



BROOKLINE HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN: INVOICE 3 PROGRESS UPDATE

January 31, 2022

Barrett Planning Group LLC, Community Circle, and Dodson & Flinker are pleased to update the Town of Brookline on the team’s progress to date on the 2022 Brookline Housing Production Plan process. This progress update accompanies our third invoice to the Town, dated January 28, 2022.

Task Description	Budget	Invoice #3 1/28/2022	Cumulative	Balance	% Invoiced
Task 1: Community Engagement	\$32,400.00	\$7,310.00	\$18,325.00	\$14,075.00	56.6%
Task 2: Housing Needs Assessment	\$20,250.00	\$4,540.00	\$8,220.00	\$12,030.00	40.6%
Task 3: Affordable Housing Goals	\$14,400.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$14,400.00	0.0%
Task 4: Housing Strategies	\$19,650.00	\$360.00	\$360.00	\$19,290.00	1.8%
Task 5: Location-Based Recommendations	\$42,330.00	\$2,200.00	\$4,600.00	\$37,730.00	10.9%
Task 6: Miscellaneous Project Coordination	\$24,960.00	\$2,430.00	\$9,030.00	\$15,930.00	36.2%
Subtotal - Professional Fees	\$153,990.00	\$16,840.00	\$40,535.00	\$113,455.00	26.3%

TASK 1: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1.2 Outreach, Consultation, Involvement, Collaboration, Shared Leadership

The consulting team concluded the first phase of its engagement plan in January 2022. This “Initial Outreach” effort ultimately reached 104 Brookline residents, advocates, stakeholders, service providers, industry professionals, and others with perspectives on housing in Brookline through its “reconnaissance” and “deeper dive” interviews and focus groups. The team invited participation through direct outreach, posted materials, newsletters, and through referrals from other interviewees. Most of these interviews were conducted on Zoom, but phone interviews were available by request. Participants were invited to request live interpretation into the Town’s primary languages as spoken in peoples’ homes as needed.

The consulting team drafted a survey to engage members of Brookline’s community, which is posted to the Town’s website and will also be disseminated directly to all participants who have engaged in this process so far. The survey link allows respondents to select a language among English, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese (Simplified): these language offerings were professionally translated by Language Connections. The purpose of this community survey is to assess priorities, needs, and barriers to housing for people who live or wish to live in Brookline. This survey follows the outline of the survey distributed as part of the 2016 HPP process so that the consulting team may compare the results between the two surveys.

1.3 Community Forum

The first Community Forum for this planning process took place on January 26, 2022 at 7 PM. The meeting was conducted via Zoom and broadcast by the Brookline Interactive Group (BIG). More than 290 people registered to participate in the forum. Language Connections, based out of Brighton, provided live interpretation into Spanish, Russian, Cantonese, and Mandarin for the duration of the meeting (including instructions at the start of the meeting to access these services). This first community meeting focused on Housing Review and Future Housing Needs, and it included a summary of Brookline’s 2016 Housing Production Plan and the actions the Town has taken to address its recommendations and strategies. The presentation also included a brief overview of the range of housing needs identified by interviewees to be high-priority and unaddressed, with particular emphasis on the needs of Brookline’s low-income residents and tenants of the Brookline Housing Authority.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the consulting team asked five questions to participants and invited written comments in the chat, as well as verbal remarks as time allowed. This portion of the meeting lasted approximately 45 minutes. BIG viewers and attendees who preferred to give comments anonymously could access a Google Form on the Town’s website that included the same questions. This Google Form was active for asynchronous participation until the survey became available on January 31, 2022.

A recording of the meeting is available on BIG’s YouTube, and the presentation slide deck is posted to the Town’s website.

TASK 2: COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2.2 Housing Needs Assessment Approach

In this phase of the project, the consulting team continues to analyze local and regional data from Brookline and its comparison communities. This effort informs the team’s understanding of existing conditions in Brookline and throughout the area, and it is critical to understanding and prioritizing housing needs. The housing needs of current and hopeful future Brookline residents are many and varied, so the consulting team looks forward to learning more as responses to the Community Survey accrue.

The team continues its analysis of existing conditions, trends, and barriers of and to housing in Brookline. Regulatory review, including land use regulations and permitting procedures, is an important component of this analysis, as well as transportation availability and accessibility, infrastructural capacity, and community attitudes and potential opposition.

TASK 4: HOUSING PRODUCTION STRATEGIES

4.1 Production of New Housing through Regulatory Changes

Reviewing Brookline’s regulations around housing development and redevelopment is a critical piece of identifying potential barriers and finding new solutions as part of this HPP process. The HPP will propose new regulatory options to help Brookline to produce affordable housing and increase housing supply.

TASK 5: LOCATION-BASED TESTING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Place-Based Analysis

Members of the consulting team toured sites in Brookline that include a range of recently developed properties and housing types, as well as sites for potential new development. Due to the uptick in cases of COVID-19 resulting from the Omicron variant, concerns for health and safety prompted some members of the consulting team to elect to tour Brookline at a later date (soon to be determined). Touring the community facilitates place-based analysis by providing the consulting team with on-the-ground knowledge of the community and its layout and built environment.

The team continues its analysis of existing conditions through GIS mapping and other methods. Data comes from a variety of sources, including current data and permitting information from the Town, recent data from the Town's affordable housing lottery agent, past planning efforts, American Community Survey (ACS) data from the US Census Bureau, the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as well as proprietary sources and others.

5.2 Community Benefits Assessments

The consulting team is working with the Harvard College Consulting Group Fiscal Impact Model (FIA) and evaluating its suitability to use in the development scenarios assessment process.

TASK 6: MISCELLANEOUS PROJECT COORDINATION

The consulting team and Working Group have met five times (October 12, November 9, November 30, December 14, 2021 and January 11, 2022) via Zoom.