

## **Fenway Community Development Corporation**

### **Community Investment Plan 2023 – 2025**

#### **Executive Summary**

One of Boston’s first Community Development Corporations, residents founded Fenway Community Development Corporation in 1973 to address the risks of gentrification in the neighborhood and protect its diverse population. As Fenway CDC marks 50 years of improving lives and building community in 2023, we continue our efforts to develop and preserve affordable housing and prepare new generations of citizen leaders committed to the neighborhood’s vitality. Fenway CDC also strengthens the community by helping the city’s most vulnerable residents improve their economic and social well-being.

**Increased CITC funding and operational capacity made it possible for Fenway CDC to accomplish the following between 2020–2022.**

#### **Affordable Housing: Development and Preservation**

- Began construction on Fenway CDC’s first new affordable housing project in more than two decades; the new 27-unit affordable housing development on an empty lot uses the city’s compact living model and makes use of an innovative framework for housing design
- Provided affordable and safe housing to 650 low- and moderate-income residents in nine residential properties, protecting these residents from displacement and preserving the long-term affordability of these properties and renovated 97 units at Newcastle-Saranac
- Cultivated new potential housing projects to increase future stock of mixed-income housing

#### **Resident Services and Workforce Development**

- Sustained our program to help residents access social services to stabilize their lives
- Increased our efforts to provide residents with job skills training, placement services, and created access to certificate and degree programs that lead to improved long-term career prospects
- Expanded Fair Foods program to reach more than 550 community residents at Southend/Lower Roxbury and Fenway Cares two sites in the Fenway— distributing fresh nutrition food
- Hosted career counseling and financial coaching sessions to serve more residents
- Co-organized home ownership and buying workshops

#### **Community Planning and Organizing**

Fenway CDC engaged residents and community partners to advocate for improvements in the:

- City’s housing policy (e.g., Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) to increase the stock of affordable housing
- State’s housing policy to improve tenant’s rights and reduce displacement, (e.g., Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act improvements to the City’s Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program so large nonprofit institutions contribute their fair share to their communities.
- When the MBTA proposed to eliminate #55 bus, organized residents to protest the cut in service as the route was vital for Fenway residents to get to downtown (see attachment 7: Community Planning & Organizing Efforts)

#### **Fenway CDC aims to achieve the following goals for 2023 - 2025 Community Investment Plan**

(See attachment 2 for Fenway CDC’s Community Investment Plan logic model)

- Create a housing pipeline of another 100-200 affordable units to be acquired and rehabilitated

- Engage more than 100 residents and community activists and collaborate with other organizations to improve the City’s Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP), secure deeper community benefits for the Fenway, and address housing affordability and social issues
- Improve the lives of over 650 Fenway CDC’s residents and hundreds of community residents in the Fenway and other Boston neighborhoods through housing services, social services, education, training, job placement, food distribution, financial coaching, and wellness programs
- Engage more than 500 residents via Fenway CDC’s membership program, and promote economic opportunities for businesses and institutions through community events

Each year, Fenway CDC has successfully utilized 100% of our community investment tax credits by engaging individuals, corporations, and institutions to support our work. Through collaborations, we engage existing and new investors through Fenway Ball Gala, Taste of The Fenway festival, and cultivation events, see attachment 3 - Fenway CDC’s CITC Partnership Opportunities.

### **Section 1: Community or Constituencies Served**

Fenway CDC serves low-income and moderate-income residents from the Fenway and other Boston neighborhoods who turn to us for emergency and essential resident and workforce development services to stabilize and improve their quality of life. To provide the best possible assistance, we partner with social service agencies and community organizations and other CDCs in Greater Boston. Our Community Planning and Organizing effort advances the Fenway’s Urban Village Plan—a sustainable, smart-growth model that supports conditions that make it possible for residents, businesses, and institutions to thrive together. Read more at [The-Community-Vision-for-a-Fenway-Urban-Village.pdf \(fenwaycdc.org\)](#)

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### **Demographics**

According to the 2020 US Census Bureau, the Fenway’s population is 37,733. Fenway is the fifth most densely populated neighborhood in Greater Boston. About half of the population are people of color. Of the 18,959 working age adults, 44% of them live below the poverty level. About 36% of the seniors in the neighborhood live in poverty.

### **Geography**

The Fenway is home to multiple world-class medical and cultural institutions, as well as 11 educational institutions. All are large employers and drivers of the regional economy. While these institutions need to provide more on-campus housing for their student population to reduce pressures on the housing market and increase housing available to non-students, Fenway CDC partners with these institutions to provide civic engagement and service-learning opportunities in which students participate in our programs to serve low- and moderate-income residents. Since 1994, we have forged partnerships with institutions to create and sustain a workforce development

program that promotes economic development for both residents and the universities. We encourage these institutions to house more students on campus to relieve pressure in the Fenway housing market and help facilitate opportunities for creating affordable, non-student housing in the Fenway.

### Economy

Since 2019, the Fenway neighborhood has seen a large increase in development. More than 8M square feet of new lab development has been proposed, approved, or is already under construction. Rising rents is due to large-scale development luxury housing and labs continue to drive out residents. Since 1990, nearly 5% of families have moved away from the Fenway. If this trend continues, lower-income families will no longer be able to live in a neighborhood that is home to critical resources like hospitals, educational and cultural institutions, transportation, jobs, and recreational space. In the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) 2022 report, the median income was \$44,370—just over half of Boston’s median household income, which is \$76,298. Over 50% of Fenway residents have household earnings of \$50,000 or less. A quarter of the adult population had less than a college degree. 4,149 residents earn less than \$24,999/year. 37% live in poverty compared to only 18% citywide. Fenway CDC also serves residents who come to us for emergency services, and they come from Boston neighborhoods with high poverty rates such as Mission Hill (40.9%), Roxbury (36.2%), South End (22.5%), and Dorchester (22.3%).

