



2024 Master Plan for Hingham Harbor Hingham, Massachusetts

Funding provided by the:
Community Preservation Committee

Photo Credit: Jack Burns



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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Using Community Preservation Funds, the Town of Hingham awarded the development of a new Master Plan specific to Hingham Harbor to the firm Beals and Thomas, Inc. (B+T) in 2022. This plan is intended to complement the Hingham Master Plan, adopted in August 2021, as well as other recent studies, and to update the 2007 Master Plan for Hingham Harbor, with the goal to create a detailed vision for the harbor for the next 10+ years. This Master Plan for Hingham Harbor (herein referred to as 'the Master Plan') is the result of a collaborative effort between the Town, the Harbor Development Committee (HDC) and the Trustees of the Bathing Beach (BBT), with the goal to engage as many people as possible to identify potential ideas and possibilities to enhance Hingham's treasured harbor.

As this Master Plan progressed, there were on-going simultaneous design efforts, construction activities, zoning amendments, and land acquisitions within the Town and specifically the Inner Harbor which contributed to the planning decisions, preferences, and priorities reflected in this final Master Plan. Municipal master planning must be fluid in its process and adaptable to respond to changing needs and resources of the municipality, environmental conditions, and political or regulatory requirements. This Master Plan strives to provide guidance to the Town, while offering flexibility and alternative concepts to explore.

The Master Plan began with an extensive site analysis, evaluating both existing Inner Harbor conditions, applicable local, state and federal regulations which would inform design decisions, and relative projects that could also impact the Master Plan. The most notable and constraining factors for development of the Inner Harbor are related to environmental considerations relative to flood zones and coastal resources areas; local zoning which limits particular uses in the Official and Open Space district which encompasses the majority of the Inner Harbor; and parking requirements, which limit the use of any public building due to the lack of available parking along the Harbor.

The existing conditions analysis revealed such features as an incomplete Harborwalk, mismatched and inadequate site amenities (i.e.: inconsistent bench styles and no bike racks), underutilized and often empty spaces (Town Wharf, Whitney Wharf, and Veterans Park), minimal areas of shade, and inaccessible walkways. However, the significant amount of undeveloped public open space along the waterfront offers opportunities to enhance and improve upon the features that are successful, and to develop new amenities to encourage public use and enjoyment of the Inner Harbor.

Following the site analysis, a comprehensive community engagement process was undertaken. The HDC directly contacted over 60 stakeholders representing nearly 40 different municipal departments, boards, committees, civic groups, and property owners, to request their feedback. Three public sessions were held to solicit input on the community's vision for the Inner Harbor. Multiple meetings were held with various Town staff members to evaluate the options for the Master Plan.

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The final Master Plan includes recommendations for both physical improvements and programming features for near term and long term activation of the Inner Harbor, as well as Hingham Harbor design standards to follow as implementing the Master Plan. Some of the key recommendations include:

- layout of the Harborwalk extension and integration with the Route 3A Corridor Re-design Project's Shared Use Path
- a new playground and designated accessible picnic areas
- increased native landscaping and shade trees
- accessible walkways and gathering spaces to encourage users of all abilities and ages
- standard site amenities such as shade structures, matching benches, picnic tables, bike racks, and lighting
- multi-purpose lawn area for informal games or fitness classes
- renovated former bath house for public restrooms
- opportunities for art and educational/historic signage and interactive exhibits
- expanded accessible parking
- reorganized veterans memorial areas on Whitney Wharf
- preservation of Steamboat Wharf as a conservation area and nature sanctuary

2.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2024 Master Plan for Hingham Harbor herein was prepared for the Town of Hingham by Beals and Thomas, Inc. However, such an endeavor was only made possible by the commitment, enthusiasm, support and participation by the community, harbor landowners, and businesses, as well as municipal organizations. Specifically, B+T and the Town would like to acknowledge the contributions from the following:

HINGHAM HARBOR DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (2022-current)

Nick Amdur
Marco Boer, Chair
Peter Branagan
Amy Cowan
Katie Doran Cutler
Paul Gannon
Allison Koskina
William Reardon, Emeritus
Brian Tomasell

TRUSTEES OF THE BATHING BEACH (2022)

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Alan Perrault
Adrienne Ramsey

COMMUNITY PLANNING DIRECTOR

Emily Wentworth

TOWN ENGINEER

JR Frey

HARBORMASTER

Ken Corson

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Tom Mayo

3.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to thoughtfully develop a Master Plan which would provide a cohesive and identifiable look for the iconic Hingham Inner Harbor. Such a proposal was designed to include programming and spaces to attract users of all ages and abilities; and can be developed in phases that are aligned with the Town's needs and resources. As such, the following guiding principles were developed to return to throughout the planning process.

Cohesive : Develop a Master Plan with design standards for a cohesive and consistent Inner Harbor look and feel that is distinctly "Hingham."

Inclusive : Develop a Master Plan that provides programming and spaces to attract users of all ages and abilities.

Attainable : Develop a Master Plan that is attainable, such that it can be developed in phases as needed and can be maintained by the Town resources available.



4.0 UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

- 4.1 LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS
- 4.2 PAST, CURRENT, & UPCOMING RELATIVE PROJECTS
- 4.3 GENERAL SITE ANALYSIS
- 4.4 EXISTING HARBOR INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

To begin a master plan, it is critical to understand the context and parameters in which the project falls. These parameters may include regulatory considerations, knowledge about surrounding context and/or upcoming projects that may be relative to the master planning effort, and a clear understanding of the existing conditions.

These parameters and surrounding context do not just mean constraints, but also opportunities that are available. Furthermore, understanding the context is not meant to stifle creativity but instead encourage creative solutions.

A blank slate is boring!

4.1 LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Local Zoning

The subject parcels, known collectively as Hingham Harbor, are located within two different underlying zoning districts and two overlay districts. A summary of these districts and associated regulations is outlined below. However, all development proponents should refer to the effective version of the Zoning By-Law for complete information regarding zoning requirements.

- **Waterfront Business District**, which generally permits commercial uses that enhance the waterfront, such as marinas, restaurants, and select types of retail stores.
- **Official and Open Space District**, which generally allows institutional and public facilities such as places of worship, schools or playgrounds, premises for government use, and private non-profit uses.
- **Hingham Harbor Overlay District**, whose stated purpose is “To promote access to and the use and enjoyment of the land and water along Hingham’s inner harbor, while protecting and enhancing its cultural, scenic and natural character.”
- **Flood Protection Overlay District**, based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps discussed below.

Waterfront Business District

The Waterfront Business District encourages low-profile development with a maximum building height of 20 feet. The subject parcels within the Waterfront Business District are also located within the Harbor Overlay District, however, which allows for a maximum building height of 28 feet measured from roof peak height and a maximum wall height of 20 feet. The maximum percentage of the lot which may be covered by buildings is 25%. The Waterfront Business District has specific definitions for yard measurements where the lot is bounded by the high-water mark.

The following demonstrates certain allowable uses in the Waterfront Business District. Please note, however, that this District also underlays the Floodplain Protection Overlay District as well as the Hingham Harbor Overlay District. These Overlays apply additional use regulations that may prohibit certain uses listed for the Waterfront Business District. A use or development which would otherwise be prohibited in the Floodplain Protection Overlay District may be allowable by Special Permit if it meets the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) generally and 44 CFR 60.3 specifically, as well as the provisions of the Massachusetts Building Code that address construction in floodplains.

Waterfront Business District Allowable Uses:

- Schools and playgrounds
- Marinas
- Boat livery
- Sales, storage, and repair of boats, boat trailers, and marine accessories

4.1 LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Allowable Uses by Special Permit:

- Public parks, libraries and museums
- Private non-profit community center, library or museum
- Country, golf, swimming, skating, or yachting club or social, civic, or recreational lodge or club not conducted as a business
- Public utility buildings or structures
- Retail store
- Craft, consumer, or commercial establishment dealing directly with general public
- Sit-down restaurant
- Fast-food/takeout restaurant
- Business or professional office or agency
- Retail sale of alcoholic beverages
- Marine-oriented retail store and consumer services for general public

The Official and Open Space District

The Official and Open Space District generally encourages public open space and municipal and private non-profit uses. This zoning district allows a maximum of 10% of the lot to be covered by all buildings. Furthermore, a minimum of 15% of the lot area must be maintained in its natural state or landscaped. However, contiguous parcels separately deeded to the Town may be considered a single parcel for the purposes of determining minimum yard dimensions within the District.

Official and Open Space District Allowable Uses:

- Seasonal sale of cut Christmas trees
- Church/place of worship, parish house, rectory, convent, other religious institutions
- Schools or playgrounds

Allowable Uses by Special Permit:

- Nursery school, daycare and privately organized camps
- Public parks, libraries and museums
- Country, golf, swimming, skating, or yachting club or social, civic, or recreational lodge or club not conducted as a business
- Outdoor concession as an accessory use when supporting permitted athletic field uses
- Farmers market

4.1 LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Hingham Harbor Overlay District

The Harbor Overlay District encourages water-dependent uses, such as marinas, public boat basins, recreational boating facilities, and other public facilities for enjoyment of the water. The maximum building height must not exceed two stories, and 28 feet measured to the peak of the building. The maximum wall height of the building must not exceed 20 feet. This overlay district applies additional design review criteria and dimensional requirements in support of the waterfront character.

When the Hingham Harbor Overlay District contains an underlying Official and Open Space district, the minimum rear yard along the waterfront shall be 10 feet from the existing sea wall or, if none, from the mean high-water mark.

The following demonstrates certain allowable water-dependent uses within the Hingham Harbor Overlay District. All subject parcels are located wholly within the Hingham Harbor Overlay District, whereas some are only partially located in the Floodplain Protection Overlay District. As noted previously, certain uses noted below may be prohibited in the Floodplain Protection Overlay District, with the potential for use by Special Permit provided that the use also meets the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) generally and 44 CFR 60.3 specifically, as well as the provisions of the Massachusetts Building Code that address construction in floodplains.

Any building within the Hingham Harbor Overlay District that affects exterior architectural features and requires Site Plan Review or a Building Permit is subject to Design Review by the Planning Board.

Water Dependent Uses:

- Marinas
- Public boat basins (also referred to as the public mooring field)
- Other public or private commercial or recreational boating facilities, such as a sailing club, rowing club and/or other organized boating facility
- Public facilities for fishing, swimming, and boat launching
- Parks, esplanades, boardwalks, and other pedestrian facilities that promote use and enjoyment of the water by the general public and are located at or near the water's edge

Uses Accessory to a Water Dependent Use:

- Offices primarily providing services to a Water Dependent Use (such as Harbormaster, other public safety, marina management or lifeguard offices), and related indoor storage
- Public restrooms, including bathhouses
- Snack Stands

4.1 LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Floodplain Protection Overlay District

The Floodplain Protection Overlay District is subject to the local floodplain management regulations. The development or construction of buildings, wall dams, or other structures is prohibited, aside from certain recreational developments such as footpaths so long as watercourses are not affected. Alteration of sand dunes is prohibited when the alteration would increase potential flood damage.

