



WalkBoston

# press kit

## MISSION

WalkBoston encourages walking throughout Massachusetts for transportation, health and vibrant communities. Our education and advocacy programs give voice to citizens to make their communities walkable.

## MAJOR PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

- Boston Collaborative for Food & Fitness
- Walking Prescriptions for People and Communities with Uphams Corner Health Center
- Community Safe Routes to School Program
- Safety training for 2nd graders across the state
- Training new walking advocates, public health staff, seniors and public works officials
- Rose Kennedy Greenway and Central Artery advocacy
- City of Boston street design and signal timing
- Project review of development projects and transportation plans/designs statewide
- Creation of walking maps to attract new walkers

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Wendy Landman** leads the organization's advocacy around walking for transportation, health, the environment and vibrant communities. Wendy



came to WalkBoston with 25 years experience in urban planning, most recently as the Principal of Landman Planning Consultants. Her planning experience spans all modes of transportation, as well as master planning, smart growth and environmental review. She holds BS and Master of City Planning degrees from MIT, and a Diploma in Urban Design from the University of Edinburgh.

## BOARD PRESIDENT

**Liz Levin** has served as Board President since 2004. She is President of Liz Levin & Company, a management consulting company that serves the transportation, design and environmental community and provides services in integrated marketing and sales, organizational development and leadership. Liz is a former Senior Vice President with Rizzo Associates, Inc. Liz is also a past national president of the Women's Transportation Seminar.



**MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES MORE WALKABLE**

Old City Hall | 45 School Street | Boston MA 02108 | T: 617.367.9255 | F: 617.367.9285 | [info@walkboston.org](mailto:info@walkboston.org) | [www.walkboston.org](http://www.walkboston.org)



## **STAFF**

**Executive Director** | Wendy Landman

**Office Manager** | Elisabeth D'Angelo

**Safe Routes to School Coordinator** | Karen Hartke

**SRTS Assistant Coordinator** | Jill Lofchie

**Program Coordinator** | Rosa Carson

**Senior Project Manager** | Robert Sloane

**Special Projects Director** | Dorothea Hass

## **AWARDS**

- America Walks Best Foot Forward Award: outstanding achievements in SRTS. '06
- Society of Behavioral Medicine's Excellence in Promoting Physical Activity. '05
- America Walks Best Foot Forward Award: for contributions to the cause of pedestrian advocacy. '03
- National Park Service's Conservation Hero Awards: to Dorothea Hass and Don Eunson of the Safe Routes to Schools Program. '02
- Boston By Foot's Distinguished Friend Award. '00
- Design Achievement Award: Move Massachusetts. '00
- US Environmental Protection Agency's Transportation Partners Award: for making smart moves for healthier transportation choices in Boston. '98
- Boston Society of Landscape Architects Award of Excellence. '93