The 10,060 renters in the neighborhood face several significant economic challenges. The average rent in the Fenway was \$2,500/month; \$30,000/year. To afford that without an undue financial burden, one must earn more than \$79,000 annually or \$37.97/hour—more than double the minimum wage (\$14.25/hour). The state has the 3rd highest Fair Market Rents in the country, in part due to a severe shortage of available housing. Between 2011 and 2018, 1,458 new housing units were built in the Fenway. More than 80% of those units were luxury apartments. Massachusetts has the highest childcare costs in the U.S. Infant care costs, on average, \$20,000/year and the average price for 4-year-olds is \$15,000/year. This puts parents — particularly low-income single parents in a terrible bind: they must work but childcare costs make working full time nearly impossible.

## **Section 2: Involvement of Community Residents and Stakeholders**

### Stakeholder Involvement in the Development of the Community Investment Plan

Fenway CDC’s Community Investment Plan (CIP) reflects input from our board, staff, and residents. To better understand the issues low- and moderate-income (LMI) and very-low-income residents are facing as the worst of the pandemic is behind us, Fenway CDC has conducted a community needs assessment with surveys, focus groups, and community conversations. This CIP is designed—in part—based on feedback from more than 1,000 residents during that process.

### Mission

Fenway CDC works to preserve the Fenway as a vibrant and diverse neighborhood by developing affordable housing, providing programs that enrich lives, and strengthening community voices.

We capitalize on opportunities and address challenges that arise from the Fenway’s unique location in the city of Boston and the community’s high concentration of world-renowned academic, medical, and cultural institutions. Fenway CDC fosters diversity, accessibility, and social cohesion within the community connecting different populations. According to the *Boston Business Journal*, Fenway-Kenmore is one of the hottest real estate markets in the state. In September 2022, Fenway-Kenmore home prices were up 13.2% compared to last year, selling for a median price of \$1.1M.

Additional pressure comes from world-renowned institutions expanding into the already dense area. These two forces drive up housing and living costs in the Fenway. Acquiring, creating, and preserving a substantial number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood is key to meeting the housing needs of (LMI) residents. Fenway CDC addresses community needs through three program areas.

### ***1. Housing Development and Preservation***

Fenway CDC has developed and preserved more than 800 affordable homes. We currently own and manage 408 units of mixed-income housing. We work closely with institutional partners, government officials, residents, and private developers to forge housing partnerships. In 2021, Fenway CDC finished major refurbishments of the 97 units at Newcastle-Saranac, which was purchased in 2019. In summer 2022, we began construction of a 27-unit affordable housing building on Burbank Street, Boston. The first new affordable housing construction in the Fenway for several decades, this project will turn an empty lot into homes. (See attachment 4: Burbank Terrace Apartments news article). We continue to cultivate new housing projects.

### ***2. Community Planning and Organizing***

We convene residents, working professionals, community organizations, issue-specific interest groups, local institutions, elected leaders, and others to improve housing development policy, tackle gentrification, and prevent homelessness by developing resident leadership. We mobilize those most impacted to advocate for policy change and inform local development conversations. Our efforts are led by an inclusive coalition of people with different racial, ethnic, and gender identities, ages, incomes, country of origin, and abilities.

### ***3. Resident Services and Workforce Development***

As important as housing is to LMI individuals' health and well-being, many need more than a home to build a better life. Fenway CDC's Resident Services and Workforce Development programs help LMI residents access housing, social services, public benefits, job skills, employment opportunities, financial counseling, educational opportunities, and wellness programs. The organization assists residents who are at risk of eviction, formerly homeless, children, youth, families, single parents, people on fixed incomes, those with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community.

1. Membership: We engage our members through community meetings, educational workshops, regular updates, and events. More than 120 residents and stakeholders celebrated the community's accomplishments at our 49th Annual Meeting.

2. Board of Directors: 14 of the 17 Board of Directors are elected by members at Fenway CDC's annual meeting. Three others are appointed by Board members. Fenway CDC's Board contribute expertise from diverse professional backgrounds in monthly meetings. One third are people of color. Board members participate in one or more committees to provide governance and oversight.

3. Executive Committee: The Executive Committee, composed of board officers meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month. They evaluate key decisions to ensure that resources and programs align with Fenway CDC's mission.

4. Finance Committee: Fenway CDC's Finance Committee meets monthly on the third Monday. Committee members analyze financial data, evaluate the organization's financial performance against an annual budget, review funding strategies, and monitor and improve financial policies. They review financial decisions and make recommendations to the Board.

5. Nomination Committee: The ad-hoc Nomination Committee identifies and interviews potential board members with a focus on developing new leadership for organization and the community.

6. Marketing and Development Committee: This Committee contributes fundraising strategies to increase the organization's capacity and promote the CITC program.

7. Housing Development Committee: The Housing Development Committee provides guidance on strategy, issues, opportunities in and around the Fenway neighborhood, and on the development process. Early in the planning process for a new development, stakeholders weigh in and help shape the final project. In building refinance or rehabilitation projects, we also involve residents from the initial planning phase. When a project is intended to serve special-needs populations, we ensure that the target population is involved in planning.

8. Urban Village Committee: Fenway's Urban Village Committee (UVC) is composed of community resident leaders and members. They meet quarterly and guide the community planning function of Fenway CDC, providing a platform where residents can monitor and respond to proposed developments in the neighborhood. For each major development project, an individual is assigned as the "point person" who monitors the development as it moves through the city's planning process, allowing Fenway CDC to respond at each phase based on input from residents. Other UVC members act as collaborators and peer editors. The UVC chair and staff liaison report to the Board on the latest developments in the neighborhood, as well as on UVC activities such as comment letters on development projects and participation in public planning meetings. Meeting dates and agendas are publicized through email notices and the Fenway newspaper.

