

# Urban Renewal:

## South Cove + Park Plaza Workshop

China Trade Building | June 10, 2015

Charlestown High School | June 29, 2015

Villa Victoria | July 9, 2015

Shelburne Community Center | July 15, 2015

City Hall | July 22, 2015



South Cove, 1965

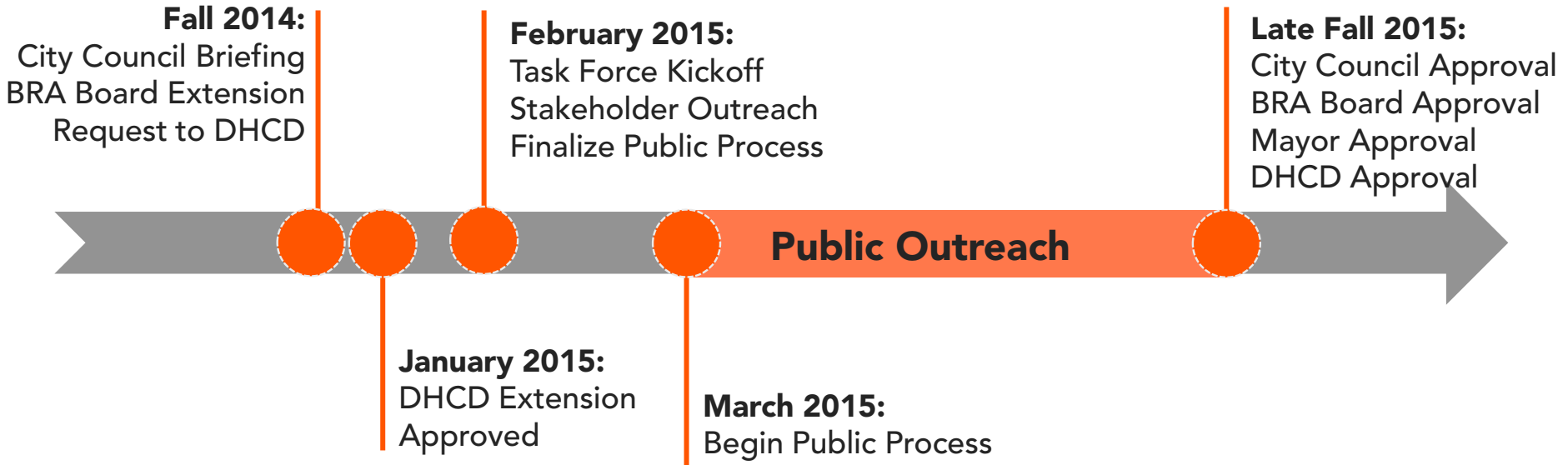
# What the BRA is **NOT** doing:

- 1. Not modifying or extending the existing boundaries**
- 2. Not creating new urban renewal plan areas**
- 3. Not proposing projects, but focusing on process and planning**

# What the BRA **IS** doing:

- 1. Repositioning Urban Renewal as a contemporary planning and economic development tool**
- 2. Refresh plans to show current planning and projects**
- 3. Revisit original goals and planning objectives**

# Simplified UR Extension Process



# What is Urban Renewal?

# WHAT IS URBAN RENEWAL?

Certain cities and towns in the Commonwealth contain areas that are substandard, decadent or blighted open.

Urban renewal is a **strategy for redeveloping and revitalizing** these disinvested, underutilized and blighted areas for residential, commercial, industrial, business, governmental, recreational, educational, hospital or other uses.

This is now a state, not federal, program.



## Blight Findings

Evidence of decadence or sub-standard conditions used to enact demonstration projects and negotiate incentives, etc.



## Eminent Domain

Taking property to accomplish a public purpose. Used for site assembly, title clearance and vertical discontinuances



## Urban Renewal Tools



## Land Use Controls

Use, height and design restrictions specific to each Urban Renewal Disposition Parcel



## UR Overlay Districts

Special zoning areas within Urban Renewal Areas



## Demonstration Projects

Projects designed to eliminate blight outside of Urban Renewal Areas



## Housing Affordability Restrictions

Affordability requirements established to create housing opportunities

# ADAPTING OUR VIEW OF URBAN RENEWAL

Responding to the changing needs of the City of Boston

## Original Approach

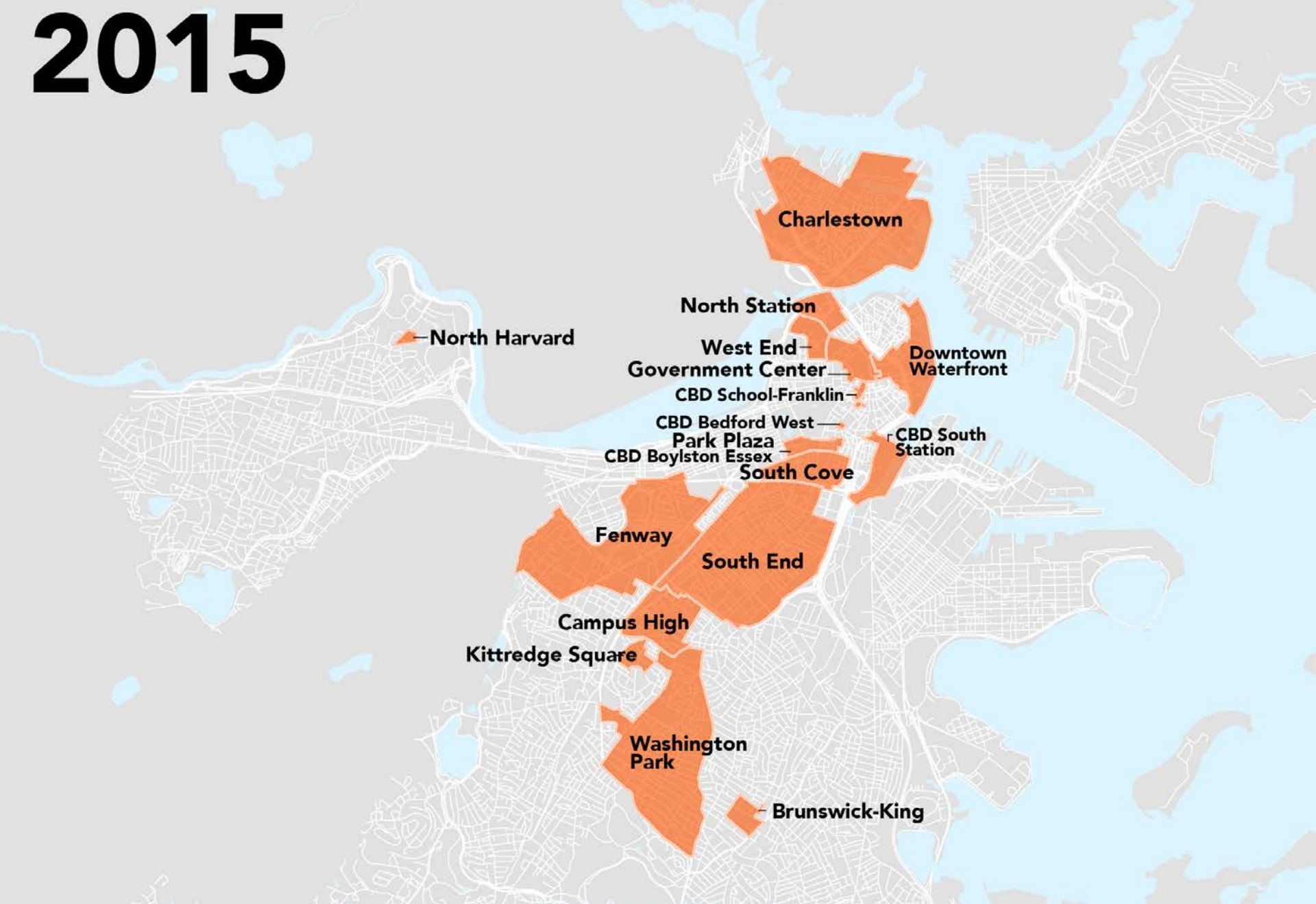
- Tackle blight
- Assemble land to develop infrastructure and public facilities
- Aggregate parcels to build streets for vehicular traffic
- Develop affordable housing

## Current Approach

- Create vibrancy
- Reinvest in already developed facilities to add density and diverse uses
- Make current streets efficient for multi-modal transportation
- Create a diverse housing stock with mixed income, family and TOD housing