# milestone events

- 1990**
  - Organization founded •
  - First guided walk [Beacon Street] •
  - Granted 501(c)(3) non-profit status •
- 1991**
  - First Annual Meeting •
- 1992**
  - Co-sponsor/chair Pedestrian Issues Forum •
- 1993**
  - Request Boston Ped Policy & Coordinator •
  - Candidate Forum co-sponsor [Mayor/City Council] •
- 1994**
  - Surface Transportation Action Forum Co-chair •
  - Publish *A Pedestrian Perspective on the Central Artery* •
- 1995**
  - Publish *5 Steps to Walkable Communities* •
- 1996**
  - Co-found national organization America Walks •
  - Publish *Walkable Communities Resource Guide* •
  - Law passed requiring ped/bike facilities in every State road project •
- 1997**
  - Publish *Shawmut Peninsula Walking Map* •
  - Charles River parkways narrowed [Watertown] •
  - Youth Environmental Justice Summit [Roxbury] •
  - Advise on Beacon Street redesign [Brookline] •
- 1998**
  - Publish *Improving Pedestrian Access to Transit* with Federal Transit Administration •
  - Boston adopts our proposal for Congress Street traffic calming [instead of overhead ped bridge] •
  - First Massachusetts Pedestrian Plan created •
  - Thwart Ruggles Street widening plan •
  - Co-found Mass. Trails & Greenways Network •
- 1999**
  - Aid coalition to save Old Northern Avenue Bridge •
  - Publish *Streetscape Guidelines for Boston's Major Roads* with City •
  - Neighborhood Bus Stop Program [Roxbury] •
  - Launch [www.walkboston.org](http://www.walkboston.org) •
- 2000**
  - Safe Routes to Schools program launched •
  - Blue Hill Avenue traffic calming •
  - Hyde Square traffic calming •
  - New logo and publications design •
- 2001**
  - Co-sponsor Streets Fit for People Conference with Adaptive Environments •
  - First paid employee •
- 2002**
  - Conduct National Walk to Lunch Day activities •
  - Co-sponsor Zakim Bridge & Central Artery Tunnel walks—over 1 million people •
- 2003**
  - Publish the book *WalkBoston* with AMC •
  - Move office to Old City Hall •
  - First Executive Director •
- 2004**
  - Join Boston Public Health Commission's STEPS program •
  - Lead delegates to DNC, with walk & map •
  - City of Boston adopts new WALK light policy •
- 2005**
  - First customized walks commissioned •
  - Rose Kennedy Greenway guidelines enforced •
  - Persuaded Governor to form State Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee •
- 2006**
  - Establish Greenway review process with City •
  - MHD Manual adds major ped standards •
  - Respond to tunnel collapse with CityRoutes maps, a new format including walk times •
- 2007**
  - SRTS Safety trainings across Massachusetts •
  - Statewide Legislator walks, from Pittsfield to Somerville •
  - Sidewalk snow/ice removal promoted statewide •
  - Pedestrian Agenda for Massachusetts created •

join/donate today!



Take great walks  
with interesting people  
throughout Massachusetts



Get maps  
made for walkers  
best routes on foot



Improve  
walking conditions  
be an advocate

## Accomplishments

**Walking Maps:** Designed custom maps for Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau, Boston Medical Center/BU Medical Center, MGH, Massachusetts Convention Center and produced CityRoutes map.

**Safe Routes to Schools:** Created first program in New England promoting walking and bicycling to school; produced toolkit and curricula for Mass. elementary schools; Steering Committee/National SRTS Partnership.

**Central Artery, Boston:** Spearheaded effort that created a pedestrian/bike-friendly design above the Central Artery—wider sidewalks, more green space, narrower lanes and roadway reduced from ten lanes to six.

**Greenway Sidewalks:** Used the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act [MEPA] to successfully challenge developer's plan to use the public sidewalk for vehicles. MEPA's decision preserved a sidewalk and led to monthly review of all sidewalk impacts.

**STEPS to Good Health:** Design and run community programs with the Boston Public Health Commission in Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan, Hyde Park, South Boston, Jamaica Plain, Chinatown/South End.

**WALK Signals:** Convinced Boston to adopt new policy to give automatic WALK signals and generous WALK time.

**Watertown:** Convinced Metropolitan District Comm. to convert underused four-lane roads along the Charles River to two travel lanes, a bike lane, and parking.

**MassHighway Design Guide:** Key participant in creating State Manual with the most progressive walking and bicycling requirements in the United States.

**Project Reviews:** Advocate for pedestrian interests in development/transportation projects, including: Somerville Ave. [Somerville], Discovery Park [Cambridge], Target Distribution Center [Westfield], Lowe's Home Store [Hadley], Longfellow Bridge and Storrow Drive.



# walkBoston

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# walkBoston

join  
us



MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES MORE WALKABLE

## About WalkBoston

WalkBoston is a non-profit membership organization that encourages walking throughout Massachusetts for transportation, health and vibrant communities. Our education and advocacy programs give voice to citizens to make their communities walkable.

