

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes potential socioeconomic impacts of the proposed project. In accordance with the 2001 *New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual* and the Final Scope of Work, it analyzes changes in population, housing and economic conditions that may occur either directly or indirectly in connection with development of the Fresh Kills Park and whether such changes would generate significant adverse socioeconomic impacts. As described in Chapter 1, “Project Description,” the proposed project would result in the development of an approximately 2,163-acre park on the Fresh Kills Landfill site in five designated planning areas with active and passive recreational uses; non-programmed natural areas; and park-related commercial retail and cultural facility space.

B. METHODOLOGY

The objective of this chapter is to determine if significant direct or indirect adverse socioeconomic impacts would occur in the study area as a result of the proposed project.

In accordance with the guidelines for socioeconomic analyses prescribed by the *CEQR Technical Manual*, this analysis considers five specific factors with respect to socioeconomic change as a result of a proposed project or action: (1) direct displacement of residential population on the project site, (2) direct displacement of existing businesses on the project site, (3) indirect displacement of residential population in the socioeconomic study area, (4) indirect displacement of businesses and institutions in the socioeconomic study area, or (5) adverse effects on specific industries not necessarily tied to the project site or to the study area.

SOCIOECONOMIC STUDY AREA

The socioeconomic study area used for this analysis is the area extending approximately one-half mile around the project site (see Figure 3-1). This study area represents the area in which the proposed project would have the greatest potential to generate socioeconomic changes.

Because of the large size of the project site, an analysis considering only the entire study area as a whole would not consider potential impacts to smaller, individual areas within the study area. For example, if median rent or income in one section of the study area were significantly lower than in other areas, that population could be more susceptible to indirect residential displacement and should be examined in greater detail. Therefore, dividing the study area into subareas makes it less likely that pockets of vulnerable populations or businesses could be overlooked.

The study area was therefore divided into three subareas based around population centers, natural and physical boundaries, as well as census tract and block group boundaries. These subareas, shown on Figure 3-1, encompass several neighborhoods: Travis and Chelsea in the northwest portion of the study area; Heartland Village and New Springville in the eastern portion; and Rossville, Arden Heights, and Greenridge in the south.

DATA SOURCES

Information presented in this chapter was obtained from a variety of sources. Demographic and housing information was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau's 1990 and 2000 Censuses. Because census tracts boundaries differ between 1990 and 2000, an area that extended farther than the ½-mile study area was examined, providing the best comparative area using available data. The Census data has been supplemented with New York City Department of Finance Real Property Assessment Data (RPAD) which provides updated household information for the immediate ½-mile study area (see Figure 3-2).

Housing and commercial real estate data was obtained from local real estate listings, including online resources, and from conversations with local brokers.

Employment data is from Claritas, Inc., a marketing information resources company, and from the New York State Department of Labor. This data was gathered at the census tract level, which extends beyond a ½ mile of the project site.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROJECT SITE

POPULATION AND HOUSING

There is no residential population or housing located on the project site.

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Existing employment on the project site is related to landfill closure proceedings and DSNY operations. This employment is City government services. There is also a trailer rental business and parking area within the Fresh Kills property. Until recently, there was also a garden center within the property, but it has since vacated the site.

STUDY AREA

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Population and housing characteristics of the study area are described below, including total population and number of households, median household income and poverty rates, number of housing units and vacancy rates, as well as housing tenure and median contract rents. This data is presented for 1990 and 2000 for the study area as a whole, as well as for the three distinct subareas.

In order to present more current population and household data for the ½-mile study area, a 2005 population estimate was calculated using RPAD from 2006. Housing unit counts were multiplied by corresponding Census Tract average household size figures, to generate the estimated population.

Population and Households

In 2000, there were an estimated 30,354 residents and 10,810 households in the ½-mile study area (see Table 3-1). Between 1990 and 2000, the study area population grew by 19.5 percent, increasing at a slightly faster rate than Staten Island (17.1 percent), and a significantly faster rate than New York City as a whole (9.4 percent).

Table 3-1
Study Area Population and Households Estimate, 1990 and 2000

	Population			Households ¹		
	1990	2000	Percent Change	1990	2000	Percent Change
Study Area	25,394	30,354	19.5	8,555	10,810	26.4
Rossville/Arden Heights /Greenridge	13,988	17,732	26.8	4,359	6,004	37.7
Heartland Village/New Springville	9,534	10,333	8.4	3,548	4,027	13.5
Travis/Chelsea	1,872	2,289	22.3	648	779	20.2
Staten Island	378,977	443,728	17.1	130,519	156,341	19.8
New York City	7,322,564	8,008,278	9.4	2,819,401	3,021,588	7.2
Notes:						
1. The number of households was derived from 2006 RPAD data. Residential units built by 1990 and 2000 were queried and totaled for the ½ mile study area, then the corresponding census tract vacancy rates from 1990 or 2000 were applied. Each residential unit was considered a "household" for analysis purposes. Average household size figures for each corresponding census tract in 1990 and 2000 were obtained from the Census Bureau, then multiplied by the number of households for each year. These totals were combined to create the ½-mile population estimates.						
Sources: 2006 New York City Department of Finance RPAD, U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census, Summary File 1.						

Further analysis of the subareas shows significant differences in growth. The majority of study area growth between 1990 and 2000 occurred in the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea, which experienced a 26.8 percent increase in population and a 37.7 percent increase in households. This rate of population growth was considerably higher than Staten Island over that 10-year period (17.1 percent), and significantly higher than the City as a whole (7.2 percent). Over the same time period, population growth north of the project site in the Travis/Chelsea subarea (22.3 percent) was also higher than the remainder of Staten Island, and significantly higher than the city as a whole. In contrast, the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea saw a smaller population increase, growing at 8.4 percent. This population increase was significantly lower than the borough, but similar to the City. This growth factor is likely a result of limited vacant land available for development in the Heartland Village subarea compared to portions of Staten Island and the other subareas. In particular, the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea had large parcels of vacant land in proximity to the development site which were developed into residential complexes between 1990 and 2000.

