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INTRODUCTION

Governors Island Alliance would like to welcome you to Heart of the Harbor: Governors Island Park Planning Workshop on Saturday June 12, 2004. The community workshop is meant to engage the public at an early stage in the planning process now underway for Governors Island. We are planning a full day, and are excited to have so many enthusiastic participants join us in thinking about the future of this special place.

Located in Inner New York Harbor just a short ferry ride from Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan, the 172-acre island has sweeping harbor views, lush green lawns and hundred year-old shade trees. The island’s incredible assemblage of historic buildings and military structures including Fort Jay and Castle Williams, which pre-date the Civil War, make it a touchstone for understanding our nation’s past.

The recent transfer of the Island from the Federal Government to the State/City Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) and the National Park Service has provided the first public access to the island in over two hundred years and a singular opportunity to incorporate an Island that few people know into the public life of New Yorkers and the nation.

The workshop is being undertaken in cooperation with the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) and the National Park Service (NPS) as part of their public planning processes and is supported by a grant from the JM Kaplan Fund. NY Waterway has donated buses for our tour.

We hope you will also join us on the evening of Tuesday, June 29 at the Municipal Arts Society’s Urban Center for a panel discussion on the results of the workshop.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR TWO GOVERNORS ISLAND EVENTS:

Governors Island Park Planning Workshop
Saturday, June 12, 2004 9am - 5 pm
Governors Island (ferry from Battery Maritime Building)

Panel Discussion on Workshop
Tuesday, June 29, 2004
Municipal Arts Society Urban Center
457 Madison Avenue
The members of the Governors Island Alliance (GIA) civic coalition, led by Regional Plan Association (RPA), have worked collaboratively to help secure its return to New York and to ensure that the public interest determined its reuse. GIA is a coalition of civic, environmental, and preservation organizations working to celebrate the Island's rich history, create memorable parks and public spaces, and ensure appropriate reuse of the Island and its historic structures. GIA's concept of redeveloping the Island as a great civic space is the basis for the recent transfer and has contributed to the establishment of a 22 acre National Monument, the set-aside of an additional 40 acres for a public park, and adoption of design restrictions in the National Landmark Historic District.

Members of the Governors Island Alliance:
- American Institute of Architects/NY Chapter
- American Society of Landscape Architects of New York
- Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy
- City Parks Alliance
- Environmental Advocates of NY
- Environmental Defense
- Floating the Apple
- Friends of Hudson River Park
- Gowanus Dredgers
- Historic Districts Council
- Manhattan Community Board No. 1
- Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
- Municipal Art Society
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- NY Civic
- NY Landmarks Conservancy
- NY League of Conservation Voters
- New Yorkers for Parks
- NY Parks and Conservation Association
- North River Community Environmental Review Board
- North River Historic Ship Society
- Preservation League of NY
- Regional Plan Association
- Riverkeeper
- Trees NY
- United War Veterans Council
- Urban Environmental Law Center
- Waterfront Parks Coalition
- Women's City Club of New York
- Working Watercraft of New York Harbor
- Working Waterfront

GOVERNORS ISLAND ALLIANCE
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The workshop is intended to help create Governors Island parkland that delivers:

1. A grand new civic space for New York, the Region, and the Nation.
2. New uses that are primarily educational, recreational, and tourism-related.
3. An experience that is unique to the Island.
4. A wide range of public programs and tenants that will attract a diversity of visitors.
5. Protection and enhancement of the historic, maritime, and open space character of the Island.
6. Reuse of the historic structures and landscapes on the Island.
7. A commitment to "Green" building and sustainable development principles.
8. Convenient and affordable ferry access from throughout the Harbor.
9. Physical and programmatic links to other waterfront parks and destinations.
10. Sufficient public and private capital & operating dollars to realize this vision.
In cooperation with the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) and the National Park Service, the Governors Island Alliance is sponsoring a community workshop on June 12, 2004 to help plan for these parklands. The purpose of the community workshop is to engage the public at an early stage in the planning process now underway on the Island. Through a series of facilitated discussions, participants will be asked to articulate their ideas for the park spaces. This information will be used by the Alliance, GIPEC and the National Park Service to frame the location, uses, programming, and design of the Island’s parkland. The workshop is being undertaken as part of their public planning processes and is supported by a grant from the JM Kaplan Fund.

A Day on Governors Island
As a participant in the workshop, you will spend the morning learning about Governors Island and the afternoon discussing, in small groups, your aspirations for this special place. The day will start with two tours of the island -- a walking tour of the northern historic portion, and a bus tour of the southern portion -- followed by an informational session on the Island’s history, status, and the opportunities and challenges of planning for the Island. Then, starting with a discussion over lunch, participants will spend the afternoon talking in groups of approximately 10 people, each led by two facilitators: one park planner or manager, and one landscape architect, architect, or urban designer. In a series of discussions, participants will consider prospective park uses and programming, their possible location on the Island, and how park uses should relate to the overall redevelopment of the Island. (see agenda on the following page for a list of discussion topics).

