Open Space Plan 2008-2014

Section 7
Analysis of Needs

Section 7.2.14 Community Open Space & Recreation
SOUTH END

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SOUTH END

THE SETTING

History
As originally conceived in the 1850s, the South End was to be a neighborhood of townhouses for wealthy merchants. In laying out the streets, the planners followed the English park model of residential squares, each with a large oval grass plot defining the center of the street. At the turn of the century, however, the more affluent residents had become more attracted to the fashionable Back Bay. The South End instead became the port-of-entry to more than 35 distinct linguistic groups as the dense residential fabric was inherited by wave after wave of primarily working class immigrants. The neighborhood maintains much of this richly diverse and complex character.

Urban renewal in general and the Prudential Center and Copley Place developments in particular attracted powerful market forces to the South End. Starting in the mid-1960s, gradual smaller-scale private reinvestment and an accompanying gentrification resulted. Along with market developments, innovative projects like the Villa Victoria housing development, the Southwest Corridor Park, and Tent City have had a positive impact on the quality of life in the community. With the location of biotechnology-related light manufacturing in the area, the expansion of the Boston Medical Center, and the re-focusing on Washington Street resulting from the City's Main Streets program and the MBTA's Silver Line project, the more eastern sections of the South End have seen a revitalization that is likely to continue into the near future.

Demographics/Housing
The South End's population has stabilized and continues to maintain its diversity. There was an increase of 6.3% in the population from 27,125 in 1980 to 28,842 in 1990. The 2000 population figure was 28,160, resulting in a slight decline of -2.4%, likely due to smaller household sizes.

The percent of white persons increased from 40% in 1990 to 50% in 2000, while the percent of blacks continued to decrease from 32% to 25% in the same period. The percent of persons of Hispanic origin (16% in 2000) and Asian/Pacific Islanders (11% in

Demographic and Housing Profile

Population	
2000 Census	28,160
1990 Census	28,842
1980 Census	27,125
Population growth/decline, 1990 - 2000	-2.37%
Population growth/decline, 1980 - 1990	6.33%

Age		
0 to 4	1,067	4%
5 to 9	1,219	4%
10 to 14	1,171	4%
15 to17	633	2%
18 to 24	3,208	11%
25 to 44	12,536	45%
45 to 64	5,950	21%
65 to 74	1375	5%
75 to 84	741	3%
85 and over	260	1%

Race	% of Total Population
White alone	50%
Black or African American alone	25%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1%
Asian alone	11%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0%
Some other race alone	9%
Two or more races	4%

Latino Status	% of Total Population
Not Hispanic or Latino	84%
Hispanic or Latino	16%

N.B.: "0%" means "less than 1%"

Demographic and Housing Profile

Households	
2000 Census	14,300
1990 Census	12,911
1980 Census	11,348
Household Growth/Decline, 1980-1990	13.77%
Household Growth/Decline, 1990-2000	10.76%

Population by Household Type	
	% Persons
Family households	49%
Non-family households	46%
Group quarters	5%

Average Household Size	
	Persons per Household Type
All Households	1.87
Family Households	2.94
Nonfamily Households	1.34

Persons Per Household		
	Households	%
1-person households	7,062	49%
2-person households	4,449	31%
3-person households	1,385	10%
4-person households	792	6%
5-person households	389	3%
6-person households	164	1%
7-or more person households	59	0%

Demographic and Housing Profile

Population Density	Persons per Square Mile
1980 Census	26,335.0
1990 Census	28,001.9
2000 Census	27,339.8
Density Change 1980 to 1990	1,666.9
Density Change 1990 to 2000	-662.1

Housing Tenure in Occupied Housing Units	% in Occupied Housing Units
Owner occupied	28%
Renter occupied	72%

Total Occupied & Vacant Housing Units in Structure	
Single units	6%
Double units	5%
3-9 units	56%
10-19 units	7%
20-49 units	8%
50 or more units	18%
All other	0%
Single/Multiple Unit Ratio	0.06