Between 2001 and 2005, the study area population continued to grow, increasing nearly 6 percent over the 5-year period (Table 3-2). The Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea, which saw the greatest population increase between 1990 and 2000, continued to grow in population (7.0 percent) over the 5-year period. The Travis/Chelsea subarea, however, experienced a consistent increase in its rate of growth. In five years, the population increased by over 20 percent. The Heartland Village/New Springville area, however, saw limited population growth between 2001 and 2005 (less than one percent).

Table 3-2
Study Area Population Estimate, 2005

	2000	2005	Percent Change
Study Area	30,354	32,091	5.7
Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge	17,732	18,967	7.0
Heartland Village/New Springville	10,333	10,370	0.4
Travis/Chelsea	2,289	2,754	20.3
Notes: New York City Department of Finance RPAD data, Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF1.			
Sources: The number of households was derived from 2006 RPAD data. Residential units built after 2000 were totaled for the ½-mile study area, then the corresponding census tract vacancy rates from Census 2000 were applied. Each residential unit was considered a "household" for analysis purposes. Average household size figures for each corresponding census tract in 2000 were obtained from the Census Bureau, then multiplied by the number of households. These totals were combined to create the ½-mile population estimate.			

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Income and Poverty

Overall, the study area is affluent compared with Staten Island and the City as a whole. As shown in Table 3-3, the 1999 median household income in the study area (\$62,216) was approximately 13 percent higher than the Staten Island median (\$55,039) and 62 percent higher than the New York City median (\$38,293). Though the median household income for the study area decreased by nearly 10 percent between 1989 and 1999, this follows a similar trend of lower median incomes throughout the borough of Staten Island, and the City as a whole¹. Despite the decrease, the median household income for the study area remained higher in 1989 than the median household income for Staten Island and the City.

**Table 3-3
Study Area Median Household Income and Poverty Rate, 1989 and 1999**

	Median Household Income			Percent Below Poverty		
	1989	1999	Percent Change	1989	1999	Change (Percentage Points)
Total study area	\$68,999	\$62,216	- 9.8	3.7	5.1	1.4
Rossville / Arden Heights / Greenridge	\$72,345	\$65,161	- 9.9	3.5	4.2	0.7
Heartland Village / New Springville	\$63,407	\$55,262	- 12.8	4.3	7.7	3.4
Travis / Chelsea	\$47,358	\$57,708	21.9	2.0	5.7	3.7
Staten Island	\$59,444	\$55,039	- 7.4	7.8	10.0	2.2
New York City	\$40,419	\$38,293	- 5.3	19.3	21.2	1.9
Notes:	All dollar values are presented in 1999 constant dollars.					
Sources:	U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census, Summary Files 1 and 3.					

Further analysis identifies considerable differences in the individual subareas. Most notably, median income rose almost 22 percent in the Travis/Chelsea subarea over the 10-year period. This increase is significant because it represents a turn in the subarea from an area where median household income was considerably lower than the borough median in 1990 (\$47,358 as compared with \$59,444), to an area which was slightly higher in 2000. The Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea had the highest median income within the study area in 1999 (\$65,161), considerably higher than both the borough of Staten Island and the City as a whole. Although it had the largest percentage decline in median household income over the 10-year period (a 13 percent decline), the area is affluent compared to Staten Island and City. Similarly, the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea saw a nearly 10 percent decrease in median household income over the 10-year period. However, at \$55,262, the median household income for the subarea is similar to the boroughwide median, and substantially higher than the Citywide median.

The poverty rate in 2000 for the study area (5.1 percent) was lower than the borough of Staten Island (10 percent), and significantly lower than that of the City as a whole (21.2 percent). Additionally, though poverty rates vary between subareas, all three are lower than the Staten Island and City figures. Between 1989 and 1999, the percentage of people living below the poverty level increased slightly within the study area, and in each of the sub-areas, mirroring the increased rates in the borough and the City as a whole.

¹ All values presented in 1999 constant dollars.

Housing Units

The trend in the study area is a growth in housing units and a decrease in vacancy rates. In 2000 the study area contained approximately 31,361 housing units, an increase of 6,237 units, or 25 percent, from 1990 (see Table 3-4). The study area’s vacancy rate in 2000 was also low (3.2 percent) compared to Staten Island (4.7 percent) and New York City (5.6 percent). This represented a 3 percent decrease in vacancy over the 10-year period within the study area.

**Table 3-4
Study Area Housing Units and Vacancy Rate, 1990 and 2000**

	Total Housing Units			Percent Vacant Housing Units		
	1990	2000	Percent Change	1990	2000	Change (Percentage Points)
Total study area	25,124	31,361	24.8	6.3	3.2	-3.1
Rossville / Arden Heights / Greenridge	16,782	21,872	30.0	4.4	3.4	-1.0
Heartland Village / New Springville	7,730	8,662	12.1	8.6	2.8	-5.8
Travis / Chelsea	612	827	35.1	8.5	4.1	-4.4
Staten Island	139,726	163,993	17.4	6.6	4.7	-1.9
New York City	2,992,169	3,200,912	7.0	5.8	5.6	-0.2

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census, Summary File 1.

Over two-thirds of the housing units are located in the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea. Though this subarea’s vacancy rate is slightly higher than the overall socioeconomic study area, it remains 1.3 percentage points lower than the vacancy rate for Staten Island as a whole. The lowest vacancy rate was found in Heartland Village/New Springville (2.8 percent), and the highest in Travis/Chelsea (4.1 percent), which still was below borough and City levels.

Housing Tenure and Rent

As shown in Table 3-5, the study area has a higher than average owner occupancy rate (73.2 percent), and higher median contract rents (\$743) compared to both the borough and the City as a whole. Though median contract rents decreased slightly over the 10-year period, they decreased at a lower rate than the borough, and even increased in one of the subareas (Travis/Chelsea).

**Table 3-5
Study Area Housing Tenure and Contract Rent, 1990 and 2000**

	Percent Owner-Occupied Housing Units		Percent Renter-Occupied Housing Units		Median Contract Rent		
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	Percent Change
Total Study Area	74.2	73.2	25.8	26.8	\$743	\$737	- .8
Rossville / Arden Heights / Greenridge	78.3	77.7	21.7	22.3	\$717	\$706	- 1.5
Heartland Village / New Springville	64.8	61.7	35.2	38.3	\$780	\$779	-0.1
Travis / Chelsea	77.3	75.7	22.7	24.3	\$716	\$739	3.2
Staten Island	63.7	63.8	36.3	36.2	\$671	\$646	- 2.2
New York City	28.6	30.2	71.4	69.8	\$ 590	\$646	9.5

Notes: All dollar values are presented in 2000 constant dollars.
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census, Summary Files 1 and 3.

