

Remote MEPA Meeting for the Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project

February 1, 2022

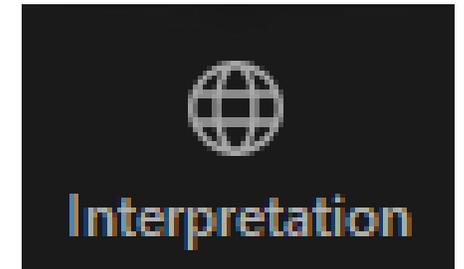


**boston planning &
development agency**

BPDA Language Access and Interpretation

Interpretation is being provided for this meeting in Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese.

- Para la interpretación al español, por favor seleccione "**Spanish**"
 - ∅ 中文普通话语音频道请选择 "**Mandarin**"
 - ∅ 中文粵語语音頻道請選擇 "**Cantonese**"
-
- A project overview has been posted to the project webpage in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese.



Meeting Recording

At the request of community members, the BPDA will be recording this meeting and posting it on the BPDA's project webpage for those who are unable to attend the Zoom meeting live. It is possible that participants may also be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices. If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.

Virtual Meeting Etiquette

- We want to ensure that this conversation is a pleasant experience for all, and that all community members/stakeholders are comfortable sharing their comments, questions, and feedback.
- Please be respectful and mindful of each other's time when asking questions/providing comments, so that all attendees are able to participate in the meeting.
- Please wait until all attendees have had the opportunity to ask a question/provide a comment before providing additional questions/comments.
- Attendees can also always set up a follow-up conversation with Joe Christo at joe.christo@boston.gov to further discuss the project and/or process.

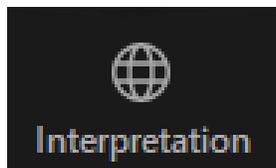


Meeting Format

- When the presentation is over, questions/comments from meeting attendees will be taken through the “raise hand” function. Should you have any technical difficulties with the “raise hand” function, project team members will read aloud questions/comments entered through the chat tab when all those with hands raised have been offered an opportunity to speak.

Zoom Tips

Zoom controls should be available at the bottom of your screen. Clicking on these symbols activates different features:



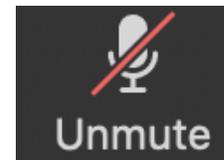
Interpretation (you may select the appropriate language channel from the list)



Turn video on/off



Raise hand to ask a question or provide a comment at the end of presentation



Mute/unmute

Meeting Agenda

- Introductions and Purpose of Meeting
- Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project Overview
- Proposed Project Site Location
- Existing Conditions and Project Impacts and Benefits
- Flood Hazard Pathways That May Affect the Project Area
- Proposed Project Design
- MEPA Environmental Review Process
- More Information and Next Steps
- Q & A



Introductions and Purpose of Meeting



Environmental Notification Form

Proposed City of Boston Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project
for Boston Planning & Development Agency



December 2021

PREPARED FOR:
Secretary Kathleen Theoharides
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

PREPARED BY:
Woods Hole Group, Inc.
A CLS Company
107 Waterhouse Road
Bourne, MA 02532

The Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) submitted an Environmental Notification Form (“ENF”) to the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs on December 31, 2021.

This initiated review of the project pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (“MEPA”, M.G.L. c. 30, s.s. 61-62I).

The Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs published a notice of the ENF in the Environmental Monitor, will receive public comments, and will then decide if an Environmental Impact Report is needed.

This meeting is a remote site visit and consultation session on the project for State partners and community members as part of the MEPA review process.

Introductions and Purpose of Meeting



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Environmental Notification Form Contents:

Section A - Environmental Notification Form (ENF) Application

Section B - Project Narrative

Section C – Existing Environment

Section D – Alternatives Analysis & Associated Impacts

Section E – Performance Standards Compliance Narrative

Section F – Review of Consistency with Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Policies

Section G - Resilient MA Action Team (RMAT) Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool Project Report, dated 11/05/2021

Section H – Environmental Justice Populations

Section I - Public Notice and ENF Distribution List

Section J – List of Required Permits & Reviews

Section K – Pre-Filing Agency Consultation Correspondence

- MA DEP/Wetlands & Waterways email, dated 02/13/2019
- MA DEP/Waterways email, dated 01/11/2019
- MA Coastal Zone Management letter, dated 01/09/2019
- MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife/NHESP email, dated 01/03/2019
- MA Historical Commission concurrence letter, dated 4/9/2021
- Boston Conservation Commission email, dated 01/08/2019
- Boston Landmark Commission email, dated 01/09/2019
- National Marine Fisheries Service letter, no date shown
- FEMA's Section 106 Consultation Submittal to the Bureau of Underwater Resources, dated 03/10/2021

Section L – Accompanying Documents

- FEMA Region 1 Project NEPA Draft Environmental Assessment, dated October 2021.

