



HARBORWALK 2.0 FORT POINT

WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE GUIDE?

Since its beginning as an industrial hub, the Fort Point Channel has evolved into a community resource that provides residents of the adjacent neighborhood and visitors from across the city with the chance to spend time near the water. It's a beloved amenity that's valued for its unique beauty and serenity. However, as Boston is challenged by climate change and rising sea levels, this space needs to evolve once more. The Fort Point Channel Harborwalk must protect the neighborhood from increasingly common and more severe flooding while still providing the neighborhood with amenities that support its users. New projects along the Channel offer possibilities for new public, open spaces that could enhance the neighborhood and support a wide range of activities for residents and the broader community. And these projects create the opportunity to incorporate adaptations along the waterfront to address significant threats of flooding along pathways that extend into South Boston.

The Fort Point Resource Guide is meant to be a jumping off point for--

- residents, boaters, workers, and advocates who spend time in Fort Point and are envisioning positive changes for the neighborhood;
- folks working in a local, state, and national government looking for ideas developed at the community level; and
- developers, architects, landscape architects, engineers, and other designers with the capital to dramatically change this area.

The resources collected here were gathered for or produced through the Fort Point Waterfront Community Design Program that took place in the fall of 2022 partnering community members with professional architects and landscape architects to generate ideas for their idealized future Fort Point Channel. The resource guide's primary purpose is to highlight the potential for creating a waterfront that is more welcoming and inclusive and better prepared for the impacts of climate change, especially south of the Summer Street Bridge. Ideas consider strategies along the waterfront, in and on the channel, and in the neighborhood. Though this guide is specifically tailored for the Fort Point Channel, the workshops that helped generate these ideas, visuals, and design proposals can be replicated for other parts of the waterfront.

The guide contains:

- **Context:** information about the history of Fort Point Channel and the adjacent neighborhood as well as the planning that has been done for the area over the past two decades and the proposed development that is underway.
- **Workshop:** a summary of the community design workshops and the resulting ideas for a more equitable, resilient, and accessible Harborwalk and community that were generated by the process.
- **Interventions:** information about climate change impacts and strategies to address them, particularly ways to reduce the risk of coastal flooding.

In partnership with the Fort Point Neighborhood Association, Boston Harbor Now has developed this guide in the hopes that community members, public sector agencies, and future developers will have a shared understanding of the opportunities, challenges, and desired community amenities and flood resilience measures that can be woven into the redevelopment of the Fort Point Channel. While it does not propose a specific strategy for implementing or funding these ideas, we hope the resource guide will be a tool for newer stakeholders to join the conversation and provide developers with guidance on how to activate the channel so it becomes a destination for not just the community but the broader region.

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NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The Fort Point Channel is a unique corner of Boston Harbor. With seawalls on both sides, low bridges, and a few small parks along the edges, it offers views and public spaces that are different from Dorchester's waterfront parks or the vistas at the end of piers in Charlestown or East Boston. The surrounding district's characteristic brick warehouse buildings reflect the neighborhood's history as a center for wool manufacturing and shipping during the mid-1800s. Today, those former warehouse and industrial buildings are home to artists, the Children's Museum, restaurants, and a range of other residential and commercial uses.

Dead End for Vessels

As a result of low bridge clearance and its dead end, the Channel sees very little vessel activity. It is almost 50 acres of calm water, making it well-suited for art installations or other distinctive cultural or recreational uses.

Possibilities for Future Redevelopment

USPS has occupied 15 acres on the North side of the channel since 1955, but may not remain on the waterfront indefinitely, possibly opening up future opportunities. Similarly, Gillette's headquarters across the Channel dates back to 1904, but in October 2023, Procter & Gamble announced that they would be moving their industrial operations to Andover..

Transit Access

South Station, a hub for the T and commuter rail, is only one block inland across the Summer Street bridge, only a few minutes' walk from the waterfront.

Bridges with Low Clearance

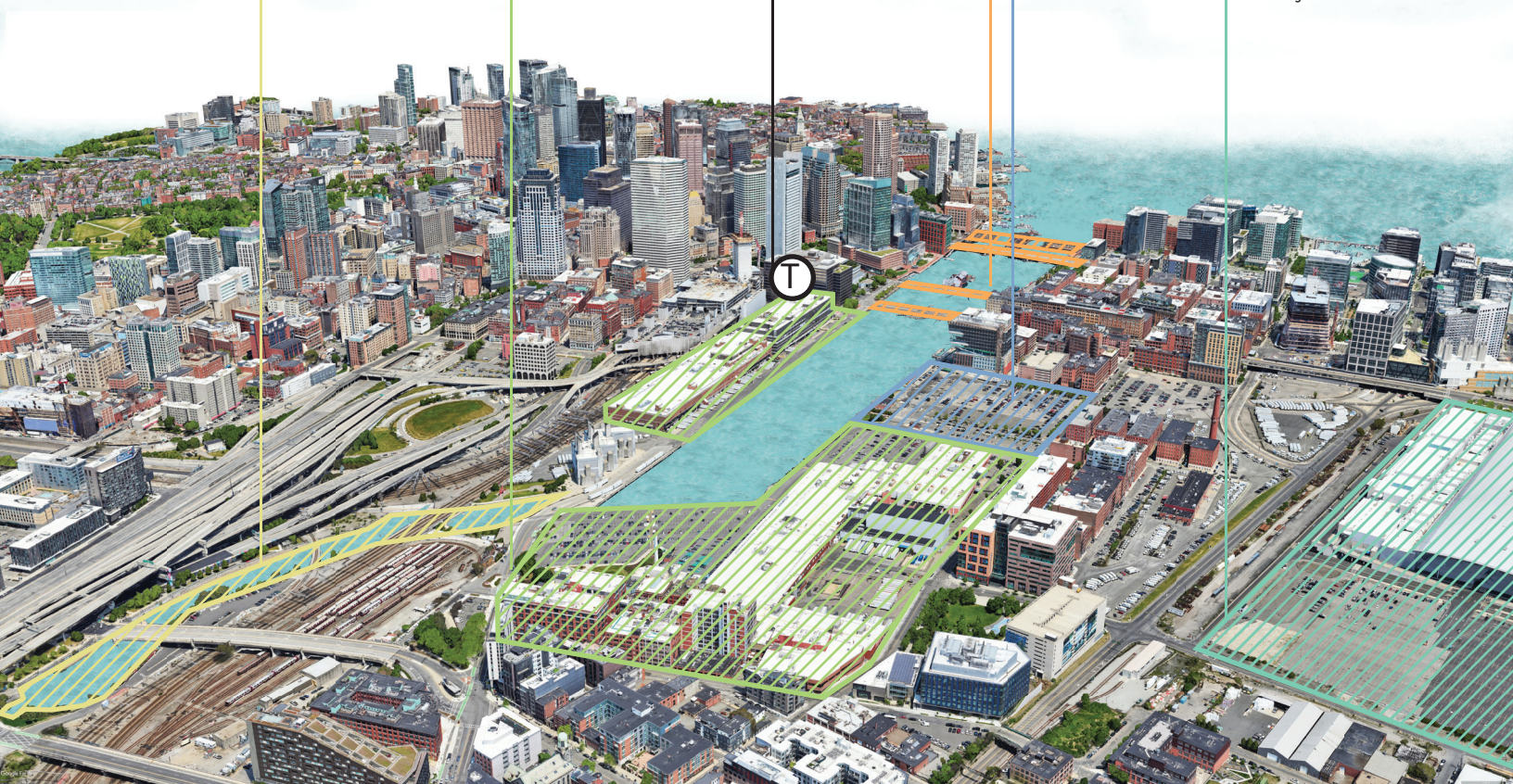
The four bridges spanning the Channel get progressively lower from north to south. The Congress Street Bridge has a clearance of just 6 ft at high tide, making the southernmost part of the Channel inaccessible to large boats.

Development Underway

Three major projects are underway at various stages of the development process. 15 Necco Street is under construction and 244-284 A Street (Channelside) and 232 A Street are under review. 232 A Street was sold by Gillette in 2021.

Proximity to Citywide Attractions

Boston's Convention Center is just a few blocks from the Channel. Other cultural institutions on and near the water, including the Boston Children's Museum, are major attractions.



NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT - HISTORY¹

The geography of Boston, and by extension the Fort Point Channel, has been shaped by the Earth's changing climate over millions of years and more recently by human intervention. The Boston Basin, which is “a wedge shaped indentation in the coast surrounded by higher area” that includes Boston, was largely shaped by ice sheets that covered much of the area 2.5 million years ago. Glaciers eroded the Cambridge Argillite and Roxbury Puddingstone bedrock found in the area and deposited glacial till on top. When Indigenous people were first thought to have arrived in Massachusetts 12,000 years ago the Boston Harbor would have been tundra-like land filled with grasses and low shrubs. As temperatures continued to slowly warm, the glaciers slowly melted and the environment transformed from tundra to forest. By 3000 years ago, Boston Harbor was covered with water from melted glaciers. Indigenous people “flocked to the newly formed harbor where they could maximize recently developed farming practices”² and took advantage of clams and other shellfish that thrived in the new watery habitat. When European colonists arrived in New England, Shawmut peninsula, what is now downtown Boston, was connected to the mainland by a narrow isthmus known as the Neck.³ Dorchester, a neighboring Massachusetts Bay Colony town that included the Dorchester Neck, which would eventually become known as South Boston, lay due southeast of Shawmut Peninsula.⁴

“Boston’s population more than tripled from 18,320 in 1790 to 61,392 in 1830... straining its capacity to accommodate all these new residents”.⁵ In response to the demand for more space, Bostonians created new land by filling in tidal flats surrounding the peninsula. The Fort Point Channel was established in the mid-1830s when the City of Boston filled land on both sides of the water in hopes of attracting new businesses to the area. As planned, emerging manufacturing companies like The Boston Wharf Company and The American Safety Razor Company, now known as Gillette, took up residence in this newly created space.⁶ These companies and others like it built factories and warehouses along the banks of the Fort Point Channel, using the channel to ship goods around the area. However, water transport started to fall out of favor at the start of the twentieth century. New modes of transportation, like rail and automobiles, out-competed boats, which were slowed by the introduction of three drawbridges that spanned the channel. With the end of manufacturing and stymied water transportation, the Fort Point Channel quieted and was in need of revitalization.

¹ Much of this history is adapted from these resources:

Seasholes, N. S. (2019). *The Atlas of Boston History*. The University of Chicago Press.

Boston Redevelopment Authority in partnership with The Fort Point Channel Abutters Group and The Fort Point Channel Working Group, (2002) *Fort Point Channel Watersheet Activation Plan*. pp. 2-12, <https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/9f285a64-bbd0-4f7d-934b-082d5170495c>

Friends of the Boston Harbor Walk (2023) *A Changing Channel*. Signs by Friends of the Boston Harborwalk, <https://boshw.us/sign/a-changing-channel/?lang=english>

Friends of the Fort Point Channel. (n.d.). *History*. Friends of Fort Point Channel. <https://www.friendsoffortpoint.org/history>

² Seasholes, N. S. (2019). *The Atlas of Boston History*. pp. 6, The University of Chicago Press.

³ Seasholes, N. S. (2019). *The Atlas of Boston History*. pp. 32, The University of Chicago Press.

⁴ Seasholes, N. S. (2019). *The Atlas of Boston History*. pp. 15, The University of Chicago Press. and Pelham, H. (1776). *A Plan of Boston in New England and its Environs*. map. Retrieved from <https://alpha.mapjunction.com/?lat=42.3631473&lng=-71.0960411&clipperX=0.0798611&clipperY=0.7024266&map1=link.mapwarpermap23164&map2=link.mapwarpermap18587&zoom=11.3481164&mode=overlay&b=0.000&p=0.000>

⁵ Seasholes, N. S. (2019). *The Atlas of Boston History*. pp. 42, The University of Chicago Press.

⁶ Boston Wharf Company Collection. Digital Commonwealth. (n.d.). <https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/collections/commonwealth:br86bb06z>

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT - HISTORY CONT.

Artists were the spark the channel needed. In the 1970s, they moved into the remaining abandoned warehouses and manufacturing buildings on the southeast side of the channel. At the time, rents were low, ceilings were high, and light coming in from the large windows was abundant, making it an ideal space for them. Since then, the artist community has expanded, creating a new cultural identity for the channel along the way.

