

# Summary of the AFFH Process

*Two important observations about fair housing...*

1) Fair Housing is the law!

Fair Housing Act of 1968

## 2) Fair Housing is fundamentally **'intersectional'**.

In fighting discrimination, intentional or unintentional, fair housing cannot be 'silo-ed' -- strategies must reflect connections with education, health and the environment, housing, income and poverty, employment patterns, criminal justice policies and practices, and practices of the private sector...

- not bounded by 'brick and mortars'
- not bounded by simply fighting prejudice
- not bounded by building more housing

- Race/ethnicity
- Language
- National origins
- Disabilities status
- Families and children
- Elderly services
- Residential segregation
- Unequal quality of housing and tenure
- Housing Choice
- Disproportionate housing needs and costs burden
- Gentrification / displacement
- Sexual orientation
- Zoning
- Real Estate development
- Homelessness
- Quality of public education
- Public health and environmental justice
- Preservation of subsidized housing
- Transportation equity
- Veterans status
- CORI status
- Income inequality; poverty; unemployment
- Prejudice and discrimination

Fair Housing is the Glue!

## *2 Key Queries*

- What are impediments to affirmatively furthering fair housing in Boston?
- What goals should be adopted in response to the identified impediments and barriers?

## *6 Key tools utilized in identifying impediments and barriers*

- Documented and analyzed history of fair housing and segregation in Boston and the region
- Reviewed continuing patterns of intentional *or unintentional* discrimination
- Analyzed census and administrative data, including agency reports, related to fair housing
- Conducted a survey of residents and residents in Boston public housing related to fair housing experiences

- Collected written testimony and held meetings with housing advocates and community representatives, and city and state officials; meetings with HUD representatives
- Solicited, collected, and documented **public testimony** throughout the City and incorporated the findings into the assessment report

*What are the impediments and barriers that should be addressed in a comprehensive fair housing plan?*

Throughout Boston several themes continually emerged in public meetings –and, supported by hard data



- Concerns, angst, fears about gentrification and displacement
- Rapidly rising rents and evictions
- Inadequate definition and meaning of *housing affordability* in terms of housing needs for low-income and working-class residents and families
- Concerns about what was perceived as frenzied real estate development

- Lack of adequate opportunities to increase homeownership, especially in communities of color
- Not enough resources for expanding alternative resident-owned housing such as community land trusts and cooperative housing
- Concern about community safety - crime and gun violence as a major problem; youth involvement with violence is too high and unacceptable; also, lack of an equity lens with criminal justice policies and practices
- Public transportation as inaccessible and inequitable in predominantly Black and Latinx parts of Boston

- Continuing residential segregation
- Linkage, inclusive development not yet ample in scope compared to the enormous profits and concentration of wealth that had been occurring before COVID-19
- Need for more resources for neighborhood-based organizations, nonprofits on the front-lines, and locally-based businesses
- Need for greater enforcement of fair housing laws as well as greater public education about fair housing
- Absence of fair housing regulations in Boston's zoning codes



# Goal Areas

1. HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND AGING POPULATION
2. REDUCING AND PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS
3. BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING REGIONAL STRATEGIES
4. EXPANDING HOUSING CHOICE
5. REDEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVATION OF EXISTING PUBLIC HOUSING, AND PRIVATELY-OWNED SUBSIDIZED HOUSING, AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HOUSING
6. ENHANCING FAIR HOUSING AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

7. ZONING AS A FAIR HOUSING TOOL

8. EXPANDING HOMEOWNERSHIP WITHIN A FAIR HOUSING LENS

9. CHALLENGING RACIAL INEQUALITIES, INEQUITIES AND BUILDING NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

10. REDUCING AND ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION, INTENTIONAL OR NON-INTENTIONAL

11. PUBLIC & COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

12. ENSURING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF CITY RESOURCES BASED ON NEED, AND PROVIDING SUPPORTS FOR RENT-BURDENED RESIDENTS AND THOSE FACING POTENTIAL AND ACTUAL DISPLACEMENT





## *Current Community Impediments to Fair Housing: Persistent Economic, Environmental, Public Health and Criminal Justice Impediments and how we use the plan to address them.*

### Environmental Justice and Public Health

1. Communities that historically have been deemed hazardous and redlined still suffer from the long-term impacts of that designation. In addition to rampant disparities in criminal justice and policing, they tend to have lingering health impacts. In Roxbury and Dorchester for instance the predominant air pollutants are PM<sub>2.5</sub> and NO<sub>2</sub> and Ozone.
  - a. Short-term exposure (averaged over preceding hours or days) to elevated outdoor PM levels NO<sub>2</sub> and Ozone levels are known risk factors for mortality and morbidity related to cardiovascular (e.g. heart attack, stroke) and respiratory (e.g. asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)) diseases.
  - b. Studies have also shown that long-term exposure (averaged over the previous year or longer) to low-levels of PM<sub>2.5</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub> and Ozone are associated with development of cardiovascular disease and associated risk factors (e.g. hypertension, diabetes), COPD, and lung cancer.
  - c. NO<sub>2</sub> aggravates respiratory illnesses causing an 84% increase in asthma attacks and emergency room visits for other respiratory illnesses.
    - a. These pollutants have a direct and defined impact on public health and create conditions where 70% of fatal COVID related deaths are of people of color.
1. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing seeks to uplift the impacts of systemic segregation on communities of color relating to public health outcomes.

Jane Smith is a single mother of a 9 year-old boy and a Roxbury resident. She worked for the gas company as a Customer Service representative. She moved five times in 2018, and had three different apartments. The first time, she was asked to leave the landlord was renovating. The second time, she moved out the she rent was increased by a third of her salary monthly. She just moved into her third apartment in December and had to decide between her gas bill and rent. She decided she would try to give her son heat for Christmas.



## How Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing can impact Roxbury.

- Building and Maintaining a Historic Community.
- Protecting Roxbury from Displacement
- Protecting Economic Diversity
- Public Health
- The best community to raise our children

