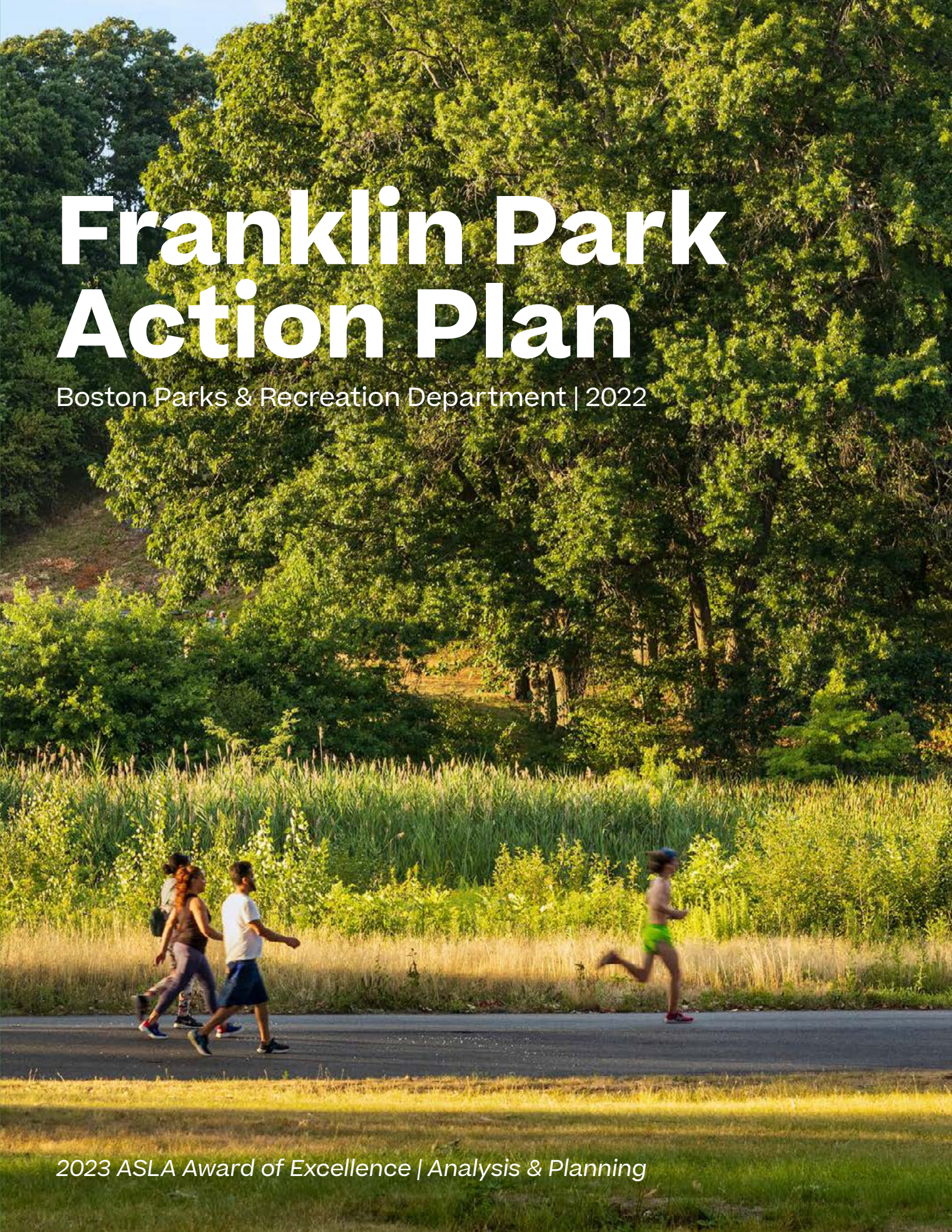

Franklin Park Action Plan

Boston Parks & Recreation Department | 2022

2023 ASLA Award of Excellence | Analysis & Planning

Franklin Park Action Plan

CITY of BOSTON

Parks and Recreation

REED HILDERBRAND Agency MASS.

2022

Boston Parks & Recreation Department

Reverend Mariama White-Hammond, *Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space*

Ryan Woods, *Commissioner*

Reed Hilderbrand

Agency Landscape + Planning

MASS Design Group

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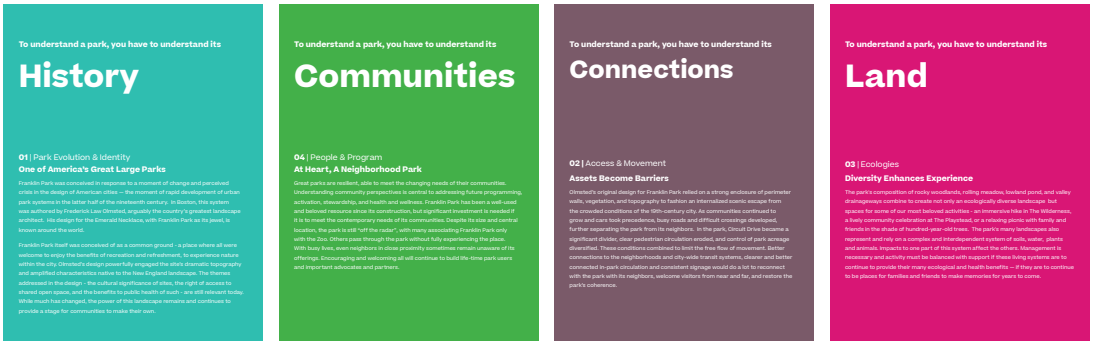
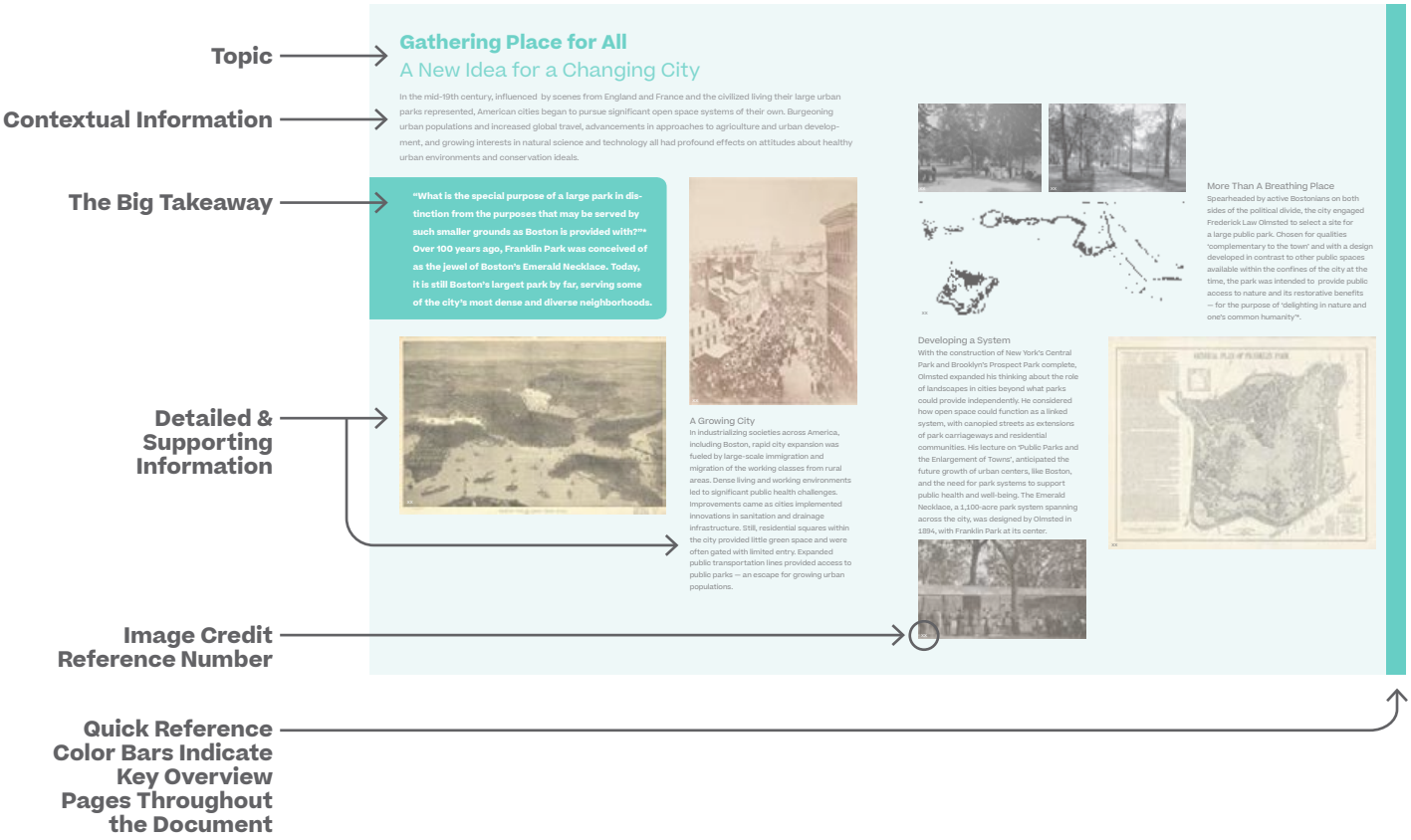
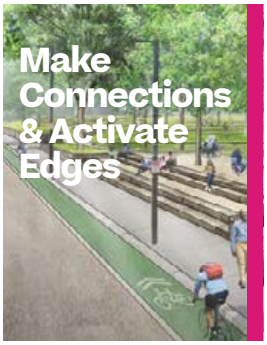


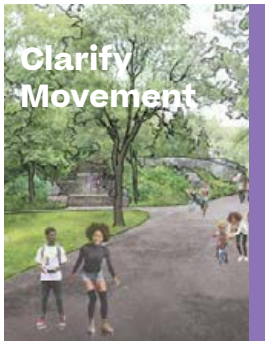
Each spread is set up for a 'quick read' to understand the main idea, or a 'deep dive' for those who want to know more detail:

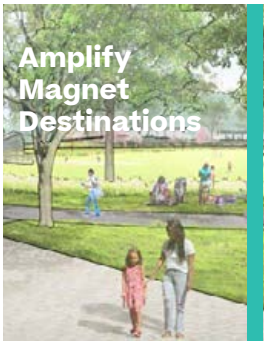


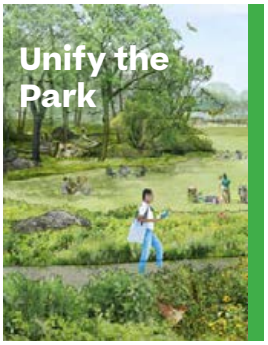
RECOMMENDATIONS

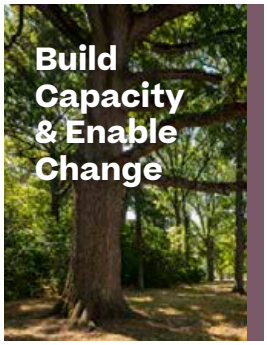
The Action Plan proposals are organized into five primary recommendations chapters:



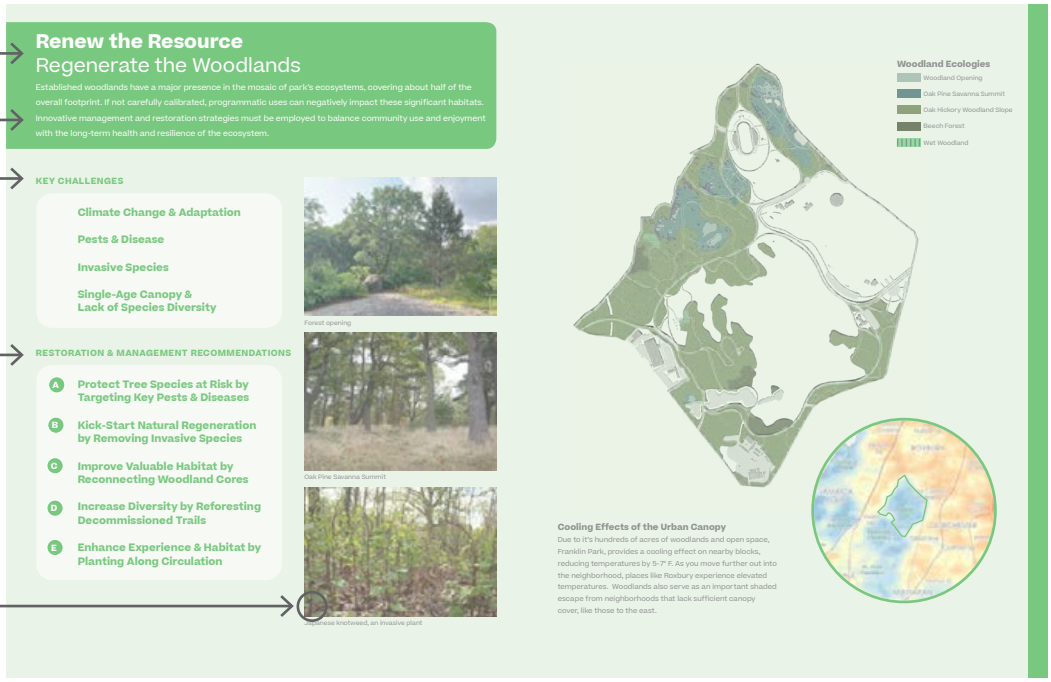








Each chapter is organized by overarching proposals and supporting pages with more detailed recommendations:



City of Boston, Massachusetts

Office of the Mayor

Michelle Wu

Dear Friends,

The Franklin Park Action Plan is the result of a community-based effort coordinated by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Franklin Park Coalition and a design team led by Reed Hilderbrand in collaboration with Agency Landscape + Planning and MASS Design Group.

The Action Plan creates a strategic vision for the future of Franklin Park that advocates for thoughtfully guided, community-driven improvements grounded in a deep understanding of its historic fabric and ecological systems and implemented through ongoing, committed investment so that the park may continue to do what it already does, but better.

To achieve this, the Action Plan's goals are forward-looking and visionary; based on practical and action-oriented recommendations that can be put into practice right away. The park must first and foremost adhere to its founding ideals as realized by Frederick Law Olmsted, which were to connect people with the landscape and to foster experiences of natural phenomena, open space, and outdoor recreation in the belief that doing so elevates daily life, promotes public health, and strengthens civic dialogue.

The Action Plan does not aim to alter the park's purpose, character, or design. Instead, it offers suggestions for the renewed care and ongoing development of this priceless resource using an analysis of the park's history, communities, and ecologies. Its proposals respond to the changes that have taken place over its 120+ year history and seek to meet this moment in time while creating a blueprint for its future.

In service,

Michelle Wu

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston

Environment,
Energy and
Open Space

Hello, neighbor:

As a Roxbury native and the City of Boston's Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space, Franklin Park has been a central place for me throughout my life. From Boston Public Schools athletes to jazz devotees to friends meandering along a walking loop, the park is a space of revelry, respite, and recreation for so many Bostonians. At 527 acres, Franklin Park is our city's largest park accommodating large festivals and protests, and featuring a golf course and the zoo that attracts visitors from all over the city and region.

A vibrant hub of activity in Boston's geographic center, Franklin Park has a legacy of underinvestment. Advocates have been calling for years for improved maintenance, more programming, and large-scale capital improvements. Upgrades to Franklin Park were listed as priorities in Imagine Boston 2030, the City's overarching planning document. $28 million from the sale of a parking garage in downtown Boston was earmarked for upgrades to Franklin Park, representing the largest investment since the park was designed and built in the late 1800s. With this money we're able to abandon the piecemeal approach and make a real difference for the park and the people who love it.

Our goal throughout the process has been to understand past planning efforts, learn what is (and isn't) working in the park, and what park users would like to see in the future. We heard from over 8,000 individuals and reached out to over 150 community-based organizations through flyers in the community, signage in the park, email, direct mail, popup events, community workshops, and one-on-one conversations.

The Franklin Park Action Plan connects the dots between the park's infrastructure, amenities, gathering spaces, active and passive recreational areas, ecology, and the surrounding communities. It's an ambitious plan, spanning a large space, and flexible enough to adapt to our City's needs. The document that follows is just the beginning of the dialogue. We look forward to continuing to work with the community to identify priorities for implementation.

Sincerely,

Rev. Mariama White-Hammond
Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space

CITY of BOSTON

1 CITY HALL SQUARE BOSTON, MA 02201-2021 | ROOM 709 | 617-635-3850 | ENVIRONMENT@BOSTON.GOV

Land Acknowledgment

Franklin Park is sited on the traditional and unceded lands of the indigenous Neponset / Massa-adchu-es-et (Massachusett Tribe). These lands have been, and continue to be, taken and colonized. Despite this, Indigenous peoples have stewarded the land throughout generations, and we dedicate this space to pay respect to them and their Elders past and present and emerging. We acknowledge this history in order to think critically about our place on these lands and to recognize and reject the perpetuation of Indigenous erasure.

Stewardship Acknowledgment

We recognize that Franklin Park has been the beneficiary of decades-long commitment from local activists and community stewards who stepped forward to protect it when government resources were absent. Largely self-organized, these individuals and organizations maintained facilities, managed crime, developed programming, and engaged youth in paid training programs. Their advocacy and stewardship has ensured that Franklin Park continues to reflect and serve the full diversity of its surrounding communities. Their contributions will continue to ground and guide the park and its future.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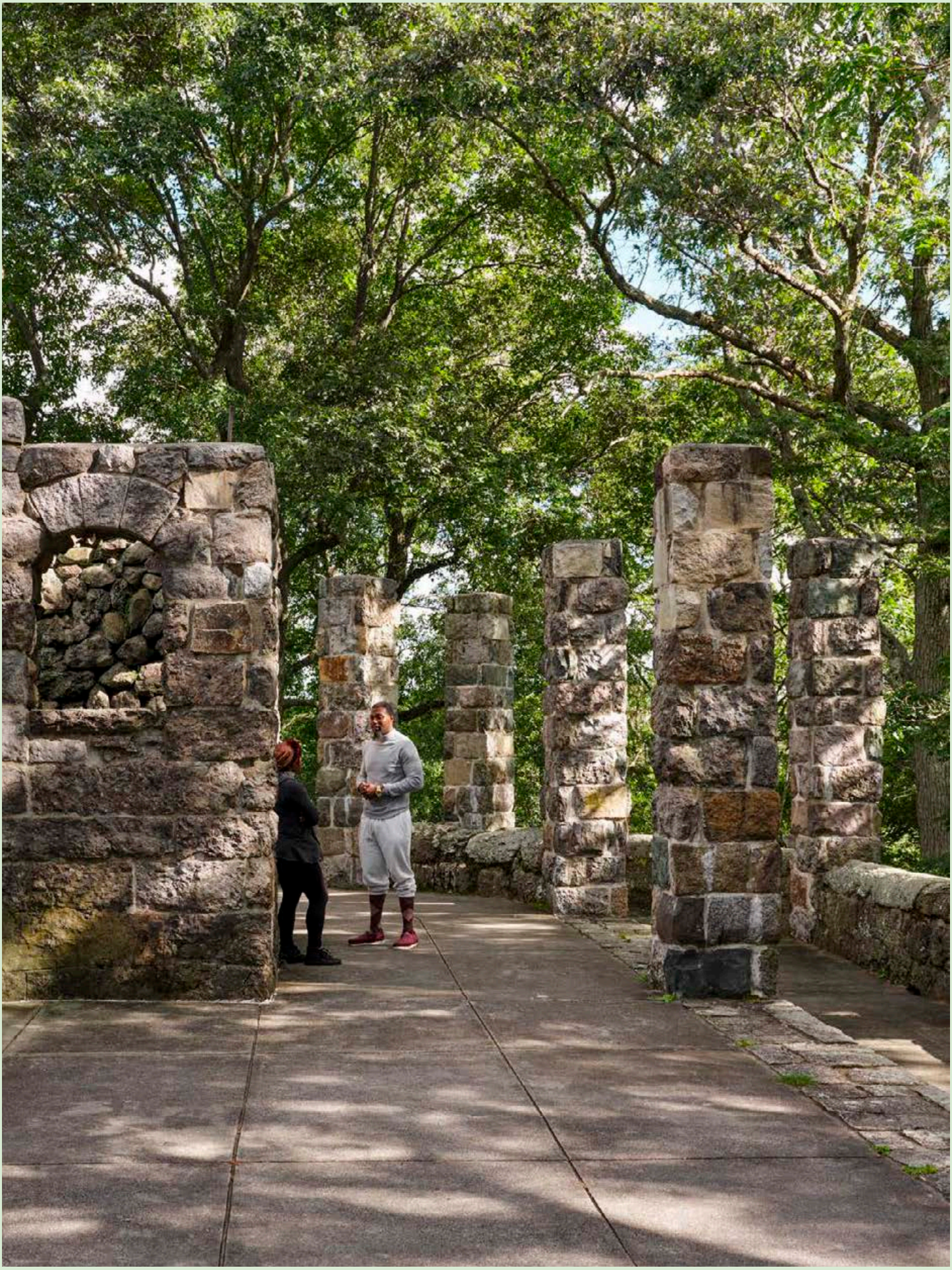


Executive Summary
What is the Action Plan?

INTENT

Franklin Park is deeply loved by the communities it serves.

This Plan does not seek to reinvent the park, to transform its design, character or intent. Instead, it advocates for thoughtfully guided, community-driven improvements that are grounded in a deep understanding of its historic fabric and ecological systems and implemented through continued, dedicated investment so that the park can do what it does now, only better.

The Action Plan recognizes that Franklin Park is a living thing, as are the communities surrounding it. Its proposals respond to the changes that have taken place over its 120+ year history and seek to meet this moment in time. To this end, the Plan aspirations are forward-looking and visionary, but are based in practical and action-oriented recommendations.

First and foremost, the park must return to its original principles: linking people and landscape, and cultivating access to natural open space and outdoor recreation in the belief that this enhances our daily lives, improves public health, and promotes civic discourse.

This report leverages an analysis of the park's history, communities, and land to put forward five primary recommendations for the renewed stewardship and continued evolution of this treasured resource:

Make Connections & Activate Edges

Clarify Movement

Amplify Magnet Destinations

Unify the Park

Build Capacity & Enable Change

BACKGROUND

In 2019, following the recommendation of Imagine Boston 2030 and the opportunity for significant dedicated funding from the sale of the Winthrop Square garage, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department engaged Reed Hilderbrand, in partnership with Agency Landscape + Planning and MASS Design Group, to lead a team of 14 consultants in the creation of the Franklin Park Action Plan – the first comprehensive plan in nearly 30 years.

The Action Plan has been undertaken in a period of great turbulence and uncertainty. Issues of race, equity, public health and a warming climate have quite rightly risen to the top of public discourse and have forced an even more urgent recognition that large parks are not just desirable public amenities but are essential elements of cultural, social, environmental and public health infrastructure foundational to the well-being of our communities. As such, they must be invested in appropriately. The Action Plan recognizes that this investment is even more critical within the communities of color that neighbor the park today.

The recommendations of this plan are the result of years of research and consultation with the community and park stakeholders, including the Franklin Park Coalition and the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, and are built upon a united understanding that Franklin Park is a landmark American public space – a landscape of cultural, social, and ecological significance. The interrelationship of these various dimensions is crucial to envisioning how the park can continue to evolve its legacy and better serve the Boston community.

To that end, the following tenets serve as the basis for the Action Plan proposals:

HISTORY

Great public landscapes are never finished.

They are living things whose cultural (and practical) significance is altered by each generation that engages with them. They require re-evaluation and change to best serve their communities. But that change must be guided by a careful understanding of the history of the place, including its natural, cultural and designed systems.

The most well-known history of the park may be its origin in Frederick Law Olmsted's design. The power of that design (and the extent to which it is still legible today despite long-term disinvestment) should not be underestimated. The choreographed interplay of diverse and dynamic natural systems, the way circulation engages topography, the use

of materials that tie the design and experience of place to the geology of the site and the park's focus on offering visitors a deep connection to a "rural" landscape are all known and valued by the park's users. These elements, and the extent to which they represent the park's "DNA," must be understood and respected. The Action Plan recommendations strive to uncover, recover, and clarify historically significant built elements of this landscape, not just because they are historic, but also because they can serve the contemporary park and its communities and reinforce the characteristics that make this place unique.

However, the evolution of an urban park is inevitable, and with an increasingly diverse community at its edges and a changing city beyond, the park must also remain flexible enough to allow for adaptation including the careful insertion of new uses that make it present and meaningful to those for whom it is a neighborhood resource. As changes are planned, where preservation or restoration is not the goal, the impact to the historic built fabric (and the intent and expression of the original design) should be carefully evaluated and advocated for. New uses should be thoughtfully integrated into the existing patterns of the larger landscape so that they remain deeply rooted in the character of the park and qualities of play, joy, and mental and physical refreshment that the historic design provided.

The history and power of the Olmsted design is, of course, built on many that came before, including hundreds of years of Indigenous habitation with the land and stewardship of its water, plant and animal systems. It is also overwritten by the generations of people who have used, cared for and made memories in the park since it opened. The history of the park and its land is deeply layered and those layers must continue to be carefully considered before change is enacted.

CLIMATE ADAPTATION & HUMAN EXPERIENCE

We are at a pivotal moment in the ecological life of the park; its management and maintenance must improve and adapt or it will not survive as we know it.

Issues of aging infrastructure, decreasing plant diversity and animal habitat, and the pressures of a warming climate threaten this resource. Important components of healthy ecologies have been lost over time, and others are aging without a reliable way to renew. With 8 distinct ecological typologies, the park is a rare urban habitat for both plants and animals. With 527 acres overall and half of that dominated by tree canopy, it is also critical infrastructure for climate change readiness with the power to contribute to both flood

management and water quality benefits and to combat the urban heat island effect.

Again and again, the community has identified that the ability to immerse oneself in a landscape of this size and character, to be in “nature”, as one of the most valued aspects of the park and that investment in improving the ecological systems is a priority. The Action Plan recognizes that management of the park’s ecological resources is not only essential to the longevity and resilience of the park itself, but will allow the park to provide benefits felt far beyond its bounds.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The park is critical public health infrastructure.

The quality of our environment is directly expressed in our mental and physical health. The park encourages activity and exercise, reduces stress and depression, improves physical health outcomes, and fosters a sense of community and belonging.

While the communities around the park are some of the city’s most vibrant and diverse, their residents are disproportionately impacted by factors such as excessive heat and noise, overcrowding, poor air quality and generational trauma. These conditions impact health outcomes, including high rates of chronic illness, asthma, and increased emergency room visits.

Supporting the resilience of the resource is foundational to maintaining its role within all of the communities it serves. Targeting existing conditions that threaten public safety, increasing programming that fosters better physical and mental health outcomes and partnering with community health institutions and advocates are all ways the plan proposes the park can do even more.

EQUITY

The park’s success lies in its diversity and ability to reflect its communities and our cultures. Shared experience and engagement among our communities builds strength and vitality for our civil society.

Once on the periphery of the Shawmut Peninsula, Franklin Park is now the geographic center of the 21st century Boston and serves some of its most demographically, culturally and socioeconomically diverse residents. It is a park for the people and should bring

neighbors together in a place that inspires and engages, educates and enlightens, and welcomes and accepts. It must support recreation, learning, and discovery and foster cultural expression, belonging, and community health.

It is also a cherished resource for neighboring Black and brown communities – a place where everyone feels not just comfortable, but ownership of the park's spaces. Investments must support the continued expression of communities of color and look for opportunities to create a symbiotic relationship between the park and the neighborhoods with investments moving in both directions.

BEAUTY

Olmsted's design for the park engaged and intensified the character of the land and its natural systems. It is still a powerfully felt part of the park's experience today.

Beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, but despite visible impacts of a lack of sufficient care over time, Franklin Park is an objectively beautiful place. Puddingstone outcrops, 100-year old canopy trees, play of light on the water of the pond, long views to big sky – all of these continue to draw visitors.

Landscapes like this are powerful cultural repositories and important ecological and infrastructural performers, but they are also places of wonder and delight that inspire the imagination and tie us to something greater than ourselves. The somewhat rough beauty of the park is a unique expression of place, reflecting the movements of geological and annual time cycles and allowing visitors to access an immersive experience of "nature" within dense neighborhoods. While this plan argues for significantly increased levels of investment, management and maintenance, those efforts should be directed at supporting the park's unique character, including its wild beauty.

GOVERNANCE

Large parks are civic experiments and as such are dynamic partnerships between government and its citizens.

The primary responsibility for the park lies, and should continue to lie, with the City. However, the plan recognizes the City's desire to develop stronger partnerships with advocacy groups and in-park and neighborhood stakeholders – and the opportunity that future investments offer for building them.

Implementation of the plan recommendations can build local capacity to make change, returning value not just to the park, but emanating that value back out to its adjacent communities in real ways. This requires buy-in, advocacy, and coordinated support across City agencies. It requires thinking holistically about the park and the communities that surround it.

The governance of the park is poised to evolve to more fully and powerfully engage community stakeholders to support successful long-term investment in the park. The time for establishing the appropriate governance structures to facilitate this collaboration is now.

(RE)INVESTMENT

Franklin Park has been subject to under-investment for far too long and significant investment is needed now to protect and sustain this critical resource and beloved public space.

The twenty-first century ushered in a new understanding of the ways parks and open spaces provide and create economic value. As a result, much discussion now centers around gentrification and the potential unintended consequences of such value creation.

Seizing on both the great power and responsibility of this knowledge, a broad range of city agencies must take proactive measures to protect and sustain the park's surrounding neighborhoods, and ensure that outcomes of park improvements are mutually-beneficial for existing neighbors. Making a visible commitment to and building trust with the surrounding communities is the most important first step. This risk and responsibility does not however signal a delay in improvements.

The proposals in this document reflect Franklin Park's unique character, its role in the city, and the voices of the community it serves. Engagement throughout the plan development set an important foundation for ongoing conversations. Though more discussion, even debate, is needed before implementation of some recommendations, the proposals are well positioned to both guide investment and inspire stewardship for the next decades of Franklin Park's life.

Franklin Park
Past, Present, Future

OLMSTED'S GENERAL PLAN OF FRANKLIN PARK (1896)

Frederick Law Olmsted designed the Emerald Necklace with Franklin Park as its crown jewel. His immersive park plan centered on an expansive experience of the New England landscape and conceived of Franklin Park as a common ground - a place where all were welcome to enjoy the benefits of recreation and refreshment, to experience nature within the city.

1

FRANKLIN PARK PRESENT (2022)

Incremental changes over time have obscured the reading of original design and split the park into pieces. But many of the important structuring elements and the powerful natural features that led the city to select this site for its first large park remain, ready to be re-revealed.

FRANKLIN PARK FUTURE

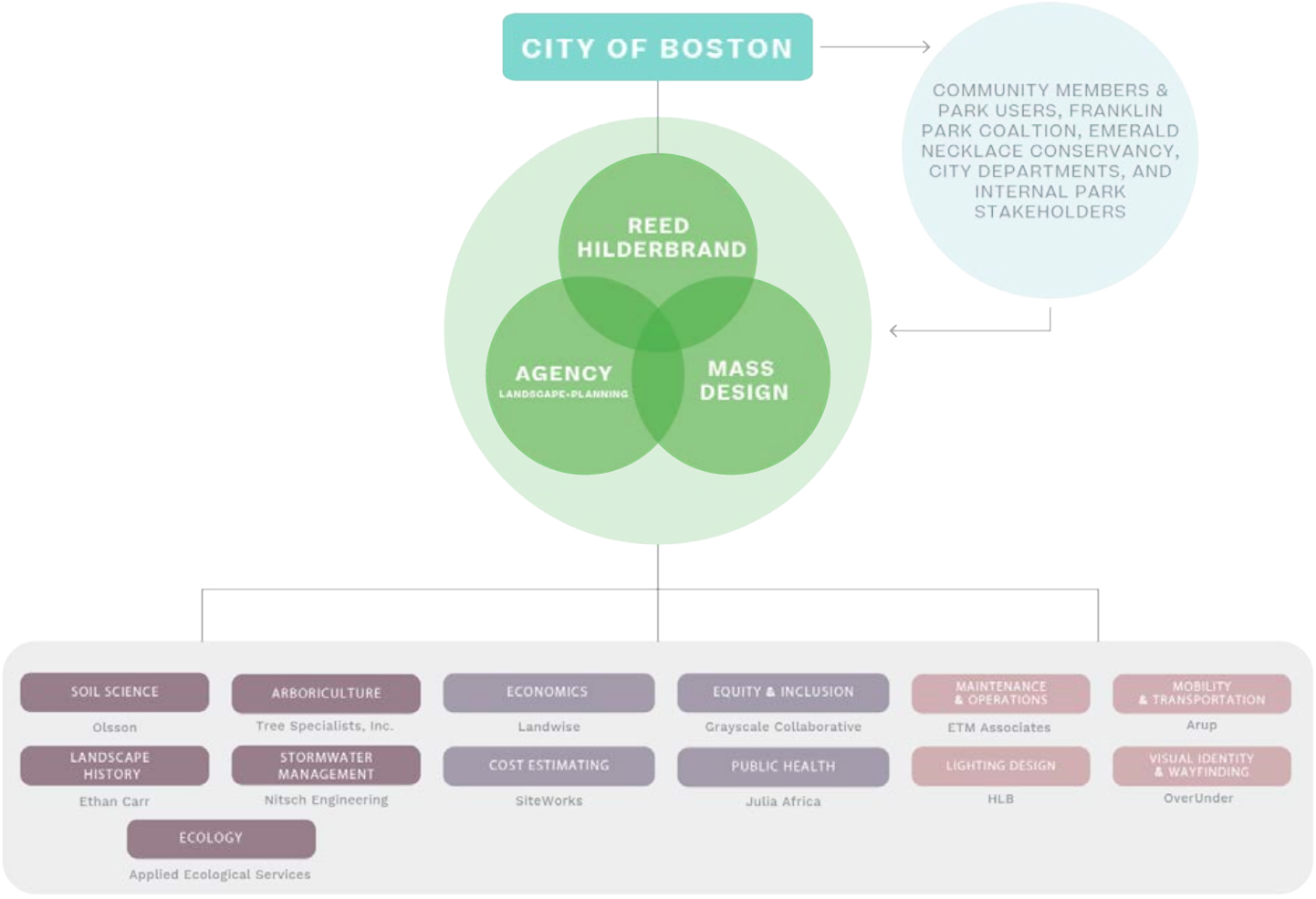
Franklin Park is a living thing, as are the communities surrounding it. The Action Plan proposals respond to the changes that have taken place over the park's 120+ year history and seek to meet this moment in time. It advocates for thoughtfully guided, community-driven improvements that are grounded in a deep understanding of its historic fabric and ecological systems and implemented through continued, dedicated investment so that the park can do what it does now, only better.

Project Team & Process

Working with the Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD) and in close collaboration with the Franklin Park Coalition (FPC), other park stakeholders, and the local community, the core design team of Reed Hilderbrand, Agency Landscape and Planning, and MASS Design Group joined together to produce a strategic vision to guide investment in Franklin Park over the next 20-30 years. Together, the team generated comprehensive and actionable recommendations that honor the park's design heritage, expand and engage its users, and will strengthen the connection of the park to the city and the community.

THE DESIGN TEAM

The collective experience of the core design team was supported by the expertise of a team of specialists, who investigated and advised on an array of cultural, environmental, and economic topics to ensure that a broad range of community voices were heard and that all aspects of the park's future were thoughtfully considered.



ACTION PLAN PROCESS

User Survey & Mini Polls
Share your feedback

Pop-Up Events
Speak with the team during an event in your community

The Wonder Walk
Particpate in a self-guided scavenger hunt to learn more about the park's history, ecology, and features & share feedback

Community Workshops & City-Led Meetings
Identify priorities and understand next steps with the Action Plan team & BPRD

Themed Discussion Groups
Deep dive discussions with the Action Plan team

Action Plan Document
See the vision for the future of Franklin Park and discover how the plan can be put into action

1 Orientation
Understood the park as a historically and culturally significant landscape, reviewed past and ongoing planning efforts, began an open conversation with the community and other stakeholders, and defined shared goals.

2 Inventory
Surveyed park users' priorities and built an understanding of historic and current park conditions, including built and natural systems.

3 Synthesis
Defined opportunities and challenges that guided design proposals based on analysis and public outreach findings.

4 Visioning
Connected ideas and conversations to establish specific strategies for protecting the park's unique qualities, while proposing important changes.

5 Taking Action
Developed a framework that foregrounded strategies that reflect community priorities to direct future funding.

Building on Past Efforts
Citywide and Local Plans

Aligning the Action Plan with the goals established in related city and neighborhood studies will ensure that it is building on past efforts. Considering potential changes in neighborhood and housing development, transit access, and environmental initiatives allows recommendations to contribute to collective future progress.

IMAGINE BOSTON 2030 | OPEN SPACE

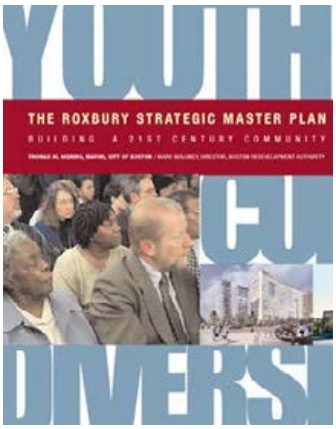
Invest in Boston's Largest Park

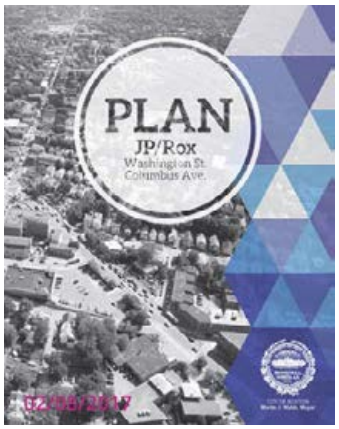
- The Imagine Boston 2030 plan recognized Franklin Park as the city's foremost opportunity to invest in open space that strengthens the city's physical and social fabric: *"Enhance Franklin Park as a keystone park in the geographical heart of the city. Sitting at the nexus of Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, Roslindale, and Jamaica Plain, Franklin Park will grow in its role as a destination for visitors citywide and an asset for surrounding communities... The continued enjoyment of the park by future generations of Bostonians and visitors from around the world requires a major restoration effort, informed by a comprehensive plan for Franklin Park."*.

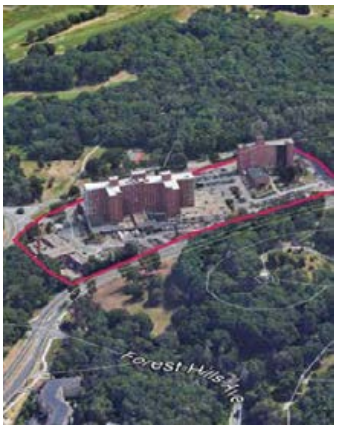
2030 Aspirations for Franklin Park

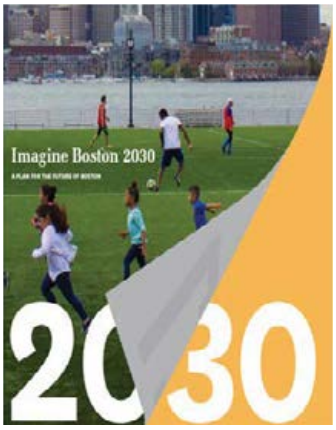
- Invest in world class programming
- Showcase beauty and tranquillity
- Improve access to the park
- Prioritize safety
- Provide best-in-class operations and management
- Respect the historic and ecological environment
- Improve signs in the park
- Foster healthy communities
- Create an inclusive gathering place

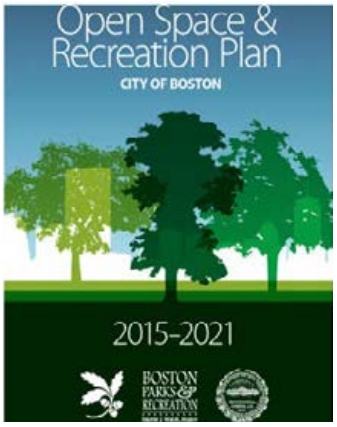
RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

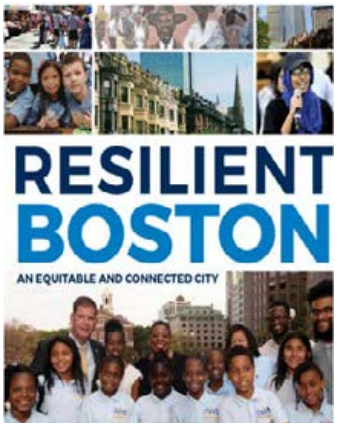












Listening to the Community
Engagement Strategy

The primary goal of the engagement strategy is to facilitate an equitable and inclusive planning and decision-making process that cultivates a shared vision for the future of Franklin Park. The relationship with the park's neighbors is built on listening, learning, and gathering and integrating feedback throughout the planning process. In order to facilitate conversations, BPRD and the design team both hosted Action Plan meetings and events, and attended neighborhood association meetings and community events to meet people where they were.

ENGAGEMENT GOALS

Keep it Fun!
Make participation in the engagement process an enjoyable activity.

3

Broaden and Diversify Input
Obtain feedback from all communities who currently enjoy Franklin Park and who could in the future. Special efforts, including neighborhood canvassing, language translation of outreach and meeting materials, and outreach activities geared towards kids, were made to engage historically under-represented communities who live next to the park, such as: lower-income residents, non-English speaking residents, and local youth.

2

Educate & Inspire
Promote a greater understanding of Franklin Park at a local and city-wide level.

4

Grow Stewardship
Build a community of civically engaged residents for the long-term success of Franklin Park.

IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

After a number of successful initial planning conversations with residents, including the first public workshop, a series of pop-up events, and neighborhood canvassing, the COVID-19 Pandemic forced the trajectory of the project to change course and to adopt new ways of engagement in order to reach out to residents safely.

The remaining community workshops were hosted online through video conferencing, and the FPAP website continued to provide a dynamic communication platform to share past meeting notes, data findings, and keep the public updated on future meetings and provide information on upcoming events.

These virtual meetings allowed participation to continue when meeting in person was not possible. Afternoon and evening meetings gave participants an option of when to attend that was most convenient. All plan updates continued to be advertised through a variety of methods, though in response to the pandemic, the project introduced the use of project mailers to adjacent residences and an email newsletter to share information more broadly. Virtual meetings were recorded and posted to the project website to provide a way for those that could not attend the meeting to stay connected and involved.

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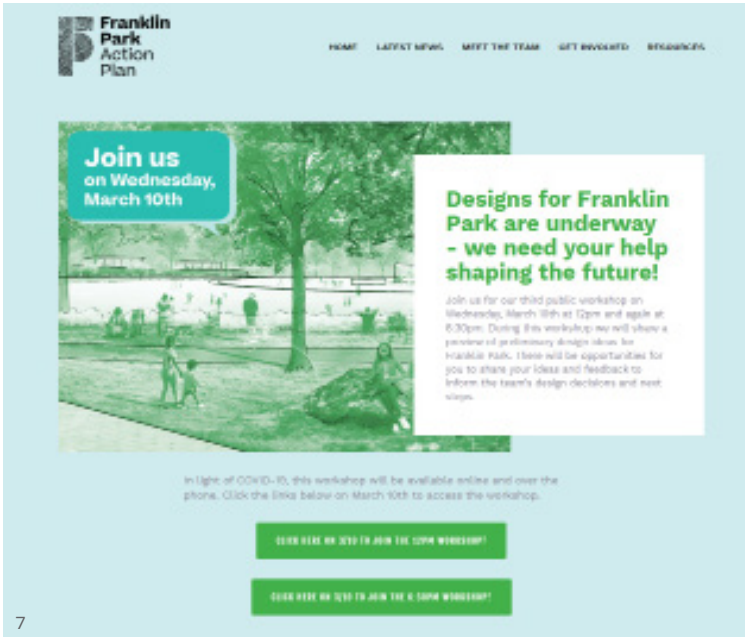

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Engagement in Action
Participation by the Numbers

The Action Plan implemented a multi-pronged and layered approach to community engagement. The engagement process emphasized meeting residents where they are, uncovering rich and detailed information about the past and present of the park, and working with local community groups. Throughout the planning process, the project team has engaged residents, community organizations, and various local stakeholder groups alike in the adjacent neighborhoods of Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Roslindale, and Roxbury.

ENGAGEMENT BY PHASE

1 **Orientation** | August 2019 to January 2020

The project team collected information from residents and park users through **canvassing** and **pop-up events**. The team was able to reach approximately 2,900 households through its canvassing efforts, engage more than 6,000 people through the **online survey**, and connect with over 26,000 different people through the **website** (26,000 unique visits and 33,000 visits total). In addition, BPRD called and/or emailed over 150 organizations to **initiate potential partnerships and raise awareness** of ongoing engagement efforts.

2 **Inventory** | January 2020 to May 2020

Following several fall and winter engagement efforts including Turkey Trot, Enchanted Trolley Tour, and Canvassing, the **first community workshop** was held in January. The purpose of the meeting was to share the team's initial analysis of the park and ask questions about how the ~300 meeting attendees use the park today in order to uncover patterns and challenges that visitors experience in and around the park. Following the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the team halted in-person engagement and updated the project website with details on how to continue to be involved while staying safe. The deadline to respond to the **community survey** was extended until mid-April to collect additional feedback for a total of 6,135 survey responses.

3 **Synthesis** | June 2020 to December 2020

In the summer of 2020, the City and design team stayed engaged with residents through **mini-polls** to gather additional information about how use of the park may have changed during COVID-19, and by sharing the results of the community survey. This phase also invited residents to dive deeper into the themes and values that unify the plan. In July, the **second community workshop** and a series of **themed discussion groups** provided participants with the opportunity to further understand and discuss how these themes and principles intersect and reinforce one another, totaling six project-led meetings. Following those discussion groups, the draft **Action Plan Principles** were shared via the website and in an online poll.

4 **Visioning** | January 2021 to March 2022

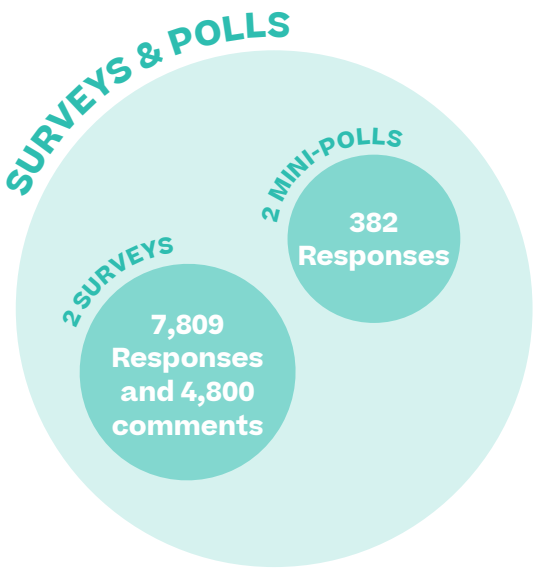
The project team developed initial recommendations based on synthesized analysis and inputs from the community. At the **third community workshop**, the team shared the 'Four Big Ideas' — the initial design proposals — and how community feedback informed the strategic design and planning approach to the project. Additional **surveys and community conversations** were held to gain feedback on and refine the initial design recommendations.

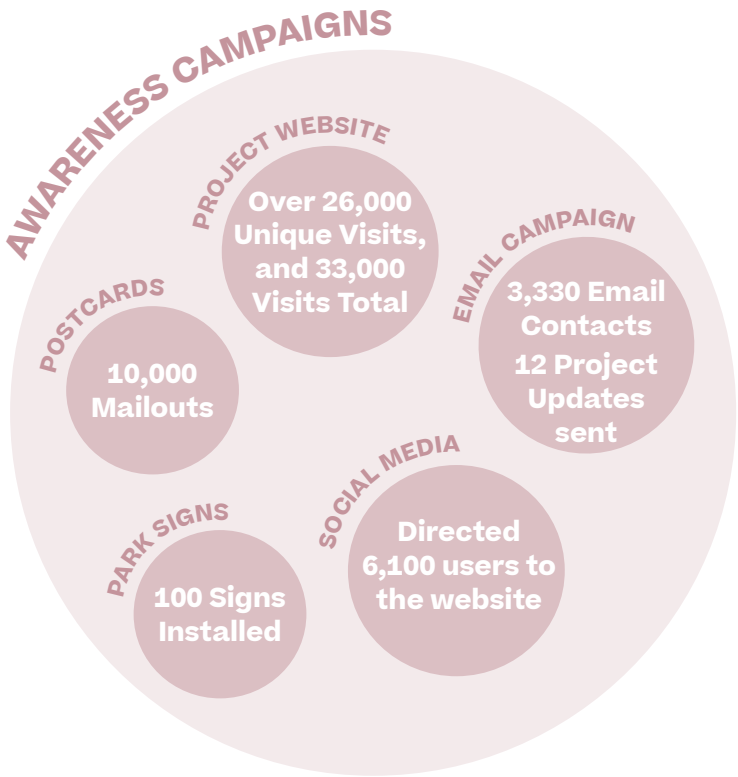
5 **Taking Action** | March 2022 to September 2022

The City of Boston held an initial **Taking Action meeting** focused on the implementation of the plan, with a refresher on project progress up until that point. They also provided an overview of project funding streams and the Franklin Park Trust Endowment. The **fourth and final community workshop** was held to glean responses to proposed improvements to the park and to understand the community's top priorities for which recommendations get implemented first.

ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

Over the course of the project, the City and the Action Plan Team were able to engage with **over 26,000 community members** and **hundreds of organizations** through in-person and digital means.





Action Plan Principles
Guiding Current & Future Work

Over-arching priorities were identified through the community survey feedback and the design team's park analysis. Draft principles were shared with the community at Workshop #2 and public comments were collected through a subsequent 'mini-poll', and used to refine and strengthen them. These principles guided the design phases of the Action Plan, ensuring that the proposals are rooted in shared values. They will continue to guide work as the Action Plan moves into implementation.

RECOGNIZE HISTORY, BROADEN POTENTIAL

- Protect, reveal and reinforce essential components of the site's historic fabric, while accommodating contemporary ecological, maintenance, and programming priorities.
- Celebrate the unique and character-defining qualities of the park.
- Provide interpretation of park histories that includes expanded narratives of BIPOC residents and park users.

REACH OUT, WELCOME IN

- Improve the park's connections by advocating for safe crossings and sidewalks, ensuring that views, entrances, and edges are clear and inviting. Add new entrances where needed.
- Create welcoming spaces for everyone to enjoy. Ensure they reflect the needs and goals of the park's neighbors.
- Improve signage and lighting to clarify wayfinding and communicate what the park has to offer; indicate routes to the park from public transit.

BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO PROMOTE A UNIFIED EXPERIENCE

- Ensure the remaining park fabric stays truly public and accessible to all.
- Expand relationships with the zoo, golf course, and hospital by looking for opportunities for shared seasonal use and cross programming. Where necessary fixed boundaries exist, embed them within the park fabric or look for ways to project a message of welcome.
- Clarify park circulation by simplifying paths, and minimizing uninviting barriers, like fences, walls, and bollards, while still keeping vehicles out of areas where they don't belong.
- Rethink the design and functionality of Circuit Drive to prioritize the pedestrian and promote larger park connections.

ENHANCE DIVERSITY TO SUPPORT LONGEVITY

- Pair strategic short-term interventions with long-term management approaches to establish sustainable systems and durable solutions for the eight ecotypes within the park.
- Integrate green infrastructure strategies to improve drainage and water quality, and reduce down-stream impacts.
- Protect heritage trees by addressing pests, setting standards for pruning and tree care, and establishing a new generation of canopy.
- Ensure that forward planning anticipates the impacts of climate change.

SUPPORT EXISTING ASSETS AND EXPAND PARK OFFERINGS

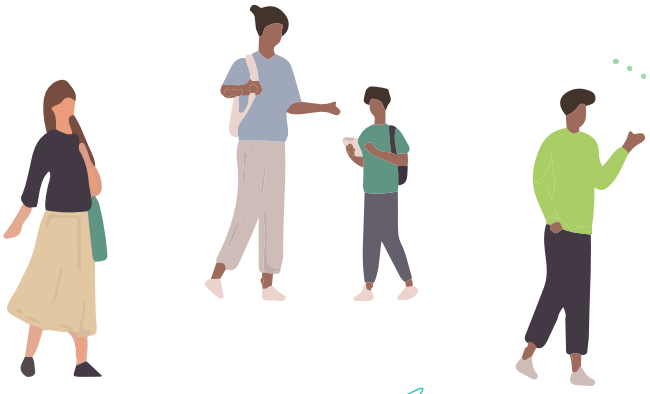
- Provide parkwide amenities (restrooms, water fountains, well maintained paths) to support park use and visitation.
- Transform single-use spaces to be flexible for year-round programming that can serve a variety of groups.
- Strike a balance between prescriptive and flexible programming, ensuring that there are safe and engaging opportunities for exploration, immersion, and learning.
- Embed new interventions in the larger landscape fabric.

GUIDE RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT TO CATALYZE LONG-TERM BENEFIT

- Establish a vision for the future and a ‘roadmap’ for decision making that is reflective of the needs of the Franklin Park community.
- Align resources with ambition: recognize and balance the impact that new improvements and expanded programming will have on park maintenance requirements.
- Expand capacity and elevate maintenance practices to meet current demands and support new use.
- Build partnerships with neighbors and local talent, community organizations, and surrounding businesses to maximize the impact of improvements for shared benefit between the park and its communities.

What We Heard
Community Priorities Overview

Over the course of the engagement process, thousands of community members and park stakeholders identified a long list of needs and wishes for the park. In conjunction with the design team's analysis, themes and priorities were identified and structured by four overarching 'Big Ideas'. These ideas were further developed and refined into five primary Action Plan recommendations for the future of Franklin Park.



"I want Franklin Park to have a duality 1. To keep its essence of being family oriented and a quiet space to hold small gatherings. 2. Public events, with touches of the major events that Boston has to offer."

"It is of most importance to highlight Franklin Park's history, both originally, as well as what Franklin Park means to our community."

"Recognize that the Park is in several neighborhoods and that every [edge is] in need of rehabilitation."

"[I want to see] a great, well lit, walking path for health and wellness."

"A better Bike/Ped loop would be great. The Circuit Loop is fantastic, but the area along the road that cuts through the park is difficult and dangerous with kids. There should be a bigger loop that goes through the rest of the park easily for both bikes or walker/runners."

"What is most wonderful about Franklin Park is that much of it is wild and relatively untouched. Don't ruin that. Boston has plenty of lovely sculpted gardens that entice the masses. It has only one Franklin Park...It's the only place in Boston of this size and kind."

"I think more needs to be done, or prioritized, to improve the ecological health of the park. This is the most pressing issue for our city at this moment in history."

"I think making various entrances to the park more inviting, as well as places for people to gather, such as a market or pop-up would make the community more likely to use the park."

All community quotes are from Action Plan survey written responses.

FOUR BIG IDEAS ⟶ FIVE PRIMARY PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

WHAT WE HEARD:

- **Improve and clarify entrances** with new paths and signage and managed vegetation
- **Enhance activities at the edge** of the park, close to the neighborhoods

MAKE CONNECTIONS & ACTIVATE THE EDGES

- Provide a continuous bike & pedestrian **Circuit Loop**
- **Improve paths** or trails and directional **signage**

CLARIFY MOVEMENT

- **Address basic needs** like restrooms, lighting, water fountains, and directional and informational signs
- Renewal of **The Overlook** and the **Elma Lewis Playhouse**
- Renewal of the park's main entrance at **Peabody Circle**
- Future use for **The Bear Dens**

AMPLIFY MAGNET DESTINATIONS

- Apply a **consistent standard of care** across the park that maintains the park's varied landscapes at a high level for safe and sustained use and **ecological health**
- Better incorporate adjacent facilities, like White Stadium, by **rethinking fences, barriers, removing dense vegetation** or seeking collaborative programs
- Increase **habitat and diversity** throughout the park

UNIFY THE PARK

+

BUILD CAPACITY & ENABLE CHANGE

Key Improvement Projects
Overview

Based on community feedback via online surveys and mini polls, community workshops, themed discussion groups, and virtual breakout rooms, top community priorities were identified. Proposed projects and improvements are categorized by 'big idea' and community priorities - as identified by feedback throughout the planning process - are indicated with a C below.

Park-Wide Improvements C

Lighting (pg. 260-263, 268-269)
Signage (pg. 260-267)
Entrances (pg. 208-219)
Stormwater Management (pg. 386-397)
Heritage Tree Care (pg. 364-371)

The Playstead

A. The Bear Dens (pg. 308-309)
B. Long Crouch Woods (pg. 306-307)
C. White Stadium (pg. 312-313)
D. The Overlook (pg. 302-305)
E. The Playstead (pg. 298-315)

Peabody Circle & Refectory Hill

F. The Front Porch (pg. 288-297)
G. Peabody Circle (pg. 288-297)
H. Outdoor Amphitheater (pg. 288-297)
I. Refectory Hill Parking (pg. 288-297, 246-249)

American Legion

J. Abbottswood (pg. 330-331, 250-259)
K. Outdoor Classroom (pg. 334)
L. American Legion Playground (pg. 334)

The Yard

M. Park Access *(pg. 214-215, 218-219)*
N. Future Improvements *(pg. 324-327)*

Scarboro Pond & Hill

O. Rock Morton & Rock Milton *(pg. 250-259, 330-331)*
P. Scarboro Pond *(pg. 356-359, 392-397)*
Q. Scarboro Hill *(pg. 348-371, 250-259, 392-397)*

Ellicottdale & Schoolmaster Hill

R. Upper Lawn *(pg. 316-323)*
S. Lower Lawn *(pg. 316-323)*
T. Ellicott Arch *(pg. 316-323, 268-269)*
U. Schoolmaster Hill *(pg. 332-333)*

The Wilderness

V. Ecological Restoration *(pg. 348-361)*

Circuit Drive & The Valley Gates

W. Circuit Loop *(pg. 236-243)*
X. The Circuit Drive Parking Lot *(pg. 246-249)*
Y. The Valley Gates *(pg. 220-223)*

- Make Connections & Activate Edges
- Clarify Movement
- Amplify Magnet Destinations
- Unify the Park
- C Community Priorities


JAMAICA PLAIN
WALNUT AVE.
ROXBURY
SEAVER STREET
FRANKLIN PARK ZOO
FOREST HILLS ST.
WILLIAM J. DEVINE GOLF COURSE
BLUE HILL AVE
SHATTUCK HOSPITAL
MORTON STREET
AMERICAN LEGION HWY
DORCHESTER
THE MAINTENANCE YARD
MATTAPAN
A
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Key Improvement Projects by Area
The Playstead & Long Crouch Woods

The Playstead

1. *The Bear Dens (pg. 308-309)*
- Restore the Bear Dens for multi-purpose use.
2. *Long Crouch Woods (pg. 306-307)*
- Perform invasive removals & add new planting, improved trails, & new nature play areas.
3. *White Stadium (pg. 312-313)*
- Make improvements for shared community & Boston Public Schools use, including new parking.
4. *The Overlook (pg. 302-305)*
- Restore The Overlook ruins and return The Elma Lewis Playhouse to its historic location with a new stage, restrooms, and seating.
5. *The Playstead (pg. 310-315)*
- Upgrade the fields (including drainage/stormwater improvements), create the tailgate edge & improve parking, and establish a new Playstead Loop path for bikes and pedestrians (including seating, lighting, and planting).


JAMAICA PLAIN
WALNUT AVE.
ROXBURY
1
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3
SEAVER STREET
4
5
FRANKLIN PARK ZOO
THE WILDERNESS

Key Improvement Projects by Area
Peabody Circle, American Legion & Scarboro Pond

Peabody Circle & Refectory Hill

1. *The Front Porch (pg. 288-297)*
- Establish a new 'front porch' pedestrian entrance and terrace along Blue Hill Avenue.
2. *Peabody Circle (pg. 288-297)*
- Reinstate the historic pedestrian circulation and expand tree planting to create a new Peabody Circle Plaza for events & programming.
3. *Stepped Seating Grove (pg. 288-297)*
- Create terraced outdoor seating with new canopy trees for outdoor education and programming.
4. *Refectory Hill Parking (pg. 288-297, 246-249)*
- Integrate a new parking lot on Refectory Hill.

American Legion

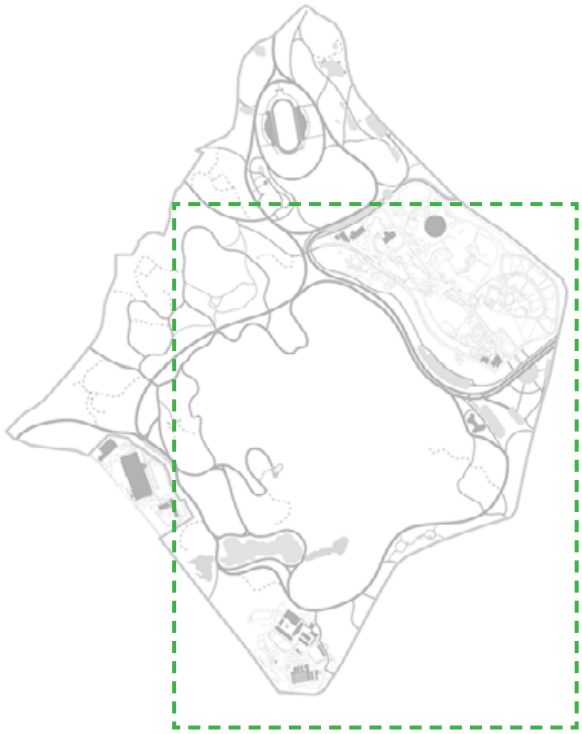
5. *Abbottswood (pg. 330-331, 250-259)*
- Perform invasive removals & add new planting; introduce new trails.
6. *Outdoor Classroom (pg. 288-297)*
- Integrate a new outdoor classroom adjacent to the wet meadow.
7. *American Legion Playground (pg. 288-297)*
- Make playground improvements, including a new splashpad.

The Yard

8. *Park Access (pg. 214-215, 218-219)*
- Provide a public pedestrian path to access the park.
9. *Future Improvements (pg. 324-327)*
- Improve The Yard to serve both public uses and BPRD maintenance functions.

Scarboro Pond & Hill

10. *Rock Morton & Rock Milton (pg. 250-259, 330-331)*
- Perform invasive removals & improve trails.
11. *Scarboro Pond (pg. 356-359, 392-397)*
- Restore Scarboro Pond ecology and improve access to the water's edge.
12. *Scarboro Hill (pg. 348-371, 250-259, 392-397)*
- Perform invasive removals & vista clearing, add new planting, and make path improvements throughout.
- Include a designated area for the Massachusett Tribe ceremonial activities.




FRANKLIN PARK ZOO
WILLIAM J. DEVINE GOLF COURSE
DORCHESTER
MATTAPAN
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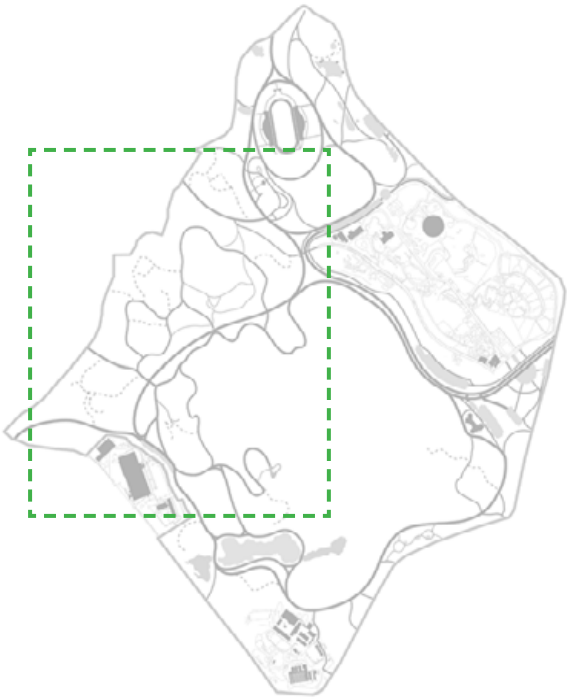
Key Improvement Projects by Area
Ellicottdale & The Wilderness

Ellicottdale & Schoolmaster Hill

1. *Upper Lawn (pg. 316-323)*
- Restore the upper lawn with shaded picnic and BBQ areas, expand the tennis courts, and provide restrooms.
2. *Lower Lawn (pg. 316-323)*
- Restore the lower lawn for flexible use, and provide a boardwalk and trails within the wet woodland.
3. *Ellicott Arch (pg. 316-323, 268-269)*
- Restore the arch, and add lighting & new planting.
4. *Schoolmaster Hill (pg. 332-333)*
- Restore the Schoolmaster Hill ruins & pergola, and introduce a flowering tree walk along the path leading from Ellicottdale.

The Wilderness

5. *The Wilderness Ecological Restoration (pg. 348-361)*
- Perform invasive removals, add new planting, and make trail and wayfinding improvements.




JAMAICA PLAIN
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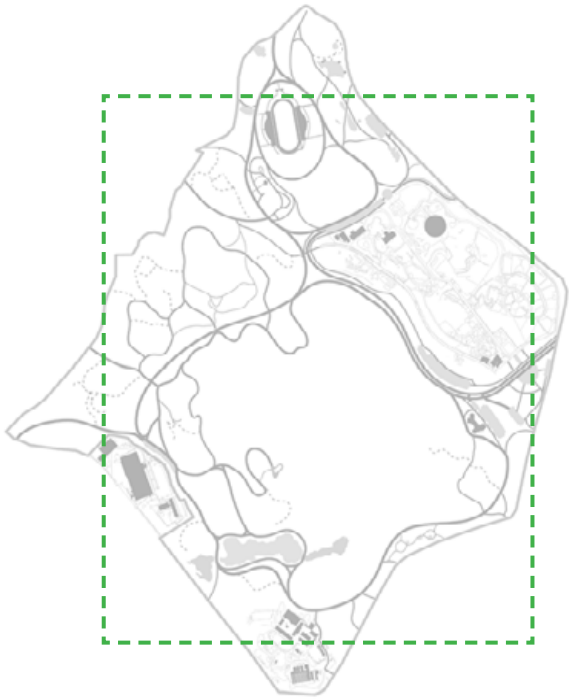
2
WILLIAM J. DEVINE
GOLF COURSE
1
SHATTUCK HOSPITAL

Key Improvement Projects by Area
Circuit Loop & Circuit Drive

Circuit Drive & The Valley Gates

1. *Circuit Loop (pg. 236-243)*
   - Reconfigure vehicular circulation to provide a safe multi-model circuit throughout the park.
2. *The Circuit Drive Parking Lot (pg. 246-249)*
   - Improve and expand the parking lot with canopy trees and stormwater management
3. *The Valley Gates (pg. 220-223)*
   - Clarify circulation & restore the Valley Gate headhouses.




JAMAICA PLAIN
ROXBURY
3
FRANKLIN PARK ZOO
1
2
WILLIAM J.
DEVINE GOLF
COURSE
SHATTUCK
HOSPITAL
DORCHESTER
MATTAPAN

Analysis

Analysis Summary

For the purposes of the Action Plan, the team looked at the park through four lenses: history, communities, connections, and ecologies. Below are the summary observations that resulted from this work.

HISTORY

- The history of the land predates the park; Boston, including Franklin Park, is the homelands of the Massachusett Tribe. The area was once a key for farming, trade, and settlement by immigrant communities.
- Franklin Park's design originated at a moment in time when there was new civic commitment to large-scale open space.
- Frederick Law Olmsted's design for the park was tied to the characteristics of the site, as well as its regional landscape context. He prioritized giving visitors both an expansive and intimate experience of a range of landscape expressions.
- Incremental changes have eroded the original design and split the park into pieces, but the powerful natural features that led the city to select the site for its first large park remain, ready to be re-revealed.
- For the park to meet its time, the diversity of its surrounding communities must be recognized.

COMMUNITIES

- Franklin Park is the center of the 21st century Boston; its neighbors are some of the most demographically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse residents of the city.
- The park has inspired and been the beneficiary of community stewardship over the past 75 years — a commitment that should be recognized and embraced.
- A symbiotic relationship between the park and its neighbors is dependent on a certain level of commitment from the city to support this needed and deserved resource.
- All parks, but in particular Franklin Park, is a critical public health resource and needs to be invested in as such.
- The park is in service of the everyday user; basic amenities that provide comfort and shelter must be distributed equitably.

CONNECTIONS

- The park operates both as a neighborhood and city-wide resource; it is important that people are made aware of it and what it offers.
- Disinvestment in the park and the way the city has grown over time, with dense neighborhoods and high traffic on surrounding streets, mean that the edge of the park and its entrances often feel unsafe and are hard to navigate.
- Vehicular circulation splits the park in two and undermines pedestrians' ability to navigate the full park safely.
- Duplicate paths, various paving materials, and a lack of signage makes the park confusing to navigate, and limits or discourages exploration.
- The need to regulate movement and access has resulted in a set of unwelcoming interventions that further divide the park, detract from the character of the landscape, and make visitors feel unwelcome.

LAND

- Franklin Park is a designed landscape. It is equally important to understand the land from an ecosystems perspective as it is to understand the design intentions that created the experience of those environments; its character must be reinstated and protected.
- At 500+ acres, the park has local and regional impacts and serves as a critical resource for climate change mitigation, habitat, and ecosystem services.
- Its eight different habitat typologies and important heritage trees make up an unusually diverse landscape and park experience within the city. Deferred maintenance is threatening the health and longevity of these ecological systems.
- Significant commitment and multi-partner stewardship is needed to care for the park today and to plan for the future; the city must provide adequate resources (staff & funding) to manage a park of this size and importance.

To understand a park, you have to understand its

History

01 | Park Evolution & Identity

One of America's Great Large Parks

Franklin Park was conceived in response to a moment of change and perceived crisis in the design of American cities — the moment of rapid development of urban park systems in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In Boston, this system was authored by Frederick Law Olmsted, arguably the country's greatest landscape architect. His design for the Emerald Necklace, with Franklin Park as its jewel, is known around the world.

Franklin Park itself was conceived of as a common ground - a place where all were welcome to enjoy the benefits of recreation and refreshment, to experience nature within the city. Olmsted's design powerfully engaged the site's dramatic topography and amplified characteristics native to the New England landscape. The themes addressed in the design - the cultural significance of sites, the right of access to shared open space, and the benefits to public health of such - are still relevant today. While much has changed, the power of this landscape remains and continues to provide a stage for communities to make their own.

The Early Landscape

Massachusett Tribe, Farmers, & Immigrants

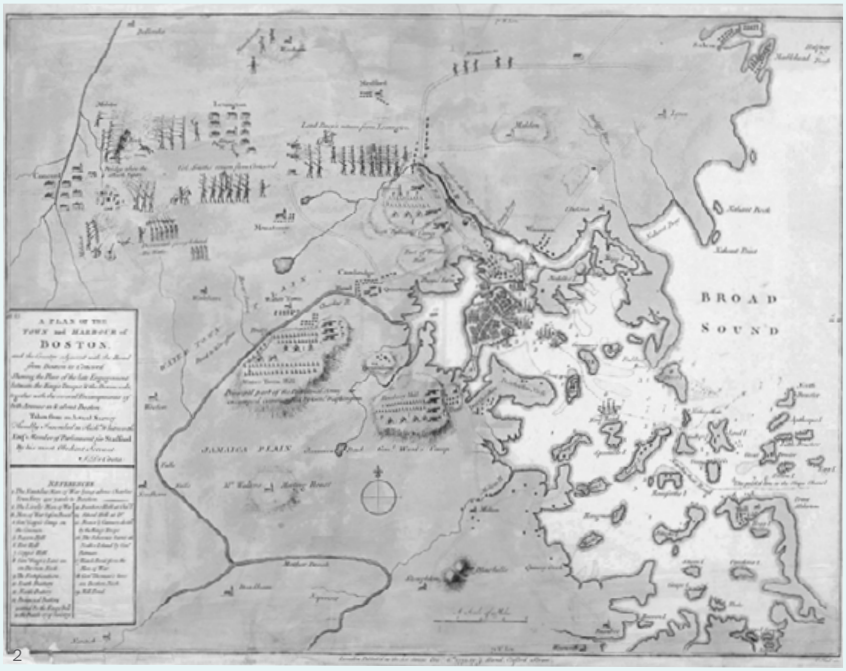
The history of Franklin Park starts with the history of the land. Many have left their mark on the place we now call Franklin Park. It is a rich, complicated, and ever-evolving narrative that's much larger the park itself. It includes stories of geologic formation, Native Peoples and colonial settlement, urban development and public health, design and community advocacy, and so much more.

Boston, the homelands of the Massachusett Tribe, was situated at the end of the Shawmut Peninsula, with the only land-based route to the city being south through Roxbury. The town's strategic location and natural resources, which had long been used for regional trade and agricultural purposes, made this small town a key site for farming and movement of goods in the Colonial era. By the 1800s, immigrant communities established themselves in and around the soon-to-be park before the city's annexation of that land in 1881.

1

The Massachusett Tribe

The land we now call Boston, including Franklin Park, is the homeland of the Massachusett Tribe. The original English colony and present-day Commonwealth derive the name "Massachusetts" from this tribe. But despite this provenance, the Colonial era precipitated a mass genocide of Indigenous peoples largely through the Plague and violent conflict. By the time the Mayflower landed, 90% of the Tribe had died, clearing the way for 17th century colonial land seizure. Nevertheless, to this day and into the future, the Massachusett Tribe continues to maintain a connection to this land.



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Boston in the Colonial Era

In 1630, John Winthrop led a group of English Puritans to initiate the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Roxbury was one of the six towns established, as a rural outpost of Boston. At this time, and for the next 200 years, the town also included West Roxbury and Jamaica Plain. The natural resources of Roxbury made it attractive to new settlers: farmable land, as it had been long used by the Massachusett Tribe, water for power, and timber and stone for building.

Over the 17th and 18th centuries, Roxbury grew into a site for farming and industry, including mills and tanneries. During the 19th century, Roxbury became home to a wide range of immigrants, including Irish, German, Scandinavian, Italian, Latvian, Jewish, and Maritime Canadian communities, who further grew the local economy.

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Acquiring Parkland

As industry, trade, and local populations expanded, Boston eventually incorporated Roxbury in 1868. In 1875, the Park Act was passed, enabling the city to obtain land for the West Roxbury Park (the initial name for Franklin Park). At the time, the area was mostly comprised of small farms with little urban development. Despite opposition from landowners, in 1881, the city acquired enough land for park construction.


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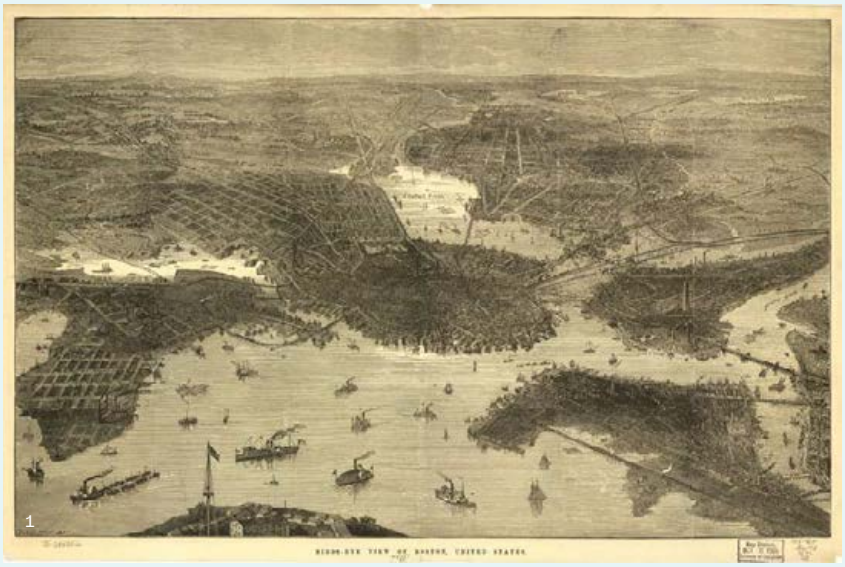
Gathering Place for All

A New Idea for a Changing City

In the mid-19th century, influenced by scenes from England and France and the civilized living their large urban parks represented, American cities began to pursue significant open space systems of their own. Burgeoning urban populations and increased global travel, advancements in approaches to agriculture and urban development, and growing interests in natural science and technology all had profound effects on attitudes about healthy urban environments and conservation ideals.

"What is the special purpose of a large park in distinction from the purposes that may be served by such smaller grounds as Boston is provided with?"* Over 100 years ago, Franklin Park was conceived of as the jewel of Boston's Emerald Necklace. Today, it is still Boston's largest park by far, serving some of the city's most dense and diverse neighborhoods.



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A Growing City

In industrializing societies across America, including Boston, rapid city expansion was fueled by large-scale immigration and migration of the working classes from rural areas. Dense living and working environments led to significant public health challenges. Improvements came as cities implemented innovations in sanitation and drainage infrastructure. Still, residential squares within the city provided little green space and were often gated with limited entry. Expanded public transportation lines provided access to public parks — an escape for growing urban populations.

**Frederick Law Olmsted, Notes on Franklin Park*

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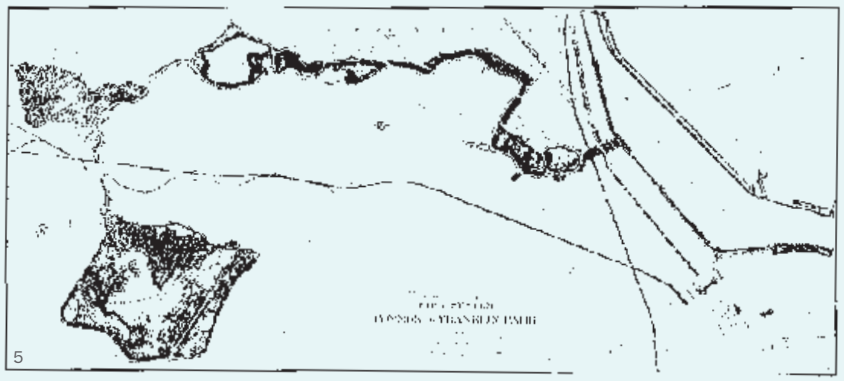

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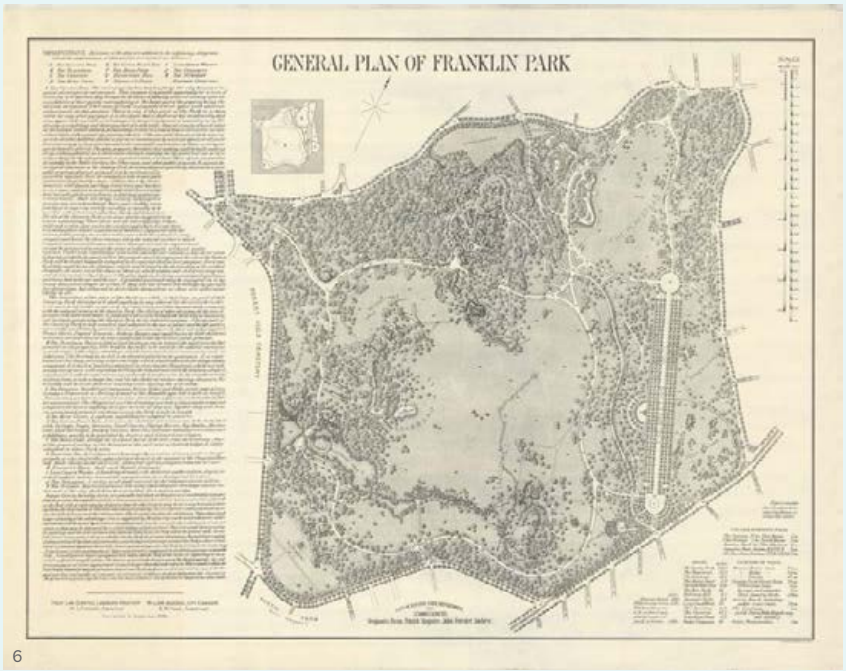
More Than A Breathing Place

Spearheaded by active Bostonians on both sides of the political divide, the city engaged Frederick Law Olmsted to select a site for a large public park. Chosen for qualities 'complementary to the town' and with a design developed in contrast to other public spaces available within the confines of the city at the time, the park was intended to provide public access to nature and its restorative benefits — for the purpose of "delighting in nature and one's common humanity."*

Developing a System

With the construction of New York's Central Park and Brooklyn's Prospect Park complete, Olmsted expanded his thinking about the role of landscapes in cities beyond what parks could provide independently. He considered how open space could function as a linked system, with canopied streets as extensions of park carriageways and residential communities. His lecture on "Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns" anticipated the future growth of urban centers, like Boston, and the need for park systems to support public health and well-being. The Emerald Necklace, a 1,100-acre park system spanning across the city, was designed by Olmsted in 1894, with Franklin Park at its center.



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Designed for the Everyday

The General Plan of Franklin Park

Olmsted's design philosophy was rooted in the belief that open space could positively impact a community's physical and mental health. In Franklin Park, the goal of recuperative time outdoors was embodied in a purposeful design, composed with an ideal based in art and native landscape composition. The cumulative impact of the park was only fully experienced through a developed familiarity with the place, a relationship with nature.

"...the benefits of a park to the people of a city, of all classes and conditions, come chiefly in a gradual way,...such benefits are neither experienced nor are the conditions on which they depend apt to be dwelt upon by an occasional observer."*

Franklin Park was designed for Boston's communities to develop a relationship with nature, and with each other in nature. The recuperative and community-building roles that Franklin Park plays remain vital today.

1

2

An Unwavering Commitment

Olmsted believed deeply that providing designed scenery complementary to the natural context put visitors' minds at ease and improved both their mental and physical health. His work at Franklin Park allowed built elements to fade into the background (reducing visual complexity), fit program to the land, and facilitated comfortable, fluid movement, resulting in a design that functioned without singular spectacle and shaped experience without a formula.


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THE 1896 GENERAL PLAN OUTLINED

Putting into practice design ideas and philosophies tested in parks prior, Frederick Law Olmsted took to composing a plan for an immersive public park, centered on an expansive experience of the New England landscape and the direct civic engagement of communities with one another. Olmsted's aspirations for Franklin Park's design were positioned between those of other large urban parks of its time and his developing ideals around larger reservation lands, like national parks and the nearby Blue Hills.

The General Plan of Franklin Park divided the space into two parts. The main park, or Country Park, emphasized "receptive" recreation — the enjoyment of scenery — by providing visitors with a serene and expansive experience. The Ante Park carefully tucked "exertive recreation", including group activities, athletic grounds, and venues for music and entertainment into the topography.*

The Ante Park

(A) The Greeting - The main entry to the park was designed with a tree-lined promenade that accommodated pedestrian, carriage, and bicycle circulation, with areas for designated individual programs. It was never fully implemented.

(B) Long Crouch Woods - Named after the Colonial name for Seaver Street, Long Crouch included a zoological display and would later become home to the Bear Dens.

(C) The Playstead - This flat, open field was designed for recreation and education for children, as well as civic ceremonies and other activities that would gather large crowds.

(D) The Overlook - The elevated platform set into the hillside was built of boulders obtained from clearing the Playstead. The only building Olmsted designed during his career resided here and housed park security, and lockers and restrooms for park visitors.

(E) Refectory Hill - Located near the main entry, The Refectory site included one of the few buildings within the park, serving refreshments to visitors outdoors, and featuring a public reading room.

Park's Facilities

(F) The Steading - Never fully constructed, this rocky knoll was intended to house park offices within the woods.

(G) The Nursery- Originally a nursery used to cultivate plants for the park, today the City's maintenance yard occupies this space.

The Country Park

(H) The Wilderness - Referred to as "the rocky wilderness land" in early records, this area was intended to serve in contrast to the open, picturesque character associated with the rest of the country park.*

(I) Schoolmaster Hill - Its name refers to William and Ralph Waldo Emerson, who lived in a nearby house while teaching at a school in Roxbury in the early 1800s. The hillside featured rough terracing with a boulder overlook and an arbor for small, shaded gatherings.

(J) Ellicottdale - Named after a nearby homestead, this small, open meadow was intended for temporary lawn games, like tennis and croquet.

(K) Scarboro Hill - A winding path leads visitors to the top of the hillside with a resting place halfway up where a Dairy was located to provide necessities for picnics.

(L) Scarboro Pond - The pond was added to Olmsted's revised plan in 1896, following public requests for a waterway in the park.

Circulation

Glen Road - The park was divided by a road intended for through-traffic running from Forrest Hills Street to Blue Hill Avenue.

Park Loops- The primary way to experience the park was through walking or riding on the Circuit Loop around the Country Park or the smaller loop around the Playstead.

(M) The Valley Gates - This marked where the two parks meet, as well as the convergence of the two primary circulation loops.

**Frederick Law Olmsted, Notes on Franklin Park*

Uniquely Boston

A City of Hills

Olmsted selected the site for Franklin Park in part because of its powerful topography. The park's boundaries intersect a drumlin field, created by glacial sediment deposited over 570 million years ago. The knobby hills and valleys iconic to Boston's landscape are a result of this same process. Within the park, two topographic shelves to the east and a large valley to the west are stitched together by a series of glacial cuts. This extraordinary topography, its open rolling pastures and rocky outcrops, have become synonymous with the park's identity.

The hilly glacial formations — or drumlins — found in the park are the result of a geologic process that shaped the land in and around Boston millions of years ago. Olmsted structured the park's design around this unique topography. The site's rocky outcrops remain an iconic feature of the park today.

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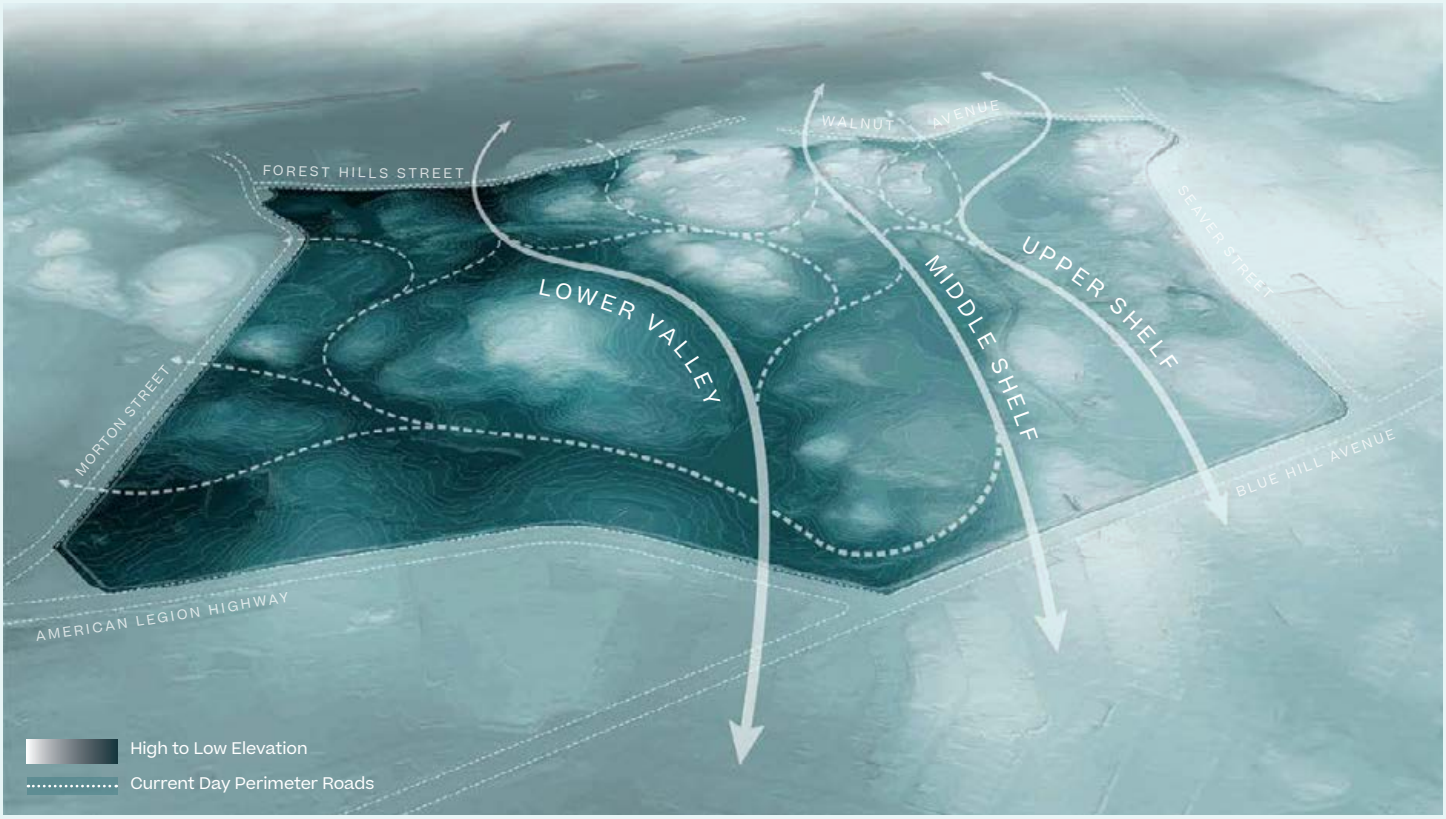
Iconic Boston

Boston's hills and islands are represented in countless early maps and artistic depictions. Whether it be the Boston Harbor, illustrating fortifications and navigation routes, or the backdrop to scenes of a developing city, the topography quickly became a recognizable feature of the area.

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Glacial erratics, or large rocks previously deposited by glaciers, can be found throughout the park today.

A Logic Revealed

Looking at the park through the lens of elevation and topography is almost like examining an x-ray, providing a glance into what lies beneath the surface: the upper shelf formed the Ante Park, the middle shelf followed Glen Road, and the lower valley connected The Wilderness to the meadow (today's golf course) through a sweeping bend across the Country Park.

How is a drumlin hill formed?

The core of the site's drumlins is composed of bedrock.

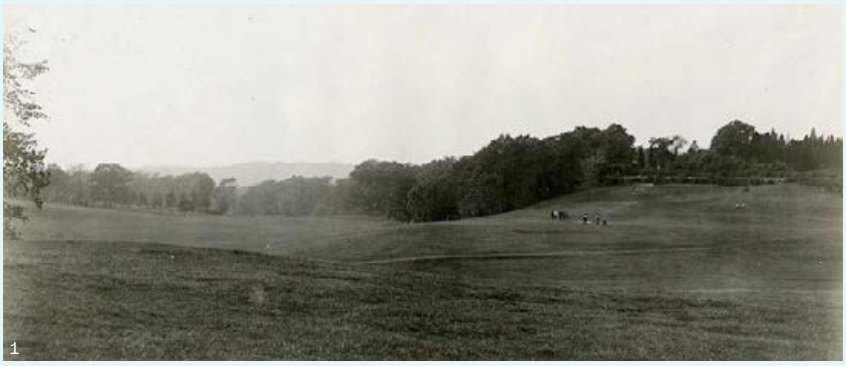
Melting glaciers moved over bedrock, depositing glacial till, rock, and sand to form a gentle slope. This movement and carving also created deep 'cuts' between hills, separating them from one another.

A Place to Escape

The New England Landscape Amplified

The park's design was founded on the specific conditions of the site, revealing or intensifying its quintessentially New England scenery. Masses of second growth woods, punctuated by rocky ledges and large boulders and rolling lowland pastures were threaded with paths to allow visitors to experience these contrasts. The plan's careful composition was more than a sum of its parts, evoking qualities of "breadth, distance, depth, intricacy, atmosphere, mystery, grandeur, and sublimity."*

The park's design elevated the original site characteristics, ordering and intensifying the experience of shady woodlands and open meadows. While the bones of the design remain, key spatial relationships have been lost as programs shifted and maintenance regimes evolved. It is critical to clarify, and in some cases, re-establish these key relationships.



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Woodlands

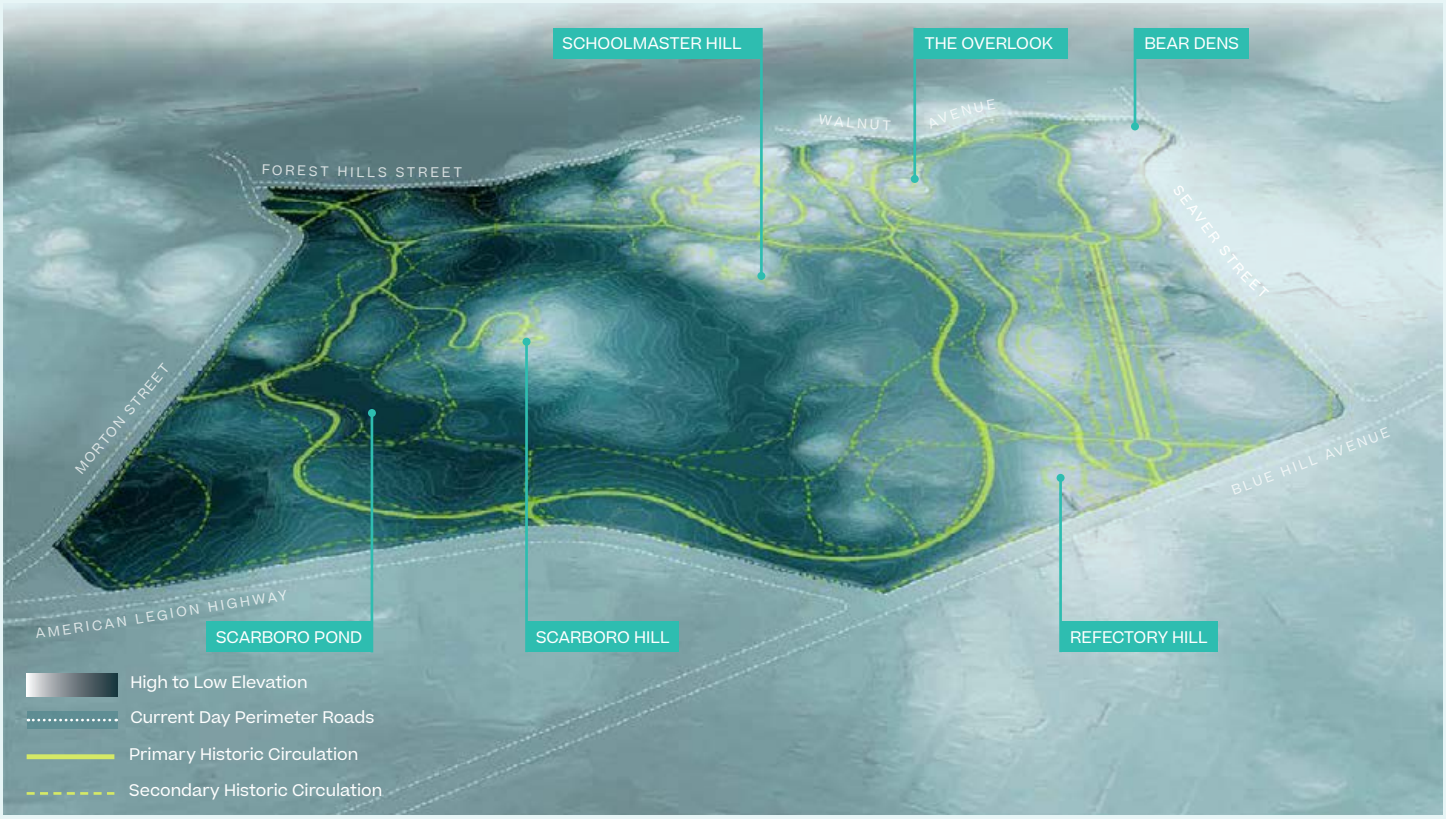
Meadow

Woodlands and Meadows

If the site's topography set the stage, the woodlands took the lead role, establishing seclusion from the city and setting the park experience apart. This significant landscape feature provided visual depth and contrast through the dynamic play of light and shadow.

Large open grasslands hosted both active and passive programs. The central meadow was most significant. Offering long views over a rolling expanse, it was intended for quiet gatherings at many scales.

Notions of the benefits of spending time in nature were at the forefront of the design, recognizing its positive impacts on mental and physical health over 100 years ago.

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Movement

Circulation was built without significant alteration to the land. Rather, "every turn was suggested by natural circumstances."* Primary loops fit closely to the topography, carefully tracing paths where the foot of hills and the upper edge of valleys met. Secondary spurs cut across grade at gentle slopes, sending visitors to a series of outlooks at higher elevations around the park. Though these served as pauses for orientation and prospect, the park's scenery was intended to be enjoyed through constant and easy movement.

Frederick Law Olmsted, Notes on Franklin Park

Views

Rural vistas within and beyond the park were essential to its purpose - “an illusion of unlimited space’ and ‘unbroken countryside” within the confines of a growing city. The site’s dense woodland - existing and created - played an important role in shaping these landscape scenes, promoting a sense of seclusion from the city and framing open spaces within the park.*

A long view across the Playstead provided a broad prospect through the Country Park and beyond to the Blue Hills of Milton; looking west, a distant wooded horizon was formed by the Forest Hills Cemetery and the Arnold Arboretum. Both views afforded to the site were uninterrupted by the city around it, demonstrating the relationship of the park to its larger landscape context and enhancing its experiential qualities.

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Materials & Built Elements

Olmsted took a strict attitude towards built elements in the park, establishing that materials and construction methods should not express wealth or elegance. All park architecture, walls, bridges, furnishings, and steps deferred to the power of picturesque scenery, and felt as if they had emerged from the landscape itself. Puddingstone mined from a quarry near Schoolmaster Hill was used to construct almost every built feature in the design, deepening the connection between park and place. With the exception of Forest Hills Entrance Bridge and Scarboro Pond Carriage Bridge, which were made of Cape Ann granite to match others in the Emerald Necklace, the remaining built elements in the park were all puddingstone construction.

6

**Frederick Law Olmsted, Notes on Franklin Park*

The Unmaking of a Plan

Changes to the Park Over Time

By the early 1900s, the major park circulation had been constructed, including establishing Glen Road between the Country Park and Ante Park. Program areas easily accessed by primary circulation routes, including the Playstead and Ellicottdale, were built and immediately put into use. Beyond these initial elements, the rest of the park's design was not constructed. Decreased funding and changes in municipal leadership started a chain of decision-making that slowly unravelled the park's coherence, the results of which are still evident today.

Beyond its initial construction, the park was never fully realized as intended. The emergence of different programmatic priorities produced a range of new ideas, interventions, and ownership in the park, ultimately impacting the collective experience today.


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Park Intentions

The original plan was never fully completed as designed, resulting in immediate trade-offs that compromised park experience in order to address immediate needs.

- Country Park
- Ante Park
- Park Admin & Maintenance Areas
- Water Bodies
- Deviations from the Olmsted Plan
- Roads & Paths
- Buildings & Structures


4

A

Early Introductions

The Greeting, a primary component of the original plan intended for strolling and programmed activities like concerts, play areas for children, and other exhibits, was never fully constructed. In 1912, the zoo, free and open to the public, was established with a design that respected the layout and orientation of The Greeting. At its peak, the original zoo drew millions of visitors to the park annually.


5

B&C

Changes in the Center

While the golf course was used for informal play early on, the official turnover of that acreage in the 1930s represented a significant shift in the park's purpose. Transforming such a large space into a single use meant most visitors could not experience the expansive and immersive park scenery as intended. Roads originally meant for carriages were widened for cars. The realignment and expansion of Circuit Drive introduced vehicles through the Country Park, creating a new division in the park's organization and character.


6

D&E

New Neighbors

The next two decades brought further additions to the park with the construction of White Stadium (1944-49) and Shattuck Hospital (1949), shifting both acreage and ownership, and once again shrinking the park experience. Park staff struggled to maintain order as automobile intrusion became pervasive throughout the park and safety issues increased. A decline in public funding led to deferred maintenance and decline.

Changing Communities & Cultures

The Park and its Neighbors Evolve Together

A park's design is one element of what shapes its character and identity, but its social, political, and demographic context have an equal role to play. The city and the park's surrounding neighborhoods have witnessed many changes throughout its 100+ year history, influencing how the park is used and by whom. These changes are both physical (evolving program) and cultural, as the community makes the park its own.

The neighborhoods around the park have and still represent a convergence of richly diverse cultures, but the city's disinvestment in these communities left the park in a state of neglect. Local activists and organizations, fed up with the lack of maintenance, funding, and crime, banded together and took action, reclaiming the park as their own.

1

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Boston Migration

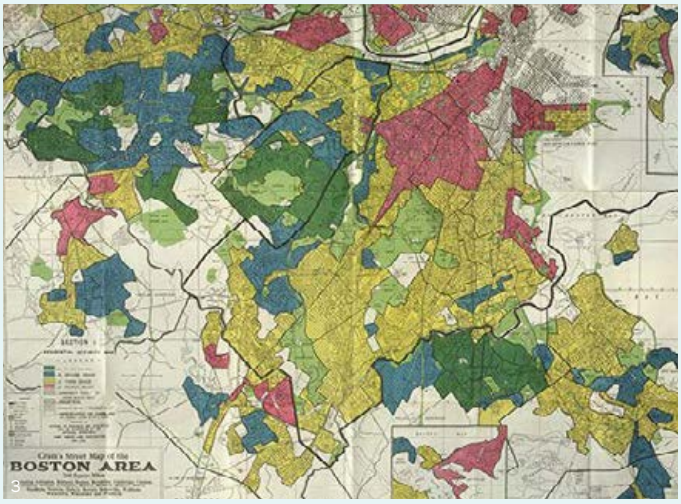
From 1820-1880, Irish and Jewish communities surrounded the Park, with Germans, Scandinavians, Italians, Latvians, and a substantial enclave of Maritime Canadians settling there as well. Boston annexed Roxbury in 1868, and by 1875, 500 acres of farmland were selected as the site for Franklin Park.

African Americans living in Beacon Hill and the South End and new Caribbean immigrants from West India, Jamaica, and Barbados, moved to areas around the park beginning in the 1930s. Continuing until after WWII, Roxbury was transformed into one of the Northeast's most prominent Black communities. By the 50s and 60s, community organizations formed to support the increasing Spanish-speaking population from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

Reclaiming the Park

By the 1970s, demographic shifts due to gentrification, redlining, white flight, and blockbusting further established Roxbury as a predominantly Black neighborhood. Since then, Dominican and Cape Verdean communities have grown to be some of the largest immigrant groups around the park, with Haitian communities living in nearby Mattapan.

As the park's neighborhoods became further established, the city's upkeep and investment in the park declined. What was once a symbol of public health and a shared resource, became a center of dangerous activity and a dumping ground. Local activists and organizations, like the Franklin Park Coalition, Elma Lewis, and the Franklin Park Golfers Association took action into their own hands, initiating clean-ups, programming and fundraising. Their work drew attention to the park, as it hosted important community events, like concerts, festivals, the Elma Lewis Playhouse, and Black Panther Rallies.



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The Franklin Park Coalition

The Coalition was founded in 1978 by a small group of community members who watched the park degrade after a decade of funding and staffing cuts were made to parks across the city. This instrumental group brought attention to years of neglect, advocating for funding from city leaders and recruiting volunteers to restore and build awareness of the park. The organization continues to play an active role in the park today.


4


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6

Until Today

An attitude of relative municipal disinvestment in the park continued until recently, causing deterioration of built features and ruins, decline of its woodlands, among other ecologies, and erosion of key spatial relationships. Significant investment is needed to repair a disjointed park experience, and re-reveal the powerful natural features of the site and the park's design.

To understand a park, you have to understand its

Communities

02 | People & Program

At Heart, A Neighborhood Park

Great parks are resilient, able to meet the changing needs of their communities. Understanding community perspectives is central to addressing future programming, activation, stewardship, and health and wellness. Franklin Park has been a well-used and beloved resource since its construction, but significant investment is needed if it is to meet the contemporary needs of its communities. Despite its size and central location, the park is still “off the radar”, with many associating Franklin Park only with the Zoo. Others pass through the park without fully experiencing the place. With busy lives, even neighbors in close proximity sometimes remain unaware of its offerings. Encouraging and welcoming all will continue to build life-time park users and important advocates and partners.

Between Many Communities

The Park's Neighbors

Nestled among many different neighborhoods, Franklin Park is surrounded by communities with a range of demographic patterns. Across multiple data points, the western side of Franklin Park continuously displays a different pattern than the north and east sides, which are more similar demographically, home to higher percentages of communities of color, households with children, and with generally lower income. Despite this divide, Franklin Park's open spaces and programs welcome neighbors from all areas.

The park's amenities and programs draw visitors from across the region, but perhaps its most important role is as a neighborhood park for the surrounding communities. The community described its ability to welcome people of all backgrounds and identities. But, access to certain amenities within the park are more proximate for some than others.

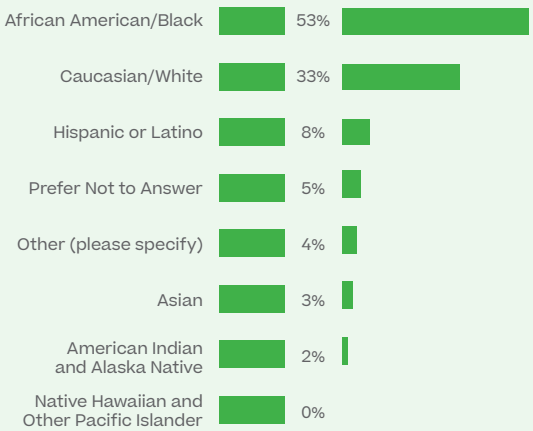
Community Memory

"Franklin Park has been an urban respite for Black and Latino families when we weren't welcomed at other city parks. Any improvements, should engage people from Black and Latino communities to ensure the traditions and needs of our communities are continued to be met."

-Action Plan Survey Respondent

Survey Respondents

Over half of the Action Plan Survey participants identify as African American or Black.



77%

of Action Plan survey respondents live in a neighborhood that touches Franklin Park

Race and income are inverted on either side of Franklin Park

72% of the surrounding residents are persons of color, with the most communities of color living to the North and East of the park. In contrast, the West has a higher concentration of households with above median income.

Race excluding "white alone"
ACS 2017

- 1-25%
- 25 - 50%
- 50 - 75%
- 75 - 100%

Median household income, 12 months
ACS 2017

- Greater than median $75,883

More renters live on the North and East sides of Franklin Park

Over 75% of housing units along much of the North and East edges are renter occupied. In these areas, rapid growth can create challenges related to displacement and inequity. On the lower East edge, there is also a concentration households with limited English.

Renter occupied housing units
ACS 2017

- 1-25%
- 25 - 50%
- 50 - 75%
- 75 - 100%

Households with limited English speaking status
ACS 2017

- Greater than 75% of households

Supporting Healthier Communities

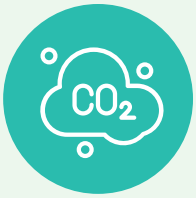
Public Health Around Franklin Park

Health disparities across most categories mirror the historical inequities brought about by generations of institutional racism, structural barriers, and discriminatory policies. Health clinics surrounding the park expressed that if investments in Franklin Park increase gentrification-related displacement of existing neighborhoods, this will significantly damage public health outcomes. Franklin Park can provide a location for programming and partnerships that address health disparities and the top factors contributing to healthy communities.