Household by Number of Vehicles Available	
No vehicles	42%
1 vehicle	48%
2 vehicles	9%
3 or more vehicles	1%

Median Household Income
$41,590

Civilian Unemployment Rate
6.9%

Poverty Rate
23.9%

2000) remained stable in the 1990 to 2000 period. These percentages indicate that the South End is one of the most racially diverse neighborhoods in the city, and is similar to the diversity of the city as a whole (54% white, 25% black, 14% Hispanic, 8% Asian/Pacific Islander).

Statistics that reflect the gradual gentrification of the South End include the higher percentages of persons in the 25-44 age group (45% versus 36% for the city); 46% of the population lives in non-family households versus 29% of the population in non-family households in Boston as a whole; 49% of the households are one-person households versus 37% for the city; a median household income of $41,590 versus $39,629 for Boston; and the trend in the South End of increasing white population over 20 years, from 35% in 1980 to 50% in 2000 versus the white population decline in Boston as a whole from 68% in 1980 to 54% in 2000.

In terms of the proportion of the youth population, i.e., ages 17 and younger, the South End has gone from a fairly comparable situation with the city in 1990, 17% versus 19% respectively, to one where it showed a distinct difference in the percentage of youth compared to Boston in 2000, 14% versus 20% respectively.

There is a much higher population density in the South End, more than double that of Boston (27,339.8 persons per square mile versus 12,172.3, respectively), and fewer households have access to a vehicle – 42% have no access to a vehicle versus 35% for the city.

The housing stock in the South End is expanding at a fast pace with the reclamation of old buildings, the conversion of single family dwellings to multi-unit condominiums, and recently, a number of new moderate income and luxury housing projects. Seventy-two percent of all occupied housing units are renter-occupied. Cultural and institutional facilities will likely increase, continuing to attract young professionals to the neighborhood.

THE OPEN SPACE SYSTEM TODAY

Equity and Investment
The tight residential fabric of the South End has resulted in approximately 30,000 persons being packed into a one-square-mile area, a density that is over two times the city's overall figure. It is not surprising then to find that the neighborhood's ratio of protected open space per thousand persons is a mere 1.03, while Boston has a 7.47 ratio. The 1.03 acres per thousand ratio for this neighborhood is less than the 2.5 acres per thousand persons guideline set out in the South End Open Space Study prepared by the Boston Urban Gardeners (1988). This is a more appropriate guideline for comparison for downtown-core urban neighborhoods. There are 29 acres of protected parks, playgrounds, squares, and malls in the South End, while another 20 acres are unprotected open space.

There are 25 community gardens in the South End, ranging from the 1.10-acre, 110 garden plot Berkeley Street Community Garden to the 0.03-acre Titus Sparrow Garden. These gardens provide additional open space as well as fresh food and outdoor activities for their gardeners. The primary holders of community garden space in the South End are the MBTA, the BRA, and the non-profit South End/Lower Roxbury Open Space Land Trust (SE/LROSLT).

The City oversaw an investment of $7.7 million toward improvements to the open space system in the South End through the 2001-2006 period (see table below). Nine facilities were affected through this effort including play lots at O'Day, Ramsay, and Titus Sparrow.

South End Capital Projects 2001-2006	
Braddock Park	$151,667
Chester Park	$15,000
Hiscock Park	$234,146
O'Day Playground	$535,053
Ramsay Park	$381,951
Rotch Playground	$5,000,000
St. Helena's Park	$257,866
Titus Sparrow Park	$827,299
Union Park Street Play Area	$295,366
Total	$7,698,348

