

# Downtown Waterfront Municipal Harbor Planning Advisory Committee

MEETING

Wednesday, May 28, 2014



CITY OF BOSTON  
Martin J. Walsh  
*Mayor*



Boston  
Redevelopment  
Authority  
Brian Golden, Acting Director

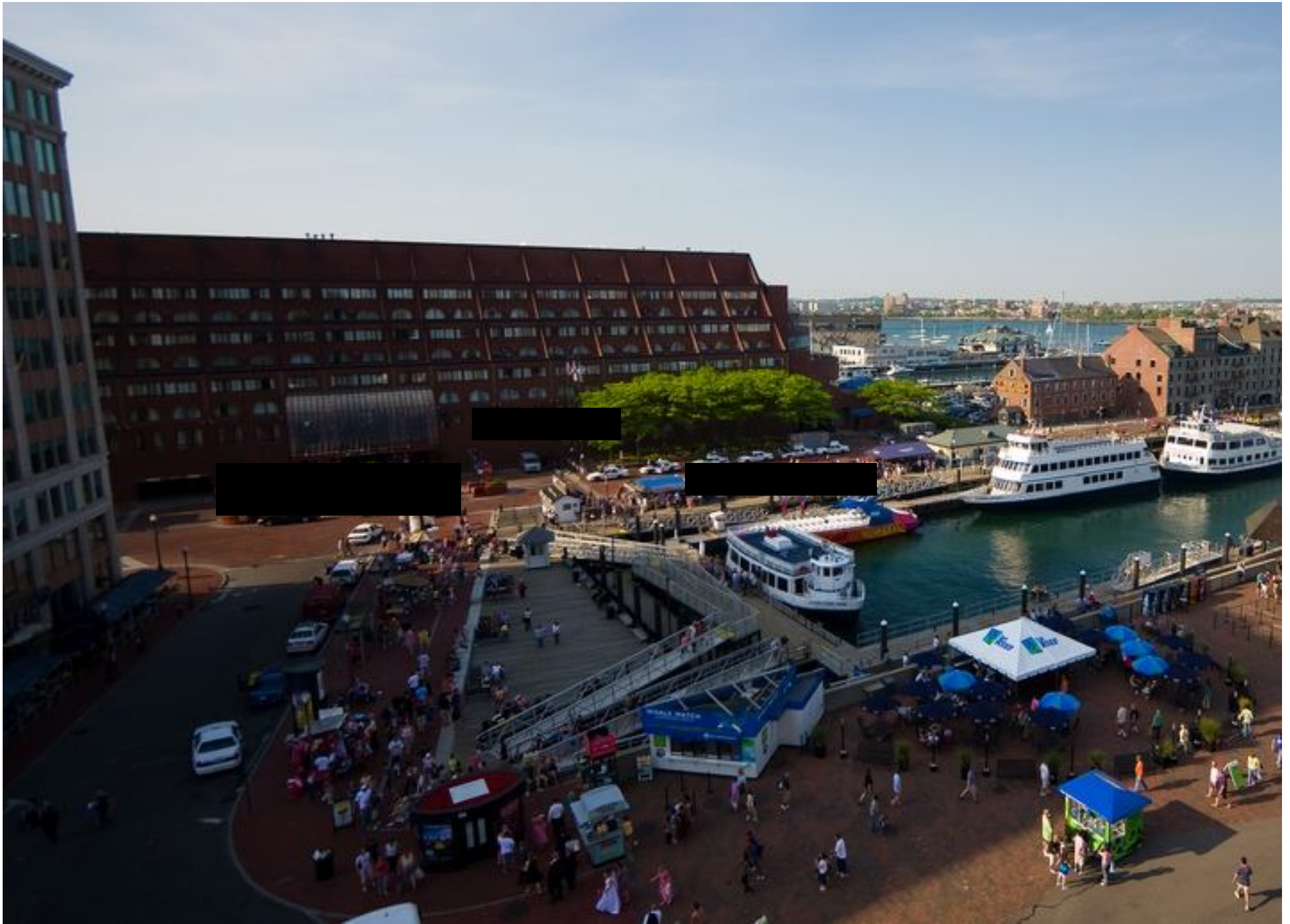
Consultants:  
Utile, Inc.  
Durand & Anastas  
Noble & Wickersham

# Agenda

- I. Overview of the Long Wharf Marriott Parcel
- II. Review of the Public Realm and Watersheet Activation Plan Recommendations for Long and Central Wharves
- III. Proposed Expansion of the Long Wharf Marriott
- IV. Draft MHP Framework and the Long Wharf Marriott
  - Public Comment
  - Review of MHPAC calendar and Public Realm Plan updates

# Overview of the Long Wharf Marriott Parcel

















★ ★ ★ Thank you for sailing with Boston Harbor Cruises! ★ ★ ★

WATSON LONGVIEW

925-4000  
ELIOT CAR INC.



**Pedestrian Analysis**

An analysis of pedestrian movements on Long and Central wharves reveals that there are pedestrian bottlenecks in certain areas, namely around the Aquarium T stop, along Atlantic Avenue, and around 255 State Street. In both peak summer times and winter rush hour, pedestrians tend to stay on Atlantic Avenue. Very few venture out to the end of Long Wharf, even in peak summer weather. This means that open space is not being fully utilized.

**July 2013 Pedestrian Traffic**



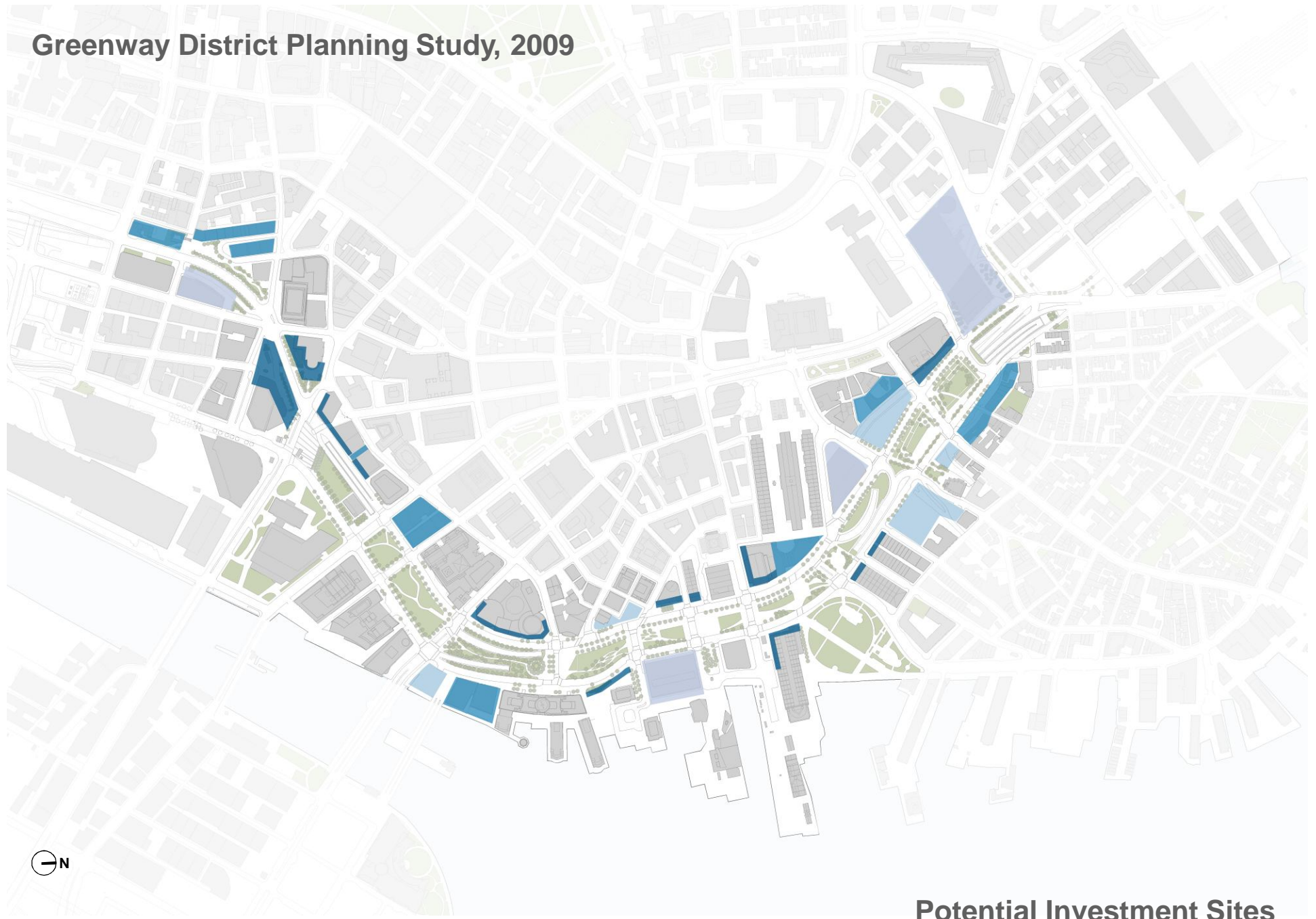
**January 2014 Pedestrian Traffic**



- Bikers
- Runners
- Business People
- Residents
- Tourists
- Workers

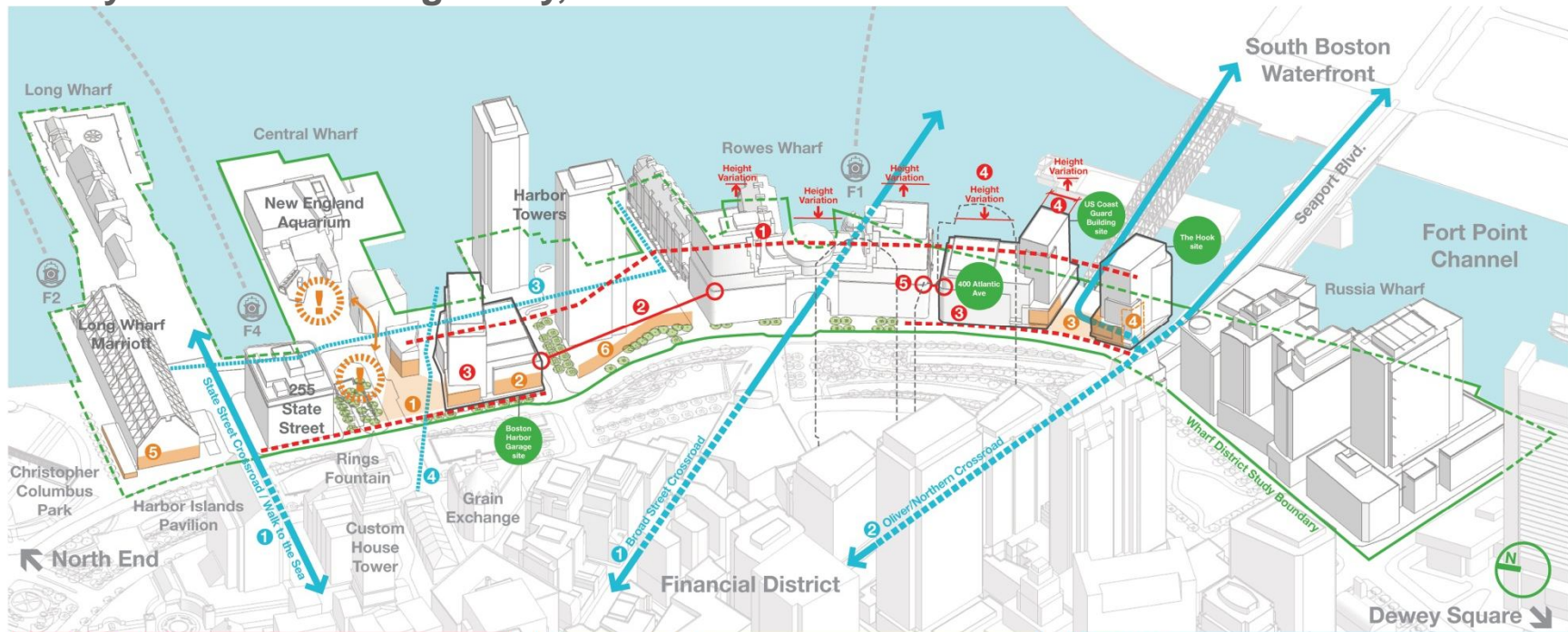
# Review of the Public Realm and Watersheet Activation Plan Recommendations for Long and Central Wharves

