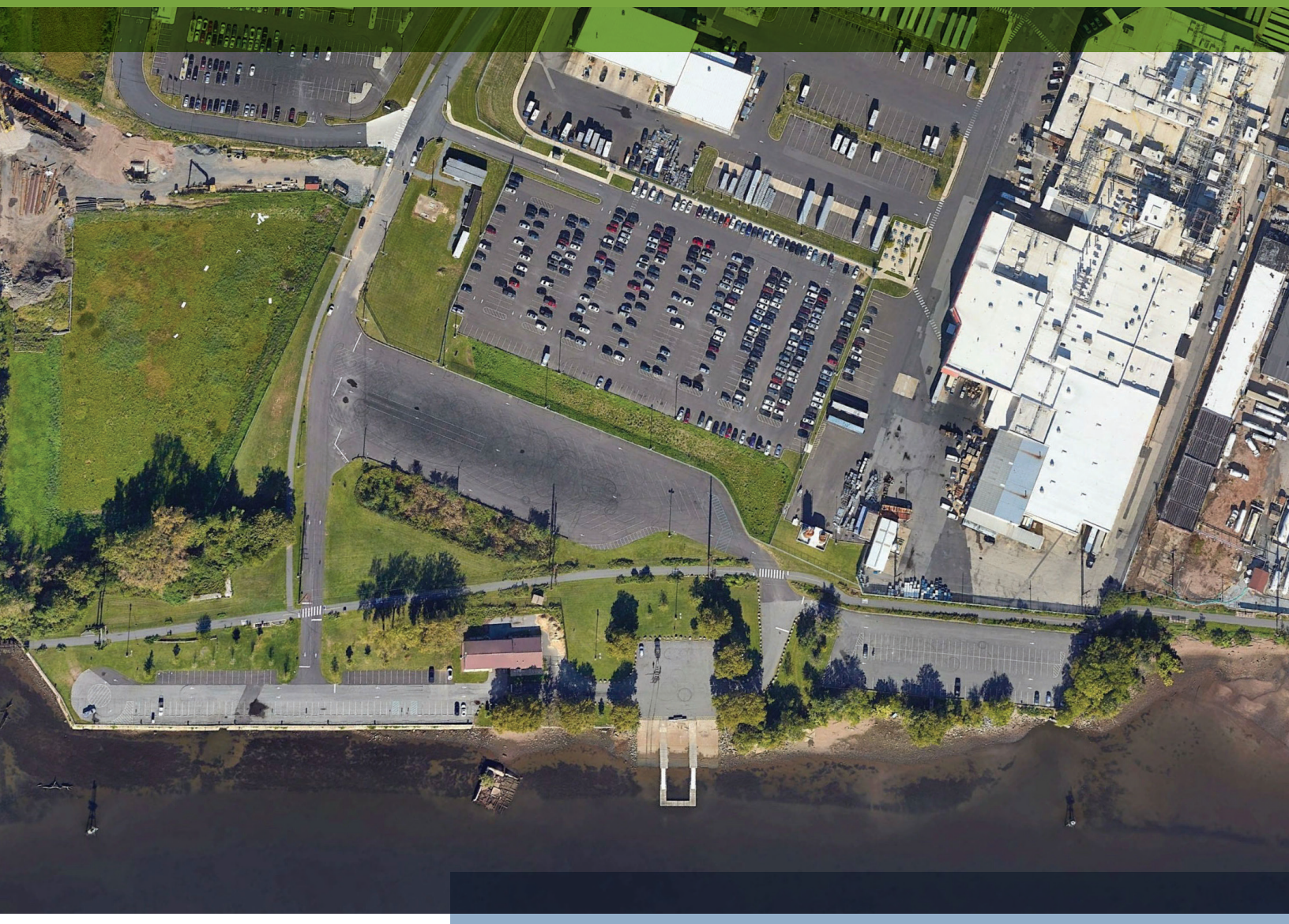
ULI Philadelphia

RIVERFRONT NORTH PARTNERSHIP

Preparing for a More Resilient Frankford Boat Launch



Technical Assistance Panel Report | JULY 19 - 20, 2023

About the Urban Land Institute

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) was established in 1936 as a nonprofit educational and research institute. It is supported by more than 46,000 members across the globe representing all aspects of land use and development disciplines. ULI's mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land to create and sustain thriving communities worldwide. ULI Philadelphia has nearly 900 members in the Philadelphia District Council, which includes the Philadelphia metropolitan area, Central Pennsylvania, the Lehigh Valley, Delaware, and Southern New Jersey. ULI provides guidance to nonprofits and municipalities seeking solutions to land use challenges. Its Technical Assistance Panels objectively evaluate specific needs and make recommendations on implementation in an atmosphere free of politics and preconceptions. ULI member and non-member professionals provide their expertise in a voluntary capacity and each has signed an agreement to prevent current and potential conflicts of interest.

Acknowledgments

On behalf of ULI Philadelphia, the panel would like to thank the sponsor organization, Riverfront North Partnership, for this effort.

In particular, the panel would like to thank Stephanie Phillips, Executive Director, and Jim Fries, Project Manager, for their work preparing, coordinating, and supporting the panel's onsite work.

The panel would also like to thank the Riverfront North Partnership staff and Board of Directors, community members, local CDCs, city, state and agency representatives, consultants, and local nonprofit leaders for sharing their insights and perspectives during the stakeholder interview sessions.

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Grant Acknowledgment

ULI is grateful for the support of The JPB Foundation.