# 2015



# 1957

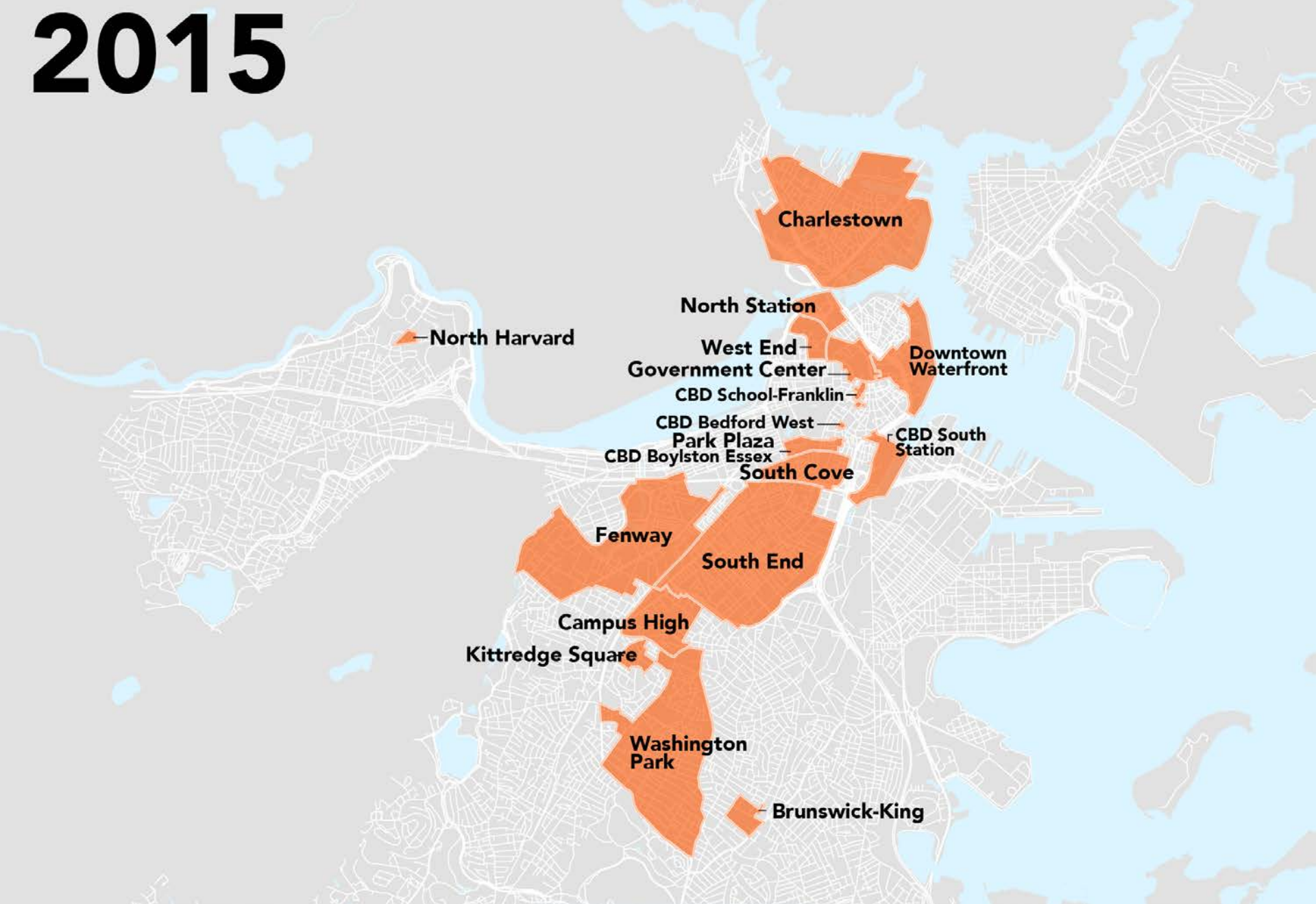


## West End



BOSTON  
REDEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY

# 2015



# URBAN RENEWAL'S STIGMA

**BEFORE**



West End, 1957

**AFTER**





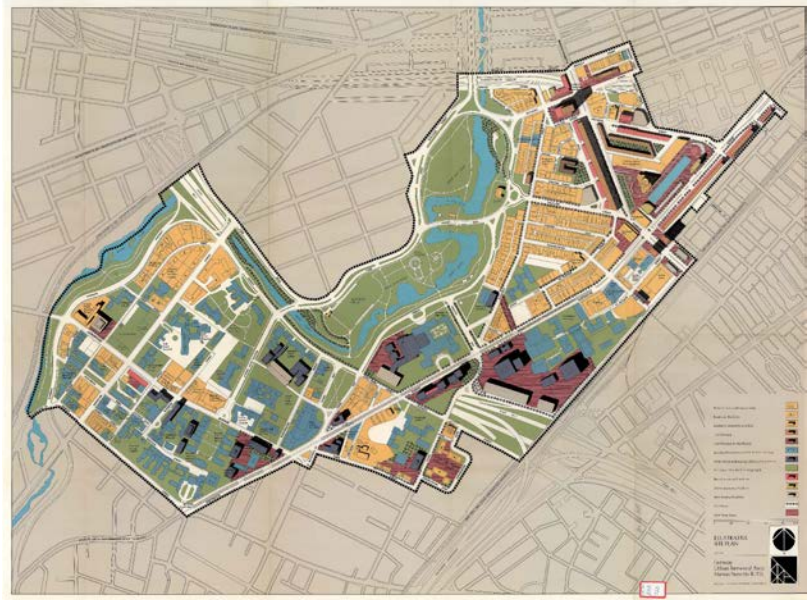
South End, 1962



Charlestown, 1965



South Cove, 1965



Fenway, 1965

# ADAPTING OUR VIEW OF URBAN RENEWAL

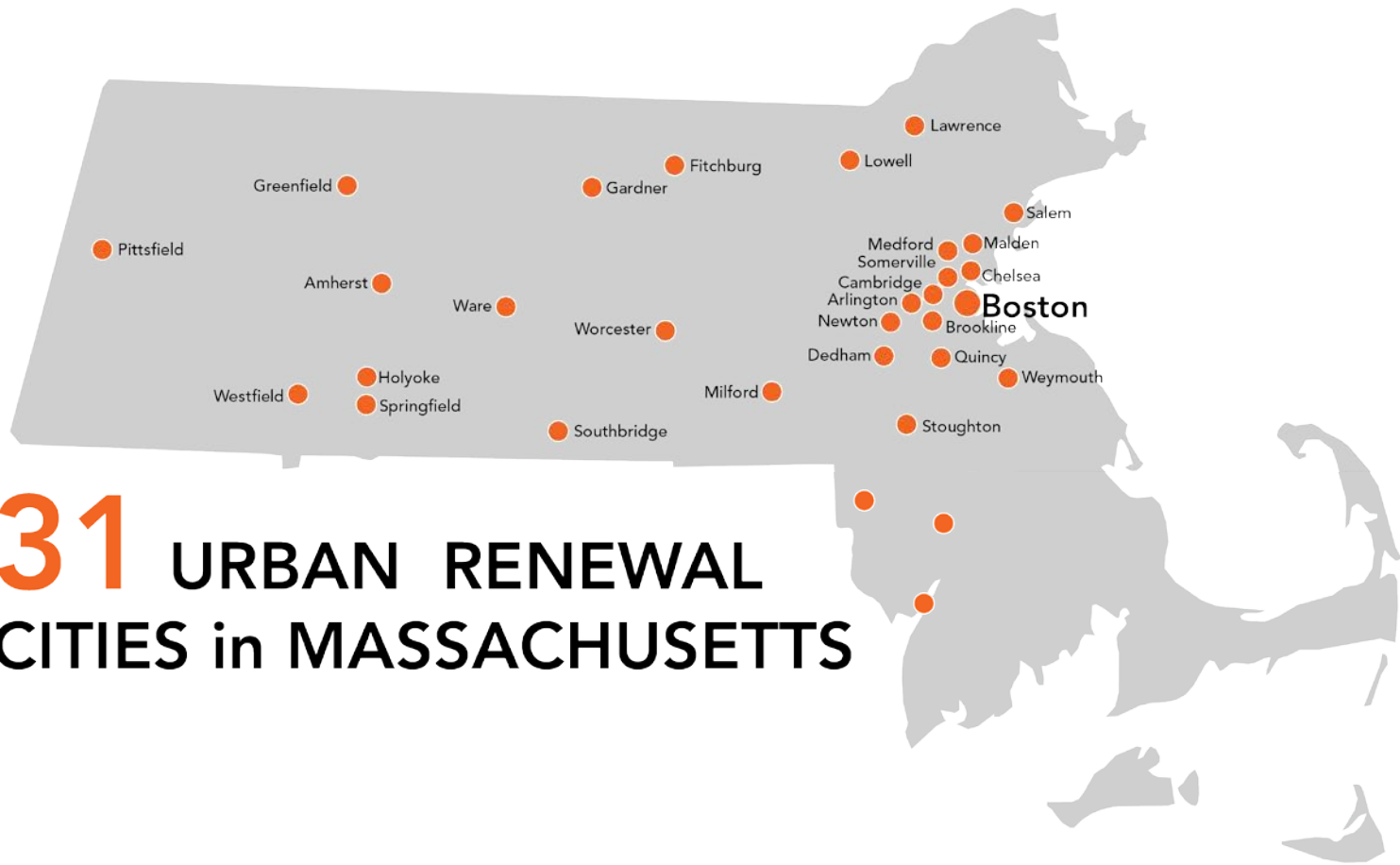
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# 31 URBAN RENEWAL CITIES in MASSACHUSETTS

# UR Plans

**19 urban renewal plans approved in the Commonwealth since 1996**

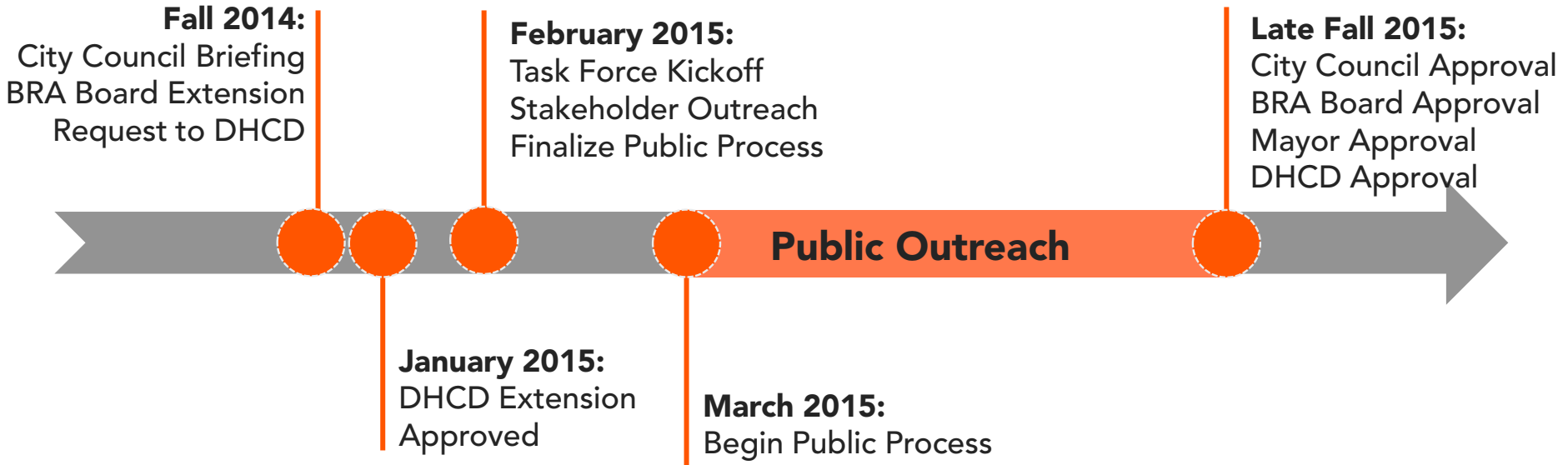
**5 plans approved over past two years**

**Despite their age, many older plans continue to be active:**

- Assembly Square in Somerville
- Union Square intermodal transportation facility in Springfield
- Kendall Square in Cambridge



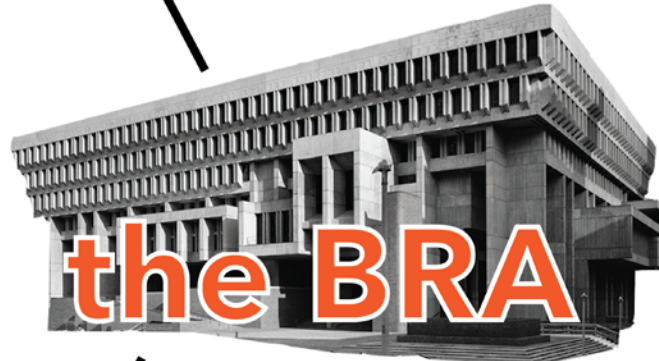
# Simplified UR Extension Process



**Public Meetings**



**Interactive Website + Social Media**



**Enlightened Partnerships**



**Stakeholder Roundtables**

January 2015 **Start!**



City Council Task Force

Website Launch of Primary Features  
Map, Tools, Projects, and Glossary

March-April 2015

**1**

### Urban Renewal Kickoff

*What is Urban Renewal?  
Boston's UR History  
UR in MA and throughout US  
UR Tools and Feature Projects in Boston*



City Council Task Force



Stakeholder Engagement

Historical Maps + 2015 Plan Area Boundaries  
BRA-owned land  
Refinement of Interactive Map

June-July 2015

**2**

### Ideas, Goals, and Planning Objectives Workshops

*Tools + Feature Projects Revisited  
Review of Past UR Plans  
Analysis of Historic Urban Renewal Plan Areas  
New "Conditions Today" maps for all plan areas  
Workshop Goals + Planning Objectives  
Demographic Analysis of Plan Areas*



City Council Task Force



Stakeholder Engagement



UR in MA Panel?

Task Force



Stakeholder Engagement

Draft 2015 Urban Renewal Plan Areas and Goals  
available for download

October 2015

**3**

### The Future of Urban Renewal in the City of Boston

*Synthesis of ideas, goals, and planning objectives from all media  
Before + After of UR Plan Areas + Goals  
An Evolving BRA...  
Setting the table for Boston's General Plan*



Partnership with West End Museum?



BRA Board City Council



Mayor of Boston



MA DHCD

Before and After Comparison

Winter 2015

**End.**

# Phase I: Kickoff Meetings



**#1 City Hall**



**#2 South End**



**#3 Roxbury**

January 2015 **Start!**

City Council  
Task Force

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Charlestown  
High School

City Hall

China Trade  
Center

Villa Victoria

Shelburne  
Community Center

# Phase 3: Synthesis

**IMAGINE** BOSTON  
2030

# IMAGINE

SHARE YOUR VISION.  
SHAPE OUR CITY.

[IMAGINE WITH US →](#)

# Urban Renewal



Idea Solicitation and Mapping



# Urban Renewal



Idea Solicitation and Mapping

# Comprehensive Plan



Pre-planning

# Urban Renewal

Idea Solicitation and Mapping



# Comprehensive Plan

Pre-planning



**IMAGINE** BOSTON  
2030

# Urban Renewal

Idea Solicitation and Mapping



# Comprehensive Plan

Pre-planning



**IMAGINE** BOSTON  
2030

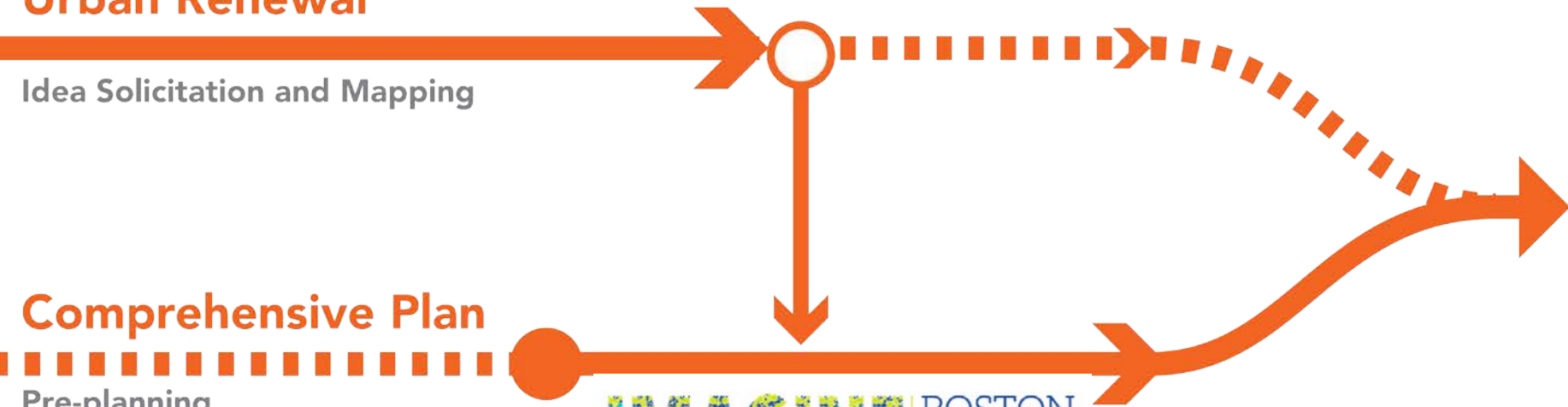
# Urban Renewal

Idea Solicitation and Mapping

# Comprehensive Plan

Pre-planning

**IMAGINE** BOSTON  
2030



# Community Goals and Planning Priorities: South Cove + Park Plaza



South Cove, 1965

# City Hall to Go (May 2015)



# City Hall to Go (May 2015)



# City Hall to Go (May 2015)





# City Hall to Go (May 2015)



# Inclusionary Development Policy Changes on the Horizon

**Administration** of the IDP Policy is now being actively analyzed and rethought

**Communication** between departments (BRA and DND) is improved

**Implementation** has become clearer for staff

# Inclusionary Development Policy Changes on the Horizon

## IDP Policy is looking actively at:

- Onsite requirement
- Offsite requirement
- Rental buyout requirements
- Condo buyout requirements
- Rental income limits



## Blight Findings

Evidence of decadence or sub-standard conditions used to enact demonstration projects and negotiate incentives, etc.



## Eminent Domain

Taking property to accomplish a public purpose. Used for site assembly, title clearance and vertical discontinuances



## Urban Renewal Tools



## Land Use Controls

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# Chinatown Master Plan



CHINATOWN MASTER PLAN 2010  
*Community Vision for the Future*

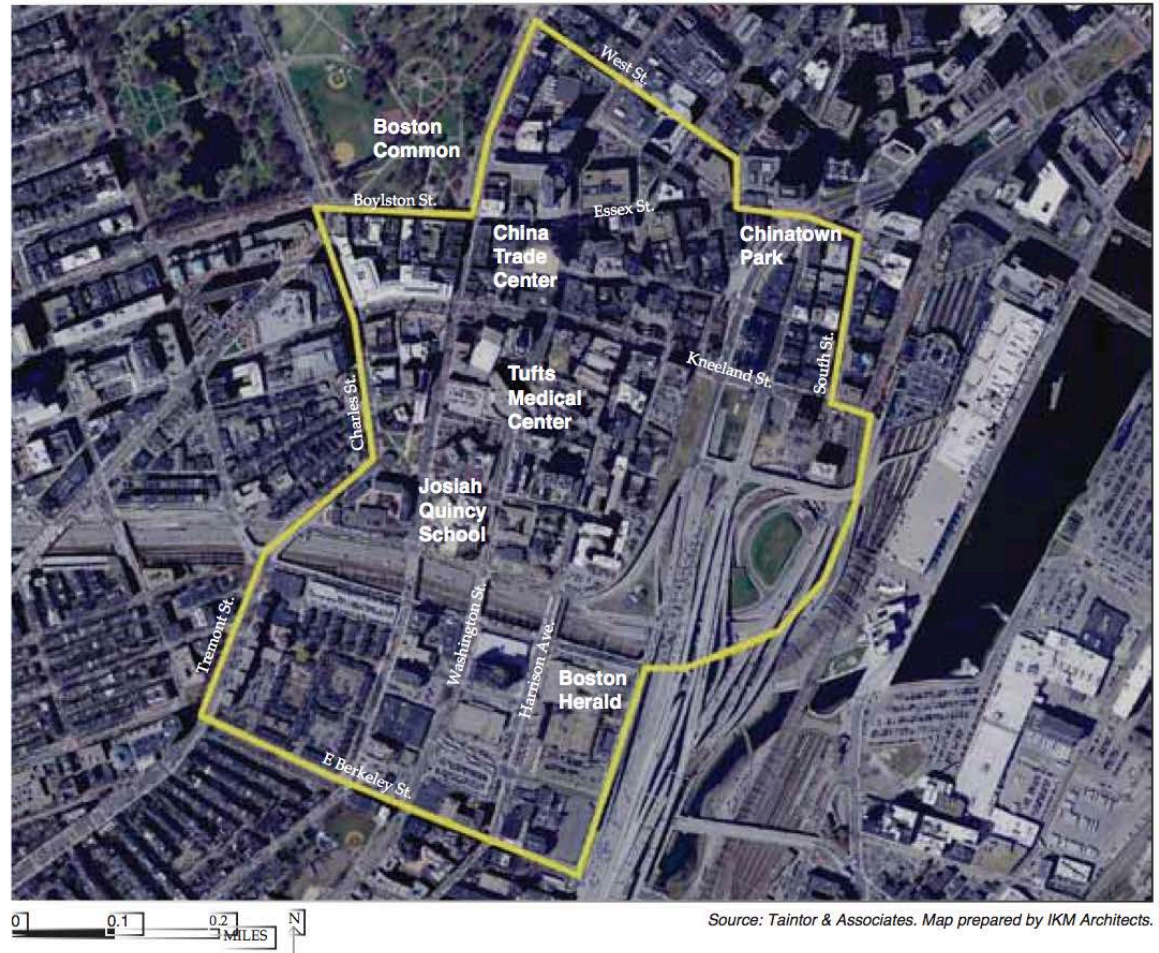
Chinatown Master Plan 2010 Oversight Committee

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## Study Area

Chinatown spans approximately 137 acres and is located near the heart of Boston. The neighborhood is bordered by Downtown to the north, Leather District and Southeast Expressway to the east, South End to the south, and Midtown Cultural District, Boston Common, and Bay Village to the west. Established in the late 1870s, the Chinatown-South Cove area was created by the filling of former tidal flats that were originally part of the Shawmut Peninsula. The presence of railways and the garment industry attracted early immigrants such as the Irish, Italians, Jews, and Syrians.

