

Roslindale Square: Squares + Streets Kick-Off

February 24, 2024

Agenda

1. What is Squares + Streets?
2. Small Area Plans
3. Squares + Streets Zoning
4. Roslindale Square Context
5. Overview of Today's Activities



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What is Squares + Streets?



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What We Think of as “Squares + Streets” Areas

- **Transit:** T stops, commuter rail stations, key bus routes
- **Commercial activity:** main streets districts, retail along streets, businesses within walking distance of both transit and housing
- **Neighborhood centers:** central locations where neighborhood residents access local services to eat, shop, spend time, and run errands
- **Mixed use:** either directly above or directly adjacent to these businesses is housing, allowing some residents to get around without requiring a car
- **Places for growth:** existing housing and businesses are well-utilized, with context and market conditions that are suited for additional housing and economic growth
- **Lack of recent planning:** need for analysis of current neighborhood context, investment needs, and how zoning matches built conditions



Why Focus on Squares + Streets?

- Ensure every Bostonian has access to **neighborhoods with everyday resources and services**
- Provide **more housing** to support Boston's current and future residents
- Pair housing growth with areas that supply an abundance of commercial, civic, cultural, and transportation resources to **expand benefits beyond access to housing**
- Focus on developing plans for transit-accessible geographic hubs to deliver **zoning reform** and coordinated, impactful, and visible **investments across City Departments** that address a range of needs



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Small Area Plans



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What is a Small Area Plan (SAP)?

Small Area Plans are focused on a small geography that will receive a **6-9 month planning and engagement process**.

These plans are meant to accomplish the following goals:

- **Update zoning** to support mixed-use development and better allow for a diverse range of housing and commercial opportunities
- **Preserve, enhance, and produce affordable housing, retail, and cultural spaces** through policy, design, and funding resources
- **Coordinate local transportation and public space improvements** to increase accessibility and promote active forms of transportation
- **Identify capital and program investments** across City departments to signal coordinated investment in these geographies
- **Identify specific design interventions** to expand tree coverage, mitigate heat, prepare for an electric future, and advance climate resilience

Squares + Streets Engagement Plan

The BPDA is focused on ensuring engagement throughout this process is equitable by **engaging people in more ways than just public meetings**, so that people whose voices are not always heard have a chance to be a part of this process.

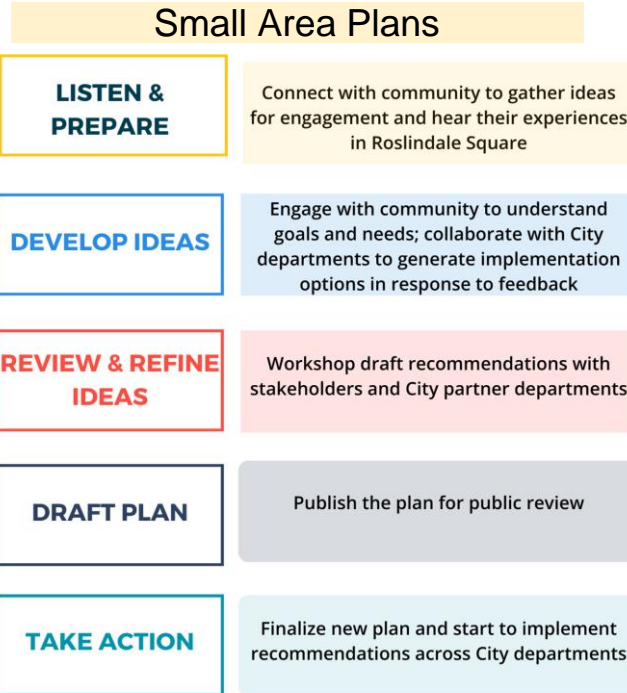
A publicly-available [Engagement Template](#) - available on the BPDA Squares + Streets webpage - sets a consistent standard of care for all Small Area Plans.

