

FEBRUARY

25
2026

PLANNING ACADEMY

Info Session



Planning Department

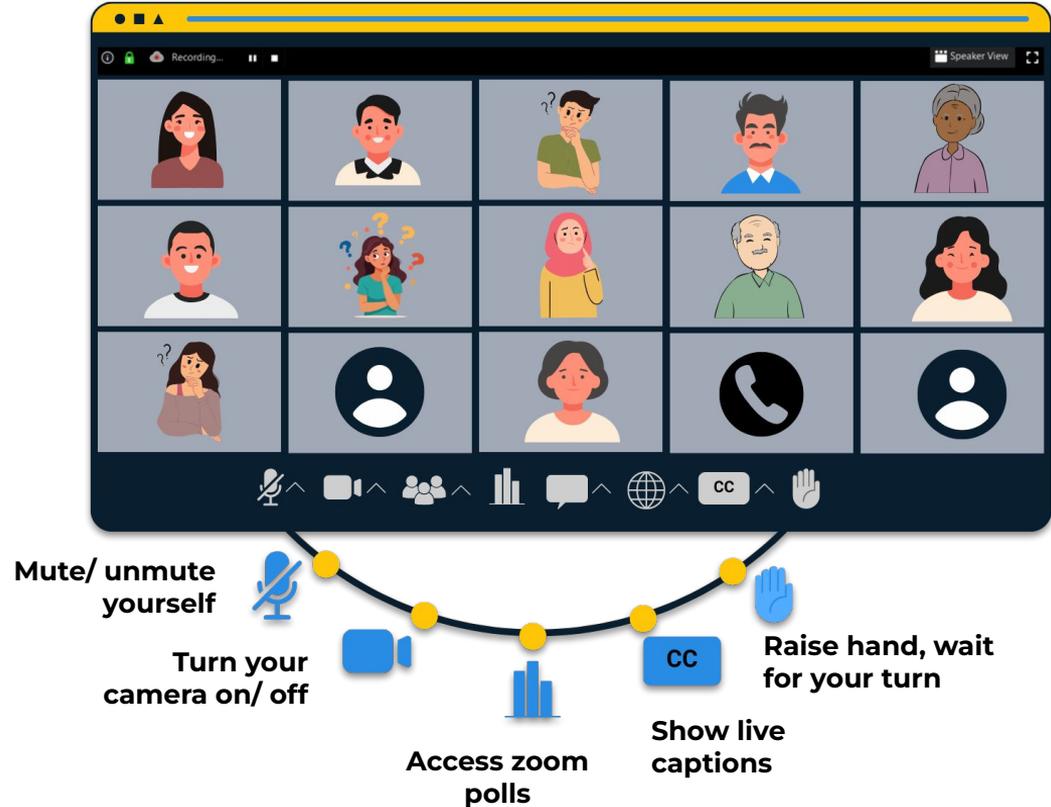
CITY of **BOSTON**

ZOOM TIPS AND MEETING INFO

- We will be recording this meeting and posting it on the Planning Department's project webpage

During the Q&A Portion

- Use raise hand function (dial *9 if joining by phone) to be invited to unmute (dial *6 if joining by phone) to ask your question or provide comment
- You can also add your questions or comments in the chat



AGENDA

1 Welcome + Introductions

2 Planning Academy Overview

3 Next Steps

4 Questions & Answers



MEETING CODE OF CONDUCT



Respect one Another

All attendees are expected to respect one another and any differences of opinion

Welcome Difference in Opinion



We welcome differences of opinion, including opinions that differ from the Planning Dept



Constructive Feedback

Constructive comments and opinions should be aimed at topics, not people

Allow All to Speak



To allow your fellow attendees a chance to ask their questions or comments, speaking time will be limited to 2 minutes

Code of Conduct



Welcome & Introductions

In the chat, share your:

Name

Neighborhood

In a few words, why you are attending this session?

Who is behind the Planning Academy?



Caroline Filice Smith
Senior Urban Designer



Kristiana Lachiusa
Deputy Director of
Community Engagement



Grey Black
Community Engagement Manager



Naoise McDonnell
Community Engagement Manager



Bethlehem Tesfaye
Urban Designer



Ethan Matthews
Urban Designer

Consultant Team



Chavella Lee-Pacheco
Consult Lela



Shavel'le Olivier
Consult Lela



Ru'a Al-Abweh
Consult Lela



Rosa Herrero
RH Design and Planning



Armani White
Reclaim Roxbury



Cole Gibson
Reclaim Roxbury

Planning Academy Overview

Planning Academy will create a dedicated space to dig into the history, context, and complexities of Planning, Design, and Development.

Our goal is to support community members in more actively taking part in shaping the future of Boston

LEARN HOW TO SHAPE THE BOSTON YOU LOVE

**Boston Planning
Academy**

Apply to join
Boston's first ever
Planning Academy!



