



# WAVES OF CHANGE

A report of the Metropolitan Beaches Commission



Produced for the Metropolitan Beaches Commission of the  
General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
by Save the Harbor / Save the Bay

June 2014

## ABOUT THE METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSION AND THIS REPORT



**T**he Metropolitan Beaches Commission was created in 2006 by the Massachusetts Legislature to take an in-depth look at the metropolitan region's public beaches in Nahant, Lynn, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy and Hull that are managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). In 2013, the Commission reconvened to examine the impacts of the reforms and recommendations made in its first report, released in 2007, and issue additional findings and recommendations to better leverage these resources for more than one million regional residents. This report documents the Commission's most recent findings.

The Commission is comprised of elected officials and community, civic, nonprofit, and business leaders from Boston and the metropolitan region's beachfront communities and waterfront neighborhoods. It is co-chaired by Senator Tom McGee and Representative Carlo Basile, and led and managed by Save the Harbor/Save the Bay.

In 2013, the Commission held 10 public hearings—two at the State House and eight in Bos-

ton's waterfront neighborhoods and the region's beachfront communities from Nahant to Nantasket. Nearly 1,000 people attended at least one hearing, and shared their thoughts about how to improve their beach. The Commission also retained the services of the CPA firm Raphael and Raphael LLP, whose findings and recommendations are summarized in this report.

In 2014, the Commission invited all those who took part in its process to review preliminary findings and recommendations, in order to make certain that we got it right. This report reflects the hard work and commitment of so many who care deeply about the beaches and are dedicated to improving the quality of life in our communities. The Commission is truly grateful to all who have participated in this effort.

Copies of this report, related appendices, sticky notes and other supporting materials on which this report is based are available at Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's website: [www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014](http://www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014).

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# THE COMMISSION WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL THOSE WHO HELPED TO SHAPE THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT.

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Dear Friends,

Over the past year the Metropolitan Beaches Commission has had the opportunity to hear from nearly 1,000 residents of the region's waterfront neighborhoods and beachfront communities of Lynn, Nahant, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy and Hull, and from experts on water quality, beach management, beach programming and water transportation.

These exchanges confirmed for the Commissioners what we have seen with our own eyes and heard in our own communities: The state of the metropolitan region's public beaches is greatly improved since the Commission issued its first report in 2007. Many of the Commission's 2007 recommendations have been enacted resulting in improved water quality, cleaner sand, and higher standards of maintenance.

However, despite these very notable achievements, sustained progress has not occurred in advancing other earlier Commission recommendations: on fulltime and seasonal staffing levels, equipment purchases and maintenance, expanded seasonal and year round programming, and improved information technology and new management systems that are essential to give DCR the tools it needs to succeed.

Despite the challenges that remain, there are still remarkable opportunities to put these beaches to better use for the residents of our communities. We recognize that it will take additional resources. It will also take time and sustained attention and oversight by this Commission and the public to accomplish our shared goals.

We believe that these beaches are extraordinary assets for our communities. They are important economic drivers and are increasingly at the center of civic life. They also provide critical recreational opportunities for the region's families and young people, and create new stewards to protect the public's \$5 billion investment in clean water.

We also believe that we have a special responsibility to the region's less affluent residents, for whom these public beaches are a primary recreational resource. Working together, we have proven that government can work—and make a real difference in the lives of ordinary people from all walks of life and from every community in the metropolitan region, including Lynn and Nahant, Revere and Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy and Hull.

We look forward to working with you to protect the gains we have made, build on our success and continue to move these beaches from good to great.

Sincerely,

Metropolitan Beaches Commission

Senator Thomas McGee  
*Co-Chair*

Representative Carlo Basile  
*Co-Chair*

P.S. We would like to thank former State Senator Jack Hart and former State Representative Kathi-Anne Reinstein for their outstanding service as Co-Chairs of the Commission. Thanks as well to Patty Foley and Bruce Berman of Save the Harbor Save the Bay and David Spillane of Goody Clancy for their help in leading and managing the hearings and producing this report.

# Progress Since the Commission's 2007 Report

When the Metropolitan Beaches Commission issued its findings in 2007, conditions on the beaches were dire. The most significant challenges identified by the Commission and the public included:

- Poor levels of maintenance at the beaches and related facilities such as bathhouses—reflected in sand that was not clean, litter that was not removed, and water fountains and other basic amenities that did not work
- Insufficient staff to provide basic services
- Lack of essential equipment to allow staff to perform duties
- Staff not assigned consistently to individual beaches resulting in a lack of accountability for problems associated with maintenance and stewardship



SOURCE: THE BOSTON GLOBE

*Poor maintenance characterized the beaches in 2007.*

- Poor communications between DCR and local officials
- Low morale in DCR workforce

The Commission's recommendations in 2007 targeted five key areas:

- Maintenance, staff, equipment—to provide the level of staffing and equipment needed by DCR staff to do their jobs effectively
- The completion of long planned capital projects in Quincy, South Boston, East Boston, Winthrop and Nahant.
- Management reforms—to create greater accountability, and ensure that DCR has the management systems and information technology in place to manage hiring and contracts
- Improved water quality and beach flagging accuracy—to protect and inform the public
- Free Beach Events/Programming—to attract the region's residents in greater number and to make the beaches more valuable to the public

Following issuance of the Commission's report in 2007, the Patrick Administration quickly embraced the Commission's findings and recommendations as a blueprint for reform, resulting in notable management changes and allocation of new resources to the beaches:

- DCR received additional funds to allow it to increase full-time and seasonal maintenance and supervisory staff dedicated to the beaches



- DCR received additional funds to purchase much-needed maintenance equipment including sand sifters and packers
- DCR advanced several capital projects that are now either completed or well underway
- DCR implemented management reforms that dedicated staff to each beach, greatly increasing accountability for the success of beach maintenance; standards and schedules for routine maintenance were developed and shared with the public

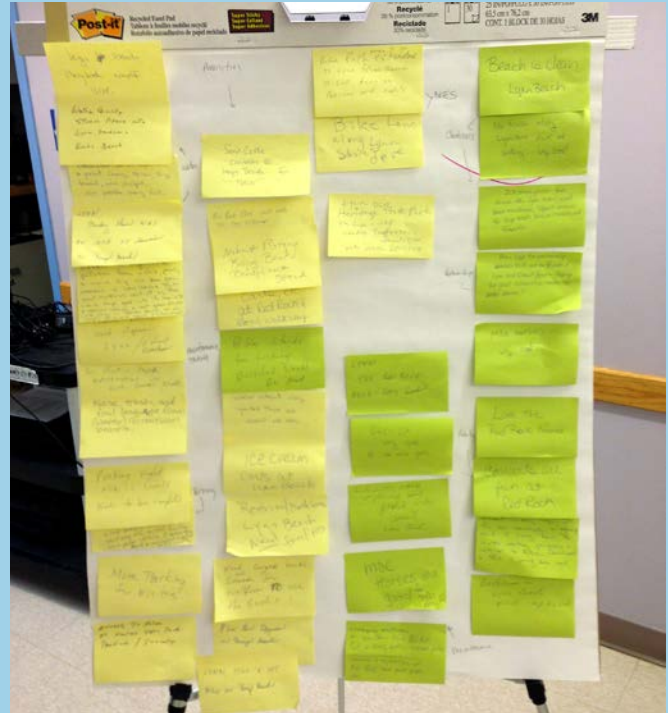
These additional investments and management reforms resulted in a sea change on the beaches, widely recognized by the public and heard consistently by the Commission in its 2013 public hearings. DCR staff receives high marks from the public for the job it is doing, sometimes under difficult circumstances.



