Are we on course?

State of the Waterfront
Today there are more groups and agencies working in concert to improve our waterfront than ever before. We are seeing progress in general. But it will take far more attention from policy and decision makers to ensure we have a waterfront and Harbor deserving of the NY-NJ metropolitan area.

In 2007 the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) convened an unprecedented series of strategy sessions with participants from over 240 agencies and organizations. This culminated in The Waterfront Action Agenda—a shared vision and policy platform for the region. In 2009 the Mayor’s Office adopted this framework into Vision 20/20: New York City’s Comprehensive Waterfront Plan.

This is a monumental step forward for the region.

Progress is being made. New York City has released its comprehensive waterfront plan and taken up the waterfront in earnest again. New Jersey received stimulus money to complete sections of the Hudson River Walkway. Currently over 2,900 acres of waterfront parks and public spaces are being planned or are under construction in more than 50 projects across the region.

State of the Waterfront serves as a snapshot of the policies today and proposes Mechanisms of Change to keep government on course, ensure projects get funded, and we maintain forward momentum.
A Metropolitan Waterfront Scorecard

To help us stay on course the *State of the Waterfront* is the start of a comprehensive report card for the region and the political leadership whose policies impact our region’s 6th borough—the waterfront. Here is a glimpse of tomorrow’s scorecard...

The waterfront score is an average of four key drivers that are vital to a healthy vibrant waterfront.

Indicators enable us to measure the progress of different aspects of our waterfront. This will give us a snapshot of the region’s progress.

1. A Working Waterfront 29.2
2. Blue Highways 33.2
3. A Green Harbor 53.6
4. A Waterfront Town 35.3

For example, the Waterfront Town score is an average of many things ranging from infrastructure to water-dependent community groups.

Miles of Greenways
Number of Historic Boats
Number of Boathouses
Number of Marinas
Number of Docks
Number of Cleats

The Metropolitan Waterfront Scorecard holds our political leadership accountable by comparing congressional districts and city council districts. It highlights the disparities of waterfront neighborhoods, what needs fixing, and what deserves celebrating.

Growth in Top U.S. Ports Throughput 2002-2005
Source: Global Insight

The Scorecard compares other top waterfronts to NY-NJ.
Economic Opportunities

A Working Waterfront

Over the last decade the Port of NY-NJ has experienced healthy growth, maintaining its position as the largest port complex on the East Coast and generating thousands of jobs and billions of dollars. Our core challenges are to continue to grow and protect the maritime industry, employ local communities, and maintain ship channel and berth depths in an equitable and environmentally sound fashion.

Despite the recession, most believe port volume will increase substantially over the next decade. But the maritime support industries essential to the port will need to maintain their position and continue to be a source of good blue collar jobs. Our core challenges are to protect and preserve the maritime industry, address the cost of dredged material disposal, protect the environment, and preserve working waterfront industries in Significant Maritime and Industrial Areas (SMIAs) in New York. The good news is nationwide movements for clean and healthy ports have picked up momentum and garnered broad political support. And maritime industries and stakeholders throughout New York and New Jersey are working toward common goals of economic and environmental sustainability.

MWA recommends we:

- Plan, coordinate, and work on bi-state solutions to ensure the cost of dredge material disposal does not increase substantially in the next decade
- Expand the number of maritime apprenticeship and training programs for local residents
- Develop tax incentives linked to job creation and zoning incentives for waterfront industries
- Improve interagency coordination and put into place the Regional Sediment Management Plan
- Put into place One Stop Shop for Permitting Assistance to help permittees navigate the waterfront permitting process
- Protect local communities by reducing pollution from truck traffic and ship engines

Benchmarks for a Working Waterfront

To accurately assess the progress of a Working Waterfront, the Waterfront Scorecard will include benchmarks across infrastructure, productivity, diversity, and programmatic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in cost of NY dredge</td>
<td>10% reduction</td>
<td>20% reduction</td>
<td>30% reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cubic yards of disposal capacity for NY</td>
<td>270,000 cubic yards</td>
<td>300,000 cubic yards</td>
<td>320,000 cubic yards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of funded apprenticeship programs for New Yorkers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transportation

Blue Highways

We celebrate the fact that over the last few years 1,000,000 trucks were taken off roads by new rail and port activities on the Brooklyn side of the harbor. The challenging news is there are fewer ferry routes today than there were two years ago, taxing our already congested roadways.

There are currently 19 private ferry routes in the NY and NJ region, with a total ridership of 10 million per year. While this sounds good too much of the region is underserved. We must establish funding mechanisms for the ferries and integrate ferries into the transportation network much like the Staten Island Ferry, the most widely used ferry system in North America. Another important use of our Blue Highways is transporting goods to reduce trucking.

