

2008 Annual Report



BOSTON
PARKS &
RECREATION

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor ♦ Antonia M. Pollak, Commissioner

As caretaker of the city's open space, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department oversees more than 2,200 acres of park land including 225 parks and playgrounds, 65 squares, urban woodlands and street trees, three active cemeteries, 16 historic burying grounds, and two golf courses.

In addition to maintaining the historic integrity of such famous landmarks as Boston Common, the Public Garden, and the other parks comprising Frederick Law Olmsted's Emerald Necklace, the Department services and upgrades facilities ranging from tot lots to the 527-acre Franklin Park. The Department also programs a wide range of sports, community events, and live entertainment in the parks under its jurisdiction. The Boston Park Rangers patrol parkland in order to discourage vandalism and encourage the wise use of the City's open spaces. Appointed by the Mayor, the Boston Parks Commission serves as the policy-making citizen body that oversees the operation of the Department and considers matters of public concern.



The Boston Parks and Recreation Department is made up of five units operating out of the administrative headquarters in Roxbury and the Franklin Park Yard. An average of 220 fulltime employees handle tasks ranging from designing new parks and playgrounds to planting the famed flower beds in the Public Garden.



The Maintenance Division at Franklin Park includes Forestry, Trades, and an Automotive Unit that repairs and maintains the Department's motorized equipment. Considered the "eyes and ears" of the Department, the Boston Park Rangers operate from their headquarters at the yard along with a busy substation on Boston Common. The Horticulture Unit and greenhouses are also located at Franklin Park.



The Parks Department's Administrative Offices at 1010 Massachusetts Avenue in Roxbury include the Commissioner's Office, the Marketing Unit responsible for partnerships, programming, marketing and communications, the Permitting Unit responsible for all athletic and special events permits in parks, the Historic Burial Grounds Initiative, Urban Wilds, and the Design and Construction Unit which oversees all new construction as well as renovations of existing facilities in City parks. The administration is also comprised of Policy and Resource Development, Finance, and Human Resources.

In addition to the offices at Franklin Park and 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, the Cemeteries Division is headquartered at Mount Hope Cemetery. The Department also owns and operates the William J. Devine Golf Course at Franklin Park and the George Wright Golf Course in Hyde Park.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS: BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Mayor Menino's Capital Improvement Program funds a regular cycle of renovations and improvements to the more than 225 parks and playgrounds and 65 squares under the Department's jurisdiction. The City's funding is augmented by grants, partnerships, and private donations. The Policy and Resource Development unit of Design and Construction prepared the final draft of the City's Open Space Plan for 2008-2012, which was given state approval. This allowed the City to maintain its eligibility to receive grants awarded by the state. The following are among the capital projects overseen in 2008 by the Design and Construction Unit:

Allston-Brighton

Renovations were completed at Portsmouth Street and Smith Playgrounds. Thanks to a private sponsorship, a grant awarded by the New England Sports Turf Managers Association (NESTMA), and a partnership with the Oak Square YMCA, a new irrigation system and turf Little League field were installed at Hardiman Playground by NESTMA volunteers over the course of one week.

Back Bay/Beacon Hill

Improvements were made to many of the pathways on Boston Common while the 30-year-old Public Garden irrigation system was replaced to improve water usage and efficiency. The granite amphitheater at Clarendon Street Playground was updated, along with the ornamental lawns and irrigation system at the heavily-used Copley Square Park, funded in part by park use permit fees.

Dorchester

A new children's play lot, improvements to the play courts, and restoration of the slopes along Adams Street were completed at Ronan Park. A new play area was installed at Quincy Stanley Play Area with a water spray and passive space.

Jamaica Plain

Mozart Street Playground was renovated to include new play structures, water sprays, an amphitheater, and a new tennis/volleyball court. At Jamaica Pond a new open space area, Pinebank Promontory, was established on the grounds of the former Pinebank Estate.

Muddy River

The Department is working in partnership with the US Army Corps, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Town of Brookline, and dedicated advocates from the neighborhoods and local institutions to move forward with a vital flood damage reduction and restoration project in Frederick Law Olmsted's Emerald Necklace park system. The Muddy River Phase One is in the final stages of design and will start construction once the permits are secured. The Phase One Design to open the sections of the river now buried in culverts was approved by the Boston Landmarks Commission and is under review by the Boston Conservation Commission and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the construction funds from the federal and state governments are in place.

