

Lessons for Equitable Park Development on the Boston Waterfront
The Urban Action Lab at Boston College
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I. Introduction

The Trustees of Reservations' Boston Waterfront Initiative, One Waterfront, will create accessible, climate-resilient open space in Boston that serves diverse community needs and brings value to the vulnerable harbor city.¹ A network of signature parks on Boston's waterfront will offer key economic, social, and environmental benefits to the city's stakeholders. Drawing on the examples of five urban waterfront parks across North America, this study examines the expected distribution of those benefits across communities in Boston and identifies relevant strategies for equitable park development.

The Urban Action Lab first presents the existing literature on the benefits of urban parks and describes how those benefits accrue to nearby stakeholders in the form of private benefits. Consideration is given to the underlying factors that prevent an equitable distribution of economic and social benefits in Boston. Each of the five case studies -- Waterfront Seattle, Millennium Park in Chicago, 11th Street Bridge in D.C., Waterfront Toronto, and Buffalo Bayou Park in Houston -- offers a lesson for overcoming the barriers to equitable park development in Boston. Lastly, the Urban Action Lab applies these findings to the potential sites of the Boston Waterfront Initiative to show how these locations align with The Trustees' vision of an inclusive waterfront.

II. Opportunity for Impact

The shores of the Boston waterfront tell a 400-year-old story of economic progress in Boston. Despite periods of crisis and decline, Boston has undergone three economic rebirths, each of which has altered the city's relationship with its waterfront. In the early 19th century, the colonial city reoriented itself toward fishing and maritime trade. Then, in the late 19th century, the industrialization of the waterfront facilitated Boston's transformation into a factory town built on immigrant labor.² The working port remains a critical source of employment for 7,000 Bostonians.³ From the late 20th century until now, the waterfront has attracted significant commercial and residential investment alongside the city's booming information economy.⁴ The post-industrial waterfront presents a unique opportunity for high-value development, increased public access, and environmental restoration.

A signature park on the Boston waterfront will not only provide immediate economic benefits through capital and operational expenditures, but it will also be a source of continuous social change. The existing literature on parks and open space identifies three categories of impacts: direct, indirect, and induced. Indirect impacts account for linkages between sectors, such as changes in income or jobs associated with parks' vendors. Induced impacts track the expenditures

¹ The Trustees of Reservations. (2018). *Imagining the Future of Boston*. <https://onewaterfront.thetrustees.org/>

² Glaeser, E. (2003). Reinventing Boston: 1640-2003. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 5(2), 13-35. doi: 10.3386/w10166

³ Boston Harbor Now. (2018). *Boston's Working Port: A Foundation for Innovation*. <https://www.bostonharbornow.org/>

⁴ Ibid.

of park employees and vendors in the local economy.⁵ Summing these three categories yields a conservative estimate of parks' economic benefits to cities. Viewed more broadly, parks have also been shown to spur increases in property values, real estate development, business activity, and tourism.⁶ By creating a major amenity on the water's edge, a signature waterfront park in Boston will therefore bring about change further inland.

Across these impacts, a line can be drawn between the public and private benefits of parks. The "public benefits" approach, backed by the Urban Institute, appeals to parks as catalysts for entire cities. It views open space within the context of long-term public policy objectives, such as improving health and wellness outcomes, creating social capital, protecting the environment, and enhancing the aesthetic quality of an area.⁷ Private benefits instead accrue to specific residents by increasing nearby property values, attracting private investment, and broadening the local tax base. Texas A&M finds that these impacts are largely experienced by those within 1,500 feet of a signature park, referred to as the quarter-mile radius of impact. The premium is strongest for households within 500-600 feet.⁸ Park developers can simultaneously pursue citywide change and promote inclusive economic growth by directing the flow of private benefits to specific neighborhoods and communities.

