

PRESERVATION AS A TOOL FOR WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION:  
Design, Management, and Financing Solutions from Vancouver, Boston, and London

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## **Dedication**

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My three years at Penn, in the programs of Historic Preservation and City & Regional Planning, have been an extraordinary experience. It has been marked by educational pursuits, the companionship of dear friends, the exploration of new places and ideas, and the advisement of esteemed educators and mentors.

This thesis is dedicated to everyone at Penn who has made my experience here so enriching, and an invaluable milestone in my life.

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## **1. Introduction**

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In the last several decades the field of urban planning has been largely focused on the challenge of urban revitalization. Post-industrial cities around the world have been attempting to respond to shifts in economic structure and market preferences, and the effect these trends have had on the physical realm. Revitalization strategies have focused on central business districts and increasingly on waterfronts.

Historic preservation has, since its inception, been intertwined with urban revitalization. The preservation movement resulted from a concern for the abandonment and neglect of historically significant structures in urban areas. It also responded to their threatened removal by federal programs that used site clearance as a means of urban renewal. As such urban renewal tactics have fallen out of favor, alternative strategies towards revitalization have developed, many involving preservation.

Although waterfront revitalization is in many ways synonymous with urban revitalizing, the tendency to preserve historic buildings in these projects is not as strong. Industrial waterfronts evolved in a different pattern than the rest of their cities, resulting in a fragmentation of the street grid, larger parcels of land, docks and piers. This haphazard evolution of space created an environment that lent itself to large scale



clearance and development of new structures once their former uses had gone.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the industrial buildings on the waterfronts were not worth saving in the eyes of many, as they did not have architectural merit in the traditional sense.<sup>2</sup> Site clearance and replacement with monolithic buildings have characterized many waterfront revitalization project as a result. An increased appreciation for industrial heritage and a movement to retain these buildings has resulted in some cities electing to retain the industrial structures along their waterfronts. Some have been included as a part of comprehensive plans, whereas others have organically evolved as individual buildings were renovated to accommodate new uses and contribute to an overall historic feel. In either case, they create environments that are at once new and historic and reunite people with the waterfronts so long dominated by industrial uses.

This thesis will examine waterfront plans that created or incorporated an historic preservation policy as a part of their redevelopment agenda. The analysis will attempt to uncover underlying similarities among the projects, and whether any common lessons emerged from them. Overall, this analysis will aim to support a conclusion that the preservation of the urban fabric in a waterfront development will lead to an economically and culturally successful waterfront, worthy of the heavy investment of time and public and private capital required. As the legislative backbone of historic preservation is the

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<sup>1</sup> Stanton Eckstut. "Solving complex urban design problems," in A.Ruth. Fitzgerald, ed. Waterfront Planning and Development New York: American Society of Civil Engineers. (1986) 54-57.

<sup>2</sup> Rinio Bruttomesso. "The Heritage of Water-related Work" In Rinio Bruttomesso, ed. Water and Industrial Heritage: The Reuse of Industrial and Port Structures in Cities on Water. Venezia: Marsilio. (1999). 8-9.

promotion of a public good, it will evaluate whether this was a goal that was reached in the development as well.

The thesis will evaluate three case studies of large-scale waterfront redevelopment projects. The three case studies are Vancouver's Granville Island, Boston's Charlestown Navy Yard, and London's South Bank. Each of these are unique in their place-based attributes, such as location, cultural context, existing buildings and governmental structure. In the redevelopment of these places, each had defined public and private objectives manifested through unique planning, management and financing strategies. Preservation was included as a design and strategy in each of these studies, in which the managing body hoped to harness the historic character of the place as a means of marketing and promotion for public enjoyment and private gain. How this focus was affected by the availability of public funds and the ability to attract private investment is examined, as well as the overall market climate. These factors are considered in any waterfront project, but are especially important pertaining to preservation-specific regulations and financing options. Though each of these projects was unique in their outcomes and dynamic throughout their development process, they contributed to a final assessment that the inclusion of preservation policy was a viable approach to the successful redevelopment of urban waterfronts.

## **2. Selection of Case Studies**

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The case studies were chosen according to a series of categories that would lead to similar points of comparison. In choosing the case studies, it was imperative that the waterfronts all had the following attributes:

- 1) Traceable planning process
- 2) Specific land use and urban design strategy
- 3) Iconic adaptive reuse project
- 4) Marketing strategy
- 5) Model partnership, funding, or legislation
- 6) Phasing and implementation plan
- 7) Distinct preservation policy, as distinct from market-driven reuse
- 8) Multiple uses and objectives, with diverse users. (tourism, housing, retail)
- 9) Planning took place several years ago, so that time has passed for evaluation

These case studies would also examine locations in different countries, in order to evaluate the difference in governmental structures and the cultural practices affecting redevelopment. Once the case studies were selected, they were then studied through historical accounts, secondary sources about their development, and primary sources consisting of planning documents, news and government legal documents. Correspondence and interviews with key players was also employed. Once the case studies were fully explored, they were evaluated for individual lessons, and those that

were common across all three. These common lessons and themes are summarized in the conclusion. This thesis endeavors to contribute to the literature on historic preservation's past and future role in waterfront development.

On a personal note, two of the case studies were chosen after I had the opportunity to visit them and was impressed by the vibrant public spaces and historic architecture that characterized them. The opportunity to visit a place and experience the location in time and scale is essential for fair evaluation. In the summer of 2005, I was able to visit the London South Bank and found it to be an energetic and eclectic urban experience, complete with a rich history. I was interested in how such a place came about and investigated this in a Fall 2005 paper on the South Bank. The following spring, I was able to visit Vancouver. Visiting Granville Island was a poignant experience. The sublime perception of the place, at once bustling and serene, stood out to me. Observing the historic architecture and industrial remnants raised many questions in my mind. It was then that the subject for this thesis was inspired – the comparison of waterfront redevelopments that use historic preservation. I chose Boston to complete the trio. As the other two waterfronts were in other countries, an American example was lacking. The Charlestown Navy Yard is a standout case since it was a National Historic Register district and was redeveloped according to the highest standards of preservation. Few other waterfronts are similar in this regard. I was able to visit Boston as well in the spring of 2007 to experience and assess the area personally. I found the Navy Yard to

indeed be an exemplary waterfront, and an ideal subject with the necessary elements for analysis and comparison.

### **3. Review of Literature**

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#### **Waterfronts and Urban Revitalization**

The topic of waterfront revitalization has been a popular one in the world of planning theory, especially in the last several decades. Some consider waterfronts a speciality in their own right. They have been a topic of local news, as many cities look to revamp their waterfronts, and of scholarly discourse, as waterfront issues are integrally related to urban planning, real estate development, and ecological restoration, to name a few. Today, many books about urban development and planning in general cite waterfront revitalization projects. Waterfronts are a very hot topic in planning, yet these developments' intersection with historic preservation, and preservation policy in particular, is not as frequent. This thesis aspires to contribute to the limited dialogue.

The need for waterfront revitalization is a direct result of the decline in typical forms of industrial economies in the late twentieth century. Since the Industrial Revolution, the waterfront was a place of industry and the powerhouse of the economy. Many cities evolved in their current place because of their proximity to water, which meant access to trade and sustenance. When industry boomed, waterfronts the world over were dominated by ports, railroads, power stations, and warehouses. As technologies shifted, the built environment of the waterfront would reflect this. The first

factor leading to the reversal of this industrial expansion was the containerization of shipping in the 1950s. Containerization greatly reduced the amount of land and space needed for cargo vessels once they were in port. Even while industry continued to be viable, the waterfront land being dedicated to that use began to shrink.<sup>3</sup> Cities began to imagine ways to redevelop the parcels of land rendered useless as processes evolved.

The need for waterfront revitalization strategies initially began in the late 1950s and sixties but were generally small in scale and reused one or two buildings. Mostly they involved waterfronts in cities whose waterfront was part of their central business district. The scale of waterfront redevelopments began to increase as early precedents in Europe, Boston and San Francisco had success in revitalization.

The topic of waterfront revitalization entered into scholarly discourse around the time that they were begun, but proliferated in the mid 1980s. Early and oft-cited works include symposia reports and working papers, namely *Waterfront Planning and Development*, a 1986 symposium report, and a University of California at Berkeley working paper by Peter Hall in 1991. These works were influential in starting the dialogue about the factors leading to waterfront development, the many challenges that they brought, and the implications that they would have on city policy in the future.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Hall. Waterfronts: A New Urban Frontier. (Working Paper 538. University of California at Berkeley, 1991). 2-3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., A.R. Fitzgerald, ed. Waterfront Planning and Development. New York: American Society of Civil Engineers. (1986).

Scholars collaborate on the current practices and ideas in waterfront revitalization through the forums of centers and symposia, which often lead to valuable publications. Centers include the Waterfront Center in Washington D.C. and the Centro Internazionale Città d'Acqua in Venice. Symposia and conferences run by these organizations have produced a great amount of academic writing about the challenges of the waterfront, from design, to policy, to management concerns. They both publish journals which have contributed greatly to this collection of thought. Most recently, the Urban Land Institute, a leading source of scholarship on leading issues in city planning and development, joined the discourse. Their 2004 book, *Remaking the Waterfront*, summarized the path of waterfront redevelopment up to that time, uniting the voices of the lead researchers and case studies in a comprehensive source. This volume is particularly useful in that it does not simply summarize the history of waterfront development, but attempts to make overall links between common problems and challenges and design and management solutions. It summarizes key design and implementation strategies based on the outcomes of several decades of successful development.

The majority of the academic volumes on waterfront redevelopment have come in the form of case studies. Ann Breen and Dick Rigby, the heads of the Waterfront Center in Washington, D.C. have published two books about waterfronts. There is a quarterly journal, a yearly conference, and a series of awards distributed by this center. The books, Waterfronts: cities reclaim their edge and The New Waterfront: A Worldwide Urban



Success Story consists of an overview of the impetus for waterfront revitalization and a collection of best practices.

Breen and Rigby point to the beginning of waterfront development being associated with a number of coincidental happenings in the latter portion of the twentieth century, especially in the United States. First, the waterfront movement occurred simultaneously with national efforts for environmental cleanup in the United States. Before this, many rivers were so polluted from industrial pasts that no one wanted to be close them. When they were cleaned up, though, they offered new possibilities for human access and activities to exploit their natural beauty. The waterfront movement also coincided with the national historic preservation movement and urban revitalization. Many cities had historic buildings on water, and federal legislation geared at saving these structures often led to a reconsideration of the waterfront itself. Federal funding, in addition to legislation, made waterfront projects possible, which flourished during the 1960s and seventies. Though the urban renewal program ended in 1974, other federal funding sources were instrumental in promoting waterfront projects. Although today federal funding plays almost no role in waterfront development, it was important and necessary to initiate the trend.<sup>5</sup>

Changes in personal preferences also influenced the direction in which waterfronts were targeted through redevelopment. The recreation and fitness movement

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<sup>5</sup> Ann Breen and Dick Rigby. New waterfront: a worldwide urban success story. London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd. (1996). 14-16.

prompted many waterfront reclamations to include recreational areas and jogging and biking paths along them. Boating and fishing as recreational activities also saw a rise in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and several waterfront projects included piers and boating slips. These greatly enhanced a sense of community, lacking in many metropolitan areas. Tourism played a major role on many waterfronts. An increase in leisure and disposable income has made tourism the number one industry throughout the world. Early waterfront projects were aimed at capturing tourism in the city. As cities reinvent their waterfronts, recreation and tourism are elements that attract interest, with resulting financial gains.<sup>6</sup> Downtown revitalization unites all of these themes, and is crucial to waterfront redevelopment. When waterfronts are spoken of, it is almost always an urban waterfront. Without the trend of downtown revitalization, especially with retail and residential uses, waterfront developments would not be happening. However, the desire to reclaim, reconnect, and beautify the waterfront was a rationale for urban revitalization in its earliest phases, so the two were as interrelated in the beginning as they are now.

The waterfront today is inextricably linked with redevelopment agendas in general. Cities and scholars are united in their interest in the waterfront problem, as almost every city in the world shares the challenge of underused waterfronts. Waterfront revitalization has become a central issue in general planning schools of thought, serving as best practices for such non-waterfront-specific topics as urban revitalization and urban design. Baltimore's Inner Harbor, a famous revitalization plan of the 1970s and eighties,

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<sup>6</sup> Breen and Rigby (1996) 17.

is a lesson not only for waterfronts, but for revitalization in general and the tourism and leisure-centered revitalization strategies of the post-industrial era.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, Vancouver's Concord Pacific Place (also known as False Creek North) and its exceptional urban design strategy is considered by some *the* model for masterplanned redevelopment districts.<sup>8</sup> Waterfront redevelopment, therefore, goes hand in hand with the forefront of planning theory and practice of this generation, and waterfront projects are included in generalized planning education as well.

### **Historic Preservation on the Waterfront**

The preservation of historic buildings has entered into many waterfront revitalization strategies, especially in Europe. The industrial memory that existing buildings and streets patterns represent has been an important feature to include as cities redevelop these areas. Of the many books and articles that focus on waterfront development, however, few have preservation policy as their main focus. Rather, the inclusion of historic buildings is part of the larger scope of a waterfront case study.

In their previously cited books, Breen & Rigby consider the preservation movement as a contributor to the modern waterfront movement in general. As many historic buildings are located on waterfronts, and there was a desire to save these

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<sup>7</sup> Richard Marshall. "Contemporary urban space-making at the water's edge." in Richard Marshall, ed. Waterfronts in Post Industrial Cities. London: Spon Press. (2001) 5-7.

<sup>8</sup> Urban Land Institute. Remaking the Urban Waterfront. Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute. (2004) 231.

buildings, preservation often led to overall waterfront improvements. This was a stronger trend in the Western world, less so in Asian countries, but this is starting to change. The United States, the United Kingdom and Canada passed legislation protecting heritage buildings in the 1960s, so development in the late sixties and seventies responded to these new restrictions and opportunities.<sup>9</sup>

Rinio Bruttomesso is a lead scholar in the discourse of waterfront development and has written at length about the role of industrial preservation in waterfront development. Bruttomesso directs the International Center for Cities on Water which has published several collections of waterfront case studies. The 1999 book which he edited, Water and Industrial Heritage: the Reuse of Industrial and Port Structures in Cities on Water summarizes a Venice conference held by his center focusing on that topic. The underlying principle of the book is the important role that industrial heritage, and its presence on water, plays in the identity of cities around the world. He notes that the reuse of these buildings should be central to any urban revitalization of a waterfront that contains these assets. Included papers focus on the urban and architectonic character of these areas, the financing, and the management of the sites. All of the case studies included cite European examples.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ann Breen & Dick Rigby (1996) 19.

<sup>10</sup> Rinio Bruttomesso. "The Heritage of Water-related Work" In Rinio Bruttomesso, ed. Water and Industrial Heritage: The Reuse of Industrial and Port Structures in Cities on Water. Venezia: Marsilio. (1999). 8-9.

Many waterfront developments have included historic preservation, but a significant literature collection about this topic specifically does not exist. Several papers in larger waterfront case study books deal with issues of preservation. Barry Shaw addresses the approach towards preservation policy taken by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) in the early 1980s in his paper *History at the Water's Edge*. As a public agency with development rights to a particular portion of land, the Corporation assumed the existing preservation legislation that came with the land, and expanded upon it. The countrywide preservation policy of the country in England is similar to the United States in that heritage buildings could be protected individually for architectural or historical merit, or entire neighborhoods of historic significance could be designated as conservation areas. When the LDDC was founded, it assumed control of a number of individually listed buildings and ten conservation areas. As part of their redevelopment plan the LDDC added 116 additional industrial buildings as listed structures. The constraints of developing historic industrial buildings such as Butler's Wharf, initially repelled developers, but Shaw concludes that once initial technical problems were solved, these types of projects served as a catalyst for further redevelopment in the area.<sup>11</sup> Thus public regulation and management plus private investment added to the preservation of the industrial character of much of the Docklands.

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<sup>11</sup> Barry Shaw. "History at the water's edge". in Richard Marshall, ed. Waterfronts in Post Industrial Cities. London: Spon Press. (2001). 137-157.

Richard Marshall comments on the challenge between waterfront development and heritage preservation in the World Heritage cities of Amsterdam and Havana in a 2001 publication. Amsterdam had succeeded in incorporating new design into an historic setting through innovative planning and an appreciation for all generations of architecture. Havana, a city that had largely remained unchanged for 50 years, had a great collection of historic buildings on the waterfront, but had no precedent for redevelopment and therefore struggled with its strategies towards this end. Marshall identified the importance of contextualism in waterfront development. He defines this not as a prevention of experimental design, but an attempt to incorporate new into old in ways that make the two intersect seamlessly. This is an especially important lesson for cities with a great amount of historic fabric on their waterfront.<sup>12</sup>

David L.A. Gordon addressed preservation policy as a factor in waterfront revitalization in his study of the Charlestown Navy Yard. In Boston, the entire Charlestown Navy Yard was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, making it a challenge for reuse projects. In his paper *Implementing urban waterfront development in an historic context*, he examined in particular the contribution of naval history to the adaptive reuse of the area, describing the special design guidelines that were applied to the redevelopment area. He concluded that the heritage-based approach to a mixed-use redevelopment scheme did contribute to the perceived successful outcome of the Navy

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<sup>12</sup> Richard Marshall. "Waterfronts, development and World Heritage Cities: Amsterdam and Havana" in Richard Marshall, ed. Waterfronts in Post Industrial Cities. London: Spon Press. (2001). 137-159.

Yard's rebirth, but concludes that the strict preservation rules were at times over-regulated and preventive of development.<sup>13</sup>

### **Placemaking and Identity**

Waterfronts can be a vehicle for cities to reinvent themselves in a new way. Placemaking and urban design are an important consideration in revitalization. As cities compete in the modern day for economic base and tourism dollars, they have to set themselves apart from all others in order to keep their competitive advantage. Urban design and marketing of the physical environment is an essential ingredient in this equation.<sup>14</sup> Many cities have remade their image through redevelopment efforts, particularly of their waterfront.

Bilbao is an example of a city that was primarily industrial and now is known the world over as a success story of revitalization and utilization of the service industry in Spain. The icon of Frank Gehry's Guggenheim on the waterfront is an icon of architectural expression and of waterfront revitalization.<sup>15</sup> Bilbao's image was changed forever by its waterfront. American cities like Chattanooga and Baltimore, which are

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<sup>13</sup> David L.A. Gordon. "Implementing Urban Waterfront Redevelopment in an Historic Context: A Case Study of the Boston Naval Shipyard." *Ocean and Coastal Management* .42. (1999) 909.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Marshall. "Remaking the image of the city: Bilbao and Shanghai" in Richard Marshall, ed. *Waterfronts in Post Industrial Cities*. London: Spon Press. (2001) 54.

<sup>15</sup> Marshall. "Remaking the image of the city: Bilbao and Shanghai" (2001) 53-71.

commonplace by other standards, are cited over and over for the waterfronts, thus placing them in an elite group of revitalized urban areas.

While some cities have looked at waterfronts as a way to reinvent their image, others have used their heritage as the starting point and the basis of a unique identity, remade for a new generation. Cities like Savannah, San Francisco, and Toronto have incorporated historic buildings into new plans for their waterfront. These have been a combination of speculative development and comprehensive planning, but most historic waterfronts have welcomed new economic vitality without the abandonment of the past identity. Preservation as placemaking policy is a formula that makes sense for many modern cities on water.

### **In Conclusion**

The discourse on waterfront planning and redevelopment is vast. However, as it relates to preservation policy, management, and implementation, there is no absolute recipe for success. Ideally, cities around the world would be able to redevelop their waterfronts, regardless of the intended use, in a way that contributed to economic vitality and context-sensitive design. This design approach would incorporate preservation with new construction, and make preservation a financially viable option. In a world where profit is the most critical measure for successful redevelopment, this has to be the possible outcome if the project is to materialize. This thesis examines three different and



successful approaches using historic preservation. towards waterfront development using historic preservation and which were successful. It looks particularly at the policy behind the preservation actions and how this aided or hurt the project. A successful project, however, is not limited solely to financial gain, since community response based on other accomplishments and attributes are not as easily measured. The study of these cases is intended to reveal how planning and management involving preservation led to projects that produced a financially viable and culturally valuable realm.

## **4. Granville Island, Vancouver, British Columbia**

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### **Overview**

Granville Island is heralded the world over as a sanctified public realm and as a triumph of planning, urban design, and preservation. The image of Granville Island that comes to mind is one of industrial sheds, reminiscent of Vancouver's industrial past, articulated with bold colors and signage, and orchestrated together as a whole through similar colors and shapes. The image of this place includes people of all ages and backgrounds, cars, and the sights and smells of the public market, restaurants, galleries, and functioning industry. The area is a compact node of history hidden beneath a bridge in the center of downtown Vancouver. Though hidden, Granville Island is the most-visited tourist destination in the whole city, and one of the few places that has been comprehensively planned to include preservation within the city.<sup>16</sup> This memorable impression is the outcome of a plan the Canadian government initiated in the early 1970s and executed through an urban design strategy that upheld the industrial character of the area, both in physical preservation and in design guidelines. Nearly thirty years old, the island, actually a peninsula, is still extremely successful, both economically and in its role

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<sup>16</sup> Lance Berelowitz. Dream City: Vancouver & the Global Imagination. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre. (2005). 255-6.

as a haven for Vancouverites and tourists. This case study is examined in order to reveal how a mix of uses, federal intervention, and preservation of existing buildings contributed to an urban place unlike any other.

## **History**

Granville Island is located at the heart of Vancouver on the southwest edge of False Creek. The city of Vancouver is located in the southwest corner of Canada, in the province of British Columbia, and is the largest city in the region. At the turn of the twentieth century, Vancouver was not the international city that it is today, but a growing industrial town, with much of the land dedicated to land uses for timber milling, mining, fishing, and agricultural production. The land that would become Granville Island was not in existence at that time, but was created later in order to make more land to house the city's growing industrial needs

In 1912, the city conducted a survey of the entire waterfront of Vancouver to ensure it was being put to its best use for industry. The two mud bars that would eventually become Granville Island were included in this survey, which determined they could be built up in order to create more land. At the time of its creation, the city decreed that the land would be city-owned, and that it would not simply be leased to individual developers. This was so the city could maintain ownership of the land to build docks

along False Creek, but it proved expeditious at the time the island was to be redeveloped for a dedicated new use in the future.<sup>17</sup>

When the Island opened in 1916, it was immediately a success and became an industrial hub in the city. It was originally named Industrial Island, but locals called it Granville Island, because it was accessed by the Granville Street bridge, which crossed over it. It was an ideal location for new businesses because it offered cheaper rates than other parts of the city, was centrally located within an active waterfront, and was fully outfitted with new infrastructure and rail lines. By 1922, the city brought electricity to the island and by 1923 it was fully leased. The next several years were the high point of the island's life as an industrial haven. It was home to businesses producing chain, rope, barrel, and boilers. Structurally, the island was arranged for optimum efficiency and performance. The buildings were all situated to face the rail lines, with their backs to the water, where the wharves were located. This was in contrast to the configuration of the rest of the city, which was in a grid formation, and created its own ambiguous street system within its own boundaries. There were no typical streets or sidewalks, only service lanes in which trucks, service vehicles, and trains all shared a common right of way. From the beginning, it was an area all to itself, unlike any other in Vancouver.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Catherine Gourley. Island in the Creek: The Granville Island Story. Madiera Park, B.C: Harbour Publishing. (1986). 23-25.

