5

Open Space

This chapter assesses the potential impacts of the Proposed Actions on open space. The *2021 City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* defines open space as publicly or privately-owned land that is publicly accessible and available for leisure, play, or sport, or is set aside for the protection and/or enhancement of the natural environment.

Introduction

The Applicant, Innovative Urban Living, LLC, is seeking discretionary approvals from the City Planning Commission (CPC) to facilitate the proposed large-scale development of a site located on Block 4430, Lot 1 and Block 4434, Lots 1 and 10 in the East New York neighborhood of Brooklyn Community District 5 (the Development Site). These approvals include a zoning map amendment, zoning text amendments to establish the Project Area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area and to expand the boundary of the Transit Zone to include the Project Area, a large-scale general development special permit, and a special permit for a public parking garage (the Proposed Actions).

The Proposed Actions would include approximately 84,950 square feet (sf) or approximately 1.95 acres of publicly accessible open space consisting of an entry plaza that would serve as a public facing entrance to the Christian Cultural Center (CCC), a public arcade connecting to the central community facility core of the Proposed Project, a quad to serve as a central gathering space, and interconnecting landscaped areas and pathways. The Proposed Actions would incorporate approximately 36,000 sf (approximately 0.83 acres) of privately owned

passive open space across the Project Area including residential building courtyards and rooftops. It would also incorporate approximately 29,400 sf (approximately 0.67 acres) of privately owned active open space including a playground for the childcare facility and residents and a recreational space to be located on top of the parking garage. Overall, the Proposed Project would consist of a mixed-use, purpose-built community on the site of the existing CCC, comprising income-based affordable housing, a performing arts center (PAC), local retail, and a variety of community facilities targeted to the civic, economic, educational, and cultural needs of the East New York neighborhood (the Proposed Project). This would include a total of approximately 2,200,538 gsf of development to be constructed in phases over a planned 10 years, with 10 buildings ranging from two to 15 stories.

Principal Conclusions

The Proposed Actions would not have a direct impact on open space resources in the study area. The Proposed Actions would not result in the physical loss of existing public open space resources, and would not result in any adverse shadow, air quality, noise, or other environmental impacts that would affect the usefulness of any study area open space. As the Proposed Actions are expected to introduce approximately 4,797 residents and 480 incremental workers in the future with the Proposed Actions, a detailed open space analysis for a residential (half-mile) study area was conducted to assess the potential for indirect effects, pursuant to the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The Proposed Project would not generate a net increase in workers above the 500-worker threshold. Therefore, a non-residential open space analysis is not warranted.

In the future with the Proposed Actions, within the half-mile residential study area, the passive open space ratio (OSR) would decrease by 5.30 percent to 0.652 acres per 1,000 residents; although this decrease is greater than the City's guideline of five percent, the passive OSR would remain higher than the benchmark ratio of 0.50 acres per 1,000 residents. The active and total OSRs would remain below the City's guideline ratios of 2.0 acres per 1,000 residents and 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents, respectively, in the future with the Proposed Actions. The active OSR would decrease by 12.97 percent to 1.140 acres per 1,000 residents and the total OSR would decrease by 10.33 percent to 1.792 acres per 1,000 residents. Although the project would result in percent increases that exceed the DCP Guidelines, it is anticipated that any potential for adverse open space impacts would be alleviated by qualitative factors, including the introduction of approximately 0.67 acres of private active open space and approximately 0.83 acres of private passive open space as part of the Proposed Project and the open space resources available to the thousands of residents of the adjacent Spring Creek Towers (formerly Starrett City).

As described below, there would be a temporary indirect active open space impact during construction related to the phasing of the project as new demand for open space resources would materialize from residents prior to the completion of all of the planned on-site open spaces. Therefore, a discussion of mitigation is warranted, see **Chapter 20, Mitigation**. This temporary impact would be eliminated upon full build-out of the project when all proposed open spaces are constructed.

Furthermore, the Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City open space resources are for residents only and are therefore not accounted for in the open space calculations; however, it is anticipated that the residents would continue to use these on-site open space amenities. Open spaces in the adjacent NYCHA Breukelen and Linden Houses such as basketball courts and playgrounds are available for use by residents of those housing developments, though not considered in the quantitative analysis. In addition, the 400-acre Shirley Chisholm State Park is located just outside of the study area, which could be reasonably assumed to be utilized by study area residents and residents introduced by the Proposed Actions. Further, the residential study area has a higher median age and a greater percentage of senior citizens than Kings County or New York City as a whole, which would reflect a higher demand for passive open space resources and less demand for active open space amenities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in any permanent open space impacts.

Methodology

Per guidance in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an open space analysis is generally conducted if a proposed project would generate more than 200 new residents or 500 new employees. As shown in **Table 5-1**, the With-Action condition would result in a net increase of approximately 4,797 residents and approximately 480 workers compared with the No-Action condition.

Table 5-1 Future No-Action and With-Action Population/Employment Summary

Use	Existing Conditions	Future No-Action Condition	Future With-Action Condition	Increment
Residential Units	0	0	2,050 units	2,050 units
Commercial (Local Retail, Trade School, Performing Arts Center and Grocery Store)	0	0	110,570 gsf	110,570 gsf
Community Facility (CCC, Day Care/Senior Center/Medical Office)	92,784 gsf	92,784 gsf	100,904 gsf	8,120 gsf
Population/Employment				
Residents[1]	0	0	4,797	4,797
Workers[2]	130	130	610	480

Notes:

[1] Based on the Average Household Size for the eight census tracts that comprise the residential study area of 2.34 (2018 5-yr ACS)

[2] Worker estimates were derived using ratios provided by the NYC Department of City Planning. The number of employees working in residential buildings was calculated by dividing the total residential units by 25 dwelling units. The number of retail and grocery workers was calculated by dividing the total commercial gsf by 333.3 sf. The Performing Arts Center, Trade School, and general community facility space including a day care and senior center was calculated by dividing the total gsf by 333.3 sf. The number of employees of the existing CCC Building was provided by the CCC.

