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# FORT POINT

FORT POINT 100 ACRES OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN

DECEMBER 2020



boston planning &  
development agency

SASAKI



# FORT POINT

## FORT POINT 100 ACRES OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN

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The background features a teal-to-dark-teal gradient. Three stylized fish are swimming in the upper half, and a fourth is partially visible on the right edge. The fish are depicted with yellow and orange accents on their bodies.

# Executive Summary





# Introduction

## Project Overview and Process

**The Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan establishes more detailed park designs for an open space network at the heart of South Boston's neighborhood as it grows over time. The proposed park network strengthens connections to the waterfront, creates a more resilient community, and expands recreation, events, and green space access.**

The open spaces are designed to become year-round destinations for Boston as a whole, while also meeting current and future local neighborhood needs. An underlying focus of this plan is for the parks to be resilient and welcoming to all. Strategies to create a more inclusive park network are woven tightly throughout the recommendations in this plan.

The Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan will serve as a guide for future development of open space resources as the 100 Acres is built out. This plan describes a vision for a connected set of distinct, destination-quality open space experiences, reflective of community priorities and needs identified through research and analysis. In addition, the Ground Floor recommendations in this plan identify opportunities for indoor spaces to enhance the district experience and enjoyment for park visitors.

## Project Goals

Overall, the plan will guide the development and programming of planned open space within the Fort Point District 100 Acres, and balance recreation and community gathering space with coastal resiliency strategies to address current and future flooding risks due to climate change and sea-level rise.

The plan builds on the public realm priorities identified in the 2006 Fort Point 100 Acres Master Plan and advances the recommendations of the 2018 Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston to assist in protecting the Fort Point neighborhood from coastal storms and future flooding.

The goals of the project include:

- Provide a vision and programmatic plan for future development of parks and open space that are accessible and available to all.
- Ensure a diverse and balanced mix of uses based on community input and user needs.
- Develop a system of open space areas that relate to each other, the surrounding built context, and the historic Fort Point Channel District.
- Design landscapes that are adaptive and resilient in response to climate change, sea level rise, and storm surge, and contribute to neighborhood flood protection.
- Increase landscape capacity to store, clean, and manage stormwater in order to decrease stormwater flooding impacts to the neighborhood.
- Establish meaningful connections to the Fort Point Channel watershed and surrounding open space, streets and linear connections, including Harborwalk and the South Bay Harbor Trail.
- Establish meaningful connections to the Fort Point Channel watershed and surrounding open space, streets and linear connections, including Harborwalk and the South Bay Harbor Trail.

## The Project Area

The area known as the 100 Acres, which makes up the southwestern portion of the South Boston Waterfront, contains approximately 88.7 acres. The Project Area is bounded by the Fort Point Channel to the west, Summer Street to the north, the South Boston Bypass Road/Haul Road to the east, and West First Street to the south. It is connected to inland Boston neighborhoods like the South End and Roxbury via the South Bay Harbor Trail, and to the northern areas of the South Boston Waterfront and Downtown Waterfront via the Harborwalk.

The focus of this report is to develop concept design and programming recommendations for the proposed network of new open spaces (approximately 9 acres in total), connecting them into a cohesive system that relate to the historic neighborhood and to the Fort Point Channel, while also being responsive to new development.



Fort Point Channel and surrounding neighborhood today (Image credit: Related Beal)

# Guiding Principles for Design and Implementation

## Statement of Concept Plan Objectives

### **The guiding principles are rooted both in the needs identified through analysis and the feedback and insight shared throughout the planning process.**

A central aim of the Open Space Concept Plan is to be a physical manifestation of the goals and objectives of the community and city-wide stakeholders. The following guiding principles bring together community input and identified needs. They are intended to capture the objectives of the design decisions and planning recommendations included in this document.

The guiding principles should serve as a foundational starting point and as a consistent “community rubric” for the project design processes for each component of the 100 Acres open space network, as they are built out over time.

### **A Resilient and Performative Landscape**

Meet performance targets for climate resilience, including reducing flood risk from the Fort Point Channel, embedding stormwater storage solutions in visible (above ground) and behind-the-scenes (below ground) strategies, and providing relief from increased heat through additional tree cover and shade structures. Support long-term sustainability by creating a greener Fort Point neighborhood with a connected open space and active transportation network.

### **An Undeniably Fort Point Identity**

Create an open space system that embraces the unique elements of this specific part of Boston's neighborhoods. Support the amplification of watersheet activities on the Fort Point Channel, and draw in a water-based sense of place and play. Build upon the Fort Point neighborhood's history and current day identity as an arts community, weaving in spaces for artistic expression as well as programs that increase exhibition and economic opportunities for independent creatives from Fort Point and beyond.

### **Enable Inclusivity with a Full Day, Year-Round Experience**

Enable the Fort Point open space network to be used by residents from all neighborhoods of Boston, especially inland communities that don't have a waterfront within the boundaries of their neighborhoods, by providing a full-day park experience that's worth the trip. Provide a balance of special, destination-quality program moments that can draw visitors from different areas of Boston and from out-of-town, with everyday amenities, shade, and places to rest that don't involve financial checkpoints (i.e., purchases or fees). Create uses and locate programs next to each other to allow multi-generational park users to have complementary experiences.

### **A Welcoming Identity with a Clarity of Public Accessibility**

Select programs and design choices that communicate a clarity of public accessibility that allow visitors to easily and quickly intuit that the open space is public. Extend the public realm and remove a sense of privatization by providing community uses indoors that relate to the outdoor open space.

### **Support Diversity Through Both Design and Operations**

Pair design decisions with long-term thinking on how the space will be implemented and operated. Acknowledge the impact of how (and by whom) a space is maintained on how different users experience the public space. In operations decisions, set a proactive goal of attracting people of a diversity of race, cultural identity, age, income, and physical ability.





**COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT**  
"We deserve a park where our neighborhood can be together, be alone, play, celebrate and grow."

# Open Space Concept Plan

## Plan Overview

The Open Space Concept Plan envisions a network of public spaces for the Fort Point 100 Acres neighborhood that is welcoming and engaging for a broad range of users, from residents in the surrounding neighborhood, to residents of inland Boston neighborhoods such as Roxbury, Dorchester, Chinatown, to local workers and tourists.

The character and identity of these public spaces, as well as the specific outdoor programs included, were drawn directly from the concepts developed with a diverse range of participants in the public engagement process.

Across input gathered from the community, a theme emerged around the desire to have the future public spaces embody the idea of an “urban wilderness” - a unique experience of nature in the city not readily found in other parts of Boston’s waterfront and the surrounding areas. A robust and biodiverse urban tree canopy, stormwater and pollinator gardens, floating wetlands, nature play experiences, and educational signage about natural systems shape this “urban wilderness” identity. The concept plan adds to the urban wilderness identity a range of activities and programming to draw a diversity of ages and interests--drawing upon the idea of the park system as an outdoor community living room with flexible uses. Elements of art throughout the parks build on Fort Point’s artistic identity to celebrate all types of creative expression, including visual arts, performance arts, and music.

Key elements of the parks include:

**A waterfront amphitheater**, which utilizes the sloping topography of the future protective berm to create terraced seating with views of the Fort Point Channel. This turf amphitheater can be used for everyday relaxing at the water’s edge or gathering for waterfront performances and events.

**An elevated waterfront plaza**, elevated to the top-of-berm height to afford views to the water from deeper into the site. The Plaza will include an interactive water feature, with an interpretive identity exploring the history of the waterfront and/or tidal fluctuations and climate change. The water feature surface should be designed flexibly to accommodate other cooler-weather programs, such as seasonal market tents or ice skating. A grove of trees with hammocks, a shade structure, and a variety of seating options invite people to linger and enjoy the waterfront plaza through the day and throughout the year. The plaza includes a location for a rotating art

installation that serves as a vertical beacon within the parks and engages Boston artists.

**Two blocks of inland community park**, featuring a connected yet complimentary experience. The western zone, between Necco Street and A Street, will be more active with grills, event lawn, temporary market, and nature-based play area. The eastern zone, east of A Street, will feature a quieter setting for relaxation and enjoying views of art and stormwater and pollinator gardens.

**A continuous, shaded promenade** meanders through the park system, providing a connective thread linking together the diverse park experiences, and connecting the inland portions of the public space network seamlessly to the waterfront plaza and Harborwalk.

**An active park**, aimed to enhance the active recreational opportunities and promote wellness for Boston residents, includes a basketball court, multi-use play surfaces and courts, a fitness grove, and a dog park.

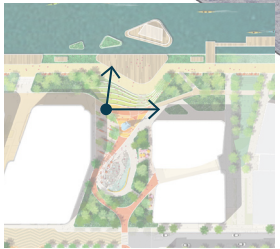
**Community pocket parks** throughout the neighborhood provide smaller-scale neighborhood park amenities and shaded, relaxing spaces for everyday use.

In addition to these unique experiences, elements of continuity unify the spaces through the District, including:

- A biodiverse, climate-adaptive, and salt-tolerant tree canopy and planting palette
- A network of opportunities for artistic and creative expression, engaging the local arts community, in the form of visual arts, performance arts, and music
- A system of pathways that are easy to navigate, making movement between park spaces seamless
- Site furnishings that are simple, comfortable, beautiful, and accommodate various ways of occupying spaces through the district, from individual to group configurations
- Energy-efficient lighting that makes the parks feel safe and comfortable into the evening and through the seasons



This illustrative visualization includes the latest building footprints for development projects that are currently under review



**Waterfront Amphitheater**

Standing at the top of the amphitheater looking north along the Channel



**Waterfront Plaza**  
Walking beside the interactive fountain, looking towards the public art piece and the Channel beyond.

Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space

FORT POINT CHANNEL

SOUTH BAY HARBOR TRAIL

HARBORWALK

FORT POINT CHANNEL PARK

G5

G4

15 Necco

5 Necco

NECCO ST

NECCO STREET PARK

G6

A STREET

WORMWOOD STREET PARK

A STREET

A STREET PARK

W. 1ST STREET

RICHARDS ST

MEDALLION AVE

MEDALLION STREET PARK

BINFORD ST

WORMWOOD ST

FORT POINT AVE

WEST SERVICE RD

HAUL RD

ACTIVE PARK



0 50 100 200 500

14



## Program Summary

### Waterfront Activation

- Floating wetlands
- Waterfront overlook / elevated places to enjoy Channel views
- Infrastructure to support floating stage or visiting activity barges
- Floating art
- Creative swings along the Harborwalk

### Resilience and Ecology

- Elevated berm to increase flood resilience
- Stormwater gardens and stormwater storage
- Pollinator and butterfly gardens
- Trees (salt tolerant, native/adaptive, and biodiverse species)
- Shade structures
- Environmental education opportunities (ex. interpretive signage, spaces that can function as outdoor classrooms)

### Connectivity

- Park promenade connecting the park network to the Fort Point Channel
- Parking spaces for park visitors
- South Bay Harbor Trail - clear, welcoming gateway into the park network and clear route through the district
- Harborwalk - including upland alternative to provide elevated connection during flooding

### Community Recreation and Programming

- Interactive fountain designed for children play
- Outdoor family lounge area with seating and lawn games
- Picnic tables and grills
- Benches and seating, including a Hammock Grove
- Shade structures to provide relief from heat
- Active recreation (including at least one full-court basketball court)
- Interesting play areas
- Affordable food options
- Complimentary indoor public facilities that support enhanced enjoyment and use of the parks
- Community gardens

### Arts and Events

- Waterfront amphitheater or terraces
- Small to medium-sized lawn supporting flexible, everyday use and events
- Market space
- Multiple spaces for performances of different scales with supporting infrastructure
- Public art throughout the district, including an “Art Promenade” and landmark public art location in the elevated plaza
- Infrastructure support for art installation and events, including electrical hook-ups for light and sound equipment and wifi connectivity
- Infrastructure support for art installation and events, including electrical outlets for light and sound equipment and wifi connectivity

The background is a teal gradient. In the upper half, there are three stylized illustrations of fish swimming from left to right. The top fish is yellow with black spots. The middle fish is orange with black spots. The bottom fish is green with black spots. The bottom half of the image is a solid teal color.

# Introduction & Process







# Introduction

## Project Overview and Process

**The Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan establishes more detailed park designs for an open space network at the heart of South Boston's neighborhood as it grows over time. The proposed park network strengthens connections to the waterfront, creates a more resilient community, and expands recreation, events, and green space access.**

The open spaces are designed to become year-round destinations for Boston as a whole, while also meeting current and future local neighborhood needs. An underlying focus of this plan is for the parks to be resilient and welcoming to all. Strategies to create a more inclusive park network are woven tightly throughout the recommendations in this plan.

The Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan will serve as a guide for future development of open space resources as the 100 Acres is built out. This plan describes a vision for a connected set of distinct, destination-quality open space experiences, reflective of community priorities and needs identified through research and analysis. In addition, the Ground Floor recommendations in this plan identify opportunities for indoor spaces to enhance the district experience and enjoyment for park visitors.

## The Project Area

The area known as the 100 Acres, which makes up the southwestern portion of the South Boston Waterfront, contains approximately 88.7 acres. The Project Area is bounded by the Fort Point Channel to the west, Summer Street to the north, the South Boston Bypass Road/Haul Road to the east, and West First Street to the south. It is connected to inland Boston neighborhoods like the South End and Roxbury via the South Bay Harbor Trail, and to the northern areas of the South Boston Waterfront and Downtown Waterfront via the Harborwalk.

The focus of this report is to develop concept design and programming recommendations for the proposed network of new open spaces (approximately

9 acres in total), connecting them into a cohesive system that relate to the historic neighborhood and to the Fort Point Channel, while also being responsive to new development.

## Project Goals

Overall, the plan will guide the development and programming of planned open space within the Fort Point District 100 Acres, and balance recreation and community gathering space with coastal resiliency strategies to address current and future flooding risks due to climate change and sea-level rise.

The plan builds on the public realm priorities identified in the 2006 Fort Point 100 Acres Master Plan and advances the recommendations of the 2018 Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston to assist in protecting the Fort Point neighborhood from coastal storms and future flooding.

The goals of the project include:

- Provide a vision and programmatic plan for future development of parks and open space that are accessible and available to all.
- Ensure a diverse and balanced mix of uses based on community input and user needs.
- Develop a system of open space areas that relate to each other, the surrounding built context, and the historic Fort Point Channel District.
- Design landscapes that are adaptive and resilient in response to climate change, sea level rise, and storm surge, and contribute to neighborhood flood protection.
- Increase landscape capacity to store, clean, and manage stormwater in order to decrease stormwater flooding impacts to the neighborhood.
- Establish meaningful connections to the Fort Point Channel watershed and surrounding open space, streets and linear connections, including Harborwalk and the South Bay Harbor Trail.
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## Glossary of terms used in this document

**Framework:** a planning map that shows a high-level approach to an area. It describes key elements and sets future intentions. In contrast, a master plan is more prescriptive and detailed. A framework provides a more general roadmap for the future with a greater degree of flexibility about exactly how it is achieved, allowing the ability to adapt as conditions change while still achieving the key goals.

**Program:** Used in the context of a park, program refers generally to any of the activities or park uses that it supports. For example, the program for the waterfront plaza as shown in this plan, includes an interactive fountain and seating area. “Programming” typically refers specifically to a scheduled set of events that are offered.

**Impervious surfaces:** hard surfaces like roads and buildings that do not allow rainfall to absorb into them. In contrast, pervious surfaces like grassy areas are more absorptive; rain soaks into them during a storm. Greater amounts of impervious surfaces increase the stress on a stormwater pipe network because more water drains into the pipes instead of absorbing into the ground.

**PDA / Planned Development Area:** a term that describes an area within a city with an additional layer of zoning considerations, which have an “overlay” effect (ie. they provide additional considerations for future development on top of existing zoning). Often, this additional layer provides flexibility for the area, so goals can be met across the whole area, rather than across each individual parcel.

**Chapter 91:** Chapter 91 provides a regulatory framework for the provision of indoor and outdoor public facilities, with the express purpose of promoting and preserving public rights to use tidelands. A portion of the 100 Acres area, west of A Street, falls in the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 91, Waterways, which is administered by the State of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

**BCB/NAVD88:** Boston City Base (BCB) and NAVD88 (North American Vertical Datum of 1988) are two different measuring systems to report heights. Each has a distinct “0” elevation. To convert from NAVD88 to BCB, add 6.46 feet.

## Process and Community Engagement Overview

The Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan represents the culmination of a year-long effort rooted in community and stakeholder engagement. The Open Space Concept Plan builds on the robust history of planning for this neighborhood and builds upon the community input that was shared in past processes. The recommendations for parks and open space design and programming in this concept plan are based on community and stakeholder input, research, and analysis findings.

The planning effort began with a thorough review of previous plans and analysis of the current and projected neighborhood needs. This process included mapping existing open space and recreation resources to identify what was missing. Community engagement was structured as a series of “waves” or grouped engagement opportunities to gather input at key project milestones.

### Engagement Wave 1

Engagement Wave 1 included four stakeholder focus groups, a community open house at Artists for Humanity, an online survey, and a focus group discussion with families living in Roxbury. The purpose of these initial meetings was to deepen the understanding of existing needs and understand priorities related to future park activities and character. Key takeaways included desires for nature/water connections (ex. stormwater gardens, pollinator gardens/wildflower meadows, floating wetland), supporting a more activated waterfront / watersheet (ex. kayak/canoe, SUP rental; overlooks, floating wetlands, program barges), and accommodating a range of more informal community amenities and events (ex. picnic tables, community events, open lawn, play area, community gardens).

Based on this feedback, three themes for the district were developed: Urban Wilderness, Community Living Room, and Flex Space/Outdoor Gallery. Each concept included a different approach to the open spaces, with the overall goal of providing three options that showed a wide range of ideas for the future parks.

Connections in Wave 1:

- Public open house at Artists for Humanity
- Non-Profit Organizations Stakeholder Group meeting

- Businesses and Property Owners Stakeholder Group meeting
- Community Groups and Civic/Cultural Organizations Stakeholder Group meeting
- Government Partners Stakeholder Group meeting
- Focus group discussion with families in Roxbury, hosted in partnership with The American Cities Coalition
- Online survey on program and character, distributed city-wide
- Meeting with developer and design teams for 15 Necco and 5 Necco street parcels, and 244-284 A Street parcels, which are undergoing Article 80 development review, to share public feedback

### Engagement Wave 2

Engagement Wave 2 extended from the end of February into the summer and included a broad range of events. Another community open house at Artists for Humanity kicked off the engagement process and the launch of a parallel online survey. The online survey remained open through the duration of this wave and offered the same questions as the in-person open house. Additional engagement focused on broadening input and included an office-hours event with numerous City Hall departments, presenting at the Boston Harbor Now Harbor Use Public Forum, and a virtual interactive storytelling session with Roxbury families in collaboration with The American Cities Coalition.

The study also expanded to include Ground Floor Activation recommendations for how Chapter 91 spaces and indoor ground floor uses could compliment the new parks, further expanding access to the district. As part of this work, interviews with waterfront activation grant recipients were conducted to understand their perspectives on what ground floor uses and supporting infrastructure could expand access and use.

Based on the feedback from Engagement Wave 2 and additional input from the BPDA, City of Boston Parks and Recreation, City of Boston Transportation Department, and other City departments, the preferred aspects of the three concepts were blended together into the preferred concept plan that is shown in this report. As part of this

process, recommendations for updating the 2006 Master Plan framework emerged that would support more usable open space dimensions and improve the balance of vehicle and pedestrian access through the district. These recommendations would require a public process and amendment to PDA No. 69 to revise the current plan.

The preferred direction presented in this report brings together the community-centered gathering spaces of Community Living Room, with the park character of an Urban Wilderness, while infusing throughout events, arts, and two complimentary medium-scale flexible lawns, one more active and events-focused and one more for passive relaxation and enjoyment.

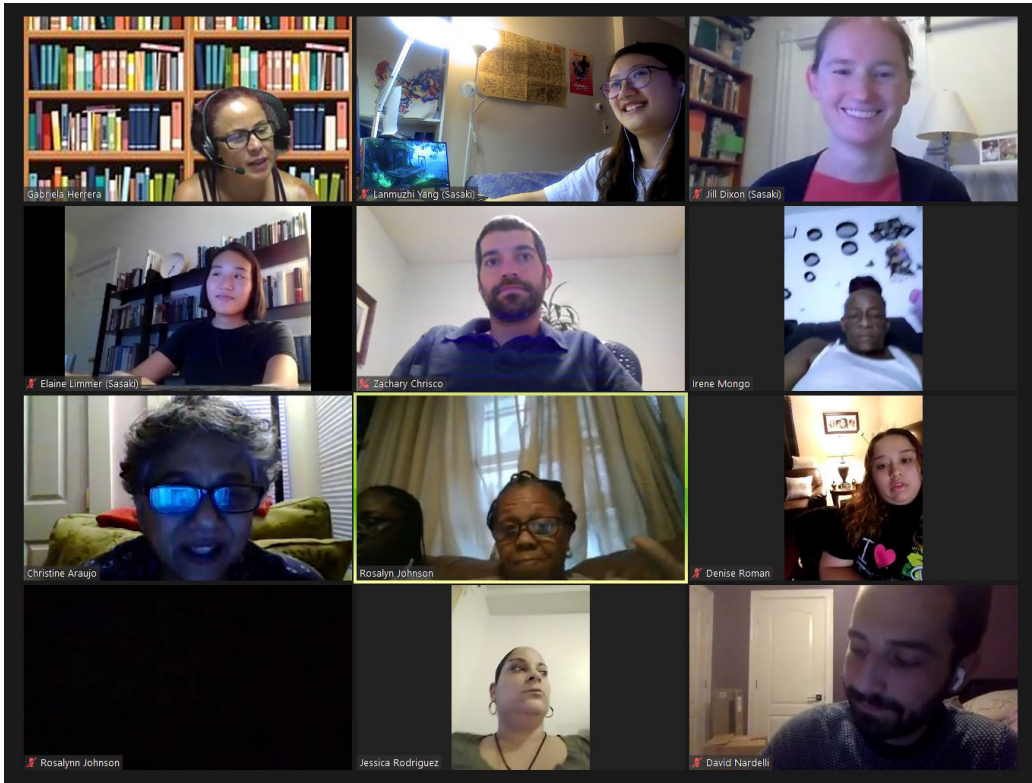
The process has proceeded in parallel to development applications for 5 and 15 Necco and 244-284 A Street, with regular coordination meetings between teams. The intent is that this concept design plan, which is rooted in community feedback, will guide the open spaces that will be included in these developments, and all future developments in the neighborhood, supporting a seamless, destination-quality park experience.

#### Connections in Wave 2:

- Public open house at Artists for Humanity
- Virtual focus group discussion with families living in Roxbury, in partnership with The American Cities Coalition
- Participation in virtual Harbor Use Public Forum hosted by Boston Harbor Now to share the concept alternatives
- Virtual open discussion of concept alternatives, open to City Hall employees
- Online survey on concept alternatives, distributed city-wide
- Interviews with recipients of the Watersheet Activation Grant to understand how Chapter 91 spaces are used today
  - “e”, Inc
  - Brown Box Theatre
  - Fort Point Arts Community

- Hull Lifesaving Museum
- The American Cities Coalition
- Focus group discussion with Watersheet Activation Grant recipients to review draft Ground Floor Activation recommendations
- Focus group discussion with City of Boston departments to review draft Ground Floor Activation recommendations
- Meeting with developer and design teams for 15 Necco and 5 Necco street parcels, and 244-284 A Street parcels, which are undergoing Article 80 development review, to share public feedback





Virtual focus group discussion with Roxbury residents (August 2020)



Mayor's Open House Event (February 2020)



Focus group discussion with Roxbury residents (November 2020)



Open House #2 (February 2020)

# Needs Analysis Summary

## **The Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan supports a more resilient, welcoming, green, and connected neighborhood.**

Fort Point is a vibrant neighborhood with a strong sense of community, history, arts, and waterfront activation. The new parks offer opportunities to build on these strengths, while also providing additional recreation space, a greater range of activities, and more green space. Importantly, the new parks will also help address key resilience needs in the neighborhood, most significantly, incorporating a waterfront berm to reduce near-term coastal flood risk in the neighborhood.

The proposed new activities, program, and design intent address existing and projected gaps in the Fort Point neighborhood. These needs were identified through analysis, review of previous planning documents, and community and stakeholder feedback.

Key needs and opportunities include:

- Creating an inclusive destination
- Expanding active recreation and diversifying green space
- Supporting watershed activation
- Increasing resilience to flooding and heat and improving environmental health
- Enhancing connectivity

## **Creating an Inclusive Destination**

### **Context:**

The surrounding waterfront neighborhoods have seen much new development in the past decade. Many of the new businesses, shops, restaurants, and housing developments introduced into the neighborhood cater to a demographic of wealthier residents and employees. This has contributed to neighborhood changes that can feel exclusive to many Bostonians and visitors.

Demographics data for the census tract (number 612) that includes Fort Point and the eastern edge of South Boston show that this neighborhood differs in a few notable ways. Compared to Boston as whole, the neighborhood is home to a higher percentage of white residents (87.2% vs. 44.5% citywide), fewer households with children under 18 years old (5.5% vs. 22.4%), and fewer families living in poverty (8.1% vs. 15.3% citywide.)<sup>1</sup> The median household income is \$130,600, compared to \$65,900 in Boston. More than 30% of households have an annual income exceeding \$200,000 per year, three times higher than the citywide total of 11.5%.

### **Opportunity:**

This waterfront park network and surrounding ground floor uses can focus on expanding access and creating a more welcoming waterfront. Not all of Boston's neighborhoods have the benefit of direct waterfront access to enjoy. This stretch of the Fort Point Channel can act as a gateway to Boston's waterfront for Chinatown residents as well as park visitors arriving via the South Bay Harbor Trail from inland neighborhoods like Roxbury and the South End.

