



Parks



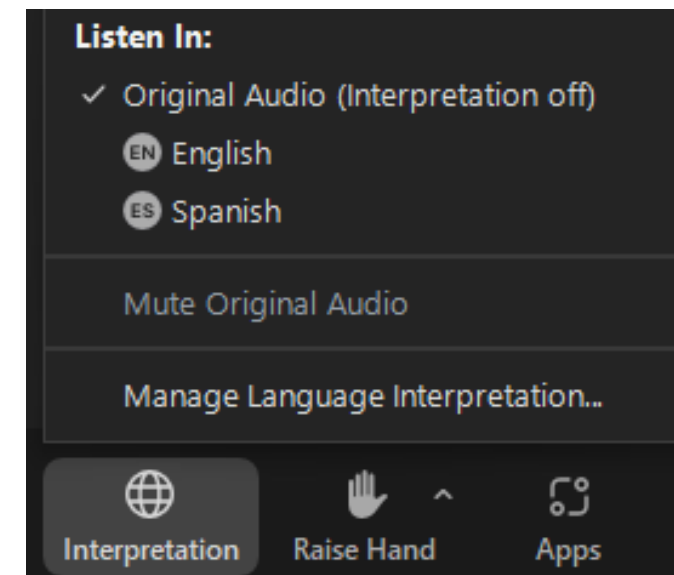
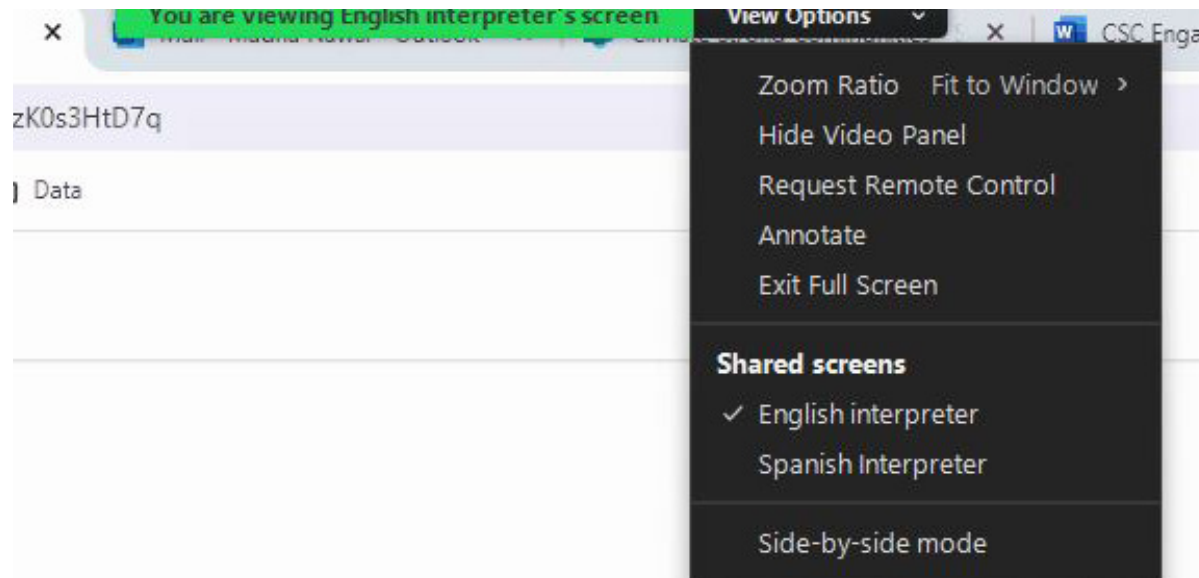
HART ISLAND MASTER PLAN

Hart Island located
in the Borough of the Bronx

Public Feedback Meeting
November 7, 2024

NYC Parks
Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects and Planners

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TODAY'S DISCUSSION

CONCEPTUAL WORK IN PROGRESS | 11/07/24

- **Master Plan Vision + Projects (30 min.)**
- **Q&A (30 min.)**



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HART ISLAND MASTER PLAN

PROJECT BACKGROUND

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- Local Laws passed in 2019.
- Hart Island is transferred to Parks in 2021.
- Parks has jurisdiction over the island and manages visitors, HRA does island maintenance and burials operations, and DOT operates the ferry from City Island.
- The Master Plan is a vision for the island's future.
- Proposals in the Master Plan are only conceptual, there is currently no funding for implementation.
- Agencies will use this vision to prioritize and advocate for funds to further improve the island.



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SCHEDULE

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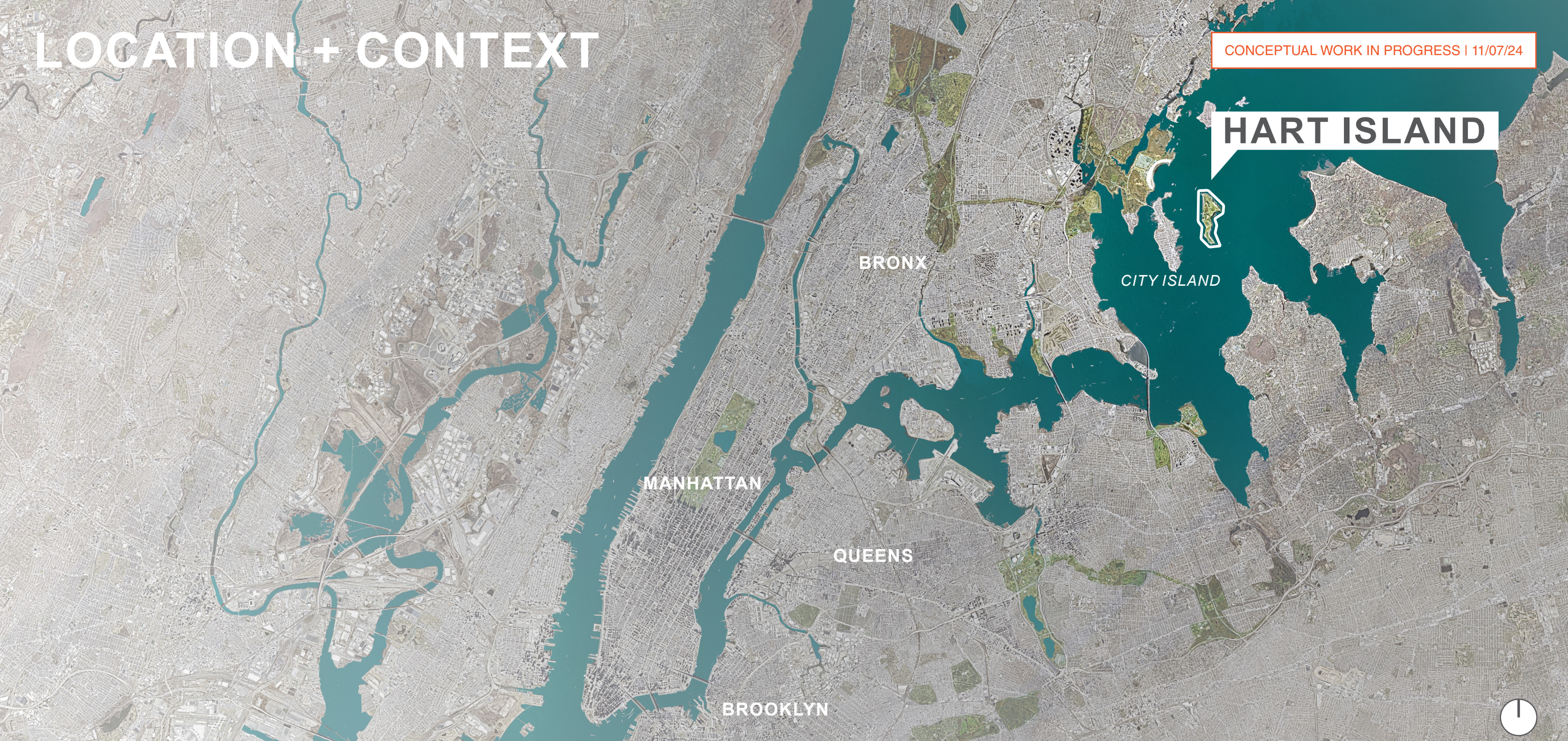
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LOCATION + CONTEXT

