National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2003

Revised: 9/2025



Governors Island NM Landscape

Governor's Island National Monument

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Introduction

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) is a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the National Park System. Landscapes that are listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources and in which the National Park Service has, or plans to acquire, legal interest are included in the inventory. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, and condition. Cultural landscapes have approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into the Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS-CL) database. In addition, for landscapes not currently listed on the National Register and/or without adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, or the Keeper of the National Register.

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is compiled from primary and secondary sources and through on-site surveys of the landscape. The level of investigation is dependent upon scoping the need for information. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's integrity and an assessment of the landscape's condition. The CLI also includes historic maps, drawings, and images; photographs of existing conditions; and a site plan that indicates major features. The CLI documents the existing condition of park landscape resources and identifies impacts, threats, and measures to stabilize condition. This information can be used to develop strategies for improved stewardship. Unlike a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), the CLI does not provide management recommendations or treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape, but it may identify stabilization measures.

The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources, and cultural landscapes. Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS) replaces three legacy inventory systems: ASMIS (archeology), CLI (cultural landscapes), and LCS (historic structures); and it reinstates the former ERI (ethnographic resources). This Cultural Landscape Inventory document reflects the information in a corresponding CRIS Cultural Landscape record.

Statutory and Regulatory Foundation

The legislative, regulatory, and policy directives for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are:

- National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)) Sec. 110
- Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3 (a and c)
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs
- Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Std. 2
- Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22; issued pursuant to Director's Order #28 (DO-28)

The NHPA requires the identification, evaluation, and nomination of historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places and the maintenance and expansion of an inventory of cultural resources. DO-28 requires a cyclic assessment of the current condition of cultural landscapes based on an assessment interval, with a default of six years.

Use

Beyond fulfilling legal and policy requirements, park staff can use the Cultural Landscape Inventory in the following ways:

- To learn about park cultural landscapes (all staff)
- To inform management decisions (park managers)
- To inform project planning and development (park managers, facility managers, project managers, compliance specialists)
- To monitor the condition of the cultural landscape and take measures to protect its significance and integrity (cultural resource managers, facility managers)
- To recognize the stabilization and treatment needs of landscape features and plan work within cultural landscapes to address the needs (facility managers, cultural resource managers)
- To understand the cultural value of natural systems in a cultural landscape (natural resource managers)
- To create programming and educational materials based on site history (interpretation and education specialists)
- To recognize impacts within cultural landscapes and enforce protection measures (visitor and resources protection staff)

General Information

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name: Governors Island NM Landscape

Resource Classification: Cultural Landscape

CLI Identification Number: 650154

Parent Landscape: 650154

Inventory Status: Complete

Park Information

Park Name: Governor's Island National Monument

Alpha Code: GOIS

Park Organization Code: 1766

Park District: GOIS

Region: Northeast

Restricted: Yes

Landscape Description:

Governors Island National Monument (NM) is an irregularly-shaped 22.78-acre parcel situated on the north side of Governors Island, New York. The 172-acre island is located one-half mile south of Manhattan and one-third mile west of Red Hook, Brooklyn at the mouth of the Hudson River. For over two centuries, Governors Island has played a vital role in the defense and development of New York City, primarily shaped by the long occupation of the U.S. Army and U.S. Coast Guard.

The National Monument property, created by presidential proclamation in 2001, preserves and protects Castle Williams and Fort Jay—among the best remaining examples of early American coastal fortifications—and interprets them and their role in the defense of New York Harbor and the nation. Castle Williams, a circular, casemated fortification, sits at the island's northwest corner, just feet from the water's edge, overlooking Manhattan, the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, New Jersey, and the Brooklyn Bridge. Fort Jay, a modified star-fort, is located on the island's high point, surrounded by portions of the historic glacis that has been used more recently as a parade ground and golf course. Several twentieth-century buildings and parking lots are included in the park boundary, as are vegetation features and circulation patterns established by the twentieth-century.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The northern portion of Governors Island is a designated National Historic Landmark District containing the National Monument property and numerous other historic resources relating to nineteenth and twentieth-century military operations. The Governors Island NM Landscape is nationally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A and C. The property possesses significance in the area of Military as a major Army administrative center for nearly a century. The property also possess significance in the areas of Architecture and Engineering for the design and construction of Fort Jay and Castle Williams, masonry harbor fortifications built between 1794 and 1811. The period of significance is 1794-1966, beginning when the newly established American government stationed troops on a full time basis to initiated a program of fortification building to address the defense of key ports, and ending in 1966 when the army headquarters operations were moved from the island to Fort Meade, Maryland, and the Coast Guard took over the island.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

Many landscape characteristics and features from the period of significance remain today. The historic spatial organization is intact, anchored by Fort Jay, a star-shaped masonry fort with a courtyard and dry moat; the circular-shaped masonry Castle Williams; and the grass-covered parade ground space. These three features were visually connected early in the historic period, but by the end of the period the Army's construction of buildings, development of roads, and planting of trees created the division of spaces that visitors experience today. A covered defile, or pathway, initially served as connection between the fortifications, but the Army's development program concealed parts of it and reduced others to a trace. The site's landscape initially favored unobstructed views to the water to ensure clear lines of fire, but as tactical functions gave way to administrative uses, such views became framed by tree plantings along streets and around buildings. While some historic features were gone by the end of the historic period, including the barbican at the fort's east entrance and most of the cannons positioned on the fort and castle, other historic features are extant, including a stone path connecting Fort Jay to Comfort Road, brick walkways, a flagpole atop Fort Jay, and remnants of the golf course that occupied the parade ground.

Since 1966, some landscape characteristics and features at the Governors Island NM Landscape have changed. The Coast Guard's construction of housing (Building 513 a-b-c) has significantly altered the space south of Castle Williams. The removal of old army buildings between Castle Williams and Fort Jay has reopened the visual connection between the fortifications, but one vacant structure (Building S-251) remains, which along with a mature row of trees still creates a visual barrier. The park plans to remove both of these buildings, adjacent roads and walkways, and the row of trees to restore landscape conditions from the early historic period. The park also plans to restore the covered defile, part of which still survives as a trace. Other changes at the site include the maturation of vegetation growing within and around Fort Jay, some of which is negatively impacting the historic structure, and the spread of invasive groundcover vegetation in portions of the parade ground. The park has recently installed new trees along the east boundary.

Condition:
The overall condition of the Governors Island NM Landscape is evaluated as "Good." The grounds are well-maintained, as lawns are regularly mowed, trees are pruned, and several trees have been replaced -in-kind. Exceptions are invasive groundcovers that dominate the lawns west and south of Fort Jay and patches of volunteer vegetation along the fort walls. However, the park and city are working to eradicate these problems. Building 513 (housing) and especially Building S-251 (library) are abandoned and in very poor condition, but are planned for demolition. The brick staircase near the library is in poor condition.

Landscape Hierarchy Description:

For purposes of the Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Governors Island National Monument is inventoried as one "landscape." The two forts within the National Monument are distinctly individual structures but their proximity and history are intimately connected. This inventory specifically details the approximately twenty-two acres of the National Monument but also includes general information regarding the historic district and island as the larger setting.

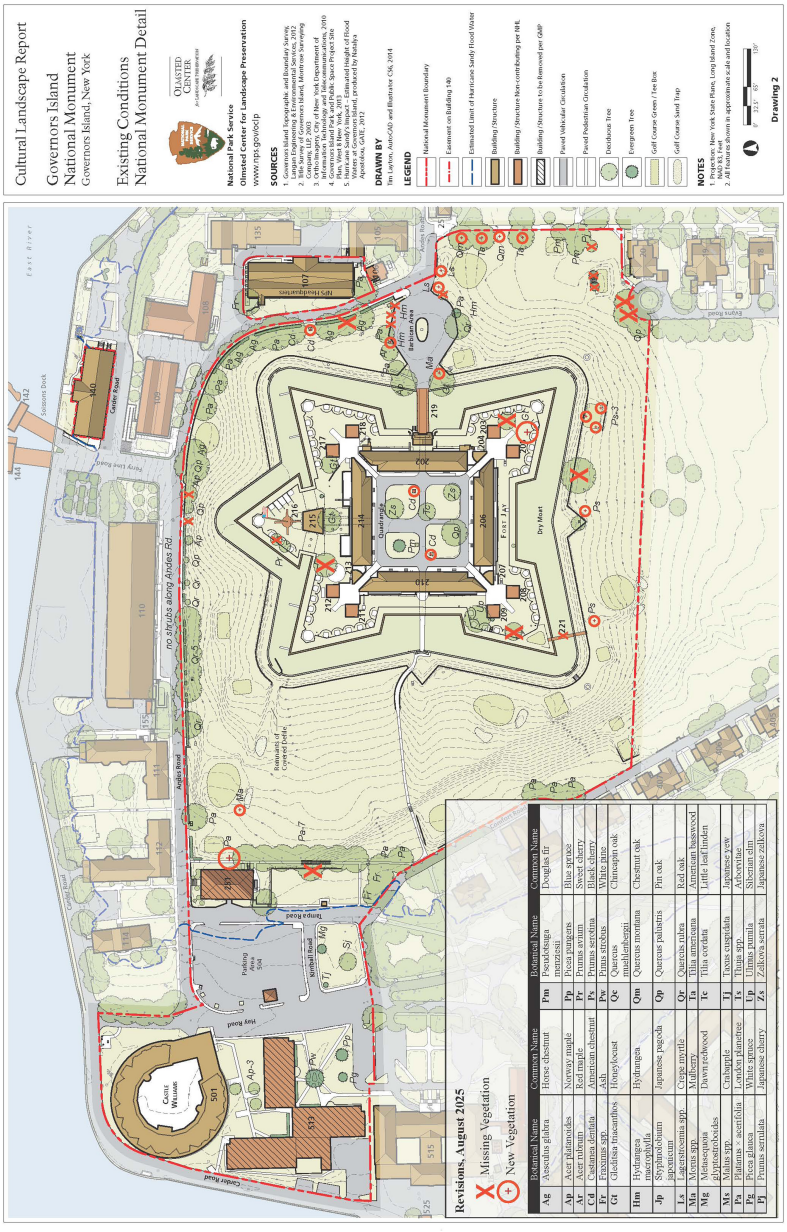
Landscape Type:

Historic Site

Other Names:

Other Name:	Fort Jay	**Other Name Type:**	Both Current And Historic
Other Name:	Nooten Island	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Nutten Island	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Pagganck Island	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Castle Williams	**Other Name Type:**	Both Current And Historic

Site Plan



Ag	Aesculus glabra	Horse chestnut	Pm	Pseudotsuga menziesii	Douglas fir
Ap	Acer platanoides	Norway maple	Pp	Picea pungens	Blue spruce
Ar	Acer rubrum	Red maple	Pr	Prunus avium	Sweet cherry
Cd	Castanea dentata	American chestnut	Ps	Prunus serotina	Black cherry
Fr	Fraxinus spp.	Ash	Pw	Pinus strobus	White pine
Gt	Gleditsia triacanthos	Honeylocust	Qc	Quercus muehlenbergii	Chinquapin oak
Hm	Hydrangea macrophylla	Hydrangea	Qm	Quercus montana	Chestnut oak
Jp	Styphnolobium japonicum	Japanese pagoda	Qp	Quercus palustris	Pin oak
Ls	Lagerstroemia spp.	Crepe myrtle	Qr	Quercus rubra	Red oak
Ma	Morus spp.	Mulberry	Ta	Tilia americana	American basswood
Mg	Metasequoia glyptostroboides	Dawn redwood	Te	Tilia cordata	Little leaf linden
Mi	Malus spp.	Crabapple	Tj	Taxus cuspidata	Japanese yew
Pa	Platanus x acerifolia	London planetree	Tx	Thuja spp.	Arborvitae
Pg	Picea glauca	White spruce	Up	Ulmus pumila	Siberian elm
Pj	Prunus serrulata	Japanese cherry	Zs	Zelkova serrata	Japanese zelkova

Site map, 1 of 1.

Concurrence Information

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes

Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 05/20/2003

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

The original CLI for Governors Island was approved by the Superintendent on May 20, 2003. A condition reassessment for Governors Island was approved by the Superintendent on August 7, 2009. This update was completed by Jeff Killion, Historical Landscape Architect at the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Boston, Massachusetts. The site map was updated by Tim Layton, Historical Landscape Architect at the Olmsted Center. The park contact for cultural resources is Daniel Prebutt, Museum Curator, Manhattan Sites, 26 Wall Street, New York, NY 10005 (212-238-4365 or Daniel_Prebutt@nps.gov).

SUMMARY OF CLI REVISIONS, 2025

• The management category remains, “Must be Preserved and Maintained.”
• National Register information is revised to include consultations with the New York SHPO in 2023.
• The areas and periods of significance are revised to reflect the 1985 National Register documentation, the 2003 CLI, and the 2010 CLR. Areas of significance are Military, Architecture, and Engineering. The period of significance is 1794-1966, beginning with construction of Fort Jay and ending when the army headquarters closed. These findings will require concurrence from the New York SHPO.
• The Chronology and Physical History chapter documents changes in the landscape since the original CLI was completed in 2003.
• Inventoried features in the Analysis and Evaluation chapter are revised as follows.
o Previously Undetermined features now Noncontributing: Fort Jay courtyard trees and Dock 102 Barge.
o Previously Contributing features now Noncontributing: London Plane tree line east of Library, Library Elm, Shade Trees at Fort Jay Entry Circle, Kimball Road, Tampa Road, and Walkways and Staircases south of Library.
o New Contributing feature evaluations: Fort Jay Powder Magazine (Building #215) and Fort Jay Storerooms/Privies (Buildings #204, 207, and 213).
o New Noncontributing feature evaluations: Fort Jay Entry Circle, Woody Vegetation on Fort Jay Structures, Retaining Wall at Building S-253 Site, and Fort Jay Concrete Bridge (Structure 219).
o Features that have been removed since 2003: Andes Road hedge, Cluster of Spruce Trees north of Fort Jay’s Dry Moat, Diagonal Line of Spruce Trees northeast of Fort Jay, Contemporary Plantings surrounding Parking Lot 504, and Cobra Style Streetlights on Carder Road.
• The overall landscape condition was evaluated as “Fair” in 2003 and “Good” in 2009. The proposed landscape condition evaluation for 2025 is “Good.”
• New site plans and existing condition photographs. Note: the site plan will be converted to ArcPro GIS at a future date, pending staff availability.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Attachment File Path

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 518-237-8643

Bernadette Castro
Commissioner

October 9, 2003

Laurie Matthews
Co-Coordinator
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
99 Warren Street
Brookline, Massachusetts 02445

Dear Mr. Matthews:

Re: NPS
Cultural Landscape Inventory
Governor's Island, New York Co.
03PR04237

The State Historic Preservation Office has completed review of the submitted Cultural Landscapes Inventory for Governor's Island National Monument. We have done so in accordance with the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

The State Historic Preservation Office concurs with your evaluation for the landscape resources, and has no substantive comment at this time. We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the report, and look forward to working together as the National Monument moves forward.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to review the report. If anyone has any questions, or if I can be of any assistance, please call me at (518) 237-8643, ext. 3271.

Sincerely,

Julian W. Adams

Julian W. Adams
Sr. Historic Sites Restoration Coordinator

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Agency
printed on recycled paper

SHPO concurrence letter, October 9, 2003 (5 pages).

NPS Cultural Landscapes Inventory
List of Contributing and Non-Contributing Landscape Characteristics and Associated Features
Governors Island National Monument
July 2003

CONTRIBUTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS & ASSOCIATED FEATURES

Views and Vistas

Buildings and Structures
- Fort Jay
- Castle Williams
- Building 107
- Building 140

Vegetation
- Fort Jay parade ground lawn
- Allees of shade trees on Fort Jay's perimeter
- Library Elm

Land Use

Spatial Organization

Circulation
- Trace of depressed walkway between the forts
- Brick and flagstone path connecting Fort Jay and Comfort Road
- Brick sidewalk along Andes Road
- Brick walkway and staircase south of library
- Interior bituminous road/walkways of Fort Jay courtyard
- Comfort Road
- Andes Road
- Kimball Road
- Tampa Road
- Hay Road

Small Scale Features
- Fort Jay and Castle Williams cannon
- Fort Jay flagpole
- Fort Jay turn-around planter

NON-CONTRIBUTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS & ASSOCIATED FEATURES

Buildings and Structures
- Library building
- Buildings 513 A, B, C

Vegetation
- Contemporary plantings surrounding Buildings 513 A, B, C
- Contemporary plantings surrounding Parking Lot 504

Small Scale Features
- Stone planters adjacent to Building 513 A
- Electrical box near library

UNDETERMINED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS & ASSOCIATED FEATURES

Small Scale Features
- Recreational equipment in Fort Jay courtyard
- Barbecue grill on top of Fort Jay walls
- Clothes line post on top of Fort Jay walls
- Streetlights
- Fencing
- Street signs
- Trash receptacles

Buildings and Structures
- Dock 102

Cultural Landscapes Inventory
Level II

Governors Island:
Governors Island National Monument

Governors Island concurs with the findings of the Level II inventory for Governors Island National Monument including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Fair

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements, will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Level II Cultural Landscapes Inventory for Governors Island National Monument on Governors Island is hereby approved and accepted.

Superintendent, Governors Island — Date: 5.20.03

Park concurrence form, May 20, 2003.

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
15 State Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02109-3572

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H30 (NER-RS&S)

August 20, 2003

Ms. Bernadette Castro
Commissioner, New York State Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation
Peebles Island
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Dear Ms. Castro:

Enclosed you will find two copies of the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) for Governors Island National Monument. The report has been prepared by Lisa Nowak, Historical Landscape Architect and David Uschold, Program Manager, of the National Park Service (NPS) Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation. The CLI program and the enclosed report continue the NPS efforts to update our cultural resource inventories.

Through the CLI program, the NPS is currently in the midst of a nationwide effort to inventory its cultural landscapes. The CLI is conducted in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended). It is an inventory of baseline information for all historically significant cultural landscapes within the national park system. The CLI process includes gathering information from existing secondary sources and conducting on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. For landscapes found potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the evaluation describes their character-defining features and assesses the landscape's overall historical integrity. It also raises questions about the landscape that require further study.

It is important to note that the CLI reports are not intended as comprehensive inventory reports for any one property, although for some properties, districts, and sites, they provide fuller documentation than for others. For example, the reports do not include a full architectural description of structures, but document structures as elements of the overall landscape. Similarly, the CLI documents other characteristics such as vegetation, spatial organization, and views and vistas. The CLI is one component of the NPS inventory effort which includes, among others, cultural resource inventories for historic structures and archeological sites. For example, the NPS List of Classified Structures inventory had included structural features of cultural landscapes, but the CLI takes a more encompassing approach to the properties, inventorying all above-ground resources in each park in which the NPS has a legal or mandated interest.

Authorized in 2001, Governors Island National Monument's 22.78-acres are set within the 120-acre Governors Island National Historic Landmark District. The National Historic Landmark District was listed on the National Register in 1985 for its history relating to late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century harbor fortifications and to its over 200 years of almost continuous military habitation. Yet before the designation of the historic district, Castle Williams and Fort Jay were added to the National Register in 1972 and 1974 respectively, for their unique architectural qualities and military history. The historic district is also a New York City Historic District, which was designated in 1996.

The resources within the Governors Island National Monument are complex and date to a long period of significance, 1794-1966. The period of significance addresses the construction periods of Fort Jay and Castle Williams (1794-1811) as well as the long administrative history of the United States Army at Governors Island

(1794-1966). This follows from the narrative statement of significance, Section 8 of the National Historic Landmark form, for the National Historic Landmark District on Governors Island.

Based on the enclosed CLI Park Report, we seek your concurrence on the following issues:

- The period of significance for the landscape is 1794-1966
- Landscape characteristics that contribute to the significance of the property (see attached list)
- Associated contributing and non-contributing features (see attached list).

If you concur with our evaluation for the Governors Island National Monument landscape resources, please sign on the space provided and return this letter directly to Laurie Matthews, Co-Coordinator, Cultural Landscapes Inventory (Address: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 99 Warren Street, Brookline, Massachusetts 02445) within thirty days. Thank you for your attention to this report. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Matthews at 617-566-1689 ext. 266.

Sincerely,

for Marie Rust
Regional Director

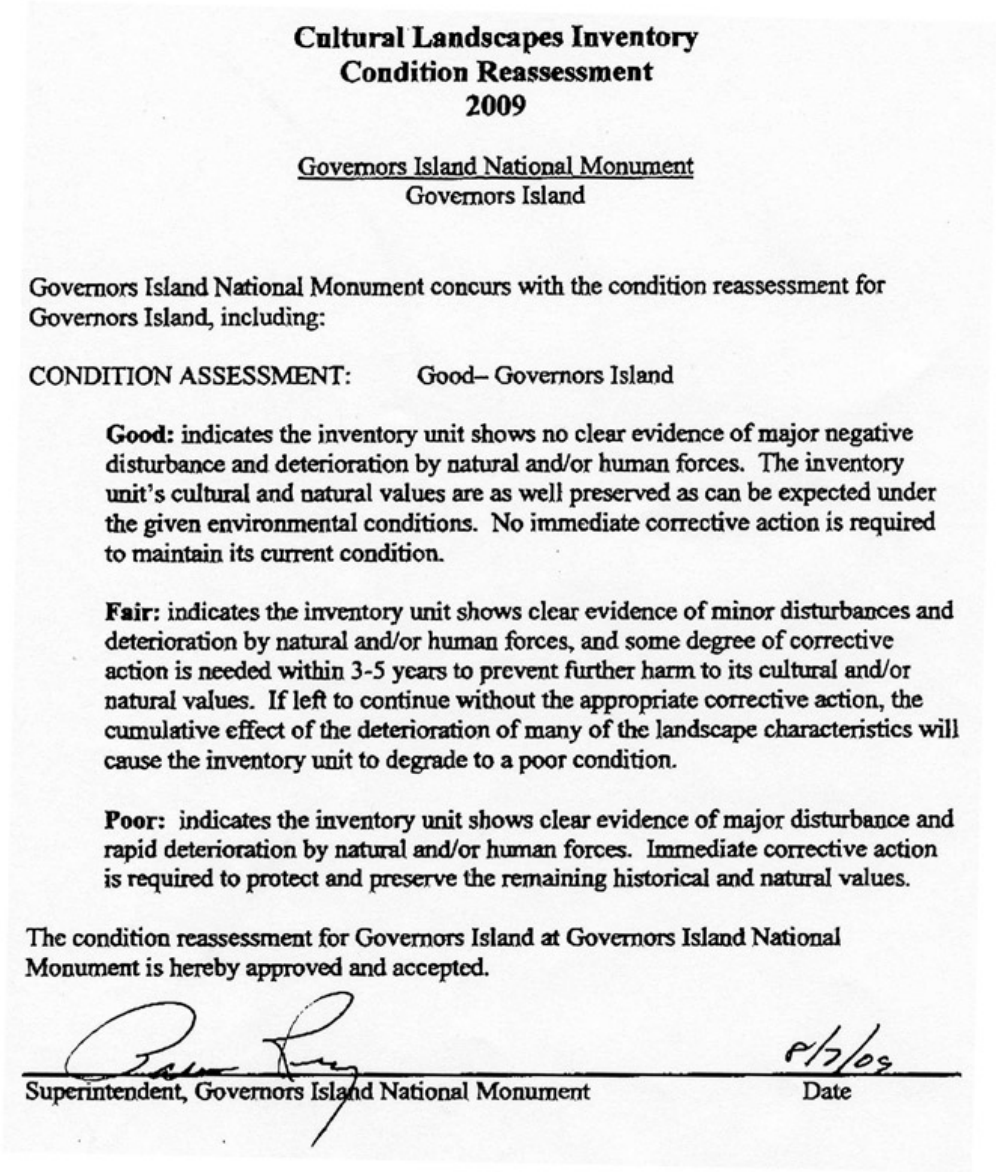
Enclosures

I concur with the above-stated evaluation including contributing and non-contributing landscape resources of Governors Island National Monument.

New York State Historic Preservation Officer _____ Date _____

Vegetation

Cluster of spruce trees north of Fort Jay's dry moat
Plantings in the Fort Jay courtyard
Domestic plantings on top of Fort Jay's walls (behind the Fort Jay barracks buildings)
Diagonal line of spruce trees northeast of Fort Jay



Cultural Landscapes Inventory
Condition Reassessment
2009

Governors Island National Monument
Governors Island

Governors Island National Monument concurs with the condition reassessment for Governors Island, including:

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good– Governors Island

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The condition reassessment for Governors Island at Governors Island National Monument is hereby approved and accepted.

8/7/09

Superintendent, Governors Island National Monument Date

Park condition reassessment form, August 7, 2009.

Cultural Landscapes Inventory
CLI Update Certification Form
2025

Governors Island NM Landscape
Governors Island National Monument

Governors Island National Monument certifies the CLI update for Governors Island NM Landscape, including:

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good – Governors Island NM Landscape

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements, will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The CLI update for Governors Island NM Landscape at Governors Island National Monument is hereby approved and accepted.

Superintendent, Governors Island National Monument — Date: 9/3/25

Park concurrence form, September 3, 2025.

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Interior Region 1
North Atlantic-Appalachian
1234 Market Street, 20th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

1.A.2.(IR1-RSS)

Daniel McEneny
Director
New York State Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
Division for Historic Preservation
OPRHP
1 Delaware Avenue North
Cohoes, NY 12047

Dear Mr. McEneny:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) Update for Governors Island NM Landscape and Governors Island National Monument. We seek to reconfirm our agreement on previously evaluated resources and your concurrence on the status of previously unevaluated resources identified in this CLI for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The report has been prepared by a team of historical landscape architects with the National Park Service (NPS) Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation and staff at Governors Island National Monument. The CLI program and the enclosed report continue the NPS efforts to update our cultural resource inventories.

Through the CLI program, the NPS is currently undertaking a nationwide effort to inventory its cultural landscapes. The CLI is conducted in accordance with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended). It is an inventory of baseline information for all historically significant cultural landscapes within the national park system, and it examines multiple landscape features that contribute to the significance of historic properties. The CLI process includes gathering information from existing secondary sources and conducting on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the property's overall significance. For landscapes found potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the evaluation describes their character-defining features and assesses the landscape's overall historical integrity. It also raises questions about the landscape that need further study.

It is important to note that the CLI reports are not intended as comprehensive inventory reports for any one property, although for some properties they provide fuller documentation than for others. For example, the reports do not include a full architectural description of structures, but

SHPO concurrence letter, September 30, 2025, 1 of 7.

document structures as elements of the overall landscape, and similarly documents other characteristics such as vegetation, spatial organization, and views and vistas. The CLI is one component of the NPS inventory effort that also includes cultural resource inventories for historic structures, archeological sites, ethnographic resources, and museum objects. For example, the NPS Historic Structures Inventory (formerly List of Classified Structures) includes structural features of cultural landscapes, but the CLI takes a more encompassing approach to the properties, inventorying all above-ground features in each park in which the NPS has a legal or mandated interest.

Previous Historic Property Evaluation:

Governors Island National Monument was established on January 19, 2001, by President Bill Clinton through Presidential Proclamation 7402, which consisted of Fort Jay, Castle Williams, and the surrounding glacis. On February 7, 2003, President George W. Bush issued Presidential Proclamation 7647, which included additional facilities within the national monument boundaries, referenced the previous proclamation and legal island transfers, and described the basic purpose of the national monument and role of the National Park Service. Prior to the park's establishment, the forts were listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

On July 24, 1972, Castle Williams was documented in a National Register Inventory-Nomination Form. National-level significance was identified in the areas of Military and Architecture. The period of significance was identified as the nineteenth century, with specific dates of 1807 and 1811 (beginning and end of fort construction). The documentation provided a brief land use history but primarily focused on the fort itself.

On March 27, 1974, Fort Jay was documented in a National Register Inventory-Nomination Form. National-level significance was identified, but no specific areas of significance were noted on the form. The period of significance was identified as the eighteenth and nineteenth century, with specific dates of 1794 and 1806 (beginning of fort construction and year it was rebuilt). The documentation provided a brief land use history but primarily focused on the fort.

On February 4, 1985, the northern 125 acres of Governors Island, including the 22-acre monument area, was designated a National Historic Landmark through a National Register Inventory-Nomination Form. National-level significance was identified in the areas of Military and Architecture. The period of significance was identified as the eighteenth through twentieth centuries, with the following specific dates: 1794-present [1983] (military post); 1794-1815 (New York Harbor fortifications, US Army); and 1933-1943 (headquarters, 1st US Army). Contributing resources included: arsenal storehouse (107), arsenal warehouse (140), Fort Jay guardhouse (201), Fort Jay barracks (202, 206, 210, 214), Fort Jay storeroom/shop/privy (204, 207, 213), Fort Jay powder magazine (215), and Castle Williams (501). Noncontributing resources included: Fort Jay garages (203, 205, 208, 209, 211, 212, 217, 218), Fort Jay flagstaff (216), Fort Jay concrete bridge (219), Fort Jay wood footbridge (S-221, since removed), quartermaster storehouse/library (S-251), and quarters (513 a,b,c). The documentation did not

SHPO concurrence letter, September 30, 2025, 2 of 7.

address the landscape, such as the parade ground, but noted that the character of the Fort Jay glacis was "preserved" by the open lawns of the golf course surrounding the fort. Note: the National Register form did not identify specific NHL themes or subthemes.

On October 9, 2003, your office concurred with the NPS on the findings of the Governors Island CLI, which encompassed 22 acres. The CLI identified national-level significance in the area of Military. The period of significance was identified as 1794-1966, which included the construction period of Fort Jay and Castle Williams (1794-1811) and the long administrative history of the US army at Governors Island (1794-1966). The CLI identified numerous contributing, noncontributing, and undetermined resources (see Analysis and Evaluation chapter). Contributing resources included the arsenal storehouse (107), arsenal warehouse (140), Castle Williams (501), circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features (see Analysis and Evaluation chapter). Resource evaluations were consistent with the 1985 NHL documentation except for the flagstaff (216), which the CLI evaluated as contributing. The CLI also evaluated Fort Jay as contributing, but unlike the NHL did not evaluate individual resources associate with the fort.

On December 21, 2004, consultation between the NPS and the NHL Program clarified that the period of significance for the NHL District ended in 1966, the year the army left the island. This date is also consistent with the date noted in the Presidential Proclamation of February 7, 2003, that created the monument. To date, the NHL nomination form has not been updated.

On May 25, 2023, your office concurred with the NPS regarding the planned demolition of Buildings 513 a-b-c and S-251. Your office agreed that several landscape features previously classified as contributing in the 2003 CLI had lost their historic context and should be reclassified as noncontributing: Library Elm, Brick Sidewalks and Staircases south of Library, Kimball Road, and Tampa Road. Your office did not concur with the NPS that the allée of sycamore trees parallel to Building S-251 (Library) should be reclassified as noncontributing, stating the "row of trees defines the limits and western perimeter of the parade ground…same as the trees that line Andes Road to the north and east of Fort Jay."

Current Findings:

The enclosed CLI for Governors Island NM Landscape fully evaluates the cultural landscape, particularly the associated landscape characteristics and features, and finds that the site's landscape retains integrity to the areas of Military Architecture, and Engineering. As noted previously, 40 of the property's features compiled on the attached list have already been evaluated in the National Register or through New York SHPO concurrence. The CLI identifies an additional 6 resources related to spatial organization and views and vistas that contribute to the significance and historic character of the property. An additional 11 features are evaluated as noncontributing because they are not historically significant.

SHPO concurrence letter, September 30, 2025, 3 of 7.

We call your particular attention to the Landscape Description, Boundary Description, National Register Information and the Statement of Significance, and Analysis and Evaluation Summary in the enclosed CLI.

Based on the CLI, we seek to reconfirm our agreement on previously evaluated resources and your concurrence on the status of resources and features identified in this CLI:

- Governors Island National Monument is nationally significant under Criterion A in the area of Military as a major Army administrative center for nearly a century.
- Governors Island National Monument is nationally significant under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering for its resources that represent late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century American harbor fortifications.
- The period of significance is 1794-1966, beginning when the newly established American government stationed troops on a full time basis to initiated a program of fortification building to address the defense of key ports, and ending in 1966 when the army headquarters operations were moved from the island to Fort Meade, Maryland, and the Coast Guard took over the island.
- The categorization of contributing, non-contributing, and undetermined landscape characteristics and features (see attached list).

