



July 29, 2026

Dear Members of the Wilmington City Planning Commission,

The Olmsted Network encourages thoughtful stewardship of Bancroft Parkway, an important Olmsted Brothers-designed landscape and public asset for the City of Wilmington.

Our mission is to champion Olmsted parks, places, and principles because access to beautiful, healthy public green space strengthens communities. Olmsted landscapes were designed to give all residents access to nature, recreation, and places that support health, connection, and quality of life. Today, these landscapes also function as critical infrastructure, improving walkability, supporting climate resilience, and contributing to the vitality of surrounding neighborhoods.

As development pressure increases near Bancroft Parkway, it will raise the stakes for how the parkway is used and maintained. In cities where high-density development has risen around a signature public green space—Fort Greene Park in Brooklyn, for example—proximity to that space becomes a premium amenity reflected in rent, while the burden of maintaining it falls on the public, uncoordinated with the private development driving the increased use. **We encourage the Commission to strongly consider the parkway's long-term stewardship and maintenance so that increased use doesn't outpace the resources available to sustain it.**

Historic landscapes are among a community's most valuable civic resources. Their defining qualities—openness, scale, beauty, accessibility, and connection to surrounding neighborhoods—cannot easily be recreated. At a time when many Olmsted-designed parkways have been altered or lost, Wilmington's intact Olmsted parkway is a remarkable civic asset worthy of lasting care and investment.

Thank you for your commitment to Wilmington's public landscapes,

Sue Breitkopf
President

PARKS, PLACES & PEOPLE