B



bosplans.org/PlanningAcademy

Why Join?

Boston Planning Academy bosplans.org/PlanningAcademy

Learn how Boston is planned, and how you can shape it!

B

Apply to join Boston's first ever Planning Academy!



The graphic features a background map of Boston with various neighborhood names like 'DOWNTOWN', 'NORTH END', and 'ROSE HULL'. It includes icons of a colorful townhouse, a tree, a modern building, and a man holding a child. A large letter 'B' is in the bottom left corner.

Explore how planning decisions are made and why your voice matters

Learn how to shape and influence planning decisions!

Meet others interested in making Boston a home for everyone



How will sessions be taught?

*Sessions will combine a balanced mix of **teaching**, **discussion**, and **activities***

Boston Case Studies

Learn fundamentals through local examples

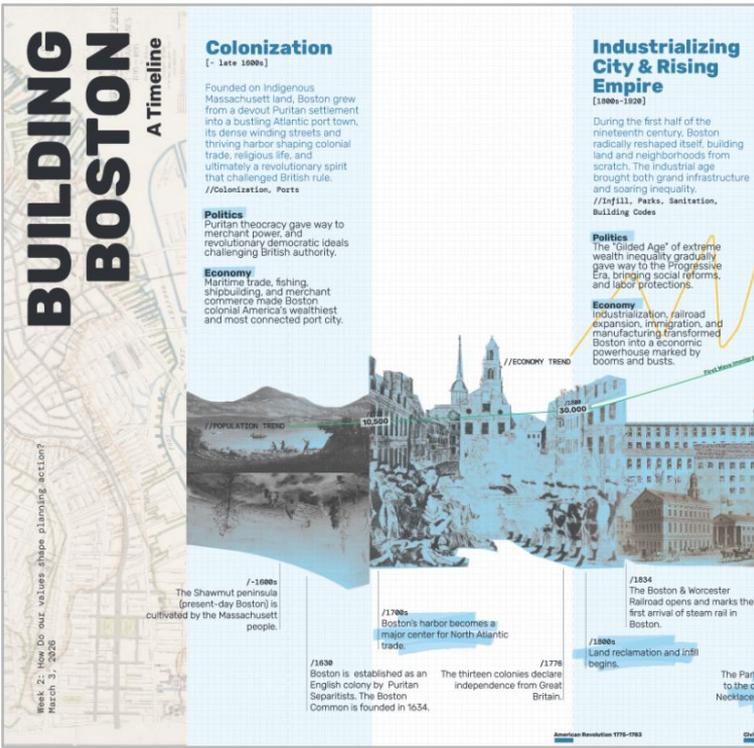
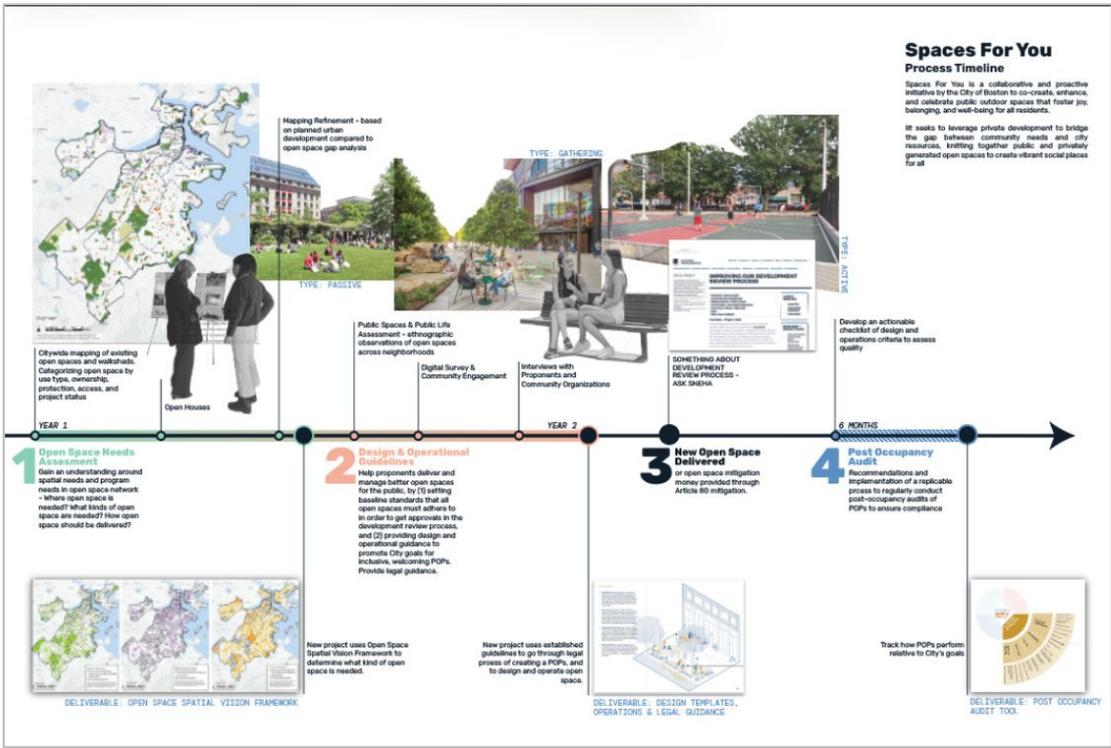
Hands-On Learning

