

PLAN: Mattapan Community Update

The neighborhood-wide planning initiative, PLAN: Mattapan, was launched in October 2018 by the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA). Since launching, planners from the Agency have been working with Mattapan residents to develop a “plan” that incorporates residents’ visions for the neighborhood and establishes paths to achieve that vision. PLAN: Mattapan will culminate in a written document that will steer public and private investment in Mattapan’s future and serve as a guide for the preservation, enhancement, and growth of the neighborhood. The following information is intended to provide an overview of the planning process completed with the Mattapan community to-date.

At the Open House Kick-Off in October 2018 at the Mildred Avenue Community Center, nearly 60 community members contributed to the foundation for *‘what’* the community wants to see in Mattapan and *‘how’* the plan can achieve this vision.

The meeting served as an opportunity for the planning team to receive initial feedback on the proposed study area and understand important community issues. The community contributed many ideas for the Mattapan neighborhood. Most comments and concerns focused on five main themes: Jobs & Businesses, Open Space & Climate Resilience, Neighborhood Identity, Housing, and Mobility.

In December 2018, the planning team continued to build this foundation at the Envisioning Your Neighborhood workshop. Community members performed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis for four of the five main themes from the previous workshop—due to time constraints, Jobs & Businesses was not discussed.

All of the groups raised concerns about gentrification and displacement. Below is a high-level synthesis summarizing some of the feedback received in the meeting.

	CURRENT STRENGTHS	CURRENT WEAKNESSES	FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES	POSSIBLE THREATS
HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeownership • Community • Diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of senior housing • High rents • Rising rents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase affordable housing • Provide senior housing • Increase ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displacement • Gentrification • Affordability • Density
NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of mattapan • Diversity • Arts • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language barriers • Limited community space • No arts or culture space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More programming • Public art • Community events • Historical society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccessible development • Gentrification • Displacement
TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue bikes • Trolley line • Walk to transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian safety & Experience • Travel time • Limited access • Limited frequency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access • Improve design of streets for people • Improve public realm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentrification with improved access • Traffic conditions
OPEN SPACE & CLIMATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neponset greenway • Access to parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public safety • Limited programming • Public realm needs improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create more open space • More programming • Improved access • Improved safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentrification • Climate change • Affordability • Access

In 2019, the BPDA hosted seven public meetings. The City Resource Fair was held at the community's request to better connect residents and businesses to the City of Boston's various constituent resources. In March, the community discussed Goal Setting for Our Neighborhood with the planning team at the Mattahunt Elementary School. Through lively and candid conversations, the following vision statement was formed

“Strengthen the existing culture and stability of the community by supporting affordable housing tenure, creating opportunities for businesses to thrive, and enhancing connections to improve the neighborhood’s experience accessing jobs and spaces where people gather.”

