

4.14.1 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with NEPA and the relevant implementing regulations and guidance, this EA includes an analysis of the relationship between short-term uses of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity. This chapter also details any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources that would occur if the Project is constructed.

4.14.2 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Construction and operation of the proposed Project would require the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of construction materials such as concrete, steel, wood, and other building materials. Energy in the form of fossil fuels and electricity would be consumed during construction and operation of the Project. These materials are available and their use would not have an adverse impact on their continued availability for other purposes. In addition to materials, funding and human labor would be required to design, build, and operate the proposed Project.

The proposed Project involves the reuse of an existing historic building and the retention and restoration of the building exterior and portions of the interior. This aspect of the Project would reduce the amount of resources used, compared to new construction.

4.14.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Short-term effects on the environment typically result from construction impacts. Long-term effects relate to the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, including consistency of a project with local and regional economic, social, planning, and sustainability objectives.

SHORT-TERM USES

Construction of the proposed Project would have greater short-term impacts on the environment than the No Action Alternative. However, the temporary environmental impacts that would result from the proposed construction activities would not be significant, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.12, "Construction."

LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

The ability of transportation systems to serve major residential and employment centers is an essential component in economic growth and productivity in cities, as well as a key factor in improving the livability of surrounding neighborhoods. The new Moynihan Station would result in a significant improvement to the passenger experience and facilitate a better utilization of Penn Station. The station would also be an important element in extending the transportation hub westward in anticipation of the large amount of new development projected west of Ninth Avenue. In all, the proposed Project would improve existing passenger service at Penn Station, accommodate new rail passengers, and would create more access to New York City for its residents, its daily workers and commuters, and tourists. Further, the additional commercial and mixed-use elements of the proposed Project are complementary to the overall goals of the Hudson Yards area of Midtown. The proposed Project would be a component of the longer-term viability of the intercity rail system and would promote the region's economic vitality. The proposed Project would strengthen the central business district of Manhattan and facilitate transit-oriented development that is characterized by comparatively lower per capita emissions of carbon dioxide, the principal gas contributing to global climate change.

SHORT-TERM USES VERSUS LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Based on the information presented above, the localized short-term impacts that would result from construction of the proposed Project would not be significant, and would facilitate the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity in the region through the provision of improved intercity rail service. *