

# Chapter 5: OPEN SPACE

## 5.1 Introduction

Per the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an open space analysis focuses on officially designated public open space. The *CEQR Technical Manual* defines open space as publicly- or privately-owned land that is publicly accessible and available for leisure, play, or sport or set aside for the protection or enhancement of the natural environment.

The *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines indicate that an open space analysis should be conducted if an action may result in a direct effect to open space, such as the physical loss or alteration of open space, or an indirect effect, such as may result from the introduction of new population that would place added demand on open space resources. As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the project site contains no existing publicly accessible open space, and so no direct impacts to existing open space resources would be expected with the proposed action. Further, other technical analyses conducted for this EIS determined that the proposed action would not cause significant adverse impacts associated with air quality or noise, thus no indirect effects to public open space with regard to use and enjoyment are anticipated. (Please refer to Chapter 15, “Air Quality,” and Chapter 17, “Noise,” for discussion of respective analyses and findings.)

However, per the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the new residential population that would be introduced by the proposed action would be of a size warranting a preliminary assessment of potential indirect effects to open space, as described in this chapter.

## 5.2 Principal Conclusions

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, indirect impacts to open space may occur when the population generated by a proposed action would overtax the capacity of available open spaces so that their usefulness would be diminished. Per the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a significant indirect impact to open space resources may be determined when 1) the proposed action would reduce the open space-to-population ratio to an extent indicating open spaces would be overburdened, or 2) when analysis determines that a pre-existing deficiency in open space would be exacerbated with the proposed action.

The preliminary open space assessment considers open space ratios, which represent the number of acres of open space per 1,000 residents. As explained in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, one key planning goal of New York City is to achieve or maintain 2.5 acres of total open space per 1,000 residents. Further, it is also a planning goal that the total open space be distributed as approximately 80 percent active open space and 20 percent passive open space; in open space ratios, this apportionment is represented as a planning goal ratio of 2.0 acres active open space per 1,000 residents and 0.5 acres passive open space per 1,000 residents.

The preliminary open space assessment finds that the proposed action would result in a combined open space ratio of 2.84 acres per 1,000 residents in the study area (compared to a combined open space ratio of 3.32 in the future without the proposed action), which would remain above New York City's planning guideline of 2.5 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. At 1.23 acres of passive open space to 1,000 residents in the future with the proposed action (compared to 1.40 acres of passive open space in the future without the proposed action), the passive open space ratio also would exceed the respective planning goal ratio of 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents. However, the active open space ratio in the future with the proposed action, which would be 1.61 acres per 1,000 residents (compared to 1.92 acres in the future without the proposed action), would remain less than the planning goal of 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents.

The balance of active and passive open space, therefore, would not meet New York City planning goals. Rather, it would represent the continuation of an existing condition in the area that currently has a high open space ratio, with more passive than active open space. As is stated in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the planning goal ratios do not constitute an absolute impact threshold; rather, these ratios are considered in combination with the City's median community district open space ratio of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The proposed action would result in an overall open space ratio of 2.84, which is notably higher than the City's median ratio of 1.5, and even the active open space ratio with the proposed action, at 1.61, would slightly exceed the City median ratio for both active and passive combined. Thus, the unmet goal for active open space would not necessarily result in significant adverse indirect impact to open space.

In addition, it is noted that, as described in Chapter 1, "Project Description," in addition to approximately 51,300 sf (1.18 acres) of publicly accessible passive open space, known as Schroeders Walk, the proposed action would add a total of 0.23 acres of open space on-site for residents' use (approximately 0.03 acres and 0.2 acres on parcels A and B, respectively). A qualitative consideration of this proposed open space indicates that it may be expected to help offset some of the new, overall demand for open space that may be attributable specifically to the proposed action. Therefore, based on consideration of both quantitative and qualitative factors, the proposed action would not result in a significant adverse impact to open space resources.

## 5.3 Methodology

The project site is not located in an area identified as “Well-Served” or “Under-Served” with regard to open space resources, according to the *CEQR Technical Manual*. As such, the threshold for requiring a preliminary analysis is the addition of at least 200 residents or 500 workers. As explained in Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” the proposed action would be expected to introduce approximately 3,274 new residents to the study area, and approximately 363 new workers.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, a residential-based analysis of significant adverse impacts is warranted per the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, though assessment of open space demands attributable to worker population is not warranted.

Per the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, open space ratios (acres of open space per 1,000 residents) are calculated for both active open spaces (such as baseball fields and basketball courts) and passive open spaces (such as lawns or sitting areas). These open space ratios are relied upon as a benchmark for determining the potential significant adverse impact on open space resources with the expected introduction of new residential population with the proposed action.