As noted previously, a use or development which would otherwise be prohibited in the Floodplain Protection Overlay District may be allowable by Special Permit if it meets the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) generally and 44 CFR 60.3 specifically, as well as the provisions of the Massachusetts Building Code that address construction in floodplains.

Allowable Uses by Right:

- Conservation of soil water, plants and wildlife
- Outdoor recreation including play and sporting areas, nature study, boating, fishing and hunting where otherwise legally permitted
- Proper operation and maintenance of dams and other water control devices
- Farming, nurseries, truck gardening and harvesting of crops
- Accessory uses, such as flower or vegetable gardens, lawns, pasture or forestry areas
- The repair, rebuilding, modification or enlargement of buildings or other structures in the FPOD that existed prior to January 1, 1969

Allowable Uses by Special Permit:

- Docks, piers, duck walks and boat landings
- Appropriate municipal uses, such as water-works pumping stations and parks
- Temporary storage of materials or equipment
- Seawalls and other coastal defenses, dams, excavations, or changes in watercourses to create ponds or pools for swimming or other recreation or agriculture use, scenic features or for drainage improvements

Additional Applicable Zoning Requirements

Site Plan Review Standards apply to projects that result in a certain level of land disturbance, generally 5,000 SF or greater, and uses that require a certain type of Special Permit. The Planning Board administers Site Plan Review applications.

Parking Standards apply in all zoning districts in order to create safe and convenient off-street parking for development. Generally, parking is required to be located on the same parcel as the use unless a waiver is granted by the Planning Board to allow parking on an adjoining property. If a structure, activity or any portion thereof may contain more than one land use, the parking requirement should be calculated to account for the greatest number of required spaces.

The Inner Harbor generally has limited space for off-street parking, constraining the development potential.

4.1 LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Other Regulations

Historic Districts Bylaw

The western side of the study area, including the Grove, Bathing Beach, Bandstand, Boat Ramp, and Town Wharf properties, is located in a local historic district. The Lincoln Extension (Phase II) Historic District was adopted in 1989 and contains more than a hundred historic resources recognized by the National Register of Historic Places, as well as several locally recognized historic resources. Work within the boundaries of the District is subject to review by the Historic Districts Commission.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

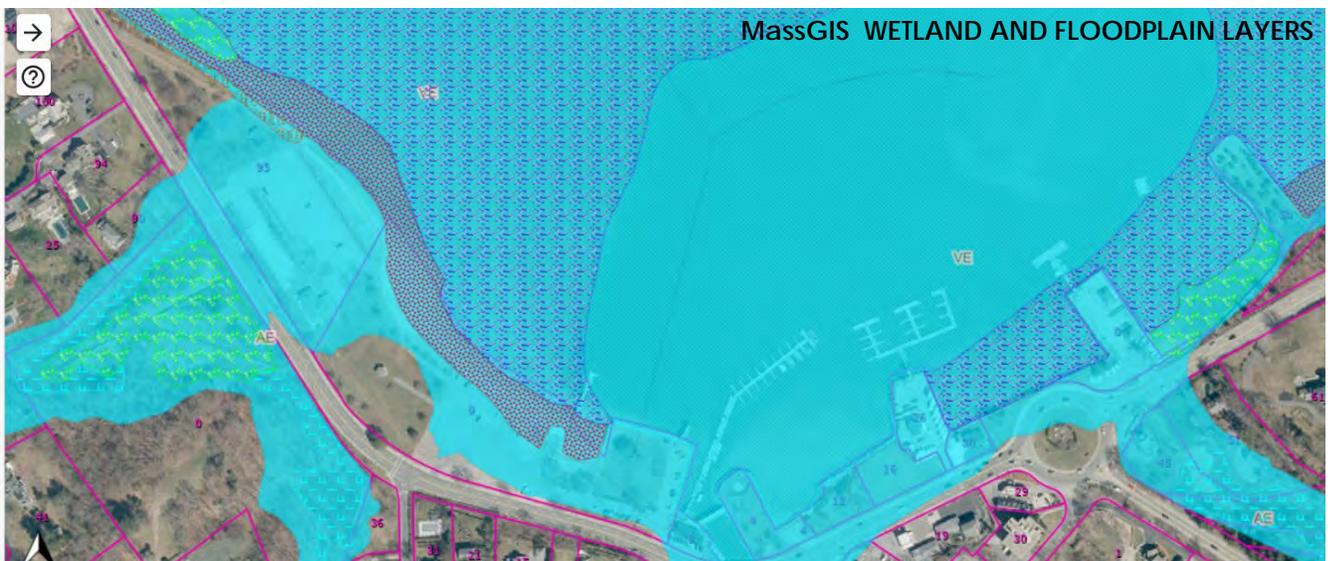
Certain properties along the harbor that fall outside of the Historic District but are listed on the Historic Assets Inventory are subject to the Demolition Delay Bylaw (i.e. 3, Otis Street, 26 Summer Street, 30 Summer Street, and Barnes Wharf). Demolition Delay is administered by the Historical Commission.

State Wetlands Protection Act and Local Wetlands Protection Bylaw

The majority of Hingham's Inner Harbor is subject to the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the local Bylaw and associated Wetland Regulations. Work within a wetland resource area or within 100 feet of wetland resource areas is subject to review by the Conservation Commission. The following is a summary of these jurisdictional resource areas that are found along the inner harbor:

- Coastal Beach and Coastal Bank
- Tidal Flat
- Salt Marsh
- Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage (LSCSF) (VE or AE Zone)
- Land Containing Shellfish (LCS)

The majority of the Harbor is within a Velocity Zone or AE Zone which are considered Special Flood Hazard Zones. The Hingham Wetland Regulations allow for reconstruction of existing structures in these areas if built using flood resistant construction and also, if built to allow "free passage of flood waters", however, new structures are prohibited.



4.1 LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS

State and Federal Jurisdiction

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)

Any work proposed seaward of the current or historic high-water mark is subject to approval by MassDEP under Chapter 91 (310 CMR 9.00)

At the time of this Master Plan issuance, MassDEP is in the process of adopting its “Resiliency 1.0 Regulatory Update”. The proposed revisions would update the Commonwealth’s:

- Waterways Regulations (aka Chapter 91) at 310 CMR 9.00;
- Wetlands Protection Act Regulations at 314 CMR 10.00;
- 401 Water Quality Certification Regulations at 314 CMR 9.00; and
- Stormwater Management Handbook

The revisions are intended to increase the Commonwealth’s resiliency to the impacts of climate change. Relevant updates include:

- Requiring consideration of projected sea level rise in new, amended, or renewal license applications (Ch. 91)
- Creating performance standards for Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage
- Incorporating nature-based shoreline protection
- Allowing for elevating and relocating roads and water dependent uses in certain situations
- Creating a permitting pathway for scientific research projects for climate change and sea level rise
- Updating precipitation data to reflect present and future storm conditions
- Promoting nature-based Environmentally Sensitive Site Design (ESSD) and Low Impact Development (LID)

Adoption of these revisions and any subsequent revisions will be applicable to the Master Plan.

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Work requiring state permits or funds will require a Project Notification Form from the Massachusetts Historical Commission

Coastal Zone Management

Work subject to federal permitting will require a Consistency Review by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management

Article 97

Art. 97 declares the conservation of natural resources a public purpose and provides that land or easements subject to Art. 97 shall not be used for other purposes or disposed of without a two-thirds roll call vote of the Legislature. Several of the Inner Harbor public properties are mapped as Art. 97 land, and therefore their use and any proposed redevelopment, shall remain aligned with Art. 97.

4.1 LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Property Control

Each publicly owned parcel along the Inner Harbor is managed by a different entity, each requiring its own review and approval of any proposed site improvements. Furthermore, any proposed site improvements, whether public or private, may be subject to review and approval by the following entities:

Hingham Inner Harbor Public Land							
Address	95 Otis	0 Otis	4 Summer	12/16 Summer	30 Summer	0 Summer	50 Summer
Known as	Bathing Beach	The Bandstand Town Wharf	Whitney Wharf P.O.W/ M.I.A. Memorial Park	Veterans Park/Mobil Station Site	30 Summer St.	Barnes Wharf	Steamboat Wharf
Control	Trustees of Hingham Bathing Beach	Town of Hingham/ Recreation	Town of Hingham	Town of Hingham	Town of Hingham	Town of Hingham	Town of Hingham
Zoning District	Official and Open Space	Official and Open Space	Official and Open Space	Official and Open Space	Waterfront Business	Official and Open Space	Official and Open Space
Overlay District	Harbor	Harbor	Harbor	Harbor	Harbor	Harbor	Harbor
Historic	Lincoln Historic District	Lincoln Historic District	Historic Assets Inventory	Historic Assets Inventory			
Flood plain OD	Partial	Partial	Entirely	Entirely	Entirely	Entirely	Entirely

4.2 PAST, CURRENT & UPCOMING RELATIVE PROJECTS

The Town of Hingham has been actively improving the Inner Harbor in recent years, with a specific focus on public access, resiliency, and open space. Recent improvements to the Harbor include the construction of the following: Whitney Wharf Pedestrian Bridge, Bathhouse/Snack Stand, portions of the Harborwalk, and resiliency improvements at the Bathing Beach.

Concurrent with this Master Plan process, the Town's harbor development projects continued to be underway in various stages of design, permitting and construction. The following is a list of current and upcoming projects which will directly impact the Inner Harbor.

1. Boat Launch at Town Wharf (completed summer 2022)
2. Barnes Wharf Floats (completed summer 2023)
3. Harbormaster Building (ongoing design and permitting)
4. Raise Wharfs (ongoing design and permitting)
5. Route 3A Corridor Re-design (2027 construction commencement)

Route 3A Corridor Re-design

The Route 3A Corridor Re-design includes the following key features relative to the Inner Harbor:

- The Route 3A Rotary is reconfigured into a modern roundabout, with improved safety and accessibility for all transportation modes.
- Summer Street and North Street intersection improvements provide a left turn lane for left turns onto Water Street and North Street, while providing improved pedestrian connections across 3A from downtown and along the waterfront
- The Route 3A re-design project includes a 10' wide shared use path. Beginning at its westernmost point, the shared use path runs easterly immediately adjacent to Route 3A. However, at the easternmost edge of the Town Wharf property, the shared use path jogs north and then east, connecting to the Harborwalk which runs behind the commercial property at 3 Otis Street, across the Whitney Wharf Bridge, and across P.O.W/M.I.A. Memorial Park. The shared use path picks up again at Veteran's Park and continues easterly through the middle of the 12/16 Summer Street properties, across the driveway to Hingham Maritime, behind the 30 Summer Street building along the waterfront, until it ultimately meets back up with Route 3A at the rotary and once again continues easterly, along the edge of Summer Street.



