MAPPING MATTAPAN

In This Issue

COLUMBIA RD.

GENDER & MOBILITY

CODMAN SQ.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2020-2021
Design Grants
Research

Sasaki
Foundation

Sasaki
Foundation

Contents

INTRODUCTION 3

GRANTS PROCESS 7

2020 Pitch Night Jury 12

RESEARCH TEAMS 15

Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative 17

Economic Development in Codman Square 27

The Mattapan Mapping Project 37

DESIGN GRANTS ALUMNI 47

MOBILITY INNOVATOR 51

A LOOK AHEAD 57

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 61

Introduction

The Sasaki Foundation is named after Hideo Sasaki, a pioneer of modern design, a landscape architect, a leader, and an educator who articulated—and proved—the value of interdisciplinary design while breaking down the traditional barriers between practice and teaching.



Since its founding in 2000, the Sasaki Foundation has awarded more than $550,000 for those interested in pursuing focused research initiatives that foster diversity and equity in the design field and that connect young people to mentorship and resources.

2019 Design Grants cohort working in the Incubator at Sasaki | Sasaki

The Sasaki Foundation was established by Sasaki, a multidisciplinary design firm founded by Hideo. It includes a bequest from Hideo's family and friends to continue his legacy of advancing rigorous research within an interdisciplinary approach to design, and supporting design education. At the intersection of research, practice, education, and community-driven processes, the Sasaki Foundation is committed to advancing the value of design, inviting diverse partners to co-create change.

The Sasaki Foundation builds its values on over six decades of work by Hideo Sasaki, with a current focus on the following priority areas.

Research & Experimentation

Large-scale, complex challenges require cross-disciplinary thinking. That's why the Sasaki Foundation convenes experts and innovators from all backgrounds. Our research programs focus on bringing issues of inequity in design to the forefront. This means supporting active research projects that center on inclusion and collaboration with communities who have historically been removed from the design process. Advancing interdisciplinary design research is in service to building more equitable cities and communities.

Community Learning & Engagement

Informed and engaged residents are the central ingredients of a successful community. The Sasaki Foundation invests in ideas and strategies that engage community members in the design process—and contribute meaningfully to its outcomes. To that end, we work with civic leaders, educators, economists, and technologists to connect design and community-driven action through public programming.

Professional Practice & Growth

A thriving design industry relies on a pipeline of diverse, talented, and passionate practitioners who infuse new ideas and disrupt established patterns. The Sasaki Foundation supports professional organizations and initiatives that prepare such future leaders. We also advocate for innovative design practice, seeking ways to cross discipline boundaries and amplify impact. Of special interest are educational programs that advance diversity and inclusivity in the next generation of design professionals.

Grants Process

In 2020, The Sasaki Foundation launched a call for proposals for our third annual Design Grants. We received 12 applications representing 45 organizations and institutions, 8 Boston communities, 21 Greater Boston cities, and 5 Gateway Cities.

Finalists pitched their ideas to win grant money and access to design expertise from Sasaki professionals. The three winning teams spent ten months working on projects that promote equity in design.

THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

In 2020, the Sasaki Foundation focused on proactive approaches to climate adaptation, housing, transit, and placekeeping, under the theme of Shared Futures: Charting a Course for Action, issuing a call for proposals to find projects that engaged with communities in the Gateway Cities, Metro West, and Greater Boston.

The challenges in addressing environmental resilience, displacement, affordable housing, access to mobility choices, meaningful public engagement, and other social equity considerations in planning and design are so broad and complex, they require a shared approach to facilitate all the necessary conversations and deliver actionable solutions. Most of these challenges faced by Boston communities are not limited to local neighborhoods—their effects are felt and shared across the Commonwealth and beyond. Multiple futures are at stake, and we can make a difference by acting now.

Proactive Approaches to Climate Adaptation

Responses to extreme heat, stormwater and flash flooding, and coastal and river flooding

In cities like Boston, climate change issues, especially environments with the urban heat island effect and flooding, disproportionately impact communities of color and low-income communities.

- What is your vision for a collaborative approach to mitigate the impacts of climate change?
- Are you doing something to increase climate resilience in your community that can scale to greater impact?

New Models for Housing

Strategies to improve housing affordability, promote a more diverse housing stock, and address gentrification and displacement

Like many cities, Boston's housing shortage requires innovative approaches to planning and design. Displacement of families, caused by economic and environmental forces, is exacerbated by the limited supply of affordable, family-oriented housing units.

- What is your innovative solution to provide better access to affordable housing and improve public health for more people?
- How are you strengthening existing networks in your community, as displacement increases?

Innovation in Transit and Access to Mobility Choices

Design strategies and solutions for existing challenges to reliable transit; strengthened public-private partnerships in expanding transportation choices and leveraging technology to provide greater access to transportation options by eliminating barriers

Greater Boston's local mobility networks and regional systems have tremendous potential to improve accessibility and safety for users. Methods for leveraging private-sector innovation to increase transportation access for all communities present a powerful opportunity.

- What actions can improve your community's mobility choices and transportation access, particularly in communities of color and low-income communities?
- How could better access to technology improve mobility for your community?

Creative Community Building

Themes of collective memory and community storytelling, investment in historic neighborhood fabric, and local business development

Designing and planning for our Greater Boston communities can extend beyond the concept of placemaking to include the idea of placekeeping—the preservation of local identity through strengthening social bonds, celebrating neighborhood history, and developing strategies for enhancing neighborhood retail, food, and health services.

- How do we preserve cultural identity while reinvigorating the social and economic well-being of a given community?
- How can we build local capacity for economic development and promote local entrepreneurship?
- How can we better leverage technology, and what opportunities do we have to create tools for better decision making and more equitable connectivity?
- How can your community expand access to open space and the public realm to allow for greater health and wellness?



EVALUATION CRITERIA

2020 Call for Proposals | Sasaki Foundation

Design

We seek proposals that utilize interdisciplinary thinking to challenge the status quo. We support design ideas that actively engage and contribute to communities. Winning teams had actionable ideas. Proposals were judged on both creativity and feasibility, and addressed resilience and equity through the lens of one of the four topics—climate adaptation, housing, transit, and placekeeping.

Equity

We seek proposals that benefit historically underrepresented communities through strategies aimed at eliminating systemic barriers. Winning teams showed how their projects would meet the unique needs of a community through a high level of collaboration with community representatives.

Inclusion

We value diverse perspectives and seek to find inclusive processes that make space for dialogue and difference. We especially encouraged proposals from women; transgender, genderqueer, or gender non-conforming individuals; members of racial or ethnic minorities; and individuals with physical and/or intellectual disabilities.

Innovation

We seek proposals that foster innovation, creativity, and interdisciplinary approaches to design. Special attention was given to teams that proposed forward-thinking, rather than reactive, concepts and ideas.

Impact

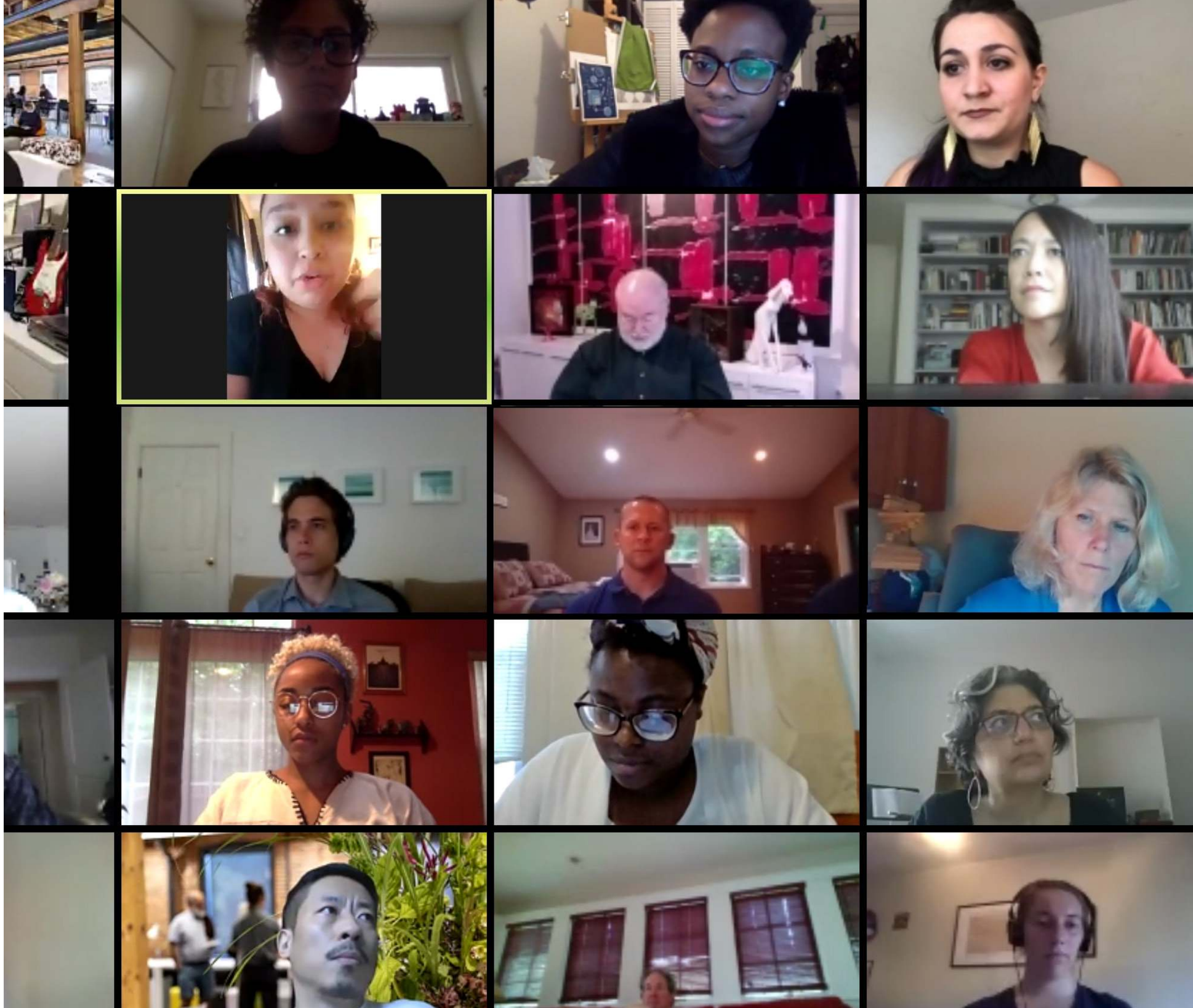
We seek proposals that can produce positive impacts within the communities they serve. Winning projects exhibited scalability or replicability across other communities with similar characteristics.