<sup>18</sup> Gourley 32-33.

Granville Island continued to be a successful industrial center well into the middle of the twentieth century. It suffered during the Depression, as all businesses did, but as World War II broke and Canada joined the fight in the beginning of the 1940s, its industrial support system stepped into high gear. This included the production of chain and other necessities on Granville Island. Just before this time, Granville Island came under federal ownership with the creation of the National Harbours Board in 1936. This gave the federal government ownership of all the harbours in the country.<sup>19</sup>

After the war, the Island's industrial vigor began to decline again and some began to see it as detracting from the city. Most of these voices were in opposition to industry's effect on the surrounding waterway, but this was an outcome of the entirety of the area, not just Granville Island. The central part of the city had become a seedy, sooty, polluted detractor which many wanted to improve. In the 1950s, some city officials proposed filling in False Creek, transforming it into buildable land, linking the two sides of Vancouver's downtown and eliminating the polluted area in between. These ideas were trumped, however, when the city paid for a new Granville Street bridge, at a span much larger than its predecessor, to be built over False Creek. Filling in the Creek would make the \$16.5 million expenditure for the new bridge a waste, and the cost to drain and fill the creek was exorbitant itself, so the idea was abandoned.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Gourley 40.

<sup>20</sup> Gourley 52-3.

The island continued to be an eyesore in the 1950s and 60s. Ever since the battle to fill in False Creek had been silenced, locals continued to argue as to the best future of the area, since all could see that industry was on the decline. Even though the rest of Vancouver still continued to be an industrial hub of North America, the new technological advances in shipping and production had outgrown the small setting of Granville Island. In 1958, a professor at University of British Columbia, Walter Hardwick began a different conversation about what to do with Granville Island and False Creek. He was the first to look at its future as being detached from the industry for which it was created.

One significant outcome that the Hardwick study had on the future of Granville Island was the combination of the land of the area under one ownership. This would have innumerable implications for the development of Vancouver's waterfront in the future. At the time of the study, the area around False Creek was owned by a number of landholders, including the federal, local, and provincial government, and most significantly, the Canada Pacific Railroad. The provincial government convinced the railroad to give up its land along False Creek in exchange for more land on the northern shore of downtown Vancouver, on the English Bay. The province then gave the land to the City of Vancouver, as well as the responsibility for redeveloping it.<sup>21</sup> The majority of the land was controlled by the federal government, whose National Harbours Board many of the lands that had been used as industrial land uses.

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<sup>21</sup> Gourley 60.

Before the Hardwick study, many Vancouverites thought that the area surrounding False Creek and Granville Island would be more of the same industry, though perhaps secondary. The new school of thought sought to put the land to a different use entirely, that of mixed used, recreational, and residential. This notion was undergirded by the nationwide and local trends of industry moving to the exterior of the city, rather than its interior, and a demand for downtown housing. These trends were unmistakable, and the local and national government saw the opportunity to use the waterfront for a different, more humane use.

In 1973, the National Harbours Board officially transferred ownership of the 41 acre Granville Island site to the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, another agency within the federal government. This move took the land from the hands of industrial developers and put it under the control of the country's primary lender for housing and other commercial developments. At the same time, local entrepreneurs, Bill Harvey and Mitch Taylor, who had opened a marina on False Creek, were developing a site on the north end of Granville Island called the Creekhous Project. The project was mixed use retail and commercial, reusing industrial buildings and retaining the vernacular materials on the corrugated tin and timber.<sup>22</sup> The success and idea of these private developers proved inspirational for the eventual design of Granville Island and helped to foster the shift in thinking about the former industrial area. This was a crucial step in achieving what would become the second, more illustrious life of Granville Island.

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<sup>22</sup> Gourley 64.

**Preservation & Placemaking: “Recycling Granville Island”**

Granville Island is a great success today for a number of reasons, but the underlying piece of the project that makes it so remarkable is its sense of place. The place that one experiences today is a result of meticulously reasoned and well-executed strategies that were conceived during the island redevelopment stage. Creating a place that was uniquely Vancouver was a central priority for the planners, citizens, and government officials that were involved in Granville Island’s redevelopment. The mechanism for achieving this desired place was primarily through the preservation of the type and scale of architecture, orchestrated through a cohesive urban design strategy.

There are three aspects of the Granville Island redevelopment plan that made the project succeed, two of which are relevant to placemaking. The first was that new developments were to take place within existing buildings or within the existing building envelope of what had been there previously, which was integral to achieving the preservation component of the project and the streamlined character of the place. The landscape of preserved buildings was then punctuated with quirky yet significant design details that crowned the project’s identity. The second is that island was to be comprised of a mix of uses, welcoming a mix of ages, and activating a mix of times of day. Finally, the project was executed by the federal government on an unencumbered schedule. Once the government had committed to the project, it went from an idea to an executed project



in under a decade – a true marvel in urban planning time. However, the rest of the development was phased so that it continued to develop organically nonetheless.

In order to assess the opportunities Granville Island offered, in 1970 the federal government hired consultants Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners to conduct a study of redevelopment strategies for the island.<sup>23</sup> The planning process involved public participation, and a presentation of various scenarios. Completed in 1972, its original intent was for Granville Island to serve to bolster the residential development already underway in False Creek. The False Creek residential district redevelopment was also making use of reclaimed, obsolete industrial land, but was putting it all towards one use. Leery that the area would be dominated by this one type of use, planners saw the need to retain this one tract of land for something distinctive. For that purpose, Granville Island was always to be of a non-residential use, however, the exact use was as yet undetermined. All that was known at this stage of the plan was that the federal government ought to benefit from this reappointment of its land, and that it could serve to unite shoreline developments that were already underway in Kitsilano and False Creek. For this reason, the consultants declared the option of reserving Granville Island for open space only or for an exhibition space was infeasible.<sup>24</sup>

The plan for Granville Island at this stage had grown out of a two year planning process designed to capture citizen input. Although a great amount is not known about

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<sup>23</sup> Gourley 63.

<sup>24</sup> Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners. Proposed Redevelopment Strategies for Granville Island: An Extension to the False Creek Studies. Vancouver. (October 1972). 2.

this stage, their conclusion demonstrated that contributors desired that the island be a public space with a combination of passive and active uses, contributing to an overall livability and quality of life asset for the city. Adequate parks and recreation facilities were lacking in the city at that time, and Granville Island offered a perfect opportunity to answer this demand, especially as it was located alongside water, which was an added bonus.<sup>25</sup> The plan also did a building condition assessment to determine if the existing buildings were fit to be reused. It was found that the majority of them to be reusable. They were almost all made of the same materials – corrugated tin and timber. Though this plan did not propose anything binding, it put forth the policies that would become integral to the project, namely public space as an urban amenity, and of adaptive reuse of the buildings that shared a similar appearance and character.<sup>26</sup>

The following plan for Granville Island continued to reinforce these same themes, but consisted more of design observations and recommendations rather than policy. Also done by Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners, the 1975 Process for Redevelopment document was firmly rooted in the idea of creating a definitive character for the island, no matter its intended use.<sup>27</sup> The plan explored a number of “character options,” including a natural park, an amusement park, an entertainment and culture district, a culture and

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<sup>25</sup> Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners (1972) 11.

<sup>26</sup> Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners (1972) 33.

<sup>27</sup> Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners. Granville Island: A Process for Redevelopment. Prepared for Central Mortgage & Housing Corporation, Ltd. Vancouver. (August 1975). 5.

education district, and an exposition place.<sup>28</sup> This plan sought to answer the question of how best to benefit from the opportune location and flexible existing buildings the island contained. It also set out redevelopment criteria on which any forthcoming plan should be built. These were particularly interesting in that they pinpointed certain design attributes about the island stemming from its industrial past that were unlike other parts of the city, and that these were desired, revered traits. One trait was that access to the island was difficult, which created a level of anticipation and intrigue that contributed to its sense of place. Another was the existing buildings' unique orientation: larger buildings were oriented towards the water with their backs to the roads and rail, while smaller buildings were oriented towards the latter. This duality created unique, irregular, but intriguing interstitial spaces that had to be kept in any redesign, as they were key qualities of the old Granville Island. Also to be retained was the "ambiguous center" of the island, and the various paths and places that occurred throughout.<sup>29</sup> From this conceptual beginning, the planners underscored perhaps ordinary tendencies of an industrial space, and elevated them to design principle that were worthy of retention and safeguarding. These aspects were as important to the persistence of place character as the retention of actual buildings, which was a major tenet of the plan. The recycling of buildings was also a major concern in the plan. The similar material of all of the buildings was important, and most were found to be structurally sound with opportunity for reuse. Of equal

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<sup>28</sup> Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners (1975) 12-23.

<sup>29</sup> Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners (1975) 26-29

importance, though, was the orientation of the buildings toward the edges and the unique views that this created for those observing the island from a distant vantage point. As mentioned previously, their relationship to each other, and the unique form that the island took on as a cohesive unit, was as important as the individuality of each building, which were in fact, blatantly ordinary.<sup>30</sup> This holistic view of the island was to remain a central point in the preservation and urban design strategy which would develop in the following years.

In order to carry out a streamlined implementation of these plans, the federal government saw the necessity of a dedicated administrative process, led by one team. To this end, the government, acting for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), appointed the Granville Island Trust, an advisory, and eventually administrative body, composed of officials and professionals of various backgrounds. Initially, the role of the Trust was to prepare recommendations for the federal government relating to implementation and to commission plans relating to social, economic, physical, institutional, and budgetary implications for development.<sup>31</sup> As the development of the island became more permanent, the Trust would transform into an administrative body, responsible to the CMHC, for dealing with leases and new development.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Thompson Berwick Pratt and Partners (1975) 30-32.

<sup>31</sup> The Interim Trust. Granville Island: Vancouver, BC. Report by the Interim Trust. Vancouver. (1976) 16-17.

<sup>32</sup> The Interim Trust 17.

The first report prepared by this body was prepared by the Interim Trust in 1976, summarizing its recommendations to the government for the development of the island, based on the previous strategy and process plans. Preservation and a mixture of uses was a foremost agenda for the Trust from the beginning. The preface of this report reads,

*The intimate connection of industrial and domestic life, the weaving of the old and new into a rich pattern, rather than the wholesale development of a currently fashionable architectural stereotype is the intended planning strategy.*<sup>33</sup>

From this stage on, the emphasis for the development of Granville Island always combined a mix of uses and area planning that included the retention of existing buildings. The uses to be included on the island were primarily entertainment, education and cultural, with some retail and commercial, a small section of industrial use, open space, and other complementary uses. These appropriate uses were to be accommodated, when possible, within an historic building. Where this was not feasible, the development was to produce the desired character and also promote an individual design identity. Both of these ends were to be accomplished through the creation of stringent design guidelines to be created by a consultant.

#### **a. Urban Design**

The government hired consultants Hotson Bakker Architects to create the urban design guidelines for Granville Island. The firm produced a plan in 1977 that came to be known as the Reference Document for Granville Island, False Creek – Area 9, which

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<sup>33</sup> The Interim Trust 1.

would serve as a guidebook of sorts for those wishing to develop on Granville Island. It was meant to encourage a similar aesthetic to arise from existing development and new construction on Granville Island. Most importantly, though, the guidelines were to be used by the Development Permit Board and Advisory Panel in the approval of any new structures or alteration to existing structures. This would ensure that the guidelines were followed. Although the guidelines were fairly rigorous in form and scale, they also called for leniency in order to permit the individuality of designs to come forth and not restrict creativity.<sup>34</sup>

Redeveloping Granville Island in the industrial style was an original goal of the federal government, but was fine-tuned through the urban design. Early plans looked at the feasibility analyses that included the retention of existing buildings as an alternative to wholesale clearance and redevelopment. This was due to a number of factors. First, there had been a growing trend in the 1970s in North America towards using the adaptive reuse of older, vernacular buildings in new projects. Although this was in response to the preservation movement of the 1960s, it was different in that it called for adaptive reuse, not the salvage and preservation of monuments to be used and interpreted in their original state. Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco was a private developer-driven project that reused a former chocolate factory for small retail vendors.<sup>35</sup> This was linked to the

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<sup>34</sup> Hotson Bakker Architects. Reference Document for Granville Island, False Creek Area 9. Vancouver. (1978). .

<sup>35</sup> Alexander Garvin. The American City: What Works, What Doesn't. New York: McGraw-Hill. (2002). 136.

movement of retail development back into the cities. With the decades-long trend, beginning after World War II, of population movement outside of the city, retail followed, resulting in shopping malls at the cities' periphery and the draining of a tax base from the downtowns. Retail centers also evolved into a generic appearance, void of character or any distinguishing design. Retailers wanting to find a niche market sought adaptive reuse of more interesting, historic buildings as the way to create a new retail environment. James Rouse spearheaded this movement of large scale retail development back into the downtowns with Quincy Market in Boston and Baltimore's Inner Harbor, with Baltimore using a mixed approach with minimal preservation.<sup>36</sup> Regardless, these projects were encouraging developers and governments to look inwardly and use these centrally-located, underused areas in downtowns to develop innovative areas for recreation and retail. These American projects were coming online in the same years that the Granville Island proposals were underway, so the Canadian government was a forerunner in this type of project.

The government was also inspired by North American trends of festival marketplaces when considering the redevelopment of Granville Island. Quincy Market in Boston was a type of this development. The festival marketplace was meant to mimic the central markets of cities' of a previous generation, where residents could come downtown to get fresh produce and meats in buildings that connected multiple vendors.<sup>37</sup> Pike Place

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<sup>36</sup> Garvin 136.

<sup>37</sup> Garvin 139.

Market in Seattle was a model for this type of development because it had retained a majority of its original flavor through the years.<sup>38</sup> As it was original, Pike Place retained a certain grittiness that characterized a true market, maintaining an air of authenticity. This virtue was an inspiration to some subsequent marketplace planning. Quincy Market in Boston, which is considered a festival marketplace, maintained the function and appearance of a market, but made the environment more clean and sterile. Whether new developments or old refurbishments, festival marketplaces were also successful in attracting attention back into cities' centers, but were especially successful at capturing tourists.<sup>39</sup> They proved to be a smart approach that many cities incorporated as a means to revitalize their downtown. The government and urban designers of Granville Island looked to these models, hoping to put a similar marketplace in Vancouver, although it would hope to attract nearby residents rather than tourists of these precedents.<sup>40</sup> Granville Island was an ideal site in that it was already under a single owner and that it had abundant historic buildings. Together, these buildings exhibited a unique quality, that if reused, could create a singular environment in the city. Therefore the underlying goal of the preservation of the industrial buildings on Granville Island was to create a unique environment, using the already existing aesthetic cohesion and authenticity of the place.

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<sup>38</sup> Gary Hack. Dean, School of Design, University of Pennsylvania. Former employee of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Personal interview. January 17, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> Hack.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Michael Geller. Former Assistant Architect/Planner, CMHC Vancouver Branch. March 5, 2007.



In order to carry out this vision of a character island, the early planning studies included a condition assessment of the salvageable buildings on the site. Based on these studies, the Trust found that two-thirds could be retained. In their preliminary recommendations to the government, they recommended that the plan for the Island be done in this fashion. Developed with this type of control, the island would produce the type of character that would lead to an attractive, unique place for development.<sup>41</sup> Overall, the government supported this model, although some were concerned as to the financial feasibility of the project. Once this feasibility was confirmed, it was recognized as the right decision.<sup>42</sup>

The plan encouraged a mixture of land uses, highlighted the most striking attributes of the building forms and the types of tenants they could yield. It encouraged not only an appreciation of the building forms as stand alone objects, but their relation to one another and the unique interstitial spaces that they created. Building tenants were encouraged not only because their use needed large spaces and high ceilings, but because their use required an orientation towards the water or the road. For example, the building that was to house the marina marketplace was chosen because it had high ceilings reminiscent of maritime uses, but also was close to the water and the marinas that had

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<sup>41</sup> The Interim Trust 13

<sup>42</sup> The Interim Trust 13, Geller.

been built. The retention of these unique spaces was emphasized as much as the recycling of the existing buildings and complying infill.<sup>43</sup>

The urban design guidelines included a concrete list of design principles that underscored all development that was to take place on the Island. They were based on qualities that the consultants thought contributed to the unifying character of Granville Island. They included the following: “building activities visually accessible to the public, day and night,” “Large, existing doorways provide viewing areas to inside activities,” “ground floor uses suggest public interaction,” “second floor spaces are less public,” “buildings are recycled for uses that benefit from their size and shape,” and “waterfront access through existing buildings.” These were listed as the *development character* portion of the plan, so that the unified character of the island was always maintained and always considered. These were paired with an attention to similar materials, mainly corrugated tin and timber, which were the materials that had historically been used on the island. Other more detailed design considerations included large doors, multi-paned industrial glazing and skylights.<sup>44</sup>

Materials also played a strong role in another major design area on the island – that of the on-street experience. This was related to the designers’ fondness for the spaces between buildings on the Island and attention to the pedestrian experience as they moved through these spaces. To create a circulation plan on the island that respected

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<sup>43</sup> The Interim Trust. Section 3.

<sup>44</sup> The Interim Trust. Section 10.

pedestrians, but accounted for the presence of cars, the designers created a street hardware system and paving strategy. First, the circulation areas were free of sidewalks. This was an allusion to historic precedence, when industrial vehicles, trucks, and workers all moved through the space on an even hierarchy. This was an ambient element that the designers chose to retain. Physically, the original railroad tracks that united the buildings on the island were kept in place and they formed the basis for where the streets would flow. As a means of demarcating distinct zones in this undedicated right-of-way, the street hardware system was created using timber and steel – historic materials.<sup>45</sup> These were to be punctuated with trees and smoothed by consistent street unit pavers in order to create an environment that was at once urban yet soft, capable of maintaining the unique spaces between buildings, and also new casual spaces that would create a rhythm and a visual movement to the street.<sup>46</sup>

### **b. A Mixture of Land Use**

Distinguishing themselves from the typical festival marketplaces that were geared towards retail development and tourists, the Island developers were concerned with diversifying the mixture of uses and attract a broad population. Early reports involved economic feasibility studies, prepared by consultants for the federal government, that

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<sup>45</sup> The Interim Trust. Section 10.

<sup>46</sup> “Award of Excellence. Granville Island Redevelopment Plan: Vancouver.” 1977 Canadian Yearbook Awards. *Canadian Architect*. (1977). 43.

proved that alternative uses, such as those for public space and leisure, were capable of generating an economic return and deserved federal funds. Although achieving financial feasibility was a concern for the government, it was not primary objective. As the developer of the project, it was willing to support uses that were less lucrative if they produced a public benefit. It would have been easy for it to develop the waterfront for high-rise commercial or residential, as it had chosen to do in other areas. Instead it chose to sanction this area for uses that would have a higher value in other ways, for example, environmental, social and historical value.<sup>47</sup>

The economic consultants, Urbanics Consultants, also determined a number of uses that would coincide with the design guidelines of creating a multi-use, multi-age group experience. As mentioned previously, some of the land uses were selected in direct response to the shape of the existing built environment that lent itself to tenants needing high ceilings and large floor plates. The use plan would ultimately activate the island from day to night, complement the design of the buildings, and provide uses that were needed in the city of Vancouver, all while preserving economic vitality in other markets within the city.<sup>48</sup> Granville Island was intended in its development stages to provide an amenity for residents in the surrounding community, especially those in the False Creek residential area that was being developed simultaneously. In the late 1970s,

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<sup>47</sup> Granville Island Trust. Granville Island Redevelopment Plan: Summarized Capital and Operating Budget. Based on Urbanics Consultants. Granville Island Capital and Operating Budget Report. Vancouver: Granville Island Trust. (1978). 1.

<sup>48</sup> Urbanics Consultants, Ltd. Granville Island Economic Effects Report. Prepared for The Granville Island Trust. Vancouver. (March, 1978). 1.

this was an above-average discretionary income submarket. The target market, combined with the shape of buildings and the desire to generate various uses led to the list of “appropriate uses” from Granville Island. Uses were determined not by typical zoning practices, but by performance zoning, which differentiated areas based on categories like public interest, innovation, character, visual interest, pedestrian access, and vehicular access. Uses were then arranged according to these outcomes.<sup>49</sup>

The first and most important use of the island that the report recommended was the public market. Here Vancouverites could come to buy fresh foods and locally made crafts, and enjoy the occasional special event. An ideal place for this development was inside the iconic Arrow Transfer building, which was in the shape of an “industrial basilica” and offered a generous floorplate for redevelopment, along with a prime location on the northern edge of Granville Island facing False Creek.<sup>50</sup> This food and craft market was to be complemented with a market for maritime uses, which was the second type of use desired. The third appropriate use was an artists and artisans realm, meant for the small scale production and sale of handmade crafts. All of these developments not only complemented each other in the type of shoppers they attracted, but did not detract from other submarkets in the city, thereby generating economic productivity.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> The Interim Trust 11.

<sup>50</sup> Roger Kemble. “Granville Island, Vancouver: A Critique.” *Canadian Architect* 25, no. 8. (August 1980): 20.

<sup>51</sup> Kemble 4-6.

Other major draws on the island that were recommended by the feasibility redevelopment plan were an entertainment center, institutional uses, and complementary retail establishments. These provided for a market that was otherwise lacking in the city of Vancouver, and contributed to the unique mix of users and times-of-day that the developers desired.<sup>52</sup> The entertainment complex was to consist of two theatres and eating and drinking establishments. This was important for drawing nighttime users. The idea behind the institutional use was the creation of an art institute, which was needed in the city. This would provide another type and time of user, and also serve as a possible feeder for the arts and crafts district. Finally, the retail was meant to act as filler for the areas in between. They were to complement the cultural uses on the island, but serve as market-driven businesses that would fluctuate according to the changing needs of those living and working nearby the island. They were to have a more organic, unprogrammed, yet guided development, and be small and subordinate in scale and type of vendor.<sup>53</sup>

Industrial uses were the final piece of the Granville Island Redevelopment package. This was what made the project truly unique in its development, since most projects sought to eliminate industry altogether when they had become obsolete in certain downtown areas. Granville Island, however, had many industrial tenants with remaining leases, and with productivity levels that made them financially attractive. Initially, the redevelopment plan allowed for many of these tenants to stay, gradually phasing them out

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<sup>52</sup> Granville Island Trust (1978). 5-6.