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HART ISLAND



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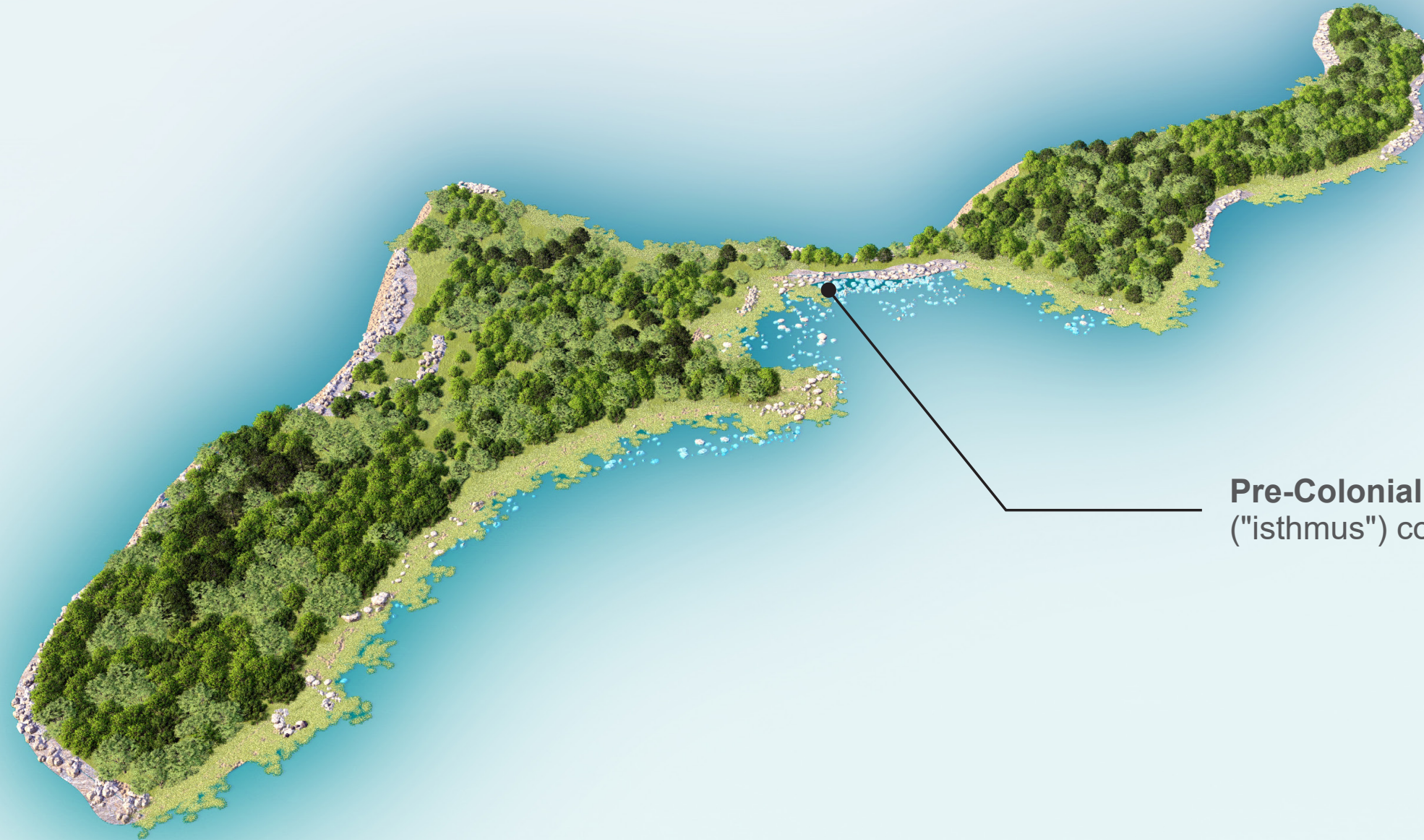
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ISLAND HISTORY

PRE-COLONIAL | PRE-1800s

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Pre-Colonial settlement: Land bridge ("isthmus") connects two islands.