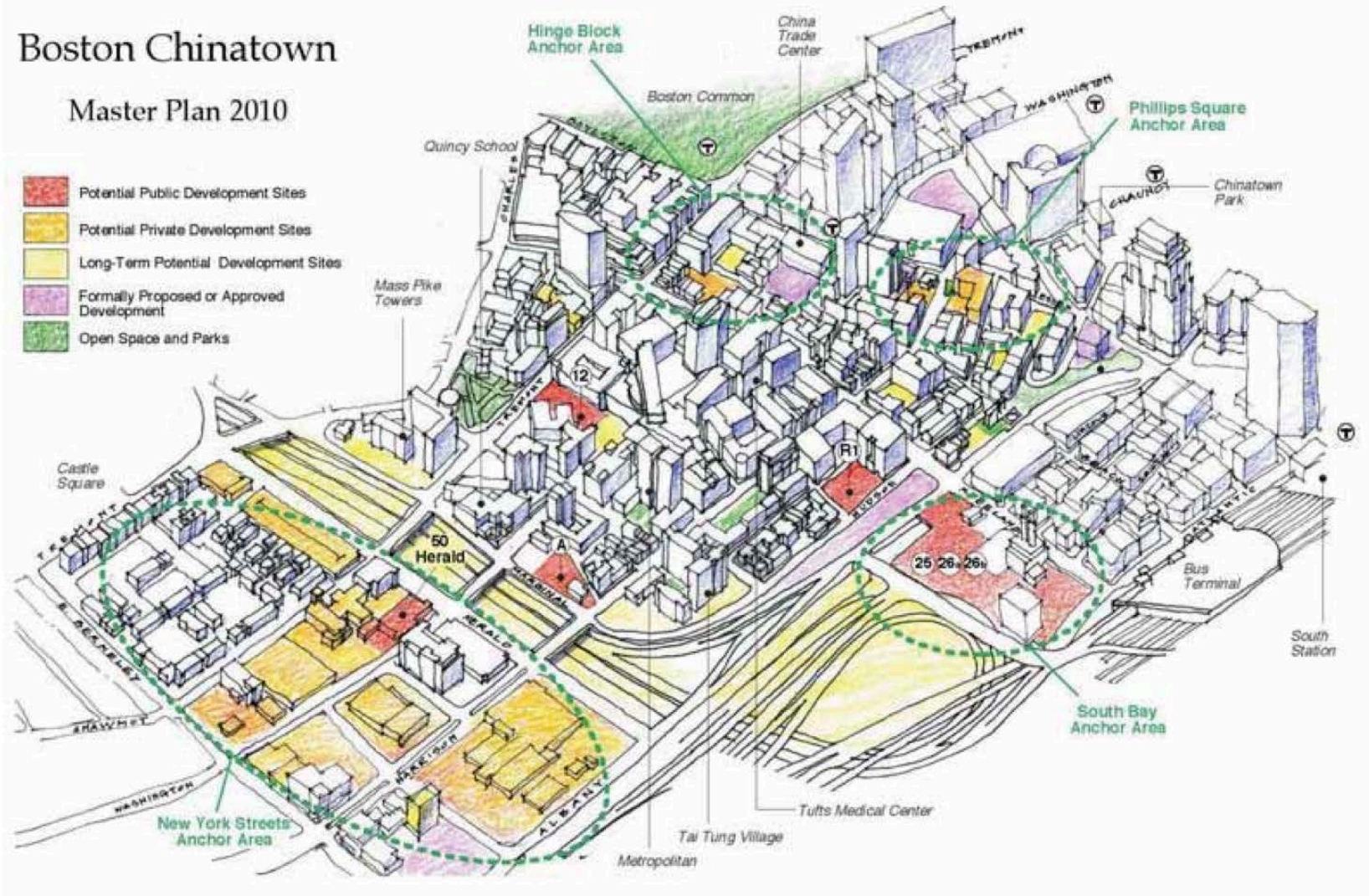
Throughout its history, Chinatown's boundaries have both expanded and contracted. The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) defines the Chinatown District as bounded by Essex Street to the north, Surface Artery/I-93 to the east, Marginal Road to the south, and Washington/Tremont Street to the west. The boundaries of the Chinatown /South Cove Neighborhood Council define the community as bounded by West/Bedford Street to the north, Surface Artery/Albany Street to the east, East Berkeley Street to the south, and Tremont/Charles Street to the west. The study area for Chinatown Master Plan 2010 combines the boundaries from the BRA Chinatown district zoning and the Chinatown /South Cove Neighborhood Council. The study area is for planning purposes and is intended as a guide to understand the growth and change in the community.

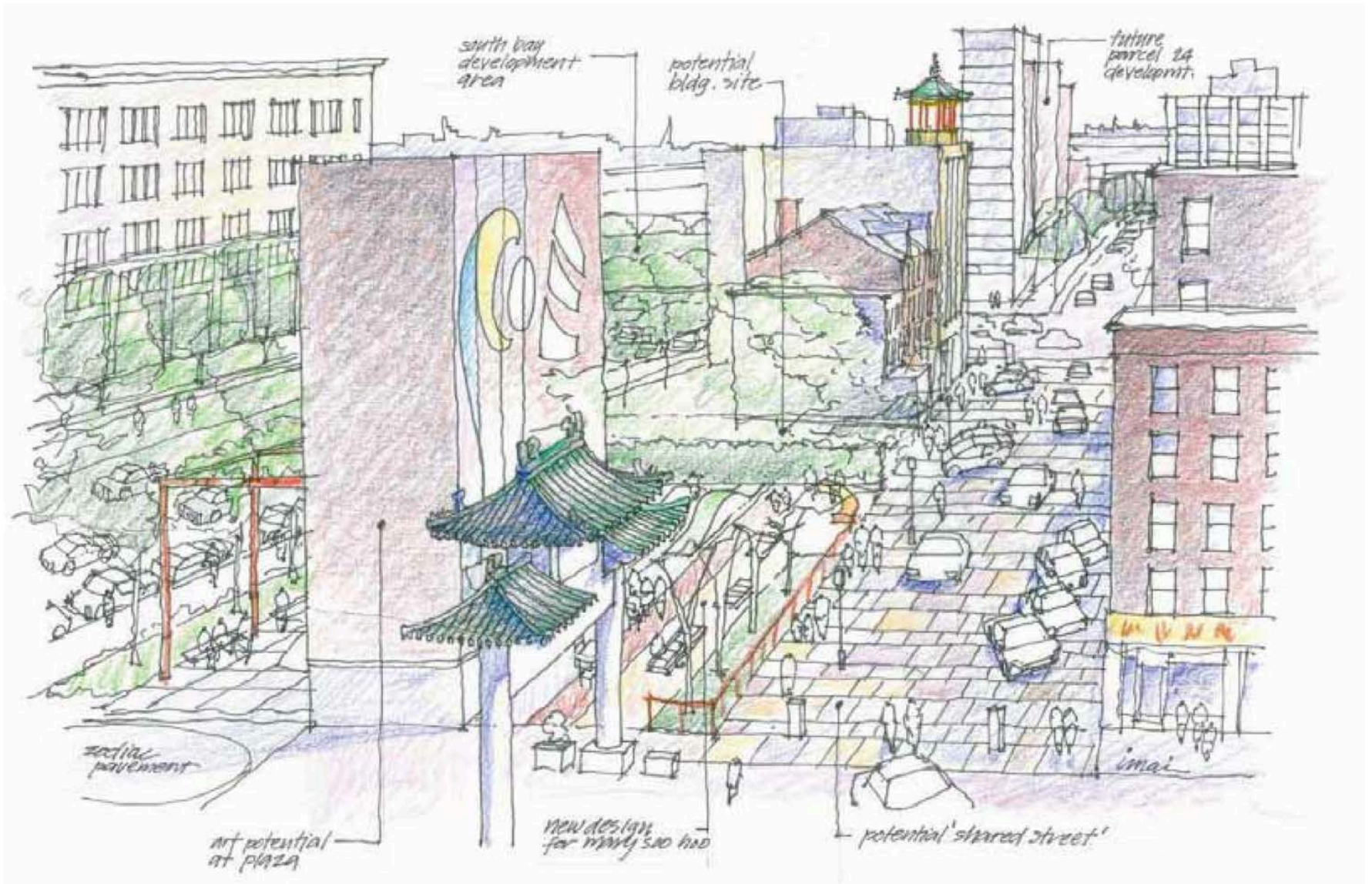


# Boston Chinatown

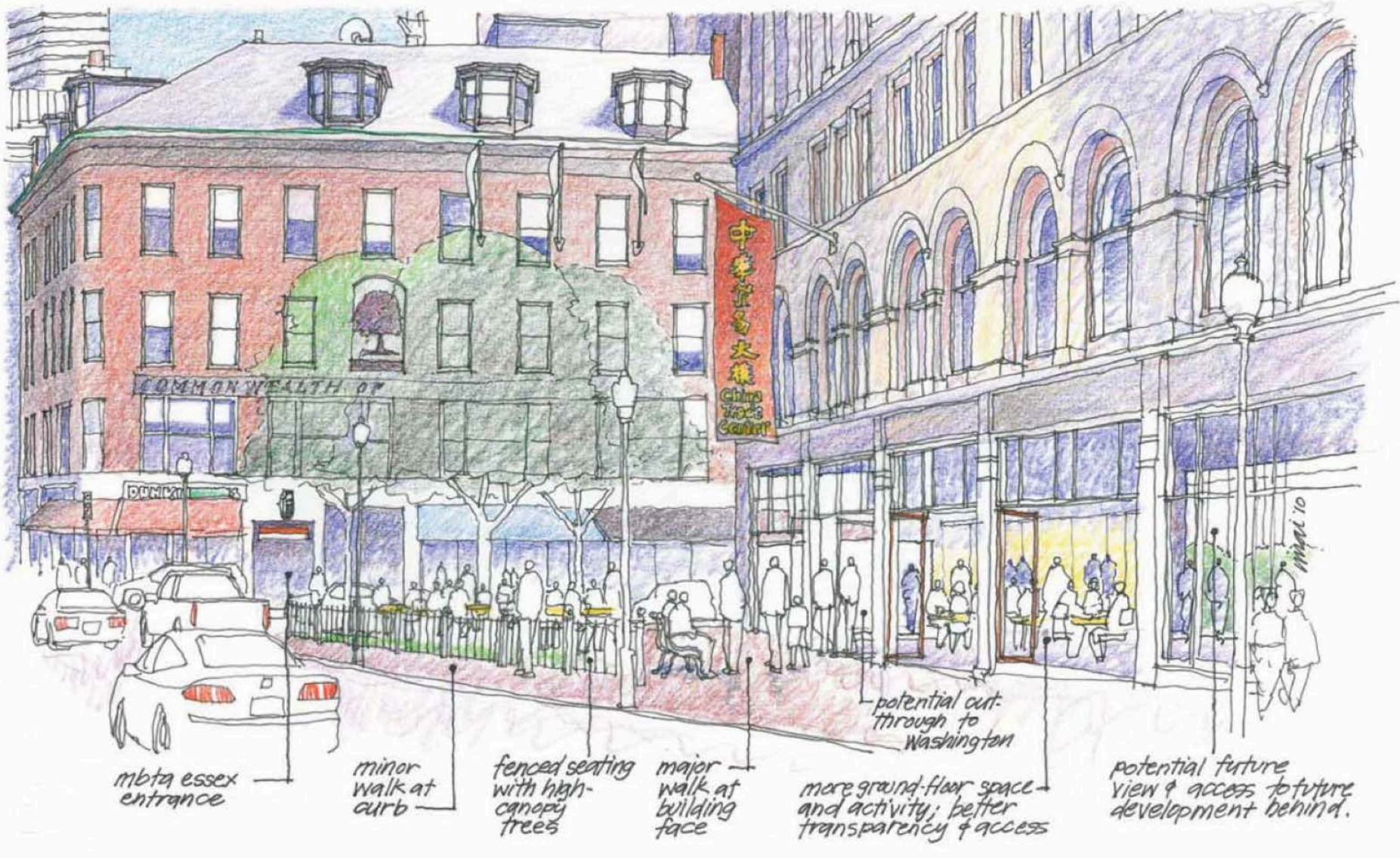
## Master Plan 2010

- Potential Public Development Sites
- Potential Private Development Sites
- Long-Term Potential Development Sites
- Formally Proposed or Approved Development
- Open Space and Parks