In 2000, of the three subareas, Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge had the highest owner-occupancy rate (77.7 percent), and the lowest median contract rent (\$706). Both figures, however, are higher than Staten Island and City as a whole. The Travis/Chelsea subarea had a 75.7 percent owner-occupancy rate, and the subarea saw the only rise in median contract rent between 1990 and 2000 (an increase of 3.2 percent). This mirrors the upward trend in incomes in the subarea as described earlier under “Income and Poverty.” Only Heartland Village/New Springville had a lower owner-occupancy rate (61.7 percent) compared to Staten Island. However, it had the highest median contract rent in the study area (\$779), which remained steady over the 10-year period. This may be a result of the low vacancy rate in the subarea.

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

In 2006, the study area contained approximately 1,276 businesses, employing about 14,168 public- and private-sector workers. A high proportion of those jobs is found in two sectors—retail and services. The retail sector accounts for 40 percent of all employment, and includes occupations in establishments such as general merchandise stores, apparel and accessory stores, and eating and drinking places. This retail sector percentage is considerably higher than the 17 percent of jobs in all of Staten Island, and 8 percent in all of New York City, and is attributable to the high retail concentration along Richmond Avenue. The services sector within the study area comprises approximately 30 percent of all employment, and includes occupations such as education, health and legal services, and includes public-sector employment. By comparison, as of the first quarter of 2006 approximately 51 percent of all jobs in Staten Island and 45 percent of all jobs in New York City were in services.¹

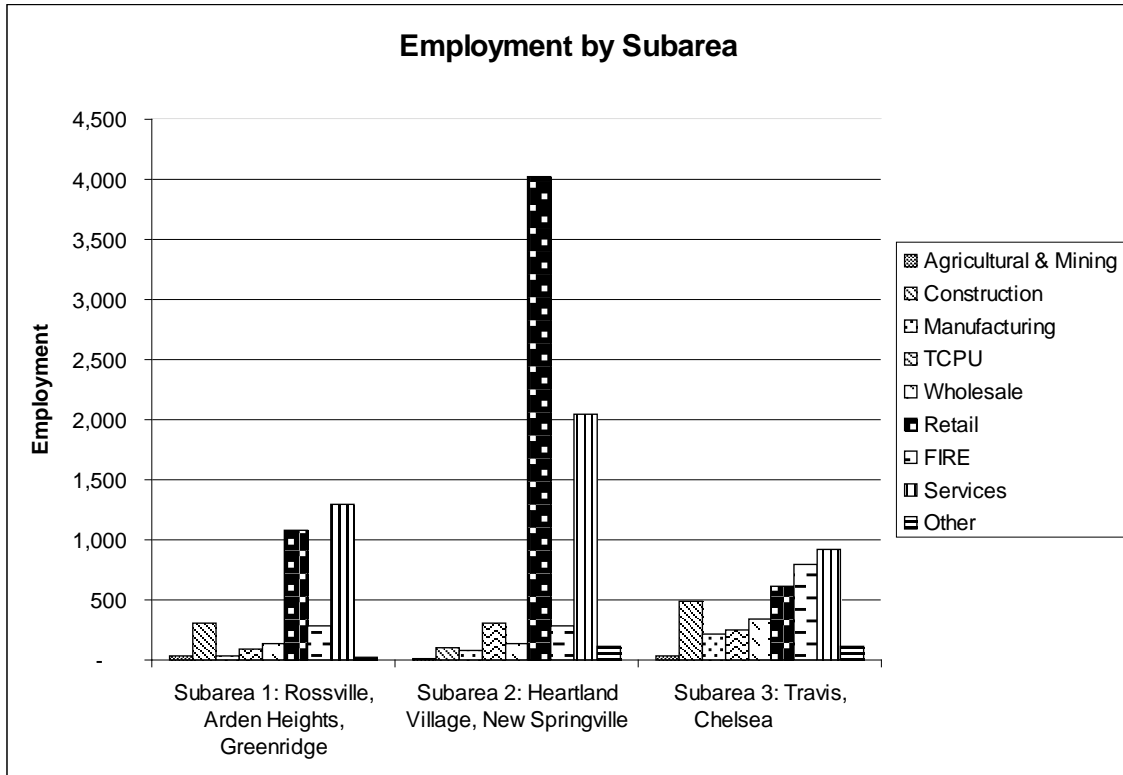
As shown in Figure 3-3, employment profiles vary across the three subareas. While retail and service sector employment is highly represented in all of the subareas, the remaining sectors vary significantly from area to area. Additionally, employment in the Travis/Chelsea subarea is much more evenly distributed among the various employment sectors than employment in the other two subareas, which tend to specialize in one or two sectors. The employment profile of each subarea is described below.

Subarea 1: Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge

The Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea contains approximately 409 firms and 3,286 employees. As shown in Table 3-6, almost 40 percent of all firms and jobs are in services. Retail also represents a large proportion of employment in the subarea, accounting for 29 percent of all businesses and 33 percent of all jobs. Land use maps indicate much of this employment to be found in shopping centers located within the various neighborhoods of the subarea. Large centers are located along Richmond Avenue near Arthur Kill Road, as well as along Arden Avenue and Rossville Avenue between Arthur Kill Road and Woodrow Road. Retail establishments in the area include a Waldbaums grocery store, a CVS and other local retailers. Several self-storage facilities are also located in the area.

¹ Study area business and employment figures are from Claritas, Inc data which provides information by the 2-digit SIC codes. New York City and Staten Island (Richmond County) business and employment figures are from New York State Department of Labor data which provides information based on NAICS codes. NAICS and SIC codes are not always comparable, however for purposes of analysis, NAICS codes corresponding to similar 2-digit SIC codes were combined for Staten Island and New York City, to provide approximate comparative figures by sector to the study area, and subareas.

