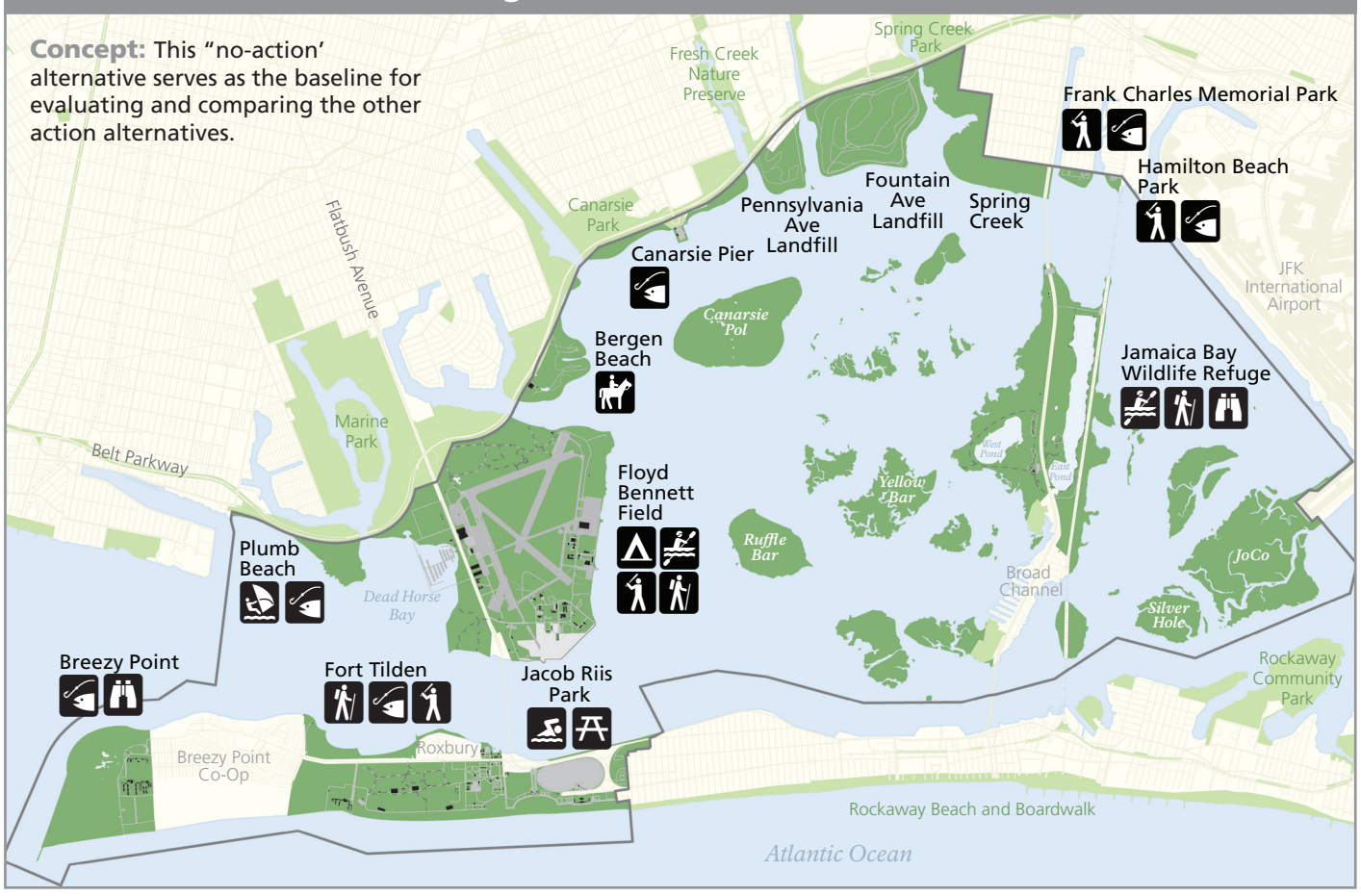
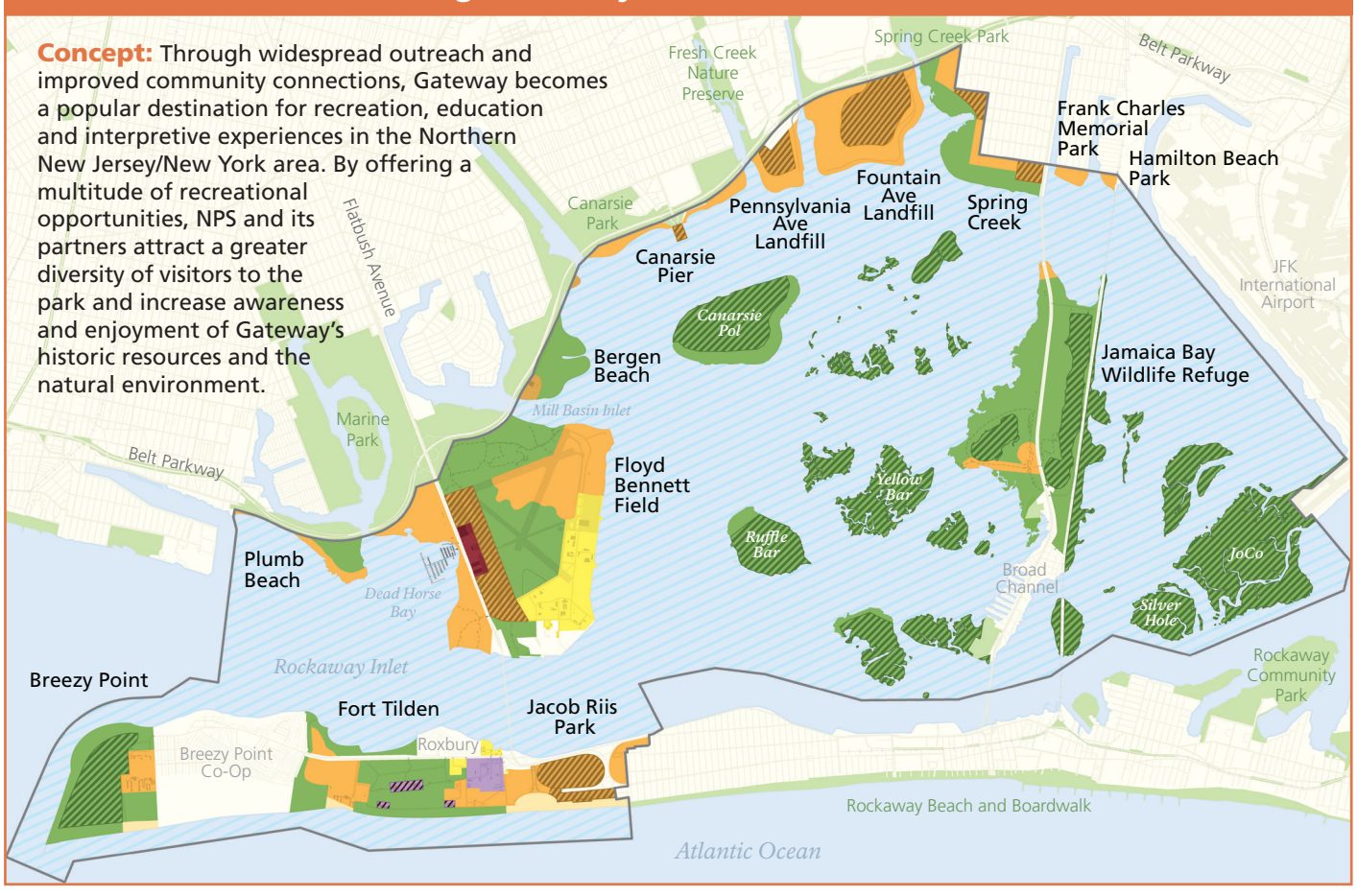
Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

