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Wednesday, April 29, 2026

Mayor Wu releases 2030 Climate Action Plan to reduce carbon emissions and strengthen Boston's climate resilience

Special to the Times Free Press

Mayor Michelle Wu announced this week the release of Boston's landmark 2030 Climate Action Plan alongside dozens of community and institutional partners at LoPresti Park in East Boston. This implementation plan provides a roadmap for how the City will achieve its carbon emissions reduction and climate resilience goals, including reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2030 and reaching carbon neutrality by 2050.

"Fighting climate change provides a generational oppor-



CARY SHUMAN PHOTO

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu joins State Sen. Lydia Edwards, City Council Vice President Gabriela Coletta Zapata, Tree Eastie Executive Director Bill Masterson (far right) city officials, and East Boston High School students for a photo following the announcement of Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan Monday at LoPresti Park.

tunity to create good-paying jobs, more affordable energy, cleaner air, and safer streets," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "The 2030 Climate Action Plan outlines Boston's determination to deliver on our brightest future through citywide action. This year's update represents a clear transition from vision to implementation, and from a focus on city government goals to city-wide coordinated action. I am grateful for all the dedicated community partners whose years of collaboration set the foundation to make this plan possible."

See CLIMATE PLAN Page 10

Play Ball!

East Boston Little League Opening Day ceremonies set for Saturday, May 2

By Cary Shuman

East Boston Little League will hold its Opening Day cer-

emonies on Saturday, May 2 at noon at Festa Field.

EBLL President Nick Free, a teacher in the Boston school

district, said the league has a sizable increase in enrollment this season with more than 150 players (boys and girls) participating on 15 teams in three divisions, Major, Minor, and Farm.

Mayor Michelle Wu, State Sen. Lydia Edwards, Rep. Adrian Madaro, and City Council Vice President Gabriela Coletta Zapata are invited guests to the

Opening Day ceremony.

"I'm excited for East Boston Little League's opening day this Saturday with an increase in enrollment boosting this year's rosters," said Madaro. "I have fond memories as a kid playing in East Boston Little League, having fun and learning valuable lessons in teamwork and sportsmanship. It's especially cool to have my old-

er son, Matteo, gearing up for another baseball season. I'm grateful for everyone working hard this year to provide that same experience to youth, and I can't wait to catch a game."

Free is being assisted in the leadership of the organization by vice president Brian Lynch, board member and concession

See EBLL Page 10



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Forum

AT LAST, COMMON SENSE REGARDING MARIJUANA, PSYCHEDELICS

The recent actions by the Trump administration to reschedule marijuana and certain psychedelics has brought a measure of common-sense to the regulation of these substances.

Federal policy for more than 50 years has classified marijuana and psychedelics as Schedule I drugs, placing them into the same category as truly-dangerous drugs such as heroin and opioids, which never has made any sense.

Schedule I drugs are defined as substances with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse which have never been applicable to marijuana and psychedelics.

The placement of marijuana and psychedelics into Schedule I occurred during the Nixon administration, which did so with the express intent (as was revealed 10 years ago with the release of Nixon-era documentation) of using the drug laws as a weapon against minority communities and college students who opposed Nixon's policies.

The Nixon-era drug laws led to the "war on drugs," a battle that America has been fighting -- and losing -- for more than five decades.

And as with any war, the war on drugs has had numerous casualties, measured not only in the lives directly lost and the trillions of wasted dollars spent at the federal, state, and local levels on ill-conceived enforcement, but also in the damage to communities, families, and individuals throughout our country, as well as the destabilization our war on drugs wrought in foreign countries.

In addition, the war on drugs has altered the way in which our nation fights crime at a basic level. All too often, the methods employed by authorities in their zeal to enforce the drug laws have conflicted with the Fourth Amendment (which protects citizens against unreasonable searches and seizures by the government) and has led to entrapment.

However, the biggest loss to our nation because of the ill-conceived war on drugs has been the decades lost to the potential for research into these substances. Both marijuana and psychedelics had been used for thousands of years by mankind for the treatment of maladies of all sorts.

Recently, psilocybin has been shown to be of benefit to veterans suffering from PTSD and marijuana has benefited patients undergoing cancer treatment. In addition, studies have shown that patients using marijuana for the treatment of pain have reduced their use of opioids significantly.

But the placement of these substances into Schedule I in the early 1970s effectively eliminated research into their potential uses for most of the past 50 years.

The recent actions by the Trump administration bring us a step closer to a day when these substances can be studied thoroughly and then regulated at the federal level (similar to alcohol), eventually allowing medical providers at long last to prescribe them to treat patients safely.

TREAT THEM WITH RESPECT AND DIGNITY

To the Editor,

Dear President Garber and Provost Manning,

The undersigned political leaders of Massachusetts, call on the Harvard administration to bargain in good faith to come to fair agreements with the Harvard Academic Workers-UAW (HAW-UAW), the union of non-tenured teaching faculty and researchers at Harvard University, and the Harvard Graduate Student Union-UAW (HGSU-UAW), the union of graduate and undergraduate student workers, that sufficiently address their workplace concerns and attend to the high cost of living in the

region.

Unions everywhere fight for safe working conditions, and HAW and HGSU members deserve the industry standard protections of grievance and arbitration procedures for issues of discrimination and harassment in the workplace, as well as codified protections for their international workers. It is also crucial that the democratic rights of members are respected and that these workers are not arbitrarily carved out or excluded from participation in their union.

We understand that both unions have been negotiating a contract with Harvard University for 20 months and 13 months, respectively, and have each called for a strike authori-

zation vote and potential strike action in the event a resolution to negotiations cannot be found. As one of the largest private employers in the region, Harvard has a responsibility to the workers in Massachusetts to treat them with respect and dignity. These workers are the backbone of education and research at Harvard, and they deserve fair recognition of their work that sustains the critical mission of the University.

We urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that these workers receive the contract that they deserve.

Sincerely,

**State Senator
Lydia M. Edwards
State Representative
Marjorie C. Decker**

LETTER to the Editor

Salesian Boys & Girls Club Scholarship Auction

Special to the Times Free Press

Salesian Boys & Girls Club to hold its 17th Annual Summer Camp Scholarship Auction/Fundraiser ~ "A Celebration of Education." on Thursday, June 25, 6 p.m. at Spinelli's Banquet Hall, 282 Bennington Street, East Boston.

Each year, this special event helps provide children with the opportunity to experience a safe, enriching, and unforgettable summer at camp. With your support, we can continue to open doors for kids who might not otherwise have access to these life-changing experiences.

Join them for an enjoyable evening featuring good friends, delicious food, great live & silent auctions, and awards.

The Auctioneer will be Joseph Ruggiero.

There are several sponsorship opportunities available.

Proceeds from the evening will directly fund summer camp scholarships and programs.

For information regarding sponsorship opportunities or the

event, Please Contact Michael Triant - michaeltriant@salesianclub.com - 617-913-1531 or Anita Belmonte - abelmonte@salesianclub.com - 617-784-1744

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TREE EASTIE PHOTO

Local volunteers and community members plant trees at Constitution Beach in East Boston on April 18, 2026, in partnership with Tree Eastie as part of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ community tree planting initiative.

