5.0 OPEN SPACE

5.1 Introduction

An assessment of open space is discussed in the following subsections to determine the impact of the employees, visitors, and patients expected to be generated from the proposed project. The proposed project would add a net gain of twenty-six (26) new certified beds and approximately 137,869 SF of floor space, generating 464 new employees. The future projected environmental setting is known as the "Future without the Proposed Actions- 2010," and includes the workers generated as a result of a yearly percentage growth, as well as, the workers generated as a result of other developments in the area. The Future without the Proposed Action, characterizes the future baseline conditions most likely to occur if the proposed actions did not take place. The Future With the Proposed Action compares the effects upon open space generated by the increased number of users with the Future Without the Proposed Action condition.

5.2 Methodology

An open space analysis examines the impact to publicly accessible open spaces that may be publicly or privately owned. The analysis looks at open space that may be set aside for active and passive recreation. Passive open space encourages leisure uses such as relaxation, sunbathing, reading, and strolling. Active open space encourages activities such as jogging, soccer, basketball and children's active play (playground equipment).

Section 3D-300 of the CEQR Technical Manual provides a methodology for an open space Analysis, to be used in cases where the potential exists for direct or indirect impacts to public open spaces. Direct impacts are defined as follows:

> *Direct impacts may occur when the proposed action would encroach on or cause a loss of open space. Direct impacts may also occur if the facilities within an open space would be so changed that the open space no longer serves the user population. Limitation of public access and changes in the type and amount of public open space may also be considered direct impacts. Other direct impacts include the imposition of noise, air pollution, odors or shadows on the public open space. Assessment of these impacts is addressed in the relevant technical sections of the Manual, and should be referenced for the Open Space Analysis.*

An assessment for direct effects on open spaces was conducted because the installation/construction of support columns for the new River Building would temporarily impede access to the pedestrian bridge leading to the esplanade during construction activities.

Indirect impacts may occur when the population generated by the proposed action overtaxes the capacity of existing public open spaces, so that their service to the existing or future population of the affected area would be substantially or noticeably diminished. The proposed number of new employees, 464, is close to the threshold set forth in the CEQR Technical Manual, which is 500 new employees, which would trigger a quantitative assessment. Accordingly, a detailed analysis of indirect impacts on open space was conducted.

As per Section 3D of the CEQR Technical Manual, a study area of ¼ mile was analyzed and publicly accessible open space was mapped. The study area included all census tracks that fell at least 50% within the ¼ mile radius; *i.e.*, census tracks 116 and 124. Thus, as shown in Figure 5-1, the study area for this EIS extends north to E. 76th Street, south to E. 67th Street, west to Second Avenue, and east to the West Channel of the East River.

All active and passive public open spaces within the study area were identified. This was done by reviewing information in publications and online databases and by a field survey conducted in July 2008. Next, the estimated number of current users was established by reference to day time worker population estimates provided by the Population Division of the Department of City Planning. Following that, the increase in daytime worker population in the study area was estimated for the Future Without the Project condition. Finally, the increase in daytime worker population generated by the project was estimated. The project-generated increase in daytime workers was considered to be the difference in the number of workers with and without the proposed project. The ratios of open space to the user populations generated with and without the proposed project were calculated and compared to the DCP goal of 0.15 acres of passive open space per 1,000 nonresidents.

Because this goal is not feasible in many areas of the City, it does not constitute an impact threshold. Instead it serves as a benchmark that represents an area well-served by open space. In addition to the quantitative analysis described above, qualitative factors are considered to determine the overall effect of a project on open space resources. Such factors can include a more subjective analysis of how the open space resources in the area meet the needs of a specific population, given its age composition or special needs. In some cases, it's important to examine nearby resources that lie just outside the open space study area. As noted below, because in the Future With the Project condition, the open space ratio would fall slightly below the 0.15 acres of passive open space per 1,000 nonresidents, such a qualitative analysis was undertaken.

