A. INTRODUCTION

The Phased Redevelopment of Governors Island (the Proposed Project) would result in the expansion and improvement of considerable amounts of publicly accessible open space on an island in the center of New York Harbor, and would create a major new open space resource for New York City and the region. The Proposed Project would also result in approximately 3 million square feet of new institutional and commercial uses, which may include academic space and faculty and/or student housing, creating new demands for open space on the Island.

The 2010 *New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* guidelines indicate that an open space analysis is generally required when an action would result in direct effects on public open space, such as the elimination or alteration of open space, and/or an indirect effect resulting from adding new users of open space. The *CEQR Technical Manual* indicates that an assessment of indirect effects on open space should generally be conducted when a project would introduce 200 or more residents or 500 or more workers. The amount of development envisioned from full development of the Proposed Project would introduce new resident and worker/student populations exceeding the thresholds for an open space assessment. Therefore, an open space analysis was conducted to determine whether the Proposed Project would result in any significant adverse open space impacts.

This chapter assesses existing conditions (both open space users and resources), probable conditions in the future without the Proposed Project, and potential impacts that would result from the Proposed Project. The analysis accounts for both the new park and public spaces that would be created by the Proposed Project as well as the new resident, worker, student, and visitor populations that would be introduced to the Island. As described in Chapter 2, "Analytical Framework," two potential development scenarios—the Mixed-Use Option (MUO) and the University/Research Option (URO)—have been identified for the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment component of the Proposed Project. As discussed below, the URO would introduce a greater number of workers and students to the Island, while the MUO would introduce more residents. Because these open space user groups have different open space needs (for example, office workers use open space differently than residents), this analysis considers the potential effects of both options.

B. PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

The full development of the Proposed Project would result in a substantial improvement to open spaces on the Island, and would create a unique new destination open space to serve the City and the region. The Proposed Project would transform Governors Island into an attractive public space for the region with a design that accentuates the Island's inherent attributes—its extraordinary views, its historical landscape, and its unique vantage point on the Harbor. This analysis finds that the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse indirect impacts on open space, but would have the potential for significant adverse direct effects on

open space as a result of the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment component of the Proposed Project.

PHASE 1

Phase 1 of the Proposed Project would improve existing open spaces on the Island, open new areas of open space to the public, and would not alter residential, worker, or visitor populations compared with the future without the Proposed Project. In particular, Phase 1 would open 23 acres of new open space to the public and would greatly expand the active recreation facilities on the Island by creating approximately 19 acres of new active open space. Although Phase 1 would directly affect existing open space on the Island, the Proposed Project would improve the existing open space and therefore would not result in any significant adverse open space impacts.

LATER PHASES

With the full development of the Proposed Project, public access would be provided throughout the year, rather than just during the summer as is the case currently and in the future without the Proposed Project. The Later Phases-Island Redevelopment component of the Proposed Project would introduce new residential (faculty and students living in dormitories), worker, commuter student, and visitor population to the Island.

DIRECT EFFECTS

As with Phase 1, the open space improvements in the Later Phases-Park and Public Spaces would directly affect existing open space on the Island, but they would not have the potential to result in any significant adverse direct impacts. The full development of the Proposed Project would result in a substantial improvement to open spaces on the Island, and would create a unique new destination open space to serve the City and the region. However, the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment component of the Proposed Project would result in adjacent development, which could directly affect the future open space through increased shadows or other conditions. When the uses associated with the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment are specifically defined, The Trust would undertake further review to determine whether they could result in direct effects to the Island open space. Because this analysis cannot rule out the possibility for direct effects on the future park and public spaces, there would be the potential for significant adverse impacts related to direct effects on open space, which would be further evaluated in future environmental review of the uses associated with the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment.

INDIRECT EFFECTS

In the future with the Proposed Project, all open space ratios except the active ratio would remain well above City open space planning goals, indicating that the Island open space would be sufficient to serve the future open space user population and that the new users would not diminish the Island's ability to serve as a regional open space destination (see **Table 6-1**). The full development of the Proposed Project would create approximately 20 acres of new active open space, with almost all of it in place upon completion of Phase 1. As a result, the active open space ratio would increase from 1.0 acres per 1,000 residents and visitors in the future without the Proposed Project to 1.4 acres in the future with the Proposed Project, indicating that the new open spaces would more than offset the active open space demand created by the new

Table 6-1
Open Space Ratios Summary

Ratio	City Open Space Goals	Open Space Ratios		
		Existing Conditions	Future Without the Proposed Project	Future With the Proposed Project
Total/Residents and Visitors	2.5	6.6	4.8	4.4
Passive/Residents and Visitors	0.5	5.3	3.8	3.1
Active/Residents and Visitors	2.0	1.3	1.0	1.4
Passive/Workers and Students	0.15	116.8	116.8	15.2

Notes: Ratios in acres per 1,000 people.

user groups from the Proposed Project. Although the active open space ratio would not meet the City open space planning goal of 2.0 acres per 1,000 residents and visitors, the Proposed Project would greatly expand the active open space facilities on the Island. In addition, the amount of active open space on the Island may be increased if necessary to serve the needs of a future residential population. Future options could include new active areas within the Island park and public spaces or the incorporation of active open space within the development zones.

