
Open Space Plan 2008-2014

Section 7

Analysis of Needs

**Section 7.3.3 Open Space Systems
Management
EMERALD NECKLACE**

Analysis of Needs

Section 7.3.3: Open Space System Management THE EMERALD NECKLACE

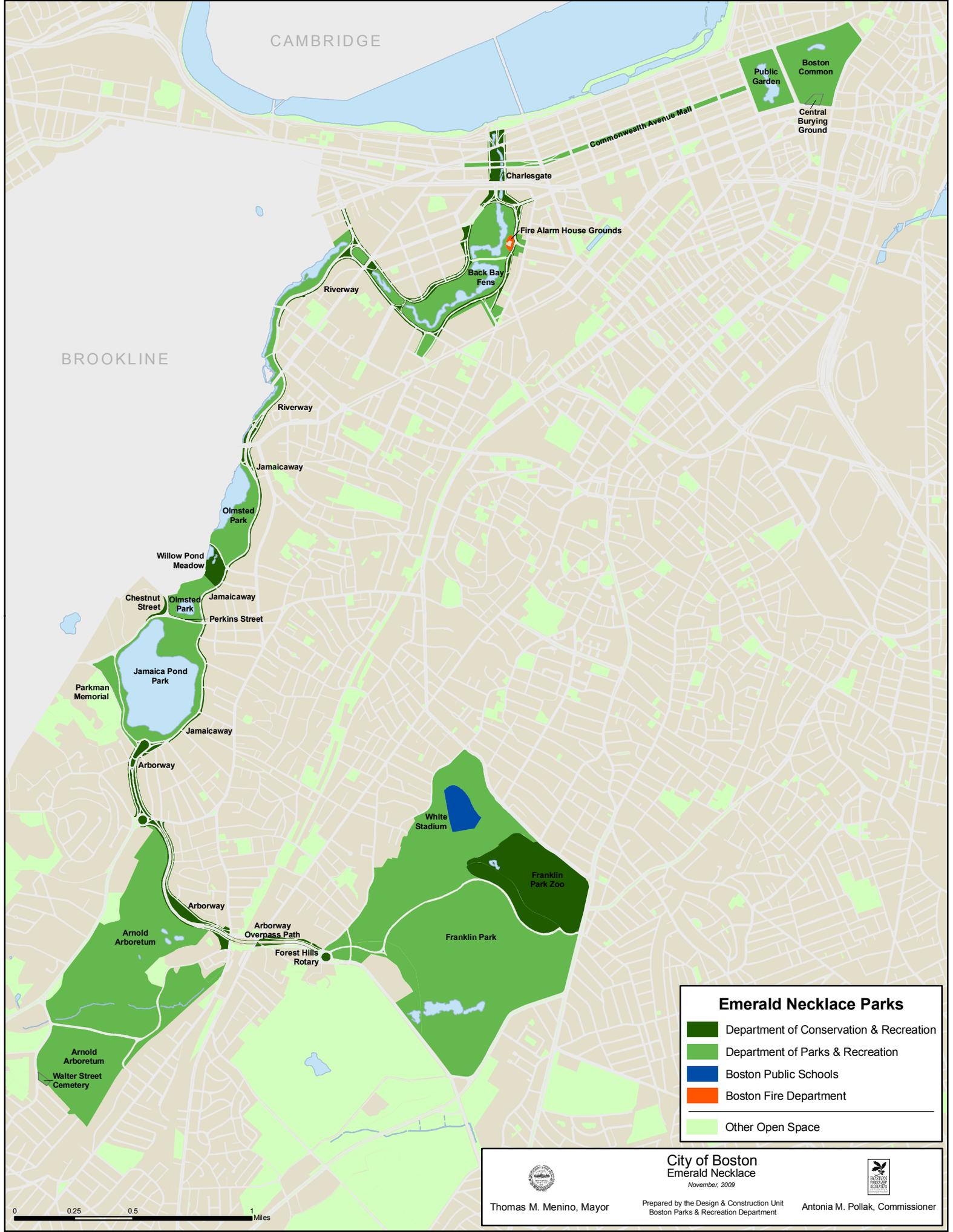
OVERVIEW

The Emerald Necklace is an internationally renowned 19th century linear park system as well as a nationally significant work of landscape architecture, sanitary engineering, and city planning. Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., the leading landscape architect of the era, created this system to expand the open spaces of Boston Common, the Public Garden, and Commonwealth Avenue Mall into Boston's growing neighborhoods. His vision sought to solve a difficult series of public health and civil engineering problems with verdant scenery that brought "peace and refreshment to the city dweller."

We want a ground to which people may easily go after their day's work is done, and where they may stroll for an hour seeing, hearing and feeling nothing of the bustle and jar of the street. We want, especially, the greatest possible contrast with the restraining and confining conditions which compel us to walk circumspectly, watchfully, jealously, which compel us to look closely upon others without sympathy.