Parks have long been understood to be contributors to community health. With increased traffic, urban density, and a prevalence of stress and addiction in daily lives, we see this need perhaps more than ever. For the communities around the park and the broader city, there are many opportunities to increase health-related programming and partnerships.

What is the relationship between public health and parks?

Parks have a big role to play in advancing public health for those who live near or visit them. Trees sequester carbon, reduce the impacts of air pollution and asthma, and provide shade during the summer to reduce the effects of heat islands. Being outdoors and in nature reinforces positive mental health and brings people together to create a stronger sense of community.

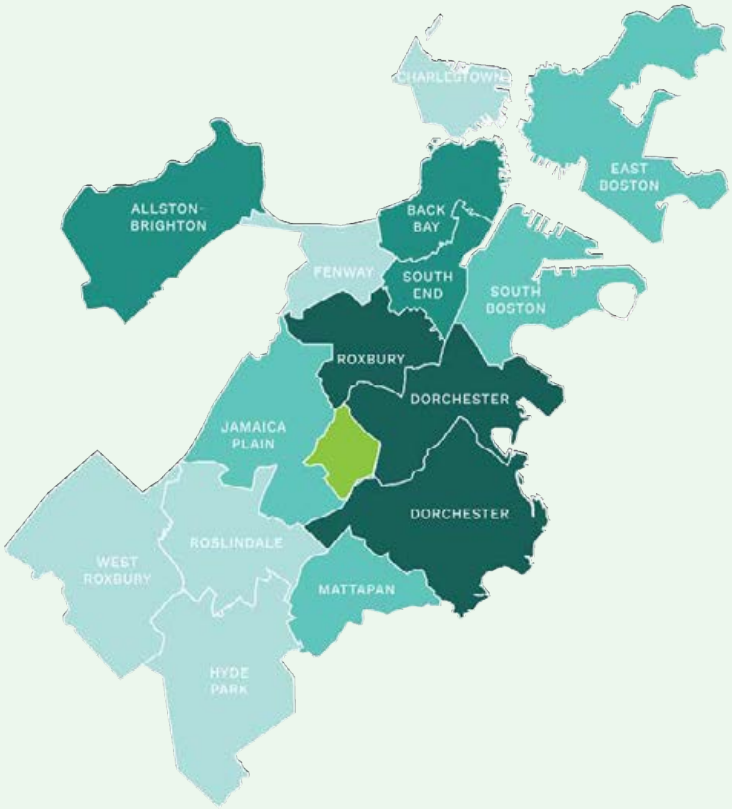


Residents in the five neighborhoods around Franklin Park listed either **outdoor air pollution from vehicles** or **outdoor noise pollution from vehicles** as the top environmental health concern at home.

When surveyed by the Boston Public Health Commission, Boston residents rated **environmental quality as their 5th most important concern**.

Residents in the five neighborhoods around Franklin Park listed either **affordable housing** or **access to health care** as the most important factor that defines a "healthy community." Green space was not ranked in the top factors.

Source: Boston CHNA Community Survey 2019.



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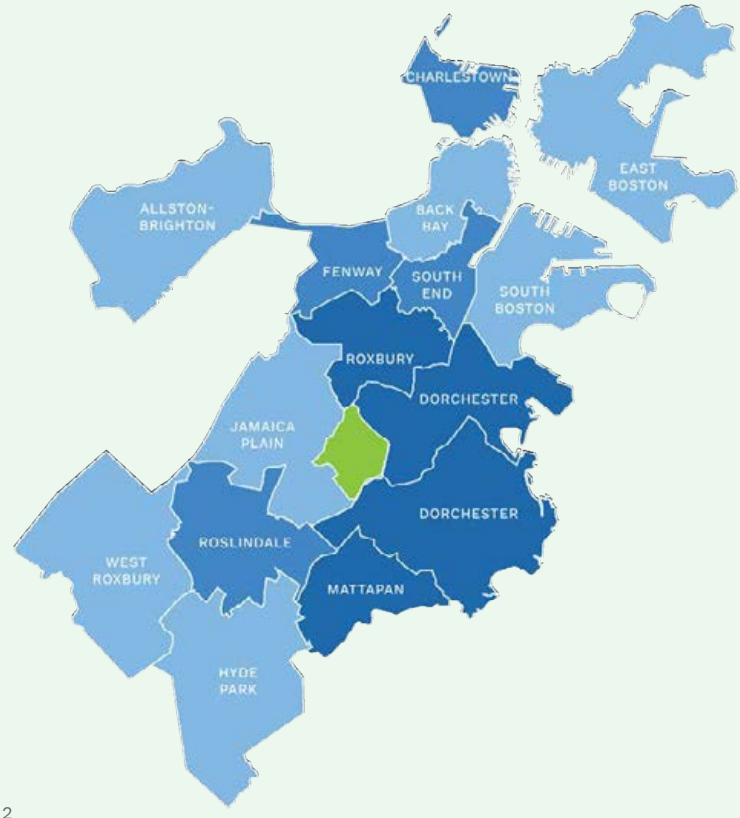
Health Outcomes

The neighborhoods around Franklin Park see some of the highest chronic disease hospitalization, overcrowding, mold hazards/violations, and asthma emergency department visits among 5-17 year-olds. Additionally, relief from environmental concerns (noise, fumes, and heat) is also needed in the neighborhoods surrounding the park. These health outcomes existed before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mold Hazard/Violations by Neighborhood, 2012-2016

- 35-59
- 27-34
- 17-26
- 9-16



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Asthma Emergency Department Visits among 5-17 Year Olds by Neighborhood, 2014-2015

- Higher than the rest of Boston
- Similar to the rest of Boston
- Lower than the rest of Boston

Programs and Opportunities

Existing health-related activities in the park include walking groups, line dancing, tennis and occasional nature-education cross-programming with the Appalachian Mountain Club for youth. There are opportunities to work with clinics to provide support for health-related programming, including trauma management and youth “greencorps” jobs on park stewardship and safety.

Many Parks in One

Places in the Park

Within Franklin Park itself, there are a variety of places, each with its own character and landmarks. In addition, there are other entities and stakeholders that have a place within the park.


1
El Parquesito Play Area


2
The Bear Dens


3
White Stadium


4
Tiffany Moore Play Area

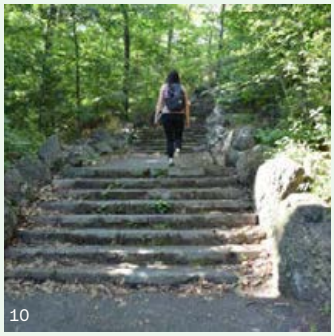

5
The Overlook Ruins


6
The Playstead


7
The Wilderness


8
The Franklin Park Zoo


9
Schoolmaster Hill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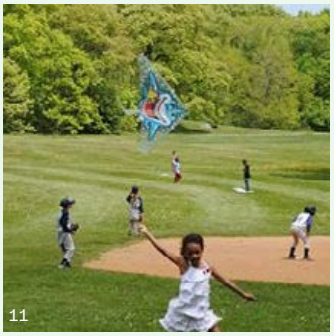
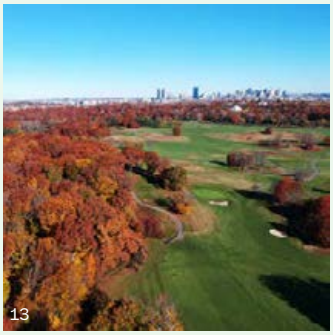
99 Steps

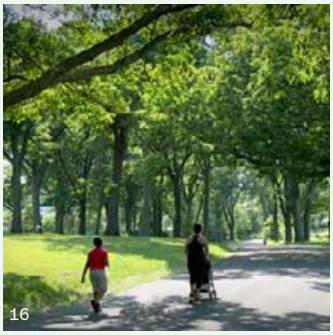

11
Ellicottdale


12
Refectory Hill


13
William J. Devine Golf Course


14
Shattuck Picnic Grove


15
Scarboro Hill


16
The Circuit Loop


17
Shattuck Hospital


18
American Legion Play Area


19
Scarboro Pond


20
Maintenance Yard

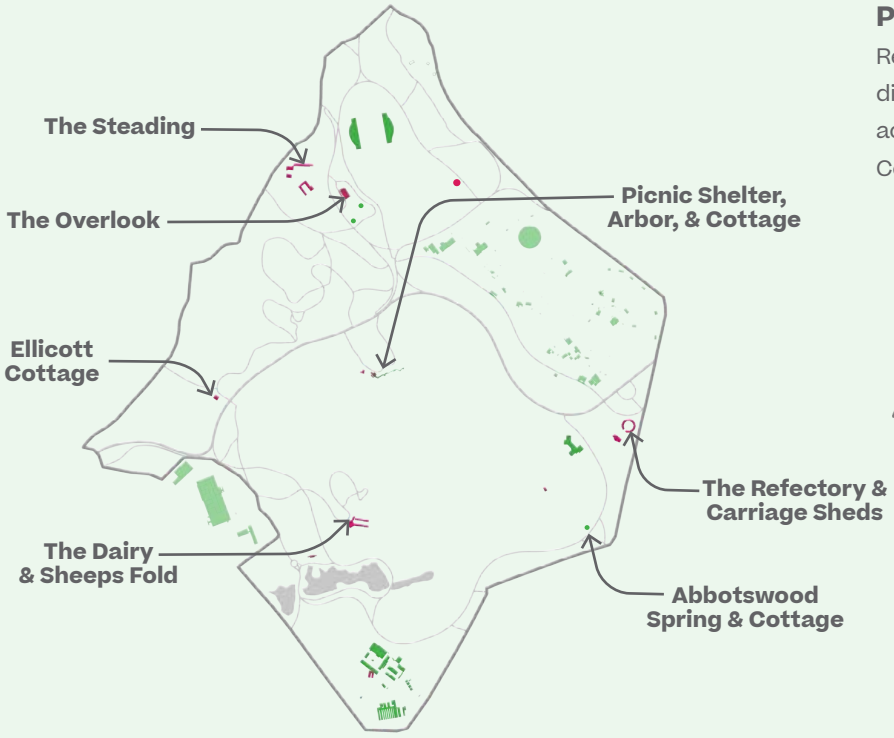
Provide Shelter & Refreshment

The Role of Park Architecture Past & Present

The buildings that emerged out of the original plan and were constructed within the first 30 years of the park's history. Park structures were carefully sited and built of puddingstone harvested from the park to maintain a quiet and natural character that did not detract from the landscape, while providing comforts to visitors, like lockers, bathrooms, refreshments, and shade.

The design of early built elements in the park was discrete in character. Location was carefully considered, both in how they were fitted to the site and in their distribution, providing refreshment and comfort to visitors throughout. Today, the vast majority of these buildings and the resources they provided - food, water, restrooms, and shade - do not exist in the park.


1



Park Amenities

Resources that were intended to be repeatedly distributed throughout the park for easy access are primarily concentrated in the Golf Course Clubhouse today.

- Restrooms
- Administrative Offices
- Food & Drink
- Learning
- Water Fountain
- Equipment Rental
- Seating & Overlook

Park Architecture & Structures

- Existing Park Architecture & Structures
- Former Park Architecture & Structures (includes items intended, but never constructed)


2

The Golf Course Clubhouse

The original Golf Course Clubhouse was built in 1911 and was subsequently destroyed in WWII by artillery practice. The second clubhouse was built in 1949 and burned down suspiciously in 1975. The clubhouse operated within the burned out shell of the building until the current clubhouse was built anew in 1998. Today, it provides an event rental space, a cafe, golf and other equipment rental, and offices for the golf course. It houses the only public restroom within the entire park.


3

The Overlook Shelter

The Overlook Shelter, constructed on and of puddingstone overlooking the Playstead, was the only building Olmsted ever designed in his career. Serving as a base for park police, it also provided lockers, equipment storage and rentals, and restrooms at the basement level which could be accessed from the Playstead. A promenade with seating provided a viewing area for activities occurring on the fields below.


4

The Refectory

The Refectory was conceived by Olmsted as a place where, “refreshments [would] be served... under a large pergola or vine-clad trellis...” It was open between 1896-1906, after which it became a branch of the Public Library and eventually closed due to maintenance issues in 1976.


5

Cottages, including the one on Schoolmaster Hill, were located near programmed and activity areas. Often multi-use, they served as small offices and meeting places, offered food and free hot water, and provided equipment rentals for lawn sports and changing rooms. In 1930, the Schoolmaster Hill Cottage succumbed to fire.


6

Springs

Drinking fountains, the ‘utilitarian equipment of the place’, were distributed throughout to provide a source of water to park visitors. They also provided neighbors with running water, which many of them did not have in their homes. The Abbotswood Spring, was referred to as the ‘Healing Spring’ and was believed to have restorative qualities.

A Call to Action

Community Stewards

The work of local activists and organizations that dedicated their time and energy has left a long-lasting impact on the park. Witnessing disinvestment in their communities in the 1960s and 70s, these individuals and groups, among others, self-organized to maintain facilities, develop programming, and engage youth in paid training programs. Their legacy of stewardship and action has influenced generations of community-building and inspired the events that continue to activate the park today.

In response to disinvestment in the park, people in the surrounding communities self-organized to ensure that local residents were still served. These individuals and the organizations and partnerships they formed were instrumental in the advocacy, stewardship, and action that brought the park out of a state of neglect, and many are still active today.

1

Elma Lewis & The Playhouse in the Park

Elma Lewis was an artist, educator, and bridge leadership activist. In the 1950s, she founded the Elma Lewis School for Fine and Performing Arts, dedicated to teaching thousands of local African-American children and adults creative arts and cultural history. She was instrumental in reintroducing programming into the park for all ages through her 'Playhouse in the Park', which combined educational, cultural, and vocational initiatives.

2

Richard Heath

With a small group of fellow community members, including Elma Lewis, Richard Heath formed the park's first constituency group, the Franklin Park Coalition, in 1975. After watching the park degrade due to a lack of funding, he raised hundreds of thousands of dollars over many years to hire work crews to take care of the park. His focus on looking for answers through the coalition transformed the park. Today, any park regular is likely to run into him on a nice afternoon – camera in hand.

3

Boston Zoological Society

For over a decade, the Boston Zoological Society (1970) supported upkeep of the park's entrances and woodlands around the zoo, while the state continued to provide funding for the facility.

4

Augusta Bailey & The Roxbury Beautification Project

Founded in 1960s as a community garden movement, Augusta Bailey formed the Roxbury Beautification Project. The group advocated for a Roxbury heritage trail connecting Franklin Park to destinations throughout the neighborhood.

5

6

The Neighborhood Arts Council & Summerthing

Modeled after the Elma Lewis Playhouse in the Park, the Summerthing concert series was initiated by The Neighborhood Arts Council. Focused on bringing art, theater, and music into Boston's neighborhoods, this organization brought programming to Franklin Park beginning in 1968.

Paul Washington & The Boston Pro-Am Golf Association

The club was founded in 1953 by Black pro-golfer Paul Washington. The inclusion of Black golfers in Franklin Park was also reflected in the visitors to the park itself in the mid-1960s.

Bob McCoy & The Franklin Park Golfers Association

A primarily Black golfers organization was founded in 1967 to maintain the defunded golf course. In 1982, they teamed up with Bob McCoy, the highest-ranking African-American ever in the City of Boston government, to leverage funding to revive the golf course. It officially reopened on July 31, 1989.

Proximity Determines Use

Accessing Key Sites

While many sides of Franklin Park are technically accessible on foot, almost two thirds of survey respondents stated they entered through Blue Hill Avenue — the majority of which arrived by car. There is an opportunity for improvements along the edges and better connections across the park.

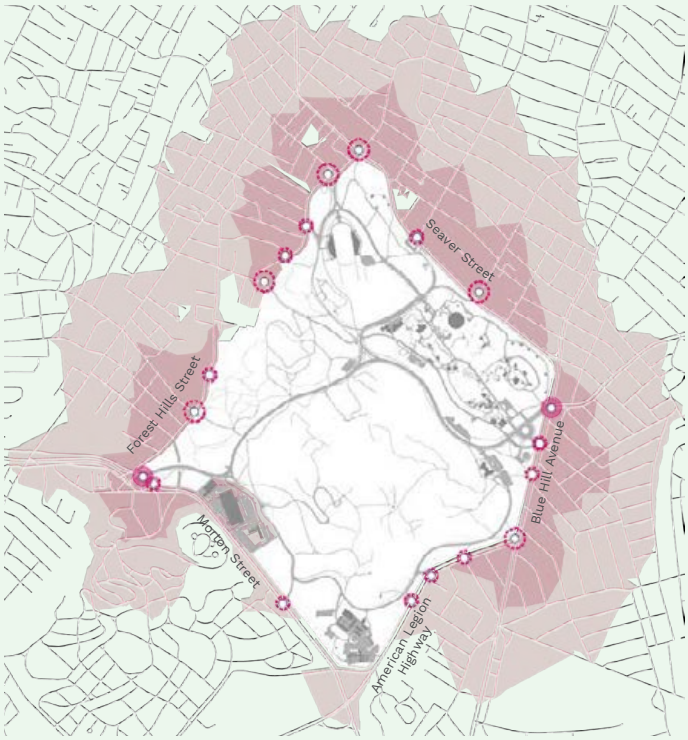
Neighbors entering on the West and North are within a close walk to secluded natural areas and active playspaces and sports fields. East arrival puts visitors in close proximity to special attractions, but lacks an easy route to a quiet walk in the woods. Equal access to the Circuit Loop makes it a popular destination and a place for neighbors to come together.

70%

of survey respondents said that the thing they appreciate most about Franklin Park is the **proximity to where they live.** This was the 3rd overall.

35%

of survey respondents who live close to the park **visit at least weekly**



Walking to the Park

5 Minute Walk

10 Minute Walk

Pedestrian Gateway

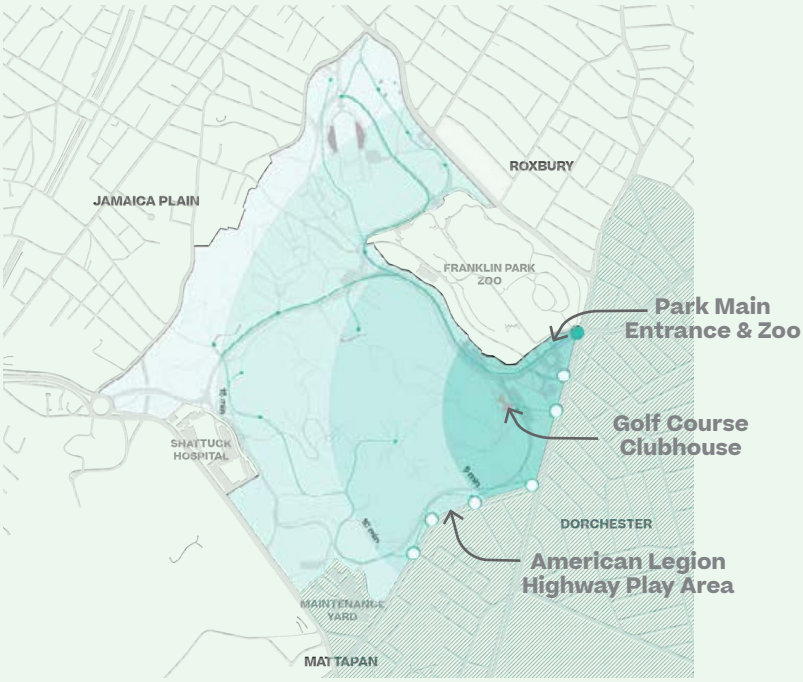
Vehicular Gateway

Arriving from the West

5 Minute Walk
10 Minute Walk
15 Minute Walk
20 Minute Walk
Vehicular Gateway & Driving Route
Pedestrian Gateway & Walking Route

Arriving from the North

5 Minute Walk
10 Minute Walk
15 Minute Walk
20 Minute Walk
Vehicular Gateway & Driving Route
Pedestrian Gateway & Walking Route



Arriving from the East & South

5 Minute Walk
10 Minute Walk
15 Minute Walk
20 Minute Walk
Vehicular Gateway & Driving Route
Pedestrian Gateway & Walking Route

Walk Times to Park Destinations

Distance mapping to primary park destinations and points of interests from each edge helps to interpret why some neighbors use certain parts of the park more than others.

From the West

Visitors approaching from the West are primarily neighbors, as there is no though-traffic on this edge. They have the fastest escape to a secluded experience in nature.

From the North

The North edge only has two main entries, but both are an easy and fast route to The Playstead and the Stadium. Entering from the North also brings you to Long Crouch Woods and the edge of the Wilderness.

From the East & South

The main entrance to the park is along the East edge, but access to quieter walking trails is limited. The main Circuit Loop Path is a popular destination. Direct access into the park from the south is blocked by the maintenance yard, and presents an opportunity to make better connections for the Mattapan community.

Distributed Assets

Park Resources

Not only does Franklin Park touch various neighborhoods and communities, but it also encompasses other entities including the Golf Course, the Zoo, Shattuck Hospital, and the maintenance yard. The remaining parkland includes miles of trails and roadways, nine recreation fields and courts, and approximately one thousand parking spaces. The mapping inventory of Franklin Park illuminated the spatial organization and relationships of all of the park's amenities and will highlight opportunities for future investments.

The array of programming and experiences to be had at Franklin Park is unparalleled, yet some activities are closer and more convenient depending on where you enter the park. Survey responses showed a clear pattern that proximity to park entrances and amenities had a strong impact on what spaces different neighborhoods use the most.

Park Breakdown by Acres

Park Space - 289 Acres

220 acres of wooded area

19 acres of mown lawn

7.5 acres of water bodies

Franklin Park Zoo*

72 acres

White Stadium*

8.5 acres

Shattuck Hospital*

12 acres

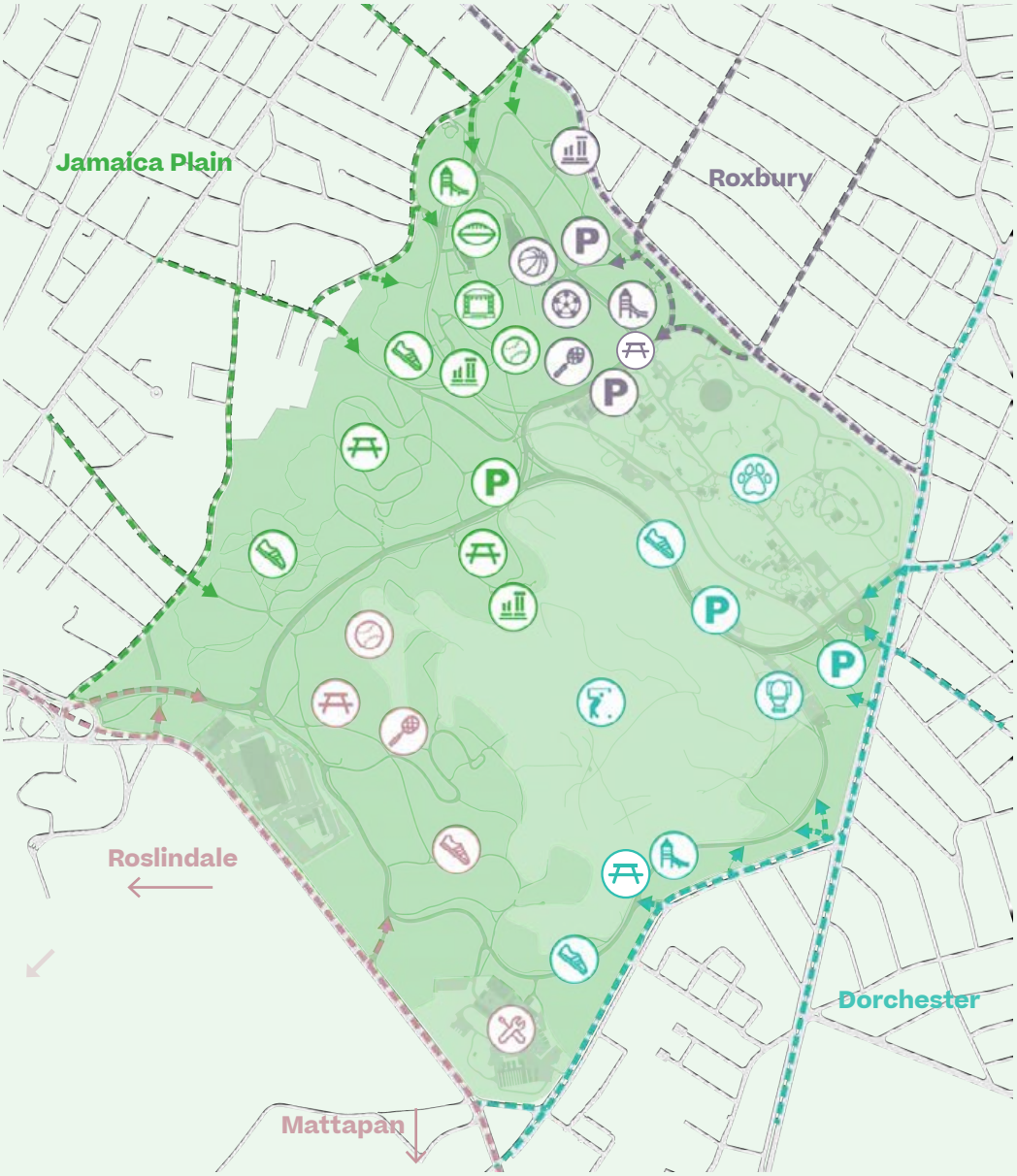
Maintenance Yard*

17 acres

Golf Course*

107 acres

*Outside the scope of the Action Plan



Amenities

3		Baseball & Softball Fields	1		Stages
2		Basketball Courts	3		Structures (including ruins)
1		Multi-Purpose Fields	4		Tennis Courts
5		Picnic Areas			
3		Playgrounds			
1		Public Restrooms			
1		Golf Course			
1		Zoo			
1		Maintenance yard			

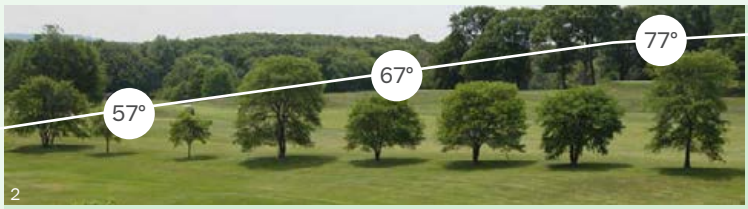
Access

2.6 miles		Limited Access Road (pedestrian & service vehicles)	
~1,000 spaces	P	Parking	
2.55 miles		Public Vehicular Road	
11.5 piles		Trails/Sidewalks	

A Slow Fall & Winter

Seasonality of Existing Programs

The 2019 park reservations and events, including those organized by park stakeholders like the Franklin Park Coalition, show a concentration of programming in the spring and summer months and more limited park activation in the fall and winter. Other stakeholders including White Stadium, the Golf Course, and the Zoo provide parallel programming that impacts the use of the park and has a similar seasonal pattern.



JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN

Festivals & Gatherings

Winter Festival

Fairy House Building Festival

Party in the Park

Kite & Bike Festival

Juneteenth

Cookouts, picnics, reunions, birthday parties

Athletics & Fitness

Walks

Doyle's Road Race

Weekdays Playstead

Softball

Boston Public Schools

Assorted field sports

Park Stakeholder Events

Zoo Events

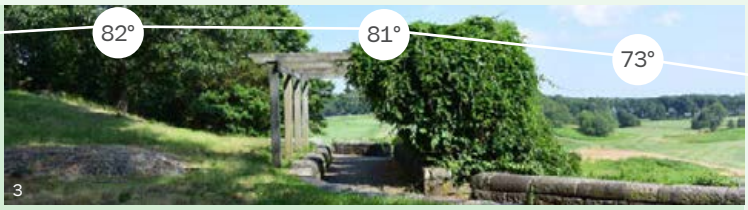
Zoo School Break Program

Zoo School Break Program

Golf Season

86% of users visit in the summer. Many respondents cited limited programming for not visiting year-round.

The **afternoon is the most popular time** to visit the park, followed by the morning, and lastly the evening.



JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

BAMS Fest
Caribbean Festival
Gospel Festival
Barbados Festival Day
Childrens' Festival
Elma Lewis Playhouse Programs
Line Dancing, Fitness, Yoga
Golf Lessons
B.A.A. Half Marathon
XC Meets, Races, Walks
Turkey Trot
Tennis (including the Franklin Park Tennis Association)
Zoo Free Fun Friday
White Stadium Summer Camp
White Stadium Friday Night Football

Park Programming
In-Park Stakeholder Programming

Active Edges

Programs, Events, & Intensity of Use

The Boston Parks Department accepts reservations for requests ranging from events to athletics to cookouts in Franklin Park. The reservations are one way to look at park use and show how different areas within the park attract the most visitors and create pulses of activity. Overall land area and amenities inform, but do not directly relate to the most active areas. There is a concentration of activities along the western edge as well as the north and east. Along the southern boundary, the hospital and parks maintenance yard limit public access and use.

The variety of programs on the western side of the park spans the broadest range of offerings, from solo hikes and cross-country meets to youth play spaces. In contrast, the narrower band of park on the eastern edge offers a more focused set of activities, tied to families, play, and the zoo. The Action Plan is a chance to explore bringing the experience of nature more directly east as well as improve connections across the park.

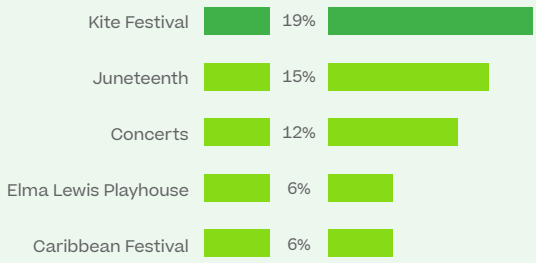
Community Memory

"Every memory there is important. When we had no car, the park was our fun. We created games, ran track and had family barbeques. The kite festival was always huge for us growing up!."

-Action Plan Survey Respondent

Top Festivals and Events

The top 5 special events or festivals survey respondents said they attend:



RESERVATIONS: EVENTS, OPEN SPACE, & TRAILS

50-99 Reservations

25-49 Reservations

10-24 Reservations

<10 Reservations

Areas of Informal Use

*2019 Reservation Data

Distributed Events

The trails and less structured green spaces offer areas for people to engage in infrequent or seasonal park-wide events and festivals, athletic competitions, and larger gatherings of family and friends. These happen alongside more unstructured uses including bird watching, exploring, and cross country skiing.

Green Spaces and Trails

The park reservations show that 20% of the events occur here with 44% of stated attendees. The Cross Country Course sees seasonal use in September and October while the other places have more use year-round.

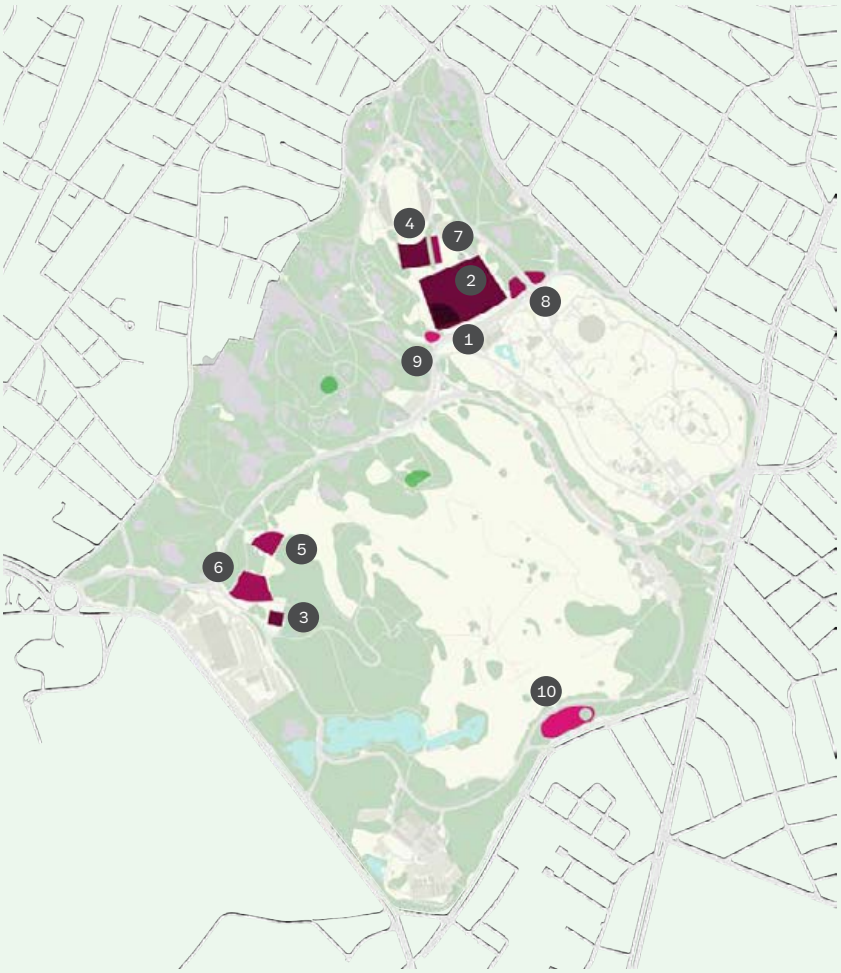
1. Cross Country Course
2. Schoolmaster Hill
3. Refectory Hill
4. Adj. White Stadium
5. The Overlook
6. Circuit Loop
7. Scarboro Hill and Paths
8. Playstead
9. Bear Cage Hill
10. Ellicott Dale
11. The Wilderness

Park Places: White Stadium

The George Robert White Schoolboy Stadium was built in 1945 and was named for a local philanthropist. It is owned and operated by Boston Public Schools and has hosted hundreds of high school sporting events. White Stadium hosted Black Panther rallies and big concerts in the 1970s and partnered with the Elma Lewis School of Fine Arts to host a 1974 soul concert with big names like Sly and the Family Stone.

1

RESERVATIONS: FIELDS, COURTS, & PICNIC AREAS



- 150-169 Reservations
- 100-149 Reservations
- 50-99 Reservation
- 25-49 Reservations
- 10-24 Reservations
- <10 Reservations
- Areas of Informal Use

2019 Reservation Data

Concentrated Activity

Some of the smallest areas in the park receive the most intense and consistent number of reservations. The events that occur here range from youth and adult sports to family barbecues, reunions, and birthday parties.

Sports and Picnic Spots

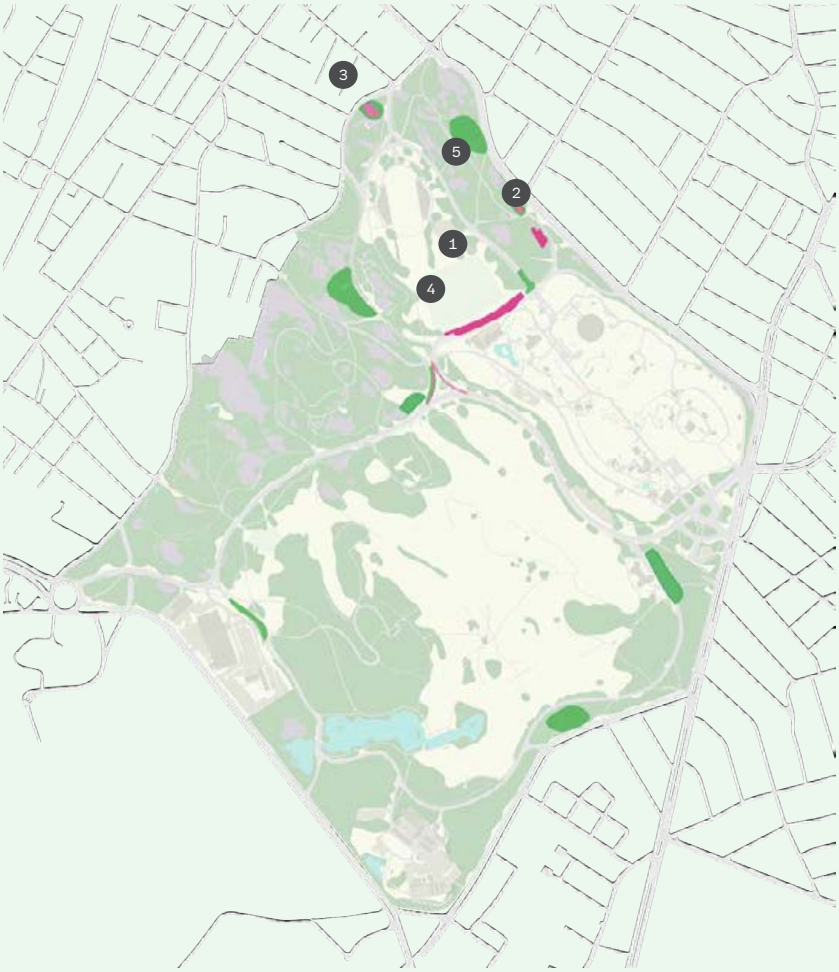
The park reservations show that 76% of the events occur here with 50% of stated attendees. There are more events during the spring and summer. There is more softball use in the spring while tennis reservations peak in August.

1. Softball
2. Softball / Cricket Playstead
3. Shattuck Tennis
4. Playstead Athletic Field
5. Softball Ellicottdale
6. Shattuck Picnic Area
7. Playstead Tennis
8. Playstead Picnic Area
9. Valley Gates Picnic / Parking
10. American Legion Picnic Area

Park Places: Elma Lewis Playhouse

The Elma Lewis School of Fine and Performing Arts erected the Playhouse stage to create an outdoor venue for students to perform for visitors. The Elma Lewis Playhouse continues to host events for children and adults throughout the summer months.

RESERVATIONS: PARKING LOTS & PLAYGROUNDS



10-24 Reservations

<10 Reservations

Areas of Informal Use

*2019 Reservation Data

Pockets of Informal Use

Some of the locations that saw the fewest event reservations in 2019 are supplemented by other spaces that provide similar activities. For example, the Wilderness and the Bear Cages can be places for play and exploration. Additionally, parking lots and roadways provide space for other uses like car cleaning or tailgating.

Playgrounds and Parking Lots

The park reservations show that <4% of the events occur here with 8% of stated attendees. The parking lots see the most reservations in May and June when they are reserved for park-wide festivals.

1. Playstead Parking (White Stadium)
2. Tiffany Moore Playground
3. El Parquesito de la Hermanidad
4. Jewish War Veteran Memorial Drive
5. Seaver Street Parking

Park Places: Schoolmaster Hill

Schoolmaster Hill marks the location where Ralph Waldo Emerson lived for two years while a school teacher in nearby Roxbury before the park was constructed. A plaque with a segment of one of his poems commemorates his time there. Today, spaces like this, the parking lots and other unprogrammed spaces become places for informal gathering and self-guided adventures.


2


3

Community Activities

Feedback on Current & Future Use

People's experiences in Franklin Park have changed over time in response to evolving community needs and amenities the park offers. To understand how people use the park today, questions about park experiences, memories, and favorite activities were posed in the community survey, public workshops, and other forms of engagement. The responses captured a range of past, present, and aspirational uses of the park.

While exercise is the top activity people typically enjoy in Franklin Park, users also consistently attend special events or festivals. These two patterns -the everyday visitor and infrequent user - were also reflected in other outreach. Better communication and more everyday activities for all seasons were requested, along with more events and event spaces.

55%

of survey respondents want Franklin Park to continue to be a **magnet for diverse groups, a meeting ground for neighbors, and a unifying destination for area residents and visitors**.

Neighborhood Favorites

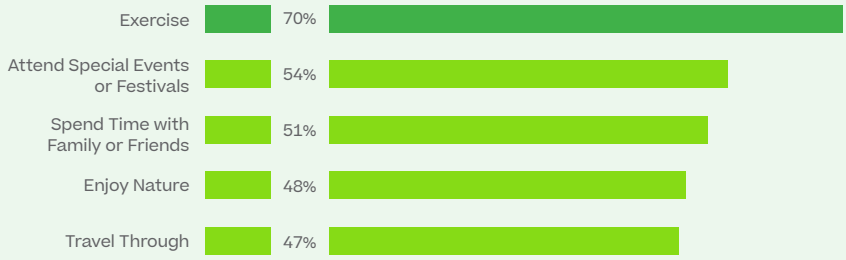
People from all neighborhoods often visit the Zoo and Circuit Path, while Jamaica Plain residents are the primary visitors of the western edge of the Park, including the Wilderness. When asked which places they typically visit in the park, more than 30% of survey respondents from each surrounding neighborhood said they visit these locations.

- Jamaica Plain
- Roxbury
- Dorchester
- Mattapan
- Roslindale

1

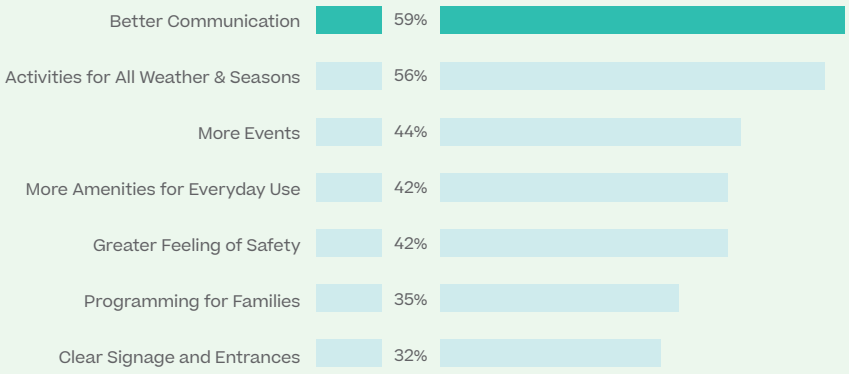
Current Park Uses

Exercise is the top activity that people usually do in Franklin Park. The only other activity that is consistently in the top 5 across demographics is attending special events or festivals.



Encouragement to Visit or Spend More Time in the Park

Raising awareness of the park's offerings paired with more opportunities for people to visit the park daily and year-round would encourage visitors to come and spend more time in Franklin Park.



Answers prioritized by more than 25% of Action Plan Survey respondents.

2

Supporting Activity & Use

Infrastructure & Utilities

There are four main utility dense areas: White Stadium, the Maintenance Yard, the Golf Course, and the main entrance at Peabody Circle. Electrical infrastructure runs along major roadways and walking trails around the golf course and stadium. The wilderness does not contain any infrastructure. Water lines are located near buildings, like the Stadium, Zoo, Clubhouse, and Circuit Drive, and sewer is available in Ellicottdale and the Playstead.

With major events, festivals, and plays, there is a need for utilities and services to support programming as well as meet the essential needs of visitors. Today, a lack of infrastructure — lighting, water fountains, bathrooms, and electrical jacks, among others — deters individuals and organizations from using the park, and places extra stress on maintenance staff.

#1

Bathrooms were the top investment prioritized by survey respondents (63% overall), and was consistently the top across demographics.

What needs the most help?

Pathways & Circulation
45% of stairs, ramps, & roads are in poor condition.

Furnishings
26.5% of benches, tables, bollards, & bins are in poor condition.

Utilities
13.8% of sewage, lights, power, restrooms & fountains are in poor condition.


1
Pathways in The Wilderness


2
Old picnic area on Hagborne Hill


3
Temporary restroom at Ellicottdale

Park Utilities

- Electrical
- Sanitary Sewer
- Water
- Gas

Water/Sewer Utilities

Existing water infrastructure is located adjacent to existing buildings, White Stadium, in the zoo, at the golf course clubhouse, and along Circuit Drive. There is also an extensive irrigation system that serves the golf course.

Sewer infrastructure appears to be available in Ellicottdale and The Playstead. There is only one location with permanent bathrooms (Golf Course Clubhouse) and existing temporary toilets were observed in Ellicottdale indicating a possible need for rest room facilities.

Electric Utilities

Electric infrastructure covers the major roadways and walking trails around the golf course and White Stadium; there is no electric infrastructure within the Wilderness.

Better electric service to the Playstead, and lighting in the Wilderness and Shattuck tennis courts could enable more use of these spaces during the evenings and create safe spaces for people to enjoy nature and participate in recreation.

Inconsistent & Limiting

Safety & Lighting

Lighting should enhance a sense of security by allowing pedestrians to easily perceive their immediate surroundings. The perception of safety is highly dependent on uniformity, clear viewsheds, reduced glare, quality and color of the light, and visual hierarchy to support wayfinding. Lighting challenges in the park today include varying light fixtures with different color temperatures, a lack of uniformity and hierarchy, overgrown vegetation and dark areas, broken fixtures, and glare.

Lighting in the park is inconsistent or absent in key areas, like entries, parking, and main pedestrian paths, contributing to perceptions that visiting or travelling through the park in the evening is unsafe. Improving the quality, distribution, and uniformity of lighting can guide use and circulation, and enhance a sense of safety in the park.

#5

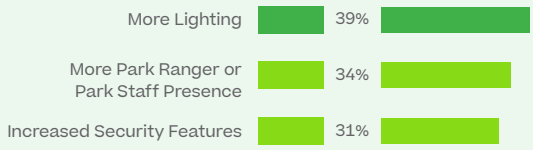
A **greater feeling of safety** was ranked fifth at 42% for what would encourage survey respondents to visit and spend more time in the park.

Light Fixtures

- Parking and Roadway Lighting - Inside Park
- Parking and Roadway Lighting - Outside Park
- Pathway Lighting
- Service and Stadium Lighting

Top Park Improvements

The following were listed in the top 10 park improvements:




1


2

Circuit Drive

The street lighting on Circuit Drive is not consistent. In some areas, the poles are spaced more than 200 feet apart. Large stretches of darkness, contrasted by small pockets of bright light create challenging conditions for drivers and increase the possibility of car accidents. The pedestrian path does not have concentrated light at all, making bus stops and walking to parking lots in the evening feel uncomfortable.


3


4

Pathways & Parking

The majority of areas around walkways adjacent to Circuit Drive are completely dark, increasing the sense of insecurity and discouraging pedestrian use at night. Areas at the park's main entrance, including the bus stop and parking lots at Peabody Circle are unlit, which creates a significant sense of unease at an important threshold where visitors should feel welcomed.


5


6

The Playstead

Six different combinations of fixtures and poles with varying color temperatures are in use around the Playstead. This variety makes it difficult to achieve a unified aesthetic in the park. The combination of different solutions creates a visual discomfort that fatigues visitors' eyes and decreases their sense of safety. Popular areas such as the Seaver St. playground and Overlook ruins are surrounded by overgrown vegetation that blocks lighting.

To understand a park, you have to understand its

Connections

03 | Access & Movement

Assets Become Barriers

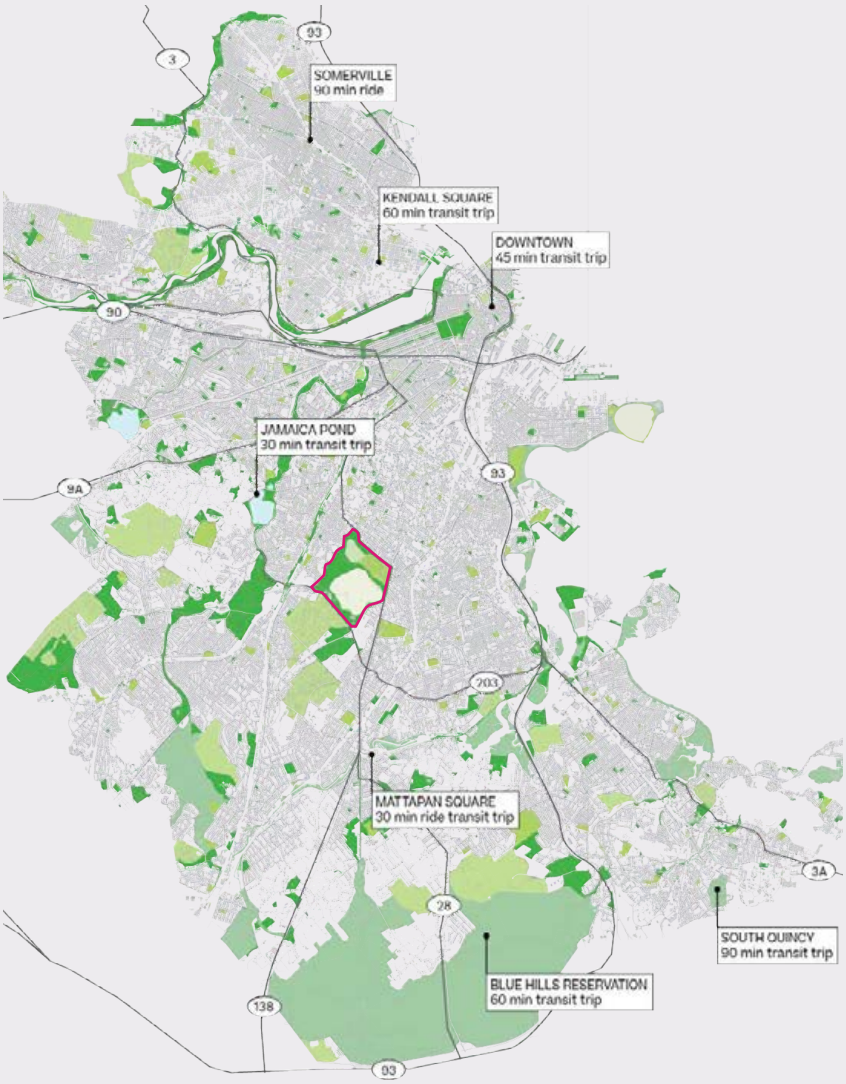
Olmsted's original design for Franklin Park relied on a strong enclosure of perimeter walls, vegetation, and topography to fashion an internalized scenic escape from the crowded conditions of the 19th-century city. As communities continued to grow and cars took precedence, busy roads and difficult crossings developed, further separating the park from its neighbors. In the park, Circuit Drive became a significant divider, clear pedestrian circulation eroded, and control of park acreage diversified. These conditions combined to limit the free flow of movement. Better connections to the neighborhoods and city-wide transit systems, clearer and better connected in-park circulation and consistent signage would do a lot to reconnect with the park with its neighbors, welcome visitors from near and far, and restore the park's coherence.

Regional Asset, Neighborhood Park

The City's Largest Open Space

As Boston's largest open space and the final link of The Emerald Necklace, Franklin Park draws visitors from the neighborhood, the city, and the region. At 500+ acres, it's scale makes it a particularly important open space resource for the communities to its east, who lack access to larger parks and natural areas within their neighborhoods.

The park must first and foremost serve its surrounding neighborhoods, but the opportunity exists to welcome regional communities and visitors to connect with a landscape unlike anywhere else in the city.



Regional Transit Connections

Franklin Park is accessible to many communities within a 90-minute transit ride.

Regional Open Space Network (left)

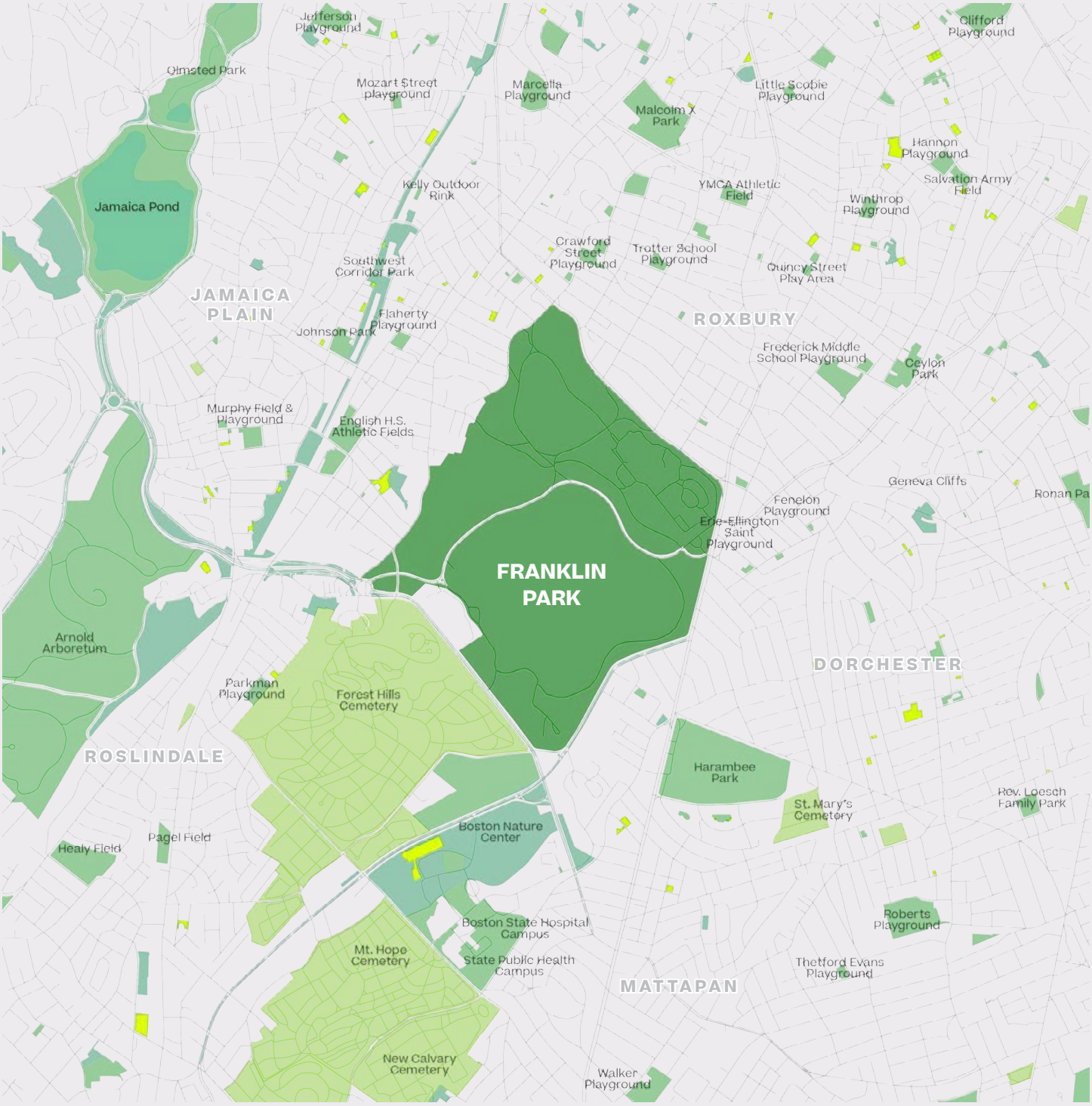
- Parks, Playgrounds, Gardens
- Cemeteries
- Community Amenities and Recreation
- Nature Reserves
- Golf Courses

Open Space Connections

Franklin Park is surrounded by a diverse array of neighborhood open spaces. It is also integral to a larger open space network extending to the Charles River (via the Emerald Necklace) and Downtown Boston (via the Southwest Corridor).

Surrounding Open Space Network (right)

- Franklin Park
- Parks and Playgrounds
- Parkways and Urban Wilds
- Cemeteries
- Community Gardens

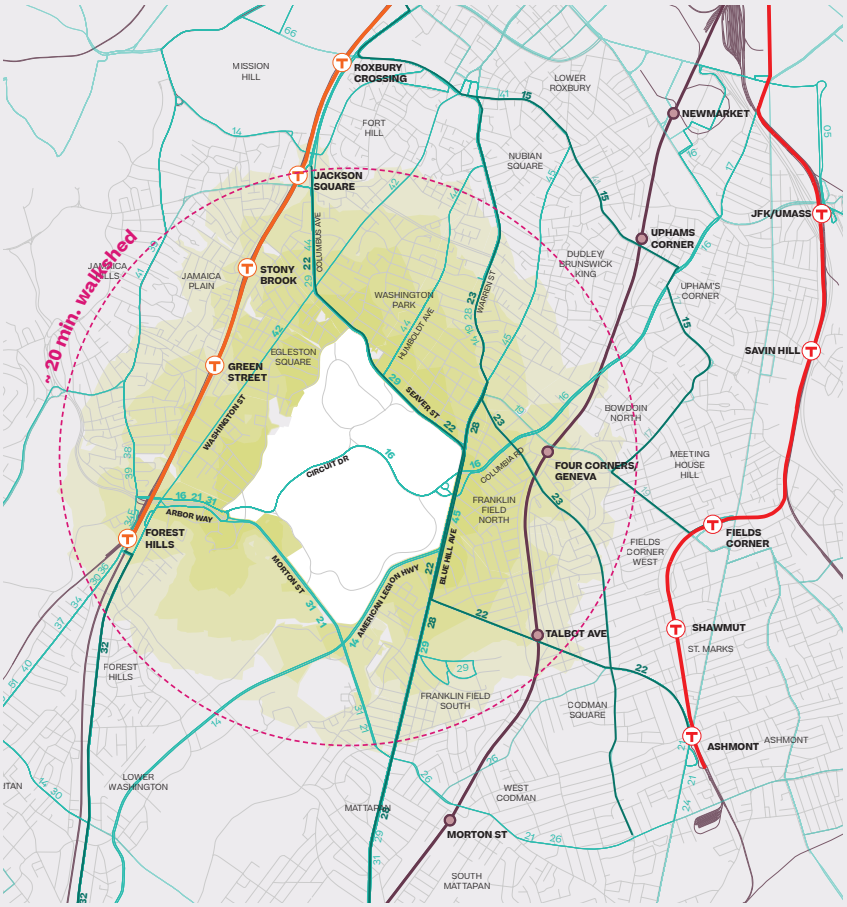

Jefferson Playground
Clifford Playground
Olmsted Park
Mozart Street playground
Marcella Playground
Little Scobie Playground
Malcolm X Park
Hannon Playground
Salvation Army Field
Jamaica Pond
Kelly Outdoor Rink
YMCA Athletic Field
Winthrop Playground
Crawford Street Playground
Trotter School Playground
Quincy Street Play Area
Southwest Corridor Park
JAMAICA PLAIN
Flaherty Playground
Johnson Park
ROXBURY
Frederick Middle School Playground
Ceylon Park
Murphy Field & Playground
English H.S. Athletic Fields
Geneva Cliffs
Fenelon Playground
Erie-Ellington Saint Playground
FRANKLIN PARK
Arnold Arboretum
DORCHESTER
Parkman Playground
Forest Hills Cemetery
ROSLINDALE
Harambee Park
Rev. Loesch Family Park
St. Mary's Cemetery
Boston Nature Center
Pagel Field
Healy Field
Roberts Playground
Boston State Hospital Campus
Mt. Hope Cemetery
State Public Health Campus
Thetford Evans Playground
MATTAPAN
New Calvary Cemetery
Walker Playground

Under the Radar

Inconsistent Messaging Limits Awareness

The areas around Franklin Park are well-served by mass transit connections to Downtown. Five nearby Orange Line and Commuter Rail Stations are located within a moderate walking distance from the park, but lack adequate signage or wayfinding to guide visitors to park entrances. Local bus routes serve the park, especially at the main entrance along Blue Hill Avenue, but most bus stops are in poor condition and are located along busy roads with few crosswalks.

Whether arriving from nearby transit or searching online, the park's identity is unclear and often focused on the Franklin Park Zoo. As a city-wide resource, communicating the park's presence and full range of offerings is critical to welcoming new users.



Public Transit Access

On a map, the Park appears to be a short walk from many modes of transit but nearby stations lack signage identifying routes to the park. As a result, connections from the Orange Line and Commuter Rail are underutilized.

Transit Lines

- MBTA Red Line
- MBTA Orange Line
- Commuter Rail
- Bus Routes
- Key Bus Routes

Forest Hills Station

Popular Online Searches

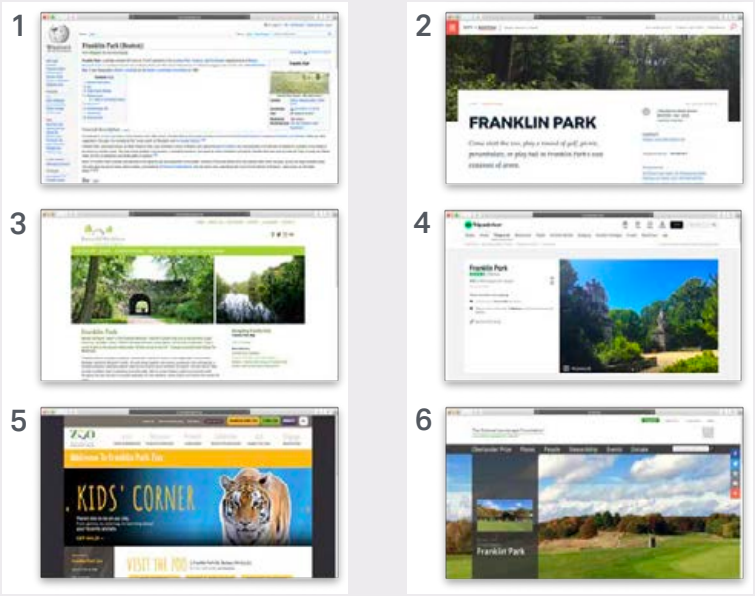
Search terms are primarily related to the zoo and the park in general, with the highest quantity of searches occurring in summer months on mobile devices.

- Franklin Park
- Franklin Park Zoo
- Directions / Address / Map
- Events & Athletics
- Nearby Businesses
- Crime & Safety

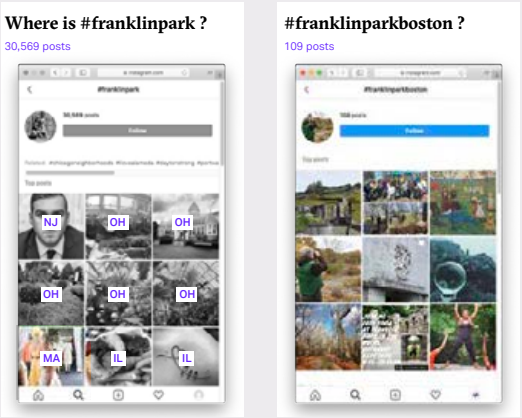
Google Maps locate the zoo, golf course, stadium, and hospital within the park, but do not highlight 'Franklin Park' as the place that contains these destinations. The label for the Park is not as strong as those for the individual pieces within it.

Top Search Results for 'Franklin Park'

The variety of web pages related to Franklin Park means increased opportunity for conflicting details about the park online leaving it unclear who is the 'keeper' of this information.



#FranklinPark on social media produces parks across the country, while **#franklinparkboston** reveals more accurate location results.

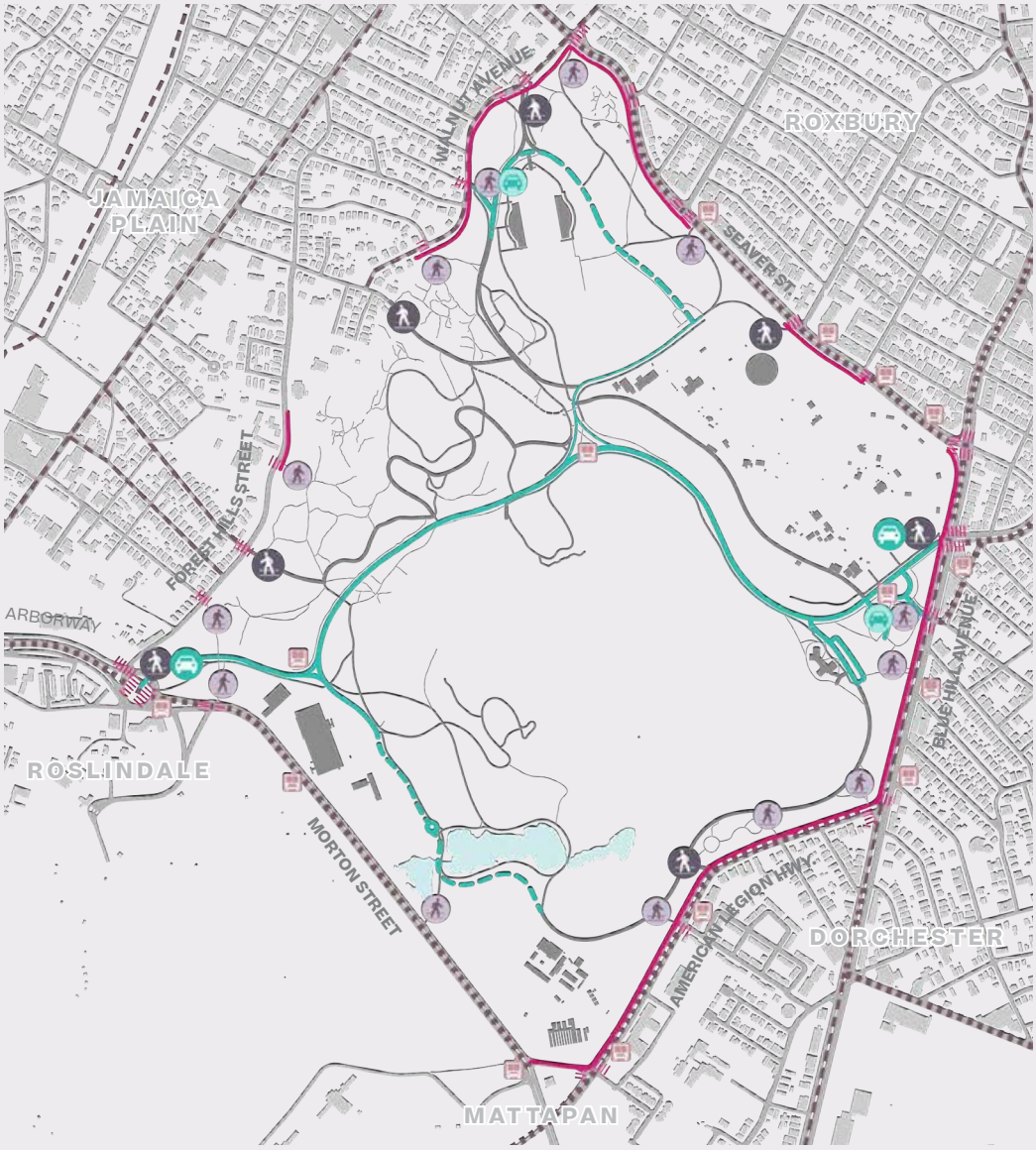


Barriers to Entry

Unequal Access & Deferred Maintenance Discourage Use

Edges can be welcoming frames for park life or barriers that hinder access. An examination of edges, beginning with the physical perimeter and extending into the park and surrounding neighborhoods, reveals where better access and visibility can welcome all users.

Elements originally intended to create a welcome separation between park and city now create barriers to access. Busy traffic intensifies this divide. Future work should address barriers at the edges to improve pedestrian and bicycle access from the adjacent neighborhoods.



Inconsistent Edge

Stretches of the park perimeter along Seaver Street, Forest Hills Street, and Morton Street lack paved sidewalks, which create unsafe pedestrian conditions along busy roads.

Crosswalks, Entries, and Edges

- Vehicle Access
- Restricted Vehicle Access
- Paved Perimeter Sidewalk
- Crosswalk
- Primary Pedestrian Entrance
- Secondary Pedestrian Entrance
- Primary Vehicle Entrance
- Secondary Vehicle Entrance
- Bus Stop

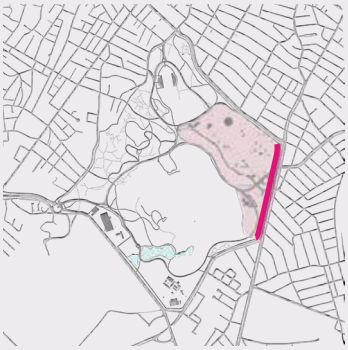
Forest Hills Street and Walnut Avenue

- **NEARBY NEIGHBORHOODS:** Jamaica Plain
- **ENTRANCES:** 7
- **CROSSWALKS:** 8
- **NEARBY PARK SPACES:** Playstead, Wilderness

Seaver St.

- **NEARBY NEIGHBORHOODS:** Roxbury
- **ENTRANCES:** 3
- **CROSSWALKS:** 7
- **NEARBY PARK SPACES:** Long Crouch Woods, Playstead, Zoo

Blue Hill Avenue



- **NEARBY NEIGHBORHOODS:** Dorchester
- **ENTRANCES:** 3
- **CROSSWALKS:** 6
- **NEARBY PARK SPACES:** Zoo, Golf Course, Circuit Loop

American Legion Highway

- **NEARBY NEIGHBORHOODS:** Dorchester, Mattapan
- **ENTRANCES:** 4
- **CROSSWALKS:** 6
- **NEARBY PARK SPACES:** Golf Course, Playgrounds, Scarboro Pond, Circuit Loop

Arborway and Morton Street

- **NEARBY NEIGHBORHOODS:** Roslindale, Jamaica Plain
- **ENTRANCES:** 3
- **CROSSWALKS:** 5
- **NEARBY PARK SPACES:** Scarboro Pond and Hill, Shattuck Picnic Area, The Wilderness, Circuit Loop

43% of survey respondents said they typically arrive by walking or running, while 17% said they typically arrive by bicycle.

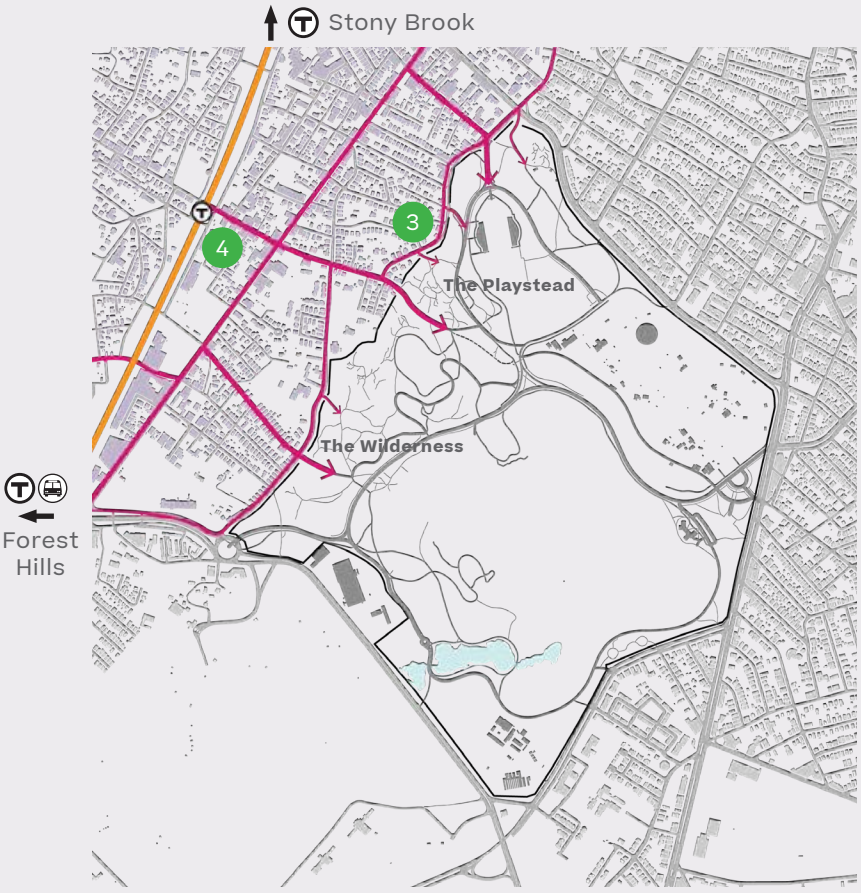
Quiet Streets, Multiple Entries

Forest Hills Street & Walnut Avenue

Abundant entrances serve the Jamaica Plain community, opening onto a diverse range of spaces with active and passive uses, including the Playstead and White Stadium, El Parquesito Playground, Glen Road, and The Wilderness. MBTA Orange Line connections including Stony Brook, Green Street, and Forest Hills Stations are all within a 15-minute walk, but lack posted information about the Park or how to reach it.

Pedestrian access from Jamaica Plain is easy - but only if you know where you are going. Posted signage along walking and biking routes from the Orange Line and enhanced wayfinding in The Wilderness can improve access for new users as well.

34% of survey respondents said they access the park from Forest Hills Street and 21% said Walnut Ave., making this the second most-used edge

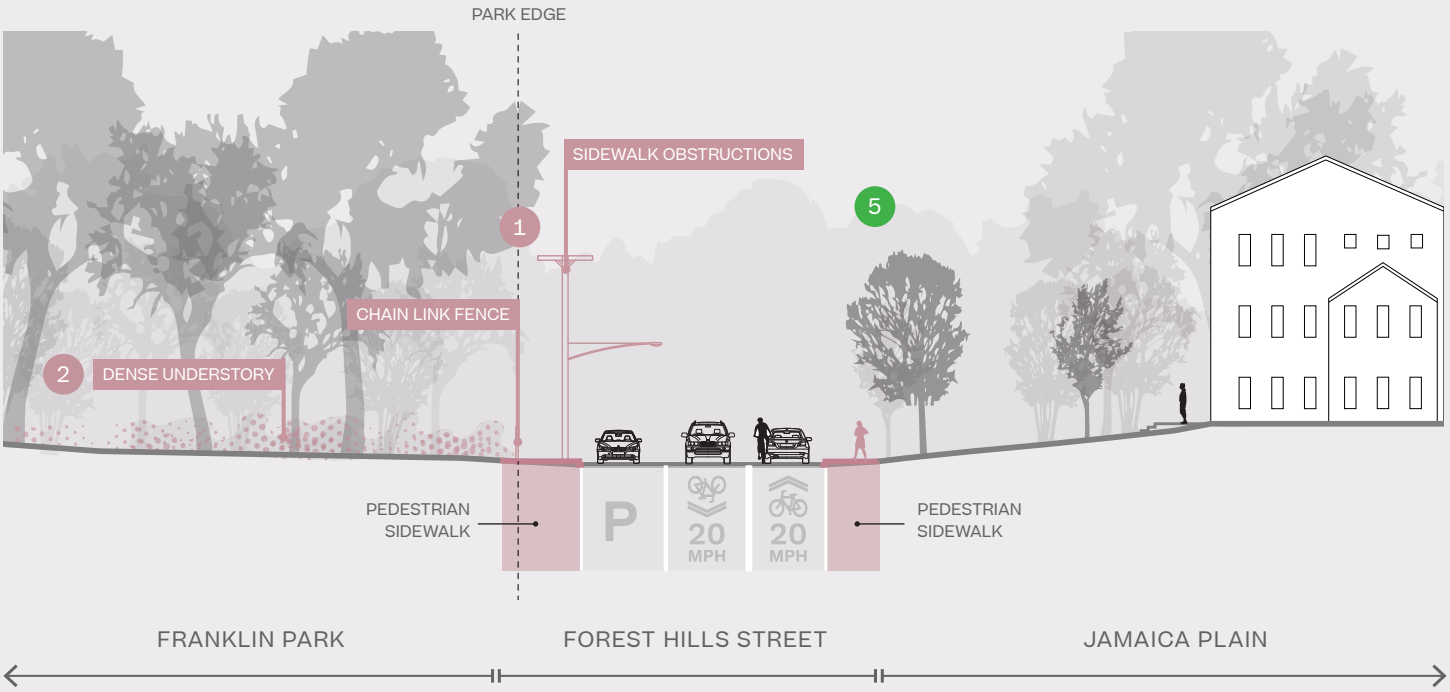


Only park edge not continuously bound by roads

Community Memory

"My son's fourth birthday party was at the Williams Street entrance to the park. We picnicked, made snowmen, explored the small 'river'. It was magic. The tunnel to the park from Williams Street entrance is like Narnia in the snow. I loved pulling a sled through it with my kids and walking into our neighborhood winter wonderland."

- Action Plan Survey Respondent



What are the barriers?

1 **Difficult Passage**

Fence, walls, and light/utility poles leave little room for pedestrians on perimeter walkways. Forest Hills Street has long stretches of unpaved sidewalk and chain link fencing. There is no pedestrian walkway along the park perimeter between Forest Hills Street and Walnut Ave.

2 **Dense and Disorienting Arrival**

Arriving into the Wilderness can be disorienting for new visitors. A dense woodland understory with thickets of invasive Glossy Buckthorn and Japanese Knotweed inhibit views into the park, making it difficult to find your way.

Where are the connections?

3 **Multiple Entrances**

Many entry points bring users to a range of active and passive use spaces.

4 **Transit Access**

Forest Hills (to the east), Green Street, and Stony Brook (to the North) MBTA stops are within a 15-minute walk of the park.

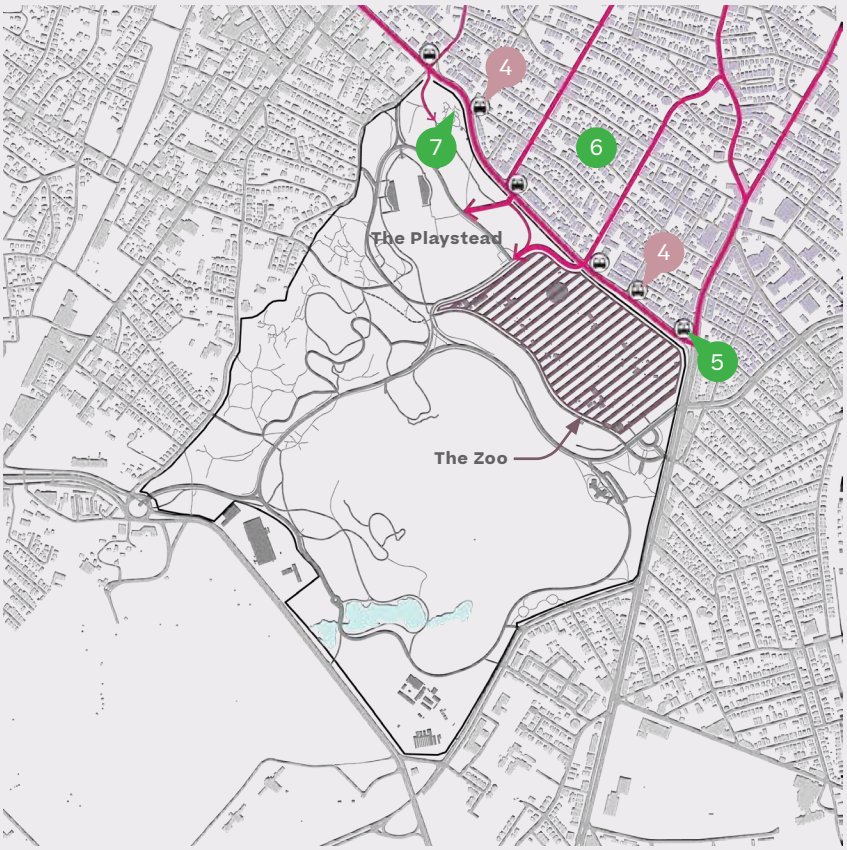
5 **Continuous Canopy**

Mature canopy trees extend the character of the park 'Wilderness', unifying park and neighborhood.

Dangerous Crossing, Difficult Entry
Seaver Street

Very few entrances along Seaver Street serve the Roxbury community. The adjacent neighborhood is one of the densest residential districts surrounding the Park, but busy traffic, rock ledges, and fences separate the community from the most actively-programmed areas of the park.

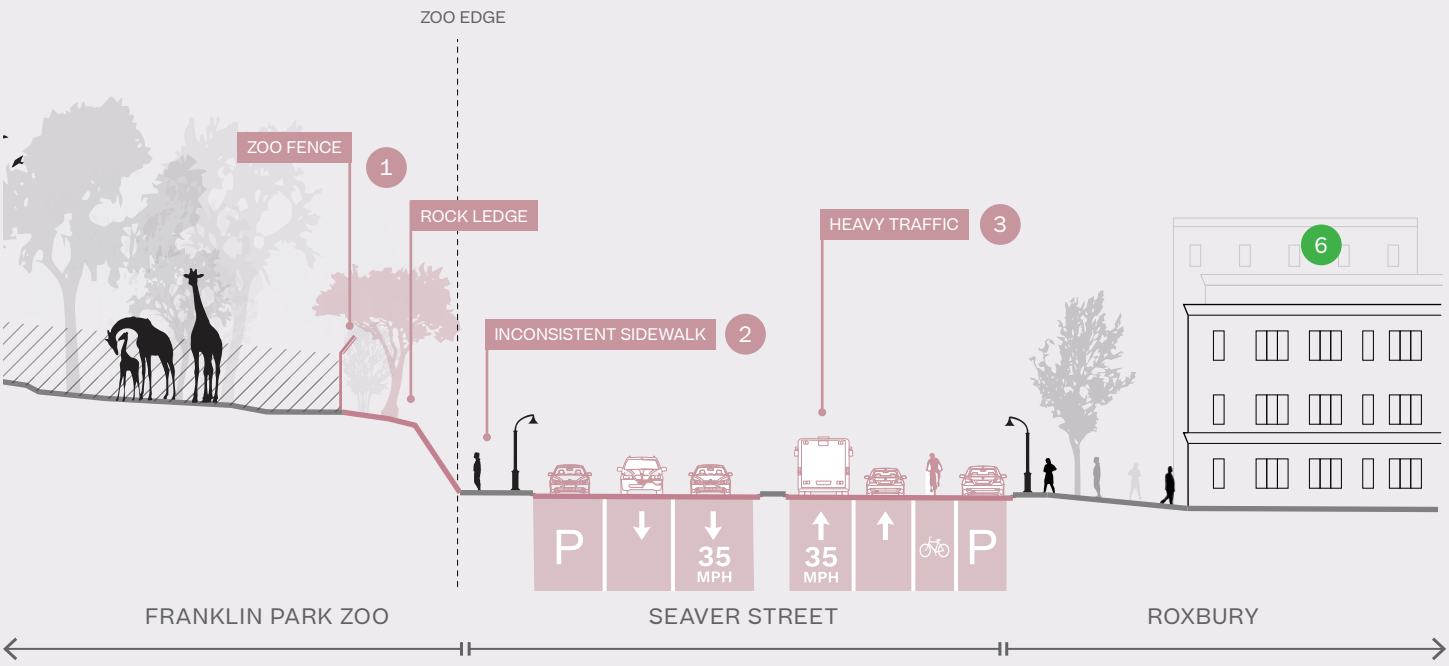
Although access is available between Humboldt and Elm Hill Avenues, the Park's densest residential edge is also challenged with the most difficult access. Ensuring safe crossings and improving entries into the park can welcome many more Roxbury neighbors. The Zoo and Park can also project a more unified identity at the street as a beacon to welcome visitors arriving from near and far.



27% of survey respondents said they typically access the park from Seaver St.

Roxbury residents ranked car emissions and noise pollution as their top environmental health concern, followed by dangerous traffic. Source: Boston Public Health Commission

21 - 25% of people living in Lower Roxbury speak another Indo-European language as a first language



What are the barriers?

1 **Rock Ledge and Zoo Fence**
Rock ledges create an impassable barrier and block views into the park. The Zoo fence projects an exclusive and uninviting image of the Park to the neighborhood and street.

2 **Inconsistent Sidewalk**
The sidewalk is interrupted with many obstructions and is precariously narrow From Humboldt Avenue to Elm Hill Avenue. Variations in material and width create safety and universal access challenges.

3 **Heavy Traffic**
Four lanes of vehicular traffic and two lanes of parking create a noisy barrier of constantly-moving traffic.

4 **Dead-End Crosswalks**
Crosswalks at Harold Street and Maple Street lead to southbound bus stops, but a ledge and barbed-wire fence create unwelcoming edges.

Where are the connections?

5 **High-Frequency Bus Routes**
Many bus stops provide frequent service along the edge.

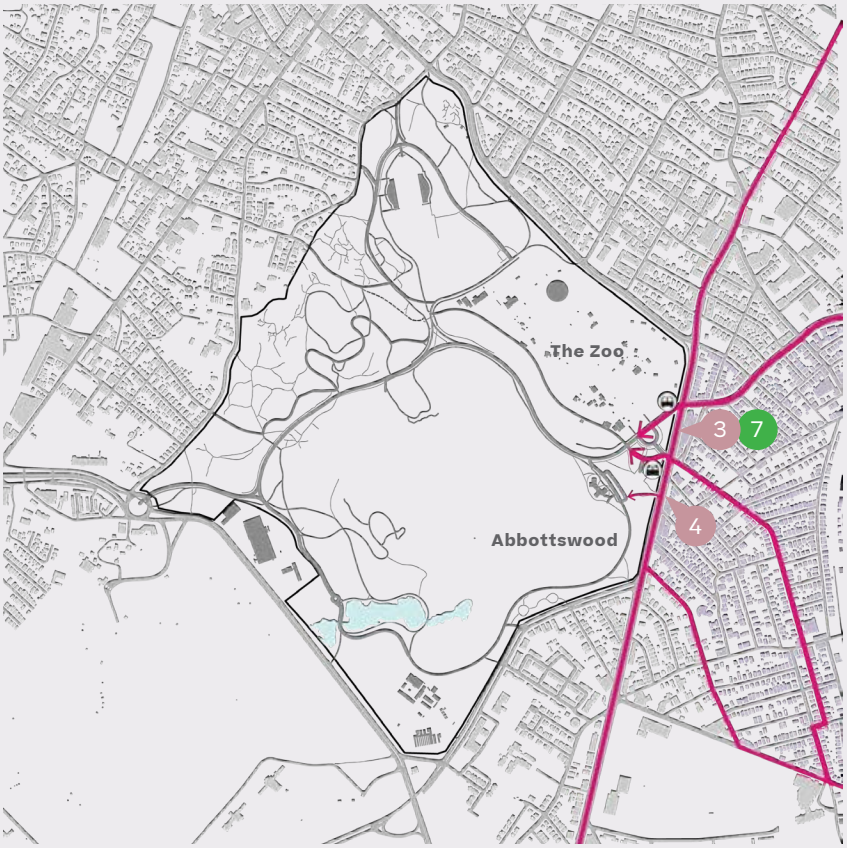
6 **Dense Residential Neighborhood**
Roxbury is the densest neighborhood adjacent to the Park. Adapting or minimizing barriers along Seaver Street will enhance access for many users.

7 **Overlook Potential**
High points provide neighborhood and city views from inside the park.

Vibrant Edge, Main Arrival
Blue Hill Avenue

The main entrance at Peabody Circle connects visitors arriving in car and on foot to The Franklin Park Zoo, The William Devine Golf Course, and the pedestrian Circuit Loop. Blue Hill Avenue is a historic main street and lively commercial corridor, but the broad street, busy traffic, and lack of crossings create a strong divide between Dorchester residents and the Park.

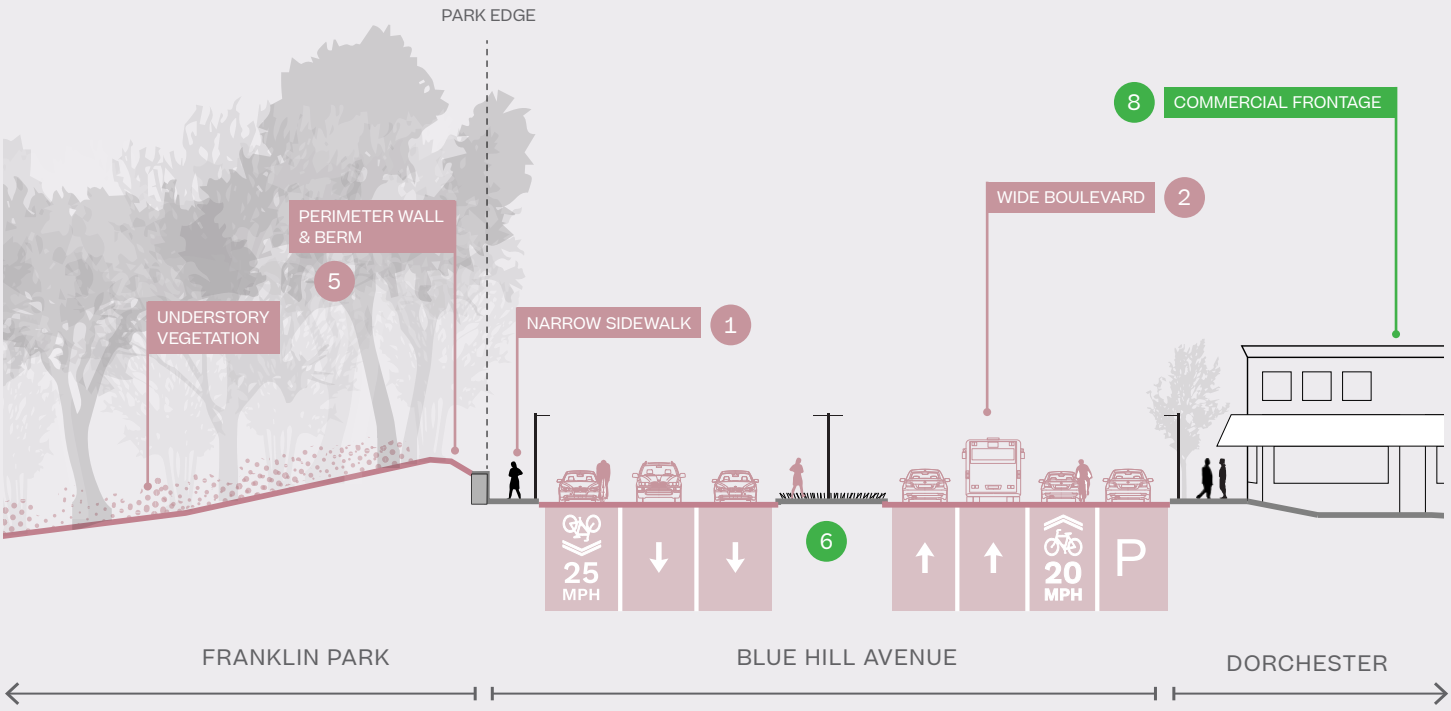
The park's main entrance is separated from a vibrant street edge and local businesses by wide roads and busy traffic. Inside, parking and confusing traffic patterns divide gathering spaces at the Zoo and Golf Course entries. Prioritizing pedestrians and bikes, and clarifying circulation can better connect the street's social life with the park.



62% of survey respondents said they typically access the park from Blue Hill Avenue, making it the most-used entrance.

Franklin Field North and South neighborhoods have the highest number of children living adjacent to the park

Blue Hill Avenue has the most frequent local bus service of any park edge



What are the barriers?

1 **Narrow Passage**
Narrow sidewalk along both edges creates uneasy pedestrian experience.

2 **Wide Boulevard, Few Crossings**
Six lanes of traffic and one lane of parking create the widest vehicular right of way adjacent to the Park.

3 **Vehicular Arrival Priority**
Peabody Circle is dominated by roads and parking, making an uncomfortable environment for pedestrians and bikes.

4 **Entrance Ruin**
The former Refectory service entrance is neglected and unsafe.

5 **Low Visibility**
Berm, stonewall, dense vegetation and a steep drop into the park combine to inhibit views into the Park.

Where are the connections?

6 **Wide Median**
A wide median can accommodate a crossing refuge island.

7 **Main Entrance**
Peabody Circle is a well-scaled entrance for a large park. Clarifying and prioritizing pedestrian and bike circulation will heighten a sense of arrival into the Park's immersive environment.

8 **Commercial Frontage**
The Park's only commercial edge is an opportunity to engage local businesses.

Welcoming Edge, Limited Crossings
American Legion Highway

Multiple entrances along American Legion Highway serve families, many with young children. Like Blue Hill Avenue, American Legion Highway is busy with traffic and difficult to cross, but the park spaces beyond are well-used and welcome visitors with views of the park and neighborhood alike.

Shady canopy trees and long views beckon visitors, but crossing American Legion Highway is difficult and dangerous. Improving crossings can welcome more schoolchildren, families, and walkers to nearby playgrounds and the Circuit Loop.

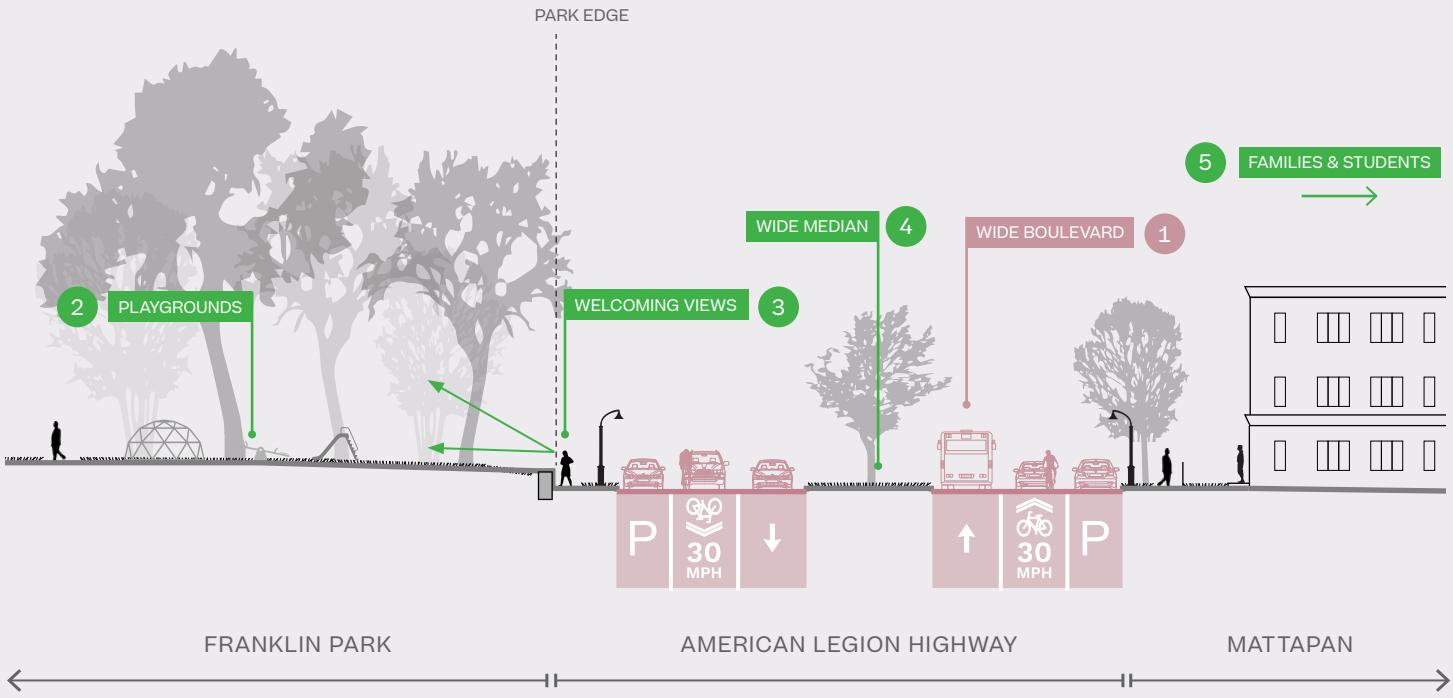
26% of survey respondents said they typically access the park from American Legion Highway

81 - 90% of people living in Franklin Field South speak Spanish as a first language.

Community Memory

Our Brooke Mattapan scholars have enjoyed countless afternoons in the American Legion playspace. "Why don't we come here all the time?" I wish the path that allows our kids to access that park was cleaned up more consistently, acting as a welcome to kids that love wide, open spaces.

- Action Plan Survey Respondent



What are the barriers?

1 **Wide Boulevard, Few Crossings**
High-traffic boulevards make crossing from the neighborhood difficult.

Where are the connections?

2 **Community Amenities**
Playgrounds and picnic tables are located near neighborhoods with many families with young children.

3 **Welcoming Views**
Low boundary wall, high canopy, and good visibility of park life invite visitors in, while providing important separation from the busy street.

4 **Wide Median**
Wide medians with shade from street trees offers the opportunity to create crossing refuge islands for pedestrians.

5 **Families & Students**
Several schools are located across the street and the Franklin Field South neighborhood has the largest number of families with children.

Uninviting, Limited Entry
Morton Street

The Casey Overpass removal and public realm improvements around Forest Hills Station greatly enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connections from Jamaica Plain and Roslindale to the Park's westernmost entrance. The remaining frontage along Morton Street, however, is almost completely inaccessible to pedestrians due to a lack of sidewalks and crosswalks. Overgrown thickets and fences make Morton St. feel like the back side of the park.

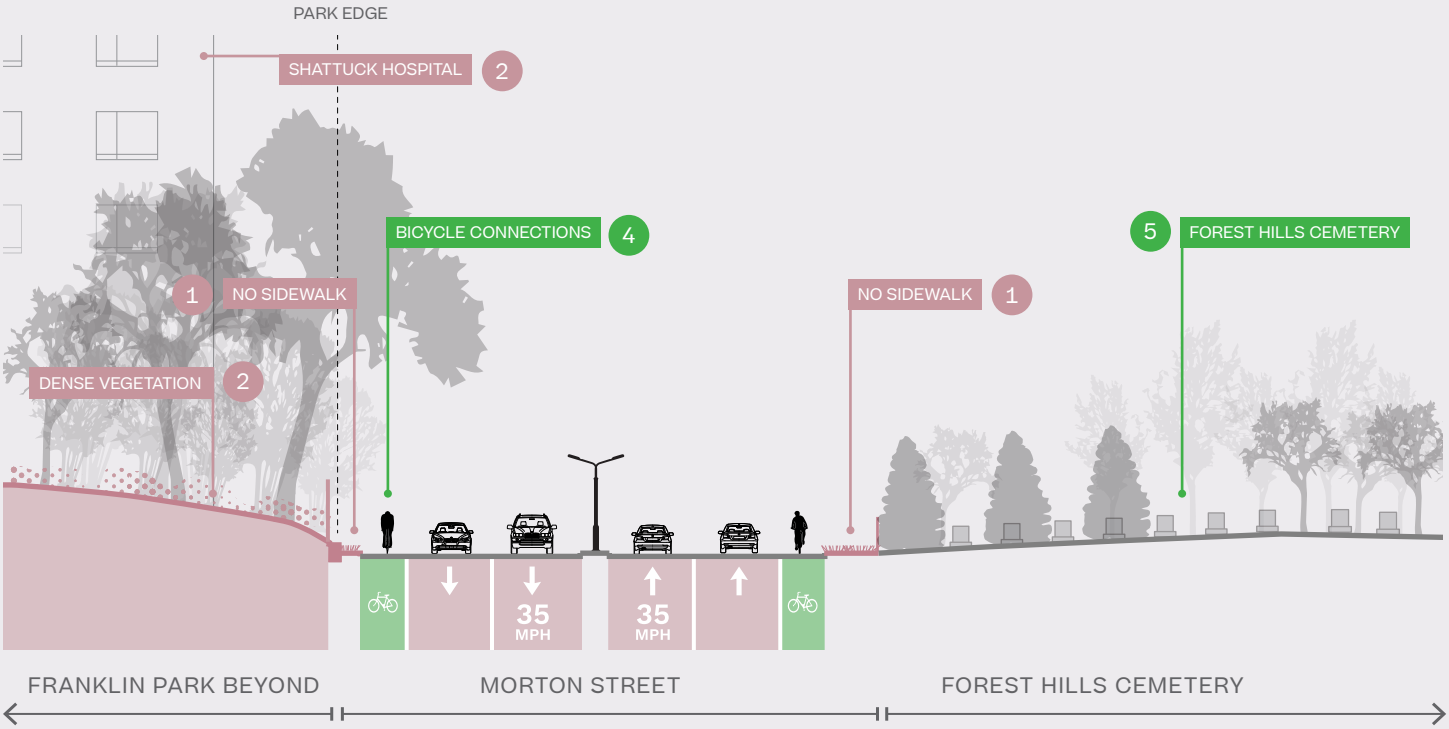
This overgrown and inaccessible edge feels overlooked, but the Forest Hills entrance is an untapped opportunity to connect pedestrians and cyclists to the Wilderness, Circuit Drive, and the renovated pathways at Scarboro Pond.

23% of survey respondents said they access the park from Morton Street and 17% said Arborway., making this the least-used edge

Community Aspirations

"My dream is for Franklin Park to be a tranquil place to walk where my family can access nature via walking paths and safe biking paths. I want to feel safe biking to and from the park via Forest Hills, and for the park to connect on both sides to safe bike infrastructure so that I can commute through the park every day."

- Action Plan Survey Respondent



What are the barriers?

1 **Limited Pedestrian Access**
The perimeter sidewalk ends at Shattuck Hospital and cemetery adjacency limits access. The southeastern entrance on Morton Street is large in scale, but there aren't any sidewalks for pedestrians and bikes to access it.

2 **Dense Back Edge**
The Shattuck Hospital, Maintenance Yard, fences, and dense vegetation create a thick edge inhibiting views and access. From the outside, this edge does not project a welcoming or unified identity.

3 **Southern Separation**
A lack of pedestrian connections inhibit access from Mattapan.

Where are the connections?

4 **New Pathways**
Recent updates to bicycle and pedestrian paths improved connections from Forest Hills Station.

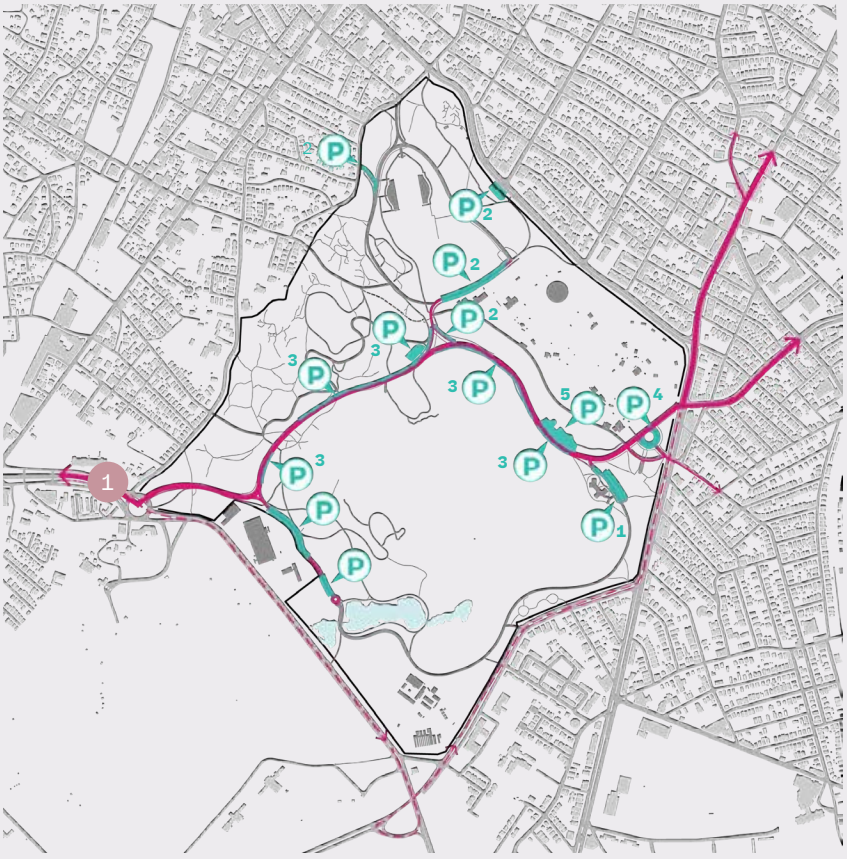
5 **Open Space Adjacency**
Nearby open spaces including the Forest Hills Cemetery, Mass Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary, and Arnold Arboretum offer opportunities for new partnerships and connections.

A Connector Divides

Traffic Splits the Park

Vehicular traffic not only rings the Park's outer edges, it also bisects the interior. Circuit Drive and dispersed parking facilitates vehicular and service access for a significant portion of users and programs, but its adaptation as a thru-street came at the cost of pedestrian and bike safety. Important moments of orientation and arrival, such as the Valley Gates and Peabody Circle, are now a complicated system of paths, drives, and parking.

Circuit Drive's fast and noisy traffic create a divisive internal edge, interrupting both physical connections and the experience of being immersed in the park. Confusing intersections at Peabody Circle and the Valley Gates leave pedestrians and cyclists vulnerable and unsafe. Improving pedestrian connections across and along the road will enhance visitor arrival circulation and safety.



75% of survey respondents said they typically arrive to the park by car.

Parking and Vehicular Traffic

Primary Vehicular Access

Parking Lot or Roadside Parking

1 Shortcuts and Traffic Patterns

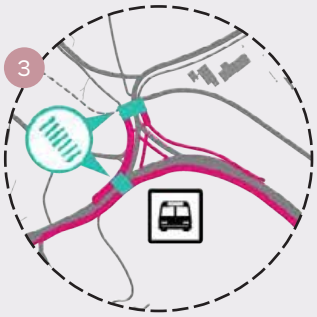
Most of the car traffic on Circuit Drive is not from park visitors, but instead is cars using the road as a 'cut through' from one area of the city to another.

Parking Data

Extensive parking is available within the park, but it is mostly informal in nature, leading to inefficiencies and visitors parking in the surrounding neighborhoods during large events.