WalkBoston's advocacy on behalf of pedestrians began in 1990 when a handful of people decided they would be more effective speaking out collectively than as individuals. Today, WalkBoston has members in 65 cities and towns and is supported by some 73 corporate/organizational members.

Most impressive is WalkBoston's lengthy record of getting cities and towns, state agencies, developers, institutions, and elected officials to recognize and provide for the needs of walkers.

Every additional voice helps WalkBoston's message to be heard. We welcome your advocacy efforts and your membership.

## What we do

While everyone walks, few people think about ways to make it safer, easier and more enjoyable. Just as wider roads and more traffic lanes encourage more car traffic, wider sidewalks, safer intersections and well-timed lights encourage more walking.

Here's how we advocate for better walking conditions:

- Talk with citizens to hear their concerns.
- Meet with public officials to initiate changes that benefit pedestrians.
- Make people aware of the importance of walking as a mode of transportation, for better health and vibrant communities.
- Propose and support legislation.
- Advise public and private officials, planners and agencies in the quest for safer, more convenient pedestrian environments.
- Produce educational materials guiding the planning and design of walkable communities.
- Lead interesting walks year-round, exploring the architecture, history and design of New England neighborhoods. [See our book *WalkBoston: Walking Tours of Boston's Unique Neighborhoods*.]

## Why we do it

### Walking is a crucial form of transportation

- It is a central component of a multimodal transportation system and part of virtually every trip—alone or combined with public transit, driving or cycling.
- Good walking conditions make transit a good option, people will walk short distances to buses/trains.
- Foot trips can replace short automobile trips—benefiting traffic flow and air quality.
- 27% of trips are one mile or less, yet 3/4 of these are made by car. Walking would take 20 minutes or less.

### Walking is good for your health

- Provides abundant benefits for your heart, lungs, muscles and energy, and exercises your body in a more balanced way than any other activity.
- Helps control your weight. Obesity is almost as deadly as smoking, and in Massachusetts 54% of adults and 25% of children are overweight or obese.
- Is a safe, low-impact exercise for all ages.

### Walking builds stronger communities

- Pedestrian activity makes residential areas more neighborly and commercial areas more vibrant.
- Businesses thrive financially in walkable communities, which offer a mix of housing, offices, shops, restaurants, and services.
- Crime decreases as pedestrian activity increases.

### Walking should be safe and easy to do

- Streets, sidewalks, intersections and crosswalks must be designed for the safety of people on foot, including providing ample WALK time.
- Faster traffic increases the likelihood of ped fatalities.
- 90% of pedestrians hit by cars die when struck at 40 m.p.h. compared to 5% at 20 m.p.h.
- An estimated 85 pedestrians are killed in motor vehicle collisions every year in Massachusetts.

## How we can help

- Provide guidance, speakers, programs, technical assistance and moral support so you can become more effective in your own advocacy efforts.
- Advise on improvements for your community, such as redesigning dangerous intersections, getting crosswalks painted, or removing sidewalk obstacles.



**membership**benefits  
BENEFITS ARE CUMULATIVE AS LEVELS INCREASE

### INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY LEVELS

- \$30 individual**
  - free or discounted walks/events
  - newsletters/e-announcements
  - publication discounts
  - \$25 drive credit when joining Zipcar
- \$50 dual/family**
- \$65 friend**
  - pedometer
- \$100—\$499 supporter**
  - *WalkBoston*, a book of 30 metro walks
- \$500—\$5000 sustaining**
  - name in annual meeting program
  - WalkBoston gift memberships [2—5]

additional contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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how did you hear about us? \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form along with your check, or donate online  
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Your donation is tax deductible as a charitable contribution

SEE OUR PRODUCTS/PUBLICATIONS LIST AT WALKBOSTON.ORG





## What we do

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- Meet with public officials to initiate changes that benefit pedestrians.
- Make people aware of the importance of walking as a mode of transportation, for better health and vibrant communities.
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**Walking builds stronger communities** Pedestrian activity makes residential areas more neighborly and commercial areas more vibrant.

