

Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund

For Allston-Brighton

Application for Funding, Spring 2016

Total Amount Requested \$ 2,500,000.00

Applicant Organization Name: <u>Boston Parks and Recreation Department</u>
Organization Address: <u>1010 Massachusetts Ave</u> City: <u>Boston</u> Zip: <u>02118</u>
Contact Person: <u>Cathy Baker-Eclipse</u>
Title: <u>Project Manager</u>
Telephone Number: <u>617-961-3058</u>
E-Mail Address: <u>cathy.baker-eclipse@boston.gov</u>
Is Applicant a 501(C) (3) organization? Yes <u> </u> No <u><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></u>
Federal Employer Identification Number: _____
Executive Director: <u>Chris Cook, Commissioner</u> Phone Number: <u>617-635-4505</u>
Email Address: <u>christopher.cook@boston.gov</u>
Board President: _____ Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Application submission(s) must be authorized and signed by an authorized signatory of the Organization.

Name and title of Authorized Signatory:

Christopher Cook, Commissioner

Signature of Authorized Signatory:



HARVARD-ALLSTON PUBLIC REALM FLEX FUND

Spring 2016 Grant Application

SMITH FIELD

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Proponent/Property Owner: Boston Parks and Recreation Department
1010 Massachusetts Ave
Boston, MA 02118
Christopher Cook, Commissioner
Liza Meyer, Chief Landscape Architect
Cathy Baker-Eclipse, Project Manager

PROJECT INFORMATION

The City of Boston's Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD) has completed a master plan of Smith Field, after the Harvard Allston Task Force identified the park as a site that has the potential to better serve the needs of the community.



FIGURE 1: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Smith Field is a 14.8 acre park on Western Avenue, one block west of North Harvard Street. It is owned by the City of Boston and maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department. It currently contains 2 Little League Fields, 3 softball fields, a Street Hockey Court, 2 basketball courts, a playground and soccer fields that overlap with the outfields of several softball fields. Internal circulation and community gathering spaces are non-existent and the park lacks clear organization and sense of place. There are very few trees in the park and opportunities for shade are few. (Figure 1)

The Master Plan (Figure 2) identified the highest needs in the park: an improved playground on Western Avenue, an updated street hockey court with lighting, and a community space along Western Ave. The Master Plan proposed shared community spaces like an amphitheater, central gathering space, and playground with splash pad consolidated along the Western Avenue frontage. The Western Avenue wall was identified as a desirable but dominating feature along the street. The Master Plan proposed height of the wall remain the same, but its visual impact be mitigated by raising the grade behind the wall as much as possible, without sacrificing the existing trees. The change in grade, in addition to additional gateway entrances, will provide protection from vehicles while allowing the park to feel more connected to the street activities. The new multipurpose natural grass field can accommodate soccer, football or other field sports, and doubles as a large audience space for the amphitheater. Court sports, like basketball, street hockey and bike polo, separate the multipurpose field from a pinwheel arrangement of 4 Little League and softball fields. The pedestrian path network will allow park users a clear area that is not in conflict with fields, and can be used as a walking/jogging loop path. The pathways would also connect to Harvard University's proposed path network to the east (Longfellow path and proposed secondary pedestrian paths). A dog recreation space can be accommodated along the pedestrian pathway system near Soldier's Field Road. Tree canopy would be increased to provide additional opportunities for shade, while remaining clear of the sports fields.



FIGURE 2: MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan recommended adjacencies and configurations of individual site elements. The vision for Smith Field, as determined in the 2015-2016 Master Plan, would not typically be reconsidered for another 30-50 years. Individual site elements, like playgrounds, courts, and fields, are typically renovated or rejuvenated approximately every 15 years.