PITCH NIGHT

On June 3, 2020, Sasaki Foundation Design Grants finalists pitched their ideas for projects that address proactive approaches to climate adaptation, new models for housing, innovation in transit and access to mobility choices, and creative community building. More than 140 designers, planners, artists, community leaders, civic leaders, and entrepreneurs attended the virtual event, sponsored by Columbia, and learned how the teams planned to leverage design to address issues of resiliency and equity.

> "We had an incredible team of judges, representing the Barr Foundation, Conveyal, MONUM, and Sasaki, who evaluated the teams on how equitable, innovative, and impactful their ideas were," said Laura Marett, Design Grants Jury Chair and Vice Chair and Secretary of the Sasaki Foundation's Board of Trustees.

Both jurors and members from the Sasaki Foundation Advisory Council participated in the review process of teams' proposals and pitches.



2020 Design Grants Pitch Night | virtual event

2020 Pitch Night Jury



Laura Marett | Sasaki (Jury Chair)

Laura is a landscape architect and associate principal at Sasaki and serves as vice chair and secretary of the Sasaki Foundation's Board of Trustees. Her practice includes landscape design and systems planning for cities and campuses, with an emphasis on resiliency. She has particular interest in the design of vibrant urban public spaces through an engaged public process and resilience planning for vulnerable communities.



Sabrina Dorsainvil | Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics

Sabrina is Director of Civic Design at MONUM. She is fascinated by people: the way they move, speak, touch, interact, and experience environments, objects, and each other. She brings this lens to her work as a designer and illustrator; from playful drawings to human-centered design projects, Sabrina's work aims to improve the everyday lives of the people around her by addressing complex issues such as housing, healthcare, and human rights.



Alykhan Mohamed | Sasaki

Alykhan is an urban planner and project manager at Sasaki who firmly believes that small changes, conversations, and projects can make big statements and pave the way for innovation on a larger scale. His ability to develop innovative solutions is underpinned by an understanding of the economic, political, and social processes that drive different urban contexts.



Mary Anne Ocampo | Sasaki

Mary Anne is an urban designer and principal at Sasaki and serves as Chair of the Sasaki Foundation's Board of Trustees. Her multidisciplinary training and experience allow her to work across contexts and scales and her collaborative approach integrates planning, landscape, and architecture. In all of her work, Mary Anne places particular emphasis on understanding and building upon the complex interrelationships of institutions and cities.



Mary Skelton Roberts | Barr Foundation

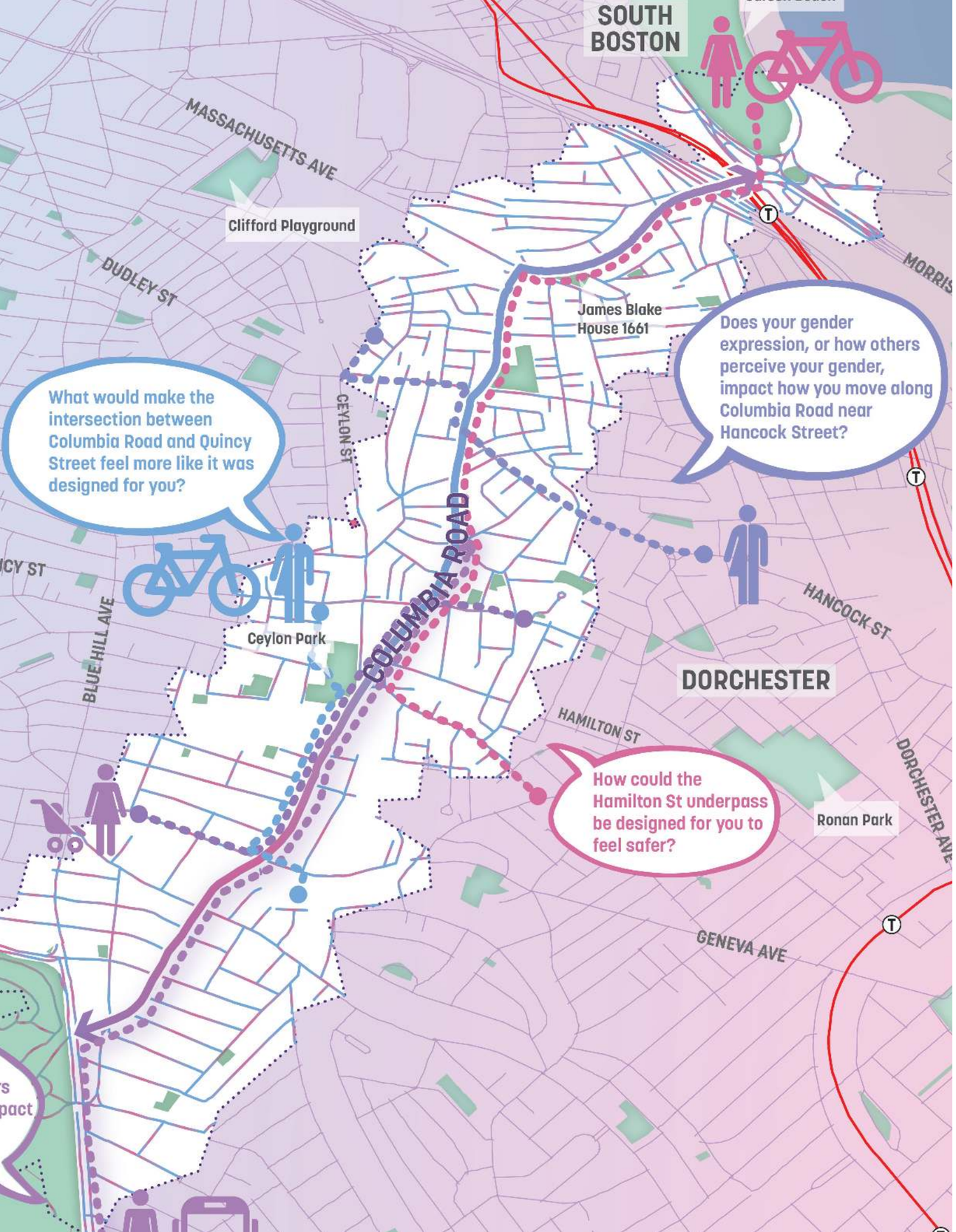
Mary Skelton Roberts was Co-director of Climate at the Barr Foundation, focusing on transportation and land use—two critical levers for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Her portfolio aimed to modernize our transit systems and to help communities transform themselves into more walkable, connected places where all residents have attractive alternatives to driving and spend far less time and money traveling by car. (In early 2021, Mary joined the Energy Foundation as Senior Vice President of Programs.)



Anson Stewart | Conveyal

Anson is project lead for analysis and research at Conveyal. He is a graduate of the MIT Interdepartmental Doctoral Program in Transportation, with international experience researching public transport systems. His dissertation involved deploying interactive mapping tools for stakeholder engagement and developing measures of urban accessibility that incorporate detailed land-use and vehicle location data.

Research Teams



Columbia Road map graphic | Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative in partnership with Sasaki

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

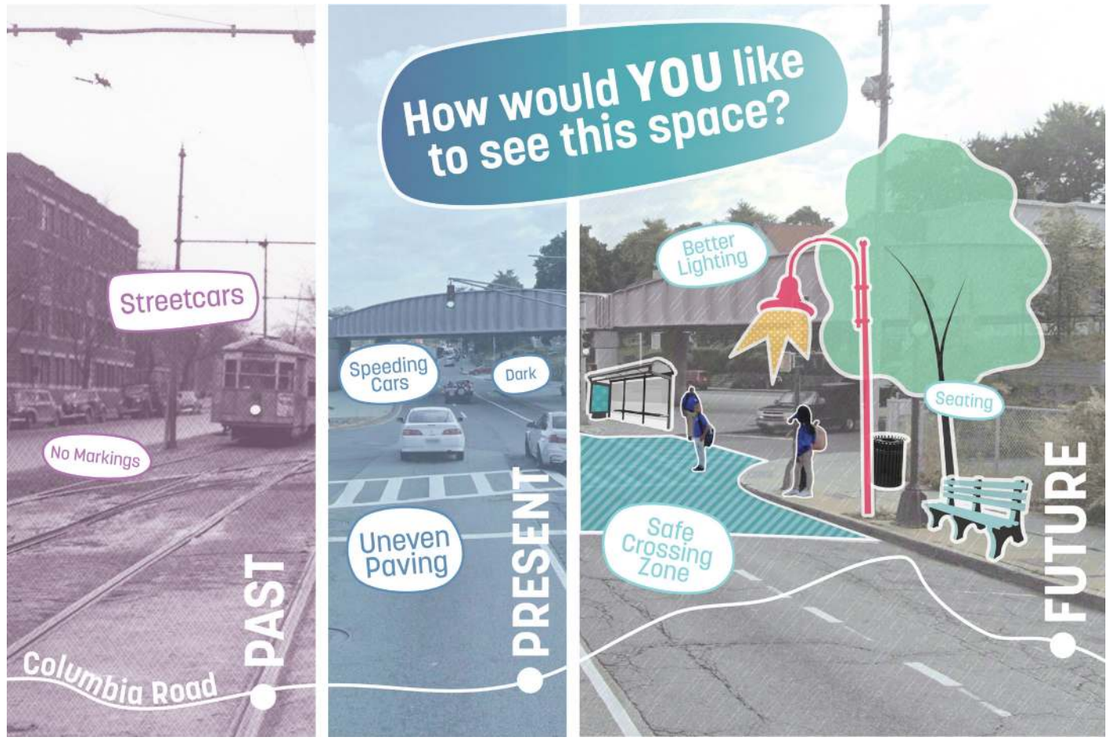
The Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative sits at the intersection between research, advocacy, and design. This project sought to understand the mobility limitations that stem from gender inequities and gendered experiences on the streets. The team examined how gender-disaggregated data can reveal mobility and design factors that address female, non-binary, and trans people's needs and experiences.

Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative

Maria de la Luz Lobos Martinez, Ambar Johnson, Kristiana Lachiusa, Denise Roman

The team recognizes that urban planning and design decisions have been made with a (non-existent) neutral person in mind. However, every person's mobility experience is unique.

