¡PA'LANTE CHELSEA ONWARD!

CHELSEA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



CHELSEA ONWARD

This is for the City that breathes beneath the
Tobin's shadow,
where salt kisses steel,
and sirens sing lullabies to the sleepless.
This is for Chelsea, Massachusetts,
where every cracked sidewalk has a story
and every story is louder than the jets overhead

But Chelsea,
They won't find your beauty on a postcard.
You're a mural of survival,
brushed in brick and struggle,
graffitied with hope in a dozen languages.
You speak Spanish in the kitchen,
Arabic in the mosques,
Hebrew in the temples,
English in the courtroom,
Everything in City Hall,
And yet always, Heart first.

You burned before, Chelsea.
Not once, but twice
1908 and 1973,
your streets lit up like the wrath of gods,
but you rose, again and again and again,
ashes in your fists,
blue-collar spirit so deep in your Chest that it cracks
through your lungs.

See, the world thinks small of small cities,
but they don't know how big a heart beats
on the corner of Broadway and Bellingham Square.
They don't know the scent of pupusas
and fresh empanadas
mingling with hot asphalt in July.
They don't know the strength of a grandmother
walking her grandson to school,
through streets painted with struggle and promise.



This is a city of firsts; myself included
First stop for those fleeing fire of another kind:
The Irish uprooted by neglect and famine,
Jewish families escaping pogroms,
Italians seeking opportunity,
Polish families building faith and community,
Cambodians surviving genocide,
Vietnamese families rebuilding after the fall of Saigon,
Central Americans fleeing war,
Bosnians displaced by ethnic cleansing,
Haitians, Syrians, Afghans, Ukrainians;
asylum-seekers, dream-chasers,
And many others who came with nothing
but found a city that gave them room to Breathe.

We don't wait for help here,
we build it.
Chelsea Pa'lante lives in every rooted vein, every
food pantry, every protest,
every raised voice saying,
"Onward, We're not done yet."

And now, we build green futures too,
planting trees where concrete cracked,
turning vacant lots into gardens,
because every hand that rebuilds
Reaches out to hug back, the earth that holds us.
Our community grows in strength and soil alike,
knowing sustainability is survival,
and inclusivity is the root of change that continues
to grow in the Rain.

You taught me that respect isn't given,
it's earned.
That resilience isn't rare,
it's routine.
That, the American dream
ain't found in white picket fences,
but in laundromats,
corner bodegas,
and the Pride of a mother, adorned in graduation
robes
who just never got to wear her own.

This city is not a backdrop;
it's a battleground
where Love fights for a better tomorrow
And on every block that you walk will be
remembered as a Victory.

So here's to the City that never sleeps
'cause it's working two jobs,
here's to the voices rising up
from Chelsea's soul
loud, raw, unrelenting.

You don't need a skyline
to touch the heavens.

Chelsea, you already burn
with the fire of your People.
And that's a Light no one can put out.

Pa'Lante, Chelsea; Onward!

Sergeant Star N. Chung, 5/21/2025



Chelsea Pa'lante Cover

CHELSEA ¡PA'LANTE!, SUMMARIZED

¡PA'LANTE CHELSEA ONWARD!

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! is our city's first comprehensive plan in over 55 years. It is the result of a citywide collaborative planning process that engaged our community to envision the future of our city over the next two decades and provides a roadmap for what should happen, where, and why.



1 We Are Chelsea

Our starting point — understanding who we are and where we want to be through the following themes:

- Chelsea is a growing, diverse, gateway city
- Chelsea is a working-class community under pressure
- Chelsea is a supportive city that has what it takes
- Our needs and opportunities

2 Our Chelsea

Our destination — informed by our vision statement:

"By 2040, Chelsea is a vibrant city where **families can stay**, **businesses prosper** and our **strong community networks** help everyone **thrive** in **safe** and **healthy** neighborhoods. Our city continues to be a **gateway** for **culture**, diversity, and equity — drawing people from near and far."

3 Onward!

Our path to get there — strategies and actions to implement our community vision and goals:

Our Families Can Stay
Produce and Preserve Housing Options for Everyone

Our Businesses Prosper
Grow Our Regional and Local Economy

Our Strong Community Networks
Connect Residents with Our Community's Support Services

Our Safe Neighborhoods
Invest in Safe Streets and Strong Communities

Our Healthy Neighborhoods
Invest in Neighborhoods that are Just, Resilient, and Connected

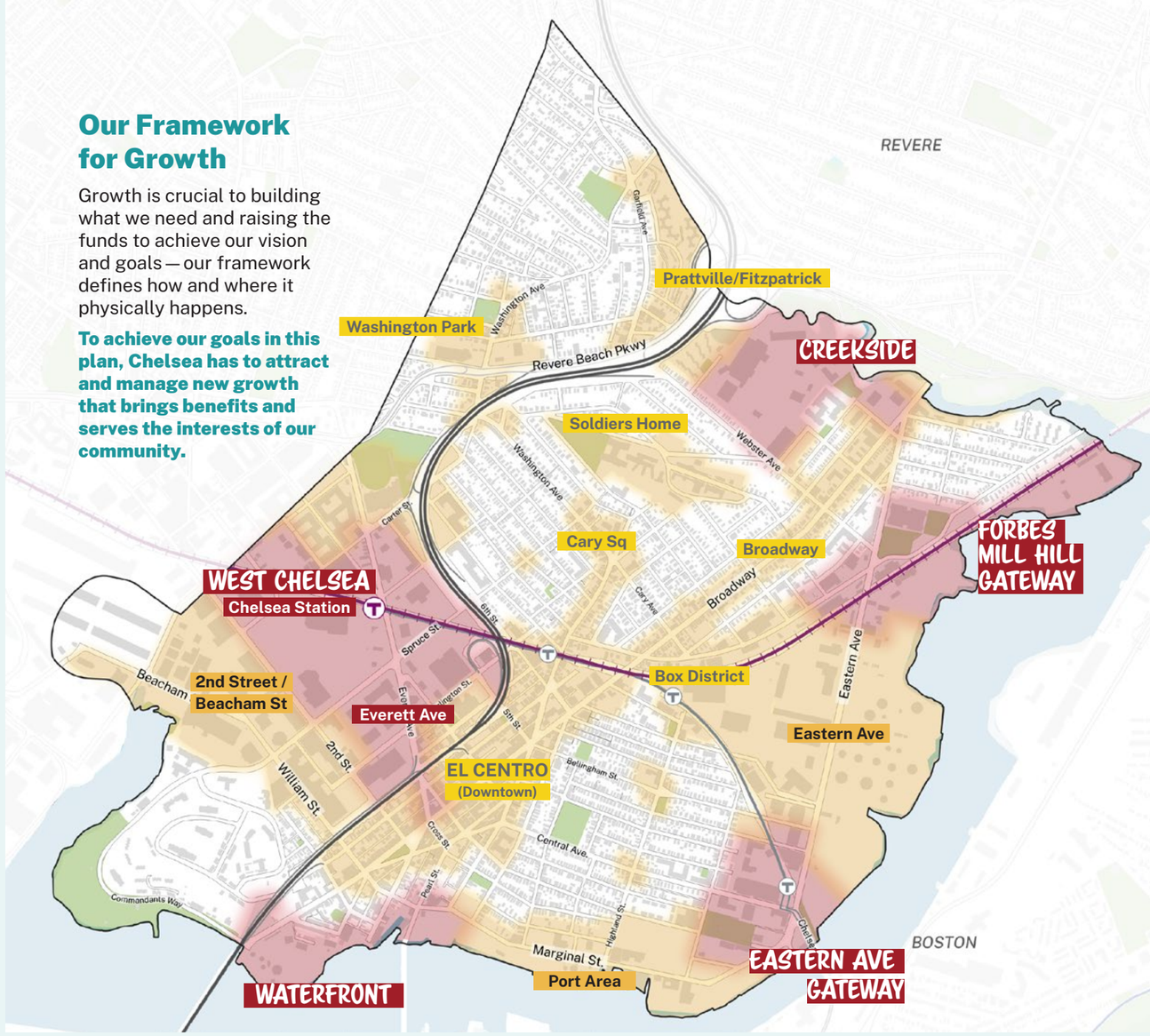
Our Gateway for Culture, Diversity & Equity
Build Cultural Pride and Vibrant Public Life



Our Framework for Growth

Growth is crucial to building what we need and raising the funds to achieve our vision and goals — our framework defines how and where it physically happens.

To achieve our goals in this plan, Chelsea has to attract and manage new growth that brings benefits and serves the interests of our community.



Growth Areas

Transformative Growth

Areas to explore large-scale holistic transformation that seeks to change the character of the place, informed by neighborhood or district-level plans, focused on attracting investment and mixed-use development.

Catalytic Growth

Areas to attract development that improves and expands the uses, character, and economic activity already there, without totally changing them.

Managed Growth

Our more consolidated neighborhoods where development potential has to be carefully handled to preserve and strengthen the existing urban form and character while allowing for context-sensitive infill development.

CHELSEA ¡PA'LANTE!, EN RESUMEN

¡PA'LANTE CHELSEA ONWARD!

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! es el primer plan integral de nuestra ciudad en más de 55 años. Es el resultado de un proceso de planeación colaborativo por toda la ciudad que involucró a nuestra comunidad para imaginar el futuro de nuestra ciudad durante las próximas dos décadas, y ofrece un mapa de ruta sobre qué debe suceder, dónde y por qué.



1 Somos Chelsea

Nuestro punto de partida — entender quiénes somos y hacia dónde queremos ir a través de los siguientes temas:

- Chelsea es una ciudad de entrada diversa y en crecimiento
- Chelsea es una comunidad trabajadora bajo presión
- Chelsea es una ciudad solidaria y aguerrida
- Nuestras necesidades y oportunidades

2 Nuestra Chelsea

Nuestro destino — informado por nuestra visión:

"Para 2040, Chelsea será una ciudad vibrante donde las **familias puedan permanecer**, los **negocios crecer** y nuestras **redes comunitarias sólidas** ayuden a todos a **prosperar** en barrios **seguros** y **saludables**. Nuestra ciudad seguirá siendo una **puerta de entrada** para la **cultura**, la diversidad y la equidad, atrayendo a personas de todas partes."

3 ¡Pa'Lante!

Nuestro camino para llegar allí — estrategias y acciones para implementar la visión y las metas de nuestra comunidad:

Nuestras Familias Puedan Permanecer
Producir y preservar opciones de vivienda para todos

Nuestros Negocios Puedan Crecer
Crecer nuestra economía regional y local

Nuestras Redes Comunitarias Sólidas
Conectar residentes con los servicios de apoyo de nuestra comunidad

Nuestros Barrios Seguros:
Invertir en calles seguras y comunidades sólidas

Nuestros Barrios Saludables
Invertir en barrios que sean justos, resilientes y estén conectados

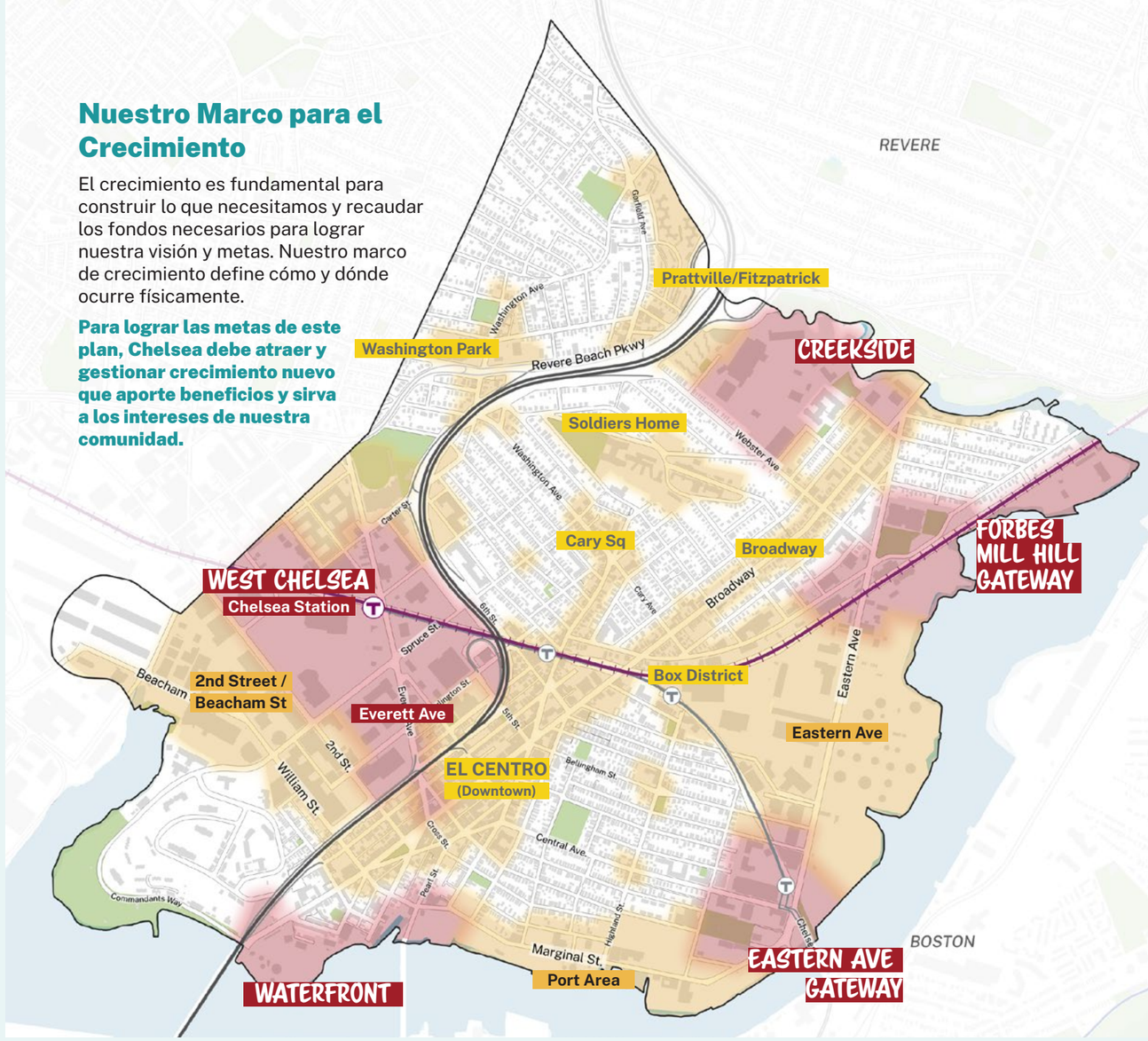
Nuestra Entrada a la Cultura, Diversidad y Equidad:
Construir orgullo en nuestra cultura y una ciudad vibrante



Nuestro Marco para el Crecimiento

El crecimiento es fundamental para construir lo que necesitamos y recaudar los fondos necesarios para lograr nuestra visión y metas. Nuestro marco de crecimiento define cómo y dónde ocurre físicamente.

Para lograr las metas de este plan, Chelsea debe atraer y gestionar crecimiento nuevo que aporte beneficios y sirva a los intereses de nuestra comunidad.



Áreas de Crecimiento

Crecimiento Transformador

Áreas para explorar una transformación integral a gran escala que busca cambiar el carácter del lugar, informada por planes a nivel de barrio o distrito, enfocada en atraer inversión y desarrollo de uso mixto.

Crecimiento Catalizador

Áreas para atraer desarrollo que mejora y amplía los usos, el carácter y la actividad económica ya existentes, sin cambiarlos por completo.

Crecimiento Gestionado

Nuestros barrios más consolidados, donde el potencial de desarrollo debe manejarse con cuidado para preservar y fortalecer la forma urbana y el carácter existentes, permitiendo al mismo tiempo un desarrollo de relleno sensible al contexto.

CHELSEA ¡PA'LANTE!, EM RESUMO

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! (Vamos em frente!) é o primeiro plano abrangente de desenvolvimento urbano de nossa cidade em mais de 55 anos. É o resultado de um processo colaborativo de planejamento em toda a cidade, que envolveu nossa comunidade na construção de uma visão para o futuro de Chelsea ao longo das próximas duas décadas. O plano oferece um roteiro do que deve acontecer, onde e por quê.



1 Somos Chelsea

Nosso ponto de partida — entender quem somos e onde queremos chegar por meio dos seguintes temas:

- Chelsea é uma cidade de entrada em crescimento e diversa.
- Chelsea é uma comunidade de classe trabalhadora sob pressão.
- Chelsea é uma cidade solidária que tem o que é preciso
- Nossas necessidades e oportunidades

2 Nossa Chelsea

Nosso destino — orientado por nossa declaração de visão:

"Até 2040, Chelsea será uma cidade vibrante onde as **famílias possam permanecer**, os **negócios prosperem** e nossas **sólidas redes comunitárias** ajudem todas as pessoas a **prosperar** em bairros **seguros** e **saudáveis**. Nossa cidade continuará sendo uma **porta de entrada** para a **cultura**, a diversidade e a equidade — atraindo pessoas de perto e de longe."

3 Em frente!

Nosso caminho até lá — estratégias e ações para colocar em prática a visão e os objetivos de nossa comunidade:

Nossas famílias podem permanecer:
Produzir e preservar opções de moradia para todas as pessoas

Nossos negócios prosperam:
Expandir nossa economia regional e local

Nossas redes comunitárias sólidas
Conectar residentes aos serviços de apoio de nossa comunidade

Nossos bairros seguros
Investir em ruas seguras e comunidades fortes

Nossos bairros saudáveis
Investir em bairros justos, resilientes e conectados

Nossa entrada para a cultura, a diversidade e a equidade
Construir orgulho cultural e uma vida pública vibrante



Nossa estrutura para o crescimento

O crescimento é essencial para construir aquilo de que precisamos e arrecadar os recursos necessários para alcançar nossa visão e nossos objetivos — nossa estrutura define como e onde esse crescimento acontece fisicamente.

Para alcançar os objetivos deste plano, Chelsea precisa atrair e gerir um novo crescimento que traga benefícios e atenda aos interesses de nossa comunidade.



Áreas de Crescimento

Crescimento Transformador

Áreas para explorar uma transformação holística em grande escala que busca mudar o caráter do local, orientada por planos em escala de bairro ou distrito, com foco em atrair investimentos e desenvolvimento de uso misto.

Crescimento Catalisador

Áreas para atrair desenvolvimento que melhore e amplie os usos, o caráter e a atividade econômica já existentes, sem transformá-los por completo.

Crescimento Gerenciado

Nossos bairros mais consolidados, onde o potencial de desenvolvimento deve ser gerido com cuidado para preservar e fortalecer a forma urbana e o caráter existentes, ao mesmo tempo em que se permite o desenvolvimento em lotes vazios ou subutilizados, de forma sensível ao contexto.

CHELSEA ¡PA'LANTE!, REZIME

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! (Annou Avanse!) se premye plan konplè vil nou an depi plis pase 55 an. Se rezilta yon pwosesis planifikasyon kolaboratif nan tout vil la ki te fè kominote nou an patisipe pou imajine avni vil nou an pandan de deseni k ap vini yo, epi li bay yon kat wout ki montre sa ki dwe fèt, ki kote, ak poukisa.



1 Nou Se Chelsea

Pwen depa nou — konprann kiyès nou ye ak ki kote nou vle ye atravè tèm sa yo:

- Chelsea se yon vil pòtay divès e k ap grandi.
- Chelsea se yon kominote klas ouvriye ki anba presyon
- Chelsea se yon vil ki bay sipò e ki gen kapasite pou reyisi
- Bezwen ak opòtinite nou yo

2 Chelsea Nou an

Destinasyon nou — ki baze sou deklarasyon vizyon nou an:

"Rive 2040, Chelsea se yon vil vivan kote **fanmi yo ka rete**, **biznis yo pwospere** epi **rezo kominotè solid** nou yo ede tout moun **fleri** nan katye ki **an sekirite** e ki **an sante**. Vil nou an kontinye ap sèvi kòm yon **pòtay** pou **kilti**, divèsite, ak ekite — li atire moun ki soti toupre kou lwen."

3 Annou Avanse!

Chemen nou pou n rive la — strateji ak aksyon pou reyalize vizyon ak objektif kominote nou an:

Fanmi Nou yo Ka Rete:
Kreye ak Prezève Opsyon Lojman pou Tout Moun

Biznis Nou yo Pwospe:
Fè Ekonomi Rejyonal ak Lokal Nou an Grandi

Rezo Kominotè Solid Nou yo
Konekte Rezidan yo ak Sèvis Sipò Kominote Nou an

Katye Nou yo ki an Sekirite
Envesti nan Lari ki an Sekirite ak Kominote ki Solid

Katye Nou yo ki an Sante
Envesti nan Katye ki Jis, Rezilyan, ak Konekte

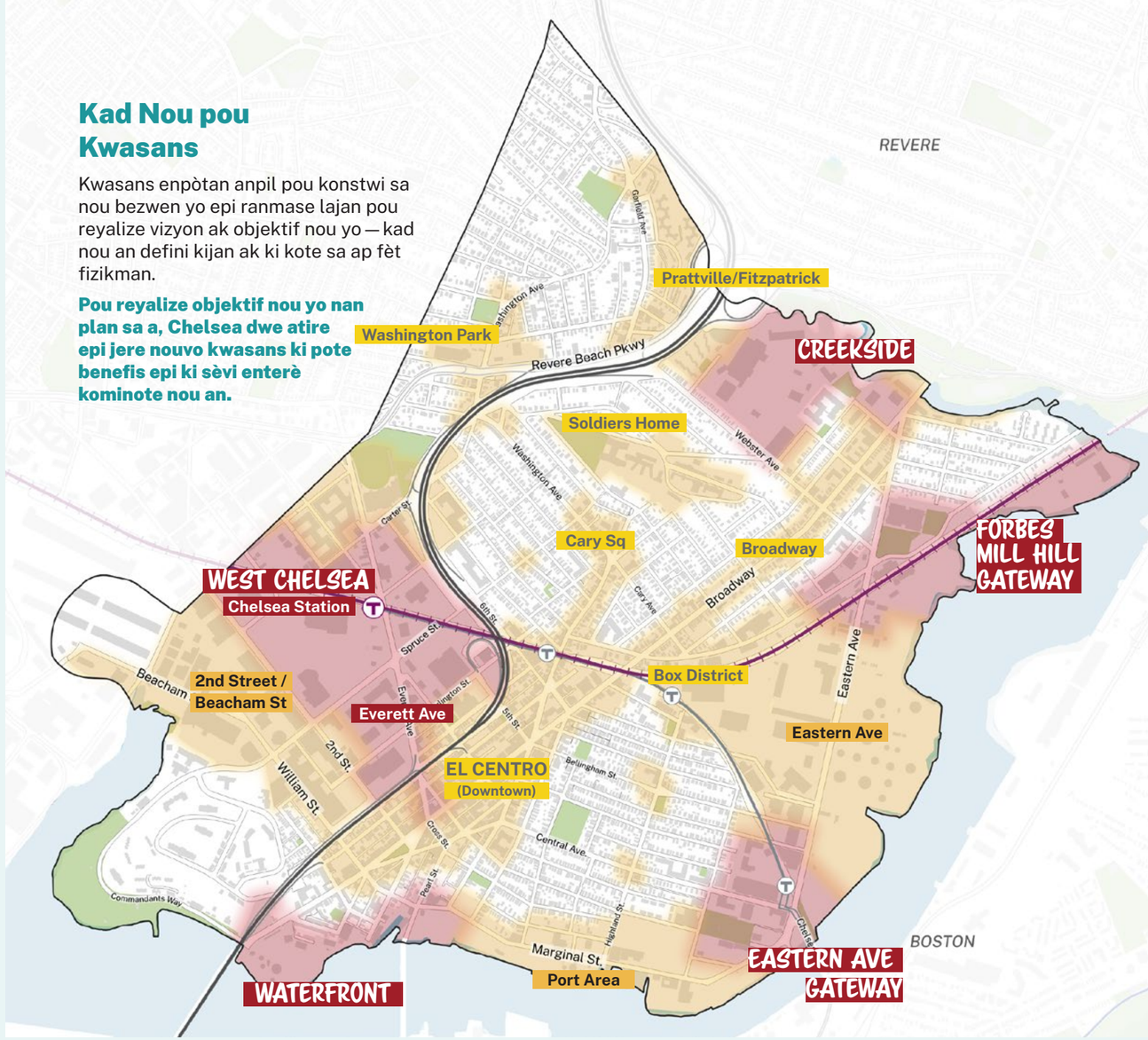
Pòtay Nou pou Kilti, Divèsite & Ekite
Bati Fyète Kiltirèl ak Lavi Piblik Vivan



Kad Nou pou Kwasans

Kwasans enpòtan anpil pou konstwi sa nou bezwen yo epi ranmase lajan pou reyalize vizyon ak objektif nou yo — kad nou an defini kijan ak ki kote sa ap fèt fizikman.

Pou reyalize objektif nou yo nan plan sa a, Chelsea dwe atire epi jere nouvo kwasans ki pote benefis epi ki sèvi enterè kominote nou an.



Zòn Kwasans

Kwasans Transfòmatif

Zòn pou eksplore yon transfòmasyon global sou gwo echèl ki chèche chanje karaktè kote a, ki baze sou plan pou nivo katye oswa distri, epi ki konsantre sou atire envestisman ak devlopman ki melanje plizyè itilizasyon nan menm kote a.

Kwasans Katalitik

Zòn pou atire devlopman ki amelyore epi elaji itilizasyon, karaktè, ak aktivite ekonomik ki deja la, san chanje yo nèt.

Kwasans Jere

Katye nou yo ki pi konsolide, kote potansyèl devlopman dwe jere ak prekosyon pou prezève epi ranfòse fòm ak karaktè iben ki egziste deja, pandan y ap pèmèt nouvo devlopman sou teren vid oswa ki pa byen itilize anndan zòn ki deja bati, ki adapte ak kontèks katye a.

CHELSEA ¡PA'LANTE!, SOO KOOBID

Chelsea ¡Pa'lante, Onward! (Hore u Soco!) waa qorshaha guud ee dhammaystiran ee ugu horreeya ee magaaladeennu yeelato muddo ka badan 55 sano. Waa natiijada hannaan qorshayn wadajir ah oo magaalada oo dhan ka dhacay, kaas oo bulshadeenna ka qaybgeliyay dejinta aragti ku saabsan mustaqbalka magaaladeenna labaatanka sano ee soo socda. Qorshuhu wuxuu kaloo bixiyaa hage cad oo tilmaamaya waxa ay tahay in la sameeyo, halka ay tahay in laga sameeyo, iyo sababta



1 Waxaynu Nahay Chelsea

Barta aynu ka bilaabayno — fahamka cidda aynu nahay iyo halka aynu doonayno inaynu gaarno, innagoo adeegsanayna mawduucyada soo socda:

- Chelsea waa magaalo albaabkeedu kala duwan yahay oo sii koraysa
- Chelsea waa bulsho ay u badan yihiin dadka shaqeeya oo cadaadis la kulmaysa
- Chelsea waa magaalo is-garab istaagta oo leh awoodda iyo agabka loo baahan yahay
- Baahiyaheenna iyo fursadaheenna

2 Chelsea-deenna

Meesha aynu u soconno — oo uu hagayo bayaanka aragtideennu:

"Marka la gaaro 2040, Chelsea waa magaalo firfircoon oo **qoysasku ku sii joogi karaan**, **ganacsiyadu ku kobcaan** iyo **shabakadaha bulshadeenna ee xooggan** ay dhammaan dadka ka caawiyaan inay **horumaraan** gudaha xaafado **ammaan ah** oo **caafimaad leh**. Magaaladeennu waxay sii ahaanaysaa **marin u furan dhaqanka**, kala-duwanaanshaha iyo sinnaanta — oo soo jiidata dad ka imanaya meel dhow iyo meel fog."

3 Hore u Soco!

Jidka aynu halkaas ku gaari doonno — xeeladaha iyo tallaabooyinka lagu hirgelinayo aragtida iyo yoolalka bulshadeenna:

Qoysaskeennu way sii joogi karaan
Abuuridda iyo ilaalinta xulashooyin guryeed oo loogu talagalay dhammaan dadka

Ganacsiyadeennu way kobcaan
Kobcinta dhaqaalaheenna heer gobol iyo heer deegaan

Shabakadaha bulshadeenna ee xooggan
Isku xiridda dadka deggan iyo adeegyada taageerada ee bulshadeenna

Xaafadaheenna ammaanka ah
Maalgelinta waddooyin ammaan ah iyo bulshooyin xooggan

Xaafadaheenna caafimaadka leh
Maalgelinta xaafado caddaalad ah, adkaysi leh, oo isku xiran

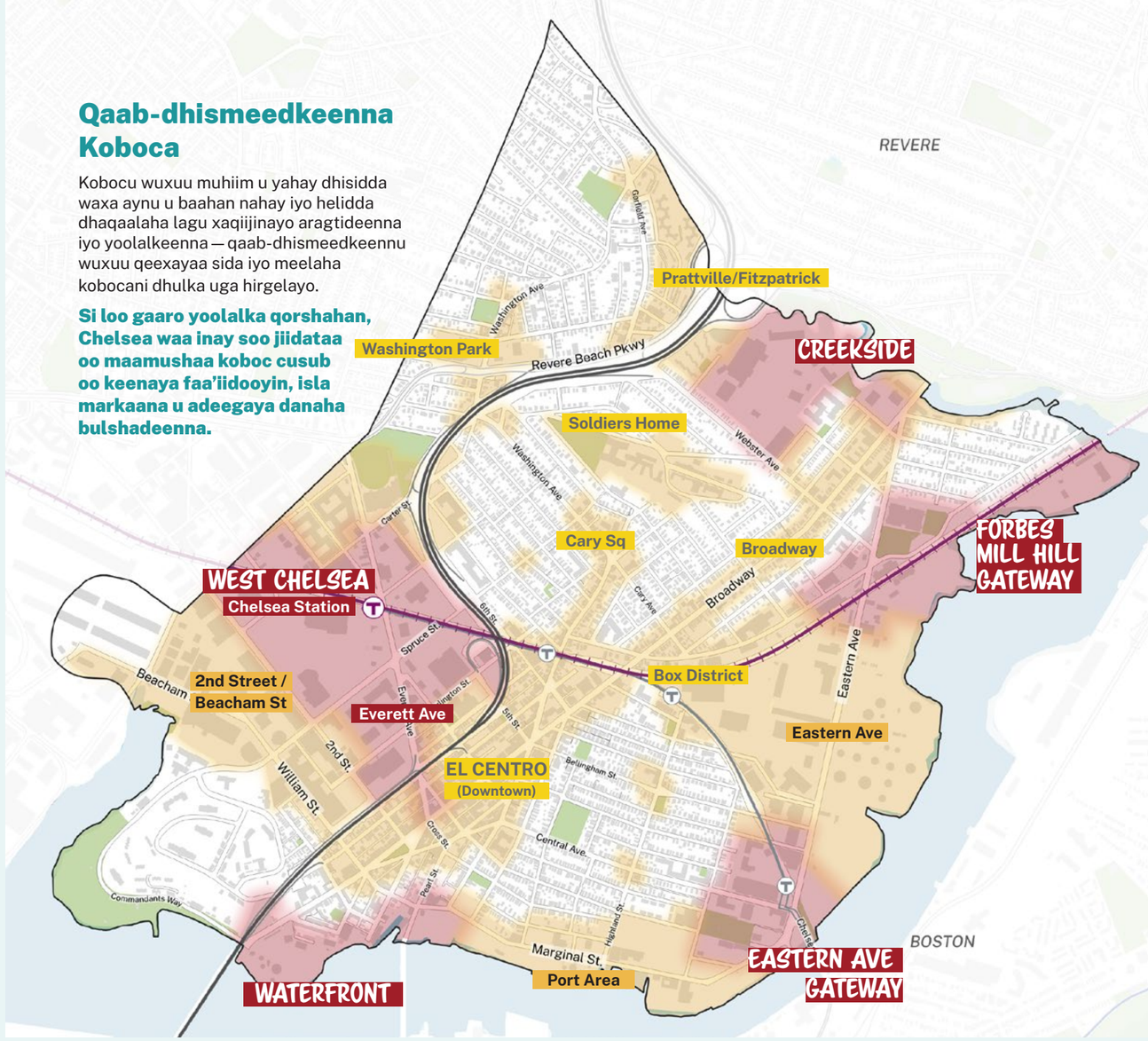
Marinkeenna u furan dhaqanka, kala-duwanaanshaha & sinnaanta
Dhisidda ku faanidda dhaqanka iyo nolol dadweyne oo firfircoon



Qaab-dhismeedkeenna Koboca

Kobocu wuxuu muhiim u yahay dhisidda waxa aynu u baahan nahay iyo helidda dhaqaalaha lagu xaqiijinayo aragtideenna iyo yoolalkeenna — qaab-dhismeedkeennu wuxuu qeexayaa sida iyo meelaha kobocani dhulka uga hirgelayo.

Si loo gaaro yoolalka qorshahan, Chelsea waa inay soo jiidataa oo maamushaa koboc cusub oo keenaya faa'iidooyin, isla markaana u adeegaya danaha bulshadeenna.



Goobaha Koboca

Koboc Isbeddel Ballaaran

Goobo lagu sahaminayo isbeddel dhammaystiran oo baaxad weyn, kaas oo ujeeddadiisu tahay beddelidda dabeecadda goobta, laguna hagayo qorshayaasha heer xaafad ama heer degmo, iyadoo diiradda la saarayo soo jiidashada maalgashiga iyo horumarin dhuleed oo adeegsi isku dhafan leh.

Koboc Dardargeliya Horumarka

Goobo loogu talagalay inay soo jiitaan horumarin wanaajisa oo ballaarisa adeegsiyada, dabeecadda goobta, iyo dhaqdhaqaaqa dhaqaale ee hore u jiray, iyadoo aan gebi ahaanba la beddelin waxa jira.

Koboc La Maareeyo

Xaafadaheenna inta badan hore u dhisan, halkaas oo ay tahay in suurtagalnimada horumarinta si taxaddar leh loo maareeyo si loo ilaaliyo loona xoojiyo qaabka magaalo-dhismeedka iyo dabeecadda hadda jirta, iyadoo la oggolaanayo horumarin lagu buuxinayo dhulalka bannaan ama aan si buuxda loo isticmaalin, oo la jaanqaadaysa xaaladda iyo dabeecadda deegaanka.

ملخّص CHELSEA ¡PA'LANTE, ONWARD! (إلى الأمام)

تُعدّ Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! (إلى الأمام) أول خطة شاملة لمدينتنا منذ أكثر من ٥٥ عامًا. وهي ثمرة عملية تخطيط تعاونية على مستوى المدينة أشركت مجتمعنا في تصوّر مستقبل مدينتنا على مدى العقدين المقبلين، وتقدّم خارطة طريق لما ينبغي أن يحدث وأين ولماذا.



1 نحن تشيلسي

نقطة انطلاقنا — فهم مَن نحن وإلى أين نريد أن نصل من خلال الموضوعات التالية:

- تشيلسي مدينة بوابة متنوعة ومتنامية
- تشيلسي مجتمع من الطبقة العاملة يواجه ضغوطًا
- تشيلسي مدينة داعمة تمتلك المقومات اللازمة للنجاح
- احتياجاتنا وفرصنا

2 تشيلسي مدينتنا

وجهتنا — كما يرسمها بيان رؤيتنا:

«بحلول عام ٢٠٤٠، ستكون تشيلسي مدينة نابضة بالحياة حيث **يمكن للعائلات البقاء**، و**تزدهر الأعمال التجارية**، وتساعد **شبكات مجتمعنا القوية** الجميع على **لازدهار** في أحياء **آمنة** و**صحية**. وتواصل مدينتنا أداء دورها بوصفها **بوابة** **للثقافة** والتنوع والإنصاف، فتجذب الناس من الأماكن القريبة والبعيدة.»

يمكن لعائلاتنا البقاء
استحداث خيارات السكن للجميع والحفاظ عليها

تزدهر أعمالنا التجارية
تنمية اقتصادنا الإقليمي والمحلي

شبكات مجتمعنا القوية
ربط السكان بخدمات الدعم المتاحة في مجتمعنا

3 إلى الأمام!

مسارنا للوصول إلى هناك — استراتيجيات وإجراءات لتنفيذ رؤية مجتمعنا وأهدافه:

أحياؤنا الآمنة
الاستثمار في شوارع آمنة ومجتمعات محلية قوية

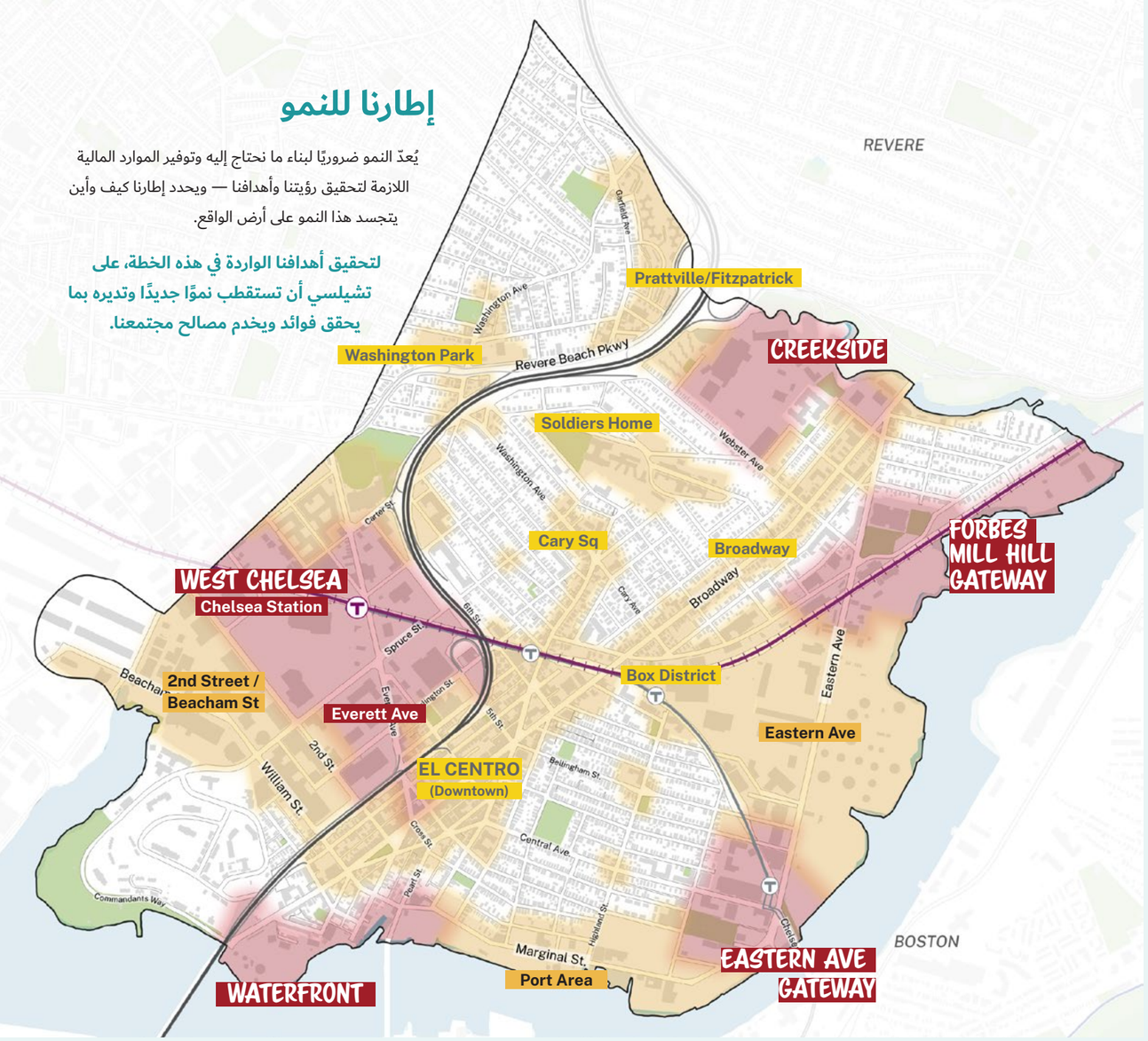
أحياؤنا الصحية
الاستثمار في أحياء عادلة وقادرة على الصمود ومترابطة

بوابتنا للثقافة والتنوع والإنصاف
تعزيز الاعتزاز الثقافي والحياة العامة النابضة بالحياة

إطارنا للنمو

يُعدّ النمو ضروريًا لبناء ما نحتاج إليه وتوفير الموارد المالية اللازمة لتحقيق رؤيتنا وأهدافنا — ويحدد إطارنا كيف وأين يتجسد هذا النمو على أرض الواقع.

لتحقيق أهدافنا الواردة في هذه الخطة، على تشيلسي أن تستقطب نموًا جديدًا وتديره بما يحقق فوائد ويخدم مصالح مجتمعنا.



مناطق النمو

النمو التحوّلي

مناطق لدراسة إمكان إجراء تحوّل شامل واسع النطاق يهدف إلى تغيير طابع المكان، بالاستناد إلى خطط على مستوى الحي أو القطاع، مع التركيز على جذب الاستثمار والتطوير متعدد الاستخدامات.

النمو المُحفِّز

مناطق لاستقطاب تطوير يحسّن الاستخدامات والطابع والنشاط الاقتصادي القائمة فيها ويوسّعها، من دون تغييرها بالكامل.

النمو المُدار

أحياؤنا الأكثر رسوخًا، حيث يجب التعامل بعناية مع إمكانات التطوير للحفاظ على الشكل العمراني والطابع القائمين وتعزيزهما، مع السماح بالتطوير الاستكمالي المراعي للسياق المحلي.

LETTER FROM THE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Dear Chelsea Community,

As a parent of two young children, I work every day to build a Chelsea that will be successful well beyond my own lifetime. For that to happen, we have to look beyond the day-to-day and set out a vision for what our city aspires to be in the future. With that in mind, it is my honor to welcome you to our city's Comprehensive Plan for the next two decades, ¡Chelsea Pa'Lante, Onward!

This plan is guided by a vision that was informed by the residents of Chelsea:

> *By 2040, Chelsea is a vibrant city where families can stay, businesses prosper, and our strong community networks help everyone thrive in safe and healthy neighborhoods. Our city continues to be a gateway for culture, diversity, and equity — drawing people from near and far.*

When you read those words closely, you see the values of Chelsea. At the forefront are our families, both the multigenerational ones that have been around since the 1800s and the ones that have taken root in the last few years. We don't want our residents to just survive; we want them to stay and thrive. Our city welcomes people from every corner of the world, and our neighborhoods are made stronger and safer because of the bonds that we create each and every day. In this way, Chelsea is a microcosm of the American project; a melting pot that everyone can call home.

¡Chelsea Pa'Lante, Onward! is a project that came from you: the residents, the business owners, and the advocates who showed up to share what they love about Chelsea and what they hope for its future. I am grateful to have had a hand in shaping a plan built not by a select few but by our collective voice.

A comprehensive plan is a guide, one that we can turn to again and again as we make decisions about growth, housing, transportation, and opportunity. It is also a statement of values to help us weigh the tradeoffs we will face when resources are limited but ambition is not. Our last plan dates back to 1970, which speaks to the significance of this project for this generation.

On behalf of the City Council, I want to thank our city staff for their tireless work throughout this process, our Steering Committee for their guidance, our community partners for building trust across every neighborhood, and our consultant, Utile, for helping translate community voice into a workable plan. And above all, thank you to the residents, business owners, and advocates of Chelsea. You have made us what we are today and it is with you that we will build our future.

Pa'lante!

Sincerely,

Roberto Jimenez Rivera

President, Chelsea City Council



Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante!

LETTER FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Dear Chelsea Community,

On behalf of the City of Chelsea, I am proud to share Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! our city's comprehensive plan and a shared vision for the future of our community.

It has been more than fifty years since Chelsea last undertook an effort of this kind. Our previous comprehensive plan was completed in 1970, and in the decades since, Chelsea has changed in ways the authors of that plan could have hardly imagined.

The word "Pa'lante" captures the spirit of Chelsea and the momentum we have built for generations. "Pa'Lante" is an expression of moving ahead, of progress, of pushing forward, together, even in the face of challenge. Over the last two years we have used "Pa'Lante" as our motto, as our battle cry, as our call to action. "Pa'Lante" is a word woven into the everyday language of our residents, and it captures exactly the spirit in which this plan was built: not a plan handed down to Chelsea, but one built with Chelsea, by the people who call this city home.

A comprehensive plan is, at its heart, a shared guide; a roadmap that reflects our values and sets a common direction for housing, transportation, economic development, open space, and the many other systems that shape daily life in our city. Chelsea's comprehensive plan is also something more honest than a simple wish list. Chelsea has limited land to develop, limited financial resources, and many competing needs, some more urgent than others. For us, this comprehensive plan is a recognition of trade-offs: a candid reckoning with the choices we must make together in order to move forward as one Chelsea, Pa'Lante.

A city that is not growing is a city that is dying. To achieve any of the goals outlined in this plan we must guide Chelsea's future growth in a way that works for and supports our community over the next 20 years. Chelsea Pa'Lante has identified the areas best suited for transformative growth that will keep our city alive and thriving for generations to come.

This plan would not exist without the hundreds of voices that shaped it. I want to extend my deepest thanks to the Chelsea City Council for their leadership and support throughout this process; to our dedicated Steering Committee, who gave countless hours to guide this work; to our community partners, who opened their doors and built trust across every neighborhood; to our city staff, whose expertise and care are reflected on every page; and to our consultant, Utile, whose skill helped translate community vision into an actionable plan.

Most of all, I want to thank the residents and business owners of Chelsea. Thank You. You showed up to workshops, surveys, pop-up events, and held conversations with us on your front steps. You shared your hopes, your concerns, and your ideas for what our magnificent, diverse and resilient Chelsea can be. This plan belongs to you.

