

PART 6

Goals, Objectives & Action Plan

COMMUNITY GOALS & PRIORITIES

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS

This new Open Space Plan comes out of the ideas and information provided by the residents of Boston through surveys and public meetings, along with input from agency officials, field work, and review of past information. The planning and public participation process has been described in Part 2, the Introduction to this plan.

Statement of Community Open Space Goals & Priorities

The *Community Setting* section of this plan (Appendix 3) has indicated that Boston's population includes a variety of ages in a community where density varies from the urban to the suburban. The *Environmental Inventory and Analysis* section (Appendix 1) has indicated that Boston is blessed with resources that give it a special sense of place, such as Boston Harbor and Dorchester Bay, and the rivers tributary to them – the Charles, the Muddy, the Mystic, Chelsea Creek, and the Neponset. The *Open Space Inventory* section (Appendix 2) arrays the various open spaces that seek to fulfill current open space needs. Based on a review of previous goals and policies, community setting, assessment of environmental conditions, and review of public input (including Appendix 6's open space opinion survey), three primary goals emerged:

- Protect and improve the existing system of open spaces throughout the city through capital rehabilitation, maintenance, programming, and other system operations to meet

existing and new challenges placed on them as the city changes and grows.

- Create new opportunities for meeting open space needs through the city-building and neighborhood development processes.
- Protect the environmental resources of the open space system to enable the restoration and maintenance of their high quality and to reduce the costs of mitigating adverse consequences.

THE ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The actions in this Action Plan section are highlights and key actions for a broad array of citizens in Boston.

What follows are the plan's goals and objectives growing out of these community goals, with various actions appended to each objective. (Two additional goals are provided which are "means"-oriented; i.e., these goals are means to achieve the three "ends"-oriented goals described above.) The actions are either ongoing, to be initiated in the near future, or in the "out years" (the later years) of the five-year term (2002-2006) of the Open Space Plan.

These actions are selected from the broad array of recommended actions that have been presented in sections on the *Community Open Space and Recreation Mission* (aka "the Neighborhoods"), the *Resource Protection Mission*, and the *Open Space Management Mission*. The actions in this Action Plan section are highlights and key actions for a broad array of citizens in Boston. However, it must be noted that the recommended actions in the *Community Recreation Mission* (aka "the Neighborhoods"), the *Resource Protection Mission*, and the *Open Space Management Mission* sections are included by reference in this Action Plan. Given that Boston is a large and diverse community, these actions that are hereby included by



Jamaica Pond

reference are as vital for the success of the Open Space Plan as the actions specifically described below.

The *Action Plan* map highlights recommended actions contained in this part that have a spatial/place-related component that lends itself to presentation on a map.

GOAL: SUSTAIN AND IMPROVE THE EXISTING OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

The citizens of Boston should continue to enjoy clean, safe, accessible, attractive, and actively used parks and open spaces in the existing system.

The city will continue to seek, not only from its own work force, but also from other contracted providers, an ever-increasing commitment to high quality, maintainable designs and construction for its historic parks and modern play facilities. In addition, for the next five years the city will enhance properties in its public open space and park system – including such resources as boulevards, medians, streetscapes, greenways, urban wilds, community gardens, cemeteries, and the waterfront. The Parks Department will continue to refine its field-based definition of a consistent standard of maintenance, and will work with others such as property owners to maximize operating and capital funds for this standard.

The objectives and supporting actions for the above goal are to:

- Continue and improve the cyclical rehabilitation of and re-investment in the historic and modern park and open space system. Reinforce cycles for capital funding reinvestment in the park and open space system. (BPRD, OBM; MDC, DEM, EOAF)
 - *Restore Charles River Reservation including children's play areas (MDC, 2002-2007)*
 - *Complete Boston Harbor Beaches Restoration (Constitution Beach Bathhouse, East Boston; Tenean & Savin Hill Beaches, Bayside Parcel Linkage, Victory Road Park-Tenean Beach Linkage, Dorchester; MDC, 2001-2006)*
 - *Begin the implementation of the Muddy River Restoration Project (BPRD, 2002-2006)*
 - *Continue to restore Franklin Park (Projects recommended by Franklin Park Master Plan including Emerald Necklace Woodlands Project/The Wilderness, BPRD, 2002-2006)*
 - *Rehabilitate and improve Stony Brook Reservation Bicycle Paths (MDC, 2003-2005)*
 - *Reconstruct Commonwealth Avenue Outbound (MHD, MBTA, BPWD, BPRD, 2003-2006)*
- Use both in-house project managers and consultants in the fields of landscape architecture, engineering, urban, environmental, and preservation planning, arboriculture, and horticulture to assure high quality design appropriate to the role of public open spaces as critical, long-lasting amenities in the public realm. (BPRD, MDC, DEM)
 - *Ongoing.*



