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Via [BPDA online comment form](#)

Re: Comments on Harvard ERC District & Greenway Plan

April 6, 2026

To the Boston Planning & Development Agency and members of the Harvard ERC District & Greenway planning team,

On behalf of the Charles River Conservancy (CRC), thank you for hosting the public meetings and presentations in March and for the opportunity to share our comments on the Harvard ERC District & Greenway Plan. We appreciate your commitment to inclusive community engagement for this mixed-use district between Western Avenue and Cambridge Street in Allston-Brighton.

Founded in 2000, the mission of the CRC is to amplify community voice and catalyze bold solutions to make the Lower Charles River and its parks more vibrant, healthy, and welcoming now and in the future. In partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and other stakeholders, we connect communities to the river and its parks, create impactful solutions, and celebrate the intersection of people and nature. Because everyone deserves a core memory on the Charles, we provide programming that connects people to the river, projects that enhance the river's wellbeing as a natural urban space, and advocacy that centers community participation.

Between the CRC's decades-long stewardship of Herter Park and ongoing participation in the Allston Multimodal Project task force, we hold a deep respect and awareness of the Allston-Brighton community's priorities and environmental justice concerns. We urge that the neighborhood community's needs remain foremost in shaping the ERC District and Greenway's design priorities and principles.

Overall, we'd like to underscore three key themes that the Harvard ERC District & Greenway planning team gathered through the community feedback process:

- Safer walking, biking, and transit connections within the neighborhood and to the Charles River
- Flexible, year-round open spaces with diverse and inclusive programming
- A public realm that connects seamlessly to surrounding neighborhoods

We appreciate the 2026 plan's provisions for more parkland, green space, and open space. We also strongly encourage the team to take this design opportunity to build world-class complete streets, with the goal of safe and protected pathways for vulnerable road users by designing for zero pedestrian or bicyclist fatalities.

While we understand that the ERC District will evolve over decades and must remain flexible as markets and conditions change, the community-driven needs outlined above are non-negotiable. These investments in safety, connectivity, and open space should continue to be a top-line priority, and the BPDA should do everything possible to protect the integrity of the greenway now so that it is realized in the future. We will continue to monitor the planning process closely and advocate that these commitments remain central as the plan advances.

The Charles River Conservancy stands ready to collaborate with the City of Boston, Harvard University, and community stakeholders to ensure this plan delivers the lasting, equitable, and inspiring public spaces our Allston-Brighton neighbors deserve. Thank you for your commitment to this work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Jasinski". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Laura Jasinski
Executive Director, Charles River Conservancy