

19.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses potential indirect and cumulative effects of the Modified Design, in comparison to the 2004 FEIS Design.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), set forth at 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, require federal agencies to consider the environmental consequences of their actions, including not only direct effects, but also indirect and cumulative effects. Indirect impacts are those that are "caused by an action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable" (40 CFR 1508.8). Cumulative impacts result from the incremental consequences of an action when added to other past and reasonably foreseeable future actions (40 CFR 1508.7).

The 2004 FEIS identified the potential for adverse indirect and cumulative effects from the disruption that would occur during construction of the Second Avenue Subway, including in East Harlem. The 2004 FEIS concluded that once the new subway is complete and in operation, it would have positive indirect effects on surrounding neighborhoods and positive cumulative effects in combination with other proposed initiatives. The Modified Design would not change the conclusions of the 2004 FEIS.

19.2 FEIS FINDINGS

19.2.1 INDIRECT EFFECTS

19.2.1.1 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The 2004 FEIS noted that indirect effects could occur during construction of the Project related to development trends—for example, if developers of new buildings delayed their development proposals to avoid conflicts with construction of the new subway. The 2004 FEIS noted that this could temporarily delay or even alter land use trends, particularly in East Harlem and the East Village/Lower East Side/Chinatown, where substantial development potential remained. The 2004 FEIS also noted that construction activities would temporarily reduce the desirability of some locations nearby, potentially resulting in a market decrease in rents for some properties. However, upon completion of the subway, these properties would benefit most from its construction, which would alleviate any long-term hardships to building owners.

Beneficial economic indirect effects during construction were identified in the 2004 FEIS. Construction workers and their families would shop and eat at local establishments, supporting these businesses. Construction would also require materials produced outside the metropolitan area, supporting jobs and manufacturers of these materials.

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19.2.1.2 PERMANENT IMPACTS

The 2004 FEIS noted that indirect effects of the new subway once it is operational would be beneficial. The New York metropolitan area, and New York City itself, relies heavily on its transit system for commuter and pleasure travel. The new subway would expand the New York City transit network and expand travel options for residents, commuters, and visitors. This would support local and regional economic growth and productivity.

The 2004 FEIS noted that travel patterns would change within Manhattan's East Side due to the new subway. Travelers previously using the Lexington Avenue (4/5/6) subway line or local bus routes would now use the Second Avenue Subway. This may result in decreased patronage of businesses near the Lexington Avenue subway stations and local bus stops, but it would also increase patronage near and en route to the new Second Avenue Subway stations. However, the Lexington Avenue line and bus services would continue to be well-used and businesses in these areas would not likely be affected greatly.

The 2004 FEIS stated that expanded transit services from the Second Avenue Subway would result in indirect effects on land use patterns and developments, particularly in East Harlem and the East Village/Lower East Side/Chinatown, where improved access would make development of vacant or underutilized lots in the area more likely by attracting new investment to the area. The 2004 FEIS also noted that market rents may increase near the new subway, due to its greater desirability.

19.2.2 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

19.2.2.1 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The 2004 FEIS acknowledged that a number of new transportation, infrastructure, and development projects were planned near the Second Avenue Subway corridor that could be under construction at the same time as the new subway. If these projects were to occur at the same time and in the same proximity as Second Avenue Subway construction activities, significant adverse cumulative impacts would occur.

Planned transportation projects within East Harlem identified in the 2004 FEIS included rehabilitation of the Third Avenue and Willis Avenue Bridges, rehabilitation and reconfiguration of certain aspects of the Triborough Bridge (now RFK Bridge), reconstruction of the 127th Street viaduct on the Harlem River Drive, and reconstruction work on the FDR Drive between 116th and 125th Streets. These projects would not have been located in the same areas as the Second Avenue Subway, but they could have created cumulative traffic impacts if constructed at the same time. In addition, ongoing commercial and residential development in the neighborhood was identified, as well as two large retail projects, which were expected to be completed before construction of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway began.

As stated in the 2004 FEIS, to the greatest degree possible, MTA and NYCT were to coordinate with public and private contractors to reduce the cumulative impacts of simultaneous construction; however, in some cases it may have been impossible to avoid these impacts as developers and agencies strive to complete their projects in a timely and cost-effective manner. In those cases, the 2004 FEIS stated that significant adverse impacts from cumulative impacts could result.

19.2.2.2 *PERMANENT IMPACTS*

Once operational, the 2004 FEIS stated that the Second Avenue Subway would result in few, if any, adverse cumulative impacts. Beneficial cumulative impacts were anticipated with other large scale transportation projects planned at the time of the 2004 FEIS, including the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) East Side Access Project to bring LIRR services to Grand Central Terminal in Manhattan, and the proposed No. 7 Flushing Line Extension from its terminus at 42nd Street-Times Square to the far West Side of Manhattan. Cumulatively, these transportation projects were to provide an overall benefit to the regional transportation system.

19.3 PHASE 2 MODIFIED DESIGN—CHANGE IN IMPACTS

19.3.1 INDIRECT EFFECTS

19.3.1.1 *CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS*

No changes to indirect effects during construction would result from the Modified Design. Construction of Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway would result in temporary construction impacts in East Harlem, as anticipated in the 2004 FEIS. However, as with the 2004 FEIS Design, beneficial indirect economic effects would result from patronage by construction workers at local businesses and from production of materials in areas outside the metropolitan area.

