Why are we here?

Over the last decade, Boston’s Downtown has transformed from primarily a business district into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. Associated with this transformation and the marked increase in development proposals is a clear need to plan for the future of Downtown comprehensively. The primary goal of this Plan will be to develop a new framework for the preservation, enhancement, and growth of the Downtown area of the City of Boston within the context of past planning studies.

City Agencies

- Housing: Department of Neighborhood Development, Boston Housing Authority, Fair Housing
- Economic Development: Mayor’s Office of Economic Development, Office of Business Development
- Public Financing: Treasurer, Assessing
- Public Facilities: Boston Public Schools, Boston Public Library, Boston Police Department, Boston Fire Department, Property & Construction Management
- Open Space: Parks and Recreation
- Arts & Culture: Mayor’s Office of Arts & Culture, Arts Commission
- Public Transportation: MBTA
- Transportation: Boston Transportation Department, Boston Bikes, MassDOT
- Water: Boston Water & Sewer Commission
- Public Works: Public Works Department, Public Improvement Commission
- Environment/Sustainability/Climate Change: Environment Department, Boston Landmarks Commission, Boston Public Health Commission
- Other Commissions and Departments: Boston Centers for Youth & Families, Elderly Commission, Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Consultant Team

- NBBJ Planning & Urban Design
- HR&A Advisors, Economic Development
- Arup, Sustainability & Transit
- Kittelson & Associates, Transportation Planning
- Boston Conservation Associates, Historic Preservation
- Ground, Inc., Landscape Architecture
- Nitsch Engineering, Blue & Green Infrastructure
- HLB Lighting Design, Lighting Strategy & Design

Tentative Process Timeline

- Spring 2018: Request for Proposals Issued
- August 2018: NBBJ Selected
- September 2018: PLAN: Downtown Begins
- October 2018: Kick-Off Open House
- December 2018: Final Recommendations & Study Completion

Planning Team

- Kennan Rhine: Senior Planner II, Team Co-Lead
- Corey Zehngebot: Senior Architect/Urban Designer, Team Co-Lead
- Sara Myerson: Director of Planning
- Jonathan Greeley: Director of Development Review
- Michael Christopher: Deputy Director for Development Review/Government Affairs
- Danchen Xu: Neighborhood Liaison, Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services
- Alex Krieger: Planning Consultant, NBBJ
- Kathryn Firth: Planning Consultant, NBBJ
- Chris Herlich: Planning Consultant, NBBJ
- Betsy Gardner: Community Engagement Consultant, Engagement Lab
- Jonathan Greeley: Director of Development Review
- Michael Christopher: Deputy Director for Development Review/Government Affairs
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Visual Summary

- Vision, Goals, & Principles
- Planning Scenarios & Development Options
- Scenario Refinement & Impact Analysis
- Development Guidelines & Zoning Recommendations
PLAN: Downtown

Past City Planning

PLAN: Downtown will incorporate themes from recent citywide plans and identify what elements of past Downtown-specific studies still resonates with the community today.
Downtown is home to a growing, diverse set of residents.

Who lives Downtown? While Downtown has only recently started to become more of a residential neighborhood, Chinatown has had a long history of being the first home for many new immigrants. The population grew 48% from 2000 to 2015.

### People

17,400 Residents live Downtown

28% are enrolled in college or university

60% have Bachelor’s Degrees or more advanced degrees.

### Diversity

- About 34% of Downtown residents are foreign-born, compared with about 27% of Boston residents.

### Race and Ethnicity

- Downtown: 56% White Alone, 22% Black, 15% Hispanic, 1% Asian Alone, 6% Other Races
- Boston: 60% White Alone, 23% Black, 15% Hispanic, 2% Asian Alone, 3% Other Races

### Age Distribution

- Only 5% of Downtown residents are school-aged children, compared to 12% of the Boston population.
- Downtown has higher shares of both 18-24 year olds and those over 65 than the City as a whole.

### Households

7,500 Households live Downtown

8,790 Housing Units and 85% are occupied

36% were families and 51% of households are single persons

72% of Households Rent

### Housing Units

- Downtown’s median rent in 2015 was $1,760, higher than the City’s median rent of $1,320.
- Downtown’s growth is poised to continue, with 4,404 new units of housing approved for construction between 2010 and November 13, 2018.¹

### Household Types

- 77% of residents live in a household. The remaining population live in dorms or other group quarters. 71% of group quarters in 2010 were dormitories.
- Only 9.4% of Downtown households have a child living in the household compared with 23% of Boston households.

Note: Demographic data are for the Census-tract approximation of Downtown which includes Chinatown and the Leather District due to data limitations. Source: (1) U.S. Census Bureau, 1950-2010 Decennial Census and 2011-2015 American Community Survey, (2) Boston Planning and Development Agency Board Memos.
### Working Downtown

**Downtown is Boston’s economic engine for all kinds of businesses.**

People come from across the region to work Downtown. While the finance sector has traditionally been perceived as the most dominant sector, there is a diversity of businesses in Downtown.

Downtown had over 171,000 payroll jobs and 30% of the payroll jobs in Boston in 2015.