- Stormwater Report entitled "Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project – Technical Support for Response to FEMA RFI" by Boston Water and Sewer Commission, dated 07/15/2020
- Memorandum for Fort Point Channel Flood Pathways, by Woods Hole Group, dated 03/02/2020
- Technical Memorandum for Benefit-Cost Analysis Methodology, by Arcadis, revision date July 2020

Section M - Project Map and Plans

- Boston USGS Map, identifying locus
- Plan entitled, "Existing Conditions", by Woods Hole Group, dated 12/17/2021
- Plan entitled, "Environmental Constraints", by Woods Hole Group, dated 12/17/2021
- Plan entitled, "Proposed Alignment Plan of Feature and Existing Utilities, City of Boston, Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project", by Arcadis, dated 12/21/2018

Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project Overview



Project Purpose:

The Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project is a proposed green infrastructure project that will help reduce flood damage in Fort Point and adjacent neighborhoods, providing protection to nearby residents, infrastructure, utilities, and structures.

Fort Point Channel is a flood pathway into Boston that causes repetitive damage, and storms and resulting damage are expected to increase in frequency and severity as a result of climate change and future sea level rise. The project will consist of a mix of earthen berms and mitigation of existing floodwalls for a 2,100 linear foot stretch along the eastern edge of Fort Point Channel, as well as about 600 linear feet of interim flood protection solutions across four locations.

Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project Overview



Woods Hole Group, Inc. • A CLS Company



Figure D-3. Components of the Proposed Action including flood control Segments 1, 2, and 3 and interim flood control measures.

Project Progress to Date:

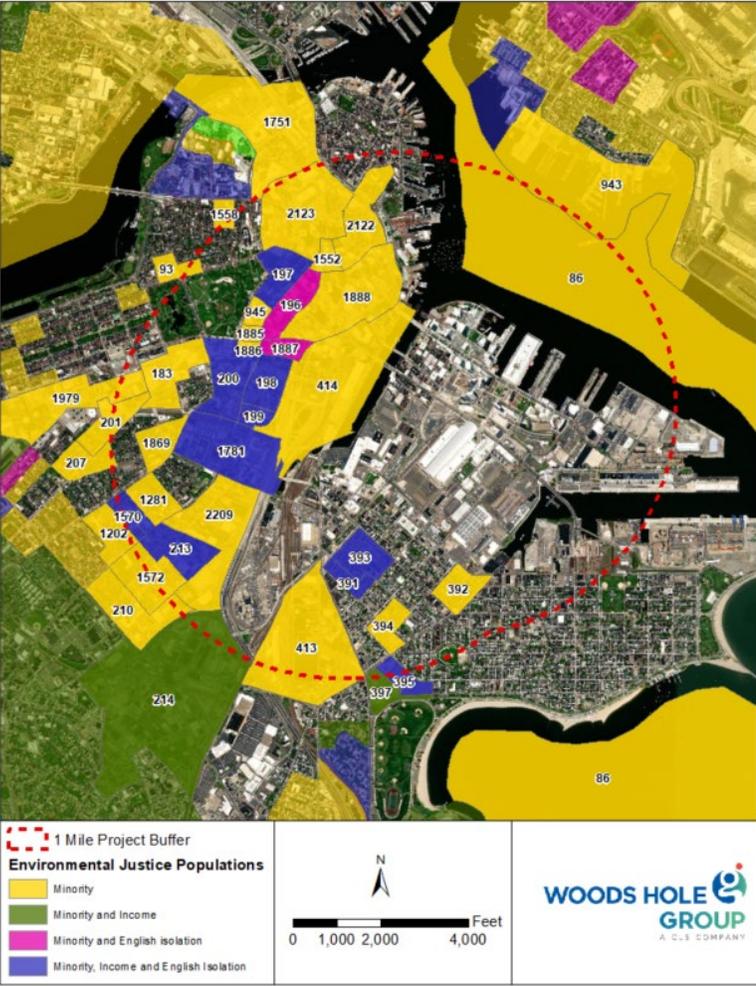
The project was first recommended in Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston (part of Climate Ready Boston) in 2018, as a result of the community-based planning process that went into developing that report. In January of 2019, the City of Boston, BPDA, and MEMA applied to FEMA's Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program for \$10M in funding for the \$20.5M project, and the City's Budget department included \$10.5M in the Capital Budget.