ULI Advisory Services: National and Global Programs

Since 1947, the ULI Advisory Services program has assembled well over 700 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for complex land use challenges. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's advisory services. National and international panelists are specifically recruited to form a panel of independent and objective volunteer ULI member experts with the skills needed to address the identified land use challenge. The program is designed to help break through obstacles, jump-start conversations, and solve tough challenges that need an outside, independent perspective. Three- and five-day engagements are offered to ensure thorough consideration of relevant topics. An additional national offering is the project analysis session (PAS) offered at ULI's Fall and Spring Meetings, through which specific land use challenges are evaluated by a panel of volunteer experts selected from ULI's membership. This is a conversational format that lends itself to an open exchange of ideas among diverse industry practitioners with distinct points of view. From the streamlined two-hour session to the "deeper dive" eight-hour session, this intimate conversational format encourages creative thinking and problem solving. Learn more at americas.uli.org/programs/ advisory-services/. Distinct from Advisory Services panels, TAPs leverage local expertise through a half-day to two-day process.

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ULI Advisory Services: District Council Programs

The goal of the ULI Advisory Services program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. The ULI Philadelphia technical assistance panel (TAP) program has assembled over 187 ULI-member teams in service of ULI's mission to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Drawing from its local membership base, ULI Philadelphia conducts TAPs offering objective and responsible advice to local decision-makers on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP program is intentionally flexible to provide a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues. In fulfillment of ULI's mission, this TAP report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment. An additional local offering is the project analysis forum, which offers a shorter format for district councils to employ local member expertise to address regional land use challenges. Panelists are land use professionals uniquely positioned to address the specific challenges at hand, and provide in-depth, project-specific, and pragmatic recommendations. The intimate, conversational format encourages creative thinking and problem solving between the panel and the sponsor.

Learn more at www.philadelphia.uli.org

Site tour with the Honor Foods facility building in the background

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Sponsor and Panelists Briefing Meeting

INTRODUCTION

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View of the Frankford Boat Launch with the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge in the background

Riverfront North Partnership engaged with ULI Philadelphia to assemble a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to evaluate current conditions, current and potential uses, and climate resilience of the Frankford Boat Launch, a trailhead park on the North Delaware River Greenway.

Riverfront North Partnership presented the panel with a park study, conducted by the organization in partnership with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation in 2018, as well as its 2021 Riverfront North Greenway Master Plan.

The TAP panelists were asked to develop and evaluate a plan for the Frankford Boat Launch, that encompassed:

- The recreational and open space needs of the community
- Climate resilience strategies to inform a forthcoming Master Site Plan
- Strategies for turning the underutilized site into a regional destination for positive outdoor recreation

On July 19th-20th, the panel, which featured planners, engineers, a hydrogeologist, landscape architects, a real estate appraiser, and an ecological restoration specialist, convened at MaST Community Charter School II in Northeast Philadelphia as a meeting and workspace. On July 19th, the group took a brief tour of the Frankford Boat Launch and park grounds. They spent the afternoon at MaST, conducting interviews with a broad sampling of stakeholders, including local residents, RNP employees and board members, representatives from the Philadelphia Water Department, environmental experts, community watershed leaders, local business owners, a PennDOT consultant, a transportation planner, a local CDC director, planners from other regions of the Delaware River waterfront, a state representative, leaders from local environmental nonprofit organizations, and personnel from state and city environmental and recreation agencies. After the interviews, the group reassembled to share feedback and identify common themes.

The following day, July 20th, the group drew from these themes to develop its findings, including a site assessment, a conceptual framework for an updated site, and a phased plan for implementing site upgrades, park management, and programming. They presented these recommendations to the sponsor and stakeholders on the afternoon of July 20th.

OVERVIEW

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Study area overview

Riverfront North Partnership was founded in 2004, initially as the Delaware River City Corporation and rebranded to its current name in 2018. Riverfront North Partnership is a nonprofit organization representing an 11-mile waterfront network of trails and parks along the Delaware River and connecting six neighborhoods: Port Richmond, Bridesburg, Wissinoming, Tacony, Holmesburg, and Torresdale. The organization's mission is to complete and sustain this network, connecting area residents to nature, recreation, environmental education, and community.

Once a rural area, this section of the Delaware River waterfront attracted mills, foundries, and manufacturing facilities in the 19th century, including the Frankford Arsenal, a U.S. Army ammunition plant. In the following decades, the construction of industrial ports, Roosevelt Boulevard, and the I-95 Interstate highway followed. Waterfront industry spurred jobs and the development of affordable housing in adjacent neighborhoods. However, factories and mills contributed to extensive pollution of the water and land, which discouraged recreational use along the river. By the middle of the 20th century, the river was declared "dead," and unfit for marine life.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the river began to recover, largely due to the Clean Water Act and regulatory changes to area sewage plants which were forced to treat wastewater before releasing it into the Delaware. In the intervening years, the Delaware Riverfront became more frequently used for recreation. After the Frankford

Arsenal closed, the PA Fish and Boat Commission created the Frankford Arsenal Boat Launch and operated it, welcoming more boaters to the river.

In 2005, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council developed the North Delaware Riverfront Master Plan and Cost Benefit Analysis to examine multiple scenarios for park development and their implementation. At that time, The North Delaware Greenway was identified as part of the interstate East Coast Greenway, a 3,000-mile multi-modal trail spanning from Maine to Florida. The Delaware River City Corporation was established to spearhead development of the North Delaware Greenway and ensure that it would be connected to the East Coast Greenway.

Over the next decade, several trails and parks were built as a result of this planning. They include Pennypack on the Delaware, the Port Richmond Trail, Lardner's Point Park, and the initial phases of the Kensington & Tacony (K&T) Trail along the railroad line.

In 2015, the City of Philadelphia acquired the frequently used Frankford Arsenal Boat Launch from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and dropped the "Arsenal" from its name. Part of the southern trailhead of the K&T trail, the Frankford Boat Launch is one of three free, publicly accessible boat launches in the city. The others include the Tacony Boat Launch which is soon to be redesigned with a public park space, and the Linden Avenue Boat Ramp at Pleasant Hill Park on Linden Avenue. For years it was widely used by anglers and boaters.