Alternative A: Current Management



Alternative B: Discovering Gateway

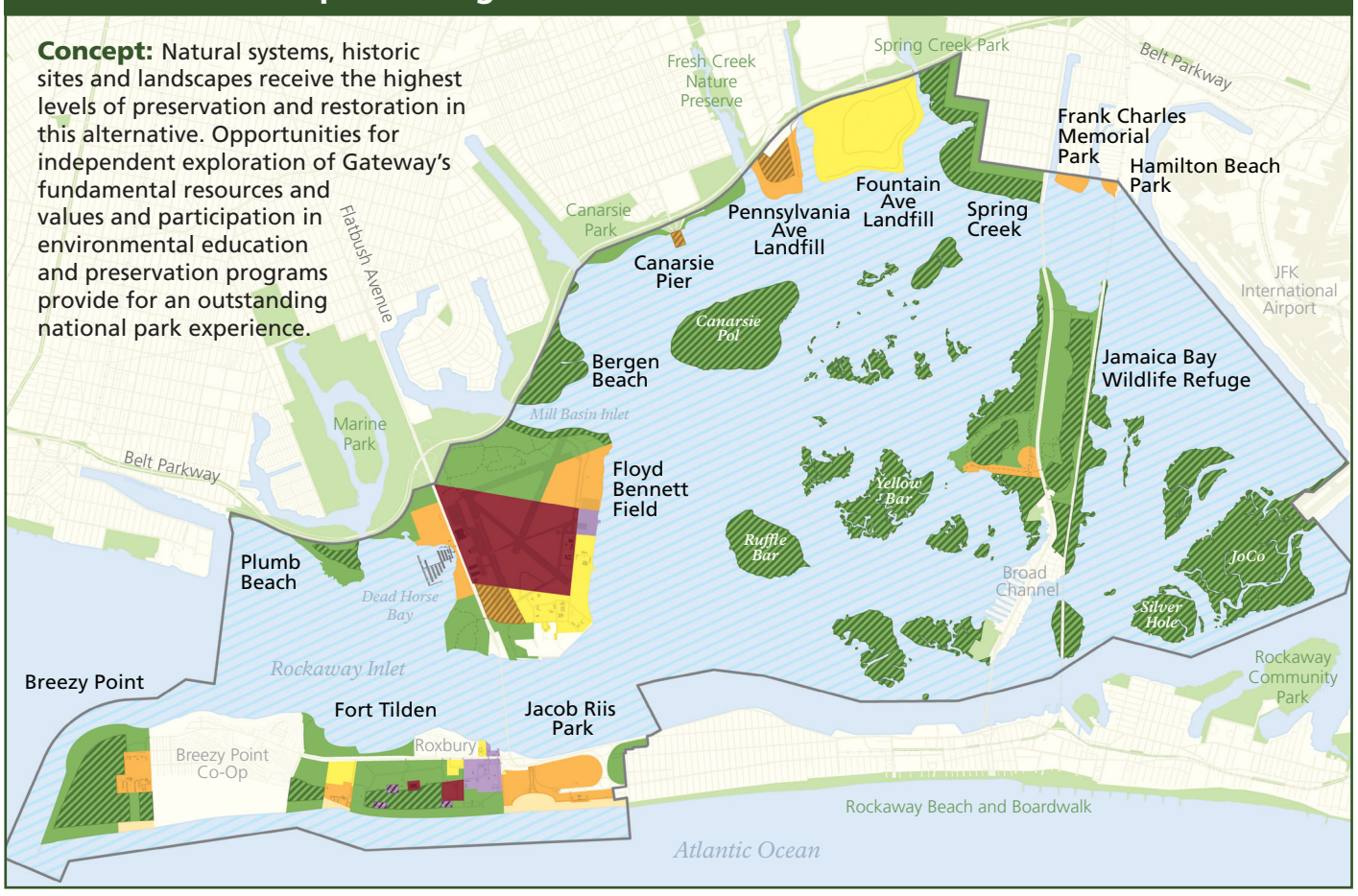


Marine | Recreation | Active Beach Subzone | Community Activity Subzone | Natural

Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

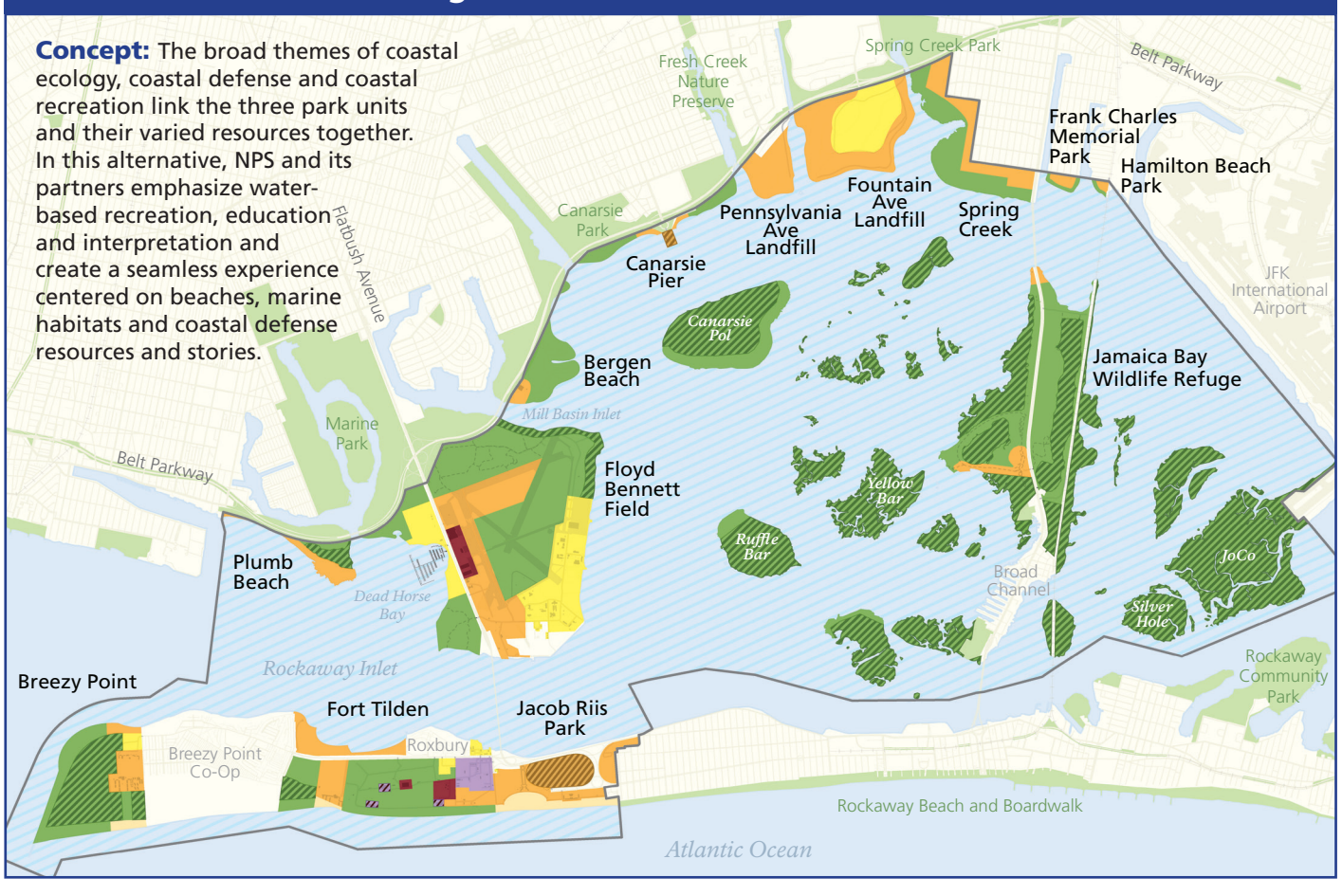
Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places

Concept: Natural systems, historic sites and landscapes receive the highest levels of preservation and restoration in this alternative. Opportunities for independent exploration of Gateway's fundamental resources and values and participation in environmental education and preservation programs provide for an outstanding national park experience.



Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines

Concept: The broad themes of coastal ecology, coastal defense and coastal recreation link the three park units and their varied resources together. In this alternative, NPS and its partners emphasize water-based recreation, education and interpretation and create a seamless experience centered on beaches, marine habitats and coastal defense resources and stories.



Sensitive Resource Subzone | Historic Core | Evolving Landscapes | Ruins Subzone | Developed

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway

Visitor Use and Experience

The Jamaica Bay unit would offer park neighbors and visitors an unmatched variety of recreational activities and a unique place to retreat from the city scape into a natural setting. NPS would emphasize community and city park connections in the development of programs tailored to city youth and their families while an array of entertainment and educational programming (e.g. concerts, festivals, air shows, readings) would draw all ages into the park.

NPS and its partners would offer an abundance of nature experiences. New facilities at Fort Tilden, Bergen Beach, Plumb Beach, the Refuge and the remediated landfills including trails, overlooks, viewing blinds, kayak launch sites, outdoor classrooms and campsites would provide more convenient access to natural areas and interpreted historic resources (e.g. Battery Harris East) to the broadest array of visitors.

Floyd Bennett Field would be transformed into a regional recreation destination. An extensive trail system would cater to hikers, bikers and nature lovers while water trails and landings invite visitors to launch kayaks, canoes, sailboards and other non-motorized boats into the bay. Additionally, enlarged areas for community uses and recreation activities provide for extensive camping facilities, play areas and entertainment/programming venues to ensure that Floyd Bennett Field appeals to a diversity of visitors.

Riis Park invites more community use with expanded facilities for community activities such as ball fields and courts along with more educational, arts and entertainment programming. Through improved bike infrastructure, public transportation and park shuttles, access to and within Jamaica Bay is made affordable and convenient to more people.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Improving water quality and habitat protection within Jamaica Bay would be prioritized along with restoring degraded stretches of coastal habitats. At Riis Park, portions of the historic parking lot would be adaptively re-used for additional recreational facilities such as ball fields, playground, group picnicking, performance/event space while the bathhouse and its associated historic features would continue to accommodate visitors.

