

# Downtown Waterfront Municipal Harbor Planning Advisory Committee

June 22, 2016



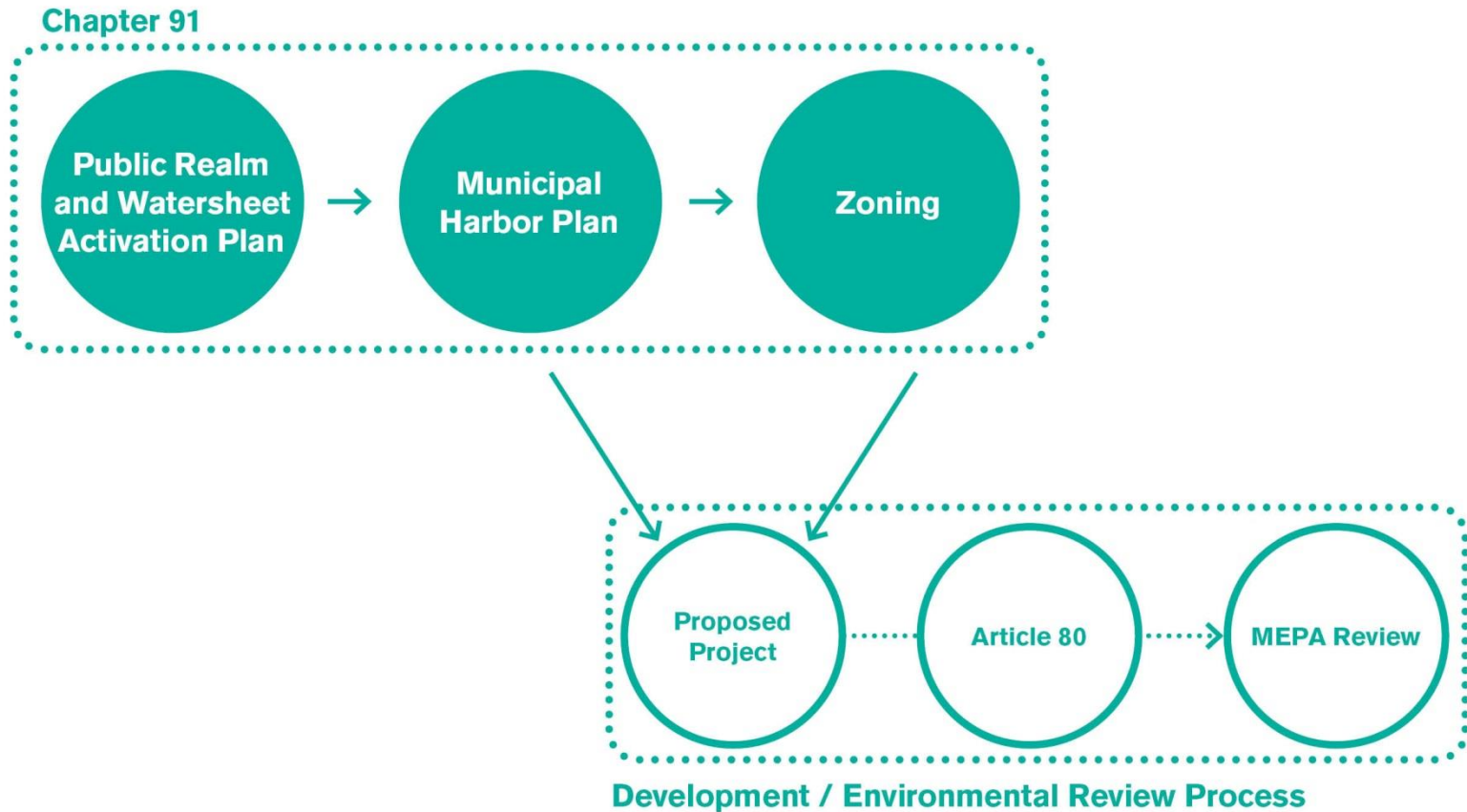
CITY OF BOSTON  
Martin J. Walsh  
*Mayor*



Boston  
Redevelopment  
Authority  
Brian Golden, Director

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

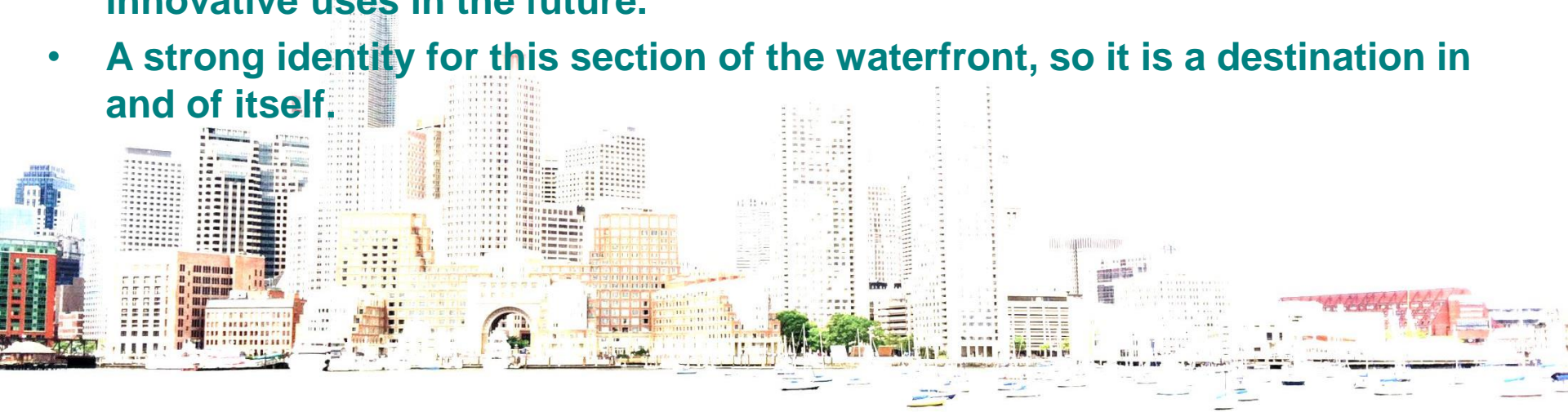
# Regulatory Framework



# Vision

For the Downtown Waterfront, we envision:

