



STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW FINDINGS STATEMENT

Pursuant to the *State Environmental Quality Review Act* (“SEQRA”), codified at Article 8 of the New York *Environmental Conservation Law* (“ECL”), and its implementing regulations, promulgated at Part 617 of Title 6 of the *New York Codes, Rules and Regulations* (“N.Y.C.R.R.”), which collectively contain the requirements for the *State Environmental Quality Review* (“SEQR”) process, DASNY, as lead agency, makes the following findings.

Date: December 19, 2024

Name of Action: New York State Life Sciences Public Health Laboratory

Description of Proposed Action and Proposed Project

The Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (“DASNY”) has received a request from the New York State Department of Health (“NYSDOH”) to construct the New York State (“NYS”) Life Sciences Public Health Laboratory. For the purposes of review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”), the Proposed Action would consist of NYSDOH’s approval of construction pursuant to the *Public Health Law* (“PHL”) of NYSDOH’s plan to centralize and consolidate existing operations of the Wadsworth Center that are currently located in five separate facilities located in the Capital Region. DASNY’s role is to deliver the project on behalf of its customer agency, NYSDOH, the programmatic decision makers and owners of the project. As the Owner’s Representative, DASNY would hold all contracts, including with the design-build team and other consultants.

The Proposed Action would facilitate the construction of a new, approximately 652,000 gross square foot (“gsf”), purpose-built, state-of-the-art Life Sciences Public Health Laboratory building and accessory 930-space surface parking lot (the “Proposed Project”). The Proposed Project would foster innovation and collaboration at the Wadsworth Center facility, and between the Wadsworth Center and outside partners, contributing to broader life sciences initiatives in the Capital Region.

Purpose and Need / Benefits of the Proposed Project

The Wadsworth Center is the public health laboratory for the State of New York. Since its origins in 1901, developing communicable diseases treatments, to its establishment in 1914 as the NYSDOH’s Division of Laboratories and Research, the Wadsworth Center has grown to become one of the nation’s preeminent state public health laboratories, providing a broad range of highly technical and specialized diagnostic, surveillance, and research activities as well as laboratory certification and educational programs, all directed towards protecting the health and well-being of the citizens of New York State. The Wadsworth Center played a central role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic and is a leader in the development and application of new public health technologies. Pioneering applied and basic public health research and development done at the Wadsworth Center has broad public health impact well beyond the state of New York, frequently

impacting the establishment of national and international standards for public health policy and practice.

The Wadsworth Center's existing laboratory facilities are antiquated and past their useful lifespans. The buildings at the Griffin Laboratory site are 50 to 90 years old, and the Biggs Laboratory at the Empire State Plaza is over 50 years old. The aging infrastructure at these sites requires substantial on-going maintenance to keep operational, and it is difficult to meet the ventilation, temperature, and electrical requirements needed to operate a modern laboratory. The David Axelrod Institute is over 30 years old. Its design is outdated, making it difficult to configure spaces for modern instrumentation and workflows. The aging infrastructure and outdated design of its current laboratories makes it increasingly difficult for the Wadsworth Center to meet the needs of a modern public health laboratory and to fulfill its critical public health mission.

The Proposed Project would consolidate laboratory operations of the Wadsworth Center from the current five locations into one new, world-class, state-of-the-art laboratory that would provide many benefits, including:

- Improved preparedness for future public health emergencies
- Enhancements necessary to meet emerging public health threats
- Improved efficiencies in public health testing
- Attraction and retention of world-class scientists
- Improved competitiveness for research funding
- Reduced costs of operations, maintenance, training, and security
- Increased personnel efficiency
- Enhanced life sciences initiatives in the Capital Region

The Proposed Project would contain flexible laboratories spaces that can be adapted quickly to respond to public health emergencies. In addition, bringing all the Wadsworth Center's Divisions under one roof would facilitate synergies that can lead to new discoveries and scientific breakthroughs. The co-location of scientists and researchers in one advanced laboratory facility would also support and cultivate industry collaborations and enhance the Wadsworth Center's ability to continue to study critical public health issues, such as drug resistance to emerging infections, environmental exposures, and biological processes that contribute to human health and disease.