Analyzing the equity impacts of parks requires insight into the demographics of nearby residents and park users vis-a-vis the entire population of the city. A few data points reveal who benefits the most from parks, and by how much:

- Resident diversity: Who lives in the neighborhood immediately served by the park?
- User diversity: Who regularly uses the park, and how do they use the park?
- Barriers to access: What physical or perceived barriers to access exist for non-residents?⁹

III. An Inclusive Waterfront

The concept of equitable economic development aligns with the goals of the City of Boston and several organizations working to increase public access to the waterfront. In 2017, the City of Boston outlined their vision for accessible, climate resilient open space on the Boston waterfront as part of Imagine Boston 2030, the first citywide plan in 50 years.¹⁰ While the structure is in place for an inclusive waterfront to be achieved, preliminary research into the social and economic landscape of the Boston waterfront reveals at least five major threats to inclusive park development:

⁵ American Planning Association. (2003). *How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development*. <https://www.planning.org/publications/document/9148668/>

⁶ Ibid.; The Trust for Public Land. (2009). *Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System*. <https://www.tpl.org/measuring-economic-value-city-park-system>; Urban Land Institute. (2011). *Benefits of Parks to Communities*. http://www.ignitecda.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/UJI_Benefits-of-Parks-to-Communities.pdf

⁷ Urban Institute. (2004). *The Public Value of Urban Parks*. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/public-value-urban-parks>

⁸ Crompton, J. (2004). *THE PROXIMATE PRINCIPLE: The Impact of Parks, Open Space, and Water Features on Property Values and Property Tax Base*. National Recreation and Parks Association.

⁹ Ibid.; HR&A Advisors. (2017). *Measuring Park Equity*. Retrieved from <https://www.braadvisors.com/emphasizing-equity-economic-impact-analysis/>

¹⁰ City of Boston. (2020). *Imagine Boston 2030*. Retrieved from <https://www.boston.gov/departments/mayors-office/imagine-boston-2030>

- Transportation: Transit access in Boston varies by neighborhood. Cost and inconvenience remain barriers for residents of Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and East Boston looking to reach the central waterfront.¹¹ City officials recognize the need to promote affordable transit and incorporate the waterfront into the city's multimodal transportation network.
- Affordability: While the median household income in Boston is similar to the rest of the United States, homes are more than twice as expensive.¹² New parks attract additional investment in their surrounding neighborhoods and raise concerns about affordability and displacement for low- and middle-income households.
- Inequality: A greater proportion of white and higher-income households live along the Boston waterfront than in the southern urban core. These households benefit from increased access to the Boston Harborwalk and other public open spaces. Exceptions exist in areas of Charlestown, South Boston, and East Boston.¹³
- Perceived barriers: Boston's complicated history of displacement and segregation shapes residents' perceptions of the waterfront. Black and Latinx residents feel excluded from the waterfront due to the lack of diversity in the population that lives and works there.¹⁴
- Climate change: Climate change poses a universal threat for Boston, and especially for people of color. Boston ranks as the fourth-most vulnerable city to flooding in North America.¹⁵ The City of Boston's Resilient Boston Harbor Plan points to waterfront parks as a strategy for protecting Boston from rising sea levels. If effective, waterfront parks simultaneously work towards climate resilience and racial equity.

Each of these underlying factors surfaced during the recent development of the Seaport District, which many believe has failed to promote the goals of an inclusive waterfront. The Seaport District is largely detached from the rest of Boston except for private shuttles and a crowded Silver Line.¹⁶ Consistent traffic tie-ups and rising housing prices have driven out long-time South Boston residents from the area.¹⁷ What has taken shape is one of Boston's whitest, wealthiest neighborhoods, with 81.4% non-Hispanic white residents and a median household income of \$141,995.¹⁸ The Seaport District intended to create a space for all Bostonians but has excluded black residents and businesses from participating in the neighborhood's economic growth.

¹¹ The American City Coalition. (2018). *Waterways: Connecting Residents of Roxbury and Dorchester to Boston's Waterfront*. http://tamcc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Waterways_Focus-Group-Summary_FINAL_Distribute-LOWRES.pdf; Rice, C. (2020, March 13). Personal interview.

