

Center Park

Strengths

Amenities: Benches are great; drinking fountains; drinking fountains with dog bowls

Connections: Access to the park is solid; multiple footbridges

Event Programming: Active events on fields; informal events on oval; Hatch Shell programs

Facilities and structures: Community Boating facility; historic Hatch Shell; playground; variety of structures

Landscape: Lagoon and canoeway are great; nice open spaces; trees and grass; flowering trees; passive nature; spirit of historic landscape design

Pathways: Walking paths that are relatively devoid of bicycles on the island; pathways along the water; linear flow of paths; bridges to the islands

Statues

Weaknesses

Amenities: Lack of four-season bathrooms; food at the café is not very good; lack of comfort stations

Connections: Entrance to the park at the Fiedler footbridge is narrow during events; pedestrian bridges are not great; bridges are in poor condition; difficult park access during large scale events

Facilities and structures: CBI docks need rehabilitation; café is not appealing; café is unsightly; restrooms are dilapidated, or in the case of the Dartmouth St Pavilion, closed; buildings in disrepair and decay; lack of children's play spaces, especially close to the Hatch Shell

Landscape: Lack of attention to trees and plantings; lawn maintenance; geese presence is a burden to the park; goose droppings make the grass unusable; area of park near Longfellow Bridge is like a no-man's land; landscape is tired; ground compacted, causing poor tree growth

Pathways: Pathways too narrow in area; conflict of pedestrians and cyclists/rollerbladers

River: Water quality after storms is poor; tall buildings close to the shoreline affect wind flow along the water sheet; sewer overflow into the river

Safety: Lighting and safety could be improved; park feels unsafe at night

Storrow Drive: Noise from Storrow Drive; parking along the park during special events is unpleasant; fencing along Storrow Drive should be extended between Dartmouth Street and TERSF

Lack of children's activities

No area for dogs to play

Too much trash

Monument at base of Fielder footbridge blocks sight line to the Hatch Shell

Skateboarders destroy granite structures

Opportunities

Amenities: Nicer, all-season restrooms would dramatically enhance user comfort; more bike racks; shade structures would be nice on hot days; build playground with an attached café and restroom; more restroom and refreshment areas; improve recycling in the park; install more bike racks throughout the park; more benches; open Dartmouth St pavilion, and sell kites, beach chairs, sun screen, etc.; extend restroom hours and improve maintenance

Art and design: More public art; sculpture installations

Connections: Park access from the city should be improved; improve linear connections; build connections to Kenmore area; create water taxi service to and from the park

Dogs: Create a dog park in underutilized spaces (i.e. along Storrow Drive); rehabilitate the Lotta dog fountain

Event programming: Winter activities; implement events such as a snow/ice sculpture contest; develop programs for all people for all seasons; create a winter carnival; check what events contribute to enjoyment, which ones are only there because no other space readily and cheaply available; rowing rentals; consider other uses for the Hatch Shell oval

Facilities and structures: Rebuild CBI docks; improve or rebuild the café; make the cafe a destination; transplant the café; place a concession stand near or under the Bowker overpass; more river docks; create a children's play area that compliments the park designer's original vision; build new playground to the left of the Fiedler foot bridge; install another wading pool; build swimming pools in the river, for swimming access during the summer; illuminate statues

and buildings at night; cluster facilities for better convenience (i.e. bathrooms and café near the playground)

Landscape: Better maintenance of open spaces; invigorate the landscape; put more order into the landscape design scheme; better maintenance of landscape and facilities; improve topography around rain shelters, as they puddle excessively; remove weeds and trash from the edge of the riverbank; make use of underutilized spaces, such as that beneath the Longfellow bridge

Pathways: Better integration between bikers and pedestrians; separate bikes and roller bladders from other pedestrians in the park; separate cars, trucks, and bikes from pedestrian paths; install varied surface treatments to pathways to segregate uses; designate certain areas as “no-bike” zones; color-code pathways to separate uses

Safety: Better security in the park, especially at night; improved lighting throughout the park; consider better lighting ambience at night

Storrow Drive and Parking: Eliminate Storrow Drive parking during large events; mitigate effects on the park from Storrow Drive; eliminate parking on grassy areas during staging for large events; create a better, integrated parking areas for staging events; dedicate one lane of Storrow Drive to bike traffic