

Life on the Greenway

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2012 | July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012

The Rose Kennedy Greenway is a ribbon of contemporary urban parks that connects people and the city by providing beauty, fun, and a sense of community in Boston.

The Rose F. Kennedy Greenway Conservancy, a non-profit organization, is responsible for maintenance, programming and improving of the Greenway. In FY12 the Greenway made great strides toward becoming an indispensable public amenity – dynamic, inclusive, and innovative.



The Greenway Conservancy is honored to operate the mile long roof deck of the tunnel created by the Big Dig. We began operations in the spring of 2009, after the legislation of 2008 gave us the mandate to create and maintain a new and excellent public realm with private contributions matching dollar for dollar any state funding. The Conservancy has fulfilled that mandate proudly, with the generous help of friends of the Greenway from Massachusetts and beyond.

But in our last fiscal year, trouble has emerged in the partnership. The state administration very publicly asked us to develop a plan that would eliminate the state contribution over the next five years. The legislature decided to amend our governance legislation without extending mandated state funding. Although the Greenway itself is becoming a major connector for the City of Boston, and the park is beginning to be celebrated as one of the great public realm spaces created in this country, the State has asked us to do a Five Year Plan showing how we could maintain this space that is open to all with strictly private funding.

We worked on the plan, researching the operations of other great public parks throughout the country. We concluded that if changes were made, including the ability to raise income from parts of the Greenway, it was possible to reduce state funding, but not to eliminate it. We invite you to read the plan on our website, and welcome your comments.

Therefore, the next year is crucial to the future of the Greenway. It will determine if the private/public partnership can continue to thrive. We want you to know that the Board is committed to working with our terrific staff, and to openly discussing with the state how the partnership can move forward into the future.

Thank you to you – our constituents – for your enthusiastic support.

Sincerely,

Georgia Murray
Board Chair

During a recent event on the Greenway featuring the carved animals for the custom carousel that is coming to the Greenway in 2013, I had the chance to talk with the young artists who inspired its theme and design. Seeing the 5th graders' delight at having their drawings come to life as real carousel characters and hearing their questions for the artist – well, it does not get much better.

Opportunities are rare in a historic city like Boston to have a hand in establishing something from nothing. Just 10 years ago, an elevated highway divided the city – look how far we have come; and then imagine the possibilities to make the Greenway an even better public park in the next 10 years! Together we can shape the future of the Greenway for Boston's children – let's make the most of it!

Patronage of park amenities this season is projected to increase by more than 50% over last season to more than half million visitors enjoying our offerings. The Board, the staff and I are passionate about our work on the Greenway – we are dedicated to ensuring that this new park system continues to attract visitors through beautiful horticulture that is organically maintained, Mobile Eats, free Wi-Fi, educational programming, hundreds of free multi-cultural events and activities, and new amenities like the carousel where families will make memories that last a lifetime.

This fall we are launching a Greenway-wide public art strategy for the next five years. Perhaps you have seen the Os Gemeos mural in the Dewey Square Park (installed in partnership with The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston)? There is more temporary public art to come that will add to the vibrancy and interest of our parks.

We are also launching a membership program that will give people who love the Greenway a way to get more involved in the parks. To that end, I invite you to join as a member and take personal pride in knowing that you will sustain the Greenway during the most important years of its development.

Sincerely,

Nancy Brennan
Executive Director



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Every spring the Greenway blooms in gardens that are more colorful and spectacular. We maintain the parks completely organically; for example, we brew and apply compost tea instead of using chemicals. This is safer for park visitors, better for the plant resilience, and more cost effective. The Greenway is the 2nd public park in the nation to practice organic landscape care, and we worked this year to improve our messaging about our efforts.

www.rfkgc.org/visit/horticulture

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The Conservancy staff is constantly improving the Greenway. In 2012, we collaborated with a renowned horticulturalist from NYC's famed High Line park to renovate the Rings Fountain garden bed; 1,500 heartier and more colorful plants now provide four seasons of textural interest.





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The Greenway Mobile Eats program continues to expand with the addition of new vendors and more customers every year. As the popularity of the food trucks and carts increases, so do the crowds and the national recognition!