# Historic Development + Urban Renewal Projects



*Chinatown Gate*



*Tufts NEMC*



*Quincy School*



*Chinese Evangelical Church*

January 2015 **Start!**



City Council Task Force



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March-April 2015 **1**

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Charlestown High School

2

City Hall

1

China Trade Center

2

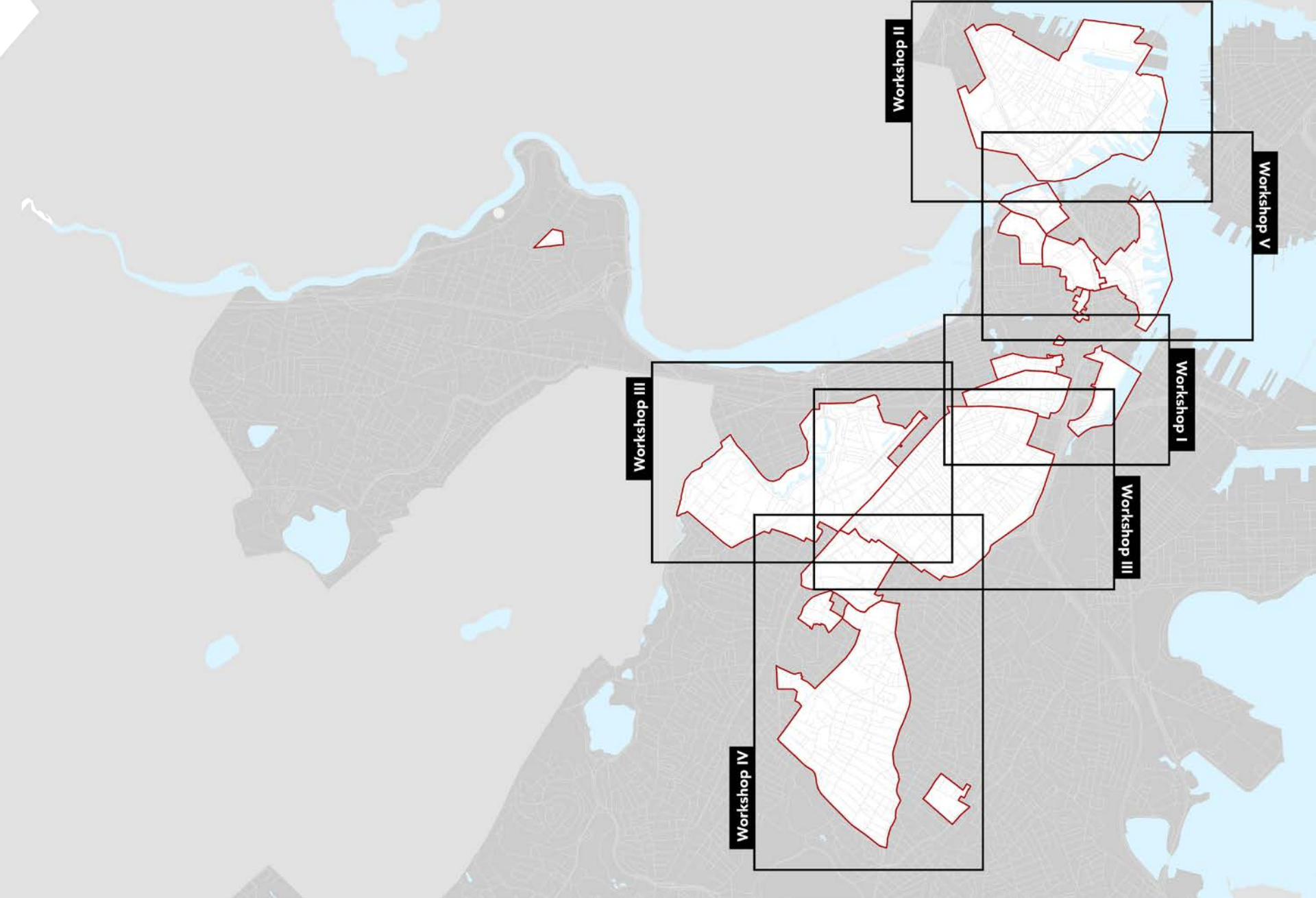
Villa Victoria

1

Shelburne Community Center

1

2



Workshop II

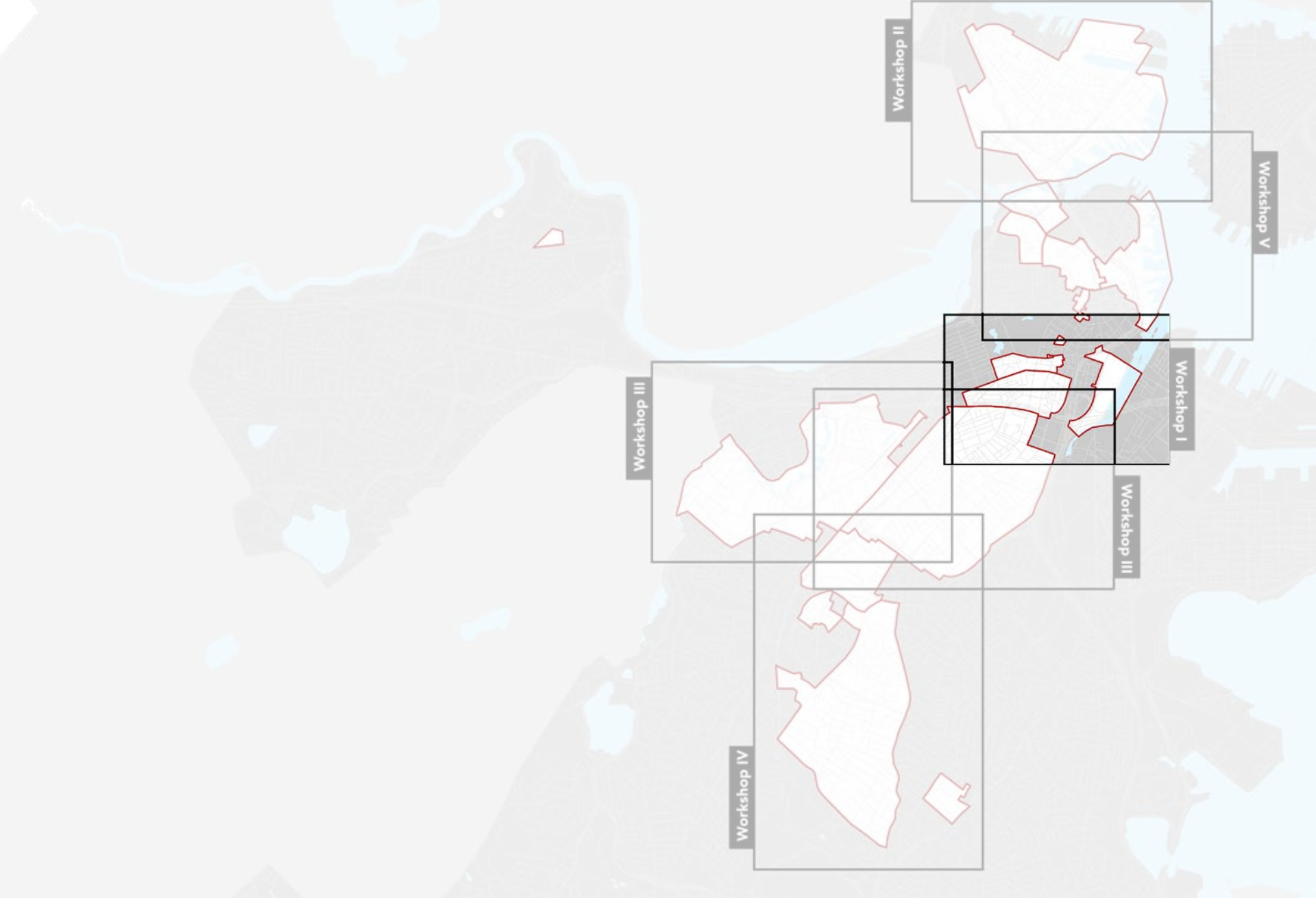
Workshop V

Workshop I

Workshop III

Workshop III

Workshop IV



Workshop II

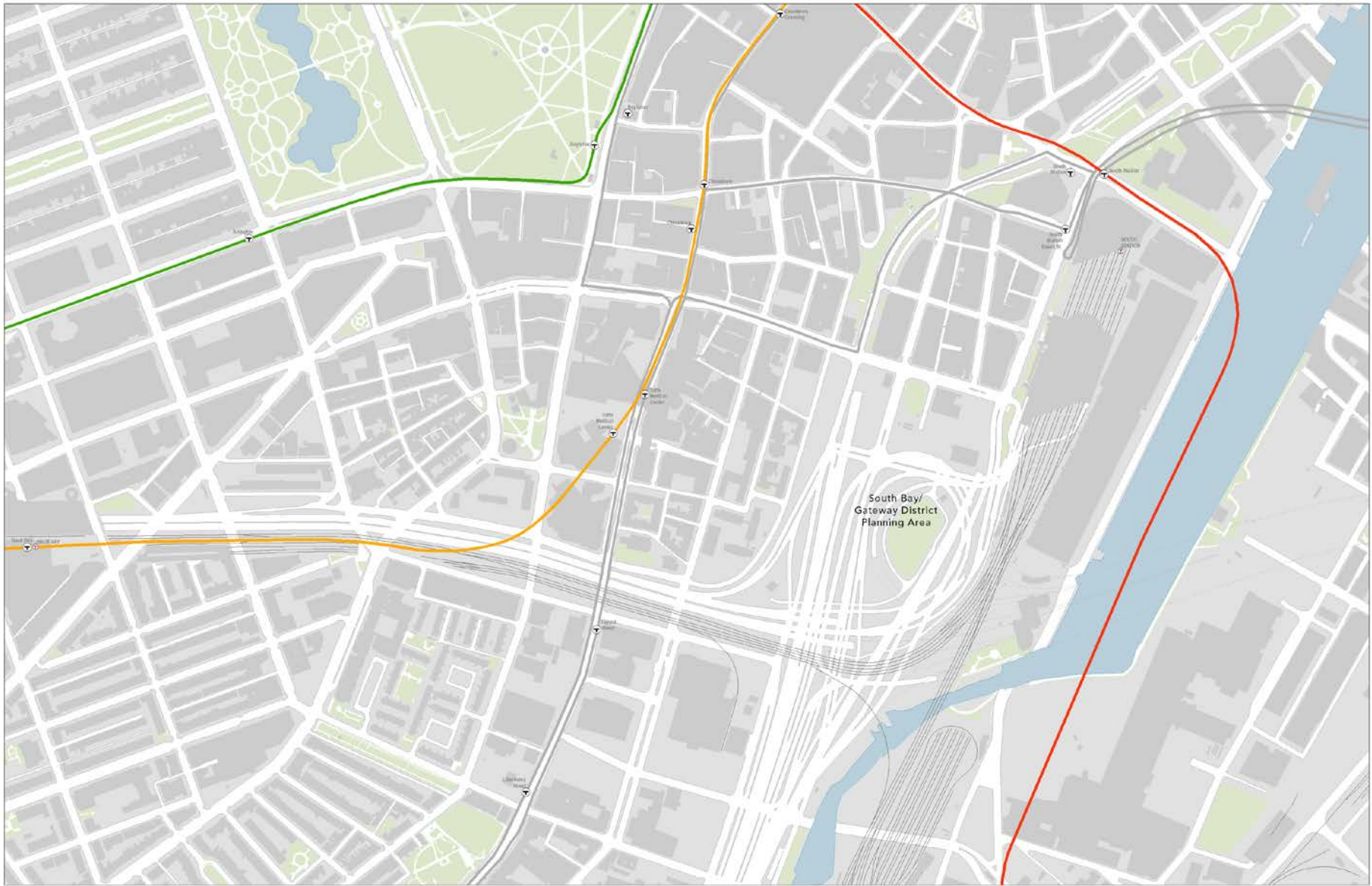
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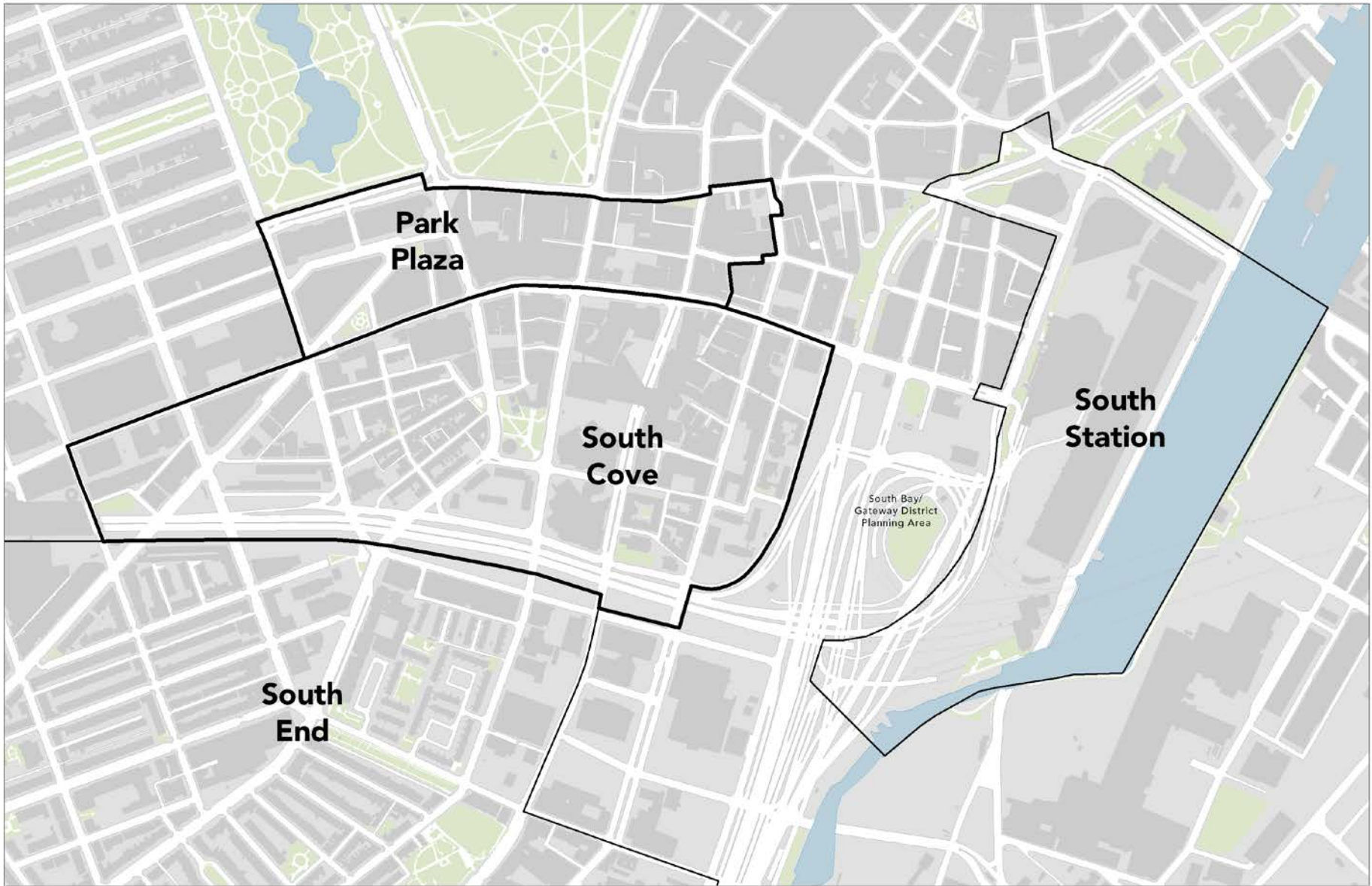
Workshop III