4.2 PAST, CURRENT & UPCOMING RELATIVE PROJECTS

Beach Management Plan

In 2015 the Conservation Commission approved a Beach Management Plan, developed by the Town with Polaris Consultants, for the Bathing Beach. The plan was developed with the objectives of maintaining the beach profile, preserving recreational opportunities, protecting infrastructure upland of the beach from storm surge, continuing the operation of the boat ramp, and minimizing the movement of sand into the mooring field and boat ramp. This plan remains the guide for managing and protecting this coastal asset while preserving its recreational value.

Resiliency Improvements

The Town of Hingham is in the preliminary design phase of resiliency improvements to foreshore structures along the Inner Harbor to reduce impacts of climate change and sea level rise. Extensive prior planning efforts, including research and multiple studies by the Town and its consultants, have ultimately given the Town a level of confidence and support in its plan for resiliency improvements. These resiliency efforts include reconstruction of the Inner Harbor walls along Town Wharf, Veterans Park, and Barnes Wharf. The design elevation of the walls is 11-foot NAVD88, which is approximately four (4) feet higher than the existing walls and consistent with those at Whitney Wharf. This effort was approved at the 2021 April Town Meeting after a long deliberative process with support of many stakeholders and studies.

The project will provide a greater level of protection for the study area as well as the adjoining state highway and nearby downtown. The design strikes a balance between projected costs and projected impacts associated with sea level rise. Should sea-level rise be worse than predicted in the decades ahead, the Town should plan for additional resiliency measures.

Current/previous planning documents reviewed

The Town of Hingham has been at the forefront of municipal planning for decades. In preparing this Master Plan, B+T reviewed the following current and preceding planning documents for reference and to ensure compatibility between the recommendations of all documents.

- Draft ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, Institute for Human Centered Design, 2022
- Town of Hingham Master Plan, approved August 23, 2021
- Hingham Harbor and Downtown Sustainable Vision Plan, June 2021
- Hingham Rapid Recovery Plan, 2021
- Rapid Recovery Planning Program, Funding Assistance Summary Report, 2021
- Hingham Community Resilience Building Workshops, Summary of Findings, June 26, 2019
- Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2016-2023
- Master Plan for Hingham Harbor, July 2007

4.3 SITE ANALYSIS

Regional/Local Transportation

Hingham Harbor is located to the southwest of Boston. Cars are the primary mode of transportation for residents of Hingham. Public transportation does exist to connect Hingham to Boston via commuter rail, MBTA bus, or ferry. While there are several modes of public transportation to attract visitors to Hingham, less public transportation options exist for Hingham residents looking to travel from their homes to the harbor. Local residents will likely travel by car or bike when visiting the Harbor.

The Inner Harbor is an ideal biking distance from the Hingham Ferry Terminal, Nantasket Junction and West Hingham Commuter Rail Stations, and from many residential homes within Hingham. The needs of cyclists should be incorporated into the final design to encourage this environmentally friendly mode of transit. Bike amenities such as bike racks, at a minimum, and possibly bike share stations, should be incorporated into the final design of the Harbor Master Plan.



4.3 SITE ANALYSIS

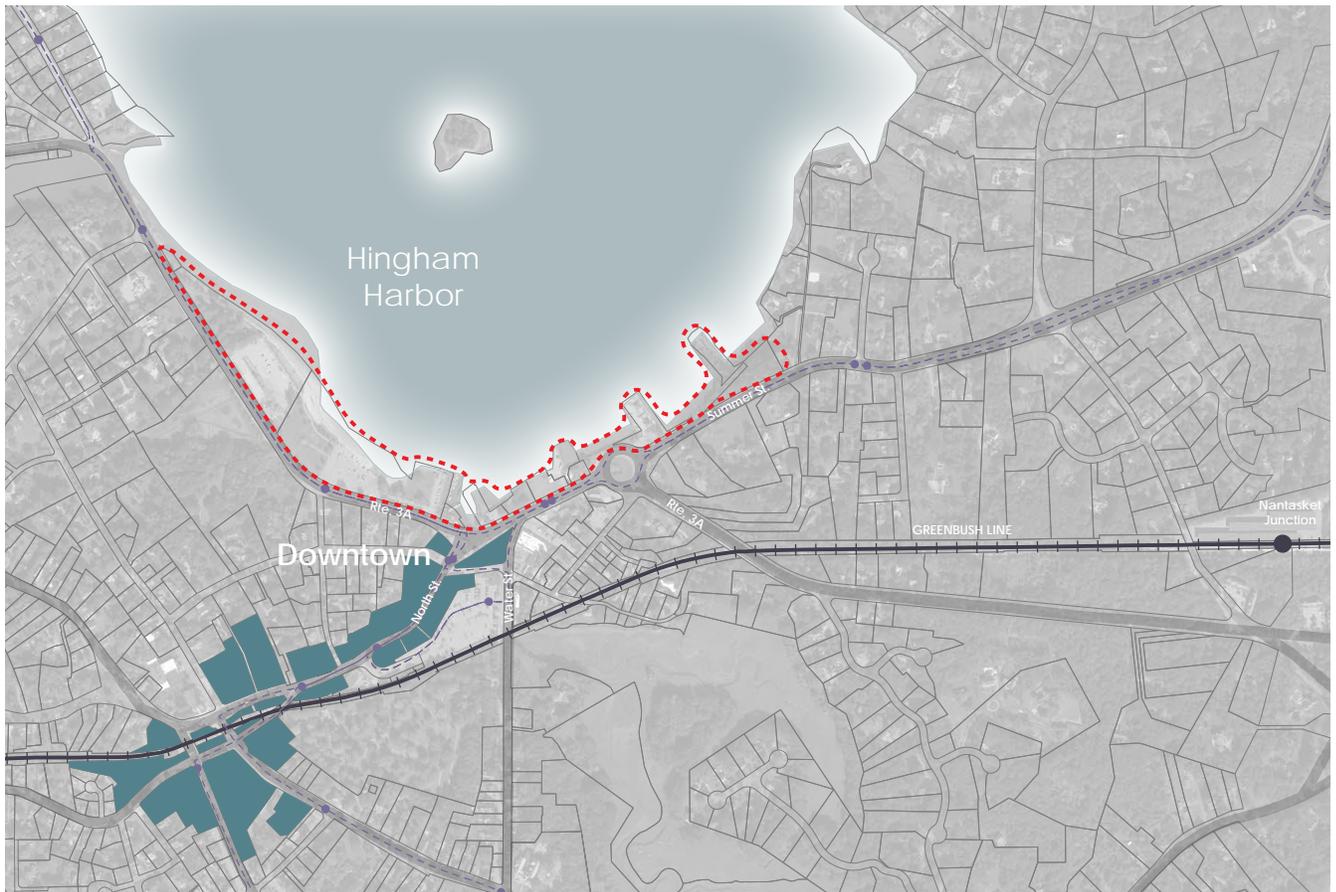
Land Use

There are a variety of types of open space near the harbor including: conservation, recreation, historical and cultural. The Inner Harbor itself is primarily designated for open space use. All open space parcels are also town owned. Only two parcels on the Inner Harbor, both privately owned, host commercial uses, including a coffee shop and marinas.

Hingham Downtown

The Inner Harbor is located perpendicular and north of Hingham's Downtown district. While the harbor offers visitors many outdoor recreation opportunities, the downtown area offers more indoor activities like dining and shopping. This inverse relationship between indoor and outdoor recreation makes this area an ideal spot for tourists to spend the whole day.

With the completion of the Route 3A improvements, it is anticipated that pedestrians will feel safer and more easily be able to cross Route 3A. Once people feel safer traveling between the harbor and downtown, both spaces are expected to gain more foot traffic.



4.3 SITE ANALYSIS

Mooring Inventory and Public Docks

The Town of Hingham currently has only three transient moorings. Moorings are managed by the Harbormaster.

Public docks for water-bound visitors to the Inner Harbor, are limited. Additionally, there is a 30 minute time restriction on usage of public docks. This restriction discourages visitors arriving by water to the Inner Harbor and Downtown. The Town should consider adding additional transient moorings and public docks to provide further water recreation opportunities and harbor usage by the community.

Aquaculture (Oyster Farming/Harvesting) in the Harbor

Aquaculture, or oyster farming and harvesting, is not presently permitted in the Town of Hingham, nor is it permissible to harvest shellfish generally given a classification made to the native shellfish population as “conditionally restricted” in the 1970s. The Division of Marine Fisheries has maintained this restriction to date, with a majority of the Harbor now classified as “Prohibited” for Shellfish Growing Areas, and the areas east of Barnes Wharf being “Conditionally Restricted.” These classifications relate to Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Please refer to Section 10 of this Master Plan for more information on a possible grant that may make aquaculture possible in Hingham Harbor.

4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

General Inner Harbor Summary

The following is a general summary of existing Inner Harbor conditions, which are further described in detail and with photographs in the subsequent pages.

- There is limited parking, especially on the eastern portion of the Inner Harbor
- Site amenities, including benches, site lighting, and trash receptacles are mismatched and either inaccessible or in disrepair
- There are no bike racks throughout the entire Inner Harbor
- There are minimal opportunities for shade across the Inner Harbor
- The Harborwalk is a desirable feature, although terminates at the end of the boat ramp parking lot
- There are few to no organized amenity areas or features for younger and older generations - no play features, and many inaccessible areas.
- There are few opportunities for visitor access from the water, due to limited visitor docks and time limitations for usage
- With the exception of the privately owned Red Eye Coffee Roasters, and the seasonally dependent Beach House "snack shack", there are no waterfront dining options available

4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY





4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

The Grove & Bathing Beach (95 Otis Street)

Although not locally known as the Grove, this title was coined in the 2007 Master Plan for Hingham Harbor by Marc Mazzealli. Seemingly appropriately named, B+T has continued to refer to this gently sloping treed area at the westerly limit of Hingham Inner Harbor as the Grove. This triangular piece of land, sandwiched between Route 3A, the Inner Harbor, and the Bathing Beach parking lot, is one of the few shaded locations along the entire Inner Harbor. The brick Harborwalk begins at the western edge of the parcel where it meets 3A, and runs along the north side of the Grove, punctuated by mismatched benches. The former bath house building remains, although not currently in use.

The Bathing Beach, under the control and management of the Trustees of Hingham Bathing Beach, is one of the Harbor's greatest assets for public access to the water. The beach is supported by a large parking lot, providing the greatest amount of consolidated public parking along the Harbor. The Harborwalk continues between the parking lot and a dune, landscaped with beach grasses and other native plantings. This dune in combination with a buried wall, were engineered to protect the beach and adjacent parking lot from the effects of storm surge and sea level rise.

