



ROSLINDALE SQUARE SMALL AREA PLAN

SQUARES + STREETS

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CITY OF BOSTON PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Boston's Planning Department was established by Mayor Wu in 2024 to restore planning as a core function of City government and to shape growth that serves Boston's residents and centers their needs. Our mission is to address our City's greatest challenges: resilience, affordability, and equity; we take real estate actions and prioritize planning, development, and urban design solutions that further these priorities. We seek to build trust with communities through transparent processes that embrace predictable growth.

The Planning Department's purpose is to: develop comprehensive short and long term plans for Boston's built environment, establish a consistent and predictable zoning code for the city, advance exceptional and inclusive design standards, provide predictability to guide development that is responsive to community needs, and plan for the effective use of public real estate.

The information provided in this report is the best available at the time of publication. This draft plan was published by the Planning Department in November 2024.

All or partial use of this report must be cited.



Visit our website
bit.ly/roslindale-square

LETTER FROM THE CHIEF OF PLANNING



Dear Neighbor:

The City of Boston Planning Department is pleased to share the Squares + Streets Roslindale Square Small Area Plan, which sets a clear vision and set of expectations for public investment and future development in this neighborhood center. Since February 2024, the Roslindale community has worked with the City of Boston Planning Department to shape this document into what we believe will allow the neighborhood to grow while also retaining its unique history and character. Staff have been working diligently with the community to ensure new investments in Roslindale Square serve current and future residents and will create a resilient, affordable, and equitable neighborhood.

Residents, business owners, and visitors have expressed a deep sense of community in Roslindale Square and admire its history of economic and social resilience. In this document, you will see recommendations specific to the needs of Roslindale Square, like the expansion of publicly accessible open space and safer pedestrian crossings resulting from intersection redesigns on Washington Street and Belgrade Avenue; opportunities to leverage public and private land for housing and other public amenities that support the vitality of the business district; placemaking & cultural activation opportunities in the newly completed Birch Street Plaza and alongside Adams Park, and much more. Several recommendations address the challenges of both residential and commercial stability within Roslindale Square, including strategies to mitigate displacement. Many recommendations came directly from Roslindale Square community members, and others were developed based on the vision for a future Square that stakeholders communicated to us.

Through this Plan, community members, private and public developers, City and interagency staff, and other stakeholders will have a common vision and framework to work toward. We invite you to partner with us to realize the vision outlined in this document, and we look forward to pursuing and implementing this Plan together.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this process,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kairos Shen', written in a fluid, cursive style.

Kairos Shen, Chief of Planning

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Roslindale Square Squares + Streets Small Area Plan is the result of several months of Planning Department and other City departments' commitment to delivering one of the first Plans completed under the new City of Boston Planning Department. This Plan was developed as a result of hundreds of community members' involvement to provide insight on their experiences and visions for the future. To all of the individuals, families, business owners, young people, advocates, and community group leaders - thank you for contributing your time to this planning process!

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Councilor Julia Mejia, *at-large*

Councilor Erin Murphy, *at-large*

Rob Consalvo, *State Representative*

Michael Rush, *State Senator*



BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S
FAULKNER HOSPITAL

P
PARKING

WELCOME TO
ROSLINDALE
CITY OF BOSTON
MAYOR LEWIS

NO U-TURN

VOTE

CHAPTER 01

INTRODUCTION

This chapter defines the characteristics of Squares + Streets areas, which are the city's mixed-use and transit-oriented neighborhood centers. It explains the goals and outcomes of the Roslindale Square Small Area Plan, and summarizes how the Plan fits into the context of past planning work in Roslindale.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THIS PLAN

WHAT THIS PLAN DOES:



PROPOSES PROJECTS AND RECOMMENDED COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Recommends public realm enhancements, transportation improvements, streetscape upgrades, and policies to revitalize vacant spaces and strengthen the neighborhood's vibrancy by drawing more residents and visitors.



DEFINES A COMMUNITY VISION

Establishes a shared vision for the future of Roslindale Square, driven by the input and aspirations of residents, local business owners, service providers, and other stakeholders.



RECOMMENDS POLICIES AND TOOLS

Recommends regulatory and policy tools such as zoning updates, business development strategies, and other measures to foster sustainable growth and opportunity.

- Some Recommendations are fulfilled through private development or in collaboration with community groups. The realization of these recommendations may be affected by future market conditions or other unforeseen circumstances, but serve to guide these opportunities when they arise.

WHAT THIS PLAN DOES NOT DO:

MANDATE SPECIFIC USES OR PROJECTS ON PRIVATE LAND

It does not prescribe exact uses or developments for privately owned properties, leaving room for flexibility and future decision-making.

GUARANTEE A FULL BUILD-OUT

A future zoning map amendment for Roslindale Square does not mean that the entire rezoned area will be redeveloped.

REQUIRE SPECIFIC LOCATIONS FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for private development in Roslindale, including proposed locations and types of development, are not mandated by this Plan.

OVERVIEW OF SQUARES + STREETS



WHAT IS SQUARES + STREETS?

Squares + Streets is a citywide planning and zoning initiative that focuses on creating, preserving, and improving housing, public space, small businesses, arts + culture, and transportation in Boston's transit-served neighborhood centers outside of downtown.

These neighborhood centers are mixed-use, where housing is located either directly above or near businesses, allowing many residents to get around without a car. They are also identified as places for growth to meet current and future housing demand while responding to needs identified in past planning processes. Squares + Streets areas represent opportunities to make place-based investments across many City departments.

WHAT IS A SMALL AREA PLAN?

Small Area Plans (SAPs) are place-specific plans, usually completed within a period of 6-12 months, that address local issues. Squares + Streets SAPs in particular focused on small mixed-use, transit-served geographies. They identify near-term investment priorities through community engagement, and outline recommendations on a 5-10 year time horizon that direct funds for physical investment, policy tools, and City programs to planning areas.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF SQUARES + STREETS?

Mayor Wu announced the Squares + Streets Initiative in January 2023 with the following goals to:

Ensure every Bostonian has access to neighborhoods with everyday resources and services

Provide more housing to support Boston's current and future residents

Pair housing growth with areas that supply an abundance of commercial, civic, cultural, and transportation resources to expand benefits beyond access to housing

Deliver zoning reform to transit-accessible hubs to support contextual growth in housing and commercial uses

Coordinate near-term investments across City Departments that address a range of needs, including transportation and open space improvements, small business supports, and cultural activation opportunities.

ROSLINDALE SQUARE PLAN AREA

WHY ROSLINDALE SQUARE?

Roslindale Square, an existing mixed-use neighborhood center, is located approximately 6 miles south of downtown Boston. The Needham branch of the Commuter Rail provides a direct connection to South Station and Back Bay from the Roslindale Village station. It is located 2 miles south of the Forest Hills Orange Line station and served by 10 local bus lines that provide access to several other commercial centers, including Cleary Square in Hyde Park, Mattapan Square, and the Dedham Mall.

Relatively low population density in this area compared to areas with similar transit service presents an opportunity to bring more residents closer to existing transit in this part of the city.

As a neighborhood center that serves a racially and ethnically diverse community, there is great opportunity to attract more foot traffic and offer a variety of housing options to support a thriving local business district.



ROSLINDALE SQUARE PLAN AREA

The Roslindale Square primary plan area is a 1/3-mile circle around the intersection of South and Poplar streets. A future zoning map amendment will not include this entire area and may extend slightly outside the primary study area.

The planning area includes the main commercial core served by Roslindale Village Main Streets (RVMS), Adams Park at the center, and the Roslindale Village stop on the Needham branch of the Commuter Rail.

The study area is referenced in this document as "Roslindale Square", "the Square", "the study area", and "the planning area". Unless otherwise noted, these terms refer to this plan area map.



PAST PLANS, STUDIES, AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

For many years, the City of Boston and its partners have studied and planned for the future development of Roslindale. Key themes from previous Plans, such as revitalizing vacant properties, improving accessibility and connectivity, and preserving the neighborhood's historic charm, continue to shape and inform the current vision for Roslindale's growth. This new Plan builds on those past efforts.

ROSLINDALE NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGIC PLAN

The Roslindale Neighborhood Strategic Plan, developed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (now the Planning Department), was adopted in September 2007. The Plan outlines goals to make Roslindale an attractive, safe, diverse, and family-friendly neighborhood.

Key objectives include offering diverse housing options, preserving historic character, supporting Roslindale Square as a vibrant commercial hub, protecting open spaces, improving transportation options, and promoting green development. In 2008,

the Plan's recommendations were reflected in new zoning (Article 67), which is now being updated to address evolving community needs through a draft zoning map amendment for Roslindale Square.

ROSLINDALE SQUARE PARKING AND CURB ACCESS PLAN

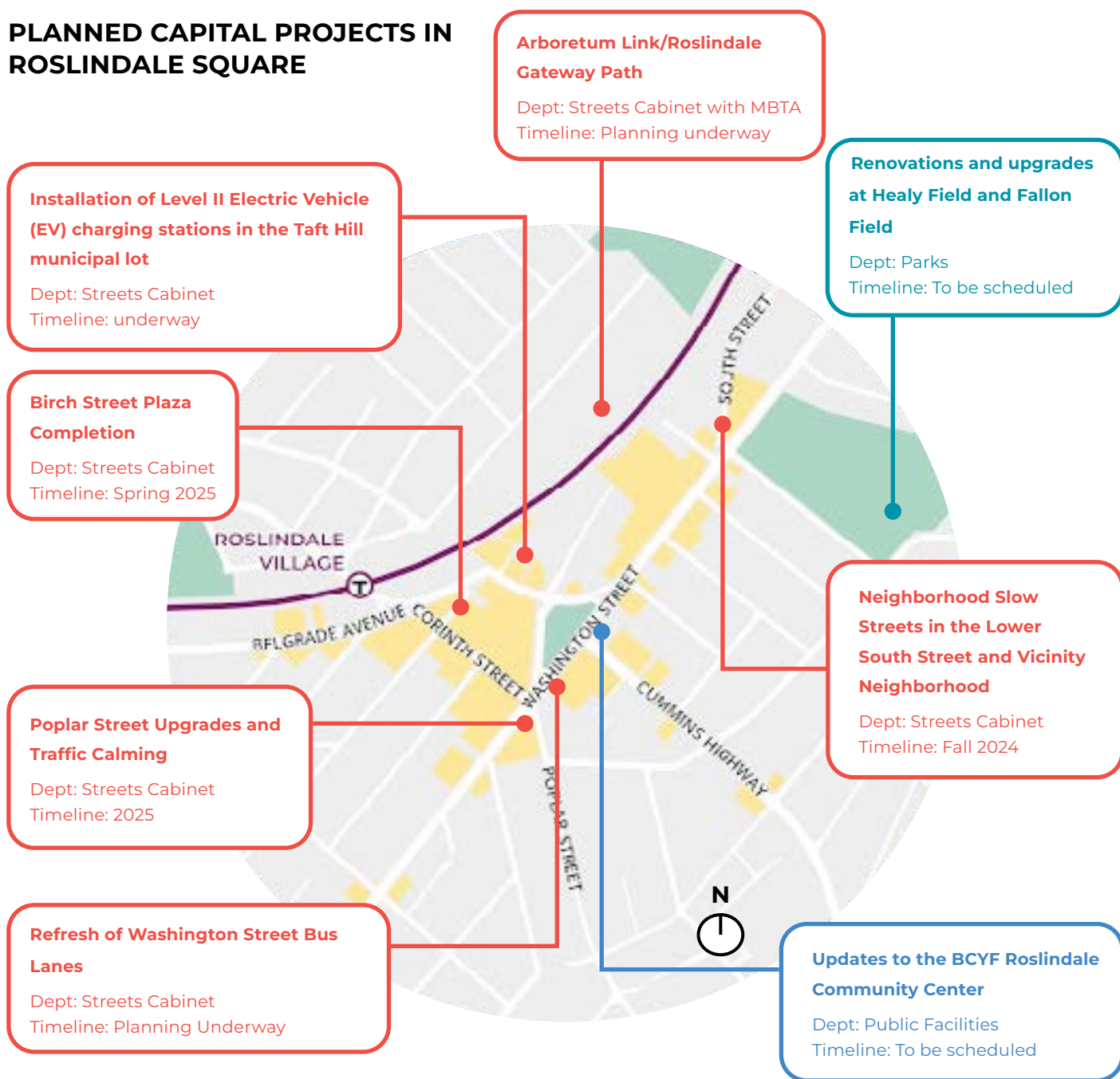
To improve efficiency and accessibility of parking in Roslindale Square, the City of Boston Transportation Department (BTD) published the Roslindale Square Parking and Curb Access Plan in March 2023 (updated in May 2023). The Plan recommendations, including considerations for maintaining short-term parking access for small businesses, are based on findings from the Roslindale Parking Study and Roslindale Business Survey. Public parking lot and curbside regulation changes are anticipated to be implemented in the next couple of years - including the installation of new multi-space meters - after a citywide parking meter replacement is complete in FY 2026.



EXISTING CAPITAL PROJECTS

Squares + Streets Plans aim to align recommendations with existing capital projects and investments. Identifying these projects is also a way to avoid conflicting or duplicative investments. A list of planned, ongoing and recently completed capital projects that respond to existing community needs and City priorities are as follows:

PLANNED CAPITAL PROJECTS IN ROSLINDALE SQUARE



LEGEND

Streets Cabinet Parks Public Facilities

HISTORICAL CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

Roslindale's historical context is essential to planning for its future, as it provides a foundation for preserving its heritage while addressing modern needs.



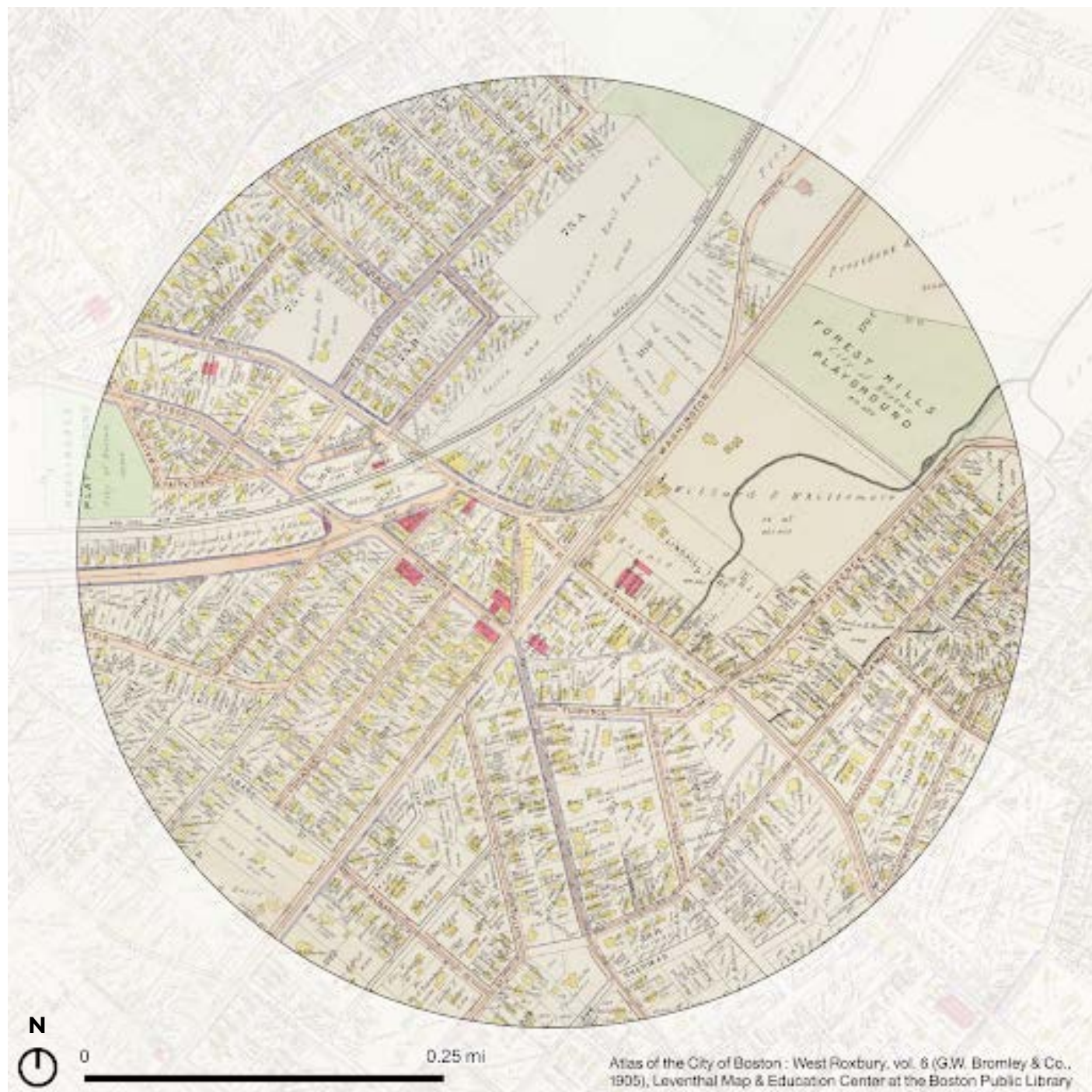
View along South Street, 1948. (Source: Boston City archives)

Originally an agricultural community in the 19th century, Roslindale transformed into a vibrant suburban neighborhood with the arrival of railroads, becoming a key part of Boston's growth. Its distinctive "village" feel, historic architecture, and diverse community are legacies of this past.

The Roslindale area was inhabited and traveled by the Massachusetts tribe for thousands of years prior to the arrival of European colonists. Permanent settlement remained sparse until the late 19th century, when the commercial and civic uses

that characterize the core of Roslindale Square today began to take shape. Roslindale, originally incorporated as part of the town of West Roxbury in 1851, was established as its own neighborhood in 1870 when Roslindale received its own postal district and name.

By 1874, Roslindale was officially annexed to the City of Boston. During this period, horsecar railways, later replaced by streetcar service in 1896, led to the development of Roslindale Square as a 'railroad village'.



Roslindale Square in the early 20th century (Source: "Atlases of the City of Boston," 1905 by G. W. Bromley & Co. Leventhal Map & Education Center at the Boston Public Library)



COBLEIGH BLOCK IN 1988

Source: Office of Historic Preservation



COBLEIGH BLOCK CIRCA 2013

The Square operated as an important local commercial center until mid-20th century suburbanization, which drew people to larger shopping plazas and homes outside of the city. The photograph of South Street in 1948 reflects the height of mid-20th century Roslindale Square as a bustling, transit-oriented commercial district prior to this shift in land use and lifestyle patterns.

In the 1970s, Roslindale Square - like many urban districts across the city - faced decline even as the neighborhood population remained stable due to an influx of immigrants, primarily from Greece. In 1985, then- City Councilor Thomas M. Menino brought the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program to Roslindale, establishing one of the first urban Main Street



THE SUBSTATION IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Source: Historic Preservation, Inc.



THE SUBSTATION TODAY

districts in the nation and the first in Boston proper. Roslindale Village Main Streets is roughly centered around the commercial core of Roslindale Square, extending along Washington Street between Firth Road and Kittredge Street and west to the intersection of South and Corinth streets. Still functioning as the heart of Roslindale today and home to many immigrants, there are several commercial and civic uses surrounding the Square,

some of which have continued the use of historic structures and spaces, including the Cobleigh Block on Belgrade Avenue (which houses many businesses including a cafe, brewery, and hair salon), The Substation, and Adams Park.

A full context of the history of Roslindale Square through the lens of the built environment is found in Appendix IV, Roslindale Historic Context Study.



CHAPTER 02

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This chapter summarizes the result of over 30 community engagement events led or attended by the Planning Department that shaped the Plan for Roslindale Square. This chapter highlights the central themes that emerged from stakeholder input and the ways that the team engaged with hard-to-reach populations.

A Full Engagement Report, including a summary of themes and engagement events, can be found in Appendix I.

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

PRE-LAUNCH ENGAGEMENT

JAN/FEB 2024

Met with community members and stakeholders to learn about Roslindale's history & understand neighborhood context and priorities



250+ participants at the kick-off open house hosted at The Substation in Roslindale Square



120+ attendees at the housing and small business & zoning educational workshops

40+ conversations with community members at weekly office hours hosted at Workhub in The Substation

TIMELINE

Canvassed 200+ businesses in Roslindale Square as part of a business inventory

30+ attendees at 2 coffee hours hosted at the local library branch and community center

15 attendees at a Spanish-language Squares + Streets meeting held at the Menino Center in Archdale BHA

Participated in 4 ESL classes at the Casserly House and ABCD, reaching approximately 50 students.