- **October 2018**, Recommended in *Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston*
- **January 2019**, BPDA/City Submitted FEMA PDM 18 Application
- **June 2019**, Project "Identified for Further Review" by FEMA
- **August 2020**, Project Granted Approval to Move Forward to environmental review by FEMA
- **April 2021**, NEPA and MEPA environmental review processes began

Proposed Project Site Location



Proposed Project Site Location Details – EJ and Flooding



Existing Conditions and Project Impacts and Benefits

Existing Conditions:

The proposed project is located in the South Boston Fort Point urban neighborhood, along the southeast edge of Fort Point Channel. Existing development within the project site includes a pedestrian path (Harborwalk), parking lots, other paved areas, granite block seawall, and various underground utilities including 14 outfalls. Existing resource areas within the project site include coastal bank, land subject to coastal storm flowage, filled tidelands, and historic districts. For further details, see the Existing Environment in Section C of the ENF.

Temporary Impacts:

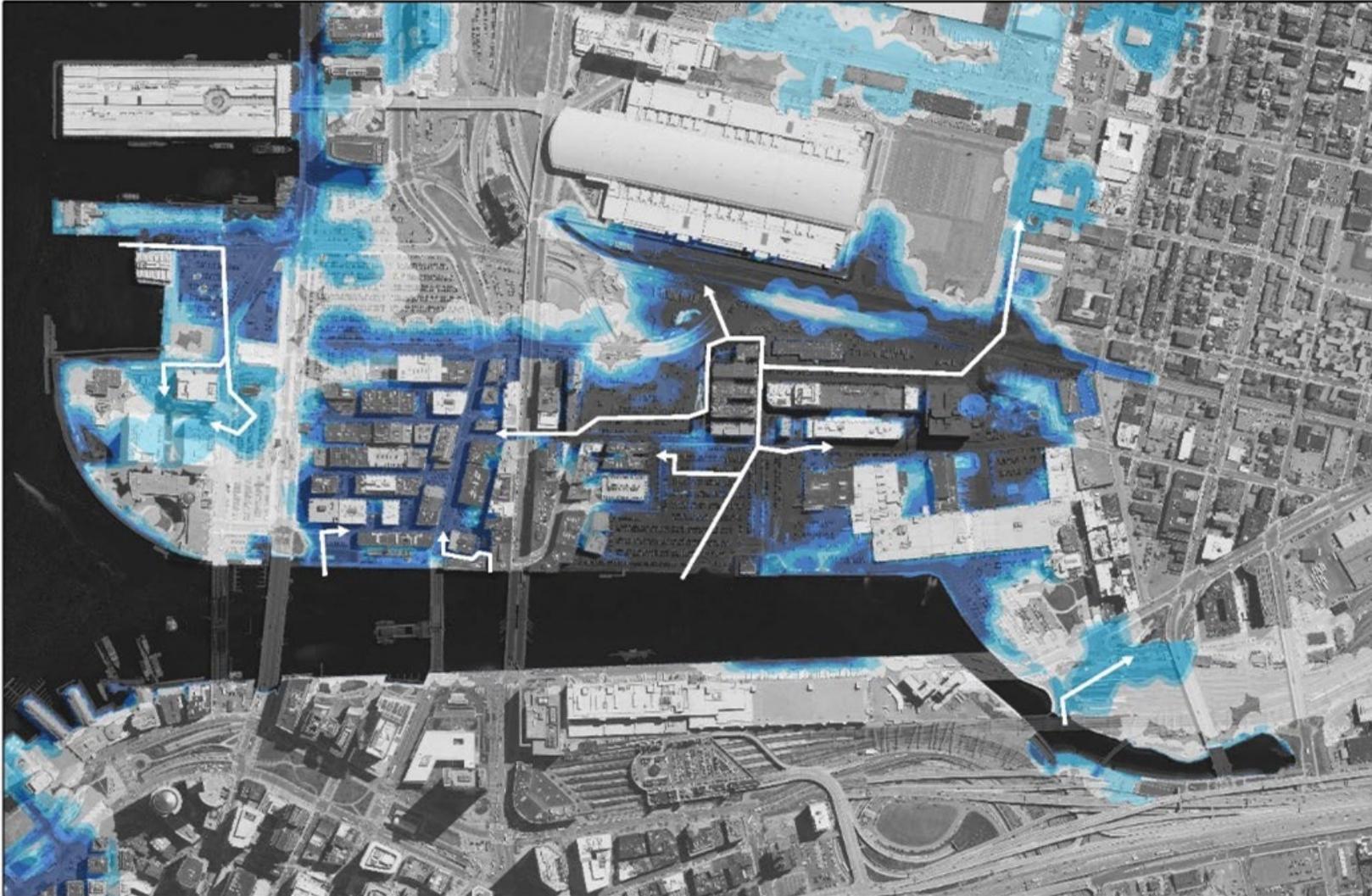
Normal transportation ways, parking areas, and public access to the waterfront and Harborwalk may be disrupted or rerouted during project construction. Minor temporary environmental impacts due to construction activities may also occur, including to soils, water quality, vegetation, and fish habitat.