Commonwealth Avenue, Back Bay



Franklin Park

- Maintain facilities and resources at existing or improved levels through the Quality Control Program, interagency coordination, and constituent-based work plans. (all involved parties)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Update management plans for selected parks where needed due to changing conditions. (BPRD, MDC)
 - *Develop new Franklin Park Management Plan (BPRD, 2001-2003)*
- Strengthen the implementation of maintenance and operation plans for the Emerald Necklace park system through the continued use of the Parkman Crew dedicated to this system. (BPRD, MDC)
 - *Emerald Necklace Crew supported by Parkman Fund as promised in the EIR for the Muddy River Restoration Project (BPRD, ongoing)*
- Improve the training program and other ongoing educational opportunities which commit to the further development of the professional and skilled workforce. (BPRD)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Sustain city-owned historic burying grounds, active cemeteries, and urban wilds through the regular maintenance commitment of the Boston Parks Department, the use of in-house program coordinators, Boston Youth Fund maintenance crews, and community volunteer groups. (BPRD)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Coordinate and cooperate with others concerning the maintenance of open spaces not owned by the Parks Department such as Emerald Necklace properties under Brookline and MDC jurisdiction, schoolyards, community gardens, and planted medians. (BPRD, MDC, Brookline DPW, BPS, BPWD, BNAN, BGSA, BHA, MHD, DEM, non-profit institutions in Boston)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Inventory trees city-wide and design a planting and maintenance program to replenish and add to the tree inventory; coordinate with other agencies affecting tree care and longevity. (BPRD, BPWD, BTM; MDC, DEM)
 - *Design program, including budget, personnel, equipment, and software. Base program on the plan developed (see action plan below re: protect environmental base of open space system). (BPRD, 2004-2006)*

GOAL: REALIZE THE POTENTIAL OF A DYNAMIC, INTEGRATED OPEN SPACE SYSTEM WITHIN THE URBAN FRAMEWORK

The City of Boston should create or take advantage of potential opportunities to advance the open space system as a way to promote its citizens' health and well-being within the total framework of geographic economic competitiveness.

In a dynamic city like Boston, there are daily decisions made to invest or disinvest in land assets. Potential opportunities arise to realize open space visions out of both types of decisions as well as the insights of those who appreciate the intrinsic worth of resources.

The Parks Commission has adopted an acquisition policy to allow for the expansion of the open space inventory under its care, custody, and control to:

- respond to the demand for facilities;
- protect scenic areas and establish buffer zones;
- close gaps in the open space system; and
- protect natural and cultural landscape resources.

As detailed in the policy, acquisition of a proposed property will be considered only when there is a demonstrated community need, an environmental and open space analysis indicates its inclusion in the city system, and a financial strategy provides for its long-term stewardship and maintenance.

In addition to acquisition through purchase and transfer, planning will be needed to inform acquisition decisions and urban development decision-making. Leadership and participation in various planning processes to secure more and better-integrated open space will ensure the city's livability and economic attractiveness.

The objectives and supporting actions for the above goal are to:

- Continue the process for evaluating potential open space acquisitions as set up by the city's recently adopted acquisition policy. Continue to staff the acquisition program and the deliberations of the Boston Open Space Acquisition Advisory Committee. (BPRD)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Continue the yearly capital appropriation in the city budget for the Mayor's Open Space Acquisition Fund. (BPRD, OBM)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Create a strategic planning process to determine the public and private vacant lands available and appropriate for inclusion in the open space system in accordance with the acquisition policy. Develop a community participation process for



Carson Beach, South Boston

determining support for including proactively selected candidate parcels into the open space system. (BPRD, BRA, DND)