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ISLAND HISTORY

1800s

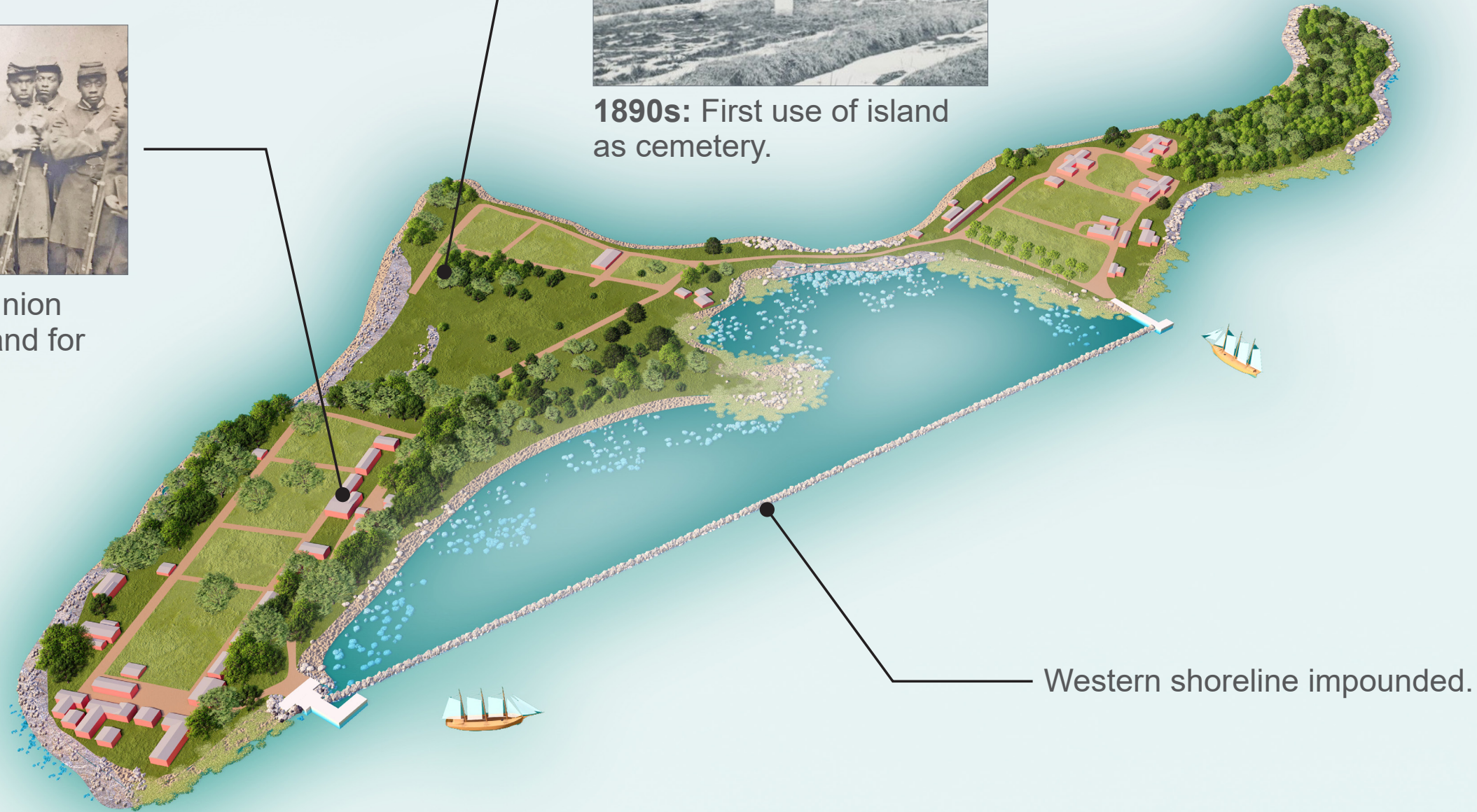


1860s: Black unit of Union Army trains on the island for Civil War.



1890s: First use of island as cemetery.

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Western shoreline impounded.



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ISLAND HISTORY

1900s

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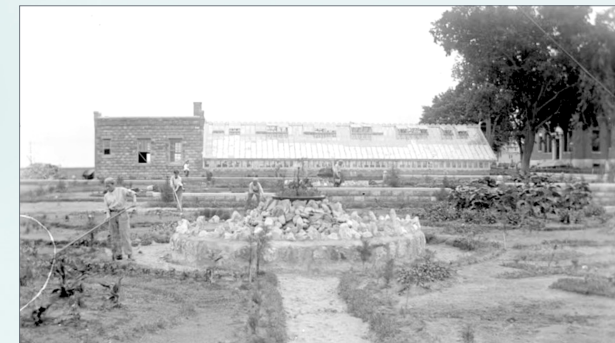
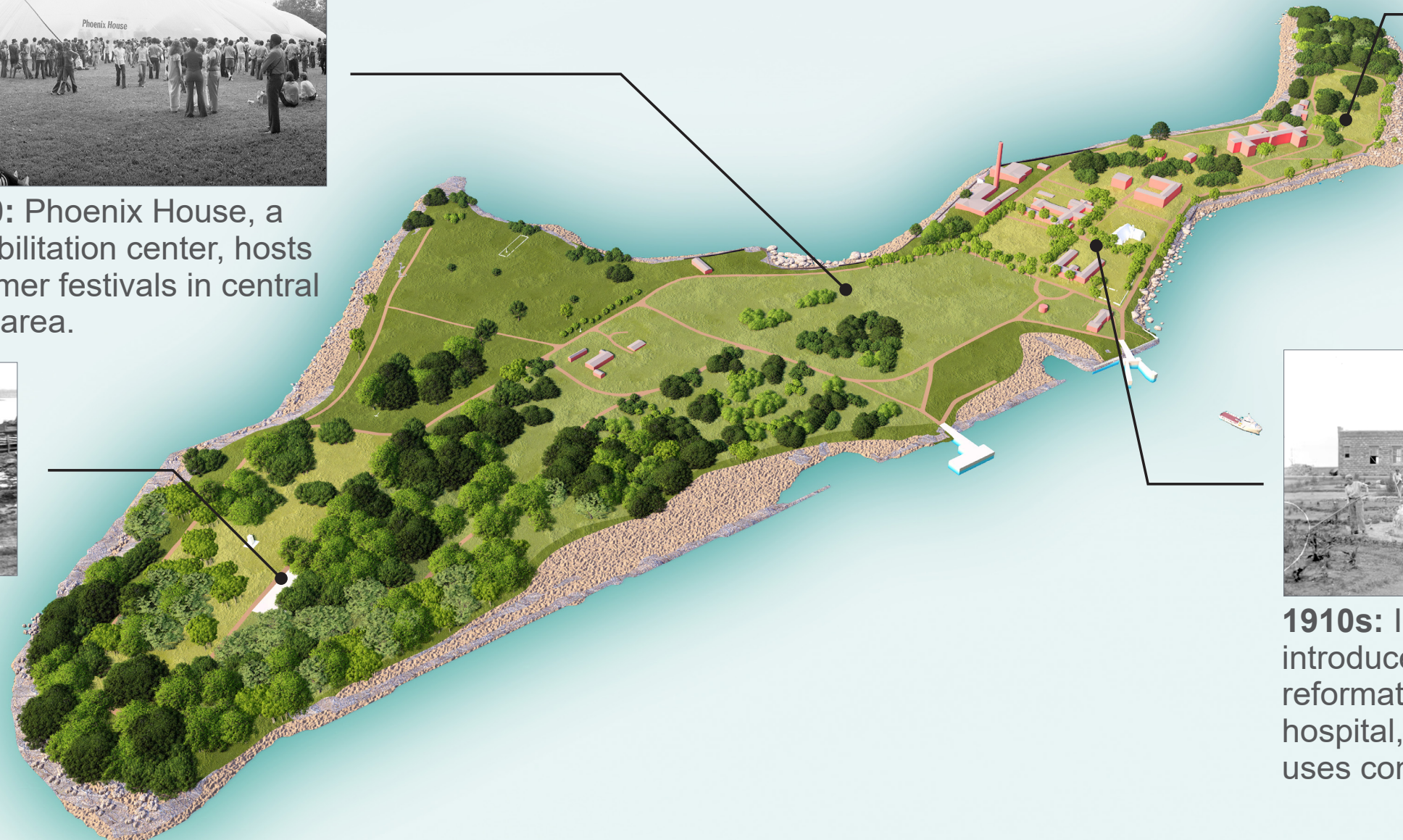
1970: Phoenix House, a rehabilitation center, hosts summer festivals in central field area.