16+ pre-kick-off stakeholder interviews with service providers, neighborhood associations, elected officials, and business owners



LISTENING AND LEARNING

MARCH-APRIL 2024

Held multiple formal and informal engagement events to educate & share information with community members so they could be better positioned to participate in the planning process



50 participants at a transportation and public realm walkshop in Roslindale Square, ending at Midnight Morning to warm up

VISIONING + PLAN DRAFTING

APR-JUN 2024

Continued working with the community to narrow down specific priorities and translate those priorities into Plan recommendations with other City of Boston Departments

2 dedicated small business focus groups and Spanish-language business walk

Engagement report-out meeting and community + cultural assets mapping exercise

SQUARES + STREETS

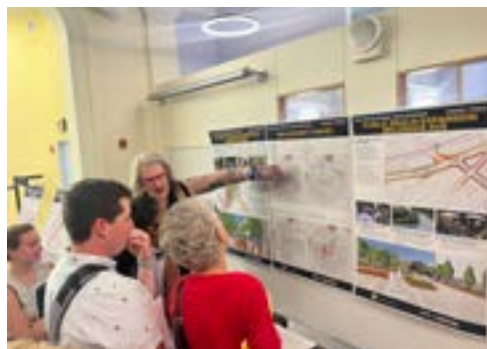
WHAT CREATES A SENSE OF PLACE
IN ROSLINDALE SQUARE?



Hosted 2 visioning sessions with 60+ attendees to determine community priorities across a range of topics and how to connect priorities to actionable recommendations



100+ touchpoints at pop-ups located at the library, bus stops, the Farmer's Market, Archdale BHA cookout, and the Summer School



150+ attendees at an in-person 'ideas reception' and pop-up at the library where draft recommendation ideas were presented to the community for the first time

300+ responses to hard copy and online survey to collect feedback on draft recommendations

TIMELINE

COMMUNITY VETTING

JUL-SEPT 2024

Presented the first draft of Plan recommendations to the Roslindale community and asked for feedback to understand what we got right & what we missed.

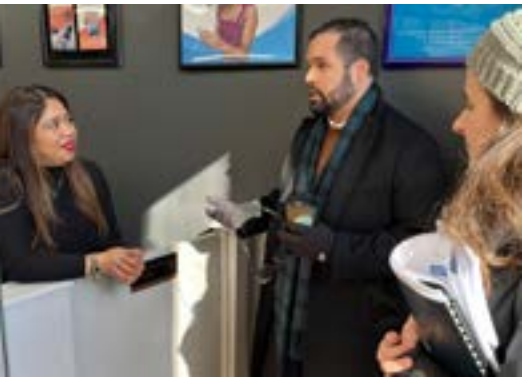
Completed 3 small business walks around Roslindale Square to hear feedback on draft ideas from business owners, including one walk for Spanish-speaking business owners



REVISING + FINALIZING PLAN

DEC 2024 - FEB 2025

Release the first draft Roslindale Squares + Streets Plan for public review on December 13, 2024.
Anticipated February BPDA Board meeting vote on the final Plan for adoption.



Spanish language meeting
at Guira y Tambora
and Spanish-speaking business owner walk
co-hosted with Councilor Pepén's Office

*Virtual public meeting to review the draft Plan on January 8, 2025, attended by over **100 community members***

Draft Plan is released December 13, 2024, starting a 50-day comment period ending January 31, 2025

Small business walk
- in both English and Spanish - on January 16, 2025 to collect business owners' and employee feedback on the draft Plan



DRAFT ZONING MAP RELEASE AND REFINEMENT

FEB 2025 - MAY 2025

Release the first draft zoning map amendment for Roslindale Square in February 2025, followed by several public meetings, office hours, and business walks before revising the map for BPDA Board and Zoning Commission adoption

FACILITATING EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION

Roslindale is a linguistically and racially diverse community, and the engagements summarized below encapsulate the team's efforts to reach a more diverse audience during the planning process.

Hosting an equitable process means that participants in Roslindale Square Squares + Streets engagements are representative of the neighborhood and inclusive of groups who historically have not been engaged in planning processes. Traditional meetings with pre-registration tend to attract fewer participants from low-income and BIPOC communities. To address this, staff have intentionally conducted numerous pop-ups, coffee hours, and focus groups at various times of day and days of the week/weekend to engage more diverse groups.

The following engagement activities were targeted to hear from Roslindale's Spanish-speaking communities, low-income households, immigrants, and BIPOC individuals. In order to meet these groups where they are at, staff attended existing community events and coordinated with scheduled programming/classes.



SPANISH-LANGUAGE MEETINGS

The team hosted 2 Spanish-language meetings to invite Spanish-speakers into the process - one in collaboration with Archdale BHA to introduce Squares + Streets and one meeting in collaboration with Councilor Peppen's office to get feedback on the draft Plan.



ESL ENGAGEMENT

Staff and interpreters attended 4 ESL classes at the Casserly House and ABCD, providing an opportunity for primarily Spanish and Haitian Creole-speaking students to learn about Squares + Streets and complete an activity about what they love and want to see improved in the Square.



POP-UPS AND TABLING

Pop-ups at Archdale events, the Sumner School, library, and bus stops expanded outreach to more residents - especially those who speak a language other than English - who cannot attend longer meetings or do not feel comfortable in those spaces. Spanish-speaking staff were present at all of these pop-ups.



BUSINESS WALKS

Staff facilitated 7 business walks throughout the planning process - including 4 in Spanish facilitated by Spanish-speaking staff - to reach business owners and hear feedback on the planning area and draft recommendations directly from them.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Below is a summary of community feedback on the strengths of the small business environment, diverse population, and community spirit in Roslindale Square as well as challenges related to drawing foot traffic, mitigating urban heat, and pedestrian safety. In conjunction with existing conditions analysis summarized at the beginning of each recommendation section, the needs communicated by the community are critical inputs for developing place-based recommendations.

We want variety in building heights + materials support for front yards/porches/balconies

Visioning Session

I love living in Roslindale Square because small business owners make an effort to connect with their customers

Kick-off madlibs activity

Public art all along Washington Street!

Visioning Session

It's still a downtown with everything you need!

Spring Survey

I would love to see the Square have more neighborhood activity over more hours of the day and night.

Spring Survey

Improve traffic patterns around Wash St/Poplar/Adams park for pedestrian safety

Visioning Session

More businesses with outside and family-friendly spaces

Visioning Session

More street trees for shade please!

Visioning Session

Adams is our jewel! better lighting and get rid of traffic that bisects the park + businesses

Walkshop

The Square Root is the best "3rd Place" in the city. We need more places like that- coffee shop, bar, music venue, etc.

Walkshop

The variety of cultural backgrounds of business owners and patrons that come together in Roslindale Square is something that makes it special

Spring Survey

More public housing and section 8 rental units for truly affordable housing

Housing Workshop

ROSLINDALE SQUARE GOALS

To realize the community goals for Roslindale Square, this Plan proposes recommendations that require the collaboration of City departments, agencies, and private sector stakeholders, including community-based organizations. The 3 goals of the Plan and their outcomes reflect engagement themes across many topic areas.

Specific information about the recommendations that advance each of the 3 goals and their outcomes—such as policy, capital projects, and future City initiatives—can be found in the following topic-specific chapters.



Each recommendation in the implementation table at the end of the chapters are color-coded to match one of the 3 community goals advanced by the recommendations. The table on the following page include a selection of recommendations as an example.

GOAL 1: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Outcome 1

Enhance existing transit service and pedestrian connections, like Sophia's Grotto, Birch Street Plaza, and Taft Court, and create new connections wherever possible

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Design Guidelines
- Arts and Culture
- Public Realm

Outcome 2

Encourage small-scale retail storefronts, cafes, restaurants, and entertainment spaces that encourage foot traffic along streets that connect to the Square (Washington Street, Cummins Highway, and Belgrade)

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Land Use and Zoning
- Small Business

Outcome 3

Create a transition into the Square using varying scales of buildings and expanded pedestrian infrastructure to enhance safety

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Land Use and Zoning
- Design Guidelines
- Public Realm

GOAL 2: ACTIVATE PUBLIC SPACES TO SERVE A DIVERSE COMMUNITY



Outcome 1

Allow a variety of active ground floor land uses and diverse housing options, especially in the Community Core, to support existing small businesses and public space programming and encourage new business growth.

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Land Use and Zoning
- Housing and Real Estate
- Small Business

Outcome 2

Establish active, mixed-use gateways at the edges of the Square that strengthen existing smaller commercial cores further into the neighborhood.

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Land Use and Zoning
- Small Business
- Public Realm

Outcome 3

Uplift community identity and inclusivity through representative public art, diversely programmed public spaces, mixed-income housing, and informal gathering spots.

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Design Guidelines
- Housing and Real Estate
- Arts and Culture
- Public Realm

GOAL 3: ENCOURAGE GROWTH WHILE SUPPORTING EXISTING URBAN FORM AND COMMUNITY ASSETS



Outcome 1

Identify sites for larger buildings and neighborhood-serving land uses, such as medium-scale entertainment venues, indoor recreation and gathering spaces, and mixed-income housing.

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Land Use and Zoning
- Housing and Real Estate

Outcome 2

Incentivize continued use/ reuse of historically and socially significant buildings throughout the plan area, including identifying opportunities to fill vacant spaces.

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Design Guidelines
- Small Business

Outcome 3




Celebrate the rhythm and texture of existing buildings, land uses, and storefronts, and affirm the local business atmosphere.

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORTING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Land Use and Zoning
- Design Guidelines
- Small Business

HOW TO READ THE IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

#	GOAL	"CHAPTER NAME" STRATEGIES		
H-4		Identify parcels with Southwest Boston CDC or other affordable housing developers for acquisition/preservation of affordable housing units on the private market.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Acquisition Opportunity Program (AOP), other private and nonprofit funds	TIMELINE 5-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonprofit Developers • Planning - Real Estate Division • MOH
SB-4		Request new Article 80 developments in Roslindale Square to contribute a monetary donation to local business support organizations as a community benefit to support their work in promoting a vibrant, stable, and affordable commercial district for small businesses.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Development • Planning - Development Review
OR-2		Expand the sidewalks at both sides of the intersection at Belgrade Avenue and Corinth Street. This includes the sidewalk in front of Square Root that would provide space for outdoor cafe seating and an extension of Alexander the Great Park that could be used for cultural programming and events.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Capital Line Item	TIMELINE Interim activation 1-3 years, full build out 8-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Community host organization • Streets

The numbers in this column of the implementation tables refer to specific recommendations. The letter prefix refers to the chapter ('H' meaning a Housing and Real Estate Recommendation, 'SB' meaning a Small Business Recommendation, and so on) and the letter refers to the order of the Recommendation in the chapter.

Each Recommendation is color-coded for the specific goal the Recommendation advances.

Red = encourage growth while supporting existing urban form and community assets

Blue = activate public spaces to serve a diverse community

Turquoise = strengthen community connections

Funding category refers to the way that the recommendation will be fulfilled.

Development = Private development is needed to fulfill the recommendation.

Capital Line Item = The recommendation needs to be budgeted for as a specific project during the annual City budget cycle.

Operating Budget/Annual Program = Recommendation will be fulfilled as part of ongoing program or budget that does not require additional budget to be set aside.

Regulatory = Zoning or other regulatory triggers that require a project to comply.

Timeline means when the Recommendation is expected to be completed.

Departments/Parties Responsible includes City departments, agencies, community groups, or private sector parties responsible for fulfilling the Recommendation.





CHAPTER 03

LAND USE AND DESIGN FRAMEWORK

This Plan supports mixed-use growth in the existing commercial core of Roslindale Square and surrounding gateway streets while reserving zoning reform for the majority of lower scale residential fabric for future initiatives.

The Land Use and Design Framework recommends where future development should occur in key local areas, and what that development should look like. The framework can identify where to allow land uses, what the scale of new buildings should be, and what kinds of infrastructure and community improvements should accompany that growth.

This chapter 1) summarizes present-day land use patterns and opportunities; 2) presents the proposed Land Use and Design Framework; and 3) identifies how new development should shape the public realm and built environment.

ROSLINDALE SQUARE TODAY

Roslindale Square is a central commercial core accessed by several major mixed-use corridors and surrounded by smaller-scale residential uses.



Existing built conditions and land uses patterns are not supported by current zoning, where the vast majority of parcels do not conform to either dimensional and/or use regulations. See the Zoning Existing Conditions Report in Appendix VI for more.

Community members also identified **three commercial and multifamily clusters** outside of the primary study area that should be considered as part of a broader land use vision. For each of these clusters, there is an opportunity to affirm multifamily structures and mixed-use activity to bring residents closer to businesses and transit.

EXISTING LAND USES LEGEND



PRIMARY MIXED-USE AREAS:

1. COMMUNITY AND COMMERCIAL CORE (CORINTH STREET, POPLAR STREET, SOUTH STREET)



Tight fabric of small-scale one- and two-story commercial storefronts along Corinth Street, Poplar Street, and South Street



Larger mixed-use buildings and some civic uses located along Washington Street and Belgrade Avenue

A major opportunity in this cluster to develop mixed-use housing, deliver major public realm improvements, and increase pedestrian activity to support local businesses and civic resources

2. ACTIVE MAIN STREET (WASHINGTON STREET TO HEALY FIELD)



Larger parcels that currently contain more car-focused site organization may enable larger-scale land uses



One- and two-story commercial storefronts on the southeast side of Washington Street

An opportunity to strengthen this part of Washington Street as a mixed-use and commercial gateway into Roslindale Square

3. CONNECTING STREETS (CUMMINS HIGHWAY, BELGRADE AVENUE, WASHINGTON STREET)



Two- and three-family residential uses, with some examples of multifamily buildings

Some service, clinic, and home-occupation uses interspersed with residential uses and building forms



Pockets of small-scale commercial storefronts at major cross streets

Existing and newly approved mixed-use and multifamily buildings across the street from Roslindale Village MBTA commuter rail stop that contribute to a 'gateway' feeling leading into the Square

Land use patterns here indicate an opportunity to further support pedestrian and mixed-use activity between the commercial core and smaller commercial clusters.

4. WASHINGTON STREET BETWEEN HAYES ROAD AND WELLSMERE ROAD



Characterized by multifamily homes as well as a mix of standalone retail storefronts and retail strips.

Residents highlighted that this area's businesses are commonly frequented and that there is **an opportunity to support more pedestrian activity** towards those commercial clusters.

5. NORTH OF WASHINGTON STREET BETWEEN GRANFIELD AVENUE AND ARCHDALE ROAD



Characterized by multifamily homes, as well as recent and upcoming mixed-use multifamily development



Residents of the Archdale Boston Housing Authority (BHA) community who live in and pass through this area expressed a desire to feel more connected to Roslindale Square and for more housing and healthy food options to be available.



An opportunity to affirm the existing pattern of multifamily housing while encouraging mixed-use activity that can enable a small commercial cluster to form closest to Archdale Road.

The Boston Housing Authority Archdale development, at the end of Archdale Street and bordering the MBTA tracks, is an important community anchor housing over 670 residents of Roslindale. The existing structures of the development have intensive capital needs to reinvest in essential housing, modernize energy systems, and improve the connectivity and circulation of the development. If the BHA pursues redevelopment of the site, it will require greater density to replace every existing public housing unit and support mixed-use redevelopment.

There should also be further planning analysis of the mixed residential, commercial, and light industrial fabric from Archdale Road (a main entrance to Archdale BHA) to Forest Hills. This section of Washinton Street provides naturally occurring affordable housing stock according to community organizers and service providers in this area. Given that this corridor serves several major bus routes to Forest Hills station, future planning should consider opportunities to create additional residential growth, commercial amenities, street safety improvements, and preservation of affordability in existing housing units.

6. INTERSECTION OF BELGRADE AVENUE AND WALWORTH STREET



Cluster of commercial activity, including restaurants and service establishments.



Serves as one of the entrance points to Fallon Field and is a western gateway into Roslindale Square.

An opportunity to affirm mix of residential and commercial character with existing three-family and multifamily residential properties within this cluster

EMERGING LAND USE VISIONS

The 2 community visions below represent distinct perspectives on growth and land use for the future of Roslindale Square, gleaned through the community engagement process. Aspects of both visions informed the proposed Land Use and Design Framework on the following page to accommodate diverse interests and determine reasonable boundaries for the Framework.

COMMUNITY VISION 1

This vision focuses on the main commercial core of Roslindale Square. Moderate growth (maximum 4 stories) was envisioned for existing mixed-use and commercial areas, highlighted in red on the map.

Some of the major concerns shared from community members who supported this vision include: maintaining sunlight on Adams Park and avoiding negative wind/shadow impacts on narrow streets, preserving the low-scale 'village feel' of the Square, and supporting existing small business by requiring active ground floors.

COMMUNITY VISION 2

This land use vision maximizes housing growth opportunities across the entire study area, including all of the residential fabric highlighted in yellow on the map.

The goals of community members who support this vision include: affirming existing residential character while encouraging infill development, promoting higher density in the core of Roslindale Square to support a vibrant business district, and promoting more active ground floors on connecting streets such as Belgrade, Cummins, and Washington Street.



Community Vision 1: This vision centers moderate growth around the existing commercial core in Roslindale Square.



Community Vision 2: This vision maximizes growth across the whole study area in Roslindale Square.

ROSLINDALE SQUARE TOMORROW

Within this framework, Roslindale Square is...

1 A community and commercial core centered around Adams Park that serves as the Squares' center of activity that:

Creates new and enhances existing public and private spaces for outdoor gathering and community building, and by creating new connections to and improving existing community spaces.

Provides opportunities for higher-density mixed-use growth, especially housing located over pedestrian-scaled commercial uses.

2 Mixed-use gateways located at existing commercial clusters around the Square that:

Affirm the small, pedestrian-scale form of existing commercial land uses that supplement the community and commercial core.

Introduce small-to-medium scale housing options.

Create moments of small-scale outdoor activity and gathering, such as outdoor dining and seating.

3 An active main-street between Adams Park and Healy Field that:

Strengthens the pedestrian connection between Healy Field and Adams Park.

Allows for larger-scale land uses desired by residents, such as indoor recreation or entertainment uses.

