

West End Branch Library Project

January 10, 2023



City of Boston
Mayor Michelle Wu



Housing

Zoom Interpretation Services



English: For interpretation in [____],

1. Go to the horizontal control bar at the bottom of your screen. Click on “Interpretation.”
2. Then click on the language that you would like to hear.
3. You are now accessing this meeting in [_____]

Cantonese: 若需粵語口譯服務：

1. 與屏幕下方之長方形控制欄中，煩請點擊“Intepretation.”
2. 煩請點擊您所需收聽的語言。
3. 您即可聽到粵語的會議口譯。

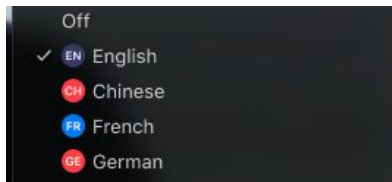
Mandarin: 若需普通话口译服务：

1. 在屏幕下方的长方形控制栏中，请点击“Intepretation.”
2. 请点击您所需收聽的語言。
3. 您即可收听普通话的会议口译。

1.



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Agenda

- Welcome!
- Tonight's meeting objectives
- Quick recap of the Oct. 26th meeting
- Development objectives for the Request for Proposals (RFP)
- Working draft of the RFP
- Questions, comments, and discussion
- Next steps



**A quick note to
potential
respondents in
attendance tonight!**



Tonight's meeting objectives

- ❖ Describe the Mayor's Office of Housing's disposition and developer designation process.
- ❖ Present the working draft of the Request For Proposals for development on this site, based on the feedback and discussion of the last year.
- ❖ Hear your comments and answer any questions you may have.
- ❖ Discuss the timeline for RFP release and developer selection.

Recapping the October 26th meeting



Attendees: 60+

- ❖ We discussed the development objectives for housing built on this site.
- ❖ We talked about the Request for Proposals drafting process and steps to release.

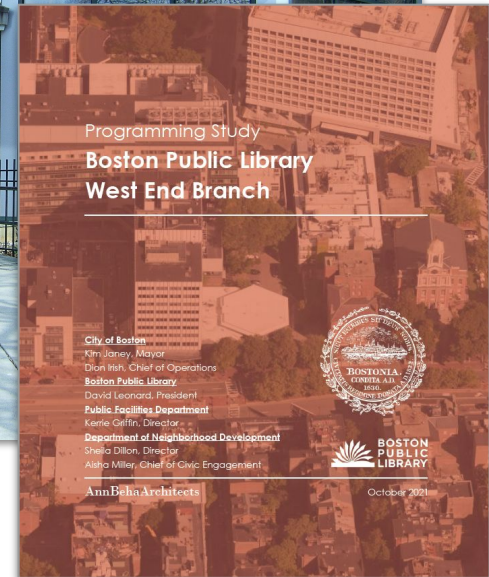
For slides and the recording from October 26th, visit:

<https://www.boston.gov/buildinghousing/west-end-library-housing-public-assets>

The final programming study included two key findings.

The programming study confirmed that a **new branch library should be built** at the West End site, with updated programming and amenities to best serve the community.

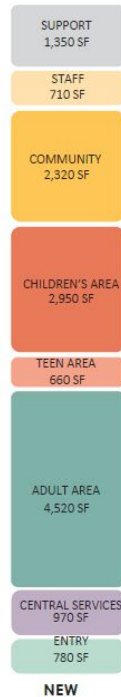
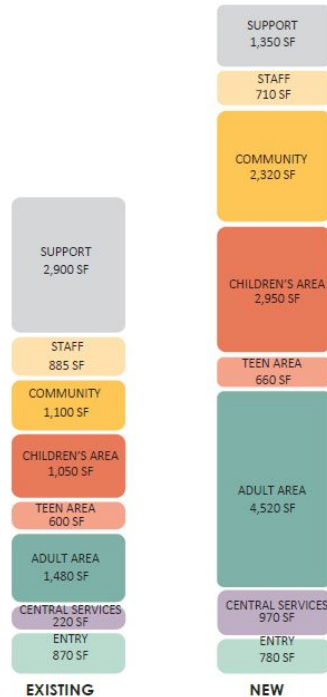
The programming study also confirmed the strong potential for a **mixed-use building with affordable housing above the library**. There was consistent support expressed for this idea at community meetings.