Chelsea has always been a city that moves forward. Together, let's build what's next. Pa'lante!

Fidel Maltez
City Manager

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan was built not on technical expertise alone, but in the beautiful intersection of professional knowledge and community wisdom.

Thank you to the thousands of Chelsea community members who answered our visioning survey, filled out a visioning comment card, attended one of our workshops, chatted with us at a community event, and shared our materials with friends and family. Thank you to all the community organizations that opened their doors and helped us host community conversations, workshops, and focus groups. Also, thank you to the vendors, volunteers, and City staff who help make our two Pa'Lante Fests a success.

Many community members, partner organizations, and City staff not listed below dedicated their time and effort to staff public engagement events, review recommendations, and conduct outreach to ensure this plan's success.

This plan was led by the City Manager's Office and in collaboration with different City Departments and under the oversight of the Planning Board.

CITY COUNCIL

- Calvin T. Brown
- Norieliz DeJesus, Vice President
- Kelly Garcia
- Tanairi Garcia
- Deron Hines
- Roberto Jimenez-Rivera, President
- Giovanni A. Recupero
- Leo Robinson
- Lisa Anne Santagate
- Todd Taylor
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CITY STAFF

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- Devon Fields, Deputy City Manager-Operations
- Paul Sagarino, Deputy City Manager-Finances
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- Lillian Martin, Communications
- Delia Harrington, Arts and Culture
- Diana Hercules
- Grace Agosto

Housing & Community Development

- Ben Cares, Director
- Julio Hernández
- Omar Miranda
- Kristen Homeyer

Permitting and Land Use Planning

- John DePriest, Former Director
- William Cecio, Director
- Adam Roy

Other City Departments

- Jim Sullivan, Chief Assessor
- Flor Amaya, Public Health Director
- Lisa Mucciarone, Public Library Director
- Ramón García, Chief Information Officer
- Cate Fox-Lent, DPW Commissioner
- Bea Cravatta, Chelsea Recreation & Cultural Affairs Director
- Charles Giuffrida, Athletic Infrastructure & Sports Tourism Director
- Keith E. Houghton, Chelsea Police Chief
- John Quatieri, Chelsea Fire Chief

Special thanks to

Chelsea Public Schools

- Michael Sullivan, Malik Howshan

STEERING COMMITTEE

The City selected the Chelsea Pa'Lante Steering Committee members following an open call for applications aiming to represent a diverse set of voices across the city.

- Jose Abreu
- Maranatha Boyer
- Mayra Balderas
- Kyle Browne
- Saira Carreto Romero
- Julie DeMauro
- Vivian Ianotti
- David Matute
- Jake Small
- Sarah Ritch, Planning Board Liaison
- Norieliz DeJesus, Chelsea City Council
- Todd Taylor, Chelsea City Council

CONSULTANT TEAM

Utile Architecture + Planning, Urban Planning and Design, Engagement

- Tim Love, Carlos Sainz Caccia, Zoë Taft Mueller, José Cotto, JT Keller, Emily Fang, Cookie Kunarattanapruek, Harish Krishnamoorthy, Loren Rapport, Kyle Jonasen, Claudia Porras, Francisca Allende, Tony Sánchez

Consult LeLa, Community Engagement

- Chavella Lee-Pacheco, Shavel'le Olivier

U3 Advisors (formerly Landwise Advisors), Economic Development and Real Estate Advisory

- Jon Trementozzi, Amy Fater, Albert Zhang

Nelson\Nygaard, Transportation Planning Advisory

- Alyson Fletcher, Zack Gavel, Michael Carraher

With the support of:

La Colaborativa, Local Community Organizing

- Milagros Barreto, Alejandra Rodríguez

Collage art between chapters by David Matute.

Image credits are noted throughout this document.
Images uncredited are provided by the City of Chelsea and the Utile team.



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INTRODUCTION

Chelsea is a growing, diverse city full of hard-working people who care for one another. Even though we are the smallest city in the state, Chelsea is home to an incredibly diverse set of places, from vibrant neighborhoods and bustling streets to active industrial areas. As a gateway city, Chelsea has always been at the forefront of change, where newcomers feel welcome. At the same time, we have also been on the front lines of disproportionate environmental injustice, highlighted by past planning decisions. Yet our strong, resilient, and supportive community has shown us there are ways ahead.

Now is the time for us to plan a future for Chelsea on our own terms, informed by the voices, ideas, and priorities of our community. After decades without one, this comprehensive plan sets our vision and goals for the next two decades, a framework for growth that benefits all of us, and a roadmap with strategies to keep moving our city **¡Pa'Lante, Onward!**

IN THIS CHAPTER:

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WHAT IS CHELSEA ¡PA'LANTE, ONWARD!?

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan, also called a master plan or citywide plan, is a long-range, strategic roadmap that guides a city's growth and development across a broad array of planning topics. Massachusetts law (MGL c. 41, § 81D) requires that it serve as "a basis for decision-making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality." It must cover topics such as land use, housing, transportation and mobility, economic opportunity, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, and infrastructure, informed by a community engagement process. It is an essential tool for local governments and planners to make informed decisions that align with the long-term vision of the community.

Beyond meeting statutory requirements, a comprehensive plan serves as a citywide campaign to engage the entire community in defining values and articulating a shared vision for its future. The resulting final plan must be an accessible document that everyone can reference, quote, and use to advocate for the city's future.



Photo Credit: Van Auken

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! is our city's first comprehensive plan in over 55 years. It is the result of a citywide collaborative planning process that engaged our community to envision the future of our city over the next two decades and provides a roadmap for what should happen, where, and why.

This plan is one of our primary tools to guide public and private action to support growth and investment in our neighborhoods, infrastructure, and city services and programs so they align with our community's goals, needs, and interests.

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! has also been a collective endeavor driven by the vision of our community. This plan isn't just about buildings and streets; it's about empowering our community and ensuring that decisions about the Chelsea neighborhoods reflect the hopes, needs, and creativity of everyone who calls our city home.

Why Plan Now?

Chelsea has changed dramatically since the city's last comprehensive plan in 1970. When that plan was produced, Chelsea had been experiencing decades of population decline and disinvestment; receivership followed in the early 1990s. Today, our city looks very different: our population is growing, our demographics are diverse, and the City's own government and organization have transformed. The last two decades brought new growth trends in and around Chelsea, as regional pressure redeveloped industrial land while, more recently, the housing market has tightened.

Chelsea will keep changing over the next two decades, and this plan provides guidance on how to manage that change in ways that support an inclusive community, equitable outcomes, and places that put people first. After so much change since our last plan, and as development patterns shift across the region, this is a unique opportunity to define new goals and a shared vision for our city and set a long-term framework to guide Chelsea's growth and policies.

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! also meets our city at a time when our gateway working-class community is under intense pressure as it navigates immigration enforcement. Even during the two-year process of producing this plan, the realities facing our community kept shifting. A comprehensive plan is about planning for a future that, for many in our community, feels under threat or hard to picture beyond the next few months. Planning for a future of hope and inclusion, even in a present shaped by fear and uncertainty, is a way to claim our place in this city and this community.

Why "Pa'Lante, Onward"?

We named our plan ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! to capture our commitment to progress, inclusion, and equity as we plan for Chelsea's future. "Pa'lante" is a widely used Spanish expression, a contraction of "para adelante." Like "onward," it carries a deeper sense of perseverance: moving ahead despite hardship, without giving up. It is a call to action—a shared reminder to keep pushing our city forward with enthusiasm and resolve, no matter the obstacles we face.



WHAT IS INSIDE THIS PLAN?

The main role of Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! is to provide a shared vision, organize it, and break it down into digestible, actionable steps. This plan provides a structure for the City and community to take action towards this shared vision.



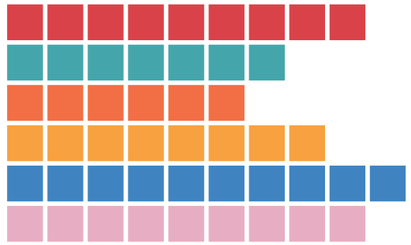
VISION & VALUES

Our shared holistic picture of where we want Chelsea to be and what we want for our neighborhoods and community.



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The thematic statements that organize our vision, giving it direction and intent.



STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

The things we need to do. Concrete measures to implement our community vision and guide the growth and investments in our city.

Key Themes

Throughout our planning process, key themes emerged as priorities for our community due to their urgency and impact. They served as anchors for our vision, goals, and strategies.

Housing — What are our housing needs? How can we produce more housing for everyone in Chelsea, especially affordable housing for our families? How can we protect residents against displacement? Where can we build more housing?

Economic Opportunity — How and where can we attract good quality jobs for our residents? What industries are our best options to support growth? How can we support entrepreneurs, local businesses, and job training?

Services & Safety Net — How can we strengthen our community services? How can we make our city fairer and more equitable for all? How can we make it easier for residents to access the help they need?

Community Safety — How can we make our streets safer to walk and our parks to enjoy? What programs should we invest in to support our youth and community well-being?

Environmental Justice & Mobility — How can we clean our waterways? What infrastructure do we need to build to protect our city from flooding and heat? Where can we build more parks or add more trees? How can we improve our transit access?

Culture & Placemaking — How can we build a city that is fun and vibrant? How can we support arts and culture that celebrates our heritage?

Land Use — How and where should Chelsea grow? What scale, location, and form are right for future development? How can growth benefit and serve the interests of our community?

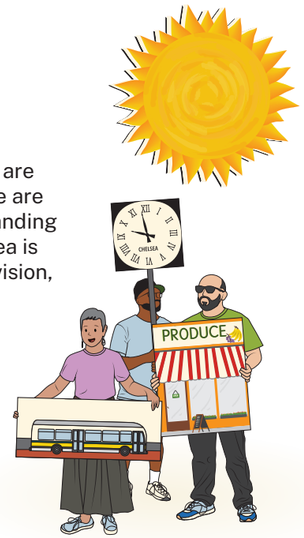
A ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE OF CHELSEA

A comprehensive plan is like a map. Like any map, it needs a starting point, a destination, and a preferred path to reach it. Our plan is organized around those same three parts.



1 We Are Chelsea

Our starting point. This chapter defines who we are and what we value as a city. It is about where we are today, the trends that got us here, and understanding the needs, challenges, and opportunities Chelsea is facing. This will provide the foundation for our vision, goals, and strategies.





2 Our Chelsea

Our destination, both conceptually and physically for our city. This chapter is a declaration of where we want our city to be in the coming decades, expressed through our vision and goals. This chapter also includes the spatial framework to guide and steer the much-needed growth in our city.



3 Onward!

Our path to get there. This chapter connects our starting point with the destination we have set for our city by providing strategies and actions to serve as steps to move us forward. This path is not fixed, though; no plan can fully anticipate the future. Like many maps, our expected route sometimes may hit a roadblock or need to be recalculated. This chapter identifies our options, defines our immediate priorities, and helps us orient ourselves amid uncertainty.

BUILDING ON THE WORK OF OUR COMMUNITY

Although Chelsea has not had a comprehensive plan for a long time, our City has produced dozens of planning efforts in recent years. A lot of community wisdom, time, and effort has gone into studies, surveys, workshops, and other engagement activities for these previous documents.

At the same time, because Chelsea has lacked a citywide plan, much of this work and knowledge remains fragmented, sometimes overlapping, and narrowly focused.

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! builds on those past and ongoing citywide, topic-specific, and area-specific plans and reports by incorporating their insights and goals into one unified framework. This plan aims to ensure continuity and alignment, fostering better coordination across the various individual topics, stakeholders, community groups, and city departments.

Relevant Past and Ongoing Plans and Studies

The City and community have made a particular effort to develop plans and reports on housing, environmental and resiliency planning, safety, equity, community preservation, and open space. Notable past and ongoing initiatives and projects include:

Community Preservation

- Chelsea Community Preservation Plan (2020) - Update in progress

Housing

- Chelsea Strategic Housing Plan (2025)
- Chelsea Fair Housing Plan (2023)
- Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (2017) - Updates (2019 and 2026)

Safety

- Vision Zero Safety Action Plan (2025)

Open Space and Cultural Affairs

- Open Space and Recreation Plan, Updated (2025)
- Arts and Culture Strategic Plan 2021-2025 (2021)

Equity

- Chelsea Digital Access Plan (2023)
- Digital Equity Plan, in collaboration with Revere and Everett (2022)

Environmental Justice, Sustainability, and Resilience

- Chelsea Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)
- Urban Heat Mitigation Report (2022)
- Mill Creek Habitat Enhancement & Waterfront Access Project (ongoing)
- Mill Creek Water Quality Improvement Project (2022)
- Island End Park and Flood Barrier Project (2021 - ongoing)
- North Suffolk Zero Carbon Action Plan (2021)
- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning 2.0 (2025-ongoing)
- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Report (2018)
- Chelsea Community Microgrids (ongoing)
- Chelsea Community Resilience Building (2018)
- Designing Coastal Community Infrastructure (2017)

Focus Area & Zoning

- West Chelsea Mixed-Use Overlay District (2026)
- West Chelsea Economic Development Study, Phase 1 (2023) and Phase 2 (2026)
- Chelsea Creek Municipal Harbor Plan and Designated Port Area Master Plan (2022)
- Eastern Avenue Climate Resilience Vision (2023)
- El Centro TDI District (ongoing)
- Downtown Broadway Project (ongoing)



ASSEMBLING OUR VISION, TOGETHER



Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! has been a collaborative process. This process created spaces where families could share their vision for a city they can keep building a future in; where young people could dream up innovative solutions for their neighborhoods; where local business owners could contribute ideas for economic growth; and where everyone in our community could share their hopes, needs, and creativity.

In the heart of our neighborhoods, every street corner tells a story of resilience, community, and hope. Our community carries wisdom passed down through generations of creating vibrant, connected spaces, despite not always being included in formal planning processes and lacking a long-range planning process for decades.

When we walk our neighborhoods, each of us experiences the direct impact of urban planning decisions. We know which streets need better lighting, where our children need safer paths to school, and which corners would flourish with open space and green infrastructure. This knowledge is not just valuable; it's essential. Yet historically, these insights have been overlooked, especially those from our Spanish-speaking neighbors, immigrant families, and working-class community members.

Our engagement included a citywide visioning survey, hundreds of comment cards gathered at community events, and multiple public workshops, all built around a Spanish-forward process designed for our majority-Latino community. We organized workshops and attended events in our public schools and library to meet with youth, and we partnered with trusted community organizations to host community conversations and thematic focus groups.

This engagement process sought to celebrate community wisdom and collective problem-solving while balancing the needs and responsibilities of the municipal government. The strategies and recommendations in this plan result from hundreds of ideas contributed by community members who participated in these engagement activities, thoughtfully shaped by the Steering Committee, City leadership, and staff.

Together, we're writing a new chapter in Chelsea's story — one where every voice matters, every dream has value, and the future is shaped by all of us — por todos nosotros.

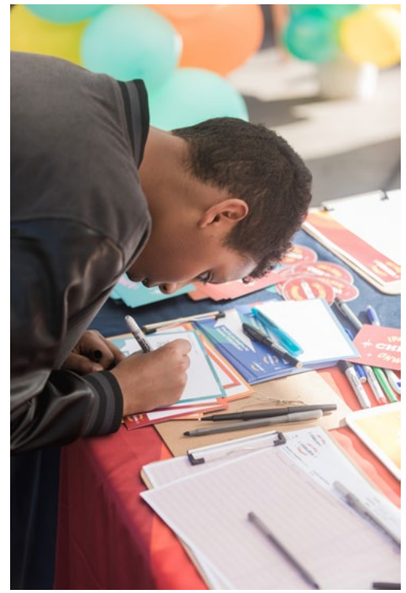








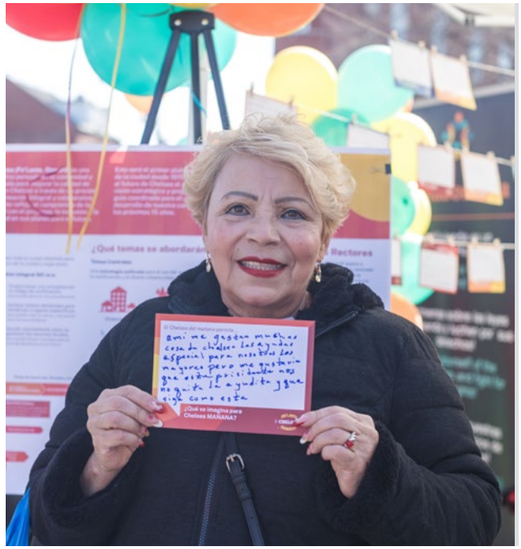








HOW WAS THE PLAN MADE?



We Are Chelsea

The first phase of our planning process focused on learning about Chelsea's needs and opportunities, analyzing data, exploring previous and ongoing studies and their goals. It also focused on listening and learning from the lived stories of our residents, the things they love about our city, what they imagine for the future, and what needs and opportunities are top of mind for Chelsea. This phase resulted in our vision statement, values, and goals, as well as gathering ideas for strategies.

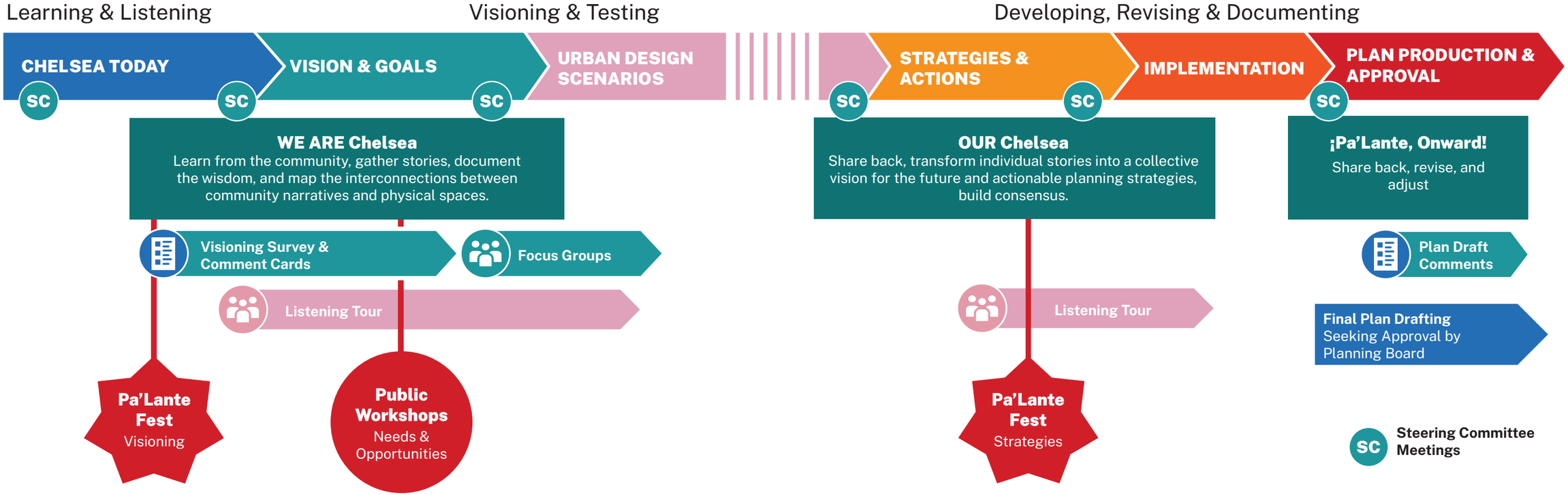
This phase was the cornerstone of our planning process and included citywide and targeted engagement activities. We kicked-off our work with our first "Pa'Lante Fest," a public event at Chelsea Square. It was followed by a citywide survey available online and through on the ground facilitators, dozens of community conversations hosted by community groups, workshops with students in our public schools, tabling at community events, and a several in-person and virtual public workshops. It also included a series of focus groups.

Our Chelsea

The second phase of our process focused on developing our strategies and their actions, defining our growth areas and urban design strategies, and prioritizing early actions. The planning team distilled hundreds of ideas from our previous phase and organized them into strategies, which we shared with the community during our second Pa'Lante Fest and in subsequent community conversations. We invited participants to sort and prioritize our draft strategies with an interactive gameboard. Finally, we workshoped with city staff and gathered community comments, ideas, and reactions to refine and develop an achievable, implementable plan for Chelsea.







Engagement in Detail

Citywide Visioning Survey

Outreach methods included an online survey, door knocking, phone banking, and on-the-ground facilitators.

813 Respondents

64% completed in Spanish

58% of English respondents identified as non-white

Public Workshops

Three workshops, two in-person (one in Spanish + one in English) and one virtual.

100+ Attendees

175+ Comments

On themes like: Housing, Economic Opportunity, Mobility, Community Character and Demographics, Green Spaces, Community Safety, and Development.

Pa'Lante Fest 2025- Visioning

298 Comment Cards Responses

Pa'Lante Fest 2026 - Strategies

80+ Participants

And hundreds more conversations and mapping participants

Listening Tours

10 Community Events

400+ Comment Cards Responses

56% completed the card in Spanish

8 Community Conversations

With: La Colaborativa Líderes Comunitarios, Anti-displacement Roundtable, Breakfasts with Chelsea Leaders, Nueva Vida Methodist Church, GreenRoots, Roundtable at Senior Center, and at the Chelsea Public Library

4 Workshops with Chelsea Public Schools

With Elementary students in 1st, 3rd, and 4th grades, and Chelsea High School students in 9th and 10th grades. Including both English-dominant and multilingual students, many of whom are recent immigrants from Latin America.

5 Focus Groups

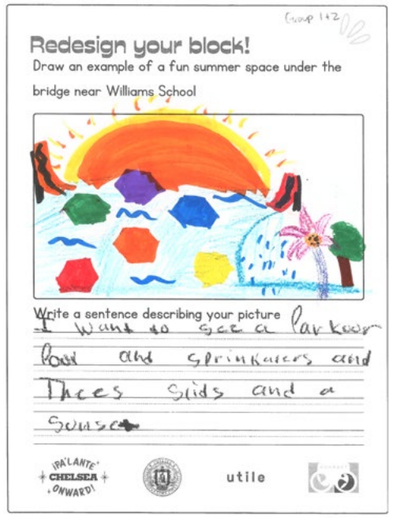
- Housing
- Community-based Organizations
- Community Safety
- Municipal Capacity
- Local Businesses and Economic Development

2200+ Conversations & Comments

Learn more about our community engagement activities and takeaways on page 218













Chelsea's engagement revealed two priorities in the community: Stabilizing families under pressure today, and investing in quality of life for the long term.

These aren't competing visions; they're two expressions of the same commitment to a Chelsea where all residents can stay, belong, and thrive.



"Lets us keep striving towards a better future for Chelsea and our youth."
-Mr. Torres

"The city governement is so invested in the community."
-Adrian

"It is our home."
-Garcia Brothers

"Chelsea had a sense of community, neighbors are always willing to help."
-Maria

"Chelsea gets a bad rep. Unfortunately, there is a lot of gentrification, but it keeps its diversity and I hope the city keeps this."
-Micheal

"To the teens of Chelsea: the library will be a safe space for you, and I want you to be here, Andrew Carnegie wanted the library to be a community space and this is your place."
-Amanda

"I, the Lord, examine the mind, I test the heart to give to to each according to his way, according to what his actions deserve."
- Jeremiah 17 : 10

"We can only make change if everyone is in the same page."
-Councilman Leo

"Rather than one thing Chelsea can do better, I am grateful and impressed with how much it has improved. Since I first moved here in 1985"
-Paul

"It does not matter which city your children grow up in, What matters is how you educate and care for them."
-Momma Ingrid

Prattville
Soldiers Home
Addison Orange
Everett Avenue
City Center
Shurtleff Bellingham
Mill Hill
Admirals Hill

Groundbreaking at Naval Hospital launches "Chelsea of Tomorrow"

WE ARE CHELSEA

To define the direction and destination where we want Chelsea to be in the next decades, we must first define who we are as a city today. **We Are Chelsea** is a statement of what our city is and where our starting point is for this plan.

Informed by the voices and lived stories of our community, along with data-driven analyses, this chapter is a snapshot of Chelsea's current conditions and the needs and opportunities that shaped the vision for this plan. It highlights key themes that emerged during our existing conditions analysis and how they could inform our decisions moving forward.

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Chelsea is a working-class community under pressure — 50

Chelsea is a supportive city that has what it takes — 54

Our needs and opportunities

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Balanced growth is critical to ensure our City's fiscal stability — 68

Accessing economic opportunity is vital for our residents. — 70

Chelsea's safety needs to focus on places and people. — 76

Environmental justice, resilience, and health should guide Chelsea's future growth. — 80

CHELSEA IS A GROWING, DIVERSE GATEWAY CITY

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! meets Chelsea at a very different moment than our last comprehensive plan. In 1970, after decades of population loss, Chelsea was described as a 'city in decline'. Today, Chelsea is anything but — Chelsea is a growing city of extraordinary strength and resilience.



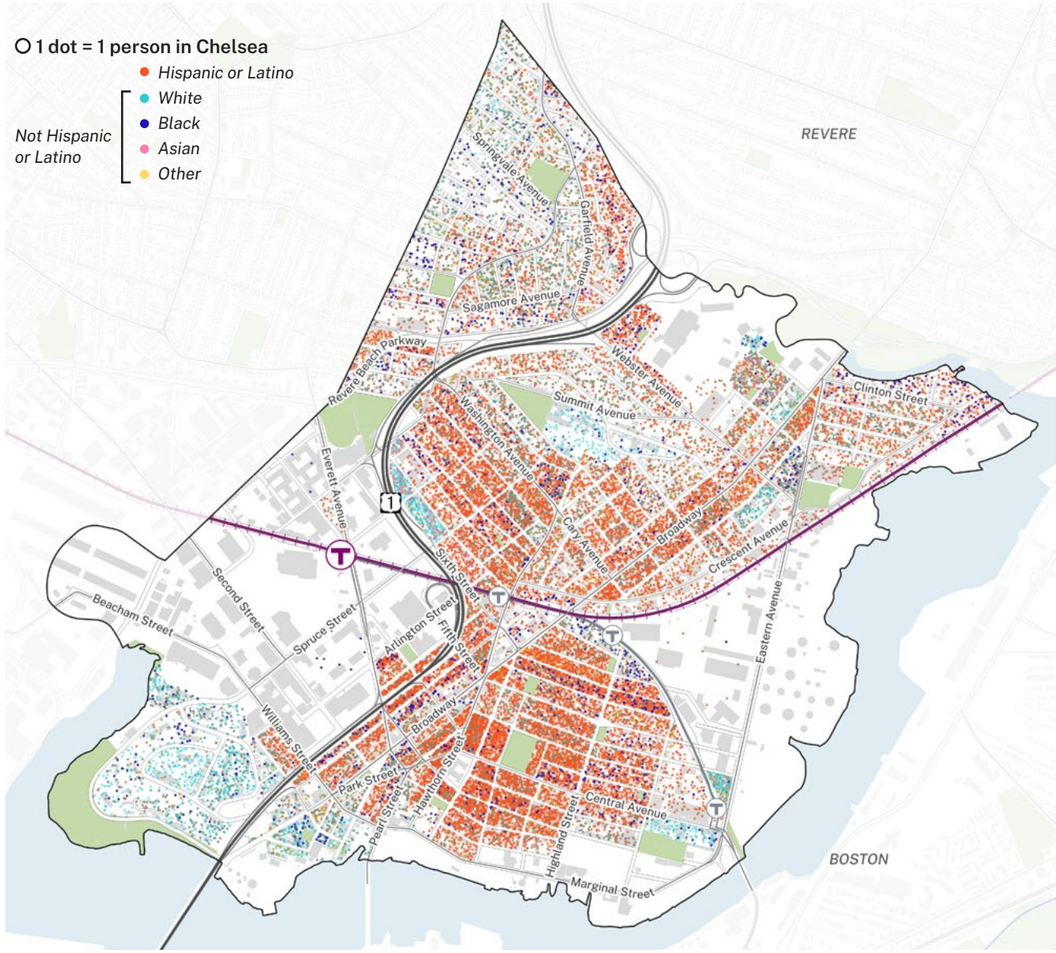


Chelsea is home to a diverse, global, and predominantly immigrant community. For more than a century, our city has been a key gateway to opportunities in the Boston region. In the 1900s, Chelsea was home to immigrants from Russia, Poland, Lithuania, and Italy, and the Jewish community made up nearly half the city's population. Today, almost half of our residents are foreign-born (46%), and 85% of those residents are from Latin America. Nearly 70% of Chelsea residents identify as Hispanic or Latino, and Spanish is the most commonly spoken language here (60% of overall residents and 76% of students in the school district speak Spanish at home). Our city is also home to many other immigrant communities, including residents who speak Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Arabic, or Somali, among others. Many of these residents are new to Chelsea — almost half (46%) of foreign-born residents have arrived after 2010 — but have chosen to stay, with nearly a third having obtained U.S. citizenship.

Diversity is reflected not just in race, ethnicity, and nationality, but also in age and family structure. Chelsea is a young city — 62% of Chelsea residents are under 40 (compared to only 50% in Massachusetts), and almost 40% of households have at least one child under 18 (vs. 28% in MA). Chelsea's youth grow up in households that are larger and more complex than those found statewide. When we talk about households, it is typical to think of a traditional married couple with children, but in Chelsea, a household can include siblings, grandparents, extended family (think aunts, uncles, and cousins), and friends.

Chelsea residents have built their own support networks, starting at home and extending throughout the community. "People and diversity" and "community support" were the top two themes that people told us they loved the most about their community today.

Chelsea's growth is evidence of the city's continued pull – *people want to come here, stay here, and build here.*



Our diverse population is evident throughout the city, particularly in the densest neighborhoods like Shurtleff-Bellingham and Downtown. Source: Decennial Census, 2020

"I love the rich and diverse culture of Chelsea and the pride residents have for this city."

Survey response

"What I like about Chelsea is that they are deeply committed to people coming from other places."

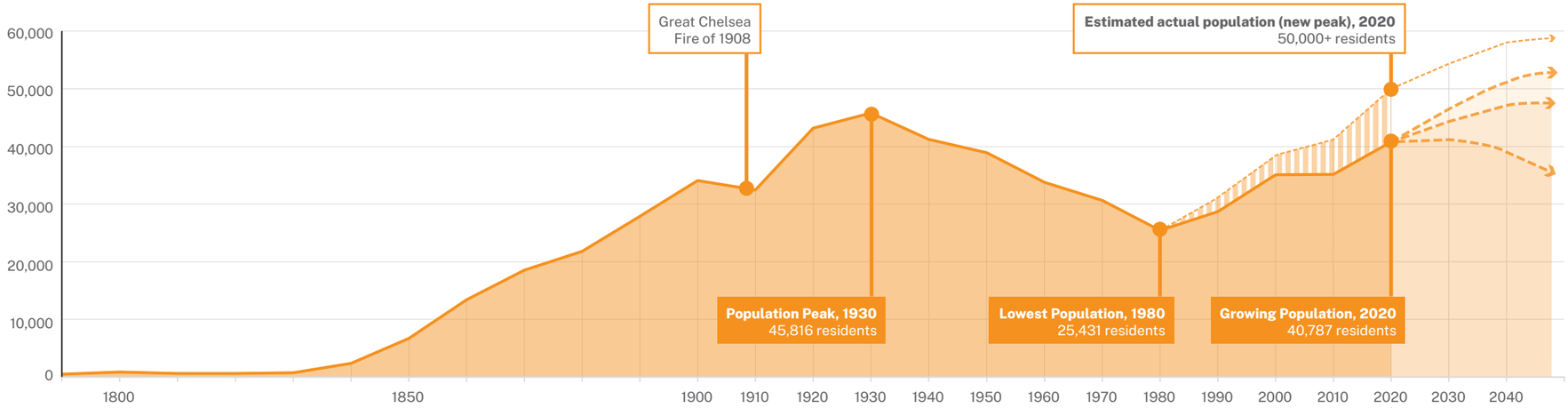
Comment card (translated)

"I feel I am in a familiar place, despite of being out of my country. I get a hug on every corner."

Comment card

Chelsea's population is growing and undercounted.

Based on Census data, Chelsea is approaching its peak population since 1930 at about 40,000 residents. However, we know that the Census undercounts communities with high proportions of immigrants and non-English speakers. While the Census is our best resource for understanding the relationships between population growth, demographics, and socioeconomic factors like income and homeownership, we recognize that certain patterns may be even more pronounced or severe on the ground. For population growth, we estimate that Chelsea's actual population has already surpassed 50,000 residents, with some estimates going even higher.



Source: Decennial Census, 1830-2020

"The diversity of Chelsea. The small town feeling of Chelsea... The rest of the world can learn a thing or two from Chelsea."

Survey response

"[Tomorrow's Chelsea allows] My family to enjoy it — to be a place for them."

Comment card (translated)



"[Everyone should know that Chelsea is...] really nice because in Chelsea, people can speak English and Spanish."

Elementary School student (translated)

"Respect and support for the immigrant who wants to do good things in this country."

Comment card (translated)

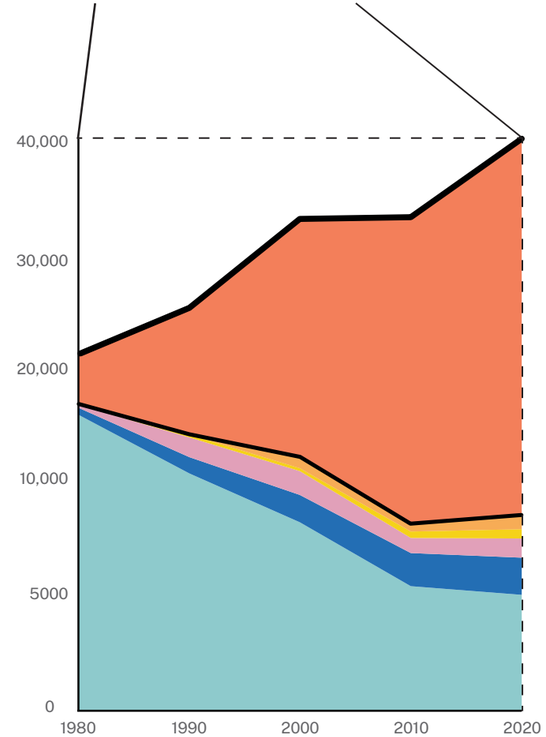


Chelsea is a multinational, multiracial, and multilingual community — and Latino identity is central to our current story.

Chelsea's diversity and waves of immigration have been core drivers of the growth, community, and culture that have defined the city for decades. Since 1980, Chelsea's Latino population has grown from 14% to 66% in 2020, making us the second most Latino city in Massachusetts. This growth reflects the deep roots and ongoing arrival of Puerto Rican, Dominican, Central and South American communities whose presence, labor, and cultural leadership have continued to enrich every neighborhood in our city.

Today, almost 80% of Chelsea residents identify as people of color. Black residents (7%) include families with generational New England roots and newer arrivals from Haiti, Cabo Verde, and elsewhere in the African diaspora. Many Latinos also identify as Black, Afro-Latino, or multiracial. Residents with Asian, Arab, and other backgrounds bring additional languages, traditions, and stories to our city.

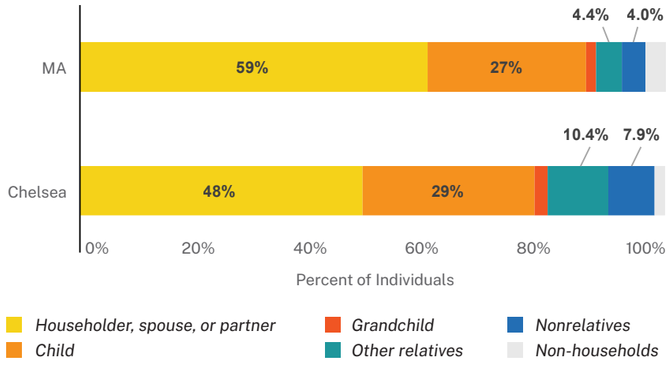
The same pull that drew immigrants to our city a century ago continues today.



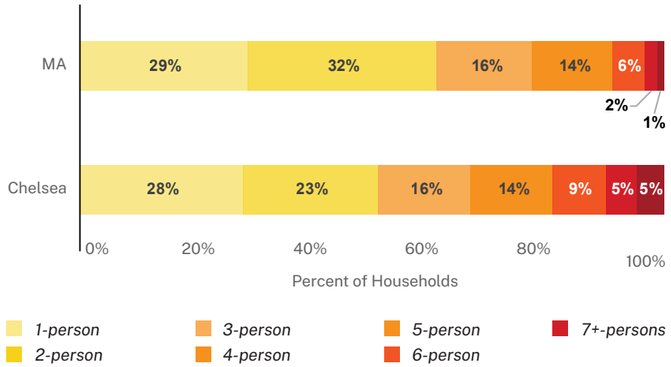
Race and ethnicity. Source: Decennial Census, 1980-2020

Chelsea's households are large and family structures are complex.

Chelsea challenges the notion of a traditional nuclear family. When compared with Massachusetts as a whole, fewer households in our community are related by marriage (33% vs. 45% in MA), more households are led by non-married women (21% vs. 13% in MA), and almost 20% of household members are extended family or non-relatives. This means the average household in Chelsea is larger than the statewide average — 19% of households in Chelsea have 5 or more people (vs. 9% in MA).



Extended family and non-relatives. Source: Decennial Census 2020



Household Size. Source: Decennial Census 2020

> "I love being close to my family while watching my children grow up where I was born."
>
> Survey response (translated)









CHELSEA IS A WORKING-CLASS COMMUNITY UNDER PRESSURE

Living in an immigrant and working-class city means financial stability is achieved through wages, not wealth. This is true for most working families here, and it reflects Chelsea's identity as a city built by labor.

A household in Chelsea earns less than households in neighboring municipalities like Everett, Revere, and Malden, which means that our community feels the pressure of rising regional housing costs more acutely than our neighbors. Income inequality also exists within Chelsea – we see differences in income along lines of race, citizenship, and homeownership status.

Chelsea is a renter city — 3 in 4 households are renter-occupied, and 77% of those households are households of color. Renting is an important and necessary housing option here, and the persistent rent burden our community faces makes it difficult to address short-term housing concerns like overcrowding, let alone save for homeownership. When households have to allocate a significant share of their income to paying rent, they are forced to make difficult trade-offs with other needs like food, utilities, and healthcare.

The pressure our community feels stems from structural barriers that are tied to the demographic profile of our residents, the economic and political realities of our country, and even the physical landscape of our city. For example, foreign-born or non-citizen residents have fewer advanced educational degrees and lower English-speaking ability. As a result, many jobs and income-earning opportunities in higher-paying sectors are out of reach, exacerbating the challenges of living in a metropolitan area with a high cost of living.

This plan is about strengthening our city's capacity for growth to help lift some of the weight of these barriers.

"More better-paying jobs, plus excellent community development, so we can really rise up and not be stuck in poor conditions."

Survey response (translated)

"Allow me to enjoy the things I love about Chelsea, without feeling like I will eventually be driven out of the community. Maybe I will be able to afford to buy pupusas on the regular again, and one day own a home here."

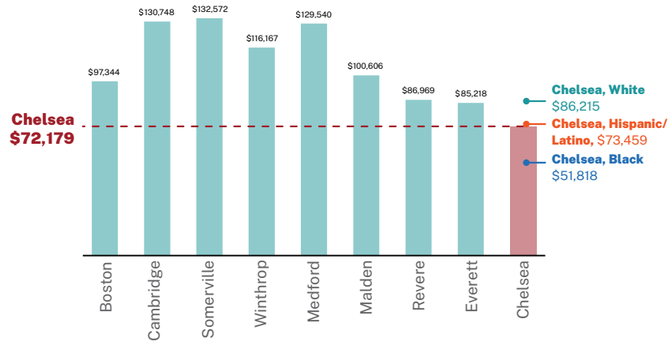
Survey response

"Economic stability for all, regardless, of education, current income, or immigration status."

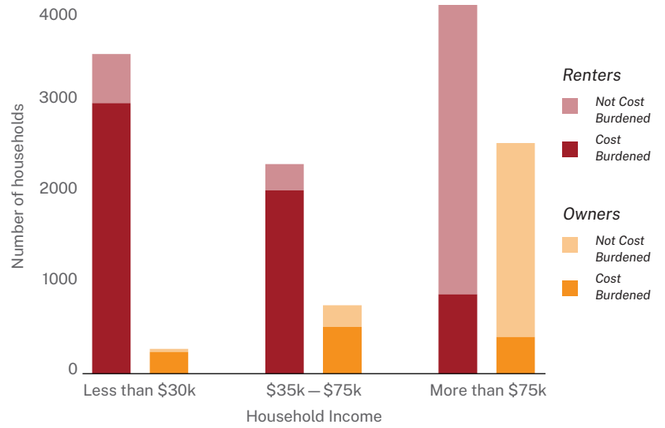
Comment card

"The community to continue to be strong and not get pushed out due to high rent and low wages."

Survey response



Median Household Income. Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2024 5-Year Estimates



Monthly Housing Costs by Median Household Income and Tenure. Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2024 5-Year Estimates

Our community earns less.

A median household in Chelsea earns only 74% of what a median household in Boston makes. Moreover, within Chelsea, different parts of our community feel this pressure more acutely than others — a Hispanic and Latino household earns a median household income of $73,459 and a Black household earns only $51,818, while a White non-Latino household earns $86,215.

Paying monthly rent and mortgage is a challenge.

Housing cost-burden (defined as paying more than 30% of your income for housing) is felt more by renters – 58% of renter-occupied households are housing cost-burdened, compared to only 32% of owner-occupied households. This is not a coincidence; the median renter-occupied household earns significantly less ($54,406) than the median owner-occupied household ($120,257).

"Affordable for Chelsea is not what is defined as affordable for the Boston Region. 80% AMI housing built is actually market rate here."

Focus group — Housing

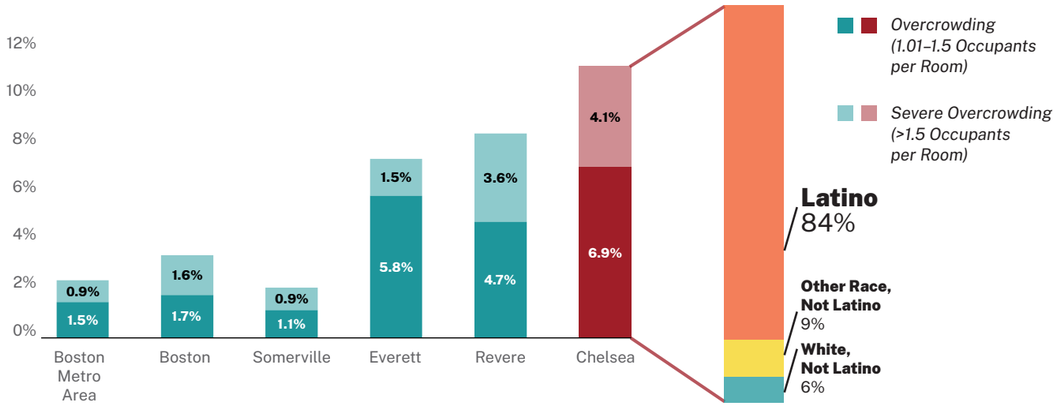
What is Area Median Income (AMI)?

Affordability is measured against an area's median income, or **AMI**, which varies by region and household size. In our case, the AMI is measured against the Boston metro area, where we earn significantly less than our neighbors.

HUD defines those making 80% AMI or below as "low income", 50% or below as "very low income", and 30% or below as "extremely low income". In our case, the AMI for a two-person household is $131,700, which means that an income of $40,000 corresponds roughly to 30% AMI, and an income of $80,000 corresponds roughly to 60% AMI.

Overcrowding is evidence of the pressure and desire to stay.

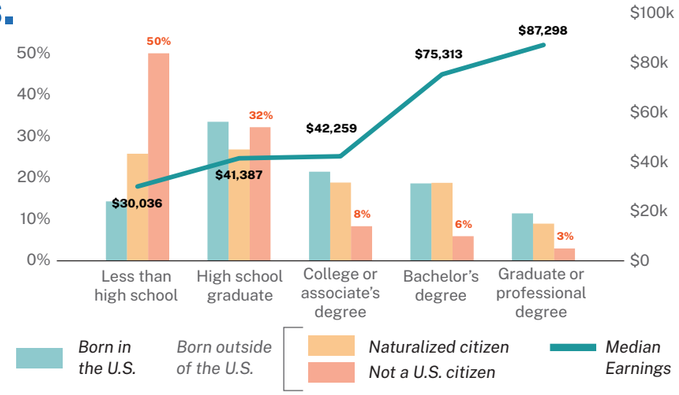
Our community has a significantly higher percentage of overcrowding (measured in the Census as occupants per room) than the rest of the region. Almost 20% of Chelsea's Latino households experience overcrowding, representing 84% of the total number of overcrowded households in Chelsea. When asked about their housing situation, almost 10% of the Spanish respondents in our Pa'Lante Survey said that they rent a room in a home, either alone or shared (compared to only 3.5% of English respondents). While for some of us, living with extended family members in a single household has cultural ties, for many others, overcrowding is tied to financial necessity. Severe overcrowding can lead to illness or mental health issues, as well as safety concerns like an increased risk of building fires. In Chelsea, we can assume that the reality on the ground is even more serious than the Census shows, considering that a significant portion of our immigrant, Latino, and non-English-speaking community is undercounted.



Source: Occupants Per Room, US Census Bureau ACS 2024 5-Year Estimates

Educational attainment is a structural barrier to higher-paying jobs.

A Bachelor's degree unlocks significantly higher pay (a jump from $42,259 to $75,313 for those who live in Chelsea). In Chelsea, only 9% of non-citizens and 30% of US-born residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 48% in Massachusetts. However, achieving a Bachelor's degree is challenging for those who work multiple jobs, have significant caregiving responsibilities, or simply cannot afford the price of education.