The Fort Point Channel underwent another transformation in the 1990's, this time however the changes were underground. The extension of the Interstate 90 highway tunnel to Logan Airport via Fort Point Channel, South Boston and the Boston Harbor; and the MBTA South Boston Pier / Fort Point Channel Transitway project or the Silver Line Phase II project run underneath the channel and neighborhood. Though the tunnels are not visible above ground, their presence impacts the location of new development which cannot be placed above them due to “engineering difficulties and increases construction costs for development directly on top of the tunnel.”⁷

⁷ Boston Redevelopment Authority in partnership with The Fort Point Channel Working Group, (2005) *Fort Point District 100 Acres Masterplan*. pp. 10, <https://www.seaportalliance.org/Archive/Draft%20100%20Acres%20June%202005.pdf>

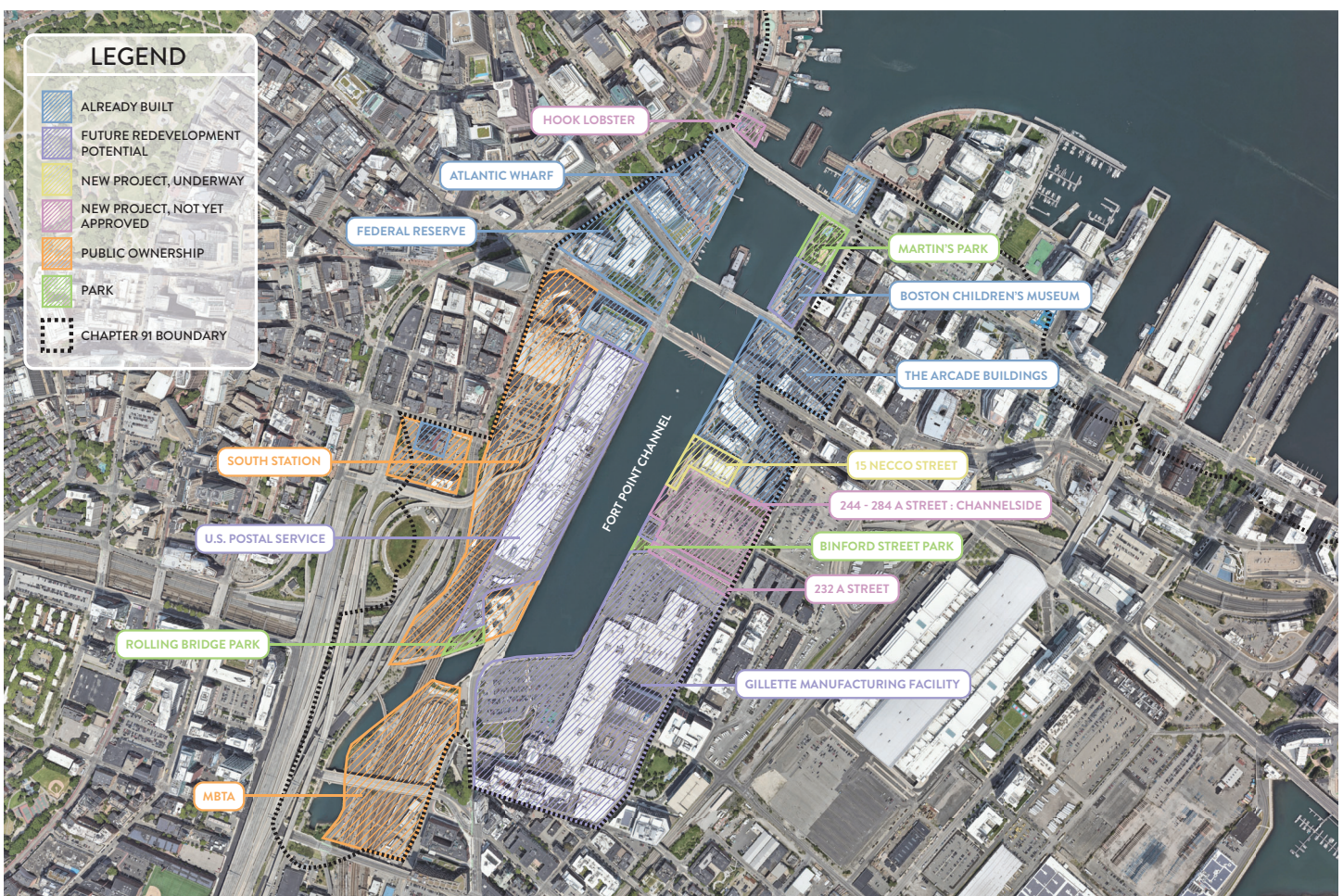


HISTORIC IMAGES

Fort Point Channel 1925, Fairchild Aerial Survey sourced from Boston Landmarks Commission Image Collection.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT - **CHANNEL ACTIVITIES**

Today the eastern side of the channel is predominantly a mixed-use district with deep ties to art and culture. Cultural institutions like the Boston Children's Museum, the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum, and the Boston Society for Architecture's BSA Space have also settled along the channel, along with artist lofts and exhibition space for the Fort Point Arts Community, solidifying the neighborhood as a creative hub and cultural destination. By contrast, most of the west side of the channel is dominated by governmental and institutional uses. Although there are some mixed-use buildings along the northwest portion of the channel, state and federal buildings like the Captain John F. Williams Coast Guard Building, the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, United States Postal Service, and rail yards for Amtrak and the MBTA dominate the remainder of the western side of the channel.



TYPES OF WATERFRONT SITES

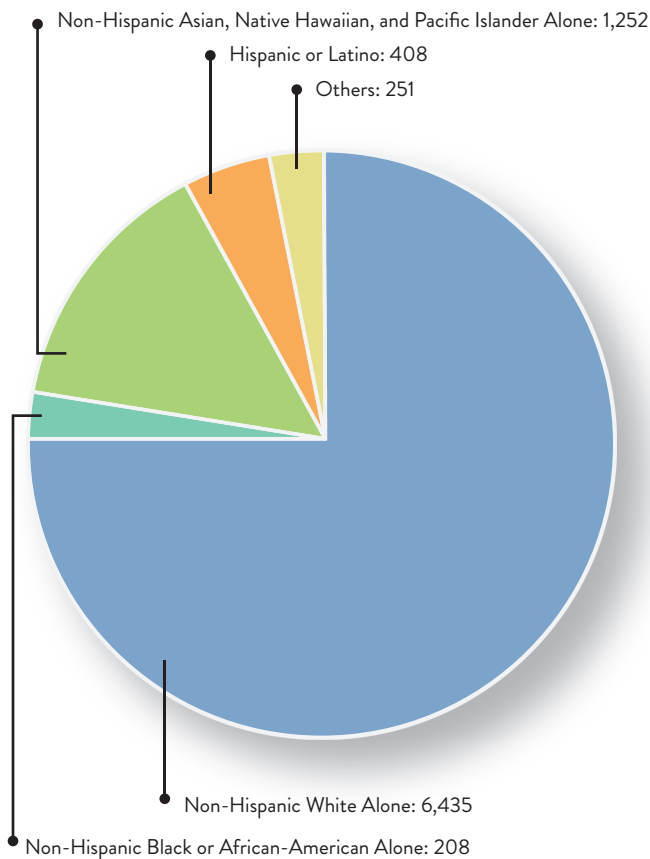
Fort Point Channel existing and future development sites.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT - *DEMOGRAPHICS*

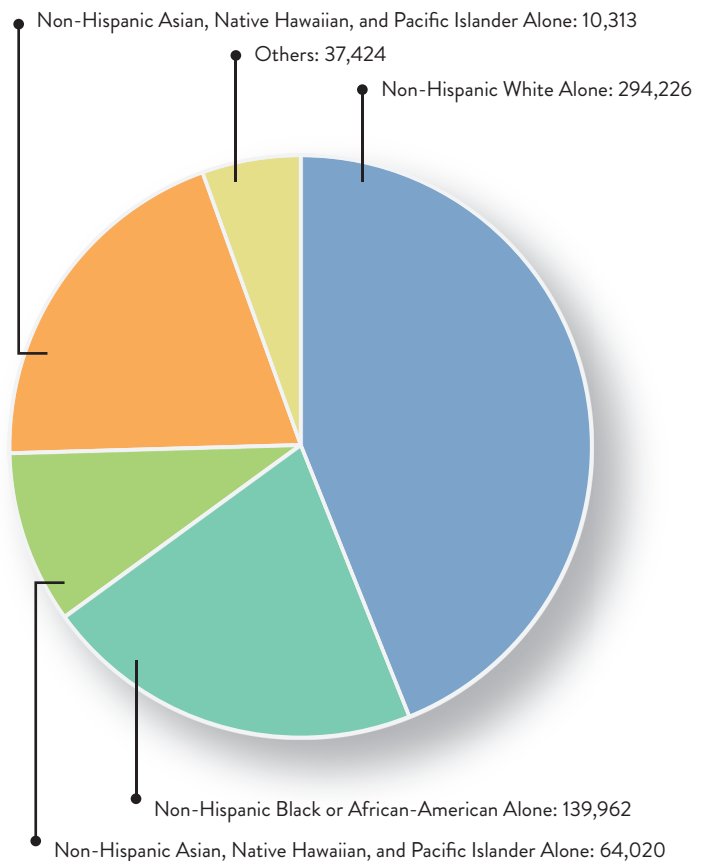
Comparatively, the Fort Point Channel is more homogeneously Non-Hispanic white than the rest of the City. Approximately 44% of Bostonians identify themselves as Non-Hispanic white alone. Of the roughly 9,200 people who live in a census tract that touches the channel, 78% identified as Non-Hispanic white.⁸ The Non-Hispanic non-white Fort Point Channel residents primarily identified as Non-Hispanic Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander alone, with a smaller number of residents identifying themselves as Non-Hispanic Black or African American alone, Hispanic or Latino, or “Other”. Residents of the Fort Point Channel also tend to have a higher income than the rest of the city. 58% of households within a census tract that touches the Fort Point Channel have a household income of \$150,000 or higher, which is more than twice that of Boston residents citywide.

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS) Retrieved from <https://maps.bostonplans.org/census/#/acs>

FORT POINT CHANNEL



BOSTON



DEMOGRAPHICS

Fort Point Channel demographics in comparison to the City of Boston based the American Community Survey 2017-2021 data found at <https://maps.bostonplans.org/census/#/acs>.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT - VISITATION

The Fort Point Channel's watershed and Harborwalk are not only used by the people who live nearby. Graduate fellows working with Boston Harbor Now in the summer of 2022 conducted a survey to understand how people use the Fort Point Channel waterfront and what respondents would like to see in the future.⁹ From the survey results, they found that respondents were a mix of people who lived nearby, people who work in the Fort Point neighborhood (who were more likely to indicate that they visited frequently and walked there), and other Boston residents who visited the Channel less frequently. Out of the respondents who chose to share their Zip Codes, more than 75% were from districts that did not touch the channel. Notably, none of the respondents who shared their zip codes were from Downtown, Chinatown, or the Leather District—neighborhoods within an easy walk of the channel.

People visit the Fort Point Channel for a variety of reasons. Most survey responses indicated that they view the channel as a destination—a place to meet friends, eat outdoors or dine out, sightsee, shop or attend a special event. Others just pass through the area, using the paths along the channel and the network of neighborhood sidewalks to get to and from places. Kayak launches located at the Children's Museum and the Fort Point Pier at 15 Necco Street allow people to get on the water and get close to the floating art created by Fort Point channel artists.

⁹ By stopping by events on three different days, the fellows collected 24 surveys.



FORT POINT PLANNING PROCESSES AND PROJECTS

Fort Point Waterfront Community Design Program builds on over two decades of planning by the City of Boston, the Boston Planning Department, developers, residents, and other stakeholders. Since 1999, at least seven plans have been created to address different geographies and challenges the channel will face.



In 1999, the then-Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), now known as Boston Planning Department, published the **South Boston Waterfront Public Realm Plan** with a vision for the Seaport district and waterfront, including the Fort Point neighborhood. The new Seaport area was conceived of as “a 24-hour neighborhood with a mix of industrial, residential, commercial, civic and retail uses, which [would] build upon Boston’s character and utilize the area’s waterfront location.”¹⁰ The plan specifically hoped the new district would provide “an accessible waterfront, attractive open space network” and more. Today, the Seaport is typically seen as adjacent to but distinct from the Fort Point Channel neighborhood, but the combined area of the two was included in this plan.

¹⁰ Boston Planning & Development Agency. (n.d.). South Boston Waterfront Public Realm Plan. <https://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/south-boston-waterfront-public-realm-plan>

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

Shortly after the release of the *South Boston Waterfront Public Realm Plan*, the Boston Planning Department completed the **South Boston Waterfront Municipal Harbor Plan** (MHP), which was finalized in 2000. The South Boston Waterfront MHP, like other MHPs, established the objectives, standards, and policies for guiding public and private use of land and water within the South Boston area and outlined substitute provisions to the requirements set by the Waterways Regulations.¹¹ In other words, the MHP allows changes to the traditional height and set back requirements of Chapter 91. The BRA prioritized substitutions and amplifications that promoted waterfront access, preserved the industrial port, and created a vital, mixed-use neighborhood in Fort Point. Since its adoption in 2000 the South Boston Waterfront MHP has undergone a series of amendments, allowing the City and former BRA, now Boston Planning Department, to further amend Chapter 91 dimensional requirements in the area.

The BRA worked with the Fort Point Channel Working Group and Fort Point Channel Abutters Group, made up of area residents, business owners, and stakeholders, to develop “a wide range of water’s edge and floating public uses, including piers, docks and landings for cultural attractions, recreational boating and sightseeing.”¹² In 2002, the BRA unveiled the Fort Point Watersheet Activation Plan, which outlined ways to improve the public’s use and enjoyment of the waters of the Fort Point Channel and make the channel Boston’s “next great place.” Many of the ideas raised during this planning process have still yet to be realized.

In 2006, the BRA released the 100 Acres Master Plan, this time focusing on developing a broad framework for new development and public open space in an underdeveloped area along the eastern side of the Fort Point neighborhood. This area included almost all of the land bounded by Summer Street, South Boston Bypass Road, West Second Street, and the Fort Point Channel. The plan envisioned the Fort Point Channel as “a great public space between the Downtown and the South Boston Waterfront... with active edges, an abundance of water activities, and multiple bridge crossings.”¹³

Until the mid-aughts, plans for the Seaport primarily focused on building in a largely vacant neighborhood with an abundance of parking lots to establish a new district. After the devastation of Superstorm Sandy, Boston had learned enough about climate change to understand the threat that it posed. From this point forward, all plans for the Seaport and Fort Point address the threats of coastal storm flooding.

¹¹ Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM). (n.d.). CZM Port and Harbor Planning Program - Municipal Harbor Plans. Mass.gov. <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/czm-port-and-harbor-planning-program-municipal-harbor-plans>

¹² Boston Planning & Development Agency. (n.d.). Fort Point Channel Watersheet Activation Plan. <https://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/fortpointchannelwatersheetactivationplan>

¹³ Boston Redevelopment Authority, *Master Plan for Planned Development Area No.69: South Boston the 100 Acres* (2007). Retrieved March 2024, from <https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/a993d0c8-b087-413c-91ad-29edfe2d5c75>.

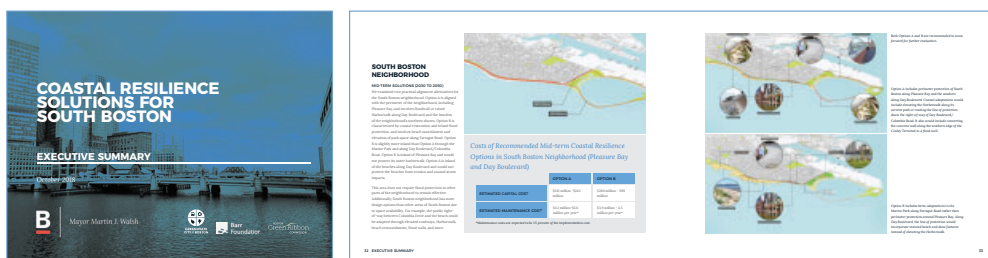
NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

In an attempt to imagine a future where Boston could coexist with sea level rise, the City of Boston, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Boston Society of Architects and The Boston Harbor Association, a predecessor to Boston Harbor Now, developed the **Living with Water** competition to “design solutions envisioning a beautiful, vibrant, and resilient Boston that is prepared for end-of-the-century climate conditions ...”¹⁴ Many of the creative designs used a “bathtub model” that predicted flooding using elevation instead of considering where flood waters could move inland and assumed coastal storm flooding water would remain in place rather than accounting for the tides moving water in and out of the affected areas.

