

Downtown Waterfront Municipal Harbor Planning Advisory Committee



CITY OF BOSTON
Martin J. Walsh
Mayor



Boston
Redevelopment
Authority
Brian Golden, Director

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

Agenda

- **Where we are in the MHP process/regulatory review**
- **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

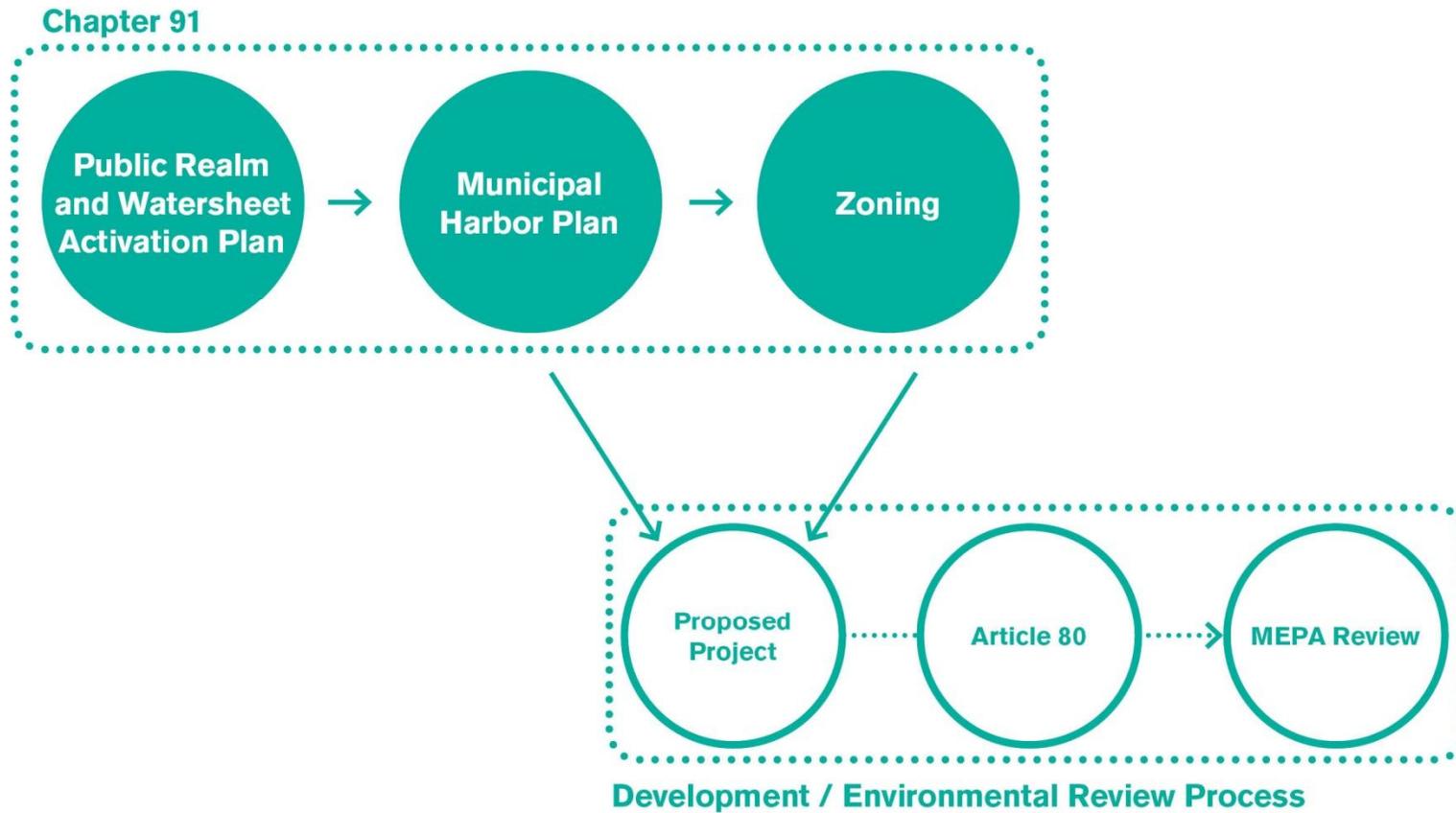
We are seeking MHPAC input on this proposed approach

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

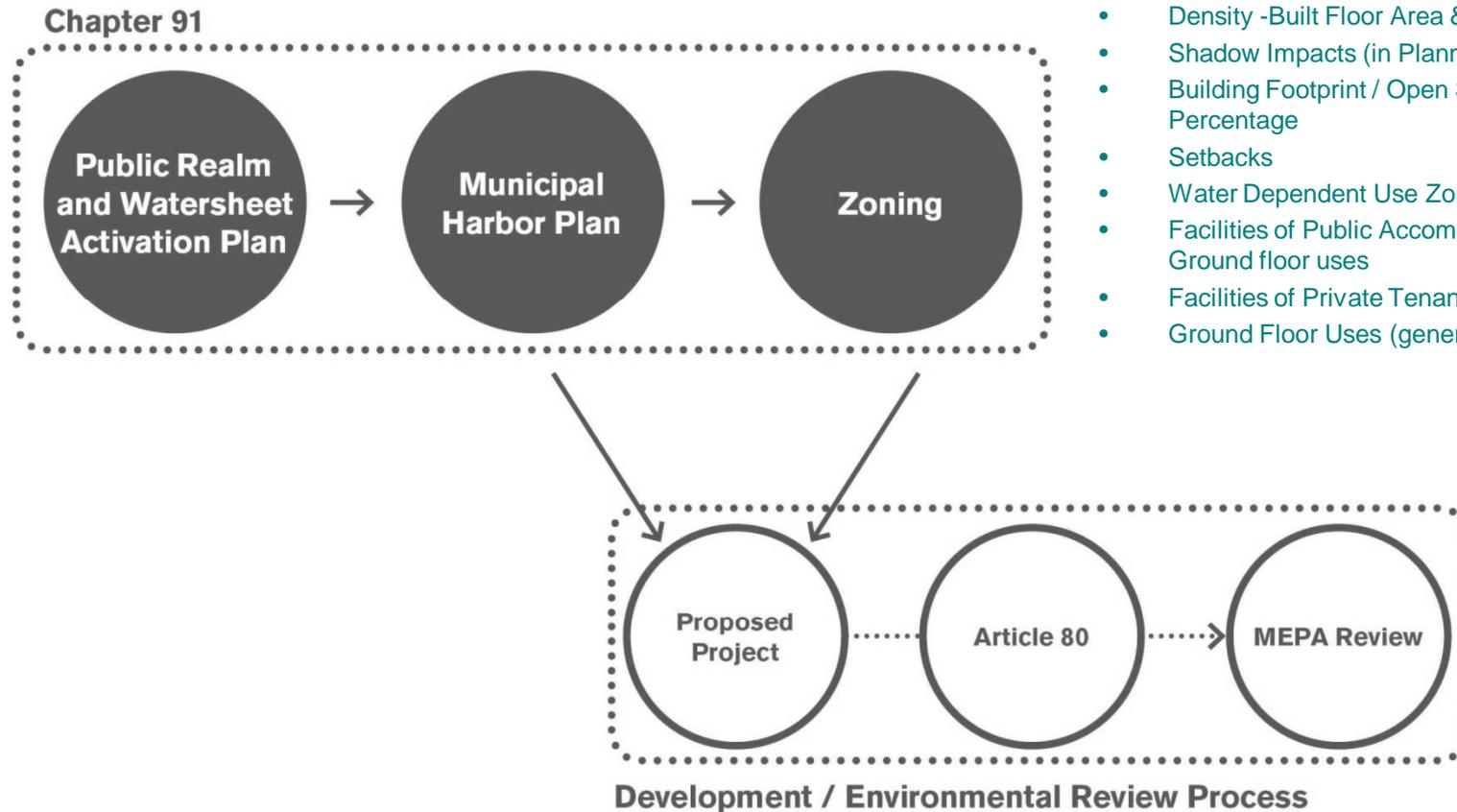
The State process includes:

- 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

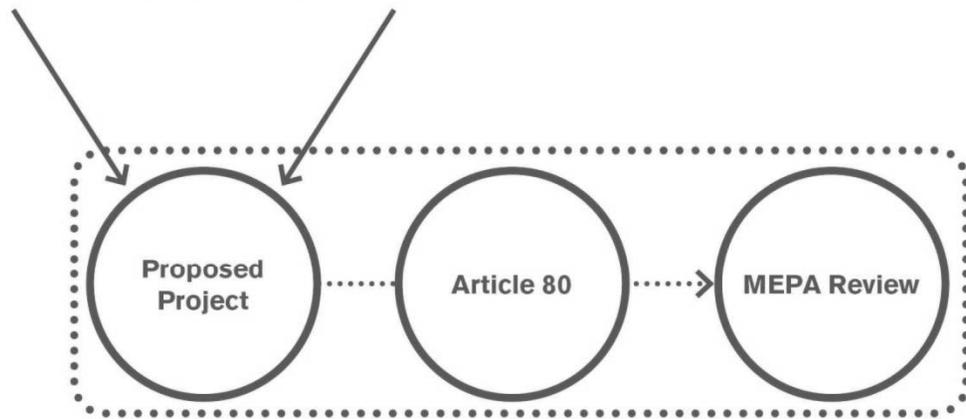


Municipal Harbor Plan

- 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)

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

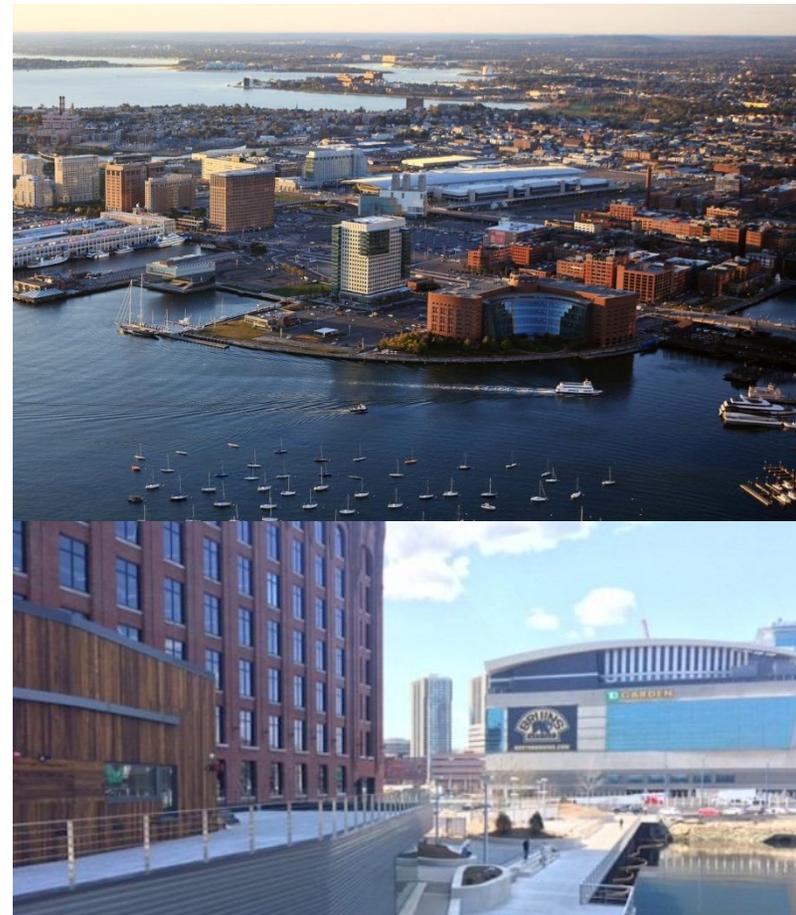
- Prior MHPs and new approaches
- Broad use of **amplifications**
- **Substitute provisions and offsets, with exceptions**
 - Building Footprint
 - Building Height
 - FPTs over flowed tidelands
 - Water Dependent Use Zones