*The metropolitan beaches serve more than 1 million regional residents.*



*Though challenges remain, in 2013 the public acknowledged that much progress has been made on the beaches since the Commission issued its 2007 report.*



*In 2013, the Commission held 10 public hearings engaging nearly 1,000 regional residents.*

## Continuing Challenges

Despite the progress made since 2007, challenges remain that must be addressed:

- Staffing levels at the beaches, which improved after 2007, have again declined in recent years. The Commission recognizes that some staffing reductions were inevitable as the Commonwealth and its agencies dealt with the recession. However, unless beach staffing is returned to more optimal levels, the beaches will inevitably reenter a cycle of decline, undermining the progress that has been made and failing to meet public expectations, as was the case before 2007.
- DCR needs additional funds to purchase new equipment and maintain its aging machinery.
- Public funding for beach programs that are so important to attracting residents and enhancing their enjoyment of the beaches has been very limited and has never come close to the level recommended by the Commission in 2007. In the absence of any meaningful public funding, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay launched and funded its Better Beaches Small Grants Program in 2008 to fill the vacuum, providing grant funding to strengthen Friends Groups and “Jumpstart” free events and programs. These programs have been highly successful, have tapped the

creativity of local organizations, and have strengthened the bond between the beaches and their communities. But without a dedicated commitment of public funds to foster continued growth and development of these programs in partnership with local groups, the progress that has been achieved is unlikely to be sustained.

- Much of the Commission’s effort in 2007 and again in 2013 has focused on the basic issues of beach management, maintenance and programming, but capital improvements are also needed to enhance these amenities and expand their capacity to meet the growing need of the more than one million people who live within a short drive or ride to the beach.
- Other key challenges that have been considered by the Commission and are described in its recommendations include: water quality and beach flagging, coastal resiliency and sea level rise, parking and public safety, dog management and the issues related to piping plover nesting areas.

Nearly 1,000 people came to a Commission Hearing in 2013, and hundreds more took part in our online survey. The Commission thanks all who participated in this effort to continue to move our beaches from good to great.

# Key Findings and Recommendations

## 1. Additional Resources Are Required to Support DCR Operations

As it did in 2007, the Commission asked the accounting firm Raphael and Raphael LLP to prepare a detailed analysis of DCR's budget and operations. This assessment has provided the Commission with a comprehensive review of the resources allocated to the beaches in the period from 2007-2013 and an understanding of the current and future barriers DCR faces in providing optimal service to the public.

Based on this detailed assessment, the Commission has determined that DCR needs additional resources to enable it to meet its obligations to the public. An increase of approximately \$9 million in the agency's annual operating budget is required to support its stewardship of beaches, parks and reservations in communities across the Commonwealth. This includes \$2.9 million for additional fulltime and \$600,000 in additional seasonal staff for the metropolitan beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

This recommended level of annual investment in the beaches would accomplish the following:

- Return DCR staffing levels to those achieved in 2008
- Allow for an extension of seven-day a week services at major bathhouses to the shoulder season months of April and November, when the beaches are very active
- Allow some major bathhouses to be kept open seven days a week year round (for instance at Wollaston and Carson beaches)
- Ensure locations heavily burdened by coastal storms would have additional staff providing emergency responses to all types of hazard weather events seven days per week, where five day per week coverage is the current norm

*"The Commonwealth's investments in the Boston Harbor cleanup, the Boston Harbor Islands and these public beaches have already resulted in dramatic improvements in the quality of life for residents in Boston and the region's coastal communities."*

**METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER PAUL GROGAN,  
THE BOSTON FOUNDATION**

- Maintain sanitation pickup at three times per week in the off season; increase pickup to five to seven days a week in the shoulder seasons and seven days a week in the peak season, up from three days per week in the shoulder season and three to five days per week in peak season
- Support additional staff in the Divisions of Engineering, Planning, Legal and Forestry, to help support ecological work at the beaches, capital project planning and fulfillment, and expanded management of permits including those governing the availability of recreational services and food offerings that can generate additional revenue to invest in these beaches

## 2. The Metropolitan Beaches Require Additional Capital Improvements

Some beaches have seen capital improvements in recent years that have greatly improved the public's ability to use and enjoy these resources. But many beaches still lack necessary amenities or have limited capacity to support growing public use. The Commission, working with DCR, elected officials and local communities, has identified needed capital projects including new bathhouses, concessions, playgrounds, dog parks, fire pits, bike trails and walking paths with an estimated cost of \$80 million. This includes \$12.9 million in short-term capital needs identified by DCR.

## MBC RECOMMENDED CAPITAL PROJECTS BY COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY	CAPITAL PROJECT
<b>WINTHROP</b>	Winthrop Beach Restoration
	Shaded seating and benches
	Bathhouse improvements
	Improved signage
	Enhanced Lighting—with flower baskets
	Foot showers and drinking fountains along the beach
	Infrastructure for kayak and paddleboard launch area
<b>SOUTH BOSTON</b>	Signature bathhouse at Castle Island with updated visitor amenities, such as parking, trash receptacles, bathrooms, drinking fountains, solar lighting and signs
	Restore the Pickle Barrel building at Carson beach for function that would enhance the park. A private entity had been interested in the building and had pursued creating a bait shop, but the capital need due to the Mass Historic issue in rehab. The estimated cost 4 years ago.
	Expand Playground at Marine Park in partnership with the Joyce Family
	Sewer line work at Pickle Barrel at Carson beach.
	Murphy Rink/Bathhouse updates and team rooms
	The restoration of the Castle, the replenishment of stone blocks, fencing and trees.
	Reinvestment in the Harry McDonough sailing Center
	Updated visitor amenities, such as parking, trash receptacles, bathrooms, drinking fountains, solar lighting and signs
	Vehicular access and control kiosk at Castle Island
	<b>REVERE</b>
Design and Build Playground for Revere Beach—estimate based on basic similar playgrounds in system. Esplanade playspace was \$1 million plus, but built with private dollars	
Restore State Police Barracks to Visitor Center / Park Amenity when MSP leave the building which is anticipated in their current master plan. Given Historic Status building would cost would be significant and difficult to estimate at this time	
Additional bathhouse to be located in the vicinity of the Markey Bridge.	
Permanent Volleyball location in the area of the Shirley Avenue Bath House on Revere Beach Boulevard	
A permanent carousel on Revere Beach in that same grassy area between Chester and Beach Streets	
Addition of food vendor spaces and game areas	
<b>QUINCY</b>	Transform Squantum Point Park and Pier into hub for ferries and gateway to the Islands.
	Design and Build Playground for Wollaston
	A Dog-Park
	Dredging at Wollaston Beach for recreational boating and bathers
<b>LYNN/NAHANT</b>	Complete improvements to Nahant Causeway
	Capital improvements to Lynn Heritage State Park Boardwalk
	Additional bathroom facilities at Red Rock
	Continued investment in the Lynn waterfront and ferry
	Build out Ward bathhouse at Nahant Beach to provide a venue for recreation and or food concession.

