

SQUARES + STREETS | ROSLINDALE SQUARE

IDEAS RECEPTION

SURVEY FEEDBACK

This is a summary of community feedback from the ideas reception survey responses. In total, there were 311 survey responses (including 9 hard copies, and 3 emails).

Feedback from this stage of engagement will inform modifications or further explanations of the proposed recommendations in the draft Plan, to be released in late-September.

Housing + Real Estate

- Of those who indicated their level of support, over 50% of survey respondents support or would modify recommendations related to [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing](#) (AFFH) interventions. Yet there is a need for more explanation of the benefits of AFFH, when compliance is required, and how it can advance Roslindale's housing goals.
- The recommendation to start a public process for the development of the Taft Hill municipal parking was met with both support/support with modification (53%) and opposition (34%). Of those who do not support the recommendation, the most significant concern is about maintaining parking for local small businesses.
- Approximately 6% of respondents suggested adding density bonuses and other incentives to spur greater housing production.

Small Business

- 64% of respondents are in favor of more affordable and healthy food retailers, cafes, sit-down restaurants, and daytime casual eateries. However, some respondents cautioned that we should not restrict new businesses in a way that creates more vacancies.
- Measures to support a thriving, stable local business environment were met with overwhelming support. Over 66% of respondents support the recommendation to advance co-ownership models of commercial spaces in Roslindale Square and 70% of respondents support the recommendation to establish a vacancy registry and connect small businesses to fill these spaces.
- Several survey responses mentioned the lack of direct financial support for tenants struggling to afford rent or landlord disincentives for keeping commercial spaces vacant.
- The recommendation to study a policy that could limit the types and/or sizes of stores was met with majority support (64%), but there is skepticism with regard to its impact on businesses that require more square footage and affordability that chains can provide.

Arts + Culture

- Over 71% of respondents are supportive of issuing a pre-permitted entertainment license to Birch Street Plaza, but want to ensure that the programming draws a diverse audience that is representative of the cultural and racial diversity of the neighborhood.
- Approximately 65% of respondents support closing Poplar Street during Adams Park events, but want to ensure this closure does not negatively impact traffic and Poplar Street businesses.
- Several respondents want to better understand the benefits of establishing a [state Cultural District](#) and how that would impact the business environment in Roslindale Square.
- 73% of respondents support more mural art in the Square but want to ensure that there are maintenance plans in place for any new murals.

Open Space

- [Converting Poplar Street](#) to a shared street condition is largely supported (66%, with an additional 9% support with modification) but there is some concern around how this change may impact business operations. Some advocated for a full closure of Poplar Street, while some comments indicated that the space for pick up and drop off facilities was not clearly illustrated in the plan.
- There is strong support for [more green infrastructure \(78%\)](#) and [an expansion of the urban forest \(71%\)](#). Concerns were raised about maintaining on-street parking supply with these improvements, however this recommendation will be achieved through setting new development back from the sidewalk, not removal of parking spaces.
- Although most respondents support [expanding the public realm at Belgrade and Corinth](#) (68%, with an additional 5% support with modification), there is skepticism about the need for more space for outdoor dining due to weather-related limitations on use, redundancy with existing outdoor spaces like Birch Street, and desire to use these spaces for common uses rather than privatized uses.

Transportation

- Several comments in support of an Orange Line Extension (approximately 11 comments) to Roslindale Square emphasize the importance of supporting reliable, frequent transit as more residents and business patrons come to this area.
- Although the [2-way Washington Street conversion](#) is generally supported (64%), there are still questions around the impacts to traffic and resulting bus delays if the Poplar Street stop was moved to Washington Street.
- Refreshed bus lanes on Washington are largely supported (70%), but there is concern about cars double-parking in the lanes and the lack of enforcement.
- Many comments are in support of more protected bike access to the Square (17 total), and safer bike accommodations to Forest Hills and to the Square from major corridors leading into the Square (Washington and [Belgrade](#) in particular).

Land Use Framework + Design

- Many comments are related to the importance of filling vacancies rather than focusing solely on developing new buildings.
- Active ground floor land uses are a priority across the most of the areas highlighted in the [Land Use Framework](#).
- There is support for modest density in the commercial core - some preferring between 4 - 5 stories and some responses indicating comfortability with 5 - 7+ stories - as long as there are scaling elements such as upper level building stepbacks, active ground floors, courtyards and through-ways between buildings.