

Existing Conditions

Overview

The study area offers a variety of land uses, recreational facilities and waterfront uses, and is subject to a variety of zoning designations. The South Shore is mainly residential, contains several parks, waterfront marinas and institutional facilities; the West Shore waterfront is more commercial and industrial. The study area is dotted by numerous national, state and city parks with a wealth of sandy beaches, streams, ponds, freshwater wetlands, saltwater marshes, and high bluffs. Woods and forested wetlands are located inland. These unique natural features are preserved by several means. In addition to the parkland, open space is protected through parcels of Designated Open Space (DOS) and through Bluebelt property. The DOS parcels, as defined by the New York City Zoning Resolution's Special South Richmond Development District (SSRDD), must be preserved in their natural state or, with City Planning Commission approval, used for limited active recreation facilities. The district plan also designates a waterfront esplanade along certain streets and the waterfront of the south shore. The Bluebelt property, under the jurisdiction of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, preserves natural drainage corridors by consolidating once-isolated parcels surrounding major watersheds. See Appendix C for more details on the SSRDD.

The Staten Island Rapid Transit (SIRT) connects Tottenville by rail with the St. George Ferry Terminal. Eleven stations lie within the study area and offer access to the South Shore. The other parts of the study area are serviced by local and express buses, which include the 54, 59, 78, 79, X1, X4, X5, X6, X17, X19, and X22 lines.

Segment by Segment

The following section describes the entire study area, segment by segment. The study area map on the previous page shows the segment boundaries.

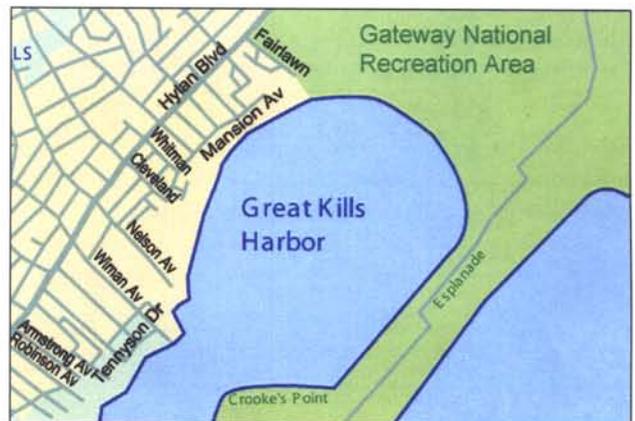
Segment A:

(Great Kills Park to Wiman Avenue)

The Bay Terrace and Great Kills areas are neighborhoods of mainly single-family homes. Some commercial activity is located along Hylan Boulevard. The shoreline contains mainly waterfront-related uses.

Waterfront:

Most of the waterfront is located within Great Kills Park in the Gateway National Recreation Area. The park's southern finger forms Great Kills Harbor, home to Great Kills Yacht Club and Richmond County Yacht Club. To the south of the park maritime uses are located along Mansion Avenue, which runs parallel and adjacent to the waterfront. In addition to the yacht clubs, a marina, boat storage facilities, retail shops and a restaurant line the street. A connection between Mansion Avenue and Great Kills Park is interrupted by the unbuilt portion of the avenue itself and the street's use by the private Great Kills Yacht Club.



Segment A (Great Kills Park to Wiman Avenue)

Between Fairlawn and Whitman avenues, Mansion Avenue is 54 feet wide. At Whitman Avenue it becomes Tennyson Drive and narrows to 43 feet. Tennyson Drive terminates at Cleveland Avenue, even though it is mapped to connect with Wiman Avenue.

With the exception of the Port Regalle residential development with its private esplanade, the waterfront between Cleveland and Wiman Avenues is undeveloped. Between Cleveland and Nelson avenues lies a private lot and the proposed Seaside Nature Park (NYCDPR). Immediately south of Nelson Avenue is Lot 70, under Parks jurisdiction, where a new open space has been created in conjunction with the community. Part of the right-of-way of the unbuilt Tennyson Drive traverses Lot 70. A new residential development, Sweetwater Estates, is proposed to be built west of Tennyson Drive, between Cleveland and Wiman avenues.

