

**JOSEPH E. CORCORAN CENTER
FOR REAL ESTATE AND URBAN ACTION**

BOSTON COLLEGE CARROLL SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

***Aligning BPDA Project Reviews and Strategies to
Build a More Affordable, Equitable, and Climate
Resilient City***

Research and Benchmarking to Support a Development Scorecard



**Boston College
Urban Action Lab
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Boston is at a point of historical inflection. In the wake of a global pandemic, an era of increased and accelerating inequality and historic evidence of the rising impact of human caused global climate change Boston residents have demonstrated an expectation that policies may be changed to better reflect ambitious goals which are responsive to these challenges,

Boston has been a shining City on a Hill, demonstrating leadership through policies focused on improving resident's quality of life. The city has a national reputation for responding to the demands of affordable housing, as well as progressive policies on wealth creation, health care and education. The violent crime rate remains low vs comparable cities.

Mayor Wu has publicly committed to policies which are objectively among the most progressive in the nation. Residents of Boston and Massachusetts have demonstrated through the electoral process a commitment to developing and implementing policies that will strengthen the long term quality of life for residents, and which are responsive to well documented, systematic policies that have previously left people behind.

The Boston College Urban Action Lab undertook a project in Spring 2023 to consider the Article 80 process and propose questions and policies for a "*Developers Scorecard*", or a tool that may precede a project review process. Such a tool will outline how responsive a particular project is to the City's goals as they relate to Affordability, Equity and Climate Resilience, and incentivize closer alignment with these goals.

To make suggestions for the developers scorecard the Urban Action Lab:

1. Established definitions for Affordability, Equity and Climate Resilience
2. Researched potential analogous programs in large US cities
3. Benchmarked policies and practices that show promise for application in Boston
4. Compiled a series of questions that will contribute to the formation of a scorecard for Boston
5. Incorporated resources for the use of BPDA of referenced programs

The following document, highlights the priority questions for the city and are grouped under sections highlighting policy and direction for Affordability, Equity and Climate Resilience.

DEFINITIONS / PRIORITIES

WHAT IS EQUITY? - Equity in Boston is defined by ensuring every community has the resources it needs to thrive. This means removing systemic obstacles in the way of an individual's success, as well as correcting historic inequities throughout concrete proactive policies (Wu, 2023). A core belief of equity is recognizing that the city of Boston and its government have perpetuated inequality within the city, and have marginalized communities as a result. The city of Boston must address past mistakes by incorporating inclusion and community engagement in efforts to make Boston more equitable (Wu, 2023).



“With his experience across city, state, and federal government tackling housing instability and building more equitable communities, Arthur will help drive our agenda forward to make Boston a city for everyone” — Mayor Wu

Importance of Equity - Equity—particularly racial equity—is a key element of social mobility, which itself is a major part of any prosperous, thriving economy. Statistically, equality of opportunity is notably stratified based on race; a [study](#)¹ published by the National Bureau of Economic research found that, even accounting for parental income, the children of Black and American Indian families are significantly less likely to earn more than their parents compared to the children of white, Asian, and Hispanic families. A variety of factors undergird this disparity in the US, but they are not helped by historic prejudice (and especially housing discrimination) that prevented many racial minorities from benefiting fully from the economic growth and suburban housing boom of the US in the late 1940s and 1950s. Intentionally equitable practices are needed to correct these historic wrongs from a moral perspective—and they work to improve the overall quality of cities in their own right.

Racially equitable practices in cities, including intentional racial integration, are shown time and again to dramatically [improve](#) social mobility for racial minorities; more broadly, they can also improve the economic [stability](#) of cities, improve intra-city race relations, and provide other net benefits to the overall population. Achieving equity is not just a moral mission, it is an economically attractive goal; thus, increasing minority representation in high-opportunity, high-quality housing is a powerful way to advance toward this goal.

¹ Race and Economic Opportunity in the United States: An Intergenerational Perspective Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, Maggie R. Jones & Sonya R. Porter <https://www.nber.org/papers/w24441>

WHAT IS AFFORDABILITY? - The definition of affordability becomes increasingly complex as it is applied to various developments. In terms of **residential housing developments**, being affordable means developments provide quality, stable living situations to people across a variety of incomes. In affordable developments, residents across income brackets are paying no more than 30% of their income. Additionally, an affordable development offers multiple transportation options to workplaces and social services such as hospitals, grocery stores, and schools.