- **A waterfront district accessible to all** by bike, transit, foot, or boat.
- **Clearly defined connections** to the Greenway, the harbor, Quincy Market, the North End, the Financial District, and the Innovation District.
- **A district and watersheet that are resilient to climate change**, designed and built to withstand inundation and storm surges.
- **Four-season destinations and programming** that are welcoming to Bostonians and visitors of all ages.
- **A district and watersheet that is flexible enough to accommodate innovative uses in the future.**
- **A strong identity for this section of the waterfront, so it is a destination in and of itself.**



# Subdistrict Character and Goals

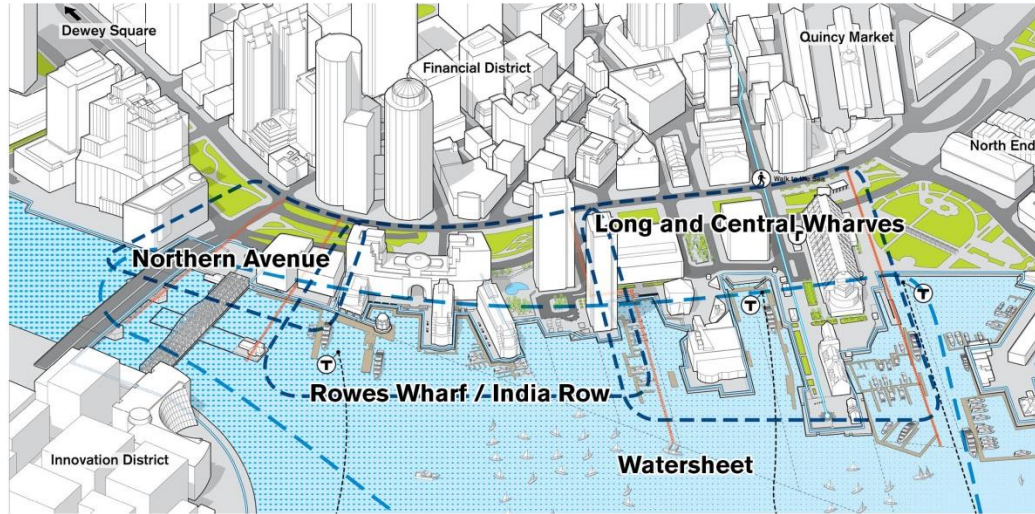


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## Subdistricts

The Downtown Waterfront can broadly be understood as four distinct areas, each with its own character and potential. Each of the Downtown Waterfront's subdistricts has its own distinct features, uses, and building styles. Moreover, each of the subdistricts connects to vastly different parts of the city, from the Innovation District to the North End. The goals for each subdistrict are driven by a desire to reinforce the specific character of each subdistrict. For example, the Northern Avenue section presents the opportunity to connect to the Innovation District; the India Row / Rows Wharf area is mature and well-established and could benefit from clearer north-south connections; Long and Central wharves are where the city meets the harbor; and the watersheet offers the opportunity to experience the city and the harbor in a whole new way.

- **Northern Avenue**, spanning from the Moakley Bridge to the Coast Guard Building
- **Rows Wharf and India Row** goes from 400 Atlantic Avenue to the Harbor Towers (which was the former India Wharf)
- **Long and Central Wharves**, which includes the Harbor Garage, Aquarium, and the Long Wharf Marriott
- In addition, the **watersheet** is a highly active place, and this plan considers it as a distinct zone in itself that needs its own spatial clarity and organization, with consideration to the adjacent uses.



### Northern Avenue

The Northern Avenue section is a key gateway between the historic center of the city and the city's newest destination neighborhood, the burgeoning Innovation District. This area, bounded by the Northern Avenue Bridge and the Moakley Bridge, is the gateway between these destinations. The challenges—and opportunities—here lie with how to facilitate passage between these neighborhoods and create a sense of entrance or arrival. Another key challenge is creating an accessible HARBORWALK path along the waterfront at both the Moakley Bridge and the Northern Avenue Bridge.

Gateway to the Innovation District

### Rows Wharf and India Row

The Rows Wharf and India Row area is a thin sliver of land between the Greenway and the water. It is home to a robust residential community and a range of restaurants and events venues at Rows Wharf. Here, the focus is on facilitating passage from north to south, and connections from the Greenway to the water. Clear pedestrian and visual connections will facilitate north-south connectivity. Drawing people from the Greenway and Downtown to the water might require improving the lateral links by adding programming, retail or restaurant uses, or signage and lighting.

Connect the North and South

### Long and Central Wharves

This is the most active and programmed area of the waterfront. With the Walk to Sea, the Rings Fountain on the Greenway, and the Harbor Islands Pavilion, this is where Boston touches the water. The goal for Long and Central Wharves is to lead more people to the waterfront and fully utilize the space available, through programming, wayfinding, and management.

Touch the Water

### The Watersheet

Building on decades of work and the clean-up of the Boston Harbor, the goal for the watersheet is to help more people experience the harbor. This requires a careful balance of different types of marinas and vessels, and a strong management plan to make the harbor friendly and inviting to all.