Parks and Recreation:

Great Kills Park is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. It covers 825 acres, and the park offers several paths, an esplanade, a boat launch, a model airplane flying field, a 400-yard bathing beach and a comfort station. A new educational center was opened in 2000 and new landscaping was provided. At the southern tip of the park is Crooke's Point. Originally an island, Crooke's Point became a peninsula in the 1940s through dredging and landfill. The point supports 81 species of birds and small mammals.

Hylan Boulevard:

In this segment, Hylan Boulevard is a heavily trafficked four-lane east-west arterial, measuring 70 feet, with a narrow concrete center median of approximately six feet. In each direction there are two 10-foot travel lanes and an unmarked 12-foot curb lane. Weekdays, the northbound curb lane is a moving lane from 6 to 9 a.m.; the southbound curb lane is a moving lane from 4 to 7 p.m. At Nelson Avenue commercial activity increases and two-hour parallel parking begins.

Transit:

The Bay Terrace and Great Kills SIRT stations offer rail access to the area. In addition, several express and local bus stops are along Hylan Boulevard.

Segment B:

(Wiman Avenue to Poillon Avenue)

The study corridor continues to the south through the predominantly residential neighborhoods of Eltingville and Annadale.

Waterfront:

Wiman Avenue to Arden Avenue:

The Tennyson Drive right-of-way continues to parallel the waterfront from Wiman to Retford avenues. The SSRDD designates a waterfront esplanade along Tennyson Drive, which is unbuilt between Armstrong and Robinson avenues. A 3.6 acre, city-owned waterfront DOS site encompassing the demapped Preston Avenue is located on Tennyson Drive between Richmond and Hales avenues. The drive is unbuilt through a portion of the DOS.



Segment B (Wiman Avenue to Arden Avenue)

To the west of the DOS site, Wakefield Road, the continuation of Tennyson Drive, parallels the waterfront between Hales Avenue and Woods-of-Arden Road. Large single-family homes are located on both sides of the road, separating the street from the bay. An asphalt path connects Wakefield Road to Mayberry Promenade in Atlantic Village, a recently completed waterfront residential development to the west between Woods-of-Arden Road and Arden Avenue. A three-foot wide public waterfront esplanade is located adjacent to 43-foot Mayberry Promenade, paralleling the waterfront within the Atlantic Village subdivision and built as part of the esplanade delineated in the SSRDD.

Arden Avenue to Poillon Avenue:

The area west of Atlantic Village is composed of detached single-family homes. Ocean Driveway, a designated waterfront esplanade street designated in the SSRDD, has a 19-foot, one-way westbound road and a separated grass path within its right-of-way. The street connects with Mayberry Promenade and Harold Avenue. City-owned waterfront DOS property is located along Ocean Driveway, providing commanding views of the bay. (Ocean Driveway is mapped but does not exist west of Harold Avenue, where shoreline erosion has eliminated the street.) Harold Avenue connects Ocean Driveway with Hylan Boulevard. Two blocks west, Bennet Avenue provides access from Hylan Boulevard back to the waterfront at the 35-foot wide Bayview Terrace, which runs adjacent to the waterfront from Bennet Avenue to Barclay Avenue. Several single-family houses are located between Bayview Terrace and the waterfront. The block between Bennet and Holdridge avenues is unbuilt, preventing continuous waterfront access. Oceanview Avenue runs parallel to the waterfront from Holdridge to Lipsett Avenue. However, it lies one block off the shoreline with homes on both sides of the street, and does not provide a view of the bay.



Segment B (Arden Avenue to Poillon Avenue)

South of Hylan Boulevard and west of Lipsett Avenue is Seguine Pond, a city-owned DOS freshwater wetland with no provisions for waterfront access. West of Seguine Pond is Spanish Camp, a former bungalow community. The area is slated for redevelopment and offers about 1,000 linear feet of beach front without formal access.

Parks and Recreation:

The two major parks in this segment are Crescent Beach Park and Blue Heron Park. Crescent Beach Park is located across from Crooke’s Point in Great Kills Park. Its sandy beach offers great views of the Raritan Bay and is being expanded south to Richmond Avenue.