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places

Visitor Use and Experience

In areas throughout Jamaica Bay such as Breezy Point, Fort Tilden, Jamaica Bay Refuge and Floyd Bennett Field, visitors would find open, protected natural areas. In these area visitors find opportunities to retreat into natural environments; experience the sounds, smells, and views; and learn about healthy habitat remnants that are very unique within the NYC metropolitan area. Independently exploring these natural areas would be encouraged in new opportunities such as a seamless beach walking trail from the Rockaways around the Breezy Point Tip.

This alternative would focus on engaging visitors, communities, and partners in participatory science, education and natural resource stewardship with a focus on improving conditions and habitat within and around Jamaica Bay. Also, increased monitoring, research, volunteer programs and collaboration with regional partners would continue to address water quality issues, habitat restoration and stewardship.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Natural resource restoration projects would be widespread. Management would focus on protecting and restoring natural conditions throughout the unit including water quality within the bay, freshwater marshes at Breezy Point the dune system at Tilden. Ongoing restoration projects would be broadened, expedited and strengthened by the additional partners, funding, and scientific resource. The park will collaborate with NYC, academic institutions and non-profit organizations to develop a science-based science center to further research and restoration projects in the bay. Along with this enhanced natural resource management would come expanded opportunities for nature-study, environmental educational and participatory natural resource stewardship programming.

The aviation history at Floyd Bennett Field would be preserved and showcased. At Tilden, interpretation of the Fort's landscape, batteries and Nike missile site would round out the predominantly natural resource based recreational experiences found throughout the unit. Interpretation projects at Battery Harris East and West and the Nike Missile site would lead to improved access to the fundamental cultural resources and enriched communication about the site's coastal defense history. All new facilities would be designed to be "light on the land" and minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources.

Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines

Visitor Use and Experience

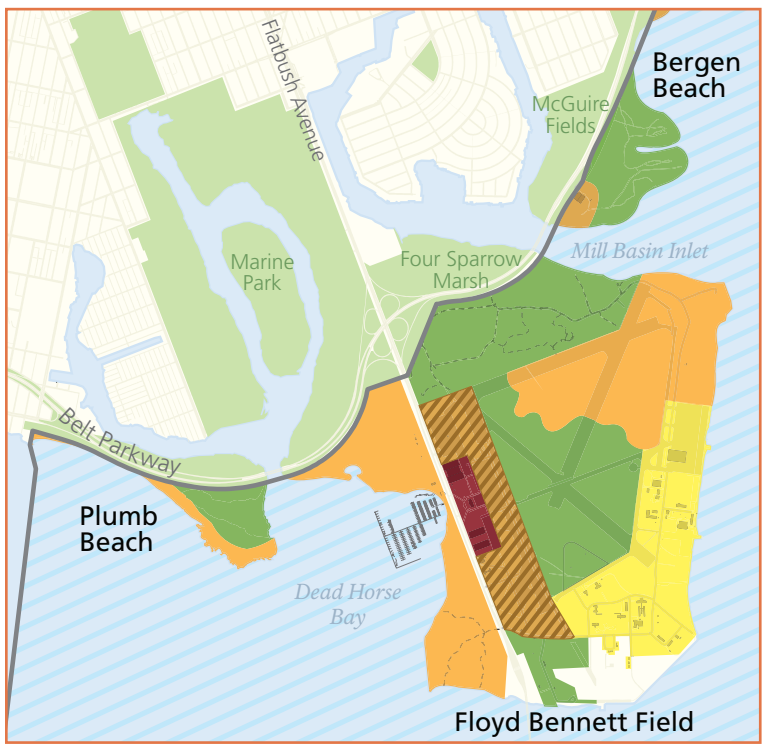
In this alternative NPS would create and expand opportunities to experience the Jamaica Bay unit from the water or along the shores of the bay and ocean. With the development of water trails, instructional water-recreation programming, equipment rentals, and the expansion of beach access, the Jamaica Bay unit would be established as a popular recreation destination for water-based activities. The coastal edges of Tilden and Floyd Bennett Field would be enhanced with improved water access, water trails, additional landings as well as camping facilities. Plumb Beach would become a windsurfing destination with expanded facilities for both windsurfers and spectators. At Jacob Riis, existing beach uses would be maintained, the parking lot would be adaptively reused for other recreation uses. Transportation facilities such as shuttle parking and a bike sharing station as well as expanded food service and other visitor amenities would be offered.

In this alternative, NPS would work closely with National Parks of New York Harbor, NYCDPR and other regional partners to improve transportation throughout Jamaica Bay, establish and promote the park as a tourism and recreation destination, and to provide new coastal stewardship and educational programs. NPS would work with partners to improve water-borne transportation throughout the unit with ferries and water taxis. With ferry service to Riis Landing and Floyd Bennett Field as well as a shuttle system and improved regional trail connections, this alternative would offer the most extensive multi-modal transportation system.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

The development of additional water-based recreation facilities and experiences would be balanced by increased habitat resource protection, research and restoration of beach and dune habitats at Breezy Point, Fort Tilden and Jamaica Bay. NPS would rely heavily on partners to maintain and improve habitat conditions within the bay waters and wildlife refuge. While the marshes would mostly remain as natural preserves set aside for research and restoration efforts, limited guided boat access to Canarsie Pol & Ruffle Bar and development of an offshore dock would facilitate environmental education and wildlife observation among the Jamaica Bay "islands". Fort Tilden would emerge as the unit's primary historic and interpretive destination where expanded interpretation of Battery Harris East and West and the Nike missile site reveal the interwoven story of the park's coastal setting and its historic fortifications.

