

**A. INTRODUCTION**

Neighborhood character is an amalgam of the many factors that combine to give an area its distinctive personality. These components include land use, scale, and type of development; historic features; patterns and volumes of traffic; noise levels; and other physical or social characteristics that help define a community. Not all of these elements affect neighborhood character in all cases; a neighborhood usually draws its distinctive character from a few determining elements.

According to the 2001 *New York City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, an assessment of neighborhood character is generally needed when a proposed project or action would exceed thresholds in any one of the following areas of technical analysis: land use, urban design, visual resources, historic resources, socioeconomic conditions, traffic, or noise. An assessment is also appropriate when the proposal would have moderate effects on several of the aforementioned areas. Potential effects on neighborhood character may include:

- *Land Use:* When a proposed project would introduce a large new or potentially incompatible land use; or conflict with land use policy or other public plans for the area; or result in significant land use impacts. The proposed project would create new parkland and would not have a negative impact on land use, zoning, or public policy.
- *Urban Design and Visual Resources:* Urban design changes have the potential to impact neighborhood character by introducing substantially different buildings in form, size, scale, or arrangement. Urban design changes may also alter block forms, street patterns, or street hierarchies as well as streetscape elements such as streetwalls, landscaping, curb cuts, and loading docks. Visual resource changes have the potential to affect neighborhood character by directly changing visual features, such as unique and important public view corridors and vistas, or public visual access to such features. The proposed project would have a positive urban design impact in that it would substantially re-landscape Fresh Kills Landfill. It would also introduce new roadways.
- *Historic Resources:* When an action would result in substantial direct changes to a historic resource or substantial changes to public views of a resource, or when a historic resources analysis identifies a significant impact in this category, there is a potential for neighborhood character impacts. The proposed project would not adversely impact any historic architectural resources.
- *Socioeconomic Conditions:* Changes in socioeconomic conditions have the potential to affect neighborhood character when they result in substantial direct or indirect displacement or addition of population, employment, or businesses; or substantial differences in population or employment density. There is no direct or indirect displacement of residences or businesses with the proposed project, nor is there any impact on socioeconomic resources.

- *Traffic and Pedestrians*: Changes in traffic and pedestrian conditions can affect neighborhood character in a number of ways. For traffic to have an effect on neighborhood character, it must be a contributing element in the character of the neighborhood, and it must change substantially as a result of the proposed project. According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, substantial traffic changes can include: changes in level of service (LOS) to C or below; change in traffic patterns; change in roadway classifications; change in vehicle mixes; substantial increases in traffic volumes on residential streets; or significant traffic impacts, as identified in that technical analysis. Regarding pedestrians, when a proposed action would result in substantially different pedestrian activity and circulation, it has the potential to affect neighborhood character. The proposed project would create new roads through the project site and would generate traffic that would use local neighborhood roads. Thus, a focus of the neighborhood character assessment will be traffic.
- *Noise*: According to the *CEQR Technical Manual*, for a proposed project to affect neighborhood character with respect to noise, it would need to result in a significant adverse noise impact and a change in acceptability category. This neighborhood character assessment would then consider potential changes local neighborhood noise levels that may occur as a result of changes in traffic conditions.

This chapter's impact analysis focuses primarily on potential changes to neighborhood character in the technical areas cited above. The study area surrounding the project site, which is ½-mile from the project site perimeter, includes the Staten Island neighborhoods of Travis, Chelsea, Heartland Village, New Springville, Rossville, Arden Heights, and Greenridge (see Figure 9-1).

In sum, the proposed project would introduce a large park that would provide recreational opportunities and public access to the waterfront on the site of Fresh Kills Landfill. The new park would alter the project site's land use and urban design characteristics and result in increases in traffic, pedestrian activity, and noise levels. However, these changes overall would not be significantly adverse with respect to neighborhood character; to the contrary, the proposed project is expected to have a positive effect on neighborhood character. The project site, which is currently in the process of landfill closure and precludes public access to both the site and the waterfront, would be enlivened with recreational amenities that would draw visitors to the area. The character of the surrounding neighborhoods would be improved by the new recreational opportunities and waterfront access that would be provided by the proposed park.

