



PLAN: Downtown

Public Meeting #3
Preliminary Recommendations & Community Priorities

October 24, 2019



**boston planning &
development agency**

Agenda

Goals and Strategies

- Presentation 1—Goals and Strategies 6:10–6:30 pm
- Discussion 1—Goals and Strategies 6:30–6:45 pm
- Discussion 1 Report Back 6:25–7:00 pm

Public Spaces

- Presentation 2—Public Spaces 7:00–7:10 pm
- Discussion 2—Public Spaces 7:10–7:40 pm
- Discussion 2 Report Back 7:40–7:55 pm

Next Steps & Wrap-up

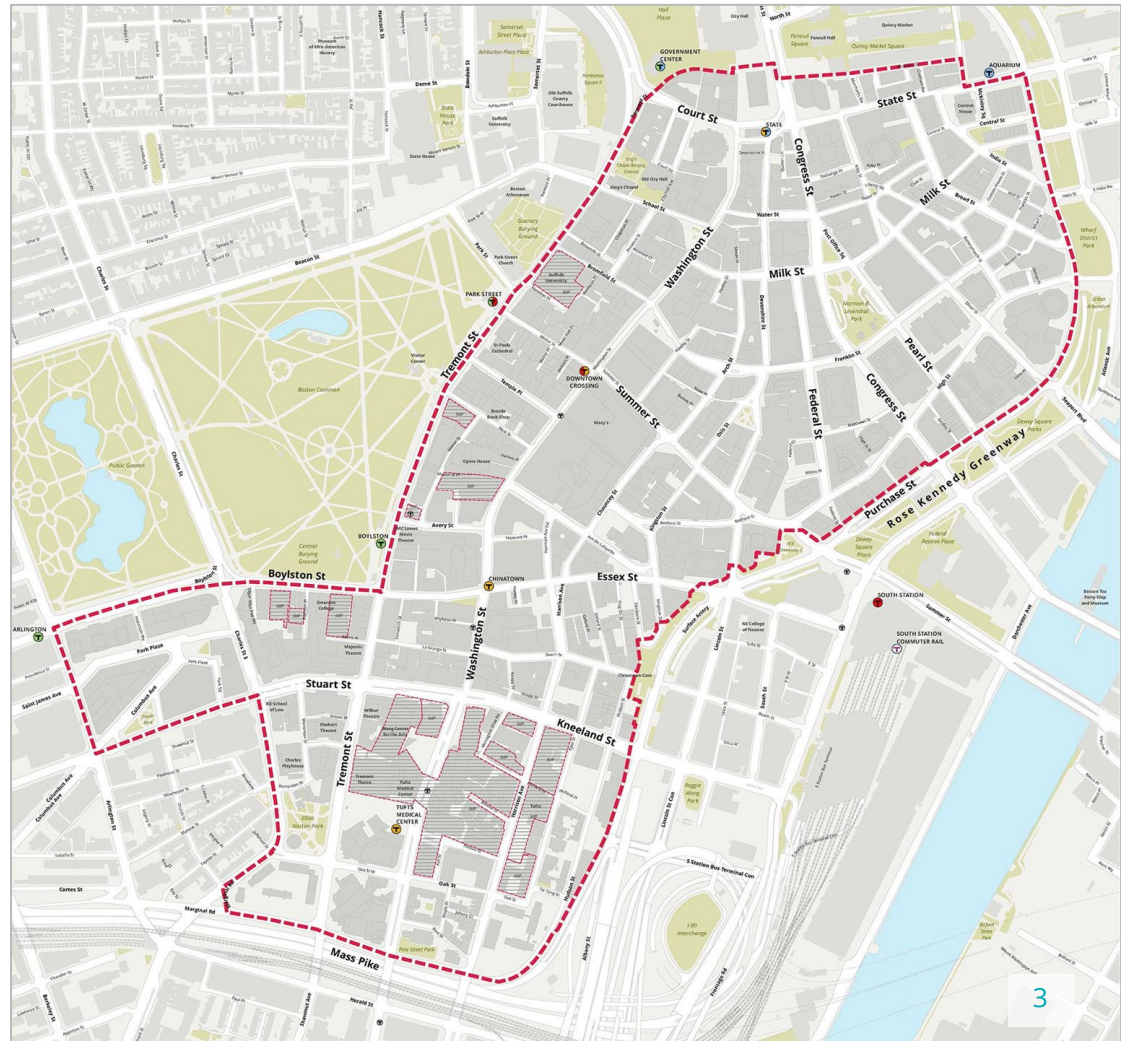
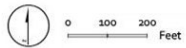
7:55–8:00 pm