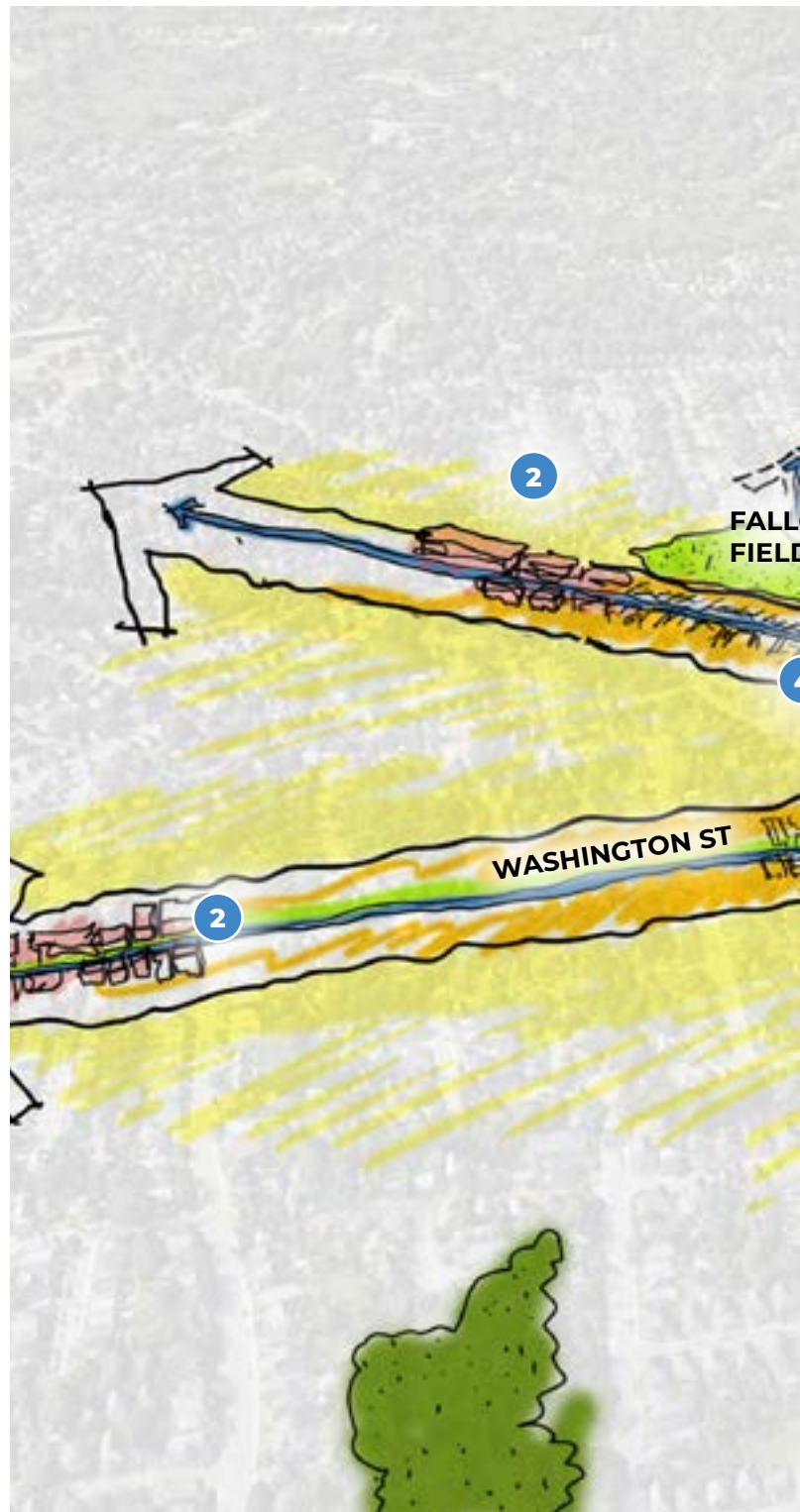
Provides opportunities for increased mixed-use growth, especially housing located over pedestrian-scaled commercial storefronts.

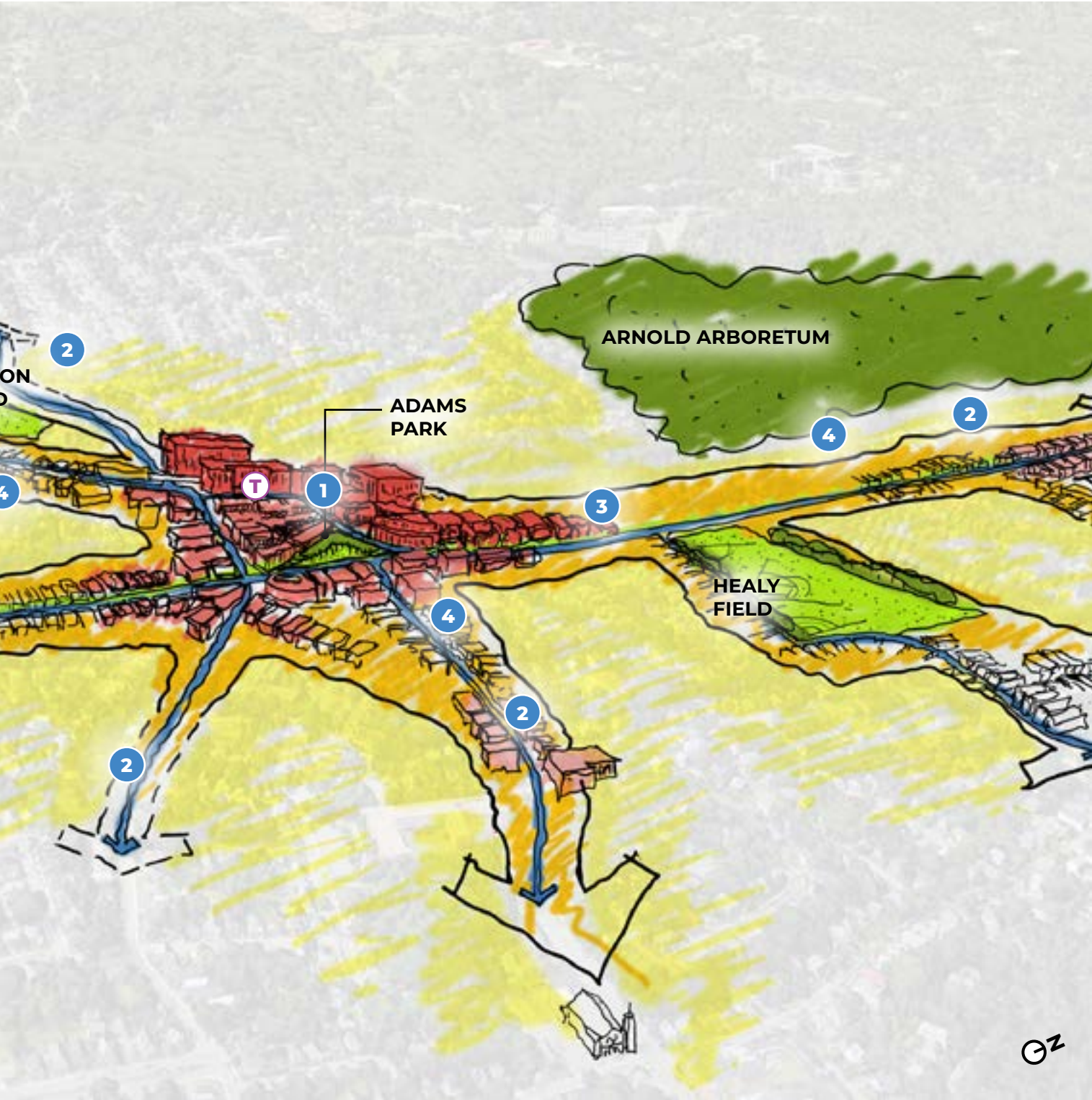
4 Connecting streets and transition corridors that:

Continue the existing residential character while allowing for some limited small-scale commercial uses, such as clinics and home occupations.

Supplement existing residential uses with infill that responds to the look and feel of its neighbors.

Create more space between buildings and leaving more room for planting and green infrastructure through increased setbacks.





LAND USE AND ZONING

RECOMMENDATION:

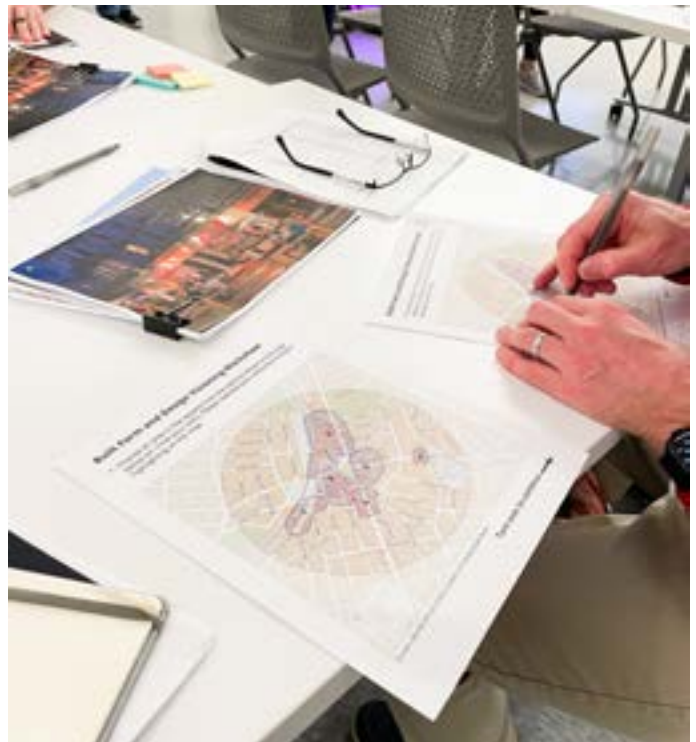
LD-1. BASED ON THE LAND USE AND DESIGN FRAMEWORK, UPDATE THE ZONING MAP TO ENCODE THE GOALS FOR MIXED-USE AND MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AND AROUND ROSLINDALE SQUARE.

1. Map Squares + Streets districts, through a Zoning Map Amendment, throughout mixed-use areas of the Square, at key gateways to the Square, and to provide transitions to smaller-scale residential areas.
2. Where this Plan envisions continued small-scale residential uses and incremental growth, update residential zoning to reflect existing built patterns, support safe walking routes to Roslindale Square, and enable the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and small multi-unit residential buildings.

Squares + Streets Districts

(adopted on April 17, 2024) are six mixed-use zoning districts that support a diversity of land uses, significant transit service, and high levels of pedestrian activity.

The purpose of these districts is to complement and increase the mix of uses, encourage walkability and adaptive reuse, and designate areas as appropriate for infill development and housing growth.



Above: Photos from different Community Engagements



WHAT ABOUT THE RESIDENTIAL FABRIC AROUND THE SQUARE?

The majority of side streets surrounding the Square contain predominantly one-, two- and three-unit homes, interspersed with small multi-unit buildings.

Future residential zoning reform initiatives will consider how to allow appropriate small-scale multi-unit residential development in these areas to deliver needed housing, particularly where there are existing patterns of three-unit and multi-unit residential uses. It will also advance zoning that allows for ADUs, or accessory dwelling units, to be built within or alongside existing homes.

Wherever there is new development in these areas, that development should affirm the design and scale of these areas. Where zoning allows for 7 or more units within a residential structure, Inclusionary Zoning requirements will deliver additional income-restricted units.

Above: Examples of existing small-scale and multi-unit residential buildings in the areas surrounding Roslindale Square.

RECOMMENDATION:

LD-1A. ENCOURAGE A MIX OF LAND USES, INCLUDING THOSE THAT PROMOTE COMMUNITY GATHERING. ENSURE ZONING AFFIRMS PRIZED EXISTING USES LIKE SOCIAL CLUBS, THE VILLAGE MARKET, AND SMALL SERVICE BUSINESSES

1. In the community core of Roslindale Square, allow for a wide-range of small-scale commercial uses like retail storefronts and restaurants as well as larger-scale uses like entertainment, event, and indoor recreation uses.
2. Throughout the community core and in the small commercial clusters near Roslindale Square, allow and encourage development that adds new residential uses above existing businesses, like the redevelopment of Wallpaper City along Poplar Street.
3. Allow for multifamily residential uses along key corridors on Washington Street, Belgrade Avenue, Robert Street, Cummins Highway, Firth Road, and Florence Street that are near major public community resources for future residents, including commercial clusters, the MBTA Commuter Rail Station, MBTA bus service, and public parks, to deliver high-quality housing and affordable units.

Squares + Streets Districts have land use regulations that have been modernized towards common land uses found in the City of Boston today as well as land uses that align with City policy goals.

The regulations also include defined sizes for certain land uses, like retail and entertainment/event uses to better align land uses with the various building scales that can accommodate them.

Some examples of those size differences are to the right, and more can be found in the Land Use Modernization Visual Guide at bostonplans.org/zoning4squares.

SQUARES + STREETS RETAIL EXAMPLES



SMALL (LESS THAN 2,500 SF)

Rialto Barber Shop, Roslindale



MEDIUM (BETWEEN 2,501-10,000 SF)

Walgreens, East Boston



LARGE (BETWEEN 10,001 - 49,999 SF)

T.J. Maxx, Back Bay

ROSLINDALE SQUARE EXAMPLES



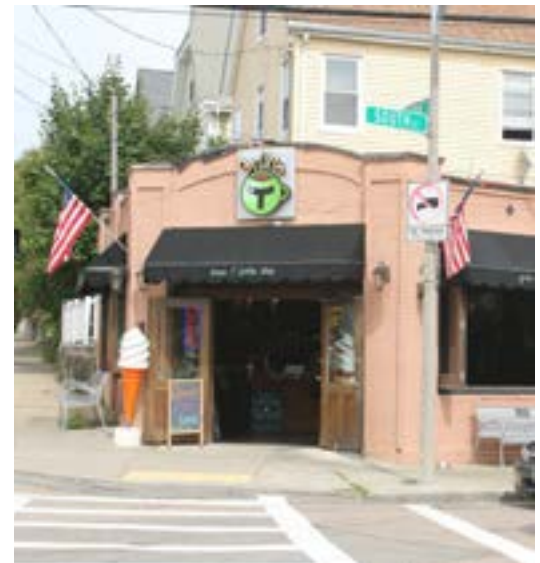
Fornax Bread Company on Corinth St



Residential and Commercial along Washington St



Retail along Belgrade Ave



Green T Coffee shop - Rozzie

RECOMMENDATION:

LD-1B. SUPPORT MIXED-USE ACTIVITY, DEVELOP HIGH-QUALITY HOUSING, AND EXPAND STREETScape AND PUBLIC REALM TO MAKE IT EASIER TO ACCESS AND SPEND TIME IN ROSLINDALE

1. **Update zoning** that accommodates and affirms the diversity of building scales within both mixed-use and residential areas. Lot coverage and floorplate should be used as key elements that shape space between and around buildings.
2. **Apply higher-density zoning districts** with building floorplates that can accommodate larger land uses such as indoor recreation and large entertainment and event spaces.
3. **Encourage outdoor amenity spaces** such as outdoor seating areas, plazas, balconies, terraces, through-block, or courtyards to deliver high-quality housing and an interplay between the public realm and private living spaces.
4. **Utilize zoning dimensional requirements**, such as yard requirements and permeable area of lot, to support the expansion of sidewalks and placement of street trees along the public realm.



An example of Outdoor Amenity Space at Evergreen Eatery and Cafe in Jamaica Plain, which uses a large setback to create public-facing outdoor seating.

Squares + Streets Districts are regulated by updated dimensional standards. The Squares + Streets Dimensional Standards Reference Guide is available at bostonplans.org/zoning4squares



Current Conditions: Washington Street at Murray Hill Road

RECOMMENDATION:

LD-2. INCORPORATE THE LAND USE AND DESIGN FRAMEWORK AND UPDATED ZONING REGULATIONS IN ONGOING REVIEW OF PROPOSED PROJECTS.

The Land Use and Design Framework and zoning regulations inform recommendations written by Planning Department staff for proposed projects that require Article 80 Development Review or that request zoning relief through the Zoning Board of Appeal.

The following factors all play a part in shaping how a building looks, feels, and functions:

1. ZONING ENVELOPE:

Zoning creates a maximum zoning envelope — a bounding box with detailed rules that development has to follow.

2. BUILT PROJECT:

In design review, urban designers consider how a project's built form supports a sense of place while remaining consistent with zoning standards.



One possible future for Roslindale Square: an imagination of the intersection at Washington St and Murray Hill Rd could look like with new built projects that adhere to new zoning envelopes. See image on the left for current conditions.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION APPROACH

Roslindale Square is populated by many old buildings of varied styles that lend the Square its character.

Variety and diversity is inherent in Roslindale Square's built fabric - including within the residential areas stemming from the Square. Yet many of these buildings are not inventoried in the database of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) - an entity that serves as the State Review Board for state and federal preservation programs - or granted a historic designation by the Boston Landmarks Commission, which would regulate physical alterations. See the map on the right for historically designated buildings and areas in Roslindale Square. Buildings that do not have a historic inventory form are less likely to be preserved and adaptively reused. Squares + Streets planning and zoning will open up opportunities for development, and historic preservation tools should be leveraged to facilitate contextual growth that respects existing historic fabric.

A Historic Context Study in this Plan, prepared by Utile and VHB, identifies key features of Roslindale's built environment today, including several inventoried historic structures and areas (see Appendix IV). This study lays the groundwork for an update to the Area Form for Roslindale Square, which was most recently updated in 1989. An Area

Form documents the historic context for a defined area to understand how -and why- the buildings, institutions, layout, residents, and owners have evolved over time. This information is accompanied by a survey of all historic buildings and features, existing and historic photographs, maps. Area Forms are used to evaluate whether the subject area (in whole or in part) or structures within the subject area meet the criteria for eligibility for the National or State Registers of Historic Places. These are important building or site classifications in state and federal historic regulatory review since they qualify buildings or structures for historic preservation tax credits and other funding incentives for adaptive reuse.

With the exception of landmarking a building, site, or district - which can be initiated through a citizens petition to the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) - a building's historic classification does not guarantee that it will not be significantly altered or demolished, in full or in-part. Rather, historic classification incentivizes property owners to seek alternatives to demolition and maintain historic fabric as the basis for contextual adaptation of existing buildings to support the evolution of the built environment.

RECOMMENDATION:

LD-3. COMPLETE AN AREA FORM UPDATE - INCLUDING AN UPDATED INVENTORY OF POTENTIALLY HISTORIC STRUCTURES - FOR THE ROSLINDALE SQUARE AREA TO FILE WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORIC COMMISSION (MHC).

The completion of this work by the Boston Landmarks Commission will take 2-3 years and will be funded by a combination of MHC grant funding and annual operating funds from BLC.



Above: Historic Building Inventory map
Left: Roslindale Congregational Church



Cobleigh Block



Roslindale Baptist Church

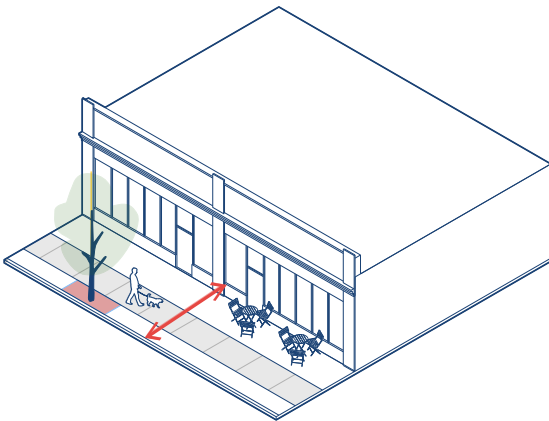


The Substation

DESIGN GUIDELINES

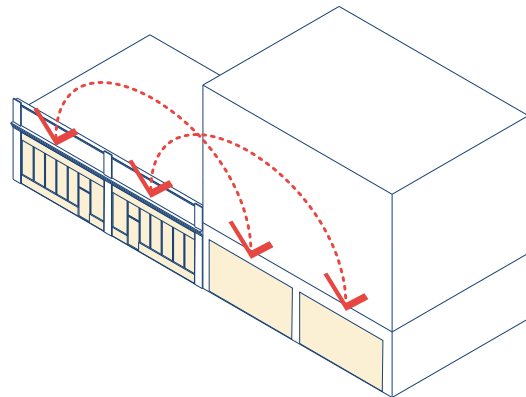
Design Guidelines are a tool to help the land uses and density recommended by the Land Use Framework relate to the unique context of Roslindale Square. They can be used by community members and Planning Department staff to advocate for design outcomes based on the Guidelines during the Article 80 Development Review process and for smaller projects that require design review to receive Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) approval.

THE FOLLOWING AREA-WIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES REPRESENT DESIGN THEMES RELEVANT TO THE ENTIRETY OF ROSLINDALE SQUARE.



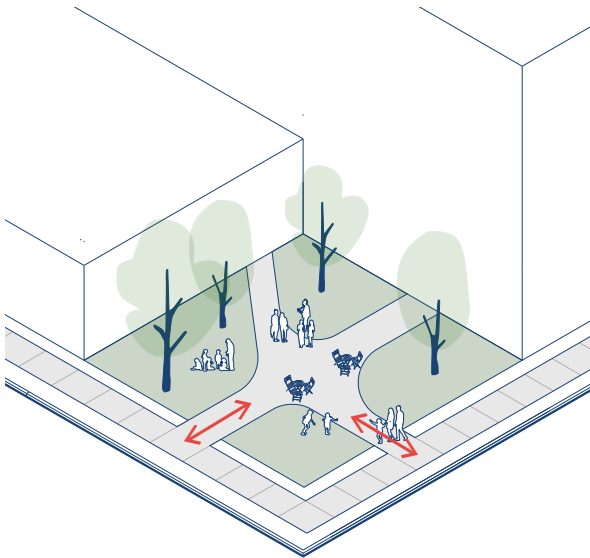
1. ACTIVATE FRONT SETBACK

All projects should use the space created by their front setback requirement to enhance the public sidewalk, especially where the existing sidewalk is not otherwise adequate for accessibility or the planting of street trees. A minimum 8' width from the building to the back of curb is preferred (3' for the planting/tree zone, 5' for the pedestrian zone).



