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## A New Look For Ghost Of '88 Race

By PAM BELLUCK

BOSTON, July 21 — The last time a Massachusetts Democrat won his party's presidential nomination, his opponent, a man named Bush, sought to make political hay out of the devastated condition of Boston Harbor.

Cruising it in an excursion boat in 1988, Vice President George Bush called the sludge-slathered waters a "harbor of shame." He accused the Democratic nominee, Gov. Michael S. Dukakis, of stalling the harbor's cleanup and declared that the amount of sewage dumped into the water in one year alone, 1986, could have covered "all of metropolitan Boston up to a depth of 17 feet."

It was a potent political image, reinforced by a reality: water contaminated with feces and littered with condoms and tampon applicators, air curdled with the stench of the Deer Island waste treatment plant. The waterfront was dingy and desolate, and cordoned off with barbed wire from much of the rest of the city.

But on Wednesday, five days before the Democratic National Convention begins here, Boston Harbor was held up as a distinctly different symbol: a spruced-up and shimmering sign of the city's progress over the last two decades.

Against the backdrop of an expanse of water that is now clean and teeming with fish and plant life, Mayor Thomas M. Menino and leaders of an environmental group called Save the Harbor/Save the Bay stood on a sunlit wharf behind one of the city's fanciest hotels and unveiled a report detailing the extent of the Boston waterfront renaissance.

"The harbor really is the next area of our city that really is going to shine in the next 25 years," Mr. Menino said as speedboats, yachts and charter fishing craft bobbed on the water behind him.

The timing of the event seemed a parry to the 1988 "harbor of shame" tour, showcasing an image of Boston that could score a few political points for Massachusetts' new presidential contender, Senator John Kerry.

"We thought it was a very good week to do this," said Patricia A. Foley, executive director of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, who was a campaign manager for Mr. Kerry's 1990 Senate race. "We thought there might be some value in making people aware of how bright the future of Boston is."

The report, prepared for the city and Ms. Foley's group by Applesseed Inc., a New York consulting firm, said the city, the state and the federal government had spent nearly \$21 billion since the late 1980's on projects that galvanized the economic development of the waterfront.

Most of those projects — including the Big Dig, the cleanup of Boston Harbor, a new convention center and the opening of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park — were undertaken with environmental, transportation, tourism or other goals besides development in mind. But they have helped draw developers who in the last 17 years, the report said, have built 3.2 million square feet of new office space, 2,720 housing units, more than 1,000 hotel rooms, nearly 2 million square feet of space for research, culture and entertainment, and nearly 4,000 parking spaces.

Thousands of people have poured into the waterfront neighborhoods to live and work. The report said neighborhoods like East Boston, Charlestown, South Boston, the North End and Fort Point Channel, which together added more than 9,000 residents in the 1990's, accounted for more than 60 percent of Boston's population growth from 1990 to 2000.

From 1994 to 2001, those neighborhoods also added more than 52,000 jobs, accounting for 88 percent of all job growth in the city.

What is more, the report said, development now proposed could add almost 7,000 housing units over the next two decades and more than 10 million square feet of office space.

"Most of that housing is in places no one's ever lived in before," said Paul S. Grogan, president of the Boston Foundation, which financed the study.

The significance of the waterfront transformation has not been lost on longtime students of Boston. "Ten years ago if you had asked me is Boston finished growing now, I probably would have said yes," said Thomas H. O'Connor, a historian at Boston College. Now, given the waterfront expansion, "the future is such that at this point the horizons are unlimited," Professor O'Connor said.

That is the impression that Mr. Menino and other city leaders hope to impart to the thousands of delegates — and perhaps especially to the 10,000 members of the news media — coming to the convention.

Ms. Foley said that when her organization was founded in 1986, "the harbor was a source of embarrassment for our city."

Now, she said, "I know in my heart that the future of the city is here, on the harbor we worked so hard to restore."