Boston marks Earth Day with tree planting at Constitution Beach

Special to the Times Free Press

To celebrate Earth Day, FIFA announced its support for reforestation and community tree planting projects across all 16 FIFA World Cup 2026™ Host Cities in North America, delivered in collaboration with the Arbor Day Foundation. As part of this initiative, Boston joined the effort with a local planting event held on April 18, 2026, at Constitution Beach in East Boston.

In partnership with Tree Eastie, volunteers and community members planted 28 trees, contributing to a growing movement focused on creating a lasting environmental legacy across Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Since launching in 2025, the initiative has emphasized long-term environmental benefits while strengthening civic engagement and local investment in green spaces.

To date, more than 250,000 trees have been planted through reforestation projects across North America, alongside community planting events led by the Arbor Day Foundation and its network of local partners. In total, the initiative will deliver 19 forest projects and 20 community planting events, supported by 24 local partners. The reforestation work is expected to span more than 2,000 acres—roughly equivalent to 1,000 football pitches.

Boston's project focused on neighborhoods with low tree canopy coverage, where additional trees can make a meaningful difference. The planting at Constitution Beach addressed key priorities, in-

cluding community engagement, air quality, environmental justice, and the urban heat island effect—issues that often disproportionately impact lower socioeconomic communities.

By expanding green space along East Boston's waterfront, the newly planted trees will help reduce urban heat, improve air quality, and better manage stormwater runoff, supporting broader community resilience goals aligned with the FIFA World Cup 2026™ Sustainability and Human Rights Strategy.

The overall initiative combines large-scale reforestation with community-based efforts, aiming to plant one million trees across North American forests while adding more than 12,000 trees in parks, school campuses, trail systems, and other public gathering spaces in Host Cities like Boston. Community planting events will continue through the summer, connecting FIFA World Cup 2026™ with local environmental action through the Arbor Day Foundation's extensive partner network.

Since 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation has led efforts to restore forests and increase urban canopy in more than 60 countries, helping plant more than 600 million trees through its global network of members, supporters, and partners like Tree Eastie. This project is another example of how local organizations and community members can help drive environmental resilience through the power of trees.

To learn more about the Arbor Day Foundation's work, visit: www.arborday.org

Massport, Tree Eastie team up to expand urban forestry in East Boston

Special to the Times Free Press

In recognition of Earth Day, the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) is happy to announce a new partnership with the local non-profit Tree Eastie to support the expansion of urban forestry in East Boston. As the owner and operator of more than 40 acres of open space, Massport views this collaboration as an important step in advancing environmental sustainability while investing directly in the health and resilience of the East Boston community.

"This partnership reflects our responsibility as a neighbor in East Boston," said Massport CEO Rich Davey. "We recognize the impacts we have on the surrounding community, and we are committed to taking meaningful action. Collaborations like this one with Tree Eastie are an important part of being a better neighbor and our long-term goal of achieving Net Zero."

Over the next two years, Massport and Tree Eastie will work together to plant native and climate-resilient trees in public areas owned and maintained by Massport throughout East Boston. These new plantings will help mitigate urban heat, improve air quality, manage stormwater, and enhance the neighborhood's green spaces for residents and visitors alike. Urban trees play a critical role in combating the impacts of climate change.

"I'm excited to see this partnership between Massport and Tree Eastie to expand the urban forestry around our neighborhood," said Representative Adrian Madaro. "Air and noise pollution have long been some of the biggest impacts our community faces from Logan Airport, and these trees will provide important mitigation that improves the well-being and quality of life for residents. I appreciate Massport's continued commitment to being responsible stewards of open space in East Boston, and I'm incredibly proud of the work Tree Eastie is doing as a grassroots organization of neighborhood volunteers to expand and enhance our community's tree canopy"

Tree Eastie has a strong track record of community-led envi-

ronmental stewardship, having partnered with local residents, civic organizations, and businesses to plant more than 700 trees across East Boston. The organization's mission is rooted in advancing environmental equity by expanding tree canopy coverage, educating residents about the benefits of urban forestry, and empowering community members to take an active role in greening their neighborhood. Tree Eastie's work has been supported by a range of public and private partners, including the Arbor Day Foundation, JetBlue, and TD Bank.

"As an all-volunteer non-profit, Tree Eastie is committed to increasing the tree canopy in East Boston, which currently has one of the lowest coverage rates in the city," said Bill Masterson, Founder and Executive Director of Tree Eastie. "Our partnership with Massport creates significant planting opportunities to add shade along pedestrian routes and mitigate the impacts of

noise and air pollution. We are excited about the possibilities this collaboration holds for the community."

Massport has made significant commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across its facilities and operations, investing in clean energy and electrification, and integrating sustainability into our top priorities. Expanding urban forestry complements these efforts by providing natural climate solutions that deliver local environmental benefits while supporting community health and wellbeing. From building parks and green space in our neighborhood to installing solar panels on our buildings, Massport is committed to being a sustainable, good neighbor for all.

The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) owns and operates Boston Logan International Airport, public terminals in the Port of Boston, Hanscom Field, and Worcester Regional Airport. For more information, please visit massport.com.

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MBTA and MassDOT celebrate Earth Day with Blue Line Station cleanup

In honor of Earth Day 2026, dozens of employees from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) volunteered to cleanup eight stations along the MBTA Blue Line: Maverick, Airport, Wood Island, Orient Heights, Suffolk Downs, Beachmont, Revere Beach and Wonderland Stations. This year's focus on the Blue Line reflects the MBTA's rotating, systemwide approach to Earth Day service efforts. Now in its fourth year, the employee-led cleanup initiative has previously focused on stations and corridors along the Orange Line, Red Line, and Fairmount Line, ensuring that communities across the network benefit each year.

"MBTA and MassDOT employees take pride in the communities we serve, and these

cleanup efforts along the Blue Line reflect our shared responsibility and desire to keep the environment clean and our system welcoming for all," said Interim Secretary General Phillip Eng.

Sustainability is a core priority for the MBTA. Initiatives like the annual Earth Day cleanup support broader efforts to reduce environmental impact and build a more resilient transit network. Through its strategic planning and climate work, the MBTA is focused on modernizing infrastructure, improving sustainability, and supporting mode shift to public transportation. In September 2024, the MBTA released its Climate Assessment, which outlines progress to date and identifies next steps to advance sustainability and resilience across the system.

In addition to its climate



COURTESY PHOTOS

Shown (above and below) are some of the employees from the MBTA and MassDOT who volunteered to cleanup eight stations along the MBTA Blue Line



planning work, the MBTA is advancing sustainability through major fleet modernization and mode shift investments across bus and commuter rail. The agency continues to deploy hybrid and battery-electric buses and invested in supporting infrastructure like the fully funded Arborway battery-electric bus facility.

The MBTA is in the midst of the Better Bus Project, which will help to make riding the bus a first choice for more riders by improving accessibility, reliability, safety, and the overall experience.

The MBTA is also moving forward with Regional Rail modernization, including a new joint procurement for battery-electric and Tier-4 low-emissions locomotives that will support quieter, cleaner, and more reliable service, building on investments already underway such as battery-electric service on the Fairmount Line.

The MBTA also thanks its

riders for doing their part. Whether choosing the bus, subway, commuter rail, ferry, or paratransit, public transportation helps to reduce traffic congestion and lowers greenhouse gas emissions. Public transportation in the region produces significantly fewer emissions per passenger mile than single-occupancy vehicles, and as ridership increases, the environmental and sustainability benefits are anticipated to grow.