### STUDY AREA

As explained in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the open space study area represents a reasonable walking distance that residents would travel to reach open spaces and recreational areas, typically ½-mile. Therefore, per the guidance of the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the study area for the analysis of indirect impacts to open space is defined to include any U.S. Census Tract (“CT”) that 1) includes the project site, or 2) is adjacent to it, as well as 3) any other CT having at least 50 percent of its area within ½- mile of the project site. In this manner, data available from the U.S. Census to describe population in the vicinity of the project site can be collected and considered along with an inventory of open space resources. As shown on Figure 5-1, “Open Space Resources,” the study area includes three CTs (1070, 1078, and 1220).

### POPULATION DATA

Data available to describe the residential population in the study area are collected from the 2010 U.S. Census, and the *Gateway Estates II Final Environmental Impact Statement (“FEIS”)*<sup>2</sup>; please refer to Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” for a detailed explanation of population estimates in the study

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<sup>1</sup> The proposed action would introduce up to approximately 122,500 sf of commercial space and approximately 355 workers, based on the following assumptions: 3 employees per 1,000 sf for retail and restaurant uses; one employee per 250 sf for office uses (including medical office); and an estimated 1 employee per 10 children in day care, which is roughly equivalent to 3 employees per 1,000 sf. Please refer to Chapter 12, “Solid Waste and Sanitation Services” (Table 12-1, “With Action Solid Waste Generation by Use”). In addition, it is expected that approximately 8 employees would also be introduced with the proposed action to provide on-site maintenance and for administration of resident programs.

<sup>2</sup> *Gateway Estates II FEIS*; New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Lead Agency, February 4, 2009.

area for existing conditions in 2016, as well as for future conditions with and without the project in 2028.<sup>3</sup> Population age is a key demographic factor considered in the analysis of open space. The age distribution of a population affects the way open spaces are used and the need for various types of recreational facilities. Typically, children four years old or younger use traditional playgrounds that have play equipment for preschool children including toddlers. Children ages five through nine tend to utilize traditional playgrounds, as well as grassy and hard-surfaced open spaces, which are important for activities such as ball playing, running and skipping rope. Children ages ten through 14 use playground equipment, court spaces, little league fields and ball fields, while teenagers and young adults typically utilize court game facilities such as basketball and field sports. Adults between the ages of 20 and 64 use court game facilities and fields for sports, as well as bike paths, promenades, and roadways which are required for more individualized recreation such as rollerblading, biking, and jogging. Adults also gather with families for picnicking, ad hoc active sports, and recreational activities in which all ages can participate. Senior citizens engage in active recreation such as tennis, gardening, and swimming, as well as recreational activities that require passive facilities.

