

Planning Grit: Advancing Reforms in Planning

Jennifer Raitt

Passion



Connection



Learning



Growth

Introduction and Outline:

- Change is possible, we have examples
- Staying on mission
- Overcoming fear in our communities
- Learning from losses
- There are a million finish lines
- Embracing a new reality
- APA's role
- Setting goals changes behavior

Planning Reforms are Possible and Necessary

- Equity
- Resiliency
- Local/ State Policy
- Partnerships
- Leadership
- Bravery

“...You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it...”

A seismic, cultural shift...

1

How should we approach our work as planners?

What is our role and capacity as planners?

2

We must overcome the fear that exists in all of our communities by raising the bar on what we need to do to address the issues of our times.

It is a climb and sometimes we
have to learn from our losses.

Town Meeting 2019

Occate

Town Meeting or bust

Arlington's
Redevelopment
Board sends zoning
recodification to
Town Meeting

hearing draft as amended for the planned February special Town Meeting. The amendments made came out of even more comments from a group of residents who have been going through the various recodification drafts looking for errors, comments from Zoning Recodification Working Group Members and ARB members.

What constitutes a policy change?

After the public hearings at the

beginning of January, members of the working group met with two members of the residents' group to discuss their comments on the hearing draft and what the latter viewed as potentially substantive policy changes.

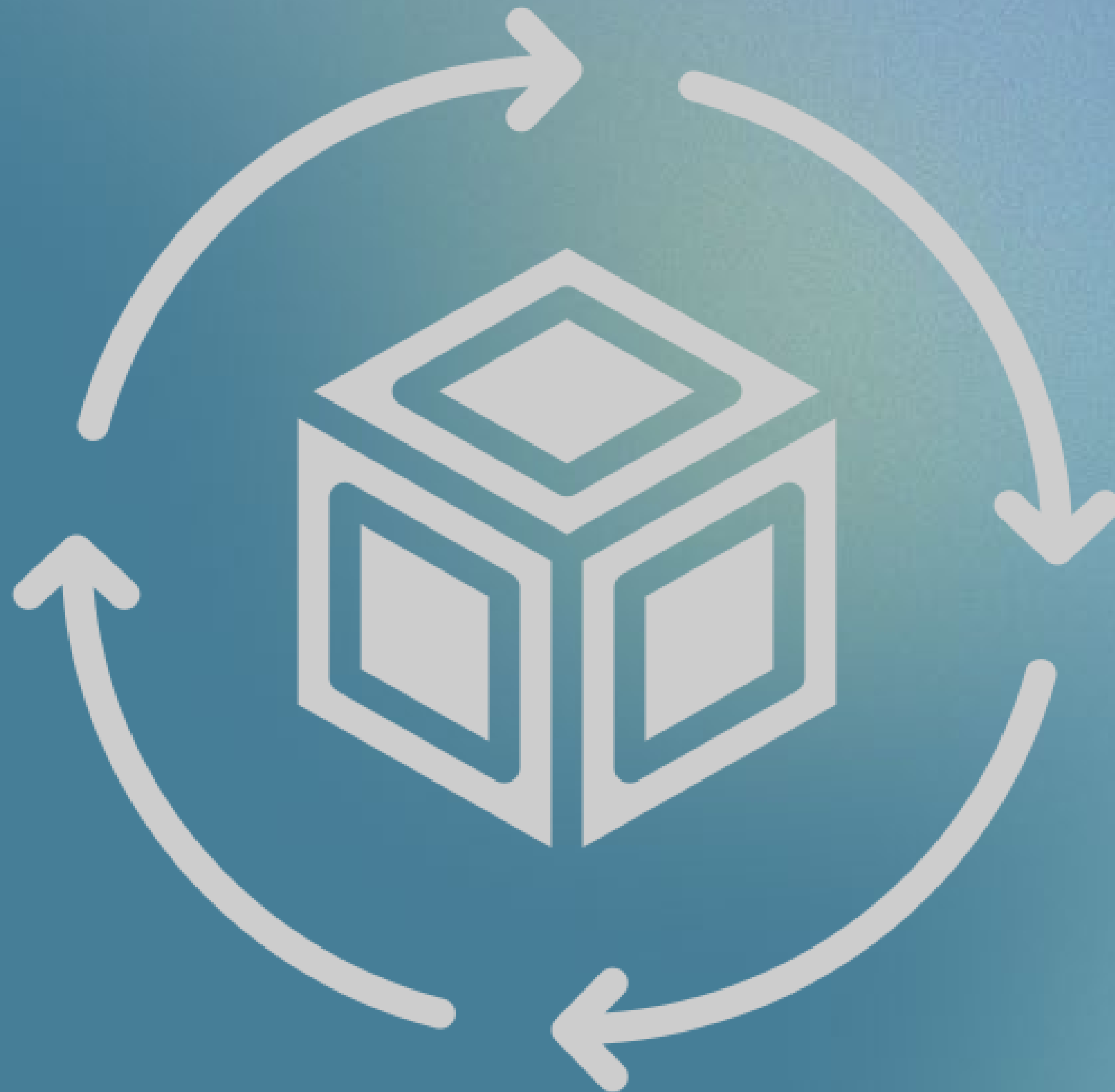
Following the meeting on Jan. 12, the document was amended with tracked changes and released on Jan. 17.