The Beach House, which opened in 2020, provides public bathrooms, a small community room, and a "snack shack" kitchen that is leased and run by a local established restaurant company. The Beach House "snack shack" is open every day throughout the summer, offering beach-goers and patrons food and desserts while enjoying incredible views of the Harbor. However, the legal constraints associated with the community room have resulted in no interested caterers, leaving the room underutilized.

Trash management at Bathing Beach is an on-going issue raised by residents.

Sand migration down Bathing Beach is an on-going issue. A 2015 Beach Management Plan, including sand nourishment, as referenced in Section 4.2 of this Master Plan, has been approved by the Conservation Commission to address this issue.



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

The Grove & Bathing Beach (95 Otis Street)

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Creation of an Inner Harbor “gateway” at beginning of Harborwalk/3A intersection – A possible expansion of the proposed Route 3A landscape improvements in this location
- Implementation of tranquil and accessible seating/picnic areas within shade of the Grove
- Exterior facade improvements and utilization of former bath house building for accessible bathrooms, storage, outdoor showers, etc.
- Implementation of a solution for trash



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

The Bandstand & Town Wharf (o Otis Street)

Just east of the Beach House building is a large grassy area, in which the Herbert Asa Cole III Bandstand exists, named in honor of one of Hingham's upstanding residents and a former Superintendent of Public Works, in 1966. The Bandstand has been used for musical performances in the past but is primarily a popular location for wedding and prom photos. Although an apparent vehicular access way is provided close to the Bandstand, presumably for loading in of performance audio/visual equipment, a formal and ADA-compliant accessible pedestrian route does not exist to the Bandstand. Additionally, this area is troubled with Canadian geese, deterring some users of the grassy area, leaving it seemingly underutilized.

The brick Harborwalk continues between the lawn area and Bathing Beach, separated by a granite block seat wall, providing a unique design detail that should be replicated throughout the Inner Harbor. The Harborwalk ends at the large parking lot between the Bandstand lawn, beach area, and boat ramp. This parking lot pavement is in disrepair with faded striping. A reconfiguration of this parking lot is recommended to increase efficiency and improve circulation. Harbormaster Corson indicated during a meeting on June 27, 2022, with all department heads, that he expected for the Department of Fish and Game, Office of Fishing and Boating Access to redesign this parking lot in the upcoming years.

Furthermore, HDC, BBT, and various municipal representatives have had extensive discussions regarding the location of the Harborwalk extension relative to the parking lot. If the Harborwalk were to be continued along the existing dune, there are environmental permitting implications and hurdles. If the Harborwalk were to be moved within the footprint of the existing parking lot to avoid impacts to the dune, reconfiguration of the parking lot striping and modest expansion into the bandstand lawn area would be required to maintain the same number of parking spaces and adequate vehicular circulation. HDC has recommended that the most efficient and cost-effective option would be to jog the Harborwalk towards 3A to coincide with the shared use path along Route 3A until Town Wharf. It is advised to provide proper safety measures at each of the parking lot driveways, as these are potentially hazardous crossing locations for pedestrians with vehicles quickly turning off of 3A. Measures should also be included to minimize "desire lines" of pedestrians choosing to continue to cut across the dune and/or parking lot, in lieu of following the Harborwalk/shared use path along 3A in this location.



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

The Bandstand & Town Wharf (o Otis Street)

Town Wharf is home of the newly constructed boat ramp, pier and gangway (completed summer 2022), parking areas, the Harbormaster shed, and the bronze equestrian “Victory” statue. This statue often referred to as “Iron Horse”, was commissioned in 1926 and dedicated in 1929 in honor of Hingham citizens who served in the armed forces.

A stone dust path which turns into a bituminous concrete crumbling walkway runs along the seawall on the west and north sides of Town Wharf, while parking is located on the south and east side of the area. Some mature trees are scattered throughout the pier with an evergreen shrub hedge oriented along the southern edge of the park. The majority of the remaining land is composed of lawn. Mismatched benches are placed in the lawn area, but none are accessible, nor is there an accessible route to the Victory statue.

Permitting is currently being undertaken for an overhaul of Town Wharf. The proposed design addresses sea level rise concerns through the reconstruction and raising of the seawall approximately four (4) feet. However, the improvements also include reconfiguration of parking, extension of the Harborwalk, incorporation of the 3A Project shared use path, a new timber access ramp, seawall railings, and a new Harbormaster shed. A larger Harbormaster building is also being contemplated for this area. The project currently preserves the “Victory” statue but does not propose any modifications that would provide accessibility or enhance the integration of the statue into the remainder of Town Wharf.

As one of the largest town-owned open space parcels along the Inner Harbor, it appears that even with the proposed improvements, Town Wharf is being underutilized. Though “Victory” and its surrounding landscaping is beloved by many, it seems these features could be both preserved and enhanced. The shape of the wharf and its proximity to parking and other amenities, make it conducive to a more active use, or at a minimum, greater accessibility and more defined gathering spaces.

Both the Bandstand area and Town Wharf are located on a single parcel owned by the Town and managed by the Recreation Department. The boat ramp is state owned, however it is the Town’s responsibility to remove sand from the ramp.



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

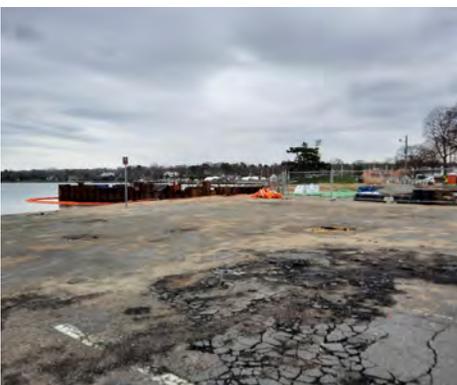
The Bandstand & Town Wharf (o Otis Street)

BANDSTAND AREA OPPORTUNITIES:

- Inclusion of a playground area
- Inclusion of a fitness area or fitness stations
- Location for a human sundial, sculpture, or historic/environmental signage
- Separation from 3A utilizing landscaping or land sculpting
- Select areas of landscaping to direct Harborwalk/pedestrian circulation, to deter geese, and to increase shade
- Tiered seat wall for separation from 3A traffic and sounds, and to create spectator seating around bandstand
- Improve programming/rental access to encourage public rentals and use of bandstand/ lawn area.
- Extension of Harborwalk to meet shared use path along Route 3A (HDC's recommendation)
- Repaving and new striping of parking lot for improved efficiency and circulation in conjunction with Department of Fish and Game, Office of Fishing and Boating Access

TOWN WHARF AREA OPPORTUNITIES:

- Continuation of the Harborwalk around Town Wharf
- Preservation of existing mature vegetation to the extent practicable and integration of new landscaping to increase shade and accessible walkways/plaza areas.
- Potential new Harbormaster building (18'x36' w/ public bathrooms)
- Inclusion of a fitness area or fitness stations
- Location for a human sundial, sculpture, or historic/environmental signage



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

Bare Cove Marina (3 Otis Street)

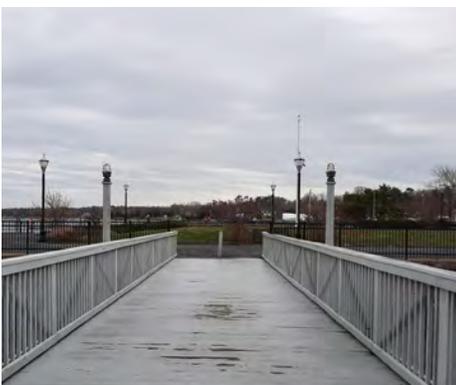
This is a privately owned parcel, home of the popular Red Eye Roasters coffee shop, and Bare Cove Marina. An accessible ramp provides a connection to the pedestrian bridge to the adjacent Whitney Wharf, maintaining continuous public access along the waterfront. This parcel is zoned as Waterfront Business.

Mill Pond Outfall (Otis Street/Summer Street Intersection)



OPPORTUNITIES

- “Gateway” signage or updated treatment of concrete wall at Mill Pond Outfall and Route 3A Bridge Abutment



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

Whitney Wharf (4 Summer Street)

This Town-owned parcel is home to the P.O.W./M.I.A. Memorial Park. The park is characterized by a large, raised lawn area, edged by vertical granite curbing and surrounded by a stone dust walkway, flanked on the north and south sides by a low granite block wall. Evergreen juniper groundcover grow over both walls, to the point that the park name engraved on the wall is completely obscured. A brick-and-granite compass rose detail and a memorial with a flagpole punctuates the northern end of the wharf. The southern end of the park, closest to Route 3A, displays a large anchor, four flag poles representing four branches of the U.S. military, and a plaza area of donor bricks. Additional site amenities include four of the Town's standard black benches; light poles with obvious wear, which do not match any other light styles along the Inner Harbor or Downtown; minimal landscaping; and an ornamental black barrier railing along the top of the seawall. The railing has been replaced at least once in the past decade due to corrosion. The park is served by a small five-car parking area, which is separated from the seawall by a different style fence, mismatched benches, and worn trash receptacles.

Although individually the features are well designed, collectively the park lacks an overall feeling of cohesiveness. The perimeter circulation and raised central lawn area appear to leave the wharf underutilized and inaccessible. A reorganization of the site features could improve the telling of the P.O.W./M.I.A. story, while providing quiet areas for reflection and remembrance.



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

Whitney Wharf (4 Summer Street)

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Re-landscape to reveal park signage and granite seat walls if park is maintained in its current configuration
- Redesign of wharf to create more usable space and increase accessibility
- Incorporate Inner Harbor/Town standard design elements for a cohesive look, but include unique features/materials to highlight various Veteran's features
- Potential relocation of memorial bricks
- Add flags to represent all branches of the US Military
- Add shade features and landscaping



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

Veteran's Park / Former Mobil Station (12/16 Summer Street)

Moving east along the Inner Harbor is the area known as Veteran's Park and commonly referred to as the former Mobil Station. Veteran's Park contains a bituminous concrete walkway beginning at Whitney Wharf and terminating at a Prisoner of War/Missing in Action memorial flagpole.

The Mobil Station lot was in operation as a gas station from the 1970s until 2008. Soil borings and groundwater investigations were performed before the Town acquired the property using Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. The gas station, associated appurtenances, and impacted soils were removed in 2008, and the site was restored without the need for an Activity and Use Limitation on the property. The parcel is currently a grassy lawn with a rip-rap barrier adjacent to the seawall.

The combined Veteran's Park and former Mobil Station parcels currently have no improvements or amenities other than several mismatched, inaccessible benches. The landscape includes some scrub growth obscuring views of the Harbor and several mid-sized trees whose location demarcates the property line between the former land uses. With limited public parking in this location, and restrictions on the use of lands purchased using CPA funds, these combined properties would be best suited to a passive recreation use. Also, given its proximity to Whitney Wharf, a continuation of a veteran's space may be appropriate, transitioning from a more active memorial at Whitney Wharf to a passive reflective space.

