

ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT

Implementation of the Waterfront Plan

Progress • Priorities • Public Realm • Infrastructure • Sustainability



Draft for review by the Alexandria Waterfront Commission

September 15, 2026

01 WHERE WE ARE

From Plan to Place



A waterfront that works for people and nature

The Waterfront Plan is visionary and ambitious. How close are we to fulfilling the dream?



Implementation

- Redevelopment and new development
- Parks and infrastructure
- Amenities and beauty
- Financial soundness

Three lenses for implementation

ENJOYABLE

Public spaces, access,
comfort and activity

SUSTAINABLE

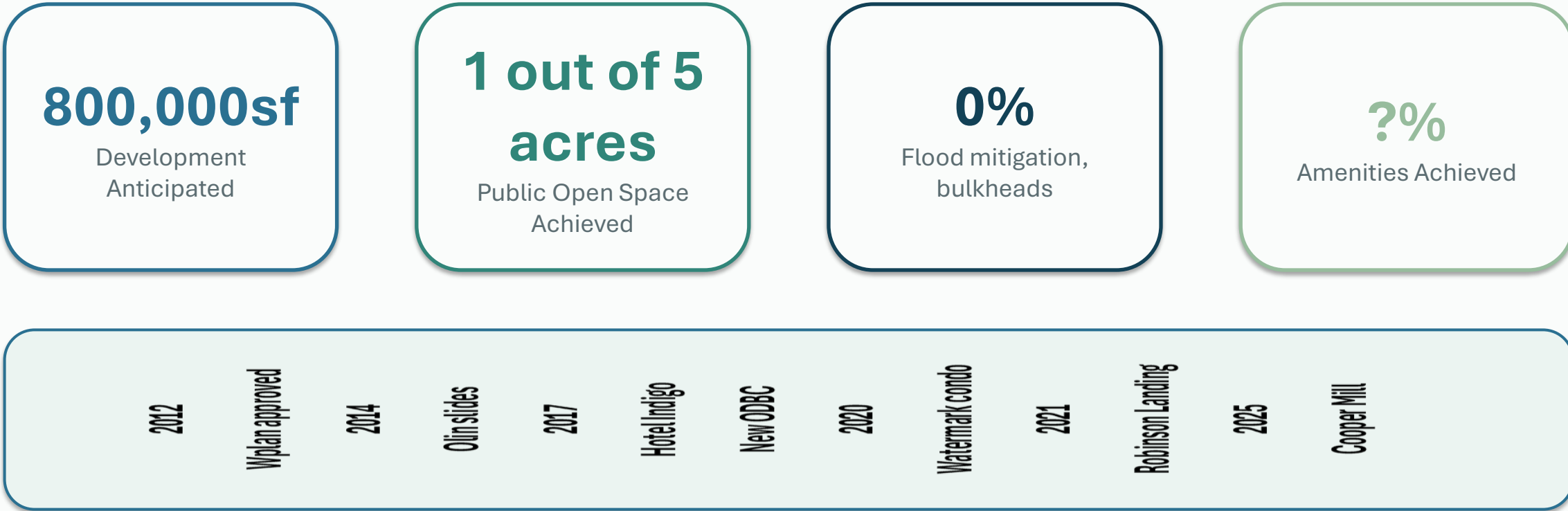
Resilience, ecology,
water and shade

CONNECTED

Streets, paths,
parks and the city

Implementation at a glance, June 30, 2025

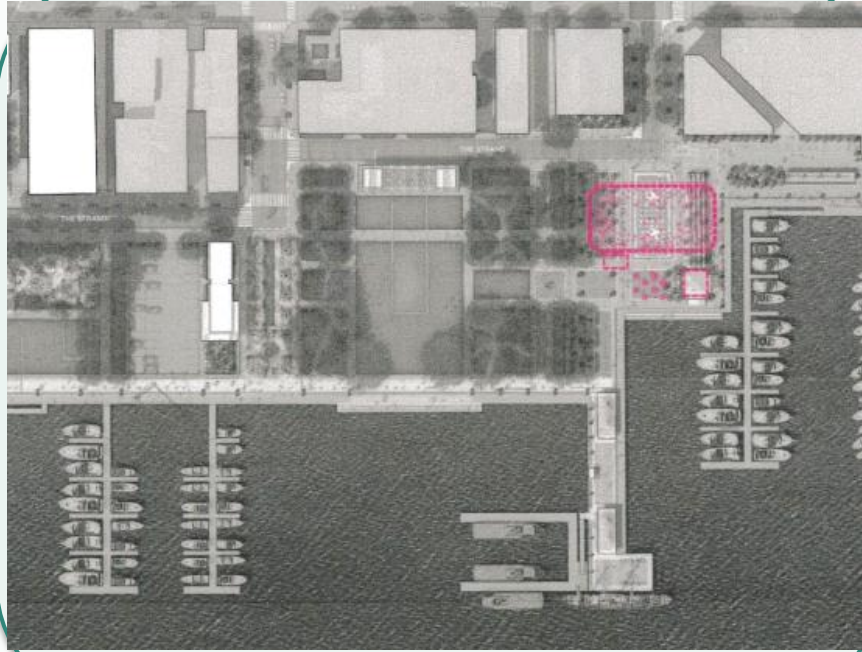
A clean dashboard for milestones, investment, projects or metrics is needed.



Source: City of Alexandria FY2025
Status of Implementation Report

Expectations Set

Publicly accessible, economically viable, environmentally and historically sensitive, culturally rich, operationally sustainable



WHY IT MATTERS

Ensure uses, design and scale of new development are compatible with the goals of a revitalized waterfront and the ambiance, history, and character of the area and surrounding neighborhood.

STATUS

Many recommended measures are underway, others are still to come.

NEXT

Reaching a final plan for flood mitigation has held up progress on many goals. Once a decision is finalized and areas of impact identified, implementation steps on remaining goals can be identified.

Approach

- Review 2012 Waterfront Plan and 2014 Olin slides in detail
- Create analysis spreadsheet indicating status of completion of line items

Rivergate Park and Rowing Facility	40			
Keep low level of activity	R 3.18	✓		
Reorient pathways to take visitors along the river's edge	R 3.19			↘
