4

Open Space

This chapter assesses the potential impacts of the proposed actions on open space. The 2014 *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.

4.1 Introduction

The proposed development on Projected Development Site 1 and the small commercial space on Projected Development Site 2 would introduce new residents and workers to the project block, creating new demands for open space in the area. Therefore, this chapter examines the potential direct and indirect impacts on open space resources from the proposed actions.

4.2 Principal Conclusions

Under the With-Action condition, the total open space ratio for the residential population would decrease by 1.21 percent compared to the No-Action condition open space ratio: 0.575 to 0.568 acres per 1,000 residents, well below the guideline of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents and below the citywide median of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The active and

passive open space ratios would also decrease slightly by 1.28 percent for the active open space ratio and 1.08 percent for the passive open space ratio (from 0.392 to 0.387 and 0.183 to 0.181 per 1,000 residents, respectively). The proposed development would not result in a greater than 5 percent decrease in the open space ratio, and the proposed development would include landscaped interior courtyard space to be utilized by the CPC and the Jewish Heritage and Cultural Center. In addition, residents of the Suffolk Building would utilize open space located on setbacks and the building's rooftop, and residents of the Norfolk Building would have their own outdoor space on their respective rooftop. Further, community gardens within the study area, the 57-acre regional East River Park, a portion of which sits just outside the study area boundary, Delancey Street Plaza, First Park, and McKinley Playground would provide additional resources for study area residents. Therefore, the proposed actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to open space.

4.3 Methodology

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 development and small commercial space would not result in the physical loss or direct displacement of publicly accessible open space, nor would they increase noise or air pollutant emissions on a public open space. The potential of the proposed actions to result in direct effects from shadows is analyzed in **Chapter 5**, "**Shadows**." As described in the "**Shadows**" chapter, the proposed actions would not result in significant adverse impacts to open space resources surrounding Projected Development Site 1, including the newly-opened park constructed as part of the Essex Crossing development (The Park) and Seward Park.

Indirect Effects Analysis

An indirect effects analysis should be performed if a project would add sufficient population, either residents or non-residents, to noticeably diminish the capacity of open space in an area to serve the future population. The threshold for such an analysis is whether the project would introduce more than 200 residents or 500 workers to the area.[1] Compared to the future No-Action condition, the proposed actions would add more than 200 residents to the area and fewer than 500 workers; therefore, following *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance, an indirect effects open space analysis was conducted for the residential population, as described below.

[1] This is for areas identified as neither well-served nor under-served by existing open space resources. See page 7-4 of the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

Study Area

As described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, an open space study area is defined by the reasonable walking distance users would travel to reach open spaces and recreational areas—typically a half-mile for residential populations. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, all census tracts that have at least 50 percent of their area within the half-mile radius are entirely included in the study area, and all census tracts with less than 50 percent within the radius are entirely excluded.

Based on the methodology described above, the residential open space study area was defined and comprises 15 census tracts: New York County Census Tracts 2.01, 2.02, 6, 8, 12, 14.01, 14.02, 16, 18, 22.01, 22.02, 30.01, 30.02, 36.01, and 41 (see **Figure 4-1**).

Open Space User Populations

Existing Conditions

Data from 2012-2016 American Community Survey for the tracts were used to determine the number of residents currently located within the half-mile study area.

The Future No-Action Condition

Within the half-mile study area, 22 new developments ("No-Action" projects) are anticipated to be constructed by 2023. To estimate the population in the No-Action condition, the average household size for Manhattan Community District 3 (2.08 person per household) was applied to the number of new housing units projected from the 22 No-Action projects and added to the existing study area population.

