

# BOSTON COMMON

## MASTER PLAN

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Open House  
29 October 2019



# AGENDA

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**Project Background**

**What We've Heard So Far**

**Site Inventory and Analysis To Date**

**Opportunities**

**Next Steps**



Property Owner  
& Project Proponent



Liza Meyer, RLA  
Chief Landscape Architect



Liz Vizza  
Executive Director



Nate Frazee, RLA  
Project Manager



Bob Mulcahy  
Director of Parks Case &  
Capital Projects

# TEAM



Gene Bolinger, RLA  
Vice President



Kyle Zick, RLA  
Principal/Owner



Elise Bluell  
Landscape Architect



Cheri Ruane, RLA  
Vice President



Cassie Bethoney, RLA  
Landscape Architect




Louise Roland  
Landscape Architect



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# Project Background



A photograph of Boston Common, showing a wide, paved path winding through a green park. In the background, several modern skyscrapers with glass facades rise against a cloudy sky. People are walking along the path, including a woman pushing a stroller. A white classical-style gazebo is visible on the left side of the path. The scene is bright and sunny, with shadows cast on the grass and path.

**Mayor Martin J. Walsh has committed \$28 million (of which \$23 million is capital funding, and \$5 million maintenance funding) from the sale of the City's Winthrop Square garage to renovate and enhance Boston Common.**

**The Common has always been a shared space - a place to come together - and it has a powerful civic identity. Our job is to celebrate it and enhance it; not to reimagine it. Cities can build great public spaces, but nowhere is there a park with the history and identity of the Common.**





**The Common is steeped in history and foundational to the cultural identity of the city.**



The physical landscape is tired.



The Common is much loved and well used.

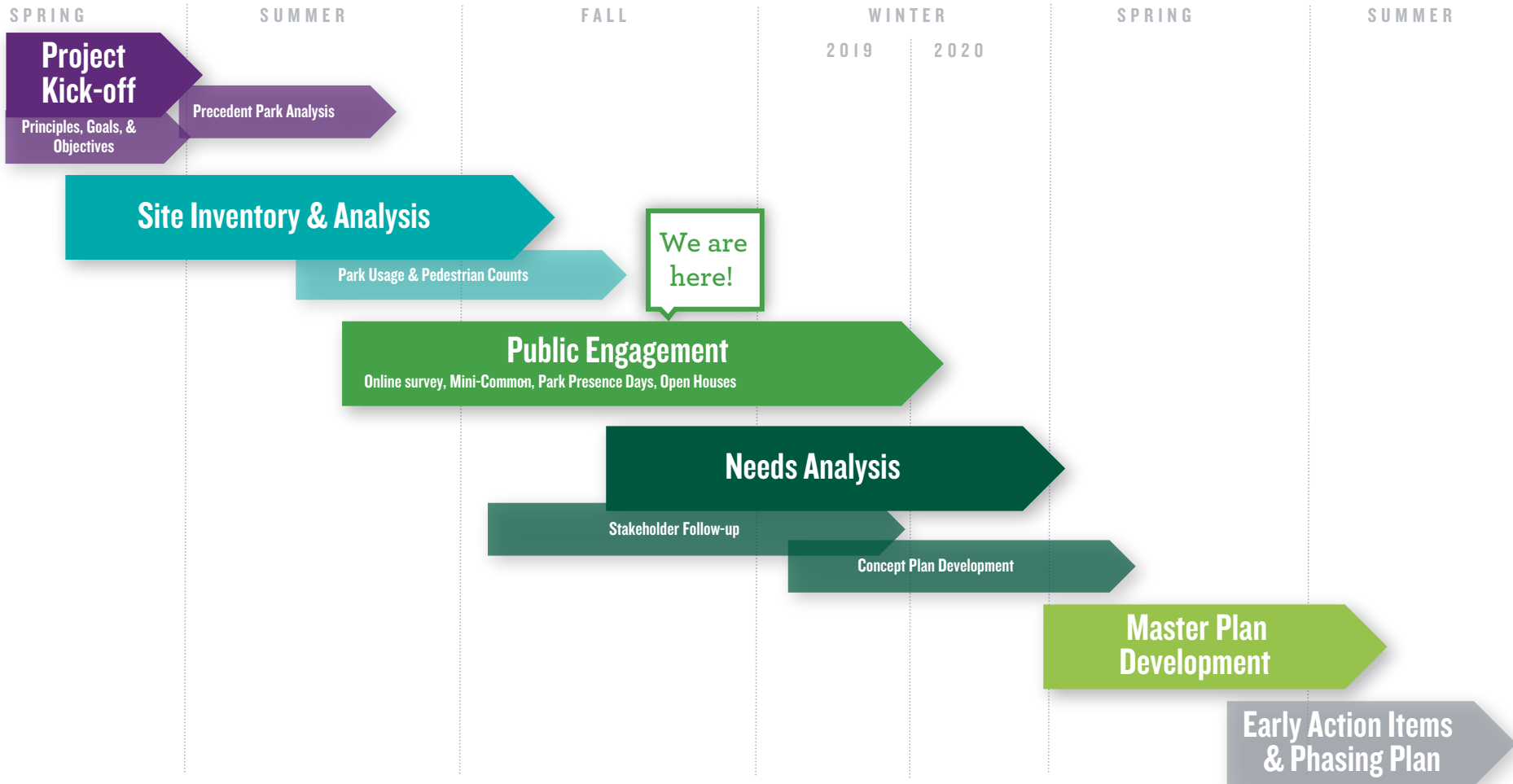


Image Courtesy of The Boston Calendar online.



**The park needs to serve  
Bostonians and visitors alike.**

# PROJECT SCHEDULE



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# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1

## MANY THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE

The Common is the people's park, a place that welcomes all. It is, at once, a worldwide landmark and a neighborhood park. Promote shared use and the support of a range of formal and informal activities.

2

## DESTINATION AND CROSSROADS

Design for pedestrians. Provide “breathing room” and a connection to the natural world for those who visit, meet at, or pass through the Common daily while also offering a rich and inviting experience for those who visit the park for its cultural, historical, recreational, and social value.

3

## HISTORIC AND CONTEMPORARY

Acknowledge the Common's layers of history, both visible and invisible, while shaping it into a landscape that serves modern park users in a 21st century city. Protect and enhance the Common's historic character.

4

## BALANCE PARK USE AND CARE

Strike the right balance between intensity of use and upholding the highest standards in park care and maintenance. Implement best practices and use requirements.

5

## CHAMPION RESILIENT STRATEGIES

Incorporate innovative strategies for managing climate change, on-site stormwater, zero waste, and other methods to enhance park health, safety, and quality of life within the context of this historic landscape.



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An aerial photograph capturing a massive crowd of people gathered for a parade in a park. The crowd, many wearing red clothing, fills a wide street and spills onto the adjacent green lawn. Several yellow double-decker buses are visible in the parade route. In the background, there are trees with autumn foliage, a large fountain, and a building with a sign that reads "PARK STREET".

# What We've Heard So Far

Image Courtesy of The Boston Herald.

# STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS TO DATE

## SECURITY / BPD & RANGERS

improve nighttime  
visibility

more cameras w/  
signage

increase park activity &  
programming to reduce  
bad behavior

more restrooms

homelessness  
impacts everyday use

smart design  
(features to deter  
homeless)

problem areas occur around  
vertical structures

## MBTA

increase  
accessibility

improve bus stops

park  
wayfinding

accessibility:  
connect Park St. station and  
Beacon St.

emergency egress

future capital  
improvement  
impacts

station infrastructure  
improvement studies

## COMMON COMMITTEE, FOPG

who will adopt & uphold  
the Master Plan?

monetary  
consumption /  
demand for park

safety  
- enforce rules

more restrooms  
smart design  
(dedicated bike lanes)

dedicated on-site "Park Director"

re-examine role of  
Park Rangers

## MAINTENANCE

inefficient waste  
collection

smart design  
(accommodate  
equipment)

high turnover &  
understaffed

inadequate  
equipment

more restrooms

undersized facility

restricted access to facility

better relationship &  
communication w/ Rangers

improve  
drainage



# MINI COMMON POP UPS

Maverick Square  
w/ Food Trucks  
8/19 3PM - 7PM

Fall Hill Fest, Beacon  
Hill  
9/22 12PM - 3:30PM

Open Newbury  
8/25 11AM - 3PM

@ Boston Common  
1. African Festival: 8/10 11AM - 3PM  
2. Frog Pond Movie Night: 9/6 4:30- 8:30PM  
3. Brewer Plaza: 9/17 10AM - 2PM

Roxbury Crossing  
Farmer's Market  
9/13 3PM - 7PM

Chinatown  
Lantern Festival  
9/7 11AM - 3PM

Jamaica Plain  
Farmer's Market  
10/1 2PM - 6PM

Egleston  
Farmer's Market  
10/12 10AM -

Bowdoin Geneva  
Farmer's Market  
10/10 11AM - 3PM

Roslindale Village  
Farmer's Market  
10/5 10AM - 2PM





Grand Sea Boston  
原參泰海味  
純天然、純野中、純原生態  
是華人菜餚的心、也是全球華人

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LEARN MORE  
HERE!  
→

Chinatown Festival, 9/7/2019





WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE // SPOT?  
LEAST FAVORITE

staytime



More plants  
More food  
More topography

More plants  
More food  
More topography

fix paths  
& draw S

Base camp  
(NODE)

More plants  
More food  
More topography

more plants!

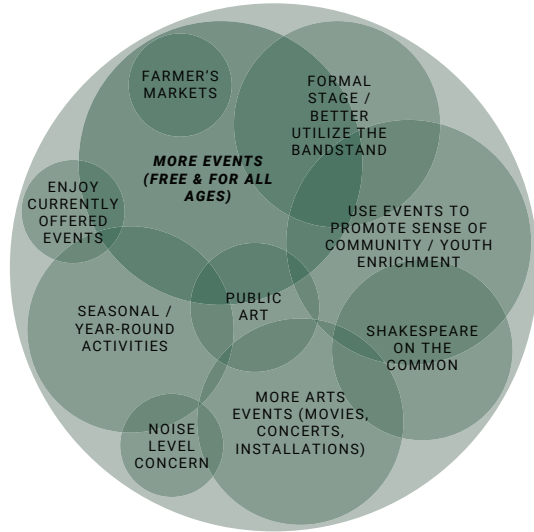
different food options!

more topography

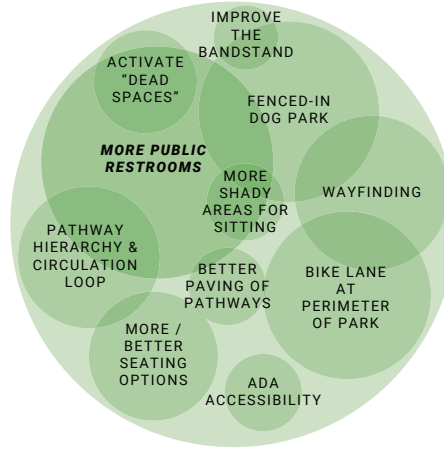
sliding hill

# MINI COMMON FEEDBACK

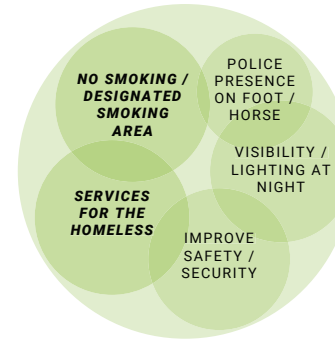
## EVENTS / ACTIVITIES



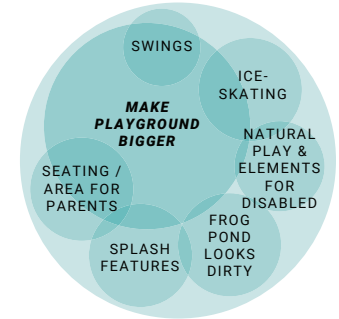
## ACCESS / AMENITIES



## HOMELESSNESS / SECURITY / SAFETY



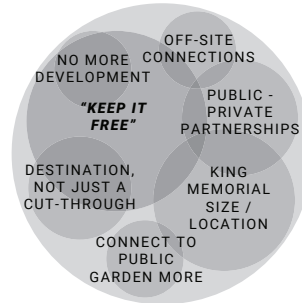
## FROG POND / PLAYGROUND



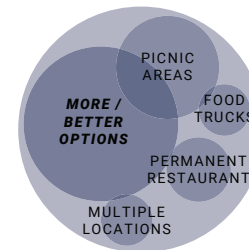
## VEGETATION



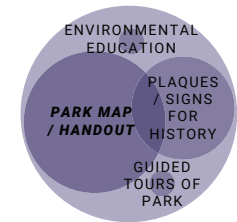
## OTHER



## FOOD



## HISTORY / EDUCATION

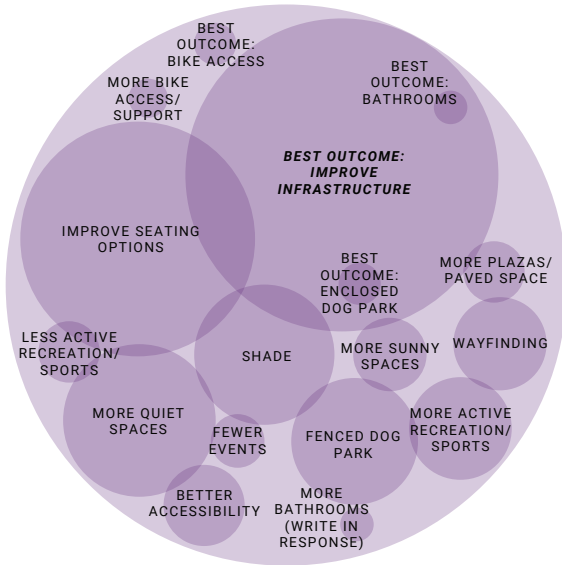


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Note: size of circle corresponds to the number of times each topic and sub-topic was highlighted or mentioned. Interior / sub-topic circles are not comparable across topics.

