

# Help us Build on the Vision for Downtown Lynn

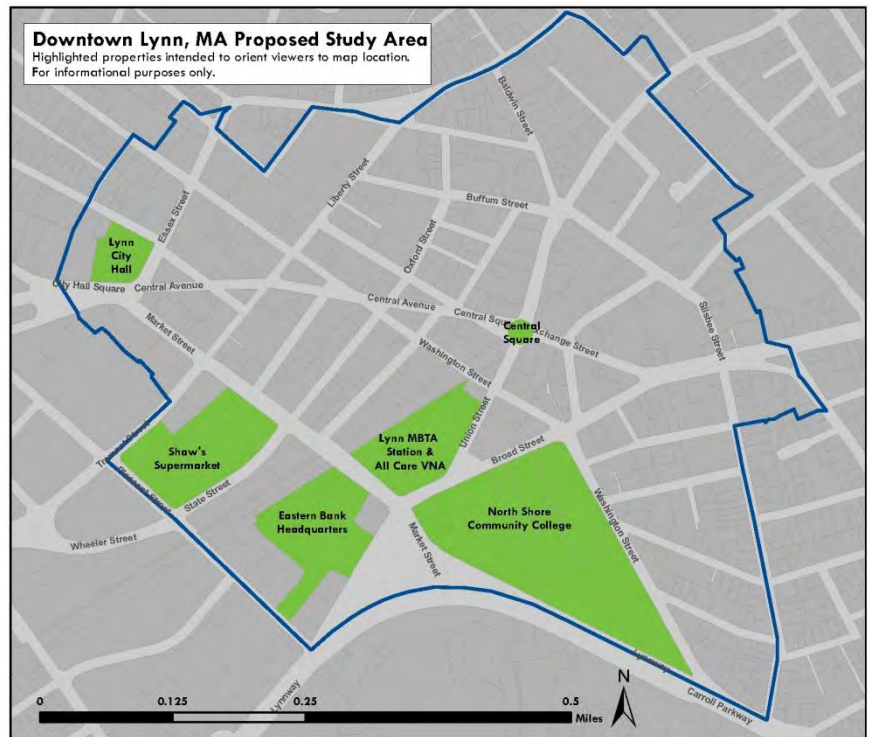
This project will build upon the existing efforts to revitalize Downtown Lynn by providing geographic data, recommending land use and policy changes, and identifying funding and human capital resources that will lead to strategic, high impact reinvestment.

## Join us for a Team of Advisors Kickoff Meeting

Wednesday, November 21, 2012, 8:00-10:00am  
Room 302, Lynn City Hall, 3 City Hall Square, Lynn, Massachusetts 01901  
Continental breakfast and networking 8:00-8:30am  
Presentation and discussion 8:30-10:00am

### Over the next several months, this Team of Advisors will:

- ★ Reach out to a larger network of community members invested in the future of Downtown Lynn
- ★ Shape project outcomes by providing feedback at critical intervals during the project timeline
- ★ Craft a shared vision for the future of Downtown Lynn
- ★ Commit to achieving Downtown Lynn's full potential as a vibrant, diverse, transit-oriented city center



### Project outcomes:

**An interactive property database will make it easier to visualize geographic trends and communicate real estate and investment opportunities in Downtown Lynn. This tool can be used to:**

- ★ Provide funders and investors with a visual representation of strengths and weaknesses of different properties
- ★ Assess acquisition potential of buildings and vacant lots in poor condition
- ★ Identify small businesses or homeowners in need of property maintenance assistance
- ★ Identify positive examples of neighborhood strength
- ★ Identify areas for the creation of new public spaces or small parks

**Recommendations will be established for overcoming barriers to achieving the vision, including:**

- ★ Recommendations for changes to zoning
- ★ Identification of grant funding sources
- ★ Strategies to fund needed resources such as staff positions

To RSVP, request language or accessibility accommodations, or find out more, please contact Manisha Bewtra at MAPC ([mbewtra@mapc.org](mailto:mbewtra@mapc.org), 617-451-2770x2081), Don Walker at OECD ([dwalker@lynnma.gov](mailto:dwalker@lynnma.gov), 781-586-6778), or Jeff Weeden at LHAND ([jweeden@lhand.org](mailto:jweeden@lhand.org), 781-581-8623).



Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is conducting this project with guidance from the City of Lynn Office of Economic and Community Development (OECD) and Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND). Funding provided by the MetroBoston Consortium for Sustainable Communities with a match from MAPC. The project will kick off with a Team of Advisors meeting on November 21 and a Public Meeting in mid-December 2012, and is expected to conclude in the summer of 2013.

# **Build on the Vision for Downtown Lynn Team of Advisors Kickoff Meeting**

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## **Agenda**

**8:00-8:30am:**

### **Continental breakfast and poster gallery**

Mingle and enjoy breakfast, compliments of OECD, while looking at Downtown Lynn maps and other graphics produced by MAPC. Please make sure to sign in!

**8:30-8:45am:**

### **Welcome by the Co-Chairs of the Team of Advisors**

Team of Advisors Co-Chairs Don Walker (OECD) and Jeff Weeden (LHAND) will kick off the meeting as well as introduce the team from MAPC.

### **Why are we here today?**

During this time, participants will introduce themselves and answer the question: if there is one thing you really want to see happen in Downtown Lynn, what would it be?

**8:45-9:40am:**

### **Project goals, tasks, and timeline**

Learn about how this project came to be, the activities that will be conducted, and intended achievements. Participants will learn more about the anticipated role of the Team of Advisors as well as the proposed meeting schedule.

### **Initial findings**

The project team shares its understanding of previous planning work as well as current land use and demographic trends for Downtown Lynn.

### **What is an interactive property database and how will it help Lynn?**

The project team is developing an interactive property database to make it easier to visualize geographic trends and communicate real estate and investment opportunities in Downtown Lynn. Learn about similar tools that have been developed elsewhere, and how MAPC proposes to customize a property analysis solution for Lynn.

### **Project outreach plan and public meeting agenda**

A major role of the Team of Advisors will be to boost the project team's outreach efforts. The project includes opportunities for community members representing diverse backgrounds to get involved, volunteer, and provide input. The most immediate outreach need is for the public forum in January.

**9:40-9:55am:**

### **Open discussion**

Participants have an opportunity to ask additional questions and offer more feedback.

**9:55-10:00am:**

### **Wrap-up and adjourn**

The project team summarizes immediate next steps, including activities to prepare for next Team meeting in December and the public meeting in January.



# **Build on the Vision for Downtown Lynn**

## **Core Project Team**

### **Downtown Lynn Team of Advisors Co-Chairs:**

Don Walker, Office of Economic and Community Development (OECD) Director of Project Operations  
[dwalker@lynnma.gov](mailto:dwalker@lynnma.gov), 781-586-6778

Jeff Weeden, Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND) Planning and Development Specialist  
[jweeden@lhand.org](mailto:jweeden@lhand.org), 781-581-8623

### **Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC):**

#### **Project Manager and Lead Planner:**

Manisha Bewtra, AICP, MAPC Senior Regional Planner  
[mbewtra@mapc.org](mailto:mbewtra@mapc.org), 617-451-2770 ext. 2081

#### **Project Data and Mapping Coordinator:**

Clayton Martin, MAPC Research Analyst  
[cmartin@mapc.org](mailto:cmartin@mapc.org), 617-451-2770 ext. 2057

#### **Project Outreach Coordinator:**

Emily Torres-Cullinane, MAPC Community Liaison  
[etorres@mapc.org](mailto:etorres@mapc.org), 617-451-2770 ext. 2051



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## **Meeting Highlights**

### **Attendance**

The following list represents participants who attended all or a portion of the meeting. Some participants were only in attendance at the beginning or end of this meeting. These notes are not intended to reflect official positions of meeting participants, rather they are intended to capture the spirit of the conversation and ideas for moving the project forward. Notes by MAPC.