Emergency repairs of the seawall abutting Veteran's Park were performed in 2020. Like the proposed Town Wharf overhaul, the Veteran's Park seawall is slated to be raised. During the planning process of this Master Plan, it was discussed that the Harborwalk extension could be designed to maximize usable space by utilizing a boardwalk cantilevered over a proposed stone revetment, or integration of a tiered amphitheater style revetment wall. As this Master Plan has progressed, the Town's resiliency consultant, Foth, has begun further exploration of conceptual designs for a stepped revetment wall in this location. Furthermore, the Route 3A shared use path design has been modified to run through the middle of the parcels, and parallel to the revetment wall, as opposed to adjacent to Route 3A. These two designs enhance the users' experience by bringing them closer to the waterfront. However, it potentially limits the amount of usable public space. As such, it is recommended that the Harborwalk and shared use path combine once again for efficiency and space saving.



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

Veteran's Park / Former Mobil Station (12/16 Summer Street)

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Continuation of Harborwalk, either next to the stone wall, or as a boardwalk extending over the stone revetment
- Creation of a passive recreation/contemplative space (chess/checker tables, sculpture garden)
- Implementation of improved landscaping: native coastal grass plantings, and large shade trees
- Multi-use lawn area to accommodate event overflow parking, as needed.



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

Private Commercial Property (26 Summer Street)

This privately owned parcel, zoned as Waterfront Business, is home to Hingham Harbor Marina. The parcel is constrained by its total lot area, which restricts the amount of parking and thus development density and use of the property. Essentially no landscaping exists on the property.

Former Private Commercial Property (30 Summer Street)

Previously home to various commercial businesses, this property was purchased by the Town of Hingham in 2023. This property is zoned as Waterfront Business. The parcel is constrained by its total lot area, which restricts the amount of parking (5 spaces total) and thus development density and use of the property. Essentially no landscaping exists on this property. The existing building is not compliant with ADA/MAAB requirements, further restricting the Town's near term public use of the building.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Continuation of Harborwalk along seawall behind building
- Fishing pier/overlook off Harborwalk, behind building
- Resiliency improvements consistent with other Town-owned properties
- Reconstruction of a 2-story building in compliance with new zoning amendments



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

3A Rotary / Barnes Wharf / Steamboat Wharf (0/50 Summer Street)

The 3A Rotary is being redesigned as a part of the Route 3A corridor project. This design includes a 10-foot-wide shared use path that runs alongside the roadway. In this location there may be the opportunity to continue the Harborwalk/Shared use path in a boardwalk form, cantilevering over the seawall to create separation between the path and the roadway, increasing the area for landscaping, and providing a unique pedestrian experience.

The Barnes Wharf property is currently leased by the Town and occupied by the Hingham Maritime Center and contains a one-story building and a covered concrete patio utilized for organized rowing activities. A docking system is located off of the northerly boundary of the wharf. The property groundcover is predominantly gravel which is used for both parking and outdoor storage of crew equipment.

Steamboat Wharf is currently undeveloped, accessible only by a narrow walkway. The resource areas surrounding this wharf limit the development potential. It is the HDC's recommendation to allow this wharf to revert back to a natural condition and be maintained as a nature sanctuary.



4.4 EXISTING HARBOR ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

3A Rotary / Barnes Wharf / Steamboat Wharf (0/50 Summer Street)

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Continuation of Harborwalk/shared use path, as designed in along rotary and Barnes Wharf to Steamboat Wharf
- Potential new boathouse on Barnes Wharf to replace existing structures
- Turn Steamboat Wharf into a nature sanctuary with trails and possible creation of an overlook/fishing pier.



5.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
- 5.2 STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK SUMMARY
- 5.3 30 SUMMER STREET SURVEY

To ensure a master plan is successful, it must address the needs, concerns, and desires of the community it is serving. This information is sometimes best gathered by simply inviting stakeholders and providing the opportunity and platform for a candid discussion. Often this results in discussions about what is NOT wanted or NOT working successfully. This information is just as valuable to informing design decisions for a master plan. Similar to site analysis and "understanding the context", community engagement helps define the parameters for the master plan.

5.1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Harbor Development Committee directly contacted over 60 stakeholders representing nearly 40 different municipal departments, boards, committees, civic groups, and property owners. Stakeholders were contacted via email to specifically ask for feedback regarding 5 wishes for the Inner Harbor and the 3 challenges that they see. Over 35 separate responses were received.

These Stakeholders were invited to participate in a series of Stakeholder Collaborative Sessions. The Collaborative Session agendas were posted in accordance with Open Meeting Law 940 CMR 29.00 on the Town's online calendar as well as in the Hingham Anchor.

Remote Stakeholder Collaborative Sessions occurred via ZOOM on the following dates:

May 24, 2022

June 6, 2022

June 13, 2022

An additional Municipal Department Meeting including the following representatives took place on June 27, 2022, to further discuss specific concerns and design ideas for the Harbor:

Matthew Cahill, Assistant Superintendent of DPW

Ken Corson, Harbormaster

JR Frey, Town Engineer

SCPO Keith Jermyn USN (Ret.), Veterans' Services

Tom Mayo, Town Administrator

Jennifer Oram, Zoning Administrator

Arthur Robert, Assistant Town Engineer

Emily Sullivan, Conservation Agent

Mark Thorell, Recreation Director

Emily Wentworth, Planning Director

Andrea Young, Historical/Historic Districts Administrator

Specifically, the following individuals and groups were contacted for their comment and involvement in the Master Plan:

- Hingham Recreation Commission
- Hingham Recreation Department
- Hingham High School Athletic Director
- Commission on Disabilities
- Council on Aging
- Climate action Committee
- Community Preservation Committee
- Town Master Plan Committee
- Shade Tree Committee
- Conservation Officer
- Conservation Commission
- Hingham Historical Society
- The Veteran's Agency
- Hingham Historical Commission
- Historic District Commission
- Harbor Development Committee
- Bathing Beach Trustees
- Community Planning Director
- Town Engineer
- Hingham DPW
- Hingham Harbormaster
- Friends of Hingham Harbor
- Hingham Maritime Center
- Gallery 360
- Oak Development
- Bare Cove Marina
- Hingham Harbor Marina
- Eat Well
- Industrial Development Committee
- Fruit Center Hingham
- Hingham Anchor
- Cutler Family Trust
- Liberty Grille
- GO + IS Mapping
- Hingham Downtown Association
- Route 3A Taskforce
- Naming By-Law Committee
- Town Select Board
- Town Administrator

5.2 STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK SUMMARY

As in any public engagement process there is often opposite opinions and feedback received, making consensus difficult. This process was similar. Some stakeholders wanted more activities along the Inner Harbor, while others wanted to keep it passive. Some thought there was not enough parking, while others did not want to add parking. However, despite varying opinions, the Stakeholder feedback could generally be organized into the following categories, with agreement on many items. Some feedback, although valuable, was either not applicable to this Master Planning process, being addressed via other planning processes, or infeasible due to regulatory constraints.

ACCESS/SAFETY

- Crossing 3A
- Connection to downtown w/ signage, matching red brick paving style
- Parking
- Complete Harborwalk
- More boat tie ups, guest moorings to access local shops/restaurants
- Kayak/ paddleboard access
- Boating and Swimming accessible to all

DEVELOPMENT

- Former Mobil Station use
- New Boathouse for public use
- Bathrooms
- Parking
- Reinforcement of caissons/Wharf stabilization
- Facilities for year-round programming
- Commercial Amenities
- Restaurant/Bar on water
- Retail space

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Landscaping
- Dredging
- Beach replenishment
- Sea Level Rise/Climate Change

PROGRAMMING

- Historical walking tour
- Interactive signage – history, ecology, climate change. Nautical theme displays
- More structured activities (tai chi, yoga, water sports)
- Bike share
- Bandstand events & increased rentals
- Marine science program
- Year-round programming
- Educational programming

AMENITIES

- Playground
- Fitness Equipment
- Benches
- Bike racks
- Bathrooms
- Signage
- Bocce courts
- Pickleball
- Remove flagpole at former POW/MIA park
- Commercial Amenities
- Restaurant/Bar on water
- Retail space

GENERAL INTERESTS & CONCERNS

- Funding
- Maintenance
- Communication/Coordination between stakeholders and municipal authorities
- Permitting

5.3 30 SUMMER STREET SURVEY

During the month of September 2024, the Town of Hingham solicited public input via survey, related to the preferred future use for the newly acquired 30 Summer Street parcel. The survey link was published in the Hingham Anchor, on Social Media (Facebook, Instagram), and on the Town website. The survey had over 748 respondents.

The majority of respondents (39%) indicated that a restaurant is their preferred use for the property, with a close second (35%) indicating maritime-related activities would be the best municipal use of this property. Additionally, there was strong support for leasing the building to a private user, such as a business or a nonprofit/civic organization, if such use could recover the Town's annual debt service or more.

Additional uses/comments included the following suggestions:

- Waterfront casual restaurant, cafe, snack shop
- Rental facility for kayaks, paddle boards other water sports equipment
- Playground
- Spray pad for kids
- Additional access to the water
- Expanded Hingham Maritime Center with year-round children and adult programs
- Town pool
- Library branch
- Event space

6.0 DESIGN PROCESS

- 6.1 PRECEDENT COMMUNITIES
- 6.2 INSPIRATION IMAGERY
- 6.3 SAMPLE CONCEPT SKETCHES

Once a master plan's goals are determined, parameters defined, and stakeholder feedback solicited, the design process may commence. By identifying design precedents, compiling inspiration imagery, and beginning to develop concepts, the vision starts to come together. Whether it be materiality, physical amenities, programming, or a combination of all, the design challenge is to fit the different components together like a puzzle. The design process is purposefully iterative, so that multiple ideas may be explored and vetted and refined.

6.1 PRECEDENT COMMUNITIES

In the process of preparing this Master Plan, research of different waterfront and coastal communities was performed with a focus on overall aesthetic and layout, site amenities, programming, and unique local regulations or incentives offered to encourage waterfront usage and public access to the water.