¹² City of Boston. (2018). *Imagine Boston 2030: A Plan for the Future of Boston*. https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/embed/file/2018-06/imagine20boston202030_pages2.pdf

¹³ U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Data, 2014-2018. PolicyMap. (25 April 2020).

¹⁴ The American City Coalition. (2018). *Waterways: Connecting Residents of Roxbury and Dorchester to Boston's Waterfront*. http://tamcc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Waterways_Focus-Group-Summary_FINAL_Distribute-LOWRES.pdf; Rice, C. (2020, March 13). Personal interview.

¹⁵ City of Boston. (2018). *Imagine Boston 2030: A Plan for the Future of Boston*. https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/embed/file/2018-06/imagine20boston202030_pages2.pdf

¹⁶ Leung, S. (30 October 2019). A free bus to get around the Seaport? Beats a gondola. *Boston Globe*. Retrieved from <https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2019/10/31/free-bus-get-around-seaport-beats-gondola/4tZuWGmoRWXFBRAOmGbYAM/story.html>

¹⁷ Ng, J. (2018). South Boston residents squeezed by Seaport's soaring rents, heavy traffic. *Boston Herald*. Retrieved from <https://www.bostonherald.com/2018/12/26/southie-residents-squeezed-by-seaports-soaring-rents-heavy-traffic/>

¹⁸ U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Data, 2014-2018. PolicyMap. (25 April 2020).

IV. Lessons from Urban Waterfront Parks

How will these documented barriers to equitable development influence the progression of the Boston Waterfront Initiative? Five projects in other North American cities provide insight into the potential equity impacts of an urban waterfront park in Boston. Each of these initiatives has brought measurable social and economic change to its respective city. Some parks resulted from small-scale neighborhood effort; others are a part of on-going urban planning projects. Together they offer lessons for equitable waterfront park development in Boston.

Waterfront Seattle: Expanding Physical Access

Civic leaders in Seattle are restoring the city's relationship with its central waterfront. The ongoing effort, called Waterfront Seattle, began in 2010 and is set to be completed in 2024. The project will deliver the city with a new park promenade, two revitalized piers, an elevated walkway to Pike Place Market, and improved East-West roadways.¹⁹ Waterfront Seattle will leverage the power of open space, infrastructure, and transportation to link neighborhoods along the waterfront to each other and the rest of the city.

HR&A Advisors and Friends of Waterfront Seattle used data from the project's progress to date to predict its economic impact upon completion. Special focus was given to the potential equity impacts of the waterfront. The report found that rising retail rents near the waterfront, already the highest in Seattle, will continue to place pressure on local businesses. This risk applies especially to low-income, minority, and immigrant-owned businesses that are relatively resource strained.²⁰ Waterfront Seattle will bring 2,385 jobs to Downtown Seattle, but this increased economic activity is likely to benefit primarily knowledge-based and tech job growth.²¹ So while the project is physically connecting Downtown Seattle to the water's edge, certain populations are not in the position to reap the full benefits of these social and economic connections.

Takeaway: Increased physical connections between a new waterfront park and the rest of the city may exacerbate the threat of displacement for vulnerable residents and businesses. Because Boston's waterfront neighborhoods are on average more affluent, transit accessibility should still be pursued as a means of transferring the benefits of a park to communities in the interior of the city.