After reading this new draft, members of the residents' group still felt there were issues that had not been addressed. Wynne Evans, a member of the residents'

group, noted that of the roughly 181 issues they found, only 96 were corrected or changed in the new draft. These roughly 66 unchanged issues became the subject of a "philosophical discussion" policy. "Not

ARB chair Andrew Bur





Engage

Ideate

Iterate

Monday



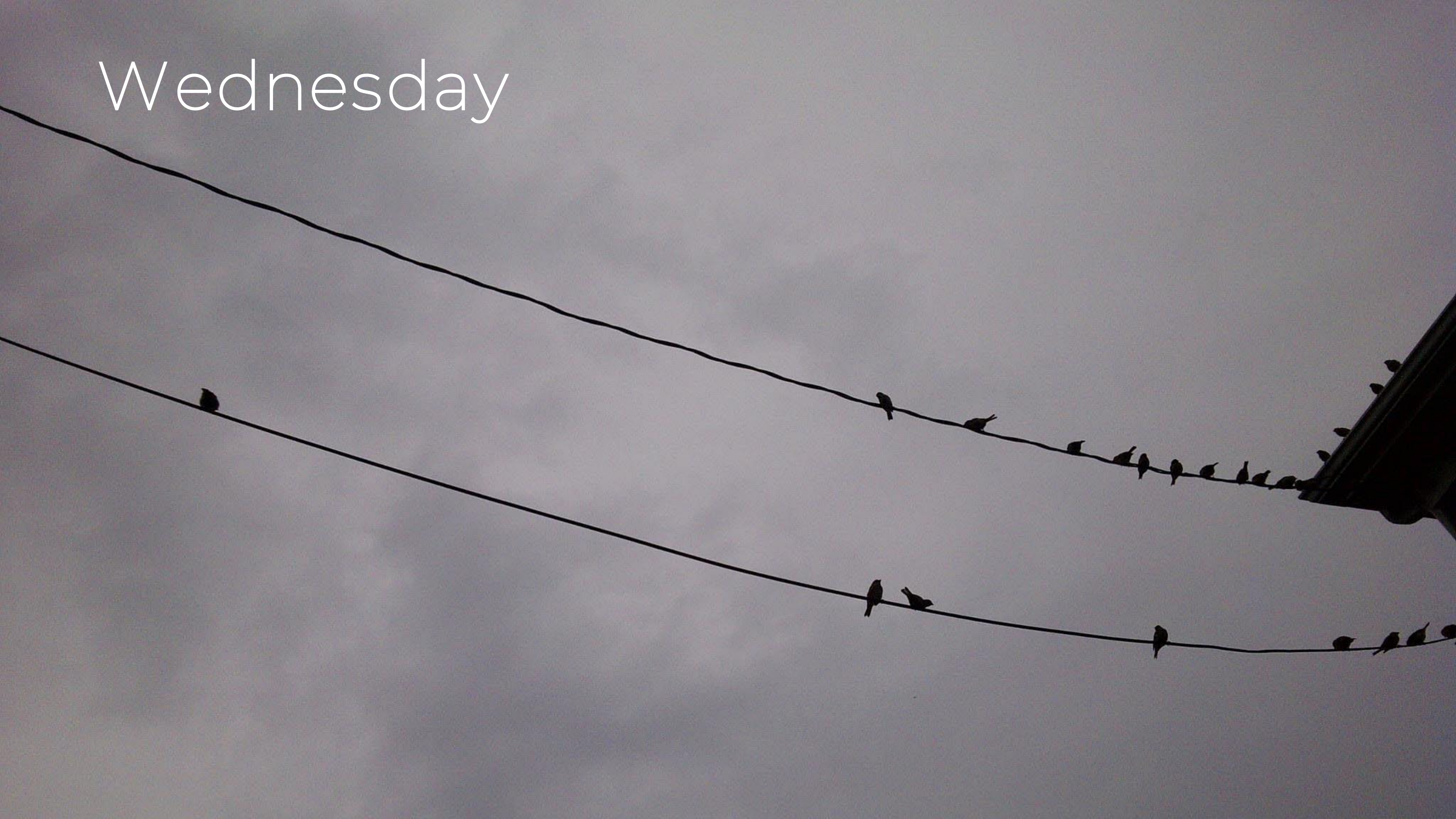
FINISH!