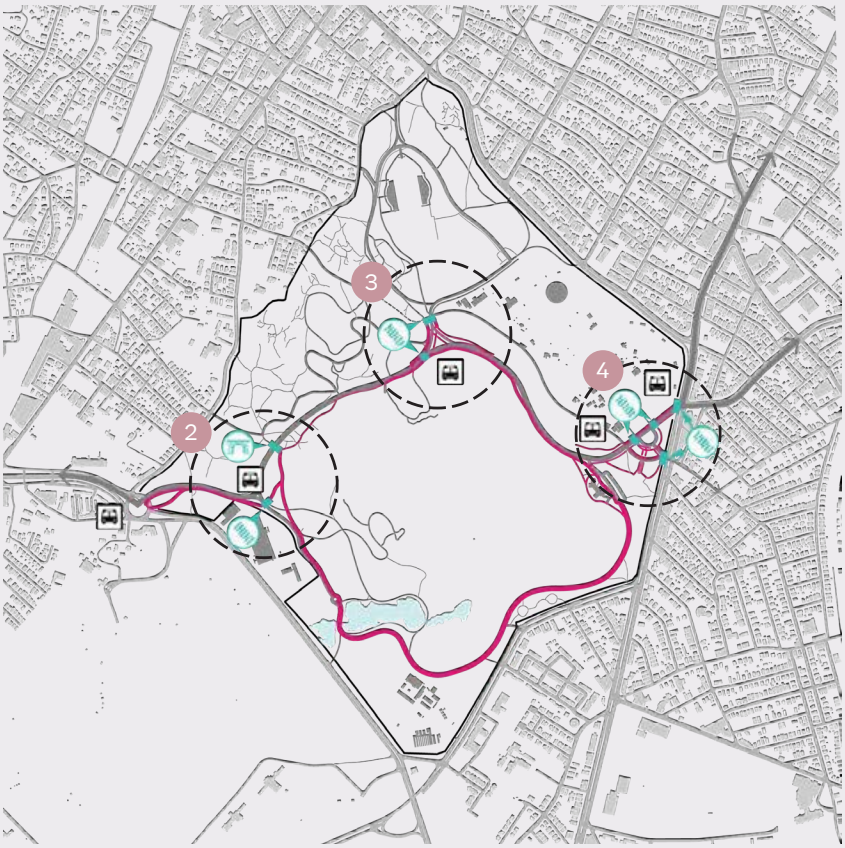
Location	Spaces
1 Golf Course	120-140
2 Playstead, Stadium, Valley Gates & Seaver Street	315-345
3 Circuit Drive	220-250
4 Blue Hill Ave Entrance	120-140
5 Circuit Drive Parking Lot	140-155
TOTAL	**915 - 1,030**

Forest Hills Entry



Valley Gates

Peabody Circle Entry



Pedestrian Circulation

The Circuit Loop & Pedestrian Paths

Crosswalk

Ellicott Arch

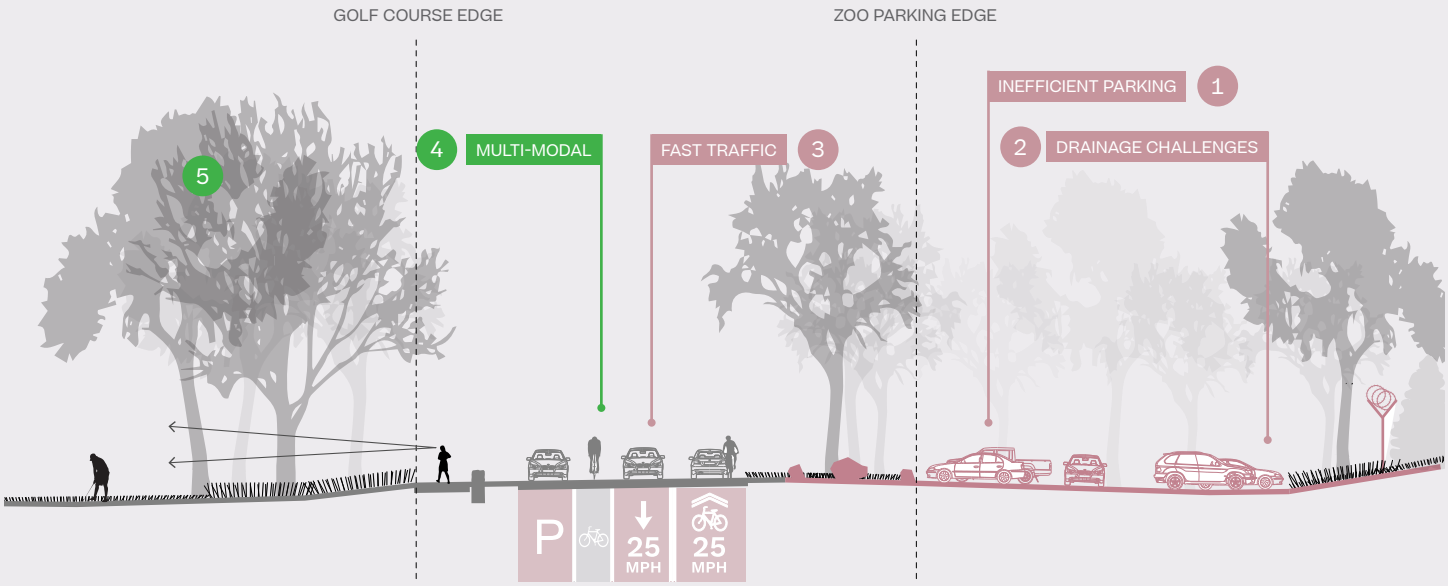
Bus Stop

Intersection Confusion

Insufficient signage at three key intersections creates confusion for drivers seeking parking and park amenities. Numerous pedestrian paths cross roads and parking, adding another layer to the wayfinding confusion.

#3

The Circuit Loop is the third most popular destination in the park.



Section A

What are the barriers?

1 **Inefficient Parking**
The majority of parking is informal, unmarked, or unregulated, leading to inefficiencies that decrease available spaces.

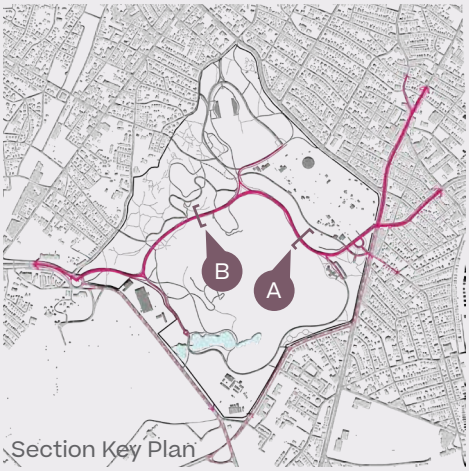
2 **Drainage Challenges**
Compacted soils from mowing and low points contribute to standing water and stormwater washouts.

3 **Park Space Fragmentation and Compression**
Cars tend to exceed the posted speed limit (25 mph). Fast traffic and parking divide major open spaces including The Wilderness, Golf Course, and Playstead. The pedestrian park experience is compressed into a narrow space between the Zoo Parking Lot and Golf Course.

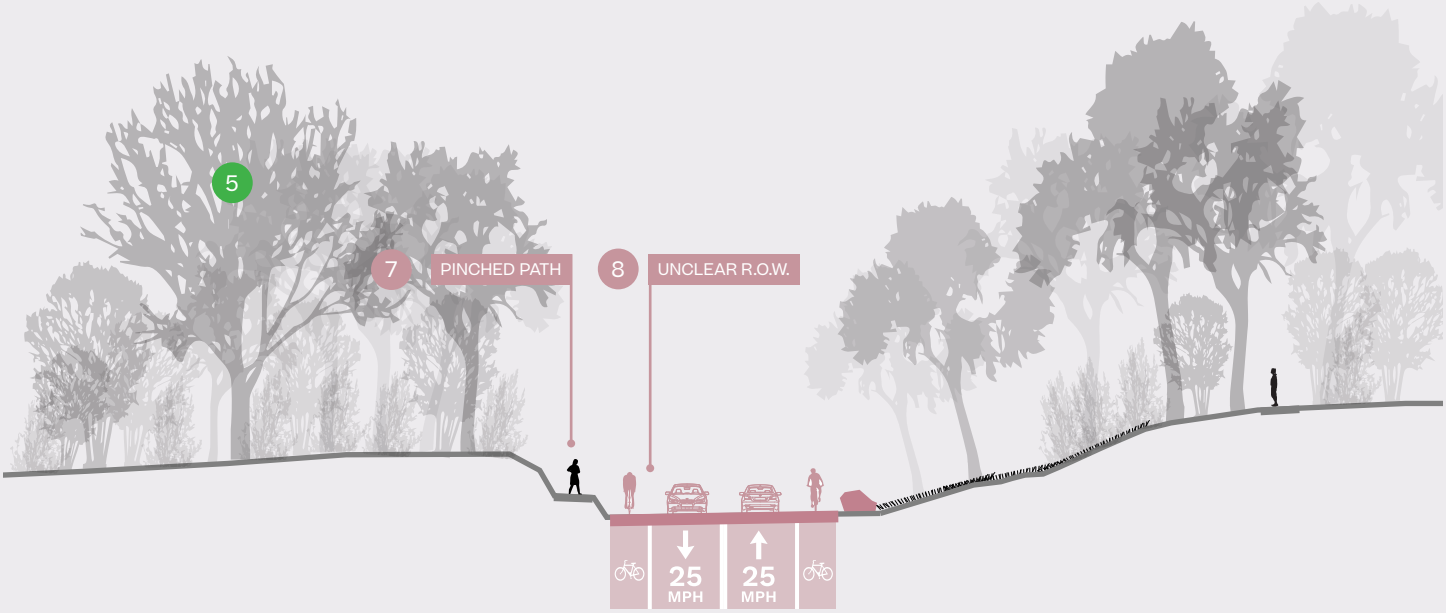
Where are the connections?

4 **Multi-modal**
The width of Circuit Drive can accommodate many uses, but clear separation of those uses can improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists alike.

5 **Canopy Connection**
Mature canopy surrounds Circuit Drive, though additional planting could establish the corridor as a parkway, rather than a divider.



Section Key Plan



SCHOOLMASTER HILL — CIRCUIT DRIVE — THE WILDERNESS

Section B

What are the barriers?

6 **Infrequent Crossings**
Key crossings are missing to make safe connections across Circuit Drive.

7 **Inconsistent Circuit Loop**
The Circuit Loop shrinks in width between the Wilderness and the Golf Course, pinching pedestrians between fast traffic and dense vegetation, and obscuring the main pedestrian circulation route around the park.

8 **Unclear Right of Way**
Intermittent lane markings blur distinctions between parking and bicycle lanes.

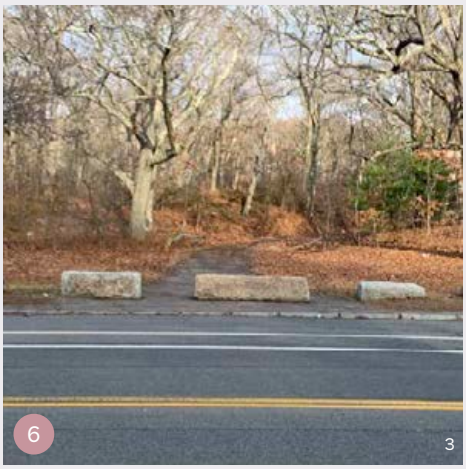
Where are the connections?

9 **Bus Connections**
Stops along Circuit Drive bring public transit access into the heart of the park. (See previous page)

Community Aspiration

"A better Bike/Ped loop would be great. [The Circuit Loop] is fantastic, but the area along the road that cuts through the park is difficult and dangerous with kids."

- Action Plan Survey Respondent



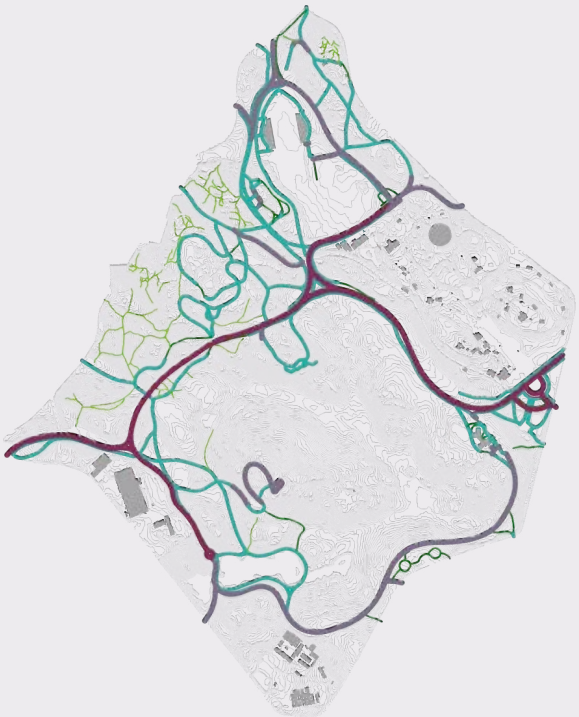
Lost Clarity

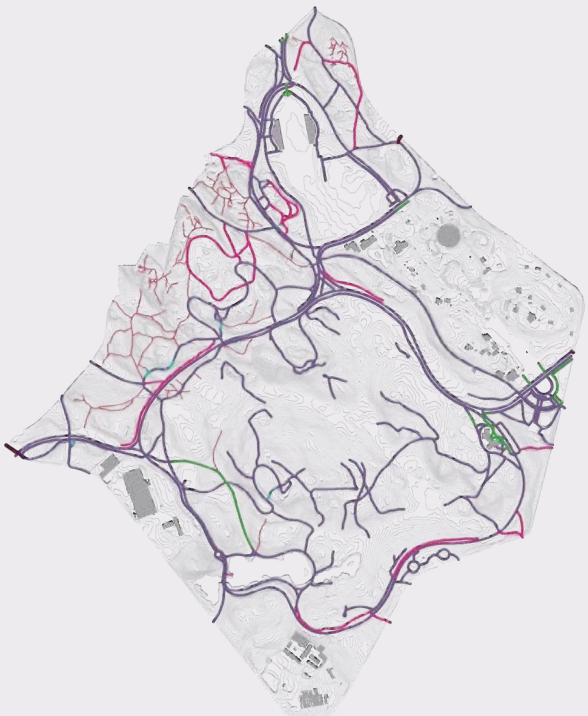
Path Hierarchy & Materials Erode Over Time

Differentiation of routes and separation of uses was a key component of the original park design. A clear hierarchy of path widths and materials served as important cues for movement and wayfinding throughout the park. Today, arbitrary and abrupt changes in width or material obscure the intuitive system of loops and circuits of the original network.

The original circulation design was carefully calibrated to use, offering a clear and immersive experience of landscapes across the Park. As cars replaced carriages and new uses were introduced, this clarity was lost. Reinstating rules to guide circulation hierarchy is critical to restoring a cohesive park experience.

1





Path Width and Scale

VEHICULAR AND SERVICE

- Circuit Drive
- 16’ - 30’ +

PEDESTRIAN

- 8’ - 15’
- 5’ - 7’
- 1 - 4’

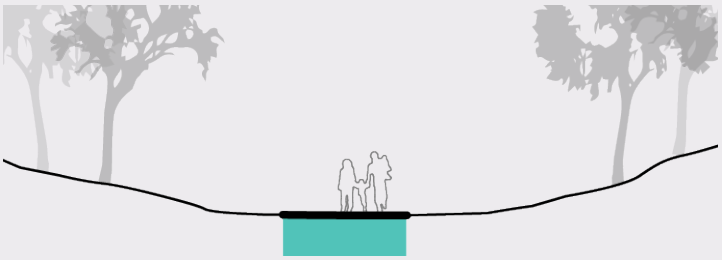
Path Material

- Asphalt
- Concrete
- Gravel
- Unpaved
- Stone

Multi-Use Vehicular, Service, and Pedestrian Paths (16 - 30'+ Width)

Vehicular-scale paths lack definition for different uses. The widely-paved areas are generous and inviting, but are often flanked by redundant pedestrian paths, making an already underarticulated expanse of paving even wider.

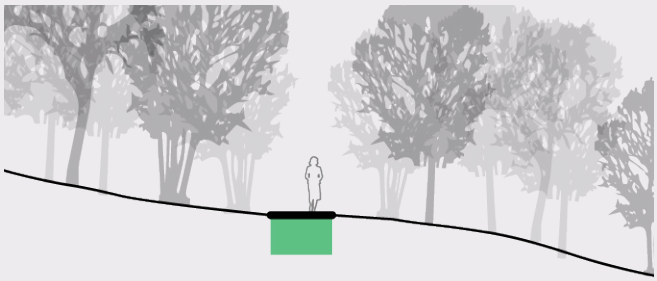

2



Primary Pedestrian Paths (8 - 15' Width)

Most paths are paved with asphalt, leading through glacial cuts and around hillsides. This width accommodates larger groups of walkers and runners. The golf cart paths are this same material and scale, which sometimes confuses pedestrians.

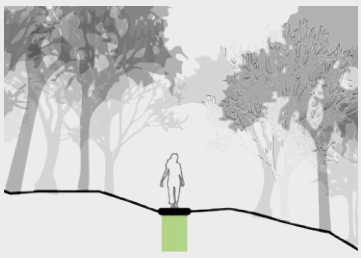

3



Secondary Pedestrian Paths (5 - 7' Width)

Narrowly-scaled paths of asphalt, gravel, and concrete are located sporadically throughout the park. This width accommodates walkers in pairs, joggers, and solo cyclists, but would benefit from material consistency and clear connections.


4



Woodland Trails (1 - 4' Width)

Intimately-scaled gravel or worn trails are prevalent throughout the woodlands and The Wilderness, but too many trails with a lack of hierarchy or route markers inhibit wayfinding. This width accommodates hikers and dog walkers in pairs or alone.


5

Divisions Intensify

Internal Edges Built to Define Ownership & Use Limit Experience

Built features from the original park design, such as walls, steps, and overlooks, were meant to guide access, curate visitor experience and provide a sense of place. In response to changing uses and programs, incremental solutions meant to control vehicles, restrict access, and improve safety now form barriers and edges throughout the park, creating visual distractions and an increased sense of division.

Fences, walls, and gates define boundaries between use and ownership but disrupt views and restrict access, which breaks down the larger park experience. Rethinking the character of these edges can improve visibility between ownership areas and create connections to adjacent landscapes.

Built Edges

- Concrete Walls
- Fences
- Gates
- Vehicular Barriers (Boulders, granite blocks, bollards, and walls)

1

Zoo Fence

Fencing creates a problematic visual and physical barrier around the entire Zoo perimeter. The stretch of fence between The Playstead and the Golf Course was once an orienting and sweeping view south through the Valley Gates. Today, it is interrupted by chain link and barbed wire at the edge of the parking lot, making it feel like the sports fields abut a service yard rather than being situated with a view through to the rest of the park.

2

Granite Blocks, Boulders, and Bollards

Granite blocks and boulders were once a necessary and low cost way of preventing vehicular access to pedestrian areas of the park. While effective for cars, in some places they actually inhibit pedestrian connections (including ADA access). As other vehicular restrictions have been put in place over time, including gates and curbs, these blocks, boulders, and bollards are often redundant and create additional barriers for pedestrians to maneuver around. Considerations for their removal should happen on a case-by-case basis.

3

Security Gates

Freestanding vehicular gates were also added over time to restrict vehicular access. A more systematic and aesthetically-unified approach could call less attention to these controls while improving their security functions.

4

Stadium Enclosures

The Stadium is a tall structure occupying the center of the Playstead, visually dividing an area where lively sporting activities were once viewed from the shady prospect of the Overlook. In addition to solid concrete walls, chain link fences covered in overgrown vines extend its opaque perimeter.

Mixed Messages

Inadequate Signage Hinders Use

Signage and wayfinding elements in the landscape can work in both explicit and implicit ways, providing clues of where you are and where you can go, directing visitors and keeping them safe. Signage also serves an important educational purpose, teaching us about our surroundings and indicating important landmarks. Additionally, increased communications about special events and everyday park destinations will encourage exploration and enjoyment of all it has to offer.

The majority of signage in the park focuses on rules and regulations, with little helping to orient visitors or interpret the park's historic significance. Carefully designed signage can guide wayfinding, provide interpretation, and encourage exploration without interrupting visitor experience.

Community Aspiration

"Not only better communication about what the park has to offer, but also clear recommendations for how to explore it. I would like to explore trails but do not want to get lost."

- Action Plan Survey Respondent

Existing Signage & Wayfinding Elements

- Entry & Arrival
- Identification & Regulatory
- Interpretive and Educational

Entry & Arrival

1 **Unannounced Arrival**
There is little indication that visitors have arrived in the park, aside from the zoo. Signage does not help visitors determine their location.

2 **Entry Barriers**
Large bollards prevent unwanted vehicular entry but also project an unwelcome message.

3 **Opportunity: Signage Support**
Elements, like stone walls, present opportunities to integrate signage that indicates arrival and highlights park features.

Identification & Regulatory

1 **Dos and Do-Nots**
Most of the park signage is regulatory in nature, focusing on what should *not* happen, rather than what visitors can enjoy. While signage of this type is critical, adding signage that lets visitors know what they can enjoy would encourage use.

2 **Legibility**
Typeface and font size on park signage is difficult to read. A lack of hierarchy makes it hard to identify where visitors are and what is nearby. Most signage is oriented toward roads, rather than pedestrian paths.

Interpretive and Educational

1 **Inconsistency**
An inconsistent approach to providing maps with available destinations, landmarks, or hiking paths leaves visitors unaware of the park's complete offerings.

2 **Opportunity: Tiny Treasures**
Subtle markers can increase educational opportunities for the passer-by.

To understand a park, you have to understand its

Land

04 | Ecologies

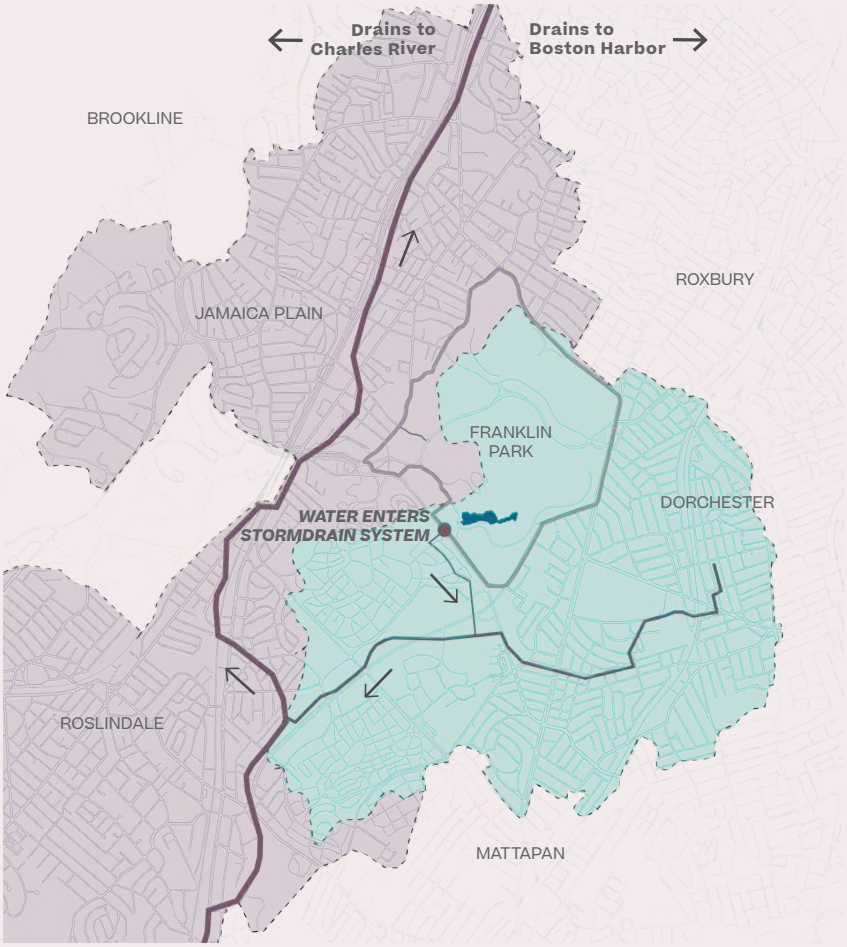
Diversity Enhances Experience

The park's composition of rocky woodlands, rolling meadow, lowland pond, and valley drainageways combine to create not only an ecologically diverse landscape but spaces for some of our most beloved activities - an immersive hike in The Wilderness, a lively community celebration at The Playstead, or a relaxing picnic with family and friends in the shade of hundred-year-old trees. The park's many landscapes also represent and rely on a complex and interdependent system of soils, water, plants and animals. Impacts to one part of this system affect the others. Management is necessary and activity must be balanced with support if these living systems are to continue to provide their many ecological and health benefits — if they are to continue to be places for families and friends to make memories for years to come.

Soaking it Up

Protect and Improve Downstream

The park spans two major watersheds, with much of its land falling within the Canterbury Brook Watershed. Runoff discharges to one of two main water bodies, Scarboro Pond, a man-made pond, or the Ellicott Arch Stream before entering the Stony Brook Conduit System and eventually making its way to the Charles River. Because of the scale and location of the park within the watershed, it not only has the opportunity to manage its own stormwater, but also positively influence 'downstream' impacts by reducing urban flooding and improving water quality.



Regional Watersheds

- Stony Brook Watershed
- Canterbury Brook Watershed
- Scarboro Pond & Ellicott Stream
- Scarboro Pond Outlet
- Canterbury Brook Conduit
- Canterbury Brook Connector
- Stony Brook Conduit
- Watershed Divides
- Drainage Flow Direction

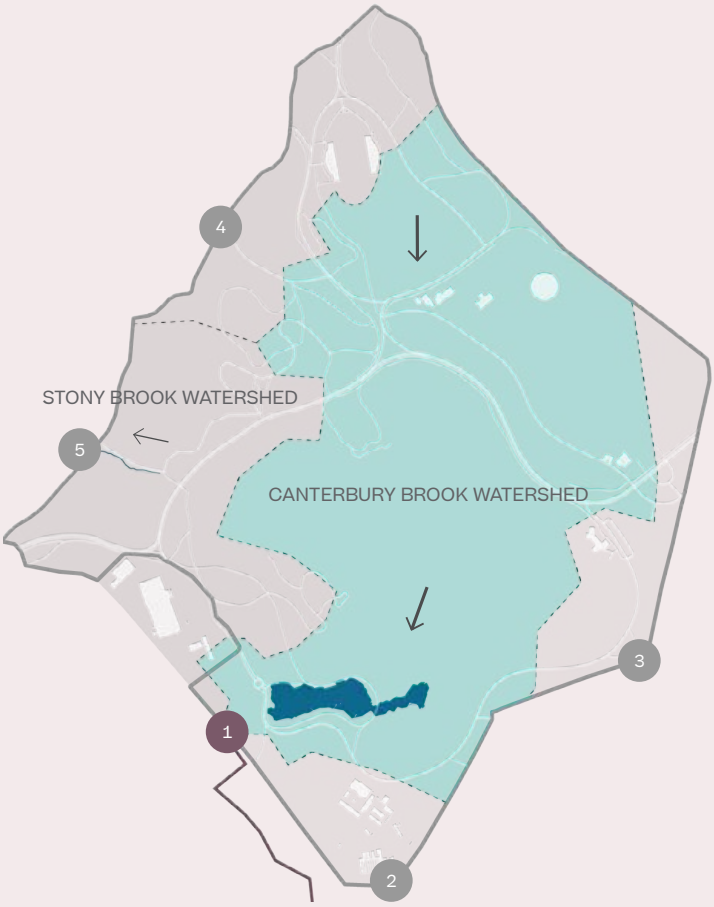

1

Aging Infrastructure

Dating back to the late 1880s, the Canterbury and Stony Brook Conduits were multi-decade infrastructure projects that spanned across the city to address urban flooding. In addition to constructing closed drainage systems beneath the streets, freshwater wetlands in and around the Park were filled to allow for expanding development. Aging and undersized for today's needs, this critical infrastructure is taxed by storm events occurring at an increasing frequency and intensity.

What is a watershed?

Also known as a drainage basin or catchment area, this is an area of land where all water drains to a central point. Watersheds are divided by ridges, or high points, which create boundaries between them. The speed that water drains depends on factors like soil type, paving material, and the slope of the terrain.



Park Sub-Watersheds

- Canterbury Brook Watershed
- Stony Brook Watershed
- Scarboro Pond & Ellicott Stream
- 1 Scarboro Pond Outlet Structure
- 2 Morton Street Closed Drainage
- 3 Blue Hill Avenue Closed Drainage
- 4 Armory Street Closed Drainage
- 5 Williams Street Closed Drainage
- Park Sub-Watershed Divides
- Drainage Flow Direction

Scarboro Pond & Ellicott Stream

The majority of the park's runoff outlets into Scarboro Pond, carrying high nutrient loads from fertilizers and geese. Resulting algal blooms impact water quality and degrade the pond environment. Debris and sediment build-up necessitate frequent cleaning of the outlet structure to prevent flooding.

Ellicott Stream is fed by surface and ground water. Evidence of species, like salamanders, indicates safe water quality despite high nutrients.

Outdated & Undersized

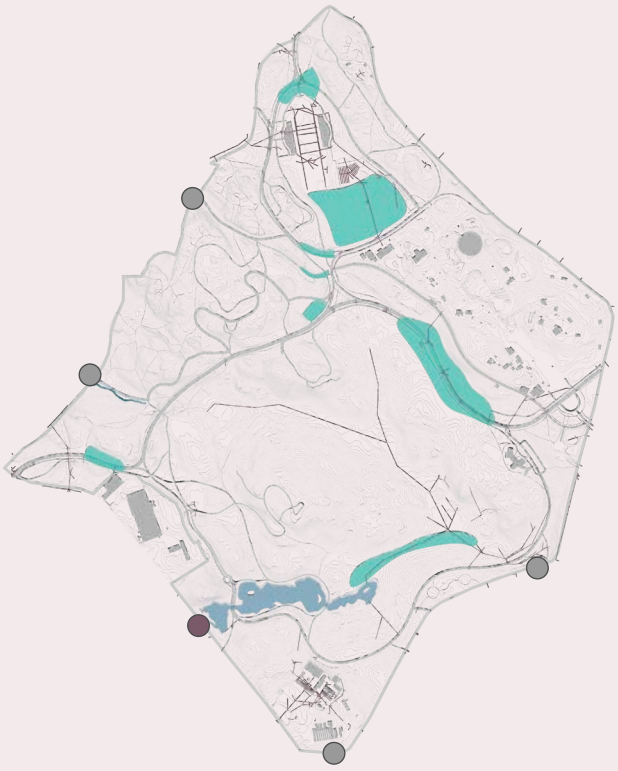
Drainage Infrastructure Poses Challenges

The park's drainage system includes vegetated and cobble swales and closed drainage, which consists of piping for areas with no natural outlet. Because some of this infrastructure dates to original park construction, it is inadequate and undersized for today's needs and often causes surcharging and localized drainage issues.

An aging drainage system leaves many of the park's high-traffic areas unusable during rain events. Runoff carrying debris and pollutants discharges directly into the pond or the city's drainage system, impacting both water quality and flooding downstream. The park's significant acreage offers opportunities for on-site "green" stormwater management.

Debris Build-Up Clogs the System

The park's historic cobble drainage swales collect leaves and debris, causing maintenance issues and clogging connections to the closed drainage system. While areas of build-up are more easily visible at the surface, drainage channels provide little mitigation to clean or slow stormwater runoff.



Localized Drainage Issues

Localized Drainage Issue

Below Ground Drainage Infrastructure

Scarboro Pond & Ellicott Stream

Drainage Outlet to City System


2


3

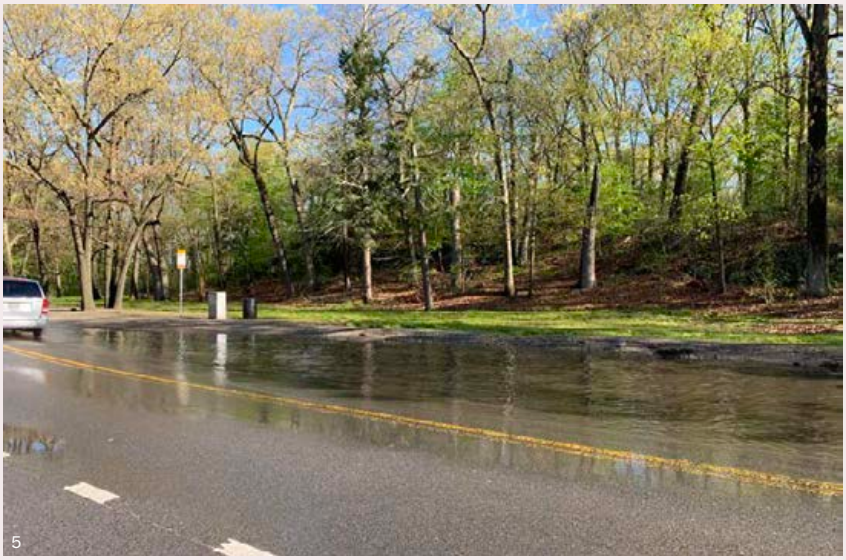
Pipe Restrictions Cause Surcharging

The subsurface drainage system within the golf course includes larger pipes discharging into smaller ones before entering Scarboro Pond. This causes surcharging within the system, resulting in manhole covers popping off and flooding along Circuit Drive.

Ponding in Low-Lying Areas

Localized drainage issues occur in isolated low spots around The Playstead, near White Stadium, along Circuit Drive, and within the golf course, leaving high-traffic areas soggy and unusable at times. Mowers and other maintenance equipment, and cars avoiding roadway flooding further compact wet soils, exacerbating the issue.


4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An Asset for All

Franklin Park as Living Infrastructure

Increasing temperatures and extreme weather events are just some of the impacts we are experiencing as result of climate change. Canopy cover in communities to the east is particularly low, intensifying the urban heat island effect, making Franklin Park a critical resource for access to cooler temperatures, and both active and passive recreation in nature.

Half of the park is covered by canopy, making it a popular place to experience nature in the city and an invaluable public health resource for its neighbors. Urban canopy combats climate change and improves our quality of life, by lowering temperatures, cleaning air and water, providing critical habitat, and improving our mental and physical health.


1


2

Canopy by the Numbers

27% Boston's Existing Canopy Coverage

50% Franklin Park's Existing Canopy Coverage

Shade & Cooling

Positive impacts from forest areas grow exponentially as they increase in size, making large, continuous canopies especially valuable in the city. Shade from trees produces:

- A reduction in heat island effect, glare, and reflection from pavement
- Cooler temperatures for people inside and out, resulting in a reduction in hospital visits during heat waves and energy conservation in buildings

Physical & Mental Well-Being

Visual and physical access to nearby green space can improve mood and physical health as well as outcomes for communities facing mental health challenges.

- Encourages physical activity and exercise
- Reduces stress and depression, slows heartbeats, lowers blood pressure, and relaxes brain waves

Clean Water

Trees and the soil they live in:

- Minimize impacts of urban flooding by reducing the rate and volume of runoff and recharging the groundwater supply
- Improve water quality by capturing and filtering out pollutants

Provide Habitat

The park's canopy provide benefits to birds, insects and mammals by:

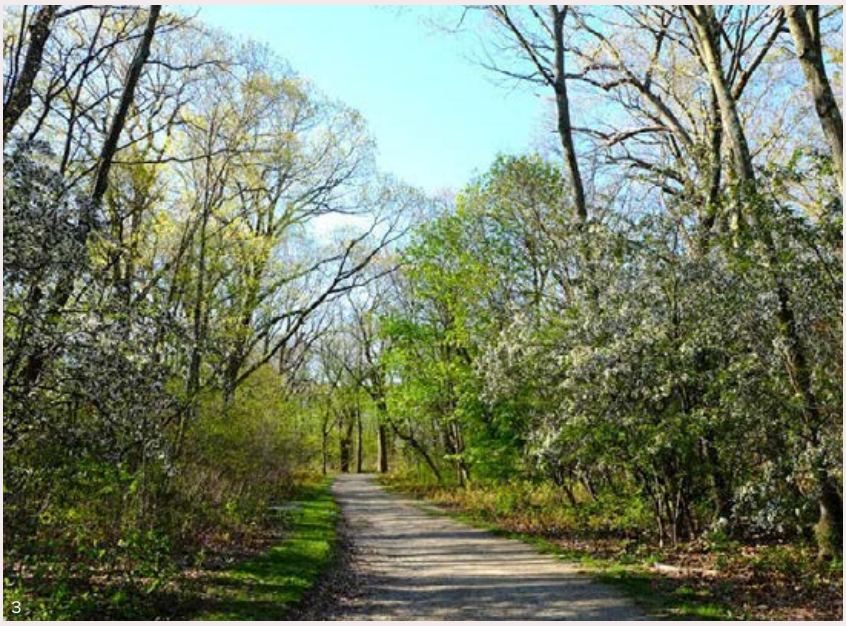
- Providing nesting opportunities and food sources

4

Canopy Cover (High to Low)*

5

Surface Temperature (High to Low)*



3

Clean Air

Leaves filter air pollutants like particulate matter, ozone, NOx and So2 from car exhaust, chemicals, and smoke. They also sequester carbon, resulting in:

- Air quality improvements and reductions in related medical conditions

Reduce Noise

Leaves and branches absorb and block sound from traffic, construction sites, and other sources in the city to:

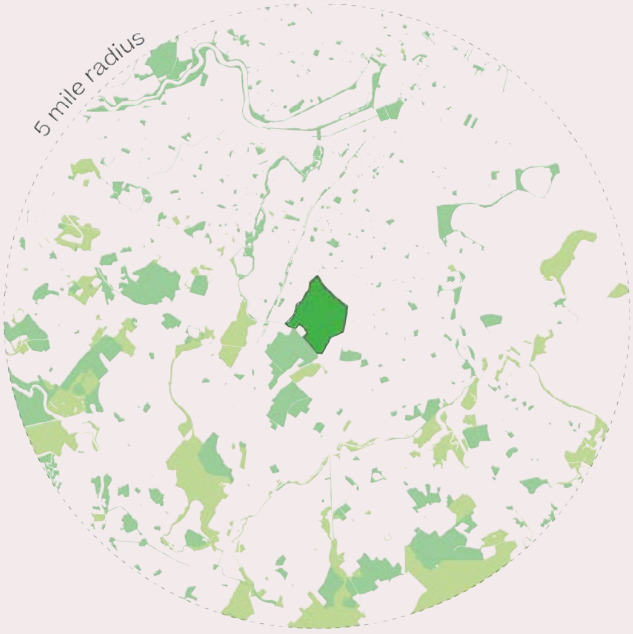
- Reduce noise pollution

Living Network

Green Relationships Run Deep and Wide

Together, Franklin Park, the Arnold Arboretum, Forest Hills Cemetery, and Boston Nature Center are one of the largest contiguous open spaces within the city, providing valuable habitat and respite for many. Much of what we experience in the park is defined by the conditions underground — the soils. Soil is constantly working to support both plant life and programmed areas and to hold and filter stormwater. Healthy soils are critical to healthy places.

Its size alone — 500+ acres — makes the park a unique habitat within Boston's network of small neighborhood playgrounds and linear waterfronts. Within its bounds, the link between above and below ground defines and supports plant life and program, while performing important ecosystem services like stormwater management, groundwater recharge, and carbon sequestration.



Open Space Network

Open Space

Conservation Area

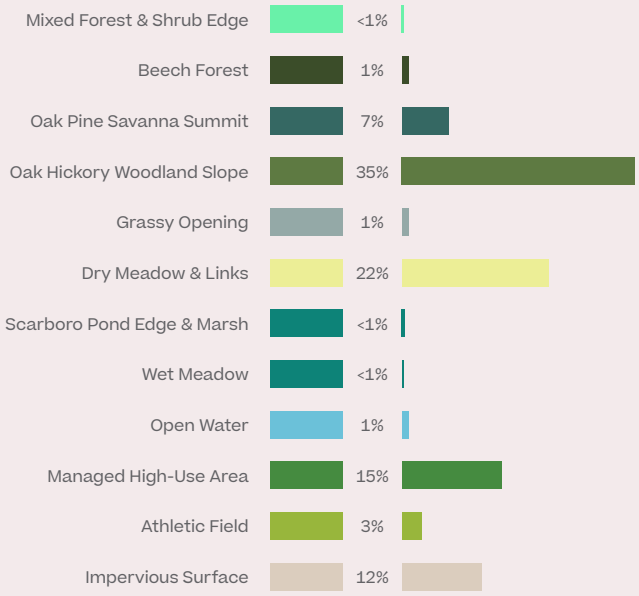
What do soils tell us?

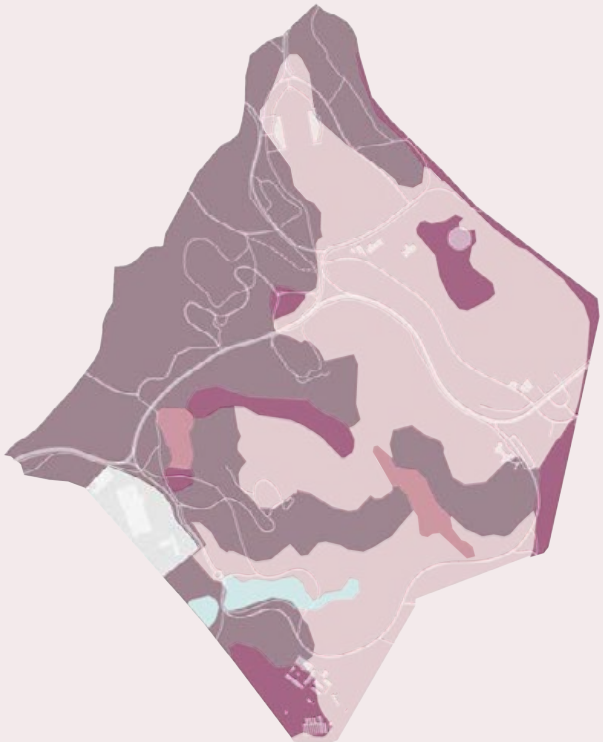
The soils in the park were shaped by glaciers and vary across elevations, with thin soils over bedrock on hills and deeper sands in valleys.

1. Soils in the woodlands, on slopes, and near rock outcrops are broadly shallow with a fine sand and silt composition. They are prone to very slow infiltration rates, but the presence of organic matter helps retain nutrients and water for plant growth.

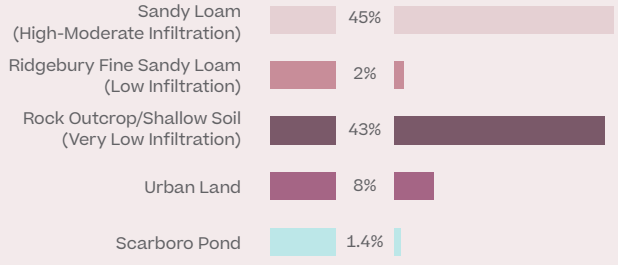
2. Soils in open areas, like the golf course, are deeper with more coarse sands near the surface. This soil remains porous and promotes better drainage, while supporting frequent foot traffic and maintenance vehicles.

Ecological Types





Soil Types



Landscape Mosaic

The Potential for Health & Diversity Exists

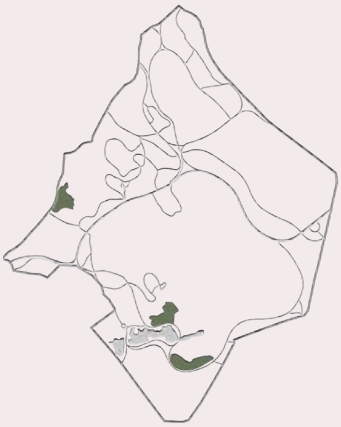
Olmsted amplified the original character of the land into a series of distinct landscape types — ranging from rocky savanna and wooded slopes to meadows and open water. Today, ecologies in the park fall within three broad types, primarily composed of woodlands and open areas, with little to no transition zone between the two. While diverse characters and ecologies still exist, their health has been compromised by deferred maintenance, heavy use, and the emergence of invasive species and threatening pests. Tailored strategies can be employed to return these systems to health and create a resilient, and even more varied, park experience.

Woodland **Buffer**

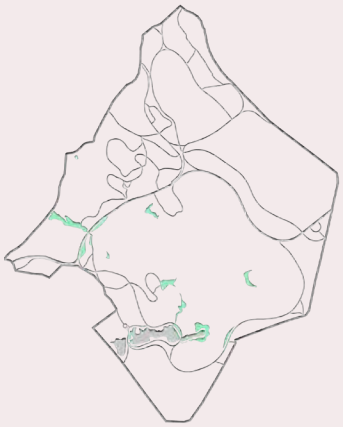
Oak Pine Savanna Summit & Grass Clearings

Oak Hickory Woodland Slope

Beech Forest



Mixed Forest & Shrub Edge



Open

Wet Meadow


5

Scarboro Pond Edge & Marsh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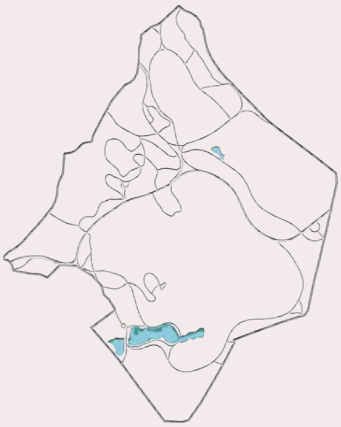
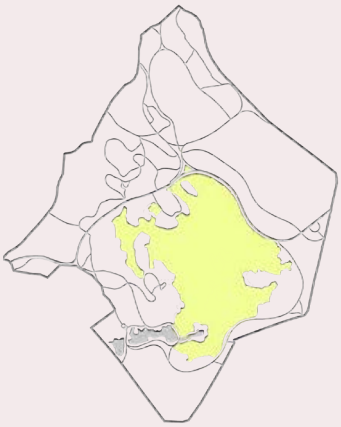


Dry Meadow & Links


7



Athletic Fields & Lawns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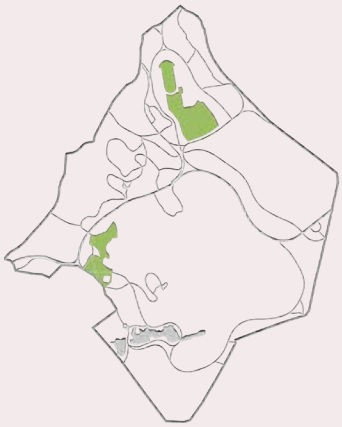


Shallow Soils, Sunny Openings

Oak Pine Savanna & Grass Clearings

Oak pine savanna communities occur at the highest elevations in the park. Naturally dry and drought-prone, these areas are characterized by thin, low-nutrient, acidic soils and puddingstone rock outcrops with little horticultural planting. Typically, healthy canopy cover ranges from 10-50%, with high light levels. Removals of pitch pine and disturbance of the ground plane has resulted in the expansion of woody plants and a decrease in rich, flowering vegetation at the ground level that provides important food and habitat for small mammals and birds.

Overgrown and unmanaged canopy has reduced the amount of light that can reach the ground layer, depleting the savanna-like grasses that characterize this zone. Reintroducing evergreens would improve habitat for winter months and build diversity in a woodland dominated by oaks.

70%

of Action Plan survey respondents identified **access to nature** as their most appreciated thing about the park

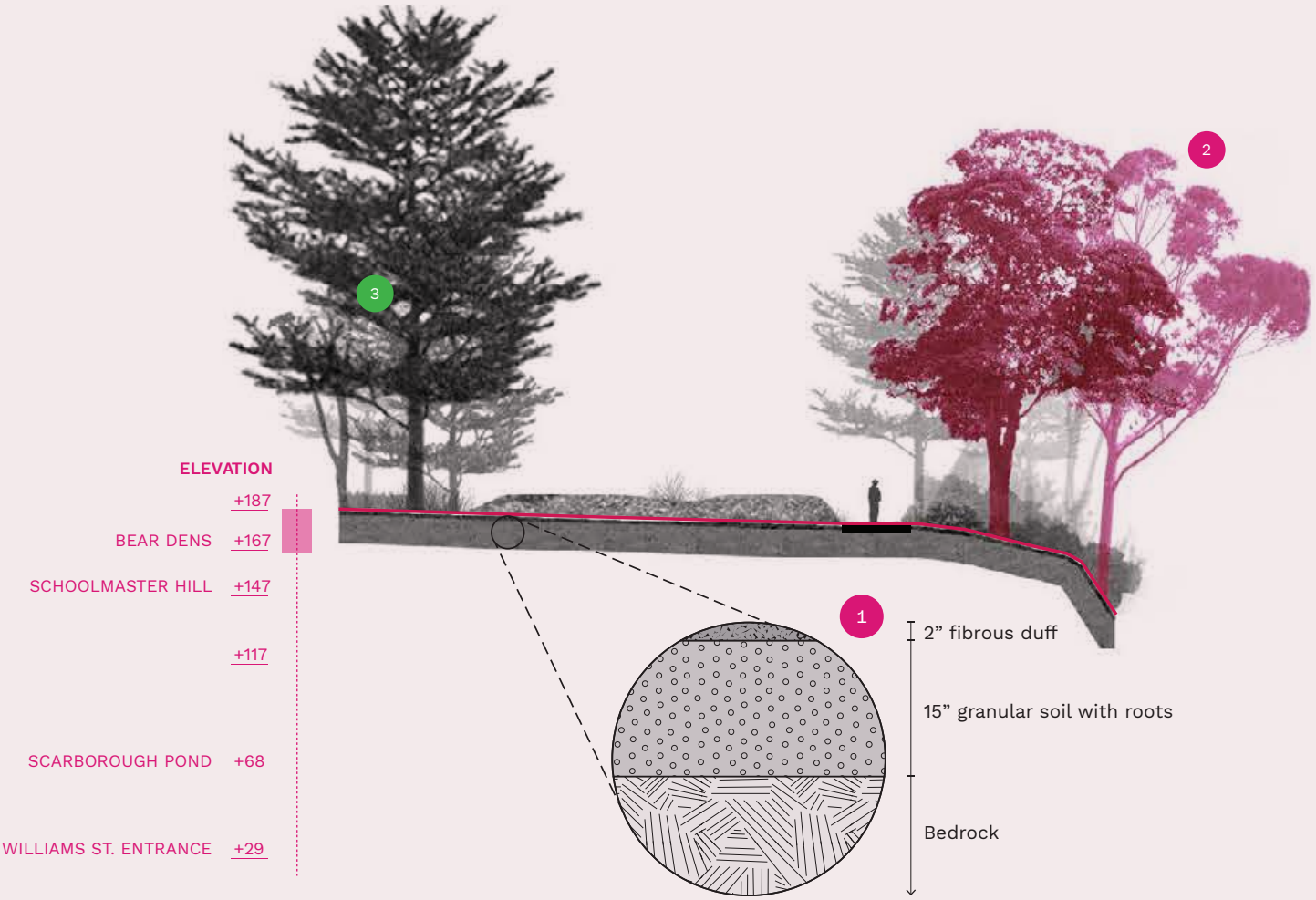
Hike in the Woods

Take in the City Views

Ecosystem Health Indicator Species

Indigo Blunting

Slender Clearwing Sphinx Moth



Where are the challenges?

1 Thin soils

Thin, low-nutrient, acidic soils are present here. While they are indicative of soils typically found in rocky woodland landscapes, they do prevent planting larger specimens.

2 Dense Canopy

An overgrown and unmanaged canopy has reduced light levels on the ground layer, causing a loss of savanna-like grasses in this zone.

What are the possibilities?

3 Evergreen Habitat

Evergreen plants are critical for winter bird habitat but have declined in recent years in part due to pests like the hemlock woolly adelgid.

Aging Canopy, Invasive Understory
Oak Hickory Woodland Slope

Oak hickory woodland slopes occur at middle elevations and account for the majority of the woodland ecology in the park. Soils are typically only inches deep before hitting rock. There is some horticultural planting at overlooks and other key destinations, but overall native plant life is in competition with invasives like Japanese knotweed, garlic mustard, periwinkle and other Eurasian plants, resulting in a loss of native flowering shrubs and reduced oak and hickory germination rates.

The park's woodlands are central to its design and experience, but their future is threatened. An unmanaged canopy and ground plane means that this single-age stand of trees does not have new saplings to take their place. Invasive species growth further stresses the forest, reducing diversity and blocking views, causing some visitors to feel unsafe.

33%

of Action Plan survey respondents listed **The Wilderness** as their most visited place in the park

Visit Park Ruins

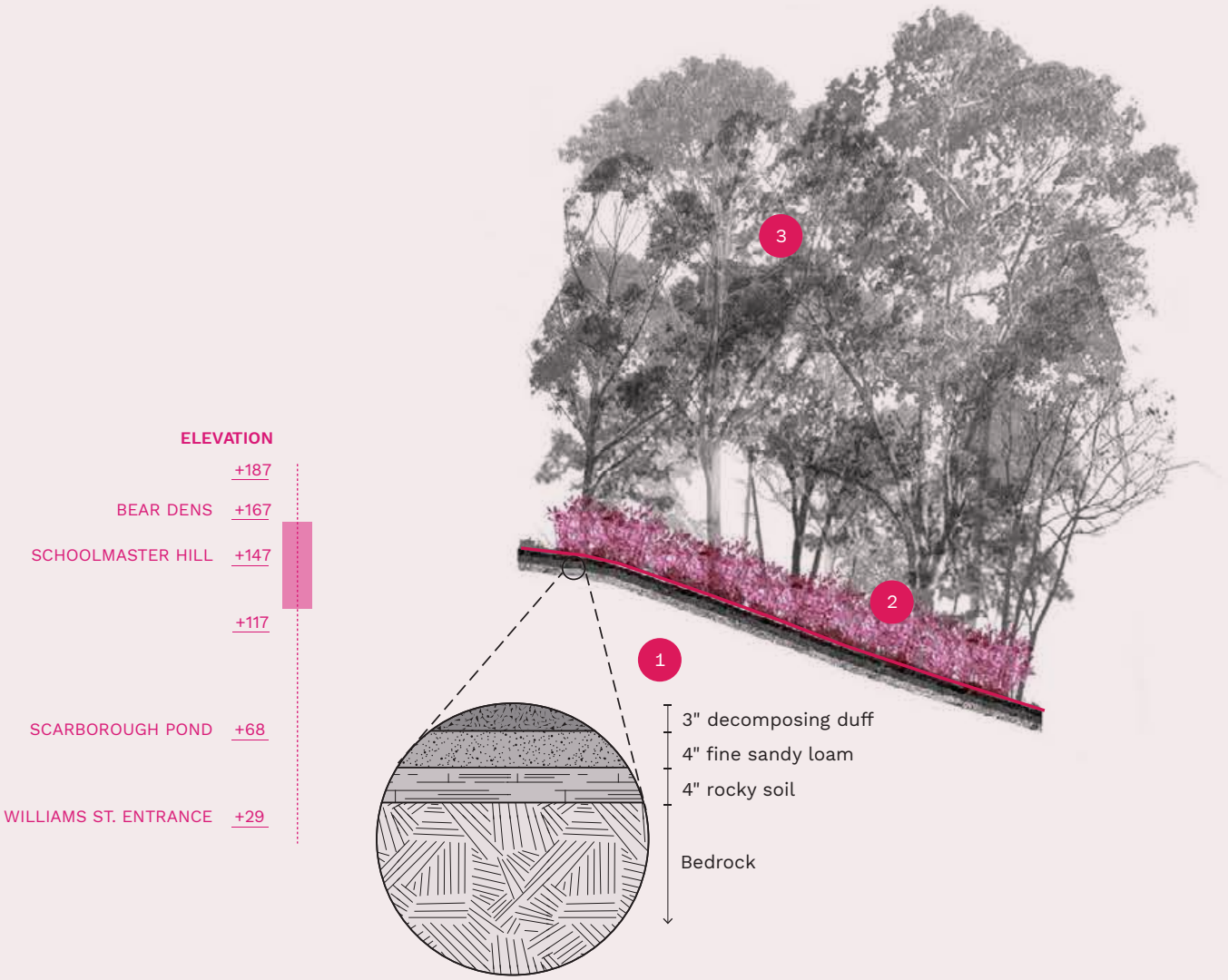
Spend Time in Nature

Ecosystem Health Indicator Species


Scarlet Tanager


Southern Flying Squirrel


Pink Lady's Slipper Orchid



Where are the challenges?

1 Thin soils

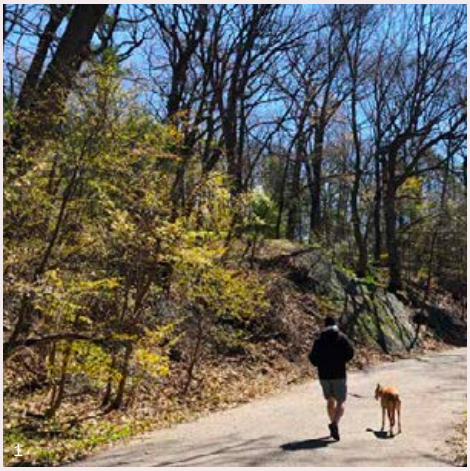
Soil is only a few inches deep before hitting rock, making natural regeneration of oak seedlings the most sustainable way to ensure the next generation of the woodland canopy.

2 Invasive Species

Glossy buckthorn, Japanese Knotweed, and Garlic Mustard are most prevalent in 6"+ deep soils. Their presence competes with understory trees and shrubs. Circulation systems increase light corridors, which invasives follow to spread across the woodland.

3 Closed Canopy

Mature canopy has been unmaintained, reducing light and inhibiting germination of new oak & hickory trees. Selective clearing, crown reduction pruning, and Buckthorn removal can encourage the next generation of drought-resistant trees that will thrive here.



Heritage Canopy, Threatened Conditions
Beech Groves

Small pockets of large European and American Beech live amongst oak, hickory, walnut, black cherry, and white pine woodlands, but are damaged by pests and threatened by thriving invasive species. Because the forest succession process is restricted due to lack of sunlight, this collection of trees largely exists without a new generation to replace them. Not only are these groves significant as some of the original Olmsted plantings, they also provide excellent food supply for mammals and birds and represent a majestic moment in the landscape.

These heritage trees are some of the oldest groves in the park, likely dating back to original Olmsted-era planting. The grand stands represent distinctive and powerful moments in the woodland canopy, but without measures to increase successional growth and protect from pests, they could disappear from the park's landscape.

47%

of Action Plan survey respondents identified **mature trees** as their most appreciated thing about the park

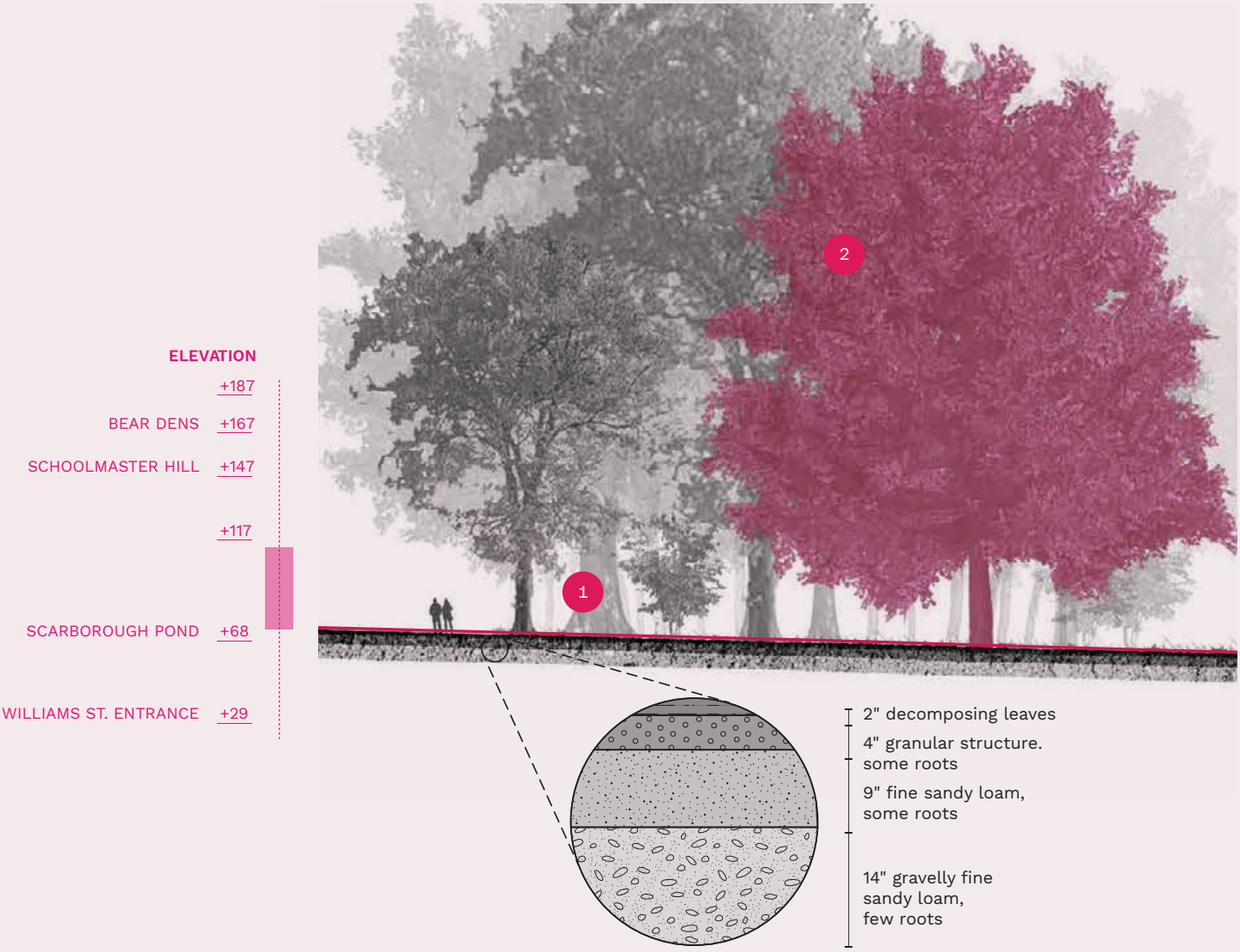
#2

Action Plan survey respondents ranked this Imagine Boston 2030 goal second: '**Respect the historic and ecological environment**. The demands of park users and the diversity of park uses will be managed in a way that is compatible with the landscape's history and ecology.'

Ecosystem Health Indicator Species

Lowbush Blueberry

Witch Hazel



Where are the challenges?

1 Bleeding Beech Canker

This fungal disease causes lesions on stems and major branches, opening trees to secondary pests. Modern treatments and preventions exist, including surface mulching with hardwood chips.

2 Dense & Aging Canopy

Low light levels prevent germination and growth of the next generation of Beech, as well as ground and understory plants that would increase diversity.

What are the possibilities?

3 Heritage Trees

The mature European Beech trees in the park are over 100 years old. Increased care can prolong their lifespans. Cultivate the next generation of heritage trees with replanting efforts.


1


2


3

Fragmented Transition, Limited Territory

Mixed Forest & Shrub Edge

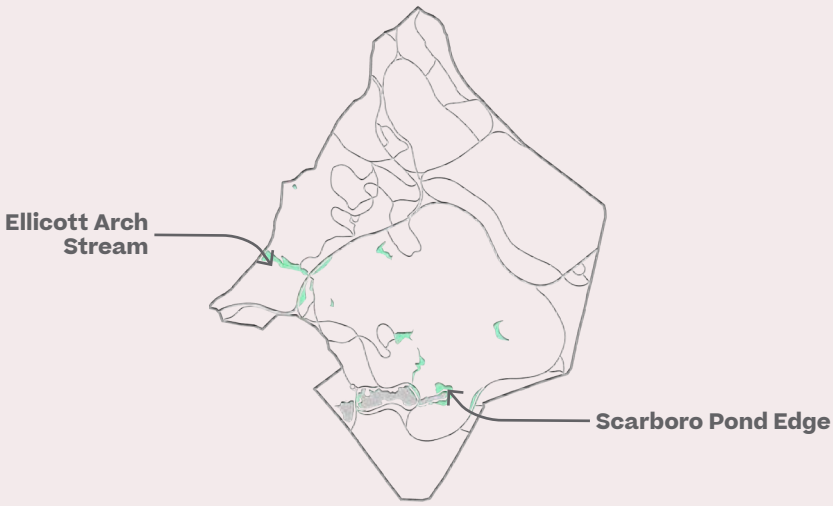
Characterized by sandy, low-nutrient soil, with high infiltration rates, these lower-elevation forests of oak, hickory, black cherry, and white pine, are often out-competed by Norway Maple. Low ground-level diversity limits germination, making this the most damaged groundlayer in the forest. Shrub edges, between forests and grasslands, would typically have more extensive horticultural planting like highbush blueberry and sumac, but this ephemeral habitat has been over-colonized by trees, resulting in high contrast between wooded and open areas.

The stark contrast between woodland and open areas leave ecological habitats disjointed and visitors with an 'either/or' experience of the park. Increasing transitions and buffers between these zones would protect and connect important habitats across the park and provide visitors with a more exciting and diverse landscape to explore.

Dream Big!
What is your hope for the future of Franklin Park?

"Connect urban residents with nature! Environmental education programming, citizen science initiatives, junior ranger programs, park cleanups..."

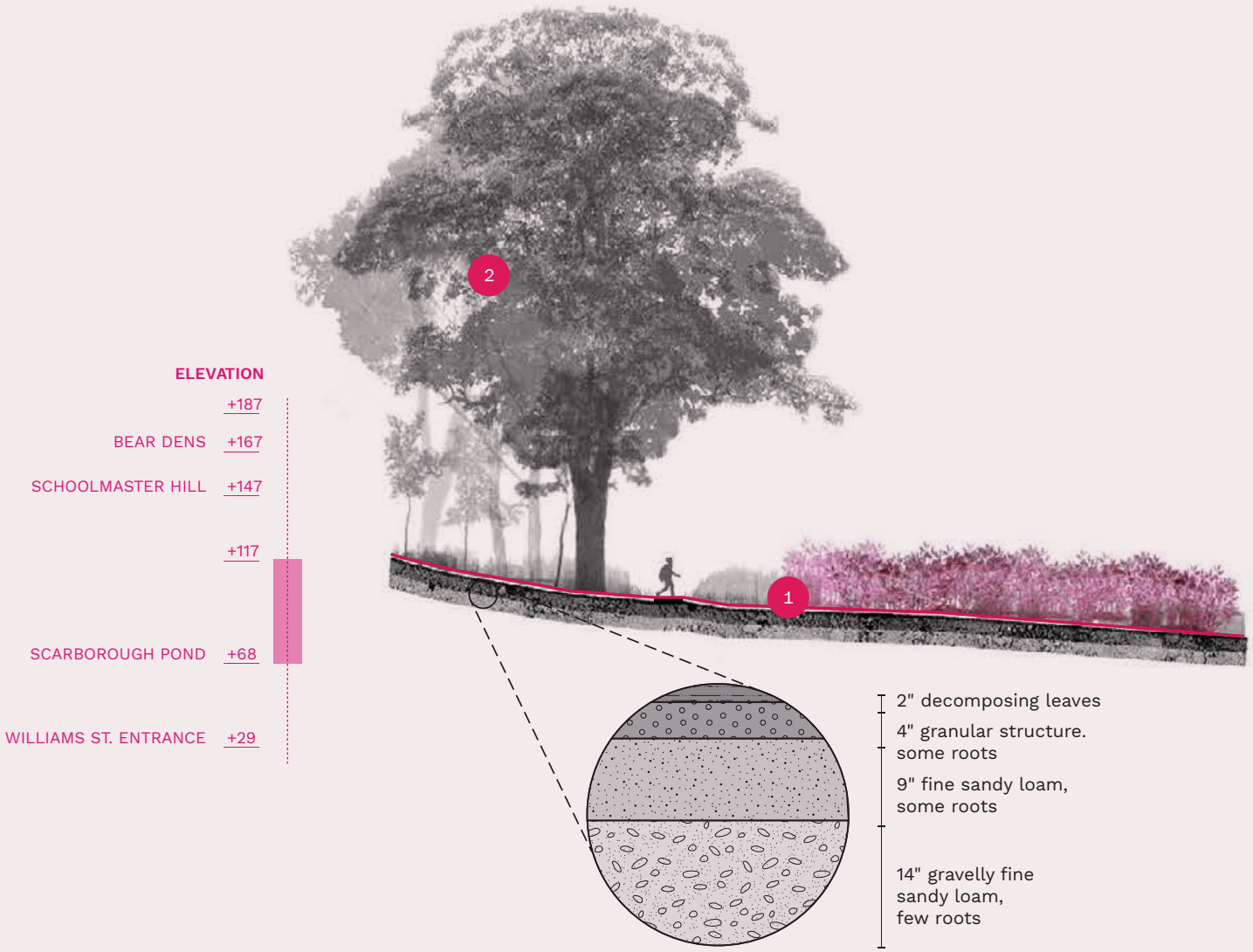
- Action Plan Survey Respondent



Ecosystem Health Indicator Species


Song Sparrow


Brown Thrasher



Where are the challenges?

1 Transitional Habitat

Disturbance of the ground layer has resulted in a loss of flowering shrubs. The shrub edge is valuable for wildlife cover, food sources, and micro-climates, but requires intervention to reduce competition.

2 Invasives Prevent Succession

Dense shade from Norway Maples and the presence of Japanese Knotweed prevents ground layer growth and forest succession.

What are the possibilities?

3 Past Plantings

Historic photos reveal planting character and species of the past, illustrating a rich transition zone largely missing in the park today.

Low Diversity, Compacted Soils
Athletic Fields and Lawns

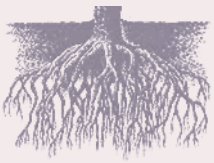
Athletic fields occur at lower elevations in the park and are characterized by level ground and sandy, low-nutrient soils. Though their ecological diversity is low, these areas offer important places for flexible use and stormwater management. Today, permeability is compromised by compaction from heavy use and infill of fine particles in the soil. Compromised infiltration capacity and traditional turf maintenance methods mean that unwanted chemical nutrients are carried to the pond or transferred to groundwater during rainstorms.

The athletic fields and lawns are some of the most frequently used areas of the park, hosting everything from festivals and events to team sports. Heavy use without remediation has undermined infiltration and surface resilience necessary to keep fields dry and usable for year-round programming.

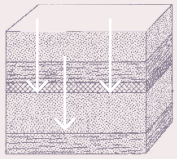
Attend a Festival or Concert

Play Team Sports

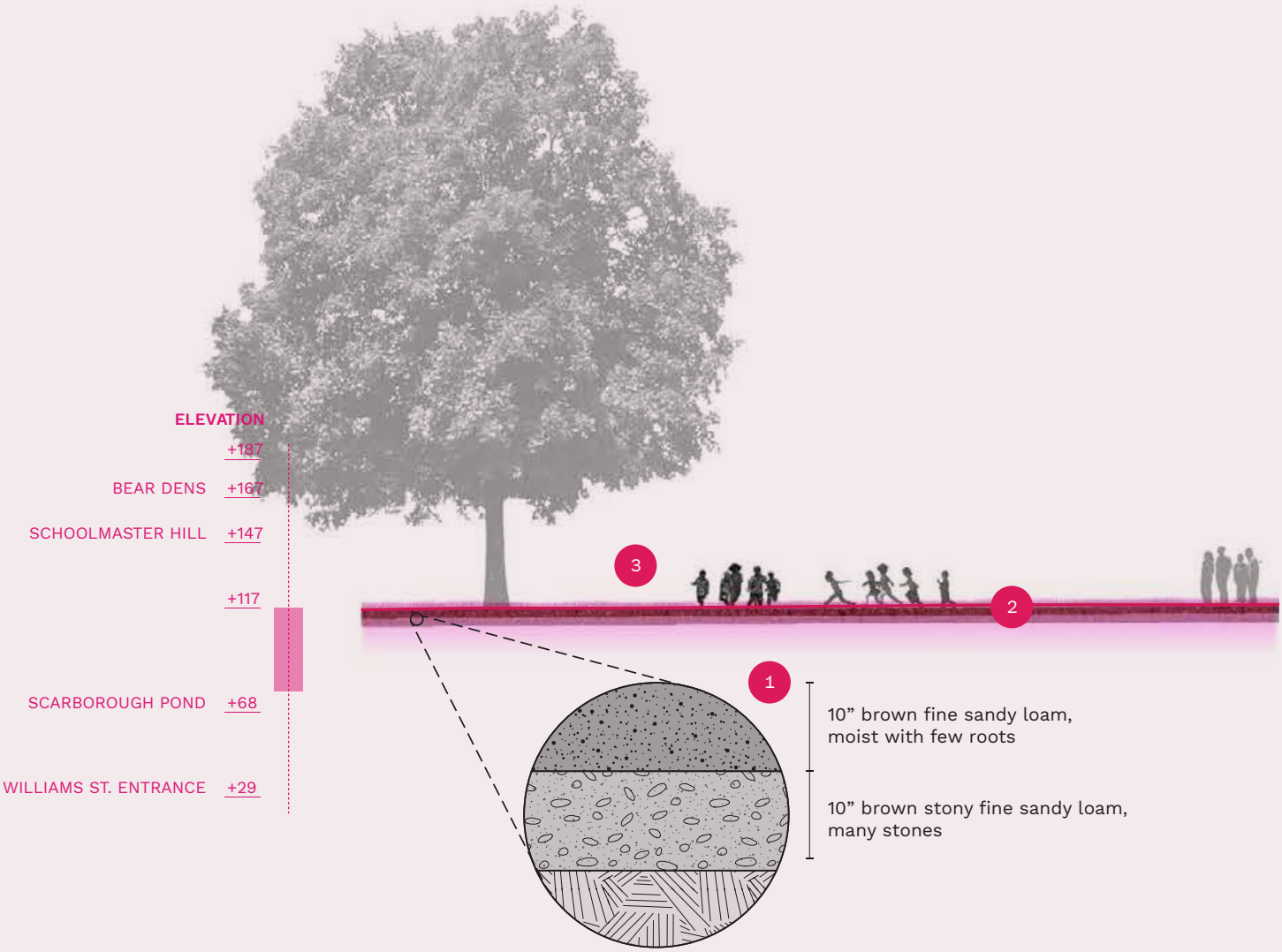
Health Indicators



Healthy Soils & Aeration



Water Infiltration



Where are the challenges?

1 **Compacted Soils**
Heavy use over time has led to compaction, inhibiting drainage in these high-use areas.

2 **Nutrient Loads**
Turf areas export nitrogen and phosphorus from fertilizers via runoff and groundwater, which stimulate growth of undesirable plant life in open water.

3 **Low Biodiversity**
Mostly turf areas produces a monocultural habitat.

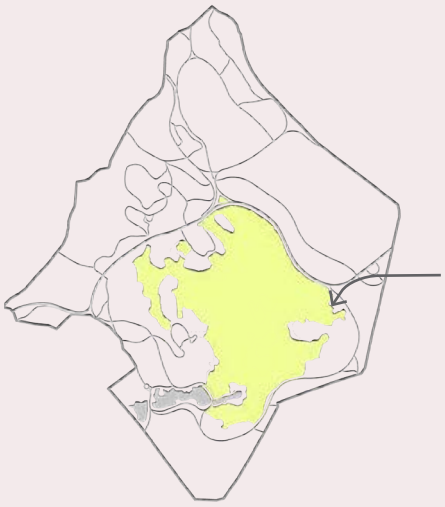
Low Diversity, Poor Drainage
Dry Meadow & Golf Course

The golf course is characterized by sandy, low-nutrient soil, high soil infiltration rates, and surface groundwater levels within a few to several feet of surface. The fairways and short roughs have low canopy cover and diversity and pose problems similar to the athletic fields, with nutrient export affecting water quality in the pond and groundwater. Taller roughs covered in little bluestem grass are generally out of play, making them opportune spaces to introduce forbs and flowering plants to support pollinators and birds.

The use has changed, but the concept of the Country Park has stayed the same: a large open meadow with sweeping park views. Runoff from the golf course has impacted water quality and the turf monoculture makes for poor habitat, but the large surface area and central location provides an opportunity to improve both without affecting play.

Play Golf

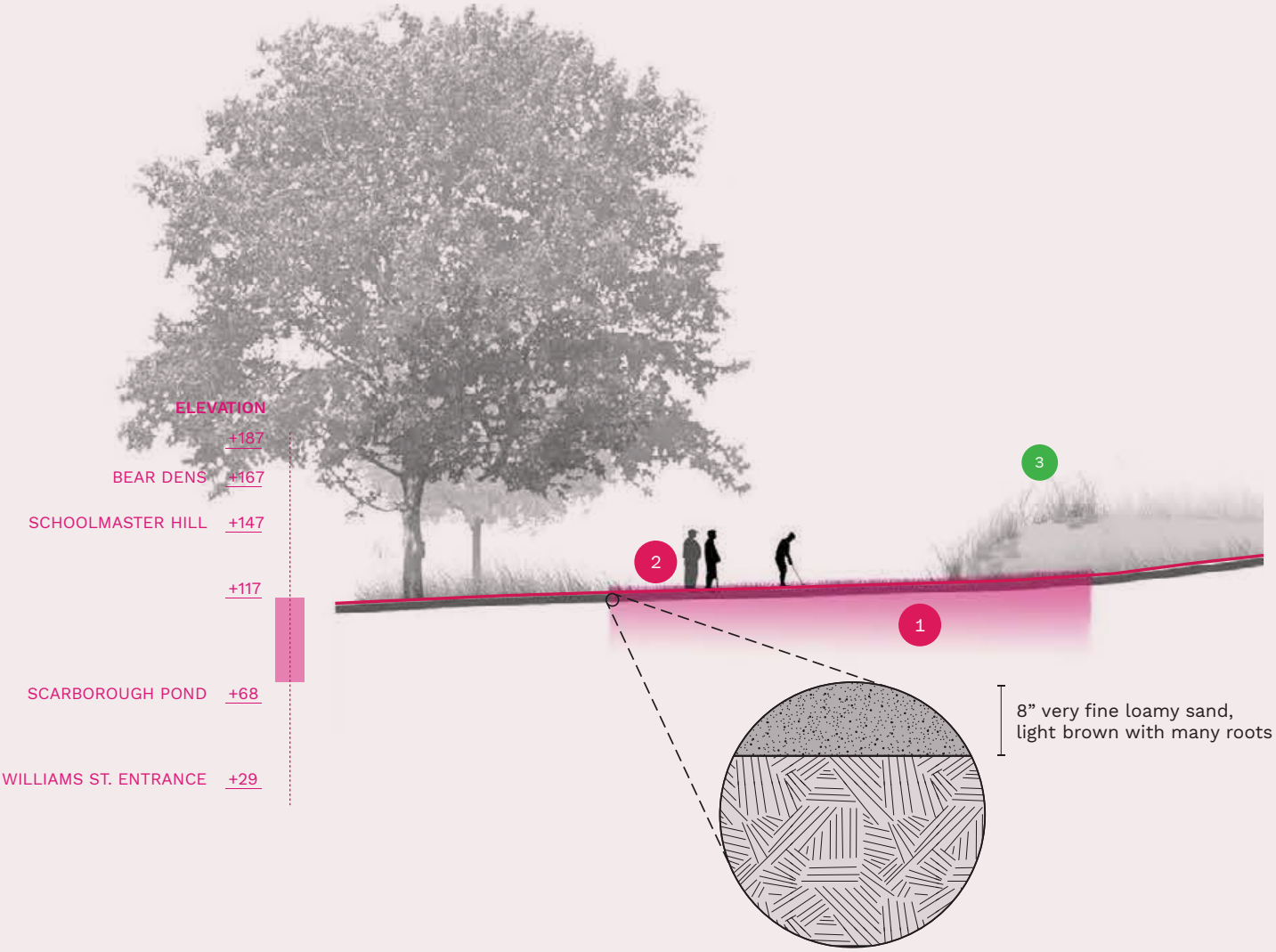
Take in Park Views



Ecosystem Health Indicator Species

Eastern Bluebird

Grasshopper



Where are the challenges?

1 Nutrient Loads

Turf areas export nitrogen and phosphorus from fertilizers, via runoff and ground water, which stimulate growth of undesirable plant life in open water.

2 Compacted Soils

Water pools in low-lying areas of the golf course in historic wetlands and drainageways. Traffic from mowers, golf carts, and golfers impacts soil quality and infiltration rates.

What are the possibilities?

3 Support Biodiversity

Expand and extend areas of flowering forbs and other meadow species in the rough to support pollinators without disturbing play.

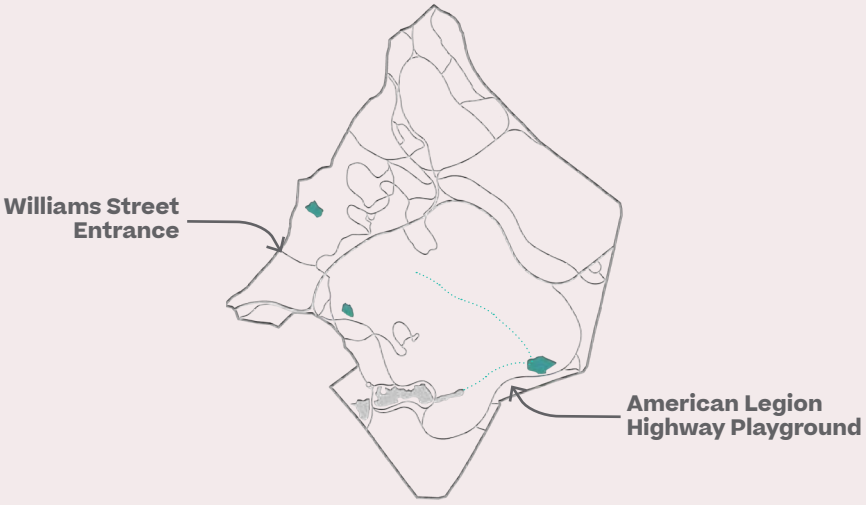
Saturated Soils, Unique Habitat

Wet Meadow & Woodland

Wet meadows and wet woodlands exist in depressions near the water table below the land surface, which create saturated soils. Low areas with sandy loam wetland soils that were filled to expand the golf course still receive large amounts of stormwater runoff due to natural drainage patterns. Minimal tree cover and a dense growth of undesirable herbaceous plants has crowded out asters and sedges. Meanwhile, the dense canopy of wet wooded areas has encouraged invasive plants that now dominate these areas.

Small pockets of wet woodlands and meadow are dominated by invasive species, limiting habitat for birds and pollinators. The lower elevation and sandy soils make the wet meadow ideal for capturing and cleaning stormwater, but its current extent is limited. Increasing diversity would improve these functions and provide an additional dimension of park beauty.

Watch Park Wildlife



Dream Big!

What is your hope for the future of Franklin Park?

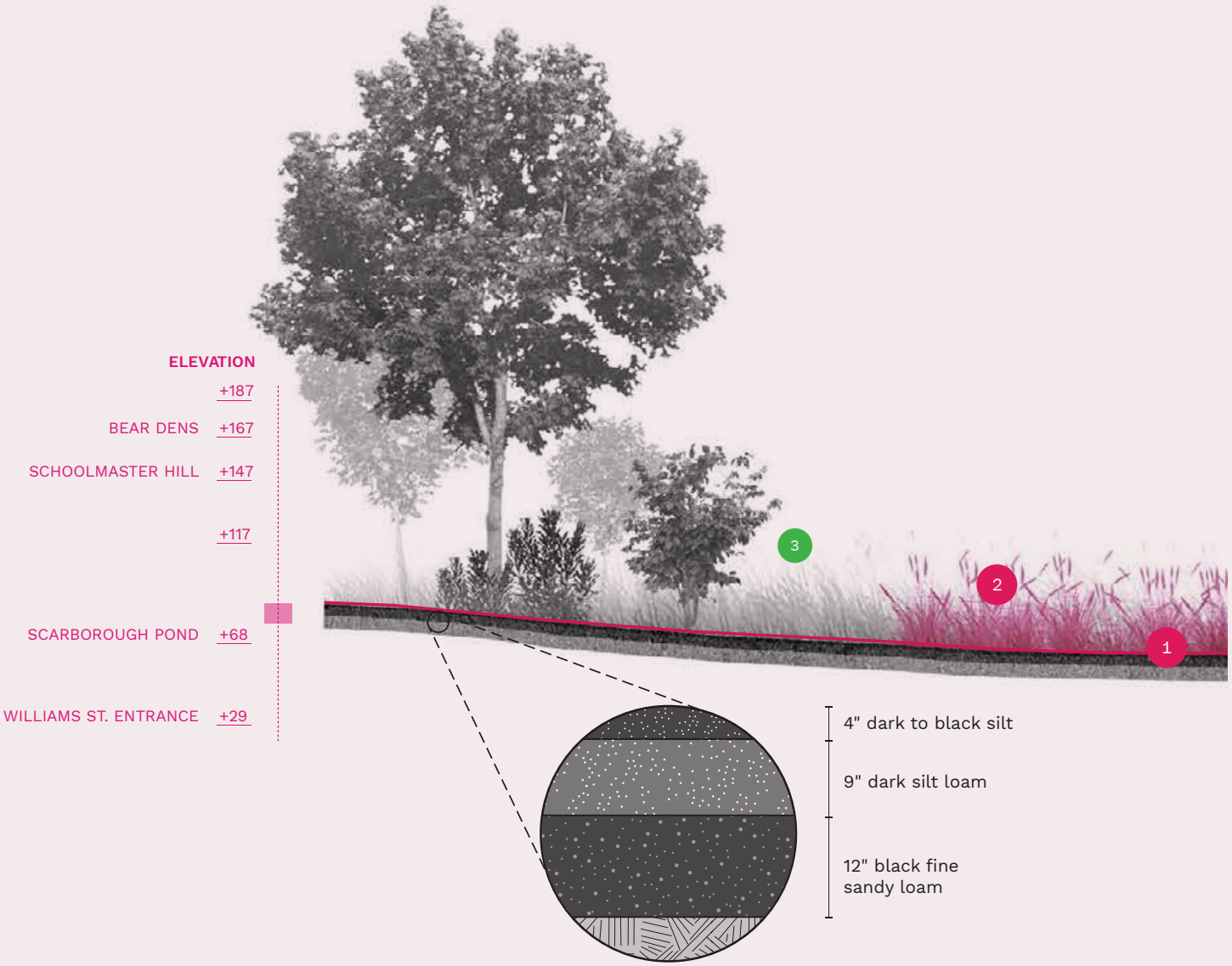
"I want Franklin Park to be an oasis of nature in an urban setting - a respite where people can be refreshed by interaction with natural and wild spaces."

- Action Plan Survey Respondent

Ecosystem Health Indicator Species

Shallow Sedge

Tussock Sedge



Where are the challenges?

1 Habitat Reduction

Filling of former wet meadows has greatly reduced one of the park's rare habitats and unique features.

2 Invasive Species

In the meadow, wet areas are dominated by reed canary grass, giant reed, and narrow-leaved cattail; in the woodland, by Japanese knotweed.

What are the possibilities?

3 Pollinator Habitat

Reintroduce flowering plants and food supply for pollinators.


1


2


3

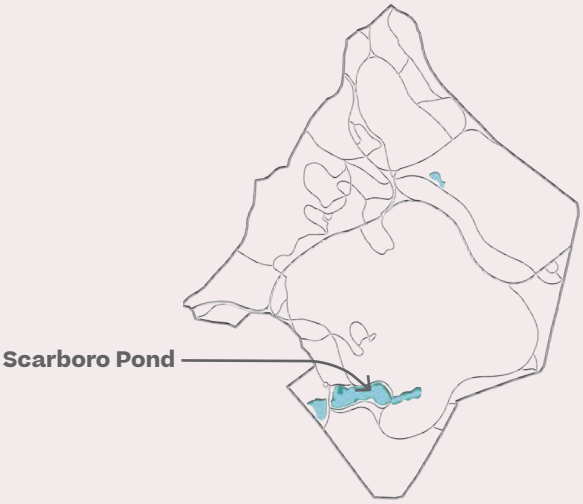
Open Water, Degraded Conditions
Pond Edge & Marsh

Excavated early in construction, Scarboro Pond is the park's only large open waterbody. Fed by overland flow and drainage pipes, it experiences vigorous algae growth and reduced plant diversity due to concentrations of phosphorus at ten times natural levels. Herbaceous and shrubby vegetation should dominate the marsh between open water and upland elevations, with bulrush and other rushes, willow, sedges, arrowhead, and other aquatic plants typically present. Currently, these are limited by the narrow-leaf cattail invasion.

As the only open water body in the park, Scarboro Pond is a popular destination. Foot traffic causes erosion in some areas, while overgrown vegetation creates secluded and unsafe spaces in others. Runoff transfers pollutants and sediment, causing maintenance issues, degrading habitat, and impacting water quality in the pond and downstream.

52%

of Action Plan survey respondents identified **views** as their most appreciated thing about the park



Dream Big!
What is your hope for the future of Franklin Park?

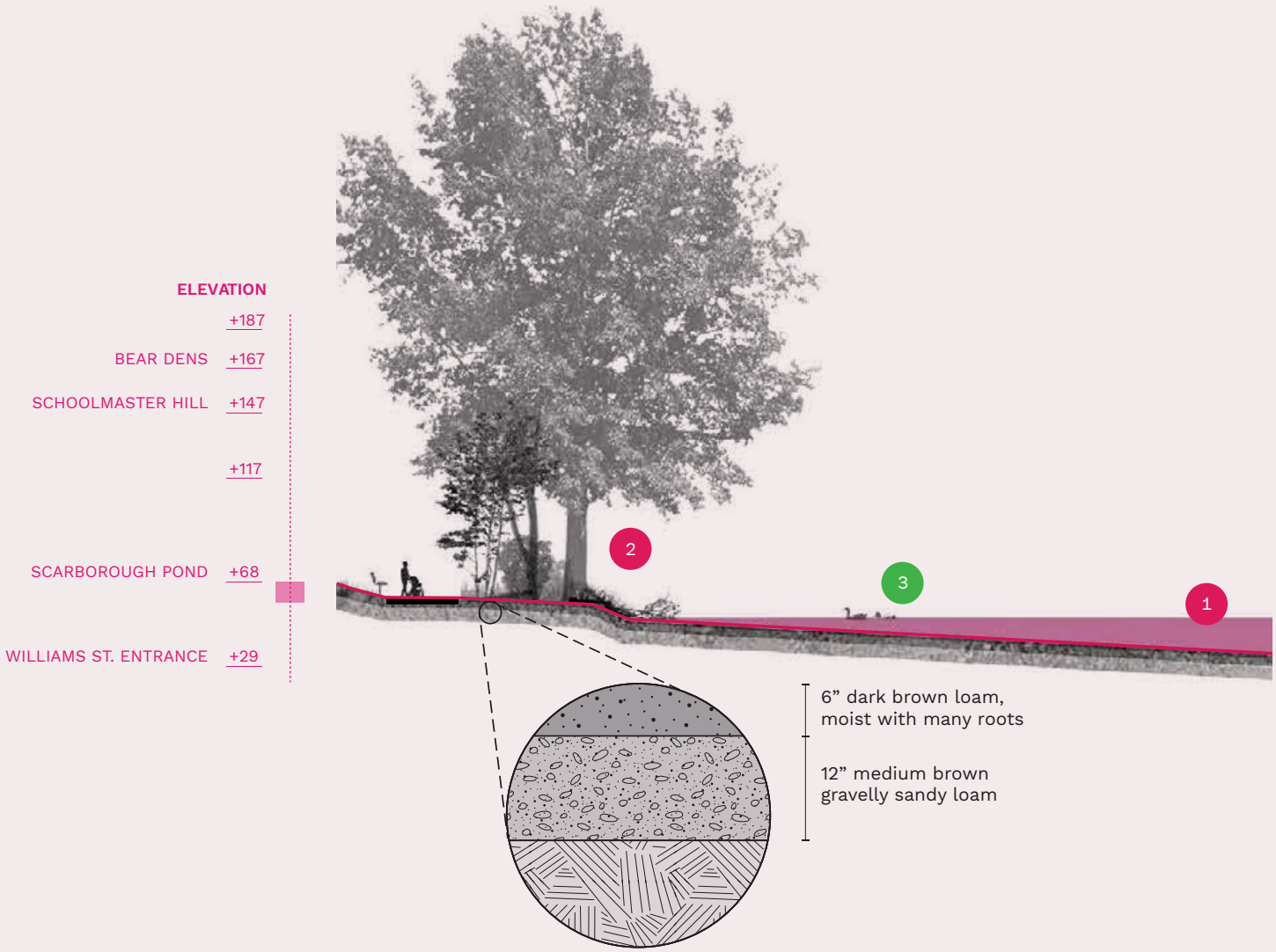
"As a Kindergarten teacher in Dorchester the idea of an affordable field trip includes Franklin Park! ...some type of teachable Pond Habitat Guide offering would be awesome."

- Action Plan Survey Respondent

Ecosystem Health Indicator Species


Canadian Rush


Three Way Sedge



Where are the challenges?

1 Excess Nutrients

Phosphorus and nitrogen from turf runoff, groundwater, and the goose population promote algae growth.

2 Edge Compaction & Invasive Species

Foot traffic around the pond results in compaction, affecting plant health, runoff, and bank erosion. The narrow-leaf cattail has the potential to behave as an invasive plant and exclude other species.

What are the possibilities?

3 Healthy Habitat

The pond habitat can support a wide range of plant and animal life that can be enjoyed by many with improved water quality and stabilization of the edge.


1


2


3

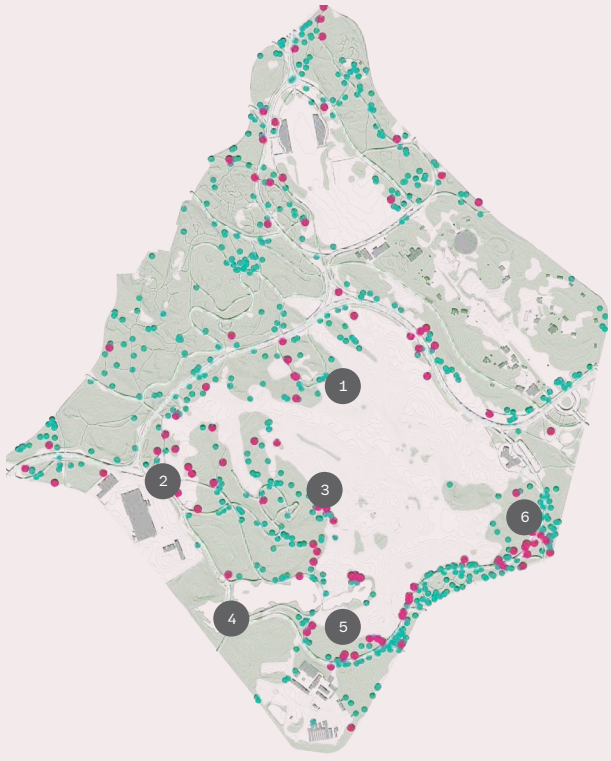
Protect Historic Specimens

Heritage Trees

The park has many stately trees located on open fields, within complex woodlands, and along scenic paths. Important to habitat and integral to the character of significant places within the park, these specimens contribute unique beauty, strengthen the spatial framework of the park, and embody the park's cultural significance within the city. These trees, some of which date to the park's construction, merit protection.

Heritage trees are notable for their age, size, and species, but most importantly for the legacy and significance that they carry. Older than most visitors, these unique trees have witnessed the park's long history. Their circumstances require special attention to ensure their health and longevity.


1



Legacy & Heritage Trees

- Legacy Trees (48"+ diameter)
- Heritage Trees (33"+ diameter)
- # Distinctive Heritage Tree Area
- Park Canopy Cover

What is a heritage tree?

This term is used to describe a specimen that is typically a large individual tree or grouping of trees with unique value and is considered to be irreplaceable. Criteria for defining heritage trees includes age, rarity, size, and aesthetic, and botanical, ecological, and historical value. Preservation of these specimens can mean stabilization of the tree itself, which may mean structural pruning or plant health care treatments, and/or removal of surrounding trees that are impacting a heritage tree's health or survival.

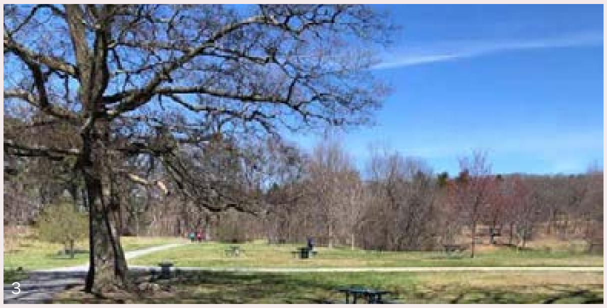
What is a caliper inch?

The standard unit for measuring trees is caliper inches, which refers to the diameter of its trunk. Measuring at chest height is a standard way to compare the size of mature trees to one another.

2

① Schoolmaster Hill

Significant trees are wide ranging, including groupings of mature pines and oaks and large individual specimens like a 31.5" Hornbeam. Dense overgrowth and invasives block views and crowd individual specimens.



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② Ellicottdale & Shattuck Picnic Grove

Several trees in this area are noteworthy for their size, age, and species, including 43", 50" and 70" oaks, and 48" and 55" sugar maples. Along paths bare soil conditions create compaction around trees and long lateral limbs near activity areas are safety threats.

4

③ Scarboro Hill

Scarboro Hill features large hemlocks and white pine, important evergreen habitat that adds to the woodland diversity. Large groupings of significant but declining oaks could be improved with selective thinning and understory maintenance for extended longevity and opening views.

5

6

④ Scarboro Pond

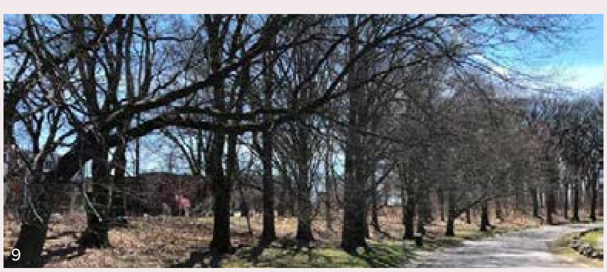
Two unique groves - one of tupelos and the other pin oaks - around the pond are growing in compacted, bare soil, which is in need of remediation. These groves are further threatened by polluted water runoff.

7

8

⑤ Beech Groves

Two beech groves, one of American beech and the other of European beech, are unique and significant trees within the park's canopy. Because of their age and susceptibility to disease, structural pruning, bracing, and treatment for insects and fungi should be prioritized.



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⑥ Circuit Drive & Loop

Many mature red maples, red oaks, and swamp white oaks dot the edge of Circuit Drive and the walking loop. Their prominent location means they are enjoyed by many, but compromised roots near paths and roads need attention for the long-term health of these trees.

Caring for the Park

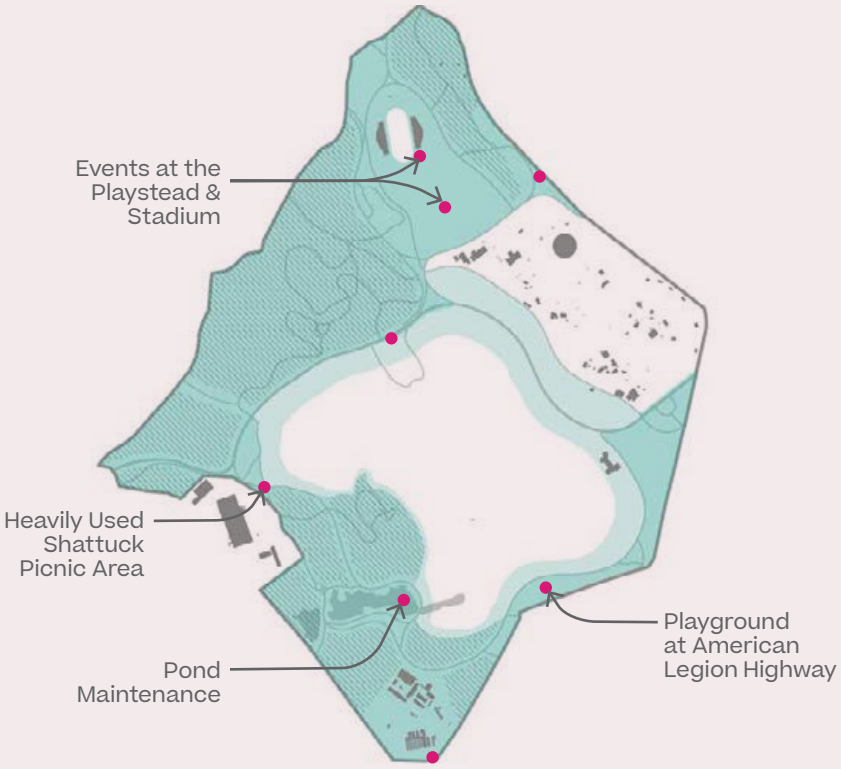
Maintenance Practices

Maintenance sustains the health, diversity, and functionality of a park's habitats and program spaces. Visitors also feel welcomed and safe in a park that is routinely cared for. But regular upkeep is just one part of the job in a park of this size – crews must also accommodate events of varying scales and intensities. The maintenance demands for a park of this size are extensive, time-consuming, and require training. Improvements to the park should consider the level of continued care they will require.

Only four staff members take care of Franklin Park. The scope and requirements of their daily work is demanding, only further challenged by limited equipment, failing infrastructure, and extra responsibilities brought on by large-scale events. An increase in programming must be carefully considered against the workload of the crew.

#5

Action Plan survey respondents ranked **Maintenance** fifth on a list of 35 improvements that people want to see in the park.

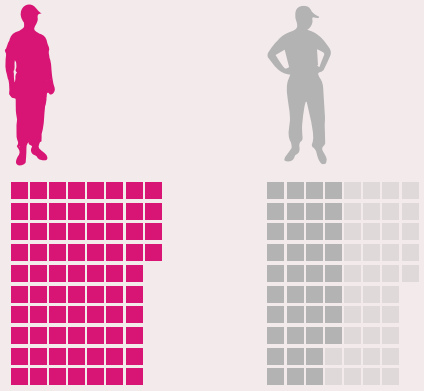


Maintenance Jurisdiction

- BPRD Crew - Routine Maintenance
- BPRD Crew - Limited Maintenance
- Overlap between BPRD Crew & Adjacent Maintenance Crew (Golf Course or Zoo)
- Challenge Areas

Who maintains the park?

The maintenance crew consists of four people.



At Franklin Park, each staff member is essentially responsible for 75 acres of regular maintenance. In comparable parks, on average, each staff person manages 38 acres.

ROUTINE & SEASONAL CARE

Grabbers, Rakes, Blowers

Bins, Packers

Cables, Cleaning Machines

Trimmers and Mowers

Ploughs

Tasks

-Regular maintenance takes place on frequented paths and highly used areas of the park, like The Playstead, playgrounds, and the Circuit Loop.

-Activities include cutting and trimming grass; de-littering, cleaning, emptying trash; clearing drains; and leaf and snow removal.

Challenges

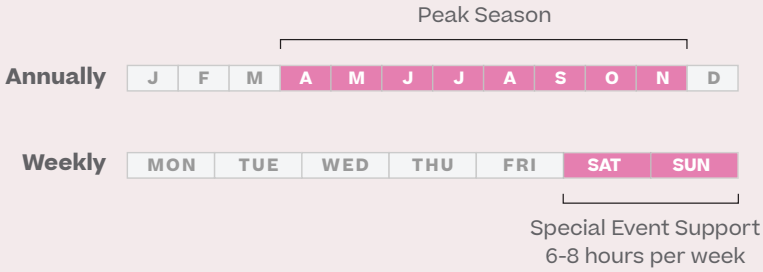
-Perimeter clean-up and trash removal requires considerable amount of work.

-Restrooms, drinking fountains, signage require regular repair.

-A lack of access to the tools and equipment needed to do the work; aging equipment requires frequent repairs, which have a slow turnaround time.

-Lack of man-power to cover everything that needs attention.

SPECIAL EVENTS



Tasks

-Preparation and event work includes putting out temporary trash reciprocals and cutting grass. Post-event work includes trash pick-up, clearing, and repairs from damage.

Challenges

-The work is time consuming and takes energy away from regular park maintenance.

-Lack of coordination between events and events support means the maintenance crew is left doing the work.

PERIODIC SPECIAL PROJECTS

Utility Maintenance

Basic Pruning

Tasks

-This work is usually contracted out, and includes utility maintenance; basic pruning and canopy management for safety and emergencies.

Challenges

-Most work is reactionary.

-Limited scope, budgets, and policies means differing opinions on what is prioritized and how the work is performed.

Recommendations


Make
Connections
& Activate
Edges

Make Connections & Activate Edges
Recommendations

CONTENTS

A Short History of the Park's Context
Development Impacts Access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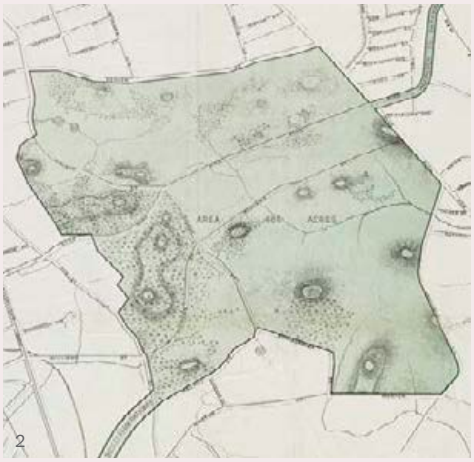
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6

A CITY OF HILLS
Early 1600s

Boston, the homelands of the Massachusett Tribe, was situated at the end of the Shawmut Peninsula in the harbor, with the only land-based connection to the city being along the 'Boston Neck', a narrow spit of land extending from Roxbury. Roxbury's strategic location and natural resources were used for regional trade and agricultural purposes long before much of the surrounding floodplain was filled to facilitate expanding city development.

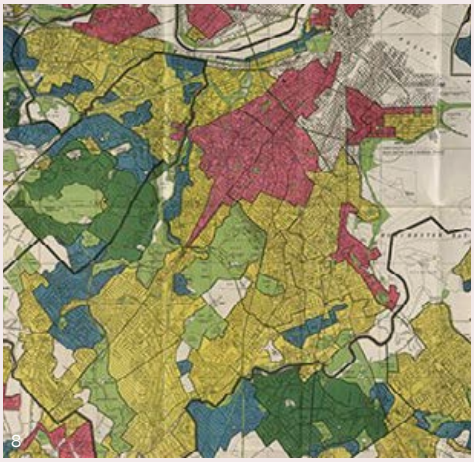
RURAL FARMS & ESTATES
1700s & 1800s

In 1875, the Park Act was passed, enabling Boston to obtain land for the West Roxbury Park (the initial name for Franklin Park). Despite opposition from landowners, in 1881, the city acquired enough land for park construction. At the time, the area was mostly comprised of small homesteads and farm roads with little urban development. Much of the soon to be park land and the surrounding areas had been cleared for agriculture and grazing. Boundaries between farms were likely marked with hedgerows or small orchards, and canopy cover was mostly restricted to rocky hills that were not suitable for farming.

IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES
1800s

During the 18th century, Roxbury grew to become a site of industry, including mills and tanneries. By the 1800s, a wide range of immigrant communities had established themselves in the surrounding areas, transforming small farms and estates to neighborhoods. In the late 1800s, construction on the park began. Key to the design was a perimeter field stone wall supported by canopy trees that defined its edge. This boundary created a separation between the respite of the park and a rapidly urbanizing city.


7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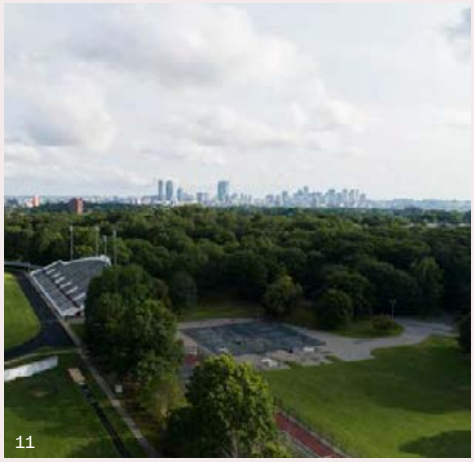
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STREET CAR SUBURBS
Early 1900s

Providing the convenience of commuting for those that wished to live outside the city center, the development and extension of trolley lines further fueled the growth and development of this area. This new era of travel shaped the park's perimeter roads, as they were widened and straightened to accommodate heavier and faster traffic. These changes increased the separation between the neighborhood and the park, making connections more distant and increasingly difficult.

PROTECTING THE PARK
1960s-1990s

By the 1970s, practices of redlining and block-busting resulted in active disinvestment in the now largely Black and brown neighborhoods surrounding the park and in the city's maintenance of the park itself. The park's planted edge, meant to create green separation from the city, became a wall of overgrown vegetation, contributing to a sense of the park being unsafe and making it even more difficult to access. New barriers within the park emerged as the community rallied to control car access, which had become unregulated throughout the park.

THE CENTER OF THE CITY
Looking Forward

As Olmsted anticipated over 100 years ago, the city would eventually meet the park's edges as it does today, making Franklin Park the geographic center of Boston. Consistent care, lighting, and signage, and ensuring frequent and marked crosswalks to entrances will contribute to making a place that feels welcome to all.

What We Heard
Clarify Access & Welcome All

COMMUNITY NEEDS & WISHES

"Recognize that the Park is in several neighborhoods and that every [edge is] in need of rehabilitation."

"Ensure that the streets bordering the park have sidewalks, even if there are no park entrances."

"I think making various entrances to the park more inviting, as well as places for people to gather, such as a market or popup would make the community more likely to use the park."

"Key entrances need to... have character and identity."

"I fear more gates, more locks, more fences, more places one can't wander."

"I feel there is good access to the park for walking - many entrances; the street entrances can all be improved for attractiveness and safety of pedestrians."

