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You can strengthen our voice

WalkBoston's advocacy on behalf of pedestrians began in 1990 when a handful of like-minded citizens decided they would be more effective speaking out collectively than as individuals. Sixteen years later, WalkBoston has grown to more than 500 members in 75 cities and towns, supported by some 70 corporate /organizational members. Most impressive is WalkBoston's record of getting cities and towns, state agencies, developers, institutions, and elected officials to recognize and accommodate the needs of walkers, as on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. Every additional voice helps WalkBoston's message to be heard. Join online at www.walkboston.org

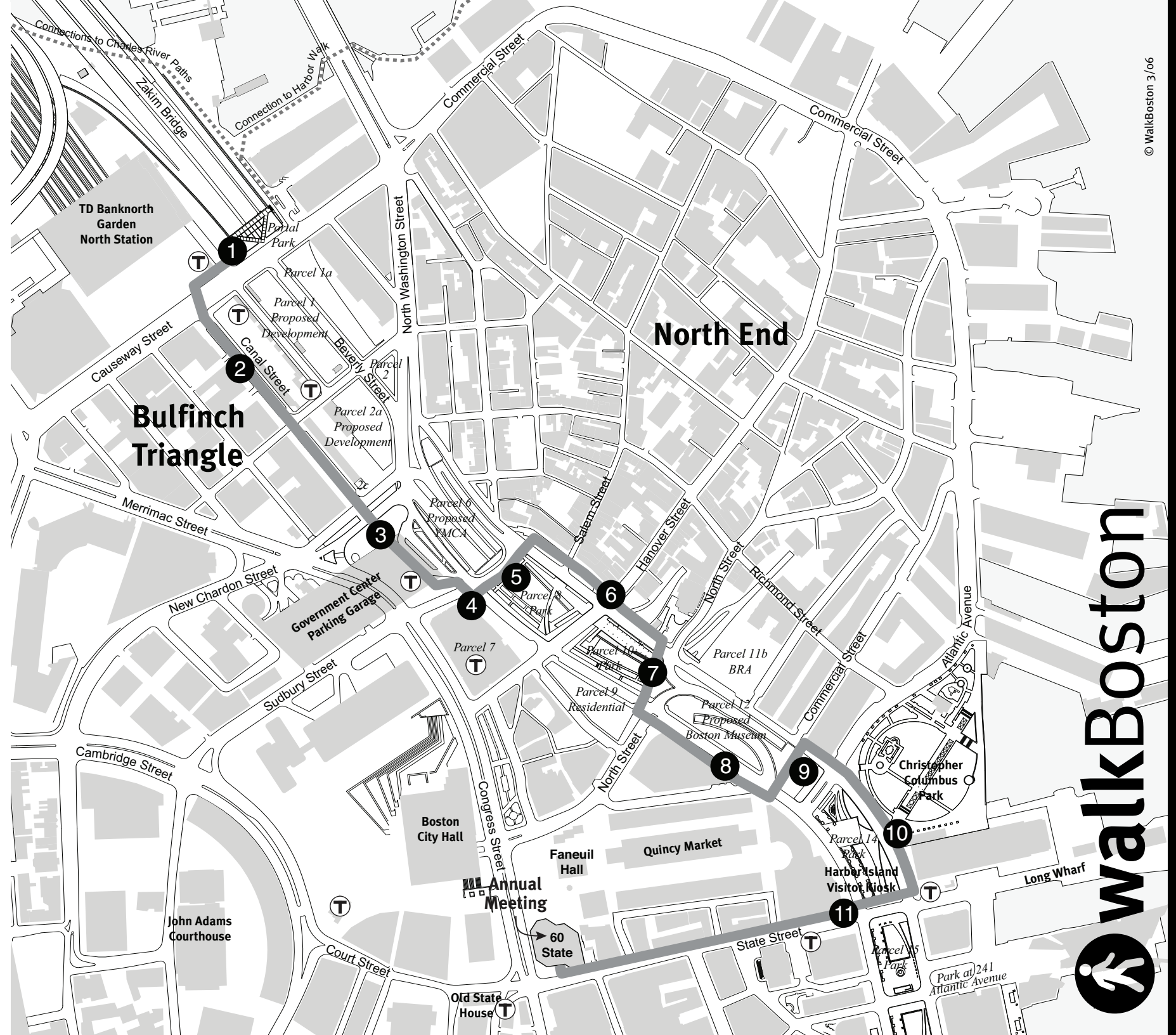


MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES MORE WALKABLE

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Sponsor: Massachusetts Turnpike Authority