## MBC RECOMMENDED CAPITAL PROJECTS BY COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY	CAPITAL PROJECT
<b>HULL</b>	Finish Nantasket Master Plan and fund a rehabilitation of Nantasket beach.
	Renovate and enhance playground at Nantasket beach.
	Adaptive response planning for sea-level rise at the Bathhouse and elsewhere
	Beach nourishment and seawall repairs.
<b>EAST BOSTON</b>	Mobi Mats to provide enhanced ADA access
	Tennis court area needs to be completed
	A floating dock for swimming
	Improved wheelchair and stroller access to the beach and the water
	Fire pit and grills at Constitution Beach
	Proper signage outlining best practices, guidelines, regulations, etc.
	A small boat/kayak/paddleboard rental and storage facility at the beach
<b>DORCHESTER</b>	Construct a small bathroom Malibu Beach near the Dorchester Yacht Club side of the beach. There is a small facility near Morrissey Boulevard side of the beach now.
	Tenean Beach needs a small bathroom facility.
	Make Landscape improvements and rethink the use of Tenean beach and changing focus on it as a passive recreation spot along the Neponset Greenway rather than a swimming spot.
	Picnic Pavilion at Malibu Beach
	Tenean Beach flood mitigation
	Remove some of the permanent/ parking lot to gain more beach/dune
	Reshape beach with a back dune to reduce flooding of parking lot
	Relocate tot lot area near courts
	Construct new bathhouse at Savin Hill
	Additional Harbor Walk and Trail signage
	Dredging at Malibu/Savin Hill and Tenean Beach
	Strengthen bike and pedestrian connections between these beaches and the Neponset Greenway and the South Boston Beaches at Rainbow Park.
	<b>BOSTON HARBOR ISLANDS</b>
Georges Island terminal and marina	
Spectacle Island, dredging needs to happen to open up marina area	
<b>ALL/SEVERAL</b>	Refresh Park furniture at some beaches.
	Add additional foot washes where needed
	Dog Parks
	Adaptive climate change /beach renourishment

*Additional information on these capital projects, including a breakdown of projected costs is available on line at [www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014](http://www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014)*

### 3. The Metropolitan Beaches Require Additional Funds to Purchase Maintenance Equipment

DCR needs \$2.8 million in additional capital funds to acquire needed maintenance equipment or replace old equipment including pick-up trucks, sand sifters, packers and loaders.

Detailed analysis, an executive summary and additional information is available in the Raphael and Raphael, LLP report at [www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014](http://www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014)

#### SUMMARY OF MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT NEEDS

EQUIPMENT
Street sweeper (3)
F150 pickup trucks to support new staff from Beaches Initiative (16)
Lifeguard stands on wheels (8)
Trash compactor trucks (2)
Small packers trucks (2)
Surf rake with tractor (4)
Loader
Kubota (4)
Jet Ski with sled (2)
CDL exempt F550 with large dump body, 4X4 with plow/sander
F-350 one ton dump truck
4-wheel drive F350
Off wheel vehicle for transport of injured person
John Deere Gator (2)
Accessible kayak ramp
Message board (2)
Zero turn mower
Arrow board (2)
Wright standing mower
Snowblower for Bobcat
Landscape trailer for power washer
Mobi mat

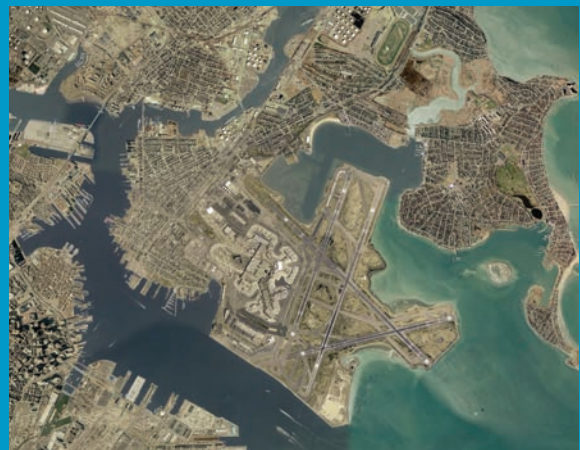
### 4. DCR Needs To Invest In New Management Systems and Information Technology

The Commission has identified a number of impediments to DCR's success in managing the beaches, which include outdated information technology and contract management systems, unwieldy hiring practices, and loss of institutional knowledge and costs associated with anticipated staff retirements. These issues are described more fully in Raphael and Raphael LLP's report.

Despite these obstacles, DCR has succeeded in bringing their management and maintenance policies and practices into alignment across the entire system, and has demon-

*“The improvements at Constitution Beach are just a beginning. East Boston is ready to embrace our historic and enchanting urban waterfront and to produce new visions of use, investment and access. At meetings here, people speak of boardwalks, harbor walks, kayaking, row boats and paddle boats. They imagine swimming holes, sculling clubs, micro-beaches, water transportation, floating restaurants and more. Such investment would unlock the true family recreational and tourism potential of our Harbor City.”*

**METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER CHRIS MARCHI, EAST BOSTON**



*Urban beaches, like Constitution Beach in East Boston, are frequently part of a larger network of public waterfront access that contributes to quality of life.*

*“The Metropolitan Beaches Commission has driven public investment that has transformed our region’s public beaches from liabilities into real assets for communities from Nahant to Nantasket and helped make the beaches of South Boston some of the cleanest in urban America. I’m proud to have been a part of it and am certain of its continued success.”*

FORMER METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSION CO-CHAIR  
JACK HART, SOUTH BOSTON

strated an ability to generate additional revenue from parking, vendor agreements and concessions. The Commission believes that there is a substantial opportunity for more revenue growth in these areas: Inexpensive metered parking in East Boston and South Boston, for which there was community support at the hearings, could conservatively generate \$250,000 a year to support beach operations and expanded programming.

To be fully successful, DCR needs both tools, like modern contract management systems and information technology upgrades, and incentives, like retained revenue from parking leases and concessions, which the Commission believes should supplement DCR’s budget and be directed towards the Metropolitan Beaches, and not to the general fund.

## 5. Free Beach Events and Programs: Better beaches require better beach programming

Since completion of the Metropolitan Beaches Commission’s first report in 2007, beach friends groups in Lynn, Nahant, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy and Hull have leveraged \$173,500 in small grants received from Save the Harbor/Save the Bay’s Better Beaches Program with \$603,500 in cash and in-kind donations from local government and small businesses for a total investment of \$774,000 in more than 180 free events and programs that serve the region’s residents and visitors alike.

These programs have demonstrated the appeal and value of free beach programs in attracting the public, and enhancing the enjoyment of the beaches for people of all ages. While DCR has been supportive of these efforts and has assisted with necessary permitting and providing staff and oversight, almost no public funds have been made available to support programming activities themselves. If these programs, which the public supports enthusiastically, are to be maintained and expanded in coming years, dedicated public funding will be needed in addition to ongoing volunteer efforts.

The Commission recommends that DCR dedicate 5% of the funds it spends on maintaining these beaches, approximately \$280,000 annually, to direct financial and in-kind support for free events, activities and programs, including matching grants of \$15,000 per community to support the efforts of local friends groups as part of Save the Harbor’s Better Beaches program.



***Events and programs add to the appeal of the beaches and their value to the public.***

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Better Beaches program, working with community partners, has provided support for more than 180 free events and programs on the beaches.