Composed of advocates, academics, and community leaders, the team wants to create an equitable and welcoming Columbia Road. They understand that people—including all of their multiple identities—need to be at the center of the conversation and that we should all be able to move safely and comfortably throughout our neighborhoods.



Columbia Road, Past, Present, and Future | Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative in partnership with Sasaki

PUBLICITY

300

posters and flyers distributed in the community

OUTREACH

5

community members led outreach efforts as paid Street Ambassadors

OUTREACH

5

different engagement strategies launched online, over the phone, and on the street, in four different languages

ENGAGEMENT

198

individuals from the Boston area participated (as of Sepember 2021)

COMMUNITY

The Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative directly impacts residents of Dorchester. However, through the critical connection Columbia Road provides and through those who traverse it, indirectly this project impacts the communities of Roxbury, Mattapan, and all other adjacent neighborhoods and community groups.

According to the 2014-2018 American Community Survey, Dorchester's population is mainly Black and brown: 45.5% (57,531) Black/African American and 18.6% (23,574) Hispanic or Latino. Roxbury follows a similar trend with 50.2% (27,013) Black/African American and 31.1% (16,732) Hispanic or Latino. Also, 22.3% of Boston's impoverished residents live in Dorchester, while 13.9% live in Roxbury (BPDA, 2020). In the census tract adjacent to the corridor, there are 14,825 (51.53%/) women in contrast to 13,946 (48.47%) male inhabitants.

STAKEHOLDERS

Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, a nonprofit based in Columbia Road, has been the team's field agent, providing insights from the community and supporting outreach efforts, especially through their Resident Initiatives and Community Organizing programs.

The team met with the Boston Transportation Department on a monthly basis to continue to inform the department on ways to include community-led processes and expedite the process of short-term improvements requested by community members along Columbia Road.

The team developed a relationship with the Office of Councilor Mejia to provide mutual support to advocate for Columbia Road communities.

The team hired community residents as Street Ambassadors to support outreach efforts and ensure the participation of those who would not have otherwise been heard.

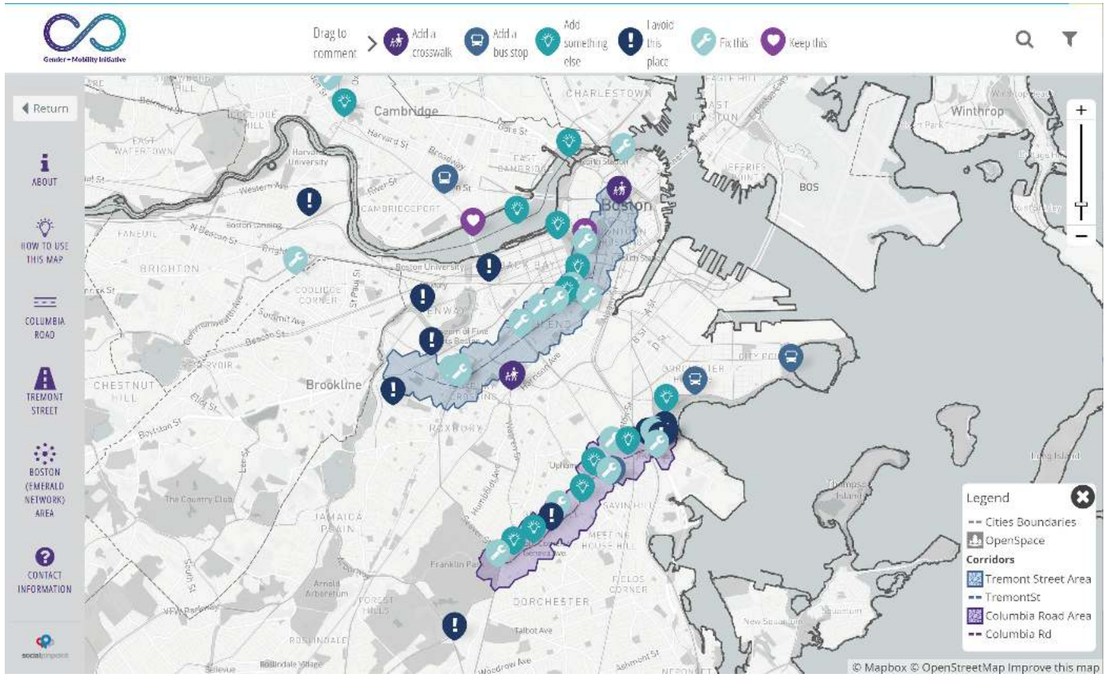
Through the Tisch College Community Research Center, Tufts University granted the team funds to do more extensive research, including a study of Tremont Street, to compare the gender experiences in different neighborhoods of Boston.

Rebecca Shakespeare, PhD, is a lecturer at the Tufts University Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning who participated as a main researcher.

IMPACT

The project has resulted in steady work with decision makers. The team has advocated for Columbia Road as a focus area for the Boston Transportation Department. Through this project they established monthly meetings between the Boston Transportation Department and LivableStreets Alliance to discuss how to better approach the corridor and share progress.

The project deployed Street Ambassadors. The team had five community members doing onsite outreach between June 14 and July 26, 2021. The Street Ambassador program was a paid part-time position to conduct surveys, promote the project, and share upcoming City of Boston projects and transportation-related news in the area. It included a training in gender, outreach strategies, advocacy, community organizing, and research ethics, which will help community members self-advocate for their neighborhood in the future.



Gender and Mobility Initiative Participatory Map | Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative

The project advanced local short-term projects. Small improvement projects identified by community members took place over summer 2021, including restriping of crosswalks, fixing sidewalks, and green infrastructure maintenance. The team will continue to prompt the City of Boston to finish the rest of these identified projects by the end of 2021.

The project provided language accessibility. Most of the project-related materials exist both in English and Spanish. The website, Street Ambassadors questionnaires, and participatory map are fully bilingual, and the team created an ongoing online survey in English, Spanish, Cape Verdean Creole, and Simplified Chinese, making the project inclusive to different communities.

The project created awareness about gender and mobility issues. The different aspects of the project have made people who did not wonder about gender impacts start talking about it. For instance, conversations with the Street Ambassadors created the opportunity for people to start thinking about gender and question what other aspects of their daily life are affected by such identity.

The team also planned and led the Ride for Us event on July 11, 2021, between Franklin Park and Ronan Park, riding through Columbia Road. This community bike ride was intended for female, non-binary, trans, and other gender-expansive people. It provided space for women to create a network with other biking women, share their experiences moving in the area, and learn to take care of their bikes. The team also was featured with a piece in the July 2021 MassMobility newsletter where they discussed raising awareness of the role of gender in transportation and mobility for an audience of practitioners in the state.

The project will inform the Columbia Road process with considerations related to gender. The team anticipates completing a set of participatory planning and design guidelines that summarize the feedback from the community by the end of November 2021. They expect those design guidelines will serve both as a self-advocacy tool for community members and organizations, as well as a guide for the City of Boston and the Boston Transportation Department, to make their planning process for the corridor more inclusive.

Inclusive process and engagement | Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative in partnership with Sasaki

For the long term, the team has been approaching different City of Boston departments and encouraging them to create a multi-department strategy. The team expects to engage several departments in a roundtable discussion of next steps for the corridor. As a result of this project, the team anticipates new transportation infrastructure on Columbia Road that tackles gender-specific issues, such as a lack of light. These infrastructure changes are expected to happen in line with the Go Boston 2030 and Imagine Boston 2030 plans.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

During community engagement, the team explained that the information collected would be used to inform the redesign of the corridor. However, many constituents were not aware that as of summer 2021, the Boston Transportation Department was considering completing a project on Columbia Road. Hence, part of the project effort shifted into advocating to include the community members in that conversation. The team is working to both raise awareness of the upcoming projects in the area and collect community feedback to inform those projects.

Besides English, the second most present language in the project area is Spanish. For this reason, the team translated all project-related materials into Spanish in order to reach this broader community.

During the grant period, the team came across people who were not sure how gender affects their mobility or urban design in general. In response, the team used the process to create awareness, and after conversations with individuals, those individuals appreciated and had a better understanding about urban gender issues.



Research/Lit Review

Gather existing knowledge and data regarding the corridor, gender identities, and transportation modes across the study area.



Community Engagement

Utilize various outreach methods to include members historically left out of engagement processes.



Co-design

Community members and partners use feedback to define project goals, vision, and needs to ensure Columbia Road is safe, equitable, and inclusive.



Design Guidelines

Community co-creates summary of interventions to improve gendered mobility to be used by the City and community members.



Future Corridor

Interventions, including mobility for all identities, are implemented! City stays in contact with residents for future improvements.

PROJECT VISIBILITY

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person interaction and traditional forms of marketing and engagement have been challenging. However, the team has been visible in the project's targeted communities by engaging in the Street Ambassador program, sharing the results and need for engagement through the project website, conducting outreach via social media, and scheduling meetings with impacted organizations and stakeholders. The team also created digital materials, such as flyers, posters, and other engagement tools, to make communities aware of their work.

COMMUNITY MILESTONES

The project contributed to several significant milestones in the community.

The team launched the Gender and Mobility Initiative website, which aims to share the project with community members, providing four different ways to engage using online platforms. The team shared the context of Columbia Road's historical urban processes and suggested other resources to learn more about gender identity or to seek social support within the Boston area.

In summer 2021, the team had a group of Street Ambassadors talking with community members, both in English and Spanish, about their perceptions and needs for Columbia Road, to encourage people to participate in their neighborhood's coming changes.

The project ultimately contributes to the development of the Columbia Road Greenway project stated in Go Boston 2030. The team participated in meetings for both Moakley and Franklin Parks and focused on understanding how those plans are tied to both Columbia Road as a physical space and also to the community that lives around it. The team also proposed a two-year plan for the Boston Transportation Department to do meaningful engagement in the corridor.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE FOUNDATION

The project contributes to the Sasaki Foundation's mission by blurring the lines between practice and research. Through short- and long-term academic research, it will inform tangible outcomes in the Columbia Road street redesign.

The team facilitated a discourse about dismantling gender roles and binaries in the built environment among people previously unfamiliar with these concepts as well as with subject matter experts, engaging all in envisioning how to make the Columbia Road community welcoming for all. Overall, the project is contributing to bringing better walking, biking, and transit connectivity to the Columbia Road corridor, regardless of age, race, income, or gender.

