

# Downtown Waterfront Municipal Harbor Planning Advisory Committee



CITY OF BOSTON  
Martin J. Walsh  
*Mayor*



Boston  
Redevelopment  
Authority  
Brian Golden, Acting Director

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



# Agenda

- **Where we are in the MHP process/regulatory review**
- **MHP components**
- **Proposed MHP**
- **Next steps**



# Where we are in the MHP process

## **The BRA and its consultant team are preparing a draft MHP**

- Draft MHP structure taking shape with key elements
- Includes new material to present on an area-wide plan
- More work needed on
  - substitute provisions for significant projects
  - offsets
  - access to existing water dependent uses

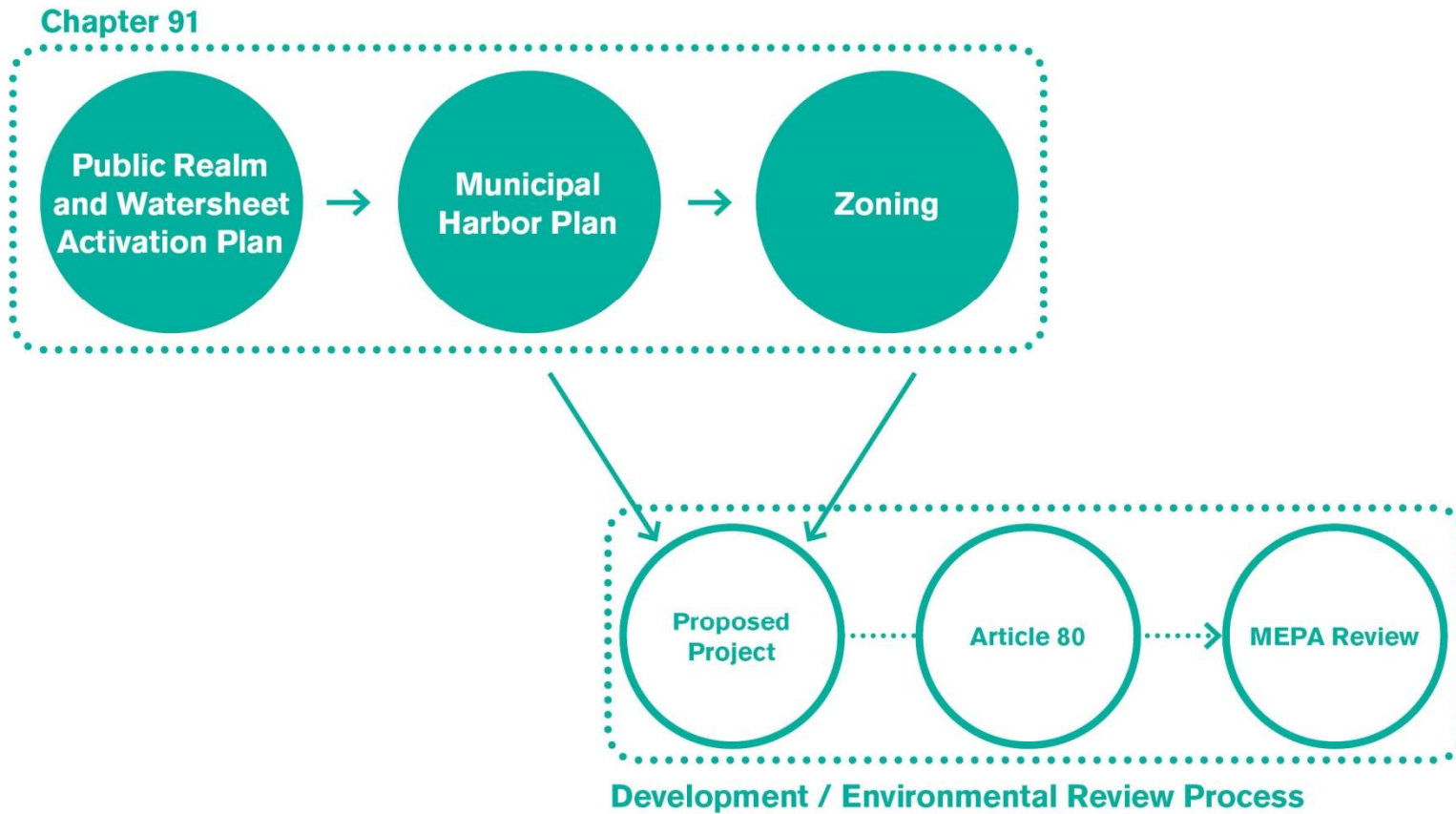
## **We are seeking MHPAC input on this proposed approach**

**Based on feedback and additional analyses, we will complete a draft MHP for further review and submit it to the State**

## **The State process includes:**

- Public hearing and comment period (30 days)
- Consultation period (30-60 days)
- Secretary issues an MHP decision

