

# Losing Ground in East Boston:

## Environmental Injustice and Infrastructure Gaps

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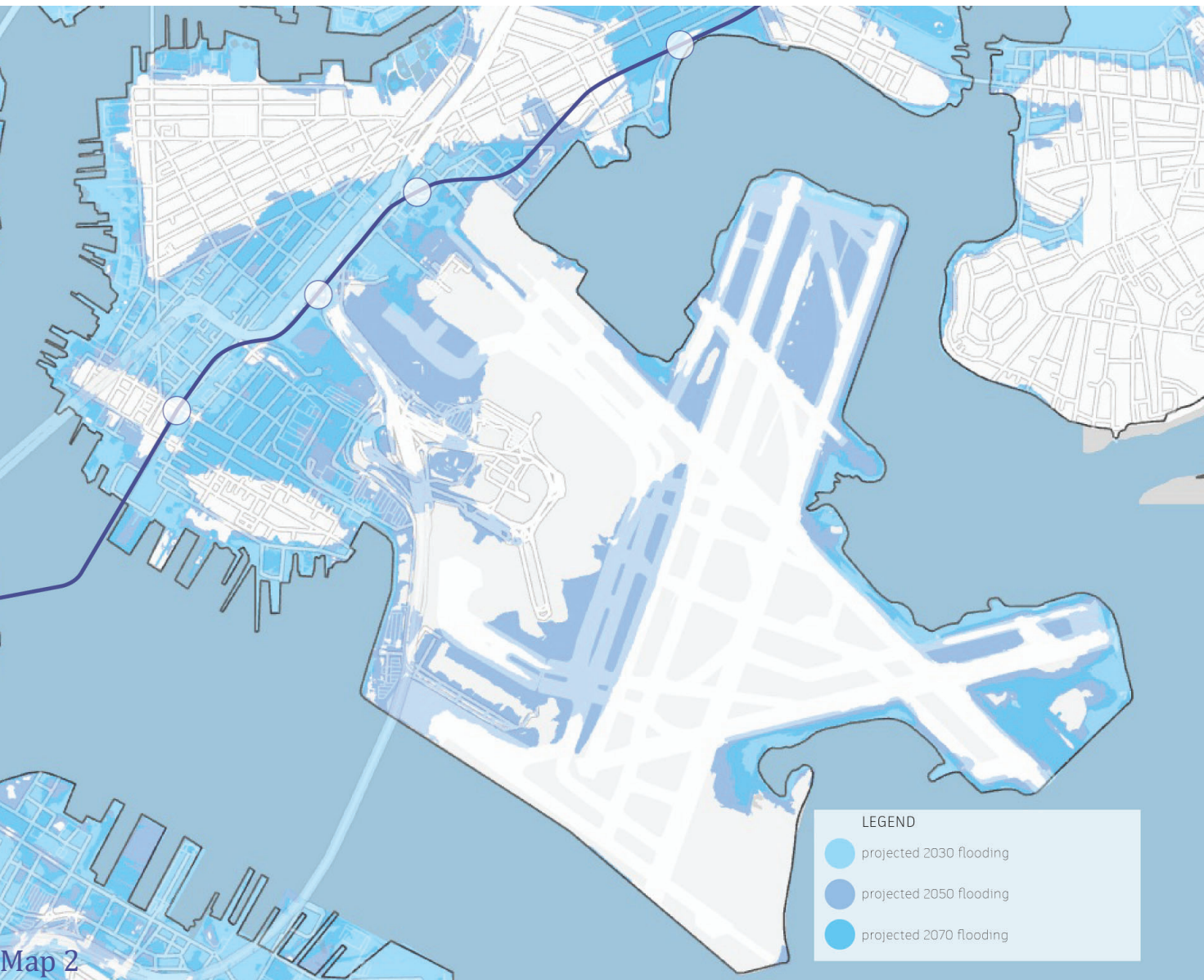
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The project analyzes inequity through infrastructure in East Boston by investigating the devastating effects of *climate change and poor infrastructure* in this working-class neighborhood. We also explore how these dynamics are shaping the built environment and exasperating local challenges across 3 metro stations along the MBTA Blue Line. (*see Map 1*)

Recent research suggests that climate change will lead to more frequent coastal and riverine flooding. As per these projections (*see Map 2*), East Boston will continue to lose ground to rising sea levels, which will increase competition over space and bring communities into conflict with expanding industries. This climate change also threatens to deprive residents of their traditional modes of public transportation to downtown Boston, mainly underground routes such as the Blue Line and Ted Williams Tunnel.