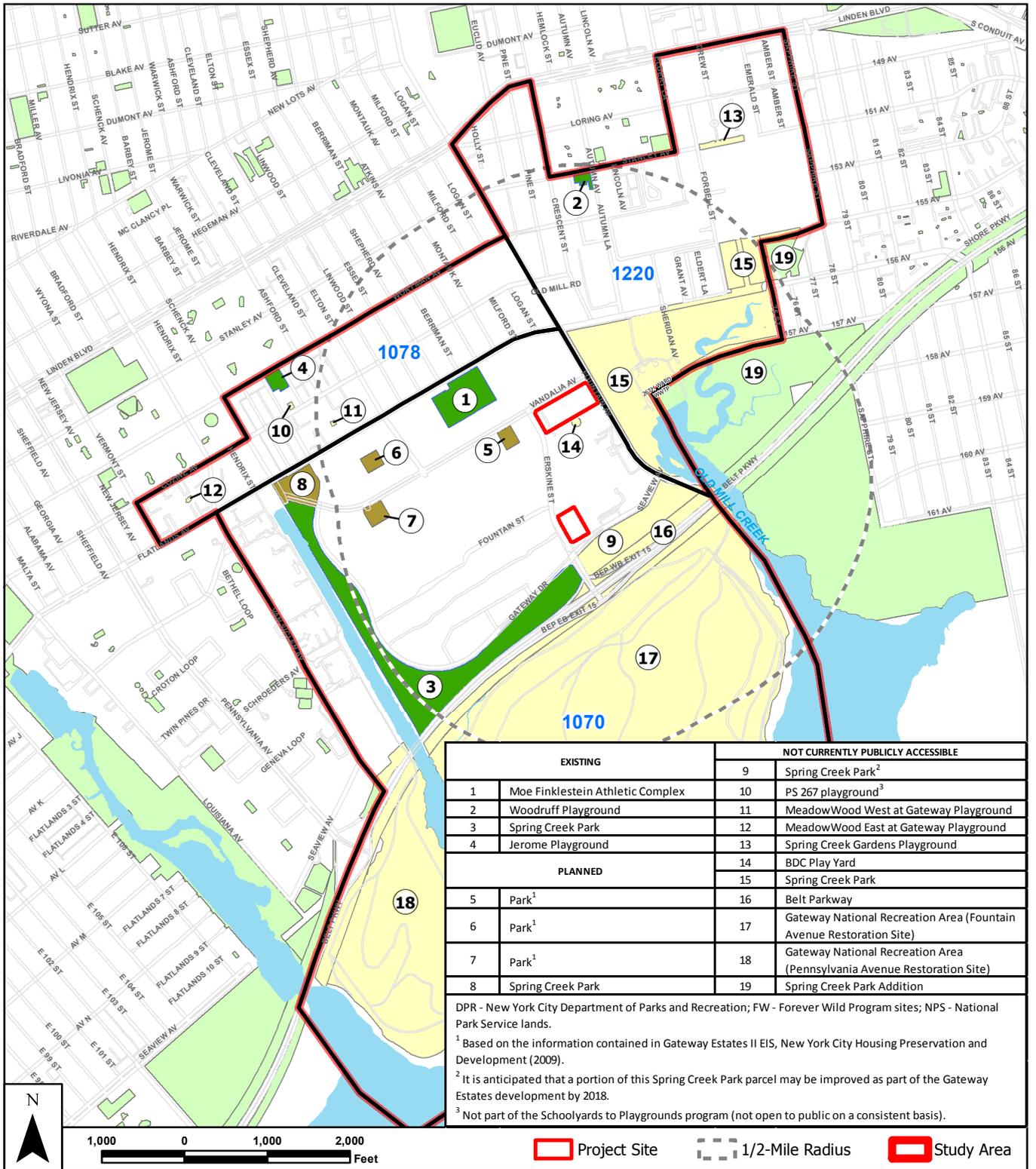
#### **OPEN SPACE DATA**

Open space may include areas used for sports, exercise or play (“active open space”) and/or areas used for sitting, strolling, or relaxing (“passive open space”). The inventory of available and planned open space is based on information available from New York City Department of City Planning (“NYCDCP”), including the NYCDCP “Selected Facilities and Program Sites in New York City, Brooklyn Community District 5,” and New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (“NYCDPR”).

In addition, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (“NYCHPD”) has been consulted to confirm information pertaining to planned open spaces that will be developed as part of the Gateway Estates development currently underway. Field surveys were conducted in June and October of 2015 to determine the number, availability, and condition of existing publicly accessible open space resources found within the study area.

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<sup>3</sup> Table 3-10, “Residential Population Projection – 2028” in Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” of this EIS, provides estimated population for 2016 and 2028, as well as a detailed explanation of estimation methods and assumptions.



Source: New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunication, 2015; New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, 2015; New York City Department of City Planning, 2010 US Census Tract; CSA Group, 2015.

**Figure 5-1**  
**OPEN SPACE RESOURCES**

**Fountain Avenue Land Use Improvement and Residential Project**



## 5.4 Existing Conditions

### STUDY AREA RESIDENTIAL POPULATION

#### *Total Population*

The 2016 study area population (CTs 1070, 1078, and 1220 combined) is estimated to be 11,976.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Age Distribution*

The age distribution of the existing population is relied upon as an indicator of types of open space that may be most utilized by the population. As shown in Table 5-1, “Study Area Residential Population, by Age – 2010,” 2010 Census data indicate that the open space study area had a residential population of approximately 9,666 people. Residents between the ages of 25 and 64 make up the majority of the population (approximately 53 percent), and adults 65 years and over account for approximately 10 percent of the study area population. These population segments are typically expected to utilize passive open space. Children and teenagers (0 to 19 years old) account for approximately 30 percent of the study area population, and children under the age of 5 account for approximately 7 percent of the population. These population segments are typically expected to utilize active open space areas, including play grounds, ball courts, and sports fields.

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<sup>4</sup> As explained in Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” the 2016 study area population is estimated by accounting for the occupancy of the 741 units of the Gateway Estates development as of 2016 in CT 1070, and application of a growth rate to estimate population in the remainder of the study area.