Blue Heron Park is located north of Hylan Boulevard between Harold and Poillon avenues. In the 1930s, New York City acquired 147 acres of land to create this park, which supports animal species like crayfish, frogs, herons, osprey, and spotted turtles. The natural landscape includes a variety of plant species, grassy fields, and forests interspersed with streams. The Bunkers Pond area along the waterfront, connecting Arbutus Creek and Wolfe’s Pond Park, is Designated Open Space (DOS). Improvements to the park are currently underway to construct an environmental center, rehabilitate paths, and provide additional landscaping.

Hylan Boulevard:

Hylan Boulevard remains a heavily-trafficked east-west arterial. From Wiman to Arden avenues it remains 70 feet wide with a narrow concrete median and three lanes in each direction. At Arden Avenue Hylan Boulevard’s geometry changes: the concrete median is replaced by a 10-foot striped median with left-turn bays. There are no sidewalks on Hylan Boulevard where the street fronts parklands.

There is commercial activity along the street with two-hour parallel parking. At Richmond Avenue mainly residential uses start to line the boulevard.

Transit:

SIRT stations for this segment are the Eltingville Station located at Richmond Avenue and White Court, and the Annadale Station at Jefferson Boulevard and Downes Avenue. Several bus stops are located along Hylan Boulevard.

Segment C:

(Poillon Avenue to Seguire Avenue)

The proposed Greenway corridor proceeds southwest through Annadale and Prince's Bay, residential neighborhoods of detached single-family houses. The area, with its mixture of turn-of-the-century and new homes, is still rural in character with mapped, partially-built streets. Two schools, St. Joseph's High School and Elias Berstein Intermediate School, are located south of Hylan Boulevard. Tottenville High School is north of Hylan Boulevard, along Luten Avenue. The Prince's Bay neighborhood, located west of Wolfe's Pond Park and south of Hylan Boulevard, also contains medical facilities and the Staten Island Hospital.

Waterfront:

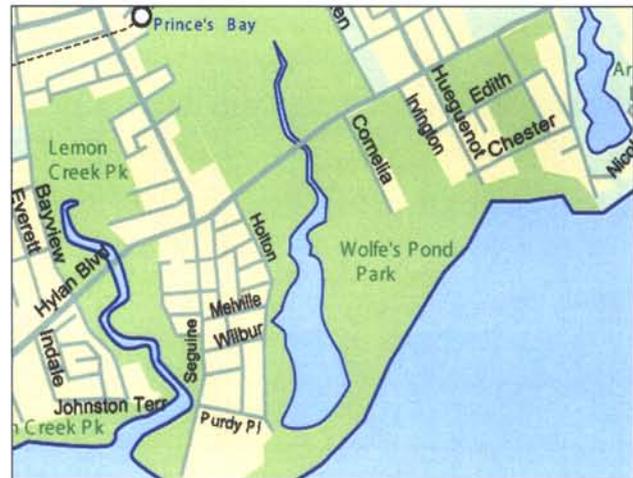
Poillon Avenue to Huguenot Avenue:
Zephyr Avenue is the 23-foot waterfront roadway in this area, running between Poillon and Bertram avenues. Zephyr Avenue is interrupted to the west by a fence bordering the Ocean Gate Estates residential development, preventing a connection to Nicolosi Drive. Arbutus Lake, located north of Ocean Gate Estates, is designated as part of DEP's Bluebelt project. The property surrounding the lake is privately-owned DOS, maintained by the Ocean Gate Estates homeowners association. West of Ocean Gate Estates, Chester Avenue runs along the waterfront between Arbutus Avenue and Huguenot Avenue. Another waterfront DOS site borders Chester Avenue.



Segment C (Poillon Avenue to Huguenot Avenue)

Huguenot Avenue to Seguire Avenue:

Located north and south of Hylan Boulevard between Luten and Holton avenues is Wolfe's Pond Park. Pedestrian access exists along the park's waterfront east of the pond.