If you concur with these findings, we ask that you please sign on the space provided and return this letter to Jeff Killion, Interior Region 1 CLI Coordinator, by email: jeff_killion@nps.gov. We would appreciate your response in **25 days**, if possible. Thank you for your attention to this inventory. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Killion at 508-455-8540 (cell).

Jonathan Meade
Associate Regional Director
Resource Stewardship and Science

JONATHAN MEADE

Digitally signed by JONATHAN MEADE
Date: 2025.09.05 09:47:57 -04'00'

Enclosure/Attachment

cc:
Superintendent, Governors Island National Monument

I concur with the National Park Service categorizations of the landscape resources and features for Governors Island NM Landscape, as contributing and non-contributing, and undetermined.

R David Mu

New York State Historic Preservation Officer

9/30/25

Date

SHPO concurrence letter, September 30, 2025, 4 of 7.

NPS Cultural Landscapes Inventory – Governors Island NM Landscape
Governors Island National Monument
List of Contributing, Non-Contributing, and Undetermined Landscape Features
September 2025

Contributing Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

The following landscape characteristics and associated features contribute to the property's historic character, though not all are considered countable resources according to the National Register of Historic Places. Features marked with a (*) were listed or described in National Register documentation approved in 1985. Features marked with a (+) were evaluated by the New York SHPO in the 2003 CLI.

Spatial Organization
- Fort Jay Courtyard
- Fort Jay Moat
- Parade Ground

Circulation
- + Brick Sidewalk along Andes Road
- + Covered Defile (Trace of Depressed Walk between Forts)
- + Fort Jay Courtyard Roads
- + Hay Road
- + Walkway between Fort Jay and Comfort Road

Vegetation
- + Andes Road Street Trees
- + Fort Jay Parade Ground Lawn

Buildings and Structures
- *+ Fort Jay
- * Fort Jay-Barracks (Building 202)
- * Fort Jay- Barracks (Building 206)
- * Fort Jay- Barracks (Building 210)
- * Fort Jay- Barracks (Building 214)
- * Fort Jay-Garages (Buildings 203, 204, 208, 209, 211, 212, 217, 218)
- * Fort Jay Powder Magazine (Building 215)
- * Fort Jay Storerooms/Privies (Buildings 204, 207, 213)
- *+ Castle Williams
- *+ Building 107
- *+ Building 140

Views and Vistas
- View north, south, and west from Castle Williams
- View between Fort Jay and Castle Williams

SHPO concurrence letter, September 30, 2025, 5 of 7.

Views of New York Harbor from Fort Jay

Small Scale Features
+ Fort Jay and Castle Williams Cannon
*+ Fort Jay Flagstaff

Non-Contributing Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

Circulation
Fort Jay Entry Circle
+ Kimball Road
Parking Area 504
+ Tampa Road
+ Walkways and Staircases south of Library
Walkways at Building 513

Vegetation
+ Building 513 a-b-c Vegetation
+ Fort Jay Courtyard Trees
+ Library Elm
+ London Plane Tree Row east of Library
Shade Trees at Fort Jay Entry Circle
Shrubs at Fort Jay Entry Circle
Woody Vegetation on Fort Jay Structures

Buildings and Structures
*+ Building S-251 (Library)
*+ Building 513 A,B,C
* Fort Jay Concrete Bridge (Structure 219)
+ Dock 102 Barge
Retaining Wall at Building S-253 Site

Small Scale Features
Acorn Style Streetlights
Cut-off Style Streetlights at Dock 102
Dock 102 Shelter
+ Electrical Vault south of Library
Hood Style Streetlights at Castle Williams
+ Signs
+ Stone Barbeque Grill on Fort Jay Terreplein

Undetermined Landscape Characteristics & Associated Features

Vegetation
+ Domestic Plantings on Fort Jay Terreplein

Small-Scale Features

SHPO concurrence letter, September 30, 2025, 6 of 7.

+ Barbeque Grill on top of Fort Jay Walls
+ Clothes Line Post on top of Fort Jay Walls
+ Recreational Equipment in Fort Jay Courtyard
+ Trash Receptacles
+ Wood Snow Fencing

bcc:
Stephen Pisani, Region 1 Historic Architecture Program
Dennis Montagna, Region 1 History Program
Bethany Serafine, Region 1 History Program
Robert Page, Director, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

SHPO concurrence letter, September 30, 2025, 7 of 7.

Revision:

Revised By	Type of Revision	Revision Date	Revision Narrative
Lisa Nowak	Change in Condition	08/07/2009	Condition reassessment completed as scheduled.
Jeff Killion	CLI Update	09/30/2025	Three levels of effort have been developed for CLI Updates: A, B, and C. Level C is limited to a condition reassessment of the landscape; Level B includes C and is a targeted update of select data fields; Level A includes C and is a comprehensive update of all data fields. This 2025 update to the Governors Island NM Landscape CLI has been conducted at a Level A effort.

Geographic Information

State and County:

State	County
New York	New York

Size (Acres): 22.78

Land Tract Number(s)

01-101, 21.69 (Fort Jay and Castle Williams)
01-102, 0.14 (dock)
01-103, 0.44 (Building 107 and yard)
01-104, 0.50 (easement, Building 140 and yard)
01-105, 0.01 (easement, Building 140 interior)

Boundary Description:

Governors Island National Monument is an irregular, 22.78-acre parcel situated in the northwest corner of Governors Island, New York. The entire island is 172 acres in size and is located one-half mile south of Manhattan and one-third mile west of Red Hook, Brooklyn. It rests within New York Harbor at the mouth of the Hudson River. The northeastern portion of the island, or all lands north of Division Street, are a designated National Historic Landmark District, which contain the National Monument and numerous other historic resources relating to nineteenth and twentieth century military operations.

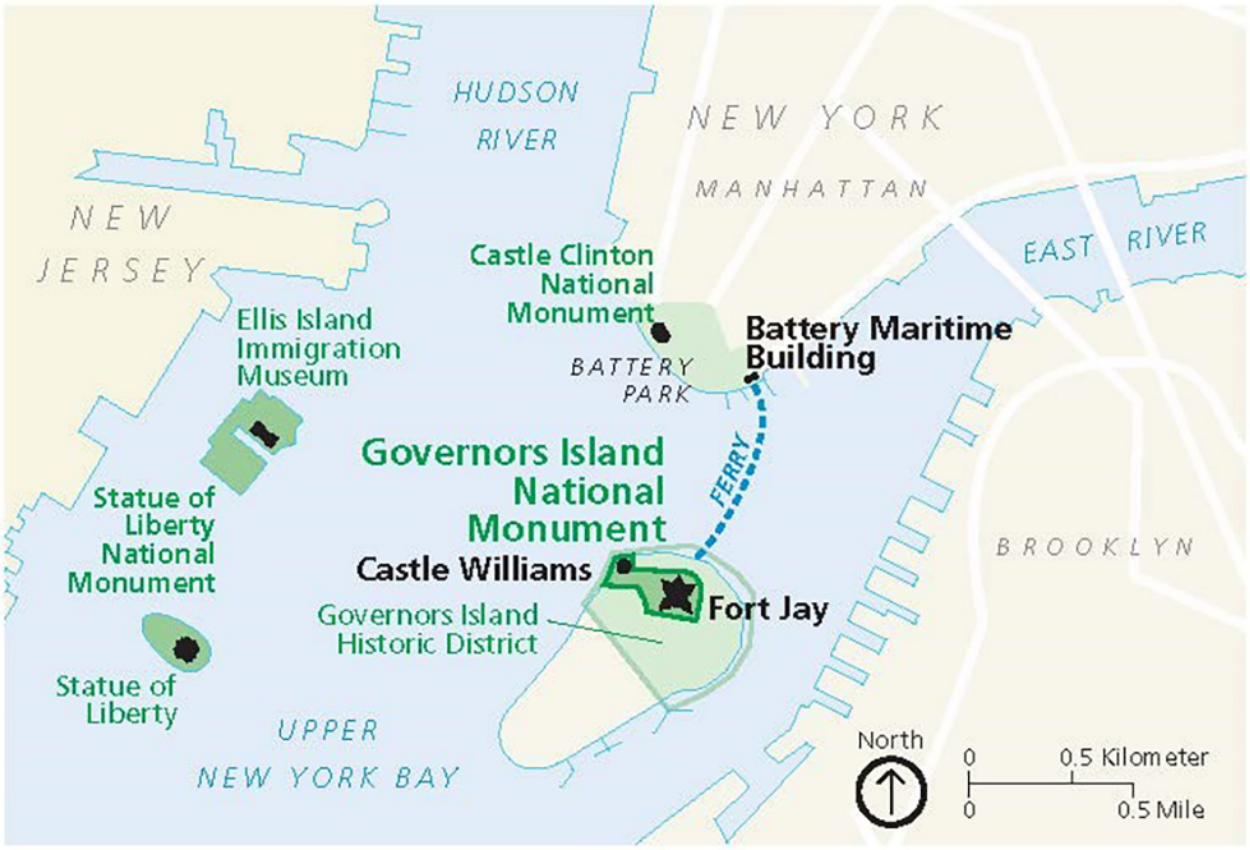
Governors Island National Monument includes Castle Williams and Fort Jay, the island’s most prominent historic resources, the approximately twenty-two acres surrounding them. Castle Williams sits at the northwest corner of Governors Island, just feet from the water's edge, overlooking Manhattan, the statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, New Jersey, and the Brooklyn Bridge. Several contemporary buildings and parking lots are included in the National Monument boundary, as are several acres of lawn surrounding Fort Jay. Three non-contiguous smaller parcels include Dock 102, Building 107 and grounds, and Building 140 and grounds).

Boundary Coordinates

Source	Type of Point	Latitude	Longitude	Narrative
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.692443	-74.015635	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.692295	-74.015152	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.69206	-74.014752	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691617	-74.014668	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691195	-74.014474	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691171	-74.01424	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.690259	-74.014325	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.690272	-74.014844	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.690276	-74.015035	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.690185	-74.015061	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.690401	-74.017623	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.690788	-74.017768	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691025	-74.017781	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691654	-74.018125	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691779	-74.018367	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691805	-74.018953	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691864	-74.019389	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691904	-74.019389	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.691969	-74.020145	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.692978	-74.019651	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.693089	-74.01949	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.693153	-74.019275	

Aerial Photograph	Area	40.693081	-74.01877	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.692726	-74.018794	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.692641	-74.018797	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.692667	-74.01861	
Aerial Photograph	Area	40.692503	-74.016416	

Location Map:



Governors Island National Monument occupies the northern portion of the island. (Governors Island NM website)

Regional Landscape Contexts:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Cultural context is the general human overlay on the physical form of the landscape. The National Monument includes two exceptional examples of First and Second system coastal fortifications that are significant examples of American military engineering and the historical importance of New York Harbor as a gateway to one of the nation's busiest ports. Fort Jay and Castle Williams stand as nationally significant fortifications that represent over 200 years of evolving military occupation on Governors Island. As a former army and later, coast guard installation, the island today is a collection of institutional features, from historic fortifications and dwellings to contemporary barracks and warehouses. Reminders of the island's historic and strategic importance can be seen today, despite the modern, urban surroundings. Although it is close to Manhattan, Governors Island has been largely inaccessible to the public for much of its history.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Physiographic context is the large-scale physical forms and patterns of the landscape such as hill, plateau, ravine, drumlin, etc. The original land mass of Governors Island represents the southern terminus of the New England physiographic province. This geologic region is separated from the New Jersey region by the Hudson River. Governors Island contains rocks and glacially deposited soil similar to those found in nearby Manhattan and Brooklyn. The elevation ranges from ten to forty feet above sea-level, sloping gently upward from the water's edge. Fort Jay is located approximately in the center of the original land mass, which is near forty feet at its highest point. When constructed, Castle Williams stood on an outcropping of rocks, almost separated from the rest of the island. This changed in later decades after a seawall was added to make the shoreline more regular. The southern portion of the island was created from fill in the early 1900s. This added land mass is relatively flat, ranging only between ten and thirteen and a half feet above sea level.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Political context is the overlay imposed on the landscape through general land use, zoning, legal restrictions, transportation, utilities, population, and political jurisdiction (e.g., state, county, city, borough, or village). Governors Island National Monument resides within New York County of New York State. It is included within a designated National Historic Landmark district that encompasses 121 of Governors Island's 172 acres (see Regional Landscape Context graphic). The island was transferred to the State of New York and the NPS on January 31, 2003. Throughout most of its history, Governors Island served as a military base and has not been open for public use.

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 05/20/2003

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

As approved on May 20, 2003, the Governors Island NM Landscape meets the Must be Preserved and Maintained management category because the preservation of the property is specifically legislated, the property is nationally significant as defined by the National Historic Landmark criteria, and the property is nationally significant as defined by the National Register criteria. In 1972 and 1974, Castle Williams and Fort Jay, respectively, were listed on the National Register. In 1985, the Castle and Fort became part of the 121-acre National Historic Landmark District. In 2001 the Castle, Fort, and part of the surrounding glacis became part of the National Monument, established for the “purpose of protecting [Fort Jay and Castle Williams], all lands, and interests in lands owned or controlled by the United States.” (FD 2017: 4,37)

Management Agreements:

Type of Agreement: Other

Management Agreement Expiration Date:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Trust for Governors Island is a nonprofit corporation created by the City of New York. It is responsible for providing island access, emergency services, and utilities, in addition to managing and developing 150 acres of the island.

Type of Agreement: Cooperative Agreement

Management Agreement Expiration Date:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

The park has a Cooperative Park Management Agreement (CMA) with The Trust, which acknowledges the mutual benefit in collaborative management and the
cost-sharing relationship.

Type of Agreement: Memorandum of Understanding

Management Agreement Expiration Date:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Memorandum of Understanding between the USDOI/NPS and Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC)

Legal Interests:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Narrative: Tracts 01-101, 01-102, 01-103, 01-104 (easement), 01-105 (easement)

Located in managed wilderness?: Unknown

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Narrative:

Adjacent lands are lands outside the cultural landscape boundary, including lands inside or outside the park. Surrounding Governors Island National Monument is the Governors Island National Historic Landmark District. While Governors Island began as a defensive post with two forts and little else, the resources of the island grew to accommodate many uses/activities and the growing population that accompanied the shift to an army administrative center. Other fortifications within the harbor like Castle Clinton on Manhattan, Fort Wood on Liberty Island, and Fort Gibson on Ellis Island, contribute to the National Monument's significance because they are part of the system of harbor defenses that were erected to protect New York City.

National Register Information

National Register of Historic Places

Documentation Status: SHPO/THPO - Inadequately Documented

Documentation Narrative Description:

Governors Island National Monument was established on January 19, 2001, by President Bill Clinton through Presidential Proclamation 7402, which consisted of Fort Jay, Castle Williams, and the surrounding glacis. On February 7, 2003, President George W. Bush issued Presidential Proclamation 7647, which included additional facilities within the national monument boundaries, referenced the previous proclamation and legal island transfers, and described the basic purpose of the national monument and role of the National Park Service. Prior to the park's establishment, the forts were listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

On July 24, 1972, Castle Williams was documented in a National Register Inventory-Nomination Form. National-level significance was identified in the areas of Military and Architecture. The period of significance was identified as the nineteenth century, with specific dates of 1807 and 1811 (beginning and end of fort construction). The documentation provided a brief land use history but primarily focused on the fort itself.

On March 27, 1974, Fort Jay was documented in a National Register Inventory-Nomination Form. National-level significance was identified, but no specific areas of significance were noted on the form. The period of significance was identified as the eighteenth and nineteenth century, with specific dates of 1794 and 1806 (beginning of fort construction and year it was rebuilt). The documentation provided a brief land use history but primarily focused on the fort itself.

On February 4, 1985, the northern 125 acres of Governors Island, including the 22-acre monument area, was designated a National Historic Landmark through a National Register Inventory-Nomination Form. National-level significance was identified in the areas of Military and Architecture. The period of significance was identified as the eighteenth through twentieth centuries, with the following specific dates: 1794-present [1983] (military post); 1794-1815 (New York Harbor fortifications, US Army); and 1933-1943 (headquarters, 1st US Army). Contributing resources included: arsenal storehouse (107), arsenal warehouse (140), Fort Jay guardhouse (201), Fort Jay barracks (202, 206, 210, 214), Fort Jay storeroom/shop/privy (204, 207, 213), Fort Jay powder magazine (215), and Castle Williams (501). Noncontributing resources included: Fort Jay garages (203, 205, 208, 209, 211, 212, 217, 218), Fort Jay flagstaff (216), Fort Jay concrete bridge (219), Fort Jay wood footbridge (S-221, since removed), quartermaster storehouse/library (S-251), and quarters (513 a,b,c). The documentation did not address the landscape, such as the parade ground, but noted that the character of the Fort Jay glacis was "preserved" by the open lawns of the golf course surrounding the fort. Note: the National Register form did not identify specific NHL themes or subthemes.

On October 9, 2003, the New York State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the NPS on the findings of the Governors Island CLI, which encompassed 22 acres. The CLI identified national-level significance in the area of Military. The period of significance was identified as 1794-1966, which included the construction period of Fort Jay and Castle Williams (1794-1811) and the long administrative history of the US army at Governors Island (1794-1966). The CLI identified numerous contributing, noncontributing, and undetermined resources (see Analysis and Evaluation chapter). Contributing resources included the arsenal storehouse (107), arsenal warehouse (140), Castle Williams (501), circulation, vegetation, and small-scale features (see Analysis and Evaluation chapter). Resource evaluations were consistent with the 1985 NHL documentation except for the flagstaff (216), which the CLI evaluated as contributing. The CLI also evaluated Fort Jay as contributing, but unlike the NHL did not evaluate individual resources associate with the fort.

On December 21, 2004, consultation between the NPS and the NHL Program clarified that the period of significance for the NHL District ended in 1966, the year the army left the island. This date is also consistent with the date noted in the Presidential Proclamation of February 7, 2003, that created the monument. To date, the NHL nomination form has not been updated.

On May 25, 2023, the New York SHPO concurred with the NPS regarding the planned demolition of Buildings 513 a-b-c and S-251. The SHPO agreed that several landscape features previously classified as contributing in the 2003 CLI had lost their historic context and should be reclassified as noncontributing: Library Elm, Brick Sidewalks and Staircases south of Library, Kimball Road, and Tampa Road. The SHPO did not concur with the NPS that the allée of sycamore trees parallel to Building S-251 (Library) should be reclassified as noncontributing, stating the "row of trees defines the limits and western perimeter of the parade ground…same as the trees that line Andes Road to the north and east of Fort Jay."

According to research conducted for this CLI and the categories of National Register documentation outlined in the "CLI Professional Procedures Guide," the areas and periods of significance, and historic resources for the 22-acre Governors Island NM Landscape are inadequately documented in the National Register from 1985, the CLI approved by the New York SHPO in 2003, and correspondences with the SHPO in 2023. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, the Governors Island NM Landscape is considered "SHPO/THPO – Inadequately Documented."

Eligibility: Eligible - SHPO/THPO Consensus Determination

Concurrence Eligibility Date:

Concurrence Narrative:

The New York SHPO concurred with the findings of this CI Update on September 30, 2025, without comment.

Significance Level: National

Contributing: Individual

Classification: District

Statement of Significance for National Register of Historic Places:

Governors Island NM Landscape is nationally significant under Criterion A in the area of Military and Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. The period of significance is 1794-1966, beginning when the newly established American government stationed troops on a full time basis to initiated a program of fortification building to address the defense of key ports, and ending in 1966 when the army headquarters operations were moved from the island to Fort Meade, Maryland, and the Coast Guard took over the island.

CRITERION A

Military:
Governors Island National Monument is nationally significant in the area of Military as a major Army administrative center for nearly a century. The Army stationed troops on Governors Island on a full-time basis during the First System period, circa 1794, and continued to do so until 1966. Initially, the island served as a defensive post. Soldiers were garrisoned on the island to man the fortifications of Fort Jay, Castle Williams, and South Battery (outside the study area), which were constructed between 1794 and 1811. These three forts worked in conjunction with the defensive works of Fort Richmond and Fort

Tompkins on the Staten Island side of the Narrows, Fort Hendricks on the Long Island side of the Narrows, Fort Wood on Beldoe's Island (now Liberty Island), Fort Gibson on Ellis Island, and Castle Clinton at the tip of Manhattan to protect New York Harbor. Fort Jay was built during the First System as a modified star fort surrounded by acres of cleared, sloped land, or the glacis, to provide a 360-degree range of fire. The largely earthen fortification was modified during the Second System and accompanied by the construction of South Battery and Castle Williams, all-masonry forts designed to defend Buttermilk Channel and the mouth of the Hudson River. (CLR 2010: 186)

As early as the 1830s, the Army built support structures on the formerly open glacis, indicating the decreased defensive necessity of some of the island's acreage. By this time, military engineering had progressed to render the value of fortifications located so close to New York City questionable; advanced naval armament moved the threat from invading vessels much farther down the harbor from Governors Island. New forts were being constructed as part of the Third System of harbor defense, including Fort Schuyler on Throgs Neck Long Island, Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island, and Fort Hancock in Sandy Hook, New Jersey. (CLR 2010: 186-187)

Governors Island remained an active Army base despite these changes in regional military strategy. The island was designated a recruitment center from 1852-1878 and briefly as the district command center of the Army's northern operations. The island's infrastructure increased through the mid-and late-1800 with the addition of structures relating to the independently administered New York Arsenal and support facilities for the Army garrison, including barracks inside Fort Jay, officers' housing, a hospital, and a church. Additionally, Castle Williams continued to serve as a military prison, notably during the Civil War when the numbers of prisoners swelled. (CLR 2010: 187)

The Army restructured its command many times between the late-nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century, yet, Governors Island remained a constant location for the upper echelon of the military establishment. From 1878 to 1966 the island served, sequentially, as the command center of the Military Division of the Atlantic, the Department of the East, the Atlantic Division, the Eastern Division, the Eastern Department, and the First U.S. Army. (CLR 2010: 187)

The presence of such decorated commanders and their staff created the need for substantial facility development. Attractive districts of officers' housing, such as Colonels' Row and Nolan Park, developed in the late 1800s. Numerous Georgian Revival buildings were constructed in the late 1920s and 1930s, including the enormous enlisted men's barracks, Liggett Hall, more officers' housing, nurses' quarters, and a new post hospital. Recreational opportunities for officers, their families, and enlisted men abounded, including a polo field, golf course, tennis courts, and swimming pools. Street trees and brick sidewalks linked the areas of the island to create an attractive, village-like setting by the end of the 1930s. (CLR 2010: 187)

Governors Island also served as an important post during the World Wars of the twentieth century. During World War I, the Army utilized the island as a major supply and troop processing depot, building scores of temporary warehouses and support structures throughout the island. This differed from the island's use during World War II, when Governors Island served mainly as the headquarters for several major command functions, including the Eastern Theater of Operations, the Second Service Command, the Exclusion Hearing Board, the Reclassification Board, and the Women's Army Corps. After World War II, the First Army headquarters returned to Governors Island and remained there until a 1966 restructuring that relocated the command to Fort Meade, Maryland. (CLR 2010: 187)

CRITERION C

Architecture and Engineering:
Governors Island National Monument is nationally significant in the areas of Architecture and Engineering for its resources that represent late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century American harbor fortifications. Military planners recognized the island's strategic value, situated at the foot of Manhattan in the upper harbor, early in the European settlement period. As early as the American Revolution, Governors Island served as part of a system of rudimentary fortifications located throughout New York Harbor. Forts erected on Manhattan, Ellis, and Liberty Islands accompanied the earthen fortification on Governors Island in hopes of providing sweeping defensive coverage of the harbor. While the island's fortifications did not

prove strong enough to repel the British, later improvements strengthened them and established Governors Island as a state-of-the-art military installation. (CLR 2010: 188)

The newly established American government initiated a program of fortification building in 1794 to address the defense of key ports. Not surprisingly, New York City was identified as an important recipient of the federal construction program, called the First American System of harbor defense. On Governors Island - the
first New York site to be fortified during the First System - the early defensive works built by the Colonials and the British during the Revolutionary War were demolished and a new fort was rebuilt in the same location. The fort was named Fort Jay in honor of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, John Jay. Fort Jay was typical of First System forts, being designed by French military engineers and built largely out of earth due to inadequate funding for more permanent materials. French engineer Charles Vincent designed a four-bastioned structure with several support buildings inside, including a shot furnace and powder magazine. Depressed walkways radiated from the central fort to smaller batteries around the water's edge. (CLR 2010: 188)

Congress established an additional fortification building program in the years leading up to the War of 1812, known as the Second System, to incorporate the latest advances in military engineering and to create a more comprehensive system of defenses along the eastern seaboard. One of the most influential engineers of the Second System was Major Jonathan Williams. Between 1807 and 1812 Williams designed and adapted numerous forts around New York harbor into a comprehensive system of defensive coverage. He incorporated older First System forts with newly constructed forts in the upper and lower harbor to account for advances in naval armament. Williams designed forts on Staten Island, Long Island, Bedloes Island, Ellis Island, Manhattan, and Governors Island. (CLR 2010: 188)

At Governors Island, Williams rebuilt Fort Jay in 1806 with masonry materials and added a north-facing ravelin. Earth removed from the older walls was likely incorporated into the sloped glacis surrounding the fort that was designed to deflect incoming artillery away from the structure. Additionally, Williams constructed a state-of-the-art circular, three-tiered, casemated fort on the northwest promontory of Governors Island, which came to bear his name. This all-masonry fort represented a major advancement in fortification design with the stacking of several levels of armament inside a protected space. The formidable structure presided over the upper harbor with clear lines of fire to the north, west, and southwest. Fort Jay and Castle Williams were physically linked by a covered defile, along a route that connected a break in the northwest corner of Fort Jay's outer walls and Castle Williams' main gate. It was during this period when documentation about the glacis, or sloped area surrounding Fort Jay and extending to Castle Williams, was recorded. Engineers described sodding the glacis, describing the open nature of the feature that provided a comprehensive and unobstructed field of fire. (CLR 2010: 188)

By 1811, the redesign and construction of Fort Jay and Castle Williams were complete. Although later alteration to the structure and use of both forts occurred, notably the construction of barracks within Fort Jay and the modification of Castle Williams into a military prison, the existing significant elements of the forts established during the Second System remain to this day to serve as defining examples of American military engineering. Their current condition is notable for its high degree of historic integrity, as documented by the National Historic Landmark nomination, which states that "they are among the country's best-preserved fortifications from an important and innovative period of American military construction." (CLR 2010: 188, from NHL 1985, Sec.8: 1)

National Register Significance Criteria:

Significance Criteria A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

Significance Criteria C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

National Register Criteria Consideration:

National Register Periods of Significance (with Historic Context Themes):

Time Period: CE 1794 - CE 1966

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Shaping the Political Landscape	Political and Military Affairs 1865-1939	America Becomes A World Power, 1865-1914	
Shaping the Political Landscape	Political and Military Affairs 1783-1860	The Army And Navy	
Shaping the Political Landscape	The Civil War	Battles In The North And South	
Shaping the Political Landscape	World War II	The Home Front	
Shaping the Political Landscape	Political and Military Affairs After 1945	United States As Leader Of The Free World	

Time Period: CE 1794 - CE 1811

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Expanding Science and Technology	Technology (Engineering and Invention)	Military (Fortifications, Weapons, And War Vehicles)	

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Military

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Architecture

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Engineering

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

NRIS Information:

NRIS Name:	Governor's Island National Monument
NRIS ID:	85002435
Other Name:	See Also:Fort Jay; Castle Williams
Primary Certification Date:	02/04/1985

State Register Documentation:

Identification Number:	90PR03845
Name:	Governors Island
Listed Date:	02/04/1985

National Historic Landmarks:

National Historic Landmark? Yes

Theme:

Contributing:

NHL ID: 85002435

NHL URL:

Date: 02/04/1985

Statement of Significance for National Historic Landmark:

World Heritage Site:

World Heritage Site? No

Category:

WHS ID:

WHS URL:

Date:

Is Resource within a designated National Natural Landscape: No

Chronology and Physical History

Chronology:

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1637	Purchased/Sold	Dutch governor Wouter Van Twiller purchases Pagganck Island from the Manhattan Indians for his private use and names it Nutten Island.
CE 1638	Land Transfer	Van Twiller replaced as governor and the island reverts to municipal ownership.
CE 1638	Altered	The island's nut trees are logged and several acres are farmed for tobacco.
CE 1664	Land Transfer	Britain overtakes the Dutch in a bloodless exchange for control of New Amsterdam.
CE 1691	Land Transfer	Island incorporated into New York County.
CE 1705	Built	British Governor Lord Cornbury builds a large house on the high land of the island around this time.
CE 1710	Altered	The island serves as a temporary quarantine station for French Huguenot immigrants. Over 250 die and are buried on the island.
CE 1730	Land Transfer	Island incorporated into New York City.
CE 1755	Military Operation	First military encampment.
CE 1776	Built	Earliest defensive fortifications constructed by colonists to thwart British attack in the beginning of the American Revolution. Eventually, their encampment included earthen fortifications, guns, cannon, and military stores.
CE 1776	Military Operation	Colonists vacate the island after they are defeated in the Battle of Long Island.
CE 1776 - 1783	Military Operation	British occupy the island for the remainder of the Revolutionary War.
CE 1783	Military Operation	British vacate the island, leaving a wharf, several wells, houses, kitchens, barns, and a hospital.
CE 1783	Neglected	Fortifications deteriorate after the American Revolution.
CE 1794	Built	Impending war with France prompts Congress to appropriate money for coastal defense. Fort Jay construction begins.
CE 1800	Land Transfer	New York State cedes the island to the federal government.
CE 1806 - 1809	Built	Fort Jay reconstructed in masonry. Renamed Fort Columbus.
CE 1807 - 1811	Built	Castle Williams is constructed.
CE 1830	Built	Old barracks in Fort Columbus razed and new stone barracks built near the parade grounds around this time.
CE 1869	Built	Seawall built along southwest side of the island from Castle Williams to South Battery.
CE 1930 - 1939	Built	Island improvements continue with Works Projects Administration (WPA) during the 1930s. Landscape improvements occur, the walls of Fort Jay are repaired, and original timber framing of Castle Williams is replaced.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1930 - 1939	Built	WPA builds a nine hole golf course on the Fort Jay parade ground during the 1930s.
CE 1966	Land Transfer	First Army headquarters moves to Fort Meade, MD and Coast Guard takes over the island.
CE 1972	Established	Fort Jay and Castle Williams individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
CE 1985	Established	Northern half of the island designated a National Historic Landmark District.
CE 2001	Established	Governors Island National Monument established.
CE 2003	Land Transfer	Governors Island National Monument transferred to the Secretary of the Interior and the remainder of the island transferred to the State of New York.

