

---

# McKim Master Plan Central Library

Boston Public Library

## Board of Trustees

Janette Blackburn, Managing Principal

Kelly Brubaker, Library Planning Principal

November 16, 2021

**design**LAB architects

**SHEPLEY  
BULFINCH**

# Agenda

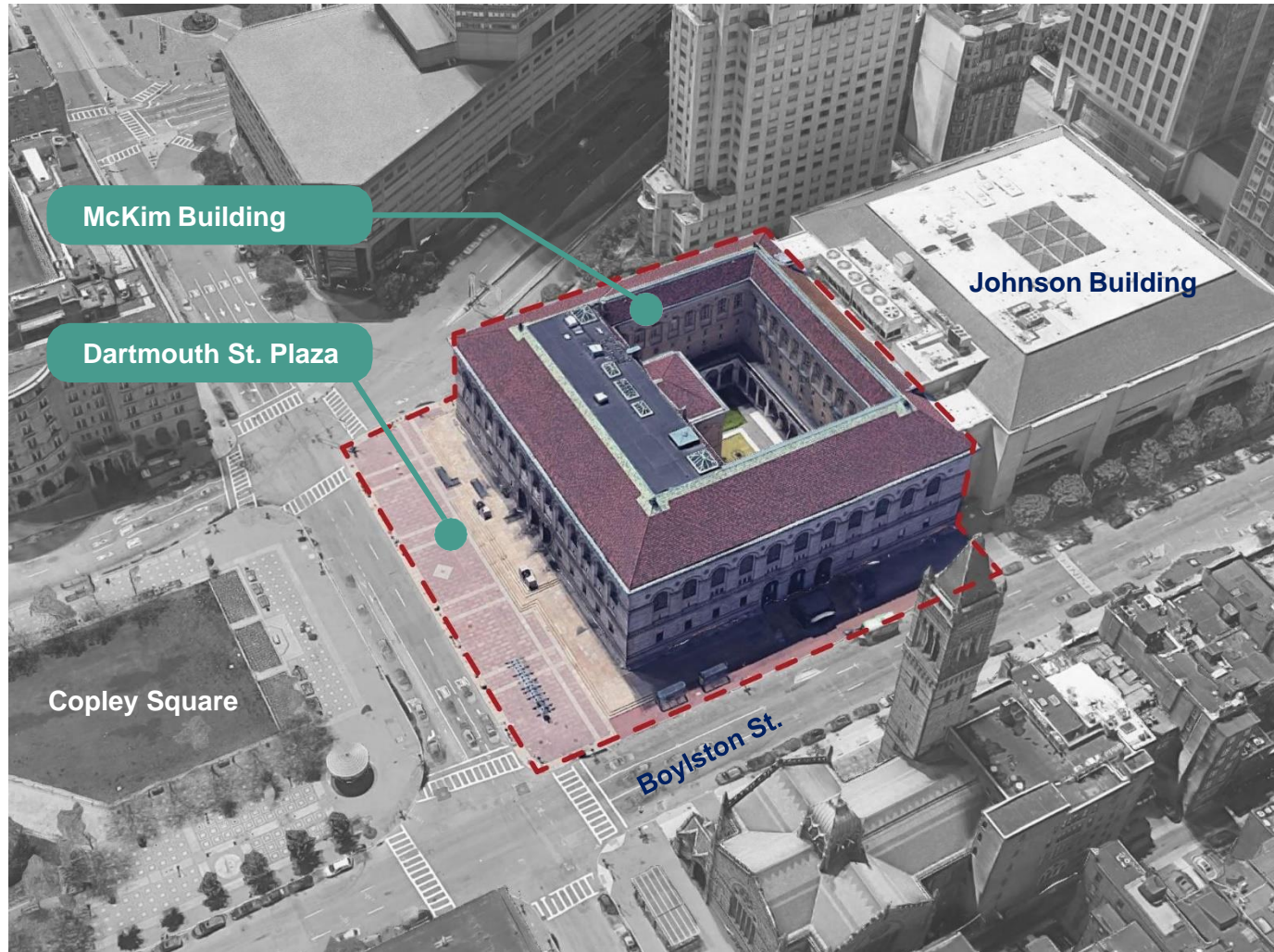
- Project Goals
- Project Process and Community Engagement
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Recommendations





# Project Scope

McKim Building & Dartmouth St. Plaza



Aerial View



McKim Entrance



View towards Copley Square

# Project Process



# Community Engagement

Community Advisory Committee, External Stakeholder Groups, and Community Meetings