Source: Educational Attainment by Median Earnings and Nativity, Population 25 Years and Over, US Census Bureau ACS 2024 5-Year Estimates, City of Chelsea

"Overcrowding is a big challenges especially with fires."

Public Workshop comment

"Chelsea should be a community where you can live and work in, therefore we must invest in good jobs for all education levels."

Comment card

"Access to opportunities for education, well-paying jobs & a strong sense of belonging."

Comment card

"Chelsea needs to reach a level of education that strengthens the standard of living and family income."

Survey response (translated)

"A high school that helps pursue my dream to become an astronaut."

Comment card

"Immigrants with advanced degrees (still) struggle to get professional jobs."

Focus group — CBOs



CHELSEA IS A SUPPORTIVE CITY THAT HAS WHAT IT TAKES

People in Chelsea take care of each other. As a working-class city of immigrants, we've built a culture in which people understand that getting through hard times means relying on one another. When facing challenging circumstances, our instinct is to organize and build support systems that can reach those most vulnerable. This resilience and mutual aid ecosystem have become some of our city's most defining traits — we fight for each other, and we show up before anyone even has to ask.

This is palpable in the everyday work of both our city government and the organizations that call Chelsea home. In the early 1990s, corruption and bankruptcy pushed our city into receivership. What followed was decades of work that included a new city charter, a rebuilt government, and a long, patient effort to earn back resident trust. The National Civic League has described Chelsea as a city that has "continually risen from adversity through unity, determination, and innovation," pointing to the receivership alongside fires, school closures, and the COVID pandemic as crises that pushed our residents, our government, and our community organizations to work more closely together. The result of this decades-long effort to rebuild trust between our government and our people is what we have now come to call "the Chelsea Way."

The Chelsea Way lives in the nearly 200 organizations, many built by and for immigrant and working-class Chelsea, that operate within our two square miles. Their work touches nearly every part of our lives.

> "We are the heart of this city and feel present in every meeting, event, and decision. This shows in the feeling of community present throghout the city."
>
> Comment card

> "We're able to become one and push forward despite the many hurdles that're put in front of us."
>
> Survey response

> "We were able to make huge changes . . . in a short period of time due to the collaborative actions between our city gov, law enforcement, and community social services. . . . When groups come together with a common purpose in service of others, we can do GREAT THINGS. I will always take pride in the way our neighbors care for each other."
>
> Survey response

> ". . . There is a great deal of support for the community and empathy for those in need."
>
> Comment card (translated)


Photo Credit: La Colaborativa



Photo Credit: CAPIC Inc

La Colaborativa and *CAPIC* connect us to food, job training, immigration assistance, and the everyday services people need to get established.




Photo Credit: La Colaborativa

The Neighborhood Developers, *Chelsea Restoration Corporation*, and *Comunidades Enraizadas Community Land Trust* build and preserve the homes that keep our city affordable for the long term.


Photo Credit: TND



Photo Credit: Comunidades Enraizadas CLT


Photo Credit: CAPIC Inc



GreenRoots leads our fight for environmental justice in a city that has carried more than its share of industrial burden.


Photo Credit: Mass Audubon


Photo Credit: GreenRoots


Photo Credit: GreenRoots


Photo Credit: North Suffolk

HarborCOV supports survivors of domestic violence, *North Suffolk Community Services* provides mental health and behavioral health care to our residents, and ROCA works alongside our young people at some of the hardest turning points in their lives.


Photo Credit: ROCA Inc





Chelsea Black Community and *Chelsea Community Connections* build belonging and mutual support across our generations, alongside our many *churches, faith communities, and neighborhood groups* that have anchored our community for decades.


Photo Credit: Chelsea Community Connections



This ecosystem extends into our business community, too — the *Chelsea Chamber of Commerce* works to help our small and local businesses thrive, and *Metro Credit Union*, headquartered right here in Chelsea, is a partner in our community investment.

This is only a glimpse of the many groups and organizations that, together, build our support systems and hold our community up.

This culture is also evident in the way our residents think about Chelsea. When we asked people what they loved most about our city, "community support" or "ayudas" was one of the things we heard most often, and many described Chelsea as "convenient," a place where access to help and services is never far away. We are able to welcome newcomers because we have built real pathways to stability that enable people to put down roots here.



Photo Credit: Chelsea Black Community

This is the Chelsea Way — the safety net we've woven for ourselves and the capacity it gives us to build what's next.



"The community works together to improve and create a more inclusive Chelsea that is good for everyone."

Comment card (translated)

"The community is deeply interconnected and vocal about what they do and do not need."

Survey response

OUR NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY ARE CHELSEA'S STRONGEST PRIORITIES.

Housing was the top priority the community listed across all our different engagement activities; 66% of our survey participants (79% of Spanish speakers and 42% of English speakers) selected housing as one of the three most important priorities for Chelsea's future. Throughout our conversations, housing instability was the most mentioned source of distress.

Our city is a leader in affordable housing production in the region, but demand for housing that meets our residents' affordability needs remains high. In the following pages, we will explore how all housing projects that get built in Chelsea play a distinct role in our affordable housing delivery. **Publicly-subsidized projects** produce the deepest levels of affordability, but only about half have legal affordability limitations (known as deed restrictions) that keep them affordable in perpetuity. **Market-rate projects** do not have affordability limitations, but add additional housing supply and contribute tax revenue that can fund the production and preservation of affordable units. Some market-rate projects are also required to set aside a share of their units as affordable through the **Inclusionary Housing Ordinance**, which was first adopted in 2017. **Naturally-Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAHs),** which are rental units that are priced at affordable levels without income restrictions due to their age, quality, or condition, also make up a significant portion of our affordable housing stock. Programs that protect NOAHs, like rent stabilization, housing quality enforcement, and building condition improvements, cost money that increases our budget demands.

This diverse mix of housing types means that our City must strike a delicate balance between preserving existing affordable housing stock, mandating affordability in new development and attracting new market-rate growth.

In Action: Housing

In the last five years, the City has produced two housing plans – the **Fair Housing Plan (2023)** and the **Strategic Housing Plan (2025)**.

- The **Fair Housing Plan** examines the structural barriers, such as redlining and exclusionary zoning, that have limited housing access and choice for our residents. It also explores the equity and economic challenges our community faces today to find housing.
- The **Strategic Housing Plan** goes deeper into the economics of housing production and examines the gap between the cost and revenue of a typical project in Chelsea. This gap explains some of the trends that our plan observes in recent housing production, where we see mostly publicly-subsidized or large market-rate projects, but not much in between. It also provides specific goals and actions to improve the delivery of housing units in Chelsea.

"NOAHs either increase rents due to mortgage or market pressure or get replaced by more expensive new housing."

Focus group — Housing

"I'd like them to build better affordable housing for residents."

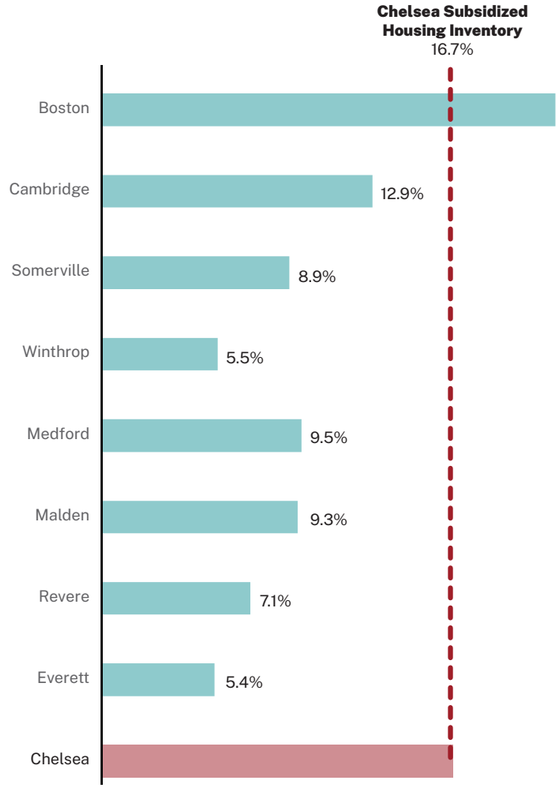
Survey response (translated)

"Affordable housing ensures Chelsea remains a city that many different people can live in."

Survey response

Chelsea is a regional leader in affordable housing.

In 2025, 16.7% of Chelsea's housing units (2,427 of 14,521) were Subsidized Housing Inventory Units (SHI), the State's measure for accounting for affordable housing, making it the 4th-highest SHI percentage, following Holyoke, Boston, and Bedford. This reflects both the makeup of our housing stock — overwhelmingly multi-family and rental rather than single-family — and decades of sustained public investment, either directly through the Chelsea Housing Authority or indirectly by supporting local affordable housing developers who have built and preserved homes our neighbors can afford. This proves Chelsea has a track record and the systems in place to keep building on it.

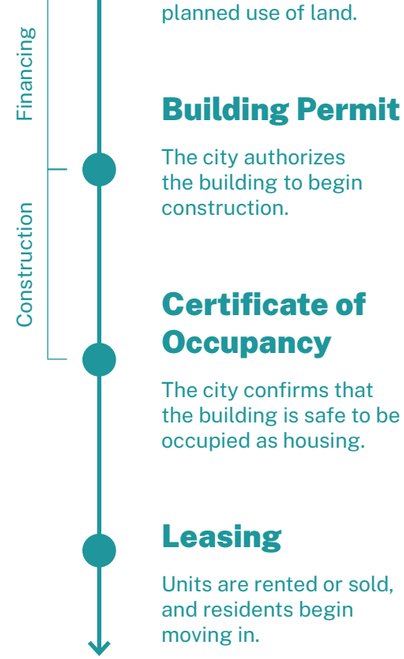


Source: Massachusetts Subsidized Housing Inventory, 2025

What does it take to build housing?

Building housing is a complex process that takes years of coordination between the City, developers, financiers, architects, engineers, and community – from proposal through approvals, financing, construction, and finally occupancy. DUO Apartments, for example, received its zoning permit in 2019, but didn't begin construction until 2022. Residents moved in in 2024 (Building 1) and 2025 (Building 2).

This timeline matters because municipal, state, and private data sources often track production at different milestones. A clear, shared picture of what's being built and when it actually comes online helps the City make better-informed housing policy. It also helps set realistic expectations for how long a project takes to move from community conversations to the day it opens its doors, begins housing families, and contributes to our tax base. Improving how we collect and track our housing data is a priority moving forward. (see Onward chapter, Action H.2)



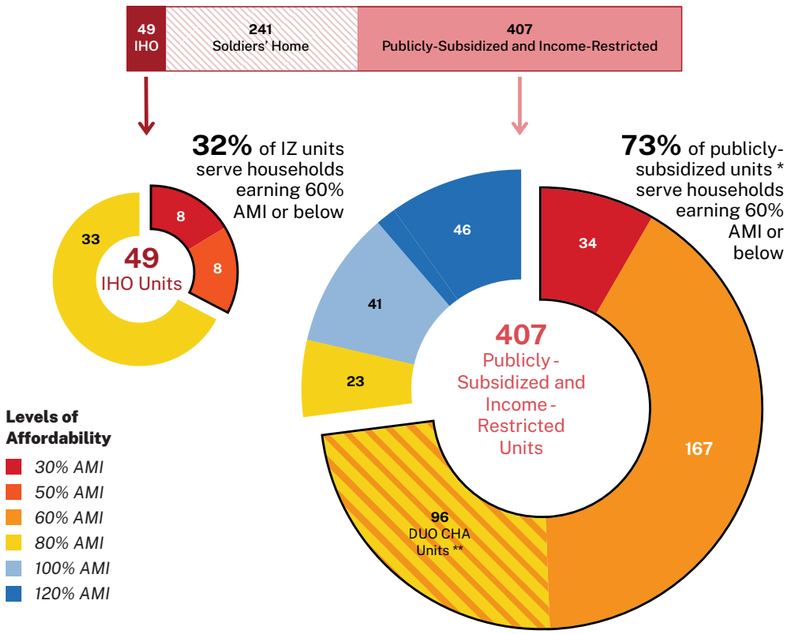
Publicly subsidized projects produce most of our deep affordable housing.

Since 2017, 93% (648 units) of the affordable housing units permitted in Chelsea were part of a publicly subsidized development. The remaining 7% (49 units) were permitted through market-rate projects subject to our Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

Publicly-subsidized projects also tend to reach households with deeper needs. The IHO requires affordable units to be restricted to 80% AMI or below, but the large majority of the limited number of units delivered through the IHO are offered at that maximum income threshold. In contrast, we estimate that 73% (297 units) of publicly-subsidized projects serve households at 60% AMI or below. The remaining 27% are mixed-income rental units or affordable homeownership units. Homeownership units are inherently harder to price at deeper affordability levels, but still matter because they offer a more attainable path to homeownership than the private market does for lower-income families.



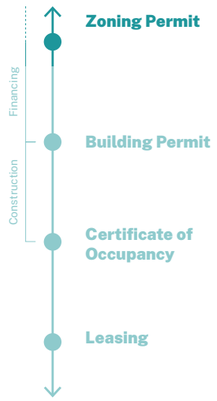




Affordable Units Permitted Since 2017; Built, Under Progress, or In Progress to receiving a Building Permit.
Source: City of Chelsea Zoning Permits, 2017 to April 2026

* Veteran housing is officially counted as affordable housing by HUD, but is state-owned and does not serve the broader Chelsea community.

** CHA-operated units in DUO Apartments are included in our count of deep affordable units. While these units are technically restricted at 80% AMI and below, CHA units often serve households earning far below 80% AMI.



On Affordability

What makes a unit "affordable"?

Affordable housing units are those reserved for low- to moderate-income households (known as "income-restricted"). A household can apply for these units only if it makes less than a specified Area Median Income (AMI) limit. For example, a unit restricted at 80% AMI means only households earning 80% AMI and below can apply to live there.

For developments that don't accept housing vouchers, AMI limits also inform rents or sale prices. Let's say that a two-bedroom apartment for a three-person household is priced for 80% AMI. The maximum possible rent for this unit is 30% of the annual income of a household earning 80% AMI (for our region, this is $117,250), which is around $2,900 per month.This same rent is significantly more expensive for a household earning 60% AMI ($88,140). While a household might be **eligible** for an income-restricted unit, they might not be able to **afford** it.

How do we get affordable units?

All housing — regardless of type, scale, and affordability — plays a role. They add units to our housing inventory, add revenue to our city's budget, and provide a home to families in our community:



25 Sixth Street: 56 one, two, and three bedroom rental apartments from 30-100% AMI, along with six owner-occupied, two-story, condominiums by The Neighborhood Developers.

Publicly-subsidized developments dedicate almost all units to lower-income households and are funded by public programs administered by MassHousing and the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), like the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). The City also closes financing gaps through city-controlled funding sources like Community Preservation Act revenue and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

These projects produce guaranteed long-term affordability because funders require the units remain affordable for a period of time. However, because they depend on public funding, the number of projects that Chelsea can support every year is shaped both by the availability of state and federal financing and by the City's locally-generated funding.



Vero Apartments: Large, 692-unit mid-rise luxury residential community developed by Fairfield Residential. It was permitted in 2015 prior to the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, so only 3% of units (21 units) are affordable at 80% AMI.



86 Blossom Street: 4 for-sale units renovated in 2023.

Market-rate projects are led by private developers and funded by private sources, so their price points depend on overall market conditions. However, these projects still support affordable housing production because when enough new market-rate supply is built, higher-income renters have more options and ease competition for affordable units that lower-income households depend on.

In addition, market rate projects contribute more to the City's tax base than affordable housing (this will be discussed further in the next section). Some of this tax revenue goes to our local housing financing sources, which in turn, helps fund publicly-subsidized developments and support NOAHs. Less market rate development in the short term reduces the funding available to produce new affordable housing or preserve existing affordable housing in the long term.

Inclusionary Zoning requires market-rate developments to include a share of income-restricted units once a project crosses a minimum unit-count threshold. This is achieved through Chelsea's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO), adopted in 2017 and updated in 2026, which sets affordable unit requirements for new developments. Developers can also opt to pay an "in-lieu" fee instead, which goes to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Because these projects have to pencil out without public subsidy, developers often cover the cost of the affordable units by charging somewhat higher rents on the market-rate units in the same building, or by delivering fewer units to completely avoid the threshold in which inclusionary units are required.

This isn't the only tool Chelsea uses to build mixed-income housing – other programs, like those built around a 60% AMI average, often bring a wider spread of incomes into one building. But IZ does something those programs don't: it puts income-restricted units inside buildings that would otherwise be fully market rate, which furthers the City's goals of creating housing opportunities that bring all income levels together under one roof.

Public housing is owned and operated by the Chelsea Housing Authority (CHA) and funded through federal funds administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD caps the total number of public housing units that each authority can own, which means that CHA cannot keep building public housing units, regardless of local need.

Instead, the City and CHA, in partnership with private developers, are redeveloping these decade-old properties into mixed-income communities that bring deeply affordable units up to current standards while adding more housing units to the city. A good example of this are the DUO apartments.

Naturally-Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAHs) are older rental units that remain affordable because of their age, size, or condition. Because NOAHs don't carry an income restriction, a change in ownership or a major renovation can reposition a unit to market rate overnight.

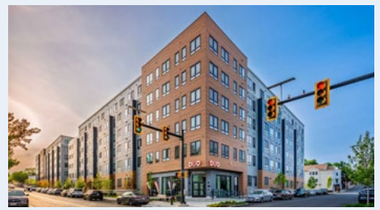
The City can help preserve NOAHs through providing funds to non-profit partners who purchase these units and establish a deed restriction on their affordability. The City can also acquire and redevelop properties and then establish affordable units through the use of local funds. Similar to publicly-subsidized development, the number of NOAHs that Chelsea can support every year depends on the City's ability to maintain local funding streams.



Chelsea Flats and Chelsea Cathedral (157-163 Chestnut Street): 30 condominiums (24 market-rate, 6 affordable) spread between a renovation of an existing historic church and a new condominium building.



The Reginald (25 Second Street): 20 condominiums (16 market-rate, 4 affordable) built in 2021.



DUO Apartments (170/180 Central Avenue): 330-unit mixed-income redevelopment of the former CHA property, Innes Apartments. 96 units are operated by CHA for public housing residents, while an additional 40 units are income-restricted for moderate-income ("workforce") families (120% AMI). Photo: Corcoran Management



55 Heard Street (Chelsea 55): 6 family-sized units acquired and redeveloped by the City of Chelsea.

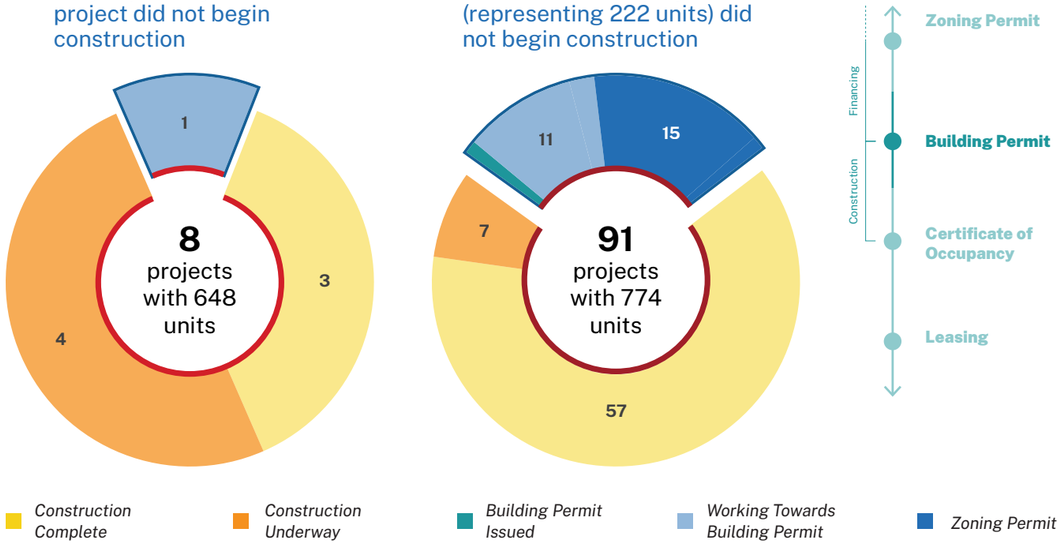


The majority of our existing housing stock in consolidated neighborhoods are NOAHs. Non-profit developers like TND have projects like Chelsea Legacy that renovates and repairs these buildings and extend their affordability.

Market-rate developments face more challenges to move from permitting to construction.

Because private sources fund market-rate developments, external factors like interest rates, construction costs, and market rents affect how quickly a market-rate development can move from permitting to construction. In turn, publicly-subsidized projects are more insulated from these swings because their financing comes from dedicated funding sources. At the time of this plan, 7 of 8 publicly-subsidized projects that received zoning permits after 2017 were under construction or already built. In contrast, almost 30% of market-rate projects (27 projects with 222 units) had not started construction.

Market-rate development is a meaningful source of new growth in our tax base, so every stalled project represents real, deferred revenue for the City. Our housing policy challenge is striking the balance between maintaining housing affordability in new units, while not introducing hurdles that stop market-rate projects from moving forward or delaying their delivery even further.



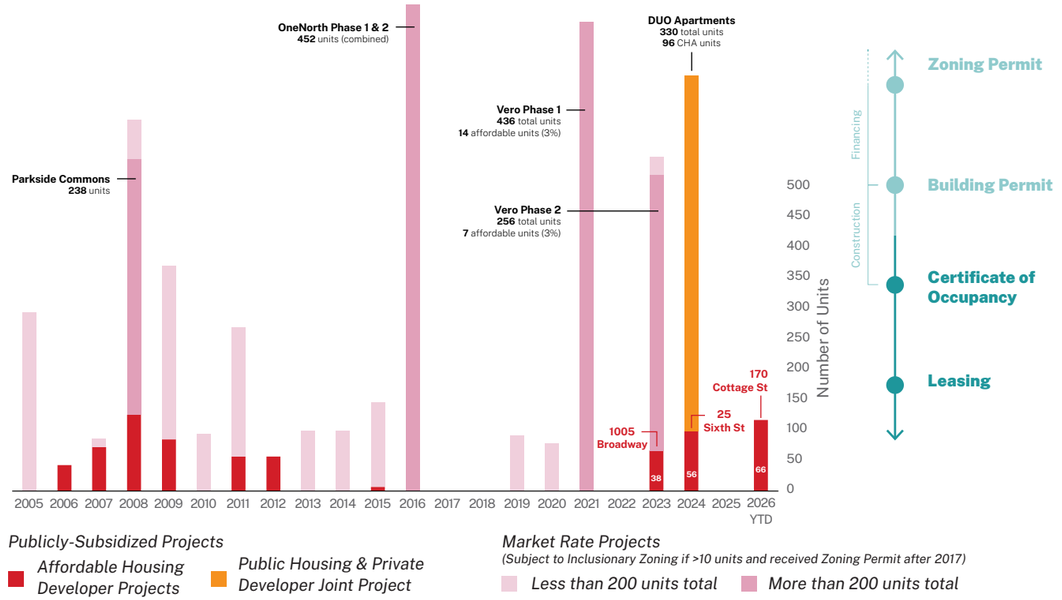
Construction Status of Projects Permitted After 2017.

Recent market-rate growth is concentrated in a limited number of residential developments.

From 2005 to 2015, Chelsea's multifamily rental market received a steady trickle of new units every year. Since 2017, delivery has been more sporadic and driven almost entirely by a handful of large, singular developments (200+ units) rather than the mid-sized projects (20-60 units) that are more typical of how Chelsea's neighborhoods have historically grown. This underscores the importance of supporting housing production at every scale to ensure that our housing growth is more consistent over time.



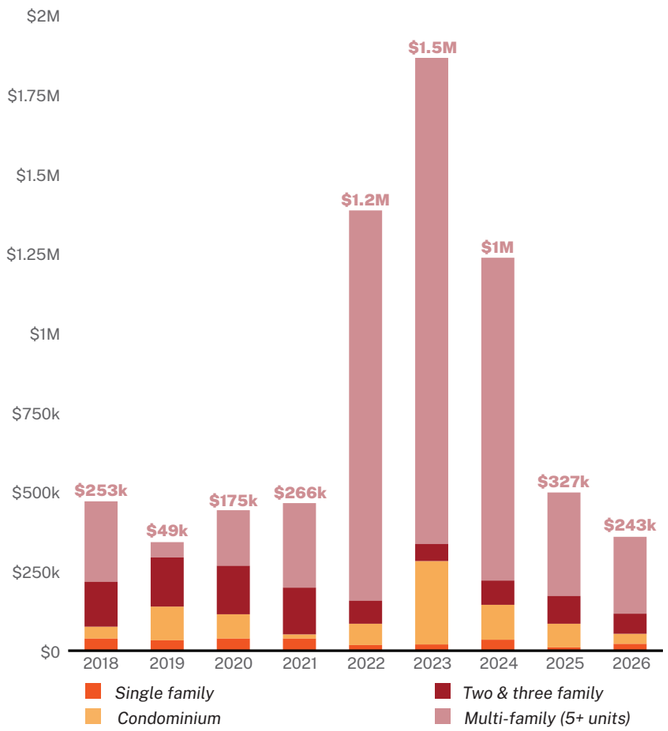
One North Development in Spruce and Heard Street



*** Vero received its Zoning Permit in 2015 and was not subject to the 2017 Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. Source: CoStar, multifamily rental units by date of completion, 2005 to 2026 year-to-date, pulled August 2026.**

Multifamily market-rate development is the primary driver of our residential tax base.

New growth from single-family, small multifamily, and condominium buildings has been modest since 2018, ranging from $150k-$350k in tax revenue per year. The greatest variation in new growth comes from multifamily housing, where tax revenue can range from as low as $50k in 2019 to $1.5M in 2023. These large influxes coincide with the delivery of large-scale market-rate residential projects, like Vero Phase 1 (2022) *, Vero Phase 2 (2023), and DUO (2024). However, in 2025, new growth from multifamily market-rate development fell back to pre-2022 levels. At the time of writing this plan, there are no projects of this scale and growth potential in our development pipeline. Looking forward, sustaining this pipeline of new development is essential because without it, we risk losing the revenue that funds both new affordable housing and the preservation of what we already have.



Note: Tax values are shown based on the Fiscal Year, so the year that a project was completed is not necessary the year it shows up in the tax records. For example, FY2026 started on July 1, 2025 and ended on June 30, 2026. Source: Massachusetts Division of Local Services, downloaded August 2026

> "[Good Development] Balances all housing + tax + revenue + affordability."
>
> Public workshop comment

> "(Give) Chelsea residents priority in the new buildings, affordable rent for low incomes, they now request credit for everyone, many Latinos don't have documents."
>
> Community conversation (translated)

On Growth

How does the City calculate property taxes?

1. The City sets two **tax rates*** – one for **residential** properties and one for **commercial and industrial** properties. The tax rate is the amount that a property owner owes per $1,000 of assessed value.
2. The Assessors Department determines the **assessed value** of every property in Chelsea, which is what it would sell for on the open market. When a property owner develops or renovates a property, the assessed value of the property increases.
3. A property's **taxable value** is its assessed value, minus any **exemptions** or **reductions**. For example, the assessed value for publicly-subsidized projects that receive LIHTC tax incentives is reduced by around 50%.
4. A property's **tax bill** is its **taxable value** multiplied by the applicable tax rate.

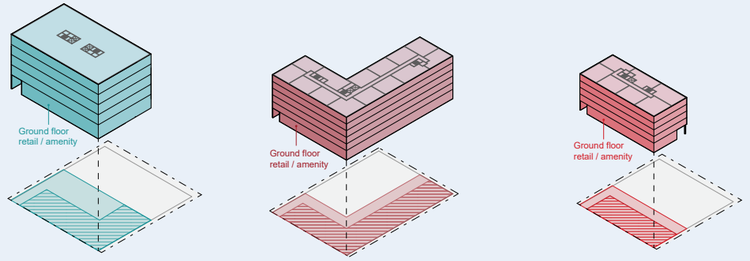
Tax Bill = Taxable Value ($) x Tax Rate ($/1000)

5. The total amount of revenue that the City collects from property taxes is referred to as the tax base or the tax levy.

* Properties like government facilities, hospitals, and certain nonprofits are tax-exempt. They are assessed like any other property, but their tax rate is zero, meaning they do not contribute to the tax levy.

How do different land uses contribute to Chelsea's new growth?

Let's assume that three different properties with different uses – commercial/industrial, market-rate housing, and publicly-subsidized housing – all have an assessed value of $5,000,000. Publicly-subsidized housing adds the least tax value because its taxable value is lower (*); commercial & industrial uses add the most tax value because it is taxed at a higher tax rate (*). In the next section, we'll talk about what **balanced growth** looks like with this mix of uses.



	Commercial & Industrial	Market-Rate Housing	Publicly-Subsidized Housing
Assessed Value	$5,000,000	$5,000,000	$5,000,000
- Tax Reduction	$0	$0	- ~50% *
Taxable Value	**$5,000,000**	**$5,000,000**	**$2,500,000**
x **Tax Rate** (2026)	**$23.79 / $1,000** *	**$11.48 / $1,000**	**$11.48 / $1,000**
= **New Growth**	$$$$	$$	$
	$118,950	**$57,400**	**$28,700**

BALANCED GROWTH IS CRITICAL TO ENSURE OUR CITY'S FISCAL STABILITY.

Delivering quality services, programs, and improved infrastructure to Chelsea residents — such as good schools, affordable housing, enhanced public safety and health and human services, and well-maintained streets, public spaces, and amenities — costs money, and those costs grow every year. Today, Chelsea's budget primarily relies on state aid (51%) and property taxes (31%). Because our residents already earn less than those in neighboring cities, our city needs to prioritize ways to increase tax revenue while keeping residential property tax bills low, which includes: (1) attracting new growth and (2) maintaining our commercial and industrial tax base.

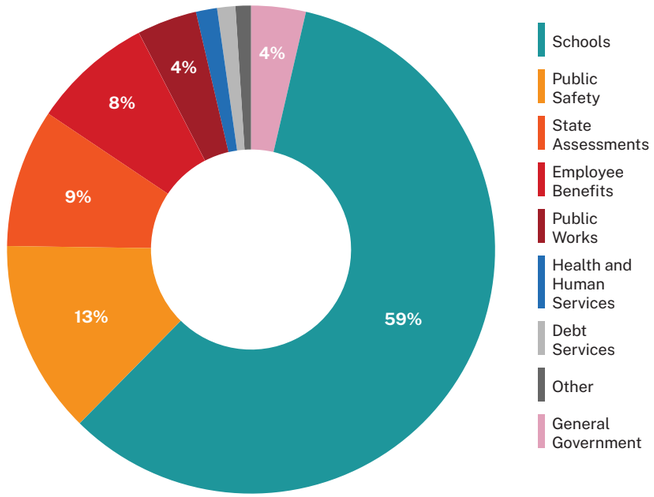
In Chelsea, commercial and industrial properties like businesses, warehouses, and industrial facilities make up about a quarter of the city's taxable value. This is already a higher share than neighboring municipalities, reflecting Chelsea's historic role in accommodating industrial and transportation uses that served the broader urban core. Paired with a higher tax rate on commercial and industrial properties than on residential properties, this means that a quarter of the City's taxable property value generates close to half of the property tax revenue collected. At the same time, a significant share of Chelsea's land is exempt and pays no property taxes at all. The more exempt land there is, the more pressure falls on everything that remains to generate enough revenue to support Chelsea's needs.

Growing Chelsea's property tax base depends on new development. Under Massachusetts Proposition 2 1/2, the tax levy on existing properties cannot grow more than 2.5% per year, which means that new growth in taxable value from new construction and development is the primary way Chelsea can expand its revenue base to fund programs and services without raising tax rates on existing residents and businesses.

As we look to new development to meet our community needs, we also need to steer new growth in ways that prioritize long-term benefits for our community. Instead of development that is car-centric, high-pollution, or exclusionary, we want development that is transit-oriented, tied to sustainable infrastructure investments, and accessible to all. We will explore this further in the Growth Framework included in the next chapter of this plan (page 86).

Our City has high budget demands.

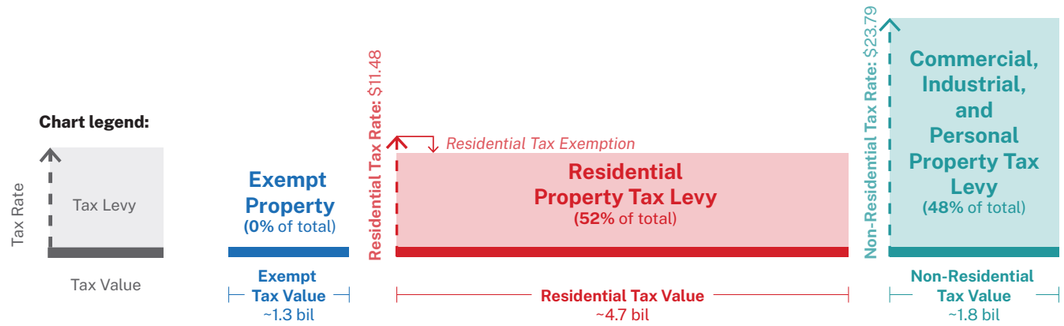
Chelsea's spending per person has grown 67% over the past ten years. Today, most of the local budget goes to schools, but our budget also funds other support networks like public safety and health and human services. Recent reductions in school enrollments have led to a loss of state funds, which means that new growth is critical to maintain the level of service that our City depends on, while continuing to expand the programs and service areas identified by our community through this plan.



Budget Use — FY2026. Source: City of Chelsea Operating Budgets, FY 2026

Chelsea has great economic opportunity in its commercial land.

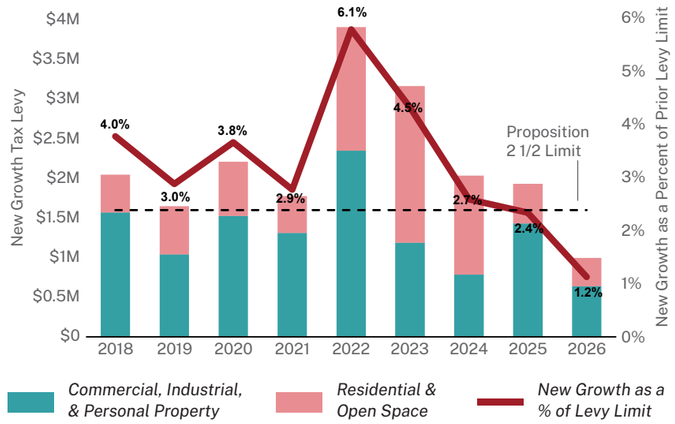
Commercial and industrial property account for 40% of Chelsea's tax levy, even though it makes up under a quarter of taxable property values. This is made possible by a higher non-residential tax rate, as well as the fact that Chelsea owns 11% of the industrial land in the Boston Harbor region, despite occupying only 2.6% of the total land area. To keep our tax base healthy and growing sustainably, we need to continue preserving and enhancing our industrial land.



Source: Chelsea City of Chelsea Assessor's Office

New growth in Chelsea has declined in recent years.

As mentioned, new growth is critical to expanding locally generated revenue to deliver the services and programs our residents need. However, new growth is slowing in Chelsea — in 2026, for the first time since 2018, the tax revenue contributed by new growth was significantly less than the 2.5% of tax growth allowed for existing properties. This is a warning sign that our city is not yet harnessing its full development and economic potential.



Source: Massachusetts Division of Local Services

ACCESSING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IS VITAL FOR OUR RESIDENTS.

Growing Chelsea's tax base goes hand in hand with fostering economic opportunities for our residents. The businesses, industries, and employers that generate new growth are the same ones that create jobs and build the kind of local economy where Chelsea residents can earn a living close to home.

Chelsea's job base has changed over the past decade. Some employers that once anchored local employment, like Signature Breads and Stop and Shop, have contracted or closed, while government agencies and large institutional employers have grown. This shift matters because the jobs that left were generally more accessible to workers in Chelsea with limited formal education or limited English proficiency. At the same time, institutional employers tend to draw from a broader regional workforce. At the same time, Chelsea has not benefited from the recent boom in professional services, transportation, and warehousing in the Boston area, resulting in a net loss in jobs overall. Chelsea's commercial retail corridors and nodes where we find most of our local businesses remain active, but near-zero vacancy rates make it difficult for new businesses to come to Chelsea, stalling the city's commercial growth potential. Failing to capture a growing commercial and industrial job base means that the burden of funding city services starts to shift more towards residents.

Public transportation is the primary thread connecting our residents to the regional job market. This connection is an asset and a vulnerability — when transit service is unreliable, reduced, or too costly, residents' access to their livelihoods is at risk. Workers commuting into Chelsea, by contrast, arrive predominantly by car, which shapes competing parking demands on Chelsea's streets and public spaces. Strengthening bus, pedestrian, and bike infrastructure is both an environmental and economic goal because extending the reach of these networks connects residents without cars to more opportunity. Investing in both housing and jobs in the areas where bus, Commuter Rail, and Silver Line services overlap could shift this pattern too — workers arriving by rail could walk straight to a job near the station, and residents living nearby could access a greater network of regional employment opportunities.

"Less traffic, easier movement/commuting, connected neighborhoods, local businesses to access necessary goods and services by walking/biking."

Survey response

"[I like] all the accessibility we have — shops, banks, pharmacies, and all the community support centers."

Comment card (translated)

"Allow families to work and grow and have upward mobility of their socio-economic class."

Survey response

"Better public transportation options, safe streets for walking to and from the public T."

Survey response

" There are many opportunities for people, everything is right around me — very convenient and accessible."

Survey response (translated)

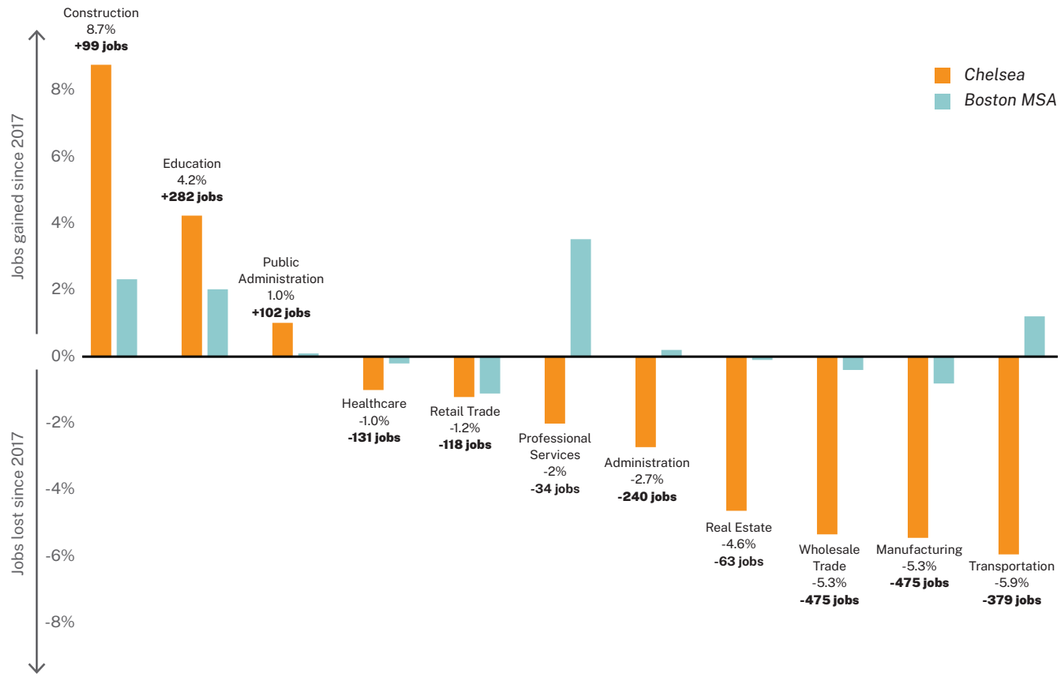
"Access to public transportation, stores, and Boston."

Survey response (translated)

Chelsea has experienced a net loss in jobs.

Job growth in the construction, education, and public administration sectors outpaced regional trends. This may be due in part to the opening of the new Clark Ave School in 2018, which was a major contributor to employment in the City of Chelsea. However, this growth hasn't offset the more dramatic losses in wholesale trade, transportation, warehousing, and manufacturing, resulting in a net loss of 1,300 jobs between 2017 and 2022.

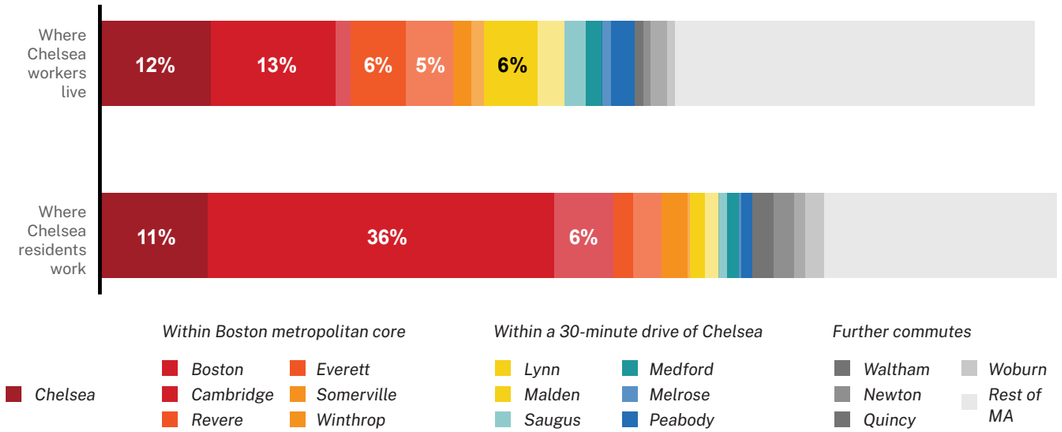


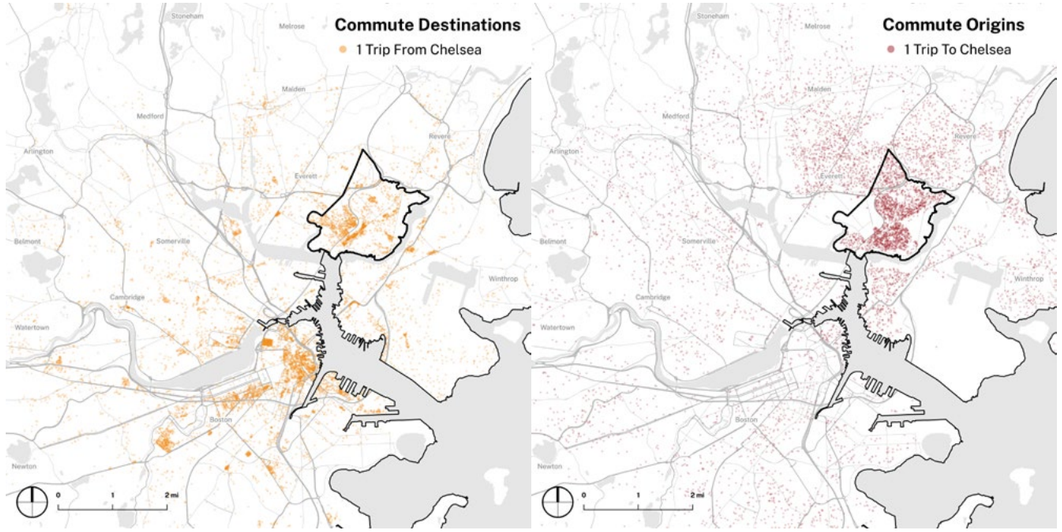


Change in Jobs by Sector (2017–2022). Source: US Census Bureau OnTheMap

Chelsea residents often commute to Boston for work.

Nearly half (42%) of Chelsea residents work in Boston or Cambridge — common destinations include medical centers like MGH, Longwood, Boston Medical, MIT/Harvard, and Cambridge Health Alliance. Within Chelsea, jobs are concentrated along Broadway and in West Chelsea. In contrast, Chelsea workers are mostly local or from surrounding cities like Everett, Revere, East Boston, and Lynn.

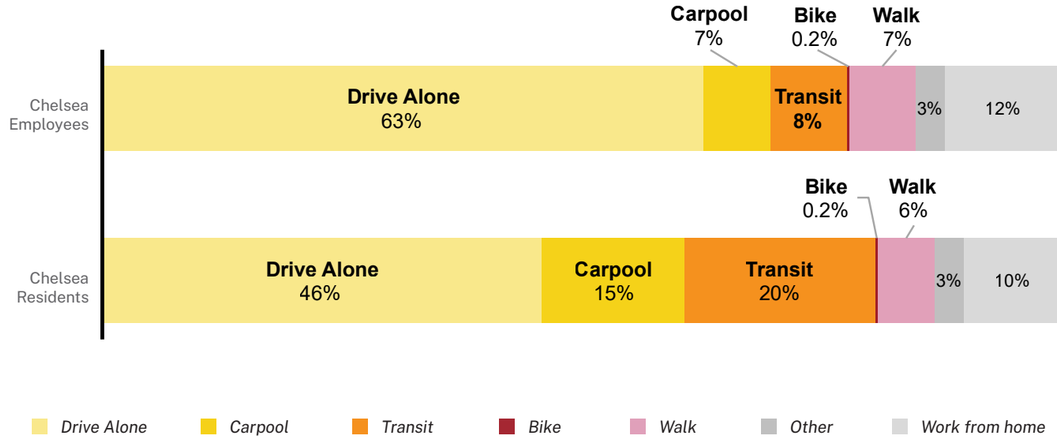




Source: U.S. Census Bureau - LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics Data (2022)

Public transportation helps residents reach opportunities.