Thank you Don Kindsvatter | Map
Bob Sloane, Erik Scheier, Ann Hershfang, Ken Krause | Text
Nina Garfinkle | Design



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About WalkBoston

Everyone walks...WalkBoston makes walking better! We promote, encourage and facilitate walking and its many benefits. Walking is good for health, the environment and local businesses. Our mission is to create and preserve safe walking environments that build vital communities. Sixteen years of advocacy has made WalkBoston the principal resource on walking issues in Massachusetts.

WalkBoston's successful advocacy

WalkBoston notices the needs of walkers and makes them high priority—in both small details and big projects. WalkBoston's skill is intervening early in project design to ensure good pedestrian conditions at the end, often years later. Three projects illustrate our focus—the Rose Kennedy Greenway streetscape [14 years of WalkBoston work], Boston's new signal timing policy [11 years], and monitoring the effects of private development on the sidewalks along the Greenway [ongoing].

Our Greenway work 1992—2006

The Greenway's success hinges on its walkability. Since 1992, we have worked to assure that the new construction will be attractive to walkers and serve them safely.

When we began our involvement, the Central Artery/Tunnel project [CA/T] was being designed by the City of Boston for 10 traffic lanes on surface streets along the Greenway. WalkBoston, Move Massachusetts and the CA/T Project created the Pedestrian Issues Forum to re-assess that design. Two years later, *A Pedestrian Perspective on the Central Artery Project* [1994] recommended narrower roadways and wider sidewalks. After WalkBoston's persistent advocacy for fewer lanes, the City adopted a 6-lane design.

Subsequently, an intensive public process established block-by-block standards for sidewalk widths and continuity, traffic lane widths, corner curb radii and bicycle lanes. In 1996/1998 State MEPA permits made these standards official Artery commitments. Ongoing oversight will be needed as developers request permits from the City of Boston for garage entrances, curb cuts and other things that impact the sidewalk.

Rose Kennedy Greenway Walk—2006

① Causeway Street and the Greenway — The north terminus of the Greenway is Portal Park on Causeway Street, with a spectacular view of the Zakim Bridge. Future pedestrian connections will link the Greenway to the Charles River paths and the Boston Harborwalk. Beverly Street will provide a connection to Haymarket Square. On Causeway Street, the City of Boston's Crossroads Initiative will guide its redevelopment into a pedestrian-oriented boulevard.

② Canal Street — The historic Middlesex Canal was once parallel to it, and now Canal Street is taking on a new 21st century role. As the principal route through the Bulfinch Triangle, it serves commuters walking between North Station and the Financial District. Once a center of electrical equipment and hardware, Canal Street has become a magnet for offices and restaurants. Now the street is taking on a residential character with development of Canal Place housing directly above the MBTA's underground Green/Orange Line superstation. The east side of Canal Street may be reconstructed with wider sidewalks, mirroring those already existing on the west side of the street.

③ Haymarket Square — A node for bus and rail transit, Haymarket Square has been significantly affected by CA/T construction. Street access to the I-93 tunnel swirls around the station and Government Center Garage. To create a safer and more pleasant environment for pedestrians, Artery construction is narrowing New Sudbury Street and enlarging the surface pedestrian and transit facilities at the MBTA bus station. Air rights above the CA/T access ramps opposite the Garage remain available for a proposed YMCA.

