



BOSTON
CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM

ANNUAL REPORT
2019



THE OCEAN



THE CITY



THE MUSEUM

In 1979, Boston Children's Museum relocated from Jamaica Plain to a former warehouse on Fort Point Channel at the entrance to Boston Harbor. At the time, it was a daring step to make the Museum's home in a bleak industrial district. Forty years later, we can say the Museum was ahead of its time, welcoming millions of visitors to its Fort Point location and taking part in the dramatic transformation of the Seaport. In 2019, the Museum's location is a major attribute, but it is now threatened by sea level rise. And again, the Museum is responding with a bold plan.



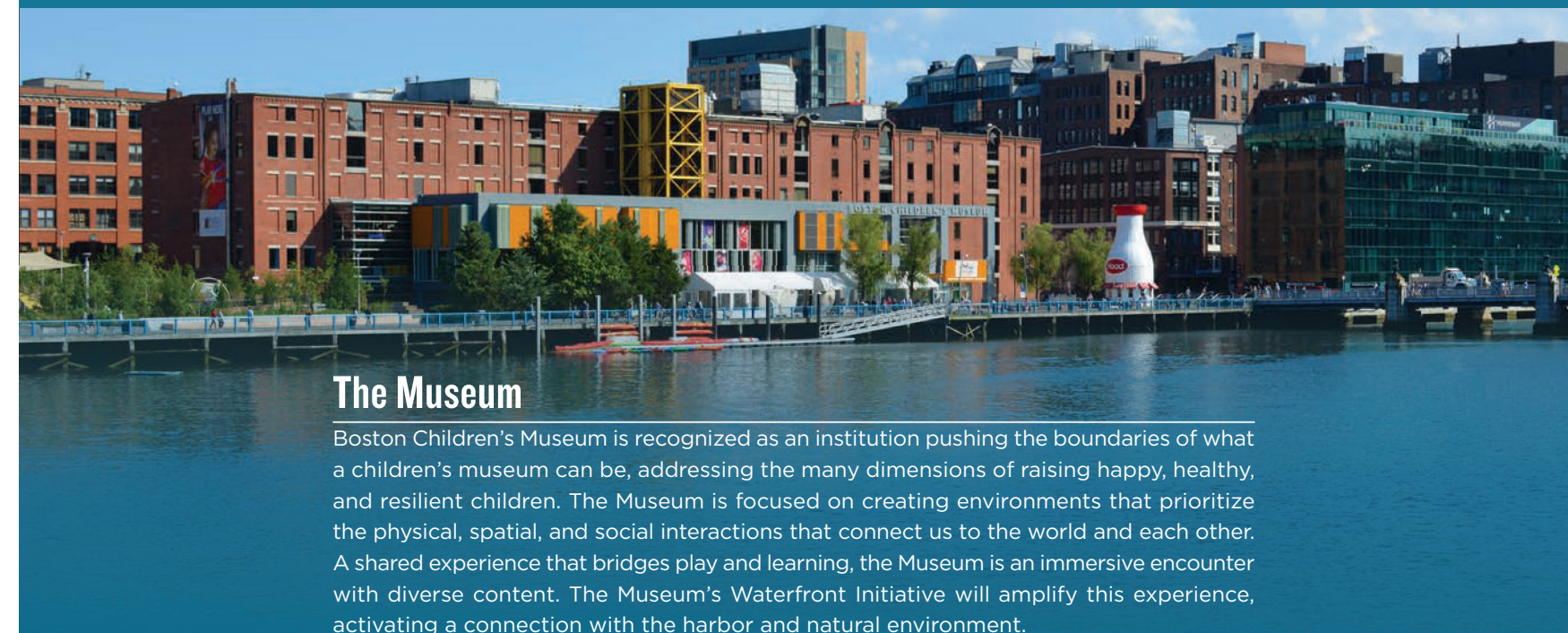
The Ocean

The ocean is one of Boston's great historic assets, an engine of trade, growth, and recreation, defining both the geography and the appeal of the city. On March 18, 2018, the Museum briefly became an island. A severe storm combined with the highest tides of the month pushed icy floodwaters onto Congress and Sleeper streets. The events of that winter brought the issue of flooding home to many Bostonians, and gave increased urgency to the city's climate resiliency efforts.