Proposed MHP: prior MHPs

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

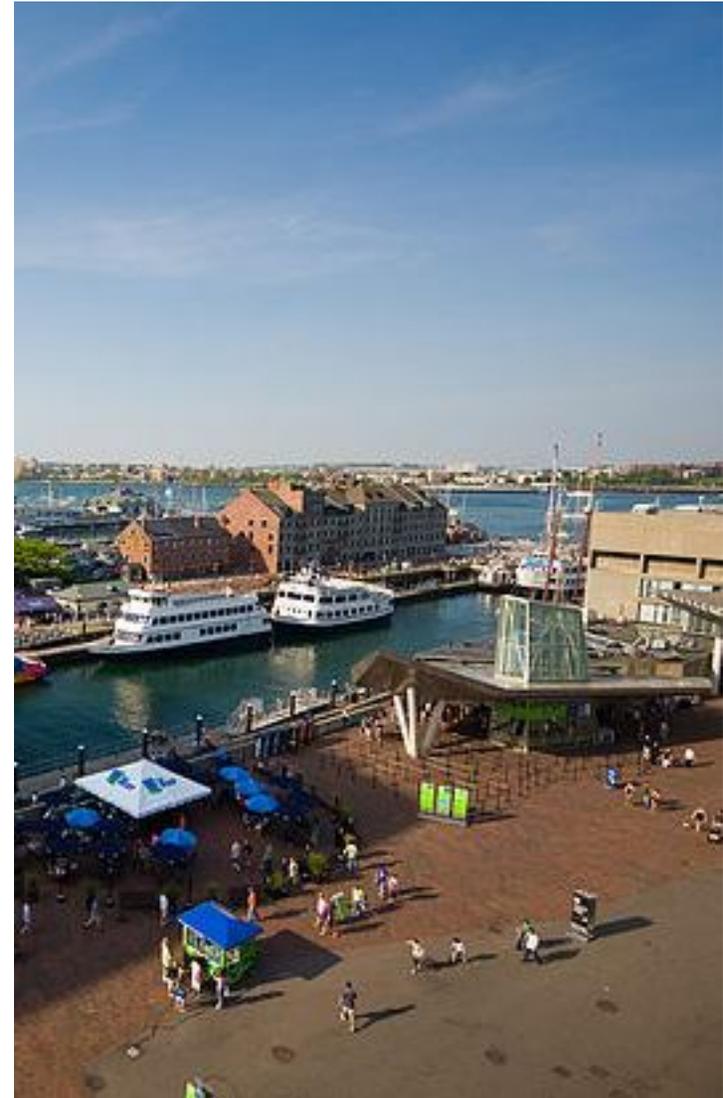
- South Boston MHP: virtually no existing development, a “clean slate”
- Fort Point Downtown (I & II) and Lovejoy Wharf: focus on a single parcel
- Downtown Waterfront: wide variety of existing structures, owners, and proposed developments



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

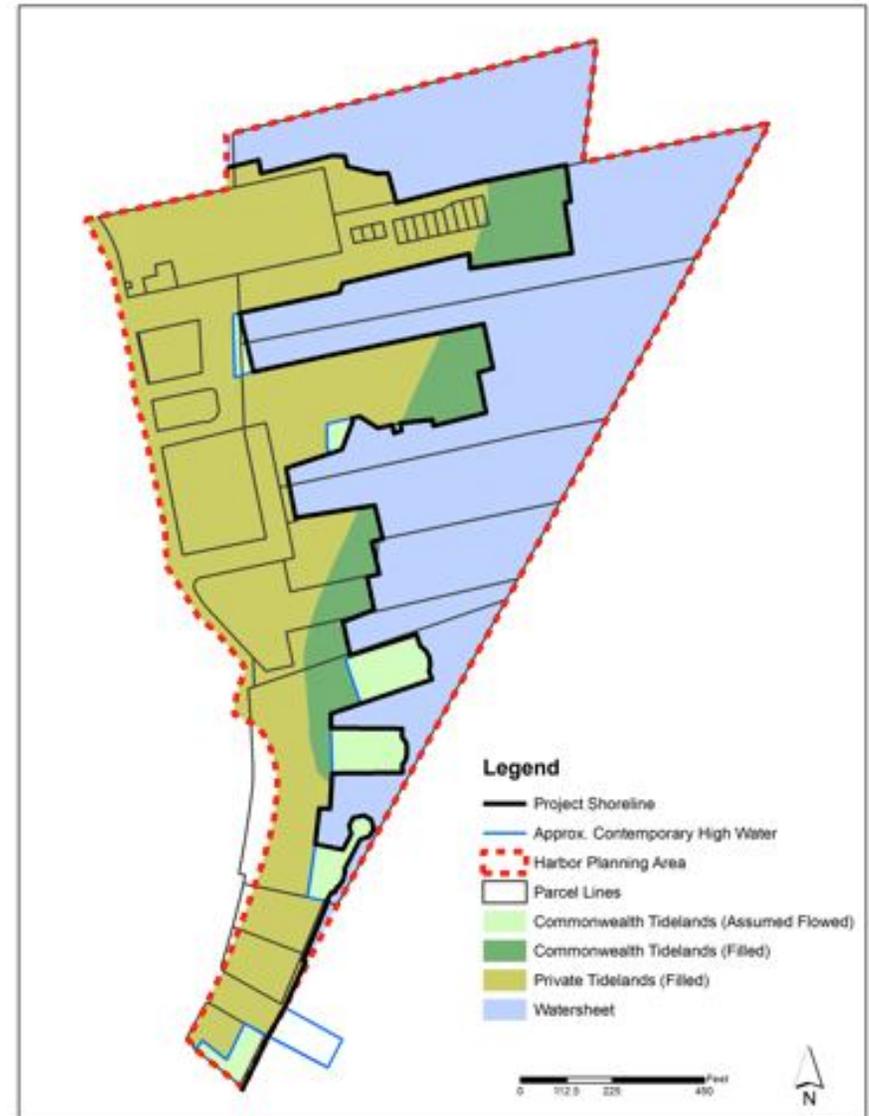


- To reflect the unique characteristics of the Downtown Waterfront, new approaches provide
 - Significant **amplifications**
 - **Protections** for existing/future water dependent uses (baseline requirement)
 - **Area-wide substitute provisions, with exceptions**
 - **Area-wide calculation for open space plus parcel specific limitations**, 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