In 2018 The Boston Environment Department released **Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston**, more commonly known as “Climate Ready South Boston.” The Climate Ready plan was one of a series of neighborhood plans offering proposed adaptation measures to protect Boston’s waterfront. The plan presented near- and long-term strategies and visions for reducing risk due to sea level rise and other types of coastal flooding.

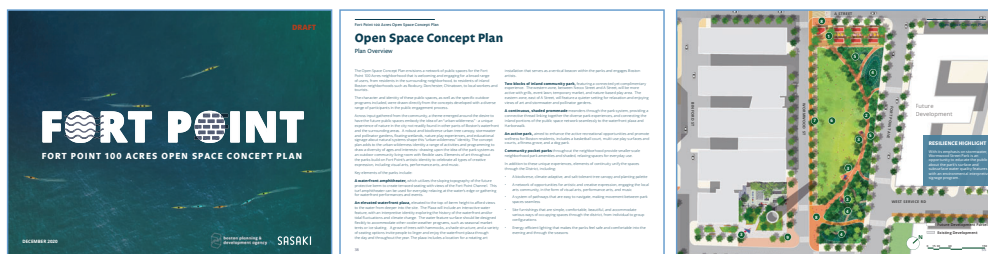
Building on the 2006 master plan for the “100 Acres” along the western side of the Fort Point Channel, the **100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan** was created to illustrate guidance for constructing future parks and open spaces in the area along the channel and back into the neighborhood. The proposed parks along the water are elevated to protect the area from nuisance flooding in the channel. A draft version of the plan was issued in 2021.

¹⁴ Boston Planning & Development Agency. (2015). Mayor Walsh honors winners of Boston Living with Water competition during celebration at BSA Space <https://www.bostonplans.org/news-calendar/news-updates/2015/06/09/mayor-walsh-honors-winners-of-boston-living-with-w>



COASTAL RESILIENCE SOLUTIONS FOR SOUTH BOSTON

Plan found at https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/embed/file/2018-09/climatereadysouthboston_execsum_v9.1s_web.pdf.



100 ACRES OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN

Plan found at <https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/e9b1c3e-1f50-4514-9334-e29be1be9f86>.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

As a result of many of these planning efforts, new development has been proposed south of Summer Street along the channel. Even more development is anticipated when major property owners like Gillette or the United States Postal Service relocate existing facilities which Gillette has officially committed to doing. The descriptions below are accurate as of publication in **September 2024**.

15 Necco Street was conceived as a new global headquarters for General Electric.¹⁵ The building is now nearly complete, but GE will only occupy the restored historic building next door at 5 Necco. The new building is 12-stories with “approximately 316,000 square-foot, multi-tenant office/life sciences/research and development building with active ground floor uses, such as retail and restaurant spaces.” Based on its proximity to transit and other parking structures, no underground parking was added to the site. The development will also contribute to a neighborhood housing trust, a neighborhood jobs trust, and the Fort Point Operations Board.

Channelside (244-284 A Street) is a new development proposal by Related Beal that was approved by the Boston Planning Department board in 2022.¹⁶ The project will consist of three buildings: a residential building, a commercial mixed-use building, and lab/R&D building with below-grade parking, and two new parks that will be transferred to the Boston Parks and Recreation Department.¹⁷ Channelside will also include the creation of a berm, which was called for in Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston. The berm will provide both coastal storm protection and the elevation change allow for the integration of an amphitheater that will provide the artist-oriented Fort Point community with a new performing arts space.

232 A Street was envisioned as two buildings in earlier master plans, but the most recent filings for the project indicate that the developer only intends to construct a single 455,050 square-foot building with a mix of lab/office/R&D.¹⁸ On the underdeveloped parcel, there will be an expanded park adjacent to the existing Binford Street Park, which will include a berm that aligns with its neighbors at Channelside.

Gillette Factory in October 2023, Procter & Gamble announced that they would be moving their industrial operations to Andover.¹⁹ This specific area has never had a government-led planning process to define the expectations for the site.

¹⁵ Boston Planning & Development Agency. (n.d.). 15 Necco Street. <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/15-necco-street>.

¹⁶ Boston Planning & Development Agency. (n.d.). 244-284 A Street. <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/244-284-a-street>.

¹⁷ Boston Planning & Development Agency, Document No. 8015 (2022). Retrieved from <https://bpda.app.box.com/s/haasec4vlsbypgm1olru6ce7mv6tcs7d>.

¹⁸ Boston Planning & Development Agency. (n.d.). 232 A Street. <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/232-a-street>.

¹⁹ Chesto, J. (2023, October 23). After more than a century of blade-making, gillette set to end manufacturing in south boston. Boston Globe. Retrieved March 2024, from <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/10/24/business/gillette-razors-south-boston-andover/>.

INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Along the east side of the Fort Point Channel, owners of new and existing properties along the water are considering how best to prepare for the future impacts of climate change and present daily nuisance flooding as well as building more public spaces and other amenities for the growing population. Both the City and building owners are in the process of planning adaptation strategies and designing parks.

The **Fort Point Channel Berm**, an elevated wall that is hidden in the landscape with sloped and planted sides, is proposed along the waterfront from Gillette north to 15 Necco Street. This extended section of the waterfront is particularly vulnerable to flooding, and creating a continuous line of defense is necessary to protect the district. If designed and implemented effectively, the berm will tie into the elevated sections of the parks proposed in the 100 Acre Open Space Plan, creating nearly half a mile of continuous flood protection along the east side of the Channel. In April 2023 the Boston Planning and Development Agency contracted a consultant for design and engineering services for the berm. The consultants will conduct an engineering assessment and site investigations of the project area and develop a design that will be refined through community engagement and evaluated by FEMA. The final design will need to meet resilience guidelines, flood-level protection standards, and other relevant measures. The Boston Water and Sewer Commission is also concerned about how stormwater will impact the area inland of the berm.

The Boston's Children's Museum, the only nonprofit landowner on the east side of the Fort Point Channel, has initiated a planning process to renovate its grounds and integrate resilience improvements from Summer Street to the Moakley Bridge. Flood protection measures, which need to be elevated 4 feet above the existing grade in order to meet the target elevation, can be integrated into the landscape as planters, steps, and other features. The museum is exploring longer-term measures that may include expanding the waterfront and access to the water.

FORT POINT WATERFRONT COMMUNITY DESIGN WORKSHOP

The Fort Point Waterfront Community Design Workshop series, like other plans of the past, attempted to better understand how to create coastal flood protection and an activated waterfront while addressing a range of climate change and public access issues. During the workshop process, teams composed of local experts and professional designers were challenged to re-imagine sites along the Fort Point Channel that embodied the principles of **Harborwalk 2.0**. Over the course of a month, teams brainstormed resilience measures and amenities for their site ultimately culminating in three different re-imaginings of sites that incorporated Nature-Based Approaches, traditional flood infrastructure, and new activation and access strategies. These final visions were shared with the broader community for additional input.

Since the **Living with Water** design competition, Bostonians have gained a better understanding of how coastal flooding will impact this area and, more specifically, understand that high waters caused by coastal storm flooding are temporary, rising and then subsiding with the tide. Hoping to combine the amenity ideation from the early 2000s plans and creativity of the **Living with Water** competition with the updated understanding of coastal flooding from Climate Ready, the Fort Point Waterfront Community Design Program was designed to build off of the past planning work while capitalizing on the developmental timeline of the Fort Point Channel. With incoming development still hammering out the details of their space and the new development coming online, the results of this workshop and this guide are intended to help the community and developers have a shared baseline understanding of the gaps and missing needs development can fill for the neighborhood.



HARBORWALK 2.0 FRAMEWORK

Today's Boston Harborwalk is a public waterfront walkway that includes parks, resting areas, art, seating, cafes, exhibit spaces, interpretive signage, water transportation facilities, and many other public amenities.²⁰ It was initially conceived as part of the 1984 Harborpark plan developed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), now the Boston Planning Department. Intended to bring people to the waterfront, Boston's Harborwalk is a tremendous success story, having established nearly 43 miles of publicly connected waterfront for residents and visitors.

But this 20th-century system for creating these public benefits was not designed to generate the bold solutions necessary to meet the demands of today's challenges. The existing Harborwalk does not provide the flood protection and adaptation needed in the face of climate change. What's more, we know that the privately owned public spaces have not consistently created a waterfront that has felt accessible or welcoming to all Bostonians.



VISUALIZING HARBORWALK 2.0

Ideas for seawall interventions as part of BHN's vision for Harborwalk 2.0.

HARBORWALK 2.0

Harborwalk 2.0 articulates the vision for the work ahead, to hold Boston's waterfront, and the stakeholders who create and maintain it, to a higher standard. It is a framework for ensuring that waterfront, the areas along the shoreline and inland to the major parallel streets are designed for equity, coastal resilience, and access.



EQUITY - the waterfront should center equity and inclusion in its design, development, programming, and uses.



COASTAL RESILIENCE - the waterfront should be prepared for the impacts of climate change, including coastal and stormwater flooding and heat.



ACCESS - the waterfront should be accessible and welcoming, reflected in its activation, connectivity to other waterfront paths and to the city's neighborhoods, and signage.

It's a vision that Boston Harbor Now's President and CEO, Kathy Abbott, has described as "a welcoming collection of connected public spaces that keep the people in and the water out." For the Fort Point Channel, in particular, this could mean creating a waterfront that provides district-level protection and looks to maintain the tranquility it provides for current and future residents. It means building an accessible Harborwalk that allows all users, whether locals or visitors, to enjoy the waterfront and amenities unique to Fort Point and its history.

²⁰ About the Boston Harborwalk. Boston Harborwalk. (2019, February 11). <https://www.bostonharborwalk.org/about-the-boston-harborwalk/>

DESIGN WORKSHOP SERIES

New projects along the Channel offer possibilities for new community amenities and public open spaces that could enhance the neighborhood and support a wide range of activities for residents and the broader community. These projects also create the opportunity to incorporate adaptations along the waterfront to address significant threats of flooding along pathways that extend into South Boston. At the same time, the arrival of new development—particularly in the form of new life science offices, lab space and market-rate housing—raises concerns for residents. Throughout previous planning and engagement efforts, community members have expressed a desire to see the neighborhood retain its distinctive character and ensure that new open spaces feel accessible, welcoming, and truly public well into the future.

With several years of planning for climate change and new development occurring in the neighborhood, the Fort Point Community Design Workshop was an opportunity to create comprehensive strategies for addressing threats of flooding and exclusivity. By creating design proposals that provide climate adaptation strategies alongside accessibility and inclusion in the open spaces and ground floor building uses along the waterfront, the community could set expectations for future development along the waterfront.

The Fort Point Waterfront Community Design Workshop series was designed to collect input from residents and other local stakeholders in partnership with design professionals to create visual models for the future of the neighborhood's waterfront. Unlike past initiatives that either did not encourage creative visioning or did not fully account for coastal flooding in Boston, these workshops married the two, resulting in creative community-generated ideas for accessing, activating, and flood-proofing the channel. These grand ideas are meant to serve as inspiration for future Fort Point Channel designs and encourage future change-makers to think bigger, even if their exact incorporation is not feasible.

DESIGN WORKSHOP SERIES

A Starting Point

The Fort Point Waterfront Community Design Workshop series took place in the fall of 2022 as a month-long process to collect input from residents and other local stakeholders in partnership with design professionals and create visual models for the future of the neighborhood's waterfront. Teams composed of local experts and professional designers were challenged to reimagine sites along the Fort Point Channel that embodied the principles of Harborwalk 2.0. As a part of their site revisions, teams were asked to:

- Recommend inclusivity and resilience strategies for different types of waterfront conditions: parks, new residential, historic residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial development.
- Suggest near-term actions that existing property owners can take to improve their waterfront sites.
- Create bold design concepts that push the envelope for a re-imagined Fort Point waterfront that honors the city's history and prepares for a more inclusive and resilient future.

These recommendations, suggestions, and ideas resulted in site redesigns prepared by each team that addressed the core elements of Harborwalk 2.0, went beyond the legal standards of Chapter 91 for facilities of public accommodation and a 12-foot-wide path, and incorporated Boston's new coastal zoning standards.



DESIGN WORKSHOP SERIES

Design Workshop Series kick-off meeting.

DESIGN WORKSHOP SERIES

Project Sites

Teams were encouraged to choose one of two locations along the Fort Point Channel where existing buildings and uses have limited planning activities and lead to flood risks:

- The Arcaded Buildings include three distinct buildings located along the eastern side of the channel between Congress Street and Necco Connection. The buildings in this section have covered walkways, and both the Harborwalk path and the lowest occupiable floors of the buildings on the waterfront are not sufficiently elevated to accommodate storm flooding today, let alone future flooding. Some have temporary flood protection devices that can be deployed during storms.
- The Southeastern Edge of the Channel is the current location of the Gillette World Shaving Headquarters. A seawall or berm is being planned for this section to serve as flood protection; however, if this site changes use or ownership, there is the potential for a more significant redevelopment of the area with more creative climate adaptation and open space opportunities.

Team members, a mix of professional designers and local stakeholders, met for the first time to pick a site to redesign and envision what a resilient, equitable, and accessible Fort Point Channel could look like. Once teams had picked a site, they were tasked with brainstorming new ideas for their sites. As the teams discussed and organized their thoughts, many of the groups developed guiding principles and values to help shape their brainstorming.



PROJECT SITES

Sites of intervention along the Fort Point Channel as proposed through the team proposals.

DESIGN WORKSHOP SERIES

Who and Why?

As prompts to brainstorm, teams considered what they personally hoped to see incorporated into future designs of Fort Point and also made a concerted effort to think beyond their own perspective. Teams asked themselves: *Who currently visits the channel, are they local residents or visitors from all over the region? Why do they come? When do they visit, and for how long do they stay?* Different personas would likely be attracted to different activities. They also tried to understand how the Fort Point Channel community might change in the future. *What would the population dynamics look like?*

Existing Conditions

To understand what they wanted to see in the future, teams considered what they currently valued about Fort Point. Team members enjoyed the tranquility of the area and the views afforded by the channel. They also appreciated the history of the area and wanted to ensure that it was celebrated. Extending beyond the actual channel itself, they valued the character of the buildings, and they loved the neighborhood's commitment to art and education.