Early-1980s: Early victims of AIDS epidemic buried at south end of island.



1950s: Nike missile silos installed on island.



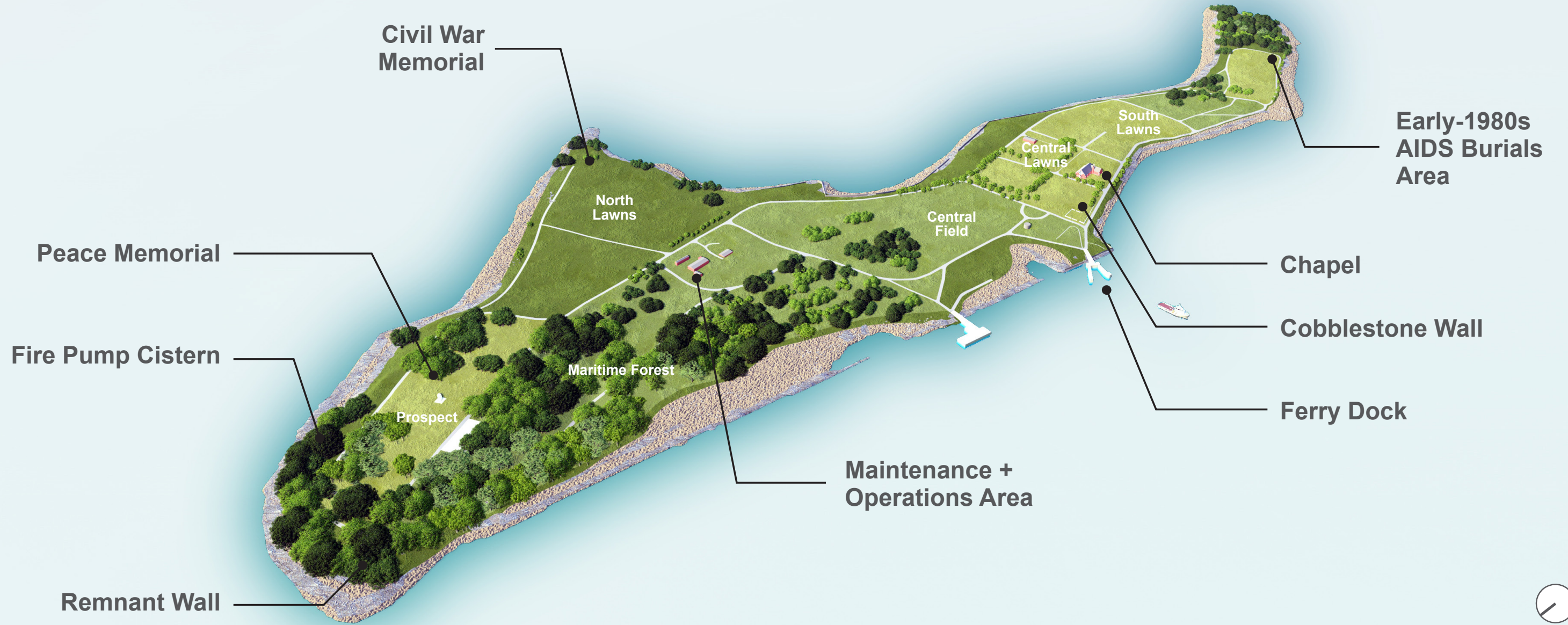
1910s: Institutional uses introduced, including boys reformatory and psychiatric hospital, as other military uses continue.