However, since the transfer of property occurred, Frankford Boat Launch has been underutilized. With Dietz & Watson deli meats acquisition of the Arsenal property in 2014 for a trucking and distribution center, and a lack of signage to direct new users, the boat launch is hard to find from the road. Additionally, needed repairs closed access for two seasons. In the interim, boaters found other access points in New Jersey and Bucks County.

Also reducing desired usage of the site is the fact that during the transfer, the PA Fish and Boat Commission, which had occupied offices in the launch building, moved and ceded the space for Philadelphia Parks and Recreation arborists, minimizing daily activity on the site.

To make better use of the site, Riverfront North Partnership launched its own programming, such as an annual Fish Fest, fishing lessons, and guided nature walks. In 2018, anticipating planned regional trail connections, Riverfront North Partnership in conjunction with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation conducted a study to identify potential improvements and amenities that might restore usage of the boat launch and introduce revenue streams such as event rentals and concessions.

Starting in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns diminished site usage even more. During this time, the Frankford Boat Launch began to attract other users. Most recently, ATV riders and "boom parties," featuring stereo systems so powerful their "booms" can be heard across the river in New Jersey, have occupied the parking lot. These uses have instigated ongoing complaints from local residents.

In 2021, with eight miles of trails completed, Riverfront North Partnership developed a Greenway Master Plan which stipulates the restoration of water-based habitats along the river, including flood accommodations to ensure their resilience. The plan calls for additional trail construction, connector street improvements, future trail enhancements, and water connections.

The Greenway Master Plan encompasses the Frankford Boat Launch. However, given the concerns of disruptive activity and underusage, Riverfront North Partnership and Philadelphia Parks and Recreation have secured state funding for a Master Site Plan specific to the Frankford Boat Launch.

In the coming months and years, more Greenway development is on the way. The Delaware Avenue extension between Orthodox and Tacony Streets, which connects the K&T Trail and Frankford Boat Launch is slated to open by 2024. Phase 2 of the K&T Trail extension has begun. The Tacony Holmesburg Trail will be open by the mid-2020s. Reimagining the Frankford Boat Launch will be critical for any vision of the Greenway"s ongoing development.

SCOPE

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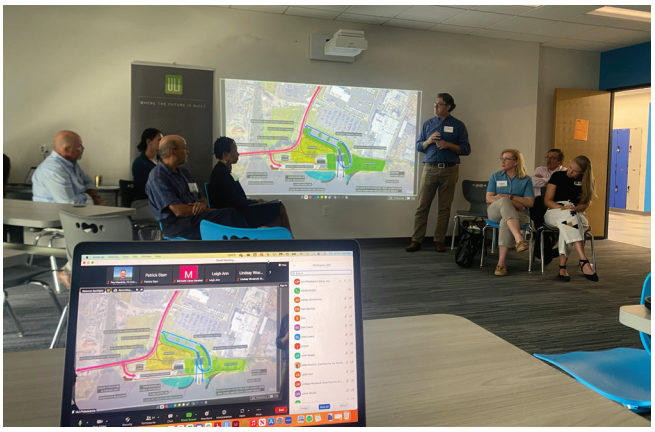
Tour of the Frankford Boat Launch with Panelists and Riverfront North Partnership

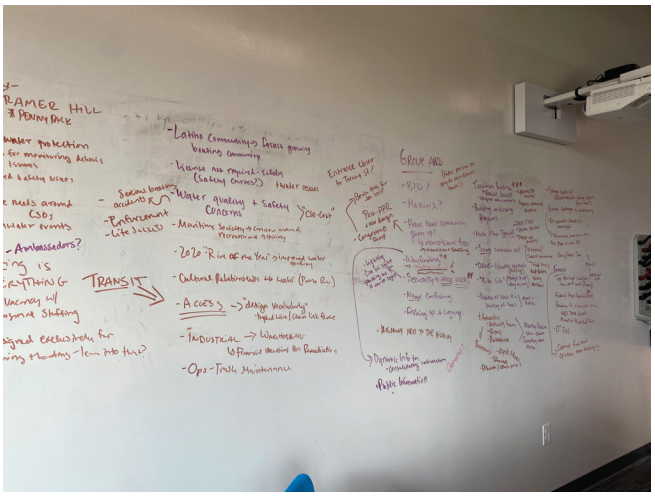
In light of the upcoming master planning process for Frankford Boat Launch, the TAP panel was asked to evaluate the site for the recreational and open space needs of the community as well climate risk. The panel's scope included the following questions:

- What is the current vulnerability and risks of climate change to public access?
- Are there specific design recommendations for green infrastructure and, if so, what maintenance considerations should Riverfront North Partnership consider?
- Given the site's history of industrial contamination, what are the limitations on the development of green infrastructure?
- Given the active recreation onsite, what are recommendations for balancing these activities with green infrastructure?
- Are there examples of—or suggestions for—educational outreach regarding climate resilience that could be integrated into the Master Plan engagement?

On the morning of July 19th, the TAP panel assembled at the Frankford Boat Launch. Representatives from Riverfront North Partnership led a tour around the premises, including where the Bridesburg Channel extends from the Delaware River, the trail "gap" that will soon be filled to connect the K&T trail, and the connection and access points to the site. The group also looked at the nearby parking lots, including the large parking area once used for boat trailers which is currently being used for ATVs and "boom parties."

In the afternoon, panelists reconvened at MaST Community Charter School II. The panel was divided into four groups to meet with 33 stakeholders, presenting a broad range of perspectives. The panelists conducted interviews to get stakeholder input on the Boat Launch, the site challenges and opportunities, and how the site could be improved upon through the planning process.