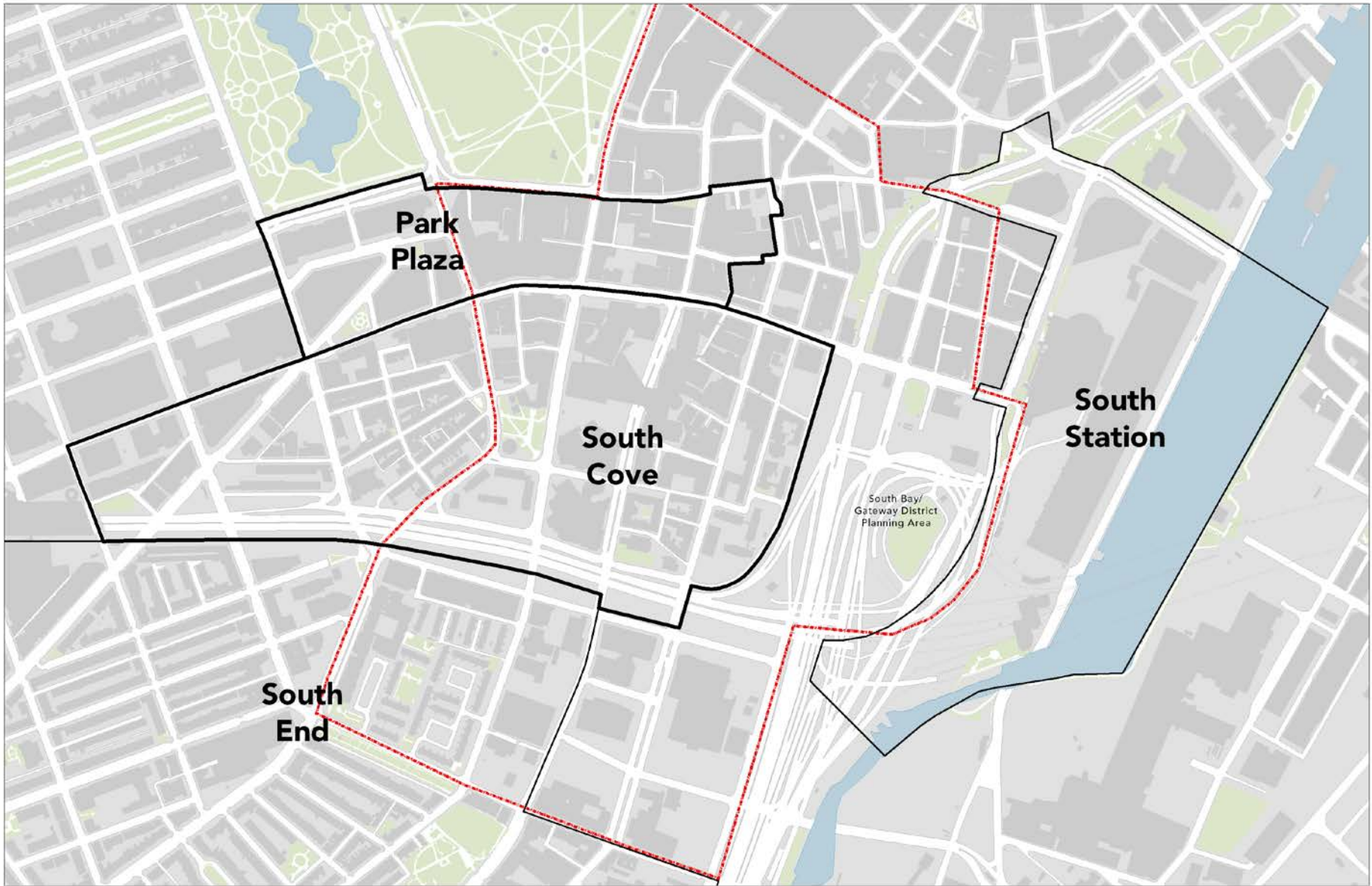
Workshop IV



South Bay/  
Gateway District  
Planning Area







**Park  
Plaza**

**South  
Cove**

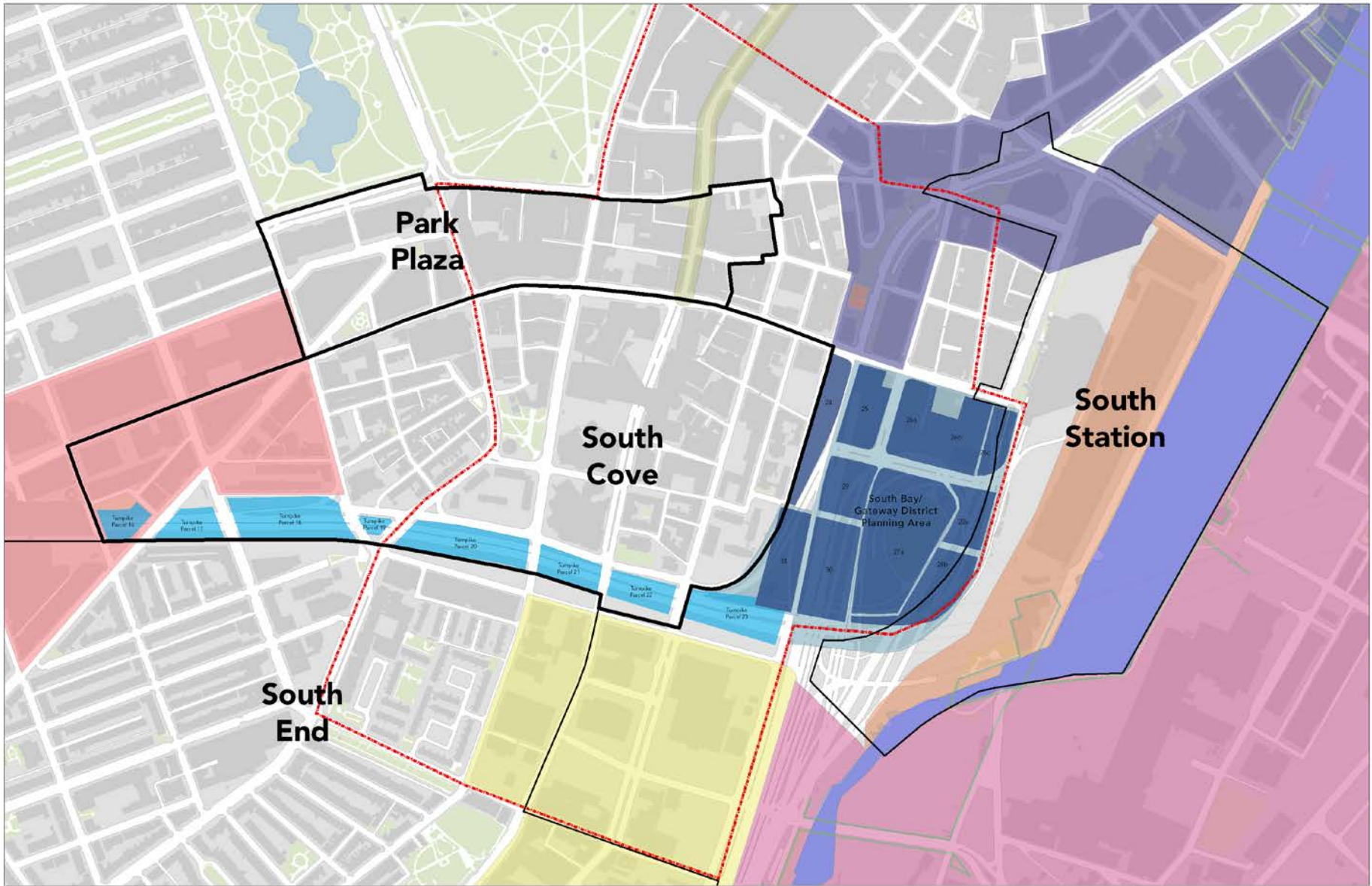
**South  
End**

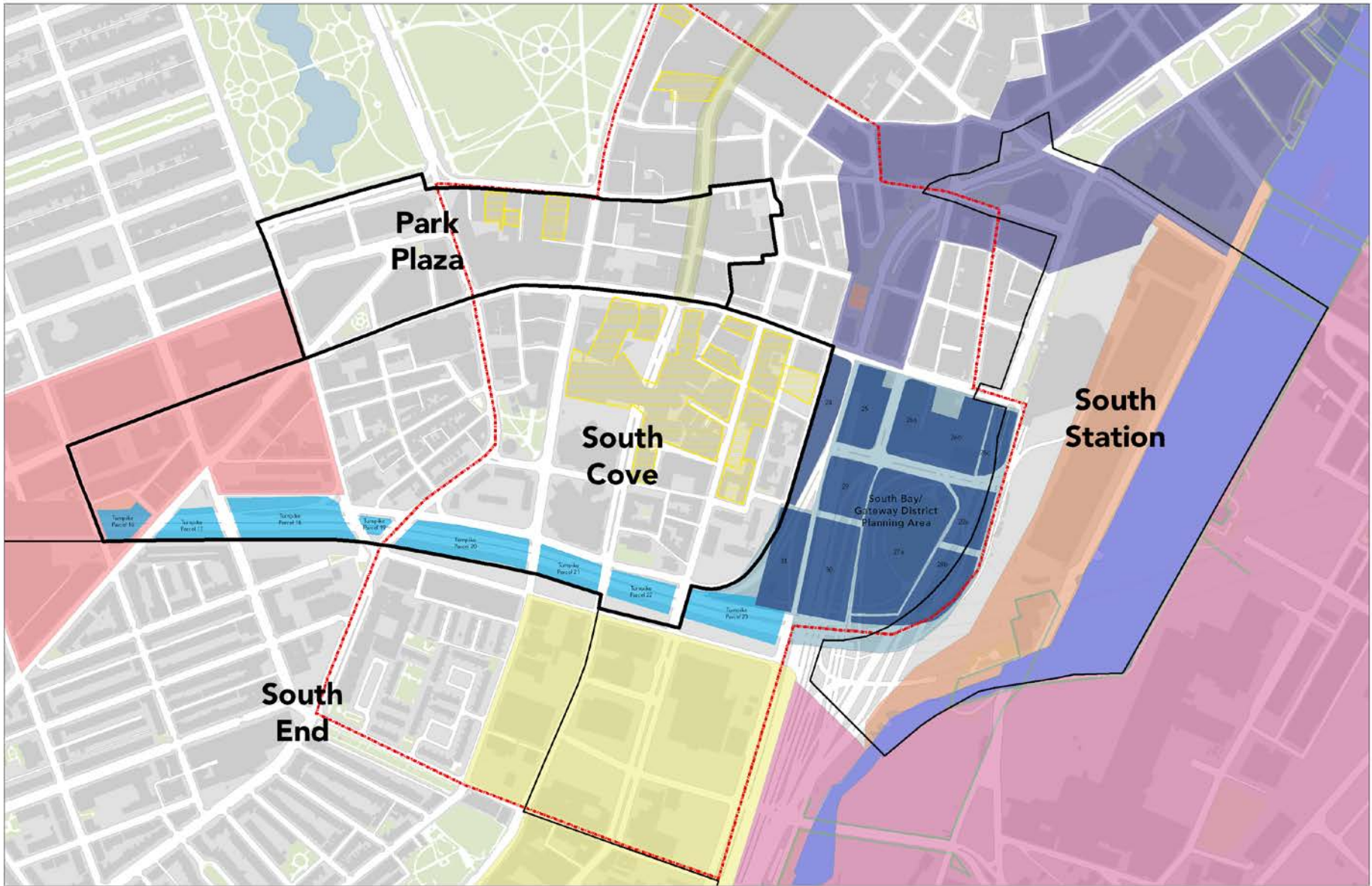
**South  
Station**

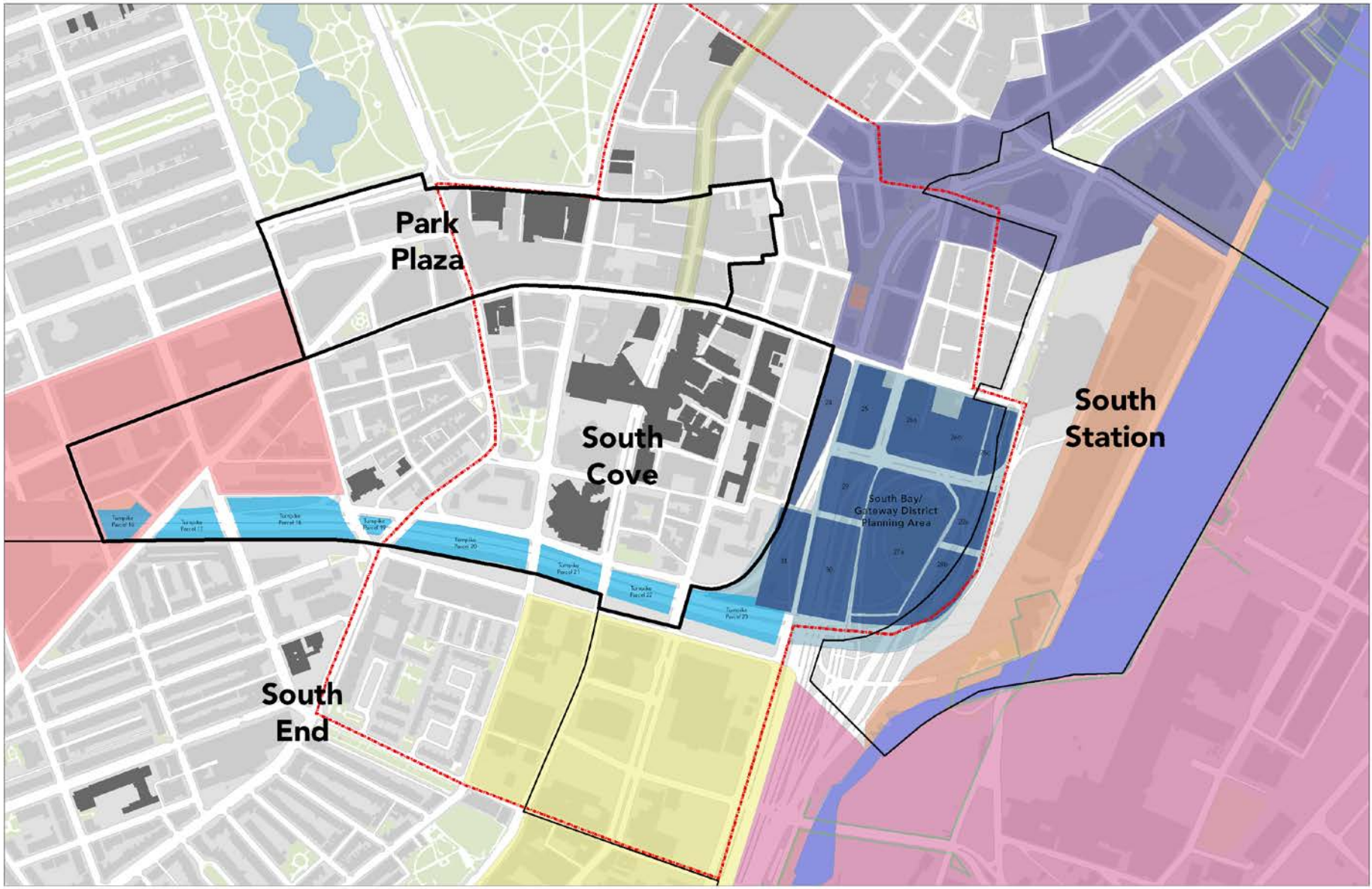
South Bay/  
Gateway District  
Planning Area