<sup>53</sup> Granville Island Trust (1978). 14.

as their leases expired. Many government officials were wary of this tactic, given the industry's historical concerns of noise and safety externalities. Planners were confident, though, and the government agreed that retaining a few industrial uses that were complementary to the new ones being proposed would contribute to the island's industrial heritage. They would also continue to produce revenue from their leases, generating a stable income for the owners.<sup>54</sup> It was an additional challenge placed on the urban designers to create guidelines that would minimize the visual inconsistency.<sup>55</sup> Eventually, they determined that stay Ocean Cement would stay in its place on Granville Island, primarily because buying out the remaining lease would spend nearly one third of the redevelopment budget for the entire project. The presence of industrial uses in an area geared towards retail and artisan tenants was a point of contention among early critics of Granville Island.<sup>56</sup> However, today, the cement plant works seamlessly with the rest of the environment thanks to the strategic urban design guidelines.

The thoughtful combination of preservation, the design of outdoor spaces through urban design, and programmed use on Granville Island created an exceptional place that is uniquely Vancouver. The tactic of "controlled intervention" allowed designers to evoke an earlier image of the Island's previous identity, but also created a new era that

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<sup>54</sup> Granville Island Trust (1978). 9.

<sup>55</sup> Geller.

<sup>56</sup> Norman Hotson. Hotson Bakker Architects. Email to the architect. March 12, 2007.

was specifically that of the urban marketplace.<sup>57</sup> This is a remarkable achievement in the sphere of placemaking. Canadian architecture critic Trevor Garwood-Jones commented on the project in 1978:

*The rejuvenation of buildings is successfully accomplished within the existing architectural background. ... habitués will sense the familiar surroundings while surrendering to the sensuous pleasure of a well-planned market which is neither modern nor historic.*

Granville Island is successful for the humaneness that the scale and feel of buildings create in their surroundings, thus creating a comfortable, warm environment.<sup>58</sup> The designers recognized the value of this intimate gathering of buildings, and the flexibility of their shape, yet allowed for a flexible approach to reuse, rather than a frozen-in-time level of interpretation. The result was an “industrial collage,” creating a flexible, adaptable environment that maintained a memory of place. Design guidelines were meant to maintain images and forms of the industrial past, interspersed with new developments and programmed for new uses. In addition to the buildings, strategic remnants such as the railroad tracks and the crane in the cement yard were left as artifacts to recall the Island’s former role in industry.<sup>59</sup> They come together in a postmodern, high-tech conglomeration in an industrial past.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> “Award of Excellence. Granville Island Redevelopment Plan: Vancouver.” 1977 Canadian Yearbook Awards. Canadian Architect. (1977). 43.

<sup>58</sup> Kemble 17.

<sup>59</sup> Joel Shack. “Cultivating a Place-Story: Port Alberni Harbour Quay, Vancouver Island, BC.” Canadian Architect 31. n.10 (1986) 20.

<sup>60</sup> Kemble 17.



**Management, Financing, and Programming**

Granville Island is a success not only for the economic gains that it produces for the city, but for the amount that it has accomplished for the preservation of memory of Vancouver's industrial past. It created a bright, vibrant urban environment that contrasted with many of its contemporaneous projects, and is now a famous, highly-visible development that has attracted residents and tourists since its beginnings. Many cities have tried to initiate projects that would accomplish the same goals of image making and downtown revitalization, but have not seen the same results. Vancouver has had this level of success because of an optimal mix of planning and placemaking, but also because of a unique and innovative management, financing, and programming scheme. From onset until conclusion, and until the present day, Granville Island has been a project of the federal government, who has provided the staff, funding, and most of all, the initiative, to see the project through to completion and maintain it.

A grand vision like Granville Island requires a grand visionary to conceive it. Luckily, the greatest visionary behind Granville Island was a Member of Parliament in the Canadian Government and had a great deal of political clout to leverage the implementation of his dream. That man was Ron Basford, an MP from Vancouver who was appointed to the Cabinet position of Minister of State for Urban Affairs in 1972, which he carried out until 1974. He remained on Cabinet in other positions until

retirement in 1978. A native of Vancouver, Basford was always a supporter of using the formerly industrial waterfront as a resource that could provide a wide public benefit. His Cabinet appointment came in the same year that the initial Thompson Berwick Pratt plan *Proposed Redevelopment Strategies for Granville Island*, was published so Basford was quick to put his support behind this influential document.<sup>61</sup>

Basford's term in Cabinet (1968-1978) was the most crucial for Granville Island. His position as the Minister of State for Urban Affairs oversaw the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which gained control of the Granville Island land in 1973. Basford was influential in obtaining the Island from the National Harbours Board for this transfer and putting the CMHC in charge. The CMHC was a major mortgage lender in Canada and was already engaged in redevelopment plans in the city. Basford then pushed through the grant of \$25 million federal dollars for the Island's development.<sup>62</sup> This grant was used to finance the new infrastructure, the buy out of existing leases, and the development of the Emily Carr Art Institute and the Public Market. Parliament covered the \$5.8 million cost of the land from the National Harbours Board to the CMHC in 1973, which was deducted from this amount.<sup>63</sup> Basford's influential role and steadfast dedication was integral to achieving a new image for Granville Island. From the time of the first Granville Island plan to his retirement from Cabinet, the project evolved from an idea to an implementable plan that had already

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<sup>61</sup> Gourley 64-65.

<sup>62</sup> Gourley 66.

<sup>63</sup> The Interim Trust.

broken ground. The involvement of a person with this level of political influence and dedication made Granville Island without equal, and Ron Basford deserving of all the credit he has received.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to providing the administrative arrangement and financial backing, Basford formed the Granville Island Trust, the management body in charge of implementing the plan, and hired an Island Manager to execute the finer details.<sup>65</sup> Basford hired Russell Brink to be the Island Manager in 1976, with the dedicated role of buying out remaining leases and getting the infrastructure in place.<sup>66</sup> It was at this time that Brink discovered that some of the original industrial tenants, of which there were thirty, had been there since before the War and were paying as little as seven cents per square foot. The largest tenants proved more challenging, especially in situations in which the lease extended for several more decades and were therefore quite expensive. The process of lease purchasing is what led to Ocean Cement's presence on the island, for their \$9.7 million lease cost would have taken an unnecessary portion of the federal grant, so negotiations were made for the plant to stay.<sup>67</sup> With one person whose sole duty it was to organize these steps for redevelopment, all while reporting back to the Trust and the government, negotiations and bringing the site up to code was expedited.

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<sup>64</sup> Geller.

<sup>65</sup> Gourley 66, Geller.

<sup>66</sup> Gourley 66.

<sup>67</sup> The Interim Trust.

The influence of the government in the development of Granville Island was immense. As a planning initiative that originated within the government, the project possesses qualities that are not the norm in other redevelopment projects. First, as it was jointly the land owner, developer, and regulatory body, the government was in a unique position to ensure that the design guidelines that they imagined were enforced. The levels of administrative scrutiny that exist in so many projects, especially those involving preservation regulations, were reduced. Not only did this expedite the time frame of development, but it lessened the opportunity for the design guidelines, and the intended sense of place, to slip off course.

Granville Island has also been so successful because of the well-apportioned and carefully chosen mix of tenants. In the planning stages of the redevelopment, economic consultants determined the appropriate uses for the island, in line with the cultural and entertainment character chosen for the site. These were to be uses that were underserved elsewhere in the city, did not detract from other markets, and whose space needs matched the building type on the Island. The government was not in a hurry to develop the land, because its priority was not to achieve the highest and quickest economic return, but to serve a discrete submarket of theaters, artist studios, and community needs. It was expected that the tenants would be those that operated outside normal market conditions and did not have another option of places to locate within the city. Rents would be offered at favorable rates. Therefore, they had the long vision and patience to wait for the

ideal tenant, rather than the first and financially capable. The initial phasing plan reflects this, as it was framed for future land use requirements for different activities, not a timeline for development.<sup>68</sup>

The Canadian government's ownership of the Island allowed it to develop the site with an exact management plan. It arranged for two major anchors, which it would finance itself, and then allowed for flexibility in between. For the more market-driven tenants, two markets existed: those that required subsidies and preferential treatment, and those that would operate within the normal market. The subsidized tenants included artisans and performing arts uses, which were underserved elsewhere in the city, needed space, but were unable to afford it in other places. These uses were integral to achieving the desired character of the island, so they were offered lower lease rates and rents, and were given dedicated space in which to slowly develop as their needs dictated. The remaining uses were the restaurants, retail and residential that could fill in as the market dictated, likely emerging to serve the artisans, students, workers, and shoppers as they came online.<sup>69</sup> Industrial uses were also present, operating almost in isolation, but provided a stable economic return for the government as it waited for the rest of the Island to mature.<sup>70</sup> The economic consultants recognized that a third party developer

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<sup>68</sup> Urbanics Consultants 1.

<sup>69</sup> Urbanics Consultants 4-8.

<sup>70</sup> Granville Island Trust 6.

would not take the care to select and control the appropriate uses, so they recommended that the Trust, acting on the part of the government, have direct control of the site.<sup>71</sup>

Granville Island's anchors were the public market and the Emily Carr College of Art & Design.<sup>72</sup> These were developed by the government as pioneer anchor tenants that would attract attention and subsequent tenants to the island. As mentioned previously, the government saw Vancouver to be lacking a suitable public market which many other cities of its size already had. Adding a market like this would fulfill a need in the city and draw the appropriate traffic to the site, but not away from other retailers. The second anchor was the Emily Carr College of Art & Design. Institutional uses were desirable anchor tenants because they were certain to bring students and teachers on a daily basis. This particular school was meant to be a feeder for the artisan realm on the Island as well. The creation of anchors is necessary for any redevelopment project that attempts to reinvent a place. These were ideal because they were capable of filling a number of needs for the city and nearby residents, bringing various age groups into the site, and also activation of the island during different periods of the day, night, and weekends.<sup>73</sup> They also fit nicely into two main heritage buildings, the Arrow Transfer building, and the B.C. Hydro buildings, respectively.

The fiscal return of Granville Island was never its primary goal, but it had to be at least financially stable to qualify as a smart asset for the Canadian government. When

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<sup>71</sup> Granville Island Trust 13.

<sup>72</sup> Gourley 77., Hack.

<sup>73</sup> Granville Island Trust 9-12.

the last of the initial \$25 million start-up capital was used, the Island was expected to be financially self-sustaining. Since the Trust completed all infrastructure phasing in 1983, Granville Island has achieved this measure. It was unique in that it did not have to recover any of this investment, because it was a grant.<sup>74</sup> Neither was the Island expected to be a tourist draw. It was expected to serve the surrounding neighborhoods and the new residential development on False Creek. As a surprise, it became the most popular tourist attraction in all of Vancouver. It brings 12 million visitors, both tourists and residents, and turns a profit of \$130 million per year.<sup>75</sup> This income goes towards supporting more programs and initiatives on the Island; it does not go into the revenue stream of the federal government.<sup>76</sup> This unique type of grant financing has been an immeasurable asset for the initial and for the continued success of Granville Island as a resource and main attraction for the city of Vancouver.

### **Perception and Lessons Learned**

Today, Granville Island still functions according to the original principles that led to its successful redevelopment. The Granville Island Trust, acting for the CMHC, still manages the site. It is heralded as one of the finest urban redevelopment and waterfront

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<sup>74</sup> Granville Island Trust 7.

<sup>75</sup> "Island Experience." Granville Island.  
<[http://www.granvilleisland.com/en/island\\_experience](http://www.granvilleisland.com/en/island_experience)> (February 13, 2007).

<sup>76</sup> Gourley 89.

projects in North America. It has received two awards from the Project for Public Spaces' for its role as a "Great Market Great City" and a "Best Neighborhood."<sup>77</sup>

In recent years, some design regulations of the Island have been reconsidered, either to allow more parking, to allow a multi-screen movie theater, or to help vacant buildings find tenants.<sup>78</sup> Though Granville Island will likely always be a beloved place for people within the city, it had unforeseen management issues that have arisen as a result of it being "too successful" such as too many visitors. Although the plans leading up to the 1978 plan had a precise vision, the lack of a concrete plan for the long term resulted in some development challenges over the years.<sup>79</sup> Recently it has conducted planning studies for transportation, urban design, building condition, and seawall and dock condition.<sup>80</sup> Currently, Hotson Bakker is in the midst of an updated plan for Granville Island, looking at alternatives for sites that were never developed and improved access. Notwithstanding its great success, planners are still looking at ways it can be improved and sustained. As it is part of the city of Vancouver, it will always respond to the city, and in that respect, never be truly completed.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> "Island Experience." Granville Island.

<[http://www.granvilleisland.com/en/island\\_experience](http://www.granvilleisland.com/en/island_experience)> (February 13, 2007).

<sup>78</sup> City of Vancouver. "Granville Island Reference Document." Policy Report: Urban Structures.

<<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/000713/pe3.htm>> (February 13, 2007).

<sup>79</sup> Geller.

<sup>80</sup> "Welcome to Island Insight" Island Insight. <[http://granvilleisland.com/island\\_insight/home.html](http://granvilleisland.com/island_insight/home.html)> (February 13, 2007).

<sup>81</sup> Hotson.



The success of Granville Island is attributable to a number of factors, from design, to management, to the mix of land uses. The aspect that underlies these all was the vision to create an environment that possessed characteristics that were unavailable anywhere else in the city. In Vancouver, that meant access to a public market, a place for artists, families, children, tourists to congregate, and a place that was reminiscent of Vancouver's industrial past. Preservation was not a common practice in Vancouver at this time, so this project was innovative and unprecedented. Although the buildings are not frozen in time and interpreted with the utmost honesty, they convey an image of the city's past. They do not attempt to recreate it, only subconsciously remind. The buildings are small scale and comfortable, and yield a dense clustering of diverse uses. The Island draws people in, aided by a certain curiosity, and gives them a special, if nostalgic, experience. One can visit as often or as infrequently as one wishes, for it is a destination, not an area through which one passes. It is a place unto itself.

This appealing aesthetic that creates a strong, unmistakable identity of place could only be a result of a comprehensive, well-designed and executed plan. The preservation of form and memory, and the foresight of the urban designers responsible for its inclusion, is what makes Granville Island the admired place it is today. The leadership of the Canadian government, and its continued involvement, also color the project. Only a governmental body, with its ability to intervene outside of the constraints of the market, could develop a project in this manner. The patient tenant selection, unshakable

development principles, and favorable leasing agreements would likely be unfeasible and impractical for a private developer to support, either in the 1970s or the 2000s. This is not a vindication, but a fact. Granville Island is a success because of the medley of visionary urban design, responsible governmental intervention, and long-term management.



**Figure 1:** Granville Island, 1922.



**Figure 2:** Granville Island from Granville Bridge, 2006.



**Figure 3:** Granville Island, Public Market.



**Figure 4:** Granville Island, pavings and curbs under Granville Bridge.





**Figure 5:** Differing scales, evident under Granville Bridge.



**Figure 6:** Industrial artifacts remain in buildings like Public Market.

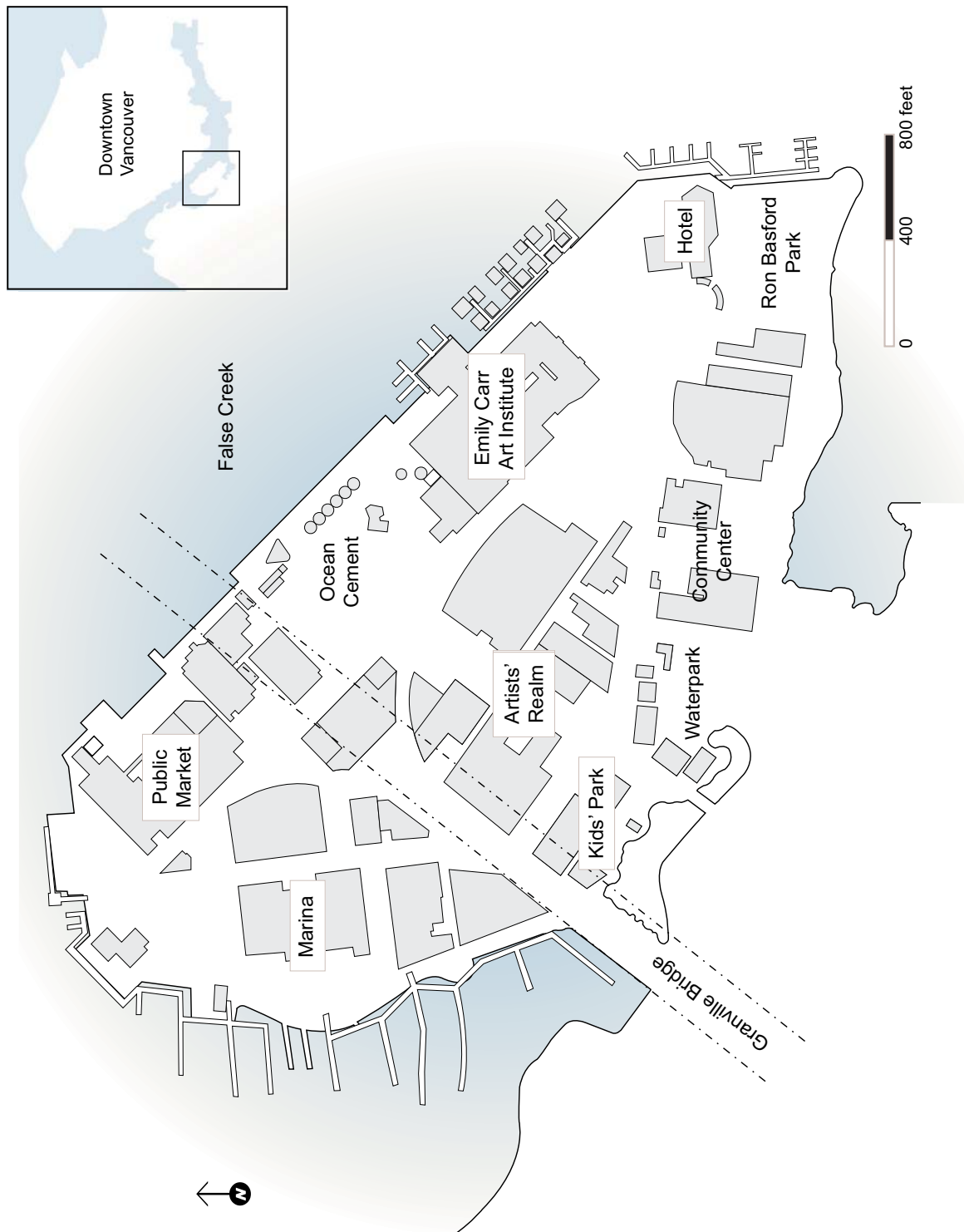


**Figure 7:** Granville Island plan option showing mixed uses.



**Figure 8:** Granville Island streetscaping plan.





**Figure 9:** Granville Island site plan.

## **5. The Charlestown Navy Yard, Boston, Massachusetts**

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### **Overview**

The Charlestown Navy Yard, also known as the Boston Naval Shipyard, is a former federal naval yard turned mixed-use development in downtown Boston. Lying on the north side of Boston Harbor, the site is most well-known as the final resting place of the *USS Constitution*, a ship of Revolutionary War fame that was built and repaired at the shipyard during its heyday. This landmark is the last stop on the Freedom Trail, Boston's arterial footpath for all things historic, and includes a national museum on naval history. Although this site attracts over a million visitors per year, what most visitors do not realize is that these attractions comprise only a fraction of the historical footprint of the Navy Yard. The majority lies beyond the well-barricaded National Park Service gates, and is a separate site not only by ownership, but by its different approach to the preservation of naval heritage. The parcel is owned and managed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), a quasi-public local agency that handles planning and economic development for the city. The preservation strategy on this end is adaptive reuse, and encouraging of new uses for the old naval buildings, but with guidelines to ensure that their historic integrity is not lost. Regulations derived from an agreement



between the city and the United States government direct developers to maintain the image and significance of the site's naval heritage, while allowing new uses that will allow the buildings to be economically viable, and thereby retained. One of the only sites in the country to be managed in this way, the Charlestown Navy Yard provides many lessons for redevelopment, especially pertaining to the delicate balance between promoting preservation and precluding development opportunity.

## **History**

The Charlestown Navy Yard is located on the north side of the Boston Harbor in Downtown Boston. Though separated by water, it is situated directly across from downtown, in view of the historic and popular North End, and in sight of the central business district. To the north is Charlestown, the residential neighborhood from which the site derives its name, and the Bunker Hill historic site. The Charlestown Navy Yard is actually the name given to the site in its second, post-redevelopment life. It was historically the Boston Naval Shipyard, one of the primary manufacturing and repair facilities for the United States Navy.

The Navy Yard was started at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Buildings were built on a need basis in order to provide the appropriate services the Navy required at that time. The first shiphouse was built in 1813, which enabled ships to be built

indoors for the first time, therefore year round. One building of note that remains from this time period is the Commandant's House from 1809.<sup>82</sup>

By the 1830s, the Navy Yard began to take on a distinct character and form. In 1826, Alexander Parris, a prominent architect practicing in Boston at the time (also responsible for Quincy Market), built several buildings on the western edge of the site. His architectural style of the oblong granite ashlar building is an iconic image associated with Boston during this time. Parris' rectilinear buildings came to inform the first plan for the Navy Yard, completed by Colonel Loammi Baldwin in 1830. The plan was for an industrial complex with five avenues laid out on a grid, creating rectilinear parcels for buildings that would face each other along this dominant street grid. This plan, and adherence to the grid, lasted through the evolution of the Yard, and is still intact. The only building that lies at an angle is the quarter-mile long Ropewalk building, located at the north end of the site parallel to the access road. The growth of the Yard expanded eastward, and Parris continued to contribute to the site, completing several more buildings up through the 1850s. The shipyard continued to be a frontrunner in naval technology, as the second Dry Dock in the nation was built there in 1833.<sup>83</sup>

Production at the shipyard surged during the American Civil War, as many local Bostonians worked to make craft new ships for battle, and repair even more. After the

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<sup>82</sup> Leslie Larson. "History of the Charlestown Navy Yard." In Boston Redevelopment Authority. Charlestown Navy Yard: Master Plan for the Yard's End. (Boston: BRA, October 1990) 3.