These communities include the following:

Burlington, VT
Rockport, MA
Duxbury, MA
Gloucester, MA
Marblehead, MA
Scituate, MA
Newburyport, MA
Barnstable, MA

6.2 INSPIRATION IMAGERY

Boardwalks, Landforms, Landscaping



6.2 INSPIRATION IMAGERY

Waterfront Activities/Programming



6.2 INSPIRATION IMAGERY

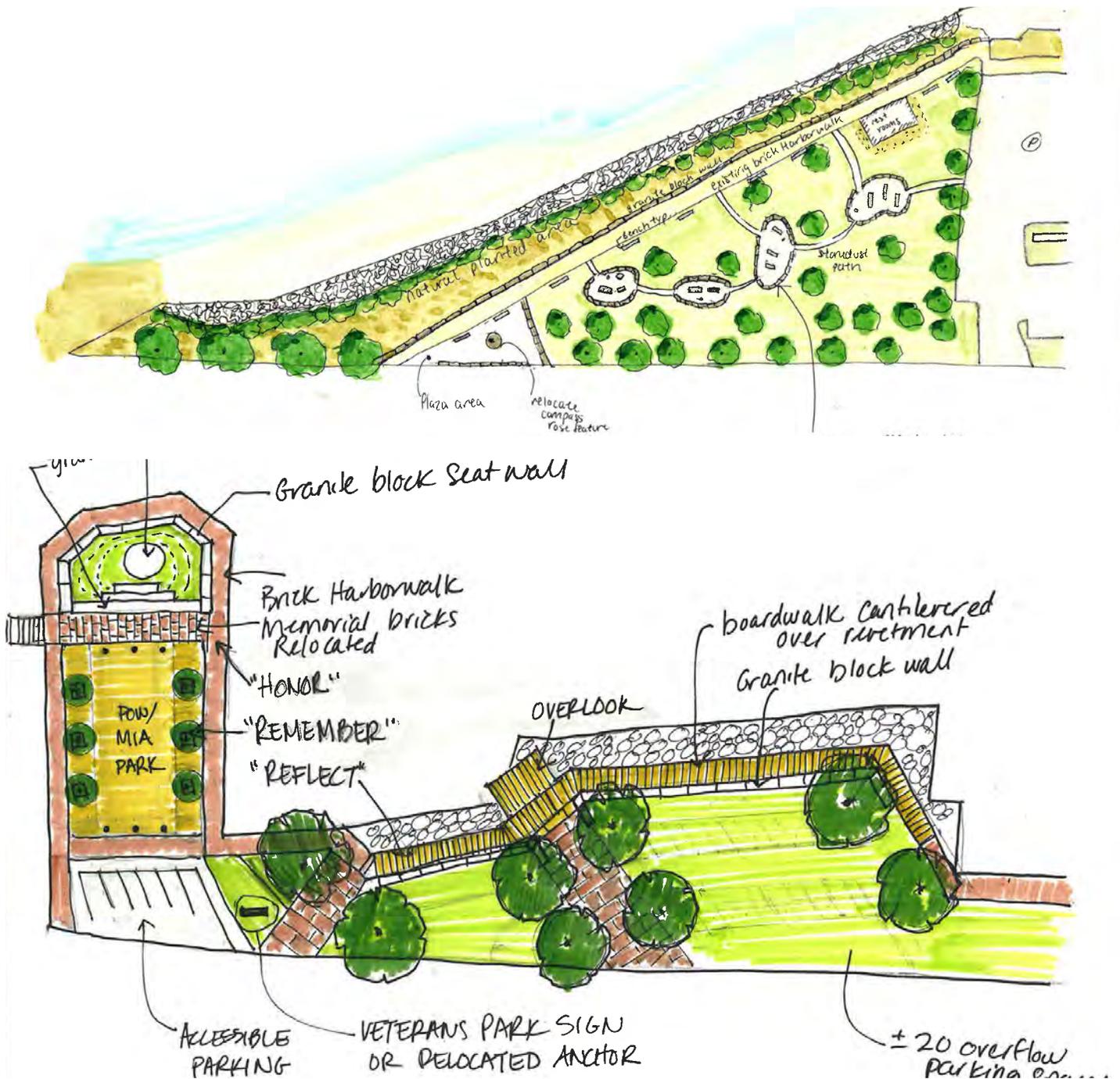
Play Amenities, Site Amenities, Shade Structures, Sculptures



6.3 SAMPLE CONCEPT SKETCHES

Creative Concepts

After identifying the desirable features through the community engagement process, reviewing successful features and implementation in precedent communities, and gathering inspiration photos, it was time to put pen to paper. Various initial concept sketches for each of the Inner Harbor areas were prepared. Concept sketches allow an opportunity to be creative, while fleshing out ideas and spatial awareness relative to existing site features. Sample concept sketches are shown on this page and the following.



6.3 SAMPLE CONCEPT SKETCHES

Creative Concepts

The concept sketches were used to facilitate further discussion with HDC, BBT, and Town staff. The concepts were vetted; with some ideas being kept and expanded on, and others abandoned due to various logistical, regulatory, political, or pragmatic reasons.

These concepts were used as the starting point in the development of the Master Plan, further detailed in the upcoming sections of this Master Plan.



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7.0 OVERALL MASTER PLAN

- 7.1 OVERALL MASTER PLAN - KEY PLAN
- 7.2 OVERALL MASTER PLAN - SITE AMENITIES
- 7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN

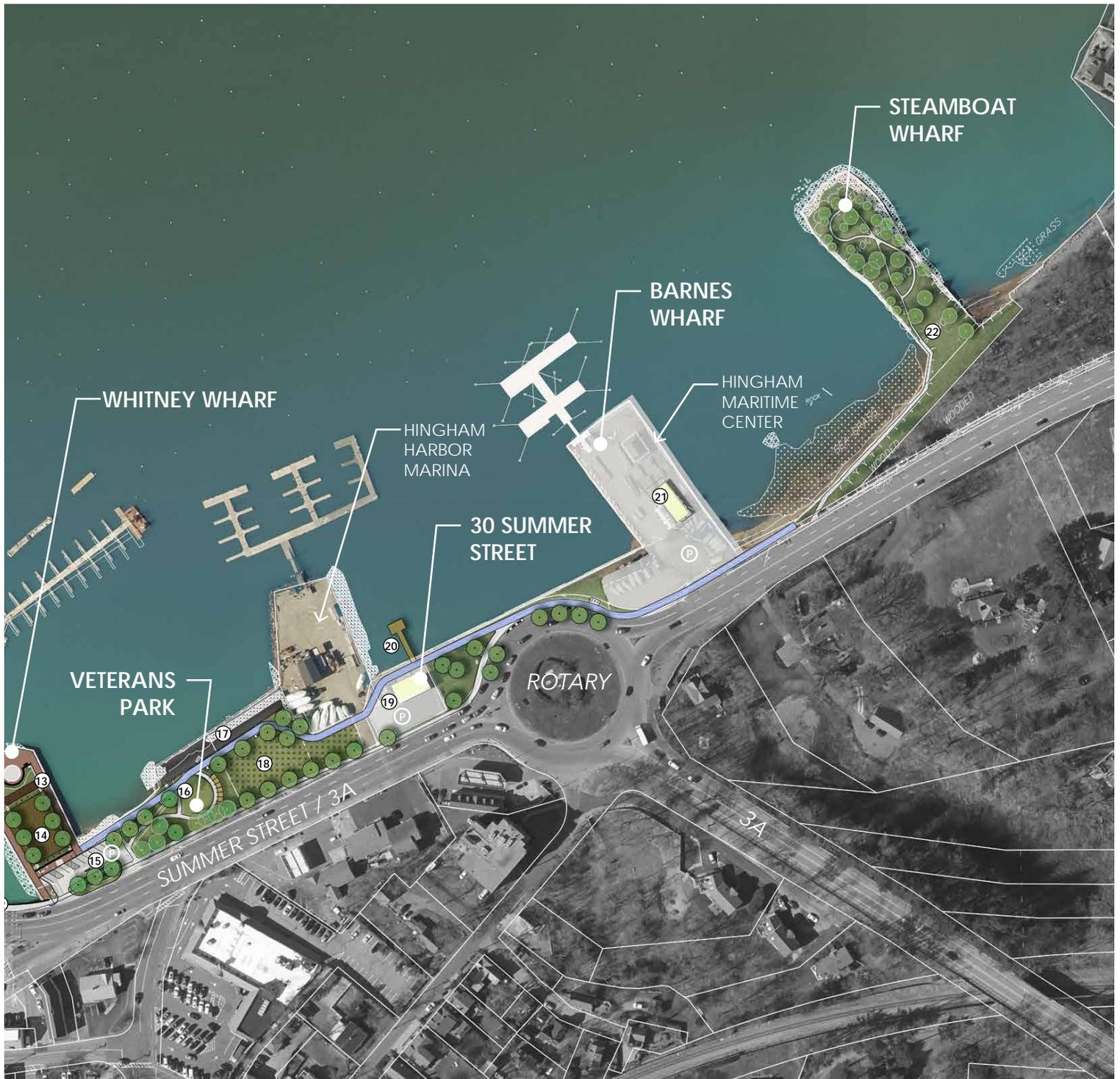
The Master Plan for Hingham Harbor is the compilation of years of discussion, public input, compromise, and generally a unanimous desire to enhance this invaluable asset for the Town. The Master Plan seeks to overcome constraints, both physical and regulatory, and to create a more unified and usable Inner Harbor public space that attracts both residents and visitors, through new site amenities, increased passive and active recreational opportunities, improved waterfront access and pedestrian circulation, and infrastructure to support future programming.

The Overall and subsequent Detailed Master Plans identify such features as: areas for picnicking, a playground, formal and informal seating along the waterfront, accessible walkways, potential building locations, reconfigured and enhanced Veterans' features, shade structures, integration with the Shared Use Path, and increased landscaping.

7.1 OVERALL MASTER PLAN *KEY PLAN*



- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced gateway feature and seating area 2. Accessible picnic areas and walking paths 3. Renovated building for accessible bathrooms and storage 4. Playground
Landscape berm and tiered seat wall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Realigned Harborwalk and new seating area 7. Potential Harbormaster building 8. Accessible walkway to 'Victory' 9. Pergola/covered sitting area 10. Human sundial 11. Multipurpose lawn area |
|---|--|



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Mural on Mill Pond Outfall wall 13. Relocated memorial bricks 14. Multipurpose decking/plaza area 15. Reconfigured parking area 16. Sculpture park 17. Tiered revetment (designed by others) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Multipurpose lawn area and overflow event parking as needed 19. 30 Summer Street public building (use TBD) 20. Fishing pier 21. Potential new HMC boathouse (size TBD) 22. Nature sanctuary |
|---|---|

7.2 OVERALL MASTER PLAN *SITE AMENITIES PLAN*



- | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Harborwalk |  | Benches, town standard (35 total) |
|  | Shared Use Path |  | Bike racks |
|  | Public restrooms |  | Picnic tables |



- | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Harborwalk |  | Benches, town standard (35 total) |
|  | Shared Use Path |  | Bike racks |
|  | Public restrooms |  | Picnic tables |

7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN *THE GROVE*



The Grove, Bathing Beach, and Bandstand

- Expand upon Route 3A design for "gateway" feature
- Accessible walkways through "grove" with picnic areas
- Ongoing dredging to make bathing beach swimmable
- Accessible benches along Harborwalk
- Renovate former bath house with accessible bathrooms and storage areas.
- Facade should match Bathing Beach House architectural style (cedar shake siding)
- Continue Harborwalk to meet Shared Use Path along 3A with select areas of native landscaping to encourage pedestrian traffic along Harborwalk instead of through parking lot.
- Plaza area with opportunity for design element such as: "Hingham Bucket" sculpture, human sundial, or other historic or environmental component.