9. Residents Steering Committee (RSC) consists of Fenway CDC Board members, staff, Building Captains, and community resident leaders. The committee provides guidance, strategic direction, and oversight to improve the quality of life for Fenway residents.

10. Racial Housing Justice Committee (RHJC) brings together diverse staff and board members from the neighborhood. Monthly, they meet to discuss how to ensure that Fenway CDC's programs, services, and departments are diverse, equitable, and inclusive (DEI). Partly as an outgrowth of their efforts, Fenway CDC provides translation at community meetings, uses multi-lingual program materials, and engages immigrants, people of color, non-English speakers, and people with disabilities.

11. Community Organizing Committee is a diverse group of committed residents who work for housing justice. They identify Fenway CDC's organizing priorities and advocate for various policies and campaigns by attending or submitting testimony to city council and state house hearings, collecting signatures to put pressure on decision makers, and increasing awareness.

As the Fenway's only neighborhood-based group committed to preserving affordable housing and promoting social and economic diversity, Fenway CDC has a track record of leveraging community organizing to preserve "expiring use" units that has resulted in preserving more than 800 mixed-income housing units. Our tenant organizing builds leadership among low-income residents to resolve landlord-tenant issues and improve living conditions. We have organized tenants facing eviction from Our Lady's Guild House at Charlesgate West, worked with tenant's associations at the Burbank Apartments, Saint Botolph Terrace, and Clearway Street to prevent eviction. In the past, we also mitigated the impact of the rising number of Emerson College students moving into the Fenway in the long term as their main building was under renovation. Our tenant support trainings helped hundreds of residents to preserve affordable housing and improve living conditions. We work with elected officials, other community organizations and CDCs, Greater Boston Legal

Services, City Life, and Metro Housing|Boston to provide stabilizing services to vulnerable community residents.

### **Section 3: Plan Goals**

#### **Housing Development and Preservation**

Since 1973, Fenway CDC has developed and/or preserved more than 800 mixed-income housing units. According to the City's database of affordable housing inventory, Fenway CDC owns, manages, or has produced 408 residential units, approximately 75% are affordable to families and individuals earning 60% or less than the area median income (AMI). We will work with local institutions, city government, residents, and private developers to forge partnerships and seek out affordable housing development and preservation opportunities. We will center people of color and traditionally marginalized groups in our decision-making while being ardent supporters of minority and women owned businesses.

#### **Goal 1: Expand Housing Development and Preservation**

Fenway CDC will continue to a) develop and preserve low- and moderate-income housing, b) improve current properties, and c) explore opportunities to develop new affordable housing units in the Fenway. By 2025, we aim to grow our portfolio to more than 500 units and facilitate the creation or preservation of another 100-200 affordable units.

#### **Goal 2: Expand Service Area**

Since 2013, Fenway CDC has been open to expanding its development area to better meet the challenge of high acquisition costs and competition for locally available property. We will collaborate where our experience and skill can add value to the development of a property or enhance a partner's ability to develop. This model worked in 2019 for the acquisition of Newcastle Saranac, a 97-unit affordable residential property in the South End/Lower Roxbury area. By working outside our original footprint and partnering with another developer, we were able to preserve these affordable units and protect the existing residents from displacement. We will continue to identify similar collaborations with private developers or institutions.

#### **Goal 3: Improve Asset Management to Ensure Sustainability**

Improving asset and property management to ensure our residential properties are financially and physically sustainable are ongoing goals. Fenway CDC transitioned to a new property management company that we believe will better ensure the wellbeing of tenants. We also hired our very first Asset Management Associate—laying the foundation for future improvements. We will fully integrate these changes into our systems to improve outcomes for our tenants and the financial performance of our properties. Our property managers will be responsive to public health emergencies while we leverage newfound methods of community-building via virtual meetings and services, allowing residents to engage with management while ensuring their safety at home.

#### **Community Benefits:**

- 1) Preservation of an economically diverse community allows people of modest means to live in a safe and vibrant neighborhood close to jobs, public transit, parks, and major cultural institutions.
- 2) Preservation and expansion of the Fenway CDC's real estate portfolio ensures that more properties remain affordable to people of modest means in perpetuity, and more residents can readily access our services and programming.

3) Locally affordable housing allows people to stay in the neighborhoods where they grew up but could not afford without rental assistance.

4) Real estate development promotes economic development through construction, property management, and other related well-paying jobs.

### **Community Planning and Organizing**

Fenway CDC has been at the forefront of community-based planning since the late 1980s with many notable successes. We collaborate with area non-profits, issue-specific interest groups, elected leaders, and local institutions to engage residents, and support community leaders who are committed to an inclusive and sustainable future for the Fenway. When residents identify concerns, we convene diverse constituencies to address the challenges, led by an inclusive coalition of community members.

Fenway CDC advocated for improvements in Boston's Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) to increase affordable housing. In January 2021, the state legislature approved a Home Rule Petition that allows Boston to add inclusionary development into the City's zoning code—a major success. We will continue to be involved as the City performs a feasibility study and makes policy improvements before codifying IDP. In Spring 2022, when a city council hearing on IDP brought attention to the city's urgent need for affordable housing, especially for BIPOC residents, resident leaders from the Fenway shared testimonials.

Fenway CDC has worked to improve the City's Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program, a voluntary commitment from large non-profit institutions to make monetary contributions to the City in proportion to the property taxes that they are currently not required to pay. We successfully advocated for updated property assessments to more accurately reflect the institutions' property holdings. We will continue to pressure the City to hold institutions accountable and ensure that community stakeholders are involved in decision making.

