

SHIRLEY AVENUE: COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

VISION

Shirley Avenue will be a **strong, healthy, and attractive neighborhood** that is welcoming to families and residents of all ages and cultural backgrounds. The neighborhood will have a **vibrant business district, inviting open spaces, accessible housing, and economic opportunities** for residents and businesses.

1 Pursue **Visionary** Goals to Sustain a Thriving Neighborhood

Attract Grocery development

Redesign Bell Circle intersection

Neighborhood Community Center

3 Improve Housing Conditions and Access to Housing



7 Proposed gateway plaza and sculptural arch



BELL CIRCLE

7 Improve the Pedestrian Environment in the Neighborhood



Clean & Safe!

No Crime & Grime!

Keep Costa Clean!

6 Ensure a welcoming, clean, and safe neighborhood



5: Support the High Quality Growth of Local Businesses

4: Celebrate and Strengthen Neighborhood Culture & Diversity

2 Connect Residents to Information, Resources, Education, and Jobs



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Life on Shirley Ave!

CONTEXT

Revere is a city of many neighborhoods, defined by their orientation to Broadway, the water, and the hilly topography, but also divided by regional parkways and arterials. The Shirley Avenue neighborhood is unique as one of the most ethnically diverse communities in Revere, tucked into a corner between the curves of Route 1A and the MBTA Blue Line that runs parallel to Revere Beach.

As a range of issues confront the neighborhood, the community has been reaching across cultural lines to develop a more unifying sense of civic pride. The active participation and leadership from residents and business owners has been a hallmark of the current planning process and will be necessary to realize the goals of this plan, given limited resources in the city and other competing interests. The future of a casino on Suffolk Downs’ property in Revere is as yet undecided but could significantly affect available resources for the city and hence the neighborhood. Other development projects at nearby Wonderland and Revere Beach are on pause waiting for this decision.

The neighborhood has many assets including proximity to the beach, the MBTA Blue Line and bus routes, local schools, and the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) HealthCare Center. The business district features small ethnic markets, restaurants, and other shops, surrounded by a range of housing types, many with relatively affordable rents. Yet with imminent change in the surroundings, issues of housing quality and stability, business quality, access to jobs and information become all the more important. To ensure that the neighborhood is welcoming and comfortable for residents, consistent attention must be granted to issues such as safety, cleanliness, and improvements to infrastructure.

PROCESS

The Shirley Avenue Action Plan has developed out of a growing awareness of the need for neighborhood-based advocacy and a shared commitment to positive change. Because of its diversity, Shirley Avenue has historically lacked a unified voice, but over the course of the last year, 144 residents, business owners, and other stakeholders have participated in, and informed, the Shirley Avenue Action Plan.

The Action Planing process began in April 2013, led by The Neighborhood Developers (TND) and the City in partnership with a resident and stakeholder Steering Committee and in collaboration with Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).

Community outreach for the current Action Plan has been led by TND staff on the ground to engage businesses and residents. Throughout the process, staff and volunteers from the neighborhood employed a range of outreach methods to elicit broad participation, including door-knocking, formal and informal surveys, community conversations, phone and in-person interviews. Overall, this effort has strengthened relationships within the community. Marking key milestones during the project, six community meetings were held, first to understand concerns and present research and then to start to prioritize actions and roles. A series of four Steering Committee meetings augmented by Task Force meetings helped set the course of the work.

The plan identifies priority actions under each strategy and assigns a “champion” who will take lead responsibility, working with others to realize the action. During this process, many other issues were identified as potential actions, but actions without champions do not rise to the level of a priority. While much of the focus is on a realistic set of actions that can be realized quickly, the plan also highlights “big dreams” and long-term strategies. These long-term strategies may take several years to accomplish, but as with many things, advocacy must begin now to build public and private support.

With early buy-in, several recommendations have already moved forward into implementation, including 49 new affordable housing units, renovations to some of the Revere Housing Authority properties, Gateway improvements, and several resident-led campaigns and events.

Full Report Online: <http://www.theneighborhooddevelopers.org/get-involved/revere-community-committee/shirley-ave-plan/>



Shirley Avenue Community Action Plan Revere, Massachusetts May 2014



A collaborative effort between the City of Revere, The Neighborhood Developers, MAPC, and residents, businesses, and others that care about the future of Shirley Avenue.

