

FINAL

*Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy*

Protocol For

**Capital Improvements  
Within the Greenway Parks and Open Spaces**

September 14, 2009

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## **1.0 THE ROSE FITZGERALD KENNEDY GREENWAY CONSERVANCY**

The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy (the Conservancy) is a private, non-profit corporation dedicated to raising broad-based support to ensure standards of excellence in the design, sustainability and use of the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway (the Greenway). To secure the Greenway's future as one of America's foremost urban parks, the Conservancy will advocate standards of consistency and excellence in design; manage its operations, work collaboratively to create, finance, promote and coordinate public programs and events; and raise adequate and stable funding to support the long-term sustainability of its public uses.

## **2.0 PURPOSE OF THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROTOCOL**

Pursuant to the Conservancy's enabling legislation, this Protocol has been developed to guide the Conservancy's process for planning, design and installation of capital improvements within the parks and open spaces encompassed in the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. This Protocol is intended to supplement, and be complementary to the City of Boston and State official regulatory and design review processes, to the extent they are applicable.

**This protocol applies to capital improvements proposed by:**

**(1) the Greenway Conservancy, and/or**

**(2) a third party such as an outside public/private organization or individual**

Because there are many overlapping jurisdictional responsibilities for capital improvements, this Protocol attempts to establish an integrated framework for planning and design focused on common objectives for the Greenway. The goal is to establish a process that is open, clear, and expedient.

The Protocol establishes a review process whereby all proposed park capital improvements are fully vetted through the Conservancy prior to any final review/approval processes required by the city or state. This will assure the city and state bodies have the benefit of the Conservancy's unique perspective as the steward and operator of the Rose Kennedy Greenway.

Another key goal of this Protocol is to ensure there is substantive and timely community involvement in early planning of capital improvements within the Greenway parks.

The Greenway parks and overall corridor are in their formative stages. The public and private parties are only beginning to get to know the spaces and how they function. Therefore, the intent is to go slowly at first; it is likely that this Protocol will need to be amended as the learning curve increases.

## **3.0 DEFINITION OF A PARK CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT**

### 3.1 LOCATION (see attached plan)

This Protocol applies to capital improvements proposed within:

- The Greenway's established parks -- including the North End Parks, Wharf District Parks, Dewey Square Parks, Chinatown Park, and the Armenian Heritage Park
- Public paved areas immediately abutting or within the parks -- including inboard public sidewalks and plazas abutting the park parcels and ramp parcels
- Greenway Ramp Parcels -- including Greenway Parcels 6, 12 and 18
- Other open spaces within the Greenway-- including small residual open spaces and related parcels

### 3.2 PARK IMPROVEMENTS COVERED BY THE PROTOCOL

The following general categories of improvements are subject to the process outlined in this protocol:

- A. Addition of a permanent building or structure -- such as a maintenance building, park pavilion, kiosk, shade structure, food stand, fountain, freestanding wall
- B. Parcel-wide change in an infrastructure system-- such as new signage system or lighting system
- C. Addition of a permanent public restroom(s)
- D. Parcel-wide change in a park pathway
- E. Parcel-wide addition of paved surfaces
- F. Re-contouring an entire parcel
- G. Elimination or complete replacement of a major park feature -- such as a fountain
- H. New permanent freestanding memorials

Note: Only proposed memorials that have a specific contextual relationship to the Greenway will be considered. Additionally, it is the Conservancy's current policy that there is a moratorium on new, freestanding memorials until 2012.

- I. Permanent Public Art Installations -- defined as those to be installed for longer than approximately 2 years

Note: The City of Boston's procedure on selection, approval and installation of permanent public art will be followed.

### 3.3 PARK IMPROVEMENTS EXCLUDED FROM THIS PROTOCOL

The following categories of improvements are required for the Conservancy to complete its day to day maintenance responsibilities and execute public programming. This includes routine items such as:

#### A. Maintenance

- Repair/replacement of elements within the parks
- Public safety and accessibility improvements and modifications
- Addition/replacement of minor park amenities such as: bike racks, trash cans, seating, anti-rollerblade treatment, operational signage, drinking fountains, tent tie-downs, other park furniture
- Minor new pedestrian paths to manage circulation

#### B. Horticulture

- Planting bed reconfiguration or material change-out for horticultural reasons
- Tree, shrub and plant replacement

#### C. Programming

- Temporary Installations
- Support facilities such as: small stage, A/V, utilities, storage, tents
- Mobile food carts or other program-related carts

## 4.0 PLANNING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 4.1 GENERAL

Three overriding principles will guide the planning and review of all Greenway capital improvements

**A. Proposed improvements must add value to the Rose Kennedy Greenway Park system**

Capital improvements must afford a net contribution to the overall excellence, beauty and public experience of the parks. Projects which do not have a clear public purpose, could be located off the Greenway parks and/or do not enhance the park environment will not be considered.