Fenway CDC worked with community partners and housing industry stakeholders to pass the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), which would give tenants the right of first refusal. The bill would lessen building-wide rent increases and create opportunities to take housing off the speculative market by creating cooperative housing and permanently affordable housing. While we were not successful this past legislative session, we expanded our coalition across MA, increased the number of legislative sponsors, and created a stronger bill that addressed concerns. We will work to see the bill passed in the next legislative session.

Fenway's UVC monitors developments and the planning process. Qualitative and quantitative neighborhood survey data, focus groups, visioning sessions, and community partnerships will guide our housing and community development work.

### **Goal 1: Building Community Leadership Capacity**

Fenway CDC will continue to engage and empower residents with the knowledge and tools to make positive change in their neighborhood. We will identify and support more than 10 community leaders and over 100 residents who can help engage their neighbors and encourage grassroots support for community development.

### **Goal 2: Equitable Inclusionary Housing Initiative**

Fenway CDC advocates with housing industry stakeholders and residents for improvements to the City's housing policy and support the creation of mixed-income housing for LMI residents. Specifically, we will work to improve the IDP.

### Goal 3: Tenant Organizing

Tenant organizing is a large part of how Fenway CDC helps improve the quality of life for Boston residents. It creates collective power by bringing people together in groups, unions, associations, and coalitions. Benefits to the community include:

1. Residents and stakeholders are empowered to contribute perspectives about neighborhood issues.
2. Fenway CDC trains and supports residents so they can make positive changes in their neighborhood and improve the quality of their community.
3. Fenway CDC trains and supports residents so they can make positive changes in their neighborhood and improve the quality of life for all community residents.
4. Develop a healthy, safe, cohesive, and thriving neighborhood with economic opportunities for residents, businesses, and institutional partners.

### Goal 4: Update the Fenway's Urban Village Plan

Fenway CDC will update the Fenway's Urban Village Plan considering the latest developments and community needs of the neighborhood. The resident-led planning process articulates a vision for the neighborhood and gives Fenway CDC tools to work with developers so they can shape their projects to align with a community-based vision for the neighborhood while fostering economic growth and development. We will share the Plan with stakeholders and update it over the next three years.

### Goal 5: Economic Development Support for Local Businesses and Community Engagement

Fenway CDC will support small businesses by providing networking opportunities, advertising, and promotion. Local business owners can share information about their services with Fenway CDC residents and can access local customers through Fenway CDC's business promotions. We will collaborate with Fenway businesses to find local talents to fill job vacancies, allowing residents to work close to home while providing employers with local, reliable employees.

### Goal 6: Membership Program

Engage Fenway CDC tenants and community residents to become Fenway CDC members so they can weigh in on neighborhood issues, vote on board of directors, and enjoy discounts from selected local businesses and merchants.

### **Resident Services and Workforce Development Program**

Fenway CDC's Resident Services and Workforce Development program helps Fenway residents pursue their goals, maintain stable housing, achieve self-sufficiency, and improve their quality of life. Through housing counseling, social services support, education, and job skills training, we empower residents to maximize their potential. We organize financial literacy, health, educational and cultural events to improve the wellbeing of residents. (See attachment 5: Building Stronger Career Paths and attachment 6: Fenway CDC's Services). Watch Fenway CDC's Youtube Channel at this [link](#) to learn more about Fenway CDC's IT/Tech programs and services in multi-languages. Many of these services are provided on site and with multi-lingual options that reflect the diversity of our residents. Community benefits include:

1. Economic development: As residents advance their education and secure living wage jobs and become more economically self-sufficient, they reduce the need for governmental assistance.
2. Fewer homeless individuals and families as we maintain adequate, affordable housing.

### Goal 1: Life Stabilization and Well-being



We will help participants through crises so they can take steps toward greater economic stability and well-being.

#### Goal 2: Education and Employment Skills/Job Readiness

Participants will develop skills to enable them to participate successfully in the labor market including job readiness skills and education so they can secure jobs that pay living wages.

#### Goal 3: Economic Stability

Fenway CDC's weekly Financial Clinic, in partnership with Metro Housing Boston, will coach residents in money management to help them become financially self-sufficient.

#### Goal 4: Resident Services

Fenway CDC will support vulnerable residents through on-going case management. We will help them access social benefits, translation, and comprehensive life stabilization assistance.

#### Goal 5: Fresh Food Access

Fenway CDC will increase access to free nutritious food through three collaborations. Our new South End/Lower Roxbury Fair Foods, Fenway Fair Foods, and Fenway Cares food distribution sites increase access to fresh, affordable groceries for residents as well as increase connective community through volunteer opportunities.

#### Goal 6: Enrich Lives

Organize Fenway Porchfest music festival and cultural activities with residents and program partners such as Art Walk to improve lives of community residents

### **Section 4: Activities to be Undertaken**

#### **Housing Development and Preservation Activities**

1. Pipeline Development: Ongoing. We regularly meet with area institutions, other CDCs, developers, brokers, and property owners to identify and evaluate new development and joint-venture opportunities so we can target properties for acquisition and work with owners and the community to agree on a development program that meets the needs of the neighborhood. Our Board, members, and neighbors provide insights, expertise, connections, and political support for this effort. We began construction on a new affordable housing development this year and continue to look for new opportunities for development and preservation. This work informs our cohesive long-term and overarching strategy as an affordable housing developer.

2. Community Organizing for Preservation: Fenway CDC's Housing Department will work closely with the abutters and residents of properties targeted for preservation to build support. Housing and Organizing staff will engage these constituencies to ensure our projects are financially and socially successful.

3. Financing: We will continue to discuss future housing development opportunities with lenders and equity sources. These relationships enable us to navigate financing more efficiently when we are ready to move forward with projects.