Chandler/ Tremont Plaza
Southwest Corridor Park
Childe Hassam Park
Castle Square Parks
Castle Square Parks
Warren & Clarendon Streets Garden
Berkeley Street Garden
Braddock Park Garden
Braddock Park
Hayes Park
Dartmouth Garden
Watson Park I & II
Peters Park I & II
Harriet Tubman Square
Ringgold Park
Titus Sparrow Park
Hiscock Park
Union Park Square
Bradford Street Play Area
Wellington Common
West Rutland Square
Rotch Playground
Wellington Green
Concord Square
South End Library Park
Unity Towers Garden
Carter School Grounds
Southwest Corridor Park
Worcester Street Garden
Rutland Green
O'Day Playground
Msgr. Reynolds Playground
Waltham Square
St. Helena's Park
Saranac/New Castle Garden
Blackstone Square
Union Park Street Playground
Newland Street Park
Carter Playground
Frederick Douglass Green
Rutland's Haven Community Garden
Franklin Square
Rutland Washington Community Garden
Harrison Urban Garden
Chester Park
West Springfield Garden
South End South Burying Ground
Kendall & Lenox Streets Garden
Washington Manor Community Garden
Massachusetts Avenue Malls
Southwest Corridor Park
Worcester Square
Frederick Douglas Peace Garden
Bessie Barnes Garden
Melnea Cass Boulevard
Bessie Barnes Park
Boston Medical Center Campus
United Nbhd of Lower Roxbury CG
Northhampton St Community Garden
Ramsay Park
Melnea Cass Boulevard
Melnea Cass Boulevard
Open Space Types
Malls, Squares & Plazas
Parkways, Reservations & Beaches
Parks, Playgrounds & Athletic Fields
Cemeteries & Burying Grounds
Community Gardens
Urban Wilds & Natural Areas
Protected Open Space
Planning District
0
0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
0.5
Miles
City of Boston
South End
Open Space by Type
Thomas M. Menino, Mayor
Prepared by the Design & Construction Unit
Boston Parks & Recreation Department
Antonia M. Pollak, Commissioner
August, 2007

Site Name	Baseball Diamond	Softball Diamond	Little League Diamond	Football	Soccer	Cricket Field	Rugby	Lacrosse	Multi-Use Athletic Field	Basketball Court	Basketball Half Court	Tennis Court	Street Hockey Court	Volleyball	Handball	Horseshoes	Children's Playlot	Waterspray Feature	Passive Area	Community Garden	Artwork/Monument	Path	Nature Trail	Landscaped Area	Fountain	Concession(s)	Parking Area	Other Features/Facilities
Berkeley Street Garden																				1								
Bessie Barnes Garden																				1								
Blackstone Square																			1						1			
Boston Medical Center Campus																			1									
Braddock Park																			1						1			
Braddock Park Garden																				1								
Bradford Street Play Area																									1			
Carter Playground		1	1						1		1	5		1			1	1	1									
Castle Square Parks										1	1						1											
Chandler/Tremont Plaza																	1		1									
Chester Park																			1					X				
Childe Hassam Park																								X				
Concord Square																			1					X	1			
Dartmouth Garden																				1								
Franklin Square																			1					X	1			
Frederick Douglass Green																												
Harriet Tubman Square																			1		1			X				
Hayes Park																	1		1		1							
Hiscock Park																												
Kendall & Lenox Streets Garden																				1								
Massachusetts Avenue Malls																												
Melnea Cass Boulevard																						X		X				
Msgr. Reynolds Playground																	1		1									
Newland Street Park																	1											
Northhampton St Community Garden																				1								
O'Day Playground										1							1		1									
Peters Park I			1							2		1		1	2		1		1									Dog Run
Peters Park II																												
Ramsay Park	1				1					3		2					1	1	1		1							
Ringgold Park											1						1		1									
Rotch Playground									1										1									
Rutland Garden																				1								
Rutland Green																				1								
Saranac/New Castle Garden																				1								
South End Library Park																			1									
South End South Burying Ground																												
St. Helena's Park																1			1									
Titus Sparrow Park										1	1	1					1		2	2								
Union Park Square																			1									
Union Park Street Playground																	1		1									