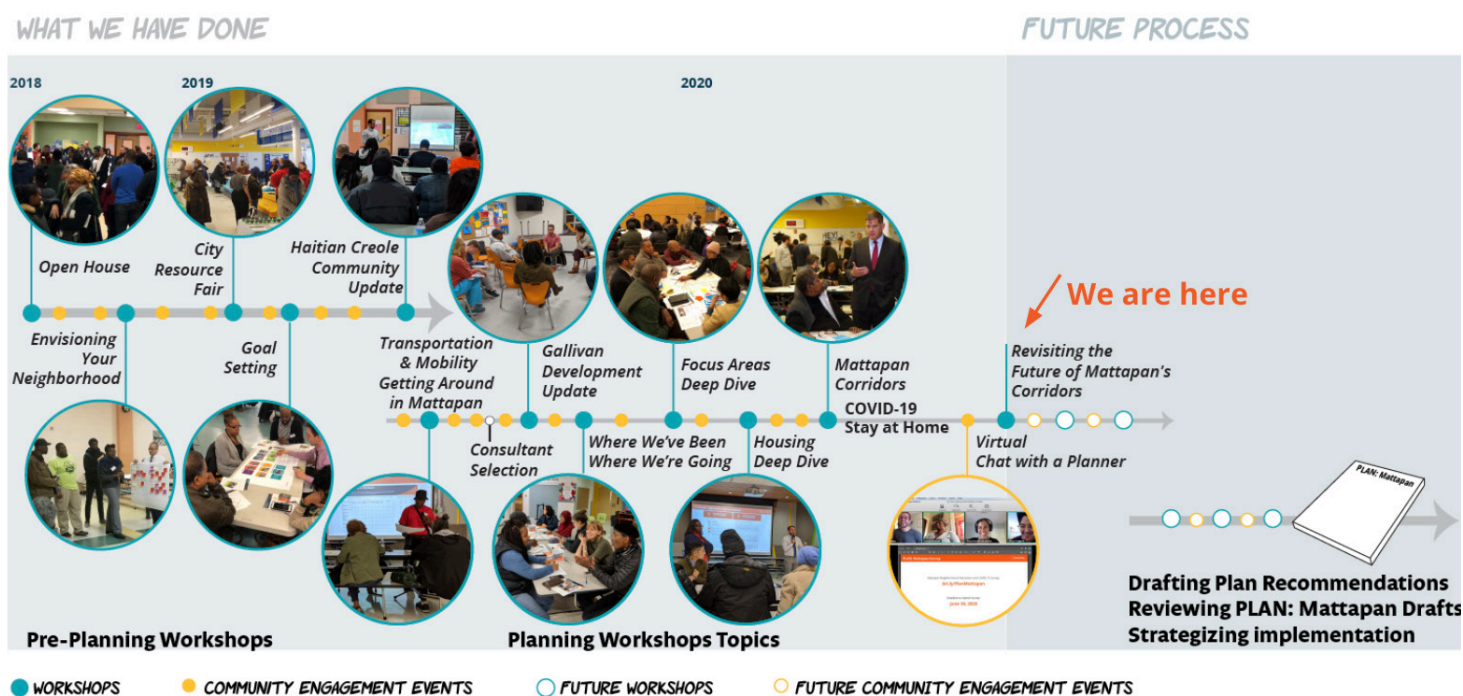
In May, the planning team met with the Haitian Community to inform them of PLAN: Mattapan’s progress and seek guidance on the next steps, and in June, the team met with the community as a whole at KIPP Academy to learn about Getting Around in Mattapan. Later in November, planners hosted an informal chat

with the community, Dinner with a Planner, where the PLAN: Mattapan consultant team, led by MASS Design Group, was introduced to the Mattapan community-at-large. This meeting marked a transition in the planning process from focusing on *‘what’* the community would like to achieve to *‘how’* PLAN: Mattapan can deliver the community’s desired outcomes.

The PLAN: Mattapan team hosted two in-person workshops in early 2020, a Housing Deep Dive and Corridors Workshop. As a result of the global pandemic, community engagement events soon switched to virtual meetings, which brought on new challenges but also a wider audience. Over the summer, the team hosted a Virtual Chat with a Planner, the Corridors Report Back, and, most recently, the Corridors Heights & Use workshop.

Throughout the entire initiative, BPDA planners have participated in and attended community meetings held by other organizations. These include meetings hosted by other City and State agencies, including the Department of Neighborhood Development, Boston Transportation Department, Public Works Department, Office of Economic Development, and MassDOT. These discussions contribute to the planning team’s growing understanding of residents’ concerns while also contributing to cross-collaboration in the entire neighborhood.

PLAN: Mattapan Timeline



WHAT'S NEXT...

The planning team is now developing pathways to move Mattapan closer to achieving the goals and aspirations outlined in earlier community discussions. Planners will review these strategies with the community in the coming months.

Concurrently, the team is developing temporary public art opportunities with the Mattapan Teen Center and issuing a Call for Artists to create murals in three locations.

This process will include the opportunity for public input and create a committee comprised of local property owners, artists, and community members to select the temporary art.

Over the next six months, the planning team will generate, revise, and document scenarios, recommendations, and decisions made with the community in the PLAN: Mattapan document. Ultimately, PLAN: Mattapan will be a flexible working plan, which holds the community's values at its forefront and presents adaptable implementation strategies for Mattapan's future.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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