**B. Proposed improvements must reflect sustainable practices**

From planning through implementation of the proposed project, every effort must be made to incorporate the best practices in the industry to advance the Greenway as a model of environmental sustainability. This includes rigorous consideration of project layout, energy needs, material selection, horticultural requirements, maintenance needs, construction means and methods, and operational characteristics.

**C. Proposed improvements must demonstrate financial viability**

All proposed capital improvements must be cost effective and undergo rigorous costing and value engineering. Prudent financial planning and budget analyses must be integrated into all phases of the capital improvement process.

## 4.2 PLANNING GUIDELINES

The following guidelines will be used in evaluating all proposed capital improvements:

### 4.2.1 Reinforce the Greenway as a Linear Public Park System

The Greenway presents a one of a kind opportunity to tie together many diverse neighborhoods and districts within downtown Boston. While the characteristics and use patterns of the individual parks and open spaces will vary, individual capital improvements should have features that reflect the broader Greenway system.

### 4.2.2 Be Welcoming to All

Capital improvements in the parks must be designed to engage and appeal to the widest possible socio-economic groups and age range of park users. Improvements should reinforce the Greenway as a place of connection and inclusion. Universal design principles and practices should be incorporated in innovative ways to welcome the public.

### 4.2.3 Support Public Programming

Careful consideration will be paid to the impact of a proposed capital improvement on both retaining full public access to the parks and maintaining the capacity for park programming for the public.

#### **4.2.4 Afford Flexibility**

Because the Greenway is a newly emerging park system, proposed capital improvements should be designed with emphasis on flexibility. Improvements should have an ability to adapt to change and evolve as the parks inevitably will. Where ever possible, elements should be designed to be modifiable and/or relocatable.

#### **4.2.5 Represent a Fresh, Innovative Design Approach**

The Greenway's vision is to offer new, engaging ways in which the public can interact with a public park. Improvements should support this vision by using materials or physical elements in innovative applications, pushing the traditional thinking to be as creative and forward looking as possible.

#### **4.2.6 Support Sustainable "Best Practices" in both Horticultural Design and Maintenance**

Because the Greenway parks will be cared for using only organic landscape management practices, all landscape design should comply with best practices in soil specification, plant sitting and selection, site drainage, irrigation requirements and design, and the interface between hard and softscape.

#### **4.2.7 Integrate Operations and Maintenance Considerations**

Planning and design of proposed improvements must incorporate a rigorous maintenance review and assessment of life cycle costs, addressing issues such as: durability; replacement part availability; standardization with other Greenway parks; graffiti; invitation to skateboarding, etc. Proposed improvements that require intensive maintenance and/or other operational costs, disproportionate to their public benefits should not be considered.

### **4.3 DESIGN IMPACT CATEGORIES**

In addition to the General Planning Principles and Guidelines identified in Sections 4.1 and 4.2, all proposed capital improvements will be assessed individually with regard their impacts and contribution to the overall quality of the public experience within the parks. The following design impact categories represent key issues to be addressed. Other impact categories may be raised depending on the project particulars. These impact categories should be addressed generally during the concept planning phase and then evaluated at a more fine-grained level during the final design phase:

- Scale and materials appropriate to park
- Environmental impacts including: sun/shade, wind, noise, odor, run-off
- Pedestrian circulation and impact on the pedestrian experience
- Vehicular access requirements
- Energy and water consumption
- Public Safety
- Constructability and construction impacts

## **5.0 REVIEW PROCESS**

The following outlines typical phases of a capital improvement project and the protocol for agency review and public comment.

### **5.1 CONCEPT PLANNING**

Key to success of a Greenway park capital improvement project is for all concerned parties to be brought together early in the planning process. The Conservancy is committed to a rigorous and inclusive conceptual planning process where ideas are exchanged, multiple approaches explored and a general consensus on direction is agreed to – prior to a project moving into final design. Also, a project’s financial viability and economic sustainability will be a key component of the conceptual design process

#### **5.1.1 Proposal Submission**

For all projects, the Proponent will be required to prepare a brief description of the proposed project which addresses its:

- Purpose
- Program
- Initial Design Concept
- Conceptual Cost and Funding Strategy

- Assessment of its conformity to the Planning Principles and Guidelines outlined Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this Protocol

### **5.1.2 Initial Project Working Session**

To identify technical, programmatic and regulatory issues early in the planning process, the Conservancy will convene an initial working session which will include a representative(s) of the following key interested parties:

(Note: The attendee list will be adjusted to reflect the unique situation of each project)

- A. Conservancy's in-house team representing public programming, design, horticulture and maintenance
- B. City of Boston agencies/departments, including, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department (Boston Parks), and others as appropriate
- C. The designated state property owner, currently the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA)
- D. Greenway Leadership Council (GLC)
- E. Project Proponent
- F. Other key organizations as appropriate

#### Purpose of the working session

- (1) Provide early technical feedback to the Proponent from multiple perspectives such that issues are identified at the outset of the proposed project and any inconsistencies between reviewing parties are captured early
- (2) Solicit feedback from the GLC to determine the most effective strategy to engage public Involvement for the particular project under consideration.