4. Fenway Affordable Homeownership: We will explore how to develop or co-develop at least 20 units of mixed-income permanently affordable limited equity co-ops or condos. This will create

diversity in the housing products in the neighborhood and enable residents to build wealth while remaining in the neighborhood.

5. **Asset Management:** Having hired an in-house asset manager, we hope to continue to ensure that our properties are financially sustainable and are in good physical condition so that residents can continue to have safe, decent, and affordable housing.

We will work with our new property management company to ensure that the day-to-day operations of our properties are run effectively. We expect their successful maintenance of the property that includes a responsiveness to work orders, continued effective financial reporting and budgeting, provisions of resident services, and upholding fair housing standards.

#### Needs-assessment with Five Co-ops

We will offer our expertise in needs assessment to the five limited equity co-ops in the Fenway and will explore the feasibility of either individual co-ops or a federation of co-ops contracting with Fenway CDC for such services as co-op share loans; co-op applicant list management; joint property management contracts; refinancing assistance; and other financial products, possibly in conjunction with the Symphony Area Renaissance Trust. If this initiative proves successful, we will explore offering co-op share loans and services to any new Fenway limited equity co-ops in the pipeline by 2025.

### **Community Planning and Organizing Activities**

#### Activity 1: Build Community Leadership Capacity

1.1 Conduct leadership-training for residents and organize community meetings.

#### Activity 2: Equitable Inclusionary Housing Initiative

2.1 Strengthen relationships with nonprofit partners, private developers, elected officials, and the Boston Planning Development Authority (BPDA).

2.2 Leverage partnerships to make concrete improvements to the Inclusionary Development Policy.

2.3 Forge partnerships with private developers so Fenway CDC can be the owner or lessor of the IDP units that the developers provide onsite.

#### Activity 3: Tenant Organizing

3.1 Build leadership among the low-income residents and provide the foundation for social justice through training, counseling, and support to help them preserve affordable housing, promote tenants' rights, and improve living conditions.

#### Activity 4: Fenway's Urban Village Plan:

Fenway CDC will continue to engage residents and community stakeholders through focus groups in a visioning process for the neighborhood. Their input will be essential as the Urban Village Committee works with Fenway CDC's Director of Policy and Community Planning, and Community Organizer to update the Urban Village Plan. The living document is targeted to developers and elected officials who do business within the Fenway neighborhood. It will reflect the composition and state of the neighborhood, outline new developments that have been built and policies adopted, since the last update. Managed by Fenway CDC's Director of Policy and Community Planning, the Fenway's UVC will:

- 4.1 Monitor institutional and private developments and work to mitigate negative impacts such as rising housing costs, displacement of residents, and diminished local services.
- 4.2 Form partnerships to create a sufficient and varied housing supply that promotes diversity and equal opportunities.
- 4.3 Form partnerships with neighborhood institutions to provide local residents with access to community space and facilities.
- 4.4 Identify improved transportation options for those who live or work in the Fenway and improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

#### Activity 5: Economic Development Support for Local Businesses and Community Engagement

5.1 Promote economic opportunities and community-building events (e.g., Annual Meeting, Fenway Porchfest music festival, Taste of The Fenway, Halloween Trick-or-Treating, Residents Block Party), build the membership program, and publicize local businesses.

#### Activity 6: Membership Program

6.1 Engage tenants and residents around the benefits of being a member of Fenway CDC. Aim to have more than 500 active members by 2025.

### **Resident Services and Workforce Development Activities**

#### Activity 1: Life Stabilization

1.1. Resident Services will help participants access the public benefits for which they are eligible.

#### Activity 2: Education and Employment Skills/Job Readiness

2.1 Resident Services will help more than 150 participants yearly to develop a professional résumé and cover letter, conduct 20 hours of job searches weekly, engage in 1 - 3 hours of employment counseling, and attend Fenway CDC's Career Fairs and weekly Career Clinic sessions. Participants will benefit from assistance preparing for interviews and, and job placement.

2.2 Enable residents who aspire to be entrepreneurs to achieve greater economic success by accessing training and resources such as money management, taxes for small businesses, and assistance with finding funding through collaborations with public and private partners.

#### Activity 3: Economic Stability

3.1 Help 150 participants secure employment, increase the hours worked, or increase their wages. Those who don't secure permanent employment will register with a temporary placement agency.

3.2 Assist 200 participants in the federally funded Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) will access the Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS), a collaboration between Fenway CDC and Metro Housing Boston. FSS participants are matched with an FSS Advisor to provide one-on-one coaching and assistance with reaching their goals. This can include financial literacy, credit help, education, job skills, and career guidance. FSS participants can build an escrow account if their earned income increases. This voluntary program helps families achieve increased economic self-sufficiency over five years.

#### Activity 4: Resident Services

4. Engage over 60% of our participants to complete workshops in tenant education, life skills, or home buying or attend financial clinics. They will develop healthy habits, improve money management skills, or learn how to manage adversities more effectively. (See attachment 8: BIDMC's Support)

#### Activity 5: Fresh Food Access

Fenway CDC Community Investment Plan 2023-2025

5.1 Continue to manage our specialized Southend/ Lower Roxbury's Fair Food site and Fenway Cares (in collaboration with 5 area non-profits to host two sites in the Fenway) so that residents have free access to fresh fruits and vegetables. This program will serve 100 residents at each distribution, providing an affordable option for increased economic stability and improved health equity. Fenway CDC has access to three community garden plots behind the Newcastle Saranac site, which have been assigned to tenants for their use. Gardeners will be provided with a variety of biodiverse, culturally relevant seed starter kits.

#### Activity 6: Enrich Lives

6.1 Collaborate with residents and program partners to organize cultural activities to promote racial diversity and improve their social well-being and increase sense of community belonging.