# Greenway District Planning Study, 2009



Potential Investment Sites

# Greenway District Planning Study, 2009



## Dimensional Criteria

- 1 All new buildings will have a maximum height of 200' (with the exception of the Hook site, at 175'), equivalent to the taller portions of Rows Wharf. Buildings should combine both low-rise and mid-rise elements in a way that takes cues from the existing context. Individual massing alternatives will be evaluated for how the shadows they create will impact the actively used portions of the park.
- 2 New buildings should establish a datum at the property's edge facing the Greenway. Ideally, the datum corresponds to and reinforces the heights in the immediate context, including the lower portions of Rows Wharf, the parapet of 255 State Street, or the tallest portion of Long Wharf, at about 125'. Taller portions of any new building should be set back by 10'-15' at this datum on the Greenway-facing sides of the building.
- 3 New development at the Boston Harbor Garage, 400 Atlantic Avenue, and the U.S. Coast Guard Building should reinforce the Atlantic Avenue street edge by building to it along a majority of its frontage. Significant breaks in that alignment should be in the service of opening connections to the waterfront.
- 4 All sites in the Wharf District, including 400 Atlantic Avenue, should vary in height like Rows Wharf, where taller masses alternate with lower masses of approximately 125' to allow for intermittent exposure to the sky plane, and to maintain visual access to the water. The lengths of any upper portion of a building over 125' should be limited to 125' on the Greenway-facing portions of the building.
- 5 The lower portions of 400 Atlantic Avenue should align with those of Rows Wharf.

## Programmatic Goals

- 1 The lively occupation of the forecourt to the New England Aquarium should be extended as close the Greenway as possible. An additional ticket kiosk or similar related programming venue might facilitate this goal. New development on the Boston Harbor Garage site should feature active uses at the northwest corner that help anchor this node of activity and enhance enjoyment of the harbor.
- 2 New or replaced uses for the Atlantic Avenue edge of the Boston Harbor Garage should offer as many uses as possible that are complementary to the adjacent parks—restaurants, cafes, retail.
- 3 The ground floor uses at 400 Atlantic Avenue and the Hook site should reinforce the presence of the Oliver Street/Northern Avenue Crossroad with complementary active uses. Concentrations of small cafes will help mark the space between them as an important link over the bridges between the Greenway and South Boston.
- 4 The southwest corner of the Hook site should acknowledge in its architectural form the importance of the Moakley Bridge "gateway" to the South Boston waterfront. The form and orientation of the building should reflect the important urban morphologies that have created the site and that announce the grid of the adjacent emerging neighborhood.
- 5 The edges of the Long Wharf Marriott site have the opportunity to offer expanded ground level uses complementary to the adjacent Greenway and Christopher Columbus Park.
- 6 The base edge of Harbor Towers is currently defined by a perimeter fence. This location would benefit from an increased residential presence and openness at the ground level.

## Connectivity

- 1 State and Broad Streets are two important Crossroads, the only two that terminate at the water's edge. Future development along these axes should enhance these rare direct views to the water from the Financial District, such as those through the arch at Rows Wharf.
- 2 Development at the Hook site and 400 Atlantic Avenue should enhance the ground plane in such a way as render this most fragile Crossroad connection more legible. Ground floor uses and special attention to landscape design will help in this regard.
- 3 All developments in the Wharf District should enhance the continuity and accessibility of the Harborwalk by providing additional points of connection from the Greenway and by "repairing" breaks in the community caused by grade changes and buildings or other obstructions.
- 4 All developments in the Wharf District, and the Boston Harbor Garage site in particular, should increase visual access to the waterfront, either at the building edges or through-building connections.

# Wharf District



# Long and Central Wharves

## Touch the Water

24

Long and Central wharves are where the city has historically met the harbor. Throngs of tourists, families, residents, and workers pass through here on a daily basis, drawn by the rich historical significance of the area, the Aquarium and IMAX theater, the nearby Rings Fountain and Greenway Carousel, and the water transportation options. This is the most activated waterfront in Boston.

The primary objective is to **create an exemplary twenty-first-century waterfront, so generations to come can experience the water's edge**. This requires concerted efforts by the many operators and property owners to come together around common goals, such as managing the pedestrian, bicyclist, and ferry traffic; coordinated wayfinding; and preserving and enhancing key view corridors. Both incremental physical improvements as well as management strategies can help organize and clarify the public realm and movement through this area.

The goals for this area are to:

- **Improve signage and wayfinding and develop coordinated signage system.** This includes a unified water transit system and consistent wayfinding for the transit options. This may include new landmarks, such as public art or flagpoles, along the waterfront.
- **Diversify the uses within the area,** such as include a broader range of retail and food venues, ranging from casual (e.g., food trucks) to fine dining. Consider uses that support the residential community and local workers.
- **Improve the Aquarium plaza / Central Wharf Park area** through consistent paving, improved wayfinding, and enhancing key view corridors to

the Aquarium and the harbor from the Greenway.

- **Increase appreciation of the Harbor Islands and establish a permanent Harbor Islands ferry gateway** on Long Wharf North. In addition, more activities and seasonal programming should be considered for the Harbor Islands (e.g., Hubway or fall and winter nature walks).
- **Activate ground-levels** facing the waterfront, key public spaces (e.g., the Greenway and Christopher Columbus Park), and the waterfront.
- **Strengthen lateral connections to waterfront** through programming and ground-level activity and maintaining view corridors from the Greenway to the harbor.
- **Invest in ferries and water transportation,** including subsidies for infrastructure improvements and ongoing maintenance.
- **Strengthen management of the public realm,** such as the bus/trolley parking in the area and vendors. Develop management plan for vendors, trolley operators, seasonal services, etc.
- **Increase appreciation of the Downtown Waterfront** through interpretive signage (both historical and environmental). Physical improvements such as storm surge barriers or public spaces designed to withstand inundation are educational opportunities.
- **Create a range of open spaces,** from quiet and contemplative zones to active hardscaped areas to shared streets. For example, the Chart House parking lot might be redeveloped as a pocket park with seating, which could complement the restaurant in the Marriot Long Wharf and offer an outdoor waiting area for

ferry passengers. The end of Long Wharf should be a destination, with programming, such as food trucks or casual dining.

- **An innovative rotating public art program,** such as those organized by the Public Art Fund in New York and Friends of Fort Point Channel locally, might also be considered at the underutilized public spaces. This program could focus on art about climate change and sea level rise or the history of the harbor.
- **Improve connections to the North End** and Christopher Columbus Park. This may be through signage or increasing the visual porosity through the Marriott.



### Key Development Site

#### Harbor Garage

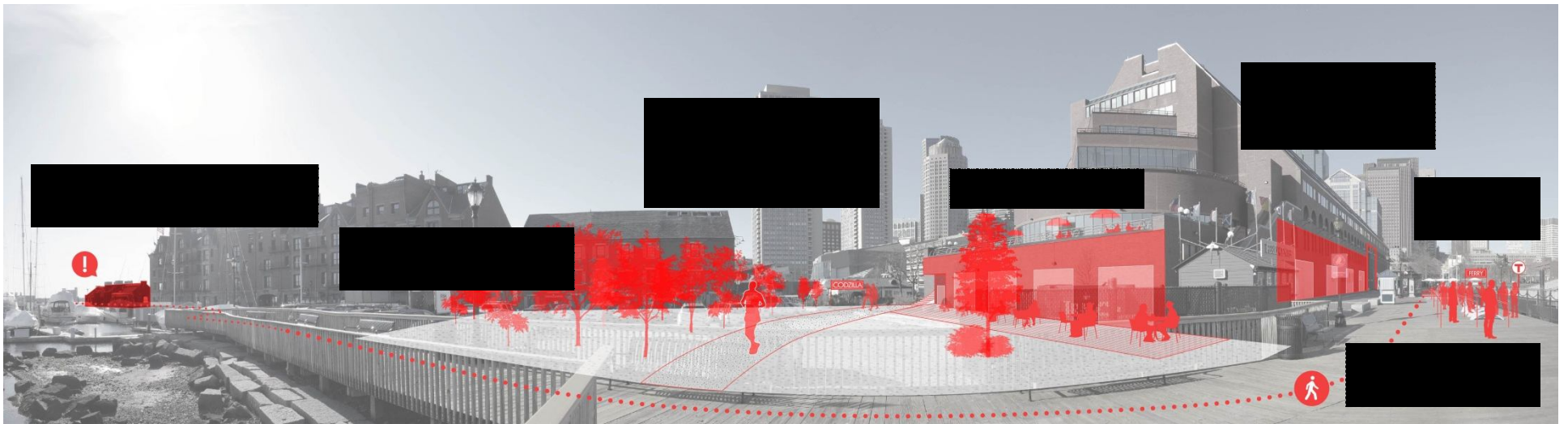
Redevelopment of the Harbor Garage site should respect both the residential uses of Harbor Towers and the activity of Central Wharf. It will form a key edge and gateway, linking the Town Cove neighborhood and the Rose Kennedy Greenway to the Aquarium and the waterfront. The edge along Milk Street, facing Central Wharf Park, needs to be designed with consideration to the streams of visitors heading to the Aquarium, the IMAX Theater, and the ferries on the wharves. This side of the parcel, as well as the edge facing the waterfront, are the most appropriate locations for new public open spaces on this parcel.