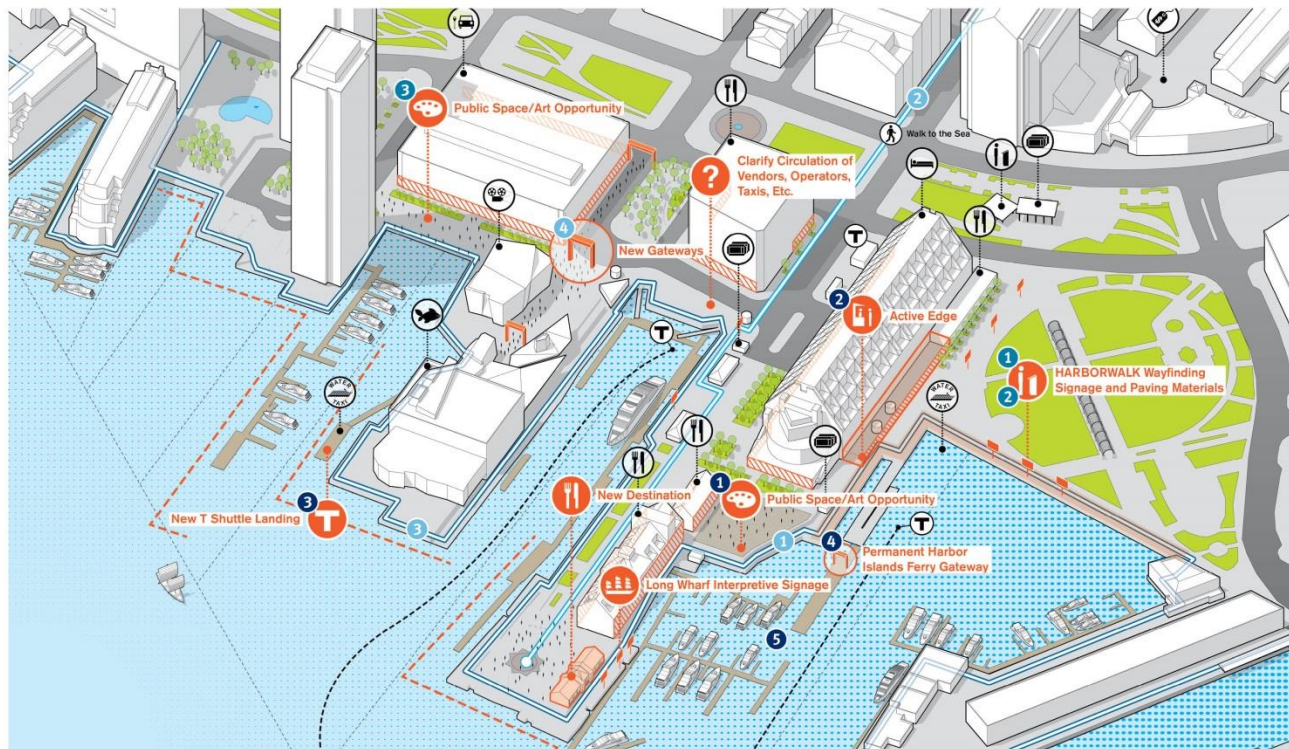
Experience the Harbor

# Revisions Long and Central Wharves

Touch the  
Water



Boston Redevelopment Authority



## Connectivity

- 1 Strengthening the connection to the North End is critical. This can happen through encouraging passing through the Marriott lobby, and improving the quality of the paths around the Marriott.
- 2 The Walk to the Sea should be strengthened and promoted. Encouraging more to travel to the end of the wharf could relieve some of the pedestrian congestion during peak tourist season, and lead to a greater appreciation of the harbor and Boston's maritime history.
- 3 The HARBORWALK should be strengthened to encourage north-south movement through the study area and to draw visitors to the ends of the wharves.
- 4 Gateway moments should be designed, such as one approaches the NEAq.

## Legibility

- 1 Signage should make clear both the HARBORWALK as well as HARBORWALK "shortcuts," such as around the Marriott. Overall maps of the HARBORWALK and the general district should be considered.
- 2 Coordinated signage can also make clear the ferry locations and schedules. This will alleviate confusion in the area. The overall area can be improved through coordinating paving materials, signage, etc. This will help clarify the public realm and direct people to the key amenities and open spaces.
- 3 Key landmarks, such as public art, large-scale signs, and digital displays, should be considered as navigation and wayfinding devices.

## Activation and Programming

- 1 Improving underutilized spaces, such as the hardscaped plaza between the Harbor Garage and the water, and parking lot and the end of Long Wharf, is a priority. Each should have a different character, ranging from quiet contemplative spots to very active.
- 2 Activating the edges of buildings is key to drawing people to this area and distributing foot traffic.
- 3 Expanding the water transit options, both in terms of destinations and regularity of service, is a key priority. Water transit can connect the Downtown Waterfront to other Boston neighborhoods, such as East Boston, as well as neighboring waterfront communities.
- 4 The Harbor Islands would benefit from a permanent gateway on the wharf.
- 5 The reconstruction of T Wharf and a reconfiguration of waterside on uses should be considered on the north side of Long Wharf.

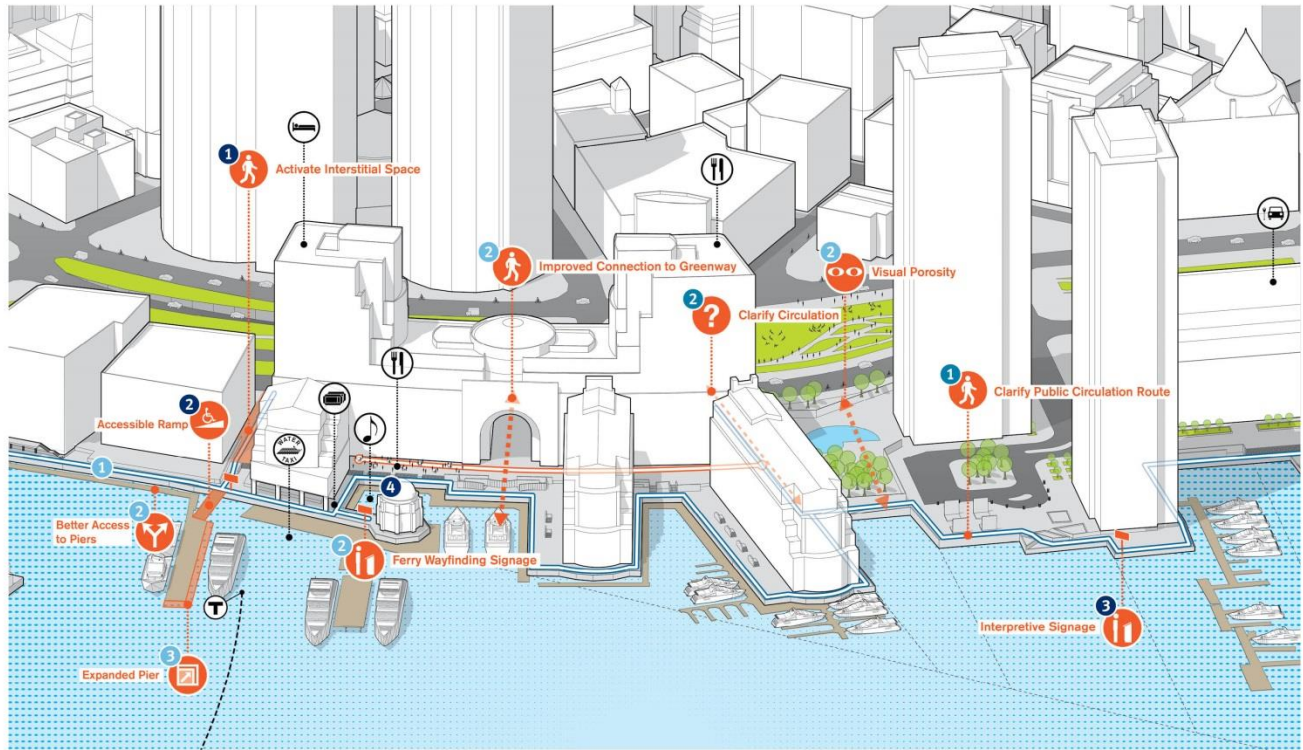
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# Revisions Rowes Wharf and India Row

