

## CHAPTER 6: OPEN SPACE

### 6.1 Overview

This chapter assesses the potential of the Proposed Action to result in significant adverse impacts to open space. The *CEQR Technical Manual* defines open space as publicly-accessible land (either public or privately-owned), the purpose of which is leisure, play, or sport. In addition, land set aside for the protection or enrichment of the natural environment is considered open space.

As detailed below, the Proposed Action would result in the introduction of new residents and workers to the Project Area, thus placing additional demand on existing open space resources. However, as 12 acres of new, publicly-accessible open space would be created by the Proposed Action, significant adverse open space impacts would not occur.

### 6.2 Methodology

The *CEQR Technical Manual* recommends an open space indirect effects analysis for any project that would introduce more than 200 residents or 500 employees. The Proposed Action would result in the addition of approximately 1,208 residents and approximately 872 employees to the Project Area. As the Proposed Action would exceed the thresholds for residential and worker populations, an assessment of potential indirect effects on open space resources has been conducted.

An open space study area was established to analyze both the nearby open spaces and the population using those open spaces. The study area reflects the boundaries of the area that would most likely be affected by the Proposed Action with respect to open space. The *CEQR Technical Manual* establishes a one-half mile radius residential study area as the reasonable walking distance (20 minutes) for residential users. A one-quarter mile radius commercial study area is considered as the reasonable walking distance for nonresidential users (ten minutes), such as workers on a lunch break. Figures 6-1 and 6-2 show the residential and commercial open space study areas, respectively. The definition of the study areas also reflects the boundaries of the area that would most likely be affected by the construction and operation of the Proposed Action with respect to open space.

For the residential study area, a half-mile radius is drawn around the Project Area. All census tracts with at least half of their land area situated within the bounds of the half-mile radius comprise the residential study area. The same process is repeated for the commercial study area, using a quarter-mile radius around the Project Area. Due to the nature of the census tract geography in this waterfront area of Staten Island, the CEQR technique of open space study area delineation was slightly adjusted. Census tract 15, within which the Project Area lies, technically should not be included in either of the open space study areas since less than half of the tract's land is located within the quarter-

or half-mile radii.<sup>1</sup> Excluding the Project Area tract from the study areas would render the open space analysis ineffective; therefore, to be conservative, tract 15 was included in the residential and commercial study areas. Census tracts that comprise the residential and commercial study areas are illustrated in Figures 6-1 and 6-2, respectively.

An inventory of all open space resources situated within the residential and commercial study areas was compiled using the New York City Department of City Planning's (NYCDCP) *Staten Island Community District 1* profile and NYCDCP's *BYTES of the BIG APPLE: Selected Facilities and Program Sites, 2005.1*, and verified via field work.

Next, an initial quantitative assessment was performed. Methods described in the *CEQR Technical Manual* were utilized to determine whether the project-generated residential and commercial user populations would significantly reduce the amount of available open space for the area's population. In order to examine the change in total population relative to total open space in the study area, residential and commercial open space ratios were calculated for Existing and Build Conditions.

### **6.3 Existing Conditions**

An inventory of public parks, privately-owned public spaces, and New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR) Greenstreets was compiled for the study areas. A Greenstreet is a traffic median or island that has been landscaped through a joint project of NYCDPR and the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT).

