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Impacts of climate change acknowledged in the planning process for Boston Municipal Harbor Plan (MHP)

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The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) is in the process of conducting planning sessions for a proposed section of the Municipal Harbor Plan (MHP) for the Downtown Waterfront area and also working rezoning the entire Greenway, using the guidelines established by the Greenway District Planning Study.

Beginning in March 2013, the BRA has established a Planning Advisory Committee which is in the process of holding public meetings to solicit comments from the public, including neighborhood residents and property owners. The area of consideration is within, but not including, Long Wharf to the Evelyn Moakley Bridge, and includes 26 parcels. The planning process is expected to take 18-months to 24-months to complete.

The MHP process is governed in part by the state's Chapter 91-Public Waterways Act and associated regulations which require all land on Commonwealth Tidelands to be used to promote the "public use and enjoyment," rather than to ensure private advantages of use. The entire area being considered consists of Commonwealth Tidelands, categorized as both "filled" and "flowed." Therefore, the planning for this area is subject to the requirements of Chapter 91 and any approved MHP.

The impact of climate changes and the findings of the Report "Preparing for the Rising Tide," issued in February 2013 and sponsored by the city of Boston and the Boston Harbor Association, will also be part of the planning process; to specifically address climate change mitigation and adaptation measures and the city's Green Building requirements.

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