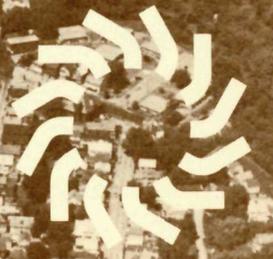




Aerial view of Lowell by Jack Woolner, photographer

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management

# Lowell Heritage State Park



# Lowell Has A Vision

Lowell is like many other post-industrial cities throughout Massachusetts. Until recently it shared most of the problems associated with these cities — loss of jobs, deteriorating downtowns, loss of population and direction. However, unlike many of these cities, the citizens of Lowell have a vision today that will give it direction for the future. The people of Lowell have recognized the unique historical features of their city and are working with the Commonwealth to create an exciting Heritage State Park which will preserve and interpret the history of Lowell, provide a recreational amenity for local and state residents and create a setting for new economic growth. This vision represents a unique opportunity for the federal government to join in this creative process with both the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the

City of Lowell in restoring the proud heritage of Lowell, once known as the industrial capital of the United States.

The City of Lowell, located at the confluence of the Merrimack and Concord Rivers, contains 12 miles of riverbank and five miles of power

canals. These rivers and canals are the features around which Heritage State Park is being developed . . . providing areas for bicycling, boating and walking, thereby interpreting Lowell's past and present from the perspective of its waterways.

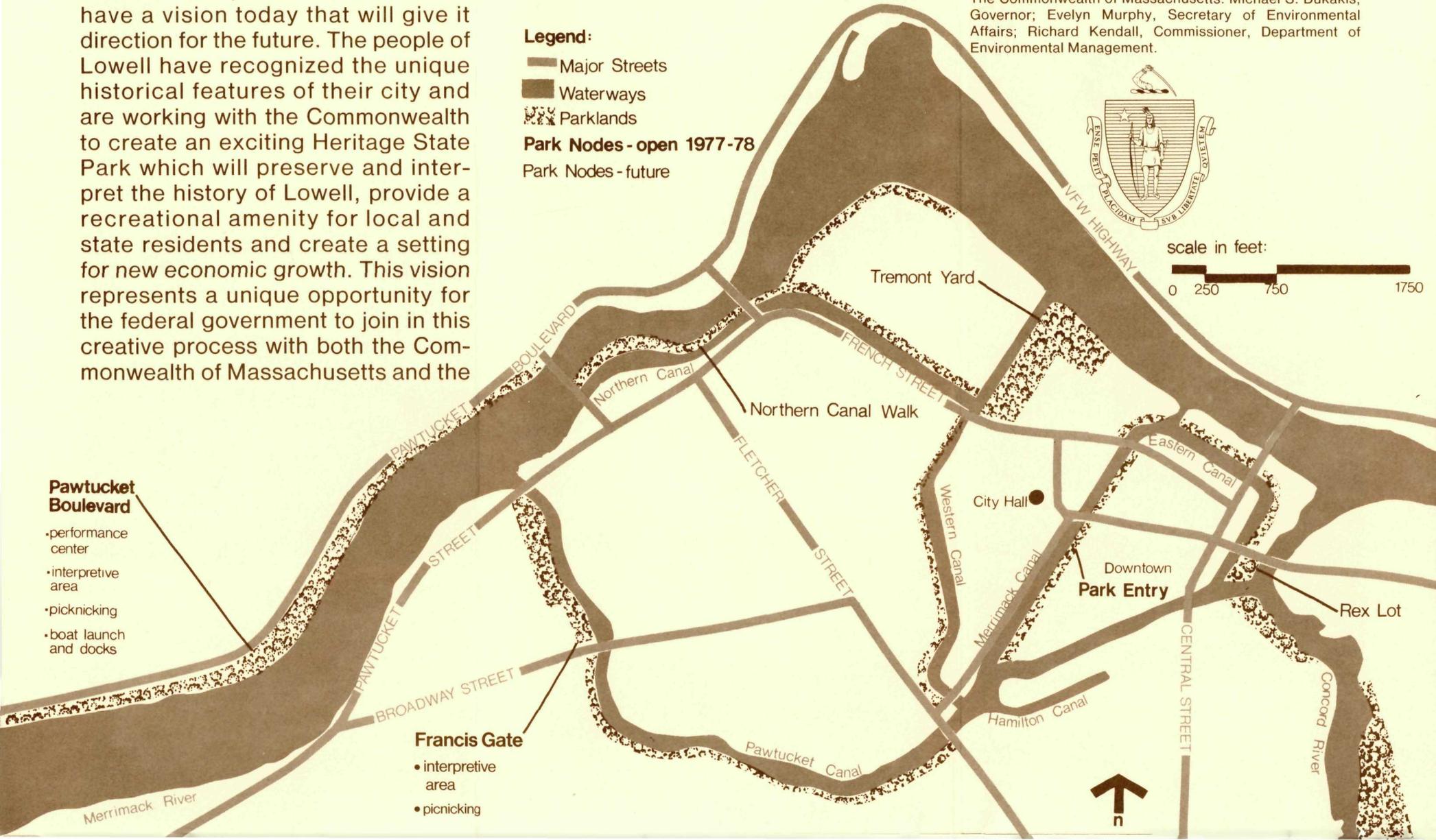
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Michael S. Dukakis, Governor; Evelyn Murphy, Secretary of Environmental Affairs; Richard Kendall, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Management.

