



Post-to-Park Transformations

CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES FOR URBAN PARK DEVELOPMENT



INSTITUTE
AT THE GOLDEN GATE



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Urban Growth and the Case for Reimagining Public Spaces

By 2050, the world's population will have grown from seven to between nine and ten billion people.

Absorbing much of this growth, cities and towns will increase 1.5 times to six billion people – an additional two billion urban residents. Urban planners, designers, as well as city dwellers are seeing the potential impacts of this rapid growth and are beginning to explore new methods for creating spaces that are densely populated while still appealing.

While it is important to focus on smart infrastructure planning, it is also crucial to look between the buildings, in the voids, for open spaces that can serve as areas for recreation, physical activity, and relaxation that provide reprieve from the urban lifestyle. These open spaces—representing a variety of landscapes from large-scale national and city parks to the more human-scaled parklets—are more than just public spaces for enjoyment. They also engage the public and create value and momentum in the demand for open spaces in urban areas. Efforts to increase urban sustainability and improve the quality of city life, combined with the need for strategic optimization of land use, provide an ideal opportunity to explore creative solutions in building parks and public lands.

To develop new parks, people are now looking for innovative opportunities to repurpose and rehabilitate existing public spaces. These repurposed open spaces provide a number of opportunities but also come with their own set of unique challenges. In building successful parks that are deeply valued

by their urban communities, park innovators must look at how they can meet the needs of the community while taking on the challenges that come with unused or dilapidated sites.

ABOUT THE CASE STUDIES

The recent transitions of former military bases to public parklands provide critical examples of how site needs, community interests, and partnership opportunities can be leveraged to create new urban parklands. Fort Baker and Crissy Field in the Bay Area, and Governors Island in New York, are examples of U.S. Army bases that have gone through such transfer processes to become successful public parks. They are representative of park transitions amidst rapid urban transformation, reflecting the diverse stakeholders, site challenges, and opportunities that have shaped urban landscapes and necessitated new strategies in park development.

Based on research of Fort Baker, Crissy Field, and Governors Island, the Institute at the Golden Gate has identified a variety of best practices in park planning and development. This report uses these case studies to explore site challenges, partnerships, funding, and community engagement and to look at how key stakeholders navigated planning, development, and implementation. Ultimately, we hope that this report will be a useful tool for those seeking to create the vibrant parks and public spaces that are necessary to build healthy, sustainable cities.



CASE STUDY
ONE

FORT BAKER

Sausalito, California

SUMMARY

Fort Baker was redeveloped for public use in 2008 and set itself apart with a unique model of partnerships and programming. Set in a cove north of the Golden Gate Bridge, the 335 acres of Fort Baker are a gateway to miles of coastal and inland trails and diverse recreational and cultural opportunities. Fort Baker includes over 28 historic buildings along with new eco-friendly buildings on the footprint of old ones that make up Cavallo Point - the Lodge at the Golden Gate, a world-class national park lodge. The site is also home to the Bay Area Discovery Museum, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Institute at the Golden Gate, a program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy in cooperation with the National Park Service.

The programming and rehabilitation of the historic buildings owe their success to a public, private, non-profit partnership where the National Park Service (NPS), Passport Resorts, and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy (Parks Conservancy) aligned their visions to revitalize Fort Baker as a

LEED-certified national park lodge; a culturally, historically, and ecologically significant national park; and a site of convening for conversations on challenges that face today's environment.

The collaborative work of the partners, especially a thorough assessment of the site conditions and needs, and navigating through Congressional and legislative hurdles exemplifies strategic planning in a post-to-park transformation. While some of the physical and political conditions at Fort Baker are unique, larger lessons can be applied to park planning practices.

BACKGROUND

In 1866, the United States Government created a military reservation along the Marin Headlands and built coastal fortifications to safeguard the San Francisco Bay. Fort Baker was formally established in the 1890s and the post was completed by 1910. The fort included Colonial Revival-style officer's homes, barracks, and community buildings for

the troops, with an emphasis on improving living conditions for enlisted men. Through World War I, World War II, and the Cold War, Fort Baker saw little action and the Army's presence dwindled with a lack of reinvestment overtime, contributing to the gradual decline of most buildings and infrastructure elements on the site.

Park planning conversations for Fort Baker began in 1972. The base formally closed in 1995 as a part of the federal base closure process and Fort Baker was included in the NPS General Management Plan (GMP) for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

SITE ASSESSMENT AND EARLY PLANNING

In 1995, the Parks Conservancy began to raise funds for the planning of a park at Fort Baker. With a planning grant from the Marin Community Foundation, the NPS and the Parks Conservancy further developed the concept of Fort Baker as a retreat and conference center. The plan was produced with input from public processes within the community, and the transformation began in 2002 once the last parcel of Fort Baker was officially transferred from post to park.

The lack of an interim plan for preservation of the historic infrastructure during the gradual departure of the Army had left the buildings in extremely poor conditions. The Parks Conservancy first assessed

all existing buildings and infrastructure to understand the resources necessary for rehabilitating the site. Aware of how expensive it would be not only to restore but also to maintain Fort Baker, the Parks Conservancy brought consultants onboard to work with NPS staff to undertake a market assessment and understand what types of use would fit and work under these conditions.

LESSON LEARNED

A temporary plan for historical buildings can save costs in the long run.

At Fort Baker, low occupancy and the gradual disuse of the historical buildings increased the rate of deterioration, resulting in high costs of renovation and rehabilitation. When a site has a significant number of historical structures, it is important to set an interim preservation plan for historic or natural resources until there is a viable owner/partner/developer that can take care of the site. Leaving a site unused and unkempt will make it more difficult and expensive to develop in the long run. To slow deterioration, develop an interim plan to preserve resources on site even if there isn't a full development plan underway.

Due to the high costs of restoration and operation of historical infrastructure, military bases like Fort Baker with buildings in need of continued care typically aim for the leased use to be financially self-sufficient from a development perspective. As such, an economic analysis was needed to test the viability of any future use options. At the time, there was a rich palette of services and programs within the parks, and a thorough market assessment explored options for a lodge and



1972

Golden Gate National Recreation Area is established; Fort Baker to become a park when no longer needed by the Army



1980

A proposal for a retreat center at Fort Baker is included in the General Management Plan for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area



1995
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Public announcement of base transfer to NPS by 2000; public process to update the 1980 plan begins



2002

Official transfer of Fort Baker from military post to national park



2008

Transformation is complete and Cavallo Point - Lodge at the Golden Gate opens



retreat center, an arts center, and a foundation center. Through further assessment of existing similar use in the Bay Area as well as of the region's needs, it was decided that a retreat and conference center would be the most successful at Fort Baker.

Unique to the retreat and conference center portion of the larger Fort Baker plan, the economic assessment evaluated the market demand, financial feasibility, cost of brick and mortar renovation, and real estate development potential, which are all core drivers of reuse that typically need to be considered as an integral part of visionary planning. More importantly, the economic consultant also identified the need for a shared vision from stakeholders. This vision was used as a starting point to test whether aligning the specific values of the partners and the economics of the lodge would be successful. From the beginning, it was clearly articulated that the project would preserve the post's special historic and natural features while creating new opportunities for learning, exchange, and enjoyment.

LESSON LEARNED

Planning the park in its larger urban context keeps the site relevant.

The partners at Fort Baker recognized the site's beauty and prime location but they also thought critically about what the Bay Area lacked. Determining the place-appropriate and place-specific opportunity of the site and considering its larger urban context can help create a park that is also a valuable resource to a city. What does your site have to offer and what does your region need?

After an analysis of the economic assessment and close examination of both the site and its larger urban context, the NPS and the Parks Conservancy

decided to pursue the idea of a conference center and lodge that would provide an inspirational setting but remain in close proximity to the city center. As the government agency and the landowning partner, the NPS then set about finding a private partner that would help develop a conference center that was mission-driven while privately run and self-sustaining.

LESSON LEARNED

Test for the type of reuse that will succeed in the present economic climate.

The idea for a retreat and conference center was well-suited for Fort Baker but it was crucial for the NPS as the landowner to test whether this use would be economically viable in order to offset the high costs of development. There must be a demand in the market for the type and character of space being developed. It is necessary to have a comprehensive economic assessment as well as a good understanding of the partners' goals in order to work within these ideas when testing the feasibility of the project. Ultimately, the partners should work towards an economically feasible reuse strategy or plan that may blend public and private sector funding.

"I strongly believe that you can have both – a project consistent with the national parks' mission and elevating it while being economically self-sufficient. It's just about fine-tuning what the plan is and integrating them into solicitation for developers."

Naomi Porat, economic consultant for Fort Baker

LESSON LEARNED

Thorough assessments and transparency can make the site more attractive.

The thorough economic assessment at Fort Baker included the plans for a retreat and conference center and its feasibility, which helped attract private developers and investors. Creating thorough site assessment reports can be an important tool in generating interest for redevelopment from the private sector. This can include historical, environmental, architectural, and economic assessments that give a detailed analysis of the site conditions, programmatic opportunities, and reuse type feasibility. Including programmatic plans in the economics of leasing and concessions can also help set a clear vision of the partners.