**Table 5-1: Study Area Residential Population, by Age – 2010**

	Census Tract 1070	Census Tract 1078	Census Tract 1220	Residential Study Area Total	Percent
<b>Age</b>					
Under 5	18	171	490	679	7.0
Age 5-9	21	169	518	708	7.3
Age 10-14	18	208	490	716	7.4
Age 15-19	23	234	488	745	7.7
Age 20-24	24	234	441	699	7.2
Age 25-64	184	2,144	2,782	5,110	52.9
Age 65+	34	689	286	1,009	10.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>3,849</b>	<b>5,495</b>	<b>9,666</b>	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

### STUDY AREA OPEN SPACES

Open spaces are classified as “active” or “passive” by the uses that the design of the space allows. Active open space is the part of a facility used for active play such as sports or exercise and may include playground equipment, playing fields and courts, swimming pools, skating rinks, golf courses, lawns and paved areas for active recreation. Passive open space is used for sitting, strolling, and relaxation, and typically contains benches, walkways and picnicking areas. However, some passive spaces can be used for both passive and active recreation, such as a green lawn or riverfront walkway, which can also be used for ball playing, jogging or rollerblading.

The name, location, operating agency, amenities and acreage of each existing and planned publicly accessible open space in the study area is included in Table 5-2a, “Study Area Open Space Resources,” and each feature is shown on the previous Figure 5-1, “Open Space Resources.”

**Table 5-2a: Study Area Open Space Resources**

Existing Conditions								
Map ID	Name	Location	Size (Acres)			Amenities	Condition	Utilization
			Total	Active	Passive			
1	<b>Moe Finklestein Athletic Complex<sup>*,**</sup></b>	Flatlands Ave. and Elton St.	8.12	6.80	1.32	Grass playing field, two baseball fields, tennis courts, handball court	Good	Moderate
2	<b>Woodruff Playground<sup>*,**</sup></b>	Stanley Ave. between Autumn Ave. and Hemlock St.	0.54	0.50	0.04	Paved play areas, play equipment, chess tables with seating, benches	Fair	Moderate
3	<b>Spring Creek Park<sup>*</sup></b>	South and west of Gateway Dr.	31.25	15.63	15.63	Paved bike paths and walkways, grass fields (including cricket field), benches, comfort station	Good	Light
4	<b>Jerome Playground<sup>*,**</sup></b>	Wortman Ave. between Jerome St. and Warwick St.	1.07	0.97	0.10	Paved play areas, play equipment, swings, basketball courts, fitness equipment, benches, chess tables with seating	Good	Moderate
	<b>TOTAL EXISTING:</b>		<b>40.98</b>	<b>23.90</b>	<b>17.09</b>			
<p><i>Notes:</i></p> <p>* NYCDPR – New York City Department of Parks and Recreation                      ** NYCDOE – New York City Department of Education</p>								

Sources: NYCDPR; 2015 Primary Land Use Tax Lot Output (PLUTO) data; 2015 New York City Open Accessible Space Information System (OASIS); CSA Group; site visits conducted in the summer and fall of 2015.

**Table 5-2a: Study Area Open Space Resources (cont'd)**

Planned Open Space					
Map ID	Names	Location	Size (Acres)		
			Total	Active	Passive
5	Park <sup>1,*</sup>	Western half of the parcel bounded by Vandalia Ave., Schroeders Ave., Berriman St. and Erskine St.	1.00	0.80 <sup>2</sup>	0.20 <sup>2</sup>
6	Park <sup>1,*</sup>	Parcel bounded by Ashford St., Locke St., Cleveland St. and Egan St.	1.00	0.80 <sup>2</sup>	0.20 <sup>2</sup>
7	Park <sup>1,*</sup>	Parcel bounded by Vandalia Ave., Schroeders Ave., Walker St., and Ashford St.	1.30	1.04 <sup>2</sup>	0.26 <sup>2</sup>
8	Spring Creek Park <sup>3,4,*</sup>	South of Flatlands Avenue between Hendrix Creek and Gateway Dr.	4.35	2.18	2.18
N/A	Gateway Estates II "additional 'perimeter park improvements'" <sup>3,5,*</sup>	To Be Determined <sup>5</sup>	7.30	3.65	3.65
	<b>TOTAL PLANNED:</b>		<b>14.95</b>	<b>8.47</b>	<b>6.49</b>

Notes:

\* NYCDPR – New York City Department of Parks and Recreation

1. Amenities not known; expected to be comprised primarily of active open space such as playgrounds and other active recreation areas. All new parks included as part of the Fresh Creek Urban Renewal Plan ("FCURP") will be in place with the completion of the Gateway Estates development by 2018.
2. The City's planning goal of a mix of 80 percent active open space and 20 percent passive open space is used to estimate the active and passive acreages for the Gateway Estate development planned interior parks.
3. The calculations assume the same balance of active and passive space as in the existing Spring Creek Park (i.e., approximately 50 percent active, 50 percent passive); active and passive totals have been rounded.
4. Amenities not known; expected to be similar to the existing perimeter Gateway Park, which includes grassy areas that can be used passively or actively, a cricket field, paved bike and pedestrian pathways, etc.
5. The *Gateway Estates II FEIS* has not identified the location(s) of planned perimeter parks improvements. Based on correspondence with NYCHPD and NYCDPR in November 2015, this information remains unavailable. However, as the entirety of the Gateway Estates development is within the open space study area for the proposed action, the totality of planned open space that will be effectuated through the Gateway Estates development completion is included and unidentified improvements amounting to approximately 7.3 acres are assumed. It is anticipated that these improvements may comprise portions of resource #9, "Spring Creek Park," indicated on the following Table 5-2b, which is currently inaccessible, but which is mapped as "planned open space" in the *Gateway Estates II FEIS*. All new parks included as part of the FCURP will be in place with the completion of the Gateway Estates development by 2018.

Sources: NYCDPR; 2015 Primary Land Use Tax Lot Output (PLUTO) data; 2015 New York City Open Accessible Space Information System (OASIS); CSA Group; site visits conducted in the summer and fall of 2015.

**Table 5-2b: Open Spaces in the Vicinity of the Project Site (Not Publicly Accessible)**

Map ID	Names	Location	Size (Acres)
			Total
9	Spring Creek Park*	Seaview Ave., Erskine St., Fountain Ave.	11.50
10	PS 267 playground <sup>6,*</sup>	Cozine Ave., Jerome St., Warwick St.	0.10
11	MeadowWood West at Gateway Playground <sup>P</sup>	Cozine Ave., Jerome St., Elton St., Flatlands Ave.	0.08
12	MeadowWood East at Gateway Playground <sup>P</sup>	Jackie Robinson Pkwy., Cozine Ave., Flatlands Ave., Van Siclen Ave.	0.10
13	Spring Creek Gardens Playground <sup>P</sup>	Forbell St., Stanley Ave., Drew St., Loring Ave.	0.89
14	BDC Play Yard <sup>BDC</sup>	Fountain Ave., Seaview Ave., Erskine St., Vandalia Ave.	0.21
15	Spring Creek Park*	Cozine St., Flatlands Ave., Fountain Ave.	59.47
16	Belt Parkway*	Fountain Ave., Erskine St., Belt Pkwy.	25.25
17	Gateway National Recreation Area*** (Fountain Avenue Restoration Site)	Belt Pkwy., Old Mill Creek, Hendrix Creek	295.75
18	Gateway National Recreation Area*** (Pennsylvania Avenue Restoration Site)	Belt Pkwy., Hendrix Creek, Fresh Creek	92.71
19	Spring Creek Park Addition <sup>7,*</sup> ,FW	Cozine Ave., Old Mill Creek, 83 St., 157 Ave.	54.37

*Notes:*

- \* NYCDPR – New York City Department of Parks and Recreation
- \*\* NYCDOE – New York City Department of Education
- \*\*\*NPS – National Park Service Lands
- FW –“Forever Wild” Program site; the “Forever Wild” Program is a NYCDPR initiative to preserve ecologically valuable lands in New York City
- BDC – Located on BDC Lot 300
- P – Privately owned
- 6. Not part of the Schoolyards to Playgrounds program (not open to public on a consistent basis).
- 7. Outside study area, but within a ½-mile of project site and contiguous to Spring Creek Park.

Sources: NYCDPR; 2015 Primary Land Use Tax Lot Output (PLUTO) data; 2015 New York City Open Accessible Space Information System (OASIS); CSA Group; site visits conducted in the summer and fall of 2015.

The largest publicly accessible open space within the study area is Spring Creek Park (Map ID #3), which is located south and west of Gateway Drive and the Gateway Center. This resource comprises approximately 31.25 acres of open space including: paved bicycle and pedestrian paths; a cricket field with bleacher seating; comfort station; benches; large grassy areas (suitable for active or passive use); and natural resources overlooks (with educational exhibits and seating). It serves adults, young adults, teens, as well as school-aged children.

Additional park resources that serve young children include two playgrounds that are affiliated with adjacent public elementary schools: Woodruff Playground, associated with PS 224 on Wortman Avenue (Map ID #2); and Jerome Playground, affiliated with PS 273 on Jerome Street (Map ID #4).

The New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) athletic facility, the Moe Finklestein Athletic Complex, is a relatively large facility that helps to meet the recreational demand for high school students and is affiliated with the public high schools located at 400 Pennsylvania Avenue (Map ID #1). This resource provides minimal passive space and primarily contains athletic fields suitable for active recreation. NYCDOE facilities are typically included in open space analyses as they are generally available to the public during non-school hours, on a regular basis.