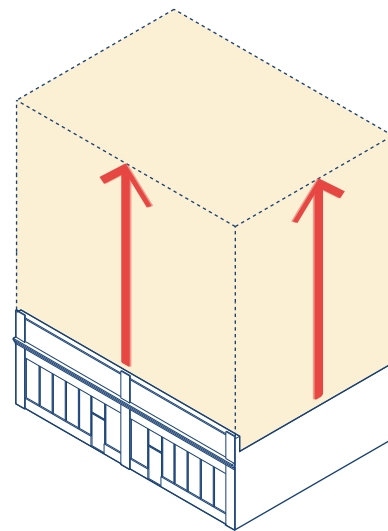
2. PEDESTRIAN SCALE STOREFRONTS

New ground-floor commercial spaces should identify architectural elements and patterns that give scale and rhythm to nearby existing commercial spaces— such as details, piers, window spacing, and more— and consider how these elements can inspire a similar scale and rhythm of storefronts.



3. OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

All new projects should consider meeting the Outdoor Amenity Space requirement where one exists by designing spaces that create new and enhance existing sites of community activation, such as publicly accessible open space and plazas.



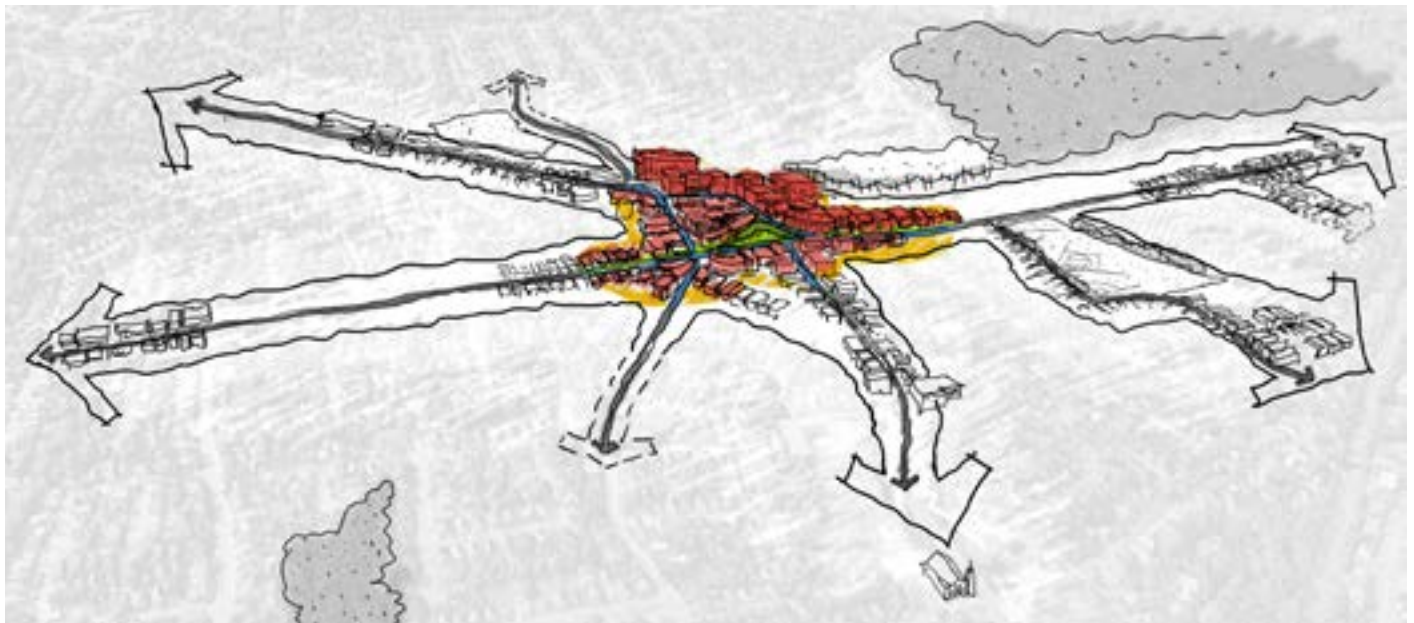
4. CREATIVE SENSITIVITY

Roslindale contains a number of sites that are culturally, historically, or architecturally significant, such as those inventoried by the Massachusetts Historic Commission. See the next page for a map of currently inventoried historic structures and areas in Roslindale Square.

New development that is adjacent to these sites must demonstrate sensitivity and creative responsiveness in their massing, facade composition, and material palette. Redevelopment of or additions to these sites should try to maintain significant, character-defining features through adaptive reuse rather than demolition.

COMMUNITY AND COMMERCIAL CORE

CORINTH STREET, POPLAR STREET, SOUTH STREET



MULTISTORY BUILDINGS

Create a visual sense of pedestrian scale at the ground level through building elements such as awnings, canopies, architectural datum lines, and other details.



Storefront on Washington Street that exemplifies a strong first-floor datum

DEVELOPMENT AT INTERSECTIONS

Locate entrances, amenity spaces, and prominent building details at the corner of the parcel. Chamfer ground floor corners to increase visibility and add texture to the streetwall. In particular, corner buildings along Corinth Street should meet their Lot Coverage, Outdoor Amenity Space, and/or Yard requirements by locating publicly accessible open spaces at the corner.



Storefront on Corinth Street with a chamfered ground floor corner entrance



Recessed balconies for residential units above Wallpaper City

OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

Where applicable, meet Outdoor Amenity Space requirements through active, street-facing spaces such as:

- Space for outdoor dining, seating, or informal gathering along the sidewalk
- Balconies and terraces created through upper-story stepbacks
- Public rooftop amenities spaces, such as seating or programmable space



Entrance to Sophia's Grotto from Birch Street (left), inside the courtyard (right)

EXISTING PUBLIC AMENITY SPACES

Existing public amenity spaces, such as Sophia's Grotto, should be retained and enhanced.



Upper story stepbacks on the second floor of a Poplar Street storefront

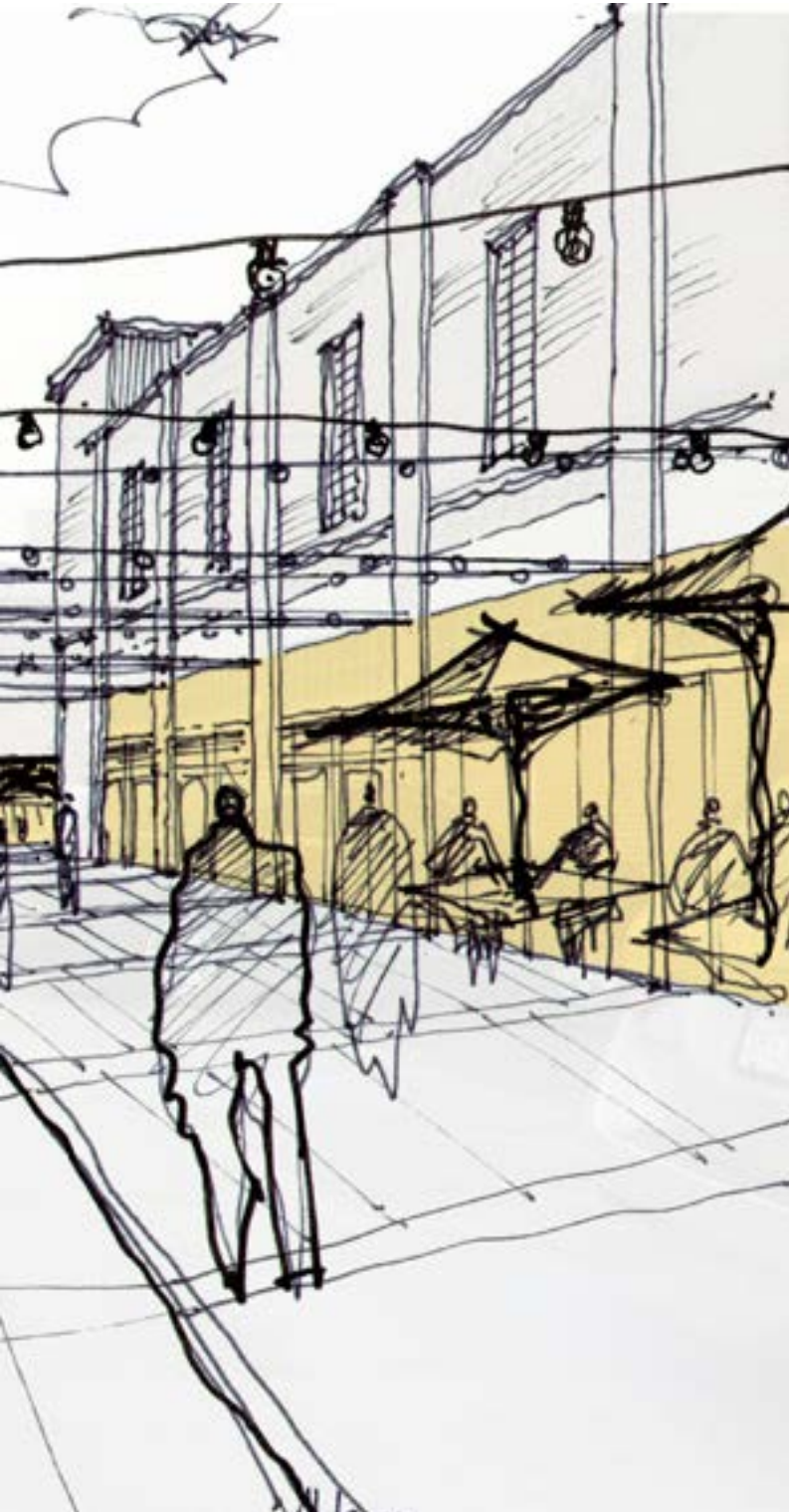
RELATIONSHIP TO CONTEXT

Compose massing and building orientation in consideration of wind impacts and access to light and air at street level. Building massing should relate to the conditions of outdoor amenity spaces to prioritize sunlight, pedestrian comfort, and air at street level.

COMMUNITY AND COMMERCIAL CORE

THROUGH BLOCK ON TAFT CT, BETWEEN SOUTH ST AND CORINTH ST





NEW PUBLIC AMENITY SPACES

In the central block bounded by Poplar Street, South Street, and Corinth Street, development should consider meeting their Outdoor Amenity Space and Lot Coverage requirements by dedicating space to the creation of publicly accessible through-block connections, especially between Corinth Street and South Street and between Poplar Street and Taft Hill Court.

Current Conditions:



ACTIVE MAINSTREET AND MIXED-USE GATEWAY

WASHINGTON STREET LOOKING TOWARDS ADAMS PARK





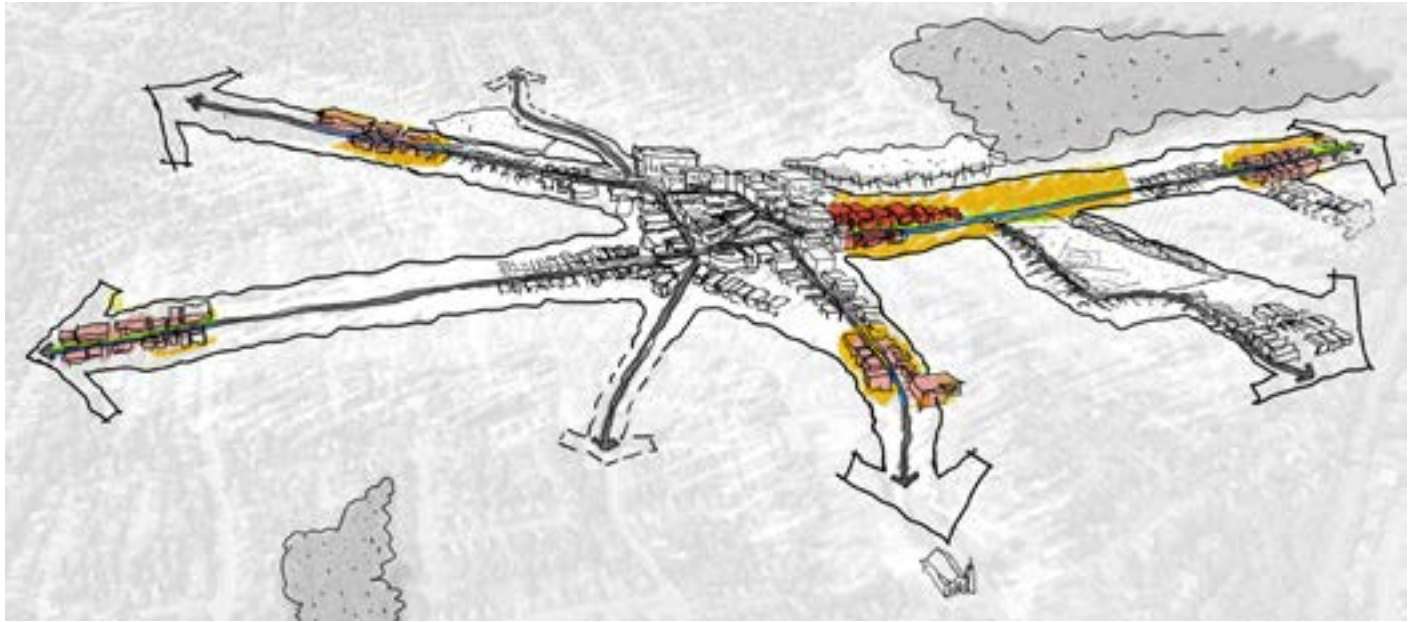
A POSSIBLE FUTURE FOR ROSLINDALE SQUARE

Current Conditions:



ACTIVE MAINSTREET AND MIXED-USE GATEWAY

WASHINGTON STREET TO HEALY FIELD



COMMUNITY EXPRESSION

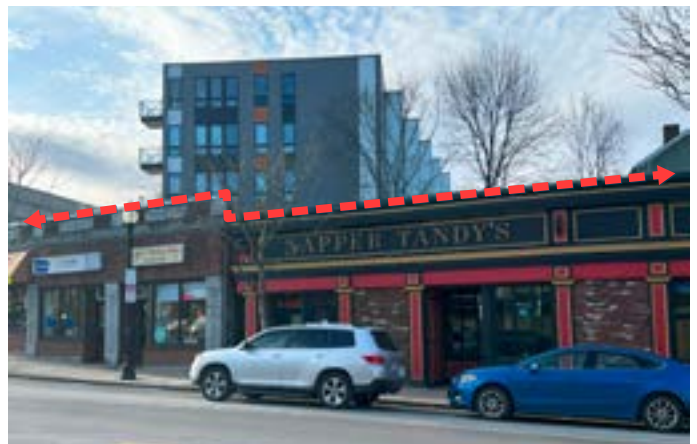
Identify opportunities for public art that celebrates Roslindale's people and culture, upholding the pattern of murals and art interventions seen leading into the Square. In addition to murals, opportunities for art and expression include, but not limited to, sidewalk art, business signage, and storefront design.



Sidewalk mural in front of Healy Field (left), wall mural on Firth Road (right)

CONTINUOUS STREETWALL

Create a continuous streetwall by continuing party wall conditions on the side parcel line where possible. When space in front of the building is not desired for outdoor seating or amenity space, locating entrances and active storefronts as close to the front of the parcel as possible.



Washington Street storefronts with a party wall condition on side parcel lines

RELATIONSHIP TO CONTEXT

Compose massing and building orientation to minimize potential impacts on access to light and air, especially where larger developments might border the small-scale residential houses.



Article 80 project under construction at 59-63 Belgrade Avenue, which includes 3-story bays to minimize scale

OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

Use the Lot Coverage, Front Setback, and Outdoor Amenity space requirements in zoning to enhance the pedestrian connection between Healy Playground and Adams Park on both sides of Washington Street. Street trees, planted buffers, public seating, and other green infrastructure should be prioritized.

In particular, celebrate the street's function as a gateway into the Square, and meet lot coverage and/or Outdoor Amenity Space requirements by creating publicly accessible open space near Healy Field and Adams Park.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

INTERSECTION AT ALEXANDER THE GREAT PARK ON BELGRADE AVE





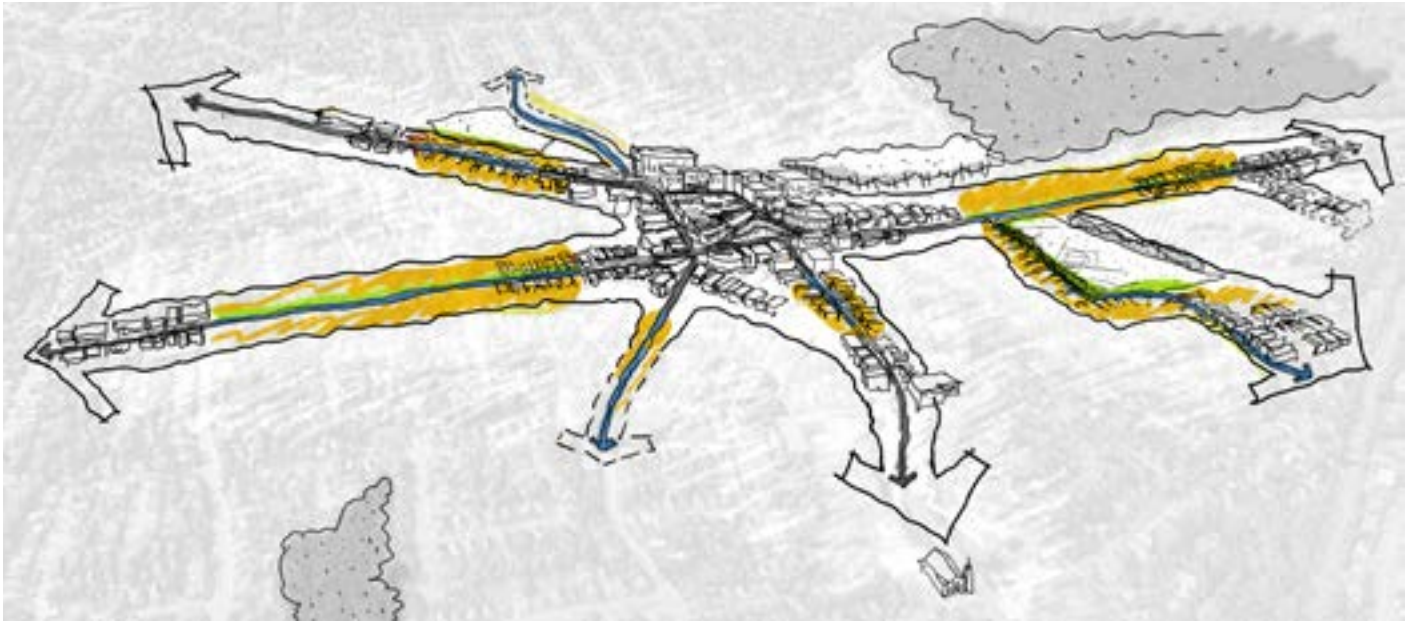
A POSSIBLE FUTURE FOR ROSLINDALE SQUARE

Current Conditions:



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

CUMMINS HIGHWAY, BELGRADE AVENUE, WASHINGTON STREET



RHYTHM AND TEXTURE

All new projects should respect the established architectural rhythm and texture of the existing residential housing on these streets by using building elements such as bays, balconies, porches, decks, chamfers, and front-facing courtyards (where space allows) to create texture in the streetscape.



Above: Residential streetscape with examples of porches, bay windows, and projecting cornices

DIVERSE ROOFLINES

Integrate new development into the diverse architectural character of these streets by exploring a variety of roof forms beyond just flat roofs.



Example of a gabled roof



Example of a mansard roof with projecting bay windows



Example of a flat roof

SPACE FOR RESIDENTS TO GATHER




To create an active streetscape, locate outdoor spaces for residents—such as porches, balconies, gardens, play spaces, seating areas, and more—in the front of the building to meet Lot Coverage and Front Setbacks required by zoning.



Examples of resident gathering spaces such as inset balconies (right), ground level and upper story porches (top), and projecting balconies (top row, middle).



