

# The Maritime Welcome Center **FACT SHEET**



**O**ver centuries, the Annapolis City Dock has evolved with the changing nature of waterfront usage. From the earliest days of shipping and trade, to the working oysterman's waterfront, to today's sailing and recreational uses - the changing needs of the city and the growing community have shaped and reshaped streetscape, architecture and activities at City Dock for hundreds of years.

In 2019, the City of Annapolis began an extensive consultation process to shape the next chapter in the story of City Dock. Resilience and flood protection



Historic City Dock



2021: Early rendering of the Harbor Master Headquarters

Learn more about City Dock Project [AccessAnnapolis.com](https://AccessAnnapolis.com)



were the urgent drivers, but the City also realized this work would provide an unprecedented opportunity to create a world-class waterside experience for residents and visitors alike. These ideas were captured in the 2020 City Dock Plan which outlined a vision for community spaces, water access, Harbormaster offices, and new visitor facilities.

Since then, the project team has held hundreds of community and stakeholder meetings. This feedback has been incorporated into the design process throughout, resulting in a gradual evolution from an initial concept to today's design for the Maritime Welcome Center - where the Harbormaster will operate with full water views and updated technology; where boaters will enjoy facilities worthy of Annapolis' handle as the nation's 'sailing capital,' where residents and visitors will enjoy indoor and outdoor water views, access visitor information, learn about the history of City Dock. One day guests may even be able to catch a sustainable, electric ferry to Chesapeake Bay destinations on both the Eastern and Western shores.

## Why a Maritime Welcome Center?

In the 2020 City Dock Park Consensus Plan, it was clear a new Harbormaster's office would be needed following construction of a raised City Dock Park.

Due to the fact that the Annapolis Harbormaster oversees waterway operations and safety, their offices must be located by the water.

The original plan to locate the Harbormaster exclusively within the Burtis House was not viable due to size, condition, and preservation needs.

The City Dock Action Committee Design Team worked through many iterations of building design, focusing on Harbormaster operations, visitor experience, and opportunities for the public to have direct water access.

The design team prioritized historic district guidelines, including height and bulk, and then created a functional design that reflected the needs of

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October 2024 Renderings: Maritime Welcome Center





# Why a Maritime Welcome Center?

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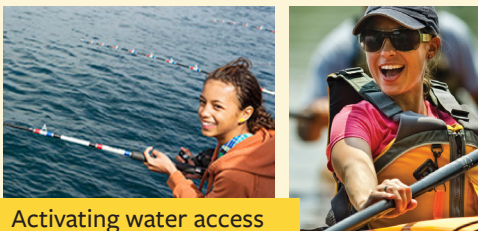
a working waterfront to create the Maritime Welcome Center.

The Maritime Welcome Center will provide a direct connection to the Burtis House by enabling ADA/ accessibility to the existing structure.

The proposed Welcome Center has evolved over three years of design and consultation with experts - preservationists, architects, designers - as well as extensive community input from +/- 100 stakeholder meetings.

Feedback from the community resulted in revisions to the design, creating a smaller two-story structure that faces the water, with a 2,278 SF footprint to address multiple needs, including:

- ▶ New, state of the art Harbormaster headquarters located by the water
- ▶ Visit Annapolis visitor bureau
- ▶ ADA accessible entrance and elevator to Burtis House
- ▶ Updated boater amenities to showcase our maritime culture and history as a “Sailing Capital”
- ▶ New public ADA/accessible restrooms and showers
- ▶ Water access for the public to engage in boating activities
- ▶ Open spaces and balconies to allow residents and visitors access to views of Spa Creek, the Severn River and the Chesapeake Bay



Activating water access for residents and visitors



# Extensive Consultation: What we heard

- Create a waterfront experience with space for community amenities and water views - that all residents can enjoy
- Facilitate boating and water access - especially for those without access the water
- Guarantee the size and design complements the Burtis House
- Give the Harbormaster views of the water, additional space and updated technology
- Provide a new home for the Visitor’s Kiisk that will serve the needs of the future
- Ensure capacity for a future ferry service to multiple Chesapeake Bay destinations
- Provide enhanced boater facilities so that Annapolis can retain its reputation as a first-class boating destination and “sailing capital.”



# Bringing Burtis House to Life

In 2021, the City of Annapolis acquired the Burtis House, the last original waterman’s house at City Dock. This ensured the City had a continuous property line from Compromise Street to the U.S. Naval Academy so that continuous flood protection could be delivered for the historic down town area.

Restoration of the Burtis House, which has been significantly damaged by flooding, will be undertaken in partnership with Preservation Maryland. Original features will be restored, later additions to the house will be removed and, in addition to a restored original front entrance, a new ADA compliant entrance will be created from the Maritime Welcome Center.

When restoration is completed the ground floor of Burtis will be used for a museum and visitor experience, telling the story of the fishing, oystering and waterman’s culture that shaped so much of Annapolis’ early history. This story will be further brought to life in the Welcome Center where access to water and boating, or to enjoy fresh caught oysters and fish, have been integrated into the design.

In planning this significant restoration and connection to the Maritime Welcome Center, the Design Team has been mindful of maintaining a design and scale that complements the Burtis

House as requested by Maryland Historic Trust (MHT). In response to these modifications, MHT granted Conceptual Approval of the new Maritime Welcome Center design in August 2024.

## THE PRINCE GEORGE STREET

**PARK:** The Maritime Welcome Center and restoration of Burtis House provides an opportunity to activate a landscaped public park on lower Prince George Street that will create programmable outdoor space and enhance water access.



October 2024: Rendering of Burtis with Prince George Park in foreground



January 2024: Extreme flooding at Burtis House

## COSTS

The Maritime Welcome Center is budgeted at \$8.2 million dollars. Funding will come through revenue generated by the Hillman Garage, a Pubic-private Partnership.