The groups also considered what they disliked about the channel. Every team wanted an accessible channel, noting that the existing stairs were prohibitive to strollers, wheelchair users, and cyclists traveling along the water's edge. They also recognized that the channel would need to be more climate resilient. The Fort Point Channel has already experienced coastal storm flooding, particularly during the winter storms of January and March 2018. Some smaller segments are inundated during very high tides even without storms. As sea levels continue to rise, teams noted that the channel would need to be more adaptable to the changing environment and perhaps some parts would even become intentionally flood-able. Participants observed that ground floors and streetscapes, which were highly valued for the activation they provide, would also be the most vulnerable to the impacts of flooding.

DESIGN WORKSHOP SERIES

Design Iterations

After team members brainstormed ideas for the waterfront, each team refined their ideas, prioritizing which elements were most important and feasible to incorporate into their chosen site. The teams then worked to redesign their section of the channel, fitting their new features into their site and then creating a visual representation of how the redesign might look.

Teams continued to meet over the next month. The organizers also offered virtual and in-person office hours that teams could use as potential meeting locations and times and for people who did not attend the kick-off meeting to share ideas.

Exactly one month after the kick-off, team members shared their reimagined sites with members of the public at the final workshop. Teams displayed their new visions on posterboard for the public to review and then took turns presenting their reimagined sites, elaborating on their proposed features, and diving deeper into the reasoning for their design decisions. After learning more about the proposals, members of the public provided feedback on what they liked and what concerned them about each new group's visions. New groups were then formed to discuss the feasibility of different components and strategies for the implementation of key components.

The ideas, themes, and values shared throughout the month-long process are summarized in the Community Recommendations section. Of the four teams that were originally built during the initial kick-off meeting, three created final designs to share with the public, which can be described in the Team Proposals section.



DESIGN WORKSHOP SERIES

Final team presentations of the Fort Point Channel Design Charette.

COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations came out of the community design workshop series process. Throughout the process, participants brainstormed ideas that they hoped to see incorporated into future designs of the Fort Point Channel. As each team refined site designs and redesigns, they sorted through their ideas and selected the ones that best supported their section of the channel, but all of the ideas generated along the way were recorded regardless of whether they were incorporated into their final designs. The suggestions below represent the full range of community brainstorms and desires. Dozens of new ideas were proposed, ranging from watersheet activation to resilience measures to new access routes.

All of the compiled ideas are sorted here into the categories of the Harborwalk 2.0 principles and further subdivided into thematic categories that emerged. Ideas that were frequently suggested across multiple phases of the workshop process are starred (★). Ideas that were incorporated into one of the teams' final designs are attributed to the team that suggested it through the following icons- (♿) Accessible Arcade, (🌳) Massachusetts Park, and (🐭) Channel RATS.

Ongoing and Short Term -

These recommendations are already being implemented somewhere on the channel or could feasibly be done in the next three years with sufficient funding and staffing to implement the idea. (ex. floating art)

Medium Term -

These recommendations require a significant investment and likely require new development in order to be implemented or they face potential regulatory hurdles. These ideas may be completed in five to fifteen years. (ex. floating swimming pool)

Long Term -

These recommendations require a larger paradigm shift in how the channel and the surrounding area is used, would require coordination among multiple land owners, or significant outside investment to support. These ideas may be completed in a 20 to 30 year time horizon, if there is support for these broader changes. (ex. a bridge across the channel at Binford Street)

A few of the ideas from the initial brainstorming exercise did not seem to provide a practical or feasible solution to the challenges being addressed or lacked enough clarity for us to speculate on what the project would entail. These ideas were: digital billboard (not clear if this was an artistic piece or an advertisement wall), parking garage under Fort Point Channel (complex considering the work needed to build the silver line and I-90 extension tunnels), water tunnel (perhaps as an alternative to a bridge), water purification/desalination (ecologically complex and likely not something that could be permitted), and expand boundaries of Chapter 91 (this state law is defined by the way in which tidelands were filled and how far the property is from the water's edge and can't be expanded).

EQUITY & INCLUSION



These ideas focus on the creation of a more welcoming district that would help create a more inclusive environment. Although improvements to access and resilience may contribute to a more equitable waterfront, those are listed separately. Few ideas explicitly addressed racial or socioeconomic inequities, instead they focused primarily on ways to activate the channel and attract a more diverse group of users. The call for affordable housing and a community advisory board was the most explicit ask for increased social equity.





Artists have played a key role in the Fort Point neighborhood's history, transforming the vacant industrial area into a community centered on cultural expression. It is, therefore, no surprise that the community wanted to ensure that art remained a central part of the character of the channel and the surrounding neighborhood. Several floating concepts (amphitheater, performance barge, sculpture park, and art) are listed under Watersheet Activation as well.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|---|--|------|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | ★ Water Sculpture Park / Floating Art | Building on a successful existing program, art in the channel was a common idea championed by multiple teams. | m |
| | Art Installations | Expand the existing neighborhood offerings with additional public art. | |
| | Artistic Lighting Installations | Much like the Summer Street underpass on A Street, this could activate the underutilized alleyways and interstitial spaces adjacent to the Harborwalk. | m |
| | Art Sculptures | Implementation could take the form of an official sculpture stroll, a prominent art podium to draw people to the end of the channel, or a collection of rotating public art installations along the shoreline. | |
| | Decorative Lighting | Building on a successful existing program, art in the channel was a common idea championed by multiple teams. | |
| | Transform Parking Areas into Public Arts and Events Spaces | Building on a successful existing program, art in the channel was a common idea championed by multiple teams. | m |
| MEDIUM TERM | Amphitheaters | An outdoor performance venue is currently proposed for implementation at Channelside (244-284 A Street). | |
| | Artist Studios | This could be implemented as live-work housing or designated spaces for production. | |
| | Flex Space for Special Events | Open plazas and grassy lawns can be set aside for flexible programming. | |
| | Performance Barges | One strategy for expanding performing arts productions is to float the stage on the water. | |
| LONG TERM | Floating Amphitheater | If the land-side amphitheater is not built or a more creative space is desired, a floating amphitheater can provide additional space for performances on the water. | |

EQUITY & INCLUSION - **BUILDING USES**



To create a welcoming space and support year round attractions to the channel, people suggested various indoor uses that would support the public visitation and programs. Ideas included a mix of uses that would help further the arts and culture that already exist in the neighborhood as well as restaurants and cafes. Participants also wanted more housing along with amenities that would serve the existing neighborhood residents, like a day care and library. Overall, the suggestions for indoor uses were more tailored to supporting the existing community while outdoor uses more often focused on creating a destination.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--|------|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | ★ Bathrooms | Additional public restrooms were requested/suggested throughout the process. While restrooms do exist in buildings at the north end of the channel, people wanted to ensure that they are included as new buildings are developed, especially to support new parks. | m |
| | Coffee | There are numerous coffee shops in the Seaport and west of the channel, but within the focus area only the only option is Vester Cafe. The Starbucks that was on the Harborwalk at Congress Street has closed. | |
| MEDIUM TERM | ★ Affordable Housing | One team called for a neighborhood-wide affordable housing policy to help combat gentrification. Other teams also considered affordable housing provisions in their discussions and proposals. | |
| | Affordable Commercial Space | The cost of rent can be prohibitive or burdensome to small local businesses. Providing commercial space at reduced rent, especially in facilities of public accommodation required by Chapter 91, can help support more diverse businesses. | |
| | City-Owned Space | There are two examples in the neighborhood of private developers designing park space and then deeding it to the City of Boston to become an official public park. Residents also want city-owned indoor space to serve as a library or another public purpose like a polling place, post office, or public meeting venue. | |
| | Community Space | People are looking for gathering space for local groups and other organizations to host meetings and events. | |
| | Cultural Institutions | The channel has several cultural institutions on and around it, including the Boston Children's Museum, Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum, the BSA Space, and several FPAC galleries. More are desired to make this an even more robust cultural district. | |

EQUITY & INCLUSION - **BUILDING USES CONT.**




| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|--|------|
| MEDIUM TERM | Day Care | These facilities make the neighborhood more welcoming to families with young children whether they opt to live or work there. | |
| | Fresh Produce Market | There are seasonal farmers markets outdoors in adjacent neighborhoods and a Trader Joe's near the northeast section of the channel, but nothing along the channel. | |
| | Housing | The new development in the area skews towards commercial, lab, retail, and hotel. Additional housing (especially affordable housing, see above) is desired. | |
| | Housing Above the Train Tracks | Improved conditions around the Fort Point Channel could incentivize new air rights housing development above the existing railroad tracks. | |
| | Library | The nearest branches are in Chinatown (1 mile) and the South Boston neighborhood (1.5 miles), and there has long been a desire for a fully public building within the Fort Point district and the Seaport. | |
| | Lunch Facilities | There are limited restaurants between Congress Street and West Broadway, and most of them focus on dinner and/or table service. | |
| | Makerspace | There are artist studios within the district as well as Artists for Humanities Epicenter, but there are no shared resources for making available to the public to use or to join as a member. | |
| | Market Gallery Space | FPAC has three public galleries and hosts open studios, but these are not commercial galleries. | |
| | Pop Up Shops for Small Businesses | Many ground floor retail spaces cater to larger stores or chain stores with their size or layout. Intentionally subdividing spaces, creating smaller footprints, or offering low cost short term leases can foster small business development. | |
| | Roof Decks | At Independence Wharf, there is a public roof deck and look out created by Chapter 91. The public is also able to go to the roof of the Envoy Hotel, but they must be 21 to enter the outdoor bar there and must pay for drinks to sit there. | |
| | Vegetarian Restaurants | Existing restaurants along and near the Channel offer vegetarian options, but none specializes in this. | |
| | Water Museum | This was a specific example of a suggested cultural institution (see above). | |
| | Workforce Development | Programs that train new employees, young workers, or folks from marginalized groups have been sponsored by a range of private property owners, developers, and employers across Boston. | |

EQUITY & INCLUSION - **OUTDOOR AMENITIES**



On land, people wanted to see a wide range of amenities that would allow them to spend time enjoying the channel comfortably. Many of the features suggested were things typically found in parks. Ideas also included spaces that would offer protection from the elements or support activation along the channel. Some outdoor amenities, including parks, pools, and trees, can be found in the Resilience - Addressing Heat section.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|--|--|---|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | Covered Spaces for Shelter | Create comfortable spaces for inclement weather. | m |
| | Covered Passages | People appreciated the current weather protection afforded by the existing passages, like those along the arcade buildings, and wanted to see them expanded. | |
| | Food Trucks | These could be valuable to activate the area during an event or to add dining options to an area with limited restaurants. | |
| | Lighting | Continuous lighting for safer conditions. Different property owners and types of lights and lampposts make today's lighting inconsistent. | |
| | Passive Areas to Sit by the Water | There are benches along parts of the Harborwalk and in Binford Street Park. More seating options are desired. | |
| | Sunlight | Some participants were concerned about the impacts of building shadows when the area is fully developed. | |
| | Trashcans | There are some trash receptacles along the water today. More are needed if the area attracts more visitors. | |
| | Water Measurement / Recording Historic Events | Interpretive markers to show changes in sea level rise and impacts of past historic flood events. A recent art installation by Carolina Aragón illustrated some of these issues. | |
| MEDIUM TERM | Exercise Equipment and Active Recreation Space | The Fort Point Channel is mostly geared towards passive use. Running and biking are the only recreational activities now. |  |
| | Sports | Sports fields are available in South Boston, the South End, and in Boston Common. There are very limited sports courts closer to the channel and the Fort Point neighborhood. | |
| | Urban Farm | Parcels awaiting redevelopment or intentionally designed roofs can provide a space for gardening in the city. Eastie Farm has provided one model for how this can be done in Boston. ²¹ | |

²¹ Eastie Farm's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. Eastie Farm. (2023, February 6). <https://eastiefarm.com/strategy/>

EQUITY & INCLUSION - **PROGRAMMING**



Programming ideas include specific activation suggestions as well as strategies for attracting a wider range of voices to the process of developing programs and broad participation in programs.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|---------------------|---|---|------|
| ONGOING / SHORTTERM | Community Advisory Board | Though most community advisory boards are very local, this team proposed a group that could inform programming strategies with representation from across the City of Boston to bring a more diverse audience to the Fort Point neighborhood. | m |
| | Community Bulletin Board with Scheduled Events | It's currently challenging to find and share information about events happening on the channel. Whether virtual or physical, a community board could help to centralize information. | m |
| | Uninterrupted Markets and Activities | Surrounding areas including the Rose Kennedy Greenway and the Seaport have farmers markets and craft markets, but these offerings are outside of the neighborhood. | |
| | Water Tours | Regular tours on the water or along the waterfront would supplement the tours led by non-profit groups that occur sporadically. | |
| | Winter Activities | Activation for the area in all seasons, especially when it's cold. | |

