



# Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space Roosevelt Island, New York

FINAL  
MAY 2017

Submitted for:



Submitted by:



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Project staff from Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) for the *Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space* project gratefully acknowledge the contributions of time and insight provided by members of the Roosevelt Island community. This kind of collaboration with the community throughout the design process was integral to the development of this Plan. Specifically, the project team greatly benefited from the input received from the Community Advisory Committee that was formed for this project. We also greatly appreciate the guidance and support of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC).

If this Plan proves a success, it is a testament to the community's collective contributions across an extended series of meetings, presentations, workshops, and discussions.

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# I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Located in the southern-most part of the Island between the Four Freedoms Memorial Park and the future site of the Cornell Tech campus, the area surrounding Southpoint Open Space is undergoing a transformation. This dynamic period of change provides an opportunity to enhance Southpoint Open Space and ensure it continues to be a key resource for the entire Roosevelt Island community.



# A. INTRODUCTION

Southpoint Open Space's rich history and unique features are a source of pride among the Roosevelt Island community and a key part of the Island's identity overall. Since the Open Space was constructed and opened in 2011, it has provided scenic views in a tranquil setting as well as a space for community gatherings. It also features two landmarked sites: the Strecker Memorial Laboratory and James Renwick's Smallpox Hospital.

During this time, the areas surrounding Southpoint have undergone significant transformations with the opening of Four Freedoms Memorial Park and the development of the future site of the Cornell Tech campus. In light of these changes, this Plan provides an opportunity to work with the community to determine whether any improvements are needed

to enhance this resource for the Roosevelt Island community and develop a plan that incorporates those improvements. Overall, the main goal is to ensure Southpoint continues to be a key resource for the entire Roosevelt Island community.

The Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space project was initiated to achieve this goal and develop an implementable plan that will guide the future of Southpoint Park and the Smallpox Hospital for the next ten years (i.e., through 2027). Community engagement has been a key component of each phase of the design process to ensure the Plan truly reflects the community's priorities, values, and vision.

This project was initiated by the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) in March 2016 with Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) providing consultant assistance.

## COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS FOR SOUTHPOINT OPEN SPACE: 2016 - 2017





*Draft Concept Plan: Wild Garden/Green Rooms for The Trust for Public Land's 2011 Master Plan for Southpoint*

## B. PLANNING CONTEXT

The preservation of Southpoint Open Space for parkland was first proposed almost half a century ago in Roosevelt Island's General Development Plan. It remained undeveloped until 2004 when RIOC invited the Trust for Public Land (TPL) to initiate park creation efforts. The TPL and a team of consultants worked with the community in the development of a vision for the area. Following

a process that involved the development of three potential alternative concepts and extensive opportunities for public input, a final Master Plan was developed. The concept was based on a "Wild Gardens/Green Rooms" concept that included expansive lawns, gardens, and waterfront views. The park was constructed and opened to the public 2011.

### i. Smallpox Hospital Stabilization

Constructed in 1856, the Smallpox Hospital was used as a hospital and medical center until its abandonment in the 1950s. While its condition deteriorated, the site was designated as a New York City Landmark in 1975. After a major portion of the north wall collapsed in 2007, RIOC worked with TPL, ETM Associates, and Plan-B Engineering on the installation of emergency shoring and bracing on the structure. As a result of this \$4.7 million project, the freestanding granite, brick and rubblestone walls were repointed and two of five steel framework towers were erected within the walls. Additionally, the necessary bracing was constructed entirely inside the walls, eliminating any need for exterior scaffolding and maintaining the picturesque view of the structure. Next, the Hospital underwent a Structural Feasibility Study that was completed in 2013 and jointly funded by the New York Landmarks Conservancy (NYLC) and Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park. That Study, also known as the Preliminary Stabilization Study resulted in the production of conceptual engineering documents to permanently stabilize the Hospital with a detailed cost estimate of over \$18 million. While that study did not take into account



*Rendering for The Trust for Public Land's Final Master Plan for Southpoint, 2011*

public access, subsequent work that is currently underway has taken this into consideration.

In 2015, work began on a *Stabilization Study* that is being led by the Four Freedoms Park Conservancy with Walter B. Melvin Architects, LLC as the selected consultant. Funded in part by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the ongoing Study builds upon the findings from the *2013 Preliminary Stabilization Study* and takes public access into consideration. In addition, it is focused on the development of a prioritization strategy for immediate, mid-term and long-term stabilization to ensure that the building's most vulnerable components are addressed first, once funding is identified. The timeline for this *Stabilization Study* is aligned with the *Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space*, with an expected completion date of spring 2017. The two project teams have worked together and shared information that has informed each other's work to maximize the quality and efficiency of both projects.



*North Elevation, Smallpox Hospital; Produced as orthorectified, or distortion reducing, image for the building survey as part of the Stabilization Study. (Image credit: Walter B. Melvin Architects)*

## ii. Southpoint Seawall Reconstruction Project

In 2012 Hurricane Sandy caused significant damage to Southpoint Open Space's seawalls, which extend from the northern tip of Southpoint to the beginning of FDR Four Freedoms Park Memorial along both the eastern and western shorelines. An initial project led by RIOC resulted in the identification of failures due to deterioration along both shores and repairs to both seawalls are currently in the planning phase. The eastern seawall experienced more severe damage; as a result, its reconstruction will be prioritized. At this time, damage to approximately 100 linear feet of



*East shore of Southpoint Open Space, 2013  
(Image credit: Langan Engineering and Environmental Services)*



*West shore of Southpoint Open Space, 2013  
(Image credit: Langan Engineering and Environmental Services)*



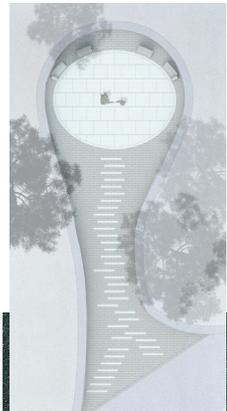
*FDR Hope Memorial statue was created by the sculptor and designer Meredith Bergmann*

the eastern seawall has already been approved by FEMA for disaster recovery funding. Construction on the eastern seawall is estimated to begin in approximately five years with construction on the western seawall to follow.

### iii. FDR Hope Memorial

The FDR Hope Memorial will celebrate Franklin D. Roosevelt's perseverance despite the paralysis of his legs and provide inspiration to those struggling with the extraordinary personal challenges of all forms of disability. As the first memorial to FDR that focuses on his disability, it will include a sculpture and plaza in a southwestern area

of Southpoint Open Space. The sculpture will depict FDR's condition, as captured in a joyful moment, greeting a similarly disabled young girl. The plaza will use special granite pavers to depict an intertwined history of FDR, Roosevelt Island, and polio. Though its opening has not been established yet, the project is in the final stages of development. It has been led by the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association and the FDR Hope Memorial Committee. A full list of all who have been involved, as well as additional details about the project, can be found at the following address: <http://www.fdrhopememorial.org/>



*Top: Site plan, FDR Hope Memorial; Bottom: Future site of FDR Hope Memorial in Southpoint Open Space*



*Aerial rendering of future Cornell Tech Campus with view looking northeast. At full build in 2043, there will be 2 million square feet constructed on 12 acres serving an academic community of nearly 2,500 on Roosevelt Island*

## iv. Cornell Tech Campus

In 2011 Cornell University partnered with the Technion–Israel Institute of Technology to win a \$100 million competition to build a state-of-the-art sciences and engineering graduate school on Roosevelt Island. The school was named Cornell Tech and the campus is located north of Southpoint Open Space on the old hospital site. Construction began in 2014 and phase one is nearly complete with three buildings estimated to open in the summer of 2017. Buildings included in phase one are located on the northern most part of the site. Phase two is not expected to begin for approximately 5 to 10 years and its design will not begin until any issues, opportunities, or needs that result from phase one can be accessed. In the meantime, a temporary landscape plan will be designed for the part of the site that is directly adjacent to Southpoint Open Space.

## v. New York City Department of Parks & Recreation Programs

Many of the ongoing programs under the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation are relevant to Southpoint Open Space. A sampling of these programs are briefly described below. For more information, please go to <https://www.nycgovparks.org>.

### Green Neighborhoods Program

The Green Neighborhoods Program is an NYC Parks Stewardship Team initiative to promote local communities in the care of street trees, forests, wetlands, gardens, and other natural resources in neighborhoods around the city.

### Partnership for Parks

Partnerships for Parks is an innovative joint program between City Parks Foundation and NYC Parks and Recreation. The public-private program supports and champions a growing network of leaders caring and advocating for neighborhood parks and green spaces. It equips people, organizations, and government with the skills and tools they need to transform these spaces into dynamic community assets.

### Parks Without Borders

The Parks Without Borders program seeks to make parks more open, welcoming, and beautiful by improving the design of the entrances, edges, and park-adjacent spaces. The main design principles and goals are as follows:

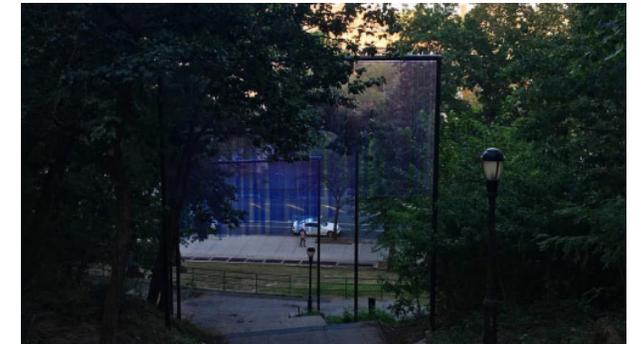
- Make entrances more accessible, convenient and easy to find to welcome everyone.
- Improve park edges to extend the beauty of parks into neighborhoods and make parks safer by improving sightlines and adding green and comfortable furnishings and amenities
- Create vibrant public spaces for community activity by transforming underused areas next to parks.



Rendering from Parks Without Borders to illustrate design principles and goals.

### Arts in the Parks Program

New York City Department of Parks & Recreation has consistently fostered the creation and installation of temporary public art in parks throughout the five boroughs. Through collaborations with a diverse group of arts organizations and artists, it brings to the public both experimental and traditional art in many park locations. The works may be displayed in prominent flagship parks, neighborhood parks and playgrounds, and traffic islands. Temporary installations are defined by an exhibition period of less than one year, typically remaining on view for three to six months.



“Sentra” by Kori Newkirk featured in St. Nicholas Park, Manhattan from August 25, 2016 until July 25, 2017 as a temporary installation. The piece reframes the steps rising from St. Nicholas Avenue, and invites park visitors to reimagine an ordinary walk as a ceremonial procession.

## C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project team conducted an analysis of the existing conditions for Southpoint Open Space that included the following:

- Community profile;
- Inventory of the existing recreational open space opportunities on Roosevelt Island; and a
- Technical site analysis of Southpoint,

Upon the completion of this analysis, all information was clearly conveyed to the public with various diagrams and other visualizations.

A community profile was performed to gain an understanding of the Roosevelt Island community that Southpoint Open Space should serve. This analysis drew from the U.S. Census' American Community Survey 2013 data to compile information about demographic characteristics such as age, income, and education. Data was also collected for Manhattan and New York City to allow for comparisons with Roosevelt Island.

This information provided a comprehensive view of the Roosevelt Island community and helped guide the development of the Community Plan. For example, with 20 percent of Roosevelt Island residents enrolled in school, it is clearly important to ensure that Southpoint Open Space provides space and allows for activities that are appropriate for children. This Profile also included information on ongoing or planned developments, such as new residential buildings and Cornell Tech, to reflect future members of the community.



