



Photography credit: Greenway Conservancy Staff

The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy Announces Arboretum Certification, Advancing Climate-Resilient Urban Canopy in Downtown Boston

BOSTON, MA (May 26, 2026) — The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy today announced that the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Boston has been awarded a Level I Accreditation by The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and The Morton Arboretum, for achieving particular standards of professional practices deemed important for arboreta and botanic gardens. This new designation marks an exciting milestone in the park’s continued growth as a vibrant public green space in the heart of downtown Boston.

“Trees and green spaces play an important role in making downtown Boston more welcoming, comfortable, and resilient,” said Chris Cook, Executive Director of the Greenway Conservancy.

“This recognition reflects years of thoughtful stewardship by our horticulture team and highlights how public parks like The Greenway can bring environmental, social, and cultural benefits to the city every day.”

Stretching through the center of Boston, The Greenway has been transformed over the past two decades from a corridor once defined by elevated highway infrastructure into a thriving linear park with active public spaces. Today, its trees contribute shade, seasonal beauty, habitat support, and environmental benefits for residents and visitors alike.

“The Greenway’s recognition as an arboretum affirms the care, intention, and expertise that shape this landscape every day,” said Brian Gibbons, Director of Horticulture at the Greenway Conservancy. “Our tree canopy is not only beautiful—it supports biodiversity, improves the visitor experience, and helps create a healthier and more inviting downtown environment.”

Achieving Level I Arboretum accreditation reflects years of work to formally document and steward The Greenway’s diverse tree canopy. This milestone was made possible through the dedication of staff and volunteers, alongside the support of industry partners, including [Hortis](#), whose plant records and collections management tools helped advance the Conservancy’s cataloging and tracking efforts. As an accredited arboretum, The Greenway also serves as a place of learning and discovery, offering visitors new ways to engage with and better understand the role of trees and horticulture in an urban environment.

Spanning multiple districts, The Greenway’s living collections showcase a wide range of trees selected for seasonal beauty, urban resilience, and their role in supporting biodiversity. Signature plantings include the iconic Washington elm, an allée of yellow magnolia, and curated displays of Appalachian Red redbuds, fothersgilla, and Japanese stewartia in the North End Parks. In the Wharf District Parks, native tree species—including black tupelo, maples, oaks, and tuliptrees—anchor ecologically focused plantings. The Fort Point Channel Parks feature seven distinct species of dogwoods and more than 15 selections of hydrangeas, adding seasonal diversity and horticultural interest. Dewey Square Park includes a sweetly scented ribbon of silver lindens, while Chinatown Park showcases distinctive conifers such as lacebark pine and Japanese white pine, complemented by ginkgo trees for year-round texture and interest.

Managed using sustainable, organic practices, The Greenway’s arboretum emphasizes soil health, plant diversity, and long-term resilience within a highly urbanized setting. The collections are supported by ongoing plant records development, thoughtful species selection, and an integrated approach to design and maintenance that enhances both ecological function and visitor experience.



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This designation reflects the collective efforts of the Conservancy's horticulture team, seasonal gardeners, volunteers, and external partners whose expertise and collaboration help sustain the long-term health and resilience of The Greenway's urban forest.

The Conservancy will continue building on this foundation through ongoing investments in the park's canopy, including enhancements to areas such as Dewey Square. These efforts will expand shade, increase biodiversity, and strengthen The Greenway's role as a welcoming, climate-responsive landscape for years to come.

For more information, please visit www.rosekennedygreenway.org

About The Greenway and the Greenway Conservancy

The [Rose Kennedy Greenway](#) is a contemporary public park in the heart of Boston and one of the most visited attractions in the Commonwealth, welcoming millions of visitors annually. The Greenway is managed by [the Greenway Conservancy](#), a non-profit responsible for the care and activation of the park. The majority of the Conservancy's annual budget is made up of generous community donations that help cultivate a gathering space where all are welcome and celebrated.

About ArbNet

ArbNet is an interactive, collaborative, international community of arboreta. ArbNet facilitates the sharing of knowledge, experience, and other resources to help arboreta meet their institutional goals and works to raise professional standards through the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program. The accreditation program, sponsored and coordinated by [The Morton Arboretum](#) in Lisle, Illinois in cooperation with [American Public Gardens Association](#) and [Botanic Gardens Conservation International](#), is the only global initiative to officially recognize arboreta based on a set of professional standards. The program offers four levels of accreditation, recognizing arboreta of various degrees of development, capacity and professionalism. Standards include planning, governance, public access, programming and tree science, planting and conservation.

More information is available at www.arbnet.org.

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