Ongoing and upcoming engagements include:

- **Coffee hours** @ the Roslindale BPL on Wednesday, February 28th 11 am - 1 pm
- **Housing Workshop:** Wednesday, March 13th, 6 pm - 7:30 pm
- **Zoning Workshop:** Wednesday, March 20th, 6 pm - 7:30 pm
- **Cultural Assets, Transportation, and Public Realm Walkshop:** Saturday, March 23rd, 9 am - 12 pm
- **Housing, Zoning, Transportation and Small Biz/Arts + Culture Combined Workshop**
 - **Wednesday, March 27th 6 pm - 7:30 pm**
 - **Wednesday, April 3rd 6 pm - 7:30 pm**
- **On-site offices** in Roslindale Square located at The Substation
- **Survey** open through March 29th

6-9 Month Small Area Plans

Engagement throughout 6-9 months



Mapping Zoning



LISTEN & PREPARE

Engagement:

- **Stakeholder groups and one-on-one meetings** to introduce Squares + Streets and how it will impact Roslindale Square
- Release **community survey** (open until March 29th)
- Direct-to-door **mailers**
- Public kick-off open house

Deliverables:

- **Plan Primer** (available on the [Roslindale Squares + Streets website](#))
- Analyze **existing conditions data** about the study area
- Collect **field data** on small businesses, public art, and historic structures
- Summary of what we've heard about the **character, culture, and community of Rozzie Square** as well as what contributes to the **resident's sense of connection and belonging**

DEVELOP IDEAS

Engagement:

- **Educational workshops** (housing, small businesses/arts and culture, zoning)
- Topic-specific **idea visioning sessions**
- Community **walkshops**
- **Field office** in Roslindale Square to hold office hours, etc.

Deliverables:

- Hold **recommendations development meetings** with City partner departments based on community feedback
- **Transportation existing conditions** analysis (pedestrian environment, bus service quality, transit capacity analysis, key intersection capacity analysis)
- **Open Space** Preservation and Expansion
- **Arts & Culture** Preservation and Development

REVIEW & REFINE IDEAS

Engagement:

- **Review draft recommendations** with community via workshops, a drop-in reception, and office hours at field office

Deliverables:

- **Engagement summary** of feedback received to-date
- Continue to produce **draft recommendations** (including draft zoning and urban design guidelines) with City partner departments including
 - Housing
 - Transportation/Public Realm
 - Small Business/Arts and Culture
 - Resiliency

DRAFT PLAN

Engagement:

- **Comment period** for final plan and draft zoning map amendment

Deliverables:

- **Draft plan and zoning map amendment** published for public review

TAKE ACTION

Engagement:

- Close-out public meeting(s) before Plan is approved by the BPDA Board
- Boston Zoning Commission approval of zoning map amendment
- Begin to develop RFPs for public land development, if applicable
- Work with Planning Advisory Council (PAC) to track implementation for public consumption

Deliverables:

- Final Plan and zoning map amendment (approved by BPDA Board)

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Squares + Streets Zoning



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Citywide Zoning Reform

Zoning reform is one of the primary ways that we are seeking to make **planning and development more predictable, transparent, and aligned with community needs** in Boston.

[You can watch our video here](#) about why we need zoning reform.

Mayor Wu is committed to **ending the City's over-reliance on the ZBA** so that all Bostonians, regardless of influence or money, are playing by the same set of rules.

Squares + Streets is only one part of larger zoning reform over a period of several years. **Squares + Streets zoning districts will not be applied to the entire city, or even to entire neighborhoods.**

New Squares + Streets Zoning Districts

These zoning districts will be a **set of options** that can be assembled to update zoning rules in these areas.

S0



Transition
Residential

S1



Main Street
Living

S2



Main Street
Mixed Use

S3



Active Main
Street

S4



Active Squares

S5



Placemaker

Rezoning for each neighborhood square and main street will be **determined through conversations with the public** and **an analysis of the context of each place**.

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Why Roslindale Square?