The open space analysis was conducted in accordance with the methodology outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. The purpose of the analysis is to provide an evaluation of the study area's existing open space conditions relative to the open space needs of the study area's users, and to predict and compare conditions relative to open space needs in the future without and with the Proposed Actions. Since the Proposed Actions would introduce additional residents and workers to the area, which would place demands on the study area's

active and passive open space resources, the analysis examines the amount of active and passive open space available in the future with and without the Proposed Actions in order to quantify the potential impact from the Proposed Actions.

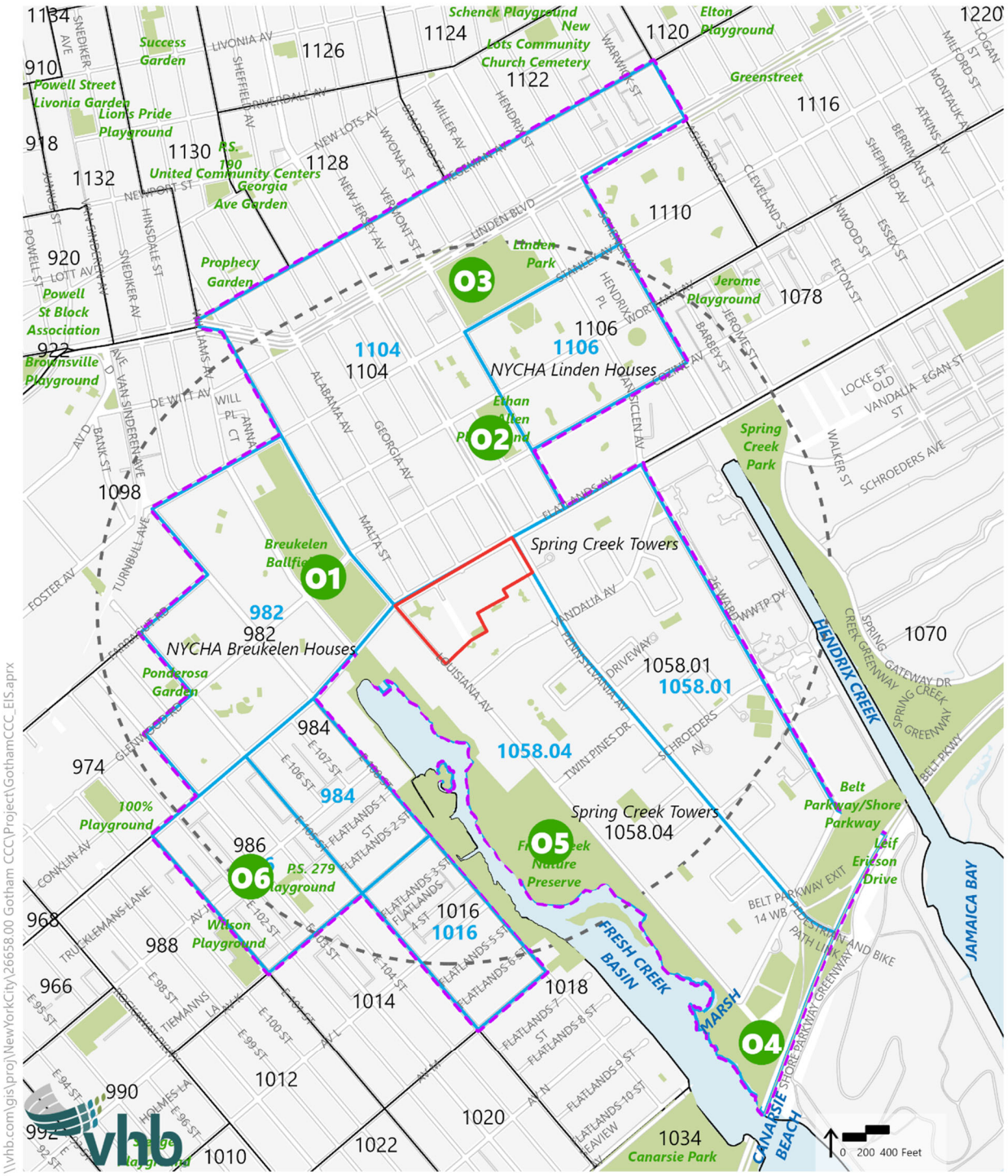
Open Space Study Area

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, the first step in an open space analysis is to define and map a study area to allow analysis of both the open spaces and the population using those open spaces within a specified distance of a project. The size of the study area is based on the distance a person may be reasonably assumed to walk to reach a local open space. Workers typically use passive open spaces within a quarter mile of their workplace, while residents use both passive and active open spaces and are more likely to travel farther—up to a half-mile from their places of residence—to reach open spaces. Because the Proposed Project would generate a net increase in residents above the 200-resident threshold compared to the future No-Action condition, a residential study area was defined. The Proposed Project would not generate a net increase in workers above the 500-worker threshold. Therefore, a non-residential open space analysis is not warranted.

