

# PLAN: Downtown

Advisory Group Meeting #8—December 18, 2019

## Vision, Goals, and Approaches (Draft)

### Vision

PLAN: Downtown will develop a new framework for the preservation, enhancement, and growth of Downtown Boston as a place for all, balancing livability, daylight, walkability, climate change preparedness, access to open space, affordability, and a dynamic mix of uses.

### PLAN: Downtown will...

- 1. Preserve cultural heritage and embrace distinctive histories to create a unique and cohesive Downtown.**
  - i. Protect public spaces that create distinctive identities in Downtown, highlighting the local, regional, and national significance of the district
  - ii. Promote arts and cultural activities that are reflective of Downtown and its Character Areas
  - iii. Proactively identify and protect important architectural context and encourage the retention of significant historic building fabric
  - iv. Continue to follow the Secretary of the Department of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties\*
  
- 2. Promote dense, mixed-use development to support living, working, learning, and leisure activities in an 18 hour/day, 7 day/week district.**
  - i. Continue encouraging residential development in Downtown
  - ii. Provide civic infrastructure to support residential uses
  - iii. Ensure Downtown remains a hub for cultural activities
  
- 3. Encourage economic development that maintains Downtown as a diverse, equitable, regional job center.**
  - i. Provide technical, institutional, and financial support to local business and entrepreneurs
  - ii. Support the continuity of small scale business operations
  - iii. Promote the creation flexible commercial spaces that can adapt to the changing needs of businesses
  - iv. Incorporate the 2019 Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) Update into PLAN: Downtown once completed\*

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## 4. Promote the retention, growth, and diversity of active ground-floor uses, especially legacy and small businesses.

- i. Accommodate the widest possible range of active ground floor uses
- ii. Support businesses that promote activity Downtown, including those that operate beyond traditional business hours

## 5. Enhance access to housing for Boston residents across all levels of affordability, stages of life, and backgrounds.

- i. Expand housing options for families in Downtown
- ii. Use publicly-owned land to provide workforce/affordable housing within mixed-use developments
- iii. Stabilize housing opportunities in vulnerable districts and for seniors
- iv. Encourage private developers to provide below-market rate housing options within their projects
- v. Incorporate the 2019 Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) Update into PLAN: Downtown once completed\*

## 6. Improve connections through, within, and to Downtown, with a focus on active transportation, transit, and other non-vehicular modes of transportation.

- i. Improve transit services through a systems-based approach to upgrading infrastructure
- ii. Prioritize high-occupancy and non-motorized transportation modes on all streets
- iii. Provide a high quality, safe street environment for pedestrians and cyclists
- iv. Encourage multimodal connections between the north and south sides of Downtown
- v. Optimize circulation in Downtown without compromising wider area vehicular movement
- vi. Rationalize logistics and pickup/dropoff activities to limit the negative impacts on commerce and movement through Downtown
- vii. Require compliance with net-zero emissions readiness\*

## 7. Encourage consistent, safe, healthy, and high-quality improvements to the public realm that welcome everyone year-round.

- i. Strengthen the public realm by providing legible and safe connections between major nodes and destinations
- ii. Provide more opportunities for people to interact with art on a regular basis
- iii. Provide new opportunities for flexible programming in the public realm

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- iv. Continue to facilitate innovative public realm interventions through pilot and tactical projects
- v. Provide the infrastructure needed for people to use public spaces throughout the day and the year

## **8. Preserve historic building fabric and cultural institutions while advancing climate preparedness and resiliency measures.**

- i. Encourage the retrofitting of historic assets to address urban heat island concerns
- ii. Encourage the retrofitting of historic assets to address flooding concerns

## **9. Ensure future development and public realm projects are resilient, and mitigate climate change impacts related to sea level rise, coastal storms, increased stormwater, and rising temperatures.**

- i. Ensure new development incorporates heat resiliency measures at the building and district scales
- ii. Ensure new development incorporates flood mitigation measures at the building and district scales
- iii. Refer to existing (or imminent) flood mitigation policies as captured in Article 25 CRB, the Flood Resilience Zoning Overlay district, and Article 37\*

## **10. Reduce the carbon impacts of new and existing buildings, transportation, and waste and consumption in Downtown**

- i. Advance the City's carbon-neutrality goals ahead of established schedules
- ii. Require compliance with net-zero emissions readiness\*