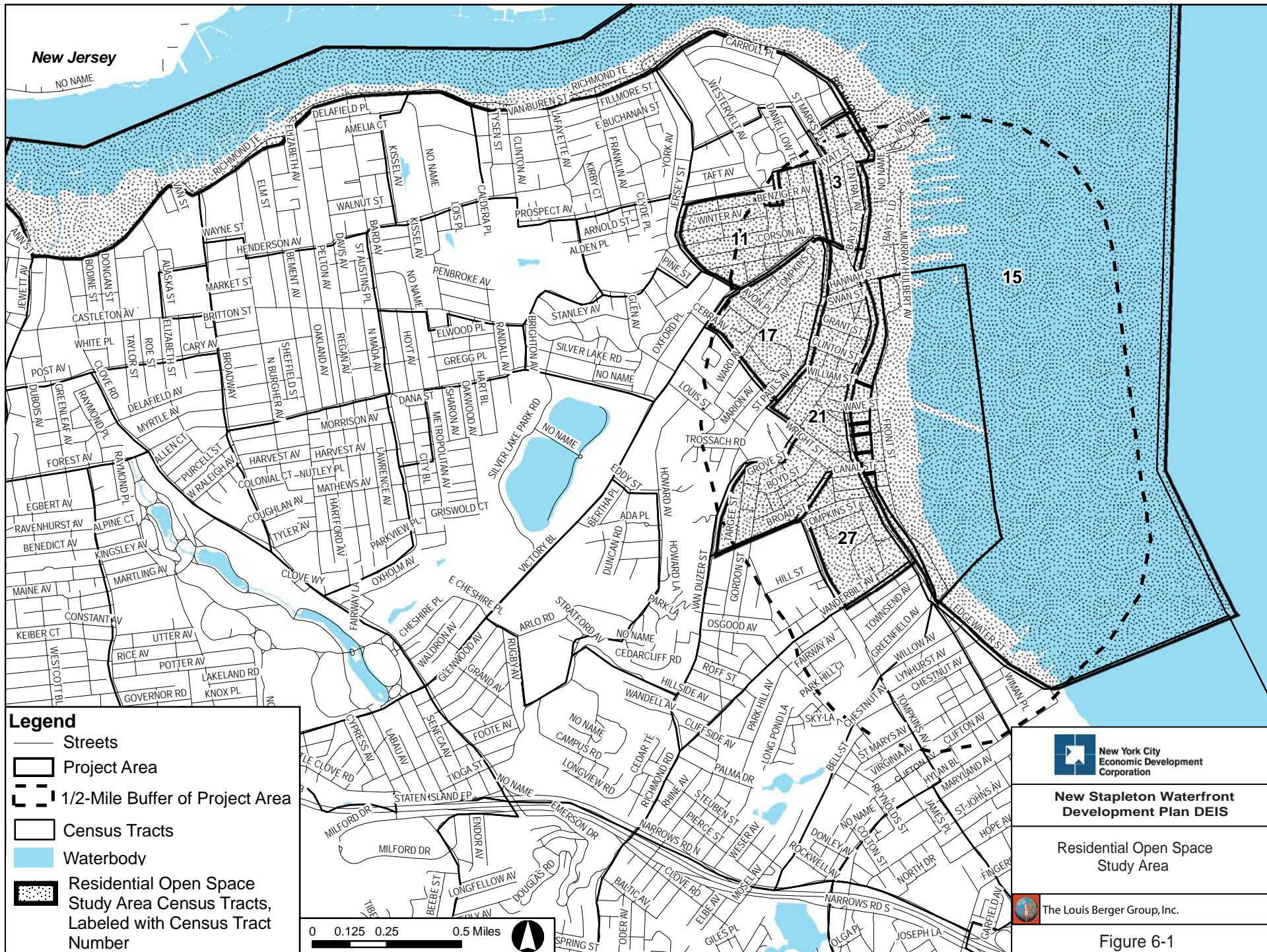
The Stapleton neighborhood does not contain an abundance of open space resources. Currently, no publicly-accessible open space exists within the Project Area. This section describes the current open space resources that have been identified in the commercial and residential study areas. Due to the nature of the census tract geography and as illustrated in Figures 6-1 and 6-2, the open space residential study area is rather large and contains six census tracts: 3, 11, 15, 17, 21 and 27. Two of these census tracts, tracts 15 and 21, comprise the commercial study area.

#### **6.3.1 Residential Study Area**

Fifteen publicly-accessible open spaces and/or recreation facilities have been identified in the residential study area. These resources are mapped in Figure 6-3 and listed in Table 6-1, along with their acreages.

