

PLAN: Downtown

Community Priorities Workshop—October 24, 2019

Vision, Goals, and Strategies (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 the cultural heritage and embrace the distinctive histories present in public spaces as essential to creating a unique and cohesive Downtown.**
 - a. Protect spaces that create distinctive identities in Downtown, highlighting the local, regional, and national significance of Downtown
 - b. Support diverse arts and culture reflective of the local communities
 - c. Integrate art into spaces and elements that more people interact with on a regular basis

- 2. Promote dense, mixed-use development to support job growth, housing opportunities, and 18 hour/7 days/week activity for residents, workers, and visitors.**
 - a. Accommodate growth while respecting the historical character of Downtown
 - b. Expand family housing options
 - c. Continue encouraging residential-focused development in Downtown Crossing and the Financial District.

- 3. Improve access to housing, cultural assets, and amenities for a diverse range of Boston residents across all neighborhoods, levels of affordability, stages of life, and backgrounds.**
 - a. Provide workforce/affordable housing on publicly-owned land (*within mixed-use developments*)
 - b. Address housing stabilization in Chinatown
 - c. Expand affordable housing stock for seniors
 - d. Cultivate a walkable environment to promote the health and well-being of Downtown residents and visitors
 - e. Incorporate the 2019 Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) Update into PLAN: Downtown once completed*

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- 4. Improve connections through, within, and to Downtown, with a focus on active transportation, transit, and non-vehicular modes of transportation.**
 - a. Review directionality to optimize circulation in Downtown without compromising wider area vehicular movement
 - b. Improve transit services through a systems approach to upgrading infrastructure
 - c. Prioritize high-occupancy and non-motorized transportation modes on all streets
 - d. Encourage multimodal connections between north and south sides of Downtown
 - e. Provide a high quality safe street environment for pedestrians and cyclists

- 5. Preserve historic building fabric and cultural institutions while advancing climate preparedness and resiliency measures.**
 - a. Protect treasured, shared cultural assets from contextually- and culturally-insensitive development and environmental threats
 - b. Proactively identify important architectural context and zone accordingly (e.g. Chinatown Row Houses)
 - c. Retain large portions of intact historic building fabric
 - d. Continue to follow the Secretary of the Department of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*

- 6. Ensure that new development and public realm projects are resilient, and mitigate climate risks such as sea level rise, coastal storms, rising temperatures, and increased stormwater.**
 - a. Coordinate investments to adapt infrastructure to future climate conditions
 - b. Incorporate near-term heat resiliency measures at building & district scales
 - c. Provide consistent opportunity for shade throughout the public realm
 - d. Reduce emissions related to transportation and vehicular traffic in Downtown, with a focus on improving traffic and logistics management
 - e. Require compliance with net-zero emissions readiness*
 - f. Refer to existing (or imminent) flood mitigation policies as captured in Article 25 CRB, the Flood Resilience Zoning Overlay district, and Article 37*

- 7. Encourage consistent, safe, healthy, and high-quality improvements to the public realm that welcome everyone year-round.**
 - a. Provide legible and safe connections between major green and open spaces
 - b. Provide new public spaces and enhancements to existing spaces that improve pedestrian experience and offer new opportunities for flexible programming
 - c. Continue to test innovative and new public realm ideas through pilot projects*

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- 8. Support business development that maintains Downtown as a regional economic center.**
 - a. Strengthen the role of Downtown as an active 18-hour/7-days/week life and work area in Boston
 - b. Continue to maintain Downtown as a well-connected job center for the region.

- 9. Promote the retention, growth, and diversity of ground-floor retail businesses, especially legacy and small businesses.**
 - a. Require small-scale individual storefronts at street level in key areas
 - b. Encourage the continuity of small scale business where possible
 - c. Provide technical, institutional, and financial support to small & legacy businesses and entrepreneurs