- Cathy Anderson, North Shore Community College
- Manisha Bewtra, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- Dan Cahill, Lynn City Council
- Brendan Crighton, Lynn City Council
- Jeff Crosby, New Lynn Coalition
- Mike Donovan, City of Lynn Inspectional Services
- Steven Godfrey, Minority Cultural Center Community Development Corporation
- Hon. Judith Flanagan Kennedy, City of Lynn Mayor
- Corey Jackson, Arts After Hours, Inc. and Downtown Resident
- Lou Markakis, real estate consultant
- Clayton Martin, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- Bob Matthias, Grand Army of the Republic Hall and Museum Building
- Carly McClain, New Lynn Coalition
- Julie Mendendez, Community Credit Union
- Ralph Sevinor, Lynn Area Chamber of Commerce
- Emily Torres-Cullinane, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- Don Walker, Lynn Office of Economic and Community Development
- Jeff Weeden, Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development

### **Welcome**

- From 8:00-8:30 participants had a an opportunity to mingle and review draft maps for the project. Lynn OECD provided a complimentary continental breakfast.
- Team of Advisors Co-Chairs Don Walker (OECD) and Jeff Weeden (LHAND) kicked of the meeting at 8:30.

### **If there is one thing you really want to see happen in Downtown Lynn, what would it be?**

Participants introduced themselves and mentioned things they wanted to see happen in Downtown Lynn. The following are some of the highlights of this conversation.

- The homeless population is a challenge for the image of Downtown Lynn. Activities such as public defecation or inappropriate adult activities have been witnessed.
- Community development that benefits the whole city and citywide involvement in the future of Downtown
- More life and vitality in Downtown
- More commercial and residential growth



- For old mistakes to be corrected, and to implement a new framework that includes having the government step back
- Focus on redevelopment under the train tracks
- A hotel in Downtown Lynn
- A strategy for Central Square
- Focus on more housing and residential development because the current loft space is full
- Would like to continue to see a growing arts program
- More people in Downtown
- Integration of North Shore Community College's Lynn Campus Expansion Study into revitalization plans for Downtown Lynn
- Similarly, integration and understanding of Waterfront plan and how development on Waterfront will impact Downtown
- More communication
- More efforts to showcase the city
- A better balance between the arts, residential development, and commercial development.
- More business and real estate developer involvement in this project
- Make Lynn more user-friendly for developers
- Public transit that goes through Downtown to other parts of the City, to provide residents with better access to Downtown
- Focus on the "common resident"
- More open space, pocket parks in Downtown Lynn
- For Downtown Lynn to be an attractive and easy place for people to live, work, and build
- Analysis and discussion of Downtown Lynn's residential capacity, foreclosure, and "build out" would be helpful
- Current residents and businesses want to stay, but also want to shed Lynn's negative image
- More activities and facilities for families are needed
- More affordable entertainment options are needed – Lynn residents often go to Salem for movie theater, museums, restaurants.
- Build a museum network and raise awareness for existing museums – for example, there is a General Electric Museum inside the plan that few know about. Other museums include the Grand Army of the Republic Hall and Museum Building and the Lynn Museum.

### **MAPC presentation**

MAPC staff gave an overview of the project and initial findings. The presentation is available on the project website and included information on the following:

- Project funding, partners and tasks
- Project mission
- Role of Team of Advisors
- Project outcomes
- Timeline
- Study area
- Previous planning work
- Property characteristics – maps showing land use by property type classification
- What is an interactive property database?
- Benefits of an interactive property database for Lynn

### **What is an interactive property database?**

The project team is developing an interactive property database to make it easier to visualize geographic trends and communicate real estate and investment opportunities in Downtown Lynn. MAPC staff offered examples of other property databases and ideas for customizing a property analysis solution for Lynn.