<sup>83</sup> Larson 4.

war, the yard was used primarily for the repair of ships. At the turn of the century, an extensive building program completed several large brick basilica-type buildings on the eastern end of the Yard, employing the highest technological advances of the time. As production at the Yard came in waves corresponding to the country's engagement in warfare, it shot up in World War I and the number of employees rose to 10,000. In 1926, the yard saw another milestone with the invention and production, of , which would become the standard of chain used in many industries.<sup>84</sup>

Production surged again during World War II, and employment at the Navy Yard reached its peak of 50,000 to match this demand. As shipbuilding came to an end after the war, however, the production levels would permanently decrease. The Yard continued to make advances in the production of naval equipment, especially in its continued production of rope, but that also began to decline in the 1950s. Jobs were cut as a response. Only several thousand were employed at the Yard in the 1970s. This did not lessen the blow, however, when the United States government, under the administration of President Nixon, announced plans to close the Boston's Navy Yard in 1973. The site was officially decommissioned in 1974, ending jobs for 5200, and leaving a 130 acre parcel of land vacant and obsolete.

Sentiments were mixed regarding the fate of the shipyard. While it resulted in the loss of many jobs, many Charlestown residents had found its presence a nuisance, an

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<sup>84</sup> Larson 5.

eyesore, and a restriction. It was disconnected from its surroundings by a granite wall, and separated the neighborhoods from the waterfront. Chelsea Street, the access road, was a dismal underpass, and did not help contribute to a feeling of conviviality. Some Bostonians saw the closure as a way to reclaim the waterfront land.<sup>85</sup>

The City of Boston also viewed the closure in an opportunistic light. City officials began looking at possible new uses for the harborfront land in 1968 when the federal government decided not to upgrade the Boston Navy Shipyard. Anticipating that it would be closed, the city did a reuse study, citing industrial, residential, and historical uses as ideal for the site. At the time of the study, the entirety of the Yard, and some individual buildings, had recently been placed on the National Register for Historic Places, a newly-established protection applied as a result of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The Act had been created as a reaction to the loss of some historically significant buildings in an era of unchecked, market-driven development and urban renewal. As a result, the buildings within the shipyard would have to undergo federal scrutiny if any changes were to be proposed.<sup>86</sup>

The shipyard was officially closed in 1974, but it took several years to arrange for a new landholder for the property and determine its suitable use. As the federal government was still the owner, it was obligated to use this uniquely situated piece of real

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<sup>85</sup> Catherine A. Hill. The Political Economy of Military Base Redevelopment: An Evaluation of Four Converted Naval Bases. PhD diss., Rutgers University Department of Urban Planning and Policy Development. (1998). 205-212.

<sup>86</sup> David L.A. Gordon. "Implementing Urban Waterfront Redevelopment in an Historic Context: A Case Study of the Boston Naval Shipyard." Ocean and Coastal Management .42. (1999). 913.

estate for the “highest and best use” possible, reaping the greatest public good and opportunities for local gain. The 1977 plan for the Yard divided it into four distinct ownership parcels, each with particular instructions. The first parcel, 13 acres and furthest to the East, included the *USS Constitution* and the most significant buildings. It would be managed by the National Park Service. This transaction took place immediately after the Yard was closed. The second parcel, 16 acres in size, just west of the most historic site and fronting on the harbor, was the parcel for public space. This was conveyed to the city of Boston for \$1 under the condition that it would be a place for public open space and enjoyment. The third 30 acre parcel was the Historic Monument Area, also given to the city of Boston for \$1. It carried the stipulation that design guidelines would guide private developers to reuse historically significant buildings. These guidelines would be created by the BRA, but approved by the National Park Service. The remainder of the Navy Yard, a total of 56 acres, was sold to the city of Boston for \$1.7 million. The BRA would also manage and lease this land, using design guidelines here as well so that privately developed buildings would conform and contribute to the character of naval heritage on the site. This area was known as the New Development Area, or the Buy Parcel.<sup>87</sup>

These four parcels, known collectively as the Charlestown Navy Yard, would define a new life for the shipyard area. The federal government, and likewise the BRA, had little experience with comprehensive redevelopment of this type. Historic

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<sup>87</sup> Gordon (1999). 217-223.

preservation had previously been done in a univalent manner, preserving buildings in time, according to their original use. Federal redevelopment had typically been large in scale, and characterized by land clearance and monolithic new developments. Melding the two into one by means of a layered approach to preservation standards, would prove to be an arduous and enduring task. As a result, the story of the Charlestown Navy Yard would reveal many successes and failures, and lessons for future applications of a similar model.

The land exchange that created the Charlestown Navy Yard was propelled by the distinct motives of the two involved parties. The proprietor, the United States government, was the owner of acres of obsolete buildings and land whose use was no longer needed, so it was unwanted. However, as the overseers of the people and their history, with the obligation to act in the public interest, the proprietor had to ensure that history of the place was preserved. In order to rid themselves of the unwanted land, but protect the buildings that sat upon it, they had to find a buyer willing to take on this charge.

As the planning and economic development agency of the City of Boston, the BRA saw the Navy Yard as a large developable tract of land adjacent to downtown. For the previous two hundred years, the public did not have access to this area. The idea of opening it up for development, capitalizing upon its waterfront access and views, and the income and tax base that it could create, was quite attractive. Coincidentally, in the mid

1970s, Boston was in a financial crisis. Their trusted way of receiving redevelopment funding was the federal government's urban renewal program, which gave city agencies direct funding. Boston was renowned for their ability to acquire federal dollars for redevelopment. Urban renewal was crumbling, and was eventually replaced by more discretionary grants like the Community Development Block Grant and Urban Development Action Grants at the end of the 1970s.<sup>88</sup> This reduced the capacity of redevelopment agencies nationwide by making them provide more of their own funds, whereas before they had been given federal money for free.<sup>89</sup> The public conveyance of the Navy Yard land was a grant, so it gave the city of Boston a great asset for free. It was simultaneously a burden, though in that it placed the responsibility of acquiring funding for all area improvements once ownership was theirs.

Additionally, this project came at the peak of a wave of preservation legislation. The late 1960s produced the National Historic Preservation Act, which as previously noted, resulted in the mass-designation of thousands of sites around the country. Then in 1976, the national Tax Reform Act gave developers a new incentive for using preservation in redevelopment. This incentive, the historic preservation tax credit, allowed developers to receive a credit against any capital expenditure that was used for preservation on a building. Before the tax credit was eventually scaled back in 1986,

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<sup>88</sup> Gordon (1999) 213.

<sup>89</sup> Lynne B. Sagalyn. "Public Development: Using Land as a Capital Resource." Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Working Papers. Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and A. Alfred Taubman Center for State and Local Government, John F. Kennedy School of Government. Cambridge: Harvard University. (1992). 8.

developers could receive up to 30% of their rehabilitation expenditures back as a direct, pre-tax credit. This was a significant amount, which could make the difference between a feasible and infeasible project, and in some cases make preservation the more economic option! This was a major, progressive move by the federal government that opened the door for a wide variety of projects. This legislation would impact the built environment of cities, as large-scale redevelopment could come to include preservation rather than clearance. With its great inventory of historic buildings, Boston was primed to test the program's potential.<sup>90</sup>

## **Preservation & Placemaking with a Hierarchy**

### **a. Urban Design**

The conveyance of parcels was determined by the federal government based on the preservation and design objectives for the site. As noted previously, a portion of the Navy Yard was given to the National Park Service. These included the oldest and most historically significant buildings and elements of the Yard, and the *USS Constitution*, which was located in port. The placement under federal management was the strictest form of preservation assigned to any portion of the park. The remainder was given to the BRA in three pieces by public conveyance. Each piece came with a Memorandum of

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<sup>90</sup> Carolyn Ellis Cheverine and Charlotte Mariah Hayes. "Rehabilitation Tax Credit: Does it Still Provide Incentives?" Virginia Tax Review 10. (1990). 167-214.



Agreement, providing for concessions like preservation or open space. It was through these agreements that the federal government was able to preserve the remainder of the Yard, but with slightly less rigor, commensurate with the significance of the buildings. The level of documentation and scrutiny required to accomplish the preservation strategy at the Navy Yard demonstrates the difficulty with which this result was achieved. The following documents will be explained in the order that they occurred, so as to express the extensive planning, time and labor required.

The first Memorandum of Agreement was for the sixteen acres that would become Shipyard Park. This required an agreement between the BRA, the federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, the Department of the Interior, the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an arm representing the federal preservation interest. The parcel was sold to the BRA for \$1 with the stipulation that it would be developed as a public park for recreation and enjoyment by all. Because the site was within an historic landmark, and it was federally owned, it had to submit to a Section 106 evaluation conducted by the Massachusetts SHPO to make sure that it would not jeopardize or disturb the historic asset.<sup>91</sup> The demolition of one structure was approved in this transaction, as it was determined that the building did not substantially contribute to the character of the Yard and the public good of creating a recreational space outweighed that of the value of the building. The

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<sup>91</sup> Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that all federally owned properties are reviewed by their state SHPO to ensure they are not disrupting items of historic significance before any building is completed.

memorandum additionally required that all final plans and landscaping for the site be submitted to the Massachusetts SHPO before any improvements occurred. Here, the federal government ensured the inclusion of public space, a recognized public good, by requiring the local authority to build and finance the project. It gave the state the responsibility to ensure that the design was historically unobtrusive.<sup>92</sup> The inclusion of recreation space would also raise the value of the rest of the parcel by providing an attractive amenity, and would give people a reason to go there.

The second agreement was between the General Service Administration, the BRA, the Massachusetts SHPO, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for the transfer of what would become the Historic Monument Area. This 30 acre parcel would be transferred for \$1 also, under the condition that the buildings would be adaptively reused according to strict guidelines. The guidelines would be created by the BRA, but approved by the Advisory Council, in a document called the Program for Preservation and Utilization. This Program would effectively “mitigate any adverse effect” on the historically designated property, as determined by the state.<sup>93</sup> This parcel included those buildings that were notable for their material or typology, and their

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<sup>92</sup> Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Memorandum of Agreement. Boston Naval Shipyard. (Washington, D.C: February 1977).

<sup>93</sup> Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Memorandum of Agreement. Boston Naval Shipyard. (Washington, D.C: October 1977).

preservation required that they mutually coexistence. This parcel was given the second highest level of regulation, in that it required preservation, but expected reuse.<sup>94</sup>

The third parcel came with another Memorandum of Agreement. It did not require absolute preservation; and involved a purchase by the BRA of \$1.7 million. The contract attached to this 58 acre parcel was that all restoration, rehabilitation, demolition, and new construction had to conform to Design Guidelines, created by the BRA, and approved by the Massachusetts SHPO. Maximizing its development potential by allowing new construction outweighed the benefit of preserving less significant buildings. Instead, the strategy was to use guidelines to yield buildings of like materials and scale that would holistically convey a cohesive image. This was the least restrictive level of regulation at work on the Navy Yard, but still had the objective of preservation.<sup>95</sup>

By 1978 the BRA acquired the entirety of their portion of the Charlestown Navy Yard and could begin to redevelop the land according to their mission. In order to do so, though, first they crafted the Program for Preservation and Utilization (PPU) to guide development in the Historic Monument Area (HMA) and the Design Guidelines for buildings in the New Development Parcel (NDP). They then attracted and selected developers for the buildings and parcels therein. The language of the objective was shared between the PPU and the Design Guidelines:

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<sup>94</sup> Two buildings within the Historic Monument Area had additional stipulations: the Ropewalk and Chain Forge buildings. They had to retain the internal structure or internal machinery, respectively, in addition to their exteriors.

<sup>95</sup> Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Memorandum of Agreement. Boston Naval Shipyard. (Washington, D.C: June 1978).

*To maximize conservation of the historic and architectural character of the site while maximizing the reuse potential of the buildings in the Shipyard for economically viable purposes.*

Additionally, the documents stated that it was their intent to “not recreate the impression of earlier times, nor expunge all evidence of the area’s industrial past.” In this statement, it is made clear that the guidelines sought innovative, modern design, but within the constructs of a contextually sensitive design approach.<sup>96</sup>

The PPU explained the overall redevelopment objective, the criteria for significance, the design approach, and a detailed account for each of the twenty-one buildings within the HMA. These buildings were significant because of their history or notable architecture, and because they contributed to a “cohesive urban environment,” enhanced by the prevailing street system and “industrial accoutrement.”<sup>97</sup> Most of the buildings were to be rehabilitated, while two called for complete preservation. This treatment was applied to the Ropewalk and the Chain Forge building. This treatment was necessary because these buildings were significant not only in architecture, but in their advancement in technology, represented by their interior structures. As they were located within the HMA, however, the responsibility of maintaining and interpreting these qualities were to be imparted upon a private developer or done by the BRA.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Memorandum of Agreement. Boston Naval Shipyard. (Washington, D.C: June 1978). 10-12.

<sup>97</sup> Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. (June 1978) 10.

<sup>98</sup> Though the PPU was drafted by the BRA, the Advisory Council had to approve it. The treatment of these 2 buildings was a point of conflict in the negotiations, and the BRA decided to defer to the Council in order to expedite the document’s approval, and the ability to begin redevelopment.

In the New Development Area, the BRA's Design Guidelines dictated that buildings could be preserved, but new construction was acceptable. Buildings were to match historical precedence and the overall character of the site. Building designs would consider height, massing, materials, sun and shade. These elements were itemized to lead architects to create buildings that would evoke the historic qualities of the navy yard.<sup>99</sup> Overall, however, the plan put much less attention on the new development building than on those in the HMA.

These urban design components were a central part of the first plan for the Charlestown Navy Yard, completed in 1978. The plan also contained a plan for streets, easements, the park, and zoning and land uses. The plan was reflective of the current trends in planning and preservation, and was also a reminder of the jobs that were lost by the Yard's closure. The plan was an exciting step for Boston. It was "an opportunity to recycle a dramatic and dormant industrial area into a vibrant and attractive place to live, work, and play." Nowhere else in the city did the BRA have the opportunity to redevelop a large parcel of land in this manner. Most redevelopments began with a clean slate, and although that often made development easier, the opportunity to capitalize upon the historic character that came with the Navy Yard was appealing. Other successful projects in Boston, namely Quincy Market, had recently proven that history and character could sell. It could work for retail, but it had not been tested for a live/work district like the plan was proposing.

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<sup>99</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Design Guidelines for the Charlestown Navy Yard. (1978).

**b. Land Uses**

The BRA dictated land uses for the Navy Yard meant to shape the type of environment that would fill its footprint. The proposed uses would change a number of times to respond to the market demands, and to attempt to steer the development of the CNY in different directions. Although the BRA and developers could decide what type of tenant would fill the space at any point in time, the land uses were officially changed through plans. The first plan was in 1978, followed by an updated plan in 1990. The years 1984 and 1991 were each a turning point for the development of the CNY because of a change in mayor and the loss of a major proposed anchor tenant. After 1991, the BRA reacted to this change and instead guided the development of the Yard to reflect the changing environment of Boston's market demands and political dispositions. A waterfront plan was completed in 2006, but it has not yet been implemented. The following section will describe these three planning stages, the events surrounding them, and the development reaction. Ultimately the market and the behavior of individual developers had the most impact on the land uses on the site, not the design of the buildings.

**Performance Fluctuations of the Navy Yard****Phase I: 1979-1991**

The 1978 plan included housing, mixed-use, institutional, hotel and conference center, and light industrial. At the time, however, the City of Boston, and especially the adjoining Charlestown neighborhood, had just lost 5000 jobs, and residents were anxious to see what the city was going to do about it. As the waterfront in the 1970s was still associated with employment, it was expected that a different industry would replace the industry that had left. The largest buildings of most modern construction, Building 149 and 199, were zoned industrial. Early attempts to attract a ship repair company to the site failed, but the city still included this item in order to placate any restless workers and allay neighborhood tensions.<sup>100</sup>

While the National Park Service had immediately begun work on their Boston Naval Historical Park in 1975, the city-owned parcel took more time to get underway. In addition to the great amount of negotiation and planning required, the city also had to update infrastructure, create a street and access strategy, perform site clearance, and ready the site for developers. Most of all, though, the BRA had to change the image of the site. Viewed as a derelict industrial setting, the agency had to convince potential residents and tenants that it was a place suitable for business and living. Much of this alteration came in the form of public investment.<sup>101</sup>

In addition to the improvement of infrastructure, the creation of Shipyard Park for the public space parcel was a first agenda item. This development would serve as a

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<sup>100</sup> Hill 213, 226-27.

<sup>101</sup> Gordon (1999). .916.

catalyst to demonstrate the changes that were taking place, and hopefully spur subsequent interest. Although the site had been attained for free, the BRA had to come up with the funding for this project themselves. This was especially challenging because the BRA usually used urban renewal funding for these types of projects, and because the BRA was financially independent of the mayor's office and could therefore not issue bonds.<sup>102</sup> The agency was able to secure \$11 million in funding, though, to create Shipyard Park and other public areas like the pedestrianization of Second Avenue. The agency was able to procure Urban Development Action Grants from the federal government for some of the street improvements and circulation on the site.<sup>103</sup>

The next challenge for redevelopment was finding private developers. This was particularly challenging given Boston's real estate market at the time. Development was virtually at a standstill in the late 1970s and the downtown office vacancy rate was 12%. Developers were barely interested in downtown at all, not to mention a risky waterfront project that was still largely characterized by gritty, vacant buildings. The BRA tried desperately to get investors, eventually getting a surprise bid by Italian developer Societie Immobiliare Generale. When they entered the equation, the BRA had not actually acquired the New Development Area. Due to the financial situation of the BRA at this time, they needed this private investment in order to pay the \$1.7 million price of the parcel. In turn, the developer actually loaned them the \$1.7 million, and were granted

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<sup>102</sup> David L.A. Gordon. "Financing Urban Waterfront Redevelopment." Journal of the American Planning Association 63. no. 2 (1997): 248.

<sup>103</sup> Gordon (1999). 916-17.



sole development rights for the whole NDA parcel. Additionally, they were given a property tax abatement for fifteen years.<sup>104</sup> They would therefore be the master developers for the NDA, which was a frequently-used tactic for redevelopment projects.<sup>105</sup> A cautious developer, Immobiliare was responsible for the development of just one residential project, Constitution Quarters, by 1980. Developments all focused on housing for the elite, given the waterfront views that their residences offered. Immobiliare was successful in attracting this demographic, especially when they started making use of the piers. They built marinas on Piers 4 and 5 in the early 1980s, which were very successful due to the lack of marina space in downtown Boston. This gave the developer financing for subsequent projects, but very much changed the character of the Yard as a place for luxury leisure and expensive homes, not the job creator that some had envisioned during the planning process.<sup>106</sup>

In the Historic Monument Area, the developer approach was more incremental and carefully executed. The BRA used an RFP process so that they could choose the most suitable developers for the desired projects. Individual developers would move independently and at their own pace, so that multiple projects could be developed simultaneously. The first RFPs were issued in 1980, but response was slow, and tenants were slow to fill the buildings. Some of the first tenants were other municipal agencies like the water company, brought by the mayor's clout, and the BRA itself. Development

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<sup>104</sup> Hill 222.

<sup>105</sup> Gordon (1997). 250.

<sup>106</sup> Hill 223.

lagged because builders and tenants were unable to visualize a feasible business environment in an old, abandoned shipyard. The BRA had to use their own tenancy to prove its worth.<sup>107</sup> The buildings that were occupied first in the HMA, were those that had the most favorable shape and required the least amount of rehabilitation expenses. By the mid-1980s, the two largest buildings, Buildings 149 and 199, were still vacant, as were the Ropewalk and the Chain Forge, the buildings with the highest level of preservation required by the PPU agreement.

### **Phase II: 1984-1991**

Over the years that it has taken the Charlestown Navy Yard to be developed, several political shifts proved to be stumbling blocks in the process. The first of these occurred in 1983, when Raymond Flynn became mayor of Boston, bringing with him a populist agenda. At the CNY, this translated into more affordable housing, public access to the waterfront, citizen participation, and more job creation. He appointed Stephen Coyle as the head of the BRA in 1984, who increased the affordable housing quota from 10 to 25% for each development. He also implemented a linkage program which would use a percentage of developments' capital budget to provide offsite affordable housing

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<sup>107</sup> Paul Barrett. Former director of BRA, 1989-1994. Personal interview. March 8, 2007.

and job training offsite.<sup>108</sup> This addendum made developing on the CNY even less attractive than it had been previously.

Additionally, the citizen participation piece of Flynn's agenda had a substantial impact on the performance of the Yard. With each project, the community had to give its seal of approval, which is never an easy task. The community still wondered where the jobs were, and where the housing was for Charlestown's working class residents. At this point, the CNY had only provided benefits for upper class residents and office workers, aside from a few construction jobs. All subsequent projects would be slowed by this clause.<sup>109</sup>

In 1979, the State of Massachusetts passed a law, Chapter 91, that waterfront access would be maintained for public use. As soon as Mayor Flynn took office, he initiated a city-wide plan for waterfront access, which would become the Harborpark Plan of 1984. This resulted in additional development guidelines for the Yard. Buildings on piers had a mandatory twelve foot setback and a thirty-five foot setback was required of all other waterfront properties. Not only did this force the BRA to change their development guidelines for the Navy Yard, but some development proposals were already underway that were non-conforming.<sup>110</sup> This launched the developer into a problem with the State. In 1986, the state of Massachusetts actually sued Immobiliare for

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<sup>108</sup> Hill 228.

<sup>109</sup> Gordon (1997) 253.

<sup>110</sup> Hill 233.

a deprivation of public access in their Constellation Wharf condos on Pier 7.<sup>111</sup> Their exaction in this case was to provide an easement at the end of the pier to provide a small public area (instead of several condos), and pay for the creation of an additional public amenities elsewhere on the Yard. Clearly, this act did not help the already lukewarm development attitude towards the Navy Yard.

Happily, around 1984, the biggest real estate boom in Boston's history was picking up steam, especially in housing. The shift in the market was so great that developers actually began to pursue the BRA. The biggest impact of this upturn was the arrival of the Raymond Group, an aggressive local development company that bought out Immobiliare. The Italian company had missed several key market opportunities because they relied on the profits from one project to finance the next. As master developers, they had completed only a few visible projects before they were bought out in 1986. The Raymond Group took over their projects, and tried to reposition the buildings that were underway, but eventually missed the market as well.<sup>112</sup>

The aggressive nature of the Raymond Group brought in the anchor tenant that the Navy Yard desperately needed, Massachusetts General Hospital. In addition to buying out Immobiliare, they also bought out the developer of Buildings 149 and 199 in the HMA, which were the site's largest and most modern industrial buildings. Raymond then owned the majority of buildings on the Yard and repositioned them for biomedical

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<sup>111</sup> Gordon (1997). 260, David Carlson. Senior Architect, Boston Redevelopment Authority. Personal interview. March 8, 2007.

