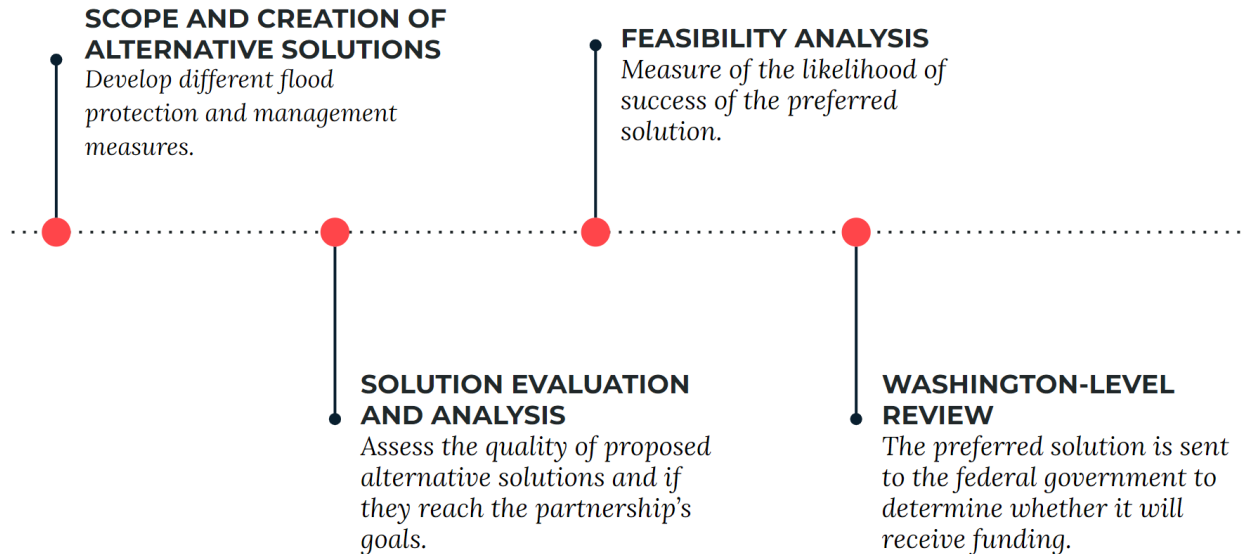


City of Boston U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) Feasibility Study

Frequently Asked Questions: May 2023

What is the Study process?

The Study process includes the following phases:



What is the Study timeline?

CSRM Studies are typically completed in three years. However, timelines for very large or complex studies can extend if necessary. Once the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil works approves the study scope and schedule, the City will publish the schedule on our website.

What is the scope of the Study?

The study area is within the administrative borders of the City of Boston. The study builds on the City's previous efforts through Climate Ready Boston. It includes the five coastal neighborhoods along Boston Harbor: Charlestown, East Boston, Downtown and North End, South Boston, and Dorchester. The Study will consider long-term flood risk in combination with sea level rise.

The Study will be conducted alongside other USACE and State studies, including the Boston Metropolitan Area Coastal Study, New Charles River Dam Planning Assistance to States Study, and Muddy River Flood Risk Management and Environmental Restoration project. Part of the study strategy is to align the Study's recommendations with state and regional planning efforts for consistency and comprehensiveness.

How does the Study intersect with Climate Ready Boston?

The Study will build on the Climate Ready Boston initiative and recommend measures that are eligible for direct federal investment. The Study will incorporate near-term Climate Ready Boston projects that are in the process of design and construction and allow for close consideration and coordination on the City's medium to long term plans. The Study is uniquely positioned to consider the entirety of existing city, federal, state, and local plans and projects.

How is this study different from the Boston Metropolitan Area Coastal Study?

USACE and the State of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs are conducting the Boston Metropolitan Area Coastal Study and will assess long-term risk and resilience at a watershed level. The scope of the State-level study includes the 12 coastal communities within Boston Harbor impacted directly by coastal storms, rising sea levels and the seven adjacent inland communities located on rivers discharging to the Harbor. Both studies are carried out in parallel and close coordination. Recommendations of the City of Boston CSRM Study will be aligned with state and regional plans. More information about the Boston Metropolitan Area Coastal Study is available here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/boston-metropolitan-area-coastal-study>.

How will this Study intersect with the State's study on the New Charles River Dam?