Residential Study Area

Pursuant to *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance, the residential study area comprises all census tracts that have at least 50 percent of their area located within a half-mile radius of the Project Area. Eight census tracts have at least 50 percent of their area located within a half-mile of the Project Area, including 982, 984, 986, 1016, 1058.01, 1058.04, 1104 and 1106 (see **Figure 5-1**).

Figure 5-1 Half-Mile Open Space Study Area Map



Direct Effects Analysis

Consistent with the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a direct effects analysis should be performed if a proposed project would directly affect open space conditions by causing the loss of public open space; changing the use of an open space so that it no longer serves the same user population; limiting public access to an open space; or increasing noise or air pollutant emissions, odor, or shadows that would temporarily or permanently affect the usefulness of a public open space. A proposed project can also directly affect an open space by enhancing its design or increasing its accessibility to the public. The Proposed Actions would not result in any of the conditions described above; therefore, no direct effects analysis is warranted.

Indirect Effects Analysis

The *CEQR Technical Manual* states that indirect effects may occur when the population generated by a project would overtax the capacity of open spaces so that their service to the future population of the affected area would be substantially or noticeably diminished. The Proposed Actions would result in a net increase of approximately 4,797 residents compared to the future No-Action condition. Therefore, a residential analysis of indirect effects is required within an approximately half-mile radius study area. The purpose of the indirect effects analysis is to quantitatively assess the adequacy of open space in the study area for existing and potential future users based on an inventory of open space resources and the effect the residential population increase anticipated with the Proposed Project as well as any population increase in the No-Action condition due to other planned or proposed developments.

Specifically, an indirect effects analysis for residential populations includes:

- The number of residents in the residential study area analysis, which was calculated based on population data from the 2015-2019 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) for census tracts within the study area.
- An inventory of all publicly accessible open spaces in the study area, using secondary sources supplemented with field surveys.
- A quantitative assessment of the OSR in the study area for residents—calculated as the ratio of open space acreage to user population—compared to benchmarks established in the *CEQR Technical Manual*. These include the optimal ratio for resident populations, which is 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents and 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents.
- A qualitative assessment of the condition and usage of open space resources in the study area, based on field visits conducted on April 9, 2021, and May 4, 2021.
- A qualitative assessment of open space resources within or adjacent to the residential study area that are not included in the quantitative assessment but could reasonably be assumed to be utilized by existing residents or by those introduced by the Proposed Actions.

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, projects that may result in significant quantitative impacts on open space resources, are typically further assessed in a qualitative assessment to determine the overall significance of the impact. Because the quantitative assessment

concluded that residential active and passive OSRs would decrease by an amount greater than DCP Guidelines, a full qualitative assessment was also included.

Walk-to-a-Park Initiative

New York City, as part of the OneNYC 2050 Building a Strong and Fair City plan, has put forth a goal for 85 percent of New York City residents living within a walking distance of a park by 2030. To help the City reach this goal, NYC Parks has a Walk-to-a-Park initiative that focuses on increasing access to parks and open space in areas of the City where residents live further than a walk to a park. According to Walk-to-a-Park service area geographic data provided by the City, the Project Area does not overlap with any known walk gap areas (see **Figure 5-2**). Therefore, a detailed assessment is not required based on the results of the Walk-to-a-Park analysis. However, a detailed assessment is warranted based on a preliminary quantitative assessment as previously discussed.

Figure 5-2 Walk to a Park Service Area



Impact Assessment

The determination of significant adverse impacts is based on how a project would affect the OSRs in the study area, as well as qualitative factors not reflected in the quantitative assessment. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, if a proposed project would reduce an OSR and consequently result in overburdening existing facilities, or if it would substantially exacerbate an existing deficiency in open space, it may result in a significant impact on open space resources. In general, if (1) a study area's OSRs fall below DCP Guidelines, and (2) a proposed project would result in a decrease in the OSR greater than the percent change threshold associated with OSR ranges, it could be considered a substantial change requiring additional analysis. In areas that have been determined to be extremely lacking in open space, a reduction as small as one percent may be considered significant warranting further analysis (see **Table 5-2**).

Table 5-2 Percent Change Guidance to Determine Possible Open Space Impact

Total Open Space Ratio Range	Active Open Space Ratio Range	Passive Open Space Ratio Range	Percentage Change in Open Space Ratio Signifying a Possible Adverse Open Space Impact
2.01 to 2.50 or greater	1.61 to 2.0 or greater	0.41 to 0.50 or greater	5%
1.51 to 2.00	1.21 to 1.60	0.31 to 0.40	4%
1.01 to 1.50	0.81 to 1.20	0.21 to 0.30	3%
0.51 to 1.00	0.41 to 0.80	0.11 to 0.20	2%
0.50 or less	0.01 to 0.40	0.01 to 0.10	1%

Note: A 2.5 OSR is the planning goal in NYC as set by DCP, with an optimal distribution goal of 2.0 Active OSR and 0.5 Passive OSR. OSRs are represented in acres per 1,000 residents

As discussed under the With-Action Condition section, the total OSR falls into the 1.51 to 2.00 acres per 1,000 residents range, and therefore a 4 percent change threshold is relevant for impact assessment. Similarly, the active OSR falls into the 0.81 to 1.20 acres per 1,000 residents range, requiring a 3 percent change threshold and the passive OSR falls into the 0.41 or greater acres per 1,000 residents, requiring a 5 percent change threshold. As discussed below, the quantitative assessment determined that the Proposed Project would result in residential passive, active, and total OSRs exceeding these thresholds. Therefore, a detailed assessment of indirect effects on open space is included below.