PARTNERSHIPS

The idea for a unique partnership grew from critical conversations on what was place-appropriate and place-specific to the site. Instead of having it be a traditional national park lodge focused on travel and leisure, the idea was to take advantage of the site’s proximity to San Francisco and to give the city something different – large meeting and event spaces that would provide a setting for convenings that are relevant, appropriate, and inspiring to the environmental issues and topics that would be discussed. The NPS and the Parks Conservancy were able to forge a successful public-private partnership by finding a private developer that could share that vision.

“You have to take advantage of the place to make things of significance happen.”

Steve Kasierski, Fort Baker Real Estate Project Manager, National Park Service

FINDING THE PERFECT PRIVATE PARTNER FIT

A multistep solicitation sequence with a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) followed by a Request for Proposal (RFP) is a standard process for any base closure redevelopment projects led by a government agency. To find a private partner that aligned with the vision for Fort Baker, the NPS, with assistance from the Parks Conservancy, laid out a detailed RFQ with a clear statement of values in historical, cultural,

and environmental preservation. With ideological goals that were set in addition to goals in finances and planning, the NPS formulated thorough selection criteria to find the right developer.

One of the most crucial factors in determining the developer for the project was the NPS preference for a project that would produce the least possible impact to resources, traffic, scenic qualities, and visitor experience while still being economically viable. After several public meetings with Q&A, presentations, and a clear matrix evaluation process, the NPS selected Fort Baker Retreat Group, a partnership between Passport Resorts and Equity Community Builders (ECB), as the development partner.

Passport Resorts is a hotel management and marketing company that earned credibility with past projects that embodied their values in environmental sustainability. Equity Community Builders is a real estate development company that had worked with similar historic buildings in the past. The partnership between Passport Resorts and ECB was not only able to show financial capacity, but also meet the size expectation for the lodge. Additionally, the Fort Baker Retreat Group was uniquely based on individual investors, as opposed to a large corporate investment, with investors who truly cared about the parks and the environment. With strong ties and experiences with local projects that would help preserve the sense of place at Fort Baker, they were also able to gain the confidence of local residents and constituencies.

LESSON LEARNED

Finding the right partner helps ensure progress and cohesive projects.

When finding a private developer, the partners at Fort Baker examined not only the candidates’ financial capacity but also their values. Creating partnerships with people whose values align builds trust among all partners.

However, even with experience and success in similar missions and visions, there needs to be a personal connection between partners. This can be developed through direct and regular interaction. Trust can come from a combination of common experience and a personal connection; take the time to study the past works of a potential partner and rely on interviews and face-to-face meetings to find out if the candidate would be a good personality fit. Build mutual trust and reliability of commitments over time – this may extend beyond contractual commitments or considerations expressed in a lease.



PROGRAMMATIC PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to Cavallo Point Lodge, there are three main on-site partners at Fort Baker: the U.S. Coast Guard, the Bay Area Discovery Museum, and the Institute at the Golden Gate. The Coast Guard and the Bay Area Discovery Museum are long-standing partners of the NPS, operating at Fort Baker throughout the transfer and transformation process. The Coast Guard is a piece of the history of the site and a cultural resource. The Bay Area Discovery Museum was a significant programming partner in the Fort Baker plan, which expanded in size and programmatic capacity during the development of the retreat and conference center. As an education institution for young children, the Bay Area Discovery Museum enlivens the park and enables Fort Baker to serve different audiences and constituencies in the same place.

The Institute at the Golden Gate (the Institute) was developed during the redevelopment planning as the public component of Fort Baker. The Institute was originally conceived to facilitate the convening of meetings at Fort Baker, bringing organizations to the site to inspire discussion and action around pressing environmental issues.

FUNDING

The lofty costs to develop a retreat and conference center using the historic buildings created a need for future security in financing the project as well as the park's future maintenance. To address this concern, the partners leveraged a number of innovative funding mechanisms, including philanthropy,

government appropriations, a long-term ground and building lease, and an alternative tax structure. Their ability to access this variety of funding sources was due to a combination of efforts in garnering community support, seeking support from Congress, and finding creative solutions in tax arrangement that reduced reliance on government appropriations to the extent practicable.

PLANNING GRANTS FROM MARIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

In the early phase of the project, the NPS and the Parks Conservancy recognized that initially there would not be government appropriation available for Fort Baker. As such, early planning needed to be subsidized with private funds. With expertise in fundraising and garnering community support, the Parks Conservancy made a compelling case to the Marin Community Foundation, which agreed to support master planning and the development of environmental documents. The Marin Community Foundation continued to be involved in the planning phases of Fort Baker and became a valued community partner in building relationships within Marin County and adjunct municipalities.

FEDERAL MONEY FOR BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE

One of the biggest challenges to Fort Baker's redevelopment was rehabilitating the buildings so that they would be attractive to private developers and investors. After investing a significant amount of time to establish how much funding would be needed for basic restoration of the site, representatives from the Parks Conservancy and the NPS made regular trips to Washington, D.C. to submit proposals and requests for public funds. With persistence and successful engagement, they were able to secure \$25 million dollars over an 8-year period. This funding came from the Department of Defense (DOD), which is not a traditional source of funding for the NPS, but a primary source for base closure and reuse. Fort Baker representatives argued that the military left the site in such poor condition that it would be impossible to attract private developers. As such, the DOD funding was used for cleanup and basic infrastructure, facilities, and site improvements.

The money was administered through the NPS, covering contracts for water, electric, and telecommunication services so that the private developers would have basic, functioning infrastructure when they came on board.

LESSON LEARNED

Strong relationships with local leaders can make all the difference.

Staff from both the NPS and the Parks Conservancy consistently worked to build relationships with political leaders who could advocate for funding and legislation that uniquely benefitted Fort Baker. Forging strong, friendly working relationships with political leaders can open up a range of opportunities and resources. Long term, bi-partisan support from local leaders can help gain direct funding for project implementation and pass special legislation that could be beneficial to the specific project in the long-run. Treat these leaders as you would any other partner by appointing key staff to maintain conversations, bring them for site visits, and keep in regular contact to build close relationships.

helped to pay equity investors but also to establish a sustainable design for the lodge.

LESSON LEARNED

Historic rehabilitation tax credits attract private investments.

Utilizing available incentives and taking advantage of the historic rehabilitation tax credits can be a complex process for everyone involved in a redevelopment project. All of the partners should understand the economics of the historic rehabilitation tax credit and the need for long-term leases. When considering the use of the historic rehabilitation tax credit, seek the advice of a lawyer, accountant, or a consultant with experience in a similar project or familiarity with the credits.

TAX INCENTIVES

Critical to funding the rehabilitation of Fort Baker was Passport Resorts’ ability to raise equity and take advantage of the historic rehabilitation tax credit.¹ This program, administered by the NPS, the Internal Revenue Service, and the State Historic Preservation Office, establishes a 20% tax credit for the substantial rehabilitation of historic buildings for commercial, industrial, and rental residential purposes.

In order to qualify for the tax credit, the project had to meet the requirements of the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards for Rehabilitation*, which set a high and detailed standard for energy efficiency and use of environmentally sustainable materials and methods. As such, this incentive not only

ADDITIONAL INCENTIVES

As previously mentioned, the substantial upfront investment required to create Cavallo Point Lodge made it critical for the investors to know that they would be able to operate on the site for a substantial period of time. As a result, the NPS and Passport Resorts established a long-term, 60-year lease for the property. The long-term ground and building lease also provided a funding source for the NPS as it required Cavallo to pay \$400,000 annually to the NPS for public safety, maintenance, and other operation fees on a 60-year lease. This agreement for a long-term lease was crucial for attracting private funding for the lodge and for the future development and maintenance of the park.

Furthermore, Congress passed legislation that enabled the Golden Gate National Recreation Area to structure business terms more in alignment with private sector development practices. Examples include allowing for a long term ground lease structure as discussed above, as well as retaining revenue generated at Fort Baker within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Also, defining Fort Baker as located within exclusive federal jurisdiction exempted the site from the local, county, and state taxes. Atypical to other national parks, this arrangement helped to finance Fort Baker’s further maintenance and other costs.

Sources of Financing for Cavallo Point Lodge (2008)

Historic Tax Credit Equity	\$ 13M
Bank Loan	\$ 49M
Private Equity	\$ 40M
Total	\$ 102M

Figures provided by Equity Community Builders.

¹ Tax Incentives for Preserving Historic Properties; <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

LESSON LEARNED***Understanding each partner's abilities and constraints helps achieve shared goals.***

Although the partners at Fort Baker had shared values and goals, they had different organizational structures, work cultures, and operational resources. Despite differences, being transparent with one another, especially in the processes of federal planning and congressional authorization, allowed the project to move forward and succeed. Both sides of a public/private project need to understand each partner's needs and expectations, especially in understanding the timelines of public agencies in legislation and funding. The private partner and the public agency both need to be transparent and responsive while the public landowner or leasing authority should work with the private developer to help them understand and meet government guidelines.