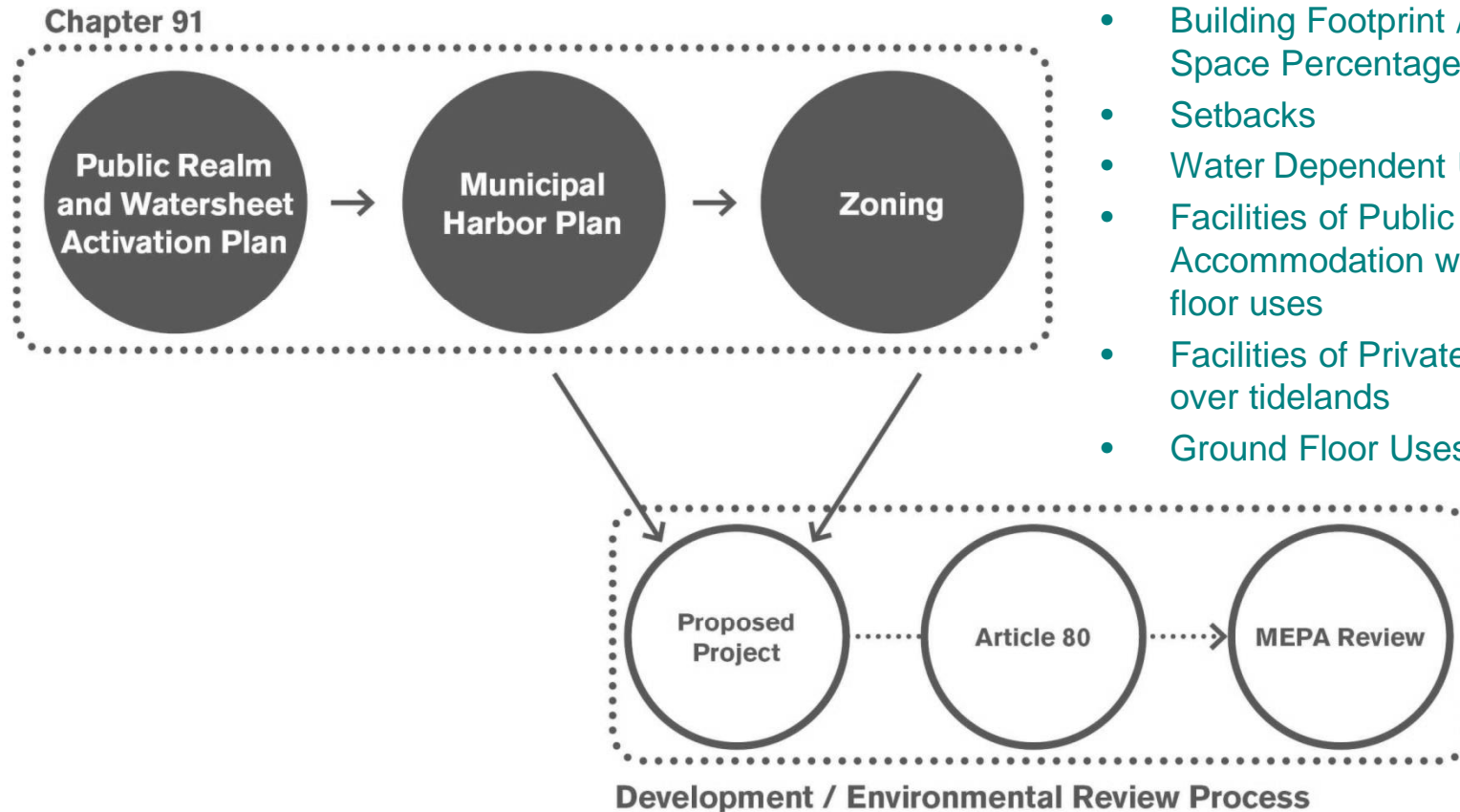
# Regulatory review



# Regulatory review

## Municipal Harbor Plan

- Height
- Density -Built Floor Area & Built Volume
- Shadow Impacts (in Planning Area)
- Building Footprint / Open Space Percentage
- Setbacks
- Water Dependent Use Zone
- Facilities of Public Accommodation with Ground floor uses
- Facilities of Private Tenancy over tidelands
- Ground Floor Uses (general)



# Regulatory review

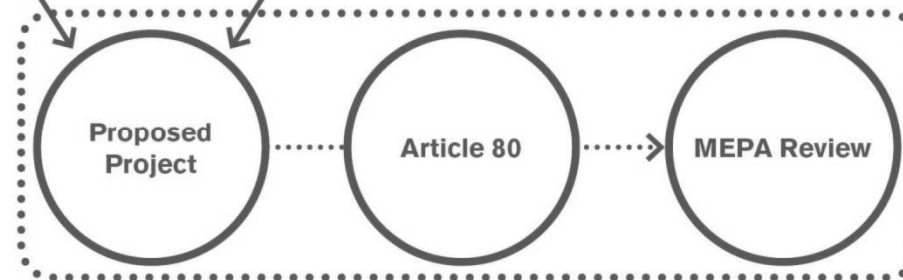
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## Article 80

- Urban Design
- Environmental Impacts
  - Shadows & Wind
- Traffic Impacts
  - Counts, Parking, Access
- Architectural Quality/ Aesthetics
- Open Space Details
- Ground Floor Uses (specific)



Development / Environmental Review Process

# MHP components: this MHP has many objectives

- Activate the waterfront
- Preserve existing and encourage future water dependent uses
- Expand view corridors & improve open space
- Provide higher-density development in some areas, retain lower density in others
- Expand water transportation
- Restrict net new shadow on key public areas
- Encourage coastal resiliency





# MHP components: examples of public feedback include

- Climate change & coastal resiliency
- Protect existing water dependent uses
- Size and type of proposed developments
- Plan on an area-wide basis
- Avoid setting unintended precedents
- Concerns about traffic
- Provide predictable, timely offsets