Link the  
North to  
South, and  
East to  
West



Boston Redevelopment Authority



## Connectivity

- 1 Strengthen the north-south connections along the HARBORWALK and Atlantic Avenue. Improving pedestrian connections between the south and the north of the downtown will relieve congestion on the roads and on public transportation, and relieve pedestrian bottlenecks.
- 2 Visual connections from the Greenway to the waterfront should be enhanced and preserved wherever possible.
- 3 Enhanced access to piers and water transit would enable more commuters and visitors to visit the area. This includes accessible ramps, better access to side piers, expanded transit piers, and better signage.

## Legibility

- 1 Clarifying the pedestrian path through the Harbor Towers property is a priority for this area. The HARBORWALK is confusing and poorly marked. Proper signage will help, as will upgrades to the paving materials. If the Harbor Towers rethinks East India Row and the entryway to the Harbor Towers, it should consider how the landscape and streetscape can make clear the public path through this parcel.
- 2 Signage should make clear both the HARBORWALK as well as HARBORWALK "shortcuts," such as through Rowes Wharf. Overall maps of the HARBORWALK and the general district should be considered.

## Activation and Programming

- 1 The interstitial spaces in this area could benefit from programming, such as restaurant seating or benches. Adding programming to these areas could increase pedestrian activity between the water's edge and the Greenway.
- 2 Improving access to the water transportation centers, with accessible ramps and better access to piers will greatly increase activity at the water's edge.
- 3 Interpretive signage or symbols (e.g., public art) about the history of the waterfront would add to the experience of visitors or passersby.
- 4 Underutilized spaces, such as the pavilion at Rowes Wharf, should be programmed or made available for public use.

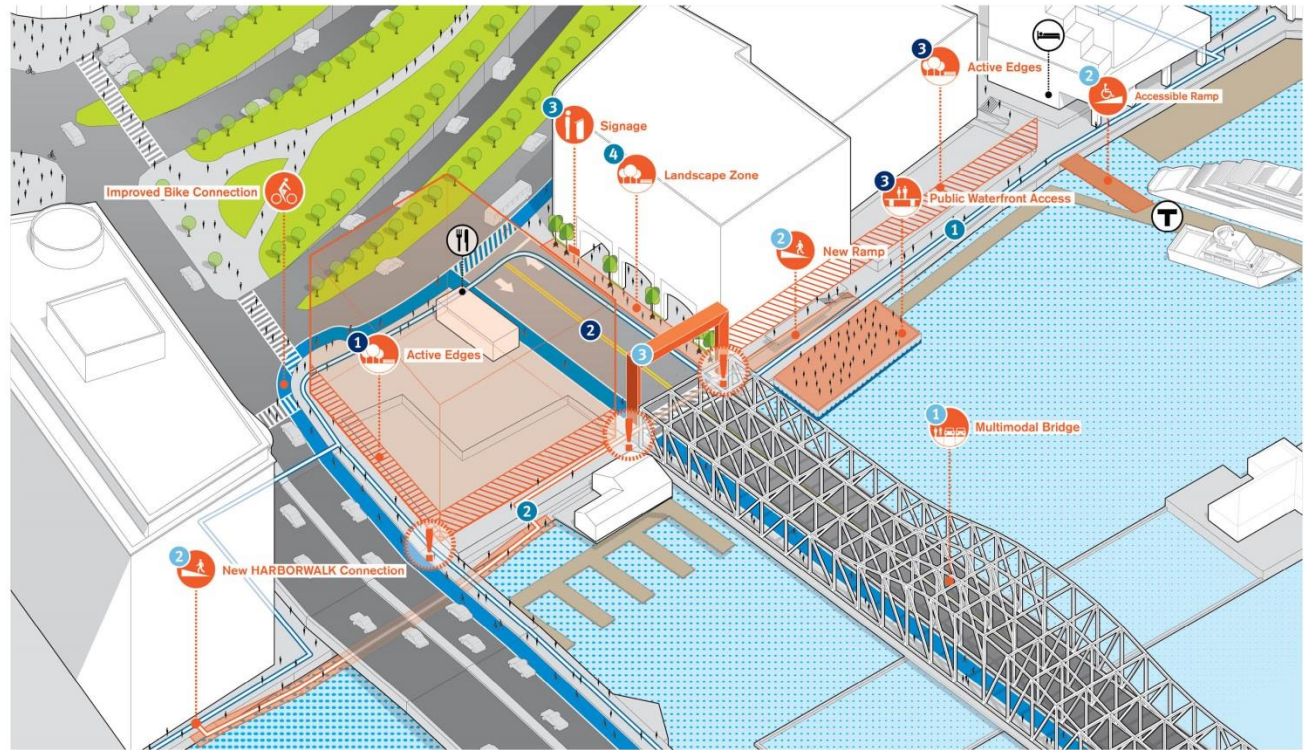
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# Revisions Northern Ave.

Gateway  
to the  
Innovation  
District



Boston Redevelopment Authority



## Connectivity

- 1 The Northern Avenue Bridge has the potential to become a model Complete Street. The renovation of this bridge could alleviate traffic congestion in South Boston and increase pedestrian and bicyclist connections to the Innovation District.
- 2 Accessible paths and waterfront access are critical to making the public realm a place for all people. Currently, the HARBORWALK jogs around the Moakley Bridge, and has an inaccessible area near the Northern Avenue Bridge. Creating ramps to the street level, or below the bridges, in both locations would add to HARBORWALK continuity and legibility. With any new development in this area, these should be priority public realm improvements.
- 3 Preserving and enhancing view corridors from the city to the harbor and along the HARBORWALK are key elements.