LESSON LEARNED***Take advantage of financial structures at all levels of the public sector that qualify.***

The partners at Fort Baker made sure to leave no stone unturned when researching every possible tax arrangement that could benefit the development of Cavallo Point Lodge as well as the entire park's future. Be sure to take advantage of tax credits and reinvestments at all levels that qualify for your project, from federal, municipal, to local programs. While at Fort Baker, the NPS as a federal agency could not seek possible mechanisms in municipalities or local governments, any projects in jurisdiction of local or municipal agencies can seek tax credits and reinvestments at the federal level.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**LOCAL ENGAGEMENT, UNREST, AND RECOVERY**

Before the Fort Baker plan and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was drafted, the National Park Service made large efforts to engage the public in the planning process of Fort Baker, which included bringing people onto site for informational tours. In 1998, the Fort Baker plan, as well as the EIS, was shared with the public through open meetings and dissemination of planning materials. Through these meetings and materials, the community was able to share their opinions and ask questions.

Once the final plan was produced and the NPS began the RFP/RFQ process, some concerns about the project grew within the Sausalito community, mainly around fears of a large development as well as potential changes in traffic conditions and the

valued character of Fort Baker. While the NPS and the Parks Conservancy shared the community's desire for the smallest development possible, EIS protocols required them to account for the maximum number of rooms possible when evaluating environmental effects. This protocol caused confusion within the community, resulting in a lack of trust between the partners and the public.

This is not unprecedented in major base closure projects or redevelopment agency projects in urban areas that include substantial change of use. While the redevelopment of Fort Baker involved litigation about the possible efforts and appropriateness of the new NPS master plan and the adequacy of the environmental assessments, the partners recognized the need for better engagement and worked to mend the relationship with the community.

LESSON LEARNED***Clear, consistent, and timely communication builds trust with the community.***

As with many new development projects in urban areas, the partners at Fort Baker faced concerns from the community. These initial concerns grew from gaps in communication due to the size, scope, and work that was required to plan for the project. It is crucial to start engaging the community early and to continue the conversations throughout a project's lifespan.

Regularly report to the community and be transparent with the goals, stages, progress, challenges, and opportunities of a project. The public release of important assessments and documents is the first step but making sure that the community can read and interpret them correctly can help avoid miscommunication and misunderstandings. A clear dialogue between each partner and the community can help send a clear message and build and maintain sense of trust.

In response to the lawsuit, the partners came together to face the conflict in the community with one voice. The NPS included public presentations as a part of the RFQ process, which is atypical of the agency but a required process for municipalities. The Parks Conservancy fostered relationships and helped form an organization called Friends to Preserve Fort Baker to demonstrate public support for the project. Fort Baker Retreat Group continued their engagement after they were chosen for the project through a series of lunches for leaders in the city, bringing some community leaders to the site and filling them in on the plans and progress. While it was important to keep the development on



track even with the challenges, it was the vision of a relatively small development, along with renewed community engagement efforts, that helped bring settlement from the lawsuit.

LESSON LEARNED

Addressing community concerns collectively builds stronger support.

When faced with concerns from the community, the partners at Fort Baker banded together to re-engage the community. This strengthened the voice of the project and helped clarify its values. It is also important to make sure every partner is aware of the problem and is willing to find solutions as a cohesive group. Work together with partners and identify active steps that could be taken if there is a conflict between the agencies and the community.

REACHING A LARGER AUDIENCE WITH PURPOSE

During the economic assessment, the partners looked at different sites that had similar projects not just to test financial feasibility but also to develop programming ideas. Looking at sites such as the Aspen Institute and Port Townsend, they realized the importance of having a “public good” element to the reuse project. With the goal of instilling a sense of place, a heart and soul, to Fort Baker, the partners developed the concept of the Institute at the Golden Gate. The Institute was designed as the public component that would give the site added depth through programming and aligned with the values of the site and its partners. They planned for the Institute to

host conferences for policy makers, government, and business leaders. The Institute and Cavallo Point would also collaborate to offer reduced-rate lodging and conference space for organizations and convenings with an environmental focus.

The ability of the Institute to bring in different groups to utilize the space actually proved financially as well as ethically beneficial during the Cavallo Point’s initial years, which coincided with the late 2008 to 2011 recession. Today, the Institute continues to connect different organizations to Fort Baker but has also evolved into a program-focused organization that explores how to position parks and public lands as a part of the solution to social and environmental challenges.

LESSON LEARNED

A public component can help you stay connected to a quickly growing city.

The Institute at the Golden Gate was an important piece in implementing the values of the partners at Fort Baker. As a program that engages the community in larger discussions around societal challenges, the Institute continues to be involved in the urban community that is constantly growing and changing.

Establishing a public component that can continue to engage the community, even after the implementation of the project, allows for the site to stay connected with fast-changing urban centers and the diverse groups of people represented in those environments. This not only creates a sense of place and meaning for a park but also positions parks as tools to bring awareness to larger issues while providing a space to think critically and take action.



CASE STUDY
TWO

CRISSY FIELD

San Francisco, California

SUMMARY

Completed in May 2001, Crissy Field marked a milestone in the size and scope of redevelopment and reuse of a former U.S. Army airfield and is now one of Golden Gate National Recreation Area's signature sites. With expansive views and a prominent position at the entrance to San Francisco from both land and water, the world-class waterfront park includes a 20-acre tidal marsh, a 29-acre open space grassy meadow, a 1.5-mile promenade and the Crissy Field Center, which enhances the use of the park as a hub of learning and stewardship with a focus on youth programs.

Crissy Field's restoration owes its success to two major components in its development and implementation: a long-term relationship forged through a private/public partnership and a tenacious effort in garnering long-lasting support from the surrounding community.

The NPS and the Parks Conservancy's ability to foster a collaborative relationship with a major

philanthropic donor, the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund (Haas, Jr. Fund), helped define a common mission that created a truly public park for every community. This was in part due to the early public processes by the NPS in partnership with the Parks Conservancy that helped build and maintain relationships with both the community and donors. Through extensive engagement efforts, the partners were able to work with the community to craft a collective vision for Crissy Field.

BACKGROUND

From 1921 to 1936, the 100-acre swath of what is now national parkland was an important Army airfield on the west coast. Crissy Field housed the Army's maintenance and engineering facilities, leaving most of the site paved with asphalt and concrete. In 1989, the Army publicly announced that it would close the post and transfer the Presidio (including Crissy Field) to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area by 1995. However, the NPS had been planning for a public park well before the transfer was publicly announced.

When early planning for Crissy Field began, the site garnered much of the public's interest. The community had previously had access to two-thirds of the site, which was unkempt with nonnative grasses or hard surfaces of asphalt, concrete, and packed earth. Even in such conditions, the public admired its views and proximity to the water. In redevelopment, they saw an opportunity for a great public park centered on recreation. A public leader and a longtime champion of parks as invaluable spaces for bringing communities together, Walter J. Haas supported the transformation with a \$100,000 planning grant in 1987, making the Haas, Jr. Fund an important philanthropic partner of the Parks Conservancy and the NPS. This partnership ultimately made possible extensive community engagement programs and a major fundraising campaign built upon a unified vision.

SITE ASSESSMENT AND EARLY PLANNING

The conditions at Crissy Field at the time of the transfer required significant investment to create a site that invited public recreational use. Much of the site was dilapidated, with large areas of



deteriorated asphalt, fencing, derelict buildings, and toxic materials. Additionally, close examination of the environmental and historic elements of the site revealed opportunities and challenges in defining and preserving the sense of place. An environmental assessment was completed by the NPS with extensive public input and stipulated that the redevelopment of Crissy Field would combine three uses: restoration of ecological resources, historical preservation, and user recreation.

Environmental advocacy groups quickly identified a 130-acre tidal marsh that had been filled in order to host the 1915 International Panama-Pacific Exposition as one important opportunity to restore the ecological integrity of the site. Advocacy groups' campaign in support of the marsh prompted an analysis of the site, which showed that restoring the marsh was feasible and would provide a valuable ecosystem for the park and improve the aesthetics of Crissy Field.

Additionally, the original airfield at Crissy Field was a documented cultural and historic resource. However, trying to preserve the historical elements proved challenging given its discordance with the natural landscape. Ultimately, park planners found that maintaining and restoring the airfield as a grassy field preserved the park's cultural and historical resource while creating an open space that could be used for various activities.

PARTNERSHIPS

From planning to implementation, there were many players involved in the Crissy Field project, creating a unique model of partnerships. The two central partners were the NPS and the Parks Conservancy, which aligned their goals in environmental and urban agendas to ultimately create an open space that prioritized the interests of the people of San Francisco. While the NPS was responsible for public outreach and community needs assessments, the Parks Conservancy focused heavily on garnering interest and support through relationships with public schools and volunteer organizations.

The goal of both the NPS and the Parks Conservancy was to create a space not just for recreation but



LESSON LEARNED

Let each partner play to their strong suits.

The NPS and the Parks Conservancy built a partnership in which each organization focused on their strengths. Understanding the available resources and seeking partners that can amplify and supplement existing expertise are good partnership practices that can save time and resources. Partners should understand each other's skills and focus their energy on their respective strengths.

also for deeper and wider community building. They wanted the space to focus on inclusivity, diversity, and youth programming that would build a sense of ownership and stewardship from within the community. This vision was further solidified by the close relationship with the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, which felt personally connected to the site and wanted to provide opportunities for others to build the same connections. As a major philanthropic foundation that focuses on supporting the diverse communities in the Bay Area, the Haas, Jr. Fund helped to provide critical financial support for the project and its related programs.