Importance of Affordability - Affordability is essential for the flourishing and prosperity of cities. It is the foundation of stability, progress, and innovation. A community can only thrive if it has residents who can afford to work and live there; this is not possible if housing is too expensive and jobs are inaccessible. When affordability is attainable, children excel in their education, businesses effectively address consumer demands, unemployment rates decline, and industries foster innovation. Affordability in all forms in all developments is fundamental to any city.

For commercial developments - the definition of affordability is altered. To be affordable as a commercial development means promoting the local economy by providing opportunities to local businesses and jobs with living wages for local residents. Affordable commercial developments should be accessible through multiple transit options to allow residents of various incomes to access them. Ultimately, the goods and services provided by the commercial development should be affordable and necessary to the community.

Institutional developments - utilize aspects from both residential and commercial definitions of affordability. Institutional developments should create local jobs that provide a living wage and quality, livable housing that will not burden residents. Finally, it too should be accessible through multiple means of transportation.

These more nuanced complex definitions of affordability will help the city create an environment where all residents have quality, stable options regarding where they live and work. This will not only make Boston a more affordable city, but a more equitable and resilient one as well.

WHAT IS CLIMATE RESILIENCE? - Climate resilience is the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to the impacts of climate change. This concept encompasses a wide range of strategies, policies, and initiatives focused on creating long-lasting harmony between humans and the environment. By improving efficiency as it relates to energy consumption, waste management, transportation, and land use, communities will be well-equipped to handle the challenges associated with climate change, such as prolonged heat waves, increased drought severity and a greater risk of coastal flooding due to increased storm intensity.

Importance of Climate Resilience - Boston faces a diverse mix of environmental challenges. Its coastal location is threatened by rising sea levels and stormwater surges. Additionally, the city's buildings and streets absorb and re-emit heat, creating a heat island effect that raises temperatures and increases air pollution. These threats are magnified by the lack of green space within the city and the emissions generated on a daily basis. To ensure the sustainability and well-being of the city and its residents, Boston must develop resilient policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance the city's capacity to adapt to climate-related impacts, promote sustainable development practices, and foster community engagement in climate action.

The purpose of Boston's climate resiliency plan is to protect the city's people, environment, and economy from the adverse effects of climate change while contributing to global efforts to mitigate its causes. By developing and implementing comprehensive strategies to address the diverse challenges posed by climate change, Boston aims to create a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable city for all its residents. In doing so, the city seeks to inspire and support other urban centers in their own climate resiliency efforts, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and resilient future for all.

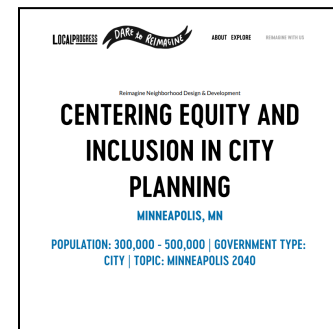
BENCHMARKING

Students from the Urban Action Lab researched cities across the United States to identify programs that advance objectives related to Climate Resilience, Affordability and Equity, based on definitions stated by the City of Boston and recent policy communications.

The following represents a series of reports referenced by the team from cities, Foundations and think tanks that focus on equity, affordability, and climate resiliency in urban development.

Equity

Chief among national urban development grading systems, the **Urban Institute's "Capital for Communities"** scorecard highlights key questions about a developer's ambitions to connect with communities, local organizations, and nearby hirees to generate developments whose benefits reflect the diversity of local communities. Several of these questions serve as the starting point for the equity-based portion of the Urban Action Lab questionnaire.



With regards to specific cities worthy of strategic emulation are the city of **Minneapolis, Minnesota** which excels in its equity and inclusion strategies, setting strong examples that the city of Boston could replicate. Minneapolis has created **three main strategies** to ensure their policies and streets reflect the

views of their residents.² Firstly, **communities have to update their city planning documents every ten years**, specifically documents like their land use and infrastructure plans. This recalibrates the city's goals to be more in line with the needs for that decade, and for the city to address the most nuanced and pressing issues.

The second strategy making Minneapolis more equitable is **a council composed of seventeen members who oversee the planning of transportation, housing affordability, infrastructure (such as sewer capacity), and many other regional planning goals**. Ensuring people from diverse backgrounds are collaborating to reach universal goals for the city is one of the strongest ways to ensure representation and fair allocation of resources and attention.