5.3 Existing Conditions

Open space is defined as "publicly or privately owned land that is publicly accessible and has been designated for leisure, play, or sport, or land set aside for the protection and/or enhancement of the natural environment", according to Section 3D of the CEQR Technical Manual. Public open space may include government parks, beaches, waters, pools, boardwalks, playgrounds, and recreation centers. In 1686, Governor Thomas Dongan enacted the first legislation allowing for the acquisition of all vacant and unappropriated lands for the City. The unappropriated lands included existing public gathering areas that would later become the first City parks. The first official park in New York City was Bowling Green Park, established on March 12, 1733. Currently there are more than 1,700 parks, playground, and recreation facilities in the City covering more than 28,000 acres. In 2003, the City, state, and federal governments allocated over $136 million towards capital improvement projects of the City's parks.

A study of privately owned public space was conducted by Jerold Kayden, Associate Professor of Urban Planning at Harvard University, and the New York City Department of City Planning entitled "Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience". The study analyzed 503 privately owned public spaces and determined the following, "based on a comprehensive,

empirical study of the City's 39-record from 1961 to 2000 with privately owned public spaces, this book has concluded that the impressive quantity of public space has not been matched by a similarly impressive quality of public space". Kayden faults inferior legislation and lack of enforcement. The types of offenses that Kayden discovered included public spaces which were being used as private driveways, doormen telling people the spaces are private property, areas gated off, restaurants and cafes overflowing called "café creep, brasserie bulge, and trattoria trickle", areas under perpetual "construction", "Peek-a-boo" plaques, where signage is hidden by greenery, or "Sharper Images Space" that are lined with spikes so that visitors can not sit, and simply unmaintained space with graffiti and garbage. Therefore, in addition to a quantitative analysis described above, a qualitative analysis of the existing open space resources was conducted to ascertain how the open space resources in the area meet the needs of the 24,670 member worker population, given its age composition or special needs.

5.3.1 Inventory of Open Space Resources

The ¼ mile study area contains ten (10) publicly accessible open spaces, totaling approximately 6.196 acres, of which 2.57 acres are for active pursuits and 3.626 acres are for passive recreation (see Table 5-2 and Figure 5-1). Seven (7) of the ten (10) open spaces are plazas and residential plazas, some of which provide sitting areas, landscaped plantings, artwork, fountains, pools, and bicycle racks. The seven (7) plazas range in size from 0.06 to 0.25 acres and comprise 26% of the passive open space in the study area. The remaining three (3) of the ten (10) open spaces are parks or esplanades. In response to a comment to the DEIS made by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), an open space survey was conducted in July 2008 to determine the open spaces utilization rates, cleanliness, and user age groups. This information is provided in table 5-2 on page 5-7.

Three (3) of the seven (7) plazas in the study area are privately-owned publicly accessible plazas (Somerset Plaza, Windsor Plaza, and Stratford Plaza) totaling 0.61 acres of open space and are of marginal value, characterized by lacking satisfactory levels of design, amenities, or aesthetic appeal. Windsor Plaza consists of a semi-circular drop-off driveway, sidewalk, planters, and trees. Somerset Plaza provides almost no accessible, usable space for the public. It does contain a fountain and plantings. Stratford Plaza consists of a semicircular drop-off driveway with fountain with no accessible space for the public.

Four (4) of the seven (7) public plazas in the study area (Kingsley Plaza, Belaire Plaza, Oxford Plaza, and the Plaza located on York Avenue between E. 70th and 71st Streets) totaling 0.33 acres of open space are characterized as having satisfactory levels of design, amenities, or aesthetic appeal. Kingsley Plaza consists of a heavily landscaped plaza with abundant seating, a drinking fountain, and bicycle parking. Belaire Plaza is a below-grade space with a fountain with seating, tables, a drinking fountain, and trees. Oxford Plaza is occupied by plentiful landscaping and seating, but the space serves primarily as an entry corridor for the residential building. The Plaza located on York Avenue between E. 70th and 71st Streets is characterized with trees and plantings and adequate seating.