Physical History:

PRE-HISTORY, to 1783

Native American and Early European Settlement:
The Manhattan people, part of the northern Delaware tribal group, called Governors Island "Pagganck" in a reference to the abundant nut trees established on the island. It is unclear from archeological investigation whether they used the island for hunting and gathering or if they established permanent settlements and engaged in agricultural pursuits. However, being so near to settled sites on Manhattan and Long Island made the island a likely place to fish and gather shellfish and nuts. (CLR 2010: 9)

European contact with Native American groups in the area began in 1524 during Giovanni da Verrazano's exploration of New York Harbor for the French government. The French were followed by the Dutch who sent Henry Hudson to North America in search of a water route to Asia in 1609. Hudson did not find the elusive "northwest passage," but did report finding plentiful natural resources including timber and animal furs. Impressed with his discovery, the Dutch, under the auspices of the Dutch West India Company, sent a ship to scout the North American coast for an appropriate settlement in 1621, first landing on Pagganck, which they translated to Nutten Island. This fledgling group was soon followed by several families who were part of a larger community of Walloons from Belgium recruited by the Company to populate company settlements in the Hudson River valley. Yet, the first European settlement of Nutten Island was short-lived as the families soon moved to Manhattan in search of more land and better protection from hostile Native American groups. (CLR 2010: 9)

Documented improvements to the island were first recorded in the mid-1620s. The earliest known depiction of Governors Island appears on a 1639 map of New York Harbor that documents dwellings, outbuildings, fortifications, and mills throughout what is now known as Manhattan, Brooklyn, western Long Island, Staten Island, and eastern New Jersey. As shown, Manhattan was the most densely populated area at the time, though diffuse settlements appeared throughout the region, hugging the shoreline. Among the scattered outlying development was a windmill on Nutten Island, labeled as belonging to van Twiller. Wouter van Twiller was the governor of New Amsterdam and the director of the Dutch West India Company in 1639 who purchased Nutten Island in 1637 for his personal use. He owned the land for five years until returning to Holland in 1642. His use of the island has been speculated about at length and includes reports that he built a house, raised animals, and cultivated the land. However, documentary and archeological evidence uncovered to date only suggests the presence of the windmill built in the 1620s (Figure 1). (CLR 2010: 9)

Nutten Island resided midway between the southern tip of Manhattan and a spit of land on the west

shore of Brooklyn, now known as Red Hook. The shore line was irregular with several inlets cut into its perimeter. Although the size of the island seems out of scale compared with depictions on later historical maps, the 1639 map appears to reflect the extents of the island at low tide. The shore would have been a mix of rocks and sand, backed by steep bluffs. Although no vegetation is shown on the 1639 map, it is likely that Nutten Island was covered in mature hardwood trees, as its name reflects, and as was typical of the majority of land on the eastern seaboard at the onset of European settlement. (CLR 2010: 10)

After van Twiller returned to Holland, Nutten Island was transferred to the Dutch West India Company for use by the governor generals, ending the only period of private ownership in the island's history. Little documentation exists about the activities occurring on the island for the remainder of the Dutch occupation of New Amsterdam, outside of an account of Governor Wilhelm Kieft leasing some acreage for tobacco cultivation. (CLR 2010: 10)

Fellow colonial power, England, set its sights on controlling the northeast region of North America by the mid-1600s. Unable to compete with Britain's superior naval strength, Holland surrendered control of New Amsterdam in a bloodless exchange in 1664, giving up all rights to their holdings in the northeast. Under proxy British rule, administered by the New York colonial legislature, population and development increased from the low levels sustained during Dutch control. (CLR 2010: 10)

The legislature offered Nutten Island to the royal governors for their personal use, establishing the island as a private retreat for New York's political rulers. Reportedly, British Governor Lord Cornbury built a house on the island circa 1702, although no evidence of the structure remains. Several decades later, Governor Cosby chose to use the island as a preserve to breed pheasants for hunting. Despite the recreational uses of the governors, the period was likely characterized by limited human intervention, resulting in a rugged, natural shoreline and abundant native vegetation. (CLR 2010: 10)

One documented interruption to the secluded, private use of the island occurred in 1710 when it was used as a temporary quarantine station. A group of Palatines, German Protestant refugees being resettled from London, were housed on the island for the summer. Their numbers, which had already been reduced by disease on the arduous sea journey, dwindled further after reaching New York where many more died and were buried on Governors Island. No documentary or archeological evidence has been found to date to suggest that permanent structures were built to house the refugees so the footprint from their occupation may have been minimal. Tents and temporary shelters were easily removed, leaving a limited impact on the landscape outside of felled trees and burial sites. (CLR 2010: 10)

Governors Island as a Defensive Post:
Colonial warfare was a near constant threat for Great Britain, as the Crown sought to protect and expand British interests in North America. Conflict with France, actual and imagined, led Colonial officials to consider fortifying New York Harbor as early as 1741. Governor Clarke advocated for the construction of defensive works in an address to the New York Legislature:
"There is great cause to apprehend a speedy rupture with France. Your situation ought therefore to awaken you to see the importance of erecting batteries in proper places… and one at Red Hook to prevent the enemy landing upon Governor's [sic] Island." (CLR 2010: 11, from Smith 1923: 33)

Although no timely action was taken to fortify Red Hook, the more immediate response to preventing an enemy landing on Governors Island was to use the island as a garrison. The first military encampment on the island occurred in 1755, during the last conflict of Britain's seven year war with France, now known as the French and Indian War. Little documentation or physical remains exist to suggest the layout, size, or character of the encampment. The scant remains suggest that it was temporary in nature with tents or other impermanent shelters used to house the troops. (CLR 2010: 11)

The physical appearance of the island is better documented beginning in 1766. Several plans of the harbor were produced in that year showing development on Governors Island, some of which may date to the military encampment during the French and Indian War (Figure 2). Several built features are consistently depicted on period imagery, including the presence of a geometric fort or building

near the center of the island, several earthworks surrounding the fort, especially to the north and west, and land manipulated for a wharf on the east side of the island, facing Buttermilk Channel. It appears that a channel was dug through the steep bluff near the wharf to create a level docking area and to create a navigable road up to the fort. This also may have been created to provide a depressed path where soldiers would be protected from enemy fire by the earthen sidewalls. (CLR 2010: 11)

A series of informal earthworks, or water batteries, were located around the perimeter of the island. These raised earth structures were built to provide a platform from which to skip projectiles across the surface of the water to impact the hulls of ships. The main fort stood at an advantageous elevation atop a regularly-shaped mound of earth with steeply sloping sides and unobstructed views. Much of the island was cleared of forest growth, though a few solitary tree specimens stood along the island's perimeter. (CLR 2010: 11)

At this time, Governors Island's shoreline was irregular and craggy due to weathering from waves and wind (Figure 3). The beach was a combination of rocks and sand backed by steep bluffs. Though the island's use was primarily military, period imagery shows the citizenry milling leisurely about the beach, illustrating that it was also used as a pleasure ground to those who could find water transportation. (CLR 2010: 11-12)

In 1766, plans were drawn for proposed fortifications on Governors Island, likely to enhance the existing rudimentary fortification. One design by British engineer John Montresor called for a square fortress and moat at the center of the island. Montresor's plan used the same location as the existing geometric fort and may have been planned to encompass a portion of the extant infrastructure. He drew a detailed cross section of the dry moat, masonry fort walls, and sloped glacis designed to surround the main fortification. Smaller water batteries were planned for the four sides of the island. Montressor designed four roads radiating from the corners of the central fort to the outskirts of the island. These may have been intended to be covered defiles, or depressed walkways built to provide coverage from enemy artillery. Yet despite a plea made by the British colonial government in 1774 to appropriate funding for Montressor's plans, the fortifications were never built. (CLR 2010: 12)

Revolutionary War:
Conflict in the North American colonies first broke out in Boston, Massachusetts, and spread across New England in 1775 and early 1776. In the winter of 1776, Continental generals and strategists foresaw that the battle would soon be for control of New York City, the largest port and commercial center in the colonies. Colonial General George Washington understood that the British sought control of New York and the Hudson River in hopes of splitting the colonies to sever lines of communication and hinder the transfer of goods. Washington was also aware of the difficulty of defending a city surrounded by water with essentially no navy. As a reminder of British naval might, several warships had been moored in New York's inner harbor and only retreated to the outer harbor in early April. Washington sent General Charles Lee, one of his most experienced officers, to New York to begin preparing a defensive plan. (CLR 2010: 12)

Lee quickly recognized the challenges in defending New York from the world's most formidable navy. The many channels and rivers surrounding Manhattan, Brooklyn, Long Island, and Staten Island created prime opportunities for a naval offensive. Lee reflected, "What to do with this City, I own puzzles me, it is so encircled with deep navigable water, that whoever commands the Sea must command the Town." A map of the inner harbor produced in 1776 illustrates Lee's predicament (Figure 4). Vast stretches of open water separated key land masses, making the selection of advantageous defensive posts essential to withstanding a naval attack. (CLR 2010: 12)

Fort Stirling was built on the tall bluffs of Brooklyn Heights overlooking the East River. Eight cannon were mounted in the fort, which was expected to provide coverage of the approximately one mile wide East River and Manhattan because of its height advantage and sweeping views of the inner harbor. On the other side of the harbor, the mouth of the Hudson was almost two miles wide, which was out of range for even the most powerful guns of the era. (CLR 2010: 13)

Protecting Long Island was paramount to initial campaign planning for the Brooklyn Heights

defenses. Four additional forts were built in Brooklyn to safeguard Fort Stirling and the Heights: Fort Greene, Fort Putnam, Fort Box, and lastly, Fort Defiance, which sat on the shores of Red Hook, across Buttermilk Channel from Governors Island. On Manhattan, guns were placed at Old Fort George near the battery and all streets that terminated on the East or Hudson Rivers were barricaded with timbers to stymie a land assault. (CLR 2010: 13)

Governors Island was viewed as a key defensive position. Its location as the closest of the inner harbor islands to Manhattan and Brooklyn made fortifying the island a strategic imperative. Benjamin Franklin wrote about the island's prominent setting and recommended creating defensive works fortified with six guns. General Lee supported Franklin's assessment and organized civilian work crews from Manhattan to begin digging fortifications in April 1776. (CLR 2010: 13)

After the British fleet evacuated Boston in the spring of 1776, Washington sent much of the Continental Army to New York in anticipation of the next significant battle. The entrenchments begun on Governors Island were improved by the arrival of Colonial General Israel Putnam and one thousand soldiers from Boston. Construction of the fortifications continued over three months. Heavyhanded earth moving projects undoubtedly altered the natural topography and vegetation around the fortifications. Many trees were removed to provide uninterrupted fields of fire and for firewood for the encamped troops. A surviving farmhouse and barn were razed for the same purpose. Yet, as shown in period illustrations, the island was not cleared of all vegetation. A sketch drawn by a British officer in 1776 shows most of Governors Island's fortifications obscured by vegetation (Figure 5). (CLR 2010: 13)

Historic maps depict several fortifications on the island in 1776 and though discrepancies exist between the available maps, a fair picture of the Revolutionary fortifications can be synthesized through their comparison. Similar to earthworks erected during the French and Indian War, a series of water batteries surrounded the island along the shoreline. Likewise, an earthen fortification stood near the center of the island at the highest elevation. In what appears to be a new feature, an additional raised battery was built on the northwest corner of the island and connected to the central fortification by a covered defile. Along with the defensive works, the island hosted a temporary garrison of one thousand soldiers. Tents, latrines, and weapons storage would have been located around the island, most probably south and east of the central fort. (CLR 2010: 13-14)

Despite Lee's apprehension about the tenuous Colonial control of New York, General Washington felt bolstered by the strength of the Governors Island fortifications. He wrote to Lee, "In a fortnight more I think the city will be in a very respectable position of defense. Governors Island has a large and strong work erected and a regiment encamped there." However, Washington's optimism faded as the British engaged the Colonial positions. Testing the waters, several British ships sailed into the inner harbor along the unfortified Staten Island shore in July 1776. The Colonials fired on them unsuccessfully from Fort George in present day southern Manhattan, Red Hook, and Governors Island. British sailor Stephen Kembal witnessed the action and reported:
"Observe the Rebels have fortified Governor's Island very strongly… About half after three in the Afternoon His Majesty's Ship Phoenix… and the Rose… with the Tryal Schooner and two Tenders got under sail to pass the Town of New York…. They received the whole of the Rebel fire from Red Hook, Governor's Island, the Battery and from some Guns in the Town." (CLR 2010: 14, from Smith 1923: 41)

Although one of the ships was damaged in the exchange, the Colonial positions were not effectively placed to stop their progress past Manhattan and up the Hudson to Haverstraw Bay. (CLR 2010: 14)

Although they had successfully passed through the Colonial defenses and traveled north up the Hudson, the British fleet stayed moored in the lower harbor awaiting reinforcements. There, they waited through the month of July and into August, amassing scores of warships and thousands of British and Hessian troops. In the interim, Washington divided his force between Manhattan, Long Island, Brooklyn, and Governors Island, not knowing where the British land assault would begin. He planned to use the East River as the main transportation route should his forces in Brooklyn and Long Island need to retreat or be repositioned. Old ships were sunk at the mouth of the East River near Governors Island to ensure that only small Colonial boats could navigate the waters between

southern Manhattan and Brooklyn Heights. (CLR 2010: 14)

On August 22, 1776, 15,000 British and Hessian troops crossed the Narrows from Staten Island and marched north toward Brooklyn. Five thousand more troops joined them several days later. The British encamped for a few days before advancing toward the defensive lines in Brooklyn, where after a six-hour assault, they overwhelmed the Colonial forces. Facing entrapment, Washington ordered a covert retreat of 9,000 men, guns, horses, and equipment across the East River on the night of August 29. Almost all of the Colonials, including the troops stationed at Governors Island, had evacuated to Manhattan by the next day when the British fired on the few retreating men. A Colonial officer wrote about the night of the retreat; “We have evacuated Governor’s Island where we have lost some cannon. They fired smartly from Fort Stirling yesterday at our boats passing from Governor’s Island.” (CLR 2010: 14-15, from Letter, Colonel William Douglas to his wife, 31 August 1776, in Smith 1923: 44)

Though the retreat from the Battle of Long Island took the British by surprise and was considered organized and successful, a measure of disorder accompanied the hasty withdrawal. As reported by a New York resident:
“The rebels in their hurry and consternation upon abandoning Long Island left the garrison upon Nutten Island (which they had strongly fortified) consisting of 2,000 men, 40 pieces of heavy cannon, military stores and provisions in abundance without the least means of quitting the island.” (CLR 2010: 14, from History of New York 1968: 113)

While the troops on Governors Island were evacuating with whatever provisions and guns they could transport, four British ships sailed into the harbor, about two miles south of Governors Island and began a bombardment on the retreating forces. In what appears to be a strategic error, the British ships were moored too far away from the island and their fire did little damage. A Hessian officer described the retreat:
“After having vacated everything except an island one English mile long, called Governor’s Island, on which four hundred Pennsylvanians were encamped, have now embarked these men, too, in spite of a battle thrown up in front of us, and taken them to New York on small vessels under cover of a two-master frigate. We sank only two of these boats. They carried no more than about forty men, but these perished miserably.” (CLR 2010: 15, from History of New York…1968: 113)

The Americans continued their retreat across Manhattan and into New Jersey in October 1776, after which New York City remained occupied by the British for the duration of the war. As indicated on period maps, Hessian troops encamped on Governors Island until the end of the conflict. (CLR 2010: 15)

Fortuitously, a surviving piece of documentary evidence provides great insight to the character of Governors Island after the conclusion of the Revolutionary War in 1783. This correspondence from the vacating British officer, Captain Duncan, to the American Governor of New York, combined with a map created in 1782 help describe the changes made to the landscape during the British occupation. Duncan listed fifteen buildings and structures on the island for the purpose of surrendering the keys. Included in the inventory was a wharf, a twelve-foot deep well and associated pump, the Captain’s kitchen, cellar and well, a cattle barn, a gardener’s house, a hospital and its associated well, a guard house, two officers’ barracks, a kitchen, and a summer house. Many of the structures are depicted on the 1782 map (Figure 6). Several are clustered inside the central fort, which appears as an irregular star shape. One building appears inside the battery northeast of the central fort and a geometric cluster of four buildings is located in an unfortified location east of the central fort. (CLR 2010: 15)

One of the most prominent features highlighted on the map is manipulated topography. Mounded earth surrounding the central fort is clearly evident. A high, flat plateau extended east of the central fort with steep slopes to the north and east and more gradual slopes to the south. The island was surrounded by an extensive system of water batteries located near the high tide mark. Faint lines are visible on the map throughout the island, which may represent fence lines or narrow earthen walls. These may have been part of the defensive system or may have simply delineated animal enclosures, gardens, or other instances of domestic habitation. (CLR 2010: 15)

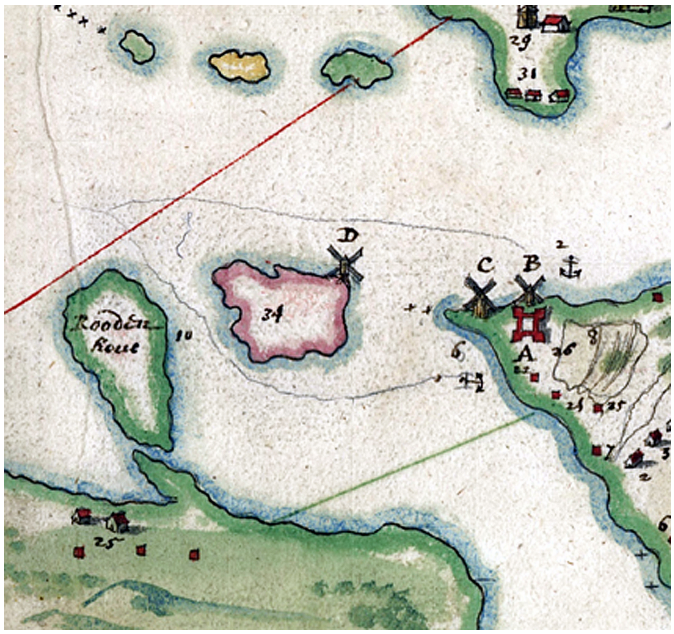


Figure 1. Manatus Map, 1639. The island labeled 34 in the center of the image is Governors Island. A windmill is the only improvement shown on the island, contrasting with the depiction of houses and barns in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the eastern New Jersey shore. (Library of Congress, "Manatus Gelegen op de Noot Rivier, Vinckenboons, Joan, 1639, #G3291.S12 collH3 vault: Harr vol 3, map 12)



Figure 2. Part of John Montresor's plan of Governors Island, 1766, showing a fort on high ground ringed on the west by earthworks, and wharf area on the east side. (Library of Congress, "Plan of Governor's, Kennedy's, and Brown's Islands and Red Hook together with part of the Bay and Soundings, shewng the position they bear to each other and to New York," #G3804.N4P55 1766. M6 Faden 96)

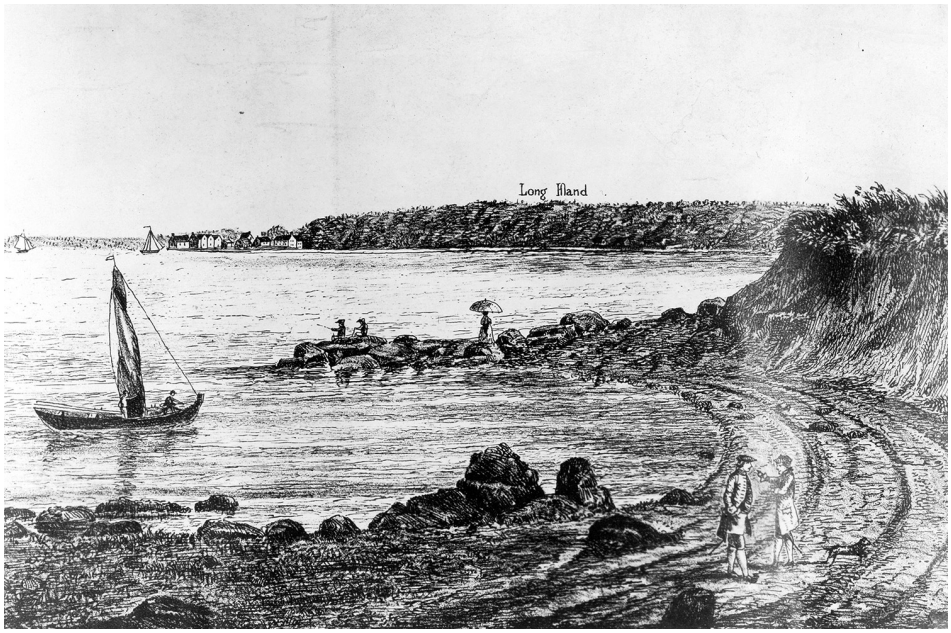


Figure 3. "A Southwest View of the City of New York taken from Governor's Island," 1766-1767. (Brooklyn Historical Society, From a plan of the City of New York 1766-1767 by Thomas Kitchen, Published by Jefferys and Faden, V1974.32.3666, Armbruster Collection)



Figure 4. Map of New York Harbor, c.1776, with Governors Island south of the tip of Manhattan (in pink). (Library of Congress, "Sketch of New York, Narrows, and Part of Long Island with the Roads," 1776, #G3804.N4A1 1776. S5 Vault)



Figure 5. Governors Island, 1776, after the battle of Long Island. (New York Public Library, "An original sketch by an English officer of Adml. Howe's Fleet while at anchor in New York Harbor. Battle of Long Island," #420784)



Figure 6. Untitled map, 1782, documenting some features described by the British when they handed over control of the island to the Americans in 1783: central fort, extensive water batteries near the water's edge, manipulated topography, and support structures. (Governors Island, circa 1782, Public Records Office, London, from Yocum 2005)

THE FIRST AND SECOND SYSTEMS OF COASTAL DEFENSE, 1784-1815

After the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, national attention focused on forming the necessities

of a post-war nation in its infancy, including an elected system of government, a national currency, and judicial system. Many things were neglected in the post-war rebuilding period, including the Governors Island fortifications, where the earthen walls deteriorated without regular maintenance. Little is known about activities occurring on the island in the post-war years, besides accounts of unfulfilled proposals to subdivide the island or turn it over to Columbia College, known today as Columbia University. (CLR 2010: 31)

First System of Harbor Defense:
After a decade of scant federal attention devoted to the collective military preparedness of the nation's port cities, Congress appropriated funds for the First American System of Coastal Defenses in 1794. Political instability in France and a continued military threat from Great Britain prompted the effort. The First System was intended to encompass the entire eastern seaboard and create a system of defensive works to discourage and repel enemy naval attacks. The scope initially included sixteen sites, including New York City, where $12,500 was appropriated for fortifications on Governors Island, Manhattan, and Paulus Hook, near present day Jersey City. (CLR 2010: 31)

The chosen First System sites, located close to urban centers, responded to the military technology of the day. In order to strike targets in Brooklyn and Manhattan, naval artillery in the late 1700s required close range to be effective, necessitating that attacking ships sail into the upper harbor. Likewise, the land-based defensive fortifications needed close range to target enemy ships. Additionally, sites close to the city became favored locations for First System fortifications because of limited funding. Discussion about the need to fortify the outer harbor and the Narrows took place in the state legislature, but appropriations supporting such an effort did not materialize. (CLR 2010: 31)

A congressional report and map from 1794 illustrate the desired outcome for the First System of fortifications on Governors Island, including defensive works to support twenty-four guns, an ammunition magazine, and a blockhouse or barracks, for an estimated cost of $3,737. Secretary of War Henry Knox specified building techniques for the works in New York, which included earthen parapets (mound of raised earth on top of the fort's walls) surfaced with knotgrass, wooden embrasures (openings for artillery), and well ventilated ammunition storage, among other directives. (CLR 2010: 31)

The 1794 map illustrates stark differences between the proposed improvements on Governors Island and what is known to have existed at the end of the Revolutionary War, notably the enlarged size and reconfiguration of the main work, or what would be known as Fort Jay (Figure 7). The 1794 plan depicted a multi-layered fortification at the high point of the island, connected by covered defiles to several smaller forts to the south, east, and west. The main fort's proposed exterior walls appear well defined and of uniform slope and thickness, contrasting with the hasty entrenchments from earlier decades. Numerous salient angles (angles pointing away from the main body of the fort) projected from the strong square shape of the fort's outer walls. No longer shown are the buildings inside and outside of the fort from the end of the Revolutionary War. (CLR 2010: 32)

Despite thorough planning, New York state officials feared the federal response would be insufficient to properly defend New York Harbor and dedicated $30,000 of additional state funds in 1794. Indeed, the works completed under the umbrella of the First System in New York Harbor were essentially designed, managed, and financed by the State of New York with some federal involvement. The state's effort was overseen by a Board of Commissioners of Fortifications, including New York's Governor George Clinton. Clinton enlisted the help of French engineer Charles Vincent, the same engineer employed by the federal government to design other First System fortifications, to locate defensive works in key areas not identified by the federal report. (CLR 2010: 32)

As early as May 1794, the Board recognized the funding shortfalls that would plague their effort, writing:
"…but in consideration of the smallness of the means in the power of the Board… the Engineer be directed to confine his plan to the repair of the old works so as to render them safe against any sudden attempt from
landing men on board of ships."

Although the Board wanted to build new works, construction was limited to strengthening and modernizing the Revolutionary War era forts. Concessions continued to be made throughout the duration of the project in an attempt to stay within budget. For example, in 1795 the Board decided to reduce the number of the fortifications being faced with masonry in a cost saving measure. (CLR 2010: 32, from "Proceedings of the Commissioners of Fortifications for the City of New York and Its Vicinity," 12 May 1794, NYS Archives)

Of all the sites chosen for New York's First System fortifications, work began first on Governors Island. This was partly due to the fact that the property was owned by the State of New York rather than by private citizens, like Ellis Island or both banks of the Narrows. Another reason for the rapid deployment of a workforce to Governors Island was the endorsement of engineer Vincent. He praised the location of Governors Island as the most advantageous place to create an intersecting field of fire with forts in Manhattan and the east shore of Long Island to deter ships from passing through the Narrows. (CLR 2010: 32)

Work on the Governors Island fortifications began in April 1794 using military labor. By late April, the Board approved the deployment of civilian work crews, including skilled masons, to supplement the labor force. Payroll records from 1794 and 1795 documents a fluctuating work force, ranging between 115 and 250 laborers depending on the season and the task at hand. Massive amounts of earth moving and land manipulation took place between 1794 and 1796. Board meeting notes from 1795 document, "It being represented to the board that in order to erect a stone wall around the Bastion and Curtain of the Fortification on Governors Island, it will be necessary to take down between 10 and 20 feet of the earth." Workers were authorized to remove "trees and all movables not necessary for military purposes." This included existing structures that did not complement the new strategic plan. Also, all livestock was removed from the island so as not to interfere with construction. (CLR 2010: 32, from "Proceedings of the Commissioners of Fortifications for the City of New York and Its Vicinity," 5 June 1795 and 14 April 1794, NYS Archives)

By January 1796, the New York newspaper Greenleaf's New Daily Advertiser reported that "Governor's Island has been fortified with a fort made of earth, and two batteries under its protection, partly lined with brick masonry; two air furnaces, a large powder magazine, and a barracks for the garrison; the whole completed."

This represented the apex of First System planning. The next few years witnessed a respite in anxiety about attacks from abroad before fear of a British invasion began anew around 1798 and work resumed at Governors Island. (CLR 2010: 33, from Argus, or Greenleaf's New Daily Advertiser, 30 January 1796, NYS Archives)

The work completed on Governors Island by the turn-of-the-century was substantial, yet fell short of the plan envisioned in 1794. A report dated February 15, 1802, written by Major D. Wadsworth to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications for the United States Army, provides insight to the condition of Fort Jay at the time of inspection. Wadsworth prepared the report to provide Williams, the primary engineer of New York's defensive posts, with a status of the fort's existing condition and recommendations for updating the structure for battle readiness. He described a twelve-foot-thick timber parapet filled with earth, with fifty-one embrasures. The walls were strengthened with pointed sticks embedded in the ground to deter a ground assault. The fort was accessed by a main gate with a guardhouse as well as a "sally port," or a tunnel cut underneath the fort's walls. Barracks buildings and a timber blockhouse were documented inside the fort. Though their exact locations are undocumented, the state paid for the construction of two arsenal buildings in 1798. (CLR 2010: 33)

Fort Jay was complemented by two detached batteries to the west and southwest. Views between the fortifications would have been unobstructed by vegetative growth, as the remaining native vegetation from the Revolutionary period had been removed in the construction effort. The state paid local farmers to cut hay and maintain the copious amounts of grass on the fort's glacis (an artificial slope built in front of fortification walls) and outlying area. The flagstaff at Fort Jay, erected in 1797, would have been visible from a great distance due to the fort's height and the denuded landscape.

(CLR 2010: 33-34)

The wharf area was located east of Fort Jay, in line with the fort's main gate and sally port. The state paid to have the wharf built in 1797, possibly in the same location as earlier wharves or landing sites. It is likely that several outbuildings were located near the wharf to provide support services to the troops stationed on the island, perhaps including stables, kitchens, outhouses, and blacksmith and carpentry sheds. Along with Major Wadsworth's detailed description of Fort Jay's attributes in 1802, he offered his opinion that the fort was "Not capable of any defense in its present state." He listed deficiencies in the fort's level of completeness but more importantly, described problems with the design and location of the fort that made it an undesirable defensive post. In his words, "I conceive the Plan of Fort Jay, in respect to the natural advantages and disadvantages of the ground to be nearly the worst which could have been adopted." (CLR 2010: 34, from Letter, Major D. Wadsworth, Reg. of Artill. & Eng., Fort Jay, to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications, 15 February 1802)

This radical departure from the almost universally complimentary opinion of previous military planners may reflect the changing status of weaponry and military technology in the early 1800s. Wadsworth cited the island's low elevation compared to nearby landforms in Brooklyn as a deficiency, making the fort susceptible to capture if posts in Brooklyn fell into enemy hands. In this scenario, the guns at Fort Jay could then be turned against the city of New York. Additionally, Wadsworth argued that Governors Island was not a viable site from which to launch a major defensive strike because of its distance from the lower harbor, which was now being viewed as an essential target due to advances in naval artillery. Of the deficiencies that could be addressed, Wadsworth cited the need to finish gun platforms, the counterscarp (the angled, outer wall of the
defensive ditch dug around the fortification), drawbridge, and the banquet of the parapet (a step built into the raised bed of the fort's walls from which soldiers can fire weapons). (CLR 2010: 34)

Perhaps Wadsworth's criticism of the strategic value of Governors Island was ahead of its time. In spite of Wordsworth's concerns, the Secretary of War authorized Fort Jay to be strengthened with masonry materials in 1806. It is likely Wadsworth's remarks went unheeded because of the increased tension with England and the inevitable military build-up that followed. (CLR 2010: 34)

Second System of Harbor Defense:
Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications, was charged with implementing a comprehensive plan for upgrading New York's harbor defenses in 1807 as part of a federal program to reexamine the coastal defenses of the eastern seaboard. Known as the Second System, this ambitious effort sought to create a comprehensive system of harbor defenses, designed by American engineers, employing more standardized and advanced construction techniques and materials. Though the design of Second System forts varied, a typical characteristic was their all masonry construction, which afforded greater protection for soldiers and guns than earthen fortifications. Masonry construction also allowed for multiple floors of guns to be stacked on top of each other, mimicking the stacked armament of contemporary war ships, to provide greater firing range. (CLR 2010: 34-35)

Williams took detailed measurements of distances between existing defensive works and areas that had not yet been fortified throughout the harbor. Deficiencies in American Revolutionary-era defenses were examined, notably the undefended distance between fortifications on the east side of the upper harbor and the New Jersey shore that allowed the British to sail up the Hudson River undeterred, as well as the lack of defenses at the Narrows. Williams' report resulted in the construction of numerous new forts and the modification of several existing ones in New York, including Fort Richmond and Fort Tompkins on the Staten Island side of the Narrows, Fort Hendricks on the Long Island side of the Narrows, Fort Wood on Beldoe's Island (now Liberty Island), Fort Gibson on Ellis Island, and Castle Clinton at the tip of Manhattan. (CLR 2010: 35)

Williams also spent time examining the strategic value of Governors Island, despite Wadsworth's unfavorable report of 1802. He measured distances from the island to several points in Brooklyn, the East River, and Manhattan, indicating that Governors Island provided strategic coverage of the east side of the upper harbor. At Williams' direction, modification of Fort Jay occurred to replace the "salt

marsh sod" defensive walls with masonry and to add a ravelin (a work in the shape of an acute angle that projects from the main walls of a fort) on the north wall of the fort. New barracks buildings and a new well were added to the interior of the fort, while several trees that had grown in the courtyard remained because they did not interfere with gun placement. Secretary of War Dearborn described the changes in 1809: "Fort Jay…with the whole of its buildings, was demolished in 1806, except the walled counterscarp, the gate, sallyport, magazine, and two barracks; all the rest was removed as rubbish, to give place for a work composed of durable materials. On the site of the old fort, a new one has been erected, of the same shape…" (CLR 2010: 35, from Secretary of War Henry Dearborn, 6 January 1809, report submitted to President Jefferson, ASP, 10th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp 236-237, Library of Congress)

It is likely that much of the earth, timber, and sod removed from the original fortification was spread across the surface of the island, perhaps leveling low spots and contributing to the uniform slope of the glacis. Williams wrote about the ongoing construction of the glasis in 1808. "The Glasis has not been sodded to its full extent owing to the want of sod, but it will be all found with grass seed before Spring, when it will probably appear like a luxuriant lawn." He boasted that the glacis:
"…commanded the whole end of the East River…the opposite extreme at the SW entrance of the Buttermilk Channel…extends to the water's edge and forms a compleat [sic] command of this part of the Harbour, except only where it is interrupted by the circular Castle." (CLR 2010: 35-36, from "Draft report to the Secretary of War Relative to the Progress and Present State of the Fortifications in the Harbour of New York," November 1808)

The circular castle mentioned by Williams referred to a new fortification begun in 1807 to provide more effective coverage of the Narrows and the mouth of the Hudson River. The new fort, initially known as the stone tower, was designed to be a "circular casemated battery… to be located on the extreme westerly point commonly called Perkin's Point." Perkin's Point was a small projection of land almost detached from Governors Island, bounded on three sides by the rugged natural shoreline. Williams described Perkins Point in a draft report to the Secretary of War in 1808:
"At the Western extremity of Governors Island there is a Point of Rocks which runs to the edge of the Channel extending about eighty yards without the Beach, the space within being bare only [at] a very low Water. On this Base which was found to be a Bed of red Clay crowded with large & very hard Rocks & Stone the foundation of a circular Castle was begun." (CLR 2010: 36, from "Outlines of a Plan of Defence for the City and Harbour of New York," by Secretary of War Henry Dearborn, 21 July 1807; November 1808, "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War Relative to the Progress & Present State of the Fortifications in the Harbour of New York.")

