

## **PLAN: Downtown**

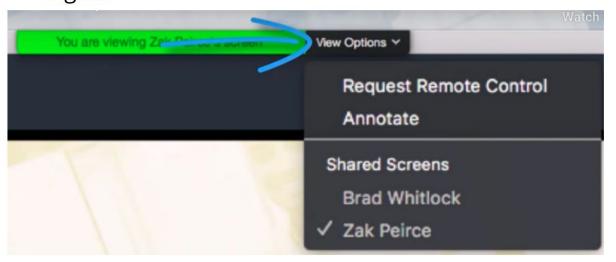
Public Meeting - Draft Report Review



## How to choose a language interpretation channel



"Mandarin" - Anny Ni "Cantonese" - Joan Siu "English"





## **Meeting Recording**

At the request of community members, this event will be recorded and posted on the PLAN: Downtown project webpage at <a href="http://bostonplans.org/PlanDowntown">http://bostonplans.org/PlanDowntown</a> for those who are unable to attend the zoom event live.

It is possible that participants may be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices. If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.

If your camera and microphone are off, you can still participate through the text chat feature at the end of the presentation.

## **Zoom Tips**

Welcome! Here are some tips for first-time Zoom users. Your controls are at the bottom of the screen:



Use the **chat** to type a comment or ask a question at any time – Members of the PLAN: Downtown team will enable the chat at the end.



To **raise your hand**, click on "Participants" at the bottom of your screen, and then choose the "Raise Hand" option in the participant box, or press \*9 on your phone



Mute/unmute – Participants will be muted during the presentation – the host will unmute you during discussion if you raise your hand and it is your turn to talk. To mute/unmute on your phone press \*6.



Turns your video on/off



## **Zoom Etiquette**

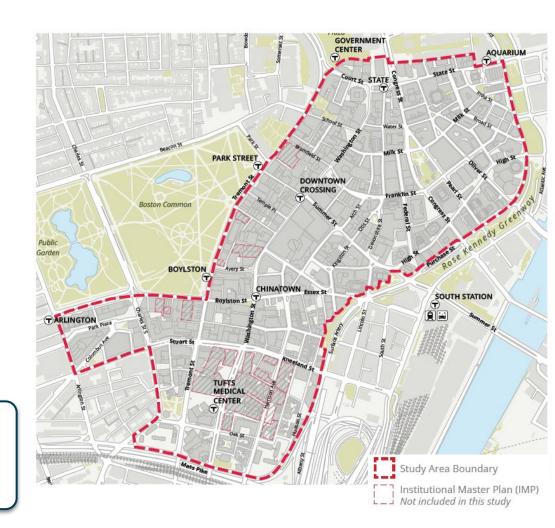
- We want to ensure that this conversation is a pleasant experience for all attendees.
- Please remain muted until called on. If you'd like to speak during this time please use the "Raise Hand" function in Zoom so a BPDA moderator can unmute attendees.
- Please be respectful of each other's time.
- We ask that participants limit their questions so that others may participate in the discussion. If you have more questions, please wait until all others attending have an opportunity to ask questions.
- If we are unable to get to your question at this meeting please put them in the Chat at the end or email <u>plandowntown@boston.gov</u>

## **Agenda**

## Public Meeting

- Welcome and timeline updates
- PLAN: Downtown report overview
  - 01 Contents
  - 02 Recommendations
  - 03 Implementation
- Next steps
- Public discussion

The PLAN: Downtown report was released on August 21st on <a href="http://bostonplans.org/PlanDowntown">http://bostonplans.org/PlanDowntown</a>.



## **Timeline**

Spring 2018 2019 2020 November 2022 all 2023 **PLAN: Downtown Begins Final Recommendations &** Scenario Planning Begins September 2018 **Study Completion** Spring 2019 计划:市中心规划开始 October 2023 方案规划开始 2019 年春季 最终建议和研究完成 2023年秋季 2020-2022 公众参与进程已 Vision, Goals, **Planning Scenario** Request for Proposals Issued Scenario & Principles Refinement May 2018 Refinement Impact Analysis 愿景、目标和指导方针 规划方案优化 发出提案要求 Fall 2019 Summer 2019 NBBJ Selected 2018年5月 方案细化 影响分析 August 2018 2019 年秋季 2019 年夏季 选择 NBBJ 2018年8月 **Preplanning: Request for Review of Past Planning & Planning Scenarios &** Scenario Refinement & ,暫停 Plan Relaunch & **Development Guidelines & Proposals & Team Selection Existing Conditions Analysis Development Options Impact Analysis** Paused Review **Zoning Recommendations** 预规划:提案要求和团队选择 过去的规划审阅和现有条件分析 规划方案和开发选项 计划重新启动和回顾 开发指导方针和分区建议 **Ongoing Public** PLAN: Downtown Kick-Off Meetings (\square) 后续公共会议 **Open House** December 3, 2018 Advisory Group 计划:市中心项目启动开放日 Ongoing Meetings 2018年12月3日 咨询委员会 后续会议 Release of the BCG Downtown **Advisory Group Kick-off Revitalization Report Downtown Office** March 7, 2019 **Conversion Study** October 27, 2022 咨询委员会启动 2019年3月 市中心办公室转换研究 **Advisory Group Nomination Process Ongoing Mobility Projects Downtown** 咨询委员会提名截止日期 2018年12月14日 Downtown Crossing Street Improvements, North Station to Seaport Multimodal Corridor, Connect Downtown, State Street Improvements

We are here!

