
Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan

*A 197-a Plan as modified and adopted by
the City Planning Commission
and the City Council*

Manhattan Borough President • New York City

Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan

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Rudolph W. Giuliani, Mayor
City of New York

Joseph B. Rose, Director
Department of City Planning

INTRODUCTION

Under Section 197-a of the New York City Charter, borough boards, borough presidents and community boards may propose plans for the development, growth and improvement of their boroughs or districts. Pursuant to the Charter, the City Planning Commission developed and adopted standards and procedural rules for review of 197-a plans. Once approved by the Commission and adopted by the City Council, 197-a plans are intended to serve as policy guides for subsequent action by city agencies.

This report on the Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan, a 197-a plan adopted in 1997, provides information for those interested in its policies and recommendations. The report contains three sections.

1. The City Council resolution, dated April 16, 1997, adopting and modifying the plan as modified by the City Planning Commission.
2. The modified plan contained in the City Planning Commission report and resolution, dated February 5, 1997.
3. The proposed Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan, as originally submitted by the Manhattan Borough President on June 14, 1995.

Section 1

City Council Resolution

City Council resolution, dated April 16, 1997, modifying and adopting the 197-a plan as modified by the City Planning Commission

**THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
RESOLUTION NO. 2291**

Resolution approving the decision of the City Planning Commission on Non-ULURP No. N 950604 NPM, a Section 197-a Plan for the Manhattan Waterfront, in Community Districts 1-4 and 6-12, Manhattan (L.U. No. 1257).

By Council Members Eisland and Fields

WHEREAS, the City Planning Commission filed with the Council on February 11, 1997 its decision dated February 5, 1997 (the "Decision"), on the "*Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan*," in Community Districts 1-4 and 6-12, Borough of Manhattan, submitted by the Manhattan Borough President, pursuant to Section 197-a of the New York City Charter (Non-ULURP No. N 950604 NPM) (the "Plan");

WHEREAS, the Decision is subject to review and action by the Council pursuant to Section 197-d(b)(1) of the City Charter;

WHEREAS, the Council held a public hearing on the Decision and Plan on March 5 and 18, 1997;

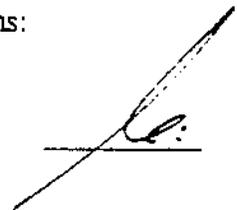
WHEREAS, the Council has considered the land use implications and other policy issues relating to the Decision and Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Council has considered the relevant environmental issues and the negative declaration, issued on February 28, 1996 (CEQR No. 96DCP034LM);

RESOLVED:

The Council finds that the action described herein will have no significant effect on the environment;

Pursuant to Sections 197-a and 197-d of the City Charter and on the basis of the Decision and Plan, the Council approves the Decision with the following modifications:

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N 950604 NPM

Reso. No. 2291 (L.U. No. 1257)

1.) in the Section entitled "Hudson River Park and Passenger Ship Terminal (Community Districts 4, 2 and 1)", immediately following the recommendations regarding Piers 53 and 54, the following language is added: "Elected officials and other community representatives should continue to work together with the Department of Sanitation ("DOS") to identify upland sites for the uses presently on Pier 52 at the Gansevoort Peninsula. For the period of DOS's use of this site, the department and the city should seek to maximize the use of space on this pier for and by recreational users."

2.) in the Section entitled "Hudson River Waterfront (Community Districts 9 and 7)" the following sentence is changed by deleting the bracketed language: "Support implementation of the Riverside South project in accordance with the restrictive declaration governing the project, [which takes into account possible relocation of the Miller Highway among other provisions relating to community participation, street layout, park development, affordable housing and connections to the waterfront.]

3.) in the Section entitled "Hudson River Waterfront (Community Districts 9 and 7)" the following language, deleted by the City Planning Commission, is restored: "Although the North River Water Pollution Control Plant has been declared currently to have adequate capacity for the Riverside South Development, in the long term the city should ensure adequate capacity throughout the area it serves, including Northern Manhattan."

Adopted.

Office of the City Clerk, }
The City of New York, } ss.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a Resolution passed by The Council of The City of New York on April 16, 1997, on file in this office.


.....
City Clerk, Clerk of Council

Section 2

City Planning Commission Report

City Planning Commission's consideration and resolution, dated February 5, 1997, approving and modifying the 197-a plan

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

February 5, 1997/Calendar No. 35

N 950604 NPM

IN THE MATTER OF a plan, concerning the Manhattan Waterfront in Manhattan Community Districts 1-4 and 6-12, submitted by the Manhattan Borough President for consideration pursuant to Section 197-a of the New York City Charter. The plan proposed for adoption pursuant to Section 197-a is called the "**Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan**".

BACKGROUND

In 1992, the Manhattan Borough President issued a draft Manhattan Waterfront Plan which was widely circulated for comment. Following an April 2, 1992 public hearing on the draft plan, and building in large part on the Department of City Planning's 1992 *New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan*, 1993 *Plan for the Manhattan Waterfront*, and its waterfront zoning regulations, the Manhattan Borough President issued the 1995 *Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan* as a proposed 197-a plan. The Borough President submitted the plan to the Department on June 14, 1995 in accordance with the City Planning Commission's *Rules for the Processing of Plans Pursuant to Charter Section 197-a*.

PLAN DESCRIPTION

The principal objective of the Manhattan Borough President's *Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan* is to enhance public access to and use of the 32-mile Manhattan shoreline.

The first three chapters of the plan offer a general discussion of waterfront policy regarding development of a continuous esplanade encircling the entire borough; redevelopment of the waterfront for water-related commercial, educational and transportation activities; and the fiscal and policy implications of waterfront revival. The Borough President's office has confirmed by letter that these chapters "make no recommendations" and "discuss only broad policy issues ...without recommendations".

Coastal Resources Act of 1981 (New York State Executive Law, Section 910 et. seq.). The designated WRP number is 095-077. On February 7, 1996, this action was determined to be consistent with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program.

COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARINGS

Community Boards 1-4 and 6-12 held public hearings on this application. All except Community Boards 9 and 10 submitted written comments. Community Boards 1, 3, 6, 8 and 11 adopted resolutions in support of the plan and raised no issues.

Community Board 2, at its public hearing on April 18, 1996, adopted a resolution noting that many of the plan's recommendations were inconsistent with the Board's previous positions. The Board voted to support the plan only if a number of modifications were made, including insertion of recommendations opposing any commercial development, floating structures or parkland designation on the Greenwich Village waterfront.

In its resolution adopted at a public hearing on May 1, 1996, Community Board 4 stated that the plan, "reflects consultation with community and civic organizations [and]...in large measure spells out for the Manhattan waterfront principles and provisions expressed or implicit in the New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan." Listing certain details in the plan that needed to be updated to reflect current and probable future conditions, the Board strongly supported the general thrust of the plan and urged its adoption, with the appropriate corrections and updating.

Community Board 7 endorsed the principles underlying the plan, but raised serious concerns about several specific recommendations and urged that the Board be involved in discussions with regard to the final plan's specific recommendations.

Community Board 12 also agreed "in general with the objectives and goals of the Manhattan 197-a Plan" but withheld approval of the plan based on its opposition to a recommendation

changes with regard to form and content, and requested clarification or additional information. The sponsor agreed to provide the requested information and did so on October 16, 1995.

On January 29, 1996, the City Planning Commission determined that the Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront 197-a Plan met threshold standards for form and content, and environmental review commenced.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (N 950604 NPM) was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et seq. and the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 96DCP034M. The lead is the City Planning Commission.

After a review of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed plan, a Negative Declaration was issued on February 28, 1996. It was determined that the 197-a plan would not, in itself, result in construction, funding, or approval of projects or changes in regulations by city agencies nor does the 197-a plan advance or effectuate any change or activity that would trigger environmental impacts.

On February 29, 1996, the plan was duly referred to Community Boards 1-4 and 6-12, the Borough Board, and the Borough President for their review and comment, in accordance with Article 6 of the rules for processing Section 197-a plans.

WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM CONSISTENCY REVIEW

This application (N 950604 NPM) was reviewed by the City Planning Commission in its role as City Coastal Commission for consistency with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP), adopted by the Board of Estimate on September 30, 1982 (Calendar No. 17), pursuant to the New York State Waterfront Revitalization and

for a bicycle path through Inwood Hill Park and on its request for further study of the Harlem River Speedway Esplanade.

BOROUGH BOARD RECOMMENDATION

This application (N 950604 NPM) was considered by the Borough Board of the Borough of Manhattan, which held a public hearing on June 20, 1996 and subsequently adopted a resolution supporting the *Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan*. The Borough Board specifically endorsed the complete esplanade around Manhattan and the restrictions to water-related transportation and park uses on the Manhattan Waterfront.

In its resolution, the Board urged the Borough President to consider modifying the Waterfront Plan to update and correct certain recommendations and to incorporate others that would be consistent with the tone and principle of the document. The Borough Board further recommended that the "Borough President and the Department of City Planning consult with the Manhattan Community Boards in any future modifications to the plan, and inform and involve the Community Boards fully in any future discussions with regard to final recommendations proposed for the Plan prior to its vote by the City Planning Commission and after it is adopted."

BOROUGH PRESIDENT RECOMMENDATION

Since the Borough President of Manhattan held a public hearing on April 2, 1992 on the draft waterfront plan and the Borough Board and affected community boards held public hearings in 1996, she elected not to conduct a further public hearing on the plan.

On June 20, 1996, the Borough President submitted a resolution recommending speedy approval of the plan. In her resolution, the Borough President stated that the Commission is asked to "approve only the site-specific recommendations in Chapter 4" as well as the updates, corrections, and modifications attached to her report. Those modifications largely reflect the comments and recommendations of the Borough Board and the community boards.

CONSIDERATION

The Commission has carefully reviewed and considered the Borough President's Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan, as originally submitted and the modifications submitted on June 20, 1996 and November 26, 1996. The Commission had several concerns with respect to the original submission, and commends the cooperative effort by staffs of the Borough President and the Department of City Planning to address these concerns, which facilitated development of the final plan. It believes the plan as modified will result in a useful guide for city policy in keeping with the purpose and intent of 197-a plans.

The Commission concurs with the plan's objectives and broad strategies for improving public access to the Manhattan waterfront and for promoting appropriate recreational, commercial and transportation activities. The Commission observes that the plan is largely consistent with the Department's waterfront plans, including the 1992 *New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan*, its 1993 *Plan for the Manhattan Waterfront*, and its waterfront zoning regulations.

In addition, considerable progress has already been made toward achieving the plan's objectives, which are largely consistent with ongoing city initiatives. Substantial sections of the Manhattan waterfront are presently accessible to the public in the form of public parklands, waterside esplanades, and public piers at various locations on both the east and west sides of the borough. Plans for the Hudson River Park will extend public access from Battery Park City to 59th Street and, with the help of federal ISTEPA funding, planning is well underway to complete other missing links in the public access network.

The Commission recognizes that many of the recommendations to enhance and expand the existing public access network are dependent upon funding availability, competing citywide priorities, and city agency constraints,

Consequently, the Commission had requested that the merit, feasibility and fiscal implications of these recommendations, in both the short- and long-term, be examined in greater detail, and that the level of specificity be reconsidered.

The Commission acknowledges the analysis, by Borough President and Department staff, of those recommendations that would entail significant capital costs. These recommendations generally fall into two categories: proposals to improve access to the waterfront by constructing new highway overpasses and pedestrian bridges; and proposals to improve access along the waterfront by constructing cantilevered esplanades or decking. The Commission agrees with the Borough President's modification which deletes the cantilevering and decking proposals which were considered fiscally impractical. The Commission further supports the modification which incorporates priority access improvements into a general planning principle which calls for implementation to occur as funds become available, and the deletion of access improvements, such as the proposed overpass at 41st Street, that were considered fiscally and physically infeasible.

The Commission recognizes that the Borough President's modifications delete a number of recommendations that conflict with sound city policy, have already been implemented or are beyond the jurisdiction of a 197-a plan, and consolidated others for the sake of clarity or rewritten to be less specific or restrictive and therefore more likely to stand the test of time.

The Commission understands that the Borough President has informed the Borough Board and community boards of the general thrust of these modifications.

The Commission finds that it is unable to concur with only two of the Borough President's modified recommendations.

The first deals with the North River Water Pollution Control Plant. The Borough President proposes to recommend: "Although the North River Water Pollution Control Plant has been

declared currently to have adequate capacity for the Riverside South Development, in the long term the city should ensure adequate capacity throughout the area it serves, including Northern Manhattan." The Commission finds this recommendation unnecessary because the Riverside South Restrictive Declaration stipulates that, prior to issuing a permit for any portion of the approved project a permit to hook up to the city sewage system, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of City Planning must certify that the projected flows from that portion of the development and various affordable housing projects within the North River drainage basin would not cause the plant to exceed its capacity.

The second modified recommendation with which the Commission cannot concur deals with the Gansevoort Peninsula (Pier 52) now used by the Department of Sanitation for garaging trucks, salt storage, and dumping snow in the river. The Borough President proposes to recommend: "The Gansevoort Peninsula offers a unique opportunity for active recreation. In order to realize this possibility, the Department of Sanitation trucks and salt storage facility should be relocated to more appropriate upland sites. Examples of appropriate recreational uses on this pier include a ballfield, a beach, boating and children's play areas."

Although the Commission recognizes the need for additional recreational opportunities in the area, it does not believe that such a recommendation should be included in this 197-a plan. Memoranda of Understanding signed by the Mayor and Governor in 1988 and 1992 reserve the Gansevoort area for continued Department of Sanitation use. The Hudson River Park Conservancy concept plan proposes open space use on the peninsula only if the Sanitation facility can be relocated. However, no alternative sites have been identified in the plan, and the Department of Sanitation plans to demolish an inactive incinerator and expand its garage operations on this site to better serve community districts 1, 2 and 5. Even if the district garages could be relocated to other sites, the Department of Sanitation stated that it needs to retain control of the Gansevoort Peninsula to plan for the city's future waste disposal needs once the Fresh Kills landfill is closed.

and the Planning Principles and Site-Specific Recommendations contained in Chapter Four are hereby replaced and modified, as follows:

Overarching Planning Principles for the Manhattan Waterfront

- Waterfront planning should maximize continuous public waterfront access. Where waterside walkways and bikeways are infeasible, it may be necessary to create inland connections to facilitate continuity.
- Waterfront planning should provide frequent and convenient opportunities for access to public waterfront areas, either in the form of elevated pedestrian bridges, or streetscape enhancements to create safer and more attractive at-grade crossings. As funding becomes available, priority locations for additional pedestrian bridges include East 8th St, East 54th Street, East 106th and/or East 116th Street, West 165th Street, West 151st Street, and West 116th Street. Appropriate access corridors for streetscape enhancements include Montgomery, Houston and Delancey streets, East 6th and 10th streets, East 23rd and 34th streets, and East 96th Street.
- Waterfront planning should encourage waterfront-enhancing uses and such water-dependent uses as expanded ferry operations and recreational boating programs.
- Waterfront planning should maximize protection of critical marine habitats and protect against potential flooding.
- Waterfront planning should promote greater use of existing resources and, at the same time, provide for the safety of diverse users of these public spaces. Adequate lighting and signage on esplanades and overpasses would minimize pedestrian/ cycling/ rollerblading conflicts. As part of a boroughwide program, installation of signage on city streets would help direct the public to waterfront parks and esplanades, such as the Roosevelt Island esplanade, a model of water's edge public access.

- Waterfront planning should consider both short-term and long-term uses of waterfront sites.
- Waterfront planning must take into account the limited government resources available without foreclosing opportunities for the future.
- Waterfront planning should take into account the rich social, aesthetic, historical and cultural heritage of the city's waterfront.
- Waterfront planning should balance the economic benefits generated by new water-related commercial uses, which would help increase the tax base and generate jobs, against the environmental and quality of life impacts generated by the proposed uses.
- Waterfront planning should be a collaborative process, involving affected public officials and communities, including community boards, in siting and design decisions.

Site-Specific Recommendations for the Manhattan Waterfront

Lower Manhattan (Community District 1)

- Complete the restoration and improvement of Pier A as an essential link between the Battery Park City and Battery Park esplanades.
- Implement the Battery Park master plan as funds become available.
- Planning for Battery Park improvements should provide for a clear pedestrian link between the park's esplanade and the newly redesigned Whitehall Ferry Terminal. Should the building now used by the U.S. Coast Guard no longer be needed by the Coast Guard or for water-dependent uses, consider extending the water's edge esplanade to the terminal.

- The Battery Maritime Building is a handsome and spacious structure, and contains docks likely to remain in use for ferry access to Governors Island. If structurally and financially feasible, at least a portion of the building should be devoted to public cultural and commercial uses that would complement redevelopment of Piers 9-12 and reconstruction of the ferry terminal.
- The planning process underway for Piers 9-12 should encourage a mix of uses that would activate and enliven the waterfront. At a minimum, provide for public open space and a variety of revenue-generating uses that would serve residents, workers and tourists in accordance with the city's goals for revitalizing Downtown Manhattan.
- Pursue construction funding for stabilization of Pier 15 at South Street Seaport.
- Support continued safe and successful operation of the South Street Seaport by implementing plans, funded by the Borough President, to replace the railing along the perimeter of Pier 17.
- Develop a pedestrian/bikeway connection inboard of the South Street Seaport and Fulton Fish Market.
- Continue operation of the Fulton Fish Market at its present location.
- Continue to work toward identifying a permanent site, preferably an indoor garage, for tour buses and commuter buses serving the South Street Seaport and Lower Manhattan.
- Complete ISTEA-funded construction of the pedestrian/bikeway connection between the South Street Seaport and East River Park; encourage provisions for maintenance funding in any lease negotiated along the route.

- Plan for an upland connection along First Avenue between the esplanades at 37th and 60th streets, in view of the infeasibility of a bike lane along the FDR Drive and the cost and questionable benefit of a cantilevered esplanade outboard of the FDR.
- Create a bicycle lane with signage on Sutton Place.
- Using private and/or public funding sources, create a waterfront gateway along the Queensboro Bridge corridor by redeveloping spaces on the north side of 59th Street between Second Avenue and the East 60th Street Pavilion Park and esplanade.
- Continue efforts to relocate the 60th Street Heliport and to create public open space.
- Explore the possibility of a bicycle route through Carl Shurz Park.

Upper East River/Harlem River Waterfront (Community Districts 11 and 10)

- Seek to reduce or eliminate parking under the FDR in the Stanley Isaacs Park area to maximize access to the waterfront.
- To improve access from East Harlem to Randalls Island recreational facilities, explore the feasibility of ferry service from the 107th Street Pier or from the Washburn Wire site at 117th Street, maintain and illuminate the 103rd Street bridge, and pursue plans for a direct walkway on Wards Island from the bridge to the park. Once access is improved and funding identified for needed rehabilitation of facilities, host major sports events and seek other revenue-generating events at Randalls Island.
- Work toward obtaining construction funds to implement plans for a park and esplanade between 125th and 142nd streets (Harlem Beach).

- Seek a public access easement along the water's edge at the Esplanade Gardens housing complex between 145th and 150th streets.

Northern Manhattan Waterfront (Community District 12)

- Since creating access to the southern portion of the Harlem River Driveway would be very costly, resources would be better spent on improving Highbridge Park and installing signage at the 142nd Street overpass to direct users to river views from the park. In the long-term, study the feasibility of restoring the water's edge bikeway/walkway outboard of the Harlem River Drive between 164th and Dyckman streets.
- In accordance with the New York City Bikeway Network Plan, create an upland bikeway connection from Dyckman Street north to the 225th Street Bridge.
- At Sherman Creek, pursue economic development opportunities including study of the potential for an ecologically sound boating facility. As funding becomes available, develop and enhance street end access points to the Harlem River and explore development of a rowing program, possibly at P.S. 5.
- Complete the ISTEA-funded study of bikeway alternatives along the Hudson River in the Inwood Hill area to determine the most feasible, cost-effective and ecologically sound route and connection to the proposed greenway on the Bronx side of the Spuyten Duyvil.
- Implement Department of Parks and Recreation access plans for Fort Washington Park as funds become available.
- Obtain funding for construction of a bridge and stairway connection at 165th Street.

- Construct a link between Fort Washington and Riverside Parks.

Hudson River Waterfront (Community Districts 9 and 7)

- As funding becomes available, implement plans for improving northern Riverside Park, particularly rehabilitation of the 135th and 148th street staircases.
- Complete ISTEA-funded design and pursue construction funding for a bikeway/walkway between 146th and 155th streets.
- Consider Scenic Landmark designation of the portion of Riverside Park above 135th Street.
- Devote at least part of the staging area next to the North River Water Pollution Control Plant to an access link from Riverside Park to the Harlem piers.
- Assess the condition of the Williamson staircase, an important access point to Riverside and Riverbank parks, and seek funding for any necessary repairs.
- In planning for the Harlem Piers, recognize their importance as a major catalyst for the economic revitalization of the neighborhood. Plans for both interim and long-term use should include water-dependent and waterfront-enhancing uses and maximize public access to the waterfront.
- Support plans for a bicycle/pedestrian path through Riverside Park.
- Develop ISTEA-funded esplanade between 91st and 83rd streets.

- A continuous bikeway/walkway the length of the park at maximum feasible width, and extension of the interim pedestrian/bike path as far north as possible.
- Continued steps to relocate parking and remove other barriers from areas proposed for public access and use.
- To ensure pedestrian access from the Clinton community to the waterfront, planning for esplanade easements along eastern edges of Piers 99 and 98, and coordinated planning for Route 9A and Miller Highway.
- Incorporation of the concrete plant site (between piers 97 and 94) in the proposed Clinton Cove Park, once an alternate site for the plant is identified.
- At the Passenger Ship Terminal (Piers 88, 90 & 92) and Pier 94, which are not under HRPC jurisdiction and for which the Economic Development Corporation is lead agency, implementation of proposals that would provide for a compatible mix of public access, maritime and commercial uses on Piers 94-92 and that would not preclude continued maritime use of Piers 90-88.
- Planning for construction of an overpass from Dewitt Clinton Park to the waterfront.
- Landscaping and maintenance of bulkheaded areas between Piers 86 and 81; provision of maximum public access on Pier 84; and measures to resolve the bus/pedestrian conflict between Piers 83 and 81.
- Development of Pier 79 for a ferry landing, public recreation and other uses that would contribute to tourism.

- Removal of billboard from Pier 78.
- Relocation of 30th Street Heliport to Pier 76.
- Restoration of the float bridge south of Pier 66.
- Development of Chelsea Waterside Park concurrent with reconstruction of that portion of Route 9A.
- Incorporation in Hudson River Park of the block between 14th and 15th streets which is to be acquired for Route 9A.
- Removal of buses from Pier 57 as soon as the proposed relocation site is available.
- Integration of remnants of Pier 53/54 headhouses in design of the esplanade; provision of public access on Pier 54 and preservation of fireboat station on Pier 53.
- Measures such as better defined crosswalks, lighting and signal timing changes to improve waterfront access across West Street from Greenwich Village.
- Planning for substantial public recreational space on Pier 40, along with other waterfront-enhancing uses.
- Reconstruction of Pier 32 for public access or, if infeasible, its preservation as habitat.

- Retention of the River Project on Pier 26.
- Use of Pier 25 for public recreational, environmental and cultural activities.

The above resolution (N 950604 NPM), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on February 5, 1997 (Calendar No. 35) is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

JOSEPH B. ROSE, Chairman

VICTOR G. ALICEA, Vice-Chairman

ALBERT ABNEY, ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, AMANDA M. BURDEN, A.I.C.P., IRWIN
G. CANTOR, P.E., KATHY HIRATA CHIN, ESQ., ALEXANDER GARVIN,
ANTHONY I. GIACOBBE, ESQ., WILLIAM J. GRINKER, BRENDA LEVIN,
JACOB B. WARD, ESQ., Commissioners

Section 3

Manhattan Borough President's Proposed 197-a Plan

Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan submitted June 14, 1995

Comprehensive
MANHATTAN
WATERFRONT
PLAN

Spring 1995



Manhattan Borough President
RUTH W. MESSINGER



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

MUNICIPAL BUILDING
NEW YORK, NY 10007

(212) 669-8300

RUTH W. MESSINGER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

Dear Friends:

With the formal submission of this Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan, I invite the City of New York and all its citizens to join me in reclaiming Manhattan's spectacular waterfront.

Manhattan's waterfront fueled New York City's original growth into a great metropolis, and it still holds great untapped potential to provide desperately needed jobs, transportation alternatives and open space. In this plan, you will find proposals for increased ferry transportation, tourist attractions, small package delivery by boat between Manhattan and the region's airports, and a continuous 32-mile esplanade around Manhattan. You will also find a strategy outlining how, even in these difficult times, this vision can begin to be implemented.

This plan draws upon the work of many different Community Boards, public agencies and civic groups, and attempts to integrate their best ideas into a single comprehensive vision for our borough's waterfront. This boroughwide perspective is meant to complement and support community-based planning efforts, not supplant them. Likewise, it complements the Department of City Planning's waterfront plan, while echoing many of its themes and objectives.

This plan incorporates dozens of constructive comments and new ideas we have received since the release of our draft plan in 1992. I have formally filed this plan and accompanying support documents with the City Planning Commission for adoption by the City, in accordance with Section 197-a of the City Charter.

Enjoy the report. If it sparks your imagination about how the waterfront can serve Manhattan, or if it inspires you to act, then it has succeeded.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ruth W. Messinger", written over a horizontal line.

Ruth W. Messinger

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Executive Summary

This report presents a comprehensive plan for the future of Manhattan's incomparable 32-mile waterfront. Its issuance originates from the Borough President's authority, under Section 197-a of the City Charter, to plan for the "development, growth and improvement" of the borough. If approved and adopted through the City's public review process, it will become the City policy guiding the revival and development of the waterfront. The publication of this plan and its submission to the City Planning Commission for approval constitute the first major steps in this public review process.

This comprehensive plan builds on the Borough President's 1992 draft Manhattan Waterfront Plan; it also complements and amplifies the work done by the Department of City Planning in its subsequent 1992 *New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan* and 1993 *Manhattan Reach Study*. It significantly revises the draft version on three principal counts. It incorporates comments on the draft received from Community Boards and interested citizens and groups. It amends the plan in light of the Planning Commission's 1993 adoption of new citywide waterfront zoning regulations. Finally, it updates developments all along the waterfront since 1992, many of them based on recommendations included in the 1992 draft plan.

While endorsing the spirit and much of the letter of the City's new waterfront zoning, this comprehensive plan differs in form and content from the work of the Planning Commission and Department of City Planning. It was drafted in close cooperation with the affected Community Boards of Manhattan, and attempts to reconcile each neighborhood's particular interests in the waterfront into a boroughwide policy. (All but one Manhattan Community Board, Board Five, includes a portion of the waterfront.) It proposes changes to City policy which would reinforce the goal of public access to the waterfront. It also speaks to an issue not addressed in the City Planning work: funding of public waterfront improvements. Finally, the plan describes the Manhattan waterfront in far greater specificity than does the work of the Department of City Planning. Much of this comprehensive plan is devoted to an unprecedented series of neighborhood-by-neighborhood portraits of the waterfront.

This plan is divided into two principal sections. The first section addresses broad policy issues concerning the Manhattan waterfront. The second section makes detailed, "site-specific" descriptions and recommendations concerning the waterfront.

The three chapters of Section I deal with:

Developing a Continuous Waterfront Esplanade. Such an esplanade would greatly increase desperately needed open space in Manhattan. It would encourage public appreciation for the waterfront and would provide a unifying design and pattern for Manhattan's physical layout. The City's new waterfront zoning, and the State's plans for regional waterfront planning, make the possibility of developing a nearly continuous waterfront esplanade in Manhattan eminently realizable. Continuity and access are the two essential features and two significant benefits of developing a waterfront esplanade encircling Manhattan. The task of developing the esplanade must accommodate a variety of recreational, commercial, transportation and water-dependent¹ industrial uses.

Redevelopment of the Waterfront for Water-Related Commercial and Transportation Activities. The city has begun to reawaken to the commercial and transportation potential of the long-neglected Manhattan waterfront. Traditional waterfront activities, such as commuter ferry transportation and cargo shipping, are reviving. New uses, ranging from "water taxi" services to marine education and research to a fuller realization of the waterfront's potential for commercial tourism, are being discussed and explored. Working in partnership with the private sector, government must play an active and imaginative role in this waterfront revival, from coordinating ferry service with existing transit systems to beginning to remove such inappropriate facilities as parking lots from the waterfront. Clearer lines of authority and accountability must replace the currently jumbled public jurisdiction of the waterfront. Government must also insure that the commercial revival of the waterfront goes forward in an environmentally responsible manner.

The Fiscal and Policy Implications of Waterfront Revival. Making the waterfront accessible for new recreational and water-related commercial uses will require new sources of public funds and revisions of City policies. Changing current City leasing and concession policies could generate greater revenue for waterfront improvements while reinforcing a commitment to reopening the waterfront to public

¹ The City's Waterfront Zoning Text describes water-dependent uses as those that "require direct access to a body of water in order to function or use waterways for transport of materials or products." Examples include ferry docks, marinas, marine transfer stations and sewage treatment plants. "Water-enhancing" uses are described as "primarily recreational, cultural, entertainment or retail shopping uses that, when located at the water's edge, add to the public use and enjoyment of the waterfront." These include parks, historical exhibits, bicycle rental shops, skating rinks and eating and drinking establishments.

access and appropriate water-dependent uses. (Where leases are granted for such non-water-related uses as parking, for example, terms should be no longer than one or two years so as to not obstruct planning for more appropriate water-related uses.) The temptation to finance waterfront improvements through "luxury" residential development should be avoided; such developments have a tendency toward *de facto* "privatizing" of the waterfront. Instead, the value-enhancing effects of waterfront improvements on nearby property can be tapped by government through a variety of alternative means, all of which require fuller discussion.

The City's new waterfront zoning regulations embody welcome major provisions that ought to enhance public enjoyment of the waterfront, immediately as well as in the long-term. Refinements of those regulations would strengthen the goal of public access and appropriate use. The City must also address such issues as open space maintenance and security if the benefits inherent in the Manhattan waterfront revival are to be realized and protected.



The contents of Section II, the chapter of site-specific waterfront descriptions and recommendations, cannot be neatly encapsulated in this Executive Summary. The reader can use the Table of Contents to locate narratives, maps and recommendations concerning specific waterfront locations; recommendations concerning each portion of the waterfront appear in these chapter subdivisions.

In many places, this section identifies such simple and inexpensive ways to improve public access to the waterfront as moving a chain link fence a few feet, putting up signs directing pedestrians and cyclists to obscured entrances to existing esplanades or installing Jersey barriers to delineate pedestrian paths.

A reader comparing this Final Plan with the 1992 draft plan will find that progress has been made on many of the recommendations made in that draft plan. This progress includes:

Harlem Beach Esplanade Park. The Borough President has secured commitments on the local, State and Federal levels for assistance in development of the proposed new 20-acre park between 125th and 145th Streets along the Harlem River.

The East River Bikeway/Walkway. The Borough President helped secure a Federal grant to design this bikeway/walkway from Pier A at the Battery to East 63rd Street. Work on the project began in July 1994. The Borough President also has committed to match Federal funds for constructing the portion of this project between the Fulton Street Fish Market and East River Park. Notification on this grant application is expected in early 1995.

Pavillion Park. Working in conjunction with Community Board 8, the Parks Council and the East River Waterfront Conservancy, the Borough President secured private funding for development of this park at East 60th Street, which opened in 1993.

Hudson River Waterfront Park. The Borough President has joined other elected officials and community and environmental groups in supporting the proposed State Hudson River Waterfront Park Planning and Development Act. The proposed law would limit development along the West Side waterfront and begin the process of building a major waterfront park. The Borough President also joined other elected officials in insuring that Manhattan be included in the State Hudson River Greenway Compact waterfront planning initiative.

Pier 35/36. The Borough President joined neighborhood residents and elected officials to oppose the City's decision to site a major municipal refueling and parking facility on Piers 35 and 36 in Community Board 3. Approval of the site was subsequently overturned as a violation of the City's "fair share" regulations.

Stuyvesant Cove. In the early 90s, local elected officials, the Borough President and Community Board 6 were successful in blocking the environmentally questionable Riverwalk residential development project. The Borough President provided partial funding for an open space study for this "Stuyvesant Cove" area and supported a Federal grant of \$575,000 for the development of an esplanade here. Work is currently underway. The Borough President has committed to match a portion of the Federal funds requested for construction of this bikeway/walkway project; notification concerning this grant application is expected in early 1995.

The Hudson River Bikeway/Walkway. The Borough President has supported creation of this interim bikeway/walkway from Battery Park City to the Gansevoort Peninsula along the Hudson River. This amenity was completed by the Hudson River Park Conservancy during the summer of 1994.





Executive Summary



Introduction / **Make No Small Plans**

Introduction / **Make No Small Plans**

This document is the first comprehensive plan for reviving Manhattan's splendid -- and long-neglected -- waterfront. It proposes an exciting strategy for new commercial, educational, transportation and recreational projects along the entire 32-mile Manhattan shoreline.

For more than 300 years, commerce and industry dominated Manhattan's waterfront, helping make New York the nation's largest, most economically important and most international city. The great heyday of New York as a port city has long since passed -- and one unfortunate result has been a short-sighted failure to capitalize on the waterfront's enduring advantages and appeal.

Through this plan, the communities of Manhattan, together with the Manhattan Borough President, propose to begin correcting that failure. This plan envisions a once-again thriving waterfront that:

Offers varied and greatly expanded recreation and relaxation opportunities, primarily through the development of a continuous, easy to access esplanade around the entire island;

Reduces land-based traffic congestion and pollution with increased ferry and water transport services and bicycle commuter routes;

Serves as an enticing entry and jumping-off point for visitors and tourists; and

Provides new employment and business opportunities and generates new revenues for the City treasury.

Government agencies control virtually the entire Manhattan waterfront, and that public ownership makes this vision of the future eminently realizable. Even on the largest privately owned portion of the waterfront, the Penn Yards site on the Hudson River, the Riverside South plan approved in 1992 calls for private funding of a major new public park that fits well with this overall plan for the waterfront.

The Need for Boroughwide Planning and Action

This final plan grows out of the work of the Manhattan Waterfront Task Force, a pioneering public/private effort initiated in 1990 by the Manhattan Borough President and consisting of representatives of Community Boards, civic organizations and public agencies with waterfront interests. A draft plan was released in February 1992. The establishment of the Waterfront Task Force addressed much of the bureaucratic fragmentation and political parochialism that have historically retarded waterfront planning. More than a dozen City, State and Federal agencies now control various parts of the waterfront. In some cases, several of these agencies have developed worthwhile plans for portions of the waterfront; however, these plans have not been made to fit into a larger vision for the borough. The multiplicity of agencies involved on the waterfront also produces a jurisdictional jumble that contributes to many of the waterfront's current problems: its intermittent disrepair and decay; the unnecessary use of prime waterfront locations for such eyesores as bus garages and parking lots; the granting of leases to private users that do not sufficiently protect public access to the waterfront; and, most tellingly, the lack of a coordinated effort to exploit the waterfront's rich and varied potential.

In recent years, Community Boards, neighborhood associations and environmental activists throughout Manhattan have put forward bold and creative ideas for increasing public use of the waterfront. This report draws heavily on their efforts. Until now, however, these community-based efforts have generally been focused on single communities. These efforts also have suffered from the formidable difficulties any citizens group faces in dealing with multiple and often remote government agencies.

The broader perspective and planning expertise of the Borough President and her staff have played an essential role in overcoming this fragmentation and frustration. Most importantly, Section 197-a of the City Charter gives the Borough Presidents the authority to plan for the development and growth of their boroughs; the Charter also requires the City Planning Commission (CPC) to review and pass on such plans. This comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan is such a "197-a plan."

The boroughwide perspective embodied in this plan is meant to complement and support community-based planning efforts, not supplant them. A number of Community Boards have prepared community plans with zoning and development recommendations concerning the waterfront, for which they are entitled to seek approval under the same Section 197-a of the Charter. For example, Community Board

6 has prepared a plan for the East River waterfront from 16th to 24th Streets ("Stuyvesant Cove") that is consistent with the Borough President's plan. The focus in the Borough President's plan on site-specific improvements, public access and new types of uses complements these efforts, as well as those presented in the *New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan* and the *Manhattan Reach Studies*, issued in the summer of 1992 and December 1993, respectively, by the Department of City Planning (DCP).