Long Term Benefits:

The project will directly benefit 31 existing buildings (including historic structures), approximately 814 current residents, and numerous jobs and businesses exposed to present and future flood risk. Many additional people, including Environmental Justice populations within 1 mile, may indirectly benefit from the improved and more resilient waterfront and more reliable transportation network. The project may also provide moderate permanent environmental benefits to wetlands.

Flood Hazard Pathways That May Affect the Project Area

Fort Point Channel - Flood Pathway Analysis



“While there are some minor connections and fringe flooding areas that occur during the most extreme storm return period (1000-year), these connections are driven by water arriving from the Fort Point Channel flood entry points and not from other locations (e.g., Reserve Channel).”

- Kirk Bosma, PE, Woods Hole Group

Proposed Project Design – Resilient Boston Harbor



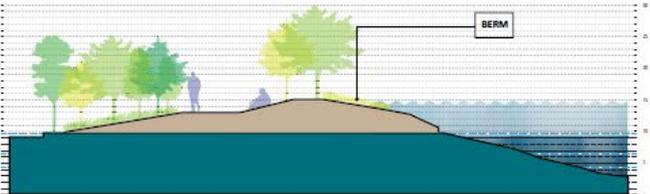
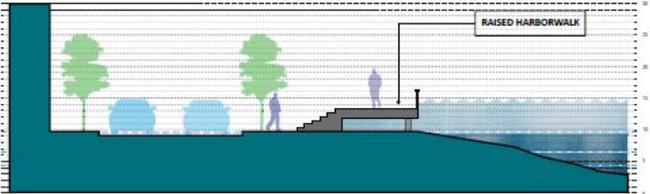
Proposed Project Design – Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston



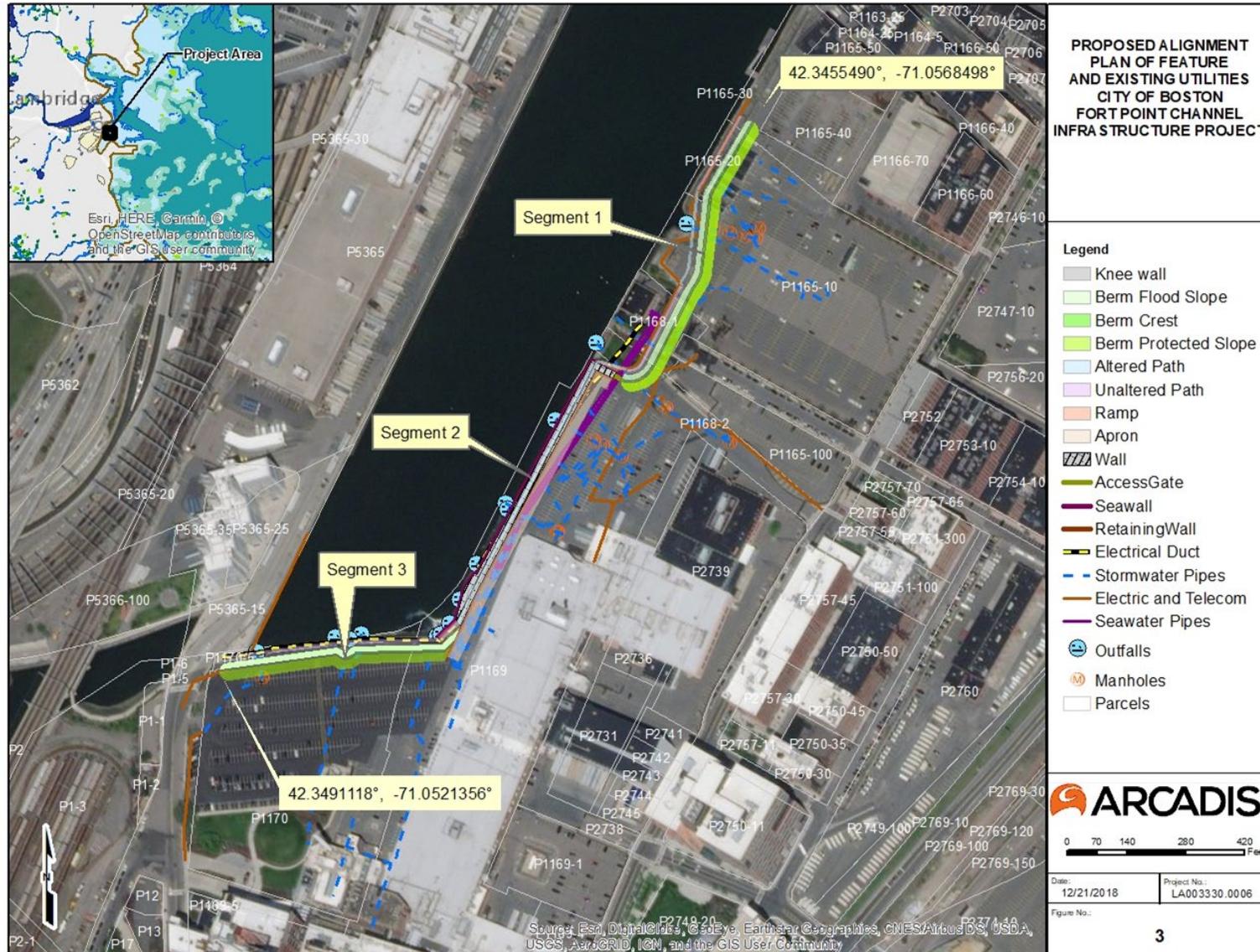
Proposed Project Design – Inspiration Images