“A partnership is a mindset, not just a transaction. People need to listen to each other, and while it is important to focus on the end goal, if you build a healthy relationship the success will follow.”

Greg Moore, President & CEO, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

The alignment and the development of this relationship took on a more expansive role as the Haas, Jr. Fund spearheaded many of the programmatic initiatives, such as civic engagement and community vitality at Crissy Field, as well as the Crissy Field Center, which serves as a hub for youth education and stewardship. These initiatives coupled with the programmatic mission helped gain the support of a larger community, which proved an important partner throughout the project.

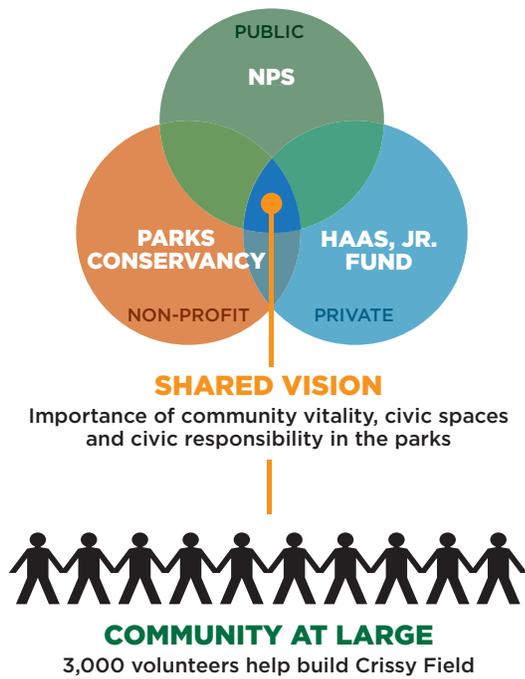
LESSON LEARNED

Co-creating an inspirational vision encourages broad participation.

The President and CEO of the Parks Conservancy stressed the importance of a clear vision that can easily be adopted by a wide audience to get partners, employees, and the community involved in planning and implementing Crissy Field. In creating a shared vision there needs to be an opportunity for everyone to be involved. Develop a process that allows for co-creation and co-ownership of a common vision. Be meticulous with wording and phrasing of the vision; use words that relate to and resonate with a broad audience.

The stakeholders forged collaboration based on a balance of interests. These partnerships were built with patience and a generous allocation of time for communication and coordination, which was critical to aligning all of the different players involved in envisioning Crissy Field.

PARTNERSHIPS AT CRISSY FIELD



FUNDING

Crissy Field was made possible through three different sources of financing: the federal government, philanthropic organizations, and the community, which not only helped implement Crissy Field but also defined its character.

FEDERAL FUNDING

Similar to many post-military bases with recent Army occupation, Crissy Field required strong and persistent efforts from the members of the Parks Conservancy to garner support from Congress for the Army to pay for the cleanup of toxic materials on site. These federal funds focused on removing contaminated soils and rubble, which was necessary before the restoration project could begin.

PHILANTHROPY AND INCUBATING DONOR RELATIONSHIPS

The majority of the funding for Crissy Field came from large donations that were the result of careful, long-term efforts to build donor relationships

by the Parks Conservancy. As the nonprofit partner of the NPS at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Parks Conservancy focused on fostering relationships with the larger community and private foundations, as well as individual donors who sought to support civic engagement projects in the Bay Area.

As previously mentioned, the Haas, Jr. Fund was a major player and a valuable partner from planning to implementation. Conversations between the partners and the Haas, Jr. Fund helped create a plan to mobilize broad civic support. Ideas for core programming such as the Crissy Field Center were not originally included in the NPS GMP and the project’s early planning phases, but rather developed as a result of the co-created values that focused on

Breakdown of Major Donations

\$100,000	Planning Grant from Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund
\$14 million	Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund
\$4 million	Colleen and Robert Haas Fund
\$16.5 million	Donations raised by the Parks Conservancy*

Figures provided by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

** Some 2,400 people made donations towards the \$34.4 million raised for Crissy Field, of which 2,200 were \$100 or less.*

community programming elements. Furthermore, the Parks Conservancy’s strategic timeline for soliciting donations was crucial in garnering public support. After the leadership gifts from the Haas, Jr. Fund set a new generous level of giving, the partnership gained momentum, maintaining existing donor relationships while fostering new ones. Once fundraisers were close to reaching their total goal, the Parks Conservancy launched a public initiative so that the impact of smaller contributions would be immediately visible. The timing allowed the 2,200 people who donated \$100 or less to see the importance of their support.

“Philanthropy is not one-sided.”

Carol Prince, Former Deputy Director of External Affairs, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

LESSON LEARNED

Large-scale fundraising requires a multi-pronged approach

DONOR RELATIONSHIPS SHOULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL

Find donors who already align with the mission and values of the project as a first step to forging a mutually beneficial relationship. Once you identify the donors and foundations in your community that can and want to help achieve the partners' mission, find the right connections between those organizations and key staff on the team who can speak to the same interests. This will help build relationships on a common ground.

At Crissy Field, the Haas, Jr. Fund was not just a source for funding but a valuable partner in its commitment to engage and serve diverse communities. A strong relationship built on a shared vision helped the partners create a valuable resource for every community in the Bay Area. Understanding that the Haas, Jr. Fund had much to offer beyond its financial contribution, the development of Crissy Field effectively leveraged donor resources and expertise and the Parks Conservancy took active steps to strengthen donor relationships.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL IN CREATING FUNDRAISING MOMENTUM

Whether the money for the project is being raised through philanthropic funding or private investments, do not stop reaching out to all levels of the public. Consistent community engagement helps prevent loss of interest in the project from both the community and donors, which also gives them more opportunities to contribute and inspire others to follow their lead.

KEEP DONORS IN THE LOOP

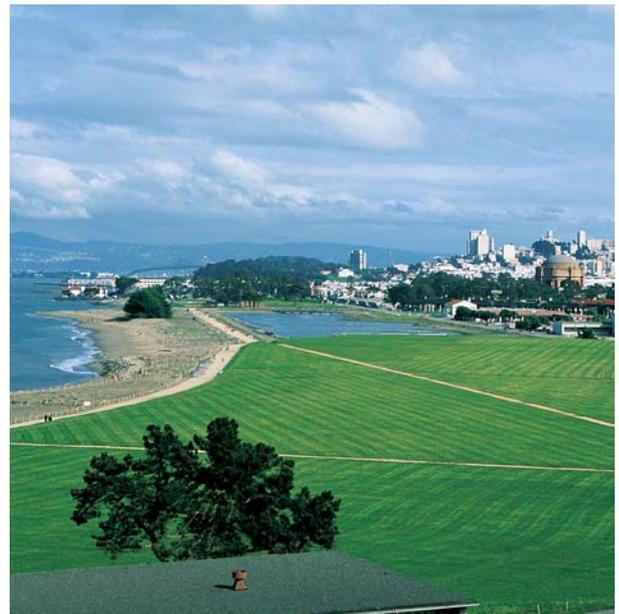
Donors should be viewed like any other partner and should be actively included in conversations throughout all phases of the project. Additionally, the quality and depth of donor reports are important to show that you want them to be engaged in the process. Their donations matter but so does their support in generating values and in decision making.

TIMING IS OF THE ESSENCE

Reaching out to the larger community is a good way to bring in public money and create a valuable connection between the community and the park. Plan for the public component of fundraising to be the last phase. This helps show the general public that even the smallest contribution makes a difference.

A FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The establishment of community stewardship programs with the help of the Haas, Jr. Fund not only resonated with the values and vision of the partners but also involved an element of self-sufficiency in programming. The focus on community involvement, from cleanup to volunteer programs, helped reduce maintenance costs at Crissy Field. By involving everyone in ongoing stewardship activities, removal of invasive plants, debris cleanup, and environmental monitoring, volunteer programs established through the Parks Conservancy continue to mitigate some of the maintenance costs while creating an opportunity for ongoing community involvement.





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

THE PUBLIC PROCESS IN PLANNING

The NPS was responsible for the community engagement process in planning the restoration of Crissy Field. Years of public meetings helped to develop an approved Environmental Assessment which defined the major features and uses of the restored site. Park Rangers held meetings with public leaders of different activity groups and presented the project in broader community meetings to explore different options and solicit feedback. Although earlier planning efforts for a smaller portion of the site took place before the base closure, public involvement for planning the entire Crissy Field area began in 1991 with vision workshops held for the amendment to the original GMP for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. It continued during the scoping process for the Environmental Impact Statement and with a series of public workshops and meetings held to address site-planning issues.

In addition to larger general public meetings, the NPS and the Parks Conservancy also had more focused meetings with representatives of public agencies and special interest groups. These groups centered on three focused areas in the Crissy Field project: restoration of ecological resources, historical preservation, and user recreation.

LESSON LEARNED

Create inclusive public processes by making them accessible to everyone.

Framing Crissy Field as an ecological, cultural, and recreational resource for the Bay Area, the partners considered a range of accessibility issues when planning their public meetings. Ensure that all meetings are accessible by public transportation and actively publicize a range of transportation options when doing outreach. Also consider language barriers and offer translation services if relevant.

“There’s a reason people come from all over the world to see Crissy Field because it had such complexity. But it was really in a way very simple – get everybody involved.”