REVERE BEACH PARTNERSHIP  
*National Sand Sculpting Competition*

FRIENDS OF BELLE ISLE MARSH  
*Educational activities on the beach*

THE EAST BOSTON YMCA  
*Summer Food Service Program and Campfire*

FRIENDS OF LYNN & NAHANT BEACH  
*Red Rock Summer Concert Series*

FRIENDS OF WINTHROP BEACH  
*Family activities on the beach*



FRIENDS OF HERITAGE PARK  
*World Folk Festival*

HARBOR ARTS, INC.  
*The HarborArts Festival*

THE BCYF CURLEY COMMUNITY CENTER  
*Summer Youth Programs*

SOUTH BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE  
*Family Fun Night on the Beach*

CITY POINT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOC.  
*Beat the Summer Sizzle at Pleasure Bay*



FRIENDS OF SAVIN HILL SHORES  
*Beach Festival Family Movie Night*

FRIENDS OF THE PARAGON CAROUSEL  
*Museum Projects and Reading Program*

FRIENDS OF WOLLASTON BEACH  
*Kids Fest*

HULL NANTASKET CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
*Endless Summer Waterfront Festival*

QUINCY BEACHES AND COASTAL COMMISSION  
*Pumpkin Fest*





*Better water transportation can make the Harbor Islands more accessible to the public.*

## 6. Critical Connections: To the beaches and along the shore

One theme that emerged at the Commission’s public hearings was the desire for better connections to the beaches, including additional public transportation, more water transportation and excursion services, and bike trails, water trails and walkways.

### BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Many of the region’s public beaches are easily accessible by public transportation, including Revere Beach, Constitution Beach, and Carson Beach. However, some are not. To address these challenges, the Commission will reach out to MassDOT and local elected officials in Hull, Dorchester, and South Boston to strengthen existing connections and add additional routes and service—including seasonal shuttles—to make it easier for all the region’s residents and visitors to take advantage of the recreational opportunities these beaches provide.

### MORE WATER TRANSPORTATION AND EXCURSIONS TO BOSTON AND THE BOSTON HARBOR ISLANDS

Nearly all of the 1000 people who took part in the Commission’s hearings expressed a strong desire for better water transportation connections between the region’s beachfront communities and waterfront neighborhoods and Boston Harbor and the Boston Harbor Islands.

The Commission believes that there are significant opportunities to expand ferry and excursion service from Lynn, Winthrop, Quincy and Hull to Boston and the Boston Harbor Islands that include:

- Support for ferry and excursion service from Lynn to Boston and the Harbor Islands
- Support for the Winthrop Ferry
- Seasonal commuter, excursion and possible dedicated freight service from Squantum Point Park in Quincy to downtown Boston, Logan Airport and the Harbor Islands
- Ferry service from Pt. Allerton to Peddocks Island



*A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the Lynn Ferry in May 2014.*

## PEDESTRIAN TRAILS, WATER TRAILS AND BICYCLE PATHS

The region's public beaches are a great place to engage in healthy outdoor activity, but it can be challenging to ride a bicycle to the beach, rent a kayak or paddleboard at the beach, or take a walk or run along the shore. As conditions on the beaches have improved, and their value to the public is increasingly evident, there is growing demand for safer and better access to the beaches for people of all ages. Priorities for improvement include:

- Improved parkway connections to the beach for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Development of facilities to support water and kayak trails and concessions in East Boston and elsewhere
- Enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connections along the waterfront between beaches in Dorchester, Lynn and other communities
- Improved ADA Access for wheelchairs and strollers in Revere, East Boston, South Boston, Hull and elsewhere

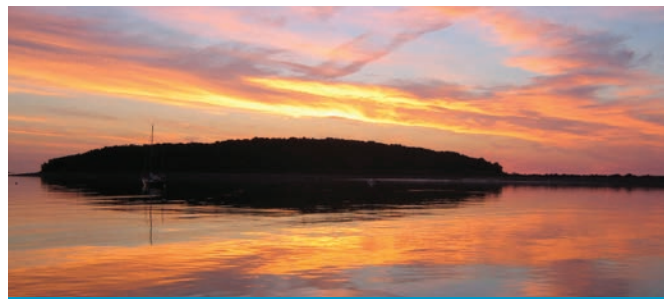
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## 7. Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area: Better Access to These Remarkable Urban Natural Resources

At the May 2013 hearing in the State House, the Commission found that the many of the capital improvements suggested in our 2007 report had been made, including outdoor showers on Spectacle Island, a new visitor center on Georges Island and the opening of Peddocks Island to the public.

However, there are still a number of important capital projects that need to be undertaken: Beach restoration and dredging of the marina at Spectacle Island; construction of a ferry terminal and recreational boating marina at Georges Island; and asbestos remediation at Gallops Island, which has been closed to the public for almost ten years.

The Commission also found that DCR still needs additional fulltime and seasonal staff on the islands, including additional lifeguards at Spectacle and Peddocks, as well



*“For the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area to really succeed we need to attract a large and diverse audience, which will require more water transportation connections from the North Shore, the South Shore and from the city, and better connections between the islands as well.”*

**FORMER SUPERINTENDENT BRUCE JACOBSON, BOSTON HARBOR ISLANDS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA**

as additional Environmental Police Officers to protect the islands' historic resources, such as archaeological artifacts on Spectacle Island, for future generations.

At every community hearing from Nahant to Nantasket the public expressed a desire for better connections and more affordable access to the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, as well as more frequent connections between the smaller islands, including Lovells Island, Grape Island, and Bumpkin Island. The Commission also acknowledges the important role that non-profit programs such as Save the Harbor's free "All Access Boston Harbor" play in bringing thousands of underserved young people and their families to the islands in the spring, summer and fall. The Commission believes that there are significant opportunities to expand water transportation, including charter and excursion service from Lynn, Winthrop, Quincy and Hull to Boston and the Boston Harbor Islands. These opportunities should be pursued by MassDOT, the MBTA, water transportation providers, charter and excursion operators, DCR, The Boston Harbor Island Alliance and the National Park Service.

## 8. Sea Level Rise: Beach Renourishment and Seawalls are an integral part of coastal resiliency

For generations, the metropolitan region's public beaches have been the first line of defense against coastal storms that threaten the region's waterfront neighborhoods and beachfront communities. The consensus of expert opinion is that over the next 50 years sea levels will rise and coastal storms will become more frequent and intense.

While substantial progress has been made in developing plans to prepare for the anticipated impacts of climate change through adaptive measures to protect downtown Boston's built environment, planning efforts to address these concerns in Boston's other neighborhoods and the metropolitan region's smaller cities and towns are just beginning.

Planning and preparing for the anticipated impacts of sea level rise and increased coastal storms will require significant investment in coastal communities, and will likely require costly mitigation measures such as more frequent beach renourishment and sea wall repairs, both of which are an integral part of coastal resiliency. Other methods to lower costs and minimize environmental impacts include soft armoring and sediment management that emphasizes the beneficial use of dredged material.

The Commission recommends that DCR and the Commonwealth work with local elected officials to prepare plans to prepare for "wicked bad storms on wicked high tides" and identify ways to fund these efforts and the significant investments that our changing climate will require.



*In many communities, the beaches serve as a first line of defense against coastal storms.*



***Improved coordination between State Police and local officials can enhance an existing partnership.***

## **9. State Police Community Policing: An evolving state, local and community partnership**

Many communities have expressed a strong interest in achieving better coordination and cooperation between State Police and local officials on a range of public safety matter including traffic, parking, noise and public drinking.

Specific concerns vary by beachfront community and could best be addressed through regular meetings between State Police and local leadership to address issues of mutual concern, including hours of operation, enforcement, and parking and towing practices during public events.

Continued funding for dedicated State Police patrols, which are a critical public safety need in beachfront communities, is essential in order to maintain and expand this important state/local partnership.

## **10. Traffic and Parking: Pay and display meters to manage usage and generate revenue**

Many of the region's public beaches are adjacent to residential neighborhoods, so managing traffic and parking can be a challenge—especially during peak season and larger public events.

Several communities have indicated a willingness to install modern, pay and display meters to manage usage and prevent commuters from monopolizing parking spaces intended for beach goers.