## Community Advisory Committee

- Back Bay Association, Meg Mainzer-Cohen
- Neighborhood Association of Back Bay, Jackie Yessian
- Boston Chamber of Commerce, Beyazmin Jimenez
- Tourism Industry, Martha Sheridan
- Boston University Dean of Libraries, K. Matthew Dames
- Boston Arts Academy Librarian, Rose Marz
- Company One Theatre, Summer L. Williams
- Now and There, Kate Gilbert
- Mayor's Youth Council, Minh Mai and Deborah Adebanjo
- SPARK Boston, Sarah Abkowitz
- Historic Boston, Derek Lumpkins
- Boston Preservation Alliance
- Project Place, Aaryn Manning
- Accessibility Advocate, Carol Steinberg

## External Stakeholder Groups

- Arts & Special Collections
- Social and Cultural
- Youth Educators
- Higher Education
- Tourism

## Supplemental Meetings

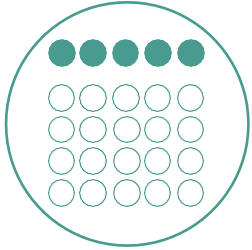
- Boston Preservation Alliance
- Boston Landmarks Commission
- Neighborhood Association of Back Bay



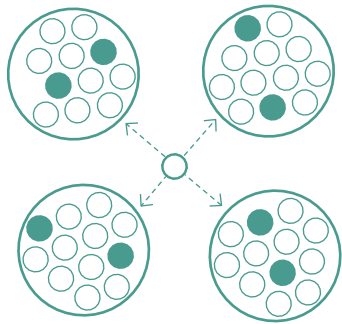
# Community Engagement

CAC, External Stakeholder Groups, and Community Meetings

## 1. Presentation



## 2. Optional Break-Out Group Q&A Sessions



## 3. Paper & Digital Surveys



### Topic #2 Free to All

#### 1 Do you currently visit the McKim building? Why or why not?

Lunch at the cafe, courtyard, favorite place in back bay, listen to live music

Self tour of Art and Architecture Galleries

Giving tours, business with staff or catered affairs

Rarely enter that way-thought it was a "private entrance"

Way in heading to Johnson Building

Events reveal that it is an active building

Visited the courtyard as a student

#### 2 What do you love about the McKim building? Is there anything you would change?

Beautiful third floor spaces opportunity for people to engage with distinctive collections in "people spaces"

Courtyard is a hidden gem

Architecture specific library collection - Learning resource to understand architecture in the city of Boston and the architecture of the McKim building. McKim story. Very rich architectural archive collections

Make the building "accessible to all"

Improve accessibility and way finding. One of first elevators put in a public building - in poor repair Cheverus Room- not accessible

Plaza is kind of a mess. Difficult to keep clean. Loose pavers.

Make Plaza more welcoming.

Not where you go to get your books/ materials/ resources. It is a place to study/ ponder them, but not to obtain them.

Entrance looks like a castle-not public

Scanner at front door is off-putting.

Opportunity to make McKim Entrance a community space. - (NYPL)

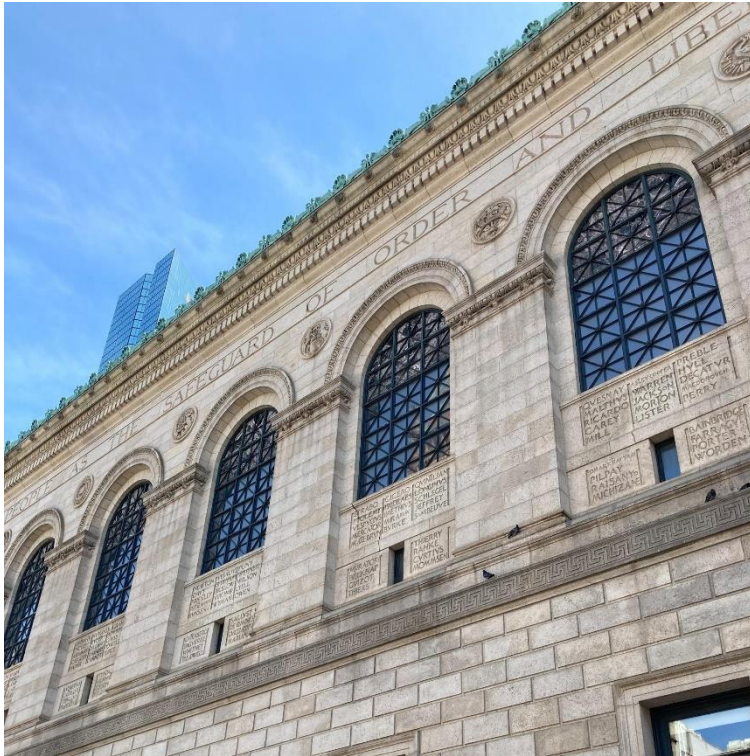
Too formal, not homey, doesn't feel comfortable.