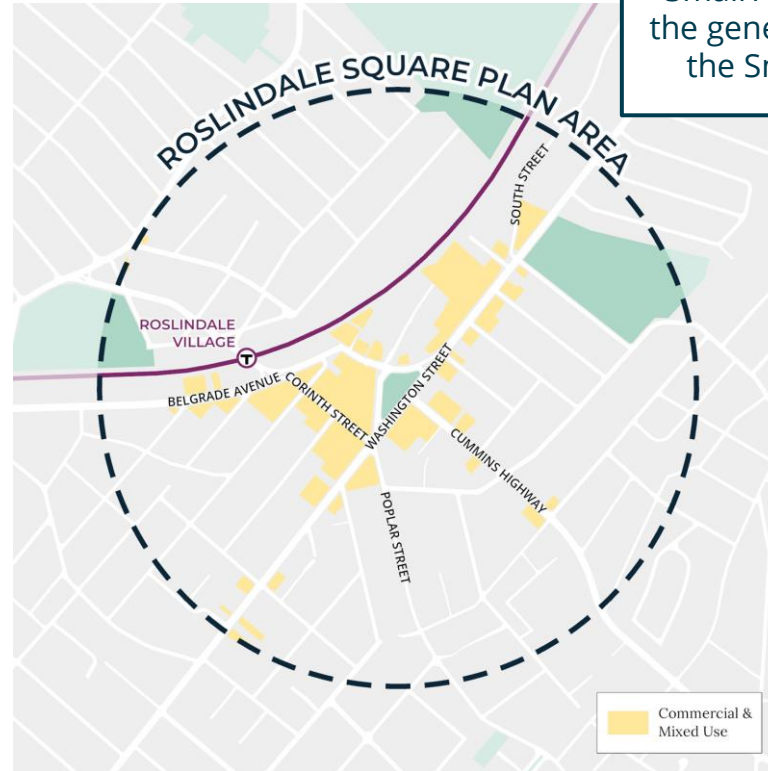


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Roslindale Square Study Area

- The Roslindale plan area will be $\frac{1}{3}$ of a mile around the main intersecting streets of South Street and Poplar Street.
- **Proposed zoning map amendments** - to be determined with the community - **will not include this entire area.**



This is not the boundary of future zoning changes. They will be determined through each Small Area Plan. This is the general focus area of the Small Area Plan.

Roslindale Square Characteristics

Squares + Streets Selection Criteria	Existing transit and active transportation options?	Opportunity for density near transit?	Existing commercial and civic resources?
Roslindale Square Details	Several local bus lines, connection to Forest Hills Orange Line station, Roslindale Village commuter station	Relatively low population density compared to neighborhoods with less transit service	Existing Main Streets District, approx. 35% of planning area is a commercial use, many civic spaces, zoning that does not support commercial mixed use
Opportunity for Squares + Streets Planning and Zoning	Take advantage of transit-oriented development to encourage transit use and implement service improvements	Bring more people closer to existing transit service, which relies on a minimum level of ridership to function efficiently	Introduce more housing and mixed-use development through updated zoning to support local small business economy and civic resources

Roslindale Square Characteristics

Squares + Streets Selection Criteria	Housing cost burden?	Lack of recent planning?	Racial/ethnic diversity?
Roslindale Square Details	34% of residents are housing cost-burdened, only half of residents can afford median rent	Most recent neighborhood planning initiative in 2007 (Roslindale Neighborhood Strategic Plan)	Roslindale is >50% non-white (primarily African American and Hispanic/Latino)
Opportunity for Squares + Streets Planning and Zoning	Need for more income-restricted housing and housing cost assistance to keep people in their homes	Signifies need for evaluation of current neighborhood context and how previous planning recommendations can be built upon	Benefits of planning should be spread across the city equitably

Agenda for Today's Open House

- Several interactive stations to interact with the themes that will be explored in the Small Area planning process, including:
 - **Storytelling corner**
 - **Main streets visioning drawing activity**
 - **'Mad Libs' style personal narratives**
 - **Interactive posters, including a link to our survey**
- How to keep up-to-date:
 - Visit the Roslindale Squares + Streets [webpage](#) for upcoming events, published documents, and more
 - Email squaresandstreets@boston.gov or Project Manager, Eileen Michaud, at eileen.michaud@boston.gov

A map of the Roslindale Square Plan Area in Boston. A dashed grey circle outlines the plan area. A purple line, likely a transit line, runs through the center. Yellow shaded areas indicate commercial and mixed-use zones. Street names visible include South Street, Belgrade Avenue, Corinth Street, Washington Street, and Clark Street. A legend in the bottom right corner shows a yellow square for 'Commercial & Mixed Use'.

Thank you for listening - we
hope you enjoy the day!