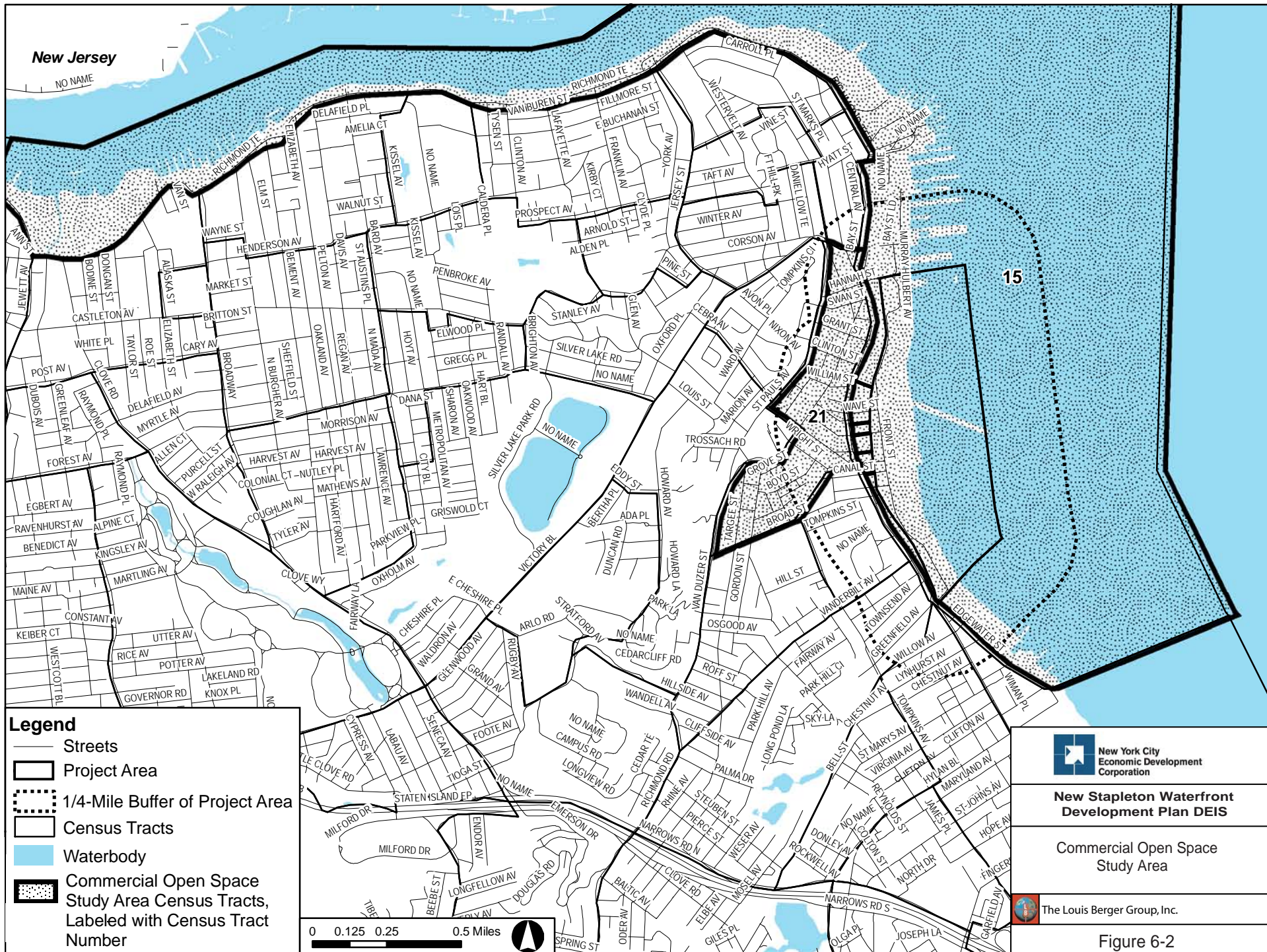
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<sup>1</sup> Tract 15 spans over five miles of Staten Island's northern and eastern waterfront, from Port Richmond Avenue to Clifton Avenue.