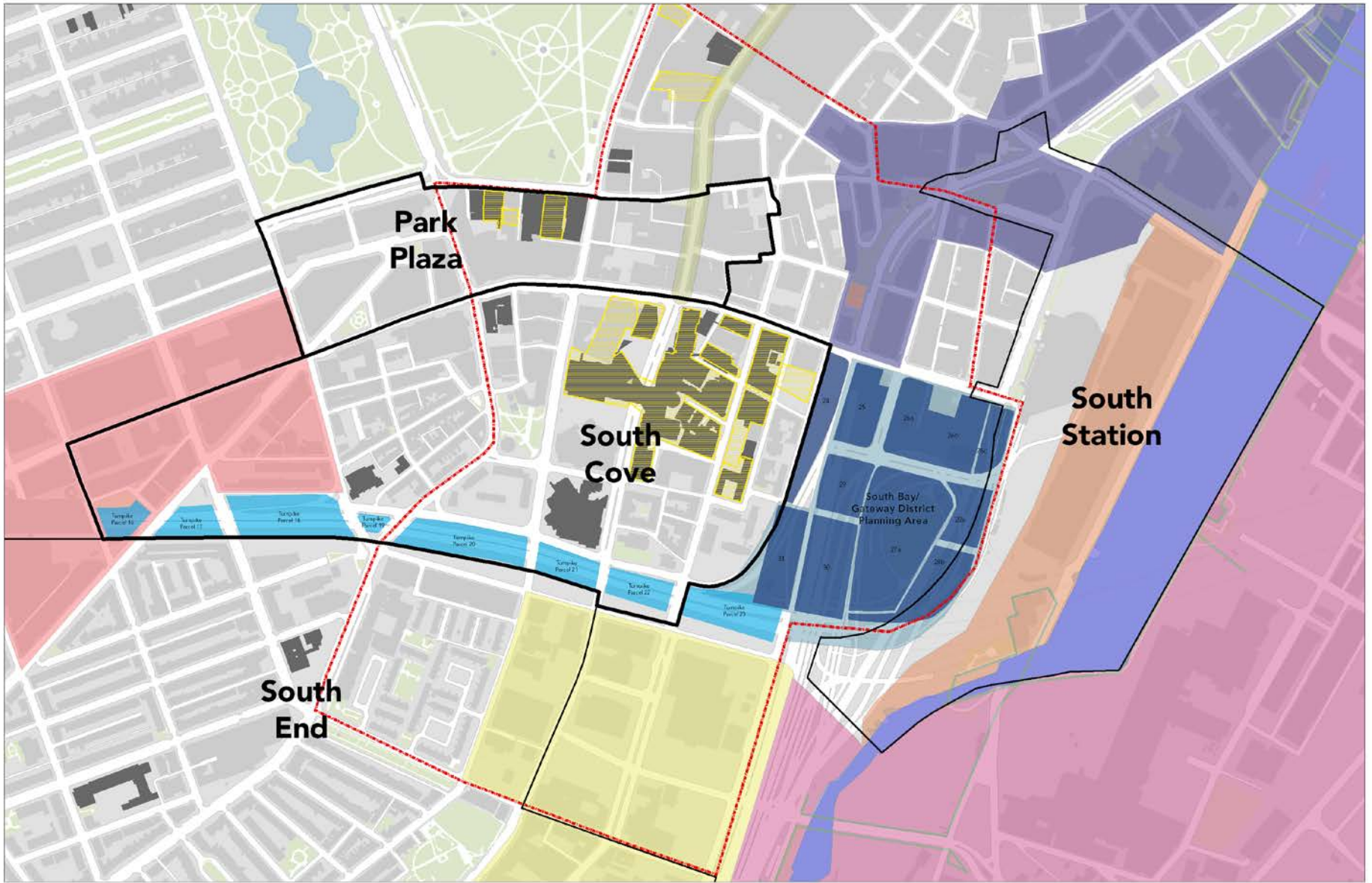


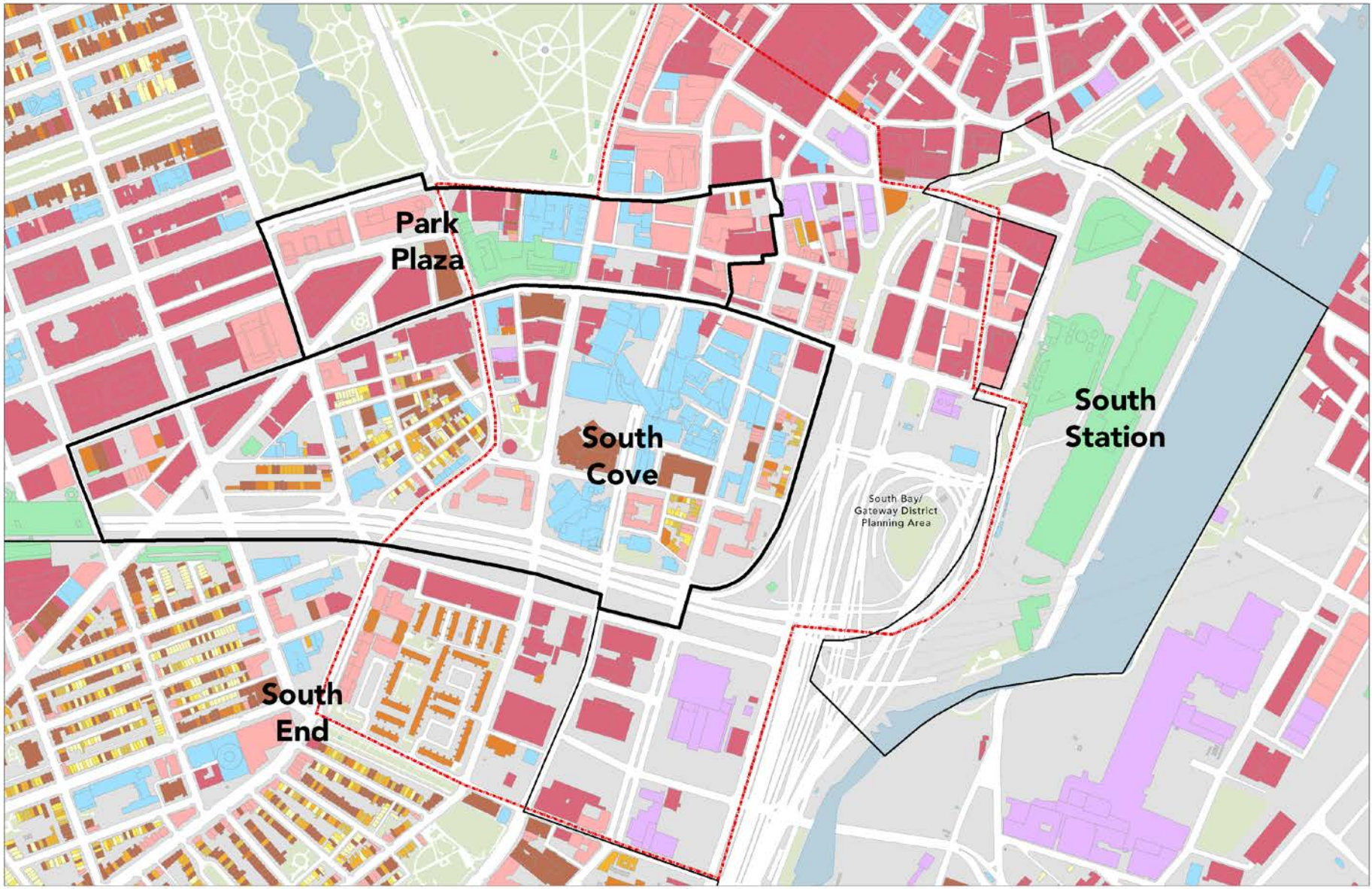


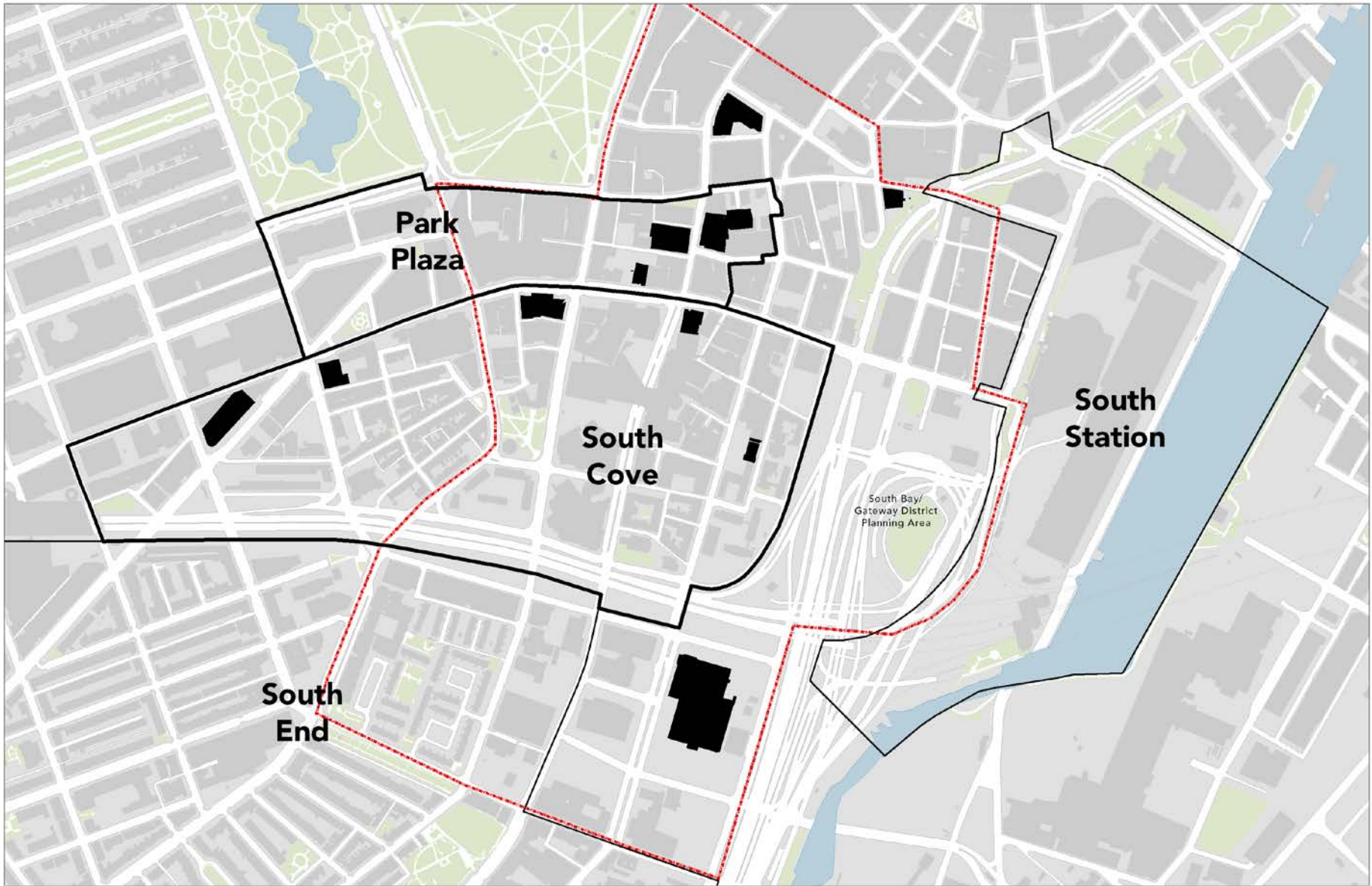


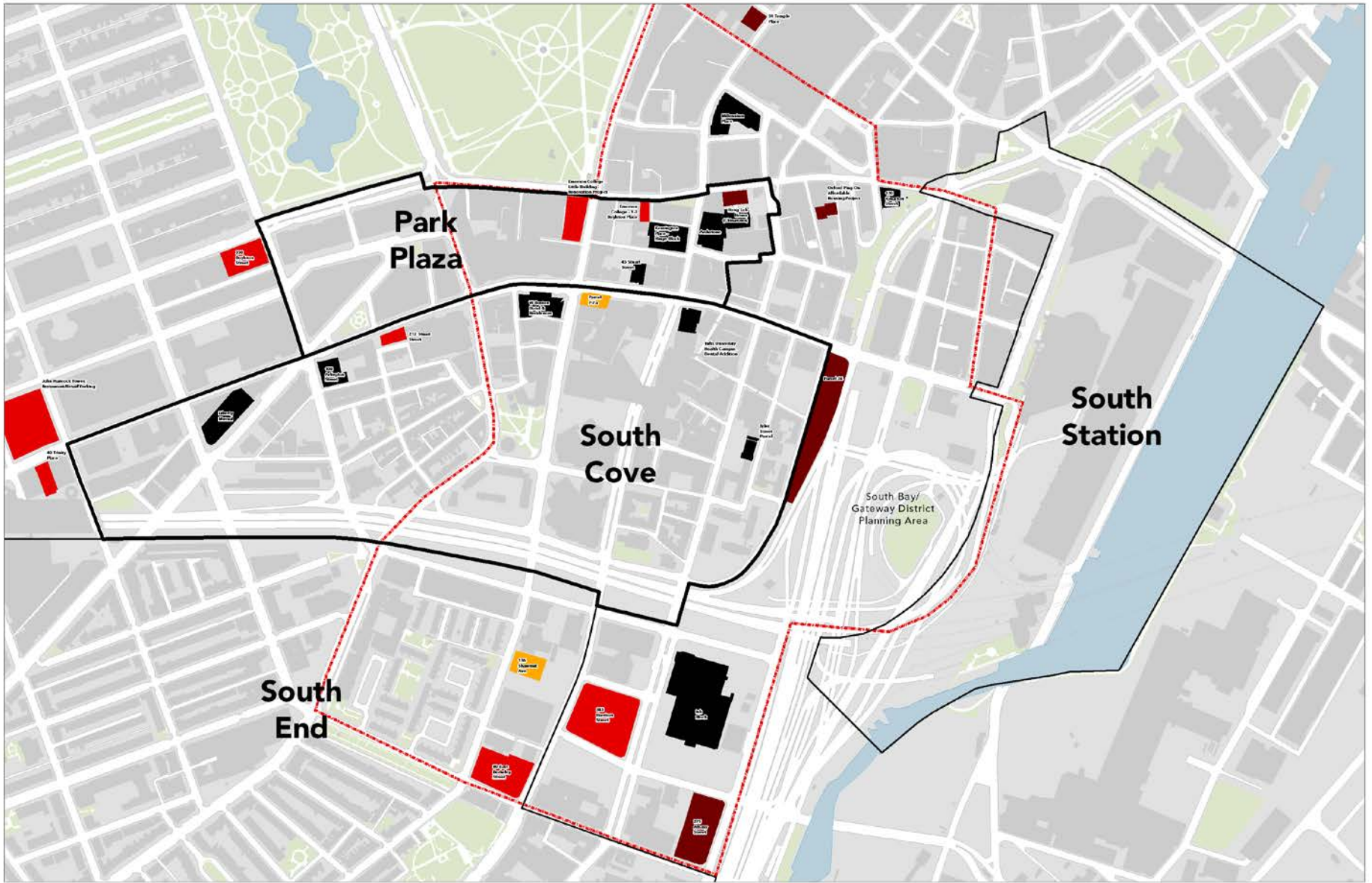


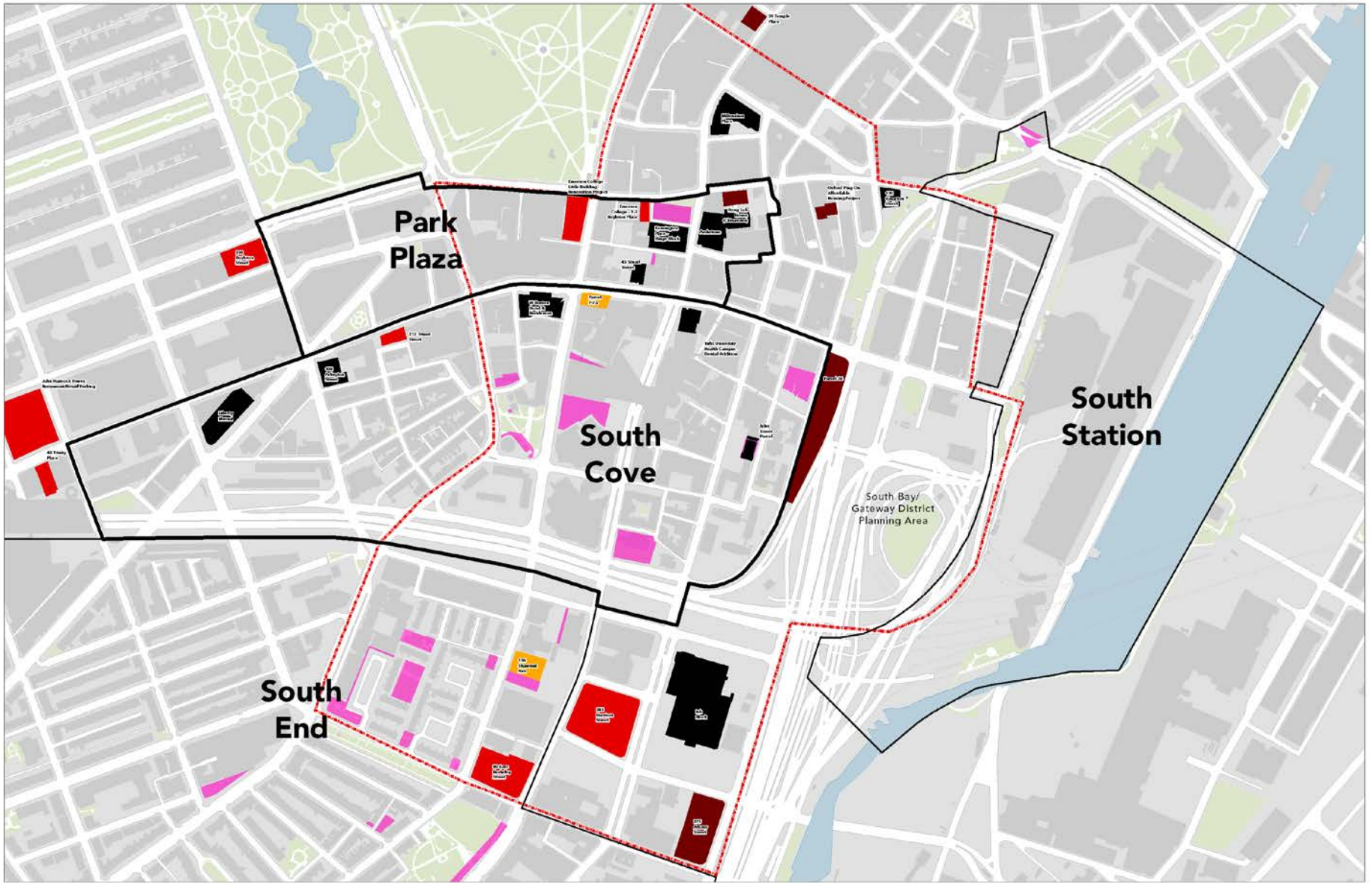




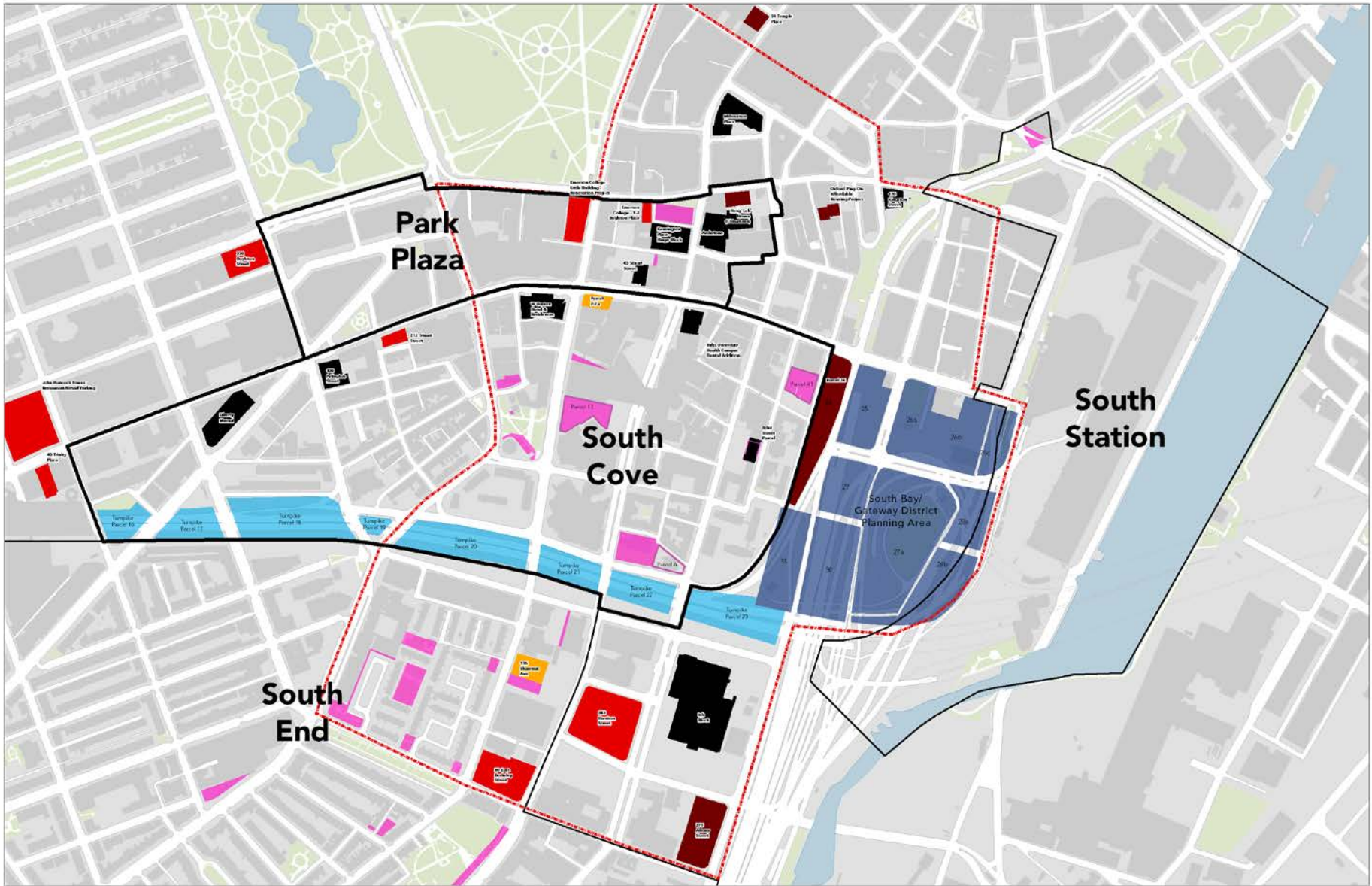












# Workshop Logistics:

## South Cove + Park Plaza



South Cove, 1965

# Workshop Logistics:

## South Cove + Park Plaza

1. Introduction (10 mins)
2. Overview presentation (30 mins)
- 3. Workshop Discussion (40 mins)**
- 4. Summary (20 mins)**

## Original (1965) Goals and Planning Objectives | South Cove

### The Plan contains five (5) basic goals:

1. To promote and expedite public and private development;
2. To cause the rehabilitation and redevelopment of the South Cove as a stable neighborhood compatible in function and design with the neighboring Central Business District, the Back Bay, and the South End
3. To preserve and strengthen the residential character of the area in such a way as to promote and insure its future;
4. To facilitate efficient use of land in the area for housing, commercial and institutional use;
5. To strengthen and expand the real property tax base of the city.

### Supporting these goals are twelve (12) planning objectives:

1. To improve the quality and condition of existing residential property through rehabilitation techniques so that all housing conforms with the standards set forth in Chapter VIII of this plan;
2. To remove deteriorated and deteriorating buildings which depress the physical condition and character of the area;
3. To intensify utilization of land to achieve more economically and socially productive uses;
4. To provide sites for the necessary expansion and reorganization of medical and educational facilities;
5. To assemble and make available suitable sites for private development, and to so guide the development of private and public land uses that they do not conflict unduly with the functioning of each other;
6. To meet the housing needs of minority groups and moderate income families;
7. To create decent, safe and sanitary dwellings, providing adequate levels of amenities, convenience, usefulness and livability for the occupants thereof;
8. To provide sites for appropriate community facilities;
9. To provide for improved traffic circulation, particularly with regard to abutting land uses, by separating through traffic from local service traffic, and by clarifying the street pattern;
10. To develop a system of pedestrian and vehicular ways that will allow effective access to all points in the area;
11. To improve street conditions and utilities and the landscaping of public areas;
12. To prevent future obsolescence, deterioration, and congestion.



South Cove + Park Plaza Urban Renewal Workshop  
China Trade Building | June 10, 2015

## Original (1971) Goals and Planning Objectives | Park Plaza

### The Plan contains eight (8) basic goals:

1. To provide a new "intown" residential community in the heart of the city;
2. To provide a higher economic use to replace an existing underutilized area;
3. To eliminate blighted conditions;
4. To increase the tax revenue by a more intensive development of the area
5. To prevent the haphazard redevelopment of this important sector of Boston which would occur through unplanned renewal based upon the present street layout and pattern of privately-owned parcels.

### Supporting these goals are seven (7) planning objectives:

1. To provide a lively mixture of mutually reinforcing uses with emphasis on residential and daytime plus evening activities;