IMPLEMENTATION

#	GOAL	LAND USE AND DESIGN FRAMEWORK STRATEGY		
LD-1, LD-1A, LD-1B		Based on the Land Use and Design Framework, update the zoning map to encode the goals for mixed-use and multi-family residential development in and around Roslindale Square.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY No additional budget needed	TIMELINE Winter 2025 (after adoption of this Plan, anticipated February 2025)	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Planning Department
LD-2		Incorporate the Land Use and Design Framework and updated zoning regulations into the ongoing review of proposed projects.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY No additional budget needed	TIMELINE Ongoing (after adoption of this Plan and an updated zoning map)	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Department (Planning Review Team, Urban Design Division, Development Review Division) • Zoning Board of Appeal
LD-3		Complete an Area Form update - including an updated inventory of potentially historic structures - for the Roslindale Square area to file with the Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC).		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating/Annual Budget and Grants	TIMELINE 2-3 years	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Boston Landmarks Commission





CHAPTER 04

HOUSING AND REAL ESTATE

This chapter presents a summary of existing conditions for Roslindale Square's housing and demographic characteristics, and ties this data to key community engagement themes and recommendations for housing and real estate.

An implementation matrix at the end of this chapter summarizes how the recommendations will be implemented, by whom, and on what timeline.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: HOUSING AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Roslindale is a racially and ethnically diverse community. A rich history of immigration contributes to the neighborhood's linguistic diversity.

Over 18% of the population aged five and older speaks Spanish at home, and more than 6% speak French or Haitian Creole.

Roslindale tends to skew towards higher income brackets. Nearly 34% of households, defined as all individuals living in the same housing unit including roommate households, earn over \$150,000 per year.

- Less than half residents identify as non-Hispanic White
- 20% identify as non-Hispanic, Black, or African American
- 24.2% identify as Hispanic or Latino

Roslindale is home to **4.5% more households earning over \$100,000** compared to the broader city of Boston.

INCOME

Study Area

\$104,518
median income*

10%
poverty rate*

Boston

\$89,212
median income*

18.1%
poverty rate*

EDUCATION

50.95%
at least a bachelor's*

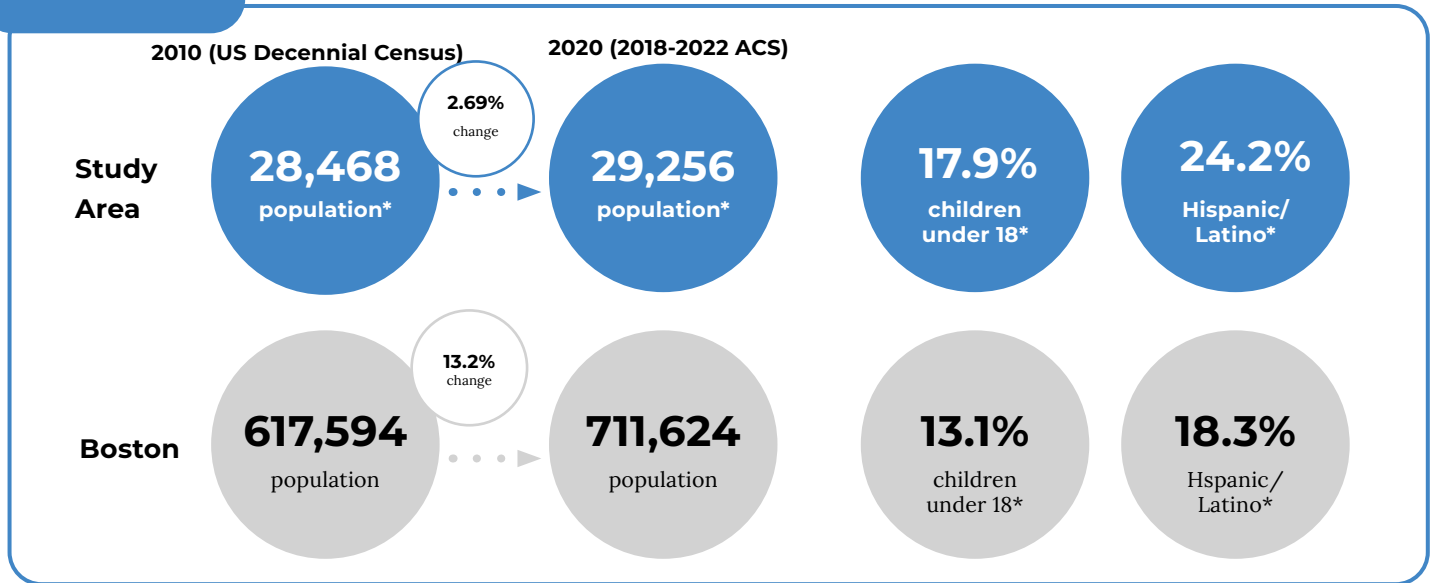
55.32%
at least a bachelor's*

* indicates data is reported at a neighborhood level - otherwise, the data is reported based on the geography of the study area

Roslindale's high median household income compared to the city indicates a need to produce more housing in the neighborhood for lower incomes.

Mixed-income housing in particular will help facilitate a more sociodemographically integrated community, supporting a key community goal.

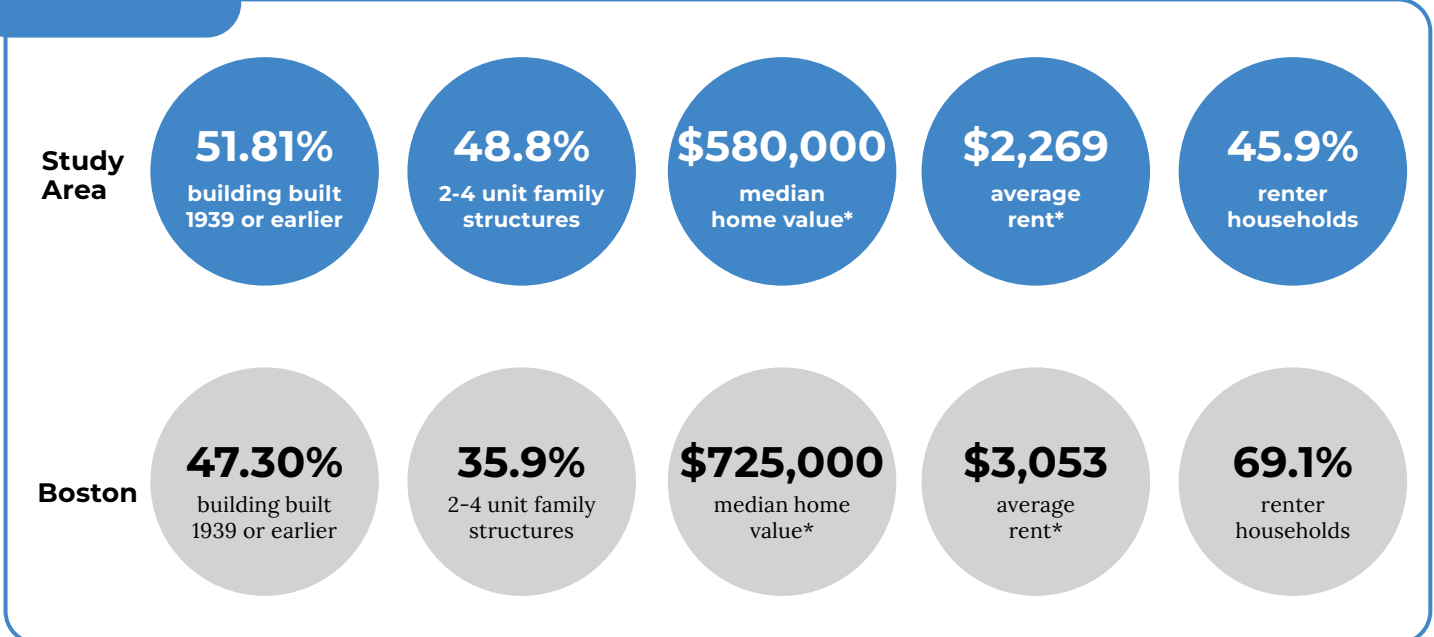
POPULATION



Roslindale is not growing as quickly as the city's population overall, so there is an opportunity for Roslindale Square to support more housing to accommodate citywide growth.

The higher than city average proportion of children under 18 in Roslindale also indicates a need to incentivize larger-sized housing units for families with children.

HOUSING



Housing prices in Roslindale are lower than city average for both rental and for-sale units, indicative of a relatively more affordable neighborhood to live in. Roslindale Square has proportionally more middle-density housing structures than the city, likely a result of many pre-war triple-decker and smaller multifamily structures in the area. In addition to producing new housing, there should be focus on preserving and updating existing affordable housing stock in Roslindale Square, much of which is in these older structures.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

The proposed housing strategies for Roslindale Square aim to significantly enhance the availability of affordable housing, particularly for families with children, while promoting inclusive community development.

By encouraging developers to provide more rental units for housing voucher holders and prioritizing the construction of 2+ bedroom, income-restricted units in new developments, the Plan will create greater access to housing near essential amenities. Redeveloping public parcels, such as the Taft Hill parking lot, will continue to address current parking needs but also leverage the opportunity for new community-desired land uses. Additionally, acquiring properties to produce or preserve affordable housing will foster mixed-income neighborhoods, contributing to a vibrant and inclusive community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES AND PRIORITIES:

EXPANDED HOUSING OPPORTUNITY FOR VOUCHER HOLDERS

There is strong interest in creating more voucher set aside opportunities, in addition to the voucher set aside requirements of Inclusionary Zoning, to produce more deeply affordable units.

IMPROVING SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION THROUGH HOUSING

Diversity and integration across income and race is an important community value to improve through producing more supply of housing at a range of unit sizes and affordability levels in new developments.

DESIRE TO LEVERAGE PUBLIC LAND FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

There is significant support for leveraging existing public land for new housing.

AFFORDABILITY LEVELS FOR NEW HOUSING

There is consistent concern with regard to the depth of affordability of new housing produced through Squares + Streets and that it will not be affordable to most households.

Business rents are high... and in order to stay in business we need more density- a mix of income levels including those who can afford market-rate apartments - Gena, a local business owner via email

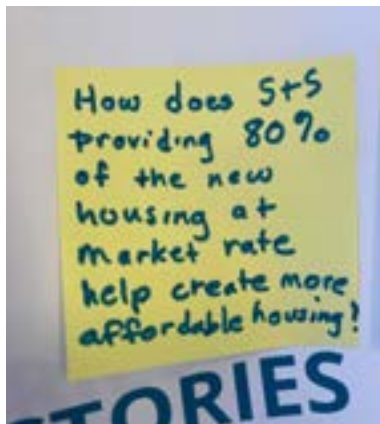
The city has been very accommodating to the concerns... about maintaining parking there, and the plan to retain parking while building residential space above it is a win-win - Kathryn, Public comment form

RECOMMENDATIONS

INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF AFFORDABLE AND MULTI-BEDROOM UNITS IN ROSLINDALE SQUARE

H-1. Encourage an additional percentage of rental units to be offered to housing voucher holders in new developments subject to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) requirements (generally residential projects with more than 50,000 square feet).

This will create more opportunity for very low income households to find housing close to the retail, transit, and civic amenities in Roslindale Square.



Post-it from Public Meeting

H-2. Request a higher proportion of 2+ bedroom **Inclusionary Zoning** units to be provided in new residential development.

Inclusionary Zoning requires that at least 17% of residential square footage in new residential developments with 7 or more units are dedicated to income-restricted housing at an average of 60% Area Median Income (AMI). An additional 3% are reserved for voucher holders, who typically earn less than 50% AMI.

LEVERAGE PUBLIC LAND AND PARCEL ACQUISITION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION AND PRESERVATION

H-3. Develop guidelines for parcel acquisition in Squares + Streets districts to support housing production.

Parcel acquisition describes the process of identifying empty parcels, income-restricted housing with expiring terms of affordability, or low-cost housing at risk of increasing in price, and purchasing those properties through City or private/nonprofit funds to maintain or increase their affordability levels.

H-4. Identify parcels with Southwest Boston CDC or other affordable housing developers for acquisition/preservation of income-restricted housing.

Identification of potential acquisition opportunities by affordable housing developers should use the tools in the forthcoming citywide Anti-Displacement Action Plan - anticipated early 2025 - to focus in areas where there is higher risk of displacement, such as a concentration of low-to-moderate income (LMI) households, and naturally occurring affordable housing that is not income-restricted.

PUBLIC PARKING LOTS IN ROSLINDALE SQUARE

TAFT HILL MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT

This City-owned lot serves as a key shared parking resource for small businesses in Roslindale Square, the seasonal farmers market, and other uses. The Plan envisions continuing these important uses that support vitality throughout Roslindale Square.

If you want to build more, the plan MUST address keeping parking spaces- Deb, small business owner comment in 01/01 public meeting



Aerial: Taft Hill Municipal Parking Lot

ROSLINDALE VILLAGE MBTA PARKING LOT

This lot is owned by the MBTA, which as a state entity is exempt from zoning regulations. Should the MBTA consider potential redevelopment of this lot or changes to its design in the future, the Plan supports its consideration as a mobility hub and potential site for mixed-use housing development.

The MBTA currently controls almost an acre of underutilized property in the commercial core....I would like to see metering in the lower lot for local business and development in the upper lot for housing. - Greg, comment in 01/08 public meeting







Aerial: Roslindale Village MBTA Commuter Rail Parking Lot

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTING CITY DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Planning	Planning Department
Development Review	Planning Department Development Review Division
Real Estate	Planning Department Real Estate Division
MOH	Mayor's Office of Housing
Streets	Boston Streets Cabinet
BIFDC	Boston Interagency Fair Housing Development Committee

#	GOAL	HOUSING AND REAL ESTATE STRATEGIES		
H-1		Encourage an additional percentage of rental units to be offered to housing voucher holders in new developments subject to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) requirements (generally residential projects with more than 50,000 square feet).		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • BIFDC • Private Development
H-2		Request a higher proportion of 2+ bedroom Inclusionary Zoning units to be provided in new residential development.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • BIFDC • Private Development • Planning - Real Estate Division • MOH
H-3		Develop guidelines for parcel acquisition in Squares + Streets districts to support housing production. This may include identifying areas where there are vacant buildings or empty lots that the City can acquire on its own or partner with a local CDC to acquire and develop.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Spring 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • Planning - Real Estate Division • MOH

H-4		Identify parcels with Southwest Boston CDC or other affordable housing developers for acquisition/preservation of affordable housing units on the private market.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Acquisition Opportunity Program (AOP), other private and nonprofit funds	TIMELINE 5-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonprofit Developers • Planning - Real Estate Division • MOH



Est. 1986



GOURMET COFFEE

4252

LOTTERY PASTRIES TEA

LOTTERY

"HOME of the BUCKET"

COFFEE CAKES * BAGELS

BREAKFAST SANDWICHES

GOURMET
COFFEE

AMERICAN

CHAPTER 05

SMALL BUSINESS

This chapter presents a summary of existing conditions for Roslindale Square's commercial environment, and ties this summary to key community engagement themes and recommendations to support small businesses in Roslindale Square.

An implementation matrix at the end of this chapter summarizes how the recommendations will be implemented, by whom, and on what timeline.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: SMALL BUSINESSES

Roslindale Square's businesses include many local, customer-serving businesses, including cafes, take-out spots, health clinics, gift stores, salons, and vehicle repair services.

Nearly half of the neighborhood's small businesses are micro-businesses, employing fewer than 10 people or earning under \$500,000 annually. The large number of small businesses in the Square indicates a need for targeted programs and policy from the City that supports the longevity of independently-owned businesses and business organizations that are invested in the community.

The majority of the Roslindale Square customer base (59%) comes from within 1 mile of the Square. The origin of the Square's customer base is largely influenced by existing business types. Over 39% of businesses in the Square are convenience businesses (such as personal care services and mini markets), a category of commercial uses that typically rely on customers who live or work close to where these uses are located. Many community-desired commercial uses are also mostly dependent on local foot traffic, such as cafes and small food retailers.

Although a successful neighborhood-serving commercial area, Roslindale Square has low evening foot traffic because few businesses stay open past 9 PM. Recently passed state legislation to expand liquor licenses in Boston could help attract more food and beverage spots to the Square, boosting evening activity and foot traffic. This may support desired medium-scale entertainment uses like a small movie theater/flexible entertainment space, which require a wider customer base to be successful.



Fornax Bakery on Corinth Street



Businesses on Corinth Street looking towards the library



Businesses on Poplar Street across from Adams Park

Roslindale Square also has several untenanted or vacant storefronts. There were 8 empty ground floor commercial spaces out of over 200 businesses (ground floor and upper floor) counted during a February 2024 business inventory. City action is needed to account for vacancies and develop strategies and incentives to fill them.

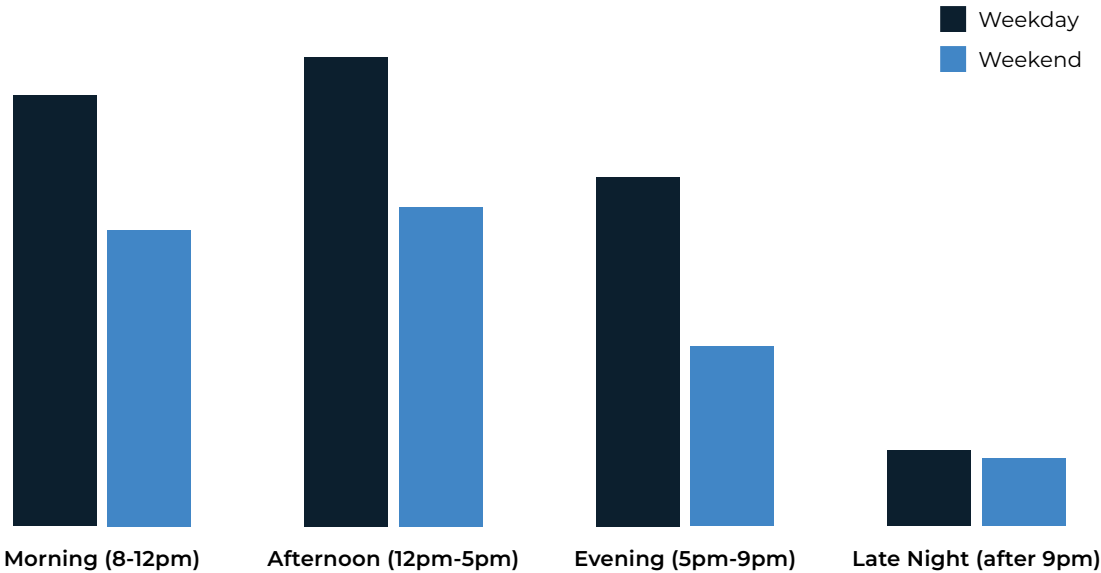


For more information, see Appendix II for the Roslindale Square Business Memo.

(Left) Vacant Knights of Columbus building at 4192 Washington Street

(Right) Vacant Storefront at 747 South Street

ROSLINDALE SQUARE BUSINESSES: HOURS OF OPERATION



Roslindale Business Hours, Boston Planning Department Analysis 2024

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Community engagement in Roslindale has highlighted several key priorities for supporting local businesses and fostering a vibrant commercial district.

Residents and business owners want to **preserve the unique character of long-established businesses and avoid displacement** if commercial rents increase, especially in the face of new zoning regulations.

There is also a **desire for more City-driven promotion of business districts** like Roslindale Square to attract visitors from across Boston. The community seeks new business types that encourage gathering and foster day and night activity, such as cafes, sit-down restaurants, and entertainment spaces.

Addressing vacancies in commercial spaces is a significant concern, with a desire to incentivize occupation of these spaces and promote long-term tenant stability.

To support these goals, strategies include technical assistance for cooperative business ownership models, expanding the reach of the Legacy Business Program, and researching policies to maintain the local feel of the business environment.



Kick-off Post -it note



Spring Survey comment



Roslindale Square
Business Owner

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES AND PRIORITIES:

MAINTAIN THE LOCAL BUSINESSES ATMOSPHERE

Community members would like to maintain much-loved local businesses, support their continued success and minimize large chains.

MORE PROMOTION OF LOCAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Many business owners indicated a desire for the City to play a greater role in promoting neighborhood business districts and encouraging more residents from other parts of the city to visit

CONCERNS AROUND RISING COMMERCIAL RENTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Business owners and their patrons are concerned that new Squares + Streets zoning may yield higher rents in new buildings that will push out long-established small businesses

NEED TO ACTIVATE VACANT COMMERCIAL GROUND FLOORS

There is a need to fill several vacant commercial spaces, disincentivize vacancies, and temporarily activate empty spaces.