The Proposed Project would also provide a wide range of active and passive facilities to serve the varying open space needs of the different user populations that would be introduced (residents, workers, commuter students, and visitors). New play areas and sports fields would provide active recreation space for residents and visitors of all ages, and new and improved passive open space areas would be developed to serve the passive recreation needs of the residential, worker, commuter student, and visitor populations. The Proposed Project would also not be expected to create consistent open space demands on open spaces near the ferry landings, nor would it diminish the ability of these open spaces to serve their user populations.

Overall, the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse indirect impacts on open space.

C. METHODOLOGY

STUDY AREAS

This analysis of potential open space impacts was conducted based on methodologies contained in the 2010 *CEQR Technical Manual*. According to CEQR guidelines, the first step in assessing potential open space impacts is to establish study areas appropriate for the new populations to be added as a result of a proposed action. Because of the Island's geographic isolation, the study area for this analysis has been defined as the Island itself. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the 172-acre Island includes a 150-acre portion that is controlled by The Trust as well as the Governors Island National Monument, which is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service (NPS) and comprises the remaining 22 acres of the Island.

In addition to the on-Island study area, this analysis also qualitatively considers potential effects on open spaces located near the ferry landings in Brooklyn and Manhattan. Because all open space users on Governors Island must travel through ferry landings in Lower Manhattan or Brooklyn to reach the Island, these spaces may be visited by future workers and residents on the Island as well as visitors on their way to or from the new park and public spaces on the Island.

OPEN SPACE USER POPULATIONS

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Analytical Framework," two scenarios—the URO and the MUO—have been identified for the development that could occur in the two South Island development zones under the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment. For the purposes of conducting a conservative analysis, this assessment considers the effects of both the MUO and the URO populations. The MUO would result in greater faculty and student housing uses, which would maximize the residential (faculty and students living in dormitories) population on the Island, while the URO would result in greater research, academic, and office space, which would maximize the worker and commuter student population on the Island. Therefore, this analysis considers the effects of the MUO in the assessment of open spaces for residents and visitors and the URO in the assessment of open spaces for workers and students.

Open space users consist of residents (in this case, faculty and students living in faculty housing and dormitories), workers, students commuting to the Island, and visitors to the Island. Currently, there are no residents on the Island. The current number of workers and visitors to Governors Island was provided by The Trust. The future residential population was calculated by applying average household size for Manhattan Community Board 1 from the 2007-2009 Census American Community Survey (1.84) to the proposed faculty housing units, and assuming one person per proposed dormitory bed. The future worker population was estimated using information provided by The Trust and employment-density ratios based on industry standards and completed environmental review documents. Future visitation was based on projections provided by The Trust. For analysis purposes, the daily visitation is based on estimates for a busy weekend day during the public access period.[1]

INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Publicly accessible open spaces and recreational facilities on the Island were inventoried to determine their size, character, and condition. Public spaces that do not offer useable recreational areas were excluded from the survey, as were open spaces that are not accessible to the general public. The information used for this analysis was gathered from The Trust and through field studies conducted in March 2011.

At each open space, active and passive recreational spaces were noted. Active open space facilities are characterized by such activities as jogging, field sports, and children's active play. Such open space features might include basketball courts, baseball fields, or play equipment. Passive open space facilities are characterized by such activities as strolling, reading, sunbathing, and people-watching. Some spaces, such as lawns and public esplanades, can be both active and passive recreation areas.

ADEQUACY OF OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

COMPARISON TO CITY GUIDELINES

The adequacy of open space in the study area is assessed quantitatively using a ratio of usable open space acreage to the study area population—the open space ratio. The open space ratio provides a measure of open space available per 1,000 residents or workers in the study area.

[1] Defined as the 85th percentile of in-season weekend visitation. In other words, the level of visitation that is higher than 85 percent of all other weekend days.

Local open space ratios vary widely throughout New York City and, therefore, the *CEQR Technical Manual* recommends comparing the study area open space ratios to citywide local norms and open space planning goals to provide benchmarks for analysis. The first comparison is the median ratio at the Citywide Community District level, which is 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The second comparison is the City's open space planning goals, which define an area well-served by open space as one with 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents, consisting of 2.0 acres of active space and 0.5 acres of passive space, and 0.15 acres of passive open space per 1,000 workers. As stated in the *CEQR Technical Manual,* these ratios do not constitute an impact threshold; rather, they are benchmarks that represent how well an area is served by open space. For this analysis, the open space planning goals for residents were applied to the Island's visitor population because it was assumed that they would generate demand for both active and passive open spaces primarily on weekends, similar to a residential population. Likewise, the open space planning goals for workers were applied to the future commuter student population of the Island because it was assumed that they would generate demand primarily for passive spaces, similar to a worker population.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Because the Proposed Project would result in the creation of a major new public open space that would improve open space conditions, this assessment provides both a quantitative and qualitative assessment of open space impacts. This assessment is based on the comparison of open space ratios with the Proposed Project to City open space planning goals. The determination of impacts qualitatively considers the potential new open space users that would be introduced by the Proposed Project, the needs of different types of open space users, and how the proposed park and public spaces would meet the needs of those users. If the analysis finds that the Proposed Project would not meet the open space needs of the new users, or that the number of new users would diminish the ability of the open space to serve the population, a significant adverse impact may result.