Segment C (Huguenot Avenue to Seguire Avenue)

Holton Avenue, a 20-foot wide, north-south street, runs adjacent to Wolfe's Pond Park, and terminates at Purdy Place. Purdy Place is 23 feet wide, runs parallel to the waterfront, and is in poor condition due to sewage and drainage problems from the adjacent residences and Lemon Creek. The waterfront property at Prince's Point, also known as Seguire Point, has undergone contamination mitigation in preparation for the 266-unit Prince's Point residential development. The site is the location of the former S.S. White Dental Works factory. The development will include an unimproved pedestrian esplanade (beachfront easement), linking Wolfe's Pond Park and Lemon Creek Park. Johnston Terrace, east of Lemon Creek, was demapped for this development and to expand Lemon Creek Park. Seguire Avenue, at 25 feet wide, is a north-south arterial, with significant traffic generated by Staten Island Hospital.

Parks and Recreation:

The 341-acre Wolfe's Pond Park is located north and south of Hylan Boulevard, and includes natural environments such as beachfront, freshwater ponds and marshes, a dense upland forest, and designated wetlands. The park provides passive recreation activities, including a bathing beach, nature trails, picnic areas, a playground and boathouse, and com-

fort stations. Other recreational spaces within this segment are the Arbutus Lake Bluebelt property and the portion of Blue Heron Park to the west of Poillon Avenue.

Hylan Boulevard:

Hylan Boulevard remains a 70-foot wide, four lane east-west arterial with a 10-foot striped median with dedicated turning lanes. It is quite heavily traveled until Huguenot Avenue, where it becomes less trafficked but vehicular speeds are higher due to infrequent traffic lights. Huguenot Avenue is one of the main north-south connectors in the segment. It is 30 feet wide and provides access to one of the SIRT stations in the area. Tottenville High School is located north of Hylan Boulevard on Luten Avenue, a two-lane, 50-foot wide street.

Transit:

SIRT stations are located at Huguenot Avenue, just north of Amboy Road, and at Seguine Avenue and Herbert Street. Bus service is provided along Hylan Boulevard, as well as along Seguine and Luten avenues.

Segment D:

(Seguine Avenue to Page Avenue)

The proposed Greenway corridor continues through Pleasant Plains and Mount Loretto, residential neighborhoods with a distinctly rural character.

Waterfront:

While small residential neighborhoods are located in the eastern and western portion of the segment, the majority of the waterfront is designated park or open space.



Segment D (Seguine Avenue to Sharrott Avenue)

Lemon Creek, just west of Seguine Avenue, runs north-south through the park from Prince's Bay. Near the mouth of the creek, maritime activities include wet and dry boat storage, dock repair facilities, and a private boat launch. A vehicular bridge over Lemon Creek was recently removed. Johnston Terrace is the only street that parallels the waterfront just west of Lemon Creek Park. It is designated as a waterfront esplanade within the special zoning district. Captain's Quarters, located on Johnston Terrace between Bayview and Indale avenues, is a 272-unit residential complex of attached townhouses with 38-foot wide roads and a seven-acre park along the waterfront.

The Greenway corridor continues west through the Mount Loretto neighborhood and property, located north and south of Hylan Boulevard. The Mt. Loretto property north of Hylan Boulevard is owned by the Catholic Archdiocese and houses a variety of reli-

gious, charitable, recreational and community facilities on 294 acres. The state agreed to purchase the 145-acre portion south of Hylan Boulevard to the Raritan Bay as a natural preserve. The portion bordering the waterfront is identified as Designated Open Space. The tidal wetlands along Raritan Bay nourish the largest clam beds in the state.



Segment D (Sharrott Avenue to Page Avenue)

Butler Manor, located west of Mount Loretto between Richard and Page avenues, has a rural character, with significant wetlands and both public and private DOS parcels. Severe erosion has eliminated substantial portions of the DOS waterfront. A horse stable is located at Butler Boulevard and Flower Avenue. Located south of Hylan Boulevard, between Butler Boulevard and Page Avenue, is the South Shore Swim Club, which includes tennis courts, playgrounds and a picnic area.

Parks and Recreation:

Parks and open space are the dominant land uses in this segment. The 106-acre Lemon Creek Park is located in Prince's Bay west of Seguire Avenue, and continues approximately one mile along the shore. This area contains the remains of a small fishing village that closed in 1937 due to a typhoid outbreak. The park was acquired in 1964 and the last parcel was added in 1989.