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Briefing meeting, site tour, presentation preparation, and final presentation to sponsor and stakeholders

SITE ASSESSMENT

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View of Delaware River from the Frankford Boat Launch

Given what they learned through the tour, briefing materials, and stakeholder interviews, the TAP panelists consolidated their findings in the form of a site assessment, upon which they based the recommendations to follow.

Location

Situated on the shore of the lower tidal Delaware River, The Frankford Boat Launch was initially designed to be used for boating and fishing. It's close to or adjacent to the neighborhoods of Tacony, Wissinoming, East Mayfair, Disston, Frankford and Bridesburg.

Usership Groups

Current and potential users of the Frankford Boat Launch include:

- Regional boaters
- Multigenerational families
- Young families
- Immigrant and English as second language communities
- Local teens
- Fisher people
- Birders
- Trail users
- Bicyclists
- "Park and view" visitors
- Philadelphia Parks and Recreation arborist crews and personnel

Current Conditions

Site Uses

Frankford Boat Launch is currently used for:

- Boating (both powered and unpowered)
- Fishing
- Picnicking
- Community events, such as Riverfront North Partnership's Fish Fest
- Community recreation, such as fishing lessons and guided nature walks

Site Strengths

The site's strengths include:

- Two seasonal public access boat ramps with floating docks
- Three major parking areas with excessive parking capacity—the extra space can be considered a strength because it can be converted for another use.
- Green space, including lawn areas, garden beds, a vegetated bioretention basin, and natural shoreline
- A multi-use paved trail
- A maintenance post/shed building with bathrooms (currently not designated for public use)

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Standing water in parking lot of Frankford Boat Launch

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View looking north along the K & T Trail, adjacent to the Frankford Boat Launch

Site Challenges

As previously stated, the site's biggest challenge is its underutilization, which leads to a lack of a regular human presence and unwanted activities. Additionally, stakeholders reported the following issues and concerns:

- Boating hours are not clearly posted
- Regular and consistent use is not encouraged by current conditions, and many boaters have moved on to other launch sites
- Existing facilities attract a limited array of user groups (boaters, anglers, trail users, and parkers/viewers)
- History of contamination
- Multiple marine uses, including jet skis, and powered and unpowered boats as well as swimmers, make it less appealing to any one group of users
- Current undesired use by ATVs, inappropriate motorists, and boom parties
- The boat ramp, since being repaired, does not allow for adequate traffic circulation
- Grounds maintenance (including needed funding and staffing) is a stressor for both the City of Philadelphia and Riverfront North Partnership
- Rules and regulations are not clearly posted in any language
- Inconsistent enforcement or presence of safety personnel
- Lack of real-time data about site use and present conditions
- Outside of Riverfront North Partnership, there is no formal community support or advocacy for the site

Coastal Risks

As a waterfront site, the Frankford Boat Launch is subject to multiple coastal risks which must be taken into account in any site development planning. Three known hazards include storm surges at the Delaware River, upland flows at the nearby tributary Old Frankford Creek, and sea level rise due to climate change.

Storm Surge at the Delaware River

Under current estimations, the site is located in a 100-year FEMA floodplain, with a defined base flood elevation of 12 feet (Reference: FEMA FIRM 4207570118H, Effective 11/18/2015). The actual site elevation is between 6.5 and

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View of Delaware River from the Frankford Boat Launch

10.5 feet. Comparing the FEMA 100-year storm elevation to the existing study area elevation, flooding is anticipated in the present-day 100-year event associated with coastal storm surges or overtopping rivers. Additionally, the FEMA model used is currently outdated, last updated in 2015, and it is anticipated that FEMA-defined base flood elevations will increase at the site based on recent storm and flood events. Even if the site is raised, property access will remain vulnerable during the present-day 100-year flood elevation. Additionally, Philadelphia is at risk for more frequent severe flooding compared with NOAA Atlas 14 estimates for a 1-in-100-years flood. The current Atlas 14 model estimates that Philly could get about three inches of rain an hour during a 100-year flood. First Street Foundation's adjusted estimates posit project that nearly five inches are possible.

Upland Flows at the Old Frankford Creek

There are over 3,000 AC of upland urban watershed draining to the Old Frankford Creek. The watershed is over 95% impervious, which is often related to high runoff volume during heavy rain events concentrated at the outlet of Old Frankford Creek. This runoff may contribute to high flood levels adjacent to the property. However, implementation of planned watershed improvements and strategic stormwater management by the City of Philadelphia could decrease flood risk at Old Frankford Creek.