D. EXISTING CONDITIONS

STUDY AREA POPULATION

Currently, there is no residential population on Governors Island. The non-residential population of the Island is 576 workers and students. This population consists of approximately 167 workers; primarily comprised of employees of The Trust, the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School, Harbor Ferry Services, and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council; and 409 Harbor School students. The worker population has been seasonally adjusted to account for variations in the Island population between the in-season period (the public access period from approximately June through September) and the off-season period (the non-public access period from approximately October through May). For instance, Harbor School employees and students are present on the Island mainly during the off-season. For most of the in-season period, school is out of session (except for summer school, which has fewer students) but there are greater numbers of employees for Island operations during that time.

In 2010, the Island received about 443,000 annual visitors. In-season, the island attracts approximately 12,760 visitors during a busy weekend day. Visitation is limited during the off-season.

STUDY AREA OPEN SPACES

Existing open space resources on Governors Island include numerous Trust-administered areas in the North Island and South Island as well as the NPS-controlled Governors Island National Monument (see **Figure 6-1)**. The Island contains a total of 84.3 acres of open space, including 17.0 acres of active open space and 67.3 acres of passive open space. **Table 6-2** summarizes existing open space resources on Governor's Island. Although only a portion of Governors Island is currently open to the public, it functions as a major destination open space for the City and region.

Table 6-2
Existing Open Space Resources Located on Governors Island

Name	Owner/ Agency	Features	Total Acres	Active Acres	Passive Acres	Condition/ Utilization[1]
Governors Island National Monument	NPS	Historic structures, including Fort Jay and Castle Williams; lawn areas, walkways, seating, waterfront views	13.8[2]	0.0	13.8	Good/High
Trust-Administered Open Space (Various open space areas, including the Promenade, Parade Ground, Nolan Park, Colonel's Row, and Picnic Point)	The Trust	Historic structures, lawn areas, walkways, seating, waterfront views. In-season programming includes field and lawn sports, mini golf, boating, concerts, lectures, cultural food, and art festivals	70.5[3]	17.0	53.5	Good/High
Total			**84.3**	**17.0**	**67.3**	NA

Note: See Figure 6-1

[1] Utilization is for the in-season period only. During the off-season, the open spaces are not open to the public.

[2] Governors Island National Monument has a total of 22 acres. The open space acreage excludes buildings and areas within Fort Jay. Because much of the National Monument is used for guided tours and other programming, this analysis conservatively assumes that it is used only for passive recreation.

[3] The Trust-administered open space excludes buildings, concession areas (such as Water Taxi Beach), areas closed to the public, and sports fields open to the public by permit only (the area is fenced off and is not accessible outside of permitted events). The amount of active and passive acreage was estimated assuming the walkways and paths are all active space, existing open lawn areas are all passive space, and the Promenade is a mix of active and passive space.

Sources: The Trust for Governor's Island; West 8 Urban Design and Landscape Architecture; AKRF, Inc. field surveys, March 2011.

Island open space uses include a variety of lawn areas, walkways, seating areas, historic structures, and waterfront views. The Island also features a wide variety of programming during the public access period, including music concerts, art festivals, food festivals, and sporting events. There are also a number of concessions operated on the Island during the public access period, including several food vendors, a bike rental, miniature golf, and Water Taxi Beach, an entertainment and food concession. In-season, a tram service is operated to provide transport from Liggett Terrace in the Historic District to Picnic Point on the South Island.

Although the Island functions as one continuous open space resource, there are several distinct areas that offer varying open space experiences and programming. These areas, described below, include the Promenade, Nolan Park, Colonel's Row, Picnic Point, and the National Monument.

The Promenade is a 2.2-mile path around the perimeter of the Island which provides sweeping views of New York Harbor and the area around Governors Island. It provides waterfront seating

6.6.11

Project Area

Boundary of Governors Island National Monument

Open Space and Outdoor Recreation

Open Space and Outdoor Recreation (Access by Permit Only - Not Included in Open Space Inventory)

Walkways and Former Parking Lots

Areas Not Open to the Public

Structures and Piers

0 1000 FEET
SCALE

PROPOSED PHASED REDEVELOPMENT OF
GOVERNORS ISLAND

Open Space Resources
Figure 6-1

areas as well as opportunities for walking, running, bicycling, and rollerblading, among other activities. Currently, the Promenade consists mostly of roadway that is car-free, except for maintenance and related functions.

Nolan Park, the Parade Ground, and Colonel's Row comprise the majority of Trust-administered open space on the North Island. Nolan Park is a four-acre lawn with mature trees, surrounded by houses that date back to 1810. The Parade Ground is a 12-acre lawn located between Nolan Park and Colonels Row. This large, passive open space is currently used for concerts, picnics, and recreational activities. Colonels Row is a triangular passive open space south of the Parade Ground that is framed by a line of historic houses and mature trees.

Picnic Point is the only existing open space resource on the South Island, except for the Promenade. It is a primarily passive open space resource that includes picnic tables, hammocks, swings, temporary art installations, and a small farm.

Similar to the Trust-administered portion of the Island, the Governors Island National Monument is currently open to the public during the summer from June to September. During this time, the NPS offers guided tours and special events such as Army Heritage Day, when park rangers and historians offer children's programming, musical demonstrations, and lectures about army life on the Island and the Civil War. The focal point of the National Monument is two historic structures—Fort Jay and Castle Williams.