## **B. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The project site is currently a closed City landfill undergoing final closure by the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY). It fronts the Arthur Kill waterfront to the west and Richmond Avenue to the east, and is bisected by the West Shore Expressway, a major north-south state highway extending along the west shore of Staten Island. To the north is the William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge, and the southern boundary is generally defined by Arthur Kill Road. To the east is the large Staten Island Mall and LaTourette Park. There is currently no public access to the waterfront from any portion of the project site. The project site currently houses no residents and there are no businesses operating on the project site. DSNY maintains operations and approximately 200 employees on the site to oversee landfill closure and post-closure activities. Final closure construction activities are underway at Landfill Sections 6/7 and 1/9.

One architectural resource, the New York City Landmark (NYCL) Sleight Family Cemetery, a.k.a., Blazing Star Burial Ground, was identified on the project site. No additional previously identified architectural resources are located in the study area; however, there are nine potential

architectural resources which appear to meet the State/National Register (S/NR) eligibility criteria identified in the study area (see Chapter 7, “Historic Resources” for further information.) Overall, however, the study area is not characterized by a concentration of historic resources and does not contain an historic district. While the Travis neighborhood is one of the older Staten Island neighborhoods, the developments to the east and south, including the Staten Island Mall and the attached and detached two-family and single-family homes, were constructed in the 1960s or later.

In addition to residential and retail uses, the study area is characterized by open space (City parks and wildlife preserves), and commercial, residential, and industrial uses. In total, the study area includes approximately 365 acres of parkland. Thus, the neighborhood as a whole has good access to local open spaces which includes passive natural areas, such as William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge and Arden Heights Woods Park, and active recreational spaces, such as Schmul Park and the South Shore Golf Course.

The northern portion of the project site is bordered by the William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge and the residential community of Travis, which is a low-density residential neighborhood with a mix of institutional and commercial uses along Victory Boulevard. There are also a number of vacant lots in this area. On the eastern portion of Travis is Schmul Park, an 8.48-acre open space that provides active play areas for the local community. Schmul Park connects on the east with the project site. North of Travis is the Staten Island neighborhood of Chelsea, and the neighborhood of Heartland Village is just northeast of the wildlife refuge. These residential neighborhoods are a mix of mostly low-density residences including attached and semi-attached homes, as well as single-family homes.

North of the project site along the waterfront of the Arthur Kill is industrial land, much of which is vacant or underused. Also north of the project site, across Little Fresh Kill, is the site of the Staten Island Waste Transfer Station.

To the south, the project site is framed by Arthur Kill Road, which is a major vehicular route across Staten Island and connects Historic Richmondtown with Totenville on the west. South of the road are the Arden Heights and Greenridge residential neighborhoods as well as Arden Heights Woods Park. Arden Heights and Greenridge are almost entirely low-density residential uses (detached and attached units). There are limited commercial uses that support the local neighborhood. Also south of Arthur Kill Road is the 185-acre Arden Heights Woods Park. The park contains several walking trails, but its principal purpose is as a natural area. Along Arthur Kill Road there are a number of outparcels that include institutional uses, a small commercial mall, and a gas station/warehouse complex. North of the gas station is the site of the future Owl Hollow park soccer fields now under construction.

To the east, the site is bounded by Richmond Avenue, a very heavily traveled road corridor that runs north/south. Across Richmond Avenue from the project site is the Staten Island Mall, a large regional shopping mall and one of the largest retail centers on Staten Island. Farther east, the land use patterns turn again into a residential community and open space. Along the west side of Richmond Avenue is an outparcel of light industrial/commercial uses as well as DSNY’s District 2 garage and a New York City Police Department (NYPD) substation. To the south of the Mall is the 500-acre LaTourette Park, which offers hiking, golf, softball, and other active and passive recreational activities. Also in this area is the former Brookfield Landfill; the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) is currently performing a remediation of this landfill property, which will eventually become a park.

The southern portion of the study area also includes the South Shore Public Golf Course, as well as a portion of the residential neighborhood of Rossville.

Roads in the study area consist of major arterials and local streets, as well as a segment of the West Shore Expressway (Route 440), extending from Woodrow Road to Victory Boulevard. The major roadway corridors that comprise the study area are the West Shore Expressway, Richmond Avenue, Victory Boulevard, Arthur Kill Road, Travis Avenue, Draper Place, Richmond Hill Road, Drumgoole Road East and West, and Woodrow Road.