Williams designed a round structure, open on its southwest side facing Fort Jay, with smooth, red sandstone exterior walls. The fort was massively constructed with eight-foot-thick walls at the base. It reached a height of forty feet with four tiers of armament stacked in the three-story building. Semi-circular openings, or embrasures, in the fort walls provided space for cannon, which numbered more than 100. Boulders piled against the base of the fort protected the sandstone walls from direct tidal action on the three sides that projected into the harbor. The only access to the fort was by foot through a gate on the southeast side. When complete, Castle Williams was widely considered the strongest and best-armed fortification in the harbor. (CLR 2010: 36)

In 1809, Williams directed the construction of a key feature to connect the two forts, a covert defile. He described creating the defile from the dismantled earthworks outside Fort Jay, which had been renamed Fort Columbus by this date:
"There are two Breastworks of Earth in Front of the old Fort, which have not been removed, it being thought unnecessary to destroy them till the Castle is finished, least the Earth of which they are composed should be wanted at that height for the proposed covered defile."

The path's tall, mounded earth sidewalls allowed troops and equipment to travel safely between the forts while under fire. This was a necessary feature because there was no longer any vegetative cover between the two forts, only a purposefully open landscape. (CLR 2010: 36, from NYCLPC Report, p.13, as cited in Warren-Findley 2007 draft: 37)

A final defensive work, named South Battery, was added to the southeast side of the Governors

Island landscape in 1812 to provide water-level coverage of Buttermilk Channel. The arrow-shaped masonry structure provided a platform for thirteen guns along its one-story parapet. (CLR 2010: 36-37)

Although the glacis and areas around the forts were kept free of obstacles, some buildings, vegetation, and landscape features dotted the landscape by the time the forts were completed. The encampment of several hundred troops required support services and infrastructure, like hospitals, stables, wash houses, barracks, a blacksmith shop, and a carpenter shop, all of which are documented on an 1813 map of the island (Figure 8). Most structures were located southeast of the forts near the wharf on Buttermilk Channel for ease of loading and unloading supplies and equipment and to be outside of the most strategic lines of fire. All were on lower ground than Fort Columbus and located several hundred yards off of the glacis with the exception of the small “surgeon’s house” near the northeast corner of the fort. (CLR 2010: 37)

Although formal circulation systems are not depicted on the 1813 plan, several tree lines delineated commonly used paths and roads. Woodcut drawings of the island from the mid-nineteenth-century depict these tree lines as tall, columnar, and evenly spaced, without interlocking canopies. Lombardy poplars planted in a formal row would create this character and are a good estimation of species type. The use of these trees in urban plantings became fashionable by the early nineteenth century, witnessed by their abundant placement throughout the island of Manhattan. (CLR 2010: 37)

The most striking of Governors Island’s tree lines was an alleé lining the road between the wharf and Fort Columbus’ main gate. Additionally, a single line of trees marked a route between Fort Columbus and the hospital located near South Battery. A third tree line traveled along the northern shoreline of the island between the wharf and Castle Clinton. The map and woodcut show the shoreline of the island as largely natural and unmanipulated with long expanses of sand and rock beaches, backed by steep bluffs. (CLR 2010: 37)

Other notable landscape features on the island in 1813 included a large, geometric vegetable garden located midway between Fort Columbus and South Battery. The geometric space was subdivided into six, equally sized sub-plots with a central aisle running lengthwise. This extensive garden would have been large enough to supplement the diet of the resident officers and soldiers. An allée of trees lined a path connecting the garden to Fort Columbus’ southeast counterscarp wall. (CLR 2010: 37)

Two cemeteries were located in the vicinity of the garden, one adjacent to it on the east side and the other to the southwest, hugging the rocky shoreline. The features may have been in use for decades, even dating to the island’s use as a quarantine station in the early eighteenth century. Little information is known about the cemeteries, and although the one on the southwest shore appears on later maps of the island, the one east of the garden disappears from the historical record after 1813. (CLR 2010: 37-38)

By 1812 the modified First System and Second System fortifications on Governors Island stood ready to defend New York in tandem with other forts around the harbor. Although tension with Great Britain escalated into open hostilities and the War of 1812, none of the New York forts fired against the British Navy. The British anchored in the lower harbor and blockaded the city for the conflict but never attempted to engage the Americans at New York City. (CLR 2010: 38)

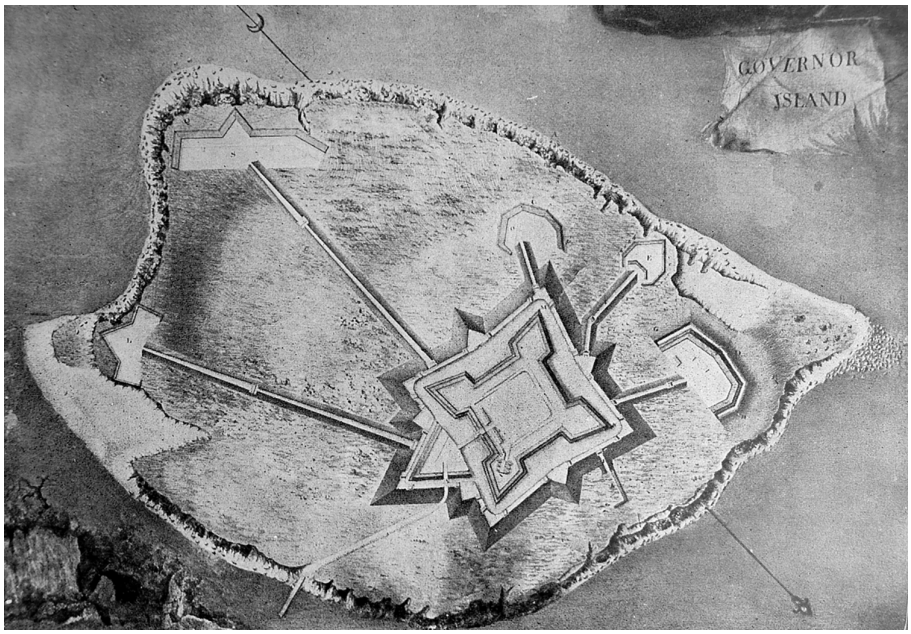


Figure 7. Plan of proposed fortifications on Governors Island, 1794. (Governors Island, 1637-1937; Its History and Development, 1937, original source not noted)

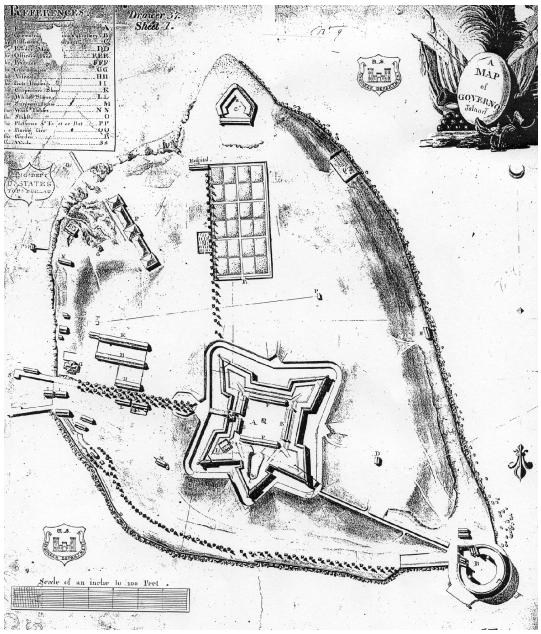


Figure 8. Governors Island fortifications, circa 1813. (National Archives II, Architecture and Cartographic Branch, Fortifications files, Record Group 77, Drawer 37, Sheet 1)

THE THIRD SYSTEM OF COASTAL DEFENSE, 1816-1865

Unlike First and Second Systems, the Third System of Coastal Defenses, initiated in 1817, was not spurred from a military threat, but was a peacetime effort to systematically update the nation's harbor defenses. The new system was overseen by the War Department and designed by professional engineers to create an integrated fortification system. (CLR 2010: 51)

Brigadier General Simon Bernard and a commission of military advisors prepared a series of reports beginning in 1816 on the state of the nation's coastal defenses and the state of military preparedness. Technological advances in artillery, ship building, and fortification design changed the strategic landscape, creating markedly different expectations for the Third System. Early planning efforts called for building hundreds of new fortifications along the eastern seaboard, yet the number of new forts actually constructed was small. (CLR 2010: 51)

Several Third System forts were constructed around the outer harbor of New York beginning in the 1830s including Fort Schuyler on Throgs Neck Long Island, Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island, and Fort Hancock in Sandy Hook, New Jersey. These smaller fortifications located further from New York City were meant to combat the improved heavy armament aboard ships and destroy targets before enemy ships approached the city. (CLR 2010: 51)

The Third System all but ignored existing coastal defensive posts. Bernard authored reports in 1821 and 1826 that hardly addressed existing forts except to recognize their deficiencies; "Most of the existing forts only defend single points…. [and] satisfy only a few conditions; and they have not been planned with a view to the defense of the frontiers." Governors Island fell into this category and was rendered increasingly strategically obsolete. However, this rebuke created new opportunities to adapt the island and its resources to the changing times. (CLR 2010: 51, from Bernard Report of 1821, as cited in Black 1983: 63)

Governors Island as a Permanent Military Installation:
After the War of 1812, Congress reorganized the military creating two central commands, one for the north and one for the south. Numerous districts fell under the two central commands, one of which, the US Third Military District, was located in New York. After being headquartered in Castle Clinton at the tip of Manhattan for several years, the command was moved to Governors Island. It remained there for seven years before being moved back to New York after prolonged bureaucratic wrangling. (CLR 2010: 51-52)

Troops remained positioned on Governors Island after the War of 1812, although in typical post-war fashion, new development on the island was slow to come. Shown in a woodcut image of the island in 1825, the island was characterized by developments made prior to 1812 (Figure 9). Castle Williams, Fort Columbus, South Battery and a scattering of columnar trees predominated, along with a few other structures that appear similar in number and scale to those depicted on the 1813 map of the island (see Figure 8). However, as the island's active defensive functions diminished in importance, support systems and related infrastructure were developed to support a permanent military base, administrative center, and an arsenal facility. (CLR 2010: 52)

Development of the New York Arsenal.
The New York Arsenal was moved from Manhattan to Governors Island in 1832 where a new district of buildings was constructed to house, purchase, distribute, and develop arms. The arsenal functioned independently from Army activities on the island and was administered by a distinct military agency called the Ordnance Department. Through the decades of the arsenal's development, technology generated on the island played a major role in the evolution of new armament, although Sandy Hook Proving Ground in New Jersey, not Governors Island, was used as the field testing facility. The Ordnance Department located arsenal
structures near the wharf on the northeast side of the island, in a six-and-a-half-acre parcel just north of the main route between the wharf and Fort Columbus. (CLR 2010: 52)

Construction of the arsenal buildings began in 1835 and continued slowly through the 1870s. In 1847, Captain Thorton of the arsenal prepared a comprehensive plan for the L-shaped district. The defining feature of included a triangular open space, or "gun yard," facing the East River surrounded by arsenal buildings. This well defined cluster fit neatly into the corner of land between the wharf and

the shadow of Fort Columbus' northeast exterior walls. (CLR 2010: 52)

As reflected sixty years after the designation of the Governors Island arsenal:
"At no other place in the immediate vicinity of New York, can the Arsenal be as well guarded as at Governors Island. It has three quarters, store houses, shops, etc, already built at great expense. These buildings are especially adapted to the wants of an Arsenal…. The space…is so distributed in a narrow strip along the shore as not to interfere with the parade or drill grounds." (CLR 2010: 52, from Ordnance Board, USA to the Chief of Ordnance, USA, 12 July 1895, RG 92 Entry 89, section 84234)

By the time this report was made in the late 1800s, the arsenal included storehouses, workshops, officers' quarters, and office space. It operated independently from the Army functions on the rest of the island using day laborers who commuted by ferry. (CLR 2010: 52-53)

Development of Army Facilities:
New physical improvements for the Army facilities began in the 1830s. Initial development addressed the need for housing on the island. Inside Fort Columbus, where barracks had been located since the Revolutionary War, four new buildings replaced older structures in 1834 to provide improved conditions and make better use of the open space inside the fort. The new barracks, used as officers' quarters, were arranged in a square, backing onto the ramparts to create a geometric inner courtyard (Figure 10). (CLR 2010: 53)

Many enlisted men were housed in tents and some in barracks buildings inside Fort Columbus, and some possibly in the casemates of Castle Williams. Conditions for enlisted men were crowded and uncomfortable, which stood in stark contrast to the gracious accommodation built for the Commanding Officer in 1843. This new structure was located near the wharf on the southeast side of the approach road to Fort Columbus. The Greek-revival building was the most ornately styled structure built on the island to date. (CLR 2010: 53)

Several new structures provided support services to the growing military community by the 1840s. A new hospital was built in 1839 southeast of Fort Columbus, near the location of earlier hospitals. It was separated from the growing cluster of buildings near the wharf, likely on purpose, to separate the sick from the well and inhibit the spread of disease. The Army built a wood frame chapel southeast of the hospital, adjacent to South Battery in the 1840s. Also located near South Battery was the cemetery on the southwest shore and a garden to the east of the cemetery. The Army relocated the garden from its previous location further north on the Parade Ground. (CLR 2010: 53)

Period imagery from the 1850s illustrates the status of the Army's development of Governors Island. The cluster of buildings at the wharf is clearly depicted along with associated groupings of formal and informally placed vegetation (Figure 11). The developed district contrasted with the open character of the landscape elsewhere on the island that was dominated by managed grassland and formal lines of columnar trees. Some small-scale landscape features existed on the glacis, including the cemetery and a garden southeast of Fort Columbus. (CLR 2010: 53)

The Army began a program of strengthening the island's shoreline in the mid-1800s, replacing the natural sand and rock beaches and bluffs with masonry walls. At Castle Williams, Army engineers built a raised masonry platform at the base of the fortification to protect the structure from the direct impact of the ocean. Encircling the entire island with engineered walls was probably not completed until the early 1900s due to repeated storm damage that obliterated segments of the Army's seawalls over several decades. (CLR 2010: 54)

The island's non-defensive functions increased in 1852 when it became home to a major Army recruiting and processing center for the northeast. Scores of "green" troops were brought to Governors Island in the 1850s to learn the basics of soldiering before being deployed to other garrisons. To house the growing number of officers, the Army added two field officer's quarters east of the Commanding Officer's quarters, overlooking Buttermilk Channel and Brooklyn in the 1850s. These buildings began infilling the open space between the Commanding Officer's quarters at the wharf and the hospital and chapel near South Battery, creating the shaded green space of Nolan

Park. However, little construction occurred to provide permanent housing for the increased number of troops, who were mostly quartered in tents. (CLR 2010: 54)

Governors Island and The Civil War:
Governors Island continued to function as a troop recruiting and processing center and a major arsenal during the Civil War. By 1861, thousands of new recruits and troops returning from battle spent time on the island, reportedly, as many as seven regiments at a time. The island buzzed with activity, from the coming and going of troops, to the storage and stockpiling of equipment. As recorded in 1861:
"The Ordnance Department on Governor's Island…continues extremely active. There seems to be a lack of space for the munitions of war constantly arriving there. Dalghrens, Columbiads, mortars, and guns of nearly all denominations, boxes of shot and shell, gun-carriages, &c., &c., crowd the wharves, and boats of one kind or another are constantly there, either delivering or receiving cargoes of warlike stores." (CLR 2010: 54, from New York Times, 11 September 1861)

The defensive importance of the island and its fortified posts, though downplayed in recent years, was not forgotten during this time of war. A letter from the Engineering Department to the Secretary of War in 1861 relayed that, "Fort Columbus, Castle William, South Battery, Fort Wood, and Fort Gibson…are in serviceable condition and entirely ready for the whole of their respective armaments." Yet, despite battle-readiness, Governors Island's contribution to the war was entirely in a support capacity. (CLR 2010: 54, from Letter, Engineer Department, Washington, D.C. to the Secretary of War, 30 November 1861)

The north and northeastern portion of the island, centered around the wharf, arsenal, and Commanding Officer's quarters, hosted much of the war time activity in a busy district of housing, administrative activity, and equipment and armament storage. An allée planted decades earlier lined the main road between the wharf and Fort Columbus. Informally placed trees grew in the wharf vicinity to provide a shady district in the otherwise open landscape. Outside of the straight, formal road to Fort Columbus and the engineered arsenal streets, the few other roads of the wharf district were rustic, unpaved, and informally constructed. (CLR 2010: 55)

It appears that few permanent infrastructural changes were made to accommodate Civil War activities. Although the military population soared during the war years, no new permanent buildings were erected due to the scarcity of funds for non-battle related expenses. Instead, the open landscape on the glacis of Fort Columbus was the location of temporary shelter and storage for the island's transient war-time population. The majority of enlisted men slept in tents on the perimeter of the island, as barrack space was at a premium and mostly given to officers and their families. (CLR 2010: 55)

Inside Fort Columbus, mature trees stood on the perimeter of the geometric courtyard lawn. The lawn was enclosed by an approximately eighteen inch high, white-painted, single rail, sawn wood fence and surrounded by a packed-earth path (Figure 12). Behind the barracks, armament sat on gun platforms around the perimeter of the unpaved ramparts, just a few yards from the rear doors of the barracks (Figure 13). (CLR 2010: 55)

Several trees grew along the fort's exterior walls without interfering with the copious amounts of open lawn on the glacis that was used for drilling and entertainment, including nightly band performances from a music shed near the Commanding Officer's Quarters. (CLR 2010: 55)

The island was also used as a prison for Confederate soldiers. Officers were held in the north building inside Fort Columbus while enlisted men were kept in reportedly squalid conditions in the Castle Williams casemates. The numbers of Confederate prisoners held on Governors Island fluctuated throughout the war, ranging from 630 to 1,100. (CLR 2010: 55)

The landscape surrounding Castle Williams was austere, mirroring the grim conditions inside the fort. Photographs taken by the famed Civil War photographer Matthew Brady depict a largely open and unprogrammed space at the fort. Views from the roof of Castle Williams show open land with narrow unpaved trails in the foreground with distant views of the Arsenal and Fort Columbus behind.

Remnants of the continuous tree line between Castle Williams and the wharf, documented in 1813, remained, though many specimens had been lost (Figure 14). Except for the narrow circumference of seawall at the base of Castle Williams, the shoreline was a mix of natural rock and sand. Gone were the steep bluffs that once characterized the edge of the island and in their place were smoother, gradual slopes up to Fort Columbus. (CLR 2010: 55-56)

Other contemporary views of the island corroborate the presence of the tree line between Castle Williams and the Arsenal, which along with a few other small clusters of trees represented the only sizable vegetative features on the island. Most of the landscape was covered in hay or what one Confederate prisoner described as “a glacis beautifully turfed in bluegrass.” This was especially true on the northwest side of the island where a clear and unobstructed view was purposefully maintained between the forts. Most buildings, temporary or permanent, were located north, west, and south of Fort Columbus to preserve the viewshed. (CLR 2010: 56, from Captain Thomas Sparrow, 4 September 1861)

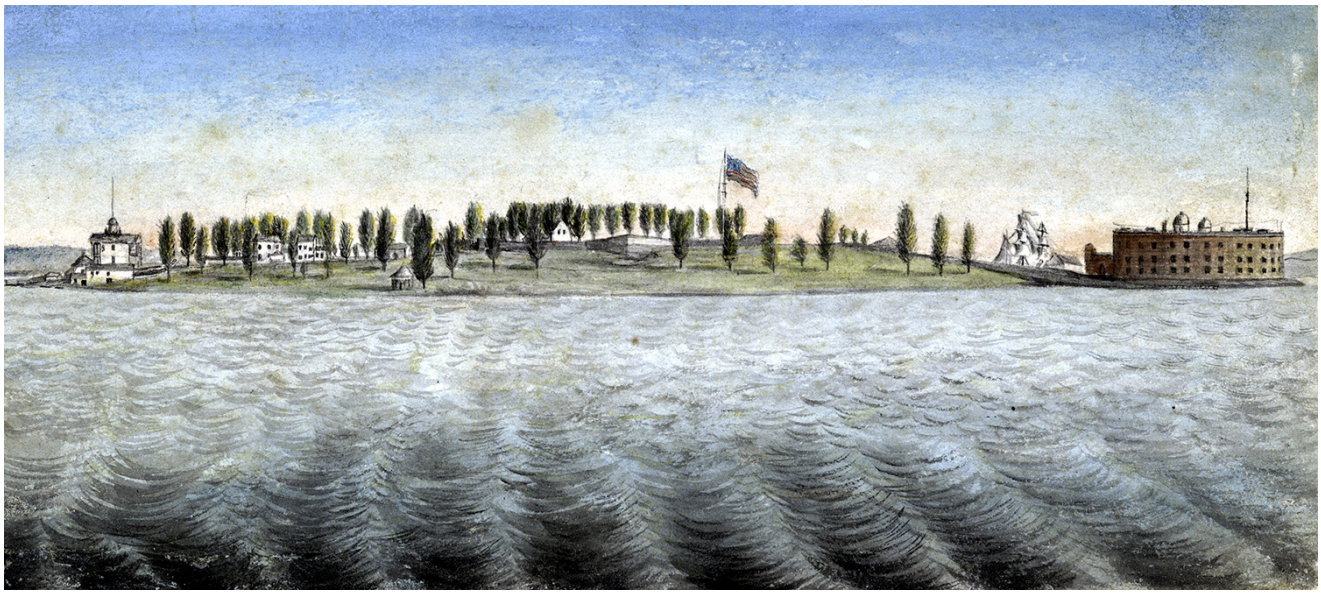


Figure 9. Governors Island from Manhattan, 1825. The three forts figure prominently in the landscape along with lines of columnar trees and managed lawn. (Image courtesy of the New York Public Library, 54551)

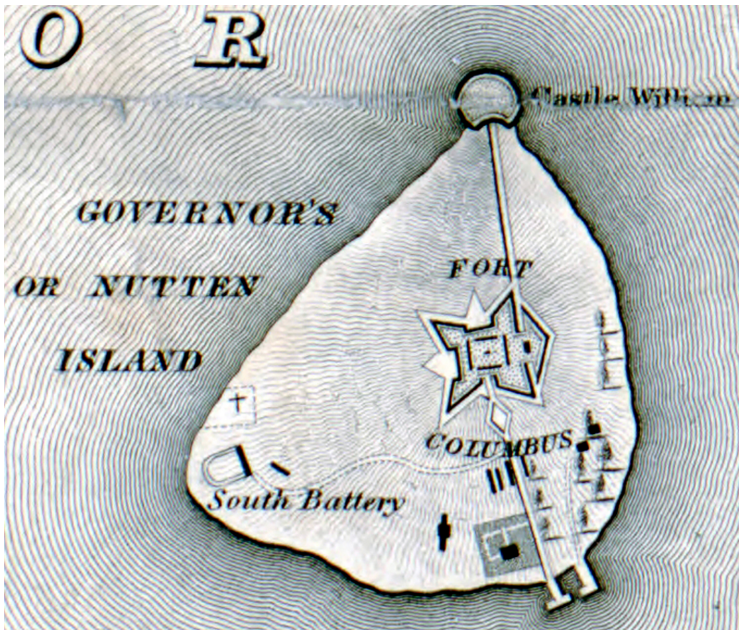


Figure 10. Governors Island, 1836. The newly completed Fort Columbus barracks created an inner courtyard. Arsenal developments, the Commanding Officer's quarters, and cemetery are all depicted on this plan. (Library of Congress, enlargement of "Topographical map of the city and county of New York and the adjacent country," J.H. Colton and Co., #G3804.N 1836.J2)

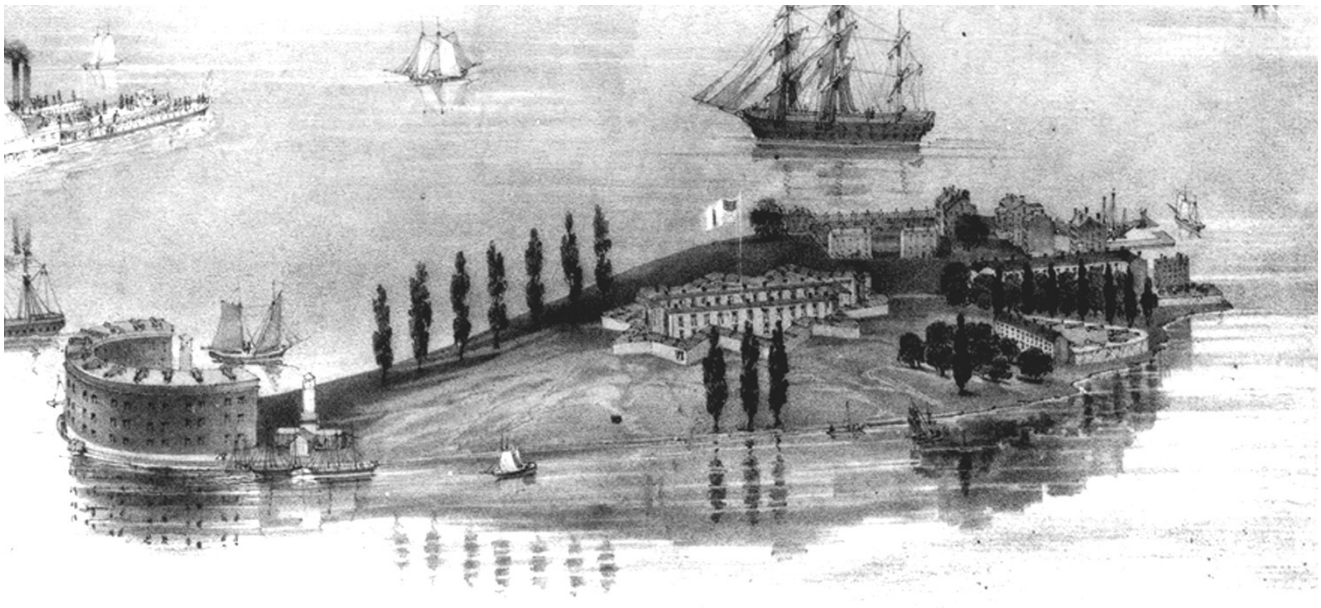


Figure 11. Bird's-Eye View of New York and Brooklyn, 1851. (Library of Congress, #PGA-Bachmann- Bird's-eye view of New York and Brooklyn (D size) (P&P)

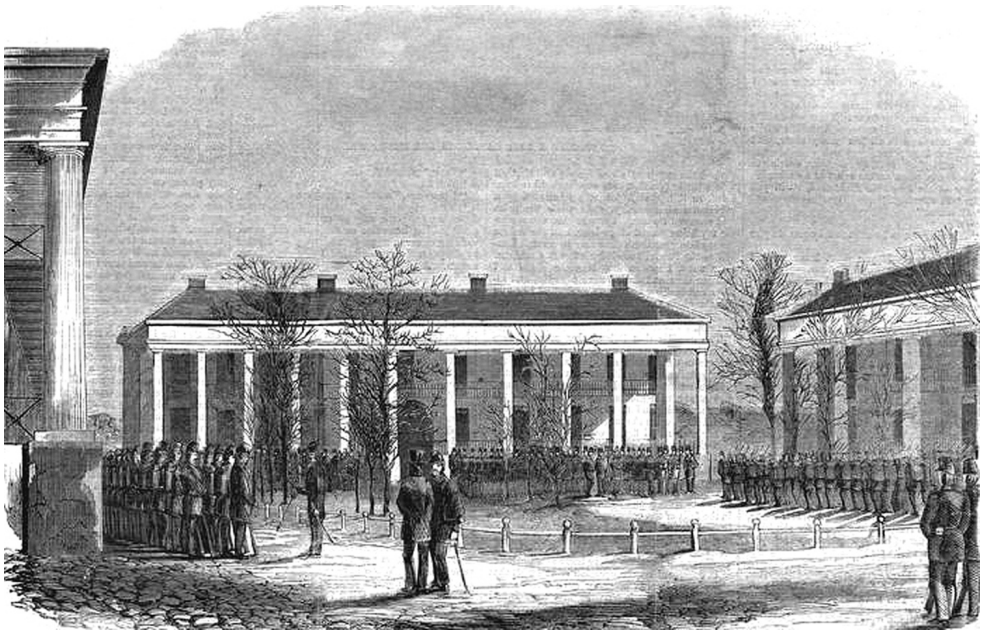


Figure 12. Drilling in the Fort Columbus courtyard, 1861. ("Recruits Drilling in Squads on Governor's Island, New York," Published in Harper's Weekly, 4 May 1861, image courtesy of Harpersweekly.com)



Figure 13. Ramparts, guns, and rear elevation of one of the Fort Columbus barracks, 1864. (National Archives II, U.S. Quartermaster's Department, #165-C-1089; SPB/NACP)



Figure 14. View looking east from Castle Williams, looking to Brooklyn, 1862. (National Archives II, Still Images, B 3480 Brady Collection)

GOVERNORS ISLAND AFTER THE CIVIL WAR, 1866-1918

After serving as a bustling administrative post, prison, recruiting center, and garrison throughout the Civil War, activity on Governors Island slowed with the conclusion of hostilities in 1865. Few significant physical improvements took place during the post-war years following the immense expenditure of human and economic capital in the war effort. However, Governors Island's function

as a permanent military base remained unquestioned and investment to improve the installation began anew after the conclusion of the war. (CLR 2010: 73)

Limited improvement efforts took place in the late 1860s, including the repair of existing buildings and walks and the demolition of deteriorated buildings. This was followed by more substantial infrastructural investment in ensuing decades. Much of the post-war activity occurred at the arsenal. Surplus munitions arrived at the island for storage and processing, however there were few facilities available to accommodate the materials. A visitor to the island in 1872 recalled that "Cannon of all shapes, sizes and caliber are lying about….Huge pyramids of shot and shell are piled around, from the enormous fifteen inch shell, weighing 320 pounds, to the diminutive one-pound ball." In response to the need for additional storage, a new warehouse, known today as Building 110, was built northeast of Fort Columbus in 1875. (CLR 2010: 73, from New York Times, 21 September 1872)

Post-war improvements to the island's physical resources, maintained with military fastidiousness and readily available labor, resulted in a pleasantly landscaped environment suited to both military preparedness and domesticity. An account of the island in 1872 described the "beautiful green island in the entrance of the channel," and admired
"the brilliant verdure of its trees, its neat, trim walks, the handsome buildings nestle in the deep foliage of its timber, and the well-kept gardens arranged in terraces extending from the landing pier to the extreme easterly point of the island."