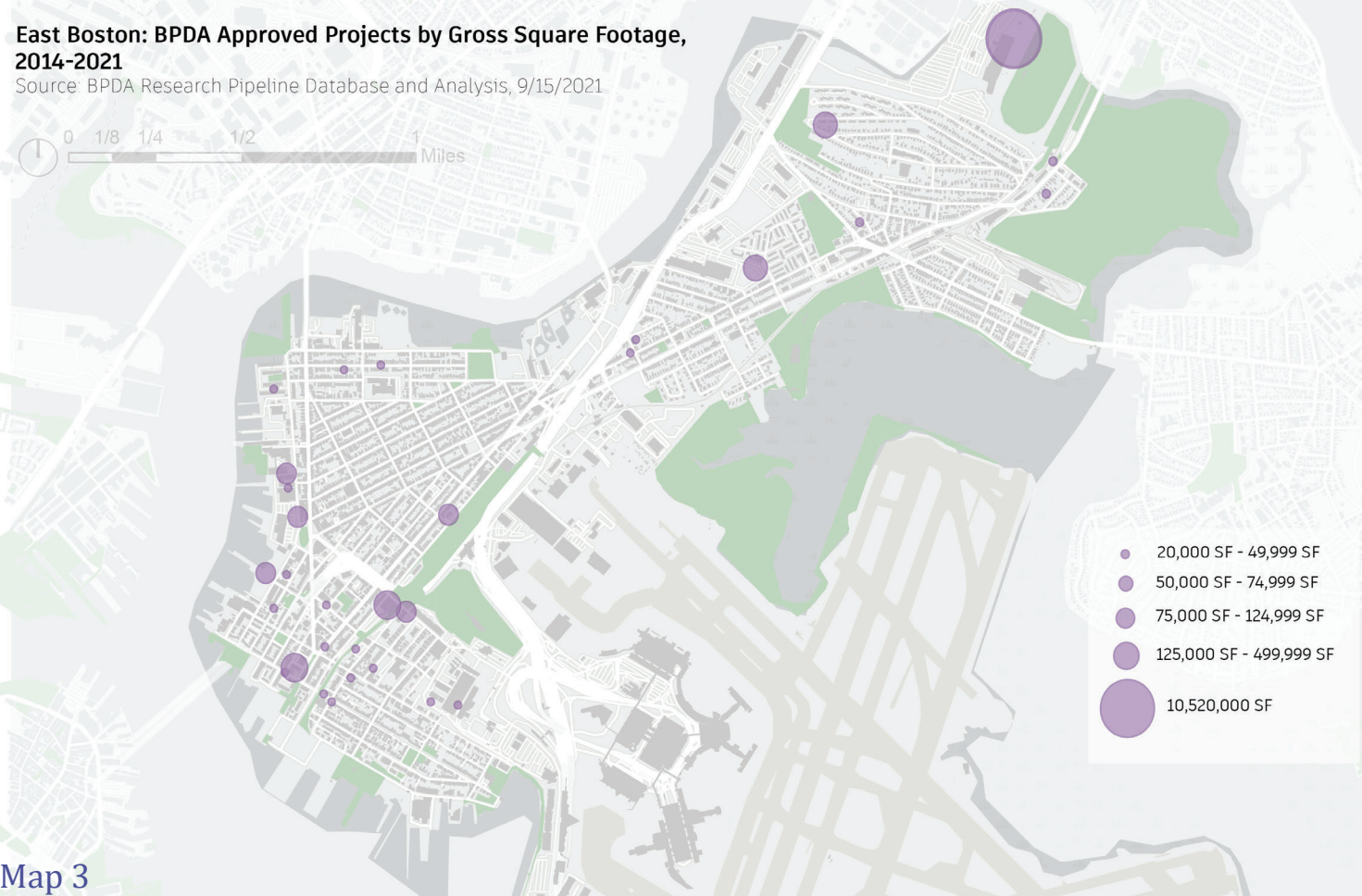
As the government responds and adapts to this new reality (*see “Existing Efforts to Reimagine East Boston”*), it will have to take appropriate steps to protect its assets while ensuring environmental justice and quality infrastructure for its residents.