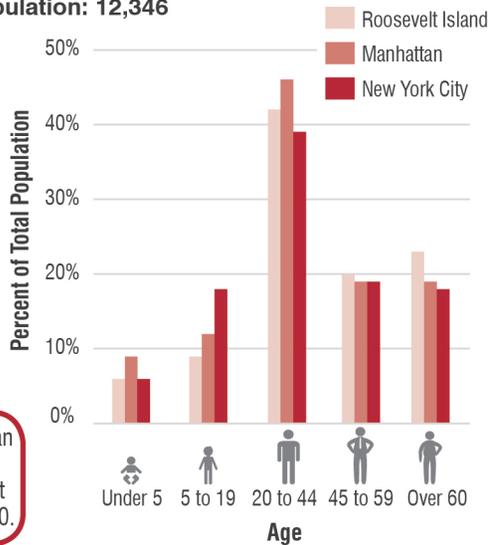
## i. Community Profile

### Age & Population

**Total Population: 12,346**

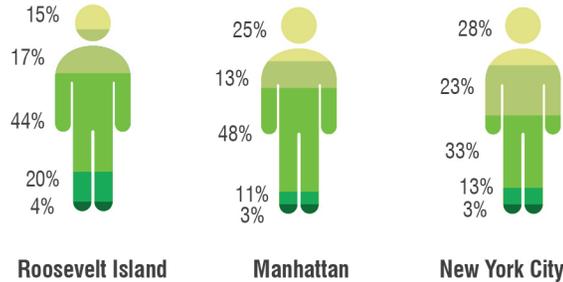
M: 5,966

F: 6,380



The median age on Roosevelt Island is 40.

### Race & Ethnicity



- Hispanic
- African American
- Caucasian
- Asian
- Other

Asians are 20% of the Roosevelt Island population. That's 9% more than Manhattan and 7% more than NYC as a whole.

### Housing

**2** Average Household Size on Roosevelt Island

63% of Roosevelt Island residents moved onto the Island in the last ten years.

91% of Roosevelt Island housing units are occupied.

**4,954**

Total Housing Units

4,519 Occupied

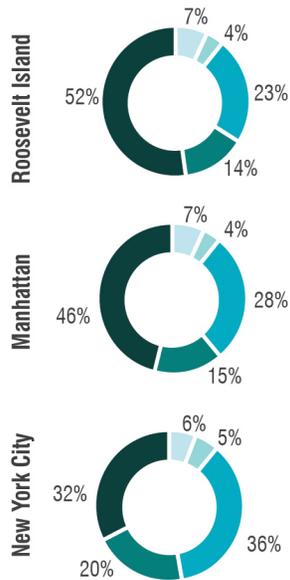
435 Vacant



### Education

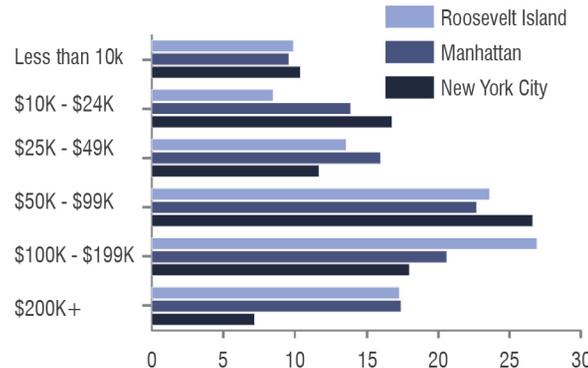
**20%**

Roosevelt Island residents enrolled in school



- Nursery & Preschool
- Kindergarden
- Elementary School
- High School
- Higher Education

### Income



The median household income on Roosevelt Island is \$86,459, that's \$16,800 more than Manhattan residents and \$34,200 more than NYC residents.

### Developments

Recent projects on Roosevelt Island will potentially increase the number of residents and visitors.

Cornell University Tech Campus



Academic facilities, when open in 2017, are anticipated to have ~300 Cornell students, and can accommodate ~800 students.



The residential tower can accommodate ~550 occupants with 356 units.

Riverwalk 7, 8, & 9: Residential Building



Riverwalk 7 has 266 residential units. Unit counts for Riverwalk 8 & 9 are to be determined.

## ii. Recreational & Open Spaces on Roosevelt Island

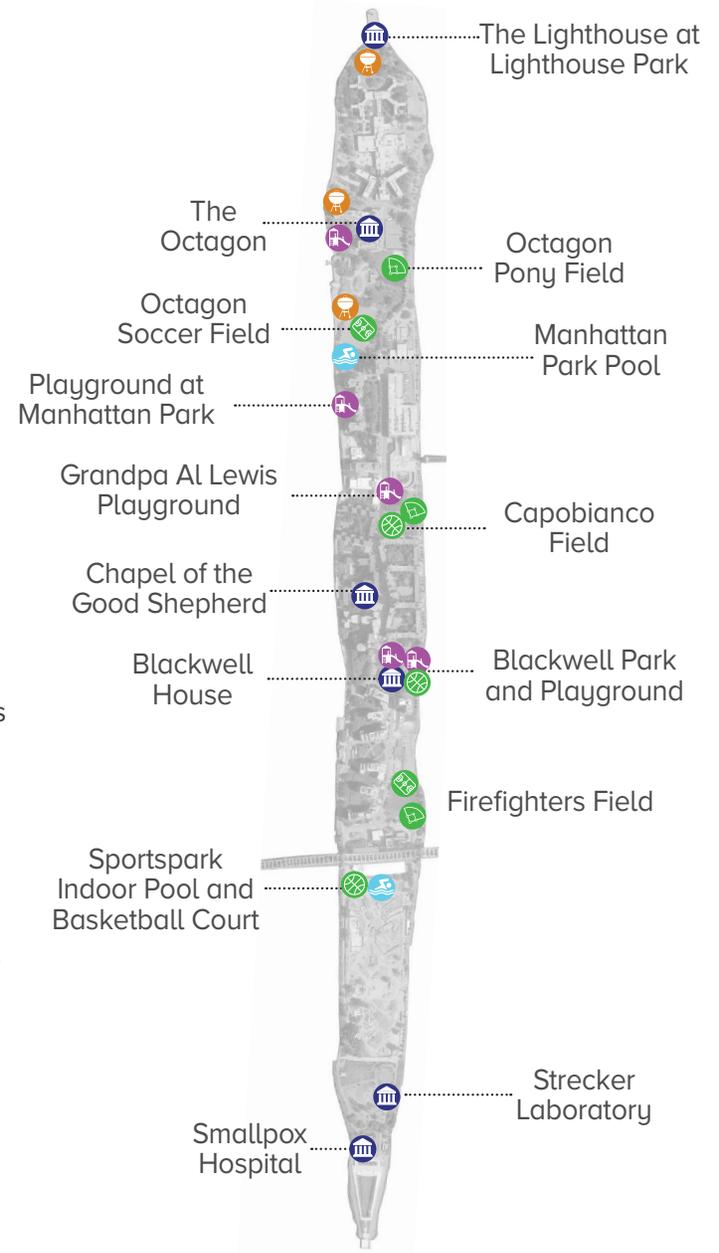
The Project Team compiled an inventory of the existing Recreational and Open Space Opportunities on Roosevelt Island to gain a better understanding of community resources and needs.

The Team also performed a technical analysis of the project site. This included an examination of Southpoint Open Space's size in comparison to other parks around New York City (as shown in the graphic below) as well as the physical characteristic, such as utilities, topography, and pathways. These physical characteristics are illustrated in the diagrams on the following page. Together, this analysis allowed for the identification of potential issues to address as well as opportunities at Southpoint.



*Southpoint Open Space's acreage includes the Smallpox Hospital area and the fenced-off areas along the shoreline that are not currently accessible but could be in the future.*

-  3 Softball/baseball fields
-  2 Soccer fields
-  3 Basketball courts
-  2 Public swimming pools
-  5 Playgrounds
-  3 Grilling areas
-  6 Landmarks



### iii. Site Analysis

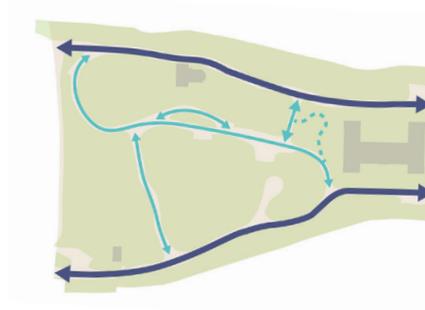
#### Entry & Access

- Fence
- Primary entrance  
\*to Southpoint and Four Freedoms Park
- Entrance



#### Circulation

- Primary paths
- Secondary Paths



#### Natural Plantings



#### Shoreline

- Seawalls
- Viewshed



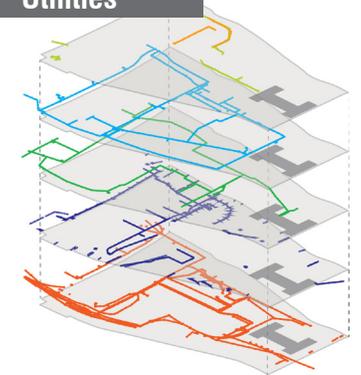
#### Amenities

- Lamp posts
- Benches
- Restroom
- Landmark



#### Utilities

- Telephone
- Unknown
- Water
- Gas
- Storm
- Electricity

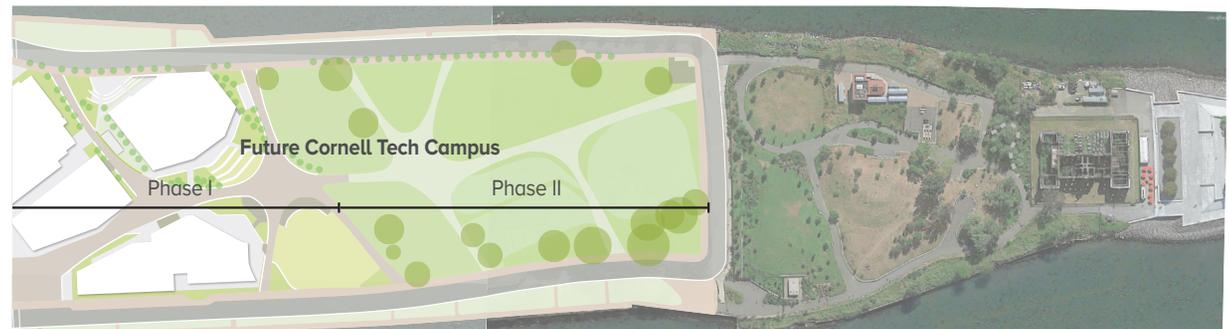


#### Landform

- Rock Outcrop
- Contour lines



#### Context



## D. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This effort included numerous opportunities for public and stakeholder involvement. The design process was highly community-driven and the input from those who live and work on Roosevelt Island has informed and guided each phase. The following summarizes the community engagement activities that occurred throughout this process.

### i. Website

An interactive project website at <http://www.southpointcommunityplan.com/> was developed and publicly accessible. Here, people could learn about the project, viewing meeting announcements and related materials, review published material and draft documents, and submit comments.

In addition, a business card with the project name, logo, and website address was distributed to the public and available at all engagement events.

### ii. Community Advisory Committee

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) consisted of representatives from community organizations, groups, and institutions with key expertise and local knowledge about the future of Southpoint Open Space.

