

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter assesses the potential impacts of the proposed actions on open space resources within an approximately ½-mile radius of the rezoning area. Open space is defined in the 2014 *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* as publicly accessible, publicly or privately owned land that is available for leisure, play, or sport, or serves to protect or enhance the natural environment. An open space assessment should be conducted if a project would have a direct effect on open space, such as eliminating or altering a public open space, or in an indirect effect, such as when a substantial new population could place additional demand on an area’s open spaces.

As discussed in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” under the Reasonable Worst-Case Development Scenario (RWCDs) the proposed actions would result in the development of 1,711 dwelling units (DUs), 135,500 gross square feet (gsf) of retail, and 15,055 gsf of community facility space. While the proposed actions would not directly displace any open space resources, the residential population associated with the RWCDs would place incremental demand on area open space resources, warranting assessment. The analysis in this chapter considers the potential for significant adverse open space impacts resulting from the addition of residential population for both the 2023 (Phase 1) analysis year, and for the full buildout of the RWCDs in the 2026 analysis year. The chapter also considers potential direct effects on open spaces from incremental shadow produced by the proposed project and on-site construction activities.

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

A detailed analysis finds that the proposed actions would result in a significant adverse indirect impact in the 2026 analysis year due to the anticipated reduction in open space ratios. The following summarizes the findings of the proposed actions’ direct and indirect effects on area open space resources.

DIRECT EFFECTS

The proposed actions would not directly displace any existing open space resources. As detailed in Chapter 6, “Shadows,” the majority of project-generated shadows on open spaces would be limited in extent and duration. The exception would be Howard Bennett Playground, where a significant adverse shadow impact would occur on the December 21 analysis day (representing the winter months). While the shadows would contribute to a decrease in the open space’s utility on the December 21 analysis day, the greatest shadowing effects on this open space would occur during the winter, when utilization of the playground is relatively low, and outside of the growing season as well as the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) tennis season. In addition, the study area includes multiple open spaces with passive and active recreation space within a 10-minute walk of Howard Bennett Playground. ~~Therefore, despite the increase in~~

Lenox Terrace

~~shadows cast on the Howard Bennett Playground, the proposed actions would not result in a significant adverse direct impact to open space in the 2023 or 2026 analysis years.~~

Construction-period effects on open space are described in Chapter 19, “Construction.” As detailed in that chapter, during construction of the proposed project access to the Howard Bennett Playground and Abraham Lincoln Playground would be maintained; however, during construction of the proposed Building N, a pedestrian gate to the east of the construction site may need to be temporarily closed, limiting access to the Hansborough Recreation Center from that location. Access to the main entrance to the recreation center, from the west via Lenox Terrace Place, would be maintained throughout construction. During certain periods, construction noise levels anticipated to be experienced at the Howard Bennett Playground would be “noticeable” (in the low to mid 70s dBA) and would be in the “marginally unacceptable” range according to the *CEQR Technical Manual* noise exposure criteria. Construction noise levels anticipated to be experienced at the Hansborough Recreation Center would be “noticeable and potentially intrusive” during the most noise-intensive stages of construction, which would have a duration of approximately three months, with maximum noise levels in the “marginally unacceptable” range (60s to high 70s dBA) according to *CEQR Technical Manual* noise exposure criteria for a period of 18 to 24 months. However, based on the limited duration and magnitude of predicted construction noise levels, construction-related noise would not rise to the level of a significant adverse open space impact at the Howard Bennett Playground or the Hansborough Recreation Center.

INDIRECT EFFECTS

While the open space ratios observed in the future with the proposed project (the “With Action” scenario) would be quantitatively low, this condition currently exists and would persist in the future without the proposed project (the “No Action” scenario). In the 2023 With Action condition, the study area open space ratios would decrease by approximately 3.28 percent for total open space, 2.89 percent for passive open space, and 3.00 percent for active open space. In the 2026 With Action condition, the study area open space ratios would decrease by approximately 4.87 percent for total open space, 4.65 percent for passive open space, and 4.96 percent for active open space. The reduction in open space ratios in the With Action scenario (2023 and 2026) would be less than 5 percent, which is the threshold defined by the *CEQR Technical Manual* for identifying a quantified indirect open space impact; however, because the reduction in the active open space ratio is very close to 5 percent and the open space ratios in this area would continue to be quantitatively low in the No Action and With Action conditions, the reduction in the open space ratio would be considered a significant adverse indirect impact in the 2026 analysis year. The proposed actions would not result in a significant adverse indirect impact to open space in the 2023 analysis year.

From a qualitative perspective, the proposed project would introduce a substantial amount (more than six acres) of new private open space on the proposed development site that would be available to both existing and new Lenox Terrace residents and their guests. This new private open space would limit the incremental demand on study area public open space resources generated by the proposed actions. In addition, the study area has a large number of community gardens, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)-owned open spaces and other quasi-public open spaces that are not accounted for in the quantified analysis but which serve to offset the demand for publicly accessible open space resources.

B. METHODOLOGY

An open space assessment examines the types of open spaces and user populations affected by a project. The goal of the assessment is to determine the significance of the change in either the availability of open space relative to the demand from the new population, or the usability of the open space affected by a proposed project.

DEFINITION OF OPEN SPACE

As defined by the *CEQR Technical Manual*, public open space is accessible to the public on a constant and regular basis, including for designated daily time periods. Public open space may be under government or private jurisdiction and typically includes city, state and federal parkland, esplanades, and plazas designated through regulatory approvals such as zoning. Private open space is not available to the public on a regular or consistent basis or is available only to limited users. Examples of private open spaces are natural areas with no public access, front and rear yards, and landscaped grounds used by community facilities, such as public and private educational institutions where the open space is accessible only to the institution-related population. Since the open space introduced by the proposed project would be private (i.e., it would be available to existing and new Lenox Terrance residents and guests, but not to the broader study area population), following *CEQR Technical Manual* guidance, it is not accounted for in the quantified analysis, only in the qualitative assessment.

Open spaces can be characterized as either active or passive depending on the activities the space allows. In many cases, open space may be used for both active and passive recreation. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, open space that is used for sports, exercise, or play is classified as active open space,” and open space that is used for relaxation, such as sitting or strolling, is classified as “passive.”