The City of Boston (COB) has included design of Master Plan Implementation - Phase 1 in the Fiscal Year 17 Capital Improvement Plan (Figure 3). Construction of Phase 1 is proposed for Fiscal Year 18 (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018). The scope of Phase 1 is the playground and splash pad, amphitheater, wall improvements, community gathering space and remediation of the grass field and Little League Field as needed. Existing trees along Western Avenue will be retained and supplemented to add shady seating areas for park users. The lighted pedestrian path network will provide organization and wayfinding into the site. The impacted area would be 135,000 sf (3 acres). Cost for the proposed work, including design fees and contingency, is \$3,500,000.

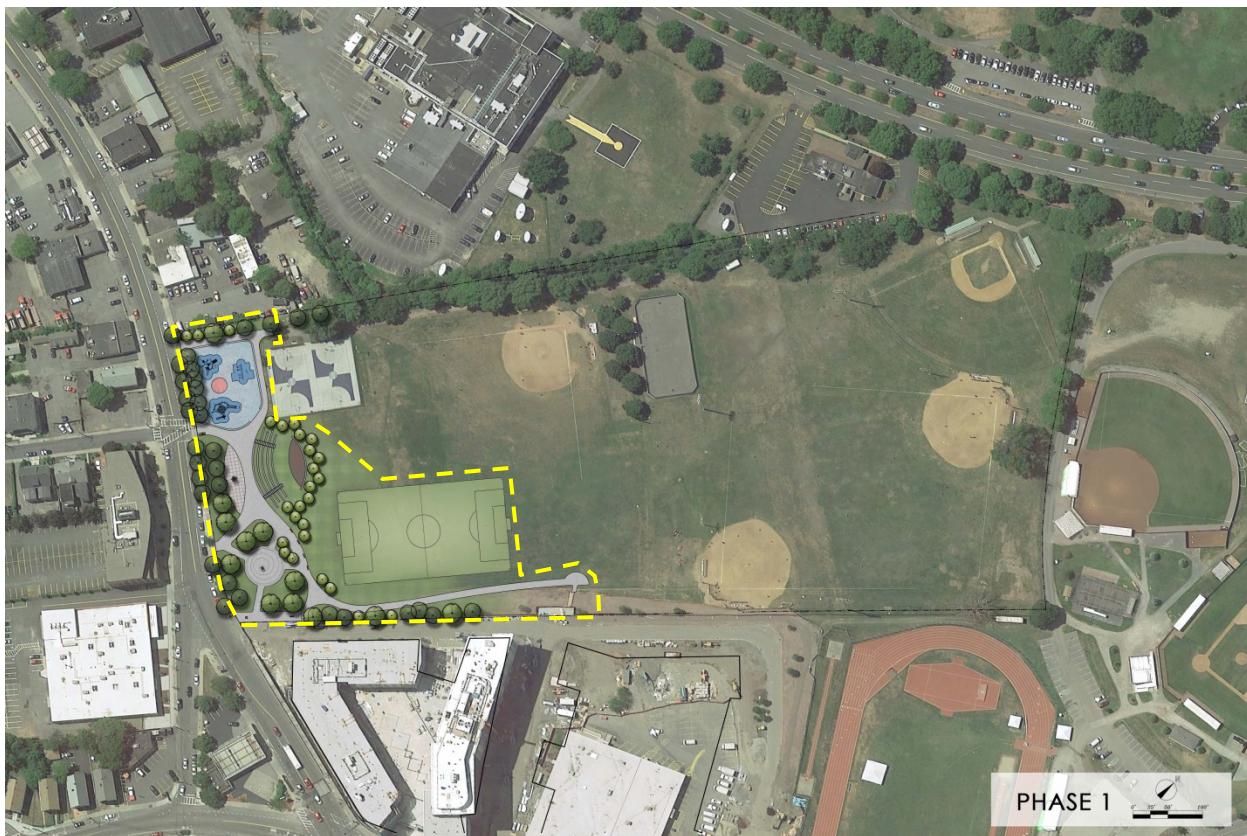


FIGURE 3: PHASE 1 IMPLEMENTATION, AS PROPOSED BY COB CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

HAPRFF Funding will allow Smith Field to transform into a more full realization of the master plan, as envisioned by the community. More than half of the site will be improved. The proposal for the HAPRFF (Figure 4) is to augment the COB funding and expand Phase 1 to include new street hockey court with lighting, relocated basketball courts with lighting, natural grass field sized to accommodate High School Soccer (240'x360') or two (2) U11 soccer fields (150'x240'), and continue lighted pedestrian pathway improvements. The pathway completes a one-third mile walking loop around the multipurpose field and courts. The amphitheater has been identified as an area where special events of varying sizes could be accommodated and special attention and details can be developed to highlight the North Allston community in this area. The total impacted area of Phase 1 + HAPRFF would be 350,000 sf (8 acres). The cost for the expanded scope of work, including design fees and contingency, is \$6,000,000.



FIGURE 4: PHASE 1 + HAPRFF IMPLEMENTATION

The Smith Field Master Plan includes improvements to the park that will not be realized through this implementation effort. Future phases of work will be required to complete the full park renovation. Highly desired items, such as irrigation for the multipurpose field and a second street hockey/multi-sport court, have been eliminated from the HAPRFF application for cost reasons. The HAPRFF grant application does not extend to include the 4 Little League and Softball Fields or Dog Recreation Space on the northern half of the site. These items could be identified as public benefits for future developments in North Allston or as changes to the Harvard IMP are made. The existing Little League and softball fields will remain accessible and permitted through construction of Phase 1 + HAPRFF. At the completion of the Phase 1 + HAPRFF phase, these fields would remain functional as they are today. HAPRFF funding is requested during this grant application round so that design efficiencies can be optimized.