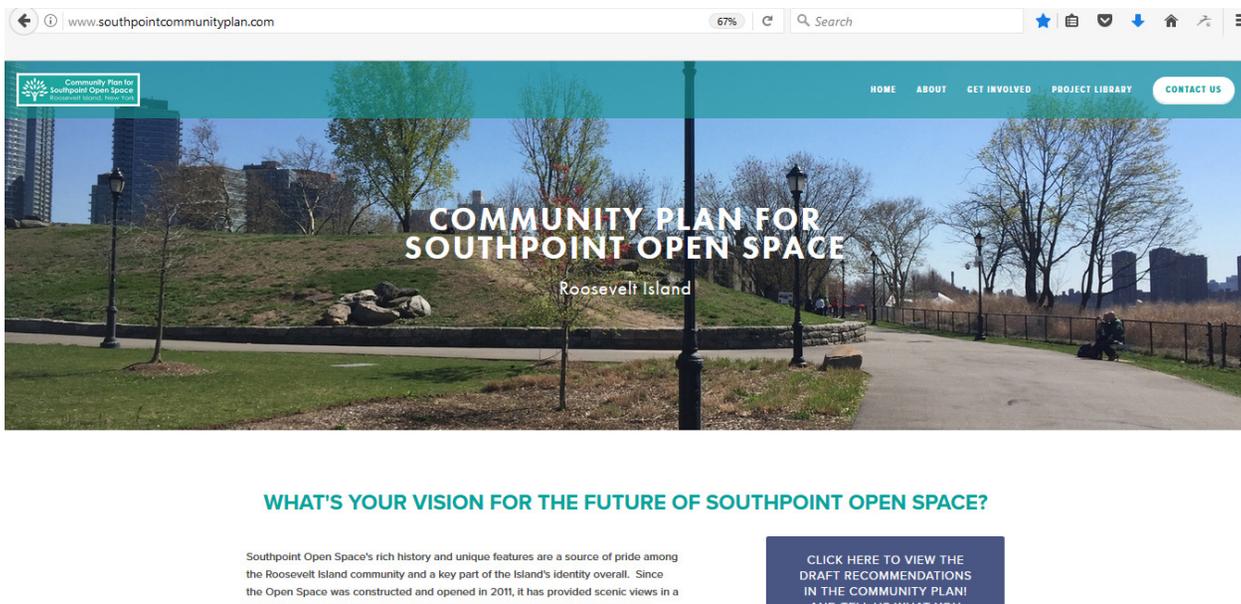
The CAC met with the Project Team at periodic intervals throughout the project to provide guidance on the development of the *Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space*. The meetings were all held at the Good Shepherd Chapel on the following days and times:

- Meeting 1: Thursday, April 28, 2016 at 6:00 PM
- Meeting 2: Thursday, July 14, 2016 at 6:00 PM
- Meeting 3: Thursday, October 13, 2016 at 7:00 PM
- Meeting 4: Thursday, December 13, 2016 at 6:30 PM

The role of the CAC was defined as follows:

- Act as a liaison to the community for this project;
- Help raise awareness about community outreach efforts;
- Provide insight and expertise on local conditions and issues;
- Brainstorm ideas and concepts with the Project Team; and
- Review and comment on draft plans and recommendations

The public was invited to attend and observe CAC meetings, and there was a designated time at the end of each meeting to hear from the public. There were also comment forms available at each



Project website homepage

meeting if anyone wanted to submit their input or feedback in writings.

### iii. On-Line Survey

An online survey was conducted over two weeks in June and July of 2016 to gather additional input about what the community thinks about Southpoint Open Space. Over 200 people completed the survey, 90% of whom lived on Roosevelt Island. Respondents answered questions about 1) how they presently use Southpoint Open Space, 2) how they would like to use it in the future, and 3) their vision for the future of the Smallpox Hospital.



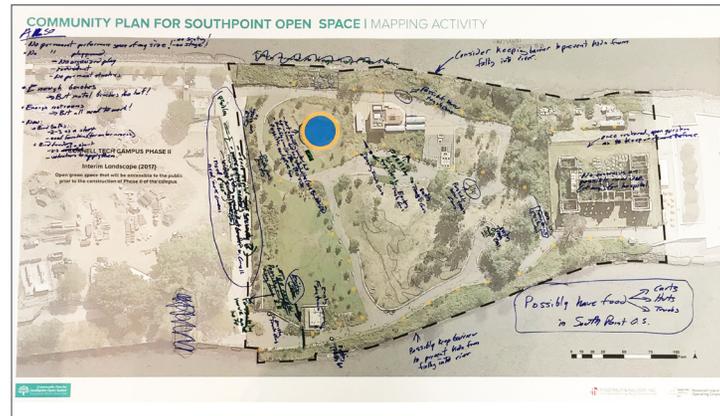
### iv. Pop-Up Event Series

In May and June of 2016, the project team embarked on a series of “Pop-Up Meetings” at the following popular community events:

- Saturday, May 14th, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM at Roosevelt Island Farmer’s Market,
- Thursday, May 26th, 3:30 PM – 6:30 PM at Bike Walk NY Helmet Giveaway, and
- Saturday, June 11th, 10:30 AM – 3:30 PM Roosevelt Island Day.

At these events, the project team set up interactive voting stations to solicit input about the communities’ priorities with respect to programming and design elements at Southpoint Open Space, programming opportunities, and the future of the Smallpox Hospital. These pop-up events served as an opportunity to share information about this project and to begin to understand what the community thinks about Southpoint Open Space. Approximately 450 people provided input at these pop-up events.





## v. Planning and Design Charrette Workshop

This event was held as an in-person, all-day event on July 23rd, 2016, as well as a Virtual Workshop on the project website throughout the month of August 2016. The in-person event was held in the Good Shepherd Community Center in addition to a walking tour through Southpoint Open Space. Attendees were invited to learn more about the project and participate in a variety of interactive activities throughout the day to brainstorm new ideas, weigh considerations for potential programming activities, sketch design ideas and more. The activities included mapping exercises, group discussions, and a walking tour. Approximately 50 people attended the morning and afternoon events, while another 150 people participated in the virtual workshop.



## vi. Public Meeting

A Public Meeting was held on November 10th, 2016 at 6:30 PM that included a presentation and an interactive activity. The presentation provided an overview and background information about the project, including the project purpose, schedule, and vision, as well as a review of previous community engagement events and the existing conditions analysis.



The presentation described the development of alternative draft concept plans that aimed to achieve a balance between space that could be used for potential active recreational activities, such as games or gatherings, and space that would be dedicated to passive recreational space, such as reading and enjoying the sightlines, and

wildlife preservation. One base concept and three alternative draft concept plans were presented. The presentation detailed various elements that could be included in each of these draft concept plans to provide attendees with a sense of how the concept plans could be implemented. Next, attendees were asked to participate in two activities. First, attendees voted on which of the four concept plans they preferred. The large majority of attendees preferred Concept B, which reserves the shorelines for passive recreational use and focuses any potential active uses in the center of Southpoint.

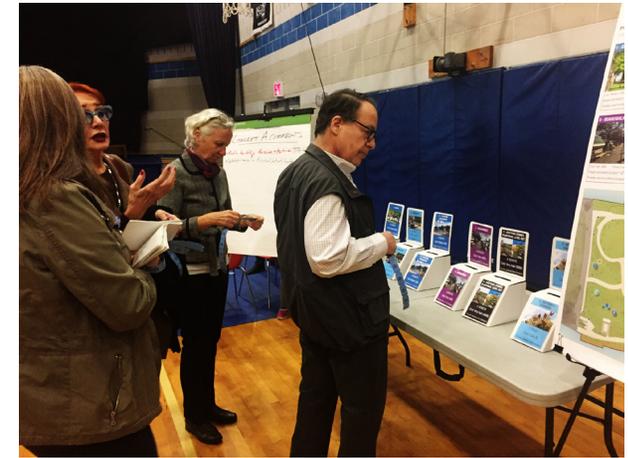
Next, display boards reminded attendees of the various elements that were included in each draft concept. Each element was displayed on a voting box. The attendees were provided with 10 tickets and asked to use their tickets to vote on the elements they thought should be prioritized, regardless of which overall concept plan they preferred. Additionally, each element was 'weighted' according to its approximate cost. For example, the renovation of the old tram's estimated cost was 'very high' so people had to use four tickets to place one vote for this element. On the other hand, the installation of hammocks was considered a "low" cost so people only had to use one ticket to vote for this element. Attendees were permitted to allocate all their tickets into one project or divide them among any number of projects. A gazebo, butterfly corridor (aka: milkweed plantings to attract butterflies), nature play area, old tramway car, and hammock area received the highest percentage of tickets.

## vii. Final Presentation

The project team gave the final project presentation at RIOC's Board Meeting on Thursday, February

16th, 2017 at 5:30 PM. The meeting was also open to the public. The presentation included information about the project; the vision statement and goals that guided the concept development; the draft recommendations for Southpoint Open Space; and the implementation plan.

The project team received comments and questions immediately following the presentation from RIOC's Board and invited the public to provide input at the close of the Board meeting. The presentation was then posted on the project website and the public were encouraged to provide any additional feedback before the public comment period closed on March 6th. The input from the final public presentation and submitted comments were then considered in the development of the *Final Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space*.



# E. VISION AND GOALS

## Development of Vision Statement



All the above referenced events occurred in 2016.

## Community Vision for the Future of Southpoint Open Space

### Vision Statement

The Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space will preserve and celebrate this dynamic, natural landscape and spectacular scenic viewpoints of the surrounding urban landscape, which both contrasts with and defines this tranquil setting.

The Community Plan will cultivate an inviting and usable space that takes into account the abilities, ages, and interests of both current and new members of the community. A flexible and adaptable design will include cultural features and amenities that provide opportunities for gatherings, learning, and exploration.

The Community Plan will respect and augment the space's context, history, and natural systems. Above all, Southpoint Open Space will remain a natural, open space for the Roosevelt Island community in its setting, use, and role.

### Goals



#### 01 | Cultural & Historical Significance

- Celebrate the spirit, traditions and history of the Island through features and elements.
- Preserve and celebrate iconic architectural landmarks.
- Enhance the sense of identity and pride the community has with the Open Space.



#### 02 | Accessibility and Usability

- Provide opportunities for a diversity of experiences at different times of the day and year through a flexible and adaptable design.
- Create a space that serves community members of all ages and abilities through a variety of active and passive offerings.



#### 03 | Comfortable and Inviting Space

- Create a setting that feels welcoming and has a strong sense of community.
- Include elements that are comfortable and protect visitors from the elements.



#### 04 | Natural Environment

- Conserve and protect sensitive natural and cultural resources.
- Create a low impact design that respects and enhances the natural environment.



#### 05 | Connection to the Water

- Emphasize the significance of the natural shoreline.
- Incorporate features that celebrate the Open Space's strong connection to the River.
- Explore the potential access to the water for safe and secure water activities



#### 06 | Public Art and Performance

- Enhance the commitment of the Island to the arts and creativity.
- Incorporate public art installations into the design of the Open Space.
- Provide opportunities for personal expression and discovery through art and performance.



#### 07 | Sustainable Implementation

- Encourage partnerships, cooperation, and coordination with local Island institutions.
- Create opportunities for ongoing future evaluation and review to ensure the Open Space continues to serve the community.





# **PART TWO:**

# **THE COMMUNITY PLAN**

## **Recommendation Toolkit**

The Community Plan was developed to reflect the community's vision for the future of Southpoint Open Space. The recommendations herein strive to balance various types of uses and activities through an adaptable, flexible design that has been inspired by the natural surroundings.



EXAMPLES OF PASSIVE ACTIVITIES



EXAMPLES OF ACTIVE ACTIVITIES



# CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

The Community Plan has been developed in collaboration with the residents of Roosevelt Island to reflect the community's vision for the future of Southpoint Open Space. It should be emphasized that this space will continue to be a green, open space and no additional development has been recommended. The recommendations herein are intended to build upon the previous plan developed by the Trust for Public Land and to enhance the existing features of the Open Space that are valued by the community today, including the sightlines, natural setting, and landscaping. Importantly, the Plan is intended to provide more opportunities for all members of the community to enjoy this resource while making sure to preserve, protect, and celebrate the natural environment. The recommendations strive to balance various types of uses and activities through an adaptable, flexible design that has been inspired by and respects the natural environment that defines the Open Space. A great public space can simultaneously be many things to many different people.