The Phone Call



Wednesday



Everywhere I turned that Spring,
change seemed to be looming.

A dense forest of tall, thin trees with a blue color overlay. The trees are closely packed, and their trunks are visible against a lighter blue background. The overall mood is serene and somewhat mysterious.

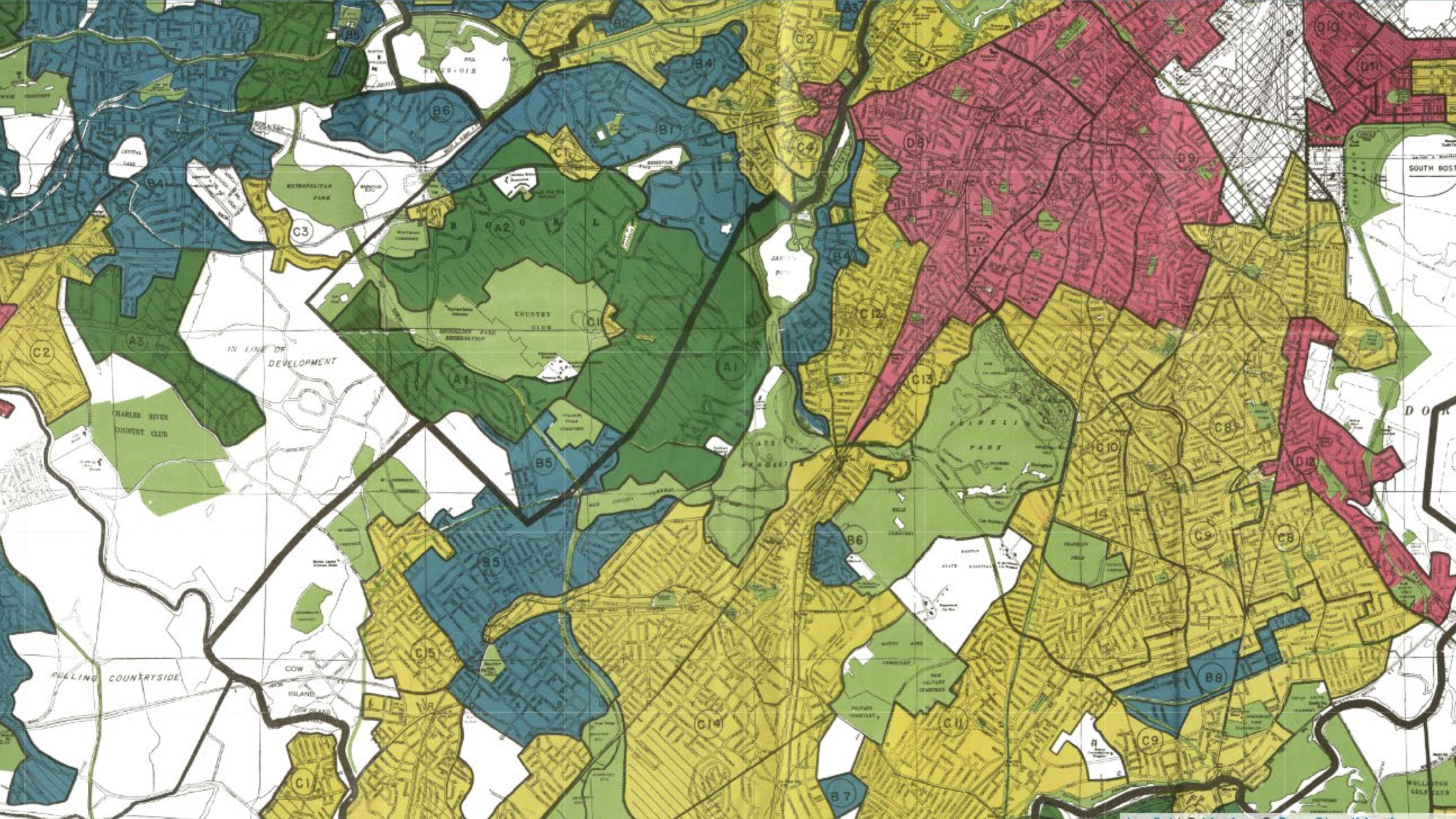
Navigating Local Politics

To: Jennifer Raitt
Date: 08/02/2017 12:35 PM
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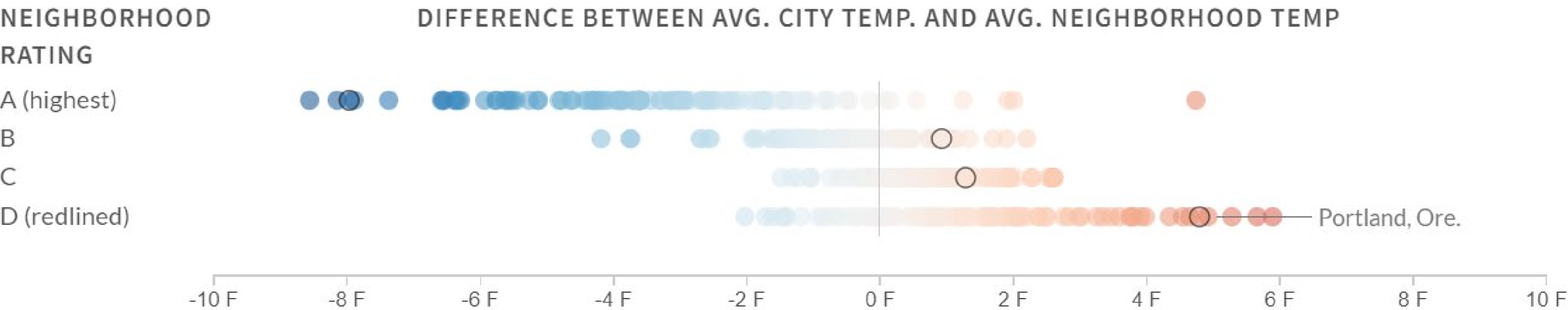
Arlington already has 40,000 people living in 4 square miles. Do we really need more people?

Not everyone sees