The South Island fields, located in the center of the Island south of Division Road, are open to the public by permit only for events and sports leagues. This area includes baseball fields and multipurpose fields. These facilities are not included in the inventory in Table 6-1 because they are not publicly accessible. These fields are not publicly accessible because they are located in an area of the Island that is closed to the general public unless there is a permitted event. At all other times the public does not have access to the fields or the area surrounding the fields. The Island also includes former U.S. Coast Guard open space facilities that are in disrepair and are not open to the public.

OFF-ISLAND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Because all open space users on Governors Island must travel through ferry landings in Lower Manhattan or Brooklyn to reach the Island, open space resources in the vicinity of these ferry landings may also be visited by these users.

In Lower Manhattan, there are four open spaces within the vicinity of the Battery Maritime Building ferry landing (see **Figure 6-2**). The largest of these is Battery Park, at 21.9 acres. Established more than 200 years ago, Battery Park includes Castle Clinton National Monument, Battery Gardens restaurant, and ferry service to Liberty Island. Battery Park is owned by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and managed by the Battery Conservancy. Nearby is New York City's oldest public park, the 1.02-acre Bowling Green, which was the site of Manhattan's sale from the Indians to the Dutch in 1626, as well as the recently completed Peter Minuit Plaza, a 1.3-acre open space in front of the Staten Island Ferry Terminal. Also nearby is Vietnam Veterans Plaza, a 0.73-acre open space that was dedicated in 1985 and renovated in 2001.

In Brooklyn, the Governors Island ferries depart from Pier 6 in Brooklyn Bridge Park. Currently, only Pier 1 and a portion of Pier 6 of Brooklyn Bridge Park are complete and open to the public. Pier 1 is a 6-acre park that includes 1,300 feet of promenade along the East River and 2.5 acres of lawn. Pier 6 is a 7-acre park and includes a 1.6-acre state-of-the-art, destination playground.

6.24.11

0 1000 2000 FEET
SCALE

Project Area

Governors Island National Monument

Ferry Landing

OFF-ISLAND OPEN SPACES

1. *Bowling Green*
2. *Battery Park*
3. *Vietnam Veterans Plaza*
4. *Brooklyn Bridge Park*
5. *Peter Minuit Plaza*

PROPOSED PHASED REDEVELOPMENT OF
GOVERNORS ISLAND

Off-Island Open Spaces
Figure 6-2

Upon completion, Brooklyn Bridge Park will be an 85-acre resource stretching from the Manhattan Bridge to Atlantic Avenue.

ADEQUACY OF OPEN SPACES

Currently, the Island includes a total of approximately 84.3 acres of open space, consisting of 67.3 acres of passive open space and 17.0 acres of active open space.

RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

As noted above, there is currently no residential population on Governors Island. With visitation of approximately 12,760 on a busy in-season weekend day, the Island has an overall open space ratio of 6.6 acres per 1,000 visitors, of which 1.3 acres are active space and 5.3 acres are passive space (see **Table 6-3**). Although the active open space ratio falls short of the City open space planning goal, both the total open space ratio and the passive open space ratio greatly exceed the planning goals of 2.5 acres and 0.5 acres, respectively.

Table 6-3
Existing Conditions: Adequacy of Open Space Resources

Population		Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios per 1,000 People			City Open Space Goals		
		Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive
Residents/Visitors	12,760	84.3	17.0	67.3	6.6	1.3	5.3	2.5	2.0	0.50
Workers/Students	576				NA	NA	116.8	NA	NA	0.15

Notes: There are currently no residents on the Island.

WORKERS AND COMMUTER STUDENTS

The passive ratio for the worker and student population is 116.8 acres per 1,000 workers and students, greatly exceeding the City open space planning goal of 0.15 acres. Overall, the Island currently provides abundant open space resources to workers and students and the provision of open space is well above City goals.

E. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT

STUDY AREA POPULATION

In the future without the Proposed Project in both 2013 and 2030, Governors Island will continue to operate as it does today, and there will be no change to the worker, student, or resident population on the Island. It is assumed for this analysis that the Island will continue to have 167 workers, 409 students, and no residents.

Because The Trust has expanded programming and public outreach in the past several years, it has achieved very high and rising levels of visitation, which are assumed to continue to increase in the future without the Proposed Project. By 2013, daily visitation is expected to increase to approximately 17,680 visitors on a busy in-season weekend day and annual visitation is expected to increase to approximately 614,000 visitors by 2013. It is expected that visitation would remain at this level through 2030 without the Proposed Project.

STUDY AREA OPEN SPACES

If the Proposed Project is not implemented, there would be no changes to existing open space resources on the Island. The Island would continue to serve the City and the region as it does today, it would not be substantially improved as it would be with the Proposed Project, and a large portion of the South Island would remain closed to the public. Furthermore, the Island would continue to be closed to the public from approximately October through May. Without the Proposed Project, the Island would not be transformed with a park and public space design intended to accentuate its inherent attributes—its extraordinary views, its historical landscape, and its unique vantage point on the Harbor.

