

Boston City Hall and Plaza Renovations

Community Presentation
09 March 2020



Mayor Martin J. Walsh
City of Boston Operations Cabinet
Public Facilities Department

SASAKI

Tonight's Meeting



Introductions

Design Overview

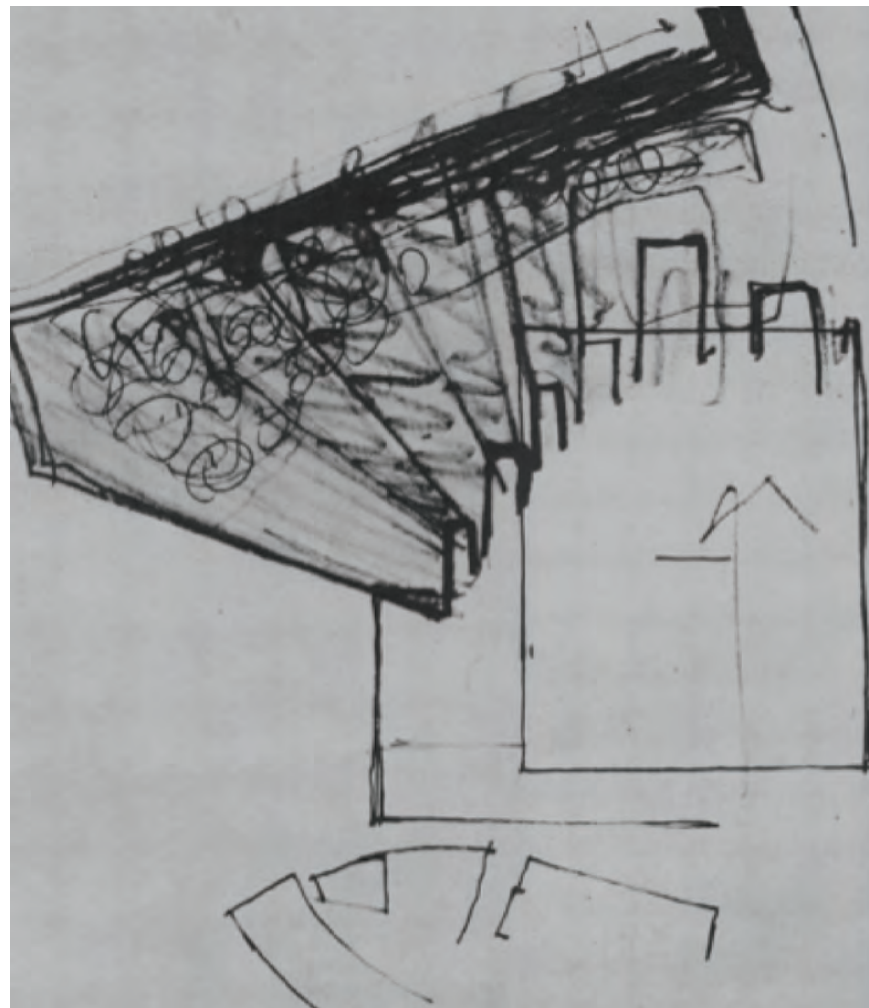
Project Foundations

A Reinvigorated Civic Heart for Boston

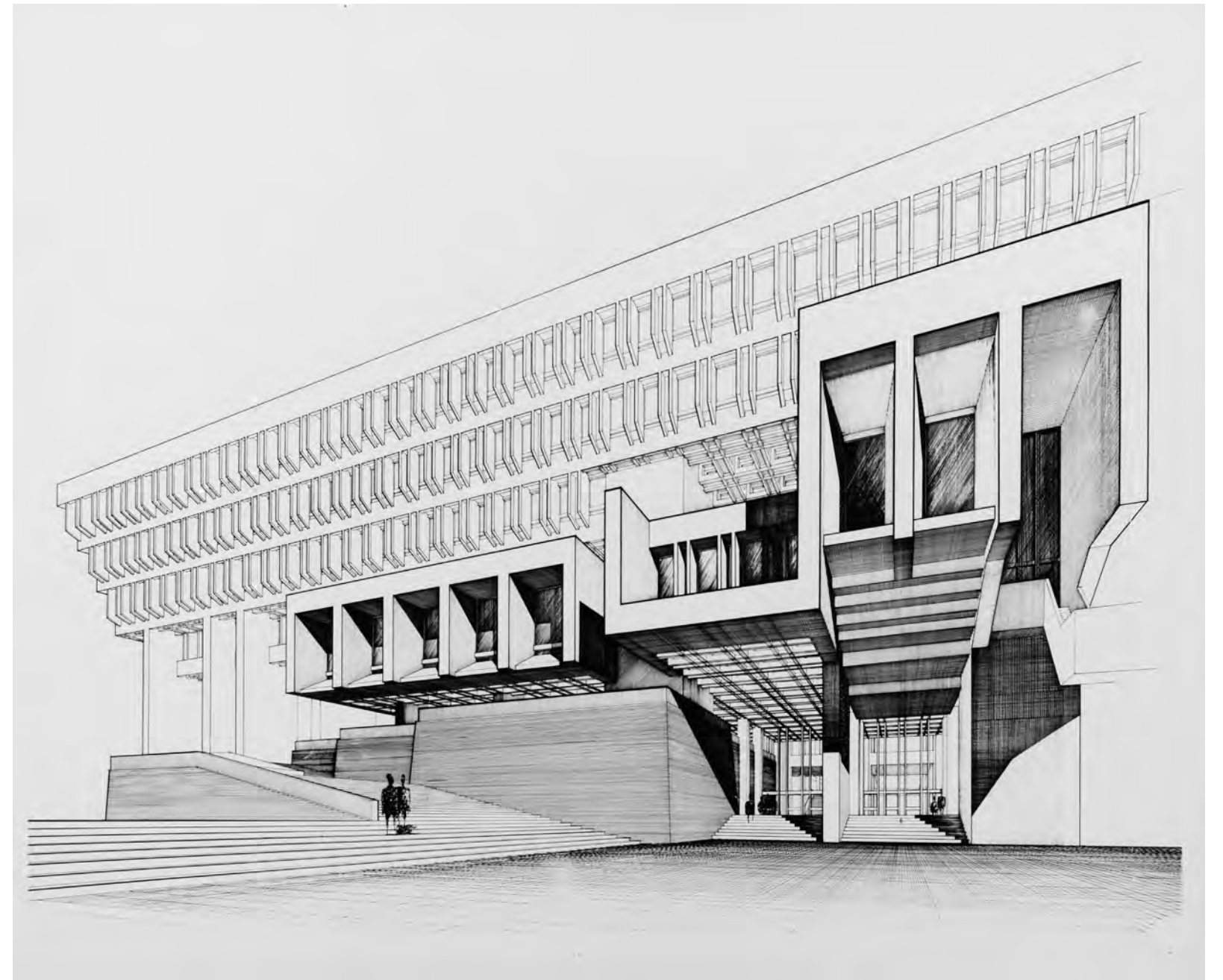
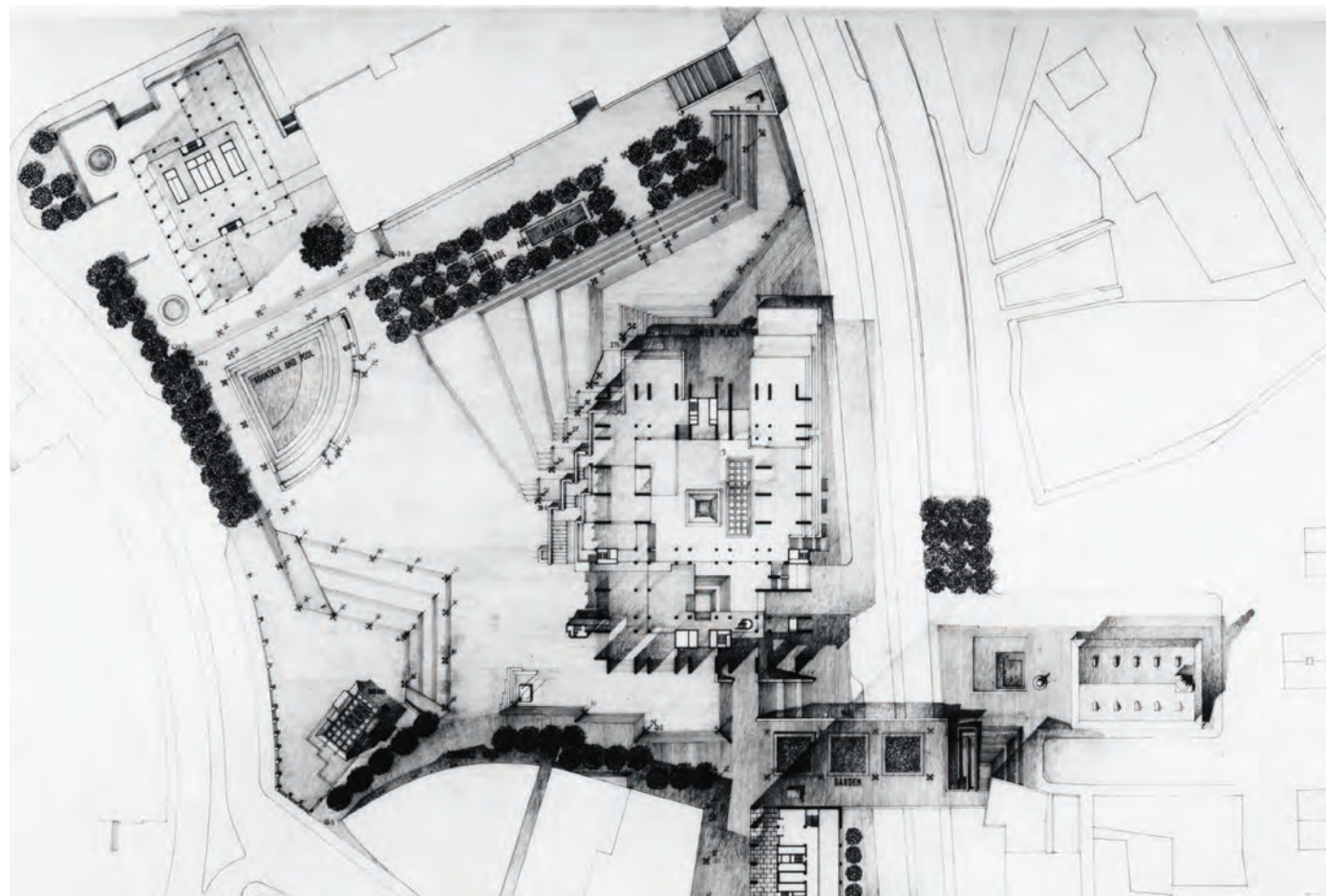
A Virtual Plaza Tour

Minor Modification to Zoning

Discussion at the Boards



VISION: Early 1960s



TODAY'S PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS

Deteriorating/Inadequate Infrastructure

Transparency

Accessibility

Wayfinding

Human scale + Comfort

Limited loading on underground tunnels

An aerial photograph of Boston City Hall Plaza. The central focus is the large, modern, Brutalist-style concrete building of Boston City Hall, characterized by its repetitive vertical columns and cantilevered upper floors. The plaza in front is paved with red bricks and features a large, light-colored geometric design. Several trees are scattered throughout the plaza, and a few people can be seen walking. In the background, other city buildings and a body of water are visible under a cloudy sky. A large white text overlay is centered over the lower half of the image.