The remaining open space resources are parks including John Jay Park and Pool, the East River Esplanade's portion within the ¼ mile study area, and One East River Place Park (which includes the East 72nd Street Overlook Park), totaling 5.253 acres. One East River Place Park

features a waterstep fountain, benches, tables, and an overlook of the East River. John Jay Park and Pool is the largest open space resource, located between East 76th and 78th Streets, York Avenue, and FDR Drive. The 3.312-acre park is managed by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation and contains numerous amenities, including a wide variety of playground equipment, tennis courts, picnic tables, benches, sprinkler, drinking fountains, game tables, landscaping, and sculptures by Douglas Abdell. In addition, the park has a 50- by 145-foot public swimming pool. The park is used by local school for outdoor activities, local children and their guardians, and daytime workers.

The East River Esplanade is located between FDR Drive and the East River. The Esplanade runs the entire length of the study area and beyond, to the north and south. The Esplanade is accessible via a pedestrian bridge over the FDR Drive adjacent to the project site on East 71st Street, which would not be removed by the proposed project (see Figure 5-2); however, a portion of it would be temporarily removed during construction and then replaced. In the vicinity of the project site, the other access points to the Esplanade are located at E. 78th Street at John Jay Park and Pool and at East 63rd Street near Rockefeller University (see Figure 5-2).

According to the *Manhattan Waterfront Greenway Master Plan (2004),* the portion of the East River Esplanade between East 63rd Street and East 125th Street, is referenced to as the Bobby Wagner Walk, the oldest portion of the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway, built in 1939. It is a multiuse path with no separation between the cyclist and pedestrians. The Esplanade is under the jurisdiction of the New York City Department of Transportation.

5.3.2 Open Space User Population

According to 2000 U.S. Census data, the 2000 daytime worker population from the two (2) census tracts in the study area (116 and 124) was 23,495. As a result of commercial developments since 2000, estimates of the current daytime population were made using the growth rate percentages of the major occupational categories listed in the labor market data provided by the New York State Department of Labor. Table 5-1 shows the daytime worker population would increase by 1,175 workers between 2000 and 2010.

Table 5-1. Existing Open Space User Population

Tract	Daytime Worker
116	16,500[1]
124	6,995[1]
2000 Total	23,495
Estimated 2000-2010 Growth	*1,175*
Estimated 2010 Total	24,670
Sources: [1] U.S Census 2000; Population Division, New York City Department of City Planning. Journey to Work.	

5.3.3 Analysis of the Adequacy of Open Space Resources

Based on 3.626 acres of passive open space in the study area, there were 0.154 acres of open space for every 1,000 workers, slightly above the 0.15 acres per 1,000 workers goal set by DCP in the CEQR Technical Manual.

5.4 The Future Without the Proposed Project - 2010

5.4.1 Open Space Resources

Without the proposed project, no significant changes to open space resources are anticipated by 2010. The size, amenities offered, and condition of the open space resources are expected to remain unchanged. As is the case in the existing condition, there would be 3.626 acres of passive open space in the study area.

5.4.2 Open Space User Population

Within the study area there are three projects expected to be completed in 2010 (See Figure 2-1 and Table 5-3):

1. New York Presbyterian Hospital just recently modified its general large scale to build a 4-story 18,219 zoning square foot (ZSF) building (Technology Building); a 13-story, 102,184 ZSF building (the SMART Building), as well as 3,982 ZSF to the adjacent "N" Building, which connects to the SMART Building; a 1-story, 37,282 ZSF enlargement to the existing Greenberg Pavilion; and a 2-story, 174,004 ZSF addition to the YY Building. This site is located between York Avenue and FDR Drive, and between East 68th and 70th Streets.

2. New York Presbyterian Hospital has an As-of-Right dormitory building at the southeast corner of 72nd Street and First Avenue.

3. 125 residential units are planned for 400 East 67th Street. This site is located on the southeast corner of First Avenue and East 67th Street.