# ONLINE SURVEY

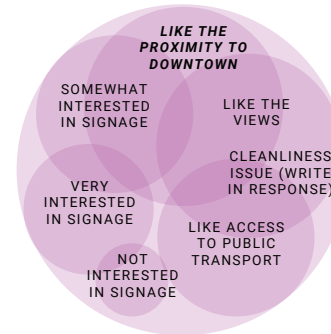
## ACCESS / AMENITIES



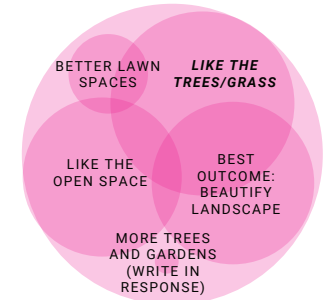
## HOMELESSNESS / SECURITY / SAFETY



## OTHER



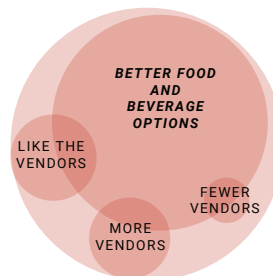
## VEGETATION



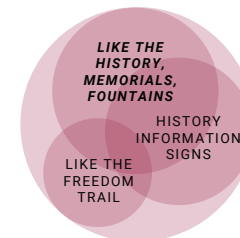
## EVENTS / ACTIVITIES



## FOOD



## HISTORY / EDUCATION



## FROG POND / PLAYGROUND



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Note: size of circle corresponds to the number of times each topic and sub-topic was highlighted or mentioned. Interior / sub-topic circles are not comparable across topics.

# ONLINE SURVEY

PARK MAP  
/ HANDOUT

INTERNAL WALKING ROUTES

DESTINATION & NOT  
JUST A CUT-THROUGH

PICNIC  
AREAS

**BETTER FOOD  
OPTIONS**

IMPROVE  
SAFETY /  
SECURITY

SPLASH  
FEATURES AT  
FROG POND

NO SMOKING /  
DESIGNATED  
SMOKING AREA

MORE  
LOCAL  
ART

**MORE  
RESTROOMS**

LIGHTING/  
VISIBILITY  
AT NIGHT

BIKE LANE AT PARK  
PERIMETER

IMPROVE  
PAVEMENT

ADA  
ACCESSIBILITY

**FENCED-IN  
DOG PARK**

WAYFINDING  
/ SIGNAGE

KEEP THE  
COMMON FREE

**MORE  
TREES**

EVENTS TO  
PROMOTE SENSE  
OF COMMUNITY  
& YOUTH  
ENRICHMENT

BETTER  
LAWN

BETTER BENCHES /  
MORE SEATING  
OPTIONS

NATURAL PLAY  
/ TREE HOUSE

**MORE FREE  
EVENTS**

SEASONAL /  
HOLIDAY  
INSTALLATIONS  
& ACTIVITIES

**BIGGER  
PLAYGROUND**

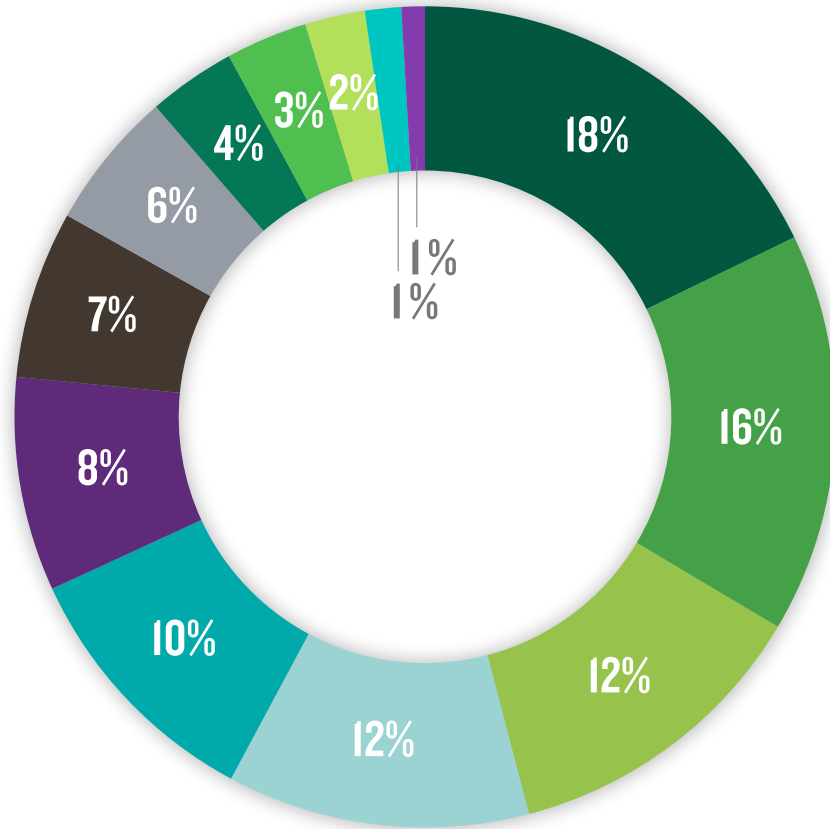
MORE SHADY  
PLACES TO SIT



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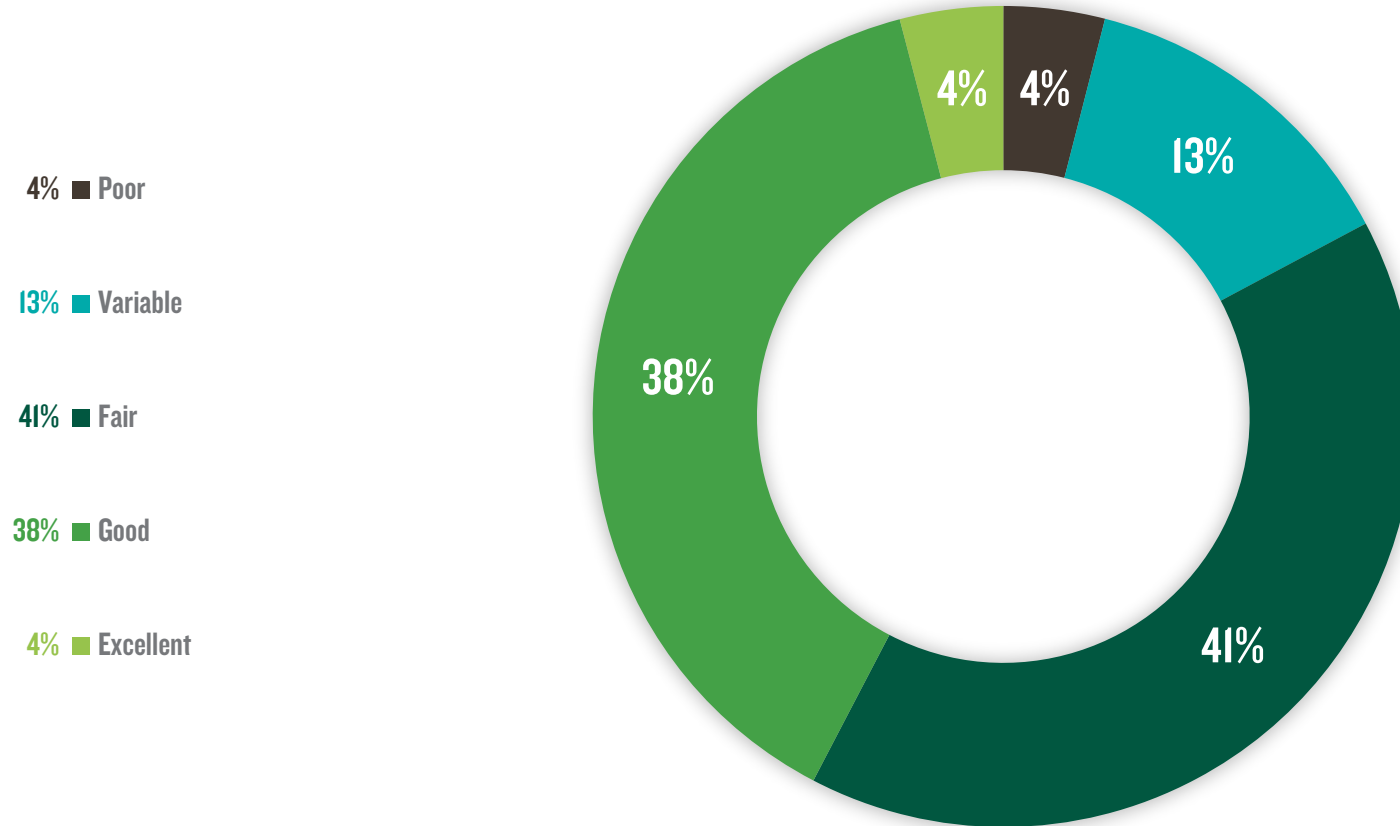
# ONLINE SURVEY

## WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE COMMON?



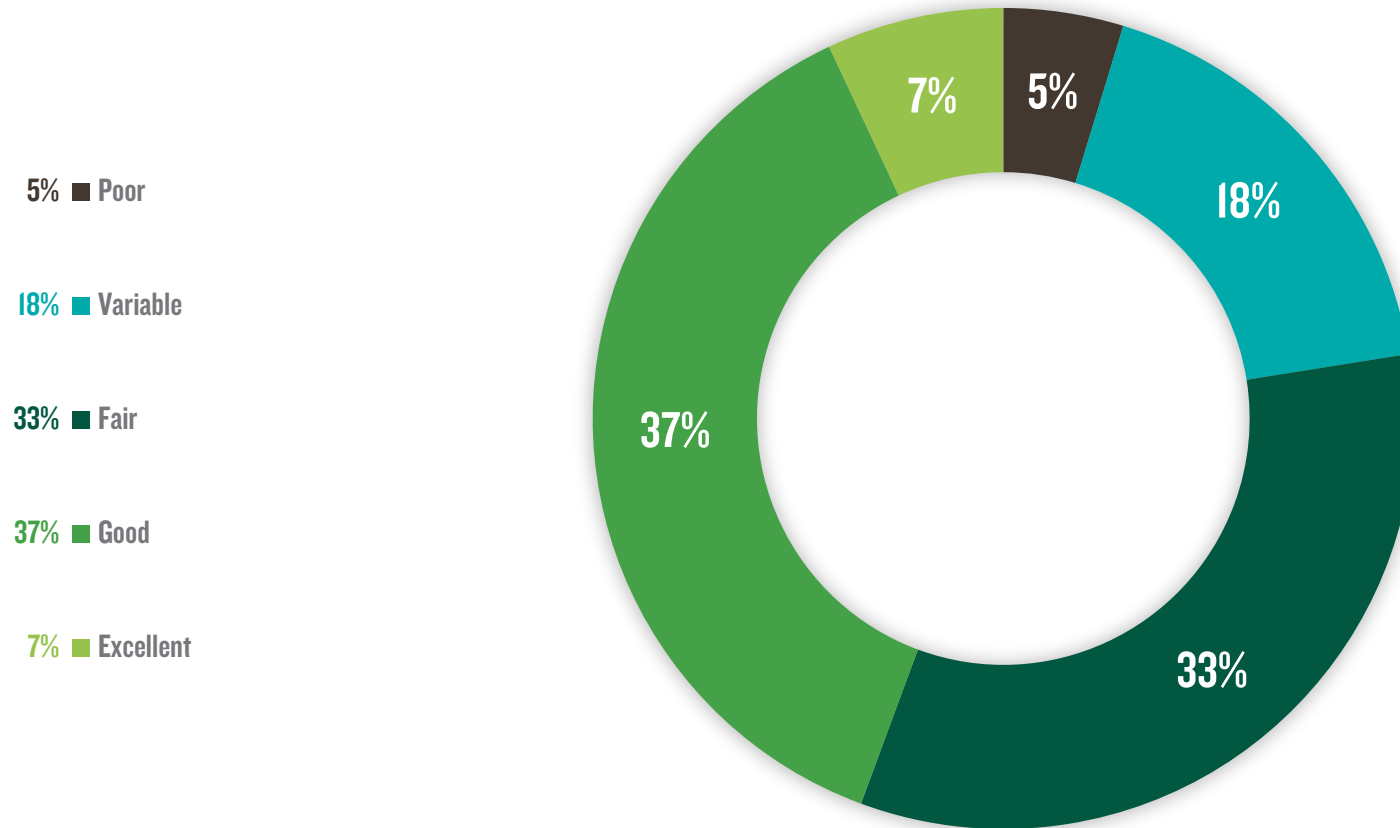
# ONLINE SURVEY

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF BOSTON COMMON?



# ONLINE SURVEY

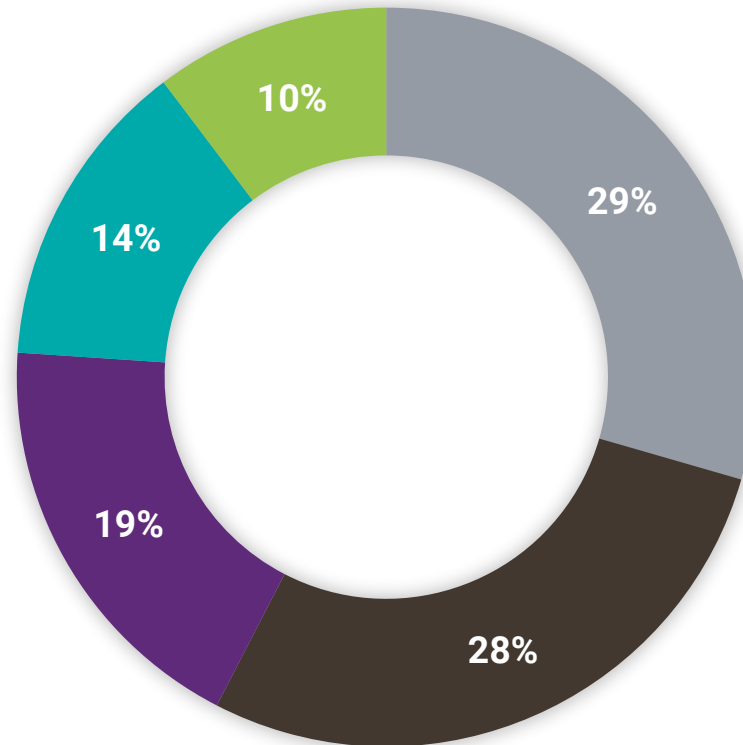
## HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE SAFETY AT BOSTON COMMON?



# ONLINE SURVEY

## WHAT IS THE BEST OUTCOME YOU COULD IMAGINE FOR THE COMMON?


- 29% ■ Beautified landscape features
- 28% ■ Improved physical infrastructure  
(e.g. pathways, benches, monuments, plazas)
- 19% ■ Improved safety
- 14% ■ More programming of activities  
(e.g. family, community, and non-profit events)
- 10% ■ Fewer vehicles in the park



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Survey as of 10/14/19  
Total Respondents: 3,999



A photograph of a park with a large green lawn, trees, and a city skyline in the background. The text "Site Inventory and Analysis To Date" is overlaid in white. The scene is bright and sunny, with people walking on the lawn and a prominent white monument on the left. The city skyline includes several tall buildings, some with glass facades, under a clear blue sky. The foreground is dominated by the lush green grass of the park.