Detailed Assessment

Existing Conditions

Study Area Population

Residential Study Area

As shown in **Table 5-3**, based on the 2015-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the eight census tracts in the residential open space study area contain a total residential population of 32,252.

Residential Population Age Distribution

Within a given area, 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 toddlers and preschool children. Children ages five through nine typically use 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, and sports fields. Teenagers' and young adults' needs tend toward court game facilities such as basketball and field sports. Adults between the ages of 20 and 64 continue to use court game facilities and fields for sports, as well as more individualized recreation such as rollerblading, biking, and jogging, requiring bike paths, promenades, and roadways. 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.

As shown in **Table 5-4**, residents between 20 and 64 make up the largest age cohort (approximately 61 percent) of the residential population in the half-mile residential study area. The next highest cohort is residents aged 65 years and over (approximately 21.1 percent). There is a higher percentage of 65 years and older residents in the study area as compared to Kings County (14.3 percent) and New York City (14.1 percent) as a whole. The higher percentage of senior citizens in the study area is also evident when comparing the median age of the study area to that of Kings County and New York City. The study area's median age is 39.8 compared with 35.6 in Kings County and 37.2 in New York City. The study area median ages by census tract range from a low of 30.1 in Census Tract 1106 and to a high of 50.7 in Census Tract 1058.04. This demographic data for the residential open space study area suggest a need for facilities geared towards the recreational needs of adults and senior citizens, as the study area exhibits a high percentage of residents in the 65 years and older age bracket. The intensity of demand for publicly accessible active open space is less in the residential study area than in Kings County or New York City as a whole because of a higher-than-average median age and percentage of senior citizens as a portion of the population total.

Table 5-3 Existing Population in the Study Area

Census Tract	Residential Population
982	4,532
984	1,998
986	2,856
1016	1,715
1058.01	5,809
1058.04	6,744
1104	5,407
1106	4,191
Total	**32,252**

Table 5-4 Existing Population within the Study Area

Census Tract	Total Residential Population	Age Distribution												
		Under 5		5 to 9		10 to 14		15 to 19		20 to 64		65 years and over		Median Age
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
982	4,532	458	10.1%	487	10.7%	249	5.5%	435	9.6%	2,345	51.7%	558	12.3%	30.4
984	1,998	138	6.9%	135	6.8%	52	2.6%	152	7.6%	1,203	60.3%	318	16.1%	41.4
986	2,856	189	6.6%	131	4.6%	184	6.4%	121	4.2%	1,861	65.2%	370	13.0%	37.1
1016	1,715	148	8.6%	69	4.0%	59	3.4%	97	5.7%	1,060	61.9%	282	16.5%	36.0
1058.01	5,809	273	4.7%	46	7.5%	403	6.9%	116	2.0%	2,597	44.7%	1,984	34.1%	50.3
1058.04	6,744	312	4.6%	427	6.3%	258	3.8%	368	5.5%	3,227	48.1%	2,152	31.9%	50.7
1104	4,407	321	7.3%	285	6.5%	279	6.3%	305	6.9%	2,580	58.4%	637	14.4%	37.2
1106	4,191	292	7.0%	471	11.2%	240	5.7%	320	7.6%	2,381	56.8%	487	11.6%	30.1
Total	**32,252**	**2,131**	**6.6%**	**2,051**	**6.4%**	**1,724**	**5.4%**	**1,914**	**5.9%**	**17,254**	**53.5%**	**6,788**	**21.1%**	**39.8**
Kings County Total	**2,559,903**	**182,787**	**7.1%**	**151,579**	**5.9%**	**159,586**	**6.2%**	**135,493**	**5.3%**	**1,563,080**	**61%**	**367,378**	**14.3%**	**35.6**
NYC Total	**8,336,817**	**551,869**	**6.5%**	**476,567**	**5.6%**	**464,704**	**5.5%**	**455,674**	**5.4%**	**5,305,538**	**62.8%**	**1,189,361**	**14.1%**	**37.2**

Source: 2015-2019 ACS 5-year Estimates

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Study Area Open Space Resources

Open space that is accessible to the public on a constant and regular basis, including for designated daily periods, is defined as publicly accessible and is analyzed as such per *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines. Publicly accessible open space may be under government or private jurisdiction and includes open space designated through regulatory approvals, such as public plazas. Private open space—that which is not publicly-accessible or is available only to limited users and is not available to the public on a constant and regular basis—is not included in CEQR-compliant quantitative open space analyses.

In addition to the distinction between public and private open spaces, individual spaces may also be classified as either active or passive, according to the types of activities for which the space is primarily used. Open space that is used for sports, exercise, or active play is classified as active and consists mainly of recreational facilities, while open space that is used for relaxation, such as a plaza, is classified as passive. Some types of open space facilities, such as esplanades, may be devoted to both active and passive uses.

In conducting the open space analysis for the Proposed Actions, publicly accessible open spaces within the study area were inventoried. The open space resources were identified by their location, owner, features, total acreage, and acreage of passive and active areas. The secondary sources for this analysis included land use and geographic PLUTO data at the tax lot level and additional data provided by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks). According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, public open space does not include Greenstreets, malls without seating, or sidewalks.

Quantitative Assessment

The half-mile study area contains six open space resources, as shown in **Figure 5-3**. Open spaces in the study area total 64.43 acres, including 42.24 acres of active open space and 22.19 acres of passive open space. These spaces are described below.