As shown in the last section of previous Table 5-2b, “Open Spaces in the Vicinity of the Project Site (Not Publicly Accessible),” several large, mapped open spaces located in the eastern and southern portion of the open space study area are not currently accessible to the public and therefore have not been included in the open space ratio calculations. According to NYCDCP data, these include open spaces identified as portions of Spring Creek Park, Belt Parkway, and the Gateway National Recreation Area “Fountain Avenue” and “Pennsylvania Avenue” Restoration Sites, all of which are shown in previous Figure 5-1, “Open Space Resources,” as resources #9, #15, #16, #17 and #18. Field work conducted in June and October 2015 confirmed that these areas lack public access and are generally unimproved.

The portions of Spring Creek Park located south and east of the project site are generally inaccessible to the public and unimproved. The area of the park situated east of the project site (#15) is enclosed by chain link fencing and is also partially occupied by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection’s (“NYCDEP”) Spring Creek Auxiliary Water Pollution Control Plant, while the area to the south (#9) includes a relatively small strip of mowed/maintained grass followed by an unmaintained, unimproved area partially enclosed by a snow fence.

The study area also contains a few playgrounds and recreation areas (#11, #12, #13) that are privately operated by residential developments such as Spring Creek Gardens at 902 Drew Street, and MeadowWood at Gateway at 1019 Van Sicken Avenue. Additional study area open space resources include a playground area that is located on public school grounds (#10) but is not consistently open to the public outside of school hours (i.e., it does not participate in the City’s Schoolyards to Playgrounds

program);<sup>5</sup> and a recreation area on State-owned land without public access (i.e., the existing Brooklyn Developmental Center (“BDC”) play yard mapped as #14). These resources are excluded from the open space ratio calculations because they are not consistently available to the public.

## 5.5 Adequacy of Open Spaces

As previously shown in Table 5-2a, “Study Area Open Space Resources,” the study area contains 40.98 acres of existing open space of which approximately 17.09 acres are available for passive use and approximately 23.90 acres are available for active use. As previously described, the study area has a total residential population of 11,976. Based on this information, the following open space ratios are calculated to determine the existing adequacy of open spaces:

- The study area has an overall open space ratio of 3.42 acres per 1,000 residents. This ratio is well above the planning guideline of 2.5 acres of combined active and passive open space per 1,000 residents, per the *CEQR Technical Manual*.
- The passive open space ratio is 1.43 acres per 1,000 residents, which is well above the planning guideline of 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents, per the *CEQR Technical Manual*.
- The active open space ratio of 2.00 acres per 1,000 residents, just meets the planning goal of 2.0 acres active open space per 1,000 residents specified in the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

As such, the study area currently contains an adequate amount of combined open space to serve the residential population.

Additionally, portions of the Gateway National Recreation Area are mapped south, east and southwest of the project site (i.e., resources #17 and #18 shown in Figure 5-1, “Open Space Resources”). Gateway National Recreation Area facilities situated less than five miles from the project site include the Marine Park Golf Course and Floyd Bennett Field. Although these resources are not included in the open space ratio calculations, they are important to mention as they may be utilized by study area residents and are considered in the qualitative assessment of impact significance at the end of this chapter.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.nycgovparks.org/greening/planyc/schoolyards>

## 5.6 The Future Without the Proposed Action (“No Action” Conditions)

### POPULATION

The 2028 study area population (CTs 1070, 1078, and 1220 combined) is projected to be 16,864 in the future without the proposed action.<sup>6</sup>

### OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

By 2028, the Gateway Estates development will have introduced a total of 36.5 acres of publicly accessible open space, including 33.2 acres of perimeter park and 3.3 acres of interior parks.<sup>7</sup> Upon completion, the perimeter park will include a bike and pedestrian path, grassy areas for both active and passive recreation, and areas of natural and planted vegetation.<sup>8</sup> A total of 3.3 acres of interior parks will be developed on three parcels as follows:

- The parcel bounded by Ashford Street, Locke Street, Cleveland Street and Egan Street;
- The parcel bounded by Vandalia Avenue, Schroeders Avenue, Walker Street and Ashford Street; and
- The western half of the parcel bounded by Vandalia Avenue, Schroeders Avenue, Berriman Street and Erskine Street (referred to as the future Gateway Park).

Overall, the open space that has been or is to be added by the Gateway Estates development consists of approximately 18 acres of active space and 18.5 acres of passive space. Active recreation space will include playgrounds, bike paths and other areas for recreation; while passive recreation areas will feature

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<sup>6</sup> As explained in Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” the 2028 population, absent the proposed action, is projected by accounting for the occupancy of Gateway Estates development, along with an applied growth rate for the remainder of the study area.