**Walking should be safe and easy to do** Streets, sidewalks and intersections must be designed for pedestrians.

## Start! reducing your risk

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Start! is the American Heart Association's call to all Americans to start walking to reduce their risk of heart disease and stroke. As obesity is skyrocketing and Americans are becoming busier and more sedentary, we want to get America walking!

### Walking is great medicine for your heart

Walking is the one exercise that people stick with. It has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity. Walking is the simplest positive change Americans can make to improve their heart health.

### Walking as little as 30 minutes a day:

- Reduces risk of heart disease by improving blood circulation
- Keeps weight under control
- Improves blood cholesterol levels
- Prevents and manages high blood pressure
- Prevents bone loss
- Boosts energy levels
- Increases muscle strength, improving ability to do other physical activities

## How to get started

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Determine how active you are now, and work on up! Start slowly. Set achievable goals—30 minutes a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity. You can even divide the 30 minutes into chunks of 15 or even 10 minutes. Ask your spouse, a friend, or a co-worker to become your walking partner—it's more fun and you can encourage each other!

### Tips for a heart healthy lifestyle:

- **Be physically active** For each hour of regular vigorous exercise [like brisk walking] you can gain two hours of life expectancy. [Harvard Alumni Study, 1986].
- **Eat foods low in fat and cholesterol** A balanced diet and healthy weight lower your risk.
- **Stop smoking today** Smoking greatly increases your heart disease risk.
- **Know your heart** Get regular medical checkups and follow your doctor's advice.

## American Heart Association

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The American Heart Association is working every day to reduce death and disability from America's No. 1 and No. 3 killers, heart disease and stroke. Physical activity—such as walking—is key to heart health and reducing your risk of heart disease. Add walking into your daily routine by taking the stairs, hopping off the T a stop early or walking during lunch.

Contact the American Heart Association's Start! Boston office at 508.656.2022 to find out how we can help you and your company get physically active.

## WalkBoston

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WalkBoston encourages walking throughout Massachusetts for transportation, health and vibrant communities. Our education and advocacy programs give voice to citizens to make their communities walkable.

WalkBoston is the state's foremost advocate for pedestrians and walking. We carry out our advocacy by speaking up for pedestrians, and by training citizens on how to work with local and state agencies to improve walking conditions. We are a non-profit organization with members from more than 60 Massachusetts communities and 70 businesses and organizations. Please learn more about us, and consider joining. Call us at 617.367.9255 for more information.

## Resources

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- [americanheart.org](http://americanheart.org) Get info about heart disease and stroke, living a heart healthy lifestyle, and much more
- [walkboston.org](http://walkboston.org) Learn about walking advocacy, Safe Routes to Schools and download walking maps
- [bostonheartwalk.org](http://bostonheartwalk.org) Start a team and walk to fight heart disease and stroke
- [ahastart.fitbug.com](http://ahastart.fitbug.com) Track your daily activities and nutrition to achieve energy balance
- [checkmark.heart.org](http://checkmark.heart.org) Create a heart healthy grocery list for yourself online
- [walkinginfo.org](http://walkinginfo.org) Pedestrian & Bicycle Info Center [PBIC]
- [bikewalk.org](http://bikewalk.org) Resources to create walkable communities

## Our member/sponsors

### Racewalker

- Massachusetts Convention Center Authority
- Vanasse Hangen Brustlin

### Strider

- Sam Park & Co.
- Massport

### Stroller

- CEMUSA
- Eaton Vance
- Equity Office
- Friends of Post Office Square
- Goody Clancy
- Heinz Family Foundation
- Liz Levin & Company
- McCourt Companies, Inc.
- Rubin & Rudman
- Whole Foods Markets

### Thank you

Don Kindsvatter | Map  
Nina Garfinkle | Garfinkle Design | Design  
Ann Hershfang | Bob Sloane | Don Eunson | Text