At the end of the day, participants will gather in the full group to hear workshop reporters share highlights from the small group discussions. There will be another chance to hear about and discuss workshop findings on Tuesday, June 29, at the Municipal Art Society’s Urban Center, when the Governors Island Alliance assembles a panel discussion on the results of the workshop. Your insight and aspirations for Governors Island will inform park planning being done by the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) and the National Park Service (NPS).
**AGENDA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Ferry departs Battery Maritime Building in Lower Manhattan</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15 AM</td>
<td><strong>Tours of Governors Island</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workshop participants will take a walking tour of the northern portion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and a bus tour of the southern portion of the island.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td><strong>Workshop Welcome and Plenary Orientation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Pirani, Regional Plan Association/Governors Island Alliance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>James Lima, Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Linda Neal, National Park Service</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Steve Whitehouse, The Saratoga Associates</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Joe Berridge, Urban Strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rob Lane, Regional Plan Association</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tupper Thomas, Prospect Park Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td><strong>Pick up Box Lunch and Break into Small Groups</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Small Group Discussion I: <em>A Day on Governors Island</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over lunch, participants will describe their ideal day on Governors</td>
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<td>Island when they return on a June day 20 years in the future.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Small Group Discussion II: <em>Identifying Prospective GI Park Uses</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Participants will be asked to prioritize possible park uses and activi-</td>
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<td>ties and consider how these relate to other activities on the island.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Small Group Discussion III: <em>Establishing a Planning Framework</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Participants will consider where on the Island their preferred uses</td>
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<td>could best be located. Base maps and a booklet that references size</td>
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<td>of possible uses will provide a basis for siting strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Group Discussion IV: <em>Describe Big Idea and Most Important Features</em></td>
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<td>Participants will decide on the most important feature or essential</td>
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<td>qualities of their scheme and explain this in detail.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td><strong>Plenary Wrap - Up</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Workshop reporters will share highlights from the small group discus-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>sions</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30 and 5:30 PM</td>
<td><strong>Ferries back to lower Manhattan</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Groups A and B will alternate seeing the island on a bus tour and on a walking tour.

Group A will take the first bus tour, boarding the buses at the ferry dock. The bus tour will circle the island and conclude in front of Fort Jay. Group A then begins the walking tour which ends at the dining hall.

Group B will take the first walking tour, beginning the tour at the ferry dock. The walking tour ends in front of the dining hall where Group B will then board the buses.
1600s: For Native Americans, the island was a place to hunt, fish and gather nuts - hence its Algonquin name: Paggananck. When the Dutch settled New York, they first stayed on the island, wary of the wilderness across the water, later known as Manhattan. Adapting the Native American name, the Dutch called it Nutten Island. One Dutch governor built a sawmill on the island to supply timber to a growing community in New Netherlands. Another governor bought it for speculative purposes under shady circumstances, clouding its legal ownership for decades.

1700s: When the Dutch gave up New York to the British, the colonial legislature gave the island over to the royal governors for exclusive use as a retreat and game preserve. At other times it was a goat farm, tobacco plantation and quarantine station for German immigrants. In 1755, the British Army dedicated the island to the purpose it would serve for over two centuries: a fortified harbor defense.

1800s: As a young American nation emerged, it was uncertain of its place in the world and its relationship with Great Britain. The new federal government constructed Fort Jay and Castle Williams to defend New York City and its harbor, vividly remembering its loss and occupation by the British during the American Revolution. During the War of 1812, these fortifications deterred a British invasion, sparing the fiery fate that befell Washington, D.C.

By the 1830s, Governors Island evolved into a military administrative center. During the Civil War, Castle Williams held Confederate soldier prisoners and later was part of the U.S. military prison system. After the Civil War, Army commands for the eastern United States were headquartered here.

1900s: In 1901, the island was expanded by over 100 acres with landfill from the construction of the Lexington Avenue subway line, providing an open space that was used for polo grounds and an army airfield, launching Wilbur Wright, Glenn Curtiss, and "Hap" Arnold, an early leader of the modern U.S. Air Force. In 1939, the United States First Army made Governors Island its home.