ISLAND HISTORY

TODAY

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ISLAND HISTORY TODAY

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC WORKSHOP 1 SUMMARY

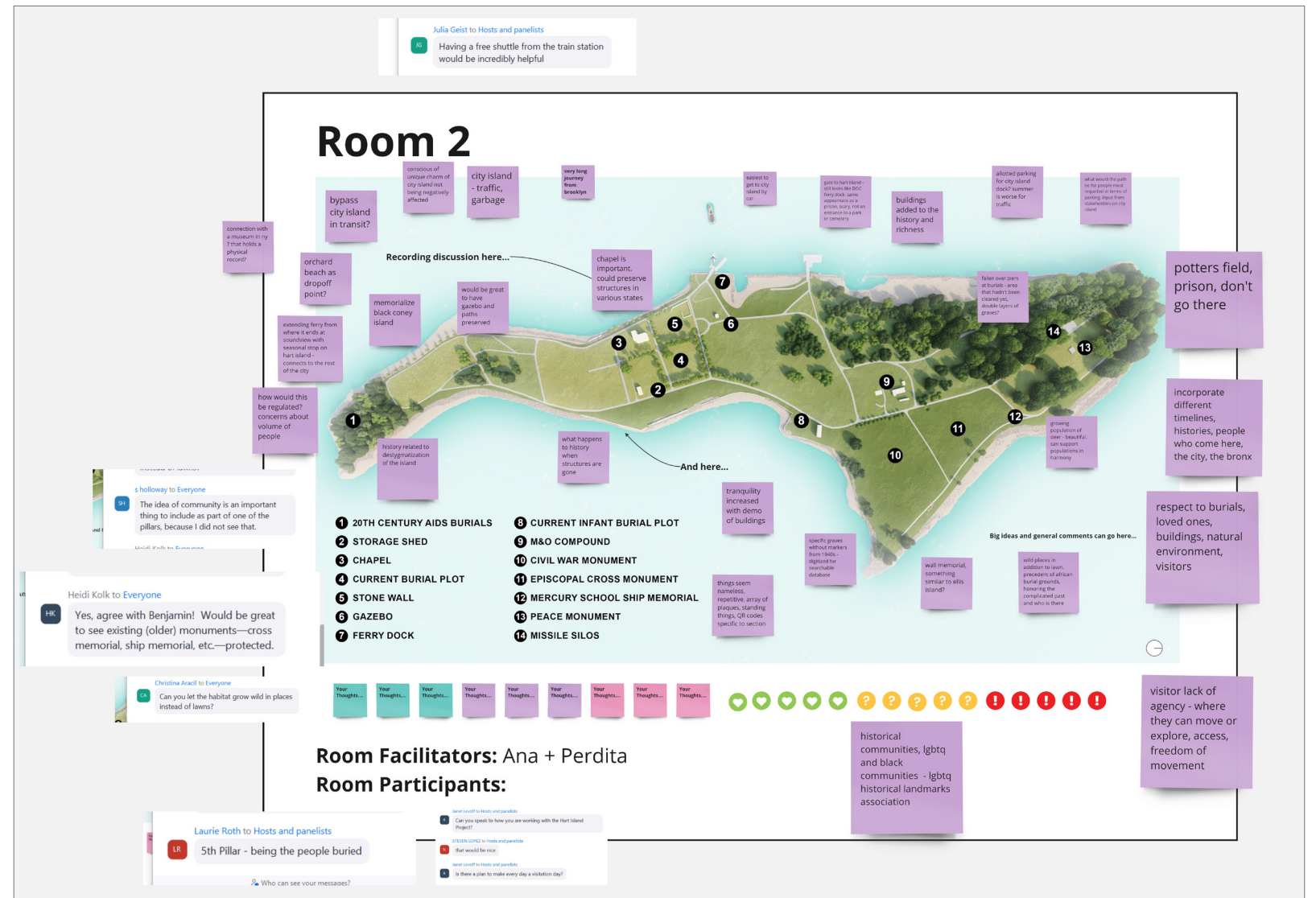
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2024 Engagement

- NYC Parks hosted a virtual public meeting on June 18, 2024. An online survey was accessible from May 28, 2024 to July 2, 2024.

What the Team Heard

- Attendees expressed the importance of the island as a respectful burial place that should cater to gravesite visitors.
- Attendees expressed a desire for bathrooms, shelters, benches, and shaded areas across the island.
- Beauty of the island offers comforting and inspiring experience.



Sample Miro board from virtual public workshop.

MASTER PLAN VISION

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Hart Island is an emotional, quiet, and spiritual place. Visitors come to be close to family members and loved ones, to engage with New York City's history, and to admire the natural beauty of the island.

As New York City's public cemetery, Hart Island provides the essential service of dignified burials for those most in need.

Master Plan Goals

- Create a dignified, safe, and accessible experience for island visitors.
- Maximize the life cycle of Hart Island as New York City's public cemetery.
- Enhance island ecological systems and adapt for climate change.



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MASTER PLAN PILLARS

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VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- Improve infrastructure and amenities for visitors.
- Legible and dignified site narrative.
- Universal accessibility.



RESILIENCE

- Adaptive landscapes for sea level rise.
- Flood resilient facilities.
- Thermal comfort.



ECOLOGY

- Habitat restoration and management.
- Stabilized shorelines.



OPERATIONS

- Coordinated visitor and burial operations.
- Maximize capacity of cemetery.



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PROGRAMMING ASSUMPTIONS

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- Operations plan aims to maximize life cycle of public cemetery use.
- Visitation to the island will continue to be scheduled in advance through gravesite visits and special tours.
- NYC Parks has no recreational use plans for the island.
- Proposed visitor amenities consider that visitors are typically only on the island for two to three hours.
- In the long-term, adaptation to sea level rise will be needed.

PROPOSED MASTER PLAN PROJECTS

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SITE PROGRAMMING

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SITE CIRCULATION




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FEATURES

- Re-pave paths to create safe shared-use routes.
- Preserve grid to provide orientation and reference historic institutional layout.
- Introduce pastoral elements such as seating areas with accompanying plantings for reflection and exploration.

PATH TYPES

-  Shared paths (16' shared asphalt road)
-  12' stabilized crushed granite path
-  6' - 12' stabilized crushed stone paths



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SITE CIRCULATION

SOUTH LAWNS + SHARED PATH

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REMEMBRANCE WALK

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Welcome Center +
Remembrance Walk



FEATURES

- Welcome center with facilities for visitors to the island.
- Shade structure with seating to welcome visitors and protect from weather.
- Contemplative lawns and gardens with seating for reflection.



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REMEMBRANCE WALK FEATURES



Lawns

- Contemplative spaces; seating areas.