Diagonally across the intersection of Flatlands Avenue and Louisiana Avenue from the Project Area is Breukelen Ballfields and Playground, a 16.16-acre park with several amenities primarily for active recreation. This open space resource contains five baseball fields, handball courts, and a playground.

On the north side of the residential open space study area is Linden Park, which is located off of Linden Boulevard. Linden Park is a 9.32-acre park that also contains several amenities for active recreation including a football field, running track, basketball field, tennis and handball courts, and a playground.

Just west of the Project Area is the Fresh Creek Nature Preserve, which spans both sides of Fresh Creek, a narrow waterbody that flows from North Channel in Jamaica Bay inland to Flatlands Avenue. The eastern portion of Fresh Creek Nature Preserve, closer to the Project Area, contains walking paths through the marsh, which provide opportunities for bird watching. However, the western portion of the nature preserve, just outside of the study area, is not publicly accessible.

In addition, though a small portion of Spring Creek Park is located within the residential study area and included in the quantitative analysis, the majority of the park is outside of the study area. The park is similar in its amenities to Fresh Creek Nature Preserve and contains

walking paths through wildlife refuges and marshes. Spring Creek Park also contains cricket fields, which is a rare open space amenity for New York City parks.

There are also two small playgrounds located in the residential study area, which are jointly operated by NYC Parks and the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) due to their location adjacent to public schools. Ethan Allen Playground is a publicly accessible park that serves as the schoolyard for the adjacent P.S. 306 and contains basketball and handball courts and a playground. P.S. 279 Playground is a small through-block park that serves the adjacent school of the same name and contains basketball courts and a playground.

Qualitative Assessment

As shown in **Table 5-5,** all of the open space resources in the half-mile study area were found to be in acceptable or good condition and have low to moderate rates of utilization on weekdays based on field visit conducted in early May. One open space, Linden Park, was found to be in good condition due to a $9 million renovation, which was completed in 2019[1]. The turf field, running track, playground, and courts are all in good condition with limited wear and tear.

In addition to the open spaces detailed above, there are several open space resources located within the Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City complex directly adjacent to the Project Area, including playgrounds and basketball courts. However, as was confirmed during field observations, the playgrounds and basketball courts are for use by residents of the Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City complex only. While these open spaces are not publicly accessible, they are available to the thousands of residents of the Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City. Due to the private nature of the Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City open space resources, they were not included in the quantitative analysis. Open spaces in the adjacent NYCHA Breukelen and Linden Houses, such as basketball courts and playgrounds, are available for use by residents of those housing developments as well as the residents of the surrounding neighborhood—though they are not considered in the quantitative analysis.

There are several publicly accessible open spaces located just outside of the study area, which were therefore excluded from the quantitative analysis. The largest of these parks is Shirley Chisholm State Park, which is located southeast of the Project Area on the opposite side of the Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City and the Belt Parkway. The state park is a destination and comprises over 400 acres with ten miles of biking and hiking trails, waterfront access, and fishing areas. Spring Creek, mentioned previously, is another example, which is primarily located outside of the study area but contains destination amenities such as a cricket field.

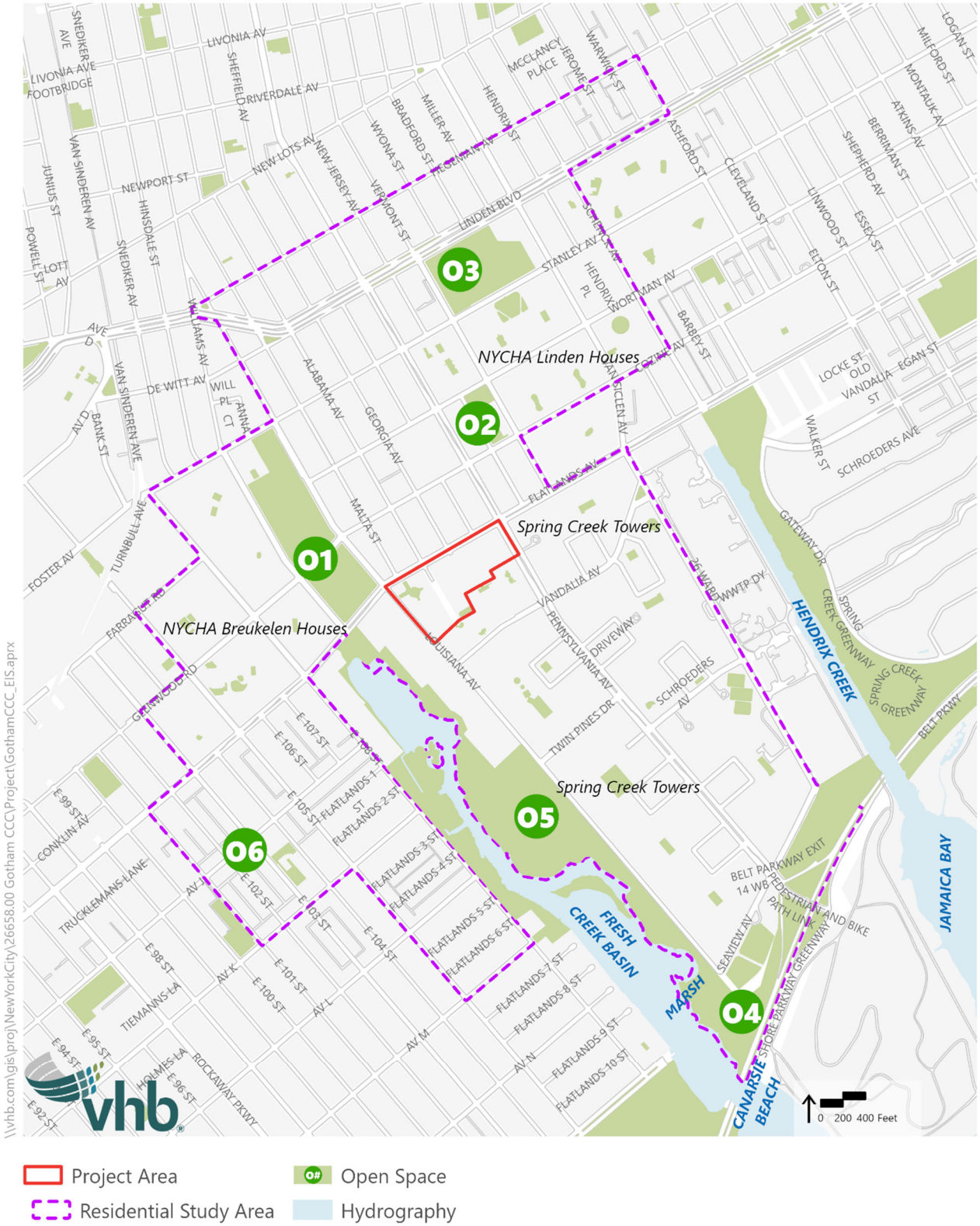
[1] https://www.bkreader.com/2018/12/19/east-new-york-parks-get-much-needed-renovations/