Sea Level Rise Due to Climate Change

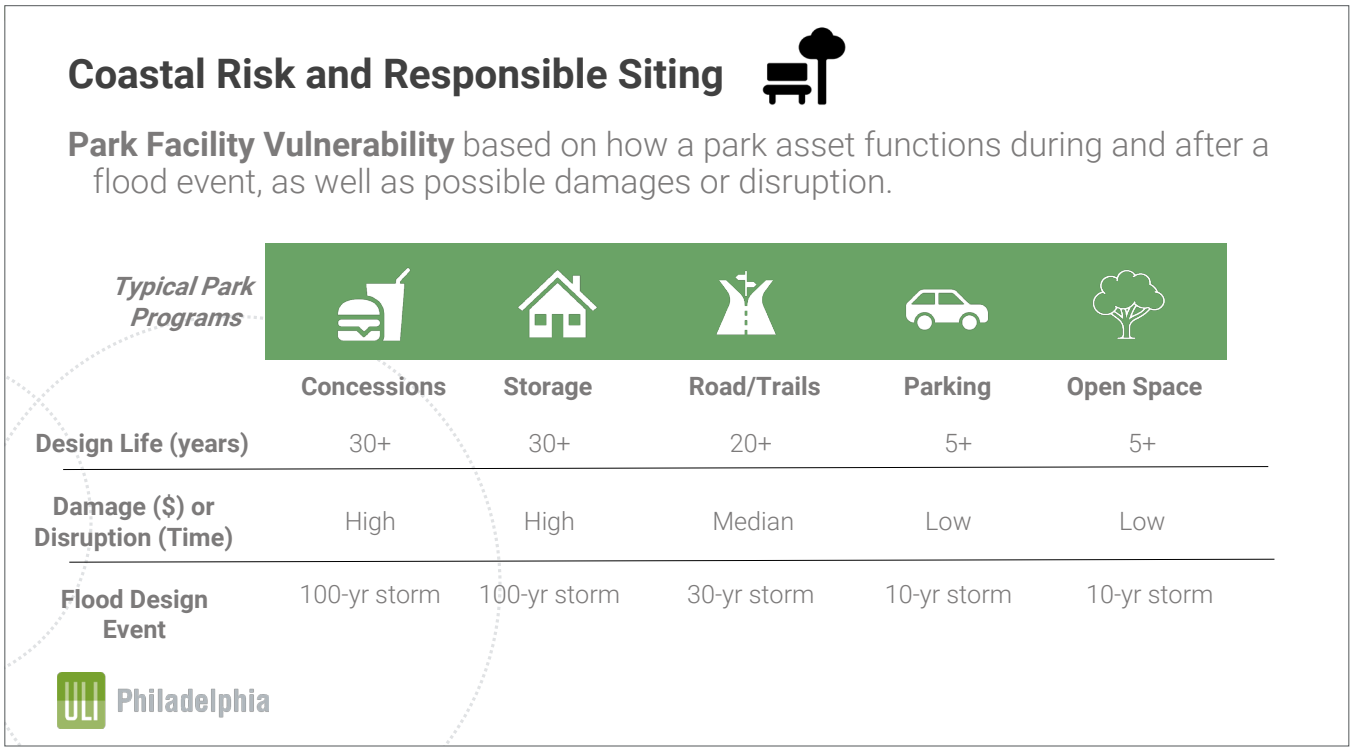
The present day mean High-High Water (MHHW) level is currently 3.9-ft NAVD88. Presently, it is anticipated that the region will see an increase of approximately 0.11 inch sea rise per year, leading to additional flood risk in the future.

Additional Climate Considerations

Given the effects of climate change, average annual temperatures are projected to increase by approximately 3 degrees Fahrenheit by 2050 and 7 degrees Fahrenheit by 2100. High temperatures are a human health risk, impacting cardiovascular and respiratory systems. As such, universal resilience design calls for preserving open space and including shade components.

Climate-Specific Recommendations

All told, Frankford Boat Launch has a high flood hazard level, and is anticipated to see 5.5 feet of flooding in the near future. However, intentional



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Park Facility Vulnerability

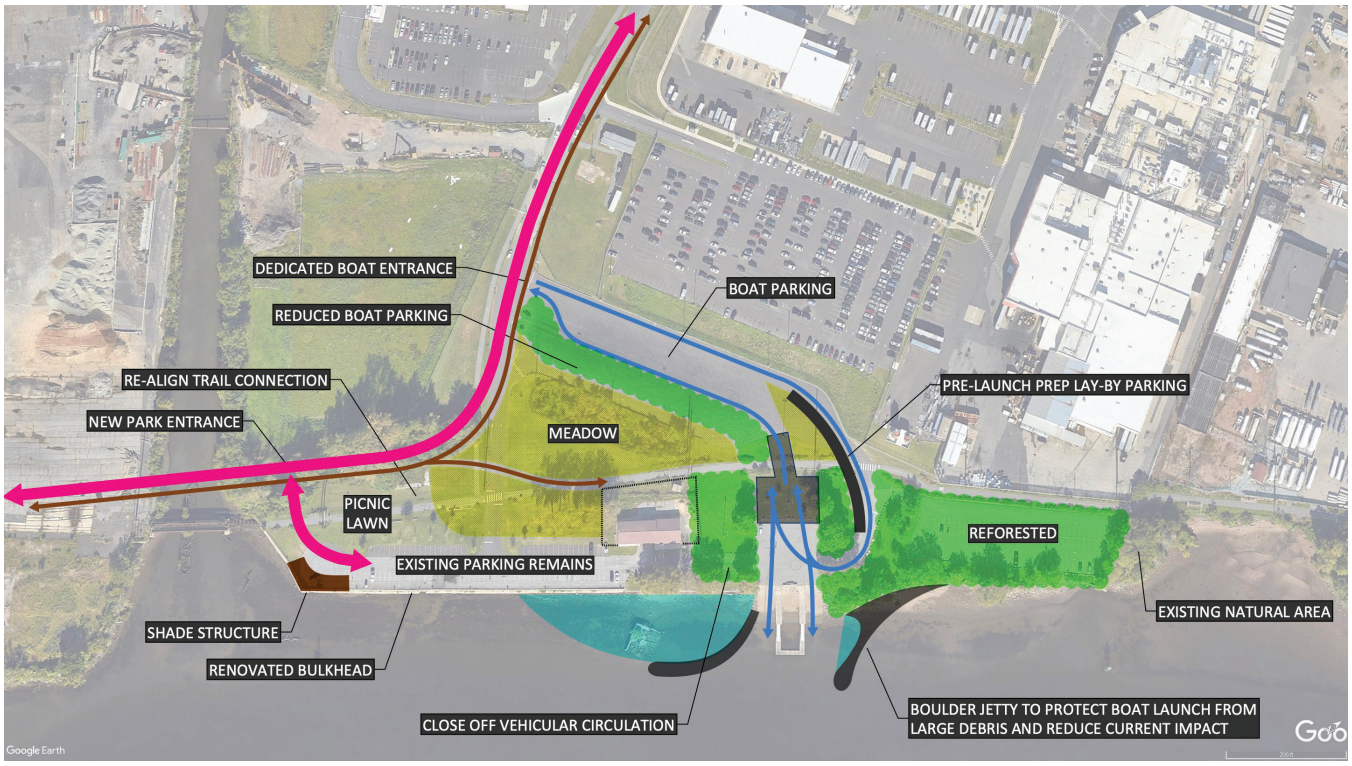
facilities and parks programming design can decrease the flood risk. The TAP panel suggested that Riverfront North Partnership take the following steps to incorporate flood and climate resilience into any future planning for Frankford Boat Launch.