Sources: MapPLUTO, NYC DCP; Landbase, DoITT; Census 2000 TIGER/Line® data, provided by ESRI.





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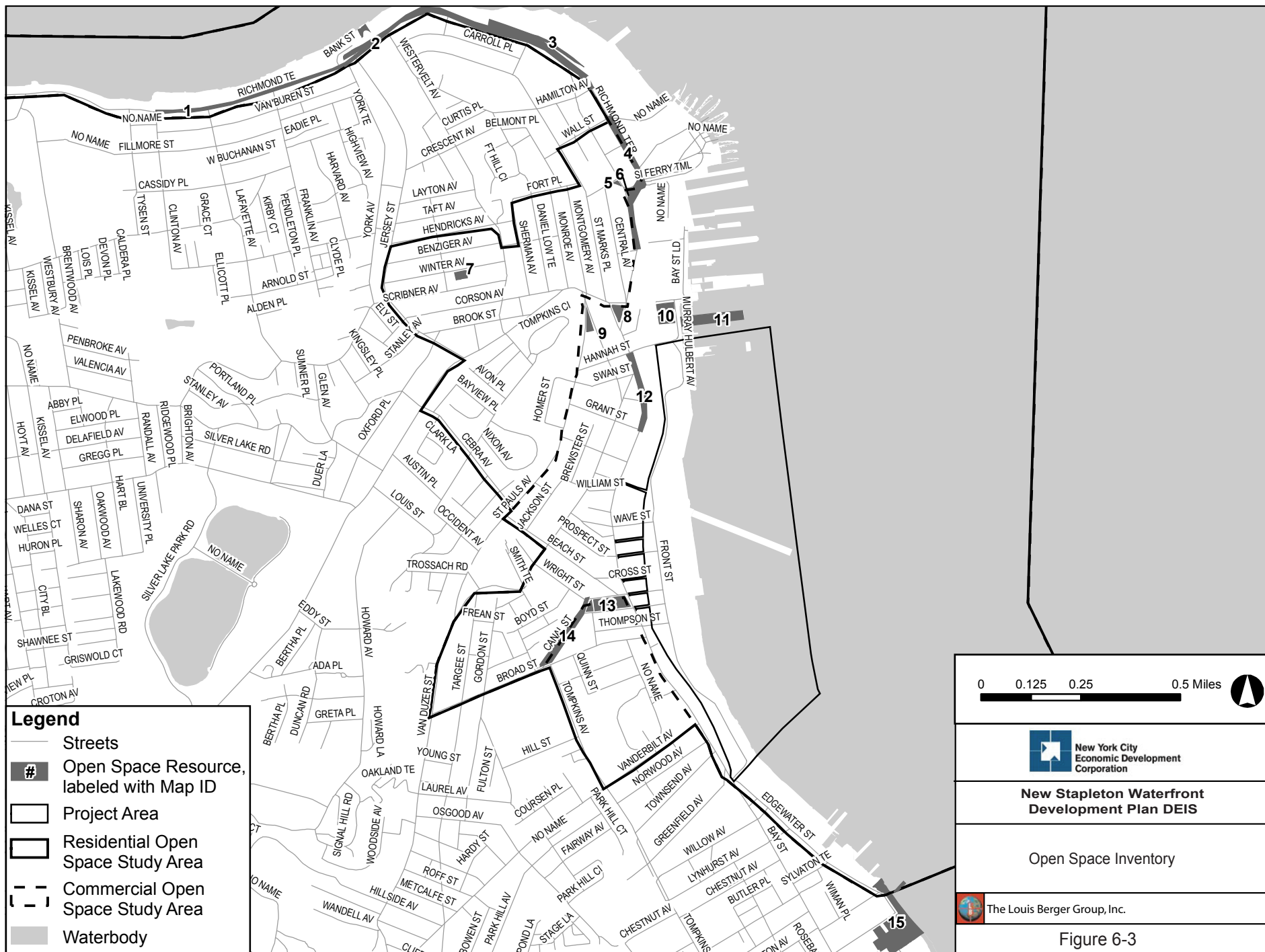
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**Table 6-1: Open Space Resources within the Residential Open Space Study Area**