DIRECT EFFECTS

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a proposed project would directly affect open space conditions if it causes the loss of public open space, changes the use of an open space so that it no longer serves the same user population, limits public access to an open space, or results in increased noise or air pollutant emissions, odor, or shadows that would temporarily or permanently affect the usefulness of a public open space. This chapter will determine whether the proposed actions would directly affect any open spaces within, or in close proximity to, the rezoning area.

INDIRECT EFFECTS

As described in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, open space can be indirectly affected by a proposed action if a project would add enough population, either residential or non-residential, to noticeably diminish the capacity of open space in the area to serve the future population. Typically, an assessment of indirect effects is conducted when a project would introduce more than 200 residents or 500 workers to an area; however, the thresholds for assessment are slightly different for areas of the City that have been identified as either underserved or well-served by open space. The rezoning area is located in an area that is neither well-served nor underserved; therefore, the assessment is based on the 200-resident and 500-worker thresholds outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*.

In accordance with *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines, the open space analysis is based on the RWCDs associated with the proposed actions. Given the scale and duration of development that

Lenox Terrace

would occur within the rezoning area, the analysis considers two distinct analysis years: 2023 (Phase 1), and 2026 (Full Build). Based on the RWCDs, by the 2023 analysis year 1,094 DUs, 33,356 gsf of incremental retail, and 4,966 gsf of community facility space would be constructed within the rezoning area. By the 2026 analysis year, 1,711 DUs would be constructed within the rezoning area (inclusive of the 1,094 constructed by 2023). Of the 1,711 DUs, 1,642 DUs are associated with the proposed project and 69 DUs are associated with the projected future development site (Lot 65). In addition, the 2026 With Action scenario would include 39,845 gsf of incremental retail space (inclusive of the 33,356 gsf of incremental retail constructed by 2023) and 15,055 gsf of community facility space (inclusive of the 4,966 gsf constructed by the 2023 analysis year).

Based on the RWCDs and the average household size of 2.34 for renter-occupied housing within the ½-mile open space study area (defined below), the proposed actions would result in the addition of an estimated 2,560 residents within the study area and approximately 144 employees by the 2023 analysis year. The proposed actions would result in the addition of an estimated 4,004 residents and approximately 203 new employees to the study area by the 2026 analysis year. Based on these population projections, analysis of the indirect effects of residential population on open space is warranted for both the 2023 and 2026 analysis years. The incremental worker population introduced by the proposed project in both analysis years is below the *CEQR Technical Manual* threshold for analysis.

STUDY AREA

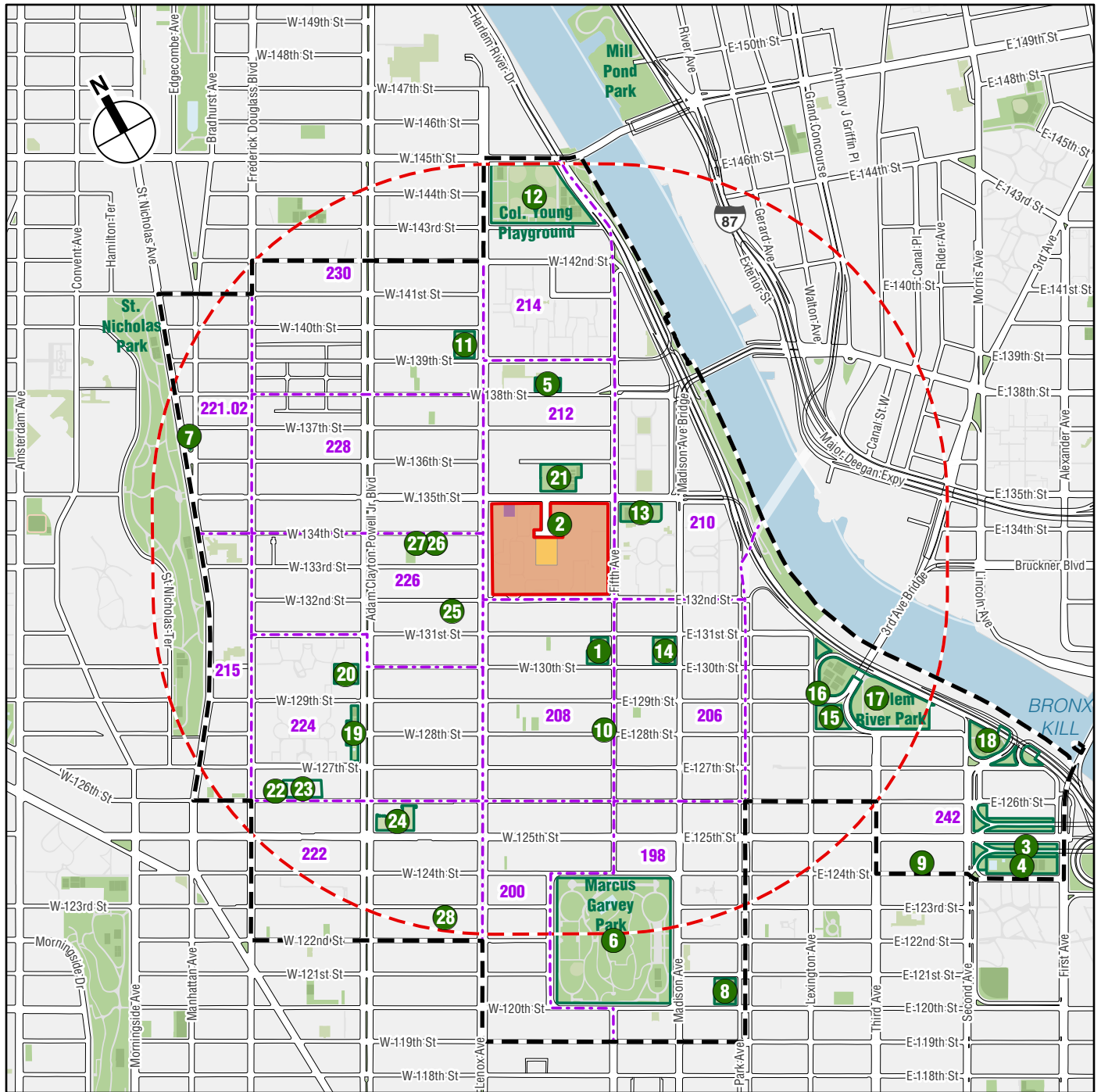
The *CEQR Technical Manual* recommends establishing a study area or areas as the first step in an open space assessment. The study areas are based on the distances that the respective users—workers and residents—are likely to walk to an open space. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, workers are assumed to walk approximately 10 minutes, or ¼-mile from their place of work to an open space, while residents are assumed to walk approximately 20 minutes, or ½-mile to an open space.