# Proposed MHP: formulation

This proposed MHP is based on

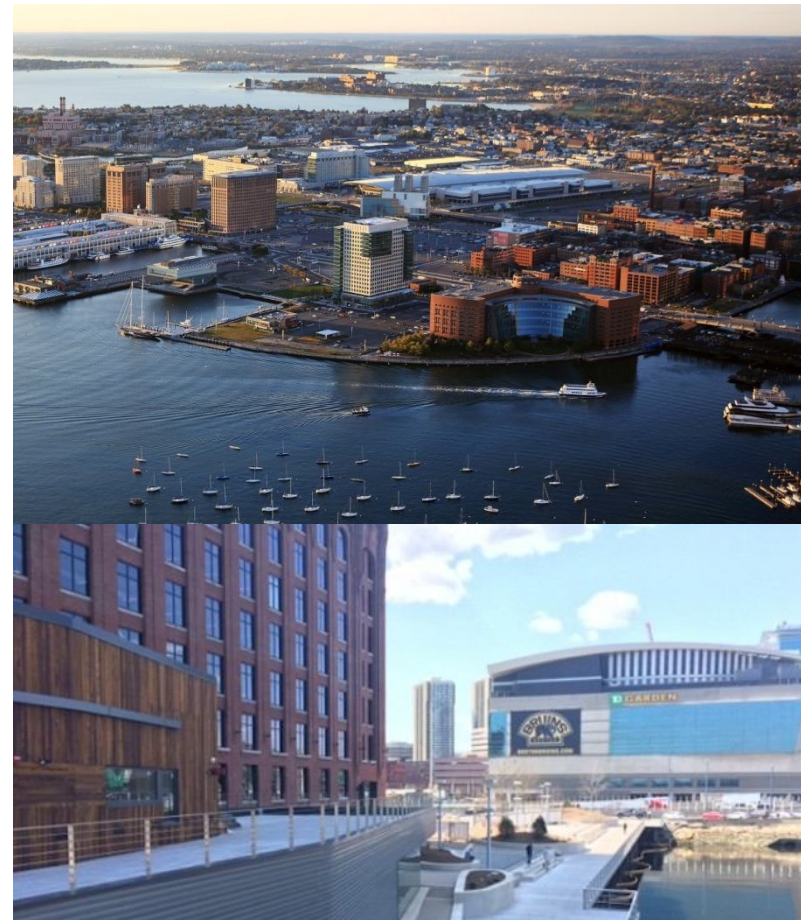
- Prior MHPs and new approaches
- Broad use of **amplifications**
- **Substitute provisions and offsets, with exceptions**
  - Building Footprint
  - Building Height
  - FPTs over flowed tidelands
  - Water Dependent Use Zones



# Proposed MHP: prior MHPs

Prior MHPs provide guidance & precedents but are not always applicable to the Downtown Waterfront

- South Boston MHP: virtually no existing development, a “clean slate”
- Fort Point Downtown (I & II) and Lovejoy Wharf: focus on a single parcel
- Downtown Waterfront: wide variety of existing structures, owners, and proposed developments



Top: South Boston (c. 2013); Bottom: Lovejoy Wharf

# Proposed MHP: new approaches

- New approaches are based on regulations and guidance from CZM & DEP, including
  - Open space is open to the sky
  - In general, a taller building with a smaller footprint is better than a shorter building with a larger footprint (same volume)
    - Preserve capacity for water dependent use
  - Focus on predictable outcomes
  - MHP must protect access to existing water dependent uses





# Proposed MHP: new approaches

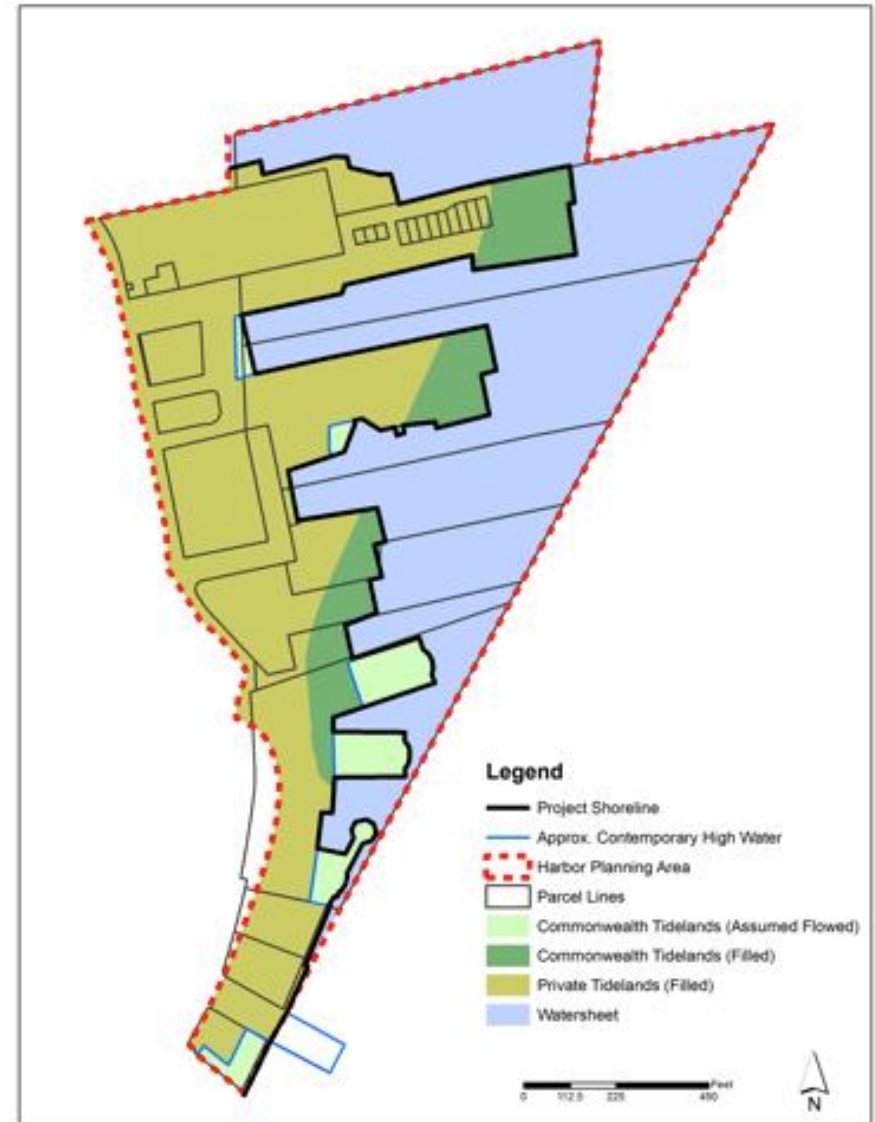


- To reflect the unique characteristics of the Downtown Waterfront, new approaches provide
  - Significant **amplifications**
  - **Protections** for existing/future water dependent uses (baseline requirement)
  - **Area-wide substitute provisions, with exceptions**
  - **Combined open space**, with a focus on approval standards for offsets
  - **Restrictions on net new shadow**
  - **Tiered offsets**, based on impacts

# Amplifications

Amplifications tailor Chapter 91 discretionary provisions, while substitute provisions are for dimensional standards

- Apply Commonwealth tidelands standards to the entire planning area
  - Ground floor FPAs
  - public restrooms
  - wayfinding & art
  - water transportation
- Designate the New England Aquarium as a prime SPDF