Millennium Park: Community built on Arts and Culture

Millennium Park in Chicago, IL is an icon of art and culture. The park opened to the public in 2004 on the site of a formerly-blighted wasteland between the city's central business district and lakefront. It features 12 world-class art installations, including Sir Anish Kapoor's "Cloud Gate" and Jaume Plensa's Crown Foundation. Over 600 free exhibitions, concerts, and tours take place

¹⁹ Waterfront Seattle. (2020). *Seattle's New Waterfront Is Taking Shape*. Retrieved from <https://waterfrontseattle.org/>

²⁰ HR&A Advisors (2019). *Beyond Real Estate Increment: The Value of the Central Seattle Waterfront*. <https://www.friendsofwaterfrontseattle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/friends-of-waterfront-seattle-hr-a-central-seattle-waterfront-study.pdf>

²¹ Ibid.

each year. Millennium Park is “a new kind of town square” for a global community of residents and visitors.²²

In 2011, Texas A&M and DePaul University produced a study on the value of Millennium Park. It found that the population of nearby homeowners and renters increased by 71% following the park’s construction, driving up rent values by 22%. The park’s visitors supported an 18% increase in nearby hotel units and continue to bring in \$1.4 billion annually.²³ As the area around the park has transformed, the profile of a Millennium Park resident has also changed. Young professionals and Baby Boomers have moved in from the suburbs to take advantage of the park’s views and amenities. Those who benefit most from the park’s proximity are increasingly wealthy.²⁴ At the same time, Millennium Park has improved safety and security outcomes, stimulated public transit development, and provided opportunities for social and cultural involvement for all Chicago residents. These competing findings expose a tension between the park’s restricted private benefits and undeniable public value as a hub for art and culture.

Takeaway: In areas of Boston where physical displacement is a threat due to waterfront development -- like in Charlestown, South Boston, and East Boston -- so too is cultural displacement. A critical mass of cultural attractions for residents and tourists can work against this threat and widen the scope of a park’s benefits.

11th Street Bridge Park: Confronting a History of Racism and Segregation

11th Street Bridge Park in Washington D.C. is “more than a park;” it represents the city’s effort to address a history of residential and racial segregation that has resulted in inequitable growth. The park is designed to connect the Capitol Hill/Navy Yard neighborhood in the west to the Historic Anacostia/Fairlawn neighborhood in the east. Set to open in 2023, 11th Street Bridge Park is already considered a hallmark of equitable development.²⁵

Building Bridges Across the River (BBAR) partnered with HR&A Advisors to estimate the economic impact of the proposed park, and Urban Institute developed performance measures to track the goal of equitable development. BBAR anticipates \$12-19 million in increased property values, \$52-175 million in real estate development, and \$7-10 million in business activity annually.²⁶ This investment is especially critical for D.C.’s most distressed neighborhoods. Twenty years of economic growth in the west has been offset by continued divestment in the east. The eastern neighborhoods today are home to 92% black/non-Hispanic residents, almost 40% of

²² City of Chicago. (2020). *Millennium Park*. Retrieved from https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/millennium_park.html

²³ Texas A&M University and DePaul University. (2011). *Millennium Park Quadruple Net Value Report*. <https://denverleadership.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Millennium-Park-Economic-Impact-Study-2011.pdf>

²⁴ Uhler, E. (2005). The Millennium Park Effect: Creating a Cultural Venue with an Economic Impact. *Economic Development Journal* 4(2), 20-25. https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/Millennium_0.pdf

²⁵ Building Bridges Across the River. (2020). *BridgingDC*. Retrieved from <https://bbardc.org/project/11th-street-bridge-park/>

²⁶ HR&A Advisors. (2014). *Estimated Economic Impacts of the 11th Street Bridge Park*. https://bbardc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/HRA-11th-Street-Bridge-Park-Economic-Impacts_FINAL_R2-2.pdf

which live below the poverty line (compared to 10% in the west).²⁷ These residents fear that the Bridge Park will use their neighborhood as an extension of the city's economic growth without protecting their interests. BBAR understands these sentiments and has incorporated plans for affordable housing, small business loans, local hiring requirements, and community programming into the park's design.²⁸

Takeaway: The 11th Street Bridge Park demonstrates proactive planning rooted in an understanding of the waterfront's historical and community context. Like the Anacostia River, the Boston Harbor separates Downtown Boston from East Boston, home to the city's largest Latinx community. The city remains segregated across racial and ethnic lines. By turning its attention to physically and/or racially isolated neighborhoods, the Boston Waterfront Initiative can connect long-divided areas of the city.

