

# THE BLUEPRINT

**A PREVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES & FRAMEWORK  
FOR BOSTON'S RESILIENCE STRATEGY**



Photo Credit: City of Boston



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## LETTER FROM MAYOR WALSH & MICHAEL BERKOWITZ



November 19, 2016

Since joining 100 Resilient Cities in December 2014, Boston has worked to make the city stronger in the face of a range of challenges. These include shocks—like terrorism or blizzards—as well as current and future underlying stresses, like a shortage of affordable housing and a lack of reliable public transportation. Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) Dr. Atyia Martin is leading the city’s effort to develop an integrated Resilience Strategy that will help Boston thrive in both good and challenging times. And while this strategy will address a wide range of issues, one theme has emerged at the very core of Boston’s efforts to build resilience: racial equity.

In the year since her appointment as Boston’s first CRO, Dr. Martin has convened open, honest dialogues with public and private sector leaders, as well as with community members from across the city. These dialogues reflect ongoing conversations that Boston communities have been having for decades. Our team has held community meetings and workshops, given presentations, and participated in many events across the city to engage Bostonians in shaping the Resilience Strategy. We have also taken different approaches to reach those who might not attend meetings, including riding MBTA buses to engage with residents individually about their impressions of Boston’s challenges. Altogether, the team has engaged with over 5,000 Bostonians.

In early 2017, we will release Boston’s Resilience Strategy. The strategy will connect the issue of race with other major challenges we face due to urbanization, globalization, and climate change. In addition to addressing racial disparities, the forthcoming Resilience Strategy will offer innovative, specific actions designed to promote equitable economic opportunity; proactive, collaborative governance; and a connected, adaptive city. However, because we believe that the city’s conversation around racial equity is so critical and urgent, we feel compelled to release this *Blueprint* to preview the principles and framework for our resilience effort.

Systemic racial inequity, and the resulting harm it inflicts upon our communities and families, is a defining problem of our time—not just in Boston, but across our nation. *The Blueprint* presents Boston as ready to lead by example—by reflecting on the city’s history, confronting challenges directly and honestly, and taking a bold stance in promoting racial equity and social justice for all Bostonians.



Photo Credit: Dr. Atyia Martin



Photo Credit: City of Boston

The roots and causes of inequity are complex and lack simple solutions. However, we believe that the principles and framework of *The Blueprint* will set Boston on a path toward building greater social cohesion, largely because this document is truly a product of the communities it is designed to serve. Through dozens of working group sessions and community meetings, we have incorporated and distilled feedback from our communities in crafting a plan that reflects both the concerns and the bold ideas of Bostonians from a variety of backgrounds. The conversations carried out on buses and in conference rooms must and will lead to an even broader dialogue throughout Boston. And by beginning the process of repairing racial inequity, Boston stands better poised to find effective solutions to other major shocks and stresses.

The ideas set forth in this document form the foundation to continue the hard, but necessary, work of building Boston’s overall resilience. With everyone’s help, the city will continue to develop and then implement its Resilience Strategy—a plan that will be built upon the foundation laid out in this document. While we are excited to collaborate in creating this foundation, our work is far from over. It will take continued partnership among the city of Boston, 100 Resilient Cities, and Bostonians working together to carry these ideas forward. It is our hope that this work will lead to a resilient Boston that serves as a model for cities to study and learn from—both within and beyond the 100 Resilient Cities network.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh  
Mayor  
City of Boston



Michael Berkowitz  
President  
100 Resilient Cities

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RESILIENT  
CITIES

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## BOSTON'S RESILIENCE PRINCIPLES:

# RACIAL EQUITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND SOCIAL COHESION

Despite recent economic growth and the great diversity that has always made Boston communities strong and vibrant, many Bostonians face challenges such as economic inequality, housing and transportation instability, the threats of flooding and sea level rise, and more. But in the face of Boston's opportunities and challenges, racial equity, social justice, and social cohesion must be at the center of our collective focus to become a more resilient city—a city that is stronger both in daily life and during emergencies. We will work together to build a city where race and class do not determine our residents' ability to thrive, heal, and connect. Applying a racial equity framework to Boston's Resilience Strategy will enable the city to strengthen connections among Bostonians of all backgrounds while preparing them to prosper despite shocks and stresses. Therefore, the Mayor's unwavering commitment to racial equity is central to the Boston Resilience Strategy.