NEXT STEPS

The team will continue to collect data through surveys and interviews through at least the end of 2021. The team will summarize and share this information with community members in the form of infographics and in two academic papers planned for release in 2022.

LivableStreets Alliance will continue to engage Columbia Road residents and lead discussions with the Boston Transportation Department as well as other City of Boston departments and agencies to support communication between both stakeholders during the visioning and design process of Columbia Road.



Bike ride for gender equity in Columbia Road on July 11, 2021 | Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative



Bike ride for gender equity in Columbia Road on July 11, 2021 | Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative

SPONSOR ORGANIZATIONS

LivableStreets Alliance envisions a world where streets are safe, vibrant public spaces that connect people to the places where they live, work, and play. They advocate for practical, people-centered transportation systems in Metro Boston that can dismantle invisible barriers that divide neighborhoods, communities, and people.

Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation acts to build a strong, thriving, and diverse community in Boston's Dorchester neighborhoods. Working closely with neighborhoods, residents, businesses, and partners, they access resources to develop and preserve home ownership and rental housing across income levels, create and sustain economic development opportunities for businesses and individuals, and build community through organizing, civic engagement, and leadership development.

STAY CONNECTED

www.gendermobility.com

www.livablestreets.info

www.dbedc.org

LivableStreets

@StreetsBoston

RESEARCH TEAM



Maria de la Luz (Luli) Lobos Martinez *(she/her/ella)* | team leader

Luli Lobos Martinez is an architecture and landscape designer who works as the Mobility and Environmental Systems Analyst at LivableStreets Alliance. Through her experience in data analysis and mapping storytelling, she works towards gender justice and ecological resilience. Her practice and research centers on environmental justice, mobility infrastructures, and actively engaging community members.



Ambar Johnson *(she/her)*

Ambar Johnson is the Program Director for LivableStreets Alliance, managing all aspects of the Emerald Network, a vision for 200 miles of seamless greenways through the Metro Boston region. Ambar's work is guided by her belief that transportation is freedom to create abundant, safe, and accessible infrastructure and options.



Kristiana Lachiusa *(she/her)*

Kristiana Lachiusa is the Director of Transit and Outreach at LivableStreets Alliance. Kristiana brings her experience leading community engagement campaigns in municipalities across the Metro Boston region. These campaigns have been served through her development of the LivableStreets Alliance paid Street Ambassador program that monetarily values community expertise and brings in the voices of those who are not typically part of the planning process.



Denise Roman *(she/her/ella)*

Denise Roman is the Resident Service Coordinator at Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation and the residents organizer for the Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative with LivableStreets Alliance.



Codman Square map | Economic Development in Codman Square in partnership with Sasaki

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

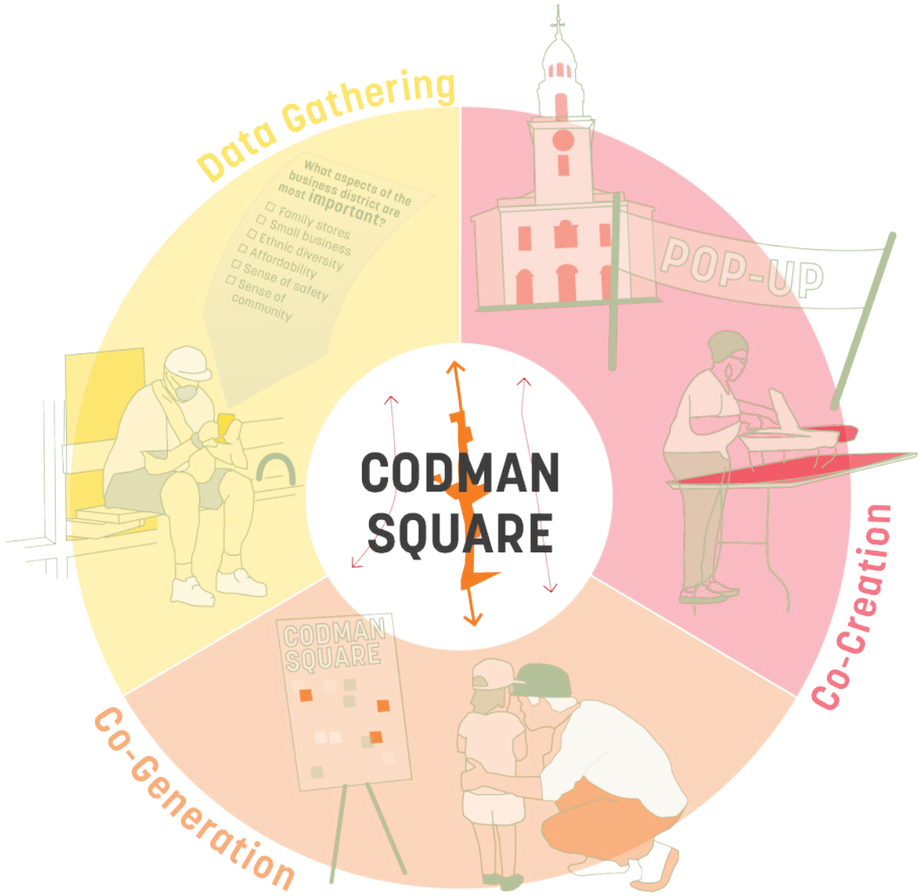
The Corcoran Center Urban Action Lab developed recommendations over the course of the 2020-2021 academic year as part of an ongoing project, supported by a Sasaki Foundation Design Grant, to strengthen the Codman Square Business District. Students and professors from the Corcoran Center for Real Estate and Urban Action conducted research in several forms to ensure the proposals for economic development considered legitimate neighborhood input and reflected neighborhood data. These methods of study included interviews with local businesses, an anonymous residential survey, a vacancy analysis, a demographic study, and several meetings with local community-based organizations.

Economic Development in Codman Square

Neil McCullagh, Taylor Perkins, Lynn Sanders, Charles Vlahakis

Realizing the strengths and potential opportunities for growth and development, the research team sought to reinforce strengths and build on opportunities that are generated from expressed community interests. With design thinking and emergent strategy at the core of the project, the team co-created a series of prototype recommendations that are representative of ideas that are low cost, implementable across a short time window, and tests of ideas and concepts that can be improved and scaled as practical. Prototypes provide an opportunity to explore what works and what is responsive and acceptable to a given context.

Through prototyping and reinforcing projects that demonstrate incremental success, programs can be implemented. The recommended economic development prototypes center on three core themes: mobilize the business district; encourage homegrown businesses; and give them a reason to stay. These prototypes present a strong foundation for community stakeholders, mobilized by Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation (CSNDC) and supported by Boston College, to advance community-led economic development in Codman Square.



Codman Square project process | Economic Development in Codman Square in partnership with Sasaki

ENGAGEMENT

9

business owners participated

ENGAGEMENT

100

individuals responded to the community survey

OUTREACH

4

meetings took place with community groups

ENGAGEMENT

600

area residents received the residential survey

COMMUNITY

Codman Square is a central business district of the Codman Square section of the neighborhood of Dorchester in Boston, Massachusetts. The Codman Square Business District comprises storefront businesses that serve the neighborhood and daytime visitors to the community.

The racial composition of the neighborhood is changing. For those who identify as white, Black, and Asian, all of these groups have shrunk as an overall percentage of the neighborhood population (white alone -0.6%, Black alone -2.10%, Asian -0.1%) . Those who identify as Hispanic have grown significantly as a percentage of the neighborhood's total population (Hispanic origin any race +4.0%) in the last ten years. Of those who identify as other race or two or more races, these groups have also increased.

STAKEHOLDERS

While there were no additional stakeholders for the project beyond the CSNDC, in the future it will be important to engage with the City of Boston and other stakeholders to advance economic development prototypes.

IMPACT

This project has created a set of economic development prototypes that are deeply informed by the community, and are immediately implementable by CSNDC and other community stakeholders. Each prototype ties to long-term goals but will allow for the flexibility to shift based on the results of implementation and ongoing community feedback. As of summer 2021, CSNDC's economic development team began efforts to advance prototypes from the theme of mobilizing the business district, with support from a Boston College summer intern.

1. BUSINESS SUPPORT ORGANIZATION: Mobilize the Business District

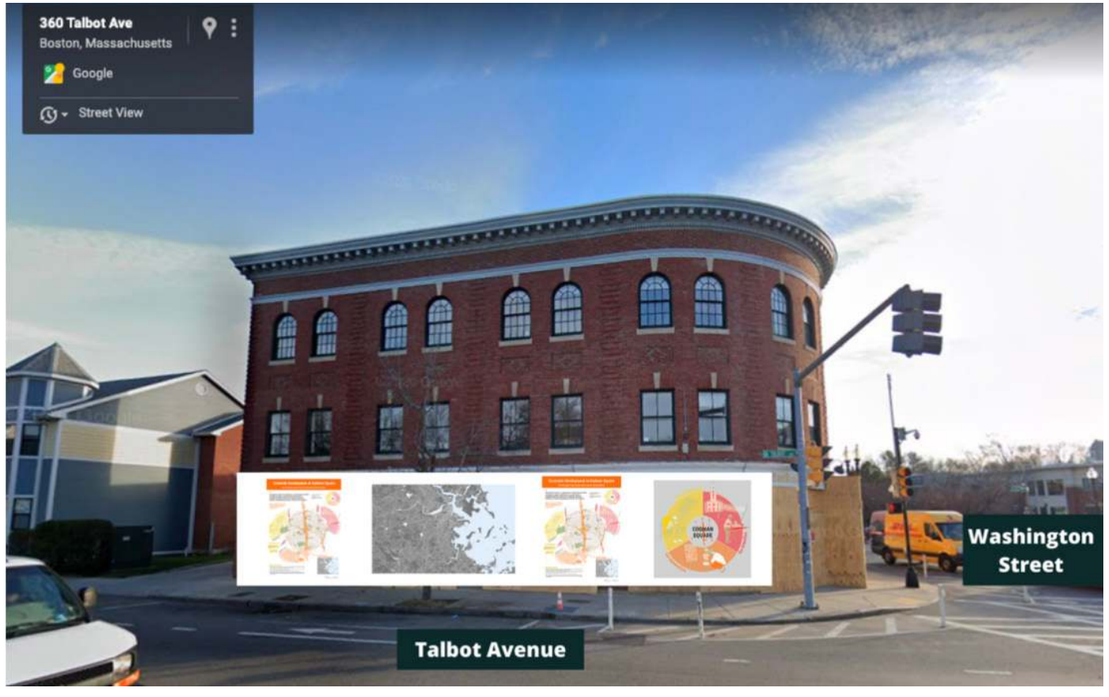
Central to a plan to mobilize actions to improve the Codman Square Business District is the development of a business working group which is supported by business owners.