-  Targeted Area for Improvements
-  Area of Proposed Active Edge
-  Important Node
-  Significant Connections
-  Pedestrian Connections
-  Wayfinding Location
-  Existing Amenity
-  Harborwalk

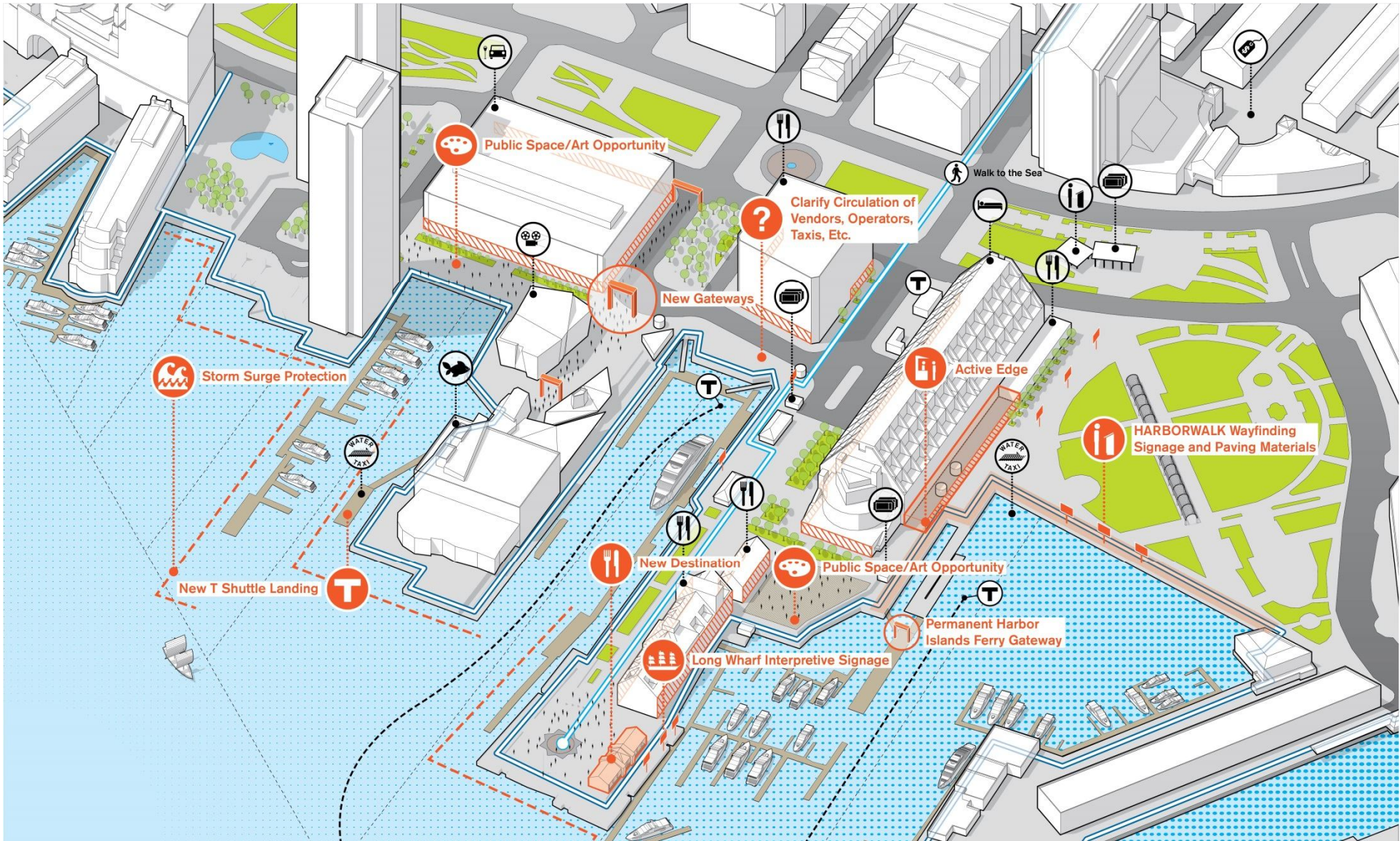




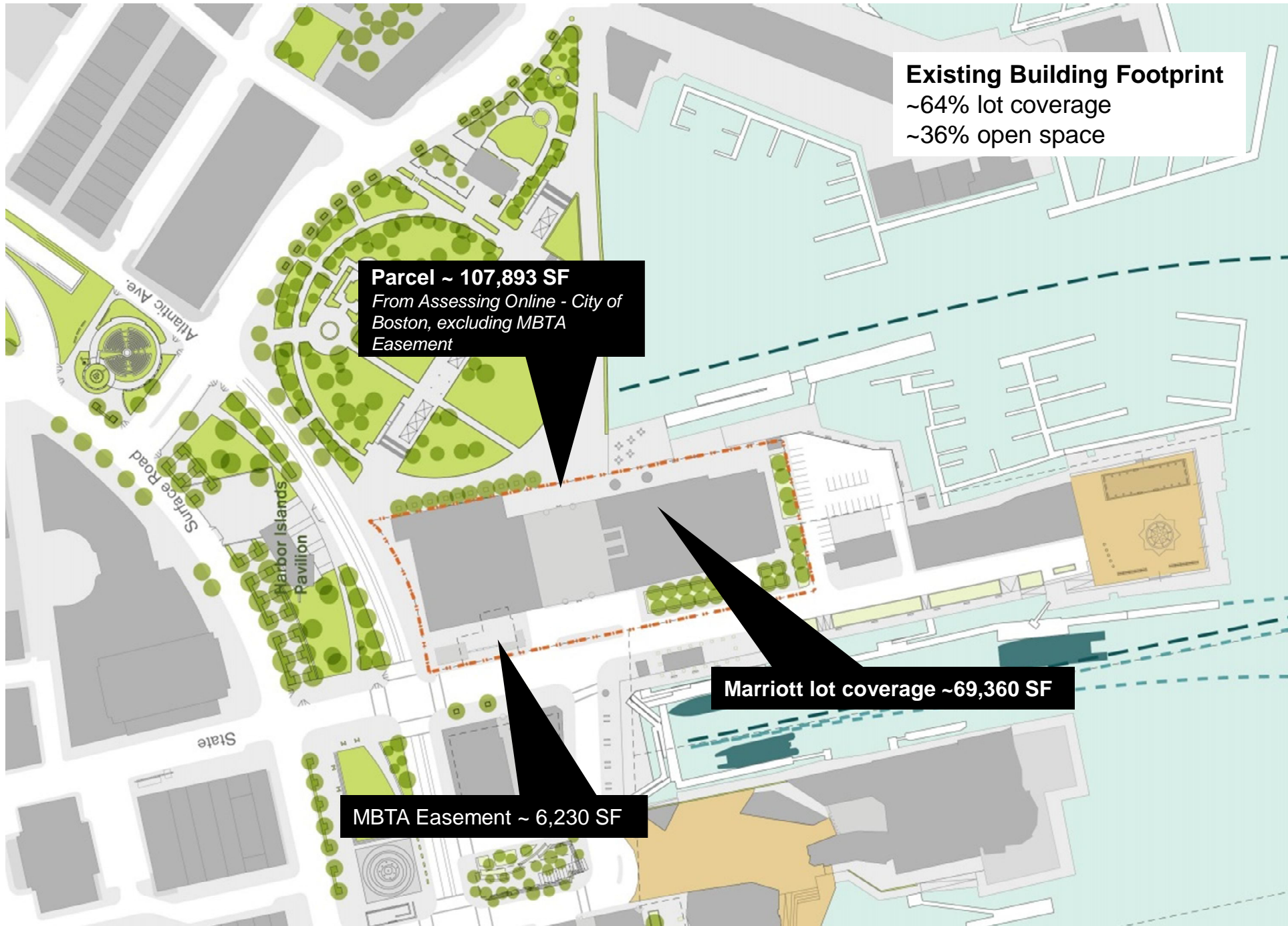
## Long Wharf: Challenges



## Long Wharf: Opportunities



# Proposed Expansion of the Long Wharf Marriott



**Existing Building Footprint**  
~64% lot coverage  
~36% open space

**Parcel ~ 107,893 SF**  
From Assessing Online - City of Boston, excluding MBTA Easement

**Marriott lot coverage ~69,360 SF**

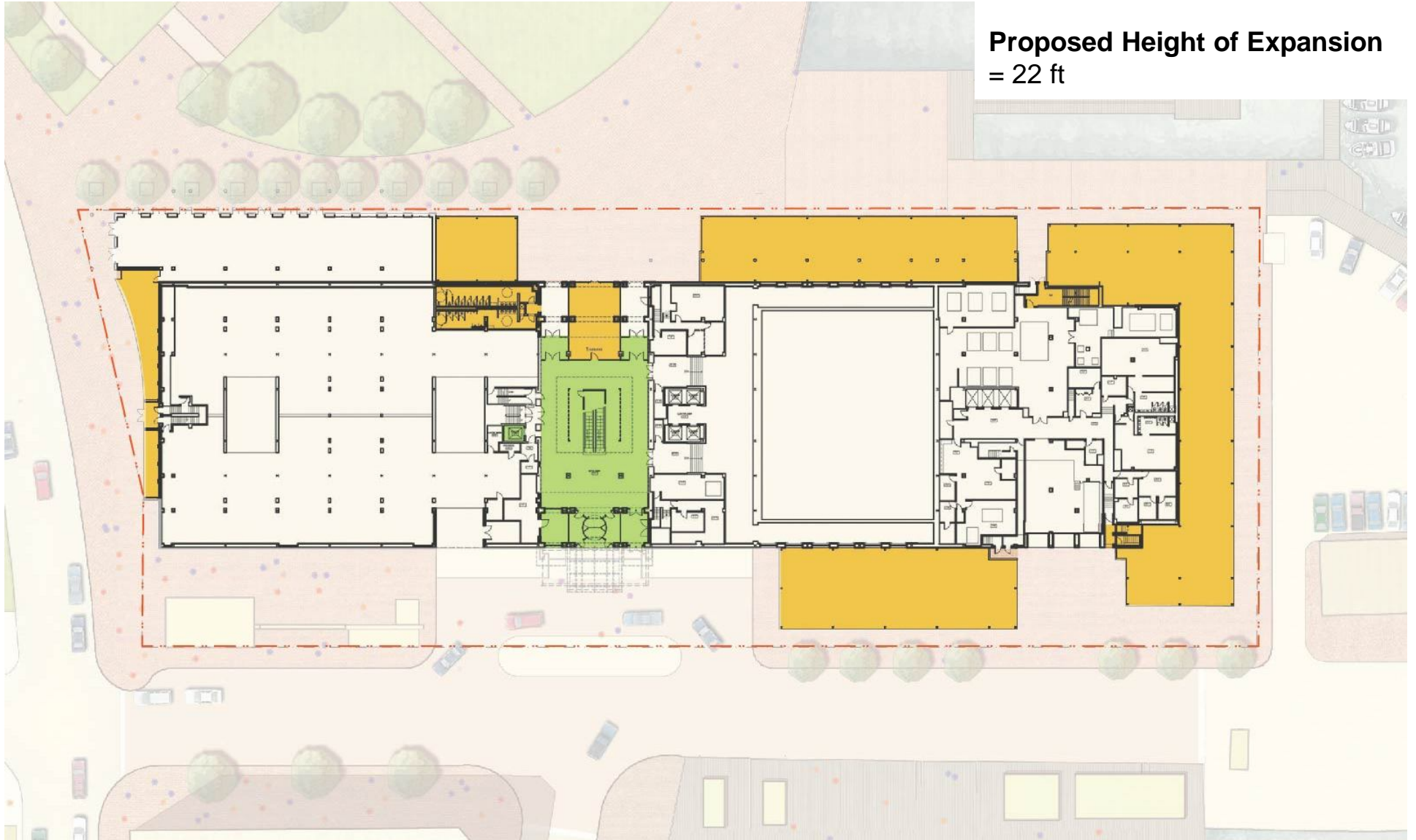
**MBTA Easement ~ 6,230 SF**

## Proposed Expansion of the Long Wharf Marriott

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**Proposed Building Footprint**  
~84% lot coverage  
~16% open space