PLAN: Downtown

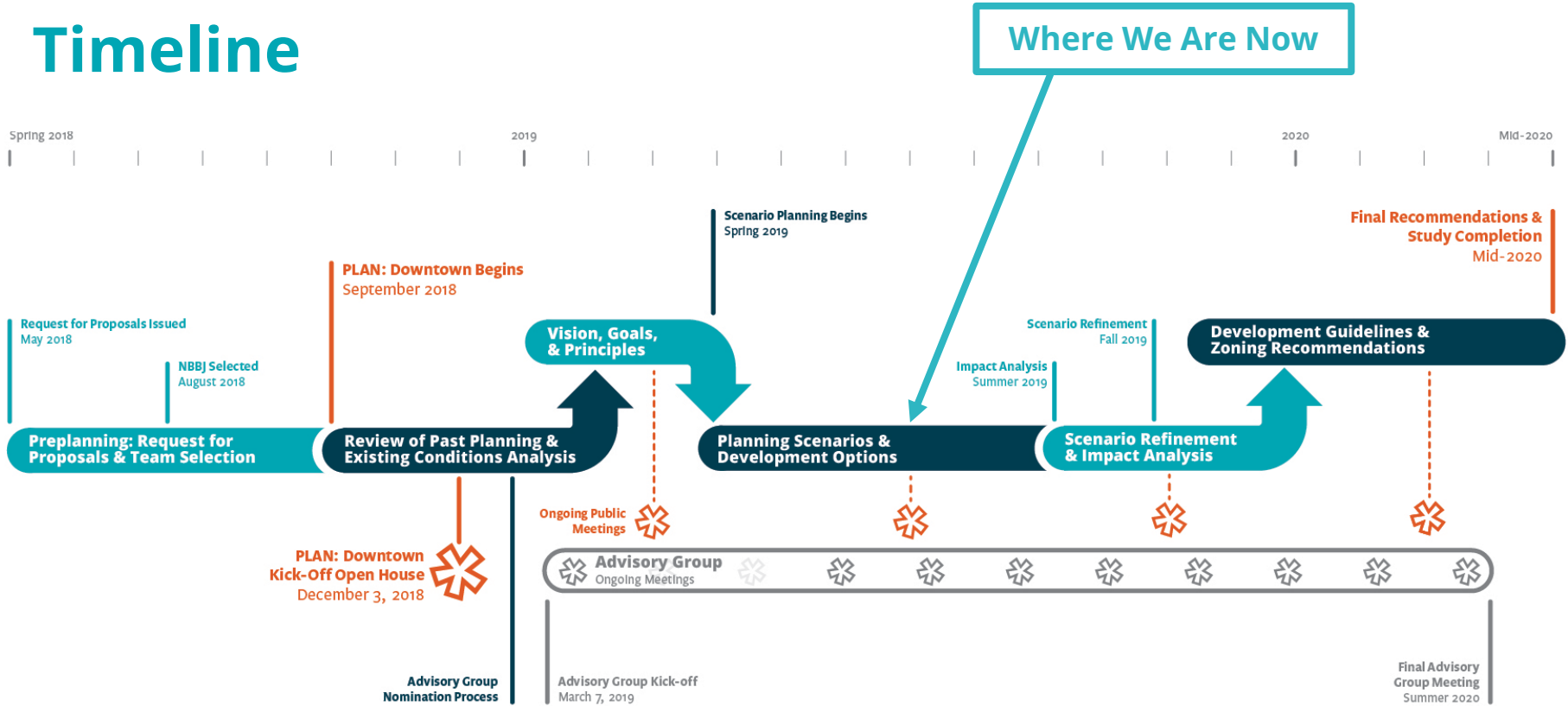
Study Area

 Study Area Boundary

 Institutional Master Plan (IMP)
Not included in this study



Timeline



Vision, Goals, & Strategies

(Draft)



Vision Workshop

April 30, 2019

Who we heard from: Over 75 attendees

Equity

- Downtown is for everyone. "What exists is a warped picture...what is a good community with a mix?"
- Chinatown vulnerable to redevelopment
- Support for low income families to avoid displacement

Resiliency & Preservation

- Value to living downtown-pressure on delicate architectural fabric
- Working-class, non-English speaking residents and immigrant-owned small businesses who cannot afford renovations are the most vulnerable.