Are we allowed to come in?

Where are the books?

# McKim Master Plan

## Project Focus



Building Improvement  
& Sustainability



Collections

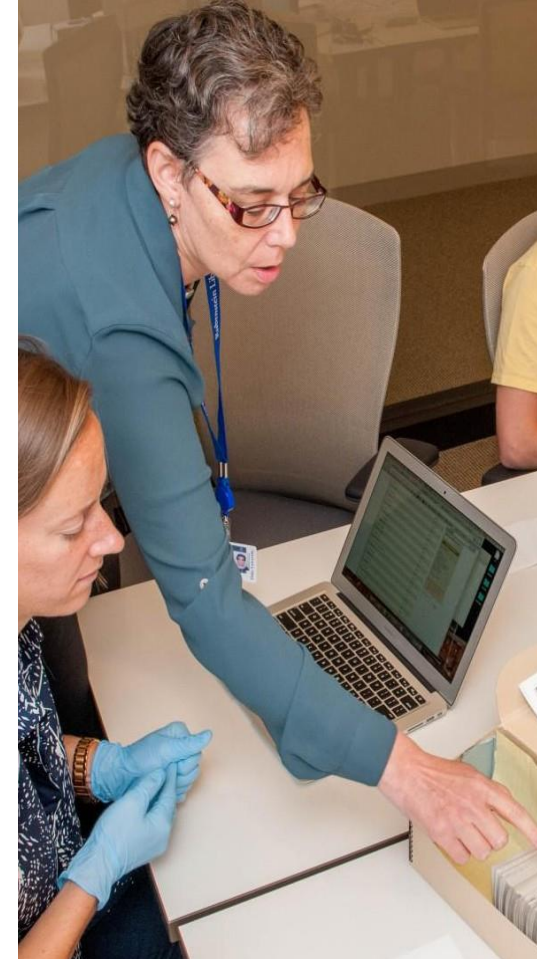


Services



# McKim Master Plan

## Community Priorities



Accessibility: Justice,  
Equity, Diversity &  
Inclusion

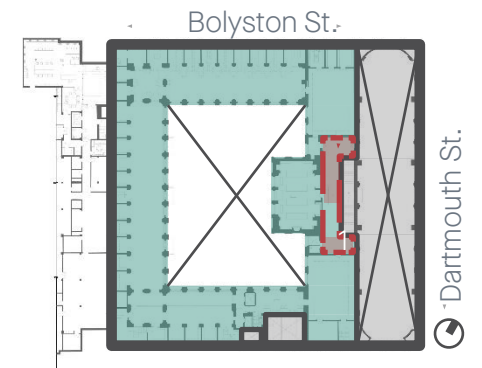
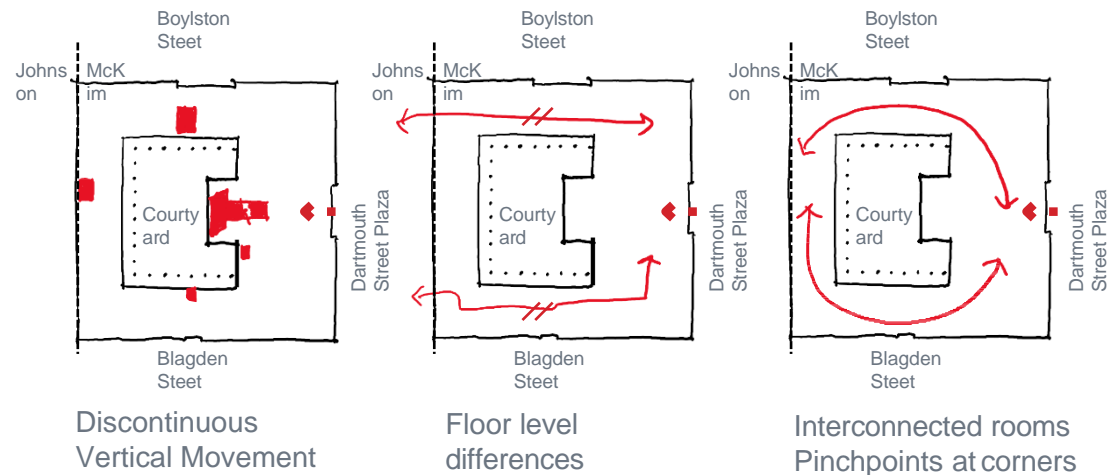
Improve  
Wayfinding

