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Aerial view of the MBTA / MassDOT-owned site along Chelsea Creek / Handel Architects.

The Harborkeepers launches Vision Chelsea Creek: A collective vision for the abandoned MBTA / MassDOT Railway site in East Boston

BOSTON, MA (19 MAY 2020) – This month, The Harborkeepers launched **Vision Chelsea Creek**: a six month-long visioning, planning, and stakeholder engagement process to re-imagine the abandoned MBTA / MassDOT-owned railway site along the industrial shoreline of lower Chelsea Creek in East Boston.

Aiming to solve for multiple coastal and urban challenges, this project is driven by a public-private partnership between **The Harborkeepers** (a local, grassroots coastal and resilience-building non-profit based in East Boston) and **Cargo Ventures** (a long-time East Boston land owner, abutter, and primary funder), in collaboration with **SCAPE** (a landscape architecture and urban design firm bringing expertise in resilient waterfront planning and design). The team is further supported by **Utile**, the **Boston Society of Architecture** and the **Boston Society of Landscape Architecture**.

Through a transparent, open community and stakeholder engagement process, the Vision Chelsea Creek team will work together to design and develop a comprehensive vision for the site, inclusive of various needs and priorities, and building on waterfront and open space advocacy; community aspirations; industry and maritime uses; and the needs of municipal stakeholders.

Overall, Vision Chelsea Creek will assess opportunities for ecological shoreline restoration and stabilization; equitable access; transportation mitigation; historic preservation; and industrial re-use. This six-month-long process will culminate in a pilot 'catalyst' project proposal that will provide insight into the future implementation of the comprehensive vision.

At a larger scale, Vision Chelsea Creek aims to enhance public understanding of land use opportunities for Boston's vulnerable waterways. The team will work to address these social and environmental challenges through detailed analysis of previous studies, community advocacy, and site conditions – outlining strategies to mitigate negative environmental impacts and create a more resilient, accessible, and restorative waterfront edge. To better inform a set of resilience and climate adaptation strategies for the site, the team will study precedent visions for the area, building on engagement conducted by local groups while leveraging and contributing to the implementation of the City of Boston's overarching climate resilience goals.

To inform this detailed technical analysis with the lived experience, aspirations, and needs of community members and stakeholders, the Vision Chelsea Creek team will explore virtual stakeholder engagement tools that adhere to social distancing and public health guidelines during the COVID-19 crisis – especially given the acute status of the virus in East Boston communities. These sessions may include a series of design charrettes; virtual site tours; and digital stakeholder workshops with community groups and organizations.

Communities in East Boston and Chelsea have historically been underserved by waterfront and open space access, and deferred transportation projects that could increase safety and connectivity along Route 1A and across the Creek. A crucial part of Vision Chelsea Creek will be setting the stage for more inclusive community engagement practices that address these concerns while strictly adhering to the public health requirements advised by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the City of Boston.

To get involved and stay informed on Vision Chelsea Creek as it develops, sign up for updates and submit inquiries on the project website: www.harborkeepers.org/vision-chelsea-creek

*For more information, contact contact **Magdalena Ayed** (Founder and Director, The Harborkeepers) at magdalena@harborkeepers.org.*

ABOUT THE HARBORKEEPERS

Founded in 2016, The Harborkeepers is a non-profit, grassroots-based organization that works to build equitable and sustainable coastal resilience by fostering environmental stewardship of the waterfront through coastal education, community engagement and cross-sector partnership-building.

Learn more: www.harborkeepers.org / Follow us on Twitter and Instagram at [@Harborkeepers](https://twitter.com/Harborkeepers).

ABOUT SCAPE

SCAPE is a design-driven landscape architecture and urban design studio based in New York and New Orleans. We believe landscape architecture can enable positive change in communities through the creation of regenerative living infrastructure and public landscapes.

Learn more: www.scapestudio.com / Follow us on Twitter and Instagram at [@scape_studio](https://twitter.com/scape_studio).

ABOUT UTILE

Utile is a Boston-based design firm built like a think tank. We design, develop, and execute branding across digital and physical platforms, merging the boundaries between hand-made art and graphic design to achieve unique solutions.

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