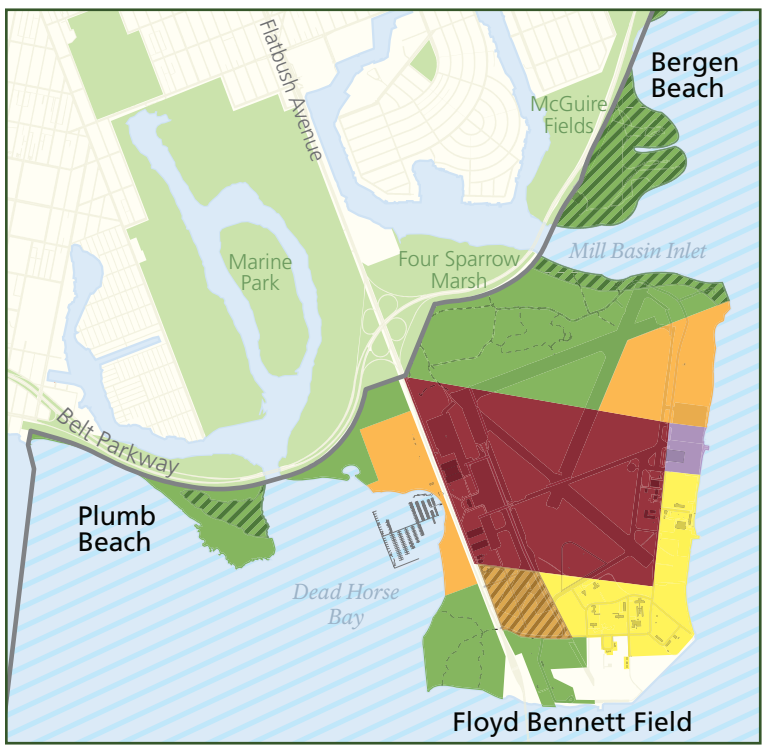
Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay



Plumb Beach
- New orientation portal developed for Great Jamaica Bay Park
- Connection from Marine Park and adjacent neighborhood by new bike/pedestrian bridge
- Access & circulation improvements by parking area and Greenway
- Controlled access to protect natural areas and habitat
- New visitor amenities such as bathrooms, rentals (bikes and wind sports), bike sharing, food trucks

Bergen Beach
- New picnic and open space area in northeast section
- New physical connections to McGuire Park, Paerdagat Basin Park, Eco Park and Flatlands neighborhoods
- Nature trail developed to bay for fishing, walking
- Improved areas for horse-related activities

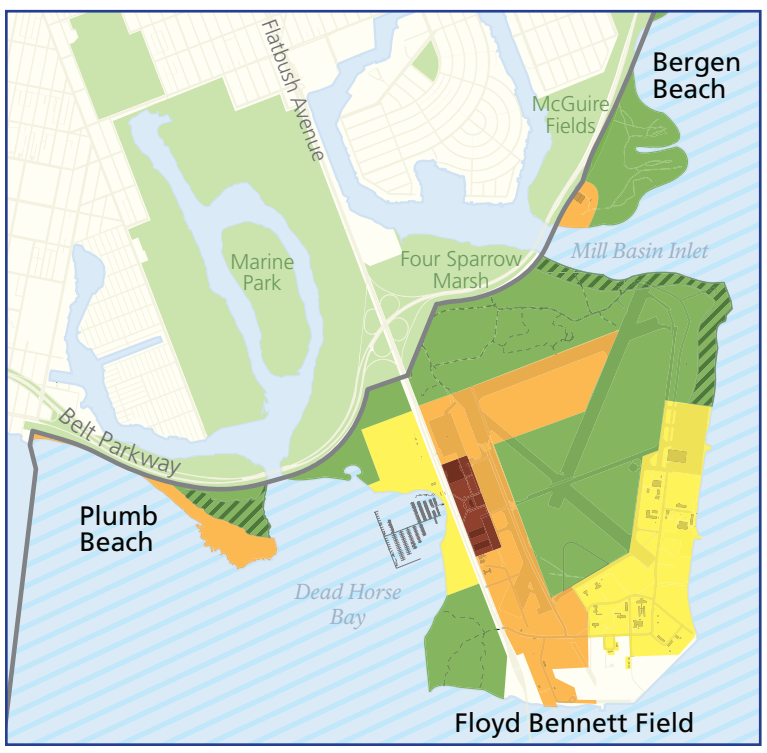
Floyd Bennett Field
- Create connections to communities and Marine Park , connections established at western portion along from Flatbush
- Multi-use trail system developed on "greened" runways
- New picnic and flexible open space areas
- New Outdoor Skills area
- Expanded camping options from tents to RVs
- Community activity space expanded for gatherings, gardens and educational events
- Jamaica Bay Greenway connection established at North 40 area
- Aviation interpretive area at Hangar Row



Plumb Beach
- Portal for nature-oriented low impact activities such as environmental education, stewardship and passive recreation
- Greenway improvements similar to B
- Enhanced natural areas/habitat including redesigned nature trail
- Improved management of shoreline and habitats

Bergen Beach
- Natural conditions predominate
- Area of intensive restoration efforts
- Horse-related activities relocated to FBF or Tilden
- No facilities (building removed)
- Very limited public access

Floyd Bennett Field
- Preserves specific aviation period of significance including cultural landscape rehabilitation
- Historic circulation pattern/entrance at Ryan center restored
- Focuses attention on Hangar Row, aircraft "museum", aviation-related activities, observation areas
- Concentrated use areas for camping, horse-related activities, community recreation and outdoor skills development
- Composting and recycling center developed with education area
- Most habitat and shoreline restoration projects



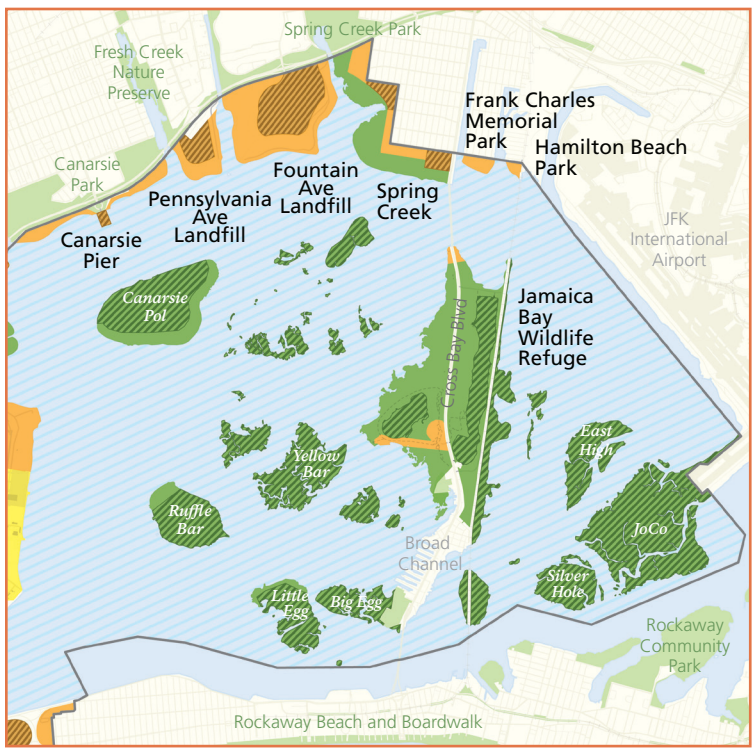
Plumb Beach
- Promotes water-based activities and wind sports
- Improved areas for rentals, lessons, spectator and launching areas
- New water trail with Marine Park loop
- Connection from Marine Park and adjacent neighborhood by new bike/pedestrian bridge
- Natural area restoration and coastal habitat enhancement