As such, enhancements to the form and design of spaces within Southpoint have been recommended to accommodate how people prefer to use that space while also protecting the existing wildlife and ecology. In any park space, there are two main types of ways that people can use the space: passive recreational activities and active recreational activities.

- Passive recreational activities typically include sedentary activities and often occur in

areas that are sensitive to the environmental resources and wildlife preservation. Examples include observing nature, painting, reading, bird watching, and walking.

- Active recreational activities refer to structured recreational activities and programs that require some level of management and at times require a facility or equipment. Examples include organized sports games, musical performances, and playgrounds.

It is important to note that one particular area in a park is not strictly limited to serving either active or passive uses. Many parks have been designed to be adaptive to various types of uses throughout the day.

While many community members desired more programming opportunities and activities, the large majority agreed that any spaces that are designed to accommodate these types of 'active' uses should primarily be located in the center of the Open Space. This would preserve the park's edges, including the shoreline and scenic viewpoints for passive uses where people could

enjoy nature in peace while re-energizing from the busy day-to-day of urban life. The directive from the community is illustrated in the diagram on the previous page and has guided the design of the concept plan.

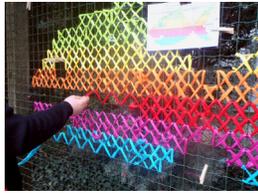
The Plan also provides a comprehensive understanding of the many factors involved in guiding the future of the Open Space in the development of a phasing plan that reflects the associated implementation elements such as funding and available staffing resources. Please note that the order-of-magnitude cost estimates are based on planning-level analysis and reflect year 2016 dollars. More detailed engineering may result in changes to project costs. This plan does not represent final engineered designs, but rather a conceptual blueprint for the future of Southpoint Open Space.

The Community Plan should be responsive to community needs as they may change due to unforeseen circumstances. Ongoing engagement with both current park users and potential future users is critical to the success of this Plan.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**1** Improve the northern edge to welcome people into Southpoint and strengthen connection to Roosevelt Island.



**2** Enhance existing entryways to create gateways that are accessible and reflect the vision for Southpoint.



**3** Create a new main entryway in the middle of the northern edge of the Open Space.



**4** Refurbish one de-commissioned Roosevelt Island tramway to relocate to the gateway of Southpoint.



**5** Install unique historical and ecological signage and markers to create a self-guided walking tour.



**6** Create a comfortable and inviting central space for all, adaptable to a multitude of uses.



**7** Provide access to the shoreline and create comfortable spaces from which to enjoy the scenic views.



**8** Create an outdoor “Nature Center” so people can connect with the environment through learning & play.



**9** Maintain natural setting that encourages wildlife.



**10** Celebrate Southpoint’s natural topography & incorporate hill into overall park design.



**11** Continue to promote and support efforts to permanently stabilize the Smallpox Hospital.



**12** Implement an “Adopt-a-Bench” & “Adopt-a-Tree” Program to help create a more comfortable Open Space.



**13** Identify pre-approved food and drink vendor locations and initiate Vendor Application Program.



**14** Develop Public Art Program for public spaces, including Southpoint Open Space.



**15** Implement Volunteer Program to assist with maintaining Southpoint Open Space plantings, bird feeder, etc.



# CONCEPT PLAN





## 1. Improve the northern edge to welcome people into Southpoint and strengthen connection to Roosevelt Island.

- Install temporary public art and/or plantings on the existing fence to showcase the identity of the park.
- Involve the community in the design of the public art through a seasonal event.
- Consider future removal of the north fence.

### The Opportunity

The edges or borders of public spaces define how such spaces interact with their surrounding environment. The design of the boundaries around a public space has the potential to create a welcoming atmosphere and help draw people into the space. Additionally, the perimeter of a park can help strengthen its connection to the surrounding neighborhood and community. And more open edges that allow better views into and out of the park can make parks and the surrounding areas safer.

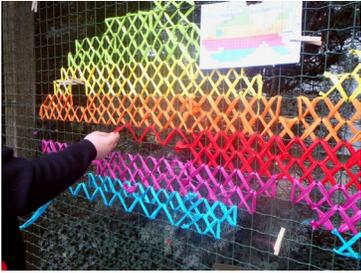
Due to its unique location and context, residents and visitors primarily interact with only one of the four edges of Southpoint Open Space which is along the northern side. Currently, an eight-foot tall steel fence exists along the entirety of this boundary. The eastern and western edges are along the river and the southern edge is along the boundary with FDR Four Freedoms Memorial Park. This places increased importance on the northern edge to establish a strong connection to the rest of Roosevelt Island. However, the southern half of the Island currently feels segmented and lacks the feeling of continuity that exists along the northern and middle sections of the Island.

### The Recommendation

The continuation of the shoreline promenades that are a component of the Seawall Reconstruction Project, briefly described in Section B and included in Recommendation 7, is one way the connection between the Open Space and the Island will be strengthened. Additional improvements can further strengthen this connection while welcoming people into the park space. In the short-term, this can be done through the incorporation of public art installations along the northern fence through a seasonal event that encourages community involvement. These temporary public art installations can be implemented at a very low cost while providing an opportunity to celebrate and showcase the Roosevelt Island community's identity.

In the future, additional consideration should be given to the potential removal of the north fence. This idea received strong support from community members but security concerns prevent removal in the short-term. The potential to address those security concerns to allow for the fence's removal should be revisited in the future since there would be significant benefits from removal, including strengthening Southpoint's physical and symbolic connection to the Island.

## Visualizations

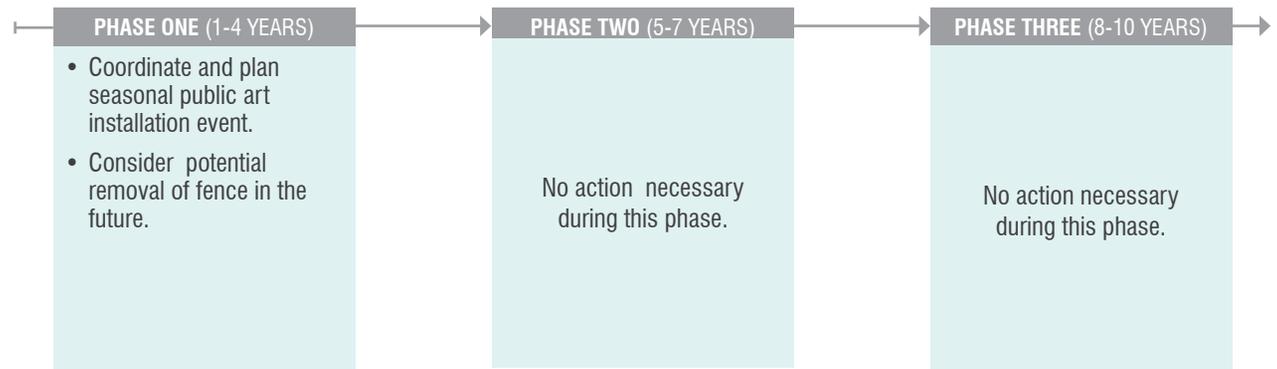


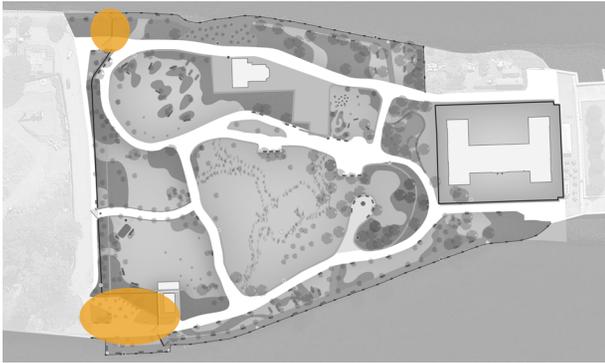
## Cost Estimate



- Assumes seasonal public art event would be coordinated with Recommendation #14: Public Art Program.

## Phasing Plan





## 2. Enhance existing entryways to create gateways that are accessible and reflect the vision for Southpoint.

- Improve accessibility by providing amenities & facilities for all modes of travel to and from Southpoint.
- Inform park users about park resources & amenities with uniquely designed & well-maintained bulletin-boards.
- Transform underused area surrounding the northwest entry into a new, vibrant public space for the community.

### The Opportunity

Gateways provide an excellent opportunity to create a strong first impression and immediately establish a space’s visual identity. However, there is currently little information or celebration at the two entryways to Southpoint Open Space, which are located at the northwest and northeast corners of Southpoint Open Space. And since anyone who visits Four Freedoms Park Memorial must travel through Southpoint Open Space to get there, many people walk through the Open Space without realizing it. As such, people often don’t recognize it as an identifiable place. The existing entryways represent a missed opportunity to reflect Southpoint’s cultural and historical significance for the Roosevelt Island community.

### The Recommendation

**The following elements are recommended for both of the existing entryways:**

- Install uniquely designed and well-maintained bulletin boards that direct people to key destinations and amenities, including up-to-date programming information
- Enhance accessibility for people of all ages on all modes of transportation with the provision of bike racks as well as benches for those waiting for the Red Bus.

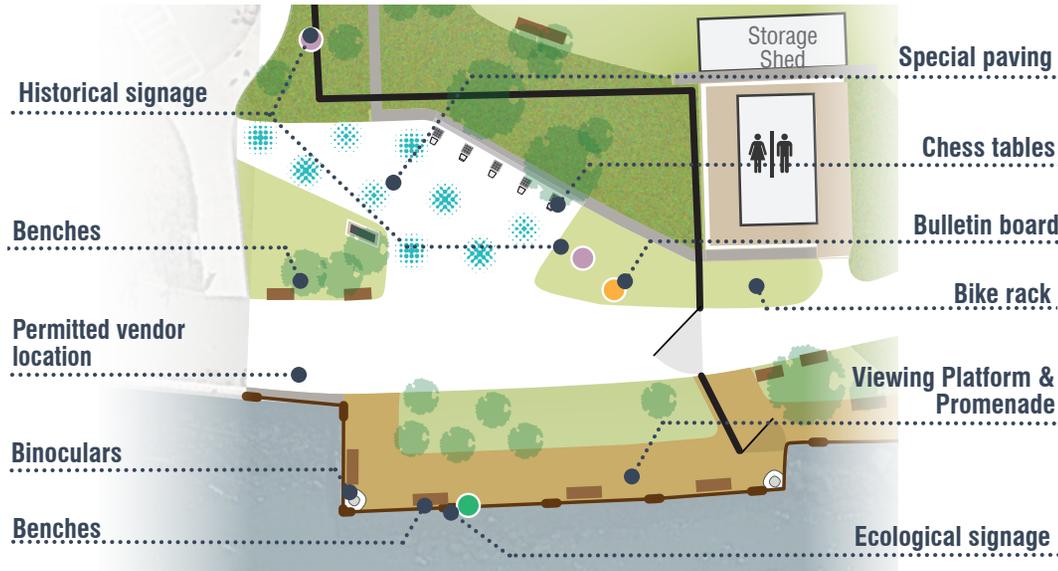
**Additional design elements and features are recommended to improve the public space outside the current primary entryway on the northwest side of the Open Space.**

- Concrete chess tables should be installed so that one player would sit along the existing stone bench. These chess tables promote healthy physical and social activity for all ages while infusing a space with a fun and innovative spirit.
- A space should also be designated as part of the “Local Vendor Permitting Program” where

local businesses could utilize the space to sell refreshments and food. (see Rec. 13 for details)

- Create a “viewing platform” at the existing space along the water’s edge. (See Rec 7 for details).
- The incorporation of special paving features on existing paved areas would be a highly visible way to create a vibrant space without impacting the natural environment.
  - » The design shown in the concept plan is *only one example* illustrating how this paving feature could dramatically create a sense of place that is unique and vibrant. Paving features should be chosen that feel authentic to the Roosevelt Island community and reflect its spirit and character. Two possibilities include a design that represents the history of the Island or a design inspired by the nearby river to reinforce the significance of the shoreline.
  - » StreetPrint, also known as Stamped Asphalt or Patterned Paving, is the most commonly used product for the implementation of decorative asphalt. The product allows for creative design solutions that require little maintenance at cost-effective prices, with significant advantages over bricks or pavers.