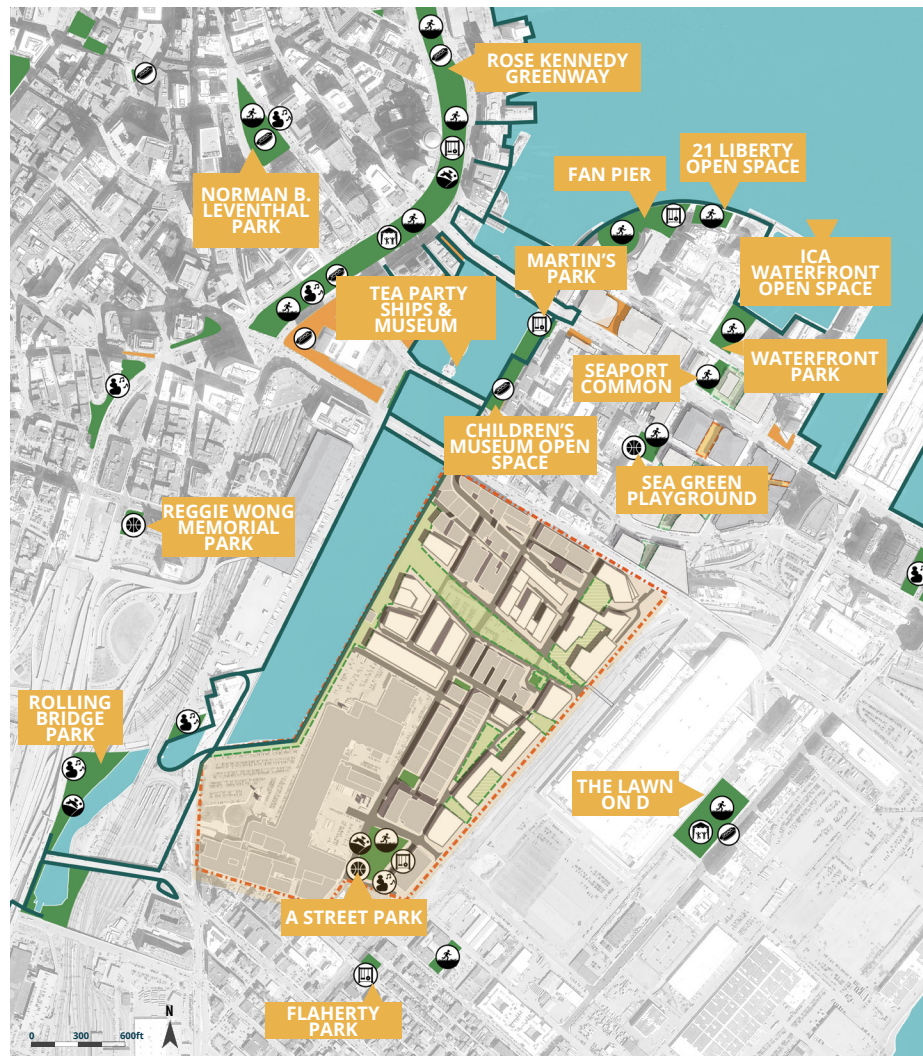
Creating a destination that truly is welcoming, enjoyable, and accessible requires a multi-layered approach including safe access and transportation options, affordable food choices, a diversity of activities for all ages, design details that invite lingering and enjoying the parks, and supporting management and operations strategies.

<sup>1</sup> Demographics data source: 2018 ACS, 5 year estimates



**“Additional active recreation space is necessary to meet the current and future needs of this growing district.”**

City of Boston’s Open Space & Recreation Plan: 2015-2021



- |                     |               |                                      |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Recreation / Sports | Pop-up Events | Existing Park                        |
| Open Lawn           | Dog Park      | Proposed Open Space in Site Boundary |
| Playground          | Food Truck    | Adjacent Proposed Open Space         |
| Cultural Elements   |               | Existing Plaza                       |
|                     |               | Proposed Plaza                       |
|                     |               | Harborwalk                           |

## Expanding Active Recreation and Diversifying Green Space

### Context:

Although Fort Point and the surrounding area includes a range of parks and open spaces, it is underserved by active recreation opportunities. A Street Park is packed with a diversity of activities: a half-court basketball court, dog park, playground for younger children, eight community garden plots, and open lawn space. As demonstrated through frequent use of the basketball court and a lengthy waiting list for a garden plot, A Street Park is highly used and does not fully meet neighborhood recreational and green space needs. As the population of Fort Point grows with new construction, the need for additional open space and active recreation will continue to increase even more. The projected build-out of the 100 Acres area is projected to add 2,300 new housing units and 12,300 permanent jobs.<sup>2</sup> To the north, Martin’s Park provides a citywide play destination near the Children’s Museum. The Sea Green Playground in the South Boston Waterfront provides an additional half-court of basketball and playground.

The other open spaces along the Harborwalk are predominantly small to medium-scale plazas or green lawns. The design and character of many of the privately owned and managed open spaces feature a highly manicured look that may give the impression of being less inviting for lingering unless visiting an adjacent restaurant. A Street Park and Martin’s Park are the only fully publicly owned open spaces in this neighborhood. Prominent regulatory signage further contributes to a feeling that open spaces are only to be enjoyed in a limited way.

### Opportunity:

Expanding active recreation opportunities through basketball courts and multi-purpose courts will help address a recreational gap in this area and support a systemwide goal of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department to increase active recreation spaces. The size and shape of the parks are slightly too small for a soccer field, but they can fit other uses like a full-court basketball court, tennis or pickle ball courts, play areas for different ages, and open lawn that encourages informal sports and play.

In addition to active recreation, providing other types of public space like community garden plots and welcoming green spaces for passive enjoyment will further diversify the range of outdoor activities for nearby residents and visiting neighbors to enjoy. Park design and a diverse range of outdoor programming can support the creation of open spaces that feel truly public and welcoming to all.

<sup>2</sup> Source: March 2006 PDA Master Plan Presentation

## Supporting Watersheet Activation

### Context:

The Fort Point Channel is an active urban waterfront. It offers small craft recreational boating in a relatively sheltered setting and has a history of vibrant art. The *Fort Point Channel Watersheet Activation Plan* (2002) considered opportunities to further activate the Channel, dividing its basins into three distinct character zones:

Hub of the Channel: stretching from the Summer Street bridge to the northern end of the channel, this zone accommodates small and mid-sized powered vessels, along with supporting dock space and landside destinations. The area south of the Congress Street bridge (which restricts larger boats from entering further into the channel), is designated the “art basin,” themed with floating art and bridge lighting.

Seawall Basin (includes the waterfront of the 100 Acres area): extending south of the Summer Street bridge to the Gillette property and including the 100 Acres area, this basin includes a range of activities centered on art and human-powered boats like kayaks, canoes, and dragon boats. A water trail with floating islands provides places to explore and rest for boaters. Art barges and a potential future pedestrian bridge across the channel further add to the activity of the watersheet and its connectivity with the surrounding areas.

South Bay Industrial Wild: located southeast of the Dorchester Avenue Bridge, this zone is a place for kayakers and canoeists to explore, with a character that brings together industrial and wild.

Additional features today include more waterfront seating to watch channel activities like boat races; indoor supportive uses like more public restrooms; accessible docks; boat storage; and educational signage about boating so passers-by can learn more about maritime culture.

### Opportunity:

Building on the recommendations of the Watersheet Activation Plan and recent stakeholder and community feedback, the Open Space Concept Plan can support increased use of the Fort Point Channel as a year-round waterfront destination. Landside infrastructure like boat storage, changing rooms/restrooms, and easy access for walking canoes, kayaks, and other boats—or floating art—to the dock can enable increased water use.

## Watersheet Uses identified in the Fort Point Channel Watersheet Activation Plan

### HUB OF THE CHANNEL

#### Main Basin

Water transportation terminal  
Harbor ferries  
Cultural loop  
Water taxi  
Performance barge  
Boston Tea Party events  
Visiting vessels  
Public landing/touch-and-go facilities  
Harbor tours/excursions  
Educational vessels  
Floating “Channel Walk”  
Floating Classrooms  
Children’s programs  
Short term vessel tie up  
Water shuttle to Seawall Basin

#### Art Basin

Floating Art  
Canoes  
Kayaks  
Rowing-recreational

### SEAWALL BASIN

(includes the 100 Acres area)

Rowing (fitness-26-foot single scull and recreation)  
Canoes  
Dragon boat races  
Water Taxi  
Youth Programs  
Water festivals  
Lantern festivals  
Paddle Boats (Individual and Groups)  
Kayaks  
Floating islands  
Floating art  
Floating horticultural displays  
Art barge  
Model boat racing  
Light festivals/displays  
Floating park  
Fountains  
Interpretive water trail  
Tidal art

### SOUTH BAY URBAN WILD

Canoe  
Kayak  
Interpretive water trail

## Increasing Resilience to Flooding and Heat & Improving Environmental Health

### Context:

Boston's weather and water levels are already shifting due to climate change, and these trends are projected to accelerate in the coming decades. As noted in Climate Ready Boston, scientists forecast more hot days in the summer, rising harbor water levels and flood risks, and increased downpours during storms.

Today, the 100 Acres area is predominantly parking lots, roadways, and buildings. Tree canopy is limited in the neighborhood, and the only open spaces are A Street Park, Binford Park, Wormwood Park, and a narrow strip of green along the Harborwalk. As an urban neighborhood, opportunities to experience ecology and biodiversity are limited. In total, 96.8% of the study area is currently impervious. Impervious surfaces, such as paved areas and buildings, do not allow rainfall to absorb into the ground and contribute to flash flooding. During rainstorms, rain is quickly washed into these pipes rather than being absorbed naturally into the ground like it would be in an undeveloped area. Pockets of stormwater flooding may exist in and around the study area during heavy storms, especially between Necco Court and the northern end of the Gillette property and along A Street, Binford Street, and Medallion Avenue.

The expansive paved areas and limited trees also contribute to the urban heat island effect, which intensifies the impacts of hot weather on human health and comfort. On hot days in Boston, it feels even hotter in the Fort Point neighborhood. Citywide, increasing summer temperatures, including more hot days and heat waves, pose the greatest public health risk. Heat-related deaths are projected to double by the 2020s and triple by the 2080s, compared to the past 30 years.<sup>3</sup> The health risks of hot weather are exacerbated for kids, senior adults, and individuals with asthma and other chronic health conditions.

<sup>3</sup> The projection of 9" of sea level rise (expected in the 2030s) is a finding from Climate Ready Boston, based on input from the Climate Projection Consensus report developed by the Boston Research Advisory Group (BRAG). "10 percent annual chance flood" refers to a flood that has a 1 in 10 chance of occurring in any given year. It is ten times more likely than a 1% annual chance flood. A 1 percent annual chance flood has historically been called a "100 year storm" because it has a 1 in 100 chance of occurring in any year. The "100 year storm" terminology, however, can be misleading because it implies a major storm like this would only occur one time in every 100 years. 1% risk of flooding each year adds up over time. For example, a house that is exposed to flooding in a "100 year storm" would have a 26% chance of being flooded at least once within a 30 year mortgage.

The Fort Point Channel's eastern and southern edges are among the most low-lying in the city. The Fort Point Channel along the 100 Acres project area has significant near-term vulnerability. With 9 inches of sea level rise (expected in the 2030s), much of the Fort Point neighborhood would experience flooding in a 10-percent annual chance flood via a flood pathway that roughly aligns with the planned open space in the 100 Acres area.<sup>4</sup> A significant flood pathway through the southern end of the Fort Point Channel develops by mid-century if no action is taken. This flood pathway will expose the South End and other inland neighborhoods to increased risk from coastal flooding as sea level rises to 21" (expected in the 2050s).

### Opportunity:

Implementing a multi-layered approach to resilience starts with elevating the edge of the Fort Point Channel to reduce current and future flood risk. The City of Boston has applied for a FEMA grant that would fund a berm that will run along the eastern and southern edges of the Channel. The top of the berm is designed to be at elevation 21.5 feet in Boston City Base (BCB) datum, including 6 inches of cover over the clay core. In comparison, the Harborwalk in this area sits at elevation 14.0 (BCB) and Necco Street is at elevation 17.0 (BCB). The open space concept design identifies opportunities to seamlessly integrate this elevated land into the park network, leveraging the higher elevation to enhance waterfront views and the park experience. The berm will block the significant near-term flood pathway, reducing the risk of coastal flooding for the neighborhood.

Behind the berm, building design centered on resilience/sustainability and strategies for stormwater storage work together to mitigate flooding impacts. Additional resilience opportunities include enhancement of the urban tree canopy and shade structures to provide relief on hot days. Increasing tree canopy and green space can help create a cooler neighborhood, reducing the urban heat island effect. In addition, planting diverse native species and creating planted areas like pollinator gardens can support improved environmental health. The parks and their stormwater systems can be designed to act like sponges, absorbing and holding rainfall during storms. Green stormwater infrastructure and rain gardens can slow and clean stormwater.

By integrating resilience strategies throughout the park network, this district could become a model destination for Boston for environmental resilience and education, and with opportunities to learn about resilience in the changing climate.

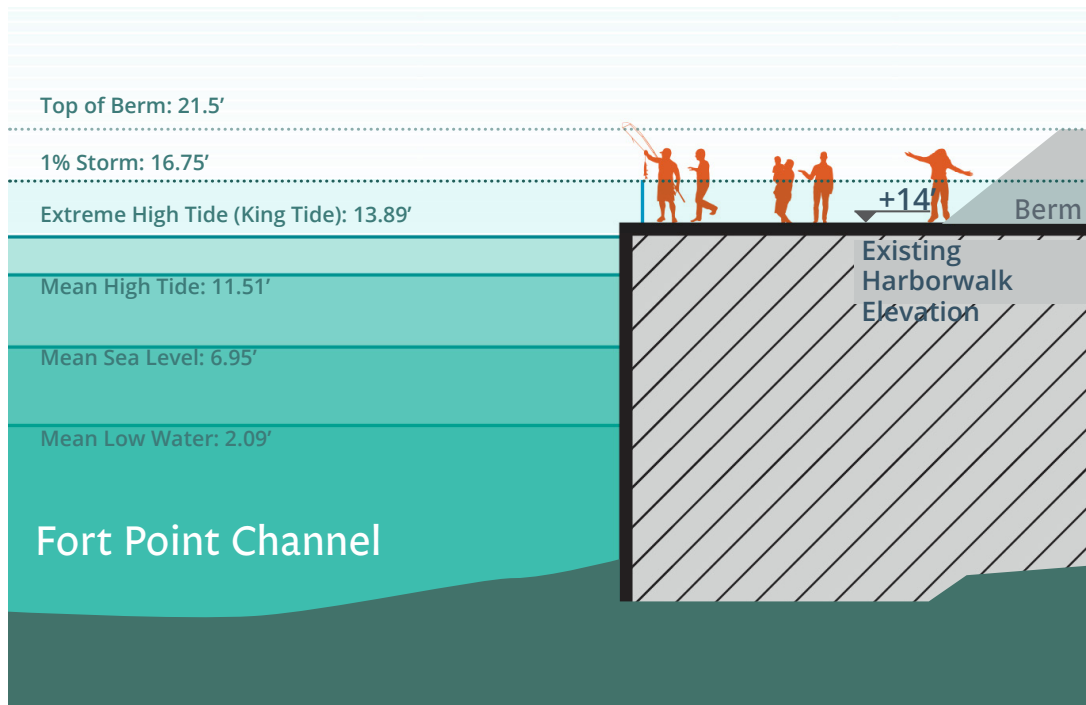
<sup>4</sup> Source: Climate Ready Boston Citywide, 2016. The historical average is based on data from 1985-2016.

## Projected Impacts of Climate Change

*Climate Ready Boston* included a scientific assessment of the projected impacts of climate change on Boston. Findings include:

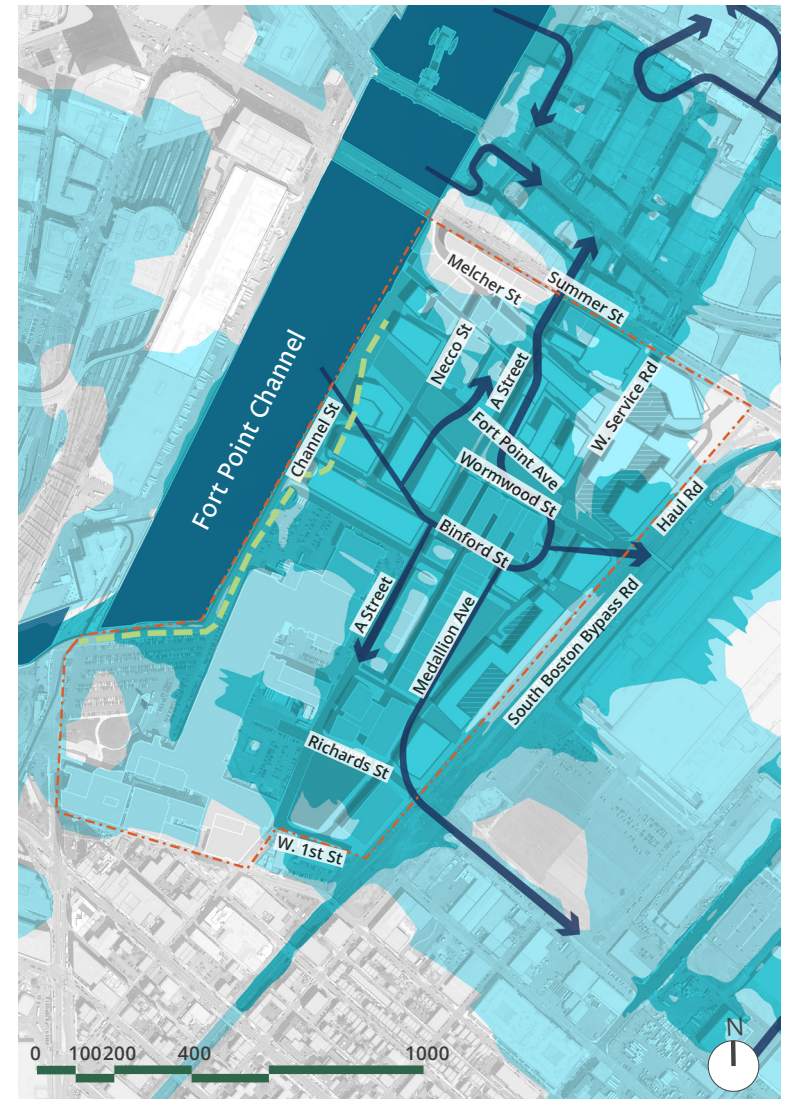
- Sea level rise: Water levels in Boston Harbor are likely to increase 40 inches by the 2070s (compared to 2000 water levels)
- Hot weather: up to 90 days above 90 degrees including up to 11 days above 100 by the 2070s (compared to only 11 days above 90 on average from 1971-2010)
- Rainstorms: a 14.5% increase in the amount of rain occurring during a 10-year, 24 hour design storm over the next fifty years (from 5.24 inches average from 1948-2010 to 6.0 inches by the 2070s)

## Fort Point Channel cross section showing current water levels



\*These elevations are based on the Boston City Base (BCB) projection system. In this location, BCB elevations can be converted to the NAVD88 datum by subtracting around 6.5 feet. (Source: Climate Ready South Boston, 2018)

## Future flood risk with 40 inches of sea level rise



Data sources: Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston, Climate Ready Boston, and BPDA

- Berm Alignment (FEMA Application)
- Flood Pathway
- High Tide in 2070 (without action)
- 1% Flood Extent in 2070
- 100 Acres Open Space Plan Boundary

## Enhancing Connectivity

### Context:

The open space system in the 100 Acres area is one link in broader open space networks, including the Harborwalk and the South Bay Harbor Trail. More locally, the 100 Acres open space system connects the Fort Point Waterfront to Fan Pier to the north, the South Boston residential neighborhood to the south, and the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center to the east.

### Opportunity:

The Fort Point Channel can act as a waterfront destination for residents arriving via the South Bay Harbor Trail from inland neighborhoods like the South End, Roxbury, and South Boston residential areas. From Fort Point, visitors can follow the Harborwalk north, linking to the northern edge of the South Boston Waterfront as well as destinations in Downtown Boston including other stretches of the Harborwalk and the Rose Kennedy Greenway.

Within the 100 Acres area, the new parks should be designed to function as a connected network. The system as a whole should provide a diversity of experiences and activities, where each new park compliments and connects to adjacent green spaces and pedestrian and bicycle networks.

Additional mobility strategies will support visitors arriving by other modes as well, including by driving or taking transit.

### COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

Adding more trees and green space was commonly shared as a need in an area that is heavily paved today.

### COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

In the in the first round of community feedback, the #1 barrier for not visiting more often is that it's "hard to get to."

# Guiding Principles for Design and Implementation

## Statement of Concept Plan Objectives

### **The guiding principles are rooted both in the needs identified through analysis and the feedback and insight shared throughout the planning process.**

A central aim of the Open Space Concept Plan is to be a physical manifestation of the goals and objectives of the community and city-wide stakeholders. The following guiding principles bring together community input and identified needs. They are intended to capture the objectives of the design decisions and planning recommendations included in this document.

The guiding principles should serve as a foundational starting point and as a consistent “community rubric” for the project design processes for each component of the 100 Acres open space network, as they are built out over time.

### **A Resilient and Performative Landscape**

Meet performance targets for climate resilience, including reducing flood risk from the Fort Point Channel, embedding stormwater storage solutions in visible (above ground) and behind-the-scenes (below ground) strategies, and providing relief from increased heat through additional tree cover and shade structures. Support long-term sustainability by creating a greener Fort Point neighborhood with a connected open space and active transportation network.

### **An Undeniably Fort Point Identity**

Create an open space system that embraces the unique elements of this specific part of Boston's neighborhoods. Support the amplification of watersheet activities on the Fort Point Channel, and draw in a water-based sense of place and play. Build upon the Fort Point neighborhood's history and current day identity as an arts community, weaving in spaces for artistic expression as well as programs that increase exhibition and economic opportunities for independent creatives from Fort Point and beyond.

### **Enable Inclusivity with a Full Day, Year-Round Experience**

Enable the Fort Point open space network to be used by residents from all neighborhoods of Boston, especially inland communities that don't have a waterfront within the boundaries of their neighborhoods, by providing a full-day park experience that's worth the trip. Provide a balance of special, destination-quality program moments that can draw visitors from different areas of Boston and from out-of-town, with everyday amenities, shade, and places to rest that don't involve financial checkpoints (i.e., purchases or fees). Create uses and locate programs next to each other to allow multi-generational park users to have complementary experiences.

### **A Welcoming Identity with a Clarity of Public Accessibility**

Select programs and design choices that communicate a clarity of public accessibility that allow visitors to easily and quickly intuit that the open space is public. Extend the public realm and remove a sense of privatization by providing community uses indoors that relate to the outdoor open space.

### **Support Diversity Through Both Design and Operations**

Pair design decisions with long-term thinking on how the space will be implemented and operated. Acknowledge the impact of how (and by whom) a space is maintained on how different users experience the public space. In operations decisions, set a proactive goal of attracting people of a diversity of race, cultural identity, age, income, and physical ability.



**COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT**

"We deserve a park where our neighborhood can be together, be alone, play, celebrate and grow."



# Open Space Concept Plan





# District Framework

## Planning Context

The Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan is built on the knowledge and ideas generated through past plans. The Fort Point Channel and neighborhood has been the subject of many previous planning initiatives, and this plan's starting point was to understand the key lessons learned from those projects, while incorporating emerging needs and new opportunities.

The planning context review included established vision and analysis for the city as a whole as well as plans that were being developed concurrently:

### Citywide Plans

- 2016: *Citywide Climate Ready Boston*
- 2017: *Imagine Boston 2030*
- 2017: *Go Boston 2030*

### South Boston and Fort Point Neighborhood

- 2002: *Fort Point Channel Watersheet Activation Plan*
- 2006-2007: *Fort Point 100 Acres Master Plan / Planned Development Area No. 69*
- 2009: *South Boston Waterfront District: Municipal Harbor Plan*
- 2012: *A-Street Park Design*
- 2015: *South Boston Waterfront Sustainable Transportation Plan*
- 2017: *South Bay Harbor Trail Design*
- 2018: *Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston*

### Concurrent Plans

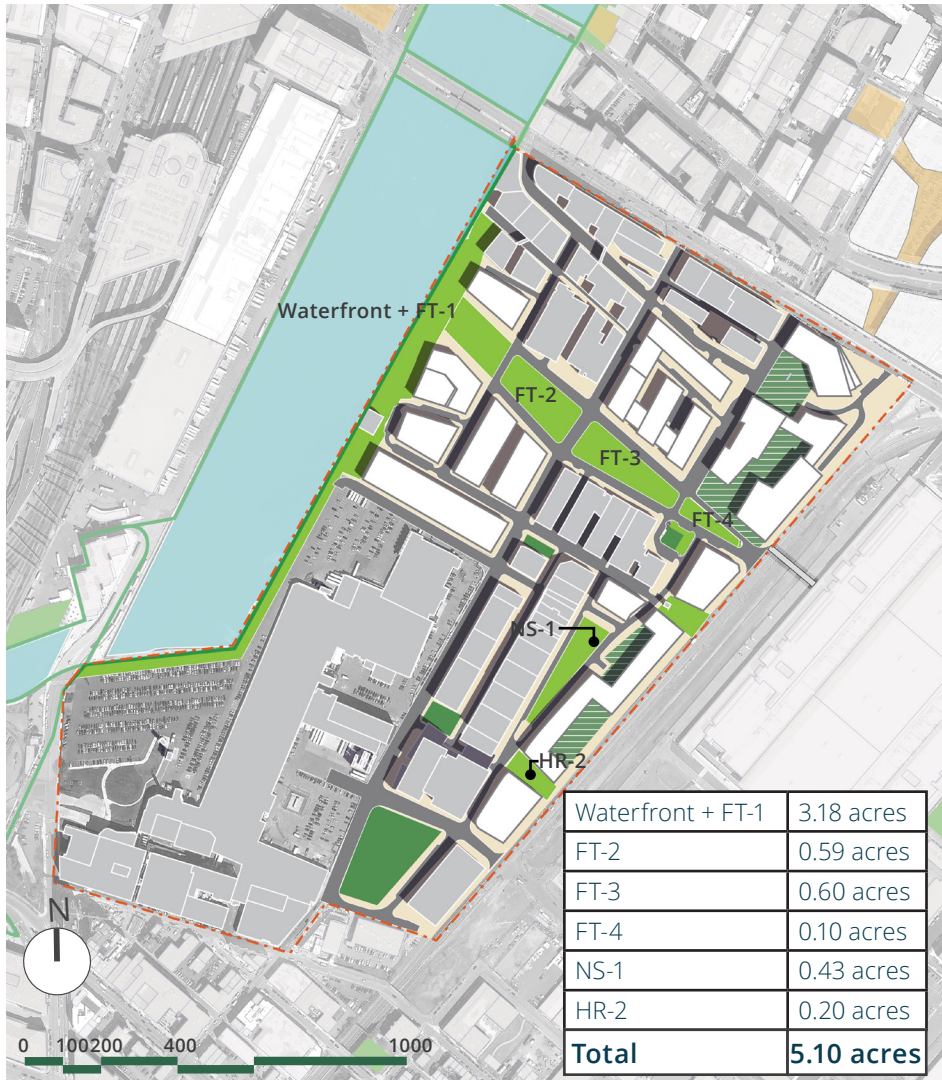
- Designs for 15 Necco and 5 Necco Street parcels via Article 80 development review
- Designs for 244 - 284 A Street parcels via Article 80 development review
- Berm design for FEMA grant application

Two primary documents provided the foundation framework for the Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan: the *Fort Point 100 Acres Master Plan* (2006) and *Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston* (2018).