### **5.1.3 Community Review**

Following this initial working session, the Conservancy will implement the determined public review process in collaboration with the City of Boston and the GLC. For all projects, the Proponent will be required to maintain a detailed project milestone schedule which defines the key design deliverable dates and outlines opportunities for public feedback. This information will be posted on the Conservancy's website.

### **5.1.4 Greenway Leadership Council Review**

Following the community review process, the Proponent will bring the proposed project to the Greenway Leadership Council for its review and feedback.

### **5.1.5 Preparation of a Summary Project Plan**

Following the Conservancy, agency, GLC and community review, the Proponent will prepare a Summary Project Plan which defines the program, schematic design, and project costs. The Project Plan must also outline a financial plan for the capital improvement, which includes projected annual operating costs.

The Summary Project Plan will be available to all relevant parties and posted on the Conservancy's website.

### **5.1.6 Project Concept Approval by Conservancy**

After completion and distribution of the Summary Project Plan, the Proponent shall present the proposed capital improvement project to the Conservancy's Board of Directors in a joint public session of the Board and GLC. At this meeting, the GLC will offer its advisory recommendation to the Conservancy Board for its action.

**A. Where the Proponent is the Conservancy, the Board may:**

1. Approve the project, including the associated financial and operations plan and authorize the Conservancy staff to advance the project into final design;
2. Direct the Proponent to modify or revise the proposed project based on comments from the Board, GLC and/or other agency or community parties; or
3. Disapprove or delay advancing the project

**B. Where the Proponent is an outside public/private organization or individual, the Board may:**

1. Approve the project, including the associated financial and operations plan, and authorize the Conservancy staff to work collaboratively with the Proponent to advance the project;
2. Direct the Proponent to modify or revise the proposed project based on comments from the Board, GLC and/or other agency or community parties; or
3. Disapprove the Project due to non compliance with the stated Planning Guidelines in this Protocol or due to opposition by the GLC, or to other factors that contributed to significant lack of consensus to advance the project further

### **5.1.6 Project Concept Approval by Public Agencies**

**City of Boston:** For those proposed projects requiring approval from the Boston Parks and Recreation Commission, the Boston Civic Design Commission, or other related City of Boston approval agencies, the Proponent will present the project for review and approval subject to applicable City codes and regulations. If the Proponent is other than the Conservancy, the Conservancy will attend these official review meetings and present its recommendations and/or concerns.

**Massachusetts Turnpike Authority:** The Conservancy will be the lead entity communicating with the MTA to confirm all issues related to highway operations have been addressed.

**EOEEA:** In collaboration with the City and MTA, the Conservancy will coordinate project information with the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs' MEPA office related to compliance of Greenway capital improvements with state environmental regulatory requirements. MEPA office determinations related to review of proposed improvements will be shared on the Conservancy's web site.

## 5.2 FINAL DESIGN

Prior to initiating the final design phase, the proposed capital improvement project will have been approved in concept by the Conservancy, the GLC, the related City and State agencies and the community. At this point, the project also must have a sound financial plan and have undergone an operations analysis.

The Proponent will continue to refine the approved concept during the design development process, preparing plans and specifications, and finalizing the project budget. Depending on the complexity and scope of the project, additional working sessions may be held with affected public agencies and departments. Should the Conservancy, working in collaboration with the GLC, determine there remain significant issues of concern, lack of consensus or other circumstances warranting further discussion, additional briefings and/or community meetings may be scheduled.

## 5.3 PERMITTING

The Conservancy will develop an outline of the permits that are needed to insure all agencies' permitting criteria are known in advance such that common design interests can be well coordinated and an efficient review process implemented.

## 5.4. CONSTRUCTION / INSTALLATION

The overriding objective in all capital improvement installations, whether by the Conservancy or by an outside third party, is for the project to be built expeditiously to minimize disruption to

the public use of the parks and to result in a quality product built in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.

For those projects to be built by an agency or organization other than the Conservancy, the Conservancy will closely monitor performance criteria related to construction scheduling, budget management and quality control to ensure the project is executed as committed.

Should any capital improvement project executed by a third party not fulfill its construction obligations, the Conservancy will work with relevant agencies to determine the optimal strategy to make the Greenway park(s) “whole” on behalf of the public park users.