Provide additional plantings using native plants in the western half	R 3.20			
Commission artist-designed seating providing views to the river	R 3.21			
Add original tide lock stones	R 3.21		✓	
Keep options open for volleyball court	R 3.22			
No changes to rowing facility	R 3.23		✓	
Oronoco Bay Park	41			
Increase level of activity; including for families and children	41			↘
Support events such as weddings, family reunions, birthdays	41	✓		
Improve ability to accommodate large events; regrade to create a sloped lawn	42, R 3.26			
Transform portions of the space into more natural settings	42			↘
Remedy blank walls facing the park with public art, lighting, landscaping	42, R 3.25			
Improve access at Wythe Street; enhance viewshed	42, R 3.	✓		
Create a pair of intersecting curved walks to frame the great lawn	43, R 3.27			
Erect a large shade structure at water's edge: overlook, stage, shelter	R 3.28			
Create terraced wetlands on the south side to emulate Ralph's Gutt	R 3.29			

Stated Goals

Ten principles shaping the character and implementation of Alexandria’s waterfront.

WATERFRONT PLAN PRINCIPLES

Authentic

identity grounded in the City’s history

Connected

improve access to public spaces with continuous pedestrian connectivity

Inclusive

a citywide resource to be enjoyed by all Alexandrians

Dynamic

maintain a living active waterfront that is a destination for Alexandrians and visitors

Variety

in uses, themes, activities, and experiences

Manageable

improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation

Sustainable

economically, environmentally, and operationally

Permeable

enhance vistas of water from the surrounding areas and of the waterfront from the river

Creative

bold, visionary, realistic, informative, and offer surprises along the way

Compatible

Future development respects existing residential neighborhoods

WHY IT MATTERS

These aspirations guide public and private actions.

