

## INFORMATION NOTE

### Waterfront planning and management in Boston

**Table – Waterfront planning and management in Boston**

	Boston
<b>Waterfront policies</b>	
Relevant waterfront policy documents	<p>Boston Harbor contains several waterfronts, and separate municipal harbour plans are developed for each of them. These plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) <i>The City of Boston Municipal Harbor Plan (1990)</i>;</li> <li>(b) <i>South Boston Waterfront District Municipal Harbor Plan (2000)</i>;</li> <li>(c) <i>East Boston Waterfront District Municipal Harbor Plan (2002)</i>;</li> <li>(d) <i>Fort Point Downtown Waterfront Municipal Harbor Plan (2002 and 2003)</i>; and</li> <li>(e) <i>Harborwalk (2004)</i>.</li> </ul> <p>There are two sets of State regulations ensuring the protection, management and supervision of public access and interests along the State's shoreline and tidelands. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) <i>Massachusetts General Law Chapter 91 (Waterways Regulations)</i> – setting standards for the protection of the State's waterfront, including the preservation of public access and the capacity to accommodate water-dependent uses; and</li> <li>(b) <i>Municipal Harbor Plan Regulations (Review and Approval of Municipal Harbor Plans)</i> – allowing cities and towns to adjust the State and local regulatory frameworks to best fulfill both State and local purposes by jointly approving a municipal harbour plan.</li> </ul>

**Table – Waterfront planning and management in Boston (cont'd)**

<b>Boston</b>	
<b>Waterfront policies (cont'd)</b>	
Highlights on relevant waterfront policy documents	<p>(a) <i>The City of Boston Municipal Harbor Plan (1990)</i> – providing a planning and regulatory basis for public access and development along the waterfront areas in the City of Boston;</p> <p>(b) <i>South Boston Waterfront District Municipal Harbor Plan (2000)</i> – providing a planning and regulatory framework for an area of 1 025 acres of land and adjacent watershed that comprise the South Boston Waterfront District;</p> <p>(c) <i>East Boston Waterfront District Municipal Harbor Plan (2002)</i> – a land use plan stipulating the planning goals of the community and the harbour plan drawn in accordance with the characteristics of the East Boston waterfront;</p> <p>(d) <i>Fort Point Downtown Waterfront Municipal Harbor Plan (2002 and 2003)</i> – creating a framework to guide the development of the entire Fort Point Downtown planning area and serving as a planning tool for the following 10 years; and</p> <p>(e) <i>Harborwalk (2004)</i> – one of the major components of Boston's waterfront revitalization programme. It is a continuous public walkway along the water's edge that connects the City's neighbourhoods to its harbour. About 38 miles of the 47-mile Harborwalk have been completed. Harborwalk is constructed in segments by developers of waterfront properties.</p>

**Table – Waterfront planning and management in Boston (cont'd)**

	<b>Boston</b>
<b>Authorities responsible for waterfront development</b>	
Major authority involved in waterfront planning and development	Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) <sup>(1)</sup> .
Institutional framework	A municipal planning and development agency for Boston established in 1957.
Governing authority	A five-member board.
Term of appointment	(a) While the four members appointed by the Mayor served for initial terms of one, two, four and five years respectively, the member appointed by the Department of Housing and Community Development served for an initial term of three years; and (b) thereafter their successors all serve for a term of five years.
Constitution of the governing board	(a) Four members are appointed by the Mayor subject to the confirmation of the City Council; (b) one member is appointed by the Department of Housing and Community Development; and (c) the chairman and vice-chairman are elected from among the members.

Note: (1) There are other departments involving in the waterfront development process. These include: (a) the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), a State cabinet-level office that oversees both environmental and energy agencies; (b) Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, a State agency responsible for ensuring clean air and water, safe management of toxics and hazards, recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills, and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources; (c) Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, part of EEA responsible for balancing the impacts of human activity with the protection of coastal and marine resources; and (d) the Boston Harbor Association, the leading harbor advocacy group working to promote a clean, alive, and accessible Boston Harbor.