Let's "re-imagine City Hall Plaza as the thriving, healthy, innovative space that it should be. It's time we showed real pride in our front yard."

Mayor Martin J. Walsh, 2015 State of the City Address

The Design Process

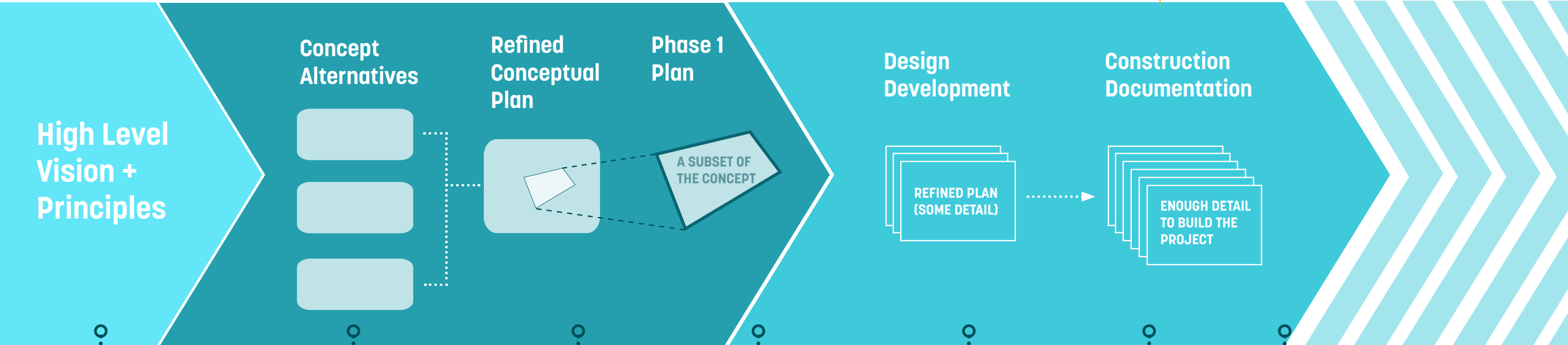
We are here!

MASTER PLAN
2015-2017

CONCEPT + SCHEMATIC DESIGN
8 MONTHS

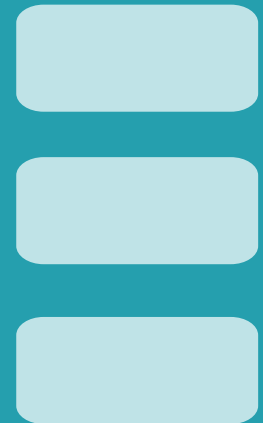
DESIGN DOCUMENTATION
10 MONTHS

CONSTRUCTION
18-24 MONTHS

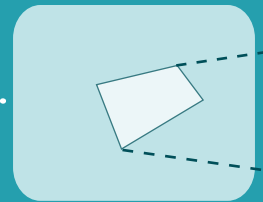


High Level
Vision +
Principles

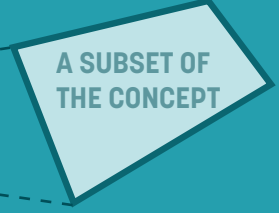
Concept
Alternatives



Refined
Conceptual
Plan



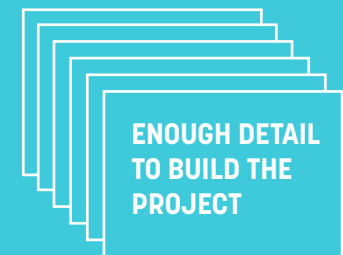
Phase 1
Plan



Design
Development



Construction
Documentation



A SUBSET OF
THE CONCEPT

REFINED PLAN
(SOME DETAIL)

ENOUGH DETAIL
TO BUILD THE
PROJECT



Public + Stakeholder
Meetings



Stakeholder
Meetings



Stakeholder
Meetings



Public
Meetings



Stakeholder
Meetings



Public
Meetings



Stakeholder
Meetings

KEY COMMUNITY INPUT TO THE DESIGN PROCESS

A plaza that can host great events year round!

Shade and comfortable seating!

A plaza we can hang out in and play in!

An energy-efficient plaza

Demonstration stormwater features!

Improved loading capacity

Integrated security + lighting

Better wayfinding

A universally accessible plaza + building

Amenities (food, restrooms, etc)

Honored legacy



VISITORS

MBTA

US GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

BWSC

YOUTH

LOCAL RESIDENTS

DISABILITY COMMUNITY

EVENT PLANNERS

BUSINESS PEOPLE

CITY EMPLOYEES

CITIZENS

DESIGN + PRESERVATION COMMUNITY

ARTS COMMUNITY

FAMILIES

ABUTTERS

OLDER ADULTS

PLAZA STAKEHOLDERS AND CONSTITUENTS

A Reinvigorated Civic Heart of Boston



**A Welcoming
and Civic
Front Yard**



**A Flexible +
Accommodating
Event Venue**

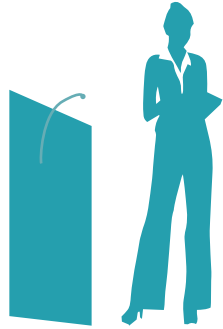


**A Model for
Sustainability
and Resilience**



**A Renewed
Cultural +
Architectural
Legacy**

Program | Elements and Principles



Speakers Corner

One Large Event Space

- Paved
- Accommodates 10K-12K
- Accommodates intensive programs like ice skating

Multiple Smaller Gathering Spaces

- Including Activation of 4th Floor Terrace

Human Comfort

- Shade
- Flexible seating in right-sized spaces

Green Infrastructure

- Including stormwater demonstration



Civic Pavilion +/- or Stage

- Flexible, rentable facility
- 40x60' covered stage
- Vehicular service access



Safe+Accessible Connections

- From Cambridge to Congress
- Into all building entries
- To all gathering spaces
- Well-lit and easy to navigate
- Minimizing stairs
- Accessible surface materials



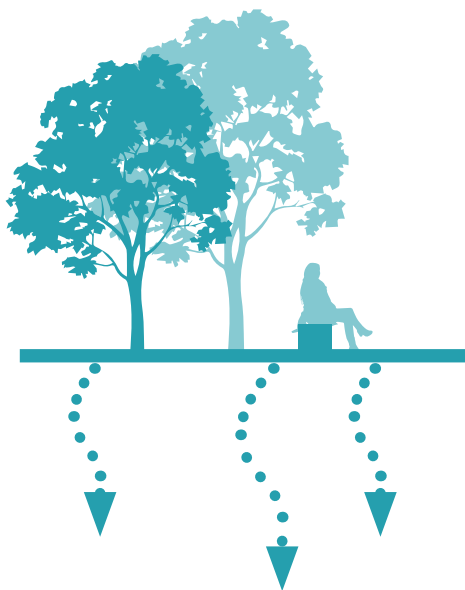
Play for all ages

- Areas for lawn games,
- Adventurous playscapes for children



Food Provision

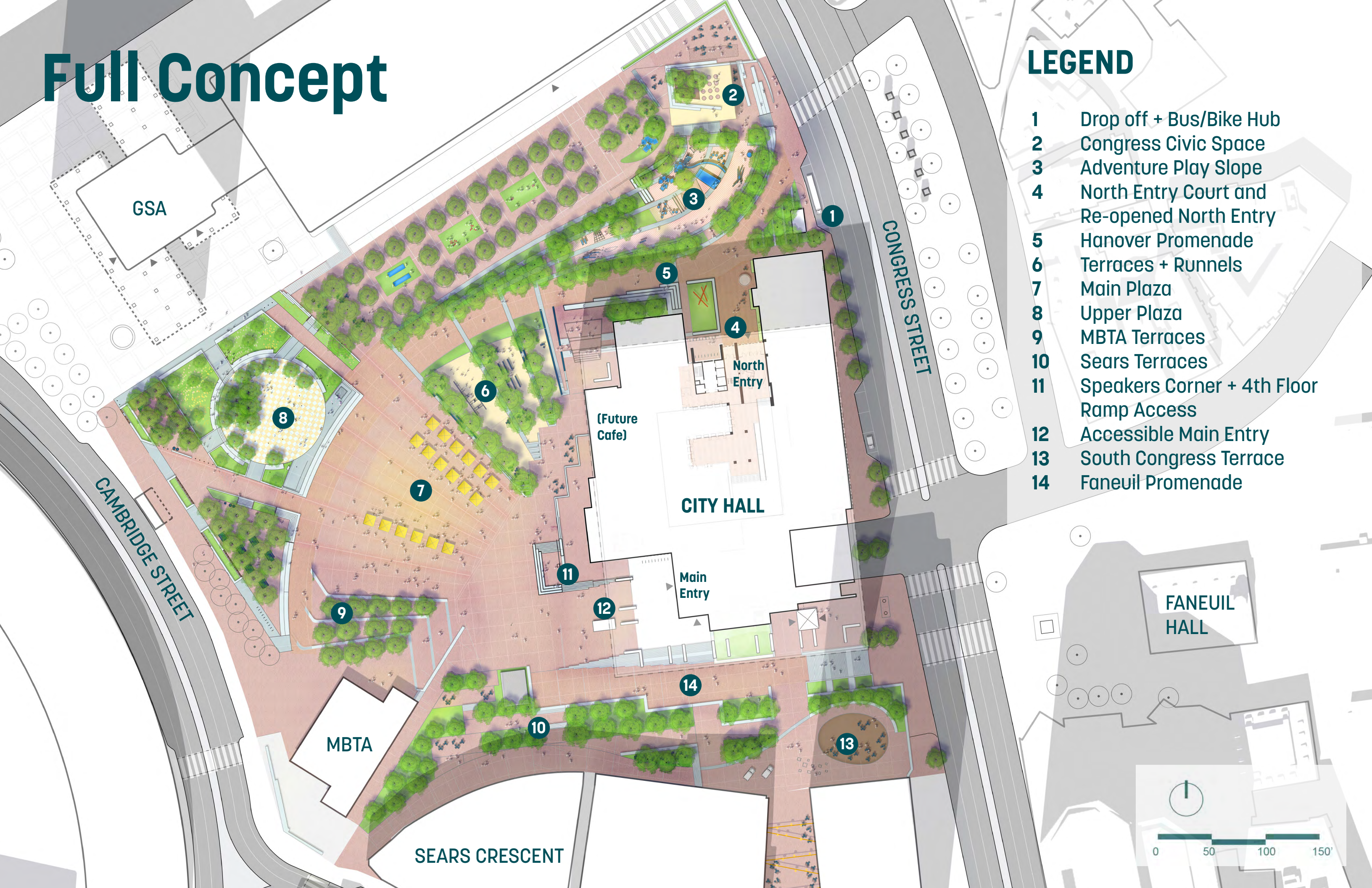
- Areas for food trucks
- Possible Cafe/Retail space