## Legend:

-  Major Streets
-  Waterways
-  Parklands

## Park Nodes - open 1977-78

Park Nodes - future



## Pawtucket Boulevard

- performance center
- interpretive area
- picknicking
- boat launch and docks

## Francis Gate

- interpretive area
- picnicking



**Progress Today Is But A Prelude**

Courtesy of Lowell Team

### Behind the Scenes

With careful thought and design Lowell's fragile resources, its neighborhood and its historic features, are being enhanced by the park. Each visible sign of park development, such as construction of a performance center, renovation of an old mill, demolition of an obsolete structure, or landscaping, is the product of many months of careful planning and hard work by a number of individuals. Representatives from the Department of Environmental Management meet frequently with local members of the park's Interpretive and Steering Committees to discuss every phase of the park, to study plans, and to suggest alternatives. These advisory committees represent not only City Hall, but such diverse interests as the University of Lowell, the Lowell Museum, the Cultural and Historical Commissions, the business community and various citizen groups. The Lowell Heritage State Park is the product of the ideas and initiatives of all these people.

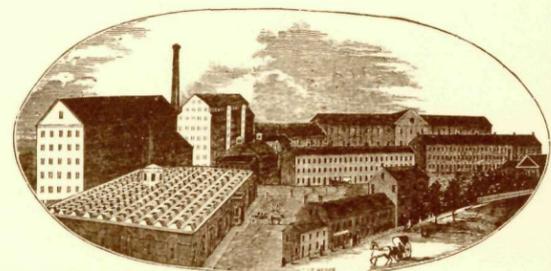
### Francis Gate Park

Completed in 1976, Francis Gate Park offers 12.2 acres of landscaped bicycle and walking paths bordering the Pawtucket Canal. Together with the renovated Gate House, this park will serve as a prototype for the remaining sites in the Heritage State Park which will function as an integral part of the city. Additional land along the canal will be acquired at a later date. Francis Gate Park has become the setting for the adaptive reuse of an historic structure to provide housing for the elderly.



David Raphael, photographer

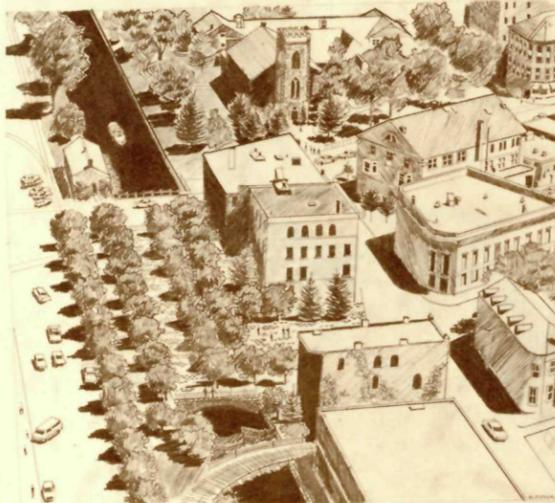
James B. Francis, Chief Engineer of Locks and Canal Co., designed Francis Gate to prevent serious flooding in the city. In 1852 and again in 1936 this gate has saved Lowell from serious disaster.