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) opened America's first subway tunnel in 1897, pioneering public transportation in the United States. Today, the MBTA is one of the largest public transit systems in the country, operating an extensive network of subway, bus, Commuter Rail, ferry, and paratransit services across 176 cities and towns. The MBTA is undergoing a transformative period, focusing on cultivating a culture of safety and excellence, modernizing infrastructure,

and improving reliability and accessibility. Current priorities include accelerating critical infrastructure repairs, expanding accessibility, and reducing emissions. The MBTA is committed to providing dependable, frequent, and accessible service that riders can rely on while supporting the region's economic vitality. Through initiatives like the unprecedented Track Improvement Program, the Better Bus Program, and the Rail Modernization Plan, the MBTA aims to connect communities and improve riders' daily experiences and trips. For questions or assistance, riders are encouraged to contact the MBTA Customer Center at 617-222-3200. Members of the press are encouraged to contact mediarelations@mbta.com. For the latest updates on MBTA services, projects, and initiatives, visit MBTA.com or follow @MBTA on social media.



CITY PAWS

Garden Safety for Pets

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

City dwellers without outdoor space may think they don't have to worry about plants that might harm their dogs. However, most of us walk our dogs past front yard gardens, in parks, and take them on hikes in the woods where dangers may be right before our eyes and their mouths.

We bring flowers and houseplants into our home and receive the same as gifts. We may not give much thought to where we place them or whether our cat or dog might eat them.

Avoiding Poisons

As with so many dangers, plants are only harmful to your companion animals if those dogs and cats ingest them. Often, it takes a large amount to do any damage. Melissa Marshall, DVM, a critical care veterinarian, offered this reassurance in a magazine interview, "Most poisonous plants are distasteful. Most of the time, an animal will take one bite and spit it out."

Knowing your pal's habits and being watchful is as important as knowing which plants are most harmful. Some will only cause mild GI upset, while others can be dangerous even in small amounts. For example, if you have cats, lilies are a real danger and should be kept totally out of your cat's reach or not brought into your home at all.

The ASPCA lists the most common plants that are dangerous to pets as: Lilies, Marijuana, Sago Palm, Tulip/Narcissus bulbs, Azalea/Rhododendron, Oleander, Castor Bean, Cyclamen, Kalanchoe, Yew, Amaryllis, Autumn Crocus, Chrysanthemum, English Ivy, Pothos, and Schefflera.

Note the inclusion of marijuana. Veterinary emergency rooms and pet poison control centers have seen an uptick in pets poisoned by marijuana since laws against the drug were relaxed. Vets who treat these cases urge pet owners to be candid about whether their cat or dog may have ingested this substance so that proper treatment can begin quickly.

Pesticides, herbicides, weed killers, antifungals, and other garden chemicals are also pet dangers in a garden. For those, read the "Material Safety Data Sheets" available with each and decide what you find safe to use around your pets. Use care in storing these products in a pet-proof manner.

A Verbal Stop

One of the first commands you should teach any dog is "Leave it." It's useful when

your pup is showing interest in the lilies popping through a fence under his nose. It's also useful when your chowhound is pulling you towards food litter in the park. Or, when a little nose is sniffing out your sandwich on the coffee table.

We've heard pet guardians who extend the command to an aggressive dog, telling it to "leave it" when another dog approaches. It's great when a single command works in many situations. With cats, removing temptation is the only thing that really works.

Have This Number Ready

The ASPCA maintains a list of toxic and non-toxic plants, and they operate a 24-hour emergency poison hotline at 1-888-426-4435. Reminders if you use this service are to have the container for any product you think might have been eaten and a credit card ready, because there is a consulting fee. The center is staffed by veterinarians and has assisted with five million cases since the service began nearly five decades ago. We keep this number on our cell phones.

The good news is that, while dangerous, plants and lawn-



If plants will be within reach of your animals, begin planning your garden selections with information on which plants are toxic to pets.

and-garden products ranked 9th among the top 10 poison-related calls the referral service handled last year. The number one problem was human medications!

SEWAGE BACKUPS ARE PREVENTABLE

No Valve = No Protection

If your home has plumbing fixtures in the basement, like a toilet or sink, a backwater valve will prevent sewage from flowing into your home during heavy rains or sewer backups.

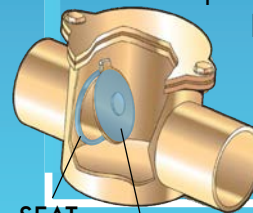


Maintenance Matters!

Without a properly installed and maintained valve your basement is vulnerable to costly and hazardous sewage backups.

Simple Maintenance Requirements:

Inspect regularly, especially before storms. Wear protective gloves and eyewear. Remove debris from valve seat and flapper with water and gentle scrubbing.



SEAT FLAPPER

Note: PSA for informational purposes. Backwater valve must be installed by a licensed plumber. BWSC does not install valves.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

ATLANTIC WORKS GALLERY'S ANNOUNCES AWG & FRIENDS EXHIBIT STARTS MAY 2

Atlantic Works Gallery is pleased to announce AWG & Friends, a group exhibit, on view May 2 through May 23, at 80 Border Street, East Boston.

This dynamic exhibition brings together gallery members alongside invited artists, highlighting a diverse range of creative voices and mediums.

In celebration of the vibrant East Boston arts community, the gallery will host early hours on Saturday, May 2, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., in conjunction with the East Boston Artists Group Open Studios event, taking place across the neighborhood.

Atlantic Works Gallery will host their regularly scheduled Third Thursday Reception on Thursday, May 21 from 6 to 9 p.m. offering visitors the opportunity to meet participating artists, share light bites and experience the exhibition in a lively, welcoming atmosphere, including an artist talk.

This exhibition will take the place of Atlantic Works Gallery's traditional summer group show. Additional details about the gallery's summer programming will be announced soon, including a June solo exhibition by Kristen Freitas, a July solo exhibition by

Walter Kopec and an August feature with special guest artist Victoria "Thirteenvic" DelValle.

Regular gallery hours throughout the exhibition are Fridays and Saturdays from 2 to 6 p.m., or by appointment.

Founded in 2003, Atlantic Works Gallery is a collaborative artist space dedicated to supporting its members and fostering the exchange of art and ideas.

For more information, please email at contact@atlanticworks.org, atlanticworks.org or follow the gallery on Instagram @awgallery.

HARBOR VIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETING AGENDA

The next meeting of the Harbor View Neighborhood Association

will be on May 4, 2026, at 6pm. The meeting is In Person only but will be streamed via Facebook for archival purposes. Attendance on Facebook does not qualify for voting. The meeting will be held in the Salesian Boys and Girls Club cafeteria, across from the Brooke Charter School on Byron Street. You can access the meeting from the front door on Byron Street which is also handicap accessible and an elevator is available for your convenience if needed. which is the handicap entry, to avoid the stairs.

La proxima reunion de Harbor View Neighborhood Association esta en cuatro de mayo a las 6pm. La reunion esta en persona y via Facebook. La asistencia en Facebook no califica para vota. Llega a la cafeteria del Salesian Boys y Girls Club por la calle Byron al otro lado de Brooke Charter School. Puede entrar a la junta por la entrada principal en la calle Byron la cual puede ser utilizada por personas con discapacidades y tiene un elevador si es que es necesario para evitar las escaleras.