Stewardship &  
Scholarship



# Challenges

- Accessibility limitations
- Confusing way-finding
- Outdated building systems
- Poor climate control
- Preservation of historic art and architecture - including water infiltration
- Third Floor closed to public, except for Sargent Gallery



# McKim Proposed Strategies

- Improve **accessibility** and **way-finding** inside and outside
- **Connect** to Dartmouth Street Plaza + Copley Square
- Restore and renovate to **improve** the **public experience**
- Utilize the courtyard to support **preservation**, **circulation**, and increase space use by **enclosing** it
- Update Infrastructure for **resiliency** and **sustainability**
- Support **modern** library **services**





# Third Floor

Reference, Education, and Collaboration



PATRON SEATING



SPECIAL COLLECTIONS  
CLASSROOM



COLLABORATION  
ROOMS



SEATING +  
COLLABORATION

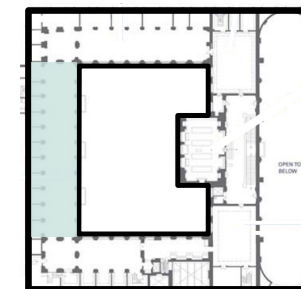


MULTIPURPOSE +  
DEMONSTRATION/LAB



# Third Floor Renewal

One-Stop Reference and Reading Room



Original



Current Condition

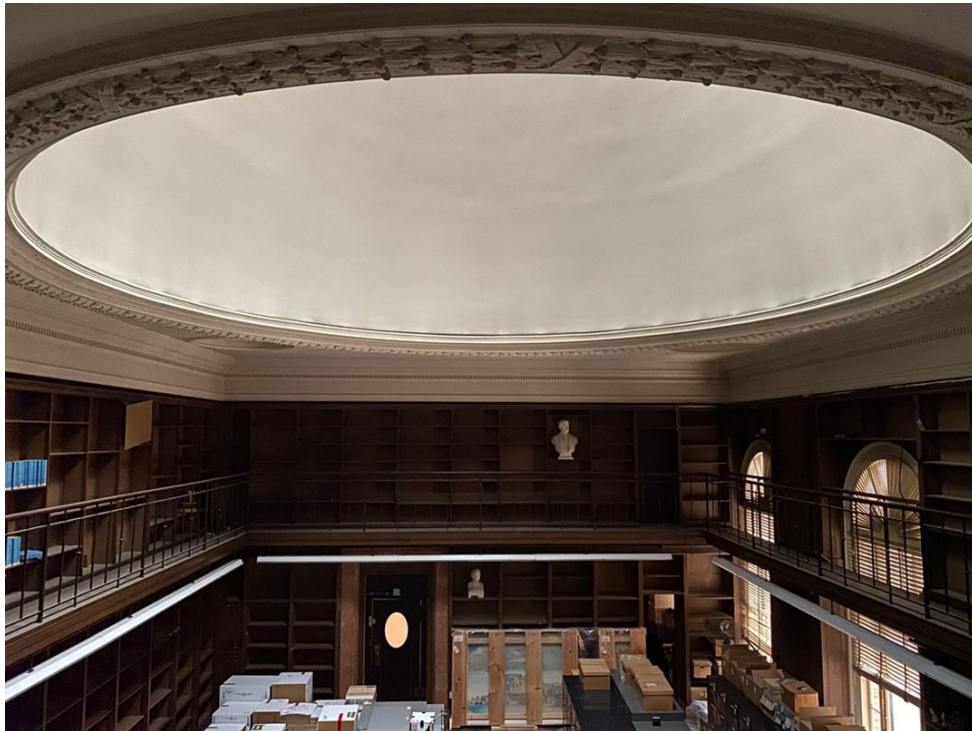
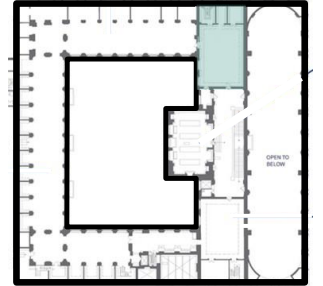


