



## A PRESS RELEASE FROM THE TRUSTEES

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Trustees Survey Finds Overwhelming Majority of Bostonians Believe Waterfront Vulnerable to Climate Change**

*Respondents also believe access to more parks and open spaces provides  
environmental, health, and community benefits*

**BOSTON, MA – September 11, 2018** – A majority of Boston residents surveyed believe the city’s waterfront is vulnerable to the effects of climate change, according to new research sponsored by The Trustees of Reservations (The Trustees).

In the wake of record tides and storm surges across Boston’s waterfront, the environmental benefits of open spaces factored heavily in the findings. A majority of survey respondents (85 percent) believe the Boston waterfront is vulnerable to the effects of climate change, with nearly half (42 percent) saying it is “very vulnerable.”

The survey<sup>1</sup> of more than 450 Boston residents also found that over two-thirds (71 percent) of respondents believe Boston needs more open and public spaces, with over one quarter (28 percent) saying Boston needs “a lot more.” Bostonians that were polled take advantage of the open spaces available to them – with over half (54 percent) saying they go to parks in the Boston area at least several times a week.

Additionally, well over two-thirds (69 percent) of respondents said parks and open spaces were extremely or very helpful in improving water and air quality. More than half (53 percent) said that improving these environmental issues was the first or second most important reason for building more parks and open spaces.

“This survey demonstrates that Bostonians clearly understand and value open space that benefits climate resilience and support increasing resources to address these challenges,” said Trustees’ President and CEO Barbara Erickson. “As an organization that protects open space for public access, we are encouraged to see there is such strong public awareness around the health, community, economic, and environmental benefits of open and green space.” The Trustees recently launched a multi-site, multi-year effort to protect waterfront open space as a public park for all.

These attitudes toward greening the city are favored even over economic development, according to the survey. When given a choice between development and parks, over two-thirds (70 percent) of Bostonians participating in the survey prefer the latter. That’s not to say a trade-off is required. Among

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<sup>1</sup> Qualtrics survey of residents of Boston proper - July 23 to Aug 8, 2018 ... n=453

those surveyed, there is also strong support (52 percent) for creating parks, gardens, and open spaces to help attract more visitors and generate more economic opportunities for local businesses.

“The Trustees have been studying potential open space solutions that protect the city while opening up its waterfront to all,” added Nick Black, Managing Director for The Trustees One Waterfront Initiative. “These findings underscore the fact that climate-resilient open space is a priority for our community.”

### **Sense of community**

Respondents also believe in the community benefits of parks and open spaces, the survey found. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63 percent) said that parks and open spaces were extremely or very helpful in building communities. Green spaces connect neighborhoods, create a sense of safety, increase outdoor recreation, instill civic pride, and reduce vandalism, among many other social benefits that studies have confirmed.

Open green space also influences where Bostonians choose to live, work, and play. Well over half of respondents (60 percent) said that living close to open space was extremely or very important when considering where to raise a family. About one-third (33 percent) said the same thing about where they would like to work. Three out of five (61 percent) Bostonians surveyed said that providing places to play and relax was either the first or second most important reason to have more parks and open spaces.

### **Accessibility**

Bostonians said they currently have good access to open space, but clearly want more of it. Almost half (45 percent) of Bostonians surveyed said that open spaces are very accessible, but approximately the same percentage called for more parks and open spaces, even if it meant more taxpayer money to fund them.

“The study confirmed that green spaces provide accessible places for fun, exercise, play, respite, and recreation. But more than that, along our endangered shorelines, they can play an important role in the safety and vibrancy of our communities,” added Erickson. “We hope the survey findings reinforce the strong public backing for green infrastructure as Boston considers the future of our waterfront.”

To review the complete findings of the Trustees Open Space Survey, [visit this link](#). To learn more about The Trustees One Waterfront Initiative, visit [onewaterfront.thetrustees.org](http://onewaterfront.thetrustees.org).

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**About The Trustees:** *Founded in the City of Boston by landscape architect and open space visionary Charles Eliot in 1891, The Trustees is the nation's first and the Commonwealth's largest preservation and conservation nonprofit. We are the largest private landowner of coastal land in the state, with more than 120 miles of coastline in our care. For more than 125 years, we have worked to preserve and protect dynamic natural and cultural sites—from beaches and community gardens, to farms, historic homesteads, designed landscapes, and hiking trails—for public use and enjoyment. Today we are working to engage a larger constituency of Massachusetts residents, members, visitors, and public and private partners in our work to help protect our fragile natural, ecological, cultural, and coastal sites for current and future generations as they face increased impacts and risks from our changing climate. To learn more, visit [www.thetrustees.org](http://www.thetrustees.org).*