Lowell Co. Mills

### The Park Entrance

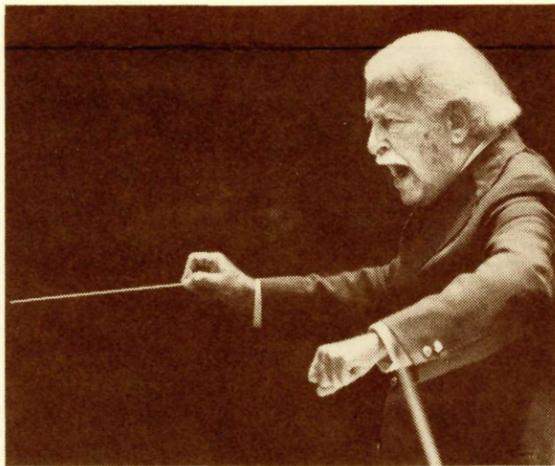
In the heart of downtown Lowell, a park will be located along the Middlesex Canal which will serve as the focal point and main entrance to the Heritage State Park. In 1835 the Boston and Lowell Railroad constructed a depot on this site, one of the first in the nation. During Lowell's first years, public entertainment, lectures, ecclesiastical and popular music recitals were held in Huntington Hall located on the site, and also in the adjacent Wentworth block. Though Huntington Hall and the depot were removed in later years, this historic site was selected for the entrance to the park because it still remains the cornerstone of the commercial and business district and will serve as a catalyst for continued downtown revitalization. Historic granite arches spanning the Merrimack have already been uncovered at the site, and will be incorporated into the park design.



Located on the edge of the site is the Mack Building, a four story brick structure built in 1870. Following extensive interior and exterior restoration, this building will be adapted for use as a park visitor's center. Here exhibits and displays will familiarize visitors with the historic features of the entire Heritage State Park.

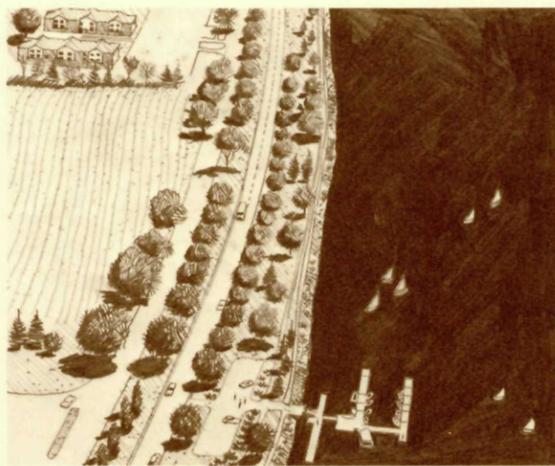
### Pawtucket Boulevard

Pawtucket Boulevard stretches approximately 1.4 miles along the Merrimack riverbank and borders an outstanding section of the river upstream of Pawtucket Falls. It is easily accessible to Lowell's downtown and is becoming "The Esplanade" of Lowell.



Courtesy of Lowell Sun, Arthur Pollack Photographer

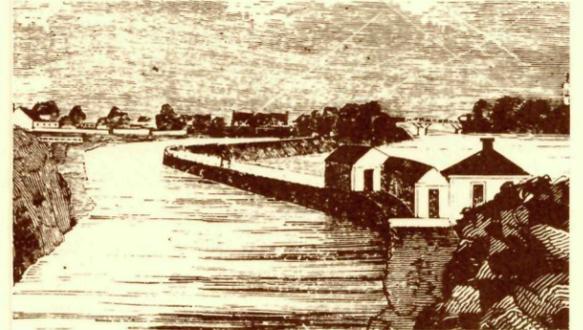
The Charles G. Sampas Performing Arts Pavilion, completed in 1976, has been the setting for fireworks, regattas and concerts, and performances of Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops. The bicycle and walking paths, lighting, bench details, picnicking facilities soon to be under construction will reflect 19th century park design.