In 2014 Minneapolis shifted to a Complete Streets policy, reassessing the hierarchy of those who use the streets and prioritizing pedestrian safety. In an effort to make the city safer and more walkable, **Minneapolis adopted a Transportation Action Plan that lists the order as pedestrians, then bikes, transit, and single-occupancy vehicles**.

The city has done extensive research when creating these policies, drawing a clear connection between destinations and transit access when creating race and climate equity. **The city participated in intense community outreach to underrepresented groups through many different means of communication from social media to street festivals**. Furthermore, the city is reassessing its zoning laws to accommodate more families on single lots and decrease the homeless population by creating more shelters and alternative forms of housing. The city has acknowledged how historically, the housing regulations in place have created exclusionary systems and norms that need to be amended. These zoning restrictions created adverse health and opportunity outcomes for residents in suffering areas, and the city of Minneapolis is determined to **dismantle these policies and rectify decades of their inequitable impacts**.

Affordability

San Francisco, California is one city leading the push for more affordable housing through its clever incentive program. Rather than providing tax cuts or funding for developers working on affordable housing, **the city government pays for and constructs all infrastructure, such as pipes, roads, power lines, etc., that the building requires**. This allows the developer to focus on building the housing units, decreasing the time needed to finish construction. Under this system of incentives, more affordable housing units are quickly available.

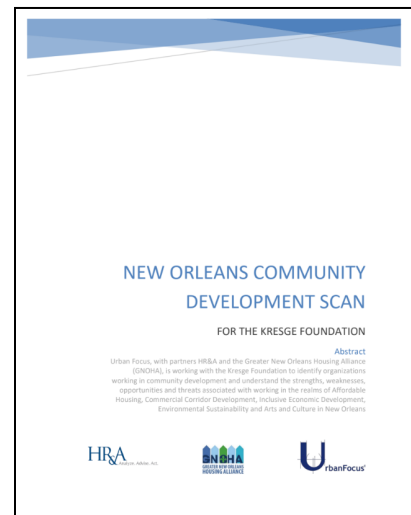
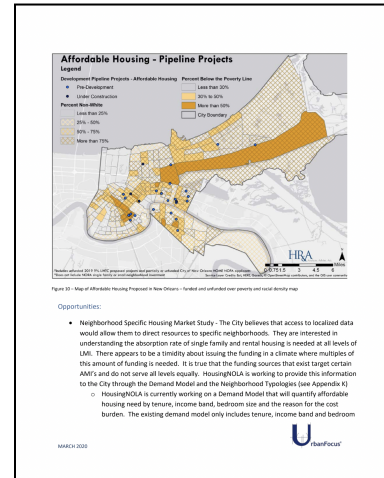


² Minneapolis City Council President, Lisa Bender. "Centering Equity and Inclusion in City Planning." 2020. Dare to Reimagine. Accessed 24 April 2023.

Boston could utilize the concept of incentives that increase the development pace rather than just decrease development costs. Sharing the work instead of putting it all on one development company's shoulders will help the City of Boston achieve its 2030 goal of better affordable housing production.

Seattle, Washington is also pushing the affordable housing template by fusing institutional development with residential development. In certain neighborhoods, **Seattle is constructing low-income housing developments with a health clinic on the first floor. This health clinic not only provides for the people living within the building but creates closer medical assistance to those in the surrounding area.** Implementing necessary infrastructure in low-income neighborhoods will help increase the quality of life and social mobility. Building both housing and hospitals in the same development is a strategy that will help protect the low-income household most at risk, one of Boston's primary goals. Increasing the well-being of a community in addition to providing affordable housing will strengthen the immediate neighborhood and surrounding areas.

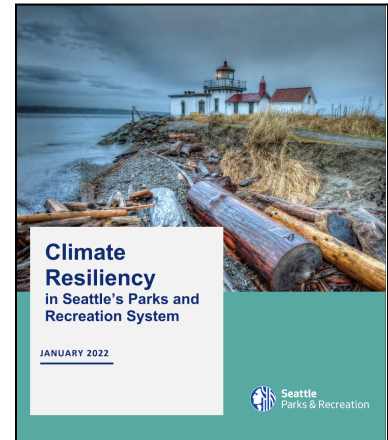
New Orleans, Louisiana is taking a proactive approach toward providing affordable housing by **implementing a sophisticated Demand Model that takes into account the diverse needs of its population.** HousingNOLA is currently fine-tuning this model to include variables such as tenure, income band, bedroom size, and cost burden factors like utilities, taxes, insurance, and income. **This updated model will give landlords an accurate understanding of why tenants are facing cost burdens, and provide a comprehensive picture of the city's affordable housing needs.** According to the Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance and the HousingNOLA Plan, demand for affordable housing in the city is incredibly high, and could potentially absorb all available funding. However, with the help of the Demand Model, officials can allocate resources more efficiently to ensure that developments are built where they are most needed. The success of New Orleans' approach to affordable housing can serve as a model for other cities, such as Boston, which could benefit from adopting a similar strategy. By incorporating a Demand Model that accurately quantifies affordable housing needs, Boston could gain a better understanding of where to allocate its resources and address its own housing challenges.