## Legibility

- 1 The HARBORWALK in this area is poorly marked, narrow, and inaccessible. New lighting and paving materials should be considered in this area. These would increase the sense of safety and the understanding of this as a public path.
- 2 The redevelopment of the Hook site should include a HARBORWALK connection along the waterfront.
- 3 Signage could direct pedestrians to the nearby attractions, such as the Aquarium, the Children's Museum, and the BSA Space, and offer interpretive information about the history of the area.
- 4 The renovation of the Northern Avenue Bridge will turn what now seems like an alley into a public thoroughfare. The renovation of the streetscape will contribute to the legibility of this as a street for all modes of transportation.

## Activation and Programming

- 1 New developments should activate the public realm with retail and restaurant uses along the ground level. The Hook site in particular presents the opportunity to activate all four sides of the parcel. The Coast Guard Building contains a cafeteria that is open to the public but little known. Encouraging awareness of this amenity can add to the activity along Northern Avenue.
- 2 Designing Northern Avenue as a welcoming thoroughfare poses a challenge because it is faced with loading docks and service areas. Design of this street should focus on making it welcoming to pedestrians with visible entrances to these buildings on Northern Avenue.
- 3 Unwelcoming edges facing the HARBORWALK should be redesigned to open up to the waterfront, and an expanded public realm should be considered in "bottleneck" areas.

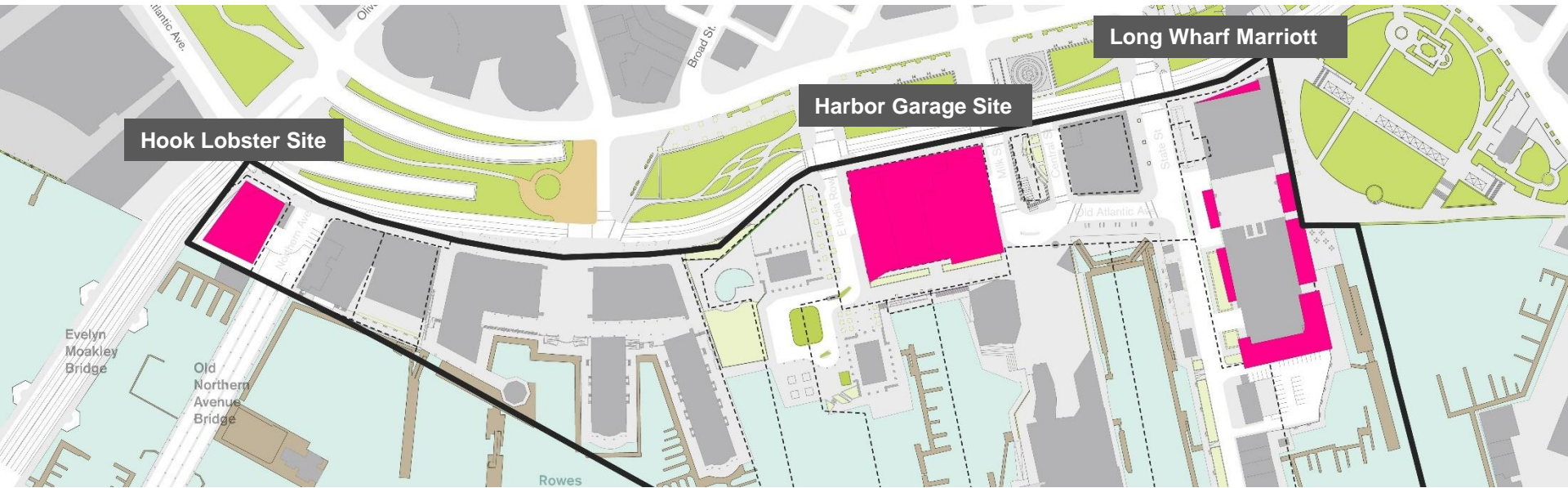
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# Offsets





# Proposed projects also have inherent public realm benefits



## Hook redevelopment

- Revitalizes the property
- Reconnects the water's edge to the public realm
- Connects South Boston Waterfront and Fort Point to Downtown; advances the Crossroads Initiative