Street trees planted in the arsenal and wharf district decades earlier matured to shade the area, notably along the canopied approach road to Fort Columbus. Engravings from the late nineteenth century display the abundant tree coverage in this region, extending from the arsenal, through Nolan Park, to the cemetery's weeping willows. (CLR 2010: 73, from New York Times, 21 September 1872)

At Fort Columbus, a roughly circular raised earth barbican remained directly in front of the bridge to prevent a clear sight-line from the wharf to the fort's main entry (Figure 15). The interior of the fort was primarily used for housing, with the geometry of the central open space unaltered from previous decades. An 1872 visitor noted that the fort's interior "is a nice shady spot, where the hot rays of the noonday sun cannot penetrate the thick foliage of the trees with which it is surrounded." The ramparts behind the barracks were kept free of woody vegetation, and cannon placed at regular intervals along the fort's walls retained its functional military preparedness. (CLR 2010: 73-74, from New York Times, 21 September 1872)

The verdant appearance of the eastern portion of the island stood in contrast with the sparsely vegetated areas east and south of Fort Columbus. Only a few Lombardy poplars along the northwest shore stood near Castle Williams. This relatively undeveloped portion of the island was dominated by low grass coverage. The Army retained the historically open, grass-covered glacis to facilitate troop drilling and military parades (Figure 16). (CLR 2010: 74)

Castle Williams remained an imposing and relatively solitary presence on the northwest corner of the island for the purposes of keeping views of the harbor and views toward the structure open. Several unornamented and utilitarian engineering buildings were located near the structure. Period imagery depicts a route extending from Castle Williams' entry to two points along Fort Columbus' west walls. One fork of the path incorporated the covered defile. The other led past a powder magazine to a break in the rampart south of the covered defile. (CLR 2010: 74)

The Army built a row of new wood-frame barracks, observed as "pretty frame cottages," near South Battery, adjacent to the post cemetery and vegetable garden in 1872. These structures reportedly replaced older barracks buildings that had earned the unflattering nickname "rotten row." Construction of living quarters continued in the late-1870s when several additional wood-frame duplexes completed the Nolan Park district, east of Fort Columbus. A row of uniformly styled officers' quarters were built along a line southwest of the Commanding Officer's quarters prior to the Civil War. These buildings, which spanned the area between the wharf district and the hospital and chapel, faced onto a rectilinear green space with brick walking paths, shade trees, and a managed lawn. When the new Nolan Park residences were built on the west side of the green, they mirrored the design, scale, and massing of the pre-Civil War residences and further defined the district by

partially enclosing the open side of the green that previously led to the open expanse of the parade ground. Although the structures strongly resembled one another, each was personalized by its occupants (Figure 17). Contemporary reports document that the quarters contained vegetable and flower gardens, trellises, and climbing vines. (CLR 2010: 74)

Development on the north and east shores previously left open to provide a clear field of fire was a sign of the island's increasing defensive obsolescence. Nonetheless, strategic planning for the island continued in the latter part of the nineteenth century. On an 1871 sketch of the island, Army engineers designed a long, linear barbette battery (a single-story, raised earth, open platform), spanning most of the distance between Castle Williams and South Battery on the island's southwest shore. If built as designed, thirty-six guns were to be mounted on the open deck to provide additional coverage of the upper harbor. It is documented that work commenced on the fort by 1872 but later accounts and analysis of late nineteenth and early twentieth century maps show that it was never completed. (CLR 2010: 74)

Seawall Expansion.
Governors Island's location in the harbor made it susceptible to the damaging forces of wind and tidal action. The earliest documented seawalls on the island were built in the 1840s to protect the base of Castle Williams from direct contact with the sea. The Army expanded its use of seawalls in 1866, completing a masonry wall on the west side of the island from Castle Williams to South Battery. This action appears to have made the existing shoreline higher and more linear. A more ambitious project was planned for the eastern shore of the
island in the 1880s. Army engineers extended the 1866 seawall northeast of South Battery, filling a sizable portion of the low tidal areas. By 1884, a masonry seawall extended from South Battery to the main wharf. In an effort to complete a perimeter seawall around the entire island, the Army accepted bids in 1889 to build 1,100 feet of seawall on the north shore, from Castle Williams to the arsenal. The proposed wall, that created 65,000 square feet of new buildable land, was intended to be a continuation of existing walls and portions were planned to replace sections that had washed away. As documented in an 1894 photograph depicting the north side of the island as seen from Manhattan, the length of shoreline between Castle Williams and the wharf district appeared as a continuous and uniform hard edge. (CLR 2010: 75)

Governors Island at the Turn-Of-The-Century:
At the end of the nineteenth century Governors Island was a well-established Army base with numerous facilities able to accommodate a sizeable population. Although the island was valued as a permanent military post, recruitment center, and military prison, the island's strategic value had been overshadowed by newer fortifications located in the outer harbor. Naval armament of the era had advanced to make the eighteenth and nineteenth century forts on Governors Island obsolete. Despite the evolution of the island's historic function, the landscape retained elements of its defensive past alongside features introduced to accommodate new uses. (CLR 2010: 75)

The utilitarian character of the island was most visible at Castle Williams. Numerous unadorned structures, such as magazines and warehouses surrounded the fort in a sparsely vegetated and austere setting (Figure 18). The Army kept the landscape outside of Castle Williams free of obstructions to allow sentries a clear line of sight around the prison. (CLR 2010: 75-76)

Conversely, domestic and recreational uses in other parts of the island offered a much more welcoming appearance. A contemporary newspaper article documented the recreational activities of the soldiers and their families. It described frequent entertaining at the South Battery Officers Club that was often decorated with flowers from a near-by greenhouse. Promenading and bicycling along a path on the perimeter of the island, a former horse track, was a popular fair weather diversion. "The grounds reserved for the parade are directly in the centre of the island, and are used for golf links. Just beyond is a tennis court, beautifully laid out and the pride of the young people." The tennis courts sat on the boundary between the heavily shaded, residential Nolan Park, and the open parade ground of Fort Columbus. Both areas were used for entertaining, as seen in period photographs of pageants and military parades. The parade ground was also occasionally used for other purposes, including ballooning. Hot air balloon enthusiast, Nicholas Helmer, obtained permission from Lieutenant Colonel Whipple to launch his manned balloon from Governors Island

south of the music stand in 1885. Helmer stretched the 162-foot-long balloon on the grass lawn to inflate it with the help of some off duty soldiers. Unfortunately for Helmer, the balloon only partially inflated before being swept into the air and across the harbor by a strong breeze. (CLR 2010: 76, from New York Times, 9 May 1887)

One area of the island that combined the character of the working military landscape and the domestic functions of the post was Fort Columbus. The structures in the interior of the fort served as barracks space, and although the geometric courtyard was planted with shade trees, the Army used the space for drilling (Figure 19). The fort's exterior landscape remained largely the same as in previous decades. The glacis remained clear of woody vegetation for drilling and parades. At the fort 's main entrance, street trees planted in the 1850s lined the approach road, terminating at the barbican that blocked direct views of the bridge and main entry (see Figure 15). The Army maintained the dry moat as closely cut lawn and used the sheltered expanse for target practice. (CLR 2010: 76)

The status of facility development at the turn of the century is well documented in a blueprint of Governors Island from 1902 (Figure 20). The handsome map shows the dense clusters of buildings at Nolan Park, the Arsenal, and the first four dwellings to be built along Colonels' Row on the south side of the island. The residential districts contrasted with the larger and more widely dispersed support buildings near Castle Williams and the island's north shore. Circulation, drinking water, fire suppression, and sewer systems were established throughout the island. The 1902 map depicts a new large dock along the north shore, opposite a large storehouse building and separated from the traditional wharf area, illustrating the Army's need to accommodate larger vessels. (CLR 2010: 76)

Expansion of Governors Island:
In response to the overcrowded conditions of lower Manhattan in the late 1800s from the explosive growth of immigrant communities, members of the public advocated to turn Governors Island into a public park. The public park movement in New York had begun in the 1850s with the construction of Central Park, built in the 1850s and 1860s, and Prospect Park in Brooklyn, constructed after the end of the Civil War. Yet, neither of these large open spaces were readily available to the residents of lower Manhattan, who were out of walking distance and an expensive trolley or ferry ride away. Representatives from lower Manhattan introduced a bill to devote Governors Island to public open space in 1888 but no was action taken. Proponents tabled the idea briefly but discussion began again in the 1890s when new legislation was again introduced to change the use of Governors Island for public enjoyment. The Army countered, citing the island's defensive value in a somewhat tenuous argument: "The island is of great national importance, and should under no consideration be abandoned as a military station. At the present time, when swift ships of war and torpedo boats may be able under cover of fogs or smoke to pass the lower forts, it is of vital importance that governors island be held and armed with rapid fire guns and with mortars to destroy any such as may succeed in eluding the vigilance of the forts below." (CLR 2010: 77, from New York Times, 29 January 1895)

In spite of the public debate about the future of Governors Island, Secretary of War, Elihu Root commissioned a study to examine the possibility of expanding the island's land mass to create the necessary space to house a full battalion. Part of his reasoning for investigating such a large infrastructural expansion may have been to increase the Army's presence on Governors Island and secure the island for exclusive military use. (CLR 2010: 77)

Early planning for the island's expansion included surveys of three shoals off the southeastern coast of the island. Planners from the Army Corps of Engineers estimated adding approximately 110 acres to the island's land mass. Some fill material was planned to come from the dredging of Buttermilk Channel. As a major shipping route that no longer accommodated the large freighters or battleships of the era, the call for dredging was made by the military and the business community of New York. Using fill from Buttermilk Channel and from the tunneling of the New York subway, Secretary Root estimated the cost for enlarging the island at $1,140,000. (CLR 2010: 77)

In the end, the War Department's grand plan for Governors Island prevailed over the desires of public park proponents. The New York State Legislature cleared the way for the island expansion by passing a bill ceding the project area's underwater acreage to the Federal Government in February

1901. (CLR 2010: 77)

Secretary Root envisioned more than a simple expansion of Governors Island's acreage. To realize the goal of completely modernizing the post, he appointed a board of military planners to study the issue. Civilian architects were added to the planning effort in 1901, including Charles McKim of the renowned New York City architecture firm of McKim, Mead & White. Root retained McKim's services for several years during which time his firm completed a series of plans to transform the island by removing all of the existing buildings and site improvements except Fort Columbus, Castle Williams, and South Battery. Reportedly, Root took McKim to the White House on at least one occasion to share details of the plan with a receptive President Theodore Roosevelt. (CLR 2010: 78)

An article in the New York Times from April 1902 with the title "Sweeping Changes at Governors Island, Practically Every Building There to be Replaced," described the thinking behind the proposed drastic alteration of the island. Colonel Kimball, one of the Army planners, reported: "It seemed to us that the best plan was to conceive of a cyclone having laid the island completely to waste, and that we should then undertake to establish an Army post upon the most modern plans." The article claimed:
"Some of the buildings now standing on Governors Island are fully a hundred years old. They were put up without any regard for a general harmonious scheme, and as a result the existing arrangement is considered by Army experts to be a general hodge-podge, entirely inferior to Army posts costing the Government much less money to maintain…" (CLR 2010: 78, from New York Times, 18 April 1902)

McKim based his design on Beaux Arts and City Beautiful principles that incorporated formal, Neoclassical architecture and site planning. These design styles dominated American civic architecture and city planning in the late 1800s and early 1900s, notably after the resounding success of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Beaux Arts architecture was often built on a large scale, using Greek, Roman, and Renaissance features such as columns, grand arched entryways, and classical sculpture. City Beautiful planning sought to organize the urban environment and add European-styled order to many of America's rapidly growing and organically evolving cities. The style used formal clusters of buildings arranged along long view corridors and incorporated repetition of scale, setback, and material. (CLR 2010: 78)

An early version of the Governors Island redevelopment plan, dated 1902, depicts the complete transformation that Root and McKim envisioned (Figure 21). According to the proposed plan, the historic forts would be the only existing buildings to remain and a long, open corridor was planned along the island's length. The design was not strictly axial and geometric but utilized these concepts in its arrangement of structures, roads, and open space. Much of the new acreage on the southeast side of the island was left as open space, with buildings lining the perimeter. At the terminus of the new acreage, a central building sat on axis with Fort Columbus with a series of roads arrayed around it. Castle Williams became part of a small side cluster of buildings arranged around an almost rectangular shape. The only landscape feature that McKim planned to retain was the main entrance to Fort Columbus and its straight path to the docks, although he proposed removing the historic barbican at the fort's east gate. (CLR 2010: 78-79)

Later iterations of the plan emerged, like one from 1907 where McKim altered several aspects of the plan to make the design even more symmetrical than prior versions. He now envisioned an almost uniform procession of modestly sized dwellings ringing the exterior of the island. McKim located a district of large warehouses and docks northwest of Castle Williams. The periodical Scientific American printed a rendering of the plan where the symmetry is reinforced by continuous lines of street trees. The streets, buildings, and trees arranged around the perimeter of the island reinforced the overall outline of the space, in which the conically shaped new acreage in the southeast resembled the cone of an ice cream cone and the rounded land to the northwest, the original landmass, the ice cream. (CLR 2010: 79)

Despite the time and money spent redesigning Governors Island, none of McKim's plans came to fruition. Work did progress on the island expansion, though, first by building seawalls around the shoals, then by pumping the water out and lastly by filling the void. Largely complete by 1909, the

new flat and featureless land was quickly recognized as a good landing field by early aviators. Wilbur Wright took off and landed from Governors Island in 1909, flying up the Hudson River to Grant's Tomb and back to the island. He was followed by other experimental flyers, such as Glen Curtiss who landed on the island after flying from Albany, NY. (CLR 2010: 79)

Little development occurred on the island's new land following the completion of the expansion project. As seen in a 1911 photograph of the island, a small cluster of unidentified structures stood on the far end but the rest of the terrain remained devoid of defining features (Figure 22). This stood in stark contrast to the original portion of the island, with its well established street trees, green lawns, work yards, and domestic and utilitarian buildings (Figure 23). (CLR 2010: 79)

World War I at Governors Island:
Complicated tensions and a tangled web of alliances between European powers came to a head in 1914 when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia in response to the assassination of their heir to the throne. Shortly after, numerous European countries joined the conflict, including Russia, France, England, and Germany. The war quickly spread beyond European boundaries because of the wide-reaching influence of these nations' colonial influence. The United States pledged to remain neutral but German submarine warfare in the Atlantic tested this policy of neutrality. United States President Woodrow Wilson remained committed to staying out of the conflict even after German U-Boats sunk the luxury liner, the Lusitania, in 1915, amidst mounting domestic pressure to enter the war. German attacks on American vessels in the Atlantic continued in subsequent years, forcing the United States to change policy. Congress declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917. (CLR 2010: 79-80)

Governors Island, strategically located at the mouth of the Atlantic Ocean and near a major shipping and population center, was positioned to serve as a supply depot for materials and soldiers heading to the war in Europe. Indecision about how to develop the new acreage was set aside and dozens of identical, massive storehouses were constructed on the southeast side of the island (Figure 24). The Army moved material between buildings and a dock at the southeast corner of the island using a railroad. The southeast side of the island also hosted numerous other support structures, including machine shops, railroad repair shops, fuel storage facilities, barracks, and mess halls. (CLR 2010: 80)

World War I development was not confined to the previously empty portions of the island. The Army erected temporary offices, barracks, and tents throughout the original section of the island (see Figure 24). The structures were mostly one-story, wood frame, rectangular buildings located with no over-arching organizational pattern. Contemporary photographs and plans show the presence of five long, thin, rectangular structures oriented north-south along the northwest side of Fort Columbus', now re-named Fort Jay, exterior wall. These and other buildings, including the 'H' shaped hospital, stood between Castle Williams and Fort Jay, obliterating most of the remnants of the covered defile that once connected the forts. (CLR 2010: 80)

The Army even located structures in the Fort Jay courtyard. Contemporary photographs show a long, rectangular clapboard structure on the edge of the grassy courtyard, directly abutting one of the area's mature shade trees. Several similar structures were erected to the west of Fort Jay's barbican. Elsewhere on the parade ground, the integrity of the open space was retained. The long expanse south of Fort Jay where polo matches and drilling took place remained free of structures. (CLR 2010: 80)

The war concluded in November 1918 when France, England, and the United States signed an armistice with Germany and the frenzied pace of activity slowed at Governors Island. (CLR 2010: 80)



Figure 15. Looking west to Fort Columbus's entrance, 1898, showing the barbican meant to block direct views to the Fort's main gate. Note trees on the road between the fort and the wharf. (National Archives II, "Entrance to Regular Fort" at Fort Columbus circa 1898. "U.S. Military Posts of the Late 19th Century, Fort Columbus, NY," Records of the Quartermaster General, Catalogue #92-F-15-6, SPB/NACP)

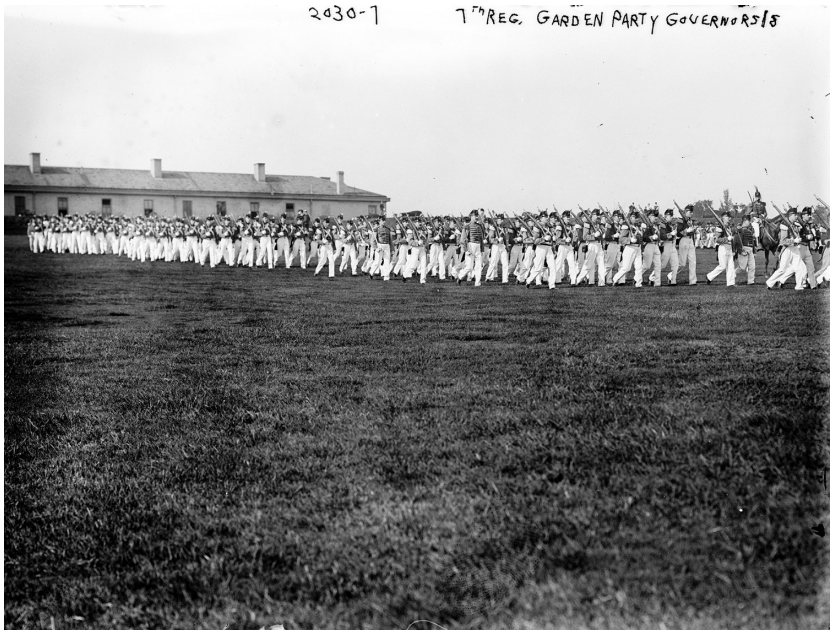


Figure 16. Dress parade of the 7th Regiment, circa 1890. The Parade Ground is devoid of plantings and other obstacles. (Library of Congress, LC-B2-2030-7)

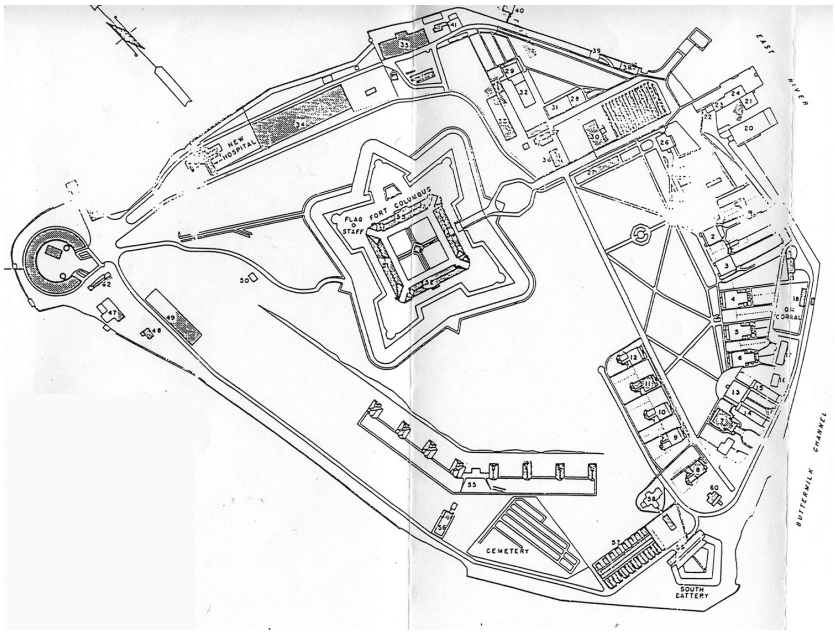


Figure 17. Plan of Governors Island, 1879. ("First U.S. Army Engineers Map of Governors Island - 1878, from a survey by 1st Lt. E. Griffin, CE and F. N. Owen, Asst. Engr." Redrawn in January 1962, Appearing in "Ordance and Explosives Archives Search Report, Findings," U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, 1997, Governors Island NM collection)

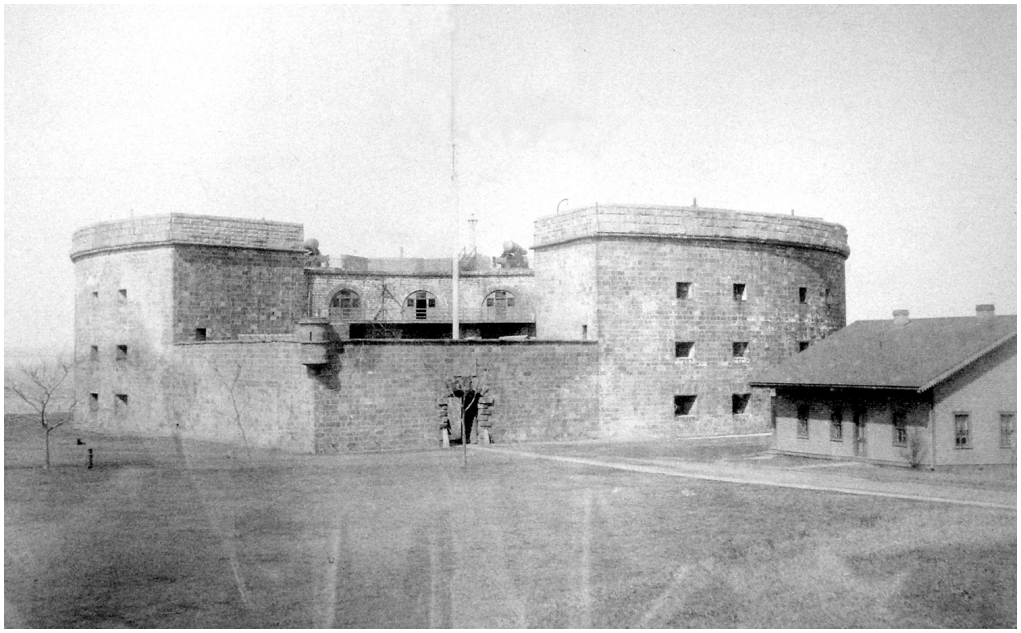


Figure 18. View of Castle Williams, looking northwest, 1898, illustrating the stark landscape surrounding the castle. (National Archives II, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General: U.S. Military Posts of the Late 19th Century, Folder 15, Fort Columbus (N.Y.), #92-F-15-3 SPB/NACP)



Figure 19. Military drilling in Fort Columbus courtyard, 1898. Perimter and interior walkways divide the space into four quadrants. Note the trees of varied ages. (National Archives II, U.S. Quartermasters Department, "U.S. Military Posts of the Late 19th Century, Fort Columbus, NY," Records of the Quartermaster General, Catalog # 92-F-15-6 SPB/NACP)

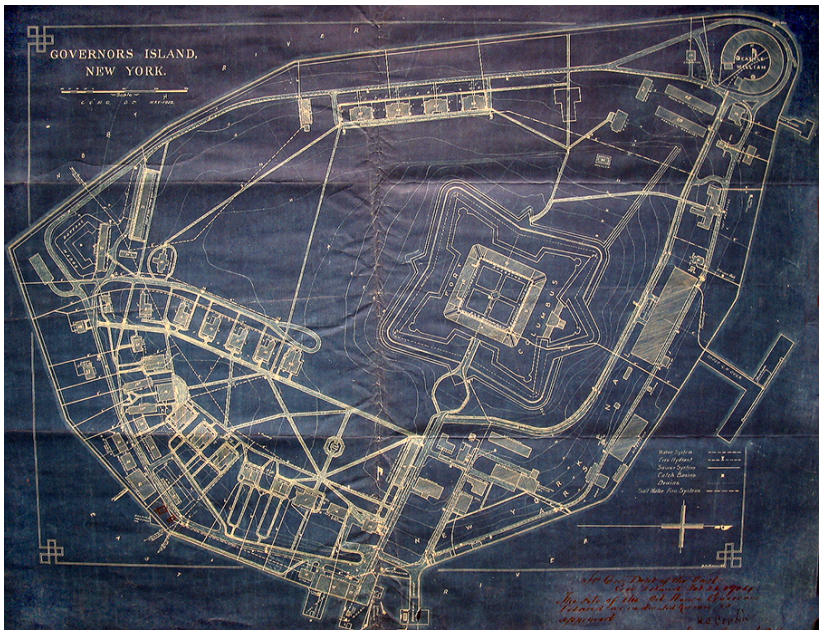


Figure 20. Governors Island plan, 1902, illustrating the existing buildings, wharves, and circulation systems. (National Archives II, RG 92, Blueprint File, Governors Island, NY, #5)

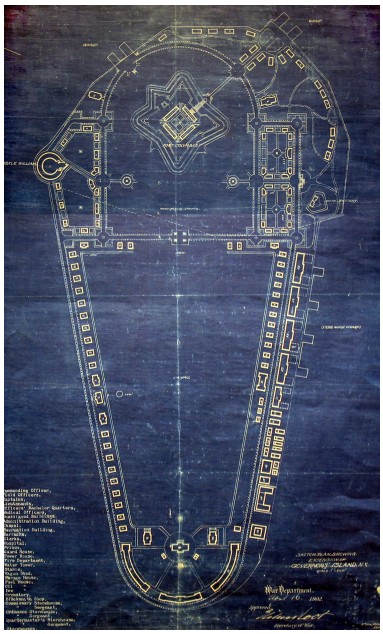


Figure 21. Plan of the redesign of Governors Island, prepared by McKim, Mead & White, 1902. Anticipating island expansion, this plan proposed removal of all of the island's existing infrastructure except for Fort Columbus, Castle Williams, and South Battery. (National Archives II, RG 92, Blueprint file, Governors Island, NY, #2, "Sketch Plan Showing Extension of Governors Island," April 16, 1902, NARA cartographic)



Figure 22. Governors Island, 1911, taken soon after the island's expansion. Except for a few small structures on the far tip of the newly filled land, the south portion of the island was devoid of development. (Library of Congress, LOT 12482 [P&P])



Figure 23. Governors Island, looking southwest, 1909. Spectators watch exercises on the flying field from the shade of Colonels' Row. Note the allees of street trees and the neat, edged, herringbone brick paths. (Library of Congress, Bain Collection, 21793)

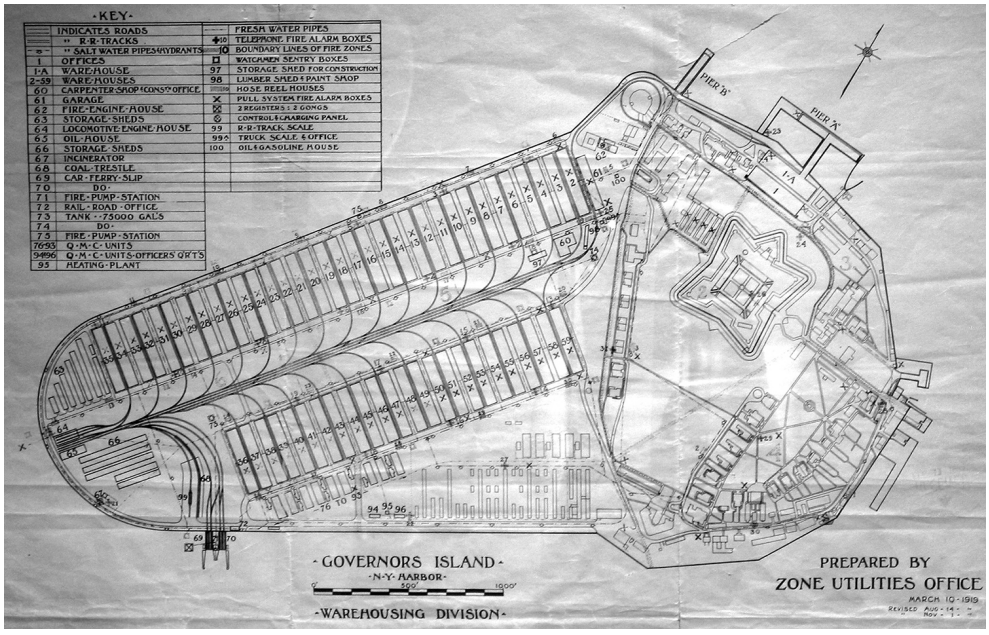


Figure 24. Plan of Governors Island, 1919, depicting the conditions of the island after World War I. The south side of the island, image left, is covered by temporary warehouses and support structures, and the Governors Island railroad. The map also depicts several temporary structures located around Fort Jay and Castle Williams. (National Archives II, RG 92, Railroad Blueprint folder, #10-5 "Governors Island")

GOVERNORS ISLAND AFTER WORLD WAR I, 1919-1966

After the conclusion of World War I in 1918, Governors Island's use as a major supply base ceased. However, the island continued to serve important military functions in ensuing decades, including hosting the command of the First Army, remaining home to a large number of troops, and functioning as a military prison. Governors Island's war-time functions were clearly evident in the post-war landscape. Uniform warehouse buildings lined the south side of the island, connected to docks at the southern extents by a system of rail tracks. The historically open connection between Fort Jay and Castle Williams, which had been compromised years earlier after the defensive value of the island decreased, was further cluttered by the addition of World War I temporary buildings. Linear wood frame structures stood east of Fort Jay, inside the courtyard, on the southwest side of the barbican, and to the south and west of Castle Williams. The fate of these structures was varied. As seen in period mapping, some, like the temporary office building southwest of Fort Jay's main gate, were removed shortly after the war but others remained in use for decades. (CLR 2010: 103)

Facility Improvements of the 1920s.
The intense activity associated with World War I subsided after 1918 with the exception of the island's role as a military prison. To accommodate the increase in prisoners after the war, the Army housed some of them in "buildings not heretofore used as prisoners' barracks, which in order make suitable for the purpose, had to be enclosed by a stockade." Several structures southwest of Castle Williams, including a wood shed, and two shop buildings, were incorporated into the prison complex and enclosed inside a guarded yard by eight-foot-tall wooden fencing topped with barbed wire. Raised guardhouses provided sentries with a view of the prison yard. Just prior to these modifications, photographic documentation depicts the area as a utilitarian, unkempt, work yard. The number of inmates must have soon decreased, as photographs from the mid-and late-1920s show the area south of Castle Williams transformed into a manicured grass lawn, with orderly displays of militaria, curbed streets, and uniform street lighting surrounding the Castle's main gate (Figure 25). (CLR 2010: 103)

The effort to clean up the scruffy war-time conditions extended to other areas of the island as well. The Army paid attention to site-wide amenities, caring for hedges, replanting street trees, and installing new street lighting. Photographic evidence shows that pre-war structures and landscapes such as those in Nolan Park, Colonels' Row, and the civilian employees' quarters on the south side of the Parade Ground were well maintained. The Army removed the temporary building from the Fort Jay courtyard and planted shrubs in the four-square grassy interior. (CLR 2010: 103-104)

This program of careful maintenance was not universally applied across the island's infrastructure. Many World War I -era barracks, for example, remained in use to house troops. The Army built the structures to be temporary and the hastily constructed wooden buildings deteriorated rapidly. In 1927 a Congressional delegation visited Governors Island and made note of the substandard housing. Congressman Kreiss declared:
"I should like to see Governors Island made one of the approach spots to New York City, a place of attractiveness instead of a dump. From what one sees from the water side, it is a dump. The military position here is a permanent one and has been since the first days of the island. The buildings, therefore, should be permanent stone structures instead of wooden shacks." (CLR 2010: 104, from New York Times, 6 March 1927: 22)

Congressman Kreiss's plea for improved housing on Governors Island supported the Army's desire to move forward with the McKim, Mead & White master plans for the island generated years earlier. In 1928, funding materialized to undertake the first large scale facility development since World War I, and construction of a large barracks building named Liggett Hall (now commonly known as Building 400) began. Staff from McKim, Mead, and White designed and oversaw construction of the building. The neo-Georgian brick structure, built on the new fill, spanned almost the entire width of the island south of Colonels' Row and was by far, the largest building on Governors Island. The linear brick building featured two wings that projected south. A grand portal cut through the building near its midpoint, framing views between the old and new parts of the island. (CLR 2010: 104)