Racial equity means closing the gaps so that a person's race does not predict her or his success, while also improving outcomes for all. It is not just the absence of racial discrimination and inequities, but the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through reflective, proactive, and

preventive measures. *The Blueprint* for Boston's Resilience Strategy provides a shared framework to remove the barriers of racism that hinder Bostonians from having access to opportunity and support to thrive from childhood to retirement, in our daily lives and during major emergencies.

We must work deliberately to confront racism and its manifestation in all aspects of our lives and institutions. The health and livelihoods of our residents depend upon this commitment, and the priorities identified in *The Blueprint* align with key social determinants of health, helping us reduce health inequities we see in communities of color. Additionally, racism is a barrier to the types of social connections we need within and across neighborhoods. Research and experience show us that social cohesion is a key determinant of how well a community fares after major emergencies.

By creating a racial equity framework for how we approach resilience, our city is taking an intentional and transparent approach to building a shared understanding of the historical role of government policies, practices, and decision-making in creating and maintaining racial inequities. This framework offers a form of accountability in preventing the progression and





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Bostonians participate in collaborative sessions during BRC Working Group Collaborative events.

reconstruction of these inequities in the future. It provides an underlying structure and will inform the visions, goals, and actions throughout the forthcoming Resilience Strategy. By embedding a commitment to racial justice within every element of the strategy, the city will work to reduce racial disparities. The use of a racial equity framework is essential to catalyze the just and equitable communities that will help our city live up to its full potential. By addressing inequities, we believe we will elevate all Boston residents collectively, regardless of race.

This framework was developed in close partnership with the Boston Resilience Collaborative (BRC). The BRC's Working Group Collaborative includes over 100 local experts in fields such as racial equity, climate change, the built environment, transportation, and public health and has helped to identify and prioritize goals and initiatives for Boston's forthcoming Resilience Strategy. Additionally,

the BRC's Research & Evaluation Collaborative has provided valuable research guidance to the Working Group Collaborative, begun the process of developing indicators and performance metrics for Boston's Resilience Strategy, and launched a popular Boston City Hall monthly speaker series that is open to the public on topics associated with the Vision Areas within **The Blueprint**. From September through November 2016, the Design Team of the BRC provided feedback on **The Blueprint** and informed our plans for implementation of Boston's Resilience Strategy. The BRC will grow over time to include new teams to participate in this work. Once the Resilience Strategy is completed, the BRC will continue partnering with the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity to guide initiative development, implementation, and measurement of progress toward achieving our goals.

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# BOSTON'S RESILIENCE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Boston's Resilience Strategy will detail what we would like to see for the future of Boston, challenges that we face as a city in achieving this Boston, and steps that we can take to address and overcome these challenges. This **Blueprint** previews the Visions and Goals, built upon the racial equity framework described throughout this document, that we have identified in pursuing a more resilient Boston.

**VISIONS** describe the conditions that result from a resilient and racially equitable Boston. These are broader, long-term conditions that will take time to realize, but will improve the lives of all Bostonians. We have identified four distinct visions that capture different aspects of the lives of Boston residents.

**GOALS** are specific accomplishments necessary for Boston to achieve these Visions. These are long-term accomplishments that, when achieved, will work in conjunction with one another to improve the lives of Boston residents holistically.

In the forthcoming Resilience Strategy, we will also detail specific actions that will support the goals described in **The Blueprint**. Our ideal Boston will not be realized overnight; achieving progress will require time, effort, and dedication. We will need the help of every resident and organization. As you read **The Blueprint**, please think about how you, your community, and your company or organization can help move this work forward. For more ways to get involved, see the Call to Action at the end of **The Blueprint**.

## VISION



# 1

## REFLECTIVE CITY, STRONGER PEOPLE

**VISION STATEMENT:** A Boston that reflects upon its history and confronts present realities of racism in daily life and during emergencies, to learn from and reduce the impact of trauma on individual and community health and well-being.