市中心交通项目: Downtown Crossing改造, North Station 至 Seaport 多功能走廊, State Street 改造

## **Engagement**













## **Vision Statement**

Create a new framework for the growth, enhancement, and preservation 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.



## Goals



Promote dense, mixed-use development, and grow and diversify active ground-floor uses, especially legacy and small businesses.



Strengthen connections to and throughout Downtown, with a focus on active transportation, transit, and other non-vehicular modes of transportation.



**Enhance access to housing and** amenities Downtown for all levels of affordability, stages of life, and backgrounds.



Improve existing public spaces and **create new ones** that invigorate Downtown year-round.



Preserve cultural heritage, historic building fabric, and embrace distinctive histories to create a unique and cohesive Downtown.



Ensure new and existing spaces and development projects are resilient and mitigate climate change impacts.

## PLAN: Downtown **01 Contents**





## **Draft Report Release:** August 21th



### **Contents**

#### **1** Introduction

- Goals
- Planning Process
- Character Areas
- Key Demographic & Development Trends

### **2** Recommendations

Based on existing conditions analysis of challenges and opportunities facing Downtown today.

- Growth & Preservation
  - Development Framework
- Mobility
  - Street typologies, key public realm connectors, and mobility projects
- Open Space & Public Realm
  - Priority improvement projects
- Climate Resilience &
   Sustainable Development

## **3** Implementation

- Policy actions
- Design guidelines
- Zoning updates
- Downtown office conversion



## **Contents**

To fulfill community's goals, the report relies on the following components:

- Existing conditions analysis of the challenges and opportunities facing Downtown today.
- Development framework to guide growth and inform zoning updates.
- Streetscape and public realm recommendations for enhanced connectivity and public spaces that support a more vibrant, accessible, and greener Downtown.
- **Priority public realm projects** for new and enhanced public spaces.

- Policy actions that establish a coordinated approach across city departments and agencies to fulfill the PLANS goals.
- Zoning recommendations to incentivize new growth and public benefits.
- Design guidelines to ensure that new development and the public realm respect and enhance Downtown's existing urban fabric.
- Office conversion recommendations to support adaptive reuse and residential growth.

## PLAN: Downtown **02 Recommendations**



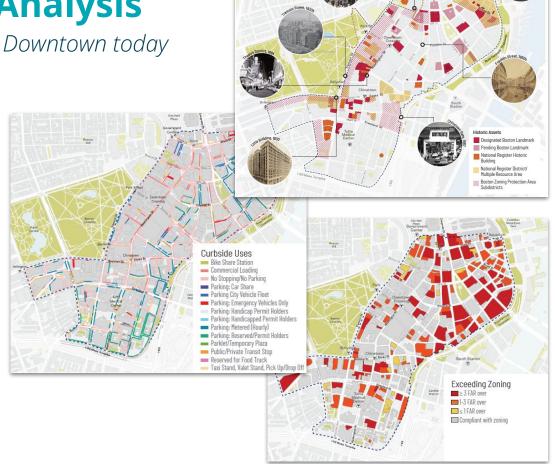


## **Existing Conditions Analysis**

Opportunities and challenges facing Downtown today

#### **Example findings:**

- Strong capacity for growth and high demand for residential development
- Struggling office market and flight to quality
- Declining affordability
- Out-of-date zoning
- Multitude of curbside uses
- Narrow sidewalks and numerous areaways
- Climate vulnerability
- Unprotected older buildings



**Development Framework** 

#### Spatial components to guide the growth of Downtown:

Growth Areas

Encourage large-scale mixed-use development opportunities that provide benefits for all of Downtown.

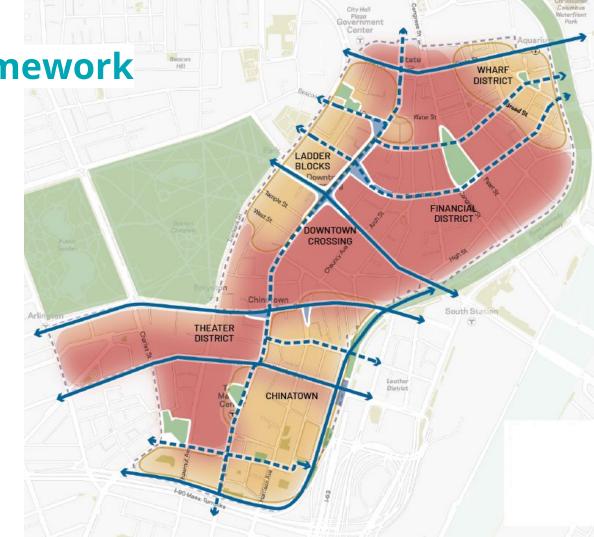
Enhance Areas

Find opportunities to improve and elevate the area while affirming its distinct historic and cultural identity.