PUBLIC BENEFITS

The Phase 1 + HAPRFF Implementation Plan would enable the City to fulfill the public's interest in drawing more neighborhood users to Smith Field. It would expand passive open space in the neighborhood, and adapt existing active recreation space to accommodate the changing demographics and interests of the community. It would provide a space for cultural activities, both small and large scale, to occur. Sustainability and green infrastructure would be enhanced by designing to infiltrate all impervious surfaces on site, and infiltrating all water runoff from water play activities. The aesthetic quality of Smith Field would be enhanced by renovating the wall, expanding tree canopy in the park, and organizing the activities in the park. The renovation would create a universally accessible pathway network in the park.

PROJECT MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS, PROTOCOLS, AND SOURCES OF FUNDING

Smith Field is maintained by BPRD. Maintenance costs are funded through the City of Boston's Operating Budget. The park will be designed in conformance with BPRD standard details. BPRD is always looking for opportunities to

integrate best practices for stormwater management and energy efficiency into our park renovations projects. Typical details include infiltration of all site water and stormwater.

ANTICIPATED REGULATORY REVIEW AND NECESSARY PERMITS

Because the impacted site is over 1 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 recreational spray play area and overflow connections to storm drains. Coordination will also be necessary with Eversource to confirm there is adequate power to service the proposed lighting system for the basketball and hockey courts. The design team will design the utilities to accommodate the anticipated capacity of future phases of work, including baseball & softball field lighting and possible expansion for the multipurpose field.

The South Charles Relief Sewer crosses the site. All structural and functional requirements will be coordinated with the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority in the construction documents. A branch of the sewer begins at the southeast corner of the site and proceeds north, parallel to South Campus Drive. It is intercepted by another branch running east/west to the Charles River. (Figure 5)