NEW BUSINESS TYPES TO ENCOURAGE GATHERING AND DAY/NIGHT ACTIVITY

There is a desire to have more 'third spaces' like cafes, sit-down restaurants and both indoor and outdoor spaces for live entertainment/movie screenings to engage with fellow neighbors, friends, and families, as well as affordable retail, especially for groceries and healthy food options

NEED TO ACCOMMODATE PARKING TO SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES

Throughout the engagement process small business owners cited parking for customers and employees as one of the top concerns and priorities for maintaining in the Square.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PROMOTE DESIRED NEW BUSINESS TYPES IN THE SQUARE

SB-1. The following commercial uses are desired by the community through new development or reuse of existing or vacant buildings:

Affordable and healthy food retailers, cafes, sit-down restaurants, and daytime casual eateries.

Businesses that provide culturally relevant and affordable goods & services to Black, Latinx, Haitian Creole, and other immigrant communities in Roslindale are encouraged.

SB-2. Through new development or reuse encourage the build-out of a small movie theater/flexible entertainment space with a local film operator as the tenant.

Existing public spaces - such as Birch Street Plaza - and businesses that already serve as entertainment and recreation venues are encouraged to program their spaces with movie showings and similar events.

Let's use existing resources for the theater - Substation would be great for theater - Deborah G, 01/08 public meeting

SUPPORT EXISTING AND LONG-TERM BUSINESS SUCCESS IN THE SQUARE

SB-3. Engage with Roslindale business owners to provide Technical Assistance (TA) for establishing co-ownership models of commercial spaces, which would contribute to long-term commercial district stability.

A cooperative model of ownership is what led to the establishment of the Village Market on Corinth Street - this history serves as a model for how cooperatives and other models of co-ownership can generate shared wealth, stability, and preservation of the local business environment.



Village Market on Corinth Street

SB-4. Request new Article 80 developments in Roslindale Square to contribute a monetary donation to local business support organizations as a community benefit to support their work in promoting a vibrant, stable, and affordable commercial district for small businesses.

SB-5. Research and report on the effectiveness of policies that limit store size and/or types of stores at a citywide scale to support small, independently-owned business districts like Roslindale Square.

This study should evaluate the impact of limiting store size and types of stores on the price and type of goods and services that may be affected, as some chains may provide cheaper prices that are more affordable to lower income households.

The study should also account for impacts on types of businesses that need larger footprints (fitness and dance studios, sit-down restaurants, etc.)

SB-7. Expand marketing outreach for the **Legacy Business Program** to include more hard copy and translated materials in order to expand the community's participation in the nomination process for this program.

In Roslindale these spaces may include the Roslindale Community Center, the Roslindale branch of the BPL, and the Menino Center at Archdale BHA.

The Legacy Business Program provides support, grant eligibility, and increased visibility to small businesses in operation for 10+ years to support continued patronage and maintain cultural vibrancy within Boston's neighborhoods

SB-6. Develop citywide tracking mechanism for commercial vacancies. Complement with a program that supports existing or start-up businesses in filling vacant commercial spaces, addressing a major source of concern for the vitality of the business sector in Roslindale Square.

SB-8. Establish digital marketing and sales support for brick and mortar businesses through the Technical Assistance Program to expand their customer base.

I'm interested in how to maintain current businesses in the Square such as the Village Market, the Thrift Shop of Boston... and immigrant owned businesses. If real estate costs go up, businesses will leave. - Melida, 01/08 public meeting ocomment









Music Show at The Square Root

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTING CITY DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Planning	Planning Department
Development Review	Planning Department Development Review Division
Real Estate	Planning Department Real Estate Division
OEOI	Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion

#	GOAL	SMALL BUSINESS STRATEGIES		
SB-1		<p>The following commercial uses are desired by the community through new development or reuse of existing or vacant buildings: affordable and healthy food retailers, cafes, sit-down restaurants, and daytime casual eateries.</p> <p>Businesses that provide culturally relevant and affordable goods & services to Black, Latinx, Haitian Creole, and other immigrant communities in Roslindale are encouraged.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning - Development Review • Planning - Real Estate Division • Private Development
SB-2		<p>Through new development or adaptive reuse, encourage the build-out of a small movie theater/flexible entertainment space with a local film operator as the tenant.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning - Development Review • Private Development
SB-3		<p>Engage with Roslindale business owners to provide Technical Assistance (TA) for establishing co-ownership models of commercial spaces.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE Spring 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEOI • Community partners (i.e. local business associations)

SB-4		Request new Article 80 developments in Roslindale Square to contribute a monetary donation to local business support organizations as a community benefit to support their work in promoting a vibrant, stable, and affordable commercial district for small businesses.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • Private Development • Planning - Development Review
SB-5		Research and report on the effectiveness of policies that limit store size and/or types of stores at a citywide scale to support small, independently-owned business districts like Roslindale Square.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE 3 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • OEOI
SB-6		Develop citywide tracking mechanism for commercial vacancies. Complement with a program that supports existing or start-up businesses in filling vacant commercial spaces		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 3 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • OEOI
SB-7		Expand marketing outreach for the Legacy Business Program to include more hard copy and translated materials in order to expand the community's participation in the nomination process for this program. In Roslindale these spaces may include the Roslindale Community Center, the Roslindale branch of the BPL, and the Menino Center at Archdale BHA.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE Fall 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • OEOI
SB-8		Establish digital marketing and sales support for brick and mortar businesses to expand their customer base through the Technical Assistance Program		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE Beginning Spring 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • OEOI



NO STOPPING
ANY TIME

BIRCH STREET

CHAPTER 06

ARTS AND CULTURE

This chapter presents a summary of existing conditions for Roslindale Square's arts and cultural sector, and ties this summary to key community engagement themes and recommendations to support public art and placemaking activity in Roslindale Square.

An implementation matrix at the end of this chapter summarizes how the recommendations will be implemented, by whom, and on what timeline.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: ARTS AND CULTURE

Roslindale Square is a multicultural community. Murals, sculptures, locally-owned business displays, temporary art and installations showcase the history and present-day diversity of Roslindale Square. Opportunities for more placemaking elements include pedestrian underpasses around the commuter rail, art on blank building faces, and in existing and future public gathering spaces.



CULTURAL PROGRAMMING AND GATHERING SPACES

In addition to the specific locations in Roslindale Square that are home to physical artwork or cultural venues, there are many annual and temporary cultural events in Roslindale Square that this chapter's recommendations support.

Many of these events occur in community gathering spaces both indoors and outdoors. The community identified sports fields, the Birch Street pedestrian plaza, the library, and several restaurants and cafes as community gathering spaces.

Recurring events include Roslindale Porch Fest, Holi in Adams Park, live music at the Summer Farmer's Market, Distraction Brewing, and the Square Root, community events at The Substation, Roslindale Open Studios, and the Greek Fest at St. Nectarios Church. Venues that serve as spaces for passive gathering and socialization are also key components of creating culture. These community-identified spaces include local businesses, cafes, and the BCYF Roslindale Community Center. A summary of Roslindale's community and cultural assets may be found in Appendix V, The Character and Culture of Roslindale Square.

The following recommendations seek to support existing and future gathering spaces with more public programming that helps to draw foot traffic towards the Square.

(Left, starting top row and going clockwise)

Roslindale window mural, Distraction Brewing

Wall Mural, corner of Birch and Corinth Street

Wall Mural called "Vintage Roslindale" completed by the Mayor's Mural Crew and Heidi Schork, 2006

Wall Mural, intersection of Washington and Firth Road

Bust, Alexander the Great Park



Courtyard, Sophia's Grotto



Roslindale Farmers Market

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

The following arts and culture recommendations have been developed to support the activation of public spaces with existing and new cultural traditions, and encourage local artists' involvement in placemaking in Roslindale Square.

COMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES AND PRIORITIES

INCREASE DIVERSE CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

The community acknowledges a need for more diverse cultural programming that includes a larger representation of the Roslindale community, especially Black, Latinx, and other immigrant groups.

ACTIVATION OF PUBLIC PARKS MORE CONSISTENTLY ACROSS THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Adams Park is host to many recurring community events, such as Holi and the Farmers Market, but other public parks and spaces in the area such as Birch Street, Alexander the Great Park, Healy Field, and Fallon Field could benefit from more seating, public art, and programming.

MORE LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, MUSIC, AND EVENTS TO ACTIVATE THE SQUARE

The community has cited a desire for more public outdoor events such as movie screenings, live music, child-friendly programs, and food festivals.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MURALS AND OTHER PUBLIC ART

These opportunities express the identity of the neighborhood, create welcoming gateways, and active underutilized spaces in the Square.

There are already several murals in Roslindale Square, but opportunities for more murals and 2-dimensional media to contribute to a sense of community include the MBTA tunnel, blank walls of buildings, and Birch Street.



Summer 2024 nightlife in Birch Street Plaza! (photo by resident Colleen Fitzgerald)

RECOMMENDATIONS

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MORE CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

AC-1. Issue a location-specific entertainment license to Birch Street Plaza to more easily host community events such as music, movie nights, potlucks, dancing, and more.

If this program expands, the City should consider providing additional location-specific licenses at City parks such as Fallon Field or Healy Field. **Community feedback indicates that these parks need more programmed activity!**

AC-2. If Washington Street is restored to 2-way directionality (see the Transportation & Public Realm chapter for more details on this recommendation), explore a more regular closure and cultural activation of Poplar Street during the Farmers Market or other temporary events in Adams Park in partnership with community groups.

AC-3. Support Roslindale Square in becoming a designated state cultural district to provide additional promotional and grant opportunities for the cultural sector of Roslindale Square.

A state cultural district will help to promote the cultural diversity of the Square to a wider audience and drive additional foot traffic to support businesses.

SUPPORT THE INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS IN THE SQUARE

AC-4. Coordinate with the MBTA to install new mural art and lighting in the Roslindale Village commuter rail station underpasses.



Pedestrian Underpass at MBTA Commuter Rail Station

AC-5. Promote the inclusion of public art in new developments - especially murals or interactive sculptures - that reflects the cultural diversity of the Roslindale community and follows MOAC guidelines for public art on private property




AC-6. Establish a public art maintenance fund with Roslindale Village Main Streets to both commission and maintain public art on private property.





AC-7. Complete a public art inventory in Roslindale Square as part of a larger citywide public art plan to identify gaps in representation and opportunities for additional placemaking.

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTING CITY DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Planning	Planning Department
Development Review	Planning Department Development Review Division
MOH	Mayor's Office of Housing
Streets	Boston Streets Cabinet
MBTA	Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

#	GOAL	ARTS + CULTURE STRATEGIES		
AC-1		<p>Issue a location-specific entertainment license to Birch Street Plaza to more easily host community events such as music, movie nights, potlucks, dancing, and more.</p> <p>If this program expands, the City should consider providing additional location-specific licenses at under-programmed City parks such as Fallon or Healy Field.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE Summer/Fall 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOAC • Licensing Department • Roslindale Village Main Streets
AC-2		<p>If Washington Street is restored to 2-way directionality, explore a more regular closure and cultural activation of Poplar Street during the Farmers Market or other temporary events in Adams Park in partnership with community groups.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE 5-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets • Community partners
AC-3		<p>Support Roslindale Square in becoming a designated state cultural district to provide additional promotional and grant opportunities for the cultural sector of Roslindale Square.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Other state capital funds	TIMELINE 3 years - application to be submitted by Fall 2026	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOAC • Community partners

AC-4		Coordinate with MBTA to install new mural art and lighting in the Roslindale Village commuter rail station underpasses.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Other state capital funds	TIMELINE 1-3 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • MBTA • MOAC
AC-5		Promote the inclusion of public art in new development - especially murals or interactive sculptures - that reflects the cultural diversity of the Roslindale community and follows MOAC guidelines for public art on private property.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • MOAC • Private Development • Planning-development review
AC-6		Establish a public art maintenance fund with Roslindale Village Main Streets to both commission and maintain public art on private property.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • MOAC • Private Development • Planning-development review
AC-7		Complete a public art inventory in Roslindale Square as part of a larger citywide public art plan to identify gaps in representation and opportunities for additional placemaking.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 12-18 months	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE MOAC



STORE
Etc.

RENTAL

CHAPTER 07

TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC REALM

Together, the elements that comprise the transportation system - such as streets, intersections, and sidewalks - and open spaces - including parks, plazas, and gathering space along the sidewalk - contribute to the public realm. Many recommendations in this chapter impact both transportation and open space systems, which is why they are combined into one chapter.

This chapter presents a summary of existing conditions for Roslindale Square's transportation assets and challenges and open space characteristics. This summary relates to key community engagement themes and recommendations to support a safer and more active public realm in Roslindale Square.

An implementation matrix at the end of this chapter summarizes how the recommendations will be implemented, by whom, and on what timeline.

This map illustrates the Roslindale Square Plan Area, highlighting various transit infrastructure. The area is bounded by a dashed line. Key features include:

- Transit Routes and Stops:** MBTA Bus Routes (blue lines) and MBTA Bus Stops (blue circles) are shown. Bus lanes are indicated by dark blue lines. Commuter Rail Lines (purple lines) and Commuter Rail Stations (red 'T' symbols) are also depicted.
- Other Infrastructure:** Bluebikes Stations (blue bicycle icons), Bike Lanes (green lines), Walkways (brown lines), and Car Share Locations (red car icons) are marked.
- Geographic Labels:** The map includes labels for streets such as Robert Street, Belgrade Avenue, Birch Street, Cohasset Street, Washington Street, Albano St, Atterton Ave, Kirtland St, Florence St, Sherman St, Wright St, Cummins Highway, Sheldon St, Sherwood St, Brookdale, Florence St, Bexley Rd, Firth Rd, South Street, and South Street. Other labels include Roslindale Village, Roslindale Square Plan Area, and Roslindale.
- Legend:** A legend in the bottom left corner defines the symbols used for MBTA Bus Stops, MBTA Bus Routes, Bus Lanes, Commuter Rail Station, Commuter Rail Line, Bluebikes Stations, Bike Lanes, Walkway, and Car Share Location.
- Orientation:** A north arrow is located in the bottom right corner.

BUS AND COMMUTER RAIL OPTIONS IN THE PLANNING AREA PROVIDE AN EXCEPTIONAL AMOUNT OF TRANSPORTATION CAPACITY: BUSES AND TRAINS THROUGH THE PLANNING AREA HAVE A MAXIMUM CAPCAITY OF NEARLY 60,000 DAILY PASSENGERS.

- Commuter rail service is accessible at Roslindale Village Station with 139 park and ride spaces.
- Extensive bus service is provided by ten bus routes, which all have stops in the study area, connecting north to the Orange Line at Forest Hills and connecting in all other directions via Belgrade Avenue, Cummins Highway, and to the south via Washington Street.
- Two bikeshare stations with nearly 30 public bikes, a public parking lot containing 108 spaces, and many public streets and sidewalks all provide connectivity for all modes of travel. Within the Planning Area, bike lanes or shared bus/bike lanes are provided on Belgrade Avenue, South Street, Poplar Street, Cummins Highway and Washington Street, however no protected bike lanes currently exist.

More detailed information on existing transportation conditions can be found in Appendix III.

KEY TRANSPORTATION TRENDS IN THE STUDY AREA THAT INFORM RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Washington Street presents many safety challenges. From 2021 to 2023, over 55% of all crashes within the study area occurred on Washington Street, including a fatal crash involving a person riding a motorized scooter in February 2024.
- 84% of Roslindale Square residents live within a 5-minute (quarter-mile) walk of a bus stop with frequent bus service, but many bus stops lack amenities such as benches and shelters.
- With peak-hour dedicated bus lanes installed on Washington Street in 2018, travel times for bus passengers improved by 20-25% and the average bus rider saved at least an hour per week as a result of quicker bus trips. However, double parking in the bus lanes creates inefficiencies for buses.
- Although the density of streets in Roslindale Square provide conditions for a walkable environment, there are many crosswalk gaps, long crosswalks, and speeding - especially along Washington Street, Belgrade Avenue, and Cummins Highway - that hinder pedestrian accessibility.
- In the study area, most commutes are vehicular trips (56.4% of commuters), but approximately 19% of commuters take public transit, and 12.4% of all households in the planning area do not have access to a vehicle compared to approximately 33% citywide. This diversity of transportation modes reflects the need for improved transit and active transportation connections to and from Roslindale Square.

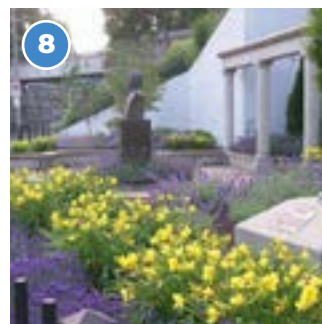
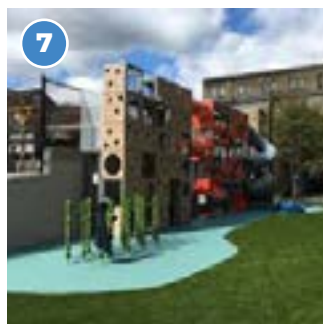
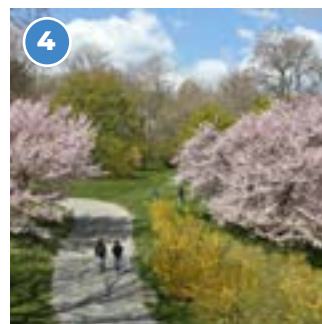
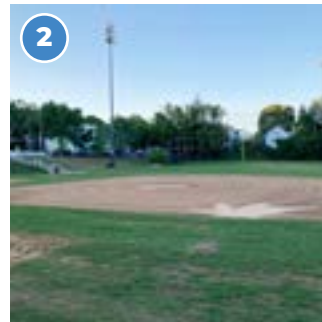
EXISTING CONDITIONS: OPEN SPACE AND RESILIENCY

Roslindale Square is well served by public parks such as Adams Park, Fallon Field, Healy Field, Roslindale Wetlands Urban Wilds and other large parks nearby including the Arnold Arboretum, Stony Brook Reservation, and Millennium Park.

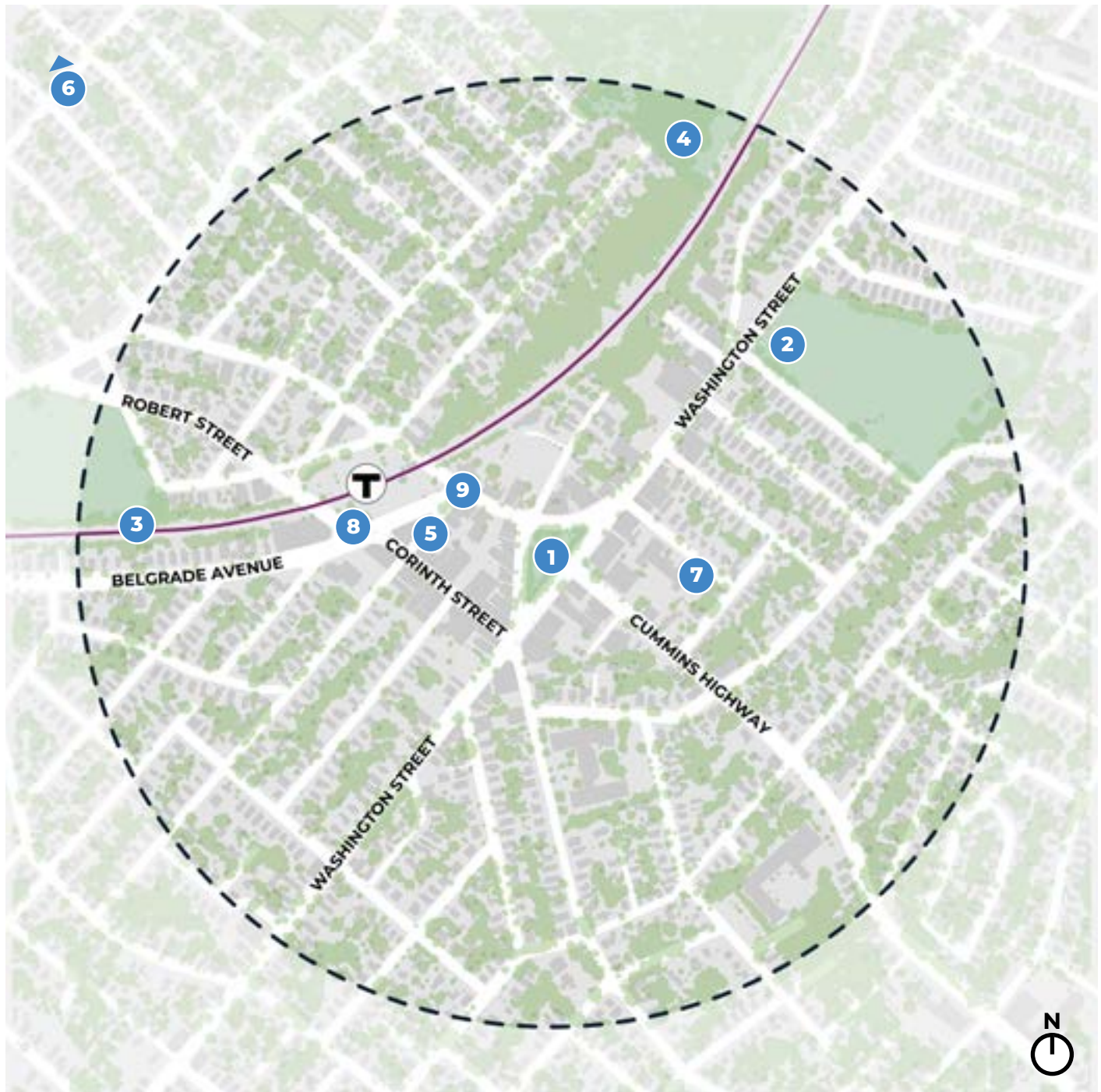
Through conversations with the community, it is clear these open spaces are an important part of the identity, community, and sense of place for residents of the Square. These parks provide a variety of spaces for community events, play, sports, and enjoying nature.