Bergen Beach
- New water trail to Paerdagat and Mill Basin inlet
- Staging area for water-based sports including launching areas, storage, shuttles, equipment rental
- Horse-related activities continue in smaller area
- Maintain natural areas and improve shoreline

Floyd Bennett Field
- New orientation portal developed at marina area
- Improved marina facilities and overnight 'boatels'
- Wetlands Center developed with extensive wetlands creation and shoreline restoration
- New Jamaica Bay Science Center developed
- Water trail connections (north side) to new launch site at Bergen Beach and western portion across from Flatbush to connect with new launch at Plumb beach
- Concentrated camping activities

Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway



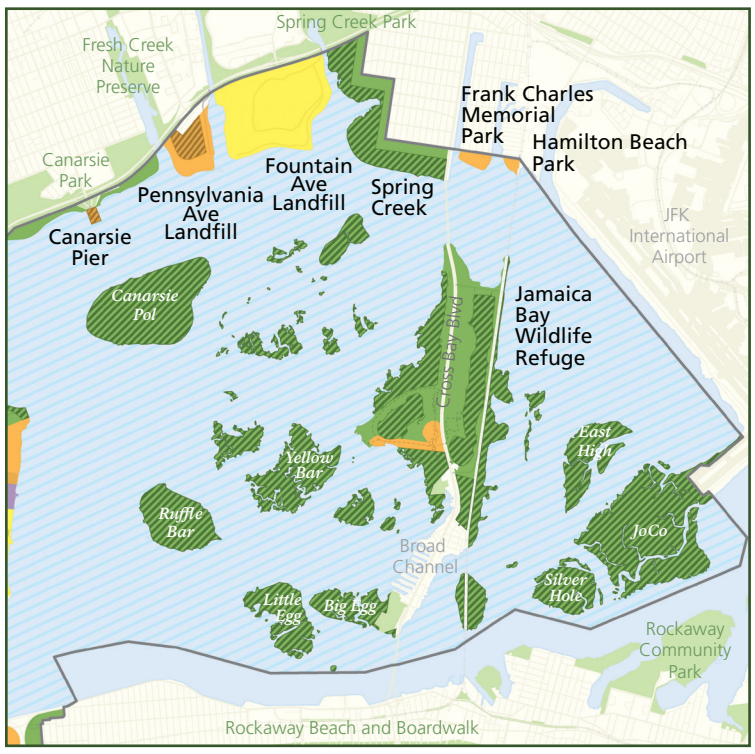
Canarsie Pier
- New orientation portal developed for Great Jamaica Bay Park
- Improved areas for fishing, kayaking and food service
- Expanded picnic and open space areas for relaxation, gatherings and community events
- Greenway improvements and connections to NYC Canarsie parks

Pennsylvania Avenue Landfill
- Roads converted into multi-use trail system for walking & running
- Improve physical connections with neighborhoods near Spring Creek
- New visitor amenities such as bathrooms
- New viewing platforms
- Ferry connection explored

Fountain Avenue Landfill
- New amphitheatre and associated facilities developed
- New viewing platforms
- Trail system on roadways
- Improved physical connections with neighborhoods

Spring Creek
- New orientation portal developed to Great Jamaica Bay Park
- Small developed area near Cross Bay Blvd with kiosk, trailhead
- Trail system to water's edge

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places



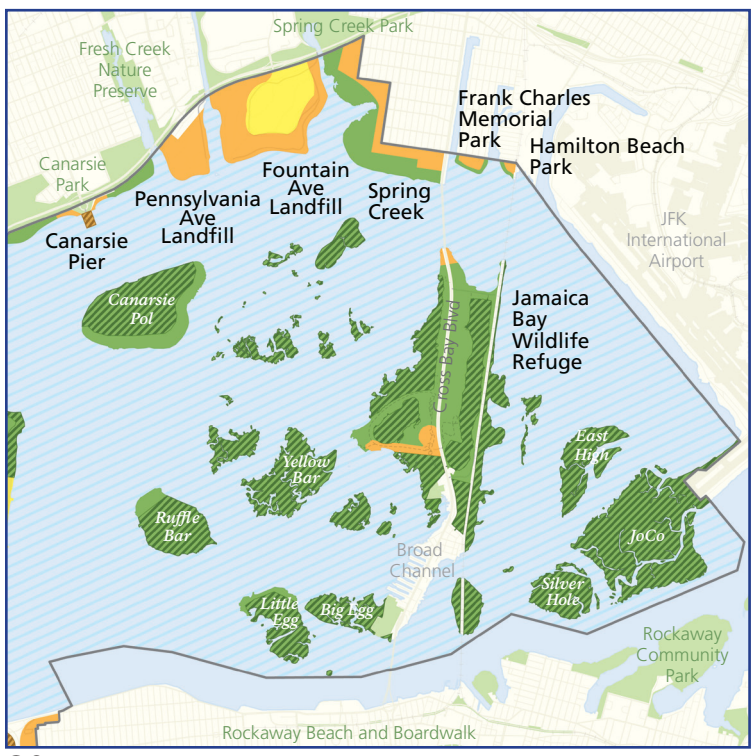
Canarsie Pier
- Retain current uses and visitor amenities
- Shade tree plantings and vegetation enhancements
- Shoreline restoration along east and west portions
- New shaded picnic areas