Full Concept

LEGEND

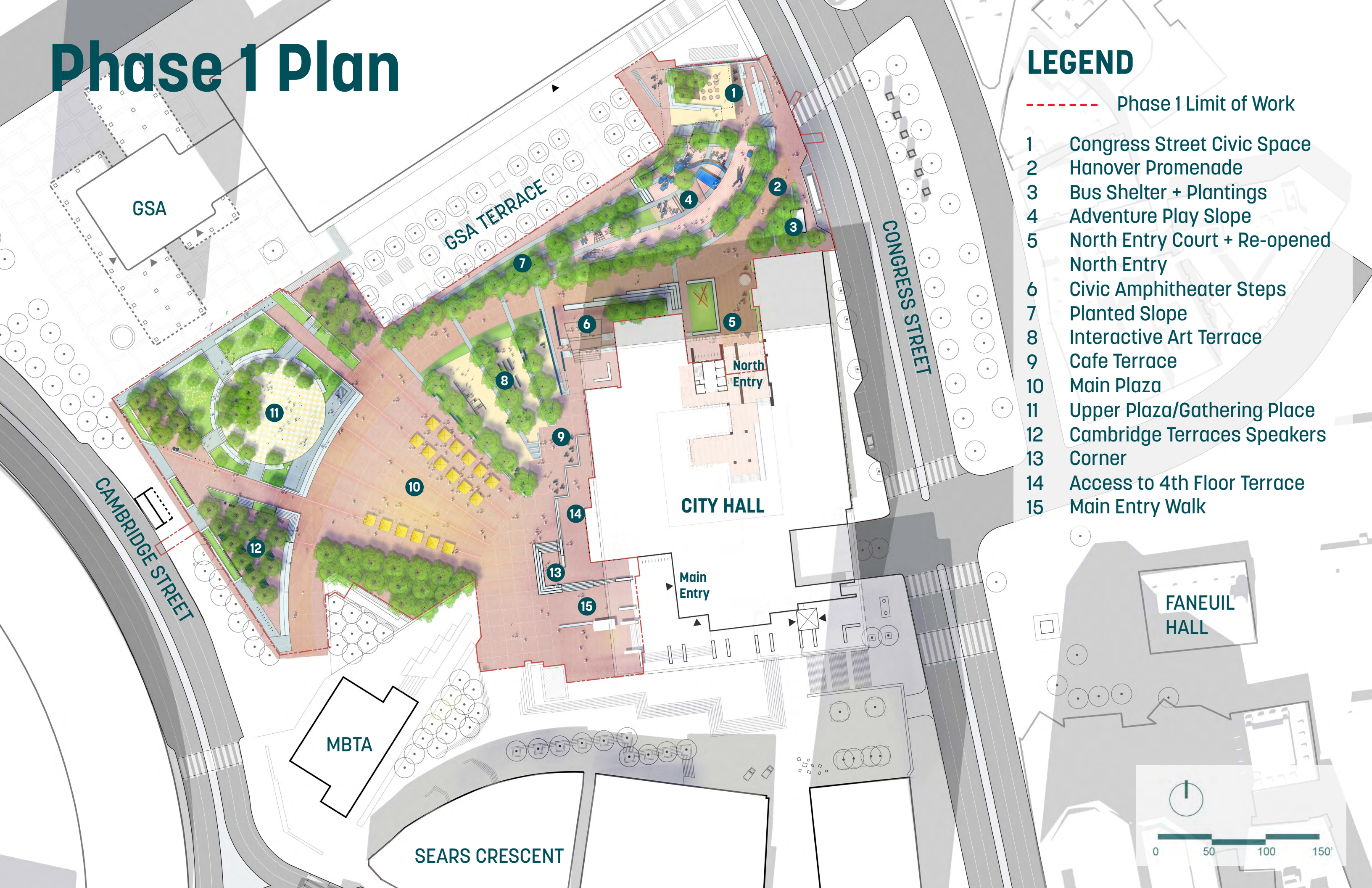
- 1 Drop off + Bus/Bike Hub
- 2 Congress Civic Space
- 3 Adventure Play Slope
- 4 North Entry Court and Re-opened North Entry
- 5 Hanover Promenade
- 6 Terraces + Runnels
- 7 Main Plaza
- 8 Upper Plaza
- 9 MBTA Terraces
- 10 Sears Terraces
- 11 Speakers Corner + 4th Floor Ramp Access
- 12 Accessible Main Entry
- 13 South Congress Terrace
- 14 Faneuil Promenade



Phase 1 Plan

LEGEND

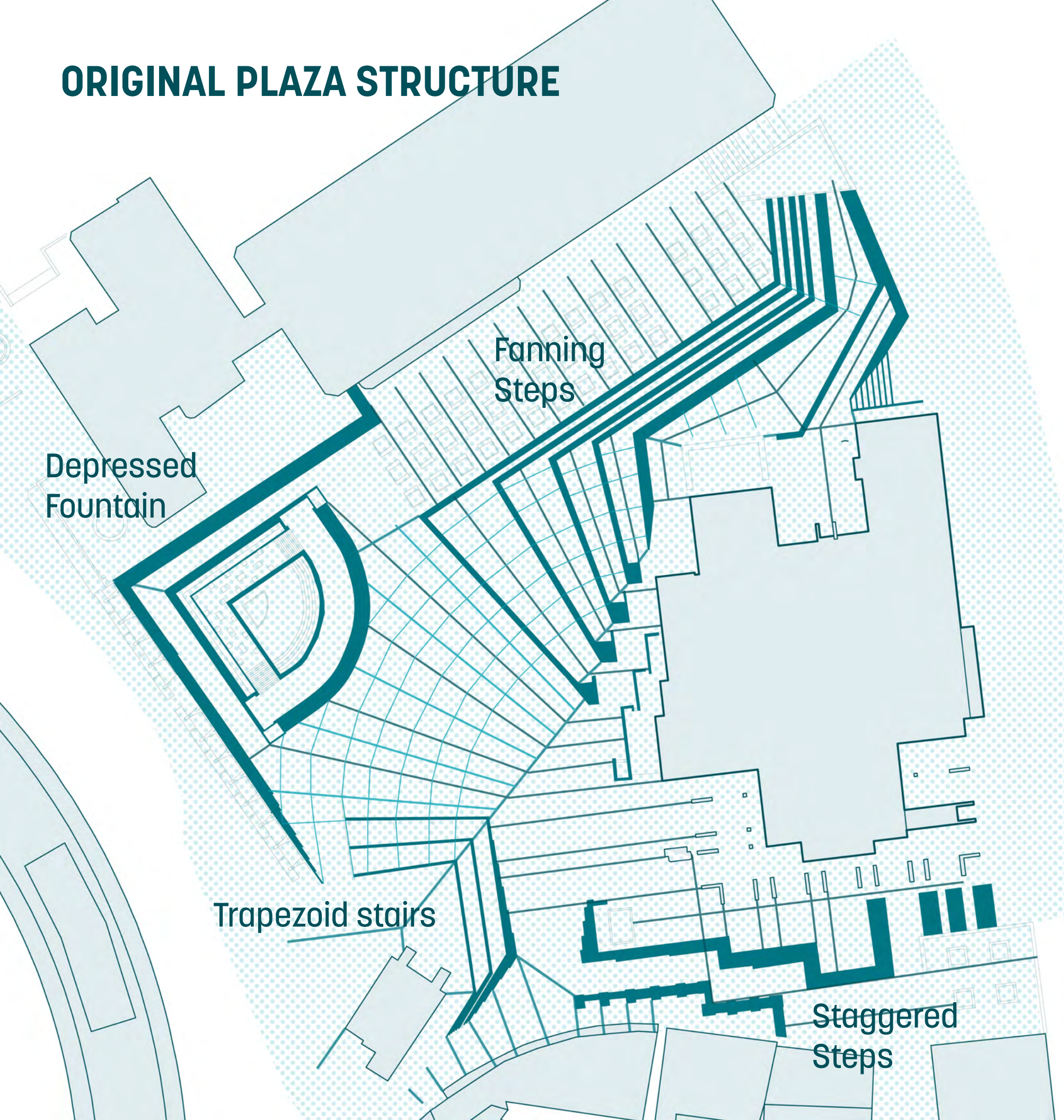
- - - - - Phase 1 Limit of Work
- 1 Congress Street Civic Space
- 2 Hanover Promenade
- 3 Bus Shelter + Plantings
- 4 Adventure Play Slope
- 5 North Entry Court + Re-opened North Entry
- 6 Civic Amphitheater Steps
- 7 Planted Slope
- 8 Interactive Art Terrace
- 9 Cafe Terrace
- 10 Main Plaza
- 11 Upper Plaza/Gathering Place
- 12 Cambridge Terraces Speakers
- 13 Corner
- 14 Access to 4th Floor Terrace
- 15 Main Entry Walk