## You can strengthen our voice

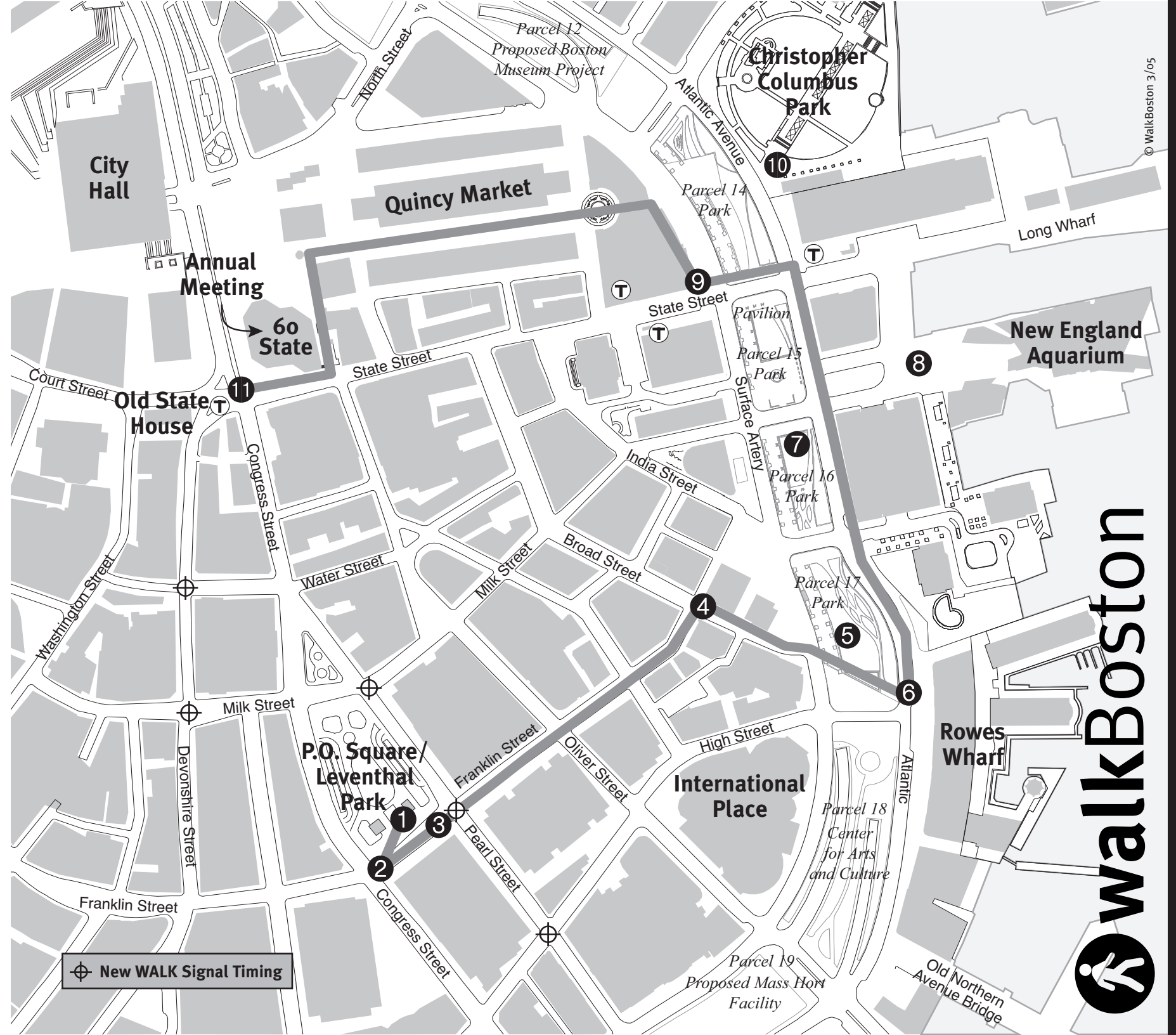
WalkBoston's advocacy on behalf of pedestrians began in 1990 when a handful of like-minded citizens decided they would be more effective speaking out collectively than individually. Fifteen years later, WalkBoston has grown to more than 500 members in 58 cities and towns, supported by some 60 corporate/organizational members. More impressive is WalkBoston's record of getting cities and towns, state agencies, developers, institutions, and elected officials to recognize and accommodate the needs of walkers, as on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. Every additional voice helps WalkBoston's message to be heard. Become a member, visit [www.walkboston.org](http://www.walkboston.org).