BRANCH REQUIREMENTS

The developer is to provide a core/shell space for BPL to design and fit out for the branch library

A LARGER BRANCH Minimum 16,000 usable SF

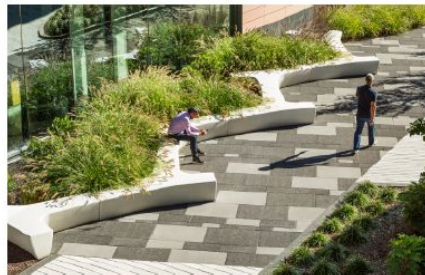


A TRANSPARENT FACADE & A PROMINENT ENTRANCE



- Institutional style ceiling heights of 12'
- Acoustic separation
- Completely separate building systems
- Separate stairs and elevator for branch use only

OUTDOOR SPACE



We released development objectives to shape proposals for the site.



City of Boston
Mayor's Office of Housing

West End Branch Library (Housing With Public Assets)

Draft development objectives for combining a new library branch with high-quality affordable housing.

October 2022

The following draft development objectives will form the basis of a forthcoming Request for Proposals (RFP) for a mixed-use development at the current site of the West End Library, which will include a new ground-floor space for the library and multiple floors of primarily income-restricted, affordable housing above. The objectives that are laid out below are the result of input and discussion gathered during a months-long participatory community process between a multi-disciplinary City of Boston team and residents of the West End and Beacon Hill. The Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH) is seeking any additional comments on these objectives before proceeding to draft the RFP for the development project.

Please share any comments or questions with Joe Backer, Senior Development Officer, at: 617-635-0226 or joseph.backer@boston.gov

More information on this project can be found at: <https://www.boston.gov/building/housing/west-end-library-housing-public-assets>

Draft Development Objectives

Deliver a First-Class Library

The City's primary goal is to build a library branch that offers world-class services in a beautiful landmark for the neighborhood. The library should have a strong street presence, enhancing the street fabric and serving as a gathering place on Cambridge Street. The design of the branch exterior should draw attention to the library and hold its own amidst the other large buildings on the street and the housing above it. The entrance, stairs and elevators for the housing in the building should be distanced from the entrance to the library to give each component a distinct identity. The library's street frontage should include an outdoor area that combines landscaped open space and seating to be welcoming, accessible and connect the library to the active, urban street life of the area.

The elements that are called out in this document are:

- ❖ Focused on the residential component of the project (for detailed library needs, see BPL Planning Study);
- ❖ Drawn from many months of community input (surveys, community meetings, submitted comments)

**The draft
Request for
Proposals (RFP)**



- ❖ [M.G.L. c. 30B \(Chapter 30B\)](#) establishes an advertised proposal process that COB must follow in acquiring and disposing real estate property by purchase, sale or rental with a cost greater than \$35,000.
- ❖ **Under Chapter 30B** we are required to conduct an **open and fair competitive process** that places all proposers on common footing, solicit information that will allow **manageable and meaningful comparisons of offers** and base decisions solely on the information solicited. (what we've heard from the community).

MOH Land Disposition Process



1 Identify Site

2 Evaluate Development Feasibility

3 Public RFP
Planning Meetings

4 Issue RFP Including
Community Feedback

5 Advertise/Developer List

6 RFP Pre-Applicant
Conference

7 Review RFP Responses
for eligibility

8 Developer Presentation

9 Tentative Developer
Designation

10 Developer financing
and permitting

11 Property transferred
to developer


12 Construction

We've released a working draft of the Request for Proposals (RFP).


This document details what proposals should include and how they will be evaluated:

- ❖ The community's vision and objectives for the site;
- ❖ Site information and neighborhood context;
- ❖ Program requirements for affordable housing;
- ❖ Components of a successful application;
- ❖ How MOH will evaluate all proposals, gather input, and move to designate a development team.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR REAL ESTATE
HOUSING WITH PUBLIC ASSETS:
WEST END LIBRARY
151 Cambridge St, Boston 02114**



RFP Issue Date: _____, 2023
Proposal Due Date: _____, 2023



CITY of BOSTON
Michelle Wu, Mayor

MAYOR'S OFFICE of HOUSING
Sheila A. Dillon, Chief and Director

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
David Leonard, President

A community-driven vision for development on this site

Section 4: Development Guidelines and Objectives

*“The **core goal of the community vision** is to strongly encourage development proposals for a mixed-use development that includes a **world-class public library** as well as **affordable rental housing above the library.**”*