Figure 3-3: Study Area Employment by Major Industrial Sector, 2005



Source: Claritas Inc., 2006

Table 3-6
Businesses and Employees by Industry, 2006
Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge Subarea

Industry	Establishments		Employees	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
Agricultural and mining	9	2.2	30	0.1
Construction	50	12.2	303	0.3
Manufacturing	4	1.0	39	1.3
TCPU	15	3.7	93	0.2
Wholesale	18	4.4	141	1.5
Retail	117	28.6	1,076	8.0
FIRE	30	7.3	287	2.6
Services	158	38.6	1,291	85.8
Other	8	2.0	26	0.3
Total	409	100.0	3,286	100.0

Notes: TCPU stands for Transportation, Communications, and Public Utilities. FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate.
Source: Claritas, Inc., December 2006.

Subarea 2: Heartland Village/ New Springville

The Heartland Village/New Springville subarea is dominated by the retail sector, which makes up 46 percent of businesses, and 57 percent of all jobs located in the subarea (see Table 3-7). Retail uses are concentrated primarily along Richmond Avenue, which serves as the border between the project site and the subarea. Many of the retail businesses and jobs are located at the various stores within the Staten Island Mall, including large department stores such as Macy’s, Sears and JC Penney, and numerous national retailers like Borders Books, The Gap, and Babies R Us. Additional retailers located along this stretch also include Costco, K-Mart, Circuit City, a Stop-N-Shop Supermarket, Wendy’s, and numerous other retailers. Second to the retail sector, approximately 30 percent of all businesses and jobs are in the services industry. The remaining sectors have fewer than 5 percent of subarea jobs.

**Table 3-7
Businesses and Employees by Industry, 2006
Heartland Village/New Springville Subarea**

Industry	Establishments		Employees	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
Agricultural and mining	2	0.4	9	0.1
Construction	21	4.1	102	1.4
Manufacturing	12	2.3	77	1.1
TCPU	22	4.3	304	4.3
Wholesale	17	3.3	135	1.9
Retail	240	46.4	4,020	56.7
FIRE	30	5.8	285	4.0
Services	155	30.0	2,046	28.9
Other	18	3.5	108	1.5
Total	517	100.0	7,086	100.0
Notes:	TCPU stands for Transportation, Communications, and Public Utilities. FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate.			
Source:	Claritas, Inc., December 2006.			

Subarea 3: Travis/Chelsea

The Travis/Chelsea subarea contains approximately 350 businesses and 3,796 jobs, and has the most varied business and employment environment of the three subareas (See Table 3-8). The services sector contains over a quarter of all employment in the subarea (120 businesses and 926 jobs). The FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real Estate) sector appears to be the second most prevalent business and employment type. This is somewhat misleading, however, because data was collected at the Census Tract level which encompasses an area outside the ½-mile study area, including the Staten Island Corporate Park. Businesses located in the corporate park, which include American Express and Merrill Lynch, likely employ the majority of people reported for this sector. Without this sector, the largest number of businesses and jobs are found in the retail and construction sectors. The retail sector makes up 13 percent of businesses and 16 percent of all employment. Unlike other subareas, the construction sector represents a sizeable percentage or subarea businesses and jobs with 13 percent of both totals. Additionally, a large Con Edison facility is located in the study area.

**Table 3-8
Businesses and Employees by Industry, 2006
Travis and Chelsea Subarea**

Industry	Establishments		Employees	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
Agricultural and mining	8	2.3	39	1.0
Construction	46	13.1	487	12.8
Manufacturing	13	3.7	216	5.7
TCPU	17	4.9	255	6.7
Wholesale	22	6.3	345	9.1
Retail	46	13.1	617	16.3
FIRE	62	17.7	797	21.0
Services	120	34.3	926	24.4
Other	16	4.6	114	3.0
Total	350	100.0	3,796	100.0
Notes:	TCPU stands for Transportation, Communications, and Public Utilities. FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate.			
Source:	Claritas, Inc., December 2006.			

D. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT: 2016 AND 2036

INTRODUCTION

In the future without the proposed project, employment on the project site is expected to diminish as closure of the landfill continues. After closure of the landfill, only a small number of employees would remain to oversee the maintenance and operations of the closed landfill. As described below, the study area would see nominal increases in both the residential population and employees in the future without the project.

2016

PROJECT SITE:

As described in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy,” the project site will remain a closed landfill in the future without the proposed project. No other development is expected on the project site absent the proposed project through the 2016 or 2036 analysis year. As noted above, a small number of employees would continue to oversee the maintenance and operations of the closed landfill.

STUDY AREA

Population and Housing

Three major residential development projects are planned to be completed in the study area by 2016: Victory Estates (100 units), Wainwright Avenue (16 units), and Presentation Convent (76 units). Table 3-9 details projected changes in population and households both by subarea and total study area as a result of these developments.

Table 3-9

Future without the Proposed Project: Population and Households 2016

	Existing Conditions (2005)		Future Without Proposed Project (2016)			Percent Growth (2006-2016)	
	Households	Population	New Housing Units	Total 2016 Households	Total 2016 Population	Households	Population
Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge	6,434	18,967	92	6,526	19,227	1.4	1.4
Heartland Village/New Springville	4,041	10,370	0	4,041	10,370	0	0
Travis/Chelsea	937	2,754	100	1,037	3,036	10.7	10.2
Total study area	11,412	32,091	192	11,604	32,634	1.7	1.7
Notes:	The 2016 household and population figures are based on the conservative assumption that all new housing units will be occupied. The 2005 population and households estimate was derived using a combination of 2006 RPAD and Census 2000 data. The number of households was derived from 2006 RPAD data. Residential units built after 2000 were totaled for the ½-mile study area, then the corresponding census tract vacancy rates from Census 2000 were applied. Each residential unit was considered a "household" for analysis purposes. Average household size figures for each corresponding census tract in 2000 were obtained from the Census Bureau, then multiplied by the number of households. These totals were combined to create the ½-mile population estimate.						
Sources:	Census 2000, RPAD.						