RAISED HARBORWALK /
PARKSPACE



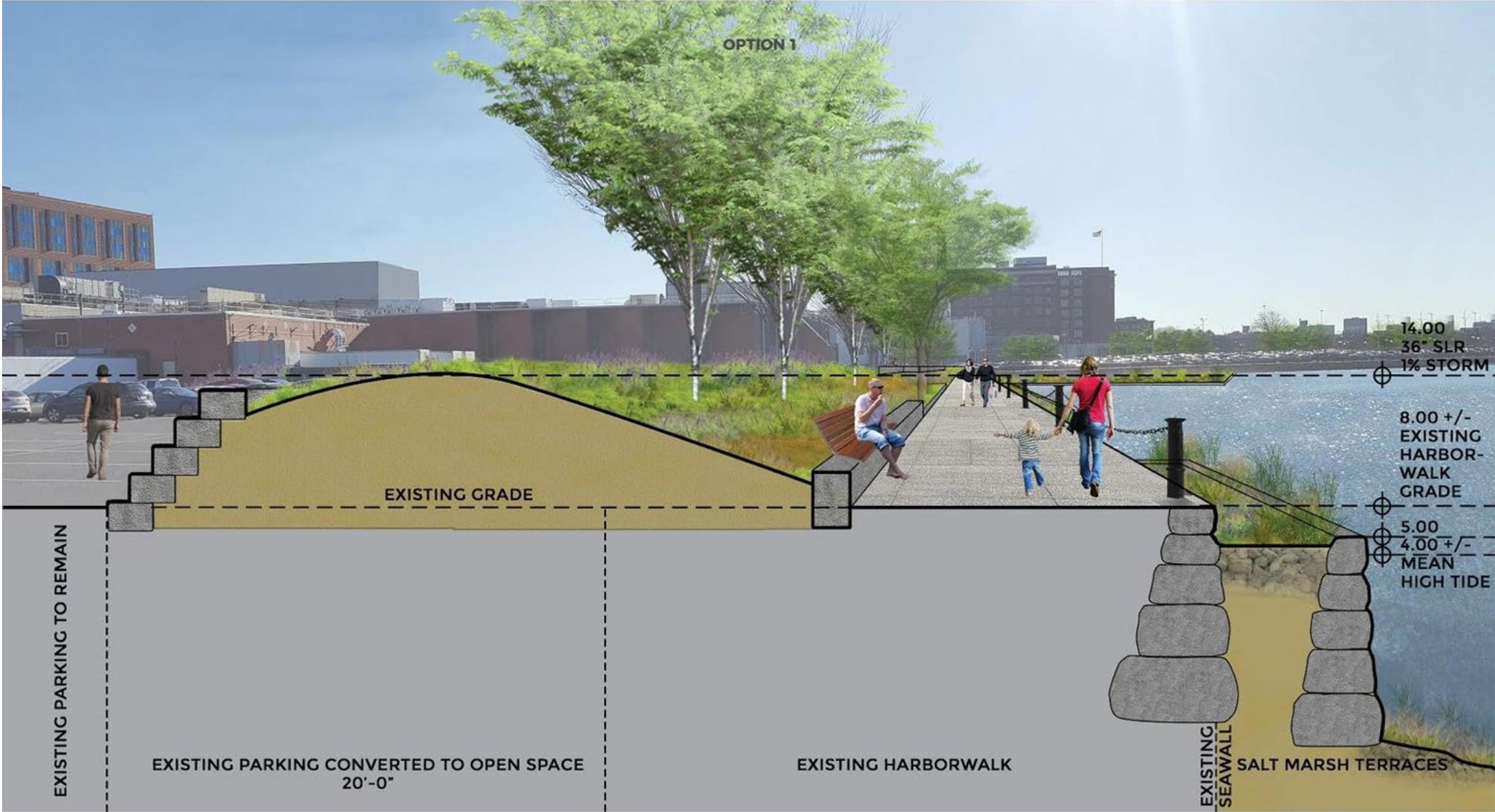
Proposed Project Design



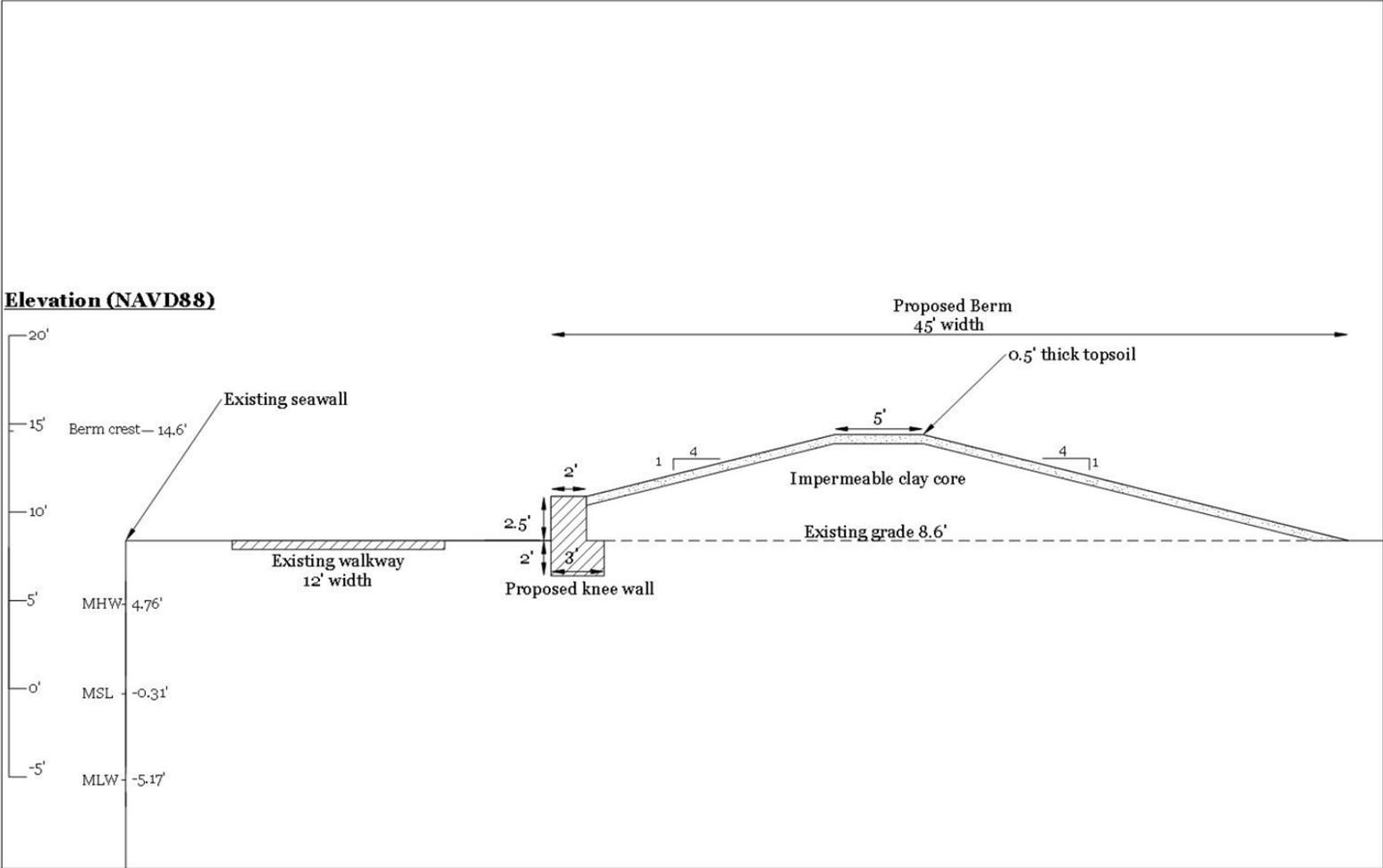
Proposed Project Design



Proposed Project Design



Proposed Project Design



Notes:
Elevations in reference to North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD88)

0' 5' 10'