Guidelines for the **new library branch**

- ❖ The core and shell building must include approximately 17,500 to 19,000 usable square feet on either the ground floor or the first two floors of the development
- ❖ The development team will not design the interior of this space; BPL will lead a separate process to design and fit out this space as a new library branch
- ❖ This space shall be provided at cost to the Boston Public Library
- ❖ Applicants are strongly encouraged to reference the final Programming Study for this branch when creating their proposals for this site

- ❖ Note that the City is planning to seek legislative relief from Massachusetts state law to allow for the procurement of a core-and-shell library space in the manner envisioned

A community-driven vision for development on this site

Section 4: Development Guidelines and Objectives

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Guidelines for the **affordable housing above the library**

- ❖ Community input from the last two years has emphasized:
 - Maximizing opportunities for affordable housing in the building without compromising on the quality of design or the potential for households of varying size to live here
 - Providing a breadth of affordable housing, across multiple income tiers, including units at the deeply affordable levels such as 30% and 50% of Area Median Income
 - Prioritizing project proposals that create either family-sized units (e.g., two-bedroom and three-bedroom apartments) or senior housing units
- ❖ Rental housing is the best fit, as it helps ensure a smooth and predictable relationship between the housing owner and the BPL in managing the building

A community-driven vision for development on this site

Section 4: Development Guidelines and Objectives

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Guidelines for the **affordable housing above the library**

- ❖ Boston Housing Authority subsidy: This project represents an opportunity to create new “Faircloth Units” as a component of the deeply affordable housing on site. The BHA is prepared to make this special subsidy available and to work closely with the selected developer to support the development of these units as a great benefit to the neighborhood
- ❖ The vision for this site is that most or even all units will be affordable, income-restricted units; however, there has been an openness to considering proposals with a relatively small proportion of units that are unrestricted (market-rate) and/or restricted at workforce housing levels (e.g., 120% of Area Median Income)

A community-driven vision for development on this site

Section 4: Development Guidelines and Objectives

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Guidelines for the **public realm and neighborhood context**

- ❖ Open Space designs to connect the library to the neighborhood at the street level as well as provide programmable amenity space (e.g., a roof deck) to building residents. Most street trees are unlikely to survive construction but all proposals should include a tree plan
- ❖ Building height/massing to match the context of Cambridge St., striking a balance between the taller neighboring buildings and the 45-foot tall Otis House next door
- ❖ No parking is required given site constraints and nearby transit options; however, parking access for Otis House spaces will be preserved, and careful planning and consideration must be given to the coordination of street parking, a pick-up/drop-off area, building deliveries
- ❖ Proponents are encouraged to consider opportunities to collaborate with Historic New England to create a shared cultural district or shared educational experience between the Otis House and the library branch

A community-driven vision for development on this site

Section 4: Development Guidelines and Objectives

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Guidelines for the development of mixed uses on City-owned land

- ❖ The land will remain under City ownership, with the housing operator entering into a long-term land lease agreement with the City of Boston
- ❖ The RFP will establish the City’s expectation for a ground lease price proposal, based on a pending appraisal; however, applicants may offer a lower price proposal, justified by the public benefits of the proposal and the financial need for a lower price
- ❖ This site will involve vertical construction on land that will remain under City ownership. Depending on the funding source, developers may be expected to adhere to Davis-Bacon prevailing wage standards. All projects funded by MOH must also meet or exceed the construction employment standards of the Boston Residents Jobs Policy

**Questions,
comments, and
discussion on the
vision and
development goals**



City of Boston funding for affordable housing (and other sources)

MOH is making dedicated subsidy funds available in this RFP

- ❖ Affordable housing development projects that meet basic MOH thresholds are eligible for up to \$1.5 million in subsidy; proposals that exceed the minimum requirement for deeply affordable units may be eligible for additional funding
- ❖ Applying for funding directly via this RFP will mean the selected development team can begin development tasks without waiting for the City's annual funding round in the fall
- ❖ Applicants are required to follow all cost containment measures that MOH holds for City-funded projects, and comply with specific budget caps and requirements
- ❖ Applicants must develop designs in alignment with MOH Design Standards, MOH's Zero Emissions Building requirements, and Universal Design standards
- ❖ All applicants must include a comprehensive program for achieving equity and inclusion in the proposed project, including the development team members and construction trades, with special consideration for proposals achieving 25% MBE ownership or soft cost spending
- ❖ The Boston Housing Authority is also making a special rental subsidy available for the Faircloth Units, and applicants are expected to seek funding from applicable agencies