F.L. Olmsted, 1870

Olmsted created a progression of landscapes connecting to the downtown parks that culminated in an extensive "country park." He designed landscapes evocative of New England's natural scenery with carefully composed valleys, meadows, and woodlands. Olmsted restored a tidal marsh in the Back Bay Fens, re-sculpted a river ravine known as the Muddy River, preserved Jamaica Pond, designed the Arnold Arboretum grounds, and transformed farmlands into the poetically inspired Franklin Park. In 1893, Olmsted wrote to his partners John Charles Olmsted and Charles Eliot, "Nothing else compares in importance to us with the Boston work ... I would have you decline any business that would stand in the way of doing the best for Boston all the time."



CAMBRIDGE

BROOKLINE

Public Garden

Boston Common

Central Burying Ground

Commonwealth Avenue Mall

Charlesgate

Fire Alarm House Grounds

Back Bay Fens

Riverway

Riverway

Jamaicaway

Olmsted Park

Willow Pond Meadow

Chestnut Street

Olmsted Park

Jamaicaway

Perkins Street

Parkman Memorial

Jamaica Pond Park

Jamaicaway

Arborway

White Stadium

Franklin Park Zoo

Franklin Park

Arborway

Arborway Overpass Path

Forest Hills Rotary

Arnold Arboretum

Arnold Arboretum

Walter Street Cemetery

Emerald Necklace Parks

- Department of Conservation & Recreation
- Department of Parks & Recreation
- Boston Public Schools
- Boston Fire Department
- Other Open Space

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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The over 1,000 acres of the Emerald Necklace represent a model park system inspired by the civic-mindedness of the late 19th century. At that time, the concept of public parks took hold in American cities to provide healthful relief from urbanization and the associated pollution, noise, and overcrowding. The Necklace gave the pedestrian, equestrian, or carriage rider an hour's or a day's recreation without leaving Boston. Age, natural selection, and successive changes in landscape fashions and levels of care have diminished Olmsted's rich composition of plants. However, these Olmsted-designed parks continue to offer scenic enjoyment, a wildlife habitat in the midst of a highly urbanized region, as well as storm water management in the Muddy River basin.

The Emerald Necklace directly serves eight of Boston's neighborhoods with numerous and varied places for quiet contemplation, enjoyment of scenery, and active play – regardless of a park user's recreational interest, economic status, or cultural identity. These places provide the settings for families and individuals to walk, run, bicycle, play ball, birdwatch, use tot lots, picnic, golf, cross country ski, fish, skate, toss a frisbee, fly a kite, rent a boat, or just sit. For Greater Boston, the Necklace is an important regional recreational destination for everything from fund-raising walks and the Franklin Park Zoo to the Boston Common holiday tree-lighting ceremony and collegiate cross-country running races.

All parks (including parkways) within the Necklace are designated Boston Landmarks with the exception of Arnold Arboretum. All are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Boston Common, the Public Garden, and Arnold Arboretum are additionally designated as National Historic Landmarks, the highest tier of the National Register.

Comprehensive Planning

The Emerald Necklace includes Boston's oldest park, its largest park, its most heavily-used parks, its most venerable collection of public woodlands, an early model for an urban sanitary system, and one of the world's most respected arboretum collections. Their protection and ongoing rehabilitation are guided by a collection of master plans. These master plans present an array of recommendations that seek to restore the historic integrity of each park while accommodating contemporary uses.

The genesis of these plans came from organized support for the protection of this park system. The Friends of the Public Garden sought to protect Boston Common from overuse. It could no longer

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be “all things to all people,” and needed a management plan to structure its use. The Massachusetts Association of Olmsted Parks (now incorporated into Preservation Massachusetts) championed the Olmsted firm’s role in planning and design for 280 municipal public parks statewide, which resulted in historic park planning and revitalization initiatives.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management (DEM) launched the statewide Olmsted Historic Landscape Preservation Program in 1984. Through this program, Boston participated in two plans: the Franklin Park Master Plan 1990 and the Emerald Necklace Master Plan for Jamaica Pond, Olmsted Park, the Riverway and the Back Bay Fens (final draft completed in 1990, updated and published in 2001). The successor agency to the DEM, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), is currently working on an Arborway Master Plan for the parkway linking Jamaica Pond, the Arnold Arboretum, and Franklin Park.

Other planning documents also contribute to the recommendations recapped in this plan. They are Conceptual Design of Signage for the Boston Common (1986), Design of Signage for Boston’s Emerald Necklace (1990), The Boston Common and Public Garden Utility Report (1990), Boston Common Management Plan (1990, updated 1996), Boston Common Pathway Plan (1991), and Boston Common Tree Planting Master Plan (1998).

Each plan for the Emerald Necklace parks has synthesized historic information, current activities, and input from extensive community processes. The result is a series of master plans that provide a flexible framework for action. At any time new information can be factored in and considered with each master plan’s guiding principles and recommendations. For elements such as planting, fencing, lighting, statuary, paths, furnishings, signs, and structures, there are clear directives based upon historic documents, design precedents, and preservation guidelines. Over the next five years as projects are identified, staff will assess needs, analyze existing conditions, and seek community input during the process that leads to final project design.