the status quo
in the same way.



In Formerly Redlined Areas, Americans Live With Hotter Temperatures

In the 1930s, the federal government rated neighborhoods in urban areas to help mortgage lenders assess risk. Low ratings were determined largely by race and ethnicity. New research in 108 cities shows that today those redlined neighborhoods are often hotter than other neighborhoods in the same city, with the most drastic difference found in Portland, Ore.



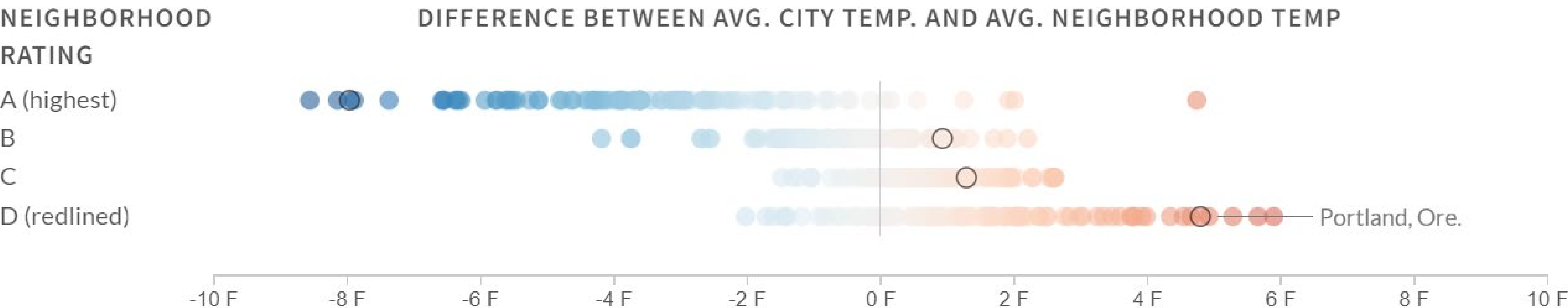
Source: Portland State University, the Science Museum of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University