<b>Map ID No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Type</b>
1	Greenstreet	Richmond Terrace between Hamilton and Clinton Avenues	N/A	Median
2	North Shore Esplanade	Richmond Terrace, Bank Street and Westervelt Avenue	0.73	Sitting Area/ Triangle/ Mall (passive)
3	Richmond Terrace Esplanade	Richmond Terrace, Peters Place, Nicholas Street	1.52	Sitting Area/ Triangle/ Mall (passive)
4	Greenstreet	Richmond Terrace between Wall Street and Slosson Terrace	N/A	Median
5	Greenstreet - Baker Square	Hyatt Street and Stuyvesant Place	0.09	Traffic Island (passive)
6	Barrett Triangle	Bay Street and Stuyvesant Place	0.03	Triangle (passive)
7	C. Liotti, L. Ikefugi Playground	Winter Avenue and Bismark Avenue	0.40	Playground (active)
8	Greenstreet	Van Duzer Street and St. Paul's Avenue	N/A	Traffic Island
9	Tompkinsville Park	Victory Boulevard and Bay Street	0.36	Triangle (passive)
10	Joseph H. Lyons Pool	Pier #6 and Murray Hulbert Avenue	2.56	Pool (active)
11	Cromwell Recreation Center	Pier #6, Foot of Victory Boulevard	3.25	Recreation Center(active and passive)
12	Greenstreet	Bay Street between Grant and Hannah Streets	N/A	Median
13	Tappen Park	Canal Street, Wright to Bay Streets	1.78	Park (passive)
14	Greenstreet	Canal Street between Broad and Wright Streets	N/A	Median
15	Alice Austen House and Park	Edgewater Street, Hylan Boulevard, Maryland Avenue	14.63	Museum, Beach and Park (active and passive)

Source: New York City DPR website ([http://gis.nyc.gov/parks/lc/NavigateTo.do?PAGE=NEW\\_SEARCH](http://gis.nyc.gov/parks/lc/NavigateTo.do?PAGE=NEW_SEARCH)), The Louis Berger Group, Inc. 2006.





Sources: MapPLUTO, NYC DCP; Landbase, DoITT; Census 2000 TIGER/Line® data, provided by ESRI

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It should be noted that Sailors Snug Harbor, an open space resource that is partially located within the residential study area, was excluded from the inventory due its distance from the Project Area. Sailors Snug Harbor is generally bounded by Richmond Terrace, Tysen Street, Kissel Avenue, Snug Harbor Road, and is located approximately two miles from the Project Area. While it is a regional facility, it is assumed that Sailors Snug Harbor is too far from the Project Area for residents to utilize on a regular basis; thus it was removed from the inventory and was not factored into the open space analysis. A brief description of inventoried open space resources is presented below.

#### Open Space Inventory

The first open space resource (Map ID 1) is a Greenstreet that extends along Richmond Terrace, between Clinton and Hamilton Avenues. Map ID 2 is the North Shore Esplanade, which is situated along the North Shore's waterfront, north of Richmond Terrace between Bank Street and Westervelt Avenue. This esplanade provides approximately 0.73 acres of passive open space. The Richmond Terrace Esplanade (Map ID 3) is situated east of the North Shore Esplanade, also along the shoreline. It is situated north of Richmond Terrace between Peters Place and Nicholas Street, and contains approximately 1.52 acres of passive open space.