For Boston to truly advance as a resilient city, all people and organizations across every sector must address the historical legacy and present-day realities of racism. Together, we must make deliberate efforts to understand the different and complex ways in which structural racism has affected us in the past and continues to affect us today. These deeply rooted issues surface during times of traumatic events that affect communities, such as neighborhood violence, evictions and displacement, long-term poverty, and extreme weather events, attesting to the need for acknowledgement and healing. While revealing this truth alone will not remedy past injustices or change current inequitable practices and policies, it is a necessary first step in improving the health, well-being, and social connections of Bostonians. "Reflective City, Stronger People" describes how we will transform our systems of thinking and acting so that resilience and racial equity are deliberately embedded into every facet of our collective decision-making.



2

## COLLABORATIVE, PROACTIVE GOVERNANCE

**VISION STATEMENT:** An inclusive and collaborative city government culture that offers residents a meaningful role in decision-making processes and facilitates cross-departmental partnership.

Addressing the complexities of resilience and racial equity requires a systematic culture shift in the way organizations and people in Boston come together to solve problems. We must work toward making government more effective by strengthening multi-sector partnerships and connections with households and families in communities affected by decision-making. However, it is common for government and other institutions to face challenges in facilitating such collaboration. A major challenge in deepening community engagement is the lack of shared understanding across the broad range of involved stakeholders about what this engagement looks like. To achieve a more collaborative, transparent, and proactive governance system in Boston, we will collectively build a culture that prioritizes the needs of every Bostonian; values community engagement and inclusive participation; and embraces innovative data collection, analysis, and sharing.



3

## EQUITABLE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

**VISION STATEMENT:** Access to economic and social pathways that support closing the wealth gap to ensure our economic security is not determined by our race or ethnicity.

A resilient Boston is one in which every Bostonian, regardless of race and ethnicity, has the same access to the economic resources that he or she needs to endure long-term stresses and recover from acute shocks. It is one in which intergenerational wealth-building opportunities and digital tools are accessible to every Bostonian, no family lives in perpetual fear of displacement, and all of Boston's children benefit from quality educational opportunities. We are committed to making progress to achieve a Boston in which there is broad access to economic and social pathways to ensure that our economic security is not determined by our race or ethnicity.



4

## CONNECTED, ADAPTIVE CITY

**VISION STATEMENT:** Increased connectivity for communities of color while improving critical infrastructure for all Bostonians.

Boston has always been at the forefront of expanding transportation options, from the first American subway system to the first car-sharing company. Boston is also one of the most walkable cities in the country, with a third of Bostonians choosing to walk as their primary means of travel. However, despite overall strong accessibility and mode options, households of color in Boston are much more reliant on transit and experience notably longer transit commutes and less accessibility. Improving transportation access and commute times is crucial to providing equitable opportunities for all residents and fostering a resilient population.

Like many cities, Boston is also facing the consequences of a changing climate, including extreme temperatures, sea level rise, heavy precipitation, and coastal storms. The impacts felt as a result of these threats will disproportionately affect communities of color and overlapping socially vulnerable communities such as older adults, children, people with limited English proficiency, people with low to no income, and people with disabilities. Preparing communities of color for the impacts of climate change and strengthening emergency responses are necessary to build resilience citywide.