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**Downtown Jobs**

**171,130 Payroll Jobs**

in comparison to 54,880 jobs in Back Bay and 31,120 jobs in South Boston Waterfront

Payroll Jobs increased by 8% from 2011 to 2015

50% of workers in payroll jobs had Bachelor’s degree or higher

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**Means of Commuting 2016**

- **36%** Drive alone
- **21%** Take the subway or train
- **15%** Bus
- **14%** Walk
- **11%** Carpool
- **10%** Other
- **2%** Telework

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**Top 5 Industries in Downtown 2015**

1. **Finance and Insurance** 41,900 jobs
2. **Professional, Scientific, Technical** 36,400 jobs
3. **Public Administration** 19,700 jobs
4. **Accommodation and Food Services** 12,600 jobs
5. **Administration & Support, Waste Management** 11,000 jobs

**Top 5 Occupations for Downtown Residents 2015**

1. **Management, Business, Financial** 2,770 jobs
2. **Sales and Office** 1,880 jobs
3. **Education, Legal, Community Service, Arts, Media** 1,410 jobs
4. **Computer, Engineering, Science** 780 jobs
5. **Healthcare Practitioners, Technical** 440 jobs

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**Place of Residence of Downtown Workers 2015**

24% of Downtown workers live in Boston.

- Top Boston neighborhoods for Downtown workers include Dorchester, South Boston, Brighton, South End, and Jamaica Plain.

**Commuter Flows 2015**

- **24%** Walk or bike
- **45%** Bus or rail
- **28%** Park and ride
- **13%** Carpool
- **7%** Other

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**Downtown Residents who Work**

53% of working Downtown Residents walk to work

22% of working Downtown residents work outside of Suffolk County

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**Note:** Demographic data are for the Census-tract approximation of Downtown which includes Chinatown and the Leather District due to data limitations.
Downtown’s public realm includes diverse spatial experiences, from traditional parks and playgrounds to more ephemeral spaces like Illuminus and the tactical plaza at Tontine Crescent. Illustrated below is a sampler of public realm assets that are located throughout the study area. Broadening our definition of public realm will be critical to bringing a richer and more nuanced public realm experience to Downtown Boston.
The juxtaposition of historic buildings and spaces alongside more modern buildings and infrastructure give Downtown Boston its unique identity. As Downtown Boston continues to grow, preservation of these historic assets will be key to maintaining Boston’s character and charm. This map is a working record of documented and designated historic ratings in the PLAN: Downtown Study Area, gathered from local and national historic resources.

1% Annual Chance Coast Flood with 40-inches Sea Level Rise

Population Exposure
The population has a significant share of older adults and residents without vehicles that could be affected by disruptions in public transportation service and loss of electricity when climate regulation indoors is necessary for resident well-being.

Asset Exposure
Various transportation connections from Downtown and sections of the Financial District may be exposed to flood impacts at some time this century.

Urban Heat Islands in 2018
Average Daytime Land Surface Temperature

Kilby Street
Large expanses of paved and unshaded surfaces contribute to a higher average surface temperature.

Post Office Square
Shade trees and unshaped surfaces alleviate increases in average surface temperatures.
**Equity**

Improve access to housing, cultural assets, and amenities Downtown for a diverse range of Boston residents across all neighborhoods, levels of affordability, stages of life, and backgrounds.

**Resiliency & Preservation**

Preserve the legacy associated with cultural neighborhoods, arts & performance venues, and historic building fabric while introducing climate resiliency & protection for new and existing spaces Downtown.

**Identity & Public Realm**

Embrace the distinctive places and identities present in public spaces and neighborhoods as complementary members of one cohesive place.

**Mobility**

Strengthen connections between Downtown and Boston’s neighborhoods with equitable travel choices that safely connect residents to the jobs and resources located Downtown.
Mixed-Use Core

Continued dense, mixed-use development and public realm improvements Downtown in the core will support job growth and new housing opportunities, add amenities, and create active centers for residents, workers, and visitors.
Plan: Downtown

Participation & Outreach

December 3, 2018

Who else should be invited to participate in this process?

Join the Advisory Group

Mayor Martin J. Walsh and BPDA are seeking nominations for community members to serve on an Advisory Group.

Who Should Participate?
- Local residents (including both renters and owners)
- Local business owners
- Property owners
- Workforce employees (including both residents of Boston and other communities)
- High School & College Students
- Local advocacy groups
- Subject-matter & technical experts such as architects & planners
- For-profit and nonprofit developers

Schedule
- Meetings will typically last 90 minutes
- Early 2019 through mid-2020
- A schedule of meeting frequency will be discussed at the first meeting.

Nominations Due December 14, 2018

How would you like to participate in this process? Share your ideas for future events.
Circle the areas you commonly visit or utilize Downtown.

Where are your favorite interior and outdoor places Downtown? Where do you commonly visit during the week versus the weekend?

Are there notable places that are significant to Downtown’s identity? Annotations & descriptions are welcome!
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Where are your favorite interior and outdoor places Downtown? Where do you commonly visit during the week versus the weekend?

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PLAN: Downtown

How do you access Downtown by Foot?

Draw the paths you commonly take while walking Downtown.

Are there routes you favor for speed versus a more pleasant experience? Are there places you avoid or prefer to walk by? Annotations and descriptions are welcome!

Did you know...
- 53% of Downtown residents walk to work
- 15% commute by bus or subway.
How do you access Downtown by Foot?

5 minute walk

Draw the paths you commonly take while walking Downtown.
Are there routes you favor for speed versus a more pleasant experience? Are there places you avoid or prefer to walk by? Annotations and descriptions are welcome!

Did you know...

53% of Downtown residents walk to work
15% commute by bus or subway.
How do you access Downtown by Bike?

Did you know... 20% of all vehicles are bikes during peak hours (8-10 am & 5-7 pm) along Washington Street south of Hayward Place.

Draw the paths you commonly take while biking Downtown.

Are there routes you favor for speed, safety or for a pleasant experience? Where do you access Blue Bikes? Do you have access to bike parking? Annotations and descriptions are welcome!
Draw the paths you commonly take while driving Downtown.

Where do you commonly park Downtown? Mark locations where you usually pick up ride hailing services or shared cars. Annotations and descriptions are welcome!

Did you know...

44% of households own at least one car

19% of Downtown residents commute by car, truck, or van.