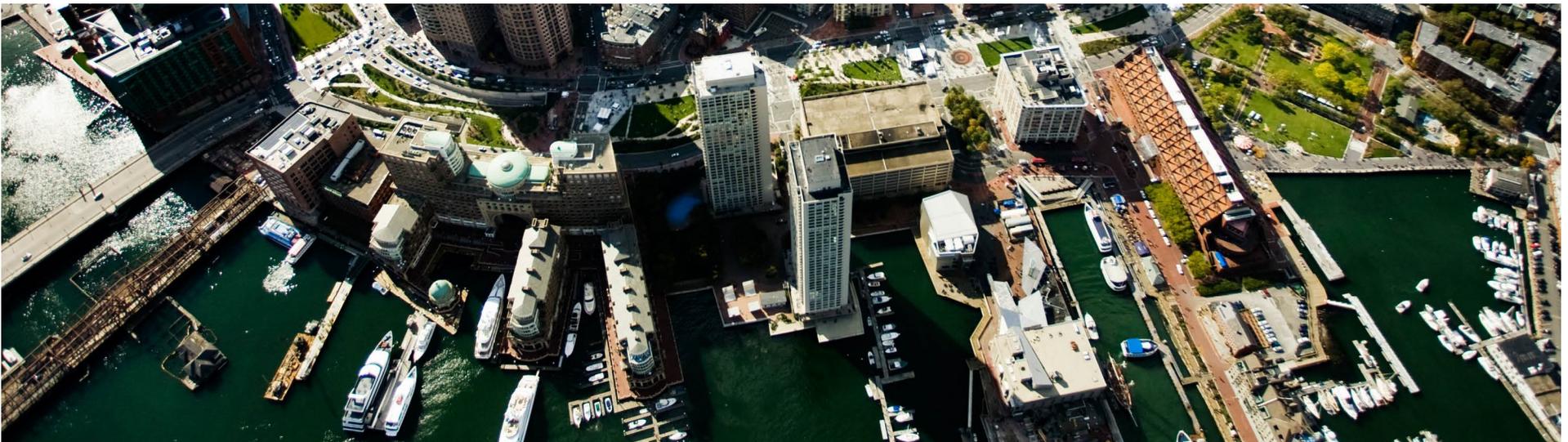
Amplifications

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



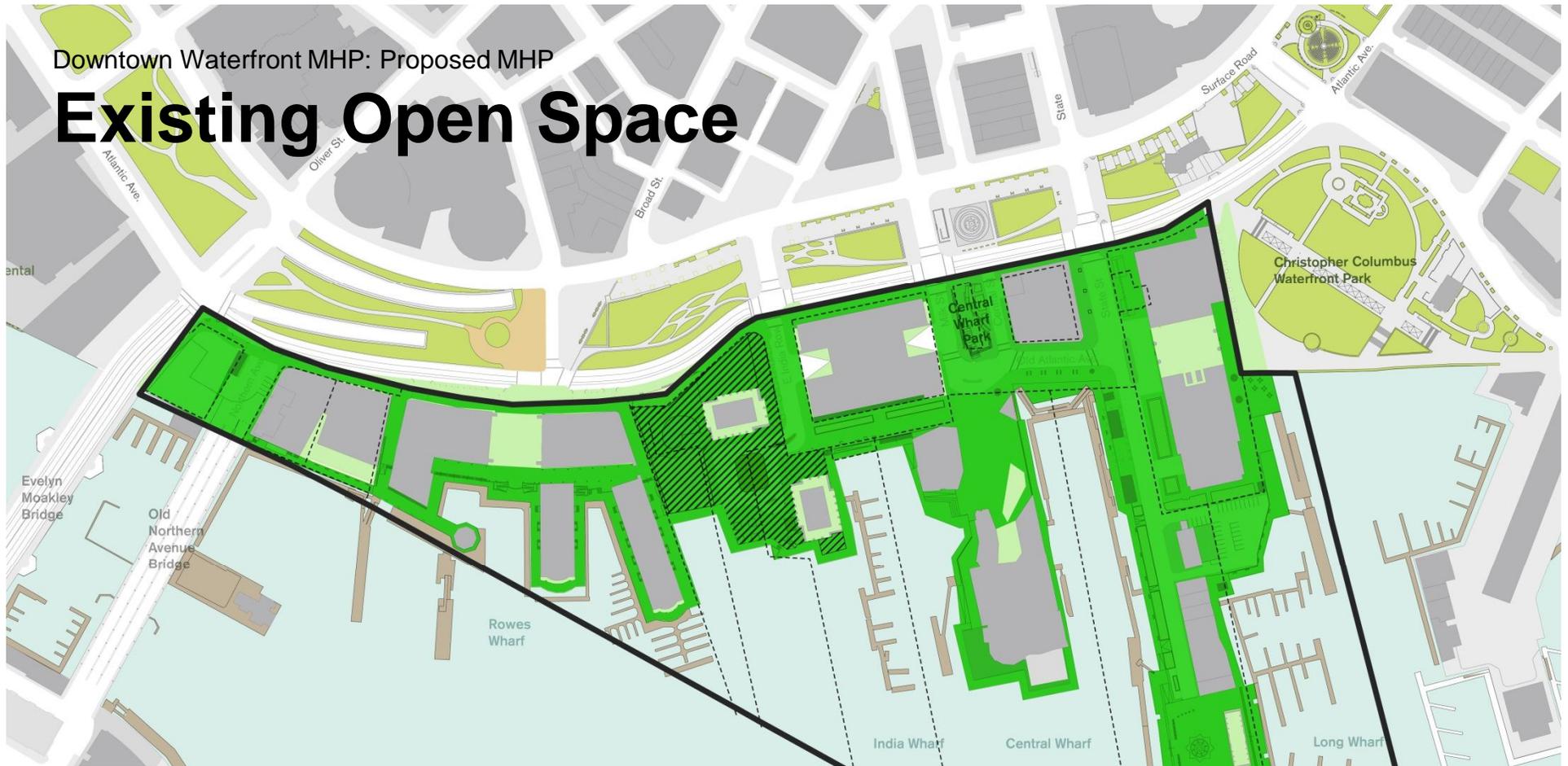
Area-wide substitute provision & offsets, with exceptions