Pennsylvania Avenue Landfill
- Roads converted into multi-use trail system
- Improve physical connections with neighborhoods near Spring Creek
- New visitor amenities such as bathrooms
- New viewing platforms
- Ferry connection explored

Fountain Avenue Landfill
Energy development only – limited or no public access

Spring Creek
- Multi-use trail developed along road's edge
- Majority of site undergoes restoration, tying into similar NYC projects in NYC Spring Creek Park

Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines



Canarsie Pier
- Increased boating access and use such as sailing
- New floating dock, mooring area and pier enhancements
- Hub for water-borne transportation and connections to other Jamaica Bay areas via water trail
- Habitat conditions improved along east and west portions
- Current recreation uses retained

Pennsylvania Avenue Landfill
- Ferry connection
- New visitor amenities such as bathrooms
- New coastal trail along water's edge
- Addition of launch areas

Fountain Avenue Landfill
- Water trail from Spring Creek
- Launch area near entrance
- New perimeter trail and trailhead
- Trail to viewing areas on top –coastal views
- Limited energy development

Spring Creek
- New orientation portal developed to Great Jamaica Bay Park
- Small developed area near Cross Bay Blvd with kiosk, trailhead
- Trail system to water's edge

Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

- New viewing platforms/areas
- New open space area for picnic/relaxation

Frank Charles Park and Hamilton Beach

- Improved community recreation and activity areas including an "exploration" playground

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

- Improved multi-modal transportation to and from the refuge, linking it to other districts by bike and public transportation
- Develop a refuge water trails and kayak instructional zone.
- Provide additional visitor amenities
- Expand network of trails, boardwalks and nature study facilities (e.g. scopes, blinds)
- Allow kayak landing access to select islands; seasonal primitive camping
- Fresh water ponds retained, breaches repaired, habitat improvements
- Physical and programmatic connections to Sunset Cove Park and other NYCDPR sites

Frank Charles Park and Hamilton Beach

- Shoreline improvements for fishing, boat launching
- New shaded picnic areas
- Nature play areas developed

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

- Establish field station for environmental education and natural resource stewardship training and as living laboratory for recovery of natural areas, ecological services and climate change study
- Strong emphasis on salt marsh habitat restoration
- Trail system expanded to access more habitats and provide more wildlife observation opportunities
- Motorized traffic is limited to channels (bay waters)
- Viewing platforms and nature study facilities added
- Wetlands around and adjacent to Jamaica Bay managed as a system

- New viewing platforms/areas
- Improved access for fishing, kayak launching and access point for Jamaica Bay water trail
- Some habitat restoration

Frank Charles Park and Hamilton Beach

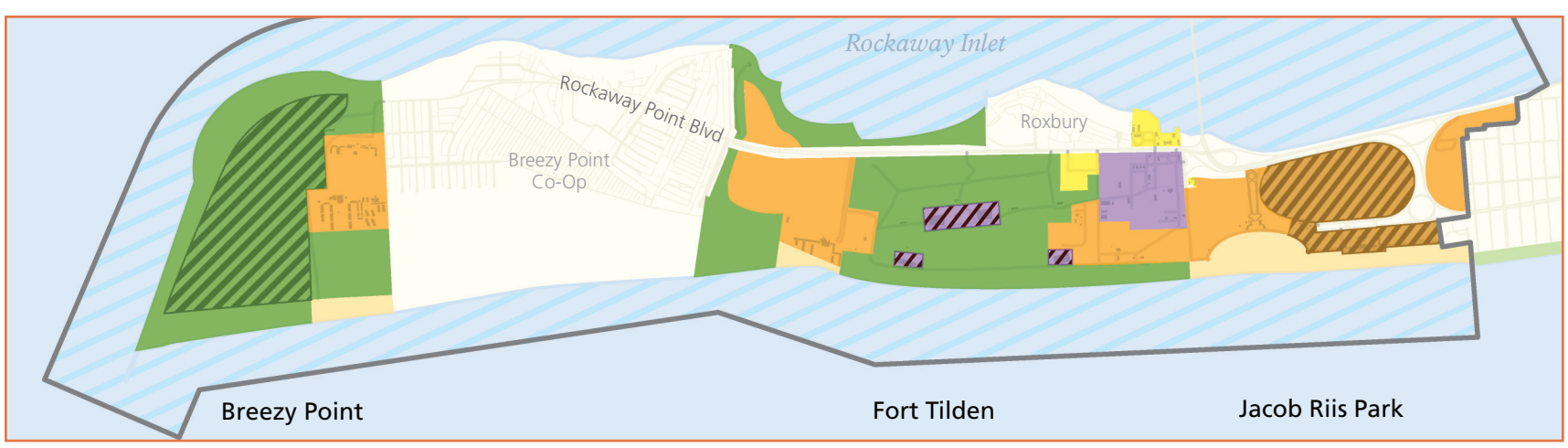
- Shoreline improvements for fishing, boat launching
- New shaded picnic areas
- Nature play areas
- Access point for Jamaica Bay water trail

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

- More water based recreation opportunities including: water trails, kayak instructional programming, equipment rental, offshore docks and additional landing/launch sites
- Limited, guided boat access to Canarsie Pol & Ruffle Bar
- Improved conditions and habitat for premier bird watching experience
- Habitat and marsh restoration promoted
- Improved transportation linkages - bus, ferry, subway

Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway

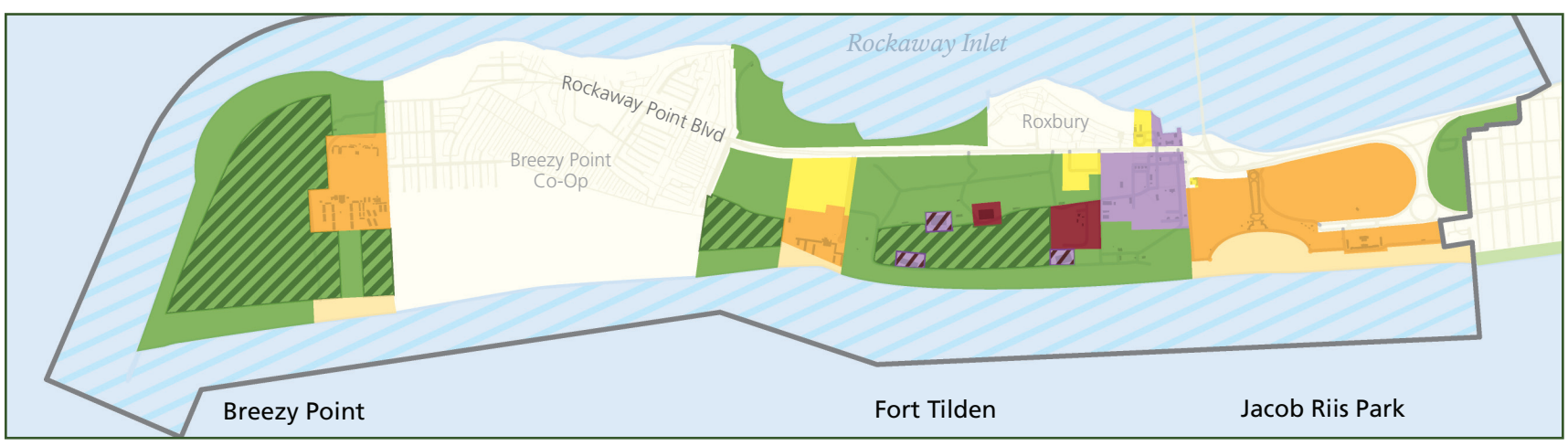


Jacob Riis Park
- Becomes multi-season community activity area
- New sports fields and community space developed (within parking lot footprint)
- Indoor space for arts and community use as well as food and new recreational uses in Bathhouse
- Expanded shaded picnic and open space

Fort Tilden
- New lodging and multi-day experience hub (east Tilden area)
- Variety of camping opportunities with associated support facilities
- Improved trail system with trailheads
- Hub for ferry transportation & boating at Riis Landing
- Natural resources managed for increased use
- Landing buildings leased for community uses

Breezy Point Tip
- Fishing and surfing access maintained with limited beach use
- Restoration of habitats and natural area
- Limited shuttle service for convenient access
- Beach clubs retained

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places

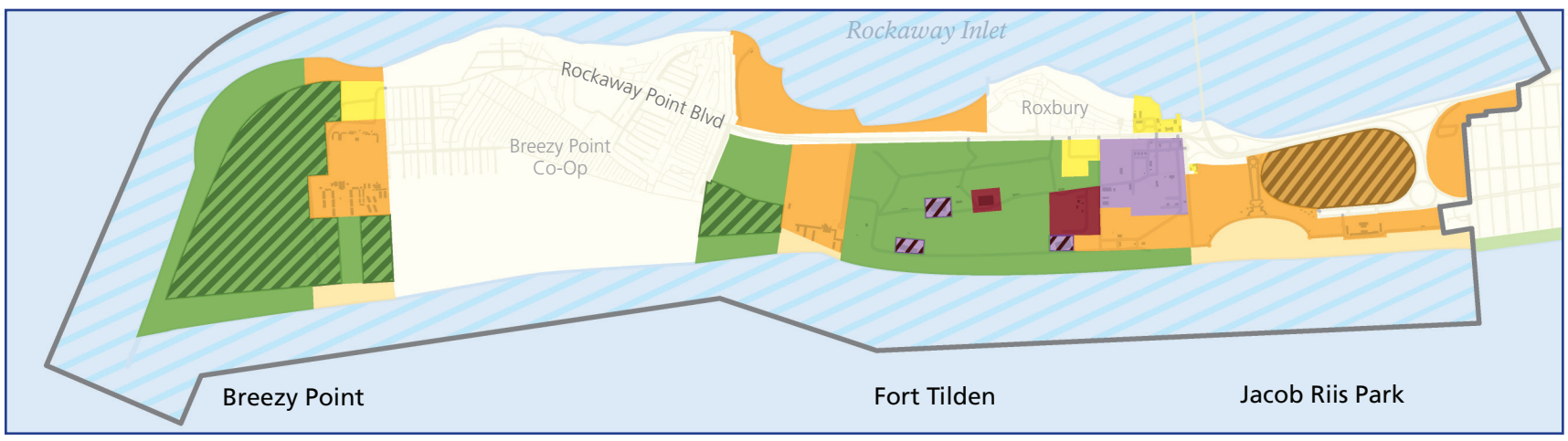


Jacob Riis Park
- New nature-oriented play and skills development area
- Picnic grove expanded with more open space
- Improved and expanded sports fields
- Natural open space area established on eastern side
- Bathhouse used for most purposes such as recreation, visitor services & operations

Fort Tilden
- New interpretive trail system highlights natural and cultural resources
- Battery Harris East stabilized and improved viewing platform
- Nike site cleaned up & interpreted
- Camping, overnight lodging and support facilities "light on the land"
- Concentrated habitat restoration
- Jamaica Bay Science Center developed at Riis Landing

Breezy Point Tip
- Restore plant communities in freshwater marsh areas
- Maintain fishing and surfing access

Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines



Jacob Riis Park
- New water skills area complimenting beach – learn to swim, surf wave, education component
- Shady picnic grove, flexible open space
- Improved visitor services including Bathhouse cafe
- Stabilize & improve shoreline and dune system
- Sea kayak trail

Fort Tilden
- Connect beach and bay experiences
- New launch areas for water activities including fishing trips
- New lodging and multi-day experience hub
- Variety of camping opportunities, including beach camping
- Camping/lodging support facilities at Riis Landing
- Improved trail system with trailhead
- Hub for ferry transportation and boating
- Battery Harris East stabilized and improved viewing platform
- Nike site cleaned up & interpreted
- Natural areas managed for increased visitor use
- Additional launch areas developed

Breezy Point Tip
- Protected beach and dune habitats
- Beach clubs retained