



A Jackson Square Timeline

Late 1800s-1950s: Jackson Square is an important factory and brewing center with thousands of residents employed at the Plant Shoe Factory on Centre and Walden Streets, Chelmsford Ginger Ale Company on Heath Street, Moxie Bottling Company on Bickford Street and four other breweries or bottling plants within a few minutes' walk. The Boston and Providence Railroad had a Heath Street station and trolleys operated on Columbus Avenue and Centre Street. See [JP Historical Society](#). Approximately 14,000 people lived in the three census tracts comprising Jackson Square, roughly 35% more than today.

1948: Mass. Dept. of Public Works calls for the construction of multiple highways to go through and around Boston. The proposal includes I-93 and I-90 (both of which were eventually built), as well as an "Inner Belt" (looping from Charlestown through Somerville, Cambridge, Brookline, Roxbury and the South End) and the "Southwest Expressway" (to connect the Inner Belt and I-95, from Roxbury to Dedham).

1962: The proposed Southwest Expressway, originally aligned with Blue Hill Avenue, is realigned parallel to the Penn Central Railroad through Jamaica Plain, Roslindale and Hyde Park. The highway will be eight lanes wide.

1965: Community and church leaders in Jamaica Plain found [ESAC](#) to promote positive social change in the neighborhood. ESAC members are leaders in organizing against the highway.

1966: A 'Beat the Belt' Rally brings together highway opponents from Cambridge, Roxbury, Chinatown, Jamaica Plain, Hyde Park and suburbs including Canton and Dedham and Canton.

1967: Jamaica Plain-based highway opponents hold one of their first meetings at a home on Germania Street, near the abandoned Haffenreffer Brewery (now the JPNDC's Brewery Small Business Complex). Activists painted a huge sign—"Stop I-95 – People Before Highways"—on the railroad embankment in Jackson Square.

Late 1960s-early 1970s: Approximately 775 homes plus many businesses on more than 150 acres are bulldozed along the proposed highway path between Forest Hills and what is now Roxbury Crossing.

1970: Following a demonstration at the State House by hundreds of highway opponents, Governor Francis Sargent declares a moratorium on highway construction while proposals are studied. Destruction of homes along the proposed highway path continues.

1974: Governor Sargent declares an end to the Southwest Expressway and Inner Belt projects. This is the first time in US history that a state has turned down federal highway dollars.

1974: [Urban Edge](#) founded by ESAC as a corporation to provide homeownership counseling, undertake housing rehabilitation and attract first-time homebuyers to the neighborhood.

1976: Plant Shoe Factory, on the site of the current Jackson Square Stop & Shop, burns to the ground. At its peak it had employed 4,000 workers.

1977: Also sponsored by ESAC, JPNDC founded to carry out economic and housing development initiatives designed by and benefiting local residents.

1979: Construction begins on new Orange Line and Southwest Corridor Park along the proposed highway route.

1987: New Orange Line opens, including Jackson Square MBTA station.

1987: Southwest Corridor Park completed

Late 1980s- early 1990s: Jackson Square gains infamy as the site of major drug dealing and gang-related violence.

1996: JPNDC, Bromley-Heath Tenant Management Corp. & a private developer develop the Stop & Shop and Martha Eliot Health Center on the former site of the Plant Shoe Factory, which had burned in 1974.

1999: Mayor Menino appoints the Jackson Square Coordinating Group (JCG) to work with the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) to lead a community planning process for the publicly owned land near the Jackson Square public transit station. The JPNDC, Urban Edge, and Hyde Square Task Force all take on leadership roles in the JCG, which included nearly 30 other neighborhood groups.

1999-2001: more than 800 community residents provide their input in small meetings and a large community charrette.

2003: More than 400 residents attend a community gathering and embrace the JCG vision for Jackson Square revitalization: affordable housing, youth and family facilities, and small scale commercial development.

2004: JPNDC and Urban Edge announce a historic agreement to collaborate in the redevelopment of Jackson Square.

2005: JPNDC & Urban Edge submit a proposal to the BRA to redevelop Jackson Square as Jackson Square Partners (JSP). The BRA designates JSP, with Mitchell Properties (now The Community Builders) and Hyde Square Task Force as additional partners) as master developer for the redevelopment of Jackson Square. The plan calls for transforming Jackson Square into a vibrant crossroads between Jamaica Plain and Roxbury with hundreds new mixed-income homes, retail and office space, open space, bike and pedestrian paths, and a state-of-the-art recreational and educational facilities.

2007: The Jackson Square Master Plan, focused on Sites I and II, gains approval from the BRA.

2008-09: The financial crash and recession delay planned start of first Jackson Square projects.

2010: The first phase of infrastructure improvements includes widened sidewalks, pedestrian-friendly improvements including crosswalks, lighting and traffic signals.

2011: JPNDC completes 270 Centre, 30 affordable apartments plus ground-floor retail, across from the Jackson Square MBTA station and immediately adjacent to the official Jackson Square redevelopment area.

2012: TCB begins construction of first official JSRI project, 225 Centre Street, 103 apartments including 35 affordable units on Site I.

2013: 225 Centre Street completed.

2013: Master planning begins for Site III, the redevelopment area's most complicated site due to the need to replace costly infrastructure, especially water and sewer lines, that were destroyed when the land was cleared for highway construction.

2014: Urban Edge begins Jackson Commons, mixed-income housing and office/retail space in and adjacent to the historic Webb building on Site II.

2015: 37 families move into Jackson Commons.

2015: JPNDC begins construction of the first Site III project, 75 Amory Ave., 39 affordable apartments.

2016: Boston Planning and Development Agency approves Site III master plan

2016: MassWorks approves infrastructure funding for relocation of water and sewer lines (necessary before future construction) and advancement of plans for plaza and green space

2017: 39 families move into 75 Amory Avenue Apartments

2017: Hyde Square Task Force reveals that TD Garden fundraising pledges unmet and advocates for major commitment to the Jackson Square Recreation Center

Next steps

- Site III infrastructure construction begins
- Community engagement and fundraising for plaza and green space planning