To prepare for construction of Liggett Hall, several World War I-era buildings flanking the proposed

building site were removed (Figure 26). These temporary work buildings were the only obstructions on the otherwise barren ground plane, as some of the World War I warehouses on the south side of the island had already been removed by this date. The line of World War I warehouses on the east side of the rail tracks were the first to be demolished and were followed by the piecemeal removal of selected buildings west of the track. Portions of the railroad were removed by this time as well, although some segments remained for the delivery of coal. Photographic evidence shows that the remaining tracks were removed by the early 1930s. (CLR 2010: 104)

Recreation on Governors Island.
The shift from using horses and mules to motorized transport was largely complete by the end of World War I. The Army made incremental changes to the infrastructure of Governors Island to reflect the shift, notably converting animal barns to vehicular garages. However, as a holdover from the days of mounted cavalry, the game of polo remained a popular pastime for Army officers. In approximately 1920, the Governors Island polo field was established on a segment of the Parade Ground located between Nolan Park and Colonels' Row. Major General Robert L. Bullard supported the game as a training exercise for soldiers as late as 1923. (CLR 2010: 104-105)

Beginning in 1925, the polo players shared the Parade Ground with golfers. A New York Times article described the course as a nine hole, par thirty course of 1,878 yards. The first hole teed off from the lawn near the Commanding Officer's house to a green inside Fort Jay's dry moat. The second and third holes were played along Colonels' Row. As described in the article: "You are "teeing up" on the fourth, when your attention is distracted by the passing of a squad of eight or ten men who walk in perfect cadence. "Who are they?" you ask, lifting your eyes from the ball you were addressing. "Prisoners!" replies your host and golfing companion…" The fourth hole was an unorthodox one, played over the roof of the World War I buildings west of Fort Jay. Luckily, a wire screen protected pedestrians from errant golf shots. (CLR 2010: 105, from New York Times, 5 July 1925)

The limited space of the Parade Ground made for more unusual holes along the golf course. The article's author described playing the fifth hole by ricocheting the ball off the walls of Fort Jay to make it onto the green inside the moat, an apparently common technique for that hole. Golf course maintenance activities and equipment storage took place in a caddy house located near the southeast corner of the Parade Ground next to the tennis courts. The small wood frame building sat in a cluster of vegetation on the perimeter of the starkly open Parade Ground. (CLR 2010: 105)

After the completion of Liggett Hall in 1930, the polo field was moved the open space south of the new barracks, possibly to address the conflict between golfers and polo players on the Parade Ground. The abundant open space of the south region allowed room for the construction of permanent bleachers and wooden field markers. (CLR 2010: 105-106)

Governors Island in the 1930s:
The completion of Liggett Hall initiated a new phase of construction to modernize the post's facilities. The Army contracted with McKim, Mead & White again in 1931 for the design of two additional barracks (Buildings 550 and 333), flanking the northwest and southeast sides of Liggett Hall. The lengths of the neo-Georgian brick buildings matched the length of Liggett Hall's south wings and were similar in scale, materials, and design, which fostered visual continuity within the new barracks district in the center of the island. (CLR 2010: 106)

Built in the same architectural style as the other 1920s and early 1930s buildings, McKim, Mead & White designed a new hospital to replace the 'H' shaped former post hospital that was created by expanding a pre-World War I building southeast of Castle Williams. The building, whose construction began circa 1932, was located south of Castle Williams next to the post bakery (Figure 27). Three more brick buildings, two officers' quarters and a nurses' quarters, replaced numerous small wood frame buildings east of Castle Williams in 1934, bringing a more uniform character to the streetscape. (CLR 2010: 106)

Maintenance of existing features continued with labor provided by the Army and the new Works Progress Administration (WPA), established in 1935 to provide jobs to the nation's vast numbers of

unemployed. The New York Times reported that Governors Island was to be renovated using one million dollars of WPA appropriations, employing five thousand workers. Numerous tasks were performed during the program, but one specifically mentioned in newspaper coverage was the renovation of dilapidated wooden officers' quarters. Despite the building campaign of the early and mid-1930s, many noncommissioned officers and enlisted men were still quartered in aging wooden barracks dating or pre-dating World War I. (CLR 2010: 106)

Various site improvements were undertaken by Army labor troops including planting trees and shrubs around the island, notably surrounding the newly constructed buildings. The Army replaced segments of the privet hedge along Andes Road as needed and maintained the mature portions carefully (Figure 28). Street trees also appear to have been managed and replaced as needed. In 1938 the Army and WPA teamed up to maintain the island's trees, evidenced by documentation of a Japanese beetle eradication campaign. According the New York Times, the WPA sprayed for the insects after the Army tried unsuccessfully for two years to control the pests, in which time the beetles "have ruined the golf course and lawn and have defoliated some of the island's elm and linden trees." (CLR 2010: 106-107, from New York Times, 1 May 1938: 45)

The post continued to serve as a home for soldiers and their families in the 1930s. As seen in period photography and maps, Fort Jay retained obsolete defensive features like cannon and scattered cannon balls, but was clearly a domestic space by this time (Figure 29). The terreplein behind the barracks became places for children to play and spaces to park automobiles (Figure 30). The ground plane was maintained as roughly mowed lawn and kept free of other vegetation. Cannon balls were used as decorative elements around the perimeter of the interior courtyard (Figure 31). This edge treatment echoed earlier efforts to define the courtyard, like the low painted, wood fence that lined the courtyard in the 1860s (see Figure 12). Mature trees, placed without a strict pattern or geometry, and a scattering of deciduous shrubs softened the formality of the well-defined, rectilinear space. (CLR 2010: 107)

A series of photographs from 1940 depicts life for residents of Governors Island and illustrates the condition of numerous recreational features. Residents were able to swim, watch polo, and play tennis and golf on the island. Recreational features were located near living areas that were organized by the military hierarchy. For example, the officers' tennis courts and golf course were located on the historic Parade Ground, between officers' housing in Colonels' Row and Nolan Park, while enlisted men's tennis courts were located south of Liggett Hall, next to the open expanse of the polo field and undeveloped land on the south side of the island. (CLR 2010: 107)

World War II:
Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939 led Great Britain and France to declare war, beginning World War II. The number of countries involved in the war increased rapidly, and soon all of Europe was embroiled in the conflict. Although the United States initially did not enter the war, by 1940 a military build-up was in place to supply the allied powers with war munitions and to increase the size of the U.S. Army. As a result, additional personnel and new infrastructure were added to Governors Island. (CLR 2010: 107)

As part of the national effort to increase recruitment, 165 new soldiers were inducted into the 16th Infantry at Governors Island in June 1940. The system was formalized with the establishment of the Fort Jay Induction Unit in 1941. Also beginning in 1941, the Army built seventy-two temporary buildings to accommodate approximately 2,000 additional troops on the island. Several temporary buildings were located around Castle Williams, not unlike conditions during World War I. The Army built additional nurses' quarters, a cafeteria, and hospital annex buildings. (CLR 2010: 107-108)

The United States entered World War II on December 8, 1941, a day after the catastrophic bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. By this time, the Fort Jay Induction Unit was processing six hundred inductees a day. This frenzied pace of recruitment continued in the months after Congress declared war and by January 1942, the island's induction unit performed over one thousand medical examinations in a single day. The crush of recruit processing highlighted the island's shortcomings, notably the lack of quarters and inadequate transportation. In response, the Army transferred their main processing facility to Grand Central Station in September 1942. (CLR 2010: 108)

Instead of serving as a port or supply facility for the storage and movement of goods and troops as in World War I, Governors Island functioned as an administrative center during World War II. The Army designated the island as the headquarters for the Eastern Theater of Operations, charged with protecting the home front, including the numerous manufacturing facilities along the eastern seaboard. Governors Island was also home to a second administrative unit during the war, the Second Service Command that oversaw training, transportation, and functions of the inductee processing centers. When the First Army was deployed to Europe, further space was made available on the island and several lesser administrative and command activities relocated to Governors Island including the Exclusion Hearing Board, Reclassification Board, and the Women's Army Corps. (CLR 2010: 108)

The Army made use of the south side of the island for temporary war-time structures, as they had during World War I, and built several warehouses and barracks. As lamented by the New York Times in 1941, … "new barracks have usurped the polo field." The compromised polo field also served as the stage for large-scale training exercises and ceremonies. (CLR 2010: 108)

To meet the enormous need for raw materials for military equipment manufacturing, the war department acquisitioned scrap metal from across the country, including historic armament from historic sites and military bases. Governors Island retained scores of obsolete cannon and cannon balls at Fort Jay and Castle Williams that were deemed necessary for the war effort. In 1942, the Army dismantled a majority of the island's guns and sent them to be melted down (Figure 32). (CLR 2010: 108)

War-time use of Fort Jay continued to be predominantly residential, although the Army continued to use the protected area inside the dry moat for target practice. Period photographs show that subtle changes had occurred in Fort Jay's inner courtyard since the 1930s. The Army removed the cannon balls lining the perimeter of the grass area and replaced this edge treatment with curbing. Shrubs had been removed from the interior green space, leaving only scattered shade trees and lawn inside the courtyard (Figure 33). (CLR 2010: 108-109)

Castle Williams continued to serve as a military prison throughout World War II. As it was historically, the only door faced east, looking down Andes Road. The ivy-covered building was surrounded on the east, south, and west by wood frame temporary buildings. The streetscape outside the fort had been altered by the new buildings, but familiar elements like mature street trees and brick and concrete sidewalks remained from earlier decades. The Army used several fencing styles to keep pedestrians off grass areas, including low, post and wire fencing and low, pipe-rail fencing (Figure 34).

Governors Island After World War II:
World War II ended in the fall of 1945. Despite the wide-spread downsizing of national military functions after 1945, Governors Island remained an important Army post until 1966 while it served as the headquarters of the First Army. Between 1945 and 1966, the Army made few large-scale changes to the island. Most of the structures built during the war remained in place throughout the Army's tenure, notably the nurses' quarters and hospital annex buildings surrounding Castle Williams (Figure 35). Even the majority of the war-era structures erected on the south side of the island remained in place with the exception of a few in the southwest area that were replaced by three multistory barracks towers in the mid-1950s. The location and character of the island's large open spaces, the golf course/Parade Ground and the polo field south of Liggett Hall, remained constant as did the cluster arrangement of buildings and circulation patterns established by the early 1940s. (CLR 2010: 109)

Changes to the landscape occurred to address the need for increased parking, including the removal of a large administration building north of Building 110. Likewise, the barbican east of Fort's Jay's main gate was modified in the 1960s to accommodate parking. The outline of the feature remained the same but the large raised-earth inner circle that once blocked clear views into the sallyport was removed and replaced by a small brick-edged raised planter. The reduction of the size of the center circle to allowed room for cars to park along the perimeter of the space (Figure 36). It was also

during this period that the Army placed a tall chain link fence along the edge of Andes Road, between the privet hedge and the street trees, to protect pedestrians from errant golf balls. (CLR 2010: 109)

A 1962 map of the island displays the vegetative cover, layout of buildings and roads, and location of recreational facilities (Figure 37). At Fort Jay, several trees had been allowed to grow along the terreplein, where for over one hundred years the area had been cleared of woody growth and maintained as cut grass. The same irregular spacing of shade trees persisted inside the courtyard. An imperfectly spaced ring of trees was located along the exterior of the recently redesigned barbican at the fort's main gate. Street trees lined the south and west side of Andes Road as it wrapped around the north side of the golf course, passing the main dock, Soissons Dock. Temporary buildings remained around Castle Williams, evoking World War II conditions. Two structures lined the northwest border of the parade ground next to a line of London plane trees. The 'H' shaped former hospital, two-story nurses' quarters, and numerous hospital annex buildings remained to the south and east of the castle. The Army had created numerous recreational opportunities throughout the island including the golf course, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, a swimming pool, and children's play areas. (CLR 2010: 145)

In 1966 the Army consolidated command of the First Army, transferring its Governors Island operations to Fort Meade, Maryland, ending over 170 years of Army occupation. (CLR 2010: 110)



Figure 25. Governors Island looking northwest, 1928, shows changes around Castle Williams since the World War I-era. The temporary prison buildings and work shops south (right) of Castle Williams had been removed and replaced by lawn. (National Archives II, RG 18 LMU 0-31-870-N, Still Pictures, Box 3, Folder 5)



Figure 26. A 1928 oblique aerial photograph shows the progress of demolition of World War I structures. The line of buildings on the southwest side (center image left) of the island remained in 1928, as did those northwest of Fort Jay. Many World War I warehouses east of the ones pictured at the center left of the image had been removed by 1928. (National Archives II, RG 77, entry 393, Box 102)



Figure 27. Aerial photograph, Governors Island, 1932. The new hospital building is shown under construction (lower image center) to the south of Castle Williams, as well as part of Liggitt Hall (image right). Note remnants of the covered defile between the forts and paths scored into the surface of the parade ground from the golf course. (National Archives II, Still Pictures, RG 18 LMU V6-870-N, Box 3, Folder 15, Governors Island)



Figure 28. Library, 1933, showing the newly replanted privet hedge along Andes Road. Notice the golf tee at image left. (National Archives II, RG 77, Entry 393, Box 102)



Figure 29. Terreplein of Fort Jay looking north toward Manhattan, 1935. Armament remained on the terreplein of Fort Jay through the 1930s. The Army maintained the surface as roughly cut grass. (New York Public Library 732061F, Photo by Sperr, Percy Loomis)



Figure 30. Fort Jay garages, 1939, built by the army in the corners of the terreplein, behind the Fort Jay barracks, in the 1930s. (National Archives II, RG 77, Entry 393, Box 102)

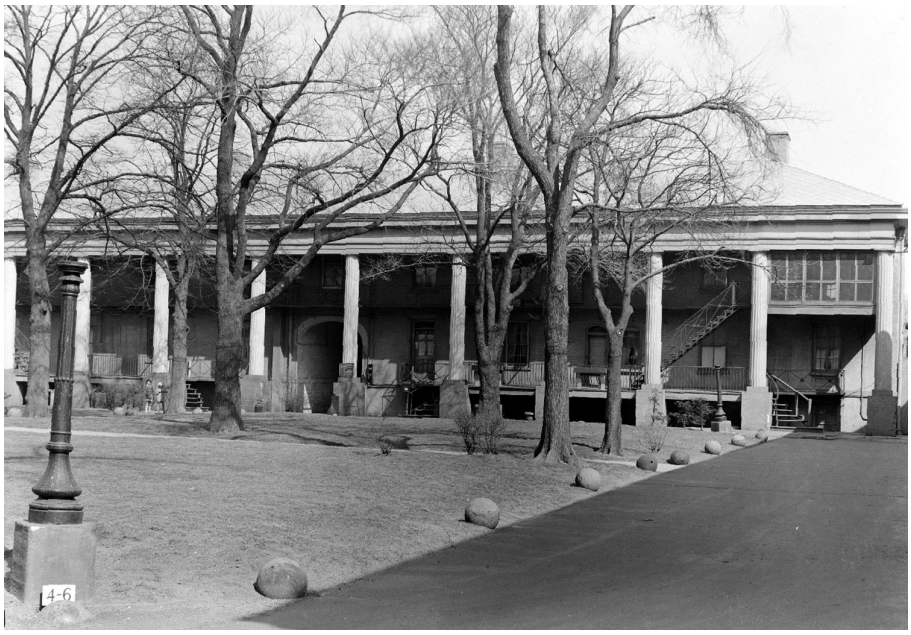


Figure 31. Fort Jay courtyard, 1934. Cannon balls differentiate the asphalt perimeter driveway and the grass inner courtyard space. Randomly spaced shade trees and shrubs are located on the interior of the space. (Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey, photograph by E.P. McFarland, March 15, 1934, East Building (west elevation), HABS NY, 31-GOVI, 1-7)



Figure 32. Cannon being removed from Fort Jay, 1942, looking north. (Center for Military History, RG 239 S, Grunert Collection, P. 43 (1))

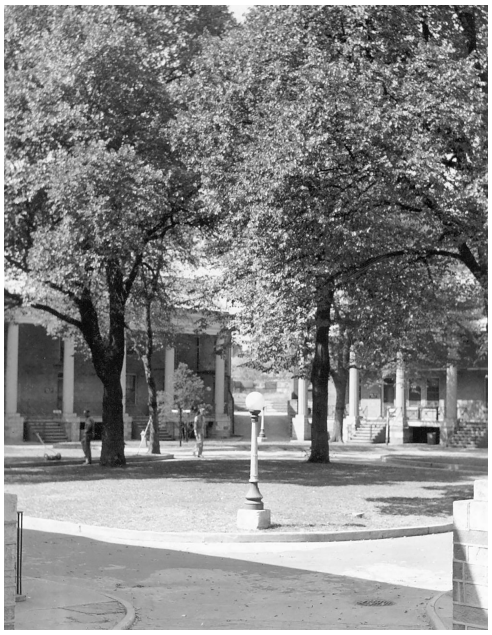


Figure 33. Fort Jay courtyard, 1944. Some changes since the 1930s are visible in this image. The decorative cannon balls had been removed, likely collected for scrap, curbing was added, and the understory shrubs had been removed. (Center for Military History, RG 239 S, Grunert Collection, P.37 (2))

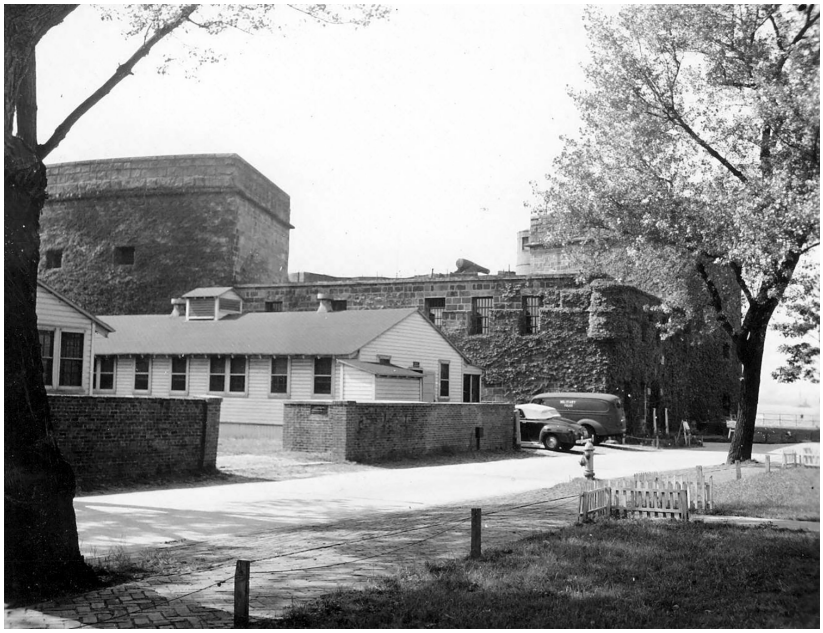


Figure 34. Castle Williams from the south, 1944, documenting the temporary hospital annex buildings adjacent to Castle Williams. Also, streetscape elements like street trees, brick sidewalks, and low fencing along grass areas are visible. (Center for Military History, RG 239 S, Grunert Collection, P. 34 (3))



Figure 35. Oblique aerial photograph of Governors Island, 1966, showing numerous World War II-era structures surrounding Castle Williams that remained in use through the end of the Army's time at Governors Island. (Center for Military History, RG 239 S, Grunert Collection, P. 34 (3))



Figure 36. Fort Jay, 1966. The Army redesigned the interior of the barbican at Fort Jay's main gate. The large center island was replaced with a small raised planter and the amount of asphalt was increased to provide vehicular parking. (Center for Military History, RG 97 S, Forts Misc Collection, Fort Jay)

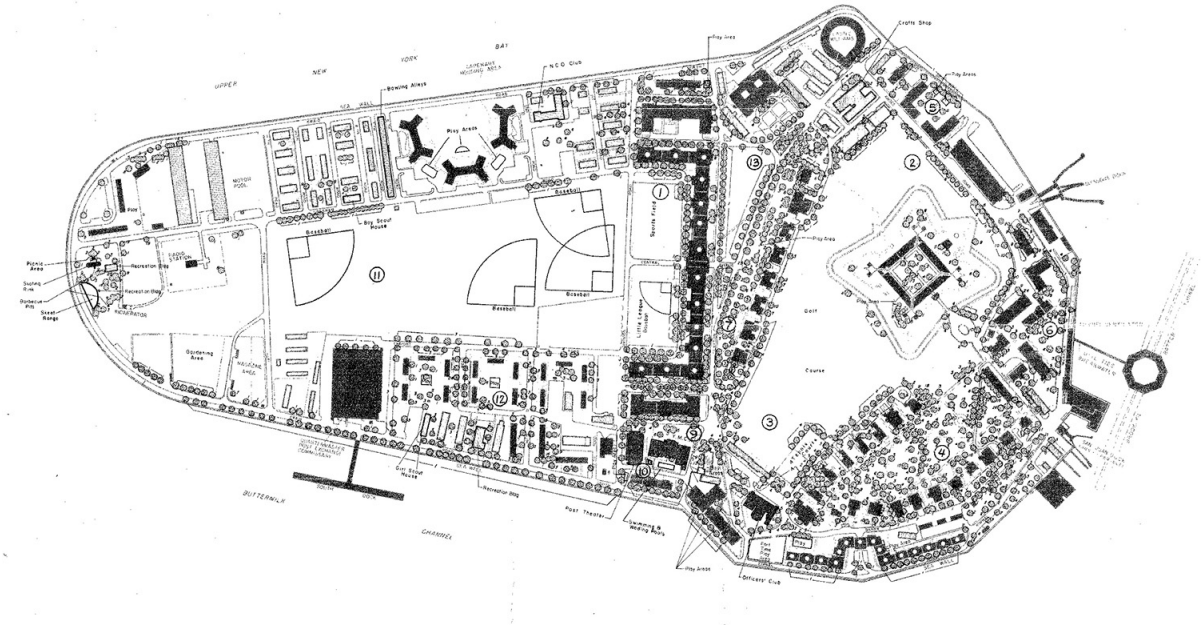


Figure 37. "General Tree-Cover and Recreation Map, Fort Jay, 1962." This plan illustrates changes made to the island near the end of the Army's tenure on the island, including extensive tree planting north of Liggett Hall and the numerous recreational facilities throughout the island. (Governors Island NM image collection)

THE COAST GUARD AND NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AT GOVERNORS ISLAND, 1967-2025

The Army left Governors Island in 1966, transferring the island to the U.S. Coast Guard on June 30, 1966. According to spectators, they left with great fanfare, albeit unintentional, when the ceremonial firing of a Rodman gun at Fort Jay broke most of the windows in the fort and the hot gun wadding lit the moat's grass on fire. The Coast Guard consolidated all of its operations for the New York metro area at Governors Island, creating the largest U.S. Coast Guard base in the country. (CLR 2010: 145)

The Coast Guard inherited resources on Governors Island that represented almost two hundred years of physical change. The island's original landmass held a collection of buildings and landscape features dating from the American Revolution through World War II. It was home to park-like housing districts, tree-lined avenues, a golf course, and the imposing historic Fort Jay and Castle Williams. South of Liggett Hall, Governors Island took on a vastly different character. Wide open, flat terrain afforded views across the space and post-1940 architecture, both temporary and permanent in design and intent, ringed the perimeter of the district. (CLR 2010: 145)

Photographs document changes made by the Coast Guard to meet their mission requirements and the needs of their personnel. By the late 1970s they had removed most of the World War II-era temporary buildings, with a few notable exceptions. By 1977 a parking lot replaced the 'H' shaped former hospital east of Castle Williams but the nurses' quarters and library building remained. The Coast Guard built three new multi-story brick barracks buildings adjacent to the south side of Castle Williams. (CLR 2010: 145-146)

At Fort Jay, the Coast Guard allowed existing trees to grow on the terreplein and families used the grass areas under the scarp walls for gardening, hanging laundry, and entertaining, evidenced by the presence of clothes lines, domestic plantings, and a stone barbeque (Figure 38). Play equipment was added to the interior courtyard green space to accommodate service members' children. The Governors Island golf course remained a popular feature and was supplemented with the planting of several tree lines to direct play and shield structures from errant golf balls. Three lines of trees are visible in birds-eye photographs from the late 1970s and early 1980s, one along the north side of Colonels' Row, another in the northwest corner of the golf course near the library, and the last along

the northern edge of the golf course, facing Soissons Dock (Figure 39). (CLR 2010: 146)

More noticeably, the Coast Guard embarked on a massive building campaign on the south side of the island where numerous small World-War II-era buildings on the east and west shores were replaced with modern barracks and family housing. Amidst this redevelopment, the Coast Guard retained the spatial integrity of the central open space, the former polo field, and landing strip. The Coast Guard added two large docks on the southeast side of the island to accommodate their numerous vessels. Additionally, the Coast Guard continued the Army's high level of maintenance. Photographs show the lawn area neatly cut, hedges trimmed, and street trees pruned and replaced when necessary. (CLR 2010: 146)

In 1985, one hundred and twenty-one acres of the northern side of Governors Island were designated a National Historic Landmark District. The district encompassed the island's original landmass and a sliver of the land filled at the turn-of-the-twentieth century including Liggett Hall. Division Road on the south side of Liggett Hall formed the southern boundary of the district. The NHL documentation listed the period of significance as 1794-Present, including the island's history as a defensive post and Army administrative center. In 1996 the New York City Landmark Preservation Commission designated the land north of Division Road as the Governors Island Historic District, a New York City Historic District, on June 18, 1996. The boundary mirrored that of the National Historic Landmark District. (CLR 2010: 146)

The Establishment of Governors Island National Monument:
To reduce costs, the Coast Guard announced plans to abandon Governors Island as their base of operations in New York in 1995. In response, the Coast Guard, General Services Administration, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the New York State Historic Preservation, the City of New York, and the National Trust, entered into a Programmatic Agreement to study the future of Governors Island and to make allowances for the maintenance and management of the island's resources. (CLR 2010: 147)

Ownership of the island remained with the federal government but Congress required that the island be sold at fair market value by 2002. Although the City and State of New York were offered the first opportunity to purchase the island, the $300 million price tag deterred the parties from taking action. President Clinton agreed to give the island to the City and State for one dollar if they could generate an appropriate plan for redevelopment, something the two groups proved unable to successfully do. (CLR 2010: 147)

After the unsuccessful introduction of legislation to establish a National Monument at Fort Jay and Castle Williams and transfer the rest of the island to the City and State of New York, President Clinton created the Governors Island National Monument by Presidential Proclamation on his last days in office in 2001. The National Monument boundary included the historic forts, the northern portion of the parade ground, and a building for administrative purposes. The fate of the remainder of the island remained in flux until April 2002 when President George Bush acted on the prior recommendation to give the island to the State and City of New York for one dollar. President Bush also issued a proclamation on February 7, 2003, that enlarged the National Monument boundary to 22.78 acres. (CLR 2010: 147)

Throughout the various plans and proclamations, the island had stood nearly vacant between 1996 and 2003. During this time, the Coast Guard and the General Services Administration shared maintenance duties to minimally maintain the island's resources, yet the sheer size of the island, the amount of building square footage, and age of the resources proved prohibitive and substantial deterioration occurred. (CLR 2010: 147)

Beginning in 2003, the National Park Service and their partner group, Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation, or GIPEC, took over the management of the island. According to their website, GIPEC, a subsidiary of Empire State Development:
"[I]s responsible for the planning, redevelopment and ongoing operations for 150 acres of Governors Island. A partnership of New York City and New York State, GIPEC seeks to bring Governors Island back to life, making this island at the center of New York Harbor a destination with great public open

space, as well as future education, not for profit and commercial facilities." (CLR 2010: 147-148, from GIPEC website)

GIPEC was reorganized and renamed the Trust for Governors Island in 2010 after the island was transferred to the sole ownership of New York City. Currently, the National Monument and the Trust for Governors Island manage the island under a cooperative management agreement. Where it is mutually beneficial, the Trust for Governors Island and the National Monument combine service providers and contracting. The National Monument uses the Trust for Governors Island's contractors for ferry service, garbage removal, utilities management, pest control, and turf maintenance. The two groups meet regularly to discuss preservation, stabilization, and alteration of shared resources like seawalls and utilities. (CLR 2010: 148)

An Archeological Overview and Assessment (AOA) was completed in 2003 that catalogued thirty-nine sites on National Monument land. These sites date to the Native American, Pre-contact period (pre-1500 AD), the Revolutionary period (1700-1783), the War of 1812 (1783-1815), the nineteenth century and Civil War (1815-1900), and the early twentieth century (1900-1966). Additionally, according to the AOA, "It was found that virtually all of GOIS possesses high sensitivity to contain additional unrecorded Native American and historic archeological sites." (CLR 2010: 148, from "Final Archeological Resources Protection Act Site Damage Assessment Report, Governors Island National Monument," 2008: 19)

In 2008, a team completed a study of the covered defile to determine the extent of damage to the resource inflicted during a 2006 golf course re-contouring project. Numerous impacts to the feature were noted, but many seemed to pre-date 2006. The subsequent report recommended not attempting to repair impacts from the 2006 project and trying to protect the feature from further ground disturbance. (CLR 2010: 148)

The NPS has completed renovation projects on the historic forts including rebuilding the Fort Jay moat bridge, rehabilitating the Fort Jay Barracks, replacing sandstone lintels at Castle Williams, and replacing the central staircase at Castle Williams. Some remnant golf course features were removed from the parade ground, including a perimeter chain link fence, a row of blue spruce trees near the library, and a set of wooden stairs. The park also undertook hazard tree removal and pruning around Fort Jay to address health and safety concerns. (CLR 2010: 148)

The Trust for Governors Island has also begun rehabilitating the buildings and landscapes in their care. They demolished the Super 8 Motel and tennis courts at the southern extent of the Parade Ground, the former public school, bachelors' quarters south of Division Road, and the buildings of Liberty Village at the southern end of the Island. The Trust for Governors Island has made improvements to the exterior of the Nolan Park residences, performed ongoing work on the seawall, rehabilitated Yankee and Soisson Docks, and repaired slate roofs, masonry and woodwork throughout the district. Infrastructure improvements have been completed including upgrading the underground water storage tanks on the Parade Ground and repairing and replacing water mains. (CLR 2010: 148-149)

General Management Plan and Foundation Document:
The National Monument's general management plan was completed in 2009. This document provides direction on numerous interpretive and facility management goals for the future. One such approved action that will have a significant impact on the cultural landscape is the removal of Building 251 (Library) and Buildings 513a-b-c (Coast Guard housing). The park awaits funding to carry out these demolition projects that will restore the historic connection between Fort Jay and Castle Williams. (CLR 2010: 149)

The National Monument's foundation document was completed in 2018. The report identified fundamental resources and values (FRV), which are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. The landscape related FRVs are Fort Jay, Castle Williams, Cultural Landscape, and Views and Vistas. The report also identified other

Important Resources and Values (OIRV): Military Traditions and Passive Recreational Opportunities. (FD 2018: 7-10)

Landscape-Related Projects since 2009:
• Completed 2011: Remove Fence Posts and Concrete Along Edge of Nolan Park (PEPC 37998)
• Completed 2011: Proposed Tree Removal On Governors Island NM (PEPC 26923)
• Completed 2013: Demolition of 15 Existing Lights on NPS Property (PEPC 46209)
• Completed 2016-2021: Repair Fort Jay Masonry Walls (PMIS 210607)
• Completed 2017: Create Four Waysides on the Castle Williams Rooftop Viewing Platforms Overlooking New York Harbor (PMIS 220565)
• Completed 2018, Funded 2019-2020: Mather HS Summer Youth – Maintain Governors Island NM Cultural Landscape (PMIS 228160 / PEPC 88643)
• Proposed 2019: Plant Native Trees in Fort Jay Courtyard (PEPC 88658)
• Funded 2019: Replace Diseased and Declining Trees with Native Species (PMIS 238673 / PEPC 88642)
• Proposed 2023: Governors Island Comprehensive Lighting Project (PEPC 112755)
• Proposed 2024: Demolish Incidentally Acquired Buildings (PMIS 152683)
• Proposed 2026-2028: Restore Fort Jay Moat Bridge (PMIS 324745)
• Proposed 2027: Repaint Flagpole at Fort Jay (PMIS 348596)



Figure 38. "Fort Columbus Building No 202, east side, looking southwest, 1983." Note the wooden deck and planter boxes, and the small garden in the gun mount. (Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey, NY, 31-GOVI, 1A-4)



Figure 39. Fort Jay oblique aerial, looking north, 1977, showing the golf greens, bunkers, and tree lines. Note the scattered tree growth on the walls of Fort Jay. The new barracks built on the south side of Castle Williams can be seen at image left. (Frank Bennett photograph, Governors Island NM image collection)

Uses

Functions and Uses:

Major Category	Category	Use/Function	Historic	Current	Primary
Defense	Coast Guard Facility		Yes	No	No
Defense	Fortification	Battery (Defense)	Yes	No	Yes
Defense	Military Facility (Post)		Yes	No	No
Education	Interpretive Landscape		No	Yes	No
Landscape	Leisure-Passive (Park)		No	Yes	Yes
Defense	Fortification	Parade Ground	Yes	No	No
Landscape	Scenic Landscape	View	Yes	Yes	No

Public Access:

Public Access: Unrestricted

Public Access Narrative:

Governors Island National Monument is open year around. Portions of Castle Williams and Fort Jay are open to guided tours, but some buildings in the fort are closed to visitation. The Trust for Governors Island, the park's partner, also offers other programming. Some events hosted by the Trust and other organizations may be ticketed and require an entrance fee.