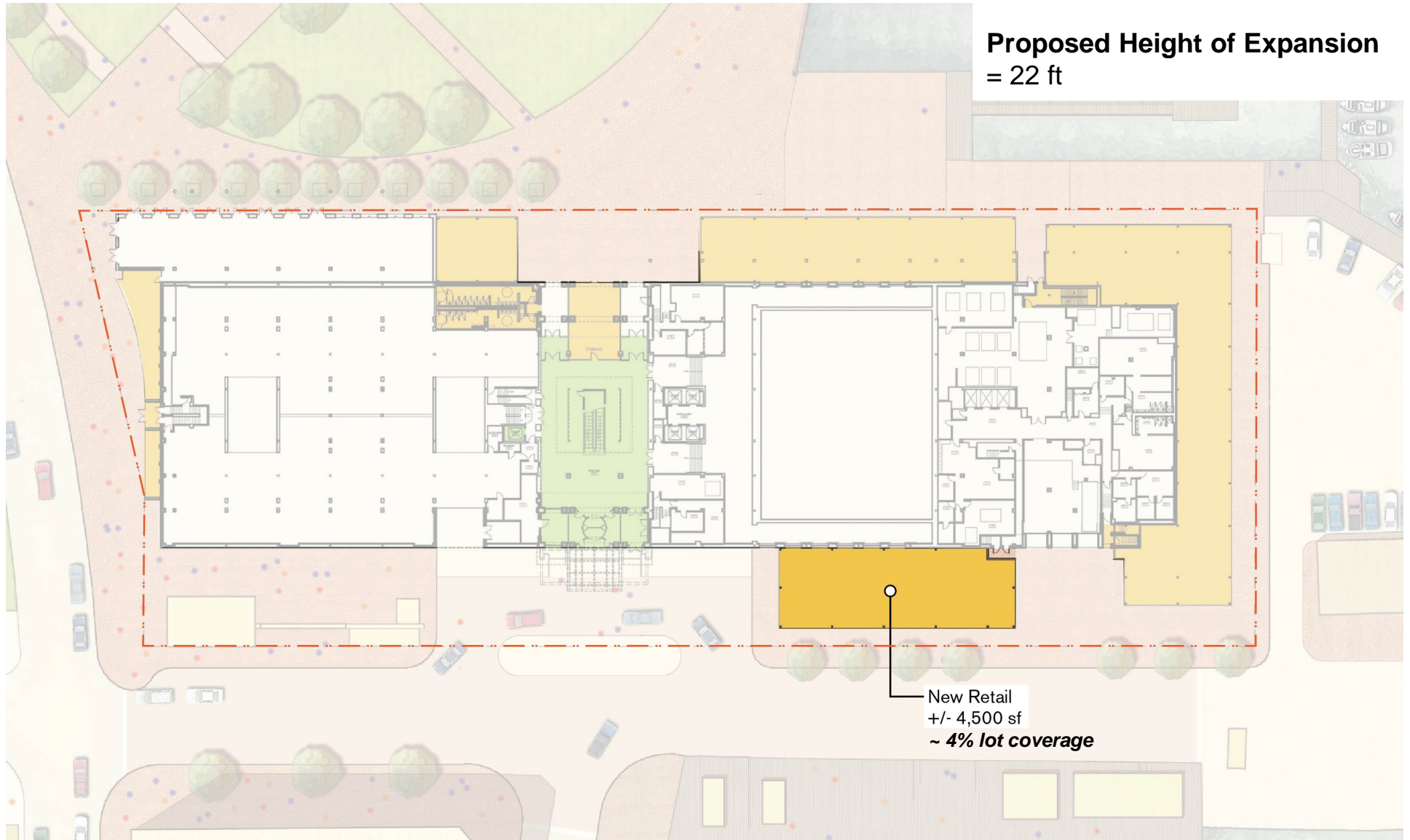
**Proposed Height of Expansion**  
= 22 ft



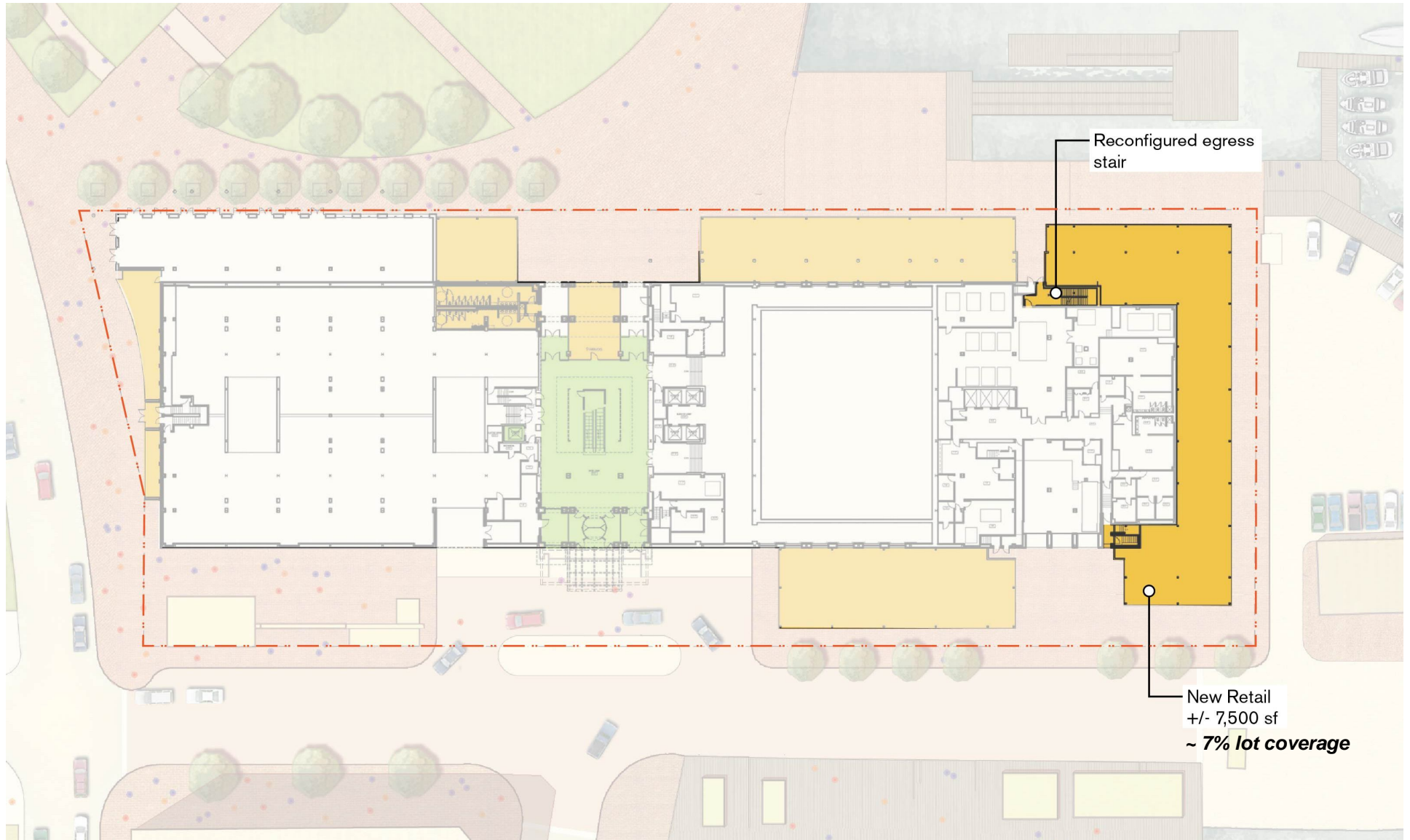
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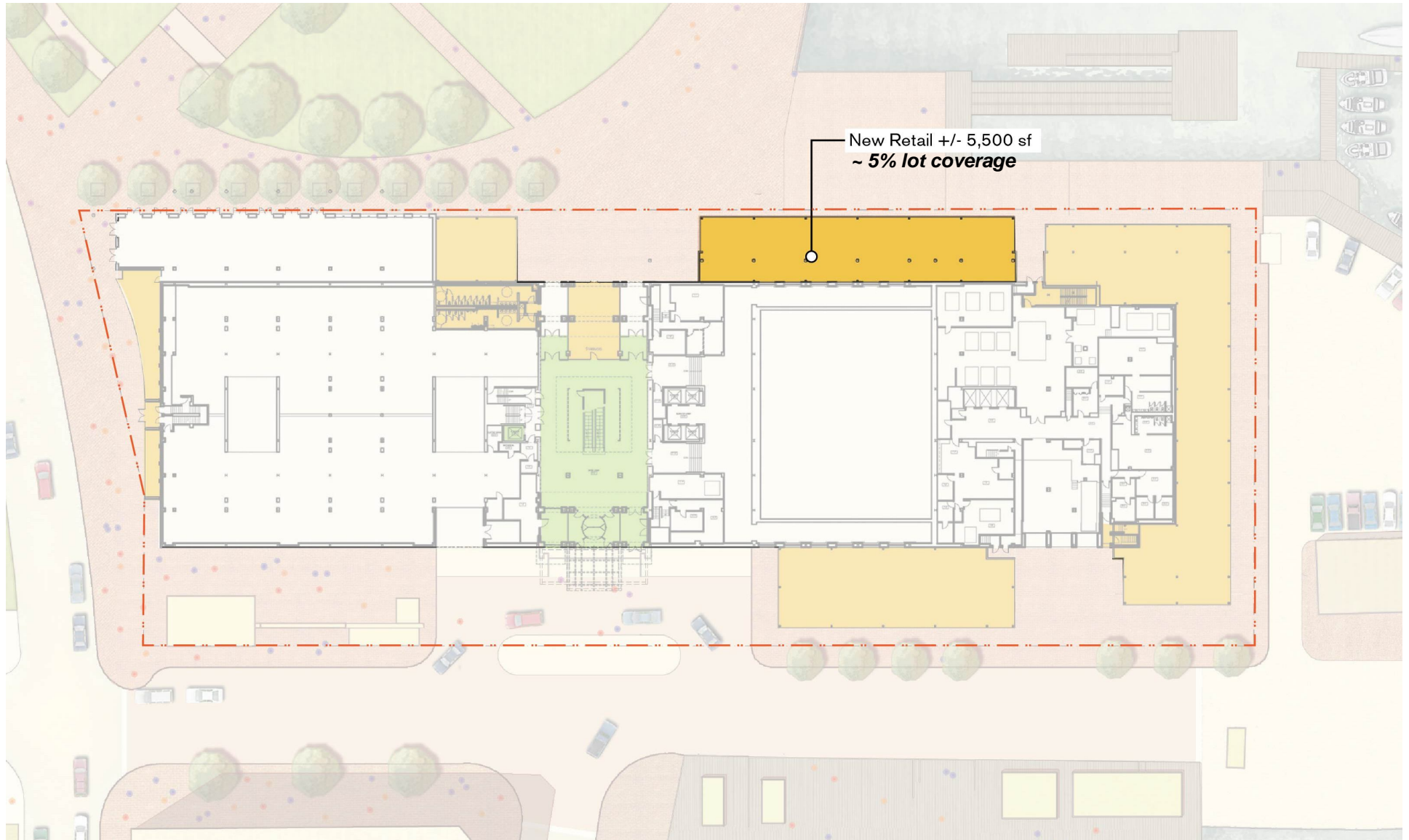