Mobility

- Prioritizing pedestrians and mass transportation options over driving
- Dedicated bus & bike lanes with planning around future scooter and other electric vehicle integration



Vision Workshop

April 30, 2019

Identity & Public Realm

- “Pocket Destinations” that complement Boston Common and the Greenway by supporting the “brown bag community” and residents with active programming.
- Public realm improvements could better support small retail businesses and “make history more visible.”
- Increased pedestrianization and emphasizing pedestrian safety.

Mixed-use Core

- “Avoid homogeneity of Downtown” and encourage variety and unique establishments.
- Provide support for small businesses which give Downtown its unique flavor as well as funding and technical assistance.
- Accommodating urban amenities such as schools & public spaces.



Community Engagement Summer Recap

Pop Up Locations

- Leventhal Park
- Summer Street Art Market
- Chinatown Gate

Walking Tours

- Chinatown Walking Tour facilitated by Ally's Alley's Walking Tour

349 Washington Street Storefront

Advisory Group Meetings

- May: Preservation & Growth
- June: Climate & Resiliency
- July: Mobility & Public Realm





Vision Statement

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.**



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Strategies

- **Protect spaces that create distinctive identities** in Downtown, highlighting the local, regional, and national significance of Downtown
- **Support diverse arts and culture** reflective of the local communities
- **Integrate art into spaces** and elements that more people interact with on a regular basis

PLAN: Downtown will...

2. Promote dense, mixed-use development to support job growth, housing opportunities, and 18 hour/7 days/week activity for residents, workers, and visitors.



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Strategies

- **Accommodate growth while respecting the historical character** of Downtown
- **Expand family housing options**
- **Continue encouraging residential-focused development** in Downtown Crossing and the Financial District.

PLAN: Downtown will...

- 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.



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Strategies

- **Provide workforce/affordable housing** on publicly-owned land (*within mixed-use developments*)
- **Address housing stabilization** in Chinatown
- **Expand affordable housing** stock for seniors
- **Cultivate a walkable environment** to promote the health and well-being of Downtown residents and visitors
- **Incorporate the 2019 Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) Update** into PLAN: Downtown once completed*

*Text in gray ensures coordination with another BPDA planning initiative, City policy, or City program.

PLAN: Downtown will...

4. **Improve connections through, within, and to Downtown**, with a focus on active transportation, transit, and non-vehicular modes of transportation.



PLAN: Downtown will...

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Strategies

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

PLAN: Downtown will...

5. Preserve historic building fabric and cultural institutions while advancing climate preparedness and resiliency measures.



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Strategies

- **Protect treasured, shared cultural assets** from contextually- and culturally-insensitive development and environmental threats
- **Proactively identify important architectural context and zone accordingly** (e.g. Chinatown Row Houses)
- **Retain large portions of intact historic building fabric**
- Continue to follow the Secretary of the Department of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*

*Text in gray ensures coordination with another BPDA planning initiative, City policy, or City program.

PLAN: Downtown will...

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.



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Strategies

- **Coordinate investments to adapt infrastructure** to future climate conditions
- **Incorporate near-term heat resiliency measures** at building & district scales
- **Provide consistent opportunity for shade** throughout the public realm
- **Reduce emissions related to transportation and vehicular traffic** in Downtown, with a focus on improving traffic and logistics management
- Require compliance with net-zero emissions readiness*
- Refer to existing (or imminent) flood mitigation policies as captured in Article 25 CRB, the Flood Resilience Zoning Overlay district, and Article 37*

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PLAN: Downtown will...

7. **Encourage** consistent, safe, healthy, and high-quality **improvements to the public realm** that welcome everyone year-round.



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Strategies

- **Provide legible and safe connections** between major green and open spaces
- **Provide new public spaces and enhancements to existing spaces** that improve pedestrian experience and offer new opportunities for flexible programming
- **Continue to test innovative and new public realm ideas** through pilot projects*

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PLAN: Downtown will...

8. Support business development that maintains Downtown as a regional economic center.



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Strategies

- Strengthen the role of Downtown as an **active 18-hour/7-days/week life and work area** in Boston
- **Continue to maintain Downtown** as a well-connected **job center** for the region.

PLAN: Downtown will...

9. Promote the retention, growth, and diversity of ground-floor retail businesses, especially legacy and small businesses.