The City and Seaport

Beginning as early as the 1600s, Boston has grown by filling in land and displacing the ocean. Since then, the Seaport in particular has undergone many transformations, from a muddy spot on the harbor to a vital shipping port, and now it is a hub of commerce, culture, and recreation. Among major cities, Boston is ranked near the top both for vulnerability to flooding and for climate resilience planning. In 2018, Mayor Marty Walsh announced his Resilient Boston Harbor initiative, outlining a bold strategy for coping with increased flood risks around the entire harbor.



The Museum

Boston Children's Museum is recognized as an institution pushing the boundaries of what a children's museum can be, addressing the many dimensions of raising happy, healthy, and resilient children. The Museum is focused on creating environments that prioritize the physical, spatial, and social interactions that connect us to the world and each other. A shared experience that bridges play and learning, the Museum is an immersive encounter with diverse content. The Museum's Waterfront Initiative will amplify this experience, activating a connection with the harbor and natural environment.

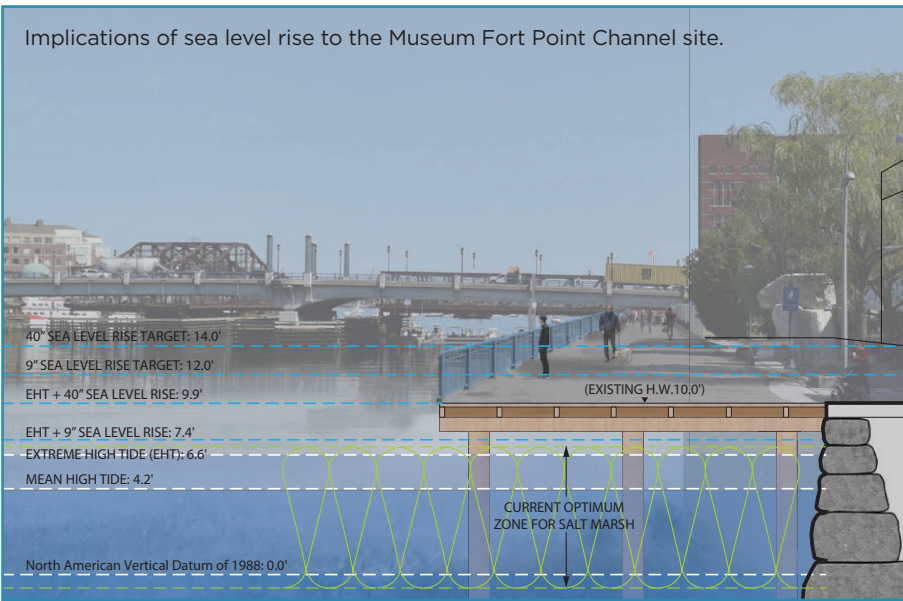
The Museum Waterfront Initiative

The Museum has received support to fund the development of a plan that will address climate resilience solutions as well as creative options for tapping the potential for immersive learning and play along the Harborwalk and Fort Point Channel.

In addition to addressing the engineering issues of flood mitigation, the design will support the many existing uses of the Harborwalk, while dramatically increasing access to the channel and harbor. The design process will focus on creating interactions with the natural environment of the channel and harbor, and exploring the marine life at our doorstep—an asset that now goes largely unnoticed. Design approaches will consider new promontories, interaction with the water, and a “living coastlines” approach, adding salt marsh or tide pool habitat. Rather than something that you walk past to get to the Museum, the harbor and amazing cityscape that surrounds us will become the basis for exploration and discovery.

True resiliency is much more than mitigation and risk reduction; it's a way to work in harmony with the environment and our community. The visionary process the Museum is embarking on will create a physical environment that provides a profound opportunity to embrace the intersecting roles that natural systems, community, and the built environment play in supporting resiliency.

The Museum has a long-standing commitment to developing spaces and exhibits designed to be accessible and usable for all its visitors. The waterfront master plan will reflect the principles of universal design, stressing design not only for those with disabilities, but equally, for parents with strollers, young children who need a quiet space, senior caregivers, and indeed, all families. This commitment will inform all stages of the waterfront project.