As a result of the above developments, the daytime worker population would increase to 24,949 workers.

5.4.3 Analysis of the Adequacy of the Open Space Resources

The additional daytime worker population would decrease the nonresidential passive open space ratio for workers from 0.154 acres per 1,000 workers, under the Existing Conditions, to 0.1444 acres per 1,000 workers.

5.5 The Future With the Proposed Project - 2010

5.5.1 Open Space Resources

The Proposed Project would not add any new open space resources to the study area.

5.5.2 Open Space User Population

The proposed project is expected to add 464 workers, increasing the number of daytime workers in the study area in the Future With the Proposed project condition to 25,413 workers. HSS acknowledges that the new HSS facility would also bring new patients and their visitors to the study area. However, HSS patients are almost exclusively surgical patients and it is highly unlikely that these patients would use open space in the study area. Moreover, visitors would not likely use open space in the study area because most visits occur in the evening. Accordingly, the analysis of open space user population assumed that neither patients nor visitors would make use of study area open space. This same assumption was included in the open space analysis in the Memorial Sloan-Kettering FEIS.

5.5.3 Quantitative Analysis of Adequacy of Open Space Resources

The results of the quantitative analysis are summarized in Table 5-4. Comparing the effect of the Future With and Without the Proposed project for 2010, the passive open space ratio of daytime workers would decrease with the proposed project. The additional daytime worker population generated by the proposed project would decrease the nonresidential daytime passive open space ratio from 0.1444 acres per 1,000 workers (for the No-Build scenario), to 0.1427 acres per 1,000 workers, which is below the Department of City Planning's guidelines of 0.15 acres per 1,000 workers. Because of this slight decrease (1.8%) in the ratio of passive open space for daytime workers, a qualitative analysis of the open space resources within the study area was conducted.

5.5.4 Qualitative Analysis of Open Space Resources

The results of the qualitative analysis of open space resources in the study area are seen below in Table 5-2. Table 5-2 describes the features, accessibility, user demographics, conditions, and utilization levels of the open space resources in the study area. In addition, the presence of various amenities and spaces provided by neighboring institutions for their large worker and resident populations would partially compensate for the slight reduction in the open space ratio. Furthermore, within the study area, Rockefeller University offers a 15-acre campus, of which a third is devoted to open space and is available to the 1,875 workers and residents of Rockefeller University. Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center offers indoor private recreation facilities to its 645 employees. These private open space and recreation areas provided by Rockefeller University and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center would decrease the demand of their worker and resident populations for publicly accessible open space in the study area.

Demand on open space would also be reduced by the proximity of other open spaces located within a reasonable walking distance of the project site, but outside the study area. The neighborhood park located at 211 East 70th Street, between 2nd and 3rd Avenues (approximately 0.43 miles from the proposed project), provides 0.869 acres of passive open space. St. Catherine's Park located at 1st Avenue between E. 67th and 68th Streets (approximately 0.31

miles from the proposed project) offers 1.383 acres of open space with various amenities. The East River Esplanade also provides an expansive open space because the park extends north and south beyond the study area for a considerable distance. These additional resources, serve to reduce the overall demand for open space resources for the area. For these reasons stated above, the proposed project would not have a significant adverse impact on open space resources due to indirect impacts.

*5.5.5 **Direct Impacts***

Direct impacts to an open space could occur if the action would result in the physical loss of public open space (by encroaching on an open space or displacing an open space), changing the use of the open space so that it no longer serves the same user population, by limiting public access to an open space, or causing an increased noise or air pollution emissions, odors, or shadows on a public open space that would affect its usefulness.

There are effects on open space resources as a result of the proposed project; however the effects do not result in significant adverse impacts. A portion of the southeastern view of the East River and Queensboro Bridge from the East 72nd Street Overlook Park would be partially obstructed by the new River Building (see Chapter 8 "Urban Design and Visual Resources"). However, this would not be significant, as all additional views to the north, east, and west would not be affected.