Organization of the Report

This report is divided into four chapters. The first three address broad themes of overarching concern.

- **Continuous public access to the waterfront, including proposed standards for a continuous waterfront esplanade.**
- **The underdeveloped economic, transportation and educational potentials of the waterfront.**
- **Strategies for implementing this plan's recommendations and an analysis of the costs and benefits of waterfront revitalization.**

The fourth (and by far longest and most detailed) chapter of the report takes the reader on a block-by-block tour of the waterfront. It begins at Battery Park at the southern tip of Manhattan and circumnavigates the island by way of the East, Harlem and Hudson Rivers, ending at Pier A. Along the way, the islands around Manhattan that also are part of this borough -- Ellis, Governor's, Liberty, Mill Rock, Roosevelt and Ward's-Randall's Islands -- also are described.

Preliminary Steps Toward Implementation

The draft version of this plan was issued in February 1992 and was circulated widely to elected officials, public agencies, neighborhood groups, the maritime industries and unions, environmental groups, open space and transportation advocates and urban planning scholars and practitioners. The Borough President also presented the draft plan to the CPC at that time. At a hearing held by the Borough President in April 1992, extensive comments were received from dozens of organizations and individuals, who suggested many modifications to the plan.

Since 1992, the Borough President's Office has initiated work on elements of this report. To cite several examples:

- With the active involvement of neighborhood groups, the Borough President commissioned conceptual design work for a new "Harlem Beach Esplanade" waterfront park along the Harlem River from 125th to 145th Streets. The proposal was included in the *New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan*. Additionally, a \$1 million commitment for Fiscal Year 1995 was obtained from the City for a preliminary design investigation and a phased construction plan for the entire proposed 20-acre park and esplanade. While there is currently no capital construction commitment in the four-year capital budget plan, the current commissioner of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Henry Stern, has expressed strong support for the project and has pledged to make every effort to obtain construction funds. In addition, the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) has agreed to build the northernmost stretch of the esplanade, from 142nd to 145th Streets, after it has finished using the site as a staging area for Harlem River Drive reconstruction (*see page 99*). An application for Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funds to construct the Harlem Beach bikeway/walkway and related access routes was submitted on November 15, 1994. The Borough President has committed to provide the required local matching funds.
- In another ISTEA application, the Borough President has committed to provide the required local match for an East River bikeway/walkway project that would extend between the Fulton Fish Market (Peck Slip) and East River Park (Jackson Street).
- The Borough President is currently working with the Riverside Park Fund and the Parks Department to develop a river's edge path in Riverside Park from 88th to 125th Streets (*see page 115*).
- In 1991, together with Community Board 7 and the New York City chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the Borough President convened a "design review workshop" of prominent national urban design experts to analyze the Riverside South project plans, including the proposed waterfront park. The plan approved by the CPC and City Council in 1992 reflected many significant improvements first suggested at that workshop, as well as other enhancements negotiated during the Borough President's ULURP review period (*see page 123*).
- The Borough President supported an application for approximately \$560,000 in ISTEA funds for a planning and design study for a bikeway/esplanade from Battery Park to East 63rd Street. The work on this project started in July 1994 (*see page 54*).

- In conjunction with Community Board 8, the Parks Council and the East River Waterfront Conservancy, the Borough President in 1993 successfully urged the CPC to amend an existing waterfront amenities agreement to obtain a commitment from the three medical institutions that own air rights over the FDR Drive from 63rd to 71st Streets to fund a pavilion park on the East River at 60th Street (*see page 85*).
- The Borough President joined in 1992 with legislators representing New York City's Hudson River waterfront communities to urge City inclusion in the Hudson River Greenway Compact, former Governor Cuomo's visionary regional waterfront planning initiative (*see page 126*).
- In August 1994, the Borough President joined other elected officials and a coalition of civic and environmental groups to support State legislation (the Hudson River Waterfront Park Planning and Development Act) that would limit development along the Hudson River waterfront from Battery Park City to 59th Street and set the stage for the creation of a major, majestic park (*see page 126*).
- Joining a broad coalition of neighborhood residents and elected officials, the Borough President strongly opposed the creation of a citywide multi-agency parking and fueling facility on Piers 35 and 36, and put forth an alternative vision of how this major pier could open the waterfront to the residents of the Lower East Side. While the CPC and the City Council approved the City's proposal with minor modifications in September 1992, this approval was later overturned on the grounds of substantial failure to comply with the City's "fair share" regulations (*see page 65*).
- In association with Community Board 6 and other local elected officials, the Borough President succeeded in 1992 in persuading the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to de-designate Related Companies as the developer of the site located between 16th and 24th Streets on the East River. (Related Companies' proposed Riverwalk development relied on an environmentally dubious plan to build apartments on platforms extending over the river.) In 1993, the Borough President also provided partial funding to Community Board 6 for an open space study of this area, now dubbed "Stuyvesant Cove," as well as for an informational brochure on the subject. The Borough President supported an application for an ISTEA grant of \$575,000 for the design and construction documents for park and esplanade development for Stuyvesant Cove. Work on this project began in fall 1994. The Borough President is also a co-applicant for ISTEA funds to construct a

Stuyvesant Cove bikeway/walkway and has committed to provide a portion of the required local matching funds (*see page 70*).

- The Borough President supported the creation of an interim bikeway/walkway along the Hudson River from Battery Park City to the Gansevoort Peninsula, completed by the Hudson River Park Conservancy in summer 1994 (*see page 128*).
- The Borough President co-sponsored, with the City College Urban Landscape Architecture Program, a 1992 design studio in which students and faculty from City University and a number of other universities developed design solutions for a series of waterfront sites along the East and Harlem Rivers. Subsequently, the Borough President also co-sponsored an exhibit of some of the outstanding designs at the Surrogate Court Building.
- The Borough President secured the relocation of six decorative steer and ram heads to the planned Hudson River Park. The heads, salvaged by the Landmarks Preservation Commission in 1991 from a demolished meat warehouse in Chelsea, will be installed on the waterfront near their original location, and serve as a reminder of that community's history as a meat-packing district.

Next Steps

With the City still recovering from a long and deep recession, some may question whether this is the right moment to propose so ambitious a plan. This plan answers that question with a resounding "yes," and provides many reasons.

A surprising number of the elements of this plan in fact call for little or no expenditure of money. Public recreational access can be improved merely by moving a chain link fence a few feet, or by putting up a sign directing pedestrians to now-obscured entrances to an existing waterfront esplanade. Some elements require modest public capital investment, some of which can proceed even in hard times. Other projects require larger-scale spending that may have to wait until revenues are more plentiful. But the planning and design for those big-ticket projects can and should begin now.

The hiatus in real estate development produced by the recession also has a silver lining; the City can seize the opportunity to plan the waterfront's future for the public good in a calmer, less heated atmosphere.

In the broadest sense, this is the right time to put forward an ambitious plan for the waterfront, because it is precisely now when New Yorkers need a sense of vision, direction and hope. The great architect Daniel Burnham is reported to have said: "Make no small plans; they have no magic to fire the blood." This plan is intended to fire the blood and inspire the kind of bold thought and action New York City needs so much today. It recommit us to preserving our heritage by restoring an abused but still-precious heirloom. And it offers real hope for future economic development and a better quality of life on this unique island borough.



Section One / **Public Policy And The Waterfront**



Chapter I / **Developing A Continuous
Waterfront Esplanade**

Chapter I / **Developing A Continuous Waterfront Esplanade**

One of the major goals that emerged from the work of the Manhattan Waterfront Task Force was the creation of a continuous esplanade around the island with easy public access. Such an esplanade is critical to bringing people to the waterfront, and such public access is critical because the waterfront is Manhattan's last frontier for new open space. Open space at the water's edge is particularly valuable, providing an additional measure of openness which is not possible when a space is enclosed by buildings on all sides. A continuous waterfront esplanade would also provide a unifying design and pattern to Manhattan's physical layout. Indeed, what makes this plan unique is its focus on Manhattan's waterfront as a whole. Many previous planning efforts have either addressed small segments of Manhattan's waterfront in great depth, or examined broader waterfront planning issues citywide. This plan articulates a boroughwide perspective.

Manhattan as a whole is underserved for open space. Only two Community Districts, 11 and 12, have as much as 2.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents², the minimum standard recommended by the Department of City Planning (DCP). Several Community Districts (2, 4 and 6) are severely underserved, with less than 0.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

In addition to increasing the amount of waterfront space accessible for public enjoyment, a continuous esplanade would open the waterfront to new uses. The water's edge would become a thoroughfare for people taking infants out in strollers as well as for jogging, in-line skating and bicycling, all increasingly popular pastimes despite the current lack of auto-free recreational space in Manhattan. Auto-free waterfront bicycle routes would handle some of the estimated 265,000 bicycle trips made each day in New

² According to DCP, the current guideline standard for planning remains 2.5 acres of open space per 1,000 population. However, for purposes of the City Environmental Quality Review, a standard of 1.5 acres per 1,000 population is observed.

York City³ and would encourage more use of bicycles for commuting and recreation. A continuous esplanade would increase circulation and safety all along the waterfront.⁴

Broad and varied access is critical to the proposed esplanade's success. This must include pedestrian and bicycle access, as well as access for those with physical disabilities. (As a public amenity, the proposed esplanade would have to meet standards established by the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act). Access ought also to include enhanced mass transit approaches to the waterfront, such as bus routes that extend to the water's edge. Finally, access should also include visual access to the waterfront, so that people are able to look down streets and avenues from inland "view corridors" that invite them to the waterfront.

A continuous esplanade would also serve to link and unify Manhattan's diverse communities. Community Board 12, which encompasses Washington Heights and Inwood in Northern Manhattan, noted in its comments on the draft plan that the esplanade could strengthen inter-community relations and promote neighborhood economic development. According to Board 12, "the concept of an esplanade circling Manhattan Island can be thought of as the framing of this wonderful mosaic . . . which is our borough."⁵

Continuity ought not mean uniformity or homogeneity. The Manhattan waterfront varies greatly in its physical construction and appearance. In some areas, there are open spaces hundreds of feet wide adjacent to the waterfront; in other locations, only a very few feet stand between highways and the water's edge. Most of the borough's waterfront consists of built-up bulkheads, but some areas are more naturalistic, with rip-rap edges. Obviously, such diverse physical conditions lend themselves to very different treatments. Yet they ought to be recognizable as part of a greater whole.

Different neighborhoods of Manhattan also lend vastly differing characters to stretches of the waterfront. The Harlem River waterfront in East Harlem and the Greenwich Village Hudson River piers need not look or feel the same. In fact, to sacrifice their distinct cultural identities would be a great loss. But none of those distinctive qualities would be lost by unifying identification devices, such as signage or other visual elements associated with the island's continuous waterfront, and a heightened sense of continuity and unity would be gained.

³ Transportation Alternatives estimate, October 1992.

⁴ Among the Manhattan waterfront parks that are most heavily used are those which are not only easily accessible, but which lead somewhere. Thus, Riverside Park's water's edge walkways on the West Side and Carl Schurz Park on the East Side attract users not only for whom the waterfront is a recreational destination, but those for whom it is the most pleasant route toward some other destination. A continuous esplanade around the borough would enable the waterfront to serve as a pleasant and meandering route between points.

⁵ Manhattan Borough President Public Hearing on Draft Comprehensive Manhattan Waterfront Plan, Community Board 12 testimony, April 1992.

Space permitting, the esplanade should include a wide variety of activities to encourage and enhance public use; ideally the esplanade should become a destination in and of itself. In wider areas, the esplanade should include parks and other public open spaces; where appropriate, it should also include publicly accessible commercial facilities, such as greenmarkets, food concessions and bicycle or skate rentals.

Recreation is far from the only appropriate use for the waterfront, or the only reason to increase public access to the waterfront. Open spaces are valuable and much-needed, but alone they are not enough to create a vibrant public waterfront. A lively waterfront must have multiple water-related uses -- commercial, transportation and industrial -- as well as recreation. These varied uses are not necessarily in conflict and can coexist and complement one another. Planning for the esplanade must provide for open access to the piers, not only for pedestrians, but for potential water-borne uses. By developing different types of activities at the waterfront -- including such small-scale water-related commercial development as retailing, excursion boats, recreational activities and restaurants -- a broad spectrum of people will be drawn to the waterfront. This is how the City can insure that the waterfront becomes a truly public resource, inviting to all who live in, work in and visit Manhattan.

Barriers to Access

Existing physical and land use features of Manhattan's coastline, the legal status of various parcels, and environmental considerations define and delineate options for waterfront planning in the short- and long-term.

The physical constraints that limit options include:

- **Topography that creates barriers, as when the grade of the street system is elevated well above the waterfront. This occurs in the area of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Drive at the United Nations and also north of 63rd Street. The FDR Drive, West Street and the West Side Amtrak tracks also become barriers when no one can safely get across them. On the East Side, FDR Drive entrance and exit ramps create walls which impede access.**
- **Existing developments, such as institutional complexes and large housing developments with no intermediate public cross-streets, also present formidable barriers.**
- **Physical conditions of the seawall and subsurface conditions underwater also limit the extent to which an esplanade/walkway can be developed.**

Land use constraints that limit design options include existing waterfront uses that conflict with the public recreation aspects of an esplanade. Examples of such uses are Con Edison and Department of Sanitation (DOS) facilities, warehousing and manufacturing uses, heliports and seaplane bases, and parking. Some of these uses, such as DOS waste transfer stations, are absolutely essential. Such water-dependent uses require waterfront locations which unfortunately do constrain public access. Where there are existing manufacturing uses on the Manhattan waterfront, access should be permitted where it is safe and feasible to do so. Other uses, such as parking, will remain for at least the short term, even though they do not require a waterfront location.

Legal constraints related to waterfront planning include commitments of waterfront land through existing leases, as well as environmental controls on development such as Army Corps of Engineers and State Department of Environmental Conservation permitting procedures.

Current Plans and Standards for Esplanades

Manhattan's entire Hudson River waterfront has esplanades either already in place or planned. This comports not only with this plan, but with former Governor Mario Cuomo's plan for a Hudson River Greenway stretching from north of Albany to New York Harbor. As the gateway to the Hudson, New York City is an important piece of that Greenway. Unfortunately, as yet the City has not elected to participate in the Greenway Compact. This regional planning initiative presents an opportunity which the City ought not pass by.

In contrast to the Hudson River waterfront, certain areas of the East and Harlem River waterfronts present obstacles to a continuous esplanade. These problem areas, which are discussed in detail in Section Two, include:

- **East 42nd to 49th Streets (page 79);**
- **East 54th to 59th Streets (page 79);**
- **West 150th to Dyckman Streets (page 100); and**
- **West 207th to 221st Street (page 104).**

These areas -- comprising only approximately four miles out of the borough's 32 miles of waterfront -- present significant challenges to achieving a continuous waterfront esplanade around the borough that are unlikely to be resolved soon or easily. For the time being, continuity improvements in these areas may consist of clear signage along existing streets to link the waterfront esplanades to the south and north of these gaps.

But if the cup is one-eighth empty, it is seven-eighths full. The encouraging reality is that the rest of the Manhattan waterfront either has esplanades in place or can have esplanades created within the foreseeable future.

Design and access criteria for esplanades, proposed by the Borough President, have generally been adopted in the City's new waterfront zoning. This zoning represents a significant step towards the goal of a continuous esplanade on the water's edge.

Concerns that the Borough President identified in her Draft Waterfront Plan that were addressed in the City's 1993 zoning design and access criteria for waterfront esplanades include:

- **New development must include an esplanade at the water's edge, the only exception being water-dependent uses such as cargo shipping operations and marine transfer stations with which water's edge access presents a conflict.**
- **Any new esplanade must be open to the sky. Water-dependent uses, e. g., ferries and excursion boats, are excluded from this requirement and can provide their public access indoors.**
- **The esplanade and its users must be protected from vehicular traffic in those areas where the esplanade is immediately adjacent to highways and other vehicular routes.**

Other of the City's waterfront zoning esplanade criteria could go further in increasing public access:

- **Given the dearth of open space in Manhattan, the City has the opportunity to mandate additional access to the waterfront. Since most of Manhattan's waterfront is publicly owned, the City should go beyond the adopted minimum requirements for design and access to make the esplanade as wide as feasible.**
- **Although the zoning increases the width of the pedestrian circulation zone in the highest density districts, it does not sufficiently respond to greater intensity of use. The width of the esplanade at any point should correspond to the expected intensity of use from adjacent areas, provided no physical constraints preclude this. In areas where there is enough space for a wider esplanade, such as the Greenwich Village waterfront, the esplanade should be wider to accommodate more people and more varied activity.**
- **For those circumstances where water's edge access presents a conflict -- as with the previously mentioned water-dependent uses such as cargo shipping operations and marine transfer stations -- design should still be sensitive to pedestrians and bicycles, and provide for attractive pedestrian/bicycle access as close to the water's edge as possible.**

- **The zoning should encourage recreational use of the waterfront. The treatment should provide for a variety of users, e.g., bikers, joggers, parents with baby strollers, people fishing, the elderly, people with disabilities and children.**
- **Any new waterfront esplanades should include a bicycle path, separated from pedestrian paths with a physical barrier. While the zoning does require that any bicycle path be separate, it does not mandate the installation of such a bicycle path.**
- **The design should produce nodes of activity and circulation at access points.**
- **The esplanade and activity nodes should be responsive to the adjacent upland area, including any historically significant local context. The regulations currently do not mandate any of these requirements.**
- **Any trees, plantings, lighting and other obstructions, including fixed seating, should be located in wider areas, to promote continuity of an unobstructed clearance for walkers, bikers and joggers.**

While the City's waterfront zoning addresses access, it only refers to minimum distance between access points and minimum width. This plan recommends additional criteria for access to the esplanade.

At-Grade Access

- **The design of access points should be consistent with the design of the esplanade/walkway/bicycle path.**
- **Elements to improve pedestrian safety should be included, such as pedestrian signalization, lighting and signage. There are no such requirements in the zoning, except lighting and the differentiation of the pedestrian way from the vehicular way.**

Elevated Access

At-grade access is far preferable to elevated access, but where existing highway traffic makes at-grade access impossible, elevated access is critical. In such cases:

- **The design of the access points should be consistent with the design of the esplanade/walkway/bicycle path.**

- **The width of the access should be appropriate for the projected activity and use of the overpass.**
- **The design should seek to use the overpass as an overlook point to take advantage of views of the river and city skylines.**
- **The overpass should accommodate the needs and characteristics of different user groups, such as people with disabilities, joggers, cyclists and children.**

Summary

Developing a waterfront esplanade would greatly increase desperately needed accessible open space in Manhattan. It would encourage public appreciation for the waterfront and would provide a unifying design and pattern for Manhattan's physical layout. The City's new waterfront zoning and the State's plans for regional waterfront planning make the possibility of developing a near continuous waterfront esplanade in Manhattan eminently realizable. Continuity and access are two essential features and two significant benefits of developing a waterfront esplanade encircling Manhattan. Esplanade development must be cognizant of physical and legal limitations, and also must accept and adapt to the varying topography of the Manhattan waterfront. It must also accommodate a variety of recreational, commercial and transportation uses.





Chapter II / **Redevelopment Of The Waterfront
For Water-Related Transportation
And Commercial Uses**

Chapter II / **Redevelopment Of The Waterfront For Water-Related Transportation And Commercial Uses**

New York's magnificent harbor and the Hudson River estuary were the marine highways that built Manhattan, fueling New York's rapid growth into the one of the world's great cities. With the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, Manhattan became the transfer point for much of the country's imports and exports. Ships docked along Manhattan's waterfront were loaded with the harvest of farms and products of factories, bound for the world's markets.

Manhattan's maritime industries have diminished rapidly during the second half of this century. By the early 1960s, New York lost its supremacy as the world's leading port. Breakbulk shipping gave way to containerized cargo, and ocean-going passenger ships were replaced by jet airliners. Manhattan's working waterfront was transformed into a wasteland, where the "highest and best use" is frequently seen as parking lots.⁶

This chapter examines current and potential water-related uses of the waterfront, and issues related to locating them on the Manhattan waterfront. These uses include: ferry and cargo transportation; education and research opportunities; and tourism and recreational use. The chapter also describes essential environmental and planning issues that must be addressed in reviving commercial life on the Manhattan waterfront.

Commuter Ferries

During the early 1900s, as many as 125 ferry lines operated in New York City, some 35 of them crossing the Hudson River. By 1967, all ferry service had disappeared except the lines running between Manhattan's Battery and Staten Island (public) and Governors Island (military).

⁶ Although no complete data are available on the total number of waterfront parking spaces, the Department of Consumer Affairs has licensed almost 1,300 parking spaces at Pier 40 and another 900 at Stuyvesant Cove; the *New York Post*, Con Edison, New York University Medical Center and various other institutions all have waterfront lots as well.

Critical though they may be, parking facilities derive no advantage from a waterfront location. In fact, they make the waterfront an undesirable area for the public to spend time. In seeking to revitalize the borough's waterfront, this plan aims to encourage uses which need to be at the water's edge or are in some way enhanced by such a location.

But with the introduction of smaller, more efficient vessels, ferries have made a comeback. Today, approximately 65,000 commuters ride the Staten Island Ferry each weekday, and more than 15,000 commuters use ferries across the Hudson and East Rivers. Although ferries still carry only a tiny fraction of the more than three million daily commuters to Manhattan's Central Business District, ferry ridership has grown steadily in recent years.⁷

New routes again link Manhattan to Queens, Brooklyn and New Jersey. Pier 11 on the East River, serving the Financial Center, is the landing facility for three of the newer routes. On the Hudson River, the Port Authority has developed a route from Hoboken to Battery Park City that has about 9,000 daily riders. The Port Imperial operation, running between Weehawken and Pier 78 at West 38th Street, has an integrated ferry-bus service, with bus routes from the pier to various locations in the Central Business District.

Communities throughout Manhattan have greeted the idea of increased ferry service enthusiastically, in part because increased ferry ridership relieves the congestion and pollution of existing transportation networks. Ferries also are popular with riders, not least because they offer some of the best available views of the city.

Government Support for Ferries

Licensing New Services New York State has recognized the benefits of ferry services. A "High Speed Ferry Task Force," led by the Governor's Office in coordination with the Urban Development Corporation (UDC), has begun to encourage privately operated high-speed ferry services to Manhattan's Central Business District. It has worked closely with the City of New York, primarily through the Economic Development Corporation and City Department of Transportation, as well as with regional transportation agencies.

The Task Force has selected operators for the following routes: Hunters Point in Queens to East 34th Street; the Tappan Zee Bridge area in Rockland County, with a stop in Yonkers, to Pier 79 at West 39th Street; and St. George in Staten Island to Pier 79. The ferry service between Hunters Point and East 34th Street started in October 1994, and the other ferry services are expected to start in 1995.

Currently, licenses for ferry routes are issued by the City Department of Transportation, while leases for ferry landing are issued by whichever agency has jurisdiction over the property in question. (For a description of the fragmented government jurisdiction over the waterfront, *see page 37*.) In order to encourage the development of ferry landings in Manhattan, the issuance of ferry landing leases should be coordinated.

⁷New York State Urban Development Corporation and New York City Department of Transportation, Shipbuilding/New Ferry Services Request for Proposals, September 1992.

Not every waterfront parcel can or should be a ferry landing; ferry service must be carefully planned and coordinated. Landing sites could be shared by several lines on a time-share basis, as is now done at Pier 11 on the East River or at any railroad station.

Infrastructure Investment All of Manhattan's existing ferry lines, except those to Staten and Governor's Islands, are privately operated. Their lack of public operating subsidies translates to relatively high fares, which create a barrier to building ridership. This leads many observers to assume that ferry service is not economically viable. While no government operating subsidies for private ferry operators are envisioned, there is a great deal government can do to enhance ferry ridership at relatively little cost to the City.

Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funds, for example, enable local governments to provide crucial infrastructural improvements to facilities used by private ferry operators. The City DOT has been awarded an ISTEA grant to provide permanent improvements at and around the East 34th Street ferry site. Some of these improvements have already been implemented, enabling ferry services between Long Island City and East 34th Street to commence.

Coordination With Mass Transit Ferry service generally needs to be augmented by land-based transportation to bring riders to their final destinations. City maps from the beginning of the twentieth century show street car routes linked to ferry terminals. The Staten Island Ferry evolved as an excellent example of a unified transportation system. At St. George in Staten Island, the ferry connects with the rapid transit rail line that extends to Tottenville. The terminal also has connections to numerous bus routes that collect and distribute passengers throughout the island. Similar connections are provided at the Battery in Manhattan, where the Whitehall Ferry Terminal is located, with links to subway and bus lines. Ongoing plans for the reconstruction of the Whitehall Ferry Terminal include improved bus and subway connections and the reorganization and design of Peter Minuit Plaza to serve as an urban open space and entrance to the terminal.⁸

It is imperative that the new terminal sites at Pier 79 and East 34th Street, as well as all other proposed ferry landings, permit easy transfer to transit services, including existing bus and subway services, modified and new bus routes, and new light rail transit services such as the planned 42nd Street trolley. Transit signage should advertise the ferry landing stops; signs within the area and at nearby subway stations and bus stops should provide directions to the ferries. Free transit transfers also would encourage use.

⁸ Unfortunately, a decision in 1994 that cars would be allowed back on the Staten Island ferry will encourage people to bring their cars with them into Manhattan and reduce the size of the public open space in front of the terminal, thus making it less attractive. In addition, the roadway for the cars using the ferries will create a break in the waterfront esplanade.

Encouraging Innovative Uses

Ferry service routes have traditionally been "fixed" in their lease agreements, thus yielding operations that are not as fully viable or profitable as they could be. If the City were to encourage more flexible routes using time-shared landings, ferry operations could become more profitable, and more specialized forms of waterborne transportation could be implemented. With relatively low investment, ferry routes can be expanded or adjusted to match changing needs. New services could include:

Airport Ferries A limited number of ferries currently serve La Guardia Airport. Because John F. Kennedy and Newark airports could also provide waterfront access, ferries serving them should also be explored. Ferry operations could also provide courier service for small packages, especially during rush hours. This would reduce truck traffic into Manhattan.

Water Taxis Vessels used as water taxis in other cities, such as Baltimore, are probably too small to navigate the more exposed waters of New York Harbor and the Hudson River on a regular basis. However, slightly larger boats might work well, operating along a series of scheduled stops as they do in London, where water-buses run on a route along the River Thames. Under ISTEA's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program, City DOT has received approval to use Federal funds to pursue the development of a neighborhood ferry service that would make a series of scheduled stops along the Manhattan waterfront. Such a service would most likely require a vessel with flexible loading capabilities that could adapt to various types of landing sites.

Recreational Ferries Ferries can also be used during off-peak hours to transport people from Manhattan to such recreational destinations as Coney Island or the New York Aquarium, or from the suburbs to Manhattan's shops, restaurants, museums, sporting events and theaters. For much of the year, commuter ferries that would otherwise be out of service could make runs to waterfront parks, including those located along Manhattan's perimeter, on Roosevelt, Ward's and Randall's Islands, and in the other boroughs. Circuits of ferries also could make stops along the Gateway National Recreation Area.

Waterborne Cargo Transportation Manhattan is now more than 99 per cent dependent on trucks for the delivery of essential goods, resulting in crippling vehicular congestion on highways, bridges, streets and in tunnels, and producing a critical infrastructure crisis. Traffic congestion poses a severe threat to the City's economic vitality and potential for development and growth. In addition, New York City has not met national ambient air quality standards for carbon monoxide, and Manhattan does

not meet the particulate standard. This could lead to serious Federal sanctions, including the withdrawal of Federal funds for State highway projects, many of which are located in New York City. With the City's current infrastructure needs, it can ill afford to lose any of its funding. The severity of the crisis requires that all options, including waterborne cargo transportation, be explored.

The primary cargo shipping activity from Manhattan currently is related to the removal of wastes. The Department of Sanitation (DOS) has marine transfer stations at Pier 99 at West 59th Street, at East 92 Street, and at the North River Water Pollution Control (sewage treatment) plant at West 135th Street. At these transfer stations, barges are loaded for the removal of solid wastes to landfill sites, primarily at Fresh Kills on Staten Island. Current planning suggests that these marine transfer stations will continue operation, delivering to other facilities, even after present landfill sites have been closed. Barges also transport sludge from the North River plant to ocean dumping sites. Recycling could lend itself to some barge cargo transportation when the recycled material is to go either to ships or waterfront plants.

Manhattan's long-moribund cargo shipping industry has revived slightly with the reopening of Pier 42 on the East River for use in coffee shipping (*see page 67*).

The DCP's 1992 Comprehensive Waterfront Plan identified the use of ferries for "fast freight" goods movement between, for example, the airports and the Central Business District as having potential economic viability. These options should be further explored.

Careful consideration should also be given to using barges for transferring material excavated during the construction of the City's third water tunnel. This excavation will be underway during the next ten years and will require tens of thousands of heavy truck trips. The use of barges to remove excavation waste could significantly reduce traffic on roadways, bridges and tunnels. This is especially true for Roosevelt Island, where one of the chambers of the third water tunnel is currently under construction.⁹

Education Waterfront space should be provided for research and education concerning the marine environment. This should be open to public and private elementary and secondary schools and colleges, and also serve as a "museum" for after-school, weekend and summer activities. A marine and oceanographic station also could be established as an extension of the City University of New York (CUNY), to accommodate research vessels and be available to other universities in the region. One

⁹ Other Manhattan tunnel shaft sites for which ULURP approvals have already been received are Shaft 25B at 705 Tenth Ave. between 48th and 49th Streets, and Shaft 26B at 501 W. 30th St. between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Other Manhattan tunnel shaft sites for which the ULURP applications have already been filed are: Shaft 27B at 10 Ninth Ave. (Hudson and 13th Streets); Shaft 28B at 388-02 Hudson St. between West Houston and Clarkson Streets; and Shaft 29B at 3-9 Hubert St. at the corner of Collister St. Also, Shaft 30B is planned to be located somewhere in the South Street Seaport area.

option under consideration is a proposal for refurbishing a Hudson River pier for such purposes.¹⁰

Recreation and Tourism Municipal marinas could offer recreational boating opportunities to a broad range of New Yorkers. Public sailing and community rowing programs could be established, similar to those now conducted in Boston on the Charles River. Public recreational rowing, canoeing, kayaking and pedal-boating could enliven the waterfront. Such boating already takes place on the Harlem River, where the rowing programs of Columbia, Fordham and New York Universities, Manhattan College, the Kings Crown Rowing Association and the Empire State Rowing Association are located. The Empire State Rowing Association also operates out of the 79th Street Boat Basin. Additionally, the River Project conducts a public boating program on the Hudson River waterfront in TriBeCa.

Proposals for private marinas on the waterfront produce strong and divided opinions. Boat owners and others have decried the virtual absence of small boat access to Manhattan and urge the creation of marinas as well as "town docks." Some Community Boards, on the other hand, have expressed absolute opposition to marinas, fearing that they would "privatize" portions of the waterfront and pollute the water. Marinas would create environmental issues related to fueling, showers and sewage pump-out facilities, as well as security and wave attenuation needs. Some of these services would require upland space.

Any boating in Manhattan waters must be well-supervised and carefully located. Safety programs, strengthened regulation and improved enforcement are required to facilitate any safe expansion of such recreational boating. Small boats within commercial channels also can create safety hazards. Because of currents and other boat and barge traffic, parts of the Hudson and East Rivers present greater dangers, and would require greater controls and precautions than exist on the Harlem River.

Charter sailing vessels, such as the Windjammer fleet that sails the coast of New England or the Hudson River sloop *Clearwater*, would be appropriate and attractive uses of the waterfront. Party fishing boats, which now are available and open to the public on a per-person basis, could also be encouraged.

Swimming is another natural waterfront activity. Having rivers clean enough to swim in safely would dramatically improve public enjoyment of the waterfront; this remains a long-term water quality goal to work towards. In the meanrime, swimming pools on pier structures and floating pool-barges which could be moored at waterfront locations could bring swimming to Manhattan's waterfront.

¹⁰ Vision for the Hudson River Waterfront, November 1990.

Tourism is an important part of New York City's economy. In 1990, more than 24.7 million domestic and international visitors came to New York City. Tourist expenditures in that year on items such as lodging, food, retail, entertainment and transportation netted the City \$516 million in tax revenues.¹¹

Most of these tourists visited Manhattan, home to a majority of New York City's attractions and sites, many of which are located at or near the waterfront. The South Street Seaport and Piers 81-86 are some of the most active waterfront areas. Thus, every improvement that enhances public access to and public use of the waterfront makes Manhattan more attractive to tourists. Charter boats for special tours, conferences and corporate functions, and supper boats and small craft for hire would also offer a wide range of new uses appealing to both visitors and residents, and could be appropriately located on the Manhattan waterfront.¹²

Longer-distance tour boats could make runs to other parts of the region, such as the towns of the Hudson Valley, the Jersey Shore, Atlantic City and Cape May in New Jersey, Baltimore and Annapolis in Maryland, and Newport and Block Island in Rhode Island. A Manhattan hub would make these destinations accessible to domestic and international visitors, and provide attractive opportunities for regional tourism cooperation.

With an accessible and lively waterfront, New York City can encourage more frequent maritime celebrations, which attract tourists and generate revenue. Special events, such as Operation Sail and Fleetweek, will continue to require pier space suitable for large vessels. In planning the renovation of piers, provisions must be made for the tie-up of large visiting vessels. Unfortunately, no such provisions were made for Pier 17 at the South Street Seaport, thus limiting access for large vessels.

Waterfront Uses and Environmental Safeguards

Water-dependency in itself does not necessarily make a particular use appropriate for a given waterfront location. Any proposed use needs to be evaluated in relation to its compatibility with neighboring uses. Specific environmental concerns raised by increased use of the waterfront include:

¹¹ Plan for Lower Manhattan, October 1993.

¹² Supper cruise boats are very popular in New York, and both of the major operators, Spirit of New York and World Yacht, have expressed a desire to expand their operations. As of 1991, Spirit of New York had some 175,000 patrons annually and World Yacht had 250,000 patrons annually. (SOURCE: Spirit of New York and World Yacht.) There exists great potential to develop further supper and other excursion cruises, thus offering a greater variety of tourist attractions. Pier sharing arrangements offer one possible way to encourage such diversity.

Marine Borers Cleaner waters in New York Harbor allow the City's piers once again to serve vital water-related commercial and recreational uses. However, the improvement in water quality over the past decade has brought the return of several types of marine borers that are detrimental to the viability of timber pile-supported piers. Marine borers attack the exterior and interior of the piles, devouring the wood and decreasing underwater pile diameter. These dangers are summarized in a report EDC commissioned from Han-Padron Associates, a marine engineering and consulting firm.¹³

Many piers have been affected. Piers 13 and 14, which currently house a tennis center, have been badly damaged by marine borers; pier rehabilitation is now included in EDC's capital budget. Reconstruction of these slips was to be completed by January 1995.

The cost of preserving these piers is high. Currently there are no Federal programs specifically for pier repair. The Army Corps of Engineers Harbor Drift Program, for example, removes decaying structures but has no provision for rehabilitation. However, ISTEA funds may be available for pier preservation where the project is justifiable as a transportation infrastructural improvement.

Parking Increased tourist activities at the waterfront also raise the issue of parking. The Borough President and the Manhattan Waterfront Task Force adamantly oppose parking at the water's edge. Yet some of the tourist-related uses this plan advocates for the waterfront would be enhanced by the availability of parking. Like it or not, visitors from the metropolitan region and from farther away tend to enter Manhattan by car. This plan therefore recognizes the importance of parking for some waterfront uses, and supports the need to plan for nearby upland parking in such cases.