Because the proposed actions would introduce a new residential population above the 200-resident population threshold, but would not introduce an employee population above the 500-worker threshold, the adequacy of open space resources was assessed for the ½-mile (residential) study area. This study area was further adjusted to include all census tracts with at least 50 percent of their area within a ½-mile radius of the outer boundaries of the rezoning area. In this way, the study area allows for analysis to include all open spaces within ½ mile of the rezoning area, and the residential population in areas where a majority of residents would access these open spaces. As shown in **Figure 5-1**, the ½-mile study area includes Census Tracts 198, 200, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 215, 221.2, 222, 224, 226, 228, 230, and 242. This is an area generally bounded by 145th Street to the north, the Harlem River to the east, 119th Street to the south, and Saint Nicholas Avenue to the west.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT


The open space impact assessment is both quantitative—utilizing density-based technical analysis—and qualitative, assessing the utilization and quality of area open spaces.

Quantitative impacts are based on how the proposed actions would change open space ratios within the study area. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a decrease in the open space ratio between the No Action and With Action scenarios approaching or exceeding 5 percent is generally considered a significant adverse impact. Further, if a study area exhibits low open space ratios, indicating a



-  Rezoning Area
-  Proposed Development Site
-  Potential Development Site
-  Half-mile perimeter
-  Open Space Study Area
-  Open Space Resources
-  Census Tracts

0 2,000 FEET



shortfall of open space, smaller decreases between the open space ratios may constitute a significant adverse impact.

Qualitative impacts are based on how the proposed actions would affect the utilization of the open space, particularly related to how the quality and utilization of the open space will change based on the inclusion of additional residential population. Qualitative assessment also includes consideration for private open spaces, destination open space resources directly outside of the study area, and the potential for beneficial open space impacts to be produced by the proposed actions.

It is recognized that the open space ratio guidelines provided by the City are not feasible for many areas of the City, and should not be considered impact thresholds on their own. Rather they should be utilized as benchmarks to indicate how well an area is served by open space. Therefore assessment of significant impacts must also include qualitative analysis, which provides contextual analysis of potential open space impacts within the study area.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

STUDY AREA POPULATION

As shown in **Table 5-1**, 2012–2016 ACS data indicates that the study area has a population of approximately 71,715 residents.

**Table 5-1
Study Area Residential Population**

Census Tract	Residential Population
198	2,824
200	3,478
206	3,142
208	5,555
210	7,199
212	4,562
214	3,332
215	4,128
221.2	2,451
222	3,090
224	7,616
226	4,563
228	6,185
230	9,402
242	4,188
Study Area Total	71,715
Note:	See Figure 5-1 for a map of census tracts included in the study area.
Source:	U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2012–2016 5-Year Estimates.

Age Distribution

The age distribution of the residential population affects the way open spaces are utilized, and the various recreational facilities need for the community. As outlined in the *CEQR Technical Manual*, children 4 years old or younger typically use traditional playgrounds that have play equipment for toddlers and preschool children. Children ages 5 through 9 use traditional playgrounds as well as grassy and hard-surfaced open spaces, which are important for activities

such as ball playing, running and skipping rope. Children 10 through 14 use playground equipment, court spaces, little league fields and other sports fields. Teenagers and young adults’ use court game facilities such as handball and basketball courts, and larger open spaces for field sports. Adults between the ages of 20 and 64 continue to use court game facilities and fields for sports, but also engage in more individualized recreation activities such as cycling, and jogging, which require bike paths, promenades and other vehicle-free roadways. For these activities, adults have greater mobility to seek active recreation outside of the ½-mile study area. Adults also gather with families for picnicking, ad hoc active sports such as Frisbee, as well as recreational activities in which all ages can participate. Senior citizens engage in active recreation such as handball, tennis, and swimming, as well as recreation that require passive facilities.

Table 5-2 summarizes the distribution of the study area’s residential population by age group, and compares this age distribution to those of Manhattan and New York City. As shown below, the study area’s age distribution is broadly similar to those of Manhattan and New York City. Roughly 65 to 70 percent of the population in the study area, Manhattan, and New York City are between 18 and 64 years of age. The study area has a slightly higher percentage of its population under 5 years old (7 percent) compared to Manhattan or New York City (5.0 and 6.6 percent, respectively). Correspondingly, the study area has a slightly lower percentage of the population that is elderly (10.3 percent) compared to Manhattan and New York City (14.4 and 12.0 percent, respectively).

Table 5-2
Study Area Residential Population Age Distribution

Age Category	Study Area		Manhattan		New York City	
	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent
Under 5 Years	4,995	7.0%	82,024	5.0%	555,383	6.6%
5 to 9 Years	4,050	5.7%	62,937	3.9%	487,643	5.8%
10 to 17 Years	6,082	8.5%	94,394	5.8%	750,835	8.9%
18 to 64 Years	49,232	68.7%	1,160,462	71.0%	5,568,784	65.8%
65 Years and Over	7,356	10.3%	235,172	14.4%	1,099,330	12.9%
Total	71,715	100%	1,634,989	100%	8,461,961	100%

Note: Due to rounding percentages may not add up to exactly 100 percent.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2012–2016 5-Year Estimates.

INVENTORY OF PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACE

As shown in **Table 5-3** and **Figure 5-1**, in the existing condition the study area contains a total of 48.64 acres of publicly accessible open space. Of this total, approximately 35.08 acres (72 percent) are estimated to be active space and approximately 13.56 acres (28 percent) are estimated to be passive open space.

The largest open space resource in the study area is Marcus Garvey Park. This approximately 20-acre open space is bounded by 124th Street to the north, Madison Avenue to the east, 120th Street to the south and Mt. Morris Park West to the west. Marcus Garvey Park contains numerous recreational amenities including basketball courts, fitness equipment, an amphitheater, public swimming pools, dog play areas, and an educational center.