Source: Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston, October, 2018.

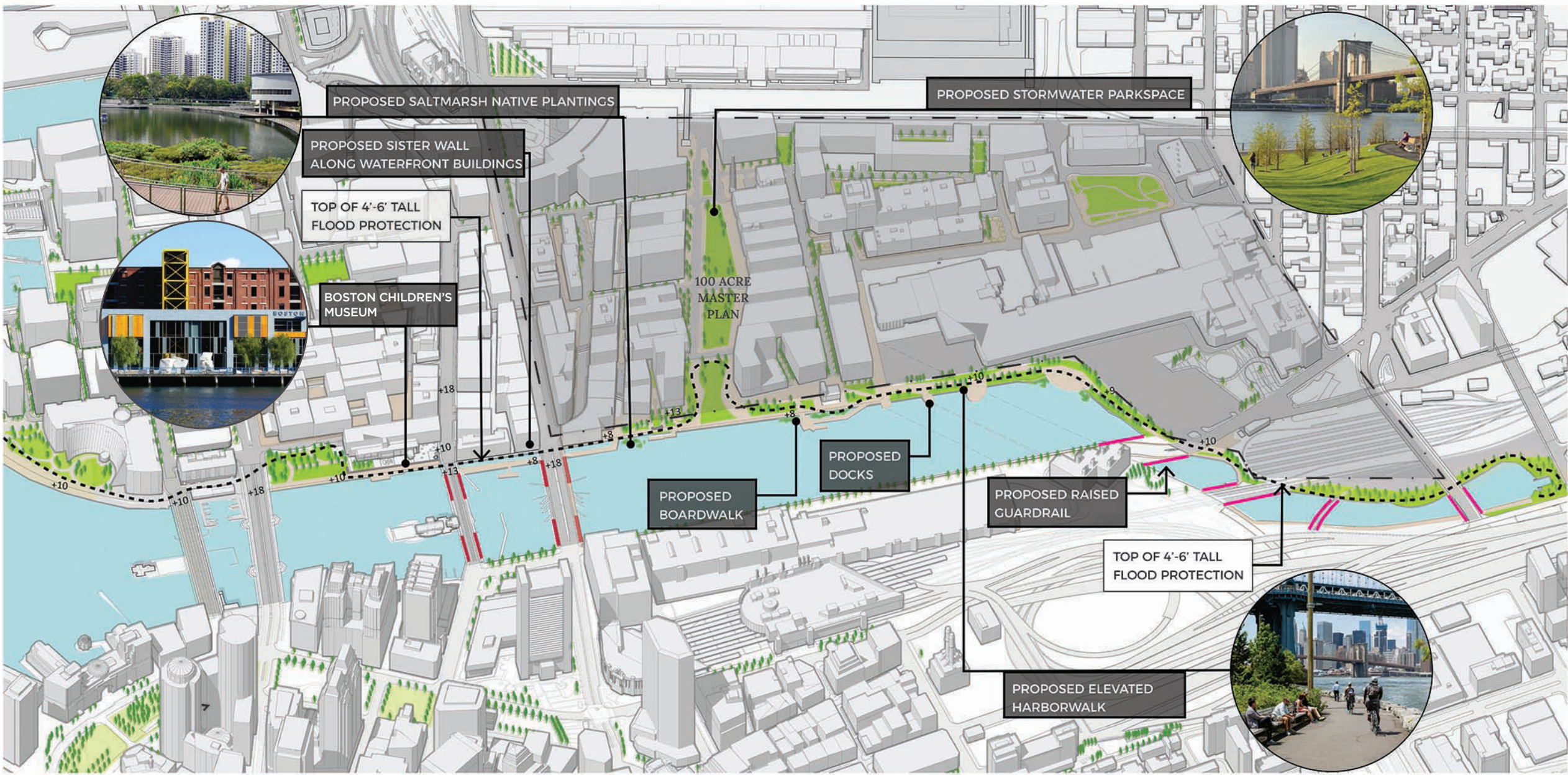


NOTE: The concept graphic above is for illustrative purposes only, and it does not reflect an actual or final design solution.