# Site Inventory and Analysis To Date

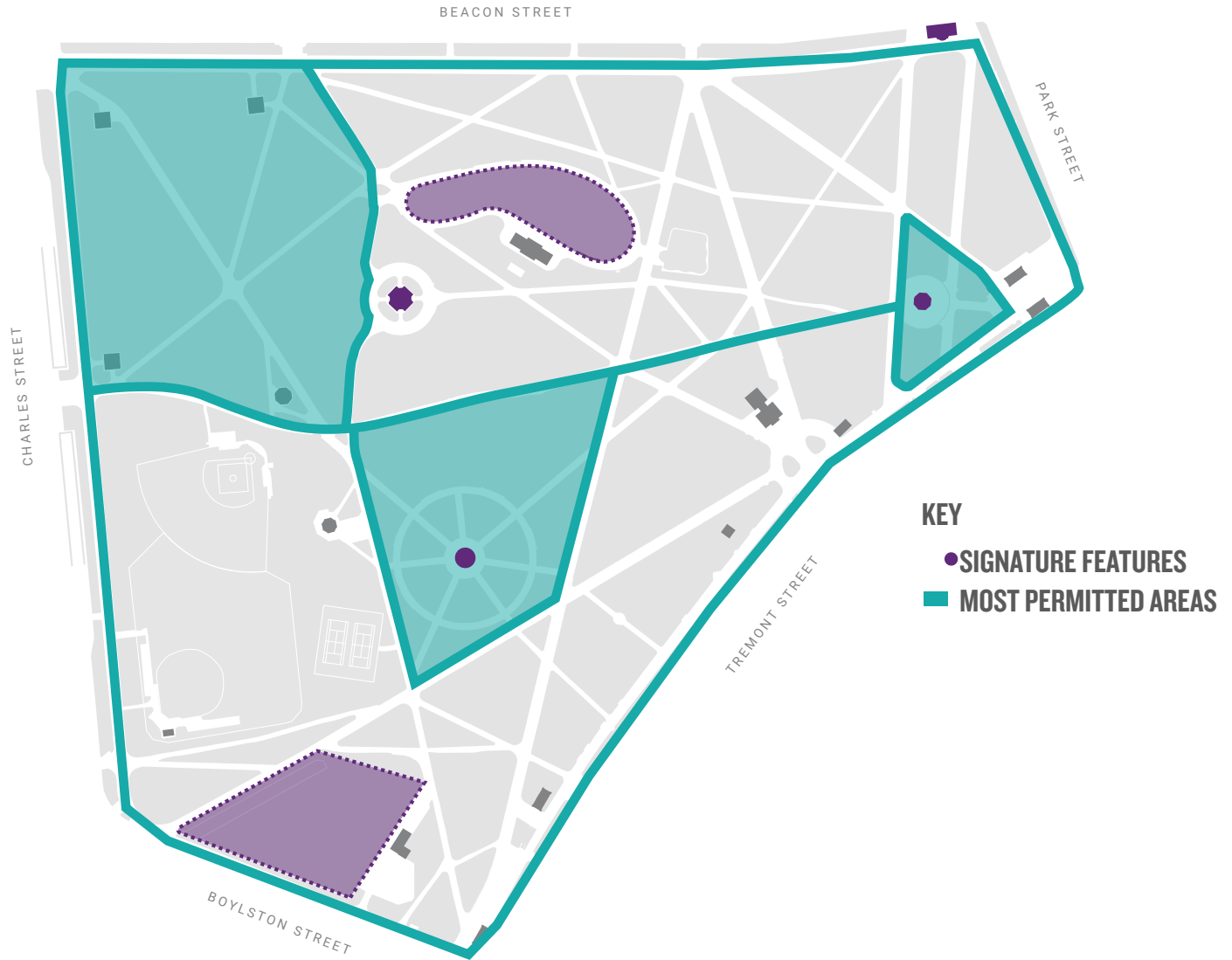
# SIGNATURE FEATURES



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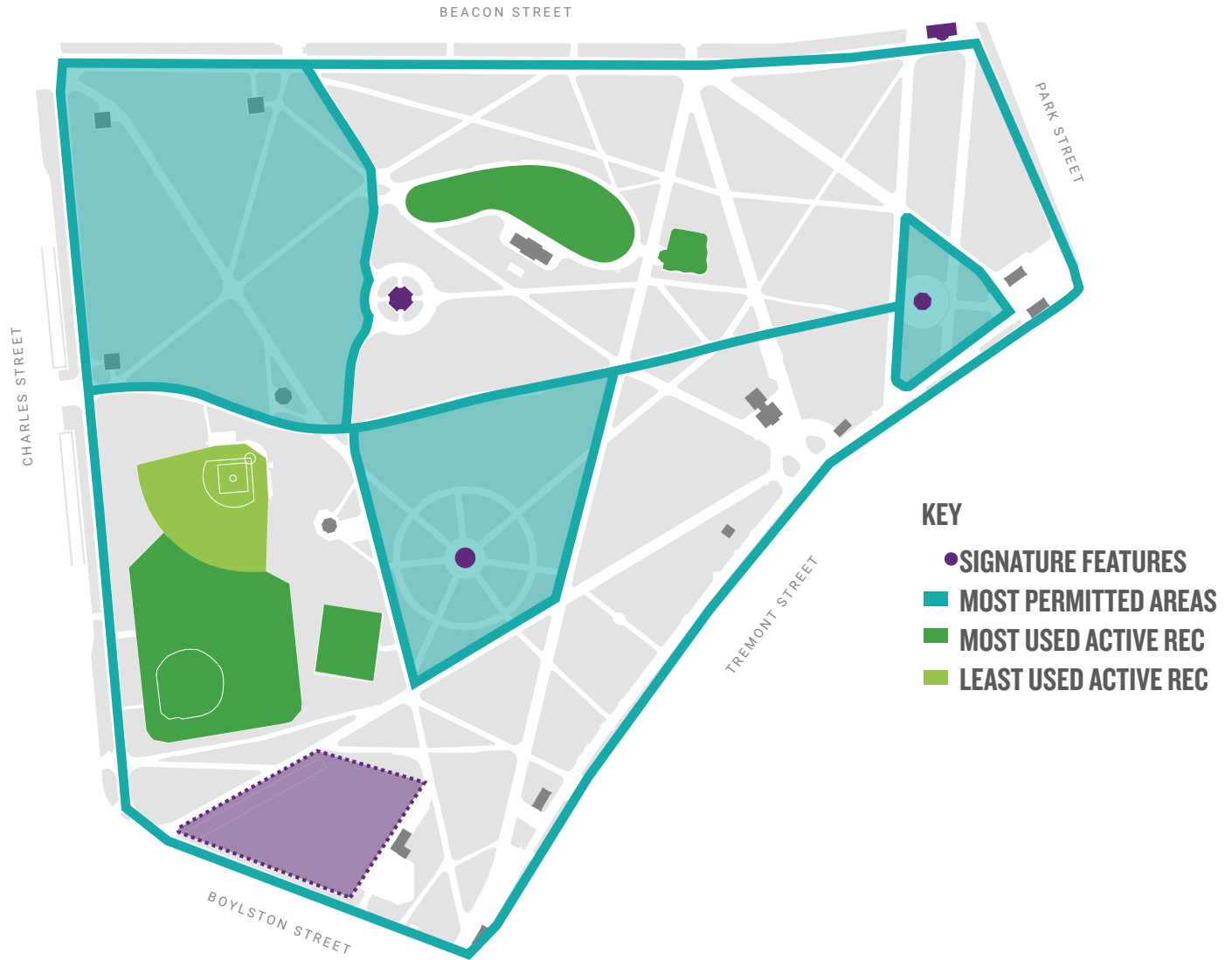
# CIVIC SPACES & SPECIAL EVENT USE