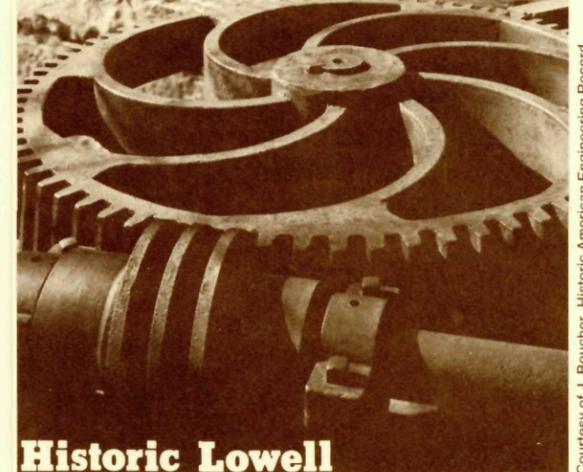
### Tremont Yard

The Northern Canal (completed in 1847) and the Western Canal (completed in 1832) intersect in the Tremont Yard area. When the two-level Western Canal was built it flowed from the Pawtucket Canal north to the Merrimack River. After the Northern Canal was completed, the flow of the water in the Western Canal from this junction south to the Pawtucket Canal was reversed. The northern end of the Tremont Yard, where the Western Canal changes from upper to lower level, is a good spot to view a section of Lowell's efficient two-level canal system.

### Northern Canal Walk



This walk, almost one-half mile in length, will be recreated to once again afford visitors a spectacular view of the Merrimack River, Pawtucket Falls, the Northern Canal and its gatehouses. Years ago it was a popular Sunday activity to stroll along the Northern Canal which was "... lined with a double colonnade of trees, tastefully laid out, with green plants, and beautiful summer promenades."



**Historic Lowell**

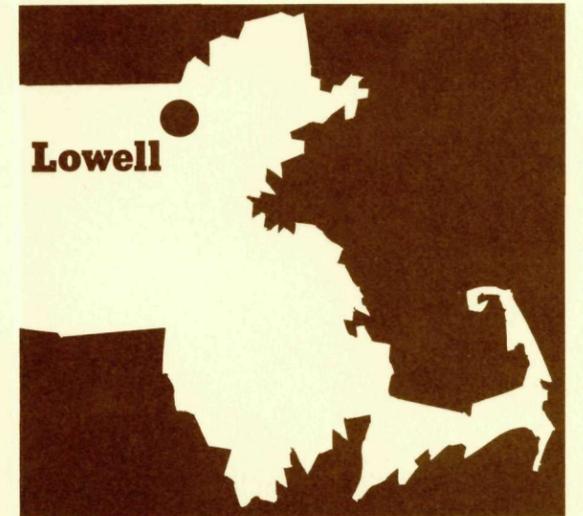
Courtesy of J. Boucher, Historic American Engineering Record

Long before the first English explorers saw wigwams along the Merrimack in 1652, thousands of Native Americans caught their winter's store of fish at this ancient capital and meeting place of the Pawtucket Indian nation.

In the 18th century, the Merrimack River was used to ship logs, lumber, and farm products to Newburyport. The Pawtucket Canal was completed in 1796 to bypass the rocks and rapids of Pawtucket Falls. However, the completion of the Middlesex Canal in 1803, linking the Merrimack River above Lowell to the Charles River at Charlestown, diverted most of the Pawtucket Canal's trade to the larger market at Boston.

In the early 19th century, the associates of Francis Cabot Lowell, recognizing the tremendous power-producing potential (up to 12,000 HP) of the 32 foot drop in elevation along the Pawtucket Falls, began the creation of the complex system of power canals, textile mills and neighborhoods which was to become America's first great industrial city.

The cotton factories in this city not only played a major role in introducing manufacturing into a national economy based on agriculture and commerce, but also served as a precursor for the modern corporation and the mass production process. The mills, canals, and workers of Lowell helped to make the United States the greatest industrial nation in the world.



### Putting Lowell Back On The Map

Lowell's creation, development and transition to a post-industrial economy is a uniquely American story that needs telling. The citizens of Lowell and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have a vision for the future, a Heritage State Park and a National Cultural Park, which will put Lowell back on the map.



For additional information about the park contact the Department of Environmental Management, Division of Forests and Parks, Region II Headquarters, 817 Lowell Road Carlisle, Mass. 01741 Telephone: (617) 369-5143