- *Commence interagency discussion, 2003; Implement planning and community participation process, 2003-2006*
- Work with the Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF) to plan for facilities to support their programming and the league- and community-based recreation programs and events. (BPRD, BCYF)
 - *Commence discussion with BCYF, 2003; Begin planning process, 2004-2005*
- Work with other city agencies to develop neighborhood linear open space networks to protect existing linear facilities and to nurture and develop proposed facilities. Work with other municipalities and the MDC on inter-municipal/regional facilities. (BPRD, BTM, BRA)
 - *Commence interagency discussion, 2003-2004*
- Engage where needed in multi-jurisdictional projects to create regional open space systems that benefit Boston's residents. Work with other municipalities and the MDC on inter-municipal/regional facilities. (BPRD, BTM, BRA, DND, BCC, BED) The following are on-going multi-jurisdictional projects:
 - *Boston Harbor Island National Recreation Area*
 - *East Boston Greenway Extension*
 - *South Bay Harbor Trail*
 - *Emerald Necklace Greenway*
 - *Neponset River Reservation/Greenway Extension*
 - *East Coast Greenway*
 - *Chelsea Creek*
- Advocate for the inclusion of open space concerns in land use decision-making in the city, given the strategic importance of open space in economic growth processes. Coordinate the open space aspects of urban development projects with the city, BRA, state, and federal planning, open space, housing, transportation, and public works agencies; complement and improve the existing open space system through input into public benefit packages and mitigation measures. (BPRD, BRA, BPWD, BTM, DND, BED, BCC, ZBA; MHD, EOTC, EOEA, EOCD, MHFA, Massport, MBTA, MTA, DCAM; FHA, EPA, FHWA, GSA, NPS)
 - *CA/T Open Space Projects (2002-2006)*
 - *Turnpike Air Rights/Charlesgate (2002-indefinite)*
 - *Beach Street Beautification (Ongoing)*
 - *Arborway Yards (2002-2004)*

- *New Open Space in South Boston Seaport Area (2002-indefinite)*
- *“The Green Center” aka Heart of the City (2003-indefinite)*
- Support the creation of land trusts and other innovative models such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and license agreements to protect open space through partnerships, fundraising, and land banking. Support existing groups like the Boston Natural Areas Network and the Trust for Public Land which are currently engaged in such activities. (BPRD, BRA, DND; MDC, DCAM, Massachusetts Land Bank; BNAN, TPL, BGSA, SE/LROSLT)
- *Ongoing.*



Boston Nature Center, Mattapan

GOAL: PROTECT, RESTORE, AND IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENTAL BASE OF THE OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Enhancing the livability and quality of life in Boston's neighborhoods and downtown through environmental improvements in the open space system will go hand-in-hand with improving their economic vitality.

The city must nurture both its economy and its environment in an interactive, complementary fashion. Cleaner waters, greener streets and parks, purer air, healthier natural ecosystems: this environmental development will result in a more beautiful, economically vibrant city. Such an environmental development model will make nature an integral part of urban development, complementing Boston's achievements in architecture and urban design. Balanced development, both economic and environmental, will continue to give Boston a competitive advantage regionally and nationally as a place to live and work.

The objectives and supporting actions for the above goal are to:

- Protect city-owned urban wilds and other natural areas from development, encroachment, and uses that degrade their natural character. Advocate for the long-term protection and stewardship of non-city publicly and privately owned urban wilds and other natural areas.
 - *Complete the Urban Wilds Master Plan. (BPRD, 2001-2002)*
 - *Incorporate Gladeside I (Mattapan) into Article 97 protected status via transfer. (BPRD, BPHC, BED, 2002-2003)*
 - *Acquire the wetland resource areas and suitable buffer zones of Pendergast Preventorium (Mattapan). (BPRD, BED, 2001-2003)*



Gladeside I Urban Wild, Mattapan

- Manage and maintain city-owned urban wilds and other natural areas to facilitate public access and promote ecological values. Promote the use of city-owned urban wilds and other natural areas for passive recreation, environmental education, and other uses in keeping with their natural character. Develop administrative, fiscal, and programmatic resources to ensure ongoing, long-term maintenance and management of city-owned urban wilds and other natural areas.
 - *Implement priority actions and projects recommended in the Urban Wilds Master Plan. (BPRD, 2002-2006)*
 - *Complete the nature trail at Millennium Park (West Roxbury). (BPRD, Trust Office, 2001-2003)*
 - *Develop Gladeside I for public access, wetland/woodland protection, and environmental education and interpretation. (BPRD, 2003-2005)*
 - *Complete the site remediation and site restoration for the Condor Street Urban Wild and the BIFCO Urban Wild (East Boston). (BPRD, 2001-2003)*
 - *Develop the ecologically sensitive sections of the Pendergast Preventorium Urban Wild for public access, wetland/woodland protection, and environmental education and interpretation. (BPRD, 2003-2005)*
 - *Develop a plan to restore habitats and improve trail conditions in the Sherrin Street Woods Urban Wild (Hyde Park). (BPRD, 2003-2004)*
 - *Develop and implement a plan to clean up Geneva Avenue Cliffs Urban Wild (Dorchester), landscape with native vegetation, and construct a path to enable public access and enjoyment. (BPRD, DND, 2001-2003)*
 - *Develop site identification signage program to alert public to the presence of urban wilds for public access and to increase protection and stewardship. (BPRD, BCC, 2002-2004)*
 - *Continue to work with non-profit groups like BNAN and Earthworks on programming and stewardship. Develop site-by-site community-based stewardship groups for each urban wild. (BPRD, Ongoing)*
 - *Continue to take advantage of all fund-raising opportunities, such as grants, mitigation awards, litigation benefits, and so on to support urban wilds capital and operating needs. (BPRD, BCC, Ongoing)*
 - *Investigate the feasibility of developing an ecological management program both for the natural areas within the Boston city-owned park system and the city urban wilds system. Concentrate such a program, if implemented, on natural area restoration and invasive species management. (BPRD, 2003-2006)*