At just \$1 per hour, DCR's parking lots at Constitution Beach in East Boston (with 193 spaces) and at Castle Island and Pleasure Bay in South Boston (with 530 spaces) have the potential to generate significant new revenue to support DCR operations and expanded events, programs and activities on the region's public beaches.

The Commission recommends that DCR explore these opportunities with local elected officials and residents, and direct these and other new revenues to enhancing beach programs and operations on the Metropolitan Beaches.

## **11. Dogs: Better Enforcement and Improved Amenities**

The region's public beaches are a popular destination for the 25% of area residents who own dogs. Though most dog owners clean up after their pets, dog waste can pollute the water and foul the beach, and has been frequently mentioned as a problem at many area beaches.

Dogs on a leash are allowed on DCR beaches between October and March, but are prohibited between April 1 and September 30. Dog owners are required by local ordinance to clean up after their pets. Despite these regulations, enforcement is not fully effective and the public cites frequent breaches of regulations both in and out of the main beach season. Improved signage combined with better enforcement could increase awareness of and adherence to existing regulations. The Commission also sees a need for new regulations and permits to manage the activities of commercial dog walkers who are increasingly using DCR's parks and beaches.



***New dog parks near beaches are needed to address the needs of dogs and their owners.***



*The growth of the plover population is a success of the endangered species law but can limit public access to beach.*

New facilities such as dog parks are also needed to address the needs of dogs and their owners. One notable success that could be a model for other communities is the South Boston Dog Park adjacent to Carson Beach, an attractive fenced area where dogs can be taken off leash. The Friends of the South Boston Bark Park manages and maintains the park on land it leases from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority.

## 12. Piping Plovers: Sharing the Beach with a Federally Protected Species

The Piping Plover, which is a “Threatened” species under both the state and federal Endangered Species Acts, is nesting on Revere Beach and Winthrop Beach in increasing numbers.

The growth of the plover population represents a success of the endangered species law, but has become a source of frustration for some residents because the protection of

plover nesting areas can limit public use and access to the beach and restrict DCR’s ability to clean sand and remove trash adjacent to nesting sites. As the Piping Plover population in the Commonwealth recovers, increased management flexibility is needed to maintain and increase recreational opportunities while providing adequate protection for these vulnerable, ground-nesting birds.

To address these needs, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife is working in partnership with a number of coastal towns to develop a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and obtain an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) from the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The HCP would enable the Division, working with towns and other landowners, to improve public access and implement special conservation measures to benefit the plovers, at appropriate sites where opportunities exist, thereby benefiting recreational users, managers, and the statewide population of Piping Plovers.

In the near term, the Commission encourages DCR and MassWildlife to continue to take steps to minimize sym-

bolic fencing and encourage the birds to nest in sections of beach with less recreational use. More attractive protective fencing, better signage and additional public education could also be used to mitigate public concerns and highlight another important environmental success story.

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### 13. Water Quality and Beach Flagging

The Commission is pleased to report that water quality has improved substantially on several of the metropolitan region’s public beaches since it issued its first report in 2007. The South Boston beaches are now among the cleanest urban beaches in the nation, a direct consequence of significant investments made by the MWRA.

Unfortunately, water quality on 5 of the 15 metropolitan region’s public beaches managed by DCR—including King’s Beach in Lynn, Constitution Beach in East Boston, Tene-an Beach and Malibu beach in Dorchester, and Wollaston Beach in Quincy—continues to lag. Poor water quality on these beaches, most typically after rain events, results in the beaches being posted as unsafe for swimming. The current method of posting, however, exacerbates the extent of the problem as it relies primarily on the results of the previous day’s testing, which results in a large number of inaccurate flags. You can find a copy of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay’s most recent report card on beach water quality and flagging accuracy at [www.savetheharbor.org](http://www.savetheharbor.org).

The Commission is pleased to note that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has approved changes to the posting protocols on marine beaches, which analysis suggests will result in far fewer unnecessary “unsafe for swimming” postings and false red flags on many of the metropolitan beaches.



***Current water quality testing protocols result in many unnecessary unsafe for swimming postings.***

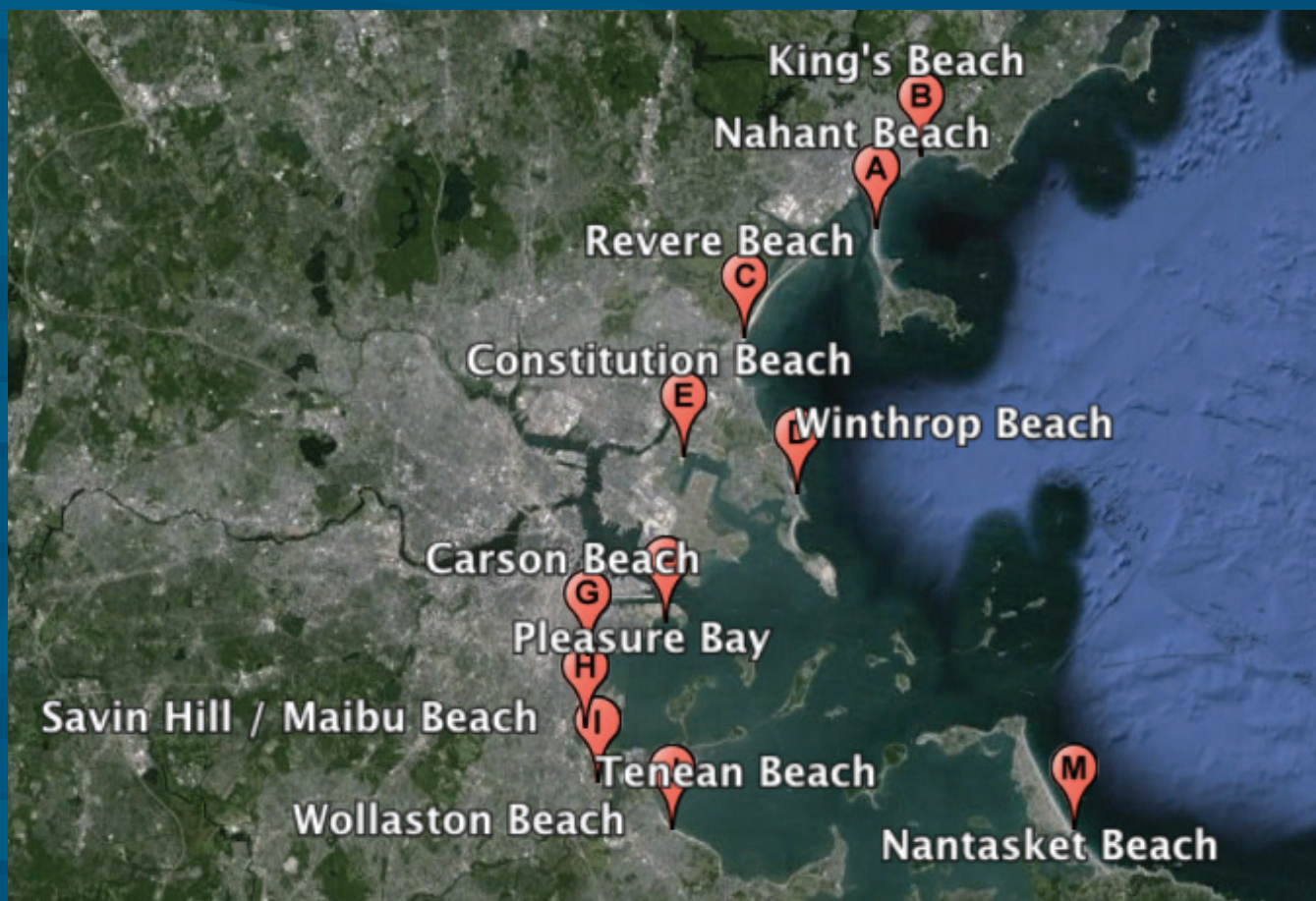
However, changes to the posting policies will not reduce the number of days that these beaches are actually unsafe for swimming. To address the underlying pollution problems that close these beaches, the Commission recommends that the Environmental Bond Bill, currently under consideration at the State House, include \$20 million to help Lynn, East Boston, Dorchester and Quincy address the remaining storm water pollution problems that prevent the public from enjoying the benefits of our \$5 billion investment in the Boston Harbor clean up.

