A place to call home:
Homes for everyone in Greater Boston
Greater Boston has grown — in jobs and population.

+ 275,000 jobs
+ 230,000 residents

(jobs from ES-202; residents from Census Pop Estimates)

Those changes have helped our economy and our communities. But our supply of places to live hasn’t kept pace.
Why does it matter?

Housing costs are so high that people can't afford to live here

**Limited options**
For many, including older adults, young people ready to start families or be on their own, low-income families or roommates who want to move on.

**Nearly half of families with children are housing cost burdened**
Choosing between rent and other needs like medicine and food, increases the risk of evictions, homelessness, and overcrowding.
Why does it matter?

When our economic and housing policies are aligned, everyone has the opportunity to live and contribute to vibrant neighborhoods.

**Shorter commutes**
People will be able to live closer to where they work when local incomes are in sync with local housing costs.

**Greater productivity, leisure, and family time**
Spending less time traveling between homes and jobs produces benefits: less traffic, greater involvement in community, and more local economic activity.

**Reduces greenhouse gases**
People take fewer vehicle trips when they live close to shops, jobs and parks, reducing emissions that contribute to climate change.
Residents who have been historically excluded from certain housing markets and neighborhoods – especially people of color and those with lower incomes – face an unfair risk of displacement from their homes and communities. The risk is now rising for moderate and middle-income households in many of the same neighborhoods.
Displacement? What’s that?

When you’re forced out of where you live – by eviction (real and threatened), foreclosure, conversion of an apartment to a condominium, catastrophic events, extreme weather, or just by rising rents, taxes, or other housing costs.
Displacement and homelessness are on the rise

27% increase in the number of homeless families in Greater Boston, over the past decade

source: GBHRC 2019

Especially affects people who have been unfairly overlooked in our current system

- Lower incomes
- Older adults
- Renters
- Families and individuals experiencing housing insecurity
- People with disabilities
Displacement disrupts individual households and the communities they leave behind. Social networks and neighborhood character can be hurt. Local economies suffer when they lose workers and shoppers at local businesses.
Housing is connected to, and influenced by many other major issues

- Zoning and land use
- Transportation
- Climate
- Public Health
- Economic Development & Security
- Equity
MetroCommon Goals: Where we want to be in 2050

All residents of Metro Boston have places to live that meet their needs, and that they can afford.

- Residents **don’t fear being priced out of their neighborhoods**. Families of every size can choose from a range of housing types. As their needs change, residents can find reasonably priced options where they hope to live, including in their current neighborhoods.

- **No one is steered toward or away from any community** because of their race, ethnicity, faith, disability, or other attributes.
New homes are integrated into neighborhoods close to jobs, shopping, schools, food, health care, recreation, and transportation – and away from natural resources that provide ecosystem services.

Owners preserve older homes, which includes making them more accessible, energy efficient, and climate resilient.

New homes are built and designed to meet the needs of a range of residents, including families with children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

MetroCommon Goals: Where we want to be in 2050
Why can't we just build more?

- Very little land area zoned for multifamily housing
- **City and Town restrictions**, including on density, building height, apartment size, parcel size, number of bedrooms, resident age, and discourage development.
- **Local Permitting Processes and Controls** make for risky and inefficient project permitting
- **Cost and Opposition**
Why can’t we just build more?

The cost to construct a home is higher than ever.

- It costs $410,000 to build a 1,500 square foot, 2-bedroom apartment
- 30% increase since 2008

(Source: 2015 GBHRC, TBF)
What’s been done so far in our region?

Statewide Policies

- 40B & 40R
- Community Preservation Act (CPA)
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Housing Choice Initiative
What’s been done so far in our region?

Regional action

Metro Mayors Coalition
Housing Task Force
Regional Housing Services Offices
What’s been done so far in our region?

Local efforts

- Inclusionary zoning
- CPA spending on housing
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) bylaws
- Public-private partnerships with local housing authorities (Charlestown, Chelsea)
Local stories of innovation

Bunker Hill Housing in Charlestown:

Public-private partnership with city bond funds, Leggat McCall, Corcoran Development, Boston Medical Center Housing investment, Healthy Neighborhood Equity Fund, and the Boston Housing Authority to replace all 1,100 reduced-rate units, create 2,100 additional market-rate units, and add space for retail and parks.
What have others done?

Portland, OR
Upzoning single family districts and allowing Accessory Dwelling Units

State of Oregon
Rent control capping rent hikes

New Hampshire & Vermont
State Law allows Accessory Dwelling Units on all single-family lots statewide

Minneapolis, MN
2019: City council approved major zoning overhauls to allow more two- and three family housing units in formerly single-family districts
What are the key challenges and opportunities we’ll need to address in MetroCommon 2050?