## Visualizations



## Cost Estimate



- Assumes that chess tables added during phase 1 are frequently used and there is demand for more

## Phasing Plan





### 3. Create a new main entryway in the middle of the northern edge of the Open Space.

- Welcome people into Southpoint by improving accessibility and activating more areas along the northern edge.
- Encourage more users to visit and utilize the central areas of the park, thereby preserving the shorelines for peaceful moments of serenity.
- Allow for potential natural flow of movement as people travel from the future Cornell Tech campus.

#### The Opportunity

Because Southpoint can only be accessed along one edge, it's important to make that edge open and accessible to welcome people into the Open Space. There are currently only two entryways into Southpoint Open Space, both of which are along the corners near the shoreline. However, the points at which people are encouraged to enter into any space often create concentrated areas of activity and can determine how people use that space. The community has expressed a desire to maintain the shoreline areas of Southpoint Open Space for passive recreational activity, such as quiet moments of reflection to enjoy the sightlines, and enjoy the natural, peaceful setting.

#### The Recommendation

A new, main entryway at the center of the northern edge of the Open Space would increase greatly its accessibility and activate more areas along the park's northern edge. It would also draw people whose primary reason for visiting the Open Space is to engage in any programmatic activities occurring in the central areas, thereby reserving

the shorelines for quieter, passive activity. If possible, this new entryway should be designed to align with the circulation patterns laid out in Cornell Tech's Landscape Plan for the Phase II area that is adjacent to Southpoint.

The design elements of this entryway would create a welcoming atmosphere that sets the tone for an experience that embraces the natural landscape and the character of the Roosevelt Island community. Natural landscaping features and trees would be incorporated to encourage a sustainable design that reflects the ecological significance of the park and minimizes maintenance costs. Notable gateway signage would draw people to the entryway, celebrate the space that people are about to enter, and inform residents and visitors of the space's many amenities. A bollard would be put in place to simultaneously prevent vehicles from utilizing this entryway while also providing an opportunity to have unique signage. Other design elements such as strategically placed lighting, would be used to create a comfortable and inviting arrival experience.

## Visualizations



## Cost Estimate



## Phasing Plan





## 4. Refurbish one de-commissioned Roosevelt Island tramway to relocate to the new gateway of Southpoint.

- Reinforce Southpoint’s identity as a place of cultural significance with numerous historical features.
- Create a community space for gatherings, play, and learning for all ages.
- Serve as a gateway feature at the new main entryway.



### The Opportunity

The Roosevelt Island aerial tramway was the first tram in the country to be used for urban transportation when it opened in 1976 and it continues to stand out today as not only a popular and necessary mode of transportation, but as a unique and historical feature of the Island.

Between 2007 and 2010, RIOC led the “Roosevelt Island Tram Modernization Project” to upgrade the original structure with a modernized tramway designed to operate in a safer and more efficient fashion. Upon the successful completion of this project, new tramway cars replaced the older versions, which have since been placed in storage. There has been community support and discussion regarding the restoration and reuse of these cars, though no clear direction as to how or where the cars should be reused.

Southpoint Open Space is already a space with rich historical significance for Roosevelt Island. It contains two landmarked buildings, Smallpox Hospital and Strecker Memorial Laboratory, in addition to the historical features such as the old structures from the Goldwater Hospital.

Additionally, it will soon feature the FDR Hope Memorial, which honors the history and character of FDR, and is located next to the Four Freedoms FDR Memorial.

### The Recommendation

With these numerous historical features, Southpoint Open Space is the ideal location for a renovated tramway car. The car would further bolster the identify of Southpoint as a space that celebrates the history and character of Roosevelt Island, while also serving as an attractive and exciting feature that would be enjoyed by all. Placed near the new main entryway, the car would bolster the prominence of this new entryway while drawing visitors that are mainly interested in any potential associated activities towards the central area of the space. An example of such potential activities are educational programs and workshops to learn about the evolution and operation of New York’s public transportation system with an emphasis on the tramway. The tramway could also serve as a community gathering space and as an opportunity for children to use their imaginations during times of play.

Across the country there are a number of organizations that specialize in the renovation and refurbishment of old streetcars, trolleys, or buses. Sometimes the purpose is for their renewed use and other times the primary goal is to preserve a sense of history and provide an opportunity for others to learn about America's transit system.

Two organizations in close proximity to Roosevelt Island that would likely be useful resources during the rehabilitation of one of the old RIOC tramways would be the Connecticut Trolley Museum and the New York Transit Museum. The Connecticut Trolley Museum in particular has numerous volunteers who are passionate about the work involved to rehabilitate old transit cars. The New York Transit Museum has numerous exhibitions and programs that are focused on educating people about NYC's transit system in particular and inspiring the next generation of potential transportation engineers.

## Visualizations



Refurbished streetcar, Connecticut Trolley Museum



"On the Streets: New York's Trolleys and Buses" exhibit at the New York Transit Museum provides a place to sit as well as an educational experience about the history of above ground mobility and surface transit in NYC.



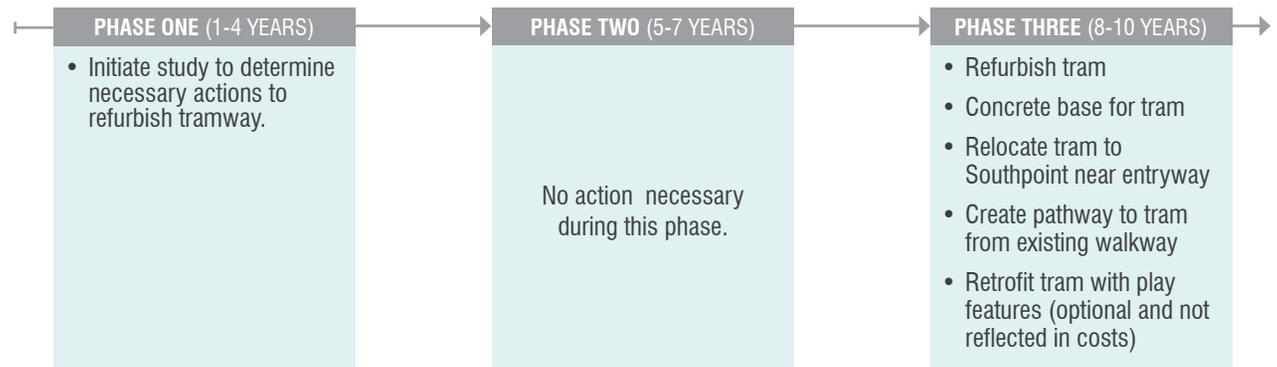
Family programs such as this one include staff readings of some of their favorite transportation stories.

## Cost Estimate



- The level of effort that will be required to refurbish the tramway will be dependent upon this initial study. The resulting cost of refurbishment could vary significantly; estimate is based on similar projects to refurbish old subway cars.
- Utilize stone leftover from Cornell construction that is being stored at Southpoint for the stone walkway to tram.

## Phasing Plan





## 5. Install unique historical and ecological signage and markers to create a self-guided walking tour.

- Educate people about the numerous historical features in Southpoint.
- Provide information on the plantings featured throughout the space.
- Encourage people to gain a renewed appreciation for the surrounding ecological and historical features.

### The Opportunity

Southpoint Open Space is a space that features many rich historical fixtures that have important significance to Roosevelt Island. Additionally, the Open Space is recognized for its embrace of the natural environment. It is truly a natural oasis within the urban environment of New York City and has been embraced by residents and visitors alike for the informal landscape design that features wild and natural plantings. It was the first park in New York City to feature only indigenous plantings and continues to only feature such plantings today.



### The Recommendation

A self-guided walking tour that utilizes strategically placed signage would allow those who spend time in Southpoint Open Space to learn about the history and ecological activities of the area. It is recommended that this signage include minimal text with 3-4 lines of information as well as RIOC's website address that people will be encouraged to visit to learn more. The suggested locations for the historical and ecological content that could be covered on the walking tour are illustrated on the map on the next page.

Additionally, planting signage would celebrate and educate park users about the indigenous species in the Open Space. This small, simple signage would utilize an understated design that blends in with the plantings. Text can include the plantings' common name, genus and species, and plant family.

Initial efforts should focus on the installation of the signage throughout the Open Space as well as an introduction to the tour at bulletin boards at the entryways. In the future, the development of brochures that would be distributed at entryways for free should be considered.

## Visualizations

The following photos represent examples of potential signage designs and types:

 Historical Signage  
(significant features such as landmark, memorial, etc.)



 Historical Signage

 Ecological Signage



 Planting Signage

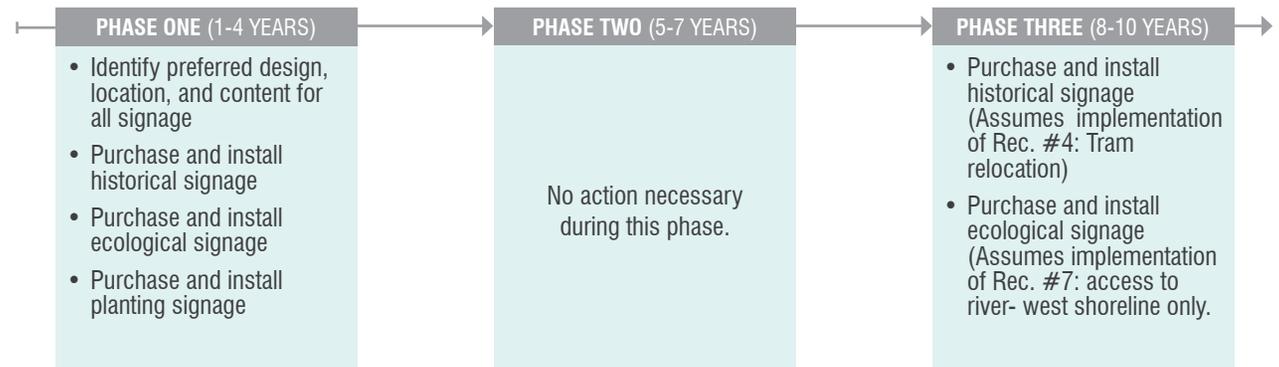


## Cost Estimate



- It is assumed that volunteers from the community and local organizations will work with RIOG to develop content for signage.

## Phasing Plan





## 6. Create a comfortable and inviting central space that is adaptable to a multitude of uses and purposes.

- Increase use of natural landscaping to create unique spaces for various activities to occur simultaneously.
- Preserve open areas for potential programming activities.
- Create comfortable spaces with more seating options and shaded areas.
- Install amenities like picnic tables to promote gathering spaces.

### The Opportunity

One of Southpoint Open Space's key features is the natural landscape and serene beauty. This is evident both in the wild landscaping and the open, green spaces. The community expressed a passionate desire to maintain this natural setting. Residents also expressed that the Open Space could be more fully enjoyed for all residents in two important ways. Firstly, the Open Space does not currently include many amenities that allow people to use it comfortably. There is a limited amount of shade and many people expressed the need for additional seating options that are more comfortable than the existing benches. Secondly, many residents expressed a desire for more opportunities to utilize the open spaces, whether that is through the provision of design elements or programming activities.