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



Downtown Waterfront MHP: Proposed MHP

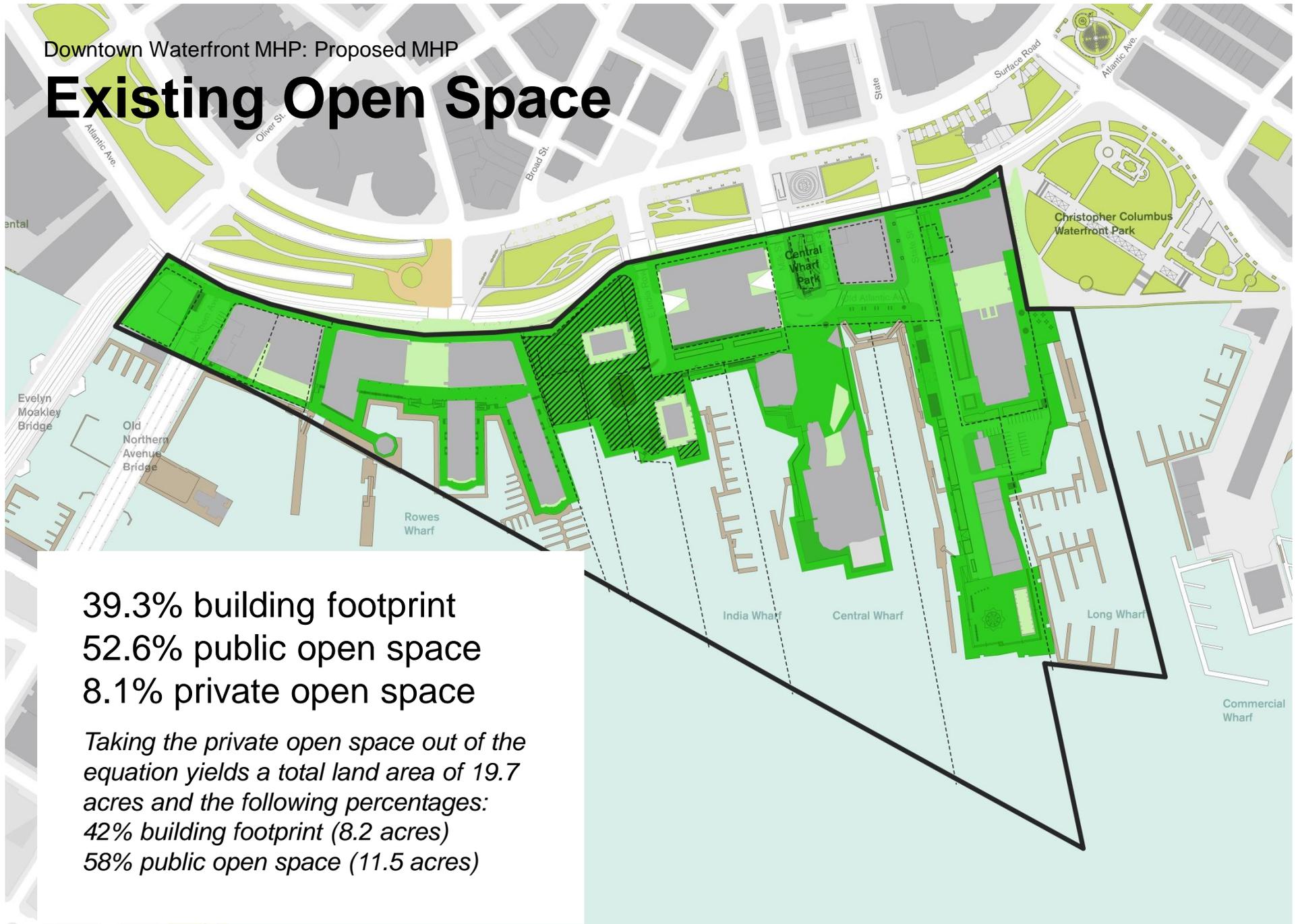
Existing Open Space



- Area-wide open space exceeds Chapter 91 standard (1 SF of open space for 1 SF of building footprint)
- Maximum building footprint for individual parcels, with offsets to improve existing open space

Downtown Waterfront MHP: Proposed MHP

Existing Open Space

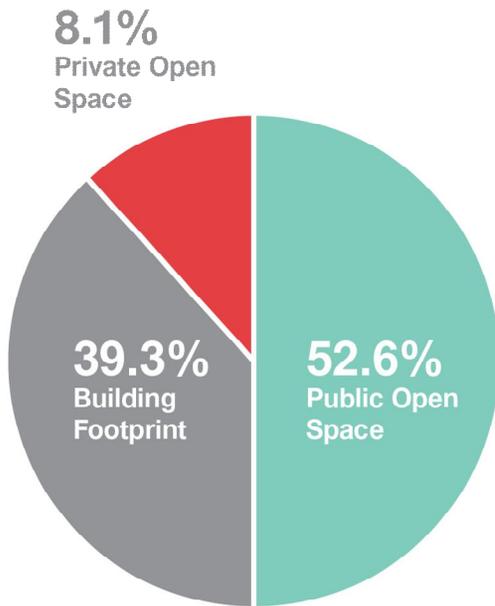


39.3% building footprint
52.6% public open space
8.1% private open space

*Taking the private open space out of the equation yields a total land area of 19.7 acres and the following percentages:
42% building footprint (8.2 acres)
58% public open space (11.5 acres)*