As detailed in the table, the 192 proposed new housing units expected to be completed by 2016 will only increase households and population by 1.7 percent over current estimates, far below the average population and household increases between 1990 and 2000. The only area that will experience a noticeable increase is the Travis/Chelsea subarea, where the 100 new households represent a 10.7 percent increase over 2005 numbers. However, with a small number of households currently within the subarea, any significant development would create a noticeable increase. To the south of the project site, the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea will experience only a 1.4 percent increase, and the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea to the east will experience no increase by 2016 based on proposed residential development. This is due largely to the declining supply of land available for residential development.

Business and Employment

There are four known commercial and public works development projects planned for the study area. Three of the projects are located in the Travis/Chelsea subarea and include a 90-room five-story Holiday Inn Express, a 50,000 square foot LA Fitness center, and a New York City Department of Sanitation Waste Transfer Station. The fourth project, a 21,866-square-foot expansion of the Costco along Richmond Avenue, is in the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea. Combined, these projects would create an estimated 138 new jobs¹ in the study area, a less than 1 percent increase by 2016. The Travis/Chelsea subarea would gain the bulk of this employment (114 jobs), and the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea would gain 24 jobs.

¹ Job estimates are based on the following assumptions: The Costco retail space expansion would bring one worker for every 900 square feet of additional space, for a total of 24 employees. The Holiday Express, with 90 rooms, would add 1 employee for every 2.67 rooms for 34 total employees, the LA Fitness facility with 50,000 square feet would add 1 employee per 1,500 square feet of space for 33 total employees, and according to the New York City Department of Sanitation, the waste transfer facility would add 47 employees.

2036

STUDY AREA

As detailed in Chapter 2, “Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy,” no residential or commercial projects are currently planned within the ½-mile study area between 2016 and 2036. Additionally, large-scale residential and commercial projects are unlikely due to existing low-density residential zoning surrounding much of the project site, and the lack of available vacant residential or commercial land in the subareas. Thus, absent a zoning change, no major new growth in housing or population is expected in the study area by 2036.

Specifically, land in the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea is zoned primarily for low-density residential use, the majority of which has already been developed in recent years. The Heartland Village/New Springville subarea is already home to one of the largest concentrations of retail and office space in the borough, and though some additional development could occur, it would be unlikely to add significant employment to the subarea. And while additional infill residential development could occur in the Travis/Chelsea subarea, a sizeable increase in residential units is unlikely since most of the surrounding vacant land is zoned for manufacturing uses which prohibits housing. Commercial and retail development could also occur, however because land is currently zoned for manufacturing, this would require special permits or a zoning change. Additionally, with a citywide trend of decreasing manufacturing use, additional development is not anticipated and employment is not expected to change significantly.

E. THE FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT: 2016 AND 2036

INTRODUCTION

The number of employees working at the project site would increase substantially by 2016 and 2036 with the proposed project. By 2036, approximately 265 workers would be employed full-time at the park, including all recreational, educational and cultural facility employment¹. Of the full-time staff, 53 would be park enforcement patrol officers that would provide 24-hour coverage. Seasonal staff would provide an estimated 220 additional positions, of which 11 would be park enforcement patrol officers that would provide 24-hour coverage. The remaining employment would be found in park-related retail, restaurant and banquet facilities located in the Creek Landing and Point areas of the park. This is expected to generate approximately 491 additional private sector related jobs. Overall, the proposed project would increase total study area employment by approximately 6.1 percent over anticipated conditions in the future without the proposed project.

2016

The objective of this section is to determine whether significant direct or indirect adverse socioeconomic impacts would occur as a result of the proposed project. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, significant impacts can occur if a proposed project: leads to the direct displacement of residents such that the character of the neighborhood would be substantially altered; leads to the displacement of substantial numbers of businesses or employees, or displaces a business that plays a critical role in the community; results in substantial new

¹ Employment estimate provided by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

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development that is markedly different from existing uses in a neighborhood; affects conditions in the real estate market not only on the site anticipated to be developed, but in a larger area; or adversely affects economic conditions in a specific industry.

The following analysis addresses these potential impacts as they relate, accordingly, to Direct or Indirect Residential Displacement, Direct or Indirect Business Displacement, or Adverse Effects of Specific Industries.

DIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT

Direct residential displacement is the involuntary displacement of residents from the site of, or a site directly affected by, a proposed action. Because there is no existing or planned residential use on the project site, direct residential displacement will not occur as a result of the proposed project.

DIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT

Direct business displacement is the involuntary displacement of businesses from the site of, or a site directly affected by, a proposed action. There were potentially two businesses affected by the proposed park mapping. One is a nursery (flower) business and the other is a trailer rental company. Although the park mapping is not yet in place, the flower business has already chosen to vacate. The trailer rental business is adjacent to an existing gas station and leases the parcel from the City to provide access to the site from Arthur Kill Road. The City will be excluding this parcel from the proposed park mapping so that the business may retain its month-to-month lease. Thus, the proposed project would not have any significant adverse impacts on existing businesses under CEQR or SEQR. With respect to DSNY employees, because full closure of the landfill will occur in the future without proposal, no employment will exist on the project site, therefore direct business displacement of DSNY employees would not occur as a result of the proposed project.

INDIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT

Potential for indirect displacement of a residential population exists when a proposed action would increase property values and thus rents throughout the study area, making it difficult for some of the existing residents to afford their homes. Typically, there may be potential for indirect residential displacement when an action meets one of more of the following tests:

1. Would the Proposed Actions add a substantial new population with different socioeconomic characteristics compared to the size and character of the existing population?

The proposed project would create no new housing units, therefore indirect residential displacement would not occur since no new population would be added to alter the size or character of the existing population.

2. Would the Proposed Actions directly displace uses or properties that have had a “blighting” effect on property values in the area?

By 2016, the proposed project, which would create a portion of a 2,200-acre regional park on a former landfill, would not directly displace a use or property that has had a “blighting” influence on property values in the study area. Though landfill conditions may have limited the residential appeal of surrounding communities, the presence of it did not inhibit significant residential or commercial investment or development in the study area.