Public Realm Connectors

Strengthen key public realm routes that connect existing public open spaces.

Public Realm Assets
Improve existing public realm spaces and identify
opportunities for new permanent and tactical public space
Downtown.



**Streetscape Recommendations** 

Create a greener and more accessible public realm network

#### **Key Public Realm Connectors:**

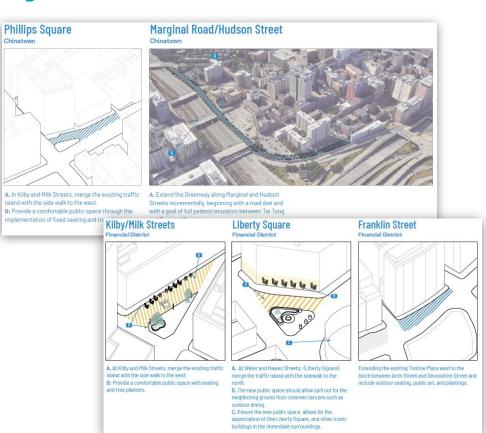
- Link to major green spaces namely, the Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston Common, and Public Garden
- Provide opportunities for "stepping stones," connecting both existing and new public open spaces
- It will be crucial to address areaways along these routes in order to enhance accessibility and green infrastructure in the areas that need it most



## **Priority Public Realm Projects**

New and enhanced public spaces

- Existing public realm improvement sites on public land such as *Eliot*Norton Park, Oxford Place Playground,
  Reader's Park, Jenny Plaza, and Custom
  House Plaza.
- Potential road diet and traffic island transformation sites such as Franklin St., Liberty Sq., and Philips Sq.
- **Potential new green edges** such as streetscape improvements and a greenway along Marginal and Hudson street.



# PLAN: DowntownO3 Implementation→ Policy Actions





## **Policy Actions**

Establish a coordinated approach across city departments and agencies to fulfill the PLANS goals.



Strengthen connections to and throughout Downtown, with a focus on active transportation, transit, and other non-vehicular modes of transportation.

floor uses, especially legacy and small businesses.

#### **Ongoing & Potential Projects**

#### Pedestrian ar



Enhance access to housing and amenities Downtown for all levels of affordability, stages of life, and backgrounds.

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- improver
- Rike Network
- Support and bike
- Support lane nety completi "Connect identified
- Offer t Continue resider goals.
  - Citywic nonprofits, and small businesses. BDPA, OEOI Seek o income
    - Expedite/streamline inspection services for first-time brickand-mortar retail businesses, BDPA, ISD, OEOI traditio limited

Incentivize the growth of a small business support program

Create low- or rent-free spaces in vacant upperfloor office

spaces, both temporarily and permanently, for startups,

that is funded by new development and redevelopment.

- Facilitate the location of short-term and temporary uses in vacant ground floor retail spaces by streamlining the permitting process for short-term occupation. BDPA, ISD, OEOI
- income Develop a new process for licensing or permitting Food & Neighb Beverage businesses to improve access for M/WBEs and firsttime brick-and-mortar businesses, advocating for change to state-level regulations as needed, BDPA, ISD, OEOI
  - Proactively engage communities throughout Downtown. informing them of economic development opportunities Downtown, via OEOI and local non-profit organizations.

- · Inventory vacant ground floor spaces at semi-annual intervals to track trends and help connect potential tenants with landlords, OEOI
- · Incentivize new uses for underutilized parking garages that create opportunities for public amenities and spaces. BDPA

Promote dense, mixed-use development, and grow and diversify active ground-

- . Encourage a diversity of uses in the Financial District by incentivizing small business, BDPA
- · Reserve space in new projects or on publicly owned parcels for rotating artists' space; spaces should include necessary infrastructure (water, electric, data) and a public-facing component (either visible from public realm or prominent signage). BDPA, MOAC
- Incentivize placement of community infrastructure such as schools, libraries, and recreation centers alongside or as part of proposed development, BDPA



## **Policy Actions** - Example actions



Promote dense, mixed-use development, and grow and diversify active ground-floor uses, especially legacy and small businesses.

- Incentivize the growth of a small business support program that is funded by new development and redevelopment.
- Create low- or rent-free spaces in vacant upper floor office spaces, both temporarily and permanently, for startups, nonprofits, and small businesses.
- Expedite/streamline inspection services for first-time brick-and-mortar retail businesses.