Recent Capital Investments

Over the past five years, the marked improvement of general conditions in the Necklace has been attributable to Boston’s Capital Improvement Program. The City of Boston has been able to proceed with capital investments using multiple resources, such as monies administered by the Office of Budget Management and the Trust Office. In 1999, the Parks Department began a planning

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process to develop a scope of work for the rehabilitation of the Muddy River in collaboration with the Town of Brookline, Boston Water and Sewer Commission, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Parks Department maintenance efforts, safety and security enforcement, and increased programming protect the capital investments and help ensure continued support for the parks. This work is supported by many private sector parties, such as the Emerald Necklace Conservancy (“the Conservancy”).

Emerald Necklace Capital Projects 2001-2006	
Boston Common	\$830,348
Public Garden	\$414,272
Commonwealth Avenue Mall	\$235,743
Back Bay Maintenance Yard	\$171,643
Jamaica Pond Park	\$59,456
Franklin Park	\$220,000
Franklin Park Golf Course	\$1,573,734
Total	\$3,505,195

PRINCIPLES, GOALS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The sections below summarize the recommendations from the various published master plans. For more extensive explanations, please refer to the master plan documents. General principles, goals, and recommendations are listed first, followed by park-specific descriptions and recommendations. These plans guide all Emerald Necklace revitalization efforts. (For further reference to Emerald Necklace recommendations in this document, see the applicable neighborhood chapters.)

General Goals for the Emerald Necklace

Historic Landscape Integrity. Rehabilitate each park’s historic character and features to sustain overall historic integrity while serving contemporary uses.

Unity and Access. Improve connections to make the system more unified and legible as a whole, facilitate use, improve public safety, and increase appreciation. Examples include better bicycle path routing and signage, pedestrian signals and curb cuts, and continued implementation of the systemwide sign program.

Awareness and Education. Foster interpretive and educational programs and continue to strengthen Ranger presence in all Emerald Necklace parks. Foster increased programming to reach

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children and adults, residents and visitors. Coordinate interpretive efforts by all groups to assure fullest possible coverage without duplication of services.

Safety and Security. Continue to work closely with the Boston Police and community groups to address and avoid problems. Exercise the limited enforcement powers of the Boston Park Rangers to create an atmosphere of security and safety in the Emerald Necklace.

Trees. Provide improved care for all trees. Develop and implement planting plans and tree care standards (draft plans for the Olmsted and Franklin Park woodlands have been developed by friends groups with support from the state). Coordinate the efforts of agencies, community groups, and potential donors to ensure that all new trees receive adequate maintenance.

Shrub Plantings. Replant Olmsted-inspired shrub beds in specific areas to regain lost scenic artistry conveyed by their variety, textures, and colors. Use plantings to combat problems such as desire paths that cause soil compaction and erosion. Adapt plant materials as needed to address security, environmental, maintenance, and wildlife management factors.

Woodlands. Develop a computerized woodlands inventory and protocol. Develop a regeneration plan to improve the woodland ecology. Develop a specific plan for the woolly adelgid infestation of the Hemlock population. (See Trees, above.)

Wildlife Management. Protect wildlife habitats when making decisions regarding rehabilitation efforts. Strive to enhance nesting and feeding areas.

Water Quality. Advocate for, support, and participate in efforts to improve water quality in Scarborough Pond and the Muddy River from Ward's Pond to the Charles River. Follow master plan guidelines regarding bank stabilization, replanting, and perimeter paths. (Please refer to the Muddy River section of this chapter.)

Infrastructure. Rehabilitate water, drainage, electrical, road, and path systems as needed, observing applicable city, state, and federal regulations along with current planning guidelines. Maintain fountains, lights, paving, and other elements for public safety and protection of capital investments.

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Structures. Rehabilitate walls, bridges, shelters, buildings, terraces, and other structural features that contribute to the design of the parks to the maximum extent feasible. Replace intrusive structures that have necessary functions with structures of more suitable design.

Existing Art Work and Memorials. Maintain existing public art and memorials in accordance with the jurisdiction of other City agencies. Encourage ongoing efforts by the City's Adopt-a-Statue Program. Continue the moratorium on new artwork and memorials in Boston Common and the Public Garden.

Memorials and Gifts. Avoid the proliferation of non-contextual memorials and artwork. Encourage contributions to Parks Department planned or approved projects on a case-by-case basis such as tree planting, furnishings and fence rehabilitation or installation, conservation of shelters, bridges, fountains, statuary, and other park elements, and sign system implementation. Encourage proponents to meet with the Parks Department for guidance early on in planning for any proposed memorials or gifts to parks. Coordinate through the Parks Department the review of proposed gifts and memorials in accordance with the jurisdiction of other City agencies, primarily the Art and Landmarks Commissions.