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### 14. Ongoing Oversight and Sustained Advocacy

Commissioners, DCR, local officials, and the public believe that these beaches have benefited from the ongoing oversight and continued attention of the Metropolitan Beaches Commission. The Commission recommends that it be established through law as a permanent body, that it hold an annual hearing and make an annual report to the Legislature.

# Findings and Recommendations by Community



Though the region's public beaches have much in common, each beach has its own unique set of circumstances. This section provides a brief summary of some of the most important needs and opportunities for each beachfront area that have been identified by the Commission based

on community discussions and public hearings, dialogue with elected officials and DCR staff. A more comprehensive description including further discussion of successes and challenges can be found at [www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014](http://www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014).



# LYNN AND NAHANT

King's Beach and Nahant Beach have both improved since 2007

The new Ward Bath House is well maintained and the reconstruction of the Nahant Causeway is nearly complete. Algae removal and trash pick-up have improved and the free concerts at Red Rock are a great success, while the Lynn Ferry, which began service in May 2014, has improved access from Lynn and the North Shore to Boston and The Boston Harbor Islands.

*Despite these improvements, water quality at King's Beach and the nuisance algae *Pilayella* continue to be a challenge.*

*"With the completion of the Causeway, Nahant Beach will be a year round destination for the region's residents and visitors to enjoy a great day at a great beach."*

METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER MARK CULLINAN, NAHANT

*"The success of the concerts at Red Rock provide proof of the value of free events and programs to the people of Lynn and surrounding communities."*

METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER ROBERT TUCKER, LYNN

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- There is a need for vendors at Ward Bath House and elsewhere
- Pedestrian access and street lighting needs improvement
- Dogs, dog waste and noise are a concern
- Not enough recycling bins
- Need more bathrooms at Red Rock
- The seawall and stairs leading to King's beach need repair
- Parking can be a problem, especially on good beach days.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Address the ongoing pollution problems at King's Beach.
- Complete and continue improvements to the Nahant Causeway
- Make improvements to Lynn Heritage State Park Boardwalk
- Provide additional bathroom facilities at Red Rock
- Add a food concession stand at the Ward Bathhouse

## EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- Increase the variety of free beach programs
- Provide paddleboard and kayak rentals and concessions on the beach
- Continue DCR in-kind support and provide additional DCR financial support for free programs

## CONNECTIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Continue investment in Lynn's waterfront
- Support water transportation to connect Lynn to Boston and Harbor Islands
- Provide year-round parking for surfers and add new programs to extend the season
- Create waterfront bike lanes/paths to the beaches and Lynn Heritage Park

## CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

- A new loader to remove trash and algae: The current loader is 25 years old
- An additional beach sanitizer, to maintain the sand
- A street sweeper to reduce runoff from Lynn Shore Drive onto the beach





# REVERE

Revere Beach has improved substantially since 2007.

In 2012, Revere Beach was the cleanest urban beach in the region, and DCR is doing a good job cleaning the sand, removing trash and maintaining the beach. Plowing the sidewalks in the winter and creating parallel parking has improved traffic and pedestrian safety. Thanks to the Revere Beach Partnership there is now year round free programming including the National Sand Sculpting Competition, which attracted 400,000 visitors in 2013.

***Today Revere Beach is a popular resource, which requires year round maintenance, a 24/7 public safety presence and additional staff to help the local beach manager.***

*“The people of Revere love their beach—and so do I.”*

REPRESENTATIVE ROSELEE VINCENT, METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER, REVERE

*“What tremendous progress we have made in a few short years! This year there were no complaints about water quality at the hearing. No one complained about dirty sand, dirty diapers, cigarette butts or needles on our beaches.”*

METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER CAROL HANEY, REVERE

*“My service on the Metropolitan Beaches Commission was one of the highlights of my career in the House. Working together we have improved all of the region’s public beaches, though it is important for me to point out that Revere Beach is still the center of the known universe.”*

FORMER METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSION CO-CHAIR KATHI-ANNE REINSTEIN, REVERE

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Better enforcement of dog ordinance and Quiet Zone
- Improve parking and provide better access to the beach for the disabled and elderly
- Add more recycling bins
- Allow more vendors and develop a simpler vendor approval process
- Find ways to protect the piping plover while preserving public access to the beach
- Continue dedicated patrols by State Police
- Bring additional retail and restaurant options to the beach
- Consider creating dog parks
- More attractive and less restrictive plover protection
- RFP for development of city-owned properties
- Move or remove boulders from the south end of beach

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Provide an additional bathhouse in the vicinity of the new Markey pedestrian bridge
- Provide additional recreational outlets for all beachgoers:
  - > Tot lot/playground, water playground project

- > Permanent Volleyball location in the area of the Shirley Avenue Bath House on Revere Beach Boulevard
- > Include a permanent carousel on Revere Beach in the grassy area between Chester and Beach Streets
- > Add food vendors and game areas

## EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- Increase support for events and festivals and the Revere Beach Partnership
- Provide swimming lessons and boat rentals
- Include more family activities on the beach to bring back the nostalgia Revere had and give a chance for young people to make their own memories at the beach as well
- Continue DCR in-kind support and provide additional DCR financial support for free programs

## CONNECTIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Explore temporary closing of Revere Beach Boulevard for events
- Provide shuttles during events as an alternative to cars



# WINTHROP

The Winthrop Beach Rehabilitation Project is well underway

Winthrop Beach is a spectacular place. The water is clean, with extraordinary views of sunrises and sunsets, storms and stars. The washrooms are open and well maintained, and the beach is well used by walkers, swimmers and surfers.

*While the public is frustrated by the delays that have postponed completion of the \$25 million Winthrop Beach Rehabilitation Project, construction is well underway and includes beach renourishment, drainage systems, lighting, and benches.*

*“The people of Winthrop are eagerly anticipating the completion of the Winthrop Beach Rehabilitation Project, which will bring sand and new amenities to this great beach.”*

SPEAKER ROBERT DELEO, WINTHROP

*“Our region’s public beaches are both recreational and environmental assets that provide coastal protection and public access to the sea for our communities.”*

METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER BARBARA BISHOP, WINTHROP

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- SAND!
- Plovers—While some residents see the birds’ return as a sign of a healthy beach, plovers reduce the space available for beach goers during nesting season
- Trash, debris, dog waste and pest control are presently a problem.
- The beach needs to be cleaned and raked more regularly
- Weeds are taking over some areas of the beach

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Provide shaded seating and benches
- Advance bathhouse improvements and better signage
- Continue to protect the shoreline
- Improve the sidewalk and road

- Incorporate lighting with the kind of poles that flower baskets could be attached to
- Add foot showers and drinking fountains along the beach
- Provide the infrastructure for a kayak and paddleboard launch area

## EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- Provide a paddleboard and kayak rentals
- Continue DCR in-kind support and provide additional DCR financial support for free programs

## CONNECTIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Continue support for the Winthrop Ferry
- Incorporate a decorative design on the sea wall
- Incorporate historical Winthrop and Walk Winthrop signage



# EAST BOSTON

Constitution Beach has improved substantially since 2007.