The median of Richmond Terrace, between Wall Street and Slosson Terrace, comprises another Greenstreet. It is represented by Map ID 4, and is located just west of the St. George Ferry Terminal. Baker Square (Map ID 5) is another Greenstreet that provides approximately 0.09 acres of passive green space. It is comprised of a traffic island that is located behind Staten Island Borough Hall, southwest of the intersection between Hyatt Street and Stuyvesant Place. This Greenstreet honors Staten Island's eighth Borough President and municipal court judge, Edward Grant Baker (1906-1971). Map ID 6 represents Barrett Triangle, which is also located near Borough Hall between Nick Laporte Place and Bay Street. This 0.03-acre landscaped triangular plot contains benches and the Clarence T. Barrett memorial. Originally unveiled on November 11, 1915, the bronze classical warrior figure on a marble pedestal by Sherry Edmundson Fry (1879-1966) was donated to the City by Barrett's widow.

Located further west in the residential study area, on the south side of Winter Avenue between Bismark and Westervelt Avenues, the C. Liotti, L. Ikefugi Playground (Map ID 7) provides just over 0.4 acres of active open space. This playground honors the memory of two young men from Staten Island who died in World War II, Sergeant Carmine Liotti (1924-1945) and Private First Class Lloyd Ikefugi (1923-1945). This parkland has been recently renovated and contains play equipment (with safety surfacing), kindergarten swings, a basketball court with bleachers, benches, a flagpole with a yardarm, and mature Sweetgum trees.

Another Greenstreet (Map ID 8), a triangular-shaped traffic island, is found on the south side Victory Boulevard between Van Duzer Street and St. Paul's Avenue. Just east of the Greenstreet is the 0.36-acre Tompkinsville Park (Map ID 9). The park offers passive open space and is triangular in shape, bordered by Victory Boulevard to the north and Bay Street on the east and west. Benches, landscaped areas and walkways comprise this

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green space. This parkland features a statue, “the Hiker,” which honors those local soldiers who served in the Spanish-American war. Additional tablets, dedicated to the Daughters of the American Revolution and those who served in the Civil War and World War I, also have been installed on the statue’s pedestal.

The Joseph H. Lyons Pool (Map ID 10), located at Victory Boulevard and Murray Hulbert Avenue, is an outdoor pool complex comprised of three pools: one wading, one diving, and one main pool. This NYCDPR facility is named in memory of Joseph H. Lyons (1874-1934), a veteran of World War I. The main pool, which is 165 feet long and 100 feet wide, is the largest one in Staten Island. There are locker rooms and showers on site as well. The Cromwell Recreation Center is located east of the Lyons Pool, on Pier #6 at the foot of Victory Boulevard. This recreation center has many facilities available to the community, including a nautilus fitness room, a boxing ring and training area, a dance/aerobics/conference room, a gymnasium with six basketball courts, a computer resource center, an art/ceramics/kiln room, a photography darkroom, and a special events great hall. A variety of programs, classes and activities are offered here, such as aerobics, water color painting, oil painting, basketball, boxing, ceramics, yoga, Pilates, woodcarving, various computer classes, youth and teen programs (including after school), and a dance series.

Further south along Bay Street, between Hannah and Grant Streets, is another Greenstreet (Map ID 12). The main open space in downtown Stapleton is the approximately 1.78-acre Tappen Park (Map ID 13), generally bound by Bay Street, Canal Street, Water Street and Wright Street. Tappen Park was named for James J. Tappen, a Stapleton World War I hero. The park is designed for passive recreation, with park benches, wrought iron lanterns, landscaped areas, a gazebo, ornamental pavers, and London Plane and Sugar Maple trees. The Stapleton Comfort Station is located on a small triangular parcel of land on Wright Street between Canal and Water Streets and serves Tappen Park. The station, influenced by Romanesque and Gothic styles, is red brick. Arched windows and wrought iron lanterns flank the entrance. Wright Street is closed to traffic, making Tappen Park and the Stapleton Comfort Station contiguous. Immediately southwest of Tappen Park lies another Greenstreet (Map ID 14). It is comprised of the landscaped median of Canal Street between Wright and Broad Streets.