Just over a quarter (28%) of Chelsea households report not having a vehicle available. Under half of Chelsea residents drive alone to work, and 20% of residents take transit, depending heavily on local bus routes like 111, 116, and SL3 to reach jobs in Boston's medical and service employment centers. These routes are among the MBTA bus routes with the highest frequencies and ridership, carrying 14,600 passengers between Chelsea and Boston every weekday.



Source: US Census Bureau 2023 ACS 5-year estimates



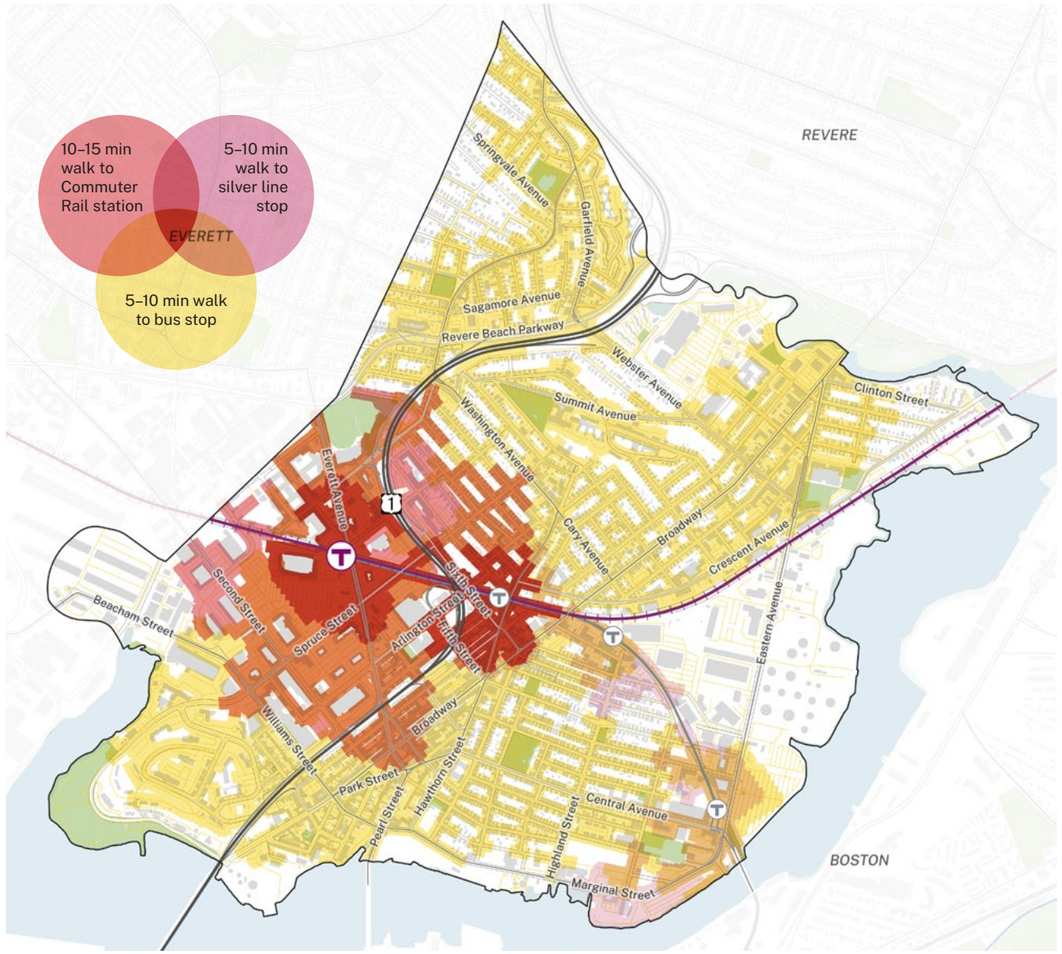
In Action: MBTA Network Improvements

- In December 2024, Routes 104, 111, 116, and 117 were part of the first phase of the MBTA's Bus Network Redesign (BNRD) changes. This included more frequent service, more destinations, and dedicated bus lanes.
- In Fall 2025, the MBTA added late-night service on Routes 111 and 116.
- MassDOT and MBTA have plans to increase the frequency of the Newburyport/Rockport Commuter Rail Line, which provides 15-minute rail connections to North Station through Chelsea Station. The Silver Line Extension (SLX) study also recommends extending SL3 from Chelsea to Everett and Sullivan Square Station.

Chelsea's most connected areas have the most room to grow.

Almost the entire city is within a 10-minute walk from an MBTA bus stop, making bus service the backbone of transit here. The Commuter Rail and Silver Line reach far fewer stops than the bus, but each is meant to connect residents to jobs across the region faster than a bus can. Neither fully delivers on that promise today. The Silver Line gets stuck in the same traffic as cars and buses, and Commuter Rail service is infrequent. Chelsea deserves rapid transit that residents can rely on.

The areas where all three modes overlap (bus, Commuter Rail, and Silver Line) are our most transit-rich, yet they remain among our least densely developed. As Chelsea advocates for better rapid transit, these areas hold the city's greatest capacity for new growth, with the potential to unlock more jobs and economic opportunity for our community. Unlocking that potential will also depend on improving the rail service.



Source: Analysis by Utile, using Scalable Urban Network Analysis for Modeling Pedestrian and Bicycle Trips in Cities



CHELSEA'S SAFETY NEEDS TO FOCUS ON PLACES AND PEOPLE.

When we asked the community about what Chelsea needs for tomorrow, safety was one of the top priorities. Community safety means many things, such as preventing violence and petty crime, addressing substance abuse and homelessness, reducing traffic and car crashes, and improving the quality of open spaces through street cleanliness and lighting. Today, safety can also include immigration-related security concerns. This means that improving community safety requires both physical investments in our streets and investments in programs and services.

The City has done extraordinary work to address community well-being and violence during crises. However, more work is needed to reduce crime rates in Chelsea, which are currently higher than the state average. This includes continuing to establish violence intervention and de-escalation programming, building trust between our communities and our police department, and investing in guidance and mentorship for our youth.

Another aspect of safety is ensuring that our streets are safe for all who use them, whether it be residents taking the bus to Boston, kids biking to school, or commuters going to work. Between 2008 and 2017, downtown Chelsea had one of the highest concentrations of crashes involving pedestrians in Massachusetts. Addressing road safety means continuing to invest in safe streets through traffic-calming interventions and intentional intersection design, and enhancing pedestrian infrastructure, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and streetlights. Part of the work also includes making it easier to travel by bus, train, or bike to reduce vehicle congestion on our streets.

How do we measure safety?

- A **crime** is a reported incident - something that happened, whether or not anyone is ever caught. A community's reported **crime rate** is the number of crimes per 100,000 people, and is used to compare the level and scope of crime across different places in the nation. The FBI has established a list of serious offenses that are considered crimes, which are differentiated by **violent crime** (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault) and **property crime** (burglary, larceny theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson).
- An **arrest** means that the police took a specific person into custody. Many crimes never lead to an arrest, and many arrests are not for crimes at all, like traffic violations or outstanding warrants. While crime rates measure the level of dangerous crime in a community, arrests indicate where police took action.
- A **traffic crash** is any event involving at least one moving vehicle that results in death, injury, or property damage. The severity of a traffic crash is often measured by factors such as the number of fatalities, the number of non-fatal injuries, or the amount of property damage.

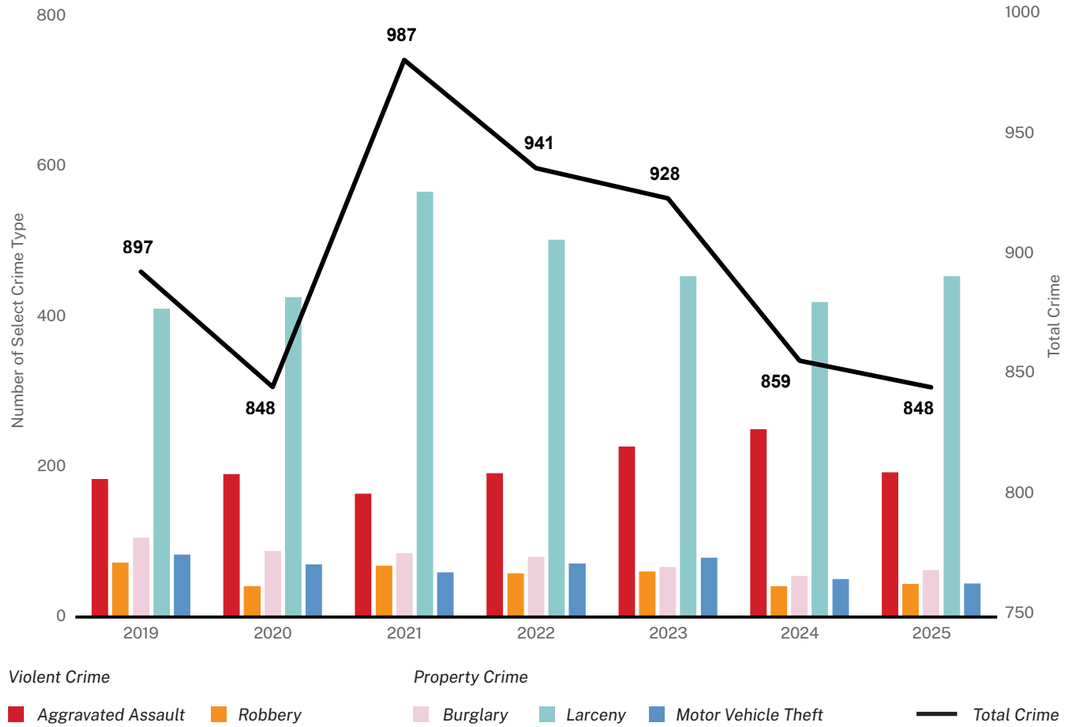


Reducing crime rates is an ongoing effort.

In 2021, the Chelsea Police Department logged a high of 987 crimes, marking a 16% increase since 2020. Since then, our city has worked to bring crime back down to pre-pandemic levels. Chelsea's 2025 violent crime rate (724 per 100,000 people) remains significantly higher than the state average (270 per 100,000 people). However, in the past year alone, Chelsea saw a 15% decrease in violent crime and a 2% reduction in overall crime. However, property crime (primarily larceny-theft) increased by 6.7%, underscoring our continued need for crime prevention strategies and neighborhood safety initiatives.

In Action: Community Safety

- Since 2014, **The Hub** has brought together roughly 25 city agencies, schools, and health and human service providers weekly to identify residents facing urgent risk of harm and coordinate an immediate, shared response. To date, The Hub has addressed more than 450 high-risk situations, working to prevent harm before it occurs rather than responding only after a crisis.
- The Police Department assembled the **Downtown Task Force** in 2020, with two dedicated police officers working to build relationships with Downtown businesses and residents and address their safety concerns. The 2025 Police Department Report reported a 10% reduction in calls for service, attributing a significant portion of this reduction to the work of the Downtown Task Force and the Hub.



Source: Chelsea Police Department, Crime Statistics Logs, UCR Crime Statistics

Police activity clusters around downtown and other key nodes.

According to the 2025 Police Department Report, total arrests decreased by 13%, with adult arrests down 11% and juvenile arrests down 30%. These reductions suggest improved outcomes through intervention, diversion, and proactive community engagement, particularly among youth.



Arrest logs: heatmap weighted by severity of arrest:
Darker areas represent locations with a higher density of more severe arrests. Arrests were categorized into 6 categories.

Violent Crime

Property Crime

Drugs & Weapons Arrests
Illegal possession of drugs or weapons, or driving under the influence

Traffic Arrests
Reckless or negligent driving, or driving while unregistered, unlicensed, or uninsured

Public Nuisance Arrests
Public disorder, like trespassing, open containers, or disorderly conduct

Warrants / Legal Processes
Arrests tied to a prior legal matter, not a new offense

Source: Chelsea Police Department, Crime Statistics Logs, Arrest Logs, 12/28/2015 - 06/14/2025. 2017 is excluded from the analysis because these logs are not public on the Police Department website.

"Although the crime rate has gotten low, keeping the streets safe for families and residents. . . . Protecting people from gentrification, deportation, and corruption."

Comment card

"We need more safety on the streets, less drugs and violence, and also more guidance for young people."

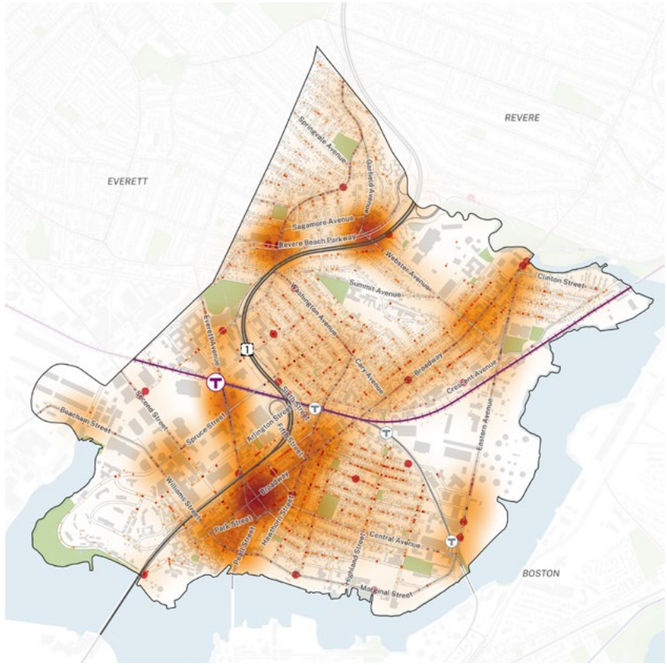
Survey response (translated)

Transportation safety is an ongoing concern.

Chelsea is among the most dangerous places in the state for pedestrians. Between 2008 and 2017, downtown Chelsea — especially the intersection of Broadway, Everett Ave, Cross, and Division Streets — had the highest concentration of crashes involving pedestrians in Massachusetts, with 254 incidents and 191 injuries or deaths. That averages about 28 incidents and 21 injuries or deaths each year.

In Action: Transportation Safety

- In 2025, Chelsea completed a **Vision Zero Safety Action Plan** which defines street safety goals and provides specific recommendations covering street design, policy shifts, and systemic infrastructure improvements. This plan already addresses most of the steps and actions to reduce accidents resulting in injuries and fatalities in our city.



Vehicle Crashes (2002–2025):
The brightest areas represent locations with the highest density of crashes.

Many crashes

No crashes

Each dot represents the specific location of a traffic crash, and the size of the dot indicates if there was a fatality.

Crash with no fatalities

Crash with fatalities

Source: MassDOT Top Crash Locations, 2002–2025

"I wish Chelsea would stop being the most dangerous city in Massachusetts. (a lot of traffic, a lot of crime)."

Comment card (translated)

"Make Chelsea safer, from violence and dangerous driving/walking conditions."

Survey response

"I am always concerned about the safety of individuals traveling in our city using modes of transportation other than motor vehicles."

Public workshop response

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, RESILIENCE, AND HEALTH SHOULD GUIDE CHELSEA'S FUTURE GROWTH.

Chelsea is caught between the environmental hazards of its industrial past and threats of climate change in the future. Our prime waterfront location was the center of the wooden shipbuilding industry in the mid-nineteenth century, and rail connections to Boston brought new industries like shoemaking, machine shops, and manufacturing. Today salt piles, oil tanks, and auxiliary airport uses line most of our creek waterfront.

Though the City's industrial legacy is an asset and opportunity for growth today, it has also taken a toll on our community. When compared with national averages, Chelsea residents live closer to pollution sources, are more exposed to vehicle traffic volume and emissions, and experience higher rates of asthma. Air quality and pollution concerns are further exacerbated by rising temperatures, as large concentrations of pavement, like those we see in Chelsea's downtown and industrial areas, make it feel even hotter. Chelsea's need for more high-quality, accessible open space is driven by both recreation and resilience – trees provide shade and cooling during heat events, and plants and other permeable areas provide absorption capacity during future sea-level rise and severe storm events.

Our industrial history has also shaped the physical form of our city. Chelsea's location on the Mystic River and Chelsea Creek means that the bridges connecting us to East Boston and Revere disrupt our city's access when big tankers need to access our port area. In addition, hills and ridges create steep grade changes that limit where development and infrastructure can go. The construction of the Eastern Railroad in the 1850s and the Tobin Bridge and Route 1 in the 1950s, both of which required flat land, displaced and separated existing neighborhoods while heightening pollution and noise levels. Today, the highway and rail lines (now the Commuter Rail) persist as urban barriers. The many crossings over or under highways, railroad surface crossings, and dead-end streets created by this regional transportation infrastructure have made the local connections between Chelsea's businesses and residents more complicated and less safe. Enabling Chelsea residents to use healthier, more sustainable transportation modes, such as walking and biking, will require investments in street and public-space design, as well as programs that encourage behavior change.

In Action: Climate Action Planning

- The City is part of a larger regional network working together to address sustainability and resilience issues. In 2022, Chelsea, Winthrop, and Revere collaborated through the North Suffolk Office of Resilience and Sustainability (NSORS) on the **North Suffolk Zero Carbon Action Plan**, establishing a roadmap to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Chelsea participated in the state's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program in both 2018 (version 1.0) and 2025 (version 2.0) to establish resilience priorities, ranging from hazard mitigation to community health and wellness.

"I wish we had a cleaner, less polluted environment."

Survey response

"More trees, to improve the climate so that it is no longer so hot."

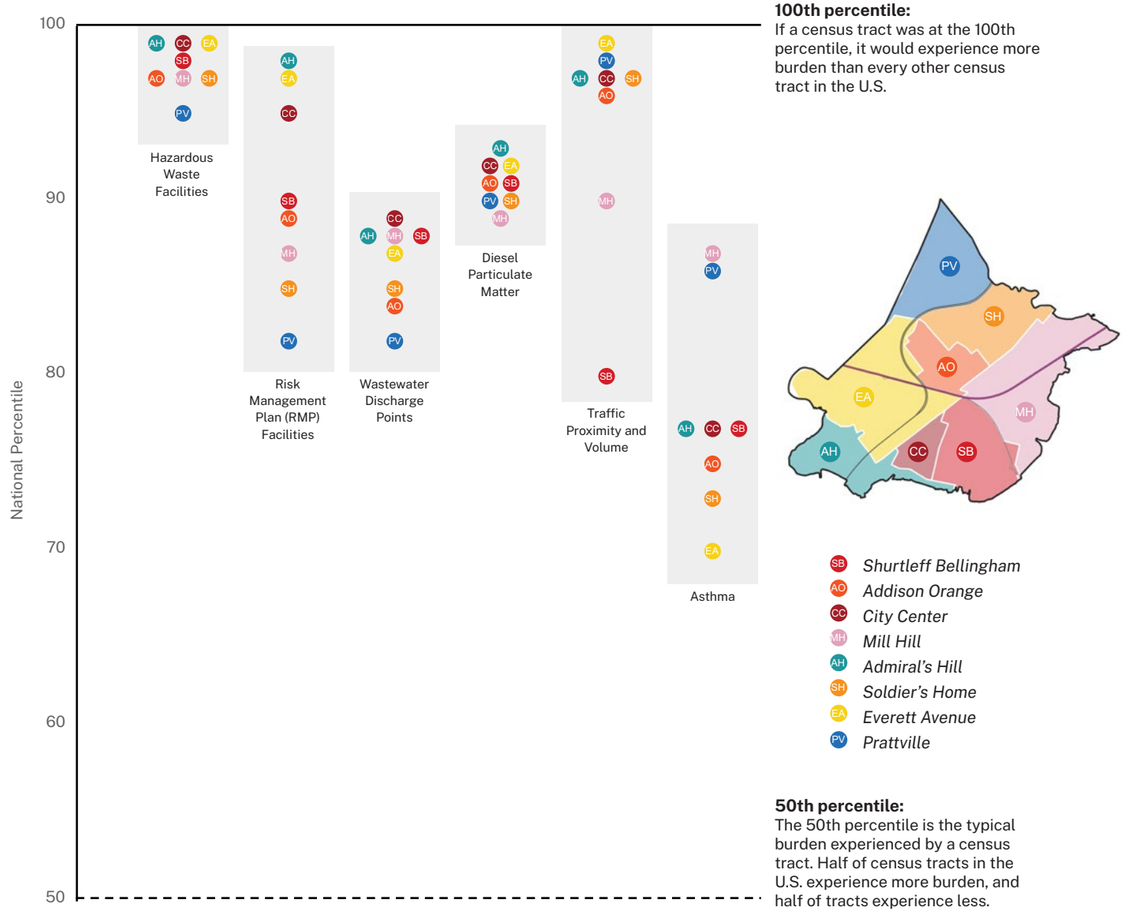
Comment card (translated)

Environmental burdens from legacy industries are concentrated in Chelsea.

Chelsea is an environmental justice community. When compared with the country as a whole, all eight of Chelsea's census tracts are closer to hazardous waste and risk sites, and are exposed to more wastewater discharge, traffic, and diesel emissions than 80% of tracts across the US. These environmental hazards affect people in measurable ways — for instance, Chelsea residents experience higher rates of asthma than in 70% of the country.

What is an environmental justice community?

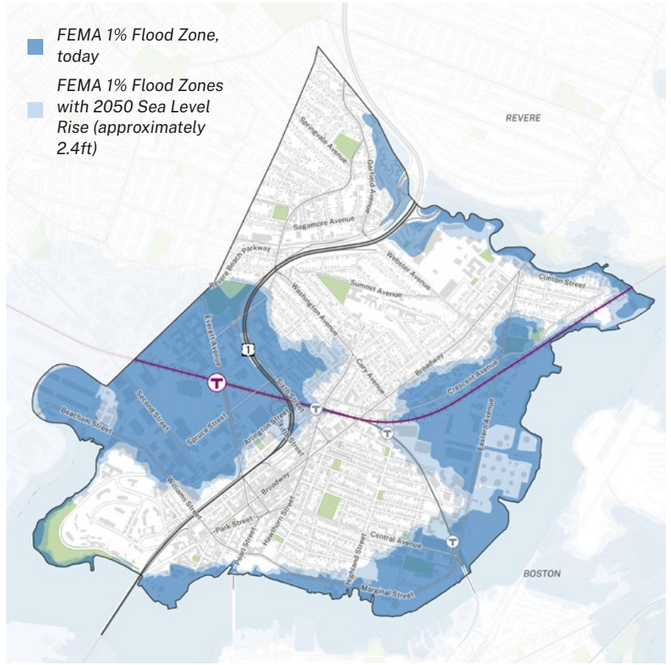
An environmental justice (EJ) community is a community that experiences disproportionate environmental harms that overlap with socioeconomic pressures, typically lower incomes or higher minority populations. These harms can include environmental factors like air and water pollution and hazardous waste, climate change impacts, lack of access to open space, or health factors like asthma and heart disease. Different programs use different data and thresholds to identify EJ communities, but Chelsea meets the criteria under both the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' EJ designation and federal screening data.



Source: Council on Environmental Quality, Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), 2023 [archived].

Flood risk will increase as climate change brings higher sea levels and more severe storms.

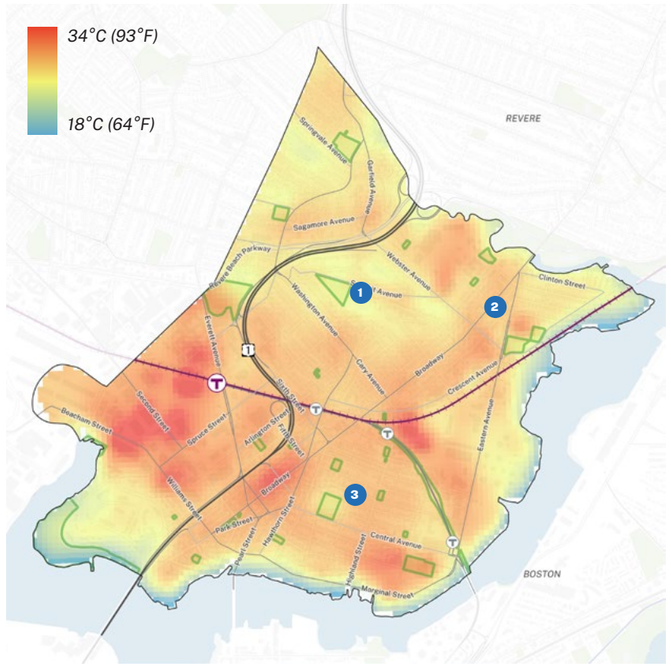
Chelsea's current 1% flood zones coincide with our two major industrial areas in the East and West of Chelsea. However, they will expand into more mixed-use, commercial, and residential areas as sea level rises and storms become more severe. This presents a challenge because these flood-prone areas are among the few remaining places that can support substantial new residential and mixed-use development. Addressing flood resilience will require both large-scale infrastructure investments and heightened regulations for new development.



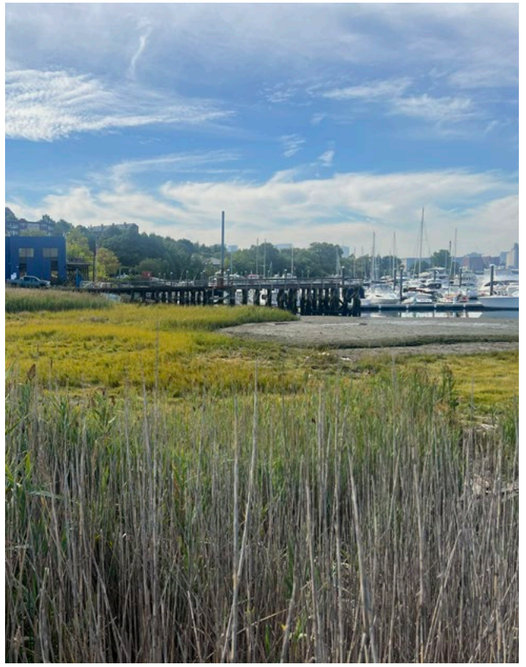
Source: FEMA, Massachusetts Coast Flood Risk Model

Chelsea experiences more severe heat than its neighbors in part due to a lack of green space.

On a typical summer day, temperatures can vary by 30+ degrees Fahrenheit across the city. Chelsea's high heat hotspots correspond with areas with high proportions of impervious areas, like West Chelsea, Broadway, and City Center. Areas with more green space or less dense development, like Admiral's Hill, Prattville, and the waterfront, experience cooler temperatures, and parks like Malone Park 1, Merritt Park 2, and Garden Cemetery 3 provide pockets of heat relief.



Source: Land Surface Temperature 2016, Chelsea and East Boston Heat Study (C-HEAT) — GreenRoots and Boston University School of Public Health. c-heatproject.org/data-applications



What is a '1%-probability flood'?

A '1%-probability flood,' commonly called a '100-year flood,' is a flood that has a 1% chance of taking place in any given year. While properties within the 100-year floodplain are generally required to purchase flood insurance, properties outside this zone can still be subject to the effects of rain and overflow.

In Action: Coastal Flood Resilience

- Chelsea and Everett have been working on and are seeking funding opportunities for the **Island End River Flood Resilience Project**, which proposes a flood barrier, tidal gates, and salt marsh restoration. This project remains a key priority for our community.
- The City recently received a MVP grant to identify design and implementation of projects and priorities, including designing **resilience-focused zoning updates** to help our community become more resilient to climate change.



In Action: High Heat Mitigation

Chelsea is taking a multi-pronged approach to mitigating the impacts of high heat:

- **Data and Monitoring**: Collecting granular air temperature data helps us understand where high temperatures are caused by dense pavement and lack of green space and enables the City to prioritize heat mitigation infrastructure in the areas of highest impact. The City has collaborated with a wide range of community and regional partners to install temperature sensors throughout the City with the **C-HEAT** and the **Wicked Cool Mystic** projects.
- **Green Infrastructure**: In 2024, Chelsea received a MVP grant to pilot cooling measures, like street trees, plantings, and additional green space at the Mary C. Burke Elementary School Complex.
- **Cooling Infrastructure**: The City recently installed four new **shade shelters** to make walking, biking, and waiting for the bus safer and more comfortable in the summer. In 2025, the City also partnered with the Chelsea Housing Authority (CHA) to install a white solar-reflective **"cool roof"** on the Margolis Complex, which helps to reduce indoor temperatures for some of our most vulnerable residents. Other investments that could help with high heat include splash pads, drinking fountains, and pools.

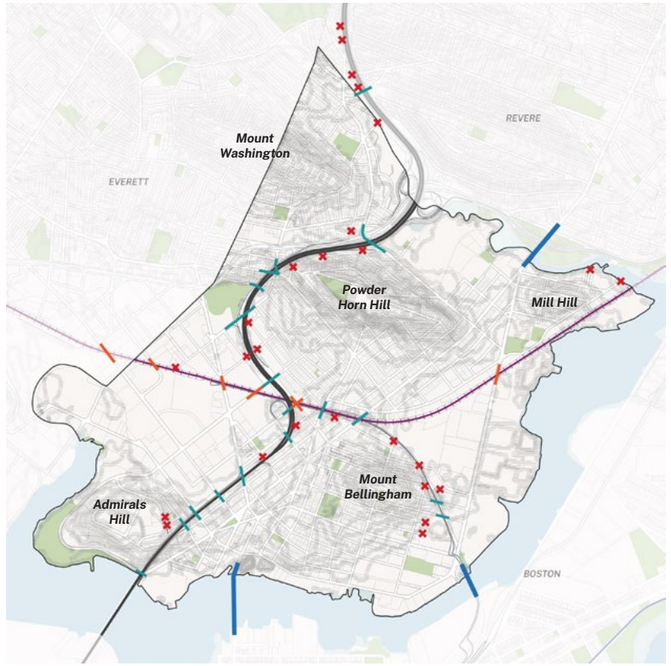
The city is divided by elevation changes and infrastructure, which isolate and cut off certain neighborhoods.

Natural barriers like the hills between neighborhoods, along with man-made barriers like Route 1 and the Commuter Rail lines, carve up the city into distinct areas. Chelsea's connectivity can be challenging because of multiple dead-end streets, critical surface rail crossings, and bridges disrupted by harbor operations. Recognizing how these natural and infrastructure features break up the city, and deliberately strengthening connections that enable more isolated neighborhoods to access opportunity, amenities, and services, is critical to improving our residents' quality of life.

There are many ways to map accessibility and connectivity. The first map shows the location of Chelsea's urban barriers and the limited places to cross them safely. The second map compares the number of neighboring addresses within a quarter-mile of a given address as-the-crow-flies, against how many addresses are actually reachable by walking for a quarter-mile on the street network.

What is accessibility & connectivity?

Accessibility refers to how easily people can reach the places they need, like jobs, schools, health care, grocery stores, and parks. **Connectivity** refers to the network of streets, sidewalks, and paths that makes accessibility possible. Being physically close to a school or bus stop doesn't necessarily mean that it is accessible if the sidewalks that connect you to them don't feel safe or if a highway stands in the way.



Connections

- *Crossings over or under barriers*
- *Crossings with surface conflict*

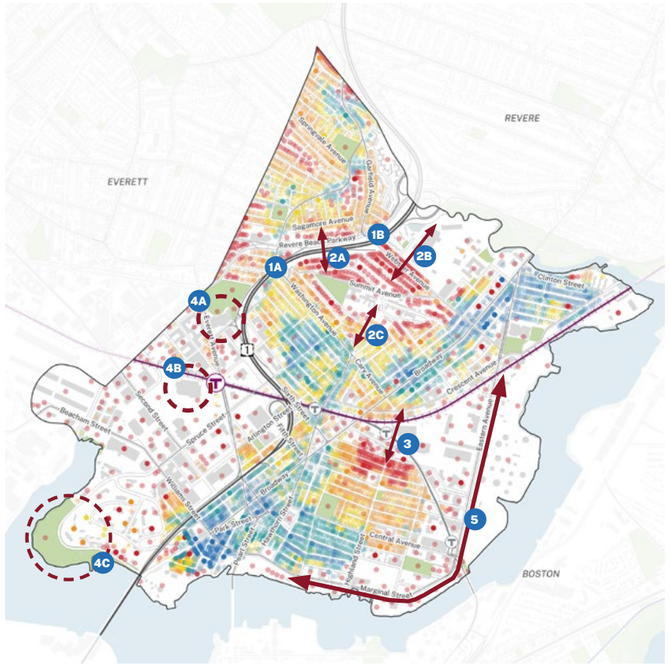
Barriers

- *Dead-ends*
- *Railroad ROW*
- *Bridges with local traffic*
- *Highway and heavy traffic roads*

Source: Analysis by Utile



Fourth Street blocked by Route 1's elevated viaduct.



Accessibility Score within Quarter Mile

- *< 0.4* — Least connected
- *0.4 – 0.6*
- *0.6 – 0.7*
- *0.7 – 0.8*
- *> 0.8* — Most connected

Source: Analysis by Nelson\Nygaard

How do I interpret the Connectivity Score?

An Connectivity Score of 0.5 means that half of addresses located in a straight-line quarter mile are reachable by walking the street network. A **higher score** means the street grid is **well connected**. A **lower score** signals a **barrier**, like a highway or rail line blocking a walking connection that would otherwise exist.

1. Washington Ave 1A and Garfield Ave / Webster Ave 1B are only two places for bikers and pedestrians to cross Revere Beach Greenway (Route 16).
2. Route 1, Revere Beach Greenway, 2A and big box stores, 2B as well as the terrain elevation 2C isolate the neighborhood near Veterans Home.
3. The Box District has limited north-south connections, separated by the Silver Line busway and Commuter Rail tracks.
4. The areas surrounding key civic and commercial hubs like Chelsea High School 4A Mystic Mall 4B, and Mary O'Malley State Park 4C have low connectivity.
5. Chelsea's waterfront area mostly contains industrial / auto-oriented land-uses, with low connectivity.

"People to have lots of access to green space and to stop bearing the burden of disproportionate amount of environmental pollution."

Survey response

"The whole Eastie waterfront is not accessible to public use."

Public Workshop comment

"Sustainable clean air and accesible waterfront!"

Comment card

"[I love] La Colaborativa and Green Roots! Fighting environmental injustice and migrant rights."

Comment card (translated)

"Clean, clear air. More trees."

Comment card (translated)


Cary Square
Fay Square
Bellingham Square
Chelsea Square
CARY SQUARE
FAY SQUARE
BELLINGHAM SQUARE
CHELSEA SQUARE
"He took up the case of the poor and needy: then it went well. Is this not what it means to know me ?"
-This is the Lord's declaration"
-Jeremiah 22;16

OUR CHELSEA

This chapter is about our collective vision for Chelsea over the next two decades. Building on the synthesis of who we are and what we need as a city, **Our Chelsea** opens with our vision statement and the values we hold, explores the goals we have defined for our city's future, and outlines how and where this vision physically takes shape in our neighborhoods. It is our roadmap for a more equitable Chelsea that attracts growth that benefits all of us, ensuring our city is ready for the decisions of tomorrow while taking care of our residents today.

IN THIS CHAPTER:

Our Vision and Values — **90**

Our Goals — **92**

Our Framework for Growth

Planning for Growth — 98

Growth Strategies — 104

Growth Areas — 114

OUR VISION AND VALUES

Our Vision for the Future

Now that we have a clearer picture of where we are starting from, it is time to define where we are heading. During our first phase of engagement, we asked Chelsea residents what they loved about their city and what their top priorities for the future were. As a result of hundreds of conversations with residents and engagement responses, we arrived at the following vision statement, which is our destination for this plan.

Our vision statement encapsulates the key themes that the community identified as top priorities. Those are: **Housing**, **Economic Opportunity**, **Services & Safety Net**, **Community Safety**, **Environmental Justice & Mobility**, and **Culture & Placemaking**. Throughout this and the following chapters, we will explore the goals we have for them, as well as the key strategies and actions we need to take to get closer to our vision.

"By 2040, Chelsea is a vibrant city where **families can stay**, **businesses prosper** and our **strong community networks** help everyone **thrive** in **safe** and **healthy** neighborhoods. Our city continues to be a **gateway** for **culture**, diversity, and equity — drawing people from near and far."



Planning Values

This vision didn't emerge in isolation; it rests on four values that have guided our planning and visioning process and will continue to guide its implementation. These values are our non-negotiable principles that define who we are as a city and should guide our decisions for the years to come.









Community Solidarity

We believe in community, one that uplifts everyone through **strong networks, collaboration, and mutual aid**. Our community groups and organizations are the backbone of the city's resilience and strength; they define Chelsea's character and help residents navigate challenges and opportunities.

Pride in Our Cultural Diversity

We celebrate Chelsea's **rich historical heritage** as a **city of immigrants**; this is a place where newcomers feel welcome and long-term residents feel a sense of belonging. We take pride in the city's **multicultural character** and generate opportunities to celebrate it.

Access to Opportunities

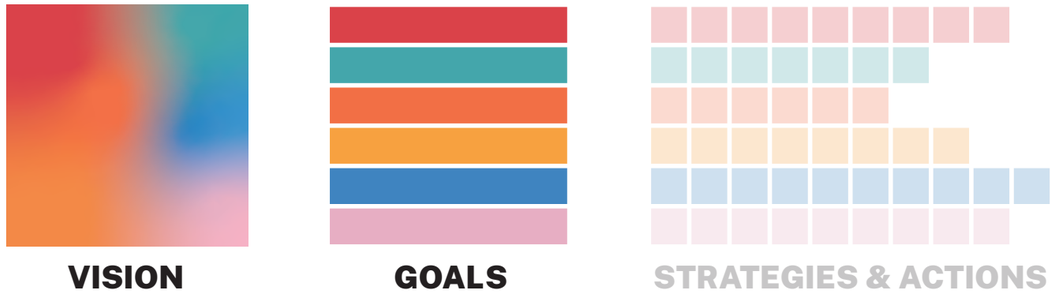
We value Chelsea's role as a gateway that connects residents to opportunities both within our city and throughout the Greater Boston region. Our location, transportation connections, and community-based services ensure that families can access what they need to build their futures.

Progress for Everyone

We prioritize development that benefits people from and in Chelsea and preserves our city's working-class character. Everyone should be able to **stay, put down roots, and have meaningful input** in decisions that shape their community's future.

OUR GOALS

With the vision for our destination now defined, we need to organize it into clear, distinct goals for what we want to achieve. If our vision is the holistic picture of where we want Chelsea to be by 2040, our goals are the thematic statements that give our vision direction.



Each theme described in the vision statement has a goal and a set of objectives. Each goal includes a series of general strategies and actions to show us the steps we need to take to reach our shared vision. These strategies and actions will be explored in the next chapter of this plan (Page 114).

Our goals for the future of Chelsea are:

Our Families Can Stay
Produce and Preserve Housing Options for Everyone

Our Businesses Prosper
Grow Our Regional and Local Economy

Our Strong Community Networks
Connect Residents with Our Community's Support Services

Our Safe Neighborhoods
Invest in Safe Streets and Strong Communities

Our Healthy Neighborhoods
Invest in Neighborhoods that are Just, Resilient, and Connected

Our Gateway for Culture, Diversity & Equity
Build Cultural Pride and Vibrant Public Life

Planning for Both Stabilization and Long-term Prosperity

While defining our vision for this plan, one thing became evident: our city has to plan for *two realities* at once, which sometimes can pull in different directions. Being a gateway city means that Chelsea is at the forefront of our region's greatest justice and equity challenges. Therefore, to be a successful and supportive gateway city, we have to act and plan for ***crisis response and stabilization***, as well as for ***long-term prosperity***. Each of these planning dimensions needs to happen simultaneously, and they feed into each other.



This means that, on one end, we have high budget demands to fund programs and provide services that assist our residents and community organizations with extremely short-term issues that test our capacity. On the other end, we need to plan for a future that builds and lifts our residents into prosperity, creates quality of life, and attracts the growth and development that helps us fund our services and programs.

Each of our goals reflects this dual reality. As we move forward to define the strategies and actions for each goal in this plan, and to make other potential decisions later on, we need to consistently ensure we are thinking in those two distinct planning realities.

Growing with the City

Chelsea is a young city, full of kids, teenagers, young adults, and families raising children. Many of our newest neighbors are immigrant families with kids who chose Chelsea as the place to build a future for themselves and their children. Throughout our engagement, we put particular emphasis on talking to kids in our schools to learn their hopes for Chelsea and their own futures. We also talked to parents, in particular mothers, raising children while working multiple jobs. Their realities shape how we approach some of our goals in this plan.

Growing with the city means growing with our youth and these families in mind. This includes planning for housing that fits growing households, streets where mothers and their kids can walk safely, good public spaces to play, support for our schools, and pathways for young people to build skills, find opportunity, and see a future for themselves here. Throughout this plan, our strategies include dedicated attention to the needs of youth and young families, so that as Chelsea grows, the next generation grows with it.



> "A stronger belief in the future of young people, and a stronger belief by the young people in themselves and their future."
>
> Survey response

> "A better, safer environment for young residents to grow up in."
>
> Survey response

> "Expanding economic mobility through access to good jobs, ensuring every neighborhood is safe and healthy, and honoring Chelsea's rich cultural and historic identity. A thriving Chelsea means progress rooted in community, equity, and pride."
>
> Survey response



OUR FAMILIES CAN STAY

HOUSING (H)

GOAL: Produce and Preserve Housing Options for Everyone

PRODUCE housing in the right sizes, types, and locations that all Chelsea residents can afford, **PROTECT** residents from displacement, and **PRESERVE** the existing affordable housing options.

- Increase housing production, at all scales and typologies, steering it to meet the needs of all sectors of Chelsea residents, current and new.
- Strengthen and invest in programs and policies to preserve naturally occurring affordable housing options, safeguard residents from risk of displacement, and enforce guarantees of adequate-quality housing.



OUR BUSINESSES PROSPER

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES (E)

GOAL: Grow Our Regional and Local Economy

Transform Chelsea's industrial legacy into an engine for strong economic development and mutually beneficial relationships between **INDUSTRY** and **COMMUNITY**, and support our **LOCAL ECONOMY** and entrepreneurship.

- Reframing Chelsea's industrial land as an opportunity for economic development that produces quality jobs and brings community benefits that prioritize current and future generations of Chelsea residents.
- Investment in programs, spaces, and infrastructure that help local businesses thrive and create pathways for residents to build prosperity through entrepreneurship.

OUR STRONG COMMUNITY NETWORKS

SERVICES & SAFETY NET (S)

GOAL: Connect Residents to Our Community's Support Services

Strengthen our tight-knit community and the safety net we have built over the years by recognizing our Community Organizations as **CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE**, building accessible **SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE**, and strengthening community voice.

- Having woven our own safety net through decades of community organizing, elevate community organizations and groups as vital civic infrastructure, supporting their capacity and sustainability while respecting their independence and community-rooted leadership.
- Strengthen and create trusted, accessible places and pathways for residents to access services and participate in community decisions, recognizing diverse forms of civic engagement.



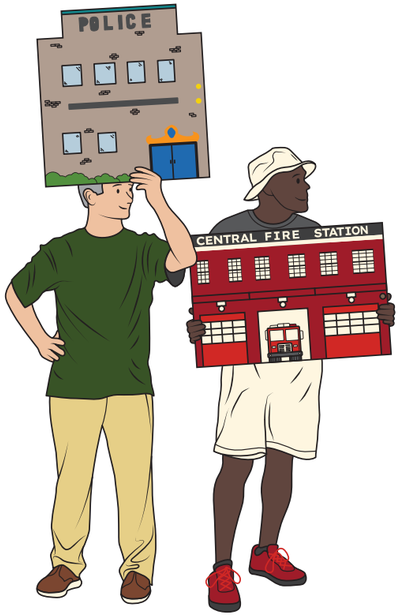
OUR SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

COMMUNITY SAFETY (CS)

GOAL: Invest in Safe Streets and Strong Communities

Build **PHYSICAL SAFETY** through street and public spaces design, and address safety challenges through **PREVENTION**, programs, and community action.

- Address physical safety hazards, perception, accessibility limitations, and barriers that divide neighborhoods through infrastructure improvements and design interventions.
- Build safety through youth programs, community leadership, trust-building, and addressing root causes of violence and crime.





OUR HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & MOBILITY (EJ)

GOAL: Invest in Neighborhoods that are Just, Resilient, and Connected

Reduce **ENVIRONMENTAL HARMS** while building **CLIMATE RESILIENCE**. **EXPAND ACCESS** to quality green spaces, recreation, waterfront, and sustainable transportation.

- As a frontline environmental justice community bearing disproportionate pollution burdens, simultaneously reduce environmental harms while preparing for climate impacts like flooding, extreme heat, and severe storms that threaten the most vulnerable residents.
- Ensure all residents have equitable access to quality parks, green spaces, recreational opportunities, and waterfront that support health, climate resilience, and community connection.
- Leverage and expand Chelsea's excellent transit access to connect residents to opportunities throughout the region while reducing car dependency, emissions, and transportation costs.



OUR GATEWAY FOR CULTURE, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY

CULTURE AND PLACEMAKING (C)

GOAL: Build Cultural Pride and Vibrant Public Life

Build **PLACES** and infrastructure to support a vibrant public life in our city while supporting **PROGRAMS**, arts, culture, and creative expression.

- Address Chelsea's critical lack of dedicated cultural and entertainment facilities by creating permanent and interim spaces and reforming policies to enable vibrant public life.
- Position arts and culture as essential community infrastructure — not optional amenities — that serve as a conduit for community expression, identity, economic opportunity, equity, and connection.

OUR FRAMEWORK FOR GROWTH

Growth is crucial to building what we need and raising the funds to achieve our vision and goals; now it's time to define how and where it physically happens. This section outlines our approach to land use and urban form, the urban design strategies that will guide new growth, and the areas of our city best positioned for it. To achieve our goals in this plan, Chelsea has to:

Attract and manage new growth that brings benefits and serves the interests of our community.