2. To carefully integrate, as to scale and activity, the new development with the surrounding areas – especially in the relationship of the buildings and uses along Boylston Street to the adjacent Boston Common and Public Garden;
3. To provide multilevel attractive and continuous pedestrian areas through the Project with maximum separation between vehicular and pedestrian movements and convenient interfacing with other transportation modes (transit, taxi, auto, pedestrian);
4. To eliminate excess and confusing roadways and replace them with an efficient, safe, and adequate new road system based on the overall proposed downtown traffic plan;
5. To create multi-use new structures, with the lower elements built close to the street lines so as to maintain the urban character;
6. To build with materials whose color and scale relate well to the existing Boston architecture of Back Bay, Beacon Hill, and Bay Village;
7. To create a new and pleasant environment within the public and semipublic areas to maximize the use of such areas and add a new dimension to the downtown commercial and entertainment areas.



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China Trade Building | June 10, 2015

# What's a goal?

Goals are the primary aim or desired result. They are intended to be general and broad.

# What's a planning objective?

Objectives are more specific than goals. They usually help to give further definition to a smaller set of clearly-defined goals.

## Community Vision for the Future

The vision and goals for the future of Chinatown was developed in Phase I of the master planning process using input collected at community meetings, focus groups, and interviews, working closely with the Oversight and Technical Committees. The above input laid the foundation for development of the Chinatown Master Plan 2010 which has been discussed and debated extensively. The following represents a collective shared vision and goals that was prepared by consensus during this process and provides the inspiration and the framework for the action plan.

### Vision of the Plan

1. Chinatown will be a diverse residential neighborhood anchored by immigrant and working class families.
2. Chinatown will be a sustainable social, economic and cultural hub for a network of Asian American communities in neighboring communities.
3. Chinatown will enhance its history and character as a unique neighborhood and cultural center that is important to the city, state, and region.
4. Chinatown will develop and diversify its economy by building on both its cultural identity and strategic location

### Goals of the Plan

1. Preserve and strengthen Chinatown as a gateway for new immigrants and as a regional center for Chinese and Asian American culture and services;
2. Ensure the preservation of existing affordable housing;
3. Expand the number and range of housing options with a priority on low- and middle-income family housing;
4. Identify, create and prepare community members and businesses for economic development opportunities which will serve the needs of local residents, the regional Asian American community, neighboring institutions, and the Downtown and Theater Districts;
5. Increase public safety, improve the pedestrian environment, and engage in transportation planning to address community needs;
6. Foster a more sustainable and greener community;
7. Cultivate a healthier and cleaner environment and promote the health and well-being of its residents;
8. Expand civic spaces and increase the number of open spaces and park;
9. Develop policies that improve the quality of life for community members;
10. Increase community civic participation;
11. Reaffirm Chinatown's connections with its neighbors.