Four (4) foundation columns would be placed in the Esplanade in between the ramps of the E. 71st Street switchback ramp of the pedestrian bridge which would cause the ramp to be unusable during construction. No permanent physical loss in open space would occur as a result of the proposed project since the support columns would be placed between the existing space between the two (2) portions of the switchback ramp of the pedestrian bridge and would not change the usable width of the Esplanade.

During installation of the columns and while the footings are being excavated, the Esplanade would be closed between approximately E. 70th Street to just past the midblock between E. 71st Street and E. 72nd Street. HSS would make every effort to limit the closure to four (4) to six (6) months and the Esplanade would remain open on weekends when construction activities and safety would permit. Fencing and temporary protection during construction activities would ensure safety to users of the Esplanade. Restoration of the Esplanade would commence as early as possible after construction of the River Building and would include plantings, lighting, benches, and paving. Since the switchback ramp would be unusable during construction access to the E. 71st pedestrian bridge would be re-routed to a temporary ramp during construction in order to preserve access along the Esplanade south of E. 71st Street. Detour signage would be installed at the last entrance/exit to the Esplanade north of the blocked area (E.78th Street) to alert Esplanade users that there is no exit south of this point and that there is a "dead-end" ahead and to direct pedestrians to the temporary ramp.

The proposed action would result in a short term (approximately six month) closure of a portion of the East River Esplanade, during construction. This would be considered temporary or of short or intermittent duration and would not be a significant adverse impact. Unforeseen and

uncontrollable events are always possible in construction, such as a worker strike. HSS will continue to make every effort to limit closure of the esplanade to between four (4) and six (6) months. As mitigation, if the Esplanade remains closed for more than six months, HSS would allocate financial resources to the City for maintenance of the Esplanade, in the amount of $10,000 per each additional month the Esplanade remains closed.

No significant shadow impacts are expected as a result of the proposed project since only incremental shadows would fall on the East River Esplanade, Belaire Plaza, and the 72nd Street Overlook Park for limited periods of time. See Chapter 7 (Shadows).

For these reasons stated above, the proposed project would not have a significant adverse impact on open space resources due to direct impacts.

Table 5-2. Inventory of Open Space and Recreational Facilities in the Study Area

Map Ref. No.	Name/Location	Owner/Building Name	Features	Accessibility	Passive (acres)	Total (acres)	Observed User Groups	Facility Condition	Utilization Level
1	John Jay Park and Pool	DPR	**Public Park:** Benches, play equipment, swings, trees, landscaping, sculpture, restrooms, swimming pool, basketball courts, and handball courts	Closes at dusk	1.656	3.312	All User Groups	Good	High
2	Stratford/1385 York Avenue	River Stratford LLC	**Plaza:** Landscaping, fountain, pool	24 hours	0.196	0.196	Adult (20-64)	Good	Low
3	Somerset Plaza/1365 York Avenue	Somerset	**Plaza:** Landscaping, fountain, pool, trees	24 hours	0.253	0.253	Adult (20-64)	Good	Low
4	One East River Place Park/525 East 72nd Street	One East River Place Realty Co., LLC	**Public Park:** Landscaping, seating, trees, fountain, benches, East River overlook	7AM to 9PM summer, 7PM all other times	0.113	0.113	Adults (20-64) & Babies (<4)	Good	Low
5	Oxford Plaza/422 East 72nd Street	Resnik 72nd Street Association	**Residential Plaza:** Seating, landscaping, fountain, lights	24 hours	0.109	0.109	Adults (20-64)	Good	Low
6	Belaire Plaza/524 East 72nd Street	Condominium	**Residential Plaza:** Fountain, drinking fountain, seating, trees	8AM to 8PM	0.060	0.060	Adults (20-64) & Babies (<4)	Good	Moderate