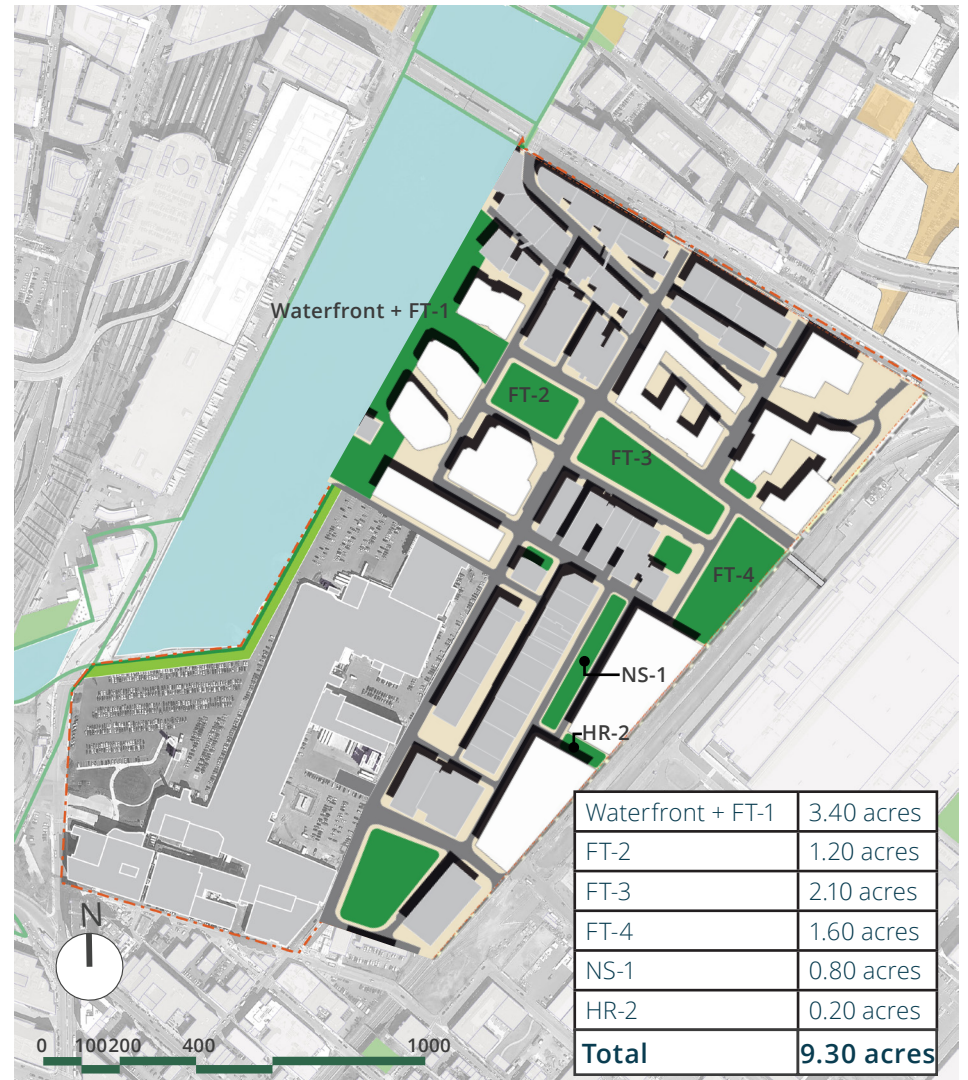
The Fort Point 100 Acres Master Plan established an overall block structure, road network, and massing hierarchy for the neighborhood. The plan included the identification of a network of open spaces, delineated as green polygons without defined design or program. To date, A Street Park is the only open space from the 2006 plan that has been implemented. This Open Space Concept Plan builds on this network, specifying park activities, programs, and design, as well as proposing to update the framework slightly to enhance open space usability and respond to the changing mobility and resilience context since 2006.

Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston identified strategies to mitigate current and future coastal flooding. It defined target elevations for waterfront open space and buildings, based on an analysis of flood pathways and projected water level conditions. This Open Space Concept Plan meets the technical targets established in that document and brings additional design ideas (rooted in a new community engagement effort) to how the elevated space is programmed and experienced. An overall goal is to leverage resilience investments to enhance waterfront and open space use.

**2006 Fort Point Master Plan Framework**



**2020 Proposed Master Plan Framework**



## Updating the 100 Acres Framework to Today's Context

The Fort Point district has a long history of transformation in Boston. Originally salt marsh and water, a process of landfill created the area known today as Fort Point in the mid to late 1800s. The district as it exists today is the result of the creative imagination and ingenuity of artists, who reclaimed what was originally established as an industrial waterfront by the Boston Wharf Company into a vibrant neighborhood of creative expression and community. The Fort Point district is still home to many beautiful brick structures and the iconic "Boston Wharf Co." neon sign. The area for the 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan overlaps with the Fort Point Channel Landmark District, and the "A" Street Protection Area.

Due to its history as industrial waterfront and the long-time presence of Gillette's headquarters and U.S. Postal Service uses, much of the district is currently used for surface parking. Acknowledging and anticipating continued growth in the city, the Fort Point 100 Acres Master Plan (2006) laid out a framework to guide the placement of future development blocks and firmly established the vision of a central open space spine.

The 2006 framework was updated as part of the 2020 plan process in order to clarify vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns, accommodate new trends in needs for development parcel sizes, and to increase both the total amount and sizes of individual open spaces so they could accommodate a greater range of park activities and be more usable. Most importantly, the proposed changes to the framework allow the plan to adapt to community needs, concerns, and desires illuminated during the plan process, such as the need for a larger contiguous open space for active sports and concerns around future vehicular circulation patterns.

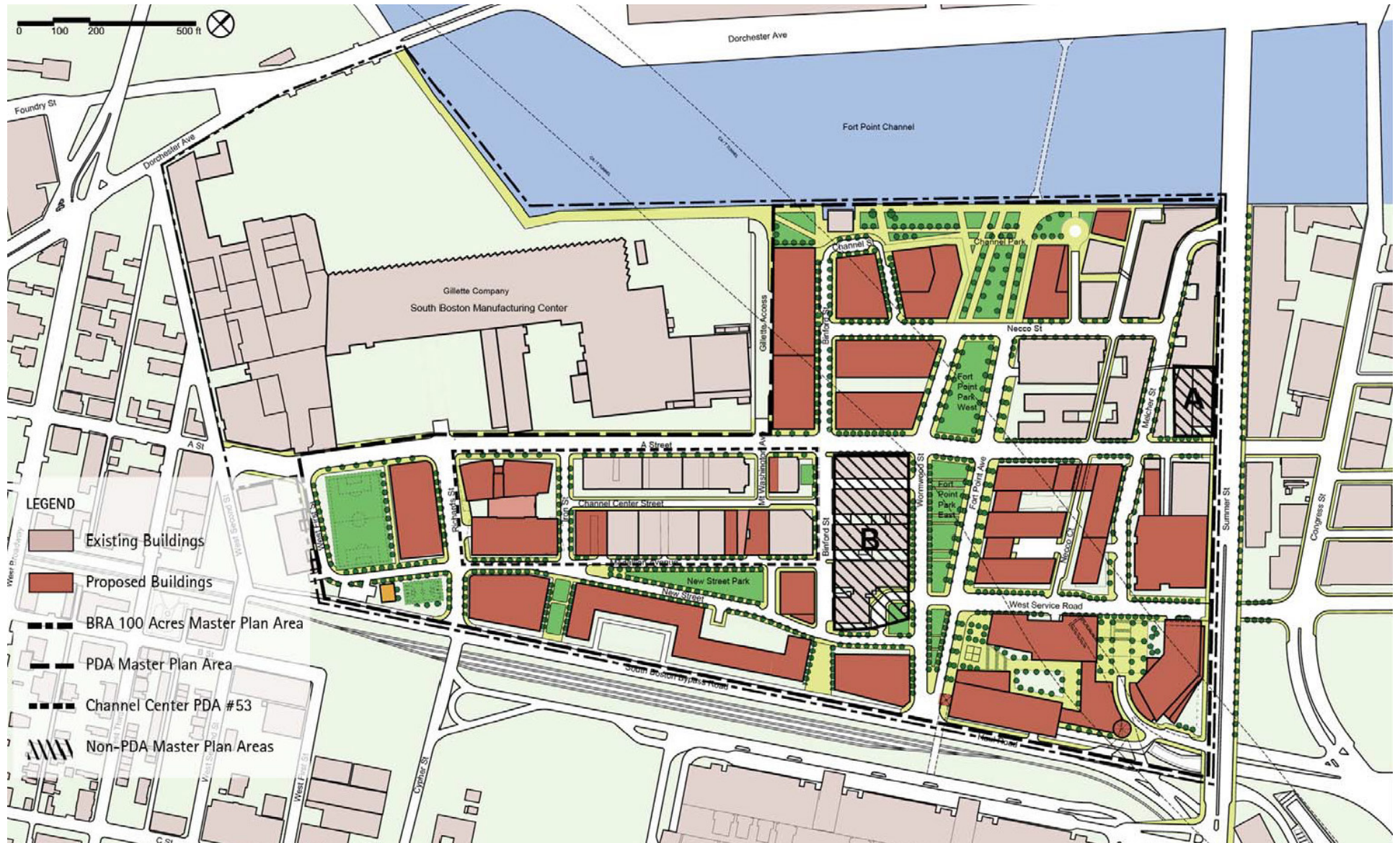
The recommended framework established in this plan should be understood as a proposed update to the 2006 district vision based on new analysis and community input. Implementation will require an amendment to Planned Development Area (PDA) No. 69 through a public process.

While portions of the plan closer to the Fort Point Channel are expected to be implemented in the near future, both development and open space blocks further east represent longer-term future potential. Depending on the implementation timing, additional review of proposed programs and design may be needed to respond to

future changes in the coming decades. Future planning for this neighborhood should seek to create continuity and a holistic open space network and to establish new design ideas through public engagement processes that invite fresh perspectives and insight.

The framework established in this plan should be understood as the latest update to the district vision based on new analysis and community input. While portions of the plan closer to the Fort Point Channel are expected to be implemented in the near future, both development and open space blocks further east represent longer-term future potential. Future open space plan updates for this neighborhood should seek to create continuity and a holistic open space network, and to establish new design ideas through a public engagement process that invites fresh perspectives and insight.

2006 Fort Point Master Plan Framework



Source: Fort Point 100 Acres Master Plan, 2006

# Open Space Concept Plan

## Plan Overview

The Open Space Concept Plan envisions a network of public spaces for the Fort Point 100 Acres neighborhood that is welcoming and engaging for a broad range of users, from residents in the surrounding neighborhood, to residents of inland Boston neighborhoods such as Roxbury, Dorchester, Chinatown, to local workers and tourists.

The character and identity of these public spaces, as well as the specific outdoor programs included, were drawn directly from the concepts developed with a diverse range of participants in the public engagement process.

Across input gathered from the community, a theme emerged around the desire to have the future public spaces embody the idea of an “urban wilderness” - a unique experience of nature in the city not readily found in other parts of Boston’s waterfront and the surrounding areas. A robust and biodiverse urban tree canopy, stormwater and pollinator gardens, floating wetlands, nature play experiences, and educational signage about natural systems shape this “urban wilderness” identity. The concept plan adds to the urban wilderness identity a range of activities and programming to draw a diversity of ages and interests--drawing upon the idea of the park system as an outdoor community living room with flexible uses. Elements of art throughout the parks build on Fort Point’s artistic identity to celebrate all types of creative expression, including visual arts, performance arts, and music.

Key elements of the parks include:

**A waterfront amphitheater**, which utilizes the sloping topography of the future protective berm to create terraced seating with views of the Fort Point Channel. This turf amphitheater can be used for everyday relaxing at the water’s edge or gathering for waterfront performances and events.

**An elevated waterfront plaza**, elevated to the top-of-berm height to afford views to the water from deeper into the site. The Plaza will include an interactive water feature, with an interpretive identity exploring the history of the waterfront and/or tidal fluctuations and climate change. The water feature surface should be designed flexibly to accommodate other cooler-weather programs, such as seasonal market tents or ice skating. A grove of trees with hammocks, a shade structure, and a variety of seating options invite people to linger and enjoy the waterfront plaza through the day and throughout the year. The plaza includes a location for a rotating art

installation that serves as a vertical beacon within the parks and engages Boston artists.

**Two blocks of inland community park**, featuring a connected yet complimentary experience. The western zone, between Necco Street and A Street, will be more active with grills, event lawn, temporary market, and nature-based play area. The eastern zone, east of A Street, will feature a quieter setting for relaxation and enjoying views of art and stormwater and pollinator gardens.

**A continuous, shaded promenade** meanders through the park system, providing a connective thread linking together the diverse park experiences, and connecting the inland portions of the public space network seamlessly to the waterfront plaza and Harborwalk.

**An active park**, aimed to enhance the active recreational opportunities and promote wellness for Boston residents, includes a basketball court, multi-use play surfaces and courts, a fitness grove, and a dog park.

**Community pocket parks** throughout the neighborhood provide smaller-scale neighborhood park amenities and shaded, relaxing spaces for everyday use.

In addition to these unique experiences, elements of continuity unify the spaces through the District, including:

- A biodiverse, climate-adaptive, and salt-tolerant tree canopy and planting palette
- A network of opportunities for artistic and creative expression, engaging the local arts community, in the form of visual arts, performance arts, and music
- A system of pathways that are easy to navigate, making movement between park spaces seamless
- Site furnishings that are simple, comfortable, beautiful, and accommodate various ways of occupying spaces through the district, from individual to group configurations
- Energy-efficient lighting that makes the parks feel safe and comfortable into the evening and through the seasons



This illustrative visualization includes the latest building footprints for development projects that are currently under review

Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space

FORT POINT CHANNEL

SOUTH BAY HARBOR TRAIL

HARBORWALK

FORT POINT CHANNEL PARK

G5

G4

15 Necco

5 Necco

NECCO ST

NECCO STREET PARK

G6

A STREET

WORMWOOD STREET PARK

A STREET

A STREET PARK

W. 1ST STREET

RICHARDS ST

MEDALLION AVE

MEDALLION STREET PARK

BINFORD ST

WORMWOOD ST

FORT POINT AVE

WEST SERVICE RD

ACTIVE PARK

HAUL RD



0 50 100 200 500





## Program Summary

### Waterfront Activation

- Floating wetlands
- Waterfront overlook / elevated places to enjoy Channel views
- Infrastructure to support floating stage or visiting activity barges
- Floating art
- Creative swings along the Harborwalk

### Resilience and Ecology

- Elevated berm to increase flood resilience
- Stormwater gardens and stormwater storage
- Pollinator and butterfly gardens
- Trees (salt tolerant, native/adaptive, and biodiverse species)
- Shade structures
- Environmental education opportunities (ex. interpretive signage, spaces that can function as outdoor classrooms)

### Connectivity

- Park promenade connecting the park network to the Fort Point Channel
- Parking spaces for park visitors
- South Bay Harbor Trail - clear, welcoming gateway into the park network and clear route through the district
- Harborwalk - including upland alternative to provide elevated connection during flooding

### Community Recreation and Programming

- Interactive fountain designed for children play
- Outdoor family lounge area with seating and lawn games
- Picnic tables and grills
- Benches and seating, including a Hammock Grove
- Shade structures to provide relief from heat
- Active recreation (including at least one full-court basketball court)
- Interesting play areas
- Affordable food options
- Complimentary indoor public facilities that support enhanced enjoyment and use of the parks
- Community gardens

### Arts and Events

- Waterfront amphitheater or terraces
- Small to medium-sized lawn supporting flexible, everyday use and events
- Market space
- Multiple spaces for performances of different scales with supporting infrastructure
- Public art throughout the district, including an “Art Promenade” and landmark public art location in the elevated plaza
- Infrastructure support for art installation and events, including electrical hook-ups for light and sound equipment and wifi connectivity
- Infrastructure support for art installation and events, including electrical outlets for light and sound equipment and wifi connectivity

# Fort Point Channel Park

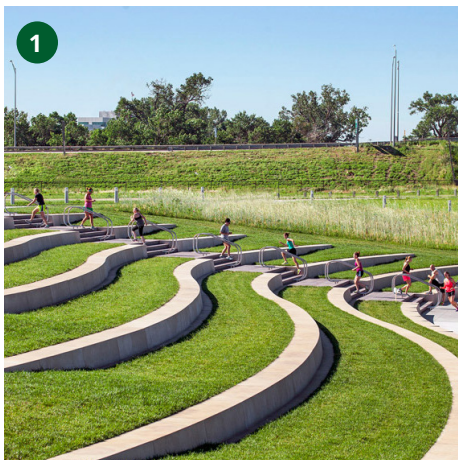
Fort Point Channel Park is where the neighborhood meets the Channel. The design celebrates water views and provides a diversity of spaces to enjoy the water, play, and experience arts and events. Along the Channel, waterside infrastructure supports waterside activities like floating wetlands and visiting barges featuring art or performances. Fort Point Channel Park will be the main gateway to the site for visitors arriving from the South Bay Harbor Trail or the Harborwalk. Along the Harborwalk, waterfront swings provide places to linger and enjoy the views.

Stepping up, an berm reduces the risk of inland flooding from coastal storms, a critical resilience feature given the low-lying topography today. Taking advantage of the change in topography, an amphitheater connects the Harborwalk to the elevated plaza, providing views of the Channel and a stage-area along the Harborwalk. The elevated plaza includes an interactive water feature with a shade structure, hammock grove area under the shade of trees, and additional seating. The top of the berm sits at elevation 21.5 feet (BCB). The eastern edge of Fort Point Channel Park slopes down to Necco Street. A gradual, accessible pathway connects the elevated plaza to both the Harborwalk along the Channel as well down to Necco Street and the other parks.

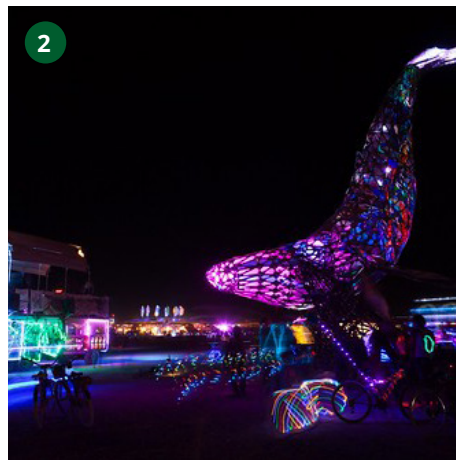
- 1 Waterfront Amphitheater
- 2 Landmark Art/Elevated Plaza
- 3 Hammock Grove
- 4 Interactive Water Fountain
- 5 Shading Structure
- 6 Floating Stage (Temporary)
- 7 Floating Wetland (Seasonal)
- 8 Waterfront Plaza / Stage
- 9 Swings along Harborwalk
- 10 Promenade in Urban Forest
- 11 Shared Street
- 12 Existing Kayak Launch

## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

Floating wetlands (also described as “a floating home for fish”) were a crowd favorite among waterfront stakeholders and Roxbury families in two virtual engagement events.



Tom Hanafan Park, Council Bluffs, IA



The Space Whale, Reno, NV



Smale Riverfront Park, Cincinnati, OH



Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago, IL



FORT POINT CHANNEL

HARBORWALK

LINE OF PROTECTION

G4\*

15 Necco\*

5 Necco

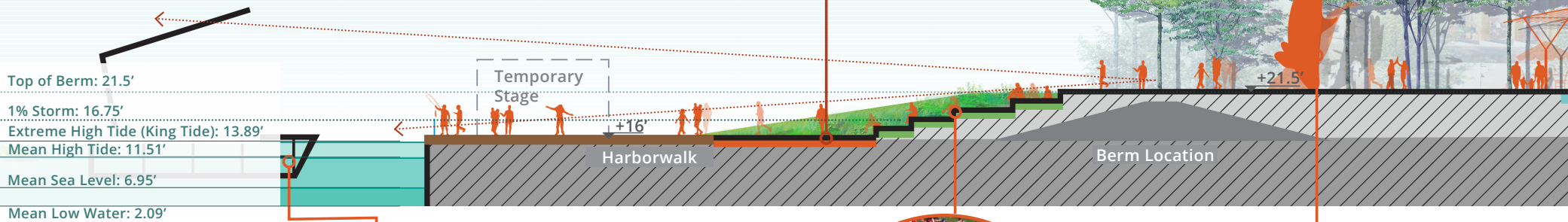
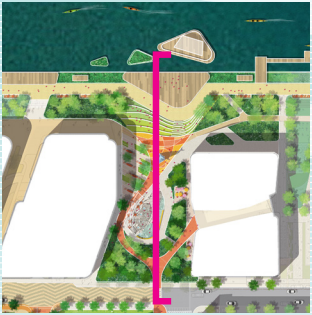
### RESILIENCE HIGHLIGHT

The elevated berm protects the neighborhood from future flooding while also providing a platform for viewing Fort Point Channel from a unique perspective.

- Future Development Parcel
- Existing Development



\*Development projects currently under review



**Water's Edge**

A waterfront amphitheater steps down from the top of the berm, providing water views and a gathering space that can accommodate a temporary stage.



**Barge Dock**  
 A barge dock along the channel's edge would allow for floating structures, such as a floating stage or floating wetlands to activate the watersheet.  
 Floating Stage Bellagio Fountains Las Vegas (Left) and Chicago Riverwalk Floating Wetland (Right)



**Waterfront Amphitheater**  
 The design creates a gradual green slope with terraced seating facing the Channel. This amphitheater could provide seating for events.

Tom Hanafan Park Council Bluffs, IA

**Landmark Art**  
 A public art piece on the elevated plaza can create a focal point for people coming from both the inland park and waterfront side.

### Elevated Plaza

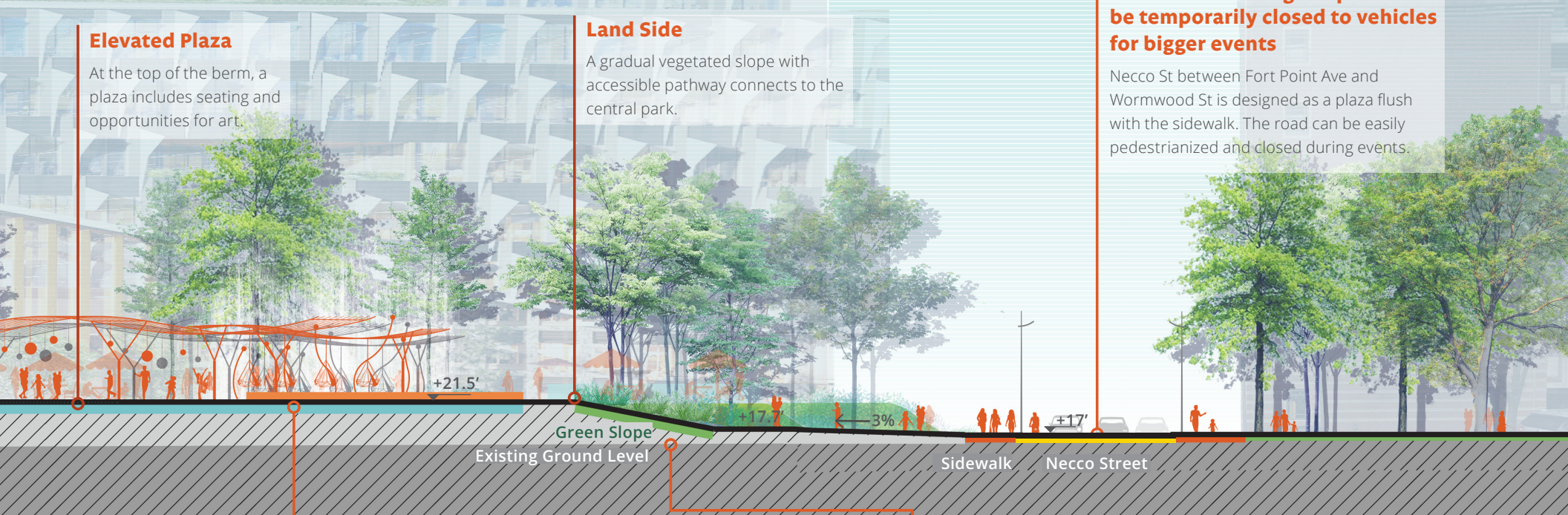
At the top of the berm, a plaza includes seating and opportunities for art.

### Land Side

A gradual vegetated slope with accessible pathway connects to the central park.

### Necco Street along the park can be temporarily closed to vehicles for bigger events

Necco St between Fort Point Ave and Wormwood St is designed as a plaza flush with the sidewalk. The road can be easily pedestrianized and closed during events.



### Interactive Water Fountain and Shade Structure

Active space for visitors of all ages providing a place to play and cool off on hot days.

Dilworth Park, Philadelphia, PA

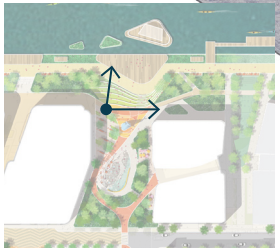


### Promenade in Urban Forest

Pockets of pollinator gardens are linked by a nature path. The path ramps up on a meadow slope and extends to the elevated plaza, bringing the energy of an urban wilderness to the waterfront.