The park was recently designated a Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat by the New York State Department of State. Its creek is the only tidal/freshwater marsh on the island. The creek water comes from Porzio's Pond, a fresh water pond at

Woodrow Road, near the western shore of the island. The park is home to the only Purple Martin bird colony in the city.

Seguire Mansion is located at Seguire Avenue and Hank Street. The 18-room Greek Revival structure was built in 1850 as a summer waterfront retreat by Joseph H. Seguire, a prosperous farmer and oyster trader. The historic house was acquired by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation and is now a museum. The Seguire Equestrian Center currently operates a stable and riding facility on the property.

The Mt. Loretto site, owned by the Mission of the Immaculate Virgin (Catholic Archdiocese), was originally used to aid destitute children from Manhattan. Mt. Loretto's most notable structure was St. Elizabeth's Home for Girls, built in 1897 on top of a meadow overlooking Raritan Bay. The structure was destroyed by fire almost a decade ago.

Hylan Boulevard:

Hylan Boulevard continues west at a width of 70 feet with a 10-foot median and left-turn bays. Sidewalks are unbuilt where Hylan Boulevard traverses parkland or open space. On-street parking is infrequent given the adjacent park land and rural setting.

Transit:

The Richmond Valley and the Pleasant Plains SIRT stations serve this segment. Local and express bus service is located along Hylan Boulevard and Amboy Road.

Segment E:

(Page Avenue to Nassau Place)

The neighborhoods of Tottenville and Tottenville Beach are located at the southwestern tip of Staten Island. They consist of turn-of-the-century and new single-family homes and offer park land along large portions of the waterfront.

Waterfront:

The previously-mentioned DOS property continues from Mt. Loretto to the west to Conference House Park. Surf Avenue is mapped but unbuilt along most of the Butler Manor waterfront between Page Avenue and Brighton Street. The only built portion of Surf Avenue is between Sprague Avenue and Loretto Street, where a sea wall has been constructed to prevent erosion.

Conference House Park is located along the borough’s tip, between Brighton Street and Shore Road. It is largely undeveloped and contains historic resources as well as a variety of natural features. The park offers dramatic waterfront views and occupies a substantial portion of the waterfront on the south shore. Shoreline erosion is a major concern. The wetlands were created by a stream, starting at Finlay and Aspinwall streets and ending with a large marsh bordering the beach.

The waterfront north of Conference House Park is developed with single-family homes on narrow streets. Tottenville’s commercial center is located on Main Street between Amboy Road and Arthur Kill Road. The waterfront along the Arthur Kill becomes more industrial and commercial. Marinas, storage facilities, auto repair shops and warehouses make the waterfront inaccessible to the general public. The roads that provide closest access to the waterfront are Ellis Street, a 35-foot wide, lightly-trafficked roadway, and Arthur Kill Road, a two-lane, 34-foot wide major east-west arterial. Craig Avenue is a two-way residential street one block further inland.



Segment E (northern half)



Segment E (southern half)

Parks and Recreation:

The 228-acre Conference House Park is rich in natural and historic resources. Half of the park is the site of a Native American burial ground. The park includes the Conference House, built in 1680 from fieldstones and timber, and so-named for a meeting there that attempted to end the Revolutionary War.

The park also contains the Henry Biddle House, a Greek Revival home built in 1850, archaeological ruins, and natural features such as accreting and eroding beach areas, sandy bluffs, meadows, woodlands, and freshwater wetlands. A newly-installed playground is located along Billop Avenue. Billop Avenue, Surf Avenue, and Satterlee Street are all narrow, lightly-trafficked streets that run along the perimeter of the park. A 1989 Master Plan for Conference House Park recommends creating six precincts representing the significance of each area.

Along Hylan Boulevard are other recreational facilities, such as five softball fields for the South Shore Little League.

Hylan Boulevard:

Hylan Boulevard narrows to 60 feet and carries less traffic. The street maintains two travel lanes and a parking lane in each direction, but the median is eliminated. It terminates at its intersection with Craig Avenue and Satterlee Street at Conference House Park, in the residential neighborhood of Tottenville. Page, Bedell, and Joline avenues provide access from Hylan Boulevard to the Raritan Bay waterfront where erosion has eradicated mapped parts of Surf Avenue. Page Avenue has two lanes and is 41 feet wide north of and 16 feet wide south of Hylan Boulevard.