EQUITY & INCLUSION - RECREATION ON THE WATER



Many ideas were linked to active recreation on the water, with a focus mostly on boating and swimming. Though one person suggested limiting boat traffic in the channel, an overwhelming number of people expressed interest in different types of boating activities, mostly non-motorized. Although these uses are currently allowed, participants also identified infrastructure that would facilitate more people being able to take advantage of boating on the channel.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|---|--|------|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | ★ Kayaks | Though kayaking is allowed on the channel now, workshop participants noted that it is not easy to do due to confusing signage and insufficient access to equipment and facilities that would make it feasible. Kayak storage is rented at a premium and rentable kayaks are complicated and expensive to access. Free kayak days led by the American City Coalition have demonstrated the popularity of this idea. | |
| | Boating Supplies for People Without Their Own | Although there is some storage space for private boats, rentable boats as well as proper flotation devices, oars/paddles, etc. are limited. Signage near the Children's Museum indicates that kayak rental is an option, but participants did not have experience with the system. Rental row boats and power boats previously available near the Barking Crab have not been advertised recently. | |
| | Deck/Dock to be on the Water | Whether by design or due to the local culture of how the existing docks are used, there is not a floating dock on the channel where people go to relax like the ones available along the Esplanade on the Charles River. | |
| | Dragon Boats | Two dragon boat clubs currently use the channel to practice and more are interested in using this watersheet. Both groups noted challenges with launching and storing boats and other equipment. | |
| | Free Crew for Beginners | Rowing lessons for those who want to learn. | |
| | Limited Boat Traffic | No motorized recreational boating on the channel. This is already a challenge at high tide with low bridge heights at Congress Street and Summer Street. | |
| | Paddle Boarding | This is currently only available to people with their own equipment. Like kayaking, this may be an additional rental amenity to provide in the future. | |
| | Storage | Storage for boating equipment is limited today. | |
| MEDIUM TERM | ★ Boat Launches | Many people wanted to see more infrastructure to support non-motorized boating on the channel, more specifically a boat launch with a ramp, which could also support getting floating art into and out of the channel. | |
| | Community Marina | Accessible community marina for non-motorized boats with storage space in a garage for dragon boats and stand-up paddle boards. | |
| | Docks for Community Boating | Although several docks already exist on the channel the call for more underscores the community's strong desire to expand boating in the area. New docks should be designed to address unmet needs. | |
| | Hoses to Rinse off Salt Water | Boaters and others who get wet want a station to rinse off salt water after exercising or swimming. | |
| | Paddle Boat that Collects Trash | There have been boats recently developed to help collect floating trash from rivers. Mr. Trash Wheel and his "family" collect debris from rivers that feed Baltimore's Inner Harbor. | |
| | Swimmable Channel | At present, the channel is not clean enough for the public to swim in safely. An increase in separated sewers and treatment could make this a swimmable destination. | |
| | Swimming Platforms | With improved water quality, designated areas for swimming and platforms with ladders can create safe places for people to swim. | |

EQUITY & INCLUSION - **WATERSHEET ACTIVATION**



While the water in the channel may be nice to look at, many groups suggested taking advantage of the water. Some activities could only be done on the water while other ideas suggested ways that a floating version of a community asset could make it a regional destination. While there are compelling reasons to create a floating pool, if a swimming facility is an urgent need for the community, a pool and other floating ideas may be easier to implement on land.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|---|---|------|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | ★ Water Sculpture Park/ Floating Art | Building on a successful existing program, art in the channel was a common idea championed by multiple teams. | |
| MEDIUM TERM | Floating Community Pool | These are popular in other cities but do not yet exist in Boston. Elsewhere along the Boston shoreline, there are several beaches, and the North End has a waterfront pool. | |
| | Floating Living Barge | Floating barges for tidal and sea life education and artist space. | |
| | Floating Restaurant | Though many Boston restaurants overlook the Harbor, there are none that float yet. East Boston has a bar on a boat that floats, and the Barking Crab recently proposed a floating addition to their restaurant. However, the proposal was withdrawn after it was made clear that the project would not be able to be permitted. | |
| | Performance Barge | One strategy for expanding performing arts productions is to float the stage on the water. | |
| LONG TERM | Floating Amphitheater | If the land-side amphitheater is not built or a more creative space is desired, a floating amphitheater can provide additional space for performances on the water. | |
| | Floating Green Space / Floating Park | Boston's own Little Island (mimicking the project in New York) with green space for festivals, community programs, and a tourist destination. | |

RESILIENCE & ADAPTATION



Workshop participants primarily focused on two major resilience goals: flood protection and ecological restoration. Recommendations of ways to mitigate urban heat island effects, another significant environmental burden of the climate crisis and one that already impacts Boston today, are also included here. The ideas put forward heavily emphasized the use of Nature-Based Approaches (NBAs) to mitigate climate change impacts. The proposals would offer multiple benefits in order to reduce flood risks from sea level rise and storm surge as well as enhance water quality and help mitigate storm water runoff.



RESILIENCE & ADAPTATION - ADDRESSING HEAT



The increase of very hot days is one of the most observable impacts of climate change, and projections indicate that Boston could have significantly more days over 90 by 2070. Data collected by the City of Boston shows that the west side of the Fort Point Channel, around South Station and the Post Office and extending into Chinatown, has some of the highest daytime and overnight temperatures in the city. Creating indoor and outdoor places for people to cool off as well as passive solutions to lower temperatures, from cool roofs to replacing asphalt areas with plants, can make Boston more livable in the future.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|--|------|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | Shade | The industrial history and present uses in the area have limited trees in the neighborhood. With few trees near the water and multiple buildings still in the design phase, most of the waterfront is unprotected from the sun. Trees and structures can offer protection. | |
| MEDIUM TERM | Drinking Fountains | Water fountains, along with water bottle fillers, allow people to stay hydrated and cool. | m |
| | Grass | There is little grass along the channel today. Undeveloped land is paved for parking. | |
| | Parks | Expanding on the existing parks: Martin's Park, Binford Street Park, and Rolling Bridge Park, the 100 Acres Open Space conceptual plan calls for several new parks, including Necco Street Park and Wormwood Street Park. | |
| | Planted Trees to Continue Arcade | Use trees to create a covered shelter over the Harborwalk and continue the arcaded feel. | m |
| | Pool | The nearest indoor pool is at the Wang YMCA of Chinatown. The nearest public outdoor pool is BCYF Mirabella Pool in the North End. | |
| | Trees | Other than at Martin's Park, most existing trees around the Fort Point Channel are along the edge of the Gillette site and are at risk of being removed when the proposed flood protection measures are constructed. | |
| | Water Park Fountains | Splash pads and fountains are limited in the area. The Rings Fountain on the Rose Kennedy Greenway is the nearest existing facility. | |
| LONG TERM | Beach Park | Create a beach connected to green space at the end of the channel. To allow for swimming, the water quality of the channel must be improved first. | |

RESILIENCE & ADAPTATION - **ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION**



Community members wanted to see the Channel's edge returned to something with the same character as the natural habitat of Massachusetts. Ideas primarily centered on reverting the built environment and gray infrastructure to more natural landscaping. It is worth noting that the land immediately surrounding the channel is man-made, and restoring this land to its pre-colonial ecology without giving up the existing land would not be possible. It may be possible to create a shoreline that mimics a habitat akin to other parts of Boston.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|---|--|------|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | Habitat Space Integrated into Urban Conditions | Designers can identify strategies that support birds, bees, and other pollinators as well as shoreline conditions that create an expanded tidal or in-water habitat. | |
| | Indigenous Plants | Use plants that are native to New England for landscaping. | |
| | ★ Living Seawall | Seawalls designed to create habitat space, enable plant growth, and support shellfish growth can provide coastal protection and improve the ecosystem. | |
| | Lush Saltwater Friendly Greenery | Use salt tolerant plants in floodable areas to ensure that plants are able to bounce back in case of storms and flooding. | |
| MEDIUM TERM | Building Out into the Water | Mimicking natural shorelines may require a combination of filling or dredging in the channel. This is presently restricted by permitting and regulations that do not allow for this type of change. | |
| | Soft Edges | At present the sea walls on either side of the channel form a hard edge to the waterfront. | |
| | Wetlands | Wetlands can support biodiversity & wave attenuation. New developments elsewhere on the harbor have tried to replicate historic marshes, and there are pilots for floating wetlands in the area. | |
| LONG TERM | Convert Gillette to Water Treatment Plant | Convert the current Gillette campus into a treatment plant to address stormwater runoff. | |
| | Removal of Outfalls | Outfalls will be captured and rerouted to Deer Island and will be housed in new pedestrian paths. | |
| | Restoration of Pre-Colonial Ecology | The land around the Fort Point Channel is made up of fill. Reverting this specific area to its former ecology may not be feasible, but converting it to match the ecology of other parts of Boston might be possible. This may also be a very long term strategy for managed retreat, especially in very low lying areas like Widett Circle. | |

RESILIENCE & ADAPTATION - FLOOD MITIGATION



Current city and developer plans focus on keeping flood water out of the neighborhood by building a wall on land and then hiding it in the landscape. Concurrent project proposals are also focused on addressing storm water flooding during rain and snow storms.

Many of the strategies proposed in the workshop to reduce the risk of flooding from sea level rise or storm surge would build into the water. As a result, they may be challenging to implement because existing waterfront regulations and permitting processes discourage this. The popularity of Nature-Based Approaches within these ideas points to the community's desire for strategies that offer multiple benefits and improve ecosystems rather than using traditional gray infrastructure, like the existing seawalls or additional concrete floodwalls.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|-------------|---|--|------|
| MEDIUM TERM | Bivalve Habitat | Oyster reefs and other structures that support bivalves create a habitat for sea life that can help filter water in the channel and also reduce wave energy, lowering the height of waves before they reach the shoreline. | |
| | Emerald Necklace Green Tutu | Projects that imagine extending Boston's Emerald Necklace park system extending into the water or along the waterfront frequently get "Emerald" in their names. The "Emerald Tutu" project, currently being piloted in East Boston, is a system of interconnected circular mats of floating vegetation that can be arranged in rings to protect urban coasts from intensified storms by absorbing wave energy. ²² | |
| | Floating Bio Island with Sea Skimmer | Floating wetlands are being tested locally in the Charles River as well as in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. This proposal combines the natural filtration of a floating eco-system with a device to passively remove floating ocean trash from the surface. The proposed island could also include a wave electric generator. | |
| | Flood Gates | Flood gates have been proposed by the Boston Water and Sewer Commission to address stormwater flooding during a torrential rain or snow event. If a high tide and heavy precipitation were forecasted to arrive at the same time, the barrier would be closed while the channel is still at low tide, creating the storage capacity to hold excess water that drains into the channel from nearby parts of the city. When the storm passes and low tide returns, the gates could be opened, and the water released out into the ocean. | |
| | Nature-Based Approaches | These strategies encompass a wide range of resilient coastline designs modeled on natural systems from cobble berms to oyster reefs to salt marshes. See Appendix I for examples and more information | |
| | Oyster Reef | This is one example of a bivalve habitat described above. The oysters would clean the water in the channel by filtering it and reduce wave energy. | |
| | Raise First Floor of Buildings Above High Water Line | Many existing buildings have occupiable floors below the future high water line. Elevating the first floor would require a redesign of the building either by raising the floor height or by sealing off the first floor and creating a new entrance level. | |
| | Space to Hold Water in a Beautiful Way | Some parks are designed to flood and to store water during storm or high tide events while still being attractive and useful on sunny days. Open spaces can be planted with salt-tolerant plants or species that can withstand time under water or they can be plazas with stormwater tanks underneath them. | |






The ideas proposed ranged from bold revisions of regional infrastructure to more local changes that could be implemented on the channel. Ideas in this category would facilitate people moving around the channel and empower them to navigate the area. Proposals for improved signage and activation for the Harborwalk are included here.



ACCESS & MOBILITY - *ALONG THE HARBORWALK*



Continuing, expanding, and improving the official Harborwalk along the waterfront was the most universally proposed idea throughout the workshop, underscoring the community's appreciation for the access to the water's edge that exists today. Participants had specific ideas about the improvements, including better signage and materials, and they also hoped to see it expanded to the west side of the channel.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | Signage/ Wayfinding | Signage allows people to know what amenities are available and how to navigate to them efficiently. Harborwalk signage in particular lets people know they are in a public space. | m |
| | Trash Management | Keeping the area tidy for people and less attractive to rats. | |
| | Visible Maintenance | Keeping the area neat and inviting with light fixtures working and damages quickly repaired. | m |
| MEDIUM TERM | ★ Elevated Harborwalk | An elevated Harborwalk was included in every team's redesign, reflecting both the popularity of the Harborwalk and the desire to ensure that it would not be submerged with future high tide flooding. | m   |
| | Material Change for Harborwalk | Using distinctive and cohesive materials for the Harborwalk will ensure its recognizability. | m |
| LONG TERM | Harborwalk Near Post Office | There is currently limited Harborwalk access on the west side of the channel by the US Postal Service facility building due to security concerns. If the Post Office were to vacate the site, there would be potential for a new Harborwalk to be redeveloped. |  |

ACCESS & MOBILITY - **GETTING TO THE CHANNEL**



Participants proposed multimodal access routes to and across the channel. Community members specifically called for new modes of water transportation and more bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure from bike paths to pedestrian/bicycle bridges. More regional transportation improvements were also suggested. These envisioned ways to make the channel easily accessible from a variety of Boston neighborhoods.

| TIMELINE | PROPOSED IDEAS | DESCRIPTION | TEAM |
|----------------------|--|--|------|
| ONGOING / SHORT TERM | Access to Channel from South End, Chinatown, and Back Bay | Presently transportation infrastructure like I-93, and the MBTA rail yard cut South End, Chinatown, and Back Bay from the channel. Better wayfinding and improved sidewalks and bike facilities can improve this connection. | |
| | Alleyway Activation | Activating the empty alleys that connect to the Harborwalk to encourage new or safer connections. | |
| | Bluebikes | Although there are Bluebikes stations spread throughout Boston, there are none between Seaport Blvd and the Broadway T stop along the waterfront, a distance of more than 0.8 miles. One inland dock exists at Channel Center. | |
| | Drop-off Locations | Designated drop-off spaces for universal access to amenities along the waterfront. People with disabilities want an easier way to get to the water's edge, especially since the Harborwalk has stairs connecting it to Summer Street. | |
| MEDIUM TERM | ★ Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridges | Pedestrian/bicycle bridge connecting different parts of the Channel would encourage foot traffic. This would be especially important if the Post Office building is replaced by an expansion of South Station. Massachusetts Park suggested that the bridge include murals to amplify artists' voices. | |
| | Connection to South Station | Encourage South Station users to visit the channel with better way finding and programming in the near term and a new bridge in the long term. | |
| | Elevated Parking | Below ground and at grade parking is vulnerable to flooding. Moving parking above grade elevates it out of harms way. | |
| | Parking | Although parking lots currently line the southeastern half of the channel, they will be replaced with new development, potentially resulting in a net loss of spaces. | |
| | Water Taxi | The Fort Point Channel has some water taxi service north of the Congress Street Bridge. New development further south may attract water taxi usage, but the low bridge heights and lack of designated dock facility may limit this. | |
| LONG TERM | Bike Path | The South Bay Harbor Trail was imagined as a continuous bike route from Ruggles Station in Roxbury to the Fort Point Channel. Today, it is complete along Melnea Cass Boulevard and from Albany Street and Frontage Road to the Harborwalk. Connections between those sections are needed. ²⁵ | |
| | Bridge | Additional bridges may help to improve circulation, particularly at Binford Street. | |
| | Cap I-90 and Build Parks on the Decks | Enclose I-90 and build parks on top of it to create a new greenway. | |
| | Consolidate I-93 and enclose with Solar | Simplify I-93 and enclose the elevated highway with solar panels to reduce noise and generate energy. | |
| | Ferries | Low bridges crossing the channel make it impossible for the existing Boston Harbor ferries to navigate it, but specialized vessels could serve some of this area. | |

TEAM PROPOSALS

The ideas displayed in the pages to follow, developed by groups of five to twelve people, were presented both as display boards and slide presentations at the final workshop in the series. In addition to the images incorporated here, the slides created are available online at :

[Include website link here.](#)

The three teams developing final designs developed the team proposals titled Accessible Arcade, Massachusetts Park, and Channel RATS.