Carol Prince, Former Deputy Director of External Affairs, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN IMPLEMENTATION

The importance of creating a park for all people spurred a larger campaign that sought to involve the community directly in the implementation of the park, allowing them to build more personal connections and experiences with Crissy Field.

Public Agencies and Special Interest Groups Involved in Crissy Field

ENVIRONMENTAL	HISTORICAL/CULTURAL	RECREATIONAL
Bay Conservation and Development Commission	The American Institute of Architects	Bay Area Dog Walkers
Environmental Protection Agency	The American Aviation Historical Society	Bicycle Coalition
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Fort Point and Presidio Historical Association	Board Sailors Groups
	National Trust for Historic Preservation	San Francisco Unified School District
	Native American Groups	
	San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Board	

A team from the Parks Conservancy created the “Help Grow Crissy Field” campaign, which engaged over 3,000 volunteers from schools and community groups and made a significant contribution to the restoration of the park.

The Parks Conservancy developed a tactical and inspirational campaign with attractive and eye-catching graphics and a simple and powerful message. The message of helping to grow Crissy Field into a beautiful park allowed people to deeply feel their role in building a sense of place and established a sense of ownership of the park.

The campaign involved direct mailing to members of the Parks Conservancy, as well as billboards, banners, and bus shelter ads that helped to reach new communities around the Bay Area. The NPS, the Parks Conservancy, and the Haas, Jr. Fund built a strong partnership with the public schools and strategically sought youth engagement. When children came out to the site to plant native plants, it created a memorable experience, providing reason to return on their own with their families.

In addition to reaching out to youth, partners involved in Crissy Field believed that reaching new audiences was critical. As such, one of the goals of the project was to expand the traditional park audiences to specifically target diverse, urban communities. There was a tremendous outreach effort to various cultural and education centers around the city, with a full-time employee and an assistant who were solely responsible for outreach to nontraditional communities. Through this effort, staff built relationships with leaders from underrepresented communities, working with them to determine

what they needed to make Crissy Field welcoming and accessible.

LESSON LEARNED

A strong marketing campaign is an important engagement tool.

The “Help Grow Crissy Field” campaign included attractive marketing materials that were placed throughout the Bay Area. The simplistic yet substantive message in these materials garnered unprecedented community support for Crissy Field. Creating a compelling marketing strategy and a brand that aligns with the vision of the partners not only increases the number of visitors and donors but also helps establish and reiterate the mission of the project. Furthermore, it is important to translate materials into the common languages of a city to ensure the inclusion of diverse communities.





CASE STUDY
THREE

GOVERNORS ISLAND

New York, New York

SUMMARY

Governors Island of New York is a 172-acre public space that sits in the New York Harbor with vast views of the Statue of Liberty, the New York City skyline, and Brooklyn. It is a valuable vantage point that frames the history of New York City while offering an open site for new cultural activities to flourish. The Island continues to bring a growing number of visitors to the public open space, with a variety of programmatic opportunities both in education and the arts. The freedom and openness of the site's landscape and programming are a result of a complex transfer from military base to public park, involving a number of different stakeholders.

A distinguishing feature in the planning and implementation of the post-to-park transformation of Governors Island was the staggered and complex nature of land transaction and management. Key players had to reconcile differing values and priorities throughout changes in political leadership as well as the division of the island property into City-State and federal lands. Despite the uncertainties,

the nonprofit Regional Plan Association (RPA) and the Governors Island Alliance (GIA) that it created, the NPS, the Governors Island Preservation & Education Corporation (GIPEC), and then the Trust for Governors Island (the Trust) continued to build and refine the idea of a much-needed public space in the dense urban fabric of New York.

While the Island is open seasonally and a major new City Park located on the site is nearing completion, leases of buildings in the Historic District and future development of the rest of the Island is still in the solicitation and planning stage.

BACKGROUND

In 1966, Governors Island was transferred from the U.S. Army to the Coast Guard as a self-contained community with on-island operations. For the Coast Guard, the expenses of running the station were significant, costing nearly \$6 million each year just for the ferry service to and from the Island. The proximity to New York City also resulted in higher

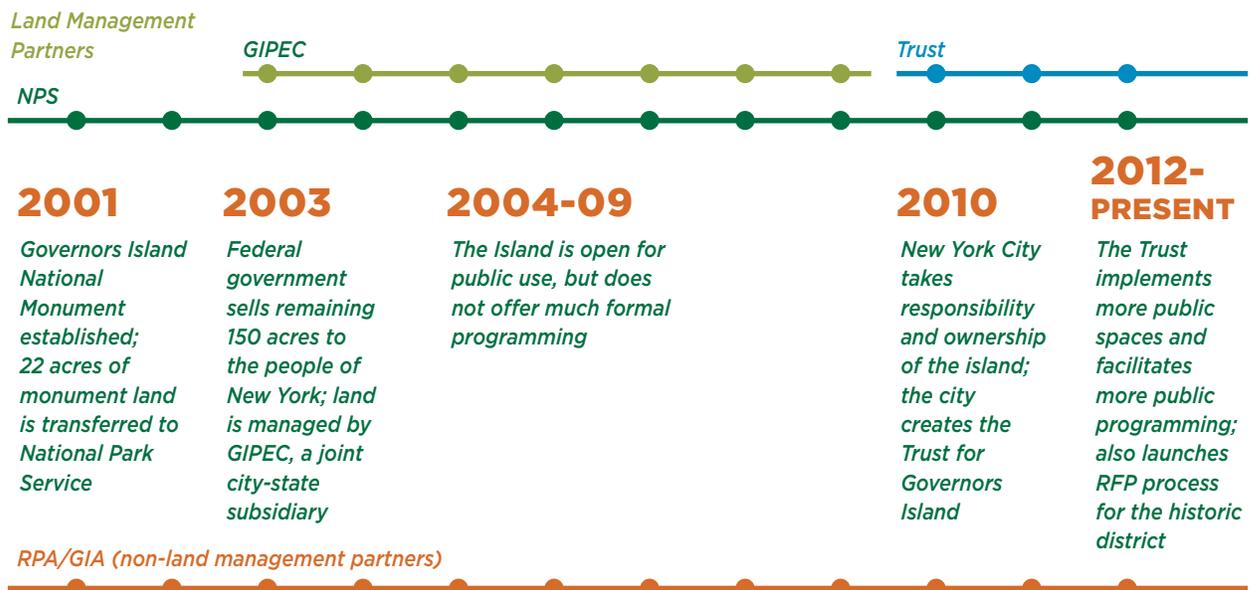
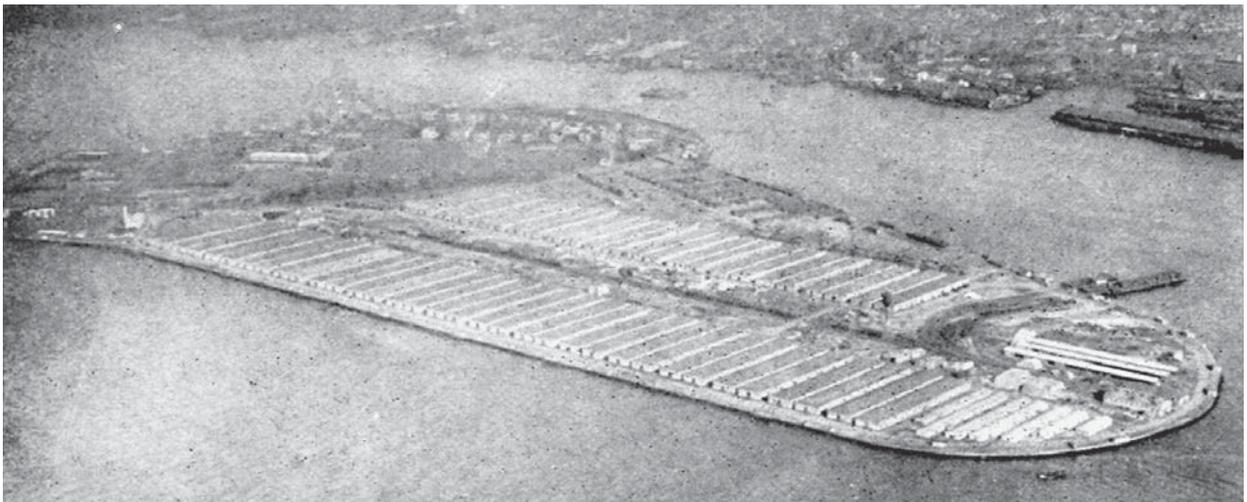
costs of maintenance and operation. By 1996, the base closed as a part of a federal budget-streamlining plan and the General Services Administration (GSA) became the Island's caretaker.

The GSA was specifically directed by the Balanced Budget Act and Congress to sell Governors Island at fair market value, which at the time was appraised at \$330 million. In 2001, the 22 acres that include two forts were named a National Historic Monument and transferred to the NPS, while the remaining 150 acres of the Island were still for sale. Ultimately, by 2003, the lack of private interest due to high costs of the Island and its redevelopment, along with RPA and GIA's strong advocacy efforts,

resulted in the sale of the rest of the Island to the people of New York for public use, to be managed by a joint City and State entity.