**Table – Waterfront planning and management in Boston (cont'd)**

<b>Boston</b>	
<b>Authorities responsible for waterfront development (cont'd)</b>	
Main responsibilities relating to waterfront planning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Reviewing proposed development projects;</li> <li>(b) making recommendations on major construction and redevelopment activity to Boston's Zoning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeal;</li> <li>(c) drafting and recommending new zoning measures;</li> <li>(d) drafting master plans;</li> <li>(e) acquiring, selling and leasing real estate to achieve economic redevelopment;</li> <li>(f) issuing revenue bonds and notes to finance projects;</li> <li>(g) operating three industrial parks;</li> <li>(h) providing financing and loan programmes for businesses, as well as technical assistance and other business services; and</li> <li>(i) providing job training, placement, and support services.</li> </ul>
Accountability	Accountable to the Mayor and the City Council.

**Table – Waterfront planning and management in Boston (cont'd)**

<b>Boston</b>	
<b>Selected waterfront development/enhancement projects</b>	
Waterfront development/enhancement projects	<p>Due to the size and complexity of Boston Harbor, it is difficult to develop a single plan to address the various needs, functions, and characteristics of the different waterfront areas. Hence, BRA has divided the harbour into eight planning districts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Charlestown Waterfront;</li> <li>(b) Charlestown Navy Yard;</li> <li>(c) North Station Waterfront;</li> <li>(d) Downtown/North End Waterfront;</li> <li>(e) South Boston Waterfront;</li> <li>(f) Dorchester Bay/Neponset River Waterfront;</li> <li>(g) East Boston Waterfront; and</li> <li>(h) the Boston Harbor Islands.</li> </ul> <p><u>Charlestown</u></p> <p>This area combines historic, recreational and natural attractions with stunning views across the harbour, accessible by a ferry ride from Downtown Boston.</p> <p><u>Deer Island</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant is the centrepiece of the Boston Harbor Project. The plant treats wastewater from 43 communities to ensure Boston Harbor remains one of the cleanest harbours in the United States; and</li> <li>(b) it contains a 2.6-mile perimeter pathway lined with interpretive exhibits designated for walking, jogging, fishing and picnicking, recreational and cultural opportunities.</li> </ul>

**Table – Waterfront planning and management in Boston (cont'd)**

	<b>Boston</b>
<b>Selected waterfront development/enhancement projects (cont'd)</b>	
Waterfront development/enhancement projects (cont'd)	<p><u>Dorchester</u> It is a popular waterfront neighbourhood offering a mixture of recreational and cultural opportunities.</p> <p><u>Downtown/North End</u> Dominating by a mix of cultural and recreational resources, parks and open spaces, and residential and business uses, the Harborwalk along this segment is well maintained and highly visited in Boston. Attractions include the New England Aquarium, Christopher Columbus Waterfront Park, Mirabella Pool and the Coast Guard Base.</p> <p><u>East Boston</u> It contains a wide array of recreational facilities and open spaces, including sailing at the Piers Park Sailing Center and skateboarding at Boston's first skateboard park. Visitors also find the maritime industry prospering along this segment, including the building of ships and docking of tugboats.</p> <p><u>Fort Point Channel</u> Regarding as Boston's "next great place" for its vibrant mix of uses, its eclectic architecture ranges from historic, brick warehouses to the towering Federal Reserve Building.</p> <p><u>South Boston</u> Special features of this district include three miles of public beaches, recreational parks, and Victorian brick and turn of the century housing styles, a working port where fishermen unloading their catch, and a place for ship repairing and cruise ship docking.</p>

**Table – Waterfront planning and management in Boston (cont'd)**

<b>Boston</b>	
<b>Public engagement in waterfront planning and development</b>	
Public engagement	(a) The Municipal Harbor Planning Advisory Committee <sup>(2)</sup> reviews the draft of the harbour plans during its preparation and prior to the review and adoption by the Board of BRA; and (b) according to the <i>Review and Approval of Municipal Harbor Plans</i> , approval of harbour plans is required to go through public consultation and public hearings.

Note: (2) The Municipal Harbor Planning Advisory Committee consists of representatives from harbour advocacy groups, residents, elected officials, business people and business and real estate associations.

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