PROPOSED AERIAL



ORIGINAL PLAZA STRUCTURE

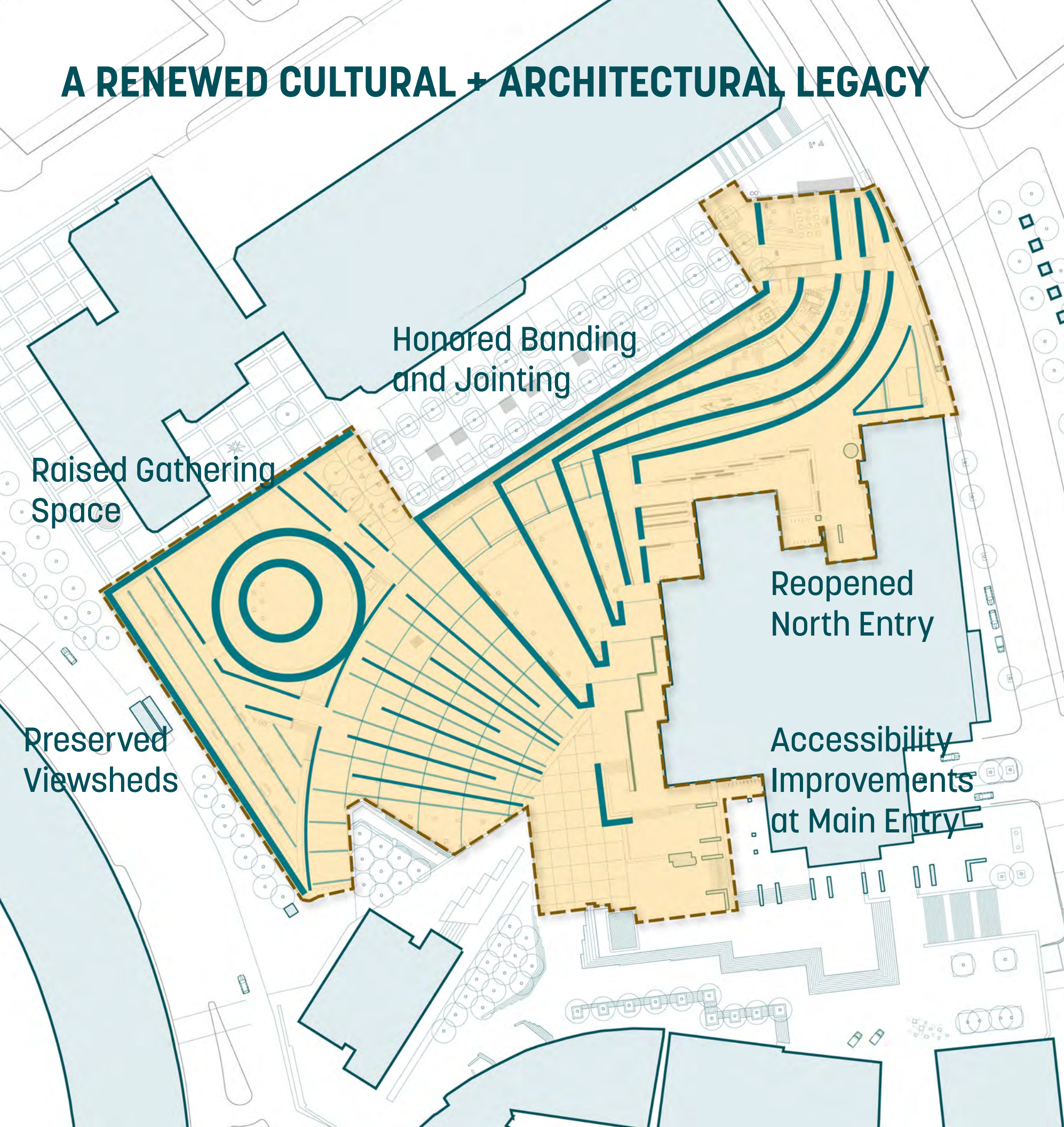


Granite Stair Treads
in a Brick Field



Expansion Joints + Brick Pattering

A RENEWED CULTURAL + ARCHITECTURAL LEGACY



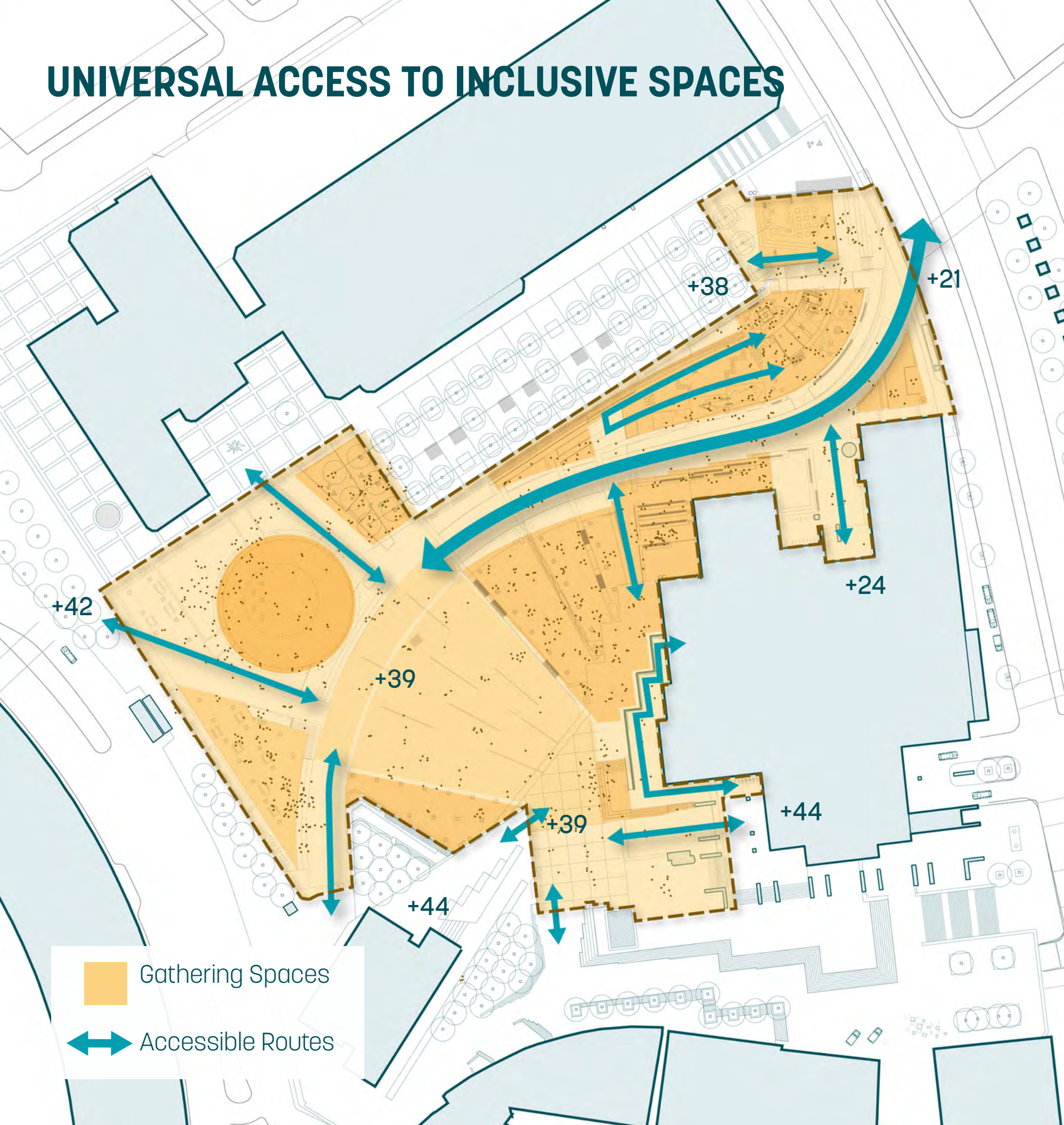
GOAL:

- Honor the original structure of the plaza, with granite banding, brick paver field with radial jointing, and iconic viewsheds to the building.

HOW?

- Reinterpret the granite banding as paving bands, benches and walls. Honor the radial banding at the main plaza and west facade, more whimsy at north facade
- Honor the original radial jointing in the main plaza and orthogonal jointing adjacent to the building
- Honor the object in the northwest corner of the plaza