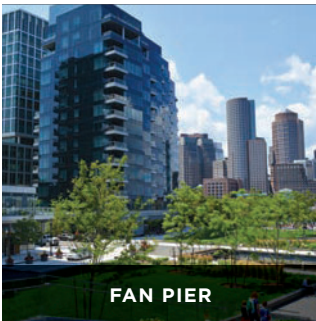
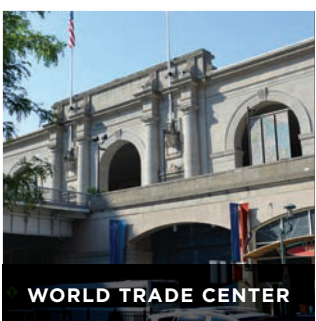
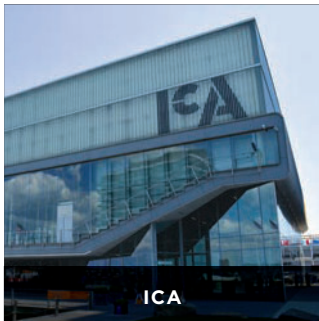
Fort Point Channel:
A Transformational Example

The Museum’s Waterfront Initiative will be in the vanguard of a series of projects transforming Fort Point Channel from a largely inaccessible, industrial arm of the harbor to a major public amenity for Boston. The Museum’s project will provide visionary leadership and will lead the way with an innovative design harmonizing the built and natural environment.

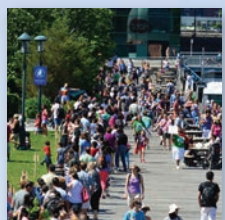
One block to the north of the Museum, the Northern Avenue Bridge project will add new connections to downtown Boston. One block to the south, beginning at the Summer Street Bridge, the city’s 100 Acre Master Plan will revitalize little-used sections of the Harborwalk along the Related Beal, GE, and P&G/Gillette sites. Not only will these projects provide the opportunity to integrate the necessary flood control, but they could create over 11 acres of new green space, as well as resilient waterfront parkland. With the future redevelopment of the Post Office site, on the west side of the Fort Point Channel, the channel would be ringed with pedestrian access and new opportunities for kayaking, water access, walking, and bicycling—all connected to the South Boston and Chinatown neighborhoods—and to Boston Children’s Museum.



Source: Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston, October, 2018.



Year in Review



6,948 attend the Free Fun Fridays program sponsored by the Highland Street Foundation.



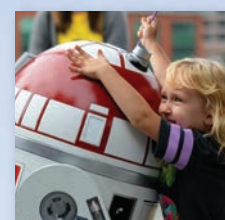
Visitors celebrate our favorite wizard's birthday with magic, wand making, and Quidditch during WIZARDING WEEKEND.



1,221 children and their parents or caregivers attend the Museum's annual Countdown to Kindergarten celebration for children entering kindergarten in Boston.



Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, Museum Board members, staff, and special guests celebrate the retirement of Jeri Robinson, VP of Early Childhood Initiatives, and the establishment of The Jeri Robinson Endowed Fund for PlaySpace.



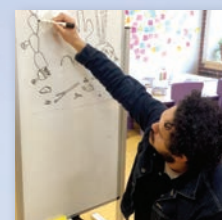
More than 150 makers and 4,000 visitors participate in the Boston Mini Maker Faire hosted by the Museum and celebrating invention, making, creativity, and sharing.



Over 400 guests attend the Museum's fifth annual Wonder Ball gala, raising over \$560,000 for the Museum's access programs.

LUNCH LEARN

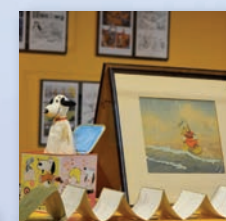
Author and parent coach Dr. Carla Naumberg presents on the topic of making parenting less stressful.



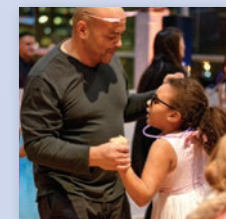
The Museum hosts 33 visiting artist workshops to introduce children to practicing artists and to explore the making of art.