West Gallery Sketch



# Third Floor Renewal

Cushman Room: Engage and Collaborate



Current Condition



Cushman Room Sketch

# Second Floor Renewal

Gather and Connect



WASHINGTON ROOM  
MULTI USE



ELLIOTT ROOM  
MULTIPURPOSE CLASSROOM



BOYLSTON ROOM  
PATRON SEATING



# First Floor Renewal

Convene and Explore



COMMONWEALTH SALON  
CURRENT CONDITION



COMMONWEALTH SALON  
MULTI USE  
PROPOSED

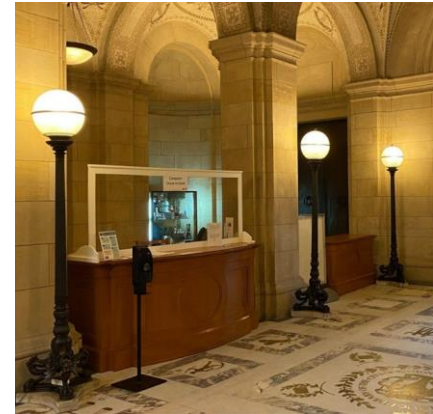


# Dartmouth Street Lobby

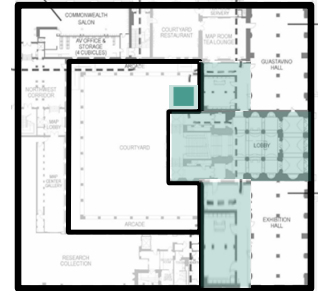
Welcome and Reveal



Showroom & Corridor, 2020



Current Lobby



New Connector/Elevator Lobby Concept



Preliminary Sketch of Dartmouth Street Lobby Renewal

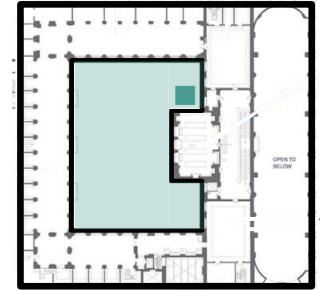


# Courtyard Enclosure

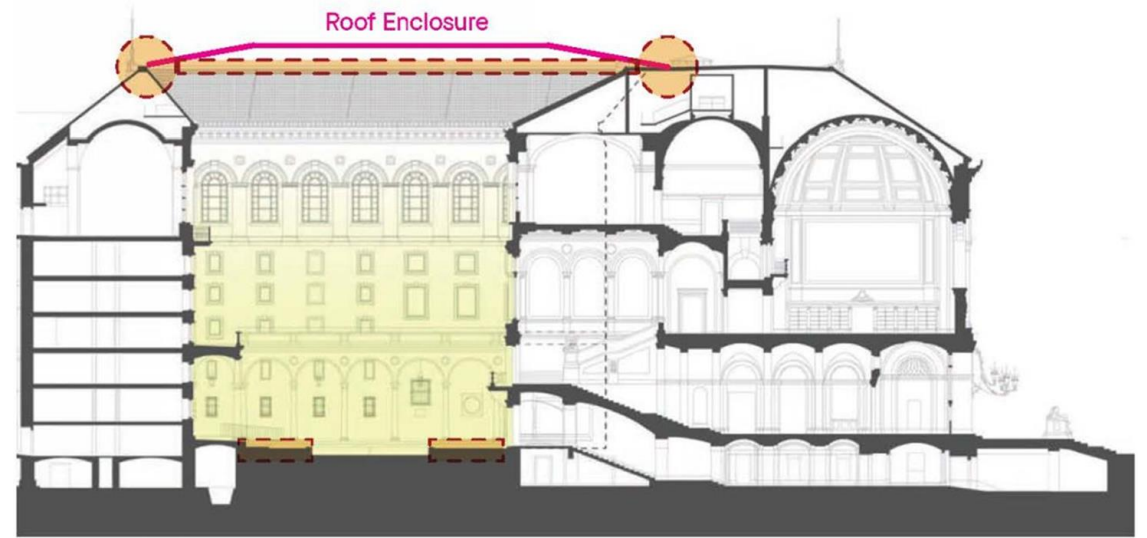
- Preservation
- Circulation
- Year-round usage