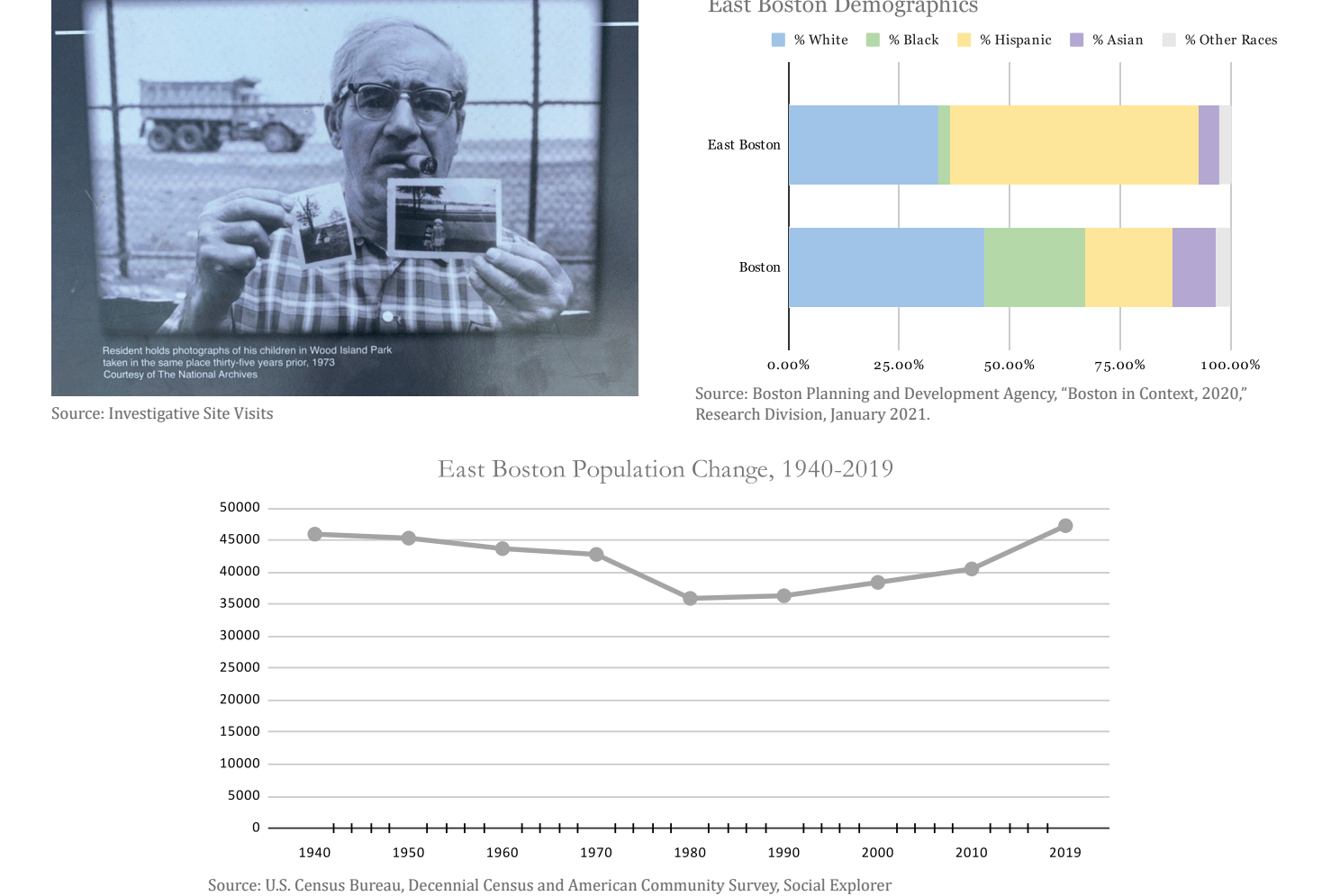
### MAVERICK SQUARE GENTRIFICATION



“Gentrification forces are operating most clearly across the nation in older cities of major metropolitan areas where Latina/os make up a significant proportion of the families *while urban elites work to “reclaim” downtown cores and surrounding areas.*” (Eduardo R. Gonzalez, *Latino Urbanism and the Gentrifying City*, 2020, p.9)