- **Mobilize a group of business leaders that are willing to initiate actions to strengthen business in the district.**

  This organization can serve as a point of focus for Codman Square Business District needs and communicate the business district's point of view to the City of Boston and the state.

- **Prepare a Buy-in-Codman initiative that informs the City of Boston regarding business and product availability in the Codman Square primary trade area. Present all Codman Square businesses to relevant City of Boston departments that engage in procurement activities.**

  In keeping with recent analysis that less than 3% of City of Boston procurement went to businesses run by people of color, this initiative can support and advance the City of Boston's interest in supporting local businesses.



A potential location for placemaking activities in Codman Square | Google Maps/Economic Development in Codman Square

- **Support existing businesses in the Codman Square Business District by beautifying shopping areas.**

  In the short term, this can be accomplished by developing a team dedicated to ongoing cleaning and maintenance in the Codman Square Business District. This could be implemented with youth in the community.

2. SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Encourage homegrown businesses

One of the underlying sentiments through all business interviews and resident responses is respect for community businesses, locally-owned businesses, and Black-owned businesses.

- **Encourage and incentivize local entrepreneurial development by providing regular entrepreneurship workshops. Develop a sustained plan for entrepreneurial mentorship.**

  Identify an expert partner with a program and a track record of sustained entrepreneurial development and coordinate a space and regular meetings.

- **Develop a restaurant incubator that will help bridge the growth of food businesses created at home or in a shared kitchen to a more formalized business model.**

  Food services comprise the employment of nearly 24% of the jobs of the entire district. Caribbean food is a specialty for the neighborhood.

3. PLACEMAKING: Give them a reason to stay

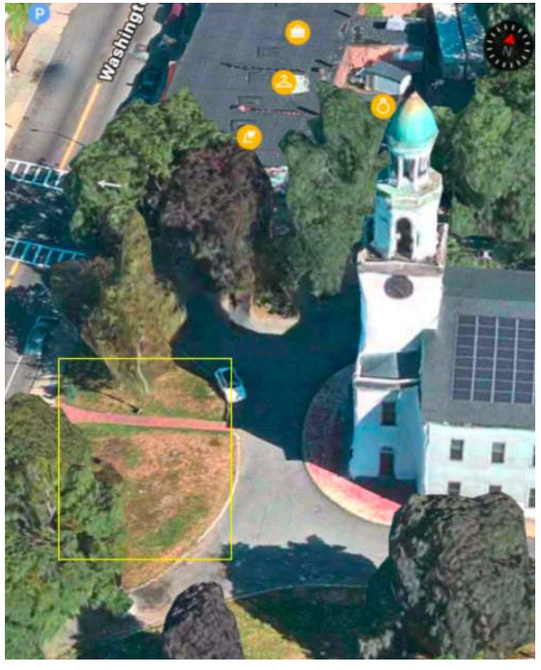
The Codman Square Business District has a specific culture which businesses and residents wish to preserve.

- **Increase use of existing outdoor space by creating places for people to meet, to congregate, and to eat.**

  When asked in the resident survey what the pros were to shopping in Codman Square, the options chosen least were "open space and public amenities" and "a nice shopping environment." Creating more active public spaces will contribute to this feeling. This can be accomplished simply by placing a small number of picnic tables in a public park.



A renovated sidewalk in Boston | Google Maps



A potential open space in Codman Square | Google Maps/Economic Development in Codman Square

- **Coordinate a regular street-closing event that creates a pedestrian mall on a dedicated weekday night or weekend time.**

  One of the most successful local annual events in the district is the summer Caribbean Jerk Festival. Developing a means of engaging the community more frequently with similar events will create more connection with the community and a more active business district.

- **Create a planning initiative to develop a set of voluntary guidelines for storefronts for the Codman Square Business District, and develop a streetscape and greening vision that advances public safety and walking with the defined purpose of increasing pedestrian use and access to the Codman Square Business District.**

  Resident survey respondents identified top priorities such as "storefront improvements" and "public space improvements and outdoor seating areas."

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

The project team focused on deeply engaging with the Codman Square community. The CSNDC invited all businesses in the district to participate in the team's business-owner interviews, and sent out the residential survey, which included an overview of the entire project, to more than 600 area residents. Additionally, the project team met with several community groups to share the project narrative and findings and collect community members' feedback and ideas.

PROJECT VISIBILITY

During summer 2021, CSNDC, with the support of a Boston College Corcoran Center summer intern, undertook a prototype effort around mobilizing the business district. The intern spearheaded a Buy-in-Codman campaign that issued frequent shopper cards to local merchants. Shoppers could receive a $25 gift card for shopping locally a minimum number of times. The intern then produced research and analysis and presented to local business leaders, highlighting the potential for a business district association. As of fall 2021 the group of business leaders has continued to form with ongoing support and partnership from the Boston College Corcoran Center Urban Action Lab.

Overall, the medium- and long-term goals of this project—creating economic development—will be visible as a more vibrant Codman Square, featuring more businesses, an enhanced streetscape, and active leadership by local entrepreneurs and business owners.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE FOUNDATION

This project actively and meaningfully engaged the Codman Square community around essential questions related to the future of the neighborhood. It utilized academic expertise to amplify and enliven community voices rather than impose upon them. The project has created a series of economic development prototypes that leverage the strengths of the design thinking process and emergent strategy, allowing for the community, mobilized by CSNDC, to chart a course forward that is both effective and adaptive, as well as continuously informed by engagement and dialogue with community members and stakeholders.

NEXT STEPS

Boston College funded a summer intern placed directly at CSNDC, who worked to assist as they implemented prototypes. CSNDC has begun efforts around mobilizing the business district, with ongoing support and partnership from the Corcoran Center Urban Action Lab.

SPONSOR ORGANIZATIONS

The **Joseph E. Corcoran Center for Real Estate and Urban Action** leverages a multidisciplinary approach to cultivate discussions and develop actions that foster community transformation. In accordance with the mission of Boston College, The Corcoran Center aims to develop the next generation of ethical real estate professionals by educating and inspiring students, alumni, and other key stakeholders so they may harness real estate as a catalyst for needed change in areas where the marginalization of vulnerable citizens is most severe, and enact broad scope solutions to neighborhoods of concentrated poverty.

The mission of the **Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation (CSNDC)** is to build a cohesive and resilient community in Codman Square and South Dorchester, develop affordable housing and commercial spaces that are safe and sustainable, and promote economic stability for low- and moderate-income residents of all ages.

STAY CONNECTED

www.bc.edu/realestate (see: Urban Action Lab)

www.csndc.com

RESEARCH TEAM



Neil McCullagh, MBA, MPA | team leader

Neil McCullagh is Executive Director of the Carroll School of Management's Joseph E. Corcoran Center for Real Estate and Urban Action and a lecturer at Boston College. Neil Earned an MPA from Harvard University, an MBA from Boston University, and a BA from Boston College.



Taylor Perkins, EdM

Taylor Perkins is Associate Director of the Corcoran Center and teaches the Urban Action Lab course in the Carroll School of Management. Taylor earned an EdM from Harvard University and a BA from Amherst College.



Lynn Sanders

Lynn Sanders is Director of Economic Development at Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation.



Charles Vlahakis

Charles Vlahakis is a small business development specialist at Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation.



The Mattapan Mapping Project is a community-based initiative that collects and shares resident stories alongside quantitative and spatial data about how Mattapan is changing with respect to development, policy and planning, and community organizing. By providing diverse, relevant, and coherent information on a single open-source online platform, the project seeks to empower residents to take civic action and advocate for equitable policy and urban development.

The Mattapan Mapping Project

Allentza Michel, Fatima Ali-Salaam, Barry Fradkin, Laurie Goldman, Cecley Hill, Sasha Hulkower, Kayla Patel, Lily Song

The Mattapan Mapping Tool is a creative and user-friendly online mapping tool designed to track nuanced data—demographic and land use statistics, audio and video files, cognitive maps, alternative housing, and land use typologies—that affirm and amplify the place-knowing and spatial claims and aspirations of community members.

Participatory action research and community capacity building around data gathering, analysis, visualization, and narratives seeks to shift extractive practices of knowledge production and scholarship led by outsiders to democratic modes of knowledge creation and applied learning which are contextual, participatory, and change-oriented.

Participatory planning engages Mattapan community members in using multi-faceted data to inform and educate other residents, neighborhood and civic leaders, organizational and institutional representatives, researchers, planners, designers, policymakers, and city staff about displacement pressures and advocates for equitable development in Mattapan.

Since cultivating community knowledge for influential action is an emergent process, the project proceeds in three iterative phases:

- Community-informed Design: Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council members and other residents informed the initial design of the tools and the prioritization of data collection.
- Community-engaged and Empowering: Residents are collecting and interpreting data to inform community education, planning, and advocacy while mobilizing their neighbors to join the effort.
- Community Ownership: Ultimately, Mattapan residents will co-lead the project to foster ongoing community learning that shapes Mattapan's future while honoring its past and celebrating the present.

Greater Mattapan graphic | The Mattapan Mapping Project in partnership with Sasaki

ENGAGEMENT

100+

community members connected through multiple outreach channels

ENGAGEMENT

20

college students trained in community engagement strategies



Team members on a community walk in Mattapan | The Mattapan Mapping Project

COMMUNITY

Mattapan's resident population is most affected by the work from this grant. Mattapan is home to one of Boston's most diverse and culturally rich communities. Of Mattapan residents, 84% identify as people of color and immigrants; 74% identify as Black, 15% as Hispanic or Latinx, 2% as Asian, and 3% as other. Whites comprise just 6% of the neighborhood population, compared to 46% for Boston. The neighborhood has large percentages of youth and elders compared to other Boston neighborhoods.

Mattapan is one of Boston's most affordable neighborhoods, making ownership opportunities more accessible. Mattapan's median household income figure is $51,873 compared to $65,000 for Boston. Of Mattapan households, 68% have a lower income than the Boston average. Yet Mattapan has a higher owner-occupied housing rate (36.23%) compared to citywide averages (35%). The median home value for Mattapan is $710,000, compared to Boston's $880,558 (MA Association of Realtors, 2019).