Credit: Sean McMinn/NPR

Heat Impact - Redlining

In Formerly Redlined Areas, Americans Live With Hotter Temperatures

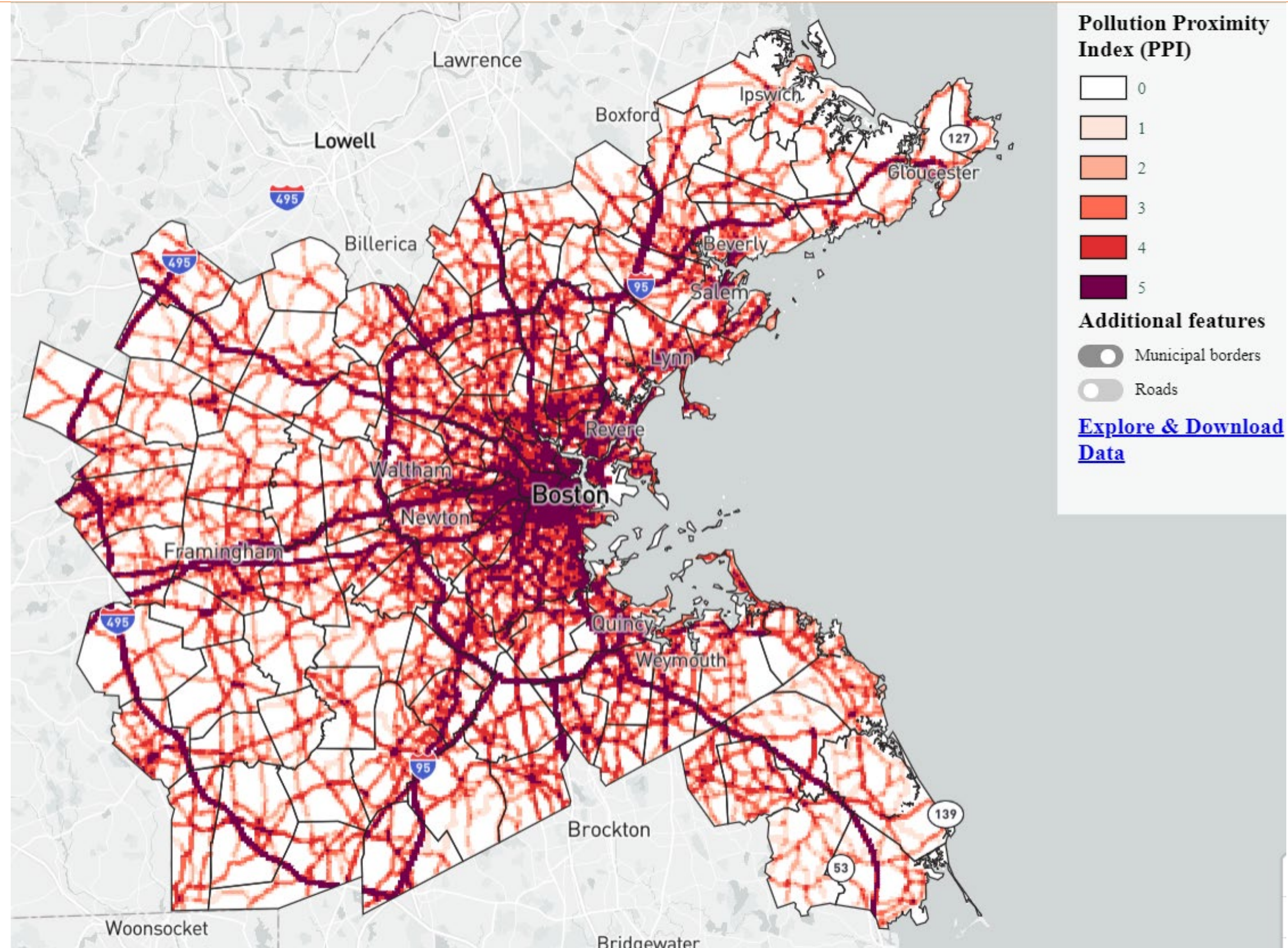
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Source: Portland State University, the Science Museum of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University

Credit: Sean McMinn/NPR

Pollution - Redlining



Racial Segregation Concentrates Residents of Color Near High-Polluting Roads, Study Shows, Metropolitan Area Planning Council. June 22, 2020 .