The USACE Planning Assistance to States Study of the New Charles River Dam is a state-level study looking at future impacts of climate change and sea level change on dam operations. This technical study will assist the State in identifying when and how the dam should be adapted, physically or operationally. The results of the Charles River Dam study will be built into the City of Boston CSRM Study.

How will this Study affect the current Climate Ready Boston projects in design and construction phases?

The City's near term projects will continue as planned and will be built into USACE coastal and engineering models describing existing and future conditions and flood impacts. The City will coordinate and remain in alignment with USACE on medium- and long-term projects. Overall, we will balance the City's ongoing near-term coastal resilience efforts with proposed longer term solutions identified through the CSRM Study.

How will this Study honor the Climate Ready Boston planning efforts and feedback the City of Boston has received to date?

USACE recognizes that the City has been through an extensive planning and community engagement process and has received significant community feedback. All past work will be included in this study. We will begin with the conceptual designs developed through Climate Ready Boston and will complete a required formulation process and feasibility

analysis to make final recommendations and unlock access to federal resources for design and construction.

What is the Study’s plan for community engagement and outreach going forward?

We encourage participation of communities as partners throughout the duration of the Study, including during the needs assessment, feasibility analysis, development of recommendations, and ultimately implementation. We will create many opportunities and means to engage and provide feedback, including office hours, [feedback forms](#), newsletters, coffee chats with city officials, and more. Please follow our [website](#) for updates.

We invite all residents and community members to participate in the Study. We will involve a wide range of community stakeholders, including residents of coastal neighborhoods, property owners and property owner associations, neighborhood councils, community-based and civic organizations, local businesses, youth and educational organizations, churches, and others. The Study team will ensure continuity and build off of the CRB community engagement efforts.

What flood protection measures will the Study consider?

The Study will consider both structural (e.g., seawalls, floodwalls, revetments, surge barriers, elevated harborwalks, nature-based solutions) and non-structural measures (e.g., permitting requirements, zoning changes, building-based adaptation, evacuation routes).

Will the Study consider nature based solutions?

Yes, nature based solutions are an important component of coastal resilience and we will consider these strategies wherever possible in the study. We will examine harbor conditions, considering Boston’s tide range and varied exposures to wave energy, as well as factors such as coastal adaptability to evaluate to what extent nature-based solutions could be appropriate in specific locations. We will also examine opportunities to use nature-based solutions in combination with other measures.

Where does the funding for this Study come from?

The Study is cost-shared 50/50 between the City and the Federal government. The City has committed to this project in its capital budget. In the longer term, if the Study unlocks congressional authorization, a large fraction of federal cost-share will support the design and construction of the recommended projects.

How will USACE work with other federal agencies on this Study?

USACE routinely works closely with other federal agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Parks Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National

Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. USACE has invited many entities to participate in the Study process. While USACE does not develop plans to meet FEMA requirements, they collaborate with FEMA and to identify risk in the floodplains.

How will large public waterfront property owners be involved in this study?

State agencies who own coastal land such as the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport), the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), are closely involved as stakeholders and resource agencies for this Study. This Study will consider these Agencies' individual resilience and asset protection plans.

Will other community concerns (e.g., housing, transit, equitable economic development) and other environmental concerns (e.g., heat, hazardous material exposure) be addressed in this Study?

While this Study is only one element of coastal resilience work, it may serve as an opportunity to advance other types of resilience. We will evaluate coastal storm risk, but to fully understand the risk and impact, it is important to understand the impacts of other stressors. This study will not recommend housing projects, or changes to transit, nor will USACE seek to influence how the city invests in economic development. However, by understanding these stressors, we can identify a comprehensive plan to manage coastal storm risk without exacerbating other stressors. The opportunity comes in raising awareness of the impacts to other federal, state, and local agencies, which can then lead to additional resilience work. Concerns identified through this study will be integrated into broader Climate Ready Boston and general City of Boston activities and efforts outside of this study.

What will happen when this Study is complete? Who will construct, operate, and maintain the recommended solutions?

Based on the selected plan, USACE will lead the design, engineering, and construction of the recommended flood protection measures in partnership with the City. The development and construction of the project will be cost-shared between the City of Boston and USACE. Meanwhile, the City of Boston will keep working to advance near-term coastal resilience projects. The City of Boston as the non-federal partner will be responsible for operations and maintenance of the project. However, USACE will routinely inspect the project for maintenance and upkeep. If a storm event causes damage to the project, it is rehabilitated at full federal cost. The partnership will continue after the project is constructed.