PLANNING FOR GROWTH

Imagining ways a place you love can change is never easy. When we see a new construction site in our city, it can be both an exciting sign of prosperity and a source of anxiety and fear. Development can mean more housing for our residents, new job sources, or new customers for our businesses. At the same time, it makes us wonder: is this for me? How will this benefit my community?

Chelsea has always been a city that attracts people. Our city has changed over the years, constantly evolving into the cohesive, supportive community we are today. This means change will keep coming; development will happen. **Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! is our opportunity to ensure we steer growth and development in ways that benefit and serve our community.**

Our Framework for Growth includes place-based strategies and identifies distinct areas to direct new growth in favor of our city. This framework gives us tools to attract new development and construction of the things we need while strengthening our capacity to fund our programs and services, so we can build a future where we are not choosing between our residents of today and the residents of tomorrow.





What Can Growth Do for Chelsea?

The goals we have identified in this plan and the strategies that will help us achieve them demand two things:

1. **Building and attracting new development**, like more housing, commercial and mixed-use developments, more spaces for businesses, and more job sources.
2. **Investing ($) in programs, services, and infrastructure** that support our residents, fund our schools, and improve our neighborhoods, which increases budget demands.

Growth is not the end; it is a means to generate the resources we need to invest in the vision and goals that our community has identified.

Well-managed growth and development can:

- **Support the city's fiscal sustainability to pay for what our city needs**, like our schools, human services, social programs, or infrastructure, through increased tax revenue
- **Reduce the tax burden from residential uses** by maintaining and growing the commercial and industrial tax base
- **Build new housing for all**, in a wide range of incomes, and provide fiscal income to fund housing preservation programs and city services
- **Attract new jobs and opportunities for businesses**
- **Invest in walkable, connected, and vibrant neighborhoods**

"More mixed use development around Market Basket and the Forbes Site. Improved access to Boston. Development of industrial sites arriving the produce center."

Survey response

We want:

- To pursue equitable outcomes for our community
- To achieve the goals we have identified for Chelsea's future
- To support and increase the City services and programs we need
- To keep our City fiscally sound



What is "new growth"?

Each year, new buildings and those undergoing significant improvements add value to Chelsea's tax base; this is called "new growth." This growth is the primary way we can expand the locally generated revenue in our budget to fund municipal services and programs without raising the cap on current residential taxes.

Growth that benefits all of us

Rising costs and the risk of displacement are real, and no plan can promise to erase them. What Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! can do is be intentional about how growth happens, so it works in favor of the residents who are here today.

Good growth for Chelsea is mindful of these pressures and puts the resources it generates back into protecting and investing in our community.

Good growth helps us fund and develop affordable housing, and fund our schools, programs, services, and the infrastructure our neighborhoods need. It is growth that is shaped with our community, with real opportunities for residents to know about, weigh in on, and help shape what gets built and where. And it reflects who we are: a city of immigrants, a working-class community, a place people have fought hard to call home.

This is the standard Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! sets for every development in our city: not just whether it can be built, but whether it makes Chelsea stronger for residents who are already here and welcoming for residents still to come.

"We need guided development and growth to create safe resources for everyone."

Comment card

"Chelsea is my home and that has grown and sustained itself for many decades. I love that it is progressing and improving and hope that it will continue to. I hope it will continue to remain close to working class people who give back to their friends, family, and community."

Survey response



"[I imagine Chelsea] safer, always with its diversity . . . strong, united, and developed for future generations."

Survey response (translated)

Growth that is mixed and balanced

Cultivating Chelsea's new growth means we need a healthy mix of commercial, market-rate housing, and deed-restricted affordable development to build the tax base that funds everything our community needs to thrive. No single type of development can do this work alone; each contributes something different, and Chelsea's future depends on growing them all together.

Commercial and industrial development is Chelsea's strongest revenue generator relative to the city services it requires, and it creates the jobs our residents need close to home. Market-rate housing — at every scale, from larger buildings to small infill projects — brings in tax revenue, is often faster and easier to finance and build, and helps support the shops, services, and public investments that benefit the whole neighborhood. Deed-restricted affordable housing provides opportunities for new and existing Chelsea residents cost-burdened by market-rate rents, though it typically requires more complex funding and public investment to build.

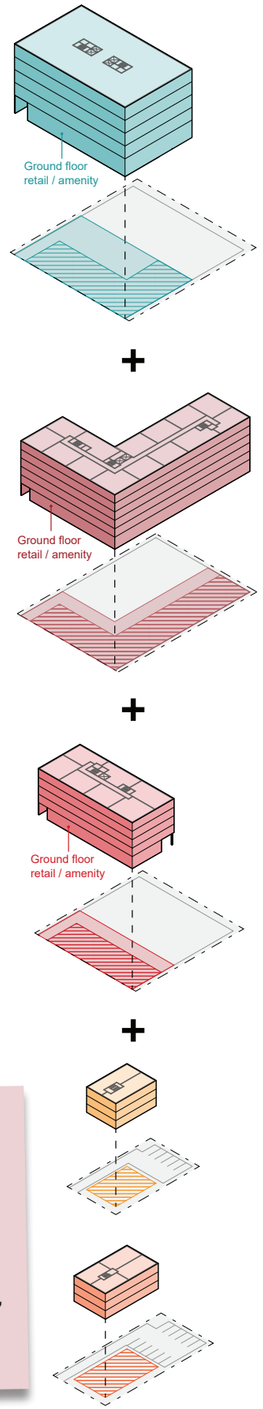
It's the combination of all these types of development, a balanced mix of uses, incomes, and scales of development, that generates the resources this plan needs to fund housing preservation, city services, and the future we've envisioned together.

"I would like to see more mixed-use buildings to maximize the limited space in our community."

Public workshop comment

"Interspersed commercial and residential areas (ground floor retail). Housing density, but not dense housing . . . prioratize green spaces with mixed use."

Comment card



Mixed-Use Commercial & New Industrial

- 2X growth vs residential
- Generates jobs and economic activity alongside tax revenue
- Demands fewer city services per dollar contributed

Market-Rate Housing

- Brings tax revenue
- Density can support local spending, benefit agreements, and public realm investments
- Easier to finance and faster to develop

Mixed & Deed-Restricted Affordable Housing

- Protects residents already here from displacement
- Density can support local spending
- Depends on complex funding sources and public investment

Small Infill Market-Rate Housing

- Ideal to add housing units on smaller properties in established neighborhoods
- Incrementally boosts tax revenue and local spending
- Tight return on investment

What would good growth look like for Chelsea?

Revitalized existing buildings

Housing that is affordable and diverse

Housing that fits with our context

Community Spaces

Street trees to provide shade

Mixed-use buildings with housing for families and spaces for local businesses

Streets with active storefronts

Better public transit infrastructure

Enhanced active sidewalks with places to sit and meet

Safer accessible streets

More spaces for entertainment

Infrastructure to bike safely

GROWTH STRATEGIES

To manage future growth, we have outlined some urban design strategies to define where and how we can accommodate good growth in Chelsea. Informed by how our neighborhoods function today, these strategies aim to guide development to add to our city's vibrancy, build places that put people first, and maximize public benefits while minimizing potential negative externalities.

These strategies are:

1. **Strengthen existing and underdeveloped nodes** by steering development to support residential and commercial growth.
2. **Improve the connections between neighborhoods** by linking their nodes and making it easier to move around.
3. **Leverage key existing industrial areas**, help them evolve, and foster new commercial opportunities.

Land use and urban form are one of our best tools

Chelsea's two square miles are some of the most in-demand land in Greater Boston. The rules we set for how our land is used, and the physical shape our buildings, streets, and public spaces take, are among the most powerful tools Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! has to shape our future.

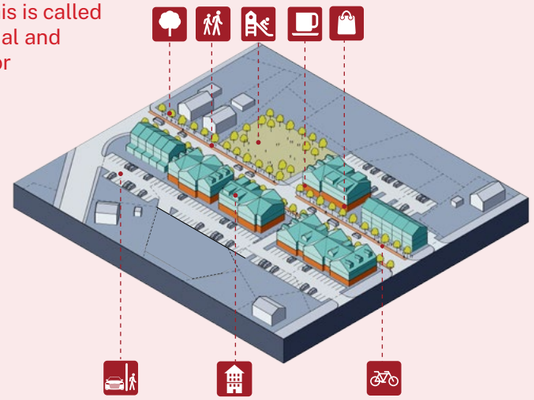
This plan sets direction across many topics, but land use and urban form are where it has the most direct authority. Land use determines what can happen where — housing, industry, retail, open space — while urban form determines its physical shape: building height and scale, streetscape design, and how public space and infrastructure work together to create a place people want to be in.

Guided by our vision, values, and goals, decisions about land use and urban form can help build safe, welcoming neighborhoods, connect residents to jobs and opportunity, expand housing options, strengthen how people move around the city, and protect Chelsea from climate risk. Left unplanned, new development risks serving private profit alone or developing in isolation, at the expense of the community that has built Chelsea into what it is today.

What is Land Use?

Land use describes how land can be used and what type of development can happen there. Zoning codes and other regulations often assign a specific land use to a parcel, which controls what activities can take place on it. Common land uses include residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and recreational. A parcel zoned for residential use, for example, must be used for housing.

Some parcels allow more than one land use at once. This is called "mixed use." The most familiar example combines residential and commercial uses, like housing above a ground-floor store or restaurant, but mixed use can pair other combinations too, such as commercial and industrial, or residential and arts and cultural uses.



Mixed-Use Urban Form

Designing places for people means encouraging a mix of uses that are easily accessible and accommodate a broad range of transport options, with safe, desirable, and convenient conditions for walking, biking, using transit, and driving. Thoughtful urban form and design can shape how buildings, streets, parks, and infrastructure landscapes come together to sustain future living and foster a sense of place.

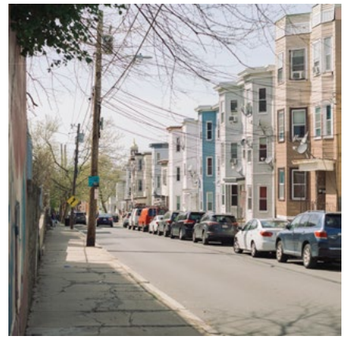
Our places today

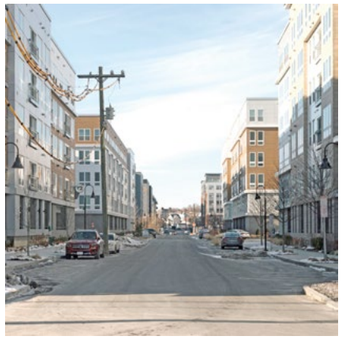
Understanding how our city is physically organized today helps us determine where and how new growth can best take shape in Chelsea. Early in our process, we used land use, building typologies, street networks, and our conversations with the community to understand how our different types of places work together to form the city we know.

Even though Chelsea is the smallest city in the state, it holds an incredibly diverse set of places. From our vibrant residential neighborhoods to our activity nodes and corridors, to industrial and retail areas, each place plays a different role in the daily lives of our residents, workers, and visitors. Several primarily residential neighborhoods sit squeezed between two large industrial areas to the east and west, with Broadway functioning as our central commercial corridor and smaller activity nodes scattered throughout. Infrastructure decisions have shaped this layout too, with Route 1, the Silver Line corridor, and the railroad right-of-way segmenting the city.

These place types guide how we prioritize and plan urban design improvements and changes across Chelsea.







Residential Neighborhoods. Most of Chelsea's neighborhoods are primarily residential areas with small open spaces and community institutions mixed in. Chelsea has a mix of mid-density neighborhoods, which are the core of our urban areas; lower-density ones; and emerging neighborhoods in areas undergoing active development of multi-family housing.

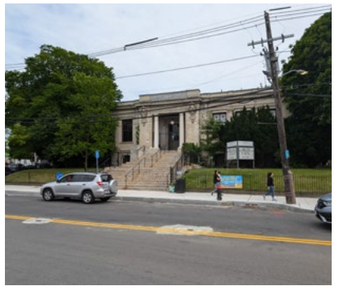






Nodes. They are Chelsea's activity and commercial hubs and can be distinguished by their clusters of activities. They include places like Downtown and Broadway; mixed-use nodes in neighborhoods like Cary Square and Washington Park; small nodes at key intersections (where we normally find a mix of land uses); big-box commercial uses like Mystic Mall;

Our places today (cont'd)


Nodes. They also include civic uses like our public schools, City Hall, health services, and community spaces.



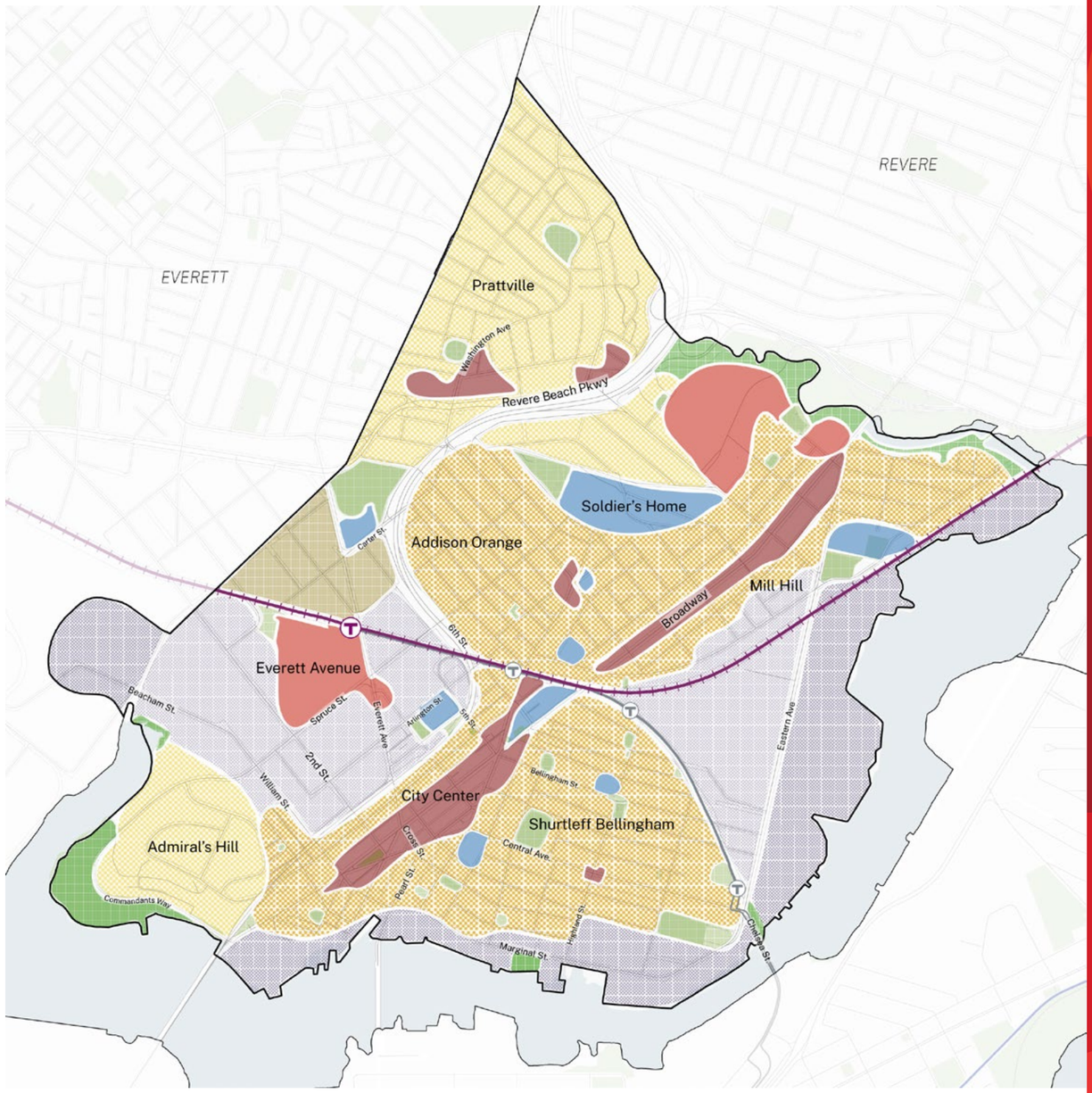


Industrial Areas. Largely located on the east and west sides of our city. Here, we found most of our job sources, and they remain vital parts of the city, although they can feel disjointed from our other neighborhoods. These areas can be distinguished into a hybrid industrial area with manufacturing, logistics services, and offices; and the waterfront, which includes the New England Produce Center, oil terminals, salt piles, and airport-related uses.





Green Open Space. The open green spaces in Chelsea can be categorized into natural/waterfront areas like the Mary O'Malley State Park, and those for sports and recreational uses, such as playgrounds and neighborhood parks.



Strengthening nodes and improving connections

The first two growth strategies are to strengthen existing and underdeveloped nodes and improve the connections between neighborhoods. Together, these strategies shape where our housing and economic goals meet the ground.

Starting with our **nodes**, guiding growth to already dense, active areas like the City Center, Broadway, and our neighborhood squares, or to underutilized nodes with great transit capacity like the area around Chelsea Station or the Silver Line, will promote a more sustainable city. They are the areas where people interact and where different activities intersect. By steering development here to add housing, commercial uses, and services, we can encourage mixed-use, walkable, vibrant neighborhoods where all residents can experience Chelsea's convenience and supportive community.

The **streets and corridors** that connect our neighborhoods and link our different activity nodes serve both mobility and land-use roles. The small footprint of our city means many everyday trips to school, work, or local stores are short. Designing our streets and infrastructure to be safer and more attractive for walking and biking, and more comfortable for those taking public transportation, can shift many of these trips away from cars, easing congestion and even reducing parking demand in our busiest commercial areas. Our corridors, like our nodes, also have room to grow by accommodating new multifamily housing along them, adding homes close to transit, jobs, commercial uses, and everyday services.

Together, nodes and corridors shape how we interact with the city, how our neighborhoods relate to each other, how we move, and how our city is organized. Because Chelsea is so compact, our nodes and corridors often blend into one another. Rather than separating them by form, we classified them by activity intensity and urban density concentration, growth capacity, and the scale of economic development they can support.

What is Infill Development?

Infill development refers to new development projects built on unused or underused land within existing neighborhoods. These projects take advantage of existing resources and infrastructure while leveraging the strengths of consolidated areas of our city, such as local businesses, the transportation network, and community vibrancy.

Good infill projects are sensitive to their context and strengthen the existing character of their neighborhoods without limiting development to low-density typologies. One way to achieve this is to set clear design guidelines for desired scale, character, and uses. Infill development will be an incremental process, where the success of one well-planned project can establish precedents and standards for subsequent developments.

For Chelsea, infill development will look different depending on each neighborhood and Growth Area. Future development in mixed-use and consolidated areas of Chelsea, like our Downtown or Broadway, should maximize development potential while producing buildings that fit the parcel fabric and strengthen the area's urban quality. For areas in our residential neighborhoods, this means smaller multi-family buildings like walk-ups and potentially single-stair buildings. This will be covered in the next section.



375 Broadway is a good example of infill development happening in our Downtown. Render by Arx Urban



Nodes and Corridors

The following map shows the different nodes and corridors and their associations, starting with downtown, our most active mixed-use area, and gradually moving down to our most residential nodes and corridors. It also highlights industrial nodes and corridors, which, in their own way, can be designed to be vibrant and better integrated with our city.

This classification should guide future zoning updates (see our strategies and actions chapter, page 148), ensuring that the intensity of use and density we allow in each area matches the role it plays in our city. This map can also help identify connections that could be strengthened or are missing from our urban fabric today by improving edges and sorting out physical barriers.





Downtown.
Our primary mixed-use district where economic activity, daily life, and community gathering converge. Downtown can grow more vibrant through infill residential development and a more diverse retail mix.

Primary.
Our highest-capacity commercial areas, serving as gateways and major activity nodes. They are tied to transportation capacity and are located in emerging and peripheral areas of our neighborhoods. Everett Avenue in particular has the potential to become a defining corridor for the city, capable of supporting denser multifamily housing alongside its commercial uses.

Mixed-Use.
Our most active neighborhood hubs connecting the more residential parts of our city to the primary activity nodes. They support local businesses and services, and create opportunities for context-sensitive denser infill development.

Neighborways.
Predominantly residential streets that knit neighborhoods together by completing our corridor network, with strong potential for improved walkability, safety, and connectivity through better sidewalks, crossings, and traffic calming.

Industrial.
Our primary source of jobs and commercial tax revenue, currently under-connected from the rest of the city — and our greatest area of economic growth potential, poised to attract clean, high-tech industries and new employment. Our industrial nodes have the potential to add supporting commercial, retail, and service uses at key intersections, creating mixed-use hubs for workers and visitors.

Some corridors, like Revere Beach Parkway, and spaces under the Route 1 viaduct, like those along Sixth, Arlington, and Spruce Streets, are part of this network of nodes and corridors. Given their harsh urban form and edge condition, they don't necessarily function in the same capacity and need particular design consideration.



Green spaces

Waterfront access

Potential waterfront access

Our city also has the potential to keep piercing out industrial port-designated waterfront to create additional green spaces, especially at key nodes and gateway corridors. Any redevelopment along the water should include public waterfront access.

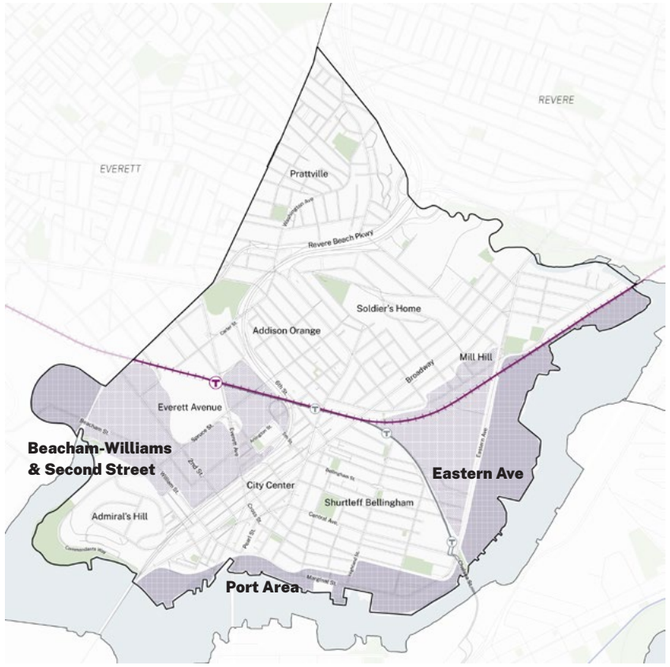
Leveraging key industrial areas.

Our third growth strategy is to leverage our key industrial areas, helping them evolve and fostering new commercial opportunities.

A significant portion of Chelsea's land has been dedicated to industrial and related uses, covering much of the east and west sides of our city. Historically, this has presented social and environmental justice challenges for our residents and limited their access to the waterfront. At the same time, this land hosts most of our jobs today and holds the greatest growth and economic development potential for tomorrow.

Most of our industrial areas are built for their primary function, manufacturing, logistics, and distribution, with loading docks, large-format buildings, and streets designed for trucks rather than people. Building on what was introduced in the previous two growth strategies, our industrial areas have the potential to relate differently to the surrounding city, particularly at key nodes and transition areas. Guidelines could include managing how buildings front and interact with the streets, allowing them to sit closer to the street, and clustering active uses like retail and services at the nodes to support the workers and visitors who move through them every day.

Today, this land is under pressure, with demand for residential development replacing industrial and commercial uses, particularly along the border with Everett. Some sections of these areas are intended for significant change (more on this in our Growth Areas section), but we also have to be careful to maintain and grow our commercial tax base and job sources. To leverage our industrial areas, we have to protect the existing industrial uses that remain essential to Chelsea's economy, while also helping our industrial areas evolve, modernize, and welcome new commercial activity.



Chelsea's three Industrial land use clusters

Protect and Modernize Industrial Areas

Employment anchors located along Beacham-Williams Street, Second Street, and at the New England Produce Center are core to Chelsea's job base today. Other anchors include state agencies like the MWRA and distribution centers along Eastern Avenue. Protecting these areas means keeping them in active industrial and commercial use, supporting the employers already here, and helping their infrastructure modernize so they can stay competitive.

Attract new industries
Chelsea's water, transportation access, and proximity to Logan Airport position our industrial areas to attract new contemporary industries compatible with manufacturing and what in our region is called tough tech (research and development start-ups with industrial and lab space needs). New industries can also support job creation and career pathways for people in Chelsea, particularly our youth, including technical and skilled trade labor.

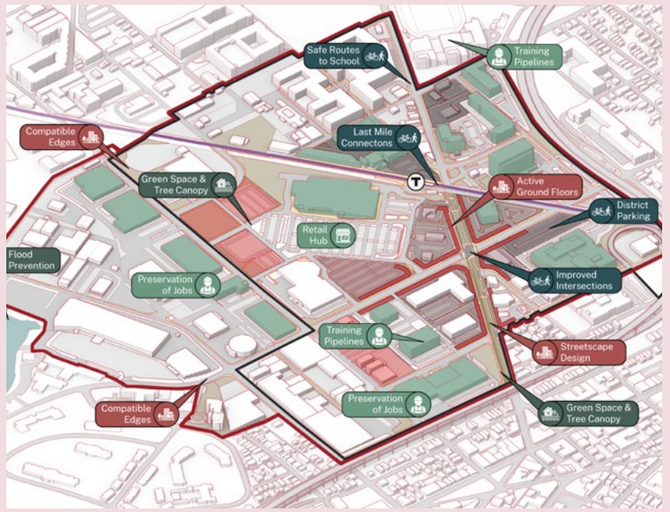
Within the Designated Port Area, complementary uses can improve public access to the water while preserving the maritime industry it was created to protect. Underutilized areas today, like the Eastern Ave and Marginal Street corridor, and parts of West Chelsea, provide room to attract new, modern, and clean industrial development.

This growth strategy is the physical foundation for our Economic Opportunity goal, carried forward through strategies and actions to protect, modernize, and attract industries that create quality jobs and improve the physical relationship between industrial areas and the city. For more details, see the Economic Opportunity goal and strategies in the following chapter (page 122).





Industrial properties still can have a better relationship with the streets they are fronting by introducing better landscape and active uses.



In Action: West Chelsea Economic Development Study, 2026

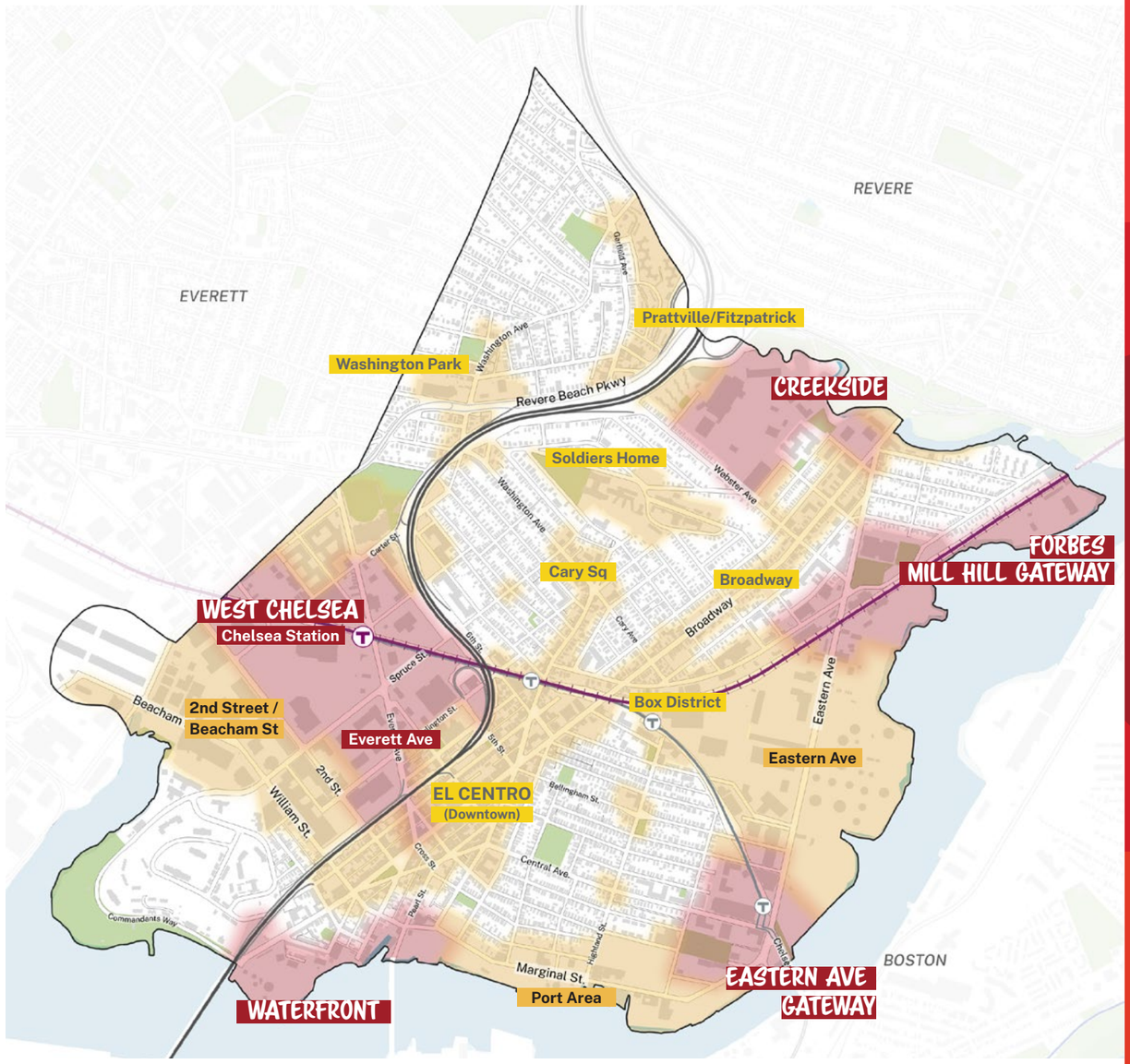
The western side of Chelsea, one of our largest industrial areas and the city's main transit hub, offers a clear example of this strategy in action. Developed in parallel with Chelsea Pa'Lante, the 2026 West Chelsea Economic Development Study looked at how to retain the employment anchors already rooted there, steer new development toward higher-employment uses instead of low-job uses like data centers, self-storage, and automated warehouses, and identify underutilized sites that could be cleaned up and redeveloped for clean industry. It also called for better connections between the area and surrounding neighborhoods, including safer crossings along key truck routes and under the Tobin Bridge. Its recommendations directly inform the industrial growth strategies in this plan.

GROWTH AREAS

Growth will not look the same and does not need to occur to the same degree all across Chelsea. Some places, like the gateways to our city and neighborhoods, parts of our industrial land, and transit areas, are underutilized and ready to be transformed entirely. Others, like our vibrant activity nodes, need an additional push to reach their full potential. And our core residential neighborhoods are well established, so our priority there is to maintain and strengthen what already works.

Our growth strategies have identified the intensity of uses and density that different nodes and corridors can accommodate. With those three strategies in mind and based on existing land uses, connections to public transit, and urban consolidation, we have divided our city into three different growth areas based on their degree of change. These areas will serve to guide the city's future land use and urban form policy decisions and prioritization.





Transformative Growth

Areas to explore large-scale holistic transformation that seeks to change the character of the place, informed by neighborhood or district-level plans, focused on attracting investment and mixed-use development

Catalytic Growth

Areas to attract development that improves and expands the uses, character, and economic activity already there, without totally changing them.

Managed Growth

Our more consolidated neighborhoods where development potential has to be carefully handled to preserve and strengthen the existing urban form and character while allowing for context-sensitive infill development.

Transformative Growth

Transformative Growth Areas are the key areas of the city where new growth will be steered to significantly change the character of the place. These are areas for real estate investment through public and private support, informed by detailed plans and studies. Some of the urban design actions to attract transformative growth include:

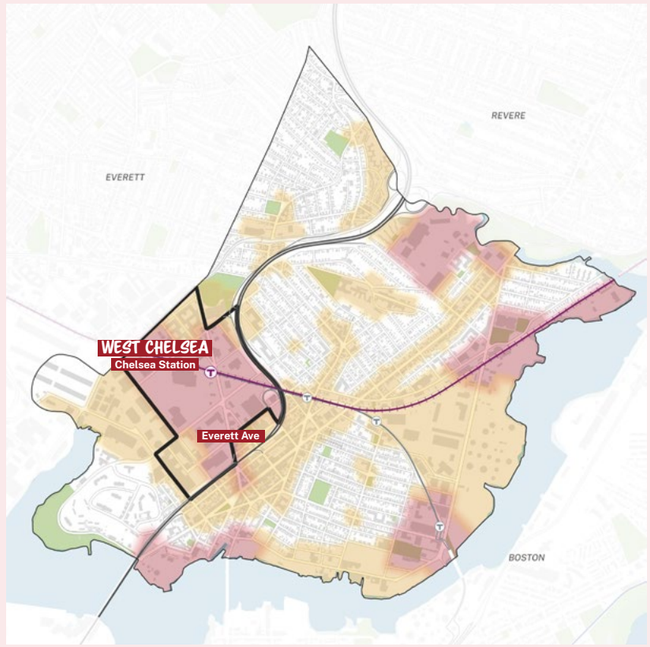
- Zoning updates and overlay districts to allow more density
- Zoning updates to add new and more diverse mix of uses
- District plans that include development scenarios to estimate capacity
- Economic development programs and municipal or state financing tools to attract new commercial, industrial, and housing developments
- Value capture schemes to fund streetscape, shared parking, or infrastructure
- Major urban and street design interventions, infrastructure improvements, and capital investments
- Subdivision of large blocks to encourage new districts that are walkable and vibrant.
- Requiring active uses on key corridors
- Guidelines and standards for high-quality, context-sensitive design
- New streets, parks, and public spaces on large sites
- Building structured parking and managing surface parking to allow for more development capacity and land uses
- Stormwater management infrastructure
- Phased development plans that maintain existing anchor uses while adding new ones.

We have identified five transformative growth areas. Some have more immediate development potential, and others are poised for longer-term redevelopment.

West Chelsea Mixed-Use Overlay District, 2026

While working on this comprehensive Master Plan, the city concurrently developed a new mixed-use overlay district for practically all the area identified for Transformative Growth. Approved in Spring 2026, this overlay district increased allowed density, building height, and uses to enable mixed-use development by right with active ground floors.

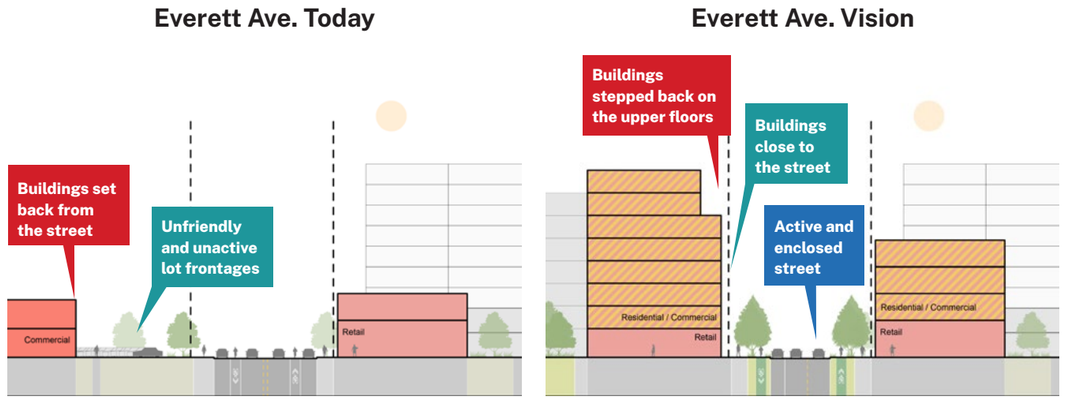
The new overlay district seeks to create an urban form that promotes an engaging pedestrian environment by including a series of form-based dimensional standards to regulate form and foster a vibrant urban environment. It also increases open and green spaces with minimum usable open space regulations requiring publicly accessible open spaces on the ground floor in larger developments. Other design guidelines include primary pedestrian street rules, no parking minimums, and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements.



West Chelsea: Chelsea train station + Everett Ave
The western side of the city, around the Chelsea train station and along Everett Avenue, is our Growth Area with the greatest potential and capacity to attract new growth in the short to mid-term, adding more housing and commercial uses and bringing revenue to the city. This area has the highest concentration of public transit alternatives and active commercial uses like Market Basket and the Mystic Mall, with large portions of the land used for surface parking. In the last decade, development along the city limits with Everett has signaled demand and potential to add mixed-use development.

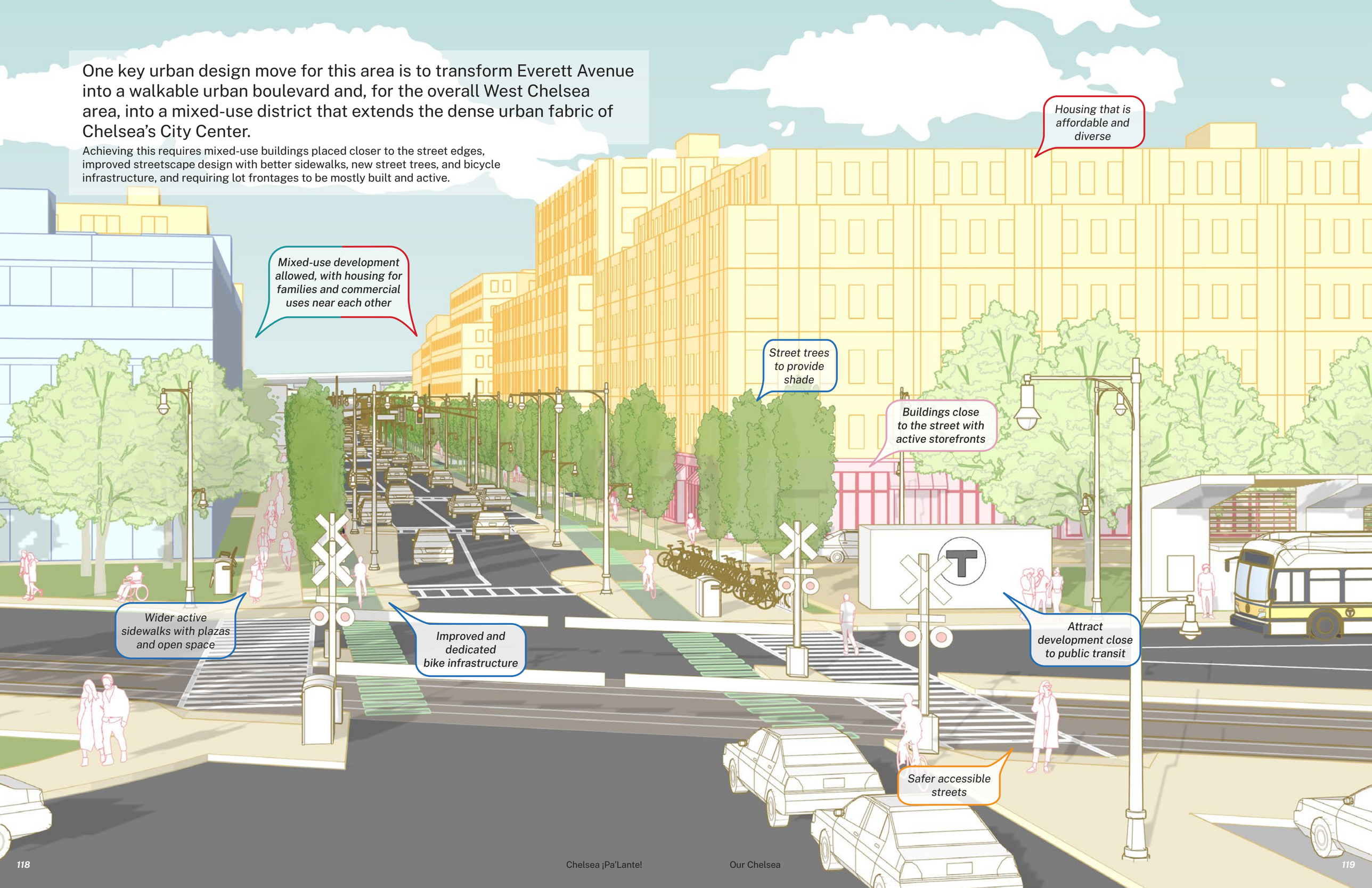


Current view of Everett Ave's auto-centric urban form, with is narrow sidewalks and unfriendly lot frontages



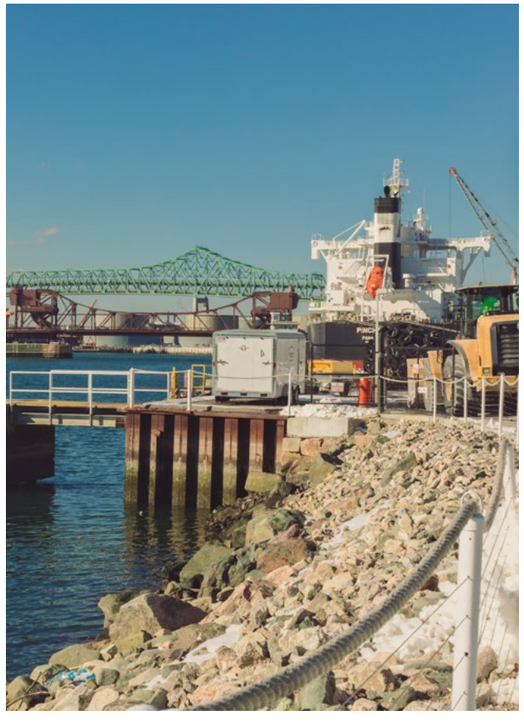
One key urban design move for this area is to transform Everett Avenue into a walkable urban boulevard and, for the overall West Chelsea area, into a mixed-use district that extends the dense urban fabric of Chelsea's City Center.

Achieving this requires mixed-use buildings placed closer to the street edges, improved streetscape design with better sidewalks, new street trees, and bicycle infrastructure, and requiring lot frontages to be mostly built and active.



Waterfront
Stretching from the end of Broadway to the Andrew McArdle Bridge on Pearl Street, the Waterfront growth area anticipates a longer-term shift as port uses like the oil terminals eventually relocate. As this land becomes available, it could support new mixed-use residential development and new 21st-century industrial uses that still benefit from direct water access, along with a future water taxi or ferry stop connecting Chelsea to downtown Boston. Managing the transition between industrial and residential uses will be key to this area's success.

Eastern Avenue Gateway
Centered on the Eastern Avenue Silver Line stop and the area around the Chelsea Street Bridge, this growth area is well positioned to grow around transit. Redevelopment of waterfront property here could add new green space and improve public access to the water, creating a walkable, transit-connected gateway at one of Chelsea's key entry points. Plans to consolidate parking uses in a structured garage are already underway which could potentially open up more than 11 acres of the Eastern Avenue property closest to the transit stop for future development.





Forbes Site y Mill Hill Gateway
The Forbes Site is Chelsea's next major growth opportunity after West Chelsea. With the site now under mission-driven partners committed to community-led redevelopment, momentum is finally building for new housing, substantial green space, and waterfront restoration. The area's biggest challenge is transit access; while the Commuter Rail line runs alongside the site, a new stop would require electrifying the line first.

Mill Hill Gateway reimagines the intersection of Eastern Avenue and Crescent Avenue, along with underutilized parcels near the Mary C. Burke School, transforming them into a new mixed-use node.

Creekside
Much like the area around Mystic Mall, the Creekside Transformative Growth Area anticipates the potential redevelopment of some big-box commercial sites and their surface parking lots. Here we could see the addition of multi-family housing, retail, grocery options, and services. Growth here could also improve public access to Mill Creek, with new riverside space and a riverwalk connection.

In Focus: The Forbes Site

The Forbes Site is now under the control of community-trusted organizations like TND, GreenRoots, and Mass Audubon, bringing together housing development, environmental advocacy, and land conservation expertise under one redevelopment effort. The city will continue to support their plan for the site, which combines new affordable housing with substantial green space and a restored waterfront, an approach that reflects Chelsea's broader push to open up its industrial waterfront for public benefit while still growing its housing supply.





Catalytic Growth

Catalytic Growth Areas are places already working for Chelsea today that have room to become a better version of themselves. Unlike our Transformative Growth Areas, these places don't need to change character to grow; they need targeted investment and improvements that build on what's already there. Some of the urban design actions to attract catalytic growth include:

- Up-zoning to allow moderate increases in density or a wider mix of uses, while maintaining the area's existing character
- Targeted, high-impact public and private investment in key locations
- Public realm improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, and street trees
- Context-sensitive infill development on vacant or underutilized sites
- Ground-floor activation through storefront improvements and flexible, multi-use spaces
- Tactical and temporary placemaking, like public art, parklets, and outdoor dining
- Small-scale economic development programs and support for existing businesses
- Protection of the existing residents, businesses, and character that already make these areas work.

Catalytic Growth can take different forms throughout the City of Chelsea, applying to both our mixed-use areas and to our industrial land. In our mixed-use and neighborhood areas, like Downtown and Broadway, our neighborhood centers, and key housing redevelopment sites, catalytic growth means building on existing activity to create denser, more vibrant places. In our industrial areas, the same logic applies differently, improving and modernizing without changing these areas' essential character or role as job centers. In both cases, the goal is to build on what's already working today to produce a better version tomorrow.

Downtown and Broadway
Downtown is Chelsea's leading mixed-use node, but it has potential to attract more residential uses. New multifamily mixed-use development, up to 6-story buildings, is already taking shape across the district. Growth here means maximizing that development potential while producing buildings that fit into the existing parcel fabric, add to the area's commercial capacity, and strengthen the area's urban quality. Further north up **Broadway** carries this same objective, tapering to a lighter scale, consistent with the lower-intensity classification shown on the nodes and corridors map.