Be challenged to move from knowledge to action!

Guest Speakers

Dive deeper with local experts - and ask them anything!

Boston Case Studies



Hands-On Learning

THINK LIKE A PLANNER

Bingo



BINGO

Identify who does what in City Hall.

STREETS CABINET (TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC WORKS) Design, plan, and maintain the public right of way.	BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT (BPRD) Create and maintain clean, green, safe, and accessible open space.	OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY & INCLUSION (OEOI) Help businesses launch, grow, and thrive.
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF ARTS AND CULTURE (MOAC) Improve the city through arts and culture.	PLANNING DEPARTMENT Plan, design, and review public and private projects.	MASSDOT State agency that manages highways, the MBTA, airports, and vehicle licensing (DMV).
MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MBTA) Manage transit services and infrastructure.	BOSTON WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION (BWSC) Plan and maintain water and sewer infrastructure.	MAYOR'S OFFICE OF HOUSING (MOH) Manage and support affordable housing in Boston.



People
 "Decisive decision-making power/influence"

+2
 "Incentive Support"

Week 4: Zoning 101
 April 29, 2020

ZONE IT!

Activity Worksheet

Land Use



Use Regulations

	Neighborhood Shopping (NS) - First Story	Neighborhood Shopping (NS) - Second Story & Above	3F-400
Residential	F	A	A
Library	A	A	C
Community Center	A	A	A
Child Care	A	C	A
School (K-12)	A	C	F
Restaurant	A	C	F
Light Manufacturing	F	F	F
General Office	A	A	F

Key: A=Allowed, C=Conditional, F=Forbidden

Height Restrictions

District	Max Allowable Height (Stories)
NS (Neighborhood Shopping)	4
3F-4000 (3 Family)	3

= 1 story



"Incentive"

Who Should Apply?

*Are you excited to get involved in planning, development, and design in the City of Boston?
Childcare, Dinner, and Transit Passes will be Provided*

We are looking for:

**City of Boston
Residents**

**Representation
from across
Boston's
Neighborhoods**

**Diversity of life
and professional
experiences**

**Representation
from different
stages of life**

**A mix of long
time residents
and people new
to Boston**

**Long-time
neighborhood
stewards and
people new to
working in their
communities**

Session Outlines - Quick View

INTRO TO PLANNING

Week 1:

What is planning and who is involved?

Week 2:

How do our values shape planning action?

Week 3:

What kind of city are we creating and who is it for?

DEEP DIVES

Week 4:

What rules shape what gets built?

DEEP DIVES CONT.

Week 5:

What is Zoning Reform and who benefits?

Week 6:

What kind of city are we building and how do we build it?

Week 7:

How do we build affordable housing, and why is it difficult?

CAPSTONE

Week 8:

What will you do next?
& Celebration!

Session Outlines

INTRO TO PLANNING

Week 1:

What is planning and who is involved?

Takeaways:

- Intro to Planning
- The powers and limits of planning
- Understanding roles and responsibilities across the private and public sectors

Week 2:

How do our values shape planning action?

Takeaways:

- How is planning shaped by values, opportunities, and constraints?
- How do past planning decisions shape our present

Week 3:

What kind of city are we creating and who is it for?

Takeaways:

- Intro to Urban Design
- What makes a complete neighborhood?
- Place making, the public realm, and streets

Session Outlines

DEEP DIVES

Week 4:

What rules shape what gets built?

Takeaways:

- Zoning 101
- Zoning for economic growth & zoning for neighborhood preservation

Week 5:

What is Zoning Reform and who benefits?

Takeaways:

- The what, why, and how of Zoning Reform
- Conditional vs As-of-Right
- Ongoing Zoning Reform Efforts

Week 6:

What kind of city are we building and how do we build it?

Takeaways:

- Development 101 in Boston
- Connection between development and funding City services
- How development is regulated by the City

Week 7:

How do we build affordable housing, and why is it difficult?

Takeaways:

- Market realities of housing development
- Funding mechanisms
- Affordable housing resources

Session Outlines

CAPSTONE

Week 8:

What will you do next?
& Celebration!