More than 4,300 adults attend the Museum's popular Grown-Ups Museum events held throughout the year.



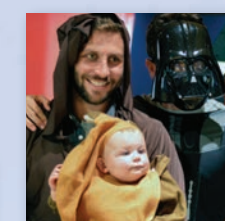
The Gallery exhibit, *Comics: Heroes, Myths, and Tales* encourages visitors to explore storytelling through comics, featuring the work of Jerel Dye, Raúl the Third, and the Boston Comics Roundtable.



Families don their fancy-fun wear for a night on the town at the third annual Silly Soirée, the Museum's children's ball and fundraiser.



The Museum kicks off a year long celebration of the 60-year sister city relationship of Boston and Kyoto, Japan, and the 40th anniversary of Kyoto's gift to Boston of the *Japanese House*, a permanent exhibit of the Museum.



Jedis join a galaxy not so far away to celebrate the art, science, and design of *Star Wars*.



The City of Boston opens Martin's Park, adjacent to the Museum. Created in memory of Martin Richard, the youngest victim of the Boston Marathon bombing, the park is an oasis of peace, joy, and active play opportunities.

JULY 1, 2018



The Museum opens its new STEAM Lab, created to host workshops, programs, and Tech Kitchen events that introduce children to science, technology, engineering, art, and math.

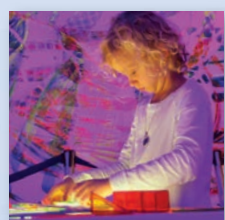


Through the project Linking with Libraries: Opportunities for Early Learning though Family and Community Engagement, the Museum works with libraries to expand their capacity to offer informal early learning activities that build school readiness.



3,505 people participate in the Museum's year-round programs for children with special or medical needs.

Actor, author, and wrestler John Cena, reads from his children's book *Elbow Grease*, inspired by his experience growing up with four brothers.



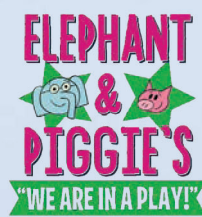
The Museum hosts artist Claire Ashley's *Umpy Lundersphere*. The immersive exhibit invites visitors to explore sight, touch, and sound using inflatable sculptures.



The TJX Companies become the new sponsors of the Museum's popular \$1 Friday Nights program.



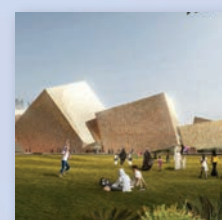
The Museum unveils its new logo, meant to celebrate the joy and possibility of childhood.



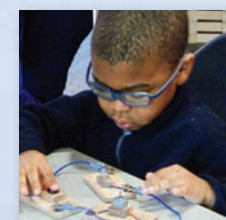
2,258 children and adults attend an exclusive 19-performance run of Wheelock Family Theatre at Boston University's *Elephant and Piggie's: "We Are in a Play!"* Based on the award-winning Elephant and Piggie children's books by author Mo Willems, the show features five actors and live music in a celebration of theater, friendship, song, and dance.



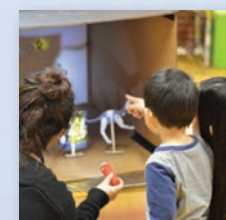
During the year, over 63,000 visitors attend performances in the Museum's *KidStage* theater.



The Museum conducts training workshops for the Qatar Children's Museum on museum operations, visitor experience, and staffing.



The Museum holds over 120 STEAM-centered programs and workshops to introduce science, technology, engineering, art, and math to children.



The Museum welcomes the Year of the Pig with the annual Lunar New Year program. Throughout the weekend, visitors learn how communities in Boston celebrate the Lunar New Year through dance, games, and art with a focus on Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese traditions.

The Museum's Boston Marathon team—Anri Brenninkmeyer, Lauren Falcone, and Julie Kellett—complete the Boston Marathon and raise over \$32,000 in support of the Museum's Annual Fund.



After a six-month residency with the Cantata Singers, more than 250 second-, third-, and fourth-grade students from Boston public schools perform songs of their own composition for their friends, families, and Museum visitors.



