



WalkBoston

# Press release

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**Release:** IMMEDIATE October 12, 2005

**Event:** **KEEP THE GREENWAY WALKABLE!**  
**Event Date:** Thursday, October 20, 2005  
**Location:** South Station, Boston  
**Time:** Start—7:30 am  
Kickoff—8:00 am  
Event ends—10:00 am

## **Keep the Greenway Walkable!**

Sidewalk Sam and WalkBoston will be painting the sidewalks in front of South Station to emphasize the need for open and continuous public sidewalks on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway.

Beginning with painting the sidewalk green in front of South Station, Sam will include sidewalk-colored pathways through the green. “Keep the Greenway Walkable” is timed to demonstrate to morning commuters the need to protect good walking facilities along the Greenway.

The Rose Kennedy Greenway, now under construction, was designed with continuous sidewalks and pathways along its length from South Station to North Station. Greenway development is beginning and is gaining momentum—developers are designing new buildings and upgrading existing ones. The first new building under construction is the Intercontinental Hotel, which intends to replace the sidewalk with two valet drop-off lanes for vehicles. WalkBoston opposes the taking of Greenway public sidewalks for vehicles.

## **The MEPA comment letter date has now been extended to October 28, 2005.**

Like that of Sidewalk Sam, your support is critical to improving the hotel’s current design. Let your voice be heard at the three levels of government who will decide this question, the City, the Turnpike Authority and the State. WalkBoston thanks Sidewalk Sam and thanks you. [see [walkboston.org](http://walkboston.org) for more info]

**WalkBoston** is a non-profit group dedicated to promoting pedestrian needs and safety. Since 1992, WalkBoston, has worked with the City, the Big Dig and other advocates to develop and implement design guidelines for pedestrian facilities on the Greenway. WalkBoston is now monitoring development plans to assure that sidewalks are continuous, uninterrupted and public, fulfilling Greenway promises.

Pages 2-3 describe and illustrate the issues confronting the Greenway.

**MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES MORE WALKABLE**

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# Central Artery / Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway



original design: continuous sidewalk



current design: parking on sidewalk



alternative design: cars and sidewalk

## Celebrating the Greenway

The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway will be the gem of downtown Boston and one of its great walking environments. Thanks to years of work by the public, City and State, it was designed to be walker-friendly, and design guidelines were adopted to ensure that. It is important that all developers along the Greenway comply with those guidelines.

## Ensuring it is walkable

The InterContinental Hotel at 500 Atlantic Avenue is the first private development being built along the Greenway. Currently, the hotel intends to build a design that puts private parking blocking the sidewalk and detours pedestrians into the hotel's entrance. This not only violates the design guidelines, but sets a terrible precedent for all future development.

## Protecting our public space

The pull-over lane alternative serves both pedestrians and cars comfortably. Contact our leaders and tell them you like it and care about a walkable Greenway!

**Mayor Menino:** [mayor@cityofboston.gov](mailto:mayor@cityofboston.gov)  
**Governor Romney:** [www.mass.gov/Agovwebmail/WebMailPageControl.ser?level=101](http://www.mass.gov/Agovwebmail/WebMailPageControl.ser?level=101)  
**Secretary Pritchard:** [env.internet@state.ma.us](mailto:env.internet@state.ma.us)  
**Chairman Amorello:** [info@masspike.com](mailto:info@masspike.com)

## Pedestrian Concerns

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The InterContinental Hotel's design eliminates the sidewalk outside 500 Atlantic Avenue and appropriates that part of the public right of way for its private use. Instead of a sidewalk, there will be a two-lane drop-off for cars, taxis and limos. To pass by the hotel, pedestrians will have to wend their way through cars or walk in behind the building columns and beneath its upper floors, crossing in front of the hotel entryway and competing with baggage, baggage carts, hotel patrons, condominium owners and valet parking.

The hotel's design does not conform to either the letter or the spirit of the guidelines for the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, which were approved and adopted by State and City governmental agencies and citizen watchdog groups concerned with the Greenway. If nothing is done about this violation of the guidelines, every development along the Greenway will want and expect to be treated similarly. The Greenway will become a back alley. The public environment of this area that holds such promise is being threatened.

## Key Issues

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The current sidewalk design for the InterContinental hotel is unacceptable. The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the City of Boston have the power to stop it. The public sidewalk along 500 Atlantic Avenue should adhere to the approved guidelines and be uninterrupted. A reasonable alternative exists, which the hotel's developer has rejected to date: a four-car pull-over lane which would preserve a sidewalk and permit loading and unloading.

## About WalkBoston

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Everyone walks at some point of every trip—to and from the car or transit, or all the way to their destination. WalkBoston promotes, encourages and facilitates 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. WalkBoston is the state's principal resource on walking issues.

[Join online at [www.walkboston.org](http://www.walkboston.org)]

## Boston Globe Editorial

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### Sidewalk Snafu — August 29, 2005

*The Rose Kennedy Greenway above the Central Artery tunnel will never live up to its promise as a promenade and pedestrian connector between downtown and the harbor if its design does not invite walkers. Making sure it does has been a goal of state, city, and community group planners from the beginning. That is why it is so disappointing that the city has gone along with a hotel's request for a parking pullout at its entrance that would force pedestrians to detour around idling cars and under the building's portico as they make their way on Atlantic Avenue... [read more at [walkboston.org](http://walkboston.org)]*

## Your Support

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The Rose Kennedy Greenway is to be a public space and the public must have a say in this critical aspect of its design. One public voice—that of Sidewalk Sam—is already being heard. Let your voice be heard at the three levels of government that will decide this question, the City, the Turnpike Authority and the State.

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