- Philadelphia City Planning Commission has an interactive map on its website:  
<http://www.phila.gov/map#dept=pcpc>

- Data Driven Detroit developed a parcel-level data tool, similar to what MAPC is proposing for Lynn – available at: [http://datadrivendetroit.org/lisc\\_parcel/](http://datadrivendetroit.org/lisc_parcel/)
- Additional examples of parcel-level property analysis were shared with participants

### **Proposed public meeting agenda**

The following public meeting agenda was posted for discussion and will change per feedback received at this meeting and before the event occurs in January:

- Date and Time: Wednesday, January 16, 5:30-8:30PM?
- Venue and refreshments?
- 5:30-6:00pm: Welcome and Project Overview
- 6:00-6:30pm: Viewing of the Chronicle Episode
- 6:30-7:00pm: Stories from Long-time Lynners and Newbies
- 7:00-7:30pm: Poster Gallery Meet and Greet
- 7:30-8:30pm: Shop, Share, and Sign Up

#### Meeting venue

- Lynn Museum would be great for gallery, mingling, science fair portions but acoustics are difficult
- LHAND community room might have better acoustics and easy parking but feels sterile
- Similarly, North Shore Community College has facilities but these might feel sterile as well.
- RAW Art Works can fit a relatively large group in their gallery space on the first floor
- The Black Box Theater might have room for up to 150 but wouldn't be suited for the gallery and mingling portions of the agenda.

#### Outreach

- One of the challenges is how to bring people together to look past their day-to-day lives and think about the future of the City where they live and work.

#### Chronicle episode

- Not all liked the Chronicle episode, as it presented an incomplete picture of Lynn. Chronicle only reached out to a limited circle of people.
- Perhaps clips could be shown, rather than the entire thing
- Aspects of the program that were good were that it started a dialogue locally, and it showed Lynn in a positive light.
- There are other examples of positive press for Lynn – these could be summarized in the poster gallery – press clippings. For example, a recent NYTimes article on the Lynn Woods as well as Globe and Globe North pieces.

#### Stories

- An oral historian could connect Lynn's history to its present
- What makes Lynn cool?
- Lynn has a history of innovation, manufacturing, labor movement, and is where the first public meeting was held with both men and women in the United States.

#### Poster gallery

- In addition to maps, etc. the gallery could show images of Lynn in its hey day. Historic photos are available on the Lynn Museum website as well as digitized by Tim Ring, who has made postcards of these images.

#### Shop, share, and sign up

- Room could be set up like a science fair, and City departments, nonprofits, and local organizations could set up information booths on the resources they have to offer. This would also be an opportunity to recruit volunteers and youth.

### **Outreach challenges**

- Small business owners do not have time to attend meetings, or if they do, they have to find staff to cover the business while they are away
- Challenges with looking forward – getting past negative image
- Multilingual community with over 80 dialects

### **Potential outreach solutions/approaches**

- Go to the community – attend events that are already happening
- Youth can be a resource
- Work on branding/marketing of this project
- Communicate to different community groups in different ways – make it clear that everyone is invited to participate
- Help people understand it is about them – that they can have a role in shaping the future of their community
- Redefine/realign Lynn. What is the story? What is the shared vision? MAPC can help to tell that story and the Team of Advisors can make sure the right story is being told.

### **Who else should be involved/contacted?**

- Arts and Cultural District meets every Tuesday – they can be a resource and are key to Lynn's renaissance
- North Shore Navigators

### **Next steps**

- Mayor Kennedy suggested that the next meeting should take place at GAR.
- Participants were given a feedback form by MAPC to fill out, which included questions about issues the project should address as well as additional people or organizations the project team should reach out to.
- Don Walker also followed up with participants requesting feedback by email.
- Meeting feedback will be compiled and presented at the following Team of Advisors meeting.