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Strategies

- **Require small-scale individual storefronts** at street level in key areas
- **Encourage the continuity of small scale business** where possible
- **Provide** technical, institutional, and financial **support to small & legacy businesses** and entrepreneurs

Discussion

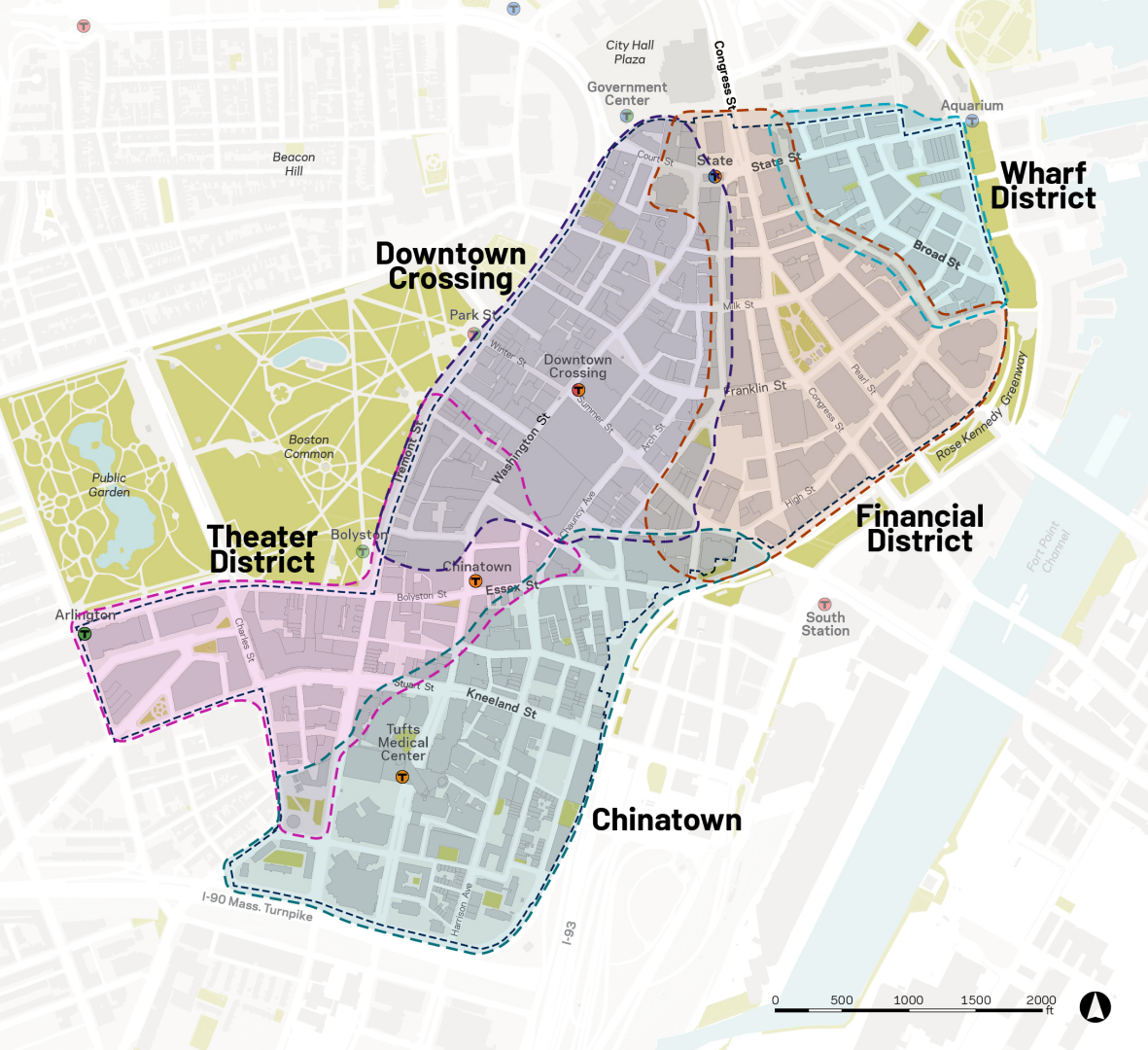
- What are you most excited about? Why?
- What are you concerned about? Why?



Recommendations for Public Spaces *(Draft)*



**boston planning &
development agency**



Character Areas

- Distinct areas within Downtown
- There is no clear boundary between the Character Areas when it comes to experience
- Character can influence policy and design guidance

Public Space Definition

Publicly-accessible spaces between and within buildings that support public life and social interaction, such as:

- Streets
- Plazas
- Parks and open spaces
- Publicly-accessible indoor spaces






WHEREVER the public is welcome.



