March 12, 2021
Re: FY2022 Parks and Recreation Budget

Dear Mayor Walsh:

We have been grateful for your leadership as we face the important recovery that lies ahead for Boston’s residents and our communities. The COVID 19 crisis has highlighted the critical importance of our parks and open spaces as a shared resource for communities and families in need of places to recreate, gather safely outside, and find solace in nature. These spaces provide invaluable ecological functions including cooling urban heat islands, filtering air and water, recharging groundwater and redirecting stormwater, and improving public health outcomes.

Thanks to government agencies and officials working in partnership with community advocates, all Boston residents are now within a 10-minute walk of a park or open space. However, to achieve true equity in parks and open space, Boston must invest in frontline communities that need dedicated resources to ensure that these myriad benefits reach those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

About Boston Park Advocates
The Boston Park Advocates is a city-wide network of over 125 parks and open space organizations. We work to connect park stewards by sharing information and resources, facilitating partnerships, and creating a united voice for greenspace investments and maintenance. We write today to request your prioritization of key funding areas and ongoing support for the Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD) in the City’s Fiscal Year 2022 budget.

The Need
Despite successful efforts under your leadership to increase investments in parks and open space during your tenure, BPRD’s budget is still less than 1% of the City’s total budget, which is insufficient to support the ongoing work of enhancing and maintaining these greenspaces. In order to have a vibrant and resilient parks system for all, we urge you to increase the BPRD’s budget to be 1% of the City’s budget. Community Preservation Act funds should not be considered a replacement for adequately funding BPRD.

Budget Requests
There are critical areas that need investment to meet these goals, and we request that in FY 2022, your budget include the following allocations.

Recreational funding: We support the BPRD request for a one-time allocation of funding to sustain important activities for children and families across Boston’s parks. This funding will ensure that BPRD can continue to develop safe ways for Bostonians to enjoy our common natural resources.
BPRD has pivoted during the pandemic to provide innovative programming to engage children, families, elders and singles in safe activities in parks. One example of their innovative programming is the February “StoryWalk” series in five Boston playgrounds for children and caregivers to explore literacy while enjoying fresh air. Vendor fees were waived during the pandemic which leaves BPRD without resources to cover costs of free or low cost recreational programs.

**Animal Care and Control:** Given the shift of Animal Control from ISD to BPRD and the need for this unit to have adequate capacity for its work, we ask that Animal Care & Control be afforded a permanent line item in the BPRD budget.

- **Background:** Historically the funding for the Animal Control Division was generated through its fee system for pet registration and vaccination; pandemic-related impacts have reduced this funding by 30%. At the same time pet ownership has skyrocketed during the pandemic, and animals have tremendous, often negative impact on parks. Animal Control provides important resources for pet owners as well as public education on their responsibilities to the community.

**Funding for dedicated Parks and Recreation Department General Counsel:** We ask that the BPRD be assigned a dedicated General Counsel similar to other departments.

- **Background:** Parks improvement projects are often delayed due to outstanding legal approvals. With the additions of the Animal Care division to the BPRD and the growing number of Community Preservation Act open space projects, those delays have increased.

*We also ask that critical items supported in last year’s budget be continued in FY’22:*

**Funding for a second shift for parks:** A second shift to cover 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. maintenance Wednesday through Sunday, operating out of Franklin Park, will ensure that parks stay safe, clean, and usable for all residents and visitors.

- **Background:** The growing use and pressures on parkland means that providing clean, safe, and accessible parks requires increased staffing. Currently, park maintenance teams work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Yet, parks are used week-long and at all hours, particularly during the weekends.

**Urban Wilds:** This program needs the continued support of an additional staff member.

- **Background:** The Urban Wilds program consists of one staff person managing the entire network of 143 parcels of urban wilds across the city. Continued support of an additional staff member would improve stewardship of these important ecological resources, which are threatened by invasive species encroachment and illegal dumping, and help bolster the city’s equitable support of its open spaces.

**Parcel Priority Plan:** We ask that this plan, started in 2017 to identify open space parcels for consideration as permanently protected open space, be advanced to completion.

**Urban Forest Master Plan and arboriculture capacity:** We support the continued investment in the development of the Urban Forest Master Plan and the BPRD request for an additional arborist for its Tree Care program.