Walks + Seating Areas

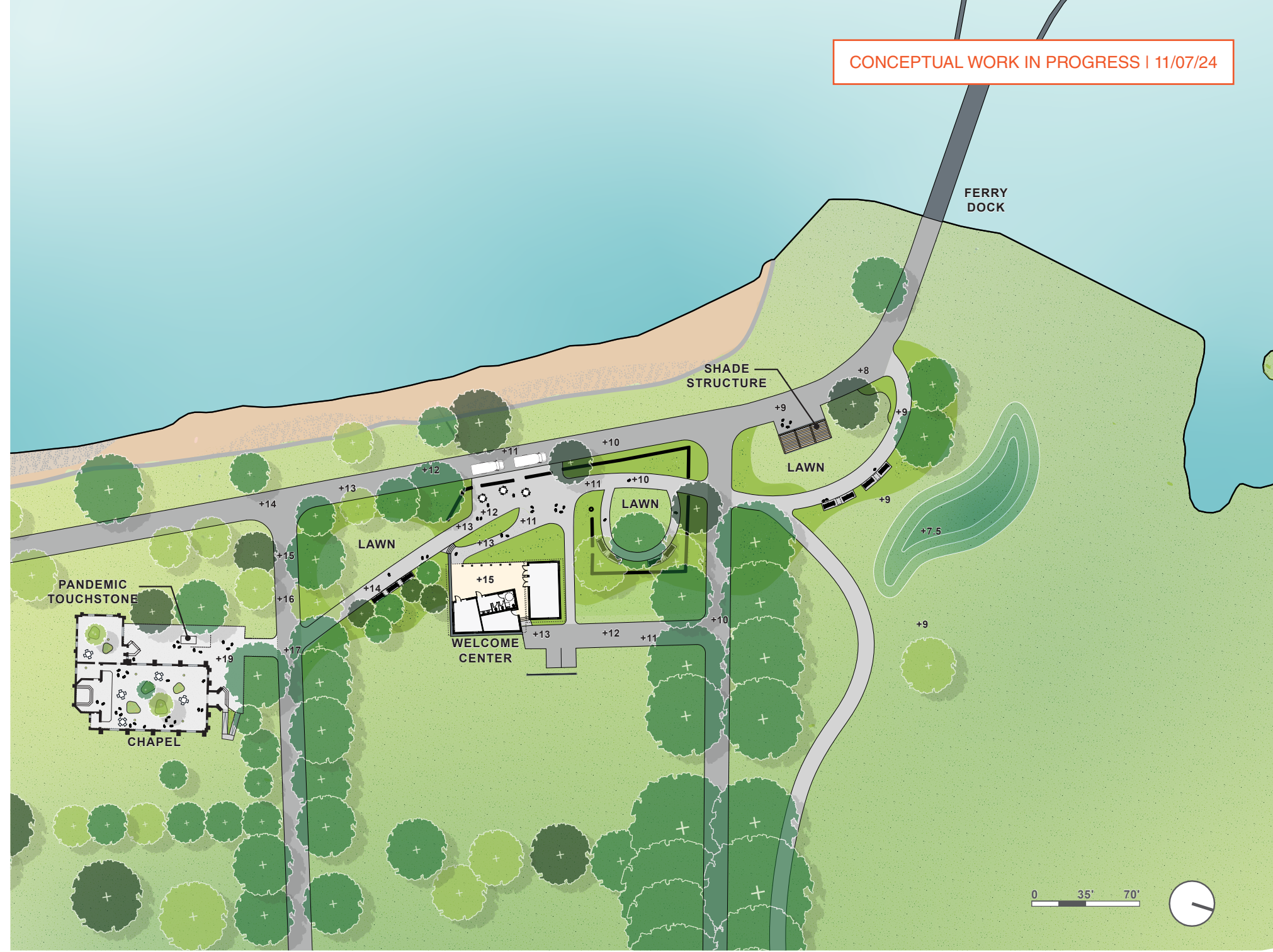
- Benches along the circulation path and in reflective spaces with views of Long Island Sound; movable seating and tables.

Welcome Center

- Historically contextual, ADA accessible, flood resilient.
- 3 bathrooms, meeting room, staff office, first aid station.

Sanctuary

- Adaptive reuse of chapel; location for approved new monuments and memorial; reinterpretation of salvaged architectural items.



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REMEMBRANCE WALK

WELCOME CENTER

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LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

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FEATURES

- Legible public cemetery and historical landscape.
- Adaptation to sea level rise.
- Active habitat restoration and management (meadow, forest, wetland establishment).

KEY

- Selective meadow edging along paths
- Allée enhancements
- Screening



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LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

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Forest Management

- Invasive plant removals and underbrush clearing to reestablish natural succession.
- Health removals of trees.
- Understory establishment.



Allée Pruning + Planting

- Address health of trees in allée.
- Preserve existing trees in allée.
- Selective tree additions to infill allée.



Screening

- Thicket planting to screen burial and maintenance and operation areas.
- On northeast area of island, screening to discourage walking close to steep embankment.



Meadow Edge Treatments

- Selectively located meadow drifts to define path edges.

HISTORIC FEATURES

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HISTORIC FEATURES

- 1. 20th-century AIDS burials
- 2. Catholic chapel
- 3. Cobblestone wall
- 4. Prison "Keep Off" wall
- 5. Civil War soldiers' memorial
- 6. Episcopal cross

- 7. White cross
- 8. Remnant wall
- 9. Nike missile launch area
- 10. Peace memorial
- A. Phoenix House
- B. Fire pump cistern

KEY

- Ruin / remnant
- Civic features
- Inaccessible / invisible features



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HISTORIC FEATURES

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Ruins Treatments

- Stabilize and remove fencing.
- Complement with rustic plantings; create semi-wild / overgrown setting while keeping structure legible.
- Seating.



Civic Features Treatments

- Stabilize and / or preserve in distressed condition or restore.
- Incorporate into site circulation; create semi-formal setting with stabilized crushed stone and seating.



Interpretive Signage

- Provide interpretive materials (i.e. maps for Urban Park Rangers) or signage / markers.

HISTORIC FEATURES

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OPERATIONS + RESILIENCE

CONSIDERATIONS

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- Public cemetery operations.
- Maintenance + operations facilities.
- Resilient, off-grid utilities.
- Sea-level rise.