Site Name	Baseball Diamond	Softball Diamond	Little League Diamond	Football	Soccer	Cricket Field	Rugby	Lacrosse	Multi-Use Athletic Field	Basketball Court	Basketball Half Court	Tennis Court	Street Hockey Court	Volleyball	Handball	Horseshoes	Children's Playlot	Waterspray Feature	Passive Area	Community Garden	Artwork/Monument	Path	Nature Trail	Landscaped Area	Fountain	Concession(s)	Parking Area	Other Features/Facilities
United Neighborhood CG																				1								
Unity Towers Garden																				1								
Waltham Square																			1									
Warren & Clarendon Streets Garden																				1								
Washington Manor Community Garden																				1								
Watson Park I																												
Watson Park II																												
Wellington Common																				1								
Wellington Green																				1								
West Rutland Square																			1									
West Springfield Garden																				1								
Worcester Square																			1					X	1			
Worcester Street Garden																				1								

Assessment

SMALL AND BEAUTIFUL

Parallel arterials slice through the South End's regular residential block grid on a southwest to northeast axis, connecting Boston's southern neighborhoods with the downtown areas. The character of land uses as well as the availability of open space resources varies as one moves across the area between these major roads.

In the western third of the neighborhood, the blocks adjacent to Columbus Avenue and Tremont Street have experienced substantial gentrification. New restaurants and stores occupy many ground floor spaces. Carter Playground and Titus Sparrow Park provide active recreation facilities. In addition to play lots, community gardens, courts, and seating areas, the DCR's Southwest Corridor Park serves as a pedestrian spine to the area, providing a link between Ruggles Station, Carter Playground, Massachusetts Avenue, Titus Sparrow Park, and the Back Bay Station.

The area adjacent to Shawmut Avenue and Washington Street is less affluent and dominated by the neighborhood's housing developments including the Villa Victoria complex. Located opposite each other on Washington Street, Blackstone and Franklin Squares together provide the centerpiece of the area's passive open spaces. Peters and Ramsay Parks provide active recreation anchors at the northern and southern ends of this sub-neighborhood, while O'Day and Ringgold provide smaller active play areas within this sub-neighborhood. A large number of community gardens are located on East Berkeley Street. The Rutland and West Springfield community gardens are also sizable. The widening of Washington Street to accommodate the Silver Line transit system has rapidly transformed this corridor, bringing in both new residential developments and park users.

Medical facilities are the dominant land uses between Washington and Albany Streets. The Boston Medical Center and Boston University Medical School complexes are interspersed with green areas and plazas to create a campus-like environment. This section of the South End has developed light manufacturing uses as well. The Cathedral housing complex, one of the oldest in the city, is one of the few existing residential areas between Washington and Albany Streets. This area has few active recreation facilities: Msgr. Reynolds Play Area, Union Park Play Area, and Rotch Playground.

The South End's lack of open space in terms of acreage is compensated somewhat by a large inventory and a broad range of facilities, typified by ball fields, courts, play lots, and small, attractive residential squares elaborated with such features as cast iron fencing, fountains, or statues. Street trees are highly valued and cared for in this neighborhood.

A detailed assessment of existing conditions indicates that facilities are somewhat unevenly distributed within the neighborhood. The larger active facilities tend to be located at the fringes of the South End, while the residential squares tend to be more fully integrated into the fabric of the neighborhood. Given the history of the South End's planning and development, this was no accident. The residential squares were designed in the 1800s as part of the residential fabric to be fully built-out and populated by wealthy merchants; the location of active areas near the industrial fringes of the neighborhood is due both to society's growing need for this type of recreation during the 1900s and to the availability of cheaper land there, particularly as industry became a less prevalent land use in this area due to economic factors.