In general, pedestrian activity in the area is light and the streets are uninviting to foot or bicycle travel, though there is some limited local foot traffic within the residential neighborhoods.

In terms of CEQR noise exposure guidelines in general, noise levels are moderate to relatively high, which reflects the level of vehicular activity on the local streets.

### **C. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT: 2016 AND 2036**

In the future without the proposed project, it is expected that the project site would continue to primarily be a closed municipal solid waste landfill undergoing post-closure maintenance through the 2016 and 2036 analysis years. It is assumed that without approval of the proposed project and the actions necessary to implement it, the project site and the associated waterfront would remain inaccessible to the public. No other City projects are expected for the project site absent the proposed actions.

Within the study area, the Owl Hollow project would be completed by 2016. This project would improve conditions in the Rossville, Arden Heights, and Greenbridge residential neighborhoods by providing a new open space with four soccer fields and a comfort station for community use. The remaining projects that are planned for construction within the study area by the years 2016 and 2036 would not be expected to result in any substantial changes to the character of the existing neighborhoods. The projects, which consist of roadway improvements, as well as commercial, hotel, residential, and industrial projects, would be consistent with the mixed-use character of the neighborhoods surrounding the project site and are expected to improve local vehicular circulation.

It is expected that traffic volumes in the study area would increase in the future without the proposed project due to new development within the study area as well as the general growth trend in traffic on Staten Island. Pedestrian activity in the area is expected to remain low.

### **D. THE FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

#### **2016**

By 2016, the completed elements of the proposed project would begin to vastly improve the character of the project site and the surrounding neighborhoods. The construction taking place in South Park by 2016 would help to improve the character of the surrounding areas of Arden Heights, Rossville, and Greenbridge by providing active and passive open space on a site that has been a visual blight on these areas for over 50 years and has precluded access to the waterfront.

Park construction would also take place in North Park by 2016. Phase A of the North Park construction would add a neighborhood park to Travis as well as other park elements that would have a positive effect on the character of this area.

In addition, by 2016, a substantial amount of construction and wetland enhancement would be completed in the Confluence, as would the first phase of construction of the proposed park roads and West Shore Expressway connections.

With the proposed project, by 2016, there would be new roadways crossing the Fresh Kills Landfill. The proposed park roadways would be an extension of Staten Island's irregular street pattern into the site and would be comprised of park roads, service roads and new ramp connections with the West Shore Expressway. These roadway improvements would provide new direct vehicular connections with the West Shore Expressway. By 2016 these local connections would extend west from the intersection of Richmond Avenue and Forest Hill Road. This would benefit neighborhood character by improving access to the regional highway which should improve vehicular connections with the rest of Staten Island and the region as a whole while also providing some local traffic relief. The detailed traffic analysis shows that the new park roadway connection at Richmond Avenue and Forest Hill Road (the "Forest Hill Road Connection") would operate satisfactorily with respect to levels of service standards. With this new connection in place by 2016, some improvements would occur at selected intersections along local road corridors over the No Build condition. For example, the new direct connection between Richmond Avenue and the West Shore Expressway would be expected to relieve some traffic congestion on Arthur Kill Road, the current major east-west connector. In addition, the intersections of Richmond Avenue at Yukon Avenue and Richmond Avenue at Drumgoole Road would respectively process approximately 160 and 450 fewer vehicles in the 2016 future conditions with the proposed Forest Hill Road connector, as these vehicles would have the opportunity to use the new park roads.

In addition to providing alternative traffic routes, the proposed park roads would provide a pleasant stretch of public road along a raised topography, providing new vistas and visual access to the waterfront and coastal wetlands. The proposed curvilinear alignment is in keeping with park goals of providing an enjoyable driving experience and spectacular views for local drivers. In the spirit of National Scenic Byways, Fresh Kills Park roads are intended to be an attraction in and of themselves. Views along the proposed roads would be designed such that driving through the park becomes a unique visual experience, with views of dramatic topography and landscapes including William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge, the Green Belt, and Arden Heights Woods. New park roadways would also be accompanied by an attractive landscape buffer along much of their length that would serve as a visual amenity. With the proposed road and pedestrian connections, the proposed park would incorporate what is currently a large block of isolated land into the urban fabric of the local neighborhood. Pedestrian and bike access are also of central importance to the park and over 20 miles of pedestrian and biking trails would benefit the local neighborhood. An extensive, diverse public path system would provide bike paths, paved and unpaved running/walking paths, equestrian trails, and mountain-biking trails, appealing to a variety of park users in the community.