- Determine RNP risk tolerance by discussing park design life—assessing for 10, 30, 50, 100-year scenarios—and desired or sustainable levels of park facility disruption
- Conduct a detailed hazard assessment using preferred design life and projections
- Considering program-specific vulnerabilities and risk tolerance preferences in the design process
- Integrate adaptive/heat tolerant planting into the design
- Decrease impervious area
- Increase tree canopy
- Increase shade opportunities

Parks, Extreme Heat, and Health

Extreme heat compromises human cardiovascular and respiratory systems, making high temperatures a pressing public health risk, particularly for low-income and elderly communities. The most universally applicable resilience design strategies to combat extreme heat are the creation of shade and the preservation of open space. Parks create "cool green space islands" that reduce surrounding air temperatures by at least 2 to 4 degrees Fahrenheit (1.1 to 2.2 degrees Celsius). (Urban Land Institute, 2020, *Successful Partnerships for Parks: Collaborative Approaches to Advance Equitable Access to Open Space*, https://americas.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/Successful_Partnerships_for_Parks.pdf)

RECOMMENDATIONS



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Conceptual Map with Panelists recommendations for Frankford Boat Launch redesign.

The TAP panel presented a conceptual framework for an updated Frankford Boat Launch. The new design would reduce the current overabundance of parking and hard surface areas, while adding a more functional loop from the lot to the boat ramp with pre-launch prep lay-by parking. Excess parking areas would be reforested or regreened for meadow space and a picnic lawn. A new park entrance with a sign would help visitors more readily find the launch from the street, while a dedicated boat entrance with clear signage would help direct boaters to the designated area. Additional upgrades and modifications include a shade structure in the fishing area, concessions and public restroom, renovations to the bulkhead, the creation of a living shoreline, and the addition of a boulder jetty to protect the boat launch from large debris and reduce current flooding impacts.

Based on this framework, the panel set out a phased plan for integrating changes and updates, including coalition-building, communications, site improvements, programming, adaptive management, funding, and staffing. The general recommendation was for Riverfront North Partnership to proceed with a long-term approach toward the evolution of the site.

Phase 1 (Years 1-4)

The first phase of work would largely be dedicated to encouraging proper use of the site, making small amenity improvements, focusing on coordination with the Delaware Avenue extension construction, and establishing a consistent site presence to enhance security.

ULI's 10 Principals for Building Resilience

1. Understand Vulnerabilities

Understanding how shocks and stresses increase risks is the first step toward building resilience.

2. Strengthen Job and Housing Opportunities

Cities with a diversity of jobs and housing choices are more resilient and better prepared for extreme events and other challenges.

3. Promote Equity

Pursuing equity means purposefully addressing racial, social, environmental, and economic injustices to build stronger communities and to support the most vulnerable communities in reducing risk.

4. Leverage Community Assets

Identifying and leveraging existing assets will enable communities to bounce back better.

5. Redefine How and Where to Build

Building resilience entails identifying and investing in places and infrastructure that are the most likely to endure.

6. Build the Business Case

Strategies that prepare for and mitigate climate-related risks can create value and provide a strong return on investment.

7. Accurately Price the Cost of Inaction

Recent extreme weather events suggest that the costs of not investing in resilience and risk reduction are dramatically increasing.

8. Design with Natural Systems

Designing resilience relies upon an understanding of the function and geography of natural systems and how they can help strengthen manmade systems and communities.

9. Maximize Co-benefits

Risk reduction initiatives and infrastructure can also include elements that enhance quality of life and economic development potential.

10. Harness Innovation and Technology

Innovation related to infrastructure, mobility, data, and information tracking can improve response to crisis and strengthen resilience for the long term.

(https://americas.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/10P_BuildingResilience.pdf)

- Reclaim the existing building onsite from Philadelphia Parks and Recreation and establish Greenway and Boat Launch staff in this space to ensure a presence onsite
- Implement smaller amenity improvements to increase picnic activity such as associated signage, trash receptacles, and picnic tables; build seating along the seawall; create more shade; and allow public bathroom access
- Establish storm response protocols for site managers to follow to mitigate risk and ensure faster clean-up
- Improve the boat ramp accessibility and circulation pattern using "no parking" designations and arrows painted on the pavement to establish a more functional flow of traffic between parking and the boat launch
- Obtain a permit for events that could be sold to people who want to responsibly use the site