### AIRPORT COMPETITION FOR SPACE

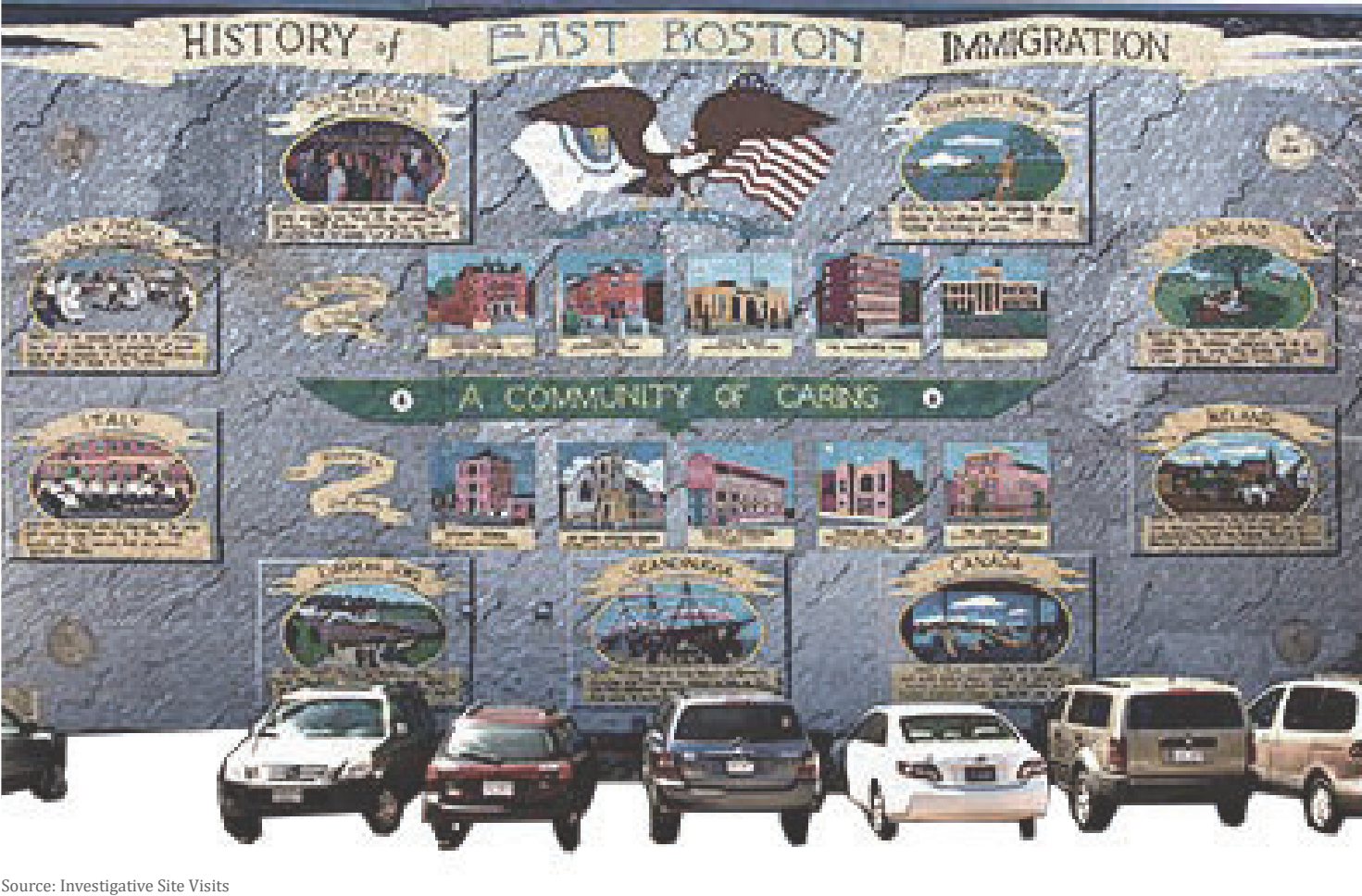


“The terrible series of policies [serial forced displacement] that have and continue to undermine poor and minority communities... Displacement *traumatizes people and destroys wealth of all kinds.*” (Mindy Thompson Fullilove, *An Antidote for the Unjust City: Planning to Stay*, 2015, p. 82)