54

Fifty-Four
Thousand
Housing
Units



Shifting the narrative

The image features a stylized, abstract line drawing of a mountain range. The mountain is composed of several peaks and ridges, with the central peak being the most prominent. The interior of the mountain is filled with numerous thin, white, curved lines that radiate from the center, creating a sense of depth and texture. The background is a solid, muted blue color. The text 'Shifting the narrative' is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font, positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the image.

Embracing this new reality takes a lot of courage and a lot of creativity.

Borrow liberally

Engage in broader initiatives

Keep learning, absorbing new ideas

Follow/ share recommended APA reforms:

Planning Home

Policy Guides

AICP Code of Ethics

P l a n n i n g H o m e

The Planning Home Principles

- Modernize State Planning Laws
- Reform Local Codes
- Promote Inclusionary Growth
- Remove Barriers to Multifamily Housing
- Turn NIMBY into YIMBY
- Rethink Finance

Planning Home

Today's housing challenges demand new tools and better planning. The housing options we plan today will foster the homes that families will grow, thrive, and dream in tomorrow. APA conceived Planning Home, an organization-wide initiative, to reshape the way planning is used to address America's housing affordability crisis.

TAKE ACTION

Taking action at the state level is one way to address the housing crisis. Check out these actions from the states, outlined in APA's Housing Policy Guide.

[Learn More](#)



Changing Perceptions

By taking unique approaches to financial, environmental, and social sustainability, Milwaukee's Westlawn Gardens demonstrated that public housing can accommodate the varying needs of underserved populations.



Exploring Case Studies

Explore innovative solutions from communities around the country addressing housing affordability and availability. From cottage homes to tax abatements, planners in Clovis, California, and Akron, Ohio, are demonstrating how planning is part of the solution to the nation's housing crisis.

Change the Narrative

Planning Home Case Studies

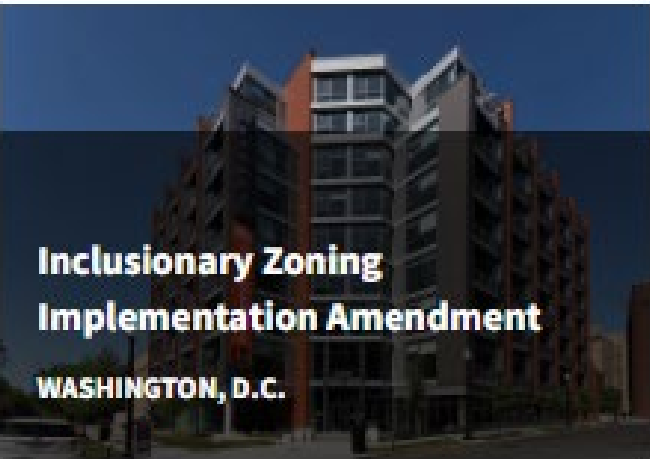
Explore innovative solutions from communities around the country looking to address the nation's housing affordability crisis. Case studies will provide an overview of an effort or initiative, additional information, and resources. Use the contact us form if you have a suggestion for a future case study.



Accessory Dwelling Unit and Unit Legalization Program
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



Residential Property Tax Abatement
AKRON, OHIO



Inclusionary Zoning Implementation Amendment
WASHINGTON, D.C.



Affordable Housing Bonus Program and Reducing Displacement
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



Cottage Home Program
CLOVIS, CALIFORNIA



Resilience Roundtable: Disaster Recovery
HOUSTON, TEXAS



A New Model for Collaboration
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



Addressing Racial Housing Disparities
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

2019 Housing Policy Guide

- Housing Supply and Conditions
- Affordability
- Location
- Housing for All

2019 Planning for Equity Guide

“Planning for equity... works to (1) create and extend opportunities to each member of the community; (2) recognize and help to build the capacity of each member of the community; (3) acknowledge and take action when the attributes of inequity are present; and (4) adopt new approaches to planning that fully embrace equity....”