Water Quality and the Marine Environment Water quality in the rivers that surround Manhattan has improved in recent years, but still has far to go. Protecting and improving water quality of the waterways -- through adequate sewage treatment, reduction in sewage overflows, water conservation and other measures -- is a critical priority for the marine ecosystem, as well as for public enjoyment of the waterfront and the water itself. This plan categorically opposes any new landfills and platform development on pilings, which pose grave threats to the marine ecosystem. The plan also opposes any return to the discredited practice of wetlands restoration as a trade-off for landfilling, the Federal "no net loss" policies of the Bush Administration used wetlands restoration to justify filling in existing wetlands.

Some environmentalists have opposed all floating structures. While floating structures also impact upon the marine environment, the nature and degree of impact varies tremendously. Accordingly, these impacts should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Floating structures that enhance public use of the waterfront, e.g., pool-barges or floating docks, may be well worthwhile. However, excessively large, permanently moored floating structures can have serious negative environmental impacts.

¹³ EDC Report: *Waterfront Infrastructure: The Danger of Marine Borers*.

Improving Planning and Coordination

Jurisdictional Issues A major contributing cause of the derelict condition of the Manhattan waterfront is the absence of any clear mandate for its use, and the lack of any single individual or agency with authority to guide its revitalization. A maze of overlapping and competing governmental jurisdictions blur lines of responsibility and accountability. The result of these sometimes conflicting responsibilities has been the loss of many important opportunities for waterfront planning, and a general pattern of neglect. It has been easy for individual agencies to claim waterfront properties to park vehicles or to store barricades or salt, but thus far no agency has possessed the authority or the political will to prohibit or relocate such activities on the grounds that they do not use waterfront land to good advantage. This results in a random pattern of development and uses, instead of a larger vision of a lively, unified waterfront; no agency has an institutional interest in promoting public access to the waterfront.

City agencies with jurisdiction over portions of Manhattan's waterfront for such matters as planning, development, maintenance and leasing include: EDC; DCP; the Departments of Business Services (DBS), Environmental Protection (DEP), General Services (DGS), Parks and Recreation (DPR), Sanitation (DOS) and Transportation (DOT); and the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). State agencies with waterfront interests include: the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC); the Hudson River Park Conservancy (HRPC); the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP); the Department of Transportation (NYSDOT); and the Urban Development Corporation (UDC). In addition, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (Port Authority) has jurisdiction over some properties, and several Federal agencies -- including most prominently the Army Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard and the Department of Transportation (USDOT) -- play a role in waterfront decision-making. This multitude of public agencies frequently work at cross-purposes with one another, without any sense of unified direction.

Coordinated Planning Pursuant to the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, New York State in 1981 adopted the Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act (WRCRA), which created the New York State Coastal Management Program (CMP) under the direction of the New York State Secretary of State. Its goal is to establish a framework for coordinating State laws and making more rational the decisions of Federal, State and local governments in the coastal area. That framework, embodied in the CMP, is built on 44 policy statements addressing problems and opportunities associated with a wide range of coastal issues.

The State legislation authorized the approval of local programs to return at least partial control of the coastal area to the municipalities -- the level of government most familiar with and affected by local conditions. In 1982, New York City received approval from the State for its local Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP), which was based on State and Federal coastal zone policies.

The WRP established a "coastal zone boundary" within which all discretionary waterfront actions must be reviewed for consistency with coastal zone policies. The City Planning Commission, acting as the City Coastal Commission, is the decision-making body for the local WRP, with the Department of City Planning serving as its staff. Local discretionary actions, including those subject to the City's land use, environmental and variance procedures, and other plans within the coastal zone are reviewed for consistency with the WRP. Review of local actions is built into the existing regulatory process and in most instances occurs concurrently. DCP and the City Coastal Commission also conduct consistency reviews for Federal and State actions, such as the issuance of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredging permit or a State DEC tidal wetlands permit.

Nonetheless, a 1991 report by the Governor's Task Force on Coastal Resources confirmed what local activists had long known: after nearly a decade of experience with the administration of the CMP program, comprehensive planning and active advancement of coastal policies envisioned in the WRCRA had not fully materialized. The Task Force report recommended the revision of the CMP to provide a clear vision for the waterfront in each of the state's coastal regions, one of which is proposed to be New York City. A revised and enhanced WRP is needed to articulate the region's characteristics and priorities and give specificity to the application of WRP policies. New York State is currently revising its CMP. Once this process is completed, DCP intends to revise its WRP, to better articulate the City's goals for the waterfront. CPC should then proceed with formal revisions to the WRP under Section 197-a of the City Charter.

Summary

The City has begun to reawaken to the potential of the long-neglected Manhattan waterfront for water-related commercial uses. Traditional waterfront activities, such as commuter ferry transportation and cargo shipping, are reviving. New uses, ranging from "water taxi" services to marine education and research, to a fuller realization of the waterfront's potential as a tourist destination are being discussed and explored. Government must play an active and imaginative role in this waterfront revival, from coordinating ferry service with existing transit systems to weighing the benefits of using river barges to remove construction excavation wastes. Clearer lines of authority and accountability must replace the currently jumbled public jurisdiction of the waterfront. Government must also insure that the commercial revival of the waterfront goes forward in an environmentally responsible manner.





In some cases, architectural design has unfortunately tended to "privatize" the waterfront.

Chapter III / **The Fiscal And Policy Implications Of Waterfront Revival**

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Implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report requires both the identification of financial resources and a commitment by the City to making reclamation of our waterfront a priority.

Financing Waterfront Renovations

Leasing and Concession Opportunities Leases of piers and other properties and grants of concessions for commercial uses ranging from parking lots and warehouses to maritime tourism and skating rinks are major sources of revenue from City-owned waterfront property.

Many existing leases clearly do not exploit the full potential of the properties and their locations. The best example of this is parking, which occupies a tremendous proportion of the borough's waterfront properties. Ironically, in light of its negative impact on waterfront revitalization, parking is a relatively low income-generating use. DRP currently realizes as little as \$1 per square foot per year for waterfront parking leases (other parking leases, in prime areas, can draw significantly more revenues).¹⁴

In contrast, water-dependent and certain water-enhancing uses avail themselves of the waterfront advantages of these properties, and present a better revenue-generating opportunity than parking. Since the adoption in 1993 of the new waterfront zoning text, the City has started to recognize that uses that are not water-dependent or enhancing should be permitted for only relatively short terms, and at higher rates of return for the City.

Many water-related uses require significant private investment, and therefore also require a commitment of long lease terms, which are only possible if the City makes deliberate long-term decisions about the future of the waterfront.

¹⁴ SOURCE: Division of Real Property, New York City Department of General Services.

Concessions, which are generally granted for shorter terms than are leases, also present opportunities to implement waterfront improvements. For instance, a basic waterfront esplanade can be created by establishing a public access easement through or adjacent to a given property and requiring, as part of the concession agreement, that the concessionaire fund fencing, modest landscaping and maintenance. All or some of the revenues generated by water-enhancing commercial concessions at waterfront sites also can be earmarked to fund the creation or maintenance of public access improvements, or bulkhead/pier repairs, either on-site or at other waterfront sites.

Residential Development In recent years, much waterfront planning has been driven by the idea that residential and commercial development along the waterfront would generate high revenues, which would in turn fund further recreational development or other municipal services. However, this is only one strategy for funding waterfront revitalization, and it has its drawbacks.

The greatest cost of residential development at the water's edge is its potential effectively to privatize the waterfront. Even if public access easements are maintained around residential developments, the presence of private security guards and restricted access areas can create the appearance of a private waterfront and discourage public access. This is particularly so in the case of luxury development, where people of a socio-economic class different from the development residents may feel -- or be made to feel -- conspicuous and unwelcome. For this and other reasons, residential development deemed appropriate for waterfront sites should be designed to serve a broad range of income levels. If, however, residential development is designed to serve a range of income levels, its revenue-generating potential is diminished or eliminated altogether, as revenues from market-rate units become the basis for subsidies to other units. Even then, there is no assurance that the waterfront will not become a *de facto* private enclave. Changes of level (anything other than grade level), irregular patterns, invisible destinations, "tunnels" through buildings and the like all serve to diminish perception of technically public spaces as public, and thus effectively privatize them.

Previously, many proposals for residential waterfront development called for construction on new landfill or on platforms supported by pilings. Such residential development is not the most effective strategy to fund waterfront revitalization, because it is highly expensive and also poses potentially grave threats to the marine ecosystem. Because of opposition by the Borough President and other waterfront advocates to such residential development, the City's new waterfront zoning now prohibits new piers and platforms for this use.

Access Generates Value It is generally agreed that proximity to open space increases real estate values and hence the City's tax base.¹⁵

In addition to property taxes, other mechanisms can capture funds from inboard development near waterfront improvements. One is the imposition of "impact fees" on new development within a defined area adjacent to improvements. An analysis of the corridor adjacent to the proposed Hudson River Esplanade Park, performed for the West Side Waterfront Panel by the consulting firm of Allee King Rosen & Fleming, projected that impact fees of five dollars per square foot of new development in a corridor 1,500 feet from the park would generate more than \$140 million by the year 2018. Impact fees have never been used in New York City, but many other cities have employed them, and, as the West Side projections illustrate, they offer tremendous potential to fund the creation, improvement and maintenance of public access to Manhattan's waterfront.

Another revenue mechanism is the "special assessment district." This involves a supplemental tax rate for property owners within a defined area adjacent to waterfront improvements, including new and existing development. A variation on this mechanism is the "Business Improvement District," an area in which all property owners pay an annual fee collected by the City for local improvements. Currently, the legislation enabling the creation of BIDs does not allow for similar assessments of residential properties, and new legislation probably would be required to permit establishment of "residential improvement districts."

There are many problems with such dedicated funding. While it would assure funding for one City need (in this case construction and maintenance of a waterfront esplanade) it would effectively divert dollars from the City's general fund and bypass the public process of setting City budget priorities. Dedicated funding also requires careful analysis to determine the impact it might have on property owners, tenants and neighborhood businesses adjacent to waterfront areas. Dedicated revenue raised through a local assessment would also raise questions of equity; the capacity of neighborhoods to sustain additional assessments varies greatly along Manhattan's waterfront. Dedicated funding may be more appropriate and equitable for funding improvements intended for primarily local usage than for projects which would draw people from the City as a whole. Nonetheless, it is important to consider a range of possible sources, rather than rely on the conventional wisdom that only through high-density development at the water's edge can the City finance improved waterfront access.

¹⁵ Investments in public open space enhance the image of a city and its neighborhoods, increasing both the marketability and value of local property. This value benefits individual landowners, the real estate development community, and, most importantly, the municipal tax base. Neighborhood Open Space Coalition, *Urban Open Space: An Investment That Pays*, 1990.

Alternative Funding Sources The Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) provides funds for alternative transportation modes, and, in particular, improvements related to bicycle and pedestrian waterfront trail development and pedestrian bridges over highways and rail corridors. ISTEA is primarily composed of "80/20" programs, with 80 per cent funding provided by the Federal government and 20 per cent provided by the local municipality. As described in Chapter Four, several Manhattan projects are slated to receive ISTEA funds, including: the East River Docks Esplanade; Pier A to East 63rd Street; Pier 15 rehabilitation; certain seawall reconstruction; and ferry improvements. The City, the State and the Borough President should work together in developing a coordinated waterfront open space strategy to capture more of these funds.

In the past, EDC offered technical and financial support in obtaining and administering ISTEA grants. However, that agency has recently redefined its criteria for economic development projects, and projects such as bikeways and esplanades -- even with infrastructural improvements and great potential for matching Federal grants -- no longer meet EDC's criteria. In the case of the Stuyvesant Cove walkway/bikeway, for example, EDC has indicated that it will not provide financial or technical assistance in obtaining Federal ISTEA funds. Much of the work that EDC will continue to do on the East River bikeway/walkway is a result of pressure from the Borough President.

In addition, as Community Board 12 pointed out in its extensive comments on the Borough President's draft waterfront report, military resources could productively be put to work to rebuild Manhattan's waterfront, as well as that of the other boroughs and other cities. The Borough President supports the Board's specific suggestion that a "Major Waterfront Reconstruction Project" could be undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Although it is unrealistic to expect private foundations to fund major capital construction work, foundation monies can be used to undertake feasibility and design studies. In 1992, for example, DCP received a grant from the Hudson River Improvement Fund to design a pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Bronx and Manhattan across the Henry Hudson Parkway Bridge to further the New York City portion of the Hudson River Greenway (*see page 106*). There are numerous foundations interested in New York City, its waterfront, or environmental and recreational activities more broadly which could be approached to help initiate waterfront improvements.



Making Waterfront Planning a City Priority

Waterfront Zoning The City's waterfront zoning approved in 1993 is a significant step in facilitating implementation of the Borough President's vision for the Manhattan waterfront. The Borough President is supportive of much of this waterfront zoning, including the following provisions which help to maximize public use of and access to the Manhattan waterfront:

- **The City's new waterfront zoning establishes water-enhancing and water-dependent use categories that help promote appropriate uses and activities on the waterfront. However, the zoning allows all uses that are allowed by the underlying zoning, many of which are not water-related. Uses such as housing, office buildings and parking can be developed on the waterfront, although they do not need or respect its special characteristics.**
- **The City's adopted plan to limit pier structures to 40 feet in height is appropriate, in those instance where it is determined that commercial and residential development should be allowed on the waterfront.**
- **With regard to waterfront sites upland of the piers, the adopted "minimum site coverage" building form is a preferred alternative to the "packing the bulk" building form originally proposed by DCP.**
- **One of the most important aspects of public waterfront planning is the provision of public open space, as well as pedestrian and visual access to the waterfront. The waterfront zoning mandates these provisions as part of any new development. These requirements are a significant improvement upon the previous process, in which the City negotiated with developers on an ad-hoc basis.**
- **The new zoning includes waterfront terms not previously defined in the Zoning Resolution, such as piers, platforms and floating structures. The zoning also expands the districts in which certain water-dependent uses, such as ferry operations, can be located.**
- **The waterfront zoning removes the development potential for lands under water beyond the bulkhead line. Previously, this underwater land was considered part of the zoning lot, and its development rights were transferrable to the lot's upland portion. This enabled development inappropriate in scale and out of context with its surrounding area.**
- **The waterfront zoning links new development to the provision of a public esplanade with design standards and minimum width requirements. This requirement assists in this plan's goal of creating a continuous esplanade encircling the island of Manhattan.**

The City's waterfront zoning, however, has not adequately addressed the following issues:

- **A more restrictive definition of water-enhancing uses within Group 6 is needed. Those retail uses that do not provide a clear public benefit to a waterfront location -- such as hardware stores, shoe repair shops and laundromats -- should not be considered water-enhancing.**
- **The optional inclusionary housing bonus in high-density districts does not adequately address the need for economically integrated housing in any new residential development.**
- **The zoning does not sufficiently limit parking on the waterfront, which is an inappropriate use.**
- **By not requiring public waterfront access in areas zoned for manufacturing and certain maritime uses, the zoning does not ensure the creation of a continuous esplanade encircling the island of Manhattan.**
- **While linking public open space to new development is an important principle in the zoning, a greater percentage of the zoning lot should be dedicated public space.**
- **The Parks Council has proposed new zoning regulations concerning the shadows cast by new buildings, as a means to protect sunlight in parks and other public open spaces. The applicability of this proposal on waterfront open spaces should be considered as well.**

Enforcement, Maintenance and Security The creation of public waterfront access will not ensure public usage of waterfront improvements if they are not safe, easy to get to, and properly maintained. As with so-called "public plazas," developers can create waterfront "public spaces" that may be blocked off to the public either permanently or intermittently to discourage public use, as occurs with the esplanade in front of the Water Club restaurant on the East River (*see page 74*). Further, there needs to be a mechanism that guarantees completion of public waterfront improvements by developers who agree to undertake them as part of private waterfront developments or as part of private upland projects. Although these improvements are usually tied to restrictive declarations that developers enter into with DCP, this has not always ensured the completion of amenities. Even recognizing the City's problematic fiscal condition, it nevertheless seems crucial to create an enforcement entity either through the Department of Buildings, DPR, or some new entity, to guarantee waterfront improvement completion and availability.

Maintenance The City's new waterfront zoning requires private waterfront developers to maintain the required public esplanade. With regard to public waterfront improvements -- either developed in conjunction with private upland developments or undertaken by the City -- the ability to maintain the space is essential. The creation of a waterfront open space fund similar to the East River Esplanade fund should be considered to fund the maintenance of new waterfront open space. Interest income of approximately \$155,000 per year from the \$2.2 million East River Esplanade fund is used to pay for maintenance. An additional \$1.5 million has been added to this fund to pay for maintenance of additional pieces of the East River esplanade and the pavilion park at East 60th Street.¹⁶

The creation of a dedicated maintenance fund would help gain support for public waterfront projects. It is critical that maintenance funds be identified prior to the commencement of any new public waterfront open space project. Because of substantial cuts to DPR's budget, the Department resisted supporting any new waterfront improvements. DPR's FY 1990 budget of \$193.5 million was cut drastically by FY 1992 to 127.2 million. Although DPR's budget was increased in FY 1993 to \$155.5 million, it was slightly reduced in FY 1994 and significantly reduced in FY 1995. In light of ongoing concerns about park maintenance, the emphasis in planning and design must be on simple, low-tech, low maintenance improvements.

The Borough President is sympathetic to DPR's current fiscal condition, and will continue to lobby for increased funds for DPR in future City budgets to ensure maintenance of its existing facilities as well as of new waterfront parks that will be created in the future.

Security Security must be considered from two points of view: that of the park users, and that of the waterfront improvement. For public waterfront areas, the best way to ensure safety and limit vandalism is to maximize access and use. The better the access, the safer the park user is likely to be and the less likely vandalism will occur. Vandalism is likely to be heaviest along those stretches of the waterfront that provide limited or minimal access.

Until Spring 1994, this point was illustrated by the waterfront park on the East River between 36th and 38th Streets. Because the only access to the park was via a tunnel under the FDR Drive at 37th Street, usage was limited, resulting in vandalism and safety problems. A new pedestrian esplanade extending from 34th to 36th Streets now provides additional access to the park. The resultant increased usage of the park should help ensure safety and limit vandalism.

¹⁶ SOURCE: Department of Parks and Recreation.

For waterfront areas that provide public access as part of commercial development, the issue of security is likely to be presented within a framework of public access versus the security concerns of the private development. The Borough President reiterates a strong commitment to public access, in the firm belief that the best security is heavy usage.

Although waterfront industrial uses are not incompatible with public access, one must take account of the potential safety hazards that exist for pedestrians around some waterfront industrial uses. Therefore, public access must be carefully planned to prevent such hazards.

Interim Uses In most cases, public access to and use of the waterfront is not an all-or-nothing venture. The City does not necessarily have to wait until millions of dollars are available to begin reclaiming the Manhattan waterfront.

In many areas a vicious cycle is at work: The waterfront is inaccessible and unattractive, so few people go there and it becomes deserted, dangerous and increasingly dilapidated, making it even more unattractive, scaring even more people away. Unfortunately, this cycle can leave the impression with planners and budget-makers that the community doesn't care about the waterfront, or that there is no demand or constituency for waterfront improvements.

It is critically important to think about interim improvements that can help reclaim the waterfront for public enjoyment. Special events at the waterfront can do wonders to remind people that the waterfront is there, that it is not so hard to get to, and that it can be safe. Such events can galvanize communities and create a strong constituency for more far-reaching waterfront improvements. For example, festivals are held every year along the Greenwich Village waterfront and at South Street Seaport. Festivals are planned for the Harlem Piers area at West 125th Street, and this plan recommends festivals on the Harlem River waterfront in East Harlem.

Similarly, while the City plans for more extensive capital projects along the waterfront, *ad hoc* physical improvements can begin to make the waterfront more inviting. Jersey barriers can delineate bicycle lanes and pedestrian areas, youth employment programs can clean up, maintain and even do some limited landscaping of waterfront properties. Signage (multi-lingual, to encourage broad public access) directing people to the waterfront, or, where the waterfront is inaccessible, indicating street routes near the water, could create a great degree of continuity and consistency along Manhattan's waterfront.

Many plans for the waterfront are long-term goals which are simply not within the City's means at this time. But the lack of resources to implement the entire long-term vision today should not stop City leaders from commenting on, adding to and expressing support for this plan; similarly, the lack of current resources must not become the justification for decisions which permanently foreclose these opportunities.

Summary

Making the waterfront accessible to new recreational and commercial uses will require new sources of public funds and revisions of City policies. Changing current City leasing and concession policies could generate greater revenue for waterfront improvements while reinforcing a commitment to reopening the waterfront to public access and appropriate water-enhancing and -dependent uses. (Where leases are granted for non-water-related uses such as parking, for example, terms should be no longer than one or two years so as to not obstruct planning for more appropriate water-related uses.) The temptation to finance waterfront improvements through "luxury" residential development should be avoided; such developments have a tendency toward *de facto* "privatizing" of the waterfront. Instead, the value-enhancing effects of waterfront improvements on nearby property can be tapped by government through a variety of alternative means, all of which require fuller discussion.

The City's new waterfront zoning regulations embody welcome major provisions that ought to enhance public enjoyment of the waterfront, immediately as well as in the long-term. Refinements of those regulations would strengthen the goal of public access and appropriate use. The City must also address such issues as open space maintenance and security if the benefits inherent in the Manhattan waterfront revival are to be realized and protected.



Section Two / **On The Waterfront: Site-Specific
Descriptions And Recommendations**

On The Waterfront: Site-Specific Descriptions And Recommendations

This section addresses each segment of Manhattan's waterfront from the perspective of its potential for access and use. It begins at Battery Park, proceeds north along the East and Harlem Rivers to the northern tip of the island, then south along the Hudson River's shores. It also takes in the smaller islands that are part of the Borough of Manhattan. Each subsection of the chapter describes existing conditions, previous and current plans and ownership or jurisdiction of a specific stretch of waterfront.

The end of each subsection presents short- and long-term recommendations concerning the described area. These site-specific recommendations have been guided by overarching planning principles:

- **Waterfront planning should maximize continuous public waterfront access.**
- **Waterfront planning should aim to take maximum advantage of existing topographical features and to minimize land use conflicts.**
- **Water-dependent and water-enhanced uses should be encouraged.**
- **Waterfront planning should maximize protection of critical marine habitats -- which means, among other things, no new landfilling, no platform development on pilings and no attempts at wetlands restoration -- as well as protection against potential flooding.**
- **Waterfront planning should consider both short-term and long-term uses of waterfront sites.**
- **Waterfront planning must take into account the limited government resources available without foreclosing opportunities for the future.**
- **Agency jurisdictions should be realigned to reflect appropriate uses, assure more accountability and streamline the policy-making process.**

- **The relative paucity of development along the waterfront has preserved much of its social, aesthetic, historical and cultural significance to the City. Any planning efforts must address the waterfront's rich and diverse heritage.**
- **Waterfront planning should balance the economic benefits generated by new water-related commercial uses, which would help increase the tax base and generate jobs, against the environmental and quality of life impacts generated by the proposed uses.**
- **Waterfront planning should not only be conducted at a boroughwide and citywide level, but should also include local communities.**

The chapter also presents demographic and "open space" profiles of each Community Board along the waterfront. These profiles, prepared to conform with the requirements of Section 197-a of the Charter, highlight the dearth of open space in Manhattan. The Department of City Planning has defined a minimum appropriate "open space ratio" of 2.5 acres of open space for every 1,000 residents. Boroughwide, Manhattan's ratio is 1.48 per 1,000 residents; in many Community Boards, the ratio is well below this average.

Community Board I

Battery Park to Pier 15

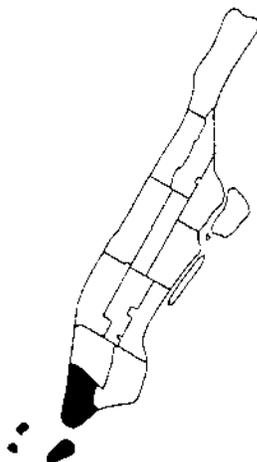
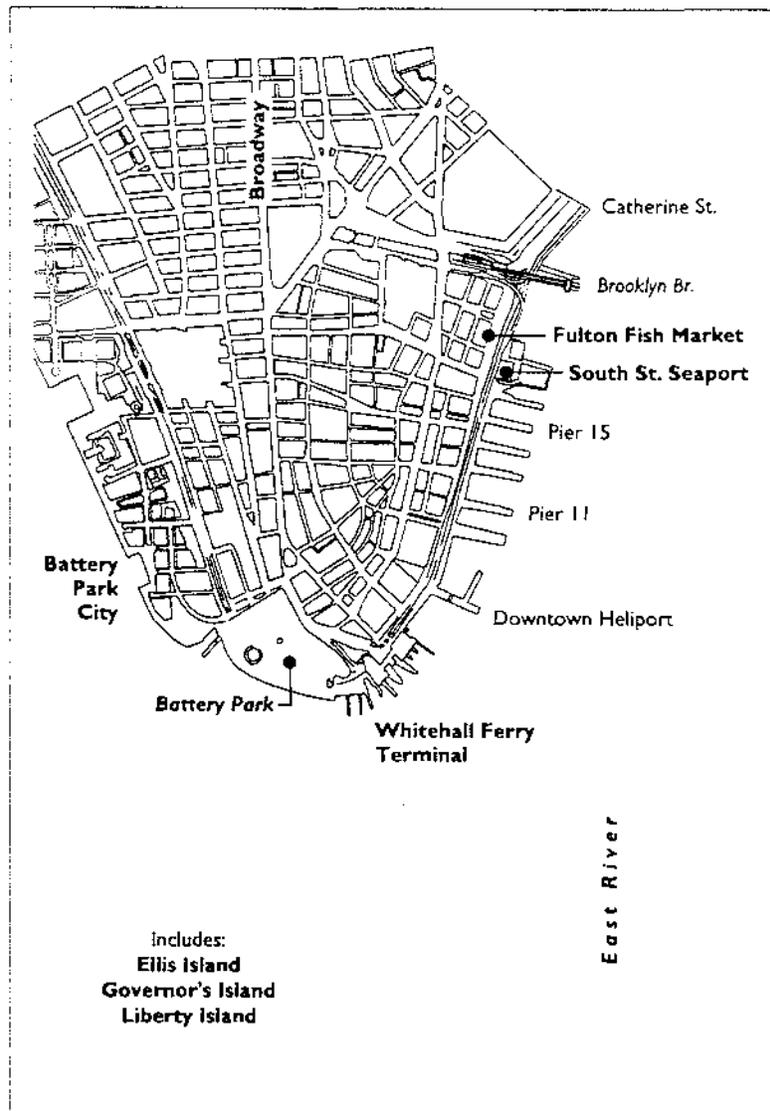
This portion of the waterfront comprises the original Port of New York, the foundation of the City's maritime economy and rapid growth. Today it is a busy transportation and tourism center that includes Battery Park and its ferry service to Liberty and Ellis Islands, the Whitehall Ferry Terminal and the downtown heliport at Pier 6.

Improved public access to the waterfront has often been cited as essential to improving Lower Manhattan's economy and ambiance. In 1993, the Department of City Planning, working with the Economic Development Corporation, other City agencies and the Downtown Lower Manhattan Association, published a "Plan for Lower Manhattan" (the area below Chambers Street) calling for the rehabilitation of Battery Park and a continuous pedestrian esplanade extending from Pier A, south of Battery Park City, to the South Street Seaport. In May 1994, EDC received a Federal ISTEA grant of approximately \$560,000 for a planning/design study for a bikeway/walkway originating at Pier A and extending along the East River waterfront to 63rd Street.

Community Board I¹⁷

Population 25,366

Located at the confluence of the East and Hudson Rivers, Community Board 1 contains the most direct and varied waterfront access in the borough. Prominent public waterfront spaces include the Battery Park City esplanade, historic Battery Park, with its ferries to Ellis and Liberty Islands, and the South Street Seaport. Planned development of the southern portion of the proposed Hudson River Park and esplanade, and the ongoing rehabilitation of the Whitehall Ferry Terminal add to this dynamic waterfront life. The Community Board's rapidly growing population, including an exceptionally high proportion of children, makes the need for additional open space especially pressing. ♦



	CB I	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+59.4%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$47,445	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	1.85	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	31.3%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	15.6%	17.5%	22.4%

¹⁷ All population figures are from the 1990 Census.

Plans for the redesign and rehabilitation of Battery Park also are proceeding. A 1988 Battery Park "master plan," commissioned by the Battery Park City Authority and DPR, was developed by the design firm of Cooper Eckstut. It called for a major redesign of the park, including the creation of a two-level esplanade. The wider upper-level esplanade would be shaded by trees and provide protection from the summer sun for people waiting on line for the Liberty Island/Ellis Island ferry. (In 1991, 2.54 million people took the Circle Line Ferry from Battery Park to Liberty and Ellis Islands.)¹⁸ The narrower esplanade below would be located at the water's edge.

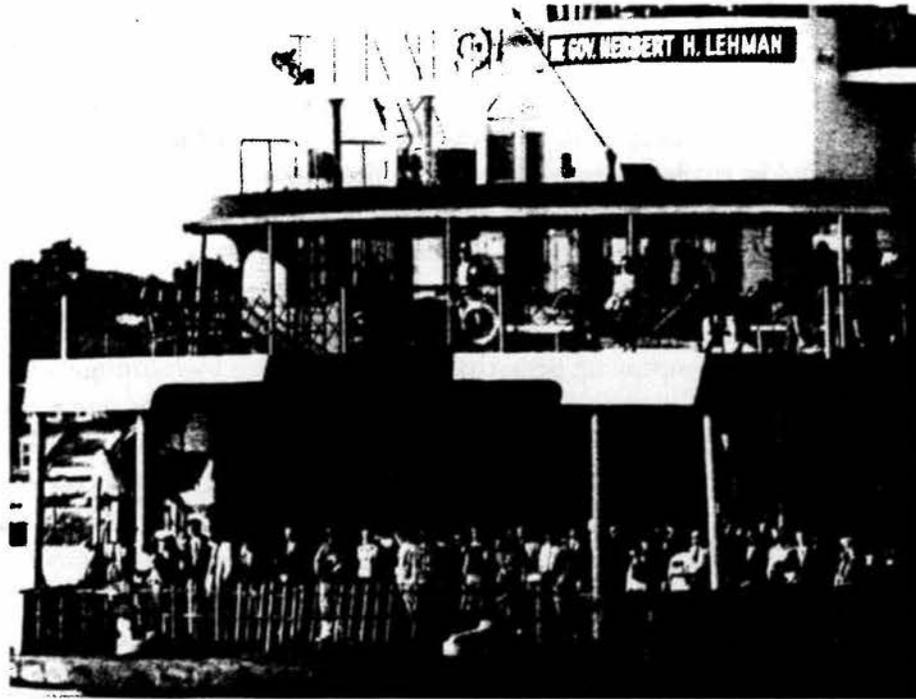
The plan also calls for improving pedestrian and visual access by reconfiguring entrances to the park to line up with streets, widening the park's perimeter, creating a large green open space within the park and moving monuments out of the park to its perimeter. The project is designed to be constructed in phases, at a total estimated cost of \$30 million. The Conservancy for Historic Battery Park was recently established to create a public/private partnership to raise funds to implement this plan. The Conservancy has begun to identify funding sources. Battery Park has been included in the Business Improvement District for Lower Manhattan, which was formed in the fall of 1994. The BID has allocated the park a budget line of \$100,000 per year for maintenance.

A prominent feature of Battery Park is Castle Clinton, erected by the State in 1811 as a fortification. The fort was handed over to the Federal government in 1855, and became a processing facility for incoming European immigrants, handling 7.5 million immigrants during its service. The structure was given to the City Parks Commission in 1890. The National Park Service, which now has jurisdiction over Castle Clinton, is interested in replacing the roof and turning it into a visitor and historic resource center for Lower Manhattan.

To the immediate east of Battery Park is the Whitehall Ferry Terminal, the Manhattan terminus of the Staten Island Ferry, the City's most popular waterborne transportation line. In the 1980s, a proposed office development atop the ferry building engendered community opposition for several years and was withdrawn. In September 1991 a fire damaged the Whitehall Ferry Terminal building. As destructive and disruptive as it was, the fire presented the City with an opportunity to rebuild the terminal. EDC, in conjunction with DOT, is currently developing plans to rebuild the terminal as a building worthy of its spectacular site and important function, and to permit expanded ferry service. Goals include improving vehicular, pedestrian and subsurface transportation routes that converge at the this site, providing convenient and attractive service for commuters, tourists, staff and visitors and, above all, creating a symbolic portal to Manhattan.

¹⁸ SOURCES: Circle Line and Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Staten Island Ferry at
Whitehall Terminal



As part of this effort, a design competition was held. The design proposal of the architecture team Venturi Scott Brown and Anderson/Schwartz was selected in 1992. The design includes a clock facing the harbor that will be 120 feet in diameter and ten stories high. The proposed building will be made of metal and green-tinted glass, with a 125 foot-high barrel-vaulted waiting room and restaurant.

Despite the opposition of the Borough President, the Administration recently has allowed cars back onto the Staten Island ferry. Because of this decision, the design of the esplanade and the 2.5 acre public plaza in front of the terminal building will be modified to allow automobiles. The total cost for the project is estimated to be \$117 million. However, the Administration, in light of the City's current financial problems, is looking to reduce the project's cost significantly.

As part of this project, the City and the Whitehall Ferry Terminal design team are planning the ferry terminal esplanade in conjunction with the eventual relocation of the Coast Guard Building, which would allow for a water's edge connection to Battery Park.

The Battery Maritime Building, under the jurisdiction of DOT, currently houses City agency offices. EDC is conducting a study of the structural condition of the building, which stands on pilings. Two arts organizations, Creative Time and Dance Theatre Workshop, had been promised renovated performance spaces here as part of the City's agreement with the developer once slated to build an office tower at South Ferry, a proposal which has since been withdrawn. Dance Theatre Workshop moved its offices

to the building. While the City is still committed to providing the two cultural groups with additional space in the building, no funds have yet been identified to undertake the renovation, estimated at \$7 million.

Proceeding along the East River shore, an existing pedestrian esplanade links the Battery-Maritime Building to Pier 11 at Wall Street. It skirts Pier 6 at Coenties Slip, which serves as the Downtown Heliport for the Wall Street area. The Port Authority operates this heliport, which is ideally located. EDC issued an RFP in January 1994 to shift tourist helicopter trips away from the 34th Street heliport, and recently accepted a bid from Liberty Helicopter to begin service in Spring 1995. In addition to shifting flights to the Downtown Heliport, EDC proposes to limit all helicopter sightseeing trips in New York to weekends, reducing the number of helicopter operations from the 34th Street Heliport by almost half.

The area from Coenties Slip to Maiden Lane includes four open, concrete piers -- Piers 9, 11, 13 and 14. This area is the subject of EDC's "East River Docks Urban Design/Landscape Study." The study, conducted by Quennell Rothschild Associates, explores ways to improve access to the piers and widen and extend the north-south esplanade and identifies "interim" (ten-year) water-related uses for the piers that would generate revenues and encourage broad public access. The conceptual theme of the plan is "people's relation to the water." It calls for a 60-foot wide esplanade and selection of revenue-generating public uses for the piers through an RFP process.

In addition, in January 1994, Community Board 1 passed a resolution identifying water-dependent and water-enhancing commercial uses that would be acceptable to the community on these piers. This broadly supported resolution was passed after extensive meetings with members of the residential and business community.

In May 1994, EDC conditionally designated developers for pier and in-water uses for Pier 9, a proposal that had the strong support of Community Board 1. The proposal included a restaurant and small kiosks for artisans to produce and sell crafts on the pier, as well as pier docking for a dinner boat operator. According to EDC, designation for this project was never awarded because the developer was unable to provide the necessary financial backing. EDC has indicated that it intends to issue a new RFP for the site.

EDC has \$10 million in 1994 City capital funds budgeted for repairs to Piers 11, 13 and 14. EDC has also received an ISTEAs grant to prepare final design and construction documents for an esplanade for the area between Piers 9 and 15 at the South Street Seaport. EDC has applied for an ISTEAs grant for construction of this esplanade two years hence. This work will be coordinated with the larger East River walkway/bikeway study.

