

# Strategic Plan 2019-2023

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation

## Highlights of our Work Ahead

Advance the **most ambitious housing development pipeline** in our history, developing 600 affordable homes that allow low-income people to thrive in Boston.

Redevelop 4,000 square feet of The Brewery as a Prosperity Center, where 700 low-income families a year from all over Boston can overcome the odds and **build long-term financial security**.

Expand our Family Childcare Program to include 60 home-based professional educators who help get 750 low-income children **on track for success in school**.

As part of Small Business Services, build JPNDC's innovative Small Contractors Project and **connect small construction businesses** owned by people of color or women to new contracts worth at least \$15 million.

Continue our partnership with residents of Mildred Hailey Apartments, supporting leaders and ensuring that **future redevelopment meets the needs** of local low-income families.

Build a strong leadership pipeline for JPNDC's board and staff, with emphasis on young leaders and people of color **who reflect our constituency**.

## Mission and Vision

Our mission is to **transform the lives and amplify the voices** of Boston residents who have been excluded from prosperity by an inequitable economic system. We develop affordable housing that allows people to thrive, provide services that help people build on their strengths, and organize people to pursue the changes they desire.

With our roots in Jamaica Plain, we envision an **equitable and inclusive Boston** in which all people have access to secure housing, economic prosperity, safe and vibrant neighborhoods, political power, and opportunities to fulfill their potential.



## Theme 1

# Embracing a Citywide Role in Housing and Economic Prosperity

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When JPNDC was founded in 1977, after decades of urban disinvestment and neglect, the revitalization of Jamaica Plain was our central priority.

Today, the challenges are **unaffordable housing and dramatically reduced economic mobility**. These challenges cross borders, and in this Strategic Plan we embrace a citywide role in addressing them.

Our expanding reach takes place on two levels. The first way is one which we did not envision. JPNDC's economic prosperity services—small business, career coaching, financial empowerment, family childcare—now attract people from all over Boston. In 2018, only 11% of families served were from Jamaica Plain. We rarely do outreach in other neighborhoods, but people come to JPNDC because they used to live in JP or because a friend, neighbor, or family member has recommended us.

The relentless housing crisis propels the second way in which we are expanding. The explosion of high-priced housing development in Jamaica Plain is not only driving the continued displacement of low-income households, but shutting JPNDC out of many development opportunities.

If we are to continue JPNDC's work of creating high-quality affordable homes, and making the most of the real estate sophistication we have developed over four decades, we must look outside the neighborhood.

In doing so we follow two essential principles: (1) working hard, as in JP, to respect and collaborate with local residents and organizations; and (2) exploring partnerships and minimizing competition with other community development corporations and non-profit developers.

## Theme 2

# Deepening our Strategic Commitment to Jamaica Plain

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Despite the best efforts of JPNDC and others, gentrification has significantly changed the demographics of our home neighborhood. Yet in large part because of these tremendous efforts, especially to create and preserve affordable housing, households earning below \$50,000 still make up nearly **one-third of the population in JP**. The new high-priced housing, stores and restaurants do not cater to them, but people of modest means are still very much part of our community.

We therefore believe it is more important than ever that JPNDC remain rooted in Jamaica Plain as partners to these families, individuals, and small businesses, lending resources to projects, activities and campaigns that support their priorities.

Our strategic commitment to Jamaica Plain encompasses the following:

- Pursuing potential affordable housing development opportunities in Jamaica Plain

(e.g. public land, collaborations with trusted partners) and prioritizing these projects within our development pipeline.

- Continuing to support the small businesses that give life to Hyde, Jackson and Egleston Squares. JPNDC's organizing support and small business technical assistance have made a

difference in helping many stay and thrive, and we plan to do so in the future.

- Remaining a key partner to residents of the Mildred Hailey Apartments, one of the largest public housing developments in the city and a key part of a revitalized Jackson Square.

### Theme 3

## Expanding our Work to Foster Long-term Economic Prosperity and Wealth Building

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The four decades since JPNDC was founded have seen a dramatic decline in upward mobility and an equally dramatic increase in income inequality across the nation. The most sobering data to many of us was provided in 2016 by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, which reported a “staggering” wealth gap between White households (\$247,000) and households of color (\$8 for African-Americans, \$0 for Dominicans) in our metropolitan area.

Far more than income, it is wealth that allows families to invest in homes, education, and business creation, and to pass their achievements on to the next generation.

At JPNDC we recognize that the people who come through our doors, overwhelmingly people of color, are poor due to historic and systemic causes that include redlining, predatory lending, employment discrimination, unequal education, and geopolitics. Viewing poverty through this lens allows us to work with families

in strategic ways that empower them to negotiate hurdles and move toward their goals.

From three JP-based pilot programs set up 20 years ago, JPNDC's work to promote economic gains among low-income families has grown into an array of bilingual services that are unmatched in our city.

Today, we are committed to integrating and strengthening these services under the roof of a welcoming, state-of-the-art Prosperity Center. The Prosperity Center will allow us to more seamlessly link our childcare, financial coaching, small business and career development services and trainings so that every person can begin immediately to make a prosperity plan that is unique to their needs, strengths and dreams.

From early education to professional training, from credit building to business building, services in the Prosperity Center will be focused on the importance of **asset building and closing the wealth gap**.

## Theme 4

# Investing in Community Organizing as Essential to Building Racial, Economic and Social Equity

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JPNDC has a strong reputation for community organizing that makes a difference.

Most of the affordable housing we have developed exists in large part because of grassroots advocacy and because our real estate and community organizing teams worked together to ensure that projects were shaped by community voices. Many people who have gone through JPNDC's leadership training activities have become activists and leaders in their buildings, neighborhoods and organizations.

JPNDC's participation in city and statewide initiatives such as the Community Preservation Act and raising the minimum wage engaged hundreds of people and contributed to legislative and referendum victories.

Today, we renew our **commitment to community organizing** as essential to the priorities of this Strategic Plan. Embracing a citywide role includes JPNDC leadership and coalition work to advocate for affordable housing, equitable development, tenants' rights, economic justice, and other priorities identified by the people we serve.

Deepening our roots in JP requires advocacy and strategic partnerships with small businesses and the residents of affordable housing developments. Promoting racial equity requires leadership development to build a pipeline of leaders of color at all levels of JPNDC.

## Theme 5

# Promoting Racial Equity in All Aspects of Our Work

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Over the past two and a half years, JPNDC has made a commitment to exploring and addressing issues of racial equity within the organization. A Racial Equity Committee formed in 2017 has spearheaded more than 30 hours of trainings and dialogue that have led to this priority in our Strategic Plan.

In JPNDC's construction projects, we have made a concerted and successful effort over several years to prioritize the hiring of contracting and consulting firms owned by people of color.

This led to one of our most exciting current initiatives: a collaboration between our small

business and real estate teams to strengthen such firms and connect them to mentors and contracts that help their businesses prosper.

Today, we affirm our commitment to utilizing a racial equity lens to examine all aspects of our organization, set clear goals and measure progress, and continue devoting resources to anti-racism training. Targeted areas of focus will include governance, hiring, and communications. Developing a leadership pipeline that reflects the people we serve will be a top priority.

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