<sup>112</sup> Gordon (1999) 921.

research, a growing industry in the city. They secured Massachusetts General Hospital as the tenant for 600,000 square foot Building 149 as a biomedical research facility. They decided to tenant 199 as well, so in one deal the developer created a critical clustering of biomedical space.<sup>113</sup> This was a critical event for the Yard.

The mid-1980s were an overall prosperous time for the Charlestown Navy Yard. Besides the shakiness of Immobiliare, and the impact of Mass General, development of housing and modest office space in both the New Development Area and the Historic Monument Area were achieved. The Kenney Development Company leased the four granite buildings on the Second Avenue pedestrian mall for office.<sup>114</sup> The granite buildings lent themselves easily to office retrofitting. The brick basilica-style buildings were most suitable for residential conversion, and many of these were developed and tenanted by 1987.

Although the developers played a strong role in the progression of the site during these years, the actions of the BRA still had a significant impact on the performance of the site. Two in-house deals made them miss the market from the leasing agency standpoint. When the market was good in the mid-1980s, they feared that their design guidelines in the New Development Area were too restrictive. To seek higher tax revenue for the city, they tried to negotiate a density increase. This required them to reissue their urban design guidelines, which took months of negotiation. Additionally, the

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<sup>113</sup> Hill 230.

<sup>114</sup> Laura C. Smith. "Laying a New Course: A mixed-use plaza adds vitality to a transformed Boston Shipyard." Historic Preservation 43. n. 2. March-April 1991: 55-57.

neighborhood groups became engaged at this point, and were displeased with the idea of increased density. The BRA was therefore stalled in community meetings as well. In attempting to capitalize on the chance of a higher profit, they held up their own ability to develop the site.<sup>115</sup>

Another potential deal gave the agency reason to revise the Charlestown Navy Yard plan. Around the same time, the New England Aquarium began thinking of moving outside of their tight downtown location into an expanded site on Yard's End, the western portion of the Navy Yard. The aquarium began negotiating with the city for use of this site, but it required the BRA to redo the plan for the Navy Yard in light of this large and unique tenant. It would require revised traffic and access plans, rezoning, and a reconfiguration of land uses. The BRA was enthusiastic to accept such a high profile tenant. The Aquarium would create an opportunity to create a tourism loop with the *USS Constitution*, which could activate the entirety of the site.<sup>116</sup> It would draw activity on the nights and weekends, complementing the existing weekday tenants. It would amount to more retail and commercial space. Most importantly, though, it would finally remake the image of the Navy Yard into a place of culture and recreation, which no tenant or developer could resist. It would finally complete the vision, and within the decade.

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<sup>115</sup> Gordon (1997) 260.

<sup>116</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Charlestown Navy Yard: Master Plan for the Yard's End. (Boston: BRA, October 1990). 31.

Including the aquarium's plans, the BRA issued a new plan for the Charlestown Navy Yard in 1990, called *Master Plan for the Yard's End*. To match this plan, they had to revise the Design Guidelines for the New Development Area. Redeveloping Yard's End was the next big piece to tackle, as most of the HMA, and the centrally-located NDA, had tenants. Another purpose of this plan was to officially change the land use strategy for the site. Some of the land uses, mainly institutional and light industrial, had not come to the Yard, and were not anticipated in the future. Light industrial was effectively replaced by biomedical research, and new tenants were expected to fill buildings adjacent to the Mass General site. Proposed land use strategies now included more affordable and elderly housing, public amenities, managed growth that addressed all users' visions, and a diversity of economic base.<sup>117</sup> In addition to the aquarium, a hotel and conference was planned, along with more medical research and marine research space to complement the aquarium, and more retail and parking to address these needs. All this was projected to occur so that by 2000, the Charlestown Navy Yard would be complete. The plan anticipated 3500 permanent jobs, 3400 construction jobs, \$1 million in job linkage, \$6 million in housing linkage, and \$9 million in property taxes. When complete, it would be applauded as a model waterfront development.<sup>118</sup>

Historic preservation was still at the core of the development model. The plan underscored its role in creating a distinguished urban environment conveying the greatest

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<sup>117</sup> BRA (1990). 21-22.

<sup>118</sup> BRA (1990) 23-30.

public benefit, and attracting investment.<sup>119</sup> The Design Guidelines were similar to those that were originally drafted in 1978, but were updated so that they worked in tandem with the new 1990 Navy Yard Plan. The new NDA Design Guidelines were stated that they would emphasize historic preservation in the sense that they would protect the blocks and street patterns of the former naval layout. The only major changes were an increase in allowable building height in some parcels, permitted uses, and roof mechanical equipment.<sup>120</sup> In order to facilitate access to the Yard's End site, however, the BRA had to negotiate for a portion of Building 114, at the westernmost portion of the HMA, to be removed. This required intense negotiations with the National Park Service, but eventually it was determined that the economic necessity of the increased access created by the proposed Gate 6 outweighed the loss of a piece of the building, which would otherwise be retained.<sup>121</sup>

The new plan took nearly almost four years to negotiate, once all of the correct agencies and stakeholder groups gave their approval. By the end of 1990, the future of the Navy Yard was bright. The following year, however, the New England Aquarium decided that it would not to relocate to the site.<sup>122</sup> Despite all of the plans and negotiations that their intention had generated, they never signed a contract, and were not faulted in the slightest for this move. On the other hand, the BRA wasted years of work

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<sup>119</sup> BRA (1990) 16.

<sup>120</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Design Guidelines for the New Development Area. (Boston: BRA, October 1990).

<sup>121</sup> BRA (1990) 65, Alisa McCann. National Park Service. Personal interview. March 5 2007.

<sup>122</sup> Gordon (1997). 260.



and administrative maneuvering to prepare for their move. They literally built their new planning strategy around this anchor. When the aquarium withdrew, the Yard was left with a void larger than it had ever been before.<sup>123</sup>

### **Phase III: 1991 - 2007**

In the years since the 1991 blow, development at the Navy Yard has been slow, but not stagnant. Thomas Menino became mayor in 1993, and his sights have largely been focused on economic development in South Boston. The Mass General anchor has kept some activity at its end, and the public spaces throughout the Yard are well-used during the summer. An upgrade to Shipyard Park, with a new playground, was completed in 2002. Rehabilitation projects have continued in the Historic Monument Area. Once its wing was removed to widen Gate 6, Building 114 was converted into commercial space for Mass General and won a preservation design award in 2002. Building 75 (adjacent to Building 149) was converted into biomedical space, while remaining basilica-style buildings were converted into affordable and elderly housing. Two residential projects are currently underway, including a large marina-front residential complex called HarborView, and a small condo residential project along the Second Avenue promenade. The housing market is strong again in Boston, which allows for these projects to be feasible. However, HarborView, under construction this year, has been in development

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<sup>123</sup> Barrett.

since the early 2000s, negotiating access and affordable housing quotas, and deliberations with neighborhood groups about waterfront view obstructions. This project is unique in that it will have ground-floor retail, which will create a more lively street environment than past residential developments at the Yard.<sup>124</sup> As stewards of the Navy Yard, the BRA continues to keep a watchful eye on the development proposals and their adherence to the guidelines.

In 2004, the BRA transferred parcels 6 and 7 at Yard's End to Partners HealthCare with the intention of developing health care facilities to complement those of Mass General. This was spearheaded by Mayor Menino, who backed the move with plans for 1000 new jobs.<sup>125</sup> In August of 2005, Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital announced their intents to move to Parcel 6, building a rehabilitation facility, research and conference space, an aquatics center, parking, and public space.<sup>126</sup> This was a pleasing announcement for the BRA, who had not been able to find a developer for the parcel since the aquarium disappointment. Plans for Spaulding Hospital are still active, but after two years, the land is still empty, reflecting the slow progression of the entire Navy Yard development.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> "Contested Navy Yard residential project nears final approval". Boston Business Journal. 28 August 2003.

<sup>125</sup> "Mayor Menino Makes Way for More Jobs at the Charlestown Navy Yard." Press Releases. 5 August 2004. <<http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra/press/PressDisplay.asp?pressID=235>> (March 20, 2007).

<sup>126</sup> "Spaulding Rehab to relocate to \$100M facility in Navy Yard." Boston Business Journal. 10 August 2005.

<sup>127</sup> David Carlson. Email correspondence. March 20, 2007.

**Management & Financing, Programming**

Although the development of the Charlestown Navy Yard has seen its share of glories, and defeats, it functions well in its current role. Its primary critique is the amount of time that it has taken to complete the redevelopment. The project was originally projected to be finished by 1990. When it was replanned to include the aquarium, that year was pushed back to 2000. In the year of this publication, there are two vacant buildings remaining in the HMA and several vacant parcels in the NDA, suggesting that the site has a long way to go. The timeline aside, however, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and the United States government, has accomplished its goal of retaining a cohesive urban place complete with high standards of preservation. Most of the upsets in the project were the result of management, politics and missed opportunities. The preservation component has been critiqued by some, but only in that it was in excess, not that it was inappropriate in premise. Conversely, it is argued that preservation and design guidelines, as upholding a public good and creating a unique environment, are most responsible for making the Charlestown Navy Yard a successful waterfront redevelopment.

The role of the BRA as the leader of the CNY redevelopment was a strong determinant of its execution. As the local redevelopment authority, it had various funding and management mechanisms at its disposal, but it was also limited by many responsibilities. Through the public conveyance option, the federal government was able

to transfer land to the government agency for free. The recipient public agency, though, was then responsible for redeveloping it with its own procurement of funds, was unable to sell it, and had to uphold a public good. The land could be revoked from the agency, or exactions given, if they did not meet said public good. The BRA, then, was in a tight spot from the beginning, as they were given a burdensome asset with the charge of finding enough funds to develop it according to rules of conveyance.

The BRA's hands were also tied by its many public agendas, and their fluctuation. The project began under the mayoral administration of Kevin White, following by Raymond Flynn, and then Thomas Menino. All three of these mayors had different priorities while in office, especially in regards to community concerns and economic development. These were all manifested in the Yard, from affordable housing, to community engagement, to job creation. State agendas had an impact as well, the most telling of these being the Chapter 91 decision for public access to the waterfront. As the BRA was a quasi-public agency under the mayor's control, it had to play well through all of these cycles. Additionally, the BRA had to be responsible for the entire City of Boston, in addition to the CNY. Many of the initial plans, as well as cyclical updates, were done in-house at the BRA. Once planning was completed, they did not have a separate staff that could dedicate themselves to the Navy Yard. It was just another piece of land in Boston. Plus anything had to await the mayor's seal of approval, which could

be held up for months depending on what was happening contemporaneously, and that mayor's political whim.

The Charlestown Navy Yard had its share of political promoters, though, to counterbalance this bureaucracy. Congressman Thomas "Tip" O'Neill was the House Majority Leader in the late 1970s, at the same time the BRA was vying for federal funding for the Navy Yard. O'Neill was from Charlestown, and had interest in the neighborhood, and Boston in general. He followed the Navy Yard project from the beginning of the 1970s, when it was realized the land might be turned over. The BRA was able to secure \$11 million in federal funding for Shipyard Park and other infrastructure, which came from the terminated urban renewal program. The money might have been allocated elsewhere, or absorbed into another fund, if O'Neil had not been the backer of the Navy Yard. He also expedited Congress' dealings with the Navy Yard in 1975. It might have been lost in the congressional agenda, accruing years of costly neglect, if O'Neil had not pushed it through. This was a stage at which the Navy Yard benefited from political actions.<sup>128</sup>

From the development standpoint, the land uses and tenant mix of the CNY were aspects that were largely left up to the market. The 1977 plan included a land use mix of substantial residential development, office and retail, light industrial, a hotel and conference center, an art college, and a public marina. These uses were to bring active

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<sup>128</sup> Gordon (1999) 918-920.

uses to the waterfront, tie in with the historic site and ambiance, and provide jobs for the neighborhood. They were not, however, going to attract a unique type of use. They were instead to act as regular city-owned land parcels, awaiting a developer and a project.

Unfortunately, the market downturn that occurred at the same time that the Navy Yard space came online was very bad timing for the city. As mentioned previously, it could not find office developers for any of its downtown parcels, let alone a risky waterfront, still overcoming its image of industry. In order to overcome this poor perception, the Yard could have been programmed with projects that did not exist elsewhere in the city, so that their marketability would have been certain. This occurred in some situations. The programming of the historic site, the *USS Constitution*, which in fact was a completely separate project, worked well because it was a one-of-a-kind tourist attraction. The marinas, though privately developed, also were popular, because no place else in the city had adequate space for them. Residential projects were successful because of the incredible views. Developers and tenants had no reason to take interest in the Navy Yard for office space. It was cut off from downtown, it had difficult access, and in the first years of redevelopment, had to exist in a milieu of construction and debris. Similarly retail wanted to locate near other retail, unless it catered to a specific need or client. The CNY did not have this, or any base on which to build an agglomeration.

The CNY also struggled to find its anchor for many years, which is essential in a waterfront development. The tourist anchor of the *USS Constitution* existed early on, but

it was very isolated on the East side of the Yard. Any offshoot businesses that it might have encouraged were inhibited by the fierce guardianship of the National Park Service. Federal park lands are strictly monitored and barricaded, so this is not officially or perceptually the same space. A possible anchor for the CNY itself was the Massachusetts Arts College, which was planning to locate in Building 149. This deal was ultimately called off by Mayor Kevin White and his BRA Director Robert Ryan in 1982. They thought that allowing a private office developer to use the building would increase tax revenues for the city. Bringing in the college early would have been a good addition to the property, and would have created retail and life around it. Instead this cultural amenity was abandoned. The building was unoccupied for several more years and the CNY was anchorless. Shipyard Park was intended to be the amenity to attract initial investment, but because it was not programmed and was not functional year round, it was unable to incite market-specific economic spinoff.

Once the anchor did arrive, it was of great benefit to the viability of the Navy Yard. It, however, changed the character of the tenants from what might have been imagined. The arrival of Mass General in Buildings 149 and 199 solidified the biomedical research component that would come to characterize the office tenants. The promise of the aquarium was also intended to be the site's anchor, balancing the cultural draw to the west side of the Yard to balance out the NPS site on the east. This was also intended to complement the daytime uses of the biomedical buildings with night and

weekend uses, providing an around-the-clock site. If this deal had been made, it would have functioned well, bringing in much more retail, commercial, and activity. When this fell apart, so did all the revenues that could have been generated by the offshoot tenants. This reliance on the market to supply the anchor tenants, while the land owner waited, was a weakness of the Navy Yard plan. If the anchors had been pinpointed early, and were developed immediately, the Yard may not have suffered so greatly from the market ups and downs, and a delayed development timeline.

The right tenant mix is crucial for successful waterfront redevelopments. At the CNY, this was slowed and aggravated by of the multiplicity of developers and land managers, and the BRA's limited flexibility in choosing them.<sup>129</sup> The Navy Yard was split into four sections,: one would be a national park, and three would be managed by the BRA. Due to its dire circumstances at this time, one of these parcels would never effectively be under the BRA, as it was passed through directly to the developer Immobiliare. In the Historic Monument Area, though, the BRA issued RFPs, hiring developers for each of the buildings. At once there were many developers acting at the Yard, all competing for similar tenants and struggling for financing. If the masterplanning of the Yard had anticipated a more select mix of tenants, the development was left to too many factors and market conditions to be right on the mark. If a more organic, market-driven approach was desired for tenancy, then that placed too much burden on the land owners to build infrastructure without seeing any immediate property

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<sup>129</sup> Gordon (1997) 250.



returns. It took nine years after it received its first grants for the Navy Yard to see property revenues exceed 100% of its expenditures.<sup>130</sup>

This balance between investment and return highlights the interplay between public and private investment required in this project. The majority of the upfront money spent was public money, and it was a mixture of federal, state, and local funds that were aggressively solicited. Although the land assets were a bargain, there was little start-up capital given to this project from the federal level. The BRA's continued vigilance over the Yard's maintenance was expected as well. After initial grants, all funding of this came from property revenue, as the BRA was financially independent from the City of Boston. In order to gain revenue from the site, it had to attract private investment. Developers would not come until the site was up to an acceptable standard, and the BRA had succeeded in changing the image of the place. The financial success of both the private and public interests were interconnected and interdependent. It could be argued that private investment was the more important of the two at the Charlestown Navy Yard. Although the public investment was required to bring the site up to standard and provide amenities like public spaces and streetscapes, these were useless without tenants. Likewise, public benefits like affordable housing and job creation were concessions to be made by private developers. If space demand had been high enough, it is possible that private developers would have developed on the Navy Yard even if it had not been improved. This is an unlikely situation, but it shows that market demands, and private

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<sup>130</sup> Gordon (1997) 251.

investors' proclivity to follow them, are the biggest determinants of the success rates of these redevelopment projects. All else aside, the market played an enormous role in the successes and the failures of the Charlestown Navy Yard.

### **Perception and Lessons Learned**

The Charlestown Navy Yard is included to demonstrate whether a waterfront redevelopment project that includes design guidelines and preserved historic buildings can result in a successful, valuable site. There are many ways that the project could have been realized more quickly, or been managed more efficiently, but these aspects are not readily apparent to the average viewer. The aspect that is most striking about the Charlestown Navy Yard is its history and its sense of place. It is recognized as a piece of heritage representative of the history of Boston and of the US Navy. It is this aspect that makes the CNY an admired and well-regarded case study a number of reasons, including waterfronts, base closures, naval heritage, and urban design guidelines.<sup>131</sup>

The treatment of historic buildings through a hierarchy of preservation regulation produced the desired effect of recognition. The most important buildings were siphoned off and given to the federal government to manage. The next tier was to be regulated through design guidelines that gave explicit regulations pertaining to each building. This area was overseen by the state of Massachusetts, with guidelines done by the city. The

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<sup>131</sup> Gordon (1999) 926-29.

final area included some buildings to be preserved, but was the area for new buildings, meant to evoke an image and a notion through materials and scale. The designs for these new buildings would be guided by the city, but ultimately created by the developer and architect, giving flexibility and modernity to the site. These guidelines, in combination with attractive streetscaping and public areas, have produced a cohesive urban environment with a distinct sense of history. They have also yielded a monumental amount of architecture and urban design awards. These include, to name a few, an urban design award for the 1979 Design Guidelines for the Historic Monument Area, adaptive reuse awards for Building 149, Building 114, Constitution Quarters, and an award for new construction to William Rawn's affordable housing development for the Bricklayers' Union, completed in 1988.<sup>132</sup> This demonstrates that preservation-based designs are likely to produce admirable results.

The other public good in addition to preservation that the Navy Yard sought to uphold was open space and civic amenities. These have also been accomplished. Shipyard Park has always been used by the residents of the Navy Yard and of nearby Charlestown, especially during the summer months. The Courageous Sail, a sailing school for neighborhood children, employing people from the neighborhood, was launched in 1987 and has been very successful. A number of annual events also have chosen to locate in the Charlestown Navy Yard, like Harborpark Day and Chowderfest, because they benefit from the setting created there. These nautically themed events and

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<sup>132</sup> BRA (1990). 17.

programming fit in well with the historic context, the naval history, and help to contribute vitality to the district.<sup>133</sup> Without the preservation component, though, these events would not be as likely to locate here.

The preservation component of the Charlestown Navy Yard has been criticized by some. This is because the preservation requirements attached to some buildings made them financially infeasible and therefore remained vacant. Initially, it was hard to attract developers because of the location, but the preservation requirement made this task even more daunting. Historic buildings did not have enough flexible interior space to warrant types of developments that usually were attracted to waterfronts.<sup>134</sup> Once developers more interested in historic properties because of the tax credit and other incentives, they looked first at the buildings with the most modern construction elements and flexibility.

This adaptability degree has continued to influence the potential for reuse. The two white elephants of the Charlestown Navy Yard are the Ropewalk Building and the Chain Forge Building. Both are located in the Historic Monument Area, which is regulated for adaptive reuse, but these two require a high degree of preservation. The HMA is all developer-driven, so this expectation to reuse the interior spaces and historic machinery of these buildings is imparted upon a developer. This might be feasible if the buildings otherwise offered positive space components, but neither does. They are both not spacious and ill configured and carry this extra financial burden. They are thus still

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<sup>133</sup> BRA (1990) 14-15.

<sup>134</sup> Gordon (1999). 928.

vacant after thirty years of base closure. In hindsight, this was an overambitious expectation for the preservation officials to make of developers. If the buildings and their interiors were of such great importance, then they should have been grouped with the federally managed and funded buildings in the national park site. They could have also deserved special federal grants for preservation, or received transferable development rights to another, restriction-free site, as a reward for the preservation component. These restraints were all heightened by the bad market conditions in Boston. More creative deal structuring could have been arranged for these buildings, and still could. Current plans may include the relocation of NPS offices to inhabit those buildings. Another is to have a local Boston vocational school tenant them. The eventual tenant would have to be outside of the normal real estate market, like a school or a federal agency, whose survival was not based solely on profits and losses.<sup>135</sup> With this knowledge, and a possibility of renegotiating the preservation standards on those buildings, tenants may be found for them yet.

Ultimately, the urban design and the preservation component of the Navy Yard's development are the only elements that withstood the test of time. These components remained consistent through multiple mayoral administrations, regardless of their agenda. Items were added to the guidelines, but nothing was taken away. The guidelines remained throughout all the market ups and downs, and through the many changing of

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<sup>135</sup> David Carlson. Senior Architect, Boston Redevelopment Authority. Personal interview. March 8, 2007.

hands among developers. Because they were binding guidelines that were to be enforced through the issuance of building rights, they were followed. They are responsible for the current feel of the Navy Yard. The tenant mix neither influences nor responds to the feel of the Yard. They simply coexist. Preservation and the sense of naval history is the only real physical force acting upon the Navy Yard. One can get a sense of history without really knowing what was there, or needing to.

There have been attempts to create an interpreted history on the city-owned Navy Yard, in the form of signage and wayfinding. A *Double Interpretive Loop Plan* was conceived in 1991, to connect the aquarium with the *USS Constitution* along a loop of historic sites. This was abandoned when the aquarium fell through. Currently, visitors to the *USS Constitution* are mostly unaware of another historic destination on the other side of the NPS barricades. Another cultural anchor would help to link them. A newer plan, the *Waterfront Activation Plan* of 2006, again sought to bring visitors through the entire site, with the ability of conveying its history through signage. This would tie in with Harborpark and the other cultural draws on the Yard.<sup>136</sup> Without any distinct destinations, though, this plan is unlikely to be executed.