# Amplifications

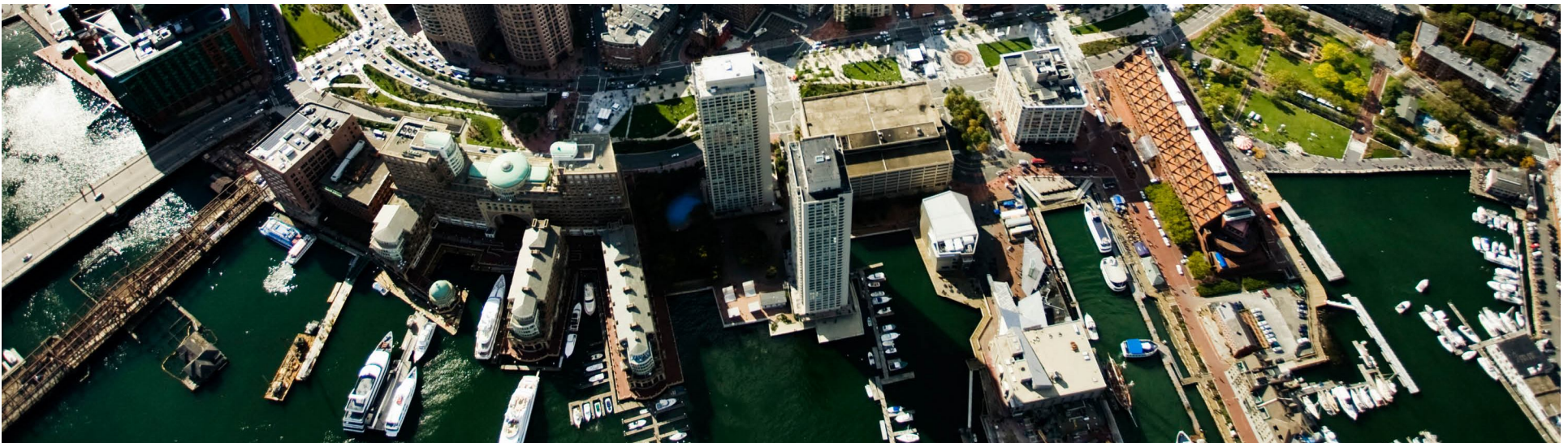
Structures over flowed tidelands, regardless of use, shall provide offsets as if an FPT



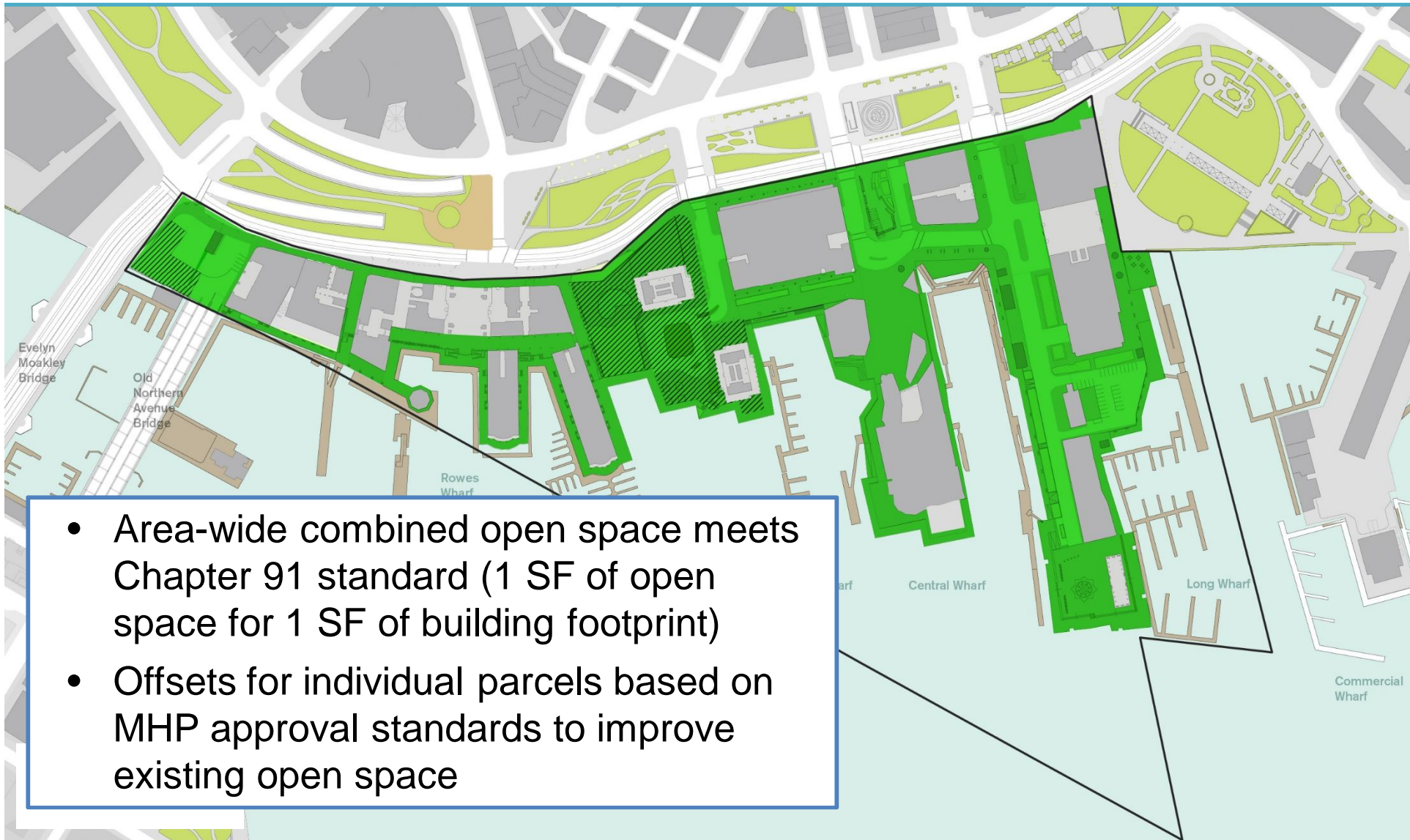


# Area-wide substitute provision & offsets, with exceptions

- Area-wide substitute provision, with exceptions to avoid precedents
  - Area-wide substitute provision retains character of the planning area
    - Based on RK Greenway guidelines for height
    - Increases open space for new projects
  - Exceptions allow for higher density with greater public benefits