## HOW THE BOSTON RESILIENCE STRATEGY IS STRUCTURED




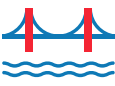
<p><b>GUIDING PRINCIPLE</b> (Blueprint, 2016)</p>	<p><b>RESILIENCE, RACIAL EQUITY, AND SOCIAL COHESION</b></p>			
<p><b>RESILIENCE VISIONS</b> (STRATEGY, 2017)</p>	<p><b>VISION 1</b></p>  <p><b>REFLECTIVE CITY, STRONGER PEOPLE</b></p> <p><i>A Boston that reflects upon its history and confronts present realities of racism in daily life and during emergencies to learn and reduce the impact of trauma on individual and community health and well-being.</i></p>	<p><b>VISION 2</b></p>  <p><b>COLLABORATIVE, PROACTIVE GOVERNANCE</b></p> <p><i>An inclusive and collaborative City government culture that offers residents a meaningful role in decision-making processes and facilitates cross-departmental partnership.</i></p>	<p><b>VISION 3</b></p>  <p><b>EQUITABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p><i>Access to economic and social pathways that support closing the wealth gap to ensure our quality of life is not determined by our race or ethnicity.</i></p>	<p><b>VISION 4</b></p>  <p><b>CONNECTED, ADAPTIVE CITY</b></p> <p><i>Increased connectivity of communities of color while adequately preparing for threats to infrastructure used by all Bostonians.</i></p>
<p><b>RESILIENCE GOALS</b> (STRATEGY, 2017)</p>	<p><b>GOAL 1.1:</b> Advance the ongoing development of community training for healing, well-being, and preparedness in the face of chronic stresses and traumatic events.</p> <p><b>GOAL 1.2:</b> Facilitate an open, ongoing dialogue for healing, learning, and action to address racism and strengthen social cohesion in communities.</p> <p><b>GOAL 1.3:</b> Acknowledge the damage that systemic racism continues to inflict on our communities and develop deliberate institutional approaches to achieve and sustain racial equity in Boston policies, practices, and culture.</p>	<p><b>GOAL 2.1:</b> Ensure employment equity and better serve all Bostonians by increasing the representation of the city's diverse population in city government.</p> <p><b>GOAL 2.2:</b> Enhance decision-making capacity in city government by bringing together our residents' and our government representatives' knowledge and skills to better develop policies, practices, and processes.</p> <p><b>GOAL 2.3:</b> Improve the collaboration, evaluation, and delivery of city services to better meet the needs of all Boston residents.</p>	<p><b>GOAL 3.1:</b> Increase access to good-paying jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities, and asset building strategies.</p> <p><b>GOAL 3.2:</b> Ensure safe, affordable, stable housing for all Bostonians.</p> <p><b>GOAL 3.3:</b> Enhance digital equity by increasing access to technology tools, computers and the Internet.</p> <p><b>GOAL 3.4:</b> Prioritize equitable education opportunities to close the gap for young people of color.</p>	<p><b>GOAL 4.1:</b> Develop a redundant and reliable public transportation network to provide equitable accessibility for all Bostonians.</p> <p><b>GOAL 4.2:</b> Prepare for the impacts of climate change and other threats while accelerating sustainable infrastructure, environment, and communities.</p> <p><b>GOAL 4.3:</b> Improve the collaboration of partners working in Boston communities to address climate change and other emergencies.</p>





Photo Credit: City of Boston



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## EMBEDDING RESILIENCE & RACIAL EQUITY ACROSS PLANS

Boston is undergoing a period of significant strategic planning. Boston’s Resilience Strategy will identify key initiatives across other citywide plans listed below and apply a resilience and racial equity lens in their implementation. We will have a collection of integrated resilience initiatives and metrics to promote social justice, transparency, evaluation, and accountability.