The Boston Naval Shipyard, and its importance in the history of the country, is now a daily historical experience for those who live, work, or pass by the Charlestown Navy Yard. As a cohesive unit, the site functions as a mixed-use district within a

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<sup>136</sup> Boston Redevelopment Authority. Waterfront Activation Plan for the Charlestown Navy Yard. (Boston: BRA, June 12, 2006).

pleasant, unified historic setting.<sup>137</sup> The balance of federal will, plus public investment, incrementally blending private investors, was responsible for this favorable outcome, and serves as a model for fusing preservation with waterfront redevelopment.

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<sup>137</sup> Barrett.



**Figure 10:** Charlestown Navy Yard aerial from 1925.



**Figure 11:** Charlestown Navy Yard, Shipyard Park & Fisherman's Wharf.





**Figure 12:** Charlestown Navy Yard residential conversion (106).



**Figure 13:** Charlestown Navy Yard new construction. Bricklayers and Laborers Non-Profit Housing Corporation design by William Rawn.



**Figure 14:** Charlestown Navy Yard: The Ropewalk Building (56).



**Figure 15:** Charlestown Navy Yard: The Chain Forge Building (105).

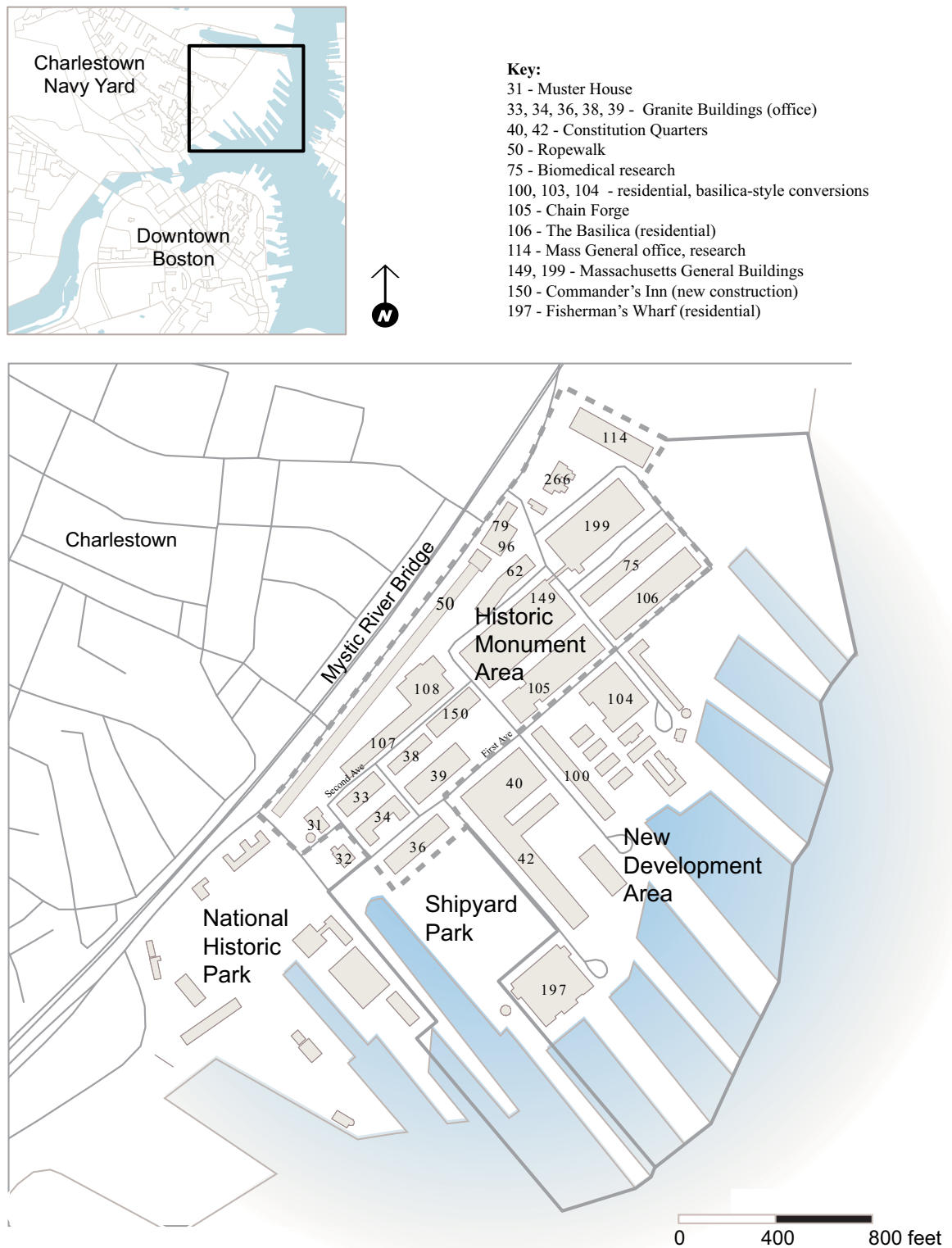




**Figure 16:** Charlestown Navy Yard First Street morphology and character.



**Figure 17:** Charlestown Navy Yard pedestrianized Second Street.



**Figure 18:** Charlestown Navy Yard site plan.

## **6. The South Bank, London, England**

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### **Overview**

The South Bank in London is an urban regeneration success story and a triumph of historic preservation on a grand scale. The unknown side of the Thames in Central London had been undergoing decades of inconsistent redevelopment strategies until the middle of the 1990s, when an approach towards cultural production on the crest of the new millennium finally secured its rebirth. The site is roughly 1.75 miles in linear length and falls under the jurisdiction of two London boroughs, Lambeth & Southwark. Encompassing a number of districts and land uses, it is managed by a multitude of partnerships, commissions, and local agencies. The South Bank, sometimes called the Millennium Mile, has been transformed from a derelict industrial wasteland, cut off from the rest of London and its surrounding neighborhoods, to one of the most-visited tourist destinations in the world. The site's primary anchor is the Tate Museum of Modern Art, which inhabited an old power station, as well as bold architectural feats like the Millennium Bridge and London Eye. The Tate not only solidified the image of the place as the new cultural destination in London, but underscored the viability of preservation as a regeneration tool and monumental gesture of architectural achievement. The formula for preservation on the South Bank has been most influenced by discretionary funding

sources and market preferences rather than by guidelines. The approach to interpretation has been an appreciation of all histories, including the one that is currently happening. This comprehensive approach to urban design helped define the project's success. By embracing all buildings of architectural merit, the South Bank used preservation as a vehicle for cultural and heritage production and tourism. Britain's unique approach to redevelopment through funding official public-private partnership entities ensures that regeneration includes multiple jurisdictions. It is duly noted that this is the product of nearly fifty years of redevelopment strategies and policy changes, demonstrating the lengthy time and patience required to complete projects of this magnitude.<sup>138</sup> This case study will examine how preservation and placemaking functioned through the work of the organized partnerships. It also explores the impact of applying designated federal funds for regeneration to urban design strategies.

## History

Before the loss of industry caused decline, the South Bank of the Thames was not the glamorous place that it is today. Throughout its history, it has acted as everything from a booming center of trade, to a haven of brothels and vagrants. Today, the site is divided into two sections: South Bank and Bankside. South Bank, on the West, is

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<sup>138</sup> Julie T. Donofrio. "The Cultural Regeneration of London's South Bank: Policy Development, Place Definition, and the Iconography of Heritage" Panorama, the Journal of the Department of City & Regional Planning, University of Pennsylvania. 13. (2006). 16-20.

governed by two boroughs – Southwark and Lambeth. Bankside is governed solely by the Borough of Southwark. Though managed as different places, South Bank and Bankside blend today as they did in the past. For the purposes of this paper, the South Bank is examined as one experiential unit, except where stated otherwise.

Beginning with the days of the Anglo-Saxons, when the boroughs were their own municipalities, the south bank of the river was the primary trading locale in all of London. Continuing through the Industrial Revolution, trade and manufacturing flourished along the riverfront, producing a landscape of docks, warehouses, and industrial buildings.<sup>139</sup> Industry remained clustered just around the river, spreading east and west along its banks, rather than south into the mostly residential boroughs.<sup>140</sup>

Though industry dominated the riverfront, the surrounding area was a cultural node in the city. As early as the Middle Ages, immigrants, criminals, and the poor sought refuge in the neighborhood and legendary prisons, such as the Clink. Theaters, like the Rose, and Globe, sprung up nearby. The majority of the theaters were closed by the end of the fifteenth century, but the reputation of immorality remained.<sup>141</sup> The area continued to attract prisons, prisoners, and insurgents for centuries, resulting in its

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<sup>139</sup> “History and Context.” Southwark Council.

<<http://www.southwark.gov.uk/DiscoverSouthwark/HistoricSouthwark/HistoryContext.html>>  
(November 7, 2005).

<sup>140</sup> Rowan Moore and Raymund Ryan. Building Tate Modern: Herzog and de Meuron’s Transforming Giles Gilbert Scott. London Tate: Gallery Publishing. (2000). 13, 14.

<sup>141</sup> “Shakespeare’s Southwark.” Southwark Council.

<<http://www.southwark.gov.uk/DiscoverSouthwark/HistoricSouthwark/ShakespearsSouthwark.html>>  
(November 7, 2005).

identity a sanctuary for London's poor and disadvantaged well into the twentieth century.<sup>142</sup> Though latent at stages, a cultural industry maintained a presence along the South Bank. This history and the availability of developable land close to Central London led to the building of cultural attractions in the early twentieth century, including County Hall in 1910, the South Bank Centre in 1951, as part of the Festival of Britain, and the building of the National Theater from 1968 to 1976.<sup>143</sup> Each were developed in hopes of inciting a cultural renewal, but none ever occurred.

While these cultural destinations were being constructed on the riverfront, industry continued to thrive as well. After World War II, several industries constructed new facilities to accommodate the newest innovations in technology. At this time, the London Power Company commissioned renowned architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to construct a new building for its Bankside Power Station in Southwark, on the Thames, opposite Saint Paul's Cathedral.<sup>144</sup> The older power station, on the same site, required a new building capable of using oil for power. Scott conceived of his building as a "cathedral of industry," worthy of such an illustrious site.<sup>145</sup> Construction of the building consisted of two stages in 1947 and 1963. After a short life, the station had to close its doors in 1981 in response to the increased price of oil during the oil crisis of the 1970s.

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<sup>142</sup> "Southwark's Prisons." Southwark Council.

<<http://www.southwark.gov.uk/DiscoverSouthwark/HistoricSouthwark/SouthwarkPrison.html>>  
(November 7, 2005).

<sup>143</sup> Peter Newman and Ian Smith. "Cultural production, place and politics on the South Bank of the Thames." International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. 24, no.1 (2000). 9-24.

<sup>144</sup> Moore and Ryan 179

<sup>145</sup> Moore and Ryan 185, 188.



For nearly twenty years, the building stood vacant, standing as an urban void waiting to be filled.<sup>146</sup>

The potential of harnessing culture for urban regeneration was considered for the South Bank as early as 1969. In that year, a Greater London Development Plan cited the area as a prime location for such a cultural cluster.<sup>147</sup> This foresight never came to fruition mainly because of opposing interests between developers and community groups in the area, each with their own approaches to redevelopment. Planning and politics in 1970s Britain was focused on community activism and social housing.<sup>148</sup> Community groups in Southwark lobbied for housing reform, creating a tension with private developers, who wished to build office space to attract businesses to the area. Through this decade, the groups argued for their respective plans, when in 1982, the Greater London Council (GLC), approved both. Subsequently, the developers sold their property to the Council, who in turn sold the land to the community groups. As a result, they formed the Coin Street Community Builders (CSCB), a socially active group aiming to support the communities around the South Bank.<sup>149</sup> This made the CSCB a primary asset holder and land developer on the South Bank. Through development, they were able to promote their own social programs, mainly achieved through housing.

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Tim Brindley. "Community Roles in Urban Regeneration: New Partnerships on London's South Bank." *City* 4. no. 3. (2000). 365.

<sup>148</sup> Newman and Smith 17.

<sup>149</sup> Brindley 366.

The community-led redevelopment of the South Bank under the Labour-controlled GLC continued through the 1980s. However, the focus of revitalization in this decade shifted to market-driven development, and was debilitated when Margaret Thatcher's conservative administration disbanded the GLC in 1986.<sup>150</sup> On the South Bank in the 1980s, improvements came in the form of increased infrastructure at Waterloo station, and the renovation of the historic County Hall and Elizabeth House for hotel and office space. Development occurred mostly as a result of private interest groups who were capitalizing upon the overall booming property market in London. The CSCB built a mixed use development in the iconic OXO Wharf, which was a great success. Overall, though, their influence was trumped by the free market in this era.<sup>151</sup>

In the 1990s, the political climate for planning shifted once again with the arrival of the John Major administration. This had a noticeable impact on urban regeneration, as the focus moved away from market-driven development and assistance funds that were distributed to predetermined needy zones. This desire to overcome the geographical constraints of regeneration funding gave rise to the partnership model. Partnerships were meant to include multiple jurisdictions, public and private entities, corporations and community groups. Such partnerships would receive and disperse funds, which were awarded on a competitive basis.

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Brindley 370.

The funding sources that partnerships competed for were primarily the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and the National Lottery funds. In 1993, these funding streams became available through programs of the British government that facilitated both urban regeneration and heritage protection. These programs were the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and the Heritage Lottery Fund, a subsidiary fund of the National Lottery. John Major's administration instituted these programs as a retreat from the era of government deregulation under the Thatcher administration. The government took on a new role as a partner and facilitator of regeneration, rather than its developer or primary provider of funding. Thus, the Central Government would administer the funds and decide to whom they would be granted, in this way controlling redevelopment indirectly.<sup>152</sup>

The Single Regeneration Budget was a new type of Area-Based Initiatives (ABI) for urban regeneration that placed the authority to garner funds and administer projects on local need. Prior to this, federal regeneration funds, and other ABIs, were based on predetermined districts that the government had designated as deserving of redevelopment funds. With the SRB, local players had to show their need in order to obtain funds. To do so, prominent agencies of the public, private, and community sectors had to form partnerships that represented multiple stakeholder groups. This model had been tested with the City Challenge Fund, instituted in the early 1990s, which also

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<sup>152</sup> Guy Baeten. "From community planning to partnership planning. Urban Regeneration and shifting power geometries on the South Bank, London." *GeoJournal* 51. (2000): 239-300.

required partnerships to form and create their own sketch plans for redevelopment. However, the SRB further added the factor of the competitive-bid based approach. A local authority had to sign off on each bid and final decisions would be made at the highest government level: the Central Government of England.<sup>153</sup>

The Heritage Lottery Fund and other sources of the National Lottery disbursement served as an important asset for the quality of the built environment on the South Bank. The National Lottery Act of 1993 created the National Lottery, which included the Heritage Lottery Fund. The main purpose of the National Lottery was to set up a fund for “good causes” that did not deduct from the overall funding pool of the Central Government, thereby relieving their responsibility for financing these objectives. The areas that could receive lottery funds were the arts, charities, heritage, sports, and projects to mark the millennium.<sup>154</sup> The Millennium Commission was set up to manage the millennium funds, and the Heritage Lottery Fund was set up to administer the funds for heritage. The National Charities Board and various Arts Councils and Sports Councils were the remaining bodies. Each of the five causes shared 28% of the lottery income, until the year 2000, when the share taken by the Millennium Commission would be dispersed evenly among the other four causes.

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<sup>153</sup> John Rhodes, et al. “New Developments in Area-Based Initiatives in England: The Experience of the Single Regeneration Budget.” *Urban Studies* 40. (2003) 1401.

<sup>154</sup> Peter G. Moore. “The Development of the UK National Lottery: 1992-6.” *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series A (Statistics in Society)* 60. no. 2. (1997) 174.

The partnerships that have been most important for the redevelopment of the South Bank, and have received significant SRB and other monies, are the South Bank Partnership and the Cross River Partnership. The South Bank Partnership was established in 1994 and is made up of the local MPs from the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark, members of the South Bank Employers Group (SBEG), and other representatives of the local government. Their main projects have focused on environmental improvements and public spaces, beginning with a 1993 urban design study. They are an advisory body, acting through the administrative body of the SBEG, which is a private organization comprised of the main businesses of the area. The Cross River Partnership is a strategic regeneration organization formed in 1994 by the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark, plus Westminster and the Corporation of London. It also includes the SBEG and infrastructure providers like London Transport and the Port of London Authority. As these are both partnerships comprised of public and private players, including representatives of the community, they have been eligible for SRB monies and also Lottery Funds.<sup>155</sup> Their project implementation is done through its various partners, including the SBEG, Transport London, and the boroughs, and includes environmental and transport improvements as well as community education and training.<sup>156</sup> The SBEG also implements the projects and directs the funds of the Waterloo Project Board, whose jurisdiction includes the Waterloo area. Like other partnerships,

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<sup>155</sup> Brindley 371.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

their projects include the public realm and community regeneration through the Waterloo Community Regeneration Trust.<sup>157</sup>

Since these initial partnerships were set up in the early 1990s, several other bodies have joined the ranks of the non-governmental agencies contributing to the public realm and image of the South Bank. Better Bankside is a Business Improvement District (BID), created in England in 2004 as the third BID in the country, which makes area improvements in Bankside. Rather than through grants, their income stream is generated by an added tax levied upon businesses within their discretionary bounds. They do not pay for large capital projects, however. Instead they focus on cleanliness, comfort, safety, and promotion, with the occasional smaller built project.<sup>158</sup>

Before the National Lottery and the Single Regeneration Budget, no funding had existed for preservation in Britain. Early reuse projects were completed without any incentive. The history of preservation legislation in England is similar to the United States in that it began in the 1960s in response to large scale demolition of historic areas. During the 1960s and 70s in London, thousands of residents lost their jobs, and the buildings on the waterfront represented painful reminders of a past way of life. Central London was in the midst of an office and commercial property boom, and developers looked to the South Bank for expansion. Local councils, however, were still trying to

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<sup>157</sup> "Waterloo Project Board is responsible for running Waterloo 's regeneration programme." South Bank Employers Group. 2007. <[http://www.sbeg.co.uk/waterloo\\_project\\_board.htm](http://www.sbeg.co.uk/waterloo_project_board.htm)> (April 2, 2007).

<sup>158</sup> Better Bankside. Better Bankside Annual Review: 2006/2007. (2007): 1-16.  
<[www.betterbankside.co.uk](http://www.betterbankside.co.uk)> (2 April 2007)

retain their declining industrial sectors and therefore resisted these pressures. This gave way to the community-backed social movements of the 1970s that colored many of the South Bank's developments.<sup>159</sup>

At this time, preservation in England had been only restrictive, with no incentives. Buildings could be listed individually as Grade I, II, or III, decreasing with level of significance. They could also be part of a conservation area, which were areas that represented a significant stage of architectural style or historical import. Much of the South Bank was included in a conservation area, which requires that any alteration or demolition of a building be approved by the borough council of that jurisdiction.<sup>160</sup> Though these tools have been important for the preservation of built heritage in England, there is no evidence that they accounted for a remarkable amount of retention along the South Bank.

Waterfront redevelopments of previous generations were not focused on preservation, but used clearance and large scale development, as demonstrated by the London Dockland Development Corporation and Canary Wharf projects. These were known for attracting investment at the expense of local character. As a response to this, several smaller, local developers saw the potential to have a different approach to

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<sup>159</sup> Kenneth Powell. City Reborn: Architecture and Regeneration in London, from Bankside to Dulwich. London: Merrell Publishers Ltd. (2004) 16.

<sup>160</sup> Carolyn Shelbourn. "Legal Protection of the Cherished and Familiar Local Scene in the USA and the UK through Historic Districts and Conservation Areas – Do the Legislators get what they intended?" University and Heritage 10th International Seminar. "Cultural Landscapes in the 21st Century." Newcastle-upon-Tyne: University of Sheffield School of Law. (April 2005) 4-5.

redevelopment, through the conversion of existing buildings. Large developers were not interested in these sites because their intricate development entailed significant risk. As early as the late 70s and early 80s, small developers began converting industrial buildings into lofts and shops in the “hinderareas” of the South Bank that had not already been demolished. In the 1980s, more industries closed, vacating historic industrial buildings, which were most often turned into housing. This first spark towards preservation and retaining a heritage presence along the bank was almost entirely developer-driven.<sup>161</sup> More developers became interested in the area and could tell from example that warehouse conversions were both a profitable and culturally valuable means of development. Many wharf conversions like (begun in 1984), the Design Museum (1987-89), and the OXO Tower Wharf (1994-6) were completed.

Developers recognized that regeneration depended on more than buildings alone. The seminal document *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, completed in 1999 by a task force of the Department of the Environment, Transport, and the Regions, listed the retention of cohesive streetscapes and building assemblages as a means towards economic development. It also called for the fusing of conservation plans with regeneration plans, viewing them as complementary to one another’s success rates. The task force also recommended that preservation should be done not in a static environment, but rather one that allowed for change, though sensitively. Conservation done too rigidly would lead instead to economic failure. The document looked to the

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<sup>161</sup> Shelbourn 21.



individual local councils to improve heritage preservation, and also called for a tax abatement for new construction, as well as national funding for heritage projects called the Renaissance Fund.<sup>162</sup> Although it emerged as a different name, the fund for heritage projects eventually became a reality. Dedicated public investment through the local boroughs and partnerships that began in the 1990s built upon the precedent set and tested by private investment dollars.

### **Preservation and Placemaking: Piecemeal Preservation with Binding Historicity**

The element of the South Bank's redevelopment that has made it so successful is its attractive, maintained, and programmed public realm. This is a result of a commitment to design excellence on the part of the local boroughs and partnerships that manage the area. Recognizing the importance of quality design in urban regeneration, they instituted a number of urban design strategies that would accomplish this vision. High design quality included the preservation of heritage buildings as well as the incorporation of new architectural forms into this historic realm. The local boroughs and partnerships as "place entrepreneurs" have regulated and promoted this space, with placemaking as a top priority.<sup>163</sup> Preservation is less a regulated design strategy than an overall aesthetic that

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<sup>162</sup> Urban Task Force. Towards an Urban Renaissance. London: Department of the Environment, Transport, and the Regions. (1999) 2-3.

<sup>163</sup> Paul Teedon. "Designing a Place Called Bankside: On Defining an Unknown Space in London." European Planning Studies 9. no. 4. (2001) 460.

has evolved over time and served as a catalyst for cultural production. It is a factor of urban design and a major contributor to the sense of place that “sells” the essence of the South Bank, making it a rich urban environment.