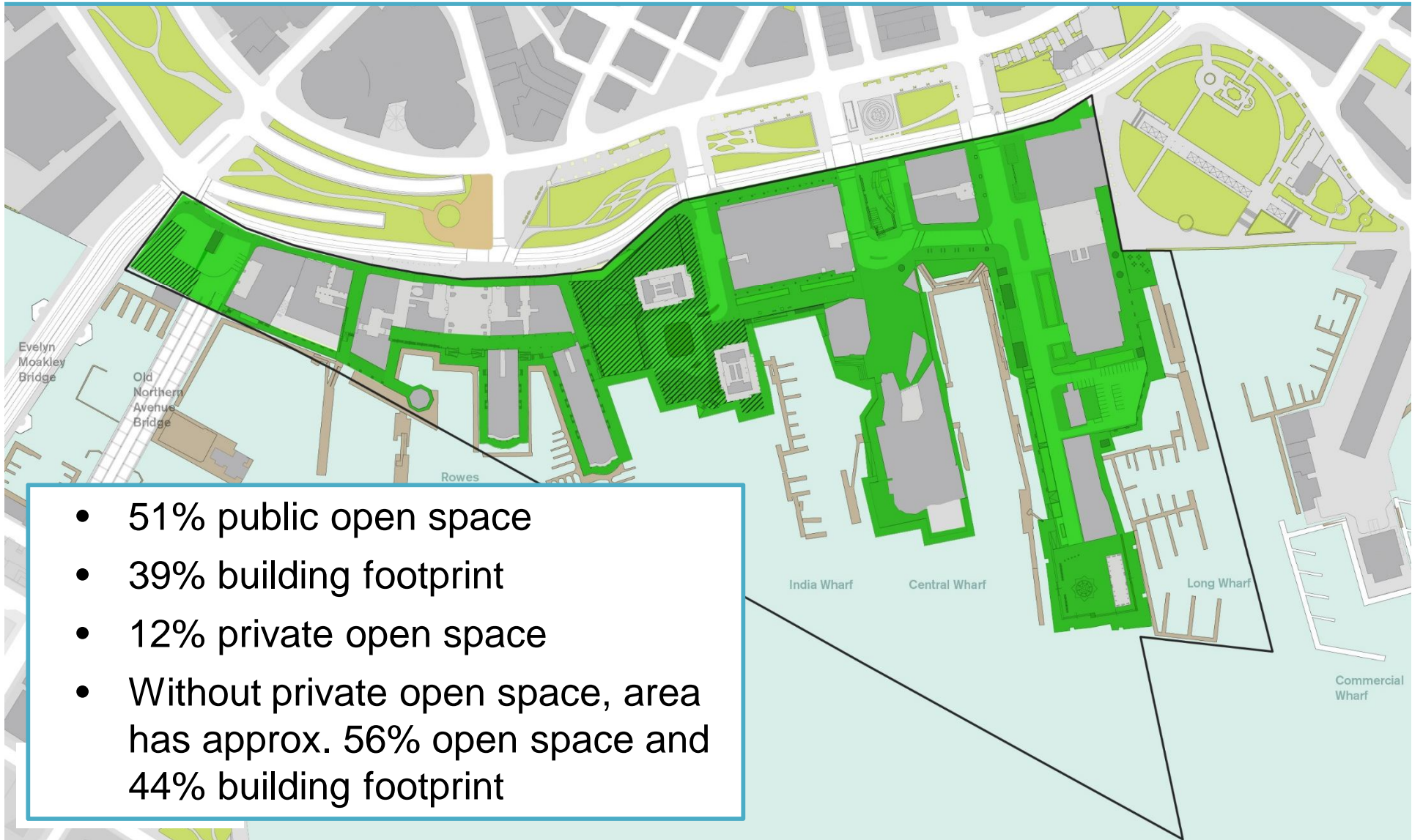
# Existing Open Space



- Area-wide combined open space meets Chapter 91 standard (1 SF of open space for 1 SF of building footprint)
- Offsets for individual parcels based on MHP approval standards to improve existing open space