In 1966, the island changed hands from the U.S. Army to the U.S. Coast Guard, becoming their largest installation in the world. The Coast Guard built apartment buildings and other facilities to serve the needs of its operations and for more than 800 families that made the island their home. At the height of its operations, the Coast Guard had about 4,600 members and dependents on the island and another 1,700 civilian and military staff commuting via a ferry each day. In 1996, the Coast Guard closed its base on Governors Island as part of a federal budget-streamlining plan and moved all personnel and operations off the island.
Governors Island Today: Transfer to NPS & GIPEC

When the Coast Guard left, the General Services Administration (GSA) became the island’s caretaker. As a provision of the 1997 Balanced Budget Act, the U.S. Congress directed GSA to sell the island at fair market value - raising fears among New Yorkers that the island would be sold to the highest bidder and privatized. Public officials, numerous civic groups and private citizens asked the President to return Governors Island back to New York and the public. In 2001, President Clinton initiated this process by declaring Fort Jay and Castle Williams a National Monument, thereby preserving a portion of the island as a permanent public park.

In January of 2003, President Bush finalized the transfer of the 22-acre National Monument to the National Park Service, and returned the remaining 150 acres of the Island to the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC), a subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corporation with a joint State-City board of directors. GIPEC’s mandate is to create "an educational, recreational and cultural center that will offer a broad range of public uses."

The Future of Governors Island: Terms of Transfer

The legal documents that spell out the transfer of the Island to the Governors Island Preservation Education Corporation commit the City, State, and Federal Governments to creating an educational, recreational and cultural center that will offer a broad range of public uses, as well as spelling out a series of specific requirements, including:

-- the establishment of a 22-acre National Monument on the Island
-- a set-aside of an additional 40 acres for a public park, 20 acres of which must be contiguous
-- a commitment to building a waterfront esplanade
-- permanent design restrictions within the historic district
-- prohibition of a number of uses.

Prohibited uses:
-- permanent residential uses (temporary residential, such as dormitories, hotel use, or artists retreats are permitted),
-- industrial,
-- casino or gaming uses
-- parking (except for vehicles used for maintenance, operation, and transportation of visitors)
-- and electric power generating stations (except for the island)

The pie chart describes the allocation of approximately 90 acres of Governors Island that must be used for uses benefiting the public.
The redevelopment of Governors Island poses an extraordinary opportunity and challenge.

The Island is replete with amenity. The Island’s massive stone forts and charming Victorian and federal-style buildings are recognized as a National and City Landmark Historic Districts. The Island’s shoreline boasts spectacular views of the Manhattan skyline, Brooklyn port, and the Statue of Liberty.

But its location poses a special hurdle. Governors Island is afforded both incredible proximity to millions of people and the isolation imposed both by its Island nature and military history. From a real estate perspective, there are few uses that truly can take advantage of being both central and apart from the City and Region.

It is this combination of character and location that led Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg to set out a vision of transforming the Island into a "grand civic space" with education, hospitality, and tourism activities. As detailed earlier, the legal documents that spell out the transfer of the Island to the Governors Island Preservation Education Corporation commit the City, State, and Federal Governments to this overall program for the Island as well as a series of specific land use requirements.

To help refine this vision, the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation and their consultants have grouped potential uses and activities in four reinforcing program streams, or “clusters”: Education/Institution; Hotel/Conference Center; Art/Culture; and Parks/Recreation. The National Park Service National Monument property may potentially include any or all of these clusters with the exception of the Hotel/Conference uses.

GIPEC and NPS are now assessing the viability and desirability of these uses and activities, in part through consultations with experts and the public. This workshop - focused on the parks/recreation cluster - is an early and important such consultation.

There are two important parameters to this assessment, and should be kept top of mind during the workshop. The most important part of the redevelopment process is to find new uses for the more than one million square feet buildings in the National and City historic landmark districts. These buildings and the ambiance they create on the Island are an irreplaceable treasure. Finding new tenants that can help maintain these structures is of paramount concern.

But beyond ensuring the upkeep of the individual buildings, GIPEC must find uses that can generate revenue to maintain the Island as a whole, including its bulkhead and piers, ferry system and other infrastructure, and the parks spaces. It is important to realize that this revenue can come directly in the form of lease or other payments from for-profit uses as well as by hosting uses that generate enough visitor traffic to support the ferry service and concessions.
Four reinforcing program streams, or “clusters”: Parks/Recreation, Education/Institution; Hotel/Conference Center; and Art/Culture.
Governors Island offers an opportunity to create a public park like no other. Its remarkable heritage, cloistered green spaces, and, most importantly, its unique relationship to the Harbor and its waters make it imperative that we stretch our conception of what a park could be. Governors Island is a special place, and its park spaces should reflect that uniqueness.

The adjoining table lists park uses that have been identified in previous studies of the Island. Part of the charge of the workshop is identifying which of these park and recreation uses should be considered priorities because they are most enhanced by being located on Governors Island.