Beyond Marcus Garvey Park, the study area contains two open space resources in excess of three acres including the approximately 6.5-acre Harlem River Park, which includes bikeways, a ball field, and basketball courts; and the approximately 6-acre Col. Young Playground which contains baseball fields, basketball courts, playground equipment, and handball courts.

**Table 5-3
Inventory of Publicly Accessible Open Space in the Study Area**

Map No.	Name	Location	Owner/Agency	Amenities	Total Acres	Passive		Active		Condition	Utilization
						Acres	%	Acres	%		
1	Courtney Callender Playground	5 Ave., W. 130 St. To W 131 St.	NYC Parks	Basketball courts, playgrounds, handball courts, spray showers	0.65	0.00	0	0.65	100	Good	Medium
2	Hansborough Recreation Center	W. 134 St., Lenox Terrace Pl.	NYC Parks	Bathrooms, media lab, running track, Wi-Fi, indoor pool, volleyball / basketball court, weight and cardio rooms	0.29	0.00	0	0.29	100	Good	Medium
3	Triboro Plaza & Othmar Ammann Playground	1 Ave. To 2 Ave., E. 124 St. To E. 126 St.	NYC Parks/ TBTA/NYCHA	Bathrooms, planters, bikeway, playground, basketball court, seating area	2.30	1.84	80	0.46	20	Excellent	Low
4 ²	Wagner Houses Pool	E 124 St Bet 1 and 2 Avs	NYCHA	Bathrooms, outdoor pool	0.81	0.00	0	0.81	100	Closed	N/A
5	William McCray Playground	W. 138 St., Between Lenox Ave. and 5 Ave.	NYC Parks	Basketball courts, spray showers, playgrounds	0.46	0.00	0	0.46	100	Fair	High
6	Marcus Garvey Park	Madison Ave, E. 120 St. to E. 124 St.	NYC Parks	basketball court, dog areas, media labs, playground, spray shower, bathrooms, fitness equip, pool, rec center, wifi, amphitheater, baseball	20.16	8.07	40	12.10	60	Excellent	High
7	Dorrence Brook Square	W 136 St To W 137 St, St Nicholas Av, Edgecombe Av	NYC Parks	Planters, seating, subway entrance	0.04	0.04	100	0.00	0	Good	Low
8	Eugene McCabe Field	Park Av, E 120 To E 121 Sts	NYC Parks	Handball courts, playgrounds	0.79	0.00	0	0.79	100	Good	Low
9	Dream Street Park	E 124 St B/w 2 and 3 Avs	NYC Parks	Seating, planted area, walkway	0.25	0.20	80	0.05	20	Good	Low
10	Collyer Brothers Park	Fifth Av, E 128th Street	NYC Parks	Benches, seating area	0.03	0.03	100	0.00	0	Good	Low
11	Fred Samuel Playground	Lenox Ave., W. 139 St. To W. 140 St.	NYC Parks	Basketball courts, fitness equip, spray showers, bathrooms, playgrounds	0.69	0.21	30	0.48	70	Excellent	High
12	Col. Young Playground	W. 145 St. to W. 143 St., Lenox Ave., and Harlem River	NYC Parks	Baseball fields, bathrooms, basketball court, playground, handball court	6.42	0.00	0	6.42	100	Excellent	High
13 ³	Abraham Lincoln Playground	5 Ave. and E. 135 St.	NYC Parks	Basketball courts, outdoor pools, spray showers, bathrooms, playground	0.99	0.10	10	0.89	90	Excellent	Medium
14	Moore Playground	Madison Ave. between E. 130 St. and E. 131 St.	NYC Parks	Basketball courts, spray showers, playgrounds	0.77	0.00	0	0.77	100	Good	High
15	Alice Kornegay Triangle	Lexington Ave., E. 128 St. to E. 129 St.	NYC Parks	Bathrooms, playgrounds, handball courts, spray showers	0.88	0.00	0	0.88	100	Fair	Low
16	Each One Teach One	Lexington Ave., E. 129 St. to E. 130 St.	NYC Parks	Playground, basketball courts	0.06	0.00	0	0.06	100	Fair	Low
17	Harlem River Park	E. 128 St., 2 Ave., 3 Ave., Harlem River Drive	NYC Parks	Bikeway, ballfield, basketball courts	6.58	1.32	20	5.26	80	Good	Low
18 ⁴	Crack Is Wack Playground	E. 127 St., 2 Ave., and Harlem River Drive	NYC Parks	Baseball fields, handball courts, basketball courts, playgrounds, sculpture	1.37	0.14	10	1.23	90	Under Renovation (Winter 2020)	N/A
19	St. Nicholas Playground South	W/s 7 Ave. Between W. 127 St. and W. 129 St.	NYC Parks/ NYCHA	BBQ, bathrooms, handball, spray showers, basketball court, dog areas, playgrounds	0.67	0.07	10	0.60	90	Good	Low
20	St. Nicholas Playground North	W/s 7 Ave. at W. 130 St.	NYC Parks/ NYCHA	Playground, spray showers, basketball court, handball	0.66	0.13	20	0.53	80	Excellent	High
21	Howard Bennett Playground	W. 135 St. To W. 136 St., Lenox Ave. To 5 Ave.	NYC Parks/ DOE	Basketball courts, handball courts, spray showers, bathrooms, playgrounds	1.23	0.00	0	1.23	100	Fair	Medium
22	C.S.154 - "Our Children's Garden"	250 W. 127th Street	HPD	School garden	0.05	0.05	100	0.00	0	Fair	Low
23	CS 154 Community Playground	W. 127th Street	BOE	Playground, running track, basketball courts	2.07	0.00	0	2.07	100	Excellent	High
24	Adam Clayton Powell Plaza	Adam Clayton Powell Blvd. and 125th Street	DSBS	Seating, planters	0.92	0.92	100	0.00	0	Excellent	High