STATUS

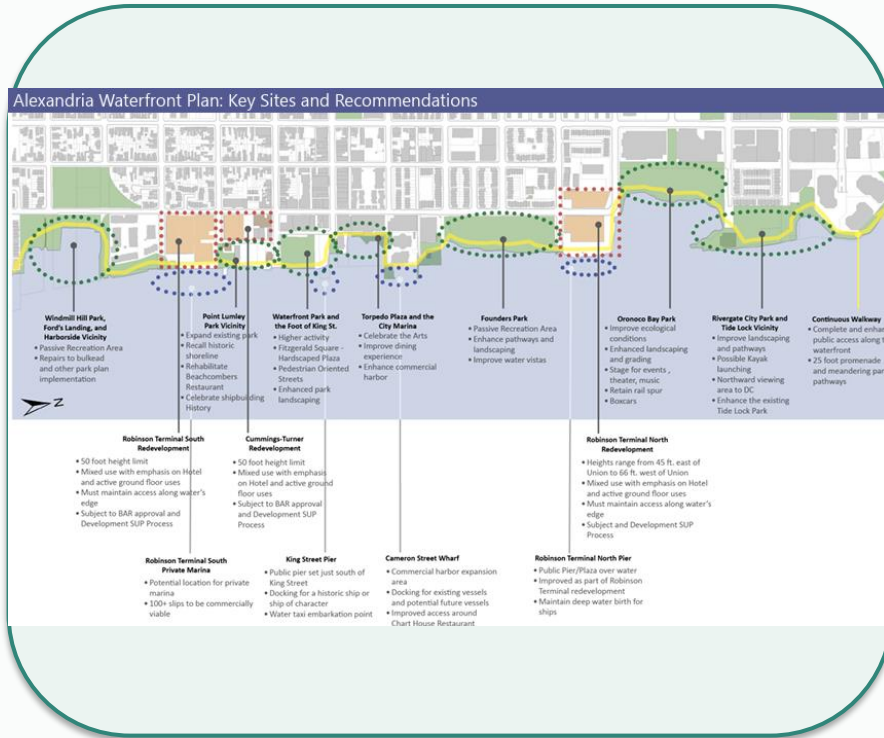
Are these aspirations being met?

NEXT

Review individual goals to determine status and implementation strategy.

Geographic Plan Areas

Goals are arranged by geographic plan areas, discussed north to south in the plan.



SPECIFIC LINE ITEMS

Goals are a mixture of new development, park expansion, pedestrianization, connectivity, financial support

STATUS

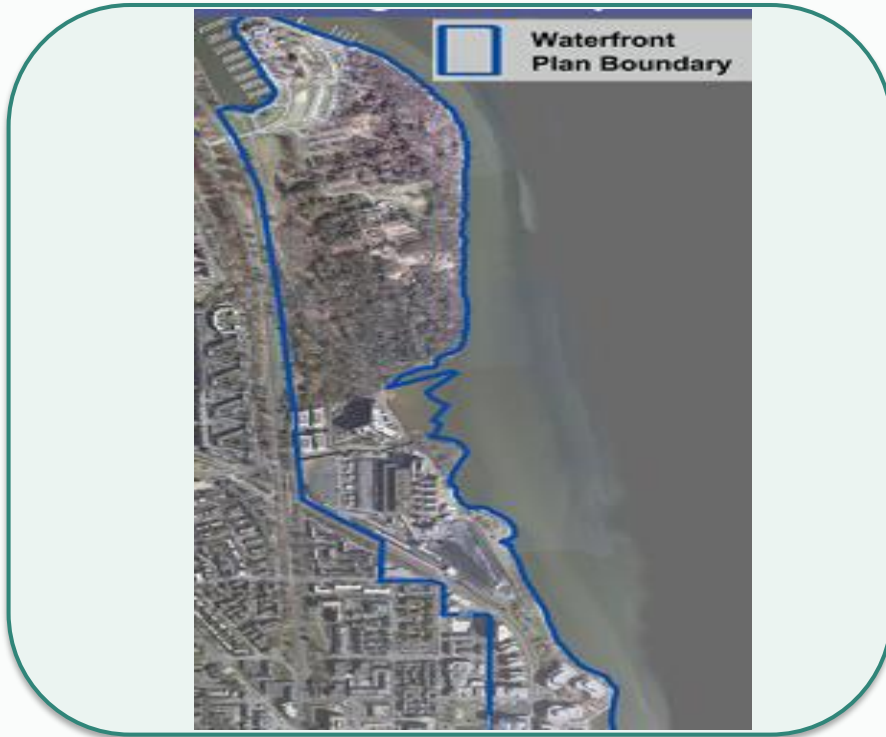
Some blocks are very successful (Robinson Landing), Others lag (Robinson North)