<sup>7</sup> Gateway Estates development future (planned) interior parks are mapped in Figure 5-1, “Open Space Resources,” as #5, #6 and #7, and #8 will be included as part of that project’s perimeter parks (totaling approximately 7.65 acres of planned open space to be constructed between 2016 and 2018); in addition, it is anticipated that a portion of Spring Creek Park mapped as resource #9, which is located directly south of the project site, and currently not publicly accessible, may be redeveloped as part of the Gateway Estates development.

<sup>8</sup> As of May 2015, an estimated 21.55 acres of open space have already been constructed by the Gateway Estates development and thus this acreage has been factored into the existing open space ratio. This represents approximately 59 percent of the total 36.5 acres of open space that is expected to be added by that project prior to the proposed action’s 2028 build year.

benches, lawns, etc. The City will own and operate these parks and open spaces.<sup>9</sup> The Gateway Estates development is expected to include a fitness center, a private facility that will be available to Gateway Estates residents providing additional opportunity for active recreation and reducing dependence on public open space.

Assuming that no other open space will be added to the study area by 2028, a total of 55.93 acres of open space will be available for the projected 16,864 residents in the study area; 23.58 for passive recreation and 32.37 for active recreation.

- The overall open space ratio of 3.32 acres for the No Action conditions would remain considerably above the CEQR recommended ratio of 2.5 acres of combined active and passive open space per 1,000 residents.
- The passive open space ratio of 1.40 also measures well above the *CEQR Technical Manual* guideline of 0.5 acres.
- The active open space ratio of 1.92 acres per 1,000 residents would fall slightly below the targeted goal of 2.0 acres.

A sufficient amount of combined active and passive open space would be available to serve the residential population in the future without the proposed action, while there would be a slight shortfall of active open space as compared with the City's planning goal.

Note that NYCDEP, NYCDPR, and National Park Service ("NPS") have been actively involved in a long-term remediation project at the Fountain Avenue Landfill, located to the south of the project site within the ½-mile study area. Capping of the landfill is complete, and plantings were installed in 2007. NYCDEP is currently involved in the planning and construction of a 300-acre recreational park on this property.<sup>10,11</sup> This future recreational park may be an additional resource available to study area residents in the future without the proposed action, but is not included in the open space ratio calculations because construction details (and anticipated opening year) are unavailable.

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<sup>9</sup> New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, *Gateway Estates II FEIS*, February 4, 2009, page 1-10.

<sup>10</sup> NYC Department of Environmental Protection "City Makes Improvements to Pennsylvania and Fountain Avenue Landfills" (Press release April 2, 1999). Accessed October 2015 online at: [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/press\\_releases/99-19pr.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/press_releases/99-19pr.shtml)

<sup>11</sup> Pirani, Robert, Regional Plan Association "Turning Trash into nature on Jamaica Bay" (October 6, 2012). Accessed October 2015 online at: <http://www.rpa.org/spotlight/turning-trash-into-nature-on-jamaica-bay>

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## 5.7 The Future With the Proposed Action (“With Action” Conditions)

### POPULATION

As explained in Chapter 3, “Socioeconomic Conditions,” the population anticipated to be introduced by the proposed action would be approximately 3,274 persons. Therefore, the 2028 study area population with the proposed action is projected to be 20,138 in the future with the proposed action, which accounts for the 3,274 residents anticipated to be introduced with the proposed action, together with the 16,864 people anticipated to reside in the study area by 2028.

### OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

The proposed action would not result in any changes to property except for the project site, which includes no public open space. The amount of off-site open space in the future with the proposed action would therefore remain the same as in the future without the proposed action (55.93 acres). As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the proposed action would introduce approximately 51,300 sf (1.18 acres) of publicly accessible passive open space, known as Schroeders Walk, to Parcel B.

- The combined open space ratio in the With Action conditions would be 2.84 acres per 1,000 residents, remaining above New York City’s planning guideline of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents.
- Passive recreation acreage at 1.23 would also measure substantially above the City’s planning guidelines of 0.5 acres per 1,000 residents.
- The active open space ratio of 1.61 acres per 1,000 residents would continue to be below the 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents specified in the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

Thus, the study area would have more than sufficient amounts of total open space and passive open space in the future with the proposed action, although there would be a deficiency of active open space, which would be greater than the shortfall in the No Action conditions, as compared to the City’s planning goal.