- Develop and implement an urban tree and forest management and development plan (of which the Emerald Necklace Woodlands Program is a sub-set) which treats the city's trees as a part of the capital infrastructure that ensures a quality environment (air, visual, climate, and wildlife). (BPRD)
 - *Convene on a semi-annual basis the Public Shade Tree Advisory Committee. Begin discussions with the Committee on the framework of such a plan. Initiate and complete planning process. (BPRD, 2001-2004)*
 - *Coordinate BPRD arborists (Maintenance and Design & Construction) with MDC, utility companies, and Friends groups doing ongoing tree work. (BPRD, Ongoing)*
- Work with city, state, and federal agencies to improve the natural resources of our open space system, especially our vulnerable water bodies. Continue to coordinate decision-making of the Parks Commission and the Conservation Commission through the Parks Commissioner's representation on the Conservation Commission. (BPRD, BED, BCC, BWSC; DEP, MWRA, MDC, MEMA, EOE, EPA, ACOE, FEMA)
 - *Pursue actively the Muddy River Restoration Project/ Emerald Necklace Environmental Improvement Program with the Town of Brookline in coordination with EOE. (BPRD, BWSC, 2001-2006)*
 - *Support the MWRA CSO Control Program, especially the Stony Brook and Dorchester Bay sewer separation projects. (BWSC, MWRA, BCC, 2001-2006)*
- Review and analyze proposed plans and developments for environmental impact, with specific attention to open space; for unavoidable impacts, work toward the most effective and feasible means of mitigation; where feasible, work with project proponents to incorporate enhancements to the open space system as part of the project. (BPRC/BPRD, BED, BCC, BRA; MEPA/EOE, MDC, DEP, DEM)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Work with other municipal and regional jurisdictions to improve ecological systems shared by them and Boston, using watershed protection principles and regional projects such as greenways as a basis for cooperation. (BPRD, BCC, BWSC, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Dedham, Everett, Milton, Newton, Quincy, Revere, Somerville, Watertown, Winthrop, MDC)
 - *Continue the cooperative working relationship with the Town of Brookline on Emerald Necklace management and restoration during the Muddy River Restoration Project. (BPRD, BWSC, Town of Brookline, 2001-2006)*
 - *Work with Cambridge, Newton, Watertown, advocacy groups such as the Charles River Conservancy, and the*



Franklin Park



Mother Brook, Hyde Park

MDC on water quality and habitat improvements on the Charles River as part of fulfilling the goals and objectives of the Charles River Reservation Master Plan. (BWSC, BPRD, BCC, MDC, DEP, EPA, Cambridge, Newton, Watertown, advocacy groups, 2001-2006)

- *Work with Milton, Canton, Dedham, advocacy groups like the Neponset River Greenway Council and the Mother Brook Coalition, and the MDC to extend the development of the Neponset River Reservation/Greenway from Dorchester and Milton to Mattapan, Hyde Park, Canton, and Dedham (via the Mother Brook). (BPRD, Milton, Canton, Dedham, advocacy groups, MDC, 2002-2006)*
- *Work with Winthrop, Revere, advocacy groups like the East Boston Greenway Council, and the MDC to extend the East Boston Greenway into these communities and to protect the environmental integrity and natural resources of Belle Isle Inlet. (BPRD, Revere, Winthrop, advocacy groups, MDC, 2002-2006)*
- *Work with the MDC to increase access to the Charles River along the West Roxbury shoreline, and to provide guidance to agencies regulating developments along the Charles. (BPRD, MDC, BRA, BCC, ZBA, 2001-2006)*
- *Build a cooperative relationship with Newton regarding watershed management for the protection of Chandler Pond in Brighton. (BPRD, City of Newton, 2002-ongoing)*

GOAL: COORDINATE OPEN SPACE PROVISION FOR MAXIMUM COMMUNITY BENEFIT

All public open space efforts should be coordinated in such a way as to maximize the benefits for the community at large.