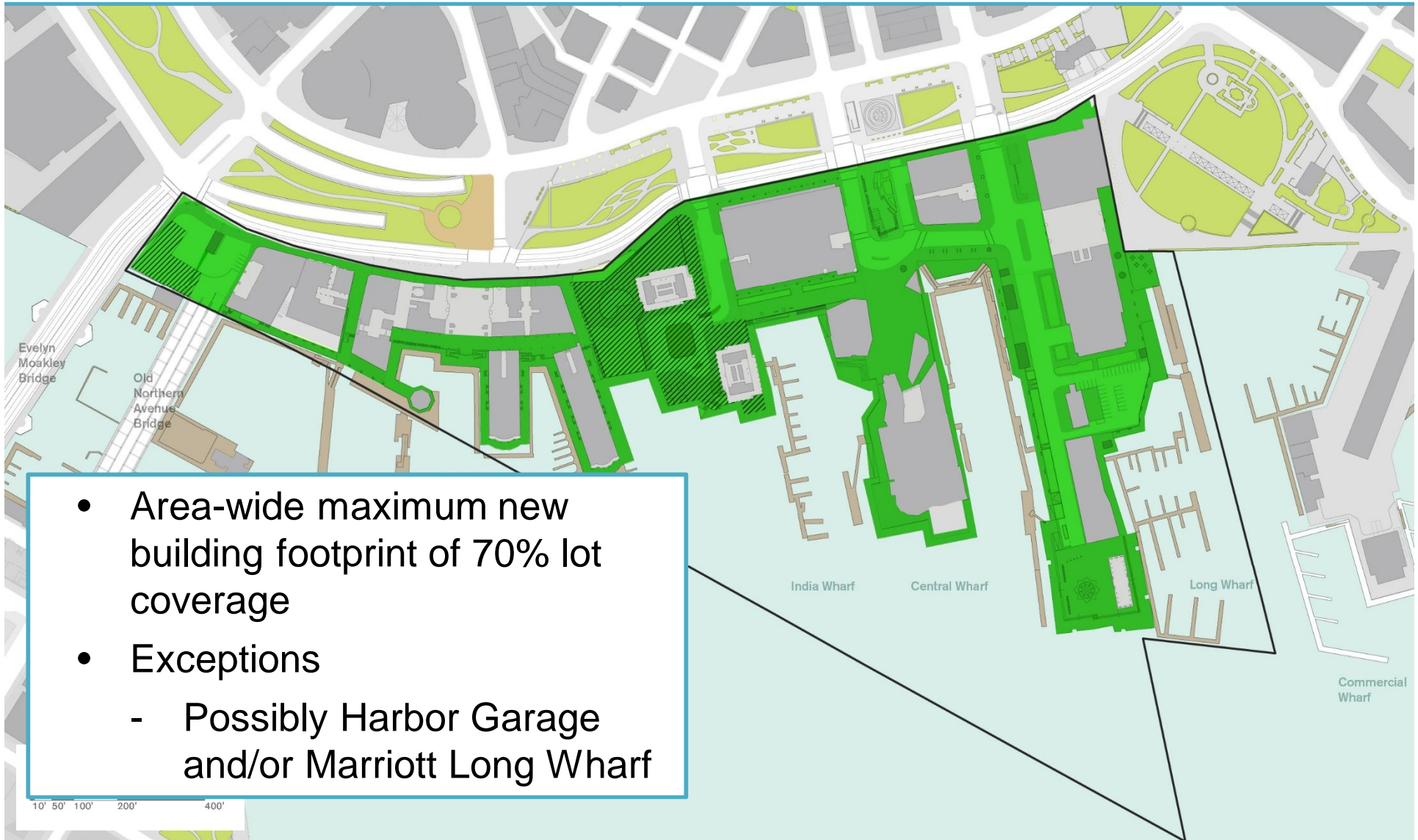


# Existing Open Space





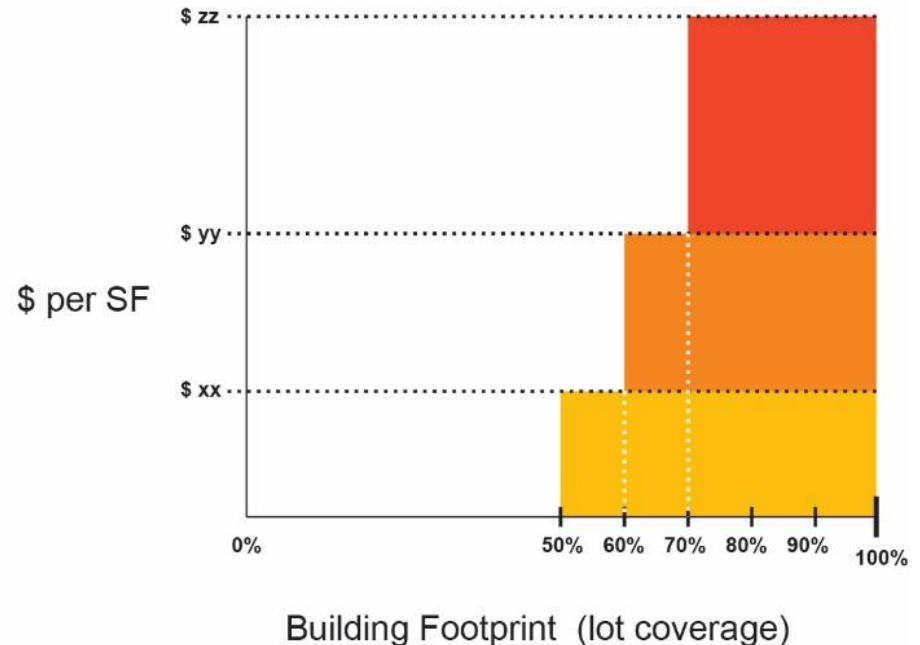
# Building footprint substitute provision



- Area-wide maximum new building footprint of 70% lot coverage
- Exceptions
  - Possibly Harbor Garage and/or Marriott Long Wharf

# Building footprint offset

- Area-wide offset based on building footprint lot coverage
  - \$xx per SF for building footprint of 51 – 60% lot coverage
  - \$xx + \$yy per SF for building footprint of 61 – 70% lot coverage
- Exceptions
  - \$xx + \$yy + \$zz for any potential building footprint in excess of 70% lot coverage
- All offsets to be used for public open space improvements, based on minimum expenditures