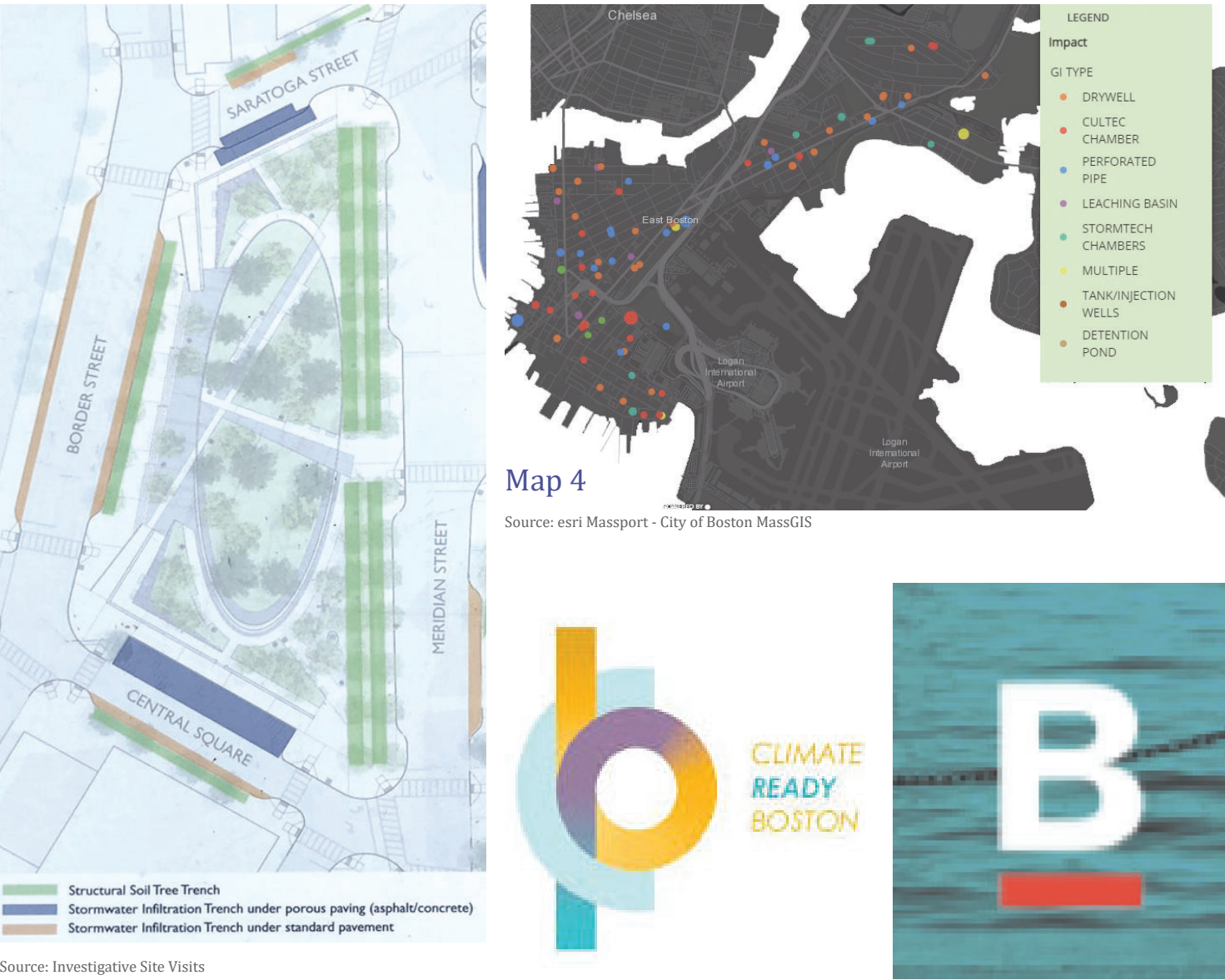
### WOOD ISLAND ENVIRONMENTS OF SOCIAL & SPATIAL INJUSTICE



“I define urban justice are the factors that contribute to our *economic, human health, civic and cultural well-being*, as well as the factors that contribute to the *environmental and aesthetic health* of the built environment.” (Toni L. Griffin, *Defining the Just City Beyond Black and White*, 2015, page 7)



## Existing Efforts to Reimagine East Boston



The Green Infrastructure project in Central Square is a joint initiative by the Boston Water and Sewer Commission, Boston Public Works, Boston Transportation, and Boston Parks Department. Inspired by natural processes to filter water, the installations help minimize the stormwater that drains into the Boston Harbor, through:

- Porous pavement
- Infiltration trenches
- Tree trenches

The local community has been receptive to the proposal. We encourage local stakeholders to explore ways to introduce similar interventions to more areas in East Boston. Upgrading existing drainage and sewage systems and creating more green spaces may empower local communities to tackle existing and anticipated challenges caused by climate change and poor infrastructure.

### Further Considerations...

- Seeing how green infrastructure helps fuel gentrification, how can the government ensure that its plans for East Boston are equitable and just?
- How can industries work with the government and local leaders to center the community in their infrastructural plans to bolster the neighborhood economy?
- How can planners provide relief to industries threatened by rising sea levels while not compromising their responsibility towards the community?

## Community Receptiveness to Green Infrastructure