2022 Equity in Zoning Guide

“Ending disproportionate exclusionary impacts by identifying specific ways in which the drafting, public engagement, application, mapping, and enforcement of zoning regulations can be changed to dismantle the barriers that perpetuate the separation of historically disadvantaged and vulnerable communities....”

2022 What is Equity in Zoning?

- **Rules:** Districts, Building Form and Standards, Use, Site Development Standards
- **Procedures:** Capacity, Advisory/ Decision Making, Drafting/ Amending Rules, Applying Rules, Enforcing Rules
- **Maps:** Drawing and Amending Maps, Making Land Available, and Removing Disparities in Neighborhood Health Risk and Access to Key Services/ Facilities, and Removing Historic Segregation

2022 Equity in Zoning Rules

6

Major Equity Concerns:

public health

environmental justice

fair access to attainable housing

fair access to economic opportunity and services

aging in place

cultural preservation

2022 Equity in Zoning Rules

- Base and overlay zoning districts
- Lot and building dimensional standards and design standards
- Use regulations for residential, commercial, industrial agricultural home occupations, temporary events
- Site development standards
 - Access and connectivity
 - Required parking
 - Landscaping, open space, and tree canopy
 - Lighting for public safety

2022 Equity in Zoning Procedures

- Capacity building
- Equity in advisory and decision-making boards
- Writing and changing the rules
- Applying the rules (administrative and ministerial decisions, decisions that require a public hearing, public notification, and conducting the hearing)
- Enforcing the rules

2022 Equity in Zoning Maps

Maps can institutionalize inequitable opportunities and outcomes by:

- Constraining land supply for needed types of development
- Concentrating polluting and harmful land uses and facilities in some neighborhoods
- Limiting access to key public services and facilities
- Perpetuating separation of old “redlining” maps

2022 Equity in Zoning Maps

- Drawing and changing area-wide zoning maps
- Making land available for needed types of development
- Removing
 - Disparities in neighborhood health risk
 - Disparities in access to key services and facilities
 - Historic segregation through mapping



Navigating Local Politics

“ WHY IS ZONING SO HARD ? ”