### The Recommendation

This recommendation is based on the idea that a great public space should be capable of being many different things to many different users. While the concept directs any potential 'active uses' to

be focused in the central area of the Open Space, the Space should be designed to accommodate both passive and active uses at various points of the day. As such, the design suggests organically dividing the large open areas in the central portion of the park into smaller sections through the use of additional natural landscaping and a new entryway. Unique spaces that are naturally separated will allow diverse activities to be occurring simultaneously and harmoniously. The provision of hammocks and picnic tables as well as additional benches and trees would allow residents and visitors to comfortably enjoy the space as both individuals or in group settings. Large portions of the open lawn area would be preserved so that they can be peacefully enjoyed during various times of the day and provide space for programmed activities at other times. According to community input, such programming activities could include the following:

- Nature classes and workshops
- Physical and mental wellness classes
- Community potluck picnics
- Lawn games
- Rotating public art exhibitions
- Performance art events
- Special events

## Visualizations



## Cost Estimate



- It is assumed that mural on storage shed would be created by local artist (see Rec. 14: Public Art Program).
- Assumes that picnic tables added during phase 1 are frequently used and there is demand for more

## Phasing Plan





## 7. Provide access to the shoreline and create comfortable spaces from which to enjoy the scenic views.

- Extend the existing promenade along the shoreline to the north of Southpoint to Southpoint's shorelines.
- Maintain areas of natural landscaping in the areas adjacent to the promenade.
- Include elements that encourage community gatherings, such as picnic tables, only on the western shoreline.
- Create seating areas that allow for peaceful reflection.



### The Opportunity

Southpoint Open Space's seawalls were damaged during Hurricane Sandy. RIOC is leading a Seawall Reconstruction Project under a separate contract that will reinforce the deteriorating shorelines and prevent further erosion. A schematic design was developed in 2013 and construction of the seawall along the eastern shoreline will occur first due to the severity of its existing condition.

### The Recommendation

The reconstruction projects on both shorelines already include the design of a promenade along the river and suggests landscaping features to incorporate in the area between the promenade and the existing pathway. The design of this promenade and a potential landscaping plan has been included in this Community Plan. The promenade would provide the public with access to the shoreline, thereby strengthening the connection to the East River while improving the scenic views that are already treasured by community members.

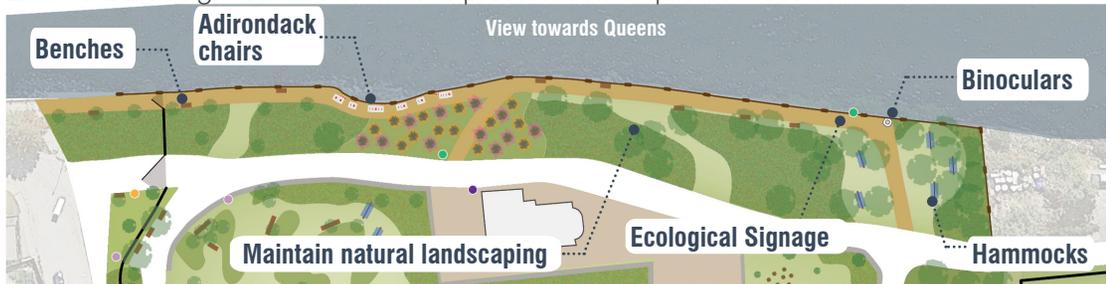
The potential landscaping plan emphasizes the importance of maintaining a natural setting with dedicated areas for 'wild' landscaping in the

areas along the shoreline. The organization and shape of such landscaped areas should reflect the informality of the space while mimicking the unpredictable and unstructured design of nature. Comfortable benches and trees for shade should dot the shoreline to offer relaxing opportunities for viewing birds, marine traffic, and spectacular views of Queens and Manhattan. Hammocks could be situated along the shoreline to provide an additional way to interact with and admire the natural setting. Hammocks are simple in gesture, form, and execution; they compliment the surrounding park environment while providing a joyful experience for those who choose to utilize them.

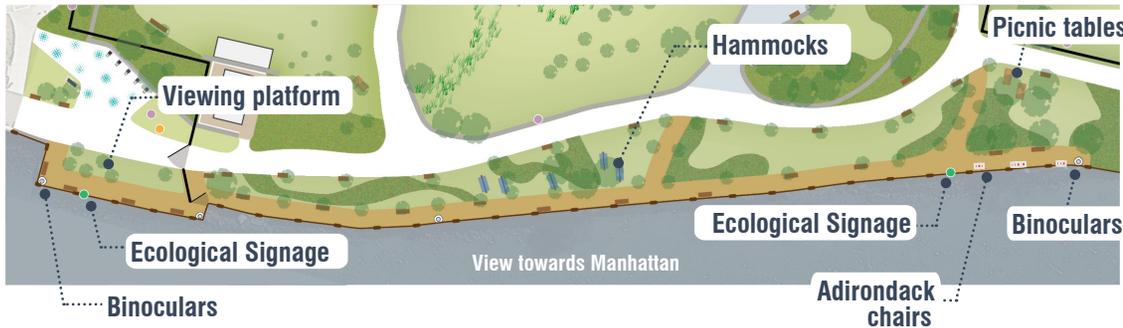
*The provision of any additional features would be focused along the western shoreline, thereby preserving space along the eastern shoreline as a peaceful setting throughout the day for all to enjoy. Additionally, the western shoreline attracts more activity since it has views of Manhattan and people travel along this side to access the FDR Four Freedoms Memorial Park. Two community gathering areas have been recommended to anchor both the beginning and end of the western promenade with picnic tables, viewing binoculars at various heights and ecological signage.*

## Visualizations

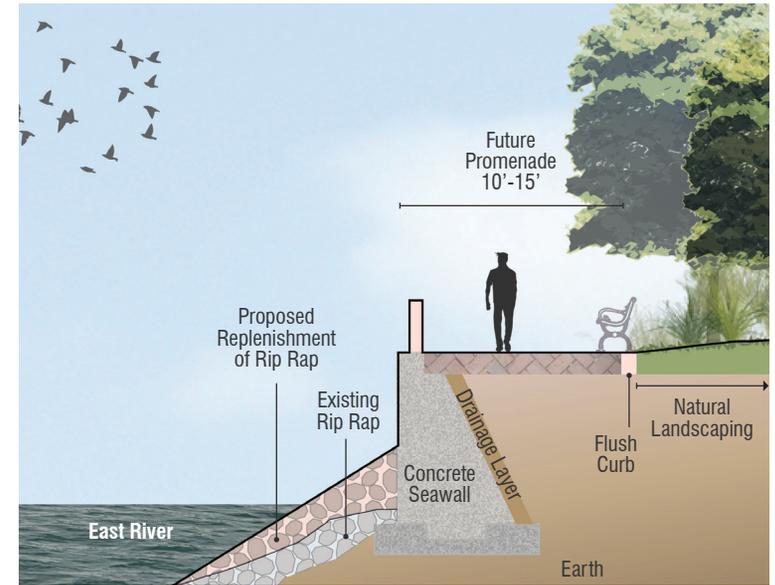
EAST SIDE design focuses on wildlife preservation & quiet reflection



WEST SIDE design allows for potential higher levels of activity



Recommended typical section along the east side (based on preliminary designs for Southpoint Seawall Reconstruction Project, Langan Engineering & Environmental Services)



## Cost Estimate



- Assumes cost of moving fence, landscaping, and boardwalk would be included in Seawall Reconstruction Project.
- Includes cost of additional trees, benches, Adirondack chairs, hammocks, picnic table, signage, and binoculars.

## Phasing Plan





## 8. Create outdoor “Nature Center” to provide a place for people to connect with the environment through learning & play.

- Utilize existing natural features and simple, minimal design approach.
- Create a “Natural Class” area with simple seating area for people of all ages to use for workshops and classes.
- Identify a “Nature Play” area for children to interact with the outdoors through unstructured, nature-based play.

### The Opportunity

The natural setting and landscaping is a defining characteristic of what makes Southpoint Open Space such a valued place. Residents and visitors both described the park as a peaceful refuge amidst the busy day-to-day schedule and pace of life in New York City. Many stated that Southpoint is one of the few places where they feel like they

can connect with nature in its true, wild form on a regular basis. Others expressed their hope that Southpoint’s natural setting would help their friends and family, particularly young children, establish a similar bond with nature. As children and adults learn more about wildlife, natural plantings, and other ecological systems, they typically gain a greater appreciation for their natural surroundings. This usually translates to a greater respect for the space and a lower likelihood of vandalism or littering, as well as an increased desire to become involved in protecting the natural environment as an important resource.



### The Recommendation

A designated, open-air, and contextually appropriate “Nature Center” would provide a space in which people of all ages could gather to learn more about nature through workshops and classes. While any specific design or details of such a space are preliminary, it would include two key features. The first would be a “Natural Class” area which would simply require a natural seating area that could be utilized for instruction as well as discussion. Many natural class areas feature log stools or benches

in a simple foundation in an open area, as shown in the examples. The log stools would be newly placed in the area; they would *not* be created by cutting down any existing trees in the space.

The second feature that is recommended is a “Nature Play” area that would encourage children of all ages to engage in unstructured, nature-based play. In recent years, there seems to be an increasing understanding that this kind of play is often a powerful influence on the development of life-long environmental conservation values among children. These play areas are often created simply by defining a boundary around a natural habitat that is already accessible to children. This is in line with the belief that the best places for nature play have already been designed by nature while also mitigating any disturbance to the natural setting. As such, it is recommended that effort should be made to utilize existing natural features, such as the existing topography, logs, or other materials, which has the added benefit of encouraging children to use their imaginations.



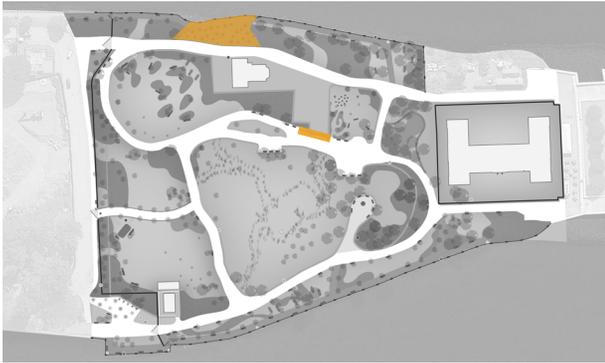
## Cost Estimate



- Cost will vary depending on play area amenities and design

## Phasing Plan





## 9. Maintain a natural setting that encourages wildlife.

- Maintain existing and create additional “wild” landscaped areas for wildlife.
- Create a dedicated space with plantings that provide nutrients for butterflies and/or hummingbirds.
- Create a locally designed bird feeder and/or bath to mitigate view of MTA subway emergency subway exit area from Open Space.

### The Opportunity

Southpoint Open Space’s natural landscape and indigenous plantings are treasured by both people and wildlife, and the park has become a home to many different animals, such as a variety of bird species, butterflies, squirrels and more. As such, all recommendations should seek to create a space that balances the needs of both animals and people by consistently including the considerations of existing wildlife and their welfare.

### The Recommendation

The preservation of the natural setting and “wild” landscaped areas that is home to many of the existing animals in the Open Space has been woven into the recommendations throughout this Plan. These areas are to be maintained whenever possible and the creation of additional natural areas has been suggested for various areas. Additionally, the design of the eastern side of Southpoint is focused on the promotion of passive recreational activity and wildlife preservation. This was done to ensure the design is as sensitive to existing wildlife as possible while also recognizing

the need to create a space that can be pleasantly enjoyed by people as well.

This recommendation also includes two new features that would further promote preserving wildlife habitats in Southpoint. The first feature is to create a dedicated space in the area between the Southpoint pathway and the eastern promenade in which to place additional indigenous plantings, such as various milkweed species, that specifically attract butterflies and hummingbirds. This dedicated area would also provide an opportunity to learn about animals like the monarch butterfly while promoting a sense of playful joy and beauty.