Courtyard, 2020



Connections at Roof Ridge Line

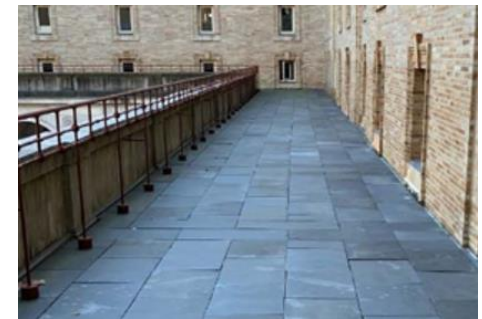
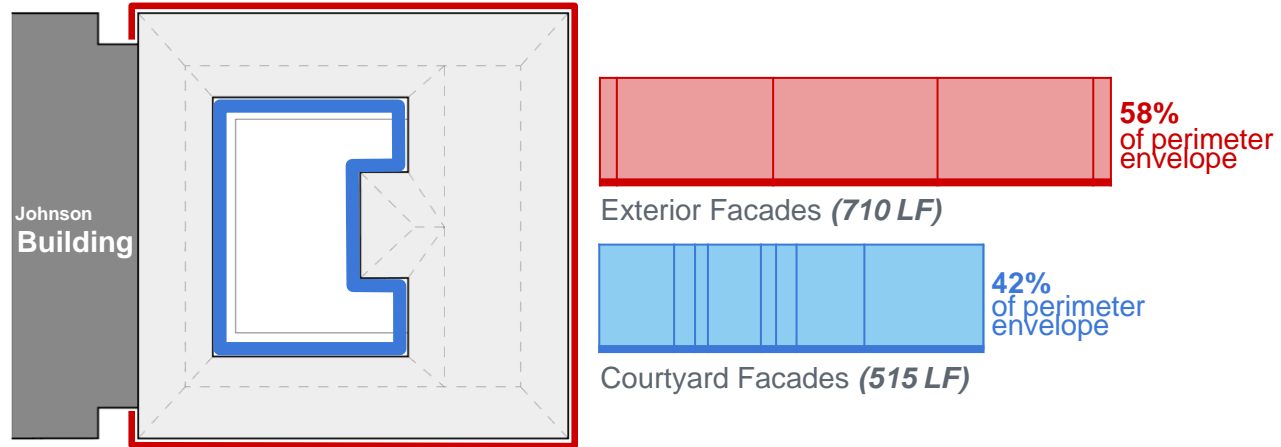


