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MAPS-LED  
Multidisciplinary Approach to Plan Smart Specialisation Strategies  
for Local Economic Development



# The urban dimension in the innovation policy: *Roxbury Innovation Center in Boston*

Preliminary Insights from Cluster-led Initiative Analysis  
Working Package No. 2 Cluster Policy and Spatial Planning

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*First International Workshops*  
*MAPS-LED PROJECT*  
05.06-12-2016  
Università “La Sapienza”, Focus Unit, ITALY

MAPS-LED “Multidisciplinary Approach to Plan Smart Specialisation Strategies for Local Economic Development” is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie RISE research project funded by the European Union’s HORIZON 2020 program for Research and Innovation under the Grant Agreement 645651

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## The urban dimension in the innovation policy: *Roxbury Innovation Center in Boston*

### Outline

#### I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis

- *Roxbury Innovation Center*: Target Area Localization and Key Indicators;
- General Description.

#### II. SECOND PART: Innovation Policies and Tools

- Innovation Policies;
- Planning tools hierarchies from County to Urban Level;
- Innovation-oriented tools: PDA Boston.

### Conclusions

- The role of Innovation Spaces as expression of knowledge dynamics;
- Specificities of the Target Area and significance in respect of the European contest.



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## FIRST PART

*Roxbury Innovation Center: Target Area Analysis*



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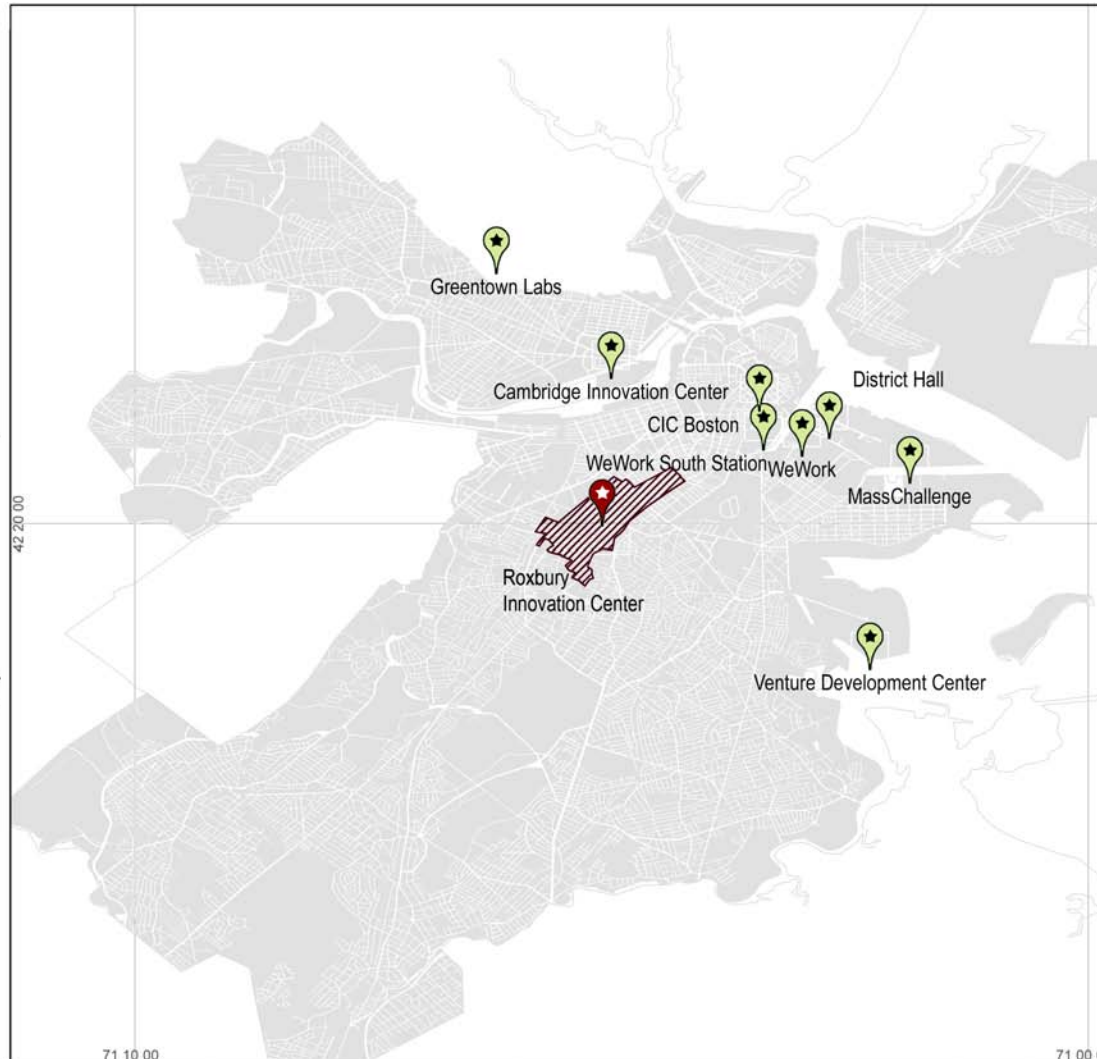
# I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis

- Localization



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Working Package No.2  
S3: Cluster policy & Spatial Planning  
February - June 2016  
Università degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria - PAU UNIT  
Northeastern University - Department of Economics  
GA No: 645651-MAPS-LED-H2020-MSCA-RISE-2014



City: Boston

Neighborhood: Roxbury

Population: 69,946

Population density:  
*Roxbury: 17,866 people per square mile*  
*Boston: 13,313 people per square mile*

Population below poverty level:  
*Roxbury: 33%*  
*Boston: 22%*

Median Age: 30

Unemployment rate:  
*Roxbury: 17%*  
*Boston: 10%*





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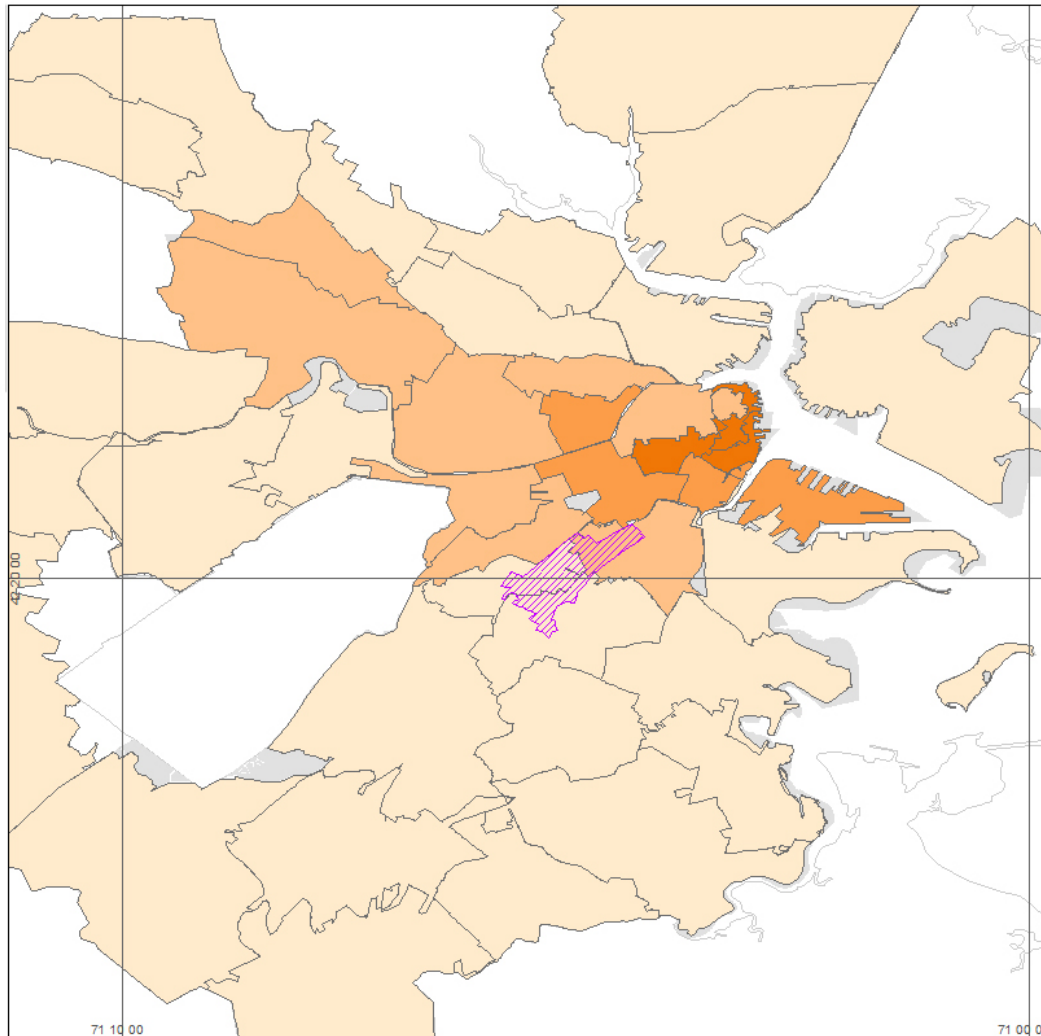


# I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis



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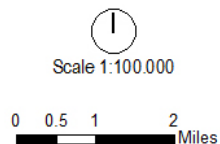
**Legend**