Cantigny Park, Wheaton, IL

\* Elevations based on Boston City Base (BCB)



**Waterfront Amphitheater**

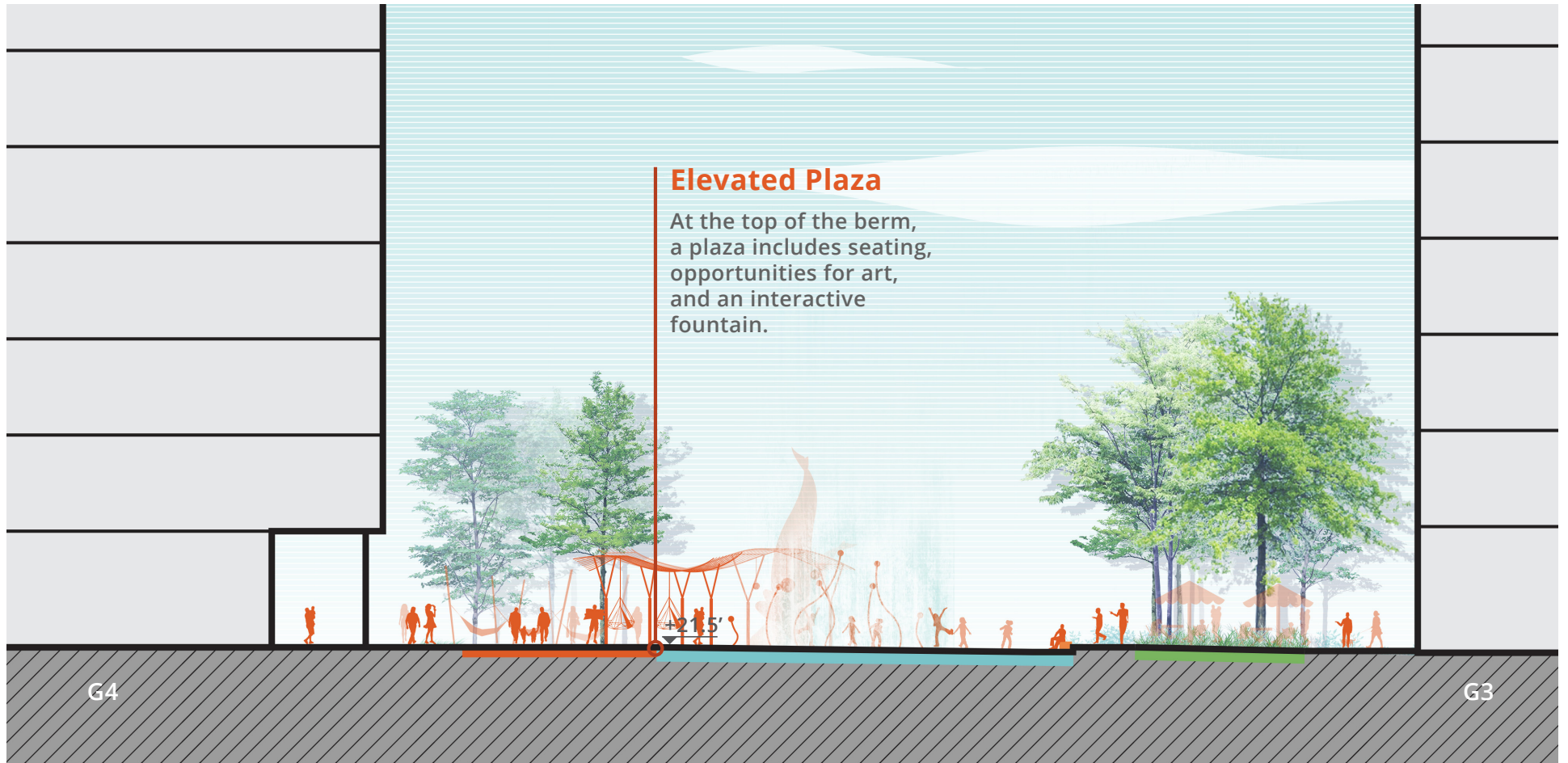
Standing at the top of the amphitheater looking north along the Channel



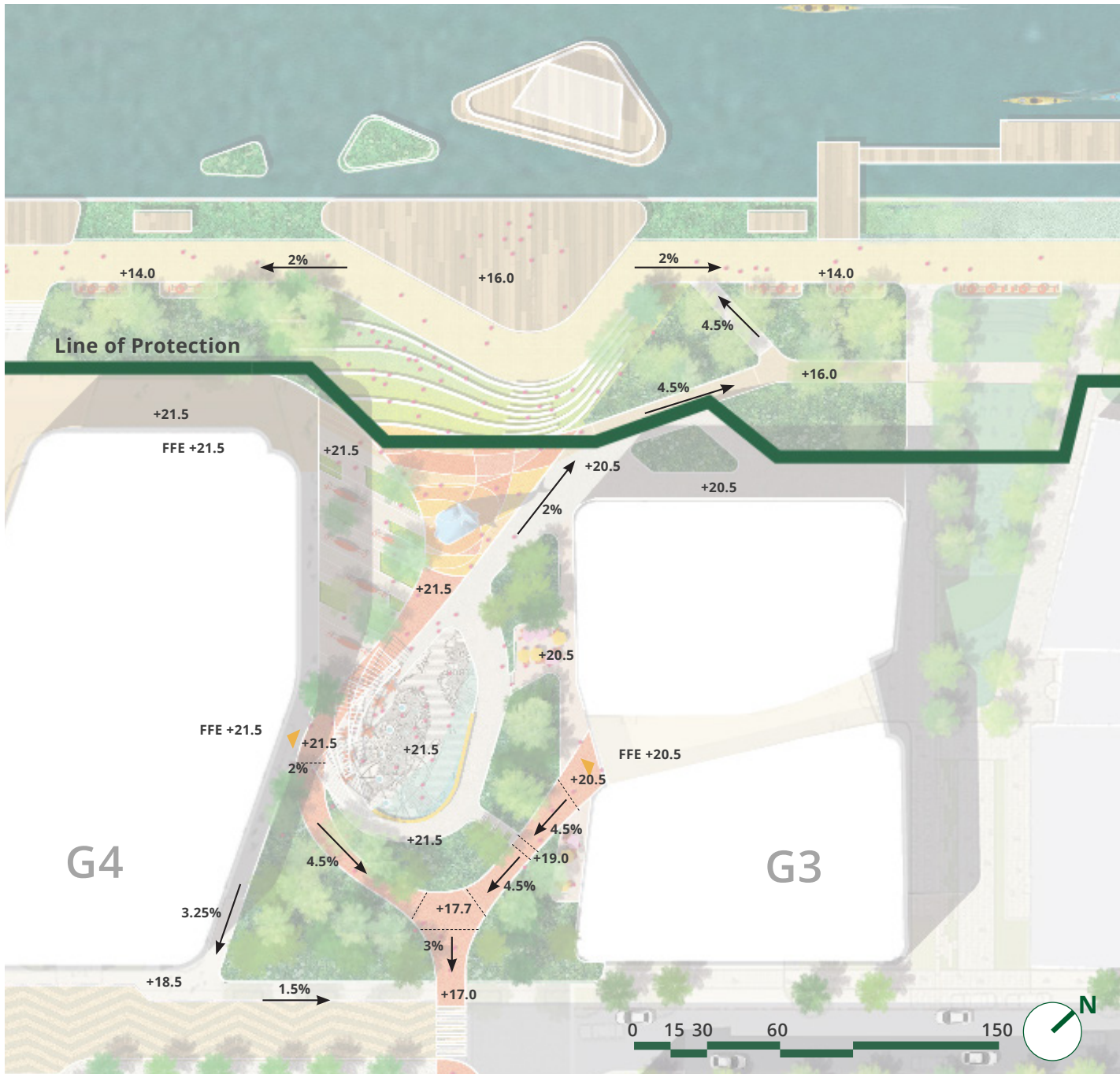
**Waterfront Plaza**

Walking beside the interactive fountain, looking towards the public art piece and the Channel beyond.









### Grading

- Gentle sloped path connects the two building entrances
- Elevated plaza sits at the same height as the berm
- Amphitheater features gentle green steps with an ADA accessible path on one side
- An alternative path of the Harborwalk connects across at elevation 21.5 (BCB) connecting to the north side of the site then gradually ramping down to the Harborwalk

Site Elevation Reference System: BCB  
 Related Beal G4 related elevation refer to 20201007  
 Related Beal Transportation Presentation

# Necco Street Park

Stretching from Necco Street to A Street, Necco Street Park includes a mix of activities for all ages. An open, gently sloped lawn provides a flexible space for gathering, play, and events. The lawn is oriented such that a temporary stage can be located near Necco Street. This stretch of Necco Street is tabled and could be closed to vehicles during events, creating a continuous pedestrian space with the Fort Point Channel Park. When not used in an event, the lawn should encourage informal recreation, relaxation, and other enjoyment. Lawn games, for instance, would encourage park visitors to hang out and relax.

Framing the lawn to the north is an “urban forest” grove with a children’s nature-play area and grills with picnic tables nestled beneath. Together, these uses support all-day enjoyment of the Fort Point parks by providing a range of activities for families. On the southern edge of Necco Street Park is a linear plaza—an extension of the pedestrian pathway along Wormwood Street—designed to host temporary markets or food trucks. A goal of the temporary market space is to create opportunity for a diverse range of business owners in Boston, which will have the additional benefit of enhancing visitor experience for a broader audience by diversifying retail options.

- 1 Flexible Lawn
- 2 Temporary Stage Location
- 3 Temporary Market Place
- 4 Grills and Picnic Tables
- 5 Nature-based Play Area
- 6 Stormwater Garden
- 7 Tabled Necco Street  
(Potential to be closed for events)
- 8 Pollinator Garden
- 9 Entry Plaza
- 10 Park Promenade
- 11 Separated Cycle Path



Smale Park, Cincinnati, OH



The Lawn on D, Boston, MA



Klyde Warren Park, Dallas, TX

## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

“I want Fort Point to be a welcoming space that connects all Bostonians to the channel for recreation--a third space to serve as a non-commercial touch point for relaxing, picnicking, etc. when visiting the area for the day.”

G4\*



NECCO ST

GARAGE ACCESS WAY (FUTURE FORT POINT AVE)



WORMWOOD ST EXTENSION / LINEAR PLAZA

G6\*

A St.

### RESILIENCE HIGHLIGHT

The "Urban Wilderness" of Fort Point Channel Park provides opportunities to escape the urban heat island that exists in the Fort Point neighborhood today.

-  Future Development Parcel
-  Existing Development



\*Development projects currently under review



**Picnic Grove:** Enjoying a gathering with family and friends, while looking towards the nature-based play area, open lawn, and market.



## Grading

- Raise path to 19 to create better views, landform for the nature play and picnic zone

Site Elevation Reference System: Boston City Base (BCB)

Shared Street related elevation refer to 20200917 Related Beal Transportation Presentation

# Wormwood Street Park

Wormwood Street Park, connecting seamlessly in design and materials to Necco Street Park, provides spaces for flexible everyday use to complement the many programmed spaces closer to the waterfront. The eastern edge of this park along A Street includes a plaza space shaded by a grove of trees, which can be the future, permanent home location of the Fort Point outdoor market.

The southern side of this park includes a generous, flexible lawn for passive use and informal gathering. North of the lawn, a curving pedestrian promenade connects to the promenade in Necco Street Park. This stretch of the promenade is lined with small platforms for rotating local art installations to create an “art walk.” As in Necco Street Park, an urban forest canopy shades the area north of the promenade, and in this zone includes pollinator and stormwater gardens. The lawn space slopes down towards the art walk, directing stormwater flow toward the stormwater gardens. Seating throughout the park provides places to rest and enjoy the space. Across Wormwood Street, the park connects to an expanded plaza that surrounds the historic smoke stack featuring additional seating, trees, and another location for a rotating public art installation.

- 1 Shaded Market Plaza
- 2 Artwalk Promenade
- 3 Public Art Location
- 4 Stormwater Garden
- 5 Pollinator Garden
- 6 Open Lawn
- 7 Separated Bike Path
- 8 Entry Plaza
- 9 Expanded Plaza and Sidewalk



Food Truck Plaza, Denver, CO



Corktown Common, Toronto, ON



Fisher Hill Reservoir Park, Boston, MA

## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

More than 75% of open house and survey respondents supported the pedestrian promenade connecting from the parks to the channel, waterfront overlook, and pollinator and stormwater gardens.



Future Development

**RESILIENCE HIGHLIGHT**  
With its emphasis on stormwater, Wormwood Street Park is an opportunity to educate the public about the park's surface and subsurface water quality features with an environmental interpretive signage program.

Future Development Parcel  
Existing Development

0 15 30 60 150 55





## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

"I want Fort Point's park to be a place that creates awe with natural landscapes... a place where people can say 'It's amazing that this is in the heart of the city.'"





## Grading

- The promenade is sloping down in the middle to benefit the stormwater garden
- The lawn is generally flat and slopes down towards east when it meets the promenade

Site Elevation Reference System: BCB

Street elevation is based on existing Boston GIS data

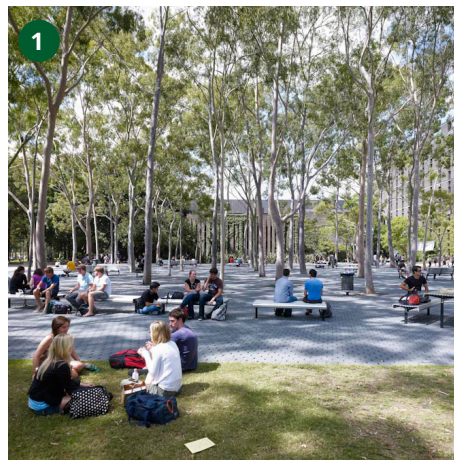
# Active Park

The eastern-most park in the Fort Point 100 Acres park network is centered on active recreation, featuring a variety of spaces to play and exercise. This park includes a range of courts including a full basketball court, flexible play surfaces, multi-use courts, and movable recreation uses such as table tennis. Colorful court surfaces take inspiration from the neighborhood's creative vibe. A shaded exercise plaza acts as the park gateway and offers a space to enjoy tai chi, a zumba class, or other fitness activities. A dog park is nestled in the southern corner of the park. Along the eastern end of the park, additional planting and an art-wall buffer the park from the Haul Road. Where possible, the Active Park should include subsurface stormwater retention and water quality treatment in the perimeter planting areas. In the future, a sculptural bridge over the Haul Road could connect the Fort Point 100 Acres parks to the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.

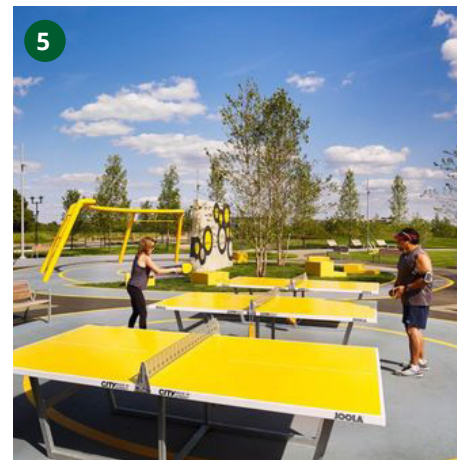
- 1 Shaded Fitness Plaza
- 2 Skate Park
- 3 Multiuse Sports Courts
- 4 Dog Park
- 5 Table Tennis, Corn Hole, Bocce
- 6 Stormwater Garden



Paris, France



Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia



Navy Yard, Philadelphia, PA



Domino Park, Brooklyn, NY

Future Development

BINFORD ST



WORMWOOD ST

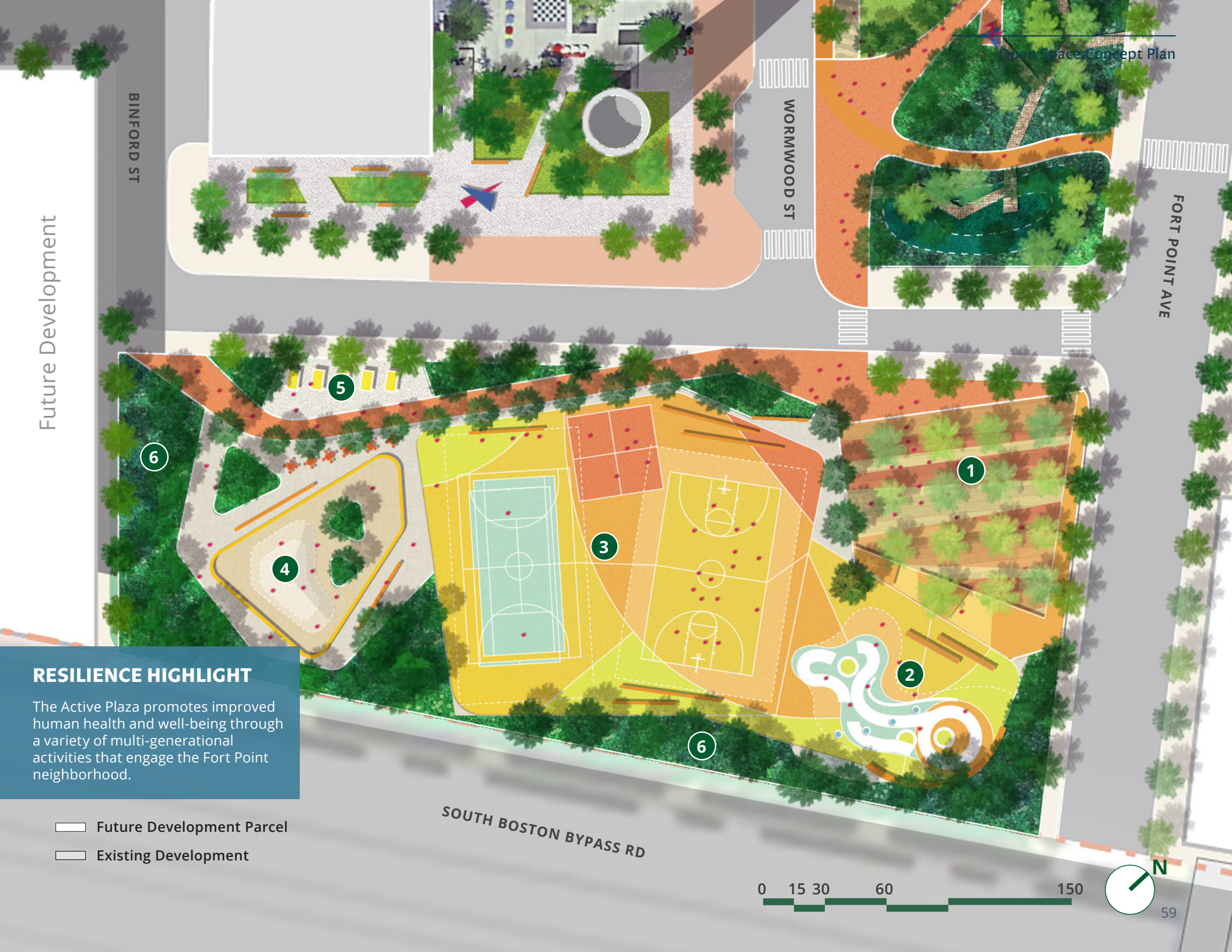
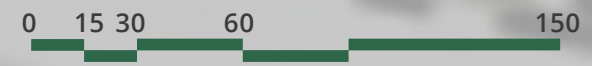
FORT POINT AVE

SOUTH BOSTON BYPASS RD

### RESILIENCE HIGHLIGHT

The Active Plaza promotes improved human health and well-being through a variety of multi-generational activities that engage the Fort Point neighborhood.

-  Future Development Parcel
-  Existing Development



# Medallion Street Park

This neighborhood-oriented green space provides a quiet setting for gardening and enjoying a peaceful moment sitting near stormwater gardens, plantings, or art. Trees shade seating areas outside of the community garden spaces. The community garden plots are located to receive ample sunshine for growth, based on a full-build shadow analysis of the surrounding blocks. Platforms for rotating art installations are distributed throughout the neighborhood park along a central pathway. An additional pocket park located between two new development parcels to the east provides a space for fitness stations or other small-scaled neighborhood amenities identified at the time of implementation.

- 1 Community Garden Plots
- 2 Shaded Plaza with Seating
- 3 Art Space
- 4 Small Lawn with Seating
- 5 Stormwater Garden
- 6 Walking Path
- 7 Plaza with Fitness Stations



Bay Meadows, San Mateo, CA



Besthoff Sculpture Garden, New Orleans, LA



Klyde Warren Park, Dallas, TX



Bryan Park, Bloomington, IN



Future Development

### RESILIENCE HIGHLIGHT

Through its productive landscape program, Medallion Street Park can provide education, health and wellness benefits that directly engage the Fort Point community.

- Future Development Parcel
- Existing Development

0 15 30 60 150





# Site Features





# Activity & Program Zones

**Fort Point Channel Park** supports watershed activation and provides places to enjoy views of the Channel and waterfront performances. Stepping up, the elevated plaza takes advantage of the higher elevation with a range of activities for all ages including places for sitting, socializing, and playing.

**Necco Street Park** supports events, play, and social gatherings. Program in this area includes grills, picnic tables, a nature-based play area, and a lawn that encourages play and lingering. Between the medium-scale lawn and Wormwood Street extension that can act as a linear plaza, this zone can support temporary markets, events, and festivals.

**Wormwood Street Park** has a quieter character, featuring beautiful stormwater gardens, rotating art along an “Art Walk Promenade,” and another medium-sized lawn for relaxation. The northern end of this zone is designed to offer a permanent market space.

**The Active Park** anchors the southern end of the park network and features a mix of spaces for sports and play.

**Medallion Street Park** is a neighborhood-oriented green space with a mix of community gardens, art, small-scale stormwater gardens, and places to sit.



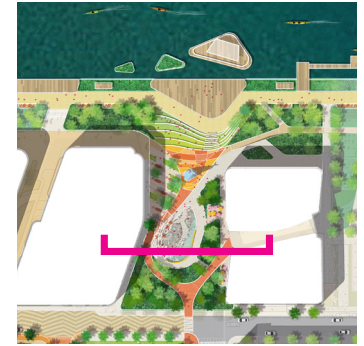
## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

“Right now, it feels as if the waterfront is designated for the uber rich of the city. There is really not much offered here as an affordable activity. It is surrounded by luxury buildings... Open spaces and events open to the public will make this area feel more approachable to the regular city dweller.”



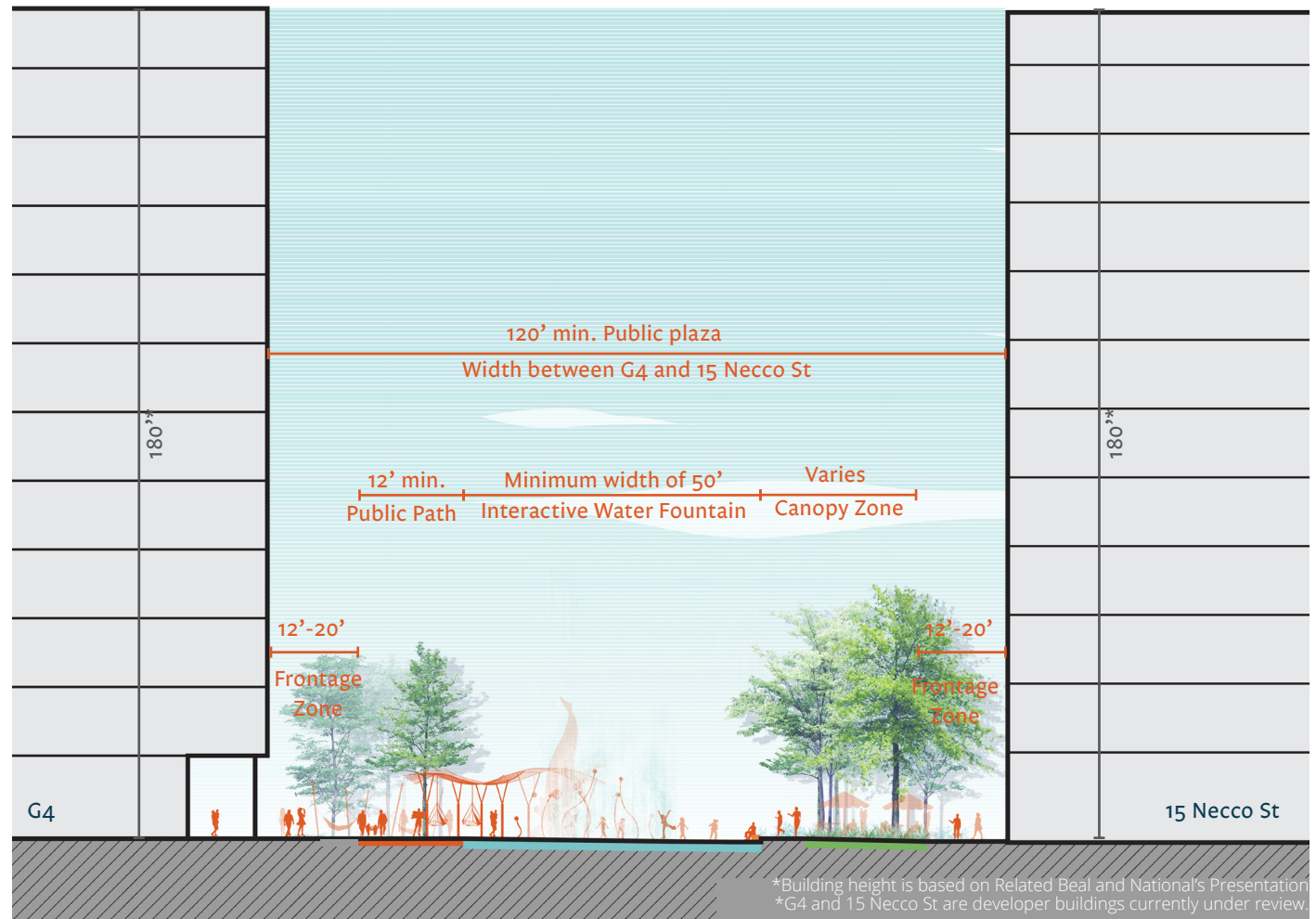


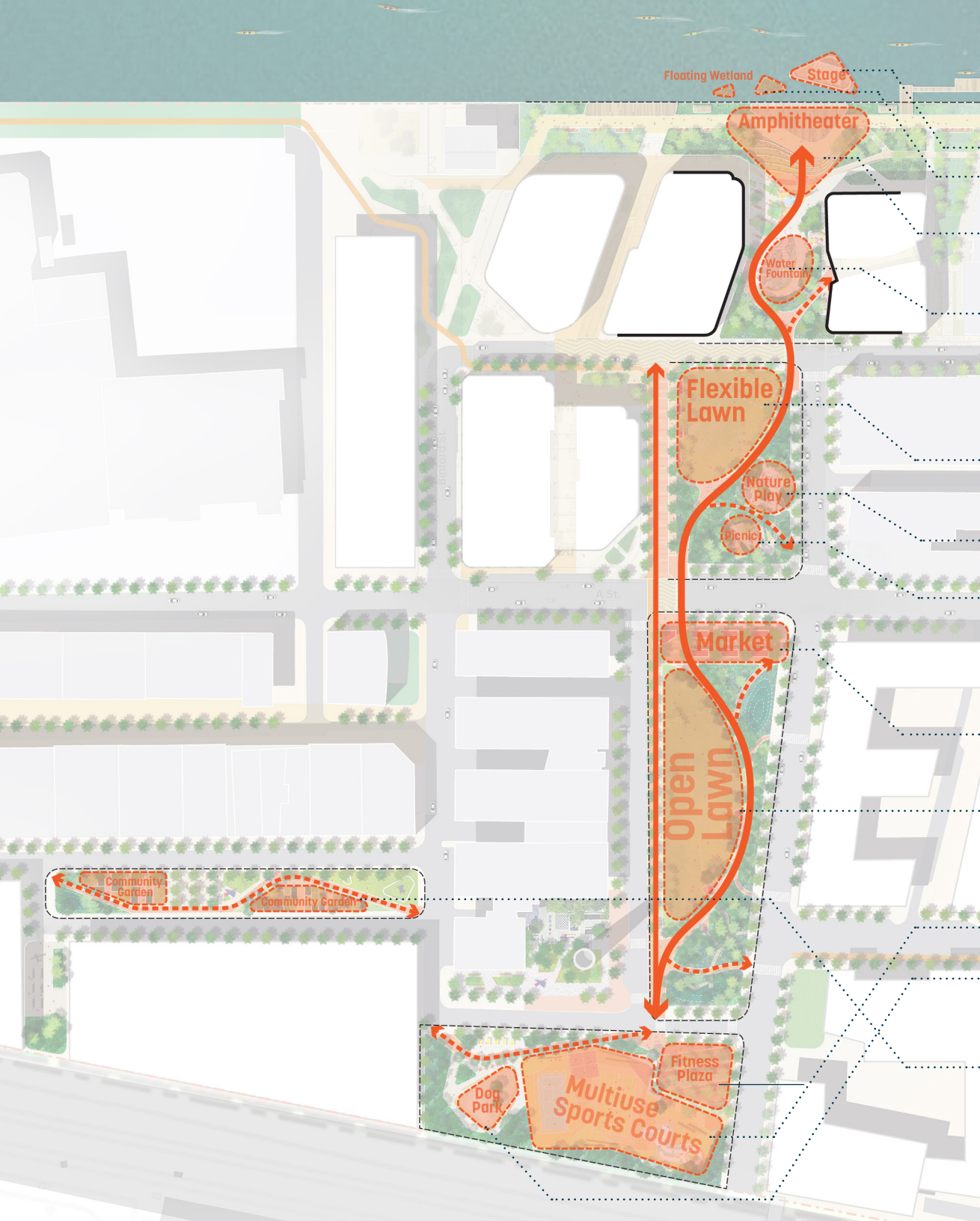
# Site Features Sizing Guidelines



## Guidelines for the elevated plaza between G4 and 15 Necco St:

- Minimum width between G4 and 15 Necco St should be 120 ft to establish a comfortable building height to plaza width ratio
- Public path should be at least 12 ft wide
- Interactive water fountain and canopy structure as the featured programs on the elevated plaza, should be at least 50' wide
- A 12'-20' wide frontage zone along each building can be used for proprietary seating, but the remaining space between G4 and 15 Necco St should be public, welcoming, and designed as a whole.