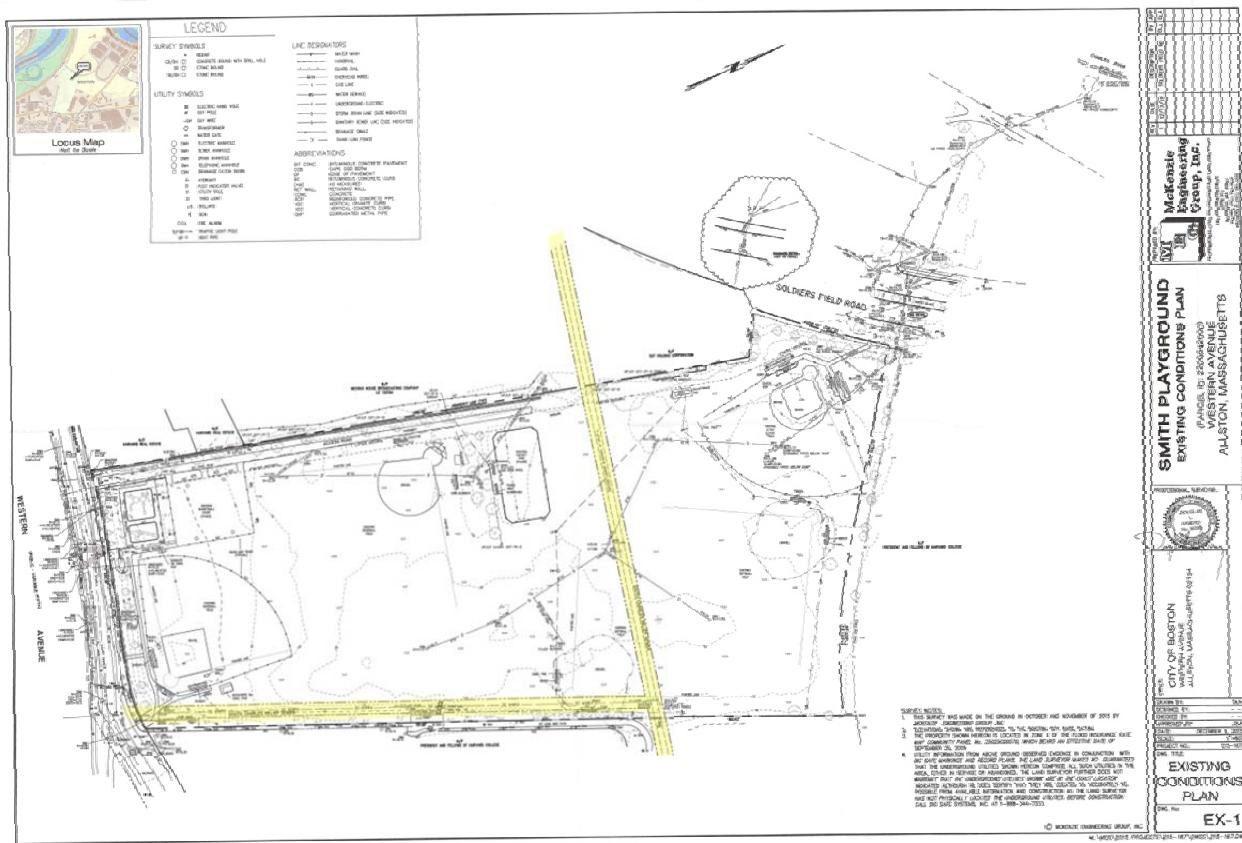


FIGURE 5: SITE SURVEY WITH SOUTH CHARLES RELIEF SEWER HIGHLIGHTED

BPRD will host a series of community meetings for Phase 1 in the Fall of 2016, as part of the design services for Fiscal Year 2017. The purpose of these meetings is to increase public awareness of the proposed changes to the park, and discuss specific improvements included in Phase 1. If awarded a grant from the HAPRFF, BPRD would incorporate the proposed scope increase in these meetings for design efficiency. There is typically a series of three meetings, with the ability to add more if warranted.

Because the scope of the HAPRFF would be combined with the Phase 1 funded by COB Capital Improvement Fund, the combined construction project would be subject to all Public Bid Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Boston Residents Jobs Policy of the City of Boston.

TIMELINE

May 2016	HAPRFF Due
July 2016 – Spring 2017	Design Services for Phase 1 + HAPRFF (FY 17)
Fall 2016	Community Meetings
Winter 2016-17	Develop Bid Documents
Spring 2017	Bid Phase 1 + HAPRFF
Summer 2017	Begin Phase 1 + HAPRFF construction (FY 18)
Summer 2018	Park opens for beneficial use, grass establishment on multipurpose field begins
Spring 2019	All areas open for beneficial use

BUDGET

The COB Capital budget for Fiscal Year 2017 and beyond includes \$3.3 million for Smith Field Phase 1 Master Plan Implementation. \$250,000 is for design services in FY17; the balance is for construction in FY18 and beyond. The City Budget for FY17 has not yet been adopted by the City Council but is expected before June 2016.