South Boston

The concrete bleachers at Lee Playground were partially replaced and the slope was softened by the planting of grass to improve the aesthetics. The soccer and lacrosse fields at Moakley Park underwent a transformation to improve the irrigation system and play surfaces. Saunders Stadium was also resurfaced with improved artificial turf.

Roxbury

The upper play lot at Ceylon Park was transformed with a new play structure by KaBoom!, a non-profit organization. The athletic field received artificial surfacing for football, lacrosse, and soccer while a lower play lot with a water spray and amphitheater was also installed with funds from Mayor Menino's Capital Program. A state grant was awarded to the community to develop Dennis Street, a vacant lot transformed into a community green with a new play lot and water spray feature. Floodlighting was installed at the Madison Park High School football and soccer fields, while St. James Park received a facelift with improvements to the passive park that improved visibility and views to the city skyline along with the installation of play structures.

Other Neighborhoods

Hunt/Almont Park in Mattapan was improved with renovations to the park entrance and walking path and enhanced public safety through the installation of a police emergency phone. The renovated American Legion Highway in Roslindale was planted with over 500 trees in cooperation with NStar. The George Wright Golf Course in Hyde Park was improved with the installation of cart paths along the ninth and twelfth holes. A partnership between the City, MASCO, and abutters of Evans Way came together to raise the funds and renovate the passive park in the Fenway/Kenmore area. In addition, a new play area, Union Park Street Playground, was constructed in the South End and state grants were sought and awarded for the capital reconstruction of Ripley Playground and Clarence "Jeep" Jones Park for a total of \$885,000.

2008 Special Initiatives

Urban Wilds

The Parks Department's Urban Wilds Initiative is responsible for the protection, ecological restoration and ongoing maintenance of hundreds of acres of conservation lands throughout Boston. Highlights for 2008 included design, layout and installation of a woodland perimeter trail by the Boston Youth Conservation Crew at the Roslindale Wetlands Urban Wild. Approximately \$75,000 in supervised volunteer hours focused on woodland maintenance and restoration throughout the city, ribbon-cuttings to celebrate the grant-funded renovation and restoration of Geneva Cliffs Urban Wild in Dorchester, design and installation of environmentally-themed fence panels at Condor Urban Wild in East Boston, and installation of site identification signs at various urban wilds throughout the city.



Park Partners

The Department's Park Partners program reached 161 groups citywide in 2008. These partnerships ranged from the formation of new friends groups to volunteer cleanups and assisting established groups with programs, maintenance, and a wide variety of projects.

Emerald Necklace Conservancy's Justine Mee Liff Fund Project

In collaboration with the Parks Department and Boston Water and Sewer Commission, The Emerald Necklace Conservancy began the process to restore the Stony Brook Gatehouse, located in the Back Bay Fens near the Museum of Fine Arts, as a visitor, exhibition and volunteer center.



Grow Boston Greener

In the second year of the Grow Boston Greener initiative, 3,000 trees were planted in the City of Boston. This included a combination of 1,500 trees planted through the initiative, the Parks Department Street Tree Team, Boston's Urban Forest Coalition (BUFC) partners, and in-kind plantings undertaken as part of other developments throughout the city.

Small Changes and Seed Grants

Mayor Menino announced the recipients of the fourth and final round of annual Small Changes grants distributed by the Parks Department to community groups across the City. Twenty-seven neighborhood organizations benefited from more than \$158,000 in grants, a legacy of Boston 2004, Inc., the host committee of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) held in Boston in 2004. Another 39 community groups received Seed Grants from a Parks Department program providing grants to local community gardens that, while small, can make a big difference to city gardeners operating on a shoestring budget. Due to the volume of requests, this year's grants provided \$125 per group for items ranging from basic tools to seeds and plantings.