In addition to the park roadways, North Park, South Park and portions of Creek Landing are anticipated to be built by 2016 opening broad expanses of land currently inaccessible to the public, with new wetlands and upland landscapes as well as active recreational facilities such as picnic lawns and soccer fields. The proposed project would also provide access to and enhance the natural waterfronts of Fresh Kills and its tributaries, Main Creek and Richmond Creek.

The Fresh Kills site as it exists today is an immense visual resource for Staten Island, although it is not publicly accessible. Its vast scale, winding creeks and variegated wetlands, along with the surreal presence of large engineered mounds, create an unusual. The enhancement of wetland

and upland habitats would improve not only the environmental conditions at the site, but its visual presentation to the local neighborhood. More importantly from the neighborhood perspective, the proposed project would provide physical and visual access to these areas for the first time, enabling appreciation of stunning panoramic views in all directions.

With the proposed project it is expected that there would be an overall visual improvement at the site. There would be the introduction of flowering wetland vegetation, flowering meadow vegetation, and new woodland. Under the proposed project, large areas currently dominated by invasive common reed would be cleared to create the proposed wetlands. More traditional-looking wetlands with open water, emergent, and edge plantings would be created, with a greater diversity of wetland species and a planted transition zone between the open water and the edge. The wetlands would contain a natural mix of herbaceous emergent, grasses and shrubs to promote habitat complexity.

Large upland areas currently dominated by monocultures of grasslands intended to prevent erosion would be replaced with a diversity of grass species and flowering species. Currently the site is devoid of woodland except for isolated patches of trees; the proposed park would plant thousands of trees and create a thick valuable woodland habitat on site for the first time. A greater diversity of vegetation would provide habitat for more birds and other animals that would support the visual appeal.

The ecological enhancement that is proposed would dramatically improve not just the environmental conditions at the site, but its aesthetics for the community. The creation of attractive open spaces would soften the visual intrusion of the landfill's massive infrastructure on the adjacent neighborhoods.

Overall, the proposed project would be expected to not only enhance neighborhood views of the site with enhanced and enhanced wetlands and woodlands, but views from the top of proposed North and South Parks would be made accessible to the public for the first time since the area was initially used for municipal landfill operations.

The proposed buildings would replace unsightly trailers and manufacturing-type structures. Buildings, industrial uses, and parking lots on the waterfront would be replaced with major new waterfront amenities. The Plant 2 area south of Landfill Section 3/4 would be converted from an underutilized, inaccessible waterfront into a publicly accessible landscaped waterfront with restaurants, sports fields, lawns, boating facilities and cultural attractions. The industrial-like paved and bulkheaded waterfront would be replaced by public waterfront facilities with a multi-purpose market roof, parking and new landscaping. Overall, the proposed project would introduce active uses along the waterfront and greatly enliven the Fresh Kills edge, which is now underutilized and inaccessible. The proposed new buildings are proposed to be low structures—from one to two stories—attractive and in keeping with scale of the local neighborhood. They would be located at the center of the site and largely not visible from outside the park, except from the West Shore Expressway. Upland enhancement would present new landforms for recreational and ecological enhancement.

In addition, existing landfill-related structures that would remain on the project site such as the landfill gas recovery plant, and the leachate treatment plant, would be secured for reasons of safety and security and would be screened by vegetation or other measures that would not be obtrusive to park users. The existing above-ground infrastructure components such as the groundwater and landfill gas monitoring wells, would be retrofitted to be flush with the ground and less visible.

The proposed project would also be expected to draw a large number of pedestrians and cyclists to the area. The increased pedestrian and cyclist activity would not result in significant adverse impacts, as existing sidewalks would continue to operate at acceptable levels of service and new sidewalks and multiuse paths would be constructed. DPR would also coordinate with DOT and NYCT to ensure that pedestrian, cyclist, and transit access to the site is improved along with the proposed park. Increased pedestrian activity would enliven areas of the project site that are lacking in street life.