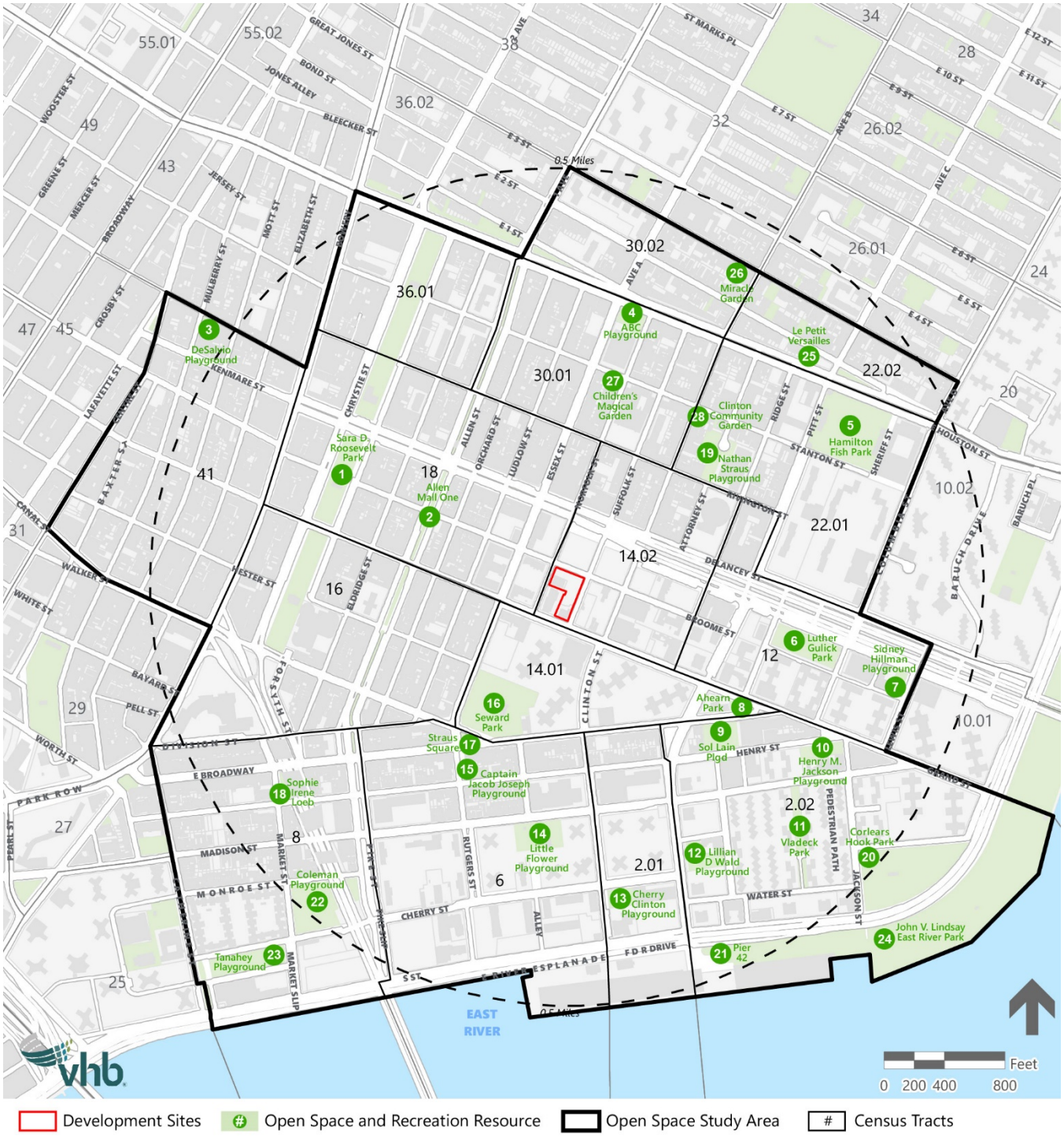
The Future With-Action Condition

Although the applicants are proposing to build approximately 115 residences for seniors, for this open space assessment analyzes all proposed 488 units as non-senior units since this results in a higher population estimate. The residential population introduced by the proposed actions was estimated by multiplying the number of units by the average household size for Manhattan Community District 3 (2.08 per household). The residential population introduced by the proposed development was added to the No-Action study area population to calculate the total resident population in the future with the proposed actions.

Inventory of Open Space Resources

The *CEQR Technical Manual* defines public open space as open space that is publicly or privately owned and is accessible to the public on a regular basis, either constantly or for designated daily periods of time. Open spaces that are only available for limited users or are not available to the public on a regular or constant basis are not considered public open space but may be considered in a qualitative assessment of open space impacts.