OFF-ISLAND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

In the future without the Proposed Project, the construction of Brooklyn Bridge Park would continue. By 2013, it is expected that approximately ⅔ of the park, or 57 acres, would be complete, including the Pier 3 upland area, Pier 4, Pier 5, and another portion of Pier 6. By 2030, it is expected that all 85 acres of Brooklyn Bridge Park would be complete. No significant changes to Battery Park, Bowling Green, Peter Minuit Plaza, or Vietnam Veterans Plaza are anticipated.

ADEQUACY OF OPEN SPACES

RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

With the increase in visitation to the Island in the future without the Proposed Project and no increase in the amount of open space on the Island, the open space ratios for residents and visitors would decrease by 2013. As in existing conditions, the Island would have no residential population. Both the total open space ratio and the passive open space ratio would remain well above the City open space planning goals, at 4.8 acres and 3.8 acres, respectively (see **Table 6-4**). The active open space ratio would be 1.0 acre per 1,000 residents and visitors, which would continue to be less than the City goal of 2.0 acres.

Table 6-4
Future Without the Proposed Project: Adequacy of Open Space Resources

Population		Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios per 1,000 People			City Open Space Goals		
		Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive
Residents/Visitors	17,680	84.3	17.0	67.3	4.8	1.0	3.8	2.5	2.0	0.50
Workers/Students	576				NA	NA	116.8	NA	NA	0.15
Notes: There are will be no residents on the Island in the future without the Proposed Project.										

Assuming no change to the resident or visitor population, these ratios would be the same in 2030.

WORKERS AND COMMUTER STUDENTS

Because the worker and student population would not change in 2013 or 2030 without the Proposed Project, and the open spaces on the Island would not change, the passive open space ratio would remain 116.8 acres per 1,000 workers and students, the same as in existing conditions.

F. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

PHASE 1 (2013)

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," Phase 1 of the Proposed Project would include a series of open space improvements. Because Phase 1 would include only open space improvements, it would not introduce any new residents or workers, and it would not increase visitation levels as compared with the future without the Proposed Project. With Phase 1 of the Proposed Project, the public access periods on the Island would not change, and the Island would continue to be closed to the public from October through May. As such, the public space improvements themselves would not necessarily result in new employees or visitors.

The open space improvements would directly affect existing open space on the Island, but they would not have the potential to result in any significant adverse direct impacts. As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," Phase 1 would result in improvements in the Historic District including Soissons Landing, the South Battery, the Parade Ground, Colonels Row, Nolan Park, and Liggett Terrace, as well as construct approximately 23 acres of open space in the center of the South Island to create Hammock Grove and the Play Lawn (see **Figure 6-3**).

The open space improvements in Phase 1 would greatly expand active recreation resources on the Island with approximately 19 of the 23 acres of new open space for active recreation. Upon completion of Phase 1, there would be a total of 93.5 acres of Trust-administered open space on the Island, with approximately 35.8 acres of active space and 57.7 acres of passive space, including paths and walkways. Total open space on the Island, including the National Monument, would be 107.3 acres, comprising 35.8 acres of active space and 71.5 acres of passive space.

The open spaces that would be included in Phase 1 are summarized below and are illustrated in Chapter 1, "Project Description."

SOISSONS LANDING

The area upland of Soissons Dock, the arrival point for ferries from Manhattan to the North Island, would be regraded and repaved to enhance accessibility and to create a series of public plazas. The area would also include additional landscaping and orientation signing

SOUTH BATTERY

The South Battery is located towards the southern portion of the Historic District on the east side of the Island. Around the historic fort is a 10,100-square-foot asphalt surface, which would be replaced with lawn, trees, shrubs, and seating areas. This would create a new resting place along the Great Promenade that would provide seating and amenities in a location showcasing the historic fort.

PARADE GROUND

The Parade Ground is a 12-acre lawn located between Nolan Park and Colonels Row. This large open space is currently used for concerts, picnics, and recreational activities. This area would be improved to support both active and passive recreation. Towards the southern end of the Parade Ground, the lawn would be regraded and improved with two flat fields that would be large enough to allow soccer and other field sports. These fields would be publicly accessible.

National Monument Boundary (Owned by the National Park Service)

Open Space Improved or Created in Phase 1

0 400 800 FEET
SCALE

PROPOSED PHASED REDEVELOPMENT OF
GOVERNORS ISLAND

Phase 1 Open Spaces
Figure 6-3

COLONELS ROW

This area would have limited improvements to support ongoing uses as festival grounds and concert venue.

NOLAN PARK

This area would be enhanced with selective plantings and reconstructing existing brick paths to improve accessibility.

LIGGETT TERRACE

From Colonels Row, visitors would walk through an arch to Liggett Terrace, a four-acre area south of Liggett Hall, the Island's largest building. The existing parking lot and lawn areas would be replaced with a public plaza with flower beds, labyrinthic hedges, fountains, public art, seating areas, concession stands, and children's play areas.

HAMMOCK GROVE

South of Liggett Terrace would be Hammock Grove. This area would be regraded to introduce a rolling terrain planted with dense groves of trees with paved paths providing access and circulation.

PLAY LAWN

The 12-acre Play Lawn would be the largest multi-purpose open space on the Island. This area would have two regulation-sized ballfields for active recreation like Little League baseball, adult softball, and soccer. In addition to the ballfields, there would be smaller open spaces with rolling topography.

