

PLAN: Mattapan



boston planning &
development agency

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The Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA)

The Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) is the planning and economic development agency for the City of Boston. The BPDA plans and guides inclusive growth in our city - creating opportunities for everyone to live, work and connect. Through our future-focused, city-wide lens, we engage communities, implement new solutions, partner for greater impact and track progress.

The information provided in this report is the best available at the time of its publication.

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For more information about PLAN: Mattapan please visit <http://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/plan-mattapan>



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Acknowledgments

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 Aimee Chambers, *Director of Planning*
 Kennan Rhyne, *Deputy Director of Downtown and Neighborhood Planning*
 Kathleen Onufer, *Assistant Deputy Director of Downtown and Neighborhood Planning*

Project Team

Kenya Beaman, *Community Engagement Manager*
 Adam Johnson, *Urban Designer*
 Adriana Lasso-Harrier, *Planner*
 Matt Martin, *Senior Urban Designer*
 Cyrus Miceli, *Planning Assistant*
 Grace Ng, *Landscape Architect*
 Pratraap Patrose, *Senior Advisor for Long-Term Planning*
 Sam Roy, *Senior Transportation Planner*
 Nick Schmidt, *Senior Transportation Planner*
 Kenya Thompson, *Urban Designer*
 Jill Zick, *Senior Landscape Architect*

Former Team Members

Lauren Shurtleff, *Director of Planning*
 Anna Callahan, *Planner*
 Rosa Herrero de Andres, *Senior Planner*
 Jared Staley, *Planner*
 Müge Ündemir, *Senior Planner*

Interdepartmental Working Group

Boston Transportation Department
 Charlotte Fleetwood
 Hannah Fong
 Kirstie Hostetter
 John Monacelli
 Matthew Moran
 Jen Rowe
 Stephanie Seskin

Department of Parks & Recreation

Liza Meyer
 Paul Sutton

Department of Public Works

Jeffrey Alexis

Disabilities Commission

Sarah Leung

Economic Opportunity and Inclusion Cabinet

Andrew Grace
 Segun Idowu
 Aliesha Porcena
 Duamarius Stukes

Mayor's Office of Arts & Culture

Melissa Meyer
 Jared Staley

Mayor's Office of Housing

Chana Haouzi
 Jay Lee
 Julio Pilier
 Alexander Sturke

Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services

Eric James

Office of Historic Preservation

Joseph Bagley
 Joseph Cornish
 Jennifer Gaugler

Community Groups & Advocates

Caribbean Integration Community Development
 Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council
 Haitian Americans United
 Mattapan Main Streets
 Mattapan Neighborhood Associations
 Powerful Pathways
 Ruth Georges

Elected Officials

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Executive Summary

PLAN: Mattapan is a City planning initiative that seeks to craft an equitable, community-driven future for Mattapan.

Guided by a multi-year participatory process that launched in 2018, PLAN: Mattapan lays out a carefully considered, comprehensive vision that aligns future growth and investment with community values and identity.

Over the course of more than 150 community meetings, Mattapan residents and community stakeholders worked alongside the planning team to craft a vision and goals for their neighborhood's future and establish recommendations for how to achieve these goals.

“Preserve, enhance, grow.”

For centuries, Mattapan has been a place where families plant roots, dating back to the Pre-Colonial Era when the Mattahunt Tribe settled along the banks of the Neponset River. It's also a neighborhood that has welcomed generations of immigrant families, and today Mattapan is home to one of Boston's largest Caribbean populations. Yet, even though Mattapan has offered stable futures to generations of Bostonians—and is the neighborhood with the highest rate of Black homeownership in Boston—it still faces serious social and economic disparities, many of which are rooted in historic racial inequity.

With Mattapan's past and present in mind, PLAN: Mattapan seeks to chart a more equitable future for the neighborhood in the years to come. In particular, PLAN: Mattapan focuses on ways to increase generational wealth, address historic inequities, and avoid displacing existing residents. The result is a Plan that is guided by the principles of “preserve, enhance, grow.” These principles help ensure that existing residents and beloved community institutions will always have a home in Mattapan. They also help outline how the neighborhood can equitably grow over the coming years and how residents' quality of life can be enhanced through better access to jobs, transit, neighborhood amenities, and other important services. Importantly, PLAN: Mattapan outlines how Mattapan can eventually transform into a 10-minute neighborhood: a community where residents can access essential goods, services, open spaces, and transit options within a 10-minute walk of their home.

PLAN: Mattapan's recommendations are guided by a central **vision statement**, which was crafted by Mattapan residents and other stakeholders. PLAN: Mattapan will strengthen the existing culture and stability of the community through recommendations related to five planning topic areas: **Equity & Environmental Justice**, **Housing**, **Mobility**, **Jobs & Businesses**, and **People & Places**.

PLAN: Mattapan Vision Statement

PLAN: Mattapan envisions a future where:

- Existing Mattapan residents are **stable in their homes** and new residents have **affordable housing options**
- Mattapan residents have **safe and reliable transit connections** to jobs, schools, and community spaces in Mattapan and throughout Boston
- **Mattapan Square** and other neighborhood nodes are home to **vibrant, thriving local businesses and cultural spaces** that reflect the needs of residents and uphold neighborhood identity

Equity & Environmental Justice

PLAN: Mattapan aims to improve residents' quality of life, promote healthy environments, and prepare for climate change. Recommendations include measures to preserve and grow Mattapan's urban tree canopy and enhance green infrastructure (i.e. permeable pavers, rain gardens, native plant species) through strengthened public realm guidelines and lot coverage requirements. It also outlines safer, more accessible bike and pedestrian connections to Mattapan's open spaces through improvements to Boston's Green Links.

Housing

PLAN: Mattapan encourages affordable, stable, and diverse housing to reduce displacement and maintain homeownership levels. Recommendations include expanding multifamily residential zoning and dimensional regulations in transit-oriented areas like Blue Hill Ave and Morton Street, and requiring greater affordability for projects that meet a bonus density threshold. PLAN: Mattapan also outlines a new Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) policy, to allow for the construction of new, detached backyard structures to increase generational wealth and make space for multigenerational living.

Mobility

PLAN: Mattapan will guide increased access to high-quality travel options, supporting safe and reliable connections within Mattapan and the rest of the City. Recommendations include improved bus and rail networks that can make transit travel more reliable and provide more direct access to jobs, schools, and other important destinations on Blue Hill Avenue, Cummins Highway, Morton Street, and River Street and beyond. The PLAN also recommends improvements to bike/pedestrian infrastructure to facilitate safer travel to neighborhood destinations and implementing slow street design and infrastructure in localized high-crash areas and across the neighborhood in new development.

Jobs & Businesses

PLAN: Mattapan will drive inclusive economic growth through support for local business and increased access to jobs within and outside Mattapan. The PLAN recommends that Mattapan's local business scene is amplified by the development of in-demand commercial like sit-down restaurants and event venues, and that transformative growth in Mattapan Square is supported by new and existing City programs that target historic disinvestment, absentee property owners, and improvements to the public realm. It is also recommended that mixed-use development be prioritized within Mattapan's commercial nodes (such as Mattapan Square and the River Street Shopping Center) and along corridors like Blue Hill Ave and River Street.

People & Places

PLAN: Mattapan envisions new art and cultural projects that celebrate Mattapan's identity and encourage a welcoming public realm. Recommendations include the adoption of design guidelines to promote active ground floor uses, programming, and human-centered streetscapes

along corridors and within nodes, as well as encouraging new developments to support community-based arts programming and the creation or restoration of public art that celebrates Mattapan's unique history. PLAN: Mattapan also recommends the implementation of modest zoning changes, mobility improvements, and public realm activation strategies to transform Mattapan into a 10-minute neighborhood.



Children play in Almont Park (photo by Ed Wonek).

How to Use PLAN: Mattapan

PLAN: Mattapan is not just a vision for Mattapan's future, it's also a call to action. It is the responsibility of the Boston Planning & Development Agency, the City of Boston, and other public entities to adhere to the recommendations in this document, while working closely with the Mattapan community to ensure that the goals and recommendations outlined in this PLAN are relevant to the community's needs over the coming years. While some of the recommendations will require more time and inter-agency collaboration (i.e. MBTA, MassDOT), PLAN: Mattapan will be the basis for new programs and policies in the neighborhood. Private entities, particularly real estate developers, should refer to and comply with the recommendations in PLAN: Mattapan. For more information on implementation and evaluation of PLAN: Mattapan and its recommendations, including current initiatives that have been implemented as a result of the planning process, turn to Chapter 6.

PLAN: Mattapan Study Area and Proposed Zoning

The following map shows the proposed zoning changes discussed in PLAN: Mattapan. Neighborhood zoning provides the foundation for sustainable, community-centered development that will support equitable growth in Mattapan. Zoning changes are mostly focused in expanding opportunities for local business and affordable, multi-family residential development, as well as creating new opportunities for small-scale, local business to be situated closer to residents' doors. These zoning changes are the first, critical step in transforming Mattapan into a 10-minute neighborhood, a community where residents can access essential goods, services, open spaces, and transit options within a 10-minute walk of their home.

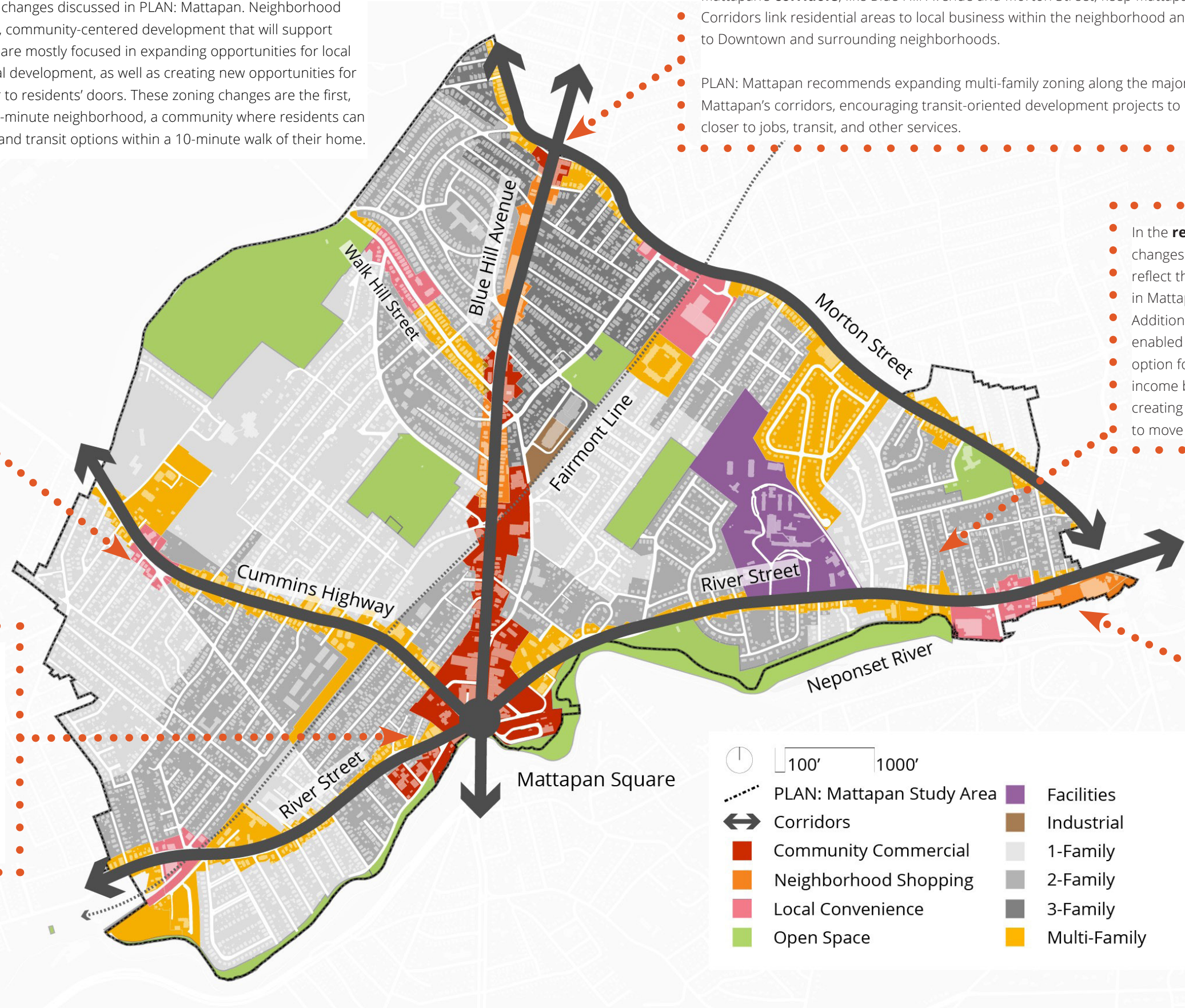
- Mattapan's **corridors**, like Blue Hill Avenue and Morton Street, keep Mattapan moving.
- Corridors link residential areas to local business within the neighborhood and support travel to Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
- PLAN: Mattapan recommends expanding multi-family zoning along the majority of Mattapan's corridors, encouraging transit-oriented development projects to locate people closer to jobs, transit, and other services.

- Mattapan's residents should have access to essential goods and services, such as markets, daycares, or laundromats, within a 10-minute walk from their doorsteps.
- PLAN: Mattapan recommends the introduction of new zoning that will allow local business to be developed **closer to residential areas**, creating future commercial areas outside Mattapan Square.

- In the **residential fabric**, future zoning changes and infill development will reflect the existing built form and use in Mattapan, whether 1-, 2-, or 3-family.
- Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) will be enabled to be built as-of-right, offering an option for homeowners to generate extra income by creating a rental apartment or creating extra space for family members to move nearby.

- **Mattapan Square** is the cultural and economic heart of the neighborhood. It features a bustling transit hub and a mix commercial spaces.
- PLAN: Mattapan recommends modest zoning changes to height, density, open space, and other requirements that will allow a mix of commercial and residential uses to flourish in Mattapan Square.

- Corridors like River Street play a crucial role in linking Mattapan residents to essential business. Creating new opportunities for local business to be **located along corridors** will allow residents to get the goods and services they need, right in their neighborhood.



01. Why PLAN: Mattapan?


PLAN: Mattapan is a City planning initiative that seeks to ensure an equitable and community-driven future for Mattapan. Through the three guiding principles of “preserve, enhance, and grow,” the City’s planning team has worked with the community to create a comprehensive vision for Mattapan and guide future growth and investment.

In this section, learn more about:

Why We’re Planning
(Section 1.1)

PLAN Vision, Goals, and Recommendations
(Section 1.2)

Previous and Concurrent Planning
(Section 1.3)



PLAN: Mattapan establishes a vision with more small and local businesses throughout the neighborhood.

1.1 Why We're Planning

PLAN: Mattapan's vision for the neighborhood's future is grounded in its past and present as it charts a more equitable future.

Mattapan today is at a critical moment. It features a thriving culture, a strong fabric of homeowners and residents, and lush natural resources and open spaces. But the neighborhood still faces economic and social disparities. When compared to the City of Boston as a whole, residents of Mattapan earn less money, travel longer to work, and have poorer health outcomes.

Mattapan is a majority Black/African American neighborhood—68 percent of neighborhood residents identify as Black/African American¹. More than a third (34 percent) of residents are foreign-born¹. The most common country of origin for foreign-born residents is Haiti. These communities make up Mattapan's rich cultural fabric, leading major community events such as the Haitian-American Unity Parade, #MattapanLove, and the Mattapan Jazz Fest.

Mattapan's median household income is one the lowest in Boston. The median household income in Mattapan is about \$17,700 less than the median family income in Boston as a whole¹. In addition, 43 percent of homes in Mattapan are valued at less than \$400,000 compared to 23 percent of homes in Boston. Even with low home values, the low incomes and purchasing power in Mattapan contribute to the elevated risks of displacement that 39 percent of renters and 33 percent of homeowners in Mattapan face².

Mattapan has a wealth of open space resources, from community parks to Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) parks to urban wilds. Although its open space ratio of 6.38 acres per thousand residents is slightly lower than the City average of 7.64 acres per thousand residents, Mattapan is still one of the top 5 greenest neighborhoods in Boston³. Yet, residents still face adverse environmental health impacts, such as asthma, due to factors like air pollution and significant dependence on cars for commuting. Lack of tree coverage and substantial paved

areas along major neighborhood corridors contribute to an urban heat island effect, which occurs when the temperature is perceived to be much higher in unshaded areas than in areas that are well-shaded by trees. These climate impacts are a threat to the health and well-being of the Mattapan community.

Mattapan residents have the longest commute times compared to other neighborhoods in Boston. Residents also use private vehicles at a higher rate for commuting, with 62 percent of Mattapan residents commuting by car compared to 46 percent of City of Boston residents⁴. Access to mobility options—transit, bikeshare, and car share—in Mattapan is limited and transit trips often require a connecting bus ride. Physical barriers, like the Fairmount Line and Neponset River, limit route options within the neighborhood, which can result in indirect and sometimes uncomfortable walking and biking trips to open spaces and commercial nodes.

The Plan documents Mattapan's priorities and its vision for the future to proactively shape development and investment when it comes to the neighborhood. This document confirms and reiterates the relevant recommendations from past plans to emphasize their importance and spur movement toward implementation. PLAN: Mattapan also clearly identifies, as appropriate, changes to land use, zoning, public realm, mobility, and community benefits from future development.

¹ Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census, 2016-2020 American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis
² Source: Income-Restricted Housing Inventory (as of 12/31/18), Department of Neighborhood Development; American Community Survey 2017 5-Year Estimates (Table B25118); HUD Housing Choice Voucher data (updated Dec 2017)
³ Source: Boston Parks & Recreation, 2015-2021 Open Space Plan

⁴ Source: American Community Survey, 2013-2017 BPDA Research Division Analysis

Mattapan at a Glance (2022)

68%

of Mattapan is Black and/or African American

34%

of the neighborhood is foreign-born or non-US Citizen

43%

of homes in Mattapan are valued less than \$400k (23% in Boston)

39%

of renters are at an elevated risk of displacement (33% of homeowners)

\$17.7k

the gap in median family income between Mattapan and Boston

\$251k

the gap in additional funding needed to develop a 2-bedroom unit at 70% AMI* in Mattapan

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census, 2016-2020 American Community Survey, BPDA Research Division Analysis
 *Area Median Income (AMI) is a metric established by the Federal government and indicates the median household income for the Boston Metro area

1.2 PLAN Vision, Goals, and Recommendations

Planning recommendations found in this document are guided by a central vision statement, which was crafted by Mattapan residents and other community stakeholders.

PLAN: Mattapan Vision Statement

PLAN: Mattapan envisions a future where:

- Existing Mattapan residents are **stable in their homes** and new residents have **affordable housing options**
- Mattapan residents have **safe and reliable transit connections** to jobs, schools, and community spaces in Mattapan and throughout Boston
- Mattapan Square** and other neighborhood nodes are home to **vibrant, thriving local businesses and cultural spaces** that reflect the needs of residents and uphold neighborhood identity

Recommendations are also organized by five planning topic areas and their respective goals, which are all critical components for Mattapan’s future. These planning topic areas are **Equity & Environmental Justice, Housing, Mobility, Jobs & Businesses, and People & Places.**

The planning topic areas, goals, and major recommendations discussed in PLAN: Mattapan are outlined on the following page.

Children share their ideas on the future of Mattapan at a 2019 visioning workshop.



Equity & Environmental Justice:

PLAN: Mattapan aims to improve residents’ quality of life, promote healthy environments, and prepare for climate change.

Preserve, protect, and grow Mattapan’s urban tree canopy through enhanced public realm guidelines; trees play a critical role in the reducing extreme heat and urban heat island effect.

Install green infrastructure (i.e. permeable pavers, rain gardens, and planting native plant species) within streets to help manage stormwater and reduce irrigation needs.

Introduce lot coverage requirements to key zoning subdistricts to reduce impervious surfaces, promote additional plantings, and create space to better transition between future development and the existing residential fabric.

Housing:

PLAN: Mattapan encourages affordable, stable, and diverse housing to reduce displacement and maintain homeownership levels.

Expand current Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) policy to allow for the construction of new, detached backyard structures and community-approved 2-4 unit infill developments for vacant abutter or city-owned lots.

Expand residential zoning and dimensional regulations in transit-oriented areas to accommodate more housing, including universally designed and ADA-accessible units for all ages.

Require greater affordability for projects that meet a bonus density threshold.

Mobility:

PLAN: Mattapan will guide increased access to high-quality travel options, supporting safer and more reliable connections within Mattapan and to the rest of the City.

Eliminate physical barriers and link people to neighborhood commercial centers, open spaces, and other destinations with safer, more comfortable, and greener connections to make walking and biking realistic options for more people.

Expand access to travel options, reduce the number of transfers, and separate buses from traffic to make walking, biking, and transit the convenient choice for more trips.

Redesign high-crash intersections and streets using design tools that result in safer speeds, safer turns, and safer crossings.

Jobs & Business:

PLAN: Mattapan will drive inclusive economic growth through support for local business and increased access to jobs within and outside Mattapan.

Support the growth of Mattapan’s local business scene by fostering the development of in-demand commercial types, like sit-down restaurants, music and event venues, and more.

Prioritize mixed-use development by strategically rezoning commercial areas and community-identified neighborhood nodes to accommodate a variety of business types.

Emphasize Mattapan Square as a place to be with investments in the public realm and local business scene.

People & Places:

PLAN: Mattapan envisions new art and cultural projects that celebrate Mattapan’s identity and encourage a welcoming public realm.

Implement modest zoning changes, mobility improvements, and public realm activation strategies to transform Mattapan into a 10-minute neighborhood; a community where residents can access essential goods, services, open spaces, and transit options within a 10-minute walk of their home.

Adopt design guidelines to promote active ground floor uses and programming (i.e. outdoor cafes, street furniture), and human-centered streetscapes.

Encourage new developments to support community-based arts programming and the creation and restoration of public art that celebrates Mattapan’s unique history and sense of place.

1.3 Previous and Concurrent Planning

PLAN: Mattapan builds upon a long history of planning in the neighborhood, recognizing the considerable time, energy, and thought that residents put into these past efforts.

The following documents were instrumental in establishing a foundation for PLAN: Mattapan. The recommendations in this document are meant to work in concert with the recommendations laid out in these plans. In addition, the planning team coordinated with its partners across the City of Boston, the Commonwealth, and leaders within the community.

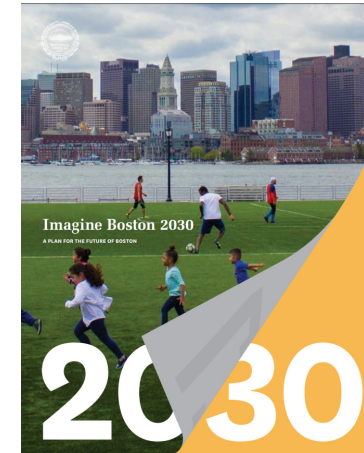


Mattapan Economic Development Initiative (MEDI)
 The *Mattapan Economic Development Initiative (MEDI)* (2004-2006) focused primarily on Mattapan’s economy and business development and established an overall vision for its commercial nodes and corridors. While the plan addresses three focus areas—Mattapan Square, Morton Street Village, and Blue Hill Center—heavy emphasis was placed on Mattapan Square as the neighborhood’s primary commercial and gateway center.

The *MEDI* identified a lack of commercial diversity in Mattapan’s business districts and recommended street improvements to increase public safety. The Boston Transportation Department (BTD) is working to redesign Mattapan Square and Blue Hill Avenue to create a safer pedestrian environment through *Vision Zero*. PLAN: Mattapan recommends additional changes to help diversify Mattapan’s commercial corridors and nodes and to create a pleasant pedestrian experience in these commercial corridors.



Fairmount-indigo Planning Initiative: Blue Hill Avenue/ Cummins Highway Station Area Plan (FIPI)
 The *Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative: Blue Hill Avenue/ Cummins Highway Station Area Plan (FIPI)* developed short and long term strategies for capital investment, public realm, and job access. This plan envisioned Blue Hill Avenue/Cummins Highway as a safe and walkable community with high quality residential neighborhoods, a vital commercial and cultural district at Mattapan Square, excellent transit access, and affordability.



Imagine Boston 2030
Imagine Boston 2030 is the first citywide comprehensive planning document for the City of Boston in over 50 years. It is the guiding document for all PLAN initiatives and laid the groundwork for future planning at a more localized scale. While there is no section specific to Mattapan, the plan identifies high-level goals for the neighborhood throughout the document. Broadly speaking, the plan identifies transit opportunities for the area, enhanced learning experiences and facilities, and the need for small business and cultural support for Mattapan Square.



Go Boston 2030
Go Boston 2030, an initiative of the Boston Transportation Department, developed a road-map for the region’s mobility future. The plan encapsulated the City’s vision for a Boston where streets are safe, equitable, and vibrant places for people. PLAN: Mattapan uses *Go Boston 2030*’s priorities, access, safety, and reliability, like a magnifying glass to discover opportunities to improve travel in Mattapan. *Go Boston 2030* identifies a number of specific transportation projects in Mattapan, including service improvements to the Fairmount Indigo Line, Fairmont Indigo Corridor greenway, and expanded rapid bus connections.