WHAT'S MISSING

Landscape and amenities (Waterfront Park), creation of Point Lumley Park, space for commercial vessels
Improved private boat marina

Daingerfield Island to Tidlock Park

Northernmost end of the waterfront: power plant site was not specifically discussed in the 2012 plan.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Daingerfield Island Master Plan
- Pedestrian access between Potomac Yard and Mount Vernon Trail

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

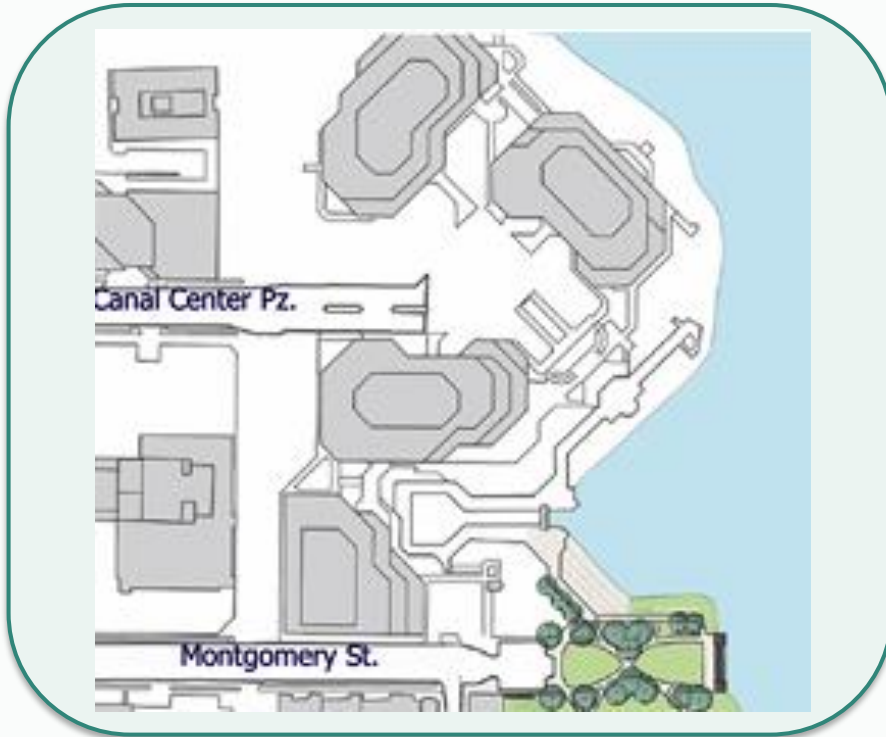
- Redevelopment of Old Town North sites
- Extend Old Town Street grid (power plant)
- Power plant as a priority open space site

COMPLETED

- Old Town North Small Area Plan
- Low-rise development added to Crowne Plaza site (Venue TH)

Gateway North, Canal Center, Tidelock Park

The area from Canal Center to the southern edge of the power plant did not receive much discussion in the 2012 plan.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Maintenance along the walkway at Canal Center; Canal Lock
- Install public art using light as an integral element
- Locations for launching canoes and kayaks

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Gateway to Art Walk, cultural anchor
- Observation area at point (Montgomery St) with steps to river
- Increase outdoor seating along waterfront

COMPLETED

- Importance of Canal Lock to City's history (signage)

Rivergate and Oronoco Bay Parks

Rivergate Park is well-established, Oronoco Bay Park is far from the vision.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Regrade Oronoco Bay Park to better accommodate events
- Erect shade structure, stage at water's edge
- Replace rip-rap with a more natural shoreline

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Seating with views of river
- Improve appearance of blank walls with public art, lighting

COMPLETED

- Improve access at Wythe Street
- Reduce impact of CSO outfall at Pendleton Street (River Renew)
- Add tidelock stones, water's edge pathways primary for visitors

Robinson Terminal North

After several tries a development plan has been approved by the City, but little has happened since.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Completion of continuous pedestrian promenade
- Improved streetscape, active street edges
- Union Street as a better bicycle/pedestrian way

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Development approvals for east and west blocks granted
- Project to incorporate historic designs and materials

COMPLETED

- Development goals and guidelines adopted
- Provision made to incorporate Pendleton Plaza (River Renew)
- Site cleared of one warehouse