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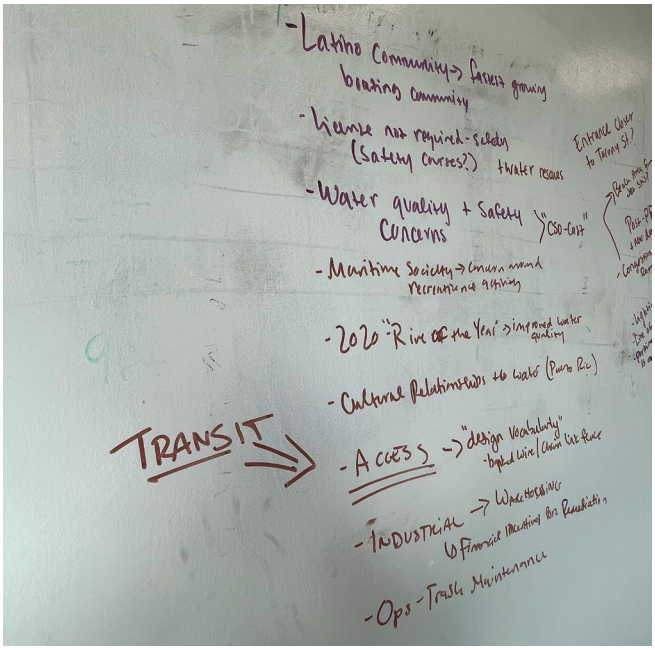
Panelists walking the K & T Trail adjacent to the Frankford Boat Launch

- Create signage for access and rules for usage onsite, including multilingual signs; introduce a bulletin board with centralized and updated information
- Continue Riverfront North Partnership's current public programming
- Introduce an environmentally or waterfront-themed art contest for area students to encourage usage
- Develop more consistent funding streams, including researching and applying for relevant grants, and collaborating with other organizations for partnered or sponsored activities

Phase 2 (Years 4-10)

The second phase would focus on building a broader user base by adding facilities that attract a more diverse group of people. Once a critical mass of park users has been developed, Riverfront North Partnership might explore the possibility of adding food concessions or potentially a kayak/bike/fishing rental service. The TAP panel also recommends planning specific improvements with funding sources in mind—for instance, grants dedicated for climate resilient improvements.



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Panelists brainstorm reccomendaitons to create a more resilient Frankford Boat Launch site.

- Continue and expand on Riverfront North Partnership's programming with offerings to draw more visitors and build on its mission, such as boat safety clinics, and climate change/floodwater themed art installations
- Expand and build on signature events such as Fish Fest to return to or exceed pre-pandemic attendance levels
- Add play/recreation/fitness equipment to expand usage, such as
- Bocce
- Cornhole
- Disc golf
- Playground
- Skate park/plaza
- Pump track
- Game tables
- Dog park
- Introduce more shade to the site, through planting trees or additional shade structures as denoted by the design team
- Secure ongoing funding by establishing a fully operational development program; applying for more grants, and renewing business improvement district work
- Make additional boat ramp improvements
- Introduce more fishing/boat user amenities such as a hose line for clean-off, microline receptacles, and a kids' fishing rod lending program
- Develop a weekend ambassador program to spread the word about the site, and integrate it into Riverfront North Partnership's Field Outreach and Work Development planning
- Build a volunteer storm response team

Phase 3 (Year 10+)

The third and final phase encompasses ongoing maintenance and building on the outcomes from previous phases. Ideally, at this stage, Riverfront North Partnership has been established as a convener, there is an established storm management protocol with prepositioning for storm cleanup, and a strong coalition of partners such as Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, the Philadelphia Water Department, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boating Commission and public volunteers working to manage, improve, and use what has become a marina/maritime destination. Additionally:

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Panelists touring the Frankford Boat Launch

- Riverfront North Partnership creates a unified information hub for all visitor information related to the Boat Launch
- Improve or expand public water and bathroom amenities
- Station permanent personnel and equipment onsite
- Conduct regular public education programming around coastal resilience, changing weather, and coastal plant communities
- Acquire dedicated funding for ongoing operations and maintenance

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The Frankford Boat Launch site was part of the former Frankford Arsenal property that has been the subject of several environmental investigations. As presented in the environmental assessment prepared by Langan Engineering and Environmental Services in 2014, it appears to have been investigated with a plan to enter the site into the PA Act 2 Program to obtain clearance for soils and continue the work of monitoring groundwork quality as necessary. The TAP panel's brief review of the information found in the PA Department of Environmental Protection eFACTS database indicates that the site is listed as "active" in the Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields Program. No additional information about the site is currently available.

However, it is understood that Riverfront North Partnership should complete a phase 1 environmental site assessment. A PA DEP file review should also be completed as part of this process to determine the status of the PA Act 2 investigation.

In addition, it is recommended that Riverfront North Partnership obtain a structural conditions assessment for the existing seawalls, looking at current conditions and vulnerabilities with recommendations for maintenance, repairs, and reconstruction.

SUMMARY

The TAP panel saw almost unlimited possibilities for redesigning, upgrading, and expanding the Frankford Boat Launch to make it a more vital resource in the neighborhood and attract visitors from beyond the Northeast area. The panel recommended phasing out any master plan. Top priority should be given to reclaiming the site from unwanted usage and making improvements to both draw new boaters and attract past users.

The site's distinction as one of the only public boat launches in Philadelphia, its ample parking, and its apt location along the newly connected Greenway trails, situate it well for growth and adaptation in the coming years. The TAP panel advised that in later phases, Riverfront North Partnership could continue building its audience by adding more functionality and recreational amenities, activating its use as an event and public programming site, and potentially adding food and equipment rental concessions.

A challenge going forward is the site's inherent vulnerability to river flooding and storm surges, as sea levels rise, and storm and flooding events become more commonplace. The TAP panel recommended that seawalls be assessed for any needed repairs, and that the design process implement resilient features such as a renovated bulkhead, a living shoreline, and a boulder jetty, as well as reclaiming an expanse of concrete parking lot for a more flood-friendly meadow area.

Finally, the TAP panel cited funding and staffing as an ongoing concern for Riverfront North Partnership in maintaining the site. The panel recommended seeking grant funding and developing partnerships with local organizations and government agencies to lower cost and add people power to ensure that any future improvements can be safeguarded and enjoyed by the public.