In making that determination, consider the following four points:

**Park spaces on the Island should not be thought of as places separate from the other uses that will locate on this Island, but rather as a setting for those uses.** The overall feel of the Island is to be one of a large greenspace with private or public uses nested within it, much as Central Park or Prospect Park harbor restaurants, museums, zoos, and gardens. One could also consider the Island as a campus, where the overall ambiance is created by a special relationship between the built structures and their setting.

**Certain park features will be more supportive of the other uses being considered for the Island.** High schools or colleges could use recreational space. An arts institution might be interested in opportunities to exhibit sculpture or stage an outdoor performance. Hotels and conference centers will benefit from landscaping and views. Ensuring that the park spaces have a positive relationship with anticipated users will help ensure that the Island is attractive to prospective tenants - a critical concern for the Island.

The planning of park space must consider the needs of neighborhood and regional visitors. Like all New York neighborhoods, residents and workers in lower Manhattan and the adjoining Brooklyn waterfront do not have enough park and recreational space to meet current demand. Governors Island offers the opportunity to meet these general needs while offering a different experience from the other nearby existing and proposed state and regional parks, such as Liberty State Park, Hudson River Park, and the planned Brooklyn Bridge and Fresh Kills Parks.

Likewise interpretation of the Island’s history and any cultural attractions should be done in the context of the many other historic monuments and cultural attractions that are located around the Harbor. The National Park Service in particular is interested in realizing programmatic and physical connections with the other National Parks of New York Harbor, including the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Castle Clinton, Federal Hall, and Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island. Many of these also had important roles in the defense of New York.
### Possible Island Park Uses/Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Park Uses</th>
<th>Precedents/Examples from the Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lawns for Picnics/Relaxing</td>
<td>Great Lawn, Sheep Meadow in Central Park; Long Meadow in Prospect Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bird Watching</td>
<td>Jamaica Bay, Central Park Ramble</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gardens: Ornamental</td>
<td>Brooklyn Botanical Gardens</td>
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<td>Habitat Restoration</td>
<td>Prospect Park Woodlands</td>
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<tr>
<th>Active Recreational Facilities</th>
<th>Precedents/Examples from the Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ball Fields</td>
<td>Central Park North Meadow Recreation Area, Red Hook Recreation Area, Hecksher Fields</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ball Courts</td>
<td>Riverside Park, East River Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Playground(s)</td>
<td>Battery Park City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bicycling/Roller Blading</td>
<td>Battery Park Esplanade, Riverside South Esplanade, Hudson River Park Esplanade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming Pool/Sprinklers</td>
<td>Red Hook Swimming Pool, Lasker Pool in Central Park, Astoria Pool</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overnight Camping</td>
<td>Gateway NRA Ecology Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unprogrammed Field Space</td>
<td>Great Lawn Central Park, Long Meadow Prospect Park</td>
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<th>Water-based activities</th>
<th>Precedents/Examples from the Region</th>
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<tr>
<td>Swimming Beach</td>
<td>Orchard Beach, Manhattan Beach Coney Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marina/Boat Launch</td>
<td>79th St. Marina, Arthur’s Landing Weekawken NJ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishing/Fishing Piers</td>
<td>Valentino Pier, Hudson River Park Piers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constructed Wetland</td>
<td>Swindler Cove Park</td>
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<td>Public Boating Programs</td>
<td>Downtown Boathouse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harbor Tours</td>
<td>NY Waterway, Water Taxi, Circle Line</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passive enjoyment from shore</td>
<td>Wagner Park, Battery Park City</td>
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<tr>
<th>Arts/Cultural Attractions</th>
<th>Precedents/Examples from the Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theatre/Amphitheater</td>
<td>Delacort Theatre Central Park, Prospect Park Bandshell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Lawn</td>
<td>Tanglewood, Saratoga Performing Arts Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecology Center/ Aquarium/ Observatory</td>
<td>Inwood Ecology Center, Van Cortland Ecology Center, Coney Island Aquarium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Attractions &amp; Rides/</td>
<td>Land of Make Believe Hope NJ, Central Park Carousel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amusement Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Museums/Fine Arts/Sculture Garden</td>
<td>Socrates Sculpture Garden, Storm King Art Center</td>
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<tr>
<th>Historic Interpretation/Attractions</th>
<th>Precedents/Examples from the Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Monument</td>
<td>Statue of Liberty / Ellis Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpretive Center</td>
<td>Lower East Side Tenement Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic House/Recreated Village</td>
<td>Van Cortlandt Manor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guided Tours</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Harbor Interpretation</td>
<td>Liberty Science Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Re-enactments</td>
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</table>
Current programs of use under discussion for Governors Island have developed over a number of years thanks to planning efforts undertaken by a variety of non-profit, academic, government, and private initiatives. Here are four examples of previous plans for the island that show possible configurations of island uses. While none of these previous plans will be implemented in their entirety, each has influenced the public dialogue about the future of the island.