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# ACTIVE RECREATION



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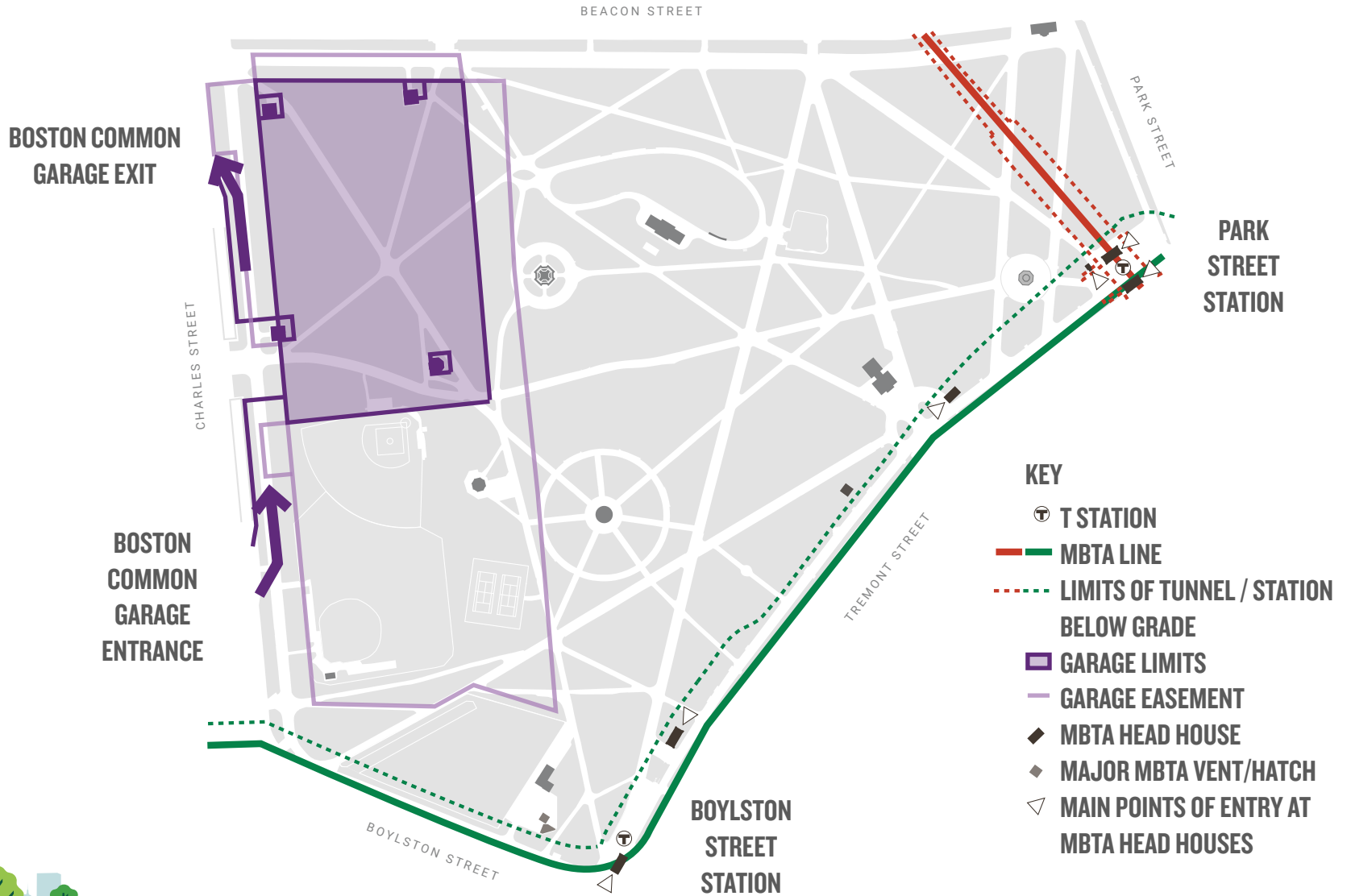
# GATHERING AREAS



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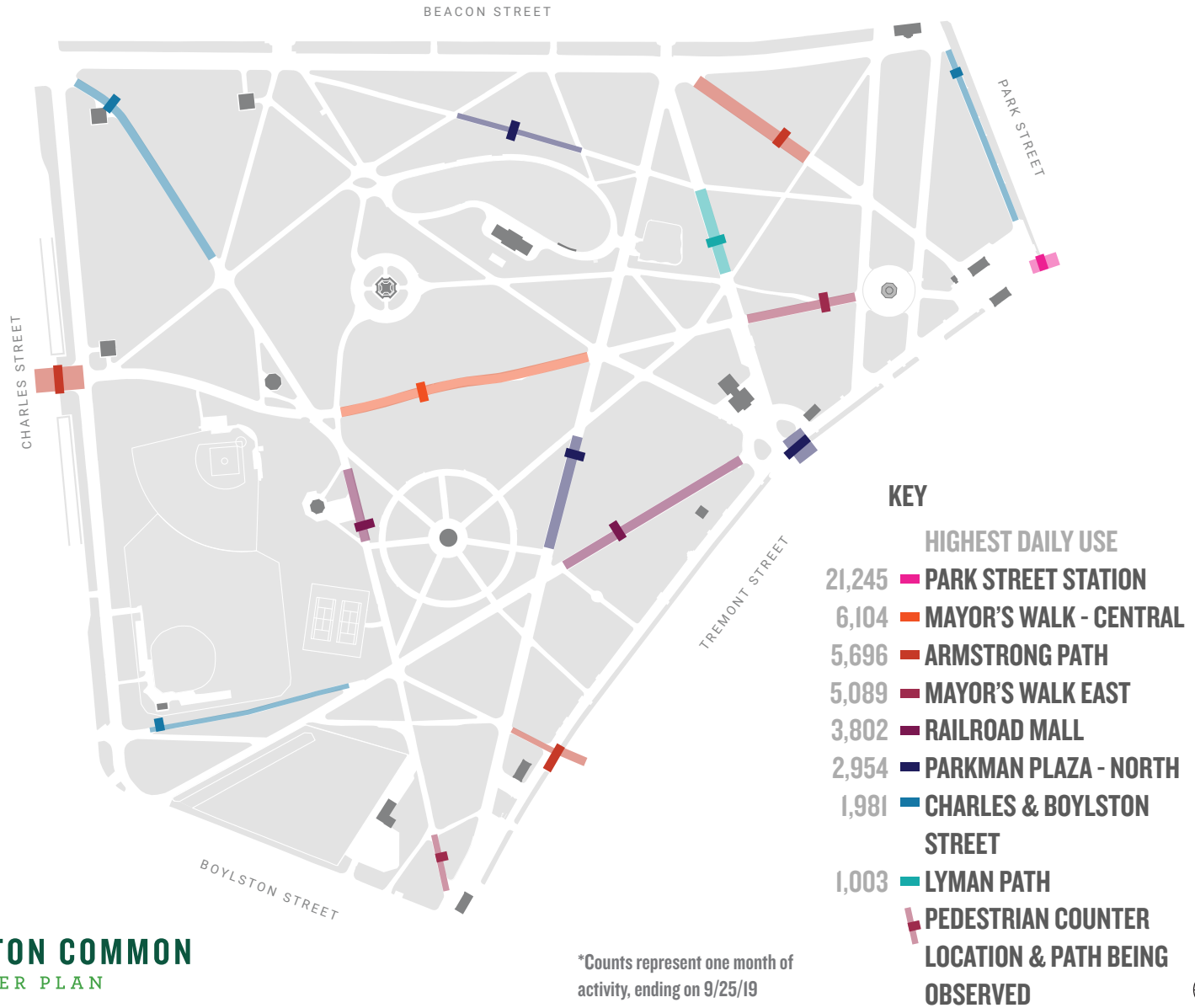
# TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE



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# CIRCULATION PATTERNS

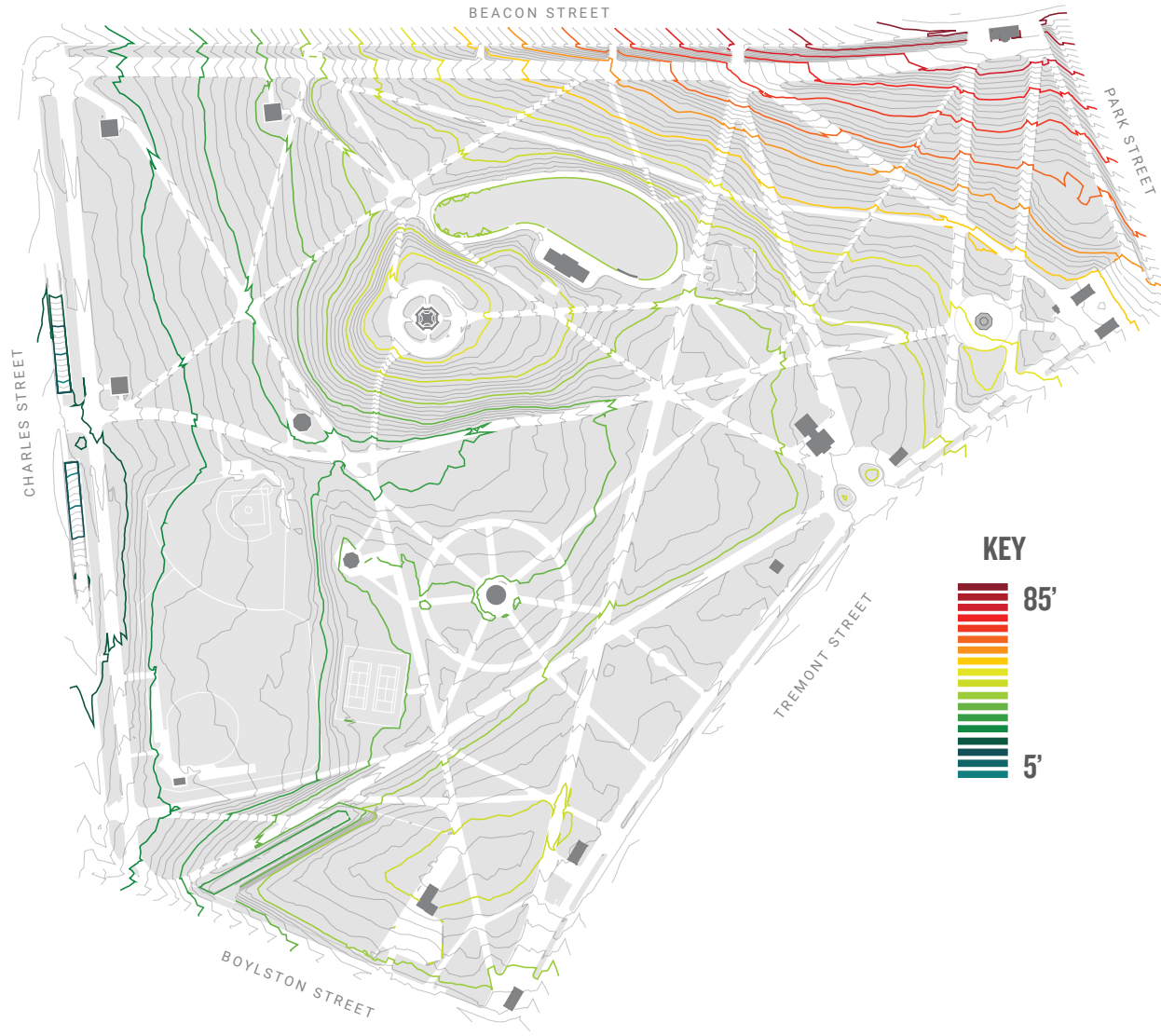


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\*Counts represent one month of activity, ending on 9/25/19



