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Study: on the waterfront, a big payoff

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Aided by public investments, Boston Harbor — once considered one of the nation's filthiest bodies of water — has emerged as one of the city's leading centers of growth, according to a study released last week. Public funding has totaled almost \$21 billion since 1987, the report stated.

Paul Grogan, president of the nonprofit Boston Foundation, which sponsored the study, said he hopes the report will "rekindle big ambitions to make the Boston Harbor one of the greatest harbors in the world."

"We hope this clarifies that there's a huge and growing payoff

for the very large investment that was made," he said.

Public investment has provided the foundation for private development on the waterfront, totaling more than \$2.2 billion, according to the study, which was released by the environmental advocacy group Save the Harbor/Save the Bay. The study focused on Boston's waterfront from the Mystic to the Neponset rivers.

Since the late 1980s, said the report, waterfront population, jobs, and earnings have all risen.

The report advocates continued residential and commercial development to further increase the harbor's value. New development projects that the city has ap-

proved or that have been proposed by developers could generate about \$117 million annually in taxes in the Fort Point Channel area alone, according to the study.

"The further development of the harbor is going to be one of the most important facets of the city's growth," Grogan said. "Water has a new economic significance."

Jack Wiggin, director of the University of Massachusetts' Urban Harbors Institute, said increased development on the waterfront should not create environmental problems, and it could be a big positive for the public. The institute assists government and communities dealing with coastal and harbor issues.