Waterfront Toronto: Transforming Negative Perceptions

Located on Lake Ontario, Toronto has been ranked the fastest growing city in the U.S. and Canada.²⁹ Waterfront Toronto aims to revitalize 800 hectares of the city's waterfront in response to the environmental, spatial, and economic challenges confronting the growing city. Since 2001, Waterfront Toronto has developed twenty five waterfront parks, amounting to one-fourth of the revitalized shoreline (400 acres).³⁰ Toronto's waterfront park system is massive in scale and potential impact.

A formal impact assessment was published by urbanMetrics in 2012 to review the first decade of work on the waterfront. At the time of the study, the revitalized waterfront had created 16,200 permanent jobs and \$3.2 billion in economic activity (compared to \$1.3 billion in development costs).³¹ Despite a significant return on investment, the project has faced criticisms for its high price tag. Waterfront Toronto has countered these claims of grandiosity by pointing to its ability to use beauty as a tool for social and economic change.³² Prior to its revitalization, the waterfront had been heavily polluted by industrial activity. Fiscal collapse in the 1990s forced Toronto to abandon important post-industrial redevelopment projects.³³ In a commercial city that is characteristically grey, the project has initiated a paradigm shift in how residents perceive and use the waterfront. A massive public asset has been created out of once-neglected space. The result is a more cohesive Toronto, both physically and symbolically.

²⁷ Urban Institute. (2019). *Equitable Development and Urban Park Space: Results and Insights from the First Two Years of Implementation of the Equitable Development Plan of DC's 11th Street Bridge Park Project*. https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/99850/equitable_development_and_urban_park_space_1.pdf

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ O'Neil, L. (June 2019). "Toronto is the Fastest Growing City in the U.S. and Canada." *blogTO*. Retrieved from <https://www.blogto.com/city/2019/06/toronto-found-be-fastest-growing-city-us-and-canada/>

³⁰ Waterfront Toronto. (n.d.) *Parks and Open Spaces*. Retrieved from <https://waterfronttoronto.ca/nbe/portal/waterfront/Home/waterfronthome/our-vision/parks>

³¹ urbanMetrics. (2013). *Economic Impact Analysis (2001-2013)*. www.waterfronttoronto.ca/uploads/documents/economic_impact_analysis_2001_2013_1.pdf

³² Bozikovic, A. (12 May 2018). Shored up: How Toronto's waterfront redevelopment is going right. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/shored-up-how-toronto-waterfront-redevelopment-is-going-right/article19784844/>

³³ Desfor, G. and Laidley, J. (2010). *Reshaping Toronto's Waterfront*. University of Toronto Press.

Takeaway: Like Waterfront Toronto, the Boston Waterfront Initiative plans to transform underutilized space into a world-class attraction. In Boston, though, black and Latinx residents are already turned off by the exclusivity and luxury of the waterfront. An overly grandiose park may deepen these feelings of exclusion.

Buffalo Bayou Park: Overcoming Environmental Threats

Winding along the banks of Buffalo Bayou in Houston, Texas, is a series of gardens, trails, art displays, and play areas that comprise Buffalo Bayou Park. The 160 acre park was developed between 2012 and 2015 as part of a larger initiative to revitalize a 10-mile stretch of the historic bayou. Once the city's principal drainage system, Buffalo Bayou Park is now an anchor for recreational and cultural life in Downtown Houston.³⁴