HUMAN GARDEN / Handmade opens in *The Gallery*. Artist Lani Asuncion's exhibit uses interactive video shot at Boston's Arnold Arboretum to heighten awareness of our role in the natural environment.



Seeta Pai, executive director of education at WGBH (Boston PBS), discusses digital media and its effect on children.



Over 200 supporters attend the Young Professionals' Council's Party on the Point summer kickoff and fundraiser in support of summer learning and fun at the Museum.

JUNE 30, 2019

4,528

Visitors to the 2018 Boston Mini Maker Faire



Facts and Figures

566,000

Visitors to Boston Children's Museum

382,000

Museum goers reached by Boston Children's Museum traveling exhibits

26,141

Children visiting the Museum as part of a school, camp, or community group

156

Birthday parties celebrated at the Museum

4,305

Attendees to Boston Grown-Ups Museum nights

1,221

Attendees to the annual Countdown to Kindergarten celebration

3,505

Visitors taking part in the Museum's special needs programs

6,948

Visitors to Free Fun Fridays celebration sponsored by the Highland Street Foundation

229

Live music and dance performances

2,258

Attendees to Wheelock Family Theatre at Boston University's *Elephant and Piggie's: "We Are in a Play!"* performances

63,291

Attendees to *KidStage* performances

12,731

Museum member families

47

Corporate and private events

300,000

Approximate number of teachers, parents, and students reached by the Museum's afterschool and out-of-school learning resource, beyondthechalkboard.org

33

Visiting artist workshops

3,090

School group students visiting the *Japanese House* exhibit

49,887

TJX \$1 Friday Night visitors

11,526

Attendees to Museum Music and Movement classes

10,000

Approximate number of people and institutions served by community outreach and Museum consulting activities

123

STEAM-focused programs and workshops

Chairman & President's Message

Dear Friends,

We're pleased to report that the Museum has had another successful year, marked by strong attendance and exciting new programming and partnerships. During the year, the Museum created joyful discovery experiences for almost 600,000 visitors. We reached an additional 600,000 beyond the Museum walls through our traveling exhibits, *Beyond the Chalkboard* website, and consulting work in the U.S. and internationally.

Among the many milestones and accomplishments, several are notable:

We strengthened our commitment to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) by opening a STEAM Lab at the Museum and hosting over 120 workshops and programs during the year. This programming sparks excitement in these vital topics through the context of play, and makes them accessible to children and families across diverse economic, ethnic, geographic, and learning backgrounds. We are also developing early-grades science curriculum for venerable educational institutions in Boston and beyond.

We witnessed the completion and inauguration of Martin's Park—a project we are deeply honored to be associated with—which commemorates the life, love, and values of Martin Richard, the youngest victim of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings. The culmination of a two-year construction effort, the park overlooks the Fort Point Channel and has already become a beautiful hub for exploration and play for children. The Museum was also honored to receive grants from Boston Children's Hospital to bring our programming to communities in Greater Boston, and from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to expand our school readiness program to three states. We also saw growth in consulting revenues from museums and government agencies in the U.S., the Middle East, and Asia. These are exciting stepping stones to substantially increase the accessibility and impact of our exhibits and programming to children and families globally—above and beyond the 1.2 million we reach currently!

This year marked the 60th anniversary of Boston and Kyoto, Japan, as sister cities, as well as the 40th anniversary of Kyoto's generous gift of the *Japanese House* to our city and the Museum. The house—a silk merchant's home from Kyoto shipped in pieces and rebuilt inside our building in 1979—is a beloved fixture at the Museum and serves as a place for exploration, as well as a reminder of international and intercultural friendship.

This was also a year of disruptions in many countries—climate-related in some, sociopolitical in others. The United States continues to experience turbulence in both arenas. In Boston, the Museum has embarked on a bold climate readiness plan to transform the waterfront outside the Museum on Fort Point Channel. While salient details of this initiative are explained earlier in this report, the plan will address the key areas of mitigating the potential damage from flooding, enhancing the accessibility of the Fort Point waterfront to the public, and tapping the full potential of the Harborwalk to provide an immersive learning and play experience.