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WalkBoston's 15th Annual Meeting — celebrated with a walk on the Greenway



Rose Kennedy Greenway



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## About WalkBoston

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**Everyone walks** at some point of every trip—to and from the car or the train, or all the way to your destination. We promote, encourage and facilitate 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)].

## WalkBoston’s successful advocacy

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Pedestrian advocacy means noticing the needs of walkers and making them high priority—in both small details and big projects. Since it was founded in 1990, WalkBoston’s special skill has been intervening at an early stage to ensure good pedestrian conditions at the end, often years later. Three such lengthy projects are the focus here—the Rose Kennedy Greenway streetscape [13 years of WalkBoston work], Boston’s new signal timing policy [10 years], and improvements at Congress/Court Streets [6 years].

## Our Greenway work since 1992

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A key factor in the success of the Rose Kennedy Greenway will be its walkability. When the Central Artery Project (CA/T) received its environmental approvals in 1991, only 6 lanes were approved for the new streets above the tunnel. However, at the request of the City of Boston, CA/T staff was designing 10 lanes.

WalkBoston and Move Massachusetts 2000, with support from CA/T, created the Pedestrian Issues Forum to re-examine the design. Two years later, in *A Pedestrian Perspective on the Central Artery Project* [1994], narrower roadways and wider sidewalks were recommended. After more persistent advocacy, the City reversed its position and supported the new approach.

Then, the Mayor convened the public-private Surface Transportation Action Forum [STAF] to further resolve design details for the Greenway, such as sidewalk and lane widths, and corner curb radii. STAF’s conclusions became official CA/T Project commitments. Together, the Greenway design and the new WALK light policy enhance the attractiveness of the Greenway for walkers.

## The Rose Kennedy Greenway walk

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❶ **Norman B. Leventhal Park** Popularly known as Post Office Square Park and open since 1992, the park offers design lessons for the Greenway: space shielded from street traffic and the ramps to a 1,400-car underground garage, diagonal paths, and an appealing restaurant. All draw walkers into and across the space. The park’s design anticipated its maintenance needs. Spare benches and paving bricks are kept on hand. Repairs of graffiti, bench vandalism and frequently damaged sidewalk bricks are made within 24 hours, assuring that Leventhal Park is a continuous delight for downtown workers in winter and summer.

❷ **Old Walk/Don’t Walk Lights** Frequent and lengthy WALK lights are crucial for walkers’ convenience and safety. For decades, Boston’s signal timing required people to push a button and wait a long time for WALK [provoking jaywalking]. Well-timed lights will encourage pedestrians to wait and cross legally and safely, which is a benefit to vehicular traffic too.

At the Congress/Franklin Street crossing, light timing could be better. On two sides, crossings are well timed for walkers to cross on the green light [with vehicles]. At the others, walkers wait 90-100 seconds for a WALK signal of 7 seconds. A wait this long is considered unsatisfactory for cars. For walkers it is unacceptable.

❸ **Improved Walk/Don’t Walk lights** In late 2004, a new City traffic signal policy was initiated, with WalkBoston’s help. The Franklin/Pearl intersection has the new signal timing. Formerly 2 of the 4 crosswalks here required pushing a button and you had a 110-second wait for an 8-second WALK. Now you cross with the green light [with vehicles], have about 30 seconds to WALK with the green across Pearl and about 50 seconds across Franklin. During every other cycle, a 4-way WALK with a chirper device guides the disabled in crossing the street.

While going down Franklin, notice that most walkers choose the wide sidewalks on the south side.