STAKEHOLDERS

In addition to the community groups the team has engaged on an ongoing basis, other stakeholders include government agencies such as the Boston Transportation Department (BTD), Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), and Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA).

Nonprofit regional organizations like LivableStreets Alliance also are involved as intermediaries for Mattapan-based organizations such as Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition. Related, there are a number of external groups that have expressed an interest to purchase and invest in land and property in Mattapan, from academia (the Corcoran Center at Boston College) to financial investment entities such as MassDevelopment and the Business Equity Initiative.

The team is also engaging with philanthropies and quasi-public agencies who have expressed interest in championing the project.

IMPACT

In the short term, the team is developing a beta version of the Mattapan Mapping Tool with ongoing feedback from team members, Mattapan residents, and other critical stakeholders.This creative and user-friendly online mapping tool will include diverse, relevant, and coherent data forms, including spatial data about the housing stock, land use trends, and development projects. The team is also gathering more nuanced data such as oral histories (intergenerational stories told by residents directly about their experiences of neighborhood change and activism); photo images of sites of significance; gentrification indicators; development projects; video interviews of residents, business owners, and other community stakeholders; and audio evidence of neighborhood change including sounds of construction, parks, and more.

ENGAGEMENT

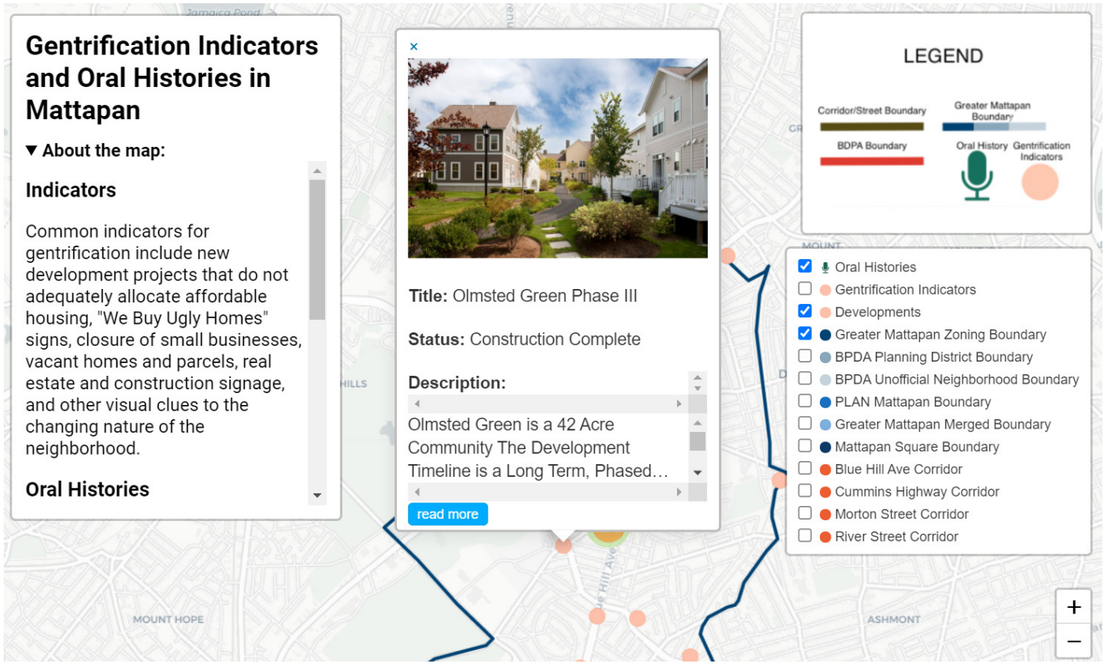
4

interviews took place for oral histories

ANALYSIS

84%

of community members identify as people of color and immigrants



Mattapan Mapping Tool prototype | The Mattapan Mapping Project

In the medium term, the team intends to pilot the Mattapan Mapping Tool as an embedded community device for neighborhood advocacy and action. Through an iterative design research process, they will track the use of the mapping tool by the Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council (GMNC) and other community members by developing assessment tools. This includes (but is not limited to) using rubrics to measure stakeholder inputs into the mapping tool over time, and the diversity of stakeholder participants. They also will monitor the indicators (i.e., data entries), and make updates and adjustments as needed. To inform the learning and impact benefits of the tool, once built, the team also will hold training and feedback sessions (beginning summer 2021), both with community members and planning and design practitioners. This will allow the team to transition from the immediate goals of establishing community-informed digital infrastructure, to instead, engaging residents as co-designers in the development process. By the end of 2022, the team aims to pilot the Mattapan Mapping Tool as an embedded community device for neighborhood advocacy and action.

In the longer term, the team intends to integrate the Mattapan Mapping Tool with participatory action research and community capacity building around data gathering, analysis, visualization, and narratives, as well as participatory planning incorporating data. Over the following five to ten years, the team envisions data-informed, community-led decision making around infrastructure investment, public policy, and urban redevelopment in Mattapan, delivering neighborhood improvements that increase quality of life, safety, health and wellness, and wealth among long-term residents, multigenerational households, and newer community members alike. Such Mattapan-based efforts and changes would not work in isolation but rather be strategically networked and coordinated with community-driven activism, policy advocacy, and participatory planning across the city and region for development without displacement.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

A distinct and defining attribute of the Mattapan Mapping Project is its integration with community-based organizations and leadership by Mattapan-based activists and equity organizers. The primary community-based partner and stakeholder for the Mattapan Mapping Project is the GMNC. Co-founded in 2018 by team members Fatima Ali-Salaam and Allentza Michel along with other Mattapan resident leaders, the volunteer-led GMNC seeks to support residents of Greater Mattapan to achieve a balanced and sustainable neighborhood. The GMNC organizes subcommittees that determine and negotiate community benefits and opportunities with developers, and convenes monthly community meetings. The team also has engaged with local anchors including Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition and Vigorous Youth, neighborhood civic associations, and other city officials and community members.

A core approach to this research is participatory action research—a method that directly involves community members in the development of research and implementation of the tool. It requires added work of teaching and training non-researchers in research methods, but leads to more impactful results as it enables users to directly co-design, participate, and disseminate the information developed from the initiative. An important overarching goal of this project is to advance participatory action research in the field of urban research and give more credence to the notion that community members must be centered in a process for it to be equitable. Further, it ensures that the long-term outcomes of the product and the product design itself is reflective of local vision and goals.



Oral History graphic | The Mattapan Mapping Project in partnership with Sasaki

PROJECT VISIBILITY

The project team has publicized project happenings across Mattapan neighborhood web channels, conducted a number of interpersonal interviews, hosted group sessions, and participated in meetings to increase the mapping tool's visibility within the community. As of fall 2021, work with residents continues through oral history interviews, field walks to gauge key highlights for more focused research, participation in GMNC committee meetings, and user testing sessions for residents to test out the prototype of the mapping tool.

Looking forward, the tool also will be a vehicle to promote the voice of the community, to bring humanity and vibrancy to the mapping process. It serves to allow the community to tell and set their own narrative about the neighborhood. The team will do this by integrating media for several purposes, ranging from oral histories of intergenerational stories told by residents regarding their experiences in the community, to visuals of sites of significance, gentrification indicators, development projects, and even audio evidence of neighborhood change (such as sounds of construction or parks). To gather this varied data from residents, the team envisions this tool embedded in local sites of importance like schools, libraries, religious spaces, businesses, and more, to ensure that all Mattapan neighbors feel empowered to use this tool as one of individual and collective expression.

COMMUNITY MILESTONES

The Mattapan Mapping Project has achieved a number of milestones over the course of the grant period. The team has connected with more than 100 community members through their various outreach channels, partnered with over a dozen students at local academic institutions like the Harvard University Graduate School of Design and Tufts University, and worked to meet with each sub-committee on the Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council to ensure a range of represented actors.

Among these milestones are the following:

- Held an additional four interviews for oral histories
- Conducted a focus group with youth
- Presented at the Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council
- Organized a seminar with Harvard GSD, which involved community members
- Participating in ongoing meetings with the GMNC Steering and Public Services Committees
- Attended a plethora of local development project and planning meetings
- Created prototypes for community workshops using various technologies such as CoMap
- Partnered with the Co-Design project student team at Harvard GSD to conduct land use analysis
- Organized a pre-walk as preparation for an interactive field exercise with residents
- Performed ongoing research and community outreach
- Established a team of volunteers to assist in the building out of the Mattapan Mapping Tool with Code for Boston
- Participating in ongoing meetings with city agencies to build trust and understanding with one another

ALIGNMENT WITH THE FOUNDATION

The Mattapan Mapping Project uses design to address some of "the most urgent challenges facing us, from social equity to environmental resilience." More specifically, it addresses the problem of green gentrification and displacement induced by transit, bikeways, and other infrastructure and urban redevelopment projects in Mattapan that disproportionately affect low-income households and communities of color. The team seeks to increase access to design through a participatory approach to developing the mapping tool, building research capacity, and informing community-engaged planning and development processes. The team embodies collective decision making for collective impact at every step of their processes. This project not only lies at the intersection of research, practice, and community, the composition of the team melds the boundaries that separate practice and research, academia and industry, the profession and the public.

NEXT STEPS

With each month and year the project progresses and resident engagement grows. Interestingly, the team is also gaining in popularity with external growth, which is encouraging. The intention in building the Mattapan Mapping Tool is that the bulk of its impact will take place once the team has completed the development phase and the tool is more fully in the hands of the community. Using the range of nuanced data housed within the tool, residents, community members, and other stakeholders will hold the knowledge and information necessary to advocate effectively for equitable policy. Beyond providing its users with information that is typically scattered and difficult to track, the Mattapan Mapping Tool will keep its users alerted to any potential or upcoming development projects in the neighborhood—information that will be shared alongside the data and narrative accounts necessary to advocate against potentially harmful development.

One of the central tenets of the Mattapan Mapping Project has been the ongoing engagement with the GMNC. As the team continues to meet with the various subcommittees, they will continue to survey these community leaders to identify and prioritize the information needed to influence existing proposals and to build out their own campaigns and initiatives. For example, during the March 2021 meeting with the Public Services Committee, the team identified several traffic and transportation related issues and proposed solutions.