NOT ACHIEVABLE

- Retain deep water pier
- Hotel as preferred use

Founders Park

Founders Park's character was retained.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Incorporate history and art plan recommendations
- Naturalize shoreline
- Rebuild bulkhead near Thompson's Alley

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Improve landscaping, park furniture, wayfinding, lighting

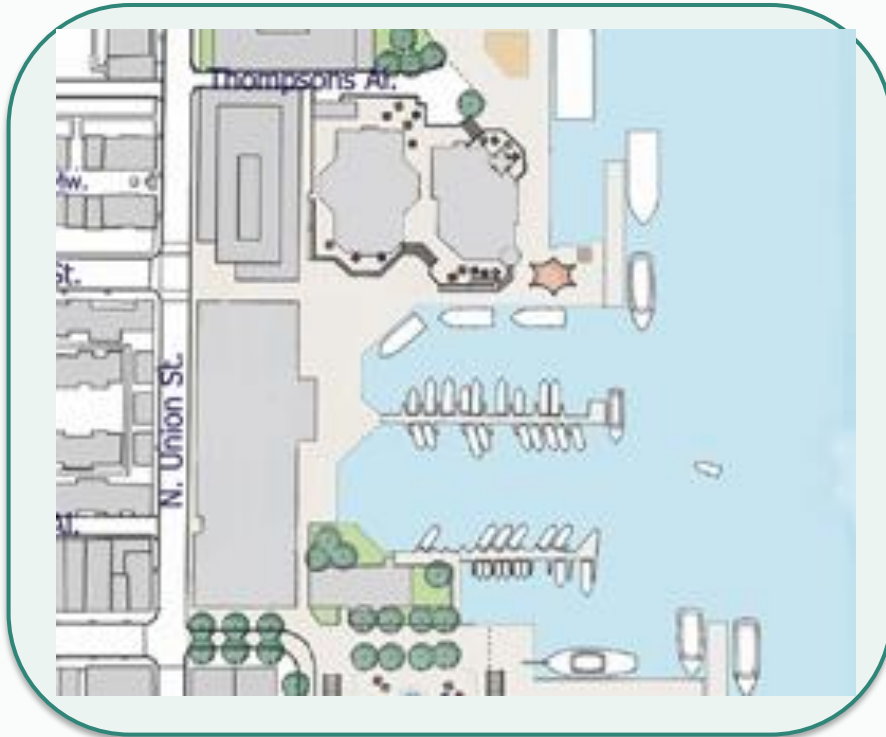
COMPLETED

- Retain passive character of Founders Park



Chart House, Cameron Wharf, Torpedo Factory to King Street

This area plus Waterfront Park is a keystone to the vibrancy of the waterfront.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Rebuild bulkhead
- Provide shade structures
- Install public art outdoors

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Strengthen the Torpedo Factory Art Center building's role

COMPLETED

- Encourage active use of outdoor vending sites
- Ensure adequate pedestrian circulation



Commercial Harbor

The plan anticipated an expansion of commercial shipping uses.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Create a new commercial pier in the vicinity of King Street
- Provide additional dock space to support expansion of commercial vessels
- Flood mitigation

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Attract Tall Ship or ship of character

COMPLETED

Waterfront Park and The Strand

This area was to be a core for tourism activity, with activities and programming for all.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Mitigate nuisance flooding; overall flood mitigation project
- Permanent park, inspired by history for park design and programming
- Establish Strand south of Prince Street as a cultural anchor

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Limit vehicular access to unit block of King Street and The Strand
- Activate park as focal point of pedestrian-related waterfront activities

COMPLETED

- Eliminate ODBC parking lot at the foot of King Street
- Established “interim” park



Point Lumley, Cummings/Turner

Development of the Cummings/Turner site has occurred but creation of an expanded Point Lumley Park lags.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Park showcasing shipbuilding past using history and art plans as guides
- Provide varied activities and recreational opportunities
- Consider civic structure in the park

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

COMPLETED

- Acquisition of surface parking lot by City
- Rehab and redevelopment of parcels facing Union Street (Indigo, Watermark)

Vision for an active and beautiful waterfront



Source: Olin Plan (2014)

Robinson Terminal South

Development of this block is largely complete and includes condo units and a restaurant.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Evaluation of kayak launch at Barca pier north
- Relocation of City Marina for personal boats

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

COMPLETED

- Redevelopment including condos, restaurants
- Improved docks and walkways
- Public space and active frontages

Windmill Hill Park to Jones Point

The park has been completed. It replaces a derelict marina.