Agenda

Welcome/Introduction (5min)

Station 7 Police Report (15min) Sgt. Cintolo and Officer Mosley.

FYI (5min): Free Monthly Community Dinner at Sacred Heart Parish May 13, 2026, at 5pm-7pm. The St. Vincent de Paul Clothing Drive will happen on Saturday, May 16, 8am-5pm and Sunday May 17, 8am-1pm at the St. Lazarus Church parking lot on Ashley Street. Remember clothes, shoes and books are accepted. LOVE YOUR BLOCK 2026, Harbor View will once again participate in the neighborhood cleanup. This event is sponsored by Mayor Wu and the Office of Civic Organizing. Volunteers can come to Brooke Charter School on Byron Street at 9:15 am on May 2, 2026. Please remember Grace Church Food Pantry for any donations of food or money. Carlos Garcia, East Boston Liaison, Office of Neighborhood Services, ONS, carlos.garcia@boston.gov or 617-308-5725

Tree Eastie (10min) Bill Masterson, founder of this community based urban forestry program which is focused on

SWAN BOAT KICKS OFF SEASON IN PUBLIC GARDEN



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTOS BY MIKE MEJIA

Mayor Michelle Wu joined students from Tynan Elementary School on Saturday, April 18, to kick off spring with the Swan Boat opening ceremony at the Public Garden.



increasing the tree canopy in East Boston. He will share the plans for Tree Eastie in 2026 and beyond. Volunteer opportunities, Free trees!

Fiesta Shows (15min) E. J. Dean, owner, and Carlo DeMaria will present their plan to bring the Carnival to 305-365 McClellan Highway, near the hotel. They will go over key details about this family event, including dates and times. Brief Q&A.

Air Quality Project (15min) NOAH staff members, Vicente Pereira, Sury Chavez and Andrea Amador along with the youth crew will present some early findings regarding air quality in East Boston. There are 9 sensors throughout East Boston, which includes one on Byron Street, that measure particulate matter.

The data will be shared, and next steps will be reviewed, which may involve use of air

purifiers and other measures. This project is in collaboration with Northeastern University.

Representative Adrian Madaro (30min) Our representative will share the work he is doing on various Committees, he Chairs or is a member of, working for us here in East Boston. He will discuss the budget and other issues that he feels the community needs to be aware of as he goes about his job representing us at the State House. Brief Q&A.

Updates

Italian Heritage Day Parade, El Parche, McLean Park, HVNA Board, Byron Street Bridge

The next meeting of the HVNA will be on June 1, 2026. Visit us at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/harborviewna> or check our website at harborvieweastboston.com or board@harborviewna.org

BOSTON PARKS LAUNCHES FREE SUMMER SPORTS CLINICS FOR 2026

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department has announced that registration is now open for its 2026 Summer Sports Clinics. This popular program provides Boston youth with a free opportunity to develop athletic skills and enjoy the city's outdoor spaces in a fun, supportive environment.

Program Schedule and Logistics

The clinics are scheduled to run from July 6 through August 14, 2026. Sessions will take place Monday through Friday, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., hosted at the Carter Playground. The program is open to Boston residents between the ages of 8 and 14.

Weekly Sports Lineup

Participants can register for specific weeks based on their interests:

- July 6–10: Baseball Series
- July 13–17: Volleyball Series
- July 20–24: Soccer Series
- July 27–31: Lacrosse Series
- August 3–7: Softball Series
- August 10–14: BUDA Ultimate Frisbee Series

Registration and Contact Information

Families are encouraged to sign up early as space is limited. Registration is available online at boston.gov/parks-sports.

For further details regarding the clinics, the public may contact Damien Margardo via email at damien.margardo@boston.gov or by calling (617) 961-3083. General updates on park improvements and events can also be found by following @bostonparksdept on social media.

MAYOR'S CUP LACROSSE TOURNAMENT TO DEBUT MAY 15-16 IN WEST ROXBURY

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department today announced the first annual Mayor's Cup Lacrosse tournament will take place on May 15 and 16, offer-

See NEWS BRIEFS Page 7

DCR advises the public on fire safety as camping season kicks off

As camping season gets underway across the state park system, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is urging residents and visitors to take precautions to prevent wildfires, as new data shows a continuing trend of longer periods of time each year when fires are likely to occur. DCR's 2025 wildfire data also shows wildfire activity has returned to more typical levels following unusually high numbers of wildfires in late 2024.

"As more people head outdoors this time of year, it's important to understand that the risk of wildfires in Massachusetts is increasing and we're having longer fire seasons than in the past," said DCR Commissioner Nicole LaChapelle. "The vast majority of these fires are caused by human activity -- and it's on all of us to help prevent them. By taking simple steps, we can protect our parks, forests and communities from damage."

In 2025, Massachusetts experienced 1,161 wildfires burning a total 925 acres. Those numbers are down from 2024, when 1,300 fires burned 4,623 acres -- a spike driven by an extended drought, dry soils and dry windy conditions. Late in 2024, several factors made fires more likely, including multi-day wind events, low humidity, and fallen leaves that added more fuel for fires.

Despite the year-over-year decline in wildfires, the data continues to show a broader

trend of fires occurring earlier in the year, extending Massachusetts' wildfire season. In the past decade, Massachusetts has continued to see consistent fire activity in earlier months of the year, when winter snowpack has historically helped reduce the chance of fires. Shorter winters with less snow have allowed for dryer conditions, which have contributed to longer windows of wildfire risk across the state.

"Since nearly all of the wildfires we are experiencing are caused by some form of human behavior, we can have a good chance of bringing our numbers down through educating the public," said Chief Fire Warden Dave Celino. "We want the public to understand that wildfires indeed happen in Massachusetts and that humans are the main cause. If we all take responsibility, we can prevent a lot of damage and potential injury."

Less than 11 percent of last year's wildfires were due to natural or undetermined causes. More than 89 percent were caused by human activity, the vast majority of which were accidental. Improper brush burning, open burns, illegal debris burning and failure to fully extinguish fires are among the most common causes of accidental wildfires.

Below are tips for preventing some of the most common causes of wildfires:

- Always fully extinguish a fire by pouring water on the site and stirring the burned ma-

terials until there is no sound of hissing and they feel cool to the touch.

- Clear fallen leaves, dry grass or any other flammable vegetation or material within a radius of at least 10 feet of the fire prior to lighting it.

- Avoid lighting fires during stretches of dry weather, or on particularly windy days.

- During burning season, obtain a permit from your local fire department.

- Have extinguishing materials on hand at all times, including water, shovels and rakes.

- Burn one small pile of material at a time and add to it slowly.

- When using a charcoal grill, properly dispose of coals using a metal container with a lid once they have fully cooled. Do not dispose of coals outside.

- When using a propane grill, check tanks for leaks months ahead of use.

- All grills should be positioned away from structures and deck railings, and out from under building eaves or overhanging branches.

To reduce the risk of fire damage to your house, homeowners are recommended to:

- Regularly clear leaves and pine needles from roofs and gutters.

- Clear leaves from under decks and stairs, as well as within a 5-foot radius of all structures.

- Maintain lawns and native grasses to a height no higher than four inches.