**Fort Point Channel Park**

- **Temporary floating stage:** 50'x75' or larger
- **Seasonal floating wetland:** two or more floating wetlands; each 12'x32' or larger
- **Amphitheater and associated performance space:** an informal civic gathering space that fits approximately 1,000 people comfortably, 0.3 - 0.5 acres
- **Interactive water fountain:** 50'x80' or larger, shape can be adjusted, but it should serve as the public focal point on the elevated plaza

**Necco Street Park**

- **Flexible lawn:** a public event lawn that accomodates 1,000 people comfortably, at least 0.4 acres (15 sqft/person + performance space)
- **Nature play:** 0.1 acres or larger, with naturalistic landscape in and around the playground
- **Grills and Picnic Tables:** should include at least 9 tables and 3 grills in 3 groups under canopy structures

**Wormwood Street Park**

- **Market space:** paved space of at least 150'x50', designed to accomodate 20-25 vendor tents and a place for small performances
- **Open lawn:** 0.7 acres for recreational activities

**The Active Park**

- **Multiuse sports courts and shaded fitness plaza:** Approximately 1 acre to accomodate multiple sports
- **Dog park:** 0.1 acres for community dog run

**Medallion Street Park**

- **Community garden:** to be sized to meet community needs, with no less than 20 garden plots

# Events and Public Art



## Events Spaces

The Open Space Concept Plan is designed with a range of spaces that accommodate events of varying sizes. The main event spaces are the waterfront amphitheater and the medium-scale event lawn. Smaller-scale performances and music could occur in the elevated plaza, waterfront amphitheater, or event lawn.

Within Necco Street Park, the Wormwood Street Extension is designed as a linear plaza, creating a near-term home for a market featuring food and craft vendors. When Wormwood Street Park is constructed, the market can move to a permanent home along A Street.

Supporting infrastructure for events that should be provided includes electricity, proximate unloading space for performance/event set-up, and parking for event vehicles. Lawns in the planned event areas should be comprised of reinforced turf to stand up to intensive use.



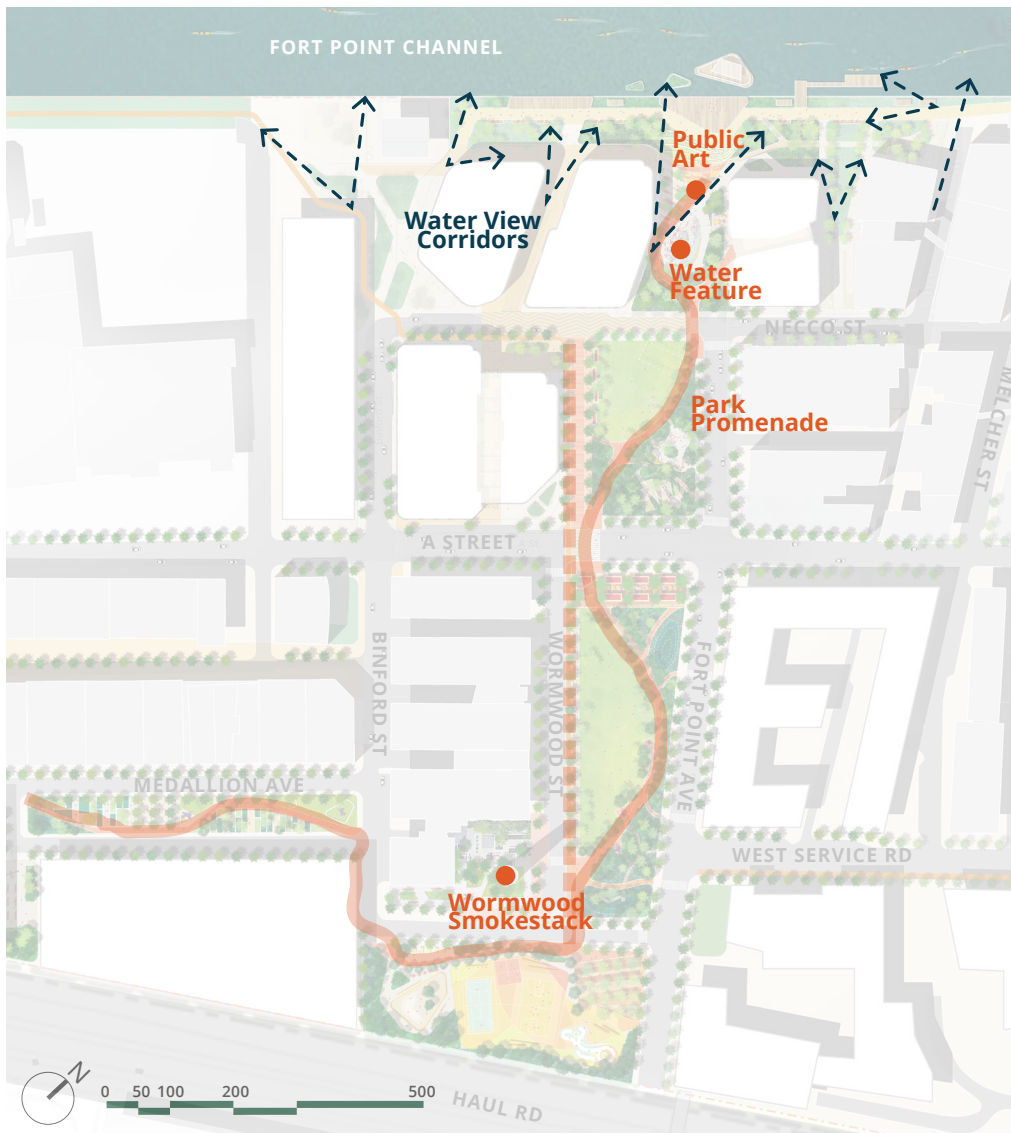
## Public Art Locations

Building upon the Fort Point neighborhood’s creative, arts-based identity, the open space concept plan integrates spaces for public art, performing arts, and music. Rotating artwork is encouraged, providing new art to draw park visitors back again and again. The plan also identifies opportunities for storage space, creating art, and supporting infrastructure (oversized doorways and access to electricity).

### Access to Electricity

Provide ample access to electrical outlets throughout the parks to support arts, events, and park enjoyment. Locations for electricity include four main categories: locations where temporary stages could be located, hook-ups for market vendors, seating areas for enjoyment of park guests, and public art locations. These outlets support event equipment and arts installations that require power. Outlets near seating areas will allow park visitors to plug in while working or socializing, supporting the extension of park visits.

# View Corridors and Orienting Features



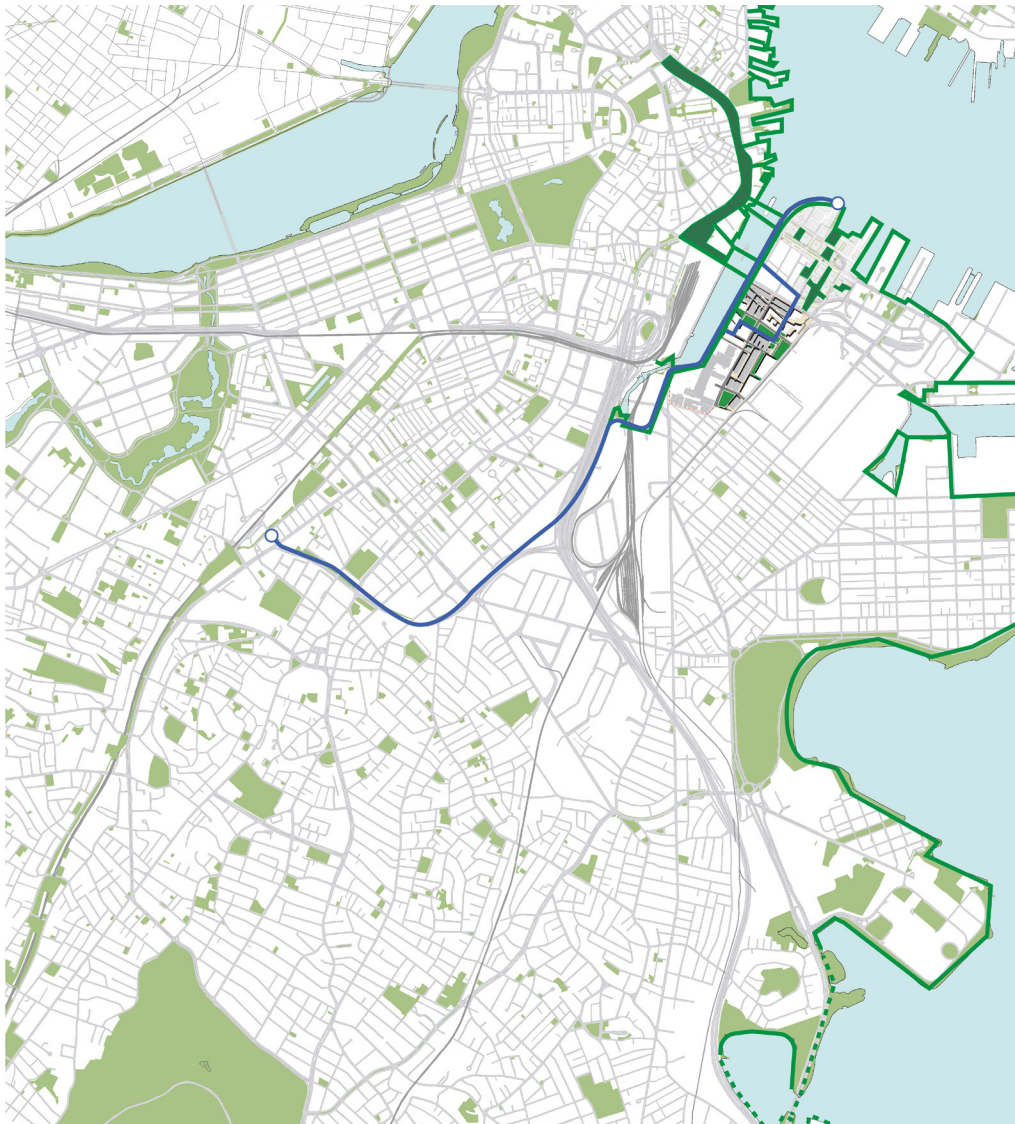
The Open Space Concept Plan focuses on maximizing views of the Channel. The elevated plaza is designed to be as long as possible to extend water views further into the site, while still allowing for an accessible, gentle slope back down to Necco Street.

North-south view corridors are preserved along the Harborwalk. East-west view corridors looking towards the water include the alley between G4 and G5, the open space between 5 and 15 Necco, Binford Street, and Necco Court.

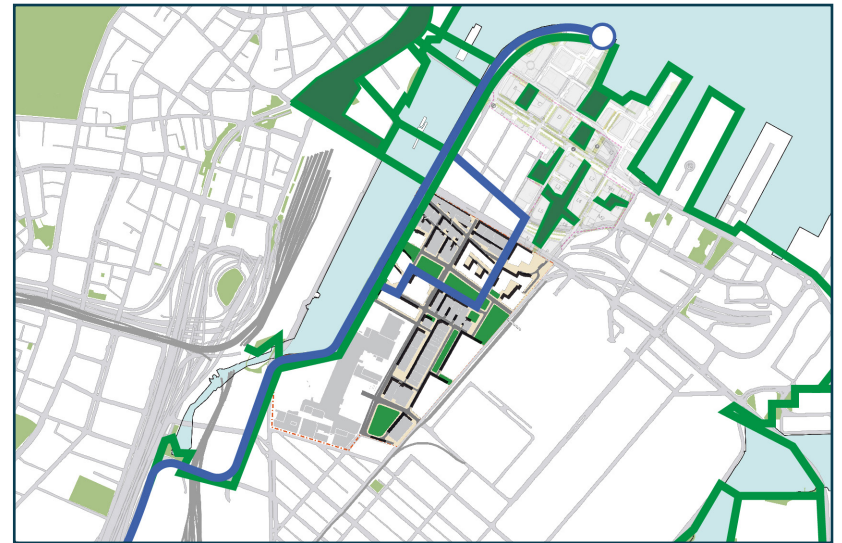
Within the site, the large public art on the elevated plaza and water feature act as internal orienting features, providing visual landmarks from the inland parks. To the east, the Wormwood smoke stack remains a prominent feature for the district.

A continuous promenade through the park and pedestrian walkway along Wormwood Street and Wormwood Street extension provides a unifying element through the network of new parks.

# Systemwide Connections

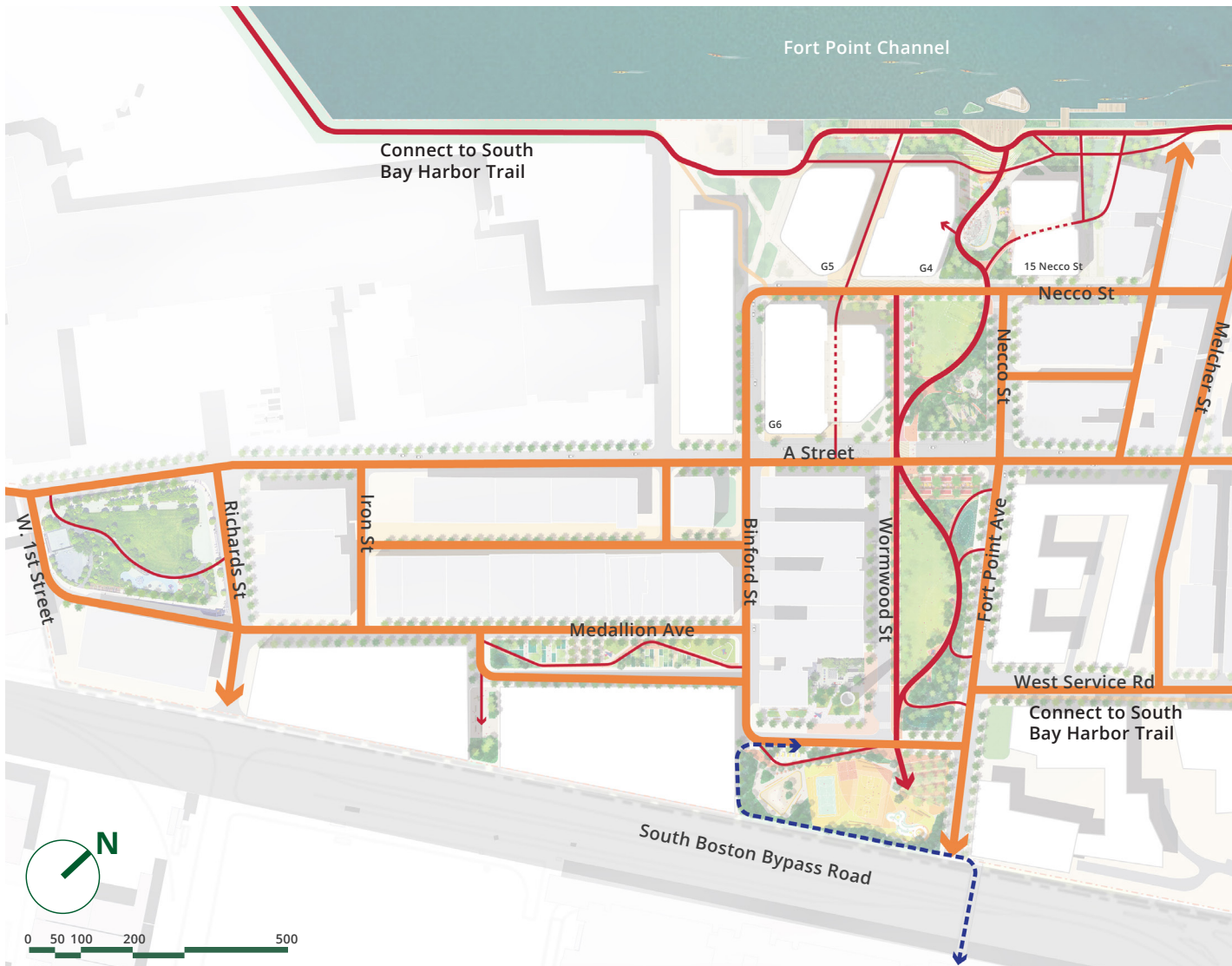


The network of open spaces and public realm through the Fort Point 100 Acres will link seamlessly with the broader City open space system, including pedestrian and bicycle connections through the site to the **South Bay Harbor Trail**, which will connect from the harbor to Roxbury. The Fort Point Parks will also become a new destination among a network of public spaces along the **Harborwalk**, including the **Boston Children's Museum**, **Martin's Park**, and **Fan Pier Park**, among others. The network can also make connections to the linear **Rose Kennedy Greenway** just across the Fort Point Channel.



- South Bay Harbor Trail
- Harborwalk
- Rose Kennedy Greenway & Seaport Square Open Space

# Mobility



## Pedestrian Circulation

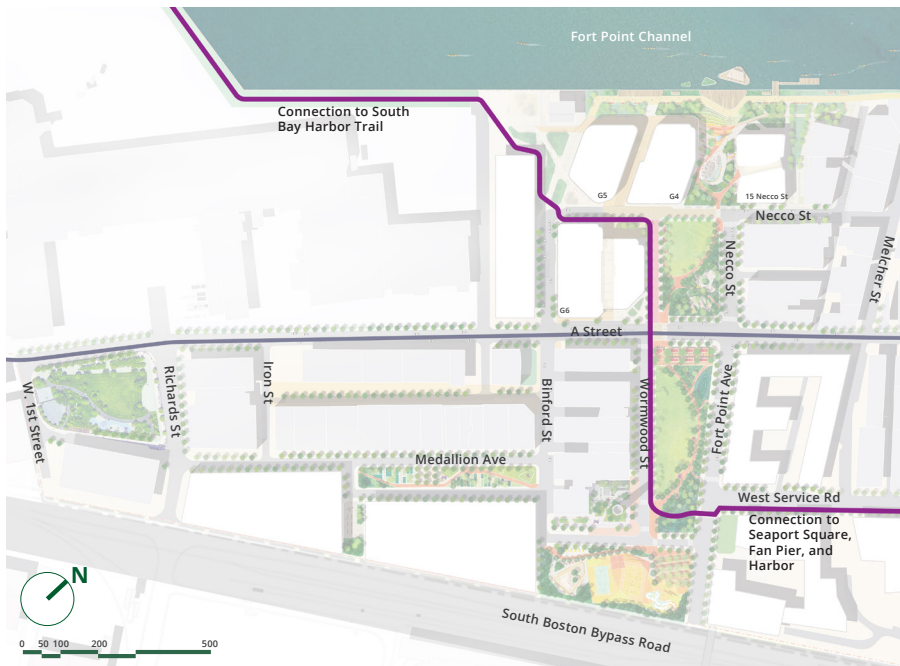
A Park Promenade weaves through the new parks, connecting each one to the next. It provides the primary park pedestrian circulation with access to all major park uses. Along the southern edge of Wormwood Street Park, a second primary pedestrian connection provides north-south access. Between Wormwood Street and Necco Street, this zone is designed as a linear plaza in Necco Street Park.

A secondary network of paths provides additional access through the parks, and the parks are all well connected to the surrounding sidewalk network.

Trees line the pedestrian network, providing more tree canopy for the neighborhood and cooling pedestrians on hot summer days.

- Sidewalk
- Primary Park Circulation
- Secondary Park Circulation
- - - Indoor Secondary Circulation
- - - Pedestrian Bridge in Future Phase



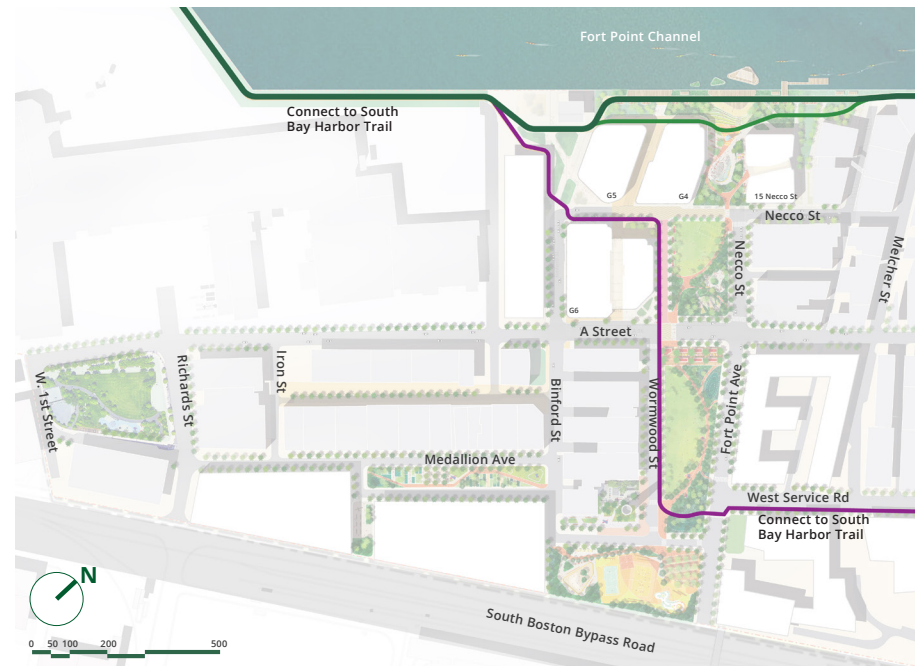


### Bicycle Circulation

*Note: Alignment of South Bay Harbor Trail in the long-term is not yet confirmed at the time of this draft. (12/15/2020)*

The South Bay Harbor Trail provides a separated cycle track route connecting from inland neighborhoods, to the Fort Point Channel and the Harborwalk, and to Seaport Square and the South Boston Waterfront via the West Service Street cycle track. Additional bicycle routes through the district include A Street and Necco Street. The goal is to create a connected bicycle network through the district while minimizing conflicts with vehicles or park uses.

- Cycle Track / Separated Bike Path
- Existing Bike Lane

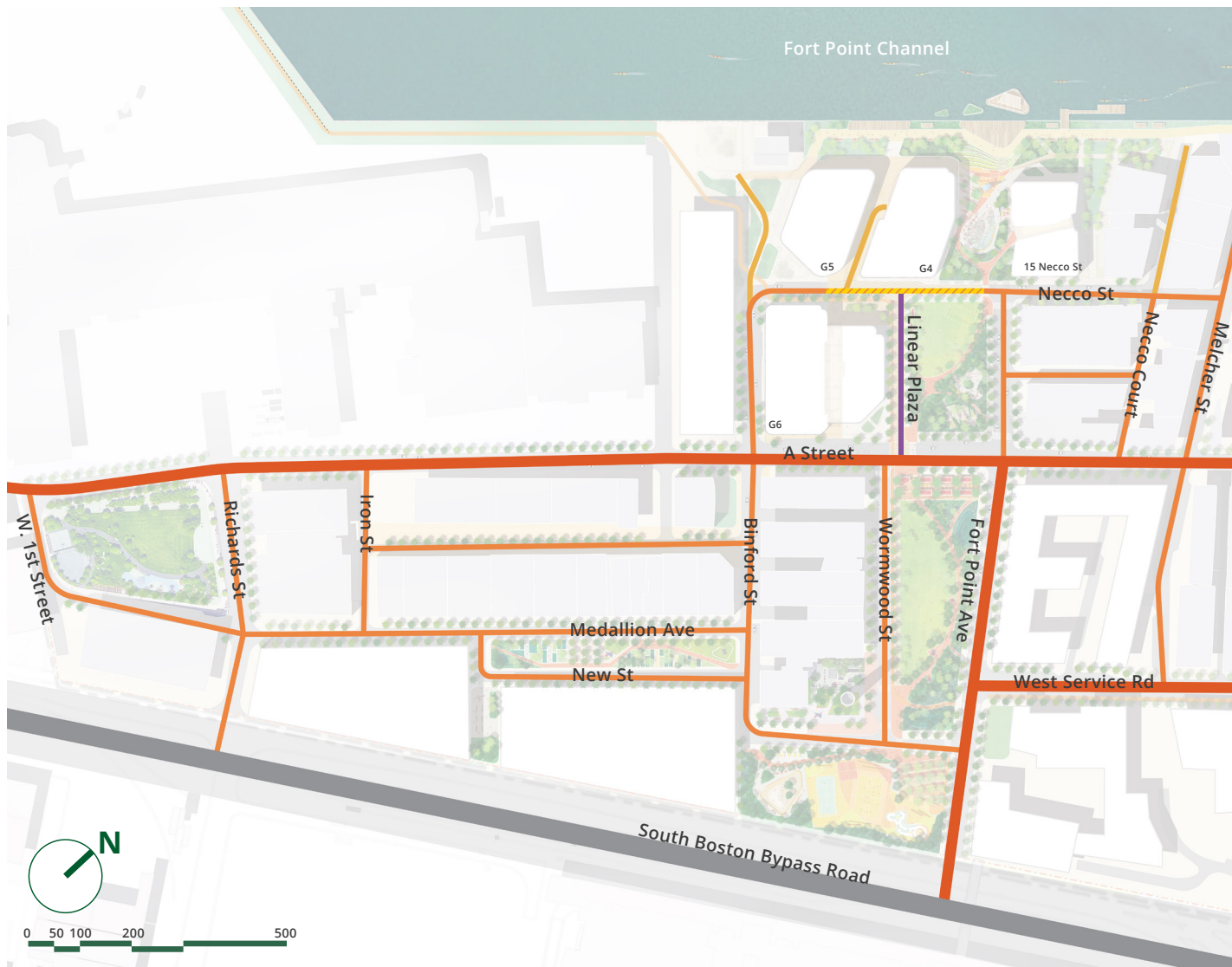


### Trail Connections

*Note: Alignment of South Bay Harbor Trail in the long-term is not yet confirmed at the time of this draft. (12/15/2020)*

The new open space network is an important hub in the citywide open space trail network. It connects two major trails: the South Bay Harbor Trail and the Harborwalk. The parks will be a destination and gateway for visitors arriving via both trails. The concept plan also includes an upland alternative route for the Harborwalk that can provide an elevated route in the event of waterfront flooding.

- Harborwalk: regular condition
- Harborwalk: elevated alternative route in event of flooding
- South Bay Harbor Trail



## Vehicular Circulation

The future development of new open spaces and streets will provide additional connectivity through the 100 Acres area. Fort Point Avenue is the main new vehicular primary connection, connecting A Street to the West Service Road and the Haul Road. Wormwood Street remains a secondary neighborhood street. To the north, the Wormwood Street Extension is designed as a linear plaza, providing a space to host markets and food trucks. The addition of New Street creates a more regular block structure, centered on the new neighborhood-focused Medallion open space.

The alignment of the new and enhanced streets is designed to minimize vehicular traffic moving between the Active Park and Wormwood Street Park. Vehicles moving from West Service Road to the Haul Road or interstate can do so without passing through the parks. This approach also preserves the existing role of Wormwood Street by designating Fort Point Avenue as the primary north-south vehicular road through the neighborhood.