Intrusive Elements. Remove or mitigate the effects of structures, buildings, furnishings, or features that conflict with the visual character of Emerald Necklace parks or which compromise the protection and preservation of these parks.

Fundraising and Collaborative Efforts. Continue efforts to secure outside funds given the special needs of Emerald Necklace parks and government fiscal limitations. Support the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and other advocacy organizations in their collaborative and fundraising efforts. Support the Conservancy's Emerald Necklace endowment fund named for the late Park Commissioner Justine Mee Liff. Use City funds to leverage outside giving. Foster partnerships and collaborations to support maintenance, capital, and programming projects for preservation and revitalization.

Maintenance. Continue to ensure a high level of maintenance to meet the high demands and historic significance of Emerald Necklace parks. Continue to upgrade equipment and increase human resources. Further develop partnerships that provide extraordinary care.

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Project Review and Approvals. All capital projects shall undergo community review led by the Parks Department. Secure all other applicable city, state, and federal review and approvals. Meet with Parks Department staff at the early planning stage for any project not initiated by the Parks Department, which will directly affect Emerald Necklace parks and for any development, building, or improvement project proposed within 100 feet of Emerald Necklace parkland. Provide direction and oversight for the planning and design of outside projects through Parks Department staff.

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PARK-SPECIFIC DESCRIPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Boston Common was formed in 1634 to provide pasturage and other shared needs for the town, based upon the English concept of common land. As the country's oldest public open space, Boston Common reflects events important to the history of the city and nation. Since Revolutionary times, the Common has been the city's favorite outdoor place for public assembly.

By 1830 the town had become a city, the sophisticated State House looked down upon a Common bordered by rows of trees, and cows were banned by municipal decree. Throughout the 19th century and into the early 20th century, Boston Common gained paved walks, statues, memorials, and ornamental fences, becoming an urban park in form as well as function. Today the five-sided, 48-acre Common is admired as much for its landscape features of mature shade trees and rolling lawns as for its historic structures, artwork, and Frog Pond.

While serving as Boston's front lawn to all visitors, the Common is also the favored location for large outdoor gatherings and a neighborhood park for downtown, Chinatown, Bay Village, Beacon Hill, and the Back Bay. Active recreation facilities consist of two tennis courts, a softball field, a Little League field, a children's play area, as well as a summer water spray pool and winter ice-skating rink at the Frog Pond.

The Visitor Information Center (VIC) at the head of the Freedom Trail is the most heavily-used tourist inquiry facility in New England. Completed in 1994 the combined Visitor Information Center and Ranger Station successfully integrate information and safety concerns under one roof. This project involved the relocation of the Ranger Station building and its rehabilitation, construction of a rear addition, demolition of the old VIC, and design of a new MBTA Freedom Trail exit. The restoration of the Parkman Bandstand in 1997 created another venue for music and theatrical performances in the Common.

The renovation of the Frog Pond and construction of the Pavilion in 1997 created a four-season amenity. This \$4 million renovation has allowed for wading in the summer, skating in the winter, and a reflecting pool in the spring and fall.

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) rebuilt the underground garage head houses and revitalized the Parade Ground in 1996. In addition, the MCCA funded the installation of

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the perimeter fence along Charles Street in 1997. The MCCA also funded the completion of the Charles Street fence that included the restoration of the pedestrian gate at the corner of Boylston Street. The Millennium Group has funded improvements to the Tremont Street edge, from Boylston Street to Avery Street.

The City is engaged in a major turf restoration program for the Parade Ground, and is setting priorities for path and edge restoration.

In addition, pathway rehabilitation continues in the Common with the Oliver Wendell Holmes path, following recommendations made in the Boston Common Pathway Plan (1991). Further enhancing Boston's "front lawn," the Shaw Memorial and World War I Steps were cleaned and restored in 1998. Light Boston installed new lighting for Brewer Fountain in 2001. The full restoration and repair of this fountain will be supported by a Save America's Treasures grant awarded in 2006.

RECOMMENDATIONS

All policies, projects, and programs for the Common will continue to recognize the need to preserve it as the primary green oasis in downtown Boston, protecting against incursions or degradation to its environment of shade trees and expansive lawns.

- Concentrate on trees and turf as well as general cleanliness, recognizing that the Common receives exceedingly high use and stress.
- Make general water, drainage, and path systems rehabilitation a priority to be implemented both as independent projects and as opportunities are presented by other projects that will disrupt the Common, such as the reconstruction of the underground garage, and the rehabilitation of Tremont Street.
- Continue partnership efforts with the Friends of the Public Garden and other involved agencies such as the MBTA and the Boston Landmarks Commission, as well as with neighbors and developers.

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The Public Garden is the oldest public botanical garden in the United States and the formal, passive recreation companion to Boston Common. These side-by-side parks together serve as a major green oasis in central Boston.