**Establishments/sq.mile**

- 1 - 50
- 50.01 - 100
- 100.01 - 500
- > 500

Target Area Roxbury (wards)

Parcels City of Boston & City of Cambridge

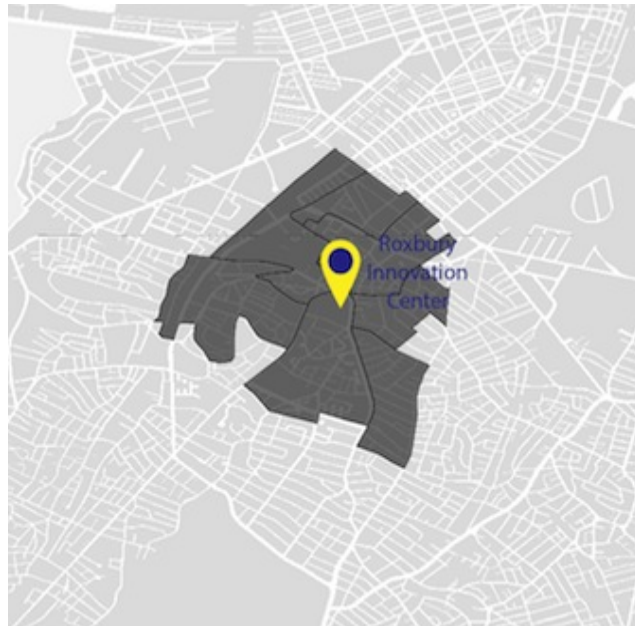


Roxbury is one of the poorest neighborhood in Boston, also in terms of cluster's establishments, however, the Government is implementing several development policies and regeneration initiatives to boost innovation and growth.

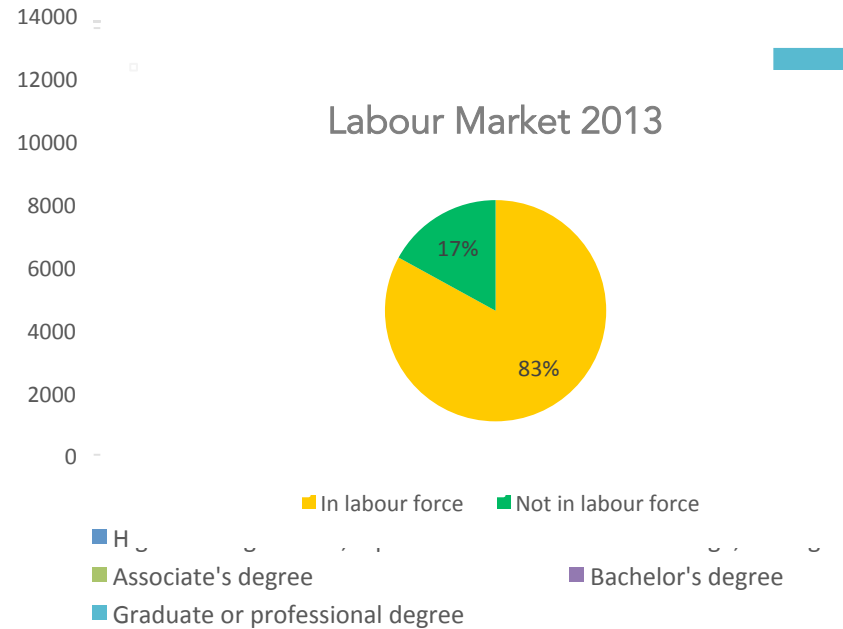


# I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis

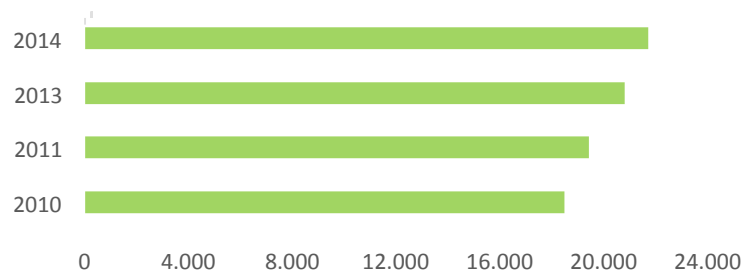
- Key Indicators



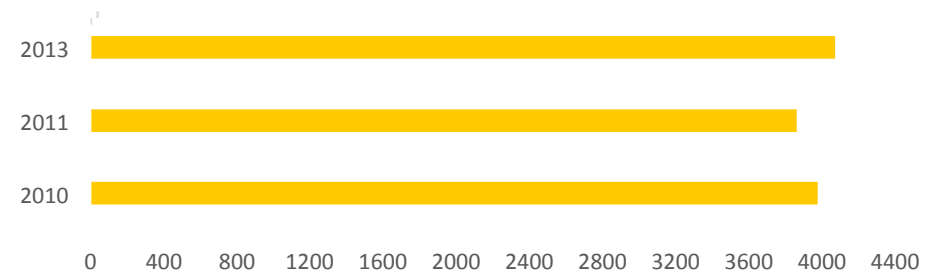
Educational Attainment



Population



Labour Force





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The unemployment rate of workers 16 years and over in Boston was 7.3% (2009-2013).