Mixed-Use Neighborhood Centers
These growth areas are all about opportunities for infill development. Growth here means keeping these areas active and vibrant, growing local businesses, improving the city's convenient access to services and community spaces, and adding new multifamily housing to the area's vitality. It could also mean strategic infrastructure and public realm investment.

Cary Square is already a mixed-use node for the Addison-Orange neighborhood with retail and services options. It has strong potential to keep evolving into a vibrant neighborhood hub, benefiting from its transit access, infilling underutilized land, and being anchored by community spaces like Temple Emmanuel and Saint Luke's Church. Long-term growth could include investment in improving accessibility up and across Powder Horn Hill (Soldiers' Home).





El Centro TDI District

In March 2026, Chelsea was selected as one of six Massachusetts Gateway Cities for MassDevelopment's Transformative Development Initiative (TDI). The newly designated district, El Centro, straddles Downtown, Broadway, and Everett Avenue, connecting the Commuter Rail station to Chelsea's downtown core. Over a three-year period, the district will receive technical assistance, grants, and other resources to support real estate development, small business growth, arts and culture, and placemaking, all built on community engagement and cross-sector partnership. El Centro's TDI designation supports our Downtown's role as a Catalytic Growth area in this plan.

Continuing north on Washington Ave to Prattville, **Washington Park** and the surrounding area down to Revere Beach Parkway also have potential to mature into a vibrant neighborhood center. Challenges here include the complex intersections across the parkway and Route 1. Together, these two Growth Areas can create a vibrant corridor that connects Prattville to Downtown.

Other Catalytic areas include the **Box District**, which could accommodate additional residential uses and unlock potential around (and across) the Silver Line stop. Finally, we find smaller mixed-use nodes scattered throughout our neighborhoods, like those at the top of Bellingham Hill, or the intersections of Washington and Garfield, Highland and Central, or Spruce and Addison St.



Housing Redevelopments
The **Fitzpatrick/Prattville** site and **Soldiers' Home** are two of Chelsea's major public housing sites now undergoing redevelopment. Prattville will remain public housing, rebuilt to better serve current residents while adding more mixed-income housing units. The Soldiers' Home, a state veterans' campus, is being transformed from outdated dormitory-style housing into modern, veterans-preference housing with on-site services, ensuring current residents are never displaced during construction. Our plan acknowledges that these redevelopments strengthen some of Chelsea's most important existing affordable and supportive housing, without displacing the communities already there.

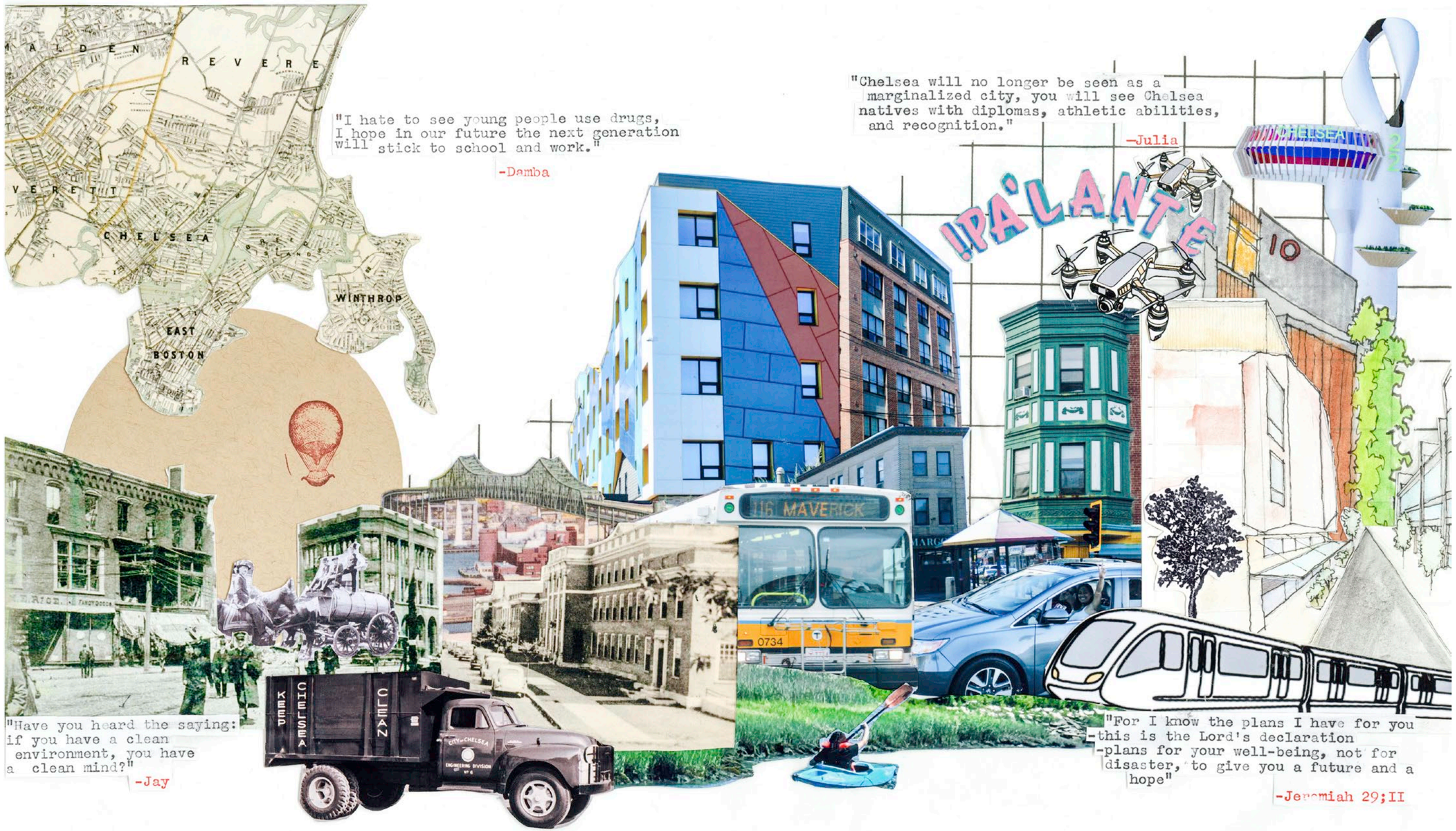
Industrial Areas
The areas along **Second Street/Beacham-Williams Street**, the **Port Area** along **Marginal Street**, and **Eastern Avenue** are Chelsea's three industrial Catalytic Growth areas, each anchored by the employers and job sources that have long defined them. Catalytic growth here follows the same approach outlined earlier in Leveraging Key Industrial Areas (page 100), protecting these anchors while helping each area modernize, welcome new commercial activity where it fits, and better integrate with the rest of the city.

Managed Growth

Managed Growth Areas are Chelsea's most established neighborhoods and places, ones we want to protect and strengthen. Growth here means careful, context-sensitive development and investment. Some of the urban design actions to support managed growth include:

- Zoning updates to allow small-scale, context-sensitive infill development on existing lots
- Ongoing maintenance and reinvestment in streets, sidewalks, and public infrastructure
- Improved connectivity through better sidewalks, crossings, and street design
- Preservation of existing building types, block patterns, and neighborhood character
- Anti-displacement strategies, such as tenant protections and support for long-term homeowners
- Support for the upkeep and maintenance of private property, including home repair and rehabilitation programs.




MALDEN
REVERE
EVERETT
CHELSEA
WINTHROP
EAST
BOSTON
"I hate to see young people use drugs, I hope in our future the next generation will stick to school and work."
-Damba
"Chelsea will no longer be seen as a marginalized city, you will see Chelsea natives with diplomas, athletic abilities, and recognition."
-Julia
¡PA'LANTE
10
CHELSEA
252
116 MAVERICK
0734
KEEP CHELSEA CLEAN
CITY of CHELSEA
ENGINEERING DIVISION
"Have you heard the saying: if you have a clean environment, you have a clean mind?"
-Jay
"For I know the plans I have for you -this is the Lord's declaration -plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope"
-Jeremiah 29;II

ONWARD!

If the previous two chapters were about understanding our starting point today and setting our vision and goals for where we want Chelsea to be tomorrow, this last chapter is about our path forward. **Onward!** presents our priority actions organized by topic areas, including a general list of strategies to help us narrow down and digest the goals we have defined. This chapter also includes our short-term priorities, a starting point for getting things done, followed by a full list of actions and policy recommendations for our community and City to implement.

IN THIS CHAPTER:

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Our Businesses Prosper Economic Opportunities (E) — 136

Our Strong Community Networks Services & Safety Net (S) — 140

Our Safe Neighborhoods Community Safety (CS) — 144

Our Healthy Neighborhoods Environmental Justice & Mobility (EJ) — 148

Our Gateway for Culture, Diversity, and Equity Culture and Placemaking (C) — 154

Getting Things Done

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OUR STRATEGIES

As presented in the previous chapter, our shared vision is organized into six distinct goals. In this chapter, we break each theme-specific goal into general strategies that outline more concrete measures we can take to advance our community vision and guide future growth in our city. Like our vision and goals, these strategies are informed and shaped by community engagement and insights from the existing conditions and trends analysis. Together, they translate each goal into tangible, focused efforts toward our desired outcomes.

As with our goals, the strategies for this plan remain attentive to both immediate crisis response and stabilization and long-term prosperity, as well as to actions that focus specifically on our youth. In addition, each goal includes both physical strategies: those that focus on building the things we need and designing our physical landscape, and policy strategies: those that invest in programs, improve communication, and restructure rules.

Many of the strategies and actions in this chapter won't feel new. Our community has worked for years to strategize and organize, and Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! is building on dozens of past, ongoing, and upcoming planning and community efforts. This plan, and this chapter in particular, aim to serve as an umbrella that brings all this work under one cohesive vision.



At the same time, other strategies not captured in this plan could still fit under one of our goals. The strategies in this chapter, and the actions within them, are detailed, but they are only the starting point for setting our path forward and defining our priorities. They are meant to be expanded, evolved, and evaluated as this plan's timeframe moves forward. Our hope is that this approach leaves room for creative solutions and flexibility along the way.

Each strategy in the pages that follow includes a short name and a guiding statement. Behind each one sits a more detailed set of actions — the specific steps that can move the strategy forward — which are laid out at the end of this chapter. This structure keeps this chapter focused on our shared direction, while the action list holds the additional detail needed to carry that direction forward.

Growing with the city

Throughout our list of strategies, we identified those focused on our youth with the **[Y]** symbol. These strategies and the actions later included under them pay closer attention to the needs of youth and young families, particularly around economic opportunity and safety, so that as Chelsea grows, the next generation grows with it.





Chelsea Strategic Housing Plan (2025)

The Strategic Housing Plan sets Chelsea's housing production and preservation targets for the years ahead, including new construction goals, protections for existing affordable units, and stronger fair housing protections. It also examined ways that Chelsea can increase opportunities for development and redevelopment through policy, partnerships, and funding, and identified five priority development sites near transit.

Chelsea Fair Housing Plan (2023)

The Fair Housing Plan examines the structural barriers, such as redlining and exclusionary zoning, that have limited housing access and choice for our residents. The plan sets eight goals to address barriers that limit housing access, including fair housing enforcement, homeownership and economic mobility opportunities, and civic engagement and education.

OUR FAMILIES CAN STAY

HOUSING (H)

GOAL: Produce and Preserve Housing Options for Everyone.

PRODUCE housing in the right sizes, types, and locations that all Chelsea residents can afford, PROTECT residents from displacement, and PRESERVE existing affordable housing options.

Increase housing production, at all scales and typologies, steering it to meet the needs of all sectors of Chelsea residents, current and new.

H.1 — Zone for Housing Production.

Reform zoning to attract new housing development in transformative areas and to incentivize infill development across the city.

H.2 — Advance Affordable Housing Delivery.

Adjust zoning to increase the delivery and funding of affordable housing that reflects Chelsea's income levels.

H.3 — Build for All Families.

Promote a variety of housing types and unit sizes for different family needs.

H.4 — Open Pathways to Homeownership.

Support homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income Chelsea residents.

H.5 — Activate Public and Strategic Sites.

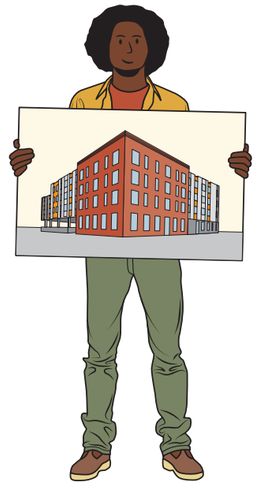
Increase density on public and underutilized sites to expand housing access without displacement.

"Market-rate housing developers can move faster. Zoning could be a tool to balance the field for affordable housing development to get the zoning benefits."

Focus group — Housing

"Property owners should be able to keep their homes."

Public workshop response



"More affordable housing where the home is also still a great quality home."

Survey response

"Fix zoning and you can address housing affordability."

Survey response

"Improvement in housing quality — a lot of old construction. Improve on building more housing, but keep it affordable to people."

Comment card (translated)

"Reform or eliminate parking minimums for (increased) affordability."

Focus group — Housing

"Access to housing and incentives for homeowners to provide affordable housing. Either through incentivizing and expanding ADU process or provide Tax relief/ benefits for homeowners to provide affordable and competitive rents."

Survey response

Inclusionary Housing Ordinance Update (2026)

The 2026 IHO update reexamined the policy's unit threshold, percent affordability, and AMI levels to strike a balance between enabling new growth in Chelsea while still maintaining affordability levels that reflect the needs of our community. The ordinance was originally adopted in 2017 and revised once prior in 2019.

West Chelsea Mixed-Use Overlay District (2026)

The West Chelsea Mixed-Use Overlay District establishes development standards for the 174-acre district around Chelsea's commuter rail station and Everett Avenue. The overlay district allows dense mixed-use development by right and emphasizes an engaging pedestrian experience through active ground-floor uses and walkable pedestrian streets.

Chelsea Community Preservation Plan (2020, update in progress)

The Community Preservation Plan guides how Chelsea spends its Community Preservation Act funds. 40% of these funds are directed to housing, making it one of the city's steadiest funding sources for affordable housing work. Priorities include preserving affordable rental units for low-income residents, increasing homeownership opportunities for low-income households, and improving conditions in the city's existing housing stock. The preservation plan is being updated as of this writing.

OUR FAMILIES CAN STAY

HOUSING (H)

Strengthen and invest in programs and policies to preserve naturally occurring affordable housing options, safeguard residents from risk of displacement, and enforce guarantees of adequate-quality housing.

H.6 — Preserve Existing Affordable Stock.

Strengthen programs and policies to preserve and invest in existing affordable housing.

H.7 — Protect Residents from Displacement.

Strengthen tenant protections, anti-displacement tools, and emergency housing and assistance services.

H.8 — Ensure Quality and Fair Access.

Strengthen housing quality enforcement and fair housing access across the city.

H.9 — Advocate at the State and Regional Level.

Advocate for state and regional policy changes that support Chelsea's housing goals.



Redevelopment of an existing small multi-family around Cary Square

"Investors buying properties rather than residents has led to spiking rents and lack of access to housing. . . . Predatory housing practices should be stopped."

Survey response

"Safe hotlines for reporting housing in poor condition."

Community conversation (translated)

"Bring the neighbors to the table as part of the negotiation process."

Focus group — Housing

"Important that these bigger buildings foster community feel, are home-y."

Public workshop response



"We need to also talk about preservation. The housing that is actually affordable today are not in affordable development landlords/ owners."

Focus group — Housing

"Rent increases, housing code violations and their impacts on health, affordable homeownership."

Public workshop response

"True affordability. . . . For the city not to be privatized. For residents to apply for affordable housing without having to forfeit their deposit."

Comment card

Eviction Task Force

Convened by the City of Chelsea's Housing & Community Development Department, the Eviction Task Force meets weekly to discuss the needs of specific community members facing eviction or related housing and economic instability. The group functions as a referral hub, bringing together social workers, non-profit leaders, and housing stability and economic mobility experts to triage cases and connect residents with supportive services. These efforts have helped keep local eviction filings below regional post-pandemic spikes.

West Chelsea Economic Development Study, Phase 1 (2023) and Phase 2 (2026)

The West Chelsea Economic Development Study analyzes market conditions, employment, and infrastructure to guide the 174-acre district's long-term redevelopment strategy. West Chelsea is home to 14 of Chelsea's largest employers, representing 37% of citywide employment, with a workforce that disproportionately serves residents without college degrees. The study prioritizes anchor retention, keeping these employers rooted in the district even as it evolves, while targeting new industries and quality jobs that build on this base rather than displace it. Recommendations chart a path for West Chelsea to grow into a vibrant, resilient, mixed-use district that welcomes new investment in jobs, housing, and retail, anchored by the district's transit access and directly informing the West Chelsea Mixed-Use Overlay District as it moved through City review.

OUR BUSINESSES PROSPER

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES (E)

GOAL: Grow Our Regional and Local Economy.

Transform Chelsea's industrial legacy into an engine for strong economic development and mutually beneficial relationships between INDUSTRY and COMMUNITY, and support our LOCAL ECONOMY and entrepreneurship.

Reframing Chelsea's industrial land as an opportunity for economic development that produces quality jobs and brings community benefits that prioritize current and future generations of Chelsea residents.

E.1 — Protect and Modernize Industrial Areas.

Protect core industrial areas as engines of economic opportunity, retain existing employers, and modernize them to support a clean, future-ready economy.

E.2 — Attract Industries that Create Quality Jobs.

Attract industries that align with community values and create quality jobs and career pathways for Chelsea residents.

E.3 — Bridge Industrial Areas and Neighborhoods.

Improve the physical relationship between industrial areas and the surrounding city through better edges, transitions, and connections.



Chelsea Creek Municipal Harbor Plan and Designated Port Area Master Plan (2022)

This plan sets policies and standards for Chelsea's industrial land on Chelsea Creek, and balances the area's protected industrial uses against goals for public access, economic development, and environmental remediation. The plan establishes a framework for future permitting and public access decisions along the waterfront and includes City zoning amendments that protect the existing industrial character while adding flexibility for supporting commercial uses.

Storefront Improvement Program (2025–Ongoing)

The City's Storefront Improvement Project supports small businesses and property owners with grants to enhance their storefront exteriors, catalyzing improvements to our downtown.

Good Jobs Coalition

The Good Jobs Coalition provides a space for community-led organizations, City staff, and related workforce development agencies to review and develop goals and strategies that connect community members to better workforce opportunities. This includes growing programs in adult basic education, construction trades, and transportation sector training, alongside rapid reemployment support for residents between jobs. The group's efforts target grant funding, programmatic improvements, and stronger referral systems to better equip our community members with the resources they need to economically thrive.

OUR BUSINESSES PROSPER

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES (E)

Investment in programs, spaces, and infrastructure that help local businesses thrive and create pathways for residents to build prosperity through entrepreneurship.

E.4 — Expand Programs and Resources for Economic Mobility.

Invest in programs, spaces, and financial resources that help local entrepreneurs grow their businesses and that build resident financial resilience and economic mobility.

E.5 — Strengthen Commercial Corridors and Nodes.

Invest in commercial corridors, nodes, and local businesses through public realm improvements, anti-displacement protections, and a diverse retail mix that serves residents day to day and attracts visitors.

E.6 — Build Youth Career Pathways.

Develop career exploration, entrepreneurship, and professional pathways for Chelsea youth through partnerships with schools, employers, and community organizations. **[Y]**



E.7 — Support the Creative Economy.

Invest in the spaces, business supports, and income pathways that allow Chelsea's artists and creative workers to live, work, and earn locally.

"Financial assistance for new entrepreneurs."

Community conversation (translated)

"[We need] youth jobs (11+), and a youth center with classes."

Comment card



"[The] entire length of Broadway going to Revere could have more mixed use development along the corridor."

Public workshop response

"Improve walkability to increase people traffic for our businesses."

Focus group — Businesses

"[Chelsea] will be filled with educational opportunities, local business, arts & cultural opportunities."

Survey response

"Have requirements for construction jobs that employ local Chelsea talent."

Community conversation (translated)

"Increasing Adult education services like health education, reading and math. Expanding Trade curriculums."

Survey response

El Centro TDI District (Ongoing)

The El Centro Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) District is a collaboration between the City, MassDevelopment, and community leadership to strengthen our small businesses and activate the public realm around our commuter rail station.

Small Business Development

Chelsea supports small businesses and entrepreneurs at every stage, from technical assistance to storefront upgrades. In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the City offers training like ServSafe certification and childcare services training, and continues to support the Center for Entrepreneurship and Training at Bunker Hill Community College's Chelsea campus. Through outdoor dining permits, storefront improvement grants, and microgrant programs — including an ARPA-funded initiative that upgraded six downtown storefronts with new signage, lighting, and windows — Chelsea is helping local businesses take root and grow.

Chelsea Leaders Breakfasts

The City convenes these breakfasts every other month, bringing together community organization leaders, religious and community-based groups, elected officials, and City government and department heads. They have served as a space to discuss key hot topics in the community, present different initiatives, and gather feedback. It was during one of these meetings presenting this Plan's work that the term "Chelsea Way" was coined as a form to describe Chelsea's collaboration with community networks





OUR STRONG COMMUNITY NETWORKS

SERVICES & SAFETY NET (S)

GOAL: Connect People to Our Community's Support Services

Strengthen our tight-knit community and the safety net we have built over the years by recognizing our Community Organizations as CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE, building accessible SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE, and strengthening community voice.

Having woven its own safety net through decades of community organizing, elevate community organizations and groups as vital civic infrastructure, supporting their capacity and sustainability while respecting their independence and community-rooted leadership.

S.1 — Position the City as a Hub.

Position the City as a convening hub that strengthens coordination, communication, and shared decision-making among community organizations, city departments, and residents.

S.2 — Support Community Organization Capacity and Sustainability.

Support community organizations' capacity and long-term sustainability so they can continue serving as essential, trusted partners in Chelsea's safety net.

S.3 — Devise Coordinated Referral Protocols.

Connect residents to services through coordinated referral systems that reduce the burden of navigating help across city departments and community organizations.

"The plan presents an opportunity to create or change the narrative and return to the collaborative approach among all CBOs and the city that was established during COVID."

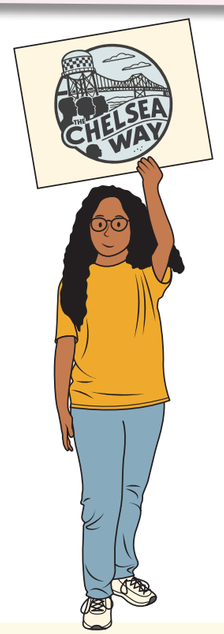
Focus group — CBOs

"Communication between the everyday folks that live here and the people in City Hall."

Survey response

"Maintain the high perception of safety, the high level of / access to community resources."

Survey response



"Institutionalize how funds coming from development can are allocated and directed to specific social programs and services."

Focus group — Housing

"Community events and spaces for middle and high school students to get involved."

Comment card

"Tomorrow's Chelsea provides a space for people of all socioeconomic statuses and cultural backgrounds to thrive and bring their whole selves."

Survey response

Digital Equity Plan (2022) and Digital Access Plan (2023)

In collaboration with Revere and Everett, these plans evaluate the symptoms and root causes of unequal access to the internet within our community. Key recommendations covered include: assessing existing infrastructure owned by telecom providers, planning for municipal broadband access, and distributing devices and digital navigators throughout our community. We conducted additional community engagement workshops in 2024 and 2025.

OUR STRONG COMMUNITY NETWORKS

SERVICES & SAFETY NET (S)

Strengthen and create trusted, accessible places and pathways for residents to access services and participate in community decisions, recognizing diverse forms of civic engagement.

S.4 — Support and Expand Physical Service Hubs.

Position a network of physical hubs, existing and new, as trusted, accessible front doors to city and community services. Support the role of our schools as a critical frontline for families. **[Y]**



S.5 — Ensure Services are Accessible and Multilingual.

Advance language justice and remove barriers to access so every resident, regardless of language, documentation status, or ability, can reach essential services.

S.6 — Strengthen Pathways for Community Voice and Participation.

Strengthen pathways for community voice and participation, recognizing that residents engage through community organizing and mutual aid as much as through formal government channels.



"Safety net programming: legal aid, rental assistance, emergency housing."

Focus group response

"Preserve our identity as a welcoming, multi-lingual, multi-cultural community."

Survey response

"A community sports center. Improve the public library's infrastructure."

Comment card (translated)

"We're able to make huge changes to the safety of our community and availability of services to all our residents in a short period of time due to the collaborative actions between our city gov., law enforcement, and community social services."

Survey response

"Less racism in public offices. I have gone to do paperwork and because I don't speak English I couldn't do it (SNAP office)."

Public workshop comment (translated)

"More opportunities for people with disabilities."

Comment card (translated)

"Continued improvement of infrastructure and schools, [and] continued easy access to city services."

Survey response

Civic Leadership Academy (2026)

The City is launching this pilot initiative in 2026. It is a hands-on program that, over a few months, will give residents a practical look at how local government works. Sessions will cover topics from budget and grants administration to public safety, housing and community development, public works, and human resources. The goal is to connect residents with insights into how the City operates and make them more likely to engage meaningfully, whether through public meetings, board service, or simply making their voice heard.

OUR SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

COMMUNITY SAFETY (CS)

GOAL: Invest in Safe Streets and Strong Communities

Build PHYSICAL SAFETY through street and public spaces design, and address safety challenges through PREVENTION, programs and community action.

Address physical safety hazards, perception, accessibility limitations, and barriers that divide neighborhoods through infrastructure improvements and design interventions.

CS.1 — Design Streets for Traffic Safety.

Invest in safe streets through policy, traffic calming, and street design, prioritizing the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and all vulnerable road users over vehicle speed.

CS.2 — Build a Safe Pedestrian Environment.

Create a safe, engaging, comfortable, and connected pedestrian network so residents of all ages and abilities can walk safely to schools, parks, transit, and everyday destinations.

CS.3 — Build Safe Bicycle Infrastructure.

Build a connected, low-stress cycling network — including protected bike lanes, a waterfront trail, and regional connections — that makes biking a safe and viable option for residents across Chelsea.

CS.4 — Design Safe, Welcoming Public Spaces.

Design and program public spaces so they feel — and are — safe and welcoming, using lighting, visibility, maintenance, and community activity.

Vision Zero Safety Action Plan (2025)

Chelsea's Vision Zero Safety Action Plan, adopted in October 2025 sets a goal of eliminating traffic deaths and severe injuries citywide by 2040, with an interim target of a 30% reduction by 2030. It's based on five years of crash data and makes explicit that this burden falls unevenly — crashes concentrate in Chelsea's lowest-income neighborhoods, and pedestrians and cyclists account for a disproportionate share of the worst outcomes despite being a small share of all crashes. The plan builds on existing City efforts like the 2017 Complete Streets Policy and Safe Routes to School program, and organizes its recommendations into four categories: road design, systemic changes, policy, and outreach.

"Speed bumps on Washington near Clark. We've already had accidents."

Public workshop comment (translated)

"One of the major factors preventing me from biking to the grocery store or park is that the streets don't feel safe for bikes. This results in me having to drive to all of these places."

Survey response

"People to feel safe living here and enjoy the public spaces."

Survey response

"Enforcing rules on the streets so that pedestrians can safely walk on the walkways."

Survey response

"[Improve] the sidewalks. I always fall. Fix them too, not just the roads."

Comment card (translated)

"More lighting in the parks in the evenings."

Public workshop comment (translated)



Re-Imagine Downtown Broadway Project (Ongoing)

The Downtown Broadway Project rethinks traffic circulation to improve access, safety, and mobility for everyone. Launched in 2018 as a MassDOT-assisted effort, the project is being delivered in two phases: Phase 1 rebuilds the utilities beneath Broadway, and Phase 2 brings the surface-level changes residents will see and feel, including a reconfigured Bellingham Square, a permanent dedicated bus and bike lane, and a renovated City Hall Plaza. The new design includes improvements like pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, wider bus lanes, and improved pedestrian spaces — several of which, including bike boxes and flashing pedestrian beacons, were first piloted on Broadway and proved successful enough to be made permanent.

Downtown Task Force

The Downtown Task Force dedicates two police officers to exclusively work on building relationships with Downtown businesses, property owners, and residents to address their safety concerns. The Task Force takes a holistic approach, gathering court personnel, social service workers, City staff — including inspectional services — and local business owners to identify trouble spots and implement strategic interventions. The Task Force also includes the City Manager's Office as a partner alongside Chelsea Police. City officials credit the initiative with measurable results: reduced graffiti, public drinking, and criminal activity in the downtown area.

Build the Base

Build the Base is a Chelsea Police Department youth camp that builds relationships between officers and young residents outside of enforcement contexts. It currently runs during school-break sessions, relying on volunteer fundraising rather than dedicated public funding to operate. The program was one of the initiatives Chelsea's 2026 All-America City Award delegation highlighted as an example of "The Chelsea Way" — alongside The Hub, Cops and Bobbers, and the Department's free ice cream events — as evidence of the City's collaborative, relationship-first approach to public safety.

OUR SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

COMMUNITY SAFETY (CS)

Build safety through youth programs, community leadership, trust-building, and addressing root causes of violence and crime.

CS.5 — Invest in Youth Prevention.



Prioritize investment in youth programs — from after-school and summer programming to mentorship, arts, and job training — as the most effective, primary form of violence prevention. **[Y]**

CS.6 — Address Violence Through Community Intervention.

Address crime and violence through community-based intervention, providing alternatives to gang involvement and connecting residents to the support that prevents violence before it happens.

CS.7 — Protect Trust in Public Safety.

Having built deep trust between residents and public safety systems through decades of dedicated work, protect and strengthen the trust between the community and the different public safety systems.

CS.8 — Address Quality-of-Life Concerns With Compassion.

Address quality-of-life concerns through a comprehensive, compassionate approach that connects people to services like mental health, housing, and employment support, rather than relying on enforcement alone.



"Guided development and growth to create safe resources for everyone."

Comment card

"A Rec. Department working hand-in-hand with the schools and the police generating programming for all ages, but especially our teenagers."

Survey response

"No danger, more daycares and schools!"

Comment card

"More children's activities and safety for the youth, as well as youth development."

Survey response

"Enhanced safety: safety training for adolescents."

Survey response (translated)



The Chelsea Hub

Since 2014, The Hub has brought together roughly 25 city agencies, schools, and health and human service providers weekly to identify residents facing urgent risk of harm and coordinate an immediate, shared response. It is police-led but voluntary, with partner agencies convening every Thursday morning to review cases. To qualify for Hub intervention, a situation must show both a high probability and a strong intensity of harm, and require a genuinely multi-disciplinary response — cases are first "filtered" against that threshold, partly to protect residents' privacy by limiting review to situations that truly need it. The model is deliberately fast: each case is discussed in about four minutes rather than through lengthy case review. To date, The Hub has addressed more than 450 high-risk situations, working to prevent harm before it occurs rather than responding only after a crisis.

North Suffolk Zero Carbon Action Plan (2021)

In partnership with Revere and Winthrop, this climate action plan sets a roadmap for net-zero emissions by 2050, with around two-thirds of regional emissions coming from buildings. This plan sets goals for building decarbonization and green infrastructure, with a focus on equity-driven recommendations, like renter-focused retrofit programs.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning 2.0 (Ongoing)

MVP 2.0 builds on Chelsea's first MVP report, and examines social resilience, community goals and environmental justice. The plan focuses on issues like language access, communication and education, cooling infrastructure, and waterfront access.

OUR HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & MOBILITY (EJ)

GOAL: Invest in Neighborhoods that are Just, Resilient, and Connected

Reduce ENVIRONMENTAL HARMS while building CLIMATE RESILIENCE. EXPAND ACCESS to quality green spaces, recreation, waterfront, and sustainable transportation.

As a frontline environmental justice community bearing disproportionate pollution burdens, simultaneously reduce environmental harms while preparing for climate impacts like flooding, extreme heat, and severe storms that threaten the most vulnerable residents.

EJ.1 — Address Pollution Risks and Sources.

Reduce pollution in air, water, and land across Chelsea by addressing legacy industrial contamination, preventing new environmental burdens, and balancing industrial activity with community health and safety.

EJ.2 — Implement Flood and Heat Mitigation Strategies.

Implement comprehensive flood-mitigation and extreme-heat strategies to protect Chelsea's residents, infrastructure, and public health from increasingly severe climate-related risks.

EJ.3 — Build Climate Resilience of Housing and Infrastructure.

Strengthen the climate resilience of Chelsea's housing and critical infrastructure, prioritizing flood-prone neighborhoods and renter households.

EJ.4 — Community-Driven Climate and Energy Solutions.

Build community-driven capacity for climate resilience and energy independence, ensuring Chelsea's residents and critical infrastructure can weather and recover from climate emergencies.



"Sustainable clean air and an accesible waterfront!."

Comment card

"Green spaces must also be a priority so that our "heat island" has the ability to cool down as well as offer respite to residents who are surrounded by hardscape."

Survey response

"Chelsea should benefit from more green space, reduced pollution, and protection from businesses that seek to exploit this community. "

Survey response

"Bigger parks, trees that give more shade."

Comment card (translated)

"Sustain energy & preserve the rich culture of Chelsea. More green space, less pollution."

Comment card

"Better protections from sea level rise and other climate threats."

Survey response

Island End Park and Flood Barrier Project (2021–Ongoing)

In partnership with Revere, this project studied the design of protective coastal infrastructure, salt marsh restoration, and enhancements to open space at the Island End Park and Island End River flood pathway.

Urban Heat Mitigation Project (2022)

This project analyzed air and land temperatures and ultimately implemented green infrastructure and cool sidewalk projects in identified heat islands.

Chelsea Community Microgrids (Ongoing)

The City is building a community-centered microgrid at City Hall and Police Station 911 Call Center to ensure that city services stay online during severe weather and power outages.

Open Space and Recreation Plan (2025)

The 2025 update to Chelsea's Open Space and Recreation Plan sets a seven-year strategy for making the most of Chelsea's limited park space. It centers three goals: improving environmental quality, expanding recreation programming for underserved age groups, and strengthening parks as community gathering spaces.

OUR HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & MOBILITY (EJ)

Ensure all residents have equitable access to quality parks, green spaces, recreational opportunities, and waterfront that support health, climate resilience, and community connection.

EJ.5 — Increase and Maintain Green Open Spaces and Tree Canopy.

Increase the quantity and quality of Chelsea's open spaces and tree canopy so every neighborhood has access to clean, green, well-maintained public space.

EJ.6 — Expand Active Recreation Programming.

Expand and diversify recreational programming and facilities so every resident, regardless of age, ability, or background, can access quality recreation in Chelsea's parks.

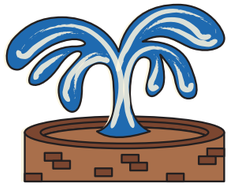
EJ.7 — Expand Waterfront Access.

Expand public access to Chelsea's waterfront and connect people to the water, balancing new recreational opportunities with the working waterfront.



"If we have larger/denser housing developments, we also need more trees and green space."

Survey response



"More water fountains in all parks. The heat is intense and few parks have water."

Public workshop comment (translated)

"I would like to see more indoor spaces adapted for children and young people in schools, such as play areas and sports courts."

Comment card (translated)

"More connections along the waterfront. Currently, many people/families enjoy the walk."

Public workshop comment

"[I imagine] In 15 years, Chelsea will have 50% more tree canopy, 20 more grass parks with playgrounds, and fuel tanks will be gone!"

Comment card

"Add green as the city increases housing, for families to have more recreational space."

Public workshop response

"More flowers and trees at schools so kids feel safer and happier."

Survey response (translated)

Mill Creek Water Quality Improvement Project (2022)

This plan completed an assessment to identify the sources and pathways of pollutants entering Mill Creek and developed a prioritized list of sites to implement best management practices (BMPs). Community engagement related to water quality in Mill Creek and the proposed BMPs was also a priority for this plan.

Mill Creek Habitat Enhancement & Waterfront Access Project (Ongoing)

The City is currently restoring the water quality and public access of Mill Creek to shape the future Chelsea Creek Sanctuary. The first phase of construction consisted of removing Slade's Mill Dam to restore tidal flow, and next phases include stabilizing the eroding coastline, removing invasive species, installing a new waterfront boardwalk, and redeveloping the former Forbes Lithograph Manufacturing Company site.

MBTA Bus Network Redesign (2024, 2025)

In December 2024, Routes 104, 111, 116, and 117 were a part of the first phase of the MBTA's Bus Network Redesign (BNRD) changes. This included better frequency, more destinations, and the installation of dedicated bus lanes. The MBTA also added late-night service on Routes 111 and 116 in Fall 2025.

Silver Line Extension Study (2024)

The Silver Line Extension Study evaluated three SL3 extension alternatives and recommended extending SL3 from Chelsea through Everett Square, ending at the Sullivan Square Orange Line Station.

Regional Rail Modernization Program (Ongoing)

The MBTA Rail Modernization program aims to increase service, improve scheduling, and convert the Commuter Rail system to electric power. Under this program, the Newburyport/Rockport Line would see service approximately every seven minutes from North Station (passing through Chelsea Station) to Salem.

OUR HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & MOBILITY (EJ)

Leverage and expand Chelsea's excellent transit access to connect residents to opportunities throughout the region while reducing car dependency, emissions, and transportation costs.

EJ.8 — Further the Expansion of Public Transit and Regional Connections.

Expand and strengthen Chelsea's public transit network — bus, Commuter Rail, Silver Line, and water transportation — to connect residents to regional opportunity while reducing car dependency and transportation costs.

EJ.9 — Strategically Manage Curbside Parking.

Manage curbside space strategically to balance parking demand and availability while ensuring accessibility.

EJ.10 — Create Programs to Shift to More Sustainable Transportation Options.

Create programs to shift to more sustainable transportation options that reduce transportation emissions.



"A livable, walkable city that connects all our neighborhoods . . . Access and activities in our waterfront. A water taxi to Boston and nearby towns."

Survey response

"Environmentally sound development, and climate resilient housing."

Public workshop response



"Better transportation, adding a T stop and/or increasing the number and/or frequency of buses to and from Chelsea."

Survey response

"A strong public transportation network to reduce car usage/dependency."

Survey response

"Expanding RC-link program to offer an alternative to owning [a car]."

Focus group

"Re-Activate former water taxi to Boston."

Public workshop comment

"More accessible and better transportation for children to get to school."

Survey response (translated)

North Suffolk Zero Carbon Action Plan (2021)

This plan also addresses transportation-related carbon emissions, which account for one-third of regional emissions. Key goals include reducing single-occupancy driving, expanding public transit, and building regional EV charging networks.

Arts and Culture Strategic Plan 2021-2025 (2021)

The Arts and Culture Strategic Plan positions arts and culture as essential community infrastructure that serves as vehicles for community expression and economic development. Its goals include expanding access, supporting artists, developing cultural spaces, strengthening organizations, and celebrating our diverse identity, with a strong focus on immigrants, youth, and Spanish speakers.



OUR GATEWAY FOR CULTURE, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY

CULTURE AND PLACEMAKING (C)

GOAL: Build Cultural Pride and Vibrant Public Life

Build PLACES and infrastructure to support a vibrant public life in our city while supporting PROGRAMS, arts, culture, and creative expression.

Address Chelsea's critical lack of dedicated cultural and entertainment facilities by creating permanent and interim spaces and reforming policies to enable vibrant public life.

C.1 — Reform Zoning for Culture and Nightlife.

Update zoning and permitting to enable performance venues, galleries, nightlife, and cultural uses that current rules restrict or prohibit.

C.2 — Identify Interim Cultural Spaces.

Activate vacant and underutilized spaces for interim cultural use, giving artists and cultural organizations opportunities now while a permanent facility is developed.

C.3 — Develop Permanent Cultural Facilities.

Develop permanent, multi-use cultural facilities offering space for performance, exhibition, education, and gathering.

C.4 — Integrate Public Art Citywide.

Integrate public art into streetscapes, parks, infrastructure, and new development, so Chelsea's cultural diversity is visible throughout the city.

"More inclusive engagement that allows residents to thrive in their own town. And more large art buildings!"

Comment card

"More cultural and musical workshops from our countries of origin, so that our children don't lose our roots."

Public workshop comment (translated)

"Community, teen, and art spaces along with housing and commercial spaces."

Survey response

"Make Chelsea a tourism highlight, a place to see."

Comment card

"An arts and culture center that is accessible for artists and community."

Comment card

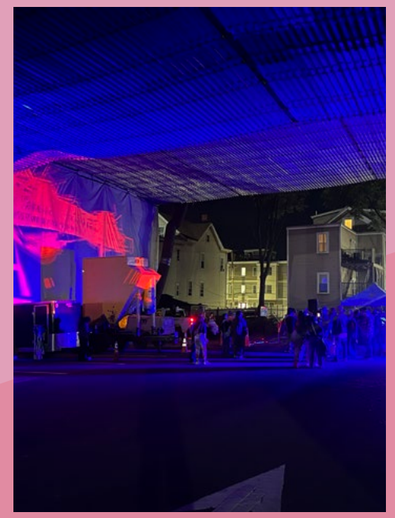
"Our history as a gateway city is remarkable; long may our city gates be open!"

Comment card

"Honor Chelsea's rich cultural and historic identity. A thriving Chelsea means progress rooted in community, equity, and pride."

Survey response





Chelsea Community Preservation Plan (2020, update in progress)

The Community Preservation Plan dedicates roughly a quarter of its funds toward protecting the city's historic buildings, monuments, and public records. The fund has supported projects like the restoration of the Governor Bellingham-Cary House and Congregation Agudath Shalom (formerly the Walnut Street Synagogue), a landmark of Chelsea's Eastern European Jewish immigrant community in the early 1900s.

OUR GATEWAY FOR CULTURE, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY

CULTURE AND PLACEMAKING (C)

Position arts and culture as essential community infrastructure - not optional amenities - that serve as a conduit for community expression, identity, economic opportunity, equity, and connection.

C.5 — Celebrate Chelsea's Multicultural Immigrant Heritage.

Celebrate and preserve the traditions, stories, and living heritage of Chelsea's diverse immigrant communities.

C.6 — Expand Youth Arts Programming.

Expand access to arts education, mentorship, and creative expression for Chelsea's youth. **[Y]**



C.7 — Support Cultural Organizations and Festivals.

Strengthen the organizations that sustain Chelsea's cultural traditions, and support the festivals and events that bring them into public life.

C.8 — Preserve and Activate Historic Resources.

Continue and build on the city's historic preservation work, making Chelsea's historic resources more accessible while balancing preservation with community needs and equitable development.

C.9 — Improve Access to Arts and Culture.

Ensure every resident can attend and help create Chelsea's cultural life, regardless of language, ability, or neighborhood.

> "We need learning spaces for our children, such as for art, painting, music, etc."
>
> Public workshop comment (translated)





Understanding Trade-offs

One of the hardest challenges for this, or any, comprehensive plan is knowing where to start: defining our priorities and recognizing our capacity limitations.

A plan is effectively a package of trade-offs — choices that often compete for the same resources and timeframes, and that carry different costs and benefits. In an ideal scenario, we could act on every strategy we identified for Chelsea, but in reality, we have to make choices.

During the second half of our planning process, in addition to communicating the need to invest in growth to build our vision for Chelsea, we showcased our set of strategies and invited the community to select their top priorities for each theme. With only a limited number of selections available, this exercise helped us both gauge which strategies were top of mind and, more importantly, illustrate the complex and challenging nature of sorting and selecting strategies to prioritize.



GETTING THINGS DONE

Moving our vision and goals forward and implementing our strategies requires a shared commitment, collaboration, and partnership; something we know how to do, the Chelsea Way. This plan is a commitment to one another to strengthen and expand our safety net, boost our capacity, and pull in the same direction towards our shared vision.

We all have roles to play in getting things done: our community, including residents, organizations, and partnering institutions, and our City. This last section of the plan lays out those interconnected and complementary roles and provides a framework to identify priorities and organize the actions we can all take, pursue, and champion to keep our City moving forward.

Empowering Our Community

As we described in We Are Chelsea, one of our community's greatest strengths is its solidarity, reflected in the groups and organizations working across our city to build the support systems that let us show up for one another. That same spirit of collaboration and partnership carries through every part of this plan.

Implementing Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! is a shared effort. Although the City stewards the actions in this plan and is responsible for carrying them forward, our community brings not only a voice to that work but embedded capacity to help carry it out. Many of the actions in this closing section already call on community organizations to act as co-implementers working alongside the City, or call on the City to support work already happening in the community. Other actions don't name that role yet, but could. This plan is also an invitation for our community to identify where they can bring their own capacity to bear and step in to help move an action forward.

Implementing our plan builds on the collaboration and partnership that already exists between our City and our community organizations and groups. We ask our community to use this plan to advocate for the actions that matter most, and to help identify where our shared capacity can move those actions forward. As we do, we ask everyone to hold on to the shared vision and goals that connect every strategy in this plan, and to the trade-offs that come with prioritizing one action over another.

Building Municipal Capacity

People consistently told us that one of the things they appreciated about Chelsea is that they find our municipal government accessible and approachable. It reflects the trust our City and community have worked hard to build over decades. That trust is never guaranteed; it takes ongoing effort, accountability, and capacity, especially as our community continues to grow and evolve.

The speed and scope of the actions we can take at any given time are shaped by the capacity of our City staff. Over the past several decades, our municipal government has grown, diversified, and broadened its reach, but real limitations remain. Many of the programs this plan seeks to expand or create will require additional staff capacity, which in turn shapes our budget needs going forward. Building the capacity to carry out this plan means investing not only in programs, but in the people who deliver them.