As the South End's population of young adults continues to grow there will be increasing demand for permits from residents to utilize existing facilities. Limited household access to vehicles is also a factor in the need for more open space accessible to residents of this area. There is a need to identify new sites for active recreation as public and private housing developments are planned and as the number of organized leagues and clubs increase. Currently, the four facilities over 2.5 acres in the neighborhood – Carter, Peters, Ramsay, and Rotch Playgrounds – are experiencing heavy use and maintenance demands. The dramatic rise in the popularity of soccer and the continued keen interest in baseball puts additional pressure on these facilities. Carter experiences added pressure from the Northeastern University student population. Smaller facilities such as O'Day and Titus Sparrow are also experiencing heavy use, again creating added maintenance and capital redevelopment needs.

The ongoing tension created when the few irresponsible dog owners allow their pets to urinate and defecate on paved and unpaved portions of the South End's parks may be somewhat relieved by the construction of a dog park in Peters Park. This dog

park was constructed with funds raised by dog owners, and includes a fund for maintenance and, if needed, subsequent removal if lack of use justifies it, in accordance with a city law governing the building of dog parks. This may help reduce complaints in other nearby parks such as Ringgold, where families bring young children to play on the play equipment.

The neighborhood's many small squares and passive parks are symbolic of the South End's urbane residential character. Yet they require ongoing restoration, operational support from friends groups, better accessibility through sidewalk improvements, and programming of small events. The absence of backyard space in the neighborhood highlights the need for such spaces. The same is true for open space facilities within the public housing developments.

Although there is a need for more ball fields, courts, and children's play areas, such uses require a substantial amount of land. Therefore, they are unlikely to be met in the near term given the intense land use pressures and high property values in this neighborhood. In concert with the stately brick townhouses on quiet tree-lined residential side streets, the English residential square model has been successful in providing an attractive and restful, yet urbane, character to this neighborhood, compensating somewhat for the lack of larger open spaces provided in less dense neighborhoods.

As mentioned before, one planning approach will be to consider the provision of open space amenities as part of public and private development projects. The Parks Department will continue to work with the BRA and other agencies through the Article 80 and other review processes such as the Parks Commission's 100-foot rule review process, to determine the need, as appropriate, for open space amenities as part of development projects.

Much has been accomplished over the past seven years for this neighborhood's street and park trees. New park trees have been planted through a Department program where persons or other entities can donate funds for a tree with a plaque placed in the soil. The minimum donation also includes two years of follow-up care. Friends groups have also contributed to tree planting and care. The Department has eliminated the backlog of dead, dying, and diseased street trees needing removal. Many of the tree pits have been replanted with a mix of species to prevent large-scale losses from disease. The goal for tree care in this neighborhood in the future will be to assure adequate funding for park and street tree

maintenance as many of the newer trees get older and already aging and stressed trees call for more frequent care. The Department will also focus on the South End as a target of efforts by the Growing Boston Greener tree-planting initiative.

Future Open Space on the Turnpike Air Rights

Resulting from the work of the City- and Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA)-appointed Strategic Development Study Committee (SDSC), the BRA commissioned a study titled A Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights in Boston (2000) to plan for the future of the Turnpike air rights parcels. For the parcels bordering the South End (Parcels 16-23), this plan called for two new parks to be created. One would be on an approximately 1.5-acre portion of Parcel 18 at a hinge with the Back Bay and Bay Village (Berkeley and Cortes Streets); and the other would be on an approximately 0.8-acre portion of Parcel 21 to be shared with Chinatown (Shawmut Avenue, Marginal and Herald Streets). The plan's guidelines for Parcel 21 call for "includ[ing] a mix of active recreation facilities, a paved area ... to accommodate community gatherings and festivals, and quieter seating areas." (Section IV, Implementation, page 81.) The remainder of the site would be developed with a building at or over 150 feet in height for mixed-income housing and commercial or community uses. With active recreation field sports requiring from 3/4-acre for football to 1.2-acre minimum for Little League (soccer would need an acre), and given the other requirements for other uses such as paved areas, quiet seating areas, and such, the type of active recreation facility appropriate for this site from a size point of view would be courts for basketball, tennis, handball, volleyball, street hockey, and the like. A process that reviews the needs of the nearby Quincy School and of the South End and Chinatown communities will help align this site's potential with its constraints.