The new bathhouse is clean, the water fountains work, the sinkhole is gone, the sand is clean and the beach is well maintained, and DCR’s beach manager and staff are responsive. It is a family friendly location, with great concessions; it has good access to the Blue Line, and to the East Boston Greenway, which connects 20,000-25,000 people to the beach each year.

East Boston has nearly 15 miles of shoreline. Though nearly all streets lead to Boston Harbor, residents have limited access to the water except at Constitution Beach and at Pier’s Park Sailing Center.

***DCR, Massport, and the City of Boston need to continue to work together with the community to expand public access to the shore and the sea.***

*“At Constitution Beach the concession stand and bath house are open, the sinkhole is gone, the sand is being raked regularly, and attendance is up, all a result of the blueprint we created with the community. Today, we look forward to building on that success.”*

STATE SENATOR ANTHONY PETRUCELLI, METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER, EAST BOSTON

*“Constitution Beach is more than just a place to spend the day. It is a portal to the environment, a remarkable recreational resource with the potential to improve the quality of life for all the residents of East Boston and the city.”*

REPRESENTATIVE CARLO BASILE, CO-CHAIR METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSION, EAST BOSTON

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve handicapped and stroller access to the beach and water
- Expand water-based activities like boat rentals and swimming lessons at the beach.
- Resolve conflicts between ball players and abutters
- Public drinking and partying on the beach is a problem—especially at night
- Provide more activities for the elderly, youth and especially teens
- Commuters are monopolizing beach parking; ensure this parking is available for beach users
- Poison ivy and trash are an ongoing problem
- Too much dog waste / No place for dogs
- Not enough lights / Too much light
- Unsupervised bonfires and uncontrolled cookouts are dangerous

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Provide mats or walkway and beach wheelchairs to improve handicapped and stroller access
- Complete work on the tennis court area
- Provide a floating dock for swimming

- Create a fire pit at Constitution Beach with signs outlining best practices and regulations
- Provide a small boat/kayak/paddleboard storage and rental facility at the beach

## EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- More planned activities for the elderly, the young and especially teens.
- More activities to encourage healthy exercise
- More beach/waterfront activities such as kayaking, boating and paddle boarding
- Swimming lessons
- Beach bonfires
- Continue DCR in-kind support and provide additional DCR financial support for free programs

## CONNECTIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Establish a “Low Tide Trail” linking Constitution Beach with “other than beach” access points
- Create a program, similar to the City’s partnership with Hubway, whereby residents could rent boats and further enjoy the beach



# SOUTH BOSTON

The beaches of South Boston have improved substantially since 2007.

South Boston is home to some of the cleanest urban beaches in the nation, attracting people to the beach and to Castle Island to swim, sail, stroll and enjoy the beautiful scenery and the views.

The sand is clean, trash is picked up regularly, the water fountains and bathrooms work, and the boardwalk and the sidewalk have been improved. As a result of effective partnerships between DCR, the City of Boston, and non-profits, there are lots of free programs and people on the beach.

*Events like road races, swims, concerts and beach festivals need to be well coordinated and scheduled to manage impacts like traffic, parking and towing on the neighborhood.*

*“Clean water and better management at DCR have transformed South Boston’s beaches into a destination for people from across the region. With that transformation comes new challenges to the neighborhood, which we have a responsibility to address together.”*

STATE REPRESENTATIVE NICK COLLINS, METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER, SOUTH BOSTON

*“Castle Island, the BCYF Curley Community Center and the Harry McDonough Sailing Center make the beaches of South Boston remarkable assets for the people of South Boston, all Bostonians and the region’s residents to share and enjoy.”*

METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER KENNY RYAN, SOUTH BOSTON

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Need to find the proper balance of retail/food vendors and over-commercialization
- Need separate area for dogs; improve enforcement of rules associated with dogs on beach
- Need to better monitor public drinking, homeless and groups playing sports
- Better lighting and an increase night patrols
- Difficult to get from one end of beach to the other by public transportation
- Castle Island needs continued investment and improvement
- Fort Independence should be open every day like similar forts around the country
- Better coordination between State Police, DCR and the South Boston community

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Restore the Castle; replenish stone blocks; improve fencing and trees; update visitor amenities, such as parking, trash receptacles, bathrooms, drinking fountains, solar lighting and signs
- Create a “signature” bath house at Pleasure Bay, and reuse the “Pickle Jar” building
- Provide a vehicular access and control kiosk at Castle Island

## EVENTS

- Road races, swims, concerts and beach festivals need to be well coordinated and scheduled to manage impacts like traffic and parking on the neighborhood
- Continue DCR in-kind support and provide additional DCR financial support for free programs

## CONNECTIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Provide a Beach Shuttle from JFK Station on the Red Line to Castle Island
- Increase vending opportunities for local small businesses
- Explore dog-friendly activities/areas at the beaches with appropriate oversight
- Support the Harry McDonough Sailing Center
- Improve lighting for pedestrians and drivers along Day Boulevard
- Incorporate pedestrian crossing signals in front of the BCYF Curley Community Center, and provide full signalization at the intersections of L Street/Day Boulevard and L Street/Columbia Road
- End the policy of towing motor vehicles during road races
- Provide more resident parking at night between Kelly’s Landing and Castle Island



# DORCHESTER

Maintenance at Savin Hill and Malibu Beach has greatly improved, however Tenean Beach continues to lag behind in terms of both amenities and water quality.

Dorchester’s beaches are great neighborhood meeting spots. The tennis courts at Tenean Beach are getting a lot of use and the Dorchester Beach Festival is terrific. The pedestrian paths and parking lots are well maintained at Savin Hill and Malibu, where the Jimson Weed has been removed and the showers work.

*“South Boston and Dorchester’s beaches are important assets and resources for all our residents. We need to take a hard look at how our public resources are distributed and to establish public-private partnerships that will sustain and build on the progress that has been made.”*

STATE SENATOR LINDA DORCENA FORRY, REPRESENTING SOUTH BOSTON AND DORCHESTER

*“Savin Hill Beach and Malibu beach are readily accessible, well used and well maintained, with strong connections to the neighborhood. Tenean Beach suffers from poor connections, storm damage, and the lack of an organized constituency. Strengthening connections to the neighborhood and the Neponset River Greenway and trails, and re-engineering the beach with dunes to make it more resilient and natural would mitigate frequent flooding and transform it into an asset for Dorchester and the City of Boston.”*

METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER PAUL NUTTING, DORCHESTER

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Water quality continues to be a problem at Tenean and at Malibu
- Wood boardwalks need to be repaired and maintained
- Tenean is in poor repair, and has been damaged by storms and high tides
- Trash collection is still a problem, especially in the shoulder seasons
- Not enough concessions or food trucks on Dorchester’s beaches
- Unearth ramps and stairs to the beach that are buried below sand
- Clear walking paths and sidewalks for year-round use
- Remove graffiti on shade shelters and other locations

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Rethink and reconfigure Tenean Beach
- Construct a new bathhouse at Savin Hill
- Provide additional Harbor Walk and Trail signage
- Dredge to remove sediments
- Strengthen beach-related bike and pedestrian connections

## EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- Provide more marketing of the recreational opportunities at the beach
- Add more concessions and food trucks; provide boat and kayak rentals
- Bring back the Dorchester Beach Festival
- Continue DCR in-kind support and provide additional DCR financial support for free programs

## CONNECTIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Increase public transportation options and new connections between the beaches in Dorchester and South Boston; provide connections to the Harborwalk and the Neponset River Greenway/Trail from neighborhoods that are not contiguous to these amenities such as Bowdoin/ Geneva, Fields Corner, Clam Point, Popes Hill, Codman Square, Ashmont, and Lower Mills
- Strengthen connections to the waterfront and improve the shoreline at UMASS Boston and Columbia Point; consider a potential transportation partnership with UMass Boston and a seasonal shuttle from Franklin Park down Columbia Road
- Encourage healthy living by making these beaches more user-friendly and accessible



# QUINCY

Wollaston Beach has improved substantially since 2007.