#### **a. Environmental Improvements**

Paul Teedon refers to the South Bank as a “post-modern landscape of cultural consumption.”<sup>164</sup> The culture to be consumed is a combination of performing and visual arts, heritage sites, and contemporary attractions. The building stock consists of historic buildings that have been adapted to modern uses, others that have been restored to their time of origin, and others that are new and innovative. The area contains millennia of artifacts, from prehistoric ages to Roman ruins. Significant buildings remain from medieval years, when the South Bank was a center of theaters, markets, and jails. Industrial buildings, warehouses, and docks from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries line the waterfront, but most of the extant buildings throughout the rest of the boroughs are residential, reflecting the outgrowth of the city over hundreds of years.

The buildings themselves were assets for redevelopment, but the spaces around them were deterrents. They were dirty, dark and uninviting to tourists or pedestrian comfort. In order to make this area attractive for investment, there needed to be significant infrastructure investment, new linkages, and improvements to the surrounding area. In order to make the South Bank stand out, these improvements had to be done well

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<sup>164</sup> Teedon (2001) 462.

and better than others. Southwark Borough officials recognized this and pushed for an adventurous urban design strategy through the *Urban Design Initiative* of 1996. This was a competition for local designers to create signage, pavings, and place markers for the areas throughout the borough, organized by Southwark, with the Department of the Environment's London office, and the Architecture Foundation.<sup>165</sup> They wanted the designs not only to be functionalist in approach, but be attractive and interesting, and also to reference the surrounding townscape.<sup>166</sup> They envisioned spaces around buildings that were as interesting as the buildings themselves, and that promoted cohesion within their environment.

Teedon has written extensively about the role of placemaking in economic regeneration in the Borough of Southwark. A change in leadership and a need to reinvent itself led the borough to redevelop in the form of a "cultural quarter." With the beginning of SRB funding, and the founding of the Cross River Partnership in 1995, the Borough began to reposition their development agenda. In addition to local boroughs, other partnerships in the area made improving the public realm a top priority. The SBEG had formed even before the partnership era began as a way to collectively conceptualize solutions that would mutually benefit the business community of the area, of which aesthetics were a part. Thus, when SRB funds were made available, many of those awarded were used for design improvements. Some of the most important improvements

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<sup>165</sup> Teedon (2001) 467.

<sup>166</sup> Paul Teedon. "New Urban Spaces: Regenerating a Design Ethos." *Advances in Art and Urban Futures* 2. (2002) 49-58.

to the public realm have been created and funded by the major partnerships. These include the Riverside Walk, linking the Tate Modern to the London Eye, which was a joint effort of Transport for London, Lambeth Borough, the CRP, the LDA, and the SBEG/SBP. It was funded by the Cross River Partnership, through the SRB, but also significant private investor. This was later lit through the Riverside Lighting Scheme, managed by the SBEG and funded by the Waterloo Project Board, Transport for London, and Lambeth & Southwark Boroughs. Past and ongoing projects of the partnerships include small installations like biker rest areas, greening and streetscaping improvements, as well as monumental items like river piers and the Jubilee Gardens.

In addition to the overarching partnerships and local boroughs, other agencies like business improvement districts contributed to the cause of environmental improvements. Large governmental expenditures like the Jubilee Line Extension (JLE) and the Golden Jubilee bridges also had major impacts. Prime Minister Major approved the JLE of the London Underground in 1994. This project had been in plan form since the 1960s and, now realized, would finally supply much-needed infrastructure to South London. In the realm of the South Bank, this would mean three new tube stops and one redesigned one. The extension of the tube brought the access that was needed for commercial development to really take hold. The JLE was of additional value because of the primacy given to architectural merit when designing the stations. The official in charge of the project was himself an architect and commissioned high-profile architects to design each

of the new stations in ways that would bring new life to downtrodden areas of the city.<sup>167</sup> This attention towards high-quality urban design revived the entire area within the new line's influence.

### **b. Design Excellence, Past and Present**

The high design standard that permeated the South Bank included the innovative treatment of heritage buildings. This is exhibited by the treatment of the signature Tate Modern building in the Bankside Power Station. The building has been heralded as an architectural masterpiece, and a triumph of engineering. The debate over the decision to reuse an old power station in such a manner brought substantial press coverage to the project. When the Tate opened, it was to worldwide acclaim that placed the South Bank in the international spotlight.<sup>168</sup> The Tate's impact on the area was especially great since they also took an active role in improving the public space around their building, thereby linking it to the surrounding community and existing spaces of the public realm.<sup>169</sup>

The Tate Modern was designated a Millennium Commission Landmark Project, for which it received a grant in October 1995. By this time, significant conversion projects had already been completed on the South Bank. Individual developers began the trend towards adaptive reuse to exploit the "wharf" aesthetic. However, these were mostly geared towards the residential market. Thanks to policy decisions at the national

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<sup>167</sup> Powell 23.

<sup>168</sup> Teedon (2002) 53.

<sup>169</sup> Teedon (2002) 54.

level, less profitable yet socially valuable projects became financially feasible and could contribute to the cultural regeneration of the South Bank.

The desire for high design on the South Bank includes emphasizing architecture from all ages. The coexistence of architecture from every era is an important asset for the South Bank, and is therefore included in marketing documents, showing how it serves as a source of pride and attraction for the area.<sup>170</sup> In a place and a country with such a vast history, the acceptance of architecture, old and new, has to be comprehensive. This tenet extends to the South Bank. It is lauded as a place of great history, yet one boasting the most architecturally avante-garde of the modern day. Examples of this include the GLC Headquarters building and the British Airways' London Eye. The connective urban design strategies of the South Bank encourage buildings to complement and connect to the surrounding public space. This contributes to the overall experience of a site that is connected from end to end in one cohesive unit. Regardless of the style of the building, the underlying character of the environment binds the South Bank together, weaving the old with the new.

At the present time, the character of the South Bank is a physical representation of centuries of trends, trials, booms and busts. No one significant master plan encompasses the whole area. Instead the area's character has been affected by a commitment to design excellence, including preservation, and attention to the public realm. This has been

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<sup>170</sup> South Bank Employers Group. Walk this Way South Bank: London Eye to Imperial War Museum. London: South Bank Employers Group. (2005).

facilitated by innovative funding programs initiated at the national level. The most powerful actors upon the physical nature of the site, however, are the unique partnerships that control it, and constantly work towards its place-promotion, public realm, and linkages with the surrounding city. Through these intricate organizations, the South Bank and its supporting neighborhoods are finally considered not only a piece of London proper, but one that is necessary and valuable, and a place all its own.

### **Management, Financing, and Programming**

Dozens of agencies, community groups, and private developers have been responsible for the investment that has led to the area's redevelopment of buildings and the public realm. Current projects, new construction, and infrastructure improvements have been the result of a interweaving of different partnerships, funding mechanisms, public and private investment, and influence of local authorities. Overall the impetus for redevelopment has come about at the local level, with local groups instigating the changes, and federal funds making them possible.

The primary form of management on the South Bank is through public-private partnerships. The partnerships that manage funds and implement projects along the South Bank are a combination of private business groups, local and central government, non-governmental organizations, and quasi-public agencies. Public-private partnerships

were gaining popularity as a means for redevelopment in the late 1980s in England.<sup>171</sup> The Coin Street Community Builders were a group that formed in the 1970s, largely a representative of the community. The South Bank Employers Group formed in 1991 to unite local businesses in the area towards the united end of improvement the environment in the area. This organization was essentially self-funded, though, and did not rely heavily on outside grants. The large-scale redevelopment projects in the cultural sector that took off in the 1990s were a result of the aforementioned funding sources of the SRB and the National Lottery Funds that were created particularly for regeneration, and occasioned the creation of local partnerships in order to obtain these funds.

In exchange for this unique way of applying for grants, these partnerships were granted flexibility in how to disperse funds. Their projects could be anywhere within the jurisdiction represented by the partnerships. Previously funds were only given to areas that the central government had predetermined as in need of regeneration. This meant that areas that had not been eligible for regeneration funds previously could now receive them, and possibly ameliorate states of deterioration before they reached a worsened state.<sup>172</sup> Grant bidders were to demonstrate that their programs would accomplish one of several goals, either to give jobs back to the area, to stimulate economic growth, create

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<sup>171</sup> Brindley 368.

<sup>172</sup> Rhodes 1402.



housing, help ethnicities, fight crime, improve or promote infrastructure or urban design, or improve quality of life through health or culture.<sup>173</sup>

On the South Bank, the SRB has had an immeasurable impact. The partnerships that manage the environmental improvements on the land were formed as a response to the SRB. The core funding source of the Cross River Partnership has been the SRB. In the first six rounds of the SRB, the CRP obtained £41.5 million in funds, and were able to get an additional £134 million in matching grants. The CRP's total SRB grants received were £58 million by 2006.<sup>174</sup> Localized partnerships, like the Waterloo Project Board and the South Bank Partnership, also cite the SRB as being an essential part of their quest to improve the quality of life and environment in their area.<sup>175</sup>

Similar to the SRB, the granting of lottery monies required that the recipient body be a partnership. Additionally, applicants had to demonstrate upfront an ability to provide matching funds. In the case of the Millennium Commission, the matching partnership funding had to equal 50% of the total of the grant, while the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Arts Councils required 25%. This requirement meant that those applying for grants had to be already well-established partnerships or investment trusts. Heritage Lottery Funds were also only for capital costs, not for continued maintenance and operating

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<sup>173</sup> Rhodes 1407.

<sup>174</sup> "How CRP is funded." Cross River Partnership. 5 May 2006.  
<<http://www.crossriverpartnership.org/page.asp?id=1219>> (April 2, 2007).

<sup>175</sup> Waterloo Project Board and Waterloo Community Regeneration Trust. End of Project Report: SE1 Success Stories. London: Waterloo Project Board. (March 2007) 1.; South Bank Partnership. Under Pressure and on the Edge. London's South Bank: A Manifesto for action. London: South Bank Partnerships. (2006) 2.

expenses.<sup>176</sup> Regardless, the HLF has been an important funding source for preservation projects all over England. In 2005, it granted £1 billion in funds for projects of built heritage, including regeneration of townscapes and individual buildings.<sup>177</sup>

In the South Bank, the impact of the National Lottery Funds, through the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Millennium Commission, and the Arts Councils has been substantial. The area partnerships and local authorities of both Lambeth & Southwark financed many of their building restorations and regeneration efforts through these funds. In Lambeth, HLF recipients included the Royal Festival Hall and the Old Vic Theater, along with other smaller projects for historic buildings. In Southwark (Bankside), funding for the Borough Market and the Imperial War Museum were granted through the HLF, as were a multitude of church restorations, museum installations, and park improvements.<sup>178</sup>

Arguably the two most illustrious projects on the South Bank that solidified its new place as a cultural commodity in London were financed heavily through Lottery funding. These were the Tate Modern and the Millennium Bridge. The Tate Modern is viewed as the true anchor of the cultural comeback of the South Bank. Meanwhile, the Millennium Bridge is important for the link it creates between the new cultural quarter and the traditional tourist destination of St. Paul's Cathedral, executed with architectural grandeur that is itself monumental. As previously noted, the Tate's decision to locate on

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<sup>176</sup> Moore (1997) 180-1.

<sup>177</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund. *Historic Buildings: 10 Years of Heritage Lottery Funding. 1994-2004*. London. (July 2005). 2.

<sup>178</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund 16-20.

the South Bank was the turning point of the redevelopment of the South Bank in 1994. This crucial decision hinged on its ability to secure a significant amount of funding through the Lottery Fund, £50 million from the Millennium Commission and £6.2 from the Arts Council's allotment for Lottery Funds.<sup>179</sup> The £50 million accounted for about 40% of its total development costs. Additionally, Southwark Borough contributed £51.5 million towards site acquisition and remediation as an incentive for locating in their jurisdiction, and contributing to additional investment. The total capital expenditure for this project was £134 million, but this was highly leveraged by private and public funding. Clearly all involved parties foresaw the value of this risky, but prominent endeavor. Ironically, no Heritage Lottery Funds were given for this project. They were, however, greatly useful for projects with less visibility. The success of the Tate, and the promise of increased tourism, encouraged smaller entities to undertake conservation plans and apply for national grants. The Southwark Cathedral is an example of this. It is a cathedral dating back to the 1200s that underwent restoration in 1997-2001 thanks to Heritage Lottery money.<sup>180</sup> In total £122 million of lottery funding was used along the South Bank by 2004.<sup>181</sup>

The Millennium Commission, since concluded, was also a crucial source of funding for the development of the South Bank. The Commission was established with

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<sup>179</sup> Miriam Kramer. "The Heritage Lottery Fund and London's Museum." *Magazine Antiques* 157. n. 6 (June 2000) 910.

<sup>180</sup> Powell 84.

<sup>181</sup> Newman & Smith 19.

the National Lottery and was meant to have a short life span, expiring in November 2006. It was intended to fund projects that would create lasting landmarks for the turn of the millennium, and was managed by a board independent of the government. Thus, the Commission's projects were by nature, more visible, often monumental projects.<sup>182</sup> The Tate, as mentioned, received £50 million for the Tate Modern expansion. Also deserving of Millennium Commission grants were the Millennium Bridge, the Southwark Cathedral, the Thames 2000 Initiative, and the Golden Jubilee Bridges. In total, grants for projects impacting the South Bank totaled £80 and accounted for on average 35% of the total cost of the project. The rest was private investment.

The SRB has been heavily criticized for keeping regeneration funds in the hands of the powerful and influential, rather than the more socially-conscious, smaller and less empowered groups.<sup>183</sup> The availability of these funds and their attachment to partnerships with common interests rather than geographic constraints has proven beneficial for areas like the South Bank. The ability of partnerships to focus funding on environmental improvements made the South Bank more attractive for private investment for undertaking preservation projects.

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<sup>182</sup> "The Commission." Millennium Commission. 2003.

<[http://www.millennium.gov.uk/about/the\\_commission.html](http://www.millennium.gov.uk/about/the_commission.html)> (April 2, 2007).

<sup>183</sup> Rhodes 1402.

**Perception and Lessons Learned**

As a result of urban regeneration, the South Bank in London was converted from the undesirable side of the river, to one of the most vibrant cultural destinations in the world. The site thrives with people on a day to day basis, offering a visual and experiential tour through the history of the site's past, while serving as a palette for the most impressive architectural design of the present. The preservation of the built environment and its contribution to the sense of place of the South Bank has played a central role in this endeavor. Though London is a place unto itself, the South Bank stands out. The redevelopment of this place reveals several valuable lessons about the key components of a redevelopment plan and preservation policy that can be universally translated.

The first lesson that must be pointed out is the length of time required to let this redevelopment be self-sustaining. A great amount of investment occurred during previous iterations of the South Bank's development that were unrelated to the current motive. From the building of Festival Hall in 1951, London's government had been trying to infuse the area with investment and attractions. Changes in political will plus booms and busts in the market slid the redevelopment of South Bank on a number of courses over the years before enough cohesive development occurred. Ample time was also required from the termination of the previous use of the site before it could be changed, whether by preservation or clearance. The factories and mills along the Thames had continued to

operate until the 1970s and 1980s in some cases. While the government was trying to program the area for new use, industry was still underway. When it ceased, emotions were high and the neighborhood morale weakened. Immediate redevelopment would have been hotly contested, as many thought that industry could return. Therefore, no one could think of new uses for the area until enough time had passed.<sup>184</sup>

Secondly, the market is an important lesson in this case study. The first phase of redevelopment was geared towards subsidized housing through the Coin Street Community Builders, who were a significant landholder in the area. This program operated free from the regular market and thus could continue to exist on the site. When development pressure started to shift, it followed the market for commercial space. This was followed by a housing boom, during which developers began to convert old lofts into housing. Lastly, development was geared towards cultural production. London needed a place to expand for new cultural products in order to keep current with the demands of the tourist culture. With the decision of the Tate Modern to relocate to Bankside, it cleared the way for other cultural tourism sites to locate there. Not all credit can be given to the Tate, however. The Globe Theater, the original cultural attraction of the South Bank was the pioneer of cultural sites on the South Bank. Those promoting its refurbishment had been embroiled by community groups in the 1980s who did not want tourists sites in the vicinity. When the market shifted, the Globe was praised, indicating how the political and market climate can shape redevelopment. The Globe now functions

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<sup>184</sup> Personal conversation. October 9, 2006.

as the anchor of the “string of pearls” of cultural destinations along the Thames.<sup>185</sup> Other sites include the IMAX Theater, the London Eye, the Dali Experience, the London Aquarium, and countless other stimulating stops that now line the bank. The fact that these new tourist attractions had no where else to locate in London, and the South Bank provided an ideal locale, was not a coincidence for the site’s success. The site now serves as a clustering of cultural amenities that rivals other areas of the city and other global tourist destinations.

The role of the public-private partnership was a main factor in the success of the South Bank. By nature, the South Bank is not one site – it is many. It is governed by two distinct boroughs while land ownership is diverse, and interest groups are even moreso. The partnership provided the ideal vehicle for overcoming these differences. The South Bank Partnership united the parties of the South Bank, while the Cross River Partnership was responsible for interests that affected both sides. In putting the redevelopment agenda in the hands of these balanced organizations, the government could ensure that programs would take multiple areas’ priorities into consideration. The South Bank Employers Group brought in the backing of primary private interests and their capital. The orchestration of federal funds distributed through partnerships and the amalgamation of private funds in an association dedicated to improving the area provided great potential for the area around the Thames. These partnerships were non-site specific, and had liberty with the types of programs they chose to promote, so they were able to impact the

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<sup>185</sup> Newman and Smith 18.

sector that they deemed to be the most needy. Though the overlapping of these multiple groups and partnerships somewhat obfuscates the planning process, it was productive for promoting an agenda of environmental improvement throughout the South Bank, which it continues today.

While the management of a place is key, resources are also needed. The availability of funding in the South Bank, from its partnerships to individual projects, was a main explanation for its achievement. Those funding sources initiated by the central government through the Single Regeneration Budget and the National Lottery Fund were unmatched in regeneration throughout the country. As an area that had been under scrutiny for decades, the South Bank was a natural choice for a grant recipient. The SRB was especially crucial for the larger infrastructure improvements on the South Bank, like transport, walkways, green spaces, and promotion strategies. The Heritage Lottery and Arts Council funds, of which the South Bank received many, were used for smaller projects, but did contribute to the retention of historic buildings or installation of items that would improve the environment. The Millennium Commission funds were awarded to the Millennium Bridge and the Tate Modern, two of the most prominent and essential sites of the redevelopment. Finally, the importance of private capital cannot be overlooked. Individual developers were responsible for initiating the conversion projects of the early 1980s and 90s that began to give the South Bank form and paved the way for future developments. Likewise, private businesses' interest in the overall upkeep of the



area gave rise to the SBEG, which has had a major impact on the space. Thus, the healthy interplay of public funding and private investment equally contributed to the great quality of the place that exists today.

Public funding can be created by legislation, but private investment can almost only be created by market demand. Market demand is created in a number of ways, but two funds that created such demand in the South Bank were important infrastructure improvements and the presence of solid anchors. Anchors are crucial in any redevelopment to secure interest in an area and solidify rebranding. Infrastructure improves accessibility and makes the site more amenable. The South Bank's rebirth as a cultural quarter was finally realized when its anchors were in place and new infrastructure improved the site's linkage with the rest of the city.

The Tate Modern is the anchor of South Bank. Its commitment in 1994 to inhabit a heritage monument and invest in a worldwide attraction brought the locality of the South Bank international attention, capturing outside investors and tourists.<sup>186</sup> This building stands as the icon of the riverfront, as it stands at the vertex of the South Bank and Bankside. It also preserves and heralds industrial heritage, which was an important aspect of the cultural identity of the area. Once it was in place, it served as a catalyst for further cultural attractions and has become the focus of the economic potential of the

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<sup>186</sup> Teedon (2001) 461.

entire bank. The economic clout of this enterprise and the proved worth found in retaining an historic building also legitimized the feasibility of other heritage projects.<sup>187</sup>

The infrastructure and access pieces not only added value through the connections that they made, but also through their own architectural merit. The Millennium Bridge linked the new South Bank cultural quarter to Central London by a pedestrian footbridge to facilitate pedestrian travel. The JLE was also crucial due to the connections that it made. The tube access made the commercial and residential areas throughout Southwark and Lambeth more accessible, providing a support system to the destinations along the waterfront. Since the stations were designed to be architecturally notable, they served as economic boosters of their discrete realms as well.

This widespread attention to urban design and the public realm contributed to the success of the South Bank. The borough councils and the partnerships overseeing the site, in addition to individual businesses, elevated the interstitial areas along the South Bank to areas worthy of special treatment. These were planned in a way that they could be enjoyed by all the public, even those not visiting the sites. As such, the public has places of its own in between the cultural attractions, adding vitality to the area. The public spaces also form a cohesive link from end to end, uniting the South Bank as one perceived space. The value of tasteful urban design in redevelopment projects has

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<sup>187</sup> Teedon (2001) 463.

increasingly been highlighted in regeneration projects throughout England, and the South Bank is evidence of this.

The successful interweaving of preserved buildings with new architectural feats is a replicable lesson on the South Bank. The South Bank's regeneration upholds the heritage of the riverbank while allowing for new iconic foci as well. The heritage of the old city, from the industrial landscape to the medieval alleys, is retained, but modern structures are allowed as they leave the design character of the place intact. In this way, the heritage of the people is upheld and undisturbed. The British view heritage buildings as intrinsically part of the identity of a place and its people. Therefore, tearing down old structures would rid a place of its identity and alienate past and future users. The old parts of the South Bank, regardless of generation, are given equal weight. This appreciation represents the long scope of British history, which is inextricably linked to its popular and cultural values.<sup>188</sup>

Maintaining this cultural value has led to a great public value for everyone, from residents to tourists to the overall economy of London. It has also created great economic potential. The renewed interest in the area has encouraged a proliferation of quality retailers and contemporary entertainment venues, such as an IMAX theater and the London Aquarium. The area now competes in visitorship with the central tourist sites in London, like Westminster Abbey and Trafalgar Square. Additionally, the attractiveness

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<sup>188</sup> English Heritage. Capturing the Value of Public Heritage: Proceedings from the London Conference. English Heritage. London: English Heritage. (2006) 8.

of the South Bank, with its easy access to the finest amenities, has made it a booming market for residential and office development as well. Property values continue to rise. Thus the economic impact is affirmed.

