

NATIONAL PARKS OF BOSTON

After months of re-imagining the National Park Service (NPS) in Boston, a series of innovative plans are being activated to preserve some of Boston's most significant and iconic historic properties and natural landscapes. We are engaging in creative placemaking to reveal diverse and compelling stories and undertaking landscape-scale interventions that support our preservation and education mission. The "National Parks of Boston" feels that this is our moment to create a 21st century park system that brings together a multiplicity of diverse organizations, the community, and national interests that will transform these special places.

One of the most ambitious and exciting activation plans involves a partnership with the U.S. Navy and USS Constitution Museum that will preserve the Charlestown Navy Yard and provide a world-class visitor experience.



THE POWER OF PLACE

The Charlestown Navy Yard – the site of the British landing for their attack on Bunker Hill – is most important in its role in the defense of freedoms. In 1794, President George Washington signed the Naval Armament Act authorizing the construction of six frigates to create the United States Navy. Along the shores of Boston Harbor, the *USS Constitution* was one of the first ships to be built and launched. A year later, Charlestown became one of six naval shipyards in the United States to support the newly formed U.S. Navy. From this early time through 1974, the landscape of the Charlestown Navy Yard evolved and shaped the way naval vessels were built, how new technologies were adapted, and how the workforce diversified during wartime. The landscape reflects remnants from the early 19th century through today where visitors can witness a working shipyard, as nearly 100 Navy sailors and ship conservators live and work within Boston National Historical Park.

TRANSFORMING THE NAVY YARD

In June 2021, the National Park Service, Navy and USS Constitution Museum (USSCM) presented a Master Development Strategy, a collaboration on making the Charlestown Navy Yard a place that is fitting for a national park that hosts America's "Ship of State" - *USS Constitution*, within the context of a working navy yard that reveals 174 years of naval heritage. The vision plan for the Charlestown Navy Yard (CNY) will be one of the most exciting transformations related to how people experience the Yard since the park's inception.

The Gateway to the Navy Yard will serve as both a port on the Freedom Trail and a portal to the rich history, contemporary relevance, and possible futures. This gateway will be an inviting space that allows people to create diverse experiences – opportunities for compelling programs, hands-on exhibitry, sweeping views of the harbor and city skyline, community spaces and moments for recharging and contemplation.

The proposed Gateway to the Navy Yard includes the construction of a new building along Constitution Road, which will integrate the NPS visitors center, USSCM and entry to the USS Constitution. Landscape enhancements will be noticeable with the restoration of historic buildings and restored artifacts like the massive cranes and dry dock to house *USS Cassin Young* and service *USS Constitution*. Throughout the Yard, a preservation standard will be applied to both NPS retained facilities, as well as several leased properties that will support the NPS in achieving its preservation and activation goals.

This plan has far reaching impacts to being a good neighbor in the Charlestown community, and sustaining the national park through cost effective operational and stewardship approaches.

NEXT STEPS

NPS is considering taking the proposed actions to transform the Navy Yard:

- 1) Proposed demolition of the vacant Hoosac Stores building in order to construct a new building that will incorporate NPS visitor facilities and USS Constitution Museum exhibits.
 - 2) Proposed demolition of Building 109, a building that was constructed in the WW II era as a temporary structure and now serves as the park's visitor and resource protection office. The building is proposed to be replaced with an open frame structure following the building's footprint to provide shade and other amenities for visitors.
- Note: Specific designs for both replacement structures are being developed and will be presented at a future public meeting.



These two projects are being evaluated as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The NEPA process is intended to, "ensure Federal agencies consider the environmental impacts of their actions in the decision-making process... to foster and promote the general welfare, create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans"

NEPA and NPS share common goals: both aiming to result in an enhanced visitor experience and the conservation and protection of our nation's resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

NPS has officially launched an Environmental Assessment (EA) for these two projects to document compliance with NEPA and assist in the planning process.