TEAM PROPOSALS - ACCESSIBLE ARCADE

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Team Members: | Chelsea Kilburn |
| Lauren Butts | Maria Rodriguez Ortega |
| Patrick Callahan | Jason Purdy |
| Brandon Chan | Teresa Senices |
| Jessica Finch | Celestine Tan |
| John Frey | Michael Travis |

The [Accessible Arcade](#) team re-imagined a site that consisted of waterfront buildings located between Congress Street and Summer Street as well as the building immediately adjacent to the Summer Street bridge. These buildings, affectionately nicknamed the Arcaded Buildings, have covered Harborwalk that hovers above the Fort Point Channel. During storm events today these walkways have been known to flood.

Their philosophy was that the project site and the broader waterfront should balance historic preservation with waterfront resilience and access. The core design of the re-imagined site centered on an elevated and accessible walkway paired with a series of resilience-oriented interventions. The elevated Harborwalk would zigzag back and forth between the center of the channel and the eastern shore to allow for an accessible grade and include improved lighting and additional way-finding to make the Harborwalk feel safer and more welcoming. Connecting to the Harborwalk would be alleys activated with public arts and event space, and below the Harborwalk would be living seawalls and floating wetlands to enhance both the ecological and aesthetic characteristics of this area. Despite all of the changes suggested, the team wanted the existing buildings, which are presently occupied and well liked for their architectural character, to remain untouched to preserve the character of the neighborhood.

Accessible Arcade members also wanted their re-imagined site to create more opportunities for water engagement. In particular, the team suggested additional boat launches, water fountains, bathrooms, and shade to ensure that people could comfortably stay in the area. To further activate the site, programming, informed by the recommendations of a diverse Community Advisory Board, would be implemented and shared on a community notice board with scheduled events.

ACCESSIBLE ARCADE

Rethinking an Elevated Harborwalk

Lauren Butts
Patrick Callahan
Brandon Chan
Jessica Finch
John Frey
Chelsea Kilburn

Maria Rodriguez Ortega
Jason Purdy
Teresa Senices
Celestine Tan
Michael Travis

Facilitated by Kelly Sherman and Melanie Garate

Developed in the 1830s by the Boston Wharf Company and owned by the company until the early 2000s, the Arcade Buildings represent Boston's largest, most cohesive, and most significant collection of late 19th and early 20th century industrial loft buildings. The Arcade Buildings enrich and enhance the unique industrial heritage of the Seaport/Fort Point Channel neighborhood, as expressed in the architectural form, details, and streetscape. We acknowledge, however, that with an increasingly changing climate there are many challenges this neighborhood will face and we see opportunity in this site because of its situation relative to flood pathways.

As a team, we believe the future of the Arca Buildings waterfront should balance sustainable historical preservation and waterfront resilience. Our proposal seeks to implement an elevated and accessible walkway paired with a series of resilience-oriented infrastructural interventions. These could include living seawalls and floating wetlands to enhance both the ecological and aesthetic characteristics of this area, but also other practical site improvements including increased lighting and additional wayfinding. This vision for the waterfront would also rely on programming to activate these various elements, and many conversations involved how to equitably and sustainably involve all Bostonians at the water's edge.

Some challenges we identified:

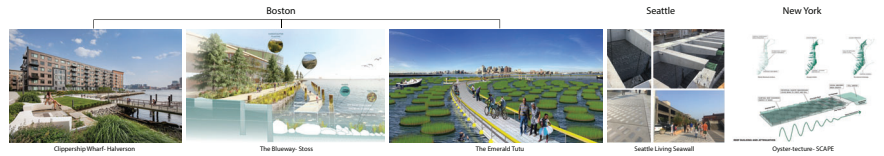
- changes in elevation
- dangerous/slippery material transitions
- a lack of consistent lighting
- regular flooding
- limited access from the neighborhood down to the water
- limited engagement from the surrounding communities
- lack of public amenities and/or lack of information about events and activities

Opportunities we considered:

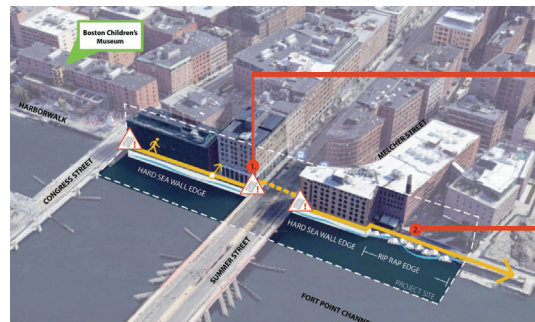
- elevating a walkway could provide a new accessible surface conducive to many different abilities and modes of transportation outside of a flood risk zone
- raising critical access points could allow for programming to take place both above and below the Harborwalk (for example, boat storage below)
- implementing floating wetlands could serve as wave attenuation
- utilizing a living sea wall could provide coastal protection while facilitating habitat space



Team Visions for the Site



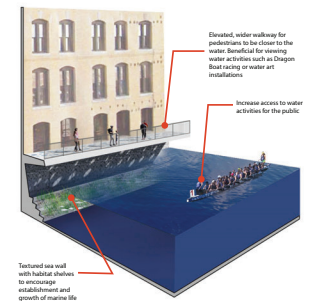
Project Inspiration from Boston and Beyond



Existing Conditions Analysis-- Constraints + Opportunities

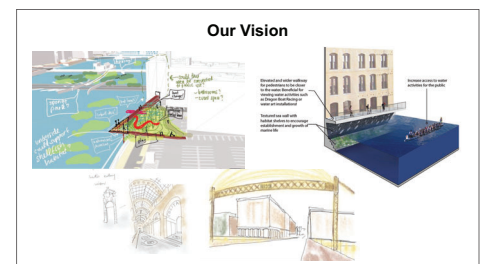
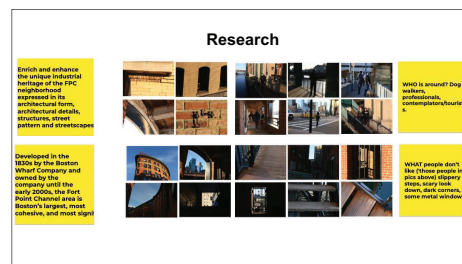


Proposed Elevated + Accessible Harborwalk



PRESENTATION BOARD

Presentation board developed by Accessible Arcade Team.



PRESENTATION SLIDES

Presentation slides developed by the team for the final Design Workshop.

TEAM PROPOSALS - CHANNEL RATS

Team Members:

Chen (Cyrus) Chu
Jill Allen Dixon
Nikunj Doshi
Deeksha Kalra
Kennifer Kaplan
Petter Kuttner

Angela Loescher-Mantal
Veera Mahadomrongkul
Tom McShane
Delaney Morris
Bud Ris
Rebecca Smerling

The **Channel RATS** team chose to redesign the Southeastern Edge site, focusing on creating a destination at the end of the channel that featured both active and passive recreation opportunities while simultaneously providing protection from flood damage. Channel RATS envisioned a number of different potential opportunities for activation of the site. The team emphasized visions that promoted art and performances, waterfront recreation, and environmental education. Their many proposals were all meant to bring people to the end of the channel by creating a destination and engaging paths to bring visitors there.

Their first scenario imagined an elevated Harborwalk atop a seawall with a sculpture stroll and fitness stations along the path. The end of the channel would terminate in a floating park with an amphitheater that could be used for performances and fitness classes.

Their second scenario envisioned a parking deck and park plus a community marina at the end of the channel with living seawalls that would increase the biodiversity of the Fort Point Channel. The marina would house non-motorized boats and contain storage space in the garage for dragon boats and stand-up paddle boats while the park would accommodate space for art installations, cultural festivals, dog parks, and a charity run/walk.

The third vision imagined bicycle and pedestrian bridges crisscrossing the channel with floating islands underneath. The bridges would encourage non-vehicular circulation about the channel while the “floating bio-island” coupled with a sea skimmer (to remove ocean trash) and wave electric generator would increase biodiversity and improve the water conditions. The bio-island would also act as an attraction and serve as a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) educational opportunity.

Channel RATS’ fourth vision included a floating community pool in the channel with an art podium to create a focal point art installation and event space to attract people from the Fort Point neighborhood and beyond.

The team’s fifth and final iteration of the imagined activation of the watersheet through floating islands and barges. The floating islands would serve as venue space for festivals, and community programs while the floating barge would host tidal and sea life education and artist space. The uniqueness of the two spaces would attract tourists and new visitors to the channel, making it an anchoring destination.



CHANNEL RATS

RESILIENT AND TRANSFORMATIVE SPACES

Destination: Fort Point Channel

Jill Allen Dixon
Deeksha Kalra
Angela Loescher-Mantal
Veera Mahadomrongkul
Tom McShane
Delaney Morris

Bud Ris
Peter Kuttner
Chen (Cyrus) Chu
Nikunj Doshi
Jennifer Kaplan
Rebecca Smerling

Imagine a place that is environmentally resilient and can seamlessly, inclusively, and equitably connect communities, land, and water.

Destination: Fort Point explores this idea through a series of scenarios that envision the Southeastern End of the Channel as a site for place for active and passive activation.

At present, the end of the channel is no destination. The industrial site has no comprehensive plan. It is surrounded on all sides - the Gillette factory to the South, which has since expanded its presence since the mid-20th century, MBTA to the Southwest, and the USPS Post Office to the Northwest. The harbor walk adjacent to the site is below sea level, lacks vegetation, and has predominantly impermeable surfaces. It is a pass through space.

However, the following design scenarios re imagine the Southeastern End of the Channel being home to infrastructure that will make it a community destination while simultaneously providing protection for and reducing flood damage:

Waterfront Amphitheater + Elevated Harborwalk

- Elevated harborwalk as seawall
- Floating park and amphitheater space
- Performance space with a sunset view

Parking Deck and Park + Community Marina

- Elevated greenspace for focal point art installation
- Living seawall
- Accessible community marina

Bike/Ped Bridges + Floating Islands

- Pedestrian/bicycle bridges
- Floating bio-island coupled with sea skimmer
- A destination for STEAM and boaters

Infill Art Podium + Floating Pool

- Art podium to create a focal point art installation
- Floating community swimming pool

Little Islands + Floating Dock

- Little islands with green space for programs
- Floating living barges for tidal and sea life



INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESILIENT COMMUNITIES



COMMUNITY FESTIVALS



SWIMMING



BIODIVERSITY



ARTS AND CULTURE



RESILIENCY



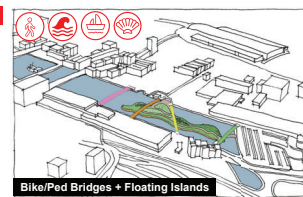
WALKABILITY



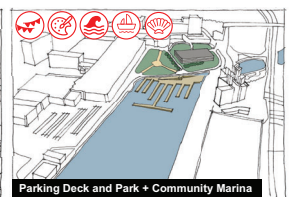
FITNESS



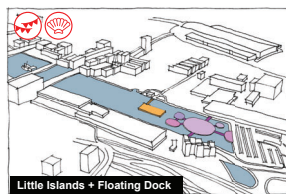
BOATS



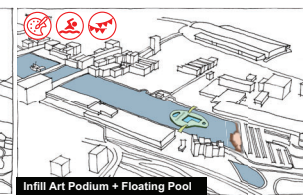
Bike/Ped Bridges + Floating Islands



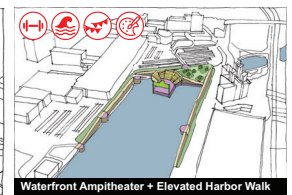
Parking Deck and Park + Community Marina



Little Islands + Floating Dock



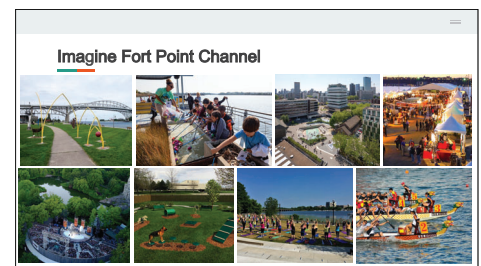
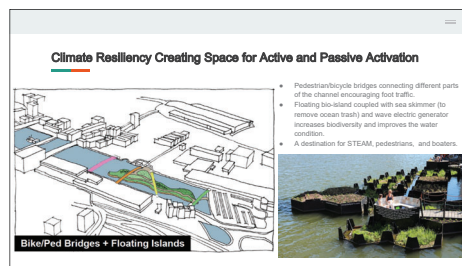
Infill Art Podium + Floating Pool



Waterfront Amphitheater + Elevated Harbor Walk

PRESENTATION BOARD

Presentation board developed by Channel RATS Team.



PRESENTATION SLIDES

Presentation slides developed by the team for the final Design Workshop.

TEAM PROPOSALS - MASSACHUSETT PARK

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Team Members: | Janis McManus |
| Matt Calvey | Hala Nasr |
| Don Eyles | Ben Pearson |
| Abby Jamiel | Sierra Rothberg |
| Paul Kirshen | Lily Ting |
| Scott Lindberg | |

The [Massachusetts Park](#) team’s vision of the Southeastern Edge site grew from four key desires:

- to acknowledge and amplify the history of the area
- to reclaim and clean the natural shoreline
- to amplify the critical importance of the neighborhood’s artist community, and
- to provide a boathouse for competitive dragon boat racing and public water access.

In their redesign, they replaced the current parking lot and Gillette Headquarters with a beach, community boating house/center, and integrated greenway and pedestrian connections to support both ecology and community connection. Understanding that their vision would require time to implement, they created a phased approach to their redesign.