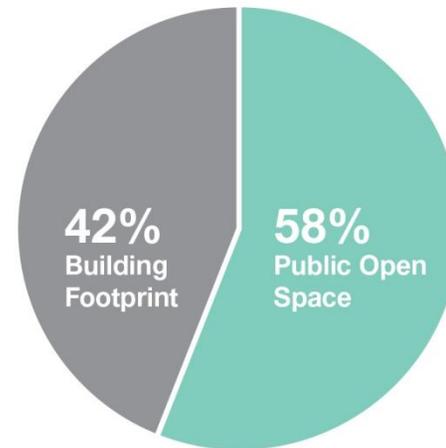
Existing Open Space

**All open space
(including private open
space)**



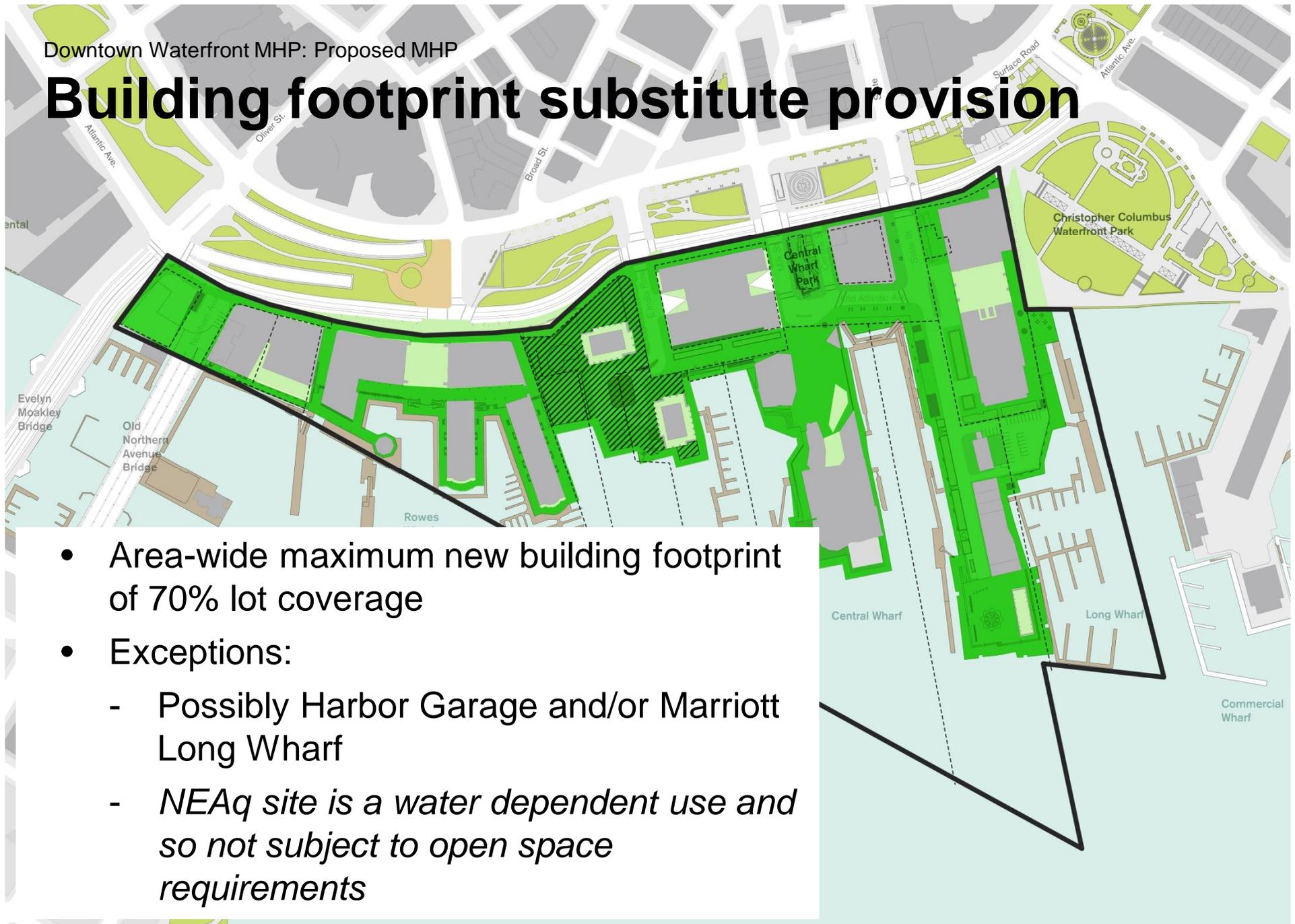
21.4 acres
39.3% building footprint
52.6% public open space
8.1% private open space

**Only the publicly
accessible open
space**



Taking the private open space out of the equation yields a total land area of **19.7 acres** and the following percentages:
42% building footprint (8.2 acres)
58% public open space (11.5 acres)

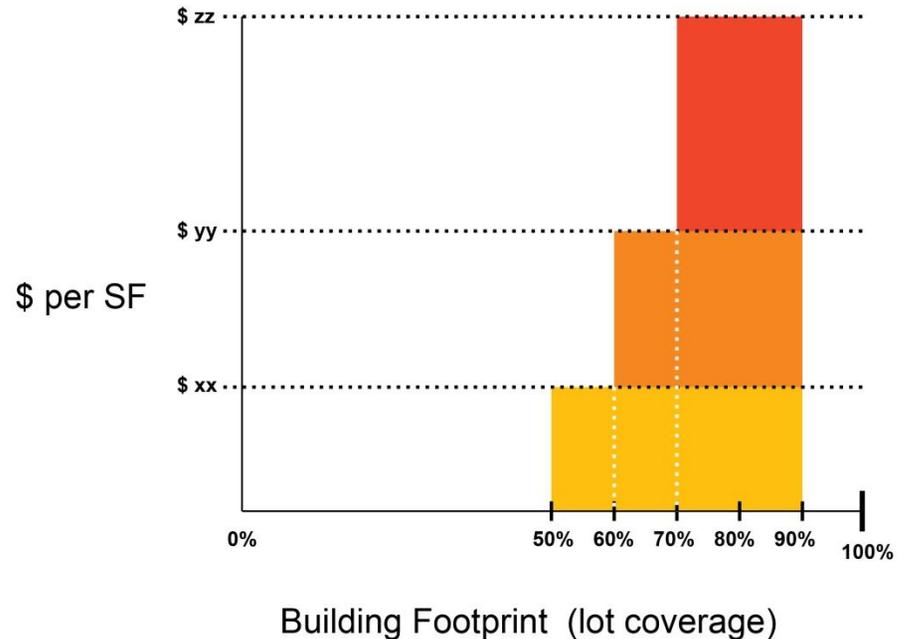
Building footprint substitute provision



- Area-wide maximum new building footprint of 70% lot coverage
- Exceptions:
 - Possibly Harbor Garage and/or Marriott Long Wharf
 - *NEAq site is a water dependent use and so not subject to open space requirements*