Associated Ethnographic Group

Ethnographic Study Status: No Survey Conducted

Ethnographic Narrative:

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The historic integrity of the Governors Island NM Landscape is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance, 1794-1966, with the existing conditions as assessed in 2025. Many landscape characteristics and features from the period of significance remain today. The historic spatial organization is intact, anchored by Fort Jay, a star-shaped masonry fort with a courtyard and dry moat; the circular-shaped masonry Castle Williams; and the grass-covered parade ground space. These three features were visually connected early in the historic period, but by the end of the period the Army's construction of buildings, development of roads, and planting of trees created the division of spaces that visitors experience today. A covered defile, or pathway, initially served as connection between the fortifications, but the Army's development program concealed parts of it and reduced others to a trace. The site's landscape initially favored unobstructed views to the water to ensure clear lines of fire, but as tactical functions gave way to administrative uses, such views became framed by tree plantings along streets and around buildings. While some historic features were gone by the end of the historic period, including the barbican at the fort's east entrance and most of the cannons positioned on the fort and castle, other historic features are extant, including a stone path connecting Fort Jay to Comfort Road, brick walkways, a flagpole atop Fort Jay, and remnants of the golf course that occupied the parade ground.

Since 1966, some landscape characteristics and features at the Governors Island NM Landscape have changed. The Coast Guard's construction of housing (Building 513 a-b-c) has significantly altered the space south of Castle Williams. The removal of old army buildings between Castle Williams and Fort Jay has reopened the visual connection between the fortifications, but one vacant structure (Building S-251) remains, which along with a mature row of trees still creates a visual barrier. The park plans to remove both of these buildings, adjacent roads and walkways, and the row of trees to restore landscape conditions from the early historic period. The park also plans to restore the covered defile, part of which still survives as a trace. Other changes at the site include the maturation of vegetation growing within and around Fort Jay, some of which is negatively impacting the historic structure, and the spread of invasive groundcover vegetation in portions of the parade ground. The park has recently installed new trees along the east boundary.

Overall, the Governors Island NM Landscape retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling to strongly reflect the historic military and engineering themes during the period of significance.

INTEGRITY

The National Register of Historic Places defines integrity as the ability of a property to convey its significance through physical resources. The National Register program identifies seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Retention of these qualities is necessary for a property to convey its significance; however, not all seven aspects must be present to retain integrity. The following evaluation is based on a 1794-1966 period of significance for the Governors Island NM Landscape.

Location:
Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. Governors Island is the site of Fort Jay and Castle Williams and the location of a major Army administrative headquarters from 1794-1966. Its location in New York Harbor remains unchanged. Governors Island National Monument retains integrity of location.

Design:
Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The overall design of the Governors Island National Monument landscape changed significantly over the period of significance. In the early years, the island was dominated by the structures of Fort Jay and Castle Williams with other landscape elements kept to a minimum as to not interfere with views and fields of fire. Fort Jay, a modified star fort surrounded by a dry moat was located in the center of the island at its highest point to provide an elevation advantage for its guns. Engineer Jonathan Williams located the round, casemated Castle Williams on a spit of land projecting into the harbor at the island's northwest tip to command control over the western

approach to the upper harbor. The two fortifications were connected via a depressed walkway, known as a covered defile, between Fort Jay's northwest counterscarp wall and the east-facing main gate of Castle Williams. As the nineteenth century progressed, the strategic importance of the two structures diminished and other administrative functions gained importance, fostering a change in the design of the landscape. Army planners built barracks inside of Fort Jay, altering the interior space and reinforcing the rectilinear shape of the quadrangle. Structures were built along the perimeter of the once-open glacis and to the south and east of Fort Jay. This shift to creating permanent housing, supply, and administrative space continued well into the twentieth century. Most of the design elements at Governors Island National Monument, including circulation patterns, architectural styles, and plantings, reflect changes made during the period of significance, so the site retains integrity of design.

Setting:
Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. The setting of Governors Island and the National Monument within it has changed markedly over the long period of significance due to rapid development of the larger island and the New York City metro area. In 1794, views to Brooklyn and New Jersey revealed much more of the native environment than was visible by 1966. Likewise, there were few dominant features on the island besides Castle Williams and Fort Jay at the turn-of-the nineteenth century. The Army changed the landscape by adding buildings, roads, and street trees to the once open landscape beginning in the early 1800s, resulting in a heavily developed campus-like setting by the end of the period of significance.

Another significant alteration of the island's setting occurred in the early 1900s when the large amounts of fill were added to the shallow shoals south of the island, which more than doubled the island's original landmass. This led the way for an expanded building campaign that added post-World War II architecture and infrastructure to the south side of the island. By the end of the period of significance, the landscape contained in the present day National Monument boundary contained several acres of the historic Parade Ground, Fort Jay and Castle Williams, and many features designed and built by the Army to serve the needs of a permanent military population. The area was visually tied to the character of the larger island through its mature street trees, historic architecture and defensive works, and the seamless connection of the Parade Ground golf course.

Beginning in the 1970s, all but one of the buildings between the fort and castle were removed, altering the historic context of that period of army development. At the same time, a residential building was built adjacent to Castle Williams by the Coast Guard. The residential hall, the last army building, as well as retaining walls, walkways, rows of trees, and a parking lot remain. Despite these changes, conditions overall today closely reflect those of 1966 and consequently, the property retains integrity of setting.

Materials:
Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. Many historic materials survive at the National Monument, including the stonework of Fort Jay and Castle Williams, brick sidewalks, and street trees that represent the earlier period of significance, as well as materials that date to later in the period of significance like the asphalt road surface of the Fort Jay inner courtyard and the stone walkway between the fort and Comfort Road. The National Monument retains integrity of materials.

Workmanship:
Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. Historic workmanship is evident at the National Monument due to the excellent condition of the fortifications. Fort Jay's masonry scarp and counterscarp walls exist nearly as they did after their final modification during the Second System. Although the glacis, or Parade Ground, has been modified from its condition during the island's active defense period, the changes made relating to the development of the golf course date to the period of significance. Evidence of historic workmanship can also be seen in the Castle Williams architecture. Brick retaining walls, brick and stone walkways, and concrete stairs throughout the National Monument have been altered little since the end of the period of significance. The National Monument's landscape retains integrity of workmanship.

Feeling:
Feeling is the property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. The dominant features of Fort Jay and Castle Williams evoke the period in which they were constructed and convey

the important technological and engineering advances of the Second System. To a lesser extent, the domestic history of the island is evident. Golf course remnants are still visible on the Parade Ground to show the transformation of a defensive feature into a recreational one, but some features, like the playground equipment inside the Fort Jay courtyard have been removed, to obscure the feeling that the space was once populated by military families. Overall, the integrity of feeling remains and evokes the character of a former military base due to the institutional appearance of the buildings and the scale of the site's dominant features, Fort Jay, the Parade Ground, and Castle Williams.

Association:
Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. Governors Island National Monument's historic association with the Army no longer remains, but the extant physical features continue to reflect that relationship. The National Monument remains associated with the Second System of harbor defense and the Army administrative headquarters period through the remaining architecture, cannons at Fort Jay and Castle Williams, golf course remnants, circulation systems, and topographic landforms. Although the National Monument is now associated with public and recreational uses, the visible reminders of its historic association with the military is intact to convey integrity of association.

Landscape Characteristics and Features:
The next section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding Historic Structures Inventory (HSI, formerly List of Classified Structures) names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1794-1966), contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource. If a feature is non-contributing, it is evaluated as "compatible" (visually congruent with the historic character of the landscape) or "incompatible" (visually incongruent with the historic character of the landscape).

Landscape Characteristic: Buildings and Structures

Historic Condition (to 1966):
Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity in a landscape, while structures are elements constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity. The British fortification of Governors Island during the French and Indian War in the mid-1700s represented the first substantial building campaign on the island. The cursory efforts to fortify the island with earthen defensive works were repeated during the American Revolution when Colonial troops erected a series of earthen batteries to deter a British attack on New York City. Their efforts were futile and the city and Governors Island were occupied by the British for the remainder of the conflict. After the war, the new American government built a defensive work in the center of the island under the auspices of the First System of harbor defense. This impermanent structure deteriorated rapidly but was replaced by two new masonry forts in the early 1800s under the Second System of harbor defense. Fort Jay and Castle Williams were state-of-the-art fortifications that presided over the upper New York Harbor. (CLR 2010: 205)

Advances in military engineering led to the weakening of the importance of the Governors Island fortifications by the mid-1800s. In response, the Army adapted their use of the island into an administrative command center, a function that continued until the end of the period of significance in 1966. The Army built scores of buildings to meet the needs of the military base, including office space, barracks, storerooms, and recreational facilities. In the twentieth century, temporary buildings were added to the landscape to meet the war-time needs of the Army during World Wars I and II.

Evaluation:
Much of the infrastructure seen today on the island was in place before the end of the period of significance, although the coast guard did make some changes to upgrade aging facilities. They built a new complex of family housing south of Castle Williams and removed several remaining World War II-era buildings. (CLR 2010: 205)

Feature Evaluations:
Building 107.
--Historic Condition: Building 107 was constructed as part of the Arsenal in circa 1850 to serve as a storehouse. The single-story brick building with Romanesque Revival elements was enlarged with an addition on the east and southwest sides in the early-twentieth century.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: Building 107 was used by the Coast Guard for administrative offices after the period of significance. It was updated in the late-1990s by GSA and currently serves as the National Monument administrative headquarters (Figure 59).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Building 513 a-b-c.
--Historic Condition: Building 513 a-b-c post-dates the period of significance.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Coast Guard removed several World War II-era structures south of Castle Williams and replaced them with three interconnected, three-story brick residential buildings in the 1970s. The buildings were located at right angles to one another to create two courtyard spaces. The vacant buildings are slated for demolition (Figure 60).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. The New York SHPO concurred with the NPS regarding the planned demolition of this building. The presence of the complex makes it difficult to understand the defensive purpose of the adjacent Castle Williams, blocking historical tactical views to the harbor which are central to the combined operation of the two fortresses. (CLR 2018: 33; SHPO correspondence, 2024)

Building S-251 (Library)
--Historic Condition: The Library, or Building S-251, was built in circa 1908. The one-story, rectangular, wood frame building was originally sided in wood clapboards and used as the post exchange. Later modifications took place to the exterior and the function of the building.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Coast Guard used the building as a library, naming it “Tampa Memorial Library.” The building was re-sided with asbestos shingles at an unknown date. It

is currently unused and slated for demolition (see Figure 49).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. The New York SHPO concurred with the NPS regarding the planned demolition of this building. It truncates Fort Jay's engineered glacis slope and former covered defile that once connected Fort Jay with Castle Williams. It also blocks the critical visual connections between Fort Jay and Castle Williams, impeding the ability of these two fundamental resources to convey their combined defensive purpose and strategic location. Note: Evaluated as Noncontributing in 2003 CLI and Contributing in 2010 CLR. (SHPO correspondence, 2024; CLR 2018: 53)

Castle Williams (Building 501)
Historic Condition: Castle Williams is a circular, three-story, casemated, sandstone and granite block fortification built between 1807 and 1811, during the Second System. It is approximately forty feet high with four levels of gun emplacements, including on the roof. The main gate faces east and was once connected to Fort Jay by a covered defile. The exterior of the fort remained relatively unchanged during the period of significance but the interior was substantially altered to be used as a military prison.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Coast Guard used Castle Williams as a community center through the 1970s, after which it was used for storage, workshops, and offices. The building is currently vacant and in need of substantial interior stabilization (Figure 61).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Dock 102 Barge.
--Historic Condition: The barge at Dock 102 was installed after the period of significance.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The NPS installed a barge at Dock 102 in 2010 to accommodate non-vehicular ferry boats, to serve as a secondary access point in the event that Soissons Dock is non-operational.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Fort Jay.
--Historic Condition: Fort Jay was first constructed in 1794 during the First System. The four-bastioned earthen fort was rebuilt in masonry during the Second System beginning in 1806 during which time a north facing ravelin was added to the structure's geometry. The modified star fort consisted of tall masonry scarp walls on which numerous cannon stood, pointing out in all directions over a cleared, sloped earth glacis, to the harbor. An approximately forty-foot dry moat surrounded the scarp walls, bounded by a series of two-stepped counterscarp walls. The fort was accessed via two sallyports, facing east and west. The east sallyport was considered the main gate, and was ornamented with an elaborate sandstone sculpture of an eagle, flags, and armament. A bridge traversed the dry moat at the east sallyport, leading to a raised barbican erected to deter a clear line of fire into the main gate. The interior of the fort was modified in the 1830s with the addition of four rectangular barracks buildings.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: Outside of routine maintenance and alterations made to the barracks to accommodate modern living, Fort Jay today resembles its appearance during the Second System (see Cover). The large sandstone fort is surrounded by a remnant of the open glacis, which accentuates the imposing scale of the feature.
--Evaluation: Contributing

Fort Jay Barracks (Buildings 202, 206, 210, and 214)
--Historic Condition: Four rectilinear barracks buildings were constructed in the interior of Fort Jay between 1834 and 1836, replacing older, dilapidated barracks in similar locations. The rear of the structures abutted the terreplein level of the fort and their uniformly styled and scaled front facades created the Fort Jay courtyard. Each Greek Revival-inspired brick building was two-stories, with a hipped roof, and a Doric-columned, two-tiered piazza running the length of the façade. The buildings were repaired and remodeled throughout the period of significance to accommodate changes in living standards.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Fort Jay barracks continued to serve as housing after the period of significance, until 1996 when the Coast Guard vacated the island. They were remodeled and repaired during this time but the character of the historic structures remained. The buildings are currently unoccupied but rehabilitation is underway to return them to useable condition

(see Figure 40).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Fort Jay Concrete Bridge (Structure 219).
--Historic Condition: Fort Jay historically featured a drawbridge at the east sallyport to span the dry moat. Photographs indicate early structures were supported by three sandstone piers. The structure featured wood decking fitted with raised wood walkways on either side of the vehicular way. Wood railings with diagonal cross bracing varied in scale and design over time. In 1952 an immovable concrete bridge deck was built atop the piers. This bridge featured raised concrete walkways and steel railings.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The NPS rehabilitated the bridge in 2008 (Figure 62).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. While dating to the later historic period, the current bridge does not evoke the wood design elements of the earlier drawbridge.

Fort Jay Garages (Buildings 203, 204, 208, 209, 211, 212, 217, 218)
--Historic Condition: The Works Progress Administration designed and built eight brick garages at the rear corners of the Fort Jay barracks buildings in the 1930s. Two of the small, square, sloped roof buildings stand at the corner of each bastion, up a cobblestone driveway from the courtyard.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The garages remained in use during the Coast Guard period and received routine maintenance. Today the structures are in fair condition and reflect their historic character (Figure 63).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Fort Jay Powder Magazine (Building #215).
--Historic Condition: The powder magazine, located underground in the north ravelin and approached by a ramp under the north quarters. The tunnel and central court of the magazine features brick walls and flagstone floors. It also had two cells flanking the tunnel, an east and west casemate flanking the court, and two powder magazine chambers in the north tip of the ravelin.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The magazine appears very little-changed from its original condition.
--Evaluation: Contributing

Fort Jay Storerooms/Privies (Buildings #204, 207, and 213).
--Historic Condition: These small, triangular, brick, granite and sandstone structures were constructed in the 1830s when buildings inside the fort were built. Originally, there were eight small triangular structures, one at each end of the barracks buildings; these were used as storerooms, privies and shops. At various times, some of these structures have been incorporated into the main buildings.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: Three of these structures remain today (see Figure 63).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Retaining Wall at Building S-253 Site.
--Historic Condition: This L-shaped concrete retaining wall was built south of Building S-251 (Library) to create a level space for building S-253 at the same grade as adjacent Tampa Road. Likely dating to the early twentieth century, the wall ran along the north and east sides of Building S-253.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: Building S-253 was removed ca.1970 but the wall was retained. Portions of the wall are severely spalling. Snow fencing supported by wood posts runs along the top of the wall (see Figure 49).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. The retaining wall has lost its historic context because Building S-253 is gone, making the wall obsolete. The park wishes to remove the wall as part of larger landscape rehabilitation effort to restore the landscape connection between the fort and castle.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Fort Jay	92892	Contributing	233500		Location	70153	Yes
Fort Jay-Barracks (Building 202)	209984	Contributing	233828		Location	70147	Yes
Fort Jay- Barracks (Building 206)	209983	Contributing	234334		Location	70148	Yes
Fort Jay- Barracks (Building 210)	209982	Contributing	234806		Location	70150	Yes
Fort Jay- Barracks (Building 214)	209981	Contributing	234826		Location	70151	Yes
Fort Jay-Garages (Buildings 203, 204, 208, 209, 211, 212, 217, 218)	209980	Contributing					No
Fort Jay Powder Magazine (Building 215)	209979	Contributing					No
Fort Jay Storerooms/Privies (Buildings 204, 207, 213)	209978	Contributing					No
Castle Williams	92890	Contributing	233380		Location	70154	Yes
Building 107	92888	Contributing	261830		Location	70161	Yes
Building 140	92889	Contributing					No
Building S-251 (Library)	209977	Noncontributing	233810				No
Building 513 A,B,C	209976	Noncontributing	235152				No
Fort Jay Concrete Bridge (Structure 219)	209975	Noncontributing					No
Dock 102 Barge	92891	Noncontributing					No
Retaining Wall at Building S-253 Site	209974	Noncontributing					No
	92887	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 59. View looking southeast at Building 107 from Andes Road, which house park offices. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 60. View looking northwest at Building 513 a-b-c, former Coast Guard residences slated for demolition. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 61. View looking northwest at Castle Williams. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 62. View looking north at the parade ground west of the fort. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 63. View looking southwest at the Fort Jay terrplein. left to right: portion of Barracks Building 214, the north side of one of the former storehouses/privies (Building 213), a portion of Barracks Building 210, and one of the garages (Building 211). The circular concrete pad in the foreground is likely the foundation of a water tower. (OCLP 2025)

Landscape Characteristic: Circulation

Historic Condition (to 1966):
Circulation refers to the spaces, features, and applied material finishes that constitute systems of movement in a landscape. Circulation patterns on Governors Island evolved over the period of significance, changing with shifts in land use. In the early 1800s, few roads or pedestrian paths were formalized due to the limited resources on site. Early circulation routes were limited to connecting the forts to each other and the main wharf. Later as structures began to line the northeastern shore and encroached on the Parade Ground, the number of circulation routes increased to connect the new structures. By the end of the period of significance, the military's long standing use of the island as an administrative center necessitated the creation of an extensive hierarchy of vehicular and pedestrian routes to connect the island's resources. (CLR 2010: 196)

Evaluation:
Today, Governors Island National Monument contains vehicular roads and pedestrian paths with varied surfaces. Some, like Andes Road and Comfort Road travel through the National Monument boundary, while connecting areas in the larger island landscape. Others are self-contained sidewalks
located within the National Monument boundary. (CLR 2010: 196)

Feature Evaluations:
Brick Sidewalk along Andes Road.
--Historic Condition: The sidewalk was installed in in the early to mid twentieth century.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The brick walkway is around three feet wide and bound by curbing along the street side and retaining walls or turf on the opposite side (Figure 44).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Covered Defile.
--Historic Condition: The covered defile connecting Fort Jay to Castle Williams was a key defensive feature designed during the Second System. It was a depressed walkway with mounded sides that provided cover for people passing between Castle Williams' main gate and the northern corner of Fort Jay's counterscarp wall. The path traveled in a straight line across the glacis between the forts. The covered defile remained in use as a pedestrian route until approximately 1900 when the Army built a structure southeast of the Castle Williams gate, over top of the feature. The placement of this building eliminated the once essential direct visual and physical connection between the forts. Additional buildings were added to the landscape between the forts during World War I, disturbing the covered defile again. Modification of the feature continued after the wartime buildings were removed, when the Army manipulated the surface of the Parade Ground to create a golf course.
--Post-Historic and Existing Condition: The Coast Guard continued to modify the golf course in the years after 1966, which left very little visual evidence of the covered defile. Currently, remnants of the feature can be seen at Fort Jay. A break in the northwest corner of the counterscarp wall and a corresponding depression of earth extending into the Parade Ground are all that remain of the historic feature above ground (Figure 45). The brick counterscarp walls curve into the path remnant as retaining walls for a few yards before disappearing into the lawn of the Parade Ground.
--Evaluation: Contributing

Fort Jay Courtyard Roads.
--Historic Condition: The Fort Jay courtyard was created in the 1830s when the Army built the Fort Jay barracks buildings. The four, nearly identical rectangular buildings created a central quadrangle space. It is not known if formal roads and paths were established immediately after the construction of the buildings, but as seen in photographic documentation, by the Civil War a perimeter road and two cross paths encircled and divided the courtyard into four quadrants. Four short road segments led from the corners of the courtyard, between the buildings, to the terreplein level behind the barracks. The courtyard roads began as packed earth but were later paved with asphalt and curbing was added. The edge treatment between the road and the interior grass spaces varied during the period of significance from a low, white painted, rail fence, to equally spaced
cannon balls set into the ground, to simple curbing and grass. The basic road configuration persisted through the period of significance with one slight modification.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The cross path that separated the northern quadrants of the courtyard was widened circa 1976, reducing the size of the northwest quadrant lawn. As was the case historically, the courtyard is ringed with a perimeter asphalt road and two short road segments bisect the center space to create four quadrants (Figure 46). The grass quadrants are equal in size with the exception of the one in the northwest that is slightly smaller due to a wider road segment.
--Evaluation: Contributing

Fort Jay Entry Circle.
--Historic Condition: After Fort Jay was redesigned under the Second System, the main gate was built facing east, facing the wharf. To prevent a clear line of fire between the wharf and the main gate, the Army built a sloped mound of earth in front of the main gate called a barbican. Paths, or defiles, circled around the barbican to provide access to the fort. This defensive feature remained in place until circa 1955 when the barbican was replaced with a smaller, low, circular brick planter and the outer paths were widened to allow for vehicular parking.
--Post Historic and Existing Condition: No documented changes occurred to the Fort Jay entry circle after the period of significance. The space is roughly circular in shape with brick retaining wall sides that become taller as they approach Fort Jay. The center planter is surfaced in mowed grass and has four stacked cannon balls in the middle. Vehicular parking is no longer allowed in the space (Figure 47).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. Although added in the late historic period, this feature has lost its historic context because the space is no longer used for parking. The GMP specifies removal of existing parking and reconfiguration of the space so that visitors may better understand the purpose and meaning of the various defensive landscape features surrounding Fort Jay. Note: Evaluated as Contributing in the 2010 CLR. (CLR 2018: 87; GMP 2009: 119)

Hay Road.
--Historic Condition: Hay Road likely dates to approximately 1812 when South Battery and Castle

Williams were constructed. A faint, informal path can be seen on an 1813 map of the island, running along the south shoreline of the island connecting the two batteries. Structures were added to the south shore of the island in the late 1800s and early 1900s, notably the residences of Colonels' Row, which were serviced by the formalized Hay Road. The approximate path of the road also marked the extents of the original land mass after the expansion of 1911. The configuration of the southwest side of Hay Road was altered after World War I and was pulled further southwest from the front doors of the Colonels' Row residences to create a larger front lawn area for the residences.

--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: No documented changes occurred to Hay Road after the period of significance. Structures were added and removed from the landscape near Castle Williams in the twentieth century, but the configuration of Hay Road remained in its historic location. As it passes Castle Williams and Building 513 a-b-c, the road widens from its typical two-lane width to accommodate parking. It is surfaced in asphalt with an adjacent concrete sidewalk (Figure 48).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Kimball Road.
--Historic Condition: Kimball Road was built circa 1940 to provide vehicular access between the old hospital, located southeast of Castle Williams on Hay Road, and Liggett Hall, enclosing the triangular green at Colonels' Row.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: No documented changes occurred to Kimball Road after the period of significance despite the fact that both the old hospital and the building to the south were removed circa 1970.The old hospital was replaced by Parking Area 504 and the lot to its south was converted to a lawn area. Kimball Road is currently a short, infrequently used, two-lane vehicular road.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing, because the road has lost its historic context due to the demolition of adjacent twentieth-century buildings. Note: Evaluated as Contributing in 2003 CLI and 2010 CLR. (SHPO correspondence, 2023)

Parking Area 504.
--Historic Condition: Not present.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: This area was the site of the old hospital beginning around ca.1900 until it was razed around 1970. The parking lot was built soon after.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. This feature is proposed for removal as part of the demolition of Building S-253 and Building 513 a-b-c. The parking lot truncates Fort Jay's engineered glacis slope and former covered defile that once connected Fort Jay with Castle Williams. (CLR 2018: 53)

Tampa Road.
--Historic Condition: Tampa Road was constructed between 1928 and 1937 along the west side of the library. It took the place of a pedestrian path that ran between the library and the old hospital, connecting Andes Road to Comfort Road.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: No documented changes occurred to Tampa Road after the period of significance despite the fact that both the old hospital and the building to the south were removed circa 1970. It is a short road segment, two-lanes in width (Figure 49).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing, because the road has lost its historic context due to the past and planned demolition of Buildings S-251 and Building S-251. Note: Evaluated as Contributing in 2003 CLI and 2010 CLR. (SHPO correspondence, 2023)

Walkway between Fort Jay and Comfort Road.
--Historic Condition: Pedestrian access from the west sallyport of Fort Jay was created during the modification of the fort during the Second System. A set of masonry stairs was built into the counterscarp wall on the west side of the fort and led across the glacis to Castle Williams, south of the covered defile. This path remained in use throughout the period of significance with several modifications. By the turn-of-the-century, structures had been added to the space between Fort Jay and Castle Williams, blocking direct access, and the new residences of Colonels' Row stood west of Fort Jay, along the west shore of the island. The walkway from the west sallyport was modified along its west side and split into three different paths leading to Colonels' Row and two points along Comfort Road. During World War I, the Army built temporary buildings on the Parade Ground west of Fort Jay and the path was modified again into to hug the south sides of these new buildings.