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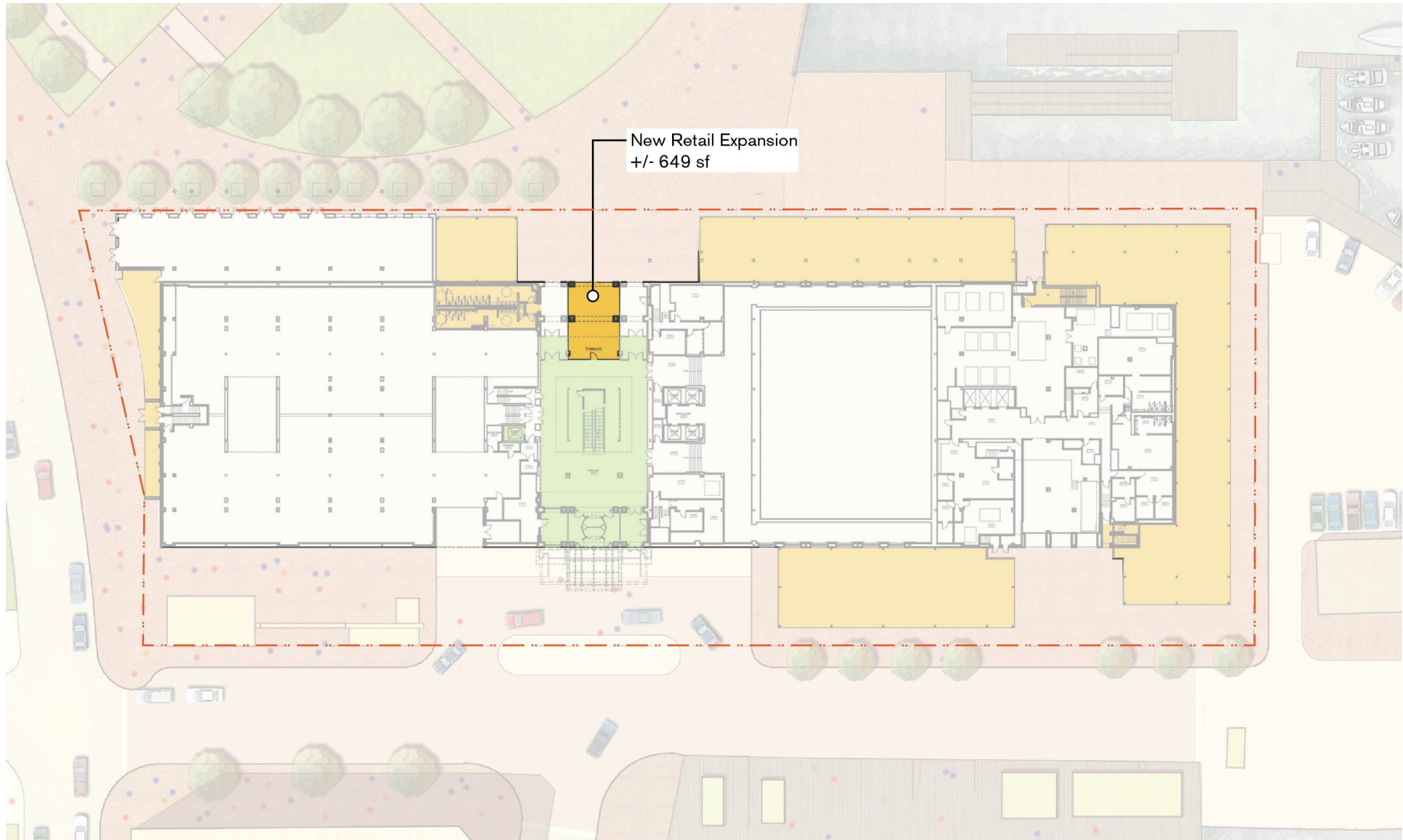