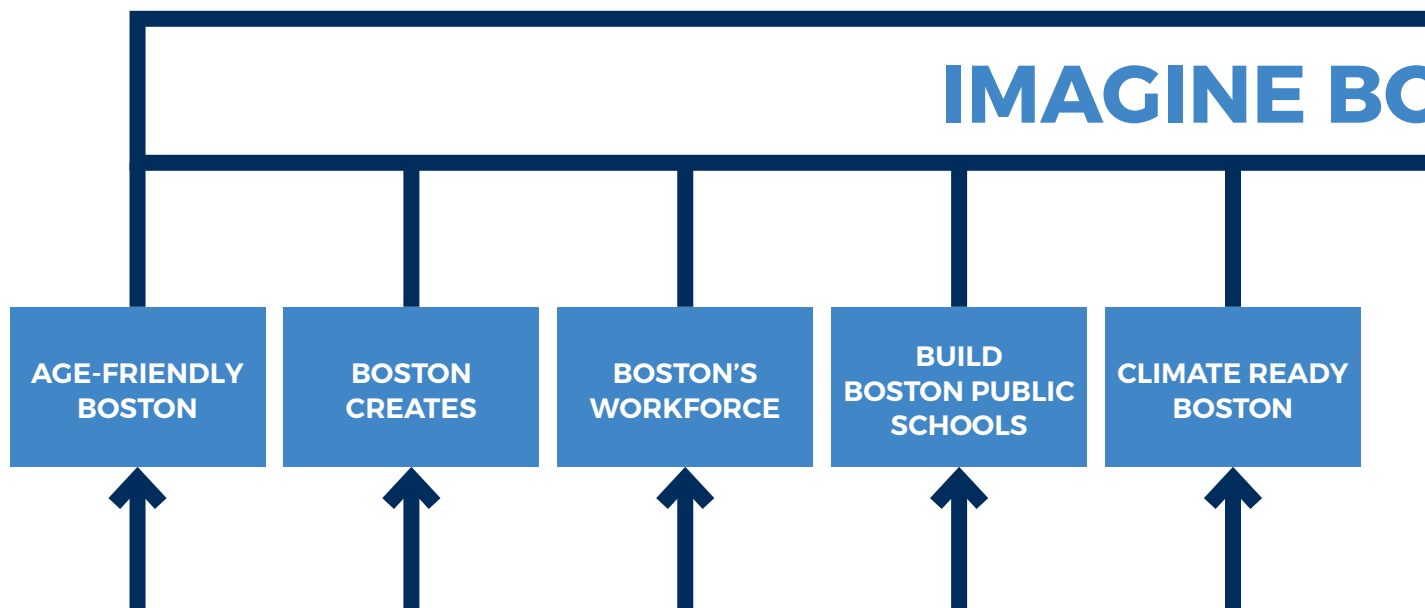
- **Imagine Boston 2030**, Boston’s first citywide plan in 50 years, will create a framework to preserve and enhance Boston, while embracing growth as a means to address our challenges and make the city stronger and more inclusive.
- **Age-Friendly Boston** challenges the city’s public agencies, community groups, businesses, and cultural, educational, and religious institutions to consider how changes to policy and practice can enhance the quality of life for Boston’s aging residents.
- **Boston Creates** calls for an “arts and culture renaissance” in Boston - weaving arts, culture, and creativity into the whole fabric of city life.
- **Boston’s Workforce: An Assessment of Labor Market Outcomes and Opportunities** takes stock of the current and projected labor market conditions facing Boston residents and underscores the pressing need for education and job training resources for residents.
- **Build Boston Public Schools** will provide a strategic framework for facilities investments, as well as curriculum and instruction reforms that are aligned with the district’s educational vision.
- **City of Boston Small Business Plan** is a road map that will guide the city’s approach to supporting small businesses as they start and grow in Boston. The plan reflects the commitment to understanding the needs of Boston’s small business community and streamlining small business services.
- **Climate Ready Boston** is an initiative to develop climate resilient solutions that will prepare our city for climate change.
- **Economic Inclusion + Equity Agenda** seeks to harness growth to create a Boston that is inclusive and provides ladders of opportunity for all—women, minorities, veterans, new Bostonians, children, individuals with disabilities, and seniors in every Boston neighborhood.
- **Go Boston 2030** is a City of Boston initiative to envision a bold transportation future for Boston for the next 5, 10, and 15 years.
- **Housing a Changing City: Boston 2030** outlines a plan to produce 53,000 units of housing to accommodate population growth and create a city where all Bostonians, regardless of race, age, economic status, or physical ability, can find a place to call home.
- **Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2015 - 2021** presents the process, analysis, plan goals, and objectives for improving and protecting open space in Boston.

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# CALL TO ACTION

The most important thing that you can do is get involved. Please join us in strengthening Boston's resilience by participating in this conversation. Your continued collaboration will help us create a more equitable and resilient Boston.