Upon their removal in the 1920s, the path took on the configuration we see today.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: No documented changes occurred to the path between Fort Jay and Comfort Road after the period of significance. It currently is a narrow, flagstone pedestrian path that departs Fort Jay at the west sallyport, travels up a double set of stairs that traverse the grade change from the dry moat to the Parade Ground, travels through a short segment with brick retaining walls, crosses the Parade Ground west of the fort, goes down a short flight of masonry stairs and meets Comfort Road at the northern extent of Colonels' Row (Figures 50, 51, 52).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Walkways and Staircases south of Library.
--Historic Condition: The walkway and staircase southwest of the Building S-253 (Library) was built between 1928 and 1937 with the construction of Tampa Road. Prior to these improvements, a grassy slope lead down to the level of the first floor of the old hospital. When the Army replaced the pedestrian path between the buildings with Tampa Road, they built around the north, west, and south sides of the Library. The stairs became necessary to traverse the grade change between the Library and Tampa Road below. Similarly, a path was laid out along the east side of the Library, connecting Andes Road and Comfort Road, also with a staircase.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: No documented changes occurred to the walkways and staircase south of the Library after the period of significance. The concrete staircase southwest of the Library is closed due to unsafe condition of the adjacent wall and the Library (see Figure 49). The brick and concrete staircase southeast of the Library is still in use but is missing several brick treads. Materials vary along the walkways: concrete bordered by brick, bluestone bordered by concrete, and brick (Figures 53, 54).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. The walkways and staircases have lost their historic context due to the previous removal of Building S-251 and planned demolition of Building S-253. Note: Evaluated as Contributing in 2003 CLI and 2010 CLR. (SHPO correspondence, 2023)

Walkways at Building 513.
--Historic Condition: Not present.
--Post Historic and Existing Condition: The Coast Guard constructed three connected three-story brick housing units south of Castle Williams in the 1970s where World War II temporary buildings previously stood. Concrete sidewalks ran through the complex, connecting the doors of the buildings to each other, Hay Road, Carder Road, and to Castle Williams. Some of the walks are closed to the public due to the poor condition of the building.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Brick sidewalk along Andes Road	92895	Contributing					No
Covered Defile (Trace of Depressed Walk between Forts)	92902	Contributing					No
Fort Jay Courtyard Roads	92899	Contributing					No
Hay Road	92898	Contributing					No
Walkway between Fort Jay and Comfort Road	92894	Contributing					No
Kimball Road	92900	Noncontributing					No
Fort Jay Entry Circle	209965	Noncontributing					No
Parking Area 504	209966	Noncontributing					No
Tampa Road	92901	Noncontributing					No
Walkways and Staircases south of Library	92896	Noncontributing					No
Walkways at Building 513	209967	Noncontributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 44. View looking southeast at the brick sidewalk and trees on the south side of Andes Road. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 45. View looking west at the break in the counterscarp wall and the trace of the Covered Defile that connected Fort Jay and Castle Williams. Note the preponderance of invasive mulberry vegetation. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 46. View looking north at the two short roads that intersect in the Fort Jay Courtyard. Each connects to a perimeter road that fronts the four barracks. Barracks Building 214 is shown here. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 47. View looking west at the Fort Jay Entry Circle, formerly the location of the fort's barbican. The curved perimeter brick walls are remnants of the defile. Shade trees date to the 1950s. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 48. View looking south at Hay Road. Castle Williams and Building 513 are at image left. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 49. View looking north at Tampa Road (image left), staircase southwest of the Library, electric vault, and the collapsed rear entrance of Building S-251 (Library). The green space and retaining wall at image right mark the site of Building S-253. The large tree at image left is called the "Library Elm." (OCLP 2025)



Figure 50. View looking west at the staircase opposite the Fort Jay's west sallyport. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 51. View looking southeast at the curved stone path on the west site of Fort Jay. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 52. View looking east at the brick portion of the path connecting Fort Jay and Comfort Road. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 53. View looking north at the brick and concrete staircase southeast of Building S-251 (Library). (OCLP 2025)



Figure 54. View looking south at the walkway on the east side of the Library. (OCLP 2025)

Landscape Characteristic: Land Use

Historic Condition (to 1966):
Land uses are the principal activities in a landscape that form, shape, and organize the landscape as a result of human interaction. In 1637, the Native Americans of the Manhattan area sold Governors Island, which they used primarily as a seasonal fishing camp. to the Dutch governor for his private use. The land was only in private ownership for a short period before becoming property of the state. Dutch and, later, British governors and their families used the island as an informal country retreat. The Dutch and the British did not capitalize on the island's strategic value until the mid-1700s when the British were in the midst of a decade-long struggle with the French and used the island as an encampment in 1755. However, it was not until 1776 that the island served as a fortified site. American soldiers erected rudimentary defensive works at the onset of the Revolutionary War, beginning the island's almost uninterrupted history as an American military base. By the late 1800s, use of the island shifted from an active defensive fortification to an administrative center. When the Army administration split into three divisions in 1878, the island became the headquarters for the Atlantic Division's east unit. Many physical changes accompanied this new use, including the construction of new buildings, recreational facilities, and the addition of approximately 100 acres of new land on the south side of the island. Military administrative activities continued until 1966 when the Army First Army headquarters moves to Fort Meade, Maryland, and vacated the facility. (CLR 2010: 195-196)

Evaluation:
The Army's departure allowed the Coast Guard to occupy the island's facilities, where they stayed until 1996. In 2001 Fort Jay, Castle Williams, a portion of the Parade Ground, and several buildings became part of the Governors Island National Monument, a unit of the NPS and open to the public. The island's historic uses no longer continue but the physical features remain to illustrate previous land uses. (CLR 2010: 196)

Feature Evaluations:
None

Landscape Characteristic: Small Scale Features

Historic Condition (to 1966):
Small-scale features are elements that provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in the landscape. During Governors Island's defensive period, few small-scale features existed in the landscape so as to not interfere with outward views and lines of fire. This changed in the mid-1800s when the island's function shifted to encompass a greater administrative role. New infrastructure was added to accommodate a full time population. Additions included streetlights, fencing, fire suppression systems, street signage, electrical equipment, and military-themed landscape ornamentation. Many of these features changed over the period of significance as features fell into disrepair and were upgraded. The Coast Guard continued to modify the island's small-scale features after the period of significance, adding more nautical-themed elements and upgrading aging infrastructure. Today, combinations of historic and non-historic features dot the landscape, speaking to the long history of military habitation on Governors Island. (CLR 2010: 208)

Feature Evaluations:
Acorn Style Streetlights.
--Historic Condition: Historic photographs depict streetlights on Governors Island by at least 1928. They were cast iron fixtures with ornamented, tapered bases and round glass globes. These appear to have been used throughout the north side of the island during the period of significance.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Coast Guard replaced the historic lights with acorn style, black, aluminum streetlights after 1966. These are currently used throughout the National

Monument.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Clothes Line Pole on Fort Jay Terreplein.
--Historic Condition: It is unknown if the clothes line pole in the northeast bastion of Fort Jay pre-dates 1966. It is possible that the feature dates to the Army's tenure at Governors Island, as it is documented that the terreplein of Fort Jay was used for domestic purposes by the residents of the barracks.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: A single leaning, rusted clothes line pole remains on the northeast bastion of Fort Jay.
--Evaluation: Undetermined

Cut-off Style Streetlights at Dock 102
--Historic Condition: Not present.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: Dock 102 is lit by a series of cut-off style streetlights. They have square downward facing luminaires meant to reduce light pollution. Although it is unknown when these lights were installed, their modern design post-dates 1966.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Dock 102 Shelter.
--Historic Condition: Not present.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The NPS installed a glass enclosed shelter, vented at the top to allow heat to escape, with doors facing the northwest with bench seating for seventy-five people. Cases are mounted on the front to display information about interpretation and island updates. The shelter, built in 2010, protects travelers from the weather as they wait for the ferry at Dock 102.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Electrical Vault south of the Library.
--Historic Condition: Not present.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The electrical vault surrounded by a concrete block structure south of the Library was built sometime after 1966 (see Figure 49). The vault stands on the site of a World War I-era building that the Coast Guard removed.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Fort Jay and Castle Williams Cannon.
--Historic Condition: Both Castle Williams and Fort Jay were heavily armed with cannon during the island's defensive period. Cannon ringed the scarp walls of Fort Jay, pointing in all directions to cover the harbor. Castle Williams had three levels of stacked armament inside and on top of the casemated round fort. During the Civil War, the Army converted the structure to a military prison and removed the guns from the casemates, leaving the roof top cannon. Fort Jay's cannon remained in place longer, standing along the terreplein until World War II when most of the guns were removed and melted down for scrap. The last documented time a cannon was fired at Governors Island was in 1966 when the Army transferred ownership to the Coast Guard. A cannon at Fort Jay was fired during the transfer ceremony, reportedly breaking the glass in many of the Fort Jay barracks windows.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: It is unknown if any changes to the cannon at Governors Island occurred after the period of significance. Currently, there is one cannon each in the northeast and southeast bastion and three in the ravelin of Fort Jay. Several more guns exist on the roof of Castle Williams (see Figures 64, 65).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Fort Jay Flagstaff.
--Historic Condition: The Fort Jay flagstaff was located in the northwest bastion until being moved to the ravelin in approximately 1926. The flagstaff was a tall, single pole hosting a single flag through the period of significance.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Coast Guard changed the type of flagpole after 1966 and kept the circa 1925 location in the ravelin. They added a yardarm cross bar to hang four small

flags at a lower level than the large American flag. The NPS removed the yardarm in 2009 (see Cover).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Hood Style Streetlights, Castle Williams.
--Historic Condition: Not present.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: There are three streetlights with hoods on Carder Road, near Castle Williams. The fixtures are painted black and mounted on wood poles. They replaced cobra-style lamps mounted on spun aluminum poles sometime after 2016.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Signs.
--Historic Condition: It is unknown if street signs were present during the historic period.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: There are three types of signage on throughout the Monument grounds: interpretive waysides signs that feature panels set within a black or brown, angled steel frame; street signs with white letters on blue backgrounds; and directional signs, also blue and white, mounted to the acorn-style streetlights.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Stone Barbeque Grill on Fort Jay Terreplein.
--Historic Condition: It is unknown when the stone barbeque grill on the Fort Jay terreplein was constructed.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: A mortared granite cobble barbeque grill is located against the scarp wall of Fort Jay’s southwest bastion. The grill has been abandoned for quite some time (Figure 66).
--Evaluation: Undetermined

Wood Snow Fencing.
--Historic Condition: Unknown.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: A run of wood snow fencing is secured by posts atop the L-shaped retaining wall south of Building S-251 (Library). Its date of origin is no known.
--Evaluation: Undetermined

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Fort Jay and Castle Williams Cannon	92904	Contributing					No
Fort Jay Flagstaff	92905	Contributing					No
Acorn Style Streetlights	209988	Noncontributing					No
Cut-off Style Streetlights at Dock 102	209989	Noncontributing					No
Dock 102 Shelter	209990	Noncontributing					No
Electrical Vault south of Library	209991	Noncontributing					No
Hood Style Streetlights at Castle Williams	209992	Noncontributing					No
Signs	209993	Noncontributing					No
Stone Barbeque Grill on Fort Jay Terreplein	209994	Noncontributing					No
Barbeque Grill on top of Fort Jay Walls	209995	Undetermined					No
Clothes Line Post on top of Fort Jay Walls	209996	Noncontributing					No
Recreational Equipment in Fort Jay Courtyard	209997	Noncontributing					No
Trash Receptacles	209998	Noncontributing					No
Wood Snow Fencing	209999	Noncontributing					No
	92903	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 66. A granite grill is located on the fort's southwest terreplein. (OCLP 2025)

Landscape Characteristic: Spatial Organization

Historic Condition (to 1966):
Spatial organization is the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. In the early nineteenth century, the defensive fortifications of Fort Jay and Castle Williams required clear sight lines and fields of fire, and as such dominated the landscape and dictated the spatial patterning of the larger island. Later, as the purpose of the island shifted to encompass more administrative activities, residential buildings, an armory, and a church encroached on the formerly open expanse surrounding Fort Jay. Other alterations included the addition of service-oriented buildings in the vicinity of Castle Williams. Subsequent improvements included clusters of similarly styled residences in park-like settings; the construction of large, institutional buildings; and the addition of approximately 100 acres on the south side of the original land mass. These nineteenth and twentieth-century changes radically altered the spatial organization created during the Second System. The visual connection between Fort Jay and Castle Williams was lost and the primacy of the forts and their associated landforms was reduced. (CLR 2010: 193)

Evaluation:
Today, Governors Island National Monument is created by an artificial boundary drawn to include Fort Jay and Castle Williams (see Regional Landscape Context graphic). Within the National Monument, Fort Jay, the Parade Ground, and Castle Williams are dominant features. Structures within the National Historic Landmark District surround the National Monument, framing the open space of the Parade Ground. The post-historic Coast Guard-era Buildings 513 A-C have altered the landscape on the south side of Castle Williams but overwhelmingly, the spatial organization of

the National Monument landscape reflects conditions at the end of the period of significance. (CLR 2010: 193)

Feature Evaluations:
Fort Jay Courtyard.
--Historic Condition: The Fort Jay courtyard was created by the construction of the barracks buildings in the 1830s. The four rectangular buildings mirrored the four-bastioned shape of the fort's scarp walls and reinforced the strict geometry of the space. Evidence of improvements to the interior of the fort can be seen by the 1860s. Photographs from the Civil War show a perimeter road and two cross streets bisecting the courtyard into four equal sized quadrants. This four-square pattern persisted through the end of the period of significance.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: No documented changes occurred to the Fort Jay courtyard after the period of significance. The space currently reflects historic conditions in its geometric organization (Figure 40). The barracks create a square frame for the courtyard which is divided into four almost equally sized quadrants. A slight modification to the width of the cross road in the northwest quadrant made late in the period of significance resulted in a slightly smaller green space in that corner of the courtyard. Shade trees of varied species and ages are dispersed throughout the courtyard, softening the strict rectilinear quality of the space.
--Evaluation: Contributing

Fort Jay Moat.
--Historic Condition: The Fort Jay moat dates to the modification of the fort during the Second System, circa 1811. The spatial qualities of the moat are distinctive, owing to the high scarp walls of the main fort and the stepped counterscarp walls on the exterior. The Army maintained the area as cut grass, keeping it free from visual obstructions. The moat extended all the way around the fort but sight lines were kept to a minimum because of the many acute angles of the scarp walls. During the 1920s, portions of the moat were used as part of the Governors Island golf course, but it is unknown how long this practice continued or what impact it had on the resource. Additionally, the Army took advantage of the enclosed space for target practice.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: No documented changes occurred to the Fort Jay moat after the period of significance. The moat is approximately forty feet wide, flat, and covered in turf grass (Figure 41). Volunteer mulberries have become established in several areas. The absence of site features inside the moat and the tall side walls presents a stark and unique visual appearance that emphasizes both vertical and horizontal planes.
--Evaluation: Contributing

Parade Ground.
--Historic Condition: The Parade Ground evolved from a key defensive feature of the early fortification period, the glacis. Even the earliest renditions of Fort Jay incorporated a wide open expanse of land surrounding the fortification walls, sloped at an angle to deflect incoming artillery. After Fort Jay and Castle Williams were redesigned during the Second System, the glacis was formally designed, graded, and covered in turf grasses. It stretched from all sides of Fort Jay, providing direct views to Castle Williams and the harbor. By the mid-1800s, the strategic importance of the Governors Island fortification had been eclipsed by newer forts in the outer harbor and the Army began building structures on the perimeter of the glacis. It is likely during this time that the name changed from glacis to Parade Ground to reflect new uses of the space; it served as a prime location for military drilling and parading. New buildings continued to fill in the space into the twentieth century but a core area of open space immediately adjacent to Fort Jay and extending southeast of the fort remained. This may be due to the fact that the Army used the acreage for recreational activities including a polo field and a golf course.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: A few documented changes occurred to the Parade Ground after the period of significance. The Coast Guard manipulated the topography and planted several clusters of trees to enhance the golf course. Today, the National Monument contains the portion of the Parade Ground surrounding Fort Jay and extending towards Castle Williams; the balance of the open space is owned and managed by the other on-site property manager, the Trust for Governors Island. The Parade Ground is still a distinctive spatial area of the National Monument due to the contrast between its open expanse and the density of development on its perimeter. The NPS maintains the surface as regularly mowed turf grass, although portions have become

consumed with invasive groundcovers (Figures 42 and 43).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Fort Jay Courtyard	209962	Contributing					No
Fort Jay Moat	209963	Contributing					No
Parade Ground	209964	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 40. View looking northwest from the Fort Jay Courtyard. Barracks Building 206 and 210 are pictured. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 41. View looking west at part of the Fort Jay moat. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 42. View looking west at the lawn-covered parade ground on the north and west sides of Fort Jay. The trees at image right parallel Andes Road. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 43. View looking west at invasive groundcovers that dominate the parade ground south of the fort. (OCLP 2025)

Landscape Characteristic: Vegetation

Historic Condition (to 1966):
Vegetation includes deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and herbaceous plants and plant communities, whether indigenous or introduced in the landscape. Historically, Governors Island was a forested landscape with a natural sand and rock beach. European observations from the mid-1600s describe the island's large population of nut trees, illustrating the likelihood that the Manhattan Native Americans did not significantly exploit the forests for timber. This changed under Dutch control, as records show the establishment of a mill on the island. The deforestation continued at a rapid rate under English and Colonial control during the American Revolution. Governors Island was used as a key defensive site in the battle of Long Island and many trees were cleared for firewood and to provide clear lines of sight from the fortifications. This defensive role continued into the mid-1800s when shifts in military technology made the fortifications of
Governors Island less essential to the defense of New York and the Army began using the space for administrative functions. New supply, residential, and office structures accompanied this shift and trees were planted around the island to provide shade and enhance the visual appearance of the new resources. (CLR 2010: 200-201)

Evaluation:
Today, several distinct vegetative features exist on the island. One is the turf grass of the Parade Ground, one of the National Monument's key spatial features. Approximately twenty-acres surrounding Fort Jay are largely cleared of trees and covered in mowed turf, although some areas have succumbed to invasive groundcovers. Many street trees exist throughout the island, some inside the National Monument boundary, most notably along Andes Road and the east side of the Library. These include mixed age specimens of London Plane
trees, oaks, and horse chestnuts. Additionally, the Fort Jay courtyard, terreplein level, and main gate entry circle host a scattering of mixed-species shade trees and volunteer shrubs.

Feature Evaluations:
Andes Road Street Trees.
--Historic Condition: Photographic evidence shows that the Andes Road street trees date to approximately 1910. It is possible that they were added during a larger streetscape improvement effort in which sidewalks, curbing, and paving were added to Andes Road In a tree survey from the early 1960s, the feature was shown to contain clusters of maples, horse chestnuts, and London Plane trees. Significant gaps in the tree line had opened by the end of the period of significance and individual specimens were replaced, notably toward the west end of Andes Road.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Andes Road tree line remained in place after the period of significance, although individual trees have been replaced since the historic period. Today, the tree line consists of mostly oaks west of Soissons Dock and a mixture of London Plane trees and horse chestnuts east of Soissons
Dock (see Figures 42, 44). Some of the London Plane and horse chestnuts at the east end of Andes Road are mature and may well be the original specimens planted in the 1920s, while others are more recent replacements. Salt-spray from a tall, waterfall-style art installation damaged four trees in the tree line near Soissons Dock in 2008; they are slated for replacement. Overall, the tree line is fairly continuous and conveys its historic character.
--Evaluation: Contributing

Building 513 a-b-c Vegetation.
--Historic Condition: This complex post-dates the period of significance.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Coast Guard constructed the complex south of Castle Williams in the 1970s to serve as family housing. Several trees were added to the courtyard between the buildings after construction. Today, the courtyard facing Hay Road hosts several large evergreen trees, many which are overgrown and entangled with vines and volunteer vegetation.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing

Domestic Plantings on Fort Jay Terreplein.
--Historic Condition: Unknown.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: Some residents of the Fort Jay barracks planted small ornamental gardens on the terreplein level near their units. It is not known whether the small, informal domestic gardens pre-dated or post-dated the transfer of the island from the Army to the Coast Guard. Currently a few iris and daylilies remain in the gun mounts on the southeast bastion (Figure 55).
--Evaluation: Undetermined.

Fort Jay Courtyard Trees.
--Historic Condition: The Fort Jay courtyard was defined by the construction of the barracks buildings in the 1830s. It is probable that trees were planted inside the courtyard shortly after, due to photographic evidence that depicts mid-sized trees by the 1860s. In 1864, deciduous trees lined the perimeter of the interior quadrants. The same pattern is shown at the end of the nineteenth century, although most of the trees are small replacements of the originals, resulting in a mixed-age, and mixed deciduous-species grouping. In the twentieth century, the geometric planting of trees became less rigidly formal due to the failure to replace dead specimens. The remaining trees matured into large shade trees.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: After the period of significance, several new trees were planted in the courtyard. In a departure from historic practice, at least one conifer and a few deciduous specimens were planted in the interior of the quadrants. The park recently added three Japanese-American chestnut hybrids to the perimeter of the quadrants and removed the deteriorated mature conifer. Today, a handful of mature deciduous trees remain in the courtyard along with the newly planted trees to create a sparse mixed-age planting of trees (see Figures 40, 46).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. The current tree planting in the Fort Jay quadrangle is haphazard, inconsistent with the expected maintenance standards and failing to convey the military bearing of such an historical location in the U.S. Army command. The seemingly random placement obstructs the formerly strong diagonal sight lines between the fort’s bastions. Note: Evaluated as Undetermined in 2003 CLI and Noncontributing in 2010 CLR. (CLR 2018: 109)

Fort Jay Parade Ground Lawn.
--Historic Condition: Documentary evidence shows that the glacis, later known as the Parade Ground, was seeded with turf grass as early as 1808. The Army managed the open expanse to provide clear views in all directions. They controlled the growth of woody vegetation and regularly mowed the turf to make use of the space for drilling and dress parades. The size and configuration of the Parade Ground changed in the mid and late-nineteenth century when the island's land use shifted from defensive to administrative, but the remaining Parade Ground continued to be surfaced in cut lawn. Beginning in the 1920s, the Army built and maintained a golf course on the Parade Ground and made changes to the feature to accommodate tee boxes, putting greens, and bunkers.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Coast Guard continued to use the Parade Ground as a golf course after 1966 and made slight modifications, but the majority of the space remained as cut grass (Figure 56). The Parade Ground turf is a character-defining feature that helps accentuate the open appearance of the formerly defensive landscape (see Figure 42). Areas of the turf have been manipulated to serve as bunkers and sand traps. A population of Canada geese often gathers on the turf east of the Library. Some areas of turf have been overwhelmed with invasive groundcovers (see Figure 43).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Library Elm.
--Historic Condition: The Siberian elm just southwest of the Building S-253 (Library) was likely planted in the 1928-1937 period, around the time Tampa Road was constructed.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: There are no documented changes since the historic period.

--Evaluation: Noncontributing. The tree has lost its historic context due to the previous and planned demolition of Buildings S-253 and Building S-251, respectively (see Figure 49). Additionally, the presence of the tree blocks the historic visual relationship between Fort Jay and Castle Clinton, the restoration of which is one of the central prescriptions of the park's GMP. Note: Evaluated as Contributing in 2003 CLI. (SHPO correspondence, 2023; GMP 2009: 121)

London Plane Tree Row east of Library.
--Historic Condition: Building S-253 (Library) and its east walkway date to approximately 1900 but the line of London Plane trees between the Parade Ground and the walkway was not planted until ca.1940. Prior to this, the area east of the Library was in flux, when it was used for temporary World War I buildings and golf course holes. In the build-up to World War II, an additional structure was built south of the Library and the tree line was planted to separate the buildings from the golf course.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: There are no documented changes since the historic period. No documented changes occurred to the tree line after 1966. Currently, nine mature London Plane trees with interlocking canopies remain in the tree line. One of the trees near Comfort Road is no longer extant.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. This feature has lost its associations to its historic context due to the previous removal of Building S-251 and planned removal of the Library. Additionally, the presence of the trees blocks the historic visual relationship between Fort Jay and Castle Clinton, the restoration of which is one of the central prescriptions of the park's GMP (Figure 57). Note: Evaluated as Contributing in 2003 CLI and 2010 CLR. (CLR 2018: 53; GMP 2009: 121)

Shade Trees at Fort Jay Entry Circle.
--Historic Condition: This was the location of the Fort Jay barbican, which featured a diamond-shaped inclined plane sloping upwards from Andes Road to expose enemy soldiers approaching the fort up the inclined plane to musket fire. Narrow access routes, or defiles, on either side of the inclined plane were bound by brick retaining walls. Following World War II the Army removed the central inclined plane feature and paved the area to improve vehicular access. The center of the resultant space featured a raised elliptical traffic island with a small display of four cannonballs stacked to form a small pyramid. The outer brick walls of the defiles were retained to enclose the parking area. Photographic evidence shows that earlier in the period of significance, no shade trees surrounded the barbican located at the fort's main gate. The presence of trees around the perimeter of the space first appear in photographs from the 1930s.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: Approximately eight shade trees, mostly London plane trees

and some maples, ring the perimeter of the Fort Jay entry circle (see Figure 47). They were planted in the 1950s, around the same time that the barbican at this location was transformed into a parking area. Several at the east side of the circle have been removed in recent years, leaving the balance of trees clustered nearer to Fort Jay and flanking the bridge and dry moat.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. While the trees date from the late historic period, they were not present when the barbican was extant. They are also inconsistent with a goal of the GMP, which aims to make physical changes for visitors to better understand the purpose and meaning of the various defensive landscape features surrounding Fort Jay. Note: Evaluated as Contributing in the 2010 CLR. (CLR 2018: 87-88)

Shrubs at Fort Jay Entry Circle.
--Historic Condition: There is no evidence that ornamental plantings stood at the Fort Jay entry circle during the period of significance.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: Several hydrangeas are located around the entry circle, notably at the east side, or opening to Andes Road. These elements are post-1966 introductions.
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. This vegetation was not present when the barbican was extant.

Woody Vegetation on Fort Jay Structures.
--Historic Condition: During Fort Jay’s active use as a harbor defense fortification, the Army did not permit woody vegetation to grow on the parapet, terreplein, ravelin over the underground magazines, or counterscarp since this vegetation would hinder and obstruct defensive functions. Nearing the end of the period of significance, the Army maintained the maintained mowed grass with no woody vegetation present. By the early 1960s, the maintenance practices had been relaxed and a few small trees began to grow along the terreplein level. By the end of the period of significance several of the trees had matured into mid-sized specimens.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: More vegetation was allowed to grow on the terreplein after 1966. Several trees, including a line of apple trees in the north ravelin, a honey locust in the southeast bastion, and a few volunteer sumac trees and Norway maples, matured and still exist today. Scattered mulberries dot the base and tops of the terreplein and counterscarp (Figure 58).
--Evaluation: Noncontributing. The existing woody vegetation on the engineered features of Fort Jay are not characteristic of conditions present during the majority of the period of significance, nor the proposed ca.1875 treatment date recommended in the 2018 CLR. Additionally, they are an immediate threat to the preservation of the fort from penetrating tree roots or from a tree being toppled and displacing a large volume of soil and masonry that may impact other features. Note: Evaluated as Contributing in 2010 CLR, but subject to reevaluation pending future research. (CLR 2018: 107)

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Andes Road Street Trees	92907	Contributing			Location	230934	Yes
Fort Jay Parade Ground Lawn	92069	Contributing			Location	230934	No
Building 513 a-b-c Vegetation	209968	Noncontributing					No
Fort Jay Courtyard Trees	209969	Noncontributing					No
Library Elm	97781	Noncontributing					No
London Plane Tree Row east of Library	209970	Noncontributing					No
Shade Trees at Fort Jay Entry Circle	209971	Noncontributing					No
Shrubs at Fort Jay Entry Circle	209972	Noncontributing					No
Woody Vegetation on Fort Jay Structures	209973	Noncontributing					No
Domestic Plantings on Fort Jay Terreplein	92909	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 55. View of perennials within the former gun mounts at Fort Jay. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 56. View looking north at the parade ground west of the fort. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 57. View looking northwest from the parade ground to the row of London plane trees east of the Library. At image left the masonry Castle Williams is visible in the background. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 58. View looking northeast at a honey locust tree and mulberry shrubs growing on the Fort Jay terreplein. (OCLP 2025)

Landscape Characteristic: Views and Vistas

Historic Condition (to 1966):
A view is the expansive and/or panoramic prospect of a broad range of vision that may be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. A vista is a controlled prospect of a discrete, linear range of vision, which is deliberately contrived. Governors Island became an essential late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century defensive post because its strategic location in New York Harbor provided sweeping views of the region. These views became less significant as the eighteenth century progressed and the island's main focus shifted from defensive to administrative functions. (CLR 2010: 211)

Evaluation:
Views from the forts of the water and skyline, and between the forts themselves, contribute to the site's historic character, but some have been altered over time. Views of New York Harbor and the distant skylines from Fort Jay are partially obstructed by adjacent buildings and vegetation, but are open from Castle Williams. The visual connection between Fort Jay and Castle Williams is mostly blocked by Building S-251 (Library) and a row of mature trees east of the building.

Feature Evaluations:
View North, South, and West from Castle Williams.
--Historic Condition: Castle Williams was built on a rocky outcropping at the northwestern corner of Governors Island to take advantage of the unobstructed views of the upper New York harbor, the mouth of the Hudson River, and the East River. The fort's main gate was built into the east side of the structure, the least necessary side to arm with cannon. These views remained unencumbered throughout the period of significance.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The fort's location at the northwest tip of the island remains unchanged and wide-ranging views of the harbor, Manhattan, New Jersey, Ellis Island, and Liberty Island are still available from the roof of Castle Williams and from the exterior where it abuts the water (Figure 64).

--Evaluation: Contributing

View between Fort Jay and Castle Williams.
--Historic Condition: During the redesign of Fort Jay and the construction of Castle Williams during the Second System, the view between the forts was an integral component of the island's defensive capacity. The forts were physically connected by the covered defile and obstructions were kept to a minimum to keep the view corridor clear. Despite the replacement of strategic functions by administrative uses, this visual connection remained until approximately 1900 when the Army built several buildings between the forts. They continued to use this space for buildable land during World War I when numerous temporary structures were placed on the Parade Ground and in areas east of Castle Williams.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The Coast Guard removed several buildings east of Castle Williams after the period of significance, partially restoring the view between the forts, with the exception of Building S-251 (Library) that remains standing today (see Figure 57).
--Evaluation: Contributing. Portions of this view are intact, but overall it impacted primarily by the presence of Building S-251 (Library) and the row of London planetrees east of the Library, and to a lesser extent the retaining wall at the former Building S-253 site, the walkways and staircases south of the Library, and parking lot 504. The removal and subsequent rehabilitation of the landscape to reestablish the historic visual relationship between Fort Jay and Castle Williams is one of the central prescriptions of the park's GMP. (CLR 2018: 53; GMP 2009: 121)

Views of New York Harbor from Fort Jay.
--Historic Condition: When Fort Jay was rebuilt during the Second System the surrounding landscape was largely cleared of vegetation and without many surrounding buildings. Consequently, the fort commanded a 360-degree view around the entire island. Guns on the terreplein level were aimed in all directions, showing the intent to provide sweeping coverage of the harbor. As the island's use shifted to include more administrative roles and newer fortifications in the lower harbor replaced the strategic importance of Governors Island's defensive works, buildings and trees began to crowd the once open viewshed of the fort.
--Post-Historic and Existing Conditions: The maturation of the island's trees after the period of significance continued to impact the view of the harbor from Fort Jay after 1966. Currently, glimpses of the water are available because of the fort's placement on high ground but a comprehensive off-site view is no longer
available. Because this alteration of the viewshed occurred over many years beginning in the mid-1800s, the current view is reflective of historic conditions (Figure 65).
--Evaluation: Contributing

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
View north, south, and west from Castle Williams	209985	Contributing					No
View between Fort Jay and Castle Williams	209986	Contributing					No
Views of New York Harbor from Fort Jay	209987	Contributing					No
	102282	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 64. View of weaponry overlooking Manhattan skyline, from the top of Castle Williams. (OCLP 2025)



Figure 65. View looking north at a gun atop Fort Jay, with Manhattan in the background. (OCLP 2025)

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 7

Next Assessment Due Date: 09/03/2032

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 09/03/2025

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The overall condition of the Governors Island NM Landscape is evaluated as “Good.” The grounds are well-maintained, as lawns are regularly mowed, trees are pruned, and several trees have been replaced -in-kind. Exceptions are invasive groundcovers that dominate the lawns west and south of Fort Jay and patches of volunteer vegetation along the fort walls. However, the park and city are working to eradicate these problems. Building 513 (housing) and especially Building S-251 (library) are abandoned and in very poor condition, but are planned for demolition. The brick staircase near the library is in poor condition.

Good: The property shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The property’s cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: The property shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the property to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: Indicates the property shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 09/17/2021

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Provisional. The condition reassessment for this CLI has been delayed due to Covid-19 travel restrictions and staffing shortages. In the meantime, the most recent condition assessment will remain in place until it is reassessed as part of a comprehensive update of the entire CLI. Planning and scheduling this update will occur in FY 2022.

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 08/07/2009

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The Superintendent, in consultation with Deana Saslaw, Program Analyst, agreed with this assessment. Deteriorated fences have been removed, hazardous trees have been pruned, and masonry on walks and stairs have been repaired. A "good" assessment indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit’s cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 03/31/2003

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Impacts

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Deferred maintenance has caused some resources to deteriorate since the Coast Guard discontinued active military activities on the island in 1996. Some hedge rows are missing individual shrubs, creating a noncontiguous appearance. Lawn areas are in need of fertilization, seeding, thatching, and aeration. Some masonry staircases and retaining walls are in need of repair and repointing. Additionally, selected fence sections, curb lengths, and areas of asphalt need replacing.

Date Identified: 07/29/2005

Type of Impact: Erosion

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Some erosion has occurred near Building 107 and along the north end of Fort Jay.

Date Identified: 07/29/2005

Type of Impact: Pruning Practices

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: The National Monument's trees and shrubs have not been correctly pruned. Improper cuts, dead limbs, and unchecked growth appear on many of the trees and shrubs.

Date Identified: 07/29/2005

Type of Impact: Inundation/Storm Surge

Other Impact:

External or Internal: External

Impact Narrative: Future storms may breach the seawall and damage the Castle Williams area.

Date Identified: 09/03/2025

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: Deterioration by historic character-altering plants (mugwort, mulberry crown vetch, Oriental bittersweet), have been a consistent problem around Fort Jay, but measures are underway to address the issue.

Date Identified: 09/03/2025

Treatment

Stabilization Measures

Treatment Documents

Treatment Type: Rehabilitation

Treatment Completed: No

Document Type: Cultural Landscape Report Parts 1 and 2

Title:

IRMA Link:

Narrative:

In 2018 the “Cultural Landscape Report for Governors Island National Monument, New York, New York, Volume II: Treatment” presented numerous landscape treatment tasks for the Governors Island National Monument landscape. The tasks aligned with the CLR’s recommendation of Rehabilitation as the primary treatment for the park. Rehabilitation was selected for its capacity to accommodate repair and replacement of deteriorated and missing historic features, while simultaneously accommodating compatible alterations and new additions to the historic property to facilitate its continued use as a unit of the national park system.
“Effective rehabilitation facilitates the accommodation of public visitation and reuse of vacant buildings within Fort Jay. While rehabilitation standards allow for such change, the emphasis of treatment should be on preservation of extant historic features and replacement of missing historic features…Rehabilitation provides the flexibility for adding such features as interpretive waysides and for reestablishing truncated circulation routes in a manner that is compatible with the historic character of the landscape. Rehabilitation also provides the flexibility to accommodate multiple resource objectives, including avoidance of invasive species, and to address contemporary maintenance considerations, such as altering vegetation to mitigate maintenance and disease concerns.” (CLR 2018: 22-23,31)

The CLR also recommended a treatment date to provide an objective and practical benchmark for managing historic landscape character and serve as a practical point of reference for avoiding the introduction of anachronistic features or qualities which never co-existed on the property at the same point in time.
“A late-nineteenth century treatment date such as circa 1875 will focus landscape treatment of the National Monument landscape on the period of time when Fort Jay and Castle Williams remained actively involved in their original defensive purpose. The late-nineteenth century reference point should not be applied within the narrow confines of the Fort Jay interior quadrangle, where extensive alteration to the inward facing building facades occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. An appropriate alternative frame of reference guiding the treatment of the Fort Jay quadrangle is a point in time where it is practical and reasonable to reestablish the former symmetrical relationships and to reinstitute the high level of landscape caretaking and inventory of landscape furnishings and features that projected Fort Jay’s military bearing. A reference date of circa 1941, prior to the United States entry into World War II, may appropriately serve this purpose.” (CLR 2018: 24)

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

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