SITE ASSESSMENT AND EARLY PLANNING

When the 22 acres of the monument property owned by the NPS was transferred in 2001, the site had relatively few historical infrastructure rehabilitation needs compared to most transferred military lands. However, the utilities, wharf, barracks, and buildings in the southern area were several decades old. Many of these historically insignificant





structures were not up to New York City building code and needed to be demolished, upgraded, repaired, and/or restored. It was estimated to cost \$75 million just to demolish these structures.

This challenge was paired with very little public knowledge about Governors Island due to its low profile during the military occupation. These challenges contributed to the lack of interest from private developers who recognized the constraints and realities of investing in the land. For

any private investment, there were also limitations in the type of development that was allowed with the federal transfer.

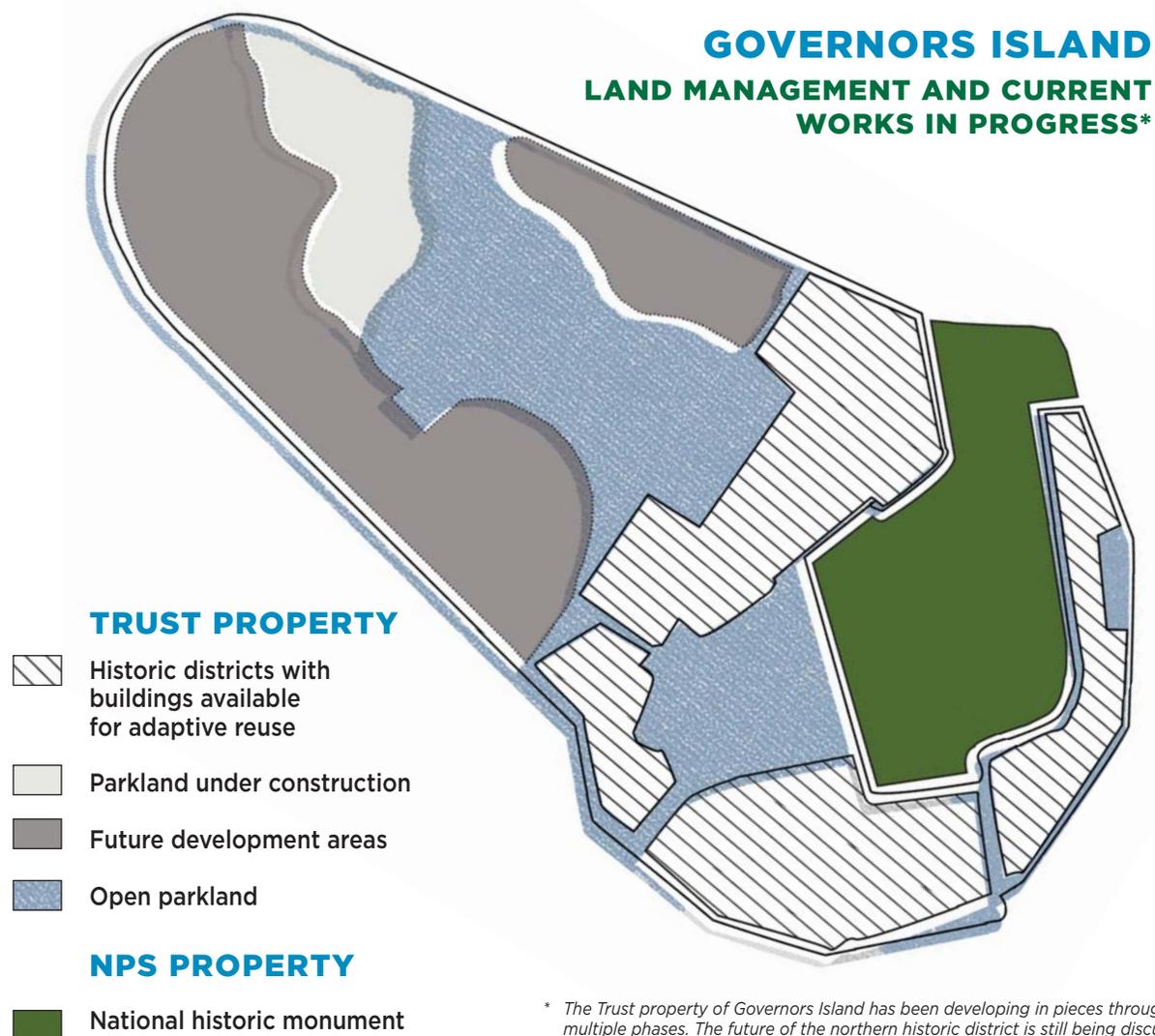
The lack of interest and options for private development, along with a federal law that allowed for the City and State to have the right of first offer, resulted in the transfer of the remaining 150 acres of the Island to the people of New York. Under this initial arrangement, the City and State of New York established GIPEC, a subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corporation with a joint City-State board. For the first four years after the transfer, differences in priorities and goals between the municipal and state government significantly slowed planning for the Island, and development under GIPEC stalled. In 2010, the Mayor and Governor of New York reached an agreement for the City to adopt sole responsibility for the Island and the City created the Trust as the managing nonprofit entity. The Trust immediately began taking steps forward with backing from the City and significant municipal funding.

Groups of Uses Established by Federal Transfer for Redevelopment

Required Uses	Education and public-accessible open space
Permitted Uses	Culture and arts, recreation and entertainment, commercial office and mixed-use, hospitality and retail, health
Prohibited Uses	Casinos, parking and power generation except for use on-island, residential not associated with permitted use

Key Stakeholders at Governors Island

Governors Island Alliance (GIA)	A separate NGO started in 1996 by RPA to focus on advocacy and community planning of Governors Island; now a nonprofit that continues advocacy efforts and manages volunteer programs on the Island
Governors Island Preservation & Education Corporation (GIPEC)	A subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corporation, a New York government and chief economic development agency; GIPEC operated with a joint City-State board to manage the 150 acres of Governors Island from 2003 until 2010
National Park Service (NPS)	A federal agency that manages the 22 acres of Governors Island Historical Monument; this land includes Fort Jay and Castle Williams
Regional Plan Association (RPA)	An independent nonprofit organization that focuses on recommendations and strategic planning in the New York metropolitan region
Trust for Governors Island (the Trust)	A nonprofit organization created by the City in 2010 charged with operations, planning, and redevelopment of the 150 City-owned acres of the Island



* The Trust property of Governors Island has been developing in pieces through multiple phases. The future of the northern historic district is still being discussed.

PARTNERSHIPS

The partnerships at Governors Island were complex due to the changes in political climate as well as changes in governing organizations. Immediately following the transfer, the NPS, GIPEC, and RPA/GIA became the key stakeholders in the project. Each of these stakeholders held different roles and approached the transfer from different viewpoints with different resources.

EARLY MEETINGS FOR ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

RPA, an independent urban research and advocacy organization, was the first and most dogged partner in spearheading ideas for a creative use of the Island. An organization with values in sustainable urban development, RPA saw the opportunity for creating a public park and advocated against exclusive private development that would do little to preserve and promote cultural resources. Following the announcement of the Coast Guard’s departure in 1996, RPA created the Governors Island Alliance (GIA), which gathered professionals of multiple disciplines to spur discussions and develop potential values that the site could provide for New York.

These meetings included architects, urban planners and designers, artist organizations, parks professionals, NPS staff, and many others from different disciplines. The results of these sessions involving numerous co-sponsors were two-fold: a strong push against exclusive private development and the spread of information about the existence and potential of the Island to the general public.

LESSON LEARNED

Advocating early to diverse communities can offer many benefits.

RPA held early meetings with as many community groups as possible to help put the Island on the map and spur creative conversations about its future. Early advocacy is crucial in getting any relatively unknown project started and can help gain practical support for park planning, make connections across sectors, and result in a truly diverse project. The first step is to understand the existing communities and reach out to a comprehensive list of diverse groups, organizations, and individuals. Get people involved in discussion and listen to what they want.

THE NEED FOR COORDINATION AND ALTERNATIVE PLANS

Once the Island was transferred, the NPS and GIPEC had a series of meetings to understand their respective planning processes and develop guidelines for early public access and overall Island operations. However, establishing cohesive planning processes between these two agencies proved difficult as GIPEC was heavily focused on overcoming internal challenges related to the structure and funding of a joint State and City entity. While the State and City worked to coordinate and resolve these challenges, the NPS began planning for multiple alternatives that would ensure compatibility with adaptive uses of GIPEC property. The park planning workshops held by the GIA and consultations with NPS leadership helped to further refine alternatives that would align with NPS goals such as resource protection, visitor experience, administration and operation, and collaboration.

Co-Sponsors for Early Workshops Held by GIA

American Institute of Architects, NY Chapter	Municipal Art Society	New York/New Jersey Harbor BayKeeper
American Planning Association, Metro Chapter	National Trust for Historic Preservation	New York State Parks and Conservation Association
American Society of Landscape Architects, NY Chapter	Neighborhood Open Space Coalition/ Friends of Gateway	Preservation League of New York State
Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce	New York City Partnership and Chamber of Commerce	The City Club of New York
Historic Districts Council	New York Landmarks Conservancy	The Parks Council
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council		Trust for Public Land
		Van Alen Institute

THE TRUST FOR GOVERNORS ISLAND PUSH FOR IMPLEMENTATION

When the City took sole ownership of the Island, GIPEC ceased to exist and the Trust formally took control of the property. As a nonprofit contractor with the City of New York, the Trust was responsible for operating and redeveloping the Island with a focus on attracting more people and diverse park users in order to aid in future business redevelopment. With municipal funding, the Trust began to increase publicly accessible spaces by opening up more of the site for activities.