Enhance access to housing and amenities Downtown for all levels of affordability, stages of life, and backgrounds.

- Accelerate the permitting of income-restricted housing by prioritizing and simplifying their review and approvals including establishing streamlined procedures in Article 80 of Boston's Zoning code.
- Offer tax and fee incentives to start construction of residential projects that meet PLAN: Downtown and the City's goals.

## **Policy Actions -** *Example actions*



Improve existing public spaces and create new ones that invigorate downtown year-round.

- Create new policies around areaways to accelerate sidewalk improvements in these locations.
- Improve the public realm by revitalizing existing parks/plazas and creating new ones.
- Enhance the context around transit connections through Downtown making transit areas efficient and legible.



Strengthen connections to and throughout Downtown, with a focus on active transportation, transit, and other non-vehicular modes of transportation.

- Explore expansion of the City's Pedestrian Zone to other areas of the district.
- Develop a management regime across the Downtown area that stipulates when deliveries and servicing can occur (and via which routes).
- Advance ongoing and potential bike, bus, and rail network projects.

## **Policy Actions** - Example actions



Preserve cultural heritage, historic building fabric, and embrace distinctive histories to create a unique and cohesive Downtown.

- Support the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture in creating the Chinatown Cultural Plan
- Fund and conduct an updated survey of all buildings and historic assets in Downtown and Chinatown.
- Create a fund that new development and redevelopment projects contribute to that is allocated to cultural and community uses and organizations and to historic preservation.



Ensure new and existing spaces and development projects are resilient and mitigate climate change impacts.

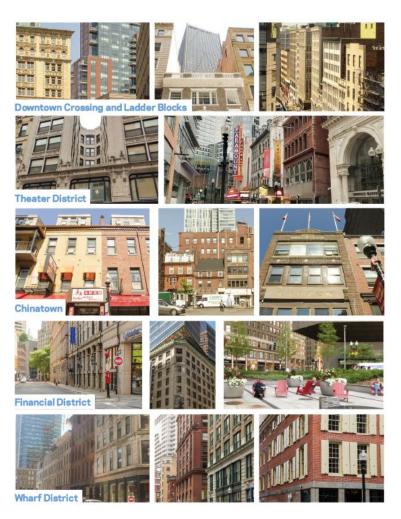
- Incentivize private investment in vulnerable historic buildings, referring to the Resilient Historic Buildings Design Guide for specific strategies.
- Support ongoing existing building performance upgrades and renovations using Boston's Retrofit Resource Hub.
- Incentivize investment in green infrastructure that addresses multiple needs, including urban heat island effects and stormwater management, as part of redevelopment and the design of capital projects.

# PLAN: Downtown O3 Implementation → Design Guidelines



Role and implementation

- Establishes the quality and character of architecture and open space
- Provides a framework for design review for City staff, as well as developers, architects, and community members
- Ensures private development and public realm projects align with PLAN: Downtown in enhancing and activating Downtown



#### The guidelines focus on 4 key areas:

- 1. Scale, Massing, & Articulation
- 2. Active Ground Floors & Loading
- 3. Public Realm
- Climate Resilience & Sustainable Development



1. Scale, Massing, & Articulation

#### 1.1 Block Size

Reduce the scale of large blocks wherever possible to maintain permeability and shape sites and buildings to respond to the prevailing scale of the area.

When possible, preserve the width of existing storefronts and retain existing buildings, or building frontages in the case where existing buildings are in poor condition.

#### 1.2 Building Massing

Shape buildings to respect the scale of the surrounding context and mitigate impacts on nearby buildings and the public realm.

Reference and respond to the height, massing, and important architectural lines of abutting buildings.

#### Design Guidelines

#### 1. Scale, Massing, & Articulation

#### 1.1 Block Size

Reduce the scale of large blocks wherever possible to maintain permeability and shape sites and buildings to respond to the prevailing scale of the area.

 When possible, preserve the width of existing storefronts and retain existing buildings, or building frontages in the case where existing buildings are in poor condition.





- Maintain existing passages and alleys or provide an interior public passage along the same or similar alignment.
- Seize site design opportunities for both buildings and the public realm to celebrate and reinforce alignments and irregularities in downtown's historic urban fabric.
- Site and building design should establish, respect, or enhance mid-block open space.

Chinatown: Include mid-block open space when developing existing surface car parking lots in Chinatown.

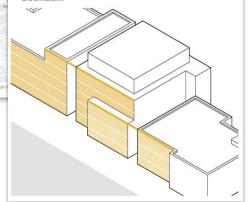
 Provide new streets, mid-block alleys, pedestrian paths, courtyards, and plazas that connect with other streets and public or common open spaces.

Downtown and Theater District: In the case of re-development, find longterm opportunities for new mid-block connections and exterior pedestrian routes with respect to Lafayette Place and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation building.