Regional Plan Association, A New Life for Governors Island, 1998
A New Life for Governors Island was prepared by Regional Plan Association and a team of consultants, including Thompson Design Group; Paul Willen; Tourbier and Walmsley; and Economics Research Associates, in 1998. The vision was based on an extensive public consultation process, including two “town meetings” attended by more than 250 people and an expert charrette of eleven distinguished urban designers, real estate experts and park managers in 1997. The Plan proposes that the Island become a new kind of park containing a wide variety of attractions including hotels, educational facilities, museums, and arts and cultural centers. Redevelopment would be focused in the historic district while existing buildinging in the southern half of the Island would be replaced by a great lawn and a series of amusements sited around the perimeter, including an amphitheatre, ecology center, and recreational facilities. Accommodating these uses would ensure that the historic buildings are protected over time and could generate revenues to offset the Island’s operational costs.

Beyer Blinder Belle Consortium (for GSA); Land Use Study, 1997: Recreation and Academic Options
The 1997 Land Use Study was undertaken to inform the public of the island’s resources, and to guide the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) accompanying the disposition of the island by the Coast Guard. The study included six potential land use options, of which two are represented here: the recreation option and the academic option. The recreation option responds to widespread interest in publicly accessible open space on Governors Island. The predominant use for the southern portion of the island, for which extensive demolition of buildings is proposed, is a public park with passive and active recreation. Buildings in the northern portion of the island are reused for public-oriented facilities such as a major conference center, hospitality facilities, retail and restaurants. The academic option assumes that an academic institution, with approximately 4,000 students, will use the island, taking advantage of the island’s defined sub-areas, the historic buildings, open space, and residential units.

City and State of New York, Governors Island Land Use Plan, 2000
The plan envisioned Governors Island as a major new tourist and educational destination, with a 50-acre public park and a conference center. The plan suggested that Governors Island would join the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island to become the third major New York Harbor icon, drawing millions of visitors each year to experience the island’s history and views.

Regional Plan Association, A New Life for Governors Island, 1998
Beyer Blinder Belle
Consortium (for GSA)
Land Use Study, 1997
Right: Recreation Option
Far Right: Academic Option

City and State of NY
Governors Island
Land Use Plan, 2000
PHYSICAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The overall planning context for the Island is conceived of in two ways: as a series of physical factors that create opportunities, constraints and formal relationships; and as a number of constraints and synergies within potential programmatic relationships.

Physical Conditions
As to the physical constraints, we have tried to synthesize the voluminous research about the Island into the following six diagrams. Because they are not exhaustive, we have also assembled several supplementary diagrams that participants may find useful; these were prepared by Beyer Blinder Belle for a 1998 Land Use Study prepared for the Federal General Services Administration disposition process. The next several pages contain the following diagrams and a discussion of each, including a series of related questions which you should keep in mind as you consider where activities might be best located.

- Harbor context - relationship to other activities and resources in the harbor, proximity to the Brooklyn waterfront and NPS operations at Statue/Ellis/Battery Park, orientation of different parts of the Island.
- Historic Landscape - original shoreline, historic district, and significant landscape features
- Environment - impact of prevailing winds, sun and shade, flood plain, exposure to the ocean (spray, tides, etc), seasonality, topography
- Spatial Organization - open space systems, building ensembles, north-south divide, the "great lawn", and iconographic southern tip
- Esplanade and Access to the Water - spatial and programmatic issues relating to the edges of the Island
- Access and Mobility - implications of arriving at different places on the Island
- Views from Island & View Corridors (Beyer Blinder Belle Consortium)
- Recreational Facilities (Beyer Blinder Belle Consortium)

Relationship Conditions
The park spaces and visitor experience on the Island must also be planned with consideration as to how they relate to each other, to other tenants of the Island, and to other Island-wide goals.
These include:

- **Synergies** - identification of competing and supporting uses that suggest physical and programmatic connections or the need for separation.
- **Circulation** - implication of moving among and between activities in different ways.
- **Daily and Seasonal Patterns** - striving for appropriate activities at different times of the day and year.
- **Phasing** - availability of different spaces and buildings for different activities in the short and long term.
- **Sustainability** - how to incorporate "green" design including minimizing material/energy use and maintenance/management considerations.
Throughout its history, Governors Island's location at the center of the harbor has defined its character and determined its use. When considering how the harbor should influence Governors Island in the future, there are a number of important points to keep in mind.