Figure 4-1 Residential Open Space Study Area



Existing Conditions

Publicly accessible open space resources in the study area were inventoried through the latest available data obtained from the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) and New York City Geographic Information System (GIS) data. Open space may be characterized as passive, active, or a mixture of active and passive. Active open space is used

for exercise, sports, or active children's play. Examples include playgrounds, athletic fields or courts, pools, and greenways. Passive open spaces allow for activities such as strolling, reading, sunbathing, and people watching. Examples include plazas, walking paths, gardens, and certain lawns with restricted uses. Esplanades are an example of open space that may be used for active uses such as running and biking or passive uses such as dog walking.

Playgrounds that are jointly owned by the DPR and the DOE are included in the inventory of open spaces. While public use of these playgrounds is prohibited during school hours, they are still included in the quantitative analysis as they serve the public in the after-school hours. Similarly, those spaces jointly owned and operated by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and the DPR are included in the inventory. While open space within a public housing development is primarily meant for use by residents of that housing development, the space is accessible to the public.

The inventory also includes community gardens within the study area that are open over 20 hours per week as these resources have extended, consistent public hours (see **Figure 4-1**).

No-Action Condition

In the No-Action condition, new privately-owned and maintained, publicly-accessible open space opened in June 2019 at 145 Clinton Street. This 15,000 sf park, referred to as "The Park at Essex Crossing" (The Park), is owned and operated by Delancey Street Associates.

In addition to The Park, new waterfront open space will be created on Pier 42, located along the East River waterfront, creating 2.93 new acres of open space. DPR is the owner/operator of the park and more details on the status of the park are provided below.

With-Action Condition

The proposed development would include interior courtyard space for use by the Chinese American Planning Council (CPC) and the Jewish Heritage and Cultural Center. Rooftop open space and other building amenities on the Norfolk and Suffolk Building would serve each building's respective residential population. These resources would not be publicly-accessible and so are not incorporated into the open space calculations for the With-Action condition.

Adequacy of Open Space Resources

Comparison to City Guidelines

The adequacy of open space in the study area is based on ratios of usable open space acreage to the study area populations (the "open space ratios"). The *CEQR Technical Manual* outlines the following guidelines for residential assessments:

- The City attempts to achieve a ratio of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents for large-scale proposals. Ideally, this would consist of 0.50 acres of passive space and 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents. However, these goals are often not feasible for many areas of the city and they do not constitute an impact threshold. Rather, it is a benchmark that represents how well an area is served by its open space.

› A ratio that meets the Citywide Community District median ratio of 1.5 acres of open space per 1,000 residents is also recommended.

Impact Assessment

The determination of significant adverse impacts is based on how a project would change the open space ratios 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 open space ratio 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 open space ratios fall below City guidelines, and (2) a proposed project would result in a decrease in the open space ratio of more than five percent, it could be considered a substantial change requiring additional analysis. However, 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.

4.4 Preliminary Assessment

Existing Conditions

As outlined in **Table 4-1**, the estimated current residential population in the study area is 83,022 persons.

Table 4-1 Existing Population in the Residential Study Area

Census Tract	Residential Population
2.01	2,670
2.02	8,016
6	10,765
8	9,299
12	3,726
14.01	3,199
14.02	2,902
16	7,219
18	7,991
22.01	6,546
22.02	1,937
30.01	4,167
30.02	2,848
36.01	3,401
41	8,336
Total	**83,022**

Source: 2012-2016 ACS 5-year estimates.

Study Area Open Space Resources

The study area includes a variety of parks and playgrounds that are accessible for use by the public. As depicted in **Figure 4-1**, and as described in **Table 4-2**, there are twenty-eight publicly accessible open spaces within the half-mile study area, totaling 46.66 acres of passive and active open space.