The parcel adjacent to Smith on Western Ave, Continuum, has set aside \$250,000 for the master plan of Smith and Phase 1 implementation. \$50,000 was used for the Master Plan; \$200,000 remains.

BPRD is requesting \$2.5 million from the HAPRFF to supplement the COB Capital Funds and Continuum funding.

Construction estimates and Design Fee estimates are described below:

Phase 1: COB Capital Improvement Funding	
Design Fees	\$ 325,000
Construction Estimate	\$ 2,875,000
Play Area, Splash Pad, Community Gathering Space, U11 Soccer Field, Amphitheater, Western Avenue Wall, drainage, plumbing, site furnishings, and planting.	
Contingency	\$ 300,000
TOTAL	\$ 3,500,000
Non-Capital Available Funds (Continuum Contribution)	(\$ 200,000)
HAPRFF Funding	
Additional Design Fees	\$ 185,000
Additional Scope Construction Estimate	\$ 2,115,000
Multipurpose field (high school soccer/(2) U11 fields), street hockey courts with lighting, (2) basketball courts with lighting, pathway with pedestrian lighting, drainage, plumbing, site electrical work, site furnishings and planting.	
Contingency	\$ 200,000
TOTAL	\$ 2,500,000
Phase 1 + HAPRFF Funding	
Design Fees	\$ 510,000
Construction Estimate	\$ 4,990,000
Contingency	\$ 500,000
Total Estimated Working Budget	\$6,000,000

WASHINGTON

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Randolph
Stetson Hall
Room 124

Congress of the United States House of Representatives

Michael E. Capuano

7th District, Massachusetts

April 28, 2016

Mayor Martin J. Walsh
Office of the Mayor
One City Hall Plaza
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mayor Walsh:

I am writing to offer my support for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department's application to the Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund (HAPRFF). Boston Parks and Recreation is seeking \$2,500,000 to improve the William E. Smith Playground in Allston.

The Smith Playground, located in the heart of North Allston, serves a diverse and growing community. With assistance from the HAPRFF, Boston Parks and Recreation will advance the goals of enhancing the beauty and user experience of the public realm, enhance public safety by increasing activity in Smith Playground, improve access and connectivity for pedestrians, and enable more families and individuals to come together in a more comfortable, user friendly and welcoming public space. As well, Boston Parks and Recreation will be able to increase the range of neighborhood recreation needs served by Smith Playground.

Thank you for your attention and please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael E. Capuano".

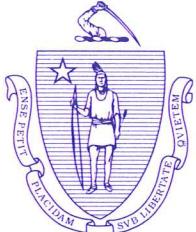
Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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MICHAEL J. MORAN

REPRESENTATIVE

18TH SUFFOLK DISTRICT

ALLSTON, BRIGHTON, BROOKLINE

STATE HOUSE, ROOM 39

TEL. (617) 722-2014

FAX: (617) 626-0491

Michael.Moran@MAhouse.gov

April 26, 2016

Christopher Cook, Commissioner
Parks and Recreation Department
1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Third Floor
Boston, MA 02118

RE: Smith Playground, North Allston
Harvard-Allston Public Realm Spring 2016 Flexible Fund Grant
Application

Dear Mr. Cook:

I am writing in support of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department's application for a \$2,500,000 Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund (HAPRFF) Grant for Smith Playground in North Allston. Smith Playground is located in my district and has been the subject of state, city, and private improvement efforts. As you know, Phase I include renovations to the children's play area, a small under 11 soccer field, a community space, an amphitheater and stage, improvements to the boundary wall, new site furnishings, and new paths. The HAPRFF grant would allow the Parks Department to expand the scope of the Phase I renovation efforts to include the southern half of the park. With the HAPRFF grant, the Parks Department would be able to replace the small soccer field with a full size multi-purpose field, add a street hockey court with lighting, relocate and add lighting to the basketball courts, add more site furnishings, extend the new pathway system to create a walking loop, and provide landscape improvements.