Additional guidance for fire safety, as well as a list of requirements enforced by the state's open burn law, can be found online.

EBLL // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

stand director Alexis Cervasio, and board member Bill Rinaldi.

A graduate of prestigious George Washington University, Free is beginning his fourth season as president. He played Little League Baseball in East Haddam (Conn.), a small town on the Connecticut River.

"My father (Stephen Free) was the president of our local Little League as well," said Free.

Nick and Tiffany Free's son, Catcher Free, 10, plays for the Major League Giants team and the BASE 12U travel team. Their daughter, Phoebe Free, 4, is starting her first season in

the Farm League, with Tiffany making her debut as the team's coach. Their son, Holden Free, 13, is an EBLL graduate who now plays school lacrosse.

All EBLL players will be attired in brand new uniforms for the 2026 season. "We have the most team sponsors we've had in a long time, and their banners will be hanging proudly on Saturday," said Free. "This league is a really big deal for me, and I'm really passionate about the success of our organization moving forward."

Free said he is hoping to relaunch the East Boston Girls Softball League next year.



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News Briefs // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

ing young athletes across the city a new way to compete and connect this spring.

This tournament brings local youth teams together for a day of friendly competition and community engagement. All tournament games will take place at the West Roxbury Education Complex fields located at 1205 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury.

"We are more than excited for the debut of our Mayor's Cup Lacrosse Tournament this May,"

said Interim Parks and Recreation Commissioner Cathy Baker-Eclipse.

Divisions are available for boys and girls grades 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8. Please note that pre-registration for teams is required with a limit of eight teams per regional division.

Visit boston.gov/parks-sports to register your team. For more information, contact Woodley Auguste at woodley.auguste@boston.gov.



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BRADLEY ELEMENTARY HOSTS "A NIGHT OF POSSIBILITY" GALA IN EAST BOSTON

PHOTOS BY BLUE BUTTERFLY PHOTOGRAPHY

The Manassah E. Bradley Elementary School hosted its annual fundraising gala, "A Night of Possibility," on Thursday, April 9, at the Reel House overlooking Boston Harbor.

More than 170 guests attended the event to celebrate Bradley Elementary's recent recognition as the 2025 School on the Move and 2024 Distinguished School and to support

continued programming at the school. Families, school administrators, Boston Public Schools staff, and community leaders gathered for an evening that featured cocktail bites, signature drinks, a silent auction, and raffles.

State Representative Adrian Madaro and Instructional Coach McKenzie Powers energized the crowd as they encour-

aged guests to participate in the auction and raffle, helping raise funds to benefit the school.

"This event reflects the strength of our school community and the shared commitment to our students' success," said Principal Claire Carney. "We are deeply grateful for the generosity and support shown by everyone who attended."

The school extended special

thanks to its event partners and contributors, including Reel House East Boston, DJ Juan of OXO Events and Jessica of Blue Butterfly Photography, as well as the organizing committee, Christine Doherty, Keeley Fanuele, Suleima Chan, Lisa Cappuccio, Diana Munera, Bridget Heigelmann, Jordan Zimmerman, Kacthary Sanclemente, Jenny Sanabria and

Adrian Madaro whose efforts made the evening possible.

Bradley Elementary also recognized the many local businesses and organizations that supported the gala through sponsorships and donations, helping ensure the event's success:

Boston Bruins, Boston Duck

See BRADLEY GALA Page 9



Jenny Sanabria, Lisa Capogreco, Bridget Heiglemann, Keeley Fanuele.



Mackenzie Powers, State Representative Adrian Madaro, and Principal Claire Carney.



Samantha Wu- Topolski, Claire Carney, Christine Doherty.

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Attendees and supporters of the Bradley Elementary School gather for a group photo at the "Night of Possibility" gala in East Boston.

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Bradley Gala // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Tours, Boston Tae Kwon Do Academy, Café Savage, Caffè Dello Sport, Century 21 Mario Real Estate, Coolidge Corner Theater, El Penol, El Traphiche, Ellie Catino, Encantadas Kids Spa Fairmont Copley Plaza, Foundation for Boston Centers for Youth and Family, Foxwoods Resort and Casino, ICA, JetBlue, JT Macken, Legal Seafood, Lolly's Bakery, Los Alebrijes, MV Baynes, Nails Art, Nick's Place, North Shore Music Theater, Omni Hotel

& Resorts, Pazza on Porter, Planet Fitness, Puttshack, Reel House East Boston, Results Boston, Rincon Limeno, Santarpio's Pizza, SAVR Restaurant, Salesians Boys & Girls Club, Spinelli's, Sunny Café, Taco Mex, The Beauty Room, The Doggy Port, The Huntington, The Point Barre, The Quiet Few, The Rose Kennedy Greenway, The Steamship Authority, Turner's Seafood, and Vuolo's Restaurant.



Ernani and Carmen DeAraujo



Brianna Forbes and Mackenzie Powers.



State Representative Adrian Madaro addresses the gala.



Bradley Family Liaison Sam Pichette and Andrew Dunford.



BPS School Superintendent Region 1 Tommy Welch and Karle Torres Welch.



Ashely Martinez and Sabrina Tam.



District 1 City Councilor Gabriela Coletta and Claire Carney



Artwork made by Bradley Students that were auctioned off.

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Climate Plan // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan marks a shift in focus from planning into the implementation phase of the City's climate action strategy, bringing City departments, local institutions, and community partners together to ensure that Boston can thrive for generations to come. The Plan provides concrete metrics and goals across key areas of climate action, including buildings, transportation, energy, workforce development, coastal resilience, and protection from extreme weather. Climate justice is a key component of this initiative, as underserved communities will disproportionately experience the greatest impacts of climate change. The City of Boston prioritized community engagement in its environmental justice communities, designed the Plan incorporating their current and future needs, and will implement strategies to ensure that every neighborhood receives the public health, economic, and resilience benefits of climate action.

Highlights of the Plan include:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions: Boston is on track to reduce emissions by 48% by 2030 through full implementation of its existing programs and policies. The Plan builds on this trajectory, outlining additional actions needed to reach the City's 50% by 2030 reduction target while simultaneously reducing energy costs for Boston residents and businesses.

- Protecting Boston from sea-level rise and extreme weather: New England's re-

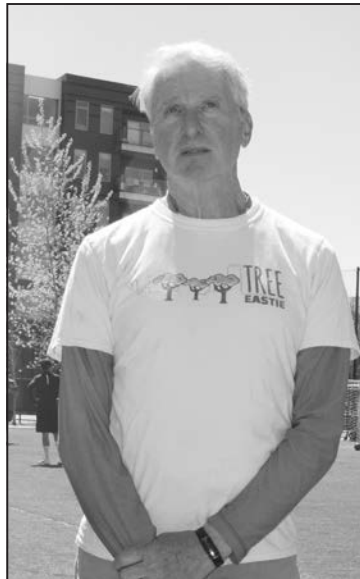
gional prosperity depends on Boston's critical infrastructure, including world-class hospitals and universities, its highway and rail network, and local food systems. The Plan includes strategies to protect these regional assets and vulnerable neighborhoods alike, outlining steps to screen City capital projects for future climate risk; protect residents from flood pathways; reduce heat-related injuries; and ensure that every Boston neighborhood has certified Community Emergency Response Teams.