### **Section 5: How Success will be Measured and/or Evaluated**

Fenway CDC conducts internal yearly evaluation to ensure that we maintain comprehensive records pertaining to all our acquisitions and development work, our asset and property management procedures, and the work that we conduct both with residents. Since much of our funding comes from public and private grants, we are experienced with reporting compliance data on a regular basis to demonstrate the ongoing nature and effectiveness of our work. We understand the importance of ensuring that our goals are specific, attainable, and measurable. Fenway CDC will provide qualitative and quantitative program impact data as required for securing CITC funding.

#### **Housing Development and Preservation**

Our housing development and preservation work will be measured by the number of people housed, the number of housing units preserved or created, the financial strength of our portfolio, and the number of community, institutional, and private development partnerships developed.

#### **Community Planning and Organizing**

Community *planning* efforts will be measured by the number of positive community outcomes achieved, the number of resident leaders trained, and the number of successful community partnerships forged for project development.

Community *organizing* efforts will be measured by the number of resident leaders trained, the number of residents engaged in tenant organizing, and the progress of our Inclusionary Development Policy work.

We will evaluate City-Wide Development Policy improvement efforts and refine approach as needed. Develop 10 new activists as leaders, and recruit 50 Fenway CDC members by 2025. Identify supporters and prepare them for Article 80 public meetings.

We will evaluate the success of our membership program to achieve our goal of engaging 500 active members by 2025.

#### **Resident Services and Workforce Development**

Life Stabilization work will be measured by the number of participants who access one or more social benefits services (e.g., Food Stamps/SNAP, Housing Vouchers, SSDI, Health Insurance/Medicaid, Fuel Assistance, Childcare Vouchers and Providers, etc.).

Education and employment skills/job readiness work will be measured by the number of participants who develop professional résumés and cover letters, who complete job searches weekly, and who attend 1 - 3 hours of employment-related counseling sessions (e.g., interview preparation, how to apply for jobs, basic skills needed for employment, placement assistance, etc.). We will measure the

number of small business owners/entrepreneurs who participate in related workshops and educational programs provided by Fenway CDC and our partners.

We will measure economic stability by tracking the number of participants who secure employment, increase the number of hours worked, increase their hourly wage, or register with a temporary employment agency. We will track the number of participants who enrolled in the Family Self-Sufficiency program to improve financial stability and build financial assets.

Success with Resident Services will be measured by the number of participants who make tangible progress towards completing the tenant education, financial literacy, life skills, and home-buying workshops to develop healthy habits, improve money management skills and learn how to deal more effectively with challenges.

We will measure the success of our three Fair Foods program sites by tracking the number of residents who use the “Fair Foods” program each month at Southend/ Lower Roxbury Site and Fenway Cares sites and ensure that residents are aware of the availability of free and fresh fruits and vegetables.

We will measure the success of our cultural activities by tracking the number of unique attendees, quality of community engagements, number of positive outcomes, and collect qualitative and quantitative surveys to improve programs and services.

## **Section 6: Collaborative Efforts to Support Implementation**

### **Housing Development and Preservation**

Fenway CDC has positive relationships with the surrounding hospitals, colleges, and universities that make it possible to develop programs that provide civic engagement and service-learning opportunities for students and employee-development programs for workers in those institutions. We will build on those programs to develop workforce housing that employees on the lower-end of the pay-scale can afford. To achieve this, we will leverage public and private partnerships while using innovative housing models of housing development and will try to acquire property that these institutions consider extraneous. This effort could result in affordable housing that serves the mission of Fenway CDC and the institutions themselves.

We will collaborate with for-profit developers as they build larger, modern residential towers in the Fenway community to provide more affordable units to maintain the neighborhood’s desired level (15%) of affordable housing. This target aligns with the executive order regarding affordable housing as discussed in Section 3. We will continue to work with community stakeholders as we seek new opportunities beyond the Fenway.

### **Community Planning and Organizing**

Fenway CDC’s community planning and organizing work will involve residents and stakeholders such as institutional partners, neighborhood business owners, working professionals, non-profit partners, and elected officials in civic activities and community meetings to plan and participate in improving the neighborhood. As part of the grassroots planning initiative, the Fenway’s Urban Village Committee will update the Urban Village Plan through community meetings. Fenway CDC empowers these stakeholders by providing training, expertise, frameworks, processes, and policies to make positive neighborhood changes.

### **Resident Services**

Fenway CDC partners with the following organizations: Boston Children’s Hospital, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Metro Housing Boston, and Northeastern Center of Community Service, and our past network of over 50 hiring employers from our Career Fairs. These partnerships in Greater

Boston provide local career and life-stabilization services to Fenway residents and help residents find the training and employment services they need to secure employment. We also collaborate with five area non-profits called Fenway Cares that directly support residents of our neighborhood.

## **Section 7: Integration of Activities/Consistency with Community Strategy and Vision**

### **Community Vision**

In 1999, Fenway CDC adopted the Urban Village Plan as its guideline for evaluating proposed development along Boylston Street. That year, the Red Sox released a plan to construct a new 44,000-seat baseball stadium. Fenway CDC sponsored two public meetings to gather input for use in updating the plan's vision. From those changes, intended to encourage economically feasible development, the Urban Village Plan emerged as a compelling, alternative vision to the ballpark proposal. The revised plan was presented in August 2000 at a community charrette that was jointly sponsored by the Fenway CDC and the preservation group *Save Fenway Park!*

The plan has become a central component of Fenway CDC's mission to promote neighborhood stability and inclusiveness. It won the support of City Hall, private developers, and nearby institutions. Fenway CDC has shaped its programs and projects to advance the Urban Village Plan, which provides the criteria by which we evaluate development proposals throughout the Fenway and comment on them in the City's formal review process.