- █ Primary Road
- █ Secondary Road
- █ Shared Road
- █ Service & Emergency Road
- █ Arterial

## Mobility Strategies to Support Inclusive, Welcoming Parks

Integrated mobility strategies are needed to improve access to the Fort Point parks for all Bostonians, including those living in the residential neighborhoods of South Boston. Connection improvements to Fort Point can also contribute to the aspirational targets set for citywide transportation in the Go Boston 2030 plan around improving safety, expanding access, ensuring reliability, reducing car use, reducing emissions, and increasing affordability.

Recommended strategies include:

- Support arrival by multiple modes — driving, transit, walking, and bicycling
- Continue to invest in the South Bay Harbor Trail and expand access to it from other neighborhoods to further grow access
- Design gateway experiences to reinforce the clarity of public access; ensure that the moment visitors arrive, they feel welcome and understand public amenities
- Focus on creating safe, comfortable streets, crossings, and paths for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Provide free or discounted parking for park users
- Consider shuttles to support more direct, faster access than public transit, especially for events

# Resilience

**Showcasing a multi-layered approach to resilience, the concept plan includes strategies to reduce coastal flood risk, manage stormwater, and provide shade to cool park visitors in warm weather.**

## Long-Term Adaptability

The plan has the flexibility through adaptable/modular design to achieve higher levels of flood protection as necessary in the future. For example, the berm as shown could allow flexibility for future increases in elevation. In addition, the Harborwalk can be adjusted in grade along the proposed amphitheater incrementally to match the elevation of the seat walls such that the function of the amphitheater remains unchanged.

## Stormwater Management and Performative Landscape Elements

The Open Space Concept Plan offers an ideal opportunity to consider the use of green infrastructure to integrate stormwater management practices into the overarching landscape strategy. Boston Smart Utilities Project should be used as a reference when designing strategies for deploying integrated green infrastructure practices throughout the site. Additionally, consideration should be given to deploying stormwater measures that are effective at three scales: the site, the neighborhood, and the watershed.

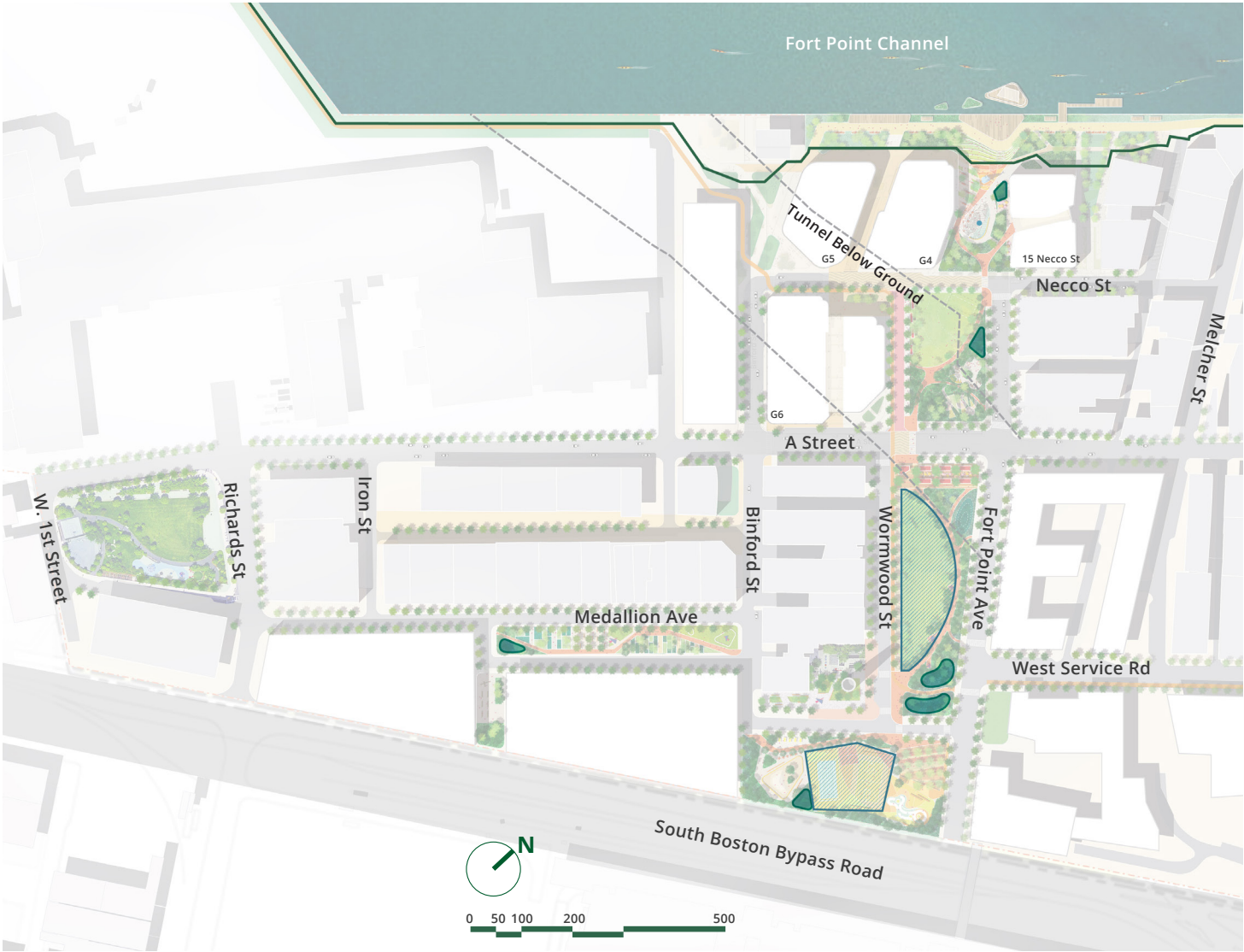
At the site scale, each of the open spaces should be equipped with best practices to capture, slow, treat, infiltrate, and release stormwater back to the main trunk lines that exist in the neighborhood. These practices may include site surface features such as porous paving, rain gardens, and bioretention cells. Below-grade practices such as stormwater cisterns and water quality units may also be utilized. As consistent with the feedback from the community, providing opportunities for educational signage describing these systems is encouraged.



At the neighborhood scale, we understand through conversations with the community that nuisance flooding does occur within the Fort Point Channel neighborhood today. The proposed park system has an opportunity to act as a sponge for the neighborhood by providing overflow storage during larger storm events. These volumes could be achieved through the depression of the landscape features within the park or through excess subsurface detention. If depressing portions of the landscape, those elements must be designed to withstand short-term flooding with minimal maintenance necessary to reactivate the park. A neighborhood-level stormwater study should inform the best locations for this storage given constraints around subsurface infrastructure (utilities and highway tunnels), groundwater elevations, soil conditions, and future surface uses and program.

At the watershed scale, the Fort Point Open Space network offers an opportunity to consider longer-term detention of stormwater within the park system. For example, in the event that the Channel is experiencing elevated water levels during a storm event (causing the storm drain system to be submerged and backup into the neighborhood) an on-site detention system can capture and store stormwater runoff from the inland areas helping to reduce inland flooding. Once water levels within the channel recede, the detention system can release the stored stormwater to the Channel. This storage system can be linked with “smart” technology that is tied to weather patterns and Channel water level predictions such that the volume of storage is used most effectively and within all required regulations.

There are a variety of potential partners with whom the neighborhood- and watershed-scale solutions should be coordinated including the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC), Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Fort Point Neighborhood Association, and the BPDA.

### Stormwater Management



-  Neighborhood Subsurface Stormwater Storage
-  Stormwater Garden

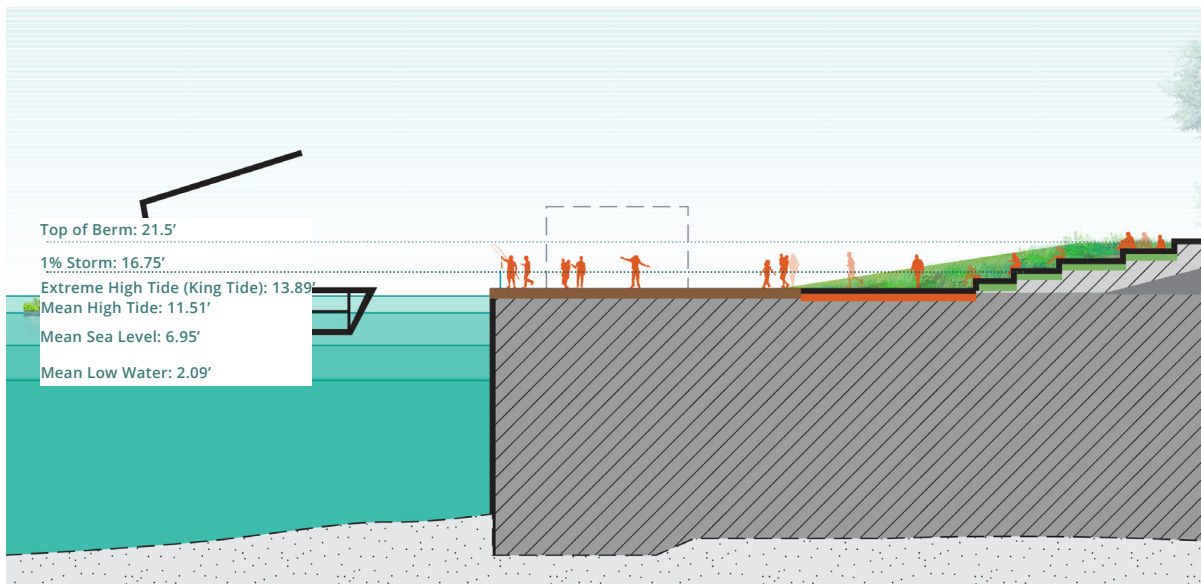
Underground Infrastructure, structure and pipes refer to 20201007 Related Beal's Presentation

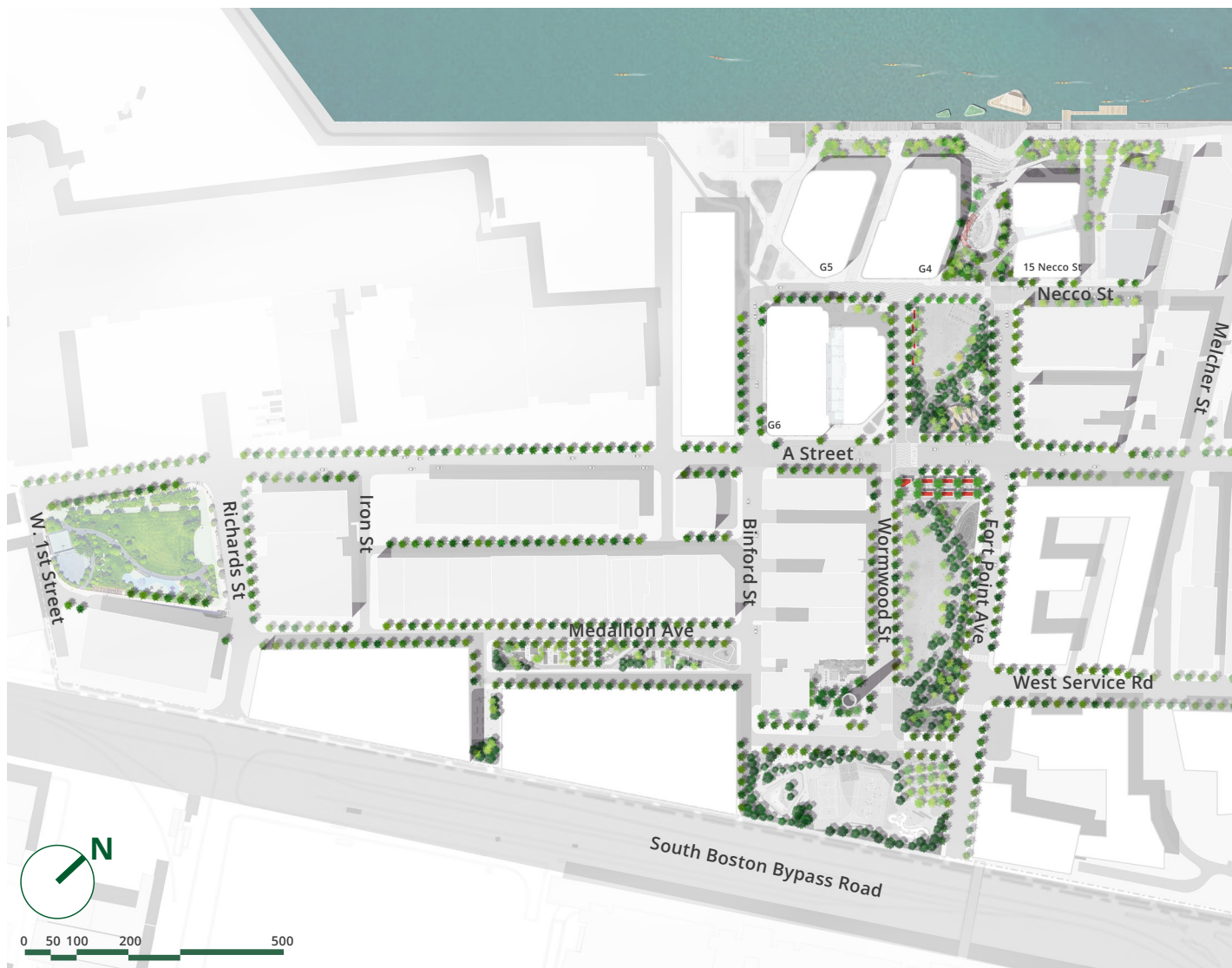


## Coastal Flooding Resilience

Working within the opportunities created by the City of Boston's application to FEMA, the proposed grading along the waterfront turns the flood protection system into a valuable community gathering space. The contours of the proposed amphitheater encompass the proposed FEMA berm and deliberately avoid penetrations of the berm's core to maintain the integrity of the protection system. Atop the berm is additional fill that provides a sculpted landscape contributing toward the larger project goals of accessibility, creating great public spaces, and integration of the neighborhood with the flood protection system.

The proposed grading scheme can accommodate both the clay core system as proposed in the FEMA application or a sheet pile system as proposed by the adjacent development. In either scenario, the proposed grades allow for an uninterrupted line of protection spanning the property line and connecting to the larger system of continuous flood protection. Further coordination between the City and development teams will be necessary to ensure this integrated approach is realized.





## Shading Strategy

To create a more comfortable, shaded environment for park visitors, the open space concept plan incorporates additional trees and shade structures throughout the parks. The elevated water feature also provides a fun way for children to cool off. The additional green space and tree canopy will create a cooling ambiance through the neighborhood, mitigating the urban heat island effect that occurs today due to the large expanses of pavement.

Higher reflective elements including pavers are also recommended to further lessen local heat island. It is recommended that future trees introduced to the open space are species that are drought tolerant and hold their canopy later into the fall. Salt-tolerant species should be selected for locations that could experience salt spray or coastal flooding.

 Tree Canopy

 Shade Structures



# Ground Floor Activation





# Overview and Principles

## **One of the core values of Boston’s waterfront is the idea that the waterfront belongs to all of us.**

Protecting and projecting a public waterfront experience involves both the outdoor and indoor spaces. The developers and implementers of Fort Point’s future buildings are, first and foremost, partners to the Boston community in the continued evolution of the city’s waterfront experience. Future partners of development in the Fort Point District should set and meet ambitious targets for clear public accessibility and high quality community-centered programing. Creating a public waterfront experience means inviting a higher number and higher diversity of visitors and users into the district: this enhances the visibility and viability of the private programs entering the Fort Point neighborhood and creates a stronger district identity that benefits all future development.

In service of creating a holistic district vision, this Open Space Concept Plan includes ground floor recommendations for the 100 Acres area. A portion of the 100 Acres area, west of A Street, falls in the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 91, Waterways, which is administered by the State of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Chapter 91 provides a regulatory framework for the provision of indoor and outdoor public facilities, with the express purpose of promoting and preserving public rights to use tidelands.

The following program and management guidelines for ground floor spaces in the Fort Point neighborhood are based on a review of previous planning documents and city-wide ground floor use needs assessments, an observational analysis of existing waterfront spaces, and community input. Community input was gathered through engagement associated with the Open Space Concept Plan design, detailed in the Introduction section, as well as targeted stakeholder conversations addressing ground floor uses.

## **Guiding Principles for a Public-Centered Ground Floor**

### **Overall Approach**

- Provide public spaces that are accessible year-round and all-day (i.e., beyond the business hours of the building’s primary use).
- Provide public spaces that require no payment for participation (i.e., not restaurants and traditional retail)
- Focus on waterfront identity that is specific to the Fort Point Channel, in balance with the city-wide network of open spaces with character tied to the Charles River and the Harbor.
- Create spaces that can be used for changing, dynamic program activation in order to encourage repeat visitors (e.g., the Special Destination Public Facility in Atlantic Wharf, rather than the static Maritime Museum at Battery Wharf). Fort Point can be known as a waterfront and arts destination that always has something new to discover.
- Think beyond exhibition space, and invite in the messiness of the making of art as a counter to the preciousness of a new private open space.
- Attract potential institutional partners to create a more durable tenant/presence in the district (e.g., Look to Artists for Humanity as an example whose space serves functions across audiences, such as private events, classrooms, community meetings).
- Extend the public realm and remove a sense of privatization by providing community uses indoors that relate to the outdoor open space.
- Pair design and programming decisions with long-term thinking on how the space will be implemented and operated.

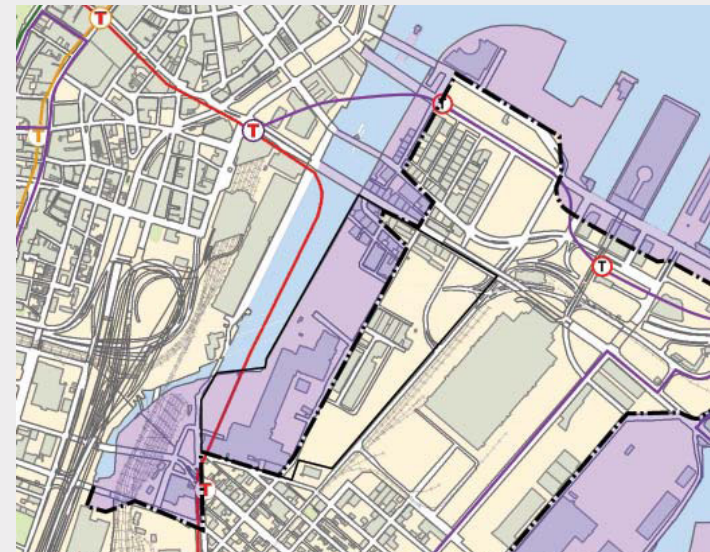
## Physical Design Principles

- Refer to and apply the universal accessibility principles outlined in the 2009 South Boston Municipal Harbor Plan Amendment:
  - Equitable use
  - Flexibility in use
  - Simple and intuitive use
  - Perceptible information
  - Tolerance for error
  - Low physical effort
  - Size and space for approach and use
- Practical, everyday amenities (e.g., restrooms, changing rooms) should have clear adjacency to and visibility from open space programs and paths.
- Provide infrastructure that enables flexibility and spontaneity (e.g., large doorways and higher ceilings in ground floor spaces to enable larger scale arts production and storage; access to electrical outlets in multiple locations).
- Provide connectivity between the public space and the other ground floor elements (e.g., a residential or office lobby) within the building to encourage accessibility and reduce redundant uses.
- Provide direct external entries into public facilities, in order to improve ease of access from open space.
- Prioritize locating public spaces on the ground floor, rather than on upper floors of the building.
- Support affordability and dynamic tenancing by encouraging shared and smaller-scale retail leasing options. Look to examples such as Bow Street Market in Somerville and Commonwealth Kitchen in Dorchester.
- Ensure consistency of design elements (signage, wayfinding, and lighting) with open space features, so that the ground floor spaces can be easily intuited as an extension of publicly accessible space.

## Regulatory Commitment to Public Access

In service of creating a holistic district vision, this plan includes ground floor recommendations for the full 100 Acres area. A portion of the 100 Acres area, west of A Street, falls in the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 91, Waterways, which is administered by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Chapter 91 provides a regulatory framework for the provision of indoor and outdoor public facilities, with the express purpose of promoting and preserving public rights to use tidelands.

### Chapter 91 Jurisdiction



Source: Fort Point District 100 Acres Master Plan, 2006

# Management and Operations Recommendations

## **The viability of any given program or ground floor use to be inclusive rather than exclusive is dependent on its management and operations policies.**

In order to achieve accessibility and sense of belonging for the public in the broadest sense, developments should seek to establish practices that remove barriers to access. Barriers to people fully participating in public uses include high-cost of participation, programming/design with limited cultural representation, lack of diversity in the staff involved in day-to-day oversight, and opaque communication of what spaces are not private. Intended to be understood in partnership with the thematic and design principles, the following guidelines address the “software” involved in creating and maintaining a public ground floor use.

### **COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT**

“It can be as beautiful as you want, but if our children don’t see people that look like them and feel comfortable, it isn’t valuable to us.”

*Roxbury resident, at a families planning workshop organized with The American Cities Coalition*

## **Tenancing and Program Development**

- Create a Community Advisory Committee, comparable to the Atlantic Wharf Program Advisory Committee, that is given decision-making power over the programming of ground floor spaces annually. The advisory committee membership should include but extend beyond Fort Point residents, to include residents from Chinatown, Roxbury, and Dorchester. Develop a compensation model for the committee, in order to enable participation across income considerations.
- Provide a platform and contact for ongoing public input for program ideas beyond the Community Advisory Committee.
- Establish a zero-based budgeting model for annual programming decisions, in which each item needs to be justified and borne out of community process and the advisory committee, rather than starting from a base list defined by the development that rolls over each year.
- Define targets of affordability for retail operators, including food and beverage choices.
- Subsidize utilities and build-out, and provide rents below market price for non-profit tenants, in order to support inclusive economic development.

## **Management and Operations**

- Require inclusive hiring standards (with particular attention to racial diversity) for management and other staff interacting with users of the public spaces. The diversity of staff present in public spaces contributes to the degree to which visitors of different racial/ethnic identities feel that a space is welcoming and desirable.
- Provide diversity and cultural competency training for staff and security to proactively address the social dynamics of surveillance and policing over the privately owned open spaces and use of public facilities within the buildings.
- Develop annual reporting of public facilities that covers community involvement process, programming, and impact (e.g., Atlantic Wharf annual reports).

- Develop operations models that handle public facilities differently than the primary use of the building in order to enable all-day activation (e.g., providing security as required after business hours to enable access to public facilities for evening use and events).
- Establish agreements and processes that allow for harmony between upper and ground floor use operations and open space programs, such as coordinating with events in the waterfront amphitheater with later hours or reduced noise levels from adjacent ground floor tenants.

## Communication of Public Accessibility and Awareness Building

- Provide signage throughout the district to clarify public accessibility for all visitors:
  - Signage outside of each building with public facilities clearly articulating free public access, in multiple languages (based on an analysis of languages spoken in Boston), and meeting signage standards of low vision accessibility
  - Signage throughout the district open space directing attention to indoor public facilities
- Contribution by developers to a fund to increase broader awareness of and use of public facilities, through the provision of educational materials, transportation subsidies, and activation grants distributed through the City and community partners
- Develop a robust plan for the promotion of available public facility space for potential tenants, including:
  - Transparent and clear communication of process and timeline for public facility space availability
  - Proactive marketing communications and outreach to community organizations and non-profit organizations throughout the city
  - Provision of free training programs to encourage first time business

entrepreneurs (e.g., similar to the model of 'first time homebuyers' programs)

- Involvement of a community advisory committee to review applications and selection of public facility tenants

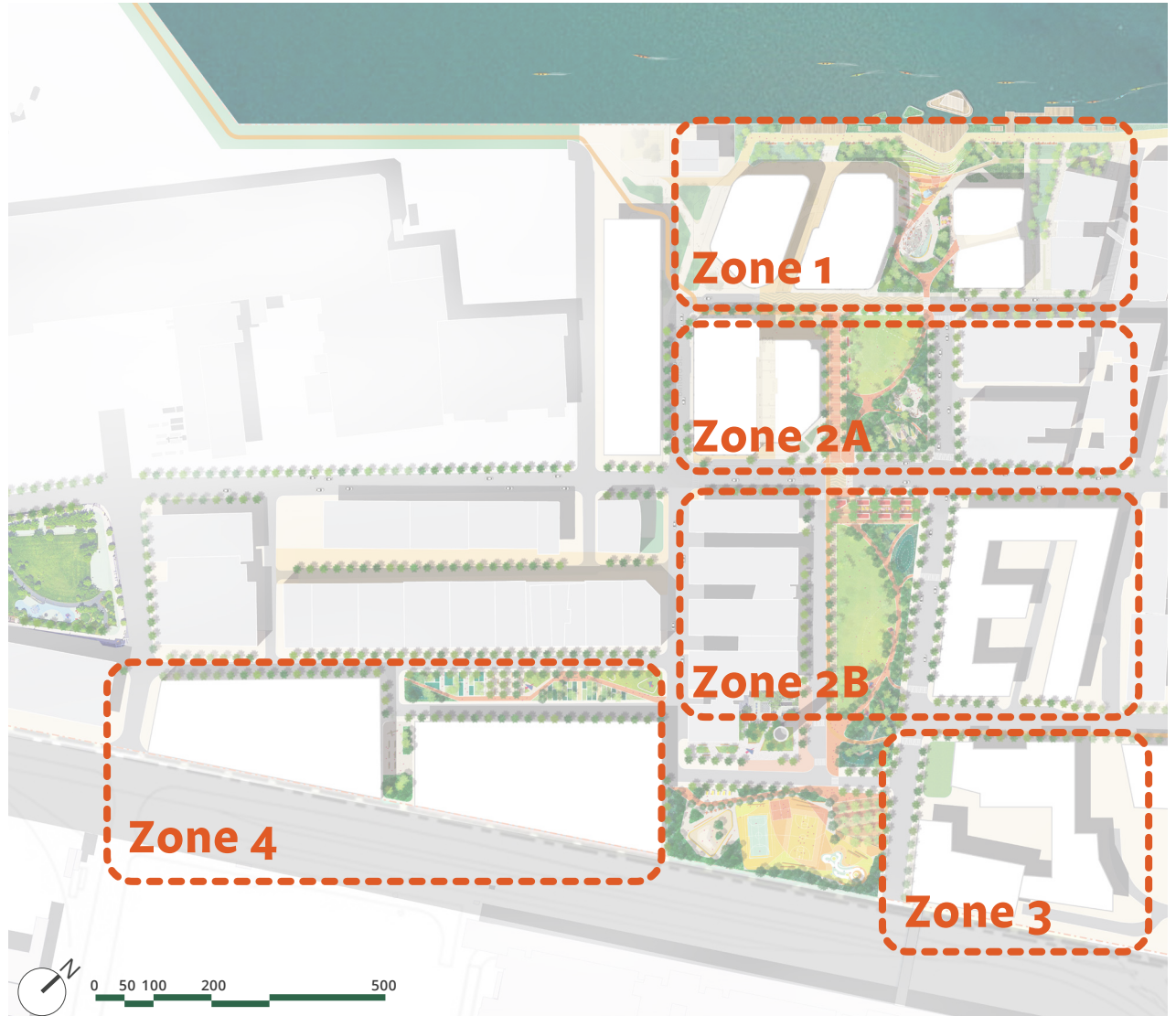
# Ground Floor Programming Recommendations

**Each of the ground floor uses in Fort Point are part of a broader public realm network that defines the overall district.**

As each phase is implemented, the ground floor programs should not only take into consideration the principles and recommendations provided in this document, but also incorporate an updated understanding of what is needed based on what has been provided in the district to date.