Two studies have investigated the environmental, social, and economic performance of Buffalo Bayou Park. The Urban Land Institute notes the park's role in promoting climate resiliency: "From the beginning, park elements were designed with water in mind -- both floods and droughts."³⁵ According to the Landscape Architecture Foundation, the park withstood nearly \$2 million in damages and repairs from Hurricane Harvey in 2017.³⁶ Just days after the hurricane hit, joggers and bikers were back on the park's upper trails. Buffalo Bayou Park brings in 12,000 daily users, 90% of which report an improved sense of well-being.³⁷ The park reaches disparate neighborhoods of Houston. Additional trails and bridges extend into these densely populated neighborhoods, creating critical points of access for residents. Of those immediately served by the park, 39% are Hispanic, 34% are white/non-Hispanic, and 20% are black/non-Hispanic (in line with the city's averages).³⁸ Buffalo Bayou Park serves as an inclusive, community-focused solution to environmental threats.

Takeaway: The Boston Waterfront Initiative can bring stability and cohesion to the entire city by working towards climate resilience. All users of a future waterfront park in Boston will benefit from additional protection against flooding and sea level rises.

V. Options for Boston

The Boston Waterfront Initiative is presented with two potential locations for a signature park: Sargent's Wharf parking lot in the North End and Piers Park Phase III in East Boston. Applying the findings of the case study analysis to both of these neighborhoods leads to more specific insights on the equity impacts of the Boston Waterfront Initiative.

As it stands, Sargent's Wharf provides roughly 250 parking spaces to the public and delivers revenue to its owners, the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA). In line with the

³⁴ Buffalo Bayou Partnership. (2020). *Buffalo Bayou Park*. Retrieved from <https://buffalobayou.org/visit/destination/buffalo-bayou-park/>

³⁵ Urban Land Institute. (2018). *ULI Case Studies: Buffalo Bayou Park*. <https://casestudies.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/BuffaloBayouFinalv3.pdf>

³⁶ Aman, A. and Yildirim, Y. (2019). Buffalo Bayou Park. *Landscape Performance Series*. doi: 10.31353/cs1580

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Buffalo Bayou Partnership. (2020). *Buffalo Bayou Park*. Retrieved from <https://buffalobayou.org/visit/destination/buffalo-bayou-park/>

Resilient Boston Harbor plan, the Boston Waterfront Initiative aims to transform the vulnerable expanse of concrete into a public asset for the North End's residents and 3.2 million annual tourists.³⁹ Like Millennium Park, however, the project's private benefits risk being concentrated among an affluent community of residents. The North End is home to an 88.5% non-Hispanic white population with a median income of \$103,415. The site is well-connected to the rest of Boston, as Sargent's Wharf can be reached by four transit stops within a 10-minute walk.⁴⁰ But cost and inconvenience will likely remain a barrier for residents of the southern urban core and East Boston. If the Boston Waterfront Initiative does not take steps to overcome barriers to access -- through transit solutions and inclusive programming -- a park at Sargent's Wharf will not promote a waterfront for all.

Based on equity alone, Piers Park Phase III in the Jeffries Point district of East Boston presents a more compelling development opportunity. The district is home to 8,300 residents and a burgeoning mixed-use waterfront which features open space, high-end and affordable housing, and the Boston Harbor Shipyard.⁴¹ A signature park like Piers Park Phase III will bring value to its industrial neighbors while promoting public rights to the water. Longtime residents are positioned to benefit from the project due to their physical exclusion from Downtown Boston. Many residents also belong to the group of black and Latinx Bostonians that negatively perceive the waterfront as a place of wealth and luxury. More than half of all East Boston residents are Hispanic/Latinx, compared to 20% in the city as a whole.⁴² This project will foster physical and social connections between communities in Boston by further incorporating residents into the network of open space established by the Harborwalk and Piers Park Phase I.

VI. Conclusion

Responding to the challenges related to park development in Boston requires careful planning rooted in a site's physical, cultural, and historical context. From the case study analysis presented in this paper, a general decision-making framework emerges. If the Boston Waterfront Initiative takes root in a predominantly white or high-income neighborhood like the North End, barriers to access must be overcome in order to transfer the public benefits of the park to a diverse community of users. In an area of impending gentrification like East Boston, increased access may exacerbate fears of displacement for local residents. The risk of displacement can be mitigated by ensuring that the park's amenities and programming are aligned with the needs of the local community. While pursuing the goal of "world-class design," a new waterfront park must recognize its immediate neighborhood stakeholders in order to suppress feelings of exclusion and promote a waterfront for all.

