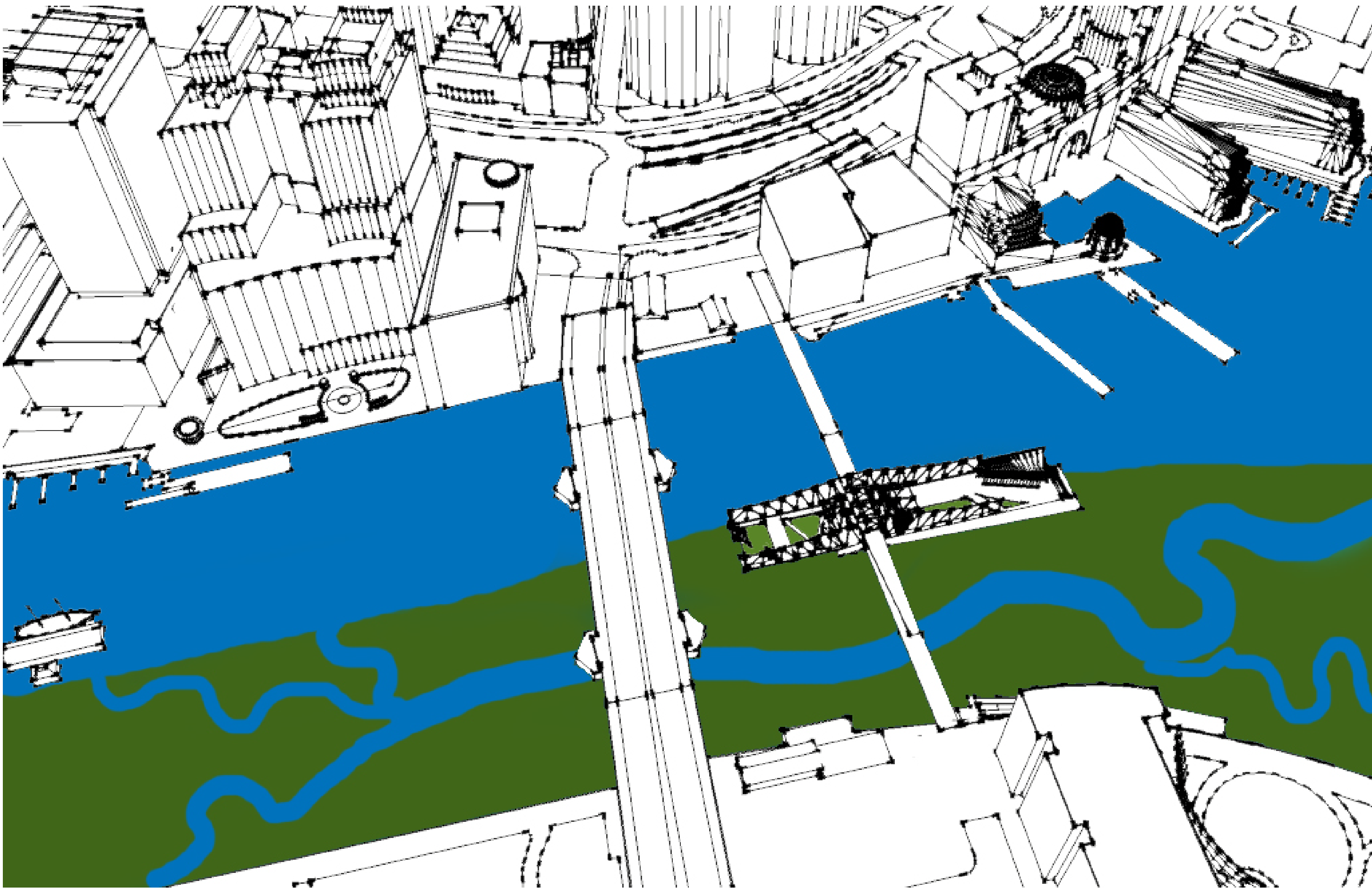


SALT MARSH BRIDGE



Today the fort point channel separates Boston’s booming downtown from the waterfront millennial-building-a-palooza. A storage-scape defined by docks and warehouses is transformed into an anti-neighborhood of speculative luxury housing. Before that this was all a marsh, a salty tidal estuary, meandering mudflats, a nursery grounds for fishes and a buffet for wading birds. When is the last time you saw heron fishing by the museum of science?

