

**The  
Children's  
Museum  
Boston**

**Waterfront  
Development**

March 3, 1989

The Children's Museum  
Waterfront Development

## Introduction

The intent in setting out to plan this addition to the Children's Museum, was to provide an outdoor, good weather attraction to compliment the already successful indoor Museum experience.

In our approach to developing this facility, 3 factors have primarily shaped the site.

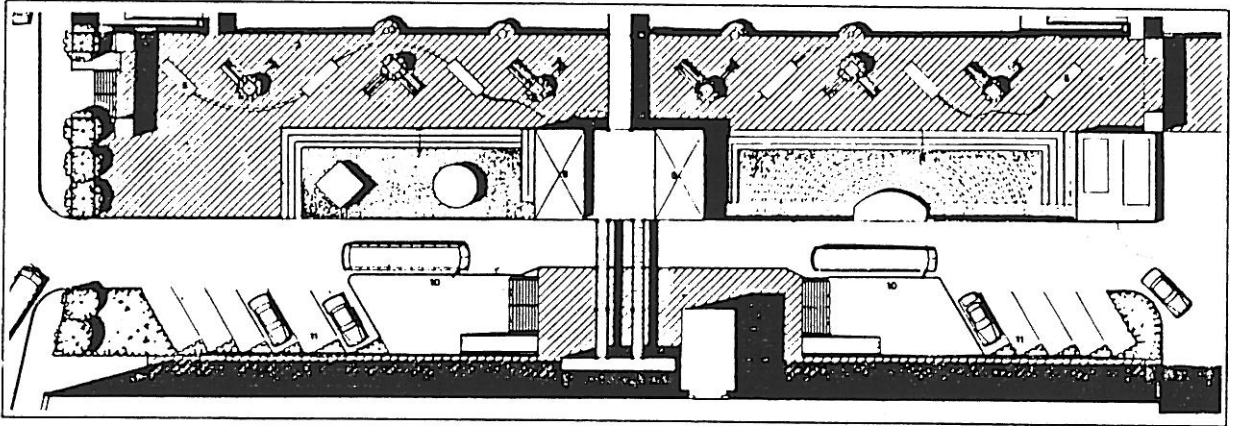
1. vehicular access and parking requirements
2. the questionable quality of the Apron underground as a suitable building surface
3. the open, spacious feeling of the Apron and adjacent channel in an urban setting of increasing concrete and steel canyons.

After reviewing countless options and alternatives, it was decided that the Apron area itself should simply be reorganized to improve access for both vehicles (primarily buses of school groups) and an increasing number of pedestrians arriving from nearby parking lots. The boardwalk should be expanded to maximize the "openness" while still creating useable, programmable space and the new attraction should be on Fort Point Channel.

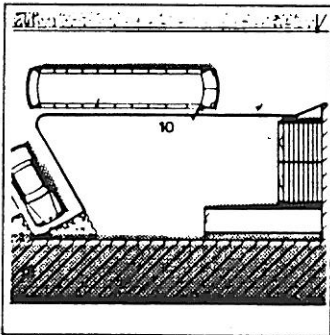
Thus, a plan has evolved which respects the Museum Wharf building, enhances the spacious quality of the Apron, and utilizes the watersheet as the building surface with water as the attraction itself.

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## The Apron



The existing walkway along the building remains unchanged except at the Museum entrances around the elevator where the deck is enlarged. On either side of the elevator at a level slightly lower than the walkway are two drop-off/pick-up areas, one in front of each Museum, with sufficient space for group assembly and orientation.

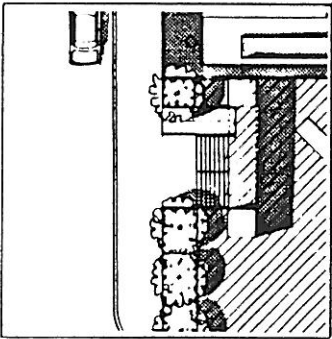


The roadway, which provides access for service vehicles and drive through for buses has been relocated slightly further from the building to accommodate 11 parking spaces adjacent to the existing walkway. This necessitates the relocation of the trash and transformer station as well as some services near the Congress Street entrance. The roadway is one way only and narrows to one lane in width near the elevator where pedestrians cross to enter and leave the Museums. For this reason, it is important to control vehicular use of the roadway.

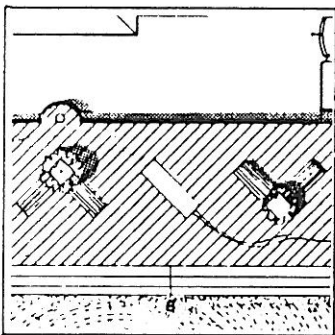
The boardwalk has been increased in width through the addition of an exhibition platform at the south end and a presentation pit at the north. As implied, the former is 3 steps up, the latter 3 steps down. The exhibition platform is

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envisioned as a place for art; where children might interact with or create sculpture, or simply as display space. The presentation pit provides a place for casual theatre or performance and with temporary seating, as well as the stair bleachers accommodates approximately 400. The area could be covered with a canopy and an attractive temporary fence could provide security. If required, additional seating could be set out on the boardwalk.

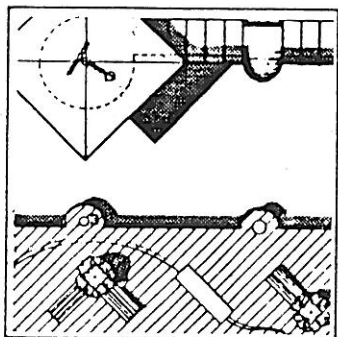


Entry gates in the form of arches to walk through have been located at the north and south entrances to the Museum Boardwalk. It is anticipated that most visitors not arriving by bus will enter via one of these gates.

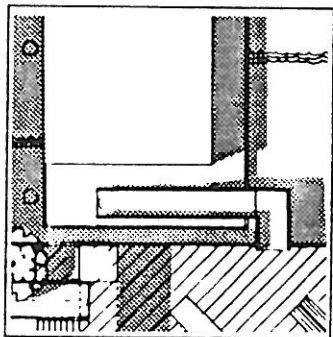


Clusters of family seating with trees in planters are provided in the central section of the boardwalk while the boardwalk brook meanders through the seating areas. Occasionally, the brook might widen to accommodate activity pools.

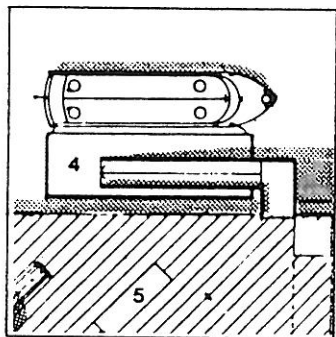
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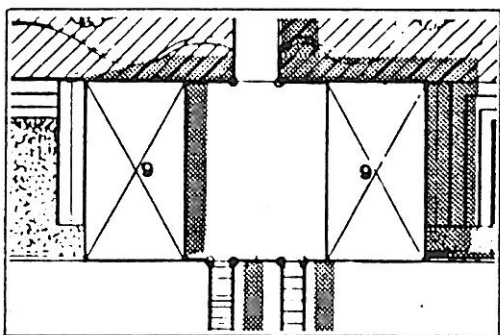
Boardwalk balconies are suggested along the waters edge. Activities on these balconies might allow the visitor to investigate the harbour or interact with the attraction moored just off the boardwalk.



From the boardwalk level the visitor can also access the floating restaurant which has been relocated along Congress Street and towards the north end is docking for the Museum Aqua Bus Link or possibly other boats.



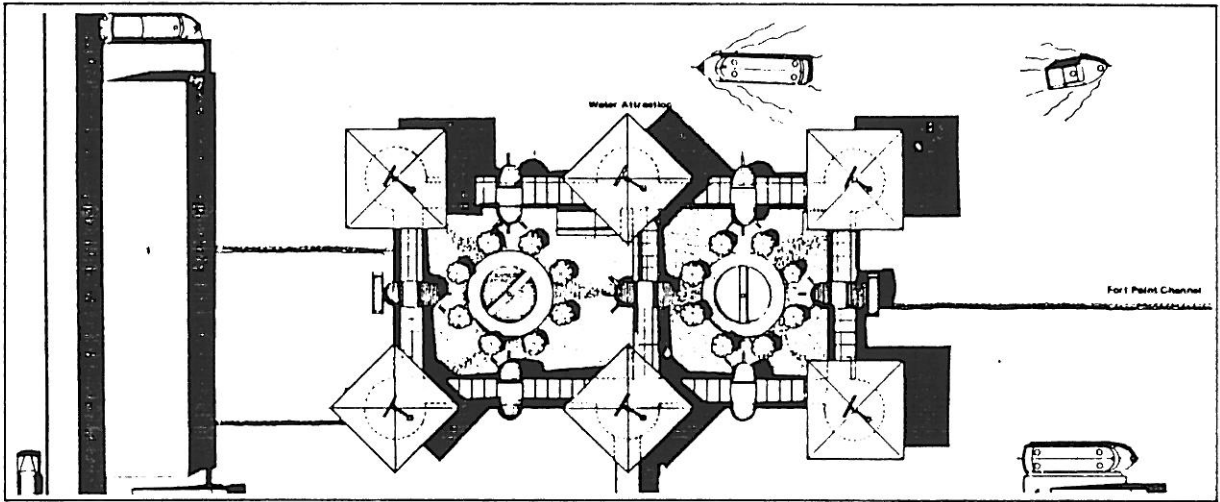
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Towards the center, the boardwalk extends as far east as the Museum Building. Here, it is flanked by 2 shops, which being largely made of glass, allow views of the merchandise offered for sale to those entering or leaving the Museum.

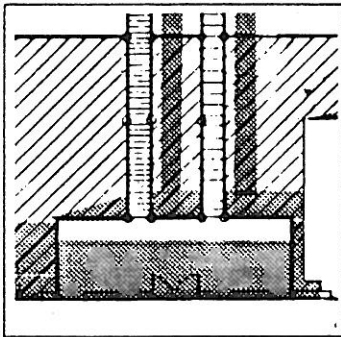
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## The Attraction



Resting on the water of Fort Point Channel sits the newest feature of Bostons waterfront, the floating attraction of the Children's Museum.

Six crystal prism roofs, each with a windmill, crown the tops of six tall, white towers. From their bases, fountains of water cascade constantly into the ocean. The towers are connected by one large open deck and several ramps which lead to upper levels. The entire structure is alive with activity. Giant water wheels spin, bubbles rise, water falls, everything moves and high overhead, children climb on nets, tunnels, bridges disappearing in one tower, then appearing in another.

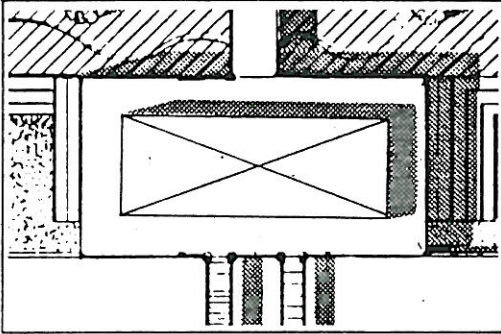


Access to the attraction is controlled from within the Children's Museum at the second level. After passing through the control point, one arrives at a narrow platform approximately the width of the existing wood deck outside the shop. This platform provides orientation for attraction visitors as well

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as protection from the environment for main level Museum entrants.

From the platform there are two types of suspension bridges; one with regular movement and the other more stable.

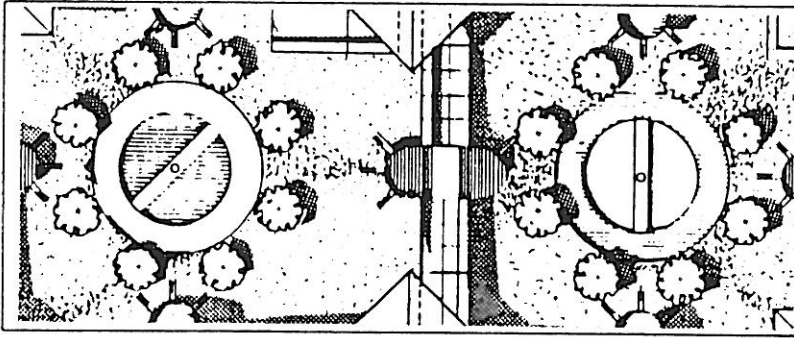


Both bridges lead to to an open structure on which we find a small building housing family and regular washrooms. These facilities are located here to serve attraction visitors, most importantly after hours when the main building might not be accessible. Continuing above the boardwalk is a singular longer bridge leading to the floating attraction.

After crossing the bridges, we arrived at the entry tower. Guests would be encouraged to turn to the right, down the north ramps which lead in a counterclockwise direction back to the entry tower. Here, they would continue in a clockwise fashion down the south ramps, leading to the main activity deck.

Throughout the entire walkway system, are activities relating to water. They are found in the wide exhibit tank railings, on the floor, overhead, or on the tipping target balconies. And in each tower is found another element. There might be interactive displays of wind and solar power; the rain collected in the crystal roofs could be investigated; or we could find a giant musical instrument with water as its source. At the 4 corner towers are opportunities to climb higher within the attraction to a network of gross motor activity elements; net climbs, snake tubes, or wobble walkways.





The main deck level features two interactive "Ocean Echo Fountains" where the visitors through their own sounds will be able to raise the level of the water below. This is also where we find the compass glide ride, water pools with living aquatic animals and steam fountains activated by passers by on the boardwalk.

After exploring this level, visitors might leave via an exit only gate to the boardwalk or alternatively, up either ramp to the second level access bridge and back to the main building. The exit only gate would be electronically linked to main control within the building to provide an accurate count of guests in the attraction and a hand stamp or other means could allow return access to the Museum from the boardwalk.

An arched covering over each ramp provides protection from both sun and rain. With the installation of side walls and a heating system, in might be possible to utilize the facility during the winter season as well.

At night, all appears a bit quieter, but the activity never ceases. High up the windmills turn slowly in the breeze. The crystal roofs glow against the evening sky and reflected light dances on the channel as the splash of the fountains continue to animate the Water Attraction of The Children's Museum.

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## Information Sheet

## Water Attraction

Overall size at roof line	118' by 190'
Overall size at main deck	76' by 152'
Maximum height to windmills	96'
Maximum height to roof peak	80'
Minimum distance from boardwalk	18'
Average distance from boardwalk	35'
Estimated capacity at any time	500 to 600
Estimated capacity play level	+175
Main activity deck	11,552 sq ft
Ramps & balconies	3,800
Towers	1,880

## Apron

Presentation pit	3,600 sq ft
Exhibition platform	2,460
Shops (2x 480)	960
Washrooms	720

## Project Budgets

Estimated cost Apron	\$650,000.00
Estimated cost Attraction	2,750,000.00
Estimated cost ramp canopys	80,000.00
Estimated cost 3rd level play	300,000.00

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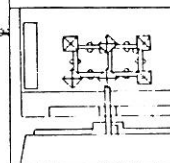
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1. Eric McMillan, Inc.

# The Children's Museum Boston

Waterfront Development



## Key Plan

1. Matt Garrett
2. Boardwalk
3. Boardwalk Balconies
4. Museum Link Dock
5. Boardwalk Brook
6. Upper Level Wobble Walkway
7. Exhibition Platform
8. Presentation Pit
9. Kiosks & Washrooms
10. Group Bus Stops
11. Parking
12. Museum Deck
13. McDonalds
14. Computer Museum

## Site Plan