- **CHECK OUR WEBSITE** for updates, events, and opportunities related to Boston's Resilience Strategy and the 2017 Resilience and Racial Equity Series: [www.Boston.gov/Resilience](http://www.Boston.gov/Resilience).
- **SIGN UP** to stay informed on more opportunities to work with the Mayor's Office of Resilience & Racial Equity.
- **PLEASE SHARE** your contributions and thoughts via social media. You can connect with us on Twitter at [@BOSResilience](https://twitter.com/BOSResilience), [#IAmBoston](https://twitter.com/IAmBoston).
- **LEARN MORE ABOUT BOSTON'S PARTNERSHIP WITH 100 RESILIENT CITIES** by visiting [www.100resilientcities.org](http://www.100resilientcities.org).
- **START A CONVERSATION** about *The Blueprint* with your children, family, friends, and colleagues.



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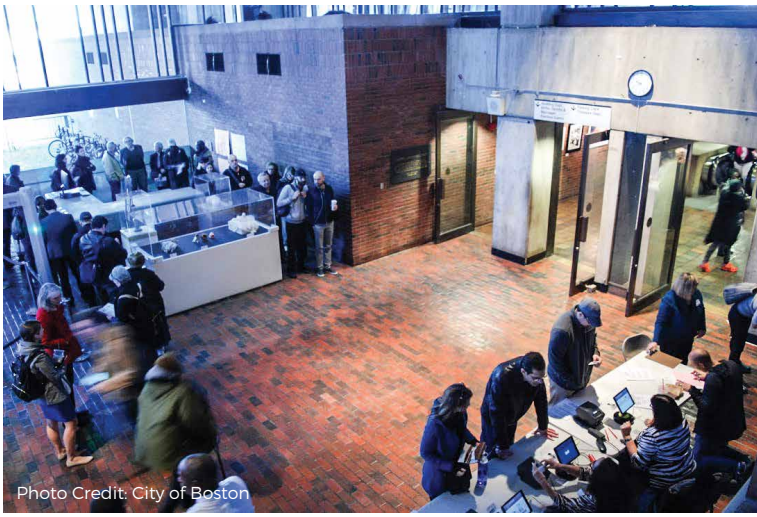