Table 5-5 Existing Study Area Open Spaces

Map No.	Name	Owner/ Agency	Features and Amenities	Total Acres	Active (Acres)	Passive (Acres)	Condition	Utilization
O1	Breukelen Ballfields/ Playground	NYC Parks	Baseball fields, handball courts, playground, bathrooms	16.16	12.93	3.23	Acceptable	Low
O2	Ethan Allen Playground	NYC Parks/ NYC DOE	Playground, basketball and handball courts, bathrooms	0.80	0.80	0.0	Acceptable	Low
O3	Linden Park	NYC Parks	Football and soccer field, basketball, handball, and tennis courts, playground	9.32	9.32	0.0	Good	High
O4	Spring Creek Park	NYC Parks	Walking paths	2.20	1.10	1.10	Acceptable	Low
O5	Fresh Creek Nature Preserve	NYC Parks	Walking paths	35.72	17.86	17.86	Acceptable	Low
O6	P.S. 279 Playground	NYC Parks/ NYC DOE	Playground, basketball and handball courts	0.23	0.23	0.0	Acceptable	Moderate
			Study Area Total	**64.43**	**42.24**	**22.19**		
			Percent of Study Area Open Space	**100%**	**65.56%**	**34.44%**		

Source: NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

Figure 5-3 Residential Open Space Inventory



Adequacy of Open Spaces

The residential open space analysis focuses on open space that may be used by residential populations. Using *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, the adequacy of open space was evaluated by comparing the ratio of existing active and passive open space acreage in the study area per 1,000 residents with the CEQR benchmark of 2.0 acres of active open space and 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents.

The existing residential population of the study area was estimated at 32,252 people. The study area currently has an overall OSR of 1.998 acres per 1,000 residents, which is below the City's goal of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents but above the citywide median of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents (see **Table 5-6**). The study area's active OSR is 1.310 acres per 1,000 residents, below the City's guideline of 2.0 acres per 1,000 residents, and the passive OSR is 0.688 acres per 1,000 residents, which is above the City's guideline of 0.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Thus, based on the quantitative analysis, the study area is adequately served by passive open space, with a deficit in active open space and total open space.

Table 5-6 Existing Conditions – Adequacy of Open Space Resources in Half-Mile Study Area

Residential Population	Open Space Acreage		Ratios[1]	DCP Guidelines
32,252	Active	42.24	1.310	2.00
	Passive	22.19	0.688	0.50
	Total	**64.43**	**1.998**	**2.50**

[1] Acres per 1,000 people.

No-Action Condition

Study Area Population

Absent the Proposed Actions, no new development would occur in the Project Area. There are also no anticipated residential developments that would add a significant number of residents to the study area by the project build year as described in **Chapter 2, Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy**. Therefore, the residential population in the No-Action condition is the same as under Existing Conditions detailed above.

Study Area Open Spaces

In the No-Action condition, no new publicly accessible open space is anticipated to be constructed in the study area. There are no ongoing or planned capital improvement projects at parks or open spaces in the study area. Therefore, the open space acreage in the No-Action condition is the same as under Existing Conditions.

Adequacy of Open Spaces

In the No-Action condition, the OSRs in the study area would remain the same as under Existing Conditions, as detailed in **Table 5-7**. The active OSR would be 1.310 acres per 1,000 residents, which is below the City's guideline of 2.0 acres per 1,000 residents. The passive OSR would be 0.688 acres per 1,000 residents, which would be above the City's guideline of

0.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The total OSR would be 1.998 acres per 1,000 residents, which is below the City's guideline of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Thus, based on the quantitative analysis, in the No-Action condition the study area would be adequately served by passive open space, however there would be a deficit in active open space and total open space.

Table 5-7 No-Action Condition – Adequacy of Open Space Resources in the Half-Mile Study Area

Residential Population	Open Space Acreage		Ratios[1]	DCP Guidelines
32,252	Active	42.24	1.310	2.00
	Passive	22.19	0.688	0.50
	Total	**64.43**	**1.998**	**2.50**

[1] Acres per 1,000 people.