PRIORITY PROJECTS REMAINING

- Art Walk concludes at south end of Windmill Hill Park
- Special paving on S. Union Street to reduce vehicle speed

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Bicycle and pedestrian pathways from Pt. Lumley to Hunting Creek

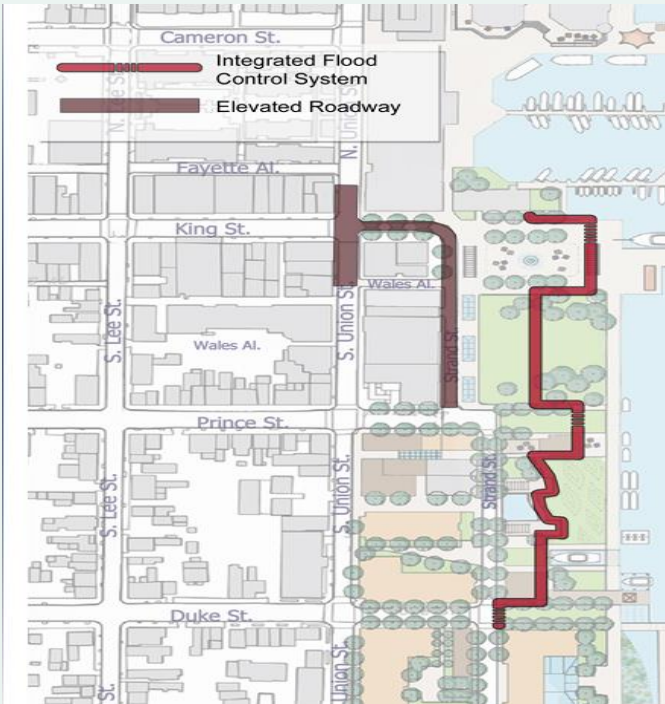
COMPLETED

- Construction of Windmill Hill Park

Original approach to flood mitigation

Delays in completing the flood mitigation project cause a key bottleneck to full implementation of the Waterfront Plan.

2014 FLOOD MITIGATION CONCEPT



Many successes! What's missing?

01

FLOOD MITIGATION

Flood mitigation is delaying progress on amenities.

02

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Redevelopment was expected to pay for infrastructure, but costs have risen.

03

ART, HISTORY & PARK AMENITIES

Art, history, and park amenities have not yet been fully implemented.

The unresolved flood strategy is the key implementation bottleneck.

WHAT'S STILL MISSING?

Five citywide dimensions remain to be completed to fully realize the 2012 Waterfront Plan's vision of a World-Class Waterfront.

01

RESILIENT

- Flood mitigation
- Bulkheads & shoreline
- Infrastructure decisions

02

PUBLIC REALM

- Parks & landscapes
- Shade, seating & lighting
- Amenities & wayfinding

03

CONNECTED

- Continuous promenade
- Bicycle / pedestrian links
- Better circulation

04

ACTIVE

- Water access & launches
- Docks & commercial activity
- Events & programming

05

ALEXANDRIA IDENTITY

- Art & historic interpretation
- Cultural programming
- Distinctive waterfront experiences

The implementation challenge is now to connect these pieces into one coherent waterfront experience.

NEXT STEPS

The Waterfront Plan is visionary and ambitious. How close are we to having a world-class waterfront?



By October Meeting

- Review spreadsheets on plan line items and suggest changes, additions, status updates
- Review Chapter 5 – Implementation
- Review appendices – History Plan, Art Plan
- Each AWC member to send a list of their TOP 5 most important projects for the City to focus on
- Send recommendations of short-term actions that don't depend on the Flood Mitigation Project
- Think about safety and cleanliness of the waterfront
- Think about Financial Soundness and Waterfront Commission input to City Budget
- Keep this analysis in mind during AWC's October update on Flood Mitigation

A waterfront people can enjoy— and a waterfront built to endure.

Discussion • Priorities • Next steps