#### 1.2 Building Massing

Shape buildings to respect the scale of the surrounding context and mitigate impacts on nearby buildings and the public realm.

 Reference and respond to the height, massing, and important architectural lines of abutting buildings. Particular attention should be paid to the base or first 5 to 6 stories of abutting buildings in the Ladder Blocks, Wharf District, and Chinatown.



### 2. Active Ground Floors & Loading

#### 2.1/2.2 Active Uses & Building Entrances

Design ground floors to include and feature active ground floor uses that support pedestrian-oriented activity and serve the local community and Downtown visitors.

#### 2.4 Parking Access, Loading, Service

Minimize the impact of parking access, loading, and service areas on the public realm, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian circulation by minimizing the size and number of cuts. Wherever feasible, locate parking access and loading on side streets or, preferably, alleyways, away from primary streets.

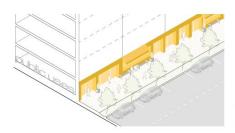
#### **Design Guidelines**

#### 2. Active Ground Floors & Loading

#### 2.1 Active Uses

Design ground floors to include and feature active ground floor uses that support pedestrian-oriented activity and serve the local community and Downtown visitors.

- a. Active and public uses include, but are not limited to: retail, creative workspaces, small enterprise businesses, cultural venues and institutions, services for the public, and community spaces.
- b. Designing for and providing space (especially small scale affordable commercial space) to small, locally-owned, and diverse-owned businesses is
- c. Publicly accessible, active ground floor uses should be available on every block that is not service-oriented, and placed as frequently as possible to support a diversity of experiences.

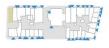


- Maximize the transparency of ground floor commercial facades such as with operable windows and take clues from adjacent older storefronts in terms of fenestration, signage location and doorways.
- e. Orient and integrate courts, entries, lobbies, large windows and balconies to face streets, public parks, plazas and open spaces to provide more opportunity for safety and interaction.
- Ensure privacy to ground floor residential units either through raising the

#### fronta 2.2 Building Entrances

Locate primary building entries on active primary streets and oriented to the public







Wharf District



#### 3 Public Realm

#### 3.1 Public Realm Activation

Wherever possible enhance and expand the public realm and create publicly accessible permanent or temporary open space that activates the streetscape and promotes use year-round.

#### 3.2 Public Art

Find opportunities to include public art and integrate features that highlight the history and culture of local communities.

Incorporate art, murals, and local artifacts as key public features, located with attention to visibility.

#### **Design Guidelines**

#### 3. Public Realm

#### 3.1 Public Realm Activation

Wherever possible enhance and expand the public realm and create publicly accessible permanent or temporary open space that activates the streetscape and promotes use year-round

- a. Design elements to maximize physical comfort. Consider solar orientation, shade, wind, light levels, flood protection throughout all seasons.
- b. Encourage a variety of shading and rain protection structures in places with high solar exposure, especially where tree planting is less viable.
- c. Utilize flexible furniture and seating paired with building awnings and plantings
- Program privately-owned public spaces such as dining and cafe seating to



#### 3.2 Public Art

Find opportunities to include public art and integrate features that highlight the history and culture of local communities.

a. Incorporate art, murals, and local artifacts as key public features, located with attention to visibility.

Chinatown: Work with the Chinatown community organizations and artists to identify opportunities for the integration of public art that highlights the history and culture of Chinatown.



"Where We Belang" mural in Chinatown by Promaga Prakkamaku

#### 3. Climate Resilience & Sustainable Development

#### **4.1 Existing Standards**

Adhere to existing green building and sustainable and resilient development standards such as: Zero Net Carbon (ZNC) policy and standards, Smart Utilities Policy (BSU), Coastal Flood Resilience Design Guidelines

#### 4.2 Design Standards

Buildings should mitigate energy needs and be designed to prepare for, easily recover from, and adapt to site-relevant climate hazards.

#### **Design Guidelines**

#### 4. Sustainability & Climate Resilience

#### 4.1 Existing Standards

Adhere to existing green building and sustainable and resilient development standards including:

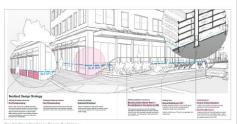
- Article 37 of the Boston Zoning Code sustainability standards and LEED rating system (required for all buildings subject to Article 80)
- Zero Net Carbon (ZNC) policy and standards
- Smart Utilities Policy (BSU)
- Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO) (required for all building >20,000 sf)
- Zero Waste Boston Initiative
- Heat Resilience Solutions For Boston Plan
- · Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (where applicable)
- · Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District (as codified in Article 25A)
- · Coastal Flood Resilience Design Guidelines
- · Mayor's Office of Housing Design Standards
- · City of Boston Green Infrastructure Standards
- · Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook and Stormwater Standards



#### 4.2 Design Strategies

Buildings should mitigate energy needs and be designed to prepare for, easily recover from, and adapt to site-relevant climate hazards:

- Flat roofs should have a Solar Reflective Index\*\* of 78 or greater
- Buildings should have green, white, and/or blue roofs to minimze heat island effect and stormwater impact
- Vegetate as much as possible available open space including roofs, balconies, and stephacks
- Implement Cool Wall facades when possible. "Cool-wall material" must be
  opaque to sunlight, exhibit an initial solar reflectance of at least 0.80, and
  exhibit an initial thermal emittance of at least 0.75. (LEED v4.1 Heat Island
  Mitigation via cool walls pilot credit)
- Include building projections, shading devices, canopies, and overhangs (that do not interfere with tree plantings) to decrease cooling loads and solar heat gain



Coastal Flood Resilience Design Guidelines

# PLAN: DowntownO3 Implementation→ Zoning Updates





## **Zoning Updates**

#### **New District Boundaries**

- Create new sub-districts that more closely reflect Downtown character area boundaries as defined by the community.
- Continue the Chinatown zoning process, building on the findings of PLAN: Downtown and the Chinatown Cultural Plan.

#### **Height and density**

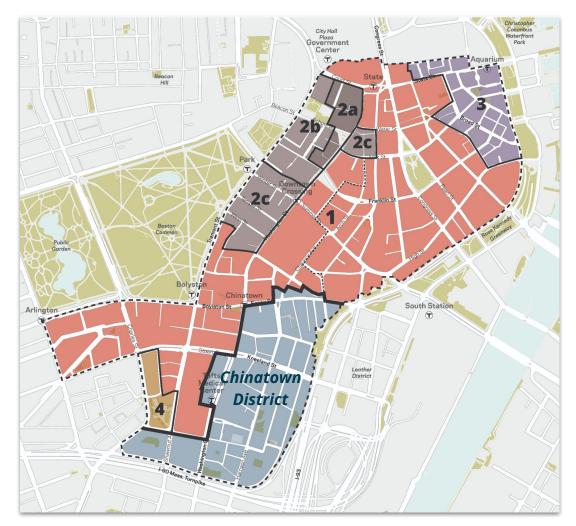
- Change as-of-right heights to match the scale of Downtown's character areas.
- Allow taller bonus-heights where density is most appropriate and transitions from high to low areas.
- Require a floor plate reduction for buildings exceeding the height of the surrounding context to reduce the visual impact of taller buildings on the public realm.

#### Uses

- Create zoning pathways to streamline residential development, particularly affordable residential development, within Downtown through the office conversion program, the height-bonus program, and base zoning changes.
- Refine inconsistent and prohibitive use definitions in the zoning code to lower barriers for diverse retail, services, and entertainment uses especially on ground floors.
- Ensure existing theaters continue to be prioritized in zoning and development review.

#### Height-bonus program

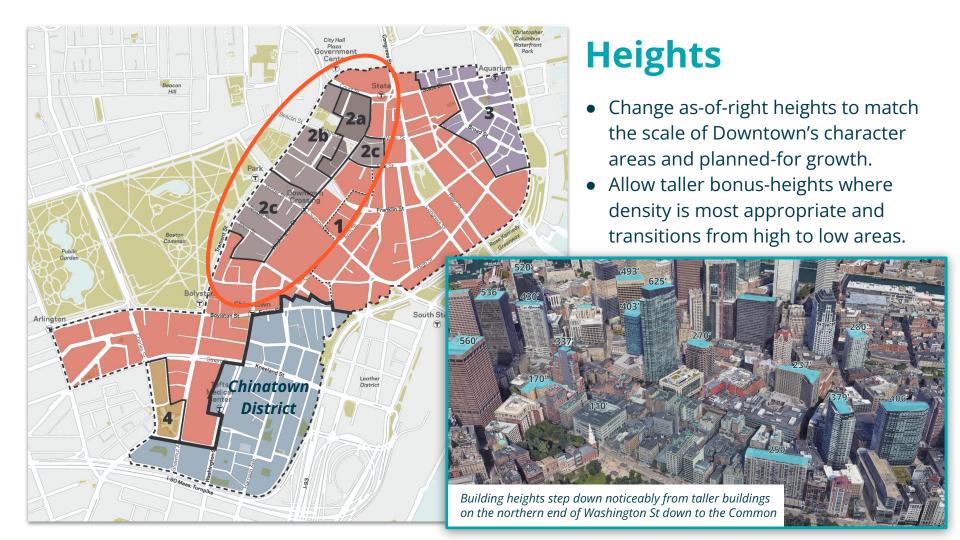
 Implement a height-bonus program and public benefit system that streamlines project mitigation, incentivizes mixed-use development where it is most appropriate, and directly funds priority public projects outlined in PLAN: Downtown.