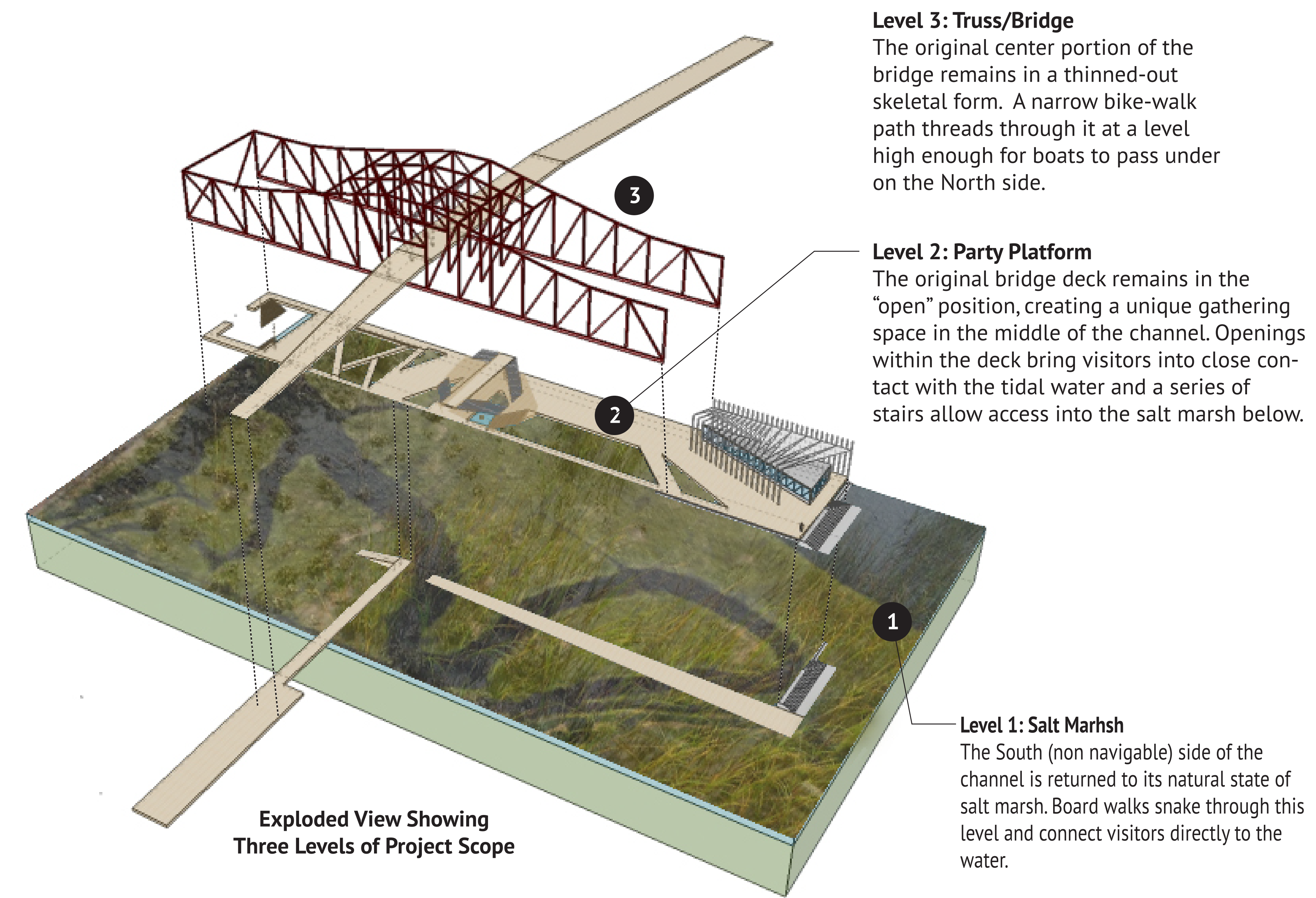
In the barren rock-world beneath the jetties and wharfs, pelotons of periwinkles, barnacles, bladderwrack and little else that can be easily seen. Feet away from this buried tide-scape children play on pavement. Families picnic, tourists stroll, business people walk swiftly in various directions.

Let us make a space here in this city for things that are old like the trusses of the northern avenue bridge, and for things that are older like the marsh. Let the bridge bring us into a renewed contact with enlivened waters, tide-pools for children, platforms for fisherman, sediments for shellfish, serpentine streams through cordgrass for kayaks and schools of fish.

What does Boston need more of? International mega-events? Tax-exempt corporate headquarters? Let us submit our collective bid to host cod fish and crabs, roots and rhyzomes.

“Salt marshes are one of the most productive ecosystems on earth. As such, they provide real and measurable environmental, social, and economic benefits. Salt marshes act as nurseries for commercially and recreationally important shell and fin fisheries (Cruz, 1973); provide habitat and food sources for birds and other wildlife; protect coastal areas from flooding and storm surges; and provide educational and recreational opportunities. Salt marshes also play a role in estuarine health by aiding in nutrient attenuation and cycling (Welsh, 1980); water quality improvement; shoreline stabilization; and mitigation for climate change and sea level rise (Gulf of Maine Council, 2008). Especially in urban areas where stormwater runoff can have high concentrations of pollutants and nutrients, salt marshes, like those found in the Boston Harbor region, absorb nutrients as they enter the estuary. These urban oases also offer critical refuges for humans and animals.”

-excerpted from the Boston Harbor Habitat Atlas (2012), Massachusetts Bay Program.



At low tide the openings in the platform create access into the marsh. People can enjoy fishing, looking for oysters, birdwatching and relaxing from the platform at all times of year.



At the harbor-end of the platform there is a small community building/cafe designed to reference the old through truss. The steps at the end of the plaform lead to a boardwalk through the marsh and also serve as a place to launch a boat or spend a romantic evening.