Recognizing the lack of green space for those who live in highly industrialized areas with limited access to greenways and non-vehicular commuting options south of the site, the team wanted to address this environmental injustice in Phase 1 of the vision. They envisioned a grass and tree-lined Harborwalk leading to the beach with swimming and water activities at the end of the channel. Collectively, these were designed to promote environmental justice by increasing green space, rehabilitating habitat, decreasing air pollution, and mitigating/adapting carbon-intensive uses. Art in the form of float-able installations, the creation of illuminated and mural-clad pedestrian bridges, and rotating public art installations along the shoreline would continue the Fort Point Channel’s long artistic history while activating the channel. The team also advocated for a neighborhood-wide affordable housing policy to help curb gentrification.



Massachusetts Park: Knitting History & Culture to the Future

Soon

Abby Jamiel
Ben Pearson
Don Eyles
Duane Lucia
Hala Nasr

Janis McManus
Lily Ting
Matt Calvey
Paul Kirshen
Sierra Rothberg
Scott Lindberg

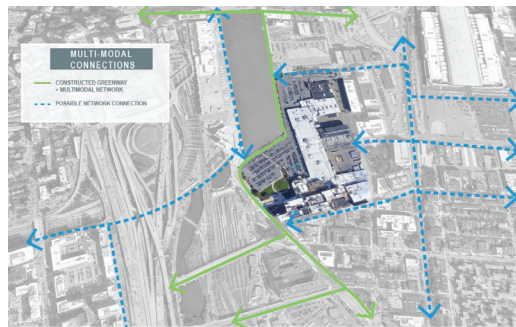
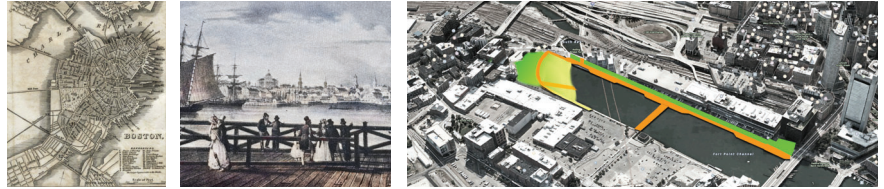
The concept for Massachusetts Park grew from four key desires: **(1)** to acknowledge and amplify the history of the area **(2)** reclaim + clean the natural shoreline **(3)** amplify the critical importance of the neighborhood's artist community **(4)** provide a boathouse for competitive dragon boat racing + public water access.

As an aquatic community space, Massachusetts Park can weave together Dorchester, South Boston / the South End, and the Seaport. Replacing the current parking lot and Gillette Headquarters with a beach, community boating house / center, and integrated greenway and pedestrian connections supports both ecology and community connection. The space anticipates a phased approach for growth, stressing improved air and water quality and transportation linkages to less served neighborhoods.

A long term vision for the site anticipates ecologically responsible, climate responsive development, including affordable residential and commercial space.

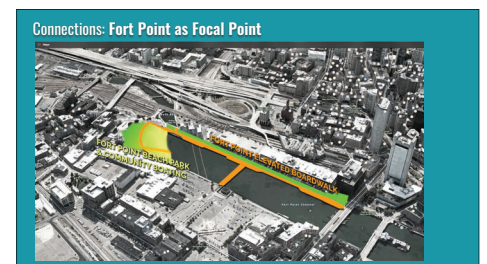
Art - Fort Point has a long artistic history. Artists, makers, and designers moved to the neighborhood when factories and industrial spaces became obsolete and available. Recently, rents have been rising and the neighborhood is gentrifying and growing less affordable. Massachusetts Park supports a neighborhood wide affordable housing policy. Additionally, it aims to amplify artistic voices through water based public art, including floatable installations, the creation of illuminated and mural clad pedestrian bridges, and rotating public art installations along the shoreline.

Ecology - The climate crisis demands we facilitate spaces that are active agents in environmental protection. While eliminating the site's current impervious surfaces and polluting infrastructure are first steps, the site should also contribute to habitat regrowth. This will incorporate indigenous plants that were present before colonizers reshaped the land for commercial use. Outfalls will be captured and rerouted to Deer Island will be housed in new pedestrian paths. By incorporating living filtration systems, like oyster farms, below new paths, water quality can improve. The goal is to have the channel be safe for swimming in the future.



PRESENTATION BOARD

Presentation board developed by Massachusetts Park Team.



PRESENTATION SLIDES

Presentation slides developed by the team for the final Design Workshop.

TEAM PROPOSALS - MASSACHUSETT PARK CONT.

In Phase 2, the team wanted to expand on the themes of open space and environmental equity in Phase 1. Although the Phase 1 beach would eliminate much of the site's current impervious surfaces and polluting infrastructure, the team wanted to further address habitat regrowth. Their Phase 2 vision incorporated indigenous plants, rerouted outfalls housed in new pedestrian paths to Deer Island, and incorporated living filtration systems, like oyster farms, to improve water quality to a swimmable state.

To expand access to this green space they proposed a new Harborwalk along the west side of the Fort Point Channel as well as new pedestrian and multi-modal connections to Downtown, Dorchester, Roxbury, South Boston, and the Seaport. They hoped that combining green space and bike/pedestrian infrastructure investment would help incentivize housing and other green infrastructure improvements. In particular, they envisioned housing located above the MBTA train tracks and a pedestrian promenade connecting the channel to Back Bay with greenery, public spaces, and sporting fields by capping I-90. Throughout the project, and particularly over the Massachusetts Turnpike, the team tried to mimic the natural ecology of the Boston area.



Massachusetts Park: Knitting History & Culture to the Future *Later*

Abby Jamiel
Ben Pearson
Don Eyles
Duane Lucia
Hala Nasr

Janis McManus
Lily Ting
Matt Calvey
Paul Kirshen
Sierra Rothberg
Scott Lindberg

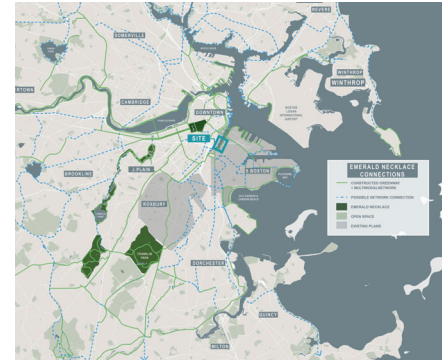
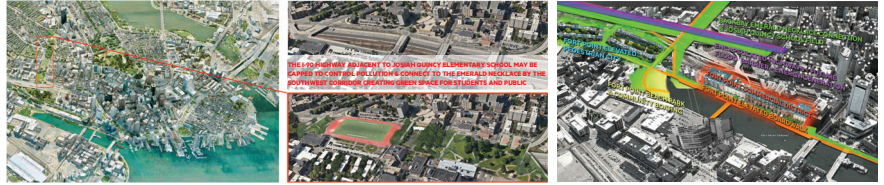
Equity and Justice - With the creation of new luxury housing units, restaurants, and retail, it is necessary to create open spaces that serve long time residents. It is the aim of the project to foster a collaborative community space for lower income families and individuals who live in the neighboring Fort Point, South End, Dorchester, and Roxbury neighborhoods. The site will promote environmental justice by increasing green space, rehabilitating habitat, decreasing air pollution, and mitigation / adapting carbon intensive uses. This is particularly meaningful for the communities to the south of the site, who live in highly industrialized areas with limited access to greenways and non-vehicular commuting options. It is an opportunity to center justice and create critical amenities for those who need them.

Phased Urban Rejuvenation - The park creates new pedestrian circulation a short walk to the city. This new connection has the potential to incentivize new housing above the train tracks. Creating housing and valuable development similar to Hudson Yards while carving out a space for nature in a fast-developing urban area, similar to Central Park.

Planned to catalyze a future pedestrian promenade connecting to Back Bay with greenery, public spaces and sporting fields capping the automotive pollution of I-90 which is currently adjacent to the Josiah Quincy school (a crime against the most vulnerable members of our community, our children). The final stage of the revitalization is to reorganize the elevated vehicular circulation into the city and repurpose the valuable area above it.

Mobility + Access - Massachusetts Park will create new pedestrian and multi-modal connections, in line with the City of Boston's Green New Deal goals and desire to become "the most bikeable city in America." These new connections have the potential to incentivize new affordable housing and green space creation over the existing South Station rail tracks.

Additionally, it can provide critical linkages between Downtown and Dorchester, Roxbury, South Boston, and the Seaport. Currently, there is a lack of safe non-vehicular routes between these neighborhoods and Downtown.



PRESENTATION BOARD

Presentation board developed by Massachusetts Park Team.



PRESENTATION SLIDES

Presentation slides developed by the team for the final Design Workshop.

APPENDIX 1:

POTENTIAL ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

There are a variety of strategies to address sea level rise and coastal storm flooding that can be mixed, matched, and layered to protect land along the waterfront. Each flood strategy has certain tradeoffs. Different approaches can operate at different scales, address different climate impacts, help realize different co-benefits, and have different implementation timelines. While some flood strategies protect a single building, others can protect whole communities. Some may help to restore the natural ecology, and others create new community amenities like playgrounds. Some minimize coastal storm surge through wave attenuation but do little to address sea level rise, while others can address sea level rise but are not able to protect against the intensified flooding caused by storm surge. Some strategies offer many forms of flood protection but may limit the public's access to the water.

Oftentimes there is not one single correct strategy, and achieving district-wide flood protection requires multiple different interventions that are layered and tied into each other to create a connected line of defense. Below is a non-exhaustive list of flood strategies that could be implemented in and along the Fort Point Channel. The different strategies are separated into two categories: *Nature-Based Approaches* and *Traditional Interventions*.

Nature-Based Approaches

- Coastal Cobble Berms
- Living Breakwalls
- Living Seawalls
- Living Shorelines

Traditional Interventions

- Building Floodproofing
- Open Space / Stormwater Park Space
- Seawall
- Vegetated Berm
- Floodgate

NATURE-BASED APPROACHES

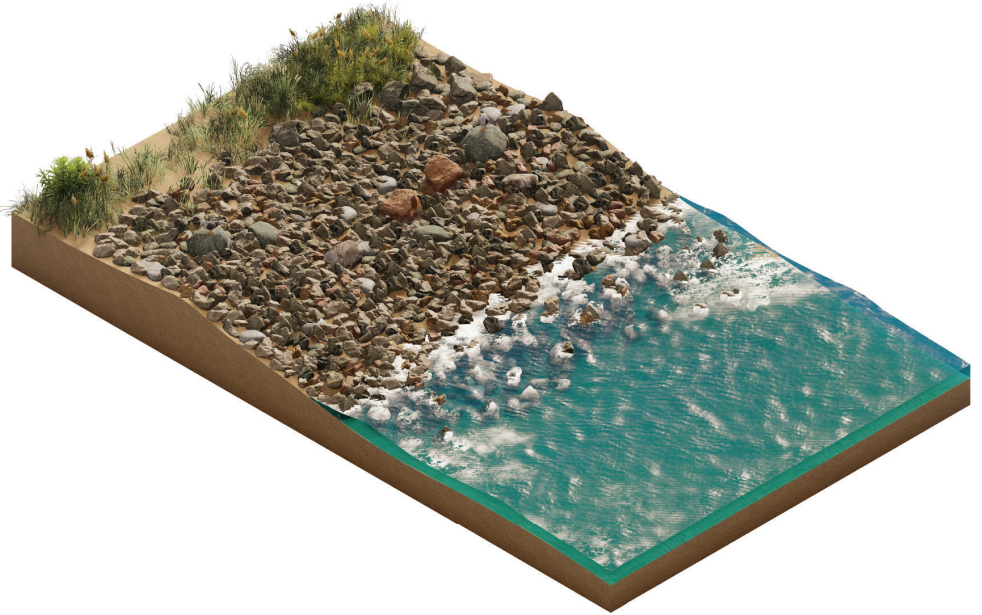
Nature-Based Approaches (NBAs) are climate-resilience strategies that mimic natural systems to address hazards such as flooding, erosion, drought, and extreme heat. They are intended to maintain or improve healthy natural cycles, coastal habitats, and public spaces and are sustainable, flexible, and adaptable. Although these interventions are more likely to have environmental co-benefits, like an increase in green space, or have some component of ecological restoration, they are often more challenging to permit. Nature-Based Approaches can be stand-alone interventions or they can often work together with traditional artificial structures to create more effective flood resilience.



ADAPTATION STRATEGIES - *NATURE-BASED APPROACHES*

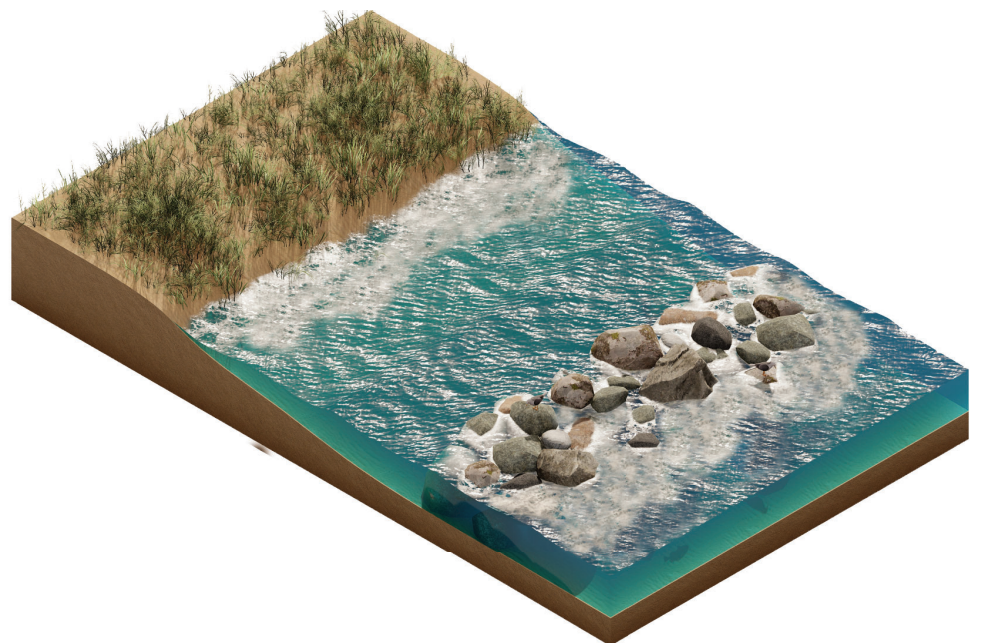
COASTAL COBBLE BERM

A cobble ridge constructed around the high tide runup limit to artificially mimic composite beaches, which naturally occur along coastlines.^{26,27} Individual cobbles (or rocks) are able to move around the beach naturally depending on wave action and tide intensity which helps protect shorelines against erosion and storm surges.