Location of Proposed Project

The Proposed Project would be located on a vacant, approximately 27-acre site on the southeastern portion of the W. Averell Harriman State Office Building Campus (the "Project Site"), flanked by Washington Avenue to the north, Western Avenue to the south, University at Albany to the west, and New York State Route 85 to the east, in Albany, Albany County, New York.

Agency Jurisdiction: Undertaking of Construction
Department of Health Capital Projects Program

Lead Agency: Dormitory Authority of the State of New York
515 Broadway
Albany, New York 12207-2964

Project Sponsor: New York State Department of Health
Wadsworth Center
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12237

Date Final EIS Filed: December 9, 2024

SEQRA Review Process

DASNY issued a Lead Agency Request and *Full Environmental Assessment Form – Part 1* to the Involved Agencies and Interested Parties on February 1, 2024. No objections to DASNY’s seeking of lead agency status were received during the 30-day time-period to establish lead agency required under the *SEQRA* regulations.

On March 6, 2024, DASNY declared itself Lead Agency and issued the following documents: a Positive Declaration, signaling its intention to prepare a *Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”)*; a *Notice of Public Scoping Meeting*, announcing the public scoping meeting; and a *Draft Scoping Document*, to provide an opportunity for involved agencies, interested agencies, and the public to review and comment on the scope of work for the DEIS. Additionally on March 6, 2024, public notice of these documents was published in the Albany Times-Union, Schenectady Daily Gazette, and the Environmental Notice Bulletin of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

On March 26, 2024, DASNY held its Public Scoping Meeting to receive comments on the *Draft Scoping Document*. The public comment period closed on April 15, 2024. DASNY issued a *Final Scoping Document* on May 22, 2024.

In accordance with the Final Scoping Document, DASNY prepared a DEIS and made it available to all involved agencies, interested agencies, and the public to review and comment on October 15, 2024. Notice of availability of the *DEIS* was published on October 15, 2024 in the Albany Times-Union and Schenectady Daily Gazette, and on October 16, 2024 in the Environmental Notice Bulletin. The Notice established a 30-day public comment period in accordance with *SEQRA* and announced a Public Hearing concerning the action.

DASNY held its DEIS Public Hearing on October 30, 2024. The public comment period closed on November 15, 2024. The *Final Environmental Impact Statement (“FEIS”)* was issued on December 9, 2024. This *SEQR* Findings Statement is dated and issued on December 19, 2024 following the minimum 10-day post-*FEIS* period required under the *SEQRA* regulations.

The issuance of the Findings Statement signals the completion of the *SEQRA* environmental review process for the Proposed Project.

All DASNY *SEQRA* documents for the Proposed Project are available on DASNY’s website at www.dasny.org/wadsworth-lab. Hard copies of all documents are available for public review at the Pine Hills Branch of the Albany Public Library, 517 Western Avenue, Albany.

State Historic Preservation Act Compliance

The Proposed Project was reviewed in conformance with the New York *State Historic Preservation Act of 1980* (“SHPA”), especially the implementing regulations of section 14.09 of the *Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law* (“PRHPL”), as well as with the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), dated March 18, 1998, between DASNY and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (“OPRHP”). OPRHP is an Interested Agency for the purposes of this SEQR review.

DASNY submitted the Proposed Project to OPRHP for review (OPRHP №. 24PR00953), and in its letter dated February 12, 2024, OPRHP concluded that no properties, including archaeological and/or historic resources, listed in or eligible for the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places would be impacted by this project.