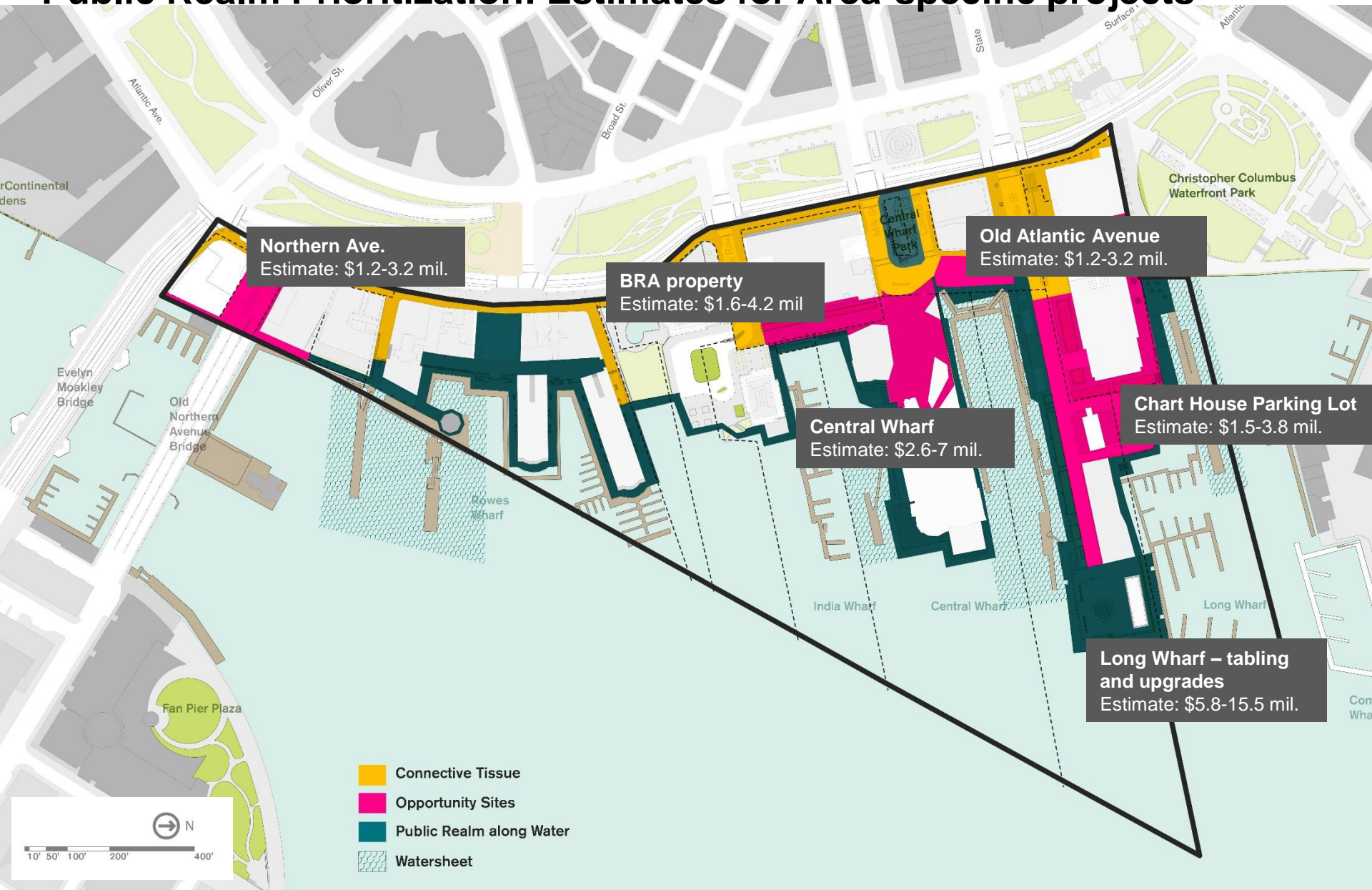
## Harbor Garage redevelopment

- Activates edges
- Removes "wall" of the garage
- Provides new open space and views to Harbor and NEAq

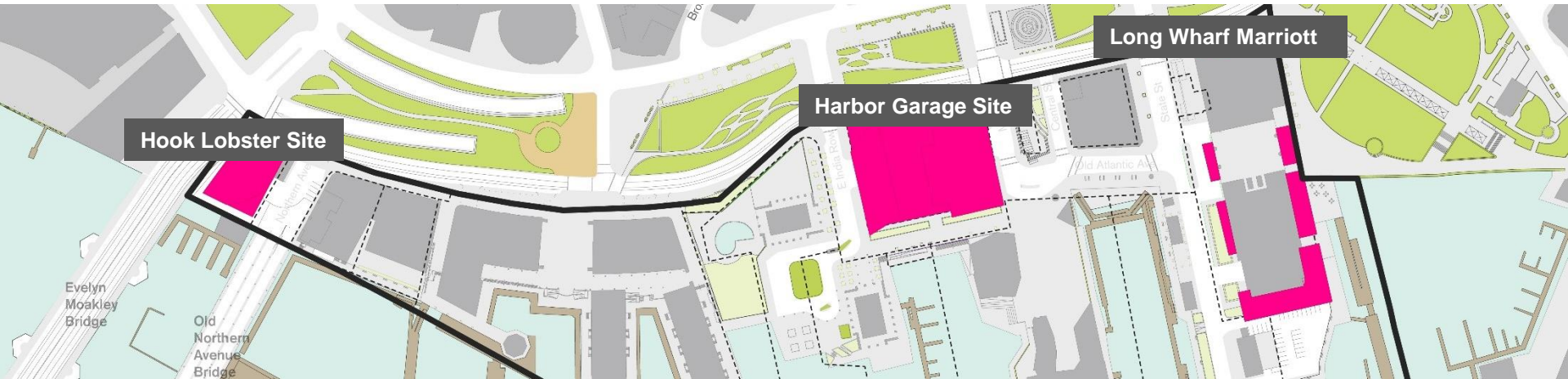
## Long Wharf Marriott Expansion

- Activates edges

# Public Realm Prioritization: Estimates for Area-specific projects



# Project-specific offsets recommendations



## Hook redevelopment

1. Enlarged open space area along Ft. Pt. Channel
2. Interior & exterior SPDF, including permanent ground floor water dependent use
3. Over-the-water Harborwalk connection to 480/500 Atlantic Ave.

## Harbor Garage redevelopment

1. Open space improvements to
  1. Chart House Parking lot,
  2. BRA property,
  3. Central Wharf, &
  4. Old Atlantic Ave.
2. Financial support for NEAq

## Alternative Offsets

- Parking for Water-dependent uses (NEAq, Harbor Islands)
- Funds for open space programming
- Water transportation subsidies

## Long Wharf Marriott Expansion

1. Interior water transportation waiting room, Harbor Islands gateway, and ticket sales

# Project-specific offset recommendations

Location	Current/Allowed Lot Coverage	Proposed Lot Coverage	Current/Allowed Building Height	Proposed Building Height	FPTs over Flowed Tidelands	Offsets	Approximate Cost Estimates
Marriott Long Wharf	64% current	80%	55'+ for new construction	22' <i>(No Net New Shadow)</i>	No	1. Interior water transportation waiting room, Harbor Islands gateway, and ticket sales	• Design and construction of 500 SF ticket area: <b>\$425,000-575,000</b>
Harbor Garage	100% current	70%	Up to approximately 150' allowed, currently 70'	Maximum 600' <i>(59,950 SF of Net New Shadow on land)</i>	No	1. Open space improvements to Chart House Parking lot, BRA property, Central Wharf, & Old Atlantic Ave.  <b>Alternative Offsets</b> 1. Financial support for NEAq 2. Water transportation subsidies 3. Funds for open space programming	Total estimate for public realm improvements: <b>\$6,900,000-18,300,000</b>
Hook Wharf	50% allowed	70%	55' allowed	Maximum 305' <i>(6,100 SF of Net New Shadow on land)</i>	Yes	1. Enlarged open space area along Ft. Pt. Channel 2. Interior & exterior SPDF, including permanent ground floor water dependent use 3. Harborwalk connection to 470/500 Atlantic Ave.	1. Pier reconfiguration: \$700,000 2. Hook as SPDF: ? 3. Harborwalk Connector (floats under Moakley Bridge): <b>\$700,000</b> <b>Total offsets above baseline: \$1,400,000 + SPDF tbd *</b>