**Land use around the harbor is rapidly changing from predominantly industrial and port uses to residential, park, and mixed uses.** While there are a number of active industrial and port concentrations within the harbor -- including the Sunset Park Industrial area, the Navy Yards, Red Hook piers, Howland Hook, and Port Authority facilities in Bayonne, Elizabeth and Newark - much of the industrial land is vacant or underused. New York and New Jersey are treating these as opportunities for parks, residential and mixed-use projects.

**There are a series of emerging park, cultural and recreation destinations throughout the harbor.** These include the National Parks of New York Harbor, including Liberty and Ellis Islands, Castle Clinton, and Fort Wadsworth, as well as new state and regional parks, such as Liberty State Park, Hudson River Park, Battery Park City parks, and Brooklyn Bridge Park. Greenways are in place or planned for the Manhattan, NJ and Brooklyn shorelines. Other major tourist attractions throughout the inner harbor include the World Trade Center site, South Street Seaport, Historic Battery Park, a complex of waterfront attractions in St. George, Liberty Science Center, the Brooklyn Bridge, and Fulton Ferry Landing.

**Harbor waters are cleaner than they have been in a century.** Billions of dollars in wastewater treatment infrastructure, spurred by the Clean Water Act, has resulted in cleaner harbor waters that support a wide range of recreational activities such as kayaking and even swimming, offer improved aquatic habitat, and help spur redevelopment of land along the waters edge.

**Three downtown concentrations are proximate to Governors Island: Lower Manhattan, downtown Brooklyn and Jersey City.** In addition to these larger concentrations of businesses and residences, smaller waterfront neighborhoods throughout the harbor are experiencing new housing starts, including lower Manhattan, all of the Brooklyn waterfront, and Bayonne and Hoboken, New Jersey.

**There is a growing fleet of ferries and recreational boats in the Harbor.** While the number of ferry passengers is still dominated by those using the Staten Island ferry and the Liberty and Ellis Island ferries, there are also a growing number of smaller volume routes and boats. Other transit service Nearby subway service is concentrated in Lower Manhattan.
PHYSICAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK: HISTORIC CONTEXT

The earliest reliable map records of Governors Island describe a 93-acre oblong, with a single central high point underlain by the same bedrock that underlies Manhattan. The form of the island has been repeatedly modified. Starting shortly after 1900, the Army started a major landfill operation, using materials excavated from IRT subway construction to expand the island southward to its present 172-acre configuration. In general, the flat "coastal plain" land on the island is landfill, and rising topography indicates the original form.

Throughout its known history, the island has accommodated a series of uses that reflect its qualities of being both central in the harbor and separate. The entire original island has high sensitivity for archeological significance.

In the Revolutionary War, American troops under Israel Putnam erected fortified earthworks on the island, which protected Washington's retreat across to Manhattan after the Battle of Brooklyn—these original earthworks are believed to have been modified by later construction. The earliest structures on the island date from the 1790's to early 1800's and include:

- Fort Jay: Completed in 1809 on the island's high point, Fort Jay's star shape form, earthworks, dry moat, and surrounding glacis (later used for a golf course) represent an excellent preserved example of the First System of coastal fortifications.

- Castle Williams: Completed in 1811, the multi-storied fort represents the Second System of coastal fortifications. Through much of its history, Castle Williams was used as a military prison.

- South Battery: The South, or Half Moon Battery, defended Buttermilk Channel and was the last of the fortifications in place prior to the War of 1812. The Officers' Club was constructed later within its boundaries.

- Ordinance Storehouse (Building 25): This repeatedly-modified structure stands at the north end of Nolan Park.

- Governor's House: Built in 1813, this Georgian Revival house is the oldest domestic structure on the island.

- Admiral's Quarters: Built in 1840, the Federal Style manor house served as the commanding officer's residence on the island, and much later as the setting of the 1988 summit talks of President Reagan and Soviet President Gorbachev.

- Block House: Constructed in 1839, this Greek Revival structure has served as a hospital and as residences.

The historic resources of the island are protected by multiple designations. Fort Jay and Castle Williams form the core of the 22-acre Governors Island National Monument, under the direct administration of the National Park Service. All of the island north of Division Road comprises a designated National Historic Landmark District. Building 400, also known as Liggett Hall, was built in 1930 on the landfill area and is the tallest and largest building on the island; it firmly establishes the southern border of the National Historic Landmark District. Of the buildings listed above, all of the structures except the South Battery and the Ordinance Storehouse are individual New York City landmarks.

Does the history of the island (or its' designated areas) affect the manner in which we might plan and use the island's future open spaces?