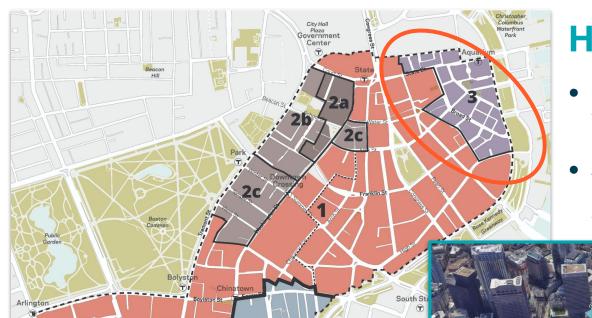


## New district boundaries

- New Downtown sub-districts:
  - Downtown Crossing, Theatre District, and Financial District
  - 2. Ladder Blocks
  - 3. Wharf District
  - 4. Bay Village
- Chinatown District: Continue the zoning process to align with the ongoing Chinatown Cultural Plan and address complex use questions in the zoning code.





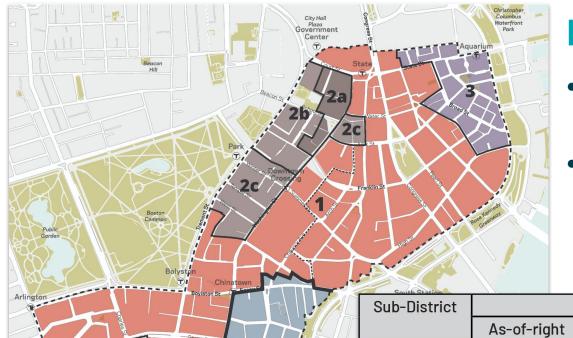


Chinatown District Leather District

## Heights

- Change as-of-right heights to match the scale of Downtown's character areas and planned-for growth.
- Allow taller bonus-heights where density is most appropriate and transitions from high to low areas.





Chinatown **District** 

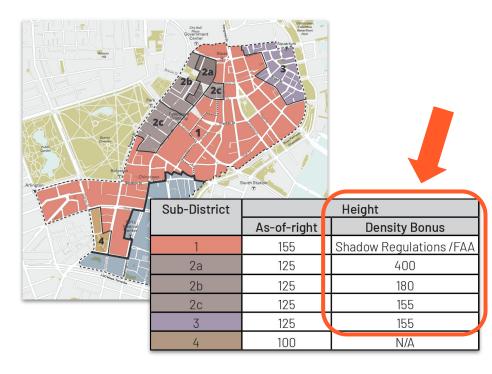
## Heights

- Change as-of-right heights to match the scale of Downtown's character areas and planned-for growth.
- Allow taller bonus-heights where density is most appropriate and transitions from high to low areas.

Sub-District	Height	
	As-of-right	Density Bonus
1	155	Shadow Regulations /FAA
2a	125	400
2b	125	180
2c	125	155
3	125	155
4	100	N/A

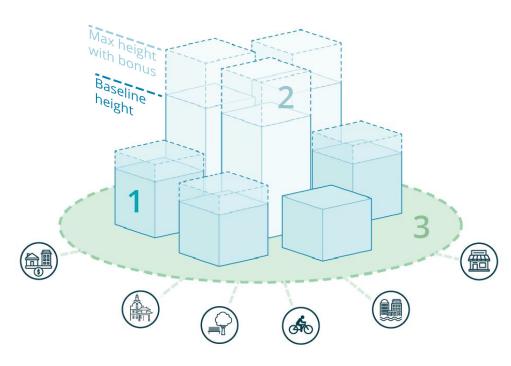
## **Height-bonus Program**

- Incentivizes mixed-use development where it is most appropriate, especially residential development.
- Directly funds priority public projects outlined in PLAN: Downtown that not one project can solve.
- Streamlines project mitigation and creates a more predictable development process that can address long-standing needs Downtown.
- Does not exceed Federal Aviation
   Administration height limits, and State shadow laws that prohibit new shadows on the Boston Common and the Public Garden at certain times of day.



## **Height-bonus Program**

- **1. New baseline heights** match the character of an area.
- 2. Developers can add density up to an established maximum building height in exchange for a predictable contribution to a public benefit fund.
- 3. The public benefit fund will be used to directly support projects and programs that benefit Downtown and Chinatown.



## **Use recommendations**

Existing use definitions and categories in the zoning code are often inconsistent and prohibitive, creating obstacles for retail and entertainment businesses that could help revitalize and activate Downtown.

#### **Use changes will:**

- Consolidate and simplify uses so we do not restrict innovative uses
- Allow more uses, particularly entertainment, retail, and cultural uses
- Streamline the code to make it more user friendly

#### 4 main use categories

#### Allowed:

- Ex: Residential Uses; Restaurant and Entertainment Uses; Office; Hotel or Motel...
- Ground Level and Cultural Uses: Bakeries and pastry shops; Clock sales or repair shops...

#### • Conditional:

Ex: Residential; Fast food restaurants;
 Transportation uses...