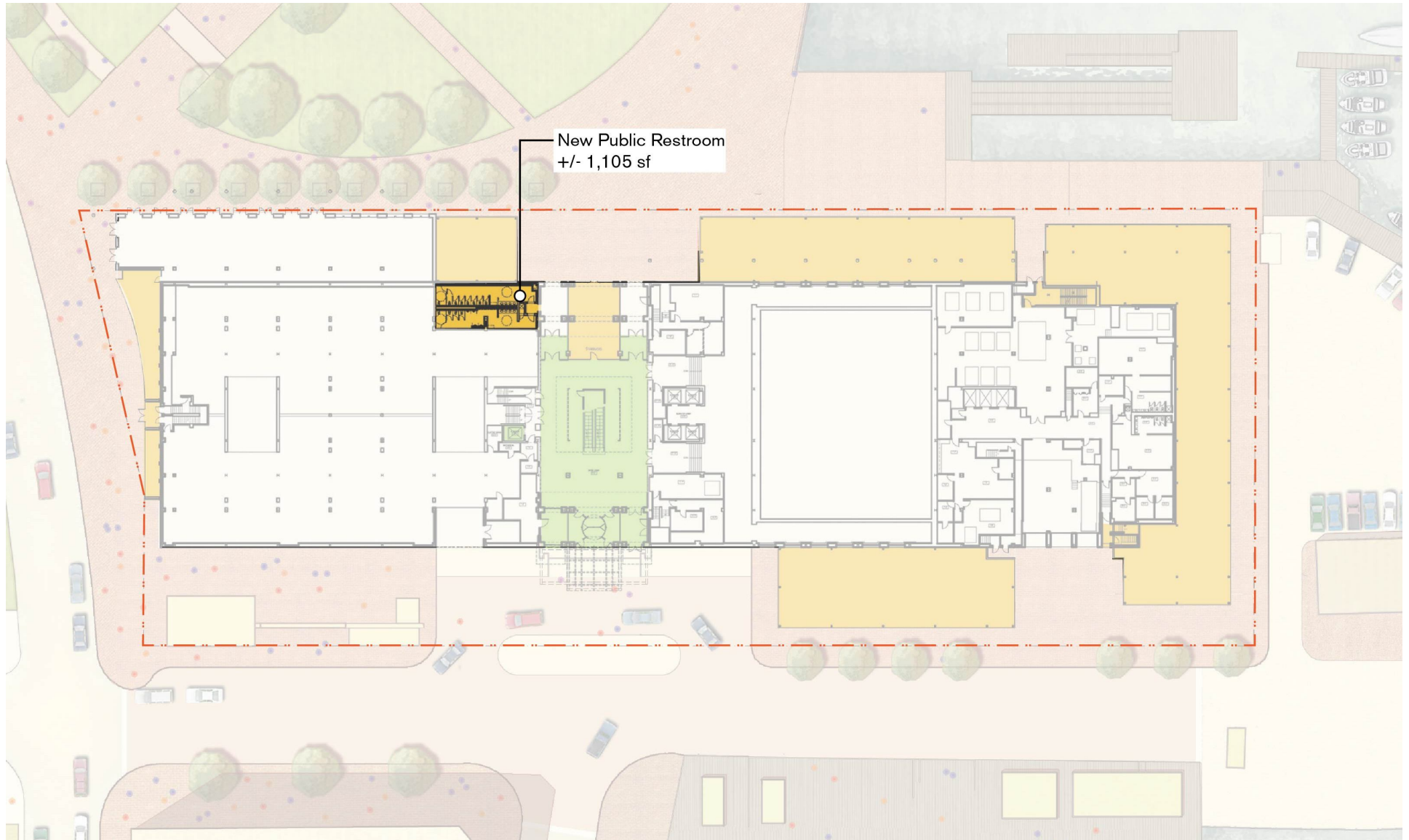
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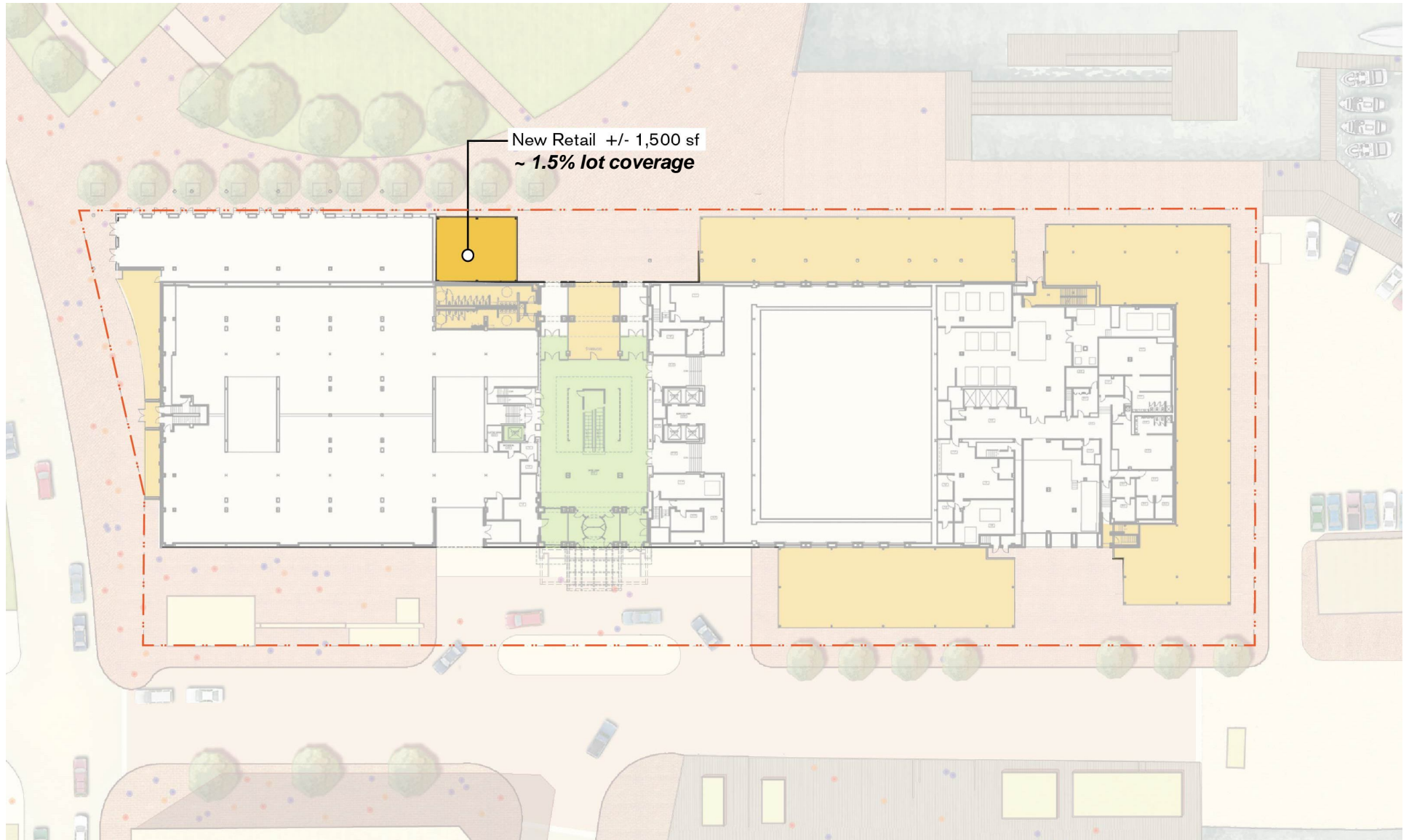
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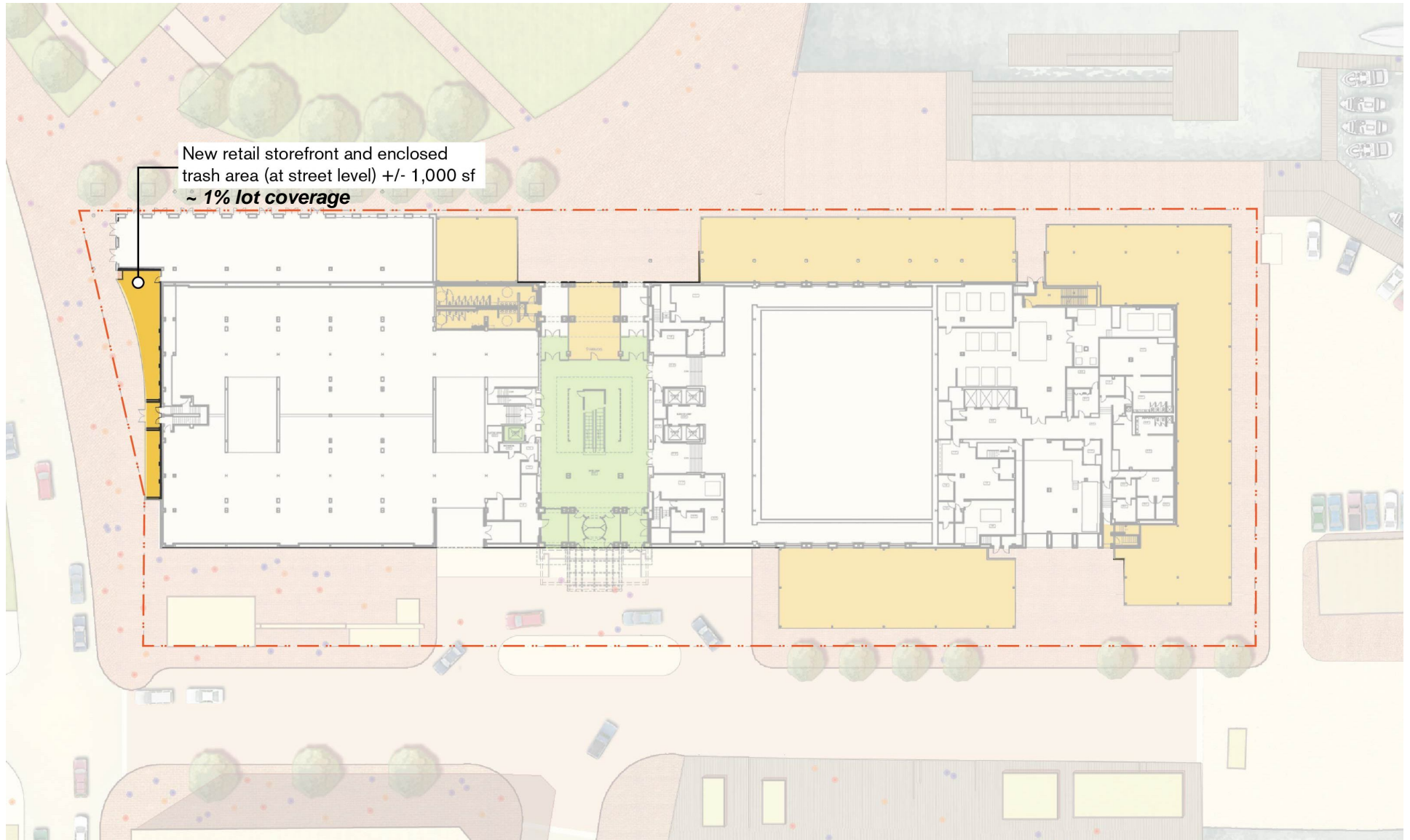
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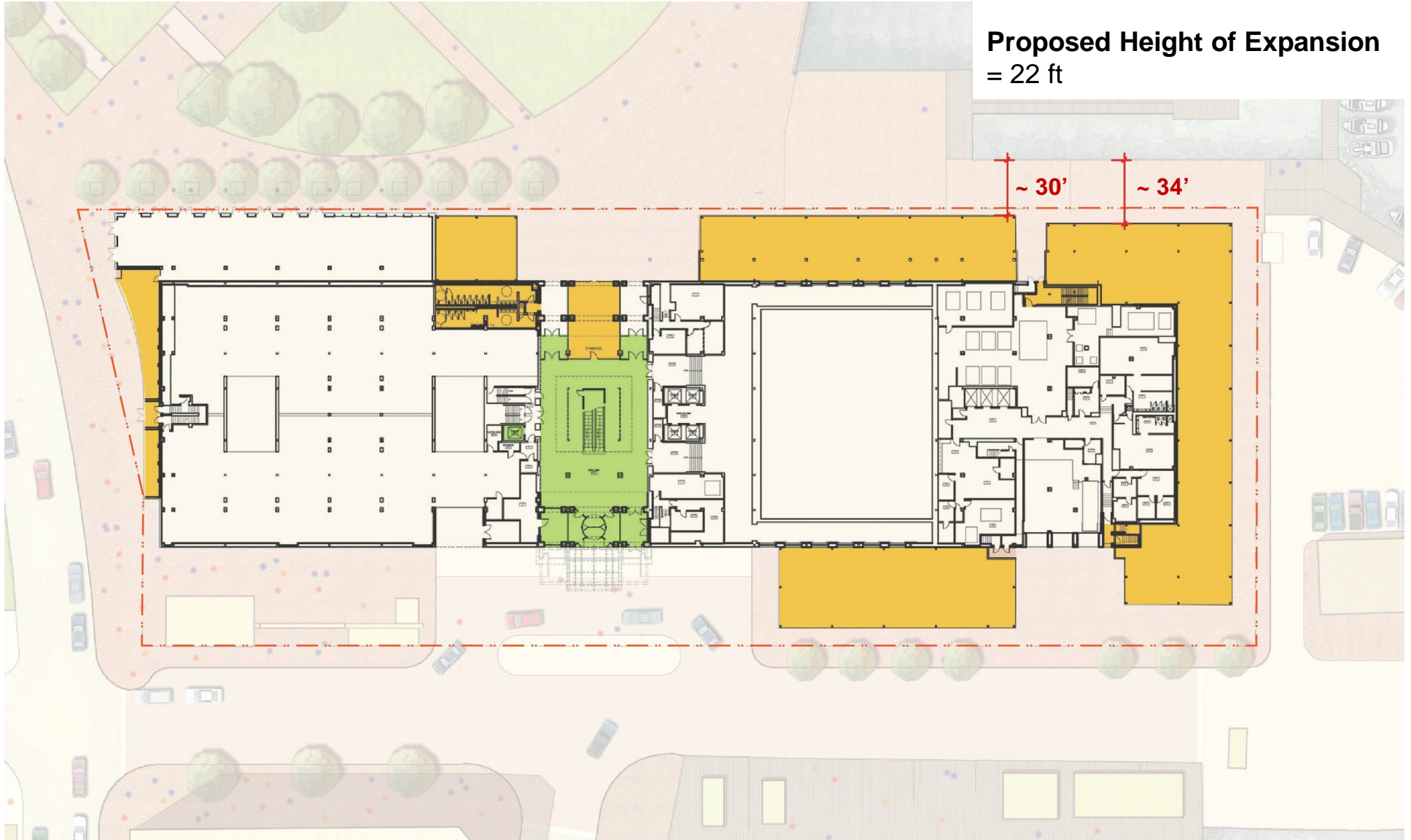