"I hope that it becomes more accessible to people with disabilities."

"Improving access by all means of arrival is important."

"Improve access for [the] elderly and disabled."

"The edge sets the tone, and it's discordant."

"Removing the fences at the Shattuck, White Stadium, and masking zoo fences is important."

VALUES & GOALS

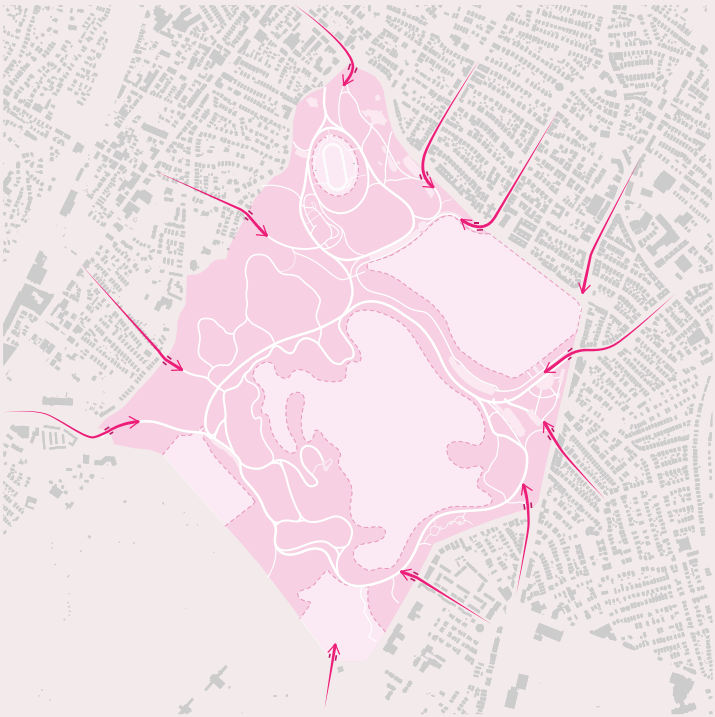
MAINTAIN THE EDGE

PROVIDE CLEAR ENTRANCES

BREAK DOWN INTERNAL EDGES

The Big Picture
Make Connections & Activate Edges

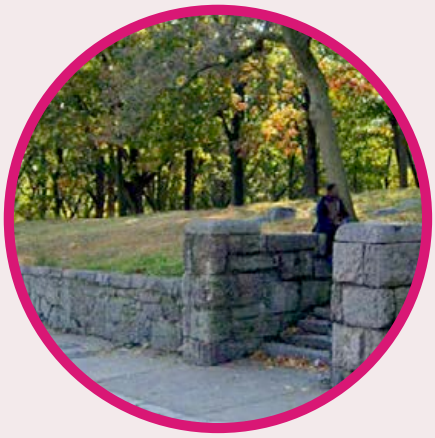
Olmsted intentionally structured the edge of the park to buffer an open interior from the working life of the city. Today, as neighborhoods have grown, traffic has intensified, and park vegetation has become overgrown. This separation can leave neighbors feeling unwelcome. By thinking more expansively about what constitutes the park's edge - from inside the park to the neighborhood across the street - improvements can be made that create better connections while maintaining the park's historic identity.



Sending a Welcoming Message

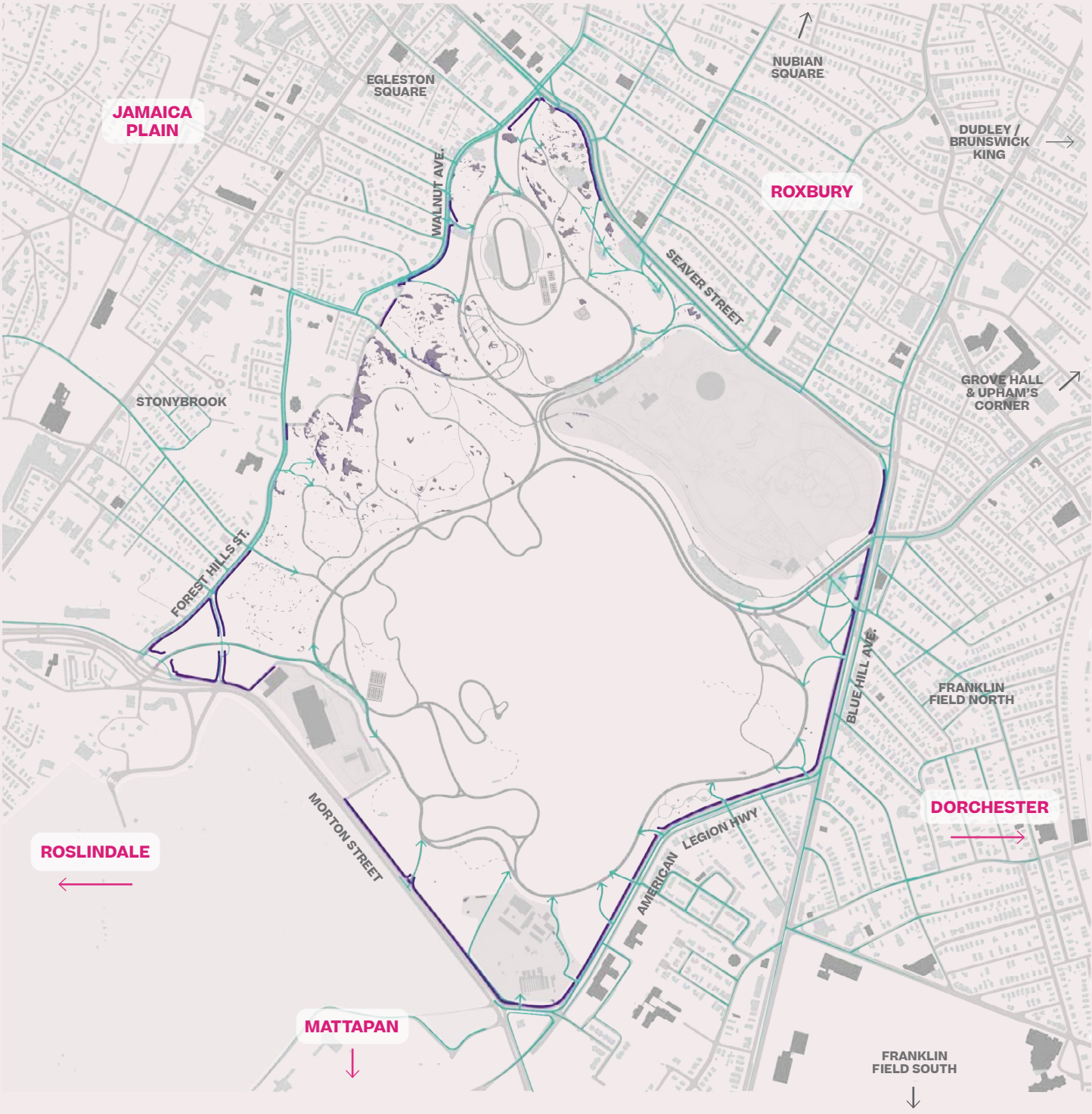
The park presents itself to the larger Boston community, and more importantly, the adjacent neighborhoods, through the reading of its perimeter. The historic fabric — puddingstone ledge rock, designed masonry, and mature canopy — must be respected, preserved, and made legible again. An elevated standard of care that includes better lighting and signage will allow the park to present a welcoming edge that invites all visitors in.

Puddingstone Ledge



Designed Masonry

Mature Canopy



Neighborhood Context

- Park Circulation & Context Streets
- Neighborhood Connections
- Perimeter Wall
- Puddingstone Rock Outcrops

Starting Outside the Park

The experience and approach to the park starts within the surrounding neighborhoods. The streets that bound the park must be considered as part of its design in order to build more robust physical connections to the diverse and active communities at its edges.

Olmsted's Toolkit
Define the Edge

The park's perimeter, or 'border lands' as they were termed in the general plan, were intentionally designed to form an inside/out condition between the park and its surroundings. This response to a quickly industrializing city and the park's immediate context of small farms made Franklin Park unique. The 'Country Park', reached by a lengthy carriage ride, landed city residents in a rural setting for the day. This sentiment was not naive though, as Olmsted recognized that eventually the city would grow to meet the park's edges. While the walled condition has created issues of access over time, it has also established a unifying element at the edge and, where working as intended, a welcome separation from the park's urban context. Olmsted's design for the scale, character, and frequency of entrances, and separation between modes of travel still serve the park well today, but there are opportunities to provide safer and more equal access to ensure all of the park's neighbors are welcomed.

A HELD PERIMETER

The Rural Edge

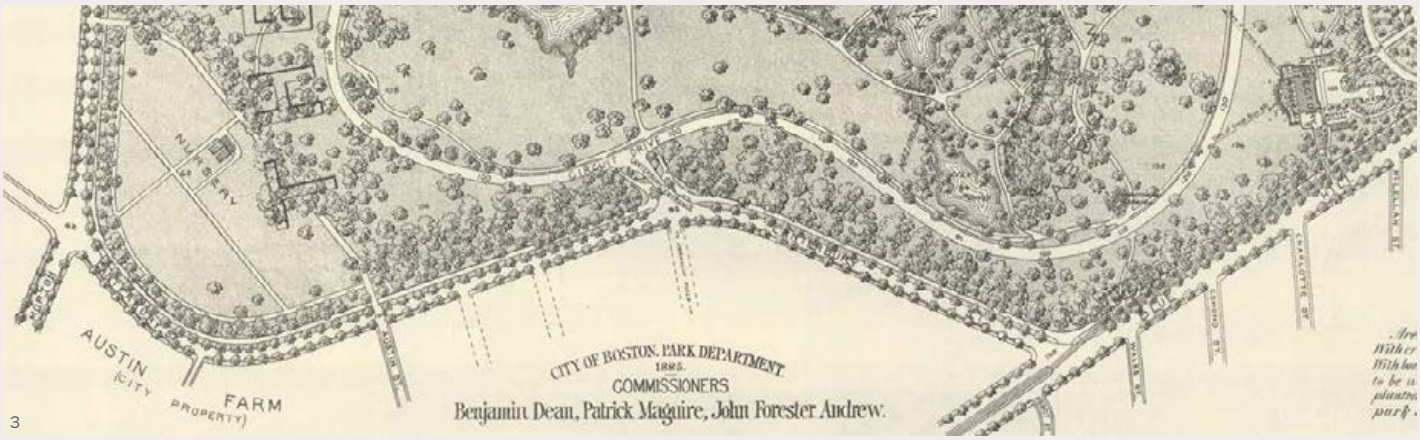
A low fieldstone wall, formed from material collected from the site, lines the perimeter of the park — either retaining grade, built into an exposed rock face, or free standing. Particular care was given to the cross section of the edge — with descriptions specifying to set back fences, protect mature trees and natural features in its layout, and to avoid excessive grading. The sidewalk and street were considered as part of the design, specifying sidewalk and road widths, street tree planting, and future transit connections. Views to the neighborhood were considered at entrances.

1

Original stone perimeter wall supported by canopy tree planting.

2

Trolley line running parallel to the park edge along Seaver Street, with mature canopy trees inside and outside the park.



3

An enlargement of the American Legion 'borderlands' with future neighborhood street connections noted, from the General Plan for Franklin Park.

4

Original stone perimeter wall supported by canopy tree planting.

5

Field stones uncovered during park construction were salvaged for the perimeter wall.

6

Parallel paths to separate modes of travel (pedestrian vs. carriage).

Welcome In
Maintain the Edge

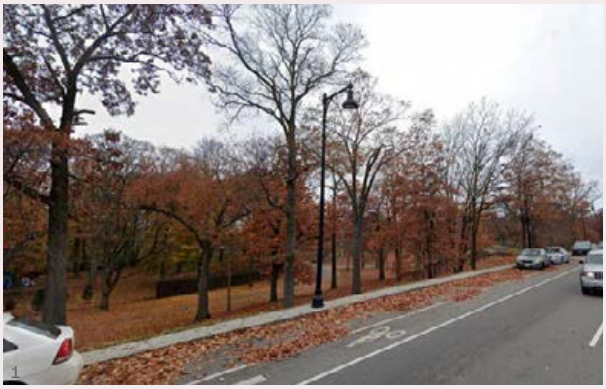
The historic park perimeter (including rock outcrops, stacked stone walls, and mature canopy trees) is a character defining feature and along most sides announces the park to its communities. Deferred maintenance has resulted in overgrowth and disrepair along certain edges that suggest a lack of care and can feel unwelcoming. Maintaining a consistent historic character while removing barriers (like dense and overgrown vegetation and fences) is critical to increasing comfortable and safe access to the park.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Unsafe Roadway Crossings**
- **Inconsistent Sidewalks**
- **Dense Vegetation Obscuring Views In**
- **Unwelcoming Barriers**

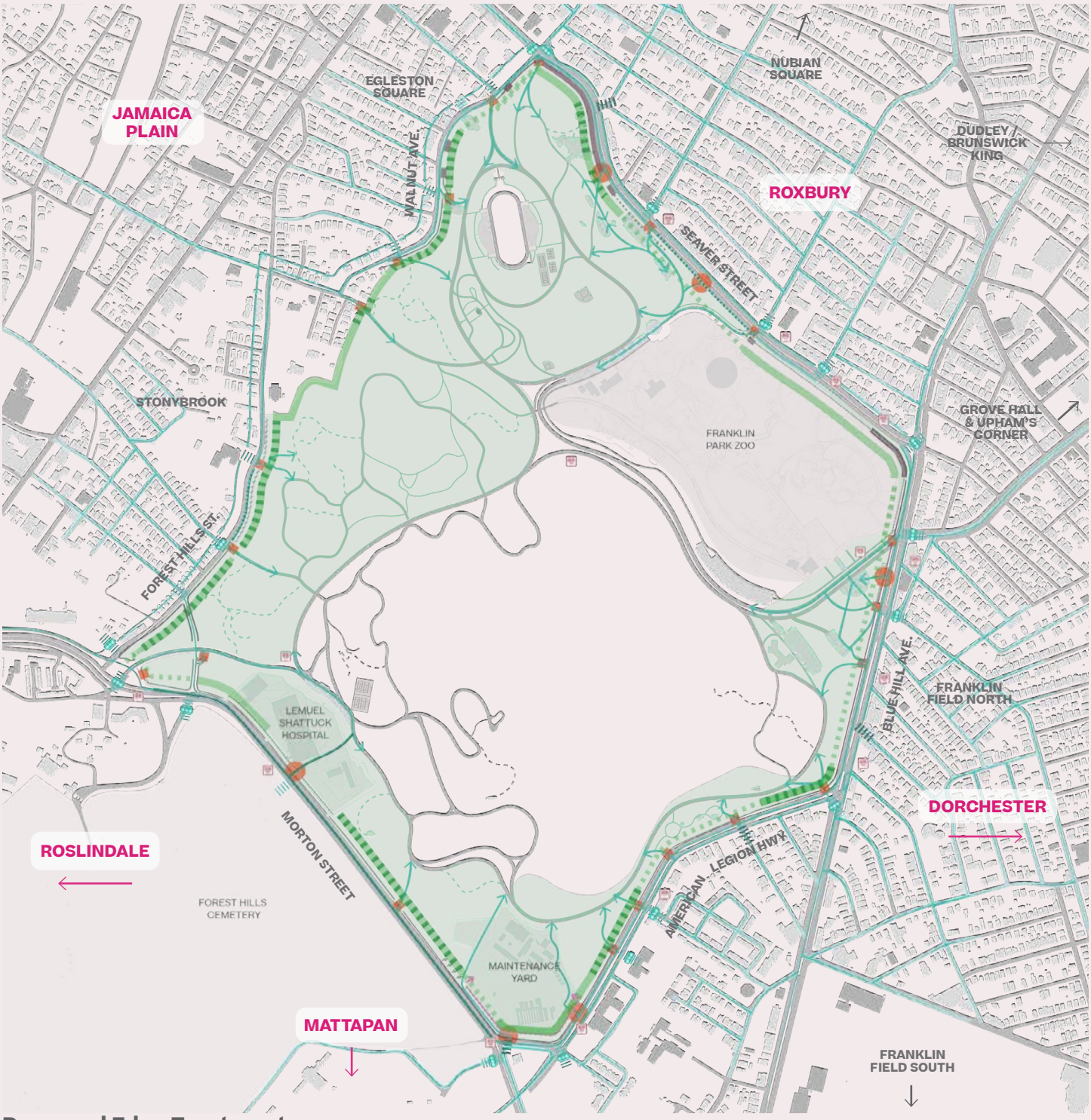
PARK PERIMETER RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Support the Community by Making the Park an Advocate**
- **Increase Pedestrian Access on Seaver Street**
- **Make Places at the Edge on Blue Hill Avenue**
- **Improve Connections to Circuit Loop on American Legion Highway**
- **Make City-Wide Connections on Morton Street**
- **Remove Barriers on Forest Hills Street & Walnut Avenue**



A narrow sidewalk along the Seaver Street edge, with high canopy and open views into the park beyond.

A park entrance along Sigourney Street.



Proposed Edge Treatments

- Pedestrian Access from the Neighborhood
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Existing Crosswalk
- Existing Signaled Crosswalk
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Sidewalk to be Widened or Repaired
- Existing Sidewalk
- Existing Paved Edge
- Existing Bus Stop
- Existing Puddingstone Rock Ledge
- Existing Stone Perimeter Wall
- Existing Granite Blocks & Boulders
- Chain Link Fence to be Removed
- Chain Link Fence to be Pushed Back
- Existing Chain Link Fence
- Selective clearing of understory to increase porosity, 15'-20'
- Existing Dense Vegetation
- Existing High Canopy, Open Ground Plane
- Proposed Pedestrian Entrance
- Existing Pedestrian Entrance
- Neighborhood Institution (w/in a 10 min. walk of the park)

Franklin Park

The Park Perimeter:

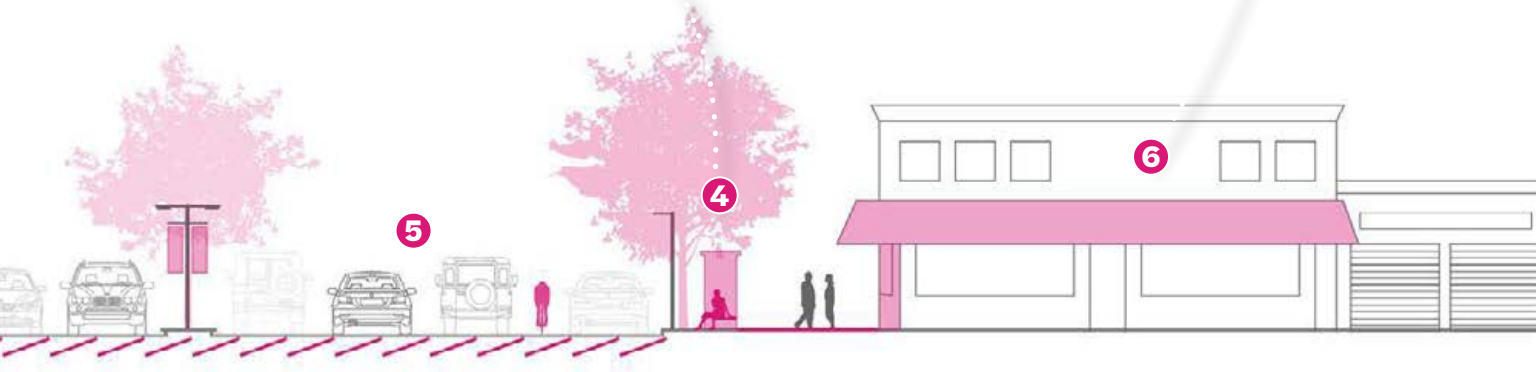
How can the park provide safe and welcoming access to all?

1 Increase Porosity and Views

Address overgrown vegetation, which obstructs views into the park and makes visitors feel uncomfortable, by selectively clearing understory to increase visual porosity.

2 Maintain Historic Masonry

The perimeter walls and steps define much of the outer edge of the park. Their periodic repair and protection is necessary to maintain this historic feature.



Perimeter Street ---------- The Neighborhood

3 Make Access Equitable & Welcoming

Provide new entrances where park access is limited, and ensure that each edge has accessible ways in; support key entrances with signage and lighting.

4 Make the Sidewalk Comfortable*

Shade, lighting, and seating, including benches and covered bus stops, are all essential elements to making the sidewalk inhabitable. The city should strive for a full 12' sidewalk with tree canopy at the park perimeter.

5 Provide Safe Ways to Get to the Park*

Creating a welcoming approach to the park, starts beyond the edge itself. Frequent and signaled crosswalks, traffic calming measures, and designated bike lanes all facilitate safe movement between the park and its surrounding neighborhoods.

6 Connect with Neighborhood Resources

Each edge of the park is bordered by institutions that play important roles within the adjacent communities. Whether that is educational, health and social services, religious centers, or focused on childhood development, opportunities exist to improve connections through better park access and programming.

**Indicates a recommendation that requires City departmental coordination and implementation that would be led by another City agency.*

Support the Community
Make the Park an Advocate

While the Parks Department jurisdiction ends at the park edge, the perception and experience of the park, safe ways to cross perimeter streets, and the park's ability to communicate a level of care does not end there. Collaboration with other City and State departments, in-park stakeholders, and neighborhood partners will be necessary to achieve goals that benefit both the park and its communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS BEYOND THE PARK EDGE

Prioritize Shade & Comfort

- Advocate for wider and continuous sidewalks where possible to provide space for pedestrians separated from the street. Understand impacts to park access or neighborhood businesses if parking is removed.
- Incorporate street tree planting in sidewalks to increase the urban canopy of surrounding neighborhoods.
- Provide street furnishings, including covered bus shelters and benches, to make comfortable, protected places to wait for transit or rest.

Establish Improved Connections

- Make convenient connections to public transit, including bus and T; provide signage at nearby stops directing people to the park.
- Provide designated bike lanes on busy perimeter streets and connect to the city's network; provide bikeshare stations at key locations at the edge of the park (see Movement recommendations).
- Implement signaled crosswalks at a regular intervals aligned with key entrances.

Pursue Partnerships & Invest in the Neighborhoods

- Offer a micro grant program for local businesses around the park for streetscape or storefront improvements, or for organizations to develop programming for the park.
- Support businesses by partnering to provide vending opportunities at events in the park.

1

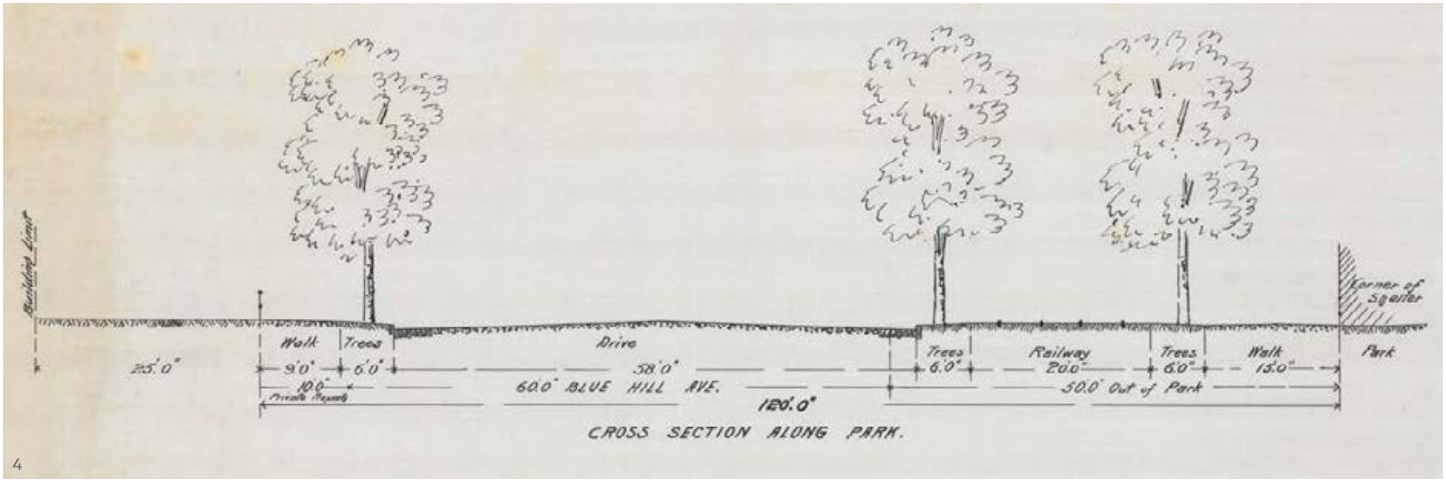
Advocate for street trees as improvements to perimeter streets are made.

2

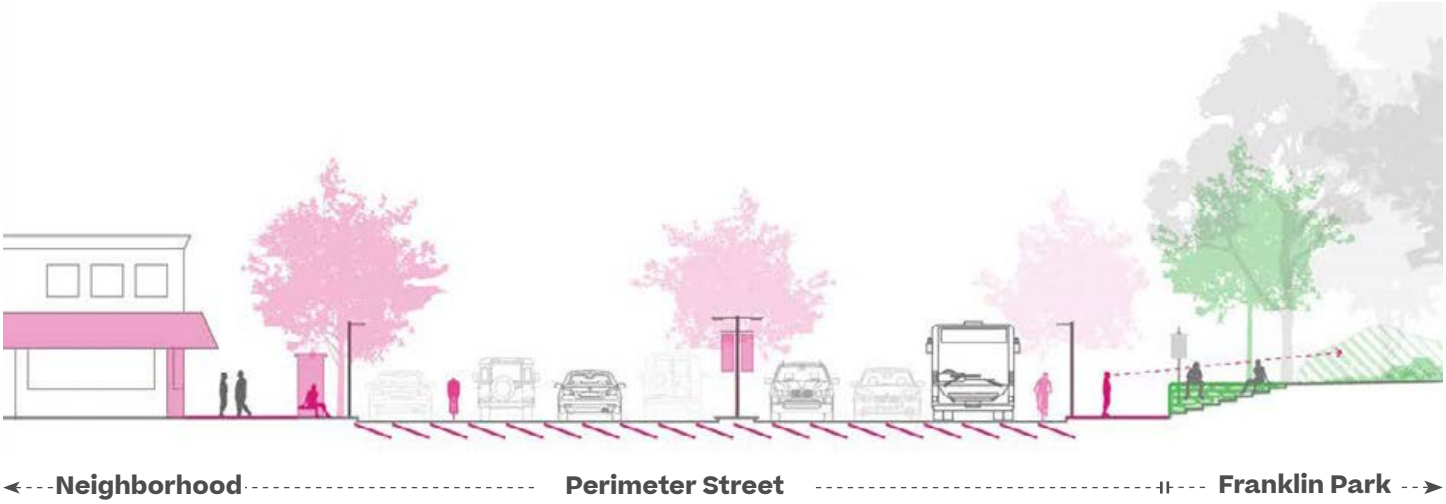
3

Raise positive awareness of the park through new banner signage on perimeter streets.

BEYOND THE PARK EDGE



An Olmsted sketch suggesting scale and components of a widened Blue Hill Avenue, including separated modes of travel, generous sidewalks, and street tree planting, from park edge to the building limit across the street (1892).



A proposed cross section of a perimeter street recommending elements essential to safe and comfortable streets, including, street trees, bike lanes, signage, lighting, bus shelters, crosswalks, connectivity to transit and relationships with local businesses.

Street Tree Planting

The Boston Heat Resilience Plan states "major streets that link neighborhood destinations could be opportunities for more shade and cooling strategies, including shaded bus stops." Blue Hill Avenue and Columbia Road both had higher heat temperatures measured in their analysis.

Trees and parks have a cooling effect on their surrounding neighborhoods. Increasing tree planting and providing adequate soil volume along adjacent streets can produce healthy robust street trees that provide critical shade and reduce the heat island effect.

Increase Pedestrian Access
Seaver Street

The Seaver Street edge is defined by its dramatic puddingstone outcrops. Tall ledge rock borders the sidewalk along much of this edge, providing some of the most dramatic views from the park out to the city. But from the neighborhood side, the rock becomes a wall, limiting points of access for the Roxbury community. New at-grade connections must be established to provide more ways into the park while existing entrances can be better supported by signage, lighting, shade planting, and marked crosswalks from the neighborhood.

SEAVER STREET RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase Access

- Create three new pedestrian entrances, and distinguish the existing Humboldt Avenue pedestrian entrance with new canopy trees that draw visitors in.
- Selectively clear understory vegetation along the park edge 15-20' in to increase porosity and views into the park.
- Work with the Boston Transportation Department to widen the sidewalk to increase accessibility; ensure crosswalks are properly aligned with entrances and sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate necessary street lights, etc.

Potential Partners & Stakeholders

- Encourage the zoo to update the outward appearance of their fence along the perimeter of the park to provide a more welcoming face to the community.
- Work with the BTD to implement a new crosswalk.
- This edge of the park is supported by a number of religious institutions, and public resources, like libraries and public assistance centers. There are opportunities to reach out about how the park can be a shared resource.

The varied edge conditions along Seaver Street.

Inspiration for friendly exterior zoo fence design.

Proposed Edge Treatments

**Indicates a recommendation that requires City departmental or Zoo coordination.*

- Pedestrian Access from the Neighborhood
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Existing Crosswalk
- Existing Signaled Crosswalk
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Sidewalk to be Widened or Repaired
- Existing Sidewalk
- Existing Paved Edge
- Existing Bus Stop

Existing Puddingstone Rock Ledge

Existing Stone Perimeter Wall

Existing Granite Blocks & Boulders

Chain Link Fence to be Removed

Chain Link Fence to be Pushed Back

Existing Chain Link Fence

Selective clearing of understory to increase porosity, 15'-20'

Existing Dense Vegetation

Existing High Canopy, Open Ground Plane

Proposed Pedestrian Entrance

Existing Pedestrian Entrance

1. Add a new pedestrian crossing at Harold St.*
2. Clear understory vegetation.
3. Add a new pedestrian entrance north of Park View Street at Long Crouch Woods; selectively clear or thin understory vegetation to improve views into the park and increase a sense of safety.
4. Widen the sidewalk to provide a continuous path along this edge and improve accessibility for a variety of users and abilities.*
5. Add a new pedestrian entrance and path at the existing steps.
6. If converted to a vehicular exit in the future, retain a complementary pedestrian entrance at Elm Hill Avenue as well.
7. Give the zoo fence a friendly outward face, and/or push back the fence to embed it within vegetation where possible.*

Make Places at the Edge
Blue Hill Avenue

A historic puddingstone perimeter wall elevates large, mature canopy trees along Blue Hill Avenue, creating a desirable separation from the street level and the city but results in a long stretch without a way into the park. The entrances that do exist at Peabody Circle are car dominated and unfriendly; the remaining stretch of the road lacks crosswalks, leaving much of the Dorchester neighborhood disconnected from the park. The opportunity exists to engage street life along this edge and improve safe crossings from curb to curb.

BLUE HILL AVENUE RECOMMENDATIONS

Make Connections

- Establish a new pedestrian entrance at Peabody Circle via the new 'front porch'; make some existing entrances pedestrian only as part of redesign of vehicular traffic.
- Address the degrading conditions at the former entrance to The Refectory; relocate utilities and fill in the 'pit' condition between the old Refectory Stairs by connecting entrance pillars with a field stone wall to match existing. Due to the extreme grade change along Blue Hill Avenue in this location, an accessible path would cut deep into the park and disturb the historic high point at the top of Refectory Hill, which can be reached by a new accessible path from Peabody Circle.
- Take advantage of the break in the median at Esmond Street and add a new cross walk to improve connectivity with the Dorchester neighborhood; ensure crosswalks are properly aligned with entrances and that sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate necessary infrastructure (street lights, etc.)

Potential Partners & Stakeholders

- Continue to engage the Zoo, the Boston Transportation Department, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation to coordinate entrances and vehicular circulation at Peabody Circle; coordinate with the Boston Transportation Department on a new crosswalk.
- In addition to many local businesses, this side of the park is home to several schools, and neighborhood advocacy and social services organizations. A redesigned Peabody Circle and expanded park programming could offer additional opportunities for partnerships.

The puddingstone perimeter wall condition.

The existing condition between the old Refectory stairs.

Proposed Edge Treatments

**Indicates a recommendation that requires City departmental coordination.*

- Pedestrian Access from the Neighborhood
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Existing Crosswalk
- Existing Signaled Crosswalk
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Sidewalk to be Widened or Repaired
- Existing Sidewalk
- Existing Paved Edge
- Existing Bus Stop

- Existing Puddingstone Rock Ledge
- Existing Stone Perimeter Wall
- Existing Granite Blocks & Boulders
- Chain Link Fence to be Removed
- Chain Link Fence to be Pushed Back
- Existing Chain Link Fence
- Selective clearing of understory to increase porosity, 15'-20'
- Existing Dense Vegetation
- Existing High Canopy, Open Ground Plane

- Proposed Pedestrian Entrance
- Existing Pedestrian Entrance

1. Maintain the primary vehicular entrance into the park with an associated but separated pedestrian entrance.
2. Add a new 'front porch' pedestrian entrance at Peabody Circle.
3. Add a dedicated pedestrian entrance at Glenway Street.
4. Support the existing Old Refectory entrance with new paths into the park; fill in the 'pit' which poses risks due to steep drop-offs today.
5. Add a new pedestrian crossing at Esmond Street to increase access from the Dorchester neighborhood across busy Blue Hill Avenue.*

Improve Connections to Circuit Loop
American Legion Highway

A low historic puddingstone perimeter wall with tall, mature canopy with open understory beyond it provides scenic, open views far into the park. There are many entries along this edge that connect to the American Legion playground and popular Circuit Loop; however, pedestrian crosswalks could be improved for better access from the neighborhood.

AMERICAN LEGION HIGHWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Prioritize Pedestrian Safety

- Establish a new pedestrian crossing at Angell Street; ensure crosswalks are properly aligned with entrances and that sidewalks are wide enough to navigate necessary infrastructure (street lights, etc.)
- Selectively clear understory vegetation to the north and south along the park edge 15-20' in to increase porosity and views into the park.
- Provide ADA pedestrian connections through the maintenance yard that avoid conflicts with park operations to improve access for the Mattapan neighborhood.

Potential Partners & Stakeholders

- Support the ongoing work by the Boston Transportation Department to implement new crosswalks along American Legion Highway.
- Many schools and youth organizations sit adjacent to the American Legion Highway side of the park, suggesting cross-programming and educational opportunities for these groups.

The view through the edge to the center of the park.

The historic carriageway entrance with granite boulders used to block car access.

Proposed Edge Treatments

**Indicates a recommendation that requires City departmental coordination.*

- Pedestrian Access from the Neighborhood
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Existing Crosswalk
- Existing Signaled Crosswalk
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Sidewalk to be Widened or Repaired
- Existing Sidewalk
- Existing Paved Edge
- Existing Bus Stop

- Existing Puddingstone Rock Ledge
- Existing Stone Perimeter Wall
- Existing Granite Blocks & Boulders
- Chain Link Fence to be Removed
- Chain Link Fence to be Pushed Back
- Existing Chain Link Fence
- Selective clearing of understory to increase porosity, 15'-20'
- Existing Dense Vegetation
- Existing High Canopy, Open Ground Plane
- Proposed Pedestrian Entrance
- Existing Pedestrian Entrance

1. Selectively clear understory vegetation to open views into the park at entrances.
2. Add a new crosswalk at Angell Street*
3. Update the granite blocks with a more appropriate edge treatment, provide a designated pedestrian crossing, and support the pedestrian entrance with canopy tree planting that matches character of the adjacent grove to embed the wide paving in the park.
4. Push the chain link fence on the perimeter wall at the maintenance yard further away from the street edge and remove all overgrown vegetation.
5. Add new pedestrian entrances and paths to increase park access from the Mattapan neighborhood.
6. Add a new crosswalk at the southernmost entrance. (Exact path alignments to be coordinated with the Maintenance Yard Master Plan; maintain separation between public pedestrian paths and critical maintenance operations for public safety).

Make City-Wide Connections
Morton Street

The Morton Street side of the park is the only side without a neighborhood directly adjacent. Non-public uses (the maintenance yard, the Shattuck Hospital campus, and the Pine Street Inn), fences, and overgrown vegetation reinforce the feeling of this edge as “back of house”, and the state highway’s fast traffic and lack of sidewalks discourages pedestrians and bikes. With a popular T-Stop nearby at Forest Hills and newly improved bike lanes along Arborway, the opportunity exists to improve connectivity and the appearance along this edge of the park.

MORTON STREET

Present an Open Edge

- Selectively clear understory vegetation along the park edge 15-20’ in to increase porosity and views into the park.
- Increase a visible connection into the operations of the maintenance yard by removing vines and overgrown vegetation along the chain link fence, and reducing fencing where possible.
- Establish new critical connections at bus stops into the park at the Shattuck Campus and the maintenance yard.
- Extend a sidewalk along the cemetery side of the road and create a new cross walk at the existing entrance into the park; ensure crosswalks are properly aligned with entrances and that sidewalks are wide enough to navigate necessary infrastructure (street lights, etc.)
- Advocate for the Shattuck Redevelopment to include connections through the campus to the park beyond.
- In the future, study extending separated bike lanes from the Forest Hills T-Stop.

Potential Partners & Stakeholders

- Engage the Boston Transportation Department and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to add new crossings, and Forest Hills Cemetery to collaborate on a public sidewalk along their edge; engage the Shattuck Campus at Morton Street to coordinate new pedestrian connections into the park.

The low historic puddingstone perimeter wall with a chain link fence and no sidewalk along Morton Street, a state highway.

A bus stop near the Shattuck Hospital bordered by a perimeter fence and overgrown vegetation.

Proposed Edge Treatments

**Indicates a recommendation that requires City departmental or State coordination.*

- Pedestrian Access from the Neighborhood
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Existing Crosswalk
- Existing Signaled Crosswalk
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Sidewalk to be Widened or Repaired
- Existing Sidewalk
- Existing Paved Edge
- Existing Bus Stop

- Existing Puddingstone Rock Ledge
- Existing Stone Perimeter Wall
- Existing Granite Blocks & Boulders
- Chain Link Fence to be Removed
- Chain Link Fence to be Pushed Back
- Existing Chain Link Fence
- Selective clearing of understory to increase porosity, 15'-20'
- Existing Dense Vegetation
- Existing High Canopy, Open Ground Plane
- Proposed Pedestrian Entrance
- Existing Pedestrian Entrance

1. Remove vines on stone wall and thin understory vegetation to present a managed edge.
2. Remove the existing stone wall at the edge of Morton Street; install fieldstone piers set in line with the end of the historic wall to match its character and prevent vehicles from entering. Plant a loose grove of canopy trees along both sides of the path to support the scale of the historic carriage drive paving.
3. Transform the street section to extend the two-way bike lane and dedicated sidewalk from Arborway along the park side edge.*
4. Add a new entrance and path connection into the park along the hospital edge, near the bus stop, as part of the Shattuck Hospital redevelopment.*
5. Maintain and rebuild (where necessary) the continuous low puddingstone wall.
6. Reinstate the historic gates at the Forest Hills vehicular entrance.

Remove Barriers
Forest Hills Street & Walnut Avenue

The quiet neighborhood edge along Forest Hills Street has close access to The Wilderness, but dense vegetation at the park edge obscures some entrances. Inconsistent sidewalks at the park edge make crosswalks critical. Along Walnut Avenue dense vegetation and granite blocks at the sidewalk's edge separates visitors from White Stadium and the Playstead and beyond it. By removing unnecessary barriers, opening views through dense vegetation, and clarifying entry points, clearer access to a range of park amenities can be supported.

FOREST HILLS ST. & WALNUT AVENUE RECOMMENDATIONS

Remove Detractions & Barriers

- Selectively clear understory vegetation along the park edge 15-20' in to increase porosity and views into the park.
- Remove the chain link fence and maintain the historic perimeter wall along Forest Hills Street.
- Assess the current need for continuous vehicular controls along Walnut Avenue (granite blocks and bollards, which were once necessary to control vehicular access into the park), and pilot the removal of some sections. Where physical boundaries are deemed necessary, use materials more in keeping with the park palette and historic character.

Potential Partners & Stakeholders

- Engage the Boston Transportation Department to repair the sidewalk along Forest Hills Street, ensure crosswalks are properly aligned with entrances and that sidewalks are wide enough to navigate necessary infrastructure (street lights, etc.)
- This side of the park is also home to several schools and community health organizations. Adjacency to active recreation and nature study resources could be particularly vital connections.

Chain link fence along Williams Street.

Granite blocks and bollards near the School Street entrance along Walnut Avenue.

Proposed Edge Treatments

**indicates a recommendation that requires City departmental coordination.*

- Pedestrian Access from the Neighborhood
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Existing Crosswalk
- Existing Signaled Crosswalk
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Sidewalk to be Widened or Repaired
- Existing Sidewalk
- Existing Paved Edge
- Existing Bus Stop

- Existing Puddingstone Rock Ledge
- Existing Stone Perimeter Wall
- Existing Granite Blocks & Boulders
- Chain Link Fence to be Removed
- Chain Link Fence to be Pushed Back
- Existing Chain Link Fence
- Selective clearing of understory to increase porosity, 15'-20'
- Existing Dense Vegetation
- Existing High Canopy, Open Ground Plane
- Proposed Pedestrian Entrance
- Existing Pedestrian Entrance

1. Maintain and rebuild, where necessary, the continuous low puddingstone wall. Thin understory vegetation to increase visibility.
2. Repair the crumbling paved edge.*
3. Replace the swing gate at the Glen Road entrance.
4. Remove all granite blocks and bollards along this edge. If barriers are still required, consider low-profile options that are in keeping with the historic character of the park.
5. Selectively clear understory vegetation to increase visibility.

Transform Barriers
Provide Clear Entrances

The park includes entrances of various scales and character at each of its edges. Providing frequent entrances is important, but making sure those entrances feel welcoming to all community members is critical. As vegetation management fell behind and entrance use shifted encouraging ad hoc modifications (vehicular entrance becoming pedestrian only) many of the park's entrances now message "stay out" rather than "welcome in." Changes can be made to improve access and reach out to the community.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Lack of ADA Accessibility**
- **Unwelcoming Messages**
- **Unclear Entrances**

ENTRANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop Consistent Standards to Maintain Historic Character**
- **Include Entrances that Meet ADA Standards**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Entrances:

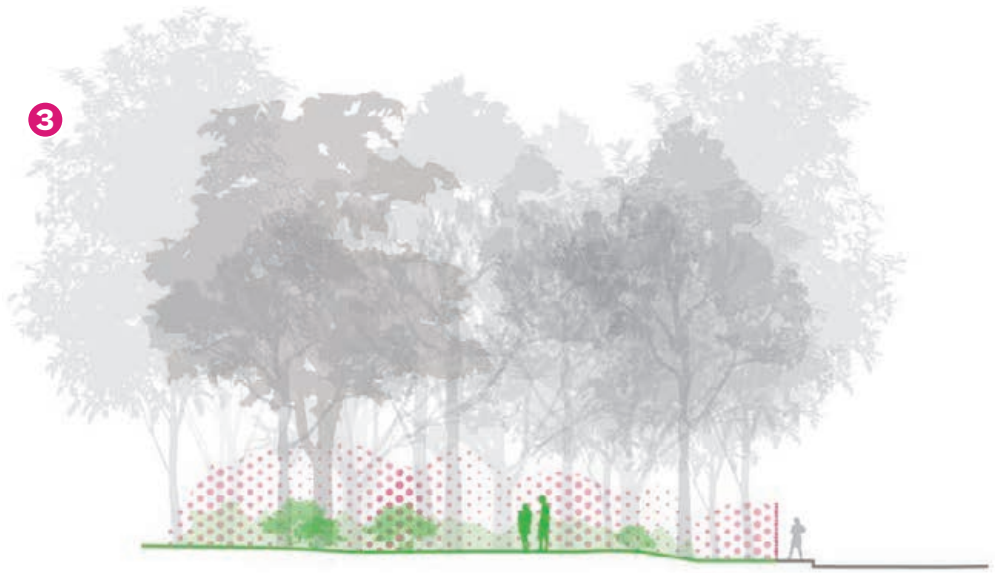
How can entrances invite use and make connections to park destinations?

1 Make Clear Connections

Existing steps negotiate grade change from the street level into the park, but visitors are met with overgrown vegetation and no path connection at most of these locations. Selectively clear understory vegetation and provide a new path connection.

2 Increase Access

The park has many ways in today, but all edges are not the same. New entrances offer the opportunity to ensure equitable access, including an ADA entrance on every edge. Proposed entrances should lead to a path that feeds into the park's circulation network, leading visitors to a primary loop and park destinations, which should include lighting and signage.



3 Provide Views In

Selectively clear understory vegetation to increase porosity and views in, increasing a sense of comfort upon entering the park, especially along The Wilderness.

4 Support Historic Fabric

Most of the entrances around the park include historic masonry elements that will require regular attention and repair. In some instances, new materials have been added. Historic typologies should guide decisions as updates are made and new entrances are added.

Maintain Historic Character
Develop Consistent Standards

The historic masonry perimeter is a character defining feature of the park. Changes to existing entrances or the addition of new ones that include masonry elements should follow the historic typologies. All entrances should have well-managed vegetation and be supported by signage and lighting where appropriate.

ENTRANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Historic Masonry

- There is a limited range of ways that the historic masonry is configured at existing park entrances. These typologies establish a specific character to individual entrances, but cumulatively create a sense of consistency at the park edge. Any adjustments or additions of new entrances should obey those typologies and the character of the historic masonry.
- As improvements are made, remove barriers (granite blocks and bollards) that are not in keeping with the historic character or material palette.

Vegetation

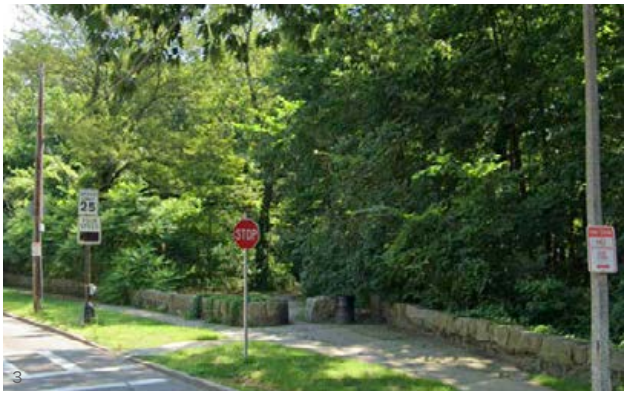
- In addition to historic masonry, entrances are also supported by the park's canopy - as an open grove, mature canopy at an entrance and along pathways into the park, or as an entrance though a woodland condition; protect and reinforce these typologies at the entrances around the park.

Supporting Elements

- Edge signage should be in keeping with the historic signage to let Franklin Park read as part of the continuous Emerald Necklace park system. More consistent deployment of appropriate signage and lighting typologies will assist with guiding movement, orientation, and a general sense of comfort (see lighting and signage recommendations).

Large Entrance: Granite bollards at School Street.

Medium Entrance: Historic stone masonry at the old Refectory.



Small Entrance: Historic stone perimeter wall along Sigourney Street.

Painted metal bollard and chain precedent.

Large Entrances -Former Carriageways

Modify historic carriageway entrances that are used by pedestrians today by removing granite blocks and bollards and replace them with painted metal bollards and chains, or by using modified stone walls to control clear entrance dimensions. Support the path with canopy tree planting on either side.

Medium Entrances

Maintain masonry walls and steps to protect the historic fabric. Manage adjacent vegetation according to the local park character (woodland vs. open) and provide adequate views into the park; support with lighting (see Movement chapter).

Small Entrances

The smallest of the park's entrances play an important role in providing more intimate and individual connections to community members but their small scale puts even more emphasis on making sure they feel welcoming. Vegetation management is key. The opening should be scaled for ADA access where the path beyond allows.

Make It Accessible
Include Entrances that Meet ADA Standards

While the historic design would not have been focused on accessibility in the same way that contemporary planning is, there are still many locations around the park that are already meeting ADA requirements or could be modified without compromising the historic park fabric and character to ensure that all edges include entrances that are accessible to all users.

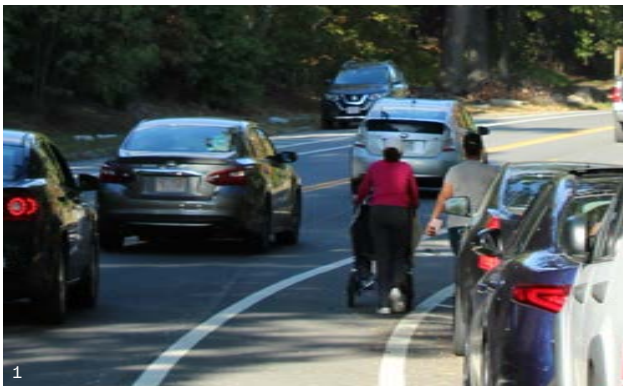
ACCESSIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

General

- Enhance ADA compliance for entrances and path connections to the primary park loops where existing or proposed entrances are at grade, by abiding by entrance clear opening and path slope requirements, and using compliant paving materials.
- Address barriers (granite blocks, bollards, and fence posts) that limit ADA minimum distances for clear openings.
- Look for at-grade connections to achieve ADA compliant entrances; do not significantly impact historic entrances.
- Consider adding handrails at stepped entrances; employ historically appropriate standards.
- Ensure any new or renovated parking meets or exceeds ADA parking requirements.
- Future planning and design of The Yard must consider an ADA entrance and path that connects to the Circuit Loop.

Priority Areas

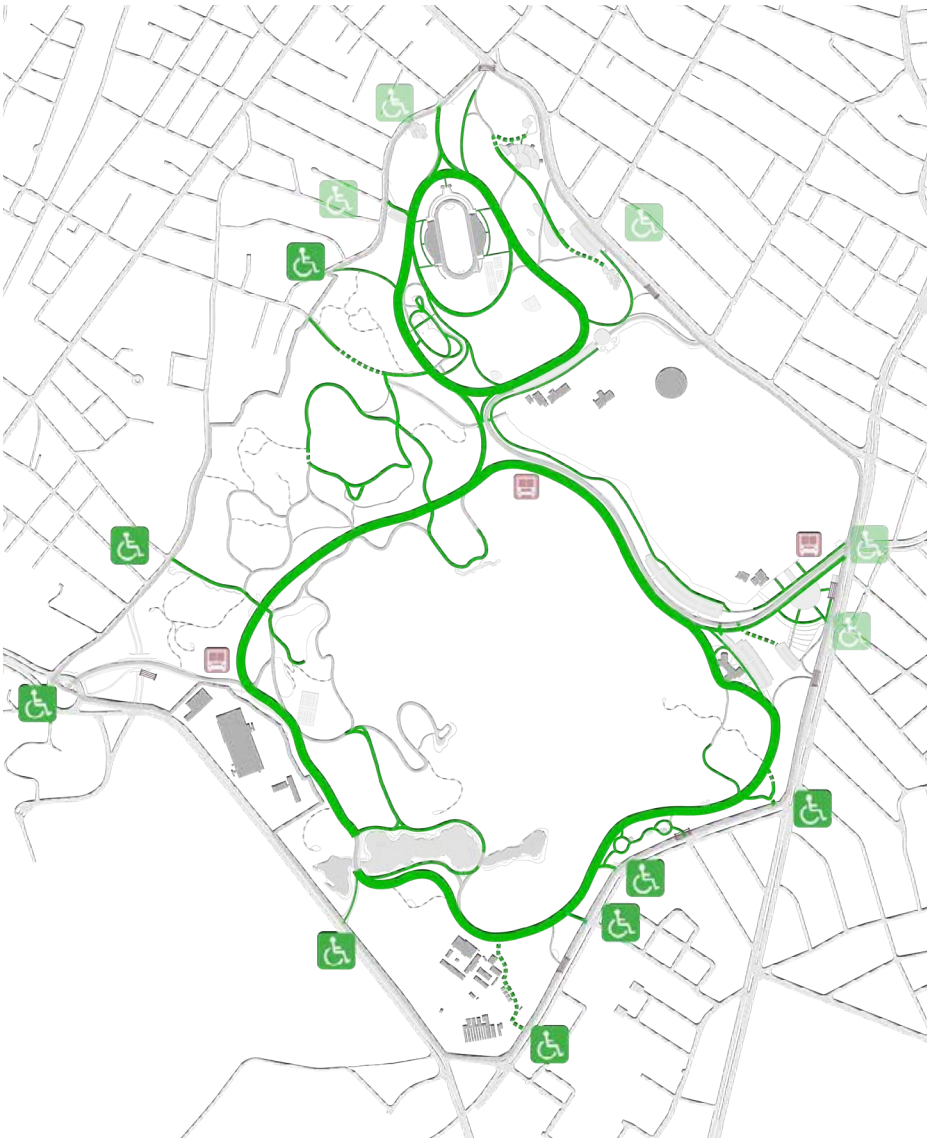
- Currently, the American Legion Highway and Morton Street sides of the park do not have any fully accessible entrances.


1
Accessibility is challenged throughout the park.


2
The existing entrance on Blue Hill Ave between McLean and Charlotte Streets.


3
Precedent for handrail inserted into historic stone steps; look to park archives or other Olmsted parks for handrail designs.

INCREASE ACCESS



Accessible Entrances & Connections

- Accessible Park Path
- Accessibility Achievable
- Park Path
- Existing Accessible Entrance
- Proposed Accessible Entrance
- Existing In-Park Bus Stop

Accessibility Criteria

Accessibility was evaluated under three criteria: The entrance opening is a minimum of 32” clear, path material is in good condition (ADA compliant material, intact and even surface), and the slope of connecting path is under 5%. Accessible entrances currently meet or could meet all three criteria, with small adjustments or upgrades that do not compromise historic park fabric or character.

Improve All Sides
Recommendations by Entrance

With the exception of a few specific areas, the park provides many pedestrian entry points. Adding new entrances should be carefully considered in the context of the distribution and scale of other entrances along a particular edge to address areas that are underserved and have difficult access. In most instances, the number and distribution of pedestrian entrances is appropriate, but the need to clarify their locations, send a welcoming message, and maintain their historic fabric should be addressed.

ENTRANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Seaver Street

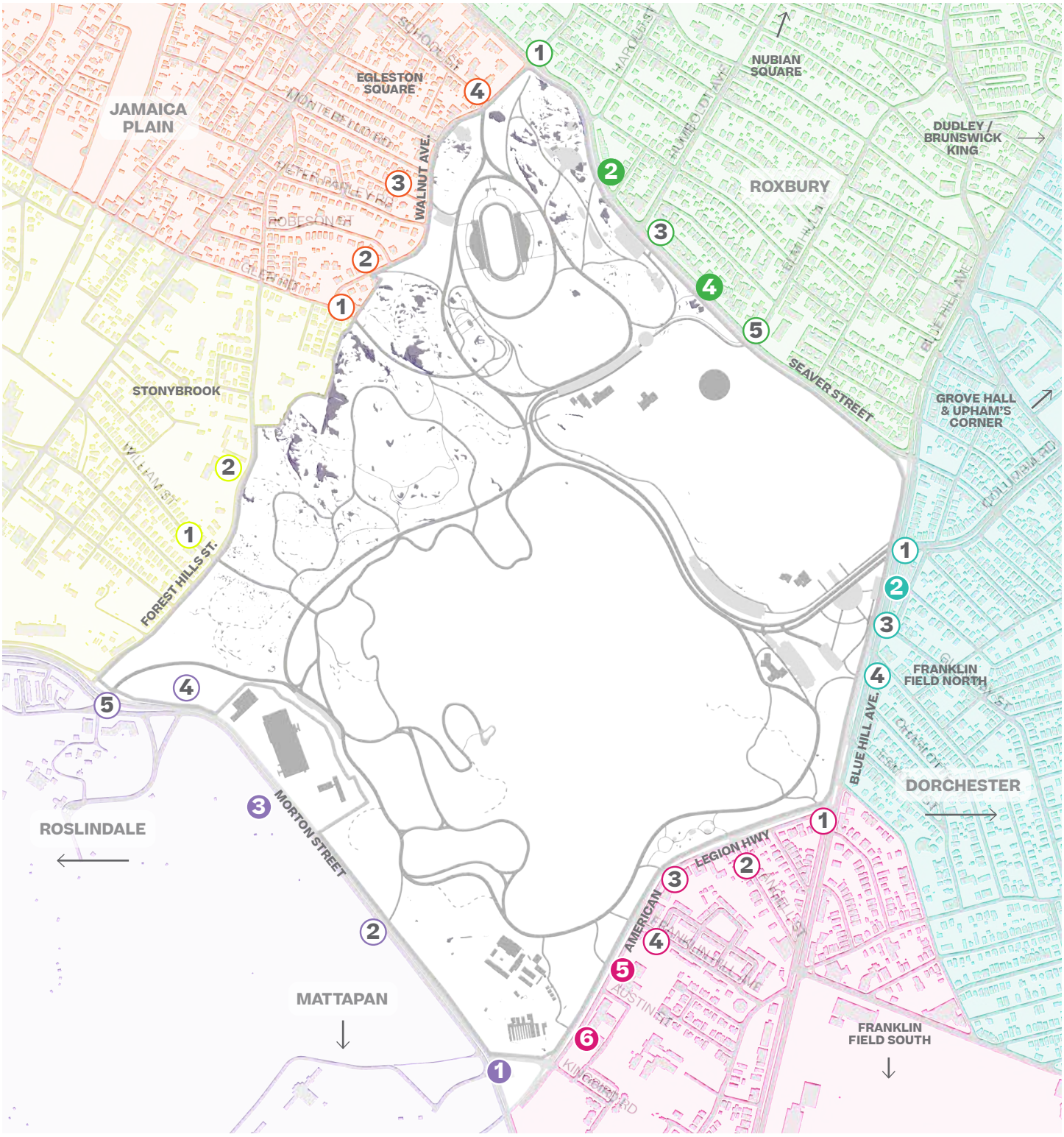
1. *At Walnut Avenue*
- Inspect historic masonry and repair if needed.
2. *At Park View Street*
- Add new small-scale entrance; selectively clear understory vegetation; add path connection.
3. *At Humbolt Avenue*
- Remove granite bollards; if barriers are necessary, replace with historic typology; support with lighting and canopy tree planting along path to draw visitors into the park through this meaningful pedestrian entrance.
4. *Between Humbolt Avenue and Elm Hill Avenue*
- Add new small-scale entrance at existing steps; add a path connection into the park; inspect historic steps and reset/regrout if needed.
5. *At Elm Hill Avenue*
- If converted to a vehicular exit in the future, remove granite bollards and retain a complementary pedestrian entrance; support with lighting along path.

Blue Hill Avenue

1. *At Columbia Road*
- Maintain a designated accessible pedestrian entrance separate from vehicular travel; support with signage and lighting.
2. *Between Columbia Road & Glenway Street*
- Add the new 'front porch' pedestrian entrance by inserting steps into the stone wall in conjunction with Peabody Circle improvements.
3. *At Glenway Street*
- Convert the vehicular exit to a small-scale, accessible pedestrian entrance in conjunction with Peabody Circle & Refectory Hill improvements; inspect and repair historic masonry as needed; support path with lighting.
4. *Between McLellan Street & Charlotte Street*
- Provide new path connections at existing Refectory step entrances; fill in the 'pit' condition with new perimeter wall between the steps, in line with the existing wall; inspect historic masonry and repair as needed.

American Legion Highway

1. *At Blue Hill Avenue*
- Inspect the historic masonry and repair as needed; remove granite bollard; selectively clear understory vegetation; provide accessible path connection into the park.
2. *At Angell Street*
- Remove granite bollards; reset steps and repair historic wall.
3. *Between Parkway Street & Franklin Hill Avenue*
- Update the granite blocks with a more appropriate edge treatment, like a painted metal bollard and chain; complete sidewalk connection; support entry path with lighting and canopy tree planting that matches the character of the adjacent grove to embed the wide paving in the park.
4. *At Franklin Hill Avenue*
- Repair historic masonry; provide ADA clear opening in wall; selectively clear understory vegetation.
5. *Between Franklin Hill Avenue and Austin Street*
- Repair and reset existing steps; selectively clear understory vegetation; provide path connection.
6. *Between Austin Street and Kingbird Road*
- Provide pedestrian access path through The Yard.



Entrances

Existing Entrance to be Improved

New Entrance

Seaver Street Edge

Blue Hill Avenue Edge

American Legion Highway Edge

Morton Street Edge

Forest Hills Street Edge

Walnut Avenue Edge

ENTRANCE INDEX CONTINUED

Morton Street

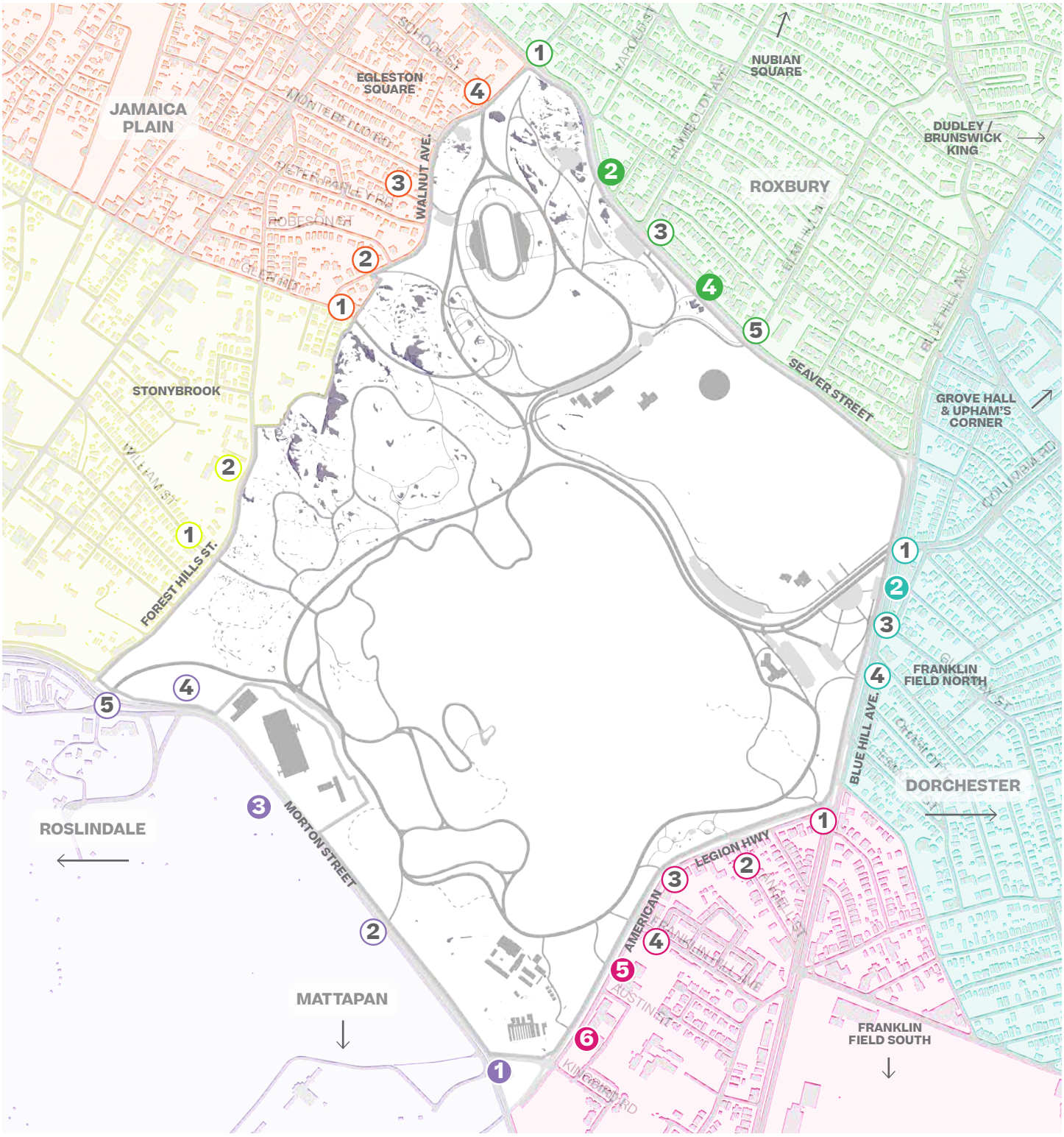
1. *At Canterbury Street*
- Provide pedestrian access path through The Yard; exact path alignments to be coordinated with the Maintenance Yard Master Plan; maintain separation between public pedestrian paths and critical maintenance operations for public safety.
2. *At Scarboro Pond*
- Remove the existing stone wall at the edge of Morton Street; install fieldstone piers with ADA compliant openings and paving, set in line with the end of the historic wall to match its character and prevent vehicles from entering. Plant a loose grove of canopy trees along both sides of the path to support the scale of the historic carriage drive paving; support entry path lighting.
3. *At Shattuck Hospital*
- Provide pedestrian access path to the park.
4. *At Cemetery Road*
- Selectively clear understory vegetation; inspect historic masonry and steps, and repair as needed.
5. *At Arborway*
- Inspect historic masonry and repair as needed.

Forest Hills Street

1. *At Williams Street*
- Widen sidewalk at crosswalk to provide accessible path into the park; remove granite bollards and rebuild entrance to follow historic typologies; support with lighting and canopy tree planting.
2. *At The Wilderness*
- Remove chain link fence; selectively clear understory vegetation.

Walnut Avenue

1. *At Glen Road*
- Selectively clear understory vegetation; provide sidewalk connection; remove granite blocks and replace the swing gate, and rebuild entrance to follow historic typologies; support with lighting.
2. *Sigourney Street at Robeson Street*
- Remove granite block to provide accessible clear opening between existing stone walls; inspect historic masonry and repair as needed; amend existing path to provide accessible path into the park.
3. *At Park Lane*
- Provide designated pedestrian path separate from the vehicular drive that meets accessibility standards; selectively clear understory vegetation.
4. *At School Street*
- Remove granite blocks and bollards and replace with painted metal bollard and chain; support path with lighting and planting.



Entrances

Existing Entrance to be Improved

New Entrance

Seaver Street Edge

Blue Hill Avenue Edge

American Legion Highway Edge

Morton Street Edge

Forest Hills Street Edge

Walnut Avenue Edge

Unify Park Spaces
Break Down Internal Edges

Built features from the original park design, such as walls, steps, and overlooks, were meant to guide access, curate visitor experience and provide a sense of place. In response to changing uses and programs, incremental solutions meant to control vehicles, restrict access, and improve public safety now form barriers and edges throughout the park, creating visual distractions and an increased sense of division.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Message of 'Stay Out'**
- **Visual Clutter**
- **Barriers to Movement**
- **Loss of Larger Spatial Connections**

INTERNAL EDGE RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Remove, Relocate & Rethink Barriers to Limit Impact on Park Character**

Security Gates

Freestanding vehicular gates have been added over time to restrict vehicular access. A more systematic and aesthetically-unified approach to the vehicular perimeter can call less attention to these controls while improving their security functions. Existing locations should be evaluated to confirm they are still needed; where vehicular gates and barriers are necessary, pedestrian access should be integrated as part of their design.

Granite Blocks and Boulders

Granite blocks and boulders were once a community-led, low cost way of preventing vehicular access to pedestrian areas. While effective, they do not feel integrated into the design, and, in some cases, actually inhibit pedestrian connections. In other areas, they are located along paths, where vehicular access is already restricted by gates, making them redundant.

Fences

Fencing in the park is necessary to control access to stakeholder properties and/or protect the community. However, its location and character consistently creates problematic visual and physical barriers. One example is the stretch of fence between The Playstead and the Golf Course around the perimeter of the zoo. What was once an orienting and sweeping view south through the Valley Gates is now interrupted by chain link and barbed wire at the edge of a parking lot, making it feel like the sports fields abut a service yard rather than being situated with a view to the valley below.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Limit Impact on Park Character

Remove, Relocate, & Rethink Barriers

Fences, walls, and gates define boundaries between use and ownership but disrupt views and restrict access, which breaks down the larger park experience. Rethinking the character of these internal edges can improve visibility between ownership areas and create connections to adjacent landscapes.

INTERNAL EDGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Remove Physical Barriers:

Fences

- Where possible, remove fence and hard barriers between the park and adjacent stakeholders with footprints in the park (White Stadium, The Zoo, and Shattuck Hospital).
- In cases where enclosure is necessary, relocate fences to 'embed' them within vegetation, giving the appearance of a unified park land and to provide a friendly outward appearance.

Gates

- Remove duplicate and unnecessary security gates throughout the park; where they must remain, locate them in a way that feels embedded in the park fabric, part of a planting strategy, and sensitive to pedestrian movement; over time upgrade to a consistent, neutral character (consider if a simple cedar gate is more appropriate than metal).
- For the gates that must remain, enact a plan to manage their daily locking and unlocking to facilitate appropriate access throughout the park.

Granite Blocks and Boulders

- Assess the current need for granite blocks and boulders placed along vehicular drives and other areas that previously controlled car access to park spaces to determine if they still necessary.
- Pilot the removal of some sections of the granite blocks and boulders. Where physical boundaries within the park are deemed necessary, use materials more in keeping with the park palette and historic character, and stockpile puddingstone for reuse in other restoration efforts.

Built Edges

Fences

Gates

Vehicular Barriers (Granite Blocks, Bollards, and Walls)

Embed fences in vegetation where possible to create a soft edge.

INTERNAL EDGE RECOMMENDATIONS

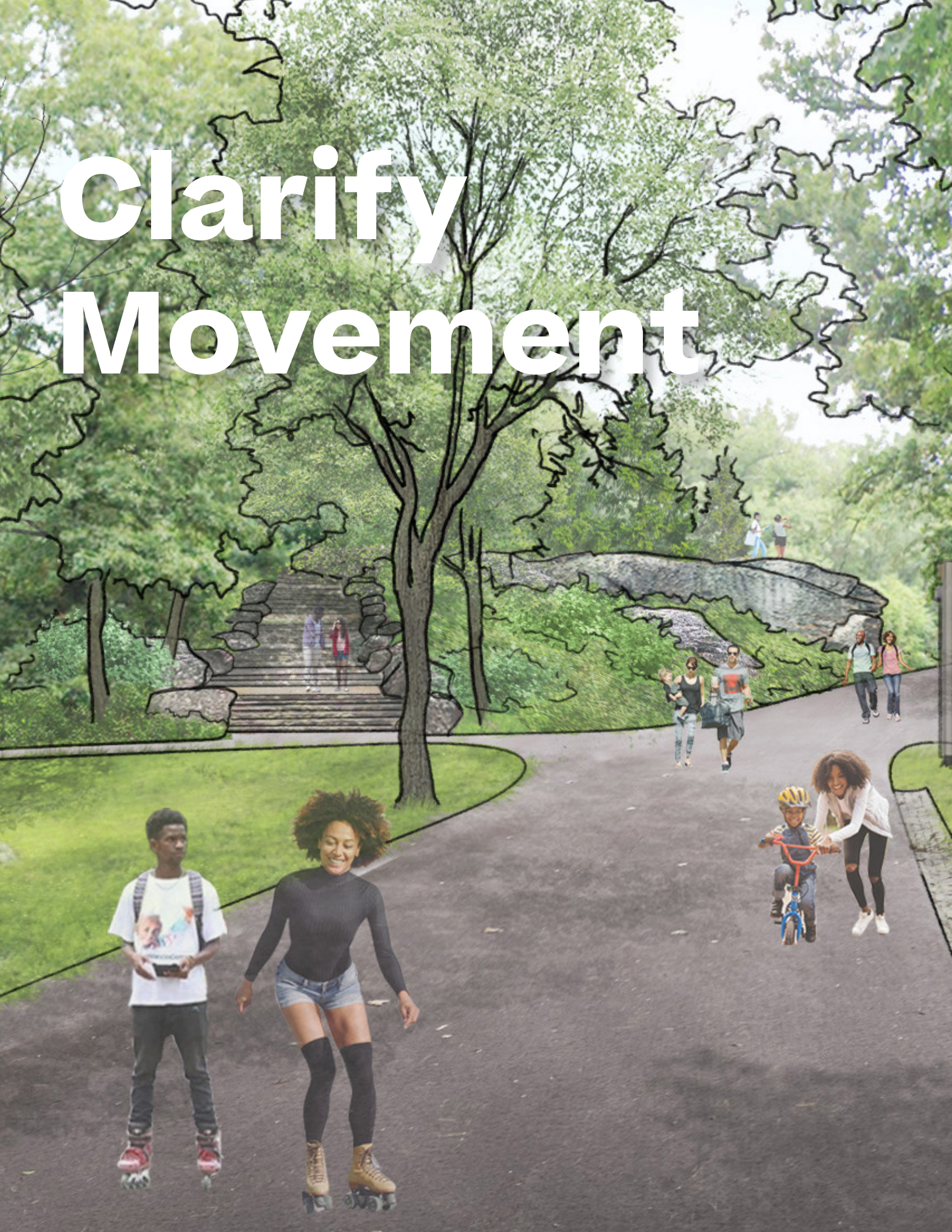
Internal Edge Treatments

- Park Space
- Understory & Brush Clearing
- Existing Fence or Wall
- Existing Fence to be Removed or Relocated
- Spatial Relationship
- (1) White Stadium
- (2) The Valley Gates
- (3) Street-Side Zoo Fence
- (4) Park-Side Zoo Fence
- (5) Shattuck Hospital

The Valley Gates

- (A) Pull back the zoo fence to visually connect the two sides of the park; selectively clear understory vegetation and brush; consider removing overgrown trees.
- (B) Remove obstacles to showcase the Valley Gates head houses and allow them to bookend the space.
- (C) Remove unnecessary bollards, gates, and granite blocks to allow for easier circulation flow through the area and views to the park beyond.
- (D) Make vehicles aware of pedestrian and bike circulation through the Valley Gates by changing path materials to prioritize their routes of travel.

The Zoo <---------- **Valley Gates** ----------> **The Wilderness**

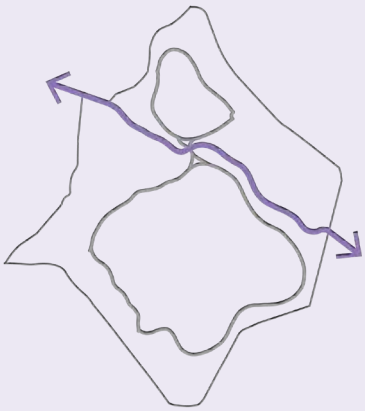

Clarify
Movement

Clarify Movement
Recommendations

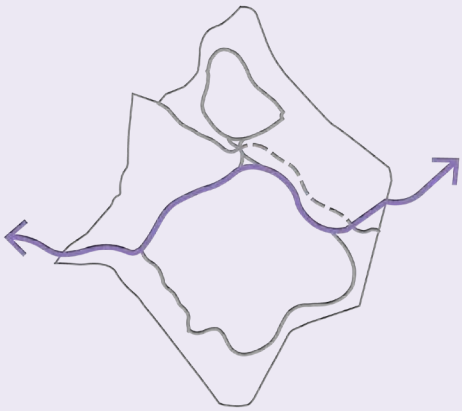
CONTENTS

A Short History of Circulation Change
New Modes of Travel Create Divisions

Farm Roads



Carriage Through-Traffic on Glen Road



Circuit Drive Opened to Cars

1

2

3

AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEADS

1870s-1880s

Prior to the construction of Franklin Park, the land was comprised of a number small farms connected by a network of minor roads. A path similar in alignment to Olmsted's Glen Road cut through the collection of properties.

SHOWCASING SENSE OF PLACE

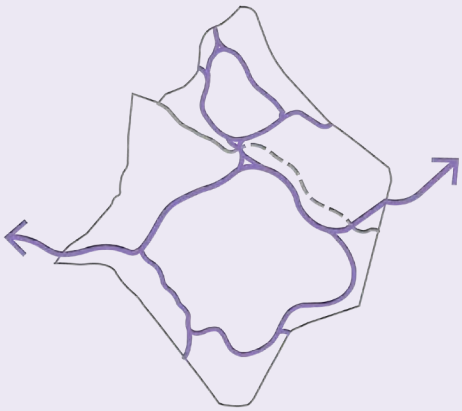
1897-1902

The original Circuit Loop (as well as loops in the Playstead and Wilderness) was designed for moving around the park via horse and carriage, while Glen Road was intended for city through-traffic (which would also have been carriages at the time). The alignment of the path was responsive to site conditions, bending around existing puddingstone rock outcrops, and featured cinematic views of the park's landscape as it moved between woodlands and open meadow.

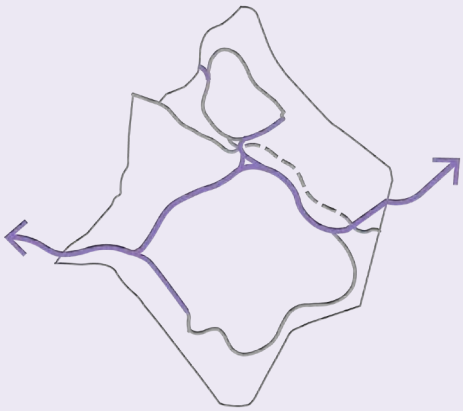
CIRCUIT DRIVE

1930s

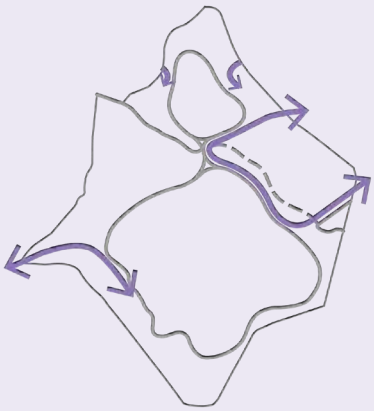
As cars replaced travel by horse and carriage, Glen Road was replaced by a new through-road, known today as Circuit Drive. The eastern half of Glen Road was eventually lost to public access behind the zoo fence and the continuous carriage loop around "the Country Park" (today's golf course) was interrupted. Circuit Drive's alignment was widened and straightened to accommodate traveling at faster speeds, and as a result certain visual and spatial connections were lost.



Car Access Extends Further into the Park



Measures are Taken to Control Car Access



Vehicular Access Maintained &
Multi Modal Loops Restored

4

CAR INTRUSION

1960s-1970s

By the 1960s and 70s, the city's investment in the park had declined; cars encroached further into the park, with access extending around The Playsted and throughout the full Circuit Loop. A lack of barriers allowed cars to drive and park throughout the park, even on Schoolmaster Hill.

5

PROTECTING THE PARK

1980s-2018

In the early 1980s, a grassroots effort by the Franklin Park Coalition and other community advocates led to the installation of stone block barriers to keep cars out of the interior of the park and on the park roads. More recently the southern portion of the Circuit Loop was returned to pedestrian-only access.

6

PRIORITIZING PEOPLE

Looking Forward

Cars are still an important part of how people get to the park today, but their access must be balanced with the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Ensuring cars can reach primary destinations without allowing cut-through traffic by non-park goers can improve access and restore multiple safe circuits and the overall experience of Boston's largest park.

What We Heard
Restore & Reconnect

COMMUNITY NEEDS & WISHES

"My dream is for Franklin Park to be a tranquil place to walk where my family can access nature via walking paths and safe biking paths."

"Not only better communication about what the park has to offer, but also clear recommendations for how to explore it. I would like to explore the trails but do not want to get lost."

"A better Bike/Ped loop would be great. The Circuit Loop is fantastic, but the area along the road that cuts through the park is difficult and dangerous with kids. There should be a bigger loop that goes through the rest of the park easily for both bikes or walker/runners."

"Some trails are in need of better upkeep/maintenance - but I would hate to see the wilderness of the park compromised. I love the ability to explore and "get lost" wandering through nature."

"...difficult to overstate how much fast cars reduce the quality of the experience in the park when you bring your kids there, or want to bike around."

"If traffic on Circuit Drive is cut off, I'd like to see a plan about where that traffic is most likely to go. How will cars get from one side to the other? How will that affect current traffic and parking patterns?"

"Cars go way too fast on the road, and there are very few places to cross safely."

"[I want to see] a great, well lit, walking path for health and wellness."

"Reorganize and improve parking, locating it near key destinations."

"[I want to see] the history of the Park reflected in the signage along walking paths, etc."

"[I want to see] a place for elders and youth to be able to safely walk and enjoy [the park]."

VALUES & GOALS

WAYFINDING →	**Support park circulation with signage, lighting, and amenities that meet basic needs.**
MULTI-MODAL MOVEMENT →	**Restore a continuous Circuit Loop for safe and accessible pedestrian and bike movement through the park.**
SAFETY →	**Provide clear and safe access to major magnet destinations for pedestrians, bikes, and vehicles.**
PERFORMANCE →	**Create parking that is beautiful, fitted to the park, and includes shade and stormwater management.**
ACCESS →	**Maintain smaller paths and trails to allow for quieter experiences of natural areas.**

RECOMMENDATIONS: ←

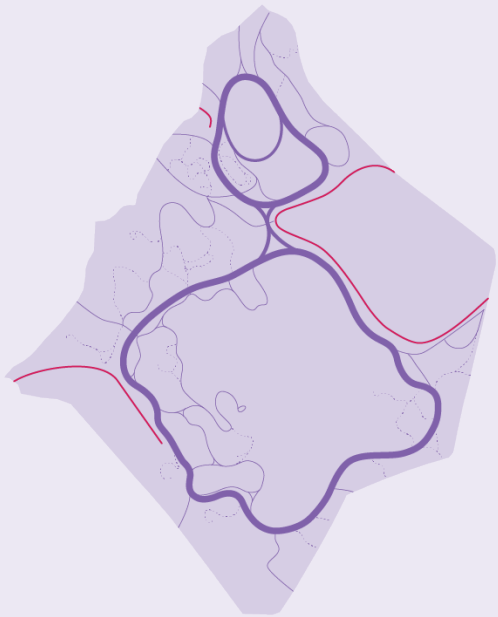
PRIORITIZE MULTI-MODAL MOVEMENT

CLARIFY PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

IMPROVE WAYFINDING, SIGNAGE, & LIGHTING

The Big Picture
Clarify Movement

Maintaining equitable access to and within the park is critical. By improving parking and vehicular circulation, elevating multi-modal routes, clearly connecting visitors to major park destinations and quiet moments alike, and addressing the safety challenges on Circuit Drive, broad mobility and access can be balanced with a commitment to the overall park experience to better welcome all.



Restoring the Loops

Olmsted's original circulation hierarchy was based on two primary loops that brought visitors throughout the park, separating modes of travel to prioritize safety and experience where needed, and sometimes allowing one path to run alongside the other. By restoring the park's two main circulation loops, safe 21st century multi-modal movement can be established, allowing users of all ages and abilities to navigate the park and its many destinations.

Slowing Things Down

Chief among the things the community love about the park is that it provides access to wildness, to the contemplative experience of nature right outside their doors. Smaller trails through the woodlands in particular will continue to provide that respite to visitors. Careful maintenance of these trails and education about how human use can negatively impact the park's natural resources are critical to advancing the stewardship of the park while still allowing neighbors to access its peace and quiet.

Getting People There

Paths and trails, and even parking lots, are essential to how people use the park today, facilitating exercise, connecting neighbors to nature, and serving as gathering spaces for friends to get together. In order to better accommodate these many uses, the system must be clarified — duplicate paths must be removed and paving repaired, hierarchy restored — and shade, signage and comfort must become an integral part of the system.

Proposed Park Circulation

- Two- Way Park Vehicular Circulation
- Possible One-Way Vehicular Exit to be Studied at Seaver Street
- Parking Lots
- Park Pedestrian Circulation
  *See pg. 244 for multi-modal park paths and connections to bike lanes on surrounding streets
- Existing In-Park Bus Stop

HIKING & WALKING TRAILS

PLAYING & LEARNING

PARKING & SOCIALIZING

Olmsted's Toolkit
Responsive Circulation

Olmsted's design for Franklin Park was founded on the specific conditions of the site, most notably its powerful topography of drumlin hills. Built without significant alteration to the land, his circulation system was designed to reveal and intensify these conditions, highlighting the contrast between masses of second growth woods punctuated by rocky ledges and large boulders and rolling lowland pastures. As he described it, 'every turn was suggested by natural circumstances'. Primary loops fit closely to topography, carefully tracing paths where the foot of hills and the upper edge of valleys met. Secondary spurs cut across grade along gentle slopes. Also of note was his intentional separation of various modes of travel – carriage, horseback, and foot – for which he scaled the width of the paths accordingly, resulting in places where several paths ran side by side. Today this creates moments of confusion in wayfinding especially in The Playstead and The Wilderness.

CONSTRUCTED PASSAGES

Masonry Structures

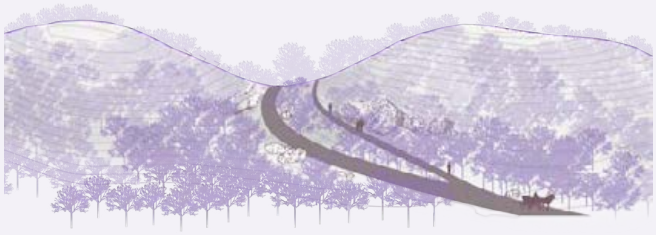
The park's walls, bridges, and steps facilitate movement up steep slopes, over water bodies, and through tunnels. Primarily constructed of puddingstone sourced on the site, this pairing of stone and circulation deepens the connection between park and the land it sits on and delivers a powerful sense of place to the visitor.


1


2

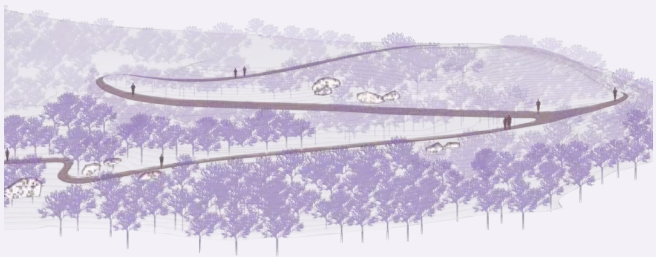

3

NAVIGATING TOPOGRAPHY



Moving Through Geologic 'Cuts'

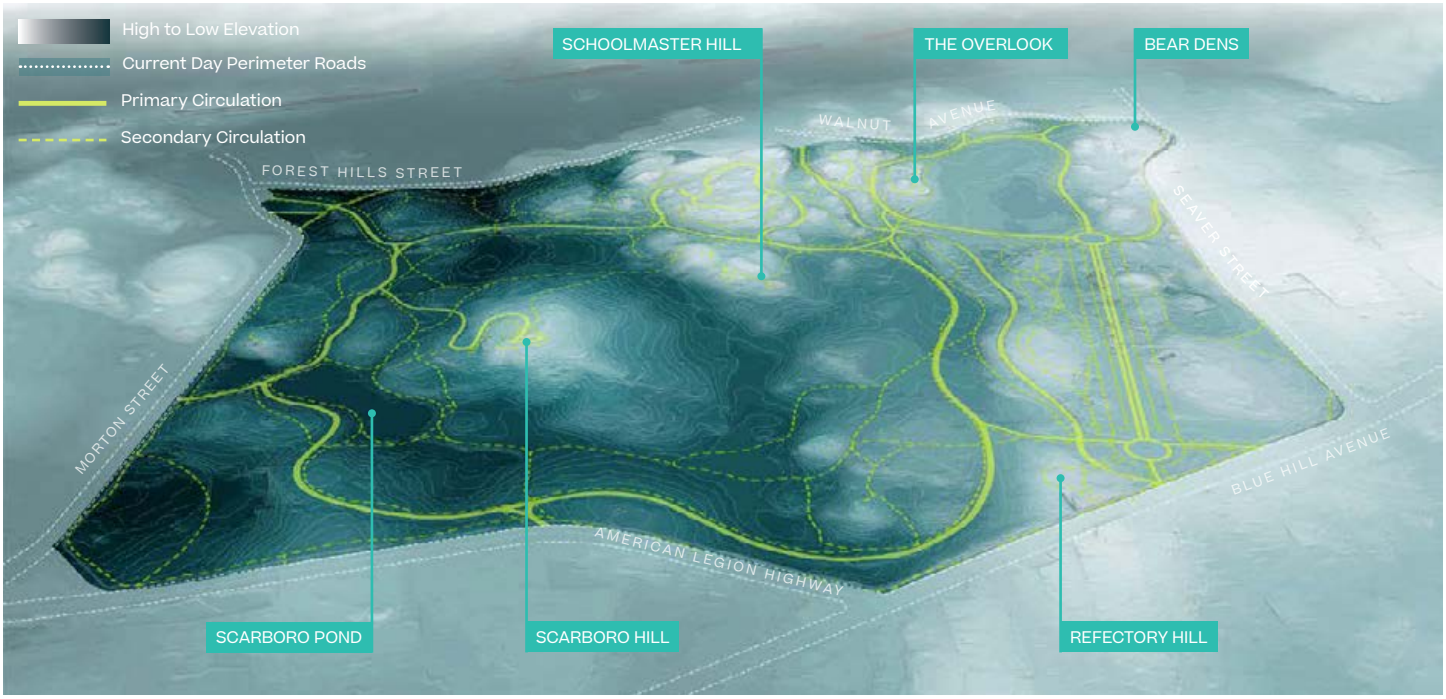
Paths that move through deeper woodland valleys and low points between drumlin hills provide an immersive experience, highlighting steep hillsides with rocky outcrops and large glacial erratics (individual boulders). These intense experiences are contrasted as paths emerge into the park's open areas of subtler topography.



Moving Up & Down Topography

Navigating from low points to high points and lookouts was typical of the park's secondary circulation via smaller paths that were seemingly draped onto hillsides, carefully cutting across topography.

HISTORIC CIRCULATION



The circulation system from Olmsted's General Plan of Franklin Park is closely fitted to the topography of the site, facilitating the enjoyment of the park's scenery, which was intended to be enjoyed through continuous, easy movement.

Prioritize the Park
Promote Multi-Modal Movement

Today Circuit Drive divides the park in two, creating noisy, high-speed traffic that leaves pedestrians and bikes with little to no space along its edge, disrupting a safe, immersive park experience. The drive also restricts cross-park movement and use, encouraging users to 'stick to their edge'. By re-imagining vehicular access and arrival, safety and experience can be improved for all.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Fast & Noisy Traffic**
- **Unsafe Crossings**
- **Dispersed & Inefficient Parking**
- **Interrupted Park Experience**

CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Re-Imagine Circuit Drive**
- **Create a Parkway**
- **Improve Access to Encourage Biking**
- **Improve Parking to Get People to Magnet Destinations**
- **Focus on Shade & Stormwater to Make Parking Do More**

Cars parked throughout the Valley Gates during an event.

Biking along the Circuit Loop.

Informal use of space near parking.

Proposed Vehicular Circulation

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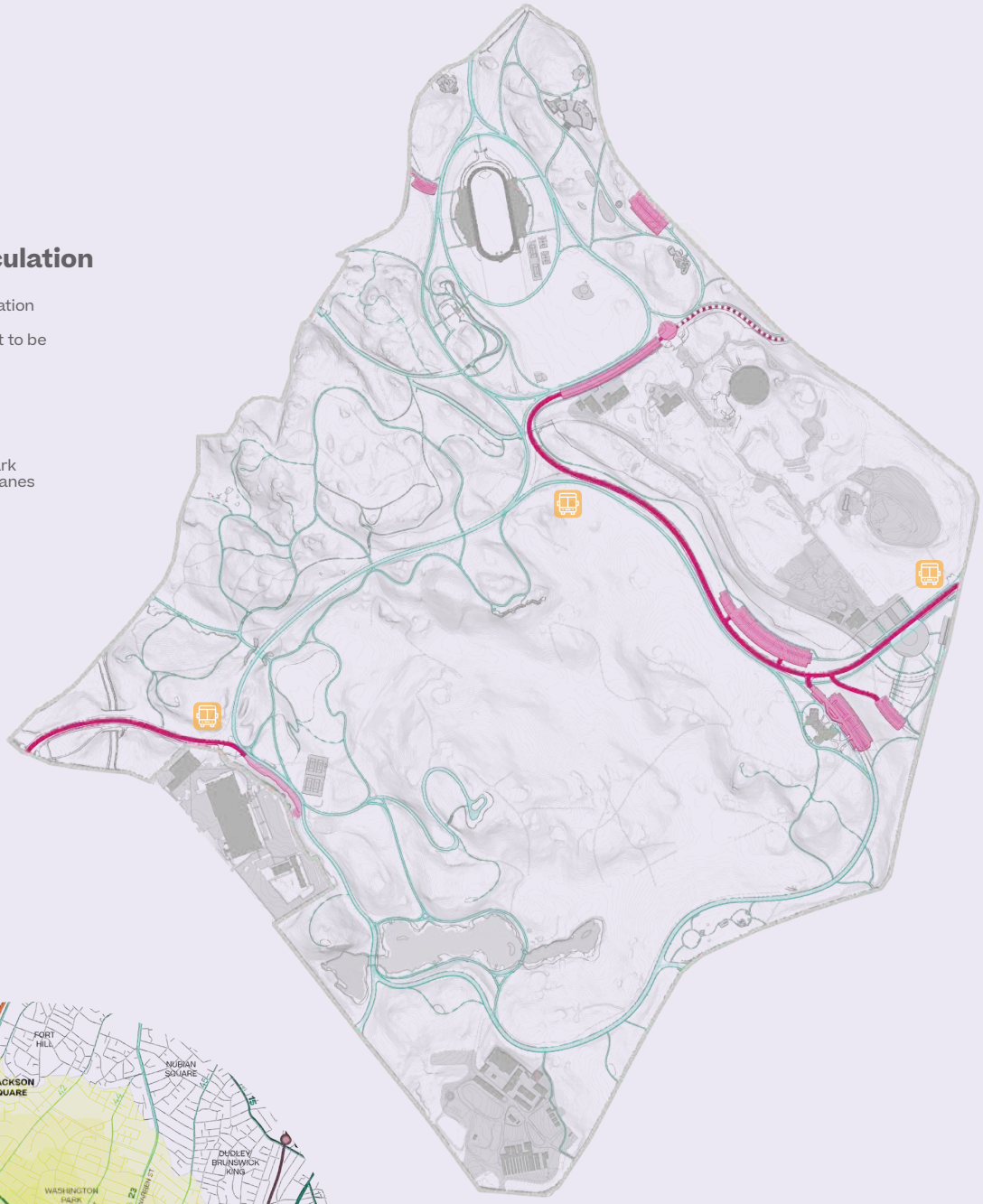


Transit Lines

- MBTA Red Line
- MBTA Orange Line
- MBTA Commuter Rail
- Bus Routes
- Key Bus Routes
- ~20-minute walkshed

Cars & Parking:

How can vehicular access be balanced with an immersive park experience?

1 Separate Modes of Travel

Clearly define lanes for cars and bikes on the park's roads, provide a generous buffer between roads and park paths, and mark designated crossings to ensure safety for all.

2 Extend the Character of the Park

Embed parking in planting - both at its edges and within the lots - to mitigate the urban heat island effect, make comfortable places to gather, and extend the landscape fabric of the park.

3 Make Parking High-Performing

Integrate planted swales and below-grade infiltration to treat and manage the park's stormwater runoff, in particular in the Circuit Drive parking lot.

4 Create Connections

Provide pedestrian paths adjacent to parking areas to connect visitors with nearby park destinations through safe and easy access, and provide bike parking for cyclists.

Make it Safe
Re-Imagine Circuit Drive

Where cars are and aren't allowed in the park has evolved in a piecemeal fashion over time. The resulting circulation is unclear and creates unsafe conflicts by disrupting the primary pedestrian and bike paths and limiting the ability for visitors to make a 'full loop' without encountering car traffic or parking lots. Maintaining access to the park's primary destinations via car and bus is important. Adjustments to vehicular circulation to re-establish safe multi-modal routes for visitors can be implemented incrementally, and should include testing and continued community input along the way.

CIRCUIT DRIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Before You Build It

Reinstating a continuous Circuit Loop is one of the biggest changes the plan proposes and has garnered both support and concern through community engagement. Any changes to Circuit Drive will need additional study (additional feasibility and traffic study, and pilot closures) to further understand outcomes within the park and on surrounding streets. However, there are some smaller near-term adjustments that can be made to increase safety along Circuit Drive in the interim, including raised and/or signaled crosswalks.

Reinstate the Circuit Loop

- Re-establish a continuous Circuit Loop for bikes and pedestrians.
- Perform traffic feasibility studies and analysis to review the potential impacts of reducing or completely removing vehicular access between Shattuck Hospital and the Valley Gates, eliminating cut-through car traffic on Circuit Drive.
- Maintain vehicular entry and exit along Circuit Drive from the west to access the parking at Ellicottdale.

Clarify Vehicular Circulation

- Study the traffic flow at the park's main entry on Blue Hill Avenue to simplify entry and exit from Blue Hill Avenue by consolidating car traffic on Franklin Park Road; study the impacts of offering a one-way vehicular exit at Seaver Street in conjunction with eliminating cut-through car traffic on Circuit Drive.
- Provide a designated bike lane along Circuit Drive.
- Establish designated pedestrian crossings at key locations.

Make Safe Connections at The Valley Gates

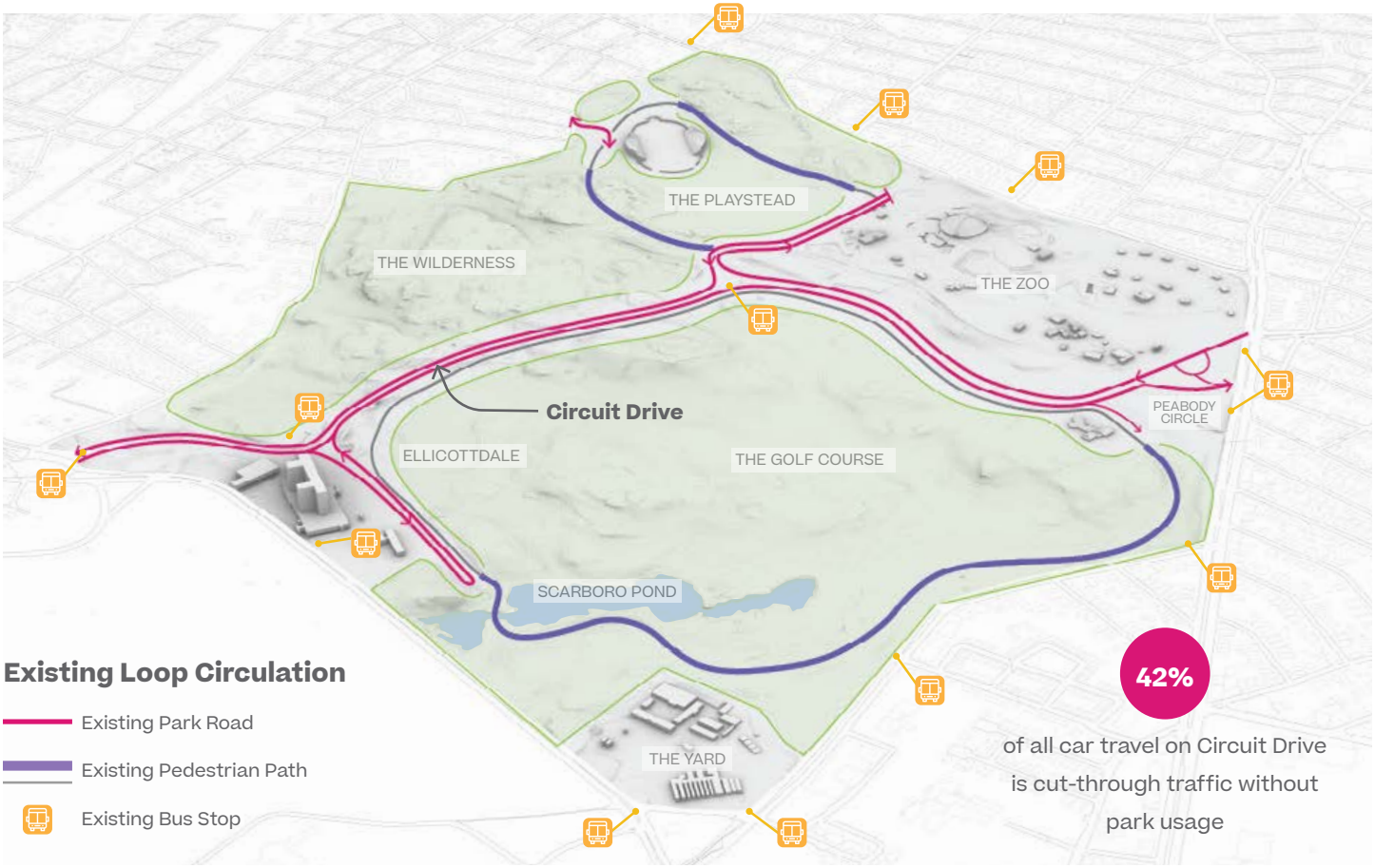
- Use traffic calming measures and designated crossings at The Valley Gates to make safe connections between the Circuit Loop, the Playstead, and the designated bike lane on Circuit Drive.

Maintain Bus Access

- Maintain critical bus stops at the edge and within the park to ensure access for all park users.
- Traffic feasibility study should include bus routes, stops, and schedules of corresponding bus lines to establish a system that best serves its users, as well as special event bus access and parking.

Existing western stretch of Circuit Drive traveling along The Wilderness.

The existing southern portion of the Circuit Loop.

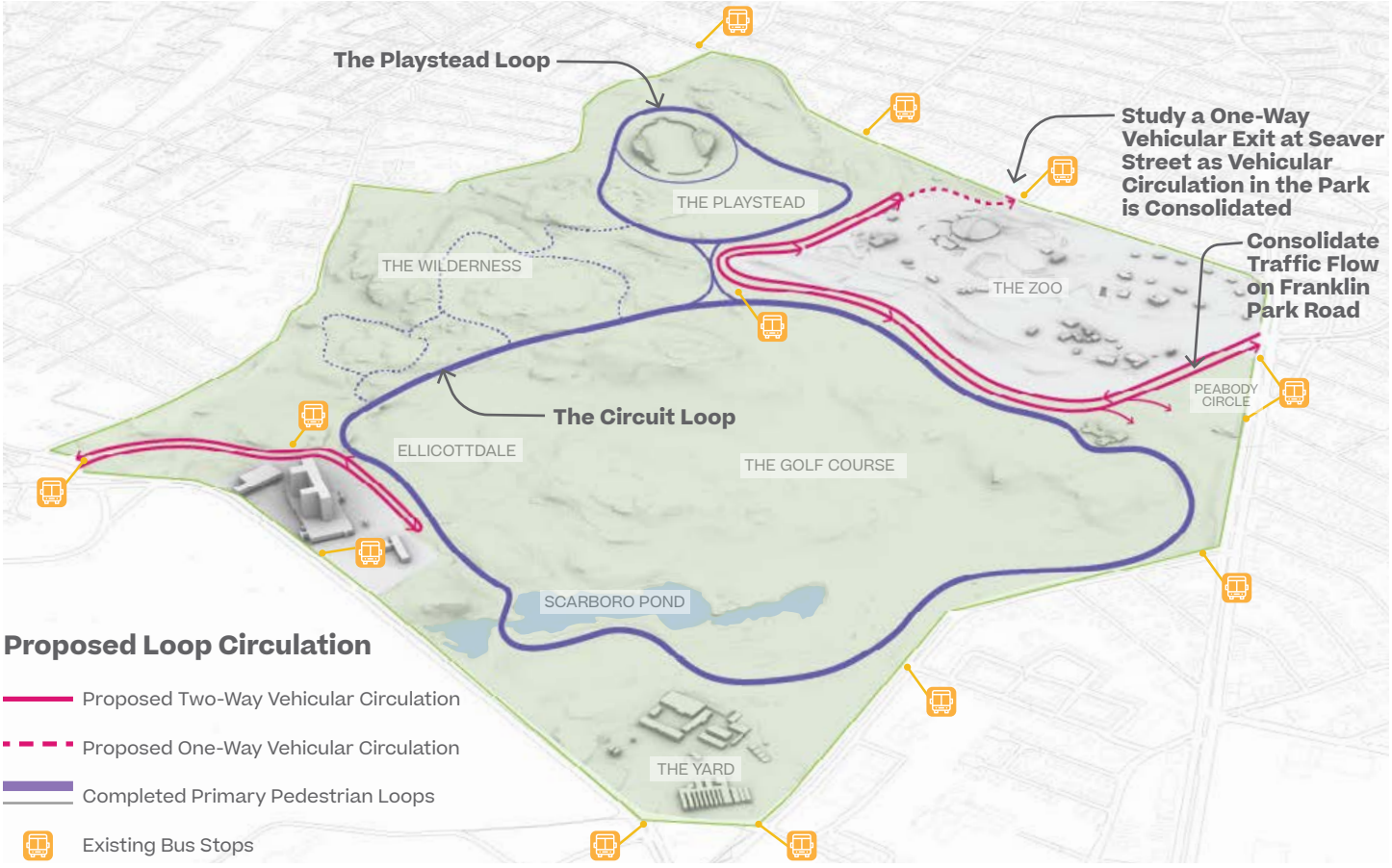


Existing Loop Circulation

- Existing Park Road
- Existing Pedestrian Path
- Existing Bus Stop

42%

of all car travel on Circuit Drive is cut-through traffic without park usage



Proposed Loop Circulation

- Proposed Two-Way Vehicular Circulation
- Proposed One-Way Vehicular Circulation
- Completed Primary Pedestrian Loops
- Existing Bus Stops

Make it Part of the Park
Create a Parkway

Circuit Drive serves as the primary vehicular access into the park, with entrances at Peabody Circle and off the Arborway. Today the drive is extremely wide, it is lined with parking along its length, which is often in conflict with bike lanes, and is devoid of canopy trees in many places. Its composition, character, and function should be transformed to support this important arrival procession and embed it into the character of Boston's largest park.

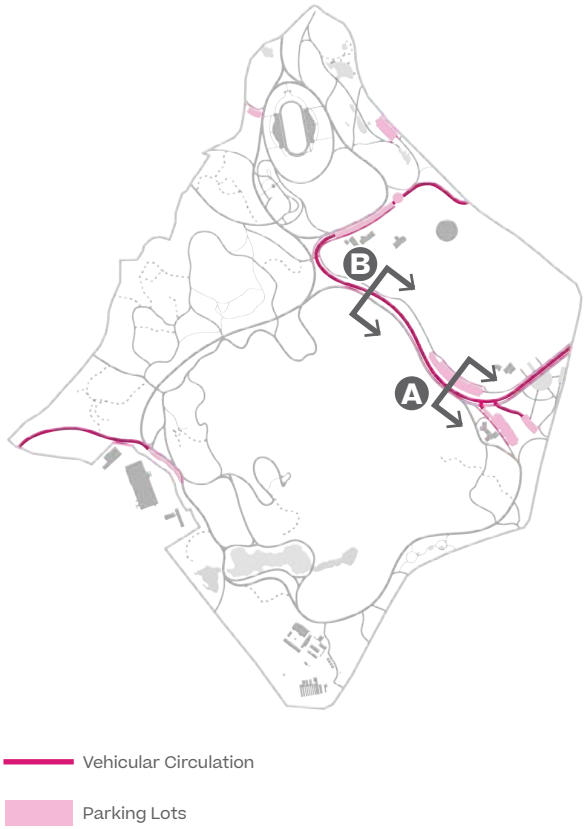
CIRCUIT DRIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Separate Modes of Travel

- Provide a designated bike lane on Circuit Drive for inbound bikers.
- Prioritize a generous multi-modal Circuit Loop path by increasing its width to accommodate bikes and pedestrians, and establishing more separation from Circuit Drive for the safety and improved mobility for all park users.
- Create separation between Circuit Drive and the Circuit Loop for the safety of park users.
- Maintain parallel parking where the revised road width allows.
- Provide designated crossings at key locations, including at the Circuit Drive parking lot and the Zoo's main entrance.