#### Forbidden:

Any use not included in "Allowed uses"



## **Existing Use Restrictions**

200+ Allowed Uses

112 Ground Floor Uses and YET...

Uses like yoga studios are still forbidden

#### **Allowed Ground Floor Uses:**

- Carpet, rug, linoleum, or other floor covering stores
- Fishing tackle or equipment sales, or rental establishments
- Lamp shops
- Millinery shops

#### **Conditional**

Take-out (like ice cream)

#### **Forbidden Ground Floor Uses:**

- Gym
- Escape room
- Yoga studio
- Brewery/Distillery

## **Existing Use Restrictions**

24 small businesses were selected for the first round of S.P.A.C.E. Grants:

- (4) Fitness/Wellness
- (4) Creative Economy

1/3 of S.P.A.C.E. grantees might need zoning variances.

## S.P.A.C.E. GRANTS

The City is working to identify creative ways to bring people back to commercial districts to revitalize our local economy. We are seeking to fill vacant storefronts and help small business owners secure new storefront space or expand to a space by subsidizing the costs associated with operating expenses.

# PLAN: DowntownO3 Implementation→ Office Conversion

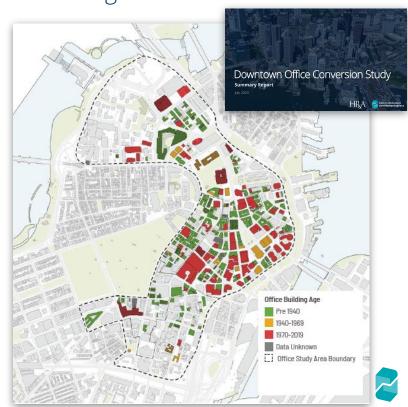




### **Office Conversion**

Advance sustainable development and create more housing in the urban core

- Ladder Blocks, Financial District, and Wharf
   District have a high concentration of potentially
   viable office buildings based on their physical
   attributes.
- The Financial District has the greatest need for more diverse mix of uses to activate the area.
- A combination of tools are needed to encourage conversion and overcome its immense financial and physical challenges, such as:
  - Tax tools reducing property taxes for a period following conversion.
  - Process tools lower barriers for conversions with expedited approvals and development process improvements.



# **Next Steps**



## **Next Steps**

- **Draft PLAN: Downtown release:** August 21, 2023
  - <u>http://bostonplans.org/PlanDowntown</u>
- **Public Meeting:** Draft Plan Overview *August 24, 2023*
- Public comment period until: September 18, 2023
  - Survey Feedback form: <u>https://forms.gle/NnctcVMxPQtAsNC58</u>
- Public Meeting: Final Plan Release & Draft Zoning Early October 2023

## **Public Discussion**



## **Policy Actions**

Establish a coordinated approach across city departments and agencies to fulfill the PLANS goals.



Ensure new and existing spaces and development projects are resilient and mitigate climate change impacts.



Improve existing public spaces and create new ones that invigorate downtown vear-round.



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Strengthen connections to and throughout Downtown, with a focus on active transportation, transit, and other non-vehicular modes of transportation.



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Preserve cultural heritage, historic building fabric, and embrace distinctive histories to create a unique and cohesive Downtown.



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Enhance access to housing and amenities Downtown for all levels of affordability, stages of life, and backgrounds.



Promote dense, mixed-use development, and grow and diversify active groundfloor uses, especially legacy and small businesses.

- Incentivize the growth of a small business support program that is funded by new development and redevelopment.
- Continu Create low- or rent-free spaces in vacant upperfloor office of new spaces, both temporarily and permanently, for startups, Citywic nonprofits, and small businesses, BDPA, OEOI
- Seek o Expedite/streamline inspection services for first-time brickincome and-mortar retail businesses. BDPA, ISD, OEO traditio
- limited Facilitate the location of short-term and temporary uses in vacant ground floor retail spaces by streamlining the Contin permitting process for short-term occupation, BDPA, ISD, OEOI of hous
  - Develop a new process for licensing or permitting Food & Beverage businesses to improve access for M/WBEs and firsttime brick-and-mortar businesses, advocating for change to state-level regulations as needed. BDPA, ISD, OEO
  - Proactively engage communities throughout Downtown, informing them of economic development apportunities Downtown, via OEOI and local non-profit organizations. BDPA, OEOI

- Inventory vacant ground floor spaces at semi-annual intervals to track trends and help connect potential tenants with
- Incentivize new uses for underutilized parking garages that create opportunities for public amenities and spaces, BDP/
- Encourage a diversity of uses in the Financial District by incentivizing small business. BDPA
- · Reserve space in new projects or on publicly owned parcels for rotating artists' space; spaces should include necessary infrastructure (water, electric, data) and a public-facing component (either visible from public realm or prominent signage), BDPA, MOAG
- Incentivize placement of community infrastructure such as schools, libraries, and recreation centers alongside or as part of proposed development, BDPA