Awarding the Boston Parks and Recreation Department a HAPRFF grant to rebuild Smith Playground would increase the range of neighborhood recreation opportunities provided by Smith Playground. It would improve public safety by increasing activity in the park, increase access and

connectivity for pedestrians, and promote community collaboration and civic and cultural growth. In short, improvements to this public space would be very welcome to the families of North Allston who would be able to enjoy, the amphitheater, community space and stage, and improved field and courts.

The grant would also advance the Cooperation Agreement's vision and help achieve its goals for the public realm in North Allston. Therefore, I urge the HAPRFF Executive Committee to act favorably on the Park Department's request for funding for Smith Playground.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Moran, Division Chair
House of Representatives Leadership
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
18TH SUFFOLK DISTRICT

ALLSTON BRIGHTON VETERANS

Boston Veterans Advisory Council

April 22, 2016

Christopher Cook, Commissioner
Parks and Recreation Department
1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Third Floor
Boston, MA 02118

Chris
Dear Commissioner Cook:

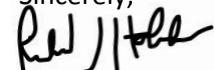
As Mayor Walsh's representative for Allston Brighton on the Boston Veterans Advisory Council, please accept my unequivocal support of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department's application for a \$2,500,000 Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund (HAPRFF) Grant for Smith Playground. Smith Playground is a vital part of Allston Brighton, specifically Lower Allston, which is north of the Massachusetts Turnpike. When coupled with Harvard University's athletic complex, it represents a fantastic greenspace in our dense, urban environs.

The \$2.5mm grant serves to enhance and repair the existing facilities and create new opportunities for community engagement, involvement, and healthy living in our neighborhood. Your Department shared the intended scope for the grant and I was taken aback by the profound, transformative impact these monies will have on Smith Playground. I remain optimistic that as the Turnpike gets "straightened" into the former railyard, that some part of the freed-up lands will be devoted to parkland. In the meanwhile, Smith Playground is the most vital park resource in Lower Allston and is worthy of these vital funds from our community neighbor, Harvard University.

My lone recommendation is should your Department receive this grant that special commemoration to the playground's namesake be made. William Francis Smith served in the United States Marine Corps during World War I. He perished on July 19, 1918 in Soissons, France. During this 5-day battle, French and US forces suffered 107,000 casualties fighting the Germans and Smith was one of the 32,000 who died.

It's my pleasure to recommend that the HAPRFF Executive Committee act favorably on your Department's request for funding for Smith Playground.

Sincerely,



RICK HOLAHAN

Allston Brighton Veterans Liaison

AllBriVets@gmail.com

Facebook: AllBriVets

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April 28, 2016

Christopher Cook, Commissioner
Parks and Recreation Department
1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Third Floor
Boston, MA 02118

RE: Smith Playground, North Allston Harvard-Allston Public Realm Spring 2016 Flexible Fund
Grant Application

Dear Mr. Cook,

We are writing you on behalf of Boston Bicycle Polo in earnest support of Boston Parks and Recreation's application for a \$2,500,000 Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund (HAPRFF) Grant for the redevelopment of Smith Playground.

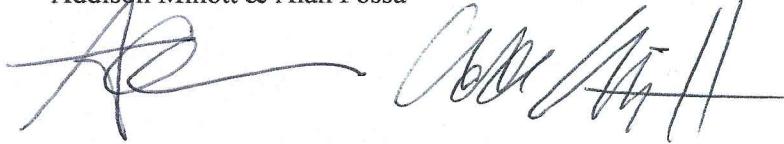
Boston Bicycle Polo has been holding practices and formal competition year round in the roller hockey rink within Smith Playground since 2006. As such, we have come to know Smith Playground not only as an integral part of our own organization but as a keystone resource to the countless other community groups that call lower Allston their home.