While the plan's approximately 1.5-acre Parcel 18 park would better accommodate field sports facilities from a size point of view, the subsequent development process for this parcel will limit the size and configuration of open space here. The City, the MTA, and the surrounding community have worked on the development plans of a private developer for Parcels 16, 17, 18, and 19. Columbus Center, the subject mixed-use air rights development project, has been proposed to be built over approximately seven acres of the Massachusetts Turnpike. The project area consists of the four parcels, stretching from the corner of Columbus and Clarendon (across from Back Bay Station) to the small triangular parcel at the intersection of Arlington, Marginal, Herald and Tremont. If built as currently configured, Columbus Center will include approximately

451 condominiums, a 160-key hotel, two larger parks on Parcels 17 and 19 and a smaller park on Parcel 18 (Cortes Street). The project also will include several new eating establishments, retail, a grocery store and day care center. These parks will be focused on passive recreation uses. The lack of space devoted to active recreation is a reflection of the combination of the high cost of developing over highway air rights and need to attract adequate revenue to meet those high costs in a project that straddles two neighborhoods, Back Bay/Beacon Hill and the South End, that already have higher land costs.

ADVANCING CONNECTIVITY: THE "GREEN HINGE"

Given the limited amount of available open space in the South End, one approach to addressing this need is to connect to open spaces outside the immediate neighborhood. The South End is already located at the northern end of a fully developed linear park system – the DCR's Southwest Corridor Park – that allows access to open spaces beyond its confines. It blends larger City-owned park facilities (Titus Sparrow and Carter) with a narrow corridor over or parallel to the Southwest Corridor rail lines. A pedestrian path and a bicycle path link these spaces and continue south toward Mission Hill and Jamaica Plain to eventually connect to the Arborway, the Arnold Arboretum, and Franklin Park at the southern end of the Emerald Necklace.

During the latter half of the 1990s, the Massachusetts Highway Department awarded the Parks Department a $1 million federal/state transportation enhancement grant for the Connecting the Corridors project. Combined with over $700,000 in City capital funding and strong support from Northeastern University, this project will convert old bridle paths in the Back Bay Fens into multi-purpose paved paths for use by both pedestrians and bicyclists and restore pedestrian paths in the Back Bay Fens. Most importantly for the South End, this project will create an enhanced link between the Fens and the Southwest Corridor Park in the vicinity of Ruggles Station via a redesigned Forsyth Street. The Parks Department is currently overseeing the design phase for this project.

As this connection to the Southwest Corridor is also quite near the western terminus of the Melnea Cass Boulevard bike and pedestrian paths, it will help provide access to the waterfront once the South Bay Harbor Trail is implemented. The Connecting the Corridors project will thus have multiple benefits for commuter and recreational users of these corridors.

In the emerging vision of connections for the South End, it could become a neighborhood flanked on all four sides by linear park features, such that it could become defined by these features, just as the parkways in West Roxbury have led to its “Parkway” nickname. With the Southwest Corridor Park on its western flank and the Melnea Cass Boulevard bike path on the southern flank, the South End has a strong base to build on this vision. The advocates of the South Bay Harbor Trail propose to link the Melnea Cass Boulevard bike path to the CA/T Project-generated Fort Point Channel open space system and the Harborwalk system in South Boston. This would be done via a path in the area between Albany Street and the I-93 entrance from Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard. The city has conducted preliminary planning for this proposal thanks to a grant from the ISTEA Enhancement Program.