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The Greenway is a stage that hosts hundreds of public events that offer multi-generational and multi-cultural experiences every program season. In 2011, there were 201 events; in 2012, that number will be over 300. Among them was the wildly successful Greenway Open Market that welcomed local artisans and craftsmen to the Greenway every Saturday June through October.

Check out www.rfkgc.org/events to see what's happening on the Greenway today!





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Through partnership with local organizations and the Conservancy's own Green & Grow youth workforce development program, hands-on environmental education and collaborations thrive on the Greenway. The Dewey Demonstration Garden is an example of what YouthBuild Boston, the EPA, Green & Grow Apprentices, and 1,488 new plants were able to produce: a pollinator garden, raised edible planting beds, a rain garden and composting demonstration area.

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In 2013, Boston will welcome a one-of-a-kind, iconic carousel to the Greenway. Inspired by drawings from Boston Public School students, the Greenway Carousel features native land, sea, and air animals.





Os Gemeos mural
Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston, MA,
photo ©Ben Gebo

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The Conservancy is committed to presenting excellent public art on the Greenway, believing that public art adds to the inherent richness of urban life and is a key component to the vibrancy of our park and the City of Boston. Completed in 2012, the temporary mural created by Brazilian twin street artists Otavio and Gustavo Pandolfo, AKA “Os Gemeos”, is innovative, bold and reflective of the type of work the Greenway will continue to present. www.rfkgc.org/visit/things-to-see/public-art

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The Greenway looks as good as it does thanks to help from over 400 volunteers every year who dedicate 1,200+ hours of their time pruning, weeding, watering, deadheading... Thank you volunteers!



DONORS

The Conservancy gratefully acknowledges those whose gifts, pledges and in-kind services have helped to sustain our work between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012.

* Denotes payments that are part of multi-year grants or pledges

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FINANCIALS

Fiscal year 2012 was the Conservancy’s third full year of operating the Greenway, and we again posted an increase in net assets (\$214K). The largest sources—government support and private contributions—were very similar in both FY12 and FY11. In FY12, we diversified our revenue by increasing the contribution from the Gala (up \$132K or +44%) and from earned revenue (up \$56K or +50%). Investment gains decreased primarily due to changes in market conditions during FY12. Insurance recoveries are non-recurring and decreased sharply in FY12 due to minimal property damage on the Greenway.

On the expense side, the Conservancy again spent more than 75% on programmatic items—organic landscape care, maintenance, beautification, hundreds of free public programs, our youth workforce development program, and more. Fundraising expenses climbed because in the previous year we operated with a vacancy in the Development Director position. Administrative costs were essentially unchanged, growing less than inflation. The decreased programmatic expenditures reflect a low-snow winter and a strategic shift toward partnering for events that drew more people at a lower cost.

The Greenway operates with a public/private funding model that has proven successful. Today, each dollar from the state is leveraged by more than one dollar of private support. All parties (State, City, Greenway and abutting property owners) are working together on a potential Greenway Business Improvement District for Park Operations, continued growth in philanthropic support, and earned income from park amenities like food vending and the Greenway Carousel that will provide a stable financial base for the Conservancy to operate for the next 5 years.

Revenue and Support	FY12	FY11
Government support	\$1,840,069	\$1,879,375
In-kind revenue - public	\$224,047	\$223,626
In-kind revenue - private	\$200,260	\$267,421
Contributions and donations	\$1,350,170	\$1,333,635
Gala revenue, net	\$432,350	\$300,438
Earned revenue	\$168,766	\$112,318
Interest and dividends	\$312,083	\$266,863
Realized and unrealized gains	\$247,971	\$756,128
Insurance and other recoveries	\$9,205	\$252,384
Total revenues and support	\$4,784,921	\$5,392,188
Expenses		
Programmatic	\$3,462,022	\$3,713,361
Administrative	\$627,028	\$615,530
Fundraising	\$481,789	\$360,911
Total expenses	\$4,570,839	\$4,689,802
Change in net assets	\$214,082	\$702,386
Net assets, beginning of the year	\$18,490,906	\$17,788,520
Net assets, end of the year	\$18,704,988	\$18,490,906



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* Members who served between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012



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