Open spaces within the study area include playgrounds, neighborhood parks, and public gardens. West of Projected Development Site 1 sits Sara D. Roosevelt Park, a linear park that runs along Chrystie Street and Forsyth Street from East Houston Street to the north to Canal Street to the south and is the second largest within the study area. Amenities of the park include courts, playgrounds, gardens, and a picnic area. Hamilton Fish Park, which is located northeast of Projected Development Site 1 and is bounded by East Houston Street, Pitt Street, Stanton Street, and Sherriff Street, is the second largest park in the study area. The park contains courts, fitness equipment, playgrounds, media labs, an outdoor pool and a recreation center.

A portion of the John V. Lindsay East River Park (East River Park) is located east of Projected Development Sites 1 and 2 and is the largest open space resource within the study area. East River Park provides approximately 57 acres of active and passive open space that includes bike paths, playgrounds, sports fields and courts, gardens, children's water play areas, and walking paths. Given the linear shape of the park, the portions of the park north of Grand Street are outside the reasonable walking distance from the projected development sites. Therefore, only the portions of East River Park within the study area census tracts are included in the open space quantitative analysis (11.82 acres).

Table 4-2 Existing Residential Study Area Open Spaces

Map No.	Name	Owner/ Agency	Features and Amenities	Total Acres	Active (Acres)	Passive (Acres)
1	Sara D. Roosevelt Park	DPR	Seating, landscaping, walking path, courts and fields, playgrounds, spray showers, restrooms	7.85	7.85	
2	Allen Mall One	City of New York	Landscaping, benches, trees	1.7		1.7
3	DeSalvio Playground	DPR	Playground, spray showers	0.27	0.27	
4	ABC Playground	DPR	Courts, playground, benches, pavement, sculptures, spray showers	0.46	0.32	0.14
5	Hamilton Fish Park	DPR	Courts, outdoor pool, fitness equipment, spray showers, media lab, recreation center, playground	4.3	3.01	1.29
6	Luther Gulick Park	DPR	Courts, playground, spray shower, benches	1.45	1.45	
7	Sidney Hillman Playground	DOE/DPR	Courts and playground	0.24	0.24	
8	Ahearn Park	DPR	Benches, trees, landscaping	0.09		0.09
9	Sol Lain Playground	DOE/DPR	Playground, benches, courts, spray showers	0.89	0.62	0.27
10	Henry M. Jackson Playground	DPR	Courts, playground, fitness equipment, benches	0.61	0.61	
11	Vladeck Park	DPR	Playground, benches, tables	0.79		0.79
12	Lillian D. Wald Playground	DPR	Courts, playground, fitness equipment, benches, trees	0.68	0.34	0.34
13	Cherry Clinton Playground	DPR	Courts, fitness equipment, playground, trees	0.48	0.48	
14	Little Flower Playground	NYCHA/DPR	Picnic area, courts, playground, spray showers, statue, benches, trees, restrooms	1.29	0.90	0.39
15	Captain Jacob Joseph Playground	DPR	Playground	0.14	0.14	
16	Seward Park	DPR	Playground, benches, restrooms, park offices, recreation center, landscaping, trees	3.36	2.35	1.01
17	Straus Square	DPR	Memorial, trees	0.12		0.12
18	Sophie Irene Loebe Playground	DPR	Playground, benches, trees	0.12	0.12	
19	Nathan Straus Playground	DOE/DPR	Benches, courts, playground	0.85	0.64	0.21
20	Corlears Hook Park	DPR	Playground, baseball field, spray showers	4.36	4.36	
21	Pier 42	DPR	Paved, walking/running path	0.69	0.69	

Table 4-2 Existing Residential Study Area Open Spaces (Cont.)

Map No.	Name	Owner/ Agency	Features and Amenities	Total Acres	Active (Acres)	Passive (Acres)
22	Coleman Playground	DPR	Playground, benches, baseball fields, courts, spray showers, skate park, restrooms	2.61	2.61	
23	Tanahey Playground	DPR	Playground, basketball courts, roller hockey, benches, tree	1.25	0.63	0.62
24	John V. Lindsay East River Park	DPR	Playgrounds, spray showers, barbecuing areas, baseball fields, basketball courts, comfort station, bicycling and greenways, fishing, fitness equipment, football fields, running tracks, soccer fields, tennis courts	11.82	5.91	5.91
25	Le Petit Versailles	DPR	Community garden (open 25 hours per week)	0.03		0.03
26	Miracle Garden	DPR	Community garden (open 26 hours per week)	0.12		0.12
27	Children's Magical Garden	DPR	Community garden (open 21 hours per week)	0.04		0.04
28	Clinton Community Garden (Community of Poor People in Action)	DPR	Community garden (open 49 hours per week)	0.06		0.06
			Residential Study Area Total	46.66	33.88	12.78
			Percent of Study Area Open Space	100%	73%	27%