# Area-wide offset recommendations

Location	Current/ Allowed Lot Coverage	Proposed Max. Lot Coverage	Current/ Allowed Building Height	Proposed Building Height	FPTs over Flowed Tidelands	Offsets
All New Structures Seaward of the Marriott LW *	50% Allowed	70%	Varied	Existing plus 30', max. 2 new floors	No	1. An annual payment for open space programming w/in or adjacent to the DTW MHP *
All Other New Structures	50% Allowed	70%	Varied	Maximum 200'	No	An annual payment for open space programming w/in or adjacent to the DTW MHP
Additions (vertical) to Existing Structures	Varied	Existing, only	Varied	Existing plus 30', max. 2 new floors	No	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mechanicals flood proofed/elevated</li> <li>2. Ground floor FPAs</li> <li>3. All open space public</li> </ol>

\* Any new structures within the MHP would be required to meet the following requirements:

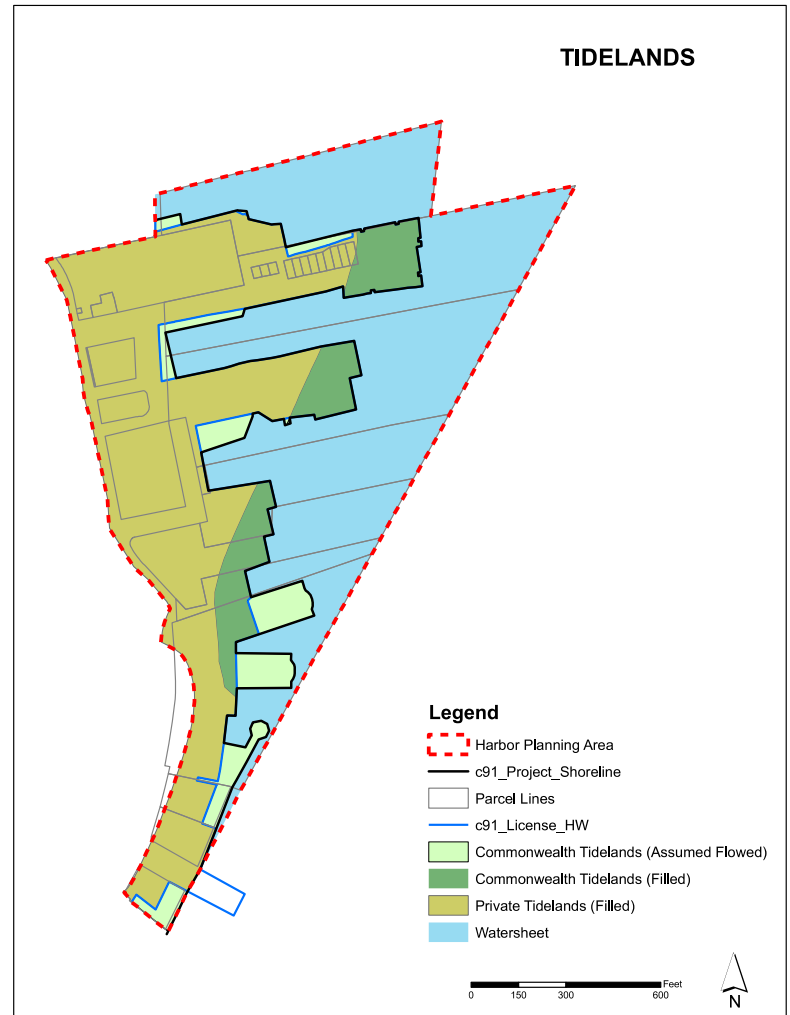
1. Mechanicals flood proofed/elevated
2. Ground floor FPAs
3. All open space public

# Amplifications

1. To the extent possible, **all interior ground floor and exterior open space** shall meet standards for Commonwealth tidelands, including characteristics specified in the DTW MHP for new or amended Chapter 91 licenses.
2. The DTW MHP will provide specific guidance on **protecting existing and proposed water dependent uses.**
3. All offsets for Hook Wharf shall be made regardless of upper floor uses (e.g., FPTs).
4. Open space areas shall be elevated, as appropriate, as a coastal resiliency measure
5. Fees associated with long-term Chapter 91 licenses shall, to the extent possible, be directed toward **water transportation and open space programming within and adjacent to the DTW MHP area.**

### 3.2. Amplifications and New Baseline Requirements

To ensure the Downtown Waterfront district provides high-quality public areas, without noticeable differences in the quality of public spaces on Private or Commonwealth tidelands, and to the extent possible, all interior and exterior areas located on Private tidelands within the MHP planning area shall be considered as if they are on Commonwealth tidelands and be required to conform to the interior and exterior public activation requirements under 310 CMR 9.53(2), including provisions for interior ground floor FPAs, excluding Upper Level Accessory Uses.



(More...)

### 3.2. Amplifications and New Baseline Requirements

(...Continued)

To implement this amplification and the provisions of 310 CMR 9.53 (2), **the City of Boston shall develop design and use standards for: (1) new, publicly accessible interior areas, including new Special Public Destination Facilities (SPDFs), if any; (2) the general types of FPAs and water dependent uses to be located in ground level interior areas and all publicly accessible exterior areas; and (3) water transportation facilities, including a water transportation and watershed management plan.** To the extent possible under applicable building codes, and subject to the amplification in Section 3.2.2 below, the design and use standards shall also provide direction and guidance on making interior FPAs and exterior public realm areas **climate resilient.**

(More...)

