



September 21, 2006

Mr. William F. Welch, Clerk  
Massachusetts State Senate  
State House – Room 335  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Mr. Steven J. James, Clerk  
Massachusetts House of Representatives  
State House – Room 145  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Messrs. Welch and James:

I am pleased to present the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR’s) Neponset River Master Plan, Phase II, which encompasses a major section of the Neponset River Reservation, including approximately 125 acres of parkland and over 11 miles of riverbank extending from Central Avenue on the Milton-Boston line to Paul’s Bridge in Hyde Park and Milton.

This Master Plan seeks to protect and enhance the ecological health of the Neponset River system, while providing for expanded recreational opportunities in the Reservation. The Plan will serve as a guide for the stewardship, management, maintenance, and operation of the parkland, the parkway, and the watershed, and enable DCR to more effectively contribute to development decisions on adjacent properties. It also identifies partnership opportunities with businesses, community groups, and landowners along the river.

Phase I of the Master Plan, covering the Lower Estuary of the Neponset River Reservation, was completed in 1998. Much of that Plan has been implemented in the area extending to Central Avenue. This new Plan builds upon the success of the Phase I Plan by facilitating access to the river and providing a wide range of recreational opportunities for the adjacent neighborhoods and region. The Lower Neponset Trail, constructed as part of Phase I, runs from Central Avenue to the Port Norfolk Neighborhood in Dorchester, where connecting roads and trails lead to the mouth of the river at Dorchester Bay. Pope John Paul II Park and the Neponset Park have been beautiful and popular additions to the regional network. It is our hope that some elements of Phase II of the Master Plan, which is slated to be implemented over a ten- to fifteen-year period, will commence immediately.

The Phase I Master Plan was made possible through the thoughtful participation of numerous individuals and organizations. The continued involvement of the public is critical to this Plan’s success, and we will continue the open and thorough public process associated with this project.

Sincerely,

Stephen H. Burrington  
Commissioner

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600  
Boston MA 02114-2119  
617-626-1250 617-626-1351 Fax  
www.mass.gov/dcr



Mitt Romney  
Governor

Kerry Healey  
Lt. Governor

Robert W. Gollidge, Jr., Secretary  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

Stephen H. Burrington, Commissioner  
Department of Conservation & Recreation

NEPONSET RIVER |  
RESERVATION MASTER PLAN





## Acknowledgements

### **Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

Mitt Romney, Governor

Kerry Healy, Lt. Governor

Robert Golledge, Secretary, EOE

Stephen Burrington, Commissioner, DCR

Karst Hooeboom, Deputy Commissioner for Planning and Engineering, DCR

### **DCR Project Team**

Cathy Garnett, Project Manager

Jim Baecker

Julia B. O'Brien

### **The Consultant Team**

#### *Crosby | Schlessinger | Smallridge, LLC (Prime)*

Landscape Architecture, Planning and Urban Design - Boston, MA

- Deneen Crosby, Principal in Charge
- Carole Schlessinger, Project Manager
- Josh Burgel
- Kate Hunchar
- Kaki Martin
- Chris Riale
- Tamar Zimmerman

#### *BSC Group*

Natural Resources Assessment and Environmental Planning - Boston, MA

- Ken Fields
- Greg Sampson
- Tim Witman
- Heather Vaillant

#### *D.G. Jones International Inc.*

Cost Estimating - Medford, MA

- Charles McGrory

*Earth Tech*

Structural Engineering - Concord, MA

- Robert Hajjar

*Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates*

Traffic and Transportation - Boston, MA

- Anne McKinnon
- Tony DiSarcina

*Jacques Whitford Company Inc.*

Assessment of Contamination Issues and Landscape Architecture - Woburn, MA

- Mark Klopfer
- David Taylor
- Cheri Ruane
- Elise Mazareas
- Tereza Dan

*rai architecture*

Architecture - Sudbury, MA

- Thomas Rourke

*Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc (under separate contract)*

Land Surveyors - Boston, MA

- Paul S. LeBaron, PLS, Survey Department Manager

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
Project Goals	2
Public Process	3
<b>CHAPTER II: EXISTING CONDITIONS &amp; ANALYSIS</b>	<b>5</b>
Land Use	5
Demographic Profile	11
Access	13
Views	15
Natural Resources	15
Cultural Resources	18
Dams and Bridges	23
<b>CHAPTER III: THE PLAN</b>	<b>25</b>
Continuous River Corridor Trail System	26
Overlooks and Views	28
Water Trail	34
Signage and Interpretive Elements	35
Fencing Strategy	36
Access/Connections	37
Specific Recommendations by Area	39
<i>Section 1: Paul's Bridge to the Martini Shell</i>	39
<i>Section 2: Fairmount Avenue Section</i>	41
<i>Section 3: Former Bay State Paper Co. Site/Tileston and Hollingsworth Dam</i>	43
<i>Section 4: Belnel Neighborhood to Mattapan Square</i>	46
<i>Section 5: Mattapan Square to Central Avenue</i>	48
Destinations	51
<i>Martini Shell</i>	52
<i>Doyle Playground</i>	55
<i>Downtown from the Tileston &amp; Hollingsworth Dam</i>	55
<i>Truman Parkway Field Office</i>	57
<i>Kennedy Playground</i>	60
<i>Mclver Square</i>	61
<i>Ryan Playground</i>	62

Acquisition/Easement Recommendations	63
Early Actions Items	65
Conservation Plan	67
<i>Section 1: Paul's Bridge to the Martini Shell</i>	68
<i>Section 2: Fairmount Avenue Section</i>	72
<i>Section 3: Former Bay State Paper Co. Site/Tileston and Hollingsworth Dam</i>	73
<i>Section 4: Belnel Neighborhood to Mattapan Square</i>	74
<i>Section 5: Mattapan Square to Central Avenue</i>	76
<i>Conservation &amp; Environmental Management through Education</i>	80
Environmental Contamination and Possible Remediation Options	80
Riverways Study of Fish Passage and Habitat Restoration	87
Permitting	88
Cost Estimates	91
<b>CHAPTER IV: ONGOING OPERATIONS</b>	<b>93</b>
Maintenance	93
<i>Routine/General Maintenance</i>	93
<i>Specific Maintenance Plans for Individual Conservation Areas</i>	97
<i>Staffing</i>	100
Safety and Security Plan	101
<b>APPENDICES</b>	
A: COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARIES	A-2
B: STRUCTURAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WALKWAY AT RIVERWAY PLAZA	A-6
C: INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT	A-8
D: BANK STABILIZATION TECHNIQUES	A-16
E: SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN	A-19