Source: Seward Park Mixed-Use Development Project FGEIS; NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

Adequacy of Open Spaces

The residential study area has an overall open space ratio of 0.56 acres per 1,000 residents (see **Table 4-3**), which is substantially less than the City's guideline of 2.5 acres of open space per 1,000 residents, and approximately 63 percent less than the citywide average of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

Table 4-3 Existing Conditions – Adequacy of Open Space Resources

	Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios (Acres per 1,000 People)			DCP Open Space Guidelines		
Total Population	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive
Residential (0.5-Mile) Study Area									
83,022	46.66	33.88	12.78	0.56	0.41	0.15	2.5	2.0	0.50

The study area's current residential passive open space ratio is 0.15 acres per 1,000 residents, which is well below the City's goal of 0.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The area's residential

active open space ratio is 0.41 acres per 1,000 residents, which is also below the City's guideline of 2.0 acres per 1,000 residents. [2]

No-Action Condition

As described in the "Methodology," the No-Action condition accounts for population growth and changes expected to the inventory of open space resources.

Study Area Population

New development in the residential study area would result in an additional 1,646 residential units increasing the residential population by 3,424 for a total residential population of 86,446 persons in 2023.

Study Area Open Spaces

In the No-Action condition, there are two proposed park improvement projects expected within the study areas:

- The Park: A new open space that recently opened at 145 Clinton Street (just one block east of Projected Development Site 1), which is part of the Seward Park Mixed-Use Development Project ("Essex Crossing").
- Pier 42 is expected to be improved with landscaping, benches, playground, comfort station, and other amenities.

"The Park"

As described in **Chapter 5**, "**Shadows**," Site 5 of Essex Crossing contains a publicly-accessible, privately-owned and maintained 15,000 sf (approximately 0.34-acre) open space on the north side of the block: "The Park at Essex Crossing" (The Park); the owner/operator is Delancey Street Associates. This park, which opened in June 2019, contains a series of bench seating areas, movable tables and chairs, an active recreational area (playground) called the Tetrahedron, and planting beds with trees.

East River Esplanade Waterfront and Piers: Pier 42

According to the Seward Park Mixed-Use Development Project FGEIS, the City is proposing to revitalize the East River waterfront by improving access to the waterfront, enhancing pedestrian connectivity, and creating waterfront amenities for public use and enjoyment. The existing esplanade would be enhanced, some new sections of esplanade would be created, and several piers would be renovated and redeveloped, including Pier 42.

There is a bikeway/walkway at Pier 42 along FDR Drive that is currently being used and would remain as part of the proposed plan for the park. The rest of the site, which is comprised of pavement and a pier shed, would be renovated. As described in the Pier 42 Environmental Assessment, the proposed plan for the pier includes removing the existing

[2] Despite the low open space ratio in the area, the site is not located in an area identified as underserved as indicated by a map showing Underserved Areas in Community District 3 (see page 7-4 of the *CEQR Technical Manual).*

pavement from the upland area and demolishing the pier shed, opening up views to the river. In addition, the open space would have landscaping and a grassy knoll, flat lawn/picnic areas with permeable pavement walkways, an entry garden, seating areas, and a playground. The first phase of the project is funded and includes the abatement and demolition of the shed on the pier (Phase 1A) and construction of the upland park between the pier and the FDR Drive (Phase 1B). Phase 1A will be completed in mid-2019, and Phase 1B is currently in the design stage. NYCEDC intends to issue a Request for Proposals in late-2019 for construction of the upland park. The owner/operator of the park is the DPR.

