

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter relies on the analysis from the *Fresh Kills Park Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS)* and summarizes the conclusions drawn from that analysis. No additional analysis was warranted for this SEIS as it pertains to Chapter 17, “Transit and Pedestrians.”

The proposed Fresh Kills Park would be located in an area served by 14 local bus routes, a number of which provide both local and express service and connections with the Staten Island Railway stop at Eltingville. Based on the travel demand estimates detailed in Chapter 16, “Traffic and Parking,” the proposed park would generate fewer than 200 transit users during any peak period. Therefore, based strictly on the guidelines of the *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, a detailed transit and pedestrian analysis is not required. However, since the proposed project is a large park that would serve the local community, including pedestrian and bicycle connections, and since it is an objective of the proposed park to expand local opportunities for transit use and alternative modes of travel for reaching the park, including running, walking, biking, and ferries, a more expanded qualitative analysis of transit and pedestrian conditions is provided in this chapter than what otherwise is required under CEQR.

## **B. METHODOLOGY**

As stated above, since the majority of trips to and from the project site are anticipated to be vehicle trips and because the area surrounding the project site is characterized by low pedestrian activity, a quantified assessment of existing pedestrian facilities is not necessary. However, this chapter includes an expanded qualitative transit assessment and a general description of pedestrian facilities in the study area.

The analysis was expanded to recognize that the proposed park is expected to be a major recreational and tourist attraction and that local access for pedestrians, bikers, joggers, and regional access for tourists, for example, is an important element in the park plan. It is also an objective of the park planners to encourage transit and alternative modes of transportation to the site for the purposes of providing more sustainable modes of travel, to reduce local vehicle traffic, to reduce anticipated vehicle traffic within the park, and to encourage and facilitate park use that might otherwise be constrained by traffic and parking availability through mass transit. Therefore, the steps in this analysis included:

- Projecting pedestrian, bike, and walk trips based on the projects trip generation rates;
- Reviewing the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) bicycle routes proposals for this area of Staten Island;
- Conducting a field survey of local sidewalk conditions in the area, particularly in the Travis neighborhood and the pedestrian corridors that would provide access to the proposed park;

- Examining the pedestrian conditions along these corridors and the major connections to the proposed park;
- Providing an examination of pedestrian safety for the major intersections around the park;
- Meeting with Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA)/New York City Transit (NYCT) to review local bus routes and discuss opportunities for expanded transit for the proposed park in the 2016 and 2036 analysis years; and
- Reviewing proposed bus, borough rapid transit and mass transit linkages proposed for Staten Island that could affect future mass transit demand.

### C. CONCLUSIONS

In total, the FGEIS concluded that the proposed park would generate fewer than 200 peak hour transit, walk, and bicycle trips during the weekday and weekend conditions in the 2016 and 2036 future years. This is due to the fact that transportation trips on Staten Island are primarily vehicular trips (see Chapter 16, “Traffic and Parking”). Therefore, to provide a conservative traffic analysis, a 90 percent auto share was assumed for trip generation estimates. As a result, the number of pedestrian and transit trips generated by the park are below the *CEQR Technical Manual* recommended threshold of 200 peak hour trips for undertaking quantified analyses. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed project would not adversely impact the pedestrian and transit conditions in the study area.

Given the relatively low volume of transit users and the numerous bus routes near the proposed park, the proposed project would not create a noticeable capacity constraint on any individual bus route. In addition, travel demand estimates indicate that a quantitative analysis of potential impacts on the Staten Island Railway is not warranted. This determination is based on the general thresholds identified by MTA/NYCT, according to which if the proposed project results in less than 200 peak hour rail or bus transit riders, detailed transit analysis is not warranted as the project is considered unlikely to create a significant transit impact.

Currently, the proposed Fresh Kills Park site is not directly served by NYCT existing bus routes; however, there are several existing NYCT bus routes that serve its periphery, as well as regional service along the West Shore Expressway (weekday service) and access to local park and rides (both existing and proposed). In the future with the proposed park, NYCT could either expand bus services and routes to accommodate the park generated transit demand (especially during the weekend summer months) or would amend the existing bus routes to include new stops within the park and along its exterior boundaries. It is anticipated by park planners that expanding the availability of bus transit in the future conditions could potentially reduce the number of project generated auto trips by shifting the patrons to mass transit. This could, over time, reduce vehicle trips and improve transit use at the local (boroughwide), citywide, and regional levels. Reduced traffic would also reduce demands on parking and enhance the overall park experience while potentially increasing park use through transit arrivals. Therefore, DPR would continue to coordinate with MTA/NYCT for the purposes of providing transit service to the park.

The proposed project would provide new pedestrian access points to the park on Richmond Avenue, Arthur Kill Road, Wild Avenue, Pearson Street, and Melvin Avenue. These pedestrian connections would provide new pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, crosswalks and corners) along major streets where these facilities do not currently exist, and would also improve the existing pedestrian facilities on Richmond Avenue intersections with Forest Hill Road, Yukon Avenue, and Richmond Hill Road by providing wider high-visibility crosswalks and sidewalks along the

park periphery. Providing sidewalks on the park side of Arthur Kill Road is a project that would need to be coordinated with NYCDOT as part of the NYCDOT Arthur Kill Road improvement project. Improving local pedestrian options along Arthur Kill Road would be a positive enhancement to the proposed park and would improve walk trip connections between the park and the local Arden Heights neighborhood. These measures would enhance pedestrian safety at all the major access and egress points to-and-from the park along Arthur Kill Road. With respect to bicycle access, DPR and NYCDOT have a program for expanding local bike access. One proposed project is the New Springville Greenway that would link the William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge on the north with LaTourette Park to the southeast via Richmond Avenue. It is also an objective of the proposed park to expand cycling opportunities within and through the park and to be a bike destination that would also advance biking as an alternative mode of travel to the park. Project elements would expand and improve local biking opportunities would therefore be a positive impact of the proposed park. There is also a City study for a south shore bikeway that would connect up along Arthur Kill Road. This could also produce a regional connection between the site, south Staten Island and the Greenbelt, creating critical linkages in the borough-wide bikeway system, long planned but never implemented. Based on the vehicle-pedestrian accident data obtained from New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), currently there are no high vehicle-pedestrian accident locations in the study area, and the proposed project is not expected to adversely impact the pedestrian safety in the study area.

These conclusions also apply to the SEIS.

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