7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN BATHING BEACH AND THE BANDSTAND



- Landscape berm parallel to route 3A to provide physical separation from 3A, noise attenuation, landscape opportunities, and informal seating.

7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN TOWN WHARF



TOWN WHARF

- New Harbormaster building with accessible public bathrooms. Facade should match Bathing Beach House architectural style for cohesive harbor look (cedar shake siding)
- Continue Harborwalk around perimeter
- Accessible path around Victory
- Pergola or shade structure
- Additional trees for shade
- Accessible benches
- Human sundial
- Multipurpose lawn area
- Dock expansion at Town Pier for visitors by boat

7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN *WHITNEY WHARF*



WHITNEY WHARF

- Mural on Mill Pond Outfall wall
- Relocated memorial bricks, replaced with expanded accessible parking
- Removal of lawn area and replacement with Multipurpose decking/plaza area
- Accessible benches
- Trees in raised planters for shade
- Native landscaping
- Replace stone dust with brick Harborwalk along perimeter
- Flags representing all branches of the US Military
- Permanent AV System for events

7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN VETERANS PARK



Veteran's Park

- Sculpture park
- Accessible benches
- Stepped revetment
- Shade structure
- Additional trees for shade
- Overflow parking with grass pavers or comparable permeable/stabilized system (fits approximately 25 cars). Access via a potential easement from 26 Summer Street driveway would need to be considered.

7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN 30 SUMMER STREET



30 SUMMER STREET

- Fishing Pier off Shared Use Path behind building
- Building renovation within existing footprint in accordance with Zoning By-law updated dimensional criteria for building height (i.e. second story possible), and upgraded to meet public accessibility requirements
- Renovated or new building facade should match Bathing Beach House architectural style for cohesive harbor look (cedar shake siding)

HDC Recommendations:

- *Short-term:* Sign up to 3-year lease agreement with non-profit for \$1/year, with 50/50 profit sharing from paid programming. Lessee shall be responsible for non-capital maintenance and operation cost of building.
- *Long-term:* Formulate long-term vision connected to respondents' desires for marine-related activities. Work with Town Planning to develop a permissible new building. Develop budget for new building and on-going permitting.

7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN *BARNES WHARF*

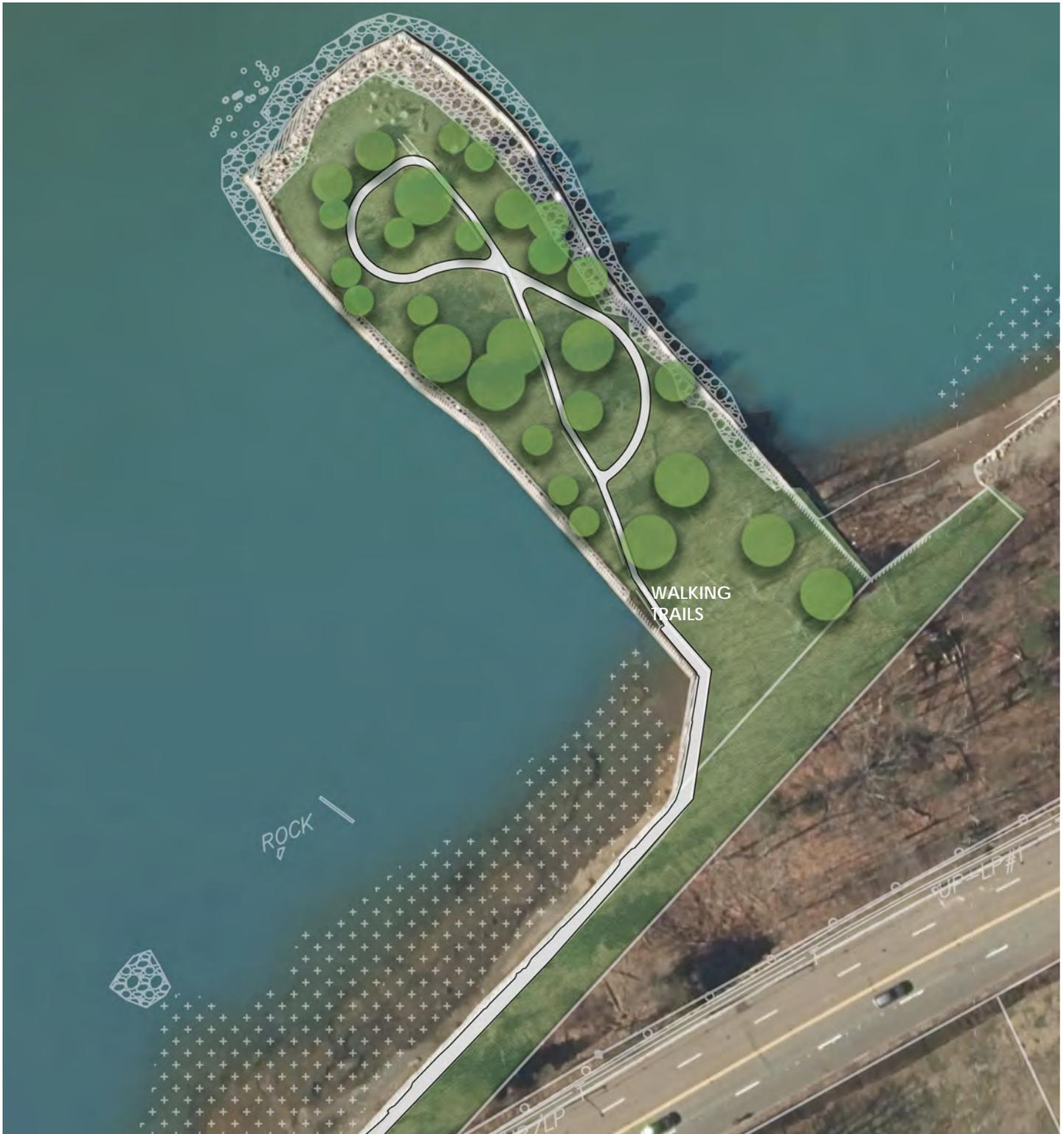


FUTURE NEW
HINGHAM MARITIME
CENTER/BOATHOUSE

Barnes Wharf

- New Boathouse in a single structure to replace existing on-site structures, potentially set on piers to allow for flood storage below building
- New building facade should match Bathing Beach House architectural style for cohesive harbor look (cedar shake siding)

7.3 DETAILED MASTER PLAN *STEAMBOAT WHARF*



STEAMBOAT WHARF

- Allow to revert to nature sanctuary, with walking trails

8.0 HINGHAM HARBOR DESIGN STANDARDS

The Inner Harbor has very distinct areas across the waterfront, each with its own unique opportunities and constraints, lending themselves to different user groups and experiences. These unique features are beneficial and should be celebrated. However, it is recommended to have a common thread that ties each of the areas together, to provide a sense of cohesiveness and overall Inner Harbor identity. Developing design standards for such features as site amenities, lighting, hardscape and landscape materials, and signage, will provide this continuity.

Benches

Currently there are approximately twenty-five (25) separate public benches along the Inner Harbor, in five (5) different mis-matched styles. It is recommended to replace all benches with the Town standard: all steel, bench style 19 as manufactured by DuMor, in color black. If desired, there is also the option to customize the Town standard benches with a signature Inner Harbor logo or icon to distinguish the area (i.e.: anchor, water, Victory silhouette, etc.). Benches should be placed generally as indicated on the Site Amenities Plan. All benches shall be set on a hard surface and be accessible. We have identified approximately 35 bench locations. All non-conforming benches should be replaced to match the Town standard.

Once all 35 benches are placed, there could be additional opportunities for other hardscaping along the Harborwalk/Shared Use Path, like adult exercise stations, shade

Trash Receptacles

Currently there is not a town-wide standard for trash/recycling receptacles. It is recommended to utilize an all-steel product in color black to match the all site furnishings, and site light fixtures. DuMor trash and recycling receptacle model 102 or 158 are recommended to match the Town standard benches and picnic tables.

Picnic Tables

Picnic tables shall be provided in select areas along the Inner Harbor. All picnic tables shall be set on a hard surface and at least half shall be ADA accessible. It is recommended to utilize an all-steel product in color black to match the benches and site light fixtures. DuMor Table model 443 with corresponding benches, or similar style, is recommended.



8.0 HINGHAM HARBOR DESIGN STANDARDS

Bike racks

Select locations for bike racks are depicted on the Route 3A Corridor Re-design landscape plans, proximate to the rotary. It is recommended to provide additional bike racks distributed throughout the Inner Harbor. Recommended locations are depicted on the Master Plan. Bike rack style shall be consistent throughout the Inner Harbor and match those selected for the Route 3A Corridor Redesign project.

Site Lighting

At the time of this Master Plan issuance, site lighting selections are being made relative to the Route 3A Corridor Re-design and shared use path design, with an effort to generally match the existing colonial style lampposts and fixtures along North Street. There has been significant discussion and design consideration for down-lighting and dark-sky compliance in an effort to balance both safety and environmental concerns relative to lighting. Upon selection of a new site lighting fixture and pole for the 3A Corridor Re-design project, the HDC has agreed to adopt the style for uniformity. Existing site lighting throughout the Inner Harbor should be phased out and replaced accordingly. A corresponding lighted bollard may also be appropriate to be selected for certain locations along the Inner Harbor, where lower light levels are needed.

Architectural Features

Architectural facade

It is recommended that any building renovations and/or new buildings be done in a style to match that of the Beach House on Bathing Beach, i.e. cedar shake siding and corresponding trim colors, for both a consistent look and for ease of maintenance.

Shade Shelters

The Master Plan identifies two distinct areas for shade structures, on Town Wharf and Veterans Park. These could be curvilinear and/or straight structures or varying sizes. It is envisioned that these could have integrated stationary or swinging benches or provide cover for additional picnic tables. Upon creation of a standard design matching the existing architecture and coastal aesthetic of the Inner Harbor, smaller versions of these could be integrated along the Harborwalk, providing additional shade and opportunities for sponsorship/purchase by residents.



8.0 HINGHAM HARBOR DESIGN STANDARDS

Hardscape Materials

The Harborwalk is recommended to be continued in the same red brick material and pattern, as it evokes a quintessential New England small town feel, and provides both a physical and visual continuous “thread” that connects the Inner Harbor waterfront and brick sidewalks elsewhere in downtown.

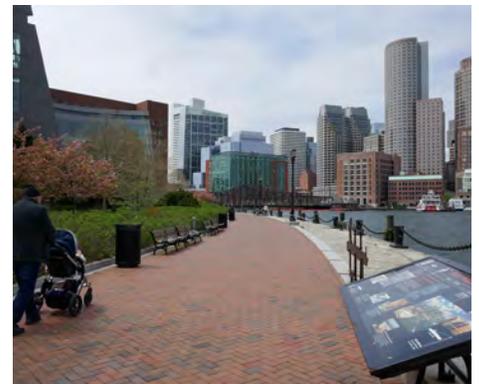
All other paving materials shall be consistent with those proposed for the Route 3A Corridor Re-design, offering an accessible surface, but also permeable to the extent practicable.