Lenox Terrace

Table 5-3 (cont'd)
Inventory of Publicly Accessible Open Space in the Study Area

Map No.	Name	Location	Owner/Agency	Amenities	Total Acres	Passive		Active		Condition	Utilization
						Acres	%	Acres	%		
25	132 St Block Association Park	W132 St, Lenox Av	DPR	Seating, planted beds	0.17	0	100	0.00	0.17	Fair	Low
26	Harlem Grown Gardens	118 W134th St, Lenox Av, Adam C Powell	DPR	Agricultural Farm	0.42	0	100	0.00	0.42	Good	High
27	Harlem Grown Gardens (Greenhouse)	126 W134th btwn Lenox Ave and Adam Clayton Powell	DPR	Agricultural Farm	0.14	100	0	0.14	0.00	Excellent	High
28	New 123rd Street Block Association Community Garden	W123rd St Bet Lenox Av & Adam Clayton Powell	DPR	Community Garden	0.14	100	0	0.14	0.00	Excellent	High
Totals					48.64	13.56	28%	35.08	72%		
<p>Notes: NYCHA – New York City Housing Authority, TBTA – Triboro Bridge Authority, DOE – New York City Department of Education, HPD – New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, DSBS – Department of Small Business Services ¹ See Figure 5-1 for a map of open space resources. ² Wagner Houses Pool was closed during observation on June 21st 2018; however it is anticipated to open for NYC Parks outdoor pool season on June 27th, 2018.r. ⁴ Crack is Wack Park was not included in total acreage for the existing condition as it is currently under renovation and expected to be re-opened by Winter 2020. Sources: NYC Parks; Field Surveys, February, March & June 2018; MapPLUTO</p>											

The remaining open space resources range from single lot, 0.03-acre parks to large 2.3-acre public plazas. These resources include the Collyer Brothers Park (0.03 acres), the Abraham Lincoln Playground (0.99 acres), Triboro Plaza (2.3 acres), Howard Bennett Playground (1.23 acres) and the Hansborough Recreation Center (0.29 acres). Amenities at these locations are both active and passive in nature. Fifteen parks include basketball courts and eight include handball courts. Three larger open space resources include baseball fields and three include swimming pools. Passive open spaces include seating areas, landscaping and planted areas, and walkways. Individual amenities within each open space resource are enumerated in **Table 5-3**.

For the purposes of conservative analysis, open spaces on NYCHA developments that appear publicly accessible are only considered in the qualitative assessment. Similarly, community gardens located on city property managed by NYC Parks, gardens operating under the City’s GreenThumb program, or gardens on private property operated by a non-governmental organization, such as a foundation or a local community development organization are considered in the qualitative assessment.

ASSESSMENT OF OPEN SPACE ADEQUACY

Quantitative Assessment

As seen in **Table 5-4** the study area has an overall open space ratio of 0.678 acres per 1,000 residents. This is lower than the guideline of 2.5 acres of combined active and passive open space per 1,000 residents. The study area’s residential passive and active open space ratios are 0.189 and 0.489 acres per 1,000 residents, respectively, which are below the *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines of 0.5 acres of passive open space and 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents.

**Table 5-4
Adequacy of Open Space Resources: Existing Conditions**

	Population	Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios per 1,000 Persons			CEQR Technical Manual Open Space Guidelines		
		Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active
Residential (½-Mile) study area										
Residents	71,715	48.64	13.56	35.08	0.678	0.189	0.489	2.50	0.50	2.00

Qualitative Assessment

As shown in **Table 5-3**, the study area open spaces include a wide variety of actively programmed open spaces appropriate for children, teenagers, adults, and seniors. Smaller parks such as Collyer Brothers Park, Dream Street Park, Adam Clayton Powel Office Building Plaza, and Dorrence Brook Square provide almost exclusively passive amenities and are well suited for the adults and the elderly who utilize these open spaces for activities such as sitting in the sun and eating lunch. St. Nicholas South Playground, Howard Bennett Playground, and Col. Young Playground provide opportunities for children to access age-appropriate activities, including play structures and spray showers. Other parks including Marcus Garvey Park and Abraham Lincoln Playground provide opportunities for adult active recreation and include facilities for handball, basketball, and other active sports.

Open spaces within the study area were further evaluated during field surveys to determine their quality, as well as their utilization by residents within the study area. These field surveys found that a vast majority of study area open spaces were in “excellent” or “good” condition (e.g., Marcus Garvey Park and Col. Young Park). Of particular note, St Nicholas Playground North

Lenox Terrace

reopened in the spring of 2018 with new playground equipment, spray showers, basketball courts and other amenities. Only a few open spaces were identified as “fair” condition (e.g., William McCray Playground and Each One Teach One Park). None of the study area open spaces were found to be in “poor” condition.

Overall park utilization within the study area is high, particularly open space adjacent to schools that are utilized by school children and residents throughout the day. Both the Moore Playground and Callender Playground are adjacent to PS 133 and provide a variety of spaces for children from this school. Other open spaces are less utilized due to their location, particularly those along the Harlem River Drive, which serves as a barrier to park access. Each One Teach One Park is only accessible by a pedestrian bridge over busy city streets as it is found within a cloverleaf of the 3rd Avenue Bridge off-ramp.

The Wagner Houses Pool, and other outdoor pools located within study area open spaces, were closed during AKRF field surveys in March and June of 2018. However, it is anticipated that these pools will be open to the public during the NYC Parks outdoor pool season, which runs from June 27th through September 9th. Indoor pools such as the natatorium in the Hansborough Recreation Center remain open to the public all year. The quantified deficiency of open space resources within the study area is partially ameliorated by several factors, including the numerous additional open spaces that exist within the study area such as local community gardens, and green spaces contained within the boundaries of NYCHA housing complexes. Open spaces within these NYCHA housing complexes generally offer access to playgrounds, basketball and handball courts, and benches for seating. These facilities are excluded from quantitative analysis because they are for the sole use of NYCHA residents; however, NYCHA developments are a significant presence within the study area, housing thousands of study area residents.

Local community gardens and other open spaces generally offer access to shaded seating areas, as well as small gardening allotments, with some including playground equipment or other play features for young children. These facilities are excluded from the quantitative analysis for the purposes of conservative analysis as they largely lack posted regular hours, and primarily serve specific groups of residents within the study area. As shown in **Table 5-5**, there are numerous community gardens within the study area, utilized primarily for passive recreation and active urban farming activities.