Given the staggered nature of planning and implementation, as well as changes in ownership and leadership, the Trust sought a landscape architect for the park areas of the Island that would understand the nature of the park-building process. When a competition was held for the design of the southern park area, the Trust ultimately chose a design that would produce a cohesive and natural development of the Island despite the existing piecemeal development process.

LESSON LEARNED

Being honest about goals and resources helps projects move forward.

The planning process at Governors Island was greatly affected by the change in political leaders and land management agencies. During this time, the other stakeholders had to recognize the parameters of the governing agencies and their available resources in order to move forward and plan for alternatives. In situations like these, setting realistic goals and being honest about timelines and resources can help partners understand each other's positions and plan accordingly. The development of federal or municipal lands can be especially time-consuming due to special authorities and multistep review processes. Factor in these elements when setting goals and clearly communicate them to everyone involved. It is common for partners to have different timelines and priorities but focusing on a communal end goal and being adaptable can help with planning comprehensive alternatives.

FUNDING

When Governors Island was under the management of GIPEC, the joint structure led to challenges in securing necessary funding for renovation. This stall in funding hindered the development of

parkland on the Island. However, once the Island was transferred to the City and the Trust, the City dedicated \$306 million in capital for a transformative first phase of investment.

The funding for Governors Island is unique as it is a public space run by a nonprofit contractor, as opposed to the City Parks Department. The Trust operates through the City's capital plans and has a master contract with the City to operate and redevelop Governors Island. Capital and operating funds flow through this contract, allowing municipal funding to directly support the project. Furthermore, while the City typically does five-year expense budget plans, the appropriation for Governors Island is determined and approved by the City Council and the Mayor on an annual basis.

Another advantage of the Trust being a nonprofit entity is its ability to receive donations. To date, the Trust has raised close to \$40 million from individual donors and foundations, primarily for parkland and public art. With past experience soliciting large donations for public schools, the CEO of the Trust and the Board Chair devote considerable time to the solicitation of donations from corporations, foundations, and individuals.

LESSON LEARNED

High-level face-to-face fundraising can generate significant philanthropic funding.

To fundraise for Governors Island, the Trust has a full-time development officer and the CEO and Board Chair devote considerable time to the solicitation of donations. A designated development officer is important in any nonprofit organization that can oversee and incubate relationships with corporations, foundations, and individuals. However, it is also important for people at the leadership level to participate in development efforts. Having the face of an organization partake in direct solicitation builds confidence and demonstrates the importance of various contributions.

As the Trust began to grow and gain traction, it became important to address the partnership with the NPS, to acknowledge shared spaces, and to establish certain obligations and responsibilities for both parties. After dialogue between the partners on what costs needed to be split, the NPS and the Trust developed a cost-sharing formula for basic facilities improvements.



LESSON LEARNED

Sharing resources can help cut costs while strengthening partnerships.

As two separate agencies managing land on Governors Island, the NPS and the Trust had a series of conversations to create a cost-sharing formula for projects that would benefit both entities, specifically for utility systems and operating expenses. If there are multiple governing entities on-site, engage in conversations among governing entities to determine how sharing responsibilities might be financially beneficial for everyone. Sharing resources and responsibilities not only cuts down costs but also fosters a more collaborative partnership. In cases where land is divided under different management, cost-sharing formulas might consider acreage of property and the extent to which each party benefits from specific shared resources.

While Governors Island was well funded due to the values and goals of the Mayor of New York City, and has seen growing success, there will be finite government funding for the Island in the future. To address future funding, the partners are currently working on sharing more responsibilities to cut costs, as well as soliciting adaptive reuse opportunities for the historic district to aid in generating more revenue for the park.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

REACHING OUT AND NETWORKING WITH DIVERSE GROUPS

When the transfer of the Island to the State and City was first announced, GIA reached out to a range of community stakeholders in order to put together an inclusive and comprehensive planning process. As a civic coalition brought together by RPA, GIA engaged communities; civic leaders; environmental groups; historic preservation groups; public and elected officials; allied agencies; veterans groups; national environmental organizations; park advocates; civil rights, housing, and homeless housing activists; and many others. They used these forums to communicate public interest in Governors Island to City, State, and federal decision makers to advocate for a public park with values across all resources.

As an organization focusing on advocacy and community engagement, GIA sought to publicize the issue through many outlets, including the press.

One of the most powerful tools in engaging the community was the continued participation of the *New York Times* from military transfer to present-day. The paper followed news of change, opportunities, and development on Governors Island, providing opportunities for everyone to respond to new reports.

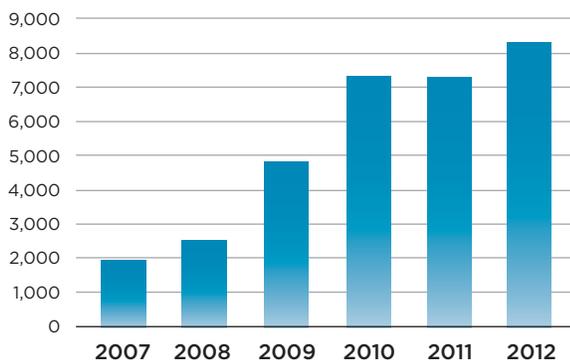
Throughout much of GIA's advocacy efforts, the NPS incorporated the values and public sentiment into its GMP for Governors Island and presented goals and plans for the Island's parks, public spaces, and historic buildings at community board meetings in both Brooklyn and Manhattan.

CREATING SPACE FOR EXPERIMENTATION

While community engagement efforts by GIA and the NPS were heavily focused on creating conversations with the community, the Trust's community engagement efforts included piloting programs that helped to gauge public interest and demand. Faced with the challenge of bringing people to a little-known island, the Trust solicited proposals for arts and entertainment programming, with very little restriction on the types of programs on the Island. Expanding programs in an innovative way and creating new opportunities not typical of traditional park programs were large factors in Governors Island's transformation and its growing number of users.



Growth in Average Daily Number of Daytime Visitors to the Island



Data provided by the Trust for Governors Island

Once the general public became more familiar with Governors Island, the Trust began to focus on reaching New Yorkers who lacked green spaces and arts/cultural programming in their own communities, as well as those who were underrepresented in their visitorship. Private funding from donors allowed the Trust to secure interns and procure translation services to reach an array of neighborhoods, senior citizens, and non-native speakers. For example, the Trust translated its calendar of events into Spanish, Chinese, and Russian and publicized events through ethnic media outlets. The Trust also observed that large members of New York City's religious communities visited the Island and began to encourage kosher vendors to ensure the availability of familiar and affordable food to all visitors.

The multifaceted community engagement methods, coupled with increased communication among the partners, provided an array of opportunities and innovations on the island, helping the growth of visitorship and ensuring that all New Yorkers view it as a resource.

LESSON LEARNED

Trying out new strategies in engagement can help cover a larger user base.

PILOTING NEW PROJECTS ALLOWS THE PARK TO BE A DIVERSE RESOURCE

Engage the community in piloting projects to acknowledge diverse interests and cultures. Be open-minded when soliciting proposals from the community for new activities. This is a practical way to gain understanding of your city's needs while letting everyone know that the park can be a valuable resource.

INVOLVING PRESS CAN HELP ENGAGE LOCAL AUDIENCES

A *New York Times* reporter covered recent news, progress, and challenges on Governors Island, which informed the local community and gave them an outlet to respond with any concerns, questions, and suggestions. Using one or multiple news sources to cover the development story of a site is a good way to share information and connect to the general public.

BEING TRANSPARENT WITH THE PUBLIC GARNERS INTEREST AND SUPPORT

Ensure that development is undertaken in an open and transparent manner with ongoing public involvement and input. Give people opportunities to be on-site to share progress, successes, and challenges so the community can respond and be a part of the journey and feel more connected.

OBSERVING USERS ON SITE CAN OFFER NEW PERSPECTIVES IN ASSESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Take the time to get to know the different users when they are on-site. Community engagement is not only about listening to what people want. Although presenting information and soliciting feedback is crucial, it is just as important to observe the users and determine their needs. A holistic approach to community engagement could include hiring staff to observe and keep track of user movement and perform qualitative analysis of their activity on-site. Remember that not everyone may be aware of or have access to other engagement opportunities that you have established.



CONCLUSION

The planning of urban parks is dependent on a variety of factors, from the uniqueness of a specific site to the political and economic climate of a city. Not all of the specific conditions and tactics discussed in these case studies may be replicable for other repurpose or rehabilitation projects. However, the greater lessons learned, broader strategies, and tactics identified in this report may be useful for other parks in their efforts to think proactively and critically about the park planning or redevelopment process.

Accompanied by a high level of commitment and passion from leaders and staff, these lessons can be leveraged for innovation in the role of parks and public places in cities. Through collaboration with diverse partners, parks should take advantage of the rich cultural fabric of dense urban centers to keep parks relevant, engaging, and beneficial to the changing and growing population.