Map Ref. No.	Name/Location	Owner/Building Name	Features	Accessibility	Passive (acres)	Total (acres)	Observed User Groups	Facility Condition	Utilization Level
7	Windsor/400 East 71st Street	Transworld Equities	**Plaza:** Trees, plantings	24 hours	0.161	0.161	Adults (20-64)	Good	Low
8	Plaza/York Avenue, between East 70th and 71st Street	NA	**Plaza:** Benches, trees	24 hours	0.092	0.092	Adults (20-64) & Babies (<4)*	Good	Moderate*
9	East River Esplanade	New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)	**Public Park:** Walking/running path, benches, trees	24 hours	0.914	1.828 **	Adults (20-64) & Babies (<4)	Good	Moderate
10	Kingsley Plaza/400 East 70th Street	Condominium	**Residential Plaza:** Seating, plantings, trees, drinking fountain, bicycle rack	8AM to 8PM	0.072	0.072	Adults (20-64)	Good	Moderate
TOTAL					3.626	6.196			

Note: Map reference numbers correspond to Figure 5-1
Source: Kayden, Jerald, "Privately Owned Public Space," John Wiley & Son, Inc. 2000.
* At the time of the Site reconnaissance, which was conducted on July 10, 2008, this open space was closed due to construction. However, based on its close proximity to similar open space in the study area, a comparable utilization rate was used.
** Portion includes area within the ¼ mile study area.

5.5.6 Indirect Impacts

The proposed project would result in a daytime worker open space ratio below the 0.15 acres per 1,000 goal established by DCP, however, no significant adverse indirect impacts would result from the proposed project. As noted above, the open space ratio guideline of 0.15 acres of passive open space per 1,000 workers is not a threshold of significance. The decrease in the ratio generated by the proposed project, when compared to the ratio in the Future Without the Proposed project condition, is slight. Moreover, as

also noted above, open space amenities provided by Rockefeller University and Memorial Sloan-Kettering for their daytime worker population and open space resources available just outside the study area relieve any pressure on open space resources.

*5.5.7 **Direct Impacts***

As noted above, the only direct impact on open space resources would be an extended closure of a portion of the Esplanade occasioned by unanticipated construction delays. Partial mitigation of that potential impact is identified in Chapter 22.

Table 5-3. Projects Expected to be Completed by 2010

Map Ref. ID	Project/Address	Project-generated populations	
		Residents	Daytime Worker
1	New York Presbyterian Hospital is located between York Avenue and the FDR Drive, and between East 68th and East 70th Streets.	0	246
2	New York Presbyterian Hospital has an As-of-Right dormitory building at the southeast corner of 72nd Street and First Avenue.	600	25
3	125 residential units are planned for 400 East 67th Street.	202	8
Total in study area		**802**	**279**

Note: Employment estimates assume 1 worker per 600 SF of retail space, 1 worker per 250 SF of commercial and institutional space, and for building service and maintenance, 1 employee per 15 dwelling units or 30,000 SF of commercial/institutional space. Residential units assume 1.62 persons per unit.

Table 5-4. Adequacy of Open Space Resources

	Existing Conditions	2010 Without Proposed Project	2010 With Proposed Project
Study Area Population			
Workers	23,495	24,670*	25,413*
Passive Open Space Acreage	3.626	3.626	3.626
Worker Open Space Ratio (acres/daytime workers)	0.154/1,000	0.1444/1,000	0.1427/1,000
Percent Decrease	2.6% above the 0.15 recommended threshold value	5.6% decrease in open space from 2000 without the proposed project. **	1.8% decrease in open space as a result of the proposed project

Notes:
* Includes workers from other developments anticipated to be completed by 2010.
** Without the proposed project a 7.34% decrease in the open space ratio would result, indicating an already existing deficiency in the open space ratio.