Just beyond the open space study area boundaries there are additional destination open spaces which residents within the study area could reasonably be assumed to utilize. The two largest in proximity to the study area are St. Nicholas Park and Morningside Park. The approximately 22-acre St. Nicholas Park is located just to the west of the study area across St. Nicholas Avenue, on the steep slope between central Harlem and Hamilton Heights. The park provides both active and passive recreational spaces including handball courts and a children’s play area. Morningside Park is located west of the southern portion of the study area. Like St. Nicholas Park, Morningside Park is located along a steep slope between Harlem and Morningside Heights. This park provides for both active and passive recreational activities including handball courts and seating areas.

Table 5-5
Community Gardens in the Study Area

Name	Location	Managing Agency	Total Acres
Harlem Rose Garden	4-8 E 129th Street	NYC Parks	0.16
W 124th Street Community Garden	Lenox and Fifth Av	NYC Parks	0.05
Our Little Green Acre/Garden Eight	275-277 W 122nd Street	NYC Parks	0.05
Cep Community Garden	2351 8th Av and 303 W 126th St	Manhattan Land Trust	0.06
Will Washington Memorial Garden	W126th St Bet St Nicholas & Frederick Douglass	NYC Parks	0.08
Joseph Daniel Wilson Garden	W 122nd St Bet Fred Douglass & Adam Clayton Powell	NYC Parks	0.06
Elizabeth Langley Memorial Garden	W 137th St Bet Lenox and A C Powell Blvd	NYC Parks	0.11
Margrchantie Garden	155-159 W 133rd St	NYC Parks	0.17
United Block Association Garden	W 131 St Bet Fifth Av and Lenox Av	NYC Parks	0.08
Unity Gardens	W 128th Street, Bet Fifth Av & Lenox Av	NYC Parks	0.13
Rev Linette C Williamson Memorial Garden	129th St, Bet Lenox Av and Fifth Av	Rev Linette C. Williamson Memorial Association	0.11
Harlem Valley Community Garden	134th Street Bet Malcolm X and Adam Clayton Powell	NYC Parks	0.06
St Nicholas Miracle Garden	St Nicholas Bet 126th and 127th Streets	NYC Parks	0.19
Abyssinian Tot Lot	W139th St Bet A Clayton Powell Jr Blvd & Lenox	NYC Parks	0.12
Total			1.5¹
Note: ¹ Due to rounding sum may not equal total.			
Sources: NYC Parks; Field Surveys, February & April 2018; MapPLUTO			

D. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT

As detailed in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” in the absence of the proposed actions the rezoning area is assumed to remain in the same condition as the existing condition. The applicant would not pursue the development of the rezoning area, and the existing structures and landscaping would remain intact and unchanged.

2023 NO ACTION SCENARIO

DIRECT EFFECTS

There are no publicly accessible open spaces that will be directly affected by study area developments planned for completion by the 2023 analysis year.

Study Area Open Spaces

In addition to the existing open spaces identified in **Table 5-4** above, in the No Action scenario, based on existing publicly available development plans, an additional 0.28-acre publicly accessible open space will be constructed by the 2023 analysis year. This open space is part of the larger 201 East 125th Street development, which includes a 19-story residential development on City-owned property. This open space—expected to open to the public by 2020—is designed as a public plaza, a 100 percent passive use resource. In addition, by 2023 Crack is Wack Playground is expected to reopen to the public. The reopening of this park will add an additional 1.37 acres of public open space to the study area, including 0.14 acres of passive space and 1.23 acres of active space.

Lenox Terrace

With this new development and the reopening of Crack is Wack Playground, the total open space within the study area in the 2023 No Action scenario would increase from approximately 48.64 acres to 50.29 acres. The total passive open space within the study area would increase from approximately 13.56 acres to 13.98 acres, and the total active open space within the study area would increase from approximately 35.08 acres to 36.31 acres.

In addition to the newly restored Crack Is Wack playground, in the No Action condition Abraham Lincoln Playground is expected to be renovated by 2023 as part of the City’s Community Parks Initiative.¹ It is anticipated that the renovations will include reconstruction of the existing basketball court along Fifth Avenue, planting of additional trees, and upgrades to other park facilities and equipment. These renovations will not affect the total size or active/passive characteristics of the open space, which will remain the same size and continue being utilized predominantly for active recreation.² As noted above, renovations to the playground’s comfort station are projected to start earlier, in fall 2019.

INDIRECT EFFECTS

Study Area Population

Based on publicly available development plans, including land use approvals, it is anticipated that an additional 2,362 DUs will be constructed within the ½-mile open space study area in the No Action scenario. Based on the existing average household size for renter-occupied units within the open space study area of 2.34 persons per DU, these additional DUs will result in the study area population increasing by 5,527 residents by the 2023 analysis year. In total, by 2023 there will be an estimated 77,242 residents within the study area.

Quantitative Analysis

As shown in **Table 5-6**, in the 2023 No Action scenario, the total open space ratio is projected to decrease from 0.678 acres of open space per 1,000 residents in the existing condition to 0.651 acres per 1,000 residents. The passive open space ratio would decrease from 0.189 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.181 acres, while the active open space ratio would decrease from 0.489 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.470 acres. Similar to the existing condition, the open space ratios all would fall below City guidelines of 2.5 acres of total open space per 1,000 residents, 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents, and 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents.

**Table 5-6
Adequacy of Open Space Resources: 2023 No Action Scenario**

	Population	Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios per 1,000 Persons			CEQR Technical Manual Open Space Guidelines		
		Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active
Residents	77,242	50.29	13.98	36.31	0.651	0.181	0.470	2.50	0.50	2.00

¹ <https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/abraham-lincoln-playground/pressrelease/21409>

² <https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/abraham-lincoln-playground/projects>

Qualitative Assessment

In the 2023 No Action scenario, open spaces within the study area would remain largely the same as described in the existing condition. As noted above, based on NYC Parks capital planning, Crack is Wack Playground, currently undergoing renovations, will reopen with new fencing and other improvements by the 2023 analysis year. In addition, new public open space providing seating and a public plaza on 125th Street will be constructed, adding open space resources within the study area. As this will be new construction, it is anticipated to be in excellent condition in the 2023 analysis year.