McKim Building Section



# Courtyard Enclosure

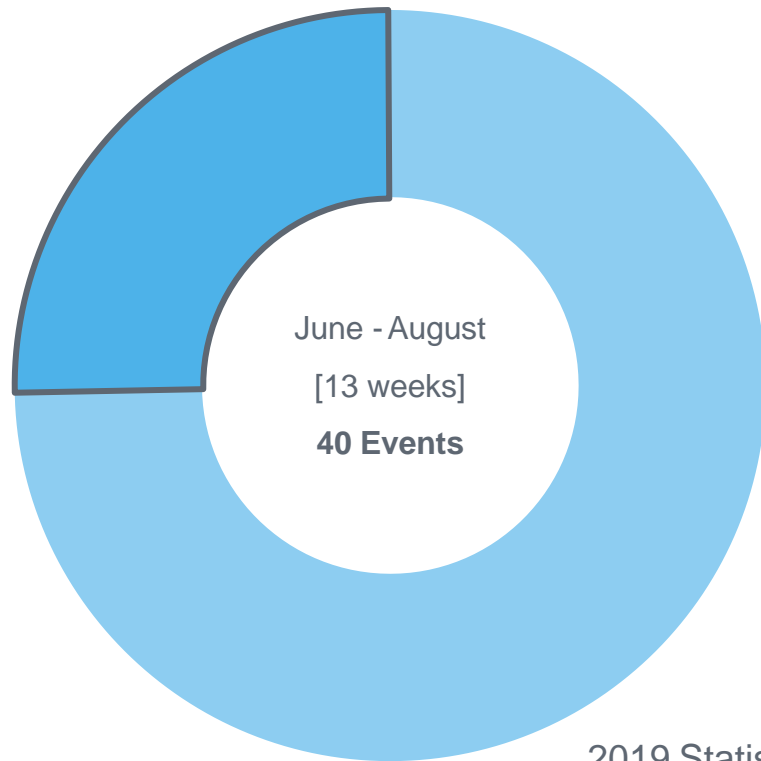
Protect Courtyard Facades





# Courtyard Enclosure

Year-round usage



2019 Statistics



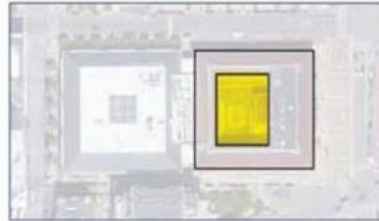


# Courtyard Enclosure

## Precedents

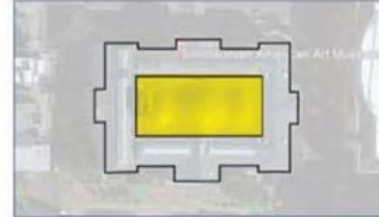


Boston Public Library  
Boston, MA



120ft x 154ft

Smithsonian American Art  
Museum  
Washington, DC



Roof completed in 2007  
130ft x 280ft

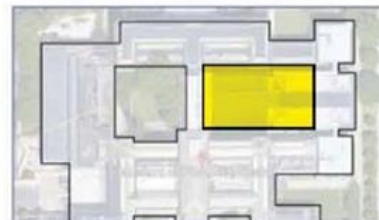


Isabella Stewart Gardner  
Museum  
Boston, MA



Roof completed in 1903  
43ft x 70ft

Museum of Fine Arts  
Boston, MA



Roof completed in 2010  
270ft x 105ft





# Dartmouth Street Plaza

Accessible and Inviting



View from Dartmouth Street



# Dartmouth Street Plaza

Accessible and Inviting



Existing Temporary Ramp

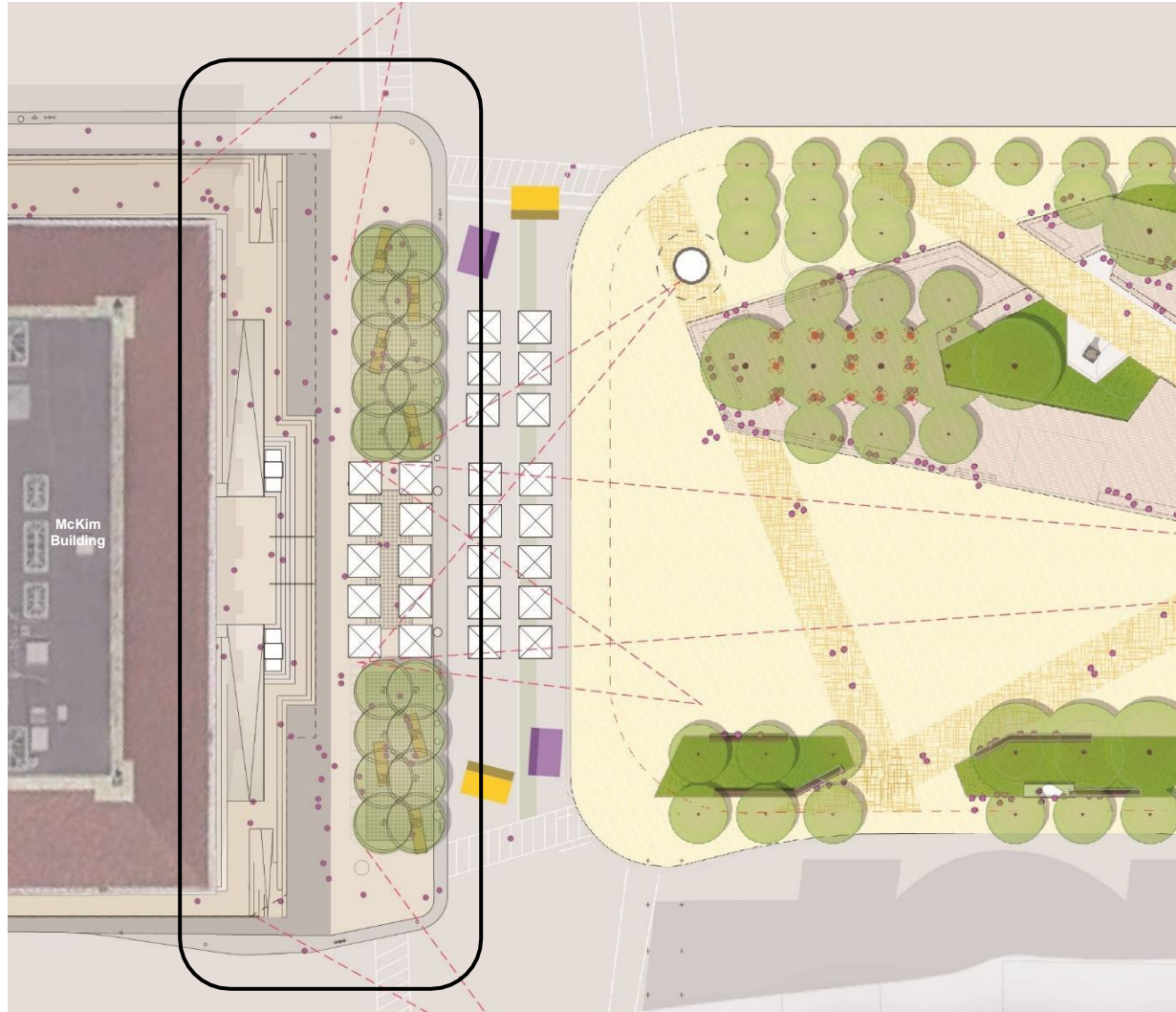


Proposed Sloped Walkways, Tree Grove, and Seating Area



# Dartmouth Street Plaza

## Community Connection and Programming



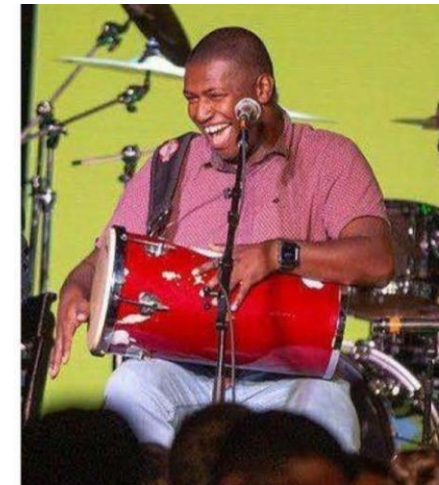
Draft concept design for the reimagined Copley Square Plaza, courtesy of BPRD and Sasaki