Improvements to the sidewalks, streets, and seawall have made it a great place to walk or run. Water quality has improved, though more work is needed and flagging accuracy continues to be a challenge on this beach. Traffic is calmer, maintenance has improved, trash is picked up regularly and the sand and bathhouses are clean and well maintained. The Friends of Wollaston Beach and Save the Harbor/Save the Bay have done an excellent job of bringing more activities for families and kids to the beach, which attracts a very diverse population.

*With increased use comes new challenges including traffic and noise until late at night, which can disturb neighbors.*

*“Our beaches are an important natural resource that provide residents and visitors with the opportunity to relax, walk, and spend time with their families.”*

STATE SENATOR JOHN KEENAN, METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER, QUINCY

*“As we come out of the economic downturn it is imperative that we work as a community to plan for the future, increasing water transportation options, expanding programs and activities on Wollaston Beach, and investing in the development of Squantum Point Park and our downtown.”*

QUINCY CITY COUNCILOR DOUG GUTRO, METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER, QUINCY

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Dogs and dog waste are still a problem
- *Pilayella littoralis*, a brown nuisance algae, may be a problem on this beach
- Dredging and sand replenishment may both be required in time
- Biking is increasingly popular but can be difficult and dangerous
- Grass and weeds are taking over parts of the beach
- More trash and recycling receptacles are needed

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

- Support for continued improvements to water quality
- Transform Squantum Point Park into a ferry hub and island gateway
- Create a playground on Wollaston Beach
- Provide a dog park on Wollaston Beach

## EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- An international food and music festival
- A bicycle race from Wollaston to Squantum Point Park
- Continue DCR in-kind support and provide additional DCR financial support for free programs

## CONNECTIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Extend walking trails around the Wollaston Beach area and the rest of Quincy
- Create more paths and bike lanes along Quincy Shore Drive
- Dredging is needed for boaters to maintain access to the yacht clubs
- Provide ferry service from Squantum Point Pier to the harbor islands, airport and downtown Boston



# HULL

Nantasket Beach has improved substantially since 2007.

The beach is clean and well maintained, with increased police and EMS presence. The beach and the bathhouse are now year-round resources for the community. There has also been a dramatic increase in the number of events and activities on and around the beach, and relationships with DCR have improved.

Sea level rise, coastal erosion and coastal storms are ongoing public safety concerns, which should be addressed in a Nantasket Beach Master Plan, which will require sand renourishment, and repair and improvements to the seawall and The Mary Jeanette Murray Bathhouse.

*“We were excited to hear from the residents of Hull about what they believed was working and what we could improve upon. What we heard at our public hearing will serve as a blueprint for a long-term sustainable program to bring economic vitality to Nantasket Beach and the region.”*

STATE SENATOR BOB HEDLUND, METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER, WEYMOUTH

*“The work of the 2007 commission opened up the conversation and put into place significant plans for sustainable improvements and development of the area. Nevertheless, there are always ways to improve this valuable resource to ensure that Nantasket Beach remains a welcoming environment for generations to come.”*

STATE REP. GARRET BRADLEY, METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER, HINGHAM

*“By leveraging our existing resources and finding ways to expand access to our beach we can support the next generation of beach goers to Hull.”*

JOAN MESCHINO, METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER, HULL

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve enforcement of parking rules and dog laws
- Increase hours for Mary Jeanette Murray Bath House (implemented after the meeting)
- Provide alternative activities at high tide, when the beach “disappears”
- Need for improved public transportation to and along the beach
- Parking is still a challenge during peak season

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Complete the Nantasket Beach Master Plan
- Move forward with adaptive response planning for sea-level rise

## EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- The “Endless Summer” has extended the season and created economic activity
- The Carousel continues to attract and entertain after 85 years

- There is still a need for more community-based activities for both locals and tourists
- Continue DCR in-kind support and provide additional DCR financial support for free programs

## CONNECTIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

- Create landside green space with shade for beachgoers to use as a retreat from high tide and for people on the boardwalk
- Staff and promote Nantasket Beach Reservation for year-round use
- Use ocean parking to strengthen commercial opportunities and recreational space
- Redesign the Nantasket Beach business district
- Create plans for small food service vendors
- Develop more and better public transportation options to get to the beach
- Resume weekend ferry service to Boston and provide new ferry service to Peddocks Island
- Introduce a trolley to connect visitors to Pemberton Pier

# Next Steps



Over the past year, the Commission has heard from the public, and from experts, advocates, the business community and elected officials. While they all acknowledge that many important things have been accomplished on the region's public beaches since 2007, they all agree that there is still much more to do.

To achieve our shared vision for these beaches, it will take additional staff, equipment and improved management systems for the Department of Conservation and Recreation. It will also require additional capital investments in infrastructure, transportation and water quality on the beaches and in our waterfront neighborhoods and beachfront communities.

Accomplishing the vision will also require additional public investment in free beach events and programs, and continued independent oversight from the Commission, which has

*“Our waterfront and our beaches are remarkable assets with the power to connect our residents and our communities to each other and the sea. The investments we have made on these beaches strengthen our communities and the economy, improve people’s lives and demonstrate that government can work.”*

**SENATOR TOM MCGEE, CO-CHAIR METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSION, LYNN AND NAHANT**

*“For us to truly succeed the answer to the question “Whose beach is this?” must be not so much “My beach” but “Everyone’s beach.”*

**METROPOLITAN BEACHES COMMISSIONER KIP BECKER, BOSTON UNIVERSITY**





played a critical role in focusing public attention on these important recreational, educational, environmental and economic assets.

Most importantly, moving forward with our shared vision of taking these beaches from good to great will take your continued involvement.

If you have questions or comments about this report or the metropolitan region's public beaches, or would like to be informed about upcoming hearings, events and activities, please send an email to [info@savetheharbor.org](mailto:info@savetheharbor.org)

With your ongoing support, the Commission will continue to protect and leverage our region's \$5 billion investment in clean water, strengthening our communities and connecting the more than one million people who live in our region to each other and the sea.



***Implementation of many of the initiatives first called for by the Metropolitan Beaches Commission in its 2007 report “Beaches We Can Be Proud Of” have made a difference. The completion of capital projects, the provision of additional staff supported by better equipment, and the implementation of management reforms have all helped. Simple amenities such as this shower in the Lynn-Nahant Beach Reservation have added to the value these beaches provide to local residents and families.***

***The Commission believes that the findings and recommendations contained in this report, “Waves Of Change”, will serve as a blueprint for continued improvement to the region’s public beaches in Lynn, Nahant, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy and Hull. Investments in staff, equipment, new capital projects, and free events and programs on the metropolitan region’s public beaches, as well as ongoing independent oversight by the Commission and involvement of the public will help move these beaches from good to great.***



Copies of this report, related appendices, sticky notes and other supporting materials on which this report is based are available at Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's website: [www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014](http://www.savetheharbor.org/MBC2014)