With the South Bay Harbor Trail covering the eastern flank, the northern flank will be addressed via the Turnpike air rights development process. As mentioned above, in 2000 the BRA released A Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights in Boston. It calls for “a bicycle way that connects from the Southwest Corridor Park Bikeway to a Central Artery Bikeway/South Bay Harbor Trail.” (Section IV, Implementation, page 81.) Along with an accompanying pedestrian circulation system of appropriately sized sidewalks, attractive street furniture, and pedestrian-oriented traffic signals, this Turnpike air rights bikeway system would help South End residents better connect to the Southwest Corridor Park, the Emerald Necklace (via Forsyth Street), Fort Point Channel, and Boston Harbor. With the Turnpike bikeway, the Southwest Corridor Park, Melnea Cass Boulevard bikeway, and the South Bay Harbor Trail surrounding the South End on all sides and providing access to regional open spaces throughout the city, this neighborhood could become known, despite its low open space ratio per person, as the “Green Hinge” of Boston.

With greenways and bikeways surrounding the South End, the advantage of the planned grid street system here is clear: it would provide quick access from the neighborhood’s interior to these “edge” greenways. Massachusetts Avenue, Dartmouth Street, and Berkeley Street would appear to be the logical east-west connectors, while Washington Street, Albany Street, Shawmut Avenue, Tremont Street, and Columbus Avenue would appear to be the logical north-south connectors. Enhancing these connecting arterials with street tree plantings, pedestrian-friendly features, and bicycle accommodations, in accordance with the Streetscape Guidelines for Boston’s Major Roads (BTD, 1999), will make these

existing and future “edge” greenways, as well as existing parklands, more accessible. The enhanced connectors will also strengthen the open space character of the neighborhood and provide a visual connection between these park systems.

Washington Street is first in that regard, as it has been comprehensively reconstructed as part of the MBTA Silver Line project. Enhanced sidewalks accompany the dedicated transit- and bicycle-preferred lane (busway) that occupies the Washington Street Corridor. Along with the existing Main Streets commercial revitalization program, Washington Street has become an attractive thoroughfare/boulevard enabling pedestrians and bicyclists to access the Melnea Cass Boulevard and Turnpike greenways as well as the open spaces in between – Ramsay, Blackstone, Franklin, Msgr. Reynolds, and Peters.

While these new edge greenways will add some acreage to the South End’s total, their benefits would support the premise foreseen by the mid-1980s President’s Commission on Americans Outdoors report, which is credited with sharply advancing the momentum in the current national movement for greenways. It was hoped that greenways would provide equal or greater recreational and open space benefits at considerably less cost in land acquisition than the model of the large acreage park located at a great distance from the population base of users. The suggested benefit/cost efficiency per acre may or may not occur in the Turnpike air rights case. However, despite its low open space per person ratio, the South End appears poised to take advantage of its central location near transportation corridors to have access to a number of linear recreation opportunities along its edges for walking, bicycling, running, and in-line skating, as well as associated passive recreation. Given the importance of such aerobic activities in a healthy lifestyle, the South End – with its edge greenways system – will have another reason to be seen as an attractive and desirable residential community.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The South End's ethnic and social vitality is matched by a rich and diverse open space inventory. However, new opportunities need to be developed to adequately absorb the neighborhood's needs because of its low open space per person ratio. The potential of major arterial streets as open space connectors must be utilized. New housing developments must create additional open space facilities to accommodate the new residents. Existing partnerships must be strengthened where discrete constituencies are matched to the management of particular facilities. The creation of new linear open space systems at the neighborhood's edges must be realized.