19.3.1.2 *PERMANENT IMPACTS*

No changes to permanent indirect effects would result from the Modified Design. Long-term indirect effects from the new subway would continue to be beneficial with the enhancement of transit services in New York City. The expanded transit options in East Harlem would also support continued economic growth and productivity of the area.

19.3.2 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

19.3.2.1 *CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS*

Consistent with the 2004 FEIS Design, if other large transportation, infrastructure, or development projects occur in East Harlem simultaneously with construction of the Modified Design, adverse cumulative impacts may result from the combined construction activities. The projects identified in the 2004 FEIS have largely been completed, but new projects are currently planned or under way (as shown in **Figure 4-1** in Chapter 4, “Social and Economic Conditions”).

The 125th Street corridor continues to be a focus of commercial and residential development, partially due to a 2008 rezoning of the area. Several large developments are planned or are currently in construction. Because this corridor has become an increasingly important economic center for Harlem, and because the previously planned cut-and-cover construction along this corridor would have been very disruptive, the Modified Design has been revised to reduce surface disruption. Tunnel boring and mining methods would be used where cut-and-cover was previously planned, resulting in a substantial reduction in surface construction activities and reducing potential cumulative impacts with other development projects. Nevertheless, construction vehicles and traffic diversions associated with the Modified Design and other development projects could continue to result in cumulative traffic impacts, consistent with the 2004 FEIS Design.

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As described in the 2004 FEIS, MTA would work with public and private contractors to coordinate and minimize cumulative impacts to the extent practicable.

19.3.2.2 PERMANENT IMPACTS

Consistent with the 2004 FEIS Design, the Modified Design would provide beneficial cumulative impacts with other transportation projects to enhance the overall transit network of the New York metropolitan area. The No. 7 line extension has been completed and the LIRR East Side Access project is under construction and scheduled for completion prior to Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway.

In November 2017, an area-wide rezoning of East Harlem and related land use actions were approved by City of New York. These actions aim to encourage and support growth in areas of East Harlem with ample transit accessibility, including the planned Second Avenue Subway.

The area that was rezoned extends along Second, Third, Lexington, and Park Avenues between 104th and 128th Streets, on 125th Street near Park Avenue, along 116th and 124th Streets between Second and Park Avenues, and in an area near Madison Avenue between 126th and 132nd Streets. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) published for the East Harlem Rezoning in September 2017 reported that by 2027, existing background growth, planned projects, and new development spurred by the rezoning will result in an additional 6,600 apartments and 16,000 new residents in East Harlem, an increase of 12 percent. This area will also see an additional 523,000 square feet of new retail space and 245,000 square feet of commercial office space, bringing 3,800 new employees to East Harlem (an increase of 9 percent). While the rezoning does not specifically incorporate development proposals, it aims to focus greater development densities in transit-rich corridors within East Harlem, and supports the future Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway.

As part of the East Harlem Rezoning, the New York City Department of City Planning coordinated with MTA to revise the Special Transit Land Use Districts (STLUDs) mapped along Second Avenue to align with current plans for the Second Avenue Subway. By encouraging transit entrances off of the sidewalk, these special zoning districts are intended to ease pedestrian flows, provide light and air to underground transit facilities, encourage development that promotes needed pedestrian amenities, coordinate present and future relationship of land uses within the district, and conserve the value of land and buildings. At locations in the mapped special district, developers of new buildings are required to coordinate with the New York City Department of City Planning and MTA to determine whether MTA wishes to obtain a transit easement, and if so, the developer must provide that easement. STLUD overlays are now mapped in the locations of the 106th Street, 116th Street, and 125th Street Stations. In addition, the text of the New York City Zoning Resolution was revised as relates to the STLUD so that (1) floor area provided for any subway transit-related uses such as subway entrances and ancillary facilities is not considered to be zoning floor area, and therefore is not counted against the total amount of development allowed on a site; and (2) greater flexibility is available in transit easement volumes to accommodate entrances and/or ancillary facilities that meet ADA requirements, ventilation and access requirements. The STLUD text also allows MTA to obtain transit easements on vacant lots that are needed for development of the subway. This coordination between the City of New York and MTA will allow future development anticipated in East Harlem to be built in a manner that is supportive of the Second Avenue Subway, and will allow the Second Avenue Subway to best support that new development. As such, the Modified Design would work in tandem with the East

Harlem rezoning to support economic growth in this area, providing cumulatively beneficial effects.

19.3.3 CONCLUSIONS

The Modified Design would not result in any new or different adverse impacts related to indirect and cumulative effects in comparison to the 2004 FEIS Design. Consistent with the 2004 FEIS, adverse indirect and cumulative effects may result during construction of Phase 2 as a result of temporary delays in area development (indirect effects) and temporary overlap of traffic, noise, and community character impacts from simultaneous construction activities (cumulative impacts). While the specific projects identified in the 2004 FEIS may be different today, the indirect and cumulative effects would be similar.

As with the 2004 FEIS Design, the Modified Design would result in long-term beneficial indirect and cumulative effects to the local and regional economy through enhanced transit accessibility. Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway would contribute to the enhancement of the overall transit network, thereby supporting the continued economic viability of the region. *