The EA will evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the two proposed projects and will have a detailed analysis of impacts to visitor use and cultural resources, including:

- Potential site, walkway, and road closures;
- Rerouting of visitors around any site closures; and
- Noise from construction/demolition activities would be conducted in compliance with local noise ordinances and would only occur during daytime hours.

Access to the current visitor center, USSCM, *USS Constitution*, *USS Cassin Young*, and the boat landing at the end of Pier 1 would have limited or no impact during these activities.

PROPOSED STEPS TO TRANSFORM THE NAVY YARD



1. GATEWAY TO THE NAVY YARD

As part of the Master Development Strategy, NPS proposes to construct a new building that would house and consolidate the USS Constitution Museum and the NPS visitor center. These functions are currently located in separate, nonadjacent buildings at the CNY.

Proposed Action: Demolition of the historic Hoosac Stores Warehouse and constructing the new building in its place.

2. PIER ONE ACTIVATION

Additionally, NPS is proposing the demolition of Building 109 and replacing with an open frame structure following the building's footprint. The proposed structure will provide shade and other amenities for visitors and provide an opportunity to activate the water's edge along Pier 1 to offer opportunities for visiting ships, special events, etc.

Proposed Action: Demolition of Building 109, a temporary structure built during World War II, currently riddled with structural issues and hazardous materials, and replacing it with an open frame structure to provide shade for visitors, special events and other amenities.

PROPOSED STEPS TO TRANSFORM THE NAVY YARD



PUBLIC OUTREACH

NPS has been committed to understanding the community's thoughts and concerns about activities at the CNY through early coordination and public engagement.

✓ **June 2, 2021** NPS hosted a virtual civic engagement meeting to present preliminary concepts for the CNY Master Development Strategy to the public.

✓ **June 2, 2021, to July 1, 2021.** 30-day civic engagement comment period to collect public input. Thirty-three comments were received during the comment period, identifying the following issues, ideas, and concerns:

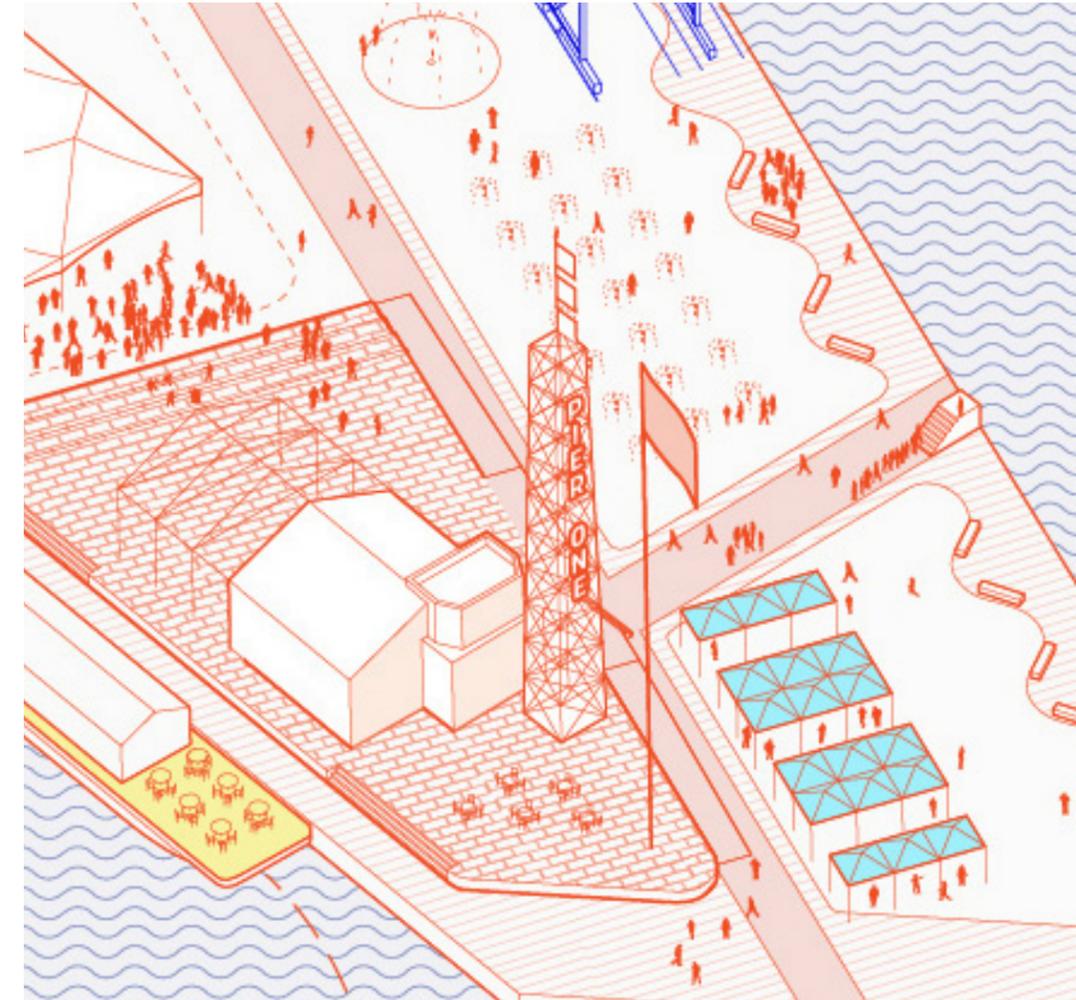
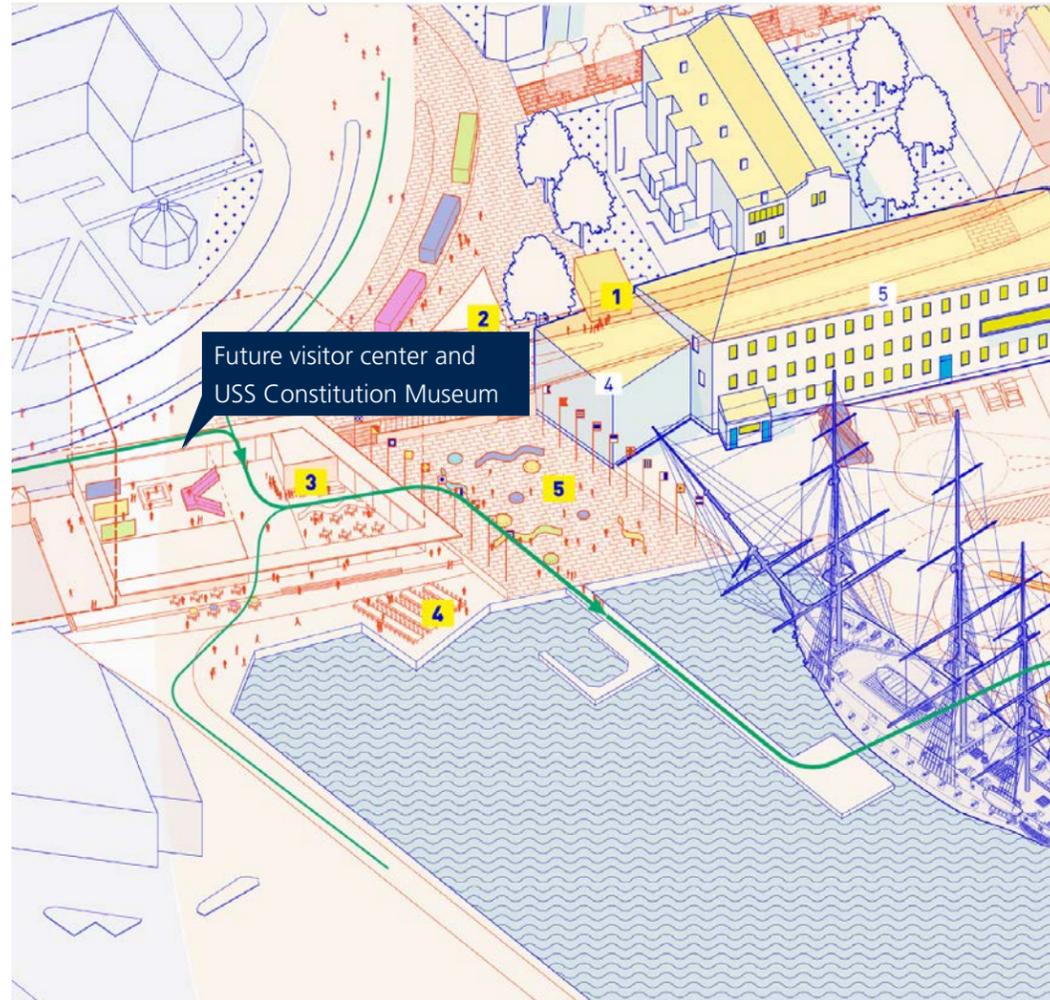
- Public access & Safety
- Land use
- Climate Change
- Socioeconomics
- Recreation
- Visual affects
- Infrastructure (transportation, buildings, etc.)