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO INCLUSIVE SPACES



100%

of plaza spaces and building entries universally accessible

+ 1 newly re-opened public entry to the building

+3k

new places to sit throughout the plaza

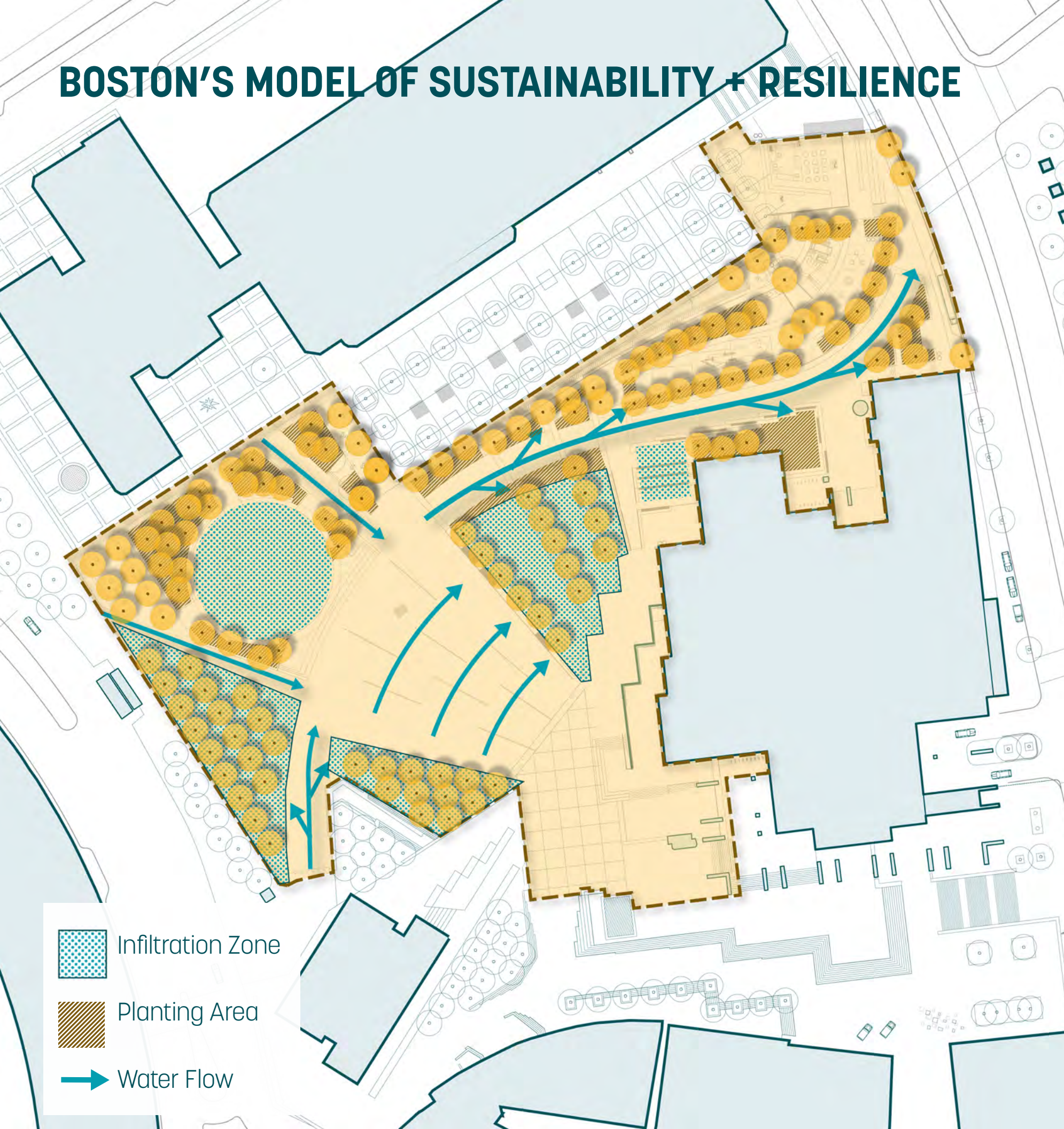
12k

square feet of destination adventure playscape

11k

square feet of terraces for pop-up play and interactive public art

BOSTON'S MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY + RESILIENCE



5x

increase in permeable surfaces
to soak up stormwater

+100

new trees improving shade,
scale and air quality

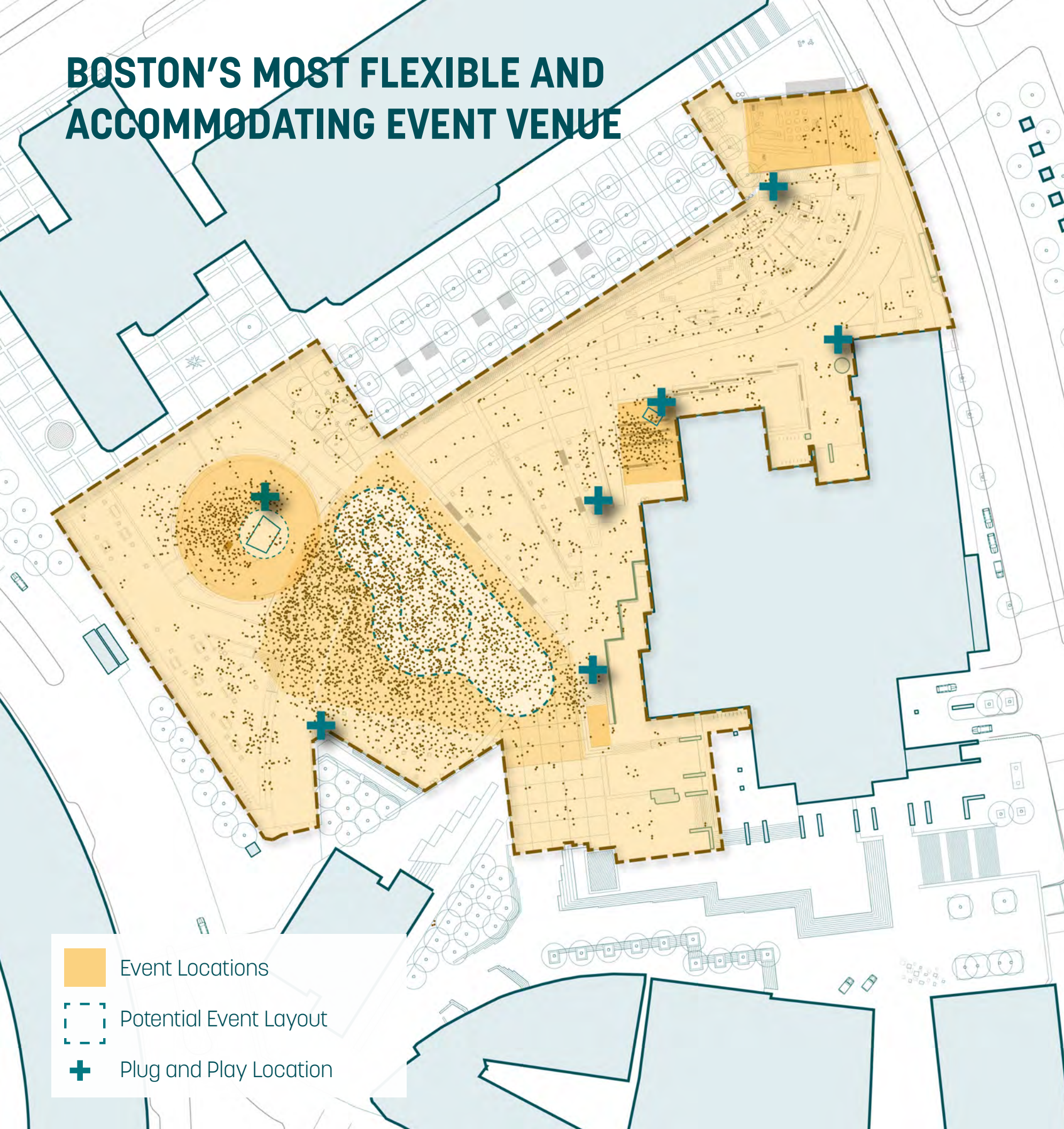
50


lights replaced with
efficient LED technology

22.5K

square feet of granite and brick
paving re-used or recycled

BOSTON'S MOST FLEXIBLE AND ACCOMMODATING EVENT VENUE



-  Event Locations
-  Potential Event Layout
-  Plug and Play Location

7

“plug and play” locations with infrastructure for events

10-12K

people accommodated in one large crowd on main plaza (20-25K on plaza overall)