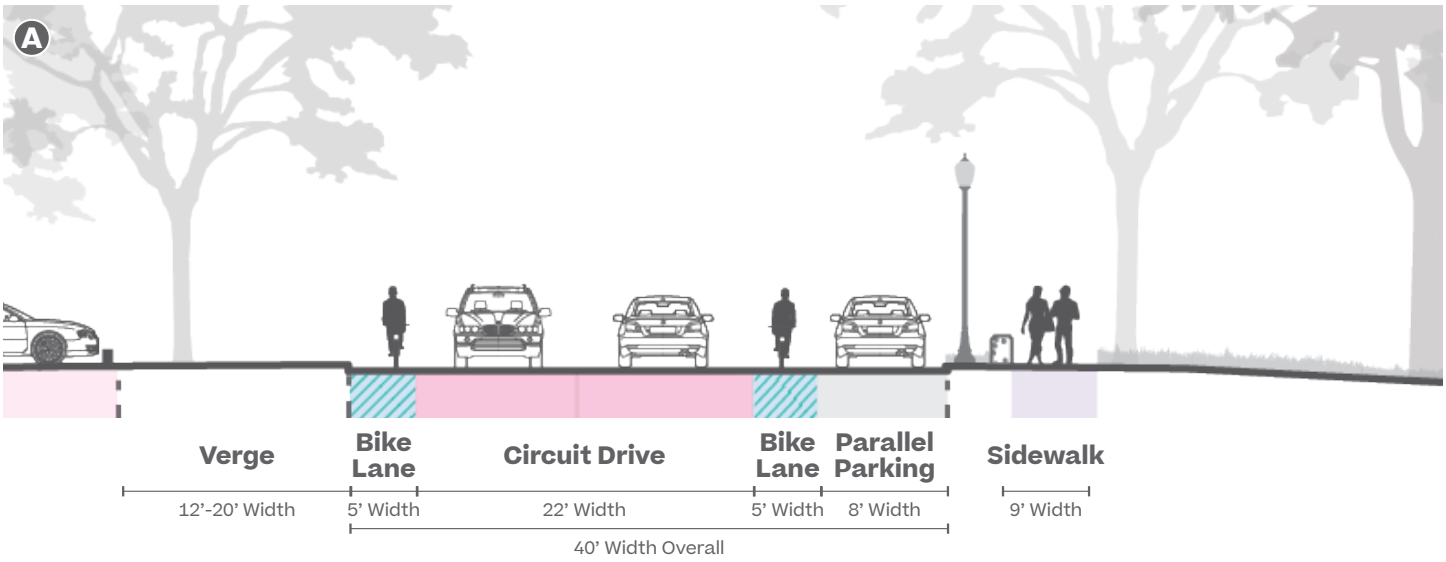
Use Canopy Trees to Integrate the Park Landscape

- Line Circuit Drive with canopy trees to create a shaded parkway, embedding the road into the park, slowing traffic, and maintaining separation between the road and shared use path of the Circuit Loop.
- Further support this corridor by integrating stormwater management and lighting along its length.

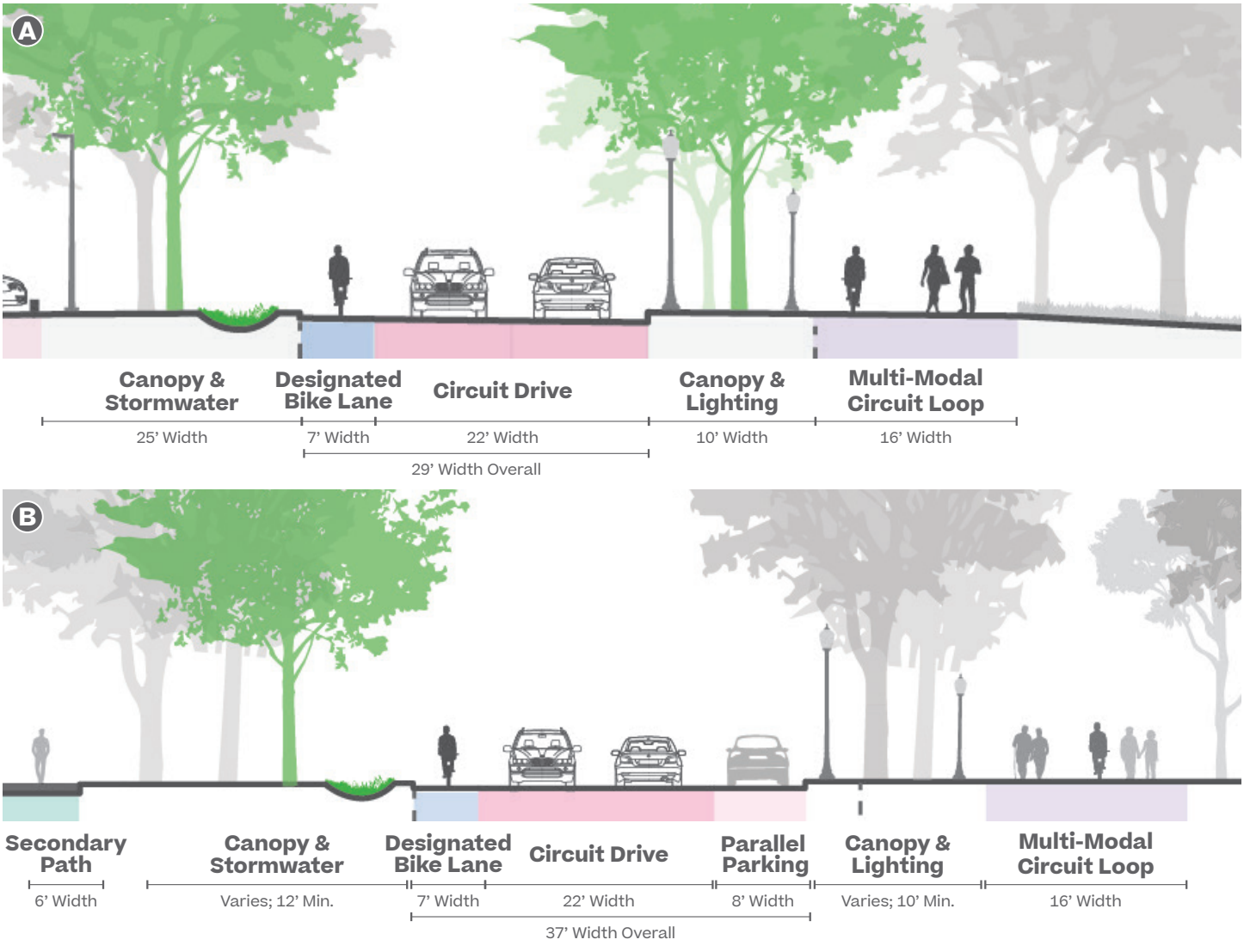


Circuit Drive today, looking east, with the 'sausage lot' parking on the left and the golf course on the right.

EXISTING CIRCUIT DRIVE



PROPOSED CIRCUIT DRIVE PARKWAY



Share the Road
Improve Access to Encourage Biking

As the city's network of bike trails and shared streets continues to grow, the park must provide opportunities to connect to this network and provide safe ways for people to arrive to the park on bike. Today designated bike lanes along the park roads are inconsistent and poorly marked and multi-modal paths are incomplete. The park has the opportunity to prioritize bicycle infrastructure and increase access to bikeshares to support healthy activities and exercise for neighbors of all ages and abilities.

BIKE FRIENDLY RECOMMENDATIONS

Shared Space

- Provide a designated bike lane on the vehicular Circuit Drive for safe and easy access into the park.
- Maintain shared bike and pedestrian park loops by providing a generous path width that does not necessitate striped lanes to separate modes of travel.

Make Biking Convenient & Accessible

- Provide expanded bikeshare, repair stations, and bike parking near the four sides of the park for easy access for all surrounding neighbors, to facilitate access to primary park destinations, and to encourage participation in programming and enjoying all the park has to offer.
- Lower the minimum age to rent a bike so younger teens can participate.
- Include innovative bikeshares that offer bikes & trikes for all ages/abilities so families can ride together.
- Introduce bike parking with bikeshare and bike repair stations, as well as in primary parking areas, considering areas that demand higher volumes of bike parking during park events and festivals, like the Circuit Drive lot and the parking lot at The Playstead fields.
- Support learn-to-bike programs to encourage use.

Connect to the Context

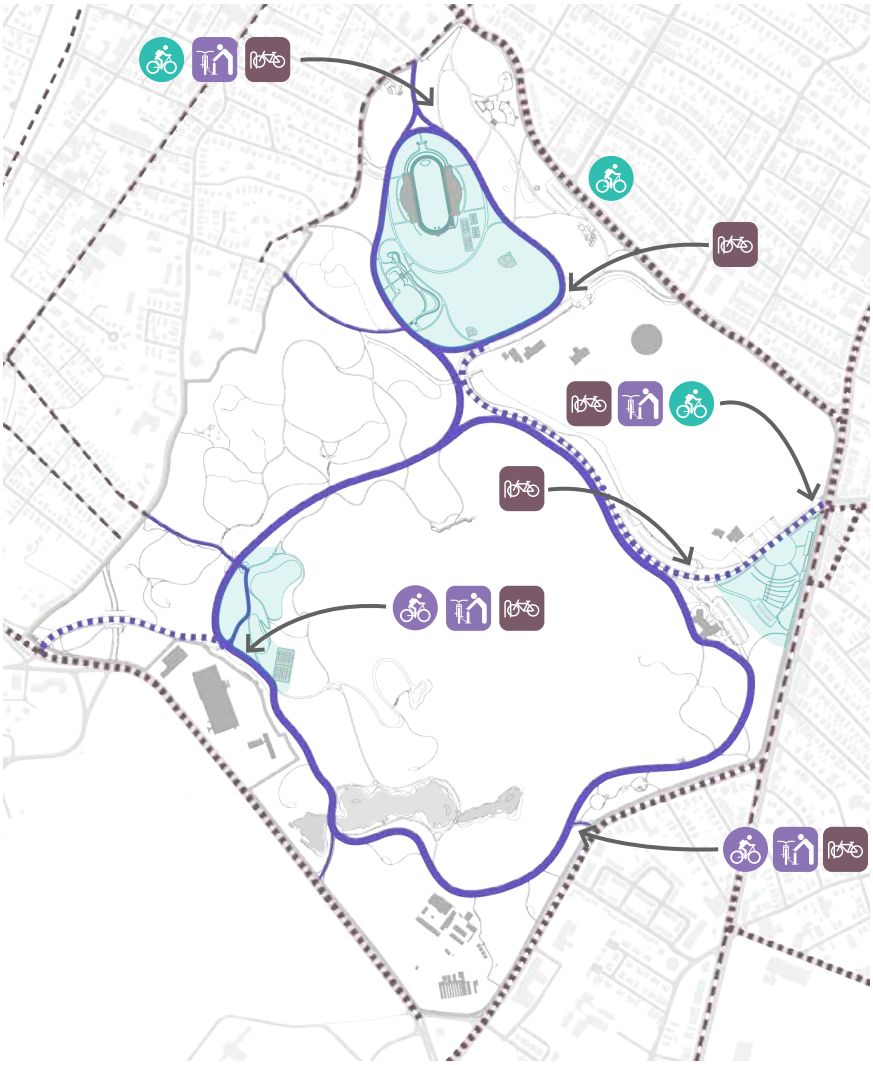
- Ensure that in-park bike routes connect to the city's network of bike lanes, shared roads, and bike trails; consider important bike entrances, like Walnut Avenue.
- Advocate for park perimeter roads to include designated bike lanes.

Programming, like the annual Kite & Bike Festival at The Playstead, promotes biking at all ages.

Multi-modal path for bike and pedestrian use.

Innovative bikeshares offer bikes & trikes for younger children and all abilities.

PROPOSED MULTI-MODAL PATHS



Bike Circulation & Amenities

- Existing Park Bikeshare Station
- Proposed Park Bikeshare Station
- Proposed Bike Repair Station
- Proposed Bike Racks / Bike Parking
- Major Park Destinations
- Shared Park Bike & Pedestrian Path
- Park Road with Designated Bike Lane
- Street with Designated Bike Lane
- Shared Street

BIKE THE EMERALD NECKLACE

For those interested in exploring the full Emerald Necklace by bicycle, Franklin Park can serve as the starting point or final destination with improved bike paths that connect to directly to the park network.

Get People to Magnet Destinations
Improve Parking

With most visitors arriving by car, there are great pressures on parking within the park. By consolidating lots near the park's major magnet destinations and increasing efficiency through improved lot layouts, the number of parking spaces can be increased to support the park's many activities without allowing the car to dominate the experience of the park. While maintaining car access is critical, maintaining the majority of park acreage as open space is also so. The City and in-park stakeholders should look for opportunities to expand parking outside of the park footprint if future demands exceed the plan's recommendations.

PARKING RECOMMENDATIONS

Concentrate Parking Near Major Magnets

- Bring visitors directly where they want to go by locating parking adjacent to the park's major magnets and popular destinations (The Playstead, the zoo, the golf course, Ellicottdale).
- Consolidate many small parking areas into several larger lots.
- Increase efficiency by clearly designating parking areas and painting parking spots.
- Maintain some parallel parking along Circuit Drive, away from the expanded parking lots, for easy access to the Circuit Loop.
- Future parking studies and design should consider bus access and parking for special events within the park; ensure any new or renovated parking meets or exceeds ADA parking requirements.

1 Parking embedded in canopy.

In-Park Parking

- Parking Lot
- Parallel Parking on Circuit Drive
- Restricted Parking
- Parking Removed as Improvements are

PARKING INCREASE: 13.5%

Parking Lots

A. White Stadium
B. Seaver Street
C. The Playstead
D. Ellicottdale
E. Ellicottdale Extension*
F. Valley Gates Gravel Lot **
G1. The Circuit Drive Lot
G2. The Circuit Drive Lot Extension ***
H. Golf Course Lot
I. Refectory Hill***
J. Peabody Circle
K. Maintenance Lot
L. The Yard (Future)

Parallel Parking @

1. Pine Street Inn
2. Ellicott Arch
3. The Wilderness
4. Circuit Drive
5. The Circuit Drive Lot
6. The Zoo Entrance

* Parking along the Circuit Loop past Ellicottdale to be re-evaluated in the long term as other parking and Circuit Loop improvements are made. ADA parking to remain.

** Valley Gates gravel lot to be maintained for special event parking, and considered as possible site for future improved parking if needed. If parking demands are met elsewhere, consider removal and reforestation.

*** Decisions to add parking in these areas to be evaluated based on overall parking demands as other parking improvements are made throughout the park.


A
B
C
F
3
4
6
G1
J
2
H
I
1
D
5
E
K
Existing Parking
Vehicular Circulation
Parallel Parking
Parking Lot
Restricted Parking


A
B
C
F
G2
3
4
6
G1
J
2
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Proposed Parking
Vehicular Circulation
Parallel Parking
Primary Pedestrian & Bike Circulation
Pedestrian Circulation
Parking Lot
Weekend-Only Parking
Park Magnet

Make Parking Do More
Focus on Shade & Stormwater

Parking plays a major role in the social fabric of the park with people using it for gathering and a variety of informal activities, but today these areas are in poor shape with crumbling paving and a lack of shade. Parking has the potential to be a beautiful and comfortable park space in its own right and to be better integrated into the landscape. It must also be put to work to perform essential ecological functions, like managing stormwater and increasing the urban canopy of the park.

PARKING RECOMMENDATIONS

Make It a Comfortable Place to Be

- Make parking lots a park space in their own right by providing shade and space for those who like to congregate near their cars to socialize, listen to music, and overlook park activities.
- Embed larger lots within the fabric of the park with ample planting, like the expanded Circuit Drive parking lot or the new Refectory Hill parking lot.
- Design around existing large trees where possible.

Promote Performance & Function

- Integrate green infrastructure, like bioswales, and infiltration systems to reduce and clean stormwater runoff.

Integrate Supporting Elements

- Make connections between parking lots and the park pedestrian circulation; provide an adequate number of bike racks for cyclists, considering areas that demand higher volumes of bike parking during park events and festivals.
- Make parking safe for early evening and morning visitors by providing lighting and emergency call boxes.
- Provide orienting signage upon arrival by locating park maps and directional signage near parking.

Essential Elements of Parking

Shade & Comfort

Stormwater Infiltration

Lighting & Signage

Embedded Park Character

Pedestrian Circulation Connections

Space for Gathering

FUTURE PARKING IMPROVEMENTS ALONG CIRCUIT DRIVE

Parking Phasing

- 1 — Expand and reconfigure the existing Circuit Drive parking lot.
- 2a — Possible location for future expanded parking along Circuit Drive if needed.
- 2b — Possible location for future improved parking in existing gravel lot if needed; if parking demands are met elsewhere, consider removal and reforestation.
- 3 — If needed after other parking improvements are made, create a small parking area on top of Refectory Hill.
- Existing Parking Lot to Remain
- Vehicular Circulation
- Pedestrian Circulation
- Enlargement Plan

CIRCUIT DRIVE PARKING LOT ENLARGEMENT

Proposed Circuit Drive Parking Lot Improvements

- Existing Circuit Drive Lot Footprint
- Existing Zoo Fence Alignment
- Proposed Zoo Fence Alignment
- ✕ Potential Trees to be Removed (Evaluate replacing selective existing trees along the Golf Course edge as part of parkway tree planting)
- Proposed Canopy Tree
- Existing Canopy Tree
- 1 — Circuit Drive Lot Expansion w/ Canopy & Stormwater Capture
- 2 — Tree-Line Circuit Drive with Continuous Bike Lane
- 3 — Seating within Existing Tree Grove
- 4 — Multi-Modal Path for Pedestrians and Bicycles

Help People See the Park
Clarify Pedestrian Circulation

Olmsted's design for circulation was carefully calibrated to use, offering a clear and immersive experience of landscapes across the park. A hierarchy of path widths and materials provided important cues for movement and wayfinding. Today, arbitrary and abrupt changes in width or material obscure the intuitive system of the original network. Reinstating logic to guide hierarchy is critical to restoring a cohesive park experience.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Lack of Hierarchy & Redundant Paths**
- **Pedestrian & Bike Safety**
- **Additional Trails in The Wilderness Create Confusion**

CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Re-Establish Park Loops**
- **Define Secondary Paths & Trails to Establish Hierarchy**

The annual Franklin Park Coalition's Turkey Trot on the southern portion of the Circuit Loop.

A secondary path leading down to Ellicott Arch.

Just Walk Boston, a primarily Black and Latino fitness group, on a morning walk.

Proposed Pedestrian Circulation Hierarchy

- Primary Loop - Asphalt
- Secondary Path - Asphalt or Stonedust
- Trail - Stonedust
- Walking Trail - Mulch
- Boardwalk / Landing - Wood
- Seasonal Access (evaluate the feasibility of a path through golf course maintained in winter to allow community to use space normally reserved for golfers)

◄ The Wilderness ⊢ The Circuit Loop

More than a Path:

What could a continuous Circuit Loop path make possible?

1 Multi-Modal Movement

With a completed Circuit Loop, a 2-mile predominately accessible path for bikes and pedestrians will move throughout the park's many different landscapes.

2 Orientation & Hierarchy

As a primary path, the Circuit Loop helps visitors navigate the park by providing a familiar and consistent place to return to when exploring.

Ellicottdale

3 Connected Park Destinations

Secondary paths & trails that frequently connect back to the main loop provide clear access to adjacent park destinations, like Schoolmaster Hill or special areas within The Wilderness.

4 Improved Habitat

Core woodland habitats are stitched back together with additional planting and canopy at the edges of the loop between The Wilderness and Schoolmaster Hill & Ellicottdale.

5 Safe and Clear Connections

Movement is supported throughout the park with consistent lighting & wayfinding that provides orientation & educates visitors about their surroundings.

6 Expanded Open Vistas

Visibility and sight lines are improved to adjacent park spaces and activities in the valleys; Important park-wide spatial connections are re-established through selective clearing.

Restore & Reconnect
Re-establish Park Loops

The park's primary loops are incomplete today, with interruptions including parking, undefined expanses of paving, and park drives. Reinstating these paths as continuous bike and pedestrian loops is critical to the legibility and hierarchy of the park's circulation system. They serve as important orienting devices, as well as safe and accessible ways to explore, connecting the park's major magnet destinations and linking visitors to the secondary path and trail networks.

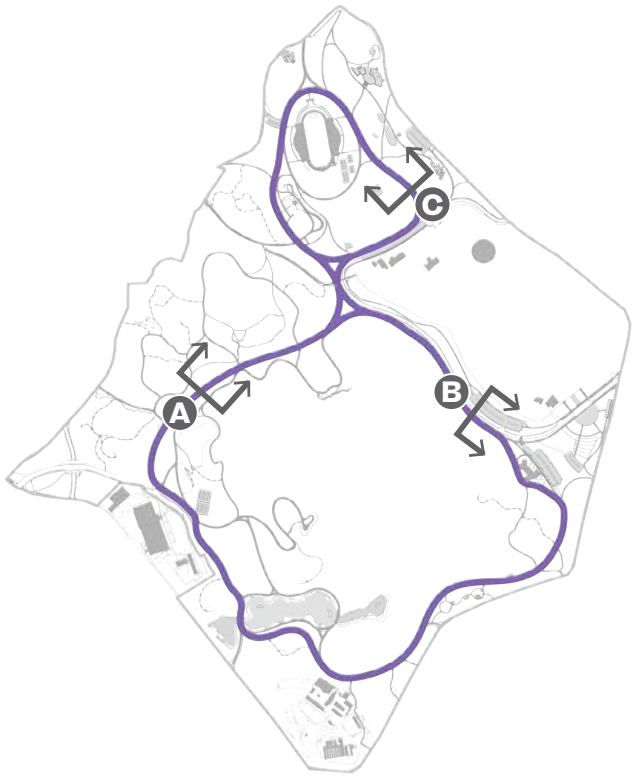
PARK LOOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Complete Primary Loops

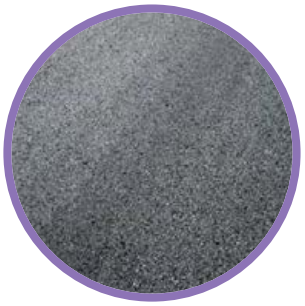
- Complete the two primary park loops, the Circuit Loop and The Playstead Loop, and connect the paths at the Valley Gates.
- Remove excess paving and establish the two loops as walking and biking paths that link the park's major magnet destinations, and that are not interrupted by parking or vehicular traffic.
- Use the remaining space on either edge to integrate additional canopy trees to provide shade and to connect adjacent woodland habitat where applicable.
- Provide open views to adjacent park spaces to increase connectivity and a sense of safety.
- Remove gates, bollards, and granite blocks that hinder continuous bike and pedestrian movement and detract from the park's character.

Create Connections

- Let secondary circulation branch off of the primary loops, bringing visitors into The Wilderness and Long Crouch Woods or to key destinations, like Schoolmaster or Scarboro Hills.
- Open views to adjacent park spaces by thinning the understory layer in select areas to shape vistas and provide a sense of connection and safety.
- Provide signage and continuous lighting to ensure traveling the loop in the interior of the park feels safe.



Primary Bike & Pedestrian Loops



Asphalt Paving

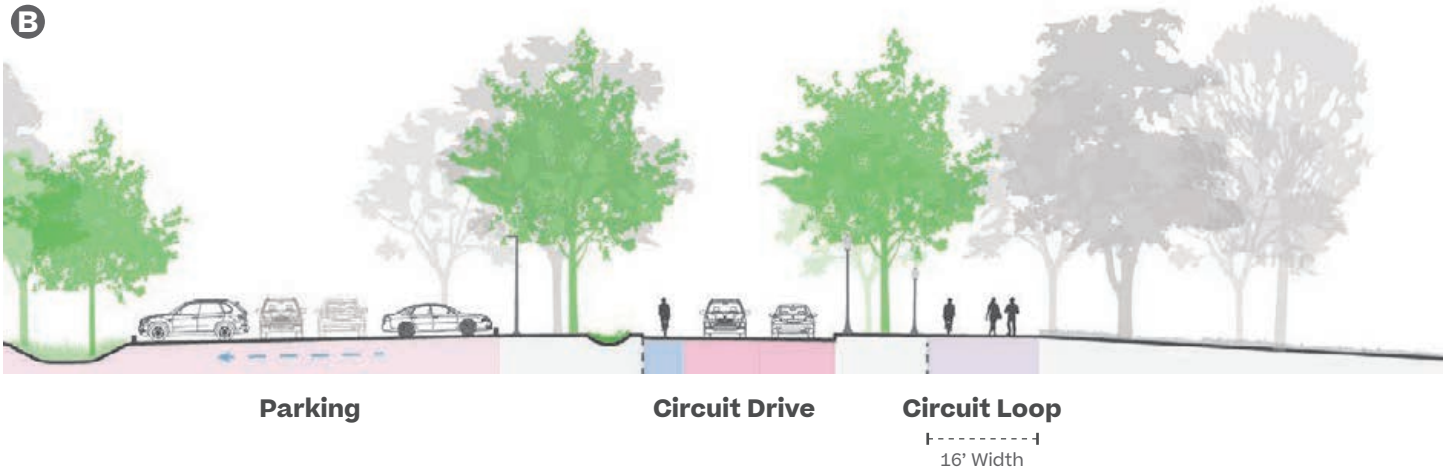
Historic Cobble Gutter

Primary Loop Materials

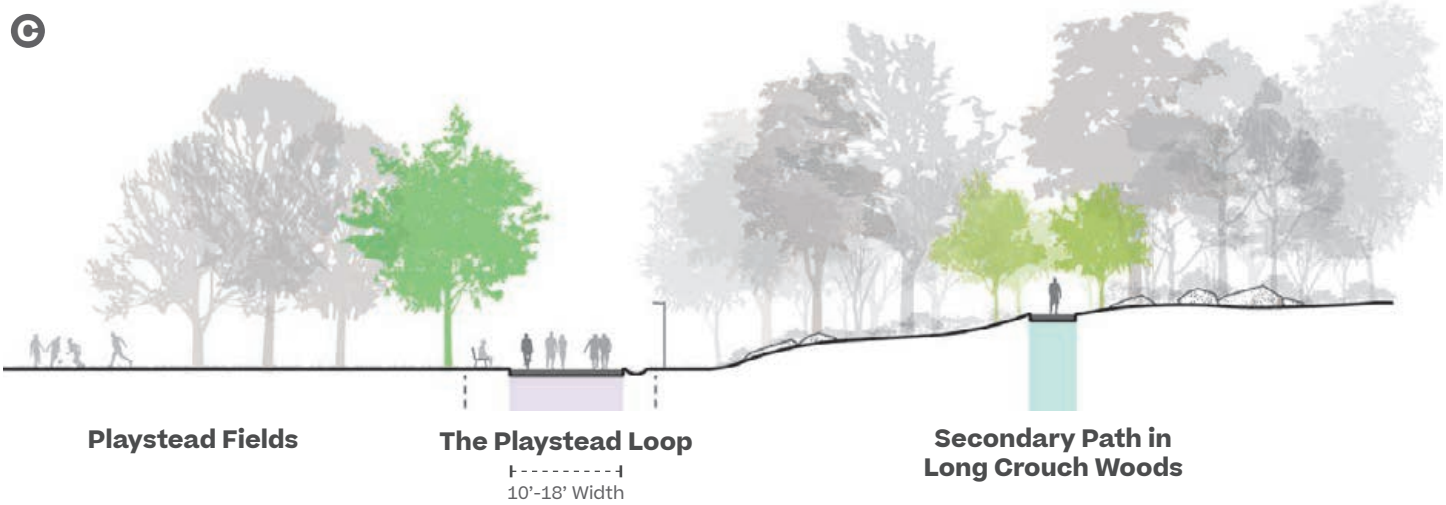
Pave with asphalt to facilitate bike and pedestrian movement; maintain slopes less than 5% to meet ADA accessibility.

CIRCUIT LOOP | THE WOODLAND CUT

CIRCUIT LOOP | THE OPEN PARKWAY



THE PLAYSTEAD LOOP



Trail | Puddingstone Steps | Primary Loop

Establish a System: How can paths provide unique park experiences?

1 Re-establish Continuous Park Loops

Reinstate accessible multi-modal loops around The Playstead and The Circuit Loop; take advantage of the gentle grade change to create accessible paths that bring many users through a range of park experiences.

2 Create Memorable Walks

Highlight popular secondary paths between park features with unique planted characters, including flowering tree walks, plants with winter interest, or evergreen presence.

3 Provide Escapes in Nature

Within woodlands and natural areas, use narrow trails to minimize disturbance, while creating or preserving moments of escape and solitude away from park activities.

4 Bring Paths through Low Points

Provide boardwalks in selective low lying, wet environments that are not accessible today to link spaces and expand the range of landscape experiences in the park.

5 Highlight Unique Geology

Maintain original puddingstone steps, walls, and other masonry and expose rock outcrops that give unique character to the circulation system; salvage unused material for future repairs.

6 Be Responsive

When repairing existing or implementing new paths, calibrate materials to their use and context. Pave more heavily traveled routes and use porous materials in sensitive areas to limit disturbance. Where possible, establish path slopes so people of all ages and abilities can experience all the park has to offer.

Establish Hierarchy
Define Secondary Paths & Trails

The secondary path and trail network is currently complicated by duplicative paths that sometimes lead visitors to dead-ends or unexpected destinations. Paths are in a variety of paving materials, not all of which are in good condition. By establishing hierarchy within the secondary path and trail network though width, material, and location, exploring the park will become more intuitive and enjoyable for a broader group of visitors.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Simplify the Secondary Path Network

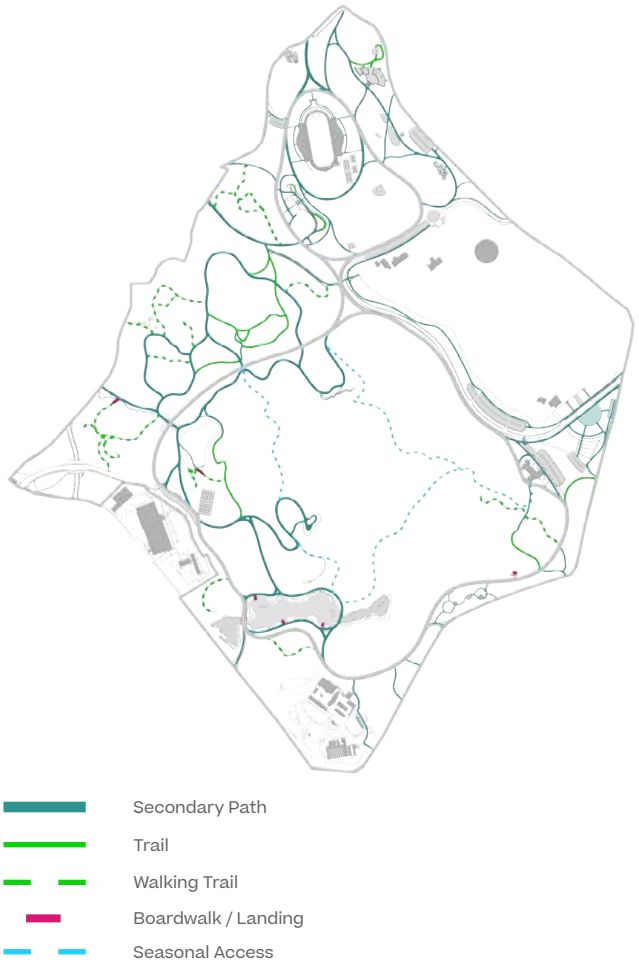
- Clarify the secondary path network so that it operates as a series of smaller loops off the park's primary circulation, leading visitors to areas of interest at high and low points throughout the park.
- Allow new paths to follow topography, moving between open views and enclosed environments, to reach high and low points throughout the park; meet ADA accessibility and remain barrier free where possible.

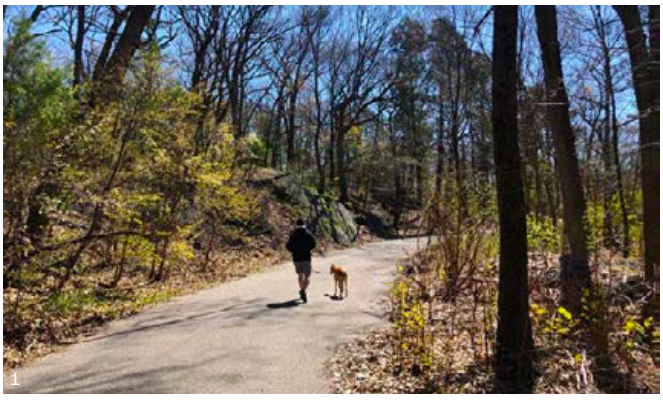
Create a Clear Trail System

- Clarify existing trail systems and provide selective additional access through other woodland areas; provide connections back to primary or secondary paths and lead visitors to a series of lookout points with interesting views within unique habitats.
- Be selective - avoid dividing woodlands into many small areas with an overly extensive trail network.
- Introduce a clear system of trail markers that include destinations, distances, and accessible and barrier free routes, so visitors know what to expect prior to committing to a walk or hike, especially in The Wilderness. Include quiet signage encouraging visitors to stay on the trail and explaining the impacts "cow paths" have on the health of the park's ecologies.

Calibrate Path Materials

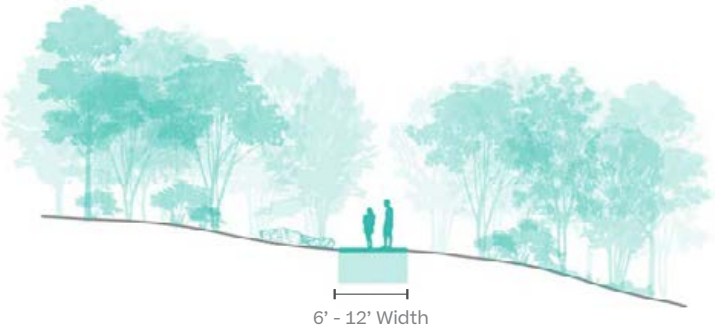
- Use porous materials, like gravel or mulch, for paths and trails in ecologically sensitive areas to avoid disturbance of habitat.
- Install boardwalks to move through wet habitats; provide platforms at the pond and wetland edges for a close up view of these unique park ecologies.

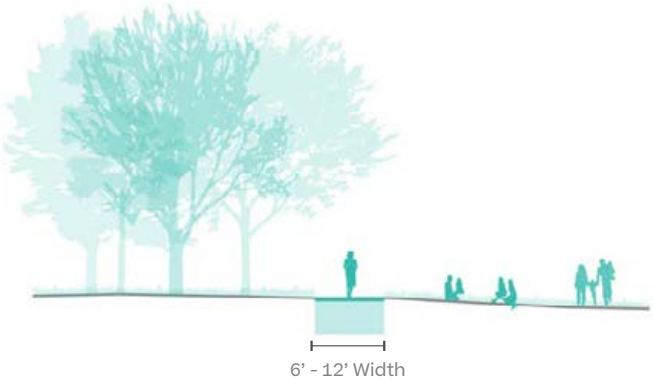




The secondary path to leading up to Scarboro Hill.

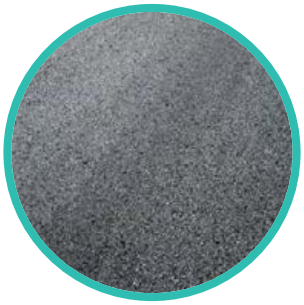
SECONDARY PATHS





Secondary Path Materials

Pave with asphalt and maintain widths that can accommodate small groups and families. Restore supporting walls and steps with puddingstone where possible; look to the precast concrete steps at the Bear Dens as an alternate material to puddingstone as appropriate.



Asphalt Paving

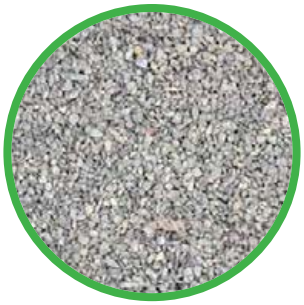
Puddingstone

Precast Concrete Steps

TRAILS & BOARDWALKS

Trail & Boardwalk Materials

Use stonedust or mulch to minimize disturbance for smaller, more discrete trails, which are intended to be traversed individually or single-file.



Stonedust

Mulch / Wood Chips

Wood Boardwalk

Support Movement & Use
Improve Wayfinding & Lighting

Signage and lighting work together as wayfinding elements, providing cues to inform visitors where they are and directing them where they can go. Both are inconsistent in the park today, leaving visitors without a sense of security and potentially limiting where they feel comfortable exploring. Carefully designed signage and lighting can be implemented to support exploration and create a more welcoming environment.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Lack of consistent, legible, and welcoming signage, including at the park's main entrance**
- **Inadequate lighting conditions in heavily used areas of the park created by outdated and inconsistent fixtures**

WAYFINDING & LIGHTING RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Mark the Main Entrances to Raise Awareness**
- **Use a Family of Signage to Guide Use, and Orient & Educate Visitors**
- **Expand Lighting Along Primary Paths to Support Early Morning & Evening Use**

1

Most of the existing signage is regulatory, focusing on what should not happen, rather than what visitors can enjoy.

2

Historic signage marking a pedestrian park entrance.


3

Historic vehicular lighting along Circuit Drive.

◄ Refectory Hill — Peabody Circle

Signage & Lighting:

How can the park feel safe and welcoming to all?

1 Mark the Park's Main Entrances

Announce visitor arrival at Boston's largest park by installing signage at the main entrance legible to those arriving by car, on foot, or on bike.

2 Welcome & Orient Visitors

Provide park maps at key locations to indicate visitor's current location and key routes to a variety of park features and destinations.

Circuit Drive ---------- The Zoo ----------►

3 Highlight Unique History

Use smaller scale signage to share the park's long history and highlight a broad range of stories.

4 Scale Lighting Appropriately

Ensure visitors feel safe and welcome by providing well-lit roads, parking and paths along main entry points and primary circulation.

5 Promote Learning

Label key tree and plant species to increase knowledge of this incredible landscape.

Raise Awareness
Mark the Main Entrances

Whether arriving from nearby transit or searching online, wayfinding and sharing of the park's identity is unclear and is often focused exclusively on the zoo. Even as you approach the main entrance at Blue Hill Ave, there is little indication that visitors have arrived at Franklin Park. As a city-wide resource, communicating the park's presence and full range of offerings is critical to welcoming visitors old and new.

SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase Awareness

- Establish a single go-to source online for all park related information, including hours, guidelines, an events calendar, and ongoing improvements.
- Make current park maps available online or via an app for use on smart phones.

Clarify Arrival

- Use simple signage at T and bus stops and along bike paths to point transit users in the direction of the park.
- Announce the park's main entrance with recognizable signage scaled for those arriving by car, bike, or on foot.
- Provide orientation to direct cars to appropriate parking locations related to their destination.
- Welcome pedestrians by marking secondary entrances.

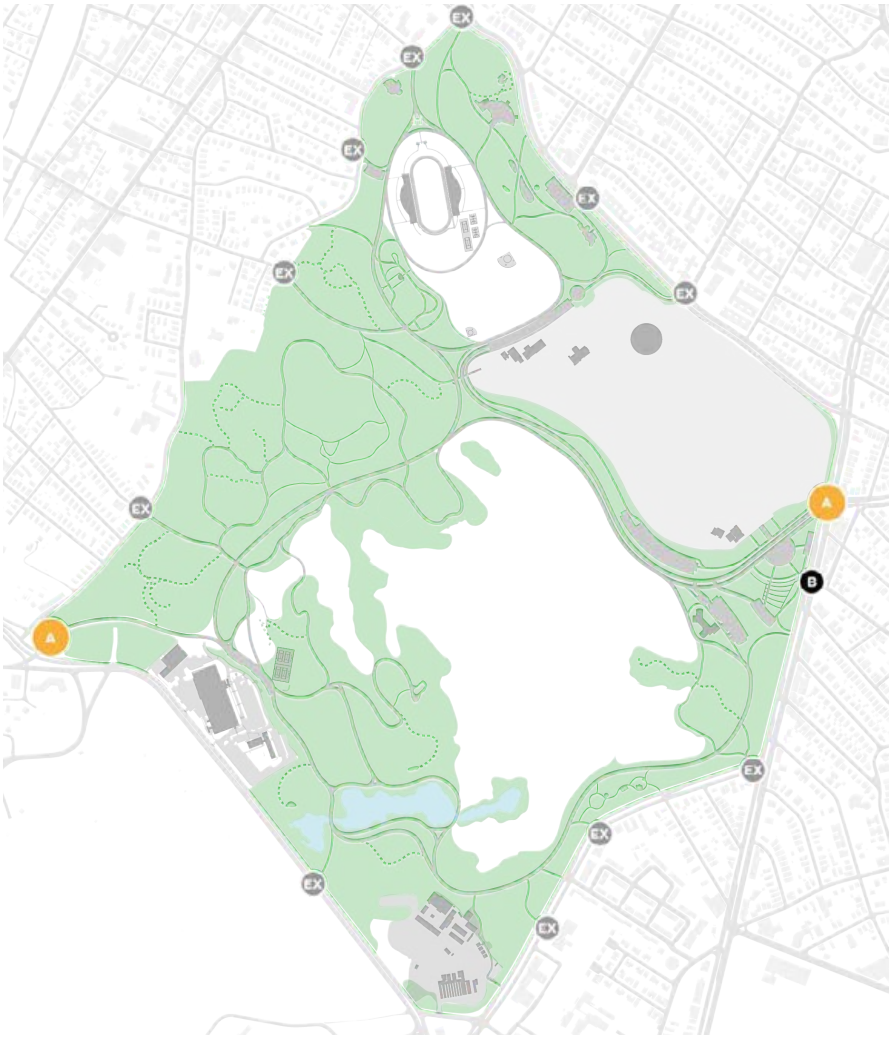
Extend Park System Language

- Use historic signage in keeping with the rest of the Emerald Necklace at the park's perimeter for continued legibility of the park system throughout the city.

Online and digital park resources.

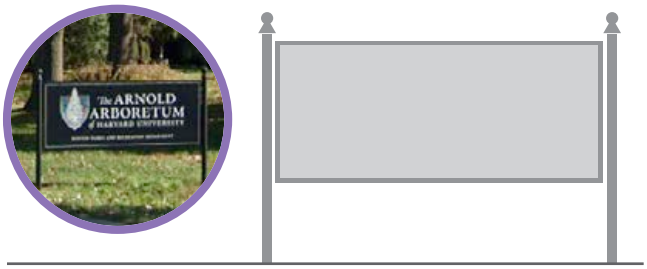
Start a campaign to share the community's favorite memories and cherished moments spent in the park.

EDGE OF PARK WAYFINDING



Proposed Signage Typologies

- A — Proposed Vehicular Signage
- B — Proposed Pedestrian Signage
- EX — Existing Pedestrian Signage to Remain



A Emerald Necklace Vehicular Entrance Sign

Vehicular Entrance

This sign at the Arnold Arboretum is typical in scale and style of signage intended for those arriving by car or driving by. This typology should be used for Franklin Park's vehicular entrances.

B Emerald Necklace Pedestrian Banner Sign

Pedestrian Entrance Sign

Historic park 'banner' signs are used throughout the Emerald Necklace to identify the various parks and historic landmarks. This typology should be used at pedestrian entrances along Franklin Park's perimeter.

Orient & Educate Visitors
Use a Family of Signage to Guide Use

Today the majority of signage in the park focuses on rules and regulations, with little designed to orient visitors or interpret the park's historic significance and important features. Carefully designed signage located selectively throughout the park can guide wayfinding, provide interpretation, and encourage exploration without interrupting the experience of the park's natural features.

SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Merge Contemporary with Historic

- Design and integrate a new family of signage for inside the park that maintains a relationship to the historic perimeter signage through material and color while creating a distinct identity for Franklin Park; design for flexibility and durability.

Scale Signage Appropriately

- Provide a uniform, clear, and friendly hierarchy of signage scaled and oriented to pedestrians.
- Provide orientation and direction with park maps and marked routes; identify accessible and barrier free routes.
- Identify key landmarks and destinations with educational and interpretive signage.

Make Messaging Friendly

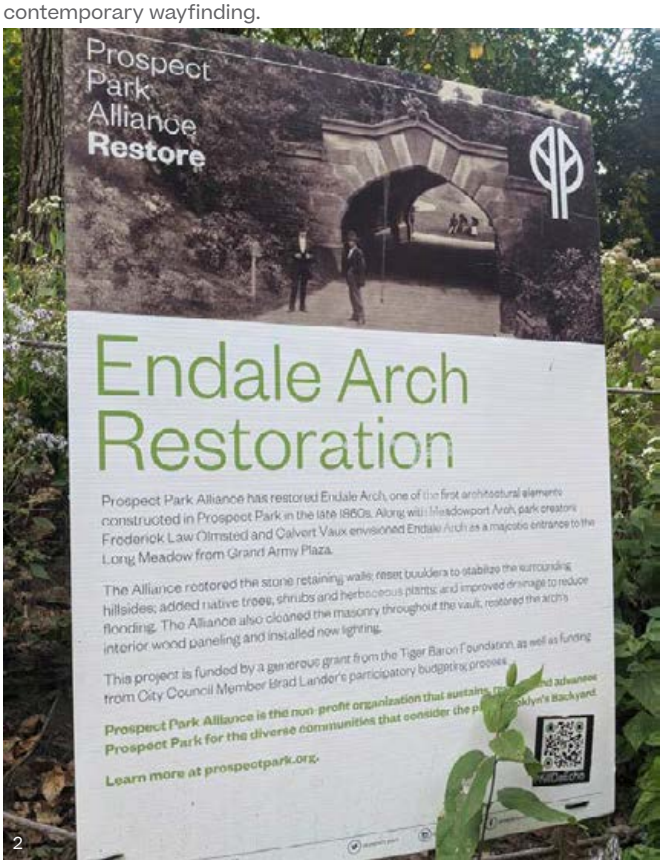
- Focus on the ways you can enjoy the park, emphasizing activities and programs you CAN do in various areas, while communicating regulatory messages in a positive manner.

Temporary Signage

- Use temporary signage to direct visitors during events that may limit use of certain areas.
- Inform and educate park visitors on important ecological restoration, special maintenance and repair, and historic restoration projects; install temporary signage before the work begins, so visitors can anticipate what's to come.

1

Other Olmsted parks have blended historic and contemporary wayfinding.



2

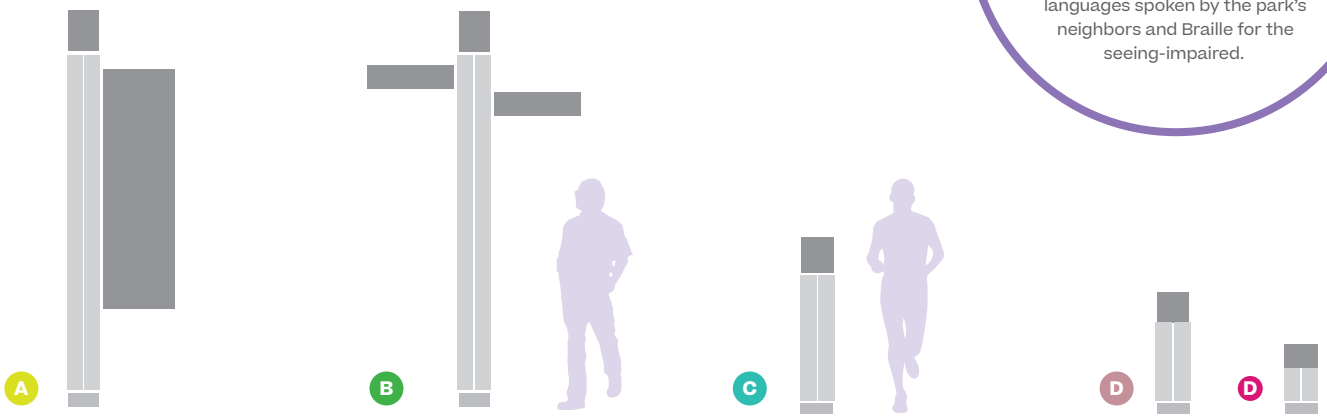
Use temporary signage to educate visitors on important investments being made in the park.

IN-PARK WAYFINDING

Proposed Signage Typologies

- A — Orienting Signage
- B — Directional Signage
- C — Educational & Interpretive Signage
- D — Large Trail Blaze
- D — Small Trail Blaze
- EX — Existing Pedestrian Signage to Remain

Increase Access
Support barrier-free park accessibility by communicating in the primary languages spoken by the park's neighbors and Braille for the seeing-impaired.



Orienting

Includes an overall park map and points to surrounding neighborhood destinations; can also include a community bulletin board.

Directional

Points visitors to nearby park destinations and amenities; overall scale and text size is legible at a distance.

Educational & Interpretive

Includes information and images about the park's history and surroundings.

Trail Blaze

Mark paths and trails in natural areas; large are located along primary woodland routes, while smaller ones are used for discrete trails.

Support Early Morning & Evening Use
Expand Lighting Along Primary Paths

Today lighting in the park is inconsistent and absent in some key areas including entries, parking, and main bike and pedestrian paths, contributing to the perception that visiting or traveling through the park in the evening is unsafe. Lighting should enhance a sense of security by allowing visitors to perceive their immediate surroundings. Improving the quality, distribution, and uniformity of lighting can guide use and circulation and enhance a sense of safety in the park.

LIGHTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Facilitate Safe Arrival & Movement

- Light the park's main entrances, providing a lit entrance at each edge of the park that corresponds with a path that connects directly to one of the primary loops.
- Reinforce wayfinding in the park by lighting The Circuit and The Playstead Loops to establish a lit network of paths that bring you from the edge into the center of the park.

Support Parking & Special Events

- Light parking areas for safe arrival in the early mornings and evenings.
- Support evening programming and events with lighting in key gathering areas, like The Playstead fields, Ellicottdale Tennis Courts, Peabody Circle, The Overlook and the Bear Dens.

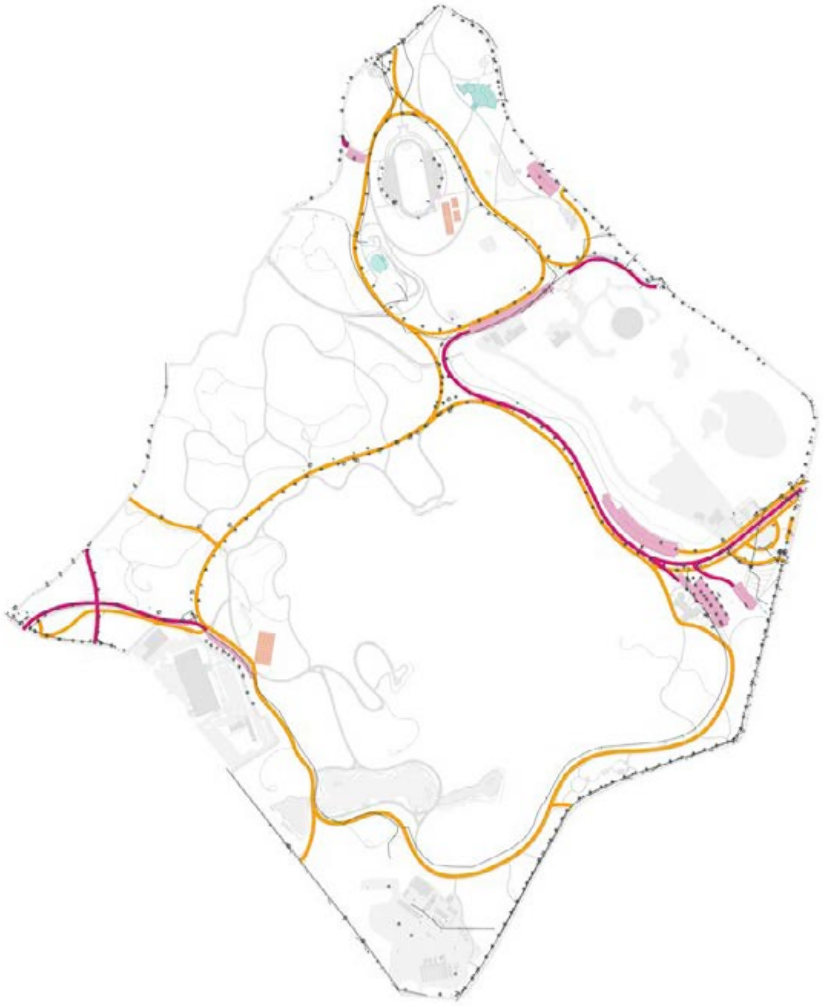
Select Appropriate Fixture Types

- Continue to utilize the historic 'acorn top' fixture along the park's main loops and entrances.
- Introduce a simple, contemporary fixture in parking areas and for special events areas, like The Bear Dens or the Elma Lewis Playhouse at The Overlook; use designated sports lighting for courts.
- Scale fixtures according to their use; install vehicular fixtures along roadways and in parking areas and pedestrian scale fixtures along paths and entrances.
- Control glare and brightness by following 'dark sky' best practices to reduce light pollution.
- Use a consistent color temperature and avoid creating high contrast between lit and unlit areas, which can impair visibility and make a visitor feel unsafe.

Historic fixtures follow the main path in Prospect Park.

Contemporary fixtures recede in a parking lot.

SCALE LIGHTING TO USE



Proposed In-Park Lighting

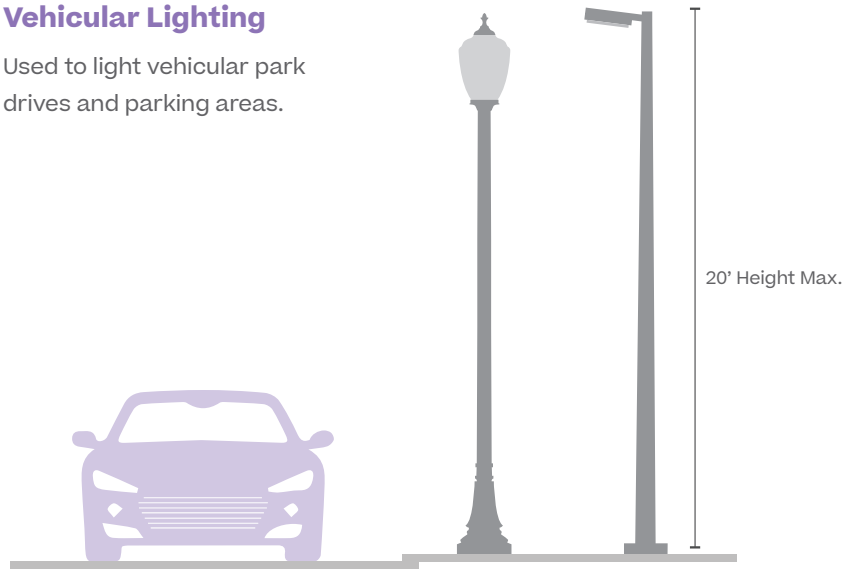
- Pedestrian Scale Lighting for Paths
- Vehicular Scale Lighting for Roads
- Vehicular Scale Lighting for Parking
- Athletic Field and Sport Court Lighting
- Special Event Lighting
- Existing Electrical Utility Infrastructure

Dark Sky Standards

Aim to reduce glare contributes to light pollution by properly shielding new or retrofitting old outdoor fixtures to focus light on desired areas, like paths and gathering spaces.

Vehicular Lighting

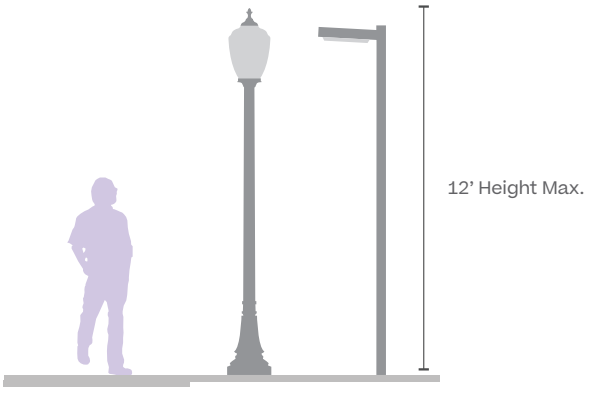
Used to light vehicular park drives and parking areas.



Spacing: Every 75'

Pedestrian Lighting

Used to light primary pedestrian paths and gathering areas.



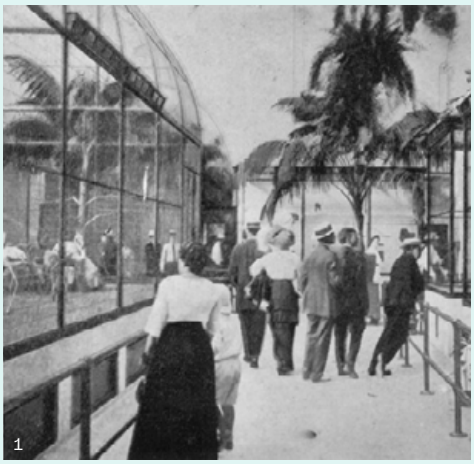
Spacing: Every 50'

Amplify Magnet Destinations

Amplify Magnet Destinations
Recommendations

CONTENTS

A Short History of Park Use
One Becomes Many



1

2

DESIGN INTENT
1895

Olmsted believed deeply that providing designed scenery complimentary to the natural context put visitors' minds at ease and improved both their mental and physical health. His original design for the park divided the space into two parts, consolidating active program in the "Ante Park". The main park, or "Country Park", emphasized passive enjoyment of scenery, and provided visitors the opportunity to experience the dramatic range of the New England landscape, from open meadow to enclosed woodland with rocky outcrops.

ATTRACTING VISITORS
1912

The Greeting, a primary component of the original plan, intended both for informal people watching and programmed activities, was never fully constructed. In 1912, the zoo, free and open to the public, was established with a design that respected the layout and orientation of The Greeting and extended through Long Crouch Woods. It drew millions of visitors to the park.

CHANGES IN THE CENTER
1930s

As the country's second oldest public golf course, the central meadow was used for informal play early in the park's history, and the acreage was officially dedicated for single-use in the 1930s. This represented a significant shift in the park's design and purpose -- an open center dedicated to free, passive recreation. This transition did, however, preserve the open meadow character of the land and protect it from being replaced by other uses. As one of the first courses to allow Black players, users today still represent a wide range of backgrounds.

3

4

5

CHANGES AT THE EDGES
1940s & 50s

Over the next decade, city government continued to allow other interests to locate large programs on park land, including White Stadium (1944-49) and Shattuck Hospital (1949). During this period, the zoo transitioned to ticketed admission and was no longer free. While these changes provided important semi-public programs, they impacted public access to significant park territory and fragmented the remaining fully-public park acreage.

DISINVESTMENT & DIVERSE USE
1960s & 1970s

While the latter half of the 20th century saw some program offerings expand (more active recreation at The Playstead and the inclusion of smaller playgrounds) the city's upkeep and investment in the park declined, and historic park features and the landscape were left to deteriorate. Local activists and organizations, like the Franklin Park Coalition and Elma Lewis, took action into their own hands, initiating clean-ups, programming, and fundraising. Their work drew attention to the park, and it hosted important community events.

A SHARED ASSET
Looking Forward

Collaboration between in-park stakeholders, like the zoo, golf course, and Shattuck Hospital, to dissolve physical and perceived boundaries as much as possible is fundamental to the future of Franklin Park. Investments in new programs and amenities, to build on the legacy of the many ways the park has served its neighbors and to better care for the park as a shared resource, can broaden the role it plays as a place to come together and serve its communities for decades to come.

What We Heard
Renew Resources & Protect Belonging

COMMUNITY NEEDS & WISHES

"It is and shall always remain a beacon and essential place for Boston's African-American community."

"It is of most importance to highlight Franklin Park's history, both originally, as well as what Franklin Park means to our community."

"I dream that I am going to the park monthly for exciting programming regarding history, elder care, literature, language, book clubs, hiking clubs, walking clubs, etc. I want the park to be a major contributor to the life of the mind, body, and spirit for all of Boston."

"It would be great to really showcase the history (Playstead, Bear Den Ruins, other ruins in the park), while showcasing some contemporary changes."

"I want Franklin Park to have a duality 1. To keep its essence of being family oriented and a quiet space to hold small gatherings. 2. Public events, with touches of the major events that Boston has to offer."

"My biggest dream is the development of a world class performing arts venue named after Elma Lewis...one has to know the history of this park and the neighborhood to appreciate this."

"My hope is to keep Franklin Park [a] historical green space in the urban community and make it vibrant."

"[I want to see] better spaces for community picnics and bbqs with clean and safe bathrooms."

"[I want to see] ethnic summer events throughout the year celebrating Boston's diversity."

"[I want to see] a safe place for people of all ages and ethnicities to enjoy the outdoors through educational, sporting, cultural and other special events and activities."

VALUES & GOALS

HISTORY →	Protect, maintain, and restore the park's historic features.
COMMUNITY & CULTURE →	Create major magnet destinations for larger gatherings and programs, each with a distinct offering.
	Supplement the magnets by connecting and improving the supporting park destinations.
BASIC NEEDS →	Support park spaces and programs with durable park furnishings.
PROGRAMMING →	Continue to partner with local groups to increase programming opportunities and ensure that offerings are reflective of the park's diverse communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS: ←

PROVIDE BASIC AMENITIES THROUGHOUT THE PARK & ACTIVATE YEAR-ROUND

MAKE PEABODY CIRCLE & REFECTORY HILL A CIVIC GATEWAY

REINVEST IN THE PLAYSTEAD & LONG CROUCH WOODS AS A DESTINATION FOR ARTS & RECREATION

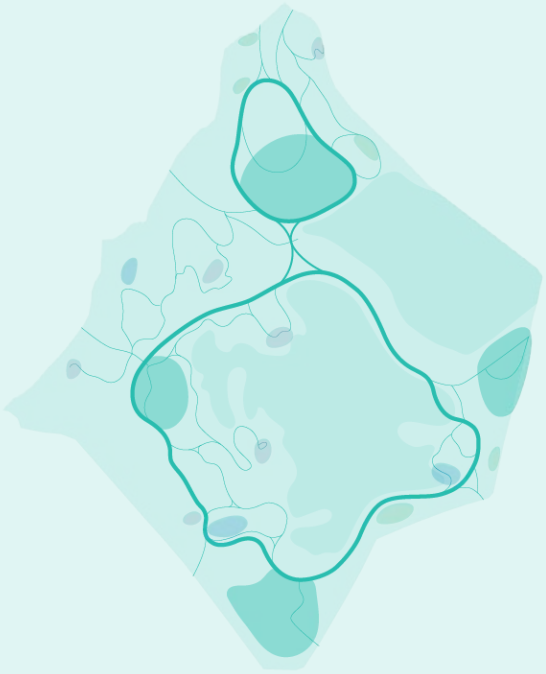
MAKE ELLICOTTDALE A PLACE FOR GATHERING & RELAXATION

INVEST IN THE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE MAINTENANCE YARD TO ACHIEVE STEWARDSHIP GOALS

INVEST IN SMALL DESTINATIONS TOO

The Big Picture
Amplify Magnet Destinations

Franklin Park was intended to serve as a common ground — a place for recreation, relaxation, and to experience nature — welcoming all communities and bringing people together for shared experiences that support discovery, education, and mental and physical health. We must celebrate all it has to offer and build on its long legacy of serving many groups in many ways. Larger centers of activity must be complemented by smaller destinations distributed throughout the park.



Diversifying Destinations

The park already has many, much-loved centers of activity. Larger destinations are often anchored by stakeholder offerings (like the zoo or the stadium), while smaller destinations are usually distributed and repeat throughout the park. Clarifying the design of each of these destinations and expanding their programming where desirable will ensure that all sides of the park can fully, and in distinct ways, serve gatherings both large and small.

Protecting Historic Features

While most of the historic structures in the park no longer exist or are in serious decline, they continue to draw visitors. The key remaining elements deserve a comprehensive conditions assessment and an updated historic structures report to inform either restoration or future transformation.

Investing in the Major Magnets

The park has a long legacy of serving many groups in many different ways - from performance and recreation to education and community building. Recommendations for the Major Magnets build on each of their histories and amplify the programs and character of each space, further enhancing these four major destinations, each with a defined identity and unique offerings.

The Playstead: A Center for Arts & Recreation

Ellicottdale: A Place for Gathering & Relaxation

Peabody Circle: A Civic Gateway

The Yard: A Commitment to Care & Stewardship

Mini Magnets

- High Points - Lookouts
- Low Points - Unique Ecologies
- Play & Education

Highlighting the Mini Magnets

The park's smaller destinations include wide-ranging improvements and programming that support the day-to-day use of the park. As opposed to the major magnets, these destinations may repeat on multiple sides of the park, promoting a more equitable distribution of certain programs and encouraging convenient and habitual use from the surrounding neighborhoods. Sometimes situated at elevational high or low points, mini magnets also allow visitors to experience the park's dramatic topography.

Olmsted's Toolkit
Distinguish Uses

With nearby Franklin Field (now Harambee Park) dedicated primarily to sports and recreation, Olmsted intentionally split Franklin Park acreage into two zones, the majority of which anticipated passive use. As programmatic wants and needs evolved through time, Franklin Park shifted to include a heavier emphasis on active recreation. The way he used topography, built masonry, and designed planting to structure spaces for program was critical to maintaining the unified experience of a large park. Whether at rest or at play, being together in nature remains vital to the recuperative and community-building experiences Franklin Park continues to offer today.

THE PLAYSTEAD

A Place for Gathering & Recreation

The Playstead's flat, open field was framed by woodlands and designed for active recreation and education for children, as well as activities that would gather large crowds. These uses continue today, holding large scale sporting events, music festivals, and community celebrations. Informal rock outcrops and a carefully designed overlook allowed for spectating to be an equally important part of the experience of the space.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ELLICOTTDALE

A Place for Informal Gathering

This small, open meadow bowl was intended for lawn games, like tennis and croquet. The more intimate scale of the space and its setting within a valley distinguished it from The Playstead and the larger open meadow at the center of the park. The space was supported by a small cottage, one of several in the park, that offered food, changing rooms, and sports equipment rentals.

4 Temporary lawn tennis was set up with nets that could be rented from the nearby Ellicott cottage.

5 The upper lawn hosts everyday gatherings, like family reunions and birthday parties.

PEABODY CIRCLE & REFECTORY HILL

An Animated Civic Gateway

The park's main gateway was designed to be a grand entrance and threshold between the park and the city, accommodating pedestrian, carriage, and bicycle circulation with tree-lined promenades where visitors could see and be seen. Later the site of a public library branch and a restaurant, Refectory Hill was a convening space for sharing food and ideas.

6 The Refectory, located on the hill adjacent to Peabody Circle, served refreshments outdoors and later was home to a public library.

7 The zoo's main entrance sits on Peabody Circle and draws many visitors to the park; there are opportunities for more public cross-programming.

THE NURSERY (TODAY'S MAINTENANCE YARD)

A Center for Stewardship

The Nursery originally served as a space to grow trees for planting in the park. As needs evolved, the city added other maintenance functions to serve the entire park system, but public access has remained off-limits.

8 The palm house (c. 1924), one of several greenhouses constructed to cultivate the plants once found as understory throughout the park.

9 Today the maintenance yard is a complex of buildings, stables, and greenhouses, and serves Boston's entire park system

Support Everyday Use
Provide Basic Amenities Throughout the Park

In order for the park's many offerings to be successful, basic amenities must be provided and upgraded to support use and activity in all seasons. Access to critical infrastructure, like restrooms, water fountains, and places to rest in the shade is essential in a park of this size if it is to truly serve neighbors young and old.

FURNISHING & AMENITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

Equitably Distribute Basic Needs

- Locate restrooms in conjunction with major park magnets at Ellicottdale and The Playstead and potentially in the future in The Yard; Peabody Circle is served by the existing restrooms in the golf course clubhouse.
- Provide water bottle filling stations at accessible locations at major park magnets as well as along the park's primary paths throughout.
- Locate trash and recycling near high-use areas, like the park's major magnets, playgrounds, and periodically along primary paths; employ a 'carry-in/carry-out' policy in woodlands and other natural areas.

Increase Seating

- Locate benches in the shade along primary park paths throughout the park to provide comfortable resting places for users of all ages without obstructing viewsheds; select furnishings complementary to their context/setting.
- Locate benches in primary gathering areas within magnet destinations, adjacent to sports courts and playgrounds for viewing.
- Be selective in natural areas; keep furnishings minimal, associated with more significant lookouts or along the main path; consider using natural materials to stay in keeping with the character of the surrounding context.

Support Eating Outdoors

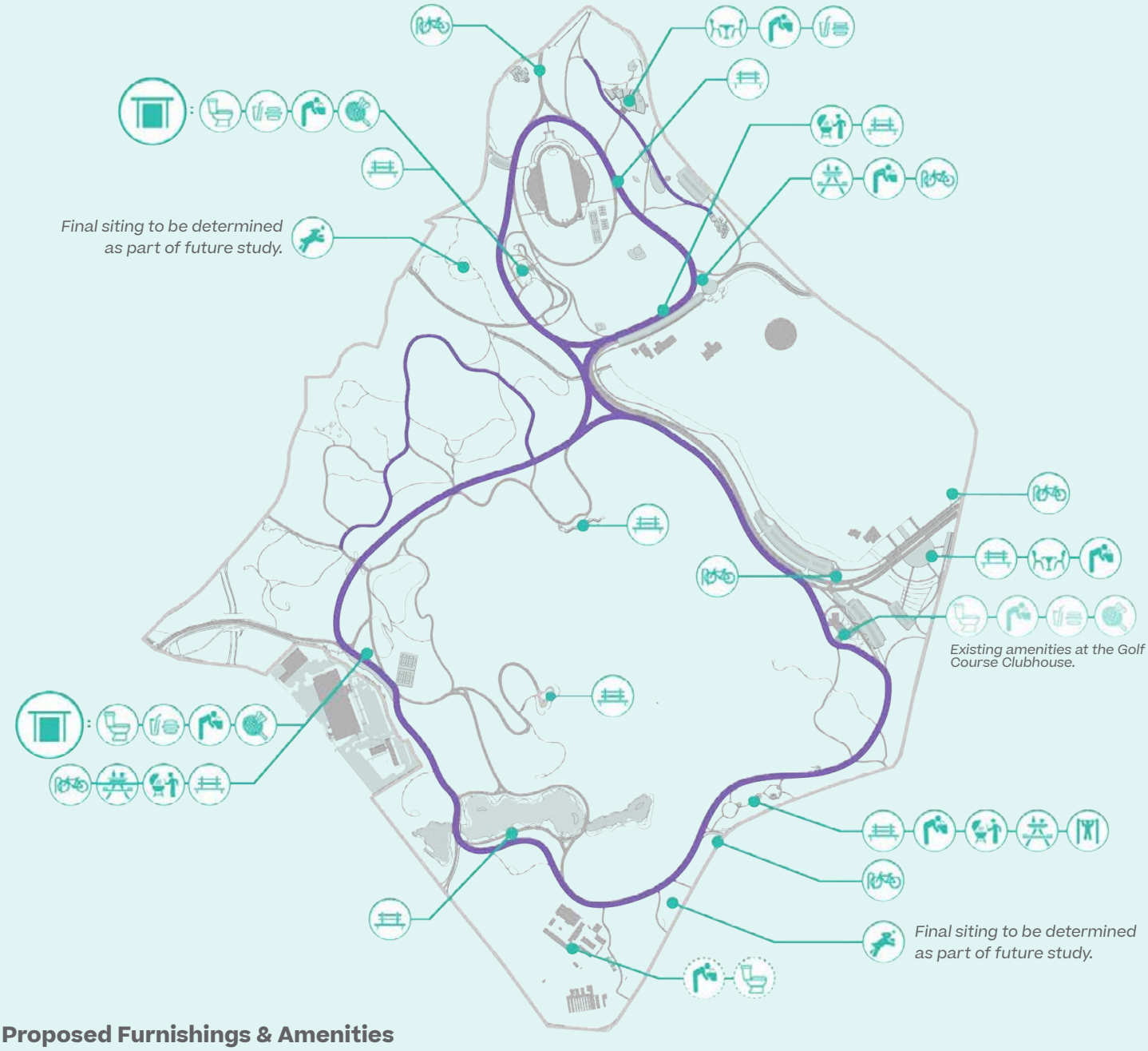
- Expand BBQ locations in the park to include The Tailgate Edge in The Playstead and the upper lawn at Ellicottdale; locate picnic tables in The Playstead's Picnic Grove and the upper lawn at Ellicottdale; provide cafe tables and chairs on the terrace at the Peabody 'Front Porch'.

Historic bench precedent in an Olmsted park.

Picnic table precedent.

Water bottle filling station.

SUPPORTING PARK USE AND ENJOYMENT



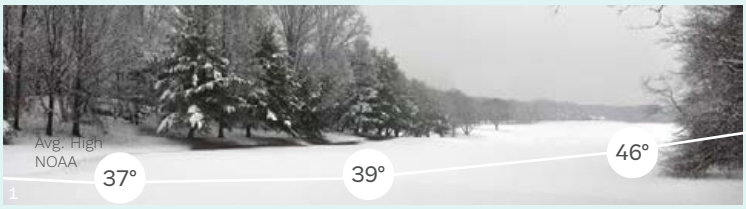
Proposed Furnishings & Amenities

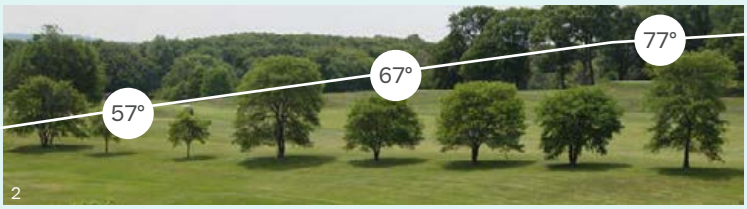
- Seating along Pedestrian Path
- Comfort Station Structure/Shelter
- Benches
- Restrooms
- Water Fountain / Bottle Filling Station
- Equipment Rentals
- Vending
- Picnic Tables
- BBQ Pits
- Cafe Tables & Chairs
- Bike Parking / Bike Racks
- Dog Park / Dog Run
- Fitness Station

As a general guideline, furnishings should be dark in color to recede in to the landscape and should reflect the historic character of the park.

Activate Year-Round
Enhance & Expand Programs Parkwide

Physical improvements and investments throughout the park will enable the enhancement and expansion of existing programs and events and support opportunities for many new programs throughout the year.





JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN

Festivals & Gatherings

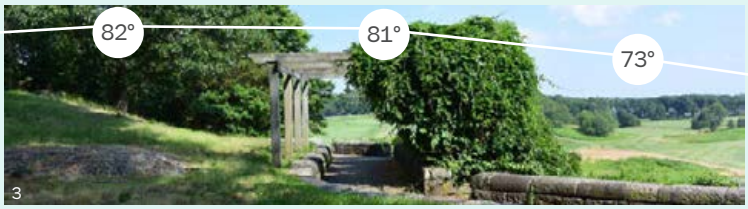
Winter Festival
End of Winter Pop-up
Fairy House Building Festival
Trolley Tour
Party in the Park
Boston Calling
Kite & Bike Festival
Boston Pops
Juneteenth
Cookouts, picnics, reunions, birthday parties
Temporary Art Exhibits
Temporary Art Exhibits

Athletics & Fitness

Walks
Ice Skating
Doyle's Road Race
Weekdays Playstead
XC Skiing and Snow Shoeing
Softball
School-Sponsored Youth Activities
Assorted field sports

Park Stakeholder Events

Zoo Events
Zoo School Break Program
Zoo School Break Program
Earth Day Events
Partner School Events
Invasive Species Removal



JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

BAMS Fest
July 4th Event
Caribbean Festival
Gospel Festival
Barbados Festival Day
Childrens' Festival
Boston Pops
New Year Celebra
Elma Lewis Playhouse Programs
Outdoor Movies
Boston Public Schools - Concerts/Plays
Temporary Art Exhibits
Line Dancing, Fitness, Yoga
Golf Lessons
B.A.A. Half Marathon
XC Meets, Races, Walks
Turkey Trot
Tennis
Teen Night Tennis and Basketball
Ice Skating
Zoo Free Fun Friday
Boston Lights: A Lantern Experience
Leaf Peeping
Golf Season
Summer Camps in White Stadium
White Stadium Friday Night Football
Invasive Species Removal
Partner School Events

Program Maintained
Program Enhanced/ Expanded
Ideas for New or Reintroduced Program

Celebrate Winter in the Park
Increase Seasonal Access & Programming

Each season in Franklin Park brings its own magic to the landscape. This is especially true during times when the entire park is blanketed in snow and boundaries between programs and uses become blurred, bringing a special focus to the topography that unifies the landscape. Many users expressed the desire to increase opportunities to use the park during this season through expanded access and additional programming unique to these months.

WINTER USE RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide Winter Access

- Expand the network of plowed primary loops and paths, main entrances, and parking areas to provide access to residents on all sides of the park from the edge to a primary loop path.

Designate Areas for Winter Activities

- Allow access through the golf course during the off-season winter months via designated trails that can be used for cross-country skiing or snow-shoeing, giving visitors the chance to experience the expansive open center of the park.
- Use White Stadium or The Playstead to set up a temporary ice skating rink.
- Designate certain trails in The Wilderness for snow-shoeing.
- Allow sledding on the hill at Ellicottdale.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2


3

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WINTER USE

Proposed Winter Access & Activities

- Plowed Paths & Parking
- Designated Winter Golf Course Path
- Snow Shoe Wilderness Trail
- 1 Ice Skating at White Stadium or The Playstead
- 2 Sledding at Ellicottdale
- Existing Structure Serving as Support Facility for Equipment Rentals & Lessons, Warming, and Food & Beverage

Make a Civic Gateway
Peabody Circle & Refectory Hill

Peabody Circle & Refectory Hill form the eastern entrance into the park. Dominated almost entirely by vehicular uses today, the space is ready to be reconceptualized as a grand, welcoming gateway into the park as envisioned in Olmsted's original design. Connected to Blue Hill Ave and the neighborhoods beyond, it will support a range of community programs -- including partnerships with the Zoo -- all under the shade of a 100-year-old oak grove.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Vehicle-Dominated Experience**
- **Unceremonial & Unannounced**
- **Underutilized Space**
- **Lack of Presence at the Street Edge**

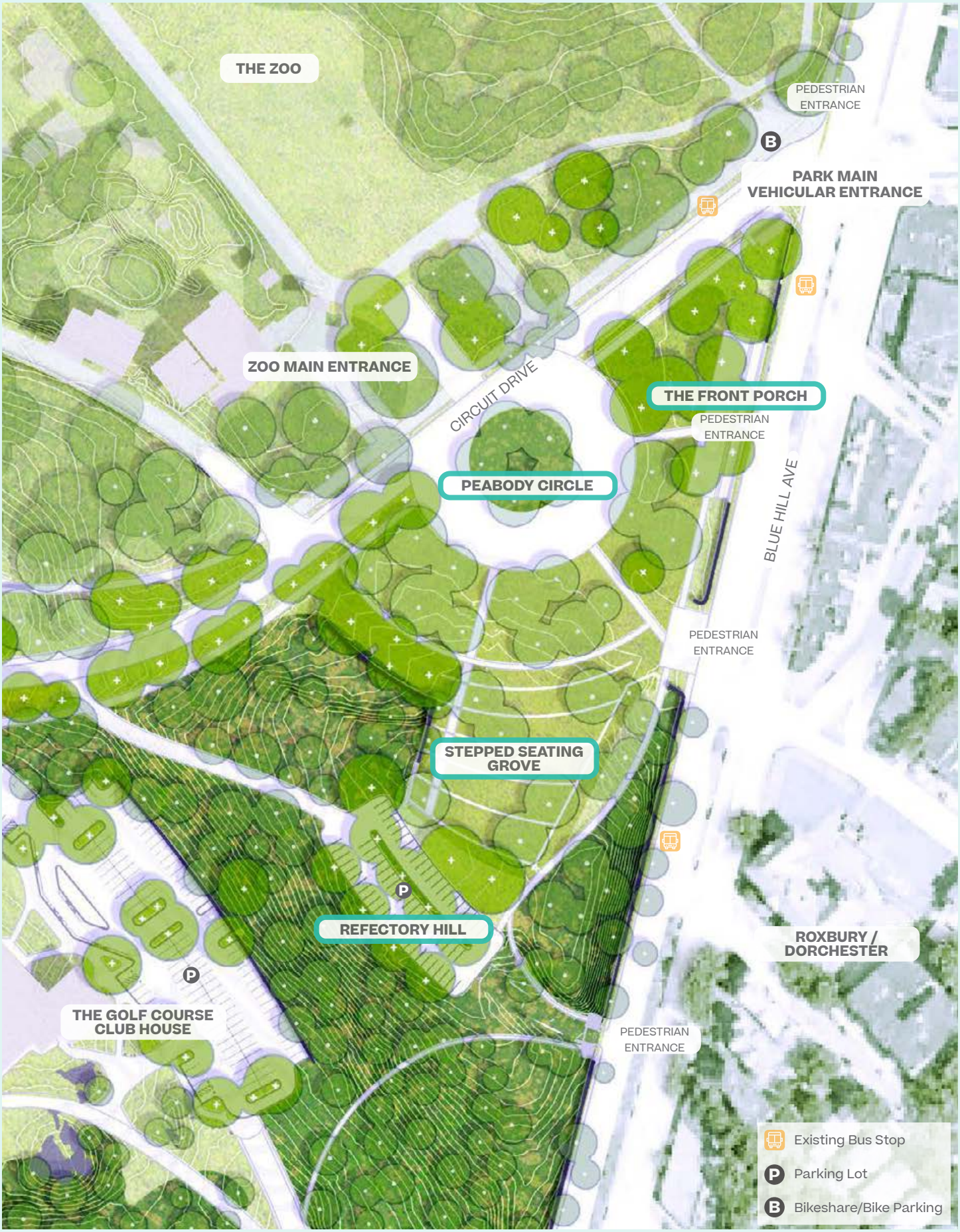
PEABODY CIRCLE RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Consolidate Vehicular Circulation to Make a Place for People**
- **Create a Welcoming Edge and Make Spaces for Gathering**
- **Prioritize Shade by Extending the Park's Canopy**

The Peabody Circle street edge along Blue Hill Avenue.

A line-dancing fitness class held in the Refectory Hill parking area.

The zoo's main entrance along Franklin Park Road.


THE ZOO
PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE
PARK MAIN VEHICULAR ENTRANCE
ZOO MAIN ENTRANCE
CIRCUIT DRIVE
THE FRONT PORCH
PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE
PEABODY CIRCLE
BLUE HILL AVE
PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE
STEPPED SEATING GROVE
REFECTORY HILL
ROXBURY / DORCHESTER
THE GOLF COURSE CLUB HOUSE
PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE
Existing Bus Stop
Parking Lot
Bikeshare/Bike Parking

Peabody Circle & Refectory Hill:

How can the park's main entrance become a place of gathering and exchange?

1 Clarify Circulation
Consolidate vehicular and bus circulation to return a significant portion of Peabody Circle to pedestrian park space.

2 Establish a Welcoming Entrance
Create a generous pedestrian threshold along Blue Hill Avenue to increase access and engage street life; maintain the existing bus stop on Blue Hill Avenue.

3 Activate the Center

Mark the historic Peabody Circle with a paved plaza with space for community events and markets. Events should consider impacts of noise on zoo animals.

4 Create Space for Outdoor Learning

Insert terraced seating shaded with canopy trees to provide space for education and gatherings for groups of all sizes.

5 Reconfigure Parking

Remove parking from the center and create a new lot on Refectory Hill that is embedded in canopy.

6 Celebrate the Zoo

Engage the zoo's main entrance and allow for shared use of the space for programming and events.

Make it a Place for People
Consolidate Vehicular Circulation

Today's Peabody Circle and Refectory Hill are dominated by cars and buses, a complicated network of roads, and parking that is difficult to navigate, with the Refectory Hill parking lot often gated and locked. MBTA Transit stops are confusing and distributed throughout the entrance, and wide roads with heavy traffic make pedestrian crossing difficult. By reorganizing vehicular circulation, park space can be reconnected and expanded, elevating the pedestrian visitor experience and giving land back to more flexible community use.

PEABODY CIRCLE CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Redesign Vehicular Circulation

- Consolidate vehicular movement to one entry and exit along Franklin Park Road in front of the zoo; restrict vehicular access to the 'circle'.

Consolidate Transit Stops

- Remove bus staging/idling from inside the park and locate bus stops together in a visible and accessible location.
- Restore the historic head house at the corner of Blue Hill Avenue as a covered transit shelter.

Reconfigure Parking with a New Lot on Refectory Hill

- Relocate parking from Peabody Circle to Refectory Hill and the expanded lot along Circuit Drive, aside from accessible parking spaces.
- Expand parking on Refectory Hill with a lot designed for entry and exit from Franklin Park Road within the park.

Announce Arrival

- Use vehicular-scale signage to announce the park's main entrance and direct visitors to nearby parking areas for primary destinations (like the zoo, golf course, and The Playstead).

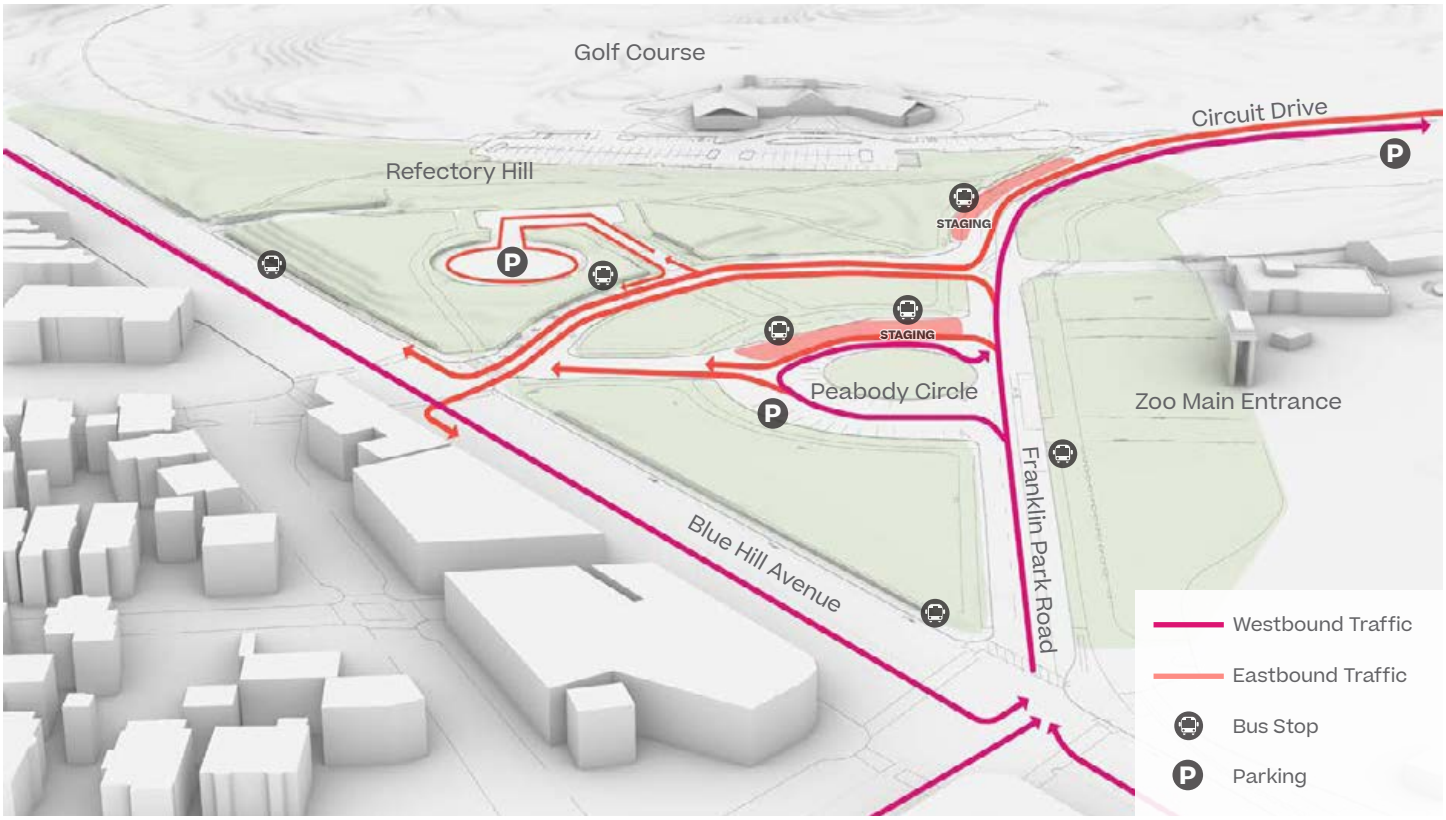

1

Existing Peabody Circle, dominated by parking and car and bus circulation.

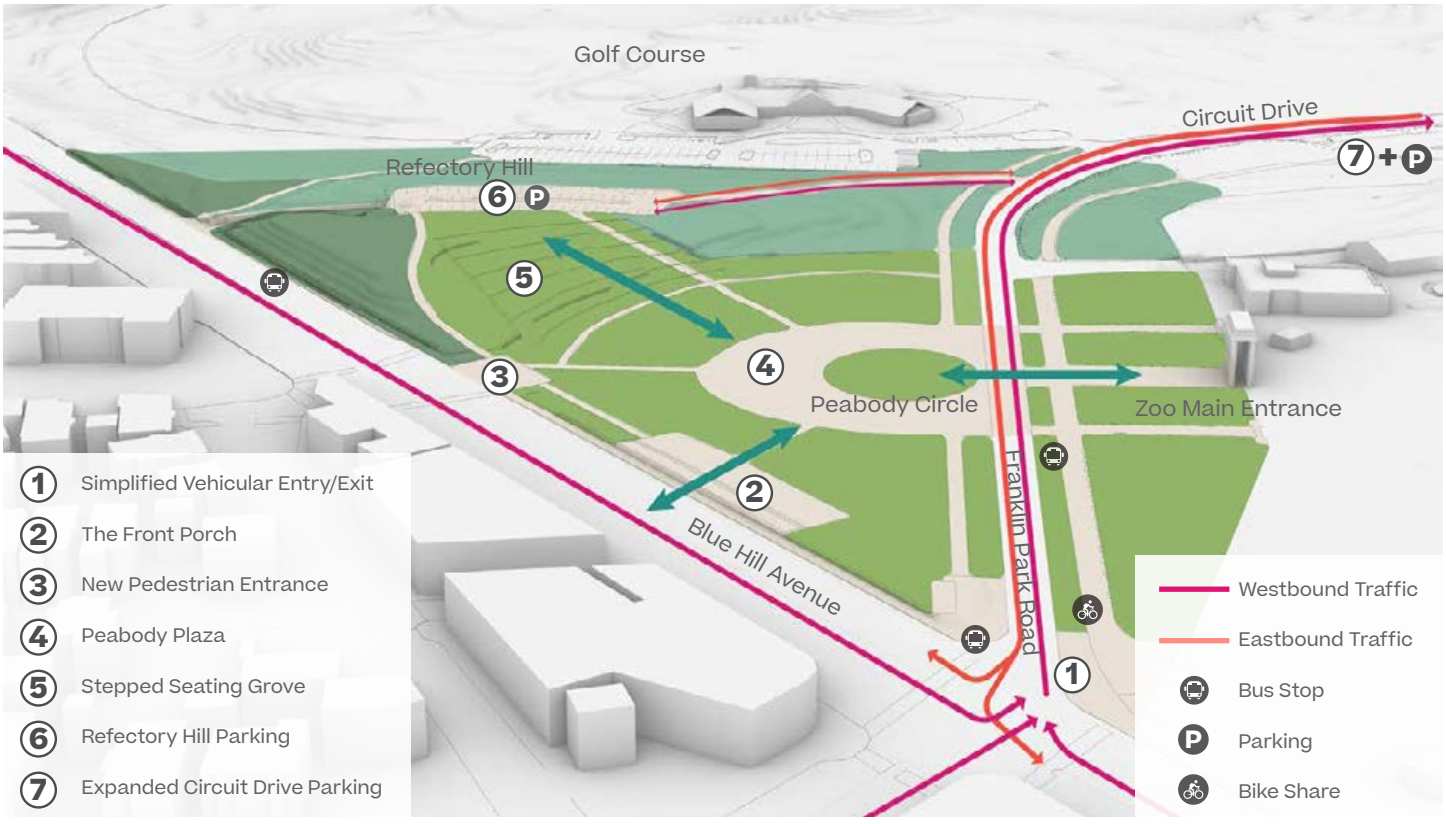

2

Parking embedded in tree canopy.

EXISTING



PROPOSED



Create a Welcoming Edge
Make Spaces for Gathering

Peabody Circle connects the Dorchester neighborhood to Franklin Park, but there is limited space for park users along this ceremonial gateway. The area resulting from reconfigured vehicular circulation in Peabody Circle provides new opportunities to create flexible gathering spaces, increase access along Blue Hill Avenue, and to give proper presence to the park's main entrance and the zoo's front door. Dorchester residents shared ideas for cross-programming and year-round activation for the shared plaza, amphitheater, and 'front porch'.

PEABODY CIRCLE STRATEGIES

Make a New 'Front Porch'

- Transform a portion of the perimeter wall along Blue Hill Avenue into an outward-facing 'Front Porch' with long, wide steps with open views and pedestrian access into the park. New steps should follow the historic character of other steps in the park.
- Maintain ADA accessible entrances to the east and west of this new entrance.
- Locate a shaded terrace at the top with flexible furnishings for eating lunch and watching street life.
- Advocate for a widened sidewalk of at least 12' with street tree planting along Blue Hill Avenue.

Anchor the Space

- Replace the parking at Peabody Circle with a shaded pedestrian plaza, while maintaining space for convenient accessible parking; mark the extents of the original circle with the plaza's design; maintain the central circle with historic canopy trees.
- Design the flexible plaza so it functions for both day-to-day use, as well as larger gatherings like outdoor fitness classes, space for parade spectating, markets and festivals, and civic events.
- Collaborate with the zoo and a local artist on a public art installation, such as bronze animal sculptures that greet visitors and make for an iconic meeting place.

Engage the Hillside

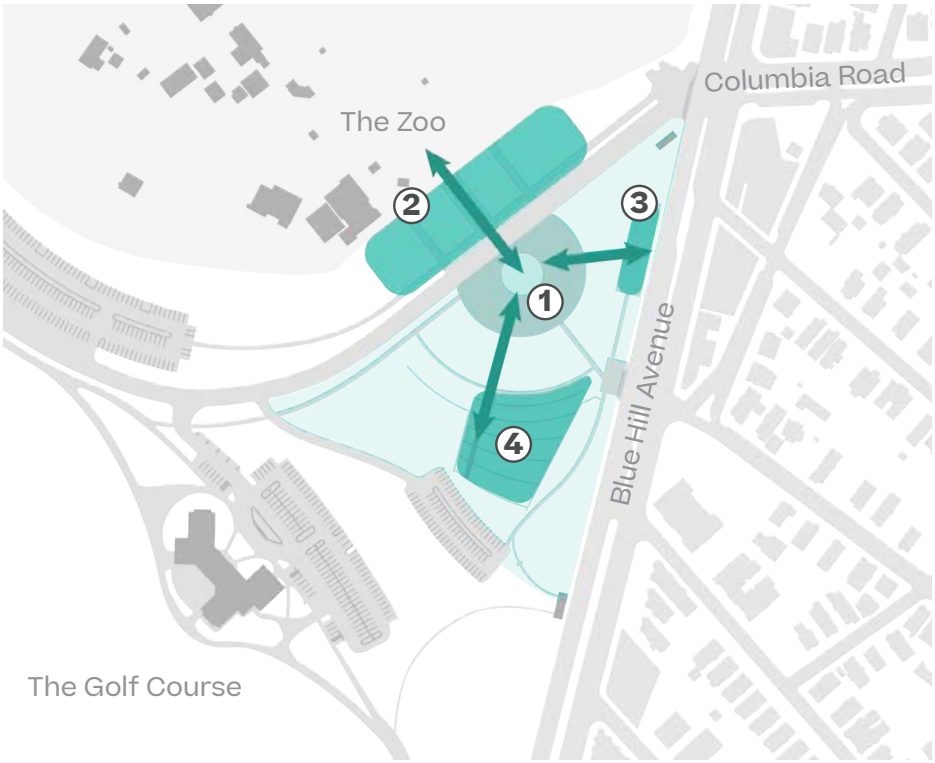
- Create a stepped seating grove on the Refectory Hill slope for shared programming between the community and the zoo. Use stone seating and steps in keeping with the character of the park masonry and set in the shade of new canopy trees.

Animate the plaza space with public art or exhibits that highlight the Zoo.

Festivals and markets can be hosted in the new Peabody Circle Plaza.

Outdoor terraced seating can serve individuals and groups.

PEABODY CIRCLE GATHERING SPACES



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Gathering Spaces & Connections

1. Peabody Plaza
2. Zoo Main Entrance
3. The Front Porch
4. Stepped Seating Grove

Outdoor Learning

Sit in the Shade

Markets

Chess & Checkers

Food Trucks

THE NEW FRONT PORCH

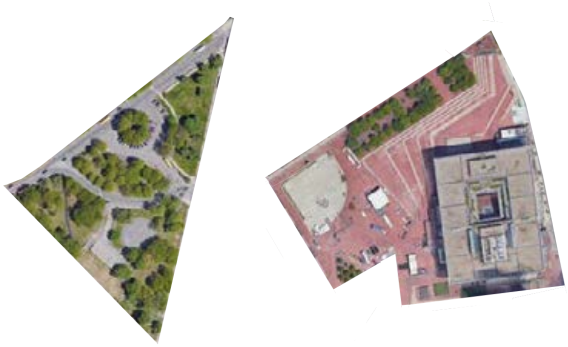
Prioritize Shade
Extend the Park's Canopy

Peabody Circle is home to many mature trees across several landscape characters, but expanses of car-oriented paving leaves large areas devoid of shade and discourages pedestrian use. The Blue Hill Avenue side is left exposed with few large trees holding the park edge, limiting places for respite for those waiting for the bus on hot summer days. Reconfiguring the vehicular circulation not only creates more space for gathering, it allows the landscape to be stitched back together through new tree planting, making for a more gradual transition to the natural areas of the park beyond.

PEABODY CIRCLE PLANTING STRATEGIES

Increase Shade

- Plant new canopy trees to form a shady grove over terraced outdoor seating and on the shaded flat surrounding the plaza to frame the space and provide separation from the street.
- Consider a range of species to increase diversity within the primarily Red Oak canopy in this area of the park, while maintaining the scale and overall character of the canopy. Consider climate change projections when selecting species.
- Introduce understory and shrub species within the wooded embankment as it transitions into the park's woodlands.

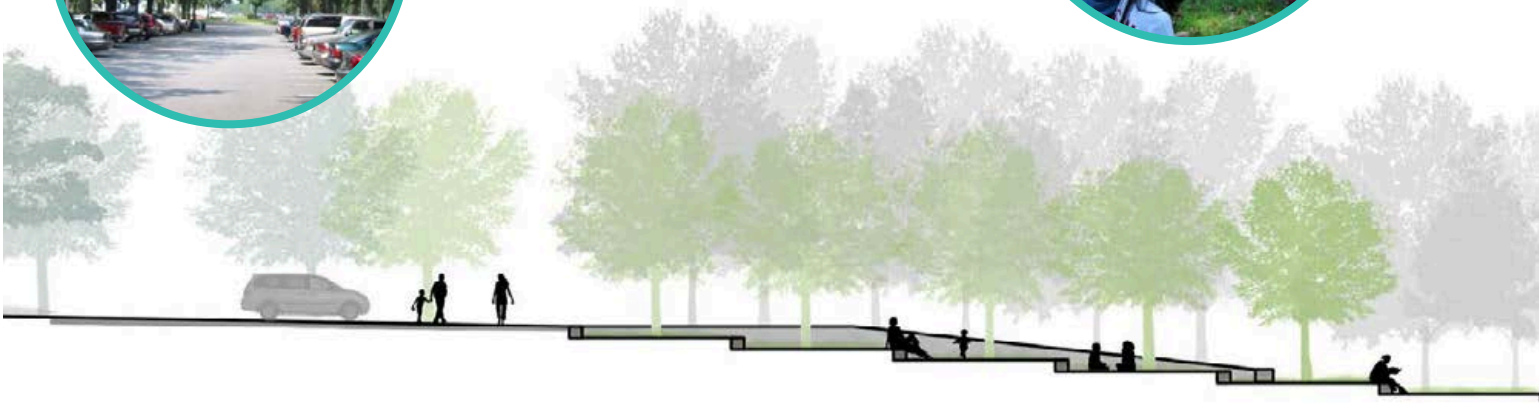


Peabody Circle and City Hall Plaza are the same size - about 7 acres; the renovation of Peabody Circle would provide the opportunity to create a new large scale park space at the park's main entrance.

CANOPY FROM HIGH TO LOW

Flexible Programming

The stepped seating grove is a flexible community space that can host a variety of programming from an outdoor classroom for schools nearby to a children's performance space, to a shady spot to eat lunch.



Future Refectory Hill Parking

Stepped Seating Grove

PEABODY CIRCLE PLANTING

Proposed Landscape Character

- Wooded Embankment
- Sloping Grassland with Canopy Trees
- Open Lawn with Tree Groves

The Value of Shade

One of Peabody' Circle's most valuable assets is the mature canopy trees, which bring a grand sense of scale and provide essential shade (in contrast to the lack there of along Blue Hill Avenue). By removing excess paving and extending the canopy throughout the area, Peabody Circle will become an important civic gathering space at the edge of the park and reduce the heat island effect along Blue Hill Avenue.

Shaded Flat | **Peabody Plaza**

Reinvest in a Destination for Arts & Recreation
The Playstead & Long Crouch Woods

The Playstead, home to gatherings around sports, theater, music, and community activism, has been a particularly important part of the history of the park's Black and brown communities. Intense use and under-resourced maintenance has impacted the health of the landscape and in turn, its ability to serve the community. With investment, resilience can return, and with the Zoo, White Stadium, and a new Elma Lewis Playhouse as anchors, this area can continue to serve as a civic center, celebrating community, recreation, and the arts.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Decreased Landscape Resiliency**
- **Important Historic Structures in Disrepair**
- **Limited Access to Amenities**
- **Confusing Circulation**

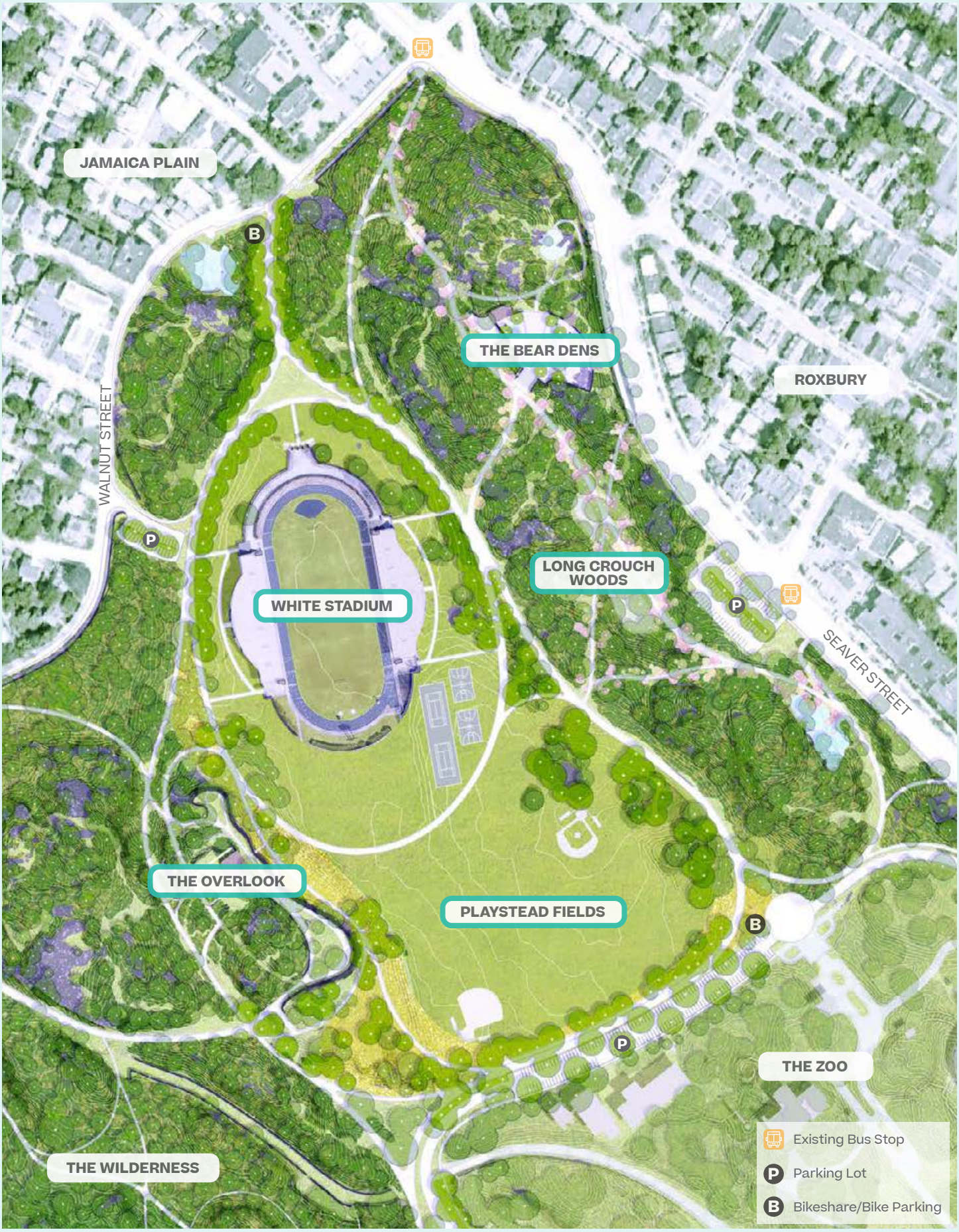
THE PLAYSTEAD RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Return the Elma Lewis Playhouse to The Overlook**
- **Introduce Nature Play into Long Crouch Woods**
- **Reimagine the Bear Dens & Design for Flexible Use**
- **Make Spaces for Tailgating & Spectating in The Playstead**
- **Make Connections by Removing Barriers & Sharing Resources**
- **Link Destinations & Use Planting to Define Circulation**

The Playstead today.

Concert-goers at BAMS Fest.

Kids day camp in The Playstead.