Given the intense use of Adams Park for events, there is opportunity to expand utilization of other open spaces that bridge between different areas of Roslindale such as Healy Field. New public realm enabled through transportation projects would also create alternative space for programming and additional greening.

The center of Roslindale Square is identified as a priority zone in the Urban Forest Plan. New development in this area should incorporate resilience strategies including street tree planting, green infrastructure, cooling stations, and shade structures to mitigate urban heat.



OPEN SPACE IN ROSLINDALE



OPEN SPACE KEY

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Adams Park | 4 Arnold Arboretum | 7 Summer School Playground |
| 2 Healy Field | 5 Birch St Plaza | 8 Alexander the Great Park |
| 3 Fallon Field | 6 Wetland Urban Wilds | 9 Pocket Park at Birch St |

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

TRANSPORTATION ENGAGEMENT THEMES AND PRIORITIES

Transportation recommendations have been developed to expand access to travel choices and create efficient transportation networks that foster economic opportunity and climate resilience.

REDUCE BARRIERS TO THE COMMUTER RAIL

Improve connections to and within the Roslindale Square Commuter Rail station, increase train frequency, and reduce fares.

RECONFIGURE CHALLENGING INTERSECTIONS

Modify skewed and complex intersections to improve crosswalk safety and create new opportunities for green infrastructure and active streetscapes.

SIMPLIFY STREET NETWORK CIRCULATION

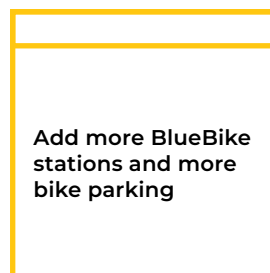
Simplify the street network for the safety of all users, to discourage cut-through traffic on minor residential streets, and to reduce circuitous travel patterns for buses and drivers.

INVEST IN BETTER BUS STOPS AND BUS RELIABILITY

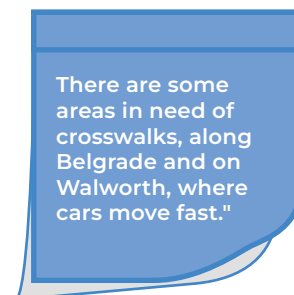
Improve high ridership bus stops by providing additional space and amenities for riders, such as shelters and benches. Install transit priority features to street segments where buses experience delay.



Walkshop



Ideas Reception Survey



Spring Survey Comment

OPEN SPACE ENGAGEMENT THEMES AND PRIORITIES

DIVERSIFYING PROGRAMMING AND SITING

Adams Park is beloved and well-used. Consideration should be given to programming in the other parks, to relieve the pressure on Adams Park and to provide activation in Alexander the Great Park, Healy Field, and Fallon Field.

EXPAND THE PUBLIC REALM

Identifying opportunities for outdoor dining and gathering areas that foster indoor/outdoor connections, making space for community gathering, and activating the streets were the most common types of open spaces the community wants to create in Roslindale.

CREATING CONNECTIONS

Adams Park is great at attracting people to the Square but better incentives are needed to bring those visitors into the rest of the neighborhood and surrounding businesses. This would generate more business and activate the surrounding streets.

CLIMATE RESILIENCY

New open spaces and development should integrate resilient strategies to manage stormwater and mitigate the impacts of urban heat. These strategies include street trees, shade structures, green infrastructure, green roofs, and solar panels. Street trees were the most requested.

"Community gathering spaces like Birch Street plaza and Adams Park allow events that ...

By focusing on making the area appealing to pedestrians will bring people to the Square. We have to encourage them to walk and bike.

Ideas Reception Survey

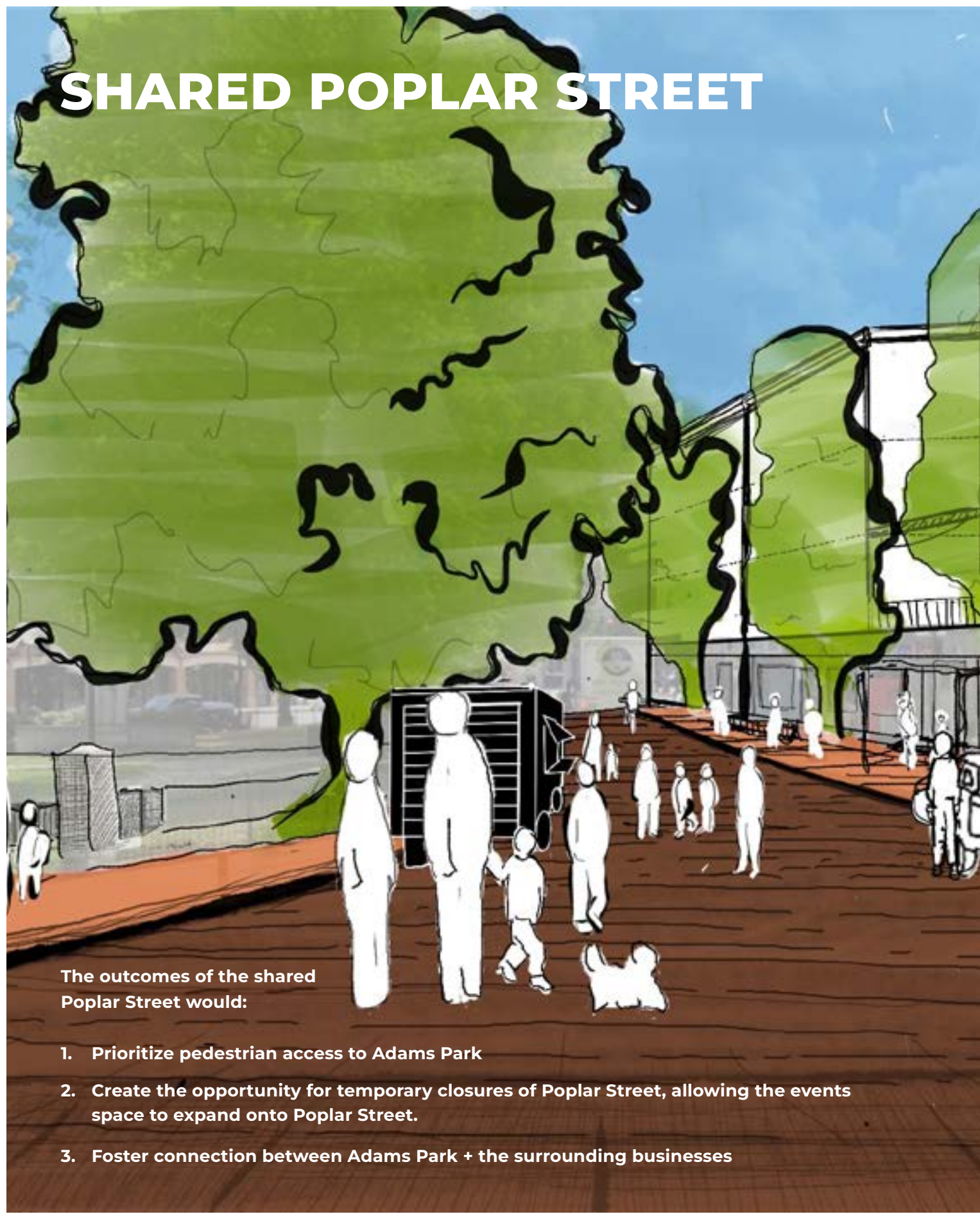
... bring people together and contribute to the great sense of community in Roslindale."

Spring Survey Comment

"Trees make spaces inviting. More trees everywhere!"

Visioning Session

SHARED POPLAR STREET



The outcomes of the shared Poplar Street would:

1. Prioritize pedestrian access to Adams Park
2. Create the opportunity for temporary closures of Poplar Street, allowing the events space to expand onto Poplar Street.
3. Foster connection between Adams Park + the surrounding businesses



RECOMMENDATIONS:

TRANSPORTATION

SIMPLIFY STREETS NETWORKS FOR SAFETY AND BETTER CIRCULATION

T-1. Conduct further engineering and design analysis to explore restoring two-way operations on Washington Street along Adams Park (between South St and Poplar St).

If two-way operations are restored on Washington St, these changes would:

Reduce traffic on Poplar St, simplify bus routing, reduce residential cut-through traffic, and improve operations at intersections.

Bus stops would be relocated as needed to allow for passenger pick up and drop off along southbound Washington St.

T-2. If two-way operations are restored on Washington St, explore opportunities to:

Shorten pedestrian crosswalks, create new separated bike connections, provide green infrastructure, and create space for community programming.

Specific areas to consider include the intersections of Washington St/South St and Washington St/Poplar St.

T-3. If two-way operations are restored on Washington St, explore opportunities to:

Expand the Poplar St sidewalk along Adams Park and/or make Poplar St a **shared street**. A shared street along Adams Park would allow for pedestrian and bike travel, in addition to local vehicle travel and curbside parking/deliveries

T-4. Flip the one-way directions of Firth

Rd and Bexley Rd to control left-turning vehicles more safely at an existing traffic signal.

This change will improve overall operations and reduce conflicts between turning vehicles and people walking and biking.

OPEN SPACE

EXPAND THE PUBLIC REALM

OR-1. Convert Poplar Street to a shared street. This change will support the capacity of

Adams Park to host events , outdoor dining, etc. and increase the connectivity between the park and the neighborhood.

A Shared Street is a street that is shared by people using all modes of travel at slow speeds.

Curbs may be removed to allow for the sidewalk to blend with the roadway. Speeds are slow enough to allow for pedestrians to intermingle with bicycles, motor vehicles, and transit.

I imagine less traffic on Poplar could actually allow for easier/ more dedicated delivery space on Poplar for businesses, the traffic having to flip around Adams Park... is dangerous for pedestrians navigating around the park. - Ben B, 01/08 public meeting comment

**2-WAY WASHINGTON STREET PROPOSED
CONCEPT**

Explore opportunity for expanded public space, green infrastructure, and separated bike lanes

South Street

Explore opportunities to widen existing narrow sidewalk

Prioritize Poplar St. for local trips, curbside parking and deliveries, and flexible community programming

Explore opportunity for expanded public space, and green infrastructure

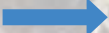

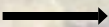
Poplar Street


Southbound bus stops (Poplar St and Taft Hill) relocated

Explore restoring two-way bus and vehicle traffic on Washington St. to simplify routing and minimize cut-through traffic.

Washington Street

TRANSPORTATION MAP KEY

-  BUS/VEHICLE CIRCULATION
-  LOCAL VEHICLE CIRCULATION
-  BIKE CIRCULATION

 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC SPACE EXPANSION



GATEWAY TO CORINTH STREET



An improved pedestrian gateway at this intersection would:

1. Create a safe and active gateway into the neighborhood from the train station.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

TRANSPORTATION

SIMPLIFY STREETS NETWORKS FOR SAFETY AND BETTER CIRCULATION

T-5. Reconfigure the Belgrade Ave/Robert St/ Corinth St intersection to create shorter crosswalks, additional public space and green infrastructure.

Consider signaling the intersection to better protect pedestrian crossings.

T-6. Square off the Belgrade Ave intersections of both Pinehurst St and Amherst St to:

- Reduce crosswalk distances
- Slow turning vehicles
- Expand space for bus stops
- Create green infrastructure opportunities

OPEN SPACE

EXPAND THE PUBLIC REALM

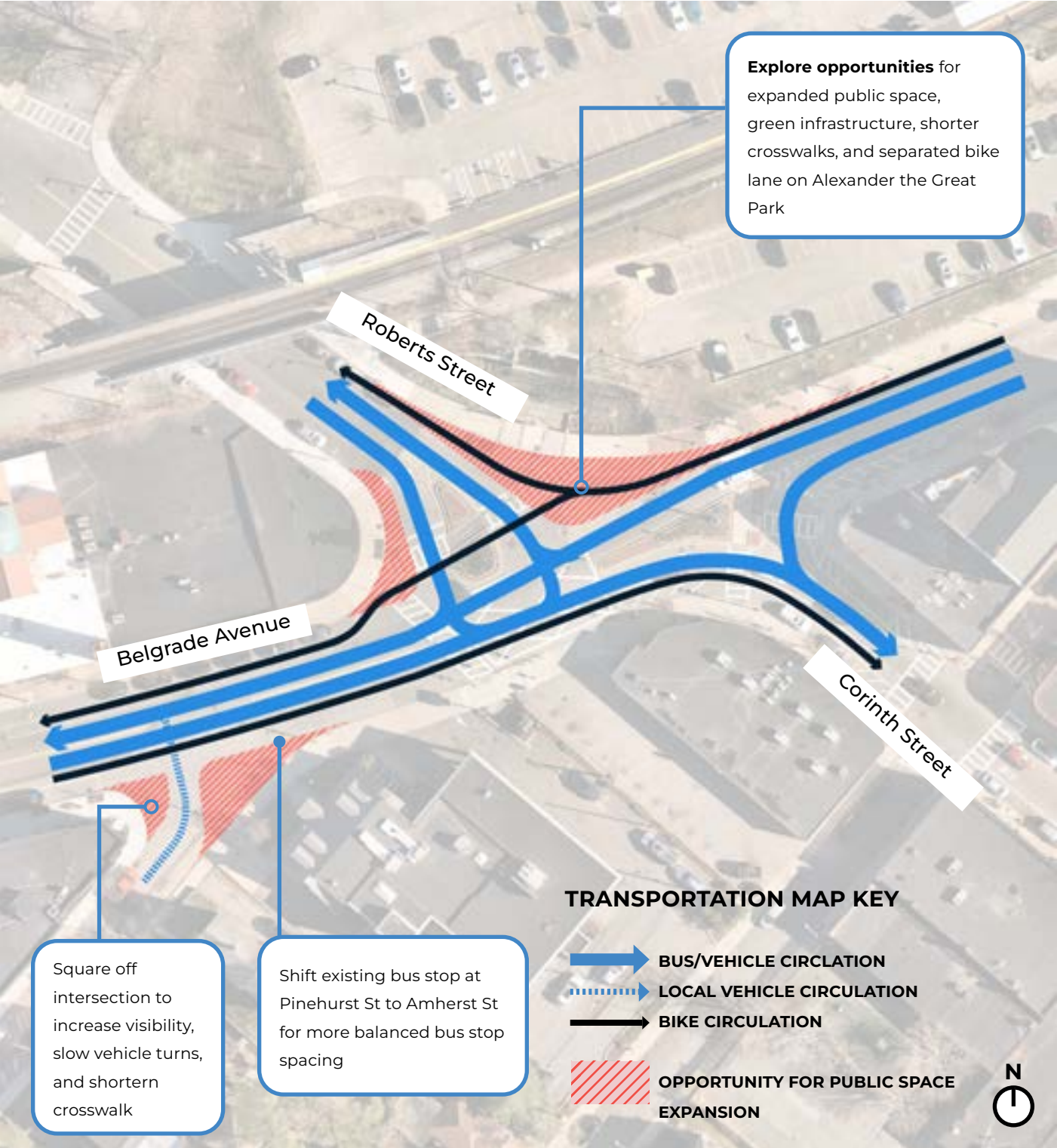
OR-2. Expand the sidewalk on both sides of the intersection at Belgrade Avenue and Corinth Street

This intersection improvement will double the sidewalk width in front of Square Root, providing space for outdoor seating and add more than 2,000 sf of additional open space adjacent to Alexander the Great Park that could be used for cultural programming and events.

The implementation of this project will be led and primarily funded by the Streets Cabinet.

Additional funding sources and maintenance considerations will need to be determined for the success of this project.

BELGRADE AVE/ROBERT ST/CORINTH STREET PROPOSED CONCEPT



RECOMMENDATIONS:

OPEN SPACE AND RESILIENCE:

INTEGRATE CLIMATE-RESILIENT FEATURES IN PRIORITY AREAS:

OR-3. Green Infrastructure should be prioritized in all public realm improvements.

Opportunities for green infrastructure should be incorporated into new development, capital projects identified in this Plan that involve roadway redesign, and through City-led efforts in residential areas.

One priority area within the plan are the streets surrounding Healy Field (Florence, Firth, and Washington streets) to alleviate the stormwater issues in this part of the neighborhood.



Example of Stormwater Management

OR-4. Heat Resilient strategies should be prioritized in the area of the Square that is considered a priority zone in the **Urban Forest Plan** (street tree planting, roof treatment, pavement selection).

New development can create increased sidewalk widths through setbacks, to provide room for additional street trees, green infrastructure, and outdoor seating - especially in Priority Zone areas identified in the Urban Forest Plan.

Street trees can be installed and maintained by the Urban Forestry Division where there are new private development projects

For public sidewalks in residential areas, the Urban Forestry Division's 'Let's Keep Boston 'Cool' program can install and maintain street trees

For tree planting on privately-owned land, community-based organizations can apply for grants and technical support from the Boston Tree Alliance

HEAT RESILIENCY IN ROSLINDALE



This map illustrates the Priority Zone identified in the Urban Forest Plan for Roslindale Square. Priority Zones are areas with three or more overlapping indicators:

- Environment Justice Census Blocks
 - Low Canopy
 - Heat Event Hours
 - Historically Marginalized Areas
- 3 Overlapping Indicators
 - 2 Overlapping Indicators
 - 1 Indicator
 - Tree Canopy/Open Space

RECOMMENDATIONS:

OPEN SPACE

IMPROVE EXISTING OPEN SPACES TO BETTER SERVE THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

OR-5. Compile alternative funding sources for park improvements requested by the community. Requested potential improvements include the following:

Adams Park: Children's play area

Healy Field: Investment in the stands and pavilion, pathway network, additional seating, picnic tables, and shade structures

Fallon Field: Additional seating, picnic tables, shade structures

Potential funding sources for these improvements are in Appendix VII: Public Park Funding Opportunities

Note: For Fallon Field specifically,

- *Requests for community events and cultural programming came up frequently in open space discussions and are addressed in the Arts + Culture section.*



Adams Park

An indoor playground is a big dream. But in the middle ground my next wish would be a tot lot, a playground aimed at kids under 5! - Emma B, 01/08 public meeting comment

[Fallon Field] tunnel is heavily used and is a gateway to both greenspace but also the small business corridor on Belgrade that leads in and out of the Square. It would not take a significant capital investment to add some lighting in the tunnel...have the city mural crew paint a mural...and plant some hardy perennials. - Joanna B, public comment form

RECOMMENDATIONS:

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

INVEST IN BETTER BUS STOPS AND TRANSIT RELIABILITY

T-7. Provide additional passenger amenities such as shelters, benches, and improved sidewalks at the high-ridership bus stops at Washington St/Firth Rd (northbound).