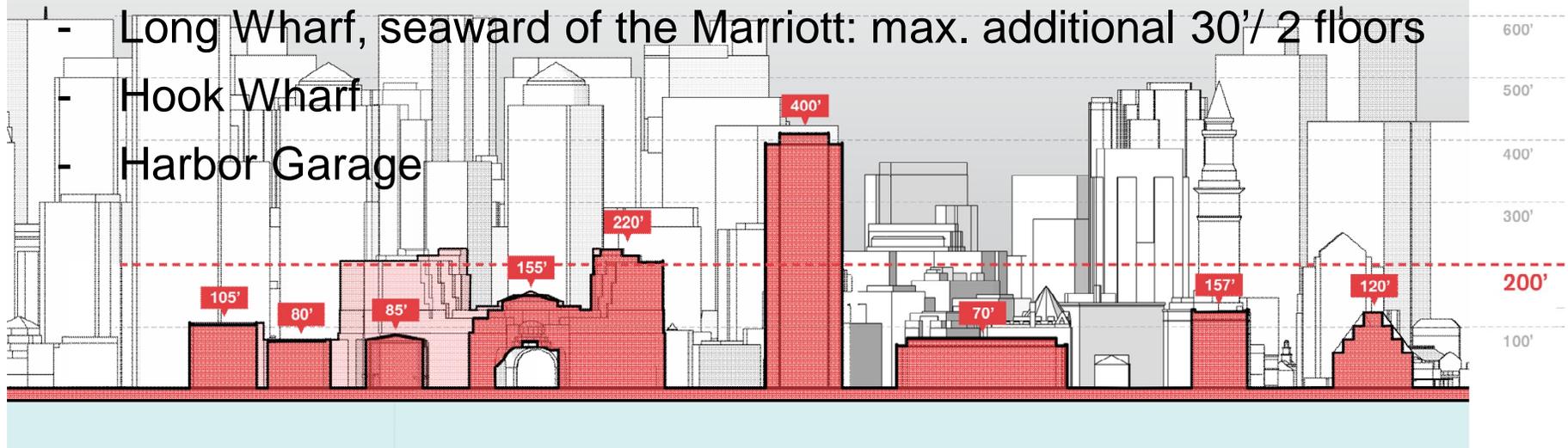
Building footprint offset

- 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



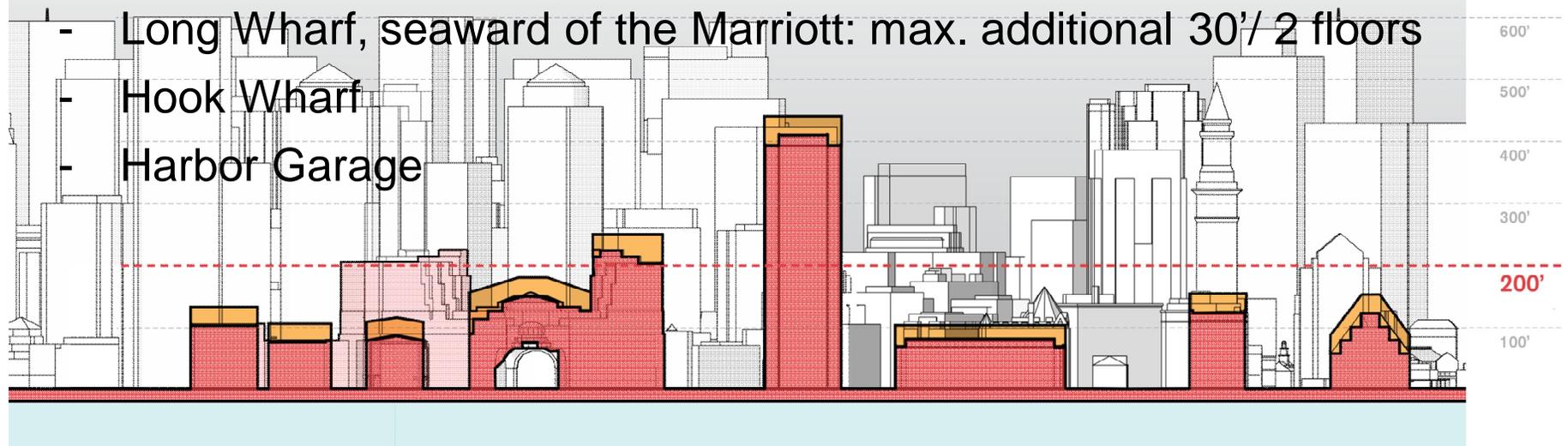
Building height substitute provision

- Area-wide building height 200' maximum
- Must meet Boston wind standards
- Exceptions
 - Existing buildings: an additional 30 feet only, no more than 2 floors
 - Not “by right”
 - Flood-sensitive mechanicals & utilities on upper floors
 - Ground floor & subgrade areas flood-proofed
 - All open space is public and ground floor FPAs



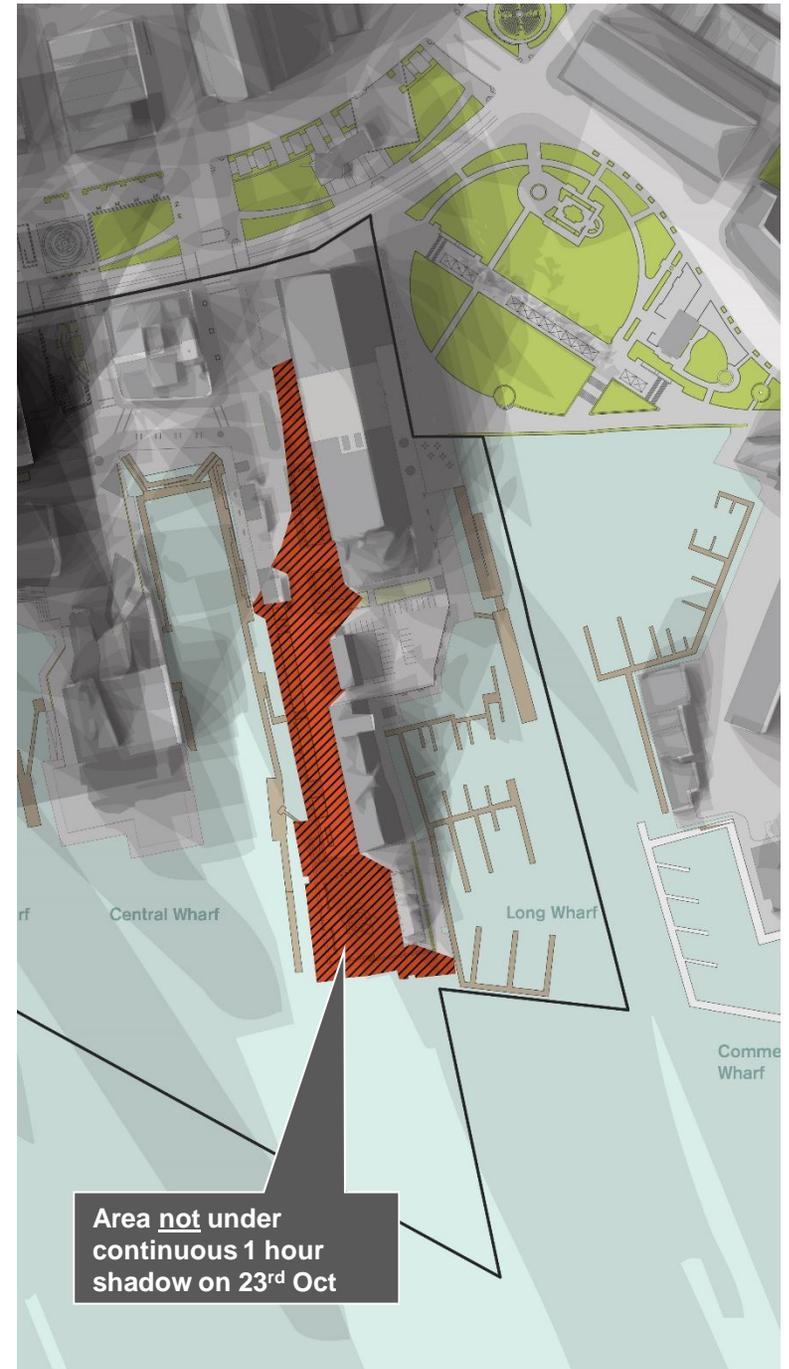
Building height substitute provision

- Area-wide building height 200' maximum
- Must meet Boston wind standards
- Exceptions
 - Existing buildings: an additional 30 feet only, no more than 2 floors
 - Not “by right”
 - Flood-sensitive mechanicals & utilities on upper floors
 - Ground floor & subgrade areas flood-proofed
 - All open space is public and ground floor FPAs