When the Public Garden was established in 1837, the site was marshland at the foot of the Common and the water's edge of the Back Bay. When the land was filled in, the Public Garden's design evolved from a plan by George Meacham published in 1859. The picturesque style of the 25-acre park centers on the central lagoon with its signature bridge and willow trees, as well as surrounding specimen trees, serpentine paths, ornamental fountains, sculpture, Swan Boats, and planting beds.

The City and the Friends of the Public Garden have conducted projects to preserve and enhance the Public Garden since 1993. They include dredging the lagoon, new signs, more ornamental planting beds at entrances and along edges, the revitalization of lawns, and tree pruning. The Japanese Lantern was restored and installed on a new base in 1993 with the helpful donation of private funds. In addition, the Lagoon Bridge was restored and the perimeter fence was repainted. The Browne Fund contributed to the design and implementation of two custom drinking fountains. The Ether Monument and the very popular George Washington statue were restored in 2005-2006. An endowment fund has been created for the upkeep of the Ether Monument. The Ether's lighting has been installed and the lighting for the George Washington and George Robert White statues is underway.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The essential style and character of the Public Garden shall be preserved and reinforced through capital projects, maintenance activities, and administrative policies.

- Make a high priority repairs to the tool shed, fountain restorations, and additional sign installation. Continue Boston Landmarks Commission and Art Commission (if applicable) review of proposed improvements to ensure that the historic character of the Public Garden is maintained. Continue Parks Department review of projects proposed by others.
- Continue to address needs and implement recommendations set forth in the Boston Common and Garden Utility Plan (1990) through a capital program, such as upgrading the water supply system, improving drainage, and retrofitting fountains to recirculate water.

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- Continue the Parks Department's above-standard level of horticultural and general maintenance for this public botanical garden. Continue supplemental care via partnerships, such as with the Friends of the Public Garden and Heritage on the Common.

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Commonwealth Avenue Mall was built by advancing westward from the Arlington Street edge of the Public Garden from 1856 to 1888. As the Back Bay was filled in, Commonwealth Avenue became its spine. The design for Boston's version of a grand Parisian boulevard is credited to Arthur Gilman, with contributions by others including Frederick Law Olmsted.

These 32 acres stretch from Arlington Street to the MBTA subway and bus terminal at Kenmore Square, interrupted by the Massachusetts Avenue underpass, the Muddy River, and the highway overpass at Charlesgate. Many of the Mall's elms have died from Dutch Elm Disease. To avoid future vulnerability to any single species, the elms have been replaced with a variety of trees. The central path features memorial statuary. Recent projects by the City and its partnership with the Commonwealth Avenue Mall Committee (an active subsidiary of the Friends of the Public Garden) include tree care and replanting, new signs and fences, statue lighting, and the lighting of the Vendome Memorial funded by the Fire Department's memorial fund. Seeding, fertilization, and a new irrigation system for the lawns were installed in 2001. Since 1999, the Department has instituted holiday lighting of the trees on Commonwealth Avenue Mall through private donations. The Women's Memorial was installed in 2003.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parks Department will continue its partnership with the Commonwealth Avenue Mall Committee and neighbors to pursue funding and complete ongoing projects.

- Complete the tree replacement plan. Maintain established trees through institutionalized care such as cyclical pruning and inoculation of elms. Continue to provide extraordinary care for trees and bedded plants through the Commonwealth Avenue Mall Committee.
- Complete lighting for the other remaining memorial statuary as lighting designs are approved.
- Install ornamental fences on Fairfield and Gloucester Streets consistent with the fencing on the cross streets from Arlington to Dartmouth.

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The Muddy River, the 3.5-mile spine of the Emerald Necklace, is an historic urban waterway. Its brooks, glades, dells, sweeping vistas, reflecting pools, and ponds are an integrated composition of civil engineering and landscape art.

Flood damage in 1996 and 1998 brought civic leaders, politicians, and community groups together to collectively re-examine the condition of this natural treasure and its importance to the metropolitan area. The result: the City of Boston and the Town of Brookline are working with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the US Army Corps of Engineers to restore the Muddy River's civil engineering functions, flood-carrying capacity, historic landscape integrity, bucolic scenery, and ecological vitality. The Muddy River rehabilitation project will significantly reduce flood impacts while improving wildlife habitat and the historic landscape of these water-oriented parks. Boston and Brookline envision that the public funds invested in this project will inspire and attract additional private monies for future historic landscape rehabilitation projects, which will ultimately lead to the completion of the Emerald Necklace rehabilitation. The two municipalities have created a collaborative process with the public and the 29 member Citizens Advisory Committee established by the Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs. The project's MEPA review was completed in 2003. The project is now being designed by the Corps.

Challenging problems face this national historic resource. Moderately heavy rains activate emergency measures to combat and clean stormwater back-ups in Fenway/ Longwood-area colleges, universities, and medical institutions, and numerous Brookline businesses and residences. Over five acres of mature Phragmites (tall invasive reeds) choke the river and diminish its flood-carrying capacity. The weeds have displaced other plant species, keeping the ecology out of balance, undermining biodiversity, and obstructing historic landscape rehabilitation. Contaminants in the river sediment continue to degrade water quality as the sediments get re-suspended into the water, limiting the number of vertebrate and invertebrate species that could contribute to a balanced ecology.

