

City of Boston
GrowBoston

City of Boston Urban Food Production Planning Grant SUCCESS STORY

NRCS Contact: Jose Jimenez
Agreement number: NR223A750001G039

Context for Project Outcomes

It has been 18 months since the end of our planning grant. The final outcome from the grant was an [86-page report](#) outlining recommendations for how our office can equitably advance urban agriculture in Boston. We have been hard at work to implement these recommendations. This presentation provides a summary of the recommendations that are currently in motion.



Urban Agriculture Ambassador Program

- **Recommendation 2.D** “Establish regular communication and engagement with residents, particularly in priority neighborhoods, to promote equitable urban agriculture.
- GrowBoston implemented the Urban Agriculture Ambassador Program, which provides 1:1 gardening education and support for gardeners in East Boston, Dorchester, Mattapan, and Roxbury (2025-26). Goals: support home gardeners, public facilities, increase connection between residents and GrowBoston.



Mel, Memia, Joel, and Nouradine - UAs



Urban Agriculture Ambassador Program



Joel leads monthly workshops at the East Boston Senior Center (employed at Eastie Farm)



Memia runs a youth program at Marshall Community Center



Nouradine teaches high school students how to garden

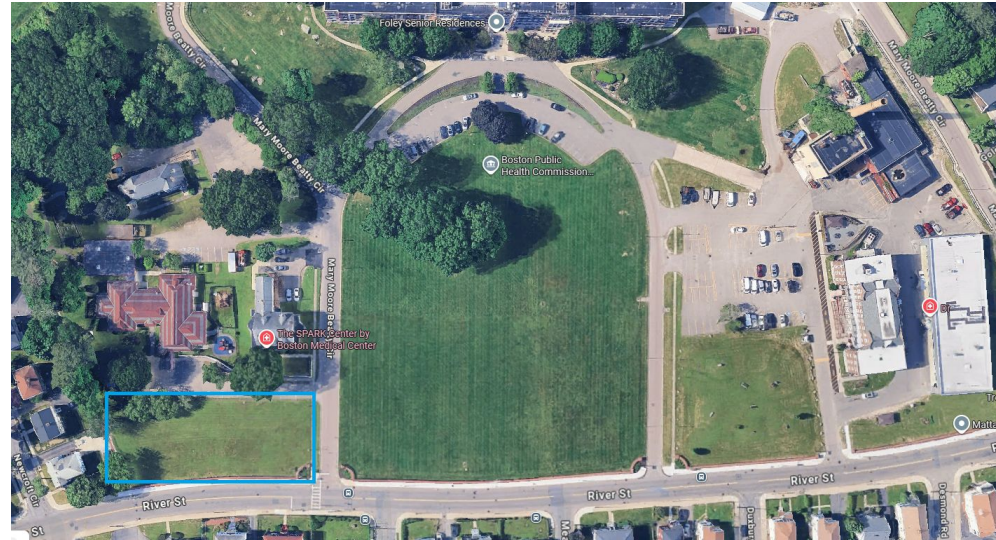


Melanie facilitates Grow Series Workshops and provides 1:1 consultations



Large Farm Site Underway

- **Recommendation 3.a.4.3** “Large Opportunity Sites identified could present an opportunity for urban agriculture integration, particularly the Boston Public Health Commission Mattapan Campus, which was also mentioned by Mattapan residents in this project’s efforts (Foley Senior Residences).”



Map of the front yard of Foley Residences. The blue box indicates the location of the farm to be developed.

- GrowBoston has a signed MOU with BPHC to develop a 1/2 acre farm at Foley Senior Residences. Produce from this farm will go directly to the Shirley’s Food Pantry to feed Mattapan residents.



Municipal Urban Ag Working Group

- **Recommendation 2B** “Convene municipal entities involved with urban agriculture and food producers in an ongoing forum for shared coordination and learning.”
- GrowBoston formed a municipal working group in order to improve communication between City departments regarding urban agriculture. This has led to the implementation of a new Beekeeping Ordinance. This group meets quarterly to explore potential policy changes to increase access to urban agriculture.



Bees on Boston Medical Center's Rooftop Farm



Seasonal Tabling

- **Recommendation 2d.3** “Facilitate seasonal, in-person tabling at growing spaces and related events across priority neighborhoods to engage active members and residents. At these engagements:
 - 2d.3.1 “Share information about GrowBoston resources and a map of growing spaces with residents to increase awareness of opportunities for support and the garden network across their neighborhood.”
 - 2d.3.2 “Encourage discussion and feedback from residents about needs and visions for host growing space.”
- GrowBoston tabled at 5 of the Mayor’s Coffee Hours and 10 other events in 2025.



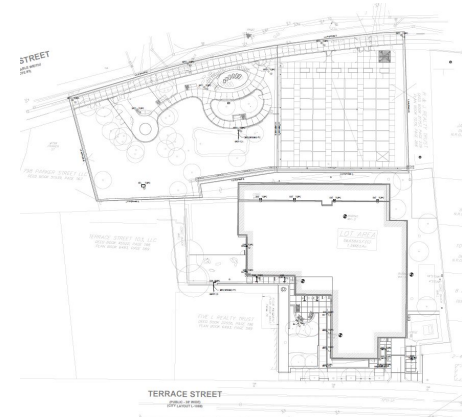
Integrating Gardens with New Housing

- **Recommendation 3a.4** “GrowBoston is interested in integrating urban agriculture with new housing developments, and as such it could proactively engage in future housing planning and implementation efforts.”
- Mildred Ave: We are in the process of closing on the sale of 14,133 sq. ft. of vacant land in the Mattapan neighborhood to be jointly developed into 6 units of affordable homeownership and a community garden. Half of the site will be used for housing, and the developer will also prepare the remainder of the site for a community garden.
- Mission Hill Pathway: GrowBoston has designated a developer for 52,500 sq. ft. of vacant land in the Mission Hill neighborhood to be developed into 48 units of affordable homeownership, a community garden, and a passive use park.
- We have begun working on a resource for housing developers that highlights ways in which they can incorporate urban agriculture into their developments.



VIEW FROM COMMUNITY GARDEN

Community garden rendering for Mildred Ave



Mission Hill Pathway Community Garden Design



Operations

- **Recommendation 2a.2** “Continue to be supported by the City through sufficient operational funds to meet needs for sustaining current operations and expanding its work in alignment with strategic goals.”
- We have successfully maintained our operating budget for the four years GrowBoston has existed as an office.



Under Exploration

- **Recommendation 4g.2** “Collaborate with key partners to support human resource needs for public growing space maintenance, particularly for school gardens over the summer (as needed) and library gardens.”
 - We are currently exploring ways to ensure public facilities and non-profit gardens have sufficient support, including a possible volunteer referral system.



Thank you for your support!