How MOH will evaluate proposals, gather input, and select a developer

Once the RFP submission deadline has passed:

- ❖ MOH will determine which submitted applications meet the City's Minimum Eligibility Criteria:
 - Proposal received by the deadline
 - Proposal is complete and contains all necessary information, forms, and documents
 - Proposal complies with the Development Guidelines and Objectives
- ❖ MOH will conduct an internal Comparative Evaluation of all proposals
- ❖ MOH will host a public meeting for the developers whose RFP submissions meet Minimum Eligibility Criteria to make detailed presentations to the neighborhood, in order to receive comments and recommendations on their proposals (including a comment period)
- ❖ Based on all internal and external input, MOH will select the most advantageous proposal and move forward with a Tentative Developer Designation from the Public Facilities Commission

What are the Comparative Evaluation process and criteria?

Every eligible proposal will be reviewed, and assigned a rating of “Not Advantageous”, “Advantageous”, or “Highly Advantageous”, according to the following criteria:

- ❖ **Development Plan** (relative to the Development Guidelines and Objectives)
- ❖ **Design Concept** (relative to the Design Considerations)
- ❖ Developer Experience and Capacity
- ❖ Developer’s Financial Capacity
- ❖ Development Cost Feasibility
- ❖ Equity and Inclusion
- ❖ Housing Affordability

(Bold indicates criteria for which MOH will seek community input at a developer presentation meeting.)