One hundred years ago, Frederick Law Olmsted believed that nature could restore the human mind and spirit. He conceived the unique urban landscape called the Emerald Necklace to bring a natural regenerative experience to city dwellers. Like their 19th century predecessors, today's civic leaders and citizens must commit to stewardship for future generations and sustain a legacy worthy of Olmsted and his peers.

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The vision for this project is far-reaching: rehabilitation of the Muddy River will protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens, re-establish the Olmsted scenery to approach its former glory, and reinvigorate the overall park experience. The municipalities are committed to exploring new and innovative ways to maintain the parks in perpetuity, and protect and preserve the public sector's investment. The park owners (Boston, Brookline, and the DCR), the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, and the Muddy River Maintenance Management and Oversight Committee have signed a landmark agreement to create a five-member cabinet that will ensure the long-term maintenance of the completed project. Boston and Brookline will aggressively pursue partnerships with private industry and cultural institutions, and examine organizational models that could inform park maintenance and management practices. The project exemplifies a renewed appreciation of the Emerald Necklace and the reinforced political will to commit to the rehabilitation of this world-class park system.

The goals of the Muddy River Rehabilitation Project are:

- Improve flood control;
- Improve water quality;
- Enhance aquatic/riparian habitat;
- Rehabilitate the historic landscape and other resources; and
- Implement Best Management Practices (BMPs)

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The Back Bay Fens dates from 1879, and is the first of the five properties Frederick Law Olmsted designed and built to create a linear system of pastoral parks in Boston. Here the Muddy River originally met the Charles River in a salt marsh.

Of Olmsted's Emerald Necklace parks, the Fens is the most changed and one of the most active. Meadows and lawns replaced marsh after the Charles River was dammed in 1910. Without tidal action the shallow pools have become stagnant. The present Arthur Shurtleff design has been overlaid on Olmsted's, and is more groomed and formal than was the original. It features the popular Kelleher Rose Garden, the World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Memorials, and the Roberto Clemente Field athletic stadium. The Henry Hobson Richardson-designed Boylston Street Bridge is the most dramatic of all the stone bridges in the Necklace. It is now obscured from the Charles River side due to the addition of the Bowker Overpass ramp from Storrow Drive.

The Fens provides essential neighborhood parkland for the Fenway, Kenmore, and Longwood areas, and serves as the "front lawn" for several of the city's venerable cultural institutions, including the Museum of Fine Arts and the Gardner Museum. It also includes the Richard Parker Memorial Victory Garden, Boston's oldest community garden. In 1998, the reconstruction of the Mother's Rest Playlot was completed, serving neighborhood children and offering a setting for small concerts. Reconstruction of the basketball courts was also completed in 1998.

Recent BWSC improvements to the Stony Brook as part of a sewer separation project to reduce CSO discharges to the Fens resulted in an award-winning historic restoration of the two H. H. Richardson-designed Fens Gatehouses along the Fenway side of the park.

The derelict Clemente Field House was replaced with a smaller structure that is less intrusive in the landscape.

In 2007, at the request of the Parks Department, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy established a volunteer Rose Garden Advisory Committee to work on the Kelleher Rose Garden's rehabilitation. This work will be completed in 2008. In 2006 as part of its ongoing research into best practices for handling invasive plant species, the Conservancy, the Parks Department, and the Army Corps of Engineers worked on test plots for the eradication of Phragmites and Japanese knotweed.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Boston Parks Department will continue to manage competing uses for active and passive recreation while preserving the Fens.

- Improve the watercourse and adjacent landscape through the Muddy River Rehabilitation Project.
- Upgrade existing sports facilities, particularly Clemente Field.
- Designate quiet/passive recreation areas.
- Implement the Linking the Corridors Project in the Back Bay Fens to improve pedestrian paths and transform the former bridle path into a multi-use path for bicycle and non-bicycle users.
- Continue the partnership agreement with the Fenway Alliance and Fenway Garden Society.
- Support the work of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, especially its effort to create a visitor center in the Back Bay Fens' Gate House No. 2.

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The Riverway, established in 1890, begins at Brookline Avenue, Park Drive, and the Fenway parkway, on land that was formerly the Sears parking lot, just west of the Fens. From the Park Drive/Riverway intersection southward to Route 9, the Muddy River is open and flows through a gentle ravine. Steep wooded banks insulate the park from the city. The Riverway offers one of the most idyllic and best-preserved experiences of Frederick Law Olmsted's designs. Three stone bridges span the water and the boundary between Boston and Brookline. The Riverway is popular with walkers, birders, bicyclists, and people seeking a contemplative refuge. Neighbors from the Audubon Circle, Fenway, Longwood, and Mission Hill areas and Brookline use this park.