# Building height substitute provision

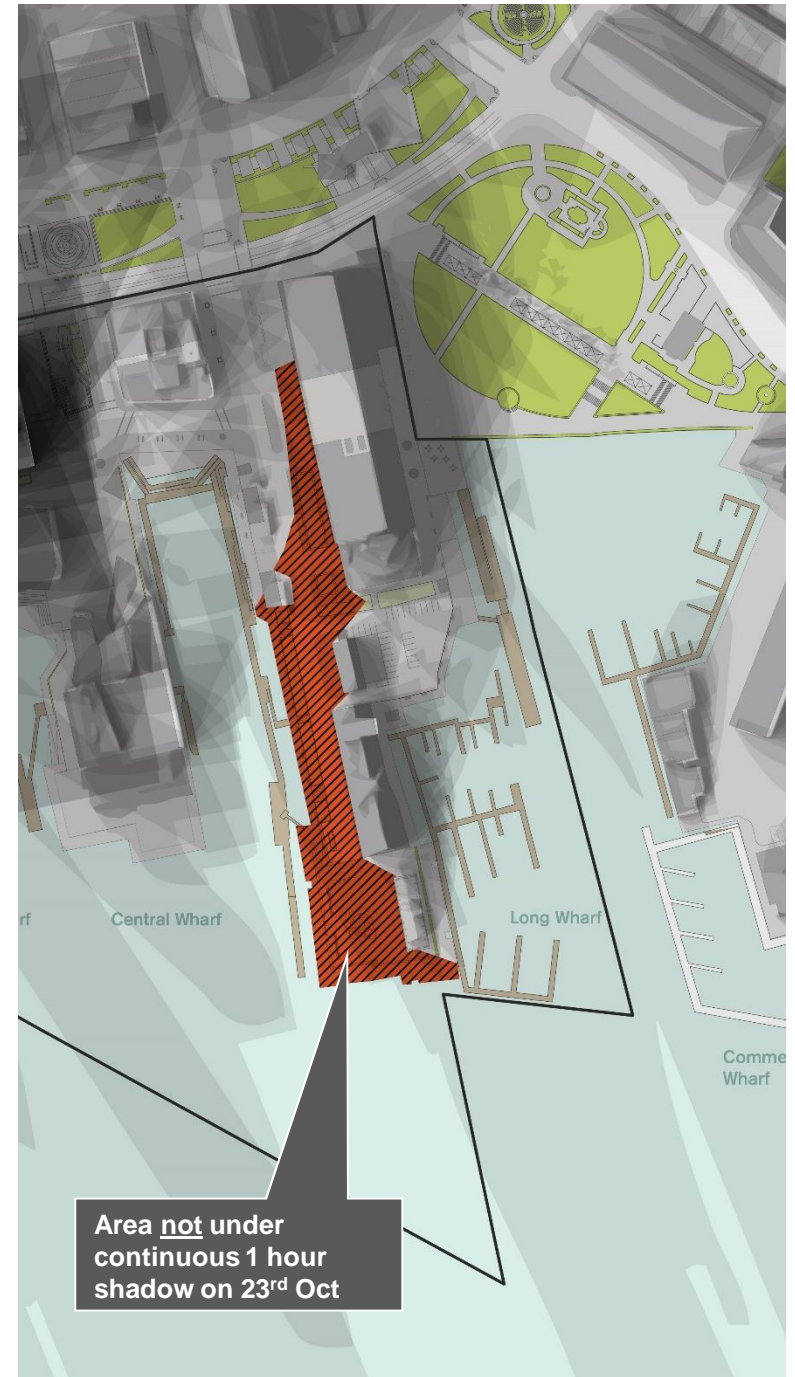
- Area-wide building height 200' maximum
- Must meet Boston wind standards
- Exceptions
  - Existing buildings: an additional 30 feet only, no more than 2 floors
    - Must move mechanicals to upper floors
    - All open space public and ground floor FPAs
  - Long Wharf, seaward of the Marriott: max. additional 30'/ 2 floors
  - Hook Wharf
  - Harbor Garage





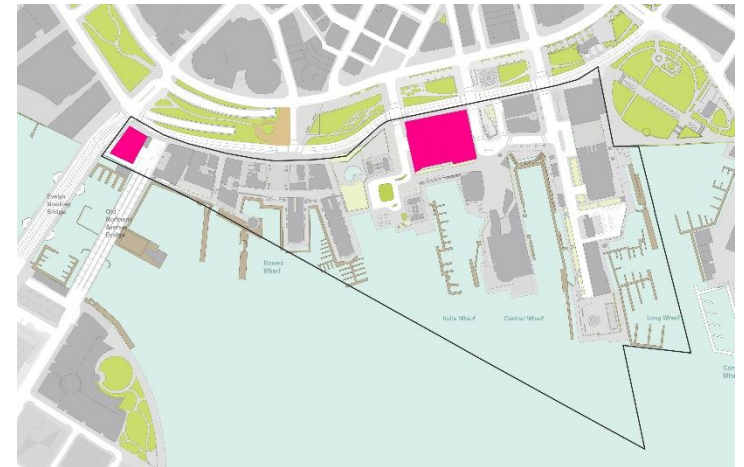
# Building height offsets

- Area-wide offset based on net new shadow (NNS)
  - \$X per square foot of NNS for implementation of the Public Realm Plan and for water transportation
  - No NNS on Long Wharf seaward of the Marriott