The second feature is an installation of a bird feeder and/or bath that would be strategically located to mitigate the views of the MTA emergency subway exit area. Unique bird facilities have been designed for other parks in various locations, including New York City, as shown in the example on the next page. A local artist could use these examples as inspiration to create an installation that provided for local birds with a design that was contextually appropriate to Southpoint’s natural setting and does not inhibit the MTA’s security standards.

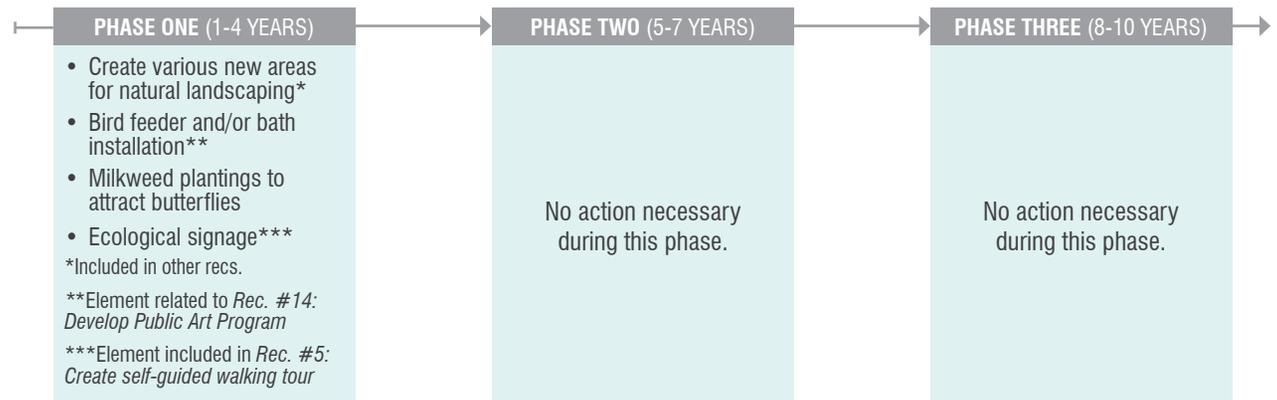


## Cost Estimate



- Assumes local artist will create bird feeder/bath and any additional funding or coordination will be done through Public Art Program (Recommendation #14).
- Natural plantings and bird feeder/bath to be maintained through assistance of Volunteer Program (Recommendation #15)

## Phasing Plan





## 10. Celebrate Southpoint's natural topography and integrate it into the overall park's design.

- Better integrate the hill into Southpoint's overall design with natural plantings.
- Strategically plant landscaping to create pathways that guide people to the hilltop while avoiding steep inclines.
- Encourage people to enjoy the view at the hilltop with viewing binoculars.
- Consider temporary public art installations that celebrate the topography.

### The Opportunity

The large hill in Southpoint Open Space is a distinguishing feature of the park space. It takes up a significant area of the space but lacks a notable function since it has not been fully integrated into the overall design. The steepness of the slope at various points often discourages people from climbing up it, despite the stunning view that can be seen from the top of the hill. The community felt that the Plan should promote the natural topography as it currently exists, as opposed to the creation of a grade change that could also be highly costly.

### The Recommendation

In accordance with community input, the concept plan should be designed to incorporate and celebrate the natural topography as it exists today. The hill should be seen as a key asset and opportunity instead of a design challenge. This can be done by improving the hill's landscaping with indigenous, wild plantings. This will help to integrate the hill into the overall design of the Open Space. Additionally, when such indigenous vegetation and flora are initially planted on the

hill, they should be strategically placed to guide people along pathways that avoid the areas with the steepest inclines. This relatively low-cost recommendation could go a long way towards improving how people interact with the hill. Additionally, viewing binoculars could be placed at the top of the hill to further enhance the view.

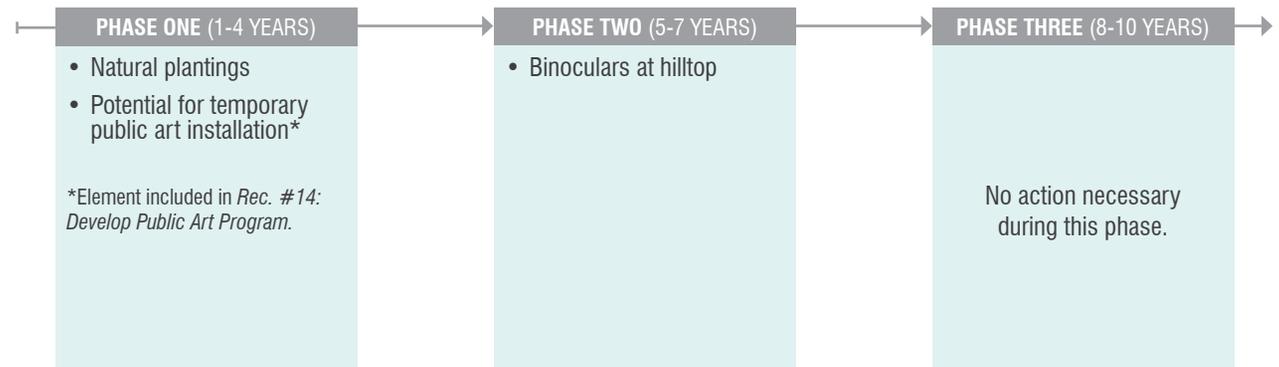
There is also the possibility to celebrate the topography through a temporary public art installation. One example of how this has been done in a creative manner that respects the environment is the example on the following page of a sculpture designed to look like a ring rolling down a hill in a public park. This photograph is not the suggested recommendation; instead, it demonstrates an idea that could serve to similarly inspire local artists with an idea that is contextually appropriate for Southpoint. Local artists should be encouraged to consider such an installation. The approval of any temporary installation would need to be reviewed based on an established set of criteria to ensure it is in line with the community's vision for Southpoint Open Space.



## Cost Estimate



## Phasing Plan





## 11. Continue to promote and support efforts to permanently stabilize the Smallpox Hospital.

- Celebrate the passion and pride the community has expressed towards protecting this resource.
- Explore the opportunity to potentially utilize the Hospital for other uses once it has been stabilized.
- Share information about the history of this iconic architectural structure.



Existing interior - central corridor looking north

### Project Description

As described earlier in this document, a *Stabilization Study* for the Smallpox Hospital has been undertaken concurrently with the development of this Community Plan. This Study has built upon previous stabilization planning efforts to identify which areas of the Smallpox Hospital are most vulnerable and should be prioritized for any stabilization efforts. This study has also considered future public access to the Hospital in its engineering documents that outline the necessary actions for stabilization.

Initial findings from the Study are that the north wall, which faces Southpoint Open Space, is likely the most vulnerable element of the Hospital and severely at risk of collapsing. However, funding to permanently stabilize the Hospital in a way that would allow for public access has not yet been identified.

### The Recommendation

As such, this recommendation is to focus all efforts associated with the Smallpox Hospital towards acquiring funding sources for stabilization. The large

majority of the community that provided input on the future of the Smallpox Hospital was passionate in their support for stabilizing the structure. As a New York City Landmark with a place on the National Register of Historic Places, the community recognizes its cultural, historical, and architectural significance.

Beyond stabilization, community members also expressed a variety of opinions about other potential uses for the Hospital. It is understood that this input may not be as directly relevant since it will likely take a number of years to secure the significant amount of funding necessary for stabilization. However, a strong understanding of what the community envisions for potential uses of the Smallpox Hospital would provide valuable information and a place from which to start the conversation in the future when it is stabilized. It should also be noted that various developers in the restaurant and hospitality industries expressed interest in the potential future of the Smallpox Hospital. However, *neither of these potential uses are strongly in line with the community's input*, which is illustrated in the diagram on the following page that shows what types of potential uses garnered the most support as well as the most opposition.



Existing interior - central corridor looking south

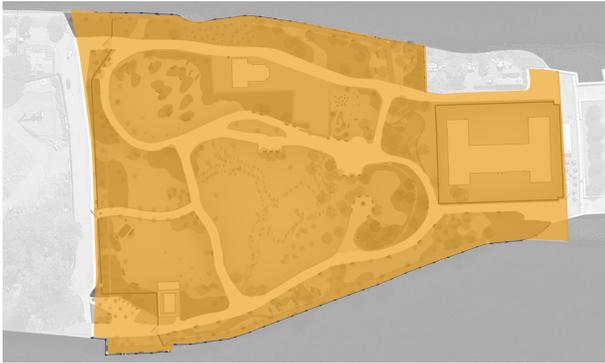


## DIAGRAM: LEVELS OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR POTENTIAL FUTURE USES OF THE SMALLPOX HOSPITAL



**Low Level of  
Community Support**

**High Level of  
Community Support**



## 12. Implement “Adopt-a-Bench” and “Adopt-a-Tree” Programs to help create a more comfortable Open Space.

- Establish a funding source for the provision of more comfortable amenities.
- Provide the community with an opportunity to be directly involved and contribute to the future of Southpoint.
- Emphasize the importance of Southpoint as a meaningful place for Roosevelt Island residents and visitors by strengthening the ties people have to it.

### The Opportunity

Many community members expressed input that Southpoint Open Space lacks basic amenities, such as comfortable seating and shaded areas that would allow people to spend more time there. People stated their dissatisfaction with both the quantity and quality of the seating options. A significant issue is that the benches retain both hot and cold temperatures, causing them to be unusable at times. Others stated their desire for benches that included backs and other features that prioritize comfort. The lack of shaded areas, particularly around the seating options that do exist, cause it to be uncomfortable to spend time in the Open Space, especially during extremely hot summer days when people would normally welcome an opportunity to sit along the river.

### The Recommendation

Many of the recommendations in this Plan seek to address these issues with additional seating options, such as benches and hammocks. Trees with enough foliage for shade have also been recommended at the majority of locations with seating. Trees have also been recommended at all locations that encourage community gatherings, such as picnic tables.

The implementation of “Adopt-a-Bench” and “Adopt-a-Tree” program would support the purchase and maintenance of these new features and also provide a mechanism by which to replace uncomfortable benches. These programs exist at many parks throughout New York City as a permanent fund to maintain and endow the care of park facilities. Through these programs, individuals or entities contribute a donation in order to “adopt” either a bench or a tree. That funding can then be used to either replace an uncomfortable bench, buy a new one or purchase a tree for the park. It is understood that the funding also goes towards maintaining these features as well as the spaces around them. In return for their donation, a placard would be engraved with a short message and placed either on the bench or at the foot of the tree. This would provide residents, local businesses, and organizations the chance to directly contribute to the vision for Southpoint Open Space and strengthen community ties to the park.

Cost estimates for this recommendation and the other three programmatic recommendations have not been included in the Plan. It is assumed that this program will be developed under RIOC’s guidance during the first phase of the Plan.





## 13. Identify pre-approved food and drink vendor locations and initiate Vendor Permit Application Program.

- Support local businesses on Roosevelt Island.
- Create a comfortable space with amenities at Southpoint Open Space.

### The Opportunity

The lack of dining or other retail establishments in the close proximity of Southpoint Open Space limits how much time people can comfortably spend in the Open Space. Additionally, many such establishments along Main Street have struggled to attract people or market their businesses.

### The Recommendation

The implementation of a Vendor Permit Application Program would simultaneously address both these issues. Those who visit the Open Space would be provided with dining options, thereby improving their overall experience, while local dining establishments would benefit from the increased exposure and marketing opportunity.