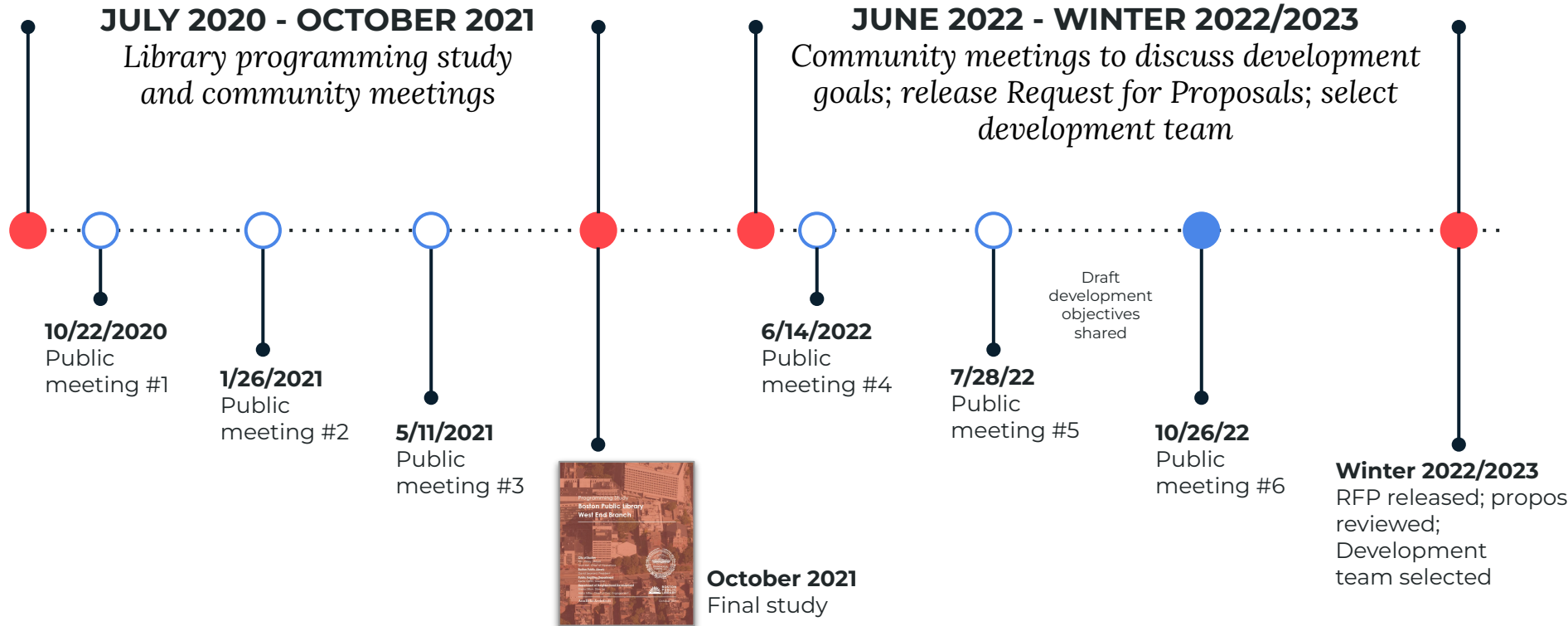
**Questions,
comments, and
discussion**



Looking forward



What has happened most recently, and what's coming up?



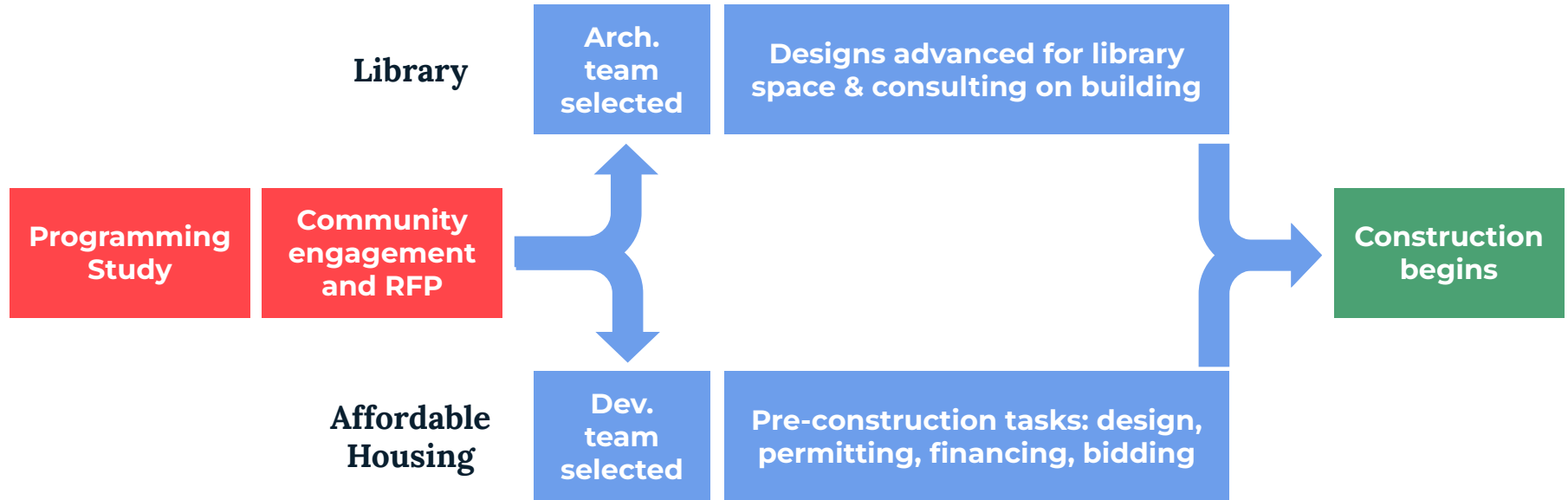
What opportunities remain for public input as we move forward?

Community engagement for this project will continue as we move through this next phase.

There are still **many** upcoming opportunities to help shape this project, including:

- ❖ Reviewing and submitting feedback on proposals that are submitted in response to the RFP;
- ❖ Attending a public “developer presentation” meeting when all respondents will present their proposals and field questions and comments;
- ❖ Participating in the BPDA-led Article 80 process once a development team is selected and a project proposal begins the formal review process;
- ❖ Reaching out at any time to meet with me or others at MOH and the City of Boston.

The library and housing planning efforts will move in parallel.



Final questions?





**Please send me any additional
feedback on the draft RFP!**

Contact info:

Joe Backer, Mayor's Office of Housing

joseph.backer@boston.gov

617-635-0226

www.boston.gov/buildinghousing/west-end-library-housing-public-assets



THANK YOU

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