Street Character




There is an opportunity for streets to increase vegetation and provide more dedicated pedestrian space.

-  Green Corridors
-  Green Connectors
-  Existing Parks and Plazas along Green Corridors or Connectors
-  Tactical and Possible Public Realm Extensions
-  Plan Downtown Study Area Boundary

0 500 1000 1500 2000 ft



 Green Corridors: routes that connect major green spaces and where consistent planting is proposed

 Green Connectors: routes that provide opportunities for green "stepping stones" traversing Downtown



Public Spaces

- *Boston Common*: The Boston Common Master Plan is currently underway
- *Boston Public Garden*
- *Rose Kennedy Greenway*: The Greenway Conservancy and newly formed Greenway Business Improvement District (BID) is focused on local improvements and programming



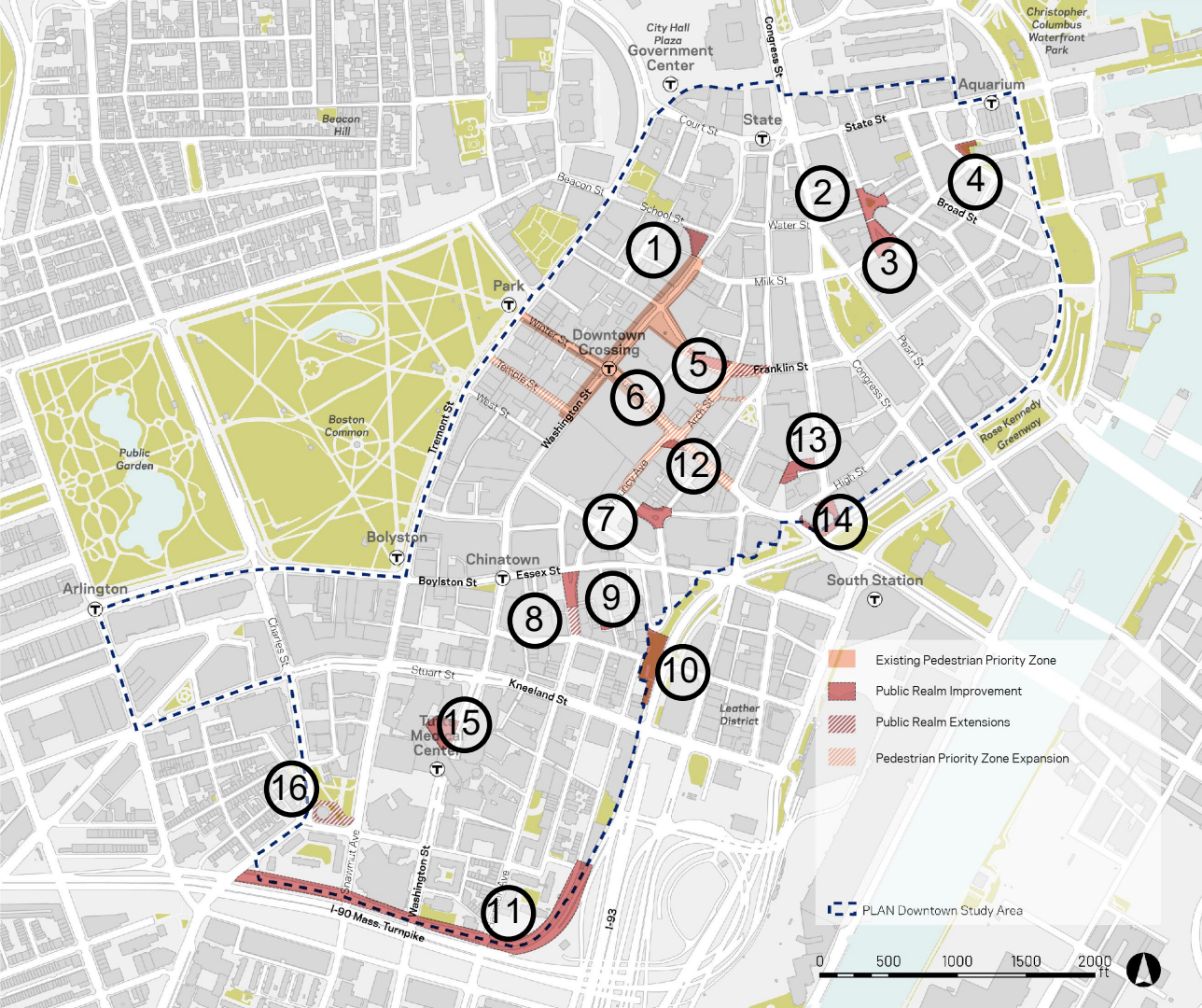
Public Spaces

Public Ownership

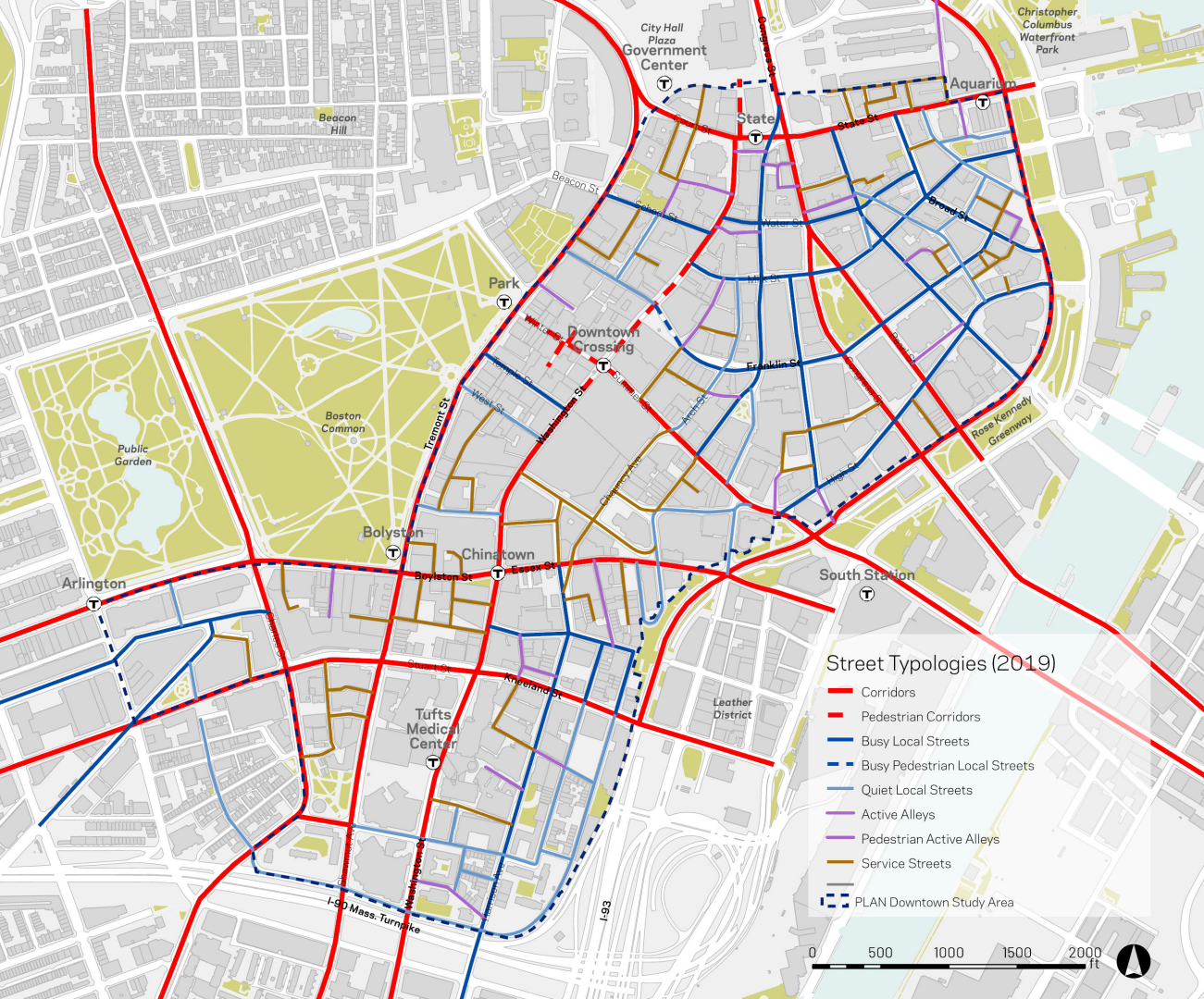
1. Readers' Park
2. Liberty Square
3. Kilby Street / Milk Street
4. Jenney Plaza
5. Franklin Street / Tontine East
6. Extended Pedestrian-Priority Zone
7. Bedford Street / Kingston Street
8. Philips Square Extension & Permanent Design
9. Oxford Place Playground
10. Chin Park
11. Hudson Street /Marginal Street