Opportunities

SMALL AND BEAUTIFUL

- Coordinate with the BRA and other agencies during the development review process to ensure that new housing developments provide facilities like gardens, play lots, and courts to accommodate new residents.
- Reinforce the South End's rich heritage of malls and squares and its English residential garden character by further enhancing and restoring open spaces like Blackstone, Franklin, Worcester, and Rutland Squares and Braddock Park. Continue to support the relationships between the Parks Department and the friends groups such as the Blackstone/Franklin Square Association.
- Encourage partnerships between the Parks Department and institutions and firms for maintenance support of parks. Use as a model the example of Emerson College's capital support for field restoration at Rotch.
- Seek out a multitude of outside sources – friends groups, neighborhood and block associations, property owners, and the like – for supplemental support of the Department's street and park tree maintenance.
- Continue to fund capital rehabilitation of the South End's squares and other City park facilities as needed in the capital renewal cycle such as South End Library Park, Monsignor Reynolds Playground, Union Park, Union Park Street Playground, St. James Park, Hayes Park, and Carter Playground.
- Continue to focus on street tree care and plantings. Support the Growing Boston Greener program's emphasis on under-treed neighborhoods like the South End.

FUTURE OPEN SPACE ON THE TURNPIKE AIR RIGHTS

- Work with the BRA and MTA through the environmental review and disposition processes to implement open space on Parcel 18 and 21 as proposed by the Civic Vision plan. Perform an in-depth assessment and feasibility study to determine the best open space uses at these sites.

ADVANCING CONNECTIVITY: THE "GREEN HINGE"

- Urge the MHD to advance the Connecting the Corridors ISTEA project both by expediting review of project designs and by moving the project up on the Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) priority list to enable an earlier construction start.
- Follow up the preliminary planning and design for the South Bay Harbor Trail with funding for construction. Seek funding from sources such as the TEA-21 Enhancements Program.
- Use the Turnpike air rights disposition and environmental review process to implement the Civic Vision plan recommendation for a bicycle way that connects the Southwest Corridor Park Bikeway to a Central Artery Bikeway/ South Bay Harbor Trail. Seek connections to the Charles River Esplanade and the Melnea Cass Boulevard bike path per the Civic Vision plan recommendation.
- Take advantage of the South End's grid street system to develop east-west and north-south connectors – enhanced arterials with street tree plantings, pedestrian-friendly features, and bicycle accommodations, in accordance with the Streetscape Guidelines for Boston's Major Roads (BTD, 1999) – to provide access to the neighborhood's "edge" greenways. Investigate Massachusetts Avenue, Dartmouth Street, and Berkeley Street as possible east-west connectors. Investigate Albany Street, Shawmut Avenue, Tremont Street, and Columbus Avenue as possible north-south connectors.
- Support a coordinated effort by DCR and MBTA legal and real estate management staffs to transfer ownership of the Southwest Corridor Park lands from the MBTA to the DCR.

Community Priorities

SMALL AND BEAUTIFUL

- Evaluate all South End squares, including Blackstone and Franklin, for minor repair needs in close cooperation with the Blackstone/Franklin Square Association and other neighborhood groups.

- Provide for family-oriented events at parks in the South End. Continue ParkARTS and sports-oriented programming in the parks.
- Increase family-oriented programming at O'Day Playground in collaboration with Villa Victoria community groups.
- Pursue additional space or improved scheduling to accommodate the growing popularity of soccer in the South End.
- Provide for additional maintenance at heavily used facilities such as O'Day, Carter, and Titus Sparrow. Develop means to attract more users to larger regional facilities like Ramsay.
- Support the effort by the Friends of Ringgold Park to replant shrubs and install an irrigation system in the park. Work with the Friends as they pursue a fountain design process funded by the Browne Fund.
- Set aside community gardens where appropriate as part of planned developments in the South End.
- Work with the State Police and Boston Police to improve public safety along the Southwest Corridor Park and at Carter Playground.

ADVANCING CONNECTIVITY: THE "GREEN HINGE"

- Assist the DCR in the creation of mechanisms to ensure the management and maintenance of the Southwest Corridor Park during times of severe budget constraints.
- Incorporate a greenway into any Turnpike air rights development, in part to link the Southwest Corridor Park to the proposed Central Artery/Tunnel open space system.