

Mayor Martin J. Walsh
1 City Hall Square, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02201



Re: Parks and Open Space Budget 2017

March 17, 2016

Dear Mayor Walsh:

Fenway Civic Association (FCA) is the Fenway's oldest all-volunteer organization, dedicated to sustaining a vital, livable neighborhood. We have a long history of working with the City to promote parks and programming, and we are grateful for the support you have given this department. This year, we ask for an increase in funding for the Parks & Recreation Department, especially in its allocations for maintenance and capital improvements.

- **Capital Project Investment:** As a capital project request, we ask that repairs for the Johnson Memorial Gates and abutting parkland, bounding Westland Avenue and the Fenway be prioritized for a 2017 start. The iconic gateway, designed by Guy Lowell, was designated as a Most Endangered Resource by Preservation Massachusetts in 2014, due to the structural cracking occurring to its tall piers and decorative troughs. With pathways in need of repair, trees in rapid decline, and soil that has compacted, we believe this historic gateway to the Back Bay Fens needs immediate attention. Once lost, this landmarked monument cannot be replaced.
- **Maintenance:** FCA has been a vocal advocate for maintenance funding of city parks. Hosting the oldest and one of the most highly-used portions of the Emerald Necklace parks system, we see the direct impact that deferred maintenance has on our limited open space. Maintenance funding provided through a healthy budget is what allows our historic park system to remain safe for its users whether it is invasives removal or regular care and cleaning. We ask for an increase in allocations for park maintenance.
- **Parks Restoration:** We applaud the work being performed under the Muddy River Restoration Project, and thank you for your support of restoration of Symphony Park and Ederly Road playground, and your continued support for Ramler Park. We believe these spaces enhance quality of life for our community and will continue our partnership in caring for these important public parks.
- **Parks Programming:** We thank the City and ParkArts for their support of arts and active programming with our organization and our neighborhood parks. As one of the fastest-growing neighborhoods in the city with among the lowest percentage of open space, we see the necessity of assuring that these opportunities continue to be offered and expanded. Our annual Swingin' concert brings hundreds of attendees to Ramler Park, and our senior programs allow elderly Fenway residents to enjoy healthy movement opportunities at Symphony Park.

We thank you for this opportunity to comment, and offer our ongoing commitment to support parks and open space initiatives in our neighborhood and in the city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marie Fukuda".

Marie Fukuda for the board, Fenway Civic Association