3

small event and gathering spaces

1

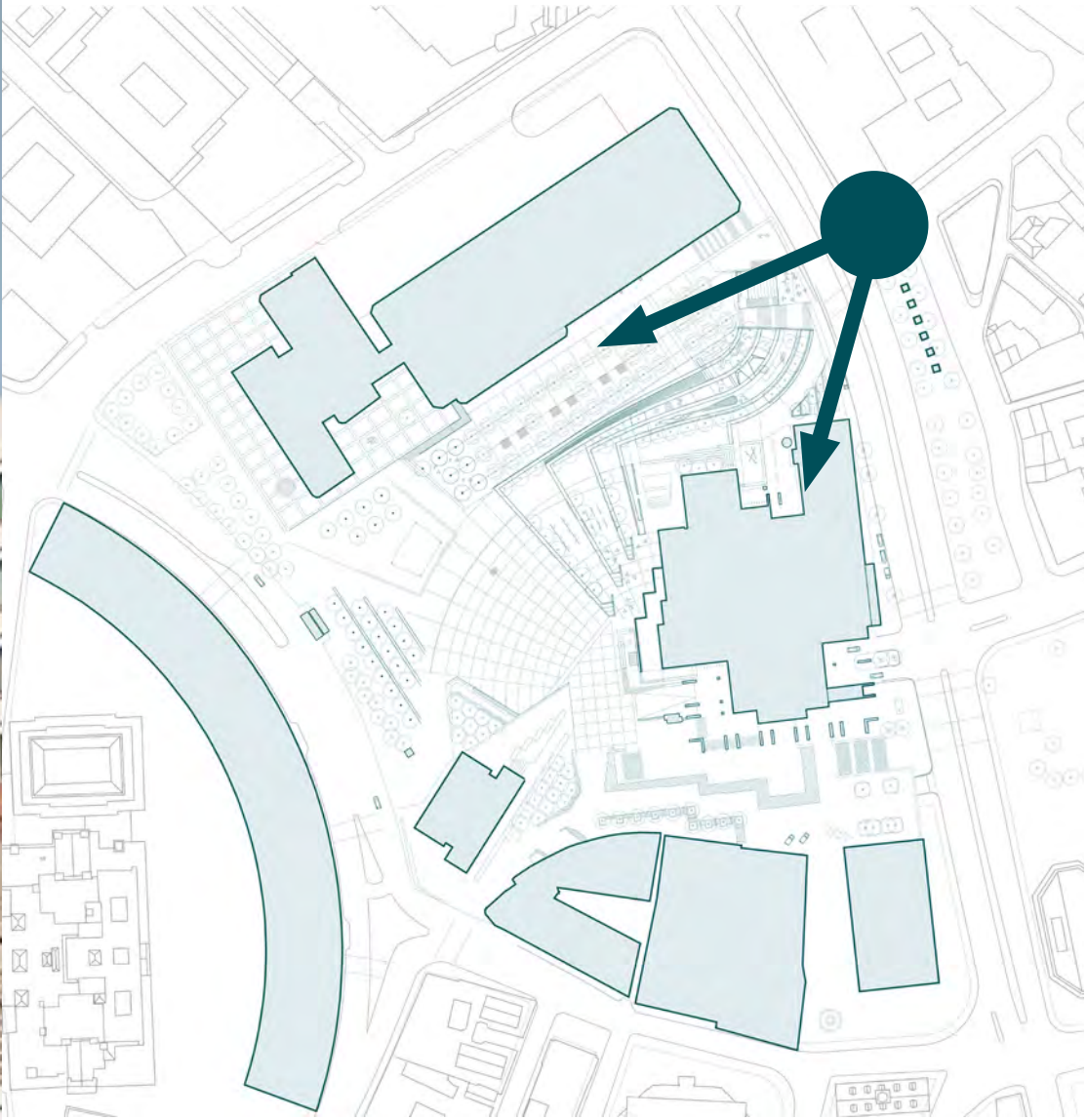
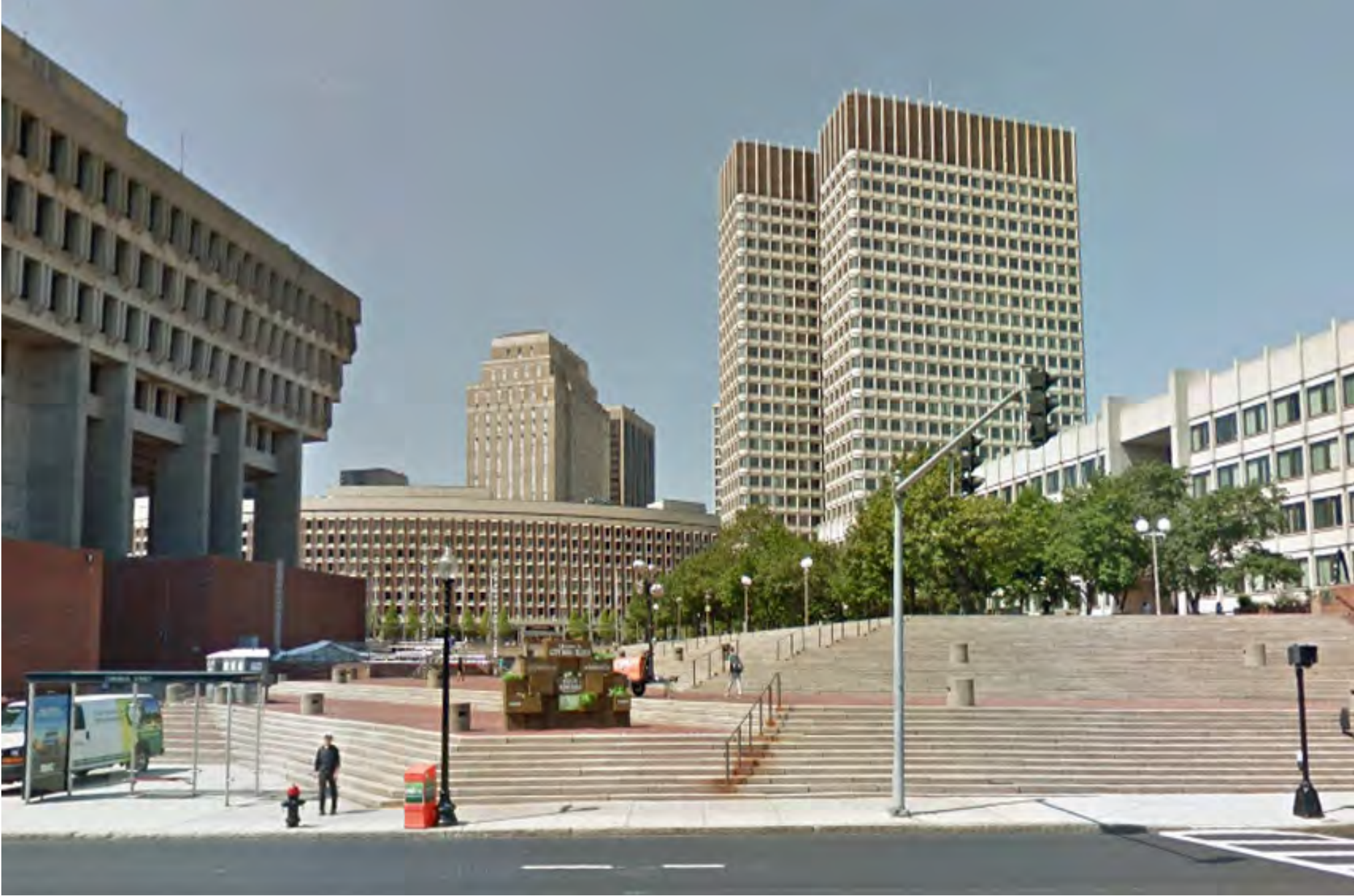
new civic building to host and support events

An aerial view of a city street with a teal overlay. The text 'Virtual Tour' is centered in a white box. Below the text is a solid orange horizontal bar. The background shows a city street with buildings, trees, and a parking lot.

Virtual Tour



EXISTING VIEW FROM CONGRESS STREET

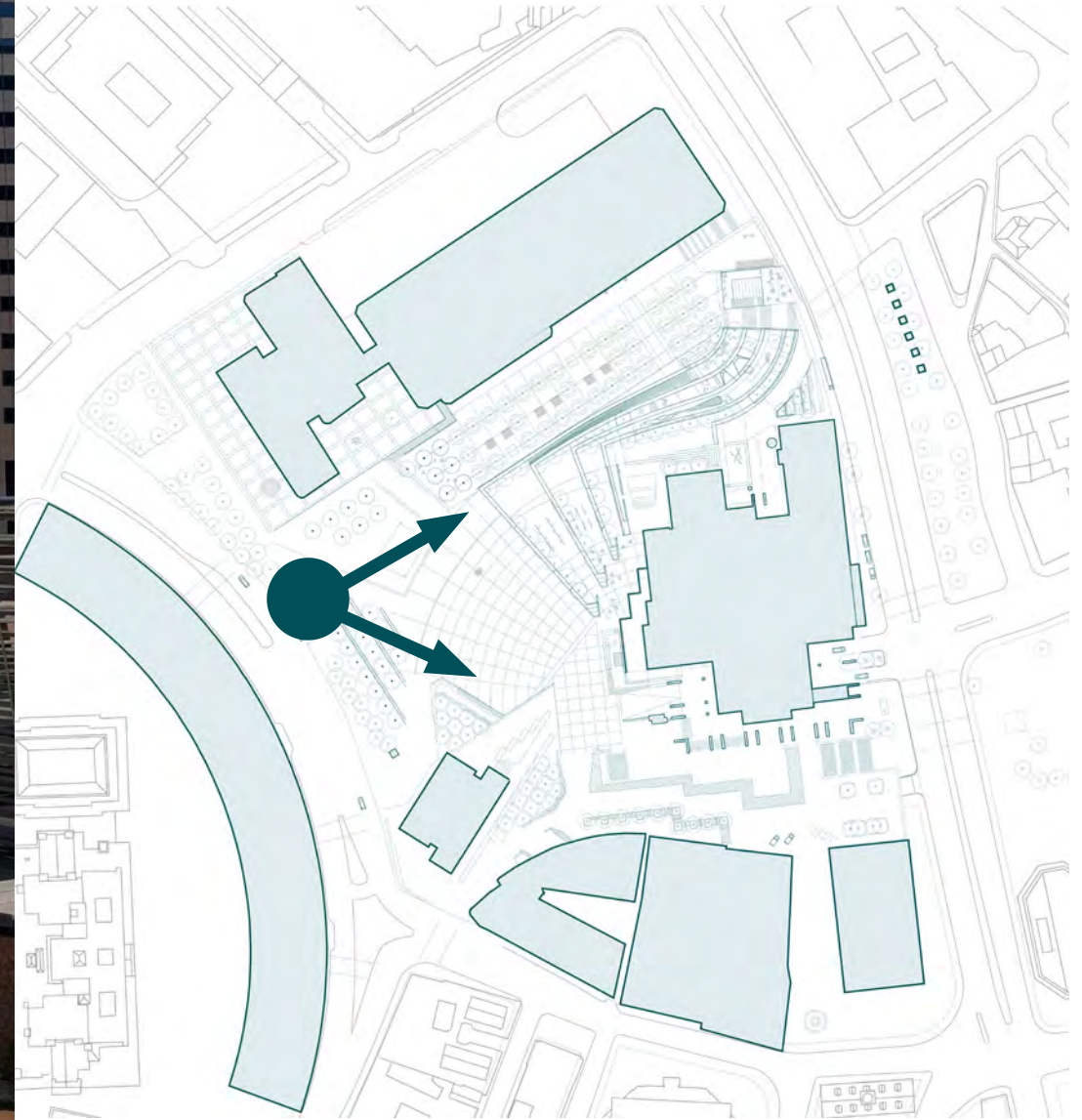


WELCOMING GATEWAYS TO AN INCLUSIVE PLAZA

(View from Congress Street)



EXISTING VIEW OF MAIN PLAZA FROM CAMBRIDGE STREET



WELCOMING GATEWAYS TO AN INCLUSIVE PLACE

(View from Cambridge Street)