The Parks Commission, the board overseeing the protection of open space in the city regardless of ownership, provides the policy precedent for a coordinated, coherent open space system.

The objectives and supporting actions for the above goal are to:

- Advocate the idea of a single open space system regardless of ownership or physical attributes. (all involved parties)
 - *Continue implementation of the “100-foot rule” mandating Boston Park Commission review of all development projects within 100 feet of all parks and parkways within Boston. (BPRC, BPRD, ongoing.)*
 - *Complete current Open Space Plan that includes the entire open space system (BPRD, 2002)*
 - *Commence new planning process for the production of the next Open Space Plan with an interagency working group. Complete next Open Space Plan with input from all involved agencies. (BPRD, 2004-2006)*

- Continue the integration of cemeteries, urban wilds, street-scapes, community gardens, public housing open spaces, and major public school campuses into mainstream parks operations and programming. (BPRD, MDC, BNAN, TPL, BGSA)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Continue to maintain all responsibility for city tree planting and maintenance under the Parks Department. (BPRD, OBM)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Encourage public policies and actions that are consistent with the city Open Space Plan such as agency area plans, zoning, conservation legislation, regulatory decision-making, and easements. (all involved public agencies, especially BPRD)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Continue to consult with the Parks Department through its professional staff (horticulture, landscape architecture, engineering, arboriculture, historic preservation, and planning) during the planning, design, and construction process on all projects which will, or have the potential to, come under the care, custody, or control of the Parks Department, or which have major open space impacts (positive or adverse) on the city. (all involved public agencies)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Participate in multi-agency planning initiatives such as the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel Project, Roxbury Strategic Master Plan, etc. to insure the maximum feasible protection and benefit for open spaces in the city. (BPRD)
 - *Ongoing.*



South Street Entrance, John Blackwell Pathway, Arnold Arboretum, Jamaica Plain

GOAL: DEVELOP A NETWORK OF RESOURCES TO SUPPORT A FISCALLY STABLE OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

A menu of alternative sources of income, both monetary and in-kind, will continue to be sought without over-commercializing or denying access to parkland and facilities.

Within the larger economic context, parks and recreation budgets have historically fluctuated with the cyclical nature of the public budgeting process. To minimize the effects of these boom and bust cycles, advocacy and active participation by the public must be consistent and coordinated. A variety of partnerships and volunteer programs on neighborhood, citywide, and corporate levels shall continue to be developed in order to supplement and support annual budgetary allocations.

The cultivation of partnerships is an important process for the city's open space system. Through partnerships of various sorts, the community is constantly informing the capital and planning processes. These partnerships often form the basis for commu

Picnic Shelter, Pope John
Paul II Park, Dorchester



nity-generated events in the parks that thereby strengthen neighborhoods. The Park Partner Program generates better communications with the Parks Department and should be continued, as should friends groups, corporate sponsorships, and individual legacy gifts.

The objectives and supporting actions for the above goal are to:

- Continue to expand the Parks Department Public/Private Partnerships Program to include all groups that have a relationship of partnership or volunteerism associated with parks and open spaces in Boston. (BPRD)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Maximize corporate, foundation, and government grant support for programs and capital improvements. (BPRD, DND; MDC, DEM, DEP, DCS/EOEA; NPS)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Continue to capitalize city park maintenance equipment to alleviate pressure on annual operating budgets. (BPRD, OBM)
 - *Ongoing.*
- Coordinate state and city maintenance to mitigate the adverse effects of any boom and bust cycle. (BPRD, MDC, BPWD, MHD, DEM, ENC)
 - *Implementation of the Emerald Necklace MOU between BPRD, Brookline, Emerald Necklace Conservancy, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Ongoing.)*
- Support the existing public and private programs dedicated to the care of specific areas of the park system such as the Adopt-a-Statue program, the Ranger program, and the Neighborhood Tree program; encourage the creation of other public and private open space enhancement programs. (BPRD, Boston Art Commission, BGSA)
 - *Ongoing.*

