



GSA SITE (8N)

Greenough Boulevard between Arsenal Street and Grove Street

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

In 1920, the U.S. Department of War acquired this eleven-acre site from the MDC to expand the complex of buildings forming the Watertown Arsenal. When Greenough Boulevard was built in 1966, it ran in front of the parcel, cutting the site off from the reservation and creating a jog in the parkway at Arsenal Street.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

The General Service Administration (GSA) site was contaminated in part with depleted uranium. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is undertaking a cleanup that will be completed in the next few years. Under the terms of the original transfer from the Metropolitan Park Commission to the federal government, the land will revert to the MDC. Close to nine acres will be accessible in the future when the Corps finishes its mitigation process.

Sawins Pond Brook runs down the western edge of the property and leads to a wetland area on the river side of Greenough Boulevard. Another wetland area exists on the eastern edge of the GSA site.

Given its size, level topography, proximity to residential neighborhoods, and considerable setback from the river, this site appears to be well suited for intensive athletic uses and recreational facilities. There is ample room for parking with negligible impacts on the river. The site is well served by the Arsenal Street bus line.

An alternative would shift the alignment of Greenough Boulevard to the northern edge of the GSA site, close to the alignment suggested in the Harriman report of 1928. This shift, involving 1,900 linear feet of new parkway, would eliminate the dogleg at Arsenal Street and create a smoother transition where Greenough Boulevard crosses Arsenal. It would, however, create an awkward roadway alignment and eliminate much of the potential for active recreational uses. Greenough Boulevard's current alignment has the important advantage of separating the wetland and passive-use area along the river from the GSA site, where active recreational uses can be accommodated. This alternative should be studied further.

GOALS

- **Reincorporate parkway land into the reservation.**
- **Improve the landscape of Greenough Boulevard.**
- **Create opportunities for structured athletic uses.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The GSA should work with the MDC** to plan for future buildings, parking areas, playgrounds, and athletic fields as part of its effort to mitigate hazardous materials and to restore the site fully.



- **Use the GSA site for athletic fields and a multiuse athletic facility to replace the aging Daly Rink and the Brighton/Allston Pool** (segment 10S). Accommodation of displaced athletic fields and facilities here would clear the way for the restoration of the old pool site and Daly Field as pastoral park areas.

- **Provide an alternative trail connection through the GSA site crossing Arsenal Street to Greenough Boulevard** at the base of the large retaining wall on the north side of the site. Provide a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Greenough Boulevard and Arsenal Street.



SOLDIERS FIELD ROAD/BIRMINGHAM PARKWAY (9S)

Soldiers Field Road between the Arsenal Street and North Beacon Street bridges

KEY RESOURCES

- *North Beacon Street Bridge (1917)*
- *Arsenal Street Bridge (1925)*
- *Birmingham Parkway (1933)*
- *Brighton/Allston Pool and Bath House (1951)*
- *Soldiers Field Road (1955)*

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

Formerly the location of the Brighton Abattoir, owned by the Butchers' Slaughtering and Melting Association, this site is the only extensive Basin property that the Metropolitan Park Commission could not acquire when it began assembling land along the Charles River. The Brighton Abattoir used the site for dumping slaughterhouse offal. The Birmingham Parkway was built not along the shore but skirting the side of the abattoir away from the river to allow carriage access to the Upper Basin. The