

projects

East Boston Greenway

location
client
completion date

East Boston, Massachusetts
Massachusetts Highway Department, Boston Parks and Recreation
2002



East Boston Greenway

The design and construction of the Conrail Corridor section of the East Boston Greenway constitutes the first .5 mile segment of what will eventually be a 2-1/2 mile long linear park. It represents hard work and determination of many East Boston citizens to reclaim open space that was lost to the City's airport expansion in the early 20th century. As the first piece of the greenway to be built, the Conrail Corridor is a portion of the linear park that will connect East Boston's busy urban waterfront to its peaceful marshland habitat.

Located in a railroad corridor that was abandoned in the 1950s, the greenway's design draws upon the area's industrial heritage and working class culture. Fencing and columns with riveted steel cross members mark the greenway's entrances. A refurbished cabooses serves as a snack bar and/or ranger station. Steel rails are integrated into the paving plan at the entrance, and are laid perpendicularly across the pathways as a tactile signal to bicyclists and rollerbladers to slow down before entering an intersection. Words referring to historical East Boston events and personalities are painted on the bituminous to indicate the direction of lanes of traffic. Large granite blocks have been salvaged and reused to build seat and retaining walls.



Although the corridor is relatively narrow (32'-60' typically), the community requested two paths be built along its length. To separate fast-moving travelers from the slower paced strollers, the elevation of the two lanes were adjusted wherever possible to create a vertical separation. Native plantings were used to enhance lane separation while not obstructing visibility.