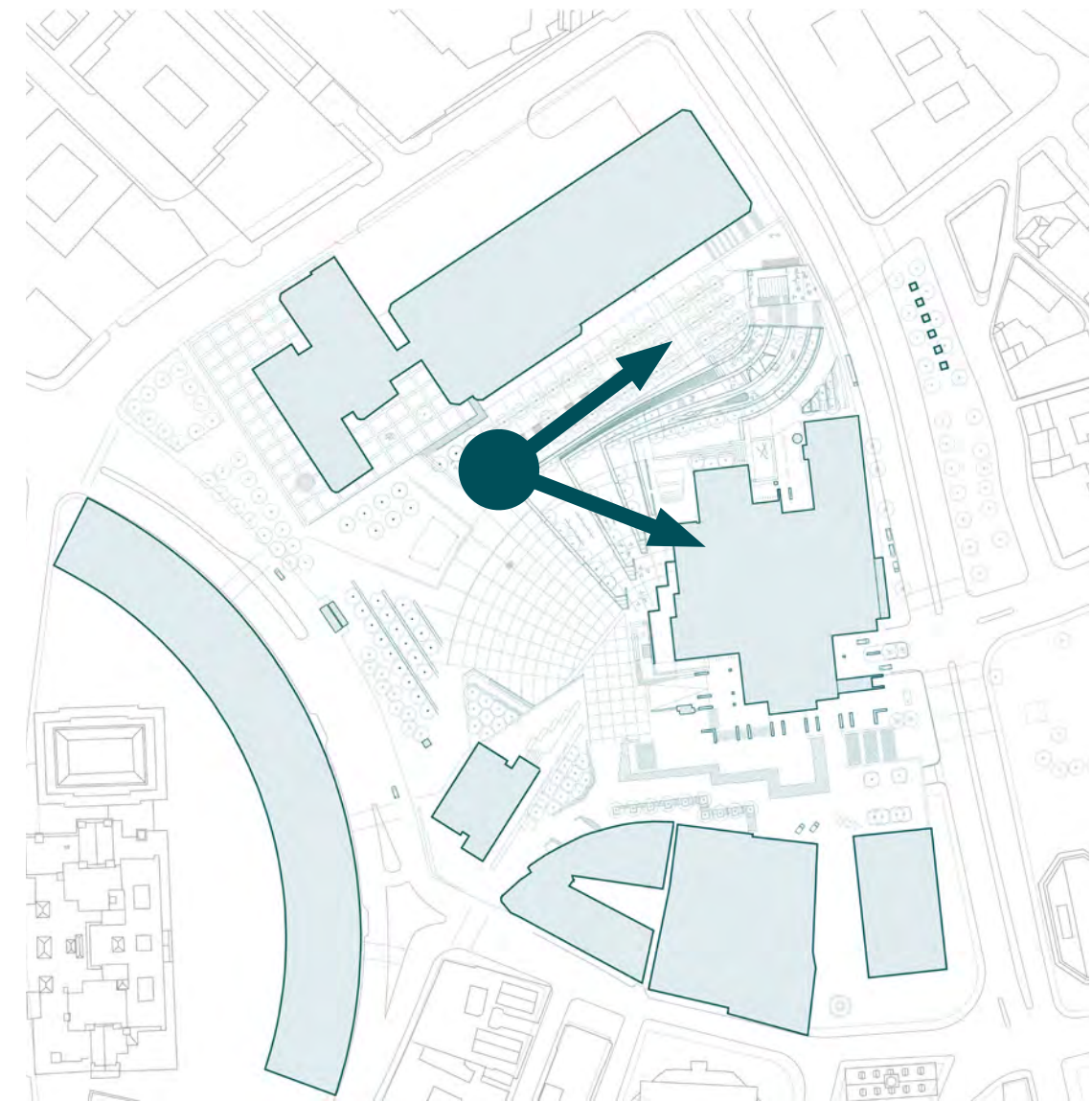
→ Main Entrance
→ North Entrance
→ Playscapes
→ John F. Kennedy
Federal Building
Federal Hall
City Hall
North End
Boston Convention

BOSTON'S MOST ICONIC AND FLEXIBLE EVENT VENUE

(Winter view across Main Plaza)



EXISTING VIEW FROM MAIN PLAZA TOWARDS CONGRESS STREET

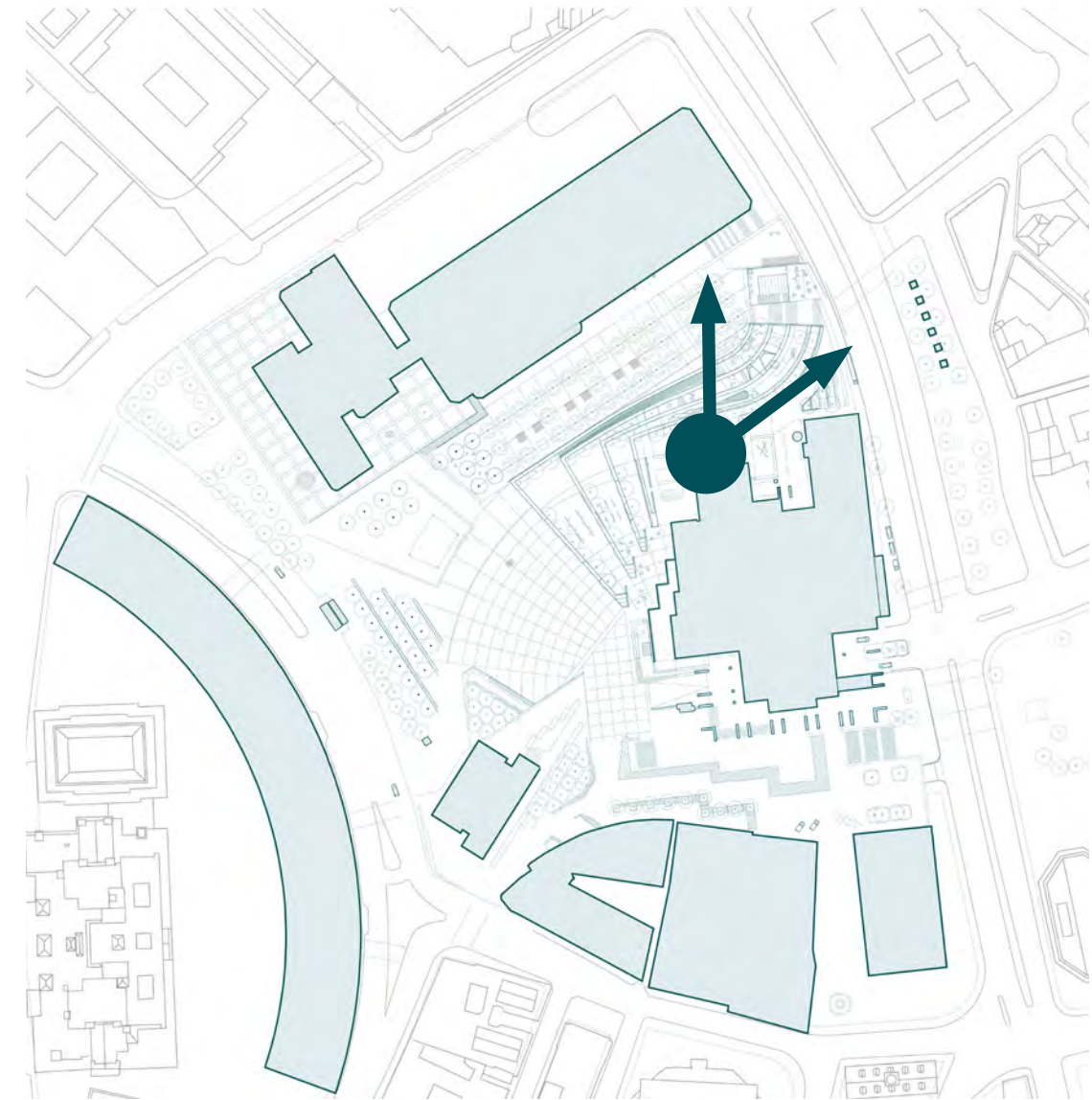


UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO COMFORTABLE ACTIVE PLACES

(View down Hanover Promenade)



EXISTING VIEW FROM NORTH ENTRY TOWARDS GSA AND CONGRESS STREET

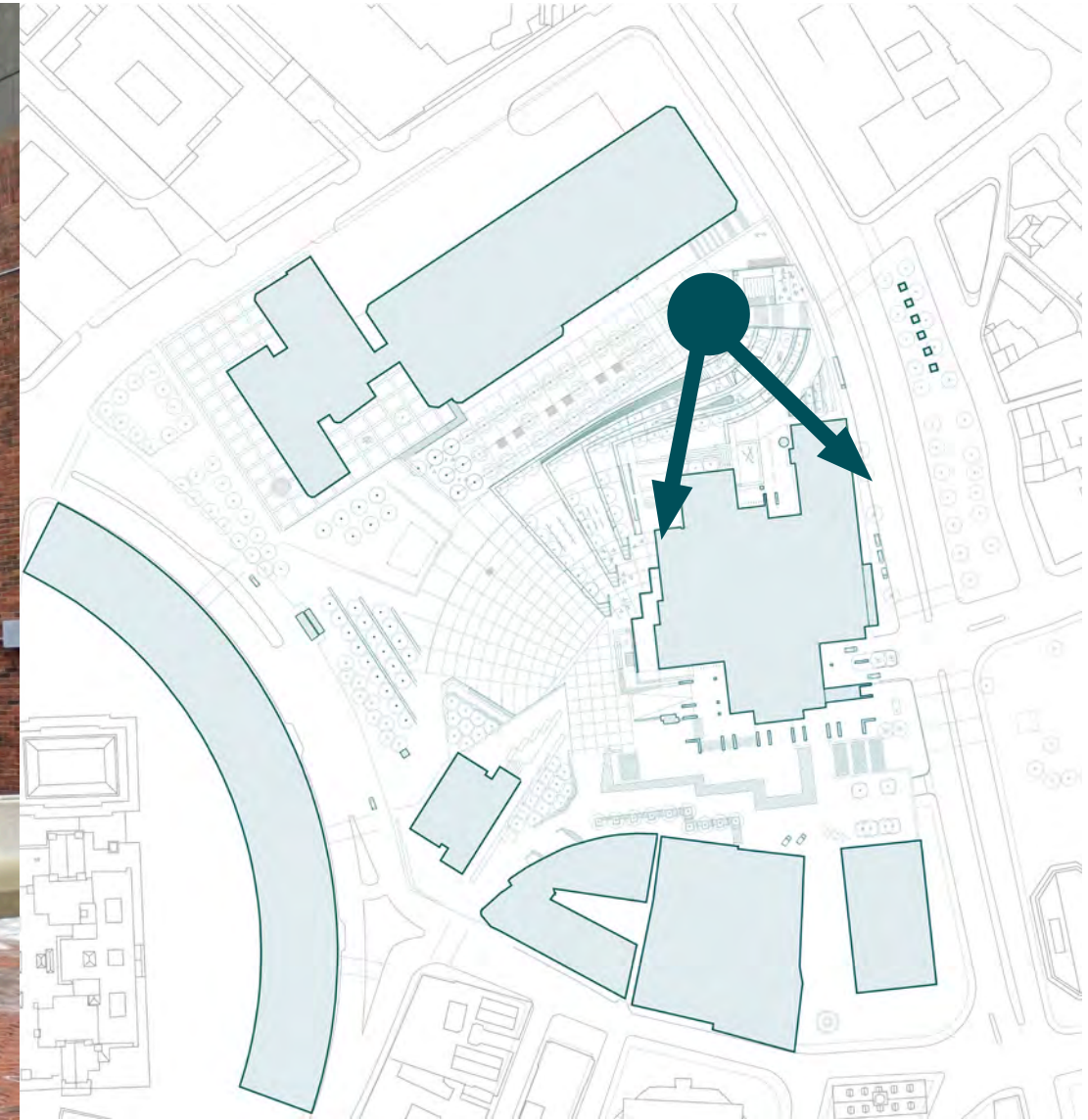


A UNIQUE DESTINATION PLAYScape FOR ALL GENERATIONS

(View of Playscape Entry)