Amid the sociopolitical turbulence, the Museum remained resolute in its advocacy for the well-being of children everywhere. Looking ahead, we see no reason for this to change. In fact, we are even more resolved to ensure that the Museum is a haven to more children and families to come together, play, and learn—for generations to come. In this intention, we are privileged and honored to acknowledge that the Museum staff, our board, benefactors, and stakeholders are united as one.



Carole Charnow
President & CEO



Nirav Dagli
Board Chair

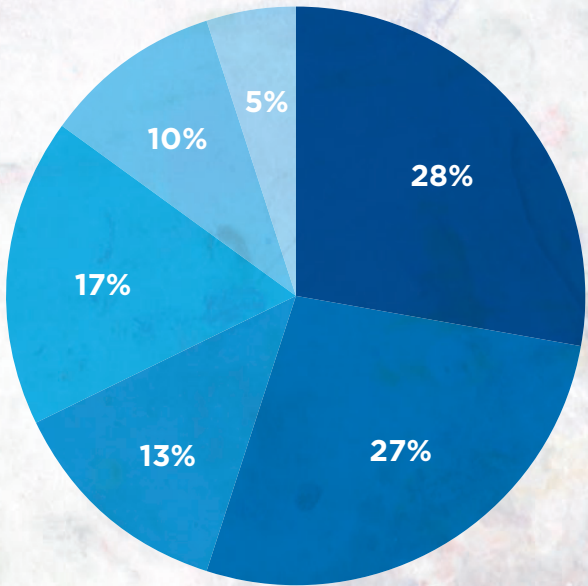
Operating Results

INCOME	FY 2019*	FY 2018
Gifts, contributions & grants	\$ 3,548,470	\$ 2,525,294
Admissions	3,422,362	3,496,518
Property revenue	2,126,112	2,290,904
Memberships	1,636,423	1,557,814
Other income	1,268,664	1,096,787
Support from endowment	716,096	706,482
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE & SUPPORT	\$ 12,718,127	\$ 11,673,799

EXPENSES	FY 2019*	FY 2018
Program services:		
Visitor services	\$ 2,840,682	\$ 2,677,576
Museum programs	2,375,159	2,019,870
Exhibits	954,136	955,884
Member services	239,912	273,825
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$ 6,409,889	\$ 5,927,155
Support services:		
Building operating costs	\$ 1,726,701	\$ 1,588,183
General & administrative	1,041,315	987,903
Fundraising	952,301	854,825
Marketing	706,288	684,537
TOTAL SUPPORT SERVICES	\$ 4,426,605	\$ 4,115,448
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 10,836,494	\$ 10,042,603
NET SURPLUS BEFORE DEPRECIATION & INTEREST	\$ 1,881,633	\$ 1,631,196
Depreciation	\$ 2,122,862	\$ 2,300,776
Interest	428,359	412,070
TOTAL DEPRECIATION & INTEREST	\$ 2,551,221	\$ 2,712,846
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(\$ 669,588)	(\$ 1,081,650)

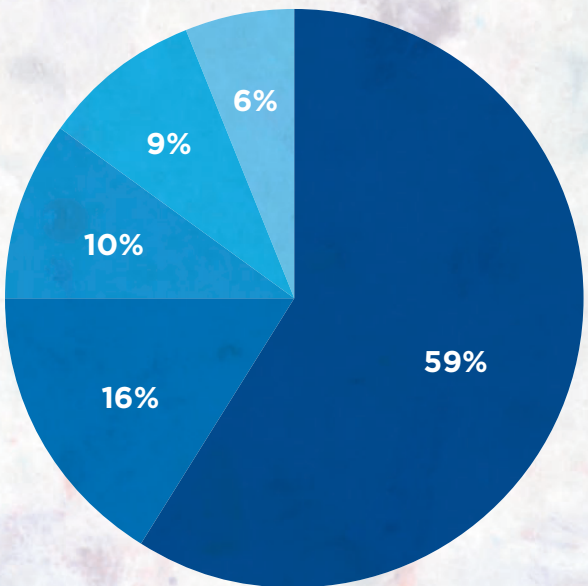
INVESTMENTS AT MARKET VALUE	FY 2019*	FY 2018
Beginning balance	\$ 16,394,624	\$ 15,891,565
Contributions/other changes, net	440,508	832,606
Spending policy transfer	(716,096)	(706,482)
Net unrealized/realized gains (losses)	183,586	376,935
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	\$ 16,302,622	\$ 16,394,624

* Preliminary, unaudited results.



FISCAL 2019 INCOME*

- Gifts, contributions & grants
- Admissions
- Memberships
- Property revenue
- Other income
- Support from endowment



FISCAL 2019 EXPENSES*

- Program services
- Building operating costs
- General & administrative
- Fundraising
- Marketing

FY19 Financial Summary

Boston Children's Museum is proud to report another successful fiscal year, highlighted by creative new partnerships, innovative and expanded programming, and continued investments in staff and property.

In fiscal year 2019, Boston Children's Museum embarked on a revolutionary project to confront the effects that climate change is having on the Fort Point Channel. During this next fiscal year, the Museum will partner with a team of professionals to fully assess the current conditions of our building and property as they relate to these changes. The underlying work will generate a future conceptual landscape design that will protect the building and property from rising sea concerns and create a unique destination for families.

In the meantime, we are leveraging this beautiful waterscape in a number of ways. We completed the first step of this endeavor in fiscal 2019 by entering into an exciting new partnership with L.L.Bean. Our recently expanded dock now offers our visitors and the public kayaking and paddle-boarding adventures, and as partners, we will be offering new program activities in our front yard and inside the Museum as seasons change.

We continue to strive for excellence in programming for an increasingly diverse visitor profile. Among the many new offerings was this year's musical theater performance of *Elephant & Piggie's "We Are in a Play!"*; a weeklong celebration of dance performances and workshops of all different genres in the Boston Youth Dance Festival; an expanded summer program in partnership with Boston Public Schools, which focused on kindergarten readiness for families, presented in multiple languages; and, finally, a new series of STEAM family workshops including Learn to Solder, Paper Making, and 3D Design. All these programmatic investments are bringing new visitors to the Museum.

The new partnerships and programming have had a positive impact on the Museum's financial condition as well as visitorship. We are pleased to report that for the year ending June 30, 2019, the Museum recorded a net surplus, before accounting for depreciation. While admissions income was slightly lower (-2.1 percent), we saw an increase in membership revenue (+4.8 percent). Attendance remained strong, and was up 2.1 percent, ending the year at 566,000 visitors. Gifts, grants, and contributions for fiscal 2019 was up 40 percent year-to-year, a reflection, in part, of the targeted fundraising for two new exhibits as well as a number of new programmatic grants.

The financial markets this year continued to be unpredictable. The value of the Museum's investment portfolio, after drawing on the approved spending policy of 4.5 percent, was flat from the prior year. The board and its finance committee closely monitor the progress of the portfolio and regularly meet with the investment advisors.

The pace of change continues to increase for nonprofits, and museums in particular. Boston Children's Museum is challenged to keep step with an evolving workforce and a demanding population that has a growing number of options for their time. We stay in front of these challenges because of our creative, energetic, and incredibly clever staff. Because of these amazing people, our funders, and friends, we ended the 2019 fiscal year in a solid financial position.

— Amy Auerbach, Senior Vice President & CFO

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Board members listed served at least three-quarters of the fiscal year.

Background photo: String art created in the Art Lab.

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ANNUAL FUND

Donors to our Annual Fund provide the crucial unrestricted support that helps the Museum meet its areas of greatest need and fulfill its mission.

\$25,000+

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Aunoy Banerjee and Niti Sharma
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Christopher Yens and Temple Gill

\$2,500–\$4,999

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Katherine B. Winter

\$1,000–\$2,499

Anonymous
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In honor of Jeri Robinson's lifetime dedication to early childhood development and her leadership in the Museum's groundbreaking PlaySpace initiative, Boston Children's Museum has established The Jeri Robinson Endowed Fund for PlaySpace. Thanks to our generous donors, this endowed fund will help sustain this beloved exhibition for future generations of children.

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