Climate Resilience

Seattle, Washington's Parks and Recreation System has developed an innovative approach to climate resilience using a vulnerability ranking assessment that considers potential impact based on the expected change in the climate, the susceptibility of the system to change, and the current processes or procedures that provide capacity to adapt.

Seattle has also developed a series of climate action plans to address issues of heat, sea level rise, and lack of green space. The **policy to mitigate heat damages** is particularly extensive. The Urban Forest Stewardship plan is a long term vision for **increasing tree canopies** in urban areas to naturally reduce heat. As for building enhancements, **heat pump systems** in recreation facilities provide clean and cool air during heat events and also filter out wildfire smoke, and **HVAC and other cooling technologies** exist in outdoor courtyards and public community spaces. This infrastructure will increase quality of life and encourage residents to spend time outdoors, even during the hottest times of the year.



New Orleans, Louisiana has enacted multiple projects to reduce flood risk, improve energy reliability, and encourage neighborhood revitalization through what is known as the **Gentilly Resilience District**. There are currently nine projects and three programs in the Gentilly Resilience District. Some of the more notable projects include the **Mirabeau Water Garden**, a new construction that will house 10 million gallons of stormwater, as well as be a space for recreation and environmental learning. **Dillard Wetlands** is another project that uses existing marshlands to capture stormwater and support biodiversity. New Orleans has completed construction of the **Pontilly Neighborhood Stormwater Network**, which will use vacant streets and alleys to capture stormwater, by using bioswales, rain gardens, and previous surfacing. The strongest of the three programs is the **Community Adoption Program**, which aims to construct green retrofits into residential properties, with homeowner involvement.



Gentilly Resilience District Creative Engagement and Communications Plan Revised: August 2020

Purpose
The Gentilly Resilience District is a combination of efforts across Gentilly to reduce flood risk, slow land subsidence, improve energy reliability, and encourage neighborhood revitalization. The city's first Resilience District uses various approaches to water and land management that have been successfully piloted throughout New Orleans and, when implemented together, are intended to create even greater neighborhood benefits—such as improved health, economic opportunity, environmental education, and recreation.

Clearly outlined in the City of New Orleans application to the National Disaster Resilience Competition was the intention and goal of robust and creative community engagement to accompany this set of unprecedented and transformative infrastructure projects and programs. As part of process of developing the application, the City reached out and exchanged with neighborhood leaders and community development and design experts to begin identifying approaches and tactics to foster widespread public engagement that facilitates community education, empowerment, and adoption.

This strategy is intended to serve as a playbook for City departments to ensure that our engagement and communications efforts are coordinated and achieving the ultimate goals of building interest, knowledge, goodwill, and ownership of Gentilly Resilience District projects among stakeholders, residents, and other interested parties. Accordingly, the messages that are elaborated in this document will be distributed among city departments and partners.

Background & Program

The City of New Orleans participated in HUD's National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) and proposed in its application the creation of the city's first comprehensive resilience district in Gentilly with projects that blend innovative and creative solutions so that people, culture, and infrastructure can thrive. A focus on Gentilly presents opportunities to leverage existing projects and investments to reduce flood risk, and to support the area's recovery and revitalization. New Orleans was awarded more than \$143 million through NDRC to implement elements of the Gentilly Resilience District proposal, building on existing investments in water management funded through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

The City is working with partners such as the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) and Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans (SWNO) to leverage existing investments in Gentilly and build on the experience of relevant pilot projects—from their gardens to education programs—throughout the city. The Gentilly Resilience District will be a model for how other neighborhoods in New Orleans, across the region, and across the country, can adapt to thrive in a changing environment.