With-Action Condition

Study Area Population

In the With-Action Condition, the Development Site would be developed with approximately 2,200,538 gsf of new residential, commercial, community facility, and parking space, including 2,050 new residential units. In total, the Proposed Actions would introduce an estimated 4,797 additional residents to the study area compared with the No-Action condition.

In the With-Action condition, the introduction of approximately 4,797 new residents would result in a total residential population of 37,049 in the half-mile study area.

Study Area Open Spaces

As part of the Proposed Project, approximately 1.95 acres of publicly accessible passive open space would be created in the Project Area. The approximately 84,950 sf of publicly accessible passive open space would consist of an entry plaza, public arcade, central quad, and landscaped areas and pathways with fixed seating. The entry plaza would be provided on the corner of Flatlands Avenue and Louisiana Avenue, providing a public facing entrance to the CCC. The entry plaza would provide passive space for sitting, with contemplative gardens flanking the plaza that would provide landscaped pedestrian connections to the remainder of the Project Area. The proposed central quad would be located in front of the proposed PAC and would serve as a central gathering space for residents and visitors to the proposed community facilities, including the CCC and PAC. This space would feature walking paths, benches, and landscaping. The public arcade and would be located along Building 5, providing public access for the PAC and the central quad to Flatlands Avenue.[2] See **Figure 5-4** below. The arcade would be an open air passive open space that would include fixed seating and possibly other seating and may also include temporary attractions such as art installations or other programming related to the adjacent community facility tenant.

[2] The proposed publicly accessible open space areas would be managed by the Applicant. Public access to these spaces would be assured via a restrictive declaration.

With the addition of the Proposed Project's publicly accessible passive open spaces, the total open space acreage within the study area would increase to approximately 66.38, including approximately 24.14 acres of passive open space and approximately 42.24 acres of active open space.

Figure 5-4 Illustrative Diagram of Proposed With-Action Active and Passive Open Space



In addition to the publicly accessible passive open space that would be created, the Proposed Project would incorporate private open space, including approximately 0.83 acres of passive open space and approximately 0.67 acres of active open space that would be available to Project Area residents. The proposed private passive open space would be developed across eight of the proposed mixed-use buildings and would primarily include building courtyards and terraces/rooftop areas. The active open space would be comprised of an approximately 18,400-sf recreation area and basketball court, located on the roof of the parking garage, and an approximately 11,000-sf playground located adjacent to the proposed day care (see **Figure 5-4**). For quantitative analysis purposes, these open spaces are considered private. However, the garage rooftop recreation area and playground would

be accessible to the public during specified hours.[3] In addition, it is anticipated that these on-site open space resources would attract residents and reduce the burden of the influx of new residents on existing open space facilities in the study area. These open spaces are considered further in the qualitative assessment below.

Adequacy of Open Spaces

Quantitative Assessment

In the future with the Proposed Actions, the residential population in the half-mile study area is estimated at 37,049. Under the With-Action condition, the OSRs would decrease compared with the No-Action condition. As shown in **Table 5-8**, the active OSR would be 1.140 acres per 1,000 residents, which is a decrease of 0.170 acres per 1,000 residents, or 12.97 percent compared with the No-Action condition. The passive OSR would be 0.652 acres per 1,000 residents, which is a decrease of 0.036 acres per 1,000 residents, or 5.30 percent. The overall OSR would be 1.792 acres per 1,000 residents, which is a decrease of 0.206 acres per 1,000 residents, or 10.33 percent. As in the No-Action condition, the passive OSRs would remain above the guideline of 0.50 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents. However, the active OSR and the total OSR would continue to be lower than the guidelines of 2.0 and 2.5 acres of open space per 1,000 residents, respectively.

The relevant *CEQR Technical Manual* impact thresholds are presented above under **Impact Assessment**. Although the passive OSR would change by more than the relevant *CEQR Technical Manual* impact threshold of five percent, the OSR would be approximately 30 percent above the DCP guideline of 0.50 acres per 1,000 residents. The active and total OSRs would be below the DCP guidelines, and would decrease by more than the relevant *CEQR Technical Manual* impact thresholds of three and four percent, respectively. However, it is anticipated that the approximately 0.83-acres of private passive open space and approximately 0.67-acres of active open space to be provided on-site as part of the Proposed Project would alleviate the use of nearby existing open spaces from the introduction of 4,797 new residents as a result of the Proposed Actions.

Table 5-8 With-Action Condition – Adequacy of Open Space Resources in the Half-Mile Study Area

Residential Population	Open Space Acreage		Ratios[1]	DCP Guidelines
37,049	Active	42.24	1.140	2.00
	Passive	24.14	0.652	0.50
	Total	**66.38**	**1.792**	**2.50**

[1] Acres per 1,000 people

[3] The proposed active open space areas would be managed by the Applicant. The rooftop recreation space, considered private active open space, would be accessible to the public with the exception of peak church parking demand periods on Tuesday evenings and Sundays and within the hours posted per the public access agreement (PAA). The playground would be available to the public outside of day care operating hours.

Qualitative Assessment

As described previously, all open spaces in the study area were found to be in acceptable or good condition and to have low to moderate utilization rates on weekdays with the exception of Linden Park, which has high utilization.