As planning and design for the Proposed Project progressed, DASNY defined potential utility connections extending beyond the Project Site previously evaluated by OPRHP. These utility connections include below-grade connections to water supply, sanitary wastewater, natural gas, and electricity service. DASNY submitted the anticipated locations of the utility connections to OPRHP for review. In a letter dated September 27, 2024, OPRHP concluded that no properties, including archaeological and/or historic resources, listed in or eligible for the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places would be impacted by the Proposed Project.¹

It is the opinion of DASNY that the Proposed Project would have no adverse impact on historical or cultural resources in or eligible for inclusion in the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Facts and Conclusions in the FEIS Relied Upon to Support the Findings

As SEQR Lead Agency, DASNY must consider in its SEQR Findings Statement the relevant environmental impacts, facts and conclusions disclosed in the FEIS (incorporating the DEIS and its attachments by reference); weigh and balance relevant environmental impacts with social, economic and other considerations; provide a rationale for the agency's decision; certify that the requirements of the SEQR regulations (6 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 617) have been met; and certify that consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the action is one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable, and that adverse environmental impacts will be avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable by incorporating as conditions to the decision those mitigative measures that were identified as practicable. In developing this SEQR Findings Statement, DASNY has reviewed and considered the FEIS (which incorporates the DEIS) together with its appendices.

Summary of Potential Impacts of the Proposed Project

In accordance with the SEQR regulations (6 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 617.8, *Scoping*), during the scoping process, DASNY focused the scope of the DEIS on potentially significant adverse impacts, and eliminated consideration of those impacts that are irrelevant or not significant.

¹ OPRHP correspondence is included in Appendix A of the DEIS (incorporated by reference in the FEIS).

As detailed in the *Final Scoping Document* (May 22, 2024), the Project Site is a previously disturbed site, located on the Harriman Campus, which is primarily comprised of underutilized surface parking lots. It is bounded by a significant transportation network. The Proposed Project would not involve the removal or destruction of large quantities of vegetation or fauna; substantial interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species; impacts on a significant habitat area; substantial adverse impacts on a threatened or endangered species of animal or plant, or the habitat of such a species; or other significant adverse impacts to natural resources. It would not impair the environmental characteristics of a critical environmental area as designated pursuant to section 617.14(g) of Title 6 nor would it impair the character or quality of important historical, archeological, or architectural resources. The Proposed Project also would not cause a substantial change in the use, or intensity of use of the Harriman Campus, of land including agricultural, open space or recreational resources, or in its capacity to support existing uses and would not create a material conflict with the community's current plans or goals as officially approved or adopted.

Accordingly, DASNY determined that the Proposed Project does not have the potential for significant adverse impacts to geological features, surface water, groundwater, flooding, plants and animals, agricultural resources, aesthetic resources, historic and archeological resources, open space and recreation, critical environmental areas, consistency with community plans and community character.

DASNY further determined that there is the potential for adverse environmental impacts relative to the following, and these were addressed further in the *DEIS*:

- stormwater management,
- community facilities,
- solid waste and recycling,
- water supply,
- sanitary wastewater,
- traffic and transportation,
- potential changes to existing air quality, including potential climate change impacts,
- potential noise impacts, primarily from construction,
- the use, quantity, and type of energy, and
- human health.

DASNY also determined that it would further discuss additional environmental resource categories such as local land use, zoning, and public policy as well as aesthetic resources and the existing community or neighborhood character in the *DEIS* to ensure that the public had sufficient opportunity to comment on the Proposed Project.

Below is a discussion of the potential impacts of the Proposed Project by topic and DASNY's analysis of each.

Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy. The Proposed Project would reactivate the underutilized Project Site with new uses that would be consistent with the nearby uses in the Harriman Campus. In particular, the Proposed Project's laboratory uses and surface parking would be in keeping with the existing office building and parking uses of the Harriman Campus as a whole and the Project Site in particular, which currently contains surface parking and previously contained office buildings and parking. As the Project Site is owned by the State of New York, and the Proposed Project

would be constructed and operated by a state agency, the Proposed Project would be exempt from compliance with local zoning laws. Nonetheless, the Proposed Project would be substantially consistent with the zoning laws as provided in the City of Albany Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance. The Proposed Project would also be consistent with the public policies applicable to the Project Site, including the New York State *Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act* (“CLCPA”), *Executive Order 22* (“EO-22”), and *Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act* (“SSGPIPA”). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts on land use, zoning, or public policy.