Capstone Project Presentation:

- Participants will apply their learnings to a project in their community. This could be a proposal for research, advocacy, data collection, tactical urbanism, and more.



Example Session

SESSION SEVEN

How do we build affordable housing, and why is it difficult?

By the end of Session 7, participants will

- Understand why affordable housing is difficult to finance and build
- Be introduced to the different ways affordable housing is created and preserved in Boston, and the role of public and private actors in producing affordable housing.
- Understand the key terms and tools involved in affordable housing

Guest Speaker: Affordable Housing Developer

Time	Topic	Method
<i>pre-session</i>	Food + Fellowship	-
0:00-0:15	Welcome + Session Objectives	Discussion
0:15-:35	Framing the Challenge: Affordability <i>Case Study: MoH Development Cost Study</i>	Teaching
0:35-:40	Break	-
0:40-1:00	Affordable Housing 101 <i>Types, Tools, and Key Terms</i>	Teaching + Discussion
1:00-1:20	Public and Private Innovations <i>Case Study: Restore Rebuild, Acquisition Fund, Housing with Public Assets, Office to Resi</i>	Teaching + Discussion
1:20-1:25	Break	-
1:25-2:25	Guest Speaker: Affordable Housing Developer Q&A <i>Case Study: Story of a Project</i>	Activity
2:25-2:30	Evaluation + Closing	Survey

Session Details

Location: all sessions held in-person at Roxbury Community College

- Capstone celebration at City Hall

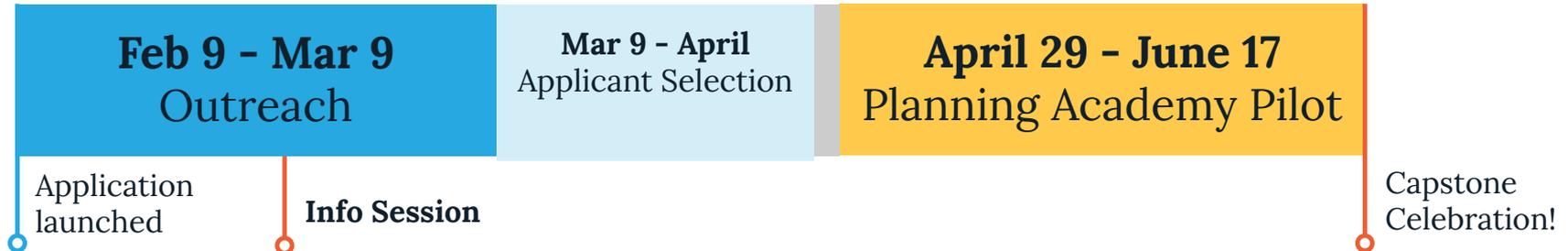
Time: 6:00pm-8:30pm

Dates: Wednesdays, April 29 - June 17th

Session #: Eight

Cost: Free. Childcare, dinner, and transit passes will be provided

**Applications due
by March 9th!**





NEXT STEPS

APPLY OR LEARN MORE!

1. **Apply to join the Planning Academy by March 9th!**
2. Learn more on our project page, check out our FAQ, or send us an email PlanningAcademy@boston.gov
3. Sign up for Planning Department emails by visiting our



[Bosplans.org/PlanningAcademy](https://bosplans.org/PlanningAcademy)



PROJECT PAGE



APPLICATION



City of Boston
Planning Department

The Planning Academy Application

The City of Boston Planning Department is excited to invite you to apply for the [Planning Academy](#) – a free interactive learning experience designed to equip Boston residents from different backgrounds and neighborhoods with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to meaningfully have a voice in shaping its future.

The Details:

- There will be eight weekly sessions: Wednesday, April 29 - Wednesday, June 17, 2026
- Each session will be held Wednesday evenings from 6:00 PM- 8:30 PM
- All classes will be held in-person near Nubian Square, Roxbury
- Childcare, dinner, and T passes will be provided for free
- Learn how you and your neighbors can be most effective in shaping your neighborhood!

Please complete the following questions to help us learn about you and share why you want to take part in the Planning Academy. The application period closes on **March 9, 2026**.

Want to learn about other opportunities to get involved in planning and development happening in your neighborhood? [Sign up here](#) to receive emails from the Planning Department.

Thank you for your interest in the Planning Academy! Our staff looks forward to reviewing your application and will be in touch with whether or not you have been selected to join this first group.

An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely Boston, showing a mix of urban buildings, green spaces, and a large body of water. A prominent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text "WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?". The background shows a dense urban area with a large stadium-like structure, a highway interchange, and a bridge crossing a river or bay. The water extends to the horizon under a clear sky.

**WHAT QUESTIONS DO
YOU HAVE?**