The proposed Fresh Kills Park would not result in significant adverse noise impacts from increased traffic or stationary noise sources. Although noise levels generated in the new park would be above the CEQR guideline, they would be comparable to noise levels in several other New York City parks, including South Shore Golf Course Park, Arden Heights Woods Park, Latourette Park, and Willowbrook Park, and would not result in significant adverse noise impacts.

In summary, by 2016, the proposed project would begin to greatly improve the neighborhood character of the project site and the surrounding neighborhoods. The proposed project would introduce various elements of a new waterfront park on land that is currently inaccessible to the public. The project site would be enlivened with active land uses that would draw visitors to the area and the surrounding neighborhoods would benefit from the new recreational opportunities offered by the proposed park. No significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character would result from the proposed project by the 2016 Build year.

### **2036**

By 2036, construction of the proposed project would be complete and the character of the project site and surrounding neighborhoods would be vastly improved by the presence of a major new waterfront park with passive and active recreational facilities on the site of Fresh Kills Landfill. The East Park and West Park portions of the park would be completed by 2036, and the remainder of the Confluence would also be fully constructed. The proposed park roads would be complete and operational, as would all parking facilities. Public access to the waterfront would be provided along the Arthur Kill and the Fresh Kills system of creeks, all of which are currently inaccessible to the public. Once completed, the proposed park would offer the public unparalleled access to the water and would also include abundant recreational opportunities. There would be pockets of natural habitat on some of the parkland and on the Isle of Meadows to attract birds and other wildlife. Features and amenities that would be incorporated into the completed park include active recreational facilities (court sports and field sports); water recreation areas for kayaking; a marina; bicycle paths; civic lawns; and opportunities to access the waterfront at sea level. Restaurants, cafes, green markets, and educational and cultural facilities would also add activity to the park.

By 2036, the proposed project would positively affect architectural historic resources by making the Sleight Family Cemetery more visible and accessible to the public. The proposed project would also improve the overall character of the surrounding neighborhoods in the study area by positively redeveloping the landfill and underutilized waterfront. It would dramatically increase access to the waterfront and the amount and quality of open space and recreational opportunities available to residents.

With the proposed project, by 2036, there would be an extension of the local street grid into the site from Richmond Hill Road. This would be in addition to the Forest Hill Road connector which would be in place by 2016. This extension would, in turn, connect with the Central Loop Park Road. There would also be the construction of the Signature Bridge essentially completing

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the Central Loop Park Road. Like 2016, the proposed road improvements would provide new direct vehicular connections with the West Shore Expressway that have never existed. This would benefit neighborhood character by further improving access to the regional highway.

As with 2016, the detailed traffic analysis shows that new park roadway connections at Richmond Avenue at Forest Hill Road and Richmond Hill Road would operate satisfactorily with respect to levels of service standards. With these new connections in place by 2036, some improvements would occur at selected intersections along local road corridors over the No Build condition. The new direct connection between Richmond Avenue and the West Shore Expressway would be expected to relieve some traffic congestion on Arthur Kill Road, the current major east-west connector. Like 2016, the intersections of Richmond Avenue at Yukon Avenue and Richmond Avenue at Drumgoole Road would respectively process approximately 400 and 450 fewer vehicles in the 2036 future conditions with the proposed park connections in place at Richmond Hill and Forest Hill Roads as these vehicles would have the opportunity to use the new park roads.

In addition to providing alternative traffic routes, the proposed expansion of the park roads would provide an additional stretch of pleasant public roadway across along a raised topography and providing new vistas and visual access to the waterfront and coastal wetlands including Blazing Star Historic Shipyard, William T. Davis Wildlife Refuge, the Green Belt, and Arden Heights Woods Park. The Richmond Hill connections would also be accompanied by an attractive landscape buffer along its length that would serve as a visual amenity. With the proposed road and pedestrian connections, by 2036 the proposed park would continue to link the Fresh Kills property with the local neighborhoods not only through expanded vehicular access, but expanded pedestrian and bike access as well. An extensive, diverse public path system would provide bike paths, paved and unpaved running/walking paths, equestrian trails, and mountain-biking trails, appealing to a variety of park users in the community.

In addition to the park roadways, East and West Parks and the Point are anticipated to be built by 2036 further opening broad expanses of land currently inaccessible to the public, with wetland and upland habitats as well as substantial active recreational facilities and event spaces where neighborhood cultural events could be held. The proposed project would also provide access to and enhance the natural waterfronts of the Arthur Kill along with expanding access to the Fresh Kills waterway.

