



Shore and Harbor Planning Grants

Town of Camden

Camden Harbor Resilience Master Plan (Fiscal Year 2024, project awarded 2023)

“This project successfully brought town staff, private property owners and concerned citizens together to more fully understand the risks associated with sea level rise, flooding and storm surge around Camden Harbor, and the community appears to be more aligned then ever in addressing sea level rise.” - Jeremy Martin, Planning and Development Director

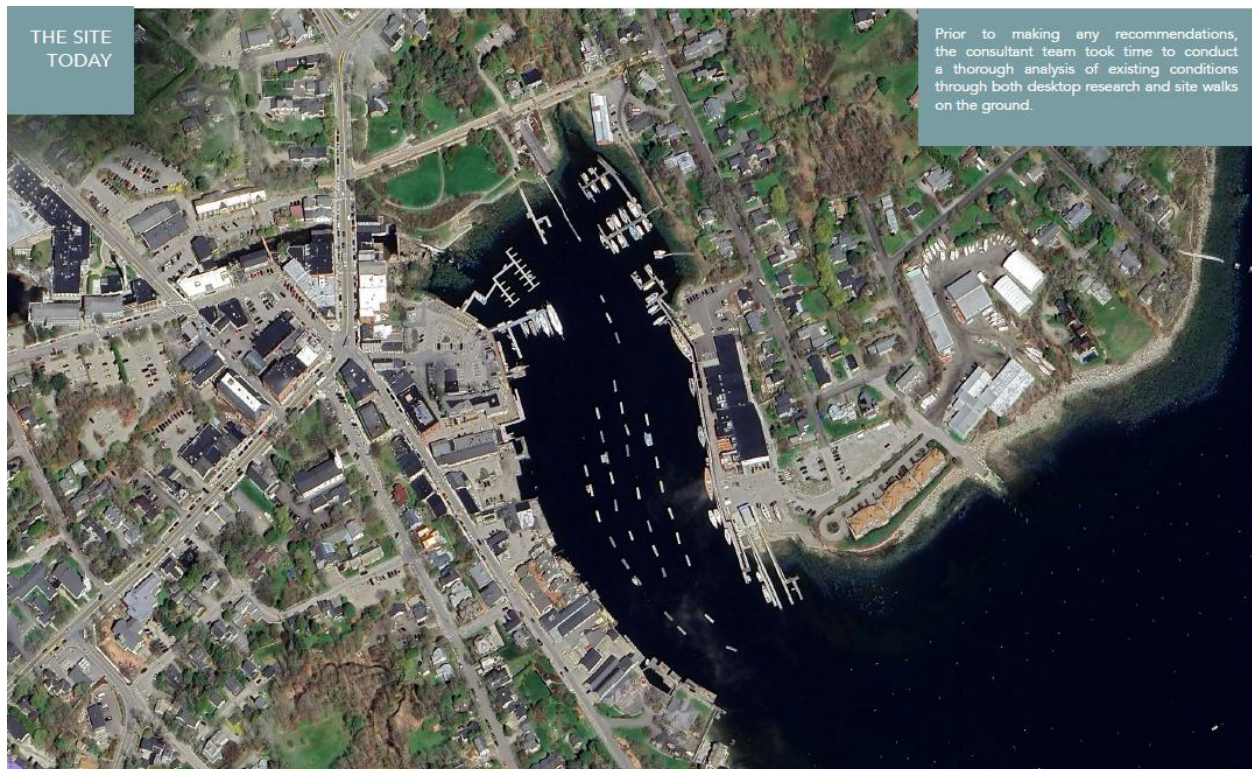
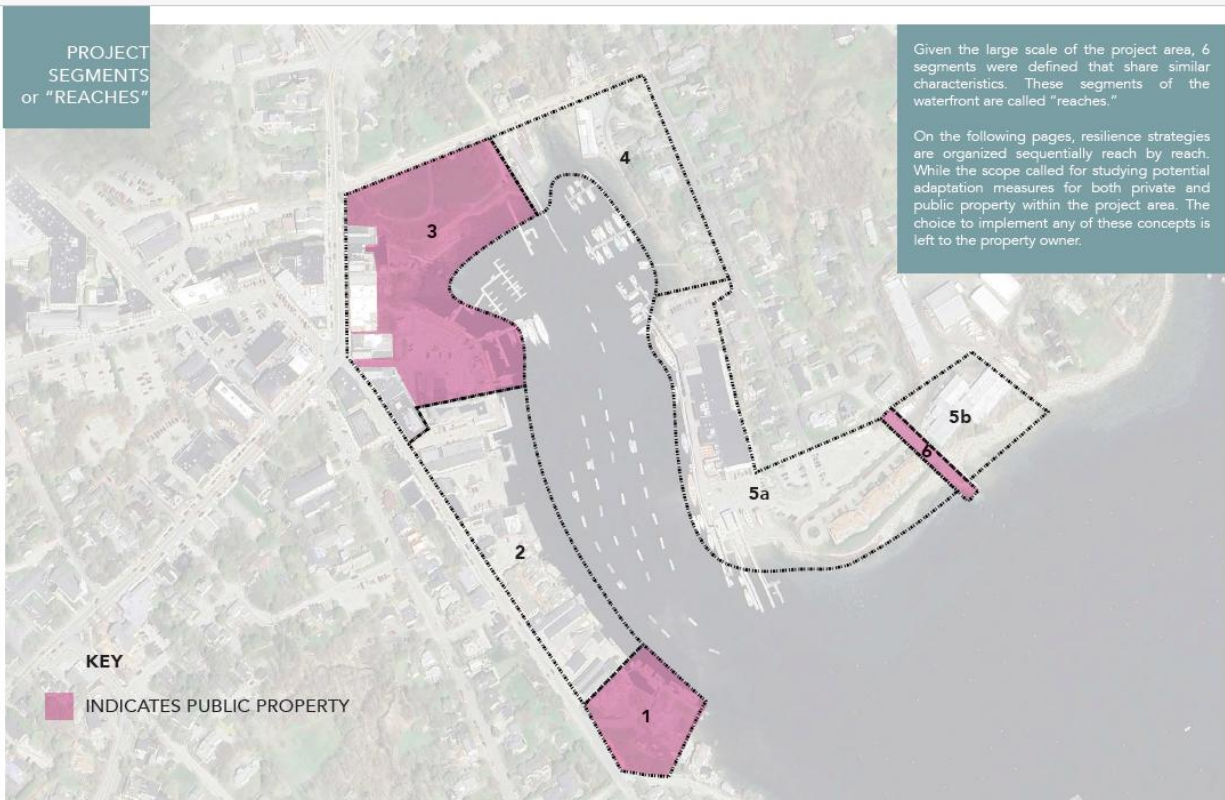