Alice Austen House and Park (Map ID 15), at 14.63 acres, is the largest open space in the study area. The park is situated adjacent to the Upper New York Bay and is named for Alice Austen, a photographer (1866-1952) who resided on the property until 1945. Austen was considered to be an influential female photographer of the time, and was also an avid gardener and founder of the Staten Island Garden Club. The parkland contains the Alice Austen House, which is both a New York City Landmark and a National Historic Landmark that has been restored to look as it did in the 1890s. Gardens in the park have been replanted according to the species depicted in Austen’s photographs. Another landmark located in the park is the McFarlane-Bredt House, a former home of the New York Yacht Club that dates back to 1845. The Alice Austen Park also includes Buono Beach, which has been named after Matthew Buono, a soldier from Staten Island who was killed in the Vietnam War. The property contains Buono Memorial, a fountain



surrounded by benches, which honors veterans who were killed in the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The house and park are under jurisdiction of the NYCDPR and the Historical House Trust of New York City. This resource offers both passive and active open space.

The open space ratio is expressed as the amount of open space acreage per 1,000 users, and measures how well served a neighborhood is by open spaces. As a planning goal for large-scale plans and proposals, the City attempts to achieve a ratio of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents. However, it is not feasible to achieve an open space ratio of 2.5 in many areas of the City. Therefore, the *CEQR Technical Manual* emphasizes that this ratio should not be used as a threshold for determining impact significance. In fact, a Citywide survey and review of all community districts found that half of the districts have a residential open space rate of 1.5 per 1,000 residents.<sup>2</sup> Under CEQR, a residential open space ratio below 1.5 generally indicates a shortfall of open space.

The 15 open spaces within the residential study area provide a total of approximately 25.35 acres of open space. According to the 2000 Census, the residential study area has a total population of 12,983. The residential open space ratio for the Proposed Action is approximately 1.95, as indicated in Table 6-2. Thus, the open space ratio exhibited by the residential study area is below the Citywide goal of 2.5, but above the 1.5 ratio that implies an open space deficit.

### **6.3.2 Commercial Study Area**

Under CEQR, less than 0.15 acres of passive open space per 1,000 nonresidential users indicates a deficit of open space. Part Two of the 2000 Census Transportation and Planning Package (U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics) was used to obtain the number of workers per census tract in the commercial study area.

According to Census data, the two census tracts that comprise the commercial study area have a total of 11,932 employees. The commercial study area contains all but three of the residential open space resources. One Greenstreet (Baker Square, Map-ID 5), Barrett Triangle (Map-ID 6), and C. Liotti, L. Ikefugi Playground (Map ID 7) are not situated within the commercial study area, and thus are not included in the commercial open space inventory. Furthermore, the North Shore Esplanade (Map ID 2), Richmond Terrace Esplanade (Map ID 3), and Alice Austen House and Park (Map ID 15) were also excluded as they are well outside the quarter-mile study area. Workers and visitors would be unlikely to travel such relatively longer distances to reach these passive open spaces.

The nine remaining resources provide a total of approximately 7.95 acres of open space. Thus the commercial study area provides approximately 0.67 acres of passive open space per 1,000 nonresidential (employee) user population, as shown in Table 6-2. The commercial open space ratio for the study area is greater than the 0.15 ratio that generally implies an open space shortfall.

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<sup>2</sup> *CEQR Technical Manual*, 2001, page 3D-5.

**Table 6-2: Residential and Commercial Open Space Ratios**

	Open Space Ratio (in acres per 1,000 users)	
	Existing Conditions	Build Condition
<b>Residential</b>	1.95	2.63
<b>Commercial</b>	0.67	1.56

Source: The Louis Berger Group, Inc. 2006.