The study area has a higher median age and a greater percentage of senior citizens than Kings County and New York City as a whole. Therefore, the demand for open space in the future should be geared towards an older and aging population, which includes active recreation such as tennis courts and passive recreation such as walking paths and seating areas. The amount of publicly accessible passive open space in the study area would increase as a result of the Proposed Actions. The Proposed Project would introduce approximately 1.95-acres of public passive open space within the Project Area consisting of an entry plaza, public arcade, a central quad, and interconnecting landscaped areas and pathways. The passive OSR would decrease by more than five percent as a result of the Proposed Actions but would remain above the passive open space guideline. Although the active, passive and total OSRs would decrease by more than three, five and four percent, respectively, as a result of the Proposed Actions, qualitative factors help to lessen their effects. The Proposed Project would create approximately 0.83 acres of private passive open space in the form of terraces for residents' use and approximately 0.67 acres of active open space in the form of a playground and recreational area. The garage rooftop recreation space, considered private active open space, would be accessible to the public within the hours posted per the PAA with the exception of peak church parking demand periods on Tuesday evenings and Sundays. During peak church demand, an additional 25,410 sf of parking space would be provided on the rooftop for increased parking capacity. The playground would be available to the public outside of day care operating hours.

It is anticipated that the on-site open space resources, such as a new playground adjacent to the child care facility, recreational facility on the roof of the parking garage and balconies, would help to reduce the demand on existing publicly accessible active and passive open space. In addition, the Proposed Actions would facilitate the development of approximately 104,150 sf of private streets and sidewalks that would serve area residents and visitors.

The adjacent Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City also has private athletic facilities, such as basketball and tennis courts and playgrounds, that are not accounted for in the quantitative analysis but are available for use by the 12,956 residents of that housing development. It is anticipated that the availability of on-site open space resources would help to reduce demand on publicly accessible open space resources within the study area. Similarly, open spaces in the adjacent NYCHA Breukelen and Linden Houses, such as basketball courts and playgrounds, are available for use by residents of those housing developments as well as the residents of the surrounding neighborhood, though not considered in the quantitative analysis. There are also several large publicly accessible open spaces located just outside of the study area. Among them is Shirley Chisholm State Park, which is an approximately 400-acre destination park with ten miles of biking and hiking trails, waterfront access, and fishing areas. It could be reasonably assumed that residents of the Proposed Project and other residents of adjacent residential buildings would utilize this park although it is located just outside the bounds of the study area.

Determining Impact Significance

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a proposed action may result in an indirect significant adverse open space impact if it would reduce the OSR by more than the percent change threshold for the associated OSR range and cause the study area's OSR to fall or remain below DCP Guidelines, which could indicate that open space facilities may become overburdened or that a deficiency in open space may become exacerbated.

A summary of the results of the indirect residential open space analysis is presented in **Table 5-9** and each open space type is discussed below.

Table 5-9 Residential Open Space Analysis Summary

Ratio	DCP Guideline	Open Space Ratios per 1,000			Relevant Percent Change Threshold (%)	Percent Change (%)
		Existing	No-Action	With-Action		
Residential Half-Mile Study Area						
Active	2.00	1.310	1.310	1.140	-3.0	-12.97
Passive	0.50	0.688	0.688	0.652	-5.0	-5.30
Total	2.50	1.998	1.998	1.792	-4.0	-10.33

Passive Open Space

In the With-Action condition, the passive OSR in the residential half-mile study area would decrease by 5.30 percent compared with the No-Action condition (0.688 to 0.652 acres per 1,000 residents), which exceeds the relevant *CEQR Technical Manual* percent change threshold of 5 percent for passive open space ratios in the range of 0.41 acres per 1,000 residents or greater category. However, it would continue to meet and exceed the DCP passive open space guideline of 0.50 acres per 1,000 residents.

Active Open Space

The active OSR in the residential half-mile study area would decrease by 12.97 percent compared with the No-Action condition (1.310 to 1.140 acres per 1,000 residents), which exceeds the relevant *CEQR Technical Manual* percent change threshold of 3 percent for active open space ratios in the range of 0.81 to 1.20 acres per 1,000 residents. The active OSR would remain below DCP Guidelines of 2.00 acres per 1,000 residents.

During construction, it is anticipated that the active OSR would exceed a 3 percent change once the first 425 units are constructed and occupied (approximately 997 residents are anticipated) during the first phase of construction. With the Central Quad and the Entry Plaza and walkways constructed in the later phases of the project, a temporary indirect active open space impact would result. Therefore, a discussion of mitigation measures for this temporary active open space impact is provided in **Chapter 20, Mitigation**.

Total Open Space

The total OSR in the residential half-mile study area would decrease by 10.33 percent compared with the No-Action condition (1.998 to 1.792 acres per 1,000 residents), which

exceeds the percent change threshold of four percent for overall open space ratios in the range of 1.51 to 2.00 acres per 1,000 residents. The total OSR would remain below DCP Guidelines of 2.50 acres per 1,000 residents. The effect on total open space is driven by the change in active open space ratios, as discussed above.

With the creation of new private passive and active open space as part of the Proposed Project, as well as the qualitative factors discussed, OSR decreases would be offset upon completion of construction and there would be no active open space impact at full build-out of the project. As discussed above, qualitative factors include the presence of other private open spaces in adjacent NYCHA developments and Spring Creek Towers/Starrett City, and the proximity to large destination parks such as Shirley Chisholm State Park, and the condition and utilization of study area open spaces. Furthermore, the Applicant will commit to providing public access to all Publicly Accessible Areas (PAA) as defined in the Restrictive Declaration.

The new residential population would be introduced before With-Action condition open spaces, resulting in a temporary active open space impact. This impact would not be permanent given the new open spaces that would be provided on-site during later phases of construction. Further, it is anticipated that the qualitative factors described above sufficiently lessen the effects of the introduction of approximately 4,797 new residents on publicly accessible facilities and no permanent significant adverse impacts are anticipated.