As detailed above under “Existing Conditions,” population in the ½-mile study area increased by 20 percent between 1990 and 2000, while the landfill was still in operation. The Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge and Travis/Chelsea subareas saw significant population increases (27 and 22 percent, respectively), and the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea saw an 8 percent increase. During the same time period, the number of housing units in the study area also increased by 26 percent. Specifically, the number of housing units increased by 38 percent in the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea, 20 percent in Travis/Chelsea subarea, and 14 percent in the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea. Residential development would not be expected in areas surrounding a site that had a “blighting” influence.

In 2000, median household incomes in the three subareas indicated the study area to be relatively affluent compared with Staten Island and the City as a whole. Median income in the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea was \$65,161 in 2000, more than \$10,000 higher than that of Staten Island, and almost \$27,000 more than the City as a whole. Median income in 2000 for Heartland Village/New Springville was \$55,262, slightly higher than Staten Island’s \$55,039, but almost \$17,000 higher than the City as a whole. And the Travis/Chelsea subarea saw a 22 percent increase in median income between 1990 and 2000, whereas the City and borough, respectively, saw decreases of 7 and 5 percent. Additionally, rates of poverty in all three areas (4 to 8 percent) were lower than the borough (10 percent) and significantly lower than the city (21 percent).

The study area experienced a strong rental market while the landfill was in operation. All three subareas had lower vacancy rates and higher median contract rents compared with Staten Island and the City as a whole. Specifically, median contract rents in the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea were 8 percent higher than that of Staten Island and 9 percent higher than the New York City as a whole; 19 percent and 21 percent higher, respectively, in the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea; and 13 percent and 14 percent higher, respectively, in the Travis/Chelsea subarea.

Discussions with Staten Island real estate brokers indicated that though proximity to the project site did contribute to lower housing and land prices when the landfill was in operation, proximity has not been an issue at all since its closure in 2001. Brokers indicated home prices have increased, keeping pace with the rest of Staten Island’s booming real estate market. New construction has occurred in all three subareas, particularly in the Travis/Chelsea subarea, which saw a 20 percent increase in the number of residential units since the landfill ceased operation in 2001.

Additionally, rental rates in all three subareas exceed median rents of Staten Island. Rental information obtained from the New York City Rent Guidelines Board estimated the median monthly rent for market-rate/unregulated units on Staten Island in Spring of 2005 was \$800 for a 1-bedroom apartment, \$1,100 for a two-bedroom apartment, and \$1,375 for a three-bedroom apartment. As highlighted in the Table 3-10, real estate listings within the ½-mile study area indicate rents within the three subareas are at or above the median rents published. These data do not indicate the project site acts as a “blighting influence” on the subareas.

In conclusion, population and housing growth, higher median contract rents and incomes, and low rates of poverty in all three subareas, indicate the project site in its current state is not acting as a “blighting” influence on the surrounding study area.

**Table 3-10
Subarea Apartment Listings, January 2006**

	Number of Bedrooms	Monthly Rent
Subarea 1: Rossville/Arden Heights/New Springville		
Rossville	1	\$900
Arden Heights	1	1,000
Rossville	2	1,250
Rossville	2	1,250
Arden Heights	3	1,700
Rossville	3	1,850
Subarea 2: Heartland Village/New Springville		
New Springville	1	800
New Springville	1	800
Heartland Village	1	850
Heartland Village	1	975
New Springville	1	1,100
Heartland Village	1	1,150
Heartland Village	1	1,150
Heartland Village	2	1,500
Heartland Village	3	1,800
Subarea 3: Travis/Chelsea		
Travis	1	800
Travis	1	900
Travis	1	1,275
Travis	3	1,700
Sources: Craigslist.org, SILive.com, January 2007.		

3. *Would the proposed actions directly displace enough of one or more components of the population to alter the socioeconomic composition of the study area?*

The proposed project would create no new residential units. Therefore no new population would be introduced to directly displace any component of the population.

4. *Would the Proposed Actions introduce a substantial amount of a more costly type of housing compared to existing housing and housing expected to be built in the study area by the time the program is developed?*

As discussed previously, the proposed project would not introduce any type of residential housing to the study area.

5. *Would the Proposed Actions introduce a “critical mass” of non-residential uses, such that the surrounding area becomes more attractive as a residential neighborhood complex?*

By 2016, the proposed project would create a portion of the 2,200-acre regional park on a site that is currently a closed landfill, introducing a substantial amount on non-residential use to the study area. However the park would not represent a new use in the study area, and would not result in substantial upward pressure on property values. The study area currently contains large areas of passive and active park and recreational space that already add to its attractiveness as a residential complex. The Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea is home to the South Shore Golf Course, Arden Woods and LaTourette Park. These facilities include walking trails,

sports fields, and other recreational activities. The Heartland Village/New Springville subarea is bordered by LaTourette Park, Willowbrook Park, and William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge, which offer both active and passive recreational uses. And the Travis/Chelsea subarea contains a local park (Schmul Park), a baseball facility at the intersection of Victory and Travis Boulevards, and abuts the William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge. Therefore, while the proposed project would create a sizeable addition of parkland to the areas, it would not introduce a new use to any of the subareas.

Parkland, whether new or additional, is both a physical and visual amenity that can add to the attractiveness of a residential neighborhood, which in turn can affect property values. However, conversations with local brokers indicate that property values have already increased in the study area since the landfill closed in 2001, and brokers felt that additional property value increases in response to the proposed project would be modest.

These modest increases in residential property values could lead to moderate increases in rental rates in the study area. However, household income data, poverty data and contract rents indicate that there is not a substantial vulnerable population living in the study area susceptible to indirect residential displacement. Nearly three-quarters of households in the study area are in owner-occupied units, and are therefore not vulnerable to indirect residential displacement. The 27 percent of study area residents in renter-occupied units are predominantly found in market rate apartments, and as discussed above, median contract rents in all three subareas exceeded both Staten Island and the City as a whole in 2000. Combined with higher median household incomes and low poverty rates, it is likely the majority of renters could sustain moderate increases in rent. Therefore, indirect residential displacement would not occur as a result of the proposed project.

In summary, while the proposed project could further increase the desirability of the study area as a residential complex, it would not create a “critical mass” of non-residential uses that would lead to indirect residential displacement.