Transit:

The Nassau, Atlantic, and Tottenville stations of the SIRT are located in the northern part of the segment. Tottenville station at the end of Bentley Street is the terminus of the SIRT line. Several local and express buses serve Hylan Boulevard, Craig Avenue, Main Street, and Arthur Kill Road.

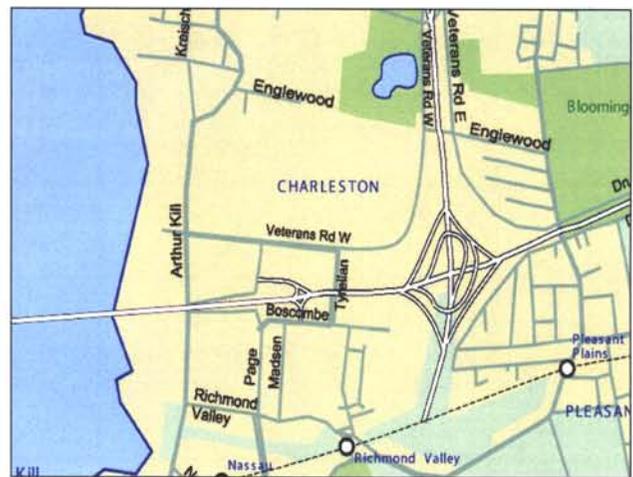
Segment F:

(Nassau Place to Bloomingdale Road)

The proposed Greenway corridor continues to the north through the Charleston neighborhood. The land uses are primarily industrial, despite which, the area has remained rural in character, with wetlands along the waterfront, vacant land and wooded and residential neighborhoods inland.

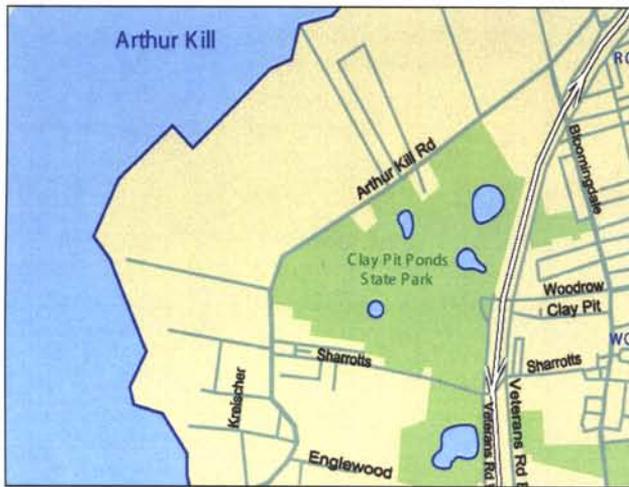
Waterfront/Land Uses:

Arthur Kill Road, a two-lane, 34-foot wide, moderately trafficked arterial with high speeds provides connections to the Outerbridge Crossing, New Jersey and Richmond Parkway. Arthur Kill Road becomes winding and hilly around Englewood Avenue.



Segment F (southern half)

Between Englewood Avenue and Sharrotts Road the land uses remain primarily commercial. Warehouses, recording and television studios, auto body shops, delis, repair and retail shops, and occasional single-family homes characterize the area. North of Arthur Kill Road industrial uses predominate. Mobil's large oil storage facilities are located along the waterfront between Ellis Road and Johnson Street in Port Mobil. Other land uses include the indoor Staten Island Ice Skating Rink, the Richer Farmer's stables on Sharrotts Road near Veterans Road West, the Staten Island Golf Practice Center, and the Arthur Kill Correctional Facility.



Segment F (northern half)

In addition to the mainly commercial uses, there are also several hundred acres of currently vacant land east of Arthur Kill Road. An MTA bus depot is planned on 10 acres fronting Arthur Kill Road at Englewood Avenue. Market rate senior housing is proposed at the privately-owned Kreisler Mansion site. The landmarked mansion would be preserved. The vacant area along Veterans Road West south of Englewood Avenue will be the future home of the Bricktown Centre shopping center, a private retail development. Just north of the site and adjacent to Clay Pits Pond State Park 20 acres of wood- and wetlands will be preserved, providing a buffer between the existing park and the proposed retail center. An additional 22 acres is slated for city parkland. A remaining portion of open space could become the future home of public schools, senior housing, and additional retail/commercial developments.