Should the park space be similar or different-in appearance, program or feeling-north and south of Division Road?

How can the history of the Island best be conveyed to visitors: through a single visitors' center or through a series of interpretive stations?
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- National Monument Boundary
- Historic District Boundary
- Landmark buildings contributing to historic district
- Other contributing buildings
- Infill opportunity
- Non-contributing buildings
- Historic shoreline
PHYSICAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK: ENVIRONMENT

The open space uses especially will be affected by several environmental factors:

1. **Winds**
   Prevailing winds are primarily from the southwest shifting somewhat due west in the winter months. Winds are strong at times and in combination with the salt water spray can make this edge of the Island difficult to occupy in the colder months. There had been some discussion of harnessing this wind power as part of a larger sustainability agenda for the island.

2. **Flooding and Salt Spray**
   With the exception of Fort Jay and its surrounding Glacis/Parade Grounds, a significant portion of the Island is the 50-year flood plain. Because of the storm surge created by the prevailing westerly winds, the western shore is even more likely to flood and is always exposed to sea spray. For this reason, the westerly shore is uncomfortable in the colder months.

3. **Topography**
   There is significant topography in the Historic District with Fort Jay occupying the high point of the Island. There are commanding views of the harbor and the entire historic district from here. The south end of the island is basically flat. One possibility is to create new topography in the south end, perhaps by using materials from demolished buildings as fill.

4. **Currents**
   The waters around the island are navigable. The calmer waters on the sheltered eastern side of the Island make Buttermilk Channel the preferred location for any boating activities and direct contact with the water.

5. **Natural beaches and shallows**
   Along the eastern edge of the Island and extending some distance from the southeastern tip of the Island, are natural beaches and rocky shallow areas created by mud and sand deposited by the currents as they pass the Island.

*How does your park design respond to these environmental factors?*
The Historic "Campus"

The northern portion of the Island has an extraordinary coherence due to its largely uniform architectural character and because it is organized around a variety of well defined, discreet and well connected spaces. Some of these are courtyard spaces that seem to be contained by the configuration of one or more buildings.

The overall spatial structure can be considered to include:

A. Primary Open Spaces

These well-defined and identifiable open spaces are characterized by the very strong relationship between the spaces and the buildings that define them. The open space program and the building uses in these areas must be considered in concert.

1. The Glacis: This is the largest and most significant open space in the Historic District. The open lawn of the glacis is a military feature, originally intended to preserve an open field of fire outward from the fort. This area was later modified for use as a parade ground, polo field, and golf course. The high ground of Fort Jay still provides a unifying identity for the glacis. Its well defined edges are created largely by the backs of the buildings that front onto Nolan Park and Colonels Row.

In addition to the Glacis, there are three other signature spaces in the northern end of the Island:

2. Nolan Park - This picturesque greenspace is cloistered by the front doors of a series of single family homes, including the City and National Landmark Admiral's Quarters and Governors House. The brick walkways, mature trees, and uncluttered lawn areas are important defining features.

3. Colonels Row Green - Similar in character to Nolan Park, this triangular wedge of land is fronted by the enormous Building 400 and a series of Federal-style homes. It opens to Castle Williams and Harbor views to the west.

4. Building 400 Courtyard - This green space is defined by the arms of Building 400, and provides the foreground view to many of its rooms. Unlike the open spaces listed above, the Courtyard is not protected by the Historic Districts Preservation and Design Manual.

What activities are appropriate in these spaces and in the buildings that surround them?

B. Building Ensembles

These are groups of buildings and smaller spaces which, by virtue of their proximity to each other and their strategic location on the Island provide orientation to the several Primary Open Spaces and the principle routes that connect them. These tend to function as "gateways" or cross roads into different parts of the island.

What activities are appropriate in these clusters?

How do these activities relate to your larger park planning vision?

The South End:

C. The "Great Lawn"

The simple fact that the Island is longer than it is wide suggests that there is a latent north-south axis from Building 400 to the tip of the Island. To the extent that some of the existing blocks and structures remain, the idea of a central lawn is reinforced. Planning on the southern end of the Island will have to respond to this in some way, accepting or counteracting in varying degrees.

To what extent does the plan of your park spaces respond to (accept or deny) the longitudinal character of the Island?

How do you move from one side of the island to the other in your design?

D. The Iconographic Southern Tip

The tip of the Island is clearly a special place on the Island, with the most commanding views of the harbor, an experience of the water on three sides, and being most remote from both Manhattan and the Historic District. Uses and their configuration here should reflect this special identity.

What special activities are appropriate at the tip of the Island?

