



2007 Policy and Planning Priorities

1. Delivery of a viable master plan and potential partners in 2007

- GIPEC should continue to move forward on its planned park design competition. The park competition and, more importantly, pursuit of the plan and capital commitments to realize the vision that emerges, is essential to providing public benefits and attracting private redevelopment.
- The designers of the park should be required to program 40 acres of open space on the southern end of the Island in responding to the RFQ. This 40 acres is in addition to the land included in the required waterfront esplanade and open spaces already protected in the National Historic Landmark District. Suggesting in the RFP that 25 acres of park open space on the south part of the Island is sufficient is contrary to the deed restrictions.
- The designers of the park should be instructed to address required public access in the development zones as part of the public open space system. Their goal should be to reinforce the Island's overall park-like character and specific linkages in the open space framework. Attention should be paid as to how landscape clues as opposed to architectural barriers will distinguish the park spaces from development sites.
- GIPEC and ESDC should complete the draft General Project Plan (GPP) by December 2007, as called for in the transfer documents. The master plan should provide sufficient guidance and flexibility to enable the Island's public parks and private uses to develop over time.
- The GPP should consider economic returns to the City and State as a whole. GIPEC should not allow promises of direct financial return from on-Island activities to trump consideration of the other goals for the Island. Governors Island is a difficult to develop site. But the right private partners will provide amenities and services for residents and businesses; support the State's tourism industry; and help address important educational and cultural goals.
- The draft and final GPP should enable GIPEC to pursue a long term partnership with one or more universities. All plans for the Island agree that a strong university presence and student dormitories are a natural fit for at least a portion of the Island's historic district.

2. A commitment to needed public investments on and off the Island

- The Governor and the Mayor should make a substantial long term commitment of capital funding to build the Island's parkland and rehabilitate the Island's infrastructure. The total capital cost is estimated by GIPEC to be about \$ 600 million, to be allocated starting in FY 2008. A verbal commitment now for building the parkland and public infrastructure is essential for securing developer interest and private capital.
- The State and City should provide sufficient capital and operating funds in FY 08 and FY 09 for site improvements to substantially improve public access in Summer 08 and groundbreaking of park construction in FY 09. The City has proposed \$37.5 million for FY 08 and \$31.5 million for FY 09; sufficient to meet this goal. The State must match this amount. This represents a substantial improvement on their current proposal of \$ \$6 million for FY 2008 and \$10 million for FY 2009.
- The State and City should ensure landside connections for Island access from Brooklyn. Such access would provide additional capacity and critical redundancy to the Battery Maritime Building in lower Manhattan.
- GIPEC should carefully evaluate the gondola proposal. Providing reliable, easy, and affordable access to Governors Island is essential to the Island's success. Determining whether the proposed gondola is the right answer will require evaluating concerns over the gondola's financial relationship to necessary ferry operations, its impact on historic views and character on and off the Island, and any commitments of public funding or property.

3. Expansion of early public uses on the Island

- GIPEC and ESDC should plan for and deliver on early Island uses. To ensure that the public makes the best use of the Island during the 5 years-plus of planning and initial construction, GIPEC and ESDC should work with the National Park Service and its National Monument, GIA, and other public and private partners to significantly expand public access and programs on the Island. This includes making capital investment to protect the health and safety of visitors. The National Monument and parade grounds and the esplanade (which must remain open forever under the Historic District design guidelines) are well suited for early activities.
- The Governor should direct his Washington office to help secure adequate capital and operating funding for the National Monument and in particular Castle Williams. An appropriation of \$ 5 million in FY 08 would enable the Monument to safely open the 1811 Castle Williams to visitors. The 22 acre National Park and the Castle in particular can be important instruments for providing for early public use and a positive identity for the Island.