❹ **Broad Street** With the overhead Artery down, you can see the grand arched opening to the harbor at Rowes Wharf. The original CA/T design extended Broad Street as a roadway across the Greenway. In 2004 it

was removed and now only the pedestrian crossing remains. WalkBoston advised on the crosswalks and curb radii changes.

❺ **The Greenway** Prior to construction of the Artery tunnel, there were 12 roadway lanes in this corridor—6 surface lanes and 6 elevated highway lanes. The final street design has cut this number in half, to a total of 6 surface lanes—3 in each direction. Sidewalks are to have an 8’ minimum walkway width, plus additional edge space for street furniture and lighting. Total minimum sidewalk width is 15’ 7”.

Total street width is 37’ which includes two 11’ travel lanes and one 14’ car/bicycle lane. STAF also specified locations for crosswalks, permanent and off-peak parking, and curb extensions. Each curb radius was based on both vehicular and pedestrian needs.

Two major challenges remain. One is working with the City and CA/T to time traffic signals so that pedestrians get a WALK light at the same time cars going in the same direction get a green light. [This “concurrent green” is standard in most U.S. cities and reflects the new policy.]

The second is to protect public sidewalks from inappropriate uses by developers that interrupt the pedestrian right-of-way for loading, parking, and valet service. Since it is the City of Boston’s responsibility to determine and regulate sidewalk use, WalkBoston has suggested to the Boston Redevelopment Authority that the City develop guidelines that would ensure continuous, direct sidewalks along the Greenway.

❻ **Rowes Wharf Streetscape** Originally Rowes Wharf had an outstanding wide sidewalk and crossings. The width can still be enjoyed in front of the residences, but at the hotel, vehicle loading/unloading narrow the public sidewalk to only 7’ and 5’ in the busy luggage cart area.

❼ **Wharf Parcels** Parcels 14, 15, 16 and 17 are the Greenway’s central open spaces. The design of this parkland is formal on the city edge [a regular tree line, smooth stone surfaces] and informal on the harbor side [irregular plantings, rough stone].

❽ **Aquarium Place** The City is developing a plan for fewer vehicles and improved walking areas for the space in front of the Aquarium. And just across

Atlantic Avenue, a Harbor Park Pavilion will promote use of the harbor islands and contain a small cafe, a shop and an outdoor meeting place.

❾ **State Street & the Greenway** The sidewalk at the State/Surface Artery intersection is finished. It’s built to agreed-upon STAF Plan standards so you see the final widths. Although the sidewalk here is wide, trees were impossible to plant because underlying utilities can’t be disturbed by roots. The remainder of sidewalks along the Greenway will be constructed during 2005.

Using Boston’s once-in-a-century opportunity, Mayor Thomas Menino’s “Crossroads Initiative” will extend the Greenway and harborfront design further up and down 11 streets that cross or connect to the Greenway. On this walk, the “crossroads” are: State, Broad, Oliver and Congress.

❿ **Christopher Columbus Park** Good public spaces often result from the advocacy of an individual or citizens’ group. In the early 1970’s, the City’s waterfront Urban Renewal Plan proposed extensive building demolition and a parking garage where Christopher Columbus Park is today. In 1973, waterfront residents and the Sierra Club presented a detailed counter-proposal for a Great Cove Square, which included a “system of pedestrian streets,” and depressing the Central Artery[!]. To thwart demolition, a suit was filed against the City and one resident even jumped into the bucket of a front-end loader. Ultimately the waterfront/North End residents group succeeded in establishing the park and moving Atlantic Avenue away from the harbor’s edge. We owe them a lot.

⓫ **Old State House Plaza** Traffic islands and pavement dominate here. This spring, construction will begin to convert one piece of roadway into a plaza, slow down traffic turning at Congress Street, and give more WALK time—all helping to make the area walker-friendly. These pavement conversions and traffic improvements stem from a broader 1999 WalkBoston design proposal for taming traffic on Congress Street.

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**For 15 years WalkBoston’s work has been about improvements like these—good design, thoughtful education about walkers’ needs and the delights and possibilities of walking.**