- Building a green workforce: The strategies outlined in this Plan are expected to support approximately 67,000 full-time jobs annually. The City will work to strengthen training pipelines and expand access to high-quality green jobs through leveraging City procurement policies, Project Labor Agreements, and programs like PowerCorps Boston.

- Tracking Boston's progress: The Plan includes 22 metrics that the City will track over the next five years through the Climate Action Plan Implementation Dashboard. These metrics measure progress towards the City's goals and how residents and businesses benefit from climate action. As implementation progresses and more data becomes available, additional metrics will be incorporated over time. These metrics include monitoring:

- Buildings that meet Net Zero Carbon Zoning, Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District, and Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO) standards.

- Heat pumps installed and



Tree Eastie Executive Director Bill Masterson, pictured at the ceremony in which Mayor Michelle Wu announced Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan.

weatherization projects completed;

- Energy cost savings from residents and businesses enrolled in Boston Community Choice Electricity.

- Street and park tree plantings to provide cooling benefits;

- Public transit and Blue-bikes ridership.

- Number of residents graduated from the City's climate job training programs, and more.

The community Climate Action Plan launch event included remarks from Mayor Wu, leadership from the City's Environment, Energy, and Open Space Cabinet, and community and institutional partners. Hosted in partnership with Tree Eastie, a Climate Action Plan community partner, the gathering included a ceremonial planting of 10 trees in East Boston to improve the neighborhood's tree canopy and local resilience to extreme heat.

"With this Plan, Boston con-



PHOTOS BY CARY SHUMAN

City Council Vice President Gabriela Coletta Zapata, pictured with her father, Ed Coletta (left) volunteer at Tree Eastie, and Claire Corcoran (right), arborist at Tree Eastie.

tinues its critical national and global leadership on climate change with direct benefits for all Bostonians and as a model for the rest of the country," said Chief Climate Officer Brian Swett. "Our communities and our future generations depend on the actions we take today. That's why we are working with our community partners to collaboratively deliver on concrete strategies, measurable targets, and actionable timelines to reduce emissions and strengthen our neighborhoods' resilience."

"The 2030 Climate Action plan distills our community's top priorities for climate, quality of life, and justice," said Oliver Sellers-Garcia, Environment Commissioner and Green New Deal Director. "We know that the effects of climate change are going to hit our most vulnerable communities hardest, so we are ensuring that every neighborhood of Boston can access the benefits of green jobs, energy bill savings, and cleaner air through this strategic path forward."

"In partnership with the community, the City developed thorough and thoughtful plans to lower the risks posed by extreme heat, coastal flooding, and stormwater flooding," said Chris Osgood, Senior Advisor to the Mayor for Infrastructure and Director of the Office of Climate Resilience. "With this plan, we shift from a focus on developing the strategy to delivering on many of the projects and policies that will best protect and enhance our neighborhoods for generations to come."

"This Plan is the most ambitious climate action agenda in

our city's history," said Hessann Farooqi, Executive Director of the Boston Climate Action Network. "I am proud Mayor Wu is doubling down on climate action that not only reduces greenhouse gas emissions, but also lowers energy bills, creates jobs and business opportunities, and improves health. I am also grateful to the many organizations and residents who informed this plan, including the members of BCAN."

"Advancing affordable, climate-resilient housing and expanding access to quality jobs are central to our work," said Gustavo Quiroga, Executive Director of LISC Massachusetts. "The City's Climate Action Plan focuses on scaling critical decarbonization upgrades and will help lower energy costs for residents while protecting vulnerable communities from extreme heat and flooding. The City's commitment to growing Boston's green workforce is equally important and will ensure more residents can access and advance in these emerging careers. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the City, working together to align the resources needed to bring these priorities to life."

"Boston is faced with the invisible threat of severe heat and the peril of rising tides," said Bill Masterson, Executive Director of Tree Eastie. "While there is no single solution, Boston's Climate Action Plan converts these challenges into actionable, measurable solutions."

Read the full Climate Action Plan online at www.boston.gov/departments/environment/boston-climate-action.



East Boston High School biology and AP environmental science teacher Molly Mus is pictured with her students Monday at Mayor Michelle Wu's announcement of Boston's 2030 Climate Action Plan at LoPresti Park.

Edwards, Coletta-Zapata deliver remarks at climate change plan

By Cary Shuman

Sen. Lydia Edwards and City Council Vice President Gabriela Coletta, who are both considered legislative champions for the environment, credited Mayor Wu for her leadership on the issue of climate change during remarks at the Mayor's announcement of the 2030 Climate Change Plan Monday at LoPresti Park.

"Welcome to East Boston, the best neighborhood in the City of Boston," began Edwards. "This is my home, but also it's a beautiful diverse neighborhood that has been climate resilient and been fighting climate change before it was cool."

Edwards praised the Friends of Belle Isle Marsh, the Maverick Street Mothers, Air Inc., Tree Eastie, Eastie Farm, and the Piers Park Sailing Center for their efforts on environmental issues.

In praising Wu, Edwards told the large gathering, "She is the climate action mayor. I think to this day, she is the only [Boston] mayor that actually came out to Belle Isle Marsh and saw that beautiful [site], the natural lungs of this area, and I want to thank you, Mayor Wu, for all of your work and to the many city officials for your hearts. I appreciate your guidance and your pushing the state to do more not for just for the City of Boston, but for all of our futures."

Coletta Zapata, who is expecting a child soon, said, "I'm

so grateful to be here in my favorite park in the City of Boston, the best part in the city."

"I'm grateful to work with our state partners, Rep. Adrian Madaro, who is an environmental champion, and Sen. Lydia Edwards, who has been at the forefront of fighting for this environmental justice community her entire career, and of course, Mayor Wu, for being a true Green New Deal mayor. As you can tell, Baby Zapata is not here yet, but he's coming very soon, and I feel at ease about his future knowing that amid the uncertainty and hostile and regressive acts by the federal government, that we have local leadership here who is making this a priority."

The former chairperson of the Council's environmental justice committee, Coletta Zapata added, "I'm proud to stand here in this environmental justice community that has long been on the front lines of combating the climate crisis. In East Boston, we know that climate change is not abstract. It shows up in extreme heat on our hottest days and in coastal flooding along our waterfront, and in the very air that our families breathe. And for too long, communities like ours have carried a disproportionate share of those burdens, and that's why today matters. This climate action plan represents a shift from planning to action, and from siloed efforts to coordinated citywide strategies that center equity, public health, and accountability."

SCENES FROM THE GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION IN BOSTON

On April 26 the City of Boston came to life with celebrations for Greek Independence Day. Beginning with a parade

in the Back Bay, and continuing on to the Greek Independence Day festival on Boston Common. Shown below residents

from the City and the Greater Boston area shown on the Boston Common wearing their best for the occasion.



PHOTOS BY PATRICK O'CONNOR



Boston Chief Climate Officer Brian Swett, Boston Environment Department Commissioner Oliver Sellers-Garcia, Sen. Lydia Edwards, and City Council Vice President Gabriela Coletta Zapata.

NORTH SUFFOLK COMMUNITY SERVICES HOSTS BUILDING BRIDGES: A NIGHT OF MEDIUMSHIP FUNDRAISER

CARY SHUMAN PHOTOS

North Suffolk Community Services (NSCS) hosted A Night of Mediumship to benefit recovery support services April 16 at the Cottage Park Yacht Club in Winthrop.

