
HARVARD-ALLSTON PUBLIC REALM FLEX FUND

Spring 2024 Grant Application

RINGER PARK

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Proponent/Owner: Boston Parks and Recreation Department
1010 Massachusetts Ave
Boston, MA 02118

Background: Public Agency

Primary Contact: B Chatfield, Project Manager
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Key Personnel: Kyle Zick, Principal of Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.
B Chatfield, project manager for Boston Parks and Recreation

PROJECT INFORMATION

Ringer Park is a 10.3 acre public park located on Allston Street, with additional entrances on Gordon Street, Imrie Road, and Griggs Place. It is owned by the City of Boston and maintained by Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD). It currently contains one Little League field, two basketball courts, two tennis courts, and one children's playground with a splash pad. A natural woodland area of approximately 3.75 acres is one of the main features of the park. The West End House Boys and Girls Club is located on Allston Street on a parcel within the park, and the Jackson Mann Community Center and BPS Horace Mann School for the Deaf are also adjacent to the park on Webley Street. All other abutters are residential properties. See Figure 1, Existing Conditions.

PROPOSED PROJECT

BPRD completed a comprehensive plan for Ringer Playground in 2021. The Phase 1 design and construction for this plan was initiated with funds from the City of Boston Capital Improvement Fund along with mitigation funding from various Allston construction projects. The comprehensive plan identified community priorities for the park: a new dog recreation area, upgrades to the playground and splash pad, arborist work for the trees throughout the park, lighting and drainage improvements, renovation of the existing entrances and pathways, renovated gathering spaces, and a new athletic field.

The basketball and tennis courts in this park are in relatively good condition. Although the comprehensive plan illustrates these as program areas, the courts (and their court lighting) would not be addressed until there is a need for this, in the future.

Based on the available funding, BPRD determined that the scope for Phase 1 would be to renovate the pathways and entrances, provide a new dog recreation area, and address needed maintenance for trees throughout the park and in key areas of the woodland. The project held two community design meetings in 2023 to develop the design for this Phase 1 program, but at these meetings, constituents strongly advocated to expand the scope of the project and address more elements from the comprehensive plan - specifically the playground, splash pad and ball field. After the second of these meetings, BPRD paused this project to seek further funding, to be able address all elements in the park in need of repair. With additional funding that BPRD is seeking from HAPRFF, BPRD would be able to include the renovation of the playground and splash pad in the project scope. BPRD will seek additional outside funding to address the ball field.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

Renovation of the playground and splash pad will provide significant public benefit to the Allston community surrounding the park, which has seen a steady increase in the number of children under the age of 9 within the last 15 years. In addition to providing active recreation for young children, a new splash pad will serve all park users with a way to cool off on a hot day, responding to the need to mitigate the increasing urban heat. In addition to serving local families, the playground and splash pad will provide active recreation for the children who participate in the West End House Boys and Girls Club, the future students at the school, and the Jackson Mann Community Center youth participants as well.

