

SOUTH BOSTON GREENWAY LINKS

OVERVIEW

Our larger vision consists of using greenway links in South Boston as a way to restore the natural hydrology of the area, especially the section that was historically the South Bay. Through daylighting sections of the Bass River along the South Bay Harbor Trail (connecting to the Fort Point Channel) and retrofitting streets and open spaces with green infrastructure, South Boston can become much more resilient to impacts from climate change.

Our design proposal specifically seeks to create a pedestrian and bicycle link in South Boston aimed at providing safe passage for all, connecting local and regional amenities from the Broadway T station to John Moakley Park and the South Bay Harbor Trail, while incorporating green infrastructure for stormwater management. Our proposal connects two scales of activity and amenities:

- *Primary and direct:* From Broadway T Station in the north, south along Dorchester Avenue and Old Colony Avenue, to John Moakley Park and The Harborwalk. Each endpoint can connect further still - north to Fort Point Channel and south to the proposed South Bay Harbor Trail and Neponset Greenway.

- *Secondary and local:* From Orton Morrotta Way to Tudor Street, across to Dorchester Street to West 8th and West 5th, south to the Harborwalk. The proposed system connects residential areas, greenspaces, the Boys and Girls Club, and two low-income BHA housing properties. It will also guide tourists through historic neighborhoods to Dorchester Heights Park and the Harborwalk. This Secondary and local system can potentially be expanded to the larger South Boston neighborhood.

Analysis:

South Boston is a historically significant neighborhood of Boston, and a pivotal piece in creating a continuous connection from downtown Boston to the South Bay Harbor Trail and Neponset River Greenway. South Boston is near downtown, yet the current pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is limited.

While our proposal is peripheral to the main center of South Boston, it does identify Old Colony Avenue as a segment for bicycle infrastructure; a path already identified as a priority by other bicycle and pedestrian advocacy groups. From a bicycling perspective, Old Colony Avenue is a direct, relatively flat route that connects John Moakley Park and the Harborwalk north to downtown Boston. The distance from Moakley Park to Fort Point Channel is a little over a mile.

Old Colony Avenue is a four-lane road that traverses a mainly light industrial area, with no bicycle infrastructure currently existing along the roadway. Both sides of the street have sidewalks but no street trees. The entire stretch of the road is very vehicle-centric, not much thought is given to other users. We believe that this is where we can have a high impact intervention that can facilitate a major change in the area; reconnecting parts of the city that have been separated both as perceived and in reality.

Secondary streets were also identified in this proposal to provide a quieter passage through residential streets, and create a link for existing greenspaces and community amenities. Three typologies of streets were included: one-way road with parking on one side; alleys; and two-way roads with parking on both sides. These street types are found throughout South Boston, and our solutions provide guidance for how to retrofit these streets for improved bicycle and pedestrian amenities and stormwater management.

PROPOSAL:

PRIMARY AND DIRECT LINK: DORCHESTER AVENUE – OLD COLONY AVENUE

PHASE 1

- Re-stripe into three lanes – one lane on each direction and a central turning lane
- Demarcate cycle track on each side of the street
- Improve sidewalk and create pedestrian crosswalks
- Green the street with planters along sidewalk and in central turning lane

PHASE 2

- Establish stormwater tree trenches on both sides and swale in the middle
- Utilize raised intersection with pavers
- Provide cycle track for bicycles

SECONDARY AND LOCAL LINKS: ORTON MAROTTA WAY - TUDOR STREET - WEST 8TH STREET -WEST 5TH STREET

PHASE 1

- Allow contraflow (two-way bicycle travel) on one-way streets
- Add planters at intersections and along buildings
- Incorporate murals/ public art on street to emphasize residential feel and slow traffic

PHASE 2

- Create "woonerf" (shared space between bicyclists, pedestrians and cars) along alley ways
- Install permeable pavement for stormwater management
- Utilize vegetated bumpouts at intersections on parking lane
- Establish stormwater tree pits along the wider two way streets