Building height offsets

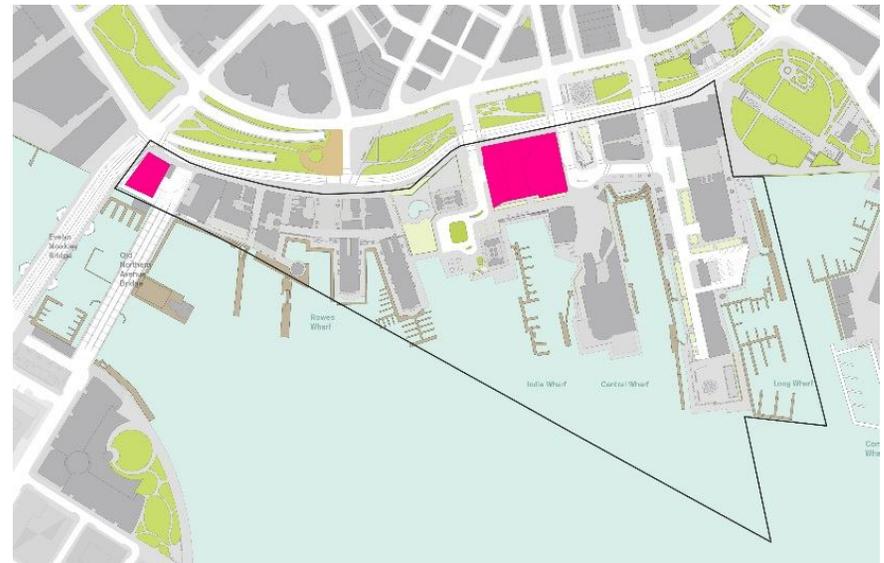
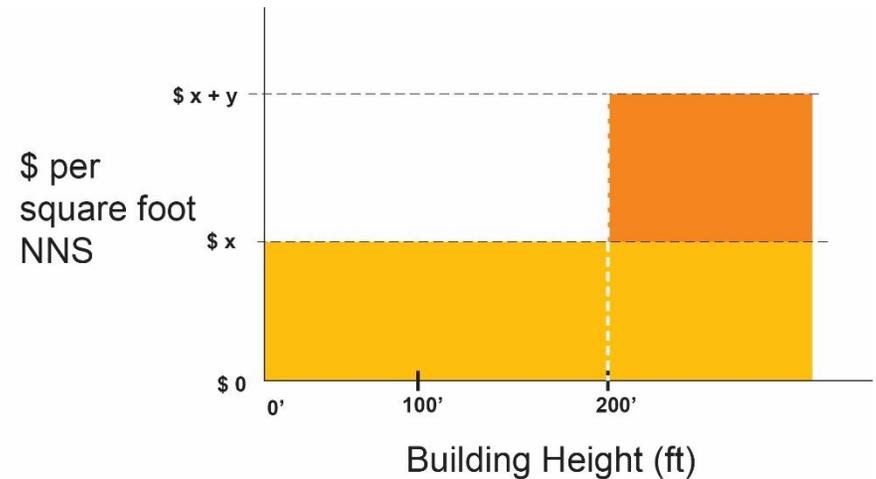
- Area-wide offset based on **net new shadow (NNS)**
 - \$X per square foot of NNS for implementation of the Public Realm Plan and for water transportation
 - No NNS on Long Wharf seaward of the Marriott



Building height offsets

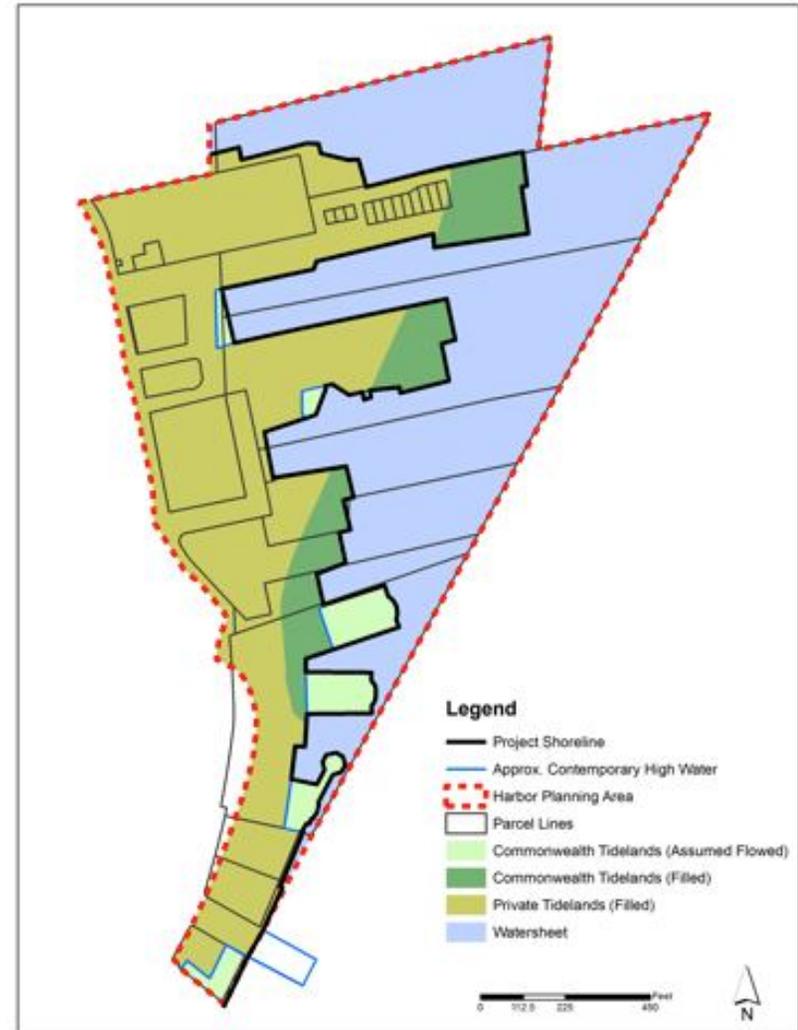
Exceptions

- Hook Wharf
 - o \$x per square foot of NNS for building height up to 200' to implement the Public Realm Plan and for water transportation
 - o \$x + \$y per square foot of NNS for building height above 200' to implement the Public Realm Plan and for water transportation
- Harbor Garage
 - o Same as above, except offsets may be substituted for 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,
October 14, 2015,
3-5 pm**