Recommendations

- **The public/private partnership that the Conservancy for Historic Battery Park has created should work toward implementing the Battery Park master plan as funds become available.**
- **The Coast Guard structure in Battery Park should be relocated, as this will greatly enhance the link between Battery Park and the new ferry terminal.**
- **The ongoing effort by the City to use the unfortunate opportunity of a fire to develop a better-designed terminal facility for the Staten Island Ferry, taking advantage of the site's prime location and spectacular views, should be encouraged and fully implemented. However, the Administration's decision to permit cars on the ferry should be revised.**
- **The Battery-Maritime Building is a handsome and spacious structure, and contains its own docks. At least a portion of it should be devoted to public uses. A large indoor market, or some other commercial use that would complement the redevelopment of Piers 9-14 and the reconstruction of the Whitehall Ferry Terminal, could fund the renovation of cultural space.**
- **In contrast to EDC's new definition for economic development, which favors large development projects, the Borough President supports smaller-scale projects that activate and enliven the waterfront and have more broad-based community support. Such projects can still generate significant revenues for New York City as magnets for tourism. Therefore, for any RFP that is issued for Piers 9-14, the Borough President strongly encourages EDC to look to the uses recommended in the Community Board I resolution.**

South Street Seaport to Fulton Fish Market

The South Street Seaport development, located on the waterfront at Piers 15, 16 and 17 and upland, is a major commercial and tourist attraction in Lower Manhattan. In 1992, the Seaport Museum and Seaport Marketplace had 13.5 million visitors.¹⁹ The Seaport complex contains approximately 250,000 square feet of retail space and 110,000 square feet of museum-related space, and has a public plaza and esplanade at the water's edge.

Infrastructure repairs at the Seaport piers are planned. In May 1994 the South Street Seaport Corporation received ISTEA funds to begin design work for stabilization of the deteriorated Pier 15. The railing at the edge of the Pier 17 retail complex has been a safety concern for the community, as its wide openings could allow children to fall into the river. Borough President Messinger budgeted \$55,000 in Fiscal Year 1993 to repair

¹⁹ SOURCE: Seaport Marketplace.



South Street Seaport

the waterfront railings at Pier 17 to increase safety by creating openings no wider than six inches between rails. Although the design of this railing has been approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the work has not yet been undertaken by the South Street Seaport Corporation.

The South Street Seaport's upland areas are within the South Street Seaport Historic District. Seaport activities, which evolved from activity at a small cluster of wharves in the 18th century to the bustle of the leading port in the nation by the mid-19th century, are reflected in the mercantile buildings erected in the days of packet ships, clippers and steamers. Retaining much of this 19th century atmosphere, the Seaport Historic District includes rare surviving examples of Georgian-Federal and Greek Revival-style buildings.

As part of the area's redevelopment, revenue from the Seaport was dedicated to the South Street Seaport Museum. However, these funds and this relationship have proved inadequate for the museum to fulfill its mission. In late 1993, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by EDC, the City and the South Street Seaport Museum, splitting the Museum from the Seaport and committing EDC to assume some of the South Street Seaport Corporation's financial obligations to the museum.

Immediately to the north of South Street Seaport at Pier 17 is the Fulton Fish Market, the largest wholesale fish market in the country. It also serves, to a much smaller extent, as a retail market. In 1992, more than 74 million pounds of fish, representing over 200 species, was sold.²⁰ The Fish Market is a major employer and commercial center, and

²⁰ SOURCE: National Marine Fisheries Service, United States Department of Commerce.

requires space for pick-ups, deliveries and parking. Unfortunately, the waterside link between the Seaport and the Fish Market is closed to the public, and no inboard walkway connects these two attractions; pedestrian traffic between them is on South Street itself.

Recommendations

- **EDC and the South Street Seaport Corporation should act swiftly to construct the new railing at Pier 17. The South Street Seaport Corporation should continue to work closely with the Borough President, Community Board 1, the Seaport Community Coalition and EDC to resolve other safety and financial problems related to the Seaport.**
- **EDC should work with the South Street Seaport Corporation, the Fulton Fish Market, the Borough President and Community Board 1 to develop a north-south pedestrian and bicycle connection in front of the Seaport and Fish Market or, if feasible in the long-term, outboard of them.**
- **The easy pedestrian access to the waterfront and current bulkhead reconstruction work along the waterfront between the Seaport and East River Park should make work on a bikeway/esplanade a priority. The Borough President is supporting an ISTE A application for the construction of such a bikeway/walkway to coincide approximately with City Fiscal Years 1997 and 1998. In any case, maintenance should be made a requirement of any lease negotiated along this area of the waterfront.**

Community Board 3

Rutgers Slip to East River Park

Heading north toward Rutgers Slip from the Fulton Fish Market, the pedestrian encounters a bulkhead area that, while largely dilapidated, is nonetheless highly accessible. This area is marred by gaping holes in the pavement, is littered with debris, and is occupied by parking lots, waiting areas for limousines and car services, junked automobiles and the homeless.

Bulkhead reconstruction is a precondition to any meaningful waterfront improvement in the area between Rutgers Slip and the Seaport. Work was completed on the area from Rutgers Slip to Market Slip in 1993. An adjoining section is presently under construction and is scheduled for completion in May 1995. The portion extending to the Seaport will be completed in 1996, upon completion of the reconstruction of the FDR Drive.

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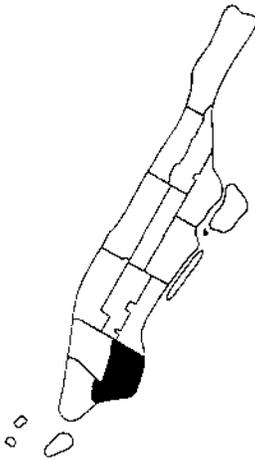
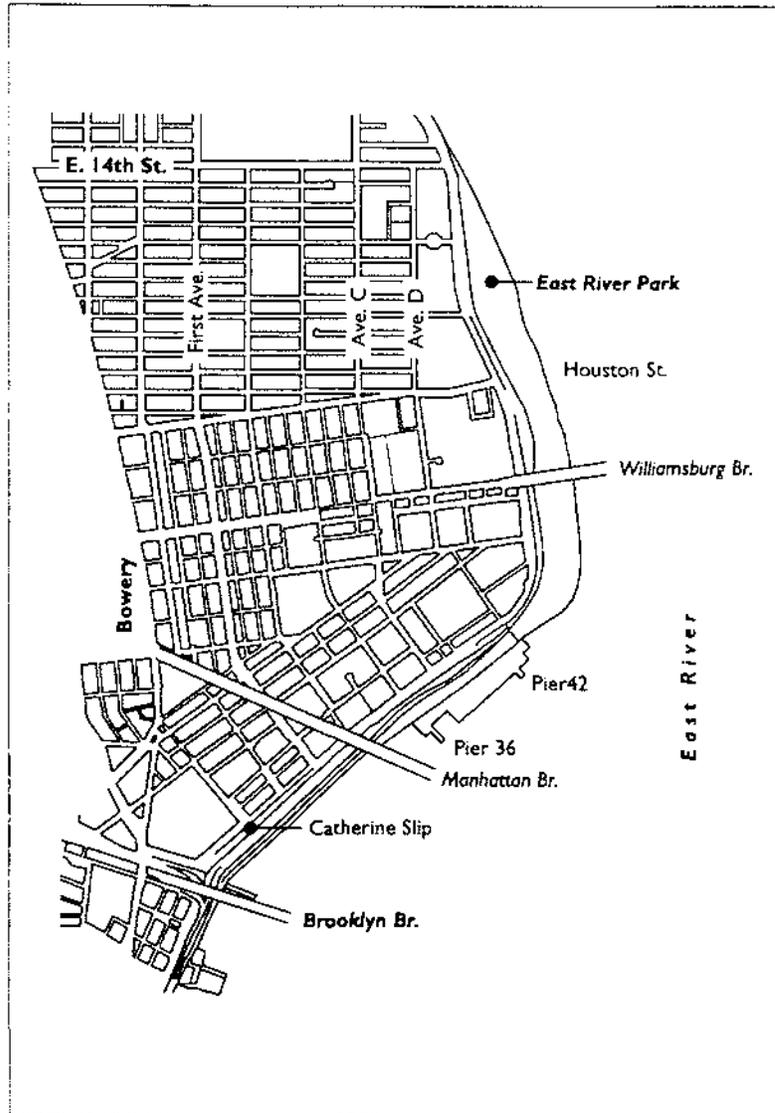
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Community Board 3

Population 154,848

Community Board 3 has a median household income well below the citywide level, coupled with a very high population density. The existing open space ratio of 0.72 acres per 1000 persons is clearly insufficient for this Community Board's needs. Open space is also difficult to use; the FDR Drive in particular acts as a barrier to existing waterfront open space. Where waterfront access exists, there are few recreational amenities. A high proportion (more than 40 per cent) of the Board's residents are seniors and children, for whom easy access to open space is especially important. ♦



	CB 3	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+4.4%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$20,007	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	0.72	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	22.9%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	18.0%	17.5%	22.4%



**Bulkhead near
Manhattan Bridge**

The Borough President was the co-applicant of an ISTEA application submitted on November 15, 1994 for funds to construct the East River bikeway/walkway project that would extend between the Fulton Fish Market (Peck Slip) and East River Park (Jackson Street) and has committed to providing the required local matching funds.

During the Dinkins Administration, EDC planned to issue an RFP for a floating restaurant at Catherine Slip after necessary reconstruction of the adjacent bulkhead was completed. Although this concept never came to fruition, it is consistent with the nearby South Street Seaport complex, and would not preclude continuous access along the bulkhead. In fact, an activity- and revenue-generating use such as this could promote the idea of an active waterfront esplanade connecting two major waterfront anchors, South Street Seaport and East River Park.

Painted bicycle and jogging lanes run along South Street from Dover Street, immediately south of the Brooklyn Bridge, north to East River Park.

Parking facilities for several City agencies are located at Pier 35/36. In September 1992 the City Council, over the strenuous opposition of the Borough President, other local elected officials and Community Board 3, approved a \$28.5 million DGS proposal for a new garage and fueling facility at Pier 36. This facility was intended to accommodate

DOS vehicles for Community Boards 3 and 6, as well as vehicles for other City agencies. As approved, the plan included some concessions to the community including a plan for a half-acre of public open space at the southern end of the site.

In 1993, pursuant to a community-initiated legal challenge to this City action, the courts held that the site selection process for this facility had contradicted the letter and spirit of the City's "fair share" procedures. In early 1994 City agencies began a dialogue with several Community Boards to identify a workable alternative site for the DOS vehicles, while considering such alternatives to the fueling facility as contracting with private gas stations. A site was identified in Community Board 4 as a temporary solution for CB 6 vehicles.

After lengthy negotiations, an agreement was struck between the City and Community Board 3 to use the new garage structure as the permanent home for some 87 Board 3 sanitation vehicles. Operating shifts were reduced and an ad hoc committee of elected officials and community representatives will oversee any proposed changes in the hours of operation. The City has agreed to provide up to \$1.5 million in capital funds for a recreational center on the northern one-third of Pier 36.

The need for recreational space for the neighborhood adjoining the site is great. It is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the City; some 70,000 people reside within a half-mile radius of the piers, housed in more than 25,000 dwelling units. There are also 12 schools in that same half-mile radius, with a total enrollment of more than 10,000 students. The concentration of children per square mile in the neighborhood is much greater than that of both Manhattan and the city at-large.

During the public review period on the proposed garage and fueling facility, the Borough President's Office held a design "charette" to brainstorm ideas for alternative uses for this site. Priorities identified for the site by this process were: economic development, including community-based employment and entrepreneurial opportunities; education, particularly opportunities for learning about the environment; and meaningful public access to the waterfront. Features included in the resulting design, many of which were also suggested at a Community Board 3 forum, were: a waterfront esplanade, a recycling center, an environmental education center, a park pavilion and water park, a green market and retail vendor market, a restaurant, a catering/party space, and theater and rehearsal space.

Two prison barges, the *Bibby Venture* and the *Bibby Resolution*, were docked at Piers 36 and 40 for several years. Empty since 1992, they were sold and removed in September 1994.

At Pier 42, cargo shipping is now re-emerging after a several-year hiatus from Manhattan's shores. Formerly known as the "banana pier," Pier 42 is being used for coffee shipping, storage and distribution by Express Industries, which has a ten-year lease with EDC for the entire pier, with a renewal option for an additional ten years. This is an appropriate waterfront use that generates revenue for the City and 15-20 jobs.

Due to fluctuations in the coffee market, Express Industries is importing less coffee than originally anticipated, and using less pier storage space; as a result, the company may sublease a portion of the pier for other purposes.

Recommendations

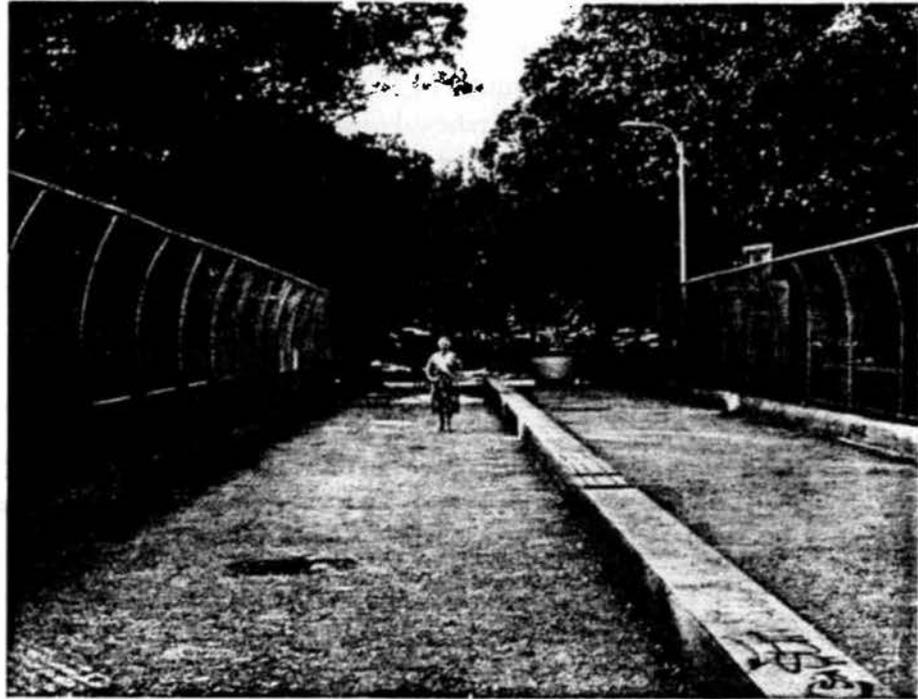
- **The Borough President encourages EDC to pursue a proposal for Catherine Slip. As part of the RFP requirement, the developer of the restaurant should be required to maintain an esplanade from Catherine to Market Streets.**
- **In regards to Piers 36 and 40, the Borough President supports the reversal of the City's initial decision to site prison facilities. This use was inappropriate on the waterfront, and proved to be highly costly to the City.**
- **Any sublease of Pier 42 should be for water-dependent uses only. Efforts to revive maritime industrial uses along this portion of the waterfront deserve very strong support. Such uses enliven the waterfront and can complement the goal of a continuous waterfront esplanade. Recognizing that they can limit access to the water's edge, facilities can and should be designed to provide for safe and unobstructed pedestrian passage to existing or contemplated esplanades to the north and south.**

East River Park

East River Park runs outboard of the FDR Drive from Jackson Street to just south of 14th Street. It was built in the 1930s by Robert Moses at the time of the expansion of the highway which was to become the FDR Drive. The park, under the jurisdiction of DPR, underwent a major bulkhead repair in 1993. Additional bulkhead repair work is scheduled to be completed in 1995.

Because the park is separated from its users by the FDR Drive, access and safety are major problems. The southernmost entrance to the park is across South Street from Montgomery Street. It requires pedestrians to compete with traffic getting on and off the Drive, and can be very dangerous.

East River Park



The second entrance to the park is an overpass from Corlears Hook Park. This is a model overpass: It connects one park to another, with walls high enough to provide safety, but low enough to provide a view. A third entrance, via the newly built overpass at Delancey Street, contrasts: It is narrow and has high walls, making it uninviting and potentially dangerous, and is built at an angle to the street, so that it fails to function as a natural extension of the street and diminishes visual access to the park and the waterfront. This unfortunate design serves as a reminder of the importance of well-designed access for park usage and safety.

There is also access to the park at Houston Street, but pedestrians and bicyclists must cross four lanes of traffic without traffic lights. The 1988 New York State Transportation Bond Act provided funds to design and construct a new FDR Drive exit ramp at Grand Street and new entrance and exit ramps at Houston Street. The Grand Street exit is scheduled to be completed in 1998. Work on the Houston Street ramps has stopped, pending completion of other construction on the FDR Drive.

Two overpasses at 6th and 10th Streets suffer from the same problems as the Delancey Street entrance: from the pedestrian vantage point at Avenue D, there is no indication that either street continues over the highway to provide waterfront access.

A very narrow path runs from the north end of the park adjacent to the FDR Drive. Immediately north of the park, alongside an area now leased by the City to Con Edison, the path becomes so narrow that it is physically impossible to ride a bicycle on it.

Recommendations

- **NYS DOT should work with the Borough President and Community Board 3 to improve pedestrian access to East River Park as part of its FDR Drive reconstruction.**
- **The Montgomery and Houston Streets access points should be made safer through installation of a traffic light and/or "zebra stripe" crosswalk.**
- **Signage should be installed to help compensate for the lack of visual access at 6th and 10th Streets by alerting pedestrians to waterfront access points. The streets leading to such access points should be enhanced by additional trees and other plantings, to form "green corridors" leading to the park and river.**
- **An additional overpass at 8th Street near the Baruch Houses would improve access and serve a substantial population; such construction should be considered in the long-term.**
- **Signage should be installed to help compensate for the lack of visual access at Delancey Street by alerting pedestrians to waterfront access points. The area of Delancey Street leading to this overpass should be enhanced by additional trees and other plantings, to form a "green corridor" leading to the park and river.**
- **Access from the northern end of East River Park to the area further north would be greatly enhanced by the simple relocation of a chainlink fence at the Con Edison plant that would appear to have no bearing whatsoever on plant operations.**

Community Board 6

East 16th to East 24th Street (Stuyvesant Cove)

This area, now known as Stuyvesant Cove, offers breathtaking views of the mid-Manhattan skyline to the north, and pedestrian access directly to the water's edge. The Stuyvesant Cove area is immediately adjacent to two large and dense residential developments, Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village. These two projects contain some 11,260 residential units that are home to more than 19,000 people.

Approximately nine per cent of the population is under 18 years of age, while approximately 43 per cent of the population is 60 and over. Since more than half of the area residents are children and seniors, open space and recreation facilities are sorely needed.

A large mixed-use development known as River Walk was proposed to be built at this site, largely on platforms on top of pilings in the East River. The thousands of pilings that would have been necessary to support platforms were a major environmental concern. The River Walk application was withdrawn in 1990; in response to the urging of the Borough President, other elected officials and community leaders, EDC in 1992 terminated the Related Companies' designation as developer of the site.

In 1990, Community Board 6 adopted 19 specific planning objectives as well as three broad policies to guide development of open space at Stuyvesant Cove. The three broad policies are:

- **Easily accessible public parks and open space should be developed at the waterfront.**
- **Water-dependent/water-related uses should be encouraged when these uses are compatible with the open space goals of CB 6.**
- **The waterfront plan for CB 6 should be consistent with overall waterfront planning goals of DCP and the Manhattan Borough President.**

In July 1992, the Community Board selected the firm of Heintz/Ruddick as a consultant to conduct a Stuyvesant Cove open space study, with funding provided by Assemblyman Steven Sanders and the Borough President. The "Stuyvesant Cove Open Space Study," completed in June 1993, presents a plan for a waterfront park. It calls for creation of a sandy beach, a pedestrian esplanade and bicycle path, an environmental center and cafe, a restaurant and deck to be built above an existing parking garage, and a boathouse with restrooms, a concession stand, and storage space for kayaks. The Community Board received a \$575,000 ISTEA grant, to be administered by EDC, to develop design and construction documents for the park and esplanade. The RFP for a design was to be issued by the end of 1994. In addition, the Borough President has committed to provide a portion of the required local match for another ISTEA grant for the Stuyvesant Cove project. If approved, the grant would fund construction of a bikeway/walkway from 18th to 34th Streets.

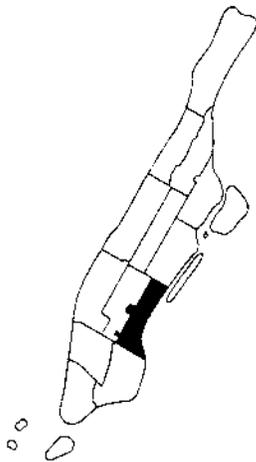
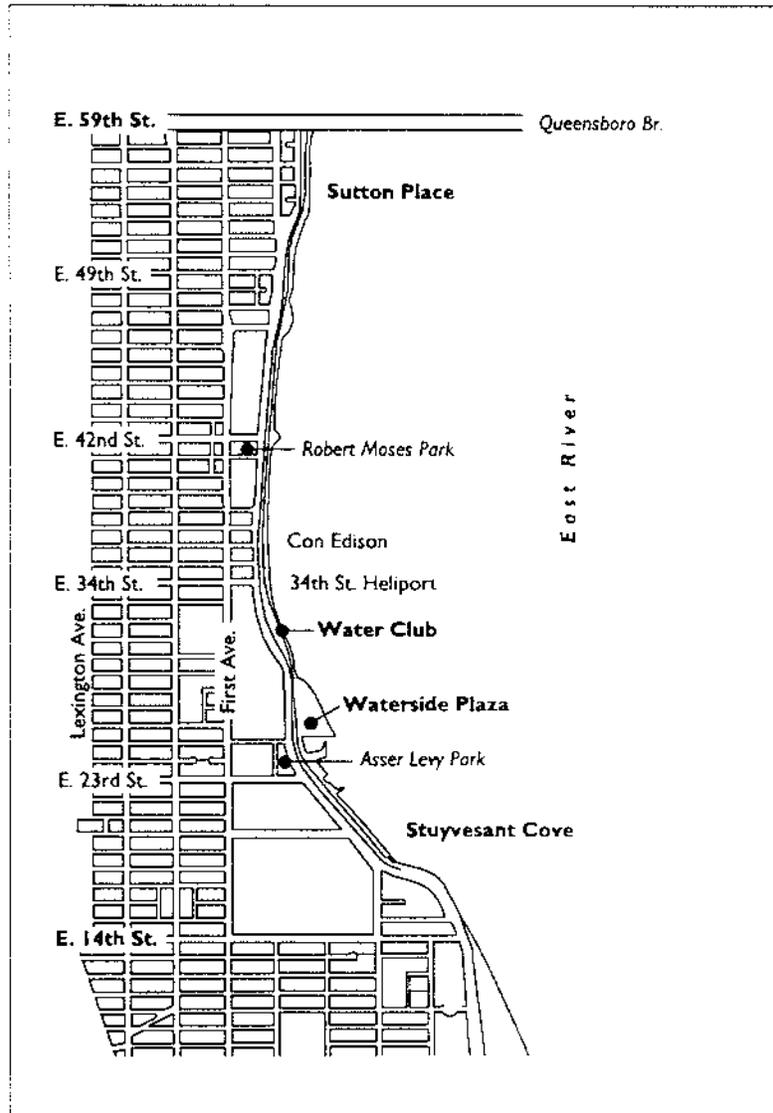
NYSDOT is undertaking the reconstruction of the FDR Drive viaduct between 18th and 25th Streets. This has displaced a substantial number of parking spaces under the viaduct. NYSDOT needs most of this waterfront area as a construction laydown site for the next several years. In exchange, the agency has agreed at the completion of the work to construct Stuyvesant Cove park improvements amounting to approximately \$1.3 million in the area it currently occupies.

Traffic lights at East 20th and 23rd Streets provide at-grade access across the marginal street to the bulkhead area.

Community Board 6

Population 133,748

Community Board 6 has a severe shortage of open space; it ranks 58th among New York's 59 Community Boards in its ratio of population to open space. Where the FDR is at grade, access to the waterfront is limited. Extreme grade changes and varied topography at the waterfront near the United Nations and Sutton Place also pose problems for maintaining esplanade continuity. However, the proposed Stuyvesant Cove project represents an opportunity to create a major waterfront amenity at the southern end of Board 6. ♦



	CB 6	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+4.9%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$45,912	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	0.15	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	8.8%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	22.2%	17.5%	22.4%

Community Board 6 will submit a Stuyvesant Cove Open Space Study for adoption by the City Planning Commission pursuant to Section 197-a of the City Charter, following the submission by the Borough President of this Waterfront Plan.

Recommendations

- **The River Walk experience demonstrates that designations for specific waterfront sites should include mechanisms for termination after a reasonable time period has elapsed and no development activity has occurred.**
- **Water-dependent/water-enhancing uses should be encouraged at Stuyvesant Cove when these uses are compatible with the open space goals of Community Board 6.**
- **The Borough President will continue to work closely with Community Board 6 to prepare materials necessary for submission of its 197-a plan for adoption by the City Planning Commission. The plan's recommendations are consistent with the Borough President's goals for the waterfront, and with the City's recently approved waterfront zoning proposal. This plan should be adopted by the City Planning Commission.**
- **The City should allocate necessary resources to assist Community Board 6 to assure an expeditious public review of its 197-a plan.**
- **East 23rd Street holds great potential as a major entrance to the Manhattan waterfront. Asser Levy Park and Bathhouse, at East 23rd Street and the Marginal Street, already draw many people from the surrounding area. Signage, a tree-lined greenway and pedestrian arcades along major thoroughfares, such as East 23rd Street, would enhance access and bring the waterfront into the core of the City.**

East 24th to East 34th Street

Access to the waterfront in this area is severely limited due to upland hospital uses which extend along First Avenue from 23rd to 34th Streets. The three hospitals in this area -- the Veterans Administration, Bellevue and University Hospitals -- have been developed as superblock campuses that create physical barriers to the waterfront. The only waterfront access point between East 23rd (as discussed above) and 34th Streets is a pedestrian overpass to Waterside Plaza at 25th Street.

Between East 24th and 25th Streets is the United Nations School. The school provides an opportunity to develop an important link between the anticipated improvements in Stuyvesant Cove to the south and the area to the north.

Waterside Plaza is a residential complex with three towers, each 40 stories high. The development contains a public esplanade that extends from 25th to 30th Streets. This project, constructed in the 1970s, provides an example of how residential development can easily privatize the waterfront. Public access to this section of esplanade is rather circuitous; it requires the pedestrian to enter through the residential complex at one level and come down to the water's edge at another level, alternatively, or through a hidden unmarked gateway at grade next to a garbage dumpster. The esplanade portion located directly behind the buildings is extremely narrow and virtually underneath the three massive towers.

An additional public access opportunity exists at 27th Street, which connects First Avenue to the FDR Drive through the Bellevue Campus. Unfortunately, this connection is closed to the public and not mapped as a street. In addition, the FDR Drive is at grade and further cuts the community off from the river.

The esplanade continues north around the Water Club Restaurant, which is situated on the waterfront between 31st and 32nd Streets, and extends to 33rd Street. The restaurant's owners have improved the esplanade with benches and lighting, as a community amenity. However, there is also moorage for large yachts here, and access to the Water Club esplanade is illegally closed to the public whenever moored yachts make private use of this public amenity, in order to accommodate increased privacy and security for the yachts. Parking for the Water Club is provided adjacent to the restaurant at the water's edge. The restaurant's lease for this parking lot runs until 2005.

The waterfront area from 33rd to 34th Streets is the site of the busiest civil heliport in the world. Used primarily for sightseeing helicopter trips, the East 34th Street Heliport poses a real obstacle to waterfront access and use. In addition, many residents believe that its proximity to an adjacent new residential community and major hospital complex makes the current site an inappropriate location for helicopter traffic. In response to these concerns, EDC (the agency responsible for this heliport) hopes to relocate all of the tourist helicopter trips, which constitute about half of the total helicopter take-offs and landings from the East 34th Street Heliport, to the ideally located Downtown/Wall Street Heliport (*see page 74*).

Recommendations

- **To the extent that its legitimate security concerns can be accommodated, the UN School should be encouraged to provide an esplanade easement around the school's perimeter.**
- **Clear signage indicating the presence of a public waterfront esplanade would improve public access to the Waterside esplanade.**

- **EDC should work with the Borough President and Community Board 6 to insure that the Water Club esplanade, which was developed as a required public amenity, remains open even when yachts are temporarily moored at the restaurant.**
- **If the Water Club's parking lot could be relocated inland, this portion of the waterfront could be made available for public use. One possible alternative location is the area between 30th and 33rd Streets underneath the FDR Drive, which is presently leased by the City to New York University and Bellevue for hospital staff parking. At present, neither tenant has a current lease with the City. The NYU lease is under negotiation and Bellevue does not pay rent and operates without a lease. The City should take this opportunity to work with the tenants, the Borough President and Community Board 6 to find alternative parking sites for the hospitals.**
- **In the long-term, 27th Street presents an opportunity for another access point to the East River waterfront. Twenty-seventh Street between First Avenue and the FDR Drive should be mapped as a public street, and an overpass across the FDR Drive should be constructed there.**
- **EDC should create a safe access easement either along the heliport's perimeter or elsewhere at the site; if safety concerns cannot be adequately addressed, EDC should use signage to draw attention to the waterfront park and esplanade to the north between 36th and 38th Streets, and the new esplanade to the south.**
- **The City should continue its efforts to reduce the number of helicopter flights from the 34th Street Heliport. Policies and plans must be developed that identify and prioritize the benefits of heliports and that minimize the noise and safety impacts to residential, recreational and hospital uses.**

East 34th to East 42nd Street

This entire stretch of the waterfront, with the exception of a park between 36th and 38th Streets, is under the jurisdiction of the City DGS. The 1985 East River Esplanade Study, prepared for Community Board 6 by landscape architect Thomas Balsley, in cooperation with the Parks Council, established clear planning goals for public use of this entire waterfront section. The report explored and recommended new ways of integrating, expanding, improving and maintaining public open space along this area of the waterfront. It also called attention to all the expiring leases at these sites.

During the late 1970s and mid-1980s, four major residential developments were erected in the East 30s and 40s. These developments added 2,643 housing units, dramatically increasing the number of residents in the area, and increasing the need for open space for the area's growing population.

There is a parking lot between 34th and 35th Streets at the water's edge. At the northern end of the parking lot is a ferry landing site, currently used for the Delta water shuttle to La Guardia Airport, a ferry service to Hunter's Point and a ferry to the Water's Edge Restaurant. DGS has leased the parking lot to New York University, which is presently operating with an expired occupancy permit. Neighborhood residents complain that this area is strewn with garbage. The Hunter's Point Ferry Service, which now leases the northern half of the parking lot, has agreed to provide site cleaning and upkeep.

NYCDOT has been awarded an ISTEA grant to provide permanent improvements to the site and surrounding area, beginning in 1995. These improvements include: improved site access for buses and pedestrians; an expanded esplanade area; traffic signals at certain intersections, including East 36th Street at the south service road; and traffic barriers to prevent vehicles from 36th Street from entering the northbound FDR Drive, thus reducing traffic on the street. NYCDOT will make these improvements and others, will work with a community advisory committee before expanding bus routing or size, and will commit to avoid any additional changes along residential streets.

Between 35th and 36th Streets is a Con Edison fuel pier; the pier is used infrequently by Con Edison, and it is not clear whether Con Edison wishes to renew its lease. If it does not, it would be required to return the pier to its original condition.

The Manhattan East Community Association (MECA) has proposed attaching four barges to this pier, two on each side. (The fuel installation would be covered for protection.) Access could be accommodated by a ramp similar to that in use at the existing ferry landing to the south. The area would then be usable for activities such as sunbathing, picnicking, rowing, fishing or small craft mooring or rental.

In the spring of 1994 EDC completed construction of a new waterfront esplanade/walkway between 34th and 36th Streets. Between 36th and 38th Streets is a City waterfront park developed by the Glick Organization as a community amenity, in conjunction with a residential building constructed by that organization. This park is consistent with the planning goals of the East River Esplanade Study. The main entrance to the park is located at 37th Street. The park also has an entrance at 36th Street, intended to connect to the newly-constructed 34th to 36th Streets esplanade. Because of security concerns raised by Community Board 6, a gate which is locked at night was installed at the 37th Street underpass entrance. Maintenance of this park is funded through the East River esplanade fund (*see also page 86*).



Stuyvesant Cove

The area between 38th and 41st Streets is currently leased by Con Edison for an employee parking lot for 150 automobiles and for the docking of barges loading and unloading fuel oil, water and equipment. This lease will run until the year 2000, with a ten-year renewal at the option of the City.

Recommendations

- **Future plans for this area should be consistent with the planning goals outlined in the East River Esplanade Study to the maximum extent possible.**
- **Thirty-fourth Street provides at-grade access to the waterfront and thus holds great potential as a major entrance to the waterfront. Signage, a tree-lined greenway and pedestrian arcades would enhance access and bring the waterfront into the core of the City, and a four-way stop signal would enable pedestrians crossing to the water's edge, which is now very difficult.**
- **In regards to 35th Street, if Con Edison does not exercise its option to renew this lease, DGS should seek to locate a publicly accessible, water-dependent use on this small pier, such as ferry service or other uses discussed in Chapter Two.**
- **DGS and EDC should work with the Borough President, Community Board 6 and the Manhattan East Community Association to explore the feasibility of the proposal to create public waterfront activity at the Con Edison fuel pier.**

- **The East River Esplanade Park Study made several proposals to improve pedestrian access to the waterfront. These proposals should be considered in conjunction with a study for the area surrounding the Hunters Point ferry landing. This study has been funded by ISTEA and will commence in early 1995.**
- **The area between 38th and 41st Streets could easily accommodate public access without interfering with Con Edison's operation. The City could leverage Con Edison's potential interest in renewing its other leases to convince the utility to amend both leases to provide pedestrian easements through the site. At the expiration of the current term, Con Edison's parking lease for this site should not be renewed, and it should be redeveloped for water-related use.**
- **In the long-term, there is an opportunity to create access to the waterfront from the Robert Moses Park and Playground, located between 41st and 42nd Streets at First Avenue, by creating a new FDR Drive pedestrian overpass. It would have to pass under the elevated FDR Drive northbound ramp at 42nd Street and over the FDR Drive itself. Such an overpass might be eligible for Federal and/or State funding if ferry service were located here, which would be a logical use of the site. Additionally, because this location is distant from residential development, it would be ideal for overnight freight delivery.**

East 42nd to East 49th Street

This area presents a major gap in the goal of creating a continuous esplanade around Manhattan. The upland area is occupied by the United Nations, which has its own elevated esplanade along the waterfront. However, because of security concerns, this esplanade is not open to the public. This section of the FDR Drive, located at the water level, contains no esplanade.

Transportation Alternatives, a bicycling advocacy group, has proposed an ad hoc solution to permit bicycle access through this gap area. A cantilevered lane outboard of the FDR Drive is in place through this area, part of which is currently off-limits to cars, and part of which is used as a breakdown lane. Transportation Alternatives proposes that, from 41st to 49th Streets, this lane be dedicated to bicycles, separated from the FDR Drive by Jersey barriers, and linked to the existing esplanade at 49th Street.

Proposals to create a broader, more inviting water's edge link here have included the development of a cantilevered esplanade outboard of the FDR Drive, which would extend from 41st Street and link up with the existing esplanade at 49th Street. The major access point would be via 42nd Street.

Recommendations

- Assuming that NYCDOT finds the Transportation Alternatives bicycle lane proposal for 41st to 49th Streets to be safe and feasible, it should be implemented in the near future.
- In the short-term, signage should be used to direct pedestrians and bicycles to First Avenue as an esplanade extension to provide continuity along the East River waterfront.
- In the long-term, a cantilever or other type of extension should be explored as a means to create space outboard of the FDR Drive for a full esplanade connection.

East 49th to East 59th Street

Upland in this area is Peter Detmold Park, which extends from 49th to 51st Streets. A pedestrian overpass now exists in this park at 51st Street and connects with a waterfront esplanade that extends from 49th to 54th Streets.