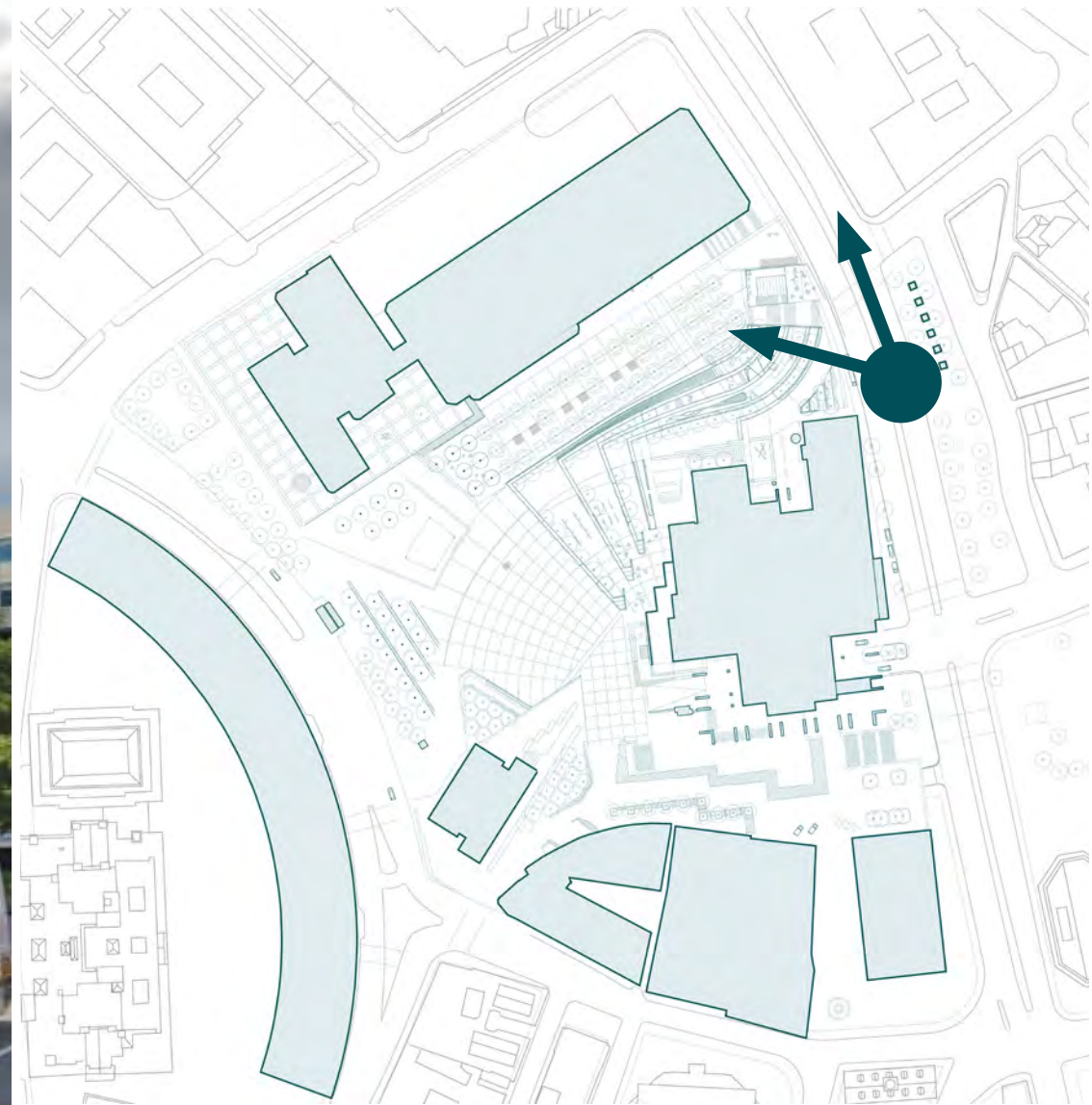
EXISTING VIEW AT NORTH ENTRY



A CIVIC AND ACTIVE NORTH ENTRY



EXISTING VIEW OF STEPS AND MBTA VENT STRUCTURE AT CONGRESS STREET

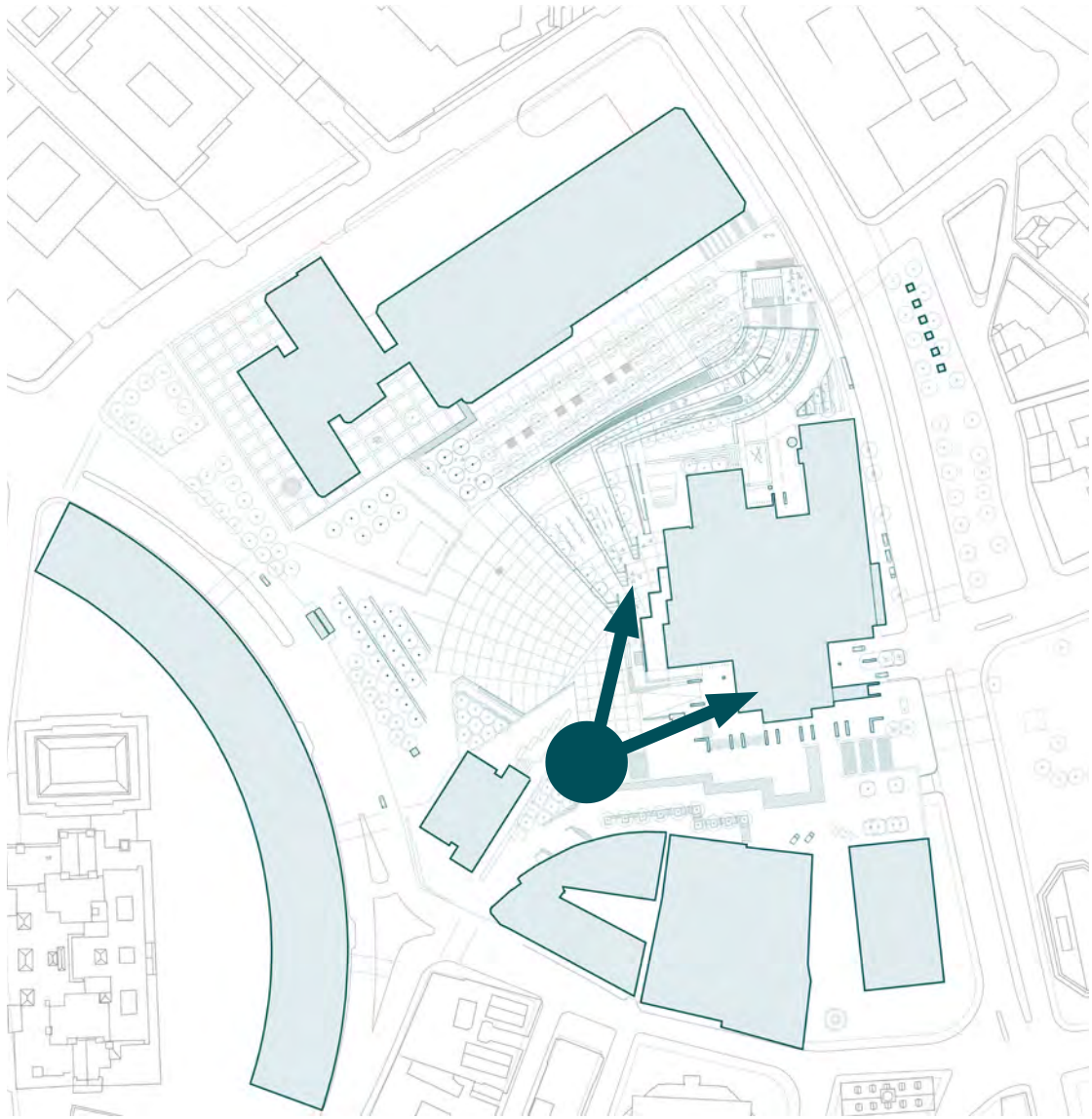


BOSTON'S CIVIC PAVILION

(View at Congress Street)



EXISTING VIEW OF MAIN ENTRANCE AND RAMP TO 4TH FLOOR TERRACE



A WELCOMING MAIN ENTRY AND SPEAKERS CORNER

(View of West Facade)



A FLEXIBLE SPEAKERS CORNER *(View of West Facade during speaking event)*



A Reinvigorated Civic Heart of Boston



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and Civic
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A Reinvigorated Civic Heart of Boston

Minor Modification to Zoning



Minor Modification

- A modification to the plan that does not substantially change the primary goals of the Government Center Urban Renewal Plan.



**boston planning &
development agency**

**Government
Center
Urban
Renewal
Plan**

**BOSTON
REDEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**



Parcel 11 – City Hall Plaza

- Currently the Government Center Urban Renewal Plan only allows for “Public Open Space” Land Uses.
- A minor modification to Parcel 11 in the Government Center Urban Renewal Plan would include the addition of “Community Uses” to be included with “Public Open Space” as Land Use Requirements.



Minor Modification Process

- 30 Day Notice to DHCD –
Department of Housing and
Community Development
- 30 Day Notice to the Boston City
Council
- Community Feedback
- BPDA Board Vote



An aerial photograph of a city, likely San Francisco, with a teal color overlay. The image shows various buildings, including a prominent one with a clock tower in the background. A yellow rectangle is positioned below the 'Thank you!' text.

Thank you!

Please join us at the boards to discuss questions and comments with the city and design team. You may also fill out a comment card with your thoughts.