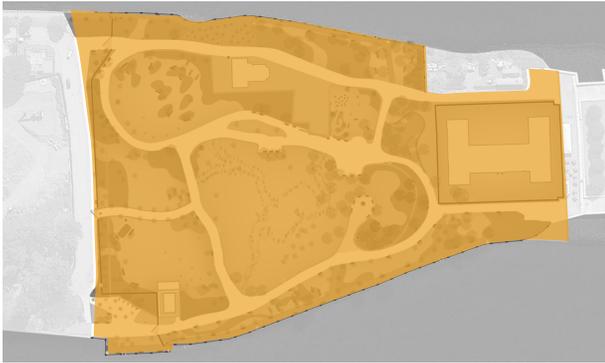
Vendors would set up a pop-up location in pre-approved “vendor permitted areas”, as shown in the map on this page. These suggested locations would be simple to adjust, if necessary, since this recommendation does not include any permanent or physical changes to the Open Space. Some similar programs provide limited ‘pop-up’ equipment for local vendors to rent or borrow; it’s possible that

this would be necessary in order for local vendors to participate in the program.

In addition to the permitted locations for the vendors, the program could also differentiate between typical days and special events and/or specify allowable seasons, days of the week, or hours of the day. It is suggested that RIOC would maintain the program and that vendors would need to submit an application in order to be approved. A minimal permit fee could be required to cover the costs of maintaining the program. However, it is advisable to waive the permit fee for the first 2-3 years as the program first gets started.

Cost estimates for this recommendation and the other three programmatic recommendations have not been included in the Plan. It is assumed that this program will be developed under RIOC’s guidance during the first phase of the Plan.





## 14. Develop a Public Art Program to manage public art in Roosevelt Island’s public space, including Southpoint.

- Ensure public art is contextually appropriate and reflects the character of the space.
- Encourage local artists to contribute to public art in Southpoint.
- In Southpoint, ensure public art compliments (and does not inhibit) the beauty of the natural setting.



The Blue Dragon statue is located near the northwest entryway to Southpoint Open Space.



As part of Project O, an initiative for ocean conservation, Southpoint Open Space will be home to a ‘wave’ sculpture for two months in the summer of 2017.

### The Opportunity

Public art encompasses a wide variety of creative expressions that range from a) paintings on a seemingly mundane fixture such as a storage facility, b) temporary installations, c) historical monuments and d) performance events. Regardless of how it is incorporated, public art allows a local community to convey a sense of identity through this expression. This contributes to the creation of a unique place that truly reflects the spirit of those who spend time there. The Roosevelt Island community embraces opportunities for public art throughout the Island and expressed a strong desire to incorporate additional opportunities into this Plan. As such, opportunities for locations for temporary public art installations as well as the design of public spaces that could be used for artistic performances have been incorporated into the Plan.

### The Recommendation

To assist with the implementation of the public art installations both at Southpoint and other locations throughout the Island, this recommendation is for the development of a Public Art Program. While

this Program could be developed within RIOC, it could also engage an artist-in-residence strategy or other type of partnership in its operation. The Program would be charged with the development and management of public art in the community. The development of such a program would ensure that art was integrated into spaces within Southpoint Open Space (and other public spaces around the Island) with a cohesive point of view that considers a diversity of artistic disciplines while reflecting the vision for Southpoint Open Space and incorporating the community’s input. Such a program could promote education about public art through installations and related programming while also raising awareness and highlighting the natural setting and environment.

Cost estimates for this recommendation and the other three programmatic recommendations have not been included in the Plan. It is assumed that this program will be developed under RIOC’s guidance during the first phase of the Plan and that it will be applied towards progressing public art efforts throughout the Island.



## 15. Initiate a Volunteer Program so the Roosevelt Island community can help realize the vision for Southpoint.

- Provide the community with opportunity to stay involved in the vision for Southpoint by helping to maintain it.
- Strengthen connection to Southpoint as well as connections within community.
- Ensure Southpoint continues to be a place that is comfortable, inviting, safe, and well-maintained.

### The Opportunity

The successful implementation of any of the recommendations included in this Plan is dependent upon what happens after the initial investment or project has been completed. Continued maintenance is required to create a positive experience for all users. The appearance of litter or other issues can send the message to park users that the space is not valued by others and often discourages people from returning and leads to a cycle of disinterest and disinvestment. Many people also associate a park's level of safety with its level of maintenance.

Volunteer programs can help local agencies manage the maintenance required to upkeep local parks so they continue to be a strong amenity for all. Volunteer programs also often help to strengthen community ties by bringing people together to work toward a common goal.

### The Recommendation

The Roosevelt Island community played an integral role in the development of this Plan and that sense of commitment shouldn't stop now. This commitment to engagement should be encouraged and built upon

through the implementation of a Volunteer Program for Southpoint Open Space that will provide people with the opportunity to continue to work together towards the community's Vision for this space. These programs are implemented in various parks around New York City and other communities similar to Roosevelt Island across the country. Volunteer opportunities are typically available for individuals as well as groups. They often include assistance with include special events, landscaping maintenance, organized clean-ups, etc. A brief training seminar or orientation for some opportunities may be appropriate. The local agency or organization that

manages the park typically manages this program to ensure volunteers' are best utilized.

Cost estimates for this recommendation and the other three programmatic recommendations have not been included in the Plan. It is assumed that this program will be developed under RIOC's guidance during the first phase of the Plan.



## C. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Order-of-magnitude cost estimates and a phasing plan have been developed with consideration of available funding and staff resources as well as the expected timeline of relevant projects in or near Southpoint Open Space. Additionally, consideration has been given to each recommendation as a

stand-alone concept as well as the integration of all the recommendations in the overall Plan. Please note that the order-of-magnitude cost estimates are based on planning-level analysis and reflect year 2016 dollars. More detailed engineering may result in changes to project costs.

### PHASE ONE (1 to 4 years)

\$266,000 total | \$67,000 annually

Element	Quantity	As featured in recommendation number...
North fence public art installations	1	1
Chess sets	2	2
Bike rack	2	2
Bulletin board	2	2
Lighting fixtures	2	2
Trash can	2	2, 6
Benches	5	2, 6
Ecological and historical signage	15	5
Planting signage	20	5
Hammocks	3	6
Landscaping and natural plantings	N/A	6, 10
Butterfly area with milkweed plantings	1	9
Picnic tables	3	6
Trees	52	4, 6
Utility shed with public art mural	1	6
Initiate tram study	1	4
Bird feeder by local artist	1	9
Programmatic recommendations	N/A	11, 12, 13, 14

### Phase 2 (5 to 7 years)

\$225,000 total | \$75,000 annually

Element	Quantity	As featured in recommendation number...
Chess sets	2	2
Paving treatment at west gateway	N/A	2
New entryway and path with bollard and new gate	N/A	3
Bike rack	1	3
Bulletin board	1	3
Landscaping and natural plantings	N/A	3
Lighting fixtures	1	3
Trash can	2	3, 6
Benches	17	3, 6, 7
Trees	39	2, 3, 6, 7
Binoculars	3	7, 10
Picnic tables	3	6
Access to east shoreline	N/A	7
Adirondack chairs	18	7
Hammocks	5	7
Natural classroom area and nature play area	1	8

### Phase 3 (8 to 10 years)

\$216,000 total | \$72,000 annually

Element	Quantity	As featured in recommendation number...
Ecological and historical signage	2	5
Adirondack chairs	12	7
Trash can	1	6
Picnic tables	3	6, 7
Benches	23	4, 7
Access to west shoreline	N/A	7
Northwest viewing platform area	N/A	7
Binoculars	5	7
Hammocks	5	7
Trees	35	7
Prepare site, refurbish tram, and place in Southpoint	1	4

# CONCEPT PLAN - PHASE ONE (1 TO 4 YEARS)



# CONCEPT PLAN - PHASE TWO (5 TO 7 YEARS)



# CONCEPT PLAN - PHASE THREE (8 TO 10 YEARS)



RECOMMENDATION MATRIX	PHASE ONE	PHASE TWO	PHASE THREE	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6	GOAL 7
1. Improve the northern edge		MAINTAIN								
2. Enhance existing gateways										
3. Create a new main entryway										
4. Refurbish one retired RI Tram to place near gateway										
5. Install historical, ecological and planting signage										
6. Create an accessible and comfortable central area										
7. Provide access to the shoreline										
8. Create a “Nature Center”										
9. Maintain natural setting for wildlife										
10. Celebrate natural topography of the hill										
11. Preserve the Smallpox Hospital	Not applicable for this recommendation									
12. Initiate Vendor Application Program										
13. Implement “Adopt-a-Bench” & “Adopt-a-Tree” Program										
14. Develop Public Art Program										
15. Establish Volunteer Program										

Note that an empty circle, such as indicates that the recommendation is not implemented at all during that phase. A full circle, such as , indicates full implementation.

## Community Vision for the Future of Southpoint Open Space

### Vision Statement

The Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space will preserve and celebrate this dynamic, natural landscape and spectacular scenic viewpoints of the surrounding urban landscape, which both contrasts with and defines this tranquil setting.

The Community Plan will cultivate an inviting and usable space that takes into account the abilities, ages, and interests of both current and new members of the community. A flexible and adaptable design will include cultural features and amenities that provide opportunities for gatherings, learning, and exploration.

The Community Plan will respect and augment the space's context, history, and natural systems. Above all, Southpoint Open Space will remain a natural, open space for the Roosevelt Island community in its setting, use, and role.

### Goals



#### 01 | Cultural & Historical Significance

- Celebrate the spirit, traditions and history of the Island through features and elements.
- Preserve and celebrate iconic architectural landmarks.
- Enhance the sense of identity and pride the community has with the Open Space.



#### 02 | Accessibility and Usability

- Provide opportunities for a diversity of experiences at different times of the day and year through a flexible and adaptable design.
- Create a space that serves community members of all ages and abilities through a variety of active and passive offerings.



#### 03 | Comfortable and Inviting Space

- Create a setting that feels welcoming and has a strong sense of community.
- Include elements that are comfortable and protect visitors from the elements.



#### 04 | Natural Environment

- Conserve and protect sensitive natural and cultural resources.
- Create a low impact design that respects and enhances the natural environment.



#### 05 | Connection to the Water

- Emphasize the significance of the natural shoreline.
- Incorporate features that celebrate the Open Space's strong connection to the River.
- Explore the potential access to the water for safe and secure water activities



#### 06 | Public Art and Performance

- Enhance the commitment of the Island to the arts and creativity.
- Incorporate public art installations into the design of the Open Space.
- Provide opportunities for personal expression and discovery through art and performance.



#### 07 | Sustainable Implementation

- Encourage partnerships, cooperation, and coordination with local Island institutions.
- Create opportunities for ongoing future evaluation and review to ensure the Open Space continues to serve the community.



## D. NEXT STEPS

The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) is pleased to present the *Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space*. The primary goal of this effort was to provide a long-range planning and implementation document to guide the future development of Southpoint Park Open Space. Throughout this process, RIOC focused on the community's priorities regarding administering resources and outdoor amenities of Southpoint Park while also preserving the existing structure of the landmarked Smallpox Hospital. After a 12-month community process, we are pleased with the recommendations that have emerged from this tremendous effort and the implementation plan that has been laid out by its authors, the firm of Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc (FHI); we are especially proud of the close interactive role that the Roosevelt Island community played in shaping the new vision for the open space.

A number of committed islanders served on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, meeting throughout the planning process and providing valuable input. Others participated in pop-up meetings throughout the Spring of 2016 that took place at Saturday Farmers Market, the annual bicycle helmet give-away, and on Roosevelt Island Day, one of the largest annual island events. There were two public meetings, an electronic survey, a virtual workshop, and many comments offered, both at meetings and through the project website. We are grateful to everyone who got involved in this valuable effort.

RIOC plans to move forward with this plan, starting this year and continuing (over several phases identified in the document) over the next ten years. The project's website – [www.southpointcommunityplan.com](http://www.southpointcommunityplan.com) – will remain active and provide you with updates on our progress.

We would like to thank the entire Roosevelt Island community for their energy, time, and commitment, as well as FHI for facilitating this process. We look forward to the next phase as we work together to enhance the current features of Southpoint Open Space as a natural, attractive, and usable space for all to enjoy.

Susan G. Rosenthal

President & CEO

The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation



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