APPENDIX
ASUMMARY OF
BEST PRACTICES**LESSONS FOR SITE ASSESSMENT AND
EARLY PLANNING****View the park as a resource within the larger urban context**

- Think of what your region needs as well as what your site has to offer; consider the larger urban context and your site's potential to create a resource for your city
- Determine the place-appropriate and place-specific opportunity of the site

Conduct thorough feasibility assessments and be transparent in your reports

- Assess the economic viability and the feasibility of a vision-oriented project; conduct a market analysis to weigh the financial implications and opportunities of different use options
- Create thorough reports that cover historical, environmental, architectural, and economic assessments and that give a detailed analysis of site conditions, programmatic opportunities, and reuse feasibility to help attract private developers and investors
- Be transparent with the improvement needs of the site

Set a temporary plan for historical buildings to reduce costs in the long run

- Set an interim preservation plan for historic or natural resources until there is a viable owner/partner/developer that can take care of the site; this can help slow deterioration and save costs in the future

Plan for public programming that can help connect to a quickly growing city

- Think broadly and critically about ongoing programming to create a sense of place and meaning for the park
- Establish a public component that can continue to engage the community even after the implementation of the project; create action-oriented programming around larger issues to create a valuable resource for the community

LESSONS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Consider both value alignment and personal connection to find the right partner

- Understand the past work of potential partners to gauge their abilities and their broader vision and values
- Seek partners that can amplify and supplement existing expertise to save time and resources
- Rely on interviews and face-to-face meetings to find out if it would be a good personality fit and if your values align
- Establish direct and regular interaction to build trust and a strong foundation for clear communication

Understand each partner's abilities and constraints to help achieve shared goals

- Clearly communicate your needs, goals, and timelines to your partners; take the time to understand your partners' needs in return
- Understand each partner's skills and resources; focus energy on respective strengths
- Both the private partners and the public agencies should be transparent about their needs and processes and should be responsive to those of their partners
- Work with the private partner to help them understand and meet public (federal, municipal) guidelines

Be honest about goals and resources

- Set realistic goals and be honest about timelines and resources to help partners understand each other's positions and plan accordingly
- Factor in the special authorities and multistep review processes required of federal or municipal lands when setting goals; clearly communicate those requirements to everyone involved
- Think critically and creatively in adapting to changes and plan comprehensive alternatives

LESSONS FOR FUNDING

Share resources to cut costs while strengthening partnerships

- Engage in conversation among governing entities to determine how sharing responsibilities might be financially beneficial for everyone
- Develop a cost-sharing formula; consider acreage of property and the extent to which each party benefits from specific shared resources in the calculation

Forge strong, friendly, professional relationships with political leaders

- For municipalities and government agencies, find a nonprofit partner that can support advocacy efforts and build relationships with local politicians
- Organize site visits for leaders to visually help them understand the goals and needs of the site
- Treat these leaders as you would any other partner; provide them with regular reports on the planning and implementation process

Utilize available incentives and take advantage of the historic rehabilitation tax credits

- Seek the advice of a lawyer, accountant, or a consultant with experience in a similar project or familiarity with the credits
- Make sure that all partners understand the economics of relevant financial incentives and the need for long-term leases

Build mutually beneficial donor relationships to create a truly civic-minded project

- Find donors who already align with the mission and values of the project as a first step to forging a mutually beneficial relationship
- Involve donors in conversation throughout all phases of the project to understand their perspective and to increase engagement
- Invest in high-quality reports for donors; the quality and the depth of reporting is important to show that you want them to be engaged in the process

Invest in high-level face-to-face fundraising

- Recognize the importance of having the leadership of an organization partake in direct solicitation; this builds confidence and demonstrates the importance of various contributions

View philanthropy and community engagement hand-in-hand

- Continue to reach out to all levels of the public throughout the entire span of the project to prevent loss of interest from both the community and the donors, and to create more opportunities for contributions
- Recognize that success creates further success; continued community engagement creates a momentum in fundraising, allowing others to be inspired and follow the lead of previous donors

Strategically plan for community donations to build an effective fundraising timeline

- Plan for the public component of fundraising to be the final push; this helps show the general public that even the smallest contribution makes a difference

LESSONS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**Work with a range of stakeholders to articulate a shared vision**

- Understand the existing communities and reach out to a comprehensive list of diverse groups, organizations, and individuals
- Listen to what people want and provide opportunities, such as public meetings or organized charrettes, to get them involved in discussion
- Develop a process that allows for co-creation and co-ownership of a common vision
- Be meticulous with wording and phrasing of the vision; use words that relate to and resonate with a wide audience

Establish clear, consistent, and timely communication with the community

- Engage the community as early as possible and continue the conversations throughout the project lifespan; take the time to listen and respond to the community to build a sense of trust
- Report regularly to the community and be transparent with the goals, stages, progress, challenges, and opportunities of the project
- Make sure that the community can correctly read and interpret important assessments and documents to help avoid misunderstandings
- Leverage one or more news sources in your city to cover the development of a site and to connect with the general public

Create truly public processes that are accessible to everyone

- Ensure that all meetings are accessible by public transportation and actively publicize a range of transportation options when doing outreach
- Consider language barriers and offer translation services if relevant
- Give people creative opportunities to be on-site to share progress, successes, and challenges so the community can feel more personally connected to the project

Address community concerns collectively

- Take proactive steps to identify potential challenges and how partners will coordinate a response if there is a conflict and/or misunderstanding with the community
- If a problem does arise, ensure that every partner is aware of the issue and is willing to find solutions as a single working group

Develop a strong marketing campaign

- Incorporate communications and marketing strategies into every phase of planning and implementation
- Provide materials translated into the common languages of your city to ensure the inclusion of diverse communities
- Find creative opportunities to access marketing expertise; building a strong advisory council or board can deepen the skills and resources available to your project, for communication strategies or any other expertise that your organization may need

Pilot new projects to create a park that is a diverse resource for your city

- Engage the community in piloting projects to acknowledge diverse interests and cultures
- Be open-minded when soliciting proposals from the community for new activities

Observe users on-site to gain new perspectives in assessing community needs

- Dedicate staff to observe and keep track of user movement and perform qualitative analysis of their activity on site

APPENDIX
BOTHER SITES
OF INTEREST

MILITARY BASE REDEVELOPMENT

**THE PRESIDIO, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

www.presidio.gov | www.nps.gov/prsf

The Presidio of San Francisco is a park and former military base on the northern tip of the San Francisco Peninsula, and is a part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Once it was decommissioned as an army base, it was transformed into a park through unique federal mechanisms similar to that of Fort Baker. However, the United States Congress created the Presidio Trust to oversee and manage the interior of the parklands with a first of its kind structure in self-sufficiency.

INFRASTRUCTURE REUSE/MULTIPURPOSE INFRASTRUCTURE

**THE HIGH LINE, NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK**

www.thehighline.org

The High Line Park is a 1.45-mile long linear park built on the elevated sections of a disused New York Central Railroad. The repurposing of the railway into an urban park includes cultural attractions, space for temporary installations and performances, and also an integration of the old Nabisco Factory loading dock. The High Line was also successful in spurring real estate development and revitalization of the neighborhoods that lie along the line.

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENTS

**NEWARK RIVERFRONT PARK, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY**

www.newarkriverfront.org

Newark has many brownfields that are suitable for improvement and these parcels were turned into Newark Riverfront Park. After site assessment, remediation, and park construction, the new park is a vibrant open space for the community for play and relaxation, but was also designed for economic development.

**SCIOTO AUDUBON METRO PARK, COLUMBUS, OHIO**

www.metroparks.net/parks-and-trails/scioto-audubon

The Scioto Audubon Metro Park was once a 160-acre brownfield with remains of asphalt and concrete plants, foundries, a cluster of railroad lines, and a massive city automobile impoundment lot. It is now a new open space that steps outside the traditional nature park design with diverse recreational facilities, while still taking advantage of its unique landscape.

APPENDIX C

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ABOUT US

THE INSTITUTE AT THE GOLDEN GATE

www.instituteatgoldengate.org

The Institute at the Golden Gate is a program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy in partnership with the National Park Service. Our mission is to promote parks and public lands as a part of the solution to social and environmental challenges. The Institute pilot tests new ideas locally, measures impact, identifies and shares best practices, and influences policy regionally, nationally, and globally.

THE GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVANCY

www.parksconservancy.org

The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy is the nonprofit membership organization created to preserve the Golden Gate National Parks, enhance the experiences of park visitors, and build a community dedicated to conserving the parks for the future. The Conservancy is an authorized “cooperating association” of the National Park Service and is one of more than 70 such nonprofit organizations working with national parks around the country.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

www.nps.gov

National Park Service is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Interior charged with managing the preservation and public use of America’s most significant natural, scenic, historic, and cultural treasures. The NPS manages the Golden Gate National Parks, as well as 405 other parks across the United States.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sophia Choi is an Urban Fellow at the Institute at the Golden Gate, focused on park planning and development in urban areas. She has worked in design research and writing for architecture and design. Sophia holds a B.A. from New York University in Architecture and Urban Planning.

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