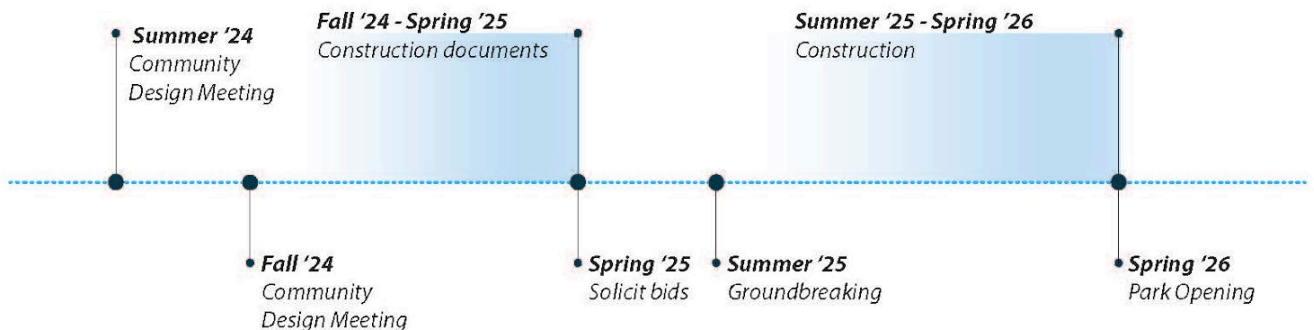
FUNDING

The City of Boston Capital Improvement Fund provides funding for many of the projects that BPRD pursues, however funding isn't always sufficient to cover all the needs requested by a community. In this case, the Capital Improvement Fund provided funding adequate to address accessibility improvements for pathways and entrances, tree work, and a dog area, but as the community indicated, an expanded scope of work that included the play area and splash pad was a strong desire.

BPRD will also submit for funding to the Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program for this project, through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

TIMELINE

If the project receives the requested funding from HAPRFF, we will conclude our community design process by holding two additional design meetings in Summer and Fall 2024 to share the new budget and scope, and finalize the design. We will then complete construction documents, soliciting bids by Spring 2025. Construction would begin Summer 2025 and the renovated park would open in Spring 2026.



PROJECT MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS, PROTOCOLS, FUNDING

Ringer Park is maintained by BPRD and maintenance costs are funded through the City of Boston’s Operating Budget. This park will be designed using BPRD standard details. BPRD is always trying to find new ways to integrate best practices for both stormwater management and energy efficiency into our park renovations.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY AND LIFE SPAN

BPRD capital projects always aim to be as efficient as possible with public funds by balancing cost and durability, with the goal of using materials that fulfill both these objectives. Specifically, play area and water spray area furnishings, pavements and mechanical/plumbing systems will have an anticipated lifespan of 15 years.

ANTICIPATED REGULATORY REVIEW AND NECESSARY PERMITS

Because the impacted site is greater than one acre, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Discharges from Construction Activities (NPDES) will be required and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) will be submitted to Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC). BWSC Coordination will be required for the proposed water service for the water spray area and overflow connections to storm drains. Review by the Public Works Street Lighting Division will be necessary for pedestrian lights along park pathways.

MATERIALS

BUDGET

The City of Boston Capital Improvement Fund budget for Fiscal Year 2024 and beyond includes a total of \$1.7 million for Ringer Park Comprehensive Plan Implementation. \$150,000 has been contracted for design services in FY24-25; the balance is for construction in FY24 and beyond.

There are six projects in the vicinity of the park (1501 Commonwealth, 89 Brighton, 37-43 North Beacon, 24 Hichborn, 5 Washington Street, and 1650 Commonwealth Ave) that will be providing a total of \$107,000 in mitigation funding towards construction costs.

An earmark of Federal Funding through ARPA 2.0 will provide \$35,000 towards construction costs, specifically arborist work in the woodland area.

BPRD is requesting \$1.0 million from the HAPRFF to provide renovation of the play area and splash pad.

Project Costs		AMOUNT
Design Fees		\$ 266,500
Construction Estimate		\$ 2,805,000
Playground, Splash Pad, Dog Area, ball field, renovated pathways, entrances, woodland work, drainage, site furnishings, and planting.		
Contingency		\$270,000
TOTAL		\$ 3,341,500
Funding Sources	STATUS	AMOUNT
COB Capital Improvement Fund	in hand	\$ 1,700,000
Federal ARPA 2.0 earmark	in hand	\$35,000
Mitigation funding	in hand	\$107,000
PARC grant Summer 2024 Application	apply July 2024	\$500,000
TOTAL		\$2,342,000
DIFFERENCE - HAPRFF	APPLY MAY 2024	\$1,000,000

FIGURE 1: RINGER PARK EXISTING CONDITIONS



FIGURE 2: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FROM 2021



FIGURE 3: PLAYGROUND AND SPLASH PAD SCHEMATIC PLAN