Scott Allan, The Boston Medium, led a night of inspiration, validation, and moments of profound meaning for those seeking connection with loved ones from beyond.

NSCS President and CEO Judi Lemoine delivering the opening remarks, thanking the many guests in attendance for their support of the event.

Guests enjoyed a delicious buffet dinner, a raffle for many outstanding prizes, and an amazing demonstration of Scott Allan's remarkable ability to connect people with their loved ones.



Scott Allan, The Boston Medium, amazed the audience with his ability to connect people with their loved ones through the spirit world.



Representing North Suffolk Community Services and the Gavin Foundation are Maura Callahan, Kathleen Corley, Duran MacArthur, Matt Langley, Kyla Miner, Janine Ortega, and Derek Burns.



Sen. Lydia Edwards, Katie O'Leary of NSCS, and Legislative Aide Eric Reidister of Sen. Edwards' Office.



Mike Murphy and Kathleen Corley.



NSCS Assistant Vice President Allison Gamble, a main organizer of the successful fundraiser, is pictured with her fellow members of the Chelsea Rotary Club (from left), Attorney David Mindlin, Allan Alpert, and Joseph Vinard.



The VIP Table, front row, are Christine Lynch, Lauren Geezil, and Devin Splaine. Back row are Kathleen Corley, Maura Callahan, Betty Hayes, Judy Walker, and Jenny Celata.



Sen. Lydia Edwards and Chelsea Public Schools Chief of Staff and Wellness Dr. Aaron T. Jennings, who is the president of the Chelsea Rotary Club.



North Suffolk Community Services CFO Kim Joyce, President and CEO Judi Lemoine, and COO Audrey Clairmont.



Rebecca Rose of Contract Sources, NSCS COO Audrey Clairmont and her husband, Drew Stock, and NSCS CEO Judi Lemoine.



Stephanie Curran Costin of Belle Isle Seafood and friend.

NORTH SUFFOLK COMMUNITY SERVICES HOSTS BUILDING BRIDGES: A NIGHT OF MEDIUMSHIP FUNDRAISER

CARY SHUMAN PHOTOS



Andrea Stanford (left), CEO of Rise Above Sober Living, and Lindsey Whitehurst, Director of Operations.



The team of coaches at North Suffolk Community Services joins Scott Allan, The Boston Medium, for a photo at the fundraiser at the Cottage Park Yacht Club.



North Suffolk Community Services President and CEO Judi Lemoine delivers the welcoming remarks at the fundraiser. At left is psychic medium and author Scott Allan.



NSCS Board Member Yvonne Castaneda speaks at the fundraiser about her personal experiences in the field of addiction recovery.

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Red Sox Foundation goes to bat for Project Bread's 58th Walk for Hunger

Special to the Times Free Press

For the first time, the Red Sox Foundation — the official nonprofit of the Boston Red Sox — will serve as a sponsor of Project Bread's annual Walk for Hunger. The Foundation's generous support has backed Project Bread's Healthcare Partnerships program and The Walk for Hunger itself — reinforcing a shared commitment to ensuring every Massachusetts family has reliable access to nutritious food.

This year's Walk, set for Sunday, May 3, is expected to raise over \$1 million to fund Project Bread's proven statewide programs. Participants can join the 3-mile loop on the Boston Common or walk virtually in their own neighborhoods. The event begins at 9 a.m. with food, entertainment, and family-friendly activities. The fully accessible route accommodates walkers with mobility devices, young children, and those with special needs. ASL interpreters and multilingual staff will be on hand to ensure everyone can participate.

Now in its 58th year, The Walk for Hunger remains Project Bread's flagship community event, bringing together families, friends, and neighbors in a celebration of compassion and action. Launched in 1969 as the first pledge walk in the nation, the event has grown into one of New England's most beloved traditions for combating food insecurity.

"Every step we take at The Walk for Hunger is a step toward a future where no family has to worry about their next meal," says Erin McAleer, President & CEO of Project Bread. "Our walkers and supporters are turning their compassion into action. Together, we're not just walking — we're building a stronger, more food-secure Massachusetts."

The Red Sox Foundation is dedicated to improving the lives of youth, families, veterans, and communities across New England by expanding access to health, education, and recreational opportunities. Since 2002, the Foundation has leveraged the team's iconic brand and fan base to deliver year-round direct-ser-

vice programs—such as Red Sox Scholars, the Fenway Park Learning Lab, and Nike RBI leagues—while also supporting mission-aligned nonprofit organizations through grantmaking and strategic partnerships. Since 2025, the Foundation has deepened its commitment and partnership with Project Bread, supporting both its Healthcare Partnerships program and The Walk for Hunger. Through this thoughtful collaboration, Project Bread and its FoodSource Hotline program have also provided compassionate support and counsel to communities served by the Red Sox Foundation who have experienced food insecurity.

"Consistent access to nutritious food is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve," says Bekah Salwasser, Red Sox Foundation Executive Director and EVP, Social Impact, Boston Red Sox. "Our mission is rooted in expanding opportunity—whether through education, recreation, or health—and food security is critically important. We are proud to support Project Bread in addressing both immediate hunger needs and long-term systemic change."

Project Bread launched the joint-fundraising Commonwealth Program in 2019. Participating organizations receive 60% of the funds they raise to support their own hunger relief programs, with the remaining 40% contributing to Project Bread's broader statewide efforts. In 2025, 51 nonprofits raised more than \$200,000 through the Commonwealth Program.

These four Boston-based nonprofits are just some of the organizations participating in the Commonwealth Program this year.

- The American Red Cross - Boston Food Pantry (ARC - BFP) operates a high-volume, barrier-free food access system centered at its onsite pantry at 1033 Massachusetts Avenue in Boston. Programs include onsite and mobile food distributions, school-based pantry partnerships with Boston Public Schools, a satellite pantry partnership with NeighborHealth in East Boston, Food is Medicine initiatives with healthcare

partners, home delivery for seniors and homebound clients, monthly USDA Commodity Supplemental Food Program distributions, and an onsite Department of Transitional Assistance Benefits Kiosk supporting SNAP enrollment. The organization utilizes research, data and statewide insights from Project Bread to inform its programming and regularly connects clients to the nonprofit's FoodSource Hotline for food assistance navigation. The American Red Cross Boston Food Pantry is a member of the Make Hunger History Coalition, led by Project Bread, helping to advance solutions to end hunger permanently in Massachusetts.

A founding participant of the Commonwealth Program with more than 30 years of continuous involvement in the annual community fundraiser, the organization will use funds raised to support ongoing pantry operations, emergency food distribution and high-volume service delivery. This year, a team of 10 to 20 walkers will lace up for The Walk for Hunger on the Boston Common with a goal of raising \$1,000 to support hunger relief efforts.

"Food insecurity remains a persistent and growing challenge across the communities we serve, particularly among seniors and working families facing rising housing and healthcare costs," says David Andre, Director of the American Red Cross Boston Food Pantry. "Participating in The Walk for Hunger reflects our commitment to collective action, shared learning, and strengthening statewide efforts to ensure equitable food access for all Massachusetts residents."