Photo from Camden Harbor Summary Report, 2025.

Project Description

Camden Harbor is essential for residents and tourists alike and contains a mix of publicly- and privately-owned properties. Many of these properties are vulnerable to sea level rise and the harbor experienced substantial flooding and damage during the winter 2023/2024 storms. Before the storms occurred, the town received both a Shore and Harbor Planning Grant and a Community Action Grant from the Community Resilience Partnership to increase the resilience of the town dock. However, after the storms, the town decided to pivot and create a master plan for the whole harbor to help them plan and stage larger-scale resilience efforts to help the entire harbor adapt to sea level rise.



Camden Harbor with six planning segments, taken from Camden Harbor Summary Report, 2025.

Project Results

The project had three phases: 1) reviewing existing vulnerability assessment information, 2) community planning workshop and design charrette, and 3) project summary and resilience road map. Extensive community engagement took place and the project concluded with an adaptation roadmap for the harbor. The town partnered with CamdenCAN, a local environmental group, for outreach and education assistance, and a kickoff meeting, three outreach meetings, and a final public presentation of the study results were organized.

The roadmap divided the harbor into six segments and provided resilience strategies for public and private properties in each segment. Two options were provided for each segment, and visual representations were included wherever possible. The design options included reconfiguring and raising properties, increasing public access and green space, and reducing stormwater runoff. community members were supportive of the proposed road map and other resilience efforts in Camden. Given that substantial amounts of the harbor are privately owned, the town provided recommendations but cannot force owners to take any specific action. Finding funding to improve resilience at private properties is often challenging, but the roadmap helps identify a common vision and goal for resilience in the harbor.

OPTION A SUMMARY

KEY THEMES:

- FLOOD RESILIENCE STRATEGIES ARE INDIVIDUALISTIC AND DESIGNED TO WORK WITHIN EACH LOT
- NO COMMUNAL WATERFRONT PEDESTRIAN LOOP
- NO PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE BETWEEN HARBOR PARK AND TOWN LANDING
- LESS OPPORTUNITY FOR HABITAT CREATION
- MORE PARKING / LESS PARKLAND
- ELEVATES AND RELOCATES HISTORIC YACHT CLUB
- CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IS PROTECTED IN PLACE

OPTION B SUMMARY

KEY THEMES:

- FLOOD RESILIENCE STRATEGIES EXPLORE PARTNERSHIPS TO REDUCE COST AND PROVIDE MORE BENEFITS
- COMMUNAL WATERFRONT PEDESTRIAN LOOP
- INCLUDES PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE BETWEEN HARBOR PARK AND TOWN LANDING
- PRIORITIZES NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS
- ELEVATES AND RELOCATES HISTORIC YACHT CLUB AND ADDS BOAT SLIPS
- CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IS PROTECTED IN PLACE

Summary of proposed outcomes for the two design options, taken from Camden Harbor Summary Report, 2025.

Future Plans

The town is planning to implement the roadmap. In the near term, they are exploring options to amend local building codes to encourage future construction and planning to be as resilient as possible. They may raise height limits to make it easier for property owners near the harbor to elevate their buildings, and are working on improving floodplain management standards. The town is also improving stormwater infrastructure and reducing impervious surfaces. Additional public engagement will occur in 2025 to identify next steps to implement the roadmap.

Lessons Learned

Community groups are essential for getting community members engaged and keeping them focused, especially when town staff have limited capacity.



Camden Harbor. Photo: Melissa Britsch

Thanks to Jeremy Martin for helping to prepare this summary.

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