

Boston

South Boston

The Lawn on D: A Place to Grab Drinks, Play Bocce, and Listen to Tunes

It's basically a playground for adults.

By [Steve Annear](#) | [Boston Daily](#) | August 11, 2014 8:29 am



IMAGE VIA SASAKI ASSOCIATES

Soon, Bostonians will have a new place to get together to enjoy adult beverages at an outdoor bar, play rounds of Bocce ball, hear tunes from local musicians, and view a rotating display of art that showcases the city's vast pool of talent.

On August 15 and 16, after four months of expedited construction, [“The Lawn on D,”](#) an [“experimental” 2.7-acre renovated park space](#) that runs alongside the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, will officially open to the public with a series of back-to-back kick-off celebrations.

“Within the community there’s been a longstanding request for some outdoor open space. We were mindful of that, and we made a commitment we would try to address that,” said Jim Rooney, executive director of the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, which oversees operations of the BCEC in South Boston. “On top of that, having this outdoor space is a good marketing tool for us.”

The multipurpose space, perfectly situated in the Innovation District, will allow BCEC officials to host outdoor events associated with conventions that come to the city, while also offering residents and workers a social experience where they can take in innovative forms of entertainment.

The BCEC has teamed up with a host of local organizations like MakeMusic, who will find musicians to take the stage regularly, and Medicine Wheel Productions, which promotes and shares the “transcendent power of public art.”

The Lawn on D will feature seasonally changing programming, much of which will be based on community feedback. The types of entertainment will fall under four categories: D Street ArtLAB, D Street Games, D Street LIVE, and D Street Music.

Rooney envisions opening up the space, which can fit 3,000 people, to larger concert-type events over the course of September and October. There will also be Bocce tournaments, Frisbee, cornhole, and free Internet access.

The Lawn on D follows in the footsteps of other nearby parks locations aimed at harboring public interaction like the Rose Kennedy Greenway. But Rooney said what’s different about the BCEC’s space is that they were able to secure a liquor license to serve alcohol, Thursday through Sundays, from their on-site bar, and their recreational offerings will be a bit off the cuff.

“People can come out and experience a different kind of place. Some artwork will go in there, some live entertainment, a tent with regular programmed entertainment,” said Rooney.

It also sets itself apart because of its transformative nature, he said, and acts as a sort of science project for the people who run the BCEC and corresponding social gatherings tied to the venue.

“The idea is to experiment a little bit,” said Rooney. “This is a nice space, but it will transform when we actually do the [BCEC] expansion.”

In July, Governor Deval Patrick signed legislation to authorize a 1.3 million-square-foot expansion of the BCEC, including substantial additions to the exhibit and meeting space, and a second, larger ballroom, since the center has become a major driving force for generating revenue for Boston due to contracts locked in for major conventions.

As the BCEC transforms, so too will The Lawn on D, offering more space for visitors to unwind.

“The way we think about this, when we built the building that exists, the whole expansion and the plans going forward are about place-making and the coolness factor,” said Rooney. “This really fits into that broader objective that the city has for the emergence of the South Boston waterfront.”

For more information about [The Lawn on D](#) visit [their website](#), which will be updated with event schedules and hours of operation.

http://www.bostonmagazine.com/news/blog/2014/08/11/lawn-on-d-boston-opening/?utm_source=iContact&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Boston%20Daily&utm_content=