Through their ongoing collaboration with the committee, the team is working to gather, organize, and map data requested specifically by those community leaders. This includes the history, successes, and failures of local transportation activism; first hand accounts from cyclists about dangers and near misses and from drivers about congestion and traffic; and community-sourced input on desired bus stop locations or feedback about existing ones.

Through the participatory action research and community capacity building portion of this project, the team will ensure that the community will eventually hold complete control of the data and information central to their advocacy. Having been engaged from the very beginnings of this project, community members will possess the tools necessary to advance equitable policy and uplift and continually engage community voices in the process.

SPONSOR ORGANIZATIONS

Powerful Pathways is a public interest consultancy rooted in social practice that blends policy development, urban planning, and social impact design principles. Their services fill the gap for businesses, nonprofit organizations, and public and design agencies by advancing innovative solutions that drive economic, environmental, and social change.

Established in October 2018 with a unanimous resident vote, the **Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council** "promotes a viable neighborhood economy to support affordable and mixed-income residential homes while protecting our natural resources for our community."

STAY CONNECTED

www.powerfulpathways.org/gentrification-intervention-prevention-open-source-portal

www.g-mnc.org

RESEARCH TEAM



Allentza Michel | team leader

Allentza Michel is an urban planner, artist, policy advocate, and researcher with a background in community organizing. Her 20 years of diverse experience across community economic development, education, food security, public health, and transportation inform her current work in civic design, community and organizational development, and social equity.



Fatima Ali-Salaam

Fatima Ali-Salaam, Chair of the Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council, has been a Mattapan resident for more than 40 years. She is a software solutions architect, having worked in the commercial engineering and healthcare industries. Her passion for creating systems to improve work environments has dovetailed into improving systems that empower neighbors to not be overshadowed by ineffective policies and processes.



Barry Fradkin

Barry Fradkin is a community planning analyst at JM Goldson, a Boston-based preservation and planning consulting firm. His work in Massachusetts focuses on housing affordability and comprehensive planning, in addition to historic preservation and open space conservation. Barry specializes in spatial data visualization and analysis, including web-based mapping platforms.



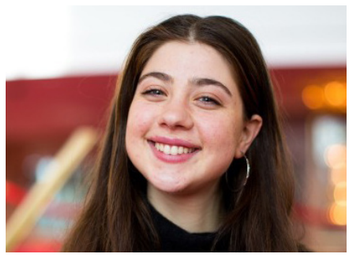
Laurie Goldman, PhD

Laurie Goldman is a senior lecturer in the Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University. Her teaching and research explore how dynamics within and across organizations influence policy and planning practice, especially creative approaches to equity-driven change. She engages in anti-displacement activism and participatory action research in Somerville, Massachusetts.



Cecley Hill

Cecley Hill is a recent graduate of the Harvard University Graduate School of Design with a master's degree in urban planning, working as a research and placemaking coordinator at Powerful Pathways. Cecley holds a bachelor of arts in architecture and dance from Columbia University and aims to create more sustainable, resilient, and just communities through her work.



Sasha Hulkower

Sasha Hulkower recently graduated from Tufts University with a bachelor of arts in American studies, focusing on art and civic engagement. As outreach coordinator at Powerful Pathways, Sasha draws on more than six years of experience working with diverse communities in the fields of education, placemaking, and the arts to engage key community members and stakeholders in a range of projects.



Kayla Patel

Kayla Patel is a master's candidate at Tufts University's Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning Program interested in using research and coursework to support equitable ecological and social resilience in cities. She works as a research assistant for the Mattapan Mapping Project. Kayla also holds a bachelor of science in ecology, behavior, and evolution from UCLA.



Dr. Lily Song

Dr. Lily Song is an urban planner and scholar activist. Her research, teaching, and practice focus on infrastructure-based mobilizations and experiments that center the experiences and insights of frontline communities and organizers as bases for reparative planning and design in American cities and other decolonizing contexts.

Design Grants Alumni

Charles River Floating Wetland

The Charles River Floating Wetland, a 2018 Design Grants winner, explores an ecological intervention to reduce harmful algal blooms in the Charles, which threaten the river's health and limit the feasibility of swimming. Reducing nutrient pollution remains a vital method for preventing blooms, but this approach depends on increasingly complex solutions. Ecological interventions, like the floating wetland, offer an alternative and complementary strategy. Experiments have shown that for water bodies like the Charles, algal blooms can be understood as a symptom of a broken food chain. The project aims to strengthen the missing link—zooplankton populations—by providing additional wetland habitat.

In June 2020, in partnership with MassDCR, the team installed the floating wetland in the Charles River in Cambridge downriver of the Longfellow Bridge. As of fall 2021, the floating wetland has experienced a year's worth of growth with a significant increase in plant density, and can grow approximately 200 grams of plants per square foot. The team spent summer 2021 collecting data, which they will study in depth over winter 2021 ahead of a second summer of data collection.

In summer 2021, the Charles River Conservancy (CRC) also partnered with the Cambridge Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP). MSYEP students worked closely with the CRC to learn about the floating wetland, share their learned knowledge, and collect community feedback on the project. With significant feedback collected onsite, students formed teams to brainstorm thoughtful and imaginative designs that will inform floating wetland project expansion.

Learn more at thecharles.org/floating-wetlands.



Close up of the Charles River Floating Wetland, October 6, 2021 | Charles River Conservancy

Rentify Chinatown

Rentify Chinatown, a 2019 Design Grants winner, understands Boston's Chinatown is at risk of gentrification and displacement, which exacerbates the loss of identity and memory. In response, Rentify Chinatown aims to leverage the joint power of data analytics, digital tools, and in-depth interviews to document and explain the place-based identity of Chinatown. The team has created a shared database of quantitative and qualitative data for Boston's Chinatown community organizations and offers insights about local identity challenges and opportunities in the neighborhood.

The team also developed WOW Chinatown, a crowdsourcing mapping tool embedded in WeChat—the messaging application widely used among Chinatown residents. In early 2021, the Rentify Chinatown research team, along with Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center and Pao Art Center, introduced this tool to residents and their friends and families, encouraging individuals to identify, post, and share their memories and sentiments about specific locations in Chinatown.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the team believes it is extremely urgent to create an outlet for the community to engage and express their opinions online. This tool will also help understand residents' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, and their perception about the changes in Chinatown. The target audience is both Chinatown residents and anyone with an association to Chinatown, including tourists, visitors, shoppers, and people who work in Chinatown.

WOW Chinatown can be searched and launched on the WeChat platform as "Rentify."

G{Code}

G{Code}, a 2018 Design Grants winner, is working towards equity and social justice by providing young female and non-binary people of color interested in pursuing careers in tech with foundational needs such as housing, inclusive communities, quality education, and expanded access to economic opportunity. Boston is a city of great opportunity but also geographic and demographic inequity. This drastically impacts young female and non-binary people of color: while many programs benefit them during their high school years, post-high school options are limited. G{Code} programming empowers those who are aging out of other services to explore their next steps and pursue careers as change makers in the tech industry.

In summer 2021, G{Code} celebrated the graduation of the third Intro to G{Code} cohort. This course is a free 10-week program designed to give female and non-binary people of color between the ages of 18 to 25 first exposure to coding to uncover interest and aptitude in tech in a supportive, inclusive, and safe environment. In this most recent cohort, 70% of graduates have gone on to participate in training and fellowship programs, joining the previous 20+ Intro to G{Code} graduates who have gone on to pursue careers in tech.

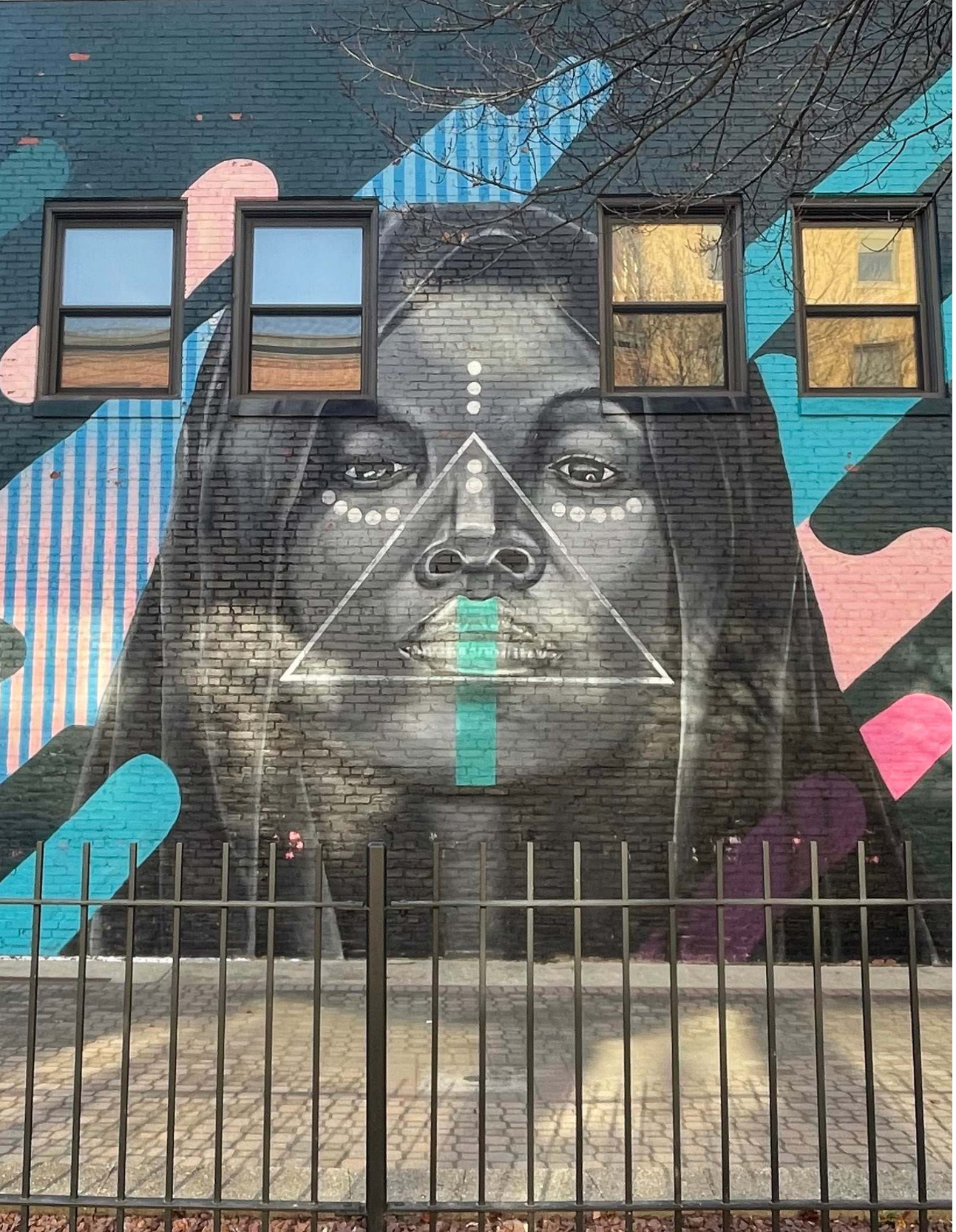


Intro to G{Code} program | G{Code}

G{Code} has also made enormous progress fundraising, most recently with a $450,000 commitment from The Willow Tree Fund to support programming and help fund phase one of the G{Code} House construction. The G{Code} Carriage House will serve as a tech center and media lab for programming and foster connection with the greater community. An IFundWomen crowdfunding campaign running through the end of 2021 aims to close the funding gap for the Carriage House.

