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New Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion opens on Rose Kennedy Greenway

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Boston Harbor Island Alliance and the National Park Service recently opened the new Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion with Mayor Thomas Menino and Victoria Reggie Kennedy presiding over the event. This is the first structure built on the Rose Kennedy Greenway and serves as the gateway to the Boston Harbor Islands national park area. Located adjacent to Quincy Market and Christopher Columbus Park, the Pavilion will allow visitors to interact with park rangers, view ferry schedules, buy ferry tickets, examine two large-scale maps of the historic islands, and even enjoy a shaded area on the Greenway.

The Pavilion's construction was funded in part with \$5 million from the National Park Service, money which was championed by the late U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy and the Massachusetts Congressional delegation. Other donors to the Pavilion include GDF SUEZ, George and Ann Macomber, Jim and Cathy Stone, State Street Foundation, Cabot Family Charitable Foundation, Smith Family Foundation, and the Boston Harbor Island Alliance board of directors.

The Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion, designed by Utile, Inc. (architect) with Reed Hilderbrand (landscape architect), and IDEO (human factors design consultants), is located on Parcel 14 on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. The facility was constructed by Turner Special Projects.

Rather than a conventional building, the Pavilion was conceived as an open-air exhibit, defined by two sculptural canopies. The program and character of the Pavilion take advantage of its position at the threshold between the busy urban environment of downtown Boston and the nearby natural expanse of the harbor and its islands.

The focus of the Pavilion is a 40 ft. by 52 ft. granite map of the Boston Harbor Islands. The eight islands that are accessible via public ferry are identified with vertical exhibit panels that highlight the diversity of the island environments and the range of recreational opportunities available to the public. The map and panels are lit all year long and the exhibition is a destination along the Greenway.

Shown (from left) are: Aaron Michlewitz, state representative; Douglas McGarrah, Boston Harbor Island Alliance board chair; Jeffrey Mullan, secretary and CEO of the Mass. Dept. of Transportation; Audrey O'Hagan, principal, Audrey O'Hagan Architects, LLC and 2011 president at Boston Society of Architects; Victoria Reggie Kennedy; Cathy Douglas Stone, Boston Harbor Island Alliance board member; Mayor Thomas Menino; David Cash, commissioner of the Commonwealth Utilities Commission; Tom Powers, president, Boston Harbor Island Alliance; Bruce Jacobson, superintendent, Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, National Park Service.