Stormwater Management. The Proposed Project would comply with applicable stormwater regulations, including the requirements of NYSDEC, the *City of Albany Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance*, and the City of Albany Stormwater Management and Erosion Control regulations. The Proposed Project would improve the on-site stormwater infrastructure to meet NYSDEC requirements. The Proposed Project would utilize subsurface conveyance systems, landscaped bioretention areas within the parking lot, and two infiltration basins to reduce runoff volumes and improve water quality for the 10-year 24-hour storm event by 100 percent and would treat stormwater runoff before it infiltrates into the soil. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts related to stormwater.

Visual and Community Character. The Proposed Project would change the visual character of the Project Site from the existing vacant land and surface parking uses to the proposed four-story laboratory building and surface parking, and portions of the Proposed Project would be visible from various vantage points near the Project Site. However, these changes would not result in a significant adverse impact on visual and community character. The Proposed Project would generally be consistent with the existing visual character of the Harriman Campus. The Proposed Project would also include landscaping and berms, further limiting the visibility of the Proposed Project from surrounding areas. Therefore, there would be no significant adverse impacts to the visual and community character of the Project Site nor of the surrounding area.

Socioeconomic Conditions. The Proposed Project would be constructed on an existing office campus and would centralize and consolidate the existing operations of the Wadsworth Center from the five separate facilities it currently occupies in the Capital Region. The Proposed Project would not directly displace any residences, businesses, or institutions from the Project Site, and would not introduce new economic activities to the study area, as the study area already has a well-established medical and institutional presence. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts to socioeconomic conditions.

Environmental Justice. The Project Site is located near two block groups that meet the thresholds to be considered Potential Environmental Justice Areas and is located near a disadvantaged community as identified by New York State’s Climate Justice Working Group. Based on the analyses in the FEIS, the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts on environmental justice populations. In general, the Proposed Project would benefit, rather than burden the communities surrounding the Project Site. It would develop an underutilized site with a modern, energy efficient development that would provide much-needed modern laboratory space and further the State’s public health goals to the benefit of all the State’s residents. When considering the overall effects of the Proposed Project, the benefits would outweigh any impacts. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in any disproportionate impacts on affected minority or low-income populations or disadvantaged communities.

Community Facilities. The Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts to community facilities including public safety providers (i.e., police protection services, fire protection services, emergency medical services [“EMS”]) and solid waste and recycling services. The Proposed Project would consolidate existing operations of the Wadsworth Center that are currently located in five separate facilities around the Capital Region. The Proposed Project may result in an increase in demand for public safety services on the Project Site. This increase would likely be offset by a reduction in demand at the existing Wadsworth Center locations that would be vacated. The Proposed Project would also include security and fire protection measures in the project’s design. With respect to solid waste and recycling service, the Proposed Project would not place new demands on the City of Albany’s solid waste services because NYSDOH would contract with permitted private haulers to handle the Proposed Project’s waste streams as it currently does for existing operations.

Infrastructure. The Proposed Project would increase demand on the municipal water and sewer systems serving the Project Site as compared to existing conditions. The City of Albany’s water supply system and wastewater treatment facilities have sufficient capacity to serve the Proposed Project. Additionally, based on preliminary engineering studies, the water supply and wastewater conveyance infrastructure near the Project Site is expected to be sufficient to accommodate the Proposed Project’s demand. NYSDOH is continuing coordination with the City of Albany, Albany County, and the New York State Office of General Services (“OGS”) to confirm the adequacy of the water supply and wastewater infrastructure that would serve the Proposed Project and would complete necessary improvements, if any, to meet the demands of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts to water supply infrastructure or sanitary wastewater infrastructure.

The Proposed Project would increase the energy demand on the Project Site as compared to existing conditions. The Proposed Project would receive electrical power from an OGS substation, which OGS and project engineers have confirmed has sufficient capacity to meet the Proposed Project electric demand. Natural gas would be supplied to the Project Site by National Grid via a new connection to an existing gas main. The Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts to energy delivery or generation systems.