Sutton Place, from 54th to 59th Streets, is located higher than the FDR Drive, with Sutton Place apartment buildings directly over the Drive. There is no available waterfront land to create a new esplanade. Instead, Sutton Place has small cul-de-sac parks at the extensions of each street from 54th through 58th Streets. These parks are in various states of usability.

Recommendations

- Construction of a pedestrian and bicycle overpass at 54th Street would create continuity by linking the existing esplanade with Sutton Place. This proposed overpass has had broad support for many years, and was featured in the 1969 City Plan.
- A bicycle lane should be created on Sutton Place, and signage should be posted to indicate waterfront links once they are in place to the north and south.
- For the long term, the City should consider a cantilevered esplanade outboard of the FDR Drive through this area, possibly to be designed and constructed in conjunction with seawall rehabilitation.

Community Board 8

Roosevelt Island

Roosevelt Island is located in the East River between 50th and 86th Streets. For much of the past two centuries, the City has populated this 147-acre island with a variety of public institutions, such as a smallpox hospital and an insane asylum. Several historically significant buildings remain on the island, including six New York City landmarks. These buildings contribute to Roosevelt Island's picturesque character when viewed from Manhattan's shore.

Redevelopment plans for Roosevelt Island began in the late 1960s under the direction of the New York State Urban Development Corporation, and in 1974 Roosevelt Island opened as a planned residential community.

Roosevelt Island's waterfront is inviting and accessible to the public. With more than three miles of developed public waterfront access, the island provides Manhattan with a successful model. Planning for the island's housing, commercial ventures and parks has incorporated waterfront access. This access includes an esplanade, which varies in width from five to 25 feet, and is planned as a continuous promenade around the island. There are also recreational areas adjacent to the water, including plazas, piers and lawns.

The tramway to Roosevelt Island offers a dramatic bird's eye view of Manhattan's waterfront. While the tramway lost almost half of its riders when subway access to Roosevelt Island was provided in 1989, it still carries approximately 3,000 paying riders, as well as students on field trips.²¹

Roosevelt Island offers many sports and recreational resources. The waterfront promenade functions as an exercise course and jogging path. The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) completed the rehabilitation of a pier on the west channel of the East River, and plans the rehabilitation of the seawalls on both the east side and the southern portion of the island.

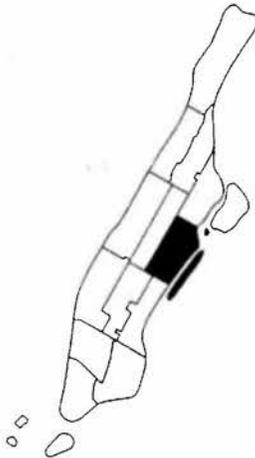
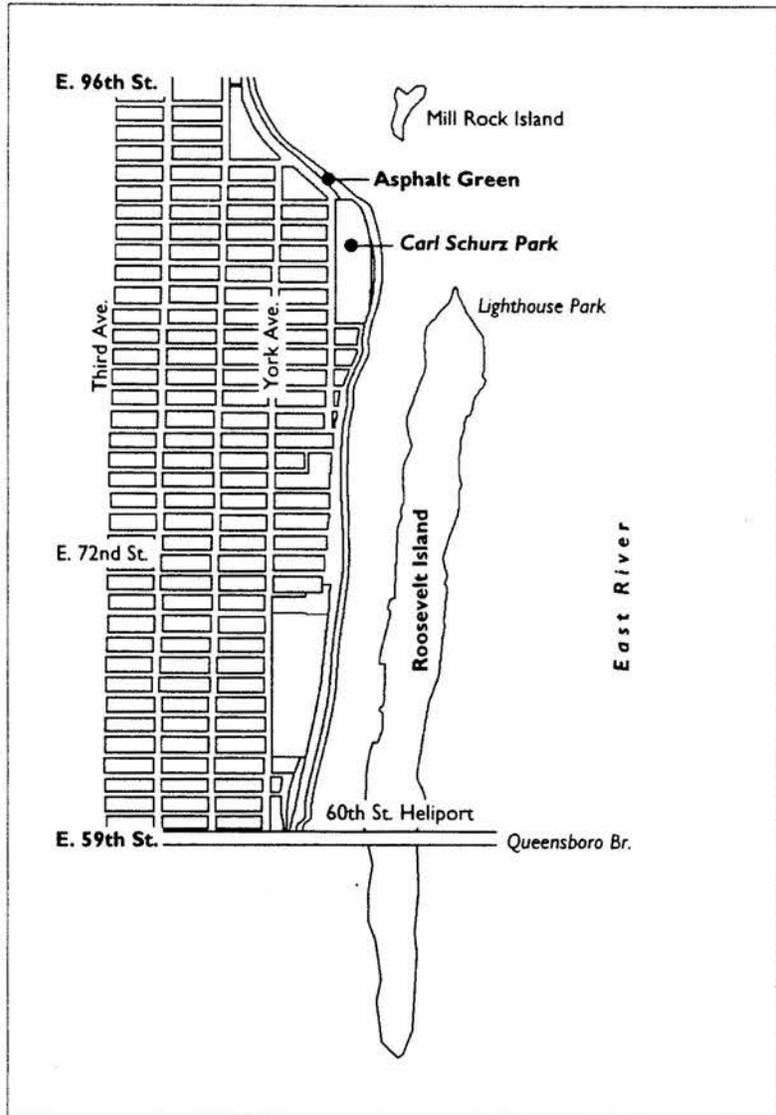
Roosevelt Island is home to Coler Memorial and Goldwater Hospitals. Coler Memorial is located at the northern end of the island, adjacent to Lighthouse Park. Patients, most of whom are wheelchair-bound, use the outdoor facilities of the hospital, Lighthouse Park and the esplanade. During the summer, many patient activities, such as barbecues and performances, are held outdoors.

²¹ SOURCE: Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, Spring 1994.

Community Board 8

Population 210,880

Community Board 8 has the second largest population among the City's 59 Community Boards; it ranks 47th in the availability of open space. A continuous esplanade runs along most of the waterfront in this area. However, with the exception of Carl Schurz Park, access to this open space is limited by the FDR Drive. The recently completed Pavilion Park provides a welcome waterfront amenity, and is a model of successful community-based waterfront planning. ♦



	CB 8	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+3.2%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$53,000	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	0.59	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	11.2%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	20.7%	17.5%	22.4%



Roosevelt Island,
looking east to
Queens

Goldwater Hospital is located near the southern end of Roosevelt Island. Although there are no parks near it, the patients, most of whom are also wheelchair-bound, use the esplanade, which is accessible to them from the hospital.

At the southern end of the island is the ruined Smallpox Hospital. With its silhouette reminiscent of a medieval castle, the building has a mysterious and romantic appearance. RIOC plans to stabilize the structure as a ruin and open the southern portion of the island as a park.

At the northern end of the island is the landmark lighthouse. It is set in Lighthouse Park, which provides a large grass-covered open space for public use. To the south is the adjacent 15-acre Octagon Park, which abuts the Northtown residential community. The park includes the Octagon Tower, New York's first municipal "lunatic asylum" now abandoned and in disrepair. Most of the park was completed in October 1992. It includes a regulation-size soccer and sports field, a Pony League baseball field, more than 200 community garden plots, six tennis courts, a waterfront promenade, and a picnic area with barbecues. The park also contains an access shaft to the City's third water tunnel, which is scheduled to be designed and constructed over the next eight years through the cooperation of DEP and RIOC.

Two components of Octagon Park remain to be designed and funded: the Ecological Park and the Octagon Building Stabilized Ruin. RIOC, with the help of Borough President Messinger, received a \$25,000 design grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to stabilize the Octagon Building. With this money, as well as with grants from

the New York State Environmental Quality Bond Act and Chemical Bank Foundation, RIOOC and the non-profit organization "Friends of the Roosevelt Island Landmarks, Inc." recently completed a conceptual design for preserving the Octagon and its grounds as a ruin. An additional \$3 million will be required to complete this project.

Recommendations

- **Roosevelt Island provides excellent examples of successful waterfront public access, which should be used by the City and Manhattan Community Boards as a model.**
- **The City should promote the Roosevelt Island Tramway and the open space and recreational opportunities available to the public on Roosevelt Island.**

East 59th to East 62nd Street

This area, adjoining the Queensboro Bridge access-way, is dominated by a Con Edison power plant. It also includes a small park (known as 24 Sycamore Park), a heliport and the Manhattan terminus of the Roosevelt Island Tramway. Elevated access to the waterfront is provided at 60th Street.

A former DOS waste transfer station stands at 60th Street. The station and its adjacent land -- a site under EDC's jurisdiction -- were originally planned as a heliport-related hotel development. Two open space advocacy groups, the Parks Council and the East River Waterfront Conservancy (ERWC), developed an alternative proposal for adaptive reuse of the second story of the two-story 12,000 square foot building. The Borough President strongly supported this project and helped realize it.

The second-story was transformed by New York Hospital into an open-air pavilion with trees, benches and other amenities at a vantage point directly above the East River. Pavilion Park, opened on May 11, 1994, creating a setting for a host of activities, including sunbathing, performances and craft fairs. The renovation cost \$2.1 million. A sculpture garden is to be added in 1995. EDC is also working with the designated developer of the earlier proposal for this site, the Studley Organization, to develop a restaurant on the currently vacant ground floor of the building.

ERWC has also developed a "gateway" plan for the upland area as far west as Second Avenue, to link City-owned spaces beneath and adjacent to the Queensboro Bridge along East 59th and 60th Streets to form a pedestrian corridor leading to the Pavilion Park. These spaces are now given over to a hodge-podge of uses, including storage and parking, and are administered by a variety of City agencies, including EDC, DOT, DPR and DGS. Now that litigation has been decided in the City's favor, EDC plans to move

forward with the Bridgemarket project. This project is a 100,000 square foot retail facility, which would contain a 35,000 square foot food market and other retail uses. It would be located underneath the Queensboro Bridge and along its side at 59th Street between First and Second Avenues.

The East 60th Street Heliport is used for corporate and occasional emergency flights. EDC, the agency with jurisdiction over the heliport, hopes to relocate it, because of its negative impacts on nearby residences, parks and hospitals and because flight patterns to the heliport conflict with the proposed Southtown development on Roosevelt Island. While there is currently no commitment to relocate the heliport by a specific date, the use of the *USS Guadalcanal* as an alternative heliport site at Pier 86 on the Hudson River has been proposed.

Recommendations

- **The ERWC "gateway" plan is consistent with the City's goals for waterfront access, and should be implemented by the City.**
- **In addition, the Tramway and its plaza should be viewed as a major gateway to Roosevelt Island, with its more than three miles of public waterfront (see page 62). The tram, as well as Roosevelt Island, are accessible to the physically challenged, bicyclists and parents with babies in strollers. Appropriate signage noting the many waterfront and recreational amenities on the island should be created for the Tramway plaza.**
- **EDC should continue its work to relocate the 60th Street Heliport so that this site can be turned into a public open space as an extension of the pavilion park. This, of course, would require additional funding for both construction and maintenance.**

East 62nd to East 72nd Street

A continuous esplanade, with grade changes, stretches along the East River from 62nd to 125th Streets. The FDR Drive, between 62nd and 72nd Streets, is at-grade. Upland uses in this area include Rockefeller University, New York Hospital and the Hospital for Special Surgery. In a 1973 agreement with the City, these three institutions were granted the right to expand their complexes over the FDR Drive between 62nd and the midblock at 71st/72nd Streets, and to build columns to support these expansions on the East River esplanade. The 1973 agreement was amended in 1983 to provide for the reconstruction of the existing at-grade esplanade, to keep the esplanade open to the sky and to minimize the impact of the columns on the esplanade. The CPC has also required that each project insure continuous north-south access during the construction phase.

The first building to be developed over the FDR Drive -- the Rockefeller University Faculty development, located between 62nd and 63rd Streets -- rises 36 stories in height. In conjunction with this project, a new pedestrian bridge to the esplanade was built over the FDR Drive at 63rd Street to replace the existing bridge at 64th Street.

An FDR Drive southbound exit and entrance is located at 63rd Street, a northbound entrance is located at 62nd Street, and a northbound exit is located at 61st Street east of York Avenue. As a consequence, much traffic congestion and visual, noise and air pollution exist in this area.

In 1983, Rockefeller University completed a second project, a 15-story laboratory building, using the air rights over the FDR Drive between East 64th and 65th Streets. The University may in the future undertake further construction over the FDR Drive, since it controls the air rights all the way to East 68th Street.

New York Hospital is also modernizing and upgrading its medical facilities, including the development of a 12-story building over the FDR Drive between 68th and 70th Streets. The Hospital for Special Surgery is constructing a smaller seven-story building over the FDR Drive from 70th to 71st Streets. The platforms for both projects are to be physically connected and will form a tunnel over the FDR Drive from 68th to 71st Streets.

In 1993, as part of the approval process required by the New York Hospital project, the Borough President urged all three institutions to develop a coordinated amenities package. This package, which was subsequently required by CPC, includes construction of a new pedestrian bridge at 71st Street, funding contributions to the East River esplanade maintenance fund and the construction and maintenance of the 60th Street Pavilion Park. City Planning has also required that a pedestrian easement be retained along the esplanade during the entire period of construction-related activity. Other impacts of the construction that are more difficult to ameliorate are the narrowing of the esplanade caused by supporting structures and the casting of shadows on the esplanade by the existing and proposed buildings constructed over the FDR Drive.

East 72nd to East 81st Street

The FDR Drive between 72nd and 81st Streets continues at-grade. The upland area at 72nd Street is elevated and provides a great vantage point. It also includes 1,500 relatively new residential units. The following projects have been completed since 1983: 515 East 72nd Street (463 units); 525 East 72nd Street (415 units); 530 East 76th Street (266 units); 524-528 East 72nd Street (146 units); and 422 East 72nd Street (220 units). An additional 289 units of housing are proposed to be developed at York Avenue between 71st and 72nd Streets.²²

²² SOURCE: *Final Environmental Impact Statement for Sotheby's Expansion*, 1991.

The developer of the 525 East 72nd Street project made improvements along the length of the esplanade between East 63rd and 71st Streets. The developer of 515 East 72nd Street made improvements to the esplanade between 72nd and 81st Streets and between 103rd and 125th Streets. These renovations include new plantings, paving, railing, benches, lighting and other fixtures.

John Jay Park is located upland between 76th and 78th Streets. A pedestrian overpass links the park and the waterfront at 78th Street.

East 81st to East 90th Street

Here the FDR Drive is located at the river level and the esplanade is above the highway. At 81st Street there is a grade change; the esplanade leaves the river level and rises, via a staircase, to the street level and becomes a wide esplanade known as John Finley Park. Unfortunately, this grade change makes the area inaccessible to people with disabilities.

81st Street is also a great lookout point. At-grade access to the esplanade is provided at 81st, 82nd and 83rd Streets.

Carl Schurz Park, which begins at 84th Street and extends to 89th Street, provides direct street access to John Finley Park and the waterfront at 84th, 86th, 87th, 88th and 89th Streets. As a wide street, 86th Street, like East 23rd and 34th Streets, is a potential major thoroughfare between the waterfront and the core of the island.

The portion of the esplanade between 87th and 90th Streets brings into view Gracie Mansion, the Fireboat House and an overpass from East End Avenue. Many people sit in this area to view boat traffic and the lighthouse on the northern tip of Roosevelt Island.

Bicycle riding is prohibited in Carl Schurz Park.

Recommendations

- **In the long term, the esplanade should be made accessible to all, including people with disabilities, and a ramp or other means of access for wheelchairs, crutches, strollers and bicycles should replace the staircase at 81st Street.**
- **Additional lighting would make Finley Park safer and more inviting in the evening. Clear signage indicating the presence of a public waterfront esplanade would also improve public access to the esplanade.**

- **Recognizing the importance of both waterfront continuity for bicyclists and safety for park users -- including children and senior citizens -- DPR should work with the Borough President, Community Board 8 and Transportation Alternatives to explore the possibility of some limited dedicated bicycle route through Carl Schurz Park.**

East 90th to East 94th Street

At one time the Fireboat Station at 90th Street was used as an environmental education center. However, because of the poor condition of the pier, this center is now closed. An important community recreational facility, Asphalt Green, is located directly upland on 5.5 acres between 90th and 92nd Streets. Asphalt Green attracts young people from all over Manhattan, who come there to use its remarkable swimming facilities, regulation-size AstroTurf playing field, and basketball courts and equipment. Asphalt Green's 50-meter Olympic-size swimming pool and adjoining 700-seat stadium have been the site of numerous swimming competitions. It is the only Olympic-size pool in the city that is open to the public. The aqua center is also home to the George Delacorte Life Center, which includes a shallow pool used by Mt. Sinai Hospital for physical rehabilitation and therapy. The Center includes a health and fitness facility.²³

The esplanade area between 90th and 94th Streets is the only portion from 62nd to 125th Streets that has not yet been refurbished. However, the developer of the recently completed apartment building at the ASPCA site at East 94th Street is required to refurbish this stretch of waterfront. A DOS marine transfer station is located at 91st Street.

Currently, NYSDOT is using some of the waterfront between 90th and 94th Streets as a staging area for reconstruction work on the FDR Drive. The area has been fenced, cutting off pedestrian and bicycle access. This situation not only denies the public access to this portion of the esplanade, but also makes the recently refurbished esplanade between 96th and 125th Streets subject to vandalism and much less safe.

²³ Two of Asphalt Green's most popular offerings, Art After School and the Community Sports League program, are offered at no cost to participants and are mainly funded by the City and State. During the City's 1992 fiscal year, the Community Sports League program served a total of 1,345 young people between the ages of eight and 20 from throughout Manhattan, particularly Asphalt Green's neighboring communities of Yorkville and East Harlem. SOURCE: Asphalt Green.

Recommendations

- **The City should endeavor to identify funds to rehabilitate the Fireboat pier. In the long-term, once the pier is reconstructed and the Environmental Center reopened, the City should develop a new overpass between the Fireboat House and Asphalt Green at 90th Street.**
- **While contractors need secure areas for equipment and vehicle storage, continuity along the esplanade is also important and should not be cut off. Federally funded projects require a waiver for the temporary taking of parkland. More careful planning by the City, the State and contractors could eliminate unnecessary diminution of public access to the waterfront. Contractors should limit their encroachment on the esplanade to the minimum area required for their safety and security needs, should always leave a route open for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and must follow all applicable Federal regulations.**

Mill Rock Island (CB 8)

Mill Rock Island is located in the East River near 94th Street. The island was created from landfill as a base for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, from which the Corps maintained the Hell Gate river access between Ward's Island and Queens. Abandoned since World War II, Mill Rock Island was sold to New York City in 1953.

DPR has jurisdiction over Mill Rock Island. The agency has cleared debris left by the Corps and planted the island with trees and grass. In recent years, Asphalt Green has used the island for wilderness courses and programs.

In 1992 the City considered commercial development on Mill Rock Island. DPR issued an RFP for a "white tablecloth restaurant" on the island in an effort to generate revenue. Because of the magnitude of the proposal, this plan raised many environmental concerns. This proposal is no longer under consideration and there are presently no plans to develop the island.

Recommendations

- **While some limited commercial development of Mill Rock Island may be appropriate, no plan for the island should be undertaken without adequate input from Community Board 8 and the Borough President.**

Community Board 11

East 94th to East 125th Street

This stretch of the East River waterfront (note that the blocks between 94th and 96th are within Community Board 8) has been restored with new lighting, railing, benches, paving and plantings, funded by the developers of nearby residential property.

Like East 23rd, 34th and 86th Streets, East 96th Street provides the potential for bringing the waterfront into the core of Manhattan. At-grade access exists at 96th Street; however, busy FDR Drive access routes under the FDR Drive must be crossed. Upland, Stanley Isaacs Park, on the north and south sides of 96th Streets, acts as a natural draw to bring people closer to the waterfront; the problem is that people are reluctant to cross under the FDR Drive to get to the esplanade. The area under the FDR Drive is used for parking. The quality of the at-grade access here is greatly lessened by the constant vehicle-pedestrian conflict.

North of 96th Street, the FDR Drive is at-grade and access to the waterfront is severely limited. Pedestrian overpasses occur at 103rd, 111th and 120th Streets. The upland areas are developed at a high density and additional access would ensure greater use of the waterfront. Some of the adjacent upland uses, such as the East 103rd Street Playground, the Thomas Jefferson Playground and the East 124th Street Louis Cuvillier Playground, bring a large number of people to areas immediately adjacent to the waterfront, but the limited opportunities for access severely restrict recreational use of the waterfront. In addition, because of limited waterfront access, neither Ward's Island Park nor Randall's Island Park are used to their fullest potential by area residents (*see page 94*).

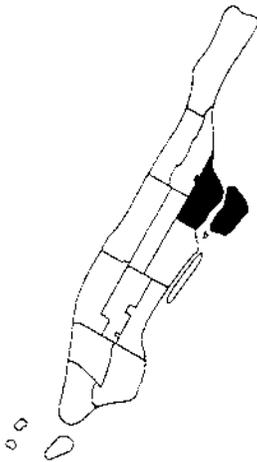
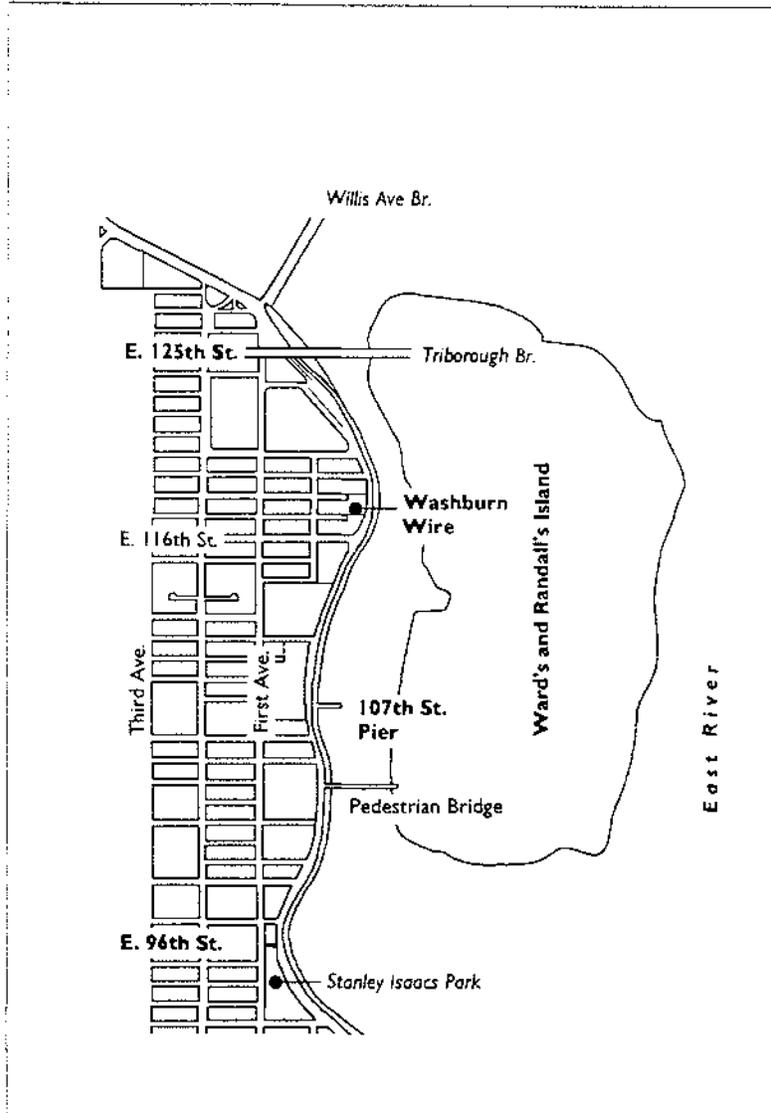
A new recreation pier is located in the East River at 107th Street. It provides the City with an opportunity to create ferry service linking East Harlem to recreational waterfront areas.

The old Washburn Wire factory is on the East River and East 117th Street. Located in the Harlem/South Bronx Empowerment Zone, it has an enormous upland building, its own bridge crossing the Drive and its own pier structure. The pier structure is owned by the City; the factory building is privately owned. Over the years, a variety of interesting economic development proposals for this site have been advanced. However, due to continuing litigation between private parties disputing ownership of the site, none of the

Community Board 11

Population 110,508

Statistics alone are deceptive here. Much of the apparent abundance of open space in this area is located on Randall's and Ward's Islands, where limited access severely reduces recreational opportunities for the community. As in Community Board 3, improving access and maintenance is especially important given the community's relatively low income and high proportion of seniors and children. The proposed 125th-145th Streets Harlem Beach Esplanade, which began as a project of the Riverton Tenants Association and which has been adopted by the Borough President, will greatly add to the community's waterfront recreational opportunities. Creating bicycle and pedestrian access is especially important to this project. ♦



	CB 11	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	-3.5%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$14,882	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	5.04	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	31.2%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	15.6%	17.5%	22.4%



**Washburn Wire Factory,
East 117th Street,
Harlem River**

proposals has ever been implemented. As part of the Empowerment Zone project, the City University of New York has proposed opening a new community college at this site. The existing esplanade passes inboard of the Washburn pier, allowing for continuous north-south access. The esplanade comes to an abrupt end at 125th Street at the base of the Triborough Bridge.

Recommendations

- **The City should eliminate parking under the FDR Drive at Stanley Isaacs Park, and instead develop the area for waterfront-related use to help draw people to the waterfront. In the short-term, signage and painted walkways would do much to make access safer and more inviting and draw people to the waterfront.**
- **In the long-term, the City should create additional pedestrian overpasses at 106th and 116th Streets to improve access to this portion of the waterfront and maximize its use.**
- **The City should work with the Borough President and Community Board 11 to create ferry service from the 107th Street Pier.**

Ward's and Randall's Islands (CB 11)

Ward's and Randall's Islands, which are connected by a causeway, were first acquired by the City of New York in 1835 and were used during the nineteenth century as the location of a potter's field, an almshouse and a home for juvenile delinquents. With the completion of the Triborough Bridge in 1935, the City took possession of the islands and began to develop their recreational potential. Parks Commissioner Robert Moses (who also directed the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority) envisioned developing the islands as a regional sports and recreation center. This vision ultimately resulted in the construction of Downing Stadium, a nature center, ball fields, tennis courts, picnic areas, playgrounds and other recreational facilities.

Access to the islands, however, is extremely limited. There are only two points of entry: vehicular access to Randall's Island via the Triborough Bridge; and pedestrian access to Ward's Island by an overpass at 103rd Street. Pedestrian traffic is discouraged, however, by the location of a homeless shelter on the island near the overpass. The 103rd Street footbridge and overpass, as well as the pedestrian pathways on the island, are poorly maintained and inadequately illuminated.

ISTEA funds have been obtained for the Randall's Island Access Study, which includes the planning and design of an island esplanade and identification of ferry landing sites. In addition, an ISTEA application for monies for the construction of a floating ferry landing dock and 1,500 feet of adjacent waterfront esplanade was submitted by NYCDPR in November 1994. Ferry service could significantly improve access for cyclists and pedestrians to Randall's Island.²⁴

Non-recreational uses continue to co-exist with the many recreational resources on Randall's and Ward's Islands. Public facilities located there include: DOS and Fire Department training facilities; a State mental hospital; the previously mentioned homeless shelter operated by the Volunteers of America; a Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority facility; DPR support facilities; and the Ward's Island Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP). A State-funded drug treatment facility is also proposed for the islands.

The Ward's Island WPCP is located on a 94-acre site. Its sludge dewatering facilities serve the Ward's Island plant and the North River WPCP. A pilot sludge composting facility has been developed to process this dewatered sludge. DEP plans to construct a sludge chemical stabilization facility at the northern corner of the WPCP site.

²⁴ NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, *Randall's Island Ferry Draft CMAQ Application*, October 20, 1994.

In 1993, the Ward's Island WPCP received an average of more than 260 million gallons per day (mgd) of sewage, although the plant is permitted to treat only 250 mgd. This exceedence, and violations of other water quality parameters over the years, resulted in 1989 and 1993 consent orders with the State DEC. Those orders call for water conservation measures to reduce flow to the plant, and for adding 25 mgd to the capacity of the plant by 1997. DEP is presently engaged in the design and environmental review of the additional capacity.

Randall's and Ward's Islands can accommodate the current number of non-recreational facilities. At the same time, the recreational use of the islands can also be enhanced. However, the siting of future non-recreational facilities -- including the planned State-run drug treatment facility on the island -- would be preferable if adjacent to existing non-recreational facilities.

Randall's Island plays host to club, league and high school softball, baseball and soccer games and track meets. Randall's Island was the site of the track events of the 1994 Gay Games, and in 1998 will host the Goodwill Games track and field events.

However, the island's recreational infrastructure is severely deteriorated. This is clearly evidenced by the poor condition of Downing Stadium. The Randall's Island's Sports Foundation is a public/private partnership formed to rehabilitate these recreational facilities. The partnership has already persuaded the City to commit \$20 million in capital monies, a portion of which will be matched by private donors. In addition, the foundation has provided staff and resources to maintain ball fields, furnish new summer day camp activities, enhance routine maintenance and make other interim improvements.

Certain revenue-generating recreational concessions have been developed by DPR in recent years. These concessions provide revenue to the City; concessionaires are required to make physical improvements to Randall's Island.

Recommendations

- **The City should seek funding to replace, properly illuminate and maintain the 103rd Street overpass to Ward's Islands, as well as the pedestrian pathways.**
- **Agencies that currently utilize the islands for non-recreational uses, or that are considering such a use, should coordinate planning with the Department of Parks, other City agencies and Community Board 11.**
- **The City should continue to host major track and field events at Randall's Islands, and should seek to develop further the island's potential with other appropriate revenue-producing events.**

- **The ISTEA funded Randall's Island Access Study should analyze potential ferry landing sites along both the East River and the Harlem River waterfronts. The 107th Street recreation pier provides the potential for connecting the adjacent Harlem community to the recreational resources of Randall's Island.**

East 125th to West 150th Street²⁵ (CB 11/10)

The land directly north of the Triborough Bridge, from 125th to 131st Streets, is under the jurisdiction of DGS. The area from 125th to 127th Streets is now leased to DOS for a salt storage site. An abandoned concrete plant occupies the land between 127th and 131st Streets. In February 1994, DRP issued a Request for Bids (RFB) for alternate uses for the concrete plant site. There were no responses and DRP intends to issue a new RFB for a one-year term.

Undeveloped parkland, under the jurisdiction of DPR, lies from 131st to West 145th Streets. Pedestrian access points currently exist at 125th, 127th and 142nd Streets. Existing bridges to the Bronx and ramps onto the Harlem River Drive at 129th Street (Third Avenue Bridge), 135th Street (Harlem River Drive access), 138th Street (Madison Avenue Bridge), 139th Street (Harlem River Drive access) and 145th Street (145th Street Bridge) could be adapted to provide increased pedestrian waterfront access.

This stretch of waterfront is ideal for expanded recreational development. It is a sizeable waterfront property, averaging more than 100 feet in width, owned by the City, and adjacent to a densely populated community of approximately 18,000 residents.

There has been considerable community interest in developing a waterfront park; the tenants of the Riverton Houses development took the initiative to commission a design for a portion of the area, executed by Harold Thorne. In spring 1991 the Borough President commissioned a design study of this full area. The resulting design, prepared by the landscape architecture firm Quennell Rothschild Associates, built upon the Riverton Tenants Association proposal and envisions a "Harlem Beach Esplanade."

Although pollution makes it unsafe to swim in the rivers around Manhattan, this plan would provide the borough of Manhattan with a form of "beach" similar to portions of the Chicago lakefront that are used for beach-like activities and that are constructed to evoke the sense of a beach. (Manhattan is the only borough of the City without any

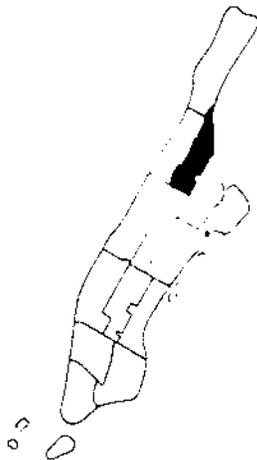
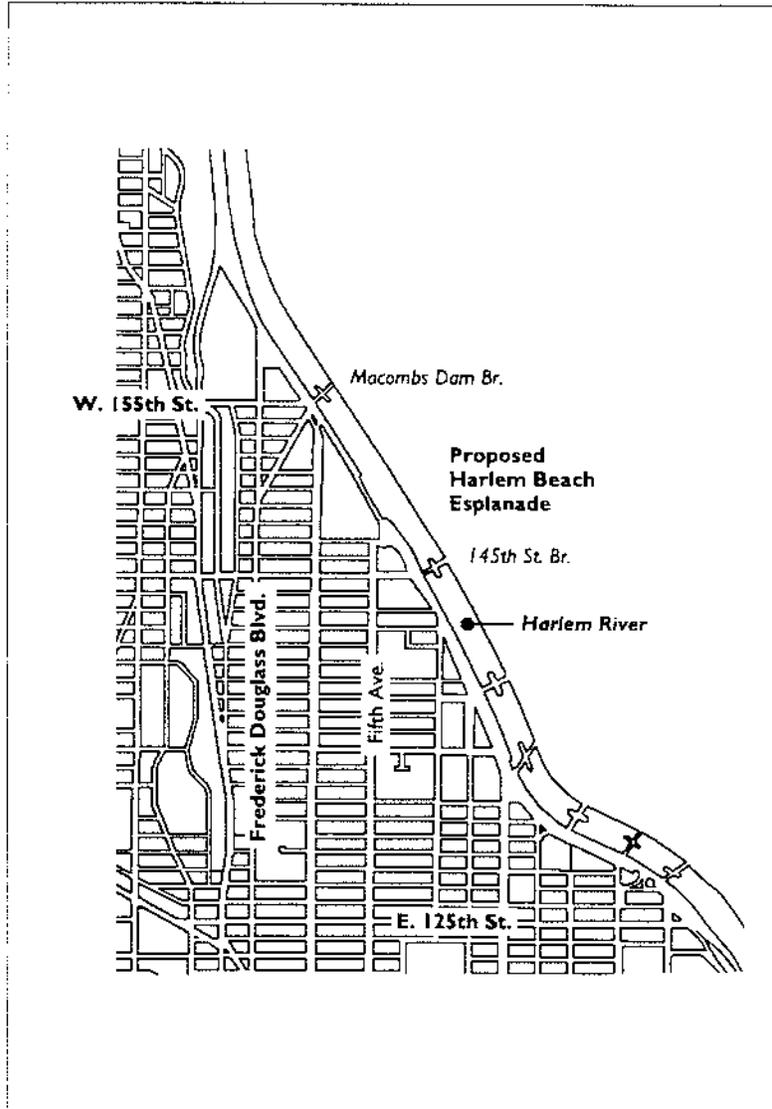
²⁵ North of East 142nd Street, the entire island of Manhattan lies to the west of Fifth Avenue, which divides east from west. North of this point, all east-west streets are identified as "West," even at their eastern-most points along the Harlem River.

Community Board 10

Population 99,519

Nearly half of the residents of Community Board 10 are seniors and children, yet the neighborhood ranks 34th in the city in open space ratio. The generally low incomes of Board 10 residents reduce their mobility and recreational options, and increase the importance of community open space. Only a small portion of Community Board 10 touches the waterfront, and public waterfront access is limited by the Harlem River Drive and by housing developments with waterfront parking facilities. However, the northern (142nd to 145th Street) edge of the planned Harlem Beach Esplanade falls within the Board's boundaries.

From 145th to 150th Streets, the bulk of the area outboard of the Harlem River Drive is privately owned by the residents of the Esplanade Gardens cooperative housing development and is used for parking. A narrow band of land at the water's edge is owned by the City, under the jurisdiction of the Department of Business Services. ♦



	CB 10	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	-5.8%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$13,252	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	1.21	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	28.6%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	19.2%	17.5%	22.4%



Harlem River waterfront, future site of Harlem Beach Esplanade

beaches.) The proposed esplanade would accommodate a broad range of waterfront recreation, such as a wading pool, sprinklers, fishing and barbecue and picnic areas, as well as such traditional esplanade activities as jogging, biking, sitting and strolling. Tall beacons, easily visible from blocks away, would mark the presence of Harlem Beach Esplanade and the connections to the City street grid.