Private Ownership

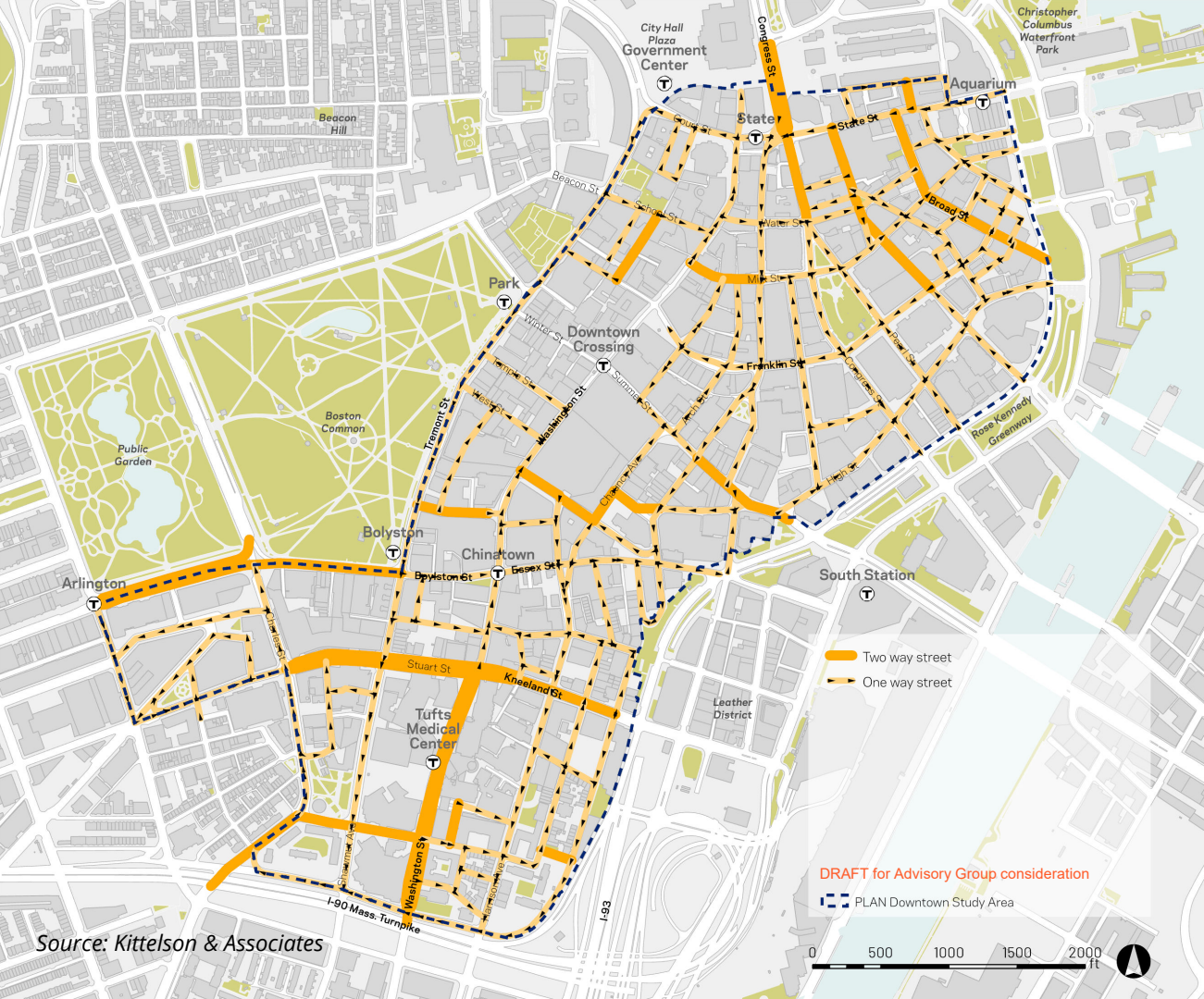
12. Chauncy Street / Summer Street
13. Milton Place
14. Fiduciary Trust Building
15. Tufts Medical Center
16. Eliot Norton Park Extension