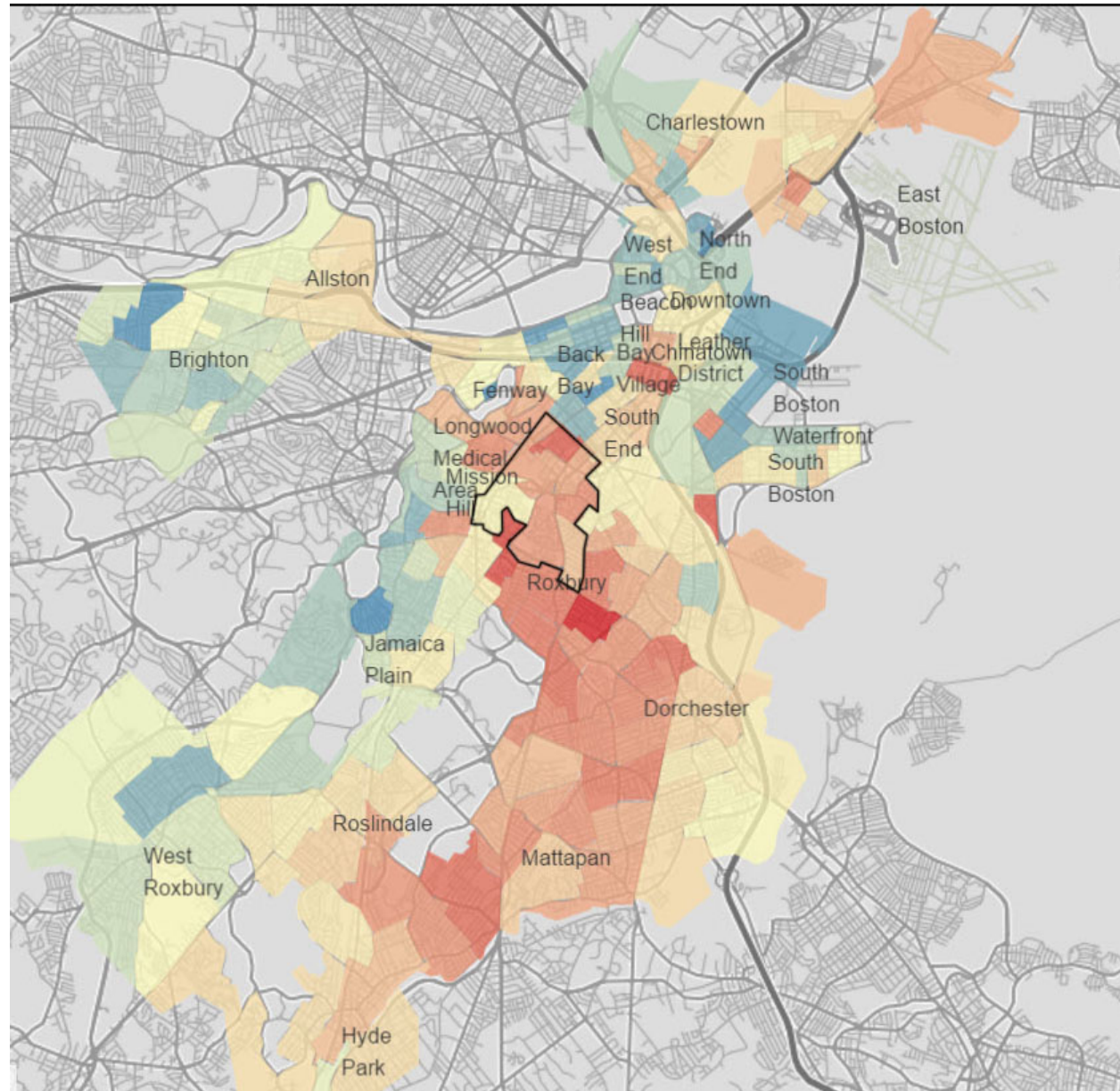
Blue tracts had lower unemployment. Red tracts had higher unemployment.



- Target Area Roxbury

The unemployment rate in the Target Area ranged from 9% to 25% (2009-2013).

Source: [github.io/boston](https://github.io/boston