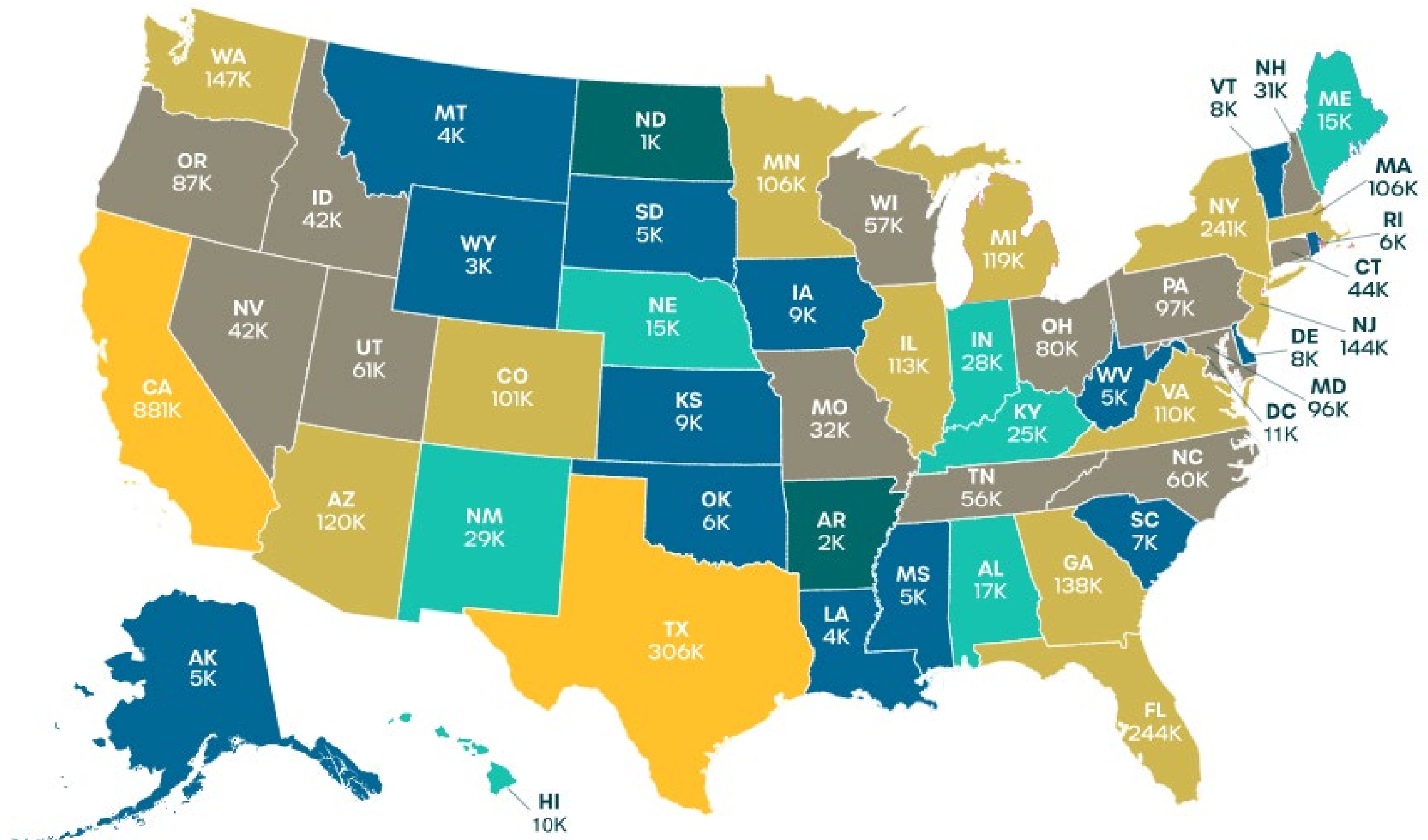
I. ASSESSING THE BOSTON ZONING CODE

Like every other zoning code in the country, the Boston Zoning Code divides land into districts and distinctly regulates each district. The Zoning Code says which districts allow residential, commercial, industrial, and open space uses. It dictates the size of lots, as well as where buildings must be located on lots, and how those lots may be developed. And the Zoning Code governs building design, including height, bulk, and materials. In regulating uses, lots, and buildings through districts, the Boston Zoning Code performs the same functions as other zoning codes.

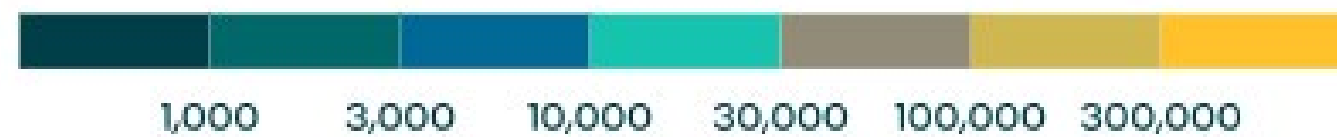
The manner in which the Zoning Code performs these functions, however, is both atypical and problematic. While individual provisions might well appear perfectly rational, even harmless, they must be assessed cumulatively, at a macro level, to understand the overall impact of the Code as a whole. In taking a broad view, and comparing the Boston Zoning Code to the codes of similar cities, a few things become clear. First, the Zoning Code is abnormally long and complex, far exceeding average metrics. Second, it is outdated, containing antiquated terms and creating regulatory hurdles that ignore current conditions. Third, it is inconsistent from one base district to the next, between overlay districts and base districts, and in its general regulatory posture. And finally, it is inequitable as written and in its application. This assessment considers each of these four characterizations in turn.

A. ABNORMALLY LONG AND COMPLEX

The first thing one notices about the Boston Zoning Code is its length: it runs 3,791 pages across 90 “articles” (chapters). To some extent, length is a proxy for complexity, because every page contains distinct regulatory text. The longer the code, the more rules with which property owners must comply. Too many rules usually mean more bureaucratic hurdles, more time, more confusion, and more expense for owners. Putting the length and complexity of the Zoning Code in context can help us understand whether it goes too far.



UNITS OF UNDERPRODUCTION, 2021



Up for Growth, 2023

2022 AICP Code of Ethics

“Equity means fairness. Diversity means the value of different perspectives. Inclusion means to be included not excluded, to create a sense of belonging, and to make people feel welcome. Access means to remove physical, cultural and regulatory barriers.”

Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP

The very act of setting goals
starts to change behavior
and communicates:

- Aspirations
- Accountability
- Standards of change

We have to set the pace



1. Outcome:
Expert Insights & Guidance

2. Value:
Long-Term
Vision



3. Unique Skill Set:
Data-Driven
Process

Passion



Connection



Learning



Growth

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