The Tate itself has accomplished great strides not only for the South Bank, but for preservation. It began an exciting new trend for historic interpretation and cultural regeneration. UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization) has pointed to Britain's approach to industrial preservation as innovative, setting the standard for extolling these important monuments to "humankind's dual power of destruction and creation."<sup>189</sup> The Tate Modern is the first building of international import to inhabit a former industrial building.<sup>190</sup> Some voices posit the possibility of the reuse of industrial buildings as the impending architectural avant-garde. Some called the Tate "daring and radical" for its complete reversal of the Gehry approach to museum architecture, rethinking the modern art museum as a powerfully calm observatory for "latent expression."<sup>191</sup> Since its opening in 2000, the Tate Modern has surpassed every gallery museum in the world in visitor numbers, being the perfect match to reside in the "unapologetically" dominant monument that Sir Scott designed.<sup>192</sup>

Preservation has made the South Bank a successful redevelopment project. Without the retention of existing buildings, in monumental reuse projects, small

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<sup>189</sup> Constance C. Bodurow. "A Vehicle for Conserving and Interpreting Our Recent Industrial Past." The George Wright FORUM 20. no.2 (2003). 68.

<sup>190</sup> Moore and Ryan 15.

<sup>191</sup> Moore and Ryan 8,9

<sup>192</sup> Esther Leslie. "Tate Modern: A Year of Sweet Success." Radical Philosophy. 109. (2001) 2-5.

commercial developments, and small pieces of urban fabric, the South Bank lacks this unique identity. Places cannot be created from scratch if they are going to succeed today. Through programming of interior and exterior spaces, mixing of generations of buildings and attention to the public realm, the South Bank has become a vibrant place that is both socially and economically sustainable. Although it is a large scale project, with powerful tenants, and in an economically strong city, the lessons are universally applicable.



**Figure 19:** London South Bank: The Tate Modern is the central landmark.



**Figure 20:** London South Bank includes multiple eras of building, including the OXO Wharf (left) and the London Eye (right).



**Figure 21:** London South Bank: Thames Walkway provides public access to the river and links cultural sites.



**Figure 22:** The Millennium Bridge links the South Bank to Central London.





**Figure 23:** London South Bank, special paving in Southwark.



**Figure 24:** London South Bank, medieval Clink Street coexists with new development and contributes to place character.



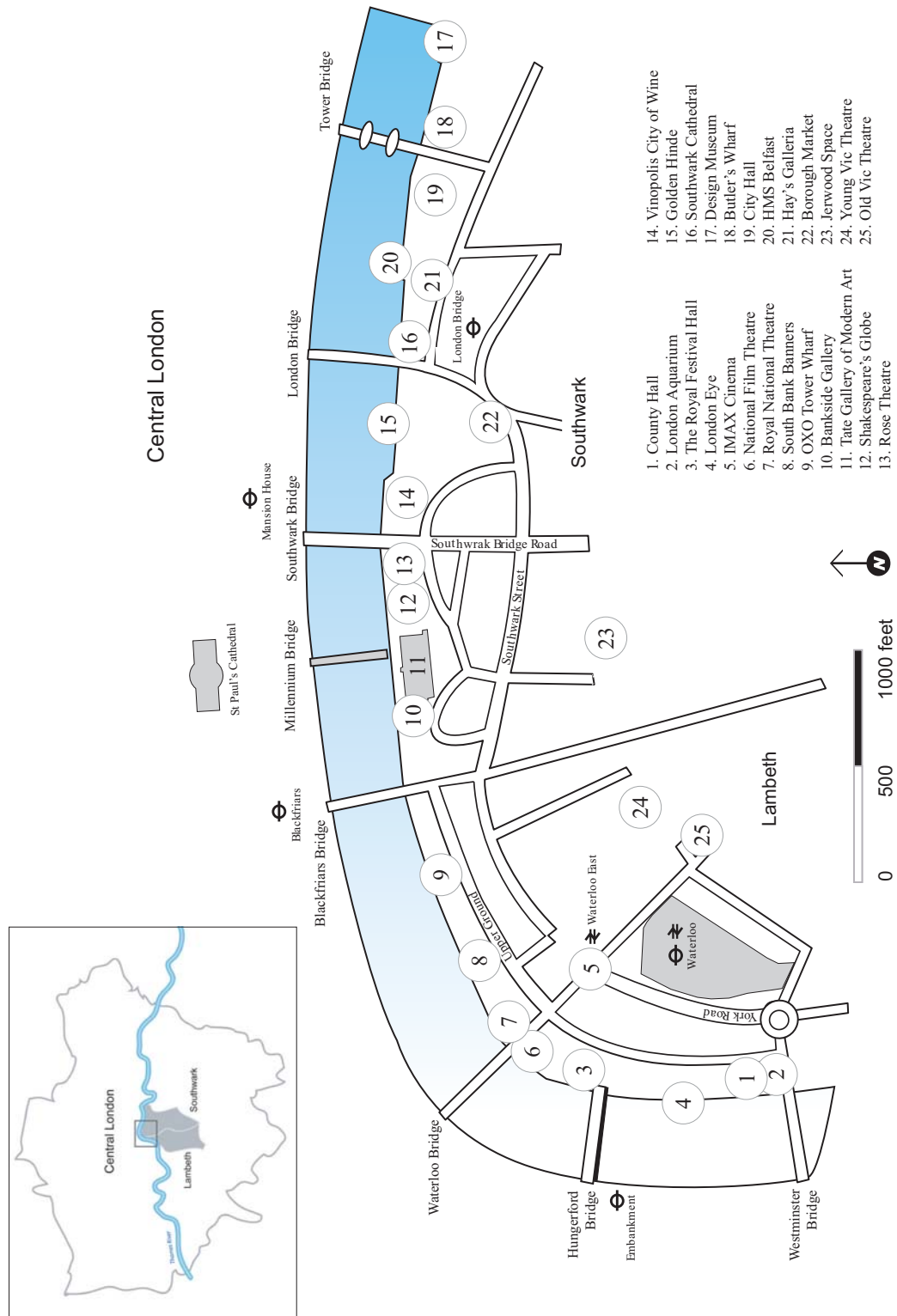


Figure 25: London South Bank site plan.

## **7. Lessons and Conclusion**

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These waterfront case studies revealed that the retention of historic buildings contributed to a physical environment that was beneficial to a redevelopment agenda. All three areas studied are considered to be successful, though, in varying parameters and degrees. The case studies differ in scale, in tenant type, in management, and in the amount of public and private investment required to prepare them for use. They are similar in defining renewal for obsolete industrial areas, bringing occupancy and vitality. While each area has welcomed new uses, they stand as a testament to the past, marking an important history in the progression of city and country. In all three cases, the aesthetic of preservation has been useful for tenant attraction, which was essential for viability. In this way, they upheld a public good while creating a private good for those who capitalized upon the development opportunity. From the present vantage point, these waterfronts have been financially successful and have succeeded in the preservation of an historically significant realm. They offer many public benefits including park space, waterfront access and purveyance of history. As preservation was considered an integral part of these projects, it is then conclusively a viable approach to waterfront redevelopment.

Although a commitment to preservation is a good starting point for a redevelopment strategy, many other factors contributed to their evolution and

management over time. The overall property market of the project city, as well as shifts in political agendas had major effects. The level of required preservation also could have a major impact, especially in Boston. A combination of public and private investment was required in all three, but the balance of dependency on these discrete sources affected the expediency of the projects. Funding was a constraint in all three cases, as well as the management body in charge of funds and in leveraging development. These factors must be included whether or not preservation is a piece of the development strategy. This study has attempted to examine the preservation aspect, but without controlling for these elements, so it must be mentioned when they had a substantial impact.

### **Attract the Anchor, Secure the Market**

The target market of the waterfront developments and the anchor tenants had a significant impact on success. In Vancouver and London, the nature of the historic buildings onsite was a factor in determining the anchor tenants of the site. In Vancouver, the tall ceilings and large floor plate of the industrial sheds was ideal for a market, gallery space, and a theater. The two anchor projects – the public market and the art school – were guaranteed by the developer early on. This provided an assuredness for other perspective tenants, reducing the risk they would assume in locating there. Similarly, in London, the Tate Gallery chose to expand its modern art collection into the Bankside Power Station because of its large interior space and commanding landmark presence.

That crucial anchor of the South Bank chose the site thanks to its historic assets. As the South Bank grew to be a cultural district in the city, the intrinsic cultural qualities of the historic buildings fit neatly into this trajectory. In both cases, the shape of the built environment actually drove the type of tenant, the anchors, and therefore the market.

The *target* market was significant in the specific type of tenant they were trying to attract. The overall *property* market of the cities was significant throughout the development timeline. In Vancouver, the target was a clustering of underserved artisans and theaters who were happy to move into Granville Island, especially with reduced rents. The target market stayed consistent until the Island was occupied. In London, the focus of the South Bank redevelopment changed several times, but the strong residential market early on was important for supporting pioneer conversion projects. Once the cultural draws came online, they enhanced the market for further cultural production and supporting services in that area. The reverse is true in Boston's experience. The downtown office market was at a historic low when the CNY project was proposed. The market grew during the 1980s, but not enough to spillover demand to the CNY. The residential market, however, was stronger and enabled the CNY to see success in this sector. Overall, the CNY has become occupied, but twenty years behind schedule. The market in Boston was detrimental to the project, preservation guidelines notwithstanding.

The case studies demonstrate that the preservation of historic buildings in waterfront developments can be attractive to a specific type of tenant and market in

which a demand exists. They may also be capable of creating a demand where one does not already exist through exploiting the value of historic character. An attention to the overall city and regional market is crucial in timing the development and projecting absorption. Redevelopment projects must therefore undergo rigorous market analyses prior to design and development so that they may reach the correct target market and that they do not get caught in a depressed real estate cycle. The agency in charge must be creative in overcoming difficulties in both of these aspects.

### **Urban Design inspired by Preservation**

Redevelopment projects are often criticized for being “placeless” or aesthetically detached from the city of which they are a part. None of these waterfront projects can fall into that category, however, because they were developed to include preservation. Preservation in waterfront developments is automatic placemaking, an automatic connection to the rest of the urban fabric, and a model for urban design guidelines.<sup>193</sup> The industrial buildings found on waterfronts are especially desirable for adaptive reuse as they offer high ceilings and large, flexible floor plates. This is an aspect of the built environment especially applicable to waterfronts. All three case studies demonstrated this to be true. Creating accompanying design guidelines can encourage new buildings to correspond with this environment. The historic architecture of the site can also inspire

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<sup>193</sup> Norman Hotson. Hotson Bakker Architects. Email to the architect. March 12, 2007.

strategies for punctuating the environment with lighting and street furniture, and lead to the remaking of place through branding and exploitation of history.

Placemaking and image changing are a necessary aspect of any redevelopment project, and preservation and image are inextricably linked. Although industrial reuse projects are more common in the present day, in the 1970s when these projects were begun, it was still a very new idea and a sensitive one. Industry was still viable in several areas, and to reuse buildings for recreational uses could be offensive to some portions of the population. Additionally, people were not comfortable with living, working, or recreating in areas that had recently been polluted and undesirable. This was the reason that some industrial waterfronts were razed. Those that kept the industrial identity had to prove through marketing and preferential leasing strategies that it was “safe” to develop and tenant these risky sites. In the long run, though, this preservation of identity was beneficial in creating a special place. In Vancouver, Granville Island is one of the few areas within the city that contains any historic buildings, especially industrial ones. This aesthetic was an initial attractor to the off-market type of tenants that were desired in the area. Today, this unique historic character of an entire site has made it a source place-recognition and pride.

The Charlestown Navy Yard case study reveals a weakness of preservation planning. The design guidelines that pertained to a portion of the site, the Historic Monument Area, gave detailed expectations of integrity for each of the buildings therein.

Two of these buildings are still vacant after thirty years – the Ropewalk and the Chain Forge Building. The redevelopment of these buildings mandated that the integrity of the interior spaces, the interior machinery, and the exterior appearance be retained, but imparted this duty onto a private developer without any provision for public assistance. This was not in the financial best interest of any private entity, so the buildings have lain vacant. Although preservation works very well in the Navy Yard and preserves an important part of national history for modern consumption, the guidelines expected too much of these buildings and they therefore failed in this regard.

Image and identity creation are essential for redevelopment projects, and historic preservation naturally provides those things. Marketing, design guidelines, and scrutiny is necessary to make sure the program is followed, but the aesthetic of historic architecture creates a direction for these elements. The historic value of the place was an asset for all three of these cases. The success of Vancouver in preserving the overall form of buildings, incorporating old and new, seemed to work better than the preservation of materials and structure required at Charlestown. Perhaps this can serve as a lesson for future projects, especially ones in which the market is not robust.

### **Access to Overcome Barriers and Add Value**

Access is particularly challenging in waterfront projects. Historically, they were disconnected from the central cities, were purposefully designed to deter public access,

and through the twentieth century were further cut off through highway infrastructure, bridges, and rail lines. Overcoming, or embracing, these obstacles, was a key challenge in all three projects. In Vancouver, the designers found the inaccessibility and mystery of the site to be one of its draws, and kept its access points at only two – one by road and one by water. In Boston, the formerly secured base was surrounded by a wall and limited to only a few, small access roads. It was also separated from downtown by the large span of Boston Harbor. The redevelopment authority had to overcome these physical and psychological divides through new access roads and anew ferry route. In London, the project greatly benefited from improved public transport access to the entire South London region through the Jubilee Line Extension and improvements to Waterloo Station. The completion of a monumental work of architecture, the Millennium Bridge, provided an integral means of access. It allowed tourists to flow from Central London, directly to the main node of the South Bank, and then alongside the new riverwalk. The question of access is crucial in all waterfronts. Sometimes it has to be created when none existed already, while in the case of Granville Island, its isolation was an asset. Maintaining this unique isolation can itself be a form of preservation.

Attention to the access routes within the site, and their ability to connect to the water and city was a key element. The morphology of buildings and streets in each of the sites was an urban design quality that warranted special treatment. In Vancouver, the streets were maintained without sidewalks, as they had been in their industrial days. The



designers thought this to be a favorable quality that they chose to highlight. They also maintained the rail lines as artifacts within the shared right of way. In Boston, the rigid grid typical of naval bases played a key role in how the site was used for military rituals in the past, and thus was immortalized by pedestrianizing Second Avenue. The streets are carried through to grant access to the water and the public spaces that line it. In London, maintaining the connectivity between the medieval street pattern of the boroughs and the public access walkway along the Thames is a crucial element in adapting the old feel of the site with the new, recreational function of the riverfront.

Extending to the existing street grid is an urban design challenge in many waterfront projects as industrial waterfronts were usually spatially disconnected from the rest of the city. Each case study had a solution to this challenge through the addition or adaptation of streets and pedestrian thoroughfares on the site. All three promoted lateral public access routes along the water's edge, creating one where it did not already exist. This is an urban design solution based on the unique location of waterfronts, underscoring the need for uninterrupted waterfront access. This solution is unique to waterfronts, underscoring the attractive assets that they can offer. In Boston, this was mandated by state legislation in the middle of redevelopment, and may not have occurred otherwise. In Vancouver, there is not a cohesive public route, but there is significant dedicated public space at the water's edge achieved through the urban design guidelines. London's partnerships were responsible for creating the Thames Riverwalk that would

unite and add shared value to sites that fronted upon the river. The Riverwalk is itself programmed with historically-inspired street furniture, events and street performers, which help to animate this already lively place.

### **Waterfronts Need Public Assistance**

A combination of public funding and private investment is required in any redevelopment project. Those trying to promote a public good, like preservation, should especially include major public resources in order to help developers offset cost. In these three case studies, the level and nature of public assistance affected the ability of the redevelopment agencies to build infrastructure, public amenities, and bring the site up to a habitable code. The availability of federal funding in particular had varying degrees of impact. Public assistance was most visible and useful in the form of upfront capital funds to offset infrastructure costs.

All three case studies included a significant influence at the federal level, either by funding mechanisms or by land grants. Vancouver and Boston received land granted for free to a new entity. In Vancouver, this was the Granville Island Trust, and in Boston, the City. The asset of land was given over to the city carrying with it stipulations that impacted the freedom to develop the land. However, as the sites were former industrial lands, which required a great amount of infrastructure upgrading. To provide for these items in Vancouver, the federal government gave a lump grant for development and

infrastructure costs, as well as assigning a trust to manage the site. In Boston, however, the BRA was left with these expenses and the responsibility of soliciting funding. This was a major early challenge for the Charlestown Navy Yard that delayed the project. Additionally, the Boston Redevelopment Authority had to attract developers and subsequent private investment while the site was being still being improved in order to make an income. This placed both the agency and tenants at a disadvantage and kept the entire site from being completed as scheduled. Meanwhile in Vancouver, everything was achieved according to plan. In London, public funding also attracted anchor tenants with the aid of the Millennium Commission and borough funds. The creation of dedicated federal funding sources created the impetus for cohesive development that transcended the typical location-based boundaries that were the tradition in England.

Public funds were most useful for the upfront capital costs associated with waterfront projects. The need for government intervention is needed because waterfront projects are inherently disconnected from central business districts and therefore do not easily warrant investment. Public funds offset the risk associated with these sites, providing money for upgrading infrastructure, readying them for development. Stimulating these markets was necessary, but resulted in unregulated market absorption thereafter.

**Dedicated Management Increases Expediency**

Waterfront redevelopment projects require clear management as well as dedicated objectives. The three case studies revealed a hierarchy of possible management structures, varying from the most defined in Vancouver and the least in London. The nature of the management body, and its ability to manipulate the site, affected the expediency of the development timeline, the likelihood of plan implementation, and the ability of the management body to control the schedule of development.

Granville Island had the highest level of management centralization. The federal government created the Granville Island Trust to amalgamate parcels and manage the island towards the aim of creating a defined place for unique tenants. The design guidelines were followed by developers under the discretion of the trust. Today, the Island is still managed by the trust and has become financially self-sustaining. The development timeline for this project was significantly less than the other case studies because of the clear management.

In Boston, the BRA was responsible for managing the Charlestown Navy Yard. It was given initial control over the land and the responsibility to produce a plan, design guidelines, and securing developers. As a municipal agency, the BRA had many projects to manage and was ultimately dependent on the mayor for approval. The site was a market-rate parcel within the city and was prone to fluctuations in politics and the marketplace. Many plans for the Navy Yard were stalled as result of outside factors.

However, since the entire parcel was placed under the jurisdiction of the BRA, the site did have unified management. This allowed the BRA to implement the design guidelines and coordinate tenants towards a coordinated goal.

In London, the ability of the South Bank to implement cohesive plans was limited by fragmented ownership and management of the land on the Thames. The boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark shared legal authority over the land, as well as multiple landowners. The switch to the partnership model in the late 1980s created a tool for coordinated development that would encompass the area as a whole. Although the idea of uniting separate sites towards an overall goal of regeneration has been positive, the partnership approach has contributed to an overall obfuscation of any actual public planning and funding on the site, many unrealized plans, and increased time delays in all projects.

The management of waterfront development has great implications for the speed with which projects are achieved and the extent to which overarching schemes can be realized. The more control over the land that the management body had, the greater their ability to dictate how the land would be shaped. This had an impact on the design strategies and preservation policies. In Vancouver, the aesthetic and tenant mix was achieved because the government essentially controlled the site. In Boston, the land was comprehensively planned by a federal mandate and managed by the city, so design guidelines could be regulated. In London, however, the piecemeal nature of the site

made implementing overarching plans difficult, and an attempt to overcome fragmentation resulted in more confusion and futile plans. The success of this area is due to strategic intervention by the public sector and steady private development, rather than by an overarching vision. There cannot be an overarching vision with dysfunctional management. This is not particular to historic waterfronts, but historic waterfronts are less likely to be redeveloped successfully without a clear enabling entity.

### **The Future of Waterfronts + Historic Preservation**

The stories of Vancouver, Boston, and London's waterfronts all demonstrate the locational challenges that come with waterfront planning, and the strategies that can help to overcome and benefit from these. As a rule, the political and social atmospheres that affected each one varied based on the city and country. In these cases, employing a preservation policy allowed development authorities to highlight existing attributes of urban, historic waterfronts to create remarkable districts and foster new development.

The intrinsic qualities of waterfronts - from pristine views, to divergent street patterns, to the type and scale of extant building – filled these redevelopment projects with more challenges and more opportunities as well. Rather than expunging these challenging elements, these three projects instead appreciated and admired them, elevating them to a new level, to be preserved, replicated, or included for having architectural or historical value. The incorporation of these ideas into plans and

guidelines have resulted in incomparable urban realms in the present day. This placemaking through preservation has made these places recognizable, noteworthy, and therefore economically viable.

Several lessons have come out of these case studies that show how preservation can be included in a waterfront redevelopment scheme. Except in the case of London, some years have passed since these were planned, and factors contributing to redevelopment have changed. Despite this fact, the lesson that preservation guidelines should be mandated by the public sector remains true. Although the private sector may chose to reuse historic buildings because of a desirable appearance, this is not a reliable expectation. Presently, the public-private development model is ideal for ensuring a mutually beneficial approach to redevelopment. This is especially the case in the United States. Since the decline of federal funding, cities have had to come up with their own funds for renewal, and this often meant leveraging private dollars and interests. The public-private partnership works for projects in which a public agency wants to include a public good, such as preservation or open space, but must rely on private investment to do so.<sup>194</sup> In many ways all three case studies were public-private developments, in that they were reliant on coordination between the two sectors.

Although federal funding was helpful in these three projects, it was not essential. In the future, federal government can best function as a source for incentives, like the

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<sup>194</sup> Lynne B. Sagalyn. "Public Private Development: Lessons from History, Research, and Practice." Journal of the American Planning Association 73. no. 1. (2007) 9.

Historic Preservation Tax Credit and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Future waterfront redevelopments will likely take place at the local level and require innovative local funding mechanisms. The modern day tools like Tax Increment Financing districts and Business Improvement Districts are ideal for creating budgets for public initiatives that do not come from the normal sources of funding. These have been successful in redevelopment projects, and can likely be applied to waterfronts as well. Overarching partnerships have had success as well, but the London example demonstrates how too many partnerships with different agendas can create confusion and a blurring of planning accountability, and should be used sparingly.<sup>195</sup>

There is no denying that preservation has played a key role in the identity of places that exists today. The presence of recognizable historic buildings is the reason that these areas are acknowledged and studied. Scrutinizing their management and funding mechanisms is necessary for realizing how the projects came about, but preservation is what makes them interesting projects. As the economy of every major country in the world has been shifting in the recent past, and continues to do so, redevelopment of older areas is going to be on the agenda of cities worldwide. As cities are constantly trying to remake themselves in order to advance forward, innovation and placemaking are the factors that are going to make them stand out. These those cities that embrace their past, and the elements that led to their initial primacy, can innovate without diluting their identity in favor of modern, generic approaches. Combining the locational and historic

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid.



assets of a waterfront in a comprehensive plan for redevelopment can create extraordinary places that provide reciprocal gains of economic growth, a connection with the past, and a landmark for the future.

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