Traffic and Transportation. The Proposed Project would redevelop a vacant and underutilized site and would therefore introduce additional vehicle trips to the Project Site. Traffic conditions were evaluated at 37 intersections for the Weekday AM and Weekday PM peak hours. In addition, traffic conditions were evaluated at 35 freeway elements (ramp merge or diverge areas and mainline sections). The analysis found that the study intersections and freeway elements generally operate at acceptable conditions under existing conditions. The analysis found that the additional project-generated vehicle trips would not result in a significant degradation in intersection or ramp merge/diverge operations, and therefore would not result in significant adverse traffic impacts.

The public transportation system and pedestrian and bicycle network have the capacity and availability to accommodate non-automotive trips generated by the Proposed Project. A portion of the Campus Access Road nearby the Project Site was recently reconfigured to facilitate the Capital District Transportation Authority’s (“CDTA”) Purple Line bus rapid transit (“BRT”) route through the campus, including adding bus stops in the vicinity of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project also includes a perimeter fencing, along with new ADA-compliant sidewalks around the Project Site, which would promote pedestrian safety by directing pedestrians to existing crosswalks on the

Campus Access Road and in adjacent Brevator Street neighborhoods, facilitating safe pedestrian passage to and from the Harriman Campus around the Project Site.

Overall, the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts to public transportation, pedestrian, or bicycle conditions.

Air Quality and Climate Change. The Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts to air quality or climate change. An analysis was performed of the emissions and dispersion of carbon monoxide (“CO”), nitrogen dioxide (“NO₂”) and particulate matter (“PM,” including both “PM₁₀” and “PM_{2.5}”) from the Proposed Project’s fossil fuel-fired stationary sources, which determined that such emissions would not result in a violation of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (“NAAQS”). In addition, a mobile source screening analysis demonstrates that the Proposed Project would not cause adverse air quality impacts due to emissions of CO from mobile sources since the Proposed Project would not increase traffic volumes, reduce source-receptor distances, or change other existing conditions to such a degree as to jeopardize continued attainment of the NAAQS.

The Proposed Project would result in up to approximately 127-thousand metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per year. The Proposed Project would consolidate the operations of the existing Wadsworth Center laboratories located in five separate facilities across the Capital Region to a single state-of-the-art laboratory building—replacing aging building facilities and centralizing transportation needs. Currently, there are no specific, reasonably foreseeable plans to re-tenant or reuse these sites, and the greenhouse gas (“GHG”) emissions associated with these sites would be eliminated as the facilities are relocated to the Project Site. Furthermore, the Proposed Project would consolidate the energy usage at the existing facilities (including the existing fossil fuel systems and the electrical systems) into one centralized system that would be able to take advantage of newer equipment technologies and more efficient system designs. Consequently, the Proposed Project is anticipated to improve overall energy efficiency, reduce overall fuel usage, and result in a net GHG emissions reduction when compared to the existing facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the GHG emission reduction goals of the New York State *Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (“CLCPA”)*, and *EO-22*.

Noise. The noise analysis considers the noise levels that would be produced by operation of the Proposed Project and whether that noise would result in potential significant adverse noise impacts on the surrounding area. The noise analysis also examines noise generated by traffic traveling to and from the Project Site, and the operation of mechanical equipment associated with the Proposed Project. The predicted noise level increases associated with the Proposed Project would be imperceptible at nearby receptors and would not exceed NYSDEC’s threshold for a significant noise level increase of 6.0 decibels A (“dBA”), at the receptor sites (dBA is a unit of measurement for the relative loudness of a sound as perceived by the human ear). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse noise impacts. In addition, the Proposed Project’s external mechanical equipment would be designed to comply with the City of Albany Code.

Hazardous Materials. The Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials. The potential for significant adverse impacts during facility operations following construction would be avoided through compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and NYSDOH protocols relating to the facility’s use, handling, storage, transport, and management of hazardous materials and associated wastes. Adherence to regulatory requirements

would also address worker safety, emergency planning and preparedness, community right-to-know, and fire safety.