Applying these findings to the two locations of interest exposes the key risks associated with Boston Waterfront Initiative. The challenge at Sargent's Wharf will be balancing the park's private benefits to North End residents and public benefits to the rest of Boston. Achieving inclusive development will demand citywide transportation and programming initiatives to draw all Bostonians into the area. Piers Park Phase III instead presents more opportunities than threats,

³⁹ U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Data, 2014-2018. PolicyMap. (25 April 2020).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Boston Harbor Now. (2018). *Boston's Working Port: A Foundation for Innovation*. <https://www.bostonharbornow.org/>

⁴² U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Data, 2014-2018. PolicyMap. (25 April 2020).

so long as The Trustees align the park's recreational offerings with residents' expressed needs. The project embodies each pillar of inclusive development: fostering neighborhood connections, honoring culture and community, and confronting existing inequities. In East Boston and elsewhere, The Trustees can initiate the next phase of Boston's waterfront transformation by using open space as a catalyst for economic and social transformation.

Appendix: Summary of Case Studies

Park	Location	Focus	Private Benefits	Public Benefits	Distribution of Benefits
Waterfront Seattle	Seattle, WA	Expanding Physical Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.1B one-time impact • 2,385 permanent jobs • \$288M annual economic activity • 8M annual visitors & \$191M in tourism spending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovated surface street along & new east-west roadways to reach waterfront • New Seawall along Elliot's Bay to protect from storms & seismic events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents in study area more diverse & less affluent than Seattle's average • Rising retail rents place pressure on low-income, minority, & immigrant-owned businesses • Job growth concentrated in tech
Millennium Park	Chicago, IL	Community Built on Arts & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22% increase in residential rents between 2004 & 2011 • 18% increase in hotel units between 2004 & 2011 • \$1.4B in annual tourism spending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 world-class art installations • 610 free events each year • Total crime down by 10% between 2004 & 2011 • 8 new transit stops developed upon park's opening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Median household income 2x Chicago's average • Influx of young professionals & Baby Boomers from suburbs • Growth in selective industries along Central Magnificent Mile
11th Street Bridge Park	Washington, D.C.	Confronting a History of Racism & Segregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$12-19M in increased property values & \$52-175M in real estate development annually • \$7-10M in ongoing business activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects Capitol Hill/Navy Yard & Anacostia/ Fairlawn • Equitable Development Plan for affordable housing, small business loans, & local hiring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority (52%) of Capitol Hill/Navy Yard residents are white; 10% poverty rate • 92% of Anacostia/Fairlawn residents are Black/non-Hispanic; 40% poverty rate
Waterfront Toronto	Toronto, ON	Transforming Negative Perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$14.4B in projected private real estate development • 16,200 permanent jobs • \$3.2B in economic activity between 2001 & 2012 • 200% return on investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% of revitalized shoreline devoted to public open space • More than 4,000 free community programs annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth 6x Toronto as a whole (already the fastest growing city in U.S. & Canada) • Influx of non-foreign-born residents to South Riverdale & Waterfront Communities neighborhoods
Buffalo Bayou Park	Houston, TX	Overcoming Environmental Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16% increase in value of single-family homes within a 0.25-mile radius, as of 2019 • \$2B of new investment within same region & time frame 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12,000 daily visitors • Reported decrease in physical ailments among 76% of surveyed visitors & improved well-being among 90% • Withstood \$2M in damages from Hurricane Harvey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved park access for 38,000 Houston residents • 39% of nearby residents are Hispanic & 20% are black/non-Hispanic, in line with Houston's overall composition