Photo Credit: City of Boston



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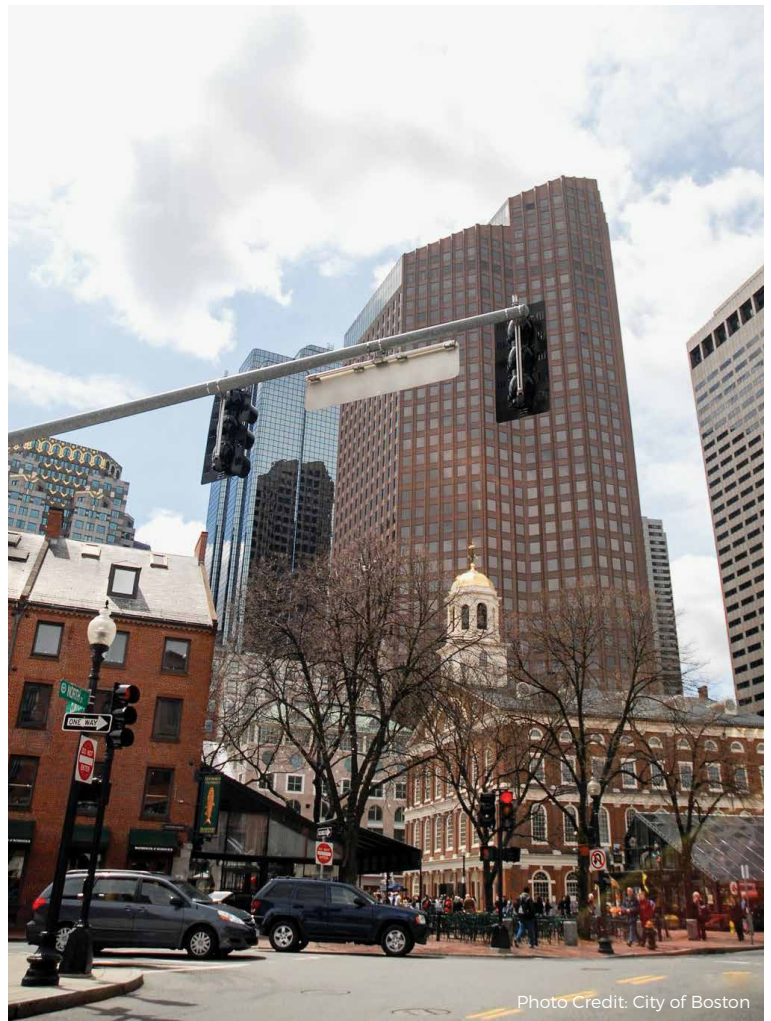
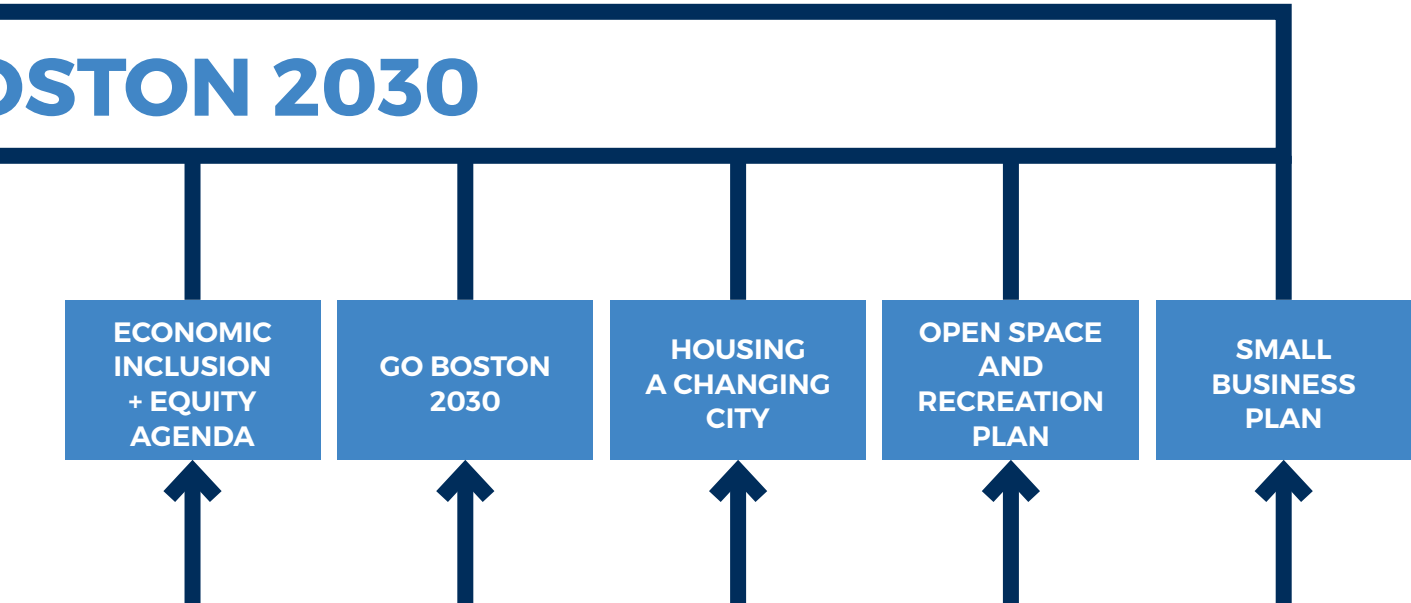


Photo Credit: City of Boston



# SILENCE STRATEGY



Photo Credit: 100 Resilient Cities

**ABOUT 100 RESILIENT CITIES—  
PIONEERED BY THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION**

100 Resilient Cities—Pioneered by The Rockefeller Foundation (100RC) helps cities around the world become more resilient to the social, economic, and physical challenges that are a growing part of the 21st century. 100RC provides this assistance through: funding for a Chief Resilience Officer in each of our cities who will lead the resilience efforts; resources for drafting a Resilience Strategy; access to private sector, public sector, academic, and NGO resilience tools; and membership in a global network of peer cities to share best practices and challenges. For more information, visit: [www.100ResilientCities.org](http://www.100ResilientCities.org).



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100 RESILIENT CITIES



**MAYOR'S OFFICE OF  
RESILIENCE &  
RACIAL EQUITY**  
—MARTIN J. WALSH, MAYOR—