PHASE 1 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Overall, Phase 1 would improve existing open spaces on the Island, open new areas of open space to the public, and would not alter residential, worker, or visitor populations compared with the future without the Proposed Project. Therefore, Phase 1 of the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse open space impacts, and no further analysis is warranted.

LATER PHASES (THROUGH 2030)

With the full development of the Proposed Project, public access would be provided throughout the year, rather than just during the summer as in existing conditions and the future without the Proposed Project. The Later Phases-Island Redevelopment component of the Proposed Project would introduce new residential (faculty and students living in dormitories), worker, commuter student, and visitor population to the Island.

STUDY AREA POPULATION

The Later Phases-Island Redevelopment component of the Proposed Project would introduce new workers and residents to the Island. This assessment considers the residential (faculty and student) population that would be introduced by the MUO and the worker and student population that would be introduced by the URO, as well as the increase in visitation that would

result from the Later Phases-Park and Public Spaces and the new uses introduced by the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment.

Under the MUO, the proposed faculty housing and dormitory uses would introduce approximately 5,071 new residents to the Island.[2] Because there will be no residents on the Island in the future without the Proposed Project, the total residential population of the Island upon completion of the Later Phases of the Proposed Project would be 5,071 residents.

The URO scenario of the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment would introduce approximately 2,496 new workers and 2,325 new students to the Island.[3] With these new workers and students, the worker and student population of the Island would increase to a total of 5,397, comprised of 2,663 workers and 2,734 students.

Full development of the Proposed Project would also result in increased visitation to the Island. At full development, a busy summer weekend day would attract approximately 21,690 visitors to the Island, an increase of approximately 4,000 visitors over the future without the Proposed Project. The total annual park visitation would increase to nearly 1.9 million.

STUDY AREA OPEN SPACES

The Later Phases-Park and Public Spaces component of the Proposed Project would result in 32 acres of newly designed open space through the center and perimeter of the South Island. This would include 9 acres of open space that would be newly opened to the public and approximately 2.5 acres of new walkways, for a total of 11.5 acres of new open space (consisting of 0.9 acres of new active open space and 10.6 acres of new passive open space).[4] With this additional open space, there would be 105 acres of Trust-administered open space (including walkways), consisting of 36.7 acres of active open space and 68.3 acres of passive open space. The total open space on the Island, including the National Monument, would be 118.8 acres with 36.7 acres of active open space and 82.1 acres of passive open space.

As described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," the open spaces in the Later Phases-Park and Public Spaces component of the Proposed Project include the creation of the Great Promenade at the perimeter of the Island; construction of Liberty Terrace including the Shell, Yankee Landing, and the Hills; and the South Prow (see **Figure 6-4**).

The open spaces created in the Later Phases-Park and Public Spaces would complete the transformation of the Island into a high quality, publicly accessible open space with a mix of passive and active uses. The new open space would serve users of the Proposed Project and also function as a destination open space for the surrounding region. The open space areas to be

---

[2] Assumes 850 gross square feet (gsf) per faculty housing unit, 300 gsf per dormitory bed, an average household size of 1.84 persons for each faculty housing unit, and 1 resident student per dormitory bed.

[3] Assumes 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) employee per: 900 sf research space; 750 sf academic space; 25 residential units or dormitory beds; 2.67 hotel rooms; 2,500 sf conference center space; 250 sf office; 333 sf retail space; 1,000 sf cultural space; and 12 school seats. To inform the employment estimate, the number of hotel rooms and school seats were also estimated based on 1 hotel room per 800 sf hotel space and 1 school seat per 125 sf school space. The estimate of university students is based on 400 sf of academic space per student.

[4] This analysis assumes that future open lawn areas would be 70 percent active space and 30 percent passive space.

National Monument Boundary (Owned by the National Park Service)

Open Space Created in Later Phases - Park and Public Spaces

0 400 800 FEET
SCALE

PROPOSED PHASED REDEVELOPMENT OF
GOVERNORS ISLAND

Open Spaces Created in Later Phases - Park and Public Spaces
Figure 6-4

developed in the Later Phases-Park and Public Spaces component of the Proposed Project are described below and are illustrated in Chapter 1, "Project Description."

Yankee Landing

Improvements to Yankee Landing, which is on the east side of the Island, would welcome future tenants and visitors from Brooklyn, Manhattan, and other points using the ferry to Yankee Pier. A sheltered but unenclosed ferry waiting area would also be provided at this location.

The Great Promenade

The Great Promenade, a 2.2-mile path around the perimeter of the Island, would be designed for walkers, bikers, runners, roller bladers, and limited vehicular traffic. New paving elements, lighting, way-finding, and guardrails would be consistent along the Promenade, integrating the Island's northern and southern portions. The Promenade would provide unparalleled views of the area around Governors Island, directing views towards the Lower Manhattan skyline, Brooklyn Bridge Park, Staten Island, the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and New Jersey.

The Promenade would have two levels on the western side of the Island and at the southern end. At both of these locations, the lower levels of the Promenade would allow for biking or walking near the water's edge and serve limited vehicular traffic. The upper level on the west side of the Island would have trees and benches, and would terminate on the viewing roof of the Shell at Liberty Terrace (see Liberty Terrace description, below). The upper level on the southern end would provide another resting area with benches and other seating (see South Prow description, below). On both the western side of the Island and at the southern end, the upper level of the Promenade would be located inland of the lower level and, therefore, no additional open space acreage would be created by the two level Promenade.