Four City of Boston projects have enhanced the appearance of the Riverway. The four stone bridges and the attendant landscape were rehabilitated in 1998 with the collaboration of the Town of Brookline and through funding from the DEM Historic Landscape Preservation Program. The two other projects were the restoration of the Back Bay Maintenance Yard and the reconstruction of the pathways on the Boston side of the park. A fourth project, undertaken jointly with Brookline, was the repointing of the historic Netherlands Road Bridge.

In addition, the Sears Company returned the Sears parking lot (the infamous "Missing Link") to the City and replaced it with lawn and trees as part of the redevelopment of the Sears Building at Park Drive and Brookline Avenue (now the Landmark Center). This section as well as the area upstream of Louis Pasteur Avenue (in the Fens) will be daylighted as part of the Muddy River Rehabilitation Project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parks Department will continue structural rehabilitation and replanting to fully reinstate the scenic glory of the Riverway.

- Foster joint projects between Boston and Brookline to implement preservation projects.
- Restore the former Sears parking lot to the vision in the master plan that emulates the original Olmsted plan. Re-create the open waterway as part of the Muddy River Rehabilitation Project.
- Improve the watercourse and adjacent landscape through the Muddy River Rehabilitation Project.

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Olmsted Park, originally named Leverett Park, was established in 1891 at the upper end of the Muddy River as a succession of ponds set in woodlands. This is especially true from Perkins Street, where the deep-set basin of Ward's Pond is nestled in a wooded bowl, to Willow Pond Road, the northern terminus of a section of rolling wooded terrain laced with a series of small ponds and streams. Leverett Pond, the park's largest body of water, shapes the more open north end of the park which abuts Route 9.

The water system demarcates the Boston-Brookline boundary. The idyllic woods, ponds, and streams are interrupted at Willow Pond Road by the two very heavily-used ball diamonds at Daisy Field. Olmsted Park retains several original stone pedestrian bridges and a stone headwall at Leverett Pond. The Route 9/Huntington Avenue overpass, separating Olmsted Park and the Riverway, was built in the 1930s. Olmsted Park is a very popular neighborhood open space resource for Mission Hill and Jamaica Plain, as well as Brookline.

In 1998 a wooden boardwalk was added to one edge of Ward's Pond allowing the public greater access to this "hidden jewel."

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parks Department will focus its rehabilitation efforts on woodland management and the restoration of Ward's Pond and other park water bodies.

- Adopt and implement the Olmsted Park Woodlands Plan developed by the Emerald Necklace conservancy in partnership with the Parks Department and Brookline Parks and Open Space.
- Correct drainage at Daisy Field to improve conditions at Leverett Pond.
- Begin water quality improvements at Ward's Pond, the upstream end of the Muddy River, as part of the Muddy River Rehabilitation Project (MRRP; please see the Muddy River section above). Continue improvements to the watercourse from Ward's Pond to Leverett Pond through the MRRP.
- Further improve the Ward's Pond landscape. Build upon the cleaning efforts made by the Longwood Treatment Center and the Appalachian Mountain Club crews. Restore understory plantings. Restore the pedestrian path all around the water's edge.
- Advocate for the water resource improvements of Leverett Pond as part of the MRRP (please see the Muddy River section above).

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- Support the master plan efforts by the DCR and the Conservancy to manage the state-owned former Kelly Rink site as a meadow.

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Jamaica Pond Park, situated between Perkins Street and the Arborway, was established in 1892. This 50-foot deep pond is the source of the Muddy River. From a formal entrance at Pond Street with a boat house and bandstand (circa 1915), the vista presents a green-fringed blue water sheet against tree-covered Hellenic Hill. Olmsted did little to change the landscape.

Jamaica Pond is one of the city's most heavily-used neighborhood parks. Visitors come from Boston, Brookline, and other communities in the metropolitan area. Runners, bicyclists, and walkers circle the 1.4-mile perimeter of the pond. Sailboats and rowboats are available for rent at the Boathouse, which also has a snack concession.

Major capital investment at Jamaica Pond in the past ten years has rehabilitated the Boathouse and Bandstand, repaired the water leveling mechanism, stabilized and replanted about half of the water's edge, and rehabilitated half of the perimeter path. A bicycle and running path was built on the former bridle path parallel to the Jamaica way, to help mitigate competing uses. The Connecting Jamaica Pond project was completed in 2001 with the support of \$1.2 million in federal and state ISTEA funds. The project included the remaining perimeter path rehabilitation and the installation of riprap along the pond edge to deter erosion. The project completed the rehabilitation of the pond edge by the planting of lawn, more than 116 trees, and over 5,000 shrub and groundcover plants. Connecting Jamaica Pond also installed a bike lane along Perkins Street to advance the master plan recommendation to increase connectivity between Olmsted Park and Jamaica Pond Park. Another project feature was the installation of a grit particle separator, a storm water pollution control device to further improve the water quality of Jamaica Pond. A separate DEM Historic Landscape Preservation Program grant funded the planting of the Pinebank slope in an effort to reduce the amount of sediment entering Jamaica Pond.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parks Department must continue to carefully protect this park and its surroundings to balance heavy user demands with the preservation of historic features and natural systems.