Extension of the Farmer's Market



Outdoor Reading Room



Outdoor Concerts



Seating and lighting



# Building Updates

## Sustainable and Resilient Future

- Stable climate to protect collections
- Meet new climate resiliency standards
- Improved stormwater management
- Healthy materials
- Local and recycled materials
- Improved indoor air quality
- Potential for geothermal heat source
- Potential for all-electric HVAC systems
- Energy efficient LED lighting
- Low-flow fixtures

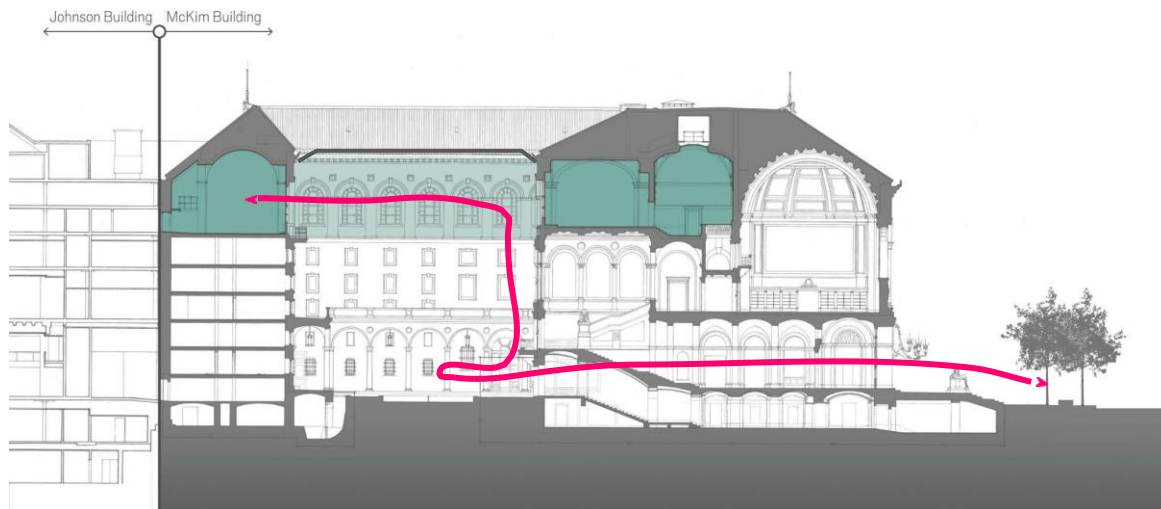


BOSTON  
Green Ribbon  
COMMISSION



# Implementation Options

- Option to keep McKim operational during construction
- A series of phased projects from \$40-\$100m
- Estimated budget to complete all recommendations: \$325m if completed all at once in today's dollars
- Funding Sources TBD





# Thank you

- Preserve Civic, Democratic and Architectural Masterpiece at one of the premier cultural destinations in the country
- Return the closed off third of the building to public service
- Expand and modernize library services