How does the design of the park respond to this strategic location?
The esplanade should not be thought of as a purely linear experience of uniform dimension, but rather as a variegated space enriched by several design considerations. Moreover it is within the zone of the esplanade that connection to the water, perhaps the most compelling opportunity on the Island, will be made in the form of ferries, large ships, small boats, fishing, and other direct contact with the water.

1. In the northern portion of the Island, the space of the esplanade includes the spaces formed by buildings each of which has its own relationship with the water’s edge.

2. The esplanade engages the spaces created by the “building ensembles” described above, which in turn lead to the Island’s interior.

3. In the southern portion of the Island, the esplanade will engage new park spaces which may be along the edge of the island or within the interior.

4. The primary route of the esplanade may leave the waters edge entirely, perhaps in response to the exposure to the elements on the western shore or around the edge of a new embayment or “soft edge”.

5. Different segments of the esplanade will provide very different views of the harbor context.

6. The esplanade on the western edge of the Island is exposed to strong winds and sea spray, making the waters’ edge here difficult to occupy during the colder months.

7. Along the eastern shore, south of Division Road, there is a well-defined space created by rows of mature trees along the sides of the road.

What does your open space plan suggest about the ways in which the esplanade/water’s edge experience may change along its length?

What activities should the esplanade be designed to accommodate?
The visitors’ experience will be very much shaped by where one lands on the Island, as this is where the visitor will first be oriented to the Island and begin whatever longer journey is planned or discovered. Access to the Island will be by ferry and therefore will be limited to two or three locations. There also has been some discussion of a tram to the Brooklyn and Manhattan shore. Various studies suggest landing points that correspond to the locations of the existing piers, although the piers themselves may or may not be re-used. In any case, there is logic to placing more intensive, high-volume uses and winter weather uses near the landing points.

1. Northern Landing: The current ferry landing is likely to be the primary gateway for visitors and vehicles. Advantages include the fact that it is the point closest to Lower Manhattan, providing dramatic views back to the City and also provides the most direct access to the buildings along the northern shore which many of the land use studies suggest buildings will be re-used for a variety of commercial and institutional uses (restaurants, studios/galleries, visitor center). At least in the short term it has the disadvantage of being the “working waterfront” in the sense that the Island will continue to be serviced primarily from here.

2. Historic East Landing: Several studies for the Island have identified this - the Island’s original ferry landing - as the most advantageous place for orientation to the historic district because it leads to the east-west route that links the sites in the National Monument to the water’s edges and the rest of the island circulation network.

3. Yankee Pier: This landing, on the axis of Division Road, is at the “center of gravity” of the entire Island. As such, several studies suggest that this is an ideal location from which one can be oriented to both the northern and southern ends of the Island.

4. Lima and Tango Piers: These locations favor access to the south end of the Island. Views off of the Island are primarily to the Brooklyn waterfront and from Lima Pier, to the south of the harbor. One issue is that access along this edge must be coordinated with any marina or other waterfront access activities which are likely to be along this edge.

Internal Circulation: The Island is about one mile long and half mile wide, making many destinations an easy walk from the ferry landings. However some form of motorized transport will be necessary for to provide for internal circulation of goods and visitors, especially during the winter months. Without a permanent residential population, the number of cars on the Island could be drastically reduced, making it possible to reclaim paved areas.

What role do the different possible points of access have in your overall park plan, including intensity and seasonality of use?

How do visitors move about the Island?
Recreational Facilities

This diagram describes recreational facilities that still exist on the island, including:

*On the southern end:* most located on the island's southern end: bowling, golf, hardball, swimming, tennis, ball fields, picnic areas, boating facilities, and fitness center facilities

*On the northern end:* golf course on the glacis

Views from Island & View Corridors

This diagram describes key views from and within Governors Island, including:

- *From the northwestern promenade:* views of the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and the Central Railroad of NJ Terminal Building; also Battery Park and Battery Park City
- *From the Ferry Landing:* views of Lower Manhattan and the Brooklyn Bridge
- *From Castle Williams:* entire harbor
- *From the eastern and southeastern shoreline:* Brooklyn waterfront
- *From the southern tip:* views of New York Harbor and the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge

Striking view within the island, include:

Within the island:
- Looking through the arch in Building 400, which frames both the north and south sides of the island
- Views of Manhattan skyline from Nolan Park and the South Battery
- Intimate views among the shaded lawn in Nolan Park and Colonel's Row Park
- Potential views of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty are precluded by the residential complexes on the Island's southeast
Governors Island = 173 acres

Comparison with NYC parks (clockwise from top right)

Central Park = 843 acres
Prospect Park = 526 acres
Battery Park = 21 acres
Fort Greene Park = 30 acres
Bryant Park = 8 acres
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