The following list provides overall themes and a list of potential programs for each zone, based on distance from the Channel and anticipated phasing. The placement of the themes and programs are based on consideration of adjacencies to open space elements and phasing. The specific programs that are included below are those that capture the value of the theme and overall purpose of promoting public use.

While it is anticipated that the ultimate ground floor uses will vary based on future community process input and financial considerations, it is encouraged that any proposed uses provide a clear connection to the intention and principles embedded in the recommendations.



## All Zones: Practical Amenities

All buildings adjacent to an open space should provide public bathroom facilities. Facilities should be easily and universally accessible from primary entries, and identified through signage that clearly communicates public use. The number of facilities provided should be justified based on a projected number of users for the building and open space program. Facilities should be available beyond business hours of a buildings primary use.

## Zone 1: The Waterfront

Located closest to the waterfront, the ground floor programming in this zone should serve three primary purposes: to support the uses on the watersheet, to enhance the destination quality of the open space, and to push against a perception of private access of the waterfront and adjacent outdoor public spaces.

### Watersheet Activation

- Rental office and storage for non-motorized watercraft (e.g., kayaks, canoes, stand up paddle boards).
- Management office space for organizations related to the operations/programming of the amphitheater and water feature in the open space.
- Support facilities to enable users of watersheet activities to come from afar and stay in the district longer: bathrooms, changing rooms, showers, locker rooms.

### Destination

- Affordable retail space. Affordable choices for visitors can be enabled by creating a space that allows for more affordable retail tenanting, including: smaller scale retail spaces (e.g., Bow Street Market in Somerville) and communal operations models (e.g., food halls).
- A Special Destination Public Facility (SDPF), such as an indoor performance space, that can draw an audience and encourage new first-time visits for events. This space should be designed to prioritize flexibility, so that it can be activated as often as possible with a wide range of programs.

- Support spaces for the SDPF, such as community meeting rooms that can serve as dressing rooms or a ticket office during a performance event.

### Arts Creation

- Arts studio shop space with shared specialized facilities (e.g., CNC machines, 3D printer, etc.) that provides reservable access to individual artists and the public. (Example: Artists Asylum in Somerville).
- Large scale arts and material storage to support floating art installations in the Channel and set and equipment necessary for performances on the waterfront amphitheater.

## Zone 2: Inland Parks

A key strategy for expanding inclusion to city-wide visitors that emerged through the community process for the Open Space Concept Plan is the importance of creating a place that families can spend all day in. Further east from the Channel, the ground floor uses are an opportunity to provide facilities that complement the open space program to allow people to rest, linger, and learn to help Fort Point be a year-round, all-day neighborhood.

### Zone 2A: Community Living Room

- Shared kitchen incubator, to provide a pathway for entrepreneurial chefs and restaurant businesses from lower income neighborhoods of Boston to have a presence on the waterfront and expand their business.
  - Example: Commonwealth Kitchen in Dorchester, MA
- A food hall that brings together start-up food / restaurant businesses from lower income neighborhoods. The food hall could be associated with the shared kitchen incubator.
- Community learning center with a book collection, arts archive, and rooms that can be used for programming such as a book reading or crafts class.
  - This also provides opportunities for supporting performances on the waterfront with supplemental programs (e.g., Boston based organization

Brown Box Theatre organizes workshops associated with each play to help people understand the performance).

### **Zone 2B: Cultural Anchor**

- A larger scale exhibition or museum space, highlighting nature learning and climate resilience.
- Dedicated and shared non-profit office space for use by organizations located in Fort Point, and to serve as an organizing location close to the waterfront for non-profit organizations operating throughout the City.
- Storage space support for the market space in the park (e.g., movable furniture, canopy structures)
- Storage space support for the art walk in the park (e.g., large scale sculptures and installations)

### **Zone 3: Active Park**

Adjacent to the Active Park, the ground floor uses can help expand the usability of the sports courts and fitness plaza by providing complementary amenities. The ground floor of the adjacent buildings are also an opportunity to expand the open space theme into a hub, introducing active programming options for a broader range of ages and weather conditions.

#### **Active Hub**

- Children's fitness and activity center (e.g., MyGym), with facilities such as gymnastics classes and climbing structures.
- Indoor play spaces for children and youth (e.g., trampoline park).
- Community recreation center (e.g., YMCA or Boys and Girls Club)
- Support facilities for users of the sports courts in the park: changing rooms, showers, locker rooms

- Food and beverage retail to serve users of the active park facilities, as well as visitors from the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.

### **Zone 4: Community Parks**

This zone is part of the longest-term area for development based on current phasing considerations, and will therefore be implemented after much additional build-out of the Fort Point neighborhood. Located away from the central open space spine, and adjacent to more neighborhood park facilities than destination programs, the ground floor uses of this zone should support the everyday community needs of the neighborhood. The following recommendations include potential programs based on the Open Space Concept Plan, but it is encouraged that the programs are reflective of the neighborhood demographic and needs at the time of development of this long term block.

#### **Everyday Community Support**

- Shared storage for community gardens equipment and tools.
- Management office for community gardens and active park facilities.
- Everyday services retail and community facilities.





Food retail that also serves as a community gathering place (Haley House, Roxbury)



Shared studio shopspace (Artists Asylum, Somerville)



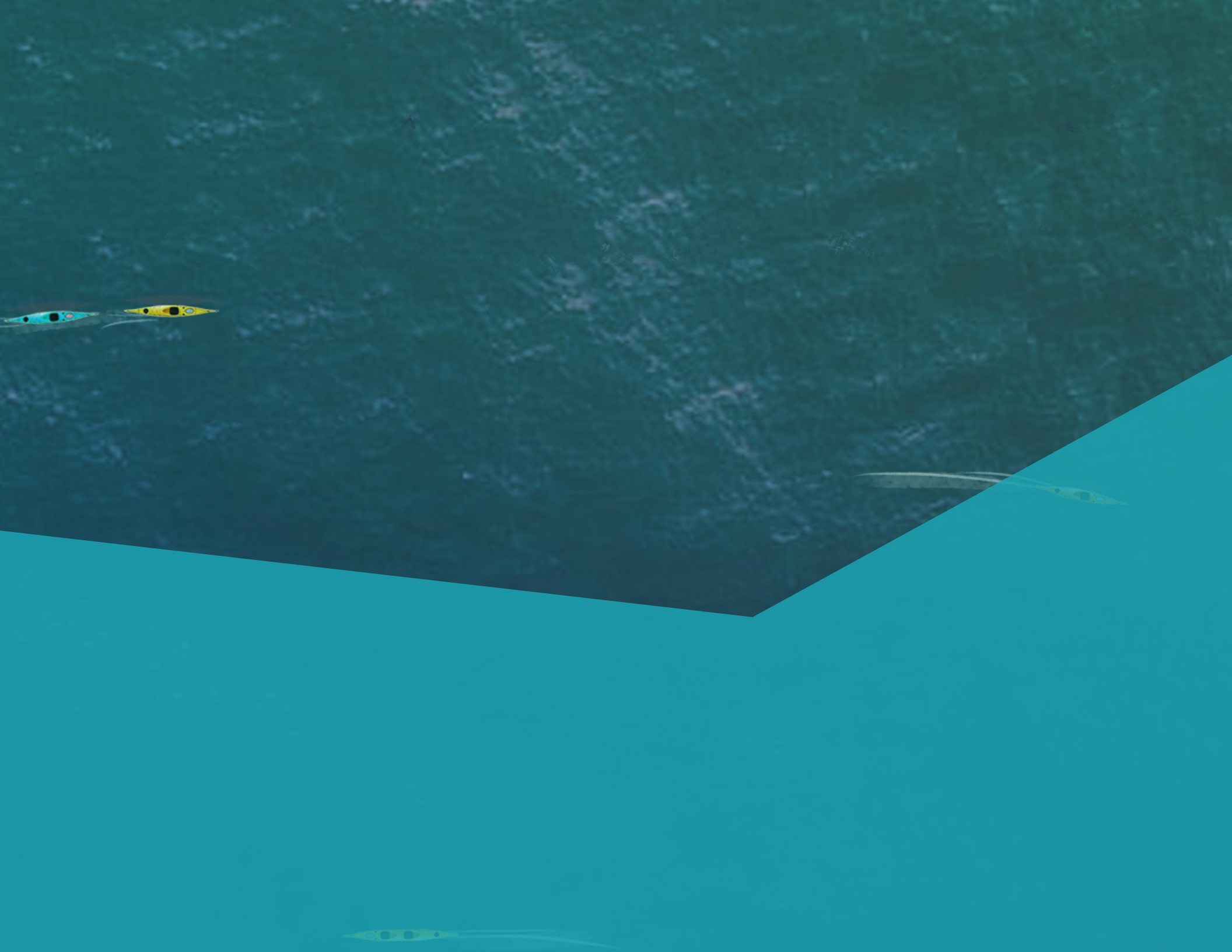
Small scale retail space with communal seating (Bow Street Market, Somerville)



Shared kitchen facilities (Commonwealth Kitchen, Dorchester)

An aerial photograph of a triathlon triad on a dark teal ocean. The triad consists of three cyclists in a line, followed by a triathlete on a bicycle, and another triathlete on a bicycle. The background is a dark teal ocean with a teal gradient at the bottom. The word "Implementation" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font in the lower-left quadrant.

# Implementation



# Introduction

The full open space system described in the Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan will be realized over multiple years and involve coordination with many existing and future collaborators to the community. This section outlines recommendations to be considered by future collaborators. Beginning with recommendations for implementation of the plan's guiding principles, this section also provides an explanation of how this plan aligns with existing City documents, how enforceability of plan recommendations, opportunities for near-term activation, and an overview of project phases.

## This section includes:

- Implementation Recommendations in Support of Inclusive, Welcoming Parks
  - Management and Operations Recommendations
  - Recommendations for Promoting Wealth Building
  - Affirmative Design Recommendations
- Implementation and Enforceability
  - Ground Floor Uses and Facilities of Public Accommodation
  - Implementation and Maintenance
  - Park Ownership, Care, and Custody
  - Roadway and Park Alignments
- Short-term Actions and Recommendations
- Phasing
- Summary of Design Intent

Incorporating these recommendations will support the creation of a parks system that is resilient, connected, welcoming, and accessible.

## Inclusive Parks Activities & Programming

The proposed concept open space design incorporates feedback received about how to make the future parks welcoming and accessible for more visitors.

The following high-level approaches underlie the recommended programs and park activities shared earlier in this document:

- Enough affordable/free activities to do to justify travel time
- Range of food options and places to eat/prepare own food
- Basic park infrastructure: benches, restrooms, shade, water fountains
- Activities and programming for all ages and diversity of interests
- Park that feels safe and comfortable for a diversity of users

Specific park activities shared by families that participated in focus group conversations include: fountain for kids to play in, classes/workshops, music, zumba, hammocks/lounge chairs, lawn games, tables for games with visibility to where kids are playing, grills and picnic tables, and affordable food options.

# Recommendations

## Implementation Recommendations in Support of Inclusive, Welcoming Parks

The Open Space Concept Plan focuses on creating a park system that feels welcoming, meets resilience performance targets, is physically and financially accessible, and offers a diversity of activities attractive to visitors of all ages. Achieving this goal requires centering the comfort and access of historically excluded visitors throughout all aspects of the parks and supporting indoor spaces.

The plan reflects the design team's intention to center inclusive access throughout the community engagement process, and the community's desire to see that represented in the plan's concept design and recommendations. The recommendations of this section provide a roadmap for how future design teams, developers, and the management entity can carry forward and honor this intent through design, operations, management, programming, and tenancing strategies. Just as the planning process has focused on broadening the involvement from all Boston neighborhoods, we recommend continued direct involvement from community members from other neighborhoods, especially those without direct waterfront access, in future design and implementation.

The new parks are intended to function both as citywide destinations and meet neighborhood green space and recreation needs. While a goal is to be welcoming to all, achieving this requires placing a specific focus on being welcome to park visitors who face additional barriers to accessing or enjoying the parks. Specific target users include residents from neighborhoods that do have a clear "waterfront," such as Roxbury and Chinatown. Target users also include black and brown Boston residents, immigrants, and other populations who are disproportionately affected by barriers to waterfront and open space access.

### What does a successful open space network look like for Fort Point?

- Welcoming to historically excluded park visitors
- Brings people together — promotes social interactions among diverse park visitors
- Supports wealth building in inland neighborhoods

### Taking an integrated approach to inclusive access includes the following layers:

- Park management and operations
- Inclusive economic development
- Affirmative design choices
- Park activities and programming (see concept plan for more details)
- Supporting mobility and transportation strategies (see the call-out in the Mobility chapter for more details)
- Supportive ground floor uses and tenancing strategy (see Ground Floor Activation chapter for more details)

### Management and Operations Recommendations

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) establishes that after construction of the new open spaces will be managed by a non-profit open space management entity. The Open Space Concept Plan includes recommendations for the future management entity in support of the goals of a more inclusive, welcoming park.

#### Recommendations:

- Establish the mission of the management entity to be centered on inclusive use and access.
- Implement inclusive hiring practices at all levels; the diversity of staff at all levels should reflect the desired diversity of park visitors.
- Provide diversity and cultural competency training for staff and security to proactively address the social dynamics of surveillance and policing over the privately owned open spaces and use of public facilities within the buildings.
- Establish continued accountability and reflection on park success through measures such as a visitors survey, focus group discussions, and an annual report of programming and impact.

- Create an Inclusive Access Advisory Group that reviews programming, proposed open space policies, and other aspects of park management with a focus on inclusive use. In order to enable diverse participation, the advisory group should provide compensation and interpretation services for meetings.
- Promote an approach to homelessness based on compassion; everyone should be welcome to enjoy parks so long as they are not negatively impacting the experience of others. Consider hiring a dedicated park staff member trained in social work and conflict mediation to be a consistent friendly face in the parks and who can connect visitors to resources as appropriate.
- Develop a partnership strategy, focused on complementary partners who can support in expanding connections to potential park visitors, economic opportunities and job pathways, and programming.
- Embrace a definition of “art” that encompasses a broad range of creative expression, including performance and music. This broader definition can ensure that an arts-based identity for the district feels inclusive of artists from a wide range of backgrounds and different cultural definitions of art. In turn, a greater diversity of arts programming can help to attract a greater range of park visitors. Design the parks to allow for a range of artistic expression and provide supporting infrastructure (for example, electricity hook-ups and wifi).
- Any maps that show the Fort Point parks in their Boston context should ensure the map extents include Chinatown and Roxbury to reinforce the connectivity between inland neighborhoods and Boston’s waterfront.
- Establish a community-led process to name the parks, with a focus on choosing names that celebrate community figures, cultures, and stories.

### **Promoting Wealth Building**

As the wave of new development continues in Fort Point and the South Boston Waterfront, it is increasingly bringing a greater proportion of wealthier residents and workers, creating a neighborhood that continues to feel designed for affluent people. Without an intentional, comprehensive effort, the new parks and ground floor uses are likely to continue this trajectory.

One goal of the Open Space Concept Plan is to counter this trend, and recommend a set of strategies to create a more inclusive park that is actively welcoming to members of the Boston community who have previously felt excluded or lacked reasons to visit the neighborhood.

A goal is to support increased wealth building both in geographies and populations that have been forced to face barriers to economic success due to system racism and injustices — Roxbury, Chinatown, Dorchester, and black, hispanic/latinx residents, immigrants, and women, especially women of color.

The benefits of this strategy include:

- Increasing access to a greater diversity of food, event, and cultural options for all park visitors than what is currently available in Fort Point and the South Boston Waterfront
- Strengthening community connections, appreciation, and understanding by creating more opportunities for interaction among diverse park visitors
- Reconnecting artists from across Boston that have roots in Fort Point back together, creating a stronger network of artists across the city

Recommendations:

- Support partnerships with organizations that support entrepreneurship and job training as pipelines for district businesses and employees, park management staff, and ground floor tenants (for example, food start-ups growing out of a shared kitchen incubator could rotate into an available storefront with free/reduced rent, have stalls at an indoor food hall or outdoor market, or spaces for food trucks).
- Prioritize procurement and B2B purchases from minority-owned businesses where

possible (for example, catering contracts for new businesses or park events with food; art purchases for new buildings).

- Intentionally create opportunities for small businesses through the programming and activation of the parks, such as:
- A recurring creative marketplace featuring artists, food vendors, and other entrepreneurs/small businesses from Roxbury, Chinatown, and Dorchester or other neighborhoods
- Outdoor fitness classes run by Roxbury-based instructors
- Establish a MBE requirement for open space design for the future park build-out (Phase 2).
- Practice inclusive hiring for all levels of positions within the future management entity.

### Affirmative Design Recommendations

The design of public spaces can give a range of signals about who belongs and how space should be enjoyed. For example, formal planting around the border of a lawn space can create a perception that the lawn space is to be looked at from a distance, but not enjoyed. A tall sign can be out of easy sight for children or someone in a wheelchair; if signage explaining public use is only in English, visitors who speak other languages may miss out on enjoying some aspects of the parks and ground floors. A pattern of enough small details can add up to a space that feels more welcoming to some cultures, ages, abilities, and interests than others.

Recommendations:

- Design for universal access throughout the public spaces, including waterfront access; provide park activities that are accessible to range of abilities
- Avoid design cues (planting palettes, materiality) that reinforce an expression of privatization
- Feature prominent wayfinding and informational signage throughout the district that makes clear what is public and helps visitors identify and feel comfortable

accessing public amenities; consider multiple languages and accessible signage design. Ensure these signs are designed to be prominent and obvious, easily noticed by park visitors.

- Avoid overly prominent regulatory signage; rather than extensive “no” signage regulating behavior, consider how it can frame use and enjoyment more positively (for example, “yes: stay, linger, enjoy”).
- Content curation principles for interpretive signage that celebrate diverse histories.
- Establish a community engagement process through all stages of design and implementation.



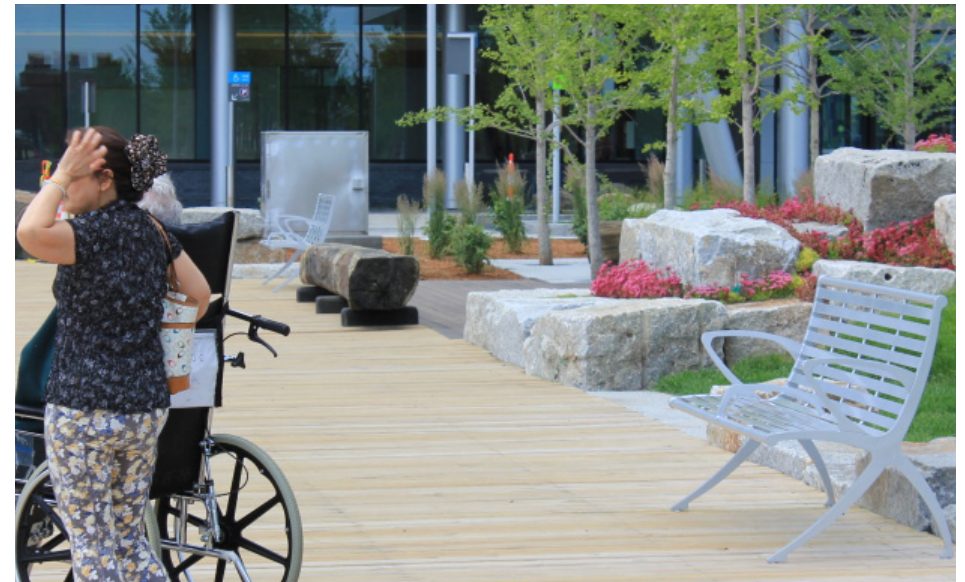
Comfortable, shaded places to sit and linger (Smale Riverfront Park, Cincinnati)



Signage in multiple languages (Grand Park, Los Angeles)



Culturally specific amenities (Tandoor oven in Thorncliffe Park, Toronto)



Universal Accessibility (Mayor Menino Park, Boston)





Public calendar of activities (El-Space Program Chinatown Pop-Up, New York)



Playful, welcoming signage (Translation: "Reserved for Cool People") (Fort Tryon Park, New York)



Free and fun programming (Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn)

# Enforceability

This report builds upon over twenty years of planning and anticipation of new parks aiding to the transformation of an industrial area in South Boston's waterfront situated along the Fort Point Channel.

The similarities between this report including the ground floor activation plan and the planning objectives outlined in the *Seaport Public Realm Plan*, *Fort Point District 100 Acres District Master Plan*, *South Boston Waterfront Municipal Harbor Plan*, *Planned Development Area #69*, *Fort Point Channel Watersheet Activation Plan*, and a memorandum of agreement between property owners is intentional as these documents created the baseline for an open space vision.

The report will be referenced in Planned Development Area #69 ("PDA #69"), the zoning for the Fort Point District 100 Acres District through an amendment recognizing it as a guiding document for the design, use, and program of the new parks.

The report will be a source for in-depth guidance on park use, program, and design for projects going through the Article 80 review process. The report will also be available to Impact Advisory Groups and the Boston Civic Design Commission.

The report will be used as guidance for review and comment on Chapter 91 License actions within the planning area.

In 2000 the *Seaport Public Realm Plan* underscored the South Boston Waterfront District's potential to expand Boston's public realm, stitching access along the natural resources of Boston Harbor via the Harborwalk to inland neighborhoods via distinct open spaces and parks. The *Seaport Public Realm Plan* suggested a waterfront counterpart to the land-based Olmsted park system. Within the Fort Point District 100 Acres, this system would include an east-west linear park connecting the new convention center through A Street to the eastern edge of the Fort Point Channel linking up with Harborwalk and South Bay Harbor Trail.

The purpose of this plan is to establish concept design, use and program for the open space required in the *Fort Point District 100 Acres Master Plan* and corresponding zoning, Planned Development Area #69.

While Planned Development Area #69 ("PDA #69"), the zoning for the Fort Point District 100 Acres, requires the development of approximately 6.9 acres of new open

space as part of the buildout of the neighborhood, it lacks detailed guidance for park design. Exhibit G and a paragraph labeled *New Public Open Space and Infrastructure Improvements* on page 4 are the two sources that set the numeric standards for the park system, identifying the metes and bounds and sizes of new parks to be delivered in the phased buildout of the district.

## Planned Development Area #69

PDA #69 has general disclosures that the open spaces will be constructed primarily on land owned by the project proponents and that they will enhance and promote enjoyment of the area for residents and visitors.

PDA #69 also notes that any regulation of public access to or use of privately-owned New Open Space will be subject to the reasonable approval of the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA).

PDA # 69 provides little guidance other than setting allowable uses, Floor Area Ratios, building height and the size and location of public infrastructure (streets and parks). The zoning refers to "The BRA (Boston Redevelopment Authority) Master Plan" as the source for architectural and landscape guidelines for the 100 Acres, also serving as the conceptual basis for future BPDA design review guidelines applicable to Proposed Projects.

## Fort Point District 100 Acres Master Plan (2006)

The BPDA Master Plan also known as the *Fort Point District 100 Acres Master Plan* ("100 Acres Master Plan") provides greater level of detail on the open space design, use and programming. This plan reflects over five years of public engagement and is informed by the *Seaport Public Realm Plan* and the *South Boston Waterfront Municipal Harbor Plan*. A product of an engaged working group made up of residents, community organizations, waterfront stakeholders, and property owners, it guides the transformation of 35 acres of underutilized surface parking lots into an expanded neighborhood with a pleasant and enhanced pedestrian environment providing easy access to the area's water, open space, and other natural and historic resources.

The following recommendations from the 2006 100 Acres Master Plan provide an example of how this Open Space Concept Plan builds upon and integrates findings

from previous planning documents.

Planning guidance/objectives for open space in the *100 Acres Master Plan (2006)* include:

- Reinforce the public edge of Harborwalk and aggregate open space at key locations.
- Use major open spaces to connect the Channel and Harborwalk to the areas east of A Street and the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.
- Parks, public plazas, outdoor recreation areas, water activities, and pedestrian connections are all elements of the type of well-designed open space system that is critical to a healthy residential community.
- Create different types of open spaces for different needs, such as passive open space and active recreational open space.
- Ensure connectivity between ground level uses and open space.
- Recognize that quality of open space is more important than quantity of open space.
- Employ open spaces to connect to and serve the traditional South Boston residential neighborhood.
- A 4.4-acre signature open space in the heart of the 100 Acres that connects the Fort Point Channel to the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.
- A network of neighborhood and pocket parks throughout the Fort Point District 100 Acres
- Plazas and courtyards within building parcels
- Public recreational and sports fields
- At the district scale, these 4 primary parks should add up to a single, memorable urban gesture.
- Each of these parks, with their distinct shapes and sizes as well as different abutting uses, will all have unique characters and accommodate many different kinds of everyday activities for residents, workers, and visitors.
- The open space sequence should be composed of a series of different types of

outdoor spaces that include recreational fields, pocket parks, and building plazas, all linked by a series of tree-lined streets.

- Public art, sculptures, fountains, and lawns that accommodate public gathering and performances should be part of the park's program.
- The parks should also include public paths, benches, and observation overlooks.
- They should provide landscape settings for reading, walking, and for children to play. Trees, trellis, benches, lighting, paths, lawns, and playground are needed for residents and other users.
- The various species of trees should provide proper shading and color changes in different seasons, as well as buffer any vehicular impact from the enjoyment of the parks.

#### **The South Boston Waterfront District Municipal Harbor Plan (“MHP”)**

The *South Boston Waterfront District Municipal Harbor Plan* (“MHP”), which was amended in 2009 to reflect the 100 Acres Master Plan (2006), is another enforcing/guiding land-use control that reiterates the planning objectives of the 100 Acres vision. The MHP notes that the open spaces along the waterfront, west of A Street are within Commonwealth Tidelands and are to be available for active or passive public recreation promoting public use and enjoyment.

The MHP, like PDA #69 provides numeric standards for future developments including the following targets for the overall composition of the MHP area: 42% building lot coverage, 36% open space, 11% streets, and 11% sidewalks. Building setback from the water's edge or the water-dependent use zone (“WUZ”) will on average be approximately 110 feet, with an areawide total area of 96,800 square feet.

The guidance and framework of 2002 *Fort Point Channel Watersheet Activation Plan* (“FPCWAP”) is strengthened in the MHP through an amplification of the Waterway's Regulations Activation of Commonwealth Tidelands for Public Use. By employing this amplification, all non-water-dependent projects that have a WUZ should contribute to the implementation of the FPCWAP as a baseline requirement. The FPCWAP contemplates certain public uses in the so-called “Seawall Basin” south of Summer Street, including rowing, canoeing, racing, water taxiing, youth programs, water festivals, lantern festivals, paddle boats, kayaks, floating islands, floating art, floating

horticultural displays, an art barge, model boat racing, light festivals and displays, a floating park, fountains, pedestrian bridge, small boat program, an interpretive water trail, and tidal art.