6. Would the Proposed Actions introduce a land use that could have a similar indirect effect if it is large enough, prominent enough, or combines with other like uses to create a critical mass large enough to offset positive trends in the study area, to impede efforts to attract investment to the area, or to create a climate for disinvestment?

As described above, the three subareas around the project site have experienced considerable residential growth and investment over the last 15 years. Since park uses tend to add appeal, this positive trend will likely continue. The proposed project is therefore unlikely to offset positive trends or impede efforts to attract new investment to the area, and will not result in indirect residential displacement.

The above analysis indicates that a substantial population at risk of indirect residential displacement is unlikely to be living within the study area, therefore the proposed project would not lead to a change in the overall neighborhood character within the three subareas, and would not result in a significant adverse impact.

INDIRECT BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONAL DISPLACEMENT

Indirect displacement of businesses or institutions may occur if a proposed action increases property values and thus rents throughout the study area, making it difficult for some categories of businesses to remain in that area. Typically, the potential for indirect business or institutional displacement exists when an action meets one of more of the following tests.

1. Would the Proposed Actions introduce enough of a new economic activity to alter existing economic patterns?

The proposed project would not introduce new forms of economic activity to the study area. With numerous park and recreational facilities and a sizeable retail sector already present in the study area, economic activity brought about from park-related uses (including proposed park-specific educational and cultural uses), is unlikely to alter existing economic patterns.

2. Would the Proposed Actions add to the concentration of a particular sector of the local economy to alter or accelerate an ongoing trend to alter existing economic patterns?

The proposed project would not add to the concentration of a particular sector of the local economy enough to alter or accelerate an ongoing trend to alter existing patterns. Economic activity generated by the park would not attract additional parks and their associated employment to the study area, nor would the approximately 200,000 square feet of park-related retail and restaurant uses alter existing retail trends or patterns. As described in Chapter 2 “Project Description,” this retail and restaurant space is intended to be park-related, and would be located in central portions of the park (Creek Landing, The Point), more than a ½ mile from existing subarea retail concentrations, including Richmond Avenue. Furthermore, according to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, projects that would introduce less than 200,000 square feet of new commercial space to an area are not likely to affect broader economic trends or result in significant adverse impacts.

3. Would the Proposed Actions displace uses or properties that have had a “blighting” effect on commercial property values in the area, leading to rises in commercial rents?

As described under the analysis of indirect residential displacement, the proposed project would not displace uses or properties that currently or have had a blighting effect on property values in the area.

According to the March 2005 State of New York Comptroller’s “Staten Island: Economic Development and the State of the Borough Economy” report¹, Staten Island zip code 10314 contains more jobs than any other area on Staten Island, with the highest employment found in the retail sector. This zip code is home to the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea which contains Richmond Avenue, a major retail corridor on Staten Island, and the Travis/Chelsea subarea which contains a large power plant and abuts the Staten Island Corporate Park.

According to Salmon Realty, commercial office and retail rents along Richmond Avenue are among the highest on Staten Island. Retail and restaurant rents along the avenue range from \$30 per square foot (psf) to \$45 psf, considerably higher than other nearby retail areas such as Victory Boulevard and Forest Avenue (\$20 psf to \$30 psf), and comparable to Hylan Boulevard on the east side of the island. Rents at the Staten Island Mall are higher. Commercial office rents along Richmond Avenue range from \$20 psf to \$30 psf, comparable with office rates throughout Staten Island. Additionally, according to Salmon Realty, vacant commercial property sale prices in the vicinity of the project site have tripled in the last five years, currently selling at approximately \$100 psf. These data indicate that the project site has not had a “blighting” influence on the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea.

¹ “Staten Island: Economic Development and the State of the Borough Economy.” State of New York Comptroller, Report 14-2005, March 2005. Employment information based on 2003 New York State Department of Labor ES-202 data.

Investment is also occurring in the Travis/Chelsea subarea. As detailed under “The Future Without the Proposed Project,” several commercial projects have been proposed in the Travis/Chelsea subarea, including an LA Fitness facility and a Holiday Inn Express hotel. New residential uses are also proposed for the subarea.

Only a small percentage of land in the Rossville/Arden Heights/Greenridge subarea is zoned for commercial or industrial development. Where it is permitted, primarily near the intersection of Richmond Avenue and Arthur Kill Road, several large shopping centers were constructed during the years when the landfill was operational. Like the Travis/Chelsea subarea, residential uses are also proposed for the study area.

In summary, existing and planned commercial development in the three subareas, upward trends in commercial sale prices, and high commercial rental rates indicate that the project site does not have a “blighting” influence on commercial property values in the study area.

4. Would the Proposed Actions directly displace uses of any type that directly support businesses in the Study Area or bring people to the area that form a customer base for local businesses?

As described under “The Future Without the Proposed Project,” without the proposed project, the project site would remain vacant open space after the full closure of the former landfill, with a trailer rental business and parking area on a small portion of the property.

5. Would the Proposed Actions directly or indirectly displace residents, workers or visitors who form the customer base of existing businesses in the study area?

There are no residential uses located on the project site and all current employment associated with the landfill closure will be gone in the future without the project. There were potentially two businesses affected by the proposed park mapping. One is a nursery (flower) business and the other is a trailer rental company. Although the park mapping is not yet in place, the flower business has already chosen to vacate. The trailer rental business is adjacent to an existing gas station and leases the parcel from the City to provide access to the site from Arthur Kill Road. The City will be excluding this parcel from the park mapping so that the business may retain its month-to-month lease.

Thus, the proposed project would not have any significant adverse impacts on existing businesses under CEQR or SEQR. In addition, as a closed landfill, the project site does not currently attract visitors, and as described earlier, the proposed project is not expected to lead to indirect displacement of residents in the study area. With respect to DSNY employees, because full closure of the landfill will occur in the future without proposal, no DSNY employment will exist on the project site, therefore direct business displacement of DSNY employees would not occur as a result of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not displace residents, workers, or visitors who form the customer base of existing businesses in the study area.

6. Would the Proposed Actions introduce a land use that could have a similar indirect effect, through the lowering of property values if it is large enough or prominent enough or combines with other like uses to create a critical mass large enough to offset positive trends in the study area, to impede efforts to attract investment to the area, or to create a climate of disinvestment?