④ Boulevard Crossings — Frequent and lengthy WALK lights are essential for walkers' convenience and safety while crossing the Greenway's many streets. In 2004, WalkBoston persuaded the City to develop and implement a new signalization policy, replacing a frustrating system which required people to push a button and wait a long time before getting a WALK signal. The new policy allows pedestrians to cross on the green light parallel with moving vehicles and gives much more WALK time. The first large-scale implementation of this policy is taking place along the Greenway. Well-timed

signals now encourage walkers to wait and cross legally and safely, also benefiting vehicular traffic.

⑤ The Greenway — In the Greenway corridor, vehicle dominance has been tamed by cutting the number of surface street lanes from the original 10 planned down to the current 6. New sidewalks are designed for an 8' minimum walkway passage, plus additional space at the edges for street furniture, trees and lighting. The minimum total sidewalk width is 15' 7".

In 2005, a Greenway property developer proposed using the entire public sidewalk for two lanes of valet parking and vehicle loading, detouring pedestrians to the hotel's front entrance. WalkBoston's intervention resulted in re-opening a continuous sidewalk in front of the building and set a precedent to guide future permitting along Greenway sidewalks. The City of Boston is responsible for implementing this precedent and will in the future be advised by organizations such as WalkBoston, Move Massachusetts and the Greenway Conservancy.

⑥ North End Parks — Wide brick sidewalks line the North End along the Greenway. Paths from Salem and Hanover Streets join in the middle of the Greenway park, connecting the North End and downtown Boston. Hanover Street, now reconnected into downtown, will be heavily emphasized in Boston's Crossroads Initiative as a major entrance to North End shops and restaurants. Passive sitting areas and active play areas for small children are being built within these parks.

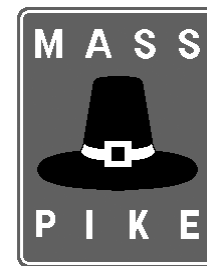
⑦ North Street Crossing — No longer the principal auto route between Downtown, the North End and the Harbor Tunnels, North Street is now primarily a pedestrian crossing of the Greenway linking the North End and Quincy Market. Signal timing here was improved by WalkBoston's work. Of special interest is the crossing's landscaping, with stone walls and plantings to shield pedestrians from Artery exit ramps. The walkway gives a pleasant vista of Faneuil Hall framed by downtown skyscrapers.

⑧ The Boston Museum — To showcase Boston's history, a four-level museum and learning center of 165,000 square feet, is proposed for this site. It will cover the Artery tunnel exit ramps with a platform that will make this area usable and accessible to pedestrians. The renowned Architect Moshe Safdie has prepared a ship-like design for the building.

⑨ Wharf Parcels — Four elongated parks stretch from Commercial Street on the north to High Street on the south. With the elevated highway dismantled, these parks reknit the city and provide recreation in an area once known primarily for noise and excessive traffic. The northernmost of these parks is bisected by the Walk to the Sea, which connects the John Adams Courthouse, new and old State Houses, Boston City Hall, Faneuil Hall, and Quincy Market to Boston Harbor. Inside the park, a visitor center will give information about the Boston Harbor Islands. Here, walkways on both edges of the Greenway illustrate many of the design standards WalkBoston worked so hard to achieve.

⑩ Christopher Columbus Park — This area was scheduled for a large parking garage in the late 1960's Urban Renewal Plan. Local waterfront residents drew up a plan for a Great Cove Square with pedestrian ways and the earliest mention of depressing the Central Artery [!]. Building demolition was about to start when residents filed suit against the City. Residents eventually gained the park, saved the magnificent Mercantile Wharf building, and had Atlantic Avenue moved away from the seafront. The park was recently expanded by the CA/T project and renovated by the City of Boston.

⑪ State Street — Being improved by Boston's Crossroads Initiative, this major thoroughfare is a dramatic walkway into the heart of the Financial District. Development already is capitalizing on the Greenway park, harbor views, boulevards and convenient transit. Varied building types and interesting sidewalk patterns characterize the walk toward the Old State House.



 **Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.**



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In its 16 years, WalkBoston has worked on design improvements for pedestrians, education about walkers' needs and the delights and possibilities of walking. Join us online at www.walkboston.org.