### **Ground Floor Uses and Facilities of Public Accommodation**

Ground floor uses and Facilities of Public Accommodation will be informed by the Article 80 and Chapter 91 licensing processes. While the land west of A Street is located on Commonwealth tidelands there is limited specifics in both PDA #69 and the MHP on ground floor use program and support of open space activation.

Guidance from these plans include the following:

- Ensure connectivity between ground level uses and open space.
- Wherever possible, ground floors of all buildings should have publicly accessible uses that activate the abutting streets and open spaces.
- Additional space for public use should be provided whenever possible and appropriate, especially along retail and commercial uses to encourage them to “spill” out from the indoors to outdoors and promote activity without overwhelming the areas provided for public use, creating pedestrian flow choke points, and obstructing free access and use of the waterfront.
- Recreational open space should have proximate supporting facilities such as changing rooms, showers, and rest rooms.
- Locations to support and provide services associated with boat landing.
- Storage space for seasonal or year-round needs for water-based activities.
- Restaurants or active uses that attract people to the waterfront.
- Interpretive or wayfinding facilities.
- Rental locations for kayaks or small boats.
- Changing rooms for the South Bay Harbor Trail network.

### **Implementation and Maintenance**

PDA # 69 requires that private landowners contribute the necessary rights-of-way

and construct streets and open spaces in phases as they develop the building parcels. All the open spaces and streets will be developed to high standards and will be fully accessible to the public. The landowners will be responsible for the long-term care and maintenance of the open spaces, while the new streets will be maintained by the City.

New parks within the Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan shall be designed and subsequently maintained to a first class quality standard with materials appropriate to the nature of the proposed use and the designs shall be subject to BPDA approval.

### **Park Ownership, Care, and Custody**

The publicness, economic feasibility, and the long-term maintenance costs of ensuring a high-quality public realm remain common objectives for all stakeholders.

There is a strong desire to have the open space be transferred into public ownership like the model established for A Street Park. A Street Park was transferred to the Boston Park Department but remains maintained by the property ownership. Another form of public control includes the easement the BPDA holds for the Harborwalk along the eastern edge of the Fort Point Channel in the planning area. While the new streets have been anticipated to be maintained by the City since 2006, the City of Boston now prefers that the streets be converted to public ways/city streets.

Agreements with the 100 Acres property owners contemplate transfer of the open spaces in fee or through easements or other perpetual property rights for passive or active recreational use. Subsurface rights/vertical limitations below the open spaces may occur due to utilities easements, parking garages or other private facilities.

While the new open spaces were intended to be initially held by the BPDA, ultimately, they were to be conveyed to a non-profit open space management entity established by the property owners and approved by the BPDA. The care and maintenance of open spaces after construction were to be managed through such management entity. (Additional recommendations regarding management and operations are included in page 84 of this report.)

The BPDA and BPD should collaborate with the property owners to explore the A Street Park model of transferring the open spaces to the Parks Department or

perhaps a new or established open space non-profit.

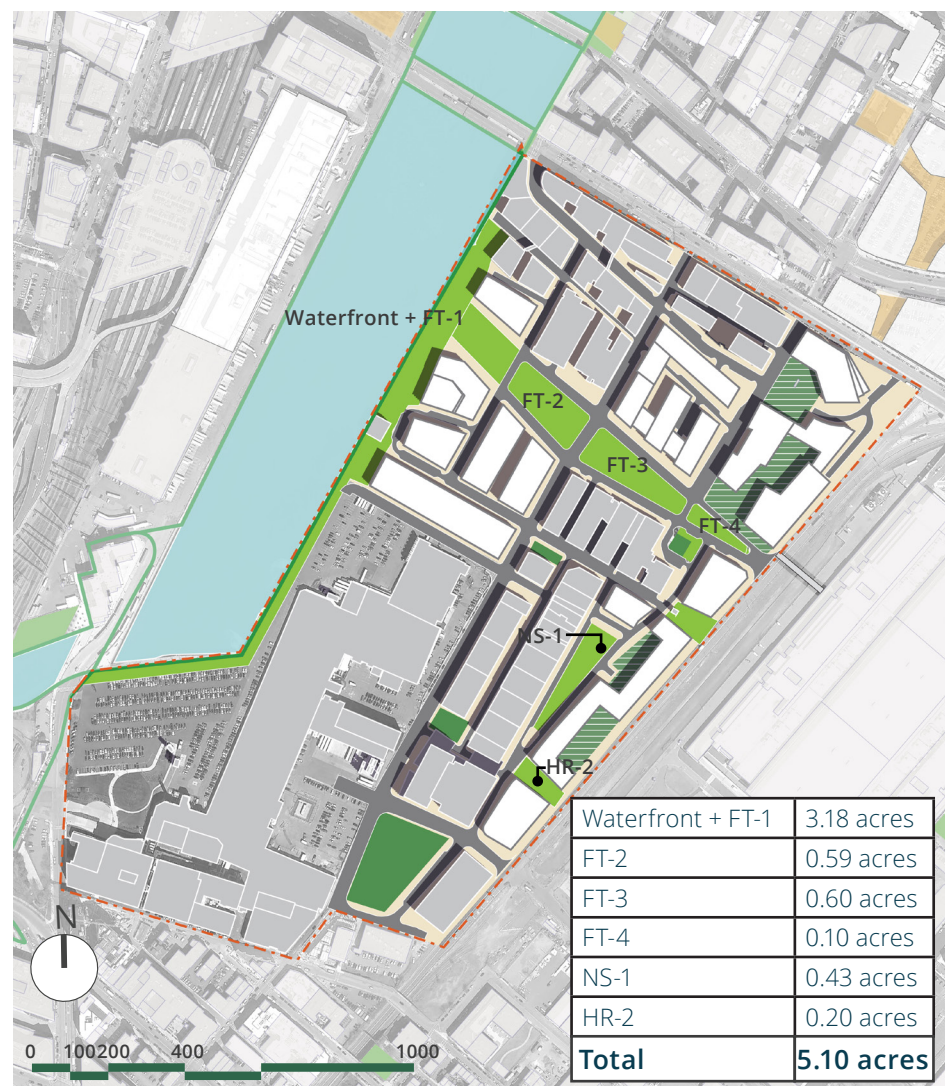
### Roadway and Park Alignments

Since the completion of the *100 Acres Master Plan* (2006), the City of Boston has been rethinking how roadways, existing and proposed, support better and safer pedestrian and bicycle access and other modes of transportation besides single occupancy vehicles. We have also looked to reduce paved roadways and increase true open space. The public realm objectives including the streets and park alignments were heavily focused in an angled north-west direction creating a physical and visual link between the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center across A Street to the Fort Point Channel and views to South Station and Downtown Boston. The angled configuration created complicated roadways with one-way pairs and oddly shaped parks that were difficult to program for diverse uses.

Through the Article 80 and design review of the projects at 15 Necco Street and 244-284 A Street, the proponent for both sites, in collaboration with the BPDA and City of Boston have developed refined and reduced roadway networks and additional and larger open spaces (FT-2) reflected in this report. Both proponents have committed and are required to design and construct their obligated public realm to be consistent with the design and program proposed in this report including integration for resilience to storm surge and sea-level rise, heat island, and stormwater management.

Similar refinements are suggested for the planning area east of A Street under control of the USPS. Roadway alignments and program have been modified to soften Wormwood Street to remain a local service connection for residents along the road along with ample pedestrian and bike access. Fort Point Boulevard will now act as the primary east-west roadway linking Necco Street through A Street and West Service Road to the South Boston Bypass. The South Bay Harbor Trail may have transitional/ alternative alignments either along the northern or southern edges of FT-2 and FT-3 based upon the timing and availability of rights-of-way lining the Trail to the cycle track network on West Service Road. The plan suggests reconfiguration of development parcels and open spaces in the USPS holdings, maintaining the ability to develop the entitlements authorized in PDA #69 but significantly improving open spaces, particularly FT-3 and FT-4. These changes will require continued public review and discussion and amendments to PDA #69 in collaboration with the USPS or successor entities.

### 2006 Fort Point Master Plan Framework



# Short-Term Actions

## Updating the Framework

The open space and road network shown in this Open Space Concept Plan document represents a proposed update to the framework of the 2006 100 Acres Master Plan and Planned Development Area (PDA) No. 69.

The updated framework:

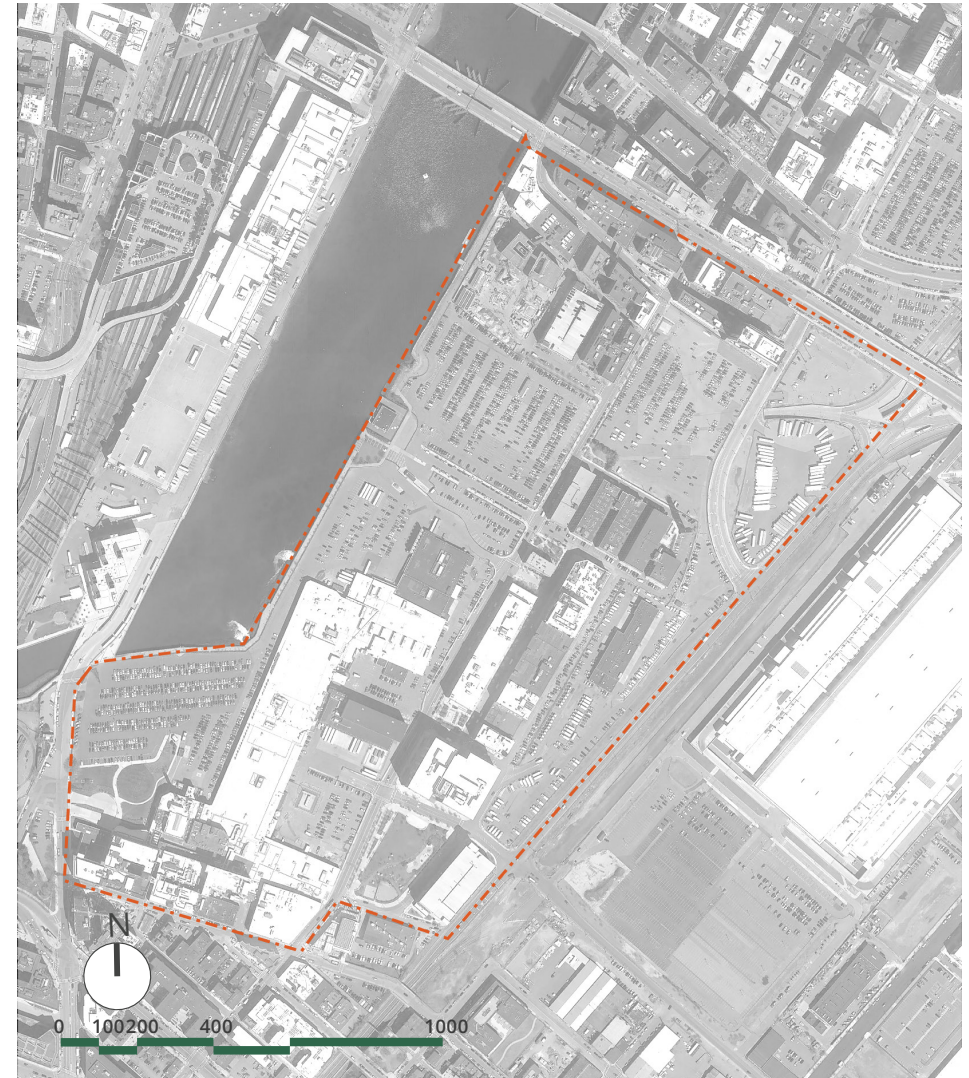
- Incorporates community feedback to refine the park shapes to create more usable open spaces
- Adjusts the road network slightly to reduce the conflicts between main vehicular corridors and park access and take into account the current mobility context, which has changed significantly from 2006.

Implementation will require an amendment to PDA 69 through a public engagement process.

## Near-term Activation to Increase Awareness and Grow Future Park Visitors

Expanding use and providing community activities does not need to wait until construction is complete. Temporary programming could begin sooner (as allowed with current COVID public health guidelines), beginning the process of making these spaces better known throughout the city and providing events for the local neighborhood. For example, the existing parking lots could host events, markets, or festivals, foreshadowing the types of activities that will be available when the new parks fully open.

## Existing Condition





Complementary events with well established festivals (BAMS Fest, Franklin Park, Boston)



Interactive art installations throughout the neighborhood ("Dance Spot Boston," Fort Point)

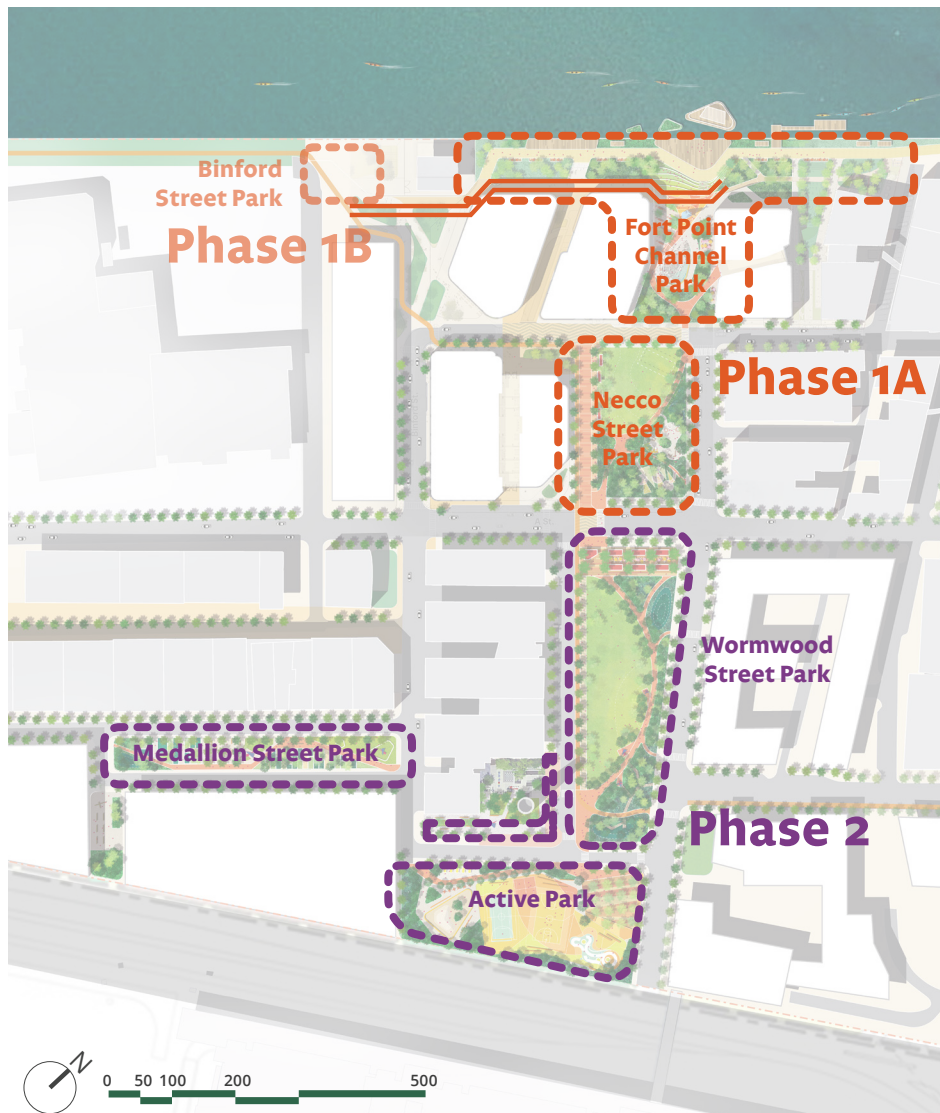


In-place installations to prompt community discussion ("We Will Imagine," Fort Point)



Temporary pop-up on surfaces to show future plans (Fosnavag, Norway)

# Phasing



## Phase 1

The initial phase of construction, Phase 1A, includes Fort Point Channel Park and Necco Street Park as well as the completion of the elevated berm. This phase is designed to create a connected park space— offering improved flood resilience—that functions as a citywide destination that also meets neighborhood recreation and green space needs. The park activities are designed to appeal to a range of ages, offer enough to do for an all-day excursion, and be welcoming to residents arriving from other Boston neighborhoods. The first phase offers a range of event spaces to further draw residents, workers, and visitors to the parks. Grills, picnic tables, play areas, places to sit, and complimentary indoor uses provide comfortable places to spend the day with family and friends. Phase 1A is currently in design, as part of the development plans of the adjacent parcels G4, G5, G6, and 15 Necco, which are currently going through the Article 80 development review process.

Phase 1B includes Parcels G7 and G8, along with improvements to Binford Street Park. The timing of this part of Phase 1 is unknown and would require Gillette selling this portion of their property.

Additional infrastructure improvements in this phase include:

- Extension and construction of Necco Street to Binford Street
- Construction of Channel Street and connection to Binford Street (this is now the alley-way and likely will not include drivable connection to Binford)
- Construction of Wormwood Street Extension between Necco Street and A Street



## Phase 2

The remainder of the park network, which falls on property currently owned by USPS, will be constructed in a second phase. The timing of this phase depends on when USPS decides to sell their land, which could be a number of years away. This phase includes Wormwood Street Park, the Active Park, and Medallion Street Park.

If implementation does not occur until after 2026, additional analysis and public input should be completed to identify any new open space needs to incorporate into the future parks. Specifically, analysis of active recreation needs should inform the final sports courts included in the Active Park. Currently, one full court of basketball, one tennis/pickleball court, and additional multiuse court space is included in the concept plan, but these uses should be refined based on priority needs when implementation occurs.

Additional infrastructure improvements in this phase include:

- Construction of Fort Point Avenue between Necco and A Street
- West Service Road Improvements
- Wormwood Street Improvements
- New construction of Fort Point Avenue to meet A Street
- New construction of Melcher Street connection to West Service Road
- New construction of Necco Alley Service Road connection to West Service Road
- New construction and improvements at New Street near the Wormwood smoke stack
- Medallion Avenue improvements
- Construction of New Street connection to Medallion Avenue and Binford Street Addition

## Permitting Considerations

The Open Space Concept Plan physically covers a variety of locations within the Fort Point neighborhood that equally span a variety of regulatory boundaries. Permitting for each parcel will be unique and should be identified early in each design process such that the guiding principles and concepts described in this document can be assessed against regulatory requirements. It is expected that specific requirements and guidelines defined by each regulatory body may result in adjustments to the concept plan—this is a natural part of the design process. However, the overarching design intent and programmatic goals should be adhered to as closely as possible.

## Resilience and Adaptation

Sea level rise projections should continue to be monitored and updated based on the most current science; if projections accelerate, additional elevation and adaptation of the waterfront parks may need to occur sooner. The waterfront berm is intended to be designed with this flexibility in mind and to be able to be incrementally elevated as needed in the future.

## Long-term Management

The Open Space Concept Plan provides a framework for a park that can adapt over time as community needs and preferences evolve. It is recommended that 20 years after construction, a new design process with robust community input is undertaken to create an updated park space. For Phase 1 parks, this new process would likely occur between 2040 and 2045.

# Summary of Design Intent

## **The design of the parks that make up the overall Fort Point open space network will continue to evolve as new community desires, development dynamics, and city opportunities arise.**

The Fort Point 100 Acres Open Space Concept Plan represents an overall vision based on the objective of creating an inclusive and welcoming park system and waterfront, and is reflective of the community process involved to date. In acknowledgment of the reality that the district continues to change and as the parks associated with each phase are implemented, the following list is provided as a guide that articulates design intent for all parks, and for each park in the Concept Plan.

## **All Parks**

- ❑ Destination-quality design, materials, and public amenities
- ❑ Supports four-season use and multi-generational use
- ❑ Clarity of public access
- ❑ Minimal regulatory signage
- ❑ Universal accessibility of all spaces, programs and pathways
- ❑ Overall design that celebrates ecology, resilience, and art
- ❑ Tree and plant selection to increase urban shade, promote biodiversity and habitat, and create a unique experience of urban wilderness
- ❑ Trees tolerant to salt spray in the Fort Point Channel Park
- ❑ Highlight resilience in the design of the open spaces, incorporating educational elements
- ❑ Celebrate creative expression by providing spaces for public art, performance, and music
- ❑ Promote waterfront access and wealth-building in inland neighborhoods, especially Chinatown, Roxbury, and Dorchester, for minority and immigrant Boston residents
- ❑ Park promenade that connects all open spaces
- ❑ Seamless design intent across property lines

## Fort Point Channel Park

- ❑ Provide an elevated line of protection at 21.5 feet (BCB) that eliminates/minimizes the need for deployables and meets the City of Boston standards for flood protection measures
- ❑ Provide an upland alternative to the Harborwalk with clear public access to create a convenient, accessible connection to the elevated plaza and alternative path of travel in the event of waterfront flooding
- ❑ Create a waterfront amphitheater with integrated seat walls facing the waterfront side of the elevated berm. Accessible and companion seating shall be provided at multiple locations throughout the amphitheater.
- ❑ Provide an accessible connection from the top of the plaza to the Harborwalk near the amphitheater
- ❑ Create an extended elevated plaza that maximizes waterfront views and public use
- ❑ While the property line bisects the plaza, it is the intent to ensure the plaza's design is seamless such that major design moves, materials, planting, and furnishings are unified across the space. Coordination among the adjacent property owners will be critical to achieving this outcome.
- ❑ Site a large-scale art-installation in the elevated plaza to act as a visual beacon from the Harborwalk and from the parks east of Necco Street. Ideally this art will be changed over time, drawing from a diverse set of local artists from across Boston's many neighborhoods.
- ❑ Locate an interactive water feature designed to encourage play in the sunniest part of the elevated plaza, with a shade structure and seating adjacent; ideally the design of the water feature would relate to an interactive story about environmental education, resilience, and climate change. Design the water feature area to be used and/or adaptable for other public uses during cooler weather.
- ❑ Offer publicly accessible seating throughout the elevated plaza including adjacent to the water feature, hammock grove, and amphitheater.
- ❑ Provide welcoming and accessible connections between the plaza and adjacent buildings; provide an indoor/outdoor relationship that is supportive of the larger vision
- ❑ Provide waterfront infrastructure that would allow an art barge, floating stage, or other waterfront vessel to dock near the amphitheater
- ❑ Support watersheet activation including small-craft boating, in-channel temporary art installations, and temporary waterside uses such as a floating stage or art barge
- ❑ Provide spaces and infrastructure suitable for small performances
- ❑ Establish the Waterfront Plaza as the central waterfront public open space within the district
- ❑ Design the Waterfront Plaza as a cohesive space that seamlessly integrates the waterfront development parcels
- ❑ Provide accessible pedestrian connections from the elevated plaza to Necco Street with paths under 5% grade alleviating the need for handrails
- ❑ Provide electrical infrastructure to support a flexibly-programmed elevated plaza
- ❑ Provide subsurface storage of stormwater where feasible to slow the rate and improve the quality of runoff from the park. Coordinate with the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC). Consider the use of surface landscape features to treat and clean stormwater prior to its introduction to the piped system.

## Necco Street Park

- ❑ Offer a flexible lawn space of approximately 0.4 acres, suitable to host both events and encourage casual play. The lawn should be designed to support a variety of activities including passive and active events. Encourage the use of reinforced turf to support necessary infrastructure and wear and tear from larger events.
- ❑ Design the lawn to encourage use, especially by families and children. Signage and design should not discourage use or feel too “precious” to be enjoyed.
- ❑ Establish a pedestrian promenade along the north side of the lawn that creates a sweeping connection through the park to the Fort Point Channel Park
- ❑ Plant an urban forest canopy to the north of the lawn and promenade that creates shade and enhances biodiversity and ecological health of the district
- ❑ Provide shaded grills and picnic tables within the urban forest area
- ❑ Create a nature-based play area buffered from vehicular roads in proximity to the grill area
- ❑ Design a linear plaza along the park’s southern edge that can host temporary markets (food, crafts, arts, holiday, etc.) and food trucks. Prioritize vendors based in inland neighborhoods such as Roxbury, Dorchester, and Chinatown and/or minority-owned businesses.
- ❑ Design the portion of Necco Street between Necco Street Park and the Fort Point Channel Park to be a flush (tabled) crossing with materials such as concrete unit pavers to signal pedestrian primacy and extend the expression of the park
- ❑ Provide subsurface storage of stormwater where feasible to slow the rate and improve the quality of runoff from the park. Coordinate with the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC). Consider the use of surface landscape features to treat and clean stormwater prior to its introduction to the piped system.

## Wormwood Street Park

- ❑ Create a permanent, shaded market space along A Street with supporting electrical infrastructure
- ❑ Provide an “art-walk” promenade through the park that also includes environmental education interpretive signage
- ❑ Designate about two-thirds of the park to a flexible lawn space and about one-quarter of the park to stormwater gardens, pollinator gardens, or other landscapes that highlight ecology and performative vegetation
- ❑ Slope the park so stormwater will flow into the stormwater gardens
- ❑ Site benches throughout, providing spaces to sit and enjoy the park, both individually and in groups
- ❑ Connect the park to an extended plaza around the landmark Wormwood smoke stack
- ❑ Provide subsurface storage of stormwater where feasible to slow the rate and improve the quality of runoff from the park. Coordinate with the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC). Consider the use of surface landscape features to treat and clean stormwater prior to its introduction to the piped system.
- ❑ Provide flexibility to respond to changing programmatic needs in this neighborhood when implementation occurs

## Active Park

- ❑ Create a graphic character that is bold and colorful, drawing upon the creative, arts-based identity of the neighborhood
- ❑ Site at least one full-sized basketball court along with other active recreation programs to be determined based on current needs (for example a second basketball court, tennis or pickleball court, multi-use court, or other sports use)
- ❑ Locate the dog park at the southern edge of this park to minimize conflicts with residential uses and keep the fenced area at the edge of the main park space
- ❑ Buffer the Active Park from noise and traffic along the Haul Road, while striking a balance with visibility into park
- ❑ Provide subsurface stormwater storage with excess capacity to support the larger neighborhood stormwater system function. Coordinate with the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC). Promote infiltration, if feasible, and water quality improvements through the perimeter planting.
- ❑ Provide flexibility to respond to changing programmatic needs in this neighborhood when implementation occurs

## Medallion Street Park

- ❑ Provide a mix of neighborhood-oriented uses including community garden plots. Additional uses should be finalized based on needs at time of construction of this park and could include, for example, fitness stations, pollinator gardens, stormwater gardens, art pockets, or seating areas.
- ❑ Locate the additional community garden plots in the part of the park that has the least amount of shading by adjacent buildings
- ❑ Provide flexibility to respond to changing programmatic needs in this neighborhood when implementation occurs

The background features a teal-to-dark-teal gradient. Three stylized fish are swimming in the upper half, and a fourth is partially visible on the right edge. The fish are depicted with simple shapes and colors like yellow, orange, and black.

# Acknowledgments



# Acknowledgments

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Core Team and Consultants on a socially-distanced walking tour, August 2020