JAMAICA PLAIN
THE BEAR DENS
ROXBURY
WALNUT STREET
WHITE STADIUM
LONG CROUCH WOODS
SEAVER STREET
THE OVERLOOK
PLAYSTEAD FIELDS
THE ZOO
THE WILDERNESS
Existing Bus Stop
Parking Lot
Bikeshare/Bike Parking

The Playstead:
How can The Playstead better support its many activities?

1 Expand Shade
Use canopy trees to provide much-needed shade in gathering spaces and along primary circulation routes to make comfortable spaces for walking and spectating.

2 Increase Function & Durability
Establish the fields as the park's main space for sports and active recreation and large festivals and events; rebuild them to manage stormwater to better handle heavy-use throughout the year.

3 Provide Spaces for Gathering & Spectating

Create spaces supported by canopy trees and seating to watch the life of the park, encouraging intergenerational park use.

4 Celebrate Art & Performance

Restore The Overlook ruins and create a multi-purpose space for arts, performance, and education, including a return of the Elma Lewis Playhouse to its historic location.

5 Connect Program with Circulation

Provide walking and biking loops that link the various destinations around the perimeter of The Playstead and in Long Crouch Woods. Support with canopy, lighting, and seating.

6 Open Access for Shared Use

Open the stadium to shared public use; strategically remove fences, walls, and overgrown vegetation south of the stadium to improve the connection to the fields and beyond.

Honor Significant Legacies
Return the Elma Lewis Playhouse to The Overlook

The ruins of the 'Overlook Shelter', the only building ever designed by Olmsted, is an important piece of park history. Its remaining stone steps and walls hosted one of the park's most iconic programs — The Elma Lewis Playhouse — in the 1960s and 70s. Offering free musical education and performances for the surrounding African American community, The Playhouse continues performances in a temporary location under the guidance of the Franklin Park Coalition. Its important legacy of stewardship and arts education is deserving of a new and permanent home in its historic location at The Overlook.

OVERLOOK STRATEGIES

Build the Playhouse

- Design to protect essential elements like rock outcrops and mature canopy; re-establish historic vegetation patterns by opening up the ground plane and removing pioneer trees.
- Restore historic puddingstone masonry elements including walls, benches, and fountains; study the best treatment of the building-related puddingstone including the remaining stairs.
- Reintroduce site specific architecture in the park with a stage, back-of-house storage, vending, and restrooms, and potentially community space.
- Restore prospect views by selectively clearing overgrown vegetation.
- Clarify pedestrian circulation; provide ADA access.

Elma Lewis, artist, educator, bridge leadership activist, and founder of the Elma Lewis Playhouse.

The original Overlook Shelter in Olmsted's General Plan was a building with two-sided functions to support program and use.

OPPORTUNITIES AT THE OVERLOOK

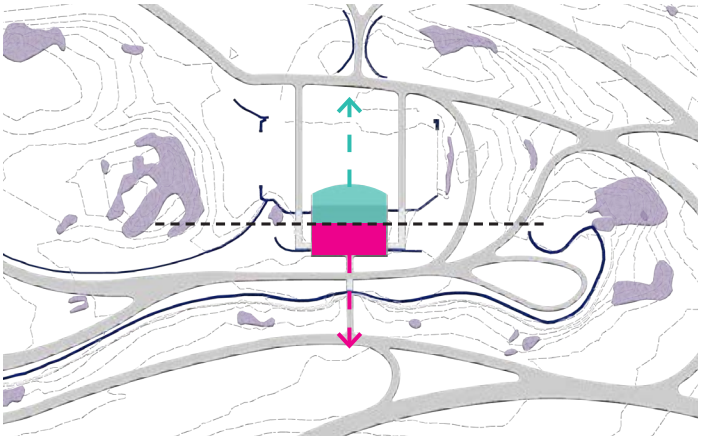
Reintroduce park architecture & reactivate the overlook as a key component of The Playstead.

Stabilize and highlight essential ruins as part of the park's original fabric.

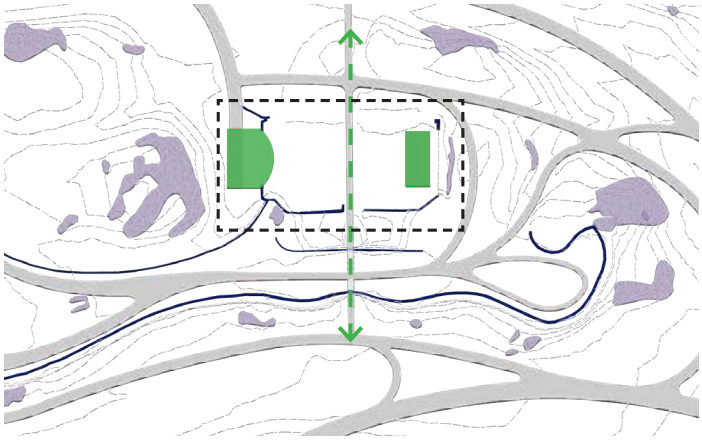
Return The Elma Lewis Playhouse to its Historic Location

New architecture with a low profile that recedes into the surrounding landscape.

Embed a stage for performance and audience seating with a natural backdrop.

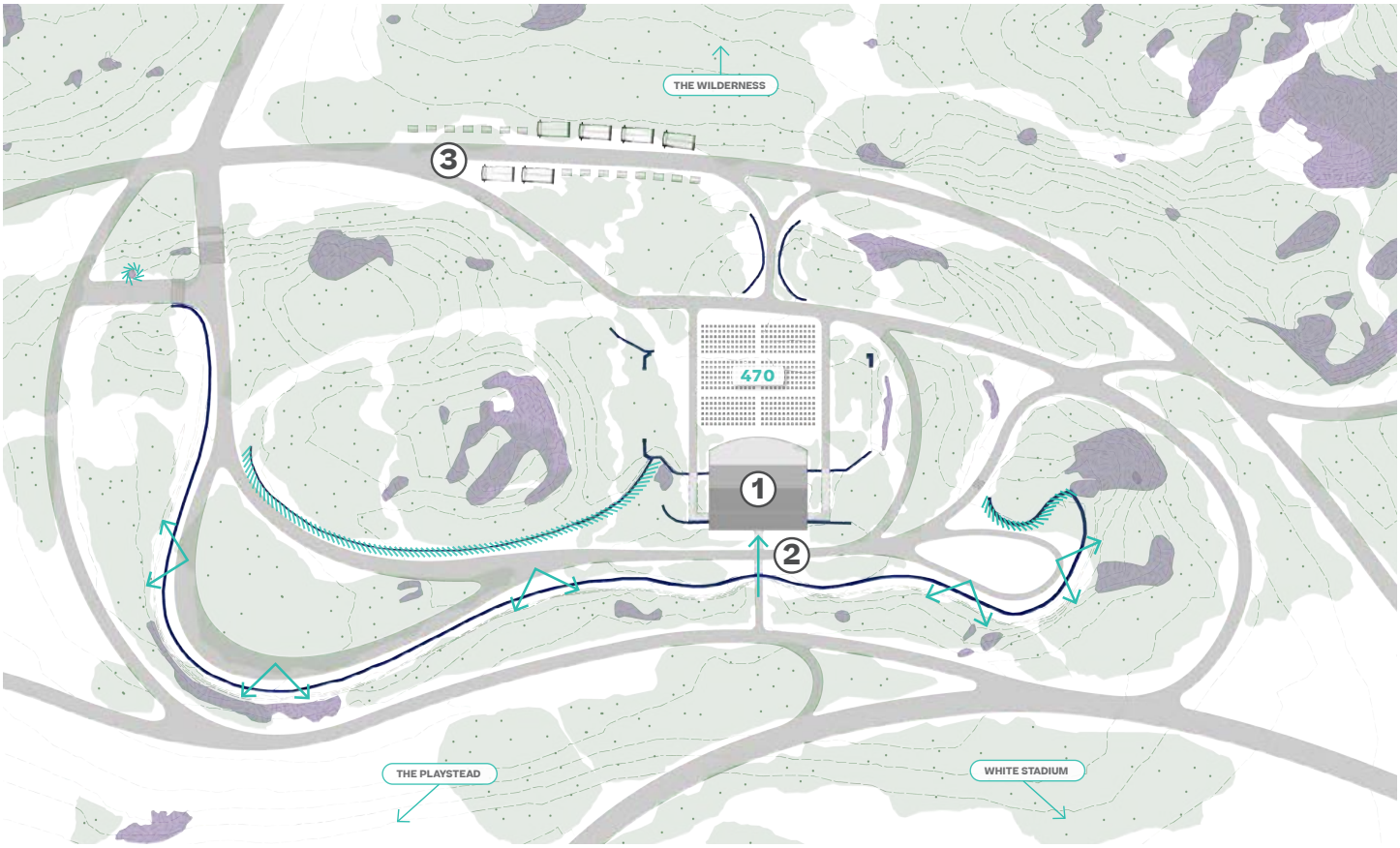


A two-sided building would allow for performance functions (teal) to face seating in the lower ruins, while community program (pink) would engage the upper terrace overlooking the fields below.



For a lighter-touch option, a series of small pavilions would allow the stage/back-of-house program to be separated from vending and restrooms; both would sit at a lower elevation within The Overlook, out of view from The Playstead fields.

OPTION A: MULTI-FUNCTIONAL BUILDING



Tree Canopy Cover

Rock Outcrops

Pedestrian Paths

Restored Historic Puddingstone Masonry

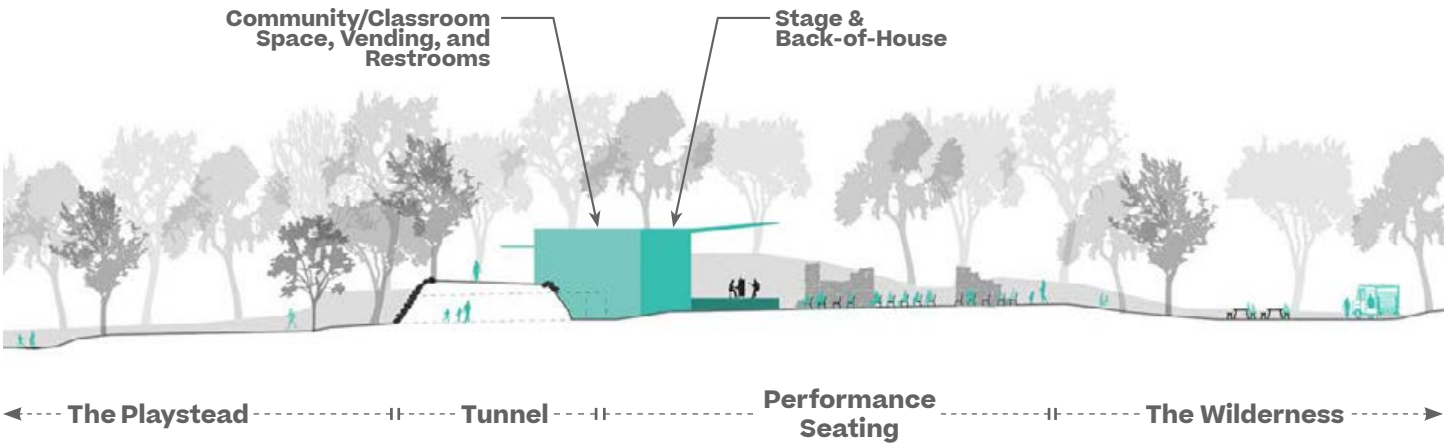
Restored Historic Puddingstone Benches and Water Fountain

Restored Open Views

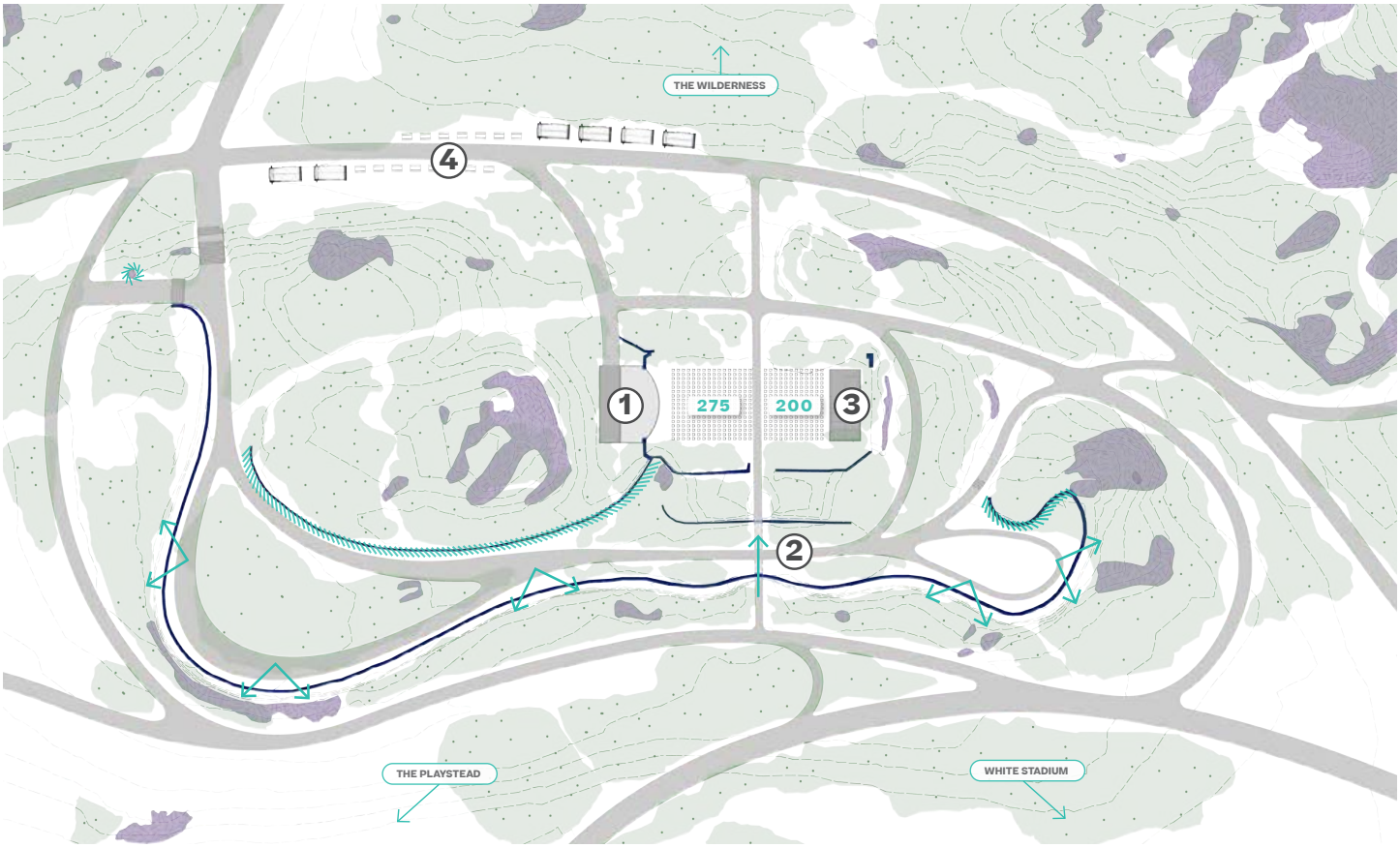
1 Stage & Multi-Functional Building

2 Tunnel Access

3 Temporary Seating & Food Trucks



OPTION B: LIGHT-TOUCH STRUCTURES



Tree Canopy Cover

Rock Outcrops

Pedestrian Paths

Restored Historic Puddingstone Masonry

Restored Historic Puddingstone Benches and Water Fountain

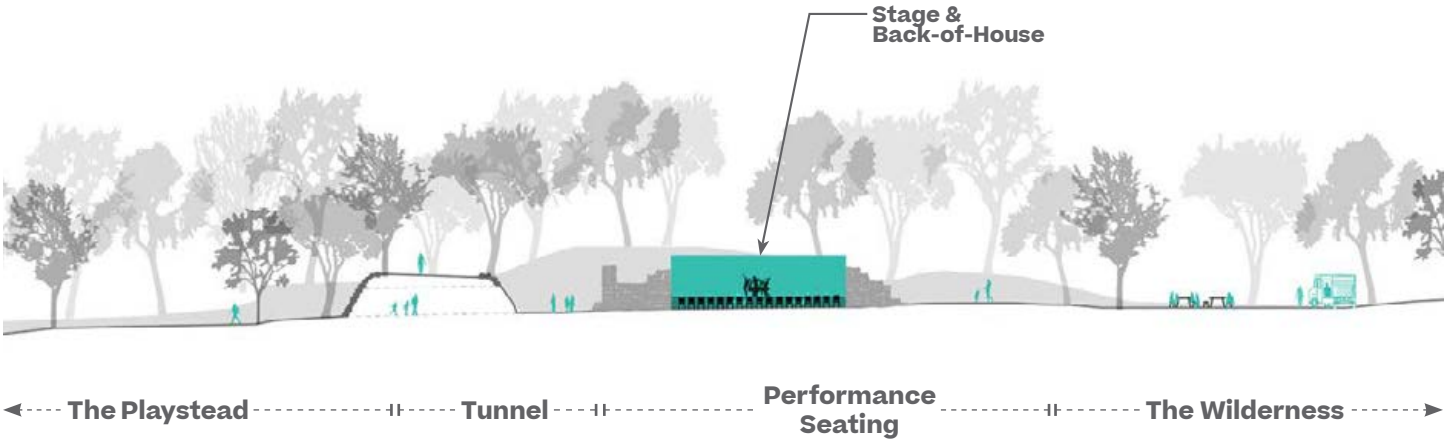
Restored Open Views

1 Stage & Back-of-House

2 Tunnel Access

3 Restrooms & Vendor

4 Temporary Seating & Food Trucks



Inspire Discovery
Introduce Nature Play into Long Crouch Woods

Long Crouch Woods, the 26-acre woodland adjacent to Seaver Street, provides unique opportunities to expand access to play and nature for the nearby Roxbury neighborhood. Once dotted with various zoological displays throughout the woods as part of the original zoo, this area was a popular destination early in the park's history drawing millions of visitors per year. Today its woodlands are overtaken by invasive species, park views have closed in, and it lacks destinations aside from the Bear Den ruins.

LONG CROUCH WOODS STRATEGIES

Weave Program through the Woods

- Establish a sequence of small programmed areas in woodland clearings along the main path.
- Focus on themes of intergenerational gathering, play and nature discovery through programming that engages the puddingstone outcrops, unique tree walks along improved paths (repair and minor regrading where needed), and forest 'rooms'.
- Give new life to old zoological displays: reimagine the bear dens and the raccoon enclosure.
- Provide quiet overlook moments - out to the city skyline and down to The Playstead fields by selectively clearing overgrown vegetation and invasive species.

Multi-Generational Programming

Increase opportunities for interaction between young and old through educational programming, creative play, access to nature, and exploration to support a people at a range of ages.

CHARACTER & OPPORTUNITIES


1
Remnant Woodland


2
Unique Character with Tree & Plant Walks

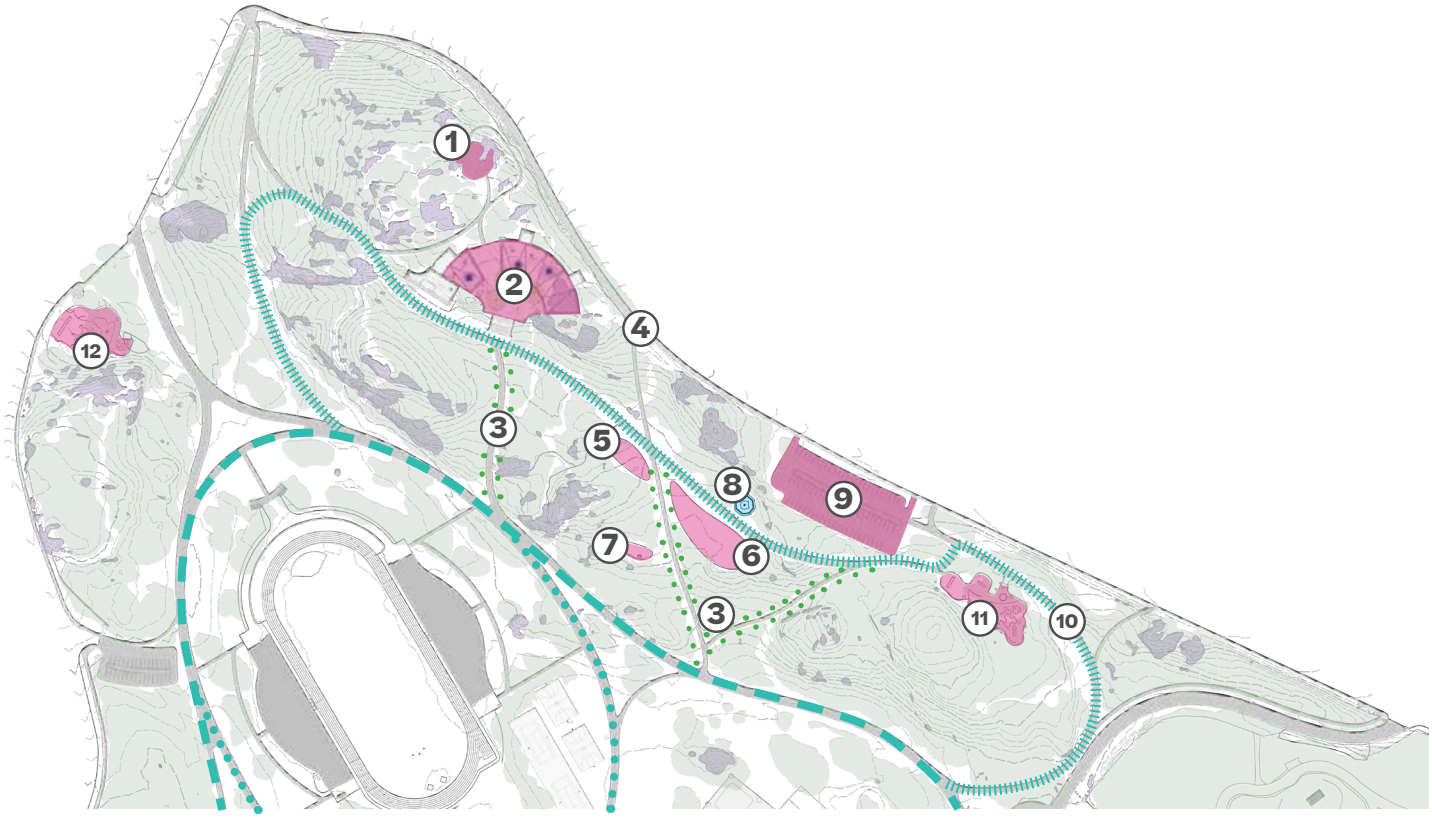

3
Programming & Play


4
Prospect with a View


5


6
A History of Discovery & Fascination with Nature, inspired by the original zoo exhibits in the park.

LONG CROUCH WOODS



Long Crouch Woods Proposed Program

- Existing Tree Canopy Cover
- Existing Rock Outcrops
- Improved Pedestrian Paths & Trails
- Proposed Program Areas
- Long Crouch Woods Loop
- The Playstead Loop
- The Stadium Loop

1. City Skyline Overlook
2. Reimagined Bear Dens
3. Tree Walks
4. New Pedestrian Entrance
5. Little Kids Nature Play
6. Big Kids Nature Play
7. The Playstead Overlook
8. Raccoon Cage Hangout
9. Reconfigured & Expanded Parking
10. Pedestrian Path to The Playstead
11. Tiffany Moore Tot Lot (to remain in the short-term; program can be updated in the long-term with community input as nature play is introduced in Long Crouch Woods)
12. El Parquesito de la Hermandad (to remain in the short-term & receive upgrades in long-term)

Precedent image for a city skyline overlook that engages the puddingstone rock outcrops.

Precedent image for a reimagined Raccoon Cage Hangout.

Reimagine the Bear Dens
Design for Flexible Use

As part of the original set of zoological displays from 1912, the Bear Dens served as the anchoring attraction in Long Crouch Woods. Due to increasing expenses, the display was closed in the mid-1950s when the zoo was migrated to its existing location, and the dens were left to deteriorate in the woods. Stabilizing this important park feature presents a prime opportunity for imaginative new uses that respect the historic fabric, while integrating elements of fun and play, with flexibility for gathering and smaller programs to serve the Roxbury side of the park.

BEAR DENS STRATEGIES

Restore the Dens & Integrate New Use

- Stabilize and restore the character defining features of the Bear Dens, including the metal work and overhang, masonry walls, steps, and benches, the relief sculpture, and the attached buildings.
- Integrate new program within the framework of the dens with flexible use in mind.
- Inspired by the historic bear pools, introduce shallow splash pads, designed to allow the space to function both for water play and for flexible events when turned off.
- Provide temporary furnishings throughout.
- Extend the woodland canopy cover with new trees.
- Install festive catenary lighting for evening events.

Park goers use stabilized ruins as flexible space for a variety of programming today, like yoga in the Schoolmaster Hill Shelter. Restoring the Bear Dens would provide a similar space on the east side of the park, which does not exist today.

BEAR DENS OPPORTUNITIES

Metal Overhang/Awning

Bear Relief Sculpture, Metalwork, & Stone Wall

Stone walls & built-in benches with cages behind

Flexible programming with canopy & lighting.

Splash pad & water play in rock outcrops for children at a range of ages.

RESTORE THE RUINS, INSERT NEW PROGRAM

Cooling Off

With more days of extreme heat and a lack of shade in the neighborhoods to the east of the park, splash pads provide a necessary respite from hot temperatures.

The Bear Dens Proposed Program

- Tree Canopy Cover
- Rock Outcrops
- Pedestrian Paths
- Walls
- Section Cut Line
- Proposed Canopy Tree
- Existing Canopy Tree
- Proposed Catenary Lights

1. Central Grove with Next Generation Canopy Tree Planting
2. Little Kids Splash Pad
3. Big Kids Splash Pad
4. Restored Steps, Walls, & Built-in Benches
5. Restored Historic Metal Overhang
6. Accessible Point of Entry

Celebrate Community
Make Spaces for Tailgating & Spectating

The Playstead has been host to all kinds of play throughout its history - from bike races and kite festivals, to concerts and theater, to sports and recreation. It has always been a place rooted in community and culture, and a place to see and be seen. Today it lacks accessible, comfortable places to sit in the shade and clear views to activity. With improved spaces for family gathering, performance, and spending time together outdoors, The Playstead can better support its many activities and the coming together of all of its neighbors.

GATHERING SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

Make Gathering Spaces at the Edge

- Create a 'Tailgate Edge" at the edge of The Playstead along the Pierpont Road parking lot to establish a linear space for tailgating and overlooking the sports fields below; incorporate canopy trees for shade, seating, and BBQs.
- Establish the Prospect Grove in the shade of the existing mature trees; provide new picnic tables for gathering and eating outdoors.

Provide Points of Prospect

- Selectively clear overgrown vegetation to provide views from high points within Long Crouch Woods and at The Overlook to watch activity in the center and take in long views across The Playstead.

Introduce New Places

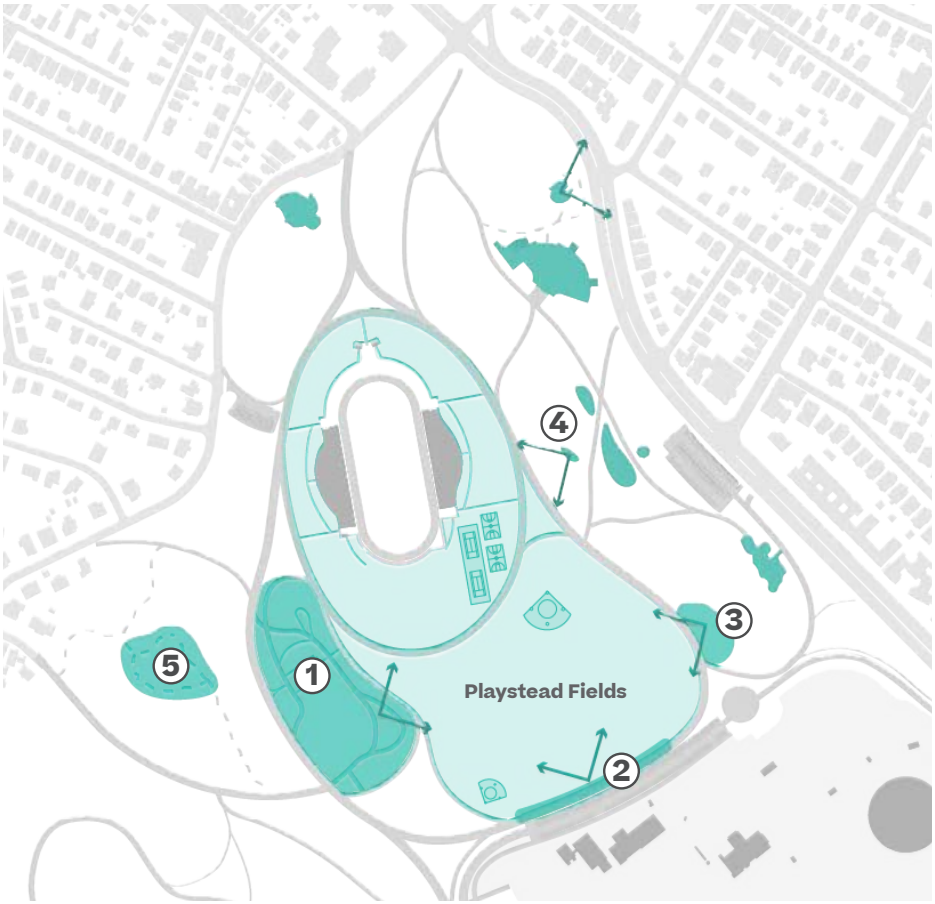
- Provide a woodland dog park in close proximity to the nearby neighborhood within the area that was intended to be The Steading in Olmsted's plan, not far from The Overlook.
- Celebrate Long Crouch Woods with new and restored destinations related to nature and play; see the Long Crouch Woods for more detail on the recommendations for this area.

Precedent image for the Prospect Grove.

A view of the annual Kite & Bike Festival from The Overlook with the zoo entrance in the background.

Precedent image for a woodland dog park.

PLAYSTEAD DESTINATIONS



text

- The Playstead Fields
- Playstead Destinations
- ① The Overlook
- ② The Tailgate Edge
- ③ The Prospect Grove
- ④ Long Crouch Lookout
- ⑤ Woodland Dog Park

Team Sports

Sit in the Shade

Picnic

BBQ

Concerts & Festivals

THE TAILGATE EDGE

- Embankment
- New Slope
- Existing Slope

Playstead Fields | **Embankment** | **Tailgate Edge** | **Playstead Loop** | **Parking**

12' Width

18' Width

Make Connections
Remove Barriers & Share Resources

The Playstead fields and White Stadium are well-loved and heavily used for sporting events, camps, and festivals. White Stadium, which serves many nearby Boston Public Schools, was built within the northern half of The Playstead's open fields in the 1940s. Piecemeal additions of parking, fences, and walls to service and secure it have cut the stadium off from its context. Re-organizing field program and removing barriers can establish shared public access to the stadium (in coordination with Boston Public Schools) and make important spatial connections across the fields.

FIELD AND WHITE STADIUM RECOMMENDATIONS

Re-Establish Visual Connections & Shared Access

- Remove chain link fences, central end-zone wall, and overgrown vegetation south of the stadium to regain a visual connection to the fields and beyond; if possible, consolidate track and field programs within the stadium walls to let the building sit within a large open lawn on all sides.
- Add a new 8' metal picket fence with access gates in keeping with the main stadium entrance so it can be secured after hours; design with a porous material to maintain new visual connections.
- Open up the stadium and restroom facilities for shared public access and use during the day.

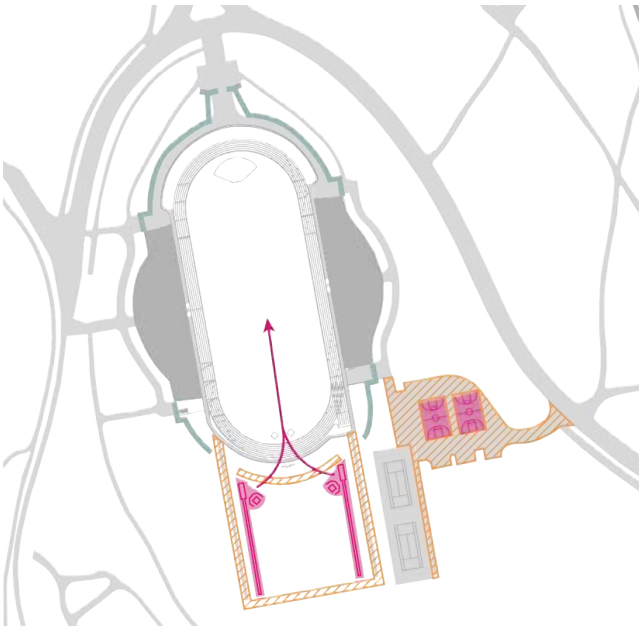
Gain Efficiency in Field Layout

- Reorganize the field layout and permanent sports courts to preserve key views, to enhance spectating, and create better connections.
- Relocate the two basketball courts; remove the excess paving surrounding the existing courts. Protect existing mature trees.
- Maintain the two softball/baseball diamonds; if reconfigured, be conscious of backstops blocking views across the park or from spaces used for gathering and spectating.
- Continue to provide striping for cricket, soccer, and space for open play; reorganize their layout based on reservation data to minimize overlaps between sports at high use times of day; expand offerings if the demand exists and space allows.

Special Events

- Provide electric and water infrastructure as need to continue to host and better support the park's large events and festivals.

Overgrown vegetation and fences and walls block visual connections with White Stadium today.



Open Up White Stadium

Paths, Paving, Fences & Walls to be Removed

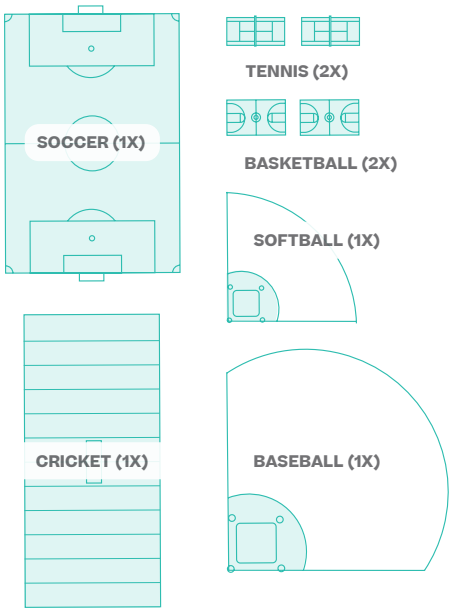
Sports Courts & Field Activities to be Relocated

Stadium Walls to Remain

MAXIMIZE PLAY FIELD AND COURT LAYOUT

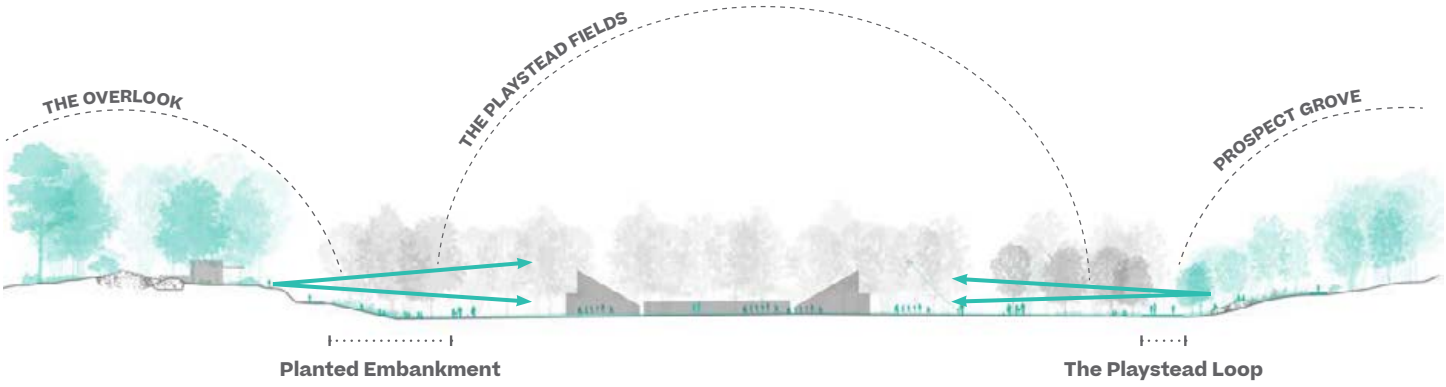
Proposed Fields & Courts

- The Playstead Fields
- Overlook Areas
- New Fence & Access Gates
- ① The Overlook
- ② The Tailgate Edge
- ③ The Prospect Grove
- ④ White Stadium



With regular reservations throughout the Fall and Spring, The Playstead's fields are well-used. As fields and courts are relocated to improve efficiency, the fields should be regraded and soils engineered with sub-drainage to improve drainage and better withstand intensive use.

OVERLOOKING THE CENTRAL FIELDS



Link Destinations
Use Planting to Define Circulation

Chief among resident desires for the future of the park were basic upgrades to make it feel safer and welcoming to all communities. Currently, roads and parking interrupt The Playstead's main pedestrian circulation, leaving an unclear and sometimes unsafe way to navigate the perimeter of the fields. Parallel and dead-end paths into adjacent woodlands leave visitors uneasy about exploring. The Playstead's many activities and civic anchors must be supported by clear and safe circulation, canopy tree planting that reinforces movement and the civic scale of the space, and basic park furnishings.

CIRCULATION & PLANTING RECOMMENDATIONS

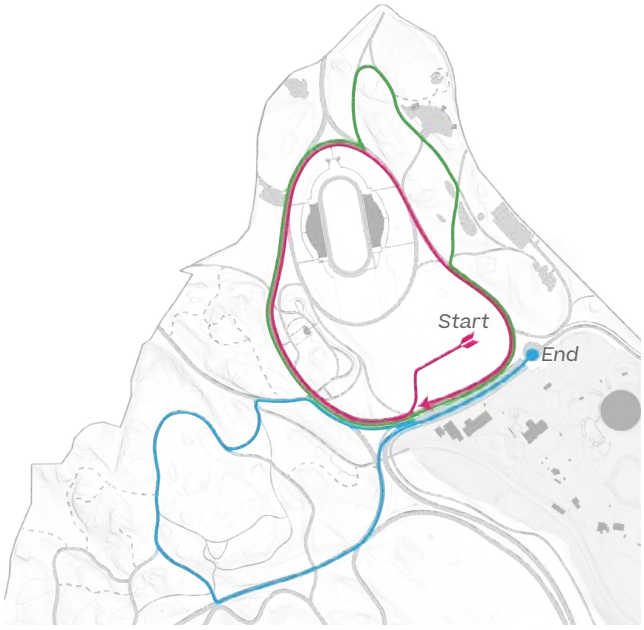
Link Places with Walking Loops

- Separate pedestrian circulation from parking to re-establish The Playstead Loop as the main walking and biking route around the perimeter, connecting event programming and destinations. Support with seating, lighting, and canopy; maintain a consistent paving material around the loop to facilitate active use by people of all abilities and special access for events set-up as needed.
- Create secondary loops around White Stadium (with access paths into the stadium and to the tennis and basketball courts) and through Long Crouch Woods to link to new program threaded along a single path.
- As improvements are made in Long Crouch Woods, make repairs to existing paths and trails where washout and erosion has occurred, and minor path regrading to improve access throughout.

Canopy & Planting

- Use additional canopy trees to reinforce circulation, indicate primary entries, frame space, and provide shade along The Playstead Loop.
- Highlight the promenade entrance north of White Stadium with formal canopy tree planting to reinforce the civic scale entry sequence and the beauty of the Art Deco stadium building.
- Highlight smaller paths in Long Crouch Woods with Tree Walks by using smaller scale planting focused on seasonal interest (flowering and fruiting or winter character).

A primary park path lined by canopy trees and seating.



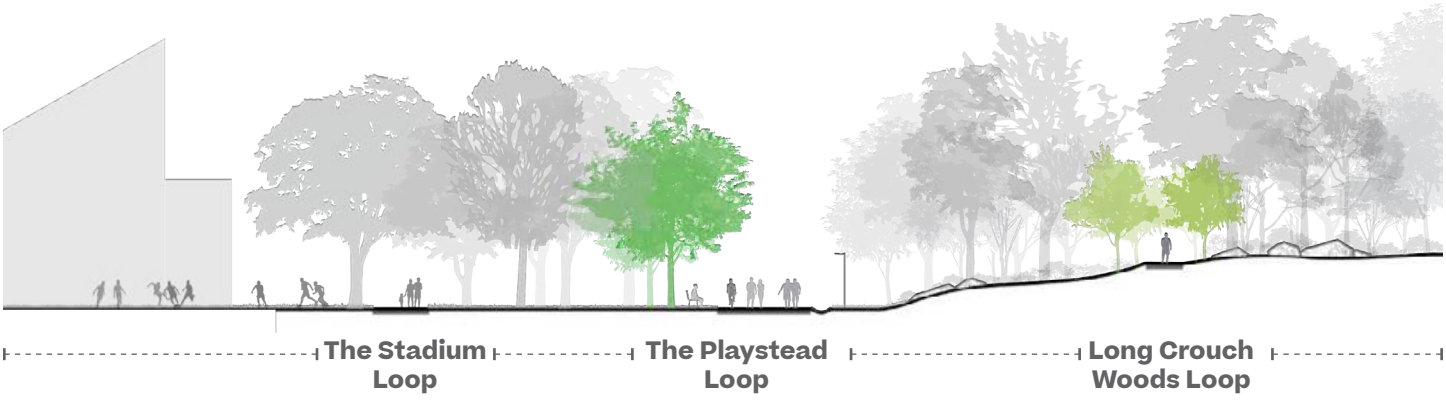
Cross Country Trails

Franklin Park has been home to cross country trails since the early 1900s, and continues to serve several local schools for meets today. Their continued partnership presents the opportunity to educate the public about the sensitive landscape that they run through and opens up stewardship opportunities for years to come.

LINK DESTINATIONS WITH PATHS & PLANTING

Proposed Tree Planting & Paths

- Existing Canopy Cover
- Proposed Tree Canopy Planting Along Paths
- Tree Walks
- 1 The Playstead Loop - 1 mile
- 2 The Stadium Loop - 1/2 mile
- 3 Long Crouch Woods Loop - 3/4 mile



Make a Place for Gathering & Relaxation
Ellicottdale

From birthday parties and family reunions to formal and informal sports and relaxing outside, Ellicottdale serves family and friends by providing spaces in contrast to what The Playstead offers (large-scale events and active recreation). But Ellicottdale's adjacencies – Shattuck Hospital, the golf course, and its dense woodlands – leave the area feeling undefined and its intended uses somewhat ambiguous. By clarifying its edges, the area can better serve its original intent: a smaller version of the Country Park meadow to support flexible use and everyday life.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Ambiguity Leaves the Space Underused**
- **Shattuck Hospital Acts as a Barrier**
- **Fragmented Ecology**

ELLICOTTDALE RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Support Flexible Use with Open Lawns**
- **Define a Sense of Place & Use Planting to Structure Circulation**

The existing tennis courts near the Upper Lawn.

Informal activities on the Lower Lawn.


THE WILDERNESS
THE CIRCUIT LOOP
THE GOLF COURSE
THE LOWER LAWN
THE UPPER LAWN
SHATTUCK HOSPITAL
SCARBORO HILL
Existing Bus Stop
Parking Lot
Bikeshare/Bike Parking

Ellicottdale:

How can Ellicottdale better support everyday gatherings and smaller uses?

1 Clarify and Cohere

Regrade the upper and lower lawns, and redesign circulation to better structure both spaces for access and use.

2 Embrace Difference

Use strong vegetation strategies to define edges at the Shattuck Hospital and the golf course.

3 Expand Ecological Diversity

Extend the character of the surrounding ecologies — from woodlands and meadow to wetland and open lawn — to emphasize the richness of this area of the park.

4 Support Existing Uses

Anchor the space with shade, seating, and a small comfort station pavilion with restrooms and water fountains; expand the tennis courts.

5 Offer New Programs

Introduce new programming at this magnet like exercise classes, movie nights, storytelling under the stars, and spring nature walks.

Support Flexible Use
Provide Open Lawns

Ellicottdale spans moderate elevation change, with distinct upper and lower lawns joined together by a rolling embankment. The upper lawn, anchored by popular tennis courts, provides flexible space for family and friends to spend time outdoors in open lawn or near the parking at its edge. The lower lawn, shaped like a subtle bowl, sits adjacent to the Ellicott Arch and wet woodland and meadow habitats. As the only remaining open lawn space aside from the Country Park, the valued flexibility of Ellicottdale should be maintained, while improving its beauty and better supporting its use with programming and amenities to serve families and friends coming together.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Engage the Edge

- Provide a pavilion or shade shelter with restrooms, water fountains, and storage adjacent to the parking area, Circuit Loop path, the upper lawn and tennis courts.
- Expand tennis courts along the woodland edge, as to not interrupt the long view through the Upper Lawn to the Lower; provide seating for spectators in the shade.

Make Gathering Spaces on the Upper Lawn

- Establish the upper lawn for family gatherings by providing seating, tables, and BBQ areas for a variety of group sizes within newly planted canopy tree groves.

Return the Lower Lawn to Flexible Use

- Allow the lower lawn at Ellicottdale to be primarily dedicated to passive and flexible uses, like family gatherings, informal games and play, and expanded small-scale programming, like exercise classes.
- Maintain the softball field in the short-term; as active recreation improvements are made at The Playstead, consider phasing out the Ellicottdale softball field to further establish the only flexible passive lawn in the park with community input.


1

A family reunion BBQ on the Upper Lawn.

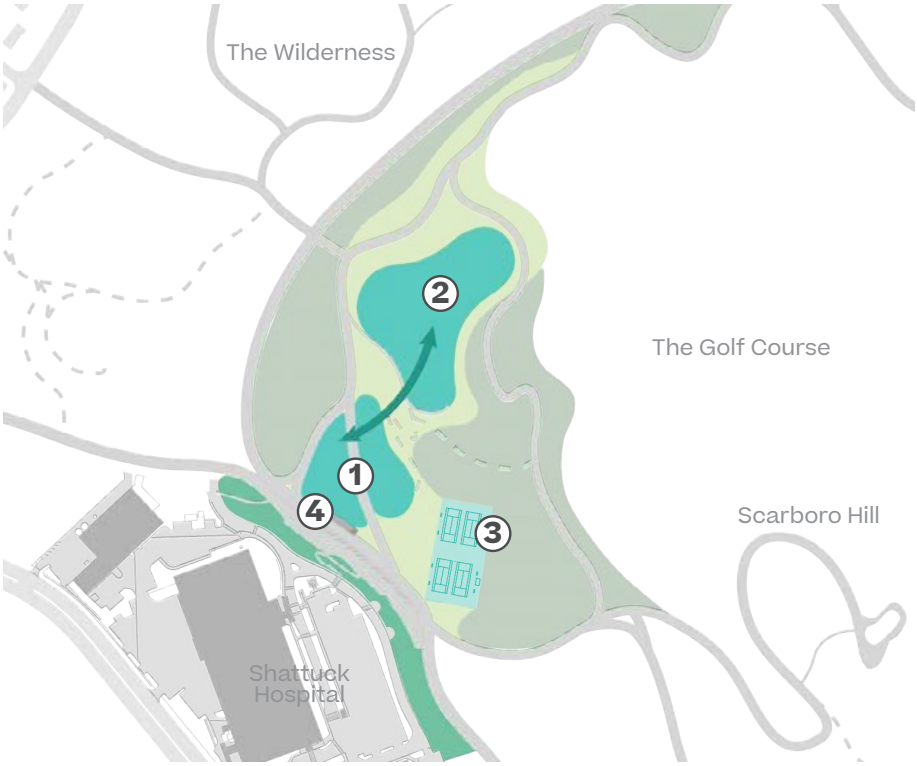

2

The lower lawn could serve as an open, flexible lawn during the day, like the Long Meadow in Prospect Park.


3

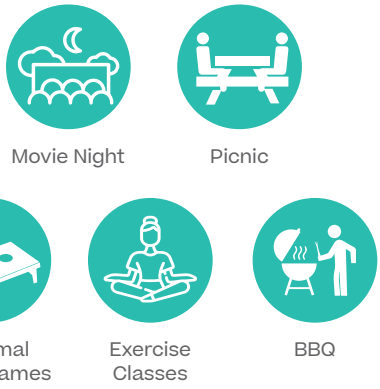
Movie nights could be hosted on the lower lawn in the evenings.

ELLICOTTDALE'S OPEN LAWNS



Proposed Open Spaces

1. Upper Lawns
2. Lower Lawn
3. Expanded Tennis Courts
4. Pavilion / Shade Structure



THE LOWER LAWN

Define a Sense of Place
Use Planting to Structure Circulation

Ellicottdale is an ecological crossroads of sorts - a place where rocky woodland and wetland meet to surround intimate open lawns at separate elevations. But the space today lacks definition and a unifying character. The Shattuck edge is harsh with expansive paving and few trees, and the golf course blurs into the lower lawn, discouraging free use. By using planting to extend the unique character of adjacent areas, frame open space, and establish clear connections, Ellicottdale and its frequent users can claim the space to support its everyday use.

CIRCULATION & PLANTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Create Connections & Frame the Lawns

- Emphasize and enhance the range of surrounding ecologies as a distinctive feature of Ellicottdale.
- Transition from woodland to open character along the Shattuck edge; remove the fence and plant the embankment with evergreen species that transition to deciduous moving north; provide views to the upper lawn and make path connections to welcome interaction and shared use.
- Plant the upper area with groves of canopy trees to create spaces for gathering in the shade.
- Define open lawns with meadow buffers; clear open views between the upper and lower lawn, and plant the embankment; establish separation between the lower lawn and the golf course with a meadow edge.
- Let secondary circulation move around open lawns, connecting to adjacent park spaces while leaving the center open for activity and clear views.
- Provide trail and boardwalk access to unique environments, like the wet meadow and wet woodland adjacent to the lower lawn.

The Shattuck Hospital edge today, adjacent to the Ellicottdale parking area (above). With the redevelopment of the Shattuck site comes an opportunity to purposefully re-integrate it into the park. The future site design should include considerations for a unified landscape character that seamlessly blends the Shattuck property with the park, embedding large buildings and parking in a significant landscape buffer on all sides, new ADA pedestrian connections between the Shattuck site and the park, and increased canopy trees throughout.

DEFINE SPACE THROUGH PLANTING

Shattuck Embankment | Parking | The Circuit Loop | Comfort Station

ELLICOTTDALE CIRCULATION & PLANTING

Proposed Circulation & Planting

- Open Lawns
- Buffer Planting
- Evergreen Planting
- Existing Adjacent Woodlands
- 1 The Circuit Loop
- 2 1/2 mile Ellicott Loop
- 3 Flowering Tree Walk
- 4 Wet Woodland & Wet Meadow Trail
- 5 Parking Lot
- 6 Opportunity for some restored park land at the Shattuck site

Upper Lawn | Meadow Embankment | Lower Lawn

Commit to Stewardship
The Yard

The Maintenance Yard plays a vital role within the park system, serving as the hub for BPRD's care of open space across the city. Investments in existing staff and facilities are essential for maintaining commitments to the community to raise the standard of care across Franklin Park. Into the future, the mission of the yard can expand to support objectives that serve both the community and the park by growing the next generation of stewards.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Blocks Park Access from the South**
- **Inefficient Layout and In Need of Facility Upgrades**
- **Safety; Official Work Areas Need to be Separated from the Public**


1

Storage areas in the existing maintenance yard in the southern portion of the park.

THE YARD RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Increase Efficiency & Protect the Park**
- **Invest in Essential Functions**
- **Promote Community Engagement & Stewardship**
- **Provide Park Access**
- **Provide Opportunities to Learn & Grow**


2

Opportunities for training & education.


Existing Bus Stop

The Yard:
How can the maintenance yard better serve the park to better serve the community?

1 Increase Efficiency & Protect the Park
The demand for operational and public program in this space may put pressure on the limits of The Yard. The City should resist the urge to expand The Yard or disturb additional parkland, and instead should be looking to densify and find efficiencies within the existing footprint. Adjacent parkland is characterized by mature woodlands and high points that serve to buffer the Circuit Loop from maintenance activities. Vegetation management in this area must continue to protect the immersive experience of the park.

2 Invest in Essential Functions
Retain the day-to-day operations of the maintenance yard; consolidate program, make necessary upgrades to facilities and equipment, and invest in advanced training for staff. Resist pressures to house unrelated city functions within this area.

3 Promote Community Engagement & Stewardship

Provide training related to workforce development opportunities for youth who live or go to school near the park; create space for volunteer demonstrations to grow the next generation of park stewards at all ages.

4 Provide Park Access

Due to its official capacities, the yard is off limits to the public and blocks park access for neighbors in Mattapan. In the short term, provide a pedestrian access path at the perimeter of the operations areas in The Yard to the park. In the long term, expand parking and programs for shared community use in the evenings and on weekends.

5 Provide Opportunities to Grow & Learn

Look for opportunities to fulfill priorities identified in The Maintenance Yard Master Plan, including interest in space for teaching and learning centered on the green industry, including horticulture, arboriculture, landscape and green infrastructure installation, and maintenance. Look for opportunities for investment to include shared spaces, like new greenhouses to accommodate this program.

6 Looking Forward

Consider places where space can be provided to the community within The Yard, including community gardening plots, bee keeping, and composting. While some maintenance yard functions must be separated for safety, aim to make appropriate functions visible to the public to raise awareness of the many people and tasks it takes to care for the park.

Invest in Small Destinations Too
Expand Mini-Magnets

The park's smaller destinations, or 'mini-magnets', support the day-to-day use of the park by providing more intimate places for learning, play, and exploration. Some programs (playgrounds for example) may repeat across the park and serve the community closest to it. By making each unique with a distinct environment, tying it to a moment in history or community culture, or by making places for learning, mini-magnets will, at times, draw neighbors across the park beyond their 'edge'.

KEY CHALLENGES

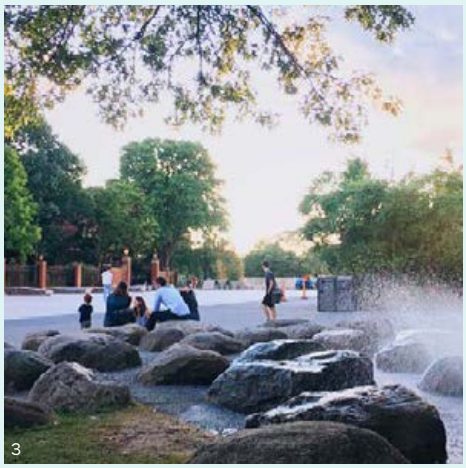
- **Outdated & Lack of Park Basic Amenities**
- **Deferred Maintenance of Park Ruins**
- **Overgrown Vegetation Obscures Key Views**

MINI-MAGNET RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Restore Views & Reveal the Landscape**
- **Protect Historic Features**
- **Provide Play & Outdoor Education**

1


2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4


5


6


7


8


9

Connect Visitors to High & Low Points
Restore Views & Reveal the Landscape

The high points and low points defined by the park's dramatic topography result in a mosaic of unique ecologies, places, and views. In contrast to neighborhood parks, Franklin Park provides the opportunity to be fully immersed in these many environments, with wide expansive views across rolling lawns and intimate moments within nature. Over time, this range of experience has been lost to overgrown or invasive vegetation or a lack of paths. By restoring access to the park's important features, its broad experience can be fully appreciated.

HIGH & LOW POINT RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide Prospect at High Points

- Preserving viewsheds provides a payoff when ascending to the park's high points, cultivates a 'cared for' aesthetic, and provides a sense of safety.
- Selectively thin vegetation to recapture these important viewsheds at historic overlooks and re-establish large scale spatial connections; provide seating where appropriate; protect heritage trees and concentrate efforts on opening up dense understory and removing invasive plants.
- Bring visitors to high points along trails that climb more challenging topography or puddingstone outcrops.

Reveal Ecology at Low Points

- Carefully integrate access to the park's wet environments with boardwalks or porous paving materials, expanding the opportunities for visitors to experience and appreciate the wide range of park landscapes.

1

View across the open meadow (the golf course) from Schoolmaster Hill.

2

Swamp cabbage growing along Ellicott Stream in the spring.

3

At the top of Scarboro Hill, clear understory and brush vegetation to open broad park views, remove vines and invasive ground layer to reveal the historic stone wall, and define clear walking pedestrian-scale paths for visitors.

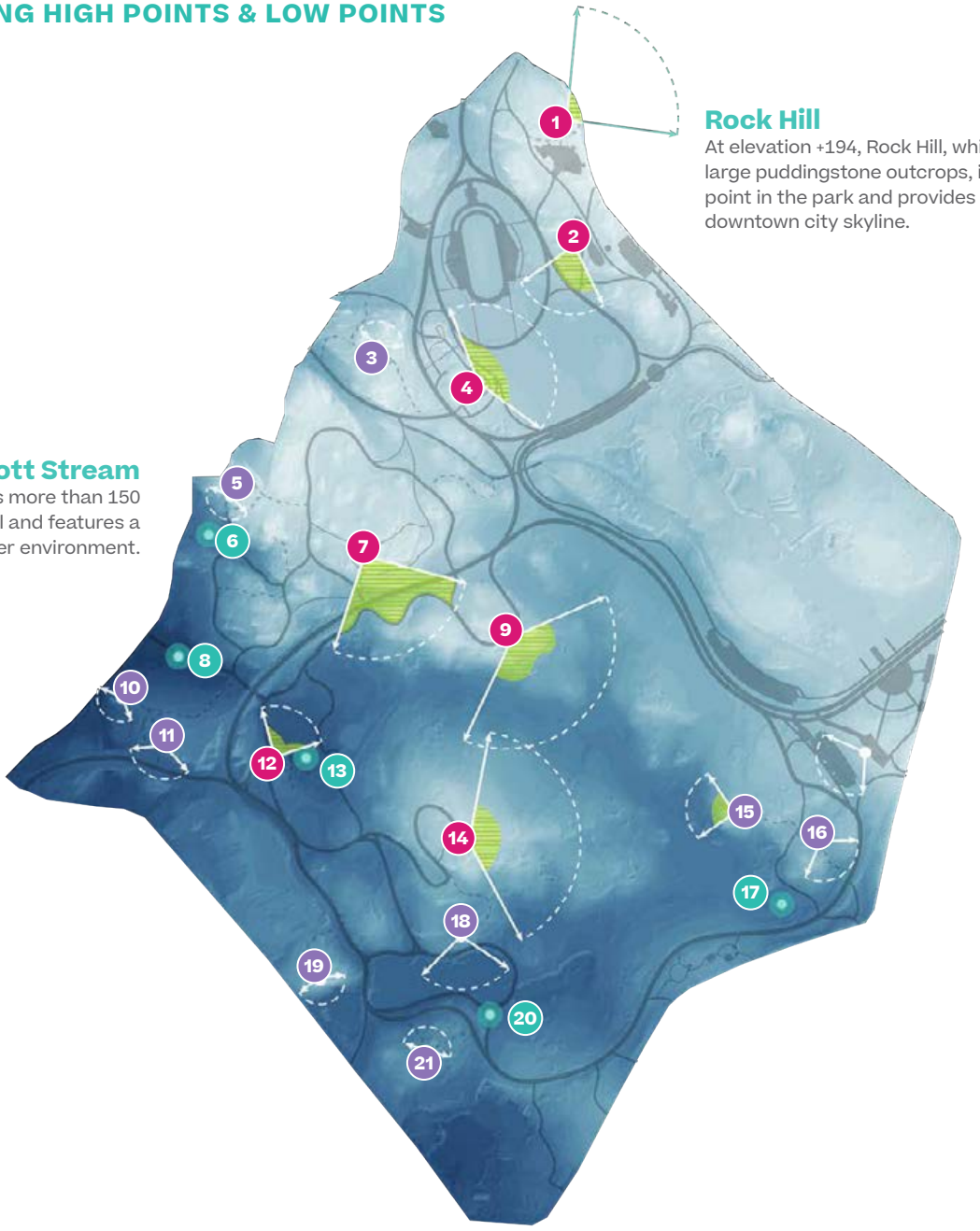
EXPERIENCING HIGH POINTS & LOW POINTS

Rock Hill

At elevation +194, Rock Hill, which features large puddingstone outcrops, is the highest point in the park and provides views to the downtown city skyline.

Ellicott Stream

Ellicott Stream sits more than 150 feet below Rock Hill and features a unique freshwater environment.



High Points & Low Points

- High to Low Elevation
- Selective Clearing for Views
- # High Points with Long Views
- # High Points Along Trails
- # Low Points
- 1 Rock Hill
- 2 Long Crouch Woods
- 3 The Steading Site
- 4 The Overlook
- 5 Sunset Rock
- 6 The Dell
- 7 Hagborne Hill
- 8 Ellicott Stream
- 9 Schoolmaster Hill
- 10 White Pine Point
- 11 Juniper Hill
- 12 Ellicottdale
- 13 Ellicottdale Wet Woodland
- 14 Scarboro Hill*

** Include a designated area for the Massachusett Tribe ceremonial activities.*

- 15 Abbottswood
- 16 Abbottswood
- 17 Wet Meadow
- 18 Scarboro Pond
- 19 Rock Milton
- 20 Scarboro Pond
- 21 Rock Morton

Celebrate the Unique Park Character
Protect Historic Features

The park's original built features - discrete architecture, walls, bridges, and steps - all deferred to the power of the landscape. A strict attitude towards material, form, and expression resulted in park features that appeared to emerge from the site itself. While many of these features have fallen into disrepair following years of neglect, they continue as markers of the park's past and important destinations for parkgoers. Maintaining the historic fabric of these elements is essential to preserving the park's unique character and history.

HISTORIC MASONRY & RUIN RECOMMENDATIONS

Stabilize Historic Masonry

- Make urgent repairs to masonry walls and steps; create a conditions report to guide future stabilization of these features.
- Stabilize historic walls, steps, and bridges; repoint wall faces, reset treads and adjacent stones, and re-mortar joints as needed for regular upkeep and maintenance. Preserve the historic character.
- Much of the original masonry and other built elements in the park is puddingstone, with the primary exception being the Cape Ann granite bridges at Scarboro Pond; use puddingstone for repair work wherever possible; investigate additional sources of the material that may be available so a stockpile for repairs can be established; if for some reason built puddingstone elements are removed, the material should be salvaged and appropriately stored for future reuse.

Give Structures a New Life

- Many of the historic structures, which now exist as ruins, present opportunities to integrate new use while preserving the remaining historic fabric.
- Use the Secretary of Interior's Standards* to evaluate historic fabric and determine what is essential to preserve and how to best integrate new built elements and uses without compromising the historic integrity.
- Create a historic structures report for more significant masonry structures, including Ellicott Arch, the Bear Dens, the Raccoon Cages, and Schoolmaster Hill, to guide the determination of a preservation approach and the design of any transformative future uses.
- When more extensive restoration and rebuilding is necessary, work with the archives to reference original drawings, details, and photos as available to match the character, form, expression, and materials.

Architecture

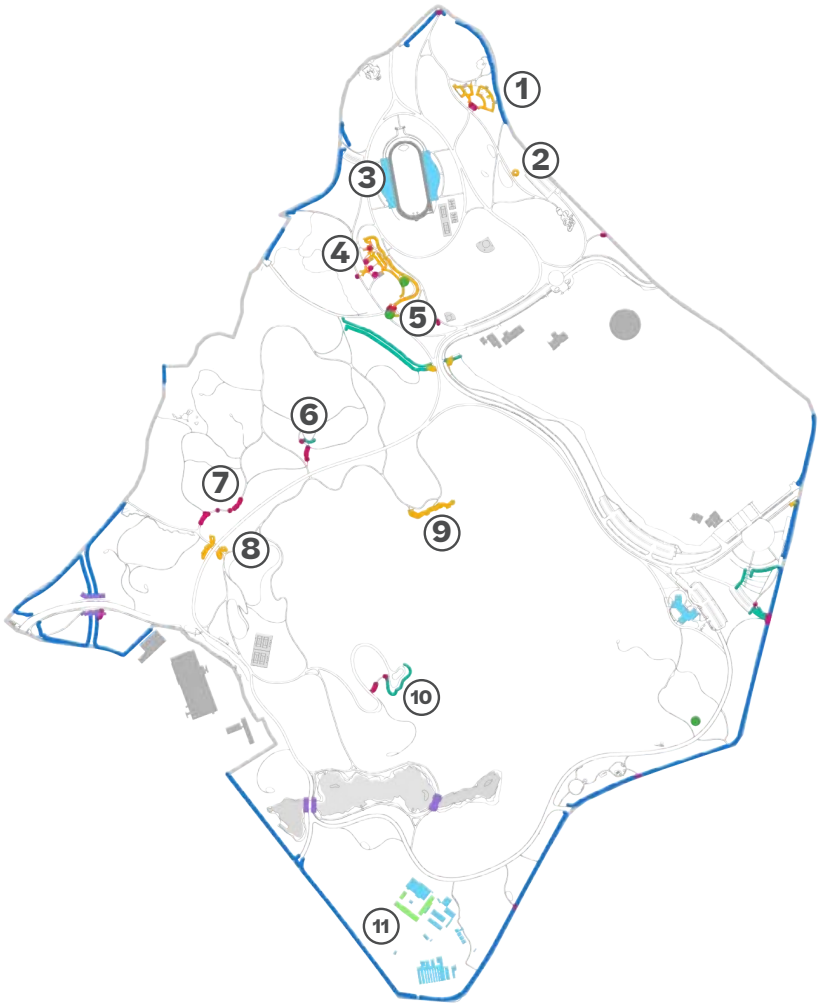
- Insertions of new architecture into the park should be carefully considered; character, materials, and location should all be deferential to the landscape.

Historic view of puddingstone steps, walls, and water fountain leading up to The Overlook in The Playstead.

Preserved ruins of the Schoolmaster Hill Shelter and overlook.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings, and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.

HISTORIC FABRIC STABILIZATION APPROACHES



Existing Park Ruins, Masonry & Architecture

- Perimeter Wall
- Interior Park Wall
- Steps
- Bridges
- Structures / Ruins
- Park Architecture
- Historic Park Architecture
- Historic Water Fountain

1. The Bear Dens
2. Raccoon Cages
3. White Stadium
4. The Overlook
5. Glen Road & Valley Gates Head Houses
6. Hagborne Hill
7. The 99 Steps
8. Ellicott Arch
9. Schoolmaster Hill
10. Scarboro Hill
11. Maintenance Yard Brick Shop Buildings

PRESERVE

Take measures to protect and stabilize with ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features, rather than extensive replacement or reconstruction.

-Repair/reset masonry walls and steps

RESTORE

Rebuild to match the historic appearance.

-Rebuild The Overlook puddingstone benches with wood slats

-Rebuild the clay tile roofs on the head houses at The Valley Gates and Peabody Circle

-Add a new roof and pergola to Schoolmaster Hill.

-Stabilize Ellicott Arch, repaint the underside, restore planting, and integrate lighting.

REHABILITATE

Preserve portions or features with historical, cultural, or architectural value; integrate new or compatible uses.

-Reimagine The Bear Dens as a splash pad and space for flexible programming.

-Rebuild historic water fountains for modern function, while preserving their unique character

-Reimagine the Raccoon Cages as a nature play element.

Discover the Park
Provide Play & Outdoor Education

The landscape of the park is well suited to serve as a living classroom and setting for play for nearby schools and neighbors. Opportunities for learning could focus on changing seasons, hydrology, ecological environments, local history, community culture, or the evolution of neighborhoods nearby. With relatively small footprints, these programs can cluster along the edge, each with a unique response to its context through its specific design.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION & PLAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Learning in the Landscape

- Provide settings for outdoor learning within a range of environments by providing seating or pathways for summer camps, elementary schools, or small groups to gather, observe, and explore their surroundings.
- Develop individual curriculum related to each unique ecology, history or neighborhood context (urban, woodland, wetland, pond and stream) in partnership with a nearby school, youth or cultural organizations, or with the zoo.

Opportunities for Play

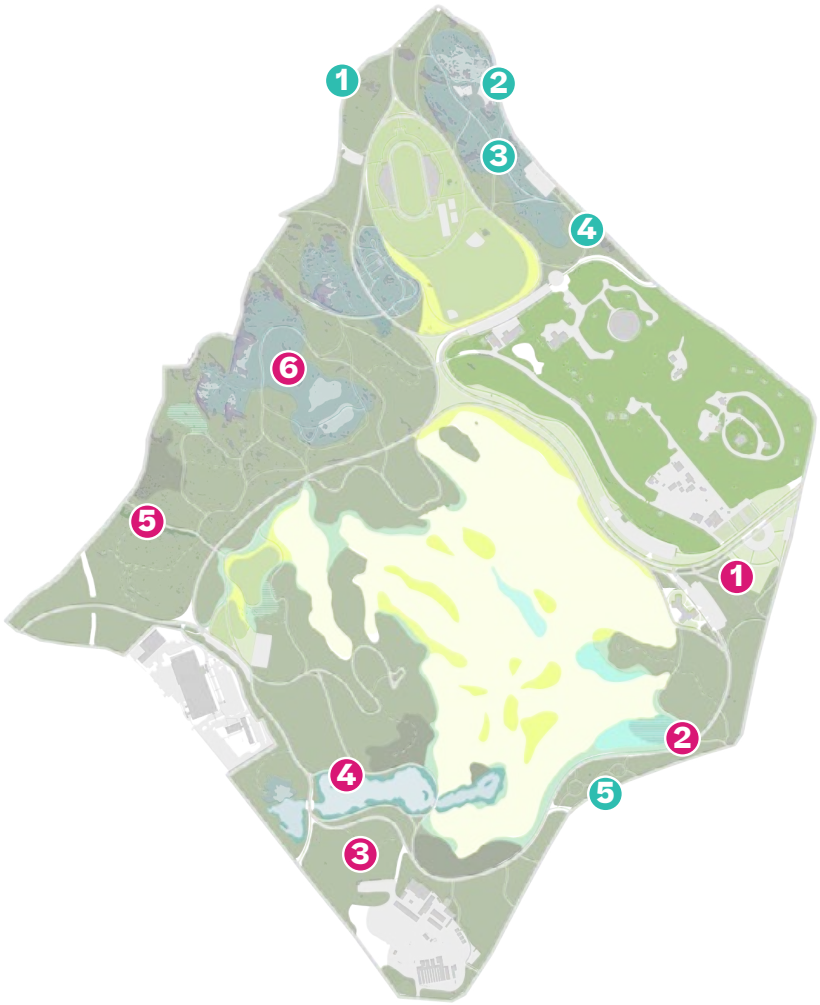
- As upgrades to existing playgrounds are made, give each a unique identity, character, and program that responds to its individual park setting (woodland, grassland, rocky outcrop, etc.)
- Consider natural play elements for a range of ages and abilities that are designed both for imaginative play and to reflect the character of the park. Look for opportunities for intergenerational programming.

Wet meadow outdoor classroom.

Woodland outdoor learning.

Nature play.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION & PLAY



Water & Play

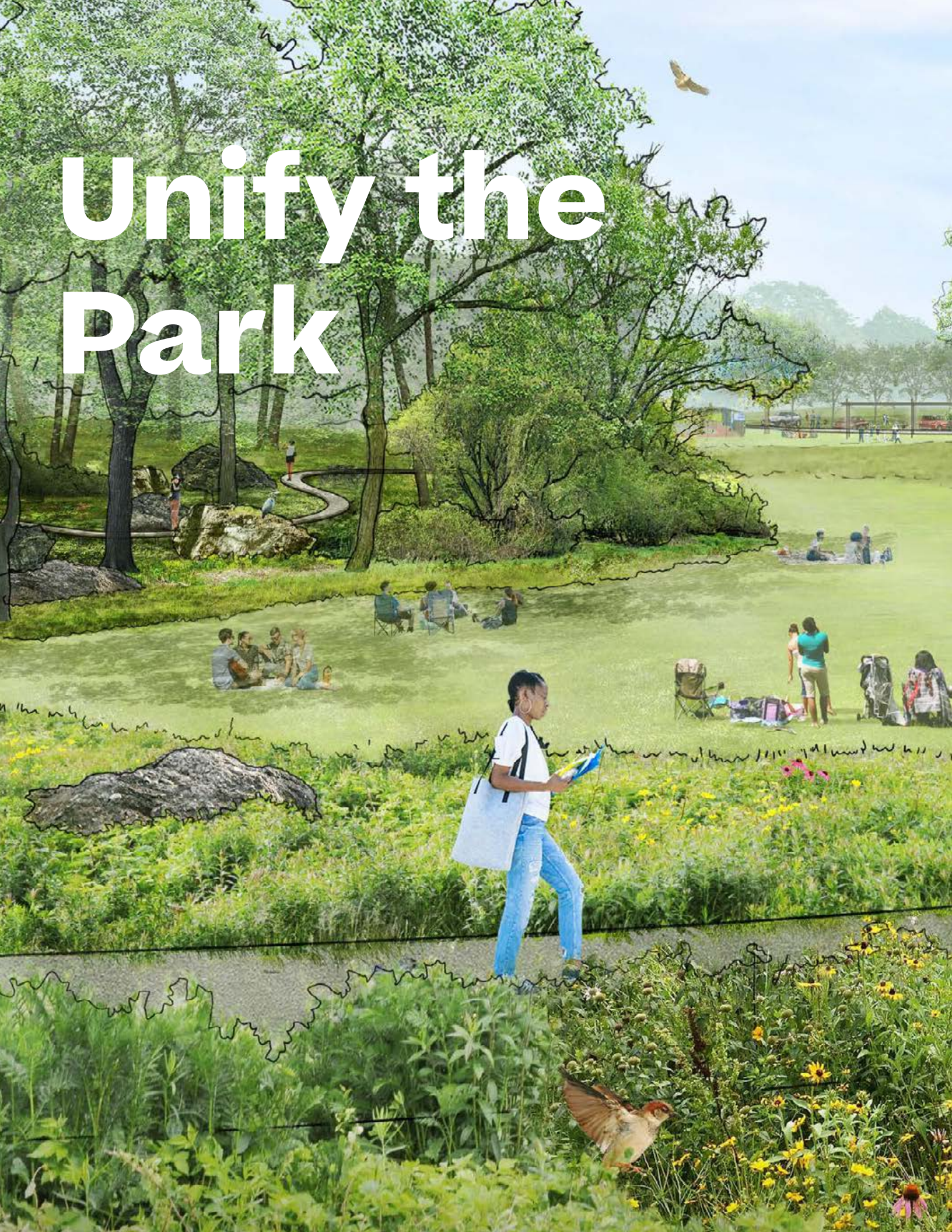
1. El Parquesito de la Hermandad
2. The Bear Dens Splash Pad
3. Long Crouch Woods Nature Play
4. Tiffany Moore Tot Lot
5. American Legion Playground

Outdoor Education

1. Peabody Circle Amphitheater Seating
2. Wet Meadow Outdoor Classroom
3. Rock Morton Forest Classroom
4. Scarboro Pond Landings
5. Ellicott Stream Crossing
6. The Wilderness Forest Room

Rock Morton

Rock Morton sits within a unique and relatively undisturbed pocket of woodland in the park. Filled with heritage trees and evergreen canopy, and a lack of invasive plants, it presents a nearby opportunity for classroom excursions for hands-on observation and learning. It also serves as an important buffer from the maintenance yard activities, immersing the nearby Circuit Loop and Scarboro Pond within the park.


Unify the Park

Unify the Park
Recommendations

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A Short History of Landscape Change
Use Impacts Character


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LIVING WITH THE LAND
Circa 12,000 years ago to 1630s

The land that is Franklin Park today first came into existence about 12,000 years ago when the last ice receded from the landscape. The resulting landscape (now known as the Boston Basin) was one of gentle forested slopes, rivers, marshes, and most notably smooth-soil covered drumlin hills, which punctuate the site of the park. Native People lived with and worked this land for thousands of years before European settlers arrived in the 1600's -- and still do today.

COLONIAL SETTLERS
1630s - 1850s

Following the creation of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, Roxbury (which includes present day West Roxbury and Jamaica Plain) was established as a rural outpost of Boston. The natural resources of the area, including arable land and timber, made it attractive to settlers. Much of the gently sloping land within what would become Franklin Park was cleared to support farming and grazing, as small farms began to dot the landscape.

THE PARK'S GENERAL PLAN
1895 - 1910

Woodlands and meadows played a character-defining role in The General Plan for Franklin Park, setting the park experience apart from the developing city and towns nearby. During the park's construction, masses of second growth woods punctuated by rocky ledges and large boulders were supplemented by the intentional planting of new canopy and understory vegetation annually. Large open grasslands were created to host both active and passive programs, and offer long views.

4

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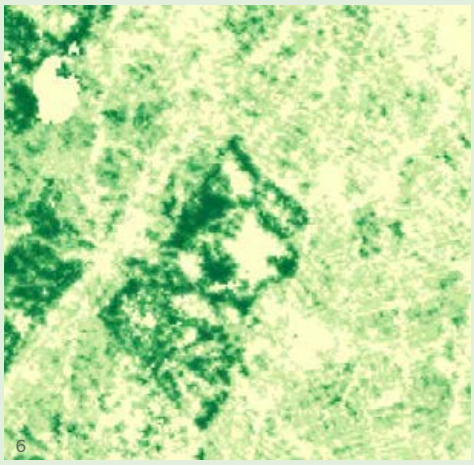

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CANOPY GROWTH
1910-1930

Though much of the park's tree planting was young material, the oaks, beeches, maples, pines, and hemlocks among other species matured with rapid growth, soon taking on a character similar to the woodlands that would have existed on the site pre-settlement. New program introduced in the park's open meadows, most notable being the golf course in the center, altered the overall experience of the park's landscape.

NATURAL SYSTEMS IN DECLINE
1930 - 2022

As City priorities and neighborhood demographics shifted, investment in Franklin Park declined dramatically. Insufficient budget allocations for the maintenance of the park, including systematic tree care and next-generation planting was neglected, resulting in large single-aged woodlands crowded with a largely invasive understory. More recently, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy has begun to support the park's canopy through increased pruning and new canopy tree planting.

LIVING INFRASTRUCTURE
Looking Forward

The park's woodlands play a more critical role in the Boston landscape than ever before in the face of habitat loss and climate change. They lower temperatures, clean air and water, provide critical habitat, and contribute to our mental and physical health. A concerted effort and investment is needed to improve the health of the urban canopy to sustain this resource long into the future for generations to come.

What We Heard
Balance Ecology & Experience

COMMUNITY NEEDS & WISHES

"Restoring and maintaining the natural features of the park - trees, plants, habitats for birds, is top priority."

"I think more needs to be done, or prioritized, to improve the ecological health of the park. This is the most pressing issue for our city at this moment in history."

"What is most wonderful about Franklin Park is that much of it is wild and relatively untouched. Don't ruin that. Boston has plenty of lovely sculpted gardens that entice the masses. It has only one Franklin Park...It's the only place in Boston of this size and kind."

"Nature in this park has been long neglected. If you did nothing more than care for trees, shrubs, get rid of invasives, and create native plant habitats, I would be thrilled."

"I think that care for the flora across the park is important, but also important is keeping the wild aspect of some of the woodlands, since that brings a rare bit of wild nature into the city!"

"Please do remove invasive species from the woodlands, but care should be taken to preserve the 'wild' and adventurous spirit of the network of informal trails and footpaths in this area. Do not manicure or formalize this magical space!"

"Plant more trees that are native to the area. Please increase flowers for bee and butterfly populations."

"The park is a place to be in nature and enhance the ecological value - make sure that continues to be central to the plan."

"Increasing biodiversity throughout the park and protecting existing ecology should be prioritized in all its forms."

"I hope for us to maintain a healthy environment in absorbing the beauty and love nature provides, not only for us, but for future generations to come."

VALUES & GOALS

PARK CHARACTER → Preserve the park's natural character & enhance its beauty and seasonal display.

HABITAT & NATURAL SYSTEMS → Implement park-wide strategies to make ecological improvements including habitat, stormwater management, and biodiversity.

PUBLIC HEALTH → Protect the park's ecological infrastructure so that it may serve its neighbors for decades to come.

ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT → Use innovative management and maintenance strategies that increase the standard level of care for the park's many landscape types.

CLIMATE CHANGE → Promote resilient and self-sustaining park ecologies.

RECOMMENDATIONS: ←

REGENERATE THE WOODLANDS

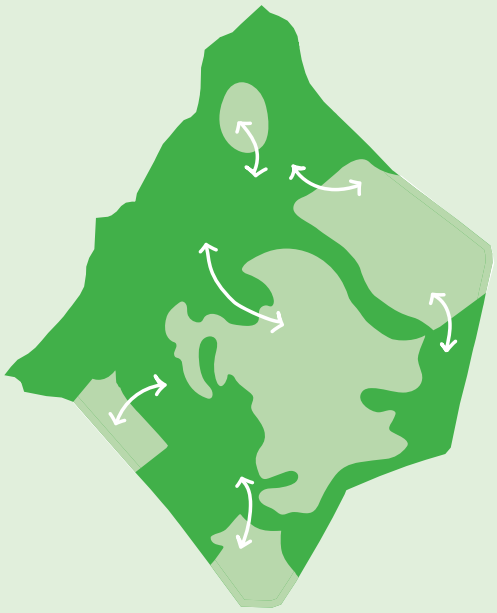
PRESERVE HERITAGE & LEGACY TREES

INTRODUCE BUFFERS & REDESIGN LAWNS TO INCREASE DURABILITY & DIVERSITY

REDIRECT, COLLECT, & CLEAN STORMWATER TO STRENGTHEN WATER SYSTEMS & IMPROVE DRAINAGE

The Big Picture
Recognize the Resource

The park's size alone – 500+ acres – makes it a unique ecological resource within the city. At the center of a diverse set of neighborhoods, it is also a critical public health resource. The city must make a significant commitment to return the park's habitats to health. It must also create strong partnerships with in-park stakeholders to promote a high standard of natural resource management and with community members to offer more opportunities for education and park stewardship .

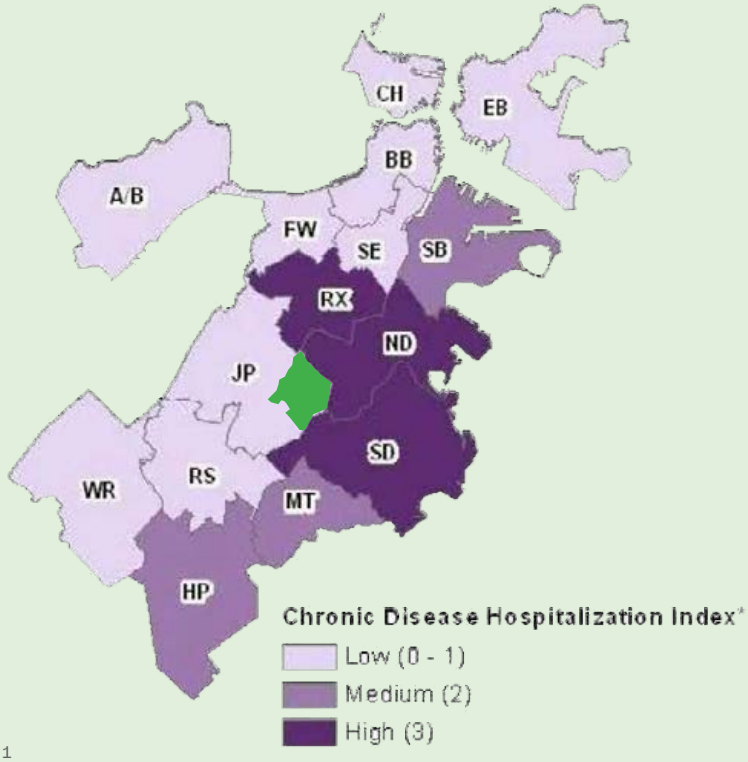


Unifying the Approach to Management

The park's ecological resources are essential to its longevity and resilience. While many stakeholders have a footprint in the park today, management strategies must work across boundaries to unify disparate governance to achieve mutually beneficial results with the whole park in mind.

Protecting Public Health Infrastructure

The impact of our environment is felt in our own health and comfort. Many of the park's surrounding communities suffer from increased rates of chronic illness, generational trauma and grief, and the effects of over-crowded housing. In addition to the park serving as an important place to escape, build relationships, and foster a sense of community and belonging, studies have shown that human contact with nature improves health outcomes, including reduced stress, better sleep, reduced depression and anxiety, lower blood pressure, and reduced diabetes and mortality.



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Proposed Ecological Types

- Woodland Opening
- Oak Pine Savanna Summit
- Oak Hickory Woodland Slope
- Beech Forest
- Mixed Forest Edge
- Wet Woodland
- Athletic Field or Lawn
- Dry Meadow Buffer
- Dry Meadow & Links
- New Wet Meadow
- Existing Wet Meadow
- Scarboro Pond Edge & Marsh
- Open Water

Managing & Extending Habitat

The park is comprised of over ten distinct ecological zones, but many, especially its woodlands, are in decline. Restoring robust ecologies has the potential to increase resilience in the face of climate change, increase wildlife habitat, and stabilize an invaluable public health resource for its neighbors.

Capturing & Directing Water

An aging drainage system leaves many of the park's high-traffic areas unusable during rain events. Runoff carrying debris and pollutants discharges directly into the pond or the city's drainage system, impacting both water quality and flooding downstream. The park's significant acreage offers opportunities to manage and infiltrate the park's own stormwater.

Olmsted's Toolkit
Structuring Experience

At the root of Olmsted's design philosophy was the belief that open space could positively impact a community's mental and physical health. Using planting, among other design strategies, he elevated the site's characteristics to enhance experience. Because many of the final planting decisions were made on site in collaboration with Olmsted's assistant landscape gardner, WIlliam Fischer, there are few records documenting the planting design. However, some key principles are evident. Canopy trees were arranged in multiple ways (as dense woodlands, open groves, and ordered allées) to structure different kinds of park settings. The early park landscape also included a more pervasive understory layer that added visual and spatial interest, and a diversity of planted character and habitat that is lacking today. Critical to the overall experience of Franklin Park was its large scale. The 500+ acres allowed him to design drastically different landscapes, from immersive woodlands to expansive open meadows.

UNDERSTORY | A LOST LAYER

Understory Trees & Shrubs

This layer of planting was typically ornamental, herbaceous and often had a flowering component. Large drifts of understory plants added both seasonal interest and a more intimate sense of enclosure, and further evoked the New England landscape character.


1


2


3

CANOPY | PARK FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS

Specimen Tree in Open Area

Standalone specimen trees were planted for the enjoyment of their beauty and unique character throughout the park. Their presence also brings shade and scale to vast open spaces.

4

Groupings & Groves

Groups of multiple trees framed open views across the park's rolling meadow. They also helped to differentiate foreground from background, giving a sense of scale to these large open areas.

5

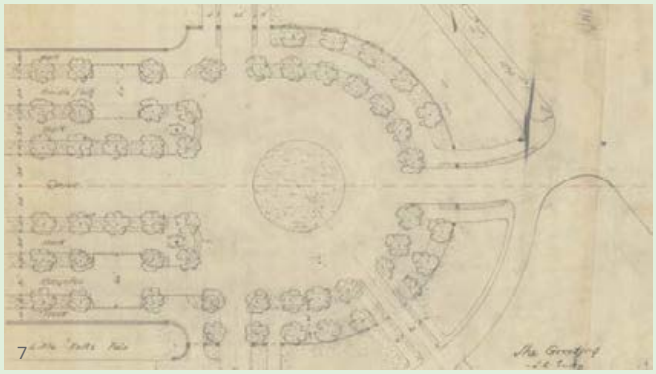
Woodlands

Much of the woodlands were purposefully planted, though their arrangement is more natural and included an understory layer. They provided contrast and backdrop to the central open meadow and created an immersive and shaded separation between the park and the city.

6

Lines & Allée

More purposeful planting of canopy allées edge significant promenades, separating modes of travel, and providing both important shade and a sense of order and formality.



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Renew the Resource
Regenerate the Woodlands

Established woodlands have a major presence in the mosaic of park's ecosystems, covering about half of the overall footprint. If not carefully calibrated, programmatic uses can negatively impact these significant habitats. Innovative management and restoration strategies must be employed to balance community use and enjoyment with the long-term health and resilience of the ecosystem.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Climate Change & Adaptation**
- **Pests & Disease**
- **Invasive Species**
- **Single-Age Canopy & Lack of Species Diversity**

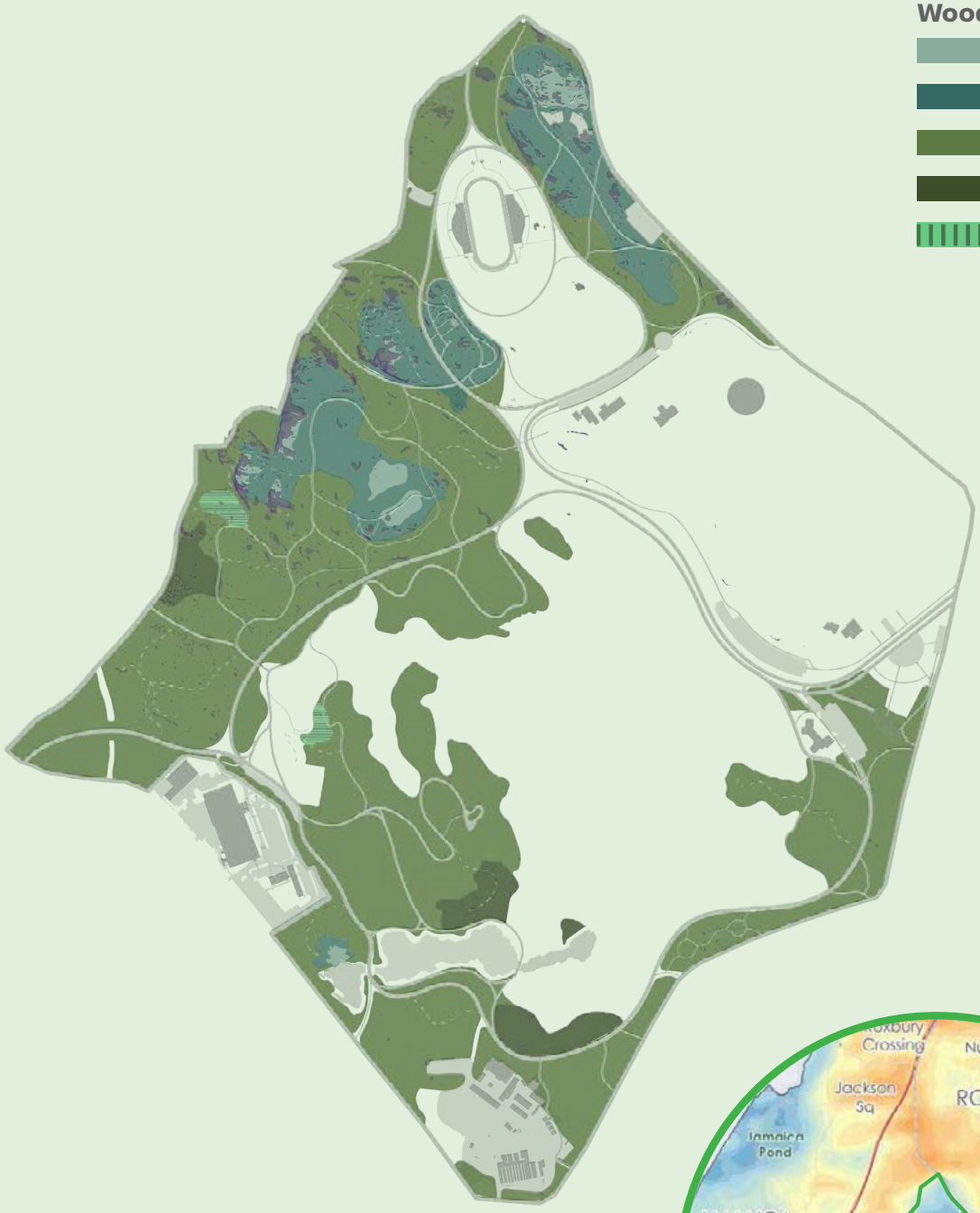
RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

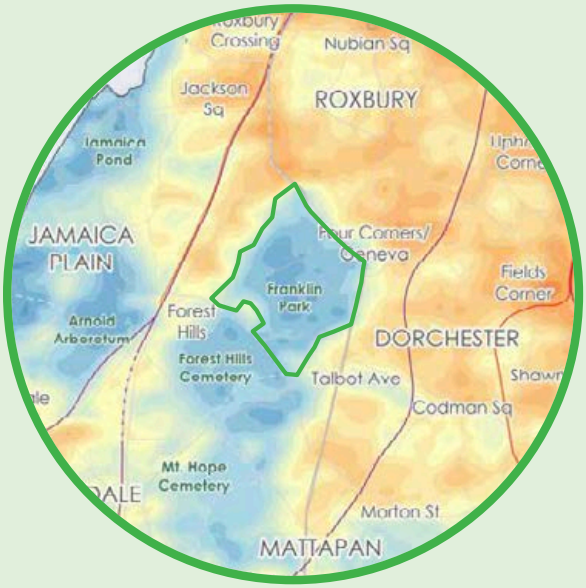
- **Target Key Pests & Diseases to Protect Tree Species at Risk**
- **Remove Invasive Species to Kick-Start Natural Regeneration**
- **Reconnect Woodland Cores to Improve Valuable Habitat**
- **Reforest Decommissioned Trails to Increase Diversity**
- **Plant Along Circulation to Enhance Experience & Habitat**

Forest opening

Oak Pine Savanna Summit

Japanese knotweed, an invasive plant





Cooling Effects of the Urban Canopy

Due to it's hundreds of acres of woodlands and open space, Franklin Park, provides a cooling effect on nearby blocks, reducing temperatures by 5-7° F. As you move further out into the neighborhood, places like Roxbury experience elevated temperatures. Woodlands also serve as an important shaded escape from neighborhoods that lack sufficient canopy cover, like those to the east. [4]

Indigo Blunting

Ecosystem Health

Monitor habitat for the presence of indicator species, which can signal a change in the biological condition and health of a particular ecosystem.

The Wilderness

A Balancing Act:

How can woodlands be managed for ecological health and community use?

1 Remove Invasive Species

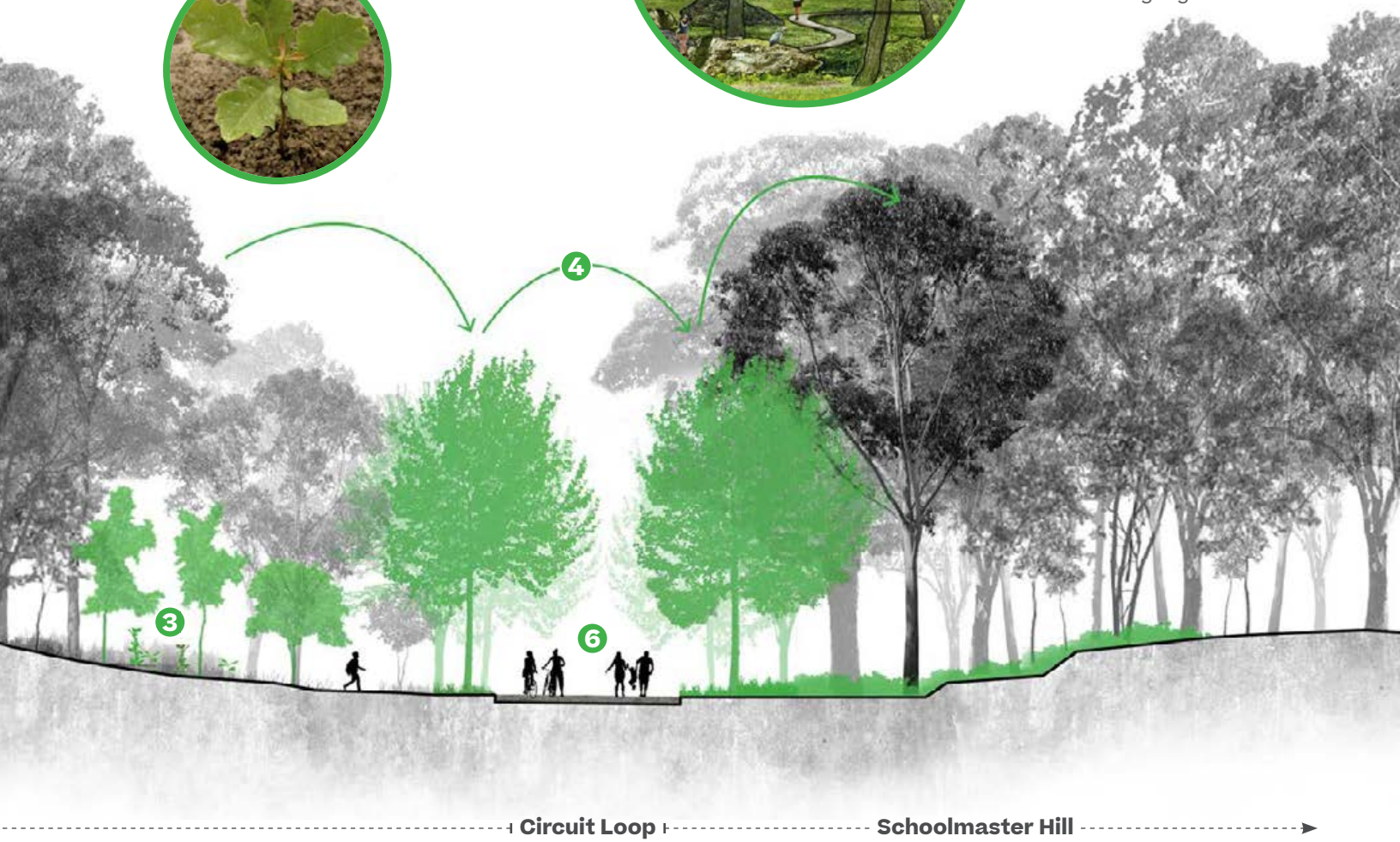
Address colonization of invasive shrubs and trees that are outcompeting native plants to jumpstart natural regeneration of the woodlands.

2 Thin Understory & Open Views

Selective thinning of vegetation not only allows more light to reach the ground layer of the forest, increasing natural regeneration, it also allows important viewsheds to be reclaimed, enhancing visitor experience.

Protect the Resource

Controlling circulation through ecologically sensitive areas will be critical for maintaining ecosystem health. Educate the public about the impacts of going 'off path' through informative signage.



3 Seed & Plant Native and Evergreen Species

Following invasive removal efforts, increase diversity for improved ecosystem health through seeding and planting native species. Increase critical year-round habitat by integrating evergreen species in new planting efforts.

4 Reconnect Woodland Cores

Join select critical areas of woodlands separated by major circulation routes by interplanting trees to fill large gaps in the canopy habitat and/or narrowing paved paths.

5 Minimize Circulation Paths

Decrease opportunities for invasive species repopulation by minimizing the number of paths and trails throughout natural areas and reforesting decommissioned trails. Keep path widths to a minimum to preserve important habitat.

6 Balance Use with Ecological Health

Concentrate heavier impact modes of movement -- like biking, running and walking -- along the new Circuit Loop. Limit program in the woodlands to 'lighter touch' activities like hiking, bird watching, and taking in park views to preserve the long-term health and resilience of these ecosystems.

Protect Tree Species at Risk
Target Key Pests & Diseases

Deferred management of pests threatens the health of vital woodlands. With increasing temperatures and global movement of plants, new and more dangerous pests are emerging yearly. Left untreated, pests and diseases can impact entire stands of important woodland habitat, leaving them in full decline. New planting strategies must account for existing pest pressures, like the hemlock woolly adelgid and the Bleeding Beech Canker and Beech Bark Disease, and anticipate new ones (like Oak Wilt, impacting Red Oaks which make up much of the park's canopy, and Beech Leaf Diseases) that may impact forest composition and adaptation over the next 100 years.

PEST & DISEASE CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS

Assess Significant Threats

- Conduct a site-wide Insect and Disease Inventory to identify key insect and pest populations
- Engage a certified arborist to Inspect and monitor trees prone to detrimental pests annually.
- Document conditions and continue to update tree care planning documents in conjunction with the Parkwide Ecological Management Plan; prioritize strategies that align with current and future management goals and evaluate the cost/benefit of investment required to control persistent pests.

Treat Pests & Increase Defences

- Apply modern treatments, including systemic stem applications for hemlock woolly adelgid, which are a cost effective way to retain important Hemlock stands in the park's woodlands.
- Air spade, mulch with composted hardwood chips, and prevent pooling water at the base of the trunk to help Beech trees defend against Bleeding Beech Canker and Beech Bark Disease infections that thrive in water-logged areas.

Prevent Decline

- Improve growing conditions for high-risk specimens and groups of trees under environmental stress (soil compaction, drought, and salt runoff) by remediating soil, surface mulching, and spot watering.

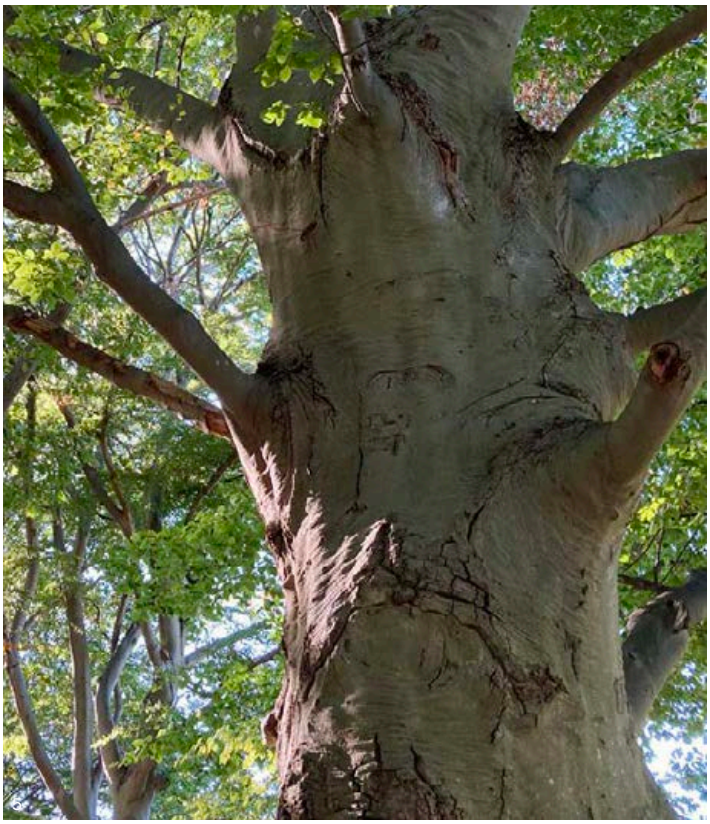
Identify Trees for Removal

- Through the tree inventory work, specimens may be identified for removal if they are threatening or negatively impacting the health of tree communities or larger ecosystems within the park and beyond. Removal and replanting may or may not be considered depending on the context of the infected tree.

Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), an invasive aphid-like insect, are very small (1.5 mm), but are often recognizable by the white woolly masses they form on hemlock needles. They cause widespread death and decline in Hemlocks.

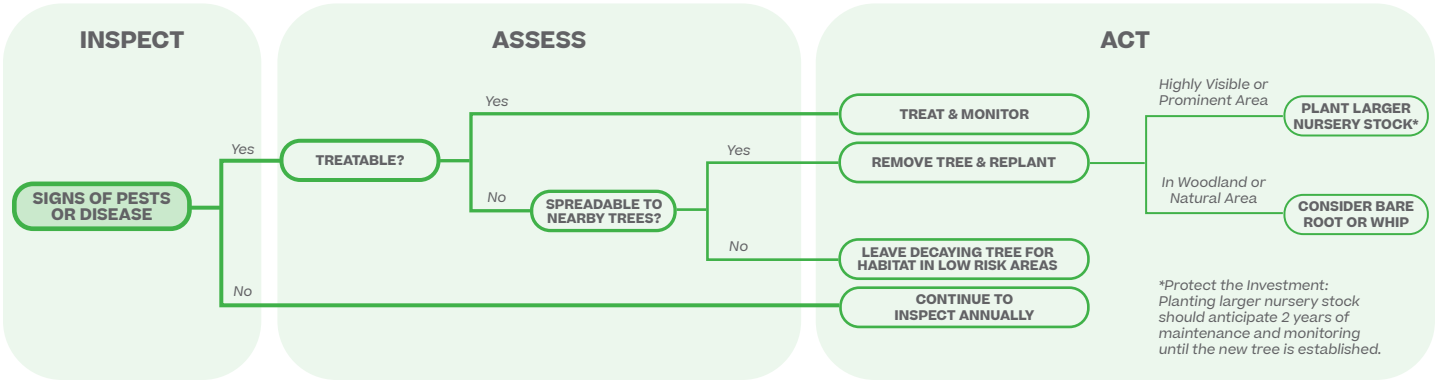
American Beech are susceptible to Beech Bark Disease, caused by an insect and fungus which colonize wounds. European Beech are susceptible to the Bleeding Beech Canker, caused by a fungus which attacks buttress roots and the lower trunk, causing the crown of the tree to thin and die back. It is recognizable by the "bleeding" fluid and surrounding decay. Disease prevention is the best strategy for preserving these trees.

Hemlocks are shade-tolerant evergreens. Protecting these trees will be critical in augmenting the evergreen habitat of the woodlands.



Some of the beech trees on-site are as old as the park. Preserving these groves will require special attention and care, as well as planting ahead to establish the next generation of this treasured community.

TREE REMOVAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS



Kick-Start Natural Regeneration
Remove Invasive Species

Invasive plants are typically introduced from other regions and usually spread quickly in their new habitat, out-competing native plants for space, nutrients, and light. In Franklin Park, years of little active management and an excessive number of trails has increased the spread of invasive plant populations. Removing these invasive plant colonies is the first step in jumpstarting natural regeneration to improve the health of the woodlands.

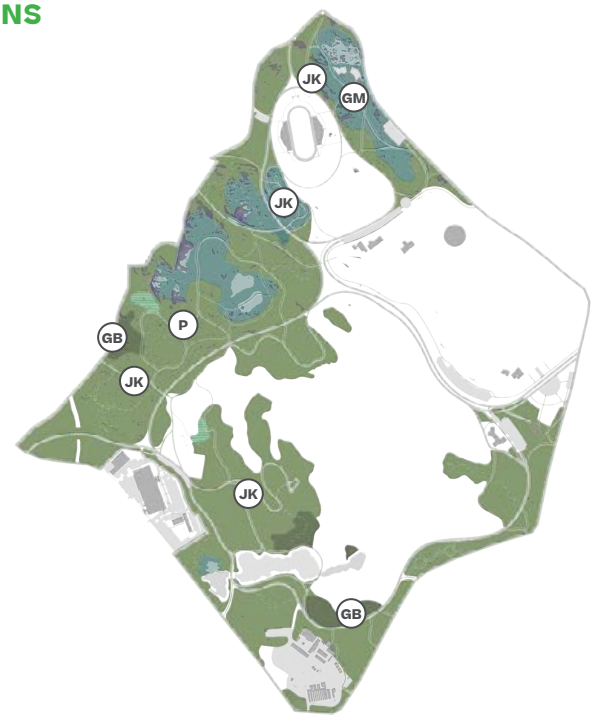
INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Identify Priority Areas

- In order to develop a workplan and successfully execute an invasive removal process, critical areas for management must be identified, and detailed and updated records must be maintained to aid in the process.
- Decisions around funding, staffing, and other resources will be based on an assessment of urgency and the possibility of further expansion of invasive plant colonies into existing healthy stands.
- Certain conditions (like newly colonized patches within broken woodlands, or those that appear to be locally expanding and coalescing near uncolonized or high-use areas that are susceptible to human activity) facilitate an accelerated spread of invasive colonies; these areas should be understood when deciding where to begin the invasive removal effort.