Phase 1 of the project will create 2.93 new acres of publicly-accessible open space in the open space study area.

Overall, construction of The Park and Pier 42 would result in an increase of approximately 3.27 acres of new passive open space. The total open space acreage would be 49.68 acres, with 33.88 acres of active open space and 15.8 acres of passive open space.

Adequacy of Open Spaces

In the No-Action condition, the total open space ratio and passive open space ratio in the residential study area would increase but would remain below the City's guidelines. The total open space ratio would increase to 0.578 acres per 1,000 residents but would remain lower than the guideline of 2.5 acres of total open space per 1,000 residents. It would be approximately 61 percent less than the citywide median of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The active open space ratio would decrease slightly to 0.392 acres per 1,000 residents and the passive open space ratio would increase to 0.186 acres per 1,000 residents. As in existing conditions, the active and passive open space ratios would remain below the guideline of 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents and 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents (see **Table 4-4**).

Table 4-4 No-Action Condition – Adequacy of Open Space Resources

	Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios (Acres per 1,000 People)			DCP Open Space Guidelines		
Total Population	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive
Residential (0.5-Mile) Study Area									
86,446	49.93	33.88	16.05	0.578	0.392	0.186	2.5	2.0	0.50

With-Action Condition

Study Area Population

In the With-Action condition, the proposed development would result in the development of 488 units, which is estimated to introduce approximately 1,015 residents for a total residential population of 87,461 in the half-mile study area. No public open space would be created as a result of the proposed development, although ground level open space for use by the CPC and the Jewish Heritage Cultural Center would be included on Projected

Development Site 1. Rooftop open space and other building amenities would serve the proposed development's residential population.

Adequacy of Open Spaces

Under the With-Action condition, the open space ratio for the residential population would decrease only slightly from the No-Action condition open space ratio (see **Table 4-5**). The total open space ratio would be reduced from 0.578 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.571 acres per 1,000 residents and would remain well below the guideline of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents and below the citywide median of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The active and passive open space ratios would also be reduced slightly: from 0.392 acres and 0.186 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.387 and 0.184 acres per 1,000 residents, respectively. In terms of percent, the proposed development would result in an approximate 1.21 percent decrease in the total open space ratio, a 1.28 percent decrease in the active open space ratio, and a 1.08 percent decrease in the passive open space ratio.

Table 4-5 With-Action Condition – Adequacy of Open Space Resources

	Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios (Acres per 1,000 People)			DCP Open Space Guidelines		
Total Population	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive	Total	Active	Passive
Residential (0.5-Mile) Study Area									
87,461	49.93	33.88	16.05	0.571	0.387	0.184	2.5	2.0	0.50

As described previously, a proposed project would result in a significant adverse open space impact if it would reduce the open space ratio 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. The proposed development would not result in a reduction in the open space ratio of more than 5 percent, and no significant adverse impact would result. Further, as noted above, open space in the form of a landscaped interior courtyard would be developed and shared by the CPC and the Jewish Heritage Cultural Center. In addition, rooftop and other amenity space would be provided for residents of the proposed development.

In addition, the analysis only accounts for some of the study area's community gardens – those with extended public hours (i.e., over 20 hours per week). Although gardens that are open less than 20 hours per week were not included in the open space inventory and quantitative analysis, they do provide additional passive open space resources for residents within walking distance of these gardens during the hours that they are open to the public. Additional open space options for residents of the study area include the rest of the 57-acre East River Park located just outside the study area (approximately 0.58 miles from the site), the Delancey Street Plaza located one block north of the site (approximately 0.05 miles from the site), First Park located between East 3rd Street and Houston Street just outside of the study area (0.41 miles northeast of the site), and McKinley Playground located between East 3rd and East 4th Street also just outside of the study area (0.47 miles from the site). East River Park would provide additional active and passive open space to study area residents, the Delancey Street Plaza would provide an additional 0.39 acres of passive open space, First Park would provide an additional 0.76 acres of active and passive open space, and McKinley

Playground would provide an additional 0.56 acres of passive open space. Overall, the proposed development is not expected to result in a significant adverse impact on open space within the residential study area.