Gateway entrance plazas would be located at 127th Street and between 135th and 139th Streets. They would incorporate pedestrian entrances, vehicular access and drop-off areas, and tree-lined seating and picnicking areas. Restrooms, a building for community events and concessions, a playground and a waterfront esplanade are also planned for these areas. Another possibility to be explored is mooring a pool-barge for seasonal swimming; this would contribute to the area's beach-like character.

In an ISTEAs application submitted on November 15, 1994, the Borough President committed to provide the required local match for construction of the Harlem Beach esplanade bikeway/walkway and its related access routes. Notification regarding the grant proposal is expected in early 1995.

Recommendations

- **If feasible, the City should develop the publicly owned water's edge from 145th to 150th Streets as a continuation of the Harlem Beach Esplanade.**

- In the short-term, clear signage should be erected to direct pedestrians and bicyclists from the 142nd Street overpass to waterfront access further north.
- The Harlem Beach Esplanade proposal should be fully implemented. Working with the Borough President, Community Boards 10 and 11, local elected officials and community groups, the City should refine the design and foster its implementation. Priorities for this process should be enhancing the design's cultural and community relevance, which requires close collaboration with community residents. Full development of the park requires the cooperation of several agencies, including NYSDOT and City DPR, DOS, DCP and EDC.
- Funding for this project is allocated by the City beginning in the fiscal year 1995 capital budget; however, that money is only for a preliminary design investigation and a phased construction plan. The Borough President, Community Boards 10 and 11, and DPR should continue to work toward obtaining additional funds for construction of the park portion of the Harlem Beach Esplanade.

Community Board 12

West 150th to Dyckman Street (CB 10/12)

From 150th to 155th Streets, the Harlem River Drive is so close to the water that there is little room for any type of development outboard of the roadway.

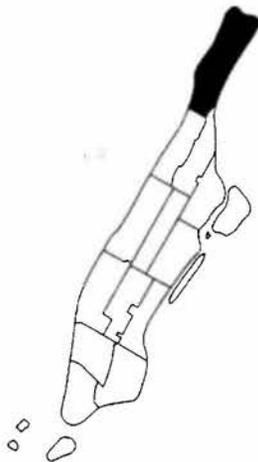
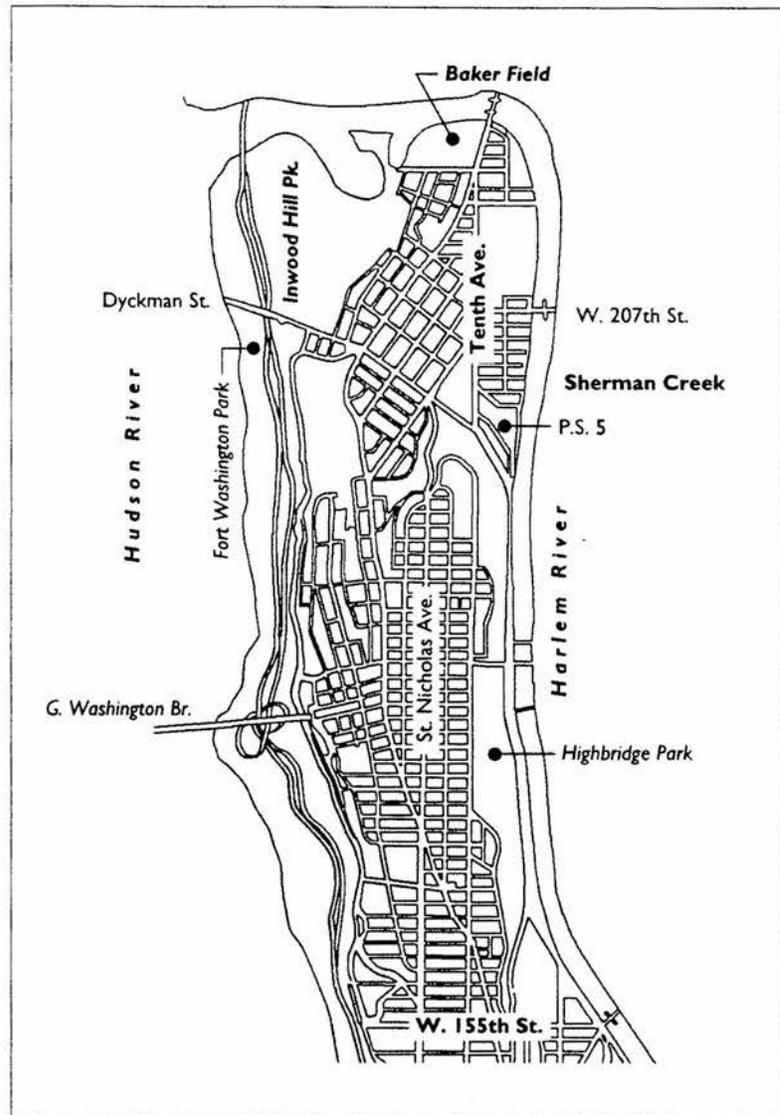
The land outboard of the Harlem River Drive from West 155th Street to Dyckman Street is known as the Harlem River Driveway, and is mapped as parkland under the jurisdiction of DPR. At points it is 40 to 50 feet wide. It boasts intricate rock formations and views of the dramatic slopes of Highbridge Park and the engineering marvels of the bridges spanning the Harlem River. Unfortunately, the only existing access point is at the northern terminus at Dyckman Street. The Harlem River Drive effectively precludes access along the park's entire length, and no southern access point exists. The park is poorly maintained and overgrown except for a small area near the northern entrance.

Community Board 12 has consistently placed a high priority on its parkland as a quality of life issue. Many of the parks in the Community Board are in dire need of rehabilitation. Similarly, many playgrounds are antiquated and need to be modernized. However, capital improvements without maintenance are virtually useless and a waste of money. To this end, Community Board 12 needs significant increases in parks operations and maintenance staff.

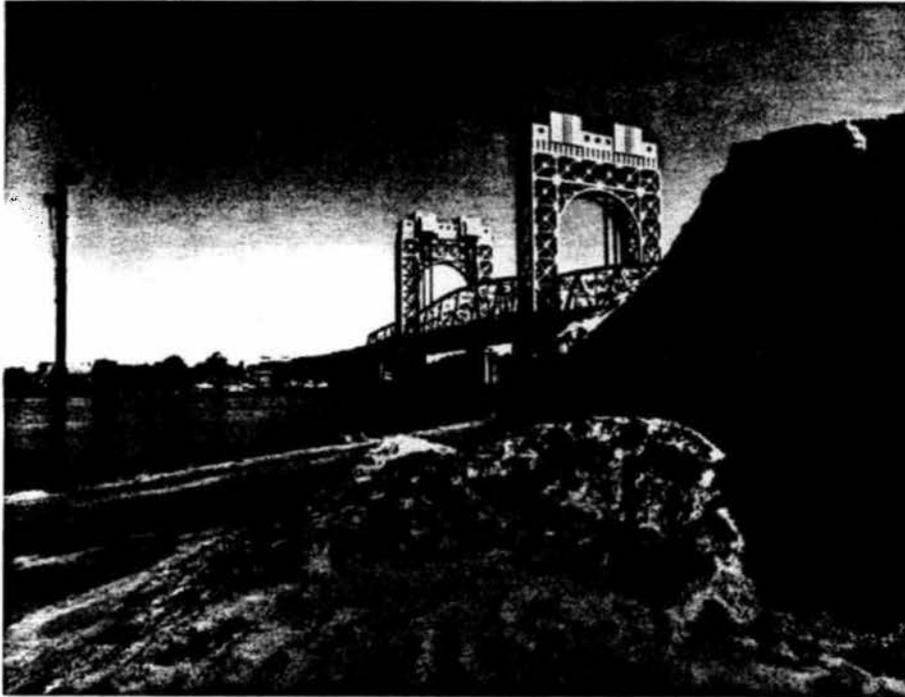
Community Board 12

Population 198,192

With hilly terrain fronting on both the Harlem and Hudson Rivers, no Community Board in Manhattan possesses a longer or more visually dramatic waterfront. However, access to the water's edge is inhibited by the topography and by perimeter highways in Inwood Hill and Fort Washington Parks on the Hudson, and by industrial uses along the Harlem River. The rapidly increasing population of the Community Board and the high proportion of seniors and children make improved access and maintenance of existing open space a priority. ♦



	CB 12	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+10.1%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$21,800	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	3.06	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	29.1%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	14.9%	17.5%	22.4%



Road salt at
Harlem River Drive,
125th Street

Recommendations

- Increased use and improved maintenance of this park depend upon the creation of additional access points, including linkage to the south (as described above) and pedestrian bridges. Unfortunately, creating such access would be very expensive. In addition, most of this park is adjacent to Highbridge Park, which is itself already under-maintained and underused. Resources would therefore be better spent on improving Highbridge Park and other existing parks in Community Board 12. Signage directing waterfront users from the overpass at 142nd Street inland to routes in Highbridge Park with river views -- which comprise part of a greenway proposal for a "Manhattan Escarpment Trail" by the Neighborhood Open Space Coalition and Transportation Alternatives -- may be the most practical way to bring a continuous waterfront walkway/bikeway through this area in the foreseeable future.
- Long-term planning should seek to link this "lost" two-mile section of waterfront esplanade to anticipated future esplanades to the north and south, and to create overpasses or other connections to well-used points within Highbridge Park.

Harlem River



Sherman Creek Area (CB 12)

This area is part of the Harlem/South Bronx Empowerment Zone. A 900-student elementary school, P.S. 5, was completed in 1993 between the Harlem River Drive, Sherman Creek and Tenth Avenue. A service road behind the school will provide the only access to the waterfront in this area. The Sherman Creek inlet is occupied by three small marinas and by many abandoned boats. A vacant site, previously occupied by a Con Edison power plant, is situated at Academy and 201st Streets. Community Board 12 supports development of this part of Sherman Creek for economic development. Concepts which the Board advocates exploring include an industrial park, a recycling facility and/or affordable housing. DOS has discussed the possibility of a materials recovery facility for the Sherman Creek area. Community Board 12 has expressed interest in this, but strongly opposes siting an incinerator here.

The area north of 207th Street is heavily industrial in character. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) occupies the waterfront from 207th to 218th Streets with a railroad yard, bus yard and garage. Other privately owned industrial uses occupy land from 218th to 221st Streets. This area is undoubtedly one of the most problematic on the Manhattan waterfront in terms of public access. Because of the amount of land required, and infrastructure investment made, by the MTA, existing uses would be difficult to relocate easily.



Sherman Creek

Recommendations

- **The Board of Education should explore the possibility of a rowing program at P.S. 5 to enable students to take advantage of the school's unique location on a safe inland waterway.**
- **The City should pursue Community Board 12's goals for economic development in the Sherman Creek area, and should not locate an incinerator there. Economic development-generating projects here should be designed in a manner consistent with public access to the waterfront.**
- **The Sherman Creek area south of 207th Street provides great potential for educational recreational uses. Because there is very little boating traffic in this area, aside from passing Circle Line tour boats, the area appears to be well-suited for a recreational boating facility that could serve as a rowing center for young people who live in the community. But any water-dependent use here would probably require dredging, which could pose environmental problems and must be done with adequate study and in a manner which minimizes ecological impact.**
- **One long-term option for manufacturing areas north of 207th Street is to deck over the existing uses and build an elevated esplanade. This would be an expensive undertaking and could be feasible only if there were a market for space for new revenue- and employment-generating uses as well. In addition, any such proposal would require rigorous environmental impact analysis so as not to create excess congestion in the area.**

- **Another possible approach for the long-term use of the area north of 207th Street is a cantilevered esplanade over the Harlem River outboard of the existing uses.**
- **Meanwhile, as most of the streets in this area extend to the water's edge and provide view corridors, these view corridors should be preserved and the street ends should be developed as points of access to the waterfront. Signage should be posted indicating the waterfront route.**

Baker Field

Owned by Columbia University, Baker Field is used for the school's football program; Columbia uses an adjacent marina for its rowing program. Although restricted to Columbia University use, the land uses here are appropriate for the waterfront.

Inwood Hill Park (Spuyten Duyvil to Dyckman Street, Western Shore)

Inwood Hill Park provides excellent access to the Hudson River from the street ends at every connecting street. Recommended improvements relate to connections to Fort Washington Park to the south and to the Bronx to the north. Such connections would further the goals of the Hudson River Greenway, a New York State initiative to preserve and link natural, scenic, historic and recreational areas from Battery Park to the Mohawk River on both sides of the Hudson River. (The proposed Greenway would cover 150 miles and pass through 12 counties.) DPR is already developing a marina and restaurant at Dyckman Street which will provide a water's edge link between Inwood Hill and Fort Washington Parks, as well as boat-building and maritime education programs for young people.

Inwood Hill Park is the last expanse of naturally seeded forest left in Manhattan. In honor of the native people of Manhattan, the City Council voted to rename the natural area of the park "the Shorokapok Natural Area," and the bill was signed into law by the Mayor on September 9, 1992. A nature center was opened here in the spring of 1994. This park is a perfect example of a natural resource where waterfront access is well-integrated with the environment and accessible to a degree that a paved esplanade directly at the water's edge is unnecessary and could detract from the environment.

Currently, bicycling is prohibited in Inwood Hill Park. Community Board 12 and the Inwood-Heights Parks Alliance fear that large numbers of bicyclists, and especially mountain bikers, could damage the park's fragile ecosystem. On the other hand, Inwood Hill Park represents an important link in any continuous walkway and bikeway

around Manhattan, and also provides a link to the Bronx over the Henry Hudson Bridge. This makes some bicycle access through the park desirable. The Inwood-Heights Parks Alliance has proposed using a fenced portion of the route of the Henry Hudson Parkway through the park for cyclists.²⁶

The New York Metropolitan ISTE A Bikeway/Walkway Working Group has been allocated \$125,000 for a planning study of a bicycle/pedestrian pathway from Riverside Park at 158th Street to the county line in the Bronx, in order to further implement the New York City portion of the Hudson River Greenway and to create a safe and adequate bicycle connection within New York City. The study will map out the best route and the pedestrian access points.

Recommendations

- **The idea of a bikeway/walkway warrants enthusiastic support, with the proviso that any recommendations for bicycle access through Inwood Hill Park not endanger the park's ecosystem, and that the study's recommendations take into account the concerns of Community Board 12, the Inwood-Heights Parks Alliance and Transportation Alternatives.**
- **Any decisions regarding DCP's study recommendations should be delayed until the completion of this more comprehensive study.**

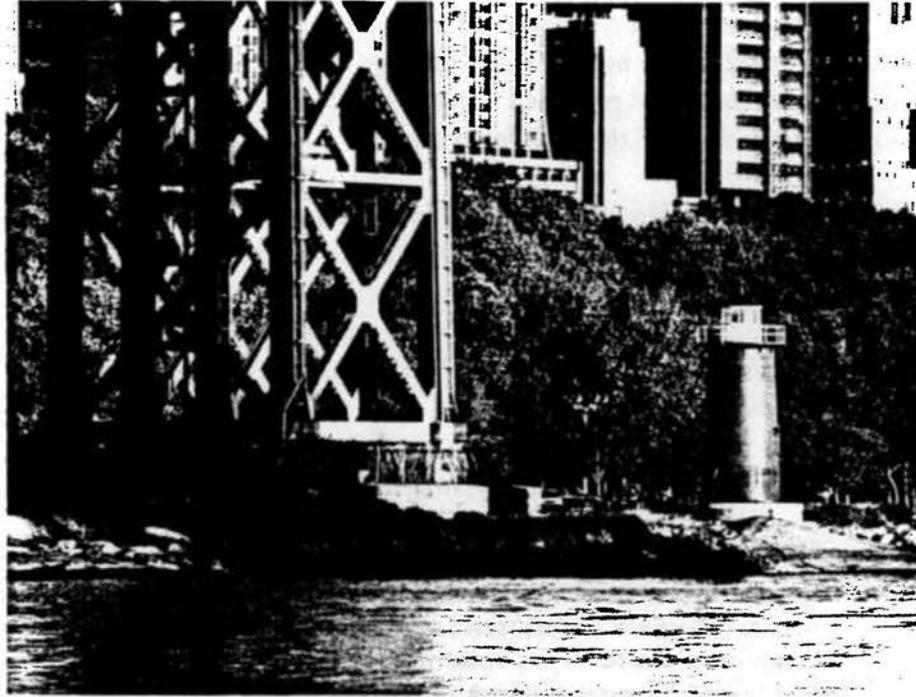
Fort Washington Park (Dyckman to West 158th Street, Western Shore)

DPR completed a major rehabilitation of Fort Washington Park in 1987. However, inadequate access has meant that this significant open space and waterfront resource remains underutilized and dangerous. In 1989, DPR issued a study, conducted by landscape architect Signe Nielsen, which recommended ways of improving access and circulation in the park. These included creating a new major access point at Dyckman Street, a parking area and access point at 158th Street, a water's edge path running the entire length of the park, and new signage at all park entrances. The study also recommended reconstruction of pedestrian bridges and underpasses.

Jeffrey's Hook Lighthouse, located in Fort Washington Park directly under the George Washington Bridge, is a designated landmark listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It was moved from its original location at Sandy Hook, New Jersey to Fort Washington Park in 1951 and is immortalized in children's literature as *The Little Red Lighthouse*.

²⁶ DCP completed a study in 1992 that examined creating a safe and adequate pedestrian/bicycle connection from Inwood Hill Park to the Bronx over the Henry Hudson Parkway Bridge; the study was never released. An inadequate pedestrian/bicycle lane (less than three feet wide, with stairs) currently exists on the Henry Hudson Parkway Bridge: at the same time, the upper level has an unused sidewalk, which is not accessible except via traffic lanes.

**The Little Red
Lighthouse at the
George Washington
Bridge**



The New York State Psychiatric Institute (NYSPI) is developing a new facility on privately owned mapped parkland on Riverside Drive between 165th and 168th Streets. The Borough President supports the need to develop a new NYSPI facility. However, she has raised concerns about the precedent of allowing construction in mapped parkland. The State Office of Mental Health (OMH) nevertheless proceeded with the plan, making some modifications to the public open space aspects of the proposal. The State will landscape and maintain new public open space to be developed adjacent to the proposed NYSPI building as well as the City-owned parkland just south of 165th Street.

The Borough President, the Parks Council and others expressed strong support for constructing a pedestrian overpass to Fort Washington Park at 165th Street; this was not included in OMH's final plan. The Parks Council continues to support such a pedestrian connection. Paul Willen, an architect and Parks Council member, designed a bridge and stairway connection which would cost approximately \$2 million. The Borough President strongly supports this design and proposal, which has the endorsement of the local community, local elected officials and DPR. There is a strong likelihood that the money necessary to construct this connection will come from a variety of State sources.

Recommendations

- **DPR's access recommendations concerning Fort Washington Park should be implemented as funds become available.**

- **To help guarantee the success of the proposed bridge and stairway connection at 165th Street, the Borough President should continue to work with the Parks Council, the local community, local elected officials and DPR to obtain the funding necessary for construction.**

Gap between Fort Washington and Riverside Parks, West 158th to 155th Street (CB 12)

A gap currently exists between Riverside Park North and Fort Washington Park from West 158th to 155th Street. DPR acquired the property from the former Department of Ports and Trade and received a grant from the State Environmental Quality Bond Act to create a link between the parks. Work is anticipated to begin in Fiscal Year 1995.

Recommendations

- **The link between Fort Washington Park and Riverside Park is critical to waterfront continuity and should be constructed.**

Community Board 9

Riverside Park (I), West 155th to 125th Street

Riverside Park stretches from 155th to 72nd Streets. This remarkable linear park, designed in the nineteenth century by Frederick Law Olmsted and modified since, is a gracious complement to the historic neighborhoods that it borders. Spectacular views of the Hudson River are framed by the park's graceful stands of elm trees. The southern portion of the park has been designated a New York City "scenic landmark." The park is also proximate to several Upper West Side historic districts and landmarks. The northern portion of the park -- along with much of the immediately contiguous neighborhoods -- is not similarly recognized, although of equal historic and aesthetic value. This spectacular park follows the Hudson shore for several miles, but at many points there is no access to the water's edge.

In the northern portion of the park, more could be done to capitalize on the scenic views of the Palisades and the beautiful shoreline. Current DPR plans call for reducing the parking area and enlarging the lawn area in order to accommodate pickup sports and picnic space, for which there is considerable local demand.

DPR has also proposed reconstructing a water's edge bikeway/walkway in Riverside Park between 155th and 145th Streets. This project, in conjunction with the planned link between 158th and 155th Streets, will connect Fort Washington Park with Riverbank State Park. DPR submitted an ISTEA application in November 1994 for this project, which is anticipated to cost approximately \$1 million.²⁷

There are three handsome but deteriorated original staircases into Riverside Park from Riverside Drive at 151st, 148th and 135th Streets. While DPR plans to restore the 135th and 148th Street staircases, this project is not presently funded. The 151st Street staircase is to be removed and replaced with a new pedestrian bridge.

Recommendations

- **DPR plans for improving the northern portion of Riverside Park should be promptly implemented. In particular, because of the importance of access into the park, funding for the rehabilitation of the 135th and 148th Street staircases and construction of the new overpass at 151st Street should be a DPR priority.**
- **The Borough President supports DPR's ISTEA application for a bikeway/walkway from 155th to 145th Streets. This is an important link in the northern Manhattan waterfront bike system.²⁸**
- **Better signage indicating the presence of the park would also improve public access. Clear signage along the existing inboard bicycle/pedestrian route would also contribute to waterfront continuity.**
- **The Scenic Landmark designation of Riverside Park should be extended to include the northern portion between 148th to 135th Streets.**

Riverbank State Park (West 145th to 135th Street)

Riverbank State Park is a 28-acre park atop the North River Water Pollution Control Plant in the Hudson River between 135th and 145th Streets. It was opened in May 1993. Park facilities include: playing fields for a variety of sports; children's playgrounds; tennis courts; swimming pools; a community garden; a skating rink; an amphitheater; and a cultural center. In addition, there are a picnic area, cafe, and snack bar. By December 1993 more than 1.2 million people had attended Riverbank State Park.²⁹

²⁷ NYCDPR, Riverside Park Walk 145th Street to 155th Street Draft CMAQ application, October 19, 1994.

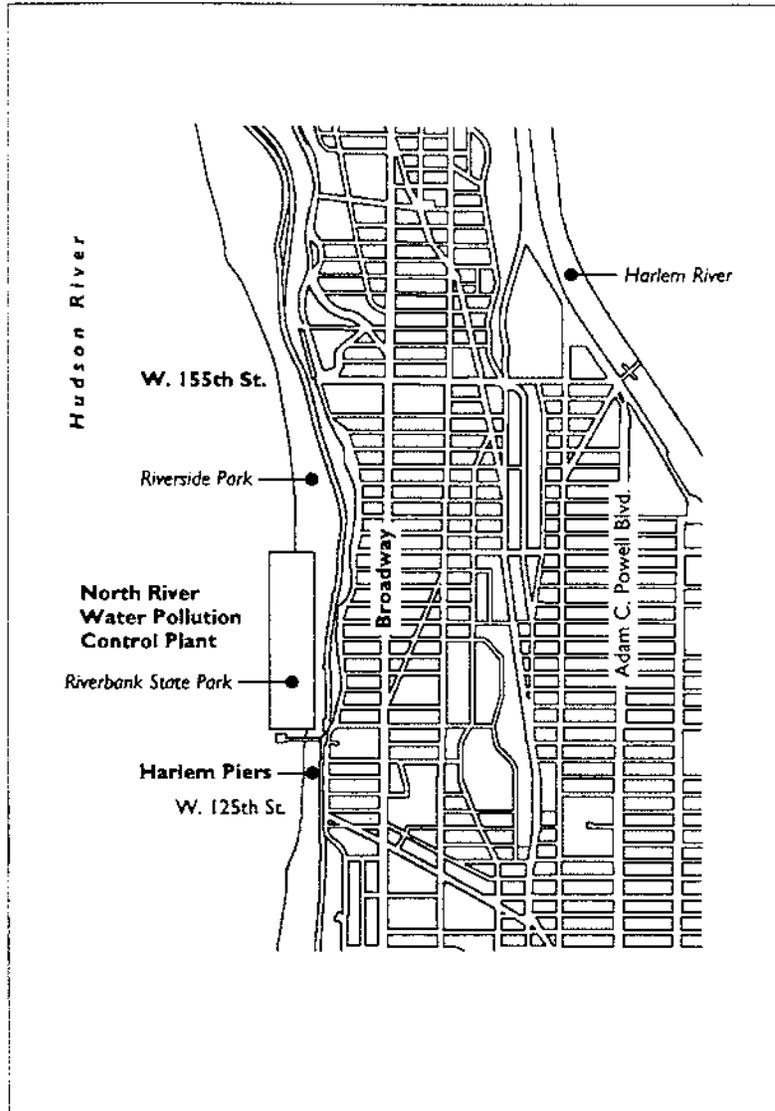
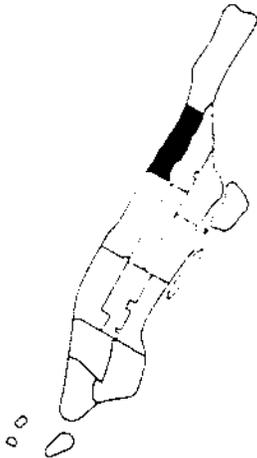
²⁸ NYCDPR, Riverside Park Walk 145th Street to 155th Street Draft CMAQ application, October 19, 1994.

²⁹ New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Community Board 9

Population 106,978

Community Board 9 contains two important open space resources near the waterfront: Riverside Park, which rises steeply from the Hudson shore to Riverside Drive; and Riverbank State Park, built on the roof of the North River Sewage Treatment Plant. As in Board 12, however, the topography inhibits physical access to the water's edge in Riverside Park. Enjoyment of the excellent and highly popular recreational facilities at Riverbank Park is marred by the City's failure to mitigate fully odor emissions from the plant. Open space in the Community Board remains well below the City's planning standard, and the Henry Hudson Parkway seriously obstructs direct access to the water's edge. The waterfront area between 135th and 125th Streets would benefit from appropriate water-dependent and water-enhancing uses. More than 41 per cent of Community Board 9 residents are children or seniors who need open space and recreation close to home. ♦



	CB 9	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+3.8%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$20,775	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	1.68	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	26.0%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	15.1%	17.5%	22.4%

Unfortunately, the park and the adjoining community have been plagued by severe odors emanating from the North River Plant. Various circumstances have contributed to the problem. The plant was originally designed to be fully enclosed, with all indoor air subjected to odor control measures before being vented. Federal budget cuts in the early 1980s prompted a redesign of the plant that left most of it open to the outside atmosphere. Limited space on the platform holding the plant prompted the design of aeration tanks at twice the normal depth. This led to incomplete aerobic digestion of waste matter, and hence to odor problems. Finally, the plant has long operated well over its design capacity of 170 million gallons per day. This situation has put a strain on equipment and cut down on the treatment time of waste water entering the plant. The result is outdoor levels of hydrogen sulfide ranging from noticeable to illness-causing.

In response, DEP has begun a \$52 million capital project to enclose selected areas of the plant and treat the corresponding plant air. In 1993 DEP released an *Odor Emissions and Control Study* of the North River plant, detailing the plans for the capital improvement.

An engineering study commissioned by the Borough President has analyzed the probable results and cost-effectiveness of these planned abatement measures. This study, entitled *The Smell of Success?* found that the improvements scheduled to be completed by July 1995 will eliminate only about 75 per cent of the plant's odor impact. Although this will represent a significant improvement, the City **must** consider how to address the remaining odor problem.

Enormous overpasses connect Riverbank State Park to Riverside Drive at 138th and 145th Streets. This makes the park accessible to the adjacent community; it is, however, not linked to Riverside Park, which adjoins Riverbank park to the north, east and south. Next to the sewage treatment plant, at grade level (i.e., below the overpasses), is a construction staging area used by DEP for construction at the sewage plant.

The community has also expressed concern about the condition of the F. Stuart Williamson stairway that brings pedestrians along 138th Street from Broadway to Riverside Drive, an important access point to Riverside Park and Riverbank State Park.

Recommendations

- **DEP's construction staging area adjacent to the North River sewage treatment plant should be devoted, at least in part, to providing access that will link Riverside Park North to the Harlem Piers area.**
- **Because of the importance of the Williamson staircase, DPR should assess its condition and seek appropriate funding to make repairs, if necessary.**

- **Access to Riverbank State Park has been improved by extending public bus service to the park. The installation of an elevator would further improve access.**

Harlem Piers, West 135th to 125th Street (CB 9)

This is a major undeveloped area stretching along the Hudson River shore between the two halves of Riverside Park. The area is the site of the proposed "Harlem-on-the-Hudson" development, long a subject of controversy and divergent visions.

As proposed by the Harlem Urban Development Corporation (HUDC), a subsidiary of the State UDC, and endorsed by UDC and the City's EDC, Harlem-on-the-Hudson would be a three million square foot mixed-use complex. It would include an African-American and Latino cultural arts center, residential, retail, office and manufacturing development, and a hotel and marina.

Community Board 9 has questioned the environmental appropriateness of the proposed housing, and strongly believes that any housing in the area should serve the needs of Harlem residents and offer a mix of income levels "in proportion to present demographic trends."³⁰

A feasibility study for the project recommended "an evolutionary, incremental approach to development rather than the more usual urban renewal strategy."³¹ It broke the project into three phases: Phase I would include uses feasible from a marketing standpoint that require no changes in zoning or new construction. These would include a food and flower market, a temporary pier or barge structure to accommodate dinner-cruise and possibly other boats, a temporary visitor information center, interim cultural spaces and other interim uses in vacant buildings. Phase II uses would also be feasible from a current-market point of view; they might, however, involve new construction, build on a Phase I use, or require a zoning change. For Phase II, the study recommended a 500-seat theatre, an enlarged food and flower market, retail space and joint living-working space for artists. Proposed Phase III uses are components of the original Harlem-on-the-Hudson plan thought not to be feasible at this point, including residential development and a 5,000-seat theater.

³⁰ While the population in Community District 9 grew by 3.8 per cent (from 103,037 to 106,978) between 1980 and 1990, the total number of housing units declined by 2.1 per cent (from 44,192 to 43,274) during this same period. The district's median household income of \$20,775 is well below that of Manhattan (\$32,262) and New York City (\$29,823). Of the 106,978 people who reside in the community district, 29.1 per cent (31,095) receive some form of public assistance. The total number of overcrowded occupied units dramatically increased 76.6 per cent (from 3,262 to 5,761) between 1980 and 1990.

³¹ Harlem-on-the-Hudson Plan, March 1992.

As a first step toward implementing Phase I, HUDC has proposed installing a floating pier structure and the operation of a restaurant excursion boat by the Harlem Steamship Company, a subsidiary of New York Cruise Lines, which also operates World Yacht. The proposal also calls for HUDC to maintain the bulkhead area west of the marginal street for uses such as craft fairs, farmers' markets, flea markets, festivals, bicycle rentals and sports demonstration events.

Community Board 9 has proposed that revenue to the City from this interim use lease be dedicated to landscaping and improvement of the bulkhead and marginal street areas, with the specifics to be determined jointly by HUDC and Community Board 9.

Just north of the Harlem-on-the-Hudson site is a DOS marine transfer facility at 135th Street. It serves approximately 200 to 225 trucks daily. The trucks tend to queue along Twelfth Avenue, sometimes reaching as far south as 130th Street during peak hours of operation. This traffic and congestion present potential conflicts with safe and enjoyable public access.

Recommendations

- **The multi-tiered phasing concept provides a realistic, prioritized strategy for developing the Harlem Piers area, and responds to many of Community Board 9's concerns. Phase I promises to open the West Harlem waterfront to public access and boats without waiting for the resolution of the complex economic and environmental issues raised by some of the Phase III components.**
- **The proposal for dedicated landscaping revenues would improve waterfront access in West Harlem and also increase collaboration between HUDC and Community Board 9.**
- **Plans for interim improvement of the Harlem Piers bulkhead and marginal street areas must be coordinated with DOS in order to minimize pedestrian-vehicular conflict. Of particular concern in designing this bulkhead area are the necessary connections to Riverside Park -- where a river's edge walkway/bikeway is under development -- and Riverbank State Park.**

Riverside Park (II), West 125th to 72nd Street (CBs 9, 7)

DPR and the private Riverside Park Fund have developed plans to link the existing water's edge pathways into a continuous water's edge walkway/bikeway from 125th to 72nd Streets. The primary "gap areas" are located between 125th and 106th Streets and 91st and 83rd Streets. In limited areas, specifically between 89th and 87th Streets, the space between the Henry Hudson Parkway and the water's edge narrows to less than five feet.

**Riverside Park
at 125th Street**



DPR submitted an ISTEA application in fall 1994, seeking funds to construct a small cantilever structure over the Hudson River between 83rd and 91st Streets to connect the existing waterfront esplanades in Riverside Park. This project will replace a narrow dirt path that is between the seawall and the Henry Hudson Parkway and include new pavement in sections of the route, restoration of landscape and new plantings to buffer the path from the Henry Hudson Parkway. This proposal is based on the feasibility analysis conducted by the landscape architecture firm of Heintz/Ruddick, which was engaged by DPR and the Riverside Park Fund.³²

The 79th Street Marina is located in the Riverside Park Boat Basin and operated by DPR. Much of the physical structure of the marina is in poor condition, although DPR has begun work to ameliorate those problems. The Borough President allocated \$400,000 in Fiscal Year 1993 to reconstruct the "A" dock and install a new wave wall. This work recently has been completed.

In addition, DPR has put out to bid contracts for piling work and dock configuration (\$500,000) and pier reconstruction (\$520,000). This work should be completed by May 1995. The Marina also requires dredging work which has not been funded yet.

³² NYCDPR, Riverside Park Walk 83rd Street to 91st Street Draft CMAQ application, October 19, 1994.



79th Street Marina,
Riverside Park

Houseboats with permanent residents are docked at this marina, raising concerns about sewage, garbage and fire access. Efforts by Borough President Messinger, City Council Member Ronnie Eldridge, DPR, Community Board 7 and marina residents resulted in a recent five-year dockage contract between DPR and the marina residents addressing these sanitation and safety issues.

In June 1994 the Empire State Rowing Association launched New York City's only public open water sculling program at the 79th Street Boat Basin.

Recommendations

- **Riverside Park offers unique potential as a link in a continuous walkway/ bikeway around the borough. The creative and forward-looking work of DPR and the Riverside Park Fund to develop a continuous walkway and bicycle path at the river's edge should be supported.**
- **The Borough President supports DPR's ISTEA application to develop an esplanade between 91st and 83rd Streets.**
- **The boaters at the 79th Street Boat Basin have the right to remain there. In the long-term, DPR should enlarge the facility and upgrade it so that recreational boaters can also dock there.**
- **Water-dependent recreational uses such as the sculling program at the 79th Street Boat Basin should be encouraged on the Manhattan waterfront.**

Community Board 7

Penn Yards, West 72nd to West 59th Street (CB 7)

The Penn Yards site is Manhattan's largest undeveloped tract of land, with 57 acres (plus another 19 acres underwater). It is also the largest privately owned waterfront property in the borough. While it is currently fenced and inaccessible except for special events to the public, this site holds spectacular potential.

In early 1991 developer Donald Trump abandoned his proposed "Trump City" plan. That 14.3 million square foot proposal had called for the world's tallest building, a wall of 700-foot (60-plus stories) towers, a one million square foot indoor shopping mall and parking for 7,400 cars. The street system was designed to revolve around the six-block long shopping mall, and did not maintain the borough's street grid system. The developer withdrew the Trump City proposal before the start of ULURP.