T-8. Refresh bus lanes and install additional crosswalks on Washington Street. Prioritize new crosswalks near bus stops that today have no crosswalks.



TRANSPORTATION MAP KEY

— EXISTING CROSSWALK — PROPOSED CROSSWALK ● BUS STOPS

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

IMPROVE CONNECTIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY OF THE COMMUTER RAIL

T-9. Work with the MBTA to provide a new or relocated Bluebikes Station closer to the Roslindale Village Commuter Rail Station.






This recommendation would support a planned future bike path - the Arboretum Link/Roslindale Gateway Path - along the MBTA commuter rail right of way to connect with the soon to be complete Arboretum Road path. Once complete, this would provide a path connection from the Roslindale Village Station to Forest Hills Station and the Southwest Corridor path network.







T-10. Work with the MBTA to identify investments that are required to increase train frequency. Continue to advocate for lower fares (Zone 1A) to reduce financial barriers to the Commuter Rail.



T-11. Coordinate with the MBTA to improve station access and wayfinding by installing new lighting and murals on the pedestrian underpass that connects under the commuter rail line.



IMPLEMENTATION




Planning	Planning Department
Streets	Boston Streets Cabinet
MBTA	Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
Development Review	Planning Department Development Review Division
Parks	Parks Department

#	GOAL	TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES		
T-1		Conduct further engineering and design analysis to explore restoring two-way operations on Washington Street along Adams Park (between South St and Poplar St). These changes would reduce traffic on Poplar St, simplify bus routing, reduce residential cut-through traffic, and improve operations at intersections. Bus stops would be relocated as needed to allow for passenger pick up and drop off along southbound Washington St.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-2		If two-way operations are restored on Washington St, explore opportunities to shorten pedestrian crosswalks, create new separated bike connections, provide green infrastructure, and create space for community programming. Specific areas to consider include the intersections of Washington St/South St and Washington St/Poplar St.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-3		If two-way operations are restored on Washington St, explore expanding the Poplar St sidewalk along Adams Park and/or making Poplar St a shared street. A shared street along Adams Park would allow for pedestrian and bike travel, in addition to local vehicle travel and curbside parking/deliveries.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)

T-4		Flip the one-way directions of Firth Rd and Bexley Rd to control left-turning vehicles more safely at an existing traffic signal. This change will improve overall operations and reduce conflicts between turning vehicles and people walking and biking.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 1-5 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Engineering)
T-5		Reconfigure the Belgrade Ave/Robert St/Corinth St intersection to create shorter crosswalks and create additional public space and green infrastructure. Consider signalizing the intersection to better protect pedestrian crossings.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-6		Square off the Belgrade Ave intersections of both Pinehurst St and Amherst St to reduce crosswalk distances, slow turning vehicles, expand space for bus stops, and create green infrastructure opportunities.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-7		Provide additional passenger amenities such as shelters, benches, and improved sidewalks at the high-ridership bus stops at Washington St/Firth Rd (northbound).		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 1-5 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-8		Refresh bus lanes and install additional crosswalks on Washington Street. Prioritize new crosswalks near bus stops that today have no crosswalks.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-9		Work with the MBTA to provide a new or relocated Bluebikes Station closer to the Roslindale Village Commuter Rail Station.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)

T-10		Work with the MBTA to identify investments that are required to increase train frequency. Continue to advocate for lower fares (Zone 1A) to reduce financial barriers to the Commuter Rail.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE 5-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • Streets (Policy & Planning) • Planning • MBTA
T-11		Coordinate with the MBTA to improve station access and wayfinding by installing new lighting and murals on the pedestrian underpass that connects under the commuter rail line.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Other state capital funds	TIMELINE 1-5 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • Streets (Policy & Planning) • Planning • MBTA

#	GOAL	OPEN SPACE AND RESILIENCY STRATEGIES		
OR-1		<p>Convert Poplar St to a shared street. This will support the capacity of Adams Park to host events and increase the connectivity between the park and the neighborhood.</p> <p>The details of this improvement will be developed in a separate process but could include the conversion of pavement from asphalt to pavers, raising a portion or all of the street to be at the level of the sidewalk, green infrastructure strategies (porous pavement, street trees with continuous tree trenches) and the addition of amenities such as seating, planters, and lighting.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Capital Line Item	TIMELINE 8-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets
OR-2		<p>Expand the sidewalks at both sides of the intersection at Belgrade Avenue and Corinth Street.</p> <p>This includes the sidewalk in front of Square Root that would provide space for outdoor cafe seating and an extension of Alexander the Great Park that could be used for cultural programming and events.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Capital Line Item	TIMELINE Interim activation 1-3 years, full build out 8-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • Planning • Community host organization • Streets

OR-3		Green Infrastructure should be prioritized in all public realm improvements. One priority area within the plan are the streets surrounding Healy Field (Florence, Firth and Washington St) to alleviate the stormwater issues in this part of the neighborhood.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development • Operating Budget/ Annual Program 	TIMELINE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to development timeline • 2-5 years, Green Infrastructure Site Assessment & Prioritization- Arboretum project 	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Development • Planning-development review • Office of Green Infrastructure
OR-4		<p>Heat Resilient strategies should be prioritized in the area of the Square that is considered a priority zone in the Urban Forest Plan (street tree planting, roof treatment, pavement selection).</p> <p>Zoning districts should be mapped to create opportunities for increased sidewalk widths through setbacks, in order to provide room for additional street trees, green infrastructure, and outdoor seating.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development • Operating Budget/ Annual Program 	TIMELINE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to development timeline (commercial areas) • 1-2 years (street planting in residential areas) 	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Development • Urban Forestry Division within Parks - 'Let's Keep Boston 'Cool' program
OR-5		Compile alternative funding sources for park improvements requested by the community		
		FUNDING CATEGORY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants (see Appendix VII for public park funding opportunities) 	TIMELINE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year 	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Department



CHAPTER 08

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This Plan sets up an actionable framework for implementing recommended capital improvements, programmatic investments, and design and land use standards in Roslindale Square.

In 5-10 years, the recommendations in this Plan will be fulfilled through planning, regulatory review, development and community action under the guidance of the Planning Advisory Council (PAC).

This Plan should be used continuously by all stakeholders involved based on identified roles in the table found in the following pages. The table breaks down how and when stakeholders should use this Plan so that the path towards fulfilling Recommendations has a clear path forward.

Entity	When should they refer to the plan?	What should they look for?
PLANNING DEPARTMENT		
Zoning Reform Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) cases Assessing new opportunities for updates to the Zoning Code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize the Land Use and Design Framework to inform recommendations for projects that request a zoning variance or have an existing building nonconformity
Planning Review Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) cases Reviewing Article 80 Large and Small Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize the Land Use and Design Framework to inform recommendations for projects that request a zoning variance or have an existing building nonconformity Refer to recommendations in the implementation matrix (page 116) that identify private development as a responsible party to assess opportunities for community benefits through Article 80 Use the Land Use and Design Framework to identify opportunities for building elements and community uses (such as housing, types of commercial uses, shared open spaces or publicly accessible ground floor or upper floor uses) that support this Framework
Development Review Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing review process for Article 80 Large and Small Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to recommendations in the implementation matrix that include private development as a responsible party and advise project proponents accordingly
Urban Design Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducting design review for Zoning Board of Appeal cases Reviewing Article 80 Large and Small Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the Design Guidelines to ensure proposals advance these guidelines through new development

Entity	When should they refer to the plan?	What should they look for?
City Departments (Not Including Planning Department)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital planning during 5-year budget cycle • Allocating annual operating funds • Determining investment opportunities through capital line items, contracts, or grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to recommendations in the implementation matrix that include their department as a responsible party to inform capital planning, staffing, and budgetary needs
Zoning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing development proposals that request zoning relief or petition for new zoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the Land Use and Design Framework for context related to desired building and community uses (such as housing, commercial uses, shared open spaces or publicly accessible ground floor or upper floor uses) and place-based design elements that align with this framework
Property Owners and Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining acquisition and/or development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to recommendations in the implementation matrix that include private development as a responsible entity to inform project scope, in-kind mitigation, and community benefits • Use the Land Use and Design Framework to inform key project elements, such as building form, design, and building uses/amenities

Entity	When should they refer to the plan?	What should they look for?
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS, CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS, SPECIAL INTEREST COMMUNITY GROUPS, AND NON PROFITS		
Community Development Corporations (CDCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying areas and proposing opportunities for development projects or smaller scale improvements aligned with community priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the Land Use and Design Framework to identify opportunities for building and community uses (such as housing, commercial uses, shared open spaces or publicly accessible ground floor or upper floor uses) that align with this framework
Individual Property Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposing a new building use, alteration, or new construction of their property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the Land Use and Design Framework to identify opportunities for building and community uses (such as housing, commercial uses, shared open spaces or publicly accessible ground floor or upper floor uses) that align with this framework
Civic/Community groups and Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating in public review processes for Article 80 developments Starting a community-led project or neighborhood improvement effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the recommendations in the implementation matrix that identify private development as a responsible party to hold developers accountable for providing community-desired amenities and investments Refer to recommendations that identify community groups as a responsible party to help turn these ideas into reality!




IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX





RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY





The recommendations in this Plan are summarized in the table below, organized by topic area. Each recommendation is grouped by topic area (for example, Housing and Real Estate Recommendations) and includes the following information: funding category, responsible entities for accomplishing the recommendation, and timeline for completion.





IMPLEMENTING CITY DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES






Planning	Planning Department
Development Review	Planning Department Development Review Division
Real Estate	Planning Department Real Estate Division
MOAC	Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture
MOH	Mayor's Office of Housing
BLC	Boston Landmarks Commission
Parks	Boston Parks and Recreation Department
OEOI	Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion
Streets	Boston Streets Cabinet
MBTA	Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
BIFDC	Boston Interagency Fair Housing Development Committee



#	GOAL	LAND USE AND DESIGN FRAMEWORK STRATEGY		
LD-1, LD-1A, LD-1B		Update the zoning map in the areas identified in the land use and design framework to encode zoning regulations that support the vision set forth in the Plan.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY No additional budget needed	TIMELINE Winter 2025 (after adoption of this Plan, anticipated February 2025)	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Planning Department
LD-2		Incorporate the Land Use and Design Framework and updated zoning regulations into the ongoing review of proposed projects.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY No additional budget needed	TIMELINE Ongoing (after adoption of this Plan and an updated zoning map)	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Department (Planning Review Team, Urban Design Division, Development Review Division) • Zoning Board of Appeal
LD-3		Complete an Area Form update - including an updated inventory of potentially historic structures - for the Roslindale Square area to file with the Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC).		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating/Annual Budget and Grants	TIMELINE 2-3 years	DEPARTMENTS/ PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Boston Landmarks Commission


#	GOAL	HOUSING AND REAL ESTATE STRATEGIES		
H-1		Encourage an additional percentage of rental units to be offered to housing voucher holders in new developments subject to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) requirements (generally residential projects with more than 50,000 square feet).		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • BIFDC • Private Development
H-2		Request a higher proportion of 2+ bedroom Inclusionary Zoning units to be provided in new residential development.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • BIFDC • Private Development • Planning - Real Estate Division • MOH
H-3		Develop guidelines for parcel acquisition in Squares + Streets districts to support housing production. This may include identifying areas where there are vacant buildings or empty lots that the City can acquire on its own or partner with a local CDC to acquire and develop.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Spring 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • Planning - Real Estate Division • MOH
H-4		Identify parcels with Southwest Boston CDC or other affordable housing developers for acquisition/preservation of affordable housing units on the private market.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Acquisition Opportunity Program (AOP), other private and nonprofit funds	TIMELINE 5-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE • Nonprofit Developers • Planning - Real Estate Division • MOH






#	GOAL	SMALL BUSINESS STRATEGIES		
SB-1		<p>The following commercial uses are desired by the community through new development or adaptive reuse of existing or vacant buildings: affordable and healthy food retailers, cafes, sit-down restaurants, and daytime casual eateries.</p> <p>Businesses that provide culturally relevant and affordable goods & services to Black, Latinx, Haitian Creole, and other immigrant communities in Roslindale are encouraged.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning - Development Review • Planning - Real Estate Division • Private Development
SB-2		<p>Through new development or adaptive reuse, encourage the build-out of a small movie theater/flexible entertainment space with a local film operator as the tenant.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning - Development Review • Private Development
SB-3		<p>Engage with Roslindale business owners to provide Technical Assistance (TA) for establishing co-ownership models of commercial spaces.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE Spring 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEOI • Community partners (i.e. local business associations)
SB-4		<p>Request new Article 80 developments in Roslindale Square to contribute a monetary donation to local business support organizations as a community benefit to support their work in promoting a vibrant, stable, and affordable commercial district for small businesses.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Development	TIMELINE Subject to development timeline	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Development • Planning - development review






SB-5		Research and report on the effectiveness of policies that limit store size and/or types of stores at a citywide scale to support small, independently-owned business districts like Roslindale Square.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE 3 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE OEOI
SB-6		Develop citywide tracking mechanism for commercial vacancies. Complement with a program that supports existing or start-up businesses in filling vacant commercial spaces		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 3 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE OEOI
SB-7		Expand marketing outreach for the Legacy Business Program to include more hard copy and translated materials in order to expand the community's participation in the nomination process for this program. In Roslindale these spaces may include the Roslindale Community Center, the Roslindale branch of the BPL, and the Menino Center at Archdale BHA.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE Fall 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE OEOI
SB-8		Establish digital marketing and sales support for brick and mortar businesses to expand their customer base through the Technical Assistance Program		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE Beginning Spring 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE OEOI




#	GOAL	ARTS + CULTURE STRATEGIES		
AC-1		<p>Issue a location-specific entertainment license to Birch Street Plaza to more easily host community events such as music, movie nights, potlucks, dancing, and more.</p> <p>If this program expands, the City should consider providing additional location-specific licenses at under-programmed City parks such as Fallon or Healy Field.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE Summer/Fall 2025	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOAC • Licensing Department • Roslindale Village Main Streets
AC-2		<p>If Washington Street is restored to 2-way directionality, explore a more regular closure and cultural activation of Poplar Street during the Farmers Market or other temporary events in Adams Park in partnership with community groups.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE 5-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets • Community partners
AC-3		<p>Support Roslindale Square in becoming a designated state cultural district to provide additional promotional and grant opportunities for the cultural sector of Roslindale Square.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Other state capital funds	TIMELINE 3 years - application to be submitted by Fall 2026	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOAC • Community partners
AC-4		<p>Coordinate with MBTA to install new mural art and lighting in the Roslindale Village commuter rail station underpasses.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Other state capital funds	TIMELINE 1-3 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBTA • MOAC
AC-5		<p>Promote the inclusion of public art in new development - especially murals or interactive sculptures - that reflects the cultural diversity of the Roslindale community and follows MOAC guidelines for public art on private property.</p>		



		FUNDING CATEGORY <i>Development</i>	TIMELINE <i>Subject to development timeline</i>	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MOAC• Private Development• Planning-development review
AC-6		<i>Establish a public art maintenance fund with Roslindale Village Main Streets to both commission and maintain public art on private property.</i>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY <i>Development</i>	TIMELINE <i>Subject to development timeline</i>	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MOAC• Private Development• Planning-development review
AC-7		<i>Complete a public art inventory in Roslindale Square as part of a larger citywide public art plan to identify gaps in representation and opportunities for additional placemaking.</i>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY <i>Operating Budget/ Annual Program</i>	TIMELINE <i>12-18 months</i>	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <i>MOAC</i>

#	GOAL	TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES		
T-1		<i>Conduct further engineering and design analysis to explore restoring two-way operations on Washington Street along Adams Park (between South St and Poplar St). These changes would reduce traffic on Poplar St, simplify bus routing, reduce residential cut-through traffic, and improve operations at intersections. Bus stops would be relocated as needed to allow for passenger pick up and drop off along southbound Washington St.</i>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY <i>Existing Grant</i>	TIMELINE <i>0-2 years for design</i>	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <i>Streets (Policy & Planning)</i>

T-2		If two-way operations are restored on Washington St, explore opportunities to shorten pedestrian crosswalks, create new separated bike connections, provide green infrastructure, and create space for community programming. Specific areas to consider include the intersections of Washington St/South St and Washington St/Poplar St.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-3		If two-way operations are restored on Washington St, explore expanding the Poplar St sidewalk along Adams Park and/or making Poplar St a shared street. A shared street along Adams Park would allow for pedestrian and bike travel, in addition to local vehicle travel and curbside parking/deliveries.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-4		Flip the one-way directions of Firth Rd and Bexley Rd to control left-turning vehicles more safely at an existing traffic signal. This change will improve overall operations and reduce conflicts between turning vehicles and people walking and biking.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 1-5 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Engineering)
T-5		Reconfigure the Belgrade Ave/Robert St/Corinth St intersection to create shorter crosswalks and create additional public space and green infrastructure. Consider signaling the intersection to better protect pedestrian crossings.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-6		Square off the Belgrade Ave intersections of both Pinehurst St and Amherst St to reduce crosswalk distances, slow turning vehicles, expand space for bus stops, and create green infrastructure opportunities.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Existing Grant	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)

T-7		Provide additional passenger amenities such as shelters, benches, and improved sidewalks at the high-ridership bus stops at Washington St/Firth Rd (northbound).		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 1-5 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-8		Refresh bus lanes and install additional crosswalks on Washington Street. Prioritize new crosswalks near bus stops that today have no crosswalks.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-9		Work with the MBTA to provide a new or relocated Bluebikes Station closer to the Roslindale Village Commuter Rail Station.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Operating Budget/ Annual Program	TIMELINE 0-2 years for design	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE Streets (Policy & Planning)
T-10		Work with the MBTA to identify investments that are required to increase train frequency. Continue to advocate for lower fares (Zone 1A) to reduce financial barriers to the Commuter Rail.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Regulatory	TIMELINE 5-10 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets (Policy & Planning) • Planning • MBTA
T-11		Coordinate with the MBTA to improve station access and wayfinding by installing new lighting and murals on the pedestrian underpass that connects under the commuter rail line.		
		FUNDING CATEGORY Other state capital funds	TIMELINE 1-5 years	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets (Policy & Planning) • Planning • MBTA

#	GOAL	OPEN SPACE AND RESILIENCY STRATEGIES		
OR-1		<p>Convert Poplar St to a shared street. This will support the capacity of Adams Park to host events and increase the connectivity between the park and the neighborhood.</p> <p>The details of this improvement will be developed in a separate process but could include the conversion of pavement from asphalt to pavers, raising a portion or all of the street to be at the level of the sidewalk, green infrastructure strategies (porous pavement, street trees with continuous tree trenches) and the addition of amenities such as seating, planters, and lighting.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE
		Capital Line Item	8-10 years	Streets
OR-2		<p>Expand the sidewalks at both sides of the intersection at Belgrade Avenue and Corinth Street.</p> <p>This includes the sidewalk in front of Square Root that would provide space for outdoor cafe seating and an extension of Alexander the Great Park that could be used for cultural programming and events.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE
		Capital Line Item	Interim activation 1-3 years, full build out 8-10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Community host organization • Streets
OR-3		<p>Green Infrastructure should be prioritized in all public realm improvements. One priority area within the plan are the streets surrounding Healy Field (Florence, Firth and Washington St) to alleviate the stormwater issues in this part of the neighborhood.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY	TIMELINE	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development • Operating Budget/Annual Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to development timeline • 2-5 years, Green Infrastructure Site Assessment & Prioritization-Arboretum project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Development • Planning-development review • Office of Green Infrastructure

OR-4		<p>Heat Resilient strategies should be prioritized in the area of the Square that is considered a priority zone in the Urban Forest Plan (street tree planting, roof treatment, pavement selection).</p> <p>Zoning districts should be mapped to create opportunities for increased sidewalk widths through setbacks, in order to provide room for additional street trees, green infrastructure, and outdoor seating.</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development • Operating Budget/Annual Program 	TIMELINE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to development timeline (commercial areas) • 1-2 years (street planting in residential areas) 	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Development • Urban Forestry Division, 'Let's Keep Boston 'Cool' program
OR-5		<p>Compile alternative funding sources for park improvements requested by the community</p>		
		FUNDING CATEGORY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants (see Appendix VII for public park funding opportunities) 	TIMELINE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year 	DEPARTMENTS/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Department

SQUARES + STREETS

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