- **Background:** A robust forestry plan promises expanded tree canopy accompanied by many ecological, physical and psychological benefits for Boston residents, particularly in under-canopied neighborhoods such as East Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan which are also urban heat islands. However, these investments must be sustained and protected by skilled arborists.
The city’s urban forest deserves both the development of the plan and the capacity within its department to execute it.

Thank you again for your leadership and your support for Boston residents and their parks. We look forward to working alongside you and others to improve, maintain, and sustain Boston’s greenspaces.

Sincerely,

Boston Park Advocates  Bostonparkadvocates.org
bostonparkadvocates@gmail.com

cc:  Budget Director Justin Sterritt
  Chief of Environment, Energy & Open Space Christopher Cook
  Boston Parks & Recreation Department Commissioner Ryan Woods

Sign-Ons

ORGANIZATIONS

All Dorchester Sports and Leadership
Arborway Coalition
Boston FLAG Flag Football
Boston Harbor Now
Charlesgate Alliance
Clean Up Boston
COGdesign
Conservation Law Foundation
David Bartsch Landscape Architecture LLC
Eastie Farm
Emerald Necklace Conservancy
Esplanade Association
F.L.A.G FLAG Football
Fairmount Greenway
Fenway Alliance
Fenway Civic Association
Fenway Garden Society, Inc.
Four Corners Main Streets
Franklin Park Coalition
Franklin Park Tennis Association
Friends of Belle Isle Marsh
Friends of Chandler Pond
Friends of Christopher Columbus Park
Friends of Cutillo Park, Inc.
Friends of Geneva Cliffs
Friends of Hayes Park
Friends of Peters Park
Friends of Ramler Park
Friends of Savin Hill Park
Friends of Symphony Park
Friends of the Boston Schoolyards (FOTBS)
Friends of the Golden Stairs Terrace-Albert Junior Lombardi Garden
Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway
Friends of the Muddy River
Friends of the Public Garden
Garden Club of the Back Bay
Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council
Keep Hyde Park Beautiful
Mandela Residents Cooperative Association, Inc
Mary Ellen Welch Greenway East Boston Greenway
Morville House
Mt. Bowdoin Betterment Association (MBBA)
Mt. Hope Canterbury Neighborhood Association
Muddy Water Initiative
Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay
New England United for Justice
Pate Landscape Architecture Inc.
Responsible Urbanites For Fido - RUFF Boston
North End
Roslindale Green & Clean
Southwest Boston CDC
Speak for the Trees, Boston
The Friends of Coppens Square
The Garden Club of the Back Bay
The Harborkeepers
INDIVIDUALS (alpha by last name)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domenic</td>
<td>Accetta</td>
<td>Fields Corner, Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randall</td>
<td>Albright</td>
<td>Back Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan</td>
<td>Allen</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh</td>
<td>Altidor</td>
<td>Hyde Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander</td>
<td>Alvanos</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>Babbitt</td>
<td>North End/Waterfront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay</td>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judith &amp; Brook</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>Codman Square, Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declan</td>
<td>Battles</td>
<td>East Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Beatman</td>
<td>Roslindale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcos</td>
<td>Beleche</td>
<td>Roxbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>Benveniste</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Benvenuto</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Bertolozzi</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan</td>
<td>Binns</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niki</td>
<td>Blaker</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evan</td>
<td>Brinkman</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha</td>
<td>Brock</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne</td>
<td>Burlingame</td>
<td>Beacon Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tina</td>
<td>Busa</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ania</td>
<td>Camargo</td>
<td>Beacon Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracey</td>
<td>Cannistraro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Carbonara</td>
<td>Lower Mills, Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marta</td>
<td>Carney</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanessa</td>
<td>Centofanti</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Cerulli</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen</td>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>Fenway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>Coker</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>Corcoran</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>Cylk</td>
<td>Hyde Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>D'Amato</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Datish</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>DeLuca</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghan</td>
<td>Denenberg</td>
<td>North End/Waterfront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris</td>
<td>Du Pont</td>
<td>Four Corners, Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane Carter</td>
<td>Duggan</td>
<td>Roslindale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>Esposito</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>Faires</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kelly</td>
<td>Fassett</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick</td>
<td>Filipi</td>
<td>Clam Point, Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher</td>
<td>Fincham</td>
<td>Wharf District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline</td>
<td>Foscato</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Freeman</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Girvin</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>Glenn</td>