Street Types



Street Directionality



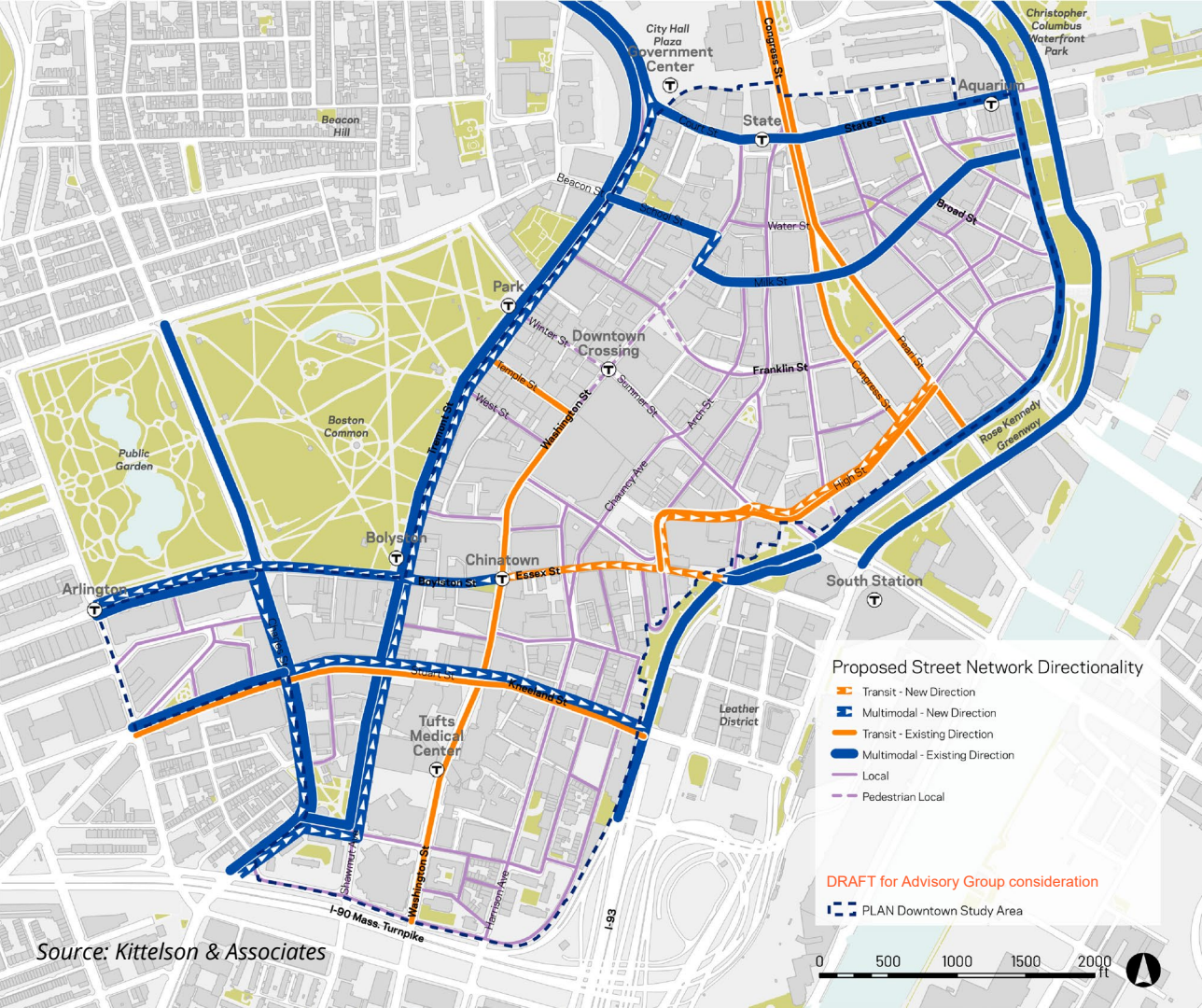
Source: Kittelson & Associates

Street Types & Directionality

Corridors: Access for travel lanes, separated bike lanes, and dedicated sidewalk

Transit-Focused Street: Access for dedicated transit lanes, travel lanes, and dedicated sidewalk

Local Street: When possible prioritize bicycle and pedestrian access through wide sidewalks and generous separated bike facilities



Discussion

Please refer to the material on your table

Next Steps

- **Advisory Group Meeting #7:** Development Scenarios
November 7, 2019
- **Advisory Group Meeting #8:** Urban Design Guidelines
December 18, 2019
- **Next Public Meeting:** Early 2020