Learn more and get involved at thegcodehouse.com.

Mobility Innovator



Mobility Innovator

The Mobility Innovator was a year-long initiative in 2020 to address mobility challenges in the Boston region through the lenses of resiliency and equity.

The project, funded by the Barr Foundation and in partnership with Sasaki, sought to understand how to better connect communities of color and low-income communities to jobs, social networks, daily needs, and amenities by improving and augmenting existing and emerging transportation networks. It explored how to better leverage technology to identify gaps in current mobility options, including bike and pedestrian pattern analysis and public safety of mobility choices. The project also investigated how amenity-oriented development can achieve a higher share of retail, food, service, entertainment, and social trips on foot.

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, a portion of the Mobility Innovator was delayed into 2021.

Funded by and in partnership with:

Barr Foundation

SASAKI

Mural by Cedric "Vise" Douglas and Julez Roth in Lynn, Massachusetts | Sasaki

get [t]here

The Sasaki Foundation, in partnership with Sasaki, created get [t]here. This website explores the challenges of mobility access in Gateway Cities around Greater Boston, specifically in Lynn and Malden.

Through an interactive survey circulated in fall 2020, get [t]here provided community members an opportunity to express their mobility priorities and observe how projects and policies can support their needs. The team summarized the results of these needs in an online story map that indicates which priorities, projects, and policies could be most impactful to each community. The team then overlaid existing datasets to the online map to highlight potential strategies and opportunities for improving those conditions. We hope this tool can align expressed needs with investment opportunities and muster the political will to equitably invest in mobility infrastructure in communities that have historically lacked, or been denied, quality mobility infrastructure.

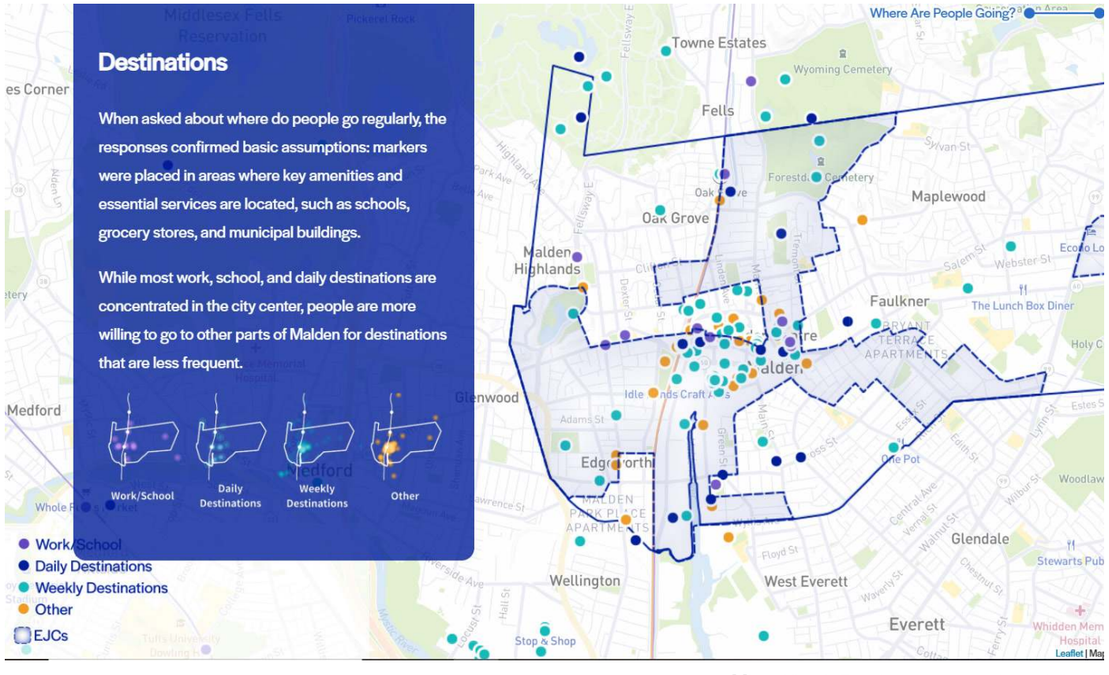
Explore the site at visualizations.sasaki.com/get-there.

Transit Access Research

The Sasaki Foundation partnered with Andres Svetsuk of the City Form Lab at MIT to research commuter rail access in Greater Boston.

The research team compared measured and perceived distances to the nearest station for both pedestrians and bicycles. The research shows how these distances can substantially differ, affected by factors like traffic, grade change, and amenities. The report, *Transit Access: Improving Walking and Biking to Commuter Rail Stations in Greater Boston*, presents four policy options and explores how each scenario could reduce perceived distance, improving access to residents, jobs, and development opportunities in the commuter rail system as a whole.

Explore the interactive map and download the report at boston.transit-access.com.



get [t]here | Sasaki Foundation in partnership with Sasaki

Mobility Equity Symposium and Mobility Summit

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, this portion of the Mobility Innovator was delayed into 2021.

For communities both within the urban core and without, transportation plans and investments often reinforce unequal land-use patterns and result in unequal access to economic and social opportunities. While technological advancements are increasingly offering opportunities to address those inequalities, there is a lack of planning, policy, coordination, and, significantly, communication in order to effectively seize them.

To explore these issues of mobility and equity, particularly in Gateway Cities, the Sasaki Foundation has partnered with the MIT Mobility Initiative to host two community conversations with academic researchers, community members, and city leaders.

The Mobility Equity Symposium, which took place June 5, 2021, with a focus on the cities of Lynn and Malden, offered an opportunity to hear from community members about particular transportation-related needs they have and challenges they face; to engage with local government actors to better understand opportunities and initiatives in the works; and to workshop methods and ideas to address the identified needs and challenges. The day included two panel discussions on the topics of accessibility.

The first panel included Aaron Clausen, City of Lynn; Whitney Demetrius, Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA); Wendell Joseph, Sasaki; and moderator Andres Sevtsuk, MIT; and looked at the wide range of factors that affect accessibility. Public transportation, walking, cycling, and wheelchair access have become a dominant paradigm related to mobility systems and access opportunities. A need exists to create a contextual and community-based system that questions accessibility at different scales and multi-modal access.

To ensure accessibility benefits are equitably distributed once put in place, we need to recognize that housing and transportation are inextricably linked. Policies to mitigate displacement are essential, along with a comprehensive and strategic plan to allow for equitable benefits.

The second panel included Steve Winslow, Malden City Council; Jonathon Feinberg, New Lynn Coalition; Barbara Kim, Malden resident; and moderator Jim Aloisi, MIT; and examined the impact of COVID-19 on local transporation needs. The discussion focused on how travel patterns in Lynn and Malden changed during the pandemic, and how that might translate into opportunities for providing a better transit and mobility experience for residents as we reimagine life after the pandemic. This requires focusing on where people live and on what they depend, in order to redirect policies, urban design, and limited financial resources in an equitable and effective manner.

The symposium's overarching objective was to understand the mobility challenges and issues that residents of Lynn and Malden are facing. During the conversation, issues related to accessibility and equity, community engagement, funding, and lack of resources resonated with most participants. As part of the symposium, participants identified key areas for future research, innovation, and action. Some key research areas raised during the event included community engagement, mobility modeling, and funding.

The Mobility Summit is the second Mobility Innovator event and is planned for November 2021. Stay tuned for more information.

A Look Ahead



In 2020, the Sasaki Foundation's Design Grants program continued with a focus on advancing design as a tool for building more equitable and resilient communities. The active research projects accomplished by the three teams in the program's third cohort offer innovative solutions to address gender inequities, economic mobility, and displacement, with an ongoing impact in Greater Boston and beyond.

The Sasaki Foundation has developed a research agenda based on the mission of promoting equity in design, which has allowed us to maintain a leadership position in contributing to the design industry and local communities. Through the Design Grants program, we aim to test new models and projects that can meaningfully work within communities, in Greater Boston and beyond.

"The work our third Design Grants cohort was able to accomplish in the areas of mobility equity, community building, and housing is impressive and inspiring. In just ten months, despite all work taking place remotely and socially distanced due to COVID-19, all three teams have already made a visible impact in their communities. And they are poised to further their impact in the coming months and years. We are excited to continue to co-create change through our growing research community," said Mary Anne Ocampo, Sasaki principal and Sasaki Foundation Board Chair.

As we look ahead, we recognize 2021 has been a transition year for all of us. In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the Sasaki Foundation's upcoming office move, we are postponing our annual call for proposals to 2022. This fall, we will focus on supporting our most recent cohort and amplifying the impressive ongoing work of our Design Grants alumni.

"We are excited to move downtown in the spring, with even more opportunities for programs, partnerships, and outreach to aspiring design students. We remain committed to our mission, fostering equity, empowering communities, and strengthening education in design. We hope to continue efforts in our focus areas—Proactive Approaches to Climate Adaptation, New Models for Housing, Innovation in Transit and Access to Mobility Choices, and Creative Community Building—while exploring new possibilities," said Laura Marett, Sasaki principal and Sasaki Foundation Board Vice Chair, Secretary, and Design Grants Chair.

The Sasaki Foundation Design Grants program will continue to bring new, local solutions to global challenges, empowering our communities and creating lasting change through the power of design.

110 Chauncy, future home of Sasaki and the Sasaki Foundation | Sasaki

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENDNOTES

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