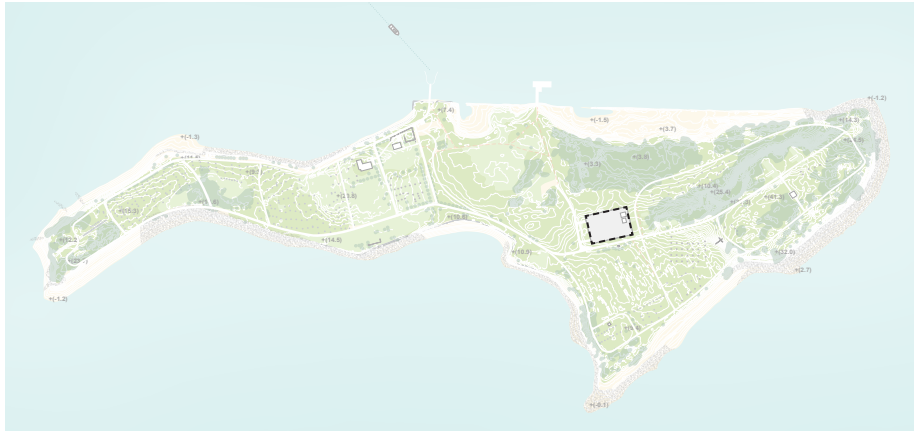


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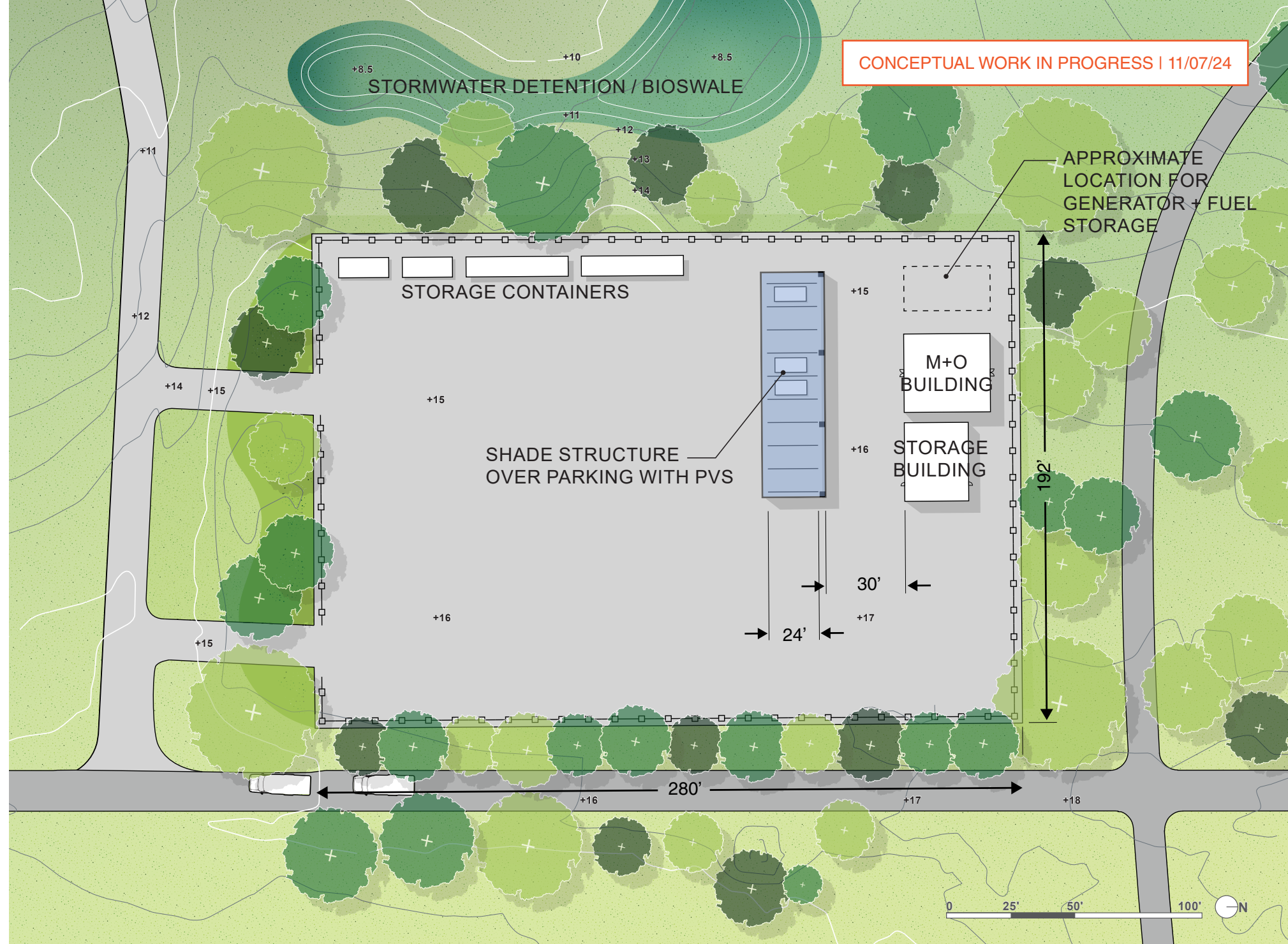


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MAINTENANCE + OPERATIONS AREA



- An updated maintenance and operations area will help to improve island operations and will rely on off-grid energy.
- Wind turbines, solar panels, and generators will be installed to provide power to the island.



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SHORELINE STABILIZATION STRUCTURES

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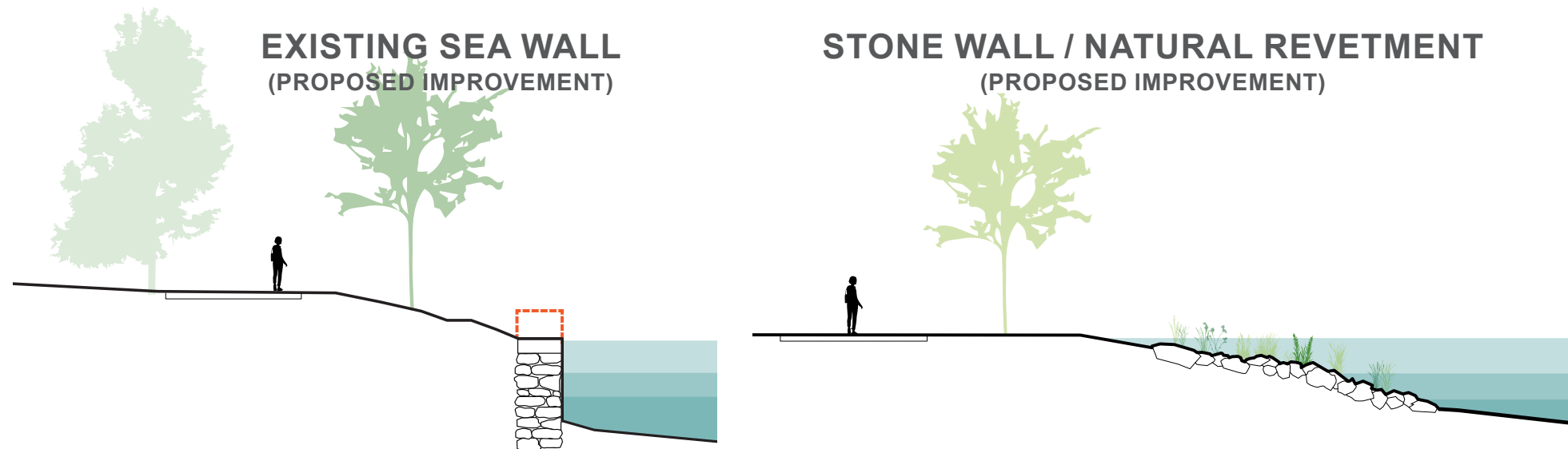
Existing Sea Walls

- Repair as needed; seawalls overall in good to fair condition.
- If repaired, increasing the top of wall elevation may provide tidal flooding protection.