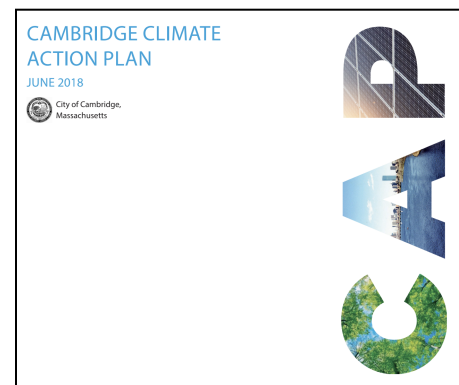
The following projects and programs currently comprise the Gentilly Resilience District:

- Mirabeau Water Garden:** A 25-acre site formerly the convent of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. FEMA dollars used. This project will be designed and constructed in two phases to store up to 10 million gallons of stormwater while also serving as a space for recreation and environmental learning.
- Pontilly Neighborhood Stormwater Network - Phase I:** This HMGP-leveraged stormwater management project is creating a stormwater network with a combination of vacant lots, streets, and alleys, to capture stormwater and benefit the Pontchartrain Park and Gentilly House neighborhoods.
- Pontilly - Phase II: Dwyer Canal Improvements:** Creating a community recreational / social space with park elements to include active & passive programming.

Minneapolis, Minnesota worked with neighboring city St. Paul to develop the Twin Cities Climate Resiliency Initiative, a public/private partnership with the goal of increasing the region's tree canopy. In pursuit of this goal, Minneapolis became a member of **Trees for Community Recovery**, a coalition which is lobbying for \$2.5 billion in federal funds to conserve and grow urban forests and bring green jobs to communities of color. To acquire funding for the TCCRI, the city has created a **carbon offset program**, allowing businesses to offset their emissions through paying other organizations to sequester

carbon or decrease emissions. Minneapolis also established a **workforce development program** that trains prospective employees for jobs within the green sector. Increasing the amount of jobs within this sector will lead to the construction of more **green infrastructure**, thus limiting the urban heat island effect and decreasing stormwater runoff. The implementation of these programs will help Minneapolis expand its tree canopy and fulfill the goals of their **Climate Action Plan**, which include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30%, increasing the percentage of those who commute by bike to 15%, and pushing the recycling rate to 50%.

Cambridge, Massachusetts has been actively pursuing climate protection since 1999, focusing on **reducing greenhouse gas (GHG)** emissions from buildings, transportation, and waste. The city aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 through a variety of initiatives, including the **Net Zero Action Plan (NZAP)**, **Municipal Facilities Improvement Plan (MFIP)**, **Zero Waste Master Plan (ZWMP)**, and various transportation initiatives. Additionally, Cambridge is working on climate change resilience and preparedness (**CCPR**). Cambridge's innovative approach to climate resilience involves the NZAP, which phases out GHG emissions from buildings by mid-century, focusing on energy efficiency, net-zero new constructions, and low-carbon energy sources. The MFIP addresses municipal facilities' needs and commits \$5 million per year for five years to implement recommendations that reduce emissions. The ZWMP aims to **reduce municipal waste** by 80% by 2050, focusing on diverting organics from the waste stream. Transportation initiatives, such as the **Transit Strategic Plan** and **Cambridge Bicycle Plan**, focus on improving public transportation, accessibility, safety, and creating an integrated street network for all users. The city's Complete Streets policy furthers this goal. Cambridge is also working on its **Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience (CCPR)** plan, which will address the city's strategies for adapting to the impacts of climate change, enhancing the overall resilience and quality of life for its residents.



DEVELOPMENT SCORECARD QUESTIONS

Scorecard questions are divided into three categories based on the expressed priorities of the City of Boston - **Affordability, Equity and Climate Resilience**. Within each of these groups subsections are created with questions which are responsive to specific objectives within each focal area. The Sections Affordability, Equity and Climate Resilience and the related subsections assume that they are preceded by a thorough project description.

SECTION I: PROJECT OVERVIEW

- Development Name:
- Description of the Project:
- Location:
- Developer:
- Contact Information:
- What type of development is it?:
 - Commercial, Residential, mixed-use, or institutional?
- New Construction, change in use, rehabilitation:
- Estimated Project size (Sq. Ft.):
- Estimated Project size (\$):
- Describe project financing including proposed subsidies and sources from Local, State and Federal sources.

SECTION II: ADVANCING EQUITY

The questions for the equity section of the scorecard fall under three basic categories: 1) Sustainable Wealth Creation, 2) Community Partnerships, and 3) Local Economic Development.