Concurrent Planning

While the planning team worked with the community to envision the future of the entirety of the neighborhood, other City and State agencies have initiated separate projects within the study area. Most notably, Boston Public Works Department (PWD) conducted a public process related to redesigning Cummins Highway and Boston Transportation Department (BTD) launched the Blue Hill Avenue Transportation Action Plan. The planning team worked closely with the agencies conducting all ongoing work in Mattapan throughout the process. This PLAN is written with the concurrent planning context in mind.

02. Transforming Community Conversations into Action

Once Mattapan stakeholders established the vision statement, the focus turned to developing geographic focus areas in Mattapan that helped structure the Plan's recommendations for positive, equitable growth across the neighborhood.

In this section, learn more about:

Documenting the Process
(Section 2.1)

How to Read This Document
(Section 2.2)

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a light-colored jacket, is speaking into a microphone at a community meeting. She is gesturing with her right hand. In the foreground, there are several stacks of yellow and red LEGO blocks on a table. Other people are visible in the background, including a man in a white shirt and tie. The setting appears to be a community room or meeting space with a yellow wall.

Mattapan residents discuss where new development should be directed in the neighborhood during a planning meeting in early 2020.

2.1 Documenting the Process

Since the planning process kicked off in October 2018, PLAN: Mattapan engaged in over 150 community events to create a shared vision for the future.

Defining the What

Community engagements varied in size and style to include public meetings and workshops, “Chats with a Planner,” neighborhood association meetings and community events sponsored by other organizations. The planning team also hosted public meetings referred to as “deep dives,” which provided community members with the opportunity to learn about certain aspects of planning in greater detail.

The planning team’s early conversations focused on confirming previous planning outcomes and creating a shared vision for the process. These first workshops were critical in laying the foundation for the rest of the initiative and led to the creation and adoption of the Plan’s vision statement.

From What to Where

Once the community crafted an overall vision for the planning process, the BPDA planning team began examining the planning issues in greater detail by exploring geographic focus areas in Mattapan: nodes, corridors, and residential fabric. By honing in on these focus areas, the planning team and community were able to have targeted discussions about the concerns and possible solutions in the neighborhood related to the planning themes of Equity & Environmental Justice, Housing, Mobility, Jobs & Businesses, and People & Places.



Mattapan residents discussing goals with planning team members during one of over 150 engagements that took place between 2018-2020.



BPDA staff discussing planning updates at a Haitian residents focus group in 2019.

And Now: How

The PLAN: Mattapan vision statement was co-created with community members to describe the future of Mattapan. Complementing the vision statement are five concrete goals described on page 15, organized around PLAN: Mattapan’s key topic areas.

These high-level goals reflect shared values and provide strategic direction to the Plan. They also allow the planning team to articulate what steps will be taken to address these goals, in the form of planning recommendations. These planning recommendations vary in scale and scope: some will be accomplished through zoning changes, while others will require collaboration with other City departments and State agencies. PLAN: Mattapan organizes its neighborhood recommendations by following a geographic framework that

is already present in the neighborhood’s built environment. While the BPDA’s focus for implementing these recommendations will be on zoning amendments and design guidelines, PLAN: Mattapan will coordinate with City departments and State agencies like Boston Transportation Department (BTD), Boston Public Works Department (PWD), the Mayor’s Office of Housing (MOH), Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), and Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to implement other programmatic or capital investments.

2.2 How to Read This Document

PLAN: Mattapan recommendations consider opportunities across three different scales: the node, the corridor, and the residential fabric.

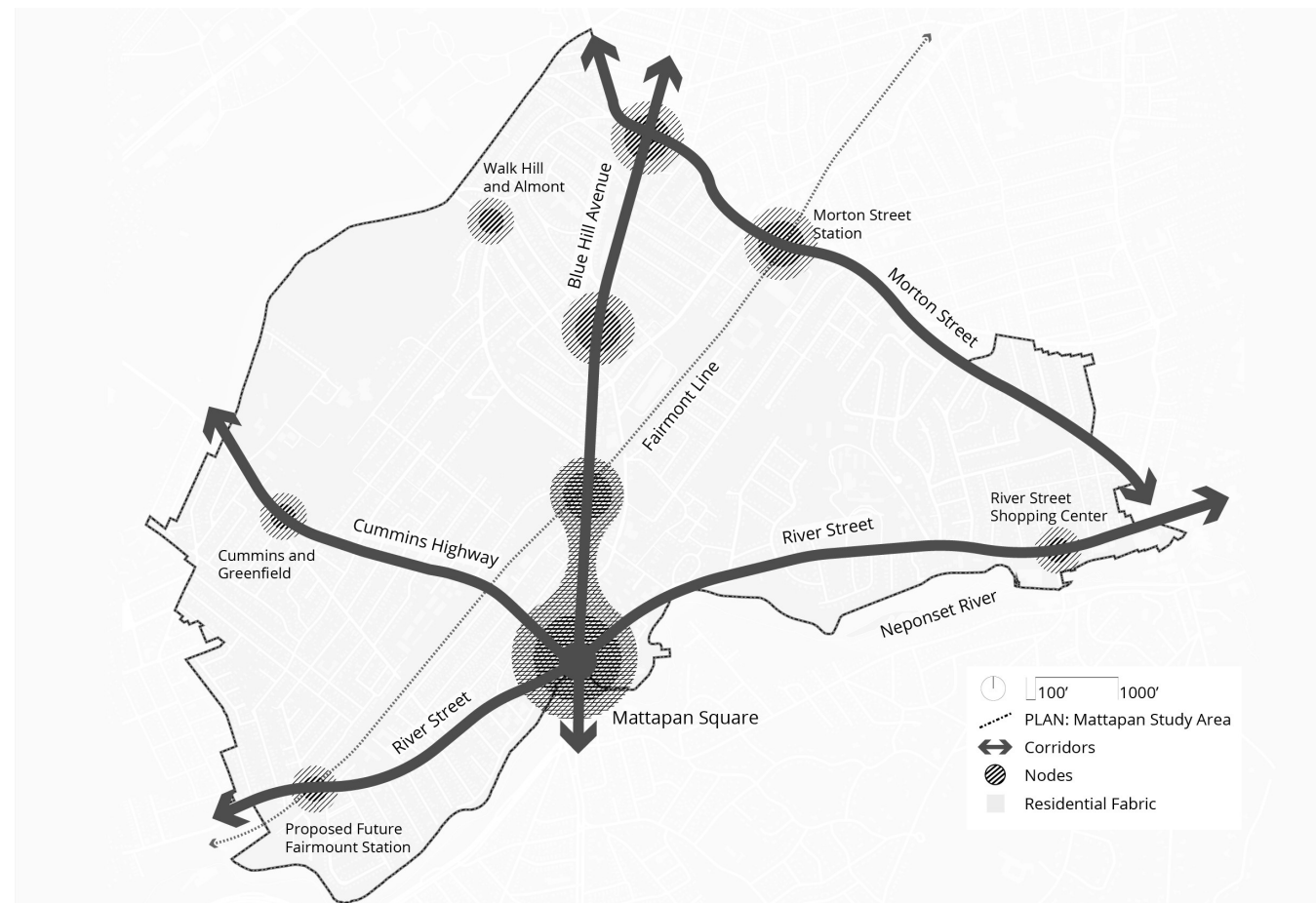
Chapters 3 - 5 of PLAN: Mattapan are each dedicated to one of these three areas (nodes, corridors, and residential fabric) in Mattapan. Within each chapter, you will find a **description** of how these areas are currently used by Mattapan's residents. You will also find discussion and **recommendations** for how these areas can best serve residents in the future, based on feedback gathered in community engagement and the overall vision that Mattapan stakeholders co-created at the beginning of the planning process. These recommendations are organized by the **planning topic areas** described on page 15.

In order to make clear what departments or groups are responsible for carrying out these recommendations, the plan lists out **Participating Actors** after each

recommendation grouping. The section titled **Evaluation Metrics** describes how we'll measure success for these recommendations.

Within each chapter, there are also **Mobility Spotlights** that provide further detail on the mobility recommendations. **Zoning & Urban Design recommendations** provide description of the proposed changes to underlying zoning in each area, and how these changes will guide development that upholds the vision for an affordable, vibrant, and equitable Mattapan.

Finally, each chapter closes with a **Focus Area** that provides more description either of a particular policy proposal or of how the planning recommendations could work together to strengthen a particular area of the neighborhood.



The above map identifies nodes, corridors, and residential fabric as three distinct scales within Mattapan.

What are Nodes, Corridors, and Residential Fabric?



Nodes are central neighborhood spaces where residents come together to shop, socialize, and build community. Generally nodes are located along major transit routes and stations at major intersections where commercial, retail, and residential uses are concentrated.

As neighborhood destinations, nodes have the highest concentrations of businesses, transit connections, and foot and vehicle traffic. Nodes tend to be denser than other parts of the neighborhood. Mattapan Square is the primary node of the neighborhood; others are located at major intersections or transit stations, as illustrated on the following page. Turn to Chapter 3 to read more about Mattapan's nodes and corresponding recommendations.



Corridors are the main streets that people take to travel into, out of, and within their neighborhood. Many of Mattapan's jobs, businesses, and residents are concentrated along mixed-use corridors. Businesses along the corridor range from small local businesses to larger globally-owned and operated businesses.

Corridors also serve a vital transportation function, connect Mattapan to other neighborhoods, and form the backbone of Mattapan's multi-modal networks. This includes Blue Hill Avenue, Cummins Highway, Morton Street, and River Street. Turn to Chapter 4 to read more about Mattapan's corridors and corresponding recommendations.



Residential fabric makes up most of Mattapan's land area. It refers to areas in the neighborhood that are primarily, though not exclusively, used for housing. Existing housing range from single family bungalows to triple deckers, and larger multi-family buildings.

Neighborhood residential streets prioritize access to homes and slow travel speeds. Unlike corridors, which accommodate buses, emergency access, and large vehicles, neighborhood residential streets are small, less busy, and ideal candidates for traffic calming. Turn to Chapter 5 to read more about Mattapan's residential fabric and corresponding recommendations.

03. Nodes

Nodes like Mattapan Square or the River Street Shopping Center are central neighborhood spaces where residents come together to shop, socialize, and build community.

This chapter describes how Mattapan's nodes can be strengthened and expanded to bring amenities closer to residents' doors, provide more opportunities for local businesses, and improve the public realm.

In this section, learn more about:

Mattapan's Nodes
(Section 3.1)

Node Recommendations
(Section 3.2)

Node Mobility Spotlights
(Section 3.3)

Node Zoning & Urban Design Guidelines
(Section 3.4)

Node Focus Area: Mattapan Square
(Section 3.5)

Place-based interventions, like these light post banners, can honor and affirm residents' cultural identity in nodes like Mattapan Square.



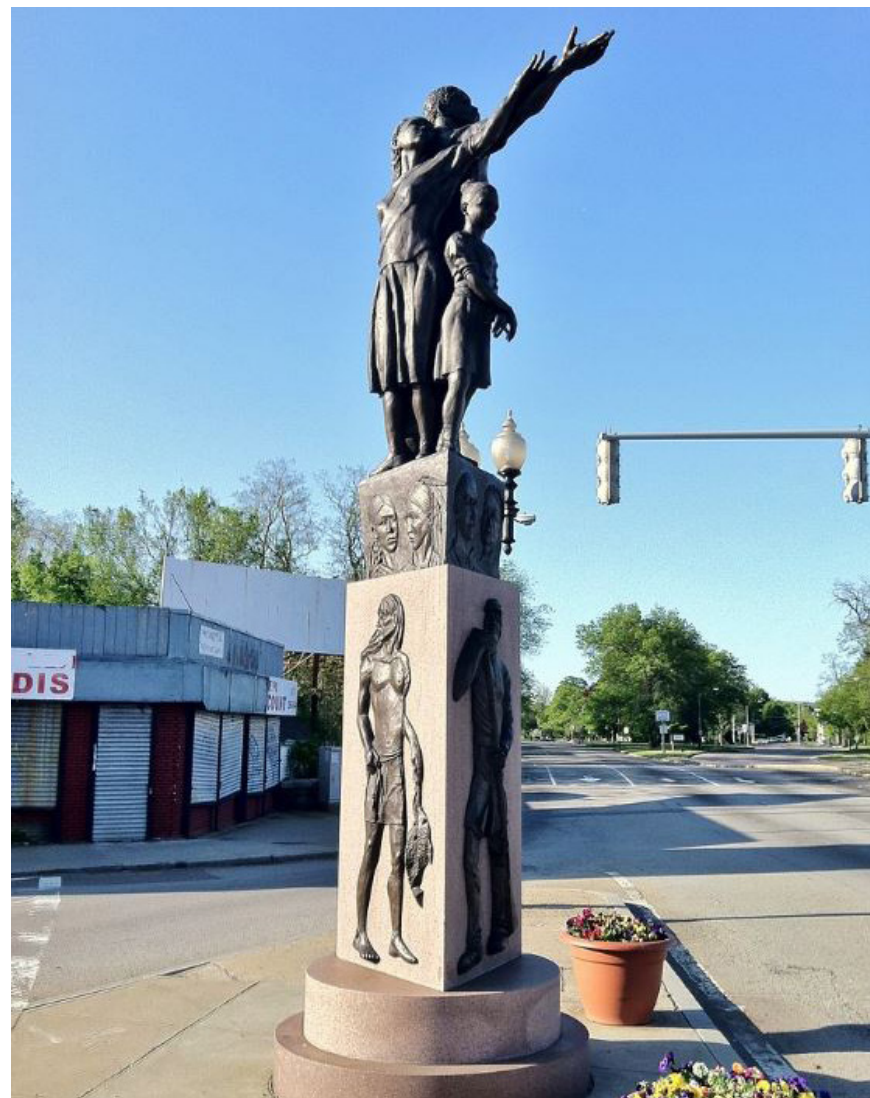
3.1 Mattapan's Nodes

All of Boston's neighborhoods boast active, transit-rich, mixed-use areas where residents can gather and local businesses can thrive. Mattapan is no exception.

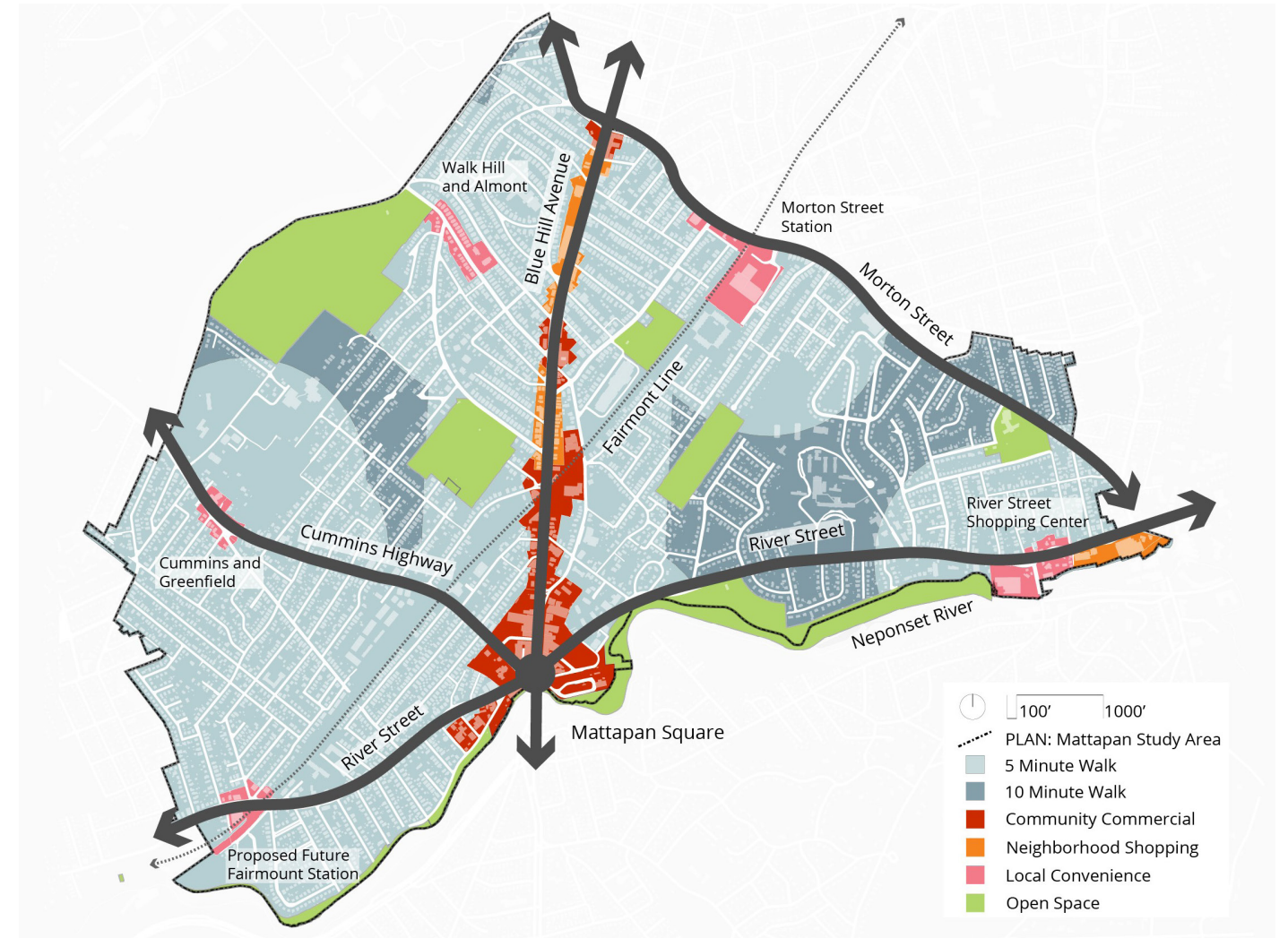
At the center of the neighborhood is Mattapan Square, a Main Streets district with local businesses and community services. From neighborhood mainstays like Brother's Deli that have served the community for decades to newer retail options, Mattapan Square is often described as the economic and social center of Mattapan.

While Mattapan Square is Mattapan's largest, most prominent neighborhood node, other, smaller local business areas are scattered throughout the neighborhood. But the legacy of institutional racism has led to neighborhood disinvestment and inequitable economic opportunities.

Mattapan's local business scene has faced an uphill battle. During community engagement events, residents described a shortage of diverse retail and essential services throughout Mattapan, as well as a need for improvements to public infrastructure—such as streets and sidewalks—that would allow residents to more easily access these amenities. The outcome of such historic disinvestment is especially apparent in Mattapan Square, where residents expressed frustration with trash on sidewalks, storefronts that have been left vacant for years, absentee property owners, and a general lack of commercial spaces where they could shop, gather, and contribute to the local economy.



"Rise" by Fern Cunningham and Karen Eutemey stands at the gateway of Mattapan Square, celebrating the diversity of the different ethnic groups that have called Mattapan home over generations.



The above map displays the 10-minute neighborhood vision for Mattapan. With the modest zoning changes outlined in this PLAN, as well as other improvements that address mobility, Mattapan can become a neighborhood where retail, services, and transit options are no more than a 10-minute walk from any resident's door.

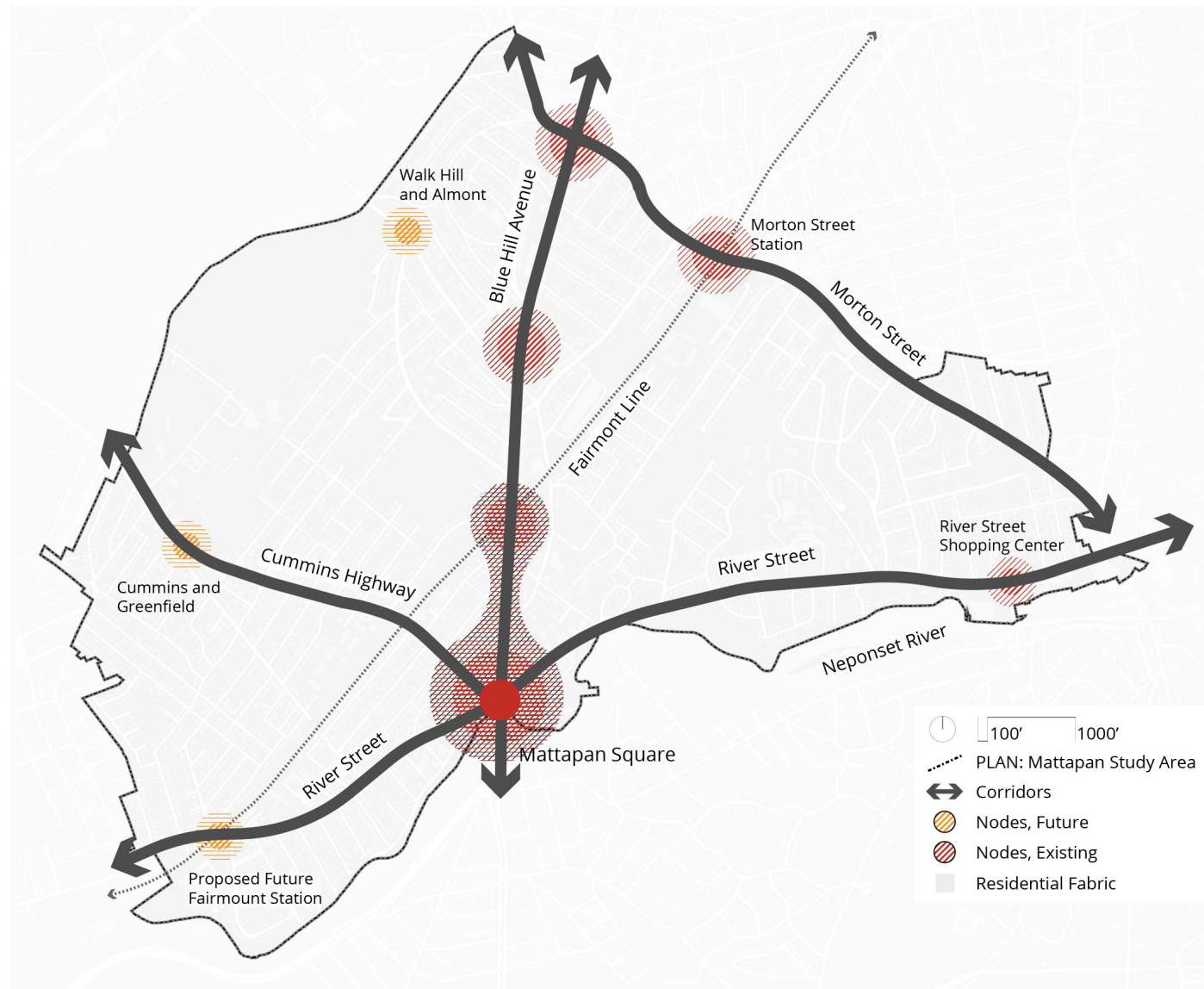
Mattapan Square and other neighborhood nodes can and should be a place for restaurants, cafes, diverse shops, and active gathering or event spaces for people of all ages. But there is much important work to be done to revitalize Mattapan's local business scene, improve the public realm, and address root causes of disinvestment.

The modest zoning changes, mobility improvements, and public realm activation strategies outlined in this chapter will build the foundation to improve Mattapan Square and other nodes over the long term. In particular, these changes, along with those outlined in the Corridors section in Chapter 4, will lay the groundwork to transform Mattapan into a 10-minute neighborhood—a community where access to essential goods, services, arts and cultural uses, open

spaces, and transit options are no more than a 10-minute walk from any resident's home. But in the short term, it is critical that the City work in partnership with Mattapan Main Streets, property and business owners, and other to address concerns around cleanliness, vacant or dilapidated properties, and absentee property owners. In order for the Square to grow to its full potential and meet the needs of residents, these issues must be fully addressed. The recommendations laid forth in this chapter describe how Mattapan's existing business nodes—such as Mattapan Square—can be strengthened, as well as how new nodes can be built to accommodate the needs of Mattapan residents.

3.2 Node Recommendations

The current nodes in Mattapan, except Mattapan Square, have modest commercial zoning and land uses. PLAN: Mattapan re-imagines existing nodes and envisions new ones in order to enable mixed-use development that can bring essential goods and services closer to residents’ doorsteps.



The above map identifies the nodes and corridors in Mattapan. Nodes in Mattapan are key intersections of activity and are vital to creating a 10-minute neighborhood. Blue Hill Avenue is the primary corridor in the neighborhood and bisects the neighborhood.

The following recommendations describe improvements to Mattapan’s existing and proposed nodes, and are organized by the five planning goals relevant to PLAN: Mattapan.

Equity & Environmental Justice

Mattapan’s nodes have significant paved areas that contribute to high temperatures and adverse health impacts. However, they are also a great opportunity to introduce nature into Mattapan’s everyday life. Street trees, planted beds, rain gardens, and similar green infrastructure not only look great but also provide an important layer of climate protection for the community. Well-designed natural additions to the nodes will help mitigate environmental concerns like high temperatures and stormwater flooding, while making maintenance of these spaces manageable. These types of green additions can also contribute to improved physical and mental health outcomes for Mattapan residents by making the public realm a much-improved environment for walking, bicycling, and waiting for transit.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; Environment; Parks; Public Health (BPHC); BTD; PWD; Private Developers

Evaluation Metrics: Reduction in average daily temperatures; Increased water retention; Long-term reduction of adverse health impacts; Increased tree canopy

Housing

Nodes are a natural location to site larger residential projects and provide increased housing supply. These large projects will be subject to the City of Boston’s Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) regulations. AFFH outlines the City’s fair housing priorities increasing affordability as well as housing families, seniors, and those living with disabilities. Nodes create the opportunity to develop both market rate and affordable homes for Mattapan residents. As larger developments are proposed in Mattapan’s nodes, additional affordability, accessibility, and other benefits are necessary to achieve fair housing. Both market rate and affordable homes are necessary to support the entirety of the Mattapan community. Nodes are, by definition, near key points of transportation and as such provide a unique opportunity to site desired accessible units in a way that supports equitable mobility.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Zoning and Development Review; MOH; Private Developers

Recommendations at a Glance

Equity & Environmental Justice

Strengthen public health and combat urban heat island effect by planting more street trees and implementing green infrastructure and lot coverage requirements

Housing

Increase development of housing supply within nodes, particularly of affordable housing. Support existing households and mitigate displacement risks.

Mobility

Expand access to travel options and redesign high-crash intersections and streets to encourage sustainable, pedestrian-friendly access to nodes.

Jobs & Businesses

Foster new, diverse retail within nodes. Connect existing businesses and future entrepreneurs with City programs that support their success.

People & Places

Increase investment and maintenance in Mattapan’s public realm, ensuring that nodes are clean and welcoming and reflect the vibrant cultural histories of residents.

Evaluation Metrics: Increase in number of affordable units; Decrease in number of households at risk for displacement; Increase in vacancy rate; Increase in number of accessible units

Mobility

All of Mattapan’s nodes should be pedestrian-friendly and encourage access that doesn’t rely on the use of a personal vehicle. A focus on pedestrian safety increases foot traffic and allows residents to safely gather together, both of which promote an active and exciting public realm.

To support improved comfort and safety of everyone traveling in and around Mattapan, PLAN: Mattapan proposes safety-focused intersection improvements. Safe intersections are not only necessary for comfort of all travelers but will help eliminate fatal and serious crashes. New developments should provide expanded sidewalks and streetscapes in compliance with Boston Complete Streets Design Guidelines. See page 81 to read about how these intersection improvements are currently underway in Mattapan.

In order to create more access to local amenities, PLAN: Mattapan proposes siting new nodes that would allow mixed-use development within a 10-minute walking radius of

residents' homes. This approach enables residents to access daily needs without leaving the neighborhood and generates more foot traffic to help businesses thrive.

Finally, expanding GoHubs! throughout Mattapan, and particularly within its nodes, would increase access to multimodal transportation options. GoHubs! are neighborhood mobility hubs that combine transportation options, information, and placemaking elements. Currently, only 40 percent of Mattapan's households are within a 10-minute walk of bikeshare, car share, and frequent transit; this figure would rise to 85 percent with expanded access to GoHubs! locations. Turn to page 28 to read a spotlight on GoHubs!.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; BTD; PWD; MBTA; MassDOT; DCR

Evaluation Metrics: Decrease in number of vehicle trips per day; Increase in number of people making most trips by mode other than private vehicle; Reduction in fatal and injury crashes

Jobs & Businesses

New commercial and mixed-use zoning in nodes will expand where new businesses can be located. Businesses like markets, daycares, and restaurants help support the needs of the community. At the same time, there is a particular need in Mattapan for more businesses that help residents enjoy their neighborhood: cafes and dining establishments with seating, retail stores for clothing, plant shops, bike shops, art studios, community centers, lounges, and live music venues were just some of the types of businesses that residents would like to see in Mattapan.

It is crucial that there be additional support and outreach given to current local establishments, as well as Mattapan residents who would like to start their own businesses. Programs such as the City's newly launched SPACE Grant can help link local entrepreneurs to vacant retail spaces in Mattapan, thus supporting local economic growth while also addressing the issue of vacant spaces in Mattapan Square and other nodes. Business owners looking to refresh the appearance of their storefronts can get support through Restore Boston, a City program that offers grants to business owners to help with design and signage services, and exterior facade improvements. Other programs aimed at the success of small businesses, such as the Economic Opportunity & Inclusion Cabinet's programs that can give business owners

the tools they need to start or expand their business, and seek to address the barriers businesses are facing. Programs such as the Technical Assistance program which pairs businesses with 1:1 coaching and support in a subject matter area, meeting a business owner's specific needs, and the Legacy Business Program, supports businesses keep and maintain their business in Boston. More information on these programs can be found at boston.gov/government/cabinets/economic-opportunity-and-inclusion.

Lastly, more support can be provided to link Mattapan's local business community with business empowerment marketing campaigns, such as All Inclusive Boston (a tourism campaign that highlights the diversity of Boston's hospitality sector across all its neighborhoods) and B.Local (an app that supports small businesses by incentivizing residents and visitors to shop locally).

Participating Actors: BPDA/Zoning and Development Review; Economic Opportunity & Inclusion Cabinet (OEI)

Evaluation Metrics: Increase in business and employment in Mattapan; Increase in diversity of type of businesses

People & Places

Mattapan's existing and proposed nodes offer opportunities for communities to gather and celebrate their cultures. Home to one of Boston's largest Caribbean populations, Mattapan offers a diverse mix of heritages, languages, and traditions, and nodes can offer space for cultural activity and expression. In key areas, PLAN: Mattapan will promote publicly accessible gathering space in the neighborhood and encourage private development to create space for artists and creatives to do their work. Through increased investment in and care for public art, cultural businesses, and gathering space, Mattapan's nodes can highlight the diversity of experiences in Mattapan and celebrate its cultural vibrancy.

Attention must be placed on ensuring that nodes such as Mattapan Square are kept clean and welcoming. During community engagement events, participants were vocal that Mattapan Square can look uncared for or even "forgotten," and that there currently are not enough spaces—either indoor or outdoor—for youth, families, and other people to spend time together. Special attention must be paid to investments in Mattapan's public realm that enhance livability in its nodes and other high-traffic public spaces. More frequent and coordinated trash and snow maintenance, the implementation of design guidelines enforcing more

harmonious architectural standards for building materials and facades, use of City supports such as the ReStore program to renovate existing storefronts, and the creation of more pop-up events or festivals are just some of the ways that Mattapan's nodes can be enhanced for their full potential. Similarly, barriers to holding such events—such as a lengthy or expensive permitting process—should be revisited by appropriate City actors.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; Arts & Culture (MOAC), PWD, OEI

Evaluation Metrics: Increase investment in and existing and new public art; Increase in community and cultural gathering space; Increase investment in maintenance and design standards within the public realm



The Haitian-American Unity Parade, a popular annual festival, starts its route in Mattapan Square.



Public art, such as the mural above of Toussaint Louverture, prominent leader of the Haitian Revolution, serves to celebrate cultural history and educate visitors, and makes neighborhood identity more visible.

3.3 Node Mobility Spotlights

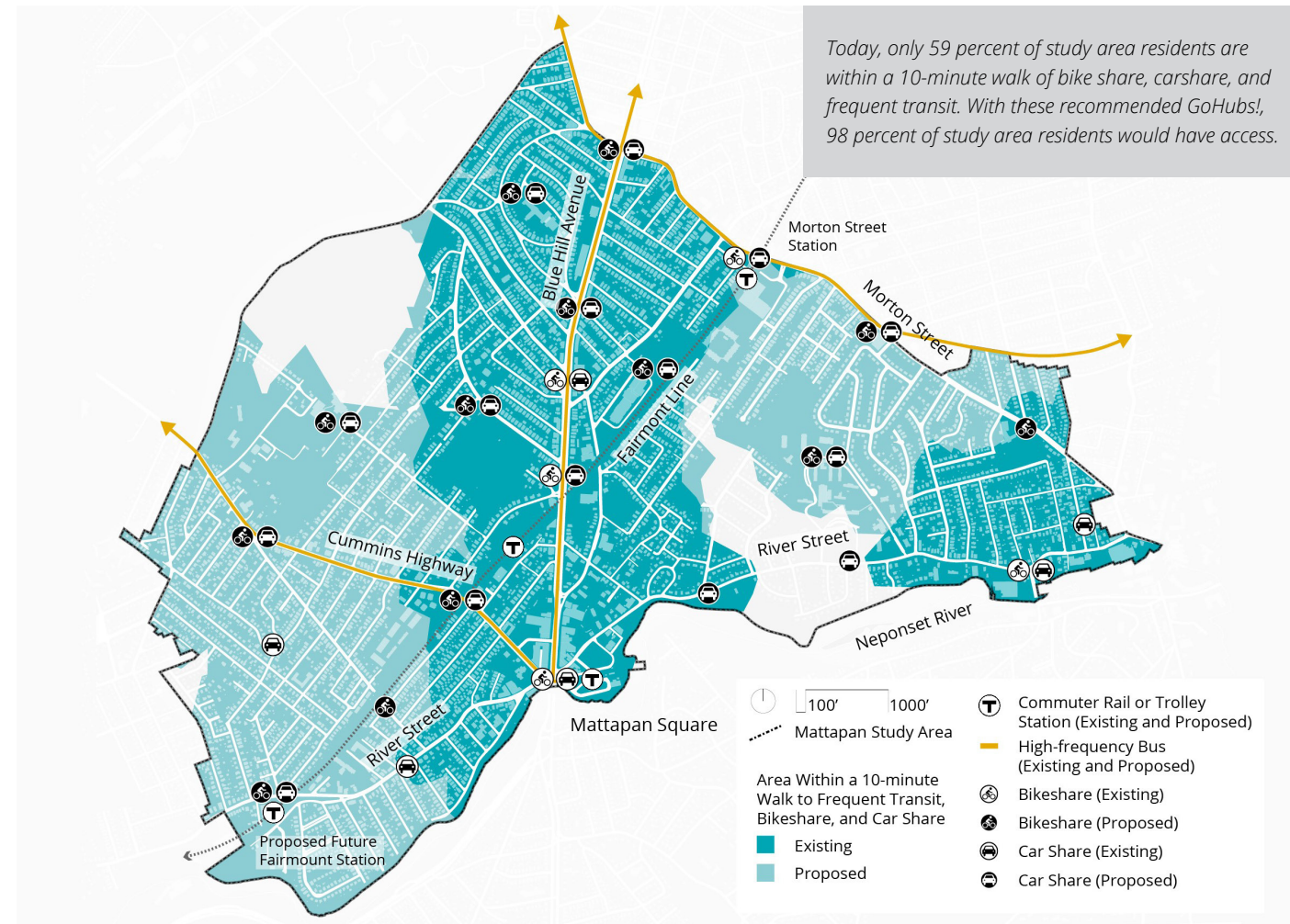
Expanding GoHubs! to Mattapan

By 2030, all homes/residents in Mattapan and Boston should be within a 10-minute walk of a bikeshare station, car share location, and a rail station or Key Bus route stop. However, only 59 percent of residents in the PLAN: Mattapan study area, compared to 60 percent citywide, meet this goal. PLAN: Mattapan recommends expanding Boston's GoHubs! program into the neighborhood to give residents and visitors access to these travel options. GoHubs!—also known as mobility hubs—combine bikeshare, car share, and transit access with public art and information at key intersections or community destinations.

GoHubs! offer people more options to get around, meet up, and find their way. PLAN: Mattapan identified potential GoHubs! locations, shown below, based on existing gaps in the transportation network and locations that are City-owned, have excess space, and are near bus stops, commercial areas, and planned walking and biking connections. If implemented, 98 percent of Mattapan residents would be within a 10-minute walk of bikeshare, car share, and a rail station or Key Bus stop.

Proposed GoHubs! Locations

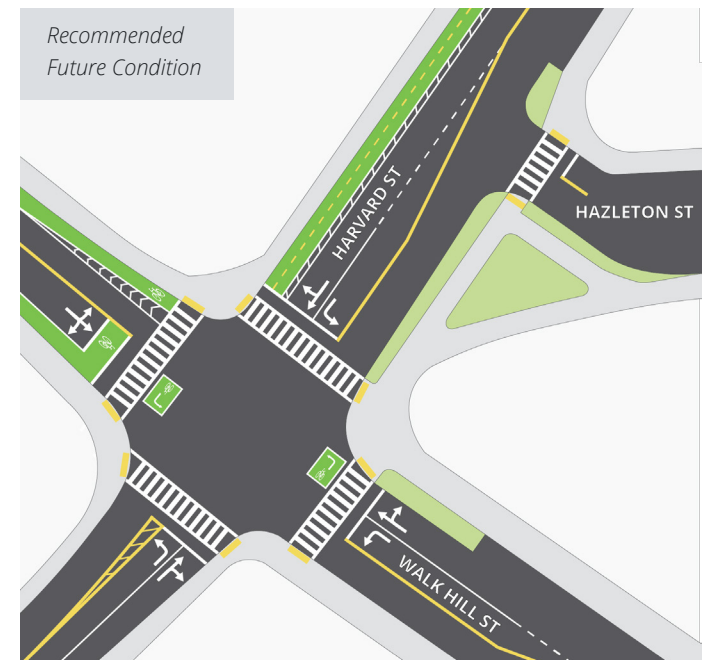
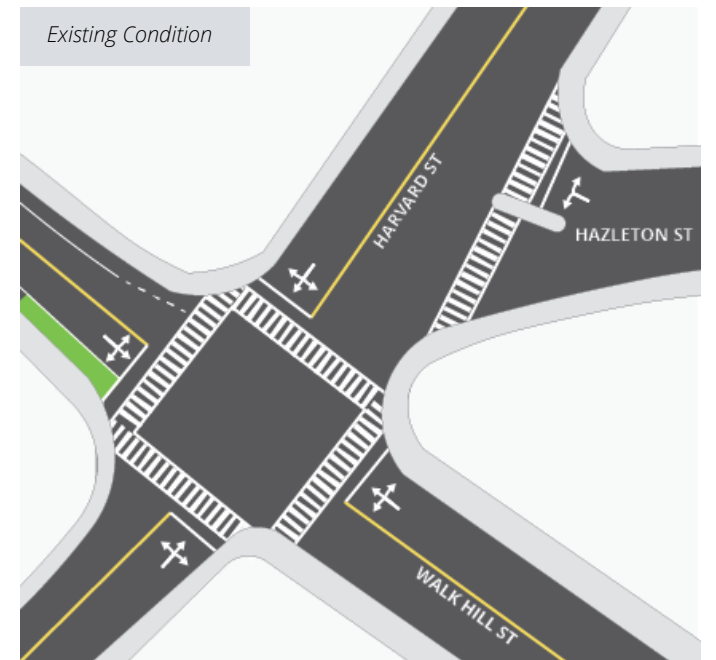
Expanding GoHubs! to Mattapan could dramatically increase residents' access to travel options beyond Mattapan Station and Milton Station.



Safety Changes to the Walk Hill Street and Harvard Street Intersection

Boston is committed to eliminating fatal and serious traffic crashes by 2030. The intersection of Walk Hill Street, Harvard Street, and Hazleton Street has one of the highest crash rates among City-owned streets in Boston. Thirty-four crashes occurred between March 2017 and December 2019, including one fatality. While 15 of these crashes resulted in an injury, all three crashes that involved a person walking or biking resulted in an injury. Crash analysis indicated that there are two primary safety challenges at this intersection: unsafe driver behavior, such as speeding and red-light running, and overly wide travel lanes, which allow drivers to make unsafe maneuvers. Hilly topography and a limited number of abutters encourage speeding.

PLAN: Mattapan and the Boston Transportation Department propose a concept to better clarify travel through and visibility within the intersection. The concept adds left-turn lanes, where space permits, narrows travel lanes, and reduces the intersection footprint. This would give drivers greater visibility to more safely make left turns, shorten crosswalk distances to reduce conflicts between drivers and people walking or biking, and reclaim excess pavement that could be used for green infrastructure and a new Green Links connection to the Mass Audubon Boston Nature Center. Green infrastructure helps manage stormwater by using plants, soil, and other natural materials to mimic nature. The result is streets that remove pollutants, drain better, and are more beautiful. The concept, shown to the right, preserves existing on-street parking and bike lanes.



Without dedicated left-turn lanes and green arrows, left-turning drivers must scan for gaps in oncoming traffic, reducing their attentiveness to crossing pedestrians or bicyclists and encouraging risky driving behavior to quickly squeeze through narrow gaps in traffic (above).

Today, the intersection is overly wide, which encourages speeding and aggressive maneuvering. In the proposed concept, left-turn lanes would provide more visibility and predictability for drivers, while a smaller intersection would reduce crossing distances, discourage speeding, and create ample space for green infrastructure and plantings.

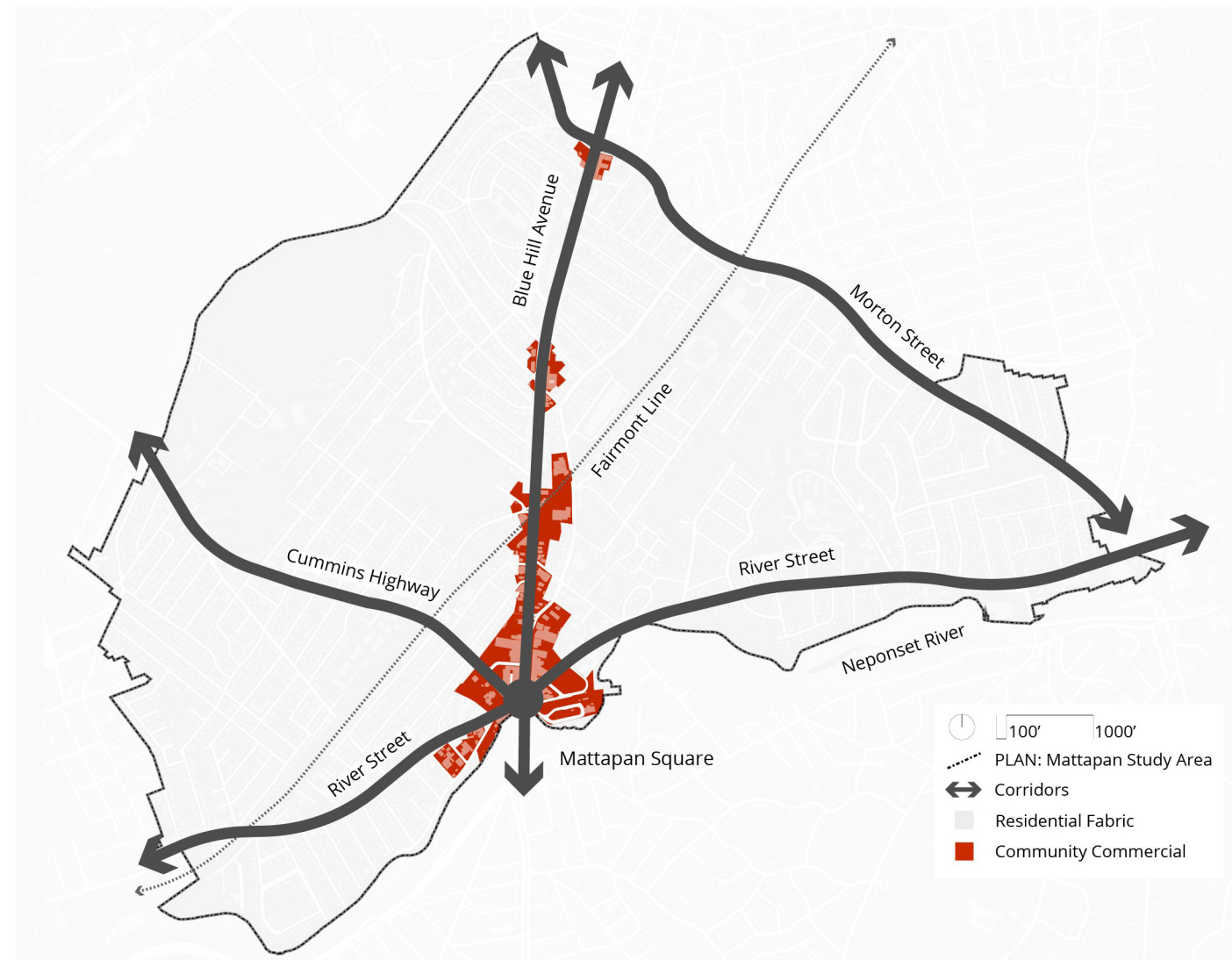
3.4 Node Zoning & Urban Design Guidelines

Expanding mixed-use zoning throughout Mattapan—in particular the Community Commercial and Local Convenience zoning subdistricts—will help achieve the 10-minute neighborhood vision and expand access to essential goods and services.

Community Commercial (CC) Zoning Subdistrict

Existing Community Commercial subdistricts in Mattapan provide a diversified commercial environment along the southern portion of Blue Hill Avenue. Retailers and offices serving larger markets are meant to be sited within the CC zoning. PLAN: Mattapan recommends modest changes to height, density, open space, and other requirements that will

allow businesses to flourish in Mattapan Square and along Blue Hill Ave and advance planning goals. These zoning objectives are explained on the following page.



Community Commercial zoning subdistricts in Mattapan are located within Mattapan Square and along Blue Hill Ave.

People & Places:

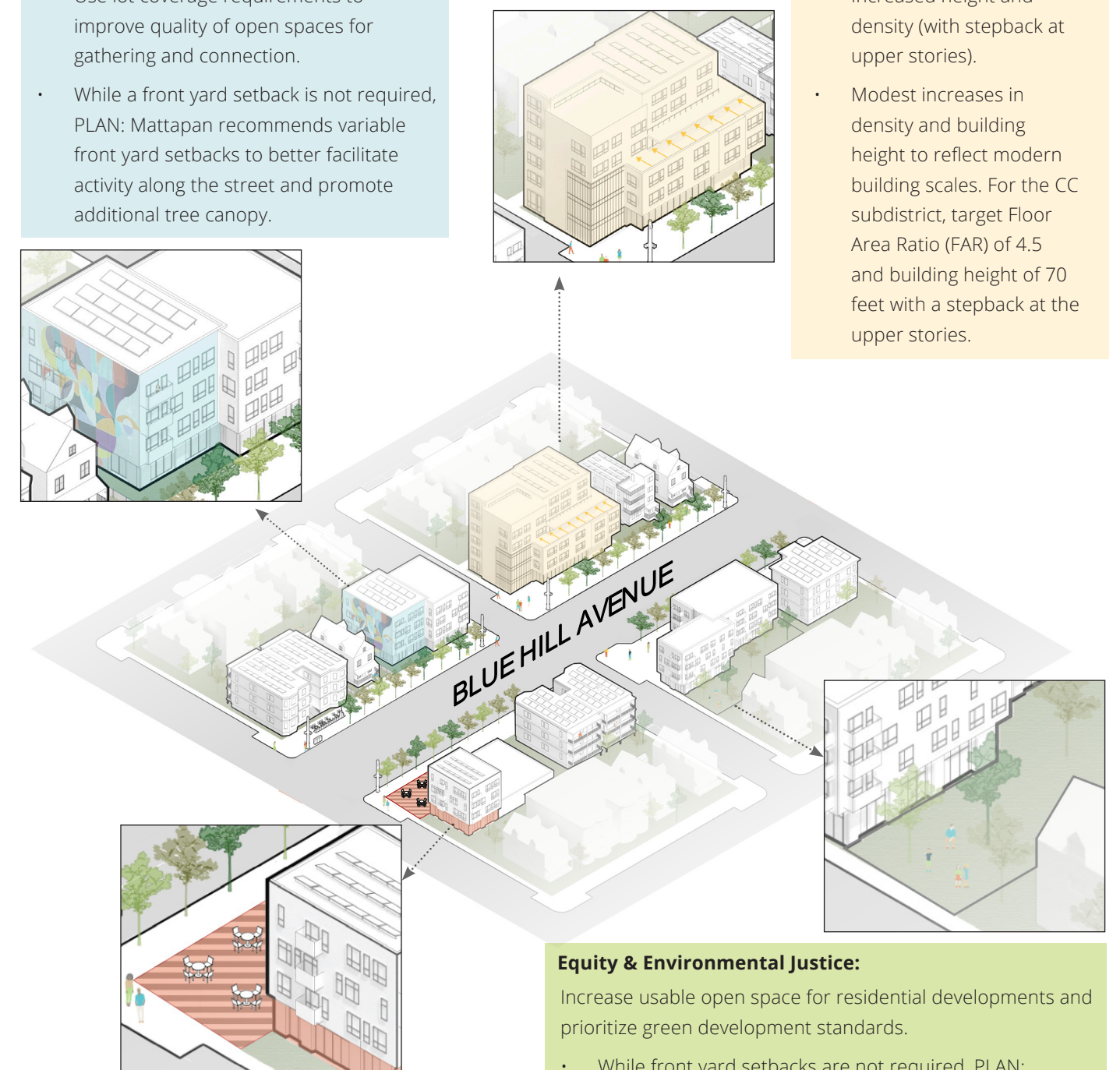
Encourage businesses, spaces, and public art opportunities that uphold residents' cultural identities.

- Use lot coverage requirements to improve quality of open spaces for gathering and connection.
- While a front yard setback is not required, PLAN: Mattapan recommends variable front yard setbacks to better facilitate activity along the street and promote additional tree canopy.

Housing:

Nodes are a natural location to site larger residential projects and increase housing supply.

- Increased height and density (with setback at upper stories).
- Modest increases in density and building height to reflect modern building scales. For the CC subdistrict, target Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 4.5 and building height of 70 feet with a setback at the upper stories.



Jobs & Businesses:

CC districts allow for the most robust type of mixed-use and commercial development, laying the foundation for a diverse set of business and community spaces that serve a wide variety of Mattapan residents' needs.

Equity & Environmental Justice:

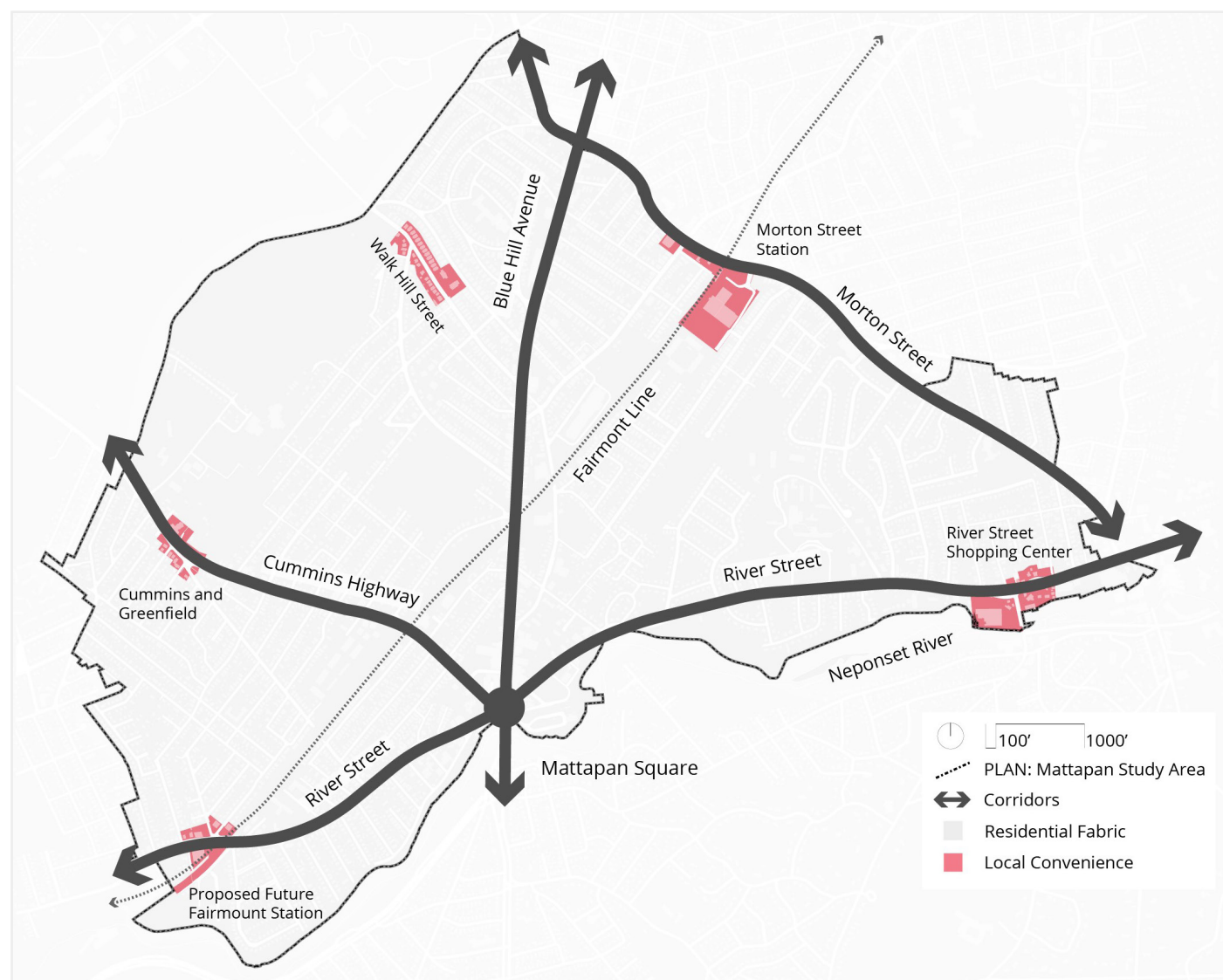
Increase usable open space for residential developments and prioritize green development standards.

- While front yard setbacks are not required, PLAN: Mattapan recommends variable front yard setbacks in order to better facilitate activity along the street and promote additional tree canopy.
- The addition of lot coverage requirements to preserve permeable surface, limiting stormwater runoff and allowing extra space for trees. Minimum permeable surface is recommended to be 20 percent.

Local Convenience (LC) Zoning Subdistrict

The Local Convenience subdistrict would be new to the PLAN: Mattapan study area and is aimed at bringing local business retailers closer to home in new nodes along major corridors. The LC subdistrict, which is used in other Boston neighborhoods, is recommended to be introduced in Mattapan to provide convenient access to goods and services throughout the neighborhood. The LC subdistrict encourages lower-density commercial and mixed-use development in the locations where it is in use, allowing spaces like daycares, libraries, bakeries, laundromats, cafes, and adult day centers to be built. This zoning designation would align with the location of community-identified neighborhood nodes, fostering the creation of more local business spaces outside of Mattapan Square.

With the added LC zoning designations, the majority of Mattapan's residential fabric would be able to reach essential goods and services within a 10-minute walk. The expansion of ground-floor commercial uses provides access and local economic opportunity, and it builds upon the existing zoning allowance for ground level non-residential uses at grade throughout the neighborhood. This move toward legalizing and promoting additional commercial uses in nodes throughout the neighborhood also helps to provide more opportunities for small and local retailers. The zoning objectives and design guidelines for LC subdistricts are explained on the following page.



The addition of Local Convenience zoning in Mattapan will support the development of more local amenities, like markets, daycares, and cafes, that are just steps away from residents' doors.

Jobs & Businesses:

The incorporation of an LC subdistrict helps Mattapan move toward a 10-minute neighborhood vision.

- The expansion of ground floor commercial uses provides access and local economic opportunity.
- This expansion also builds upon the existing zoning allowance for ground level non-residential uses at grade throughout the neighborhood.

Housing:

Mixed-use development helps position people closer to local amenities.

- Set the allowable FAR to 1.75, with a maximum building height of 55 feet.
- Rear yard requirements in particular work to better transition between higher density areas and lower density areas.



People & Places:

Position this zoning designation to foster nodes of mixed-use activity along Cummins Highway, Morton Street, River Street, and within the residential fabric at the intersection of Walk Hill Street/Almont Street. These nodes would serve as anchors within the residential fabric, bringing cultural spaces, outdoor seating, and other enhancements to the public realm closer to residents' homes.

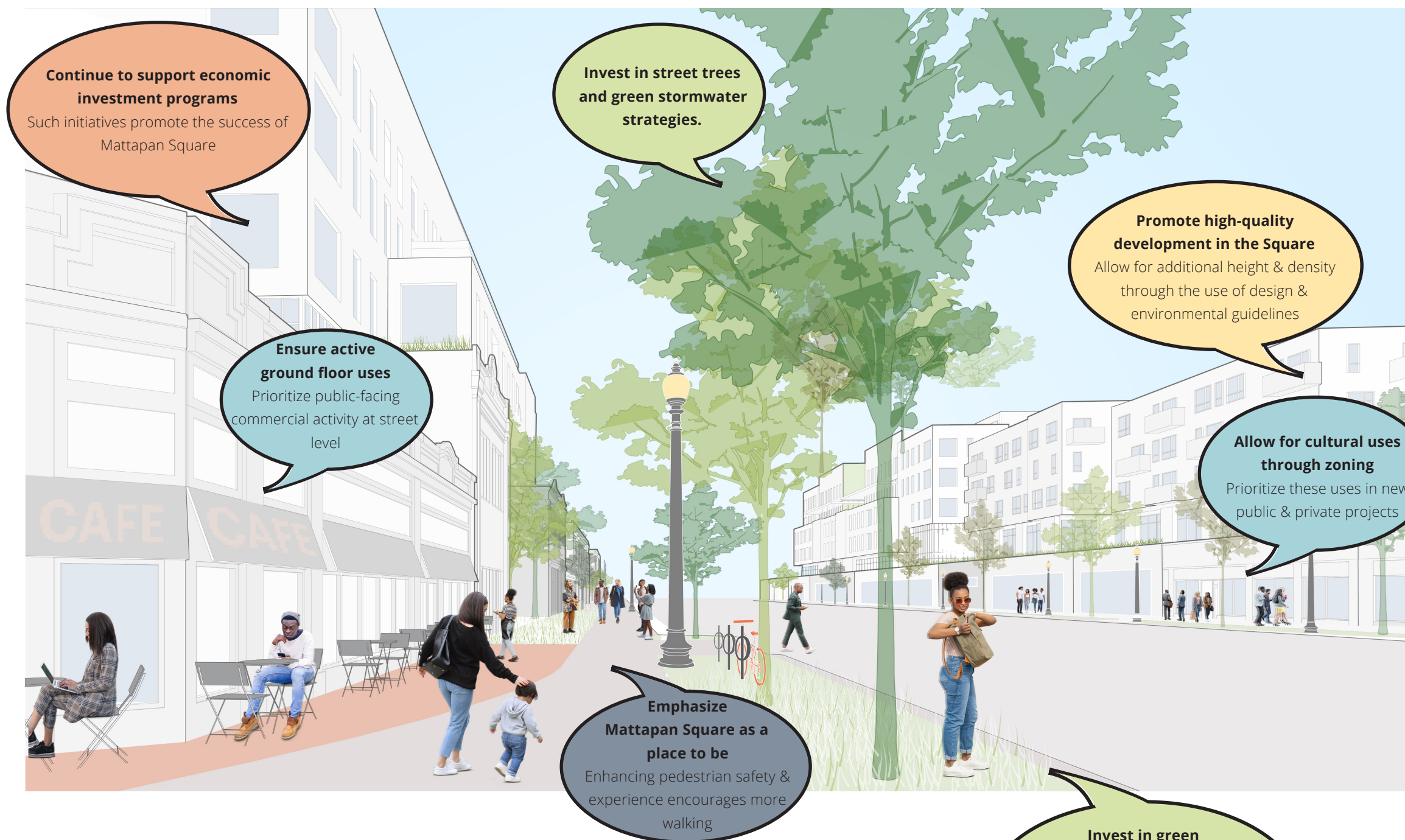
Equity & Environmental Justice:

Increase usable open space for residential developments and prioritize green development standards.

- Residential developments will have requirements for usable open space per unit.
- While front yard setbacks are not required, PLAN: Mattapan recommends variable front yard setbacks to better facilitate activity along the street and promote additional tree canopy.

3.5 Node Focus Area: Mattapan Square

Mattapan Square is the cultural and commercial heart of Mattapan. Home to a passionate community of business owners, a bustling transit hub and gateway to the Neponset River Greenway, Mattapan Square offers great potential to act on the Plan’s vision for equitable growth.



Potential Future Condition of Mattapan Square (Blue Hill Avenue and Fairway Street)

Mattapan Square primarily focuses on changes that support small and local businesses, create a comfortable space to walk and gather, and cool and beautify the node. However, PLAN: Mattapan will also take advantage of transit proximity and encourage mixed-use development with upper stories dedicated to housing.

Major Strategies for Mattapan Square are as follows:

Encourage mixed-use, mid-rise development

- Address current barriers that block investment in Mattapan Square. The current 55-foot zoning limit on building heights is not reached by the existing 1- to 2-story buildings that populate the Square.
- Allow additional height and density to promote high-quality development in the Square.

- Adopt design guidelines to respect the existing building stock.
- Support Main Street initiatives, events, and work as they embark on new ways to revitalize the neighborhoods, and increase foot traffic to local businesses.
- Empower Mattapan Main Streets to work alongside residents, business owners, and visitors to develop a robust analysis of small businesses they would like to see in the area. This will allow the City—through the Economic Opportunity and Inclusion Cabinet—to streamline processes to allow for their placement.

Invest in placemaking and placekeeping

- Seek opportunities to promote civic life and engagement with the Square by enhancing the physical makeup of the public realm. The future of the Square should honor the people that define its present and past. Purpose-built gathering spaces can better support activities like farmers markets, concerts, and other celebrated features of life in Mattapan today and in the future.
- Honor existing public art, which is culturally resonant with the histories and traditions of the people who call Mattapan Square home, through public investment and private development benefits. Provide maintenance and conservation needs and complementary shorter-term public artwork and cultural events. This focus on place affirms Mattapan’s cultural identity and the people that define it. As transformative physical investments are considered for the Square, it’s important that Mattapan’s cultural DNA remains at the forefront.

Celebrate nature as a part of city life

- Facilitate easier access to cooler spaces to and from the Square. Enhance connections to natural assets, like the adjacent Neponset River Greenway, through wayfinding signs and direct, safe, and comfortable walking and biking connections.
- Non-standard conditions—such as ornamental plantings, pots, and storm water strategies—may require agreements with outside organizations.

Encourage walking and creative activities

- Promote activities that encourage use of outdoor spaces during all times of year. Food trucks, pop-up events (fitness classes, artist markets), and live music are just some of the activities that draw residents together in the public realm.

04. Corridors

Corridors are the main streets that people take to travel into, out of, and around their neighborhood.

This chapter describes improvements to Mattapan's corridors that will increase transit access, improve pedestrian safety, enhance the public realm, and promote additional opportunities for multi-family housing and local business.

In this section, learn more about:

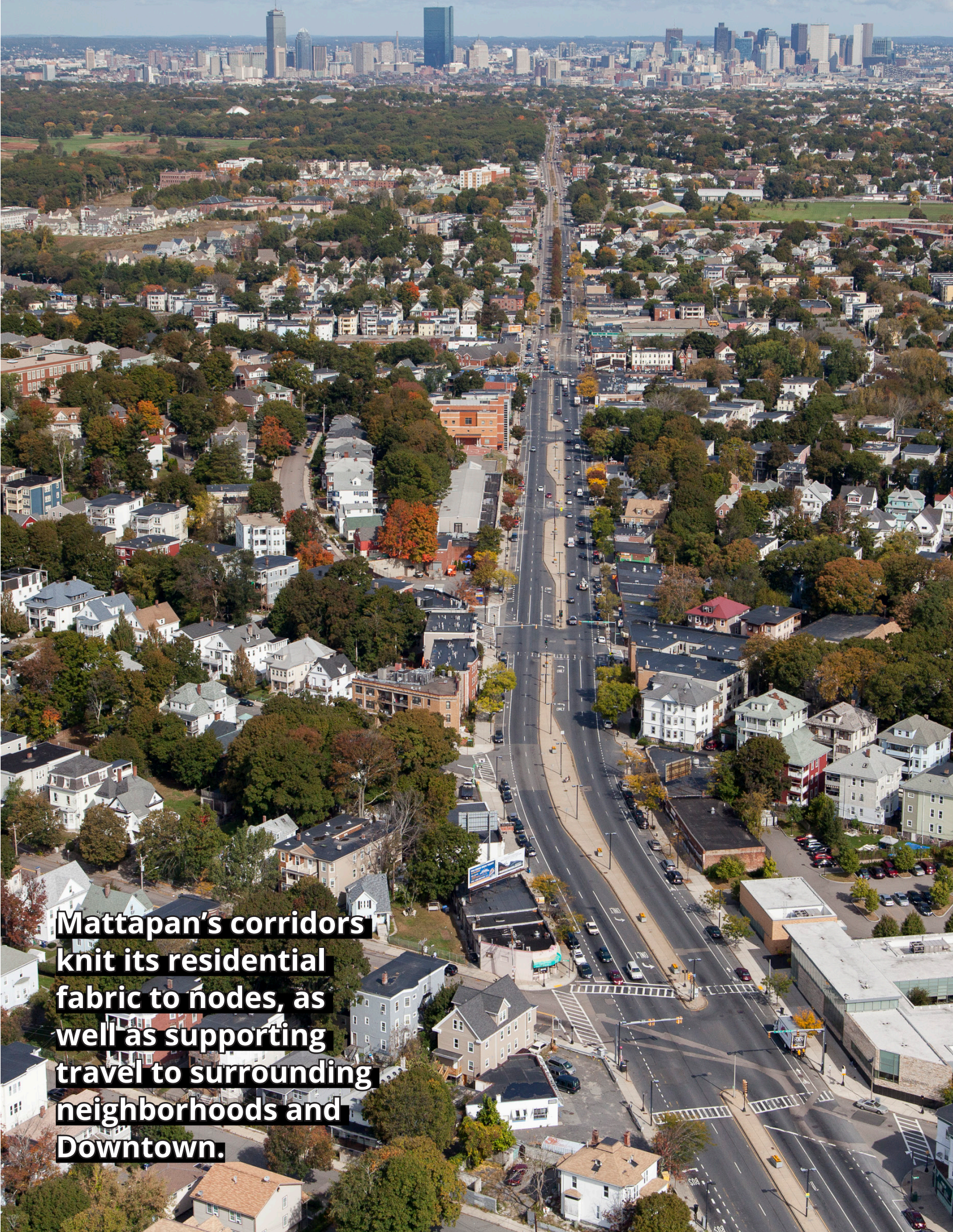
Mattapan's Corridors
(Section 4.1)

Corridor Recommendations
(Section 4.2)

Corridor Mobility Spotlights
(Section 4.3)

Corridor Zoning & Urban Design Guidelines
(Section 4.4)

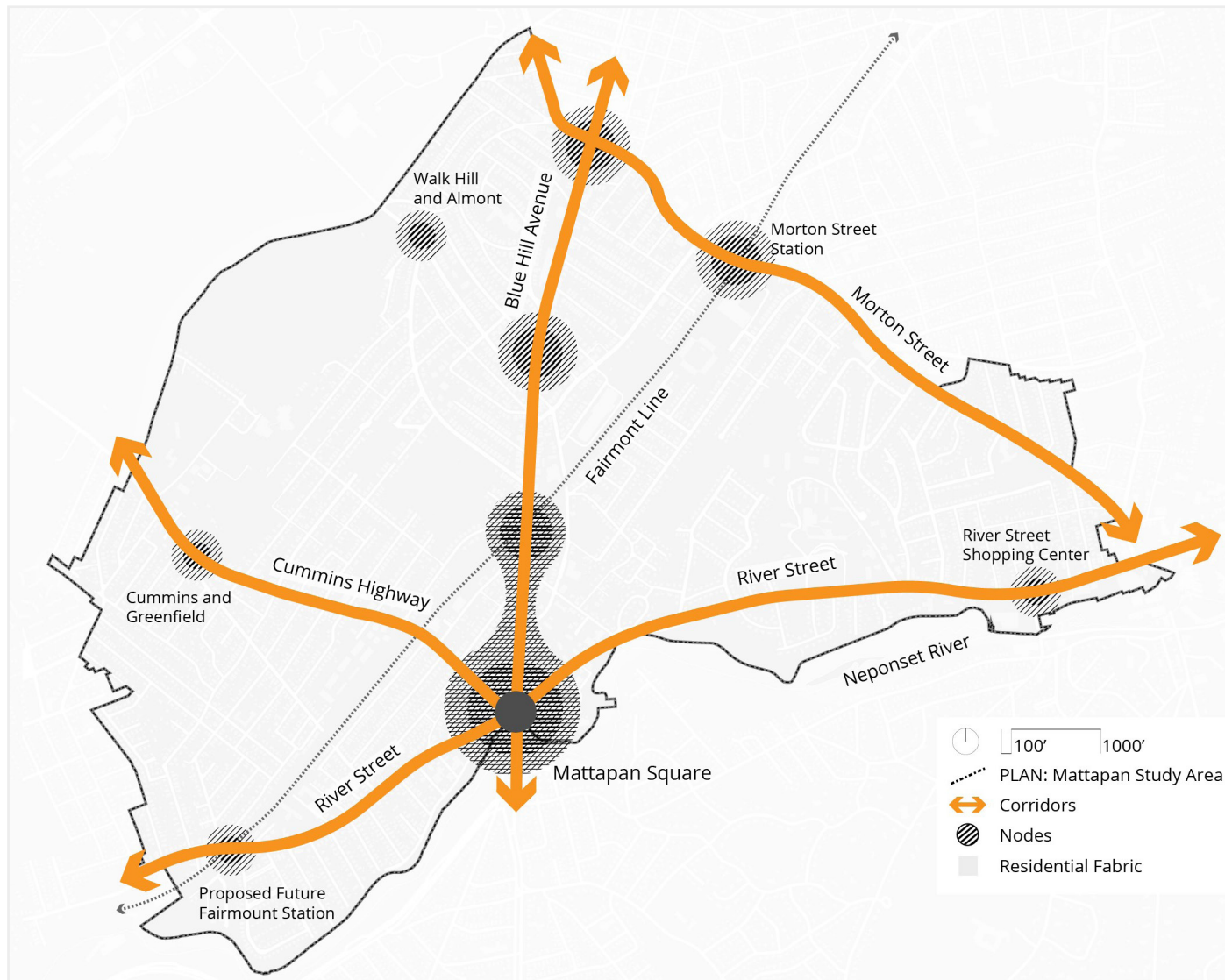
Corridor Focus Area: River Street
(Section 4.5)



Mattapan's corridors knit its residential fabric to nodes, as well as supporting travel to surrounding neighborhoods and Downtown.

4.1 Mattapan's Corridors

Mattapan's corridors are the neighborhood's arteries. From River to Morton Streets and from Cummins Highway to Blue Hill Avenue, these main roads stitch the residential areas of Mattapan to its nodes of activity, promoting the type of local movement that makes for dynamic neighborhoods.



The above map identifies the corridors in Mattapan. Corridors are the primary roadways in a neighborhood. In Mattapan, corridors include Blue Hill Avenue, Cummins Highway, Morton Street, and River Street.

Corridors also perform the critical task of linking Mattapan to the rest of Boston, supporting travel to surrounding neighborhoods and Downtown for work, school, or leisure.

Like nodes, corridors provide an opportunity to achieve the 10-minute neighborhood vision, while also providing space for more housing and local businesses. Corridors are well-connected to bus and rapid transit, making them prime locations for denser multi-family residential developments as well as amenities like restaurants, pharmacies, fitness centers, community centers, and other neighborhood establishments.

Finally, corridors are well used by people traveling by foot, mobility device, bike, bus, and car. It is critical that the streetscape along Mattapan's corridors be strengthened to promote safety and easier travel, as well as a lively public realm that welcomes pedestrian activity and facilitates neighborhood connection. The recommendations in this chapter describe how Mattapan's corridors can continue to support the travel of thousands of neighborhood residents and workers, while also promoting livability and cultural connection.



The modest zoning changes recommended in PLAN: Mattapan will make it easier to locate local business close to housing, or to add housing to areas with small business.



Mattapan's corridors are stages for community festivals and events, like the Haitian-American Unity Parade.

4.2 Corridor Recommendations

Mattapan's corridors link residents to jobs, school, and places for gathering or recreation. The proposals for corridors described in PLAN: Mattapan focus on safer, more efficient travel, as well as increased capacity for mixed-use development and space for cultural connection.

The following recommendations describe improvements to Mattapan's corridors and are organized by the five planning goals relevant to PLAN: Mattapan.

Equity & Environmental Justice

While Mattapan is known for its lush parks, its corridors often lack shade, leading to an urban heat island effect. Reducing the amount of pavement, planting more street trees, preserving existing ones, and improving planting conditions overall will provide and sustain much-needed shade along Mattapan's corridors. An expanded tree cover would help remove local air pollutants from vehicle emissions and make walking, biking, and waiting for the bus more comfortable and appealing. Expanded planting areas could incorporate stormwater collection for passive irrigation—improving survival changes for street trees—while increasing stormwater collection capacity during heavy rain events.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; Environment; Parks; Public Health (BPHC); BTM; PWD; Private Developers

Evaluation Metrics: Reduction in average daily temperatures; Increased water retention; Long-term reduction of adverse health impacts; Increased tree canopy

Housing

Similar to nodes, Mattapan's corridors are a prime locations for transit-oriented development (TOD), including larger residential projects, due to their access to amenities, rapid transit, and bus service. TOD projects, as a result, minimize trip making by car by making transit an attractive and competitive travel option for everyday trips.

All large residential projects are required to comply with the City's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) policy that prioritizes increasing affordability as well as housing families, seniors, and those living with disabilities.

Concentrating and promoting a mix of housing types along the corridors helps to relieve housing shortage pressures

Recommendations at a Glance

Equity & Environmental Justice

Strengthen public health and combat heat by increasing urban canopy and other green infrastructure, plus encouraging climate-friendly forms of mobility.

Housing

Site large residential projects along corridors. Pair increased height/density with benefits like affordability, improved public realm, and ground floor amenities.

Mobility

Eliminate physical barriers, separate buses from traffic, and reduce the number of transfers to make walking, biking, and transit convenient choices.

Jobs & Businesses

Foster new retail along corridors, particularly on the ground floor of new residential development. Connect businesses with City programs that support their success.

People & Places

Build moments of connection along corridors with more pop-up events, markets, and festivals, as well as permanent space for arts and cultural uses.

on Mattapan, thereby maintaining affordability for existing residents while increasing housing supply for new neighbors or allowing current Mattapan residents to downsize and remain in the neighborhood closer to existing and future amenities. New corridor development is capable of providing more homes without impacting the established character of the residential fabric.

Like in the nodes, increased height and density are coupled with community benefits, like increased affordability, opportunities for new ground-floor building amenities to add to the diversity of offerings already in Mattapan (retail, cultural/civic/community spaces), improved public realm amenities (shared open spaces, public squares, cafe spaces, street trees, planted beds, green infrastructure),

and improved transportation links (wide sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops). While PLAN: Mattapan proposes contextually appropriate changes to each corridor, additional corridor development potential is to be proportional to the community benefits offered.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Zoning and Development Review; MOH; Private Developers

Evaluation Metrics: Increase in number of affordable units; Decrease in number of households at risk for displacement; Increase in vacancy rate

Mobility

Corridors connect people to nodes and destinations within Mattapan and to other neighborhoods. As the backbone of the Mattapan's multimodal transportation network, corridors should provide an accessible, safe, and reliable experience for all travel modes. New crosswalks and shortening existing crosswalks will improve overall neighborhood accessibility but also reduce crossing pedestrians' exposure to conflicts with cars. Learn more about crosswalk recommendations on page 44.

Corridor and transit service improvements will also help make transit more useful for more trips by increasing bus reliability and frequency, reducing the number of transfers

between services, and directly connecting residents to the Longwood Medical Area, Fenway, and Downtown. New regional express services and connections to the Commuter Rail network may help discourage regional cut-through traffic in Mattapan and the impacts of congestion, pollution, and safety on its residents. Learn more about these proposed bus and rapid transit recommendations on pages 46-48.

City departments and State agencies are currently advancing plans and projects in Mattapan that advance PLAN: Mattapan and citywide goals. City projects include the redesign of Cummins Highway, Blue Hill Avenue, and Mattapan Square to meet contemporary design standards, add new and upgrade existing crosswalks, make transit a more attractive travel option, and introduce new trees, landscaping, and green infrastructure. These, as well as State projects, are further described in the Implementation chapter on page 81.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; BTM; PWD; MBTA; MassDOT; DCR

Evaluation Metrics: Decrease in number of vehicle trips per day; Increase in number of people making most trips by mode other than private vehicle; Reduction in fatal and injury crashes



Improvements to bus and rail networks recommended in PLAN: Mattapan can make transit more reliable and provide new connections to areas of opportunity. Green infrastructure, including increased tree canopy, provides shade and reduces urban heat island effect for passengers and pedestrians.

Jobs & Businesses

The addition of new housing units in mixed-use developments along Mattapan's corridors will help bring additional patrons to support the existing businesses. New mixed-use development will provide space for community-desired local businesses like sit-down restaurants, cafés, and retailers.

Strategic City investment along the corridors can accelerate the establishment of new local and small businesses to the neighborhood. These investments can also help to diversify the type of retail and services in the neighborhood. Here, too, existing programs like the SPACE Grant, Restore, technical assistance, and All Inclusive Boston can support both the unique needs of local businesses and also bring more investment in the local economy as a whole. Consideration can also be given to expanding the borders and purview of Mattapan Main Streets to these corridors to ensure that more local businesses are given access to City services and resources.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Zoning and Development Review; Economic Opportunity & Inclusion (OEI)

Evaluation Metrics: Increase in business and employment in Mattapan; Increase in diversity of type of businesses

People & Places

By definition, corridors are high-traffic areas. This offers a unique opportunity to build moments of connection and congregation into the corridor experience. Cherished community events such as the Haitian-American Unity Parade and Mattapan On Wheels use Mattapan's corridors as their stages, and there is community appetite for more events in public spaces, such as holiday markets, pop-up fitness classes, and street food festivals.

PLAN: Mattapan can accomplish this by enabling wider, more comfortable sidewalks with variable front yard setbacks, more generous open space requirements, simplifying permitting processes, providing more funding for cultural activities, and the creation of indoor and outdoor spaces for gathering and cultural activities (such as dance and arts education).

In particular, Mattapan's corridors would be a viable setting for hosting the City's recent Open Streets initiative, which temporarily closes major thoroughfares to motor traffic and opens them for pedestrian use. Holding an Open Streets day in Mattapan in 2023 and beyond would help residents



experience their streets in a new way and connect with neighbors and local businesses.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; Arts & Culture (MOAC), PWD, OEI

Evaluation Metrics: Increase in private open space; Increase in BIPOC-led community and cultural space

Mattapan's corridors are the neighborhood's arteries, stitching the neighborhood's residential fabric to its nodes, as well as to surrounding neighborhoods and Downtown Boston.

4.3 Corridor Mobility Spotlights

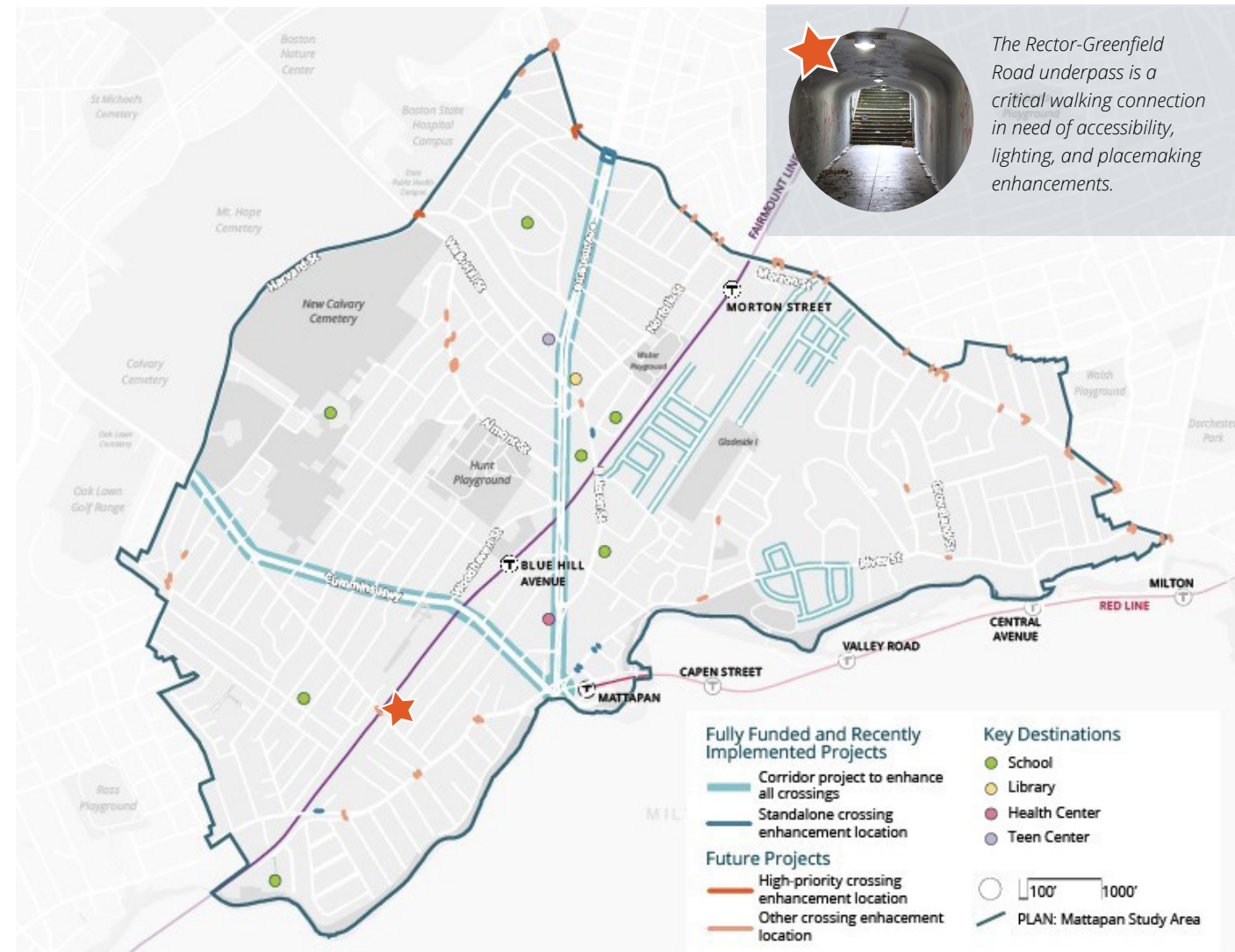
Shorter Crosswalks are Safer, More Comfortable Crosswalks

PLAN: Mattapan participants expressed concern about the safety and availability of crosswalks. Safer, more comfortable crosswalks are needed to encourage drivers to slow down and yield to people walking. All crosswalks should be fully accessible, especially near transit and destinations.

BPDA evaluated the safety, comfort, and accessibility conditions of all crosswalks in the PLAN: Mattapan study area. Crosswalks were highlighted as candidates for enhancement if they span more than two lanes without a signal or waiting area in the median, or span a distance of 60 feet without a waiting area in the median. Missing crosswalks were identified, too.

The evaluation found more than 80 locations that are candidates for crosswalk enhancement or new crosswalks. Many of these locations will be addressed through the Cummins Highway and Blue Hill Avenue projects. PLAN: Mattapan prioritized the remaining crosswalk locations, shown in the map below, based on proximity to MBTA services and important destinations such as schools, parks, and community centers.

Proposed Locations for New or Enhanced Crosswalks
 While the Cummins Highway and Blue Hill Avenue projects will address many uncomfortable crosswalks, many long crosswalks remain on Morton Street, which is State-owned west of Gallivan Boulevard.



Besides street redesign projects, like Cummins Highway and Blue Hill Avenue, both the City and State have programs to help, over time, improve crosswalks at these locations.

- The Boston Public Works Department (PWD) and Boston Transportation Department (BTD) can create new crosswalks and improve safety at those that already exist.
- BTD reviews constituent concerns about crosswalks on a regular basis. They can address some of these concerns relatively quickly by changing signs and pavement markings. Within the PLAN: Mattapan study area, you can see this type of project along River Street and where Harvard Street intersects with Deering Road and Courtland Road.
- Some crosswalk issues need more time to address because the best solution includes some amount of sidewalk and/or curb ramp construction. BTD and PWD collaborate in identifying these locations, and design them with feedback from neighbors. Development projects can design or construct these types of projects as mitigation.
- PWD is working to construct or upgrade approximately 1,600 curb ramps per year. They have surveyed more than 23,000 ramps citywide. An implementation plan will be developed next.
- The MBTA is improving crosswalks that serve bus stops and rapid transit stations. Its "Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure" (PATI) will result in full accessibility at all bus stops. As of 2022, the PATI program upgraded crosswalks at three bus stops in the PLAN: Mattapan study area.
- MassDOT upgrades existing crosswalks on its roadways based on routine reviews of safety data, for example where crashes occur. Addressing "high crash locations" is a priority. MassDOT recently upgraded crosswalks and intersection design along Morton Street between Harvard Street and Blue Hill Avenue.

New Connections:

Blue Hill Avenue Crossing from River Street to Mattapan Station

Today, Blue Hill Avenue is missing a crossing between River Street and Mattapan Station, requiring people to cross more streets than necessary. BTD has proposed this crossing as part of the Blue Hill Avenue Transportation Action Plan. When implemented, approximately 1,200 more residents would be within a 10-minute walk to Mattapan Station, 16 percent more residents than today.

The map shows the area around Mattapan Station. A legend indicates:

- Existing 10-minute Walk to Station (light blue area)
- Future 10-minute Walk to Station (darker blue area)
- Existing Station Access Point (T icon)
- New Walking Connection (orange star)

The photograph shows a street view looking across Blue Hill Avenue towards Mattapan Station. A red star is overlaid on the image to indicate the proposed crossing location. The caption notes that wider sidewalks create more waiting space for people walking and biking, and the new south crossing would directly link the west side of Blue Hill Avenue to Mattapan Station and the Neponset Greenway.

More Useful and Reliable Bus Service for Everyday Trips

Four out of every five Mattapan transit riders use the bus, but service is slow, unreliable, and often doesn't take riders where they want to go. Street and service enhancements can improve frequency, reliability, and better connect buses to the rail and rapid transit networks.

While some of these recommendations are carried forward from Go Boston 2030 and the Bus Network Redesign, PLAN: Mattapan recommends supplementary actions to further encourage a shift toward sustainable travel options and make the bus a more convenient choice for all trips. PLAN: Mattapan bus network recommendations propose extensions or higher-frequency service of existing bus routes, new bus routes, and new dedicated bus lanes to support bus reliability and attractiveness.

- **To make transit more useful for more trips, introduce an “Outer Ring” dedicated bus corridor with high-frequency service** on Morton Street and Gallivan Boulevard that connects Forest Hills, Morton Street, Ashmont, and a new infill station on the Braintree Branch of the Red Line.
- **To increase bus reliability and frequency, introduce dedicated bus lanes** on Blue Hill Avenue, Warren Street, Malcolm X. Boulevard, and Columbus Avenue, which serve Mattapan Routes 28, 29, and 31. (All four corridors are included within active planning projects within BTD or the MBTA.) In addition, upgrade Route 30 and Route 31 to high-frequency service. These upgrades may require completion of the expanded Arborway Bus Maintenance Facility, which will bring more buses to routes in and near Mattapan.
- **To reduce transfers between services, ensure one of the bus routes serving Mattapan Square runs directly into the Longwood Medical Area**, as recommended by the Go Boston 2030 and the Bus Network Redesign.
- **To discourage regional cut-through traffic in Mattapan, introduce express bus service** between the South Shore and Longwood Medical Area (LMA), and expand bus service between JFK/Umass and LMA. Over 20 percent of vehicles passing through Mattapan Square on weekday mornings are destined for LMA, Jamaica Plain, and Roxbury, areas with job opportunities but limited highway access and poor cross-town bus connectivity.

Improving Bus Reliability on Morton Street

Thousands of Mattapan residents ride MBTA Routes 21, 26, and 31 along Morton Street each weekday, but these routes suffer from delays and longer-than-scheduled travel times. PLAN: Mattapan recommends changes to Morton Street to create faster, more reliable bus service:

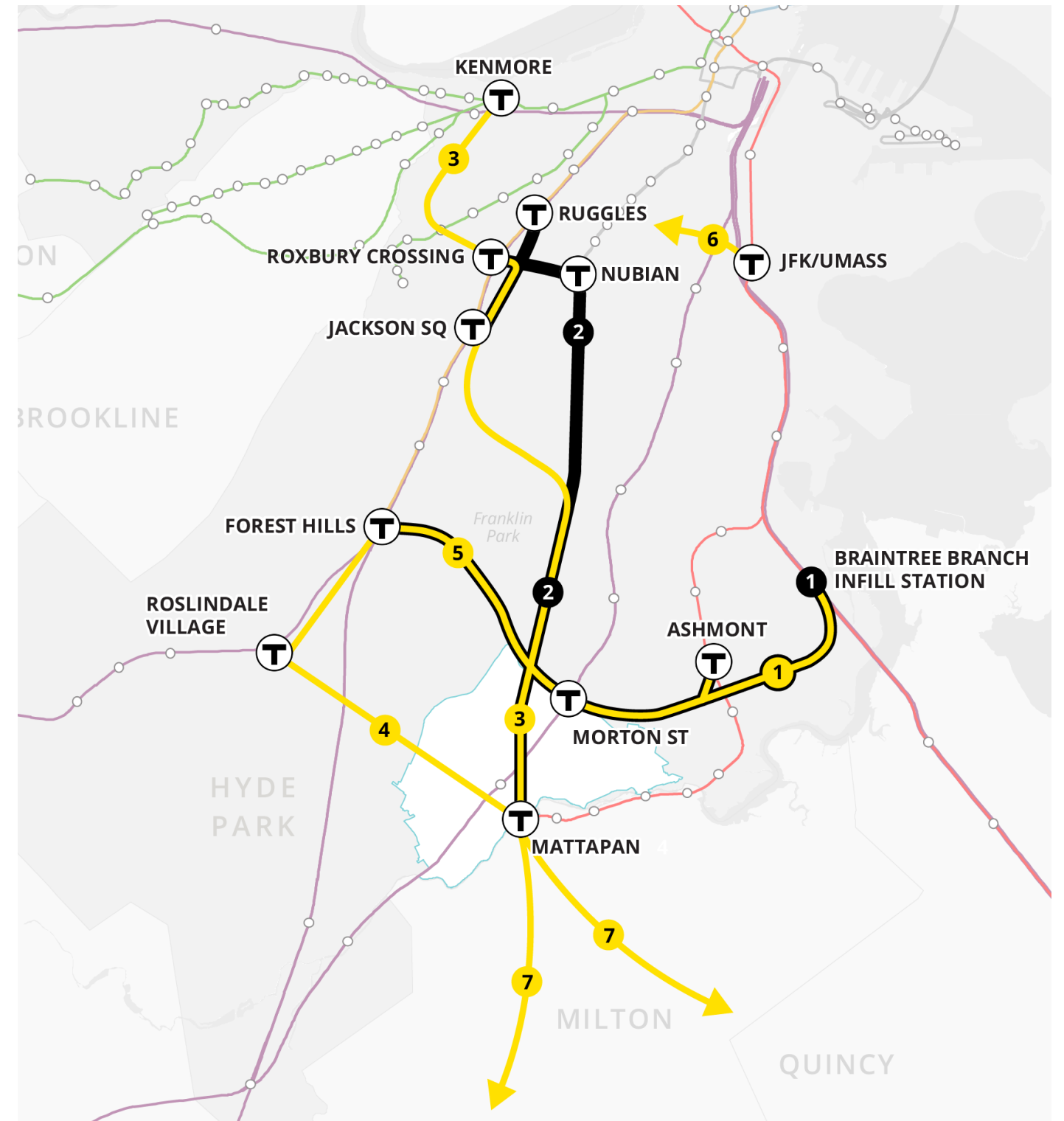
- Build bus bulbs to improve accessibility and make space for passenger waiting amenities. Bus bulbs allow buses to stop in-lane, speeding up service.
- Relocate bus stops to the far side of the intersection at Selden Street (toward Forest Hills) and Wildwood Street (toward Ashmont). Far-side bus stops improve reliability.
- Add benches to frequently used bus stops including near Harvard Street, Blue Hill Avenue, Wildwood Street, and Selden Street. Add benches and shelters to very frequently used bus stops near Harvard Street, Greendale Road, Wildwood Street, Norfolk Street, Evans Street, and W. Selden Street.
- Collaborate with the community, MBTA, and MassDOT to explore dedicated bus lanes on Morton Street in the future, including establishing new “Outer Ring” high-frequency bus service.



Morton Street at Wildwood Street
Despite being well used, bus stops along Morton Street are often inaccessible and lack basic amenities for passengers, like benches and shelters.

Bus Network Recommendations

Mattapan's buses can be more useful for more trips with investments in streets and service. Recommendations focus on more reliable and frequent service, dedicated bus lanes on the most congested corridors, fewer transfers, and express buses to provide an alternative for drivers cutting through.



- 1** Connect Forest Hills, Morton Street, Ashmont, and, in the long term, the Red Line Braintree Branch with an “Out Ring” high-frequency dedicated bus corridor
- 2** Introduce dedicated bus lanes on Blue Hill Ave, Warren St, Malcolm X Blvd, and Columbus Ave
- 3** Introduce one-seat, high-frequency bus service to Kenmore Station via the Longwood Medical Area
- 4** Upgrade Route 30 to high-frequency service
- 5** Upgrade Route 31 to high-frequency service
- 6** Expand bus service between JFK/Umass and Longwood
- 7** Introduce South Shore express bus service to Longwood

More Useful and Accessible Rail and Rapid Transit Service for Everyday Trips

More Fairmount Line trips have been added in recent years, while the Mattapan Trolley Transformation project will introduce modern, accessible light rail vehicles. Further improvements are needed to complete the implementation of the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative and to better connect the Mattapan Trolley to the rail network and job centers.

Like bus network recommendations, rail and rapid transit network recommendations are intended to make transit a convenient choice for more trips, not just downtown commutes, and encourage a shift toward sustainable travel options. Recommendations, which are shown on the following page and described below, include more frequent, faster Fairmount Line service, a modernized and extended Mattapan Trolley, and new walking and biking connections to existing rail stations.

- **To eliminate transit access barriers, introduce a south entrance to Morton Street Station** via a new pedestrian bridge (see the callout to the right). Similarly, create a new walking connection from Babson Street to Blue Hill Avenue Station along the Jubilee Church parking lot.
- **To make transit more useful for more trips, electrify the Fairmount Line with trains every 10-15 minutes**, as adopted by the MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board, and introduce River Street and Columbia Road Stations, consistent with the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative. Extending the Orange Line to Roslindale Village, as proposed in Go Boston 2030 and MBTA's Focus40, could encourage more direct bus-to-Orange Line connections for Mattapan residents, but further study is needed.
- **To make the Mattapan Line more accessible and reliable, upgrade the service to modern light rail vehicles.** During this transition, Mattapan Station and its maintenance facility would be reconfigured to support new, larger train cars. The station redesign should celebrate the Mattapan Line's history and community identity by retaining a historic trolley for viewing and expanding the Neponset Greenway gateway. As part of a River Street Station planning process, the MBTA should evaluate opportunities and feasibility of extending the Mattapan Line along excess Fairmount Line right-of-way.

New Connections:

Morton Street Station Pedestrian Bridge and Gladeside Urban Wild Paths

PLAN: Mattapan envisions a new Fairmount Line pedestrian bridge with access to the southern ends of the existing Morton Street Station platforms. If implemented alongside expanded Gladeside Urban Wild paths, approximately 3,500 more residents would be within a 10-minute walk to Morton Street Station, a 38-percent increase. By linking to Walker Playground the bridge would expand neighborhood park access and close a significant gap in Boston's Green Links.

Existing 10-minute Walk to Station

Future 10-minute Walk to Station

Existing Station Access Point

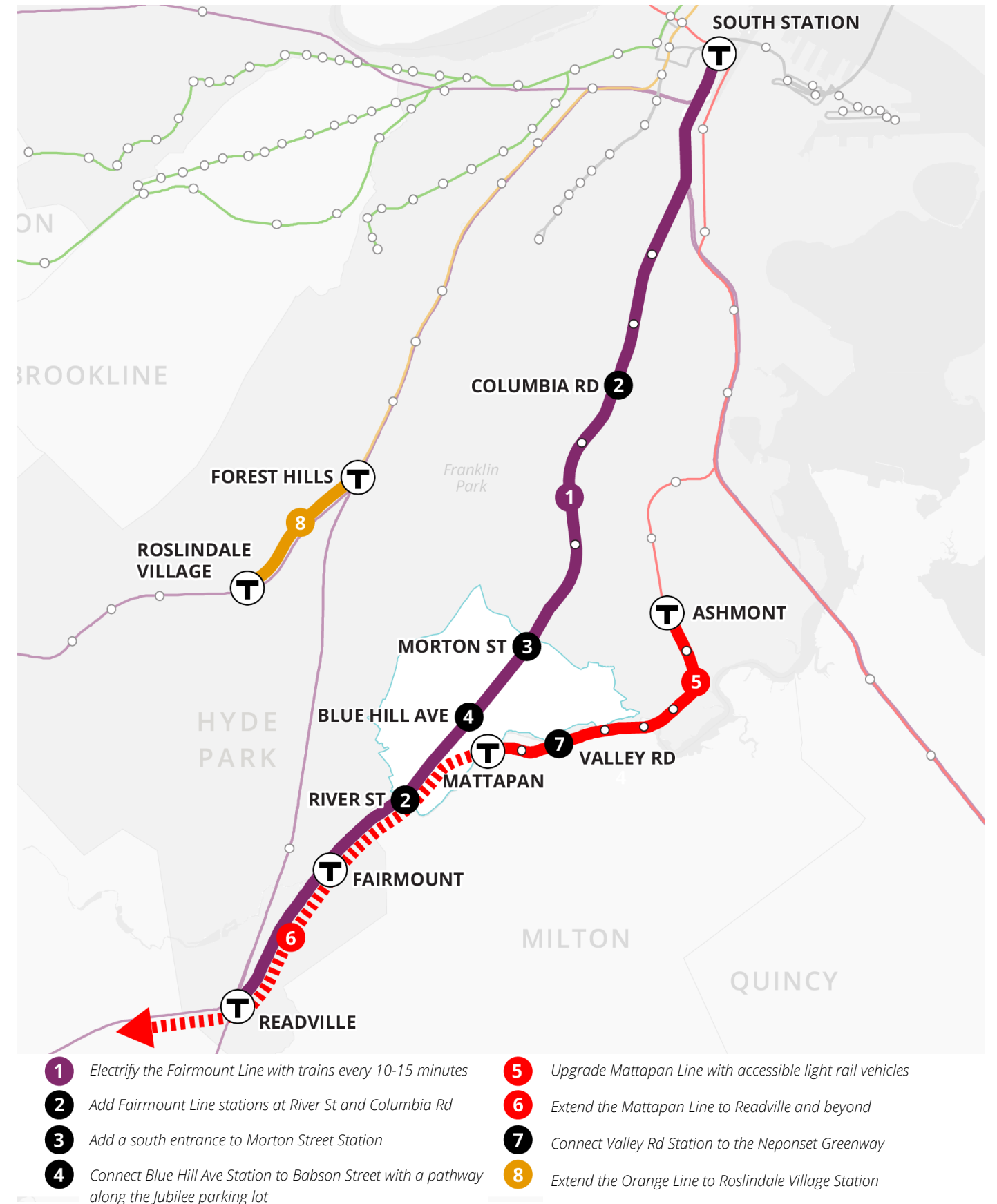
New Walking Connection

Morton Street Station, looking southwest

Morton Street Station platforms are immediately adjacent to open space and many homes, but people must walk an extra five to ten minutes to reach the station's access points via Morton Street.

Commuter Rail and Rapid Transit Recommendations

Mattapan's rail and rapid transit services can be more useful for more trips with targeted investments. Recommendations focus on more reliable and frequent service, modernizing services, greater accessibility to existing stations, and new stations.



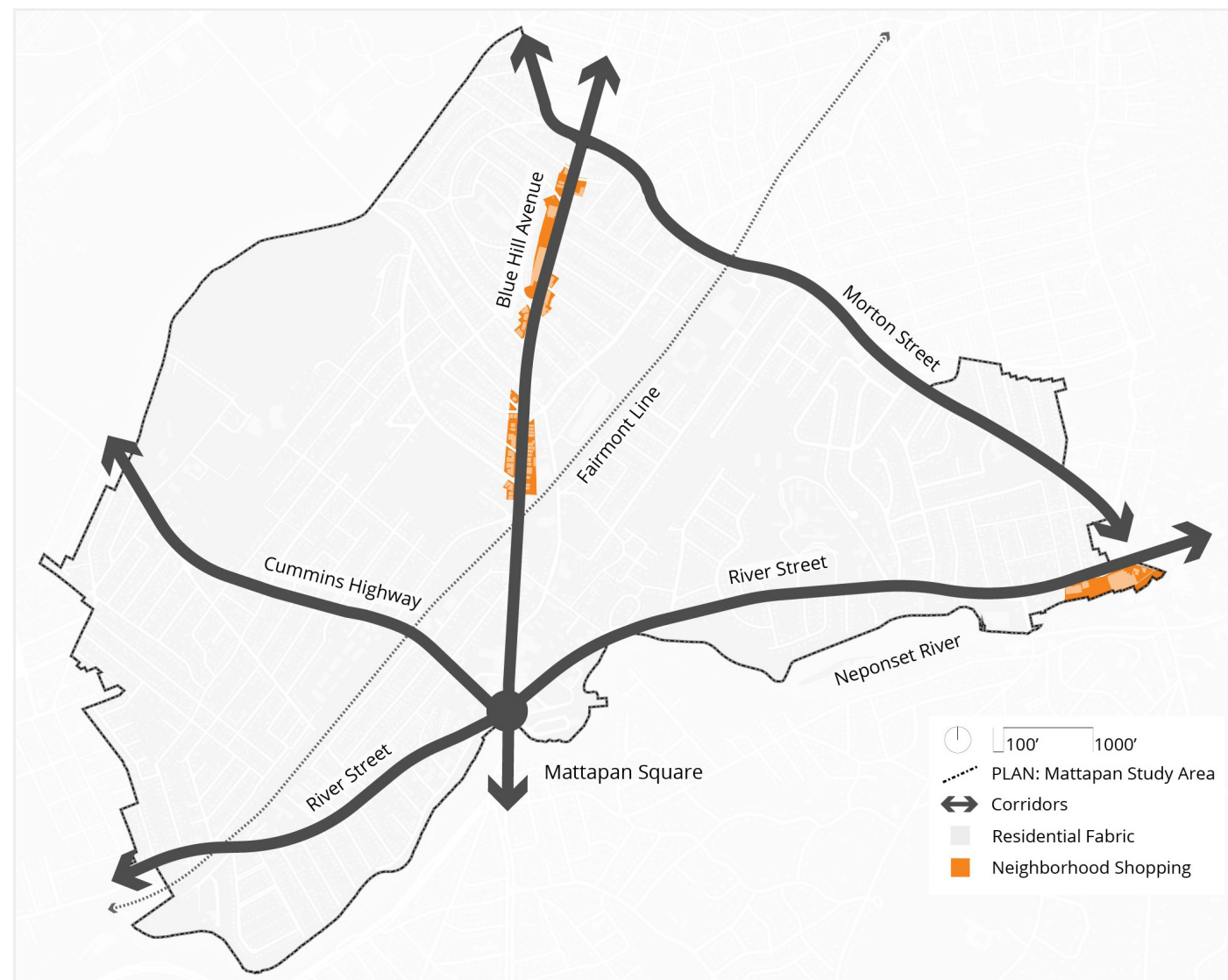
4.4 Corridor Zoning & Urban Design Guidelines

In order to develop a 10-minute neighborhood, expand areas allowing Neighborhood Shopping to improve quick access to essential goods and services within the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Shopping (NS) Zoning Subdistrict

Neighborhood Shopping zoning is currently in use in Mattapan. PLAN: Mattapan recommends expanding the NS zoning subdistrict to encourage commercial and mixed-use development along the Blue Hill Avenue corridor and a portion of River Street near Lower Mills.

Under this zoning designation, establishments like offices, veterinarians, museums, fitness centers, garden supply stores, and other destinations that provide goods and services to the larger neighborhood may be developed.



The Neighborhood Shopping zoning subdistrict is used in select sections of Mattapan's corridors, bringing a greater variety of convenience goods and services to the larger neighborhood.

Expanding multi-family residential zoning in Mattapan will encourage more housing along transit and amenity-rich corridors, locating people closer to where they live and work.

Multi-Family Residential (MFR) Zoning Subdistrict

The multi-family residential subdistrict is already established in the neighborhood to encourage low- to medium-density multi-family areas with a variety of allowed housing types.

PLAN: Mattapan recommends expanding the MFR subdistrict along Cummins Highway, Morton Street, and River Street to support new development near transit and the viability of amenities at neighborhood nodes.

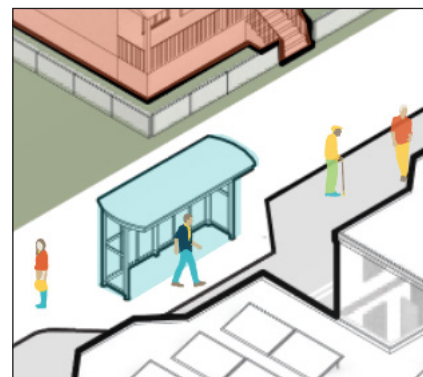


Multi-Family Residential zoning, which already exists in Mattapan, should be expanded along Mattapan's corridors, particularly along River and Morton Streets and Cummins Highway.

Urban Design Guidelines for Corridors

Jobs & Businesses:

Expand denser, multi-family housing along Mattapan's corridors to bring people closer to transit options for commuting and make transit a more attractive option for everyday travel. Bring amenities and services closer to existing and new housing along corridors, helping Mattapan's local business scene thrive.



People & Places:

The expansion of MFR and NS zoning designations will bring local amenities and new housing to Mattapan's transit-rich corridors, supporting easier access to services and upholding the 10-minute neighborhood vision.

- Community benefits from residential development can support investments in the public realm, such as better amenities for transit riders and pedestrians.
- While not required within NS subdistricts, PLAN: Mattapan recommends variable front yard setbacks in order to better facilitate activity along the street and promote additional tree canopy.

Housing:

Encourage multi-family development at moderate densities, in keeping with the scale of recent successful multi-family developments.

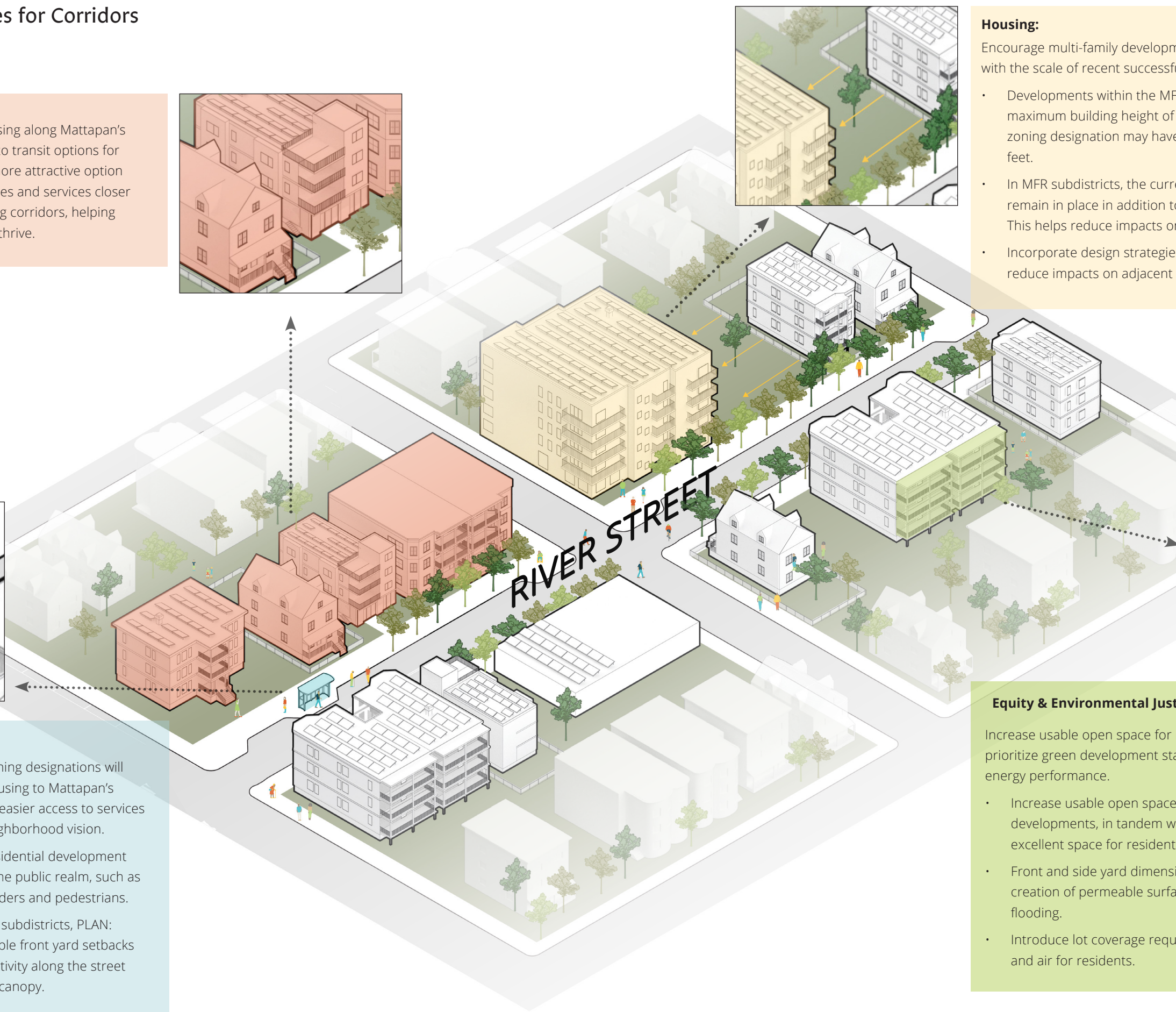
- Developments within the MFR zoning designation may have a maximum building height of 45 feet; developments within the NS zoning designation may have a maximum building height of 55 feet.
- In MFR subdistricts, the current applicable rear-yard setbacks remain in place in addition to the proposed lot coverage targets. This helps reduce impacts on adjacent low-density areas.
- Incorporate design strategies, including rear yard setbacks, to reduce impacts on adjacent lower-scale areas.



Equity & Environmental Justice:

Increase usable open space for residential developments and prioritize green development standards, including requirements for energy performance.

- Increase usable open space per unit for new residential developments, in tandem with design guidelines to provide excellent space for residents and provide stormwater control.
- Front and side yard dimensional regulations support the creation of permeable surface areas, reducing stormwater flooding.
- Introduce lot coverage requirements to promote additional light and air for residents.



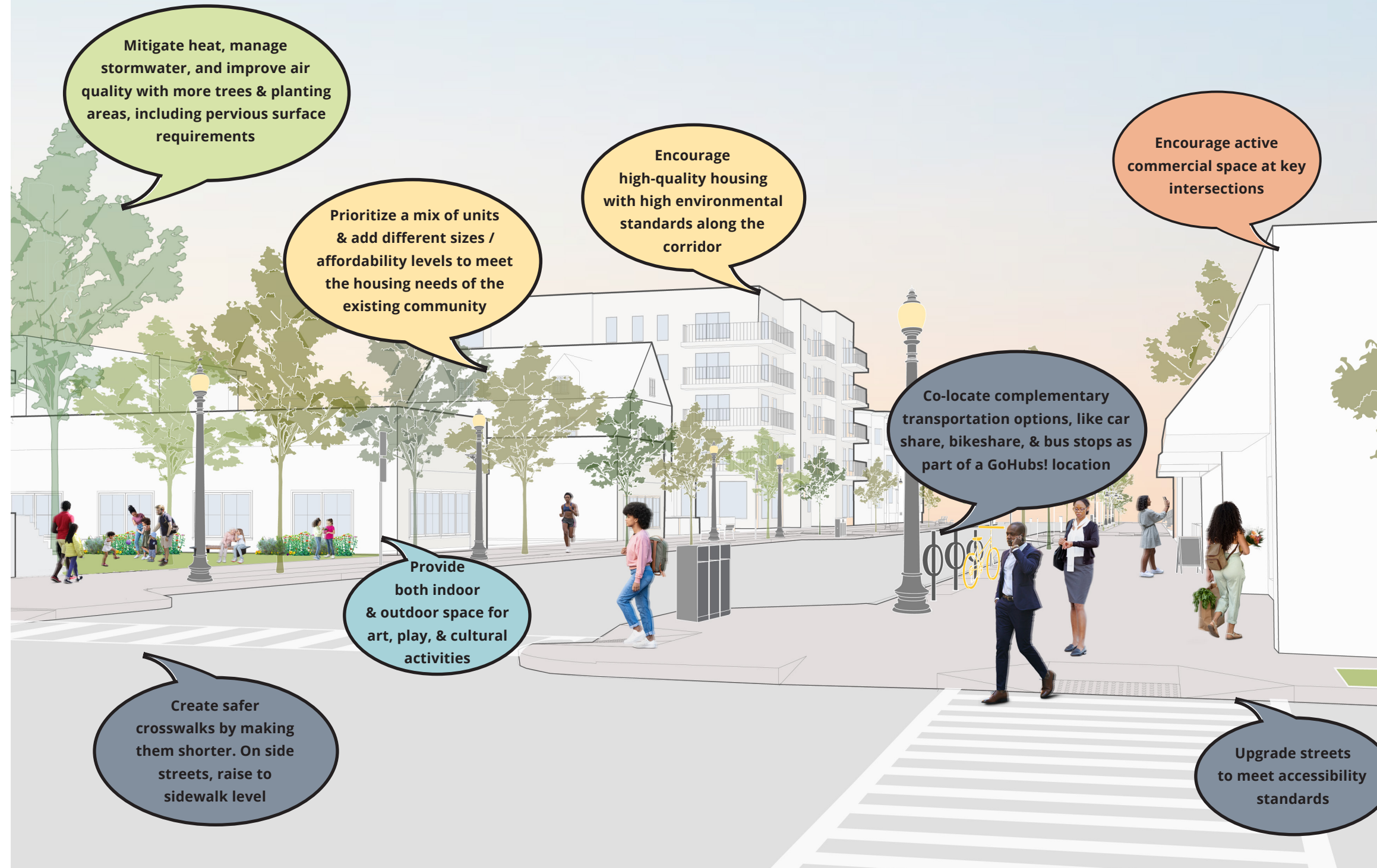
Strategies for Active, Safe, and Resilient Corridors

Encourage ground-floor activity that encourages frequent activity in the public realm

- Where appropriate, particularly near transit and at key intersections, allow for mixed-use development.
- Encourage variable front setbacks to provide outdoor gathering and dining space, especially at corners.

Potential Future Corridor Condition (Morton Street)

Upgrade to meet accessibility standards and design physical spaces that make it easy to make healthy choices. Create safer crossings by making them shorter and, where there is a traffic signal, giving people more time to cross. Encourage variable front setbacks to provide outdoor gathering and dining space, especially at corners.



Allow additional height and density on parcels directly facing corridors

- Parcels abutting corridors can support more height and density.
- At key intersections, encourage mixed-use development to provide neighborhood services and amenities.
- Encourage a mix of housing types with an emphasis on increased housing supply and affordability.

Reduce adverse health impacts and mitigate climate change

- Maintain planting zones and promote street trees to reduce the heat island impact. This can be achieved through the implementation of lot coverage maximums among other interventions.

Design streets to promote safe behavior, reduce speeds, and promote walking, biking, and transit use

- Separate buses from traffic to make bus service faster and more reliable. Dedicated spaces make the street work better for everyone, no matter how you travel
- Design for slower speeds by building curb extensions to fill in extra space at wide or irregularly-shaped intersections. The curb extensions create a "T" in the intersection instead
- Improve the visibility between pedestrians and drivers by providing clear corners ahead of a crossing. This reduces the likelihood of crashes at intersections.
- Improve the comfort and dignity of bus stops with amenities such as benches, lighting, trash cans, and real-time arrival information. Also, make transit faster and more reliable with bus lanes, head starts at traffic signals, and/or bus stops next to the travel lanes.
- Make walking safer and more accessible by installing crosswalks at each bus stop and in more frequent intervals
- Install signage and informational kiosks at GoHubs! to educate residents on connections to nearby parks, paths, and community amenities

Make space for residents to enjoy the public realm

- Encourage new development to include improvements to the public realm and/or space for art or cultural events
- Hold more festivals, markets, and other pop-up events along corridors

4.5 Corridor Focus Area: River Street

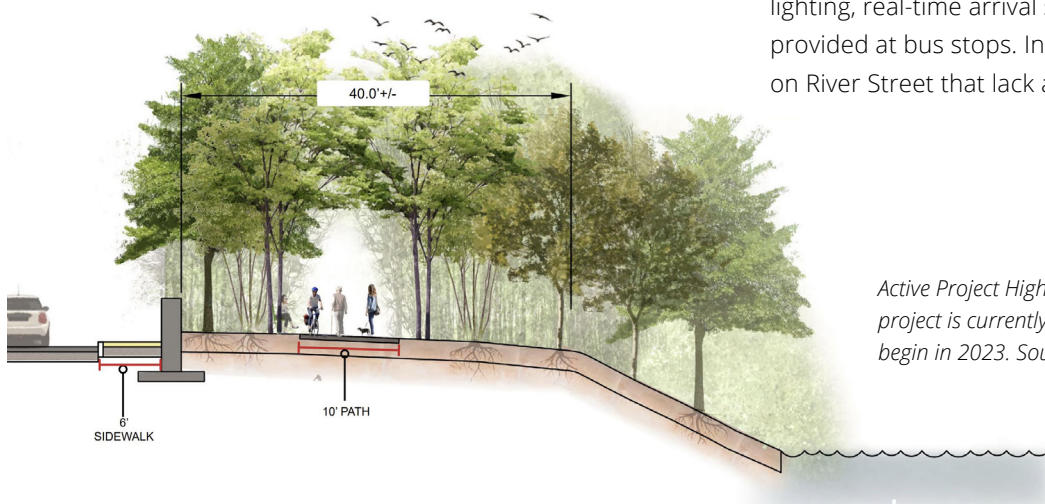
Compared to the rest of the corridors in Mattapan, River Street is a lower-density corridor that runs along the Neponset River. It provides access to Ryan Playground, the Neponset River Greenway, Mattapan Square, and shopping beyond Mattapan in Cleary Square and Lower Mills.



River Street - current condition.

Set the stage for a future infill station on the Fairmount Line. With the future electrification of the Fairmount Line, an infill station at River Street could be added to the route without significant impacts to travel time. A new station at River Street—as originally proposed during the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative—would provide around 10,000 existing residents with a 20-minute ride to Downtown, 95 percent of whom are people of color. The impact of a new station at River Street can also be amplified by concentrating new housing and small neighborhood businesses around the station into a new node, as proposed on page 28.

Use light-touch transit investments to make taking the bus more comfortable and reliable. MBTA Routes 24, 33, and 240 operate along River Street in the PLAN: Mattapan study area. (The MBTA's Bus Network Redesign initiative proposes replacing Route 33 with an extended Route 24.) Like Morton Street, River Street has numerous opportunities for small-scale interventions—like making space for bus stop amenities with larger sidewalks in concentrated areas—to improve the transit experience for Mattapan residents. Along River Street, most bus stops see between up to 80 boardings per day; however, stops near the intersection of Cummins Highway see over 350 daily boardings. Basic amenities like shelters and benches—as well as others like trash cans, lighting, real-time arrival signs, and bike parking—should be provided at bus stops. In addition, there are eight bus stops on River Street that lack a crosswalk. Adding crosswalks to



Active Project Highlight: The proposed Edgewater Greenway project is currently under design. Construction is proposed to begin in 2023. Source: MASS.gov

each of these bus stops will ensure people can easily get to and from the bus stop for both their inbound and outbound trips, and will also help make the neighborhood generally more walkable.

Stitch River Street, Edgewater Drive, and the Edgewater Greenway together with continuous access.

Today, the Neponset Greenway is a cherished community path that provides safe and separated walking, biking, and recreational access for Mattapan residents. However, the path only runs parallel to River Street east of Mattapan Square. West of Mattapan Square, a proposed path along Edgewater Drive, known as the Edgewater Greenway, will extend similar benefits to additional residents. Curb ramps and crosswalks should connect the Edgewater Greenway to

all adjacent side streets—Tesla Street to Osceola Street—at logical locations. Additionally, the Edgewater Greenway should incorporate new Neponset River bridge crossings near Tesla Street and Wachusett Street to seamlessly connect to the Brush Hill Road pathway and broader Neponset River path network.

In the 2023 construction season, the Boston Public Works Department will be reconstructing Newcroft Circle, Southmere Road, Ledgebrook Road, Leahaven Road, and Meadowbank Avenue to create more comfortable and accessible crosswalks. This capital project will reconstruct sidewalks, add new crosswalks, resurface streets, install new street lighting, and replant a number of trees in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department.

With redevelopment and capital projects, River Street can be improved with wider sidewalks, street trees, and bus stop amenities.



05. Residential Fabric

Residential fabric refers to areas outside of nodes and corridors that are mostly housing.

This chapter describes modest zoning changes and development guidelines that are focused on building local equity with a diverse, relevant mix of housing types, as well as expansion of Boston's Green Links to better connect residents to open spaces and neighborhood destinations.

In this section, learn more about:

Mattapan's Residential Fabric
(Section 5.1)

Residential Fabric Recommendations
(Section 5.2)

Residential Fabric Mobility Spotlight
(Section 5.3)

Residential Fabric Urban Design Guidelines
(Section 5.4)

Focus on: Additional Dwelling Units
(Section 5.5)



Over the last 60 years, Mattapan has offered a pathway to homeownership for thousands of Black Bostonians.

5.1 Mattapan's Residential Fabric

Mattapan is a primarily residential neighborhood—and proudly so. It's a neighborhood where people rent or buy homes, raise their families, and settle down for generations.

With a higher owner-occupancy rate (38 percent) than the citywide average (35 percent), Mattapan has offered a crucial pathway to homeownership and building generational wealth for thousands of families. This is especially true for Black homeowners, who make up 36 percent of Mattapan's owner-occupants (compared to the citywide average of 28 percent).

However, Mattapan has become increasingly affected by the citywide housing shortage. With Boston's population growing faster than the amount of available housing units, pressure for available housing (which increases housing prices) has been placed on all neighborhoods, including Mattapan. It is critical that Mattapan's existing residents are not affected by these rising housing costs and are able to continue to stay in the neighborhood they call home, while also supporting new neighbors who are moving to Mattapan. This chapter describes recommendations for Mattapan's residential fabric that focus on supporting existing residents, building local equity, and providing more affordable and intergenerational housing and recreational opportunities now and into the future.



Mattapan's residential fabric is overwhelmingly low-density. Seen here are examples of the housing typologies that are typical to Mattapan and make up the neighborhood's unique character.



The majority of Mattapan is characterized by its residential fabric. These are the areas between corridors and where most Mattapan residents live. Buildings are most often made up of up to three homes.

5.2 Residential Fabric Recommendations

Taking up the majority of the physical study area, recommendations for Mattapan's low-rise residential fabric are focused on building local equity and providing a more diverse and relevant mix of housing units and recreational opportunities now and into the future.

The following recommendations describe objectives for Mattapan's residential fabric and are organized by the five planning goals relevant to PLAN: Mattapan.

Equity & Environmental Justice

Mattapan is home to significant open spaces but connections between them and traveling from residential areas can be unsafe and unpleasant. Through localized improvements to Boston's Green Links, Mattapan residents will have an easier time walking or biking to open spaces from their homes. Read more about improvements to the Green Links on page 68.

While Mattapan has 35 percent tree canopy coverage (higher than the citywide average of 27 percent), Mattapan had a net loss of 10 acres of tree canopy from 2014-2019, with the greatest losses on residential lands. Residential land, which is where most of Boston's canopy lies, requires actions by private owners, who often need education on proper planting and care practices. Additionally, the Urban Forest Plan inventory observed that Mattapan is one of five neighborhoods in which trees are in greater conflict with above ground utilities. Opportunities for reducing these conflicts should be considered.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; Environment; Parks; Public Health (BPHC)

Evaluation Metrics: Reduction in average daily temperatures; Increased water retention; Long-term reduction of adverse health impacts

Housing

Boston's housing shortage means that new housing must be built in all neighborhoods, thereby easing high demand and stabilizing housing prices. PLAN: Mattapan's recommendations for housing are twofold. First, ensure that all existing Mattapan residents have the resources and support they need in order to stay in their homes and neighborhood. Second, increase the neighborhood's housing

Recommendations at a Glance

Equity & Environmental Justice

Make it easier for residents to walk or bike to local parks by improving Boston's Green Links in Mattapan.

Housing

Ensure that existing Mattapan residents have the resources needed to stay in their homes. Increase housing supply through ADUs and other diverse developments.

Mobility

Link people to neighborhood commercial centers, open spaces, and other destinations with safer, more comfortable, and greener connections.

Jobs & Businesses

Focus on safe and efficient connections from residents' homes to their places of employment, school, and services.

People & Places

Strengthen capacity for connection and public realm place-keeping within residential fabric. Allow ADUs to have accessory art uses and encourage artist workspace.

supply (and therefore ease demand and competition for current housing stock in Mattapan).

PLAN: Mattapan's housing recommendations for the residential fabric highlight that large impact does not have to come from large development. In order to respect Mattapan's historically low-density, low-rise nature, multi-family developments will, by and large, be clustered along corridors and within nodes, which can more readily handle such projects due to their proximity to transit and the taller heights/floor areas that are typical for such areas. Within the traditional residential fabric, infill development that is in keeping with neighborhood character will create more low-rise (1-3 family) housing stock and offer housing opportunities for new generations of Mattapan residents. PLAN: Mattapan also proposes an expansion of Boston's

Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) policy, which will create the potential for increased housing without large-scale development. There are approximately 2,400 lots in Mattapan that could provide a new housing opportunity through ADU 3.0, supporting existing residents and increasing housing supply, including intergenerational housing. See page 72 for an in-depth overview of ADU 3.0 and how it can benefit Mattapan's current homeowners and future residents.

It's also important to leverage existing housing programs the City has to offer in support of maintaining homeownership levels. In addition, PLAN: Mattapan recommends working with the Mayor's Office of Housing to provide additional support and services for the purposes of creating more community control in the housing market.

In addition to existing housing programs, PLAN: Mattapan recommends leveraging City-owned and controlled land to create additional housing to support the Mattapan community. The Boston Public Health Commission's (BPHC) campus on River Street, as identified in the Mayor's Public Land for Public Good report, is one of the City's largest publicly controlled assets.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Zoning and Development Review; MOH; Private Developers, BPHC

Evaluation Metrics: Increase in number of affordable units; Increase in number of ADUs in the neighborhood; Decrease in number of households at risk for displacement; Increase in vacancy rate

Mobility

PLAN: Mattapan's focus for the transportation network within the residential fabric is to slow speeds on residential streets and to make it safe, comfortable, and attractive to reach neighborhood destinations on foot or by bike. PLAN: Mattapan focuses on connecting neighbors with the Green Links through a series of on- and off-street paths connecting neighbors to the rich open spaces and community destinations within the neighborhood.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; BTM; PWD; Parks; MassDOT; DCR

Evaluation Metrics: Decrease in number of vehicle trips per day; Reduction in fatal and injury crashes

Jobs & Businesses

As described in Chapters 3 and 4, new jobs and businesses are to be concentrated in Mattapan's nodes and along its corridors. Within the residential fabric, PLAN: Mattapan focuses on connecting residents' homes to their places of employment, wherever they may be.

PLAN: Mattapan aims to make transit travel more reliable for all residents. In many cases that means guiding development to well-connected transit areas (such as along corridors or in nodes). For the residential fabric, this means making the trip to and from public transit as enjoyable and smooth as possible.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Zoning and Development Review; Economic Opportunity & Inclusion (OEI)

Evaluation Metrics: Increase in business and employment in Mattapan; Increase in diversity of type of businesses

People & Places

PLAN: Mattapan's approach to linking corridors and nodes to the residential fabric is meant to bring people closer to cultural assets and to each other. But it's also important to strengthen capacity for connection and public realm place-keeping *within* the residential fabric. The proposed ADU 3.0 policy would expand Mattapan's housing stock for intergenerational families. In addition, future zoning could allow accessory arts uses to encourage the development of artist workspace within the residential fabric.

Participating Actors: BPDA/Development Review; Arts & Culture (MOAC)

Evaluation Metrics: Increase in intergenerational housing, Increase in artist live-work units in Mattapan

5.3 Residential Fabric Mobility Spotlight

Connecting People to Parks and Community Destinations with Green Links

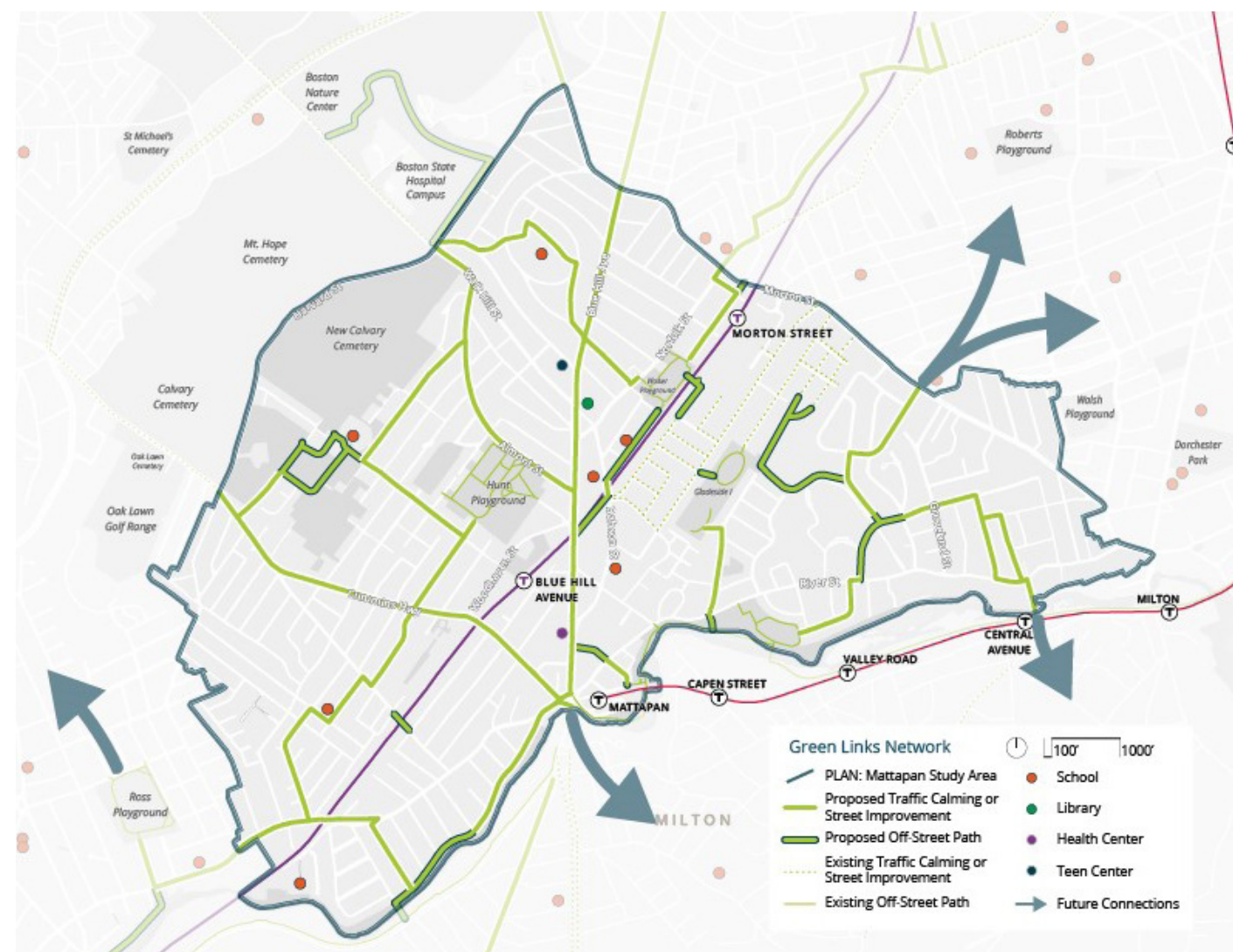
Access to open space increases physical activity and promotes good health and peace of mind. Boston's Green Links connect people to Boston's greenway and open space network with safer street crossings and new paths, on-street bikeways, and use of low-traffic residential streets.

Mattapan is rich in open space, including passive and recreational parks, playgrounds, urban wilds, and the Neponset Greenway. While PLAN: Mattapan surveying found that although adults and youth alike prefer to walk or bike to these beloved spaces, the existing Green Links network of on- and off-street connections is underdeveloped due to barriers presented by waterways, topography, railroads, and major streets.

PLAN: Mattapan envisions a Green Links network that includes projects in progress by the City, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), community groups, and others, as well as new connections. The proposed Mattapan Green Links network incorporates the envisioned Fairmount Greenway and in-design Edgewater Greenway, and proposes a new pedestrian bridge linking Walker Playground and the West Selden area to Morton Street Station.

Proposed Green Links

The proposed Green Links network connects open spaces and destinations using public streets and existing and proposed shared-use paths that avoid steep terrain, wherever possible.



Green Links connect open spaces and their off-street pathways with connections made by sidewalks, separated bike lanes, enhanced crossings, and low-traffic streets. Creating a comfortable Green Links environment often requires slowing vehicle speeds on quiet residential streets. Speed humps (top image) slow down drivers and help ensure that residential areas are safe to walk, bike, or play in. On main streets with more traffic, separated bike lanes and enhanced crosswalks (bottom image) make walking and biking safer and more attractive travel options.

5.4 Residential Fabric Urban Design Guidelines

Mattapan’s residential fabric has and will continue to see incremental changes as more new housing is built on open parcels or through the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock. In general, PLAN: Mattapan calls for the preservation of the existing style and scale of these residential fabric areas.



While a certain level of consistency exists in the current housing stock, Mattapan today enjoys a good deal of variation in design from one home to the next.

Larger multi-family residential and commercial projects will be limited to both new and existing nodes and corridors of Mattapan (outlined in Chapters 3 and 4) where they can take advantage of adjacent transit options and blend naturally with Mattapan’s existing larger building stock. Smaller-scale multi-family projects can and should find a home within Mattapan’s lower-scale residential areas. The preservation of the existing building stock in these areas is an important priority for PLAN: Mattapan.

New development will be expected to make best efforts to retain existing buildings in order to preserve Mattapan’s built form and character, but also as a means to reduce the environmental impacts of new construction.

Infill Development within the Residential Fabric

All new residential development should acknowledge, enhance, and promote the existing character of its surroundings. Although new buildings will inevitably evolve with respect to style and materials, the basic height, building footprints, and rich architectural detail that is found within the neighborhood today should be reflected in new buildings

to come. Basic dimensional zoning requirements including front yard setbacks, limits on building square footage, height, and open space will remain unchanged from the current zoning. This will help ensure that new buildings can maintain important key features found in the area today, including ample green front yards and consistency with respect to height and scale. New buildings should have features that meet Mattapan’s needs, including improved energy and environmental performance, safety, accessibility, and opportunities for cultural expression. The inclusion of front porches, stoops, and sitting areas are important design elements that help promote community building and social interaction between future and existing neighbors.

Parking Requirements for Infill Development

New buildings should include a variety of primary and secondary architectural elements that contribute to the rich fabric of homes and strive to include unique features that add interest and human scale to the overall massing and fenestration of the building stock. Providing on site parking is often a challenge in the design of new homes. Historically,

most of the housing stock in Mattapan provided parking in the form of side yard driveways or detached garages, often located within rear yards. These designs are very effective at reducing the public visibility of parking and paved areas that otherwise cannot be improved with planting and landscaping.

Contemporary buildings that provide parking within the primary structure must make special efforts to locate garage doors on secondary facades where their impact on the overall building architecture can be minimized, as well as limiting the size of the garage doors. In addition, special care should be made to maintain interior parking garages within the limits of the building footprint. Parking areas beneath buildings that spill out beyond the perimeter walls of the building cannot be properly screened and should be avoided. Front yard parking is also inconsistent with the character of Mattapan’s neighborhoods and is highly discouraged.

Landscape Design in the Residential Fabric

Not only should new buildings take design cues from the existing neighborhood norms, site and landscape plans also will be expected to incorporate a similar amount and quality

of open space in new infill development. The potential for new ADU structures to occupy more open space in side and rear yards than what currently exists in Mattapan will make it imperative that remaining open spaces are landscaped to maximize trees and plantings that help address Boston’s climate goals. Trees and other plantings can be used for screening and buffering, and are particularly adept at establishing “transitional zones” between areas of higher-scale development and more traditionally low-rise areas. The retention of existing trees, particularly those six inches in caliper or higher, should be prioritized in the case of all new development or renovations. Retention of existing tree canopy, particularly on privately-owned parcels where a majority of the City’s tree canopy/cover exists, is critical to a number of climate ready goals—abating heat island, absorbing storm water, and sequestering carbon—so a thoughtful approach to added density will be required on all sites.



Retaining existing trees and maximizing the quality of open spaces in new residential development will help combat urban heat island effect and uphold climate-resiliency goals.

5.5 Focus On: Additional Dwelling Units

Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) are a low-impact way to meet the urgent need for more housing while maintaining the character of Mattapan’s residential fabric. They are also one of the most effective ways that a homeowner can ensure that their property best fits their family’s unique needs.

The Opportunity

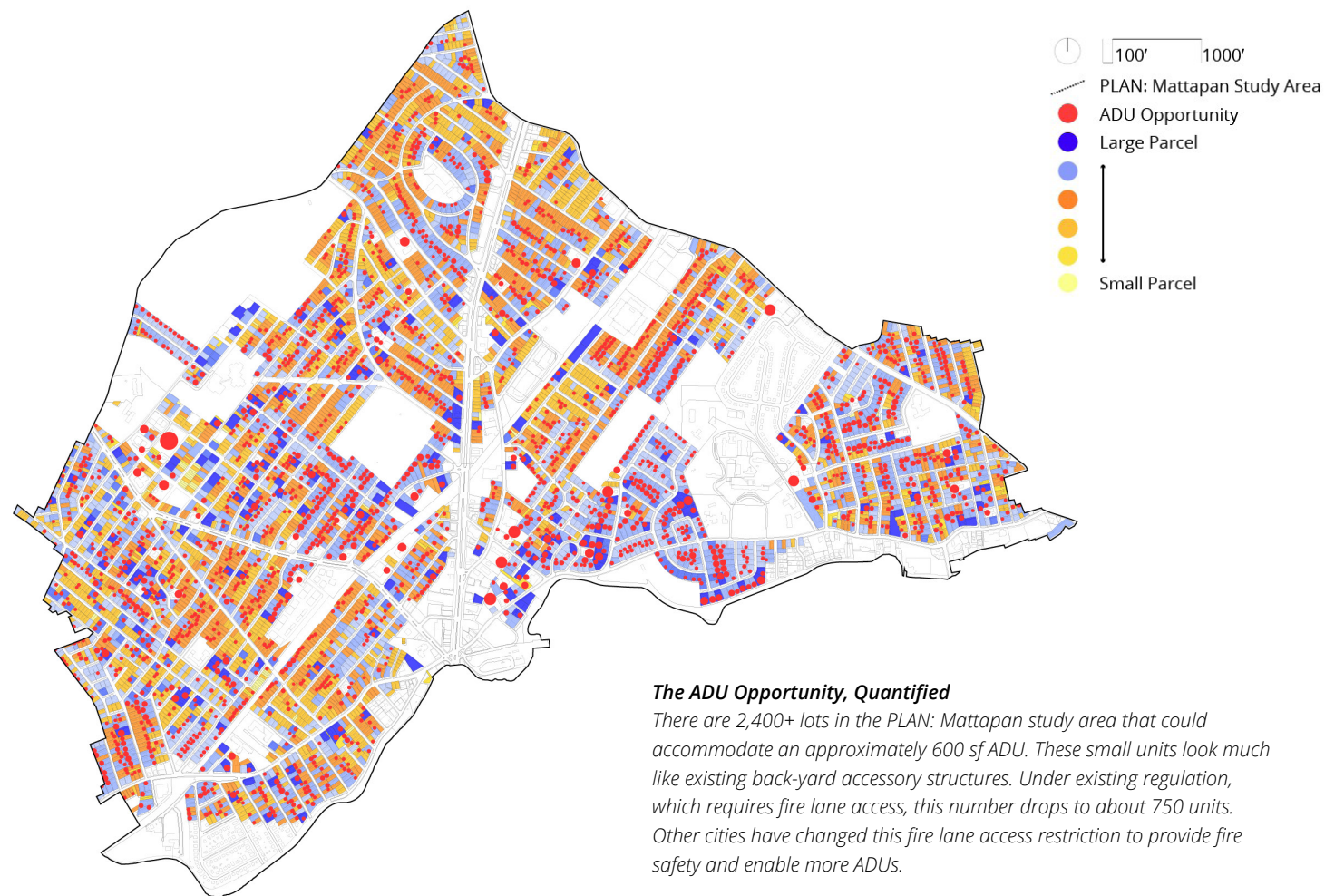
As urban areas expand and regional property values increase, homeownership opportunities and affordable rental housing are more challenging to secure. While the market in Mattapan does not currently support robust financial returns on new housing development for most investors, it is possible that this will change over the coming years, making real estate development of various scales in Mattapan more attractive to external investors.

PLAN: Mattapan recommends small-scale and incremental changes to the residential fabric by and for the Mattapan community. Through a combination of regulatory changes

to allow infill development and the packaging of technical assistance around development financing, management, and execution, the intent is to enable existing homeowners to add value and needed units to their properties, increasing both local equity and housing supply.

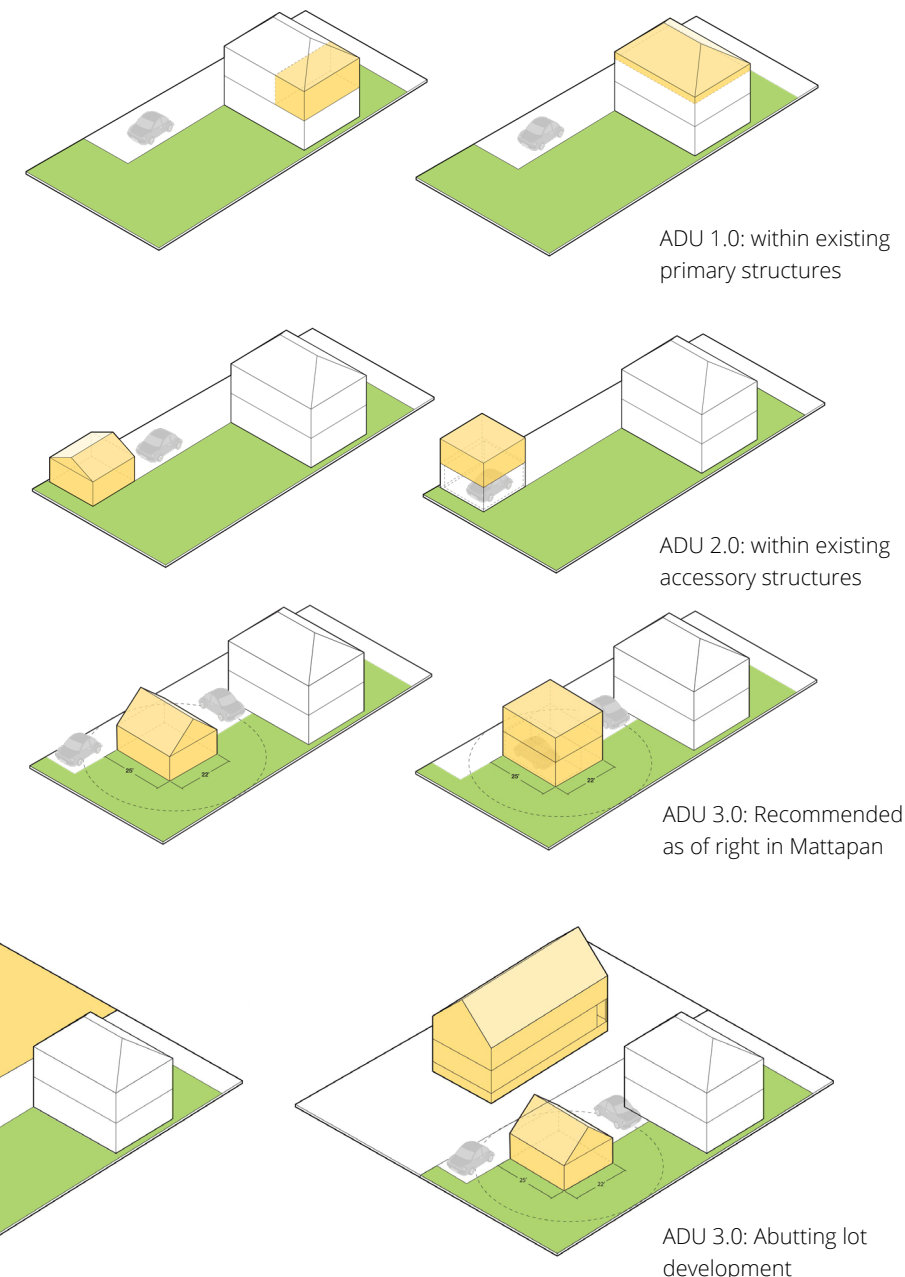
Additional Dwelling Unit 3.0 (ADU 3.0)

Throughout community engagement in Mattapan, one of the pieces of feedback the planning team heard most consistently was the need for multi-generational housing that allowed families to stay together over the years and for older adults to age in place. Constructing additional dwelling units (ADUs) on existing properties can serve growing or



ADU 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0

The City of Boston is currently piloting regulation for additional dwelling units. Right now, ADU 1.0 is currently allowed across Boston and ADU 2.0 is in a pilot program that builds upon the fact that 35 percent of residential structures in Boston already host existing accessory structures. This report recommends that ADU 3.0, which would allow new free-standing accessory units, as well as the renovation of existing primary and accessory structures, be allowed as-of right across Mattapan.



extended families, aging adults, and young professionals while providing needed supplementary income to existing property owners.

ADUs are an important and increasingly common strategy for generating affordability and equity in urban areas and historic neighborhoods across the US. They are a largely invisible but high-impact way to provide needed housing stock and supplemental income to property owners.

ADUs are currently permitted within existing primary structures and an ongoing pilot is allowing the conversion of existing accessory structures such as sheds and garages into ADUs. PLAN: Mattapan encourages these modes of property improvement and expansion, and recommends that new structures are also permitted as of right across all residential

zoning districts in Mattapan.

ADUs offer a different, and potentially more affordable, rental option for singles, older generations, and small families. Householders aged 25-44 earn over \$30,000 less in Mattapan than in Boston as a whole and ADUs could help reduce housing cost burden for these residents. Forty percent of all senior households in Mattapan are cost burdened; income from an ADU could help supplement other forms of income and reduce housing cost burden. Residents have shared that they struggle to house extended family in their primary dwelling. In these cases, ADUs could act as an essential pressure release valve while still maintaining essential familial support systems.



A frequent topic addressed during community listening sessions with Mattapan residents was their view that more housing is needed for single adults and young professionals—particularly adult children who had grown up in Mattapan and weren't yet able to afford to buy a home. ADUs offer a flexible, low-cost option for single, young adults, seniors, or other populations who may not require a lot of space.

While the benefits of ADUs are clear, their visual impact is minimal because structures of this size are commonly found in the rear yard of parcels, often invisible from the street. Enabling ADUs to be built as-of-right across all residential parcels holds great potential for increasing both equity and affordability in Mattapan's residential fabric.

There are over 2,400 residential lots in the PLAN: Mattapan study area that are large enough to build a new free-standing ADU, if the property owner decided to pursue one.

The permitting and approvals process in Boston can be complicated and costly, creating an unintended barrier to the provision of small-scale housing in the residential fabric. By providing clear design guidelines and supports that are designed to meet the needs of Mattapan residents today, relevant and needed housing can be more easily and quickly delivered in Mattapan. A future program could develop pre-approved designs and assist in financing ADUs for interested homeowners.

Urban design recommendation should consider multiple

Whether the goal is to create extra space for family members to move nearby, or to generate extra income by creating a rental apartment, ADUs are about maximizing the choices a homeowner can make for themselves and their family.

Filling in the gaps, lowering the barrier to entry

While there are many lots physically large enough for an ADU, a property owner must want to build one on their lots and be able to finance the build-out. In order to facilitate change and local development, the barrier to entry needs to be lowered. A combination of regulatory and financial strategies are needed to support incremental housing growth.

building types. Building types, which may be developed in collaboration with the community, may include ADUs as well as 2-4 unit types that can fill in vacant lots in sub-districts where zoning permits 2-4 family buildings.

Abutting parcels

In addition to the back-yard opportunities for increased equity and affordable rental units provided by new ADU

zoning guidelines, there are hundreds of vacant residential parcels in Mattapan, most of which are owned by an abutting residential property owner. These parcels pose an additional opportunity for equity and the provision of affordable rental units. Like pre-approved ADU plans, enabling pre-approved 2-4 unit building plans would lower the barrier to entry for more and more relevant housing units. A future co-design process with the community can ensure an optimal match between local needs and unit design for infill development.

Explore alternative and collective ownership models

Enabling development by existing property owners is critical but needs to be complemented by encouraging new residents to attain housing equity for the first time in the context of the Boston housing market. This is challenging within traditional models of homeownership and housing finance; this plan recommends the exploration of alternative and collective models of ownership with the goal of maintaining high levels of homeownership in Mattapan.

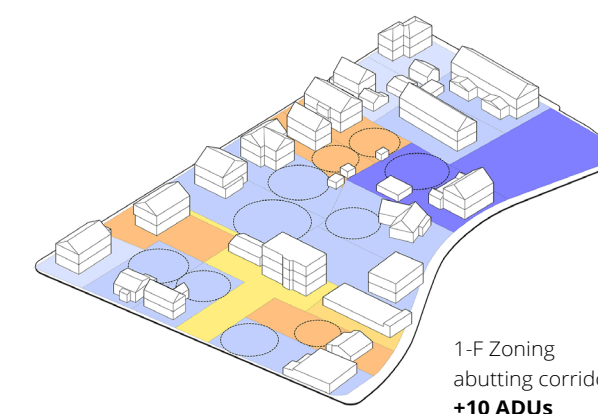
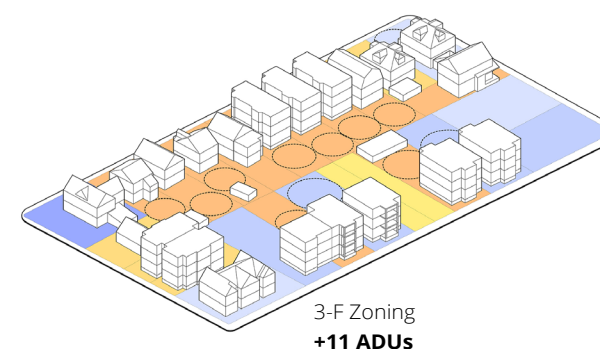
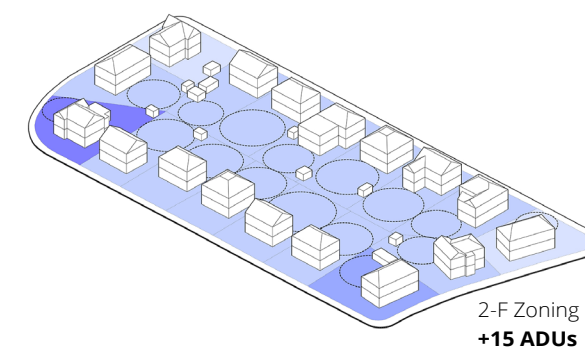
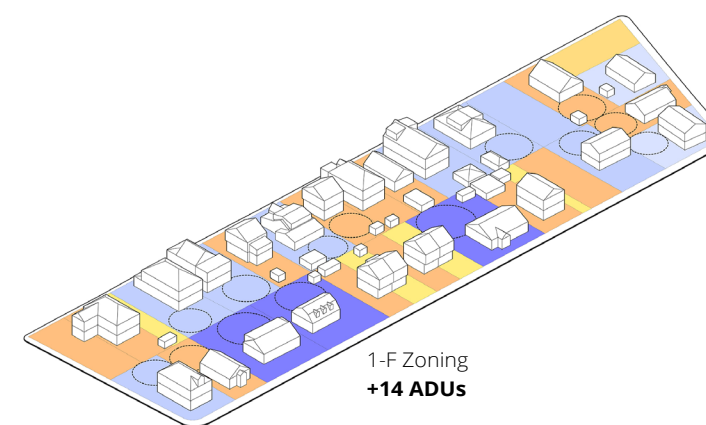
One particularly promising model is the Limited Equity Housing Co-op (LEHC), which may work alongside a Community Land Trust (CLT) to pair land acquisition and/or development with a management and operational infrastructure. The LEHC is an alternative ownership

and management model designed to increase ownership prospects and provide housing sustainability across more income levels and parcels within Mattapan.

A community partner is needed to build lasting change on this front, and some form of public-private partnership must be explored for such models to succeed. If local interest exists and efficacy is achieved, these models hold the potential to provide a much broader variety of units for populations that are often excluded from the housing market. Co-living, transitional housing, and traditional family units may provide partial equity offerings alongside residential management and related services to deepen local impact.

Maintain lot coverage, minimize changes in height

The goal of PLAN: Mattapan is to guide transformative changes to the nodes and corridors. As such, new developments in the residential fabric should prioritize the prevailing lot coverages of the area and only consider modest changes in height from the existing heights of primary structures. These changes should be coupled with increased affordability and other community benefits.



Why ADUs Matter: an interview with ADU owner and Mattapan resident Wesley Williams Jr.

Mattapan resident Wesley Williams, Jr. is the proud owner of the first licensed Additional Dwelling Unit in the history of Boston. When Boston's current ADU program, which allows owner-occupants to create smaller, independent units within their homes launched in 2019, Wesley immediately recognized the potential for an ADU to benefit his family over the long term.

Wesley decided to convert the basement of his three-story, colonial-style home into a rental unit. Apart from being a homeowner since the 1970s, Wesley had no formal experience in development or construction. Instead, he relied on his strong neighborhood relationships to assemble a local team of contractors who performed a total gut renovation of the basement. Throughout the entire process, Wesley stressed that quality in building materials and livability of the space was of the utmost importance.

"Mattapan is a beautiful part of the city," he said. "I wanted the quality of this space to reflect that and show off the

neighborhood." The result was a 570 square foot 1 -bedroom basement unit, complete with a full kitchen, bathroom, and home theater space.

Once the ADU was finished, Wesley listed it on Airbnb. In the past year that it's been completed, he's rented it out to guests from all over the world who are visiting Boston but looking to stay somewhere with a local, neighborhood feel. He's now planning to shift to a longer-term rental model and rent the unit out to a tenant who would like to make a more permanent home in Mattapan.

For those who are considering building an ADU on their property, Wesley has three pieces of advice: ask a lot of questions, take full ownership of the project, and assemble a team of contractors who deeply understand the local context. Overall, his experience from start to finish was overwhelmingly positive. "I developed a piece of property in Boston," Wesley said, "and I'm so damn proud of that!"



Wesley was intentional about choosing high-quality materials and amenities that both offered visitors a comfortable stay as well as reflected the vibrancy of Mattapan as a neighborhood. The full kitchen and home theater space allow visitors to truly feel at home.



Wesley's basement ADU, which he has rented to visitors looking for short-term stays in Mattapan.



06. Implementation & Evaluation

This chapter will dive into implementation of goals and recommendations introduced in Chapters 3 through 5. Here, you'll find possible near-, medium-, and long-term actions, as well as ways we'll measure their success.

In this section, learn more about:

Current Projects
(Section 6.1)

Recommendations Implementation
(Sections 6.2 - 6.7)



Transformations in Mattapan Square, as guided by PLAN: Mattapan, will help support more small and local businesses like Mama's Caribbean Mini Market.

6.1 Current Projects

The following initiatives support at least one of PLAN: Mattapan’s stated planning goals and are currently being implemented in the neighborhood. Several of these initiatives are the direct result of the planning and community engagement process for PLAN: Mattapan.

Mattapan Public Art Project

One of the biggest pieces of feedback that the planning team heard in community listening sessions was that Mattapan needs more public art. This advocacy from residents directly resulted in the Mattapan Public Art Project, an initiative through the BPDA and the Mayor’s Office of Arts & Culture that funded several murals, all created by young local artists from Mattapan. The murals, which were artistic explorations on community, representation, and activism, were located at the Mattapan Teen Center and the Carter Post. The Mattapan Public Art Project is ongoing, with additional locations in the neighborhood currently being explored.

“Welcome Home, Boston” Initiative

Mayor Wu announced the “Welcome Home, Boston” initiative in November of 2022 and directed \$60 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to be allocated to the development of income-restricted housing for eligible Boston residents and financial assistance programs to help qualified residents buy homes in Boston.

This investment is the largest one-time investment in homeownership in Boston and will provide grants that will deliver lower mortgage interest rates and up to \$50,000 in direct assistance, including down payment and closing costs, to income-eligible first-time homebuyers. The City is making 150 parcels of City-owned land available for the development of income-restricted homeownership opportunities, including parcels in Mattapan. The ARPA funding also enables a homeownership program for qualified Boston Housing Authority residents, who can receive up to \$75,000 in down payment assistance and closing costs. To learn more about the initiative, visit <https://www.boston.gov/housing/welcome-home-boston>.



Young artists with the mural that they created outside the Mattapan Teen Center in May 2021.



The mural at the Mattapan Teen Center depicted the characteristics that the artists felt describe the Center: engagement, community, activism, opportunity, safety, and fun.

Active and Recently Completed Mobility Projects

Blue Hill Avenue Transportation Action Plan

Led by the Boston Transportation Department, the Blue Hill Avenue Transportation Action Plan will result in investments along a three-mile stretch of Blue Hill Avenue from Mattapan Square to Grove Hall. Community conversations about the Blue Hill Avenue Transportation Action Plan began alongside the PLAN: Mattapan process in 2019 and have resulted in three primary goals for the corridor: improving pedestrian safety, expanding transportation options and reliability, and connecting infrastructure investments to related community priorities like housing, economic development, and public realm. The design of Blue Hill Avenue is expected to be developed throughout 2023 with construction beginning in late 2024.

Cummins Highway Reconstruction

Led by the Boston Public Works Department, the reconstruction of Cummins Highway will respond to significant safety, resiliency, and accessibility issues between Harvard Street and Mattapan Square. The current design of Cummins Highway encourages high-speed driving and as a result Cummins Highway is one of the top crash locations in the city. In addition to addressing these significant safety issues, the City will use the Cummins Highway project to respond to other priorities like making the street more accessible for pedestrians of all ages, adding more shade trees and climate resiliency features, improving street lighting, improving the quality of the street surface, and providing safe places for people to bike.



Cummins Highway

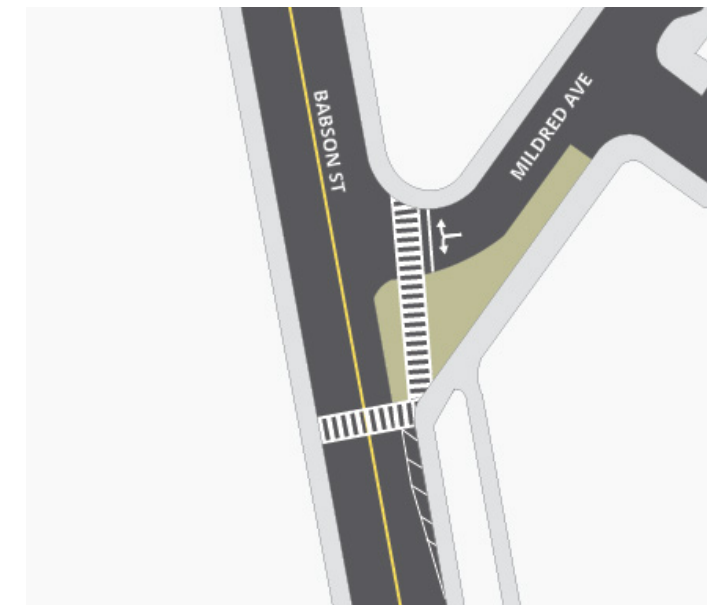
The redesigned street will include accessible sidewalks, safer crosswalks, new street lights, new street trees, and better bike lanes.

River Street Sidewalk Reconstruction

As part of the Boston Public Works Department’s annual street resurfacing program, a cluster of streets in Mattapan will soon be repaved including: Newcroft Circle, Ledgebrook Road, Southmere Road, Leahaven Road, Meadowbank Avenue, and portions of River Street between Southmere Road and Meadowbank Avenue. As part of this work, curbs and sidewalks within the area will be reconstructed, new accessible curb ramps and crosswalks will be installed, new lights will be added to the street, and new trees will be planted.

Babson Street and Mildred Avenue Reconfiguration

The intersection of Babson Street and Mildred Avenue is a primary access point for Mildred Avenue K-8 School, Mildred Avenue Community Center, and KIPP Academy. While only one crash was recorded in recent years, the topography of Babson Street and angle of Mildred Avenue encourage speeding despite its importance to students crossing Babson Street and school buses exiting Mildred Avenue. Informed by PLAN: Mattapan, the Boston Transportation Department recently installed a quick-build intersection reconfiguration that reduces the intersection footprint and provides clear corners to slow travel speeds and enhance visibility for all users. The concept also preserves most existing on-street parking.



Babson Street and Mildred Avenue

The smaller intersection reduces crosswalk distances and encourages slower turns, while clear corners provide more visibility of crossing pedestrians.

6.2 PLAN Implementation & Article 80 Design Review

Boston's Zoning Code requires that all real estate development projects over 20,000 square feet and/or 15 residential units undergo a comprehensive review process that examines the design of the project as well as the development's overall effect on the surrounding community. The procedures and standards for this review appear in Article 80 of the Zoning Code.

The Article 80 process may include, but is not limited to, review of a project's impacts on transportation, public realm, the environment, and historic resources. Boston Planning & Development Agency Project Managers assist developers in navigating the Article 80 process. Public input is encouraged throughout a project's review timeline.

Goal	Recommendation	Intended Outcome
Mitigate and reduce the urban heat island effect in the neighborhood	by increasing the urban tree canopy in Mattapan through enhanced public realm guidelines by preserving and protecting healthy, mature existing trees; trees play a critical role in the reduction of impacts due to extreme heat and the urban heat island	Increase in tree canopy coverage; Decrease in high temperatures
Reduce the impacts of stormwater events in the neighborhood	by increasing storm water retention through the limitation of impervious lot coverage	Decrease in stormwater flooding; Decrease in water runoff
Make walking and biking realistic transportation options for more people	by maintaining unobstructed pedestrian zones of more than 8' in major commercial areas and/or where contextually appropriate by providing sufficient sidewalk dimension to maintain healthy street trees, implement green infrastructure, and encourage ground floor activity	Decrease in number of vehicle trips per day
Encourage a shift toward sustainable travel options	by directing development mitigation to walking, biking, and transit projects	Increase in number of people making most trips by mode other than private vehicle
Increase support for small and local businesses	by requiring new development to include smaller commercial spaces prioritized for local businesses	Increase in types of local businesses in Mattapan; Increase in household income; Decrease in racial wealth gap
Foster and maintain community and cultural gathering spaces and increase the potential for gathering in Mattapan	by requiring new development to create and/or maintain accessible and welcoming interior and exterior spaces by ensuring active uses and programming at the ground floor of buildings that can engage the streetscape (i.e. outdoor cafes, street furniture) by creating pedestrian zones (sidewalks or curb extensions) of more than 8.5' in major commercial areas by prohibiting surface parking lots along the sidewalk edge and encouraging parking to be internalized in buildings and wrapped with active street frontage	Increase in publicly accessible community and cultural gathering space
Increase support for local art, culture, and creative activity	by encouraging new developments to contribute to local, community-based art efforts	Increase in resources committed to local arts and culture initiatives through new development; Increase in number of artist live-work units; Increase in number of arts and culture uses anchored in existing and new spaces
Create and maintain a sense of place throughout the neighborhood	by employing signage that represents and embraces the diverse backgrounds and languages of the Mattapan community	Increase in resources for arts/cultural programming in publicly accessible spaces

6.3 Implementation Recommendations for MOH

The Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH) is responsible for developing affordable housing, housing the homeless, and managing the City's real estate. MOH also works to ensure that renters and homeowners can find, maintain, and stay in their homes.

Goal	Recommendation	Intended Outcome
Increase the supply of affordable housing options in Mattapan	by redeveloping and reusing surface parking lots (with BPDA)	Increase in number of affordable units, including affordable homeownership opportunities, in Mattapan; Reduction in households that are at risk of displacement
	enable appropriate infill on abutter and city-owned lots	
Reduce the amount of private equity necessary for development	explore and implement additional public funding to help generate additional affordable housing	Increase in local homeowners applying for building permits
	explore hybrid or alternative management and ownership models that allow shared "amenity" spaces to lower the barrier to entry and ensure long-term management success	
Stabilize naturally occurring affordable housing	by strategically acquiring property through the City's Acquisition Opportunity Program (alongside BPDA)	Maintain or reduce rental rates and/or homeownership costs
	by coordinating with community partners (such as Community Development Corporations, Community Land Trusts) to fund property acquisitions	
Increase homeownership opportunities across all income levels	by increasing access and participation to first-time home buyer courses	Increase homeownership rates in Mattapan
	by exploring the creation, implementation, and expansion of rent-to-own programs for residents	
	by leveraging existing programs and City-owned land to increase the supply of units	
Allow homeowners to build Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) as-of-right on their property	by developing financial assistance programs for homeowners interested in building an ADU	Increase financial feasibility of ADU development and ensure that cost is not a barrier to development

6.4 Implementation Recommendations for BTM / PWD

The City of Boston Transportation Department (BTM) plans, builds, maintains, and operates the City's streets. The Public Works Department (PWD) provides core basic services essential to neighborhood quality of life, including roadways construction and maintenance, operation of the recycling program, drawbridge operation, maintenance of street lights, and supervising contracts for the removal and disposal of solid waste removal.

Goal	Recommendation	Intended Outcome
Make walking and biking realistic transportation options for more people	by eliminating physical barriers that make walking and biking routes indirect	Decrease in number of vehicle trips per day
	by maintaining unobstructed pedestrian zones of more than 8' in major commercial areas and/or where contextually appropriate	
	by improving bike/ped connections to key destinations, commercial centers, open spaces, and other community spaces	
	by providing sufficient sidewalk dimension to maintain healthy street trees, implement green infrastructure, and encourage ground-floor activity	
Encourage a shift toward sustainable travel options	by expanding access to frequent transit, bikeshare, and carshare	Increase in number of people making most trips by mode other than private vehicle
	by expanding access to CharlieCards, especially for people who rely on reduced fares	
	by directing development mitigation to walking, biking, and transit projects	
	by better managing curbside regulations, including more pick-up/drop-off zones	
Make transit a convenient choice for more trips, not just downtown commutes	by offering transit passes to residents as part of a new development	Increase in transit ridership
	by separating buses from traffic	
	by making the travel experience accessible and dignified	
	by reducing the number of transfers by expanding the high-frequency bus network	
Eliminate fatal injury and crashes	by redesigning high-crash intersections and streets	Reduction in fatal and injury crashes
	by incorporating slow street design and infrastructure into new development	
	by separating bikes and pedestrians from traffic to improve the experience and comfort of walking and biking	
Reduce the impacts of stormwater events in Mattapan	by installing green infrastructure strategies (i.e. permeable pavers, rain gardens, and planting native plant species) along streets to help manage stormwater and reduce irrigation needs	Decrease in stormwater flooding; Decrease in water runoff
Foster and maintain community and cultural gathering spaces and increase the potential for gathering in the neighborhood	by creating pedestrian zones (sidewalks or curb extensions) of more than 8.5' in major commercial areas	Increase in publicly accessible community and cultural gathering space; Increase maintenance and accessibility of Mattapan Square's public spaces
	by hosting an Open Streets day and other pop-up community festivals/events along Mattapan's corridors	
	by increasing investment in maintaining Mattapan Square's public spaces with more frequent trash and snow removal, and other public realm maintenance	

6.5 Implementation Recommendations for OEI

Boston's Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion (OEI) works to make Boston a global model of economic equity for working people, entrepreneurs, businesses, and investors. OEI implements sustainable practices that repair economic harm and help build generational wealth, fostering local talent and innovative ideas, creating thriving and healthy neighborhoods, establishing equitable procurement strategies, and strengthening the partnership between the City and local organizations.

Goal	Recommendation	Intended Outcome
Increase support for small and local businesses	by expanding access to high-quality affordable commercial space for local businesses that support local employment	Increase in household income; Decrease in racial wealth gap; Increase in support, maintenance, and success of Mattapan's local businesses; Increase in diversity of type of businesses
	by supporting the launch or continued growth of small businesses with 1:1 coaching and other supports	
	by providing additional support and outreach that links future entrepreneurs in Mattapan to vacant commercial spaces in the neighborhood	
	by expanding the borders and purview of Mattapan Main Streets to better support businesses along Mattapan's corridors	
Connect residents to more job opportunities	by expanding current and / or creating new job training programs for Mattapan residents	Increase in employment opportunities in Mattapan; Increase in number of people employed in Mattapan
Create and maintain a sense of place throughout Mattapan	by supporting small business owners to improve store facades through the Restore Boston program	Increase in support, maintenance, and success of Mattapan's local businesses; Increase maintenance and accessibility of Mattapan Square's public spaces
Increase recognition of Mattapan's local businesses citywide	by linking Mattapan's local businesses with business empowerment marketing campaigns, such as All Inclusive Boston and B. Local	Increase awareness and accessibility of Mattapan Square as a citywide business and cultural destination; Increase in patronage of Mattapan businesses by residents from across the City;

6.6 Implementation Recommendations for the Parks and Recreation Department

The City of Boston's Parks and Recreation Department maintains over 2,300 acres of park land throughout Boston, ensuring that these open spaces are clean, green, safe, and accessible.

Goal	Recommendation	Intended Outcome
Promote a healthier neighborhood	by maintaining and supporting additional funding for Mattapan's Urban Wilds	Decrease in negative health impacts; Increase in use of park land in Mattapan
Provide opportunities for intergenerational play	by designing public parks for multiple ages and abilities in order to better serve Mattapan's larger family households, including higher percentages of children, teenagers, and adults over 35.	Increase in spaces for families, teens, adults, and elders to gather and enjoy the outdoors
Celebrate the cultural and physical elements that make Mattapan a unique and distinct city destination	by supporting local community and cultural groups in creating outdoor events that could be held by temporary closure of the public right-of-way (public alleys, sidewalks, and streets) or are held in public parks (music festival or cultural event) by continued improvements to the Neponset River Greenway that support its growth as a signature green corridor for the Mattapan community (alongside Department of Conservation & Recreation)	Increase in outdoor events in Mattapan; Increased usage of open spaces

6.7 Implementation Recommendations for MOAC

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture (MOAC) enhances the quality of life, the economy, and the design of the City through the arts. The office's key areas of work include support to the cultural sector through grants and programs, as well as the production and permitting of art in public places.

Goal	Recommendation	Intended Outcome
Increase support for local art, culture, and creative activity	by establishing an arts liaison to help guide local arts-related uses through zoning	Increase in resources committed to local arts and culture initiatives through new development; Increase in number of artist live-work units; Increase in number of arts and culture uses anchored in existing and new spaces
	by reviewing Boston's events permitting process in order to determine if any barriers	
Create and maintain a sense of place throughout Mattapan	by directing resources to public art restoration efforts, arts programming, and public art that celebrates Mattapan's unique history and sense of place	Increase in number of public artworks restored / preserved; Increase in resources for arts programming in publicly accessible spaces; Increase in public art opportunities for local artists; Increase in year-round cultural events
	by supporting efforts for pop-up festivals, markets, and other community events	