## 6.4 No Build Condition

For the purposes of the No Build Condition analysis, it is assumed that existing uses in the Project Area would remain unchanged in 2015, with the exception of a vacated Homeport Site. The four temporary institutional uses that currently occupy the Homeport Site would be relocated under the No Build Condition, independent of the Proposed Action. Thus the Project Area's contribution to the nonresidential user population would decrease under the No Build Condition.

None of the Projected Development Sites within the Project Area would be developed in the No Build Condition, and no new public open space would be created. However, there would be an increase in the residential and nonresidential user populations relating to any background growth that may occur within the area, including the ten anticipated development projects identified in Chapter 2, "Analytical Framework." In terms of demand for open space in future without the Proposed Action, substantial changes to the existing residential and nonresidential user populations, or corresponding open space ratios, are not expected.

## 6.5 Build Condition

Under the Proposed Action, approximately 12 acres of publicly-accessible open space would be created within the Project Area. Open space design plans, while still under development, are discussed below. Table 6-2 lists the Build Condition open space ratios for the commercial and residential study areas.

The design of the Homeport Site includes a continuous waterfront esplanade and two major public open spaces that would accommodate a mix of active and passive uses (see Figure 1-12 in Chapter 1). The approximately 100-foot-wide esplanade would generally extend from the extension of Swan Street in the north, to the extension of Greenfield Avenue in the south.

The two public open spaces, which would provide physical connections between the esplanade and Front Street, are known as Pier Place and the Cove. Pier Place, located at the base of the USS The Sullivans Pier, is envisioned as a large green space with grass areas, native ornamental and marsh plantings, extensive seat walls, and paved areas. This open space is envisioned as a lively area that would serve as the focal point for development on parcels B1 and B2 – the restaurant/banquet facility and sports complex, respectively (see Figures 1-5 and 1-8).

Design of the Cove, which would be located between the extensions of Canal and Water Streets, calls for the removal of an existing collapsed relieving platform, thereby exposing an approximately 42,000-square-foot area of open water at high tide. The water area of the Cove would be bordered by public area that could include a boat house, kayak launch and café with outdoor dining which would help to activate the open space. The edges of this area would be formed using gabion walls and stepped concrete slabs, with both upland plantings and varied wetland environments to promote a broad range of aquatic flora and fauna.

A private drive would be established in the area between Pier Place and the Cove to provide year-round public access and improved public safety along the waterfront, while also buffering the public areas from development parcels B2 and B3.

The north and south ends of the Homeport Site would be developed as natural areas, with paths, seating, beach grass meadows and lower, tidal estuarine plantings. Landscaping would be low-lying in these areas to allow for broad views of the bay and Lower Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, and the passing boat and ship traffic. A small 50- to 75-foot fishing pier is planned for the south end of the Project Area.

It should be noted that the Navy has berthing rights to the north side of the USS The Sullivans Pier for at least the next seven years. Since its future use is unknown at this time, the Pier, while part of the Special District, currently is not part of the redevelopment plan.

#### ***6.5.1 Residential Study Area***

The Proposed Action is expected to add 1,208 residents to the Project Area, raising the residential population of the study area to 14,191. Twelve acres of open space would be created by the Proposed Action, increasing the open space acreage in the residential study area to 37.35. Under the Build Condition, the residential open space ratio would increase to approximately 2.63, surpassing the Citywide goal of 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

#### ***6.5.2 Commercial Study Area***

The Proposed Action is anticipated to add approximately 872 employees to the Project Area, increasing the commercial study area user population to 12,804. The 12 additional acres of open space that the Proposed Action would create would bring the total acreage for the commercial study area to 19.95. The commercial open space ratio under the Build Condition would be approximately 1.56, substantially greater than the 0.15 ratio that generally indicates a shortfall of open space.

### **6.6 Conclusion**

The Proposed Action would increase the open space ratio within the commercial and residential study areas, and would create 12 new acres of publicly-accessible open space along the north shore of Staten Island. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to publicly-accessible open space would result from the Proposed Action.