# Goals | South Cove

## Original (1965)

The Plan contains five (5) basic goals:

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2. to cause the rehabilitation and redevelopment of the South Cove as a stable neighborhood compatible in function and design with the neighboring Central Business District, the Back Bay, and the South End area;
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5. to strengthen and expand the real property tax base of the city.

## Renewed (2015)



# Planning Objectives | South Cove

## Original (1965)

Supporting these goals is a number of specific planning and design objectives:

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11. to improve street conditions and utilities and the landscaping of public areas;

## Renewed (2015)





## Proposed (2015) Goals | South Cove

*Below are suggested themes for a proposed set of 2015 goals for the South Cove Urban Renewal Area. These themes and draft language were informed directly by the Chinatown Master Plan (CMP) and with input from knowledgeable staff from the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA). We ask for your feedback on these proposed goals and also assistance in creating supporting planning objectives. Thank you.*

### Housing

- Expand the number and range of housing options (CMP)
- Strengthen the residential character of Bay Village and Chinatown by increasing residential density and diversifying housing type and mix of income (BRA)

### Public Realm

- Foster a more sustainable and greener community (CMP)
- Expand civic spaces and increase the number of open spaces and park (CMP)
- Strengthen the pedestrian and public realm connections between this area to the surrounding neighborhoods of the downtown, South End, Back Bay and South Bay (BRA)

### Neighborhood Connectivity

- Reaffirm Chinatown's connection with its neighbors (CMP)
- Increase public safety, improve the pedestrian environment, and engage in transportation planning to address community needs (CMP)
- Promote the area's diverse and vibrant mixed use character while improving connections to the neighboring Central Business District, the Back Bay, and the South End (BRA)

### Economic Development

- Identify, create, and prepare community members and businesses for economic development opportunities which will serve the needs of the local community, including residents, institutions, the Downtown and Theater Districts (CMP)
- Promote greater economic vitality of the area by aligning and balancing growth of institutional uses with commercial development and community development (BRA)

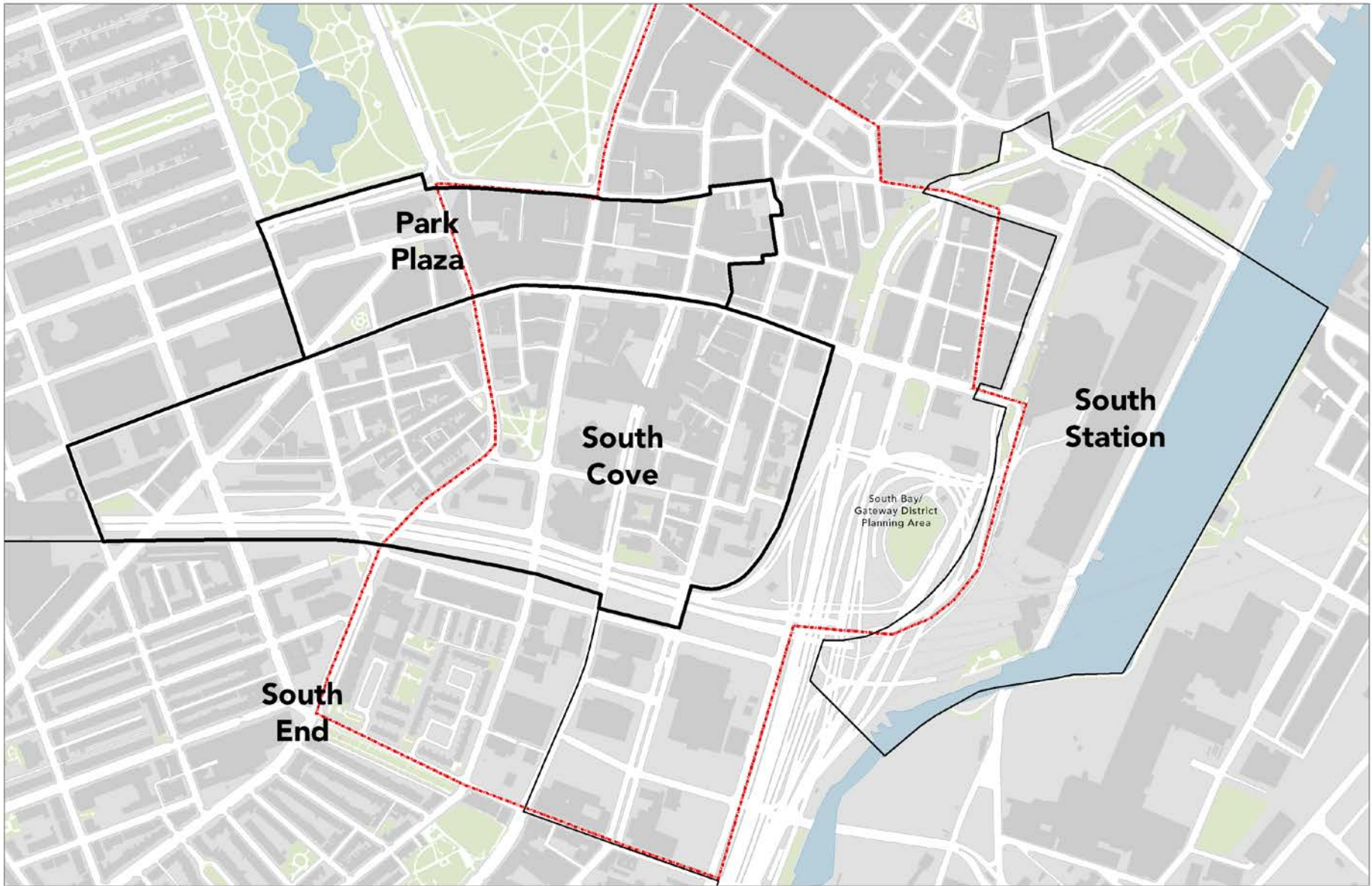
Please assist us with creating supporting planning objectives!

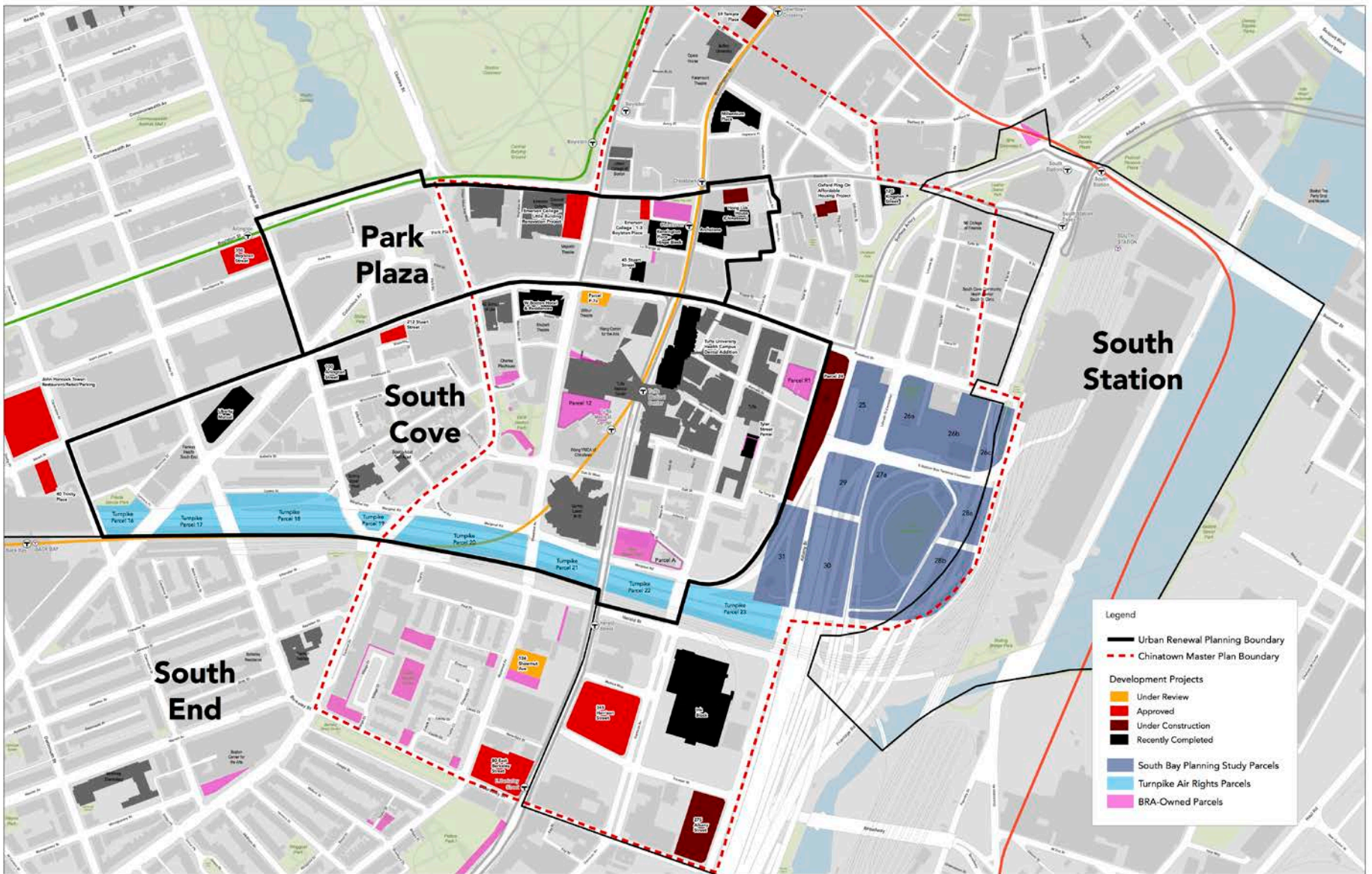


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China Trade Building | June 10, 2015  
Contact: Corey Zehngebot | Email: urbanrenewal@boston.gov

# Suggested themes for the goals:

- Housing
- Public Realm
- Neighborhood Connectivity
- Economic Development





South Cove + Park Plaza Urban Renewal Workshop (June 2015)

# Wrap Up + Next Steps:

## South Cove + Park Plaza



South Cove, 1965



**Interactive**





## PLANNING

What is Planning?

Planning Initiatives

Community Planning

Institutional Planning

Waterfront Planning

Urban Design

Urban Renewal

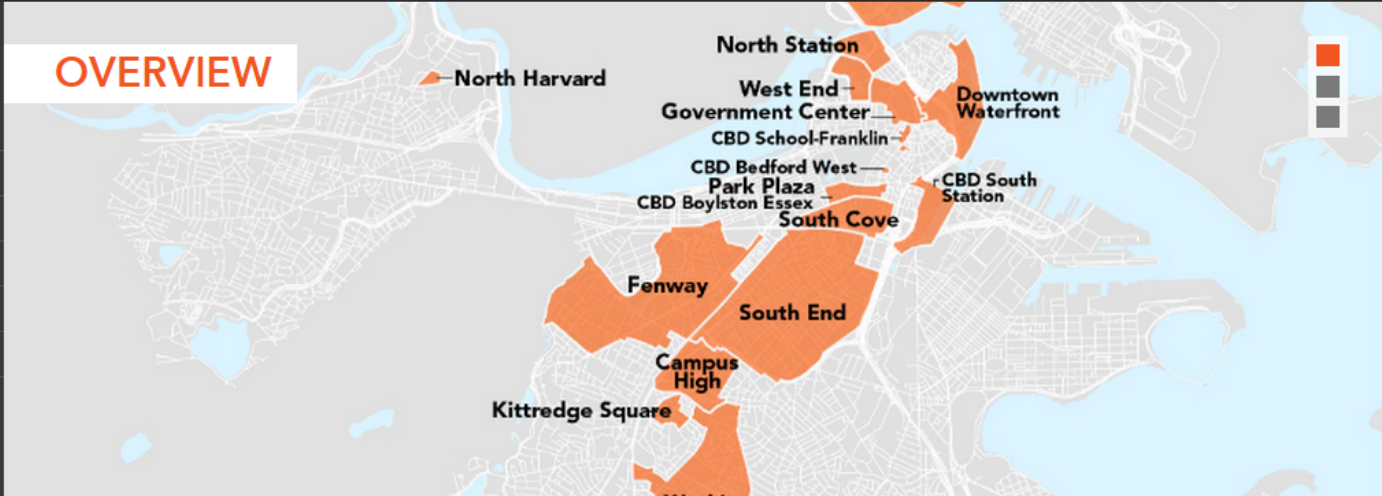
- Overview
- Map
- Featured Projects

Zoning Viewer

Enter Address or Parcel ID



## OVERVIEW



The BRA is seeking to extend [urban renewal](#) plan areas that cover over 3,000 acres of the city and include parts of Charlestown, the Fenway, Chinatown, the South End, Roxbury, the Downtown Waterfront, the West End, North Station area, and Government Center.

Urban renewal dates back to the American Housing Act of 1949, when the federal government began to invest great sums of money to redevelop cities that were rapidly declining after World War II. Early urban renewal efforts attempted to tackle widespread blight by assembling land to develop massive infrastructure and public facilities, usually at the expense of displacing poor and marginalized residents. The current effort is focused on a contemporary reframing of urban

## EVENTS

23  
FEB

Urban Renewal Task Force Meeting

## NEWS

December 17, 2014  
[BRA begins community engagement process to extend urban renewal](#)



January 2015 **Start!**



City Council Task Force

Website Launch of Primary Features  
Map, Tools, Projects, and Glossary

March-April 2015 **1 Urban Renewal Kickoff**



City Council Task Force

*What is Urban Renewal?*  
*Boston's UR History*  
*UR in MA and throughout US*  
*UR Tools and Feature Projects in Boston*



Stakeholder Engagement

Historical Maps + 2015 Plan Area Boundaries  
BRA-owned land  
Refinement of Interactive Map

June-July 2015 **2 Ideas, Goals, and Planning Objectives Workshops**



City Council Task Force

*Tools + Feature Projects Revisited*  
*Review of Past UR Plans*  
*Analysis of Historic Urban Renewal Plan Areas*  
*New "Conditions Today" maps for all plan areas*  
*Workshop Goals + Planning Objectives*  
*Demographic Analysis of Plan Areas*



Stakeholder Engagement



UR in MA Panel?

Task Force



Stakeholder Engagement

Draft 2015 Urban Renewal Plan Areas and Goals  
available for download

October 2015 **3 The Future of Urban Renewal in the City of Boston**

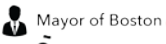


Partnership with West End Museum?



BRA Board City Council

*Synthesis of ideas, goals, and planning objectives from all media*  
*Before + After of UR Plan Areas + Goals*  
*An Evolving BRA...*  
*Setting the table for Boston's General Plan*



Mayor of Boston

Before and After Comparison



MA DHCD

Winter 2015 **End.**

# Phase 3: Synthesis

**IMAGINE** BOSTON  
2030



# Thank you!

## South Cove + Park Plaza



South Cove, 1965