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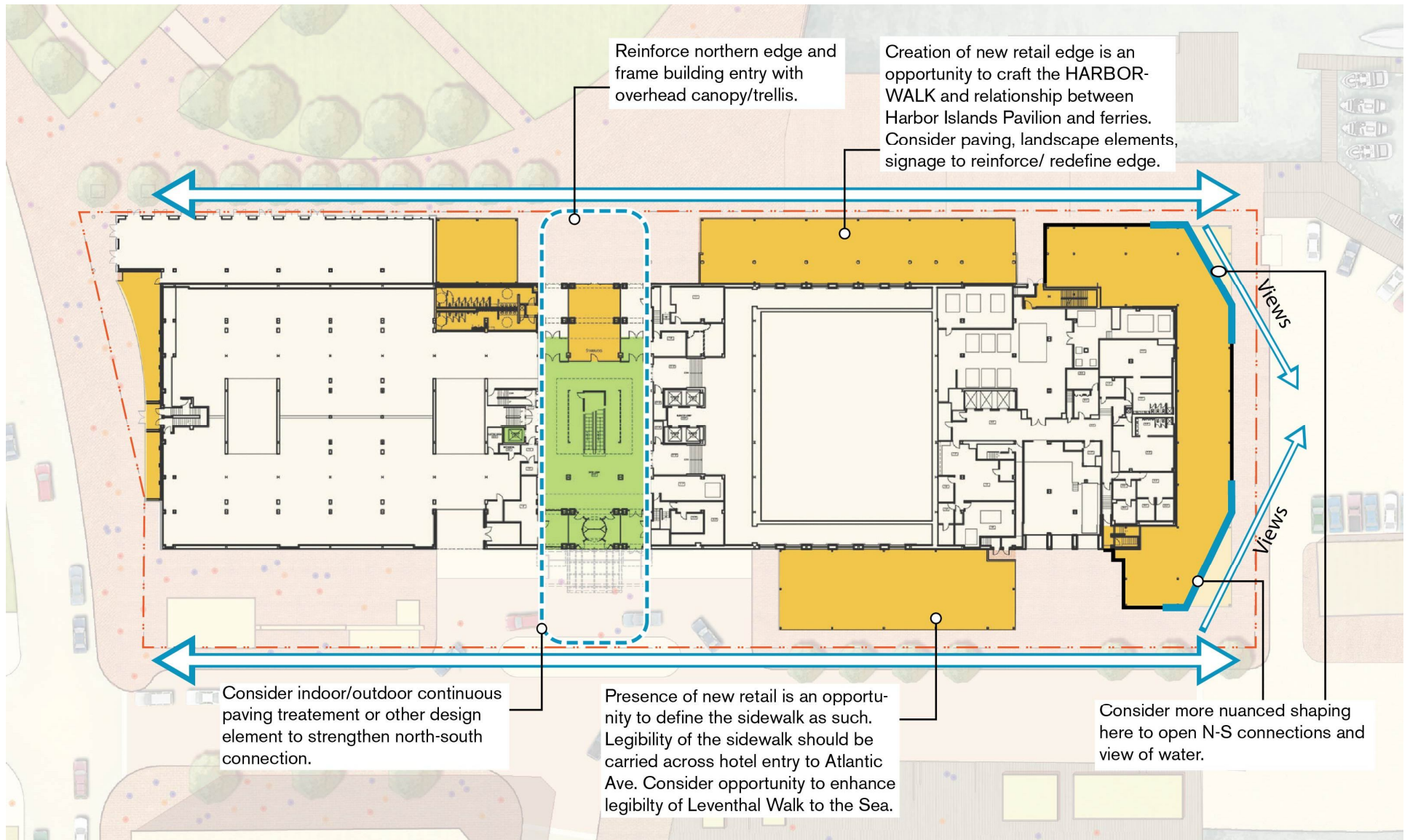
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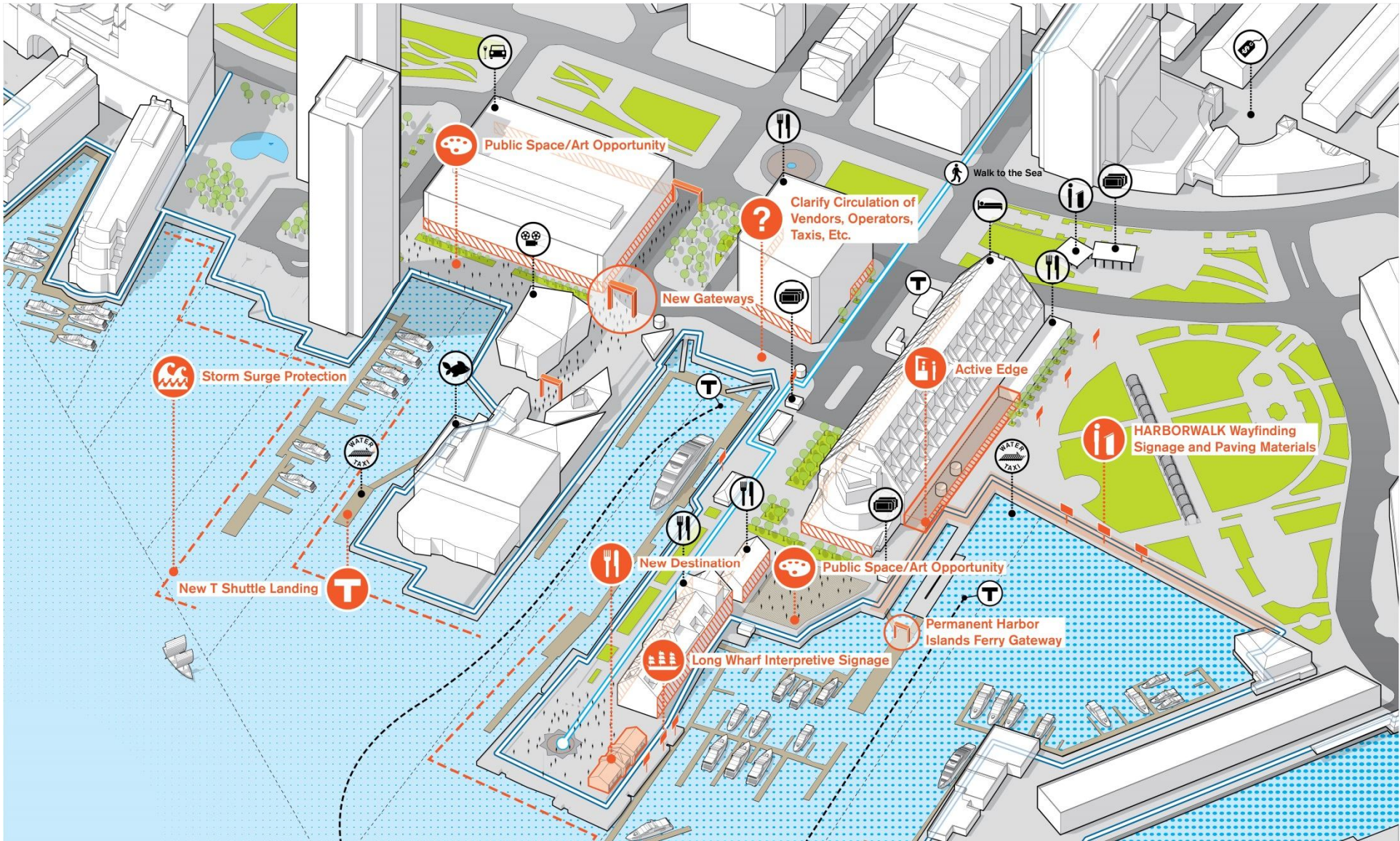
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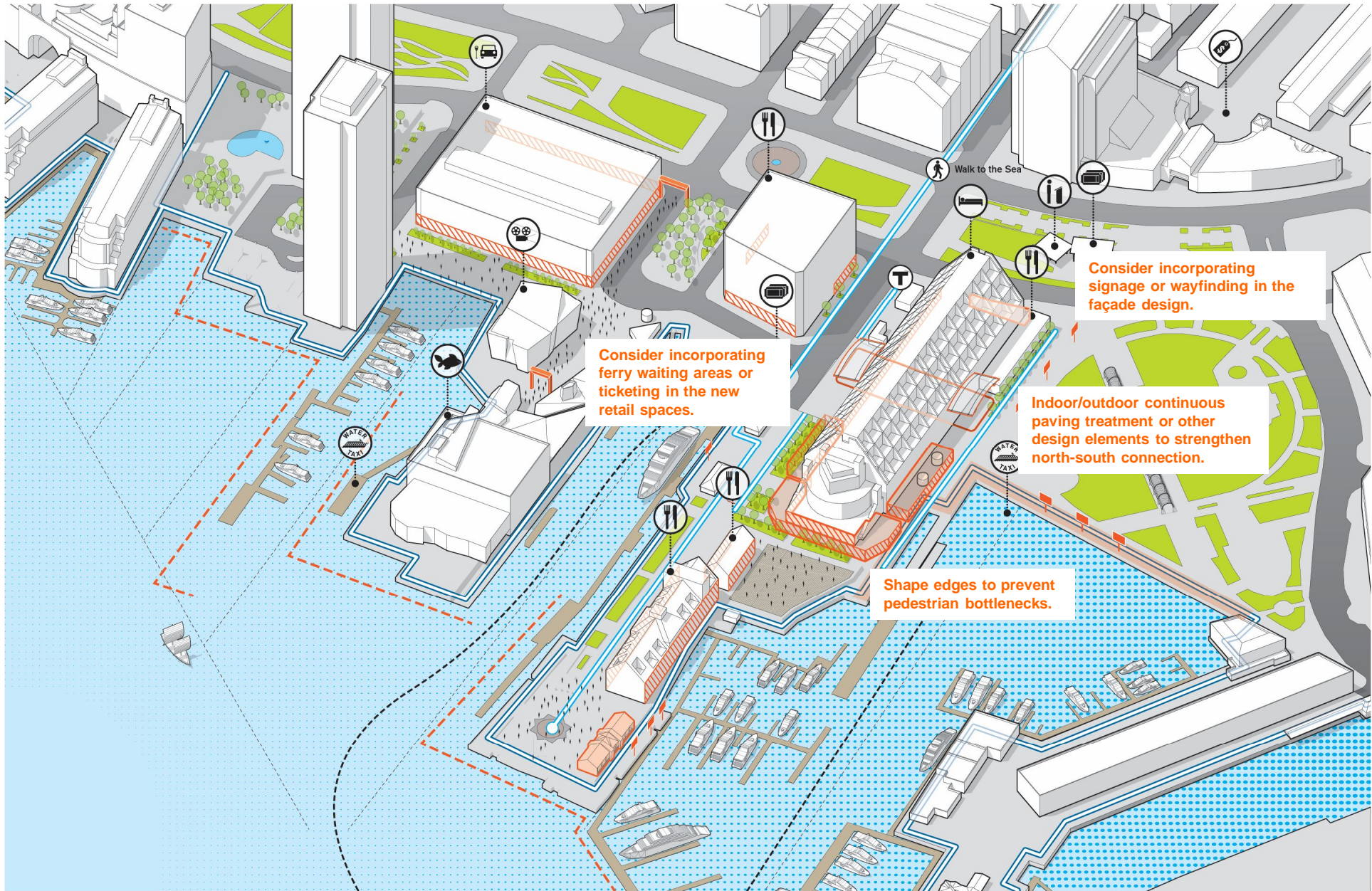


# Proposed Expansion of the Long Wharf Marriott









# Long/Central Wharves



**Four-season programming or festivals** (e.g., cider festival in fall or ice sculpture festival in winter; see Quebec winter festival as example).

**Increased facilities for commuters and transit passengers**, such as an enclosed ferry waiting room, bike storage, and other passenger amenities. This might occur in the Marriot Long Wharf or Harbor Garage redevelopment.

**Improve hardscape and add interpretive information** about history of BRA-owned land between the waterfront and the Harbor Garage. Redevelop Chart House parking lot into open space, and connect with the restaurant in Marriott Long Wharf.

**Improve Aquarium plaza through unified materials**, wayfinding, and visibility from the Greenway

**Unified wayfinding and intelligent transportation system** (ITS) for ferries.

**A designated drop-off/pick-up area** for school and charter bus users of water transportation and the other amenities and attractions.

**Introduce restaurant uses or food trucks** on Long Wharf and large sculptural element to draw visitors to end

**Create a permanent Harbor Islands Gateway** on the waterfront.

**Add ground-level programming and porosity** to the Marriott Long Wharf, such as retail and restaurant uses

**Interpretive signage** through this area, both environmental and historical. Should build on the Walk to the Sea.

**Improve NEAq visibility from the Greenway** through gateway elements, with possible display on IMAX theatre.

**Active uses on the Harbor Garage site** facing Central Wharf and Atlantic Ave. Make visible the education programs and public uses inside.

**Create view corridor to the water** and NEAq in the Harbor Garage development site. Open space should be on the north side.