ACTION		CHAMPIONS + PARTNERS
1.1	Establish a comprehensive financial opportunity center in the Shirley Avenue neighborhood	CONNECT; CAPIC; Revere Community School; Women Encouraging Empowerment
1.2	Develop a multi-service center in the Shirley Avenue neighborhood that serves all ages	TND; City of Revere DPCD; Revere Cares; RYiA; City of Revere DPR; Residents; Women Encouraging Empowerment
1.3	Attract a grocery retailer and pharmacy to develop in the Shirley Avenue neighborhood	City of Revere DED; TND; Revere Cares
1.4	Redesign Bell Circle to better serve multi-modal transit, pedestrian and bicyclist needs	Walk Boston; City of Revere DPCD; Residents; Revere on the Move; MAPC, RYiA
1.5	Cultivate a business support organization for Shirley Avenue that builds local business skills, provides resources, offers engagement and promotional activities	Business Owners; City of Revere DED; Office of the Mayor; Residents; Chamber of Commerce

ACTION		CHAMPIONS + PARTNERS
2.1	Develop a communication strategy to disseminate relevant public health, housing, municipal policy, and cultural event information to residents of the Shirley Avenue neighborhood	Office of New Revere Residents; Revere CARES; Ward 2 Councilor; Office of the Mayor; TND
2.2	Commit to high standards of inclusive communication in the Shirley Avenue neighborhood	Office of New Revere Residents; All involved organizations, agencies, businesses, and residents
2.3	Connect residents to resources and economic opportunities to improve financial stability and prosperity	CONNECT; CAPIC; Revere Community School; Women Encouraging Empowerment

ACTION		CHAMPIONS + PARTNERS
3.1	Collaborate to increase funding and expand availability of home rehabilitation loan and grant programs	City of Revere DPCD; CAPIC; Massachusetts DHCD; TND; St. Jean’s Credit Union
3.2	Develop more housing for a range of income levels and household sizes and ages	City of Revere DPCD; TND; Revere Housing Authority; Massachusetts DHCD

ACTION		CHAMPIONS + PARTNERS
4.1	Organize activities that build relationships between neighbors and strengthen neighborhood pride	RCC Events Committee; TND, Revere Beach Partnership; Women Encouraging Empowerment; City of Revere DPR; Residents
4.2	Develop and implement educational activities on neighborhood cultures, histories, and shared issues	TND; RYiA; Women Encouraging Empowerment; RCC Events Committee; Residents

ACTION		CHAMPIONS + PARTNERS
5.1	Develop opportunities for networking, skill development, and financial support for business owners in the Shirley Avenue neighborhood	Chamber of Commerce; City of Revere DED; Business Owners; Revere Community School; St. Jean’s Credit Union
5.2	Create a branding and marketing plan for the Shirley Avenue neighborhood	City of Revere DED; Residents; Business Owners; TND, City of Revere DPCD, NeighborWorks America
5.3	Improve Shirley Avenue parking locations and policies to support businesses and residents	Business Owners; Ward 2 Councilor; Office of the Mayor; TND

ACTION		CHAMPIONS + PARTNERS
6.1	A Revere Community Committee (RCC) sub-committee leads cleanliness campaigns and increases accountability as needed	RCC Cleanliness Committee; TND; Revere Beautification Committee; Ward 2 Councilor; City of Revere ISD; City of Revere DPW; City of Revere DPR; Residents
6.2	Advocate for improvements to bulk item disposal	RCC Cleanliness Committee; Kimball Avenue NeighborCircle; City of Revere ISD; City of Revere DPW; Residents
6.3	Establish Friends of Costa Park to steward and oversee park programming, cleanliness, and maintenance	TND; City of Revere DPR; City of Revere DPW; Ward 2 Councilor; Residents
6.4	Create a regular forum for neighbors, City officials, and police officers to discuss safety concerns and reporting	RCC; Ward 2 Councilor; Revere Police Department; Revere Fire Department; Women Encouraging Empowerment; RYiA
6.5	Empower youth to lead community engagement and violence prevention efforts in the neighborhood	RYiA; Revere Police Department; CAPIC; Revere CARES

ACTION		CHAMPIONS + PARTNERS
7.1	Enhance the entrance into the neighborhood with the proposed gateway plaza and sculptural arch	City of Revere DPCD; TND; Revere Beautification Committee; Residents
7.2	Repurpose the end of Walnut Avenue as a community space	Kimball Avenue NeighborCircle; Revere on the Move; TND; City of Revere DPCD
7.3	Address infrastructure improvements in identified problem areas	City of Revere DPW; City of Revere DPCD; Residents; Ward 2 Councilor; WalkBoston
7.4	Identify immediate walkability improvements to pedestrian crossings, wayfinding, signage, and signal timing at Bell Circle	WalkBoston; City of Revere DPCD; MassDOT; RYiA; Revere on the Move
7.5	Improve access and orientation to and within the neighborhood through signage and wayfinding from the beach and regional highways	City of Revere DPCD; TND; Revere on the Move; WalkBoston; Residents