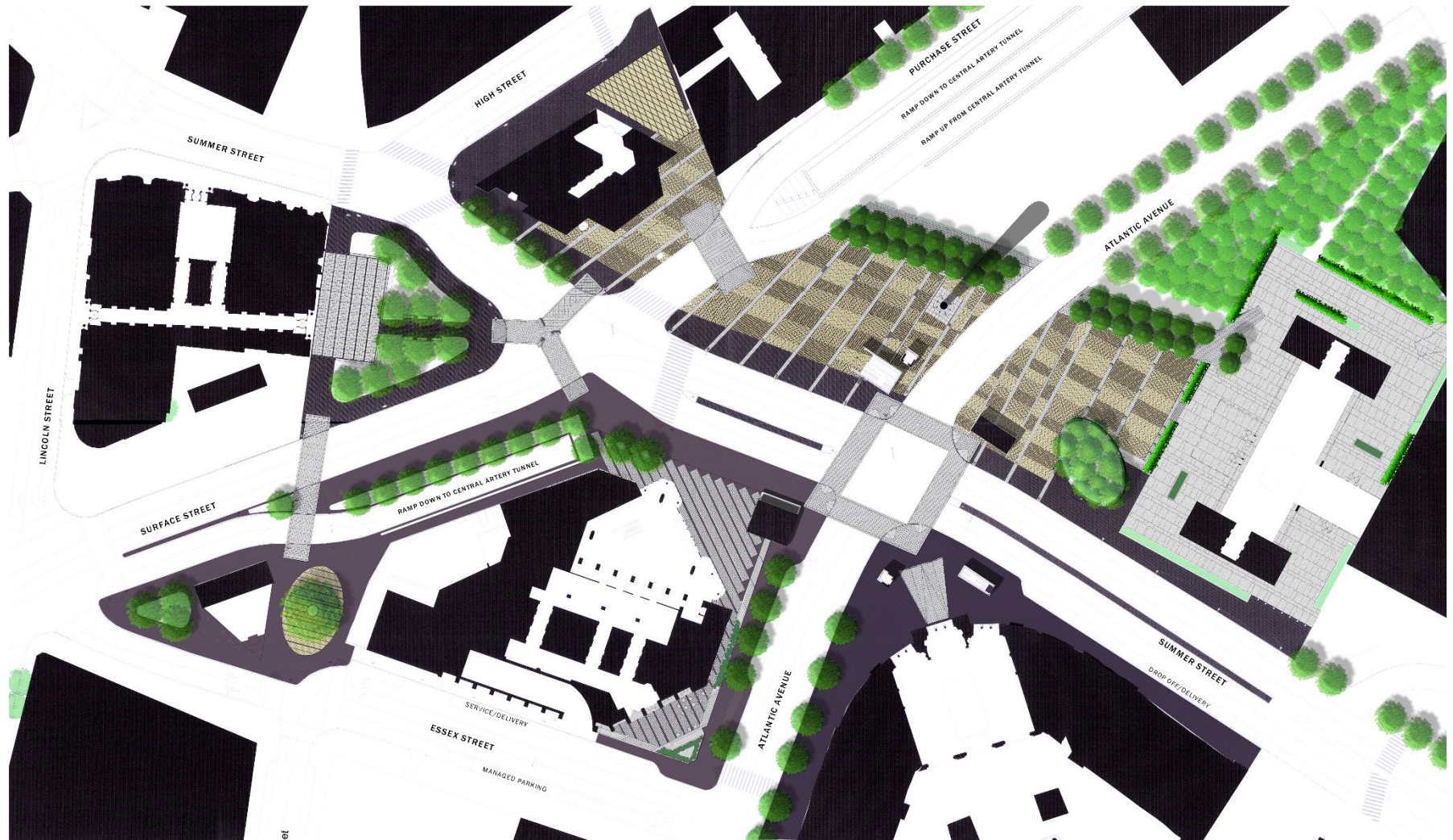


## 3.2. Amplifications and New Baseline Requirements

(...Continued)

All SPDFs, FPAs, signage, amenities, landscaping features, wayfinding, and the location and size of public restrooms shall conform to the City's design and use standards, which shall provide guidance to DEP to meet this amplification for Chapter 91 licensing decisions.

# Precedents Dewey Square



# Precedents

## Dewey Square



# Precedents Broad Street



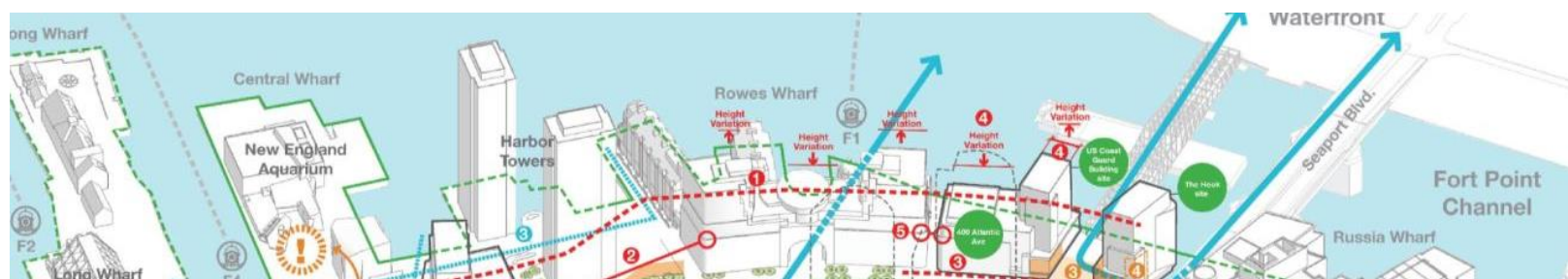
# Precedents

## Broad Street



# Elements of an MHP

- City's MHP objectives (RNTP and Public Realm Plan)
- + State requirements in the Notice to Proceed
- + Substitute provisions
  - + Impacts & offsets
  - + Amplifications
  - + State approval standards
  - + Public input
- = Draft MHP**



# How the DTW MHP is organized

## 1. SUMMARY

## 2. MHP BACKGROUND & GOALS

## 3. AMPLIFICATIONS, SUBSTITUTE PROVISIONS, & OFFSETS

### Approach

### Baseline Requirements with Amplifications

Activation of Commonwealth Tidelands for Public Use

Engineering and Construction Standards

Standards to Protect Water Dependent Uses

Upper Floor Uses Over Flowed Commonwealth Tidelands

### Substitute Provisions

Building Height / Lot Coverage

Facilities of Private Tenancy / Water-Dependent Use Zone

### Offsets

Marriott Long Wharf / Hook Wharf / Harbor Garage / Additional Offsets

## 4. CHAPTER 91 LONG-TERM LICENSE FEES

## 5. PREPARING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

## 6. MHP CONSISTENCY

Downtown Waterfront

# Next Meeting

# Wednesday, July 20, 6-8 pm

