



# CITY SPLASH



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Swim the Charles: Today...and maybe everyday?

*The Charles River Conservancy kicks off a Swim the Charles fundraising campaign and releases feasibility study supporting potential for Charles River Swimming Facility*



BOSTON--Tuesday, July 12, 2016-In conjunction with today's sold-out fourth annual CitySplash event, the [Charles River Conservancy \(CRC\)](#), released "[Swimming in the Charles: A Feasibility Study for the Establishment of a Permanent Swimming Facility in the Charles River Basin](#)" and launched [Swim the Charles](#), an Indiegogo campaign to support returning swimming to the Charles.

"Due to decades and hundreds of millions of dollars of remediation, Boston and Cambridge are poised to set an example for other American cities by leading the country with a safe and innovative swimming facility that is accessible and beautiful," said Conservancy Founder & President Renata von Tscharner. "We want to challenge perceptions that the river is filled with dirty water. The Charles River is the cleanest urban river in America-lets create a place to swim in our river!"

With a partnership grant from [Common Impact](#), a team of volunteer professionals from the Boston office of global design firm [Stantec](#) conducted a study for the Charles

River Conservancy exploring the feasibility of a permanent swimming facility in the Charles River at North Point Park. In order to evaluate the feasibility of such a site, Stantec compiled a team of volunteers, drawing on expertise from landscape architecture, civil engineering, environmental science, and more. Their work determined that given further study, continued investment in water quality, and due diligence, a permanent swimming area is feasible.

"This project brought together Stantec's best-in-class design and engineering expertise and the Charles River Conservancy's intimate knowledge of the river and its environment to help us all better understand what needs to happen to bring about a swimmable Charles River," said Common Impact CEO Danielle Holly. "A feasibility study of this quality and depth wouldn't have otherwise been accessible to the Charles River Conservancy. It's a great example of what corporate skills-based volunteering makes possible."

A permanent swimming area can bring multiple benefits:

"An urban riverfront swimming area would add an entirely new dimension to the recreational opportunities for everyone in the downtown area," said Jeffrey A. Simon, senior principal with Stantec. "Many cities around the country and the world are realizing how great an asset their urban waterfront can be and are investing in the protection, revitalization, and redesign of their waterways, many focusing on restoring opportunities for swimming in these urban rivers."

For many years, North Point Park was underdeveloped and used for industrial purposes, but mitigation for the "Big Dig" project led to new commercial, residential, and open space development in the area, including North Point parkland and the Lynch Family Skatepark (developed by the CRC). Because of its generous lawn spaces, direct access to the river, nearby connections to the MBTA, proximity to several Hubway bike rental stations, a playground and spray deck, North Point Park is quickly becoming a destination, making it an ideal location for a permanent swimming area on the Charles.

To support the next steps in the Conservancy's Swimmable Charles program, the Conservancy launched an Indiegogo crowd-source fundraising campaign. The campaign seeks to cover the cost to understand and overcome the known challenges to a facility's implementation. Those hurdles include the need for safety considerations and the cost to plan, design and permit, use and operation agreements with landowners, and permitting barriers to build and operate. To support the Conservancy's *Swim the Charles* campaign, please visit:

<https://igg.me/at/swimthecharles>

The Charles River Conservancy's first ever Community Swim on July 13, 2013 marked the first public swim in the Charles River in more than fifty years. Recreational swimming has been prohibited in the Charles since the 1950's, when a growing awareness of the health risks posed by pollution in the Charles caused the beaches and bathhouses lining the river to close. After years of environmental health initiatives, most notably the [Clean Charles River Initiative](#), and over 50 years of hard work by the [Charles River Watershed Association](#) (CRWA) swimming is now allowed through permitted events such as the Charles River Conservancy's Community Swims and the annual Charles River Swimming Club's One-Mile Swim Race, which began in 2007.

"For 65 years, Charles River Watershed Association has been dedicated to restoring the health of the Charles River," said Robert Zimmerman, Jr., Charles River Watershed Association Executive Director. "After years of hard work, we have seen a remarkable resurgence in the health of the river. Work remains, but we know we can get there, to fully restore this beloved natural system for both humans and wildlife."

Additional CitySplash event partners include: the Charles River Swimming Club, Community Boating, Inc., Mass. Water Resource Authority (MWRA), and the Mass. Department of Public Health (DPH).

###

**About the Charles River Conservancy:** The Charles River Conservancy is dedicated to the stewardship, renewal, and enhancement of the urban parklands along the Charles River, for the enjoyment of all. The Conservancy promotes the active use and vitality of the parklands, increases recreational and cultural opportunities, and works to ensure the beauty and integrity of this extraordinary public resource.

Follow CRC on Twitter [@CharlesRiverCRC](#) or at [Facebook.com/CharlesRiverConservancy](#)

[www.thecharles.org](http://www.thecharles.org)

**About Stantec:** Stantec's [Boston practice](#) employs more than 230 architects, landscape architects, planners, engineers, and other design and development professionals. We're active members of the communities we serve. That's why at Stantec, we always design with community in mind.

**Press Contact:** S.J. Port - (781) 752 - 5341 or [sjport@thecharles.org](mailto:sjport@thecharles.org)

Charles River Conservancy, 43 Thorndike Street, S3-3, Cambridge, MA 02141

[SafeUnsubscribe™ {recipient's email}](#)

[Forward this email](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by [sjport@thecharles.org](mailto:sjport@thecharles.org) in collaboration with

**Constant Contact** 

Try it free today