*Boston Parks and Recreation Department
Operating Budget FY2008*

Maintenance
\$9,451,800

Administration
\$2,935,934

Cemetery
\$2,097,442

Design & Construction
\$1,502,852

Fund for Parks and Recreation
\$5,940,035
Capital Budget
\$12,463,318
Parkman Fund
\$1,300,000
Total \$15,988,028



BENEFACTORS

American Express
Bank of New York Mellon-Arthur F. Blanchard Trust
Boston Common Frog Pond Foundation
Boundless Playgrounds, Incorporated
Friends of The Public Garden, Incorporated
WCVB-TV 5

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Comcast
Emerald Necklace Conservancy
Friends of Christopher Columbus Park
Harvard University
Harvey Cohen Trust
New England Sports Turf Managers Association

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MAGIC 106.7 FM
Nova Scotia Come to life

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Park Partners

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Arboretum Park Conservancy/Bussey Brook
Beacon Hill Garden Club
Boston College
Boston University
Brighton Main Streets
Carney Hospital
Carter Playground Tennis Association
Cedar Grove Civic Association
Charlestown Mother's Association
Charlestown Preservation Society
Chinese Historical Society
City Year
Colorado Street Association/Shangri-La Community Garden
Concord Square Neigh. Association
Condor Street Urban Wild
CVS/Boundless Playgrounds
Delle Avenue Neighborhood Association
Deloitte Touth
Dorchester Environmental Health Coalition
East Boston Healthy Boston
Elm Hill Park Improvement Association
Emerald Necklace Conservancy
Emerson College
English High School
Fairmount Neighborhood Association
Fenway Civic Association
Fenway Garden Society
Fields Corner Civic Association
Four Corners Main Street
Franklin Park Coalition
Franklin Park Golf Advisory Group
Friends of Back Bay
Friends of Bay Village
Friends of Belle Isle Marsh Urban Wild
Friends of Blackstone/Franklin Square
Friends of Chester Square
Friends of Childe Hassam Park
Friends of Christopher Columbus Park
Friends of Clarendon Tot Lot
Friends of Commonwealth Avenue Mall
Friends of Copley Square
Friends of Copps Hill
Friends of Cuneo Park
Friends of DeFilippo Park
Friends of Dell Rock
Friends of Doherty Park
Friends of Dorchester Park
Friends of East Boston Greenway
Friends of Eliot Norton Park
Friends of Fern Square
Friends of Forbes Street Playground
Friends of Geneva Cliffs
Friends of George Wright Golf Course
Friends of Gibbons Playground
Friends of Harriet Tubman Square
Friends of Hayes Park
Friends of Highland Park
Friends of Hiscock Park
Friends of Hooker Park
Friends of Hunt/Almont Park
Friends of Iroquois Woods
Friends of Isabella Pocket Park
Friends of Martin Playground
Friends of McCarthy Playground
Friends of Meadow Urban Wild
Friends of McLaughlin Playground
Friends of Nira Rock Urban Wild
Friends of Oak Square Common
Friends of Park Plaza
Friends of Peters Park
Friends of Polcari Playground
Friends of Poplar Street Play Area
Friends of Puddingstone Garden Urban Wilds
Friends of Ramler Park
Friends of Ringer Park
Friends of Ringgold Park
Friends of Ronan Park
Friends of Ryan Park
Friends of Savin Hill Park
Friends of Training Field
Friends of Temple Street Park
Friends of The Brophy
Friends of The Muddy River
Friends of The Prado
Friends of The Public Garden
Friends of The Urban Orchard at McLaughlin Woods
Friends of Titus Sparrow Park
Friends of Town Field/A.D.S.L.
Gardens for Charlestown, Inc.
Hawthorne Youth Center
Hobart Neighborhood Association
Hobart Park Neighborhood Association
Jeffries Point Crew
Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association
Keyspan
M Street Park Neighborhood Assoc.
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Mission High School
Mission Hill Main Streets
New Balance
North End Waterfront Mother's Association
Newton High School Students
Oak Square Y.M.C.A.
Ramsay Community Advisory Board
Ringer Park Crime Watch
Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy
Roslindale Green and Clean
Roslindale Main Streets
Roslindale Wetlands Task Force
State Street Bank
Suffolk County Sheriff's Department
Trinity Financial
Union Park Neighborhood Association
Veteran's Benefits Clearing House
West Roxbury Evening Garden Club
Wheelock College
Woodhaven Urban Wild/Culbert Neighborhood Association
Worcester Square
Y.M.C.A. Boston



BOSTON PARKS & RECREATION

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor
Antonia M. Pollak, Commissioner

2008 Boston Parks Commissioners

Antonia M. Pollak, Chairperson
Bernard Lynch Jr., Assistant Commissioner
Jerry Carchedi, Assistant Commissioner
Raymond Foley, Associate Commissioner
Susan Park, Associate Commissioner
Charles Titus, Associate Commissioner
Brian McLaughlin, Executive Secretary

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**BOSTON
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RECREATION**



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