2026 NO ACTION SCENARIO

DIRECT EFFECTS

No developments to be completed by the 2026 analysis year are anticipated to directly impact public open spaces within the study area.

INDIRECT EFFECTS

Study Area Population

Based on current, publicly available development plans, including other land use approvals, by the 2026 No Action scenario an estimated 2,566 DUs will be constructed within the ½-mile study area. Based on the existing average household size for renter-occupied units within the open space study area of 2.34 persons per DU, this increase in units will result in the study area population increasing by 6,004 residents. In total the study area population in the 2026 No Action scenario is anticipated to be approximately 77,719 residents.

Quantitative Analysis

As shown in **Table 5-7**, in the 2026 No Action scenario, the total open space ratio is projected to decrease from 0.678 acres of open space per 1,000 residents in the existing condition to 0.647 acres per 1,000 residents. The passive open space ratio would decrease from 0.189 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.180 acres per 1,000 residents, while the active open space ratio would decrease from 0.489 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.467 acres. Similar to the existing condition, the open space ratios all would fall below City guidelines of 2.5 acres of total open space per 1,000 residents, 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents, and 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents.

Table 5-7

Adequacy of Open Space Resources: 2026 No Action Scenario

	Population	Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios per 1,000 Persons			CEQR Technical Manual Open Space Guidelines		
		Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active
Residents	77,719	50.29	13.98	36.31	0.647	0.180	0.467	2.50	0.50	2.00

Qualitative Assessment

In the No Action scenario no major changes to the open spaces within the area are anticipated, and qualitative conditions would be similar to those described under the 2023 analysis year.

E. FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2023 WITH ACTION SCENARIO

DIRECT EFFECTS

The proposed actions would not directly displace any existing open space resources. By the 2023 analysis year, an approximately 0.24-acre pocket park would be developed in the northwest portion of the proposed development site. This new private open space would be made available to existing and new Lenox Terrace residents and their guests. Landscaped areas and pedestrian walkways around the existing and new buildings on the west side of the proposed development site also would be developed by the 2023 analysis year.

As detailed in Chapter 6, “Shadows,” Proposed Building NW (at the corner of Lenox Avenue and 135th Street) and Proposed Building NE (at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 135th Street) would cast incremental shadow on the Howard Bennett Playground, contributing to a decrease in the open space’s utility on the December 21 analysis day. However, the greatest shadowing effects on this open space would occur during the winter months, when park utilization is relatively low, and outside of the growing season as well as the NYC Parks tennis season, which runs from the first Sunday of April to the Sunday before Thanksgiving.³ In addition, the study area includes multiple open spaces with passive and active recreation space within a 10-minute walk of Howard Bennett Playground, including the Courtney Callender Playground at Fifth Avenue and 131st Street, which includes children’s play structures and handball courts.

It is also anticipated that, due to ongoing construction on the proposed development site in the 2023 With Action scenario, the open space resources in closest proximity to the proposed development site, including Howard Bennett Playground, might be less utilized by area residents in favor of others in the surrounding area; however, access to public open spaces in the surrounding area would be maintained. Construction-period effects on open space are described in Chapter 19, “Construction.” ~~In summary, despite the increase in shadows cast on the Howard Bennett Playground, the proposed actions would not result in a significant adverse direct impact to open space in the 2023 analysis year.~~

INDIRECT EFFECTS

Study Area Population

As detailed in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the proposed actions would facilitate the redevelopment of the rezoning area including the construction of 1,094 DUs by the 2023 analysis year. Based on the average household size of renter-occupied units of 2.34 for the ½-mile study area (US Census 2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Estimates) the RWCDS would add an additional 2,560 residents to the open space study area. With the additional population introduced by the proposed actions, the study area would have an estimated population of 79,802 residents.

Quantitative Assessment

As shown in **Table 5-8**, the total open space ratio is projected to decrease from 0.651 acres of open space per 1,000 residents (the No Action scenario) to 0.645 acres per 1,000 residents in the

³ NYC Parks Tennis FAQ <https://www.nycgovparks.org/things-to-do/tennis>

2023 With Action scenario. The passive open space ratio would decrease from 0.181 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.179 acres, while the active open space ratio would decrease from 0.470 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.465 acres. Similar to the existing condition and 2023 No Action scenario, these open space ratios would fall below City guidelines of 2.5 acres of total open space per 1,000 residents, 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents, and 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents.

**Table 5-8
Adequacy of Open Space Resources: 2023 With Action Scenario**

	Population	Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios per 1,000 Persons			CEQR Technical Manual Open Space Guidelines		
		Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active
Residents	79,802	50.29	13.98	36.31	0.645	0.179	0.465	2.50	0.50	2.00

CEQR Technical Manual guidelines indicate that a significant adverse impact is usually identified when the study area open space ratio between the No Action and With Action scenarios decreases by more than 5 percent in areas that are currently below the City’s median community district open space ratio of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

As shown in **Table 5-9**, in the 2023 analysis year the study area open space ratios for total open space would decrease by 3.28 percent, passive open space would decrease by 2.89 percent, and active space would decrease by approximately 3.00 percent. Therefore, the proposed actions would not result in a significant adverse indirect impact to open space in the 2023 analysis year.

**Table 5-9
2023 Open Space Ratio Summary**

Ratio	CEQR Technical Manual Open Space Guideline	Open Space Ratios per 1,000			Percent Change (With Action)
		Existing	No Action	With Action	
Residential (½-Mile) study area					
Total—Residents	2.5	0.678	0.651	0.645	-3.28%
Passive—Residents	0.5	0.189	0.181	0.179	-2.89%
Active—Residents	2.0	0.489	0.470	0.465	-3.00%

Qualitative Assessment

In the 2023 With Action scenario, open spaces within the study area would remain the same as in the 2023 No Action scenario. The wide variety of open space resources not included in the quantitative assessment—including community gardens, NYCHA open spaces, large open spaces just outside the open space study area, and other private open spaces—would remain available to study area residents, providing alternative open space options for both active and passive recreation. In addition, by 2023 an approximately 0.24-acre pocket park would be developed in the northwest portion of the proposed development site, as well as landscaped areas and pedestrian walkways around the existing and new buildings on the west side of the proposed development site. This new open space would be accessible to existing and new residents of Lenox Terrace and their guests, and would help to meet their passive and active open space needs.