MWA recommends:
- Increase freight transit with better rail connections throughout the harbor
- Improve ferry service to NYC’s outer boroughs and throughout the tri-state area
- Link existing transit hubs to the NYC transit system
- Incorporate the ancillary benefits of emergency services during times of crisis and tie this to new funding sources
- Bring in subsidies to ferry service from private and federal sources
- Improve wayfaring signage in NY/NJ to make ferry travel easier

Benchmarks for Blue Highways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily ferry commuters other than Staten Island</td>
<td>~31,000(^{[1]})</td>
<td>45,000(^{[2]})</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of bus lines serving ferry connections in New York City(^{[1]})</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of funded apprenticeship programs for New Yorkers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{[1]}\) From Travel Patterns in the New York Metropolitan Area, NYMTC, 3rd quarter 2009.
\(^{[2]}\) Growth in ferry ridership based on San Francisco Water Emergency Transportation Agency’s projected tripling of Bay Area ferry ridership by 2025.
\(^{[3]}\) Based on MWA evaluation of maps and transit maps.
\(^{[4]}\) According to local officials no locations exist currently. Two locations by 2025 may be a goal for the region.
The Comprehensive Restoration Plan promises to elevate the metropolitan waterfront on par with the Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, and Great Lakes as a nationally significant region deserving of federal support. In comparison, the Great Lakes received $400 million in federal assistance in 2009. NY-NJ received less than a million.

For the first time we have a region-wide restoration plan encouraging a mosaic of habitats to provide society with environmental and social benefits. We can now make sure projects achieve the greatest restoration impact by incorporating multiple ecosystem improvements in single projects.

However we shouldn’t lose sight of the billions of gallons of storm and combined sewer discharges that currently pollute our waterways.

### Benchmarks for a Green Harbor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green Roofs</td>
<td>0.07% coverage in NYC&lt;sup&gt;[1]&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>10% coverage in region&lt;sup&gt;[2]&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>20% coverage in region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands restored or created</td>
<td>175 acres&lt;sup&gt;[5]&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1,200 acres&lt;sup&gt;[6]&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2,000 acres&lt;sup&gt;[7]&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of community based climate change adaptation plans</td>
<td>0&lt;sup&gt;[8]&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles of water redeveloped using innovative ecological design</td>
<td>1.25&lt;sup&gt;[9]&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>[1]</sup> MWA estimate.  
<sup>[3]</sup> Based on PlanNYC and possible NJ reductions.  
<sup>[4]</sup> Based on PlanNYC and possible NJ reductions.  
<sup>[7]</sup> Based on additional 500 acres of wetlands created every year after 2015.  
<sup>[8]</sup> None at the moment but UPROSE is working on what they believe is the first in NYC.  
<sup>[9]</sup> MWA estimate based on “Design the Edge” and similar projects.
Targets for Oyster Restoration

The short-term objective as stated in the CRP for oyster reefs is to create 500 acres of self-sustaining and naturally expanding oyster reef habitat across 10 to 20 sites by 2015. By 2050, the objective is to have 5,000 acres of established oyster reef habitat.

Biologists call oysters a keystone species—a species that plays a critical role in maintaining the structure of an ecological community.

In addition to making the water cleaner and clearer, oysters latch onto objects and one another, forming natural reefs that provide habitat for plants and animals, while combatting erosion.

Many MWA Alliance Partners are working on oyster restoration including NY/NJ Baykeeper, Bronx River Alliance, Harbor School, Hudson River Foundation, Brooklyn Bridge Park, Rocking the Boat, River Project, Trust for Governors Island and many others.

To fulfill the promise of a Green Harbor we must:

- Work with government leaders to ensure the Comprehensive Restoration Plan is implemented and sufficiently funded
- Make sure the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan is applied equitably across the city particularly to the most underserved communities
- Promote oyster restoration across the harbor
- Develop the Waterfront Design Guidelines for NY and NJ based on the Comprehensive Restoration Plan to encourage ecological design and public access

Biologists call oysters a keystone species—a species that plays a critical role in maintaining the structure of an ecological community.
A Waterfront Town

Today there are more opportunities for people of all walks of life to picnic, barbecue, stroll, bike along the water’s edge and access the water than a decade ago. However, these waterfront opportunities remain few and far between especially in communities. It will take diligence and creative solutions like Greenways and MWA’s Eco Docks to ensure every neighborhood enjoys the quality of life advantages of a Waterfront Town.

Harbor Camp
Getting kids on to the water, that’s the goal of MWA’s Harbor Camp Program serving 1,000 kids every summer. Every child has the right and need to know they live in a City of Water – a region surrounded and defined by water.

Livability

A Waterfront Town is built on an open dialogue and partnership between government, community groups, and users of all economic backgrounds. Unfortunately, for the neighborhoods who don’t have this partnership, the benefits of a vibrant, fun, engaging waterfront are often off the radar for local government and residents. MWA is helping bridge this disconnect with Eco Docks. In a partnership with the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, MWA is spearheading the construction of the region’s first Eco Dock in Bay Ridge by 2011. Eco Docks help land-locked communities host recreational programs and educational vessels like Hudson River Sloop Clearwater and Fireboat John J. Harvey.