Utilization of granite blocks are recommended throughout the Inner Harbor, as they provide informal seating, can be used as retaining walls, and are a natural and regionally appropriate material, historically used for seawalls, with little to no maintenance required.

Landscape Materials

Plants native to coastal New England shall be utilized throughout the Inner Harbor, to increase shade, reduce water consumption and maintenance of lawn areas, encourage native habitat, and provide year round seasonal interest. It is also recommended to match plantings used along the Route 3A Corridor Re-design Project, as applicable for continuity and a cohesive look. Trees proposed on Whitney Wharf may benefit from being installed in raised planters to increase soil volume for trees and to elevate the root systems further out of the wharf structure.

Tree, shrub, and perennial species, shall be selected to withstand the harsh waterfront conditions, including tolerance of extreme wind, salt air, flooding, and full sunlight. The Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) is a good resource for coastal landscaping in Massachusetts, and may be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/coastal-landscaping-in-massachusetts-plant-list>



8.0 HINGHAM HARBOR DESIGN STANDARDS

Signage and Sculptures

The Inner Harbor has existing educational signage throughout. It is recommended to expand upon this concept with additional educational signage/plaques to provide visitors with information on the unique history and natural and cultural resources to be found or seen in the Harbor (e.g. marine wildlife, shorebirds, coastal wetlands/salt marsh, the Harbor Islands, resiliency efforts, native flora and fauna).

In order to further engage the public and youth, it is recommended to pair signage with possible interactive sculptures or other art installations representing various historic and environmental features. For example:

- a railroad sculpture commemorating the historic railroad running in Summer Street
- “pebble” seats, explaining the process of coastal attrition
- a “Hingham Bucket” water feature
- a musical sound sculpture, powered by the wind
- sea animal sculptures native to the harbor



9.0 PROGRAMMING

Hingham Inner Harbor Suggested Programming by Space/Season			
Harbor Area	Spring	Summer	Fall
The Grove/ Bathing Beach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touch a Truck/Boat • Car Show • Sandcastle Competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standup paddle board and Kayak Rental @ Renovated Bath House • Touch a Truck/Boat • Car Show • Fireworks Viewing • Food Truck Festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touch a Truck/Boat • Car Show • Halloween in the Harbor - Haunted Grove Walk & Trunk-or-Treat
The Bandstand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden Club Plant Sale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concert Series • Theater Performances • Farmers Market • Weekday Kids Camps • Fireworks Viewing • Movie Night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concert Series • Theater Performances • Farmers Market
Town Wharf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness classes (outdoors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga/Fitness classes • Farmers Market • Beer Garden • Weekly Kids Day ("Wacky Wednesdays") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Market • Beer Garden
Whitney Wharf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior/Parkinson's/Veterans fitness classes (outdoors) • Craft/Antique Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior/Parkinson's/Veterans fitness classes (outdoors) • Craft/Antique Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior/Parkinson's/Veterans fitness classes (outdoors) • Craft/Antique Show
Veterans Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movie Night • Art Show • Strawberry-fest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October-fest/Harvest-fest • Beer Garden
30 Summer Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior/Parkinson's/Veterans fitness classes (indoors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior/Parkinson's/Veterans fitness classes (indoors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior/Parkinson's/Veterans Fitness Classes (indoors)
Barnes Wharf (Hingham Maritime Center, HMC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Break Camp (indoors/outdoors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Camp (outdoors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Camp (outdoors)
Steamboat Wharf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids Nature Camp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids Nature Camp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekend Nature Camp
Harborwalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drone Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids 1-mile Fun Run 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drone Show

Winter	Year Round	Facilities for Private Rental
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter Break Camp (indoors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair Yoga (indoors) Senior Fitness Classes (indoors) Misc. Adult Education Classes (indoors) 	Yes - Beach House
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas Tree Lot Ice Skating Rink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground 	Yes - Bandstand and Picnic Tables (weddings/ parties)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor floating docks 	Yes - If community room is included in new Harbormaster Building
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday Shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veterans events 	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice Sculpture Display 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rotating Art Exhibits 	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter Break Camp (indoors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library Story Time Toddler/Baby Classes Misc. Adult Education Classes Coffee Shop/Small Restaurant 	Yes- 30 Summer Street Building
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter Break Camp (indoors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HMC Rowing/Sailing/ Paddling Programs and Camps 	Yes- Boathouse (weddings/ parties)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Snowshoeing 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday Stroll/Winter Lights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking Harbor Tours Fitness Circuits 	N/A

10.0 PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 10.1 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- 10.2 MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT
- 10.3 PHASING

In order to create and sustain a successful and vibrant Inner Harbor for public enjoyment, strategic phasing, short-term and long-term financial support, maintenance, and management must also be considered.

10.1 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Grant Opportunities

[Massachusetts Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\) Grant Program](#)

The Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund provides up to 50% of the total project cost for the acquisition, development, and renovation of: Parks, Trails, and Conservation areas.

Minimum/maximum grant: \$50,000/ \$1,000,000

- Former Bath house building renovation for public restrooms
- Additional visitor docks off Town Wharf/Town Pier (encourage waterfront recreation and access)
- The Grove, accessible picnic areas
- Harborwalk extension
- Town Wharf Renovations
- Fishing pier off 30 Summer Street
- Steamboat Wharf Nature Sanctuary

[Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Division of Conservation Services Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities \(PARC\) Grant Program \(Small Town\)](#)

Maximum Small Town grant of \$100,000.

- The Grove, accessible picnic areas
- Harborwalk extension
- Landscape Berm at the Bandstand

Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) [Coastal Resilience Grant Program](#)

- Applicable categories may be Shoreline Restoration for stepped revetment, or Public Outreach for creative and interpretative educational/environmental signage throughout the Inner Harbor.

[MassTrails Grant Program](#)

Provides matching grants to communities, public entities, and non-profit organizations to plan, design, create, and maintain trails and trails experiences used and enjoyed by Massachusetts residents and visitors.

- Harborwalk extension
- Shared Use Path amenities (benches, etc.)

[Seaport Economic Council Grant Program](#)

Applicable category: Dredging Design & Permitting Grants. This program provides pre-construction-phase funding, for saltwater dredging projects that contribute to the economic significance, recreational value, public safety, and/or coastal resilience of Massachusetts' coastal harbors.

- Inner Harbor dredging by Bathing Beach to increase recreational swimming.

10.1 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Grant Opportunities

[Community Preservation Act](#)

Portions of the Master Plan may be eligible for funding through the Community Preservation Act.

- Playground may be applicable as a new creation project under the Recreation Category.
- Former Bath house building renovation for public restrooms, may be applicable as a rehabilitation and renovation project under the Recreation category
- Fishing pier off 30 Summer Street, may be applicable as a creation project under the Recreation category.

[MassBays Healthy Estuaries Grant](#)

This grant is available and may be of interest for the Town to pursue. This grant would provide an opportunity to support reclassification of the native shellfish population in Hingham through further data collection and research on the prevalence of shellfish in Hingham waters. While the Division of Marine Fisheries requires an internal avenue of testing and data collection to inform their assessment of shellfish population presence, the Division does consider external data and research, as well. The MassBays Healthy Estuaries grant would allow for additional research on the condition of the shellfish population in Town waters, with the goal of supporting the Division of Marine Fisheries' decision to re-classify the native shellfish population and, as such, promote an opportunity for aquaculture and shellfish harvesting in the waters of Hingham.

Funding Sources

- American Rescue Plan Act funding
- Matching donations
- Purchase opportunities (memorial benches, bricks, shade structures)
- Facility rentals
- Sponsorship through naming rights (must be approved by the Town's Naming Committee)

10.2 MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Maintenance

Maintenance is a necessary evil that accompanies any development, specifically in the public realm. Funding and staffing restrictions often limit the attention required to maintain a public resource. This can be further complicated by employment contracts between the Town and union employees, prohibiting public/private partnerships for maintenance responsibilities. Although volunteer opportunities are welcomed, there is often a lack of consistency and reliability with such a source.

Any proposed improvement to the Inner Harbor shall be accompanied by an approved maintenance plan for long-term maintenance. Further discussions between the Town of Hingham, HDC, BBT, and other stakeholders is needed to determine how such a maintenance plan can be achieved, in the best interests of the community and its public waterfront assets.

Management

It is recommended that the Town designate a single year-round, part-time position for the management of the Inner Harbor programming. This person would be the central resource for organizing and coordinating the use of the Inner Harbor's public spaces, including being in charge of facility rentals, event permits, and the public calendar for the Inner Harbor.

These tasks are currently managed by staff in the Town Administrator's office. It has been suggested that this position may be suitable for a retiree or an eligible senior through the Property Tax Work-Off Program administered by Hingham's Center for Active Living.

10.3 PHASING

Phasing

With the upcoming construction of the Route 3A corridor Re-Design Project, slated for 2027 construction, there are areas of the Inner Harbor Master Plan that will be impacted and ultimately benefit from that project, and therefore should be coordinated to occur concurrently or immediately before or after the Shared Use Path construction. Permitting and ever-changing and increasingly stringent regulatory processes will also impact the implementation of the Master Plan. However, the following project areas identified below in Phase 1, are anticipated to be relatively low risk and independent of other Harbor improvements, making them ideal for near-term consideration and implementation. Subsequent phases are identified based upon separate project areas, but does not necessarily reflect order of implementation, as this will be determined based upon permitting and available funding.

Phase 1 - Independent Project Areas

- The Grove, picnic areas and former bath house renovation
- Playground area
- The Bandstand Area landscape berm, seatwall, picnic tables, landscaping, bike racks, and Harborwalk extension
- Whitney Wharf veterans area reconfiguration and improvements
- Mural on Mill Pond Outfall wall
- Short term lease of 30 Summer Street
- Temporary overflow/event parking - *confirm parking use is consistent with CPA funded land, determine access and obtain access easement/agreement with 26 Summer Street as necessary.*
- Steamboat Wharf- allow to revert to nature sanctuary
- Additional visitor docks off Town Pier

Phase 2 - Route 3A Corridor Dependent Project Areas

- Veterans Park - sculpture park and tiered revetment area
- Shared Use Path and associated amenities (Benches, bike racks, etc.)
- Fishing Pier off 30 Summer Street
- Expanded parking

Phase 3 - Town Wharf, coordinate with raised wharf project.

- Harbormaster Building, *as permissible within environmental regulations.*
- Harborwalk extension
- Accessible walkways and multi-purpose lawn area

Phase 4 - 30 Summer Street

- Building renovation

Phase 5 - Barnes Wharf

- New boathouse, *as permissible within environmental regulations.*