# TOPOGRAPHY



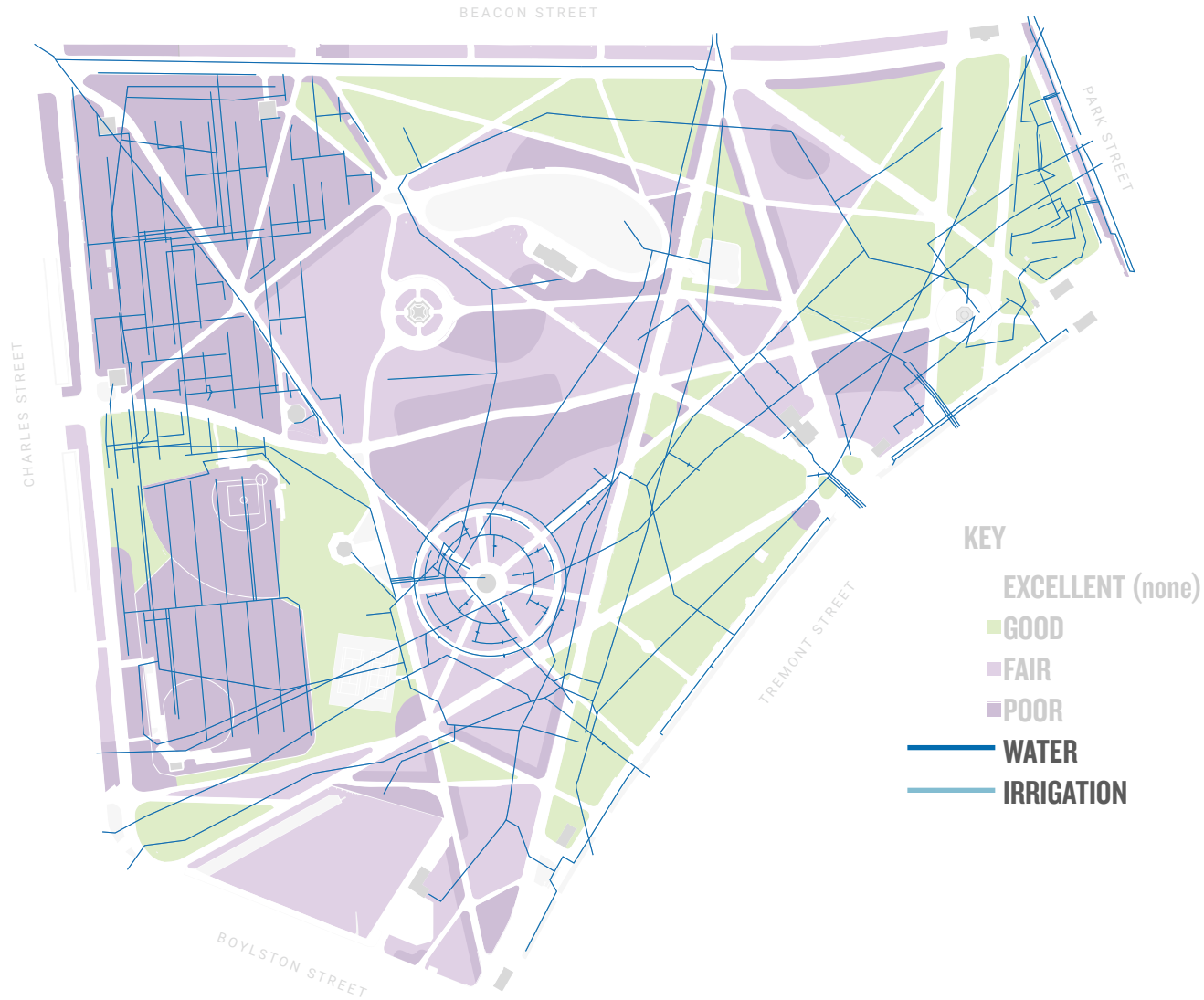
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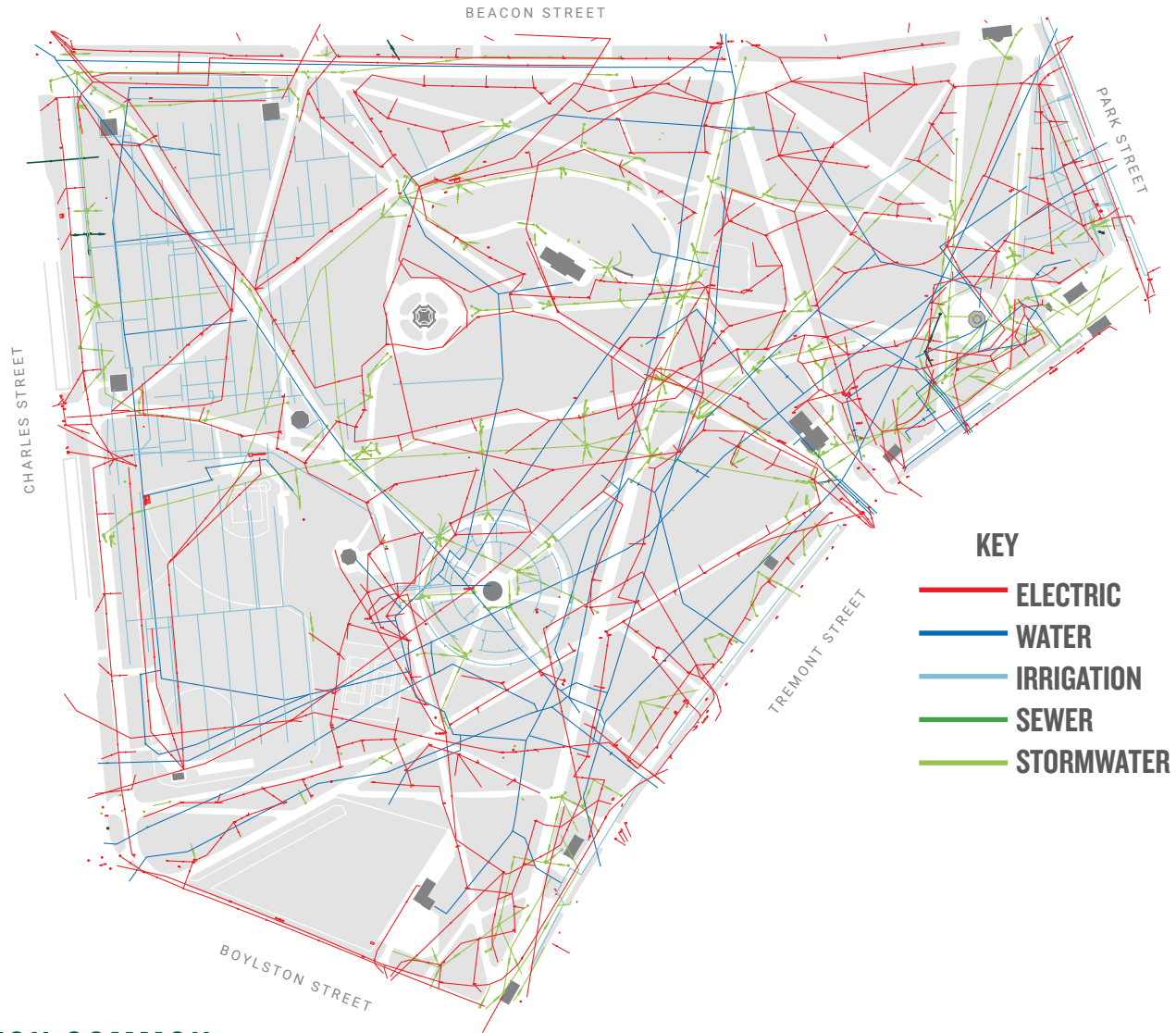
# SOILS & TURF



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# UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE



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# Opportunities



# OPPORTUNITIES ENTRANCES & ARRIVAL



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# OPPORTUNITIES

## ENTRANCES & ARRIVAL

## EDGES



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# OPPORTUNITIES

**ENTRANCES &  
ARRIVAL**

**EDGES**

**CIRCULATION**



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# OPPORTUNITIES

**ENTRANCES &  
ARRIVAL**

**EDGES**

**CIRCULATION**

**NEW FEATURES,  
FACILITIES &  
AMENITIES**



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# OPPORTUNITIES

**ENTRANCES &  
ARRIVAL**

**EDGES**

**CIRCULATION**

**NEW FEATURES,  
FACILITIES &  
AMENITIES**

**OPERATIONS &  
MAINTENANCE**



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# OPPORTUNITIES

**ENTRANCES &  
ARRIVAL**

**EDGES**

**CIRCULATION**

**NEW FEATURES,  
FACILITIES &  
AMENITIES**

**OPERATIONS &  
MAINTENANCE**

**PROGRAMMING**



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# OPPORTUNITIES

ENTRANCES &  
ARRIVAL

EDGES

CIRCULATION

NEW FEATURES,  
FACILITIES &  
AMENITIES

OPERATIONS &  
MAINTENANCE

PROGRAMMING

GOVERNANCE



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# Next Steps





## HOW YOU CAN HELP TONIGHT!

**VISIT US AT  
THESE TABLES!**

← **PROGRAMMING & EVENTS**

← **STRUCTURED USE AREAS**

← **SAFETY & SECURITY**

**CULTURE, HISTORY & MONUMENTS** →

**TREES & SITE FEATURES** →

**ACCESS, CIRCULATION & BIKES** →

# NEXT STEPS

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**Q & A**

**PROVIDE FEEDBACK TONIGHT**

**STAY TUNED!**

More questions or thoughts  
following this meeting?  
Email or call BPRD Project  
Manager Nate Frazee at  
nathan.frazee@boston.gov  
617-961-3167

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