- Provide extraordinary maintenance for the landscape, including the new water's edge plantings, through the Parkman Fund and park partners.
- Continue programming with community participation. Emphasize activities singularly suited to Jamaica Pond such as

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- gatherings at the bandstand and the current environmental education and boating programs.
- Work with the owners and the community to preserve Hellenic Hill, an urban wild and an essential component of the scenery and ecosystem of Jamaica Pond.

Analysis of Needs

The Arnold Arboretum was established in 1872. Located south of Jamaica Pond, the Arboretum is managed by Harvard University under a 999-year lease with the City of Boston, thus establishing a longstanding partnership. Within its 273 acres, the landscape's informal character provides a country park experience, including dramatic views from atop Bussey Hill and Peters Hill. The artful and studious planting of the Arboretum collection results from the collaboration between Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles Sprague Sargent. The legacy of earlier estate owners is retained by name in such features as the Walter Street Burying Ground, Bussey Brook, and Weld Street.

The Arboretum is bordered by the neighborhoods of Jamaica Plain, Roslindale, and West Roxbury. Known worldwide for its scientific collection of trees and shrubs, it also serves as a favorite regional and neighborhood passive park. In 1996, the Arboretum was increased by 24 acres, thanks to the addition of a parcel known as the South Street Tract, and an ISTE A grant was secured to implement a pathway through the Tract, connecting the Forest Hills MBTA subway station and the Arboretum's South Street gate. The pathway and gate improvements were completed in the spring of 2002.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parks Department encourages ongoing collaboration between the staffs of the Arboretum and the Department.

- Continue to rehabilitate pathways, roads, walls, and other infrastructure components with input from the Arnold Arboretum staff.
- Support the opportunity to interpret the South Street Tract as an urban wild.
- Monitor the Institutional Master Plan revision to insure that future developments are consistent with the intent of the partnership with the Parks Department.

Analysis of Needs

Franklin Park accounts for more than half of the land area of the Emerald Necklace park system and approximately one-quarter of the total parkland owned by the City of Boston. Landscape historians and designers have hailed it as one of the finest public parks ever built. Franklin Park's design dates from 1885. Its 484 acres, arranged in a diamond shape, are set among the neighborhoods of Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Roslindale, Mattapan, and Dorchester. A century after its creation, Franklin Park is still a much-needed refuge from the city. It suffered a severe decline in the 1960s and 1970s, but is now significantly rehabilitated and well visited. With its Country Meadow, 65-acre Wilderness woodland area, and peaceful Scarborough Pond, the park still magically suggests a rural retreat. There are picturesque ruins of a shelter and terrace on Schoolmaster Hill above the meadow and the remains of the Playstead Overlook Shelter.

Designed as the active part of the park, the Playstead has versatile, popular playing fields and the newly-refurbished White Stadium. The revitalized Franklin Park Zoo, managed by Zoo New England, and the William Devine Municipal Golf Course (in the meadow) bring 40,000 visitors annually. In 1998, the City completed a new golf course clubhouse that was inspired by the Olmsted-designed Playstead Overlook Shelter.

Because it accounts for approximately one-quarter of the City of Boston's parkland, its maintenance and capital improvement needs continue to be substantial, particularly because a significant amount of the park's vegetation, structures, and infrastructure is a century old. Franklin Park has seen significant improvements: the children's play areas at Walnut Street and Humboldt Avenue entrances have been rehabilitated thanks in part to a federal urban recreation grant; the Schoolmaster Hill ruin has been stabilized; and a Woodlands Program has been initiated to focus on rehabilitating the forest areas of Franklin Park and the other Emerald Necklace parks. The Department is now engaged in the development of a transportation access plan for the park, as well as a comprehensive assessment of walls and masonry structures.

Analysis of Needs

RECOMMENDATIONS

As the largest park in the Parks Department's system and an internationally recognized historic landscape design achievement, Franklin Park poses many challenges today. Neighborhood and active park user needs must be addressed, while respecting the historic and regional significance of this "country park."

- Increase neighborhood partnerships such as with the Franklin Park Coalition. Coordinate activities with the Zoo, White Stadium, and others.
- Respond where needed to neighborhood needs by rehabilitating ball fields, improving basketball facilities, and providing or retaining picnic tables in suitable locations.
- Provide extraordinary maintenance and management of vegetation. Develop, refine, and implement the Woodlands Management Plan to ensure the future health of the forested area of the park.
- Continue to implement the Franklin Park Maintenance Yard master plan for reorganization and revitalization of the existing yard.
- Oversee preparation of a water quality assessment and treatment plan for Scarborough Pond, funded with state participation. Phase in its implementation.
- Continue coordination with and among agencies and community groups to avoid user conflicts and to assist with maintenance, programming, and fund-raising.