Horizontal and vertical scale

Proposed Berm Cross Section

City of Boston, Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project

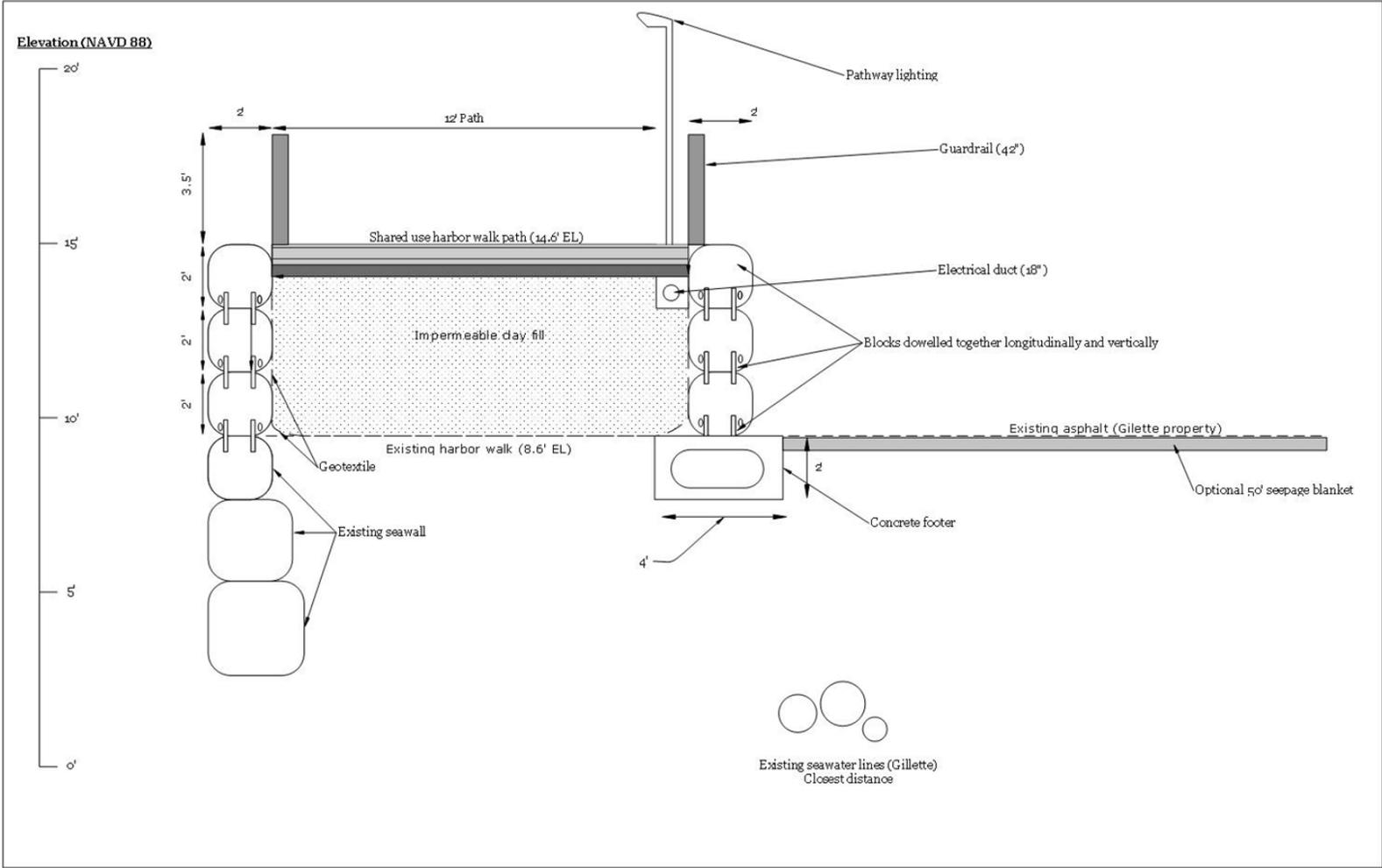


Date: 12/20/18

Proj No: LA003330.0006

Figure 4

Proposed Project Design



Notes:
Elevations in reference to North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD88)

0' 2' 4'
Horizontal and vertical scale

Proposed Seawall Cross Section

City of Boston, Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project

ARCADIS Design & Consulting for water and built assets

Date: 12/21/18

Figure: 6

Proj No: LA003330.0006

MEPA Environmental Review Process - Selection of Consultant

Purpose of MEPA:

The Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) requires that state agencies study the environmental consequences of their actions, including permitting and financial assistance. It also requires them to take all feasible measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate damage to the environment .

Environmental Review RFP Scope:

The Consultant will complete a MEPA environmental review for the Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project, producing an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), if required. MEPA review is required if a project requires a State Agency Action and meets or exceeds a MEPA review threshold, which is outlined at 301 CMR 11.03.

Summary of Proposal from Woods Hole Group:

The Woods Hole Group team has built a strong track record working on other similar projects, and brings substantial knowledge and expertise in environmental and historic preservation reviews; coastal climate resiliency planning and related infrastructure and open space design; and community and stakeholder engagement and facilitation.



MEPA Environmental Review Process Overview

Review Thresholds

- 11.03(3)(b)1.a – alteration of a coastal bank, requiring a permit
- 11.03(3)(b)1.f – alteration of one half or more acres of any other wetlands (Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage), requiring a permit
- Assumed FEMA funding, passed through MEMA, is State financial assistance

Resource Areas

- Coastal Bank
- Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage
- No Estimated or Priority Habitat – NHESP Letter
- National, State + Local Historic Districts
- Historic Structures

Environmental Justice Neighborhoods (1 mi.)

- Minority (26)