As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” preliminary designs indicate that the proposed action would include private open space to be developed on top of retail on Parcel A and on top of parking garage areas on Parcel B. These areas would provide additional recreational space for residents’ use, thereby helping to offset the demand for open space that would be generated by the residential population that would be introduced with the proposed action. Thus, the proposed action would provide a total of approximately 9,900 sf (0.23 acres) of private open space, which would be available only to the project-generated residential population.

**IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE**

The impact from the proposed action on the open space study area is determined by comparing the With Action conditions to the No Action conditions. As discussed below, this comparison considers both qualitative and quantitative factors. Table 5-3, “Study Area Open Space Ratios,” presents the open space ratios (overall, passive and active) for the existing, future No Action and With Action conditions.

**Table 5-3: Study Area Open Space Ratios**

	Population	Park Acreage			Overall Open Space Ratio	Active Open Space Ratio	Passive Open Space Ratio
		Total	Active	Passive			
<b>Planning Goal/ CEQR Guideline</b>					2.5	2	0.5
<b>Existing Conditions</b>	11,976	40.98	23.90	17.09	3.42	2.00	1.43
<b>Future No Action Conditions</b>	16,864	55.93	32.37	23.58	3.32	1.92	1.40
<b>Future With Action Conditions</b>	20,138	57.11	32.37	24.76	2.84	1.61	1.23
<b>Change from Future Without Action Conditions to Future With Action Conditions</b>					-14.46%	-16.15%	-12.14%

Source: STV Incorporated, 2016.

*Quantitative Analysis*

As noted in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a proposed action is considered to have a significant adverse open space impact when:

- There would be a direct displacement or alteration of existing open space within the study area that has a significant adverse effect on existing users (e.g., an action would result in a net loss of publicly accessible open space).
- The open space ratio would be reduced by more than 5 percent in areas that are currently below the City’s median community district open space ratio of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. A decrease as small as one percent may be considered significant in those areas that are extremely lacking in open space, depending on the area of the City. Such a reduction could be considered a significant adverse impact if it would result in overburdening existing facilities or further exacerbate a deficiency in open space.

As previously noted, the proposed action would not directly displace or alter any existing or planned open spaces. As exhibited in Table 5-3, “Study Area Open Space Ratios,” the With Action conditions would result in an approximately 14.5 percent reduction of the overall open space ratio, compared to conditions in the future without the proposed action. The active open space ratio of 1.61 acres per 1,000 residents would be lower than the target 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents specified in the *CEQR*

*Technical Manual*. However, in the future with the proposed action, the overall open space ratio of 2.84 would remain above the recommended 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents, and the total open space ratio in the study area is currently, and would remain, above the City's median community district open space ratio of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Thus, the shortfall of active open space below the City's planning goal would not be considered a significant adverse impact.

### *Qualitative Assessment*

With respect to qualitative effects, the following factors are useful in determining whether a proposed action would result in a significant adverse impact to open space conditions:

- The proposed action would have a significant physical effect on an existing or proposed open space due to an increase in shadows, noise, air pollutant emissions, or odors compared to the future without action conditions.
- A proposed action causes a qualitative impact such as might occur when the overall open space ratio is adequate, but a specific user group (such as young children or basketball players) would be adversely affected by being underserved or there would be conflicts in the utilization of open space.

As discussed in other chapters of this EIS, the proposed action would not cause increased shadows, noise, or air pollutant emissions that would affect the usefulness of any study area open space, whether on a permanent or temporary basis. Furthermore, the proposed action would not change the use of a publicly accessible open space so that it no longer serves the same user population, nor would it limit public access to any open spaces.

While the amounts of total and passive open space resources in the study area with the proposed action are, and would continue to be, sufficient in comparison to New York City guidelines, there would remain a relatively minor deficiency in active open space; the ratio of active open space would continue to be lower than the measure of open space adequacy and the guideline planning goals.

Field observations conducted for this EIS indicate that the existing open spaces in the study area have light to moderate utilization levels and are in fair to good condition, and as such, appear to have the capacity to serve additional users. Further, private open spaces and school playground areas that are not open to the general public can also help to meet open space demands generated by study area residents that have access to these resources. Additional existing open space resources that are located proximate to (i.e., less than five miles from) the project site include the two substantial components of the Gateway National Recreational Area – the Marine Park Golf Course (an 18-hole, public golf course) and Floyd Bennett Field, which includes the ice rinks, gymnastics center, and outdoor turf fields provided as part of the Aviator Sports and Events Center. These additional existing and planned open spaces could help substantially to offset the projected deficit of active open space.

Particularly in light of these additional existing and planned resources, the proposed action would not result in a significant adverse impact on open space within the study area.