2026 WITH ACTION SCENARIO

DIRECT EFFECTS

Full buildout of the proposed project and the future projected development site would not result in the direct displacement of any existing public open spaces.

In addition to Proposed Building NW and Proposed Building NE (which would be constructed by the 2023 analysis year), Proposed Building N—located on 135th Street midblock between Fifth Avenue and Lenox Avenue—would cast incremental shadow on the Howard Bennett Playground, contributing to a decrease in the open space’s utility on the December 21 analysis day. The new shadows would be most pronounced during the winter months when park utilization is relatively low, and outside of the NYC Parks tennis season. As described above, the study area includes other open space resources (including the Courtney Callender Playground) that would not be shaded at the same time as the Howard Bennett Playground, and provide similar open space amenities including children’s play structures and handball courts, and could be utilized by study area residents for active and passive recreation.

Construction-period effects on open space are described in Chapter 19, “Construction.” As detailed in that chapter, during construction of the proposed project access to the Howard Bennett Playground and Abraham Lincoln Playground would be maintained; however, during construction of the proposed Building N, a pedestrian gate to the east of the construction site may need to be temporarily closed, limiting access to the Hansborough Recreation Center from that location. Access to the main entrance to the recreation center, from the west via Lenox Terrace Place, would be maintained throughout construction. Construction noise levels expected to be experienced at the Howard Bennett Playground would be “noticeable” (in the low to mid 70s dBA) during the three-month period of the most noise-intensive construction activity, and would be imperceptible to barely perceptible throughout the remainder of construction. Predicted construction noise levels would be in the “marginally unacceptable” range according to the *CEQR Technical Manual* noise exposure criteria. Construction noise levels anticipated to be experienced at the Hansborough Recreation Center would be “noticeable and potentially intrusive” during the most noise-intensive stages of construction, which would have a duration of approximately three months, and noticeable at times over the course of 18 to 24 months. Maximum noise levels would be in the “marginally unacceptable” range (up to the high 70s dBA) according to *CEQR Technical Manual* noise exposure criteria. However, based on the limited duration and magnitude of predicted construction noise levels, construction-related noise would not rise to the level of a significant adverse open space impact at the Howard Bennett Playground or the Hansborough Recreation Center.

~~In summary, despite the increase in shadows cast on the Howard Bennett Playground, the proposed actions would not result in a permanent significant adverse direct impact to open space in the 2026 analysis year.~~

INDIRECT EFFECTS

Study Area Population

As detailed in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the proposed actions would facilitate the redevelopment of the proposed development site with five new buildings as well as the potential development of one new building on the projected future development site. These developments would add an estimated 1,711 DUs to the open space study area, including 1,642 DUs on the

proposed development site and 69 DUs on the projected future development site. Based on the average household size for renter-occupied units of 2.34 within the ½-mile study area (US Census 2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Estimates), the proposed actions would increase the study area population by an estimated 4,004 residents. In the 2026 With Action scenario, the open space study area population would total 81,723 residents.

Quantitative Assessment

As shown in **Table 5-10**, in the 2026 With Action scenario the total open space ratio is projected to decrease from 0.647 acres of open space per 1,000 residents (the 2026 No Action scenario) to 0.624 acres per 1,000 residents in the 2026 With Action scenario. The passive open space ratio would decrease from 0.180 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.173 acres, while the active open space ratio would decrease from 0.647 acres per 1,000 residents to 0.450 acres. Similar to the existing condition and 2026 No Action scenario, the open space ratios all would fall below City guidelines of 2.5 acres of total open space per 1,000 residents, 0.5 acres of passive open space per 1,000 residents, and 2.0 acres of active open space per 1,000 residents.

Table 5-10
Adequacy of Open Space Resources: 2026 With Action Scenario

	Population	Open Space Acreage			Open Space Ratios per 1,000 Persons			CEQR Technical Manual Open Space Guidelines		
		Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active	Total	Passive	Active
Residents	81,723	50.29	13.98	36.31	0.624	0.173	0.450	2.50	0.50	2.00

As noted above, *CEQR Technical Manual* guidelines indicate that a significant adverse impact is usually identified when the study area open space ratio between the No Action and With Action scenarios decreases by more than 5 percent in areas that are currently below the City’s median community district open space ratio of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

As shown in **Table 5-11**, in the 2026 With Action scenario, the open space ratios for total open space would decrease by 4.87 percent, passive open space would decrease by 4.65 percent, and active space would decrease by approximately 4.96 percent.

Table 5-11
2026 Open Space Ratio Summary

Ratio	CEQR Technical Manual Open Space Guideline	Open Space Ratios per 1,000			Percent Change (With Action)
		Existing	No Action	With Action	
Residential (½-Mile) study area					
Total—Residents	2.5	0.678	0.647	0.624	-4.87%
Passive—Residents	0.5	0.189	0.180	0.173	-4.65%
Active—Residents	2.0	0.489	0.467	0.450	-4.96%

Qualitative Assessment

As illustrated in **Figure 5-2**, the proposed project would create a substantial amount of new private open space on the proposed development site, approximately six acres in total. This new open space would surround the existing and new buildings on the Lenox Terrace campus, and would replace much of the area currently occupied by surface parking. It is currently anticipated that the features of this open space could include a large central lawn, a winding pedestrian promenade lined with trees and garden areas, and four “pocket parks.” This new open space would be accessible to existing and new residents of Lenox Terrace and their guests, and would help to meet



Lenox Terrace

their open space needs. In addition, the wide variety of open space resources not included in the quantitative assessment—including community gardens, NYCHA open spaces, large open spaces just outside the open space study area, and other private open spaces—would remain available to study area residents, providing alternative open space options for both active and passive recreation.

The qualitative considerations discussed above would offset the quantified reduction in study area open space ratios; however, because the reduction in the active open space ratio in the With Action scenario (2026) would be very close to 5 percent and the open space ratios in this area would continue to be quantitatively low in the No Action and With Action conditions, the reduction in the open space ratio would be considered a significant adverse indirect impact in the 2026 analysis year. The proposed actions would not result in any permanent significant adverse indirect impacts to open space in the 2023 analysis year. *