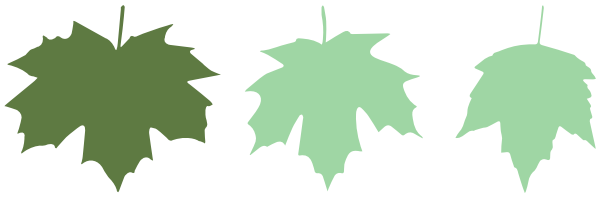
Prepare for a Long-Term Investment

- Committing to this process is a multi-year effort, with a larger up-front investment. Costs will decrease over time, but some level of monitoring and management will always be necessary to maintain a healthy woodland ecosystem.
- To make the most of time and resources, it is recommended to focus investment in one area first, slowly moving through the park, rather than a piecemeal approach.



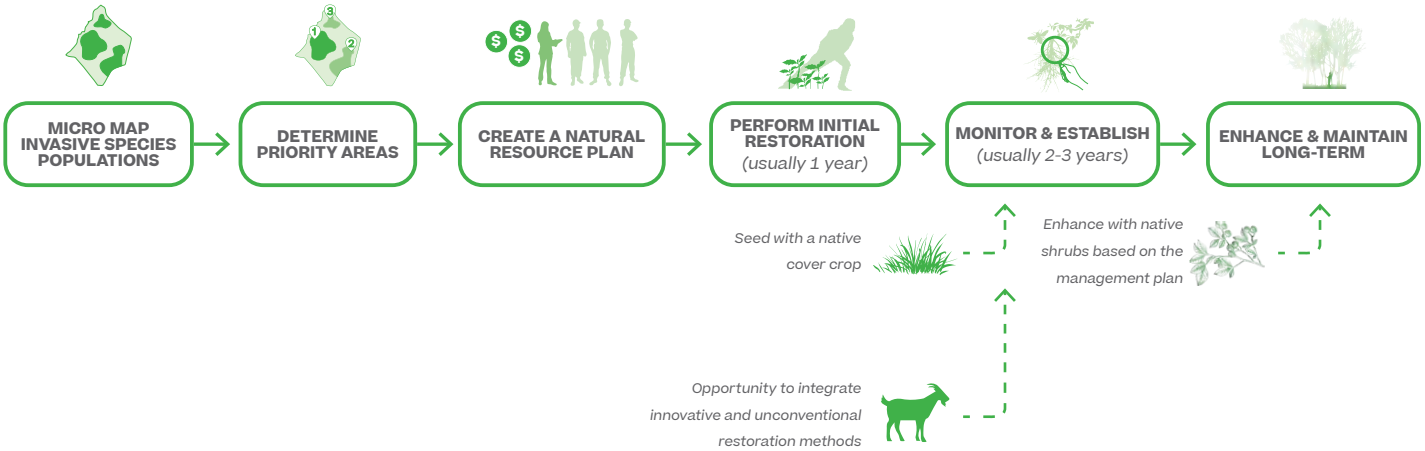
MAPLE TREE IDENTIFICATION TIPS

Norway Maples, which are invasive in woodland settings, have leaves that are usually wider than they are long with five distinct lobes. Sugar maple leaves aren't as wide and often have three distinct lobes and two much smaller lobes near the stem. Red Maples have three major lobes.



Norway Maple *(invasive)* | Sugar Maple *(native)* | Red Maple *(native)*

PROCESS TO MANAGE INVASIVE SPECIES



CRITICAL INVASIVE SPECIES IN THE PARK

A range of invasive plants exist throughout the park today. Below is a selection of the dominant species observed.

Norway Maple

A large deciduous tree that inhabits forests and forest edges; tolerant of many growing environments; produces a great deal of shade, making it difficult for other plants to grow beneath them; spreads by seed which are produced in high volumes.

Japanese Knotweed

An upright, herbaceous perennial with oval / heart-shaped leaves and bamboo-like stems; can grow to be 15' tall; thrives in disturbed areas and spreads rapidly via an extensive root system; can tolerate deep shade.

Glossy Buckthorn

A single or multi-stem shrub or small tree with shiny leaves; spreads by seed, which are produced in high volumes; shade tolerant but frequently invades sunny, open areas or path edges.

Garlic Mustard

A low-growing invasive herb with kidney-shaped leaves and small white flowers; found in forests and forest edges; emerges earlier in the spring than most native plants, outcompeting them for moisture and nutrients.

Periwinkle

A fast growing, creeping groundcover that forms dense mats along the forest floor, displacing native species; evergreen, with springtime blue, lavender, or white flower.

Improve Valuable Habitat
Reconnect Woodland Cores

Major roads and paths have subdivided what was once larger stands of woodlands into smaller areas, leaving insufficient space for the animals that rely on interior habitat away from people and cars. Consolidating programming and circulation to reconnect critical habitat areas, and increasing diversity of the woodlands through planting a variety of tree types and sizes will help stabilize the forest ecology and better support a healthy ecosystem.

WOODLAND HABITAT RECOMMENDATIONS

Reconnect Woodland Cores

- Join discrete areas of woodland, separated by Circuit Drive and other primary park paths (like through Scarboro Hill) by interplanting with trees to fill large gaps in the woodland canopy.

Promote Biodiversity & Sustainability

- Currently, Red Oak dominates planting in the park. Replanting strategies should aim to increase age and species diversity site-wide; species selected should be adaptive to the future forecasts of climate change to ensure longevity.
- In areas where irrigation is not possible or low-maintenance areas, like utility areas, woodland edges, and less formally used areas of the park, experiment with small, bare root whips that require a lower investment in acquisition and installation.

Look to Historic & Native Plants

- Based on the Olmsted planting lists available, there is an opportunity to incorporate trees that hold both historic significance and add to the native palette of the park landscape.
- Consider species that are not only historically appropriate, but also increase park diversity or build upon small stands of unique tree communities in the park.
- Develop data-driven methodology for evaluating the effects of climate change on significant woodland tree species. Include forward-looking management strategies that anticipate shifting composition, and evaluate actively planting species that are not currently hardy.

Canopy Tree Species

** Identifies trees included in the Olmsted plant palette*

American Beech *
Fagus grandifolia

American Holly
Ilex opaca

American Sycamore
Platanus occidentalis

Black Cherry *
Prunus serotina

Eastern Hemlock *
Tsuga canadensis

Eastern Red Cedar *
Juniperus virginiana

Pin Oak *
Quercus palustrius

Shagbark Hickory *
Carya ovata

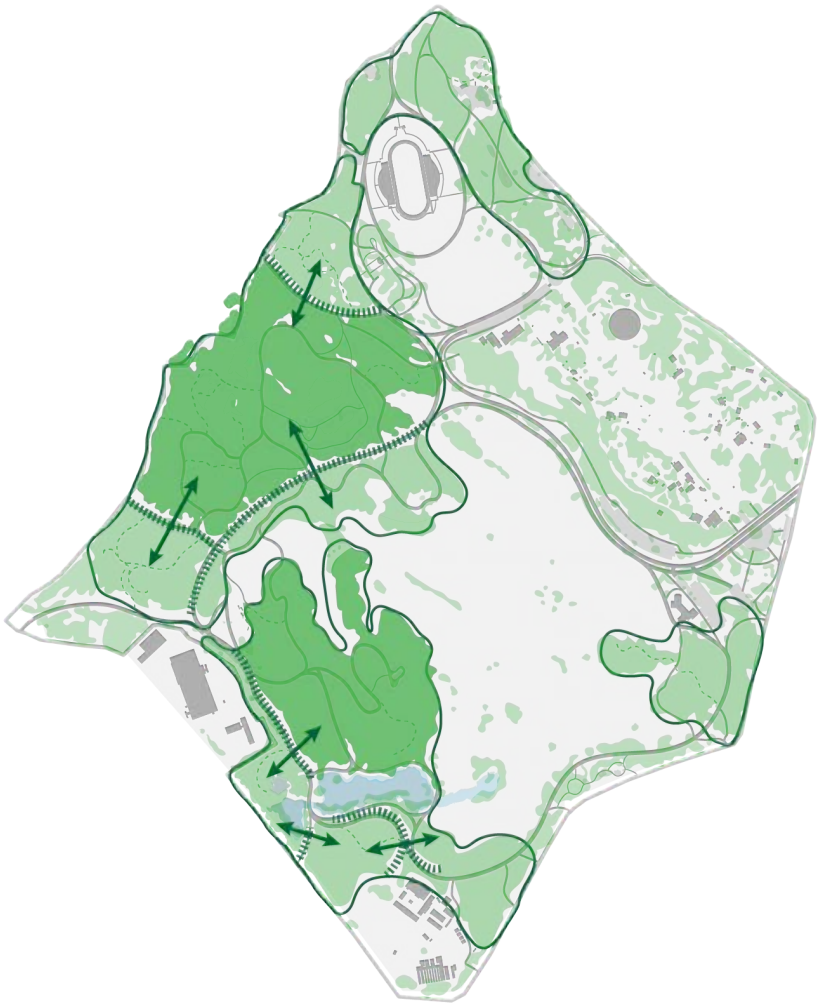
Silver Maple *
Acer saccharinum

Sweet Birch *
Betula lenta

Tupelo
Nyssa sylvatica

White Oak *
Quercus alba

OPPORTUNITIES TO RECONNECT HABITAT

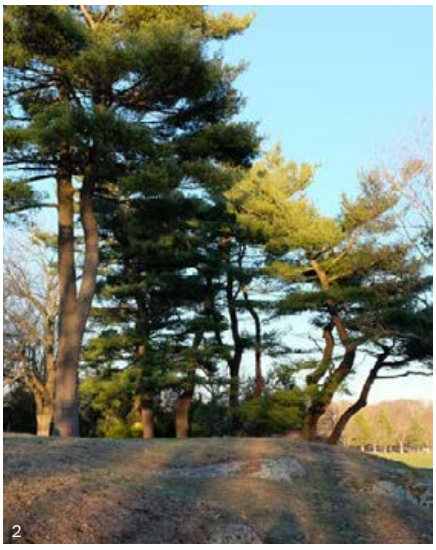


Woodland Cores

Core Woodland Areas

Discrete Woodland Areas

Opportunity to reconnect woodland canopy through interplanting



(Left to Right) Tupelo grove at the edge of Scarboro Pond, mature pines on Schoolmaster Hill, heritage Beech trees along the Circuit Loop.

Increase Diversity
Reforest Decommissioned Trails

Within the woodlands, primarily in The Wilderness, an excessive number of trails has encouraged the spread of invasive plants, leading to decreased plant diversity and the inability for tree canopy to regenerate. As part of the larger ecosystem restoration efforts, the number of trails will have to be reduced and reforestation efforts will need to follow. Reforestation strategies can bring improved diversity to the woodlands at the ground and shrub layers with low investment.

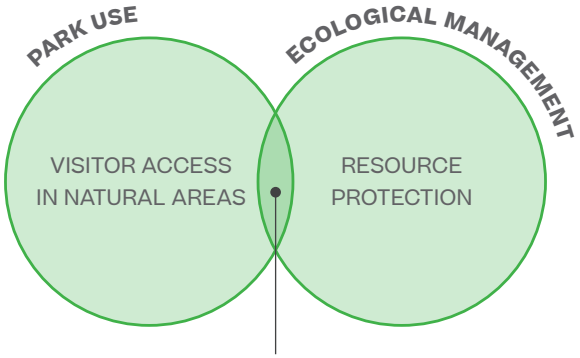
TRAIL RESTORATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Reforest Decommissioned Trails

- Decommission excessive and redundant trails in The Wilderness that facilitate the spread of invasive species.
- Reforest the old trails and slopes with a shade-tolerant forest seed mix.
- Plant shrubs and whips where decommissioned trails meet existing trails to discourage human use that can hinder reforestation efforts. Use signage to educate the public about the importance of staying on the paths in natural areas.
- Use remaining trails and roads to define management units within forested areas.

Increase Diversity with Low Investment

- To provide a food source for animals and visual interest for park visitors, include flowering and fruiting shrubs, like Wild Blueberry, in trail reforestation efforts; Include evergreen plants, like Juniper and Pine to provide valuable evergreen habitat missing in the park today.
- Protect shrub and whip planting from rodent and deer browsing during establishment.



Plant Palette Seasonal Variation

flowering and berry-producing understory trees and shrubs

** identifies trees included in the Olmsted plant palette*

Witchhazel *
Hamamelis virginiana L.

Maple-Leaved Viburnum *
Viburnum acerifolium

Black Huckleberry
Gaylussacia baccata

Lowbush Blueberry
Vaccinium angustifolium

Plants to Leave in the Past

Not all plants are suitable in today's park landscape. Plants should be selected with a critical eye and it is not recommended to incorporate plants that are considered invasive or unsuitable for this climate, including any cultivar or hybrid of any prohibited plants. These species, which were used in the past, demonstrate traits that render them undesirable for planting in the park today:

Norway maple
Acer platanoides

Bell's honeysuckle
Lonicera x bella

Barberry bush
Berberis vulgaris

European buckthorn
Frangula alnus

Burning bush
Euonymus alatus

SIMPLIFY TRAIL CIRCULATION

Wilderness Paths for Reforestation

Proposed and existing to remain trails

Existing trails to be removed and reforested
(trails suggested for removal and reforestation are based on the historic plan trail alignment, opportunities to improve wayfinding and control the spread of invasive species; final trail system to be confirmed as part of the future ecological restoration plan)

Woodland canopy

TRAIL REFORESTATION PROCESS

Remove & Stabilize

Remove the trail path material (paving, base, etc.), rototill the soil, and immediately seed with a native woodland cover crop to stabilize the soil and provide vegetative cover, and tamp the seed; use erosion control on slopes.

Deter Human Use

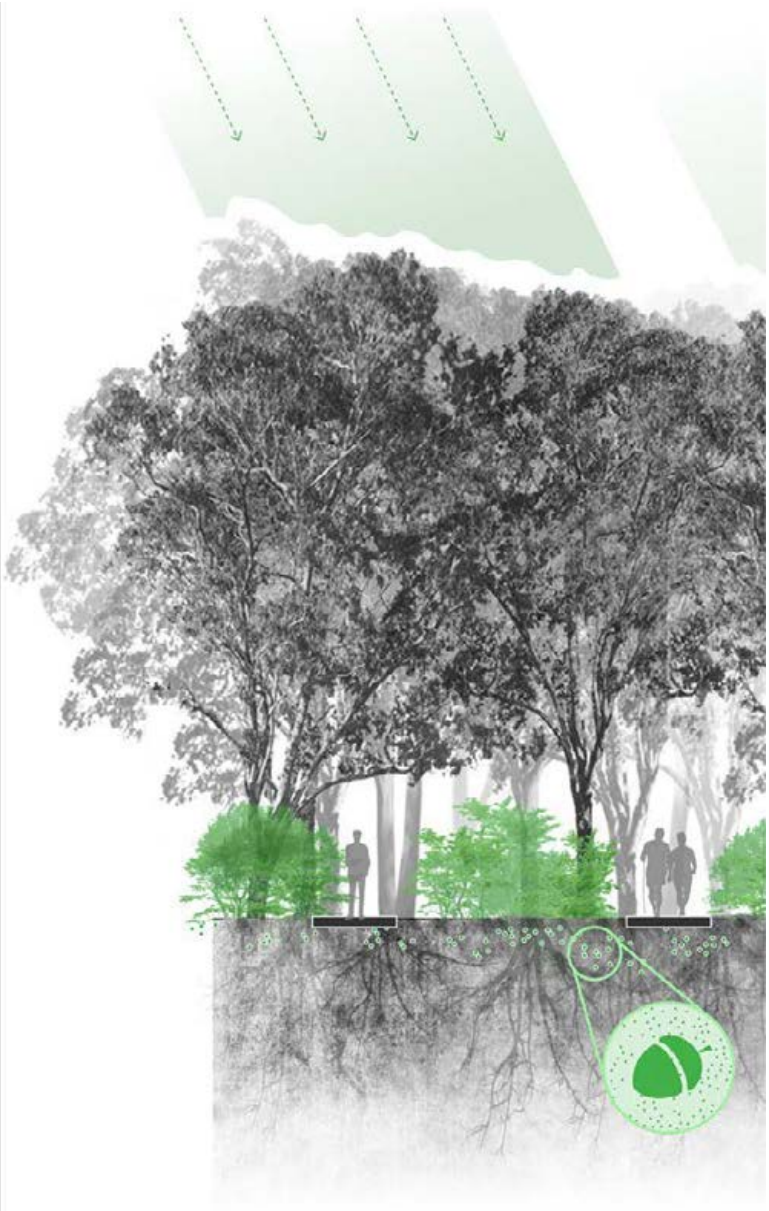
At the time of path removal and seeding, plant the ends of decommissioned trails where they meet active ones with shrubs and whips to deter human use; select flowering or berry-producing understory to increase diversity and provide a food source.

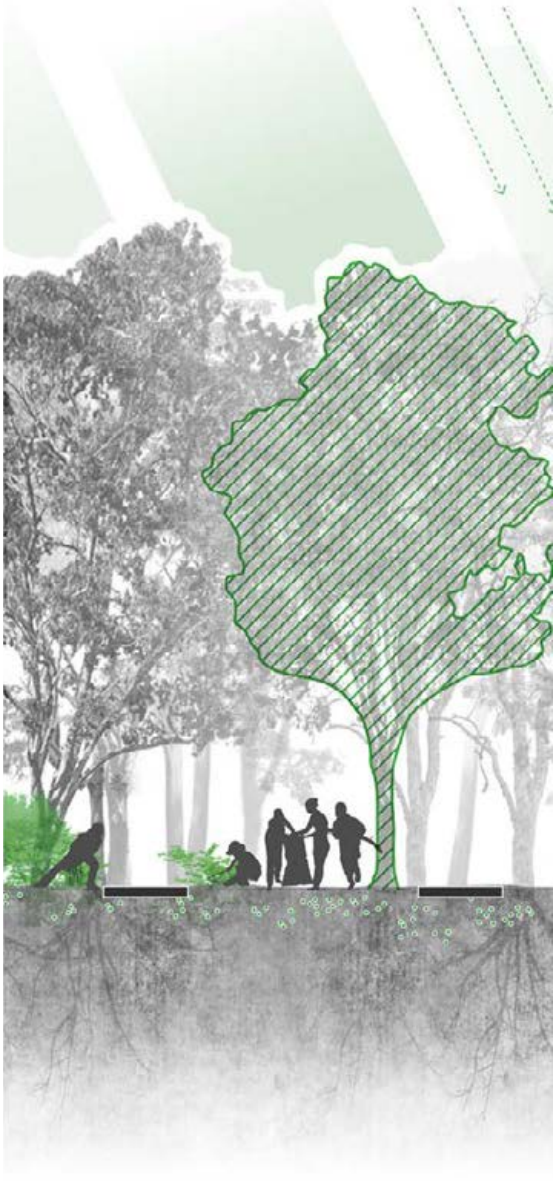
Re-established Cover

Over time, cover crops and shrubs and whips will fill in and mature in the place of previous trails and paths, blending with the established woodlands on either side.

Manage Natural Regeneration

The Life of an Acorn





Year 1

Existing Park Woodlands

When invasive shrubs and trees dominate the woodland, it decreases light levels and limits the growing conditions for other plants. The resulting ecosystem is fragile and without a reliable next generation of canopy trees able to emerge from the seedbank below the surface.

Invasive Species Removal & Understory Thinning

Increasing light levels on the woodland floor is critical to activating native seeds within the soil. Two strategies — removal of invasive species and selective tree removal — will encourage the natural regeneration of the extensive oak-hickory and beech canopy.

Green Jobs Opportunity
The new city workforce development program, Power Corp, will expand access to green jobs through paid training and hands-on work, with a focus on tree care, urban wilds maintenance, and park rangers work.

Year 2-3

Seeding & Sunlight

Bare ground, resulting from invasive removal, should be seeded with a native mix to prevent recolonization of invasive plants. As light reaches the forest floor, the seedbank of acorns laying dormant below the surface is activated and able to grow.

Year 4+

Natural Regeneration & Planting

A new generation of canopy trees emerges, creating a more resilient, mixed aged woodland ecosystem. Diversity can be supplemented by planting fruiting and flowering trees & shrubs, and continued management through thinning over time will be necessary to maintain the regenerative cycle.

Enhance Experience & Habitat
Plant Along Circulation

Planting that is distinct from the natural character of the woodlands brings further definition to the park's landscape. Using canopy trees to line primary paths brings a sense of scale, separates modes of travel, and adds to the urban forest. Understory planting can build seasonal interest. Incorporating different colors, textures, and sizes of understory trees and shrubs with sensitivity to composition, scale, and diversity will establish a multidimensional park environment, improve habitat, and provide an enriching experience for visitors throughout the year.

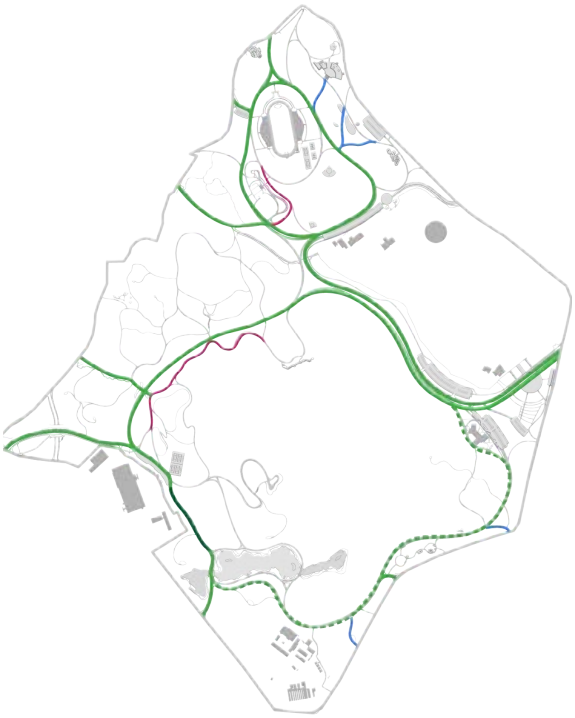
CIRCULATION PLANTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Use Canopy to Support Primary Paths

- Emphasize primary paths with canopy tree planting along their edges through the use of allées and more informal lines of trees to guide movement, create separation between modes of travel, and to provide shade for park visitors (see diagram to the right).
- Interplant existing allées and lines of trees to fill in gaps and extend the life of formal heritage tree planting in the park.
- Planting of large calliper nursery stock should be conducted as a formal effort and should be proceeded by design; quality plants and proper installation is necessary and 2 years of maintenance and monitoring should be anticipated until the new tree is established.

Add Seasonal Variation to the Landscape

- Strategically plant evergreen trees, and flowering understory trees and shrubs along popular pedestrian paths to generate visual interest and maximize their display as you move through the park; select plants that highlight the changing seasons throughout the year.
- Actively manage these zones in high use areas to prevent this ephemeral zone from succumbing to forest succession.



Allées & Tree Walks

- Existing Woodlands
- Existing Canopy Tree Lined Path
- Proposed Canopy Tree Lined Path
- Proposed Evergreen Edge
- Proposed Flowering Tree Walk
- Proposed Winter Interest Tree Walk

Flowering & Winter Interest Tree Species

** identifies trees included in the Olmsted plant palette*

Flowering Dogwood *
Cornus florida

Crabapple
Malus sp.

Cornelian Cherry
Cornus mas

Serviceberry *
Amelanchier canadensis

American Yew
Taxus canadensis

Horse Chestnut
Aesculus hippocastanum

Precedent images for canopy trees supporting park paths.

Protect Legacy
Preserve Heritage & Legacy Trees

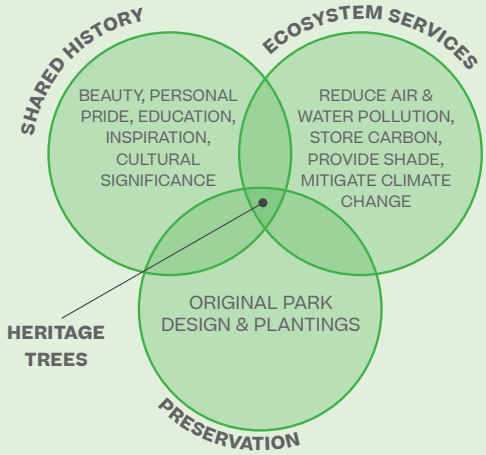
Many park visitors appreciate the beauty of mature canopy, both for their scale and the connection to previous generations they suggest. As heritage and legacy trees age or become damaged by pests, disease, or extreme weather, pruning, stabilization, and preventative measures must be taken to maintain ecological integrity, historic character, and safe conditions for visitors. Replanting efforts allow for diversification of the park's ecology, while adding species that carry historic significance.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Aging Canopy**
- **Deferred Care & Environmental Stress**
- **Pests & Diseases**

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Set Standards for Tree Care to Manage for Long-Term Stability**




1

Red Oaks on Scarboro Hill


2

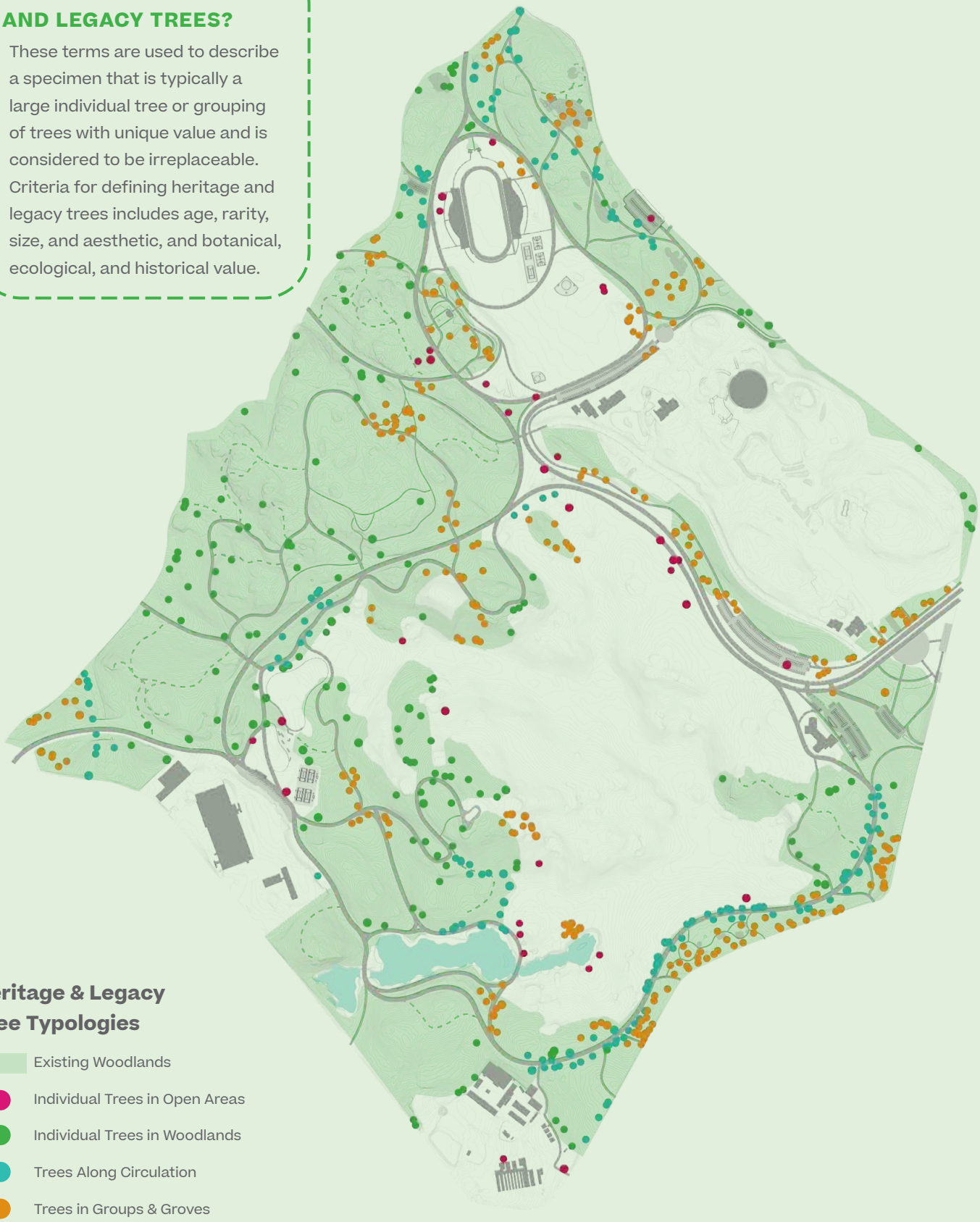
American Beech grove along American Legion Highway


3

Mature White Pines on Schoolmaster Hill

WHAT ARE HERITAGE AND LEGACY TREES?

These terms are used to describe a specimen that is typically a large individual tree or grouping of trees with unique value and is considered to be irreplaceable. Criteria for defining heritage and legacy trees includes age, rarity, size, and aesthetic, and botanical, ecological, and historical value.



Heritage & Legacy Tree Typologies

- Existing Woodlands
- Individual Trees in Open Areas
- Individual Trees in Woodlands
- Trees Along Circulation
- Trees in Groups & Groves

Legacy Trees are defined as 48”+ diameter, and Heritage Trees as 33”+ diameter.

WHY WORK WITH AN ARBORIST?

Arborists are professionals trained in the cultivation, management, and study of trees, shrubs, and other woody plants. They perform and assist with planting, pruning, tree removals, and preventative and emergency tree care.

Pruning for Habitat
Focus on preservation of stems or limb structures with cavities or large deadwood for animals to make their homes.

The Park Elders:
How can heritage trees be preserved for future generations?

1 Inspect & Monitor Heritage Trees
Use a certified arborist to conduct a risk assessment of the heritage trees in the park, documenting signs of pests or disease or structural instability. Evaluate high-priority trees annually and all others on a regular basis; update the management plan accordingly.

2 Take Preventative Measures
Identify, monitor, and treat signs of insects and disease, including Hemlock Wooly Adelgid and Beech Canker, and improve growing conditions for trees under environmental stress.

Preventative Care

Canker infections on Beech trees thrive in water-logged areas. Unlike many other tree diseases, it can be effectively treated and spread from one tree to the next is unlikely.

Stabilization for Longevity

Pruning, bracing, and cabling area all measures that may be necessary to stabilize an heritage tree as it ages.

3 Stabilize & Prune

Prioritize pruning efforts in visible and high-use areas where safety concerns are heightened and aesthetic impacts are more dramatic, like along primary paths and adjacent to actively programmed areas.

4 Identify Trees for Removal

At times, specimens may need to be removed if they are threatening the safety of park visitors or negatively impacting the health of adjacent trees.

5 Retain Dead Trees for Habitat

Certain birds and other animals prefer to make their homes in dead or decaying trees; deadwood and other remaining limb structure should be selectively preserved where appropriate to expand habitat types.

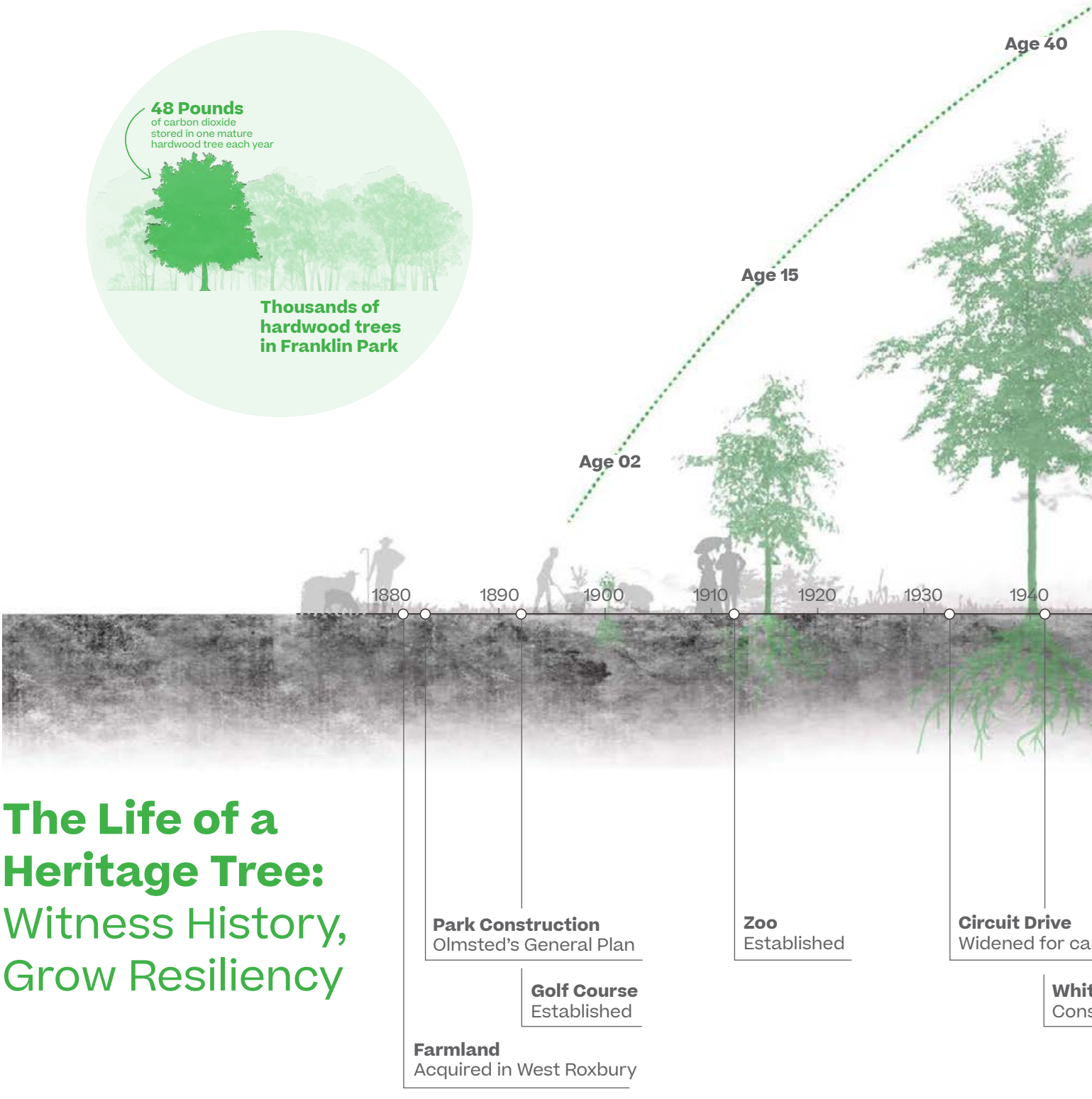
6 Replant for Continuity and Diversity

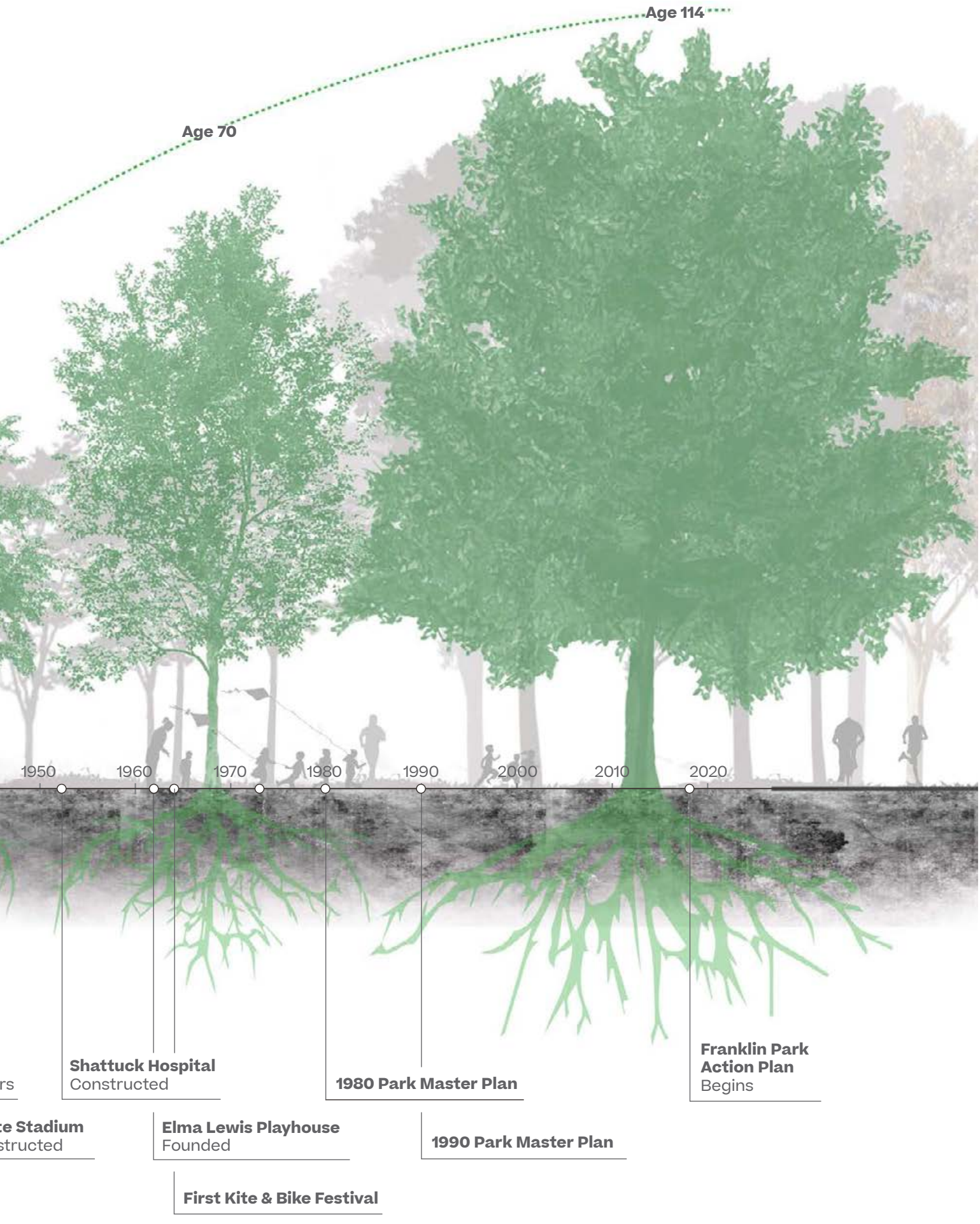
Cultivate the next generation of heritage trees through purposeful planting throughout the park. Select species that both hold a historic significance and also add diversity to the park landscape.

Protecting the Park's Greatest Resource

The park's heritage trees have witnessed many important events throughout their lives, outliving most of their human counterparts. Each individual tree also performs essential ecological functions, including sequestering thousands of pounds of carbon dioxide over their lifetimes. Multiplied over Franklin Park's 527 acres, the park's urban forest and eldest trees are an irreplaceable resource.

The Life of a Heritage Tree: Witness History, Grow Resiliency




Age 114
Age 70
1950
1960
1970
1980
1990
2000
2010
2020
rs
Shattuck Hospital
Constructed
1980 Park Master Plan
Franklin Park
Action Plan
Begins
te Stadium
structed
Elma Lewis Playhouse
Founded
1990 Park Master Plan
First Kite & Bike Festival

Manage for Long-Term Stability
Set Standards for Tree Care

To enhance the health of the park's heritage trees and prolong their lifespans, it is necessary to develop standards for their care. In the immediate term, work and treatments should focus on stabilization – structural work and plant health care treatments that safeguard from deterioration or loss. A priority plan should be established to identify which trees are the most important to protect if resources are limited. Priorities are typically based on the location and prominence of the tree, its uniqueness as a specimen, or the degree of risk it presents.

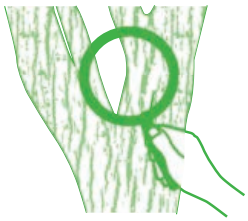
TREE CARE RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a Site-Specific Tree Care Program

- Maintain continuity from year to year by identifying a specific group or individual that will monitor and care for significant trees in the park.
- Conduct a site-wide inventory to identify and locate significant trees, and develop a formalized classification system, including work specifications that are assigned on a tree-by-tree basis.
- Trees in high use areas of the park should receive a greater level of structural scrutiny with a formal risk assessment and rating that will guide its care.

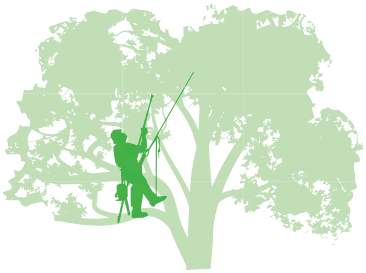
Inspect & Monitor Significant Trees Annually

- With a certified arborist, document signs of insects, disease, broken limbs, and other conditions and update tree planning documents as applicable.
- Fence off trees to restrict foot traffic and limit disturbance below the tree canopy for at-risk specimens during treatment and recovery.



Stabilize & Prune for Risk Management

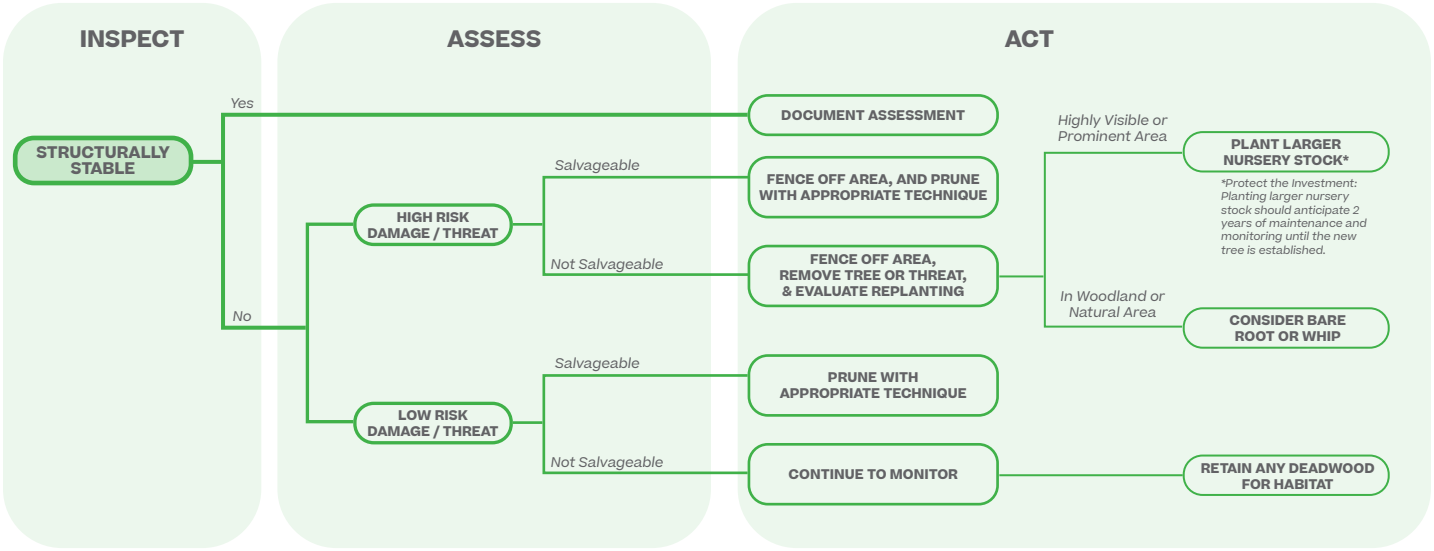
- Increase the use of branch or canopy reduction pruning to reduce end-weight and mechanical failures; use structural support hardware if needed.
- Decrease the use of crown cleaning and thinning pruning methods to preserve habitat and resources, unless the goal is to open light to the ground layer to promote regeneration.
- Use crown raising pruning methods only when view and aesthetics are the top priority.



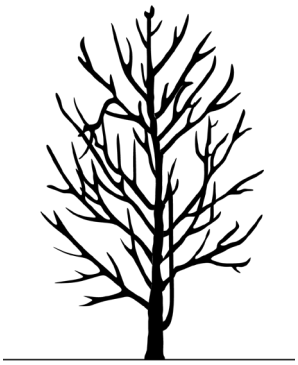
Retain Dead Trees to Preserve Habitat

- Preserve stems or limb structures with cavities or large deadwood for habitat.
- Retain structurally sound standing dead/dying trees in low use wooded areas for wildlife habitat and to conserve investment.

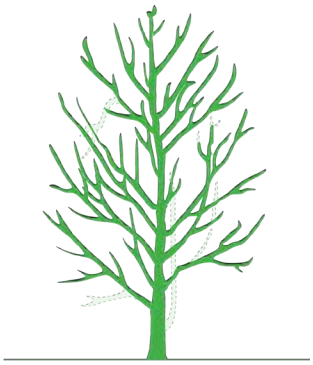
PROCESS FOR TREE PRUNING, REMOVALS, & REPLANTING



PRUNING TECHNIQUES FOR HERITAGE TREES

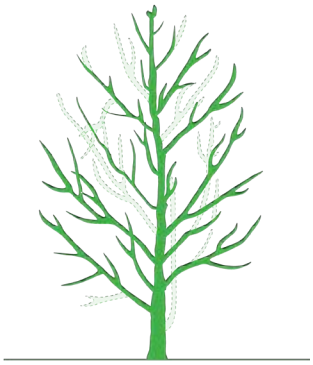


Before Pruning



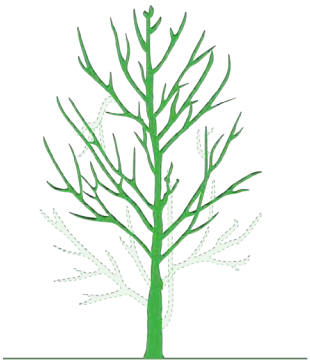
Crown Cleaning

removal of defective limbs to reduce the risk of branch failure, improve plant health, and enhance tree appearance



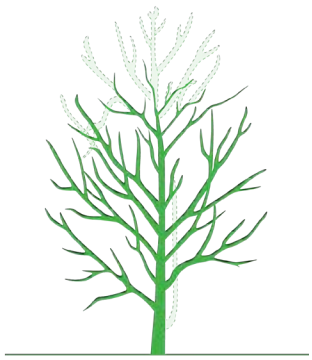
Crown Thinning

removal of live, healthy branches on trees with dense crowns to improve light penetration, air movement, and to decrease wind resistance



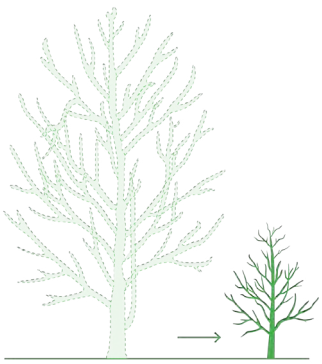
Crown Raising

pruning or removing lower branches and limbs to provide vertical clearance



Crown Reduction

removal of limbs to decrease the height and/or spread of the canopy or individual limbs that are growing close to buildings, other trees, or utilities, or to prevent or correct storm damage



Replanting

In instances of damage that cannot be repaired through pruning, trees may have to be removed if they pose a threat to park users; replanting to establish the next generation of heritage trees is critical to preserving the character of the park.

Increase Durability & Plant Diversity
Introduce Buffers & Redesign Lawns

Turf areas are critical to supporting many community uses and activities, but they do not offer significant ecological benefit. Buffers, which serve as transitional spaces between woodland and open areas, perform important ecological functions, including slowing stormwater and providing habitat for wildlife. They also provide beauty and a sense of enclosure at the edge of open lawns.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Compaction resulting from high-use of open areas**
- **Lack of plant diversity and natural stormwater filters**

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Plant the Forest Edge to Provide a Refuge for Wildlife**
- **Introduce Ecological 'Stepping Stones' to Expand Dry & Wet Meadows**
- **Introduce Buffers to Frame Open Space**
- **Design Durable Sports Fields & Lawns for High-Use**

WOODLANDS | **BUFFERS** | OPEN


1

The Playstead fields today.


2

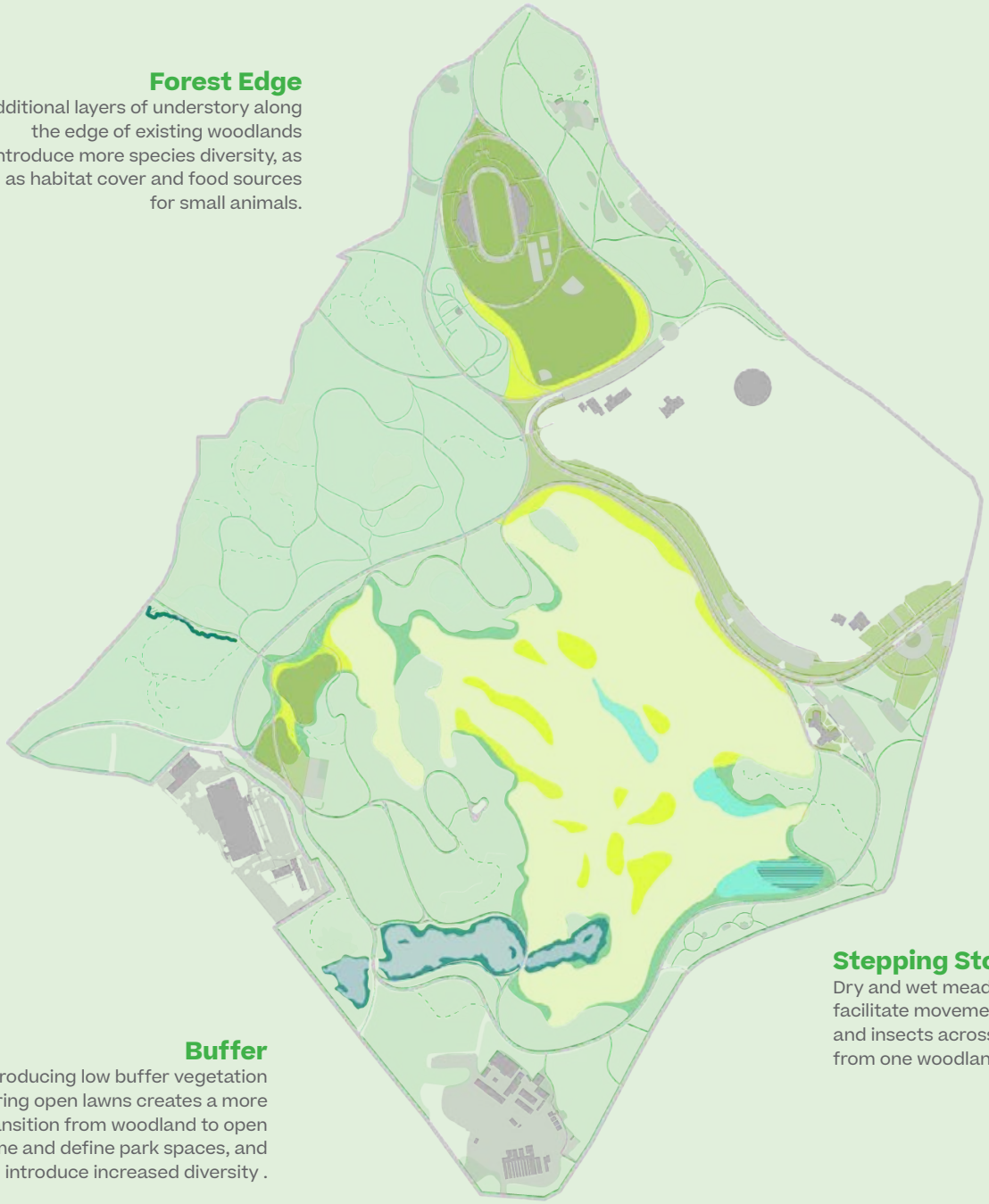
Wet meadow buffer between the Circuit Loop & Golf Course


3

Existing meadow buffer between Circuit Drive and the Golf Course

Forest Edge

Additional layers of understory along the edge of existing woodlands introduce more species diversity, as well as habitat cover and food sources for small animals.



Stepping Stones

Dry and wet meadow areas facilitate movement of animals and insects across open areas from one woodland to another.

Buffer

Introducing low buffer vegetation bordering open lawns creates a more gradual transition from woodland to open areas, frame and define park spaces, and introduce increased diversity .

Proposed Ecological Types

- Existing Golf Course
- Dry Meadow or Buffer
- Wet Meadow
- Existing Wet Meadow
- Ellicott Stream
- Pond Edge
- Scarboro Pond
- Athletic Field or Lawn
- Forest Edge
- Woodlands

Spotting Migratory Birds

The park's large size and location near the coast means it plays an important role in the regional ecosystem as a stopover for migratory birds. Local groups, like those celebrating Black Birders Week with an early morning walk, enjoy searching for warblers, vireos, and woodpeckers.

Keystone Species

Eastern Bluebirds and Brown Thrashers are two keystone species whose nesting sites and food habitat would be increased by forest edge and dry meadow buffer planting.

◄ Scarboro Hill — Forest Edge — Dry Meadow Stepping Stone

Transition Zones:
What does a healthy forest edge look like?

1 Provide Shelter & Habitat

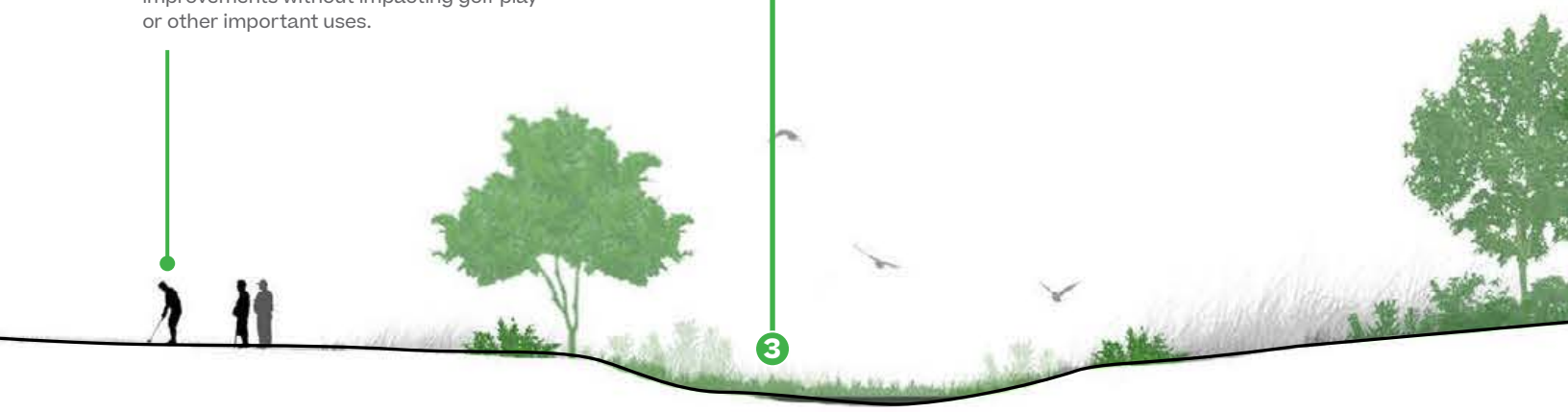
Introduce forest edges to work in tandem with wet and dry meadows to provide landscapes that facilitate the movement of animals and insects across the golf course and other open areas from one woodland to another.

Plants Mark the Spot

Highbush blueberry thrives where groundwater is near the surface.

Shared Space

Insert habitat and stormwater improvements without impacting golf play or other important uses.



Golf Course ····· Wet Meadow Stepping Stone ····· Forest Edge

2 Increase Dry Meadows

Build on the successes of the existing dry meadow areas in the golf course by incorporating others that create buffer stepping stones without impacting play; incorporate species that create forb-rich grasslands to provide sources of nectar and pollen and winter landscape interest.

3 Add Wet Meadow Stepping Stones

Incorporate wet meadows in naturally low-lying areas to collect and filter runoff as it makes its way to Scarboro Pond.

4 Protect Downstream Water Systems

Incorporate eco-friendly management practices to decrease nutrient pollutant loads in stormwater runoff (including nitrogen and phosphorus) that eventually discharge into Scarboro Pond.

Provide a Refuge for Wildlife
Plant the Forest Edge

Its regional context makes the park a valuable migratory stopover for birds, butterflies, and dragonflies. Yet, there are few flowering plants and shrubs, which has deteriorated the habitat and food supply for animals and pollinators. Introducing mixed forest edges near less heavily programmed areas in the park, like near the golf course and the edges of The Wilderness, will provide a safe haven for small animals, birds, insects, and pollinators, free of intense and active human use.

FOREST EDGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Facilitate Wildlife Movement

- Reduce habitat fragmentation by enhancing woodland edges with a gradient of planting from canopy to groundcover to provide small animals and insects refuge as they move between larger areas of woodland.

Enhance Food Supply

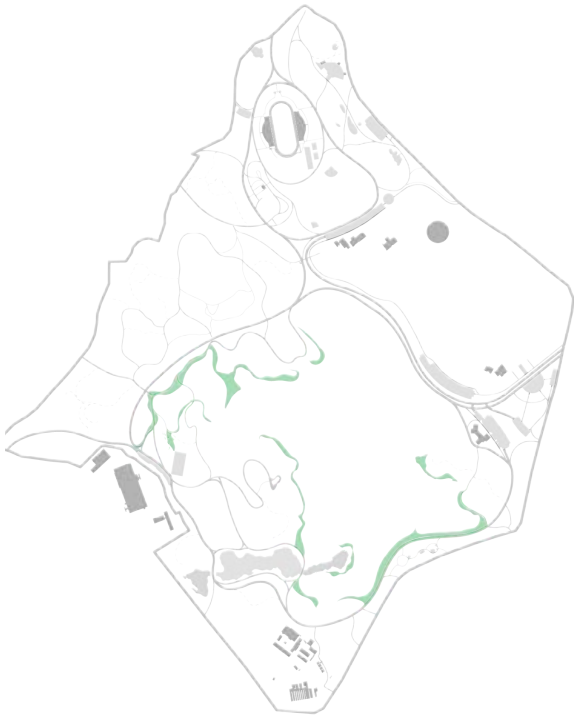
- Increase diversity by introducing flowering and fruiting shrubs and understory to provide food sources for wildlife. This should include nectar and pollen for pollinators and berries for small animals and birds.

Provide Shelter

- Provide additional support by installing bird houses and bat boxes to augment natural habitat. These also have the potential for educational programs.

Balance Habitat & Safety

- Maintain important viewsheds from adjacent pathways to ensure a sense of safety for visitors as they move throughout the park in the evenings and early mornings.



Transitional Habitat

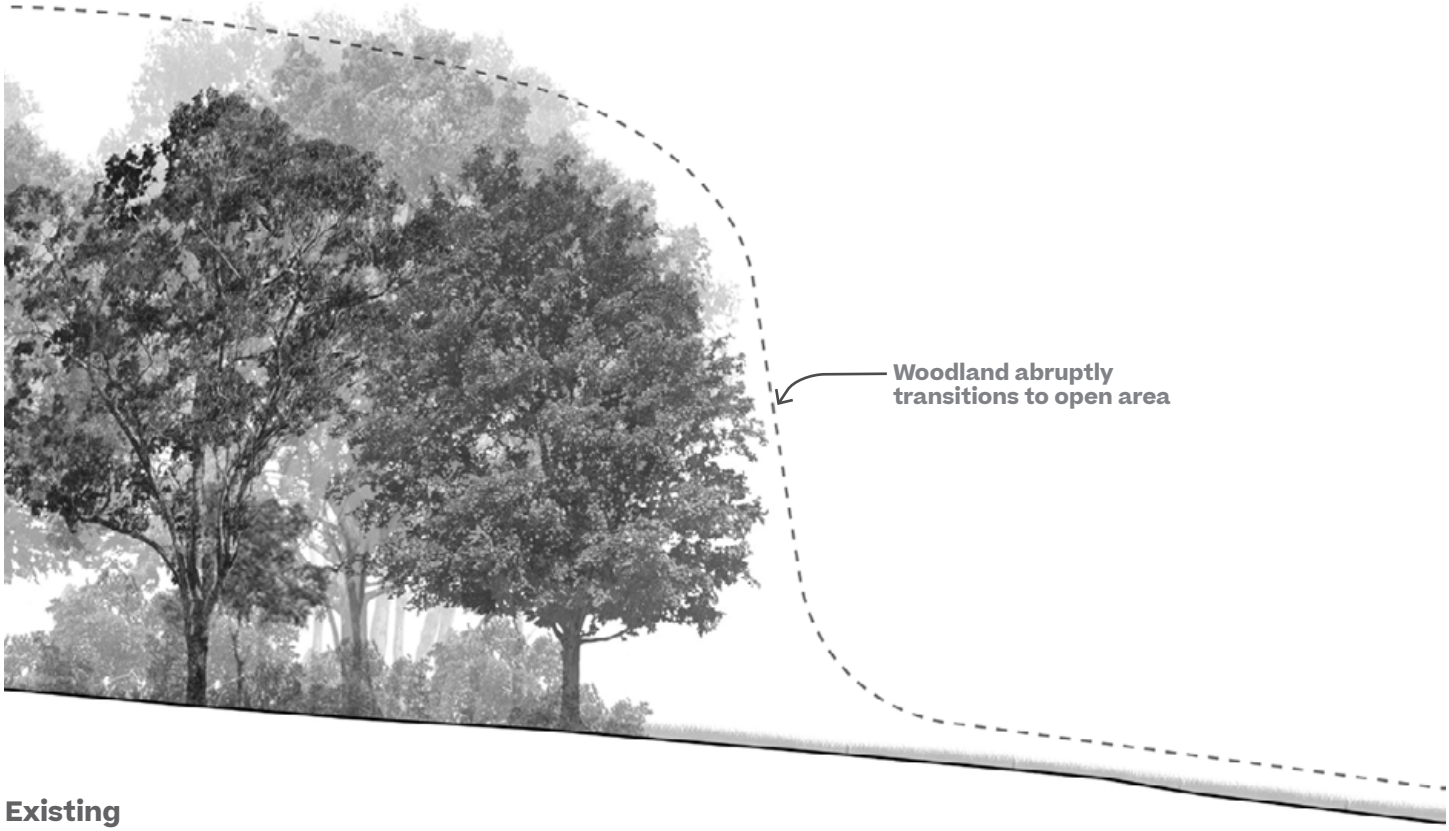
The mixed forest edge, which includes understory and shrub species, is valuable for wildlife cover, food sources, and microclimates, but will require maintenance to keep it from returning to a canopy condition.

Witchhazel *
Hamamelis virginiana L.

Grasshopper

Eastern Bluebird

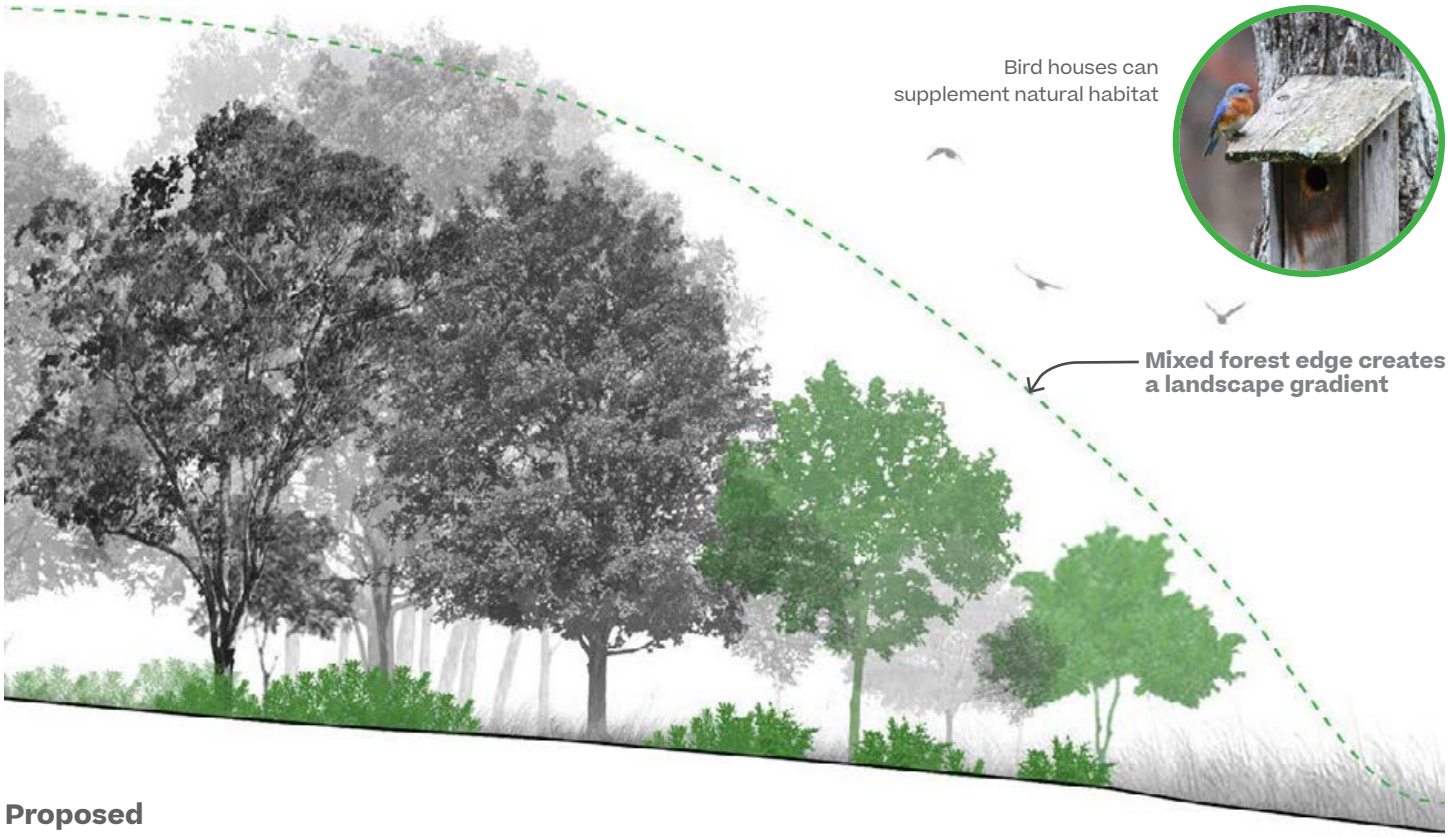
Hop Hornbeam
Ostrya virginiana



Existing

Oak Hickory Woodland | Mown Lawn & Links

Today, the transition between forest and the open landscape is very abrupt with few layers of planting.



Proposed

Oak Hickory Woodland | Mixed Forest Edge | Dry Meadow & Links

Adding layers of understory along the edge of existing woodlands introduces more species diversity, as well as habitat cover and food sources for small animals.

Introduce Ecological 'Stepping Stones'
Expand Dry & Wet Meadows

Working in tandem with mixed forest edges, implementing dry and wet meadow 'stepping stones' within the golf course and other areas of low activity will help to facilitate movement of animals and insects across open areas from one woodland to another. These stepping stones also serve to slow and filter harmful nutrients out of stormwater runoff and encourage water infiltration into the soil below, reducing detrimental impacts downstream at Scarboro Pond and beyond the park.

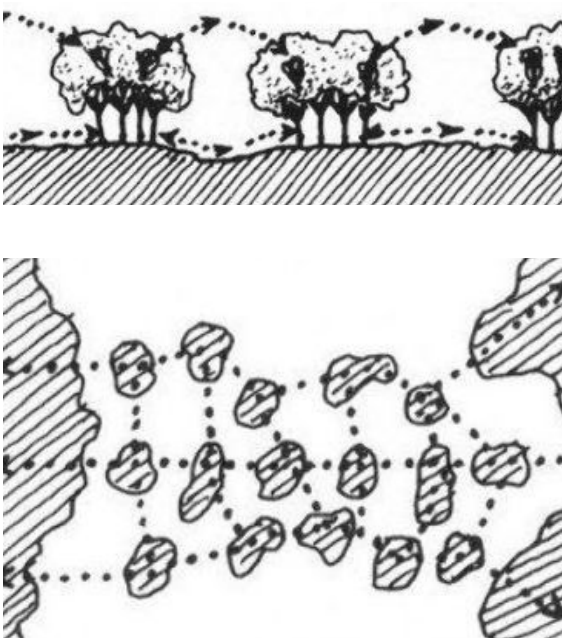
STEPPING STONE RECOMMENDATIONS

Dry Meadow Stepping Stones

- Position areas of dry meadow in zones out of play on high points and along slopes without impacting the course.
- Build upon the grounds crew experimentation with the addition of forbs - or non-grassy flower plants - in out-of-play areas to increase plants that provide nectar and pollen for insects and birds.

Wet Meadow Stepping Stones

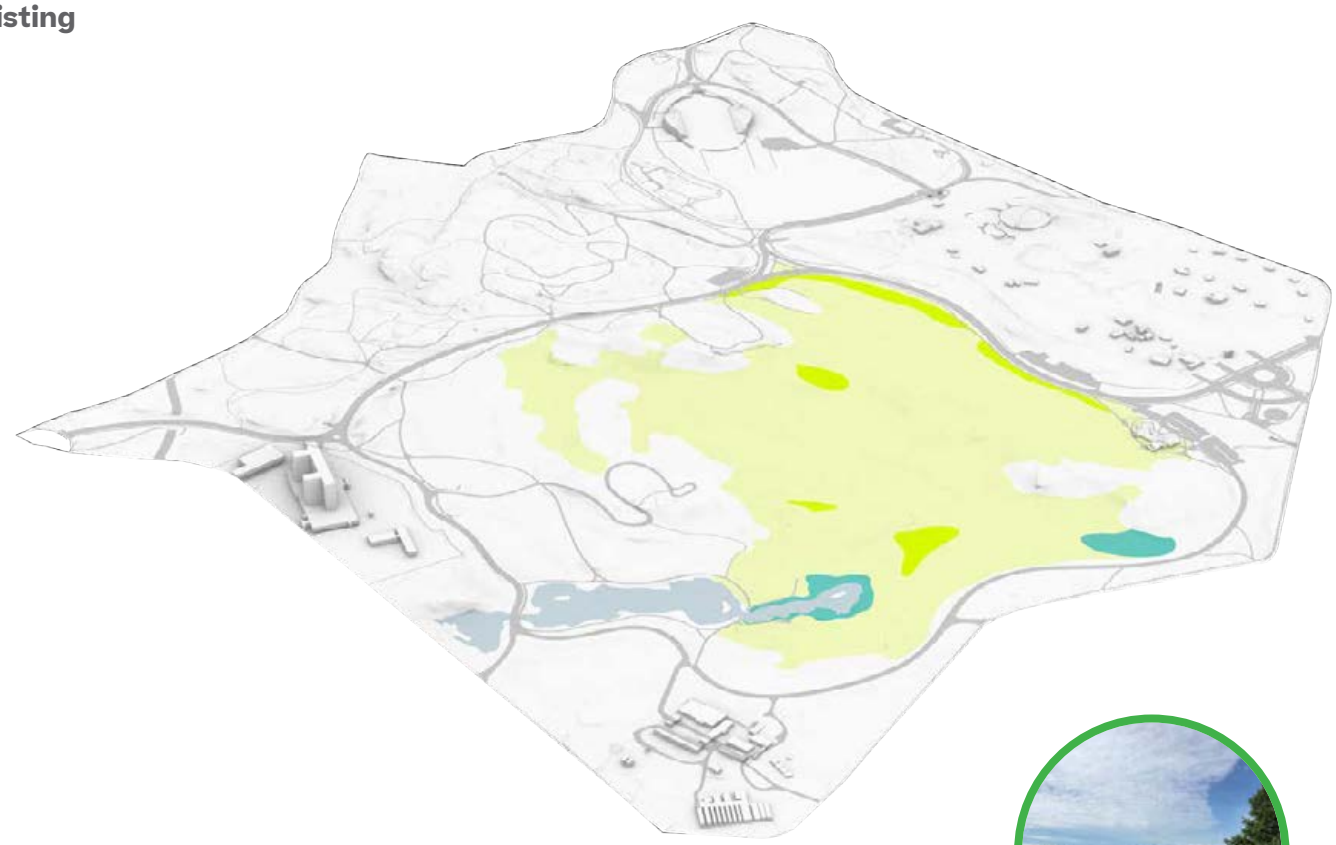
- Locate areas of wet meadow that correspond with natural drainage channels and low points to collect and filter runoff as it makes its way to Scarboro Pond or Ellicott Stream.
- Plant these areas with tussock-forming sedges, which will grow and spread quickly, support many species, absorb water and nutrients from runoff, and sequester carbon.



WHAT IS AN ECOLOGICAL STEPPING STONE?

"Stepping stones" are an ecological concept that describes small areas of habitat that offer a refuge for species as they move between other larger patches of habitat.
(Image credit: Richard TT Forman)

Existing



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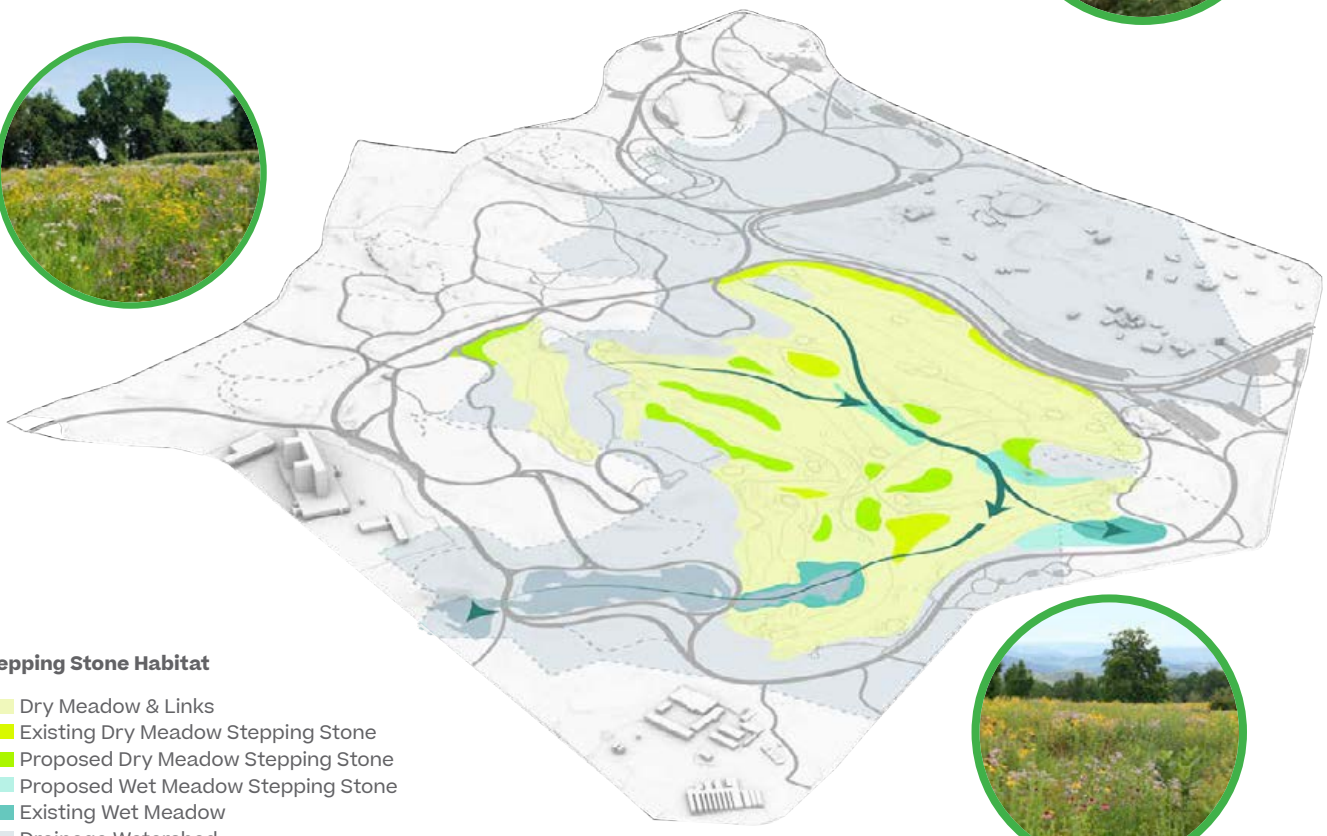


Frame Open Space
Introduce Buffers

Areas bordering the open lawns of the park present an opportunity to introduce buffer vegetation to create a more gradual transition from woodland to open areas, frame and define park spaces, introduce increased diversity and visual interest, and slow and filter stormwater. The character of buffer vegetation should correspond with its ecological context and the adjacent park uses.

BUFFER RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduce Unique Character

- Open park lawns present the opportunity to introduce unique vegetation at the edges that increases the diversity of open areas without impacting function and use.
- Plant the embankment between the upper and lower Ellicottdale lawns and edges of the lower lawn with a pollinator buffer to increase biodiversity, frame the space, and create separation from adjacent programs, like the golf course.
- Plant the existing low lying area adjacent to the Ellicottdale wet woodland with wet meadow species to highlight this unique ecology.
- Plant the embankment at the edge of The Playstead Fields with a grassland buffer to define the fields and highlight the change in topography.

Grassland Buffer

Wet Meadow Buffer

Pollinator Buffer, appropriate for the transition between the upper and lower lawns, and to provide separation between the lower lawn at the golf course at Ellicottdale.

YEAR-ROUND POLLINATOR HABITAT

A pollinator buffer surrounding the lower lawn at Ellicottdale increases biodiversity, frames the open lawn, and provides separation from the adjacent golf course.

Spring

For pollinators in April, plant: Asceplias tuberosa, Milkweed
A host plant for butterflies, as well as an important nectar source for bees and insects.

Summer

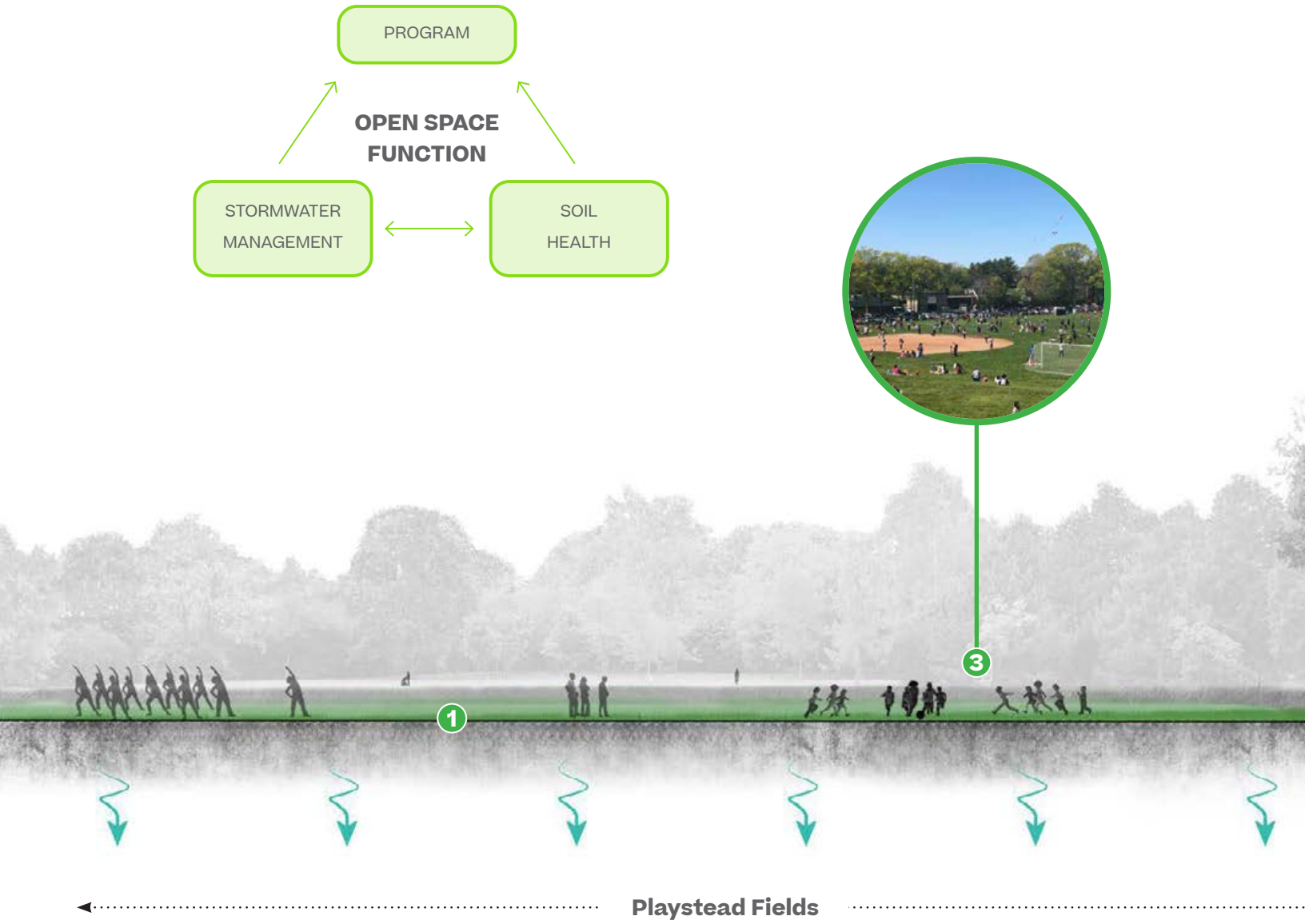
For pollinators in May, plant: Asceplias tuberosa, Milkweed
A host plant for butterflies, as well as an important nectar source for bees and insects.

Fall

For pollinators in September, plant: Aster spp., Asters
Important food source for bees and butterflies.

Winter

Leave stalks, stems, and leaf litter in place for burrowing insects like bees as overwintering sites.



Open Lawns:

What steps are needed to ensure long-term durability and function?

1 Amend Soils & Provide Aeration

Introduce organic soil amendments to enhance soil structure and resiliency by increasing organic matter content, improving water & nutrient retention, and supporting microbial activity. Conduct regular aeration, which will further enhance nutrient and water retention and relieve drainage issues in highly compacted areas.

2 Improve Drainage

Decompact and regrade sports fields and lawns to improve drainage and conditions of play; locate green infrastructure at the edges to slow, collect, and filter nutrient-laden stormwater runoff.

3 Prevent Compaction

The design of turf areas should respond to anticipated use and other potential stressors. Further protect open areas after heavy rains by marking off and allowing lawns to dry out prior to their use.

4 Provide Shade & Circulation

Further support resiliency of open lawns and sports fields by providing designated circulation for bikes and pedestrians; plant canopy trees to provide shade and comfort for park users.

5 Increase Diversity

Introduce plant diversity and habitat at the edges of open areas with meadows and understory trees and shrubs.

Anticipate High Use
Design Durable Sports Fields & Lawns

The park's major magnets all contain open lawns of some kind: The Playstead features large fields that support team sports and major events, Ellicottdale's expanded flexible lawn spaces serve families and small gatherings, and Peabody Circle's new lawn amphitheater and plaza space allows for outdoor education and community events in the shade of canopy trees. For these spaces to function successfully, support for lawns must start below ground with strong, healthy soils that facilitate drainage and durability for year-round use.

LAWN & SPORTS FIELDS RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish a Soil Management Plan

- Conduct a more detailed analysis of individual biological communities and total nutrient content of soils in sports fields and open lawns during an active growing season to determine needs related to increasing diversity of soil organisms and nutrient-supply capacities.

Increase Durability of High Use Areas

- Introduce organic soil amendments to enhance soil structure and resiliency by increasing organic matter content, improving water and nutrient retention, and supporting microbial activity.
- Conduct regular aeration, which will further enhance nutrient and water retention, and relieve drainage issues in highly compacted areas.
- Utilize organic or slow release fertilizers, and do not apply when heavy rain is expected.
- Compaction also impacts large individual trees within open areas; root pruning and soil remediation should be performed to increase their longevity.

Improve Drainage

- Introduce a high-use soil profile, including a functional drainage layer, for sports fields and lawns that get intense use.
- Regrade sports fields and lawns to improve positive drainage and eliminate low areas where water collects.
- Locate green infrastructure (like buffer vegetation or swales) at the edges to slow, collect and filter runoff.
- Protect lawns after heavy rains; mark off areas for 'turf resting' to allow water to fully infiltrate and lawns to dry out prior to their use.

BENEFITS OF LAWN AERATION

Before
Reduced water and nutrient infiltration and increased stormwater surface runoff. Lawn is struggling due to compacted soil and shallow roots.

Treatment
Aerate and fertilize lawn to increase pore space to increase oxygen, water, and nutrient infiltration, allowing for improved respiration and increased aerobic microbes.

After
Stormwater runoff is decreased due to improved infiltration. Deeper roots develop, leading to a healthier lawn.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ON THE PLAY FIELDS

The proposed Playstead incorporates design features that improve both stormwater management and plant diversity. By regrading the fields with a central high point, surface runoff flows towards a grassland embankment with a french drain at its base to capture water at the edges.

Redirect, Collect & Clean
Strengthen Water Systems

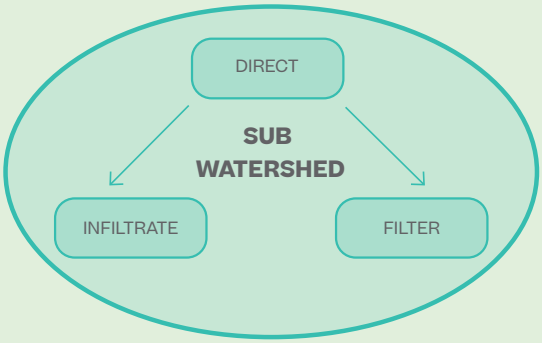
The health and resilience of the park's hydrology go hand in hand with function of the above and below ground drainage systems. Introducing green infrastructure and right-sizing the hard infrastructure will positively impact drainage and water quality as stormwater and runoff make their way to Scarboro Pond and exit the park. The pond faces its own set of challenges with shoreline compaction and erosion, invasive species, and reduced habitat that must be addressed through pond stabilization and restoration.

KEY CHALLENGES

- **Pollution from stormwater runoff**
- **Aging and undersized drainage infrastructure**

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Integrate Green Infrastructure to Upgrade Drainage Systems**
- **Restore Scarboro Pond by Stabilizing & Expanding Aquatic Habitat**
- **Optimize Drainage Control Points to Decrease Downstream Impacts**




1

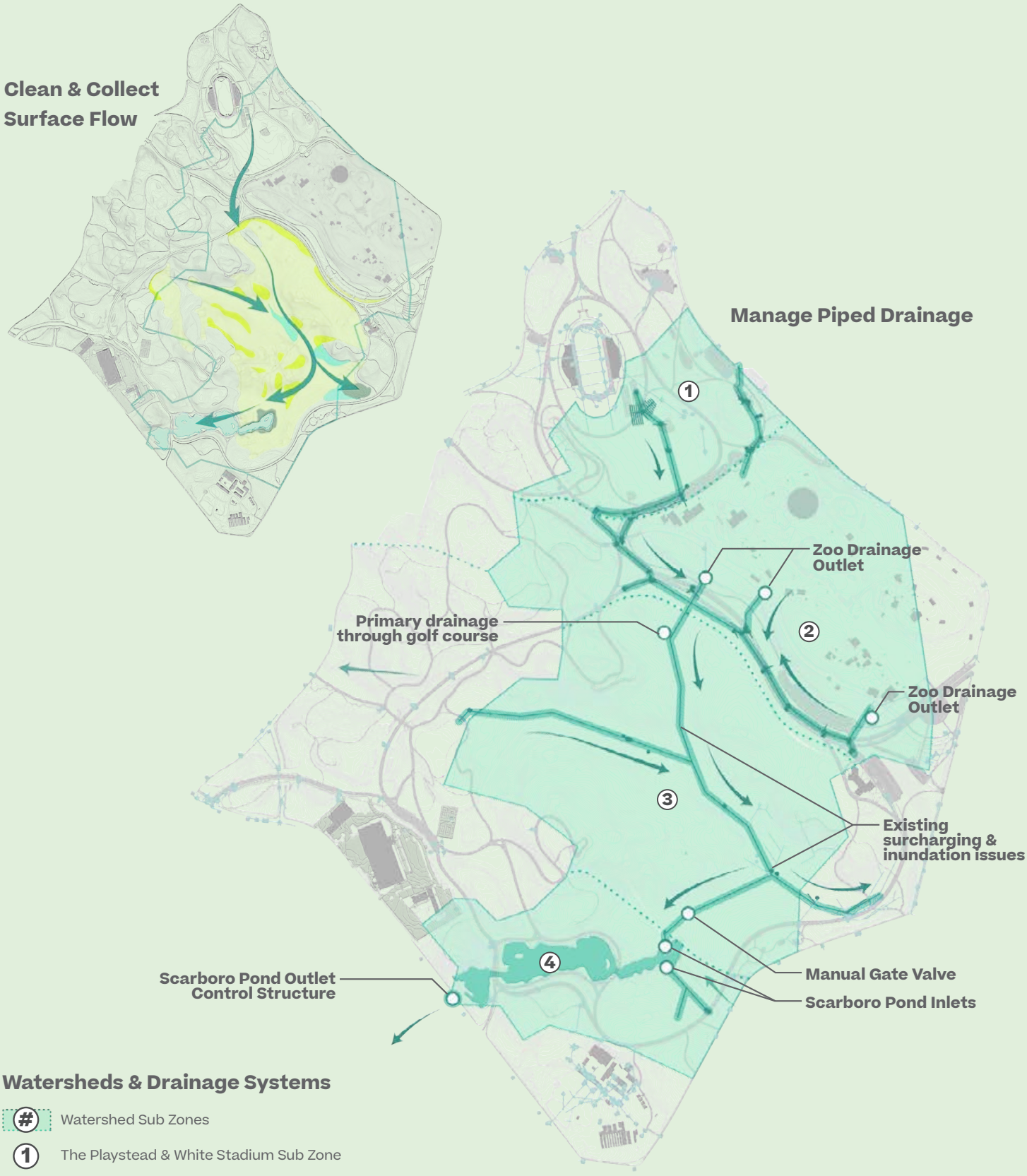
The compacted pond edge.


2

Algae blooms at the pond edge near the golf course.

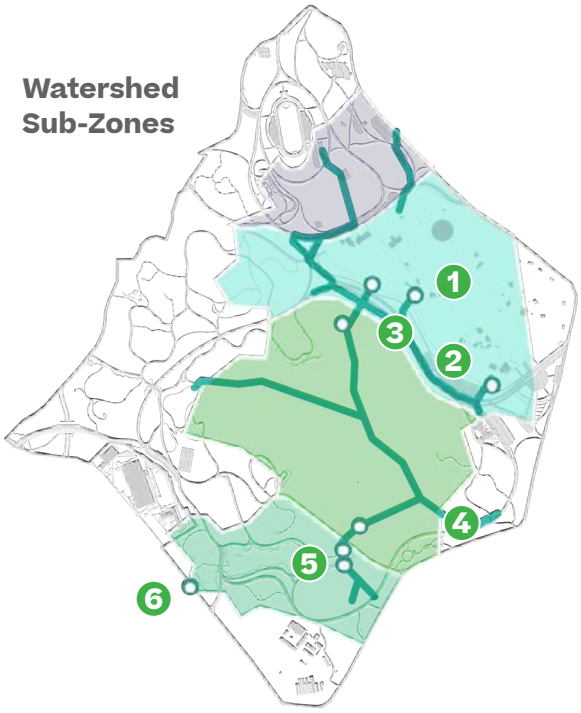

3

Flooding on Circuit Drive after a rain storm.



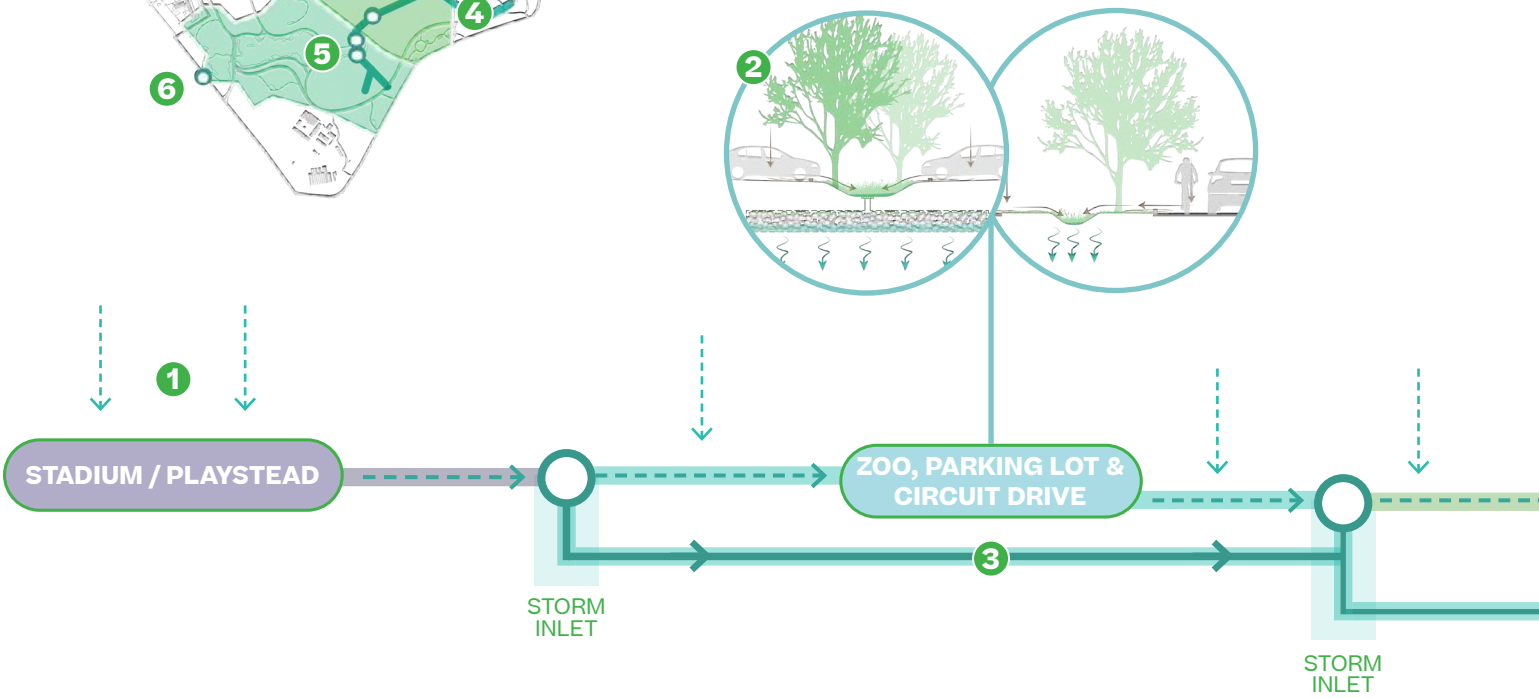
Watersheds & Drainage Systems

- (#) Watershed Sub Zones
- (1) The Playstead & White Stadium Sub Zone
- (2) The Zoo & Circuit Drive Sub Zone
- (3) The Golf Course Sub Zone
- (4) Scarboro Pond Sub Zone
- Water Flow Direction
- Piped Drainage Infrastructure & Control Points



BREAKING DOWN THE WATERSHED

The majority of the park falls within a single watershed that drains to Scarboro Pond, either through piped drainage infrastructure or via surface runoff. Both carry pollutants from fertilizers and harmful chemicals from oils and salts from Circuit Drive and parking areas. Breaking down the watershed into smaller areas that can slow, capture, filter the water or increase infiltration into the soil, reduces the amount of water draining to the pond and improves its water quality.



Upper Scarboro Pond Watershed

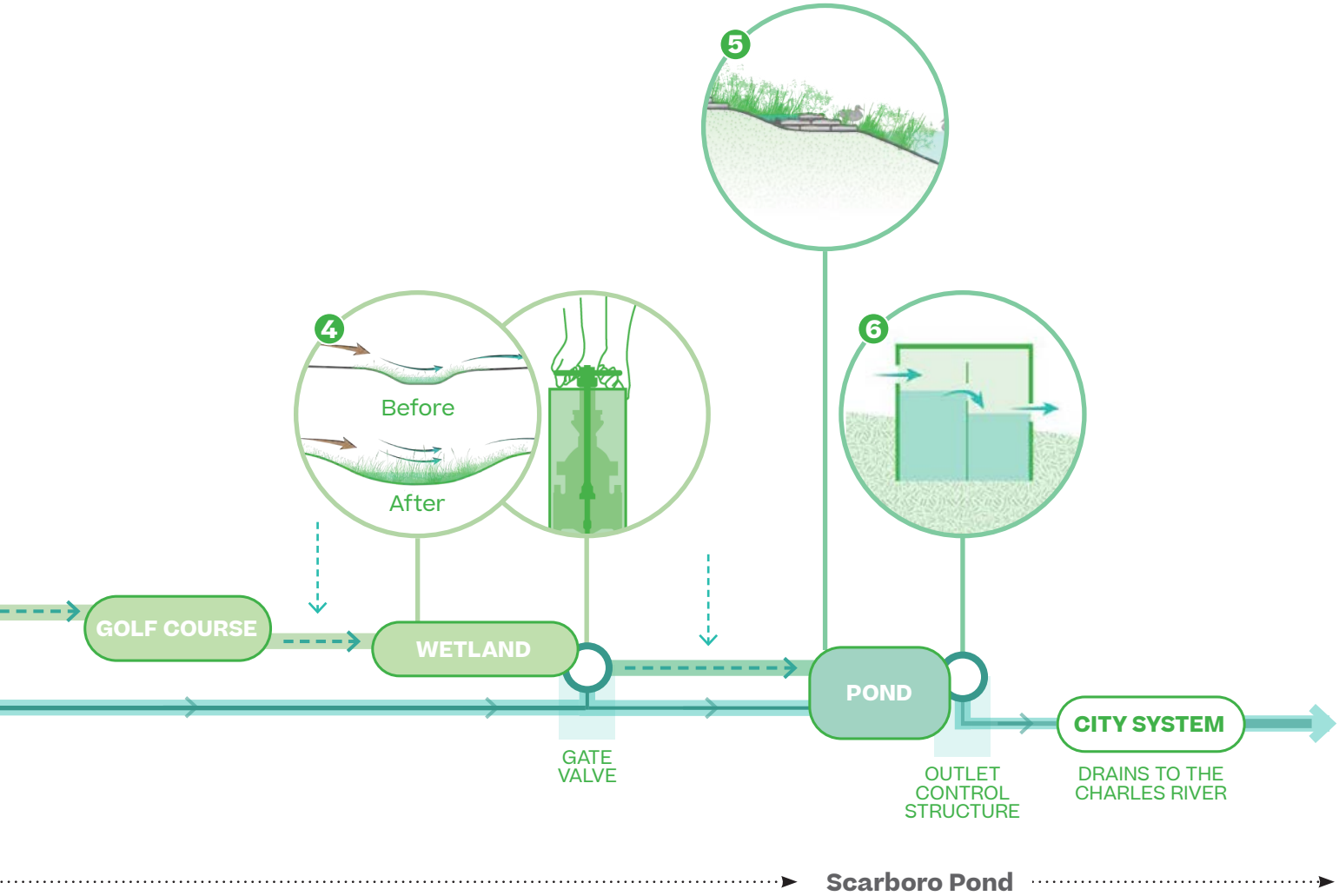
Water Systems:
How can the park improve water quality downstream?

1 Break Down the Watershed

Use local green infrastructure to treat and infiltrate run-off from paved surfaces in the upper Scarboro Pond watershed before it enters the piped underground drainage system.

2 Intercept Drainage from the Zoo

Take advantage of improvements along the zoo's edge to implement subsurface storage within the parking lot and biofilter swales along Circuit Drive to intercept, treat, and infiltrate runoff.



3 Update Drainage Infrastructure

As improvements are made, upsize existing outdated and undersized drainage infrastructure to reduce overall pressure on the system and to improve issues with surcharging; optimize existing gate valve to improve efficiency of the system.

4 Optimize the Wetland

Implement naturalized surface storage by supplementing the existing wetland with naturalized stormwater wetlands to provide additional capacity within a system currently impacted by surcharging.

5 Augment the Pond Edge

Provide filtration and water quality treatment at existing outfall locations at the pond edge, including sediment forebays; consider in-pond enhancements like aeration to further improve water quality and aquatic ecology.

6 Update the Control Structure

Evaluate the existing outfall structure and consider modifications to allow for increased storage and future flood resilience.

Upgrade Drainage Systems
Integrate Green Infrastructure

A big factor in the declining water quality in the park is polluted runoff from Circuit Drive and parking areas. At a minimum, the park must manage its water quality and quantities within its own footprint to mitigate impacts beyond the park's boundaries. Sizing of all water-related infrastructure should anticipate stronger and more frequent storms associated with the changing climate.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Break Down the Watershed

- Create smaller sub-watersheds within the park that intercept stormwater and collect, filter, and slow runoff within their own boundaries to decrease the amount of water that moves from one sub-watershed to the next and reduce stress on the overall drainage system

Hold and Release

- Use parking lots as an opportunity to address runoff from regular to medium-sized storm events by designing them to slow and hold the peak stormwater runoff.
- Design for infiltration by disconnecting piped connections to the larger drainage system, allowing runoff to feed the aquifer, or by detaining water and slowly releasing it into the system via an upsized pipe. Consider the use of permeable paving where appropriate.

Slow and Clean

- Use Circuit Drive as an opportunity to intercept runoff from the Zoo before it reaches the Golf Course by re-routing runoff into vegetated swales via curb cuts to filter and slow water before it enters the piped system

Direct and Convey

- Restore and enhance the function of historic cobble swales that have become buried or broken and provide regular maintenance to clear debris to ensure proper flow of runoff to drain inlets

Filter

- Direct surface runoff to french drains at the perimeter of open lawn areas, like The Playstead, to slow runoff and increase filtration


1

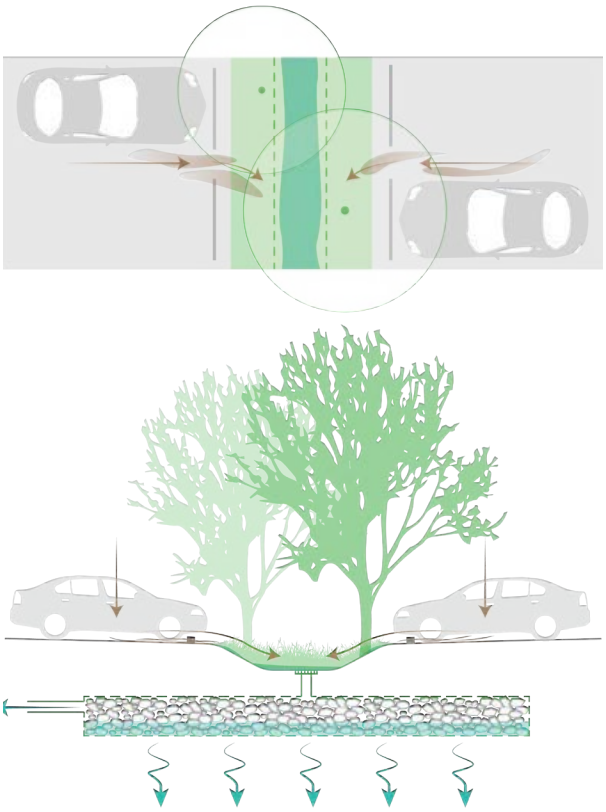
Vegetated swale in the center of parking.


2

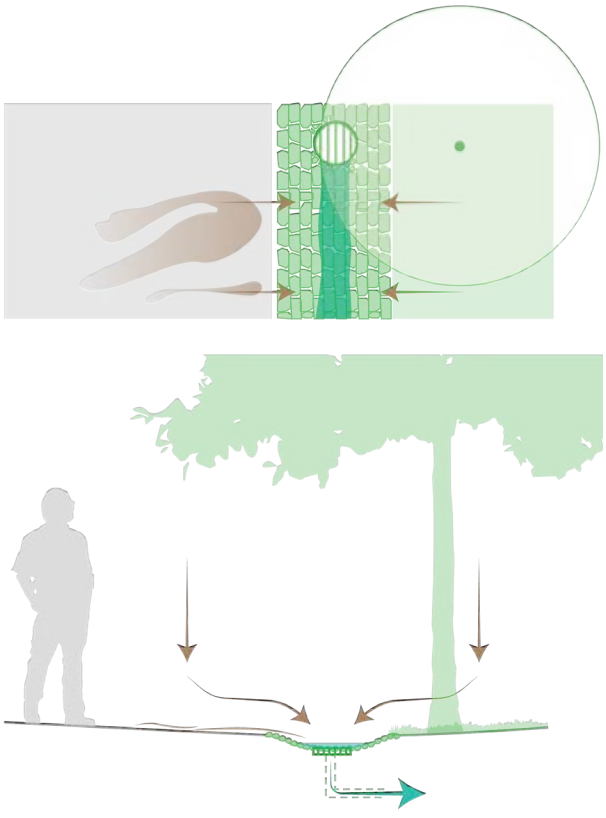
Pedestrian paths connected to parking.


3

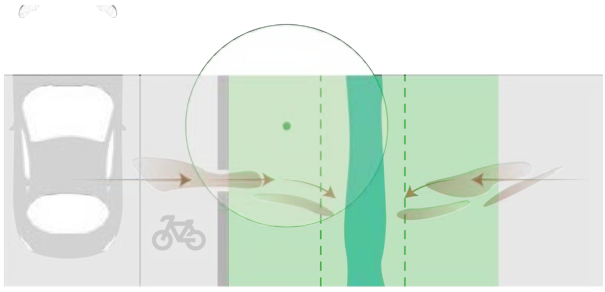
Vegetated swale at the edge of parking.