- Minority and English Isolation (2) – Chinese
- Minority and Income (2)
- Minority, Income, and English Isolation (10) – Chinese and Spanish/Spanish Creole

Local, State, and Federal Permitting

- Boston Conservation Commission - Order of Conditions
- Boston Landmarks Commission - Certificate of Design Approval
- Boston Public Improvement Commission - Specific Repairs License, Maintenance, and Indemnification agreement
- Mass DEP Waterways Division - Chapter 91 License or Amendment
- Mass Office of Coastal Zone Management - Federal Consistency Determination (if required)
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and Mass Historic Commission - Section 106 Determination of Adverse Effect Concurrence
- US Army Corps of Engineers Permit (if required)
- US EPA for a Section 402 National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit.

Climate Change Adaptation + Resiliency Strategies / RMA

- Sea Level Rise/Storm Surge (High Risk): Main purpose of this project, designing permanent berms/floodwall for 2050/2070 DFE, interim features for 2030 DFE
- Extreme Heat (High Risk): Converting 1.48 acres of impervious parking to green open space adjacent to public trail, drought tolerant plantings
- Extreme Precipitation – Urban Flooding (Moderate Risk): Modeling show no impact or benefits, designing outfall flap gates to prevent backflow, reducing impervious surfaces
- Extreme Precipitation – Riverine Flooding (Low Risk): Not relevant

More Information and Next Steps

More information on the proposed project and to download the full ENF:

<https://www.bostonplans.org/news-calendar/calendar/2022/02/01/mepa-meeting-for-resilient-fort-point-channel-infr>

To obtain a copy of the ENF and be added to the email list for future updates, please contact:

Boston Planning & Development Agency, Proponent
c/o Woods Hole Group, Inc.
Attn: Beth Gurney
107 Waterhouse Road, Bourne, MA 02532
(508) 495-6240
email: bgurney@woodsholegroup.com

To submit comments during the proposed project's comment period:

Please email Erin Flaherty at erin.flaherty@mass.gov and reference Resilient Fort Point Channel Infrastructure Project and EEA#16514 in the subject line.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/submitting-comments>



**boston planning &
development agency**

Q & A

Joe Christo

Senior Resilience and Waterfront Planner
Boston Planning and Development Agency

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