The Hills

The Park Master Plan envisions four hills between 32 feet and 82 feet in height on the South Island, transforming the topography of the Island. The Hills would be planted with ground covers, shrubs, plants, and trees. In addition, there would be several pathways to explore the Hills. From the top of the Hills, broader views of the surrounding area would be available, with views of the Statue of Liberty, New Jersey, Lower Manhattan, the Brooklyn waterfront, and Staten Island.

Liberty Terrace

Adjacent to the Great Promenade would be Liberty Terrace, a gathering area on the west side of the Island. A new structure, The Shell, would provide protected outdoor seating and space for a food concession. A new public restroom building would be located nearby. Other amenities at Liberty Terrace would include movable tables and chairs, benches, and play areas.

South Prow

At the southern end of the Island, the Great Promenade would split into two levels. The lower level pathway would follow the edge of the Island and would be at grade with the eastern Promenade. This pathway would surround Wetland Gardens, a three-acre area with a variety of wetland plants. A picnic area would be adjacent to Wetland Gardens. Next to the upper level pathway would be the South Prow Overlook. This area, which would have benches and other seating, would be seven feet above Wetland Gardens.

ADEQUACY OF OPEN SPACES

Residents and Visitors

In the future with the Proposed Project, the full development of the Park and Public Spaces component of the Proposed Project would provide a substantial open space resource for Island residents and visitors, and all but the active open space ratio would remain above City open space planning goals. Although the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment would introduce new residents, visitors, workers and students, the open space created by Phase 1 and the Later Phases-Park and Public Spaces would offset much of the additional demand created by the new populations. The total open space ratio and passive open space ratio per 1,000 residents and visitors would be 4.4 acres and 3.1 acres, respectively, both of which would greatly exceed the City's open space planning goals (see **Table 6-5**). Moreover, the total open space ratio of 4.4 acres would substantially exceed the citywide community district median ratio of 1.5 acres. Although the active open space ratio would be below the City goal of 2.0 acres, it would increase to 1.4 acres per 1,000 residents and visitors compared with 1.0 acres in the future without the Proposed Project.

Table 6-5
Future with the Proposed Project: Adequacy of Open Space Resources

Population		Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios per 1,000 People			City Open Space Goals		
		Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive
Residents/Visitors	26,761	118.8	36.7	82.1	4.4	1.4	3.1	2.5	2.0	0.50
Workers/Students	5,397				NA	NA	15.2	NA	NA	0.15

Notes: The resident and visitor population includes approximately 5,071 residents and 21,690 visitors, based on the MUO scenario, which maximizes residential uses (faculty housing and dormitories). The worker and student population includes 2,663 workers and 2,734 students based on the URO scenario, which maximizes research, academic, and office space uses.

Workers and Commuter Students

In the future with the Proposed Project, Island open spaces would remain more than sufficient to serve the worker and student populations on the Island. The passive open space ratio per 1,000 workers and students would be 15.2 acres, approximately 100 times greater than the City open space goal of 0.15 acres.

QUALITATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

The development of the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment component of the Proposed Project would change the nature of park usage on the Island compared with the park development alone. As noted above, the new uses created by the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment would introduce new resident, worker, and commuter student populations which, because they would be present on the Island every day, would create more consistent and permanent open space demands than the visitors to the Island open space.

The open space needs would vary among the different populations introduced by the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment. The worker and commuter student population on the Island would be expected to utilize mainly passive open spaces, such as seating areas and lawns, and generate minimal demand for active open space. As described above, the full development of the Proposed Project would create or improve a number of passive open spaces on the Island, all of which could serve the worker and commuter student population. Open spaces in the Historic

District would be improved, and new public plazas would be created at Soissons Landing. Substantial new passive open spaces would be created in Hammock Grove, Liberty Terrace, The Hills, and the South Prow. All of these areas would offer seating, walkways, and, in many cases, broad views of the surrounding harbor. The commuter student population may create some demand for active space as a result of university-related athletics (e.g., intramural sports), but this demand is expected to be minimal and could be accommodated by the improved and expanded active open space resources on the Island and further offset by the possible provision of private recreation facilities (such as fitness centers) within the development zones.

The new residential population (faculty and students living in dormitories) would create demand for both active and passive open space, as well as a variety of facilities to meet the recreational needs of a wide range of age groups. As noted above, the Proposed Project would greatly expand active open space resources on the Island to serve the new residential populations. The full development of the Proposed Project would create approximately 20 acres of new active open space, with almost all of it in place upon completion of Phase 1. These spaces would include multiple places for organized or informal sports play as well as a variety of play areas for children of all ages. The Play Lawn would have two regulation-sized ballfields for active recreation like baseball, softball, and soccer, and the Parade Ground would provide two flat fields for team and informal sports. In addition to team sports, these fields could be used for other active recreation such as Frisbee and kite flying. The Great Promenade and park paths would provide spaces for individualized active recreation. The Proposed Project would also include play areas for children of all ages. Although these would not by typical playgrounds, they would be spaces designed to encourage imaginative play with creatively designed structures and features that would allow active recreation activities such as swinging, climbing, and sliding. These play areas would be located at Liberty Terrace and Liggett Terrace. In addition, the large open spaces on the Island, such as the Parade Ground, and the rolling topography of the Hills could be utilized for active play for children. By providing ample sports play areas as well as children's playground areas, the Proposed Project would provide active recreation facilities to serve the new user groups that would be introduced by the faculty housing and student dormitories.

