

Lower Park

Strengths

Connections: Accessible from red and green MBTA lines; most accessible area of the park; connections to Cambridge and New Basin; gateway to the Charles River Basin

Facilities and structures: Good facility structures in the Teddy Ebersol's Red Sox Fields and the Lee pool; playgrounds; interesting historical structures in Lee Pool, locks area, and police barracks

Focal point of outdoor recreation for two neighborhoods (West End and Beacon Hill) that have minimal open space

River-edge pathway is a great experience

Great vistas

Weaknesses

Connections: Poor connections to the city and the Museum of Science; no direct access to the water's edge; broken link from Longfellow Bridge to the park; bridges are not in code with the ADA; underpass beneath the Longfellow Bridge is unpleasant; poor connections to the dam; cumbersome access from the neighborhoods

Facilities and structures: Lee pool should have activity; unused buildings are an eyesore; tennis courts are rarely used; state police barracks is not the best use for the Locks area; parking lot at State Police barracks is wasted space

Programming: Adult use of the sector, and of the fields in particular, is minimal and relegated to the background; no winter activities

Signage and Communication: Lack of wayfinding and signage; lacking a sense that you're entering a great resource

Threat from overuse from large events (charity walks, etc.)

Opportunities

Connections: Improve access to the river, for both boats and pedestrians; create pedestrian linkages to local neighborhood; bridge the park to the Museum of Science

Facilities and structures: Bring back a swimming pool and/or install a sauna; create another café or enhance the snack pavilion; improve public facilities such as the Lee Pool building; transform the parking lots to parkland; open a changing area to accommodate field and/or pool users

Programming: Increase adult programs; better winter activities to the lower park; better outreach for field access; open the fields on for free, unplanned use on Mondays; facilitate swimming opportunities in the river; Develop a historical education feature at the Lock buildings

Signage and Communication: Improved information about field usage and access

Avoid privatization of the space