**Create visible and legible links** from Harbor Islands Pavilion to the ferry locations

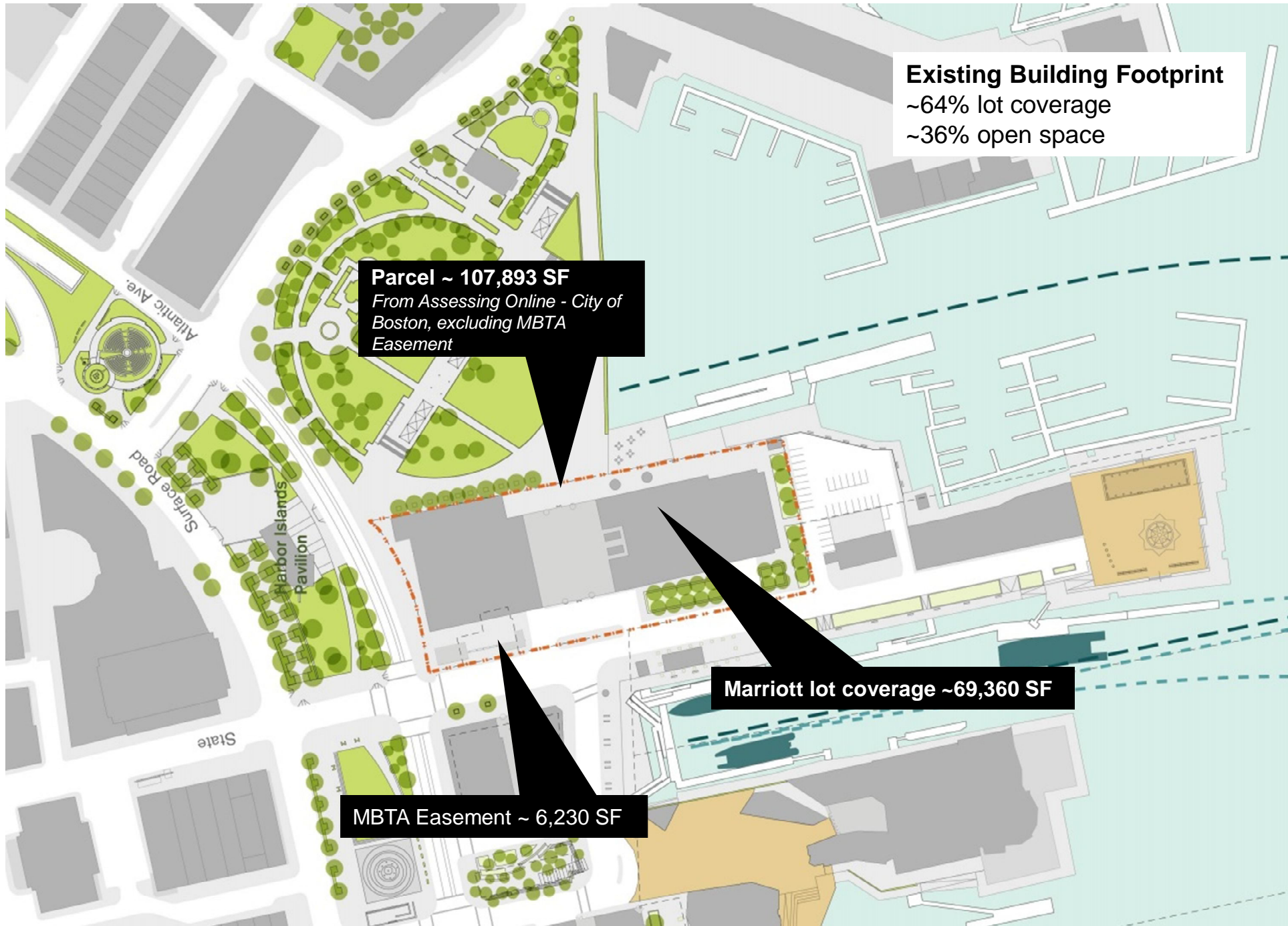
	Goals					Implementation Considerations and Challenges				
	A district accessible to all by foot, transit, water, and bike	Clearly defined connections	Climate change resilience	Four-season destinations and programming	Flexibility to accommodate future uses	Linked to significant development	Requires a partnership between stakeholders	Poses management challenges	Idea that needs adoption	Money
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# Long/Central Wharves



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# Draft MHP Framework and the Long Wharf Marriott

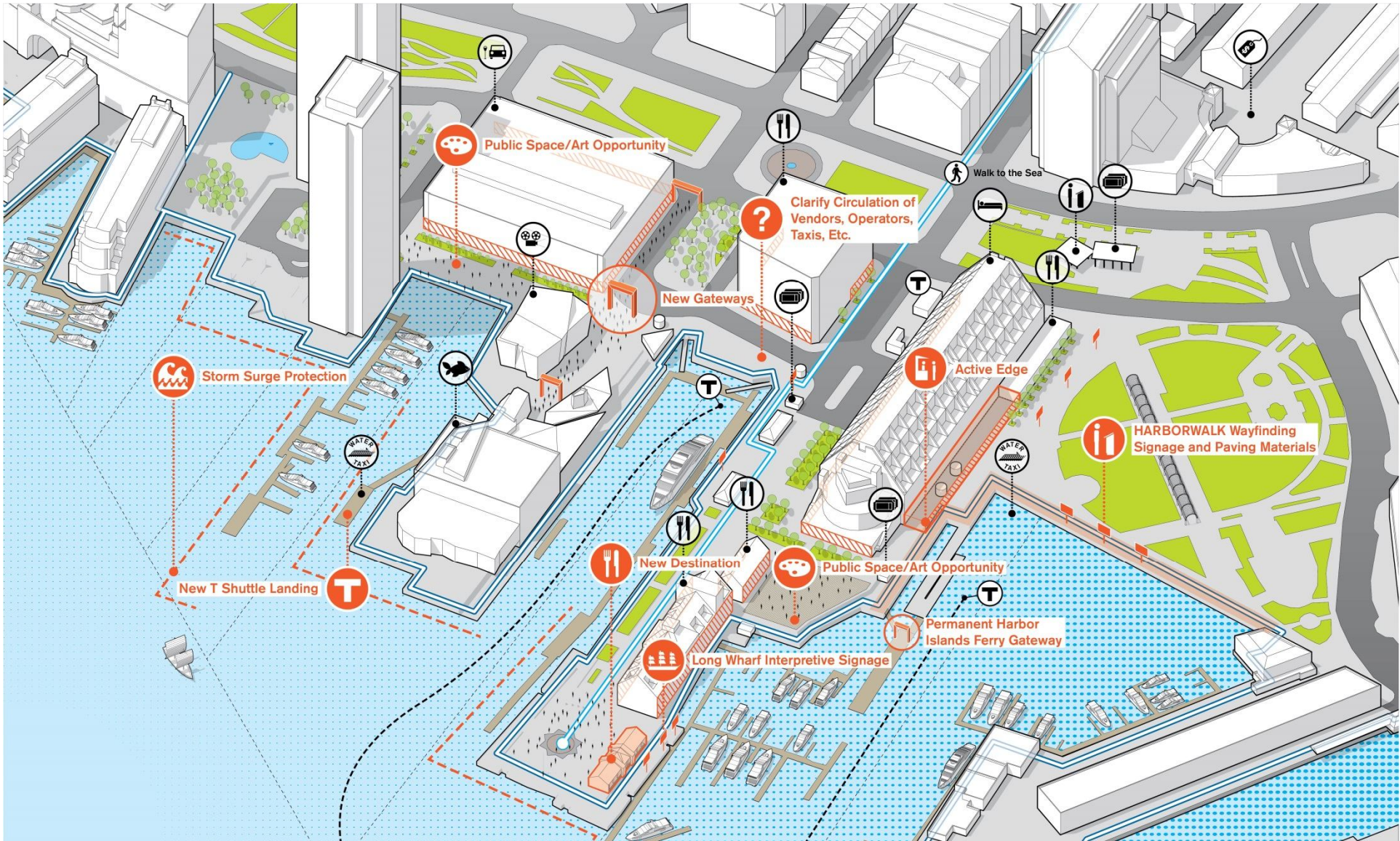


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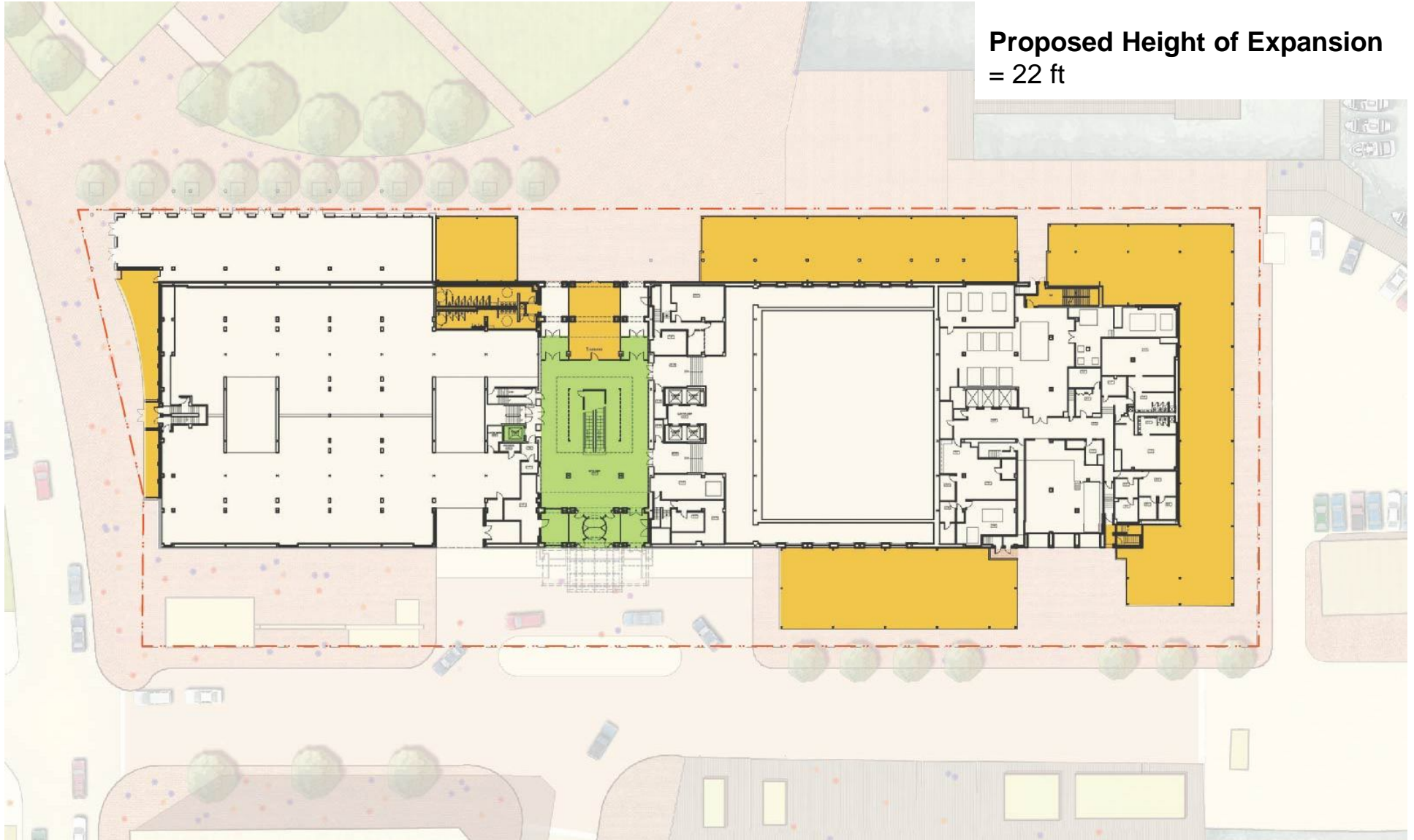


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