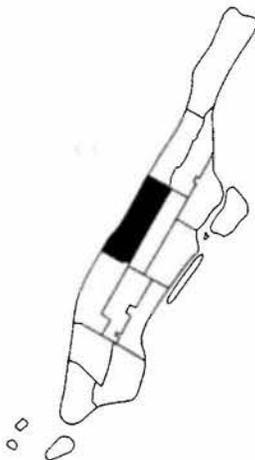
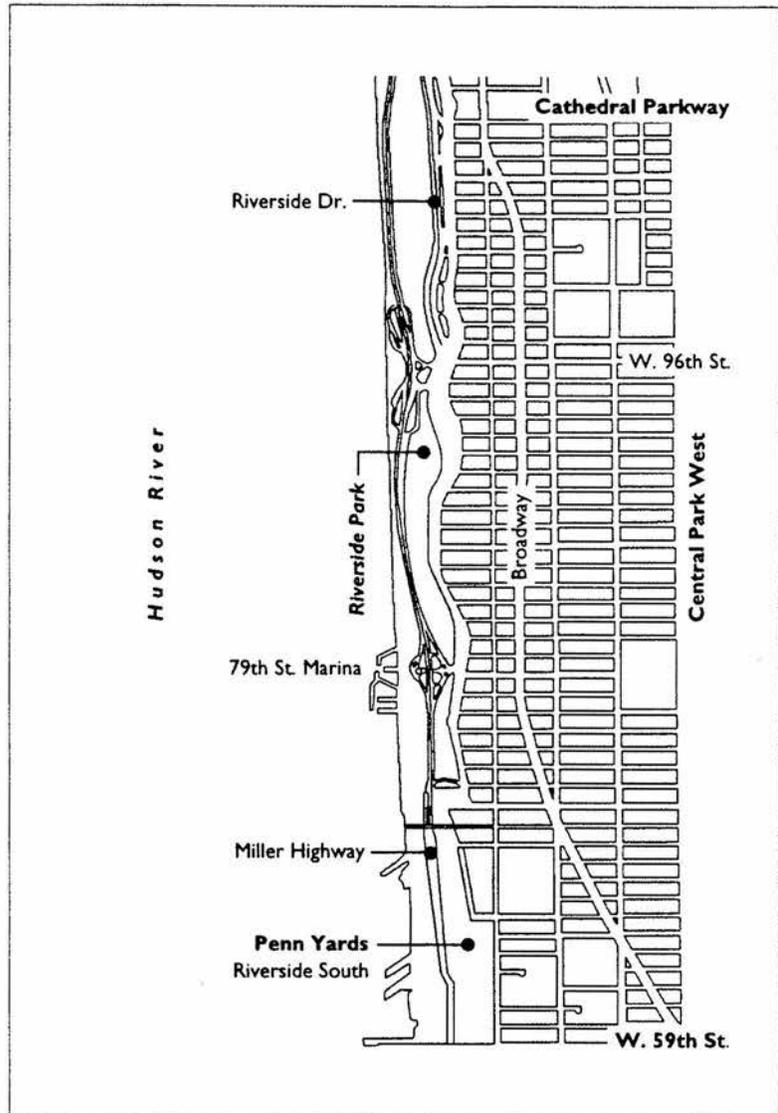
Trump then joined forces with a consortium of civic groups, including the Municipal Art Society, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Parks Council, the Regional Plan Association, the Riverside Park Fund and Westpride, to secure ULURP approval for a new plan, known as "Riverside South." At the time this new plan was announced, the Borough President marked the change with the comment, "we are moving away from an appallingly bad plan toward a concept for this site which can make a great deal of sense for everybody." In light of the site's critical importance, especially for the Manhattan waterfront, the Borough President co-sponsored, with Community Board 7 and the New York City chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a comprehensive three-day planning and design review "charette" in June 1991, as well as a series of public forums on park design held during the pre-ULURP period. In addition, along with other elected officials and community representatives, the Borough President participated during 1991-92 in the Penn Yards Advisory Committee convened by the Department of City Planning.

During the Borough President's ULURP review period in the summer of 1992, a number of significant commitments were negotiated. These included: mapping the park land as public park; increasing the amount of active recreation space; creating a collaborative process to involve the public in ongoing park design issues and a strong public-private partnership to fund park maintenance; agreeing to a park construction phasing schedule to ensure waterfront enhancements in the areas nearest the residential communities adjoining the site as early as possible (with improved designs for access from the northern, southern and eastern edges); and constructing a small temporary open space very early on (well before commencement of development).

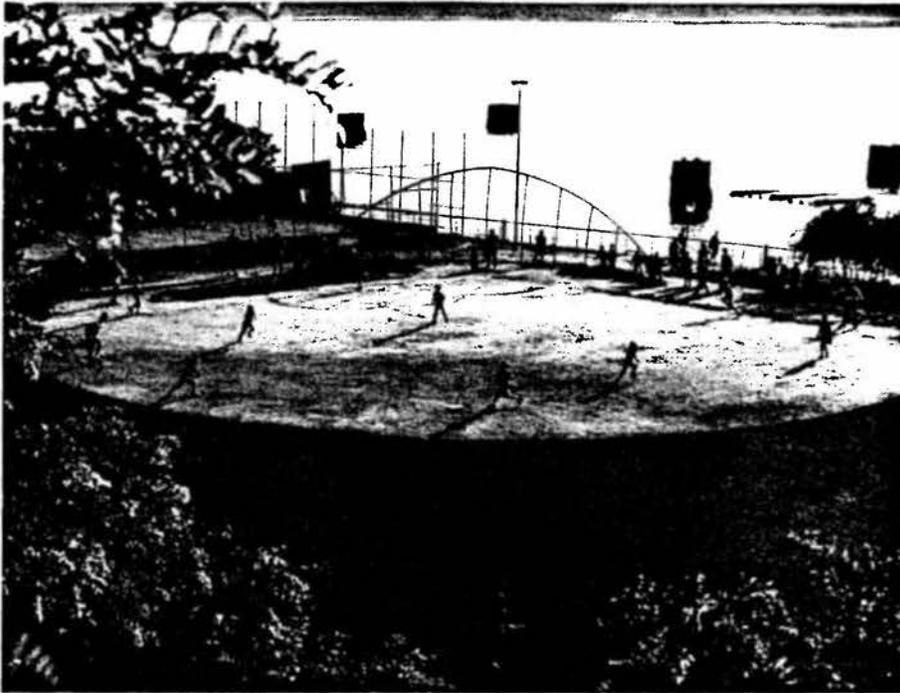
Community Board 7

Population 210,993

Community Board 7 is the most populous Community Board in New York City, yet it has an open space ratio well below the City Planning Commission's standard of 2.5 acres per 1,000 persons. Riverside Park and Drive provide excellent and popular waterfront recreation to residents. However, incomplete north-south esplanade connections in the park and the obstructions presented by the Henry Hudson Parkway and Miller Highway restrict access to Community Board 7's waterfront area. The Riverside South project -- the largest privately held waterfront site in Manhattan -- will include a much-needed public waterfront park and esplanade. ♦



	CB 7	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+2.1%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$40,852	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	1.55	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	14.2%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	18.0%	17.5%	22.4%



Riverside Park
near 72nd Street

Other negotiated commitments included: lowering the buildings' streetwalls and narrowing some of the towers, to reflect more appropriately in this design the surrounding area's context; devising a certification process to ensure that sufficient sewage treatment capacity exists to permit the hook-up of the project (without interfering with other development in the area); incorporating sustainable development principles into the project's construction; and including community services consistent with City fair share principles within the community facility space. The developers also committed to include a minimum of 12 per cent affordable units (low-, moderate- and middle-income), with a goal of 20 per cent. Additional commitments to protect against displacement of such residents and preserve SRO occupancy in the surrounding area were also included.

The agreement also covered: supplying funds to support the rehabilitation of the West 72nd Street IRT subway station; timing the contributions for the park, affordable housing and subway improvements to ensure that such commitments would be met prior to final build-out; convening a community-based Construction Liaison Committee to deal effectively with construction impacts; and making substantial efforts to recruit and employ a diverse workforce (and vendors) in the construction and operation of the project. The Borough President conditioned further support of the project upon the inclusion of each of these items in the project's approvals; by the time the ULURP process reached its end, each of these commitments was so reflected.

As approved, Riverside South includes a 21.5-acre waterfront park, the extension of the Manhattan street grid and 7.9 million square feet of development, including about six million square feet of residential space (5,700 units), a 1.8 million square foot television studio, 3,500 parking spaces (restricted primarily to accessory use for the development), and significant amounts of space for offices, community facilities, local retail uses, theaters and studios. The plan was designed by Riverside South Planning Corporation (RSPC), an entity formed by the Trump Organization and the consortium of civic groups listed above.

A major existing physical barrier on the site is the Miller Highway, an elevated steel structure running parallel to the Hudson River for the entire length of the site. The elevated highway made sense when the site was used as a railyard and the objective was to keep vehicular traffic out of the way. In the context of recreational and residential development of the site, though, it is an eyesore and a constraint, effectively bisecting the site and leaving a narrow band of land, at points no more than 30 feet in width, at the water's edge.

In the course of planning and reviewing Riverside South, City and State officials made a commitment to support the relocation of this highway, moving it east of the existing structure and down to grade level, to make way for a waterfront park stretching from 59th to 72nd Streets. Unfortunately, due to the advanced state of deterioration of the existing highway structure, simultaneous work had to proceed on the repair and reconstruction of the existing highway structure. However, the Federal Highway Administration, the New York State Department of Transportation and the New York State Urban Development Corporation plan to initiate an environmental study and preliminary design effort, the products of which will be a preliminary design report and Environmental Impact Statement for the project.

As for the design for the relocated highway, the Borough President will be reviewing closely the design and environmental documents. While the idea of having larger portions of the roadway covered has some obvious design merits in terms of enhancing access to the park, this option, like others, will have to be evaluated in the context of its potential noise and air quality impacts, and its cost. Similarly, while the Borough President is adamant that the highway project will have to follow the most environmentally sound air quality mitigation methods, including vents, stacks and fans as deemed necessary, it is simply too early to make an appropriate design recommendation.

While the relocation of the Miller Highway clearly would enhance the quality of the waterfront park, the approved design for the Riverside South waterfront park includes options for construction with or without the relocation. As initially proposed, the park design included two playgrounds, two acres of active recreational space, a recreation pier,

an amphitheater, a large lawn area, an area dedicated to community gardens, a freshwater pond and a waterfront esplanade. From its inception, the overarching design principle for the Riverside South project has been the development of a great new waterfront open space.

As a result of negotiations during ULURP review, several key issues that had been raised by the Borough President, as well as by Community Board 7, the City Planning Commission and the City Council, were addressed via improvements in the park design and plan. Approximately 1.5 acres of active recreation space were added, enhancing the park's value both for the surrounding community and for diverse users throughout the City who will eventually be able to enjoy the new park. The project is subject to a special permit vesting deadline of six and one-half years, but actual full build-out could well take many more years. The park construction phasing plan mandated in the project approvals will ensure that the waterfront elements closest to the existing neighborhoods (the Upper West Side and Clinton) proceed early in the development, and that the entire park is substantially completed prior to the project's full build-out. Access to the park from those existing communities to the north and south of the project area, as well as from Amsterdam Houses to the east, was also enhanced through design improvements. The waterfront design of the park was also somewhat simplified, and provisions were made for ongoing public involvement in the park's design, operation and maintenance.

In the event that the highway relocation project does not proceed, the Riverside South approvals incorporate a fallback waterfront park design, i.e., with the current elevated highway configuration. This design includes an esplanade, a hard-surface recreation area, a maintenance/bathroom structure and a paved pathway beneath the highway structure, along with a lawn area, tot lot and community garden in the upland area. Since the earliest stages of development (those which occur prior to the final design or commitment of funds for the highway relocation) entail the construction of the portion of the park that would remain unchanged by the highway location, the areas closest to the water's edge (esplanade and pier) are designed to remain the same regardless of how the rest of the park eventually evolves.

As the North River Water Pollution Control Plant, which serves the West Side of Manhattan, has consistently been operated by the City at levels above its legally permitted capacity, the question of sewage treatment is a critical one for a project of the magnitude of Riverside South. Over the years, proposals have ranged from a moratorium on all new development in the North River plant's catchment area, to requiring Riverside South to construct its own sewage treatment plant (which DEP and DEC oppose), to a "no-net-flow" approach that would link Riverside South's development to various water conservation measures in the catchment area. In February 1995 the City certified specifically that Riverside South's buildings could be hooked up

to the North River plant without impeding other development in the area or causing the plant to exceed its permitted capacity.

The Riverside South site plan largely reflects the objectives previously expressed in a major analysis undertaken by Community Board 7 and the Municipal Art Society in 1989. These "West Side Futures" recommendations called for the waterfront area of the site to be developed as parkland, the continuation of the Manhattan street grid through the site, retail development limited to serving local residents, and residential density at or below the equivalent of an "R8" zoning district. All these principles were met in the approved Riverside South plan. It is also noteworthy that Riverside South, in sharp contrast to the previous proposal for the site and in anticipation of the Waterfront Zoning Text enacted by the City subsequent to the project's approval, does not include any transfer of floor area from lands underwater.

Recommendations

- **The relocation of the Miller Highway is worth the public expenditures sought, primarily because of the dramatic difference this design would make in opening up a thirteen-block section of the West Side waterfront.**
- **The rehabilitation of a public recreation pier, as planned at Riverside South, will enhance the park and encourage water-dependent uses. Ferry service is one such use which may be ideal for this location and should be explored.**
- **The extension of the street grid through the project area, with many views through to the waterfront, also represents an important enhancement, directly connecting the dense surrounding urban environment with a spectacular waterfront site.**
- **The single highest priority in planning for this park is ensuring that it becomes an unambiguously public resource for the entire city, and in no way a private enclave for the new residential development. One key means to discourage privatization, aggressively supported by the Borough President and ultimately incorporated into the approvals, is the inclusion of substantial affordable housing throughout the development.**
- **As the design of the park progresses, and especially in light of the project's commitment to sustainable development principles, an appealing approach would be an ecological and environmental theme, including: recycled materials in the park's construction; selecting plantings which offer functional value in cleaning air, including bioaquatic park drainage mechanisms; utilizing solar power for lighting and facilities; and offering demonstration areas for environmental education.**

- The park's design should remain relatively simple and basic, so that it can be improved over time, can keep long-term maintenance costs down, and allow funds to be targeted to provide other needed mitigation/amenities, including mass transit mitigation measures.
- As this project anticipates a lengthy and gradual build-out, especially as regards the highway relocation issues, the emphasis on waterfront connections early on in the development plan is critical.
- Similarly, for the public, both in the nearby community and the City as a whole, to appreciate fully the potential of this tremendous waterfront site, temporary open space enhancement is crucial. This temporary park was originally mandated to be constructed by the summer of 1994, and is now set to proceed in the immediate future, the Miller Highway project and the need for certain permits having prevented completion to date.
- To the extent that the television studio component of the approved project does not proceed, as its speculative nature indicates it may not, the character of Riverside South as a waterfront development would be strengthened by the substitution of such an economically productive use as an Olympic-style sports and training complex.
- Given the importance of the North River plant's proper operation to the quality of life of the West Harlem community adjoining the plant, as well as to the water quality of the entire lower Hudson River, certification of the Riverside South project should not have been issued on the basis of a cursory review and speculative plan. Rather, the City must examine all alternatives, including additional conservation measures and/or the creation of additional capacity (i.e., a new plant), to ensure that the West Harlem community's waterfront enhancement and economic development potential does not suffer in any way as a result of Riverside South or other developments in North River catchment area.
- The Riverside South Development Corporation (RSDC) should work closely with Hudson River Park Conservancy (HRPC) to ensure that connections with the Riverside South Development are properly considered.



West Side Waterfront, West 59th Street to Battery Park City: An Overview (CBs 4, 2, 1)

The Hudson River corridor from West 59th Street to Battery Park City is perhaps the world's most talked about four-and-a-half miles of waterfront. It has been the subject of succession of planning efforts. From 59th to 35th Streets, the area is controlled by the City; below 35th Street, it is under State jurisdiction. The West Side Waterfront Panel (WSWP), with members appointed by the Governor, the Mayor and the Manhattan Borough President, issued recommendations late in 1990; more recently, the Hudson River Park Conservancy (HRPC), and its master design consultant have also undertaken planning for the waterfront.

The WSWP's "Vision Statement" foresees an esplanade providing continuous public access to the waterfront as well as the area in front of pier headhouse structures, linking the waterfront sections. A 20-foot-wide continuous esplanade is proposed to run along the length of the waterfront. Several common elements such as paving, seating, railing and lighting fixtures are envisioned by the statement as giving "unity to the walkway." Historic artifacts, interpretive signage, sculpture or other public art would be integrated at designated points along the esplanade to highlight critical views, historic locations or areas of ecological significance.

Structure and Powers of the Hudson River Park Conservancy

On May 17, 1992, the Governor and Mayor executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding implementation of the recommendations of the West Side Waterfront Vision Statement. In endorsing the recommendations, the MOU states that the "revitalization of the West Side waterfront is of the highest importance and the creation of a new Hudson River Waterfront Park is the key to such revitalization." Pursuant to the request of the Governor and the Mayor, HRPC was formed as a UDC subsidiary.

A troubling shortcoming of HRPC as it is structured in the MOU has been the absence of community representation on its Board of Directors. Instead, an advisory board was established consisting of members of Community Boards 1, 2 and 4. A number of committees has been established to address issues concerning the proposed park.

The lack of community representation on the HRPC board would be partially corrected by proposed State legislation introduced in August 1994 by Assemblyman Dick Gottfried that would install one community representative on the Board of Directors. The HRPC Board of Directors endorsed the legislation at a meeting on October 6, 1994.

The proposed legislation would also limit development along the Hudson River waterfront while setting the stage for the creation of a park. The legislation would enact a State commitment to plan and develop the waterfront from Battery Park City to 59th Street as a park; prohibit residential, commercial office building, and hotel development anywhere in the park area; provide for preparation of the park proposal in consultation with the community; make HRPC subject to local laws; earmark all rent the State gets from the old Westway site and let it be used only for the park; and extend 1990 Hudson River waterfront protections, which currently run from Battery Park to 35th Street, north to 59th Street.

Other park development strategies being pursued by HRPC, elected officials and the affected Community Boards include parkland designation, a Federal payback waiver application and a Federal payback.

An additional problem with the MOU is that it charges HRPC with funding responsibility for reconstruction of the bulkhead and the relocation of tenants and uses now on the waterfront but unrelated to the park. This represents a very significant increase in financial responsibility from the program outlined in the Vision Statement.

HRPC must comply with all State and local environmental review processes and has hired the consultant firm of Allee King Rosen and Fleming to undertake an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The affected communities are involved in the process of developing the EIS. It is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 1996.

Designing the Park

In April 1994, the HRPC Board selected Quennell Rothschild/Signe Nielson as a master design consultant. Services to be provided include: reviewing current and proposed planning, design and structural studies/reports; informing the design of the proposed bikeway/walkway on Route 9A (the West Side Highway); developing a parkwide design philosophy and vocabulary; coordinating all subsequent design; and developing a schematic design for Stage I, which is likely to encompass the area from the north side of the Pier 40 structure (just north of Clarkson Street) to the north side of Pier 51 (just north of Jane Street).

The master design consultant is required to communicate with community design liaisons in the course of performing the assigned tasks. These community design consultants have been selected through a separate RFP process. They include: Kent Smith representing Community Board 1; Tom Balsley representing Community Board 2; and Bukhurst Fish Hutton Jacquemart representing Chelsea and Clinton.

HRPC has made interim programming one of its immediate objectives. An interim bikeway/walkway which runs from Chambers Street to the Gansevoort Peninsula was completed for use in Summer, 1994. Interim programming has included the "Jazz on the Hudson Festival" on Pier 45 in Greenwich Village, and "Chelsea Waterside Arts" program on Pier 62 in the summer of 1994, in conjunction with the Chelsea Waterside Park Association. HRPC has also developed a summer youth program for local high school and college students, who learn about environmental waterfront and parks issues, and also help maintain the developing West Side waterfront park. HRPC, with the Chelsea Waterside Park Association and Chelsea Piers Management, have opened Pier 62 for the summers of 1994 and 1993.

Thirteen piers³³ were identified for public recreation in the vision statement. Many of the piers within the proposed Hudson River Park continue to deteriorate with each passing year, resulting in decreased public access and constant escalation of the estimated costs of rehabilitating them. NYSDOT has submitted an application to the FHWA to use approximately \$12 million -- derived from the pier lease revenues -- for stabilization of some of these piers. The piers identified for this work are: Pier 25 (Community Board 1); Piers 45, 46 and 54 (Community Board 2); and Pier 64 and the area north of that pier (Community Board 4). Stabilization is scheduled to begin in Spring 1995.

Recommendations

- **A challenge facing the designers is the selection of unique design elements that will give the esplanade and piers a "signature." The waterfront park must reflect the distinctive characters of each of the upland neighborhood on which it fronts. These design elements must also endow the esplanade with a visible sense of connection to the City, especially where major crosstown streets intersect the park. Care needs to be taken by the consultants so as not to create a four-and-a-half mile long monotonous esplanade.**
- **The Borough President supports Assemblyman Gottfried's proposed legislation and believes that it will help ensure the development of Hudson River Park. The Borough President supports the other park development strategies being pursued as well.**

³³ Piers 25, 26, 34, 42, 45, 46, 51, 62, 63, 64, 79, 94 and 97.

- **While this legislation would substantially improve community representation, Community Boards 1, 2 and 4 should each have a voting member on the Board of HRPC.**
- **HRPC should expand its summer programming, which provides opportunities to involve the local community in the park.**
- **The Conservancy's interim bicycle/pedestrian path from Battery Park City to the Gansevoort Peninsula should be extended further north.**
- **The waterfront should continue to be opened for interim park uses; such new uses as the proposed canoe and kayak launch at Pier 26 should be identified and implemented as soon as possible. Planning and implementation for these interim uses should occur through an open, democratic process, with strong Community Board involvement. Pier 62 should continue as an interim public use.**
- **Immediate steps must be taken to relocate parking and other incompatible uses from the waterfront corridor, to create interim recreation areas, to rehabilitate public access piers, to create continuous pedestrian and bicycle access along this corridor, and to remove other barriers to access to the waterfront. The credibility of the long-term vision depends upon the provision of incrementally improved access in the short-term.**
- **In order to prevent further deterioration of the piers identified for public recreation, New York City should identify matching funds so that the pier stabilization work can be undertaken.**

Community Board 4

West 59th to West 56th Street, Piers 99-95

At 59th Street, Pier 99 serves as a DOS marine transfer station. Pier 98 at 58th Street serves as a fuel barge receiving station for Con Edison. These are water-dependent uses which are appropriate to continue at their present locations. However, the WSWP Vision Statement urged that "operations at the eastern edge of Piers 98 and 99 be reorganized to provide adequate space for the esplanade."

Pier 97 at 57th Street is used for parking by DOS. The Vision Statement proposed that it become a public access pier. Unfortunately, in the summer of 1993 a portion of the pier was damaged by fire.

Piers 95 and 96, at 55th and 56th Streets respectively, are in poor condition and unused. The Vision Statement called for their removal. The bulkhead in the area between piers 94 and 97 is occupied by a concrete plant. The Vision Statement called for the plant to remain at that location while Route 9A is under construction, and then to be removed to make way for a waterfront park, to be linked to the existing DeWitt Clinton Park.

Recommendations

- **DOS should begin planning whatever reorganization is necessary to provide space for an esplanade east of the Pier 99 marine transfer station, and should implement such reorganization as soon as possible. Unfortunately, the lease between the City and Con Edison for Pier 98 is not up for renewal until 1999. The City should nonetheless negotiate for a public access easement with Con Edison prior to that expiration date. These areas should be opened as part of an interim esplanade as soon as a connection to the south is planned; access need not await the construction of the new West Side Highway and the Hudson River Esplanade Park.**
- **NYSDOT must carefully coordinate what have until recently been two completely separate planning processes, for the West Side Highway south of 59th Street and the Miller Highway to the north, in particular to ensure pedestrian access to the Clinton waterfront.**
- **Pier 97 should be stabilized so that it can become publicly accessible.**
- **The only modification necessary to the Vision Statement's plan for Piers 95 and 96 is some provision in the interim for a bicycle lane between the concrete plant and the West Side Highway.**

West 55th to West 48th Street, Piers 94-88

Piers 88, 90 and 92 are passenger ship terminals, operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey since 1974. Pier 94 is an adjacent cargo pier. The terminals were rehabilitated for \$38 million by the City in the early 1970s to consolidate cruise ship activity. They drew numerous visitors and provides many economic benefits to the City; in 1989, the Port Authority estimated that the passenger ship terminals generated more than \$150 million and 1,300 jobs.³⁴ In 1991, more than 180 ships sailed from the site carrying more than 300,000 passengers. During the same year, trade shows -- which use the facilities in the off-season -- drew more than 400,000 visitors.³⁵

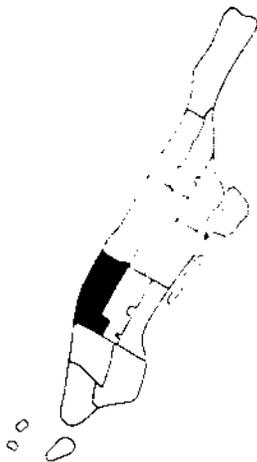
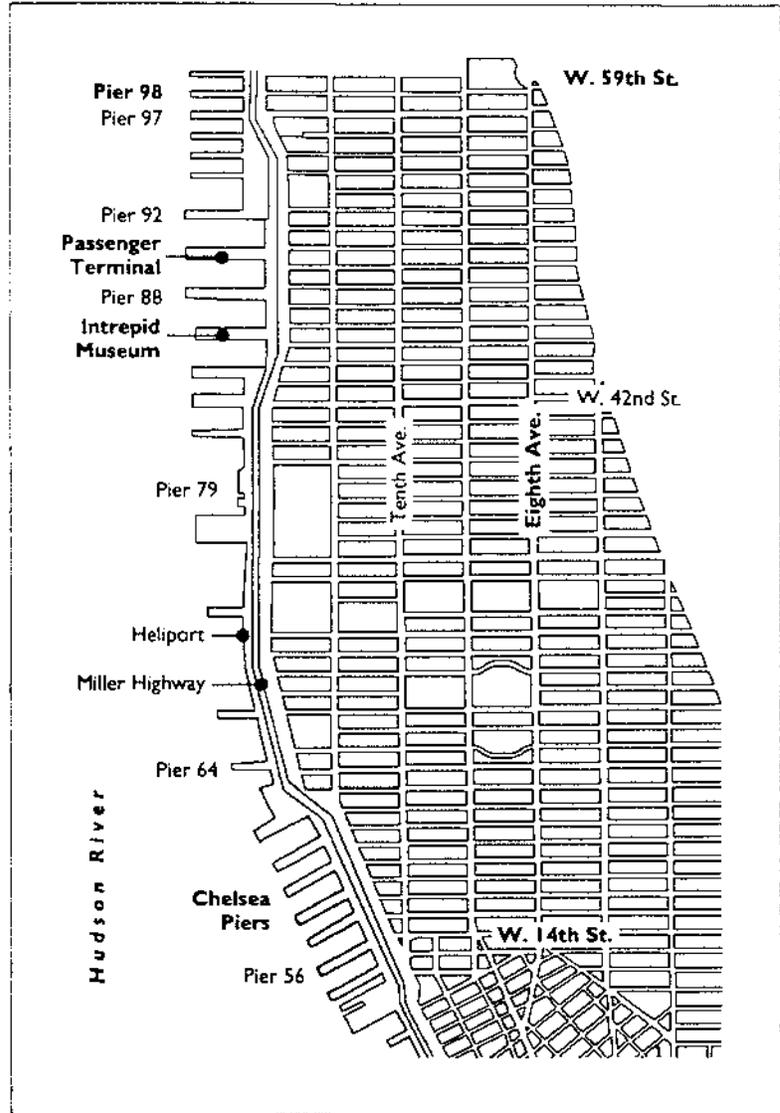
³⁴ The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

³⁵ SOURCE: EDC.

Community Board 4

Population 84,431

Historically, this stretch of the waterfront included some of Manhattan's most active shipping piers. Today, a mix of uses, including maritime-related tourism as well as non-maritime and non-water-dependent uses that inhibit access to the waterfront, characterize the Community Board 4 waterfront. This entire length of the waterfront lies within the projected Hudson River Park and esplanade. Construction also has begun on the Chelsea Piers project -- a major recreational venture located on the waterfront at 23rd Street. Community Board 4 ranks 57th of the 59 Community Boards in open space ratio. Its need for open space is intensified by its highly residential character. ♦



	CB 4	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+2.8%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$30,450	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	0.17	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	11.4%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	17.9%	17.5%	22.4%

Nonetheless, the terminals have run at an operating deficit since it opened, with a \$7 million deficit in 1991. Because cruise ships berth mostly in the summer months, the facility is underutilized, and trade shows fail to fill the gap.³⁶

Under the Dinkins administration, EDC and the Port Authority hired the urban design firm of Cooper Robertson & Partners to conduct a planning/urban design/marketing study of piers 88-94. However, this study was terminated by the present administration before final recommendations were released. A new redevelopment study and plan for the area has been undertaken, with the goal of maximizing revenues on all four piers. EDC is planning to issue a development RFP in early 1995 for Piers 94 and 92. EDC will also issue an RFP for cruise ships operations for Piers 90 and 88.

The WSWP Vision Statement designated Pier 94 for industrial, commercial and public recreation activities. There is no reason why this pier cannot be easily transformed into a public recreational facility prior to the reconstruction of Route 9A and the rest of the Hudson River Waterfront Park.

Presently, piers 88-92 are vastly underutilized. Additional uses on these piers that complement existing maritime activity could both increase the viability of current operations and serve the needs of the nearby community. Community Board 4 has identified the need for an overpass connecting DeWitt Clinton Park, the largest park in the Community District, with the mezzanine level of Piers 88-94; the park and the mezzanine are on the same level. The proposed overpass would provide a much-needed increase in the open space resources of this community.

Recommendations

- **Pier 94 should be developed in accordance with the vision statement to provide as much public access and recreation for the community as possible.**
- **Community Board 4 and the Borough President should participate in the new study for the future use of Piers 88-94. While the Borough President recognizes the need to generate revenue from these piers, maximizing revenue should not be the only factor.**
- **Consistent with existing and future economic activity on Piers 88-92, it might be possible, as the Vision Statement points out, to open some or all of the water's edge to the public -- access to which is now blocked all the time -- at least at certain times, so that this structure does not function as a monolith blocking access to the water for six full blocks. A dedicated bicycle pathway adjacent to the Passenger Ship Terminals would be another meaningful interim improvement.**

³⁶ SOURCE: EDC.

- **Whatever uses are selected should not preclude the long-term use of Piers 88 to 92 for maritime related uses. Additionally, the long-term use of Pier 94 should include maritime uses and public access.**
- **The Borough President supports the proposed overpass with DeWitt Clinton Park. In the long-term, the HRPC, the City, Community Board 4 and the Borough President should work toward creating this access point. ISTEA funds may be one possible funding source for the construction of the overpass and the creation of public access around the piers.**

West 47th to West 41st Street, Piers 86-81

The tourist hub in the area between Piers 86 and 81 is one of the most active sections of the Hudson River waterfront.

Pier 86 houses the *Intrepid* Sea-Air-Space Museum. In 1991, approximately 500,000 people visited this museum. The heavy public use of this area, however, raises several concerns. The land area outboard of the roadway between Piers 88 and 84 is extremely narrow; this will make the connections to the parkland to the north and south more problematic. In addition, although the *Intrepid* Museum is mandated by the terms of its lease to provide public access, it has failed to do so; access is restricted to admission-paying museum goers.

The *Intrepid* Museum Foundation has proposed to install the US Navy helicopter carrier *USS Guadalcanal* as the West Side heliport across the far ends of Piers 84 and 86, with access via Pier 86. The Museum Foundation has formed "Task Force Operation *Guadalcanal*" including representatives from the Manhattan Borough President's Office, Community Board 4 and the Hudson River Park Conservancy.

The proposal would relocate the 30th Street Heliport to the *Guadalcanal*, which would enable the 30th Street space to be developed as part of the Hudson River Waterfront Park, and would provide additional funds to the *Intrepid* Museum Foundation.

However, significant problems with this proposal have been raised by the Clinton community. Siting the *Guadalcanal* at this location would require the removal of the end of Pier 84, which is the most sound portion of the pier.³⁷ The *Guadalcanal* would reduce public access to Pier 84, which is presently the only publicly accessible pier in Clinton. The heliport would also reduce the quality of the remaining publicly accessible

³⁷ Department of General Services, *Pier 84 Engineering Survey*, 1994.

portion of Pier 84 by blocking waterfront view corridors and creating noise and pollution. Other alternative sites that have been recommended by the community include Piers 76 or 72.

Pier 84 is currently under a short-term lease to Circle Line Sightseeing Tours for expanded operations. Adequate daily maintenance of this pier has been an ongoing problem. Pier 83 houses Circle Line tour boats. In 1991, these boats, which tour the entire Manhattan waterfront, served some 650,000 visitors.

The area between Piers 83 and 81 is currently used as a bus turnaround, which conflicts with pedestrian access to the waterfront. Pier 81 is now the home of World Yacht, which operates dinner cruises and other boat excursions. In 1991, when it operated at Pier 62, World Yacht served 250,000 customers. Demand for these services has become so great that World Yacht had to seek larger permanent facilities, which resulted in the move to Pier 81.

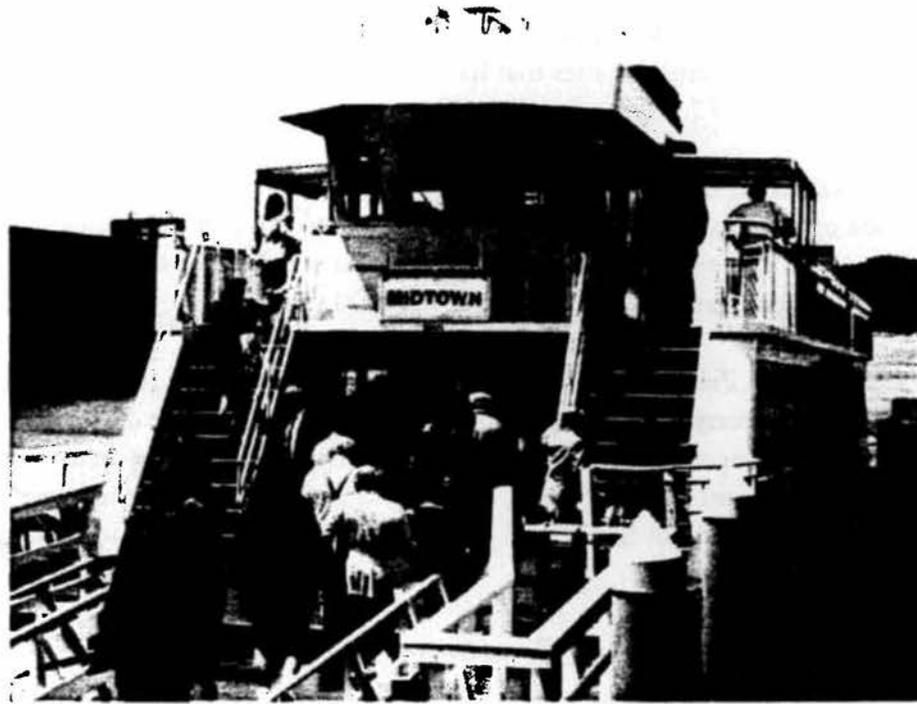
Recommendations

- **Simple steps to clean and landscape the bulkhead area connecting these tourist attractions would help link them, and would contribute to continuity.**
- **With regard to siting the *Guadalcanal* at Piers 84 and 86, the EIS for this project should include complete environmental and financial analyses for other siting alternatives, including Piers 76 or 72.**
- **The Borough President has consistently called on the *Intrepid* Museum to meet the conditions of its lease that require public access. The public has a right to immediate and consistent access to Pier 86.**
- **In the area between Piers 83 and 81, HRPC should work with the Transit Authority (TA) to address the conflict between pedestrian and bus traffic so that pedestrian access to the waterfront may be maximized.**

West 40th to West 36th Street, Piers 79-76

Pier 79, at 38th to 40th Streets, is currently used as a warehouse, which is a waste of precious waterfront space. EDC has undertaken a short-term three-year occupancy permit for expanded ferry operations to accommodate new routes from Staten Island, Rockland County and Yonkers to west Midtown. This route is scheduled to begin in spring 1995.