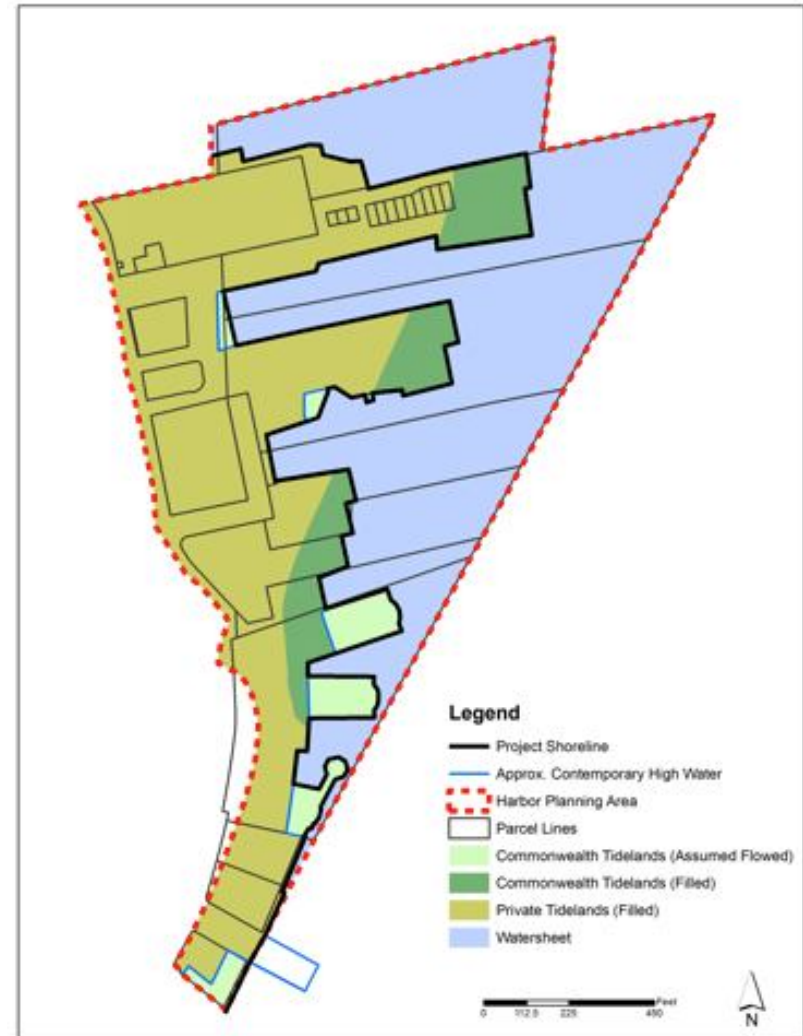
# Building height offsets

- Exceptions
  - Hook Wharf
    - \$x per square foot of NNS for building height up to 200' for implementation of the Public Realm Plan and for water transportation
    - \$x + \$y per square foot of NNS for building height above 200' for implementation of the Public Realm Plan and for water transportation
  - Harbor Garage
    - Same as above, except offsets may be substituted for new or existing SPDFs



# FPTs over flowed tidelands, substitute provision and offset

- No area-wide substitute provision or offset
- Exception
  - Hook Wharf, for residential development on upper floors over flowed tidelands
- Offset
  - On-site public benefits
  - Offsets must be provided regardless of use (amplification)





# Water dependent use zone (WDUZ), substitute provision

- WDUZ may be reconfigured to provide the same or greater area as a compliant WDUZ
- Some limitations on the seaward extent of seasonal uses, such as outdoor cafés
- No offset required



# Next Steps

- Discuss and comment on proposed MHP framework
- Present baseline requirements for water dependent uses
- Present substitute provisions & offsets for Marriott Long Wharf, Harbor Garage, and Hook Wharf
- Finalize draft MHP with additional information and schematics for comment



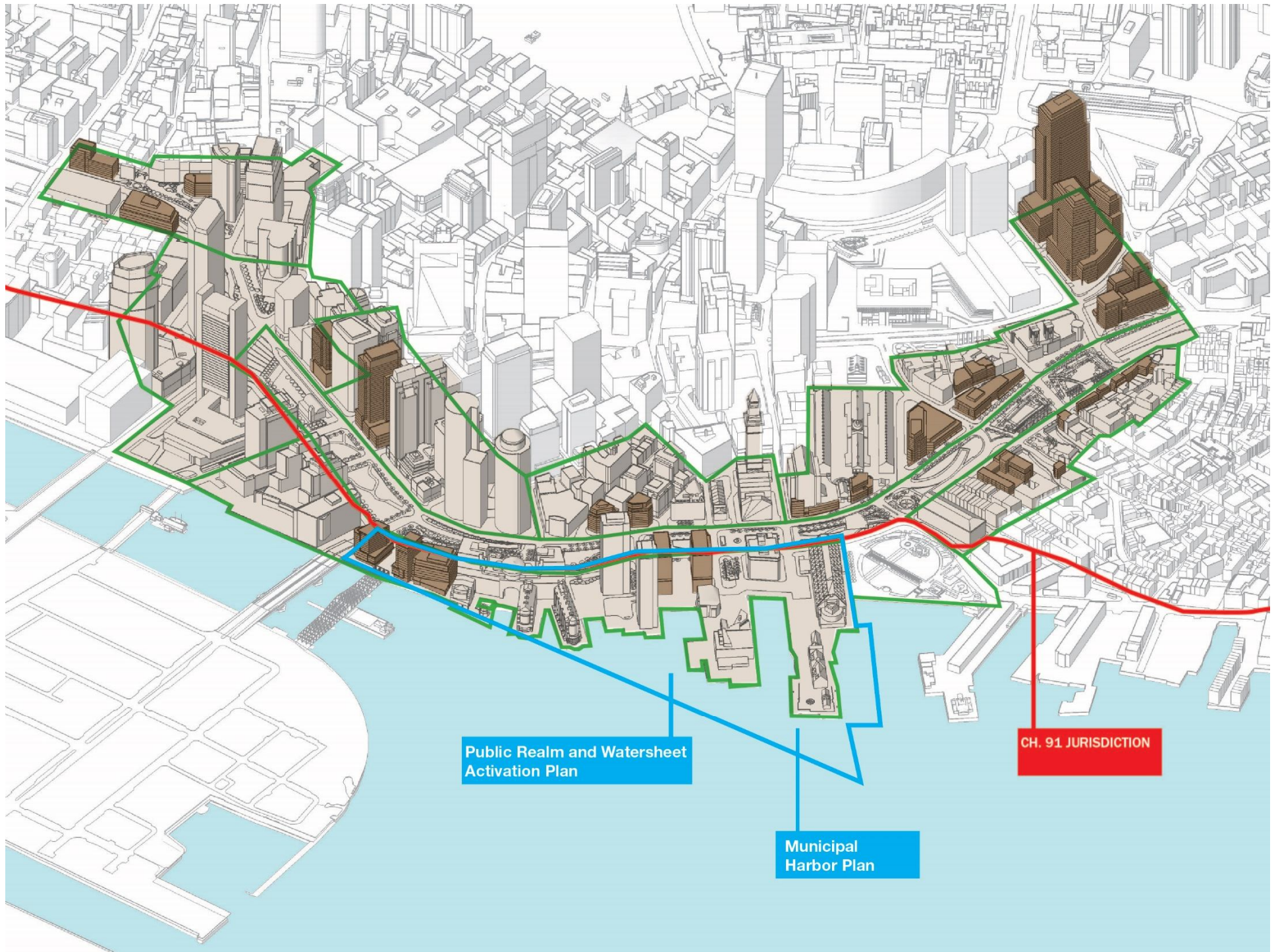
Downtown Waterfront

## Next Meeting

# Wednesday, September 30, 2015 3-5 pm







Public Realm and Watersheet  
Activation Plan

Municipal  
Harbor Plan

CH. 91 JURISDICTION