Since the 2021 engagement meeting and comment period, NPS has refined the scope of work in order to meet NPS's operational and stewardship mission and to improve the Navy Yard as a user welcoming, active, and vibrant location.

GATEWAY CENTER DESIGN

The schematic design (concept) phase for the proposed building (the "Gateway Center") is scheduled to begin in July 2022. The proposed plan to consolidate the USS Constitution Museum and the NPS visitors center will show building size, aesthetic, circulation, and may include incorporation of salvaged building materials from the demolition of the Hoosac Stores Building. Alternatives will be developed during this phase.

The public will be provided an opportunity to review and comment on the new building design concepts via a separate public engagement period. This opportunity will likely include a presentation and public scoping meeting. Stay tuned for more information!



1. GATEWAY TO THE NAVY YARD



2. PIER ONE ACTIVATION



THE PLANNING PROCESS

Having refined the Proposed Actions, NPS is currently in the public scoping period of the NEPA process. Public scoping refers to the engagement of the interested and affected public early in the process on matters related to the proposed actions, environmental issues that should be addressed, potential alternatives, and sources of data that should be considered. Written comments can be submitted until **July 21, 2022**.

HOW TO COMMENT

- 1  Submit comments electronically at the project website link below (preferred method). <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/cnystrategy>
- 2  Submit written comments to the park's headquarters in Charlestown, MA by mail to:
 Superintendent Michael Creasey | Boston National Historical Park
 21 Second Ave | Charlestown, MA 02129

IMPORTANT DATES

June 21, 2022	Public scoping period begins	← We Are Here
July 21, 2022	Public scoping period ends	
August 11, 2022	Review/analysis of public scoping comments	
October 20, 2022	Publication of EA, start of public comment period	
October 26, 2022	Public scoping meeting* (tentative date)	
November 21, 2022	End of public comment period for EA	
November 22 - December 6, 2022	Review/Analysis of public comments	
December 28, 2022	Decision file submission	

*NPS plans to host a public meeting in the Fall '22, at which time there will be another opportunity for participation and input on the EA. This meeting will follow the draft publication of the EA and will provide more information about the Proposed Actions and anticipated impacts on visitors, the community, cultural resources, and the environment and, more importantly, to hear your thoughts and ideas. Stay tuned for details!

The 30-day comment period ends on **July 21, 2022**.

Notes: Comments will not be accepted by fax, email, or any other way than those specified above. Please also note that your entire comment - including personal identifying information such as your address, phone number, and email address - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Comments submitted by individuals or organizations on behalf of other individuals or organizations will not be accepted.



For more information, visit the project website at:

<https://www.nps.gov/bost/learn/historyculture/preservation.htm>