Sustainable Wealth Creation focuses on how a development creates avenues for social mobility and long-term wealth creation for local residents and employees of the development itself. ***Community Partnerships*** highlights whether a developer made agreements with local community organizations to provide community members with transparency on the benefits and drawbacks behind the development. The last category, ***Local economic development***, clarifies how the local community benefits from the development—whether by reducing startup costs for neighborhood entrepreneurs or by prioritizing local hires during the development building process.

Goal - Sustainable Wealth Creation

- What range of roles (ex. Income range, experience range) are available to nearby residents through this development?

- Directly or indirectly, how does the project create career ladders or pathways for mobility for entry level and lower-wage employees, such as apprenticeships or on-the-job training opportunities?*
- How are the residents connected to the most economically competitive city sectors?
- What economic opportunities are available to residents through this development?
 - What range of roles (ex. Income range, experience range) are available to nearby residents through this development?
 - What opportunities exist for residents to build social capital and social mobility over time?
- How many full-time jobs will the project create and what percentage of workers hired would be locals? “Local” being defined as: living in the designated [neighborhood](#) where the project is, and/or living within 1.5 miles of development, regardless of designated neighborhood)

Goal - Community Partnerships

- Will the project **market** accessible units to people with disabilities and/or affordable units to low-income community members?*
- Does the project make contract-based agreements with local community-based organizations that focus on local employment?
- Does the Project demonstrate clear engagement with a broad and representative selection of community stakeholders?

Goal - Local Economic Development

- Will the project be built with union labor?
- Will the project prioritize “Local” being defined as: living in the designated [neighborhood](#) where the project is, and/or living within 1.5 miles of development, regardless of designated neighborhood)
- Will the project provide or expand a space, facility, or service that meets a basic need, provides a necessary social good, or creates a cultural amenity that is currently lacking in the community and has been prioritized as a need by community members?*
- Did the project sponsor or developer make a plan to set generous Tenant Improvement Allowance terms for commercially-approved units in order to encourage local entrepreneurship?
- How much demolition, if any, will be required of existing residential units to complete this development?
 - Will the project displace or reduce existing health services, social services or cultural amenities (ex. Museums, theaters, religious institutions, etc)?
 - Will all residents displaced from demolished or rehabilitated units be responsibly relocated or have a right to return?
- Do the project’s hiring plans reduce obstacles for populations facing employment barriers, such as anti-discrimination protections beyond those required by federal and state law?

SECTION III: ADVANCING AFFORDABILITY

Questions in the Affordability section of the Scorecard are broken down into subcategories representative of based on three main goals: *Expanding Residential Affordability*, *Protecting and Advancing Affordable Commercial Space*, and *Ensuring Institutional Development Supports and Advances Needs of Local Community*.

Expanding Residential Affordability - focuses questions on providing quality, stable living situations to people across a variety of incomes.

Protecting and Advancing Affordable Commercial Space - focuses questions on the development's capacity to advance the local economy by providing opportunities to local businesses and jobs to residents.

Ensuring Institutional Development Supports and Advances Needs of Local Community - focuses on the creation of local jobs, living wages, accessible necessities, and quality, livable housing that will not burden residents.

Separating the scorecard into residential, commercial, and institutional ensures that the nuance for each type of project is considered early in the planning process.

Goal - Expanding Residential Affordability

If your development is mixed use, please fill out all relevant sections

- Is the project within a ½ mile of one or more public transit options?
- Is the project within a ½ mile of one mode of rapid transit?
- Will the development be accessible via biking and walking? - i.e. have bike racks/parking/storage and pedestrian sidewalks/walking paths?
- Does the project respond to the most needed housing types?
- Will residents at or below the neighborhood's AMI be cost burdened by housing? Severely cost burdened?(Cost-burdened if residents pay more than 30% of their income, severely cost-burdened if residents pay more than 50% of their income)
- Does the development provide avenues for market rate or affordable homeownership, If so, what are they?
- What essential services are within ½ of a mile of the development? (hospitals, grocery stores, schools, parks, pharmacies)
- Does the development plan any investments that will complement or increase access to these essential services?

- Does the proposed project define a plan for rent increases that assure affordable housing units maintain affordability and are maintained permanently? For at least 30 years?
- Does the developer plan to employ a case manager on site for low or extremely low-income residents?