LIVING BREAKWATERS

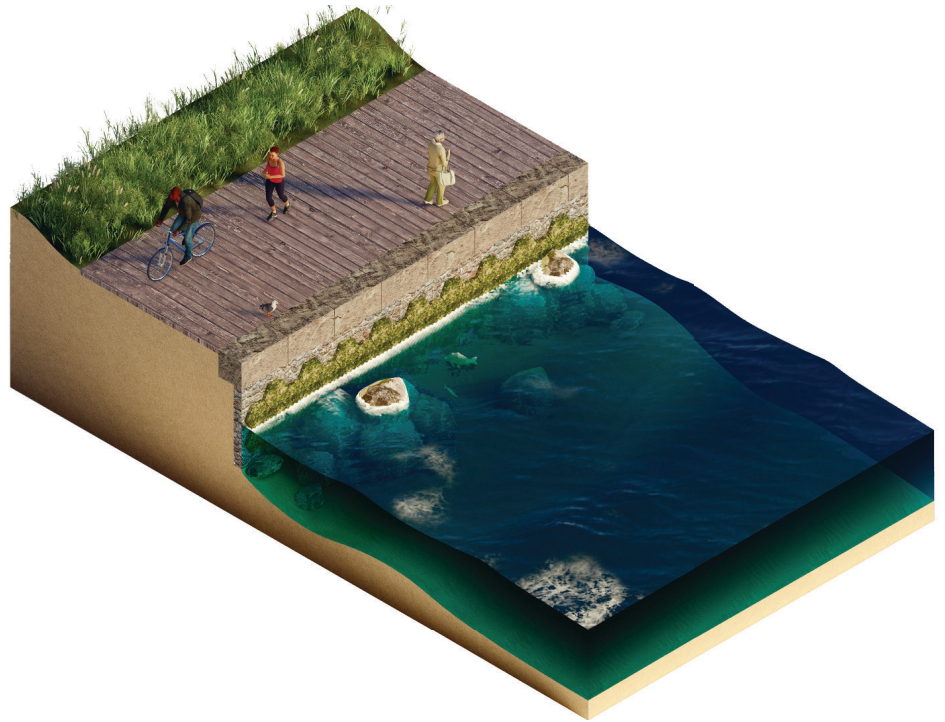
Partially submerged rubble mound structures designed to attenuate storm waves to improve safety and prevent damage to buildings and infrastructure and provide habitat for local marine life.²⁸



ADAPTATION STRATEGIES - *NATURE-BASED APPROACHES*

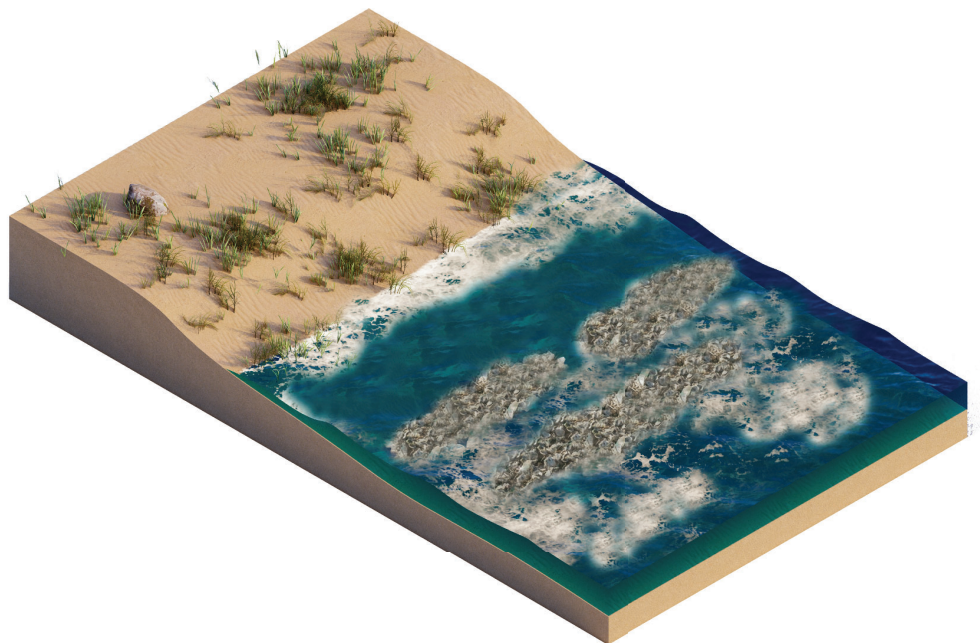
LIVING SEAWALLS

Material placed on existing seawalls that mimics natural and local marine habitats and surfaces. The chosen materials help promote the increase of marine animals such as fish and shellfish and reduce the impact of wave intensity from coastal storms.



LIVING SHORELINES

Coastal infrastructure that uses vegetation alone or in combination with other natural materials to stabilize eroding shorelines and buffer flood impacts while maintaining or restoring the natural land-water interface. Examples include salt marshes, oyster reefs, and mangroves.



TRADITIONAL INTERVENTIONS

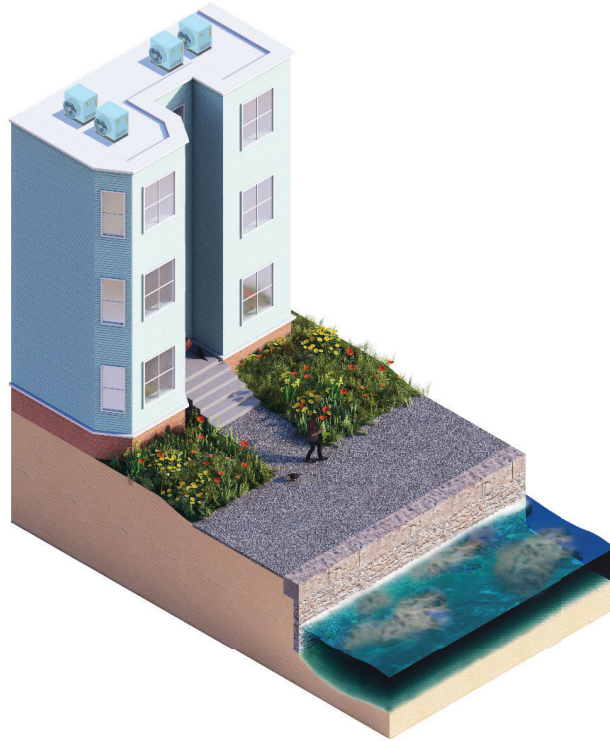
Traditional Interventions are climate-resilience strategies that utilize man-made infrastructure and engineering best-practices to protect against climate hazards. Unlike Nature-Based Approaches, these interventions are not designed to mimic natural processes but rather follow the established practices developed by civil engineers. Although they often do not inherently come with environmental co-benefits, they can be integrated with Nature-Based Approaches and open space, or other amenities to provide flood protection and community benefits. Because they have been developed in tandem with the existing regulatory processes, they are typically easier to permit.



ADAPTATION STRATEGIES - *TRADITIONAL INTERVENTIONS*

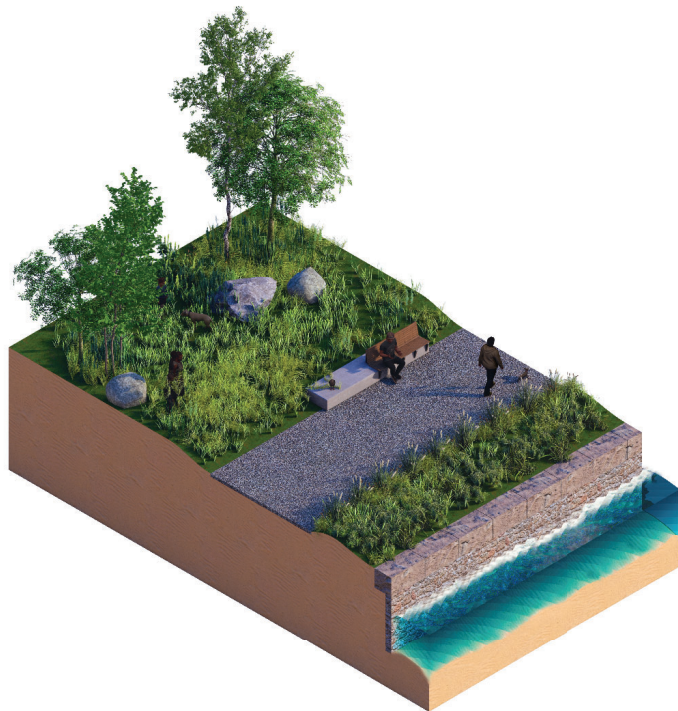
BUILDING FLOODPROOFING

Adapt individual buildings to withstand flooding. There are a variety of steps that can be taken to flood-proof a building, including relocating mechanical equipment to upper floors, creating a floodable first floor, and or elevating the lowest interior floor. Additional building-level interventions can be found in the [BPDA's Coastal Flood Resilience Design Guidelines](#).



OPEN SPACE / STORMWATER PARK

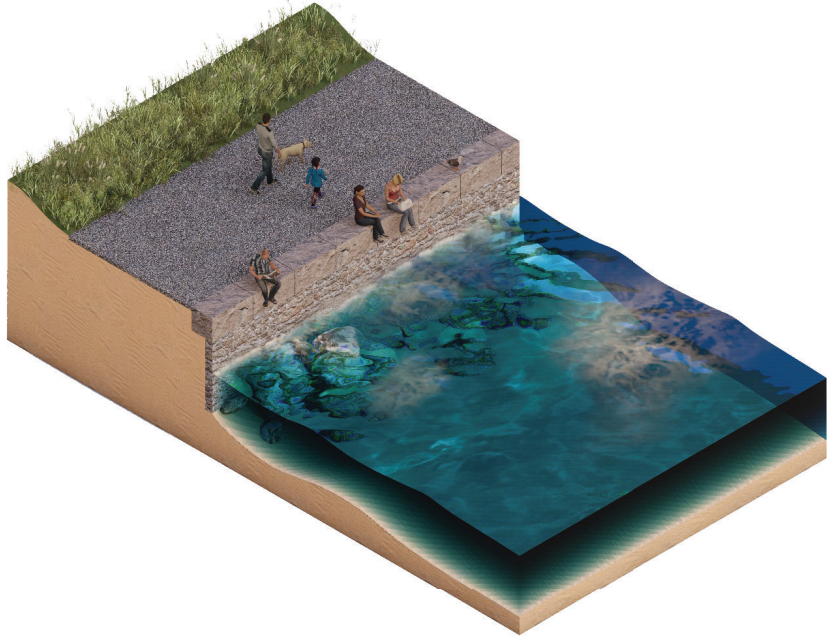
New and existing open spaces can be designed to function as elevated structural barriers to flooding.²⁹ The additional green space reduces impermeable surfaces to increase stormwater retention while creating public green space. This intervention is currently proposed at 15 Necco and 244-284 A Street.



ADAPTATION STRATEGIES - *TRADITIONAL INTERVENTIONS*

SEAWALL

These barriers to flooding are created by adding compacted fill and/or height to the associated shoreline protection structures (seawalls, bulkheads, revetments, etc.) A walking path, like the Harborwalk, can be placed on top of the additional height for increased waterfront access and connectivity.³⁰ A combination berm/seawall is currently proposed along the southern end of the Fort Point Channel.



VEGETATED BERM

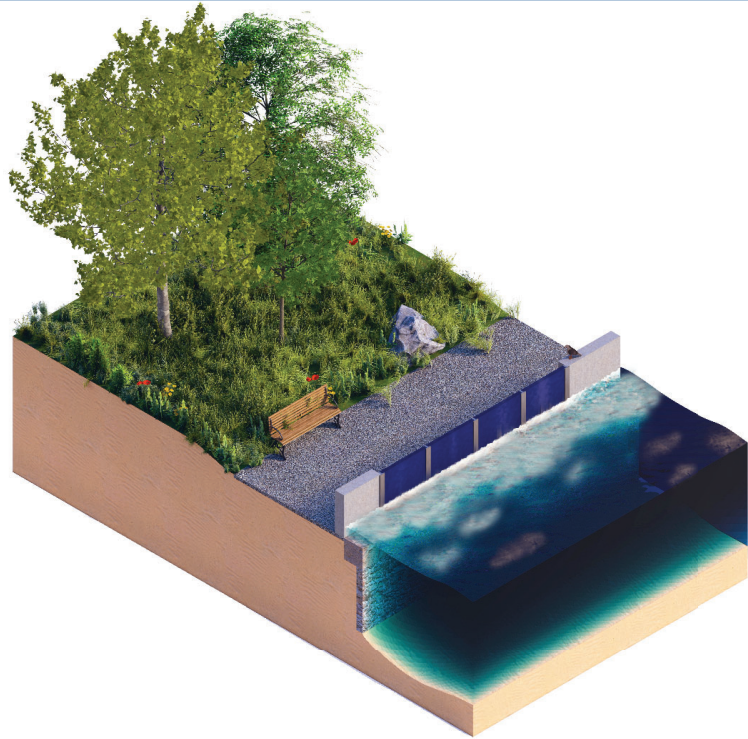
A compacted earthen levee, constructed parallel to the shoreline, that acts as a barrier to flooding. A berm will have at least one access path along its crest, grass-type plantings, water-side erosion protection, and land-side drainage.³¹ A combination berm/seawall is currently proposed along the southern end of the Fort Point Channel.



ADAPTATION STRATEGIES - *TRADITIONAL INTERVENTIONS*

FLOODGATE

A barrier that opens and closes when the forecast shows that a high tide and a heavy storm will coincide. At the mouth of the Fort Point Channel, a barrier could be closed while the channel is still at low tide thereby creating capacity to hold excess rainwater that drains into it from nearby parts of the city. When the storm passes and low tide returns, the gates could be opened, and the water released out into the ocean.³² While the floodgate would help mitigate storm runoff, other measures would still need to be incorporated to protect from sea level rise and storm surge.



GRATITUDE

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