As described above, the proposed project would create a regional park on a former landfill. This transformation would represent an added amenity to the study area, which already contains the largest concentration of employment on Staten Island, and commands among the highest retail

Fresh Kills Park GEIS

and office rents in the borough. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a climate of disinvestment or impede efforts to attract new investment to the area.

Although park-generated and park-diverted traffic could impede efforts to attract investment to the area, preliminary analysis suggests this as unlikely. The majority of traffic is anticipated to access the park via major roadways such as the West Shore Expressway. Additionally, new park roadways with direct access to the expressway are likely to divert traffic from existing congested routes. However, until a full traffic analysis is performed, the extent of impacts cannot be determined.

Summary

The above analysis indicates that the proposed project would not displace a use that has had a “blighting” influence on the study area, nor introduce an economic activity in any sector large enough to alter or accelerate existing patterns. Additionally, residents, workers, or visitors that form the customer base for existing businesses would not be directly or indirectly displaced. Therefore, the proposed project would not lead to a change in the overall economic character within the three subareas, and would not result in a significant adverse impact.

ADVERSE EFFECTS ON SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES

According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, a significant adverse impact may occur if an action would measurably diminish the viability of a specific industry that has substantial economic value to the City’s economy. An example as cited in the *CEQR Technical Manual* would be new regulations that prohibit or restrict the use of certain processes that are critical to certain industries. The *CEQR Technical Manual* indicates that a more detailed examination is appropriate if the following considerations cannot be answered with “no adverse effects.” As described in greater detail below, the proposed project would clearly not have any significant adverse effects on any specific industry.

1. Would the Proposed Actions significantly affect business conditions in any industry or any category of businesses within or outside the study area?

The proposed project would not introduce an economic activity to the study area that is large enough to affect existing trends or patterns, or add a significant concentration to any particular sector. Furthermore, it would not directly or indirectly displace residents, workers or visitors who form the customer base of existing businesses in the area. Therefore, the proposed project would not affect business conditions in any specific industry or business category within or outside the study area.

2. Would the Proposed Actions indirectly substantially reduce employment or impact the economic viability in the industry or category of businesses?

There were potentially two businesses affected by the proposed park mapping. One is a nursery (flower) business and the other is a trailer rental company. Although the park mapping is not yet in place, the flower business has already chosen to vacate. The trailer rental business is adjacent to an existing gas station and leases the parcel from the City to provide access to the site from Arthur Kill Road. The City will be excluding this parcel from the park mapping so that the business may retain its month-to-month lease. Thus, the proposed project would not have any significant adverse impacts on existing businesses under CEQR or SEQR.

2036

Between 2016 and 2036, the proposed project would see additional park and park-related uses open throughout the project site. These uses include additional active and passive recreational areas, park-related retail and restaurant facilities, and educational and cultural amenities. The following analysis addresses the potential for the full project development program to result in significant socioeconomic impacts in the study area.

DIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT

Direct residential displacement is the involuntary displacement of residents from the site of, or a site directly affected by, a proposed action. Because there is no existing or planned residential use on the project site, direct residential displacement will not occur as a result of the proposed project.

DIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT

There were potentially two businesses affected by the proposed park mapping. One is a nursery (flower) business and the other is a trailer rental company. Although the park mapping is not yet in place, the flower business has already chosen to vacate. The trailer rental business is adjacent to an existing gas station and leases the parcel from the City to provide access to the site from Arthur Kill Road. The City will be excluding this parcel from the park mapping so that the business may retain its month-to-month lease. Thus, the proposed project would not have any significant adverse impacts on existing businesses under CEQR or SEQR.

INDIRECT RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT

Full development (or build-out) of the proposed project would not result in the indirect displacement of study area residents. The proposed project would not create housing units; therefore no new population would be added to alter the size or character of the existing population in the study area. As detailed in “The Future Without the Proposed Project: 2016 and 2036,” above, the proposed project would not displace a use that has had a “blighting” effect on surrounding areas as those areas have seen substantial residential investment even during the period of active landfill operations. Additionally, the proposed project would not create a “critical mass” of non-residential uses that would make it a significantly more attractive neighborhood complex. The study area is already home to abundant park and open space such that the additional recreational space and other recreation-oriented uses would not be expected to significantly affect property values. Even if moderate rent increases were to occur, high household incomes and contract rents in all three subareas suggest that renters would be able to afford these increases. Therefore, with no population vulnerable to indirect residential displacement identified, the proposed project would not lead to a change in the overall neighborhood character within the study area, and would not result in a significant adverse impact.

INDIRECT BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT

The proposed project, which would create a 2,163-acre regional park by 2036, would not result in the indirect displacement of study area businesses. Between 2016 and 2036, the proposed project would add an unspecified amount of park-related retail, restaurant, educational, and cultural facilities. However, like in the 2016 Build year, these do not represent new uses to the study area. Park and recreational space is found in each of the study subareas, as are retail and

restaurant uses, particularly along Richmond Avenue in the Heartland Village/New Springville subarea. The proposed project would not displace a use that has had a “blighting” influence on the study area. Local brokers indicate that retail and office rents in the study area are among the highest in the borough, and property values for vacant commercial land near the project site have tripled in the last five years. The estimated 375 total employees generated by the proposed project by 2036 would not significantly affect business conditions in the local economy, and the proposed project would not directly or indirectly displace the customer base of any existing businesses. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact on the socioeconomic conditions of the study area.

F. CONCLUSIONS

As described in greater detail below, the analysis concludes that the proposed project would not result, either directly or indirectly, in a significant adverse socioeconomic impact. Because there is no existing or planned residential use on the project site, direct residential displacement would not occur as a result of the proposed project, nor would the proposed project result in the indirect displacement of residents. In addition, because full closure of the landfill would occur in the future without the proposed project, no private employment would exist on the project site. Therefore, there would be no significant adverse impacts as defined under CEQR and SEQR with respect to direct business displacement as a result of the proposed project. The proposed project also would not displace any special or unique manufacturing operations or alter existing economic patterns. For all these reasons, it is concluded that the proposed project would not adversely impact socioeconomic conditions. *