While Smith Playground has for years been an invaluable resource to Boston Bicycle Polo and the rest of the community; the current infrastructure within is in desperate need of improvement to meet the growing and evolving needs of the community. The proposed Phase I changes supported by the HAPRFF grant would include swapping out the small, under 11 soccer field to gain a full size multi-purpose field; adding a street hockey court with lighting; relocating and add lighting to the basketball courts, adding more site furnishings and extending the new pathway system to create a walking loop for active living. These renovations to Smith Playground would make the park more accessible, safer and more usable. Furthermore these changes would ensure that Smith Playground adequately meets the needs of the growing community now and for years to come.

The HAPRFF grant would ensure that the much-needed renovation of Smith Playground would not over burden the city's limited resources and would ensure that the goals outlined by community stakeholders are fully accomplished. We are confident that the HAPRFF executive committee will recognize this proposal as an opportunity to invest in the health and well being of the community of lower Allston and build a lasting partnership with the citizens of Boston. Boston Bike Polo offers its full support to the proposed renovation to Smith Playground and we strongly urge you to award Boston Parks and Recreation the HAPRFF grant.

Sincerely,

Addison Minott & Alan Fossa



aminott@gmail.com, afossa@bu.edu
Board of Directors
Boston Bicycle Polo

April 29, 201

Christopher Cook, Commissioner
Parks and Recreation Department
1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Third Floor
Boston, MA 02118

RE: Smith Playground, North Allston
Harvard-Allston Public Realm Spring 2016 Flexible Fund Grant Application

Dear Mr. Cook,

As spokesman for Allston Roller Hockey at Smith Field, I am pleased to write in support of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department's application for a \$2,500,000 Harvard-Allston Public Realm Flexible Fund (HAPRFF) Grant for Smith Playground. Smith Playground is located in the heart of the North Allston neighborhood, a diverse and growing community that is the subject of state, city, and private improvement efforts. It is a dense inner-city neighborhood, bounded by two major traffic corridors where intensive use of the limited number and size of parks is the norm.

The scope of the Phase I renovation, in the southern third of the park fronting on Western Avenue, now includes the children's play area, a community space, an amphitheater and stage, a small, under-11 soccer field, improvements to the boundary wall, such as added openings, new site furnishings, and new paths. The HAPRFF grant would help the Parks Department expand the scope of the project to the southern half of the park: to swap out the small, under-11 soccer field to gain a full size multi-purpose field, which is more flexible and usable; to add a street & roller hockey court with lighting; relocate and add lighting to the basketball courts; add more site furnishings; extend the new pathway system to create a walking loop for active living; and provide landscape improvements. Given the limited city budget and the large size of the park, this would make this area more efficiently provide for a mix of active and passive recreation appropriate to this residential part of North Allston. The grant will advance the goals of enhancing the beauty and the user experience of the public realm, enhancing public safety by increasing activity in the park, improving access and connectivity for pedestrians, and promote community collaboration and civic and cultural growth, especially with the amphitheater, community space, and stage, and the more ample field and courts, enabling families and individuals to come together in a more comfortable, welcoming public realm space.

Given the Parks Department's excellent track record of public participation in the design development process for its capital projects, we would expect that community support and involvement will be encouraged. Cathy Baker-Eclipse has done an excellent job of keeping the community well-informed and in full-participation, and for that we especially thank you.

Your award of a grant to Smith Playground will therefore increase the range of neighborhood recreation needs served by this park. This grant will strengthen this park as a vital community asset, and improve the public realm in this neighborhood.

Therefore, by awarding the Boston Parks and Recreation Department a grant to rebuild Smith Playground, you would advance the Cooperation Agreement's vision and help achieve its goals for the public realm.

We urge the HAPRFF Executive Committee to act favorably on your Department's request for funding for Smith Playground.

Sincerely,

Dana Rizzotti, 1A Appian Way, Allston, MA 02134