Clearwater takes over 3,000 NYC kids on the water each year and would take more if NYC
Greenways are a comprehensive network of bike paths that connect the metropolitan waterfront. Greenways expand recreational opportunities for walking, jogging, biking, and in-line skating. Greenways answer the growing public demand for safe and pleasant ways to travel about the City. These trails allow one to get to work or school, shop or do errands, or to reach the waterfront, parks, beaches, and museums.

Overall, 41.6 miles of new Greenway are funded for design and construction using $133 Million in City, State and Federal funds over the next four years. An additional $85.6 million in Greenway destinations and enhancements, such as comfort stations, boat launches, and environmental restoration projects, are funded for design and construction over the next four years.

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**Benchmarks for a Waterfront Town**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of NYC Greenways[1]</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Historic Boats calling NY Harbor Home[2]</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Eco Docks[3]</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate number of water access points per mile of waterfront</td>
<td>0.2 [4]</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[1] Current estimate NYC greenway and Hudson River Walkway miles and MWA goals
[2] North River Historic Ship Society
[3] MWA programmatic goal
[4] Figure derived by dividing number of access points by total miles of waterfront in NYC
Currently there are over 2,900 acres of waterfront parks and public spaces being planned or under construction across the region. But are these waterfront edges designed for the community, safety, growth, transportation, sea level rise, and the environment? MWA recommends that we...

Design for Water Access and Safety
Does your waterfront design include boat storage for human-powered vessels, gates in fences, bollards and cleats for boats to tie-up, whether it is for an emergency, event, visiting ship, or educational program?

Design for Sea Level Rise
We need community based and developed adaptation plans that make our most vulnerable communities resilient to changes, improve the environmental health of our communities, and engage residents at the grassroots level.

Build it and Study it
We must incorporate ecological restoration into park plans, monitor their effectiveness and learn what needs to be done to improve the ecological productivity of the waterfront. Scientists and engineers agree if we do not build and study innovative designs, including pier and docks, static decline is the future for our waterfront.

Our communities need a well designed edge.
Mechanisms of Change

In the past 40 years too many grassroots attempts to improve the waterfront have been slowed or derailed by political and economic shifts. To ensure we stay on course, MWA and Alliance Partners are putting into place Mechanisms of Change to provide ongoing funding for projects and waterfront oversight at the highest level of government.

1. **NY-NJ Harbor Caucus**
   Now is the time to intensify our push to fund the restoration of the harbor and waterfront. We need to be sophisticated, working in the halls of Congress and spearheading a campaign in Trenton, Albany, and D.C.

2. **The Metropolitan Waterfront Scorecard**
   We need a comprehensive report card to help ensure we stay on track despite political and economic uncertainties. MWA is spearheading this effort gathering key metrics and targets for the waterfront as outlined in the sample scorecards on each page. This report card is the first step to holding ourselves accountable to progress.

3. **Funding for Regulatory Agencies**
   State, local, environmental and regulatory agencies issue permits, provide funding, and protect the environment. Without adequate funding for important permitting agencies, projects, plans and programs, progress on the waterfront will be delayed or postponed indefinitely. Funding and staff for agencies such as the NYS Department of Environmental Protection, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, maritime police departments, the US Army Corp of Engineers, and the Coast Guard are critical components of a healthy and vibrant waterfront.

4. **Department of the Waterfront**
   MWA encourages the creation of a Department of the Waterfront or other governance entity for NYC and the Harbor.

5. **One Stop Permitting**
   The One Stop Shop for Permitting Assistance is a proposed consulting entity or office housed at an agency or not-for-profit organization to help permittees understand and navigate the waterfront permitting process. Instead of checking individual websites and guides for every state and municipal agency that requires permit information, permittees can visit a central location for a comprehensive look at the permitting process as well as information about how to answer requirements and comply with regulations.

6. **Environmental Curriculum**
   There is no more permanent or effective solution to all waterfront challenges than educating our next generation of citizens and leaders. A first and most important step is the development of environmental, marine, coastal, and maritime curriculum for all harbor students. Off-the-shelf education packages will bring New York Harbor to life for thousands of students.
How does all that stuff on container ships get to my door? How can I get a job working on the waterfront? How can I go sailing? Are harbor cruises for everyone? Why can’t I take a ferry from the Bronx to Brooklyn or Jersey City? Where can I swim? Where can I touch the water? Where can I launch my kayak? When will we have more waterfront parks near my neighborhood? When will my school have a program on the waterfront? When can I get ferry service for my neighborhood? How can we protect blue collar jobs on our waterfront? How can I protect my family from storm surges? How will boats tie up in my neighborhood in an emergency? When will my business be able to afford to dredge? Where can a historic ship dock in my neighborhood? Is our waterfront on course? When will we have a boathouse? Is it safe to eat the fish? How does all that stuff on container ships get to my door? How can I get a job working on the waterfront? How can I go sailing? Are harbor cruises for everyone? Why can’t I take a ferry from the Bronx to Brooklyn or Jersey City? Where can I swim? Where can I touch the water? Where can I launch my kayak? When will we have more waterfront parks near my neighborhood? When will my school have a program on the waterfront? When can I get ferry service for my neighborhood?