<td>Parkside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren</td>
<td>Goldberg</td>
<td>Allston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Goodwin</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittany</td>
<td>Gravely</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Gregory</td>
<td>Seaport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marjorie</td>
<td>Greville</td>
<td>Beacon Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelsey</td>
<td>Griggs DeCarolis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaryGaye</td>
<td>Grizwin</td>
<td>North End/West End/Causeway St Hub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Guptill</td>
<td>Hyde Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>Haile</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clayton</td>
<td>Harper</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy</td>
<td>Hegan</td>
<td>Kenmore Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirsten</td>
<td>Hoffman</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erica</td>
<td>Holm</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angel</td>
<td>Howell</td>
<td>Roxbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen</td>
<td>Hume</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Iappini</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kay</td>
<td>Ives</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Jacobson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Parker</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>Charlesgate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yvette</td>
<td>Jarreau</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamela</td>
<td>Jorgensen</td>
<td>Fenway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Nickname</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristin</td>
<td>Kalani</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>Waterfront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Kiefer</td>
<td>Beacon Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Kinsella Scannell</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Kubiak</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>Kudra</td>
<td>Four Corners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeannine</td>
<td>Laing</td>
<td>Dorchester/Roxbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa</td>
<td>Latson</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Leonard</td>
<td>Mission Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heidi</td>
<td>Lindert</td>
<td>Hyde Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marissa</td>
<td>Lorenzo</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadine</td>
<td>Marcellus</td>
<td>Mattapan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>Marsh</td>
<td>Beacon Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Masterson</td>
<td>East Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Masterson</td>
<td>East Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kay</td>
<td>Mathew</td>
<td>Roxbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erica</td>
<td>Mattison</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>McCabe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>McCarthy</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annie</td>
<td>McCue</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>McDonald</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>McGuire</td>
<td>JP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison</td>
<td>McRae</td>
<td>Jamaica Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Meshoulam</td>
<td>Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne</td>
<td>Missert</td>
<td>Hyde Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristen</td>
<td>Mobilia</td>
<td>Fenway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Moss</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janean</td>
<td>Muhammad</td>
<td>Hyde Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>Muspratt</td>
<td>West Roxbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Nagy</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Neilander</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>O'Reilly</td>
<td>East Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terese</td>
<td>O'Connell</td>
<td>North End/Waterfront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick</td>
<td>O'Connell</td>
<td>Northend/Waterfront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myleisy</td>
<td>Oliveras</td>
<td>West Roxbury</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Carolyn Osteen Beacon Hill
Ann Pellagrini Fields Corner, Dorchester
Tyler Perry North End
Margaret Pokorny Back Bay
Anya Potter North End
Susan Povak Brighton
Mike Prokosch Dorchester
Kelley Ready Dorchester
Robyn Reed North End
Caroline Reeves Back Bay/Fenway
Joan Resnikoff South End
Carl Richter South End
Eileen Ridge Dorchester
Caroline Rotch South End
Sierra Rothberg Dorchester
Patricia Sabbey North End
Gina Schaak North End
Stefanie Schefter Back Bay
Mike Schiano North End
Natasha Seaman Jamaica Plain
Molly Sherden Beacon Hill
Seth Singer North End
Beverly Sky South End and Fenway
Cynthia Smith Downtown Crossing
Janet Smith Hyde Park
Rhett Sosebee North End
Andrea Southworth North End
Kenneth Talbot Dorchester
Jason Tarzia Dorchester
Patricia Thiboutot North End/Waterfront
Kannan Thiruvengadam East Boston
Jane Thorbeck South End
Bonnie Thryselius Fenway
Vidya Tikku City of Boston
Margaret Toro Dorchester
Alfred Van Ranst Beacon Hill
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christopher</td>
<td>Wells</td>
<td>North End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamen</td>
<td>Wetherill</td>
<td>West Roxbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Franklin Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive</td>
<td>Woodward</td>
<td>Codman Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Woolverton</td>
<td>South End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brent</td>
<td>Zeigler</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zara</td>
<td>Zsido</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>