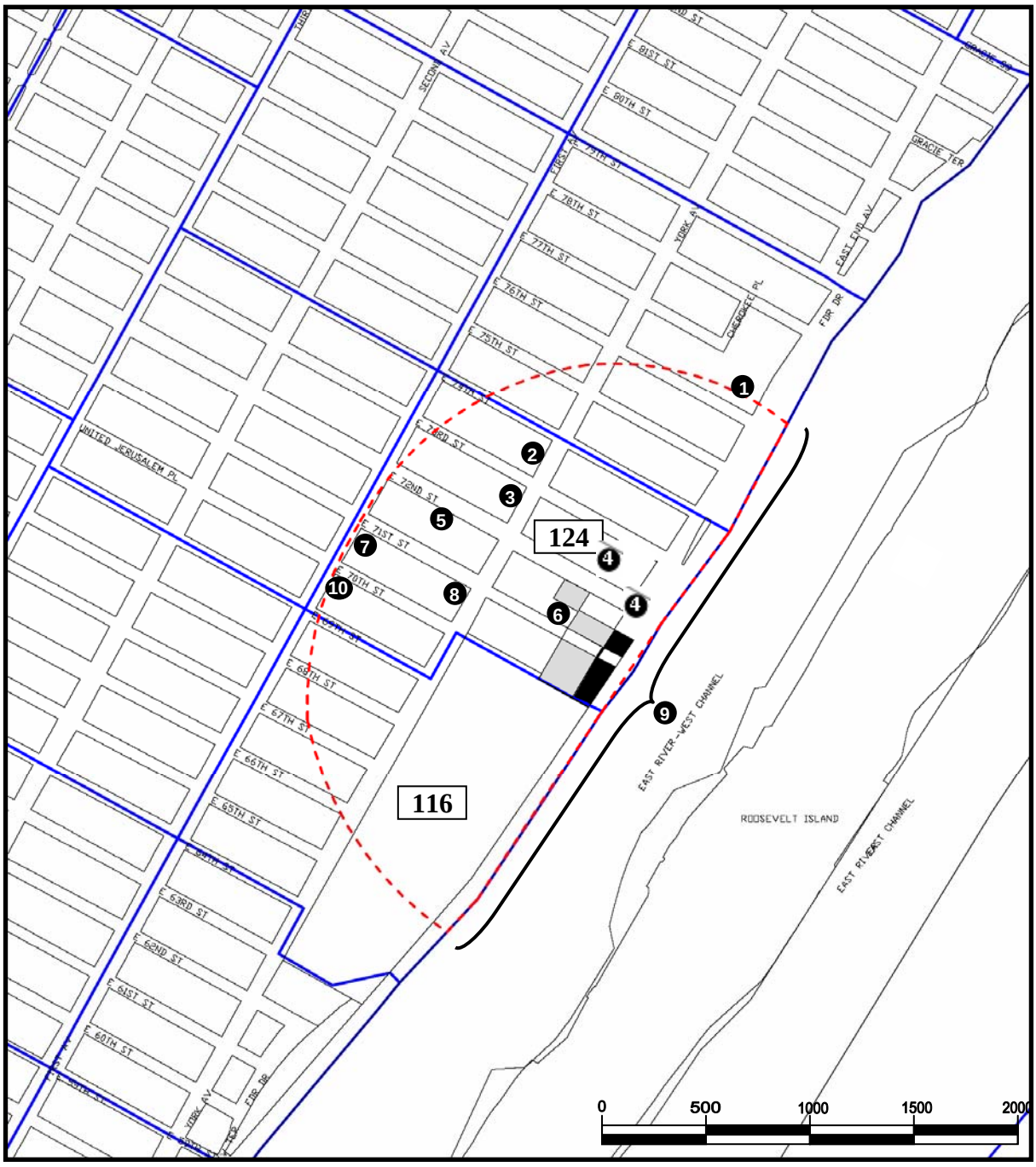
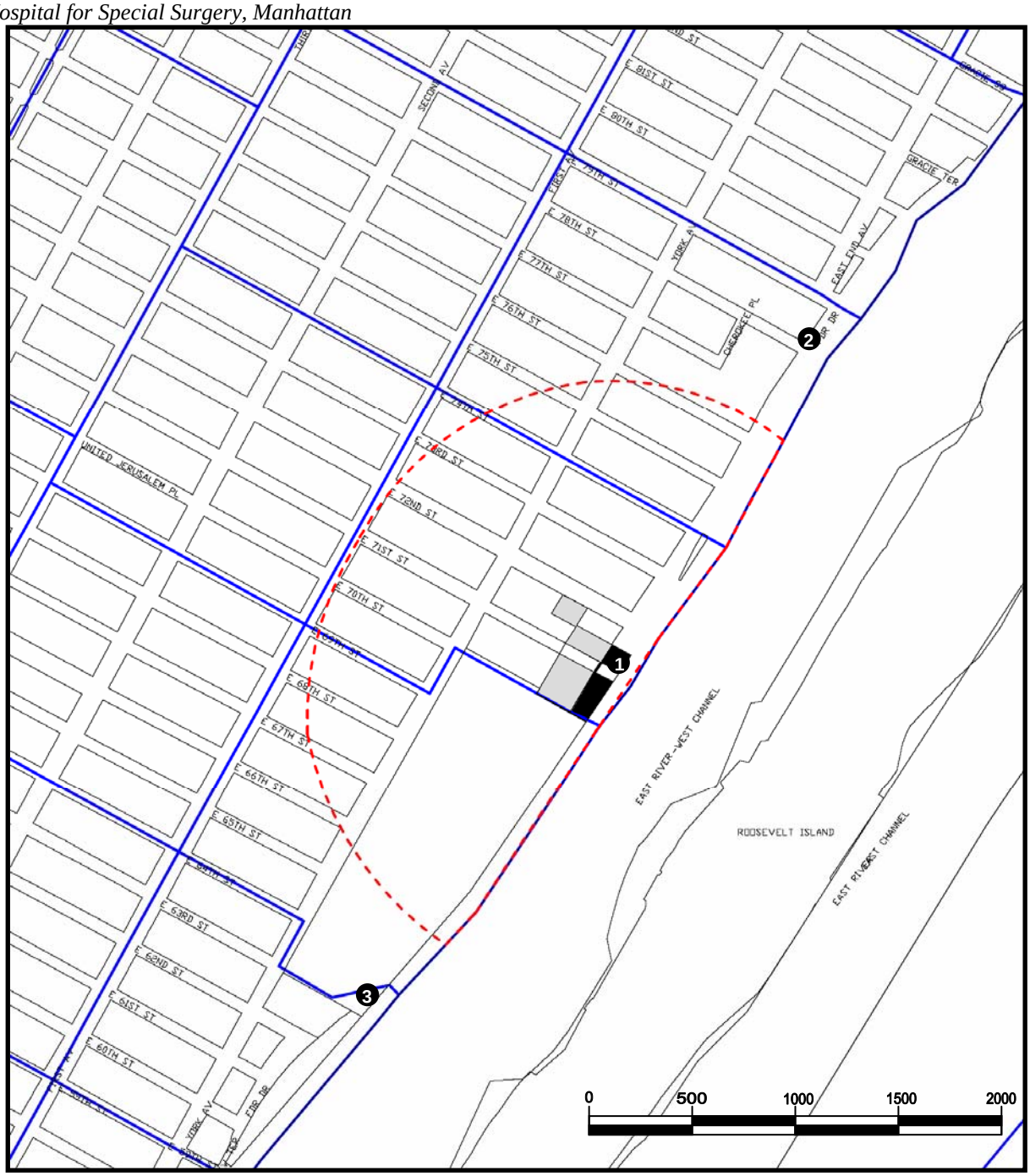


Figure 5-1. Open Space Resources.



Proposed Project
Expansion Plan
❶ Pedestrian Bridge on E. 71st Street
❷ Pedestrian Bridge on E. 78th Street
❸ Pedestrian Bridge on E. 63rd Street

Census Tract Boundary
¼ Mile Perimeter

Figure 5-2. Access to the East River Esplanade.