Parks and Recreation:

The 250-acre Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve is one of three wildlife preserves in New York State, and includes 6.5 miles of meandering equestrian and hiking trails. The park is on the site of the former Kreisler Brickworks, a clay mining operation that serviced the construction industry in New York City. The park preserve opened in 1980 and has over 90 acres of designated freshwater wetlands. The Winant Farm, which is eligible for listing in the State and National Registers of Historic Places, is located within the park grounds.

The park is bordered by Arthur Kill Road, Englewood Avenue and the West Shore Expressway. Traversing

the park, Sharrots Road, a 30-foot wide, major east-west arterial, connects Arthur Kill Road to Bloomingdale Road across the expressway.

Transit:

Transit services in this segment are limited to the local bus route 74. The SIRT runs along the southern boundary of the segment as described previously.

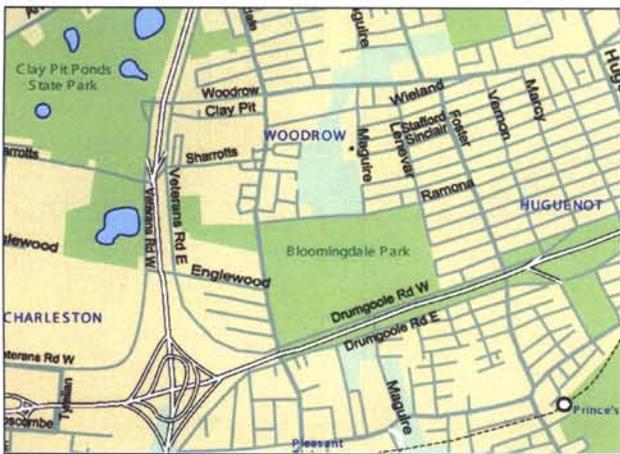
Segment G:

(West Shore Expressway to Foster Road)

Segment G contains the neighborhoods of Woodrow and Rossville, areas currently undergoing rapid development of single-family and townhouse subdivisions. Some vacant land and Bloomingdale Park are located along the West Shore Expressway. A partially-occupied commercial development lies between Arthur Kill Road and Westfield Avenue.



Segment G (northern half)



Segment G (southern half)

Land Uses: (no waterfront access)

Veterans Road East and West, the service roads of the West Shore Expressway, vary in width and change from two-way to one-way direction at Englewood Avenue. South of Englewood Avenue Veterans Road West has three southbound travel lanes and two northbound lanes, separated by a median. Conversely, Veterans Road East has three northbound

lanes separated by a median from two southbound lanes. North of Englewood Avenue both roads narrow to three lanes, with northbound travel on Veterans Road East and southbound travel on Veterans Road West. They are 34 feet wide and carry light to moderate traffic. The roads terminate at Woodrow Road, where an underpass beneath the West Shore Expressway connects the two service roads.

Bloomingdale Road is a major north-south arterial within the segment. It is a two-lane road varying in width from 24 to 54 feet. A recently-developed community of single-family homes is located south of Woodrow Road to the northeast of Bloomingdale Park. The vacant property west of Maguire Avenue, between Stafford and Ramona avenues, is slated for a residential development known as Maguire Estates.

Parks and Recreation:

The 138-acre Bloomingdale Park contains two segments: the recently-acquired Bloomingdale Extension west of Bloomingdale Road, and the original portion to the east, which is bounded by Bloomingdale, Ramona, and Lenevar avenues, lightly-traveled wide residential streets, and by Drumgoole Road West, the service road for the Korean War Veterans Memorial Parkway. Bloomingdale Park is primarily wetlands and forests and is currently being improved with new recreation facilities. Equestrians currently use Sharrotts Road to ride from Clay Pit Ponds Park to the equestrian trails of Bloomingdale Park.

Transit:

Transit service is provided by two local and two express bus routes. They follow the Bloomingdale Road, Woodrow Road and Rossville Avenue corridor, as well as Foster and Woodrow roads.