PANELISTS

Co-Chair: Charnelle Hicks,

CHPLanning

Charnelle Hicks has 30 years of experience in comprehensive and regional planning, economic development, and public outreach. Charnelle has management consulting experience in business organizational development and frequently shares her professional knowledge on expert conference panels. In 2016, she gave a Keynote Address to the City Planning and Urban Design Conference (CPUD) in Istanbul, Turkey, and was recognized as a Philadelphia Minority Business Leader by the Philadelphia Business Journal. CHPlanning specializes in transportation and infrastructure, land use and environment, design and engagement, and management and technology solutions to complex multidisciplinary problems for social and built environments.

Co-Chair: Barry Seymour

Barry Seymour most recently served as the Executive Director of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), one of the nation's largest and most respected Metropolitan Planning Organizations. In his time at DVRPC, Mr. Seymour instituted the first municipal grant program for revitalization of urban neighborhoods and older suburban communities, created a growth management planning program for suburban communities, spearheaded the Pennsylvania and New Jersey Smart Transportation initiative, oversaw a regional food system plan and is now directing efforts to improve energy efficiency and address climate change in the region. He is a recipient of the 2008 Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence. Prior to joining DVRPC Barry Seymour was Director of Waterfront and Open Space Planning for the New York City Planning Commission.

Kara Slocum, PE, ENV SP, WEDG,

Arup

Kara Slocum is currently a senior civil and resilience engineer at Arup. She is motivated by engineering challenges and team-driven solutions. She specializes in sustainable parks and open space site development and leads with an interdisciplinary, collaborative design approach. Kara has over seven years of experience working with interdisciplinary design teams to realize complex and innovative engineering solutions. Her professional experience has been expanded and developed on projects related to resilience, ecology, urban framework, water management, and sustainable site development. Kara has a passion for design practice that shapes a resilient and equitable built environment, and one that celebrates and improves user experience.

Peter Simone,

Simone Collins Landscape Architecture

Pete serves as President of Simone Collins Landscape Architecture, a planning and design firm committed to creating an ecologically enduring society. Pete has 40+ years' experience across a broad range of Landscape Architecture and Planning. His expertise includes planning and zoning, land development, and park, greenway, and trail design. Pete is an experienced public participation facilitator, and he has conducted scores of community meetings with diverse citizen groups. Pete was made a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 2005. He resides in West Chester, PA, and is a past president of the Vesper Boat Club.

Susanne Curran,

Curran Realty Advisors LLC

Susanne serves as President of Curran Realty Advisors LLC, a valuation and consulting business. Susanne's background includes city and regional planning, real estate market analysis, bank risk in real estate assets, valuation of complex properties, and appraisal review and consulting. Susanne has worked for multiple banks, including Susquehanna Bank and BB&T. Her business bank clients include Univest, Penn Community, Citizens, Wells Fargo, PNC, and others. In addition, Susanne is an instructor on complex topics, including land valuation, yield analysis, real estate market analysis in multiple sectors, demographic and economic demand, discounted cash flow analysis, leasing and tenant analysis, residential subdivision analysis, conservation easements, appraisal national standards, and appraisal review theory.

I. Scott Renneisen, PG,

Terraphase Engineering

I. Scott Renneisen, P.G., is Principal Hydrogeologist at Terraphase with over 30 years of experience in site characterization, groundwater remediation, and consulting for contaminated property clean-up and closure. Scott's experience is wide-ranging: from hazardous and non-hazardous waste site investigations, contaminated groundwater investigations, groundwater resource evaluations, aquifer analyses, remediation, and PA Act 2/New Jersey site closure strategy development to pre-acquisition environmental surveys, brownfields redevelopment, and groundwater modeling. Scott's hydrogeological work has spanned evaluations and assessments in a variety of geologic settings, including complex aquifer systems found within unconsolidated and fractured rock formations to the siting, installation, testing and permitting of drinking-water supply wells.

Brad Thornton, ASLA LEED AP,

Ground Reconsidered

Brad Thornton is Principal at Ground Reconsidered, a landscape architecture studio dedicated to realizing engaging, beautiful, and memorable places. Brad excels at creating innovative and technically resourceful design solutions to complex site challenges. The breadth of his experience includes work on all phases of a diverse range of projects. Brad is as passionate about the form and aesthetic quality of urban sites as he is about protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Brad received his BSLA, magna cum laude, from Temple University.

Emma Schad,

ArcheWild

Emma Schad is an ISA™ certified arborist and a land steward with 8 years of experience working on public and private lands primarily in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Over five years of this professional term has been in Philadelphia, carrying out maintenance, planting, and ecological restoration project work in the city's public parkland inventory. In addition to performing the fieldwork for ecological rehabilitation projects in coastal plain forests, riparian zones, woodlands, and installed meadows, she has also conceived of and managed public access and planting projects within these natural systems. Her years of volunteer project leadership with the public and school groups, collaboration with workforce development organizations, and her own mentorship from colleagues has informed her roles as an environmental and fieldwork educator. Emma currently works on ecological restoration and native plant garden installation projects on public and private lands in and out of the city as a WildLawn® specialist.

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPANTS

- Delaware River Waterfront Corp.
- Tacony CDC
- Philadelphia City Planning Commission
- PennDOT
- SeaPhilly
- Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership
- Riverways Alliance
- PA Sea Grant
- Philadelphia Water Department
- Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
- Riverfront North Partnership Team Members
- Riverfront North Partnership Board of Directors
- Joe Hohenstein, State Representative
- Trust for Public Land
- Clean Air Council
- Justice Outside
- PA Environmental Council
- Partnership for the Delaware Estuary
- East Coast Greenway
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
- PA Fish and Boat Commission

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