Building this capacity takes many forms: maintaining the staffing our public safety departments need to keep our community safe, investing in the facilities and equipment our departments rely on to do their work well, improving our data systems so we can track our progress over time, and continuing to hire multilingual staff who can meet our residents where language access matters most. This work spans every part of our City government — from police and fire to housing inspectors, DPW crews, planning and permitting staff, health and human services, and recreation and cultural affairs. The actions that follow reflect this breadth, organized to show which parts of our City government will help carry each one forward.



SHORT-TERM IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! seeks to create a strategic plan for the next two decades. Over our planning process, we gathered hundreds of ideas that helped us craft our vision and determine our strategies. Many of these ideas included detailed actions that were sorted through our thematic goals.

Among those actions, we identified some short-term next steps as priorities for implementation over the next five years. These actions are immediate measures that will be critical to kick us off on the path to make our vision for Chelsea a reality. Some of these short-term priorities are already in motion, either as ongoing programs and policies we want to strengthen or as recent planning efforts we should steward to fruition.

Comprehensive Citywide Zoning Reform

Zoning reform is probably the most substantial next step in implementing Chelsea ¡Pa'Lante, Onward! Zoning regulations are the most powerful tool a city has to carry out its land use and development objectives, making zoning reform the natural next step to translate our community's vision and goals, and incorporate our growth strategies, into the city's land use regulatory framework.

A city-wide zoning update will bring this plan into the regulatory framework developers must follow when building new projects in our city, while providing clarity and guidance to municipal staff, boards, and the community. A clear, easy-to-follow zoning ordinance will make our city more attractive for investment and make processes more predictable for everyone in our community. It will also establish a shared understanding of how we use and manage our land, the uses we want to see in our city, and how we steer development opportunities to keep building a city that is vibrant, convenient, and dynamic.

A zoning code refresh for Chelsea must consider cross-cutting changes across multiple themes that advance different aspects of our vision and goals. Some of the priorities for a future zoning update, addressed across different strategies and actions, include:

- Housing Development
  - Encourage diverse housing types, in particular allowing for multifamily, across all of our city, at context-appropriate scales
  - Reduce or eliminate parking minimums
- Commercial Uses
  - Protect core industrial uses
  - Update definitions, dimension standards, and permitting to attract new and emerging industries
  - Allow accessory commercial and retail uses, like micro-businesses and small-scale commercial uses, within and adjacent to residential areas to accommodate flexibility and support entrepreneurship
  - Encourage and expand mix of uses in Chelsea's nodes and corridors, requiring active uses in ground floors and primary frontages
- Environmental Justice
  - Advance our Green Zoning initiative
  - Pursue opportunities to increase open space citywide and expand green stormwater infrastructure
- Transportation
  - Require Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans for new large developments
  - Reform parking requirements to meet market conditions: eliminate minimums, unbundle costs, enable shared parking.
- Arts and Culture
  - Update the zoning ordinance to remove barriers to nightlife, entertainment, and cultural venues.
  - Streamline permitting for cultural uses
  - Require or incentivize new developments of a certain size to set aside space for cultural and creative uses

Advance Affordable Housing Delivery and Housing Preservation Programs

As reflected throughout this plan and highlighted in our first goal, housing production and preservation are top of mind for most residents in Chelsea, particularly housing that everyone in Chelsea can afford. Our city has worked hard in recent years to strengthen, expand, and diversify our toolkit for delivering and preserving housing options in Chelsea. In the near future, it is a priority to build on this work by strengthening the capacity of our Affordable Housing Trust Fund and developing more stable mechanisms for affordable housing production.

Like many of the strategies in this plan, growth is central to our affordable housing delivery and preservation. Growth is needed for the construction of housing itself, as well as to increase revenue that funds programs and projects focused on our affordable housing stock. The zoning reform described above will unlock many regulatory levers, such as reducing parking requirements to lower unit production costs or diversifying housing typologies. In addition, our city can prioritize the following actions in the short term to advance the production and preservation of affordable housing:

- Creating an Affordable Housing Overlay District that helps affordable housing developers outcompete market-rate developers by streamlining permitting, allowing greater density, and adopting more permissive approval processes.
- Establish a clear biennial review process for the recently updated Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, improving tracking of development data, in-lieu fee revenue, unit delivery metrics, and market data to calibrate affordability requirements as market conditions evolve.
- Continue to support the redevelopment of Chelsea Housing Authority properties
- Advance the implementation of the Strategic Housing Plan (2025)
- Identify sustainable funding sources to institutionalize emergency rental, utility, and eviction prevention assistance programs.



Support the Transformation of West Chelsea and Other Key Growth Areas

As noted in the previous chapter, the western area of Chelsea represents our City's biggest opportunity to pursue our community priorities through development and growth. Advancing a Mixed-Use Overlay District (2026) was a crucial first step, developed in coordination with this planning process. Subsequent work should include actively engaging key property owners to pursue development alternatives for this area. In addition, the citywide zoning update should adopt new industrial zoning policies calibrated to attract new and emerging industries. In the short term, we should also start advancing pedestrian crossing improvements along Everett Avenue, helping connect West Chelsea more safely to the rest of the city. Longer-term actions could include further public realm and infrastructure improvements to strengthen this connection.

The Forbes Site redevelopment project is also a priority. As it continues to make progress, the City should keep actively supporting our community partners as they work to deliver housing, green spaces, and community spaces. Our other transformative growth areas remain important priorities for attracting and steering development.

Continue to Enhance Our Downtown and Strengthen Its Connections

Downtown is another key growth area. As our main local commercial hub, it anchors our efforts to attract visitors and create a vibrant mixed-use district of residential, commercial, and cultural uses. In recent years, infill redevelopment has begun to reimagine Downtown's potential as a complete neighborhood, while active community and economic development programs are helping activate our public spaces.

The designation of parts of our Downtown as a MassDevelopment Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) District is a great short-term opportunity to infuse our most important commercial node with vibrancy, attract development, and support small local businesses, arts and culture, and placemaking. The Downtown Broadway Project, our city's largest street and utility reconstruction effort in three decades, is already advancing this vision: modernizing our water, sewer, and drainage systems, and preparing for a new streetscape that will bring dedicated bus and bike lanes, wider sidewalks, green infrastructure, and a renovated City Hall Plaza. We should also continue to support MassDOT's ongoing work to improve the Route 1 crossing that connects Downtown and Prattville, helping close one of our city's most significant physical barriers.



Advance Stormwater Management And Environmental Strategies

Chelsea's growth is linked to our city's environmental resilience. Much of our available land for transformational development sits within our floodplain, and many of these same growth areas also experience some of our city's highest temperatures and least tree canopy coverage. Building the Chelsea we envision means addressing these conditions directly as part of our growth goals.

Addressing our combined sewer overflows and improving stormwater management citywide remain top priorities, helping ensure cleaner water and safer streets during major storms, and reducing the flood risk that constrains development in our growth areas. Alongside these infrastructure investments, we should continue to advance waterfront access projects, including along Mill Creek and other creek and coastal areas identified for future public access. Expanding tree canopy and green infrastructure in our growth areas will also help address urban heat, particularly in the neighborhoods that need it most. Expanding our Adopt-a-Drain program will pair everyday resident engagement with citywide drainage maintenance, giving people a direct way to help protect their own neighborhoods. Finally, implementing the recommendations of our Urban Heat Mitigation Report will help us address rising temperatures and their impact on our most vulnerable residents.



Invest In Our Youth Programs

As described in Growing with the City, this plan pays close attention to the needs of youth and young families across our strategies, so that as Chelsea grows, the next generation grows with it. Investing in our youth is both an economic and a safety priority.

Expanding career exploration and professional pathway opportunities will help young people build skills and connections early, opening doors into Chelsea's economy as they grow into adulthood. Our Safe Neighborhoods goal to invest in strong communities treats youth programs as a form of primary prevention, investing in young people early to help reduce crime and violence later on. We should continue to build on our existing police-led youth mentorship efforts, which have helped build trust between our young people and public safety staff.

ACTIONS TO MOVE US FORWARD

The short-term priorities are a starting point. To keep moving beyond them, the City should report on progress each year, including priority actions completed, the work still underway, and the new actions that will become priorities next. The City can share it in its State of the City report. The City should also consider keeping Pa'Lante Fest, which we held in March during this planning process, as an annual public event to share the report with the community and hear what residents think should come next.

The following pages list actions identified for each strategy under this plan's six goals. These actions condense hundreds of ideas, conversations, and comments we gathered from the community, workshopped with City staff, and refined with our consulting team. Each action includes tags to help identify how it will move forward.

Action Type

The first tag describes the type of action and relates to the City team or teams responsible for leading and stewarding it. The four action types are:

Zoning & Land Use

Changes to our zoning code and land use regulations, led by the Permitting and Land Use Planning Department.

Planning Initiative & Policy

New studies, plans, policies, standards, or partnerships. Often led by Housing and Community Development (H+CD) or the City Manager's Office, especially when coordination is needed across City departments, City Council, or community organizations.

Programs & Services

Ongoing and new programs delivered directly by other City departments, in particular Health and Human Services (HHS), Recreation and Cultural Affairs, the Inspectional Services Department (ISD), and our Police and Fire Departments.

Capital Project

High-cost public investments in infrastructure, facilities, or equipment, generally initiated by City Council or the City Manager's Office and managed by departments such as H+CD, Public Works (DPW), Water & Sewer, and Chelsea Public Schools.

Action Impact

The second tag describes which of the two aforementioned planning realities this action focuses on:

Crisis Response

Actions that address urgent needs and provide short-term stabilization.

Long-term Prosperity

Actions that build toward our long-term quality of life, growth, and vision for Chelsea

Some actions carry more than one type, reflecting their cross-cutting nature. For example, a planning initiative or policy decision may later grow into a standing program or service, or trigger the need to fund new infrastructure or equipment. This also reflects the shared responsibility many actions carry across departments.

Together, these tags show what kind of work each action involves, who is responsible for it, and how it fits into our short- and long-term priorities.



OUR FAMILIES CAN STAY - HOUSING (H)

GOAL: Produce and Preserve Housing Options for Everyone

PRODUCE housing in the right sizes, types, and locations that all Chelsea residents can afford, PROTECT residents from displacement, and PRESERVE existing affordable housing options.

Increase housing production, at all scales and typologies, steering it to meet the needs of all sectors of Chelsea residents, current and new.

H.1 — Zone for Housing Production

Reform zoning to attract new housing development in transformative areas and to incentivize infill development across the city.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Citywide zoning update to encourage diverse housing types, like mixed-use development in catalytic growth areas, small multi-family, missing-middle housing, and ADUs; even in R1 areas.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Define districts in key areas of the city to implement zoning tools that facilitate growth, directing and containing larger-scale mixed-use developments in transformative growth areas. Ensure these areas invest in public realm and are not developed in isolation from the city.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	
Update parking requirements to lower housing production costs and increase unit counts. • Evaluate the elimination of required parking minimums, in particular in areas with better transit access and development capacity. • Consider decoupling parking requirements from residential development by allowing or requiring unbundled parking, where residents can choose whether to rent/purchase parking separately.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Define zoning and design guidelines toward promoting context-appropriate, incremental infill development in existing neighborhoods.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	

H.2 — Advance Affordable Housing Delivery

Adjust zoning to increase the delivery and funding of affordable housing that reflects Chelsea's income levels.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Create an Affordable Housing Overlay District that helps affordable housing developers outcompete market-rate developers by streamlining permitting, allowing greater density, and adopting more permissive approval processes.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Implement and monitor the revised Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (approved by the City Council in June 2026) to facilitate the production of affordable housing and to sustain fee-in-lieu revenue flowing into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for citywide affordable housing investment, without impeding growth.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Establish a clear biennial review process for the IHO, improving tracking of development data, in-lieu fee revenue, unit delivery metrics, and market data to calibrate affordability requirements as market conditions evolve.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓

H.3 — Build for All Families

Promote a variety of housing types and unit sizes for different family needs.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Enhance the implementation of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance that legalizes and promotes ADUs citywide by providing technical assistance and pre-approved designs to facilitate and increase ADU production.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Incentivize family-sized affordable units (3+ bedrooms) in new developments suitable for multi-generational and larger families, through both zoning incentives and funding programs.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Develop programs to preserve and incentivize 2-3-family homes for owner-occupancy and to support housing models for multi-generational families.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Support affordable live/work housing that allows artists and creative workers to live and produce in Chelsea.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

H.3 — Build for All Families (cont'd)

Promote a variety of housing types and unit sizes for different family needs.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Protect existing Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing from conversion or demolition as a critical source of low-barrier, deeply affordable housing, **and support the development of service-enriched permanent supportive and transitional housing** for residents with complex needs.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	

H.4 — Open Pathways to Homeownership

Support homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income Chelsea residents.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Expand first-generation homebuyer education programs in partnership with local community organizations, with services available in multiple languages.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Enhance the city's first-time homebuyer financial assistance programs, with a focus on current renters and immigrant families.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Support permanently affordable homeownership through partnerships with community land trusts and affordable housing developers, while promoting shared-equity models that build wealth without the risk of displacement.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

H.5 — Activate Public and Strategic Sites

Increase density on public and underutilized sites to expand housing access without displacement.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Continue to support the redevelopment of Chelsea Housing Authority properties and explore opportunities to add units and income diversity, leveraging state and federal funding programs.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓

H.5 — Activate Public and Strategic Sites (cont'd)

Increase density on public and underutilized sites to expand housing access without displacement.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Identify and assemble publicly owned or underutilized sites to advance mixed-income residential projects, in partnership with mission-driven developers and community development corporations. **Consider establishing a municipal land bank** to acquire and hold properties for future use.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

Strengthen and invest in programs and policies to preserve naturally occurring affordable housing options, safeguard residents from risk of displacement, and enforce guarantees of adequate-quality housing.

H.6 — Preserve Existing Affordable Stock

Strengthen programs and policies to preserve and invest in existing affordable housing.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Monitor and maintain an inventory of deed-restricted affordable housing to track expiration dates and work with property owners to renew restrictions before they convert to market rate. Approximately 1,129 SHI units (47% of Chelsea's subsidized inventory) carry expiration dates, with 273 units expiring by 2030 and 516 units expiring between 2030 and 2039.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response	
Continue to study mechanisms to acquire, permanently preserve, and maintain naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAHs) in our most affordable neighborhoods — including tenant and nonprofit right-of-first-refusal when buildings sell — using the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Community Preservation Act funds, and state preservation resources.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Strengthen support programs for small landlords renting to low- and moderate-income households, including rehabilitation loans and grants, reduced or waived permitting fees, and an emergency capital improvements fund for critical repairs that prevent deterioration and displacement.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	

H.7 — Protect Residents from Displacement

Strengthen tenant protections, anti-displacement tools, and emergency housing and assistance services.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Tenant Protection			
Expand tenant rights education, legal representation, and support for tenant organizing, including funding for a housing legal clinic accessible in multiple languages.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Strengthen tenant protections against harassment, condominium conversion, and forced displacement through enforcement of existing policies, extended notice requirements, and relocation assistance where applicable.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Develop landlord incentive programs to accept housing vouchers and lower-income tenants, addressing source-of-income discrimination and expanding access to existing rental stock.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Anti-displacement			
Leverage displacement risk mapping to design an early warning system that identifies vulnerable residents, properties, and neighborhoods, and define zones for targeted anti-displacement programming in the city's highest-risk areas.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Continue to provide property tax relief for long-term residents, especially seniors and residents on fixed incomes, to stabilize homeowners facing rising tax burdens tied to neighborhood appreciation.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Ensure one-for-one replacement plus net new units during Chelsea Housing Authority redevelopment, guaranteeing that current residents maintain housing access while overall capacity expands.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Emergency Housing Assistance and Stability Services			
Identify sustainable funding to institutionalize emergency rental, utility, and eviction prevention assistance programs following the expiration of American Rescue Plan Act housing resources.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	✓

H.7 — Protect Residents from Displacement (cont'd)

Strengthen tenant protections, anti-displacement tools, and emergency housing and assistance services.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Support rapid response to housing emergencies such as fires, floods, and sudden building condemnations, including developing a dedicated fund and coordinating with community organizations.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Develop a framework for relocation assistance and pathways to long-term housing stability for displaced residents, connecting households to wraparound services and permanent, affordable housing options	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	

H.8 — Ensure Quality and Fair Access

Strengthen housing quality enforcement and fair housing access across the city.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Housing Quality and Code Enforcement			
Strengthen proactive code enforcement, especially in older housing stock and small multi-family buildings, where most of Chelsea's residents live and where deferred maintenance most often drives unsafe conditions and displacement.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Continue and expand existing home repair and lead remediation programs to prevent displacement due to disrepair, including ongoing Housing Rehabilitation, Lead Abatement, Lead Service Line Replacement, and the Get the Lead Out programs, prioritizing homes with children, pregnant residents, and low-income homeowners and tenants.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	✓
Continue the Cross-Departmental Housing Task Force, coordinating with HCD, ISD, the Health Department, and other city agencies to proactively identify and address substandard housing conditions.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	

H.8 — Ensure Quality and Fair Access (cont'd)

Strengthen housing quality enforcement and fair housing access across the city.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Address underreporting of code violations and housing discrimination through community education, trusted access points (including a tenant safe-line for housing complaints), and protection from landlord retaliation.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Support property owner education on maintenance standards and fair housing obligations, equipping small landlords with the knowledge and tools to comply with code and fair housing law.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Fair Housing Access			
Activate the Human Rights Commission to lead fair housing enforcement and conduct periodic fair housing testing to identify discrimination patterns in rental and ownership markets.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Remove structural barriers to housing access in City programs and services, including language, documentation requirements, and application barriers that disproportionately exclude immigrant residents and households with limited English proficiency. Specific tools include adopting and implementing a Language Justice Ordinance requiring translation of housing documents, applications, and tenant notices into Spanish and other languages spoken by Chelsea's residents, and redesigning City housing program intake processes to reduce procedural friction.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Expand housing navigation services for newcomers and residents with limited English proficiency, helping households understand and access the full range of housing programs and protections available.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Develop cultural competency training for housing providers, inspectors, and legal service providers to improve service quality and reduce discrimination in housing interactions.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

H.9 — Advocate at the State and Regional Level

Advocate for state and regional policy changes that support Chelsea's housing goals.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Advocate, alongside other Gateway Cities, for state enabling legislation for rent stabilization, a real estate transfer fee dedicated to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and jobs-housing linkage fees, as structural tools are currently unavailable to Massachusetts municipalities to address displacement and fund affordable housing locally.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Advocate for the removal of documentation requirements, such as Social Security Number requirements, **language barriers, and complex application processes** in state housing programs that disproportionately exclude immigrant residents and households with limited English proficiency.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Advocate for state building code and zoning reforms that enable diverse housing typologies — including single-stair construction, missing-middle building forms, and other production-friendly standards — currently constrained by state-level regulation.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Strengthen regional partnerships to address the Greater Boston housing crisis, collaborating with the North Suburban HOME Consortium, other Gateway Cities, and metropolitan housing entities, aligning Chelsea's strategy with neighboring communities, and accessing regional affordable housing funding.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

OUR BUSINESSES PROSPER - ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES (E)

GOAL: Grow Our Regional and Local Economy.

Transform Chelsea's industrial legacy into an engine for strong economic development and mutually beneficial relationships between INDUSTRY and COMMUNITY, and support our LOCAL ECONOMY and entrepreneurship.

Reframing Chelsea's industrial land as an opportunity for economic development that produces quality jobs and brings community benefits that prioritize current and future generations of Chelsea residents.

E.1 — Protect and Modernize Industrial Areas

Protect core industrial areas as engines of economic opportunity, retain existing employers, and modernize them to support a clean, future-ready economy.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Use zoning and land-use policy to keep core industrial areas in active commercial and industrial use, improve how industrial buildings engage with the street and city, and manage the transitions where they meet mixed-use and residential areas.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Retain and support existing job-generating industries through proactive engagement and early identification of operational constraints that could threaten long-term viability. Work with employers to improve job quality, wages, and working conditions across sectors.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Steer industrial land away from low-employment uses such as data centers, self-storage, and automated warehouses.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	
Remove zoning and permitting barriers to solar installation, EV charging, and energy-efficient retrofits across industrial areas.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Advance harbor and waterfront planning that balances maritime industry, public access, environmental protection, and economic opportunity along Chelsea's industrial waterfront.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

E.2 — Protect and Modernize Industrial Areas

Protect core industrial areas as engines of economic opportunity, retain existing employers, and modernize them to support a clean, future-ready economy.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Adopt new industrial zoning policies to attract new and emerging industries — such as advanced manufacturing, life sciences, clean tech, and robotics — by updating use definitions, dimensional standards, and streamlining permitting pathways for industries aligned with community values.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Adopt a framework for community benefit agreements from new large-scale industrial and commercial projects, with commitments on local hiring, training partnerships, and career pathways.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Build and maintain a catalog of underutilized and environmentally constrained industrial sites to attract clean industries with quality jobs, guide remediation efforts, and align investment with community values — climate and environmental justice, worker protections, and good wages.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Partner with regional and state economic development agencies, such as MassDevelopment, the Massachusetts Office of Business Development, Metro Mayors Coalition, and MAPC, **to position Chelsea's industrial assets** and attract investment aligned with community values, leveraging the city's transit access and regional workforce advantages.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Develop workforce pipelines in partnership with employers, schools, community colleges, and workforce programs, covering both established sectors such as food processing, logistics, and manufacturing and emerging sectors such as clean tech, tough tech, robotics, advanced manufacturing, and life sciences.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Leverage Chelsea's transit connections to expand resident access to regional employment centers beyond the city, such as continuing the existing microtransit rideshare program with Revere, ongoing coordination with the MBTA, and creative solutions to first- and last-mile gaps in transit connectivity.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

E.2 — Protect and Modernize Industrial Areas (cont'd)

Protect core industrial areas as engines of economic opportunity, retain existing employers, and modernize them to support a clean, future-ready economy.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Coordinate workforce programs with wraparound supports — language training, credentialing, childcare, transportation — in partnership with the community organizations and service providers that already deliver these supports, so training is accessible to the residents who need it most.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Open pathways for community ownership and participation in economic development projects, including cooperative models and community investment opportunities.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

E.3 — Bridge Industrial Areas and Neighborhoods

Improve the physical relationship between industrial areas and the surrounding city through better edges, transitions, and connections.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Improve Edges and Transitions			
Implement projects and programs to buffer critical edges between residential and industrial areas through green infrastructure, public space improvements, and design treatments that protect nearby neighborhoods.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Reduce environmental impacts from industrial uses on adjacent residential neighborhoods through zoning standards, performance requirements, and operational improvements.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Improve pedestrian and cyclist safety along industrial-residential transitions, especially in key crossings under the Tobin Bridge and along the Beacham/Williams St-Marginal St-Eastern Ave corridor, and strengthen last-mile connections to transit.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Designate primary truck routes and manage heavy vehicle traffic to separate freight movement from residential streets and active pedestrian corridors.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

E.3 — Bridge Industrial Areas and Neighborhoods (cont'd)

Improve the physical relationship between industrial areas and the surrounding city through better edges, transitions, and connections.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Build Accountable Relationships with Long-Term Industrial Uses			
Develop frameworks to improve community relationships with difficult-to-relocate industrial uses such as oil terminals, the regional road salt facility, airport parking, and waterfront operations.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Strengthen monitoring, enforcement, and transparency around the environmental and safety performance of existing industrial users.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Negotiate community benefit agreements with long-term industrial tenants, with commitments on local hiring, environmental improvements, and community investments.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	✓

Investment in programs, spaces, and infrastructure that help local businesses thrive and create pathways for residents to build prosperity through entrepreneurship.

E.4 — Expand Programs and Resources for Economic Mobility

Invest in programs, spaces, and financial resources that help local entrepreneurs grow their businesses and that build resident financial resilience and economic mobility.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Reform zoning to allow greater flexibility and support entrepreneurship, such as accessory commercial and retail uses, including micro-businesses and small-scale commercial uses within and adjacent to residential areas.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Create business incubator and accelerator programs for local entrepreneurs, with intentional outreach to immigrant entrepreneurs and other historically underserved groups.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Develop shared commercial spaces and resource-sharing models for small-scale food, retail, and production businesses, including shared-kitchen models with client-facing training in the food and beverage industry, maker spaces, and pop-up retail formats.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Provide business education, technical assistance, and capital access through programs offered in multiple languages and with cultural competency.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Provide financial literacy, credit-building, and wealth-building education through programs offered in multiple languages and tailored to Chelsea's residents.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Strengthen partnerships and connect residents with mission-aligned financial institutions, such as community banks and credit unions, to expand access to capital, banking services, credit access, and protection from predatory lending.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	

E.5 — Strengthen Commercial Corridors and Nodes

Invest in commercial corridors, nodes, and local businesses through public realm improvements, anti-displacement protections, and a diverse retail mix that serves residents day to day and attracts visitors.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Invest in Public Realm			
Invest in public realm improvements — streetscape, lighting, sidewalks, gathering spaces — **along Chelsea's commercial corridors and nodes**, prioritizing Downtown, Broadway, and the primary corridors identified in the Growth Framework.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project		
Advance Everett Avenue's transformation into a defining primary corridor connecting Chelsea Station and Downtown, with active ground floors, pedestrian-oriented design, and walkable connections, building on the West Chelsea Mixed-Use Overlay District.	Zoning & Land Use Capital Project		
Activate neighborhood commercial nodes and gateway corridors — including Cary Square, Washington Park, the Box District, and Mill Hill Gateway — through targeted public investment, business support, and placemaking aligned with the growth strategies in this plan.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project		
Local Business Health & Character			
Support a diverse commercial mix across Chelsea's corridors and nodes, including daily-needs retail, services, food, and gathering spaces that serve residents day-to-day and reflect Chelsea's cultural identity.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy		
Protect small businesses from commercial displacement through lease protections, relocation support, and stable tenancies, and open pathways to commercial property ownership through cooperative and community-ownership models.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Expand multilingual business support, storefront signage programs, and culturally-competent technical assistance that reflects Chelsea's business and resident communities.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services		

E.6 — Build Youth Career Pathways

Develop career exploration, entrepreneurship, and professional pathways for Chelsea youth through partnerships with schools, employers, and community organizations.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Build career exploration and professional pathways for Chelsea youth in partnership with Chelsea Public Schools, Bunker Hill Community College, regional employers, and community organizations, with bilingual programming and culturally competent navigation for first-generation students.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Convene schools, employers, and workforce organizations to expand internship, apprenticeship, and paid work-based learning opportunities for Chelsea youth, and use City levers, including local hiring requirements in community benefit agreements, to create more youth opportunities.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Support youth entrepreneurship education and mentorship programs that serve youth-led businesses and connect young entrepreneurs to capital, technical assistance, and shared commercial spaces.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

E.7 — Support the Creative Economy

Invest in the spaces, business supports, and income pathways that allow Chelsea's artists and creative workers to live, work, and earn locally.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Foster the development of affordable workspace for artists and creative workers — including studios, rehearsal spaces, production facilities, maker spaces, and live/work units — through new development, adaptive reuse, and community benefit agreements in new large developments.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Support creative entrepreneurship through specialized technical assistance, business education, and access to capital, building on the entrepreneurship infrastructure developed under E.4.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Connect artists and cultural workers to exhibition, performance, and income opportunities through artist residency programs, public commissions, and partnerships with regional cultural institutions.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Maintain a Chelsea artist registry and resource directory to help artists access opportunities, programs, and one another.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Recognize creative industries — including design, media, performance, visual arts, and cultural production — **as workforce development sectors**, and integrate creative-economy pathways into youth, adult, and entrepreneurship programs across E.4, E.6, and Pa'Lante's workforce work.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Continue and expand Discover Chelsea's work positioning Chelsea's cultural assets and events as a regional cultural destination, building on the City's proximity to Boston and its vibrant multicultural character to attract outside spending into the creative economy, while ensuring programming continues to serve and prioritize residents.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

OUR STRONG COMMUNITY NETWORKS - SERVICES & SAFETY NET (S)

GOAL: Connect People to Our Community's Support Services

Strengthen our tight-knit community and the safety net we have built over the years by recognizing our Community Organizations as CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE, building accessible SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE, and strengthening community voice.

Having woven its own safety net through decades of community organizing, elevate community organizations and groups as vital civic infrastructure, supporting their capacity and sustainability while respecting their independence and community-rooted leadership.

S.1 — Position the City as a Hub

Position the City as a convening hub that strengthens coordination, communication, and shared decision-making among community organizations, city departments, and residents.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Continue building authentic partnerships with community organizations grounded in mutual respect and shared power, what we have come to call "the Chelsea Way," supporting community leadership.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Establish a governance forum or convening body that brings together community organizations, city departments, and residents to align on shared goals and decision-making while respecting organizational autonomy.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Develop a shared information and communication framework that consolidates access to programs, funding opportunities, and legal resources, and connects the City and community organizations across the service ecosystem.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓

S.2 — Support Community Organization Capacity and Sustainability

Support community organizations' capacity and long-term sustainability so they can continue serving as essential, trusted partners in Chelsea's safety net.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Strengthen organizational capacity and stability through predictable city support, leadership training, staff retention, and leadership development programs.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Leverage city resources and advocacy to help organizations access grants, state funding, and other revenue sources.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Support culturally specific, immigrant-led, and grassroots organizations, and invest in the next generation of immigrant and youth leadership within them, as vital, community-rooted partners in Chelsea's safety net.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

S.3 — Devise Coordinated Referral Protocols

Connect residents to services through coordinated referral systems that reduce the burden of navigating help across city departments and community organizations.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Develop protocols for warm handoffs between organizations and city departments, creating a coordinated referral network and a shared navigation system that connects city services and community organizations.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Map existing services to inform referral protocols and identify gaps in the service ecosystem.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Ensure all referral information and systems are multilingual and accessible.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	

Strengthen and create trusted, accessible places and pathways for residents to access services and participate in community decisions, recognizing diverse forms of civic engagement.

S.4 — Support and Expand Physical Service Hubs

Position a network of physical hubs, existing and new, as trusted, accessible front doors to city and community services. Support the role of our schools as a critical frontline for families.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Strengthen existing community access points — City Hall, schools (as family resource centers), healthcare facilities, the Public Library, and community gathering spaces — as front doors to services.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Pursue the development of new community infrastructure, including an intergenerational recreation and community center, and the possibility of a dedicated community and immigration services center.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Map service hubs to ensure they are distributed equitably across neighborhoods, co-locating complementary services where possible.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Design spaces that are welcoming, culturally responsive, and trusted by all members of our diverse communities.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

S.5 — Ensure Services are Accessible and Multilingual

Advance language justice and remove barriers to access so every resident, regardless of language, documentation status, or ability, can reach essential services.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Advance language justice by providing essential services in residents' preferred languages, staffed by multilingual, culturally competent personnel.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Remove documentation barriers to service access, ensuring all residents can connect to support regardless of immigration status.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	

S.5 — Ensure Services are Accessible and Multilingual (cont'd)

Advance language justice and remove barriers to access so every resident, regardless of language, documentation status, or ability, can reach essential services.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Address the digital divide in access to reliable internet and digital services.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Tailor services to the needs of diverse populations, including seniors, people with disabilities, newcomers, and multi-generational households.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

S.6 — Strengthen Pathways for Community Voice and Participation

Strengthen pathways for community voice and participation, recognizing that residents engage through community organizing and mutual aid as much as through formal government channels.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Deepen efforts to meet residents where they are by engaging with residents in community spaces and through trusted organizations.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Design participation opportunities, including public meetings, boards and commissions, and planning processes, **that are accessible to immigrant and diverse communities**, including remote participation options and clear information on how to get involved.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Consider participatory budgeting and other resident-directed decision-making models that give residents direct influence over public investments.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Explore introducing city-required community engagement thresholds for major city decisions, such as significant development and site plan approvals, drawing on requirements used in other Massachusetts cities while learning from their implementation challenges.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Expand democratic participation, including voter education, by partnering with and compensating trusted community organizations for civic engagement work.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

OUR SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS - COMMUNITY SAFETY (CS)

GOAL: Invest in Safe Streets and Strong Communities

Build PHYSICAL SAFETY through street and public spaces design, and address safety challenges through PREVENTION, programs, and community action.

Address physical safety hazards, perception, accessibility limitations, and barriers that divide neighborhoods through infrastructure improvements and design interventions.

CS.1 — Design Streets for Traffic Safety

Invest in safe streets through policy, traffic calming, and street design, prioritizing the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and all vulnerable road users over vehicle speed.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Integrate Vision Zero strategies across all street design and capital projects to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries, prioritizing the safety of vulnerable road users over vehicle speed.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response	✓
Regularly report Vision Zero progress and actions, consistent with the Safety Action Plan.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Deploy a citywide traffic calming policy and program to reduce speeding (speed bumps, raised crosswalks, curb extensions), implemented proactively and equitably across the city.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response	✓
Pursue safety demonstration projects to engage the community and build consensus around long-term redesigns.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Seek to redesign the city's most dangerous intersections and corridors identified through Vision Zero's High Injury/High Risk Network analysis, including priority safety improvements at key intersections.	Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	

CS.2 — Build a Safe Pedestrian Environment

Create a safe, engaging, comfortable, and connected pedestrian network so residents of all ages and abilities can walk safely to schools, parks, transit, and everyday destinations.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Improve sidewalk quality, width, connectivity, resilience to climate impacts (flooding, snow, heat), **and accessibility** (ADA compliance) to create a safe, comfortable walking environment for all ages and abilities.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Identify and create safe routes to schools, parks, and transit.	Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Improve pedestrian crossings across and around the city's major barrier roads, particularly Route 1 and Revere Beach Parkway, by addressing barriers to walking — wide streets, lack of crossings, incomplete sidewalk network — to reduce the disconnection these corridors create between neighborhoods. Priority locations include: • **Washington Ave** - over Route 1 (currently under design work by MassDOT) and at Revere Beach Pkwy (Route 16). • **Webster/Garfield Ave** - pursue a comprehensive redesign of pedestrian safety and crossing conditions at Route 1 and Revere Beach Parkway • **Route 1 corridor** - reduce the long-term barrier effect of Route 1 through urban design and bridge projects. Study the feasibility of adding a pedestrian crossing across both Rt 1 and 16, following the right-of-way of Murray St.	Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	

CS.2 — Build a Safe Pedestrian Environment (cont'd)

Create a safe, engaging, comfortable, and connected pedestrian network so residents of all ages and abilities can walk safely to schools, parks, transit, and everyday destinations.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Strengthen local pedestrian connections across remaining barriers and to underserved areas of the city. Priority connections include: • **Across the Commuter Rail tracks and the Silver Line busway.** • **Downtown and Everett Ave** - improve connections throughout Downtown and between Downtown and the MBTA commuter rail stop along Everett Ave • **Box District** - improve north-south pedestrian connections to and from the Box District, which currently has limited connectivity. • **Veterans Home area** - improve connections up the hill to Veterans Home from Cary Sq and to and from the neighborhood behind the hill, which is also cut off by Route 1, Revere Beach Parkway, and big-box stores. • **Low-accessibility destinations** - improve pedestrian connections to Chelsea High School, Mystic Mall, and the Mary O'Malley State Park area.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Create more contiguous pedestrian waterfront access over time through boardwalks and similar strategies.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

CS.3 — Build Safe Bicycle Infrastructure

Build a connected, low-stress cycling network — including protected bike lanes, a waterfront trail, and regional connections — that makes biking a safe and viable option for residents across Chelsea.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Create a connected cycling infrastructure network of low-stress facilities, including protected bike lanes and protected intersection crossings, addressing key barriers (Route 1, Revere Beach Parkway, rail crossings, industrial areas) and supporting bikeshare and other micromobility.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Increase bicycle parking supply and end-of-trip facilities throughout the city.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

CS.3 — Build Safe Bicycle Infrastructure (cont'd)

Build a connected, low-stress cycling network — including protected bike lanes, a waterfront trail, and regional connections — that makes biking a safe and viable option for residents across Chelsea.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Expand Bluebikes bikeshare infrastructure across the city by adding stations at new destinations and expanding existing service in key areas like the Commuter Rail stop.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Connect to regional bike networks (Northern Strand Trail, future Silver Line Shared-Use Path)	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Prioritize separated facilities on key routes climbing steep streets, in particular to improve bike connectivity to Prattville and Bellingham Hill.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Develop a waterfront trail for safe biking along Chelsea's waterways, connecting to the city's broader waterfront access strategy.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

CS.4 — Design Safe, Welcoming Public Spaces

Design and program public spaces so they feel — and are — safe and welcoming, using lighting, visibility, maintenance, and community activity.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Improve pedestrian-scale lighting in parks, parking areas, near transit stops, and along pedestrian pathways.	Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Apply safety-by-design principles in parks and public spaces, including clear sightlines, removing or redesigning isolated or hidden areas, activity-generating design that puts "eyes on the street," and a balance of openness with inviting places to gather and sit.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Ensure public spaces are consistently well-maintained and show visible signs of care.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

CS.4 — Design Safe, Welcoming Public Spaces (cont'd)

Design and program public spaces so they feel — and are — safe and welcoming, using lighting, visibility, maintenance, and community activity.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Continue and expand support for regular community events and programming in public spaces, accessible and welcoming to Chelsea's diverse communities, to build relationships among residents and with the City, create positive associations with shared spaces, and shift perceptions of safety over time.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓

Build safety through youth programs, community leadership, trust-building, and addressing root causes of violence and crime.

CS.5 — Invest in Youth Prevention

Prioritize investment in youth programs — from after-school and summer programming to mentorship, arts, and job training — as the most effective, primary form of violence prevention.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Significantly expand after-school and summer programming, ensuring equitable access across all neighborhoods and income levels, to create safe, positive spaces for young people citywide.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Build on existing police-led youth mentorship efforts, such as the Chelsea Police Department's "Build the Base" youth camp, by securing sustained public funding to grow them from school-break sessions into year-round and summer programming, reducing reliance on volunteer fundraising.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Provide diverse programming, including sports, arts, recreation, mentorship, and job training, in partnership with schools, community organizations, and youth-serving agencies, building skills and opening pathways to opportunity.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Support youth leadership development and meaningful roles for young people in community decision-making.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

CS.6 — Address Violence Through Community Intervention

Address crime and violence through community-based intervention, providing alternatives to gang involvement and connecting residents to the support that prevents violence before it happens.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Sustain and strengthen community-based violence intervention programs like The Hub, which provides a coordinated, multi-agency model for early intervention for individuals and families facing elevated risk of violence, crime, or harm, including through mentorship, economic opportunity, and connections to intensive services as alternatives to gang involvement. **Ensure the program has staffing and dedicated funding that keep pace with community needs, rather than relying primarily on competitive grants**.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Support conflict-resolution and de-escalation programs and connect high-risk youth to intensive services and support.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	

CS.7 — Protect Trust in Public Safety

Having built deep trust between residents and public safety systems through decades of dedicated work, protect and strengthen the trust between the community and the different public safety systems.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Neighborhood Leadership & Resident Networks			
Strengthen and expand the City's existing Sector Community Action Teams, resident-driven groups that meet regularly with neighborhood police officers, to identify **and support informal community safety leaders at the street, block, and building level**, including resident-led initiatives like block watches and mutual aid networks.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Continue and expand the Chelsea Police Department's community engagement programming, from Coffee With a Cop and the Citizen Police Academy for adults to youth-focused events like Cops and Bobbers fishing outings and free summer ice cream, as low-barrier opportunities for residents citywide to build relationships with public safety personnel.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

CS.7 — Protect Trust in Public Safety (cont'd)

Having built deep trust between residents and public safety systems through decades of dedicated work, protect and strengthen the trust between the community and the different public safety systems.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Expand and modernize the City's existing non-emergency reporting tools, including its online Citizen Police Reporting system and Crime Tip Hotline, **to be fully accessible and multilingual by design**, rather than reliant on browser-based translation, so residents can more easily report and coordinate on community safety concerns.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Crisis Response	
Explore mechanisms to recognize and compensate community safety leaders for their work.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Trust with Immigrant Communities			
Address immigration-related fears that prevent people from using streets and public spaces, **and ensure that city services and public safety remain accessible to all residents, regardless of documentation status**.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Implement community policing approaches and safe reporting mechanisms that respect immigrant concerns and do not risk immigration consequences.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Sustain relationships between public safety systems and immigrant communities through community events and everyday presence, not just enforcement.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Continue and expand training for public safety personnel in cultural competency and immigration-related issues.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

CS.8 — Address Quality-of-Life Concerns With Compassion

Address quality-of-life concerns — from substance use to homelessness — through a comprehensive, compassionate approach that connects people to services like mental health, housing, and employment support, rather than relying on enforcement alone.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Work with community services and organizations to expand access to treatment, recovery, and harm reduction services, including growing the City's community health navigator program beyond its present limited capacity and addressing the concentration of substance-use crises, particularly downtown.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Rethink service delivery models, including reconsidering aspects of the City's housing-first approach, **to balance individual needs and compassion with community concerns about safety and livability**.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Pursue community-based approaches to homelessness and poverty-related safety concerns, addressing root causes and balancing accountability with support, rather than criminalizing poverty or homelessness or relying on enforcement alone.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Sustain and strengthen merchant and business district safety initiatives, such as the Chelsea Police Department's Downtown Task Force, ensuring the model has staffing that matches downtown's needs.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	

GOAL: Invest in Neighborhoods that are Just, Resilient, and Connected

Reduce ENVIRONMENTAL HARMS while building CLIMATE RESILIENCE. EXPAND ACCESS to quality green spaces, recreation, waterfront, and sustainable transportation.

As a frontline environmental justice community bearing disproportionate pollution burdens, simultaneously reduce environmental harms while preparing for climate impacts like flooding, extreme heat, and severe storms that threaten the most vulnerable residents.

EJ.1 — Address Pollution Risks and Sources

Reduce pollution in air, water, and land across Chelsea by addressing legacy industrial contamination, preventing new environmental burdens, and balancing industrial activity with community health and safety.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Air			
Implement strategies from the Zero Carbon Action Plan to reduce emissions across Chelsea's buildings, transportation, and industrial sectors.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Establish an Air Pollution Control Commission and deploy regional air quality monitors near industrial and transportation corridors.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Expand hyperlocal, block-by-block air quality monitoring and work on mechanisms to share the data publicly through a real-time, multilingual dashboard that tracks correlations with respiratory health outcomes.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Hold major pollution sources accountable by closing environmental enforcement gaps.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response	
Support the transition of industrial operations to cleaner practices.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

EJ.1 — Address Pollution Risks and Sources (cont'd)

Reduce pollution in air, water, and land across Chelsea by addressing legacy industrial contamination, preventing new environmental burdens, and balancing industrial activity with community health and safety.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Advocate for stronger state and federal environmental regulations, including for trucks and heavy-duty vehicles, and for regional policies that address the historic inequities of Chelsea disproportionately bearing environmental burdens without corresponding benefits.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Water			
Advance waterfront access projects, including along Mill Creek and other future creek and coastal plans to restore water quality and habitat.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Conduct ongoing ecosystem health assessments of Mill Creek and Chelsea Creek.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Address Combined Sewer Overflows and improve stormwater management to reduce the amount of untreated wastewater entering Chelsea's waterways.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Partner with industrial waterfront users on environmental improvements and, when possible, community access for recreation.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Land			
Draft plans to remediate contaminated sites, especially those with Activity and Use Limitations, prioritizing residential neighborhoods and areas near schools and parks.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Ensure safe soil conditions for community gardens, play spaces, and other public areas through regular testing and monitoring.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Address illegal dumping of hazardous materials near public housing.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response	

EJ.1 — Address Pollution Risks and Sources (cont'd)

Reduce pollution in air, water, and land across Chelsea by addressing legacy industrial contamination, preventing new environmental burdens, and balancing industrial activity with community health and safety.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Require environmental safety plans from industrial users in flood-prone areas to prepare fuel storage, salt piles, and other hazardous materials for climate risk.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response	
Require a cumulative impact analysis for large-scale developments and prevent new pollution sources in areas already overburdened by environmental harms.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

EJ.2 — Implement Flood and Heat Mitigation Strategies

Implement comprehensive flood-mitigation and extreme-heat strategies to protect Chelsea's residents, infrastructure, and public health from increasingly severe climate-related risks.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Flooding			
Complete the Island End River Coastal Flood Resilience Project, which is fully designed and permitted, with a storm surge barrier and wetland restoration built in partnership with Everett; advocate for the funding needed for full construction; and explore phased implementation if funding gaps persist.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Advance the Hazard Mitigation Plan's other priority flood infrastructure projects, including the Willow Street pump station and Eastern Avenue flood protection infrastructure, along with continued sewer separation and drainage upgrades, prioritizing the city's lowest-lying neighborhoods and the rail corridor that bisects Chelsea's environmental justice communities as a major flood pathway.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Expand the Adopt-a-Drain program to pair resident engagement with citywide drainage maintenance.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓

EJ.2 — Implement Flood and Heat Mitigation Strategies (cont'd)

Implement comprehensive flood-mitigation and extreme-heat strategies to protect Chelsea's residents, infrastructure, and public health from increasingly severe climate-related risks.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Heat			
Implement the Urban Heat Mitigation Report's recommendations, using a heat mitigation infrastructure prioritization assessment such as the C-HEAT initiative, to guide investment toward the city's hottest areas (e.g., Division/Broadway, Mary C. Burke School, Highland Street).	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Expand the resident-led Cool Block Initiative citywide, including the Tree Keeper Program, which has raised tree survival rates from 30% to 87%, and cool/white roofs on public and community buildings.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Support and expand the City's "Beat the Heat" campaign and cooling center network, ensuring residents know the locations, hours, and access points for cooling centers, splash pads, and other cooling resources.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	✓
Provide direct heat relief to vulnerable households, including free or subsidized air conditioning for low-income, elderly, and medically at-risk residents.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Install shade structures at playgrounds and other public spaces.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Work with MBTA and regional partners to install weather-resilient stops, such as bus shelters with heating and cooling capabilities.	Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	

EJ.3 — Build Climate Resilience of Housing and Infrastructure

Strengthen the climate resilience of Chelsea's housing and critical infrastructure, prioritizing flood-prone neighborhoods and renter households.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Define strategies to weatherize and retrofit housing for extreme heat and flooding, with renter-focused programs that address energy burden alongside displacement risk, prioritizing flood-prone, low-lying buildings.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Strengthen landlord accountability for maintaining safe, habitable housing conditions during and after climate events to safeguard affordable units from climate-driven displacement.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Advance the City's Green Zoning initiative — currently developing updated floodplain, stormwater, and development standards to strengthen resilience against coastal flooding, stormwater flooding, and extreme heat — and integrate its recommendations into zoning, building codes, and capital improvement planning.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Strengthen evacuation routes and emergency access along Chelsea's critical corridors, including Broadway, Eastern Avenue, and MBTA transit lines, especially in environmental justice areas.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response	
Protect critical infrastructure (schools, utilities, and emergency services) from flooding.	Capital Project	Crisis Response	

EJ.4 — Community-Driven Climate and Energy Solutions

Build community-driven capacity for climate resilience and energy independence, ensuring Chelsea's residents and critical infrastructure can weather and recover from climate emergencies.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Continue building out Chelsea's municipally owned community microgrid — providing solar- and battery-powered backup electricity to City Hall, the police station, and other critical facilities, with plans to expand to affordable housing, schools, and health centers — governed through a resident-inclusive energy board.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓

EJ.4 — Community-Driven Climate and Energy Solutions (cont'd)

Build community-driven capacity for climate resilience and energy independence, ensuring Chelsea's residents and critical infrastructure can weather and recover from climate emergencies.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Strengthen community-based emergency response networks, partnering with community organizations and neighborhood ambassador programs to prepare residents for and respond to climate events.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response	
Build resident capacity for climate preparedness by collecting and responding to resident experiences during storms, floods, and heat events.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Provide direct emergency support to residents affected by extreme weather, including financial assistance and food distribution.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

Ensure all residents have equitable access to quality parks, green spaces, recreational opportunities, and waterfront that support health, climate resilience, and community connection.