- At Boston Latin Academy, addressing food insecurity is a critical part of supporting students' ability to learn, grow, and succeed both inside and outside the classroom. For the past four years, the school's Fresh Food Pick Up initiative has provided consistent access to fresh, healthy food for students and families, helping to remove barriers faced by many in their diverse and underserved community. Through their continued partnership with Project

Bread, Boston Latin Academy has expanded this work while engaging students, staff, and families in meaningful service. This year, led by Family Liaison Ms. Medina, a team of 25 to 40 participants will walk in person on Boston Common, proudly representing their school in coordinated black and gold, with a goal of raising \$5,000 to further expand food access programs, emergency grocery support, and essential resources for their community.

"Participating in The Walk for Hunger allows us to bring our entire school community together around a shared purpose," says Ms. Medina. "It's about raising awareness, taking action, and ensuring our students and families have the resources they need to thrive."

- For more than 50 years, The Paulist Center's Wednesday Night Supper Club has provided a welcoming space in Boston where neighbors experiencing homelessness and food insecurity can gather for a nutritious meal, companionship, and dignity. As the founding team of Project Bread's Walk for Hunger in 1969, The Paulist Center has remained deeply rooted in the event's mission, raising thousands of dollars annually to sustain its weekly meal program and related services, including distribution of hygiene items and seasonal clothing. This year, led by Sarah Branciforti, a team of 50 to 75 walkers will once again take to Boston Common in person, aiming to raise \$60,000 to support food purchases and essential supplies that keep their operations running while continuing to foster a strong sense of community among volunteers and guests alike.

"The Walk for Hunger is not only essential to sustaining our program, it's a meaningful way for our entire community to come together," says Branciforti. "It reflects our commitment to ensuring that everyone who walks through our doors is met with nourishment, dignity, and connection."

- Friday Night Supper Program, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving a hot, nutritious meal in a safe and dignified environment every Friday to anyone who

wants one. Based in Boston, the organization provides a restaurant-style dinner alongside access to a clothing and toiletry closet and pantry table, supporting individuals experiencing low income, homelessness and food insecurity. Through its weekly meal service, Friday Night Supper Program not only addresses immediate hunger but also fosters community, connection and dignity for all who attend, aligning with broader efforts to combat food insecurity across Massachusetts. This year, more than 20 walkers will participate in The Walk for Hunger at Boston Common. The team's goal is to raise \$8,333 to support weekly meal service, including the cost of food, kitchen supplies and essential equipment needed to serve guests consistently and with care.

"Our partnership with Project Bread has been both meaningful and impactful," says Aaidaliz Perez, Executive Director of Friday Night Supper Program. "Through The Walk for Hunger and The Commonwealth Program, we are able to raise critical funds while staying connected to a broader network committed to ending hunger. One of our most memorable experiences was walking alongside members of our community and even inviting guests to join us and cross the finish line together. It was a powerful reminder that this work is about more than meals—it's about community, dignity and shared purpose. This year, we look forward to building on that spirit and continuing to walk together in support of our mission."

To register as a participant for Project Bread's Walk for Hunger, or to support a walker or team with a donation, visit give.projectbread.org/walk. All individual walkers are encouraged to fundraise a minimum of \$25 and teams \$250. Participants who raise \$500 or more are recognized as Heart & Sole walkers and receive access to personalized fundraising support, exclusive event gear, free breakfast on Walk Day, and invitations to exclusive events.

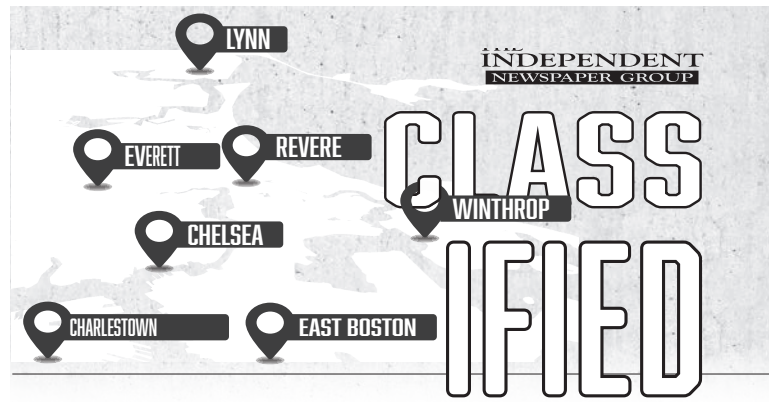
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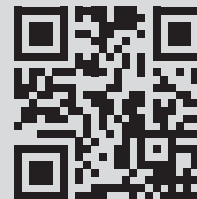
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Local leaders visit center to learn about severe flooding threats

Staff Report

State legislators visited the New England Produce Center in Chelsea last Friday to learn more about increasingly severe flooding that threatens the food supply for more than nine million people in New England and beyond.

The New England Produce Center is the largest wholesale produce market in the region and a cornerstone of the food supply chain, distributing fresh food to grocery stores, restaurants, schools, hospitals, and institutions across Greater Bos-

ton and throughout New England and the Canadian Maritime provinces.

The produce center sits in the floodplain of Island End River, a tidal tributary of the Mystic River that frequently overtops its banks. Flooding is growing more severe each year and will become catastrophic as sea levels rise.

Disruption to the produce center due to flooding would have consequences far beyond Chelsea and Everett, threatening regional food access, economic activity, and supply chain stability.



COURTESY PHOTO

Local legislators and city leaders visiting the New England Produce Center last Friday, April 24

Officials used the visit to highlight the importance of the Island End River Flood Resilience Project, which has been under development by the Cities of Chelsea and Everett for more than a decade to address this critical vulnerability. Developed in response to growing risks from storm surge and sea level rise, the project is designed to protect the produce center, thousands of residents in surrounding neighborhoods, and interconnected transportation and utility infrastructure.

The project includes a linear flood barrier, underground tidal gates to prevent and manage storm surge, and new public access improvements, including an elevated riverwalk, a new Island End Park, and restored wetland habitat.

The tour gave legislators an opportunity to hear directly from Chelsea City Manager Fidel Maltez, Everett Mayor

Robert J. Van Campen, and other local leaders about the urgency of advancing the project and the importance of sustained state and federal support to protect this critical regional asset.

“This visit made clear that protecting the New England Produce Center is not just a local priority, but a regional imperative,” said Chelsea City Manager Fidel Maltez. “For more than a decade, Chelsea and Everett have been advancing the Island End River Flood Resilience Project because we understand what is at stake. This project protects critical food infrastructure, strengthens supply chain resilience, safeguards surrounding communities, and represents the kind of forward-looking investment we need to meet the challenges of climate change.”

Everett Mayor Robert Van Campen said the flooding we see along the Island End River

is not just a future threat.

“It is happening now, and it is getting worse,” Van Campen said. “Residents, businesses, and critical regional infrastructure like the New England Produce Center are all at risk. Chelsea and Everett have been driving this project forward for more than a decade, and we are grateful for the opportunity to show our state partners firsthand why this investment matters so much to our communities and the region.”

Participants in the tour included Senator Sal DiDomenico and members of the Massachusetts Joint Committee on Emergency Preparedness and Management and the Joint Committee on Federal Funding and Accountability. Committee members in attendance included Representatives Kathy Lannatra, Kate Donaghue, Steve Ultrino, Estela Reyes, and Jeffrey Turco.

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