Fifteen years ago, Fenway CDC measured progress toward the goals spelled out in the Urban Village Plan and hired an outside agency to provide a report card of our activities related to the development of the Fenway Urban Village. The Report Card is available at [www.fenwaycdc.org](http://www.fenwaycdc.org). The plan continues to have relevance as a tool to transform the neighborhood into an urban village—a self-sustaining environment where people can live, work, shop, and find entertainment. In 2015, Fenway CDC updated the Urban Village Plan by engaging residents and community stakeholders in our Neighborhood Needs Assessment and Visioning Focus Groups. We will engage the Urban Village Committee members to conduct the next update of the Plan during 2023 – 2025.

### **Community Strategy**

Fenway CDC builds community leadership capacity by conducting community meetings and trainings for residents and stakeholders in five working areas:

- 1) Affordable Housing: Ensure sufficient and varied housing supply is available
- 2) Transport and Access: Increase public transportation and improve access for the disabled
- 3) Community Space, Open Green Space, and Arts & Culture: Improve community facilities and access, maintain open green space, and create access to cultural institutions
- 4) Institutional Impact: Mitigate the risk of gentrification which may displace residents
- 5) Business Community: Support a healthy business community that serves residents and visitors

### **Interaction and Interrelation of Activities with Larger Community Vision and Strategy**

Fenway CDC's Community Investment Plan (CIP) activities align with the Community Vision and Strategy as evidenced by our strong partnership with residents and stakeholders, our integration of collaborative efforts across organizations, and shared resources. Our activities align with the work of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and Health Resources In Action - an organization that improves healthy lives and sustainable communities.

Fenway CDC Community Investment Plan 2023-2025

Community planning and housing development program activities address affordable housing, mitigating impact of institutional expansion, development of neighborhood businesses, community safety, quality of life improvements, homeownership, gentrification, and protecting assets from predatory lending practices. These issues are critical in transforming our Fenway neighborhood into a strong, viable community. Our workforce development program collaborates with many other non-profits to help low-income residents find quality employment. Our CIP is consistent with other neighborhood, community, and regional plans. Fenway CDC's CIP builds on the vision found in documents that the city has produced to shape the neighborhood's zoning and streetscape. These include the East Fenway Neighborhood Strategic Plan (2003), Land Use and Urban Design Guidelines for the West Fenway Special Study Areas (2002), the Fenway Neighborhood Transportation Plan (2001), and Imagine Boston 2030.

Fenway CDC ensures that these CIP goals and outcomes are strategically aligned with the work of the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporation, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and other CDCs in the commonwealth of Massachusetts. Through continuous collaboration with stakeholders and residents, we believe we can leverage our community network, resources, and knowledge to help residents live longer lives and build a prosperous economy.

### **Section 8: Financing Strategy**

Fenway CDC will finance its activities in the next three years using a multipronged approach as it has in the past. More than a decade ago, development fees allowed the organization to establish board-designated reserves to sustain us when development fees were low or not projected. Between 2018 and 2022, new acquisitions have contributed additional fees to our reserves. While we have not had to draw on these reserves, they allow flexibility as we pursue development or preservation of affordable housing projects. Fenway CDC anticipates that it will be able to maintain a consistent level of asset management fees and collection of deferred development fees from our housing properties including an expiring-use affordable housing property that we acquired in 2019, and the new ground-up project under construction. Our projections include staffing and expenses that are in line with our 2022 budget after several years of increasing our staff capacity. This was possible, in part, thanks to increased unrestricted donations. The CITC program has had a very positive impact on fundraising.

**Strategy 1: Expand Real Estate Development Activities.** Through housing development and preservation work, Fenway CDC expects to continue to realize developer fees which allow us to continue serving residents and community.

A portion of our reserves has been set aside to allow us to maintain a real estate development team while we pursue new affordable housing development opportunities. In the past year, we have identified several potential projects within the Fenway and are actively working to move them forward. Burbank Terrace, our 27-unit affordable housing development, was one such project that has come into fruition this past year. Real estate projects will be funded through public and private acquisition, pre-development, construction, and permanent financing. We will seek additional grant funds as appropriate for each project. Fenway CDC has experience assembling financing for projects and works with development consultants for additional expertise. Fenway CDC has developed or preserved more than 800 units in 13 projects using a mix of city, state, federal, and private financing.

**Strategy 2: Expand Funding Sources.** As part of our Strategic Plan, we will put greater emphasis on individual giving at the \$1,000 and up level, targeting new and existing supporters of the organization. During 2023 - 2025, we will plan and implement a strategy for major giving and legacy giving programs.

**Strategy 3: Strengthen and Increase Existing Funding.** We will continue to grow our successful annual events. The Fenway Ball has been a stable source of unrestricted income for 15 years and Taste of The Fenway has increased revenue each year since it was revived four years ago. These events help us connect to individual and corporate donors who may benefit from the CITC Program.

We will use our existing program successes to appeal to existing corporate and foundation funders to expand their grant funding. We will work towards expanding our grant funder base by demonstrating that our programs are making a positive community impact and can serve as a model for others. Our Walk to Work/Resident Services program has had a 15-year history of Community Development Block Grant funding via the City of Boston Jobs & Community Services (CDBG-JCS) due to Fenway CDC's success in providing services to the community. Those successes have also secured recurring bank foundation grants. Our Community Planning and Organizing activities have been supported through a combination of foundation grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$65,000 from donors such as Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) and The Hyams Foundation. Fenway CDC's unrestricted income from fundraising events and housing fees supplement grant funding for Community Planning and Organizing.

#### Strategy 4: Improve Operational Efficiency

We will expand our service-learning program with local colleges and universities to connect students to the community in which they study. We will deepen our community engagement with donors and funders through traditional and social media. We will also use our donor database to capture, track and analyze fund development data and formulate strategies to increase and diversify funding.