By 2036 the proposed project would expand the overall visual improvements at the site. In West and East Parks there would be the introduction of flowering wetland vegetation, flowering meadow vegetation, and new woodlands. More traditional-looking wetlands with open water, emergent, and edge plantings would be created, with a greater diversity of wetland species and a planted transition zone between the open water and the edge. The wetlands would contain a natural mix of herbaceous emergent, grasses and shrubs to promote habitat complexity.

Large upland areas currently dominated by monocultures of grasslands would be replaced with a diversity of grass species, including flowering species. As part of the East and West Parks the proposed design calls for thousands of trees to create a thick valuable woodland habitat. This expanded diversity in vegetation cover would provide habitat for more birds and other animals that would support the visual appeal of the proposed park.

The ecological enhancement that is proposed by 2036 would dramatically improve not just the environmental conditions at the site, but its aesthetics for the community. Expansion of the project into East and West Park would create attractive open spaces that would further soften the



visual effects of the landfill's solid waste Section 6/7 and 1/9, respectively on the adjacent neighborhoods (particularly at East Park).

Overall, the proposed project would be expected to not only enhance neighborhood views of the site with enhanced wetlands and woodlands, but views from the top of proposed North and South Parks would be made accessible to the public for the first time.

Under the proposed project the proposed buildings in the area of Plant 1 would replace trailers and manufacturing-type structures. Buildings, industrial uses, and parking lots on the waterfront would be replaced with major new waterfront amenities as the area is converted from an underutilized, inaccessible waterfront into a publicly accessible landscaped waterfront with restaurants, a major sports field, with landscaped open spaces and cultural attractions. The industrial-like paved and bulkheaded waterfront would be replaced by public waterfront facilities with a multi-purpose market roof, parking and new landscaping. Overall, the proposed project would introduce active uses along the waterfront and greatly enliven the Fresh Kills edge for the community, which is now underutilized and inaccessible. The proposed new buildings in the Point are proposed to be low structures—from one to two stories—attractive and in keeping with scale of the local neighborhood. They would be located at the center of the site and largely not visible from outside the park, except from the West Shore Expressway.

In addition, existing landfill-related structures that would remain would be screened by vegetation or fences or other creative measures, and would not be obtrusive (e.g., the leachate treatment at the end of South Park). The existing above-ground infrastructure components such as the groundwater and landfill gas monitoring wells, would be retrofitted to be flush with the ground and less visible.

As noted above, the proposed project would draw a large number of pedestrians and cyclists to the area. The increased pedestrian and cyclist activity would not result in significant adverse impacts, as sidewalks would continue to operate at acceptable levels of service. Increased pedestrian activity would enliven areas of the project site that are lacking in street life.

The proposed Fresh Kills Park would not result in significant adverse noise impacts from increased traffic or stationary noise sources. Although noise levels generated in the new park would be above the CEQR guideline, they would be comparable to noise levels in several other New York City parks, including South Shore Golf Course Park, Arden Heights Woods Park, Latourette Park, and Willowbrook Park, and would not result in significant adverse noise impacts.

In summary, by 2036, the proposed project would greatly improve the neighborhood character of the project site and the surrounding neighborhoods. The proposed project would introduce a new waterfront park on land that is currently inaccessible to the public. The project site would be enlivened with active land uses that would draw visitors to the area and the surrounding neighborhoods would benefit from the new recreational opportunities offered by the proposed park. No significant adverse impacts on neighborhood character would result from the proposed project.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The proposed project would introduce a large park that would provide recreational opportunities and public access to the waterfront on the site of Fresh Kills Landfill. The new park would alter the project site's land use and urban design characteristics and result in both reduction and increases in traffic along street corridors in the area and would increase pedestrian activity. However, these changes overall would not be significantly adverse with respect to neighborhood

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character; to the contrary, the proposed project is expected to have a positive effect on neighborhood character. The project site, which is currently in the process of landfill construction closure and precludes public access to both the site and the waterfront, would be enlivened with recreational amenities that would draw visitors to the area as well as the enhancement of natural habitat and the protection of resources. In sum, it is expected that the overall local neighborhood character would significantly benefit from the proposed project by the creation of a substantial new park with waterfront access and new park road connections to a regional highway. \*