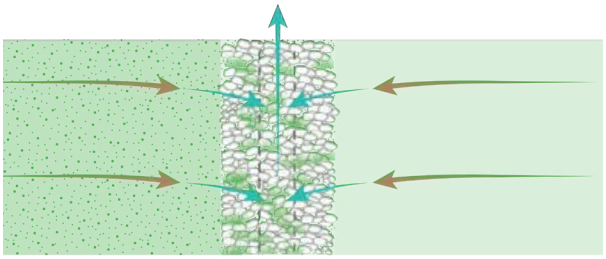


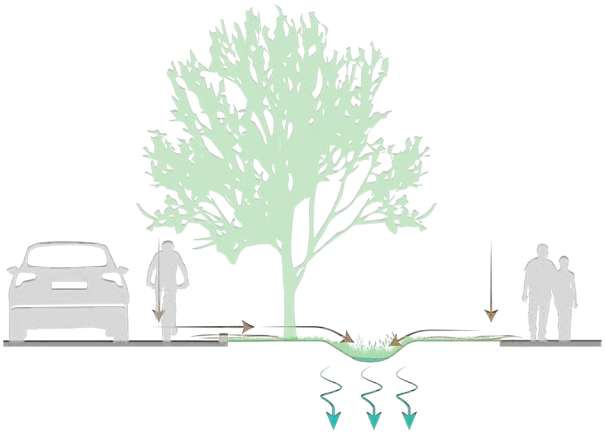
Hold and Release



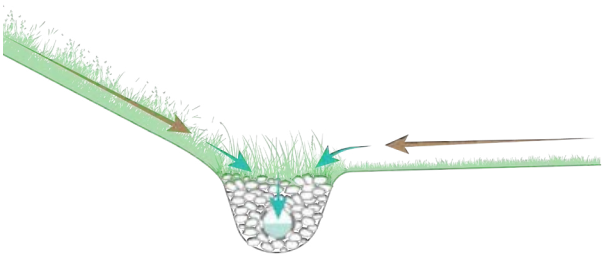
Direct and Convey







Slow and Clean



Filter

Narrow-leaved Cattail

Canary Reed Grass

Aquatic Invasives

Known for its fast growth, the canary reed grass is an aggressive invasive that spreads quickly. The entire root mass must be removed to eliminate it. While Narrow-Leaved Cattail is only considered non-native, it certain contexts it can behave as an invasive plant; they can be controlled by cutting them back in mid-late summer.

Circuit Loop

Scarboro Pond:

How can the pond operate as essential ecological infrastructure?

1 Remove Sediment Build-Up

Investigate the pond to identify areas of sediment build-up and muck on the bottom to increase water storage capacity and improve water quality for wildlife.

2 Remove Invasives

Remove invasive species (and those that behave like invasives) to allow sun to reach the water and native emergent plants along the edge.

3 Expand the Edge

Create a more gradual slope to the water's edge and stabilize with native emergent and aquatic species; decompact soils around the base of existing trees that have been impacted by years of foot traffic.

4 Improve Water Quality

Filter stormwater at outfall locations to reduce the presence of duckweed and algal blooms; consider aeration to further improve water quality.

5 Provide Access to the Water's Edge

Allow visitors to access the edge of the pond only at specific points to prevent widespread soil compaction along the banks. Educate the community about the impacts of foot traffic. Manage high vegetation open up views from walking paths.

6 Update the Control Structure

Evaluate the existing outfall structure and consider modifications to allow for increased storage and future flood resilience.

Stabilize & Expand Aquatic Habitat

Restore Scarboro Pond

A popular park feature, Scarboro Pond serves many functions - unique habitat, critical stormwater infrastructure, and park destination to observe wildlife near the water. Years of visitor foot traffic and an increased goose population has compacted the pond's edge, impacting the roots of large trees and causing erosion at its banks. In other areas, unmanaged and overgrown vegetation blocks views to the water. Stormwater carrying fertilizers and pollutants from across the park drains into the pond from the golf course and piped outfalls, degrading water quality and habitat and encouraging invasive species growth.

POND RESTORATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Remove Polluted Sediment

- Built-up sediment deposited by runoff and muck at the bottom of the pond holds accumulated pollution and contributes to excess nutrients in the water column, causing imbalance for wildlife habitat; the pond should be investigated to identify select areas to carefully remove the polluted sediment via dredging operations.

Thin Vegetation & Remove Invasives

- Remove invasive plants (and those that behave as invasive) at the pond's edge, like the narrow-leaf cattail; this may have to be performed from a small boat to reach all invaded areas.
- Thin dense vegetation on the banks to allow sun to reach the water and emergent plants.

Expand the Edge to Increase Habitat

- Decompact and create a more gradual slope to the water's edge to increase the pond buffer.
- Stabilize the edge with native emergent and aquatic species, including grasses, sedges, rushes, and bulrushes that serve to reduce erosion and slow and filter runoff.

Provide Access

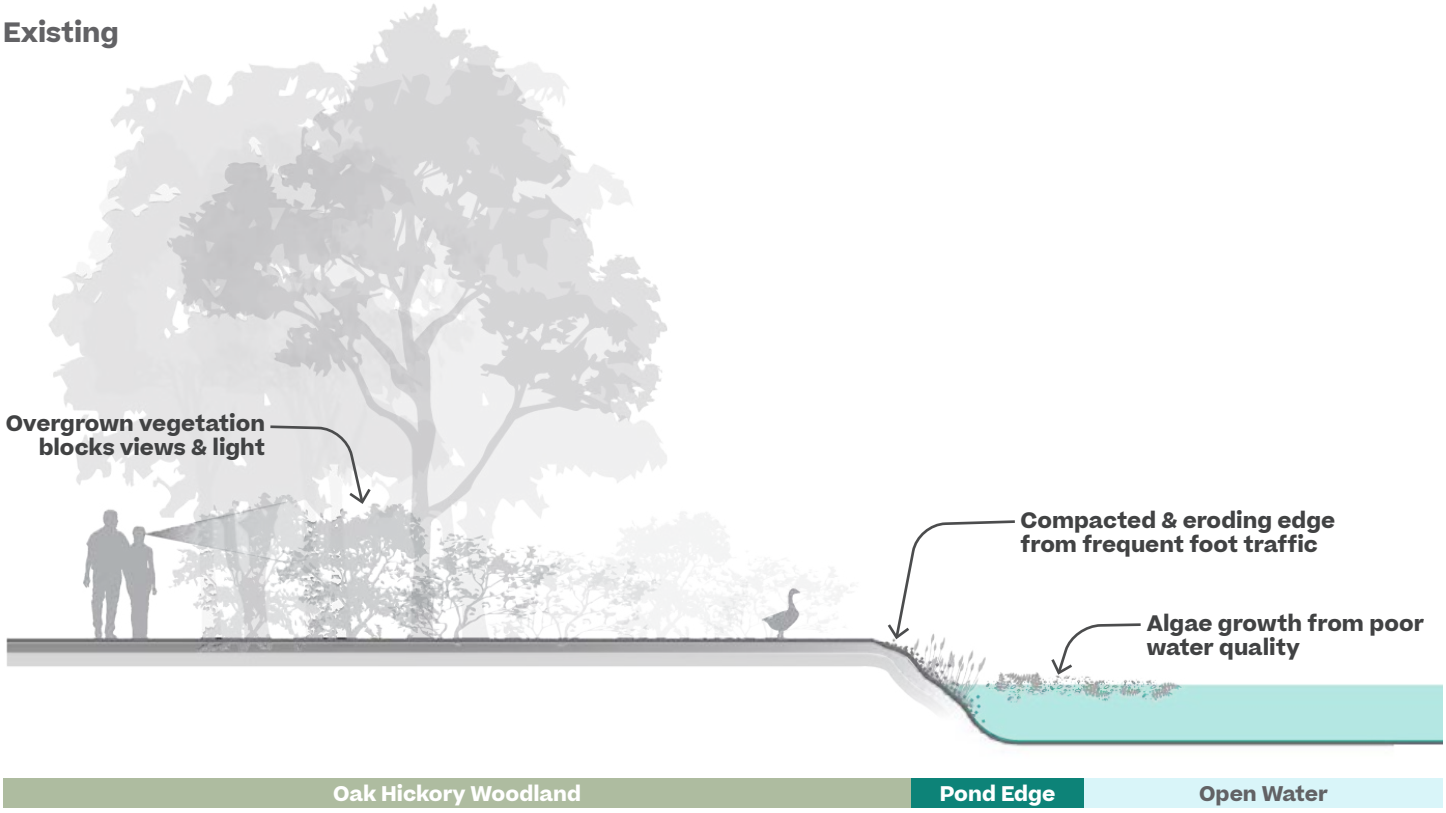
- Reduce foot traffic causing compaction at the edge by providing a few select access points to reach the water via elevated boardwalk landings.
- Manage high vegetation to allow for views to and across the pond to enjoy wildlife and scenery.

Protect Ellicott Stream

- This unique aquatic feature in the lowest lying area of the park along the Williams Street entrance, is healthy and has good water quality; it should be protected detrimental stormwater runoff from nearby Circuit Drive and Forest Hills Street.

A vegetated pond edge.

Existing



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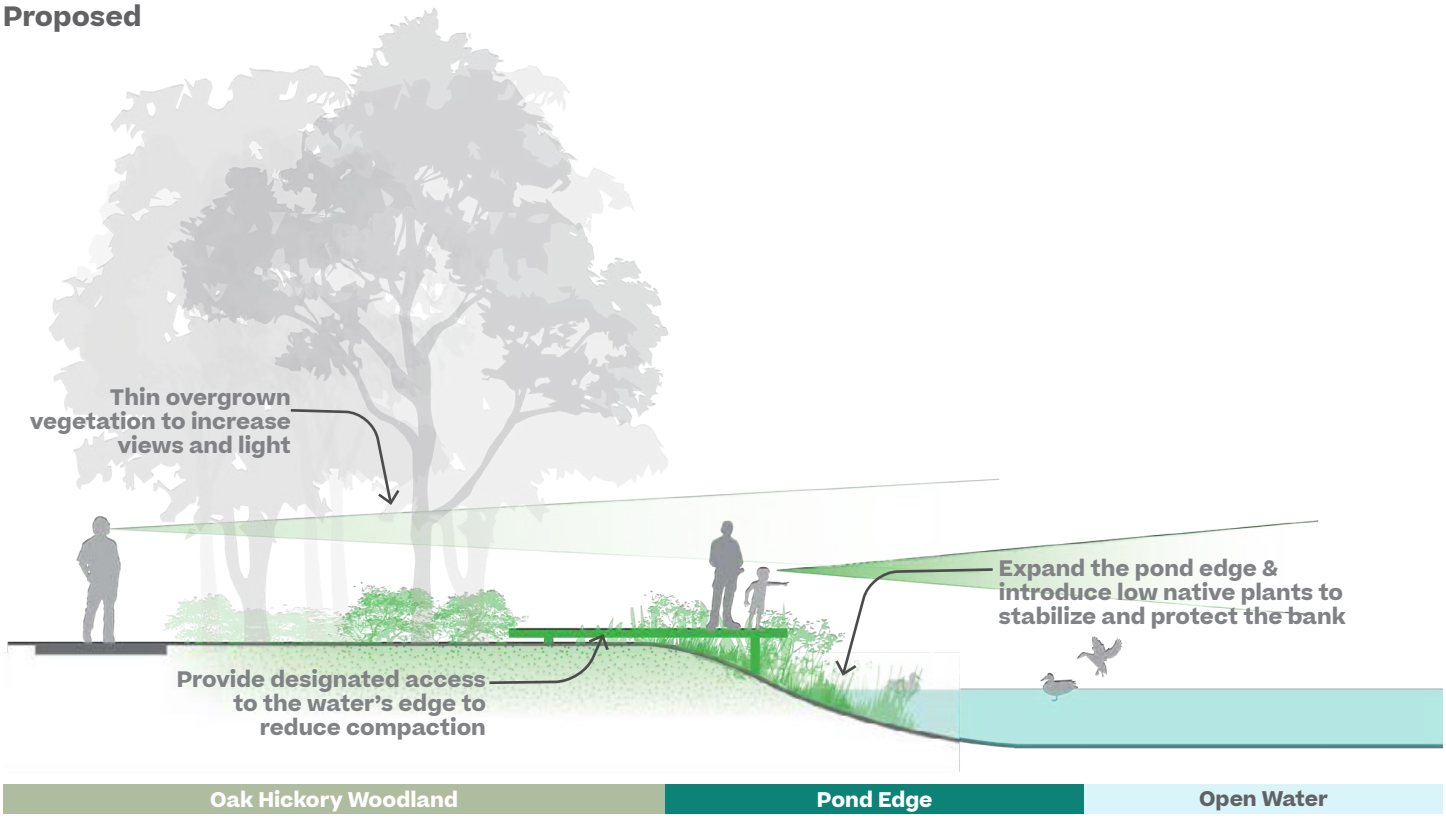


Decrease Downstream Impacts
Optimize Drainage Control Points

Increasing Scarboro Pond's storage potential starts outside of the boundaries of the pond itself and must consider opportunities upstream in the golf course and downstream at the outlet control structure for a holistic approach to retrofitting the system of how water is controlled and moves through this area of the park.

POND INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Divert Stormwater During Large Events

- The gate valve structure within the golf course provides the ability to manually control the quantity and speed of piped water that flows into the pond at any given time. If the pond's water level is getting too high, water can be diverted into the wetland within the golf course.
- Enhancing the drainage system with naturalized stormwater wetlands will provide additional storage capacity for overflow relief and surface runoff in large rain events. It will also help to prevent surcharging of the piped system in other areas within the park.

Filter Water at Piped Outfalls

- Provide filtration and water treatment at existing outfall locations by introducing sediment forebays that include several underground chambers and a vault for cleanout.
- Evaluate an aeration system for the pond to break down bacteria, improve water quality, and reduce algae blooms.

Increase Pond Storage Capacity

- Consider opportunities in large storm events to utilize the pond for increased storage up to the 100' buffer.

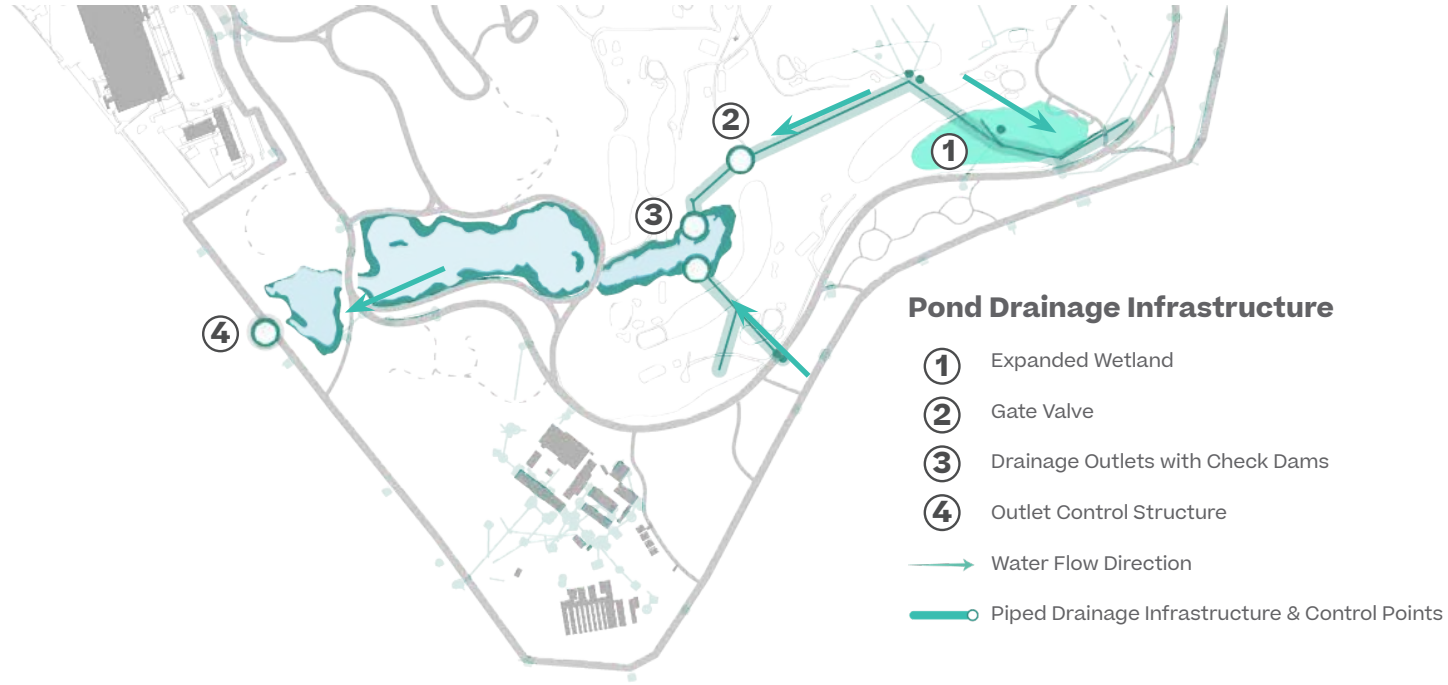
Upgrade the Outlet Structure

- Evaluate the outlet structure maintenance and potential modifications or upgrades that would allow for increased water storage in the pond and improved future flood resilience.

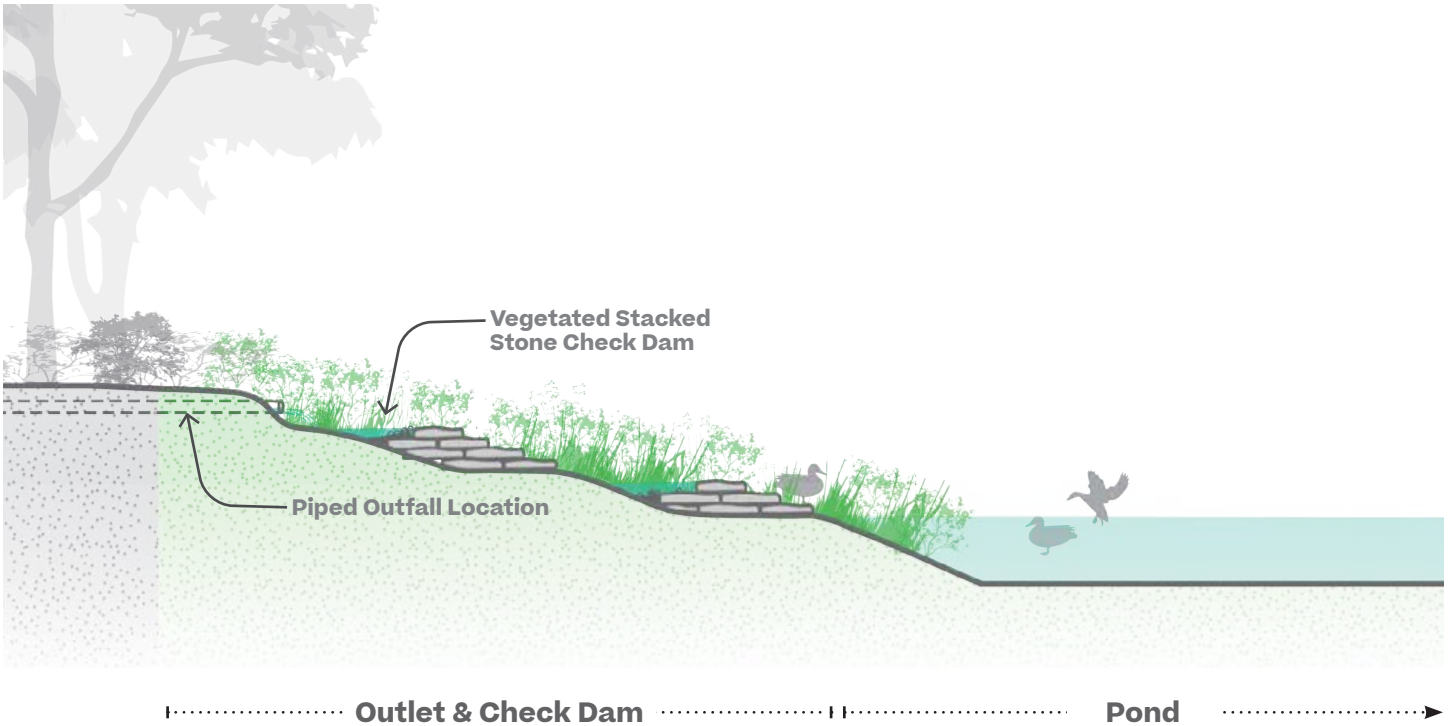
The existing outlet control structure at Scarboro Pond

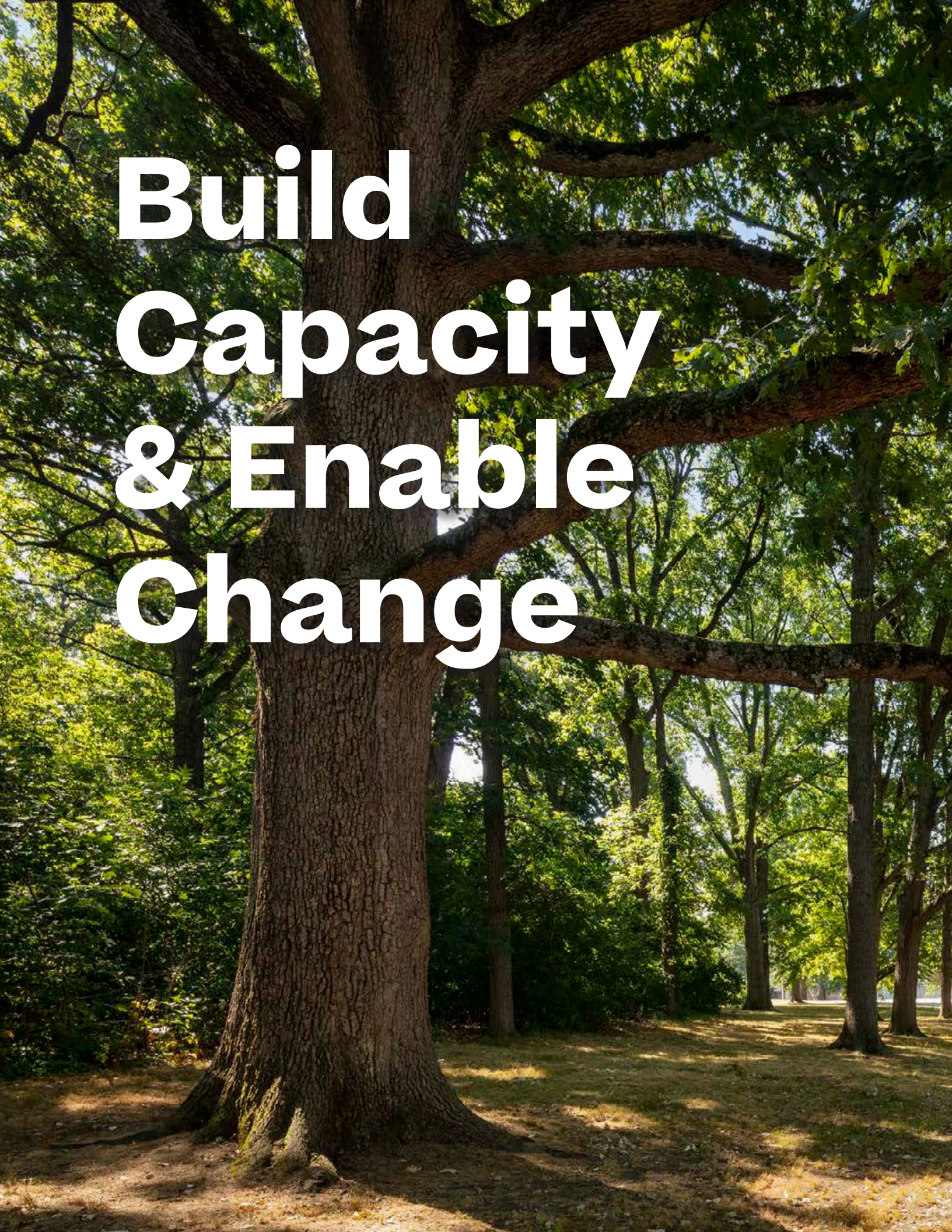
Precedent for a vegetated check dam and sediment forebay.

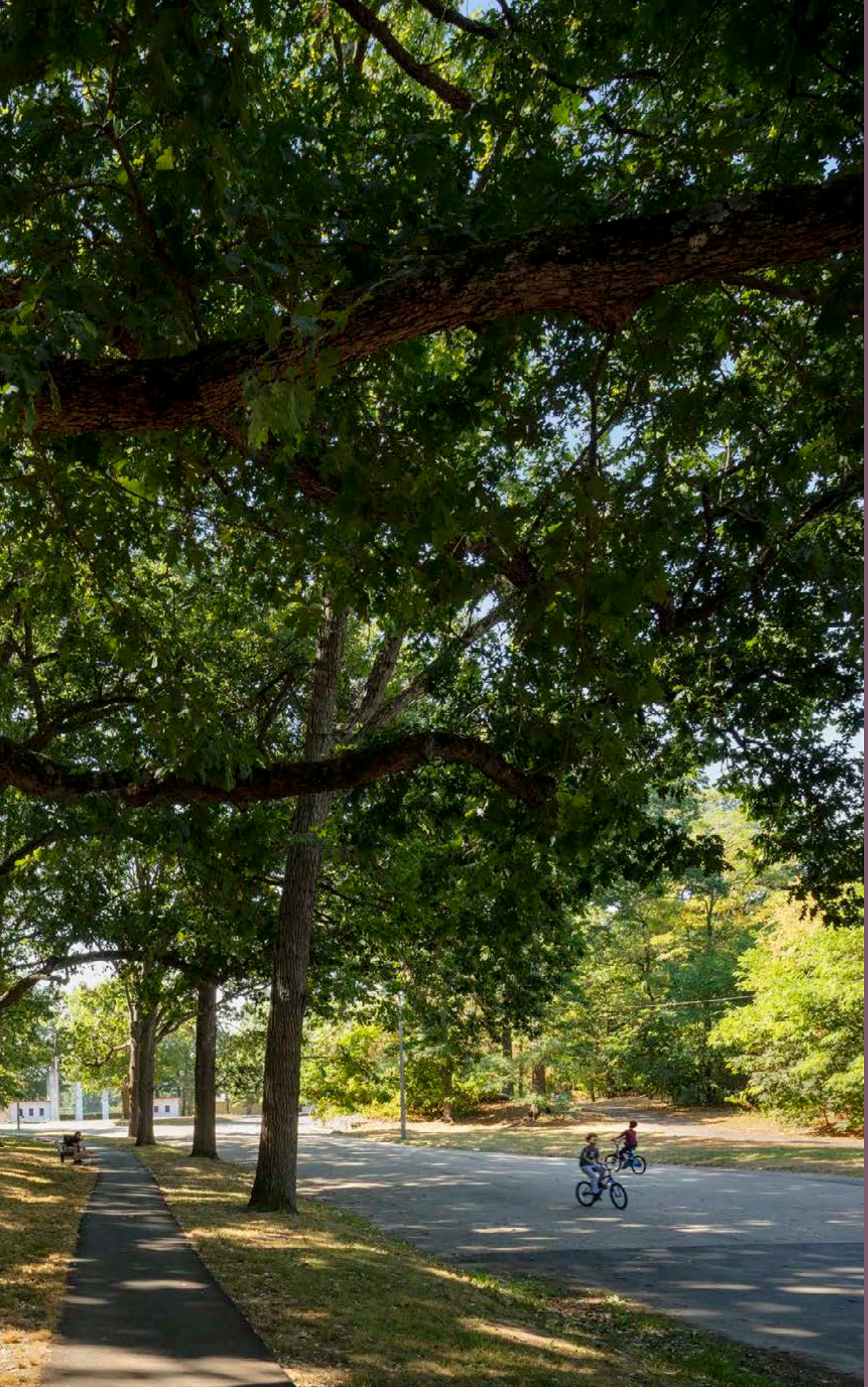
DRAINAGE CONTROL POINTS



FILTER WATER AT PIPED OUTFALLS




Build
Capacity
& Enable
Change



Build Capacity & Enable Change
Recommendations

CONTENTS

What We Heard
Prioritize the Community & Commit to Stewardship

COMMUNITY NEEDS & WISHES

"[I hope] that resources will be affordable and accessible to all who desire to gather there."

"That gentrification does NOT change the historic, cultural, and urban experiences of what Franklin Park and Franklin Park Zoo bring."

"[I hope] that the communities in the immediate proximity of Franklin Park, predominantly communities of color, will have more of a say in the development and happenings at Franklin Park."

"Safe and inclusive space for families that further showcase the value of investing in diverse communities, creating a higher quality of life"

"I hope Franklin Park will continue to be an important staple within the black community. To be better kept up and more open to events for people within the community."

"[I hope] that there will be even better maintenance and investment in all aspects of the park so that future residents can enjoy a beautiful and safe park."

"I would love to have the maintenance of the park be the top priority for the rangers and staff."

"That folks from the neighborhoods directly surrounding Franklin Park benefit from the improvements."

"My hope is that Franklin Park continues to thrive while remaining true to its roots."

"Just keep it clean"

VALUES & GOALS

MAINTENANCE & CARE →	**Care for the park as it exists today.**
EQUITABLE INVESTMENT →	**Make equitable investments across the park and be proactive and intentional about how investment extends into the surrounding communities.**
	Pursue a variety of appropriate funding sources.
CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT →	**Continue community outreach & trust-building.**
GOVERNANCE & SUPPORT →	**Build multi-party support for the Action Plan within the City and hire a Franklin Park Administrator to oversee the day-to-day park operations and investments.**

RECOMMENDATIONS: ←

BUILD INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITMENT FOR THE PLAN

PROTECT THE PARK'S NEIGHBORS

BUILD MORE PARTNERSHIPS

ADVANCE A SHARED PARK GOVERNANCE MODEL

COMMIT TO AN INCLUSIVE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

ELEVATE THE STANDARD OF CARE

GROW LOCAL TALENT

The Big Picture
Sustain a Shared Resource

Building, supporting, and sustaining park life is an active and ongoing effort, with the city, community organizations, the park's maintenance team, volunteers, and individual neighbors all playing vital roles. Purposeful and thoughtful investment can improve the park for longstanding users while bringing positive impacts through new partnerships, grounds for community programming, and providing a safe and beautiful place to come together. Through ongoing dialogue with stakeholders, the plan will continue to grow the diverse and dedicated network of park stewards.

Building Capacity & Making Change

Franklin Park is what it is today because of its strong and long-lasting community of stewards. Generations of park users have benefited from this legacy of community-building, programming, and care for the park, and stewardship opportunities and partnerships with local neighborhood organizations continued to be highlighted as a top priority by neighbors throughout the planning process.

Critical to the next steps of the Action Plan and fostering this ongoing sense of stewardship is continued trust-building between the community, the City, and key partners. As improvements are made to the park, they must return value to it and emanate that value back out into its communities. Communication, governance, knowledge, and relationships must be aligned to advance shared goals of equity, longevity, resiliency, beauty, and protection of this incredible resource.

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Build Interdepartmental Commitment

Gather Multiple Agencies to Stand Behind the Plan

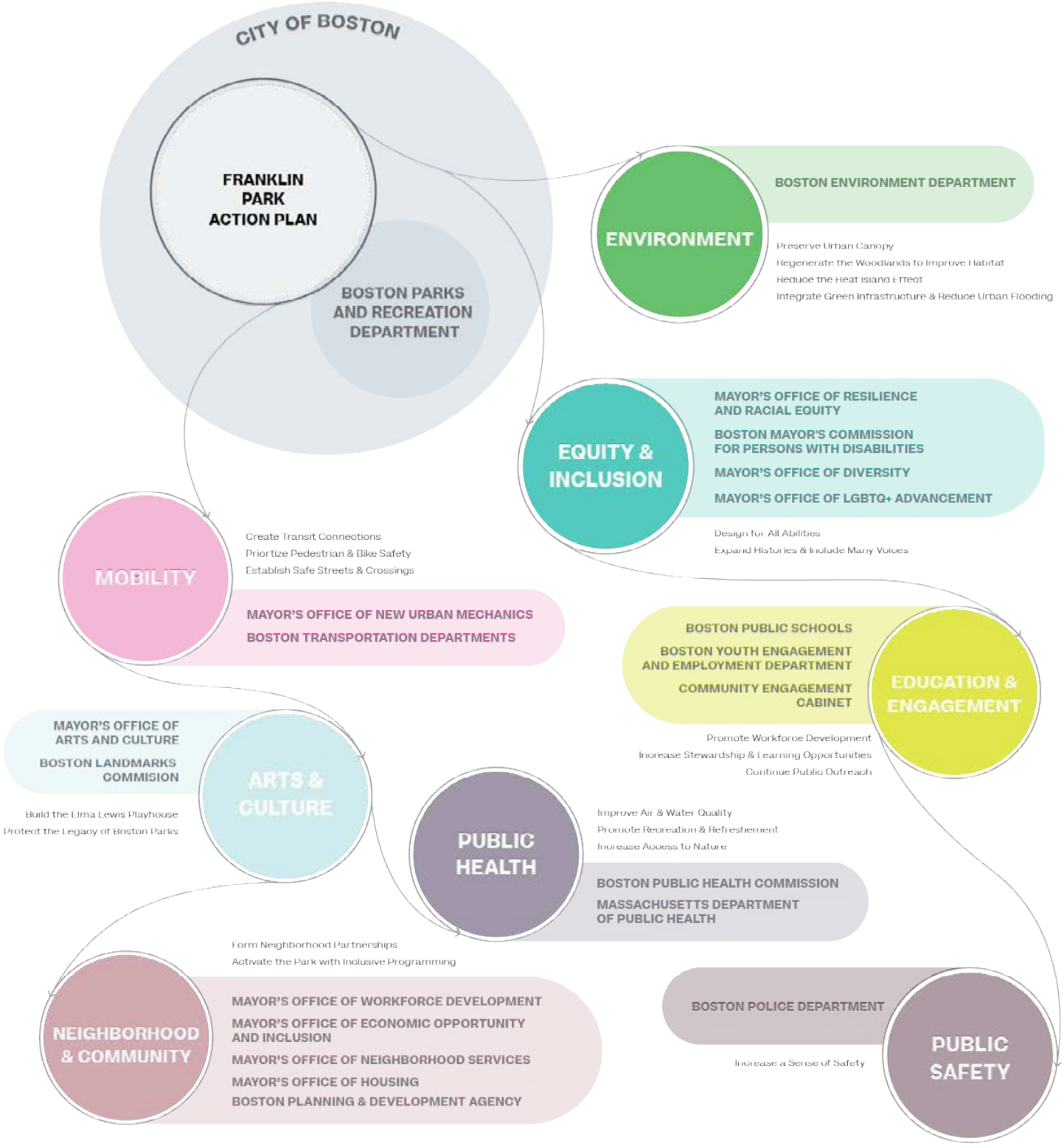
The recommendations of the Action Plan reflect not only BPRD's stated goals, but those of multiple other city agencies — including those around climate change, public health and community investment. Franklin Park is a unique opportunity for agencies to become committed and active partners in supporting both in-park change and broader investment across the surrounding communities.

CITY-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Form a City Advisory Task Force

- Establish a consistent core group of leaders from select city agencies to achieve cross-agency buy-in and to move 'big thinking' in the Action Plan forward.
- This group should include cabinet level members and provide strategic leadership in the implementation process to ensure alignment with relevant initiatives and implementation strategies, and to identify partnership potentials and sychroniciites with ongoing City efforts that can be mutually leveraged.
- The City Advisory Group will also serve as ambassadors for the plan and connectors to their constituents and network.

CITY AGENCIES & SHARED INITIATIVES



Protect the Park's Neighbors
Put Policies in Place to Support the Community

Research shows that the threat of green gentrification is real in many cities, and it can lead to increases in housing prices and the displacement of less affluent longtime residents (particularly communities of color) that many park equity efforts are designed to serve. Policymakers, planners, parks and housing advocates, and local community-based organizations are increasingly recognizing this threat and taking action to limit displacement[1].

PARKS-RELATED ANTI-DISPLACEMENT STRATEGIES

The Parks-Related Anti-Displacement Strategies (PRADS) research, which studied twenty-seven large parks across nineteen cities, provides common observations:

- A variety of strategies are being deployed around park projects across the country. Most efforts are multidisciplinary. Different strategies are likely more applicable and effective depending on whether the local real estate market is hot, warm, or cool.[1]
- Community engagement is viewed as crucial for implementing PRADS, especially in the early stages of park development projects. Indeed, the impetus and energy for much of this work around the country has arisen from community-based organizations. [1]
- Projects in which equity-oriented efforts are more deliberate tend to use multidisciplinary approaches, integrating affordable housing, job training and creation, and support for small businesses. [1]
- Efforts to address the threat of green gentrification directly and implement PRADS are leading many park advocates to participate in broader initiatives to address displacement, whether it is triggered by parks or not, and to conceive of parks as just one crucial part of equitable community development. [1]

Strategies for Boston

In Boston, between 2000 to 2018, significant home value appreciation has occurred, but the percentage of non-white households adjacent to Franklin Park has largely stayed consistent. Even so it is important to get ahead of demographic shifts. Boston already has strategies in place for reducing green gentrification with key policies and organizations including inclusionary zoning, commercial linkage fee/housing trust fund, community benefits agreements, and a community land trust. These existing strategies are critical and, in many cases, have helped to stabilize neighborhoods around Franklin Park. Additional strategies for reducing displacement as a result of Park improvements fall into several key categories. Their multi-disciplinary nature underscores the importance of coordination at the city level between agencies and departments to achieve beneficial results.

Helping Renters

In Boston, the Mayor's Office of Housing has many strategies in place to help Boston renters through the Boston Home Center and the Office of Housing Stability, including:

- Financial assistance for residents behind on rent
- Housing search support
- Legal and mediation support
- Educational workshops for renters
- Acquisitions of rental units to make them permanently income restricted

Helping Homeowners

Strategies to preserve or create homeownership among longtime, low-income residents:

- Foreclosure assistance and counselling
- Down payment and closing cost assistance
- Forgiveable loans for improvements
- Property tax freezes
- Development of affordable homeownership opportunities for City owned vacant lots (over 70 near Franklin Park)
- Low interest mortgages
- Homebuyer education classes and credit counselling

Helping Businesses

Strategies to create or preserve jobs and small businesses for longtime, low-income residents:

- Job Creation through Procurement Policies
- Small Business Disruption Funds

[1] *sourced from "Greening without Gentrification Report" by Alessandro Rigolon and Jon Christensen*

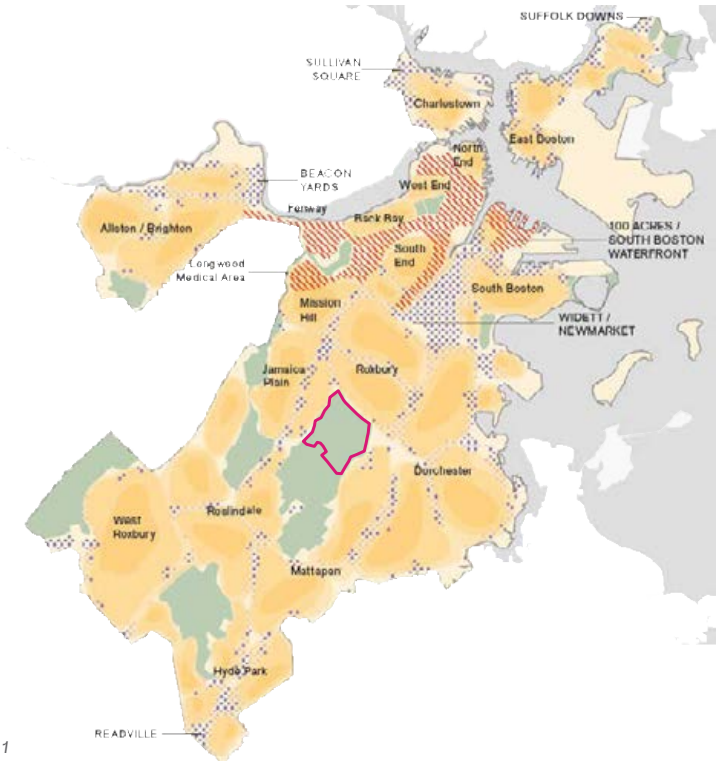
BOSTON 2030 ENHANCEMENT ZONES

The neighborhoods surrounding Franklin Park have been designated in the Imagine Boston 2030 plan as zones for enhancement, meaning city improvements will be focused less on new construction and more on local services, vitality, and housing affordability. This will include investments to public realm spaces like playgrounds, parks, and streetscape improvements. **Early and coordinated actions across city agencies to protect vulnerable residents is foundational to any large-scale improvements within the park and within the surrounding communities.**

Enhanced Neighborhoods
Improvement of the public realm and contextually sensitive development, paired with anti-displacement policies, will improve neighborhood vitality, services, and affordability while affirming each neighborhood's distinct identity.

Mixed-Use Job Centers

Expanded Neighborhoods
Significant new mixed-use housing and job growth in transit-accessible areas at the edges of neighborhoods will reduce housing price pressure, expand access to opportunity, and stitch together the physical fabric of the city.



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WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM OTHER PARKS?

Two case studies parks demonstrate that significant changes in investment levels for regional significant parks was correlated with significant housing price appreciation and a loss of minority households from neighboring census tracts. While it is not possible to attribute a causal link between the park specific investments and the changes in adjacent neighborhoods, this analysis dovetails with existing research showing the impacts of green gentrification.

Forest Park, St. Louis
Between 1995 and 2018 Forest Park in St. Louis raised $242 million dollars in two separate capital campaigns aimed at significantly expanding and improving the park. While these campaigns funded large scale improvements in the park, significantly raising its prominence and visitation, they also contributed to major economic and demographic shifts in adjacent neighborhoods. Between 2000 and 2018, six census tracts in the Botanical Heights, Shaw, Compton Heights, and Tower Grove Park neighborhoods experienced significant loss of non-white population while home prices outpaced those of the city overall. Especially these neighborhoods saw a loss of non-white population averaging 28%, twice that of the city overall. Additionally, home prices increased an average of $118,000, approximately 1,.75 times that of the increase across the city overall. These impacts were felt most heavily by lower income households.

City Park, New Orleans
A look at City Park in New Orleans revealed similar results. City Park raised and deployed $128 million between 2005 and 2018, a large investment that fundamentally reshaped and repositioned the park. In neighborhoods on the South side of the park including Seventh Ward, Bayou St. John, Mid-City, Treme/Lafitte, Tulane-Gravier, home prices increased an average of $192,000 or 1.46 times the increase of the City overall. Additionally, the number of non-white households in these neighborhoods decreased by 19.5% over the period. While this is only 75% of the reduction in the city overall, unfortunately the city lost 26% of its non-white population during this period due to the massive outflow of households from New Orleans because of Hurricane Katrina.

Expand Agency
Build More Partnerships

Executing the community's vision for the park will require committed partnerships between BPRD and in-park stakeholders, non-profit partners and an expanded set of community partners. Each will have a distinct and critical role to play. Collectively, these partnership will cultivate a diverse and dedicated stewardship network integral to the future success of the park.

BUILD ON PLAN MOMENTUM

Form Institutional Partnerships

- In partnership with the Franklin Park Coalition and other organizations, articulate an agenda for seasonal programming that is well-suited to the park and advances access for residents of all ages and backgrounds.
- Build relationships with community organizations and institutions already engaged in the Action Plan who can champion events and programming to build familiarity and ownership in the community; evaluate potential partners against Action Plan goals and recommendations to ensure mutually beneficial aspirations and organizational missions.

Connect to Advocates

- Identify community advocates and partners who are already active and making an impact within the surrounding communities; incorporate these groups and individuals into implementation conversations.
- In communities where children have a proportionately larger representation than in other parts of Boston, work to engage children as a way to engage their parents. This includes working with community partners to identify opportunities for things like: 1) Mobile ideas/ice cream truck that gives free ice cream in exchange for ideas; 2) Street chalk art events for kids that invite parents to join; 3) Public cook-outs and food festivals/ contests.

Communicate Regularly

- Work with the FPC to continue to use the Action Plan email newsletter as a way to communicate with the 3,000+ community members on the email list about next steps in the plan, amplify ongoing projects, opportunities for engagement, and updates about the Park and events; support this with other modes of communication for those without digital access.

ROLES ORGANIZATIONS PLAY WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES

Community and Park Friends' Groups

Support neighbors through programming, knowledge-sharing, and park/community advocacy.

Civic Institutions

Provide access to necessary resources such as education, healthcare, and workforce development resources.

Arts/Cultural Organizations

Uplift artists and cultivate culture throughout the neighborhoods.

Ecology and Environmental Organizations

Educate the general public on the importance of relationships between living things and their environment.

EXISTING IN-PARK STAKEHOLDERS & PARK PARTNERS

BPRD STAKEHOLDERS

Boston Parks and Recreation Department
The Parks Department oversees Franklin Park, and will serve as the primary group facilitating the implementation of the Action Plan.

BPRD Maintenance Department
The park is home to the BPRD Maintenance Department yard, which serves the entire city park system. Future opportunities for shared use, workforce development training, and youth education related to stewardship and care of the park will have to be carefully coordinated with their operations.

The William J. Devine Golf Course
The 18-hole course offers is owned and operated by BPRD. The course will play a key role in improving stormwater management, water quality, and increasing biodiversity within the park.

IN-PARK STAKEHOLDERS

The Franklin Park Zoo
Operated by Zoo New England, the Franklin Park Zoo provides year-round ticketed admission, free days, and summer camps for children. Improvements at Peabody Circle, the parking lot along Circuit Drive, and in The Playstead will need to be coordinated together.

Shattuck Hospital
Plans are under development to renovate the 13 acre hospital site. Better integrating the campus within the park and improving connectivity between the campus, the park, and transit will be beneficial to all.

Boston Public Schools
Boston Public Schools operates White Stadium and uses it for offices and sporting events. BPS partnership and coordination is necessary in order to provide shared public use of the stadium.

NON-PROFIT PARTNERS

Franklin Park Coalition
The Coalition has a long history of engaging community members through conservation & stewardship, community events, and advocacy & outreach. They will also play a key role in the administration of the Franklin Park Endowment Trust, which will go towards maintenance and programming.

Emerald Necklace Conservancy
The Emerald Necklace Conservancy's mission is to restore and improve the Emerald Necklace for all. Franklin Park is the largest park within this system, and their expertise in fundraising, historic Olmsted parks, landmarks review, and ecological restoration will be valuable.

Other Community Partners
There are many existing community partners and new partnerships that will be formed to advance the goals of the Plan.

Make it Multi-Partner

Advance a Shared Park Governance Model

As an immediate next step, The City should establish a framework for immediate and future park governance to clarify responsibilities for plan implementation work, including capital project decision-making, fundraising, programming, and maintenance. With a new governance plan in place, partnerships can be evolved to support implementation of capital projects, park-wide programming, and maintenance and operations.

PARK GOVERNANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish a Franklin Park Administrator Position

- The City should hire a dedicated staff person for communication and coordination around all park activities: events, maintenance, programming, construction, and volunteer activities in Franklin Park. This 'Park Administrator' position would also continue to build community connections and partnerships to ensure continuity and responsiveness to feedback.

Shift to a Multi-Partner Model

- There are opportunities, both through the Franklin Park Endowment Trust and through long-term relationships with the Franklin Park Coalition and Emerald Necklace Conservancy, to shift Franklin Park towards a "multi-partner" governance model. This means that the City, which currently leads investments in maintenance and operations would more fully share activation and care responsibilities with others.

Divide Responsibilities

- Each park partner should have clear responsibilities and work directly with the Park Administrator.
- The city will continue to lead and be responsible for capital projects, and basic maintenance and care.
- The Franklin Park Coalition will continue to lead activation and programming in the park, and will take on an expanded role as a voting member on the Franklin Park Trust Endowment.
- The Emerald Necklace Conservancy will continue to support larger and more specialized restoration efforts and ecological management based on the comprehensive natural resources plan.

FRANKLIN PARK ADMINISTRATOR

Most major parks at the scale and stature of Franklin Park have a Park Administrator (or equivalent management role) in place to ensure proper coordination, planning, and communication across all aspects of a park and its users.

A Park Administrator at Franklin Park would serve to coordinate daily and seasonal needs of the park. The Administrator would serve as the single point of contact for park partners, ongoing community coordination, as well as an overseer of in-park activities and programs.

ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE MODELS

Governance refers to the framework that defines who is responsible for the park and how those responsible parties make decisions about its maintenance and operations. While the City of Boston is currently responsible for the park, which represents a public sector model of governance, the plan proposes a new model for the park, in which the City more fully shares responsibilities for programming and ecological restoration with trusted partners.

Shared governance expands capacity, provides a bridge for community engagement and involvement, and supports expanded opportunities for community priorities to inform decision-making.

Multi-Partner

The City provides funding for capital improvements, but multiple non-profit partners take on programming (Franklin Park Coalition & neighborhood coalitions) and focused ecological restoration efforts including volunteer coordination (Emerald Necklace Conservancy).

Case Study: Philadelphia Parks and Rec, Friends of FDR Park, and the Fairmount Park Conservancy

Conservancy Model*

A majority of the park responsibilities are borne by a private, non-profit organization who funds, maintains, programs, and often has a lease or easement over the land.

Case Study: Forest Park Forever, St. Louis

** Not Recommended for Franklin Park*

City Led

The City grows staff and skills to manage, host, and expand public programs. Franklin Park Coalition and community organizations continue to play a modest role in hosting legacy events, through the city's framework.

Case Study: Theodore Wirth Park and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Outsourced*

A private provider is contracted to provide public programming (similar to the Lawn on D or South Station).

Case Study: Friends of City Park for City Park, New Orleans, LA

** Not Recommended for Franklin Park*

Make it Count
Strengthen Established Relationships

Capital projects will need to undergo a number of reviews by groups operating as “gatekeepers” that protect the resource based on a particular stewardship focus, including the Boston Landmarks Commission and Conservation Commission. A review by a group of representatives composed of in-park stakeholders and community members should be another.

BUILD ON PLAN MOMENTUM

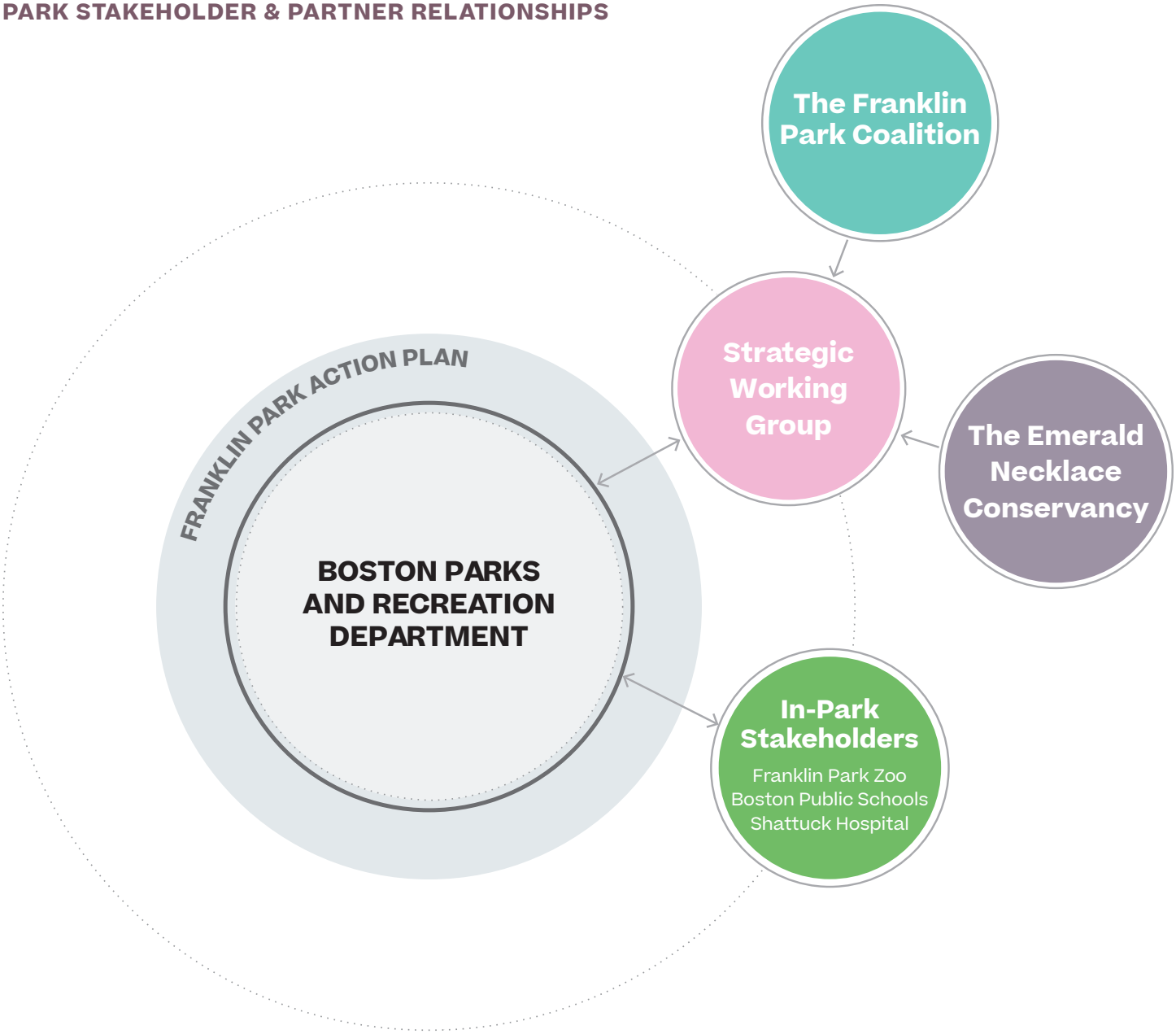
Develop a Memorandum of Understanding

- Create a three to five year social contract between community leaders, the City, and non-profit entities that outlines the shared expectations in and around the park; this memorandum should be considered a working document that can be re-evaluated as projects are implemented, community needs change, and relationships between the neighborhoods and the city evolve.

Strengthen Stakeholder Partners

- The **Emerald Necklace Conservancy** has been a long-term and important partner for BPRD in particular around the management of natural systems within the park and protecting Olmsted designed parks within Boston. They will continue to lead ecological restoration efforts and could take on an expanded role in fundraising for capital improvements.
- The **Franklin Park Coalition** has a long history of park activism and stewardship, and serves a key role in convening community members across different neighborhoods surrounding the park. The Coalition also takes a lead role in park programming, which in turn strengthens its ties to the neighborhoods and community members.
- To make the most of the strengths of these two organizations, a **Franklin Park Strategic Working Group** should be formed that provides a venue for each organization to build collaborative working relationships with each other and the City around needs and priorities at Franklin Park.
- Give this group a seat at the table when developing both capital projects and programming in order to make sure improvements are best serving the community and capitalizing on specific synergies that exist between Action Plan recommendations and neighborhood priorities.
- This group will provide strategic input on project implementation at key milestones, and will serve as ambassadors for the plan and connectors to their constituents and networks; they will receive high-level updates via scheduled meetings with the city and design team.
- Stakeholders with a physical footprint in the park (like the Franklin Park Zoo and Boston Public Schools) will also continue to be important partners; coordination around improvements on property that BPRD does not currently own, as well as expanded program offerings will require close coordination.

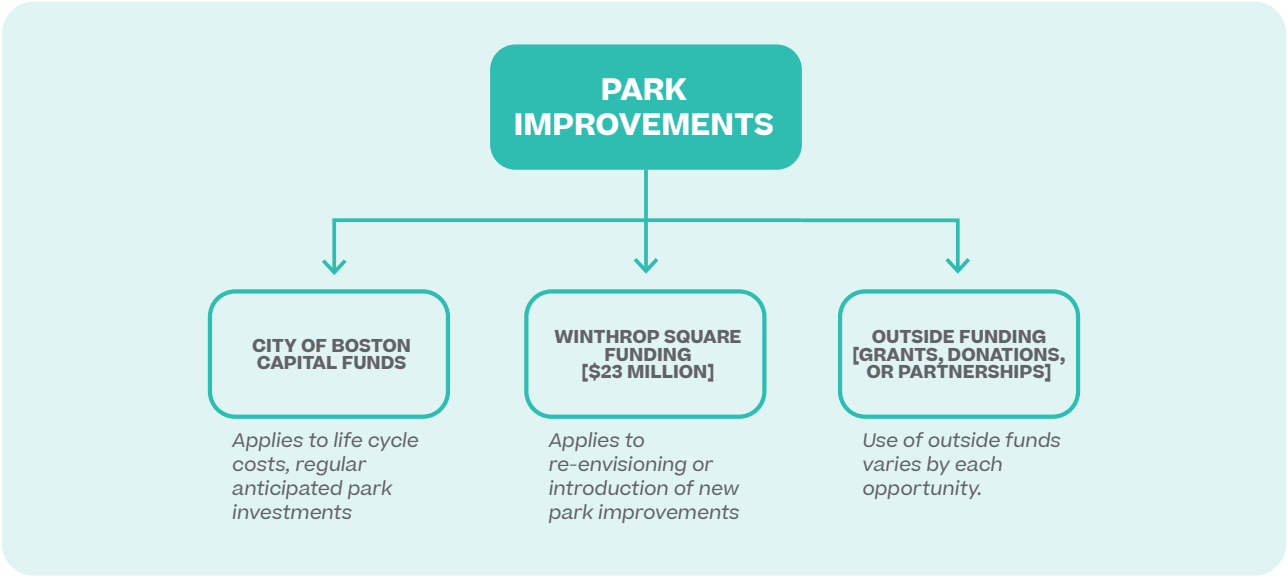
PARK STAKEHOLDER & PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS

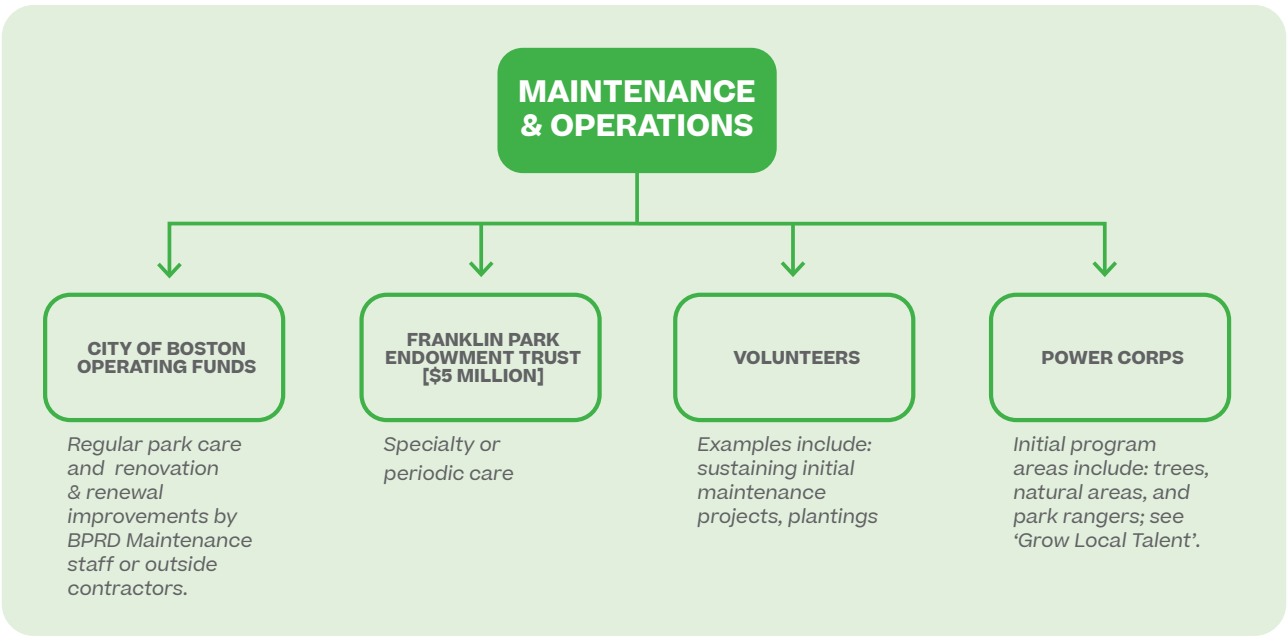


Two Kinds of Investment
Capital vs. Maintenance Dollars

The work of the Action Plan falls loosely into two categories: Capital Projects and Maintenance and Operations. Both categories have several funding streams available. Some sources are of a set dollar amount, while others are variable, and each source has its own set of constraints around how the funds can be applied.

FRANKLIN PARK EXISTING FUNDING SOURCES





ACTION PLAN PROJECT TYPES

Recommendations in the Action Plan fall into three broad categories: maintenance, ecological restoration, and capital improvements. Each category has a varying timeline, investment, and implementation process associated with it.

Maintenance Projects

- Immediate & short-term timeline
- Targeted scope to address specific issues
- Relatively low cost
- Repeat & seasonal work

Ecological Restoration Projects

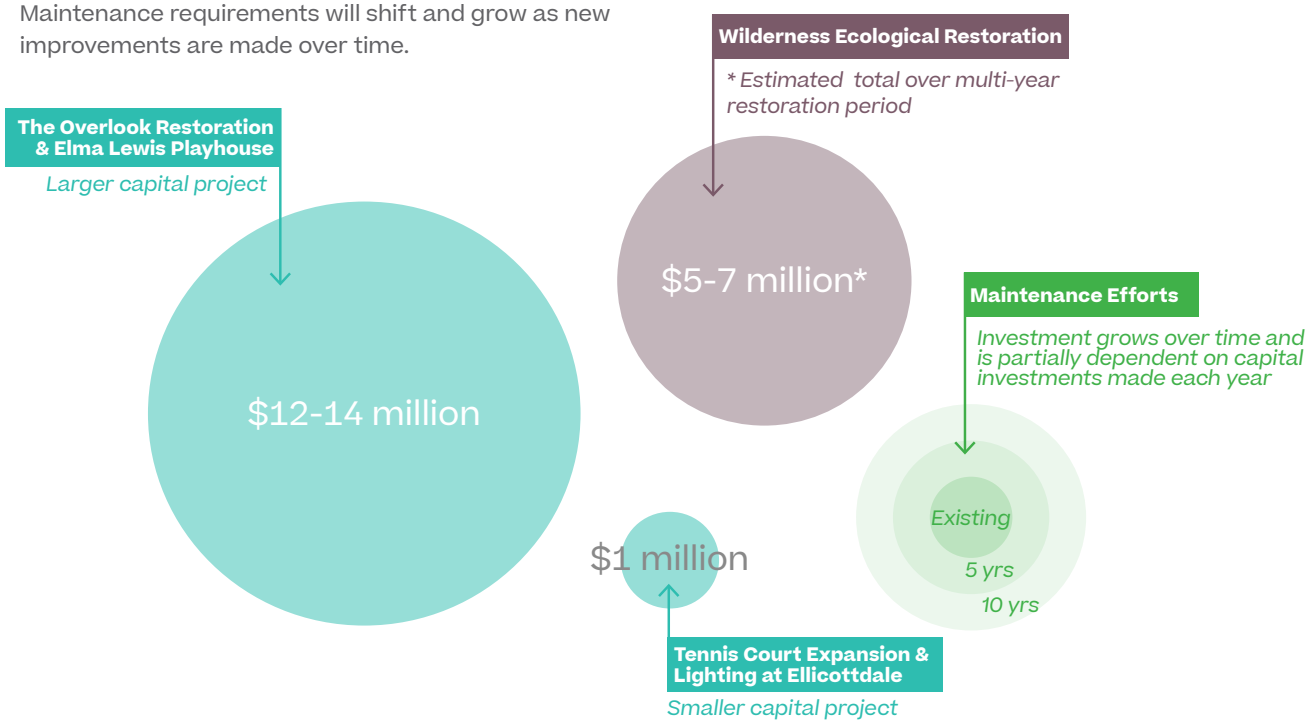
- Sustained effort over a longer timeline
- Cumulative benefit
- Can jumpstart a process with smaller pilot project efforts

Capital Projects

- Varied timelines
- Immediate impact when complete
- One-time project
- Further design and outreach, or feasibility studies required to proceed

PROJECTS & IMPROVEMENTS: A RANGE OF INVESTMENTS

Individual project costs will range depending on scope, complexity, and timeline. Some will be smaller one-time investments, while others will require years of planning and design prior to construction. Maintenance requirements will shift and grow as new improvements are made over time.



Find the Right Fit
Target Additional Funding Sources

Parks typically use a mix of funding sources to achieve their goals, as will be the case with Franklin Park. Certain sources may be more appropriate depending on priorities, project type and size, and desired outcomes. The Action Plan was developed to guide these, and other investments made in the park over the next 20-30 years. The current dedicated funding serves as a jumpstart to making improvements, and additional sources will need to be identified over time to ensure long-term investment.

DEDICATED PUBLIC FUNDS: WINTHROP SQUARE FUNDING

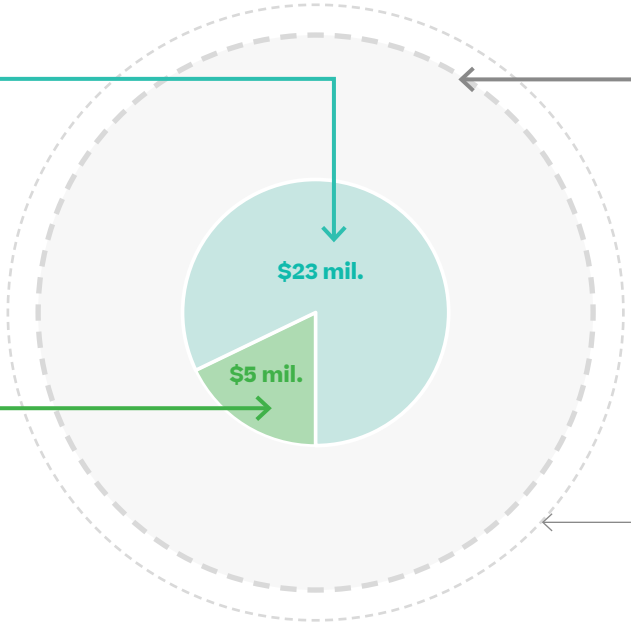
Franklin Park has $28 million of dedicated public funding from the sale of the Winthrop Square Garage, including $5 million earmarked for a maintenance and programming endowment. Decisions on how to best apply these dollars must be considered in the context of other available funding to secure the right fit between proposed improvement and the appropriate funding stream.

Capital Projects

Capital Funds
are dedicated to making physical improvements to the parking including: park amenities and features, landscape and vegetation, and utility infrastructure.

Maintenance & Programming Endowment

Endowment Funds
go towards things like: park management, maintenance, annual programming.



Overall Project Costs

Overall Project Costs
The total costs of all the potential projects in the Action Plan recommendations is ~$150 million. The Action Plan is a visioning document with a 20-30 year time horizon and additional funding streams will be identified as implementation progresses based on community priorities.

Introduction of new park improvements will increase the necessary maintenance investment. Long-term maintenance costs for any capital improvement should be evaluated as part of subsequent design studies and development to ensure they can be planned for and sustained.

HOW DOES THE ENDOWMENT WORK?

An endowment starts with an initial financial contribution, called principal. The principal amount is invested and remains untouched so it can grow, while the annual profits of the investment are used for improvements. Each year, BPRD and the Franklin Park Coalition will jointly create a workplan to submit to the Franklin Park Endowment Trust for approval. The Trust is comprised of three voting members: 1 from the Franklin Park Coalition, 1 Mayoral appointee, and the District 7 City Councilor. Funds will be distributed 70% maintenance and 30% programming annually.

PARK FUNDING TAXONOMY

Mix & Match Strategically

Parks rarely rely on a single type of funding to contribute to their operations, maintenance, and capital improvement budgets. The surrounding context, park programming, and maintenance requirements are all considerations in determining the appropriate combination of strategies for a sustainable future. Not every funding mechanism listed below is appropriate for Franklin Park. It is critical to identify sources that will both provide large scale funding stream opportunities and are also an appropriate fit for the park, its communities, and the particular project or improvement.

What could be right for Franklin Park?

Outside of Public Funding from the City of Boston, the largest opportunity to raise funds for future capital improvements is likely to be from Contributed Income. In particular, Philanthropic and Corporate Sponsorships could be paired with Winthrop Square Funds to increase the pool of resources available to Franklin Park. Boston has a robust line-up of philanthropic groups and large corporations, many with giving programs and missions that align with the community driven goals of the Action Plan for Franklin Park. Tapping into these resources takes organizational capacity and time, but the potential for fund raising is significant and much larger than revenues that may be produced from in-park revenue generation.

Public Funding

General Fund
Bonds
Taxes
Loans

Contributed Income

Grants
Philanthropic Sponsorships
Memberships
Corporate Sponsorships
Grassroots Giving
Friends Groups

Earned Income

Concession Sales
Rental Fees
Parking Fees
Event Fees

Value Capture

Tax Increment Financing (TIFs)
Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)
Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT)
Developer Incentives
Ground & Right-of-Way Leases

Bold = potentially appropriate funding sources for Franklin Park.

Commit to an Inclusive Process
Implementation Factors & Process

A variety of factors impact the decision to move forward with a particular park project. Often these improvements will require upfront work and collaboration by BPRD, in-park and community stakeholders, and City and/or State agencies to allow work to begin. This could include finalizing land transfers, putting partnerships in place to support projects once they are completed, or securing the appropriate funding sources.

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

As noted below, there are many considerations when evaluating a park improvement for implementation. Park improvements near communities that have historically been underserved, or lack program or park destinations close-by must be prioritized; investment in improving the care and resilience of the park's landscape based on a comprehensive plan will support the resource and related uses; design decisions that protect the historic park fabric will ensure its unique character is not compromised.

Community Priorities

- What is the community most interested in seeing happen first?

User Group

- Who will benefit from the project or improvement?

Project Type, Size, & Location

- Where is the project located within the park and what Action Plan goals does it achieve?

Ecological Impact

- What are the greater ecological benefits of the project?

Historic Park Standards & Landmarks Review

- How does the project reflect and support the historic character of the park and its Boston Landmark designation?

Project Cost & Funding Source

- How much does the project cost to design and build, and what is the funding source?

Permitting, Ownership & Logistics

- Will the project require coordination with other city/state agencies or in-park institutions?

Equitable Investment

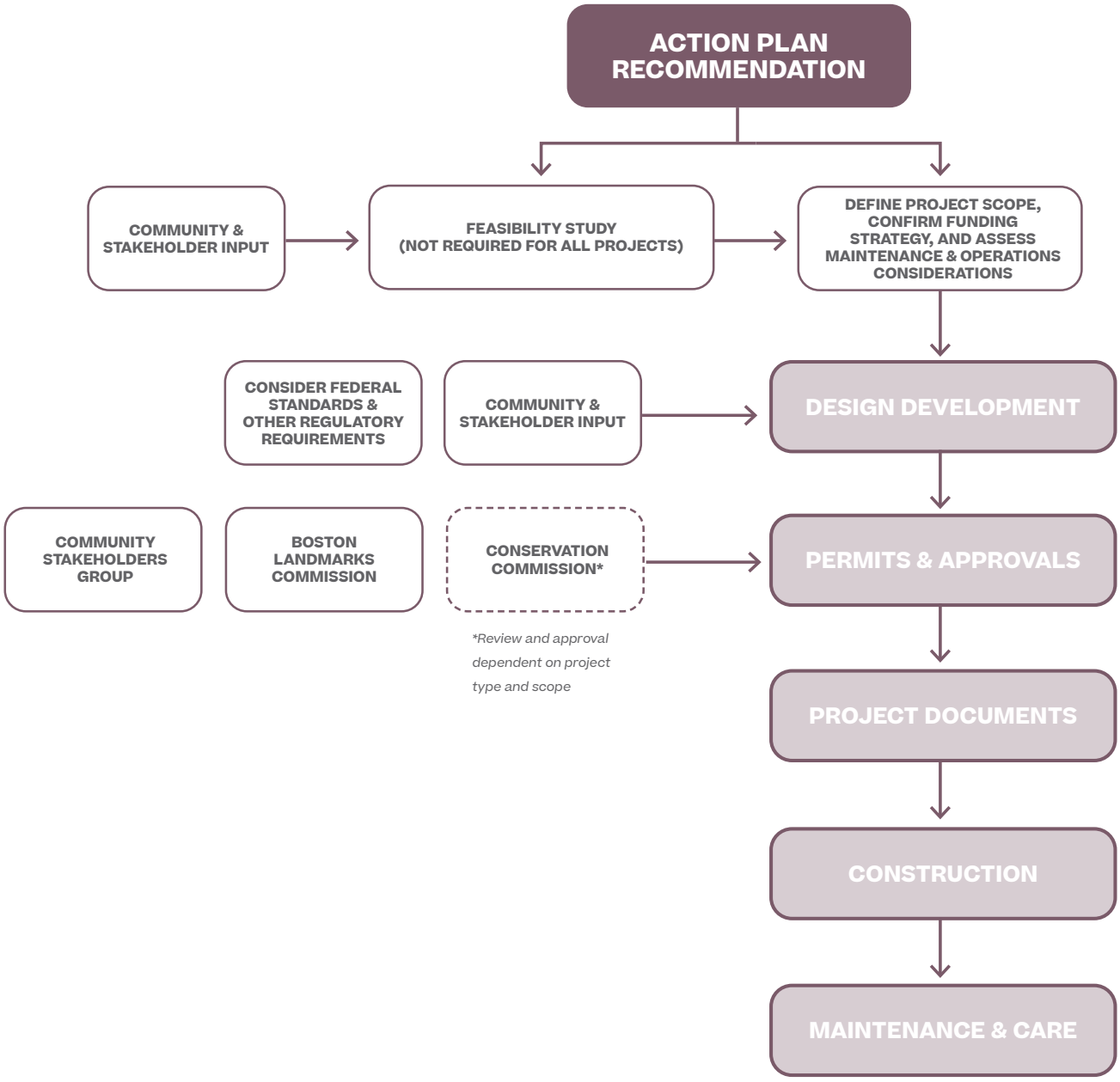
- What are the opportunities to invest in workforce development and prioritize equitable procurement of new work?

Post-Implementation Maintenance

- What will be required to care for the project after it is built?

PROCESS OF PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Once a project is selected for implementation and funding is secured, it will enter a process of refinement to confirm its scope, design, and how maintenance regimes may need to adjust to prepare for its long-term care. Additional site analysis and study will be conducted in parallel with an ongoing community engagement process before it is submitted for required permits and approvals. The project design team will refine the details and prepare drawings for contractors who will build the project.



Elevate the Standard of Care
Franklin Park Should Be a Model

In order to build towards implementation of new capital investments, the City must first commit to addressing the community's top priority: "Take proper care of what we have now." Franklin Park is a large and complex landscape that cannot be managed in the same way as other BPRD properties, and the existing park requires much more care than it is currently receiving. A clear and robust commitment to care would not only build back the quality of the park, but also trust between the City and the Community.

FILL THE MAINTENANCE GAP

Even if no new features are introduced, the level of care in the park needs to increase significantly. Franklin Park requires 4-6 times the current maintenance staff hours being dedicated to it in order to address existing maintenance and stewardship needs.

Maintenance responsibilities will also expand as new investments and additional programming are implemented as part of the Action Plan recommendations. Each improvement will require an assessment before it is installed to ensure that maintenance requirements can be met and sustained. With new park features added, anticipated maintenance needs are expected to increase to 4-7 times the current staff hours.

The gap in maintenance staff hours will be addressed by taking steps over several years to build the team in a sustained and successful way, and must be guided by a larger Maintenance Plan.

The Franklin Park Trust funding will help to supplement immediate needs. Park maintenance & stewardship can be also supplemented through the development of park partnerships and support from volunteer programs. Volunteers can provide invaluable support, providing assistance with de-littering, invasive removal, and replanting efforts, but will require coordination, training, and supervision.

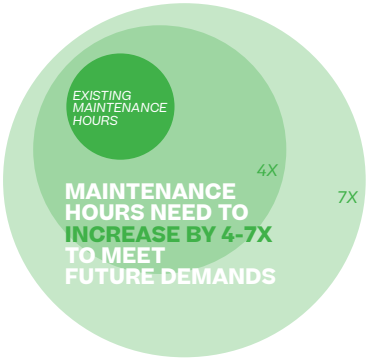
Expand the Core Crew

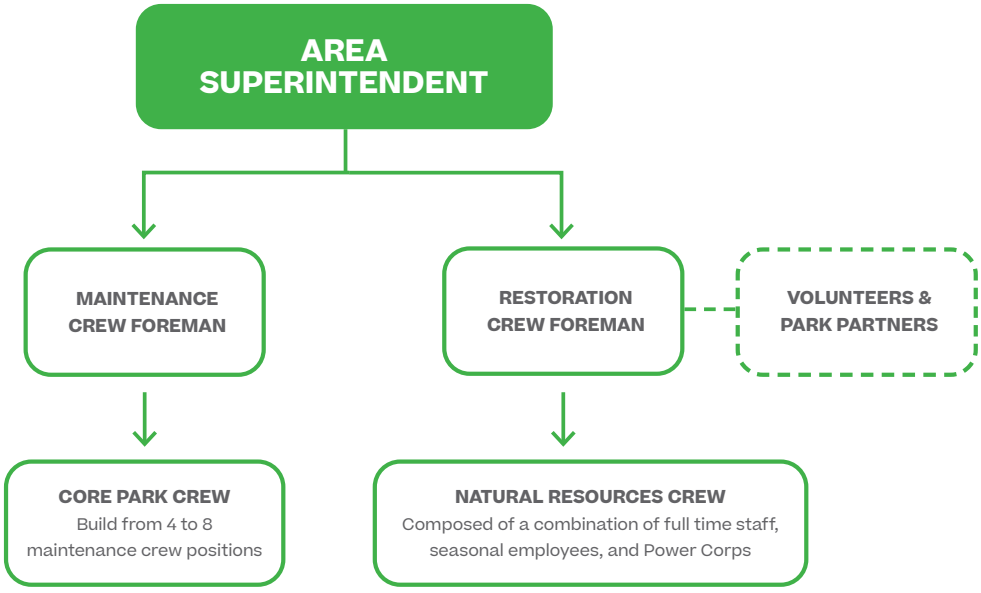
The existing maintenance team is incredibly dedicated, but at four full-time people (who have responsibilities in other parks as well) it is undersized for even basic maintenance needs.

- Immediate Task: Develop and implement a plan for expanding maintenance crew capacities (including shifting responsibilities of the existing crew to allow them to spend all their time in Franklin Park, as well as expanding the team) to appropriately staff the following needs: mowing and turf care and general grounds care (litter pick-up, emptying trash/recycling, surface cleaning, some minor repairs, etc.).
- Near-Term Task: Develop a new Natural Resources Crew that oversees consistent care of the park's natural areas to fill the largest maintenance gap in the park. This should include a Restoration Crew Foreman, trained in ecology or natural resources management, to monitor the health of the ecosystems, accurately identify invasive species, correct areas of erosion, and direct landscape management efforts performed by BPRD staff, PowerCorps, outside contractors, or volunteers.
- As Action Plan recommendations are implemented, maintenance responsibilities will expand, so both the Core Park Crew and the Natural Resources Crew will need to grow over time to meet those needs.

MAINTENANCE CREW ORGANIZATION

Moving forward, the BPRD maintenance crew at Franklin Park should grow and be complemented by a restoration/natural resources-focused crew to manage the landscapes within the park that require specialized training.





The full-time team should grow by at least 4 people in the near term, and continue to build over time. Growing the seasonal staff will help address expanded maintenance needs.

Expand Maintenance Support
Increase Knowledge & Partnerships

EXPAND CAPACITY

Provide the Needed Tools

Inadequate and aging equipment requires frequent repairs often further delaying maintenance tasks.

- Support the inventory of existing equipment and target annual upgrades; over time, budget to purchase new equipment and make specialized rentals where needed as the maintenance team grows to add new members and demands on equipment increase.
- As improvements to The Yard are implemented, advocate to include space to accommodate repairs for equipment and machinery dedicated to the park to cut down on turnaround times and to not impede the work of the maintenance team.

Understand Pressure Points

Special events — festivals, concerts, and large gatherings — are some of the community's most treasured traditions, but the Franklin Park Maintenance Crew is often left doing the heavy lifting of set-up and clean-up, which takes energy away from regular park maintenance.

- Event organizers should provide set-up and clean-up teams so the park crew can focus on overall park maintenance.

Offer Training & Certification

The necessary expansion of the Franklin Park core maintenance team is an opportunity to invest in neighborhood workforce development. Having specialized technical knowledge within the core team will also provide a continuity of care critical to not only the health of the natural resource but the unique character of the park.

- Invest in the existing staff to create high levels of technical knowledge and a solid understanding of management goals and objectives.
- Select key personnel to oversee tree-related contracts.
- Support training and certification in the following fields of study: arboriculture, horticulture, turf science, ecological resource management, and natural resource management.
- Encourage additional training and special certifications by paying staff for their time off work to pursue these areas of study.

Partner with Specialists

Specialized tasks like utility maintenance, tree pruning, and maintenance, are typically contracted out. Because budgets for this work are inconsistent, the work is often reactionary, and priorities and techniques differ depending on who is doing the work.

- Set standards for who, how, and when this work is performed and put methods in place to ensure coordination between full-time teams and outside support.
- Additional needs can be met through the larger BPRD maintenance staff including the trades division and dedicated specialty crews like ballfields. Some tasks may require outside contracts like janitorial services and work on historic masonry.

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Maintenance & Care
Tasks by Type

GENERAL MAINTENANCE NEEDS & TASKS

GENERAL
Litter & debris removal, including clearing drains

Furnishings & amenity maintenance (lighting, water fountains, benches/picnic tables, etc.)

Snow removal, plowing paths

WOODLANDS
Inspection & monitoring for disease, invasives, damage

Tree thinning to control light levels and views

Invasive species control; planting and reseeding.

Post-storm clean up to remove fallen branches that may pose safety hazards.

HERITAGE TREES
Annual inspection & monitoring for signs of pest and disease, broken limbs, etc.

Preventative care and remediation, including pest treatments, pruning, and protecting from compaction

Tree removal and replanting efforts

BUFFERS AND FOREST EDGES
Regular inspection for damage, pooling water, plant disease.

Mowing/cut back of meadows (frequency dependent on species)

Prune and maintain shrubs and trees

Weeding, mulching, watering, pest and disease controls, invasive removals

TURF, SPORTS FIELDS, & LAWNS
Regular inspection for signs of stress, damage, or disease; test for compaction.

Mowing (for frequent for active lawns), pest & weed control, and watering& irrigation

Renovation, including fertilization and aeration, levelling, and grading

Drag infield and reline for sports fields

POND
At the pond edge: erosion control, planting maintenance, reseeding/replanting, and litter removal, deter foot traffic; inspection of sediment levels every few years to determine if dredging is needed

Inspection of drainage outfall and control infrastructure

Flood inspections & clean-up

PATHS AND TRAILS
Inspection for cracks, spalling loose edging

Surface cleaning

Repairs, including patching & filling cracks, resetting edging, releveling soft surfaces, addressing the development of undesired/ off trail paths

HISTORIC MASONRY
Annual inspecting and monitoring

Surface maintenance (spot clean, repaint/ stripe, resurface as needed)

**More significant rebuilding would require skilled masons so the historic character is maintained.*

SPORTS COURTS & PLAY AREAS
Weekly inspecting and monitoring

Surface maintenance (spot clean, repaint/ stripe, resurface as needed)

PICNIC & GATHERING AREAS
Regular cleaning

Litter & debris removal

Furnishing & amenity maintenance

PARKING
Regular inspection for cracks, spalling, faded lines, etc.

Surface cleaning

Repairs, including, repainting, patching and filling cracks, re-aligning car stops

PAVILION & COMFORT STATION
Regular interior cleaning, and exterior cleaning

Assumed annual repair for material replacement and utilities maintenance.

SPECIAL EVENTS
Events bring regular visitors to the park and have significant impacts on the landscape and the workload of the maintenance crew. Third party vendors should be responsible for set-up and clean-up. Fees associated with events should include clean-up/ repair costs if required. Permitted play at the sports fields should be monitored to prevent overuse and provide time for recovery between games.

Management Zones & Maintenance Typologies

- Woodlands
- Heritage Trees
- Buffers & Forest Edges
- Golf Course (by other)
- Sports Fields & Lawns
- Pond
- Paths & Trails
- Historic Masonry
- Sports Courts
- Parking
- Pavilion & Comfort Station

Grow Local Talent
Implementation Can Support the Community

Implementation of both capital and maintenance projects in Franklin Park are also opportunities to strengthen ties to local businesses and to invest in the local workforce — in particular neighborhood youth. Ensuring that investments in the park are also investments in the neighboring communities will bolster the economic and social health of the park's neighbors. It will also serve as a model for other park projects whose procurement strategies will impact the future of skilled workforce development in their own communities.

EQUITABLE PROCUREMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Contract with Under-Represented Businesses

In 2020, the City released a disparity study that showed that only 1.2% of city contracts went to Black and Latinx-owned businesses. The majority of businesses in the neighborhoods surrounding Franklin Park are minority-owned or minority-staffed.

- To ensure these communities benefit from the economic investments being made in the park, explore opportunities to implement equitable procurement policies (in conjunction with city and state procurement policies and goals) to contract with businesses in adjacent and marginalized communities.

Invest in Knowledge Sharing and Training

- Make accredited training programs a part of contracts and programs launched within the park.

Commission Local Talent

- The park is surrounded by a diverse network of artists, makers, and creative institutions; programming should include commissioning individuals within these existing networks.


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POWER CORPS AS PRECEDENT

A partnership of the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development and the Cabinet of Environment, Energy, and Open Space, PowerCorpsBOS is a 6-month, paid, green jobs program that provides young people ages 18-30 with training, career readiness support, and connections to employers in green industries. As part of City of Boston climate policy, the program aims to promote workforce development for youth in careers related to environmental stewardship.

Priority populations include returning citizens, court-involved residents, youth who have experienced homelessness or housing instability, young people who have been in foster care, and other marginalized communities.

Over the course of the training program, PowerCorps teaches members a variety of transferable soft skills and technical forestry skills, including native and invasive plant identification, environmental conservation, and parks maintenance focused on tree care, urban wilds maintenance, and park rangers work. Franklin Park will be a critical site for this training and an opportunity for the program to grow staff locally.

Create opportunities for workforce development related to park care and maintenance.

Before You Build It
Next Steps

Plan recommendations can take years to realize, and many will require further study for feasibility and detail, additional design, or immediate stabilization work to protect the park and its features, in addition to the continued conversation with the community and park stakeholders. This set of next steps is advised to facilitate careful and thorough implementation of plan recommendations, and advance advocacy efforts for Franklin Park and the Action Plan within the community and the City.

MAKE CONNECTIONS & ACTIVATE EDGES

Gain Early Wins at the Edge

- There are many early wins at the edge that don't require a significant amount of additional study or outreach in the same way that other proposals will require, including: inspect perimeter walls and steps and make urgent repairs to address unsafe conditions; manage understory vegetation to improve views and increase a sense of safety, especially near pedestrian entrances.

Advocate for the Park

- Work happening on the surrounding streets needs to take the park into consideration; begin conversations with related city agencies to make them aware of the plan and advocate for its out-of-park recommendations as they develop designs for the perimeter roads.

AMPLIFY MAGNET DESTINATIONS

Continue Conversations

- Not all restoration work can happen at once. Continue engagement and outreach with the surrounding communities about their priorities.

Stabilize Historic Ruins

- Prior to any work aside from urgent repairs and stabilization, create a conditions report for historic masonry, including walls, piers, and steps.
- Create a historic structures report for any more significant historic features or masonry, including The Bear Dens, Ellicott Arch, Schoolmaster Hill, and Valley Gate Head Houses per the Secretary of Interiors Guidelines before pursuing any future improvements.
- Use the reports to guide prioritization of work moving forward.

Coordinate with Partners on Future Work

- Make necessary land transfers back to BPRD to facilitate future projects (Peabody Circle, Bear Dens, Raccoon Cages, etc.)
- Work with BTD on a traffic and bus study for Peabody Circle.

UNIFY THE PARK

Create a Park-Wide Ecological Management Plan

- The management and care of the park's ecologies must be approached comprehensively and guided by an overarching management plan that is supported by increased staff and resources.

Pilot Invasive Removal Process

- Look for opportunities to test removal strategies in a limited area; use the pilot project as a chance to educate the public about the process and what to expect.

Expand the Tree Inventory & Assessment

- This would should include developing a formalized classification system for defining, identifying, and caring for significant trees with work specifications that are assigned on a tree-by-tree basis.

Broaden Tree Care to Include the Woodlands

- Before further damage is incurred, perform necessary pest and disease control, and pruning for high-risk heritage and legacy trees.

Assess the Drainage System

- Conduct a hydrologic and hydraulic analysis of the existing drainage system to further define the current issues and optimize the proposed solutions.

Assess the Pond & Its Infrastructure

- Assess the gate valve and outlet structure.
- Collect more information on water quality and sediment constituents at the bottom of Scarboro Pond to determine extents of dredging needs.

Continue the Collaboration With In-Park Stakeholders

- Continue to work with in-park stakeholders to coordinate efforts to manage for the future and increase biodiversity; for example, work with the golf course to implement buffer planting and continue to move towards more eco-friendly maintenance strategies.

Before You Build It
Next Steps

CLARIFY MOVEMENT

Conduct Future Studies

- Conduct a traffic feasibility study to understand potential impacts of vehicular circulation changes on surrounding streets, signal changes, and bus routes.
- Create a Transportation Demand Management Plan for people visiting and working in the park (including the Zoo, BPRD, White Stadium, etc.), including consideration for bus access and parking during special events.
- Continue coordination with BTD to enhance multi-modal transportation access to key park destinations.
- Conduct a comprehensive lighting study to better understand existing fixtures and utility constraints prior to implementing new ones; select a family of historic and contemporary light fixtures that are in keeping with the park character and establish standards for which kinds of lighting should be part of the City street lighting system and which should be unique to the park and maintained separately.
- Conduct a comprehensive signage study to better understand the full range of existing signage, and define opportunities for new signage typologies that are in keeping with park character.

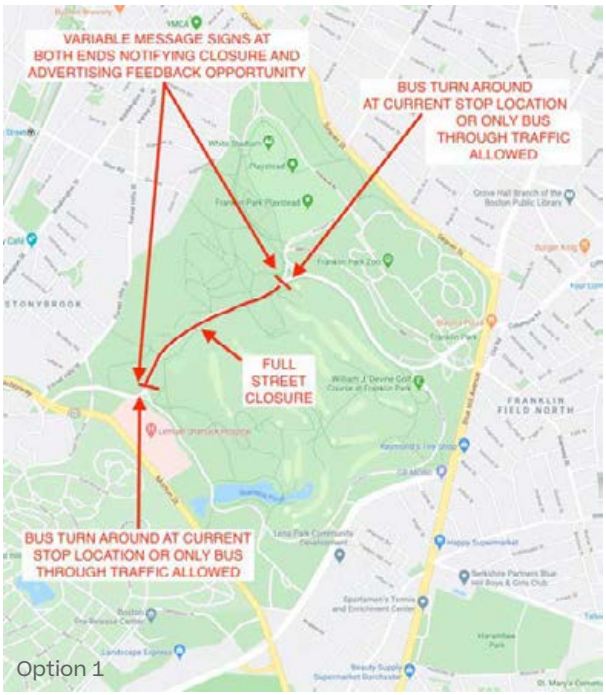
Implement 'Make Safe' Improvements on Circuit Drive

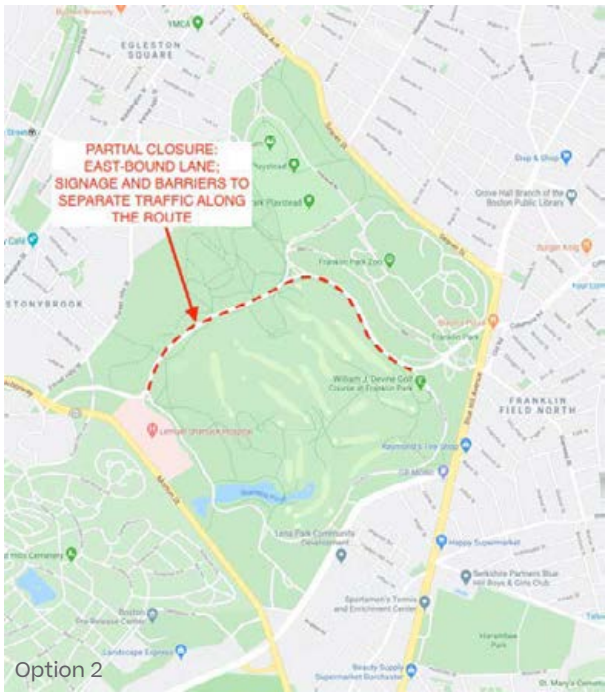
- Implement immediate changes to improve safety for bikes and pedestrians along Circuit Drive, including adding crosswalks across at key locations.
- Consider stop signs or flashing signaled crosswalks at key crossings to prioritize pedestrian safety over cut-through traffic.

Pilot a Temporary Closure on Circuit Drive

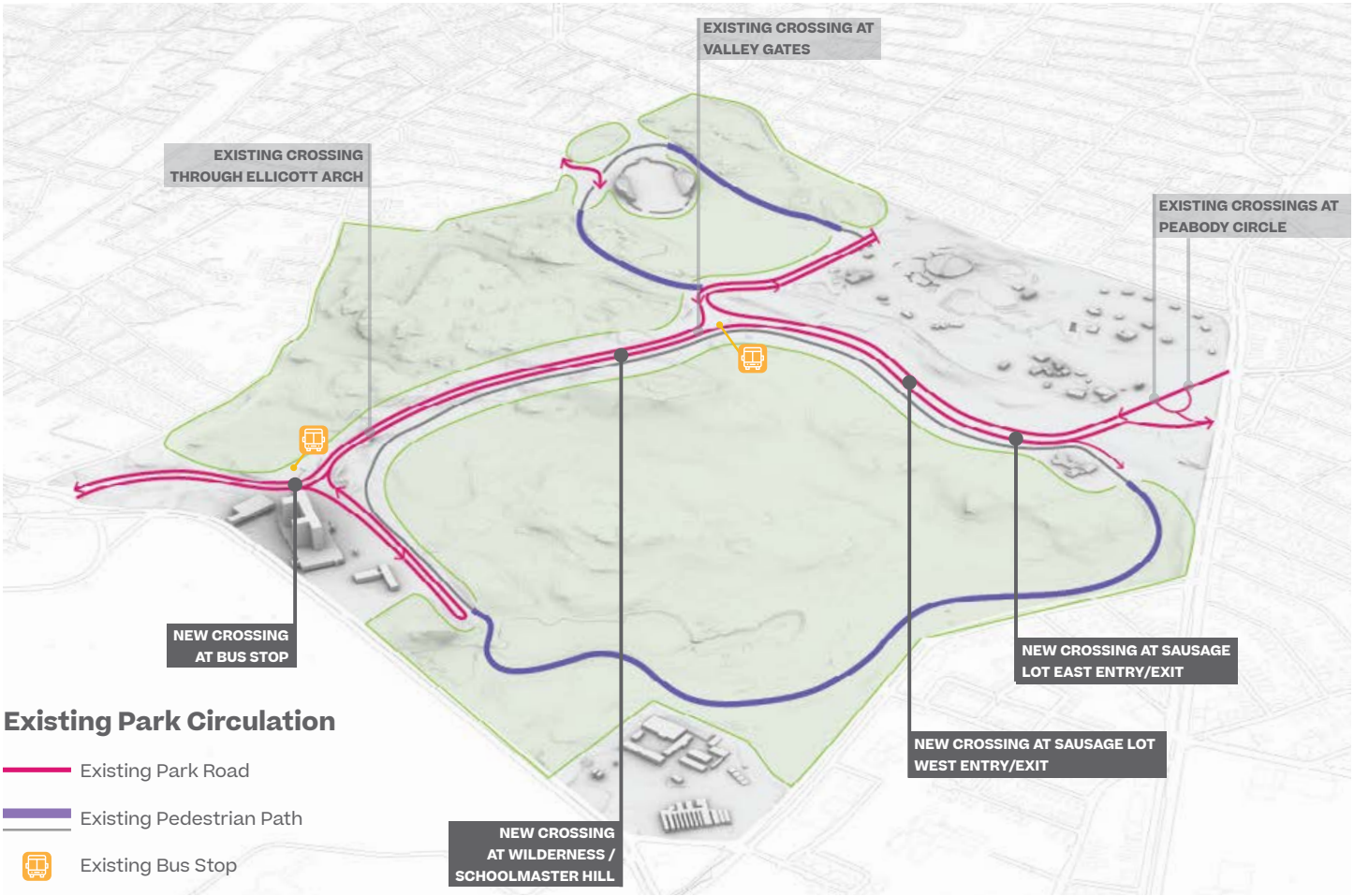
- Pilot a temporary closure to gain a better understanding of design opportunities and constraints, and get additional feedback from the community on the partial closure of Circuit Drive; test the closure over 6-10 weekends or for 2-3 weeks (7 days a week) during the summer.
- While traffic analysis, bus routes, parking lot expansion, and signage improvements are being implemented, continue to test Circuit Drive modification and closure scenarios (extents, duration, frequency) to learn what is successful and welcomed by the communities surrounding the park.

CIRCUIT DRIVE TEMPORARY CLOSURE PILOT





CIRCUIT DRIVE 'MAKE SAFE' PROPOSED CROSSINGS



Action Plan Implementation
Next Steps

The Action Plan provides a vision and guidebook for park care and improvements over the next two to three decades. Work will be advanced according to community and City priorities and as staff capacity and funding allows. Early and mid-range projects identified here advance the major priorities and recommendations in the Action Plan and build up programs to sustain long term park stewardship. Project priorities will be regularly reevaluated with community input to respond to changing needs and park conditions.

EARLY ACTION WORK

OPERATING / FRANKLIN PARK TRUST FUNDING

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

- Create & fill recommended Park Administrator position
- Property transfer - Peabody Circle
- Property transfer - Bear Dens
- Develop the Natural Resources Crew
- Develop the Power Corps Crew
- Install, manage, & maintain 1 or 2 temporary restroom facilities
- Develop & begin implementation of a Maintenance Plan

YEAR 1 TRUST WORK PLAN

- Woodlands maintenance & invasive removal*
- Turf management*
- Litter & debris collection and removal / recycling*
- Swing gate management*
- Cobble gutter clearing & maintenance*
- Drain cleaning*
- Reset steps at The Overlook & associated masonry repair
- Glen Road repaving

** Indicates annual programs*

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS / WINTHROP SQUARE FUNDING

PROJECTS

- Bear Dens Make Safe project
- White Stadium surroundings improvements, including fence removal, clearing overgrown vegetation, and repainting & cleaning exterior walls (in coordination with other White Stadium projects by BPS / PFD)
- Ellicott Arch lighting
- Crack repair in tennis courts at Shattuck
- Establish safe crossings along Circuit Drive (in coordination with BTD)
- Develop a parkwide Ecological Management Plan that includes a tree care program and invasive species management

RECOMMENDED STUDIES & PLANS TO ADVANCE ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Design for performance space at The Overlook
- Franklin Park vicinity traffic analysis studies to inform multi-modal circulation improvements
- Design studies for future activation & use of The Bear Dens (following the Make-Safe work)
- Siting study for dog recreation space
- Parkwide improvement strategies, including lighting, signage, and restrooms

MID-RANGE WORK

OPERATING / FRANKLIN PARK TRUST FUNDING

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

- Continue to build out park maintenance crews as FPAP projects are advanced
- Refine the temporary restroom program into a permanent program that can be properly managed & maintained
- Expand year-round programming in the park
- Implement, assess, & refine the Parkwide Ecological Management and Maintenance Plans
- Formalize partnership programs with key park partners and opportunities for continued youth engagement

ONGOING TRUST FUNDED WORK

- Continue to address deferred maintenance back-log
- Adjust the annual work plans to respond to new park maintenance needs, adjustments in BPRD maintenance crew capacity, & input from park partners & park users
- Reassess annual contracts to determine adjustments or updates each year

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS / WINTHROP SQUARE FUNDING

RECOMMENDED WORK

- Identify & address facility improvements according to life-cycle needs
- Continue community discussions through park partners to help evaluate recommended Action Plan projects
- Implementation of studies identified and completed in Early Action Work
- Advance projects over each of the 5 FPAP recommendation categories

All work and phases will be re-assessed as implementation progresses, and will adjust based on needs and staff levels.

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Page 38, Executive Summary

Fig. 1. Harvey, Millicent. *Schoolmaster Hill, Franklin Park.* 2022. Photograph. Courtesy of Millicent Harvey Photography.

Page 46-48, Franklin Park

Fig. 1. Olmsted, Frederick Law. *General Plan of Franklin Park, 1885.* 1930. Map. Historic New England. https://www.historicnewengland.org/explore/collections-access/capobject/?refd=AR001.PLOT.026b.

Page 51, Building on Past Efforts

Fig. 1. City of Boston, Imagine Boston 2030. Boston, Massachusetts. Sept 8, 2017.

Page 53-54, Listening to the Community

Fig. 1-10. Courtesy of the design team.

Page 75-76, The Early Landscape

Fig. 1. *Old Indian Trail Looking South from Seaver St*. March 30, 1894. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/9267838541/in/album-72157634611391438/.

Fig. 2. De Costa, J. and Hall, Charles. *A Plan of the Town and Harbour of Boston and the Country Adjacent with the Road from Boston to Concord, Shewing the Place of the Late Engagement between the King's Troops & the Provincials, Together with the Several Encampments of Both Armies in & About Boston. Taken from an Actual Survey.* 1775. col. map 37 x 49 cm. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3764b.ar090000/.

Fig. 3. Oliver Foster, Jeanne. People in Franklin Park. u.d. Courtesy of Jeanne Oliver Foster.

Fig. 4. Boston (Mass.). Park Commissioners. *West Roxbury Park: West Roxbury District*. 1876. Boston Public Library, Norman B. Leventhal Map Center. https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:js956k79g.

Fig. 5. *Site of Scarboro Pond Looking West toward Morton St. Rock Milton on Right*. 1891. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://farm4.static.flickr.com/3776/9270720300_7a27ca2e8b_b.jpg.

Fig. 6. *Roxbury, Mass. Synagogue, Blue Hill Avenue*. 1912. postcard. College of Charleston Libraries, William A. Rosenthall Judaica Collection. https://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/lcdl/catalog/lcdl:50917.

Fig. 7. *Location of Circuit Drive from 39f-50c*. 1891. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://farm4.static.flickr.com/3693/9267944989_fde59102cf_b.jpg.

Page 77-78, Gathering Place for All

Fig. 1. Sulman, T. *Bird's-Eye View of Boston, United States*. 1870s. map. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/75694552/.

Fig. 2. *The Franklin Statue Celebration Showing Parade on Court Street*. September 17, 1856. Photographic print (13 3/4 x 10 1/2 in). Boston Public Library, Arts Department.

Fig. 3. *The Long Walk, Boston Common, Boston, Mass*. 1920s. Photograph. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/2016815645/.

Fig. 4. *Lincoln Parkway*. c. 1910. Photograph. Digital Commons at Buffalo State. https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/olmsted_parks_images/24/.

Fig. 5. Olmsted, Olmsted, and Eliot. *Olmstead's Plan for the Emerald Necklace*. January 1894. map. Norman B. Leventhal Map Center. https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:ht2503205.

Fig. 6. Wm. M. Coombs, del. and F.L. and J.C. Olmsted, landscape architects. *General Plan of Franklin Park*. 1885. map. Boston Public Library.

Fig. 7. *Bear Cages, Franklin Park, West Side*. Accessed 2020. Photograph. Historic New England. https://www.historicnewengland.org/explore/collections-access/capobject/?refd=PC001.02.01.USMA.2540.0420.012.

Page 79-81, Designed for the Everyday

Fig. 1. Sargent, John. *Frederick Law Olmsted*. 1895. Oil on canvas 254 x 139.7 cm (100 x 55 in.). Biltmore House, Asheville, North Carolina https://www.jssgallery.org/Paintings/Frederick_Law_Olmsted.htm.

Fig. 2. *Olmsted's Work at Franklin Park Allowed Built Elements to Fade into the Background* Accessed 2020. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/9271218288/in/album-72157646843256092/.

Page 82-83, Uniquely Boston

Fig. 1. Boston (Mass.) Park Commissioners. *Topographical Map of West Roxbury Park*. 1884. map. Norman B. Leventhal Map Center Collection. https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:js956k77x.

Fig. 2. Whitefield, Edwin. *Boston from Parker Hill*. 1866. watercolor on four sheets of paper. Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Fig. 3. Thomas Hyde. *Boston, Its Environs and Harbour: With the Rebels Works Raised against That Town in 1775*. 1775. map. Library of Congress. https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:z603vj614.

Fig. 4. *Franklin Park Road*. u.d. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/9268269555/in/album-72157646435428479/.

Fig. 5. *Glacial Erratics, or Large Rocks Previously Deposited by Glaciers, Can Be Found Throughout the Park Today.* 1890s. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/14846356579/in/album-72157634611391438/.

Page 84-85, A Place to Escape

Fig. 1. *Schoolmaster Hill Looking West.* Oct. 16, 1903. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/9268406907/in/album-72157646843256092/.

Fig. 2. Courtesy of the design team.

Fig. 3. *Path in the Woods.* Accessed 2020. Photograph. Frances Loeb Library, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Cambridge. Hollis.

Page 86-87, A Place to Escape

Fig. 1. *Photographer D.W. Butterfield Taking a View of Refectory Hill in Franklin Park.* 1892. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/9267927279/in/album-72157634611391438/.

Fig. 2. Butterfield, David W. *Playstead from School Street Entrance.* Accessed 2020. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/9270681682/in/album-72157634611391438/.

Fig. 3. Detroit Publishing Co. *Boston, Massachusetts.* Accessed 2020. postcard. Harvard Fine Arts Library. https://hollis.harvard.edu/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=HVD_VIA8001206847&context=L&vid=HVD2&search_scope=everything&tab=everything&lang=en_US.

Fig. 4. F.L. Olmsted & CO. Accessed 2020. Photograph. Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/9270975036/in/album-72157646435428479/.

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Page 88-89, The Unmaking of a Plan

Fig. 1. Franklin Park Coalition. *Franklin Park, Ellicott Arch.* 1977. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Image Collection. https://www.flickr.com/photos/cityofbostonarchives/15768450977.

Fig. 2. Abdalian, Leon H. *Franklin Park Picnic Ground.* April 4, 1953. Photograph. Leon Abdalian Collection, Arts Department, Boston Public Library. https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:r494x443s.

Fig. 3. *Valley Gates Playstead Note Pierpont Road Open to Traffic.* c. 1977. Photograph. Courtesy of Boston Landmarks commission, City of Boston Archives.

Fig. 4. *Franklin Park Zoo – Bear Dens.* n.d. Photograph. Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism. https://www.visitma.com/blog/2012/05/franklin-park-zoo-celebrates-100-years/

Fig. 5. *Schoolmaster Hill.* 1977. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission, City of Boston Archives.

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Fig. 2. *Reed Canary Grass (Phalaris Arundinacea) Grows Thickly in a Field of Northern Illinois.* Feb.23, 2018. Photograph. Tri-state Livestock News. https://www.tsln.com/news/reed-canarygrass-environmental-foe-cattle-food/.

Fig. 3. *Bloedel Reserve.* u.d. Photograph. Scenic Washington. https://www.scenicwa.com/poi/bloedel-reserve.

Fig. 4. Courtesy of the design team.

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Fig. 1-2. Courtesy of the design team.

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Fig. 1. *Freedom House*, Inc. 2019. Photograph. Freedom House. https://freedomhouse.com/programs/.

Fig. 2. *Grove Hall Library*. 2019. Photograph. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/bplgrovehall/.

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Fig. 2. Maintenance People. u.d. Photograph. GoGreenQuotes. https://www.gotreequotes.com/what-is-a-tree-arborist/.

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Fig. 3. *Park Care and Maintenance*. u.d. Photograph. Courtesy of Franklin Park Coalition.

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