**38th Street
Ferry Terminal,
Hudson River**



At 38th Street on Pier 78, the Port Imperial Ferry Company operates a ferry that transported an average of 6,000 passengers each weekday in December 1992, on an anomalous privately owned waterfront lot. A large three-dimensional cigarette advertising billboard has recently been installed on the site.

At Pier 76, City DOT operates a tow pound, where illegally parked automobiles towed from Midtown streets are taken. This pier is located across from the Javits Convention Center, which drew 2.79 million people in 1991.³⁸ Since 1984, the City has proposed locating the Hudson River Center hotel facility on Pier 76 and the area immediately to the east of the existing headhouse. The City is presently considering the relocation of both the tow-pound and the Hudson River Center to an upland site.

Recommendations

- **The proposed ferry operation should be considered for relocation from Pier 79 to Pier 76. This option should be considered during the three-year period of the short-term ferry permit. Consistent with the Vision Statement of the West Side Waterfront Panel, Pier 79 should be developed for public recreation uses.**
- **Alternative uses, specifically those contributing to the West 42nd Street waterfront area as a tourism magnet, should also be considered for Pier 79.**

³⁸ SOURCE: Jacob Javits Convention Center.

- **The billboard on Pier 78 is a visual obstruction and is a highly inappropriate use on the waterfront. It should be removed immediately.**
- **Pier 76, currently excluded from the Hudson River Park, should be included in the park. Regardless of the long-term future of this site, revenue-generating short-term uses that are both related to the Convention Center and appropriate to the waterfront are preferable to the tow pound and should be sited here in the near-term. Such use must include appropriate public access.**
- **Pier 76 should be considered as an alternate site to dock the *USS Guadalcanal* as a heliport.**

West 30th to West 26th Street, Pier 66

The heliport at 30th Street should be moved to a new proposed West Side Heliport using the *USS Guadalcanal* in order to open the relatively wide bulkhead in this area to public access.

Immediately to the south of Pier 66 is a float bridge, one of the last intact artifacts of the maritime industries that once flourished all along Manhattan's waterfront. In November 1994 HRPC applied for funds under the ISTEA Enhancement Program to stabilize and preserve the float bridge for future community use.

Recommendations

- **The Borough President supports the relocation of the 30th Street heliport, in order to distance the heliport from the adjacent upland communities, and from the future Chelsea Waterside Park. However, given the concerns associated with siting the *Guadalcanal* at Pier 84, it appears that Piers 76 or 72 would be a more appropriate location.**
- **The float bridge should be preserved and restored as soon as possible before further deterioration occurs. The Borough President has supported this endeavor.**

West 26th to West 16th Street, Piers 64-59

The WSWP calls for the bulkhead area from 26th to 24th Streets to be cleared, to make way for an accessible wide bulkhead esplanade leading to a proposed Chelsea Waterside Park. This area has just been leased for a two-year period for an open-air restaurant and recreation facility that will include public waterfront access. As part of the pier

stabilization program, this area is to be cleared and paved with asphalt; a railing will also be installed.

The area from 24th to 22nd Streets is designated for development of the Chelsea Waterside Park. This eight-acre park would stretch from Eleventh Avenue to the Hudson River, straddling Route 9A (the West Side Highway), taking in the Thomas F. Smith triangles and including three public recreation piers, 64-62. The Chelsea Waterside Park Association initiated planning for this ambitious park, designed by landscape architect Thomas Balsley.

There is a broad consensus in support of the Chelsea Waterside Park. Chelsea is particularly lacking in adequate open, green and recreational spaces. The community has been awaiting the completion of the City's Chelsea Recreation Center for some 25 years. In addition, this park is a required mitigation measure for the taking of portions of Thomas F. Smith Park by NYSDOT for the planned reconstruction of Route 9A. Community Board 4 and the Chelsea community consider the construction of this park their foremost priority in opening the Chelsea waterfront for public enjoyment.

Until it is developed as part of Chelsea Waterside Park, Pier 63, located at 23rd Street, will be used for recreational and restaurant uses. The first floor of the pier structure will contain an indoor roller rink; the second floor will contain lockers and a restaurant; and the roof will be bubbled over and contain basketball and volleyball courts. These uses will occupy the site for five years beginning January 1, 1995. There are also two two-year renewal options at the discretion of the State and lessee.

The Chelsea Piers -- Piers 62, 61, 60 and 59 -- stretch from West 22nd to 18th Streets. Pier 62 is an open pier. The other piers constitute perhaps the most dramatic example of Manhattan's isolation from its waterfront, with their Chinese wall of massive headhouses. These piers currently contain warehouses, television production facilities and parking.

Chelsea Piers Management was selected in 1993 to develop these piers. The lease for Piers 61, 60 and 59 will run for ten years with a ten-year renewal option. They will be developed with two ice-skating rinks, a golf driving range, an Olympic training center for track and gymnastics, and a marina, as well as a television and film production complex in the piers' headhouses.

Pier 62 will be developed by Chelsea Piers Management for interim active and passive recreational uses. This pier, along with Pier 63, will eventually become part of Chelsea Waterside Park, which the State will develop as part of the reconstruction of Route 9A.



Float Bridge at
West 26th Street

Originally, the interim plan for Pier 62 was for use as "passive" open space, to be developed in cooperation with the Chelsea Waterside Park Association and Community Board 4. Chelsea Piers Management has now decided to add two rollerblading rinks. The community and local elected officials have expressed a strong preference for retaining the pier for passive recreation uses only.

In response to certain community concerns, Chelsea Piers Management offered various commitments to Community Board 4. In addition, as a result of the Manhattan Borough President's efforts, especially as they relate to Pier 62, Chelsea Piers Management also agreed to these further commitments: they will provide some free skating time to residents of the Chelsea community; they will work with community groups to provide free youth programs; they will explore the feasibility of expanding the hours of Pier 62 beyond the "dawn to dusk" hours so that they coincide with the hours of rollerblading rinks; and they will include the community in developing the facade design of the headhouse.

Recommendations

- **The Chelsea Waterside Park will serve as a major open space resource for one of the most underserved communities in the City. The City and HRPC should work with Chelsea Piers Management Ltd., NYSDOT, the Chelsea Waterside Park Association, Community Board 4 and the Borough President to plan for the development of this park concurrently with the reconstruction of Route 9A, rather than await the completion of plans and financing for the entire Hudson River Waterfront Park.**

- **The uses proposed by HRPC for Piers 61 through 59 are appropriate, compatible with their location on the waterfront, and will be in operation years before the completion of the waterfront park. NYSDOT should be applauded for this excellent selection.**
- **Chelsea Piers Management Ltd. should continue to work closely with the Chelsea Waterside Association and Community Board 4, especially toward the goal of incorporating as many elements of the original design for the Chelsea Waterside Park into the Pier 62 design as possible.**
- **Chelsea Piers Management Ltd. should also continue to work closely with the Chelsea Waterfront Park Association, Community Board 4 and the Borough President to develop a design that maximizes public access to the pier. However, no design should conflict with the design plans for the future Chelsea Waterfront Park.**
- **Until the Chelsea Waterside Park is completed all of the parties should ensure that public access to the interim park is maintained.**

Community Board 2

West 16th to West Houston Street, Piers 57-52

Pier 57 at 16th Street is used by the New York City Transit Authority's subsidiary, the Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority (MaBSTOA), as a bus garage for 180 buses. The buses will remain at this location until 2001, when the scheduled reconstruction of the 100th Street Depot will be completed.

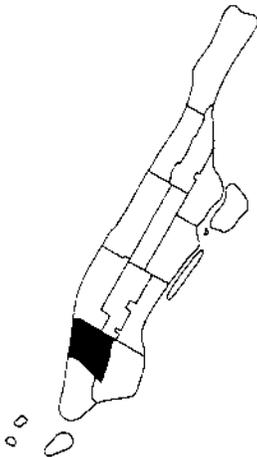
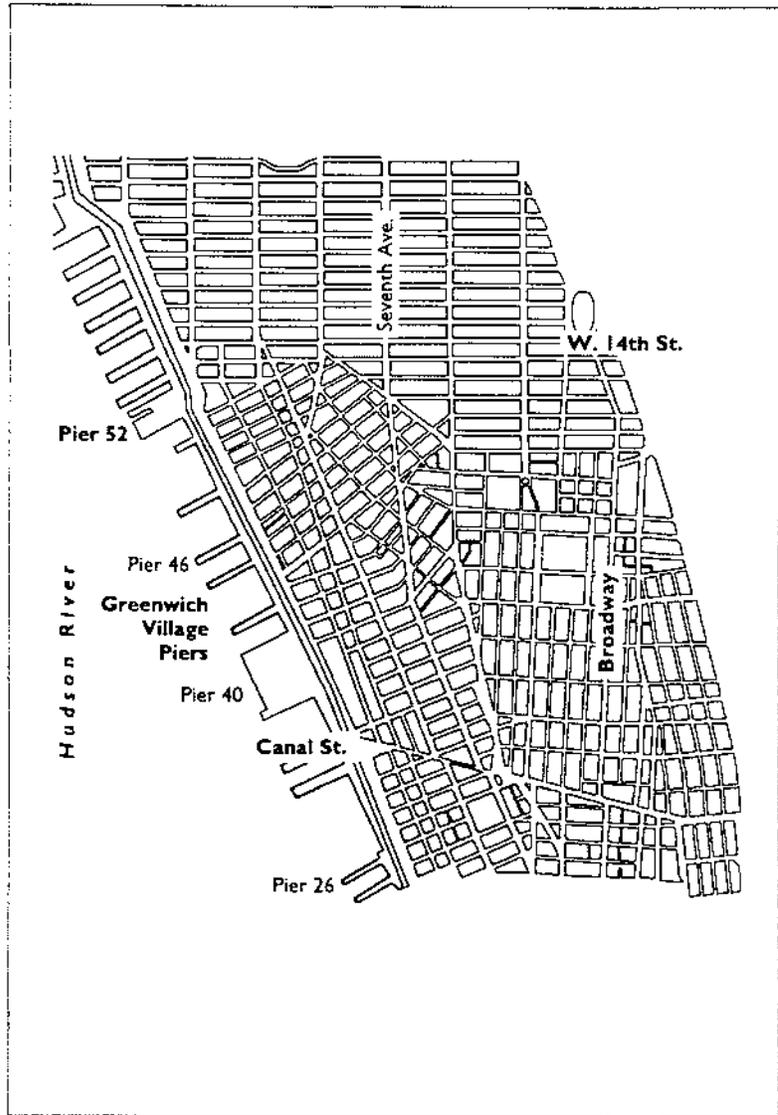
Piers 56, 54 and 53 were historically all Cunard Piers, once used by the great ocean liners; survivors of the *Titanic* were brought here. Pier 56 at West 14th Street is vacant and in poor condition. Community Board 2, the Borough President and preservation advocates sought to have the structure of Piers 54 and 53 at West 13th Street, with its impressive and largely intact headhouses, preserved as part of the Hudson River Waterfront Park. Unfortunately, the building of Piers 54 and 53 were demolished in 1991 by NYSDOT. The main arch and granite courses have been left in place and some other architectural elements have been salvaged. HRPC is working to restore these historic architectural elements; this work may be included in the Pier Stabilization Program. A fireboat station is also presently located at Pier 53 at 12th Street.

Pier 52 at Gansevoort Street has long been used by DOS, previously as a waste transfer station and currently for parking and salt storage. Community Board 5 sanitation vehicles have been relocated to the facility while the East 74th Street garage is under reconstruction. Although this relocation is ostensibly only temporary, community

Community Board 2

Population 94,105

The projected Hudson River Park and esplanade will extend into Community Board 2, where the historic West Greenwich Village waterfront offers great potential for future open space and recreational development. The neighboring community presently uses many of the piers for recreation; although impeded somewhat by the West Side Highway, access here is significantly better than on much of the rest of the island. There are several existing proposals for the revitalization of Pier 40, the largest of the many publicly accessible piers along the Community Board 2 waterfront. The open space ratio in Community Board 2 is 0.19 acres per 1000 persons; of the City's 59 Community Boards, it falls 55th on this scale. ♦



	CB 2	Manhattan	New York City
Change in Population 1980-1990	+8.1%	+4.1%	+3.1%
Median Household Income	\$39,592	\$32,292	\$29,823
Open Space Ratio (Acres per 1000 Pop.)	0.19	1.48	2.62
Pop. under 19 Years	11.4%	25.7%	19.0%
Pop. over 60 Years	16.7%	17.5%	22.4%

members are concerned that the additional trucks may not be removed. The existing pier structure is poorly maintained; it has broken windows, is marred by graffiti, and its entry is often strewn with garbage. In recent years, various proposals for this site have been considered, including expanded parking, the construction of a permanent garage, and a solid waste facility.

Recommendations

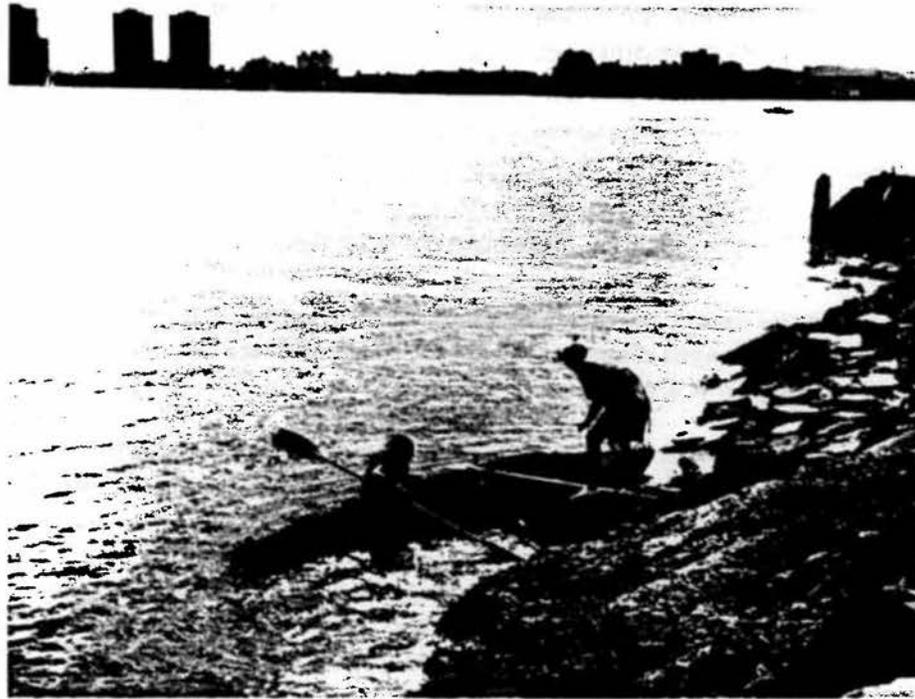
- **To the extent possible, remnants of the great headhouses of Piers 54 and 53 other salvaged elements should be integrated into the design of the esplanade through this area.**
- **The fireboat station at Pier 53 is an important part of the West Side's maritime heritage and should be restored and maintained in its current operation.**
- **The Borough President strongly opposes expanding parking facilities on the Gansevoort Peninsula at Pier 52, and supports relocating current DOS parking and salt storage at Pier 52 to more appropriate upland sites.**
- **Community Board 2's proposal to create a dog run at the southern end of the Gansevoort Peninsula should be implemented as an interim use.**
- **Immediate steps should be taken to provide public access around the perimeter of the entire pier.**
- **The poor condition of the sanitation facility detracts from the overall Greenwich Village waterfront area. DOS should maintain the structure and clean the entrance area on a regular basis.**

West Houston to Leroy Street, Piers 46-40

The Greenwich Village waterfront is at present the most accessible, open and heavily used portion of the proposed Hudson River Park area. Here, open piers are a popular recreational resource, serving not only local residents but the gay community throughout the metropolitan area. Warm weather draws hundreds of people to these piers and the adjacent bulkhead area, and special events, such as the annual dances on Pier 45 at Christopher Street for Lesbian and Gay Pride Day, draw many thousands.

Community Board 2 seeks to continue the tradition of these simple open piers. To assure a sense of openness at the waterfront, the Board has proposed establishing a Scenic View Special Zoning District. This proposal is one component of the Community Board's 197-a plan for the West Village currently under review by the Department of City Planning.

**Kayaking at
Gansevoort Point,
Pier 52**



In addition, Community Board 2 has long sought to have the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designate a Greenwich Village Waterfront Historic District. Such an historic district would protect the maritime heritage of this historic community, which the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation has documented meticulously. The Greenwich Village piers -- themselves historic -- are in widely varying condition, and some require extensive rehabilitation.

Because the Greenwich Village waterfront is already used as a recreational area, it is particularly ripe for interim improvements. Community Board 2 and the Federation to Preserve the Greenwich Village Waterfront and Great Port have worked since 1985 to improve and enliven the Greenwich Village waterfront. They have succeeded in restricting parking and increasing lighting and drainage. NYS DOT, HRPC and Community Board 2 have worked together to build the previously described interim bicycle and pedestrian path.

Pier 40 is a mammoth pier stretching from Leroy to King Streets. It covers 16 acres, the equivalent of seven city blocks. It is now used for warehousing and parking. It is one of the areas which the Vision Statement has identified as a potential development site. The community design liaison will work closely with the master design consultant to identify potential uses for Pier 40, about which there are a widely divergent range of ideas. Community Board 2 has taken the position that Pier 40 should be devoted exclusively to

open space -- landscaped and green -- with modest concessions acceptable only by special permit and with community review. This position enjoys very strong support among community residents and local elected officials, who quite justifiably cite a severe lack of open, green space in the West Village.³⁹

Recommendations

- **HRPC should immediately undertake the stabilization and rehabilitation of the existing Greenwich Village piers, so they can be used as public recreation piers in this open-space-starved part of the borough.**
- **The historic community of the Greenwich Village waterfront deserves landmark protection. Furthermore, such designation supports and complements the goal of waterfront revitalization. LPC should carefully review CB 2's proposed historic district and designate the area -- in whole or in substantial part, as it deems appropriate -- as an historic district.**
- **Design elements along the Greenwich Village waterfront -- including plaques, sculptures, decorative pavings and exhibits -- should also be included in the planning and construction of Route 9A, the esplanade, parks and public recreation piers to emphasize the role of this unique site in the City's social and commercial history.**
- **In addition to the worthwhile locally initiated interim improvements described above, more well-defined pedestrian crossings across West Street and better lighting are inexpensive steps which could be taken in the short-term to improve access to and use of Greenwich Village's waterfront and piers.**
- **NYCDOT should review the timing of the lights on West Street, to improve pedestrian access to the interim waterfront improvements.**
- **Due to its size, Pier 40 -- in its entirety, or in substantial part -- should include recreational uses to help meet Community Board 2's critical need for open space. It is imperative that HRPC explore possible ways to use Pier 40 to fill this gap.**
- **Realistically, the debate over development of Pier 40 is likely to continue for some time. In the meantime, without substantial investment, the existing structure could be adapted to a mix of water-enhancing uses.**
- **Any long-term uses proposed for Pier 40 should be water-dependent or water-enhancing. Residential, office and hotel development, mega-stores, and parking do not represent a desirable strategy for generating revenue from the Pier.**

³⁹ Community Board 2 Waterfront Committee Report, November 1994.

Leroy to North Moore Street, Piers 34-25

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is currently engaged in a process for the design and reconstruction of Pier 34. It has proposed two 18-foot wide finger piers from the bulkhead to the 10,000 square foot apron surrounding the Holland Tunnel vent shaft. The Port Authority would prohibit public access on one of the finger piers, as well as on the area around the vent shaft. HRPC, the Borough President and Community Boards 1 and 2 endorse a design plan for Pier 34 that will allow public access to **both** finger piers as well as to the apron.

Upland of Piers 25 and 26 is historic TriBeCa, characterized by its streetscapes of elegant commercial buildings from the last century. Stately warehouses and loft buildings resembling Italian palazzos line its cobblestone streets. TriBeCa's historic character was affirmed in the early 1990s by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission's designation of four historic districts within the neighborhood. Two of these historic districts -- TriBeCa North and TriBeCa West -- are adjacent to the Hudson River waterfront. Their proximity to the shoreline reinforces the historic character of the City's waterfront. In addition, the historic districts have enormous potential as waterfront recreational resources.

Pier 26, located between Hubert and North Moore Streets, houses the River Project, a non-profit research and education group. Pier 26 is in a severely deteriorated condition and requires immediate stabilization. As mentioned previously, HRPC is proposing interim uses for this pier, including a kayak and canoe launch, as well as fishing programs. However, the Towboat & Harbor Carriers, a trade association, has expressed concern about the hazards of navigating commercial vessels in close proximity to small recreational vessels.

Pier 25 is home to two historic vessels, a ferry and a tug boat. These ships will be relocated to Pier 26 once it is stabilized, and will be used for public education purposes. Pier 25 formerly was the site of the Amazon Club, which was strongly opposed by TriBeCa residents because of the noise and hazardous pedestrian and traffic conditions it generated. HRPC plans to site some small-scale commercial and recreational water-enhancing uses on this pier.

Another component of the vision statement's program for the TriBeCa Basin is a wetlands restoration project initially proposed by the River Project.

Recommendations

- **While aware of the Port Authority's security concerns in regard to Pier 34, the Borough President recommends that the Port Authority develop a plan that would include public access to both finger piers and the apron.**

- **Piers 25 and 26 should be stabilized immediately, so that the work of the River Project can continue. Research, education and public small boat access are exemplary waterfront uses. The River Project should be encouraged to expand its ecological education programs here, and the feasibility of more accessible small craft boating programs should be explored.**
- **The Borough President supports the general direction outlined by HRPC for Pier 25 and plans to work closely with HRPC and Community Board 1 to identify specific uses so that those that are ultimately sited do not replicate the problems created by the Amazon Club.**
- **Wetlands restoration projects, or research to improve restoration techniques, such as the River Project's work in the TriBeCa Basin, are appropriate, but any attempts to use wetlands restoration or mitigation to justify filling in existing wetlands should be prohibited.**

Battery Park City (CB 1)

Battery Park City is a mixed-use residential and commercial community on 92 acres of landfill at the tip of lower Manhattan. The complex has a permanent community of some 7,500 residents, as well as a daytime population of about 30,000 workers.⁴⁰

Public open space comprises approximately 30 per cent of Battery Park City. A waterfront esplanade links these various public open spaces. This esplanade is completed for all but its southernmost section, known as South Park. Battery Park City's North Park and esplanade were officially opened in spring 1992. At-grade access across West Street at Chambers Street is to be improved. In addition, the Stuyvesant High School Bridge offers safe passage across West Street to North Park and the esplanade.

In 1992 the Battery Park City Authority (BPCA) terminated a controversial plan for the three-acre South Garden project. The BPCA Board has directed its staff to develop a new design for the park. The BPCA Board outlined the following conditions and considerations to guide the development of a new plan for the site:

1. **The new park plan will carefully consider cost of maintenance and have a capital cost lower than the originally planned project.**
2. **The esplanade will continue from the South Cove to Battery Park, resembling the current esplanade from South to North Coves.**

⁴⁰ Battery Park City Authority, July 1994.

3. **The park's design must enhance the magnificent views of New York Harbor and the complex of nearby public sites including the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island and the proposed Holocaust Museum and Memorial.**
4. **There will be consultation with the community via presentations and open Board meetings.**
5. **The inland areas of the site will be designed by a leading landscape architecture firm, following a rigorous selection process conducted by staff.**

Some Battery Park City residents have objected to the idea of connecting the BPC esplanade to Battery Park, citing security and related concerns.

Two areas within Battery Park City remain to be developed: the North Residential Area and a portion of the Battery Place Residential Area, located at the southern end of Battery Park City.

The North Residential Area extends north for eight blocks from the World Financial Center to Chambers Street. In July 1994, the Battery Park City Authority issued new North neighborhood design guidelines. Within the North Residential Area, Parcel 15 is the site for the new Exchanges' project, Parcels 25/26 are designated for commercial or residential development, and Parcels 16-19, 23 and 24 are designated for residential development. The Battery Park City Authority and the Board of Education are planning an elementary school (K-8) on Parcel 22.

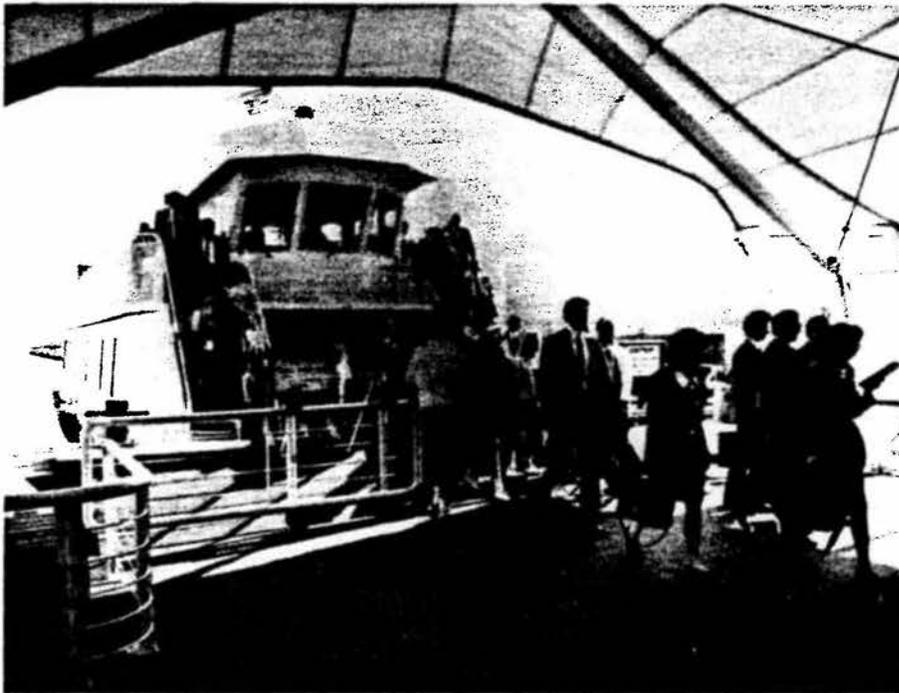
Within the Battery Place Residential Area, Parcel 1 is designated for hotel development, Parcels 2, 3, 12, 13 and part of 14 are designated for residential development, and the remainder of Parcel 14 is designated for development of the Holocaust Museum.

Pier A (CB 1)

Pier A is a nineteenth century covered pier designated as a New York City Landmark. The pier is being redeveloped by EDC for restaurant and retail uses, and will include a visitors center for Harbor Park. Construction was to start in late 1994. The pier is between Battery Park City and Battery Park, and potentially offers a pedestrian/bicycle link between these two major waterfront esplanades.

Recommendations

- **The link between the BPC esplanade and Battery Park, via Pier A, is essential to continuous waterfront access. BPCA should work with the Borough President and the community to ensure all the conditions outlined by its board will be followed, especially as they relate to the continuous esplanade to**



**Commuters from
New Jersey arrive at
Battery Park City**

Battery Park, full and open community consultation, enhancement of harbor views, and capital and maintenance costs. It is also important that BPCA address the security concerns of Battery Park City residents in the context of the continuous esplanade.

- **EDC should continue to plan and design the Pier A project in coordination with the Battery Park City Authority's plans for South Park and Battery Park Conservancy's rehabilitation of Battery Park.**

Ellis Island (CB 1)

Ellis Island is a 23-acre site situated in New York Harbor. From 1892 through the first decades of the twentieth century, Ellis Island served as the principal point of entry for immigrants to the United States. Abandoned for decades, the island is now home to the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, under the jurisdiction of the National Parks Service.

The Ellis Island compound of distinguished Beaux-Arts buildings is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a New York City historic district. The Main Hall is also a New York City landmark. The architectural firm of Beyer Blinder Belle undertook the highly acclaimed restoration work, for which it received a City Club of New York "Bard Award." Thirty more buildings -- from the enormous baggage/dormitory building to the small hospital kitchen -- continue to deteriorate, and the opportunities for rehabilitation become progressively more expensive to execute.

In 1991, the National Park Service put forth a controversial proposal to establish a private international conference center on the island involving the rehabilitation of some of the historic structures, demolition of others, and large new construction. This proposal was widely criticized by community and preservation groups, and was ultimately withdrawn.

Recommendations

- **Congress should allocate funds to stabilize and restore these historic structures.**
- **Any commercial use of Ellis Island should provide public access areas in all buildings.**
- **Any new proposal should attempt to incorporate all existing buildings into the project.**

Governor's Island (CB 1)

Governor's Island has long been a military installation. From 1794 to 1966, the island was used as an Army base. In 1966 the Coast Guard consolidated its East Coast facilities here. Governor's Island is home to approximately 5,000 residents, including those living aboard ships docked at the island. The recreational facilities for residents include ballfields, a golf course, a tennis facility and a swimming pool. Because Governor's Island is a military installation, it is off-limits to the public for most of the year. Recent published reports suggest that the Coast Guard is contemplating the eventual abandonment of Governor's Island. Any new plans for Governor's Island should consider the preservation and reuse of the historic buildings located there.

Liberty Island (CB 1)

Originally named Bedloe's Island after one of its Dutch owners, this island, like all the others off the southern tip of Manhattan, had an early military history as part of shore defenses against the British Navy in the War of 1812. Uneventfully used as a base after that, it was chosen as the site for the Statue of Liberty, erected there in 1886. The Army continued to use the island until 1937, when it abandoned the site in the face of rising enthusiasm for the statue as a symbol of America. Most buildings were cleared from the island at that time. The buildings there now almost exclusively serve the statue and its tourists. The statue and all its facilities were restored or rebuilt for the 1986 centennial. Liberty Island is accessible by ferry from Battery Park. No changes are contemplated at present.

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Recommendations

- **Congress should allocate funds to stabilize and restore these historic structures.**
- **Any commercial use of Ellis Island should provide public access areas in all buildings.**
- **Any new proposal should attempt to incorporate all existing buildings into the project.**

Governor's Island (CB I)

Governor's Island has long been a military installation. From 1794 to 1966, the island was used as an Army base. In 1966 the Coast Guard consolidated its East Coast facilities here. Governor's Island is home to approximately 5,000 residents, including those living aboard ships docked at the island. The recreational facilities for residents include ballfields, a golf course, a tennis facility and a swimming pool. Because Governor's Island is a military installation, it is off-limits to the public for most of the year. Recent published reports suggest that the Coast Guard is contemplating the eventual abandonment of Governor's Island. Any new plans for Governor's Island should consider the preservation and reuse of the historic buildings located there.

Liberty Island (CB I)

Originally named Bedloe's Island after one of its Dutch owners, this island, like all the others off the southern tip of Manhattan, had an early military history as part of shore defenses against the British Navy in the War of 1812. Uneventfully used as a base after that, it was chosen as the site for the Statue of Liberty, erected there in 1886. The Army continued to use the island until 1937, when it abandoned the site in the face of rising enthusiasm for the statue as a symbol of America. Most buildings were cleared from the island at that time. The buildings there now almost exclusively serve the statue and its tourists. The statue and all its facilities were restored or rebuilt for the 1986 centennial. Liberty Island is accessible by ferry from Battery Park. No changes are contemplated at present.



Glossary of Public Agency Acronyms

BPCA	Battery Park City Authority (<i>State</i>)
CPC	City Planning Commission (<i>City</i>)
DBS	Department of Business Services (<i>City</i>)
DCP	Department of City Planning (<i>City</i>)
DEC	Department of Environmental Conservation (<i>State</i>)
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (<i>City</i>)
DGS	Department of General Services (<i>City</i>)
DOS	Department of Sanitation (<i>City</i>)
DOT	Department of Transportation (<i>City</i>)
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation (<i>City</i>)
EDC	Economic Development Corporation (<i>City</i>)
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
HRPC	Hudson River Park Conservancy (<i>State</i>)
LPC	Landmarks Preservation Commission (<i>City</i>)
MBPO	Manhattan Borough President's Office
NYSDOT	Department of Transportation (<i>State</i>)
OPRHP	Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (<i>State</i>)
PANYNJ	Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
RIOC	Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (<i>State</i>)
UDC	Urban Development Corporation (<i>State</i>)
USDOT	Department of Transportation (<i>Federal</i>)

Acknowledgments

This project has involved hundreds of people, including members of all of Manhattan's waterfront Community Boards, as well as representatives from a broad range of public agencies, environmental and civic organizations, and the maritime industries.

Each of the 11 Community Boards that border the Manhattan waterfront has been directly involved in the development of this plan. Often, as many as a dozen or more Community Board members led task force members and the Borough President's staff on lively and informative tours of the waterfront. To a significant degree, this final plan incorporates the recommendations of these Community Boards. Grateful thanks for their contributions to this plan go to the former Community Board chairs and district managers and the following current chairs and district managers:

Community Board 1

Anne Compocchia, *Chair*
Paul Goldstein, *District Manager*

Community Board 2

Carol Feinman, *Chair*
Rita Lee, *District Manager*

Community Board 3

Luis Soler, *Chair*
Martha Danziger, *District Manager*

Community Board 4

Ross Graham, *Chair*
Julia Fitzgerald, *District Manager*

Community Board 6

Gary Papush, *Chair*
Carol Pieper, *District Manager*

Community Board 7

Elizabeth Starkey, *Chair*
Penny Ryan, *District Manager*

Community Board 8

Barbara Chocky, *Chair*
Denise Woodin, *District Manager*

Community Board 9

Theodore Kovaleff, *Chair*
Lawrence McClean, *District Manager*

Community Board 10

Barbara Askins, *Chair*
Linda Wood, *District Manager*

Community Board 11

Eddie Baca, *Chair*
Jannette Irizarry, *District Manager*

Community Board 12

Marvin Higgins, *Chair*
Maria Rivera, *Acting District Manager*

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Department of Business Services
Department of City Planning/City Planning Commission
Economic Development Corporation
Landmark Preservation Commission
Office of Midtown Enforcement
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Transportation

We especially thank the following individuals at these City agencies: Cathy Faughnan, previously of DCP; Ann Buttenweiser, previously of EDC; Glynis Berry of NYCDOT; Stephen Whitehouse and Joseph Chu of DPR.



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Governor's Task Force on Coastal Resources
Harlem Urban Development Corporation
Hudson River Park Conservancy
Hudson River Valley Greenway Council
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
New York State Department of State
New York State Department of Transportation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation
United State Department of Transportation

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59th Street Task Force
125th Street Local Development Corporation
Asphalt Green
Carl Schurz Park Association
Chelsea Waterside Park Association
Citizens for a Hudson River Esplanade
Citizens United Against Riverwalk
City Club of New York
CIVITAS
Clean Air Campaign
Clinton Planning Council
Coalition for a Livable West Side
East 72nd Street Block Association
East River Waterfront Conservancy
East Side Rezoning Alliance
Environmental Action Coalition
Environmental Defense Fund
Exploring the Metropolis
Federation to Preserve the Greenwich Village Waterfront and Great Port
Fireboat House Environmental Center
Five Borough Alliance
Gramercy Neighborhood Associates
Green Guerrillas
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation
Horatio Street Association
Hudson Harbor Preservation Association
INFORM
Interstate Sanitation Commission
Manhattan East Community Association
Maritime Association of New York and New Jersey
Municipal Art Society
Natural Resources Defense Council
Neighborhood Open Space Coalition

New York Riding Program for the Handicapped
 New York City Audubon Society
 New York Public Interest Research Group
 North River Community Environmental Review Board
 Parks Council
 Regional Plan Association
 Renee DuBois Center
 River Project
 Riverside Park Fund
 Save the Piers
 Seaport Community Coalition
 Shorewalkers
 Sierra Club
 Sutton Area Community
 Towboat Harbor Association
 Transportation Alternatives
 Tribeca Task Force
 Washington Heights-Inwood Local Development Corporation
 West Village Committee
 Westpride
 West Harlem Environmental Action
 Women's City Club of New York
 Yorkville Civic Council

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MBPO Staff

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