EJ.5 — Increase and Maintain Green Open Spaces and Tree Canopy

Increase the quantity and quality of Chelsea's open spaces and tree canopy so every neighborhood has access to clean, green, well-maintained public space.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Pursue opportunities to increase open space citywide by updating zoning to require public space contributions from larger developments, as well as by acquiring land for new parks and green spaces, prioritizing neighborhoods with the least access.	Zoning & Land Use Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Expand green stormwater infrastructure — rain gardens, bioswales, and pocket parks — throughout neighborhoods, and integrate green space requirements into new development.	Zoning & Land Use Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓

EJ.5 — Increase and Maintain Green Open Spaces and Tree Canopy (cont'd)

Increase the quantity and quality of Chelsea's open spaces and tree canopy so every neighborhood has access to clean, green, well-maintained public space.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Expand tree canopy citywide, prioritizing areas with the least coverage and highest heat, and address the city's tree mortality rate and invasive species.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Engage residents in tree planting and maintenance through the Tree Keepers program and other volunteer opportunities, guided by a citywide tree planting capacity assessment.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Support community gardens and urban agriculture.	Zoning & Land Use Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Increase park maintenance staffing and capacity to support Chelsea's 40+ parks and facilities.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	
Strengthen coordinated clean-up efforts among residents, the City, and community organizations, including regular clean-up days and improved trash receptacles.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Address pest control and mold in public spaces, particularly following flooding.	Programs & Services	Crisis Response	
Improve lighting in parks and recreational spaces to extend operating hours later into the evening to accommodate working families' schedules.	Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	

EJ.6 — Expand Active Recreation Programming

Expand and diversify recreational programming and facilities so every resident, regardless of age, ability, or background, can access quality recreation in Chelsea's parks.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Expand programming for underserved populations, including infants through preschool, teens, adults, and seniors, and partner with disability organizations to ensure inclusive programming.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Work to diversify recreational facilities, including sports courts, skate parks, and futsal courts, to close gaps in access to athletic facilities citywide.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Implement the City's ADA Transition Plan to enhance accessibility across all parks systematically.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Create volunteer opportunities for residents to help lead and support recreational programming.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Simplify the permitting process for community events in parks.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Install comfort and cooling amenities, such as restrooms, water bottle fillers, electrical outlets, grills, and water play features, accessible to all ages.	Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓

EJ.7 — Expand Waterfront Access

Expand public access to Chelsea's waterfront and connect people to the water, balancing new recreational opportunities with the working waterfront.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Support redevelopment of the former Forbes Site, now being transformed into public open space, waterfront access, and affordable housing by a conservation and community development partnership, **through coordinated permitting, planning support, and community engagement**.	Zoning & Land Use Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	✓

EJ.7 — Expand Waterfront Access (cont'd)

Expand public access to Chelsea's waterfront and connect people to the water, balancing new recreational opportunities with the working waterfront.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Require public waterfront access as a condition of new shoreline development, consistent with the state's Public Waterfront Act (Chapter 91), and open new public access points on underused industrial land within the Designated Port Area that doesn't conflict with working maritime uses. These actions are recommended by the City's 2022 Municipal Harbor Plan and DPA Master Plan.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Pursue the expansion of waterfront access-point parks and public activity nodes, such as the Eastern Avenue Extension site and land along the Chelsea Creek, including near-term, interim public programming on underused sites while longer-term redevelopment proceeds. Develop a connected waterfront trail with harbor walks and overlooks linking parks and neighborhoods.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to the waterfront along Marginal Street, Eastern Avenue, and other industrial corridors, which are currently designed for truck traffic rather than safe walking and biking.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓
Prioritize safe public access on waterfront sites as the City continues to remediate environmental pollution along its waterfront.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Explore opportunities for water-based recreation, such as kayaking, paddling, and fishing, as water quality continues to improve.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Support educational and interpretive programming about Chelsea's waterways and maritime history.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

Leverage and expand Chelsea's excellent transit access to connect residents to opportunities throughout the region while reducing car dependency, emissions, and transportation costs.

EJ.8 — Further the Expansion of Public Transit and Regional Connections

Expand and strengthen Chelsea's public transit network — bus, Commuter Rail, Silver Line, and water transportation — to connect residents to regional opportunities while reducing car dependency and transportation costs.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Advocate for expanded, more frequent MBTA service, including the Silver Line Extension (SL3) to Everett and Sullivan Square Station, increased Commuter Rail frequency, and continued improvements to bus and Silver Line reliability. Explore the market and feasibility for adding an infill station stop by the Forbes Site.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Improve land use and urban design around Chelsea Station and other transit nodes to support transit-oriented development, leveraging Chelsea's existing 100% transit-shed coverage as a competitive advantage in attracting residents and development.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Continue to work with the MBTA and other potential partners to reintroduce water transportation, such as ferry service and water taxi connections to Boston, and develop waterfront access points to support it.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Work with MBTA and regional partners to advance bus lanes and transit signal priority and enhance transit stops with shelters, seating, lighting, accessibility features, bike parking, and real-time information.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Support commuter pass programs and fare-free or reduced-fare transit initiatives, and promote them to increase awareness, access, and participation.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

EJ.9 — Strategically Manage Curbside Parking

Manage curbside space strategically to balance parking demand and availability while ensuring accessibility.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Improve wayfinding and pedestrian connections to better balance parking demand across Downtown and other districts.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Improve and simplify the parking permit allocation process to reduce administrative burden and increase resident convenience. Explore monthly, by-district renewals or distributing the program through contractors.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Conduct a comprehensive curbside policy study — accounting for the city's development outlook — **to develop a curbside allocation and management framework** balancing competing modes, uses, and times of day.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Explore public parking options in place of accessory parking requirements in development areas near Chelsea Station and other transit-oriented development areas.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

EJ.10 — Create Programs to Shift to More Sustainable Transportation Options

Create programs to shift to more sustainable transportation options that reduce transportation emissions.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Require Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans for new large developments. TDM plans could include: ride-sharing, carpooling, car-sharing, transit/bike-share pass programs, real-time transit information, bike parking, showers/changing facilities, repair equipment, e-bike charging, in-lieu fees, and requiring developments to have on-site mobility managers.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Reform parking requirements to meet market conditions, such as eliminating parking minimums, unbundling parking costs from rent and purchase prices, and enabling shared parking agreements between complementary uses. (Related to H.1).	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Work with local businesses to coordinate and consolidate deliveries, and explore freight micro-fulfillment and cargo bike pilots for last-mile delivery.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Support electric vehicle infrastructure by removing zoning barriers to EV charging where appropriate.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	
Promote the shift from single-occupancy vehicle trips, particularly for short commutes, toward car-share, bike-sharing, biking, walking, and transit, through infrastructure investment and targeted outreach.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

OUR GATEWAY FOR CULTURE, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY - CULTURE AND PLACEMAKING (C)

GOAL: Build Cultural Pride and Vibrant Public Life

Build PLACES and infrastructure to support a vibrant public life in our city while supporting PROGRAMS, arts, culture, and creative expression.

Address Chelsea's critical lack of dedicated cultural and entertainment facilities by creating permanent and interim spaces and reforming policies to enable vibrant public life.

C.1 — Reform Zoning for Culture and Nightlife

Update zoning and permitting to enable performance venues, galleries, nightlife, and cultural uses that current rules restrict or prohibit.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Update the zoning ordinance to remove barriers to nightlife, entertainment, and cultural venues, and create districts or overlays that enable performance venues and theaters, galleries and maker spaces, and dining and entertainment uses, while balancing neighborhood livability.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Continue and strengthen Discover Chelsea's Permitting Project, which streamlines Special Use permitting for cultural venues, activities, and public space activation, scaling requirements to the complexity of the activity.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	
Pursue Massachusetts Cultural District designation for Downtown, building on the city's ongoing work to strengthen the area's cultural and creative identity.	Planning Initiative & Policy	Crisis Response Long-term Prosperity	✓

C.2 — Identify Interim Cultural Spaces

Activate vacant and underutilized spaces for interim cultural use, giving artists and cultural organizations opportunities now while a permanent facility is developed.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Partner with property owners, including by reusing the city's vacant properties, **to identify and activate spaces for interim cultural use** through flexible, short-term agreements.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Support pop-up galleries, performances, and cultural activations in interim spaces, giving artists exhibition and programming opportunities while a permanent facility is developed.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓

C.3 — Develop Permanent Cultural Facilities

Develop permanent, multi-use cultural facilities offering space for performance, exhibition, education, and gathering.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Conduct a feasibility study of cultural facilities to determine the optimal approach for a permanent cultural facility. Options to evaluate include building new, renovating an existing building, sharing space with another public facility such as the planned community center (see S.4), or operating a distributed network of smaller spaces. Identify potential sites, such as former industrial buildings, underutilized school buildings, city-owned properties, and ground-floor space in new development.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Develop, based on the outcome of the feasibility study and as prioritized by the city's 2021-2025 Arts and Culture Plan, **permanent, multi-use cultural spaces** that can accommodate uses like performance, exhibition, arts education, rehearsal and production, and community gathering.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

C.4 — Integrate Public Art Citywide

Integrate public art into streetscapes, parks, infrastructure, and new development, so Chelsea's cultural diversity is visible throughout the city.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Build on Discover Chelsea's existing murals, artist calls, and public art tour with a formal public art master plan that expands art reflecting Chelsea's cultural diversity into streetscapes, parks, and development citywide, identifying priority corridors and nodes for concentrated activity, and continuing opportunities for community participation.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Require or incentivize new developments of a certain size to set aside space for cultural and creative uses such as artist studios, maker spaces, galleries, and other creative enterprises.	Zoning & Land Use	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Adopt a percent-for-art policy that requires qualifying development projects to dedicate a share of construction costs to public art.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	

Position arts and culture as essential community infrastructure - not optional amenities - that serve as a conduit for community expression, identity, economic opportunity, equity, and connection.

C.5 — Celebrate Chelsea's Multicultural Immigrant Heritage

Celebrate and preserve the traditions, stories, and living heritage of Chelsea's diverse immigrant communities.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Continue and expand the Heritage Celebrations Grant to sustain Chelsea's living cultural heritage — oral histories, community archives, and traditional arts and cultural practices such as music, dance, crafts, and foodways — through direct grants to the artists, organizations, and culture bearers who carry them forward. (Related to C.7)	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Create culturally specific public spaces and gathering areas that reflect and honor the ethnic character of Chelsea's neighborhoods.	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

C.6 — Expand Youth Arts Programming

Expand access to arts education, mentorship, and creative expression for Chelsea's youth.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Continue and expand the Recreation & Cultural Affairs Division's after-school and summer arts programming for children and teens.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Work with Chelsea Public Schools and other educational institutions to integrate arts education and artist residencies into the curriculum.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Create mentorship programs connecting youth with local artists and cultural workers, and support youth-led cultural projects, performances, and leadership opportunities.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Consider developing scholarships or subsidy programs to help youth access arts programs beyond what the city offers directly.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

C.7 — Support Cultural Organizations and Festivals

Strengthen the organizations that sustain Chelsea's cultural traditions, and support the festivals and events that bring them into public life.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Continue and strengthen the Chelsea Cultural Council's Heritage Celebrations Grant program, which already funds festivals, murals, and cultural programming led by Chelsea's cultural organizations, and expand organizations' capacity to access it through funding and technical assistance.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓
Continue and expand Chelsea Day as the city's civic-wide celebration, alongside the growing calendar of culturally specific heritage festivals that Heritage Celebrations Grant funding already supports across Chelsea's diverse communities.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	

C.7 — Support Cultural Organizations and Festivals (cont'd)

Strengthen the organizations that sustain Chelsea's cultural traditions, and support the festivals and events that bring them into public life.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Support neighborhood-scale cultural celebrations and block parties alongside citywide events, continuing Discover Chelsea's technical assistance, equipment, staging, and coordination support for organizers at both scales.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Strengthen Discover Chelsea's events calendar as the city's single, reliable, and up-to-date source for cultural events, bringing together listings currently spread across separate city and partner websites.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	✓

C.8 — Preserve and Activate Historic Resources

Continue and build on the city's historic preservation work, making Chelsea's historic resources more accessible while balancing preservation with community needs and equitable development.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Adopt a Historic Preservation Plan that highlights the histories of all Chelsea residents, uses preservation as a tool to advance equity, economic development, sustainability, and resilience, and strengthens the documentation and tracking of the city's historical assets.	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Continue the comprehensive inventory of Chelsea's historic resources, and preserve and digitize historic archives, including city records and community histories, to make them publicly accessible.	Planning Initiative & Policy Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Improve public accessibility to historic sites, such as City Hall, Chelsea Garden Cemetery, and public monuments, while balancing preservation with community needs and equitable development.	Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	✓

C.8 — Preserve and Activate Historic Resources (cont'd)

Continue and build on the city's historic preservation work, making Chelsea's historic resources more accessible while balancing preservation with community needs and equitable development.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Support adaptive reuse of historic buildings for cultural and community uses, including as a potential site for the permanent cultural facility. (Related to C.3)	Zoning & Land Use Planning Initiative & Policy	Long-term Prosperity	
Revitalize the City's walking tour program, currently offered by Discover Chelsea, **by commissioning professionally produced, self-guided audio tours** with multiple-language transcripts, updating outdated online information, and adding new tours and interpretive programming as more historic resources become accessible.	Programs & Services Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	

C.9 — Improve Access to Arts and Culture

Ensure every resident can attend and help create Chelsea's cultural life, regardless of language, ability, or neighborhood.

Action	Type	Impact	Short-term Priority?
Help cultural organizations sustain their commitment to free and low-cost programming and expand access to affordable venues so more artists and programmers can produce events that currently go unrealized due to a lack of space. (Related to C.2, C.3, C.7)	Planning Initiative & Policy Capital Project	Long-term Prosperity	
Address the transportation, childcare, and awareness barriers that keep residents from attending Chelsea's cultural programming, and ensure it reaches every neighborhood, not just downtown.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Offer cultural programming in multiple languages and broaden accessibility through culturally competent delivery and tools such as ASL interpretation and captioning, extending Pa'Lante's accessibility and language justice commitments to arts and cultural life. (Related to S.5)	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	
Prioritize family-friendly, multigenerational programming that welcomes participants of all ages.	Programs & Services	Long-term Prosperity	



APPENDICES

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

VISIONING SURVEY

To anchor our work in the first phase of the planning process, we asked the Chelsea community for their vision for the future through a citywide survey.

The survey helped us learn which themes were top of Chelsea residents' minds for the city's future. Respondents could also share their thoughts about Chelsea today and desires for tomorrow. response.

How was the survey available?

The survey was available in Spanish and English. We reached the community online and in person through door knocking, phone banking, and on-the-ground facilitators at city events, food pantries, and community activities. Our goal was to gather responses from all sectors of Chelsea's diverse community.

- **813** people submitted responses
- **64%** of respondents completed the survey in Spanish
- **58%** of English-speaking respondents identified as non-White

What did we ask?

The survey had 2 main sections.

1. A series of demographic questions including:
   - What is your relationship with Chelsea?
     - *Live, work, have family, access community services, own property, visit, or other*
   - Which neighborhood(s) and areas of Chelsea best describe where you primarily live, work, and/or engage with?
   - Which best describes your current housing situation?
     - Rent home, rent room alone, rent room shared, own, live with family/friends, or don't live in Chelsea
   - How long have you lived in this community?
   - Engagement method and time preferences
   - Age group
   - Racial/Ethnic background
2. Plan Focus and Visioning questions
   - Which aspects of our community's future are most important to you? (select up to 3)
     - Housing, Land Use and Zoning, Economic Development, Environmental Justice, Transportation and Mobility, Parks and Public Spaces, Community Health and Safety, Cultural and Historic Preservation, Services and Infrastructure, Other
   - Chelsea TODAY — Tell us more about what you love about Chelsea today. (open-ended question)
   - Chelsea TOMORROW — Tell us more about your top priorities for Chelsea's future. (open-ended question)

Themes we heard in top priority areas:

Housing Affordability and Stability
Affordability, rent stabilization, landlord accountability, displacement protection

Public Safety and Transportation
Pedestrian safety, better public transit, violence intervention, safe routes to school

Economic Development and Opportunity
Job creation, workforce development, local businesses, youth opportunities, affordable retail and dining

Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience
Pollution, green infrastructure and trees, heat mitigation, flood resilience, waterfront access

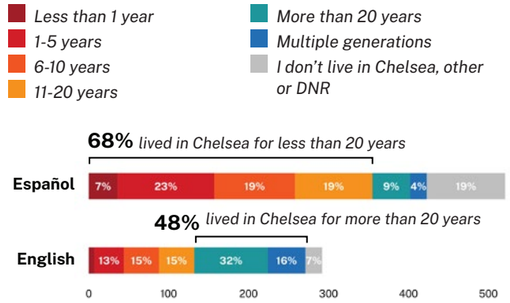
Cultural Preservation and Community Spaces
Cultural businesses, recreational facilities, mixed-use development that serves community needs

What we learned

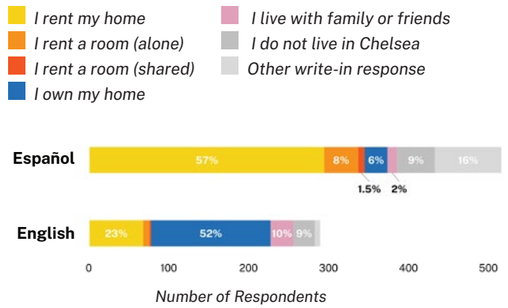
The survey provided deep insight into residents' priorities, with some responders offering detailed ideas that we later incorporated into the plan's strategies. For the visioning phase of the plan, some of the key lessons were:

1. **Spanish-speaking respondents are newer to Chelsea.** 68% have been in Chelsea less than 20 years (49% less than 10), compared to 48% of English-speaking respondents who have lived in Chelsea for 20+ years.
2. **Most Spanish-speaking respondents rent their homes.** Only 6% are homeowners compared to 52% of English respondents.
3. **Spanish-speaking respondents had three clear priorities: housing, safety, and economic development.** English-speaking respondents had a more distributed set of priorities with added focus on long-term planning themes.

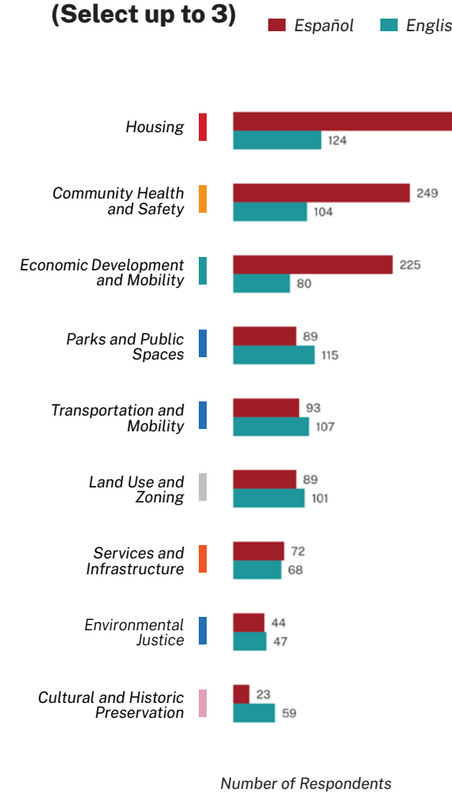
1 How long have you lived in this community?



2 Which best describes your current housing situation?



3 Which aspects of our community's future are most important to you? (Select up to 3)



COMMENT CARDS

In addition to our survey, we had physical comment cards available for the community to fill out.

We collected comment cards at our first Pa'Lante Fest, at six community pop-up events, and at the library. The cards included the same two open-ended questions than our visioning survey:

- What do you love about Chelsea TODAY?
- What do you imagine for Chelsea TOMORROW?

700+ cards were collected

56% of respondents completed the comment card in Spanish

We transcribed and classified all answers based on the key themes in the responses.



What we learned

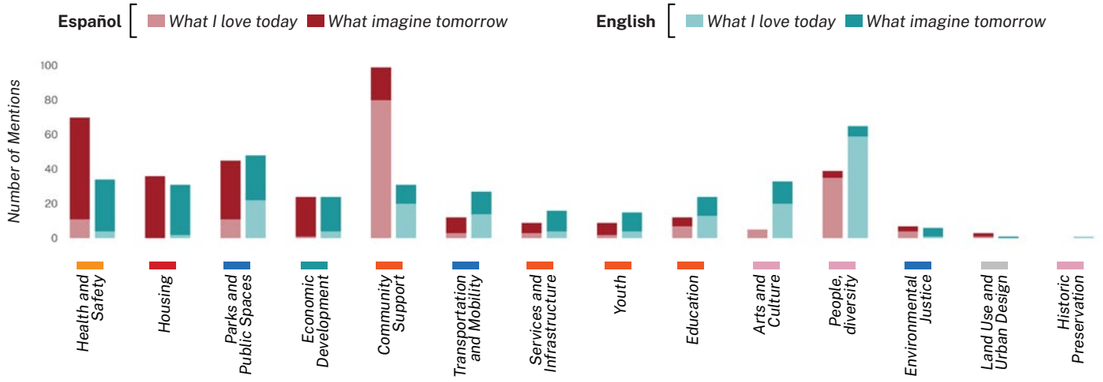
Spanish-speaking respondents prioritize **immediate community needs**, like:

- **Community support:** Focus on the help rather than just the diversity. Family services, children's safety, senior services, food access.
- **Economic Vulnerability:** Immigration status concerns, affordable services
- **Safety:** Safer streets, Traffic safety, crime-related concerns.
- **Parks:** Park improvements, infrastructure and lighting

English-speaking respondents prioritize **future-oriented policy solutions**, like:

- **Community Identity:** Diversity, cultural preservation
- **Quality of Life:** Arts, culture, recreational programming
- **Civic Engagement:** Government responsiveness, community participation
- **Development Vision:** zoning-related, transportation

Most mentioned themes across comment cards



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Throughout the process, in addition to our two Pa'Lante Fest events, the consulting team and City staff took Chelsea Pa'Lante out to where people already were.

At community events across the city, we invited residents to join the survey and workshops, listened to what they love and what they want to change, and later shared the plan's findings, vision, goals and strategies.

Thank you to everyone who stopped by, filled out a comment card, answered the survey, played our trade-offs board game or just chatted with us.

Listening: 2025

Primero de Mayo, hosted by La Colaborativa
May 1, 2025, Sixth Street Underpass

Youth Mental Health Day
May 29, 2025, Chelsea High School

Chelsea Library Summer Reading Kick-off
June 10, 2025, Chelsea Public Library

Juneteenth Celebration, hosted by Chelsea Black Community
June 19, 2025, Washington Park, Prattville

TND Block Party
July 19, 2025, Bosson Park

Chelsea Day 2025
September 6, 2025, Broadway

Sharing back: 2026

Chelsea Peace Vigil
May 2, 2026, City Hall Square

Chelsea Day 2026
September 5, 2026, Broadway

Farmers Market
September 15, 2026, Chelsea Square

Browne Middle School Open House
September 17, 2026, Williams School











PA'LANTE FEST

Planning the future of our city was also about celebrating it. Each March of this process, Chelsea hosted Pa'Lante Fest at Chelsea Square: a citywide gathering the way Chelsea knows how to do it, with music, dancing, food, local vendors and activities for the whole community. At two key moments in the process, these events let us learn from residents' wisdom and share back what we were hearing.

Pa'Lante Fest 2025

We launched the planning process on March 15, 2025. Hundreds of residents joined us on a warm, sunny day to celebrate Chelsea. There were cupcakes topped with the plan's brand-new logo, coloring and button-making hosted by the Chelsea Public Library, mini golf, a Fire Department truck for kids to climb on, and free ice cream from the Chelsea Police.

More importantly, residents and visitors stopped by our Pa'Lante tables to tell us what they love about Chelsea, what they want to change and, above all, what they imagine for its future. We received almost 300 comment card respondes and hundreds more stopped by to learn about the process ahead and show us where they live, work and spend time in the city.









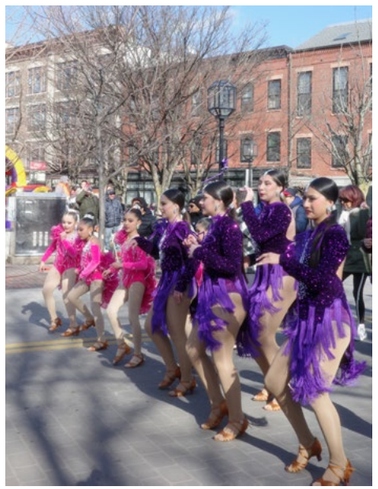


Pa'Lante Fest 2026

A year later, on March 14, 2026, after the success of our first fest we gathered at Chelsea Square again. It was cold and windy, but the dancing, hot drinks, music and enthusiasm for Chelsea's future kept us warm.

After a year of meetings, community conversations, events, workshops and a survey, it was turn to share the draft vision, goals and strategies, as well as our framework for growth. The centerpiece was a trade-offs board game, where residents learned about dozens of draft strategies and chose the ones that mattered most to them. The goal wasn't necessarily to end up with a ranking but rather to 1) illustrate the complex and challenging nature of sorting and selecting strategies to prioritize and 2) give us a sense of where community sentiment is strongest on each goal.







PUBLIC COMMNUNITY WORKSHOPS

In the summer of 2025, we hosted three public community workshops as part of the Somos Chelsea phase.

These workshops focused on identifying needs and opportunities for Chelsea through conversations and activities across key themes identified in the survey, comment cards, other engagement findings, and our existing conditions analysis.

We hosted two in-person workshops: one in Spanish in the morning (based on engagement preferences from Spanish-speaking survey responses) and one entirely in English in the evening. Both workshops offered children activities and food. We hosted a third workshop virtually, with English and Spanish facilitation available.

Spanish Workshop - June 25th 2025, 10 AM, Williams School Cafeteria
English Workshop - June 26th 2025, 6 PM, Metro Credit Union in Prattville
Virtual Workshop - July 9th 2025, 6 PM, Zoom using Miro for interactive boards

- **100+** attendees across all three workshops.
- **175+** distinct comments across boards

Activities

The in-person workshops had a science-fair style format, with an array of informative and interactive boards to share information and gather feedback on the following topics:

- Demographics and Households
- Housing — *Activity board: quality of housing and desired type of housing development*
- Employment
- Mobility — *Activity board: Mobility mode share and quality of infrastructure*
- Public Safety — *Activity board: Identification of where safety concerns are located and understanding of safety challenges related to crime, traffic, and community concerns.*
- Development Focus Areas — *Activity board: Identification of our opportunities to locate more housing, job sources, businesses, and recreational areas.*
- Future Development — *Activity: What does good development look like?*
- Vision statement sorting Activity

Things we learned

Demographics & Community Character: Demographic churn, community instability, displacement concerns, overcrowding, linguistic diversity beyond Spanish, cultural preservation.

Housing Quality & Conditions: Inadequate inspections of housing in poor condition; affordability needs to reflect Chelsea's income levels; preserve existing housing stock; improve landlord accountability; address transient residency.

Employment & Economic Development: Help sorting entrepreneurship barriers, more quality jobs, industry accountability, community stewardship, language justice, public maintenance responsibility gaps.

Green Spaces & Waterfront: More waterfront access through parks and paths, heat relief, climate adaptation, environmental justice, park infrastructure gaps.

Mobility & Transportation: Bus service gaps, transit capacity, rail connectivity and water transportation advocacy, traffic on school routes, state infrastructure gaps, parking regulation, better street conditions, improve walkability.

Public Safety: Safety concerns are mixed, spanning traffic & street safety as well as crime-related issues. Need for better lighting & park safety, police & surveillance, better bike & pedestrian infrastructure.

Good and Bad Development: Good development: transit-oriented, increases public open space, better housing quality, public realm equity, long-term community benefits. Bad development: car-centric, exclusionary, density without infrastructure, polluting industries for tax revenue.



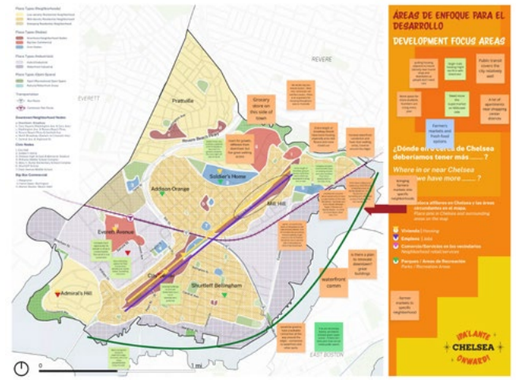














COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

In addition to our public workshops, we met with residents in smaller, more intimate settings, hosted by or held at the invitation of organizations across Chelsea.

These conversations took place in spaces where people already gather and trust one another and allowed for deeper discussion than a large public event can. They helped us hear, in more detail, the different perspectives that shape Chelsea's needs and opportunities.

Thank you to every organization that opened its doors and invited us in, and to every participant who shared their time and experience.

- Líderes Comunitarios hosted by La Colaborativa
- Anti-displacement Roundtable, invited by Comunidades Enraizadas
- Breakfast with Chelsea Leaders (2x)
- Workshops with Nueva Vida Methodist Church
- Workshop with GreenRoots
- Roundtable at Senior Center











FOCUS GROUPS

To hear more specific input, we convened focus groups with people who bring deep experience and knowledge on key themes for the plan.

Groups were hosted by, or held in partnership with, organizations and institutions across Chelsea. Each one went deeper on a single topic than a public event can.

Community-based organizations
June 4 and 5, 2025, Chelsea Public Library.

- *The Neighborhood Developers, Chelsea Black Community, GreenRoots, Comunidades Enraizadas CLT, La Colaborativa and the Community Enhancement Team joined us.*

Municipal Capacity with City Staff
August 20, 2025, City Hall.

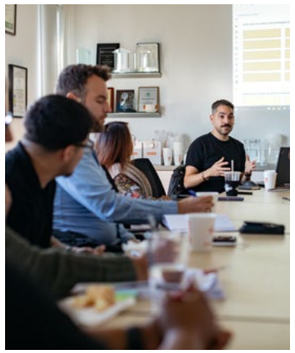
Local Businesses and Economic Development
August 20, 2025, Chelsea Chamber of Commerce.

Housing
October 2, 2025, hosted by The Neighborhood Developers.

- *Participants included housing providers, authorities, and advocates: the Chelsea Housing Authority, Chelsea Restoration Corporation, The Neighborhood Developers, La Colaborativa, Comunidades Enraizadas CLT, GreenRoots, the Housing Equity Committee, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board, the Director of Housing and Community Development, and the City Manager. CAPIC and CBC were also invited.*

Community Safety
October 23rd, 2025, Chelsea Police Department

- *Hosted by the Downtown Task Force*











SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

Chelsea is a young city, so we asked the youth who will inherit this plan.

In July 2025, Consult LeLa and Utile led workshops in Chelsea Public Schools, with activities for each age, to learn how students experience their city and what they dream of and worry about for its future.

Elementary School (grades 1, 3 and 4; 33 students)

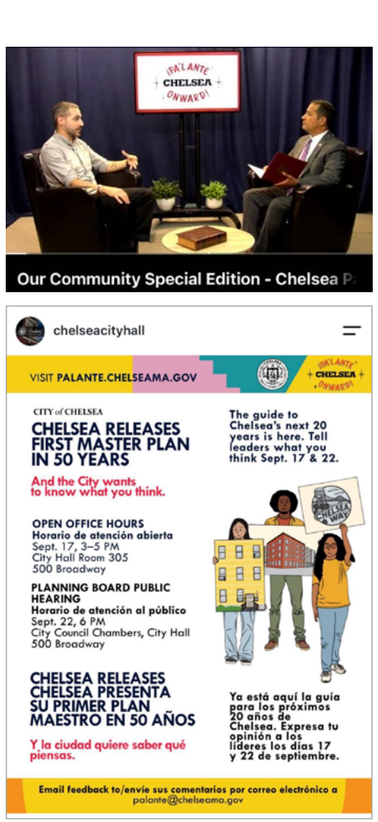
Students wrote a “Pa’Lante Poem” about what they love and hope for, then redesigned two familiar places: the area under the overpass across from Williams School and the waterfront site across from their school on Crescent Avenue. Water play, from pools to splash pads, topped their wishes, followed by soccer fields, basketball courts and parks where “kids can play.” They called Chelsea “fun,” “safe” and “the best,” and value a city where “people can speak Spanish and English.”

High School (grades 9 and 10, plus multilingual students; 72 students)

Students discussed housing, transportation, environmental justice and their futures. They worry most about rent and displacement, traffic hazards, gang violence and fear of immigration enforcement, and they feel heat, flooding and air pollution in daily life. They asked for more buses, safer crossings, more trees and spaces that sustain Latino culture, from soccer fields to cultural centers.

At every age, students shared pride in Chelsea’s culture and bilingual character, and a hope that growth will protect them.





COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Keeping the plan visible mattered as much as the events themselves. Throughout the process, we shared articles and updates in the City’s weekly newsletter, and the City’s social media team published flyers, videos and posts that announced events and shared the plan’s progress. That let residents follow along and take part even when they couldn’t attend in person.

We also brought the conversation to residents’ screens. We joined the City Manager for three Facebook Live broadcasts, and sat down with the City Manager twice on “Our Community,” the City Manager’s show on Chelsea Community Cable: first early in the process, in mid-2025, and again at the end, to talk through the draft plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

We Are Chelsea - Visioning Engagement

- Citywide Visioning Survey
  - Available online
  - Also through: door knocking, phone banking, and on-the-ground facilitators
- Pa’Lante Fest 2025 - Visioning
- Public Workshops - Needs and Opportunities
  - 2 in-person (one in Spanish and one in English)
  - 1 virtual
- Community Events
  - Primero de Mayo
  - Chelsea Library Summer Reading Kick-off
  - Youth Mental Health Day @CHS
  - Juneteenth Celebration 2025
  - TND Block Party 2025
  - Chelsea Day 2025
- Chelsea Public Schools Workshops
  - High School — 9th and 10th grade
  - Elementary School — 1st, 3rd, and 4th grade
- Community Conversations
  - La Colaborativa Líderes Comunitarios
  - Anti-displacement Roundtable w/Comunidades Enraizadas
  - Breakfast with Chelsea Leaders
  - Nueva Vida Methodist Church
  - GreenRoots Workshop
  - Chelsea Public Library
- Focus Groups
  - Community-based organizations
  - Local Businesses and Economic Development
  - Housing
  - Community Safety
  - Municipal Capacity with City Staff
- Communications
  - Newsletter
  - Social Media
  - Our Community @Chelsea Community Cable

Our Chelsea - Strategies Engagement

- Pa’Lante Fest 2026 - Strategizing
- Community Events
  - Peace Vigil 2026
- Community Conversations
  - Breakfast with Chelsea Leaders
  - Roundtable at Senior Center
- Communications
  - Newsletter
  - Social Media
  - Facebook Live

Onward! - Public Draft Engagement

- Office Hours
- Community Events
  - Chelsea Day 2026
  - Farmers Market
  - Browne School Open House
- Planning Board Public Hearing
- Email and Online Comments
- Communications
  - Social Media
  - Facebook Live
  - Our Community @Chelsea Community Cable

GLOSSARY

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

A self-contained housing unit in an owner-occupied single-family home or lot that is either attached to the main dwelling or in a separate structure on the same property.

ADA Compliance

Refers to the federal Americans with Disabilities Act and determines all handicap requirements and stipulations. ADA compliance for a structure includes handicap access in the form of elevators, ramps, wheelchair lifts, as well as the proper positioning of light switches, countertops, grab bars, etc.

Affordable Housing

Dwelling units priced low enough so that households earning less than certain thresholds can comfortably pay for them. These thresholds typically target households earning below 80% of the area's median income (or AMI) or some other percent of AMI. Affordable housing refers only to the cost of housing to the consumer and does not refer to the design, type, or method of construction of a housing unit or development. Generally, if a given household pays less than 30% of its monthly income on housing, that housing price is considered affordable.

Area Median Income (AMI)

Every year the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimates the median family income for every American metropolitan area and region at various levels (30% AMI, 50% AMI, 80% AMI, and 100% AMI). HUD adjusts this data based on household size so incomes can be expressed as a percentage of the area median income. They then publish these figures, called income limits, as part of an annual report, and these limits are used for eligibility in most housing programs.

Brownfield

A former industrial or commercial site where future use is affected by real or perceived pollution. These sites often negatively impact local communities. Typically, they cannot be redeveloped without environmental cleanup.

By-Right

A zoning framework that allows development projects to proceed without the need for a special permit, variance, amendment, waiver, or other discretionary approval if the project meets all the existing zoning requirements.

Climate Change

Long-term shifts in temperature and weather patterns. These shifts can be natural, such as through variations in the solar cycle, but since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change. These human drivers primarily refer to burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas.

Commercial

Concerned with, or engaged in, business. Here, business refers to the trade of goods, services, or both for the primary purpose of profit. This report will often refer to commercial spaces and uses; these terms refer to places or uses that are dedicated to business. For example, a business district would refer to a portion of the city dedicated to business, such as a downtown area, and business use would refer to portions of buildings reserved for retail, restaurant, or other business-related use.

Community Garden

A piece of land where a group of people individually or collectively grow plants of their choosing. Typically, community gardens are not for profit, and their purpose is to serve the local community. These gardens can be located in various places, but they are often on publicly accessible land and sometimes integrated with park space.

Complete Streets

A transportation policy and design approach that prioritizes safety for all road users. This approach has become a popular framework that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated and maintained with safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access in mind for all users regardless of age, ability, or their mode of transportation. Streets that meet these guidelines are referred to as Complete Streets, and many policies and plans that aim to improve street safety include the term "Complete Streets" in their title.

Context Sensitive Design

An approach to land-use, housing, and transportation decision-making that makes design choices based on existing features at a given site, instead of automatically engineering those features into compliance with design choices that have already been made. This approach considers stormwater flow patterns, wetlands, street layout, and other existing site features along with nearby design and development norms before making any design decisions.

Cost Burden

The Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development uses this phrase to describe households that spend 30% or more of their combined income on housing-related costs. These costs typically refer to rent and mortgage payments.

Decarbonization

Reducing the amount of emissions from greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide (CO_2), released into the atmosphere.

Environmental Justice

A framework that strives to equitably distribute environmental harms and benefits and involve everyone with the decision-making process for environmental policies.

Environmental Justice Areas

This report follows Massachusetts' definition of Environmental populations which refer to neighborhoods that meet at least one of the following criteria: 1) the annual median household income is 65% or less of the statewide annual median household income; 2) minorities make up 40% or more of the population; 3) 25% or more of the households identify as speaking english less than "very well;" 4) minorities make up 25% or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150% of the statewide annual median household income. This report visualizes Environmental Justice areas by the number of criteria they meet, so a neighborhood that meets only criterion 2 would have a lower weight than a neighborhood that meets criteria 1, 2, and 4.

First and Last Mile Connections

These terms refer to public transportation systems and describe the beginning or end of an individual trip that uses public transportation options. Specifically, this describes how a user gets from their starting point to a bus stop or train station for the first mile, and how they get from a bus stop or train station to their destination for the last mile.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

The ratio of a building's total floor area to the size of the piece of land upon which it is built. A building's floor area refers to the sum of the area of each floor. FAR is expressed as a decimal number and is derived by dividing the total floor area of the building by the total area of the parcel (floor area ÷ lot area). For example, a building with a FAR of 1.0 has a total floor area equal to the area of the land it is built on; a FAR of 1.5 has one-and-a-half times that floor area; and a FAR of 2.0 has double that floor area. FAR is an effective way to calculate the bulk or mass of building volume on a development site and is often used with other development standards, such as building heights, lot coverage, and lot area, to encourage a community's desired arrangement and form of development.

Heat Island Effect

An effect that causes urban areas to become significantly warmer than their surrounding less densely built-out areas. The effect is primarily caused by replacing natural landscapes with hard surfaces (roads, sidewalks, etc.), concentrating heat-trapping gases like carbon dioxide and other air pollution (vehicle and building exhaust), and the high volume of heat-generating machines and processes (air conditioners, refrigerators, etc.).

Inclusionary Zoning

A policy that requires a share of new housing development to be affordable to low- or moderate-income households through zoning code.

Infill Development

Development projects located on underused or vacant land in existing urban areas. This practice increases density and places new developments near existing resources and infrastructure.

Infrastructure

The system of public works of a country, state, or region, as well as the resources (such as personnel, buildings, or equipment) required for an activity.

Land Use

The economic and cultural activities that are practiced at a given place. Land uses are often described in terms like agricultural, residential, industrial, retail, recreational, and others. Different land uses are influenced by whether the land is public or private, location of the building, zoning policy, and other factors.

Micromobility

Small vehicles for single passengers that are designed to transport users short distances. These vehicles can be either human-or electric-powered; they fit within a bike lane, and include scooters, skateboards, and other similar vehicles.

Mixed-Use

A zoning classification that blends multiple uses, such as residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or entertainment, into one space. These spaces physically and functionally integrate those multiple uses and provide pedestrian connections between surrounding areas. Mixed-use development may be applied to a single building, a block, a neighborhood, or in zoning policy across an entire area.

Multi-Family Housing

Any residential property containing more than one housing unit and where more than one family lives. These homes can take many forms, from free-standing single-family homes restructured into multiple units to large multi-story apartment complexes.

Multimodal

Having or using more than one method, or mode, of transportation. These methods, or modes, of transportation include walking, biking, taking a bus or train, etc. The term Multimodal often refers to development projects or planning policies that support multiple methods of transportation in a given area.

Parking Ratios

The number of parking spaces allocated per dwelling unit for a development project.

Public Realm

Any publicly owned streets, pathways, sidewalks, parks, open spaces, buildings, and facilities where the public has access.

Resilience

The capacity to resist damage and recover quickly from disturbance. This term is often used to describe the ability of communities and ecosystems to survive climate-based disturbances without losing functions or services.

Single-Family Housing

Any residential property containing no more than one housing unit and where no more than one family lives. These homes are typically free-standing residential buildings.

Stormwater Management

The practice of diverting and directing rainfall with the purpose of preventing floods during storm events. Stormwater management involves drainage infrastructure, as well as ground types and ground cover that absorb water, like soil and trees.

Sustainability

Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This term is often used to describe environmentally friendly practices that will ensure future generations have access to an environment that is at least as safe, clean, and bountiful as today's environment. However, the term can also describe other practices designed to last, such as economic and social practices.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

A type of urban development that maximizes the amount of residential, business, and leisure space within walking distance of public transport. It promotes a symbiotic relationship between dense, compact urban form and public transport use. This plan also uses the term equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD), which refers to TOD practices that also avoid unfair distributions of harms or benefits.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

A planning framework that aims to increase travel efficiency for individual users so that they arrive at their destinations more quickly. Often, the biggest barrier to fast travel times is vehicular traffic, so TDM improves efficiency by encouraging people to walk, bike, and use public transportation, thereby decreasing the number of cars on the road.

Universal Design

The design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability.

Walkshed

An area within a specific distance of a designated origin point that can be comfortably walked using available sidewalks and paths accessible by foot. A half-mile is often used for this function because it corresponds to a 10-15 minute walk for most people and is a distance most people are willing to walk instead of driving or using another mode of transportation.

Wayfinding

All of the methods people use to orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place. Strategies to improve wayfinding throughout an area can include increasing the number and visibility of street signs, adding additional signage with elements like maps, and improving the visibility of landmarks.

Zoning

Or zoning code, describes land use policy that controls what can and cannot be built on a property based on its geographic location within a municipality. City and town governments use zoning to divide their municipality into areas, or zones, and then apply different restrictions and allowances to different zones. For example, factories may only be permitted in an industrial zone.

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¡PA'LANTE CHELSEA ONWARD!

October, 2026

