

003 Re-imagining the Waterfront

Project Name: Re-imagining the Waterfront: Reclaiming the Waterfront

Location: East River, New York City, US

Theme: Design

Type: Urban Ideas Competition

Client: -

Size: -

Date and Duration: 2012


Status: Completed

Today, the city is disconnected from its own waterfront by a massive road. We want to change that by connecting the city and its inhabitants to the waterfront. This will be achieved by making distinct physical and visual connections between the city and the water. As we see it, there are two ways of accomplishing this, either by conducting a major road divide that would allow people to get safer access to the waterfront, or we could simply cover it up.

First, we propose putting a lid on the road and covering up the traffic mess. Next, the creation of a new tunnel on ground level to allow the construction of a new people's park on the top and a new stretch of buildings on each side. By doing so it is suddenly possible to not only make a good connection to the waterfront and thereby putting people first, but also to create a new mixed-use waterfront with commercial activities on the ground floor and residential on above.

This design strategy creates numerous new entries both towards the park, the city and the waterfront, which equals a natural surveillance and ensures public safety 24/7/365. Lastly, it will establish a truly vibrant waterfront. The new continuous waterfront promenade is then placed on stilts above the water, providing a varied edge with several areas giving physical access to the water and connecting new city destinations with diverse spatial experiences as well as with water related activities.

Main design features include a year-round ski hill, skate area, a houseboat area, a river aquarium and fish market, urban sea farming, a new urban beach with an alternate function for ice skating in the winter, a river tree forest on the water, a floating stage for performance art and concerts, a harbor bath, a water gym and a water laboratory.



Before the redesign of the waterfront, it was impossible to cross the road safely. The newly covered road allows me to skate along the whole waterfront uninterrupted. Also, the new attractions such as the water laboratory and skate area have been fun to explore with my friends after a long day of school.

Gabe, 21, Student, about the waterfront redesign