Construction. The Proposed Project is anticipated to be constructed in a single phase with completion in 2030. As is typical with any construction projects, there would be temporary disruption to the surrounding areas during the construction of the Proposed Project. A detailed Construction Management Plan (“CMP”) would be prepared by DASNY as the Owner’s Representative, which would establish construction management protocols and measures to minimize potential adverse impacts from construction. Although there may be adverse effects associated with construction activities, they would be temporary in nature and minimized with control measures.

Construction of the Proposed Project would create daily construction-related traffic to and from the Project Site. The potential construction worker and truck trips would have minimal impact on traffic surrounding the Project Sites, as the number of construction-period trips would be less than the number of vehicular trips generated by operation of the Proposed Project, which did not result in significant adverse impacts for the operational traffic associated with the Proposed Project. Therefore, construction of the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts on traffic and transportation conditions.

Air quality impacts associated with construction activities are typically the result of fugitive dust or emissions from vehicles or equipment. Construction sources would move around the Project Site over the construction period such that the air pollutant concentration increments due to construction of the Proposed Project would not persist in any single location. The Project Site is generally some distance away from nearby sensitive receptors with the nearest campus buildings more than 250 feet away to the west of the Project Site, and the nearest off-campus receptors more than 400 feet away to the east of the Project Site. Such distances between the construction sources and the receptors would result in increased dispersion of pollutants. Although there may be adverse effects associated with the construction activities, they would be temporary in nature and minimized with the dust control measures and emissions reduction program. Therefore, construction of the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse air quality impacts.

Construction of the Proposed Project would generate noise and vibration from construction equipment, construction vehicles, and delivery vehicles traveling to and from the Project Site. Noise levels caused by construction activities would vary widely, depending on the phase of construction and the specific task being undertaken. Construction activities would comply with the hour limitations set forth in section 255-32 of the *Code of the City of Albany*, to minimize noise intrusion from construction activities during nights when residential uses are more sensitive to noise. In addition, construction equipment utilized would incorporate sound attenuation practices to further reduce the potential impact to sensitive receptors. With these measures, short-term noise impacts would be minimized. Noise resulting from construction activities is temporary and would cease upon completion of the work at the Project Site. Therefore, construction of the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse noise impacts.

Construction of Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials. The potential for significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials during construction of the new facility would be avoided by adhering to applicable regulatory requirements and best management practices related to hazardous building materials and excavated soil handling and disposal.

Overall, construction of the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts.

Cumulative Impacts. The Proposed Project, when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, would not have the potential to result in significant adverse cumulative impacts. The other background projects in the area surrounding the Project Site are limited in number and size and are typical of the existing character of the Harriman Campus and the surrounding area. The Proposed Project would also be consistent with the scale and type of development on the Harriman Campus.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts. As discussed in the chapters of the FEIS, the Proposed Project is not anticipated to result in any unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts.

Irreversible and Irrecoverable Commitments of Resources. There are a number of resources, both natural and man-made, that would be expended in the construction and operation of the Proposed Project. These resources include the building materials used in construction; energy in the form of gas and electricity consumed during construction and operation; and the human effort (time and labor) required to develop, construct, and operate the Proposed Project. If the Proposed Project is not constructed, the existing Wadsworth Laboratory facilities would continue to operate and consume similar resources for their operation. The development associated with the Proposed Project also constitutes a long-term commitment of land resources, thereby rendering land use for other purposes highly unlikely in the foreseeable future. The Proposed Project would redevelop a vacant and underutilized portion of the Harriman Campus that was previously developed with two buildings. The Project Site has been previously disturbed and does not possess any natural resource of significant value. These commitments of land resources, materials, and energy are weighed against the benefits of the Proposed Project, which would create a new, world-class, state-of-the-art laboratory for the Wadsworth Center. The Proposed Project would provide many benefits to the public, including improved preparedness for future public health emergencies, enhanced capabilities to meet emerging public health threats, and improved efficiencies in public health testing, among others. Further, since the Proposed Project would only affect the Project Site, it would not preclude any future changes or alterations to the Harriman Campus.

Growth Inducing Impacts. The Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse growth-inducing impacts. As described above, the Proposed Project consists of the construction of a new, purpose-built, state-of-the-art Life Sciences Public Health Laboratory building and accessory surface parking lot on a previously developed site on the Harriman Campus. The Proposed Project would not introduce a new land use that could induce additional development, nor would it create new infrastructure capacity or new access to undeveloped areas or induce substantial numbers of new workers to move to the area.

Summary of Mitigation Measures Proposed

The Proposed Project has been designed to avoid significant adverse impacts. As discussed in the FEIS, the Proposed Project would not result in significant adverse impacts in any of the technical areas analyzed, and no mitigation measures beyond the implementation of best management practices and those required by applicable laws and regulations are proposed.

Description of Alternatives Analyzed

The FEIS describes and evaluates the No Action Alternative to the Proposed Project, as required by the *SEQRA* regulations. Potential environmental impacts of the No Action Alternative are analyzed to a level of detail to allow reasonable comparison with the Proposed Project, in the context of each *DEIS* subject area. Using the conclusions from the technical analyses in the *DEIS*, the potential impacts of the No Action Alternative are compared to the potential impacts of the Proposed Project.

Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Project would not be constructed. The Project Site would remain in its current vacant and underutilized condition with surface parking uses. The Wadsworth Center's existing five facilities would remain at their existing locations in the Greater Albany area, which are generally outdated laboratories with aging infrastructure that make it challenging for the Wadsworth Center to fulfill its public health mission. Over time, these existing facilities would continue to deteriorate, even with ongoing maintenance, and would further degrade the capabilities of the Wadsworth Center. The Wadsworth Center's operations also would not benefit from the efficiencies and collaborative opportunities that would be provided by a consolidated, purpose-built, state-of-the-art laboratory facility.

Overall, with the No Action Alternative, none of the benefits associated with the Proposed Project would occur, and the No Action Alternative would not meet the NYSDOH's objective to consolidate the Wadsworth Center's existing facilities, outmoded and dispersed throughout the Capital Region, into a world-class, state-of-the-art laboratory to continue to serve the evolving public health needs of the citizens of New York State.

In addition, the FEIS describes the site selection process for the Proposed Project. NYSDOH, DASNY, and Empire State Development ("ESD") conducted a site selection process to identify suitable locations for the Proposed Project in the Capital Region. This process evaluated several potential sites for the Proposed Project based on several factors including site acquisition and construction cost, proximity to similar institutions, and the ability to accommodate space needs. The Project Site was selected because it is already State-owned property that is cleared and ready for new construction, and it is of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed facility. Other alternative sites that were evaluated would have required acquisition or lease of additional property to accommodate a consolidated laboratory facility. Therefore, these sites would potentially compromise the Proposed Project's goal of creating a consolidated laboratory and these alternative sites were not selected for the Proposed Project.

CERTIFICATION OF FINDINGS TO APPROVE/FUND/UNDERTAKE

Having considered the Draft and Final EIS, including all comments submitted through the SEQR process and responses thereto, and having considered the preceding written facts and conclusions relied upon to meet the requirements of the *State Environmental Quality Review Act*, codified at Article 8 of the New York *Environmental Conservation Law*, and its implementing regulations, promulgated at Part 617 of Title 6 of the *N.Y.C.R.R.*, including 6 *N.Y.C.R.R.* § 617.11, this Statement of Findings certifies that:

1. The requirements of 6 *N.Y.C.R.R.* Part 617 have been met; and
2. Consistent with the social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives thereto, the action approved is one which minimizes or avoids adverse environmental effects to the maximum extent practicable, and that adverse environmental impacts will be avoided or minimized by incorporating as conditions to the decision those mitigative measures which were identified as practicable.

Dormitory Authority State of New York



(Signature of Responsible Official)

(Name of Agency)

Robert S. Derico, R.A.

(Name of Responsible Official)

Director, Office of Environmental Affairs

(Title of Responsible Official)

December 19, 2024

(Date)

515 Broadway, Albany, New York 12207

(Address of Agency)

For Further Information:

Contact: Robert S. Derico, R.A.
Director
Office of Environmental Affairs

Address: DASNY
515 Broadway
Albany, New York 12207

Telephone: (518) 257-3214