### **Section 9: History, Track Record, and Sustainable Development**

Fenway CDC was founded in 1973 as a response to a string of threats to the neighborhood including a flawed urban renewal plan; an arson-for-profit ring that claimed five lives; pressures from institutional expansion; widespread condo conversions and displacement; the elimination of rent control in the context of rapidly rising housing costs; and plans for the construction of a large baseball stadium in the residential area. Fenway CDC mitigated the impact of those crises and found opportunities to strengthen the community while expanding programs and services to aid LMI individuals and families in the neighborhood. Fenway CDC continues to be a stabilizing presence in the community.

### **Track Record of Past Practices & Approaches to the Financing and Implementation of Proposed Activities**

#### Housing Development and Preservation

Fenway CDC began developing and preserving affordable housing nearly 50 years ago. We continue to build on this history that allows us to improve the lives of residents and strengthen community. Since our inception, our housing development and preservation efforts have resulted in:

- Developed and preserved more than 800 mixed-income homes for thousands of residents
- Created the first housing in the U.S. specifically for people with AIDS and HIV



- Long-term investment in the local community through Fenway CDC’s continued ownership and community-focused management of the property
- Completed the rehabilitation of Newcastle Saranac in Lower Roxbury, preventing the displacement of residents from its 97 units
- Broke ground on a 27-unit affordable housing development in the heart of the Fenway neighborhood

### Community Organizing and Planning

Fenway CDC was founded by community activists. Community Organizing and Planning has been central to Fenway CDC’s mission and remained a cornerstone of its activities. Since our inception, we have accomplished the following:

- Trained resident leaders to plan and implement community-oriented activities that improve their neighborhood and quality of life of residents
- Involved residents to promote a plan for the development of an “urban village” in the Fenway that includes development of over 2,000 units of mixed-income housing and a community center
- Engaged residents and community stakeholders to share their voices to ensure that Northeastern University increases their student dormitories beds from 0 to 600 in their 10-year master plan, preventing displacement of residents due to transient students escalating rental costs.
- Collaborated with community stakeholders to improve the IDP to improve affordability in citywide neighborhoods and saw success when the state legislature approved a Home Rule Petition to codify IDP in Boston’s zoning code.
- Worked with elected leaders, community partners, CDCs, and the Boston Committee to suggest improvements in the City’s housing policy to create a future stock of mixed-income housing.

### Economic Development

Since 1994, Fenway CDC has partnered with the employers in the Longwood Medical and Academic Area to form the “Walk to Work” program, which addressed a need for free career counseling, job placement, education and training referrals, and career advancement services for Fenway residents who had no other local resources available.

### Resident Services

Fenway CDC has served thousands of residents by providing housing services, counseling, referral services, and case-management relating to education, job, health and financial wellness.

### Personal Financial Management

Fenway CDC partnered with Metro Housing Boston to offer financial coaching to help residents learn how to create fiscal goals, develop budgets, savings, and debt management.

### **Fenway CDC’s work is consistent with the Commonwealth’s Sustainable Development Principles.**

### Concentrated Development and Mixed Uses

Fenway CDC’s real estate development projects are all located in dense, lively, mixed-use, transit-oriented Boston neighborhoods. The projects exceed the highest LEED standard of 10 units per acre. Residents can walk to banks, restaurants, grocery stores, daycare, community centers, libraries, pharmacies, schools, and health care providers.

### Advance Equity

Our tenant population and committees are more diverse than the Fenway neighborhood, although slightly less than the City of Boston. We provide translations at meetings and reach a diverse resident pool by advertising in non-English publications and to communities of color.

### Make Efficient Decisions

Fenway CDC prides itself on the civic engagement of its members and residents. Part of our mission is to empower people and to help them to speak out on issues that affect their lives. Thus, we involve residents and neighbors when we weigh in on neighborhood development projects or pursue projects. While this decision-making process is not always the most expedient, the participation of those stakeholders who are directly affected improves outcomes and instills a sense of ownership in the community.

### Protect Land and Ecosystems

Our projects involve either acquisition and preservation or infill redevelopment in the densely populated Fenway, avoiding the loss of nature. We value green spaces in a large city like Boston and one of our committees is focused on the protection and expansion of green space in the community.

### Provide Transportation Choices

Our projects are in mixed-use, transit-oriented areas with great pedestrian infrastructure and access to several public transportation options. We fought to preserve MBTA bus access to the center of the neighborhood and multiple branches of the Green Line that serve the community.

### Increase Job and Business Opportunities

Our Fenway projects preserve affordable housing near major Boston employment centers, including Back Bay and the Longwood Medical Area. These development projects create jobs during construction and sustain jobs for property management staff and others who support the properties and residents. We prioritize locally owned businesses, businesses owned by women and people of color, and those that provide services to residents. We hope to offer below-market retail space to local start-up businesses and entrepreneurs in some newer developments.

### Promote Clean Energy

We monitor the monthly energy use of all our properties so that we can adjust to improve efficiency. We have completed or are undertaking energy efficient retrofits across our portfolio, including the installation of new lighting, HVAC systems, and windows with higher insulation performance. We have installed solar thermal systems at three properties, and we hope to install these systems on additional properties in the future. Our properties participate in local recycling and multiple properties make use of food service programs that use excess produce, reducing food waste.

### Plan Regionally

The *2008 MetroFuture Regional Plan* issued by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) provides guiding principles for Fenway CDC's work. Fenway CDC's development projects meet the ideal for the future envisioned by MAPC: they are dense developments in an already developed and vibrant neighborhood and well served by infrastructure. Shops, services, public transportation, and recreation spaces are easily accessible to residents. With Fenway CDC's acquisition of 97 affordable units in the South End/Lower Roxbury neighborhood, we expect to embrace the same principles as we develop affordable housing in a wider footprint.