Goal - Protecting and Advancing Affordable Commercial Space

- Is the project within a ½ mile of one or more public transit options?
- Is the project within a ½ mile of one mode of rapid transit?
- Will lease agreements prioritize neighborhood business opportunities?
- Will the developer be making additions to public transit (building T stops, bus stops, etc.)?
- Will the developer commit to the maintenance of the transit stops' infrastructure that they have built?
- Will the development be accessible via biking and walking? - i.e. have bike racks/parking/storage and pedestrian sidewalks/walking paths?

Goal - Ensure Institutional Development Supports and Advances Needs of Local Community

- Is the project within a ½ of a mile of one or more modes of public transit?
- Is the project within a ½ of a mile of one form of rapid transit?
- Will the development be accessible via biking and walking? - i.e. have bike racks/parking/storage and pedestrian sidewalks/walking paths?
- Applicable to Hospitals, will the development serve as a community health center? Decrease percentage of income spent on health care?
- Applicable to Universities, will the development create on-campus housing?
- Will the developer commit to the addition of transit stops?
- Will the developer commit to the maintenance of the transit stops' infrastructure that they have built?

SECTION IV: BUILDING A MORE CLIMATE RESILIENT CITY

To ensure that developments within Boston are resilient to the effects of climate change, this scorecard assesses:

Limiting and Anticipating the impacts of Climate Change - this first section will analyze the effectiveness of existing measures to combat extreme weather, address flooding, and create initiatives focused on minimizing excess stormwater runoff.

Becoming a zero-waste community - developments will receive a score consistent with their conservation of resources related to policies and infrastructure that advance waste reduction.

Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions - seeks to advance and direct project priorities which curb emissions through sustainable practices and green infrastructure.

Reducing the urban heat island effect - a phenomenon describing increased temperature within densely-populated areas due to the removal and replacement of green space with heat-absorbing surfaces like pavement. This section analyzes project choices that incentivize choices which reduce the urban heat island effect.

Goal - Limiting and Anticipating the impacts of Climate Change

- What opportunities does the project provide to educate community members on their impact on climate change?
- If the development is in an area with a high risk of flooding, what different measures can be taken to prevent or mitigate the effects of flooding?
- How is a development suitably equipped to withstand extreme flooding conditions?
- Are the costs of constructing flood mitigation infrastructure for a development better used in a different form?
- Are emergency response plans for climate-related disasters adequately mitigating the results of climate disasters?
- How does the development prepare for future climate change predictions?

Goal - Becoming a Zero-Waste Community

- How are recycled and green materials being used in construction?
- How does the development encourage businesses and residents to reduce their consumption of single-use plastics?
- How does the development promote a circular economy [markets that incentivize reusing and reallocating products rather than extracting new resources], such as repair workshops and other sharing platforms?
- How well does the development plan educate the community on waste reduction and recycling/composting?
- How does the development incorporate technology to store, circulate, and reduce energy and electricity consumption?
- How does the development reduce waste of packaging and construction materials?

Goal - Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- In what manner are renewable energy sources being integrated and advocated (change to ‘is there a plan in place that uses renewable resources - what percentage is being drawn from the grid, locally, mitigated through other development choices that you’re making) for within the development community by the developers?
- Are there strategies and incentives instituted by the developers to stimulate energy efficiency and diminish emissions originating from the development's buildings?
- At which LEED certification tier do these buildings reside? (0 represents no certification, while 5 signifies platinum status)
- How effectively are non-motorized transportation options, such as cycling and walking, facilitated through the provision of bike lanes and pedestrian pathways by the developers?
- To what extent are developers incorporating green spaces and natural habitats within the development to promote biodiversity and enhance overall environmental quality?

Goal - Reducing Heat

- How well is green space and climate resilient technology utilized on the exterior of buildings and the surrounding land occupied by the development?
- How successfully does the development increase its overall shade coverage through expansion of the tree canopy?
- How effectively do the development’s buildings use features to keep their interior cool, especially regarding units occupied by at-risk residents like the elderly or disabled?
- In the event of a power outage or intense heat wave where interior temperatures reach a level that is threatening to those inside, to what extent does the development’s emergency plan for a heat crisis adequately protect residents?
- To what degree do the developers consider community history and partner with community organizations and leaders to ensure green infrastructure fits into the existing mold of the community?
- To what extent does the development implement initiatives to educate residents on the impacts and dangers of excessive heat?

RESOURCES

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