Off-Island Open Spaces

In the future with the Proposed Project, all residents, workers, students, and other open space users on Governors Island would travel through ferry landings in Lower Manhattan or Brooklyn. As noted above, the total annual park visitation would increase to nearly 1.9 million, with a busy summer weekend day attracting approximately 21,690 visitors to the Island. These visitors may utilize open spaces near the ferry landings on their way to or from the Island. However, the new visitors to these open spaces would not diminish the ability of these open spaces to serve their user populations, nor would the new Island populations create consistent open space demands on the parks near the ferry landings.

Two of the open spaces near the ferry landings—Battery Park and Brooklyn Bridge Park—are destination open spaces that already attract a large number of visitors from around the City and the surrounding region, as well as large numbers of tourists. The greatest potential for increased use would be in Brooklyn Bridge Park because the ferry landing is within the park. However, Brooklyn Bridge Park is a large, long park that stretches north to near the Manhattan Bridge. Upon completion, Brooklyn Bridge Park would be 85 acres and is expected to be able to accommodate large numbers of visitors. Furthermore, because the Island would provide ample open space for the future user populations, it is unlikely that they would travel off-island to meet

their day-to-day open space needs. Therefore, the future Island population and visitors would not result in significant adverse indirect effects on off-island open spaces.

LATER PHASES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

DIRECT EFFECTS

As with Phase 1, the open space improvements in the Later Phases-Park and Public Spaces would directly affect existing open space on the Island, but they would not have the potential to result in any significant adverse direct impacts. The full development of the Proposed Project would result in a substantial improvement to open spaces on the Island, and would create a unique new destination open space to serve the City and the region. However, the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment component of the Proposed Project would result in adjacent development, which could directly affect the future open space through increased shadows or other conditions. When the uses associated with the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment are specifically defined, The Trust would undertake further review to determine whether they could result in direct effects to the Island open space. Because this analysis cannot rule out the possibility for direct effects on the future park and public spaces, there would be the potential for significant adverse impacts related to direct effects on open space, which would be further evaluated in future environmental review of the uses associated with the Later Phases-Island Redevelopment.

INDIRECT EFFECTS

The Proposed Project would transform Governors Island into an attractive public space for the region with a design that accentuates the Island's inherent attributes—its extraordinary views, its historical landscape, and its unique vantage point on the Harbor. In the future with the Proposed Project, all open space ratios except the active ratio would remain well above City open space planning goals, indicating that the Island open space would be sufficient to serve the future open space user population and that the new users would not diminish the Island's ability to serve as a regional open space destination (see **Table 6-6**). The full development of the Proposed Project would create approximately 20 acres of new active open space, with almost all of it in place upon completion of Phase 1. These spaces would include multiple places for organized or informal sports play as well as a variety of play areas for children of all ages. Furthermore, the active open space ratio would increase from 1.0 acres per 1,000 residents and visitors in the future without the Proposed Project to 1.4 acres in the future with the Proposed Project, indicating that the new open spaces would more than offset the active open space demand created by the new user groups with the Proposed Project. Although the active open space ratio would not meet the City open space planning goal of 2.0 acres per 1,000 residents and visitors, the Proposed Project would greatly expand the active open space facilities on the Island. In addition, the amount of active open space on the Island may be increased if necessary to serve the needs of a future residential population. Future options could include new active areas within the Island park and public spaces or the incorporation of active open space within the development zones.

Table 6-6
Open Space Ratios Summary

Ratio	City Open Space Goals	Open Space Ratios		
		Existing Conditions	Future Without the Proposed Project	Future With the Proposed Project
Total/Residents and Visitors	2.5	6.6	4.8	4.4
Passive/Residents and Visitors	0.5	5.3	3.8	3.1
Active/Residents and Visitors	2.0	1.3	1.0	1.4
Passive/Workers and Students	0.15	116.8	116.8	15.2

Notes: Ratios in acres per 1,000 people.

The Proposed Project would also provide a wide range of active and passive facilities to serve the varying open space needs of the different user populations that would be introduced (residents, workers, commuter students, and visitors). New play areas and sports fields would provide active recreation space for residents and visitors of all ages, and new and improved passive open space areas would be developed to serve the passive recreation needs of the residential, worker, commuter student, and visitor populations. As noted above, the passive open space ratio for the worker and student population would exceed the City open space planning goals. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse indirect open space impacts to the Island's park and public spaces.

Finally, the Proposed Project would not be expected to create consistent open space demands on the open spaces near the ferry landings, nor would it diminish the ability of these open spaces to serve their user populations. Because the Proposed Project would provide ample open space for its user population, it is unlikely that residents would travel off-island for their day-to-day open space needs. Therefore, the future Island population would not result in significant adverse indirect effects on off-island open spaces.

Overall, the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse indirect impacts on open space. ✷