Stone Wall / Natural Revetment

- Reconstruct with an engineered revetment slope to resist environmental loading from wind and waves.



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SHORELINE STABILIZATION

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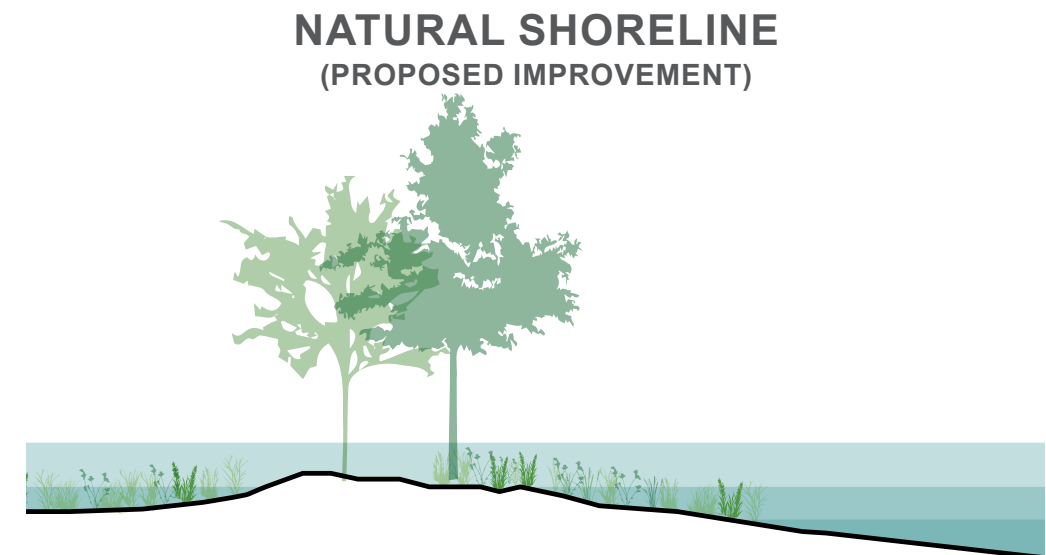
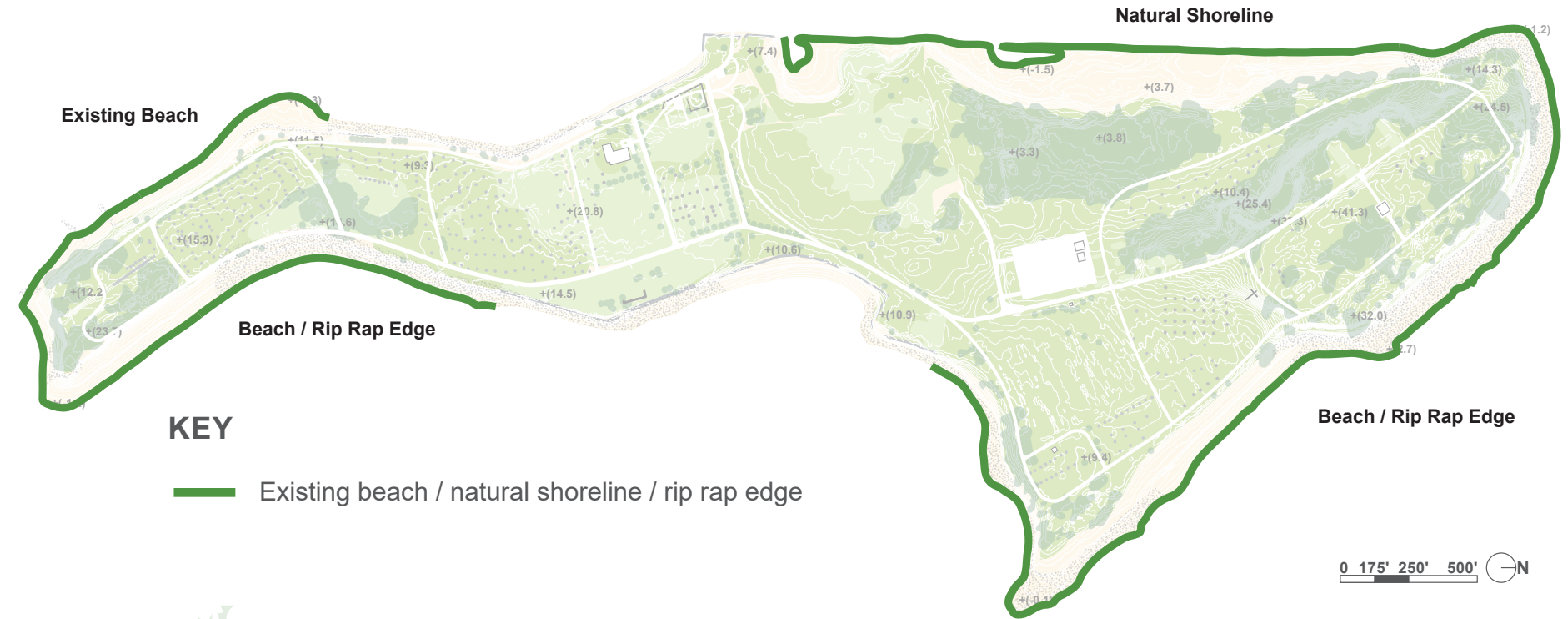
NATURAL SHORELINE

Existing Beach

- Install ECOconcrete modules to create tidal habitat.

Natural Shoreline

- Aquatic plantings could be placed along the current intertidal zone to establish wetland.



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SUMMARY

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NEXT STEPS

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*Master Plan
Study Start
February, 2024*

*Public Meeting 1:
Listening
June 18, 2024*

*Public Meeting 2:
Draft Concepts
November 7, 2024*

*Final Master Plan
2025*

*Master Plan
Projects
Considered
for Capital Funding
2025+*



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NEXT STEPS

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- Meeting attendees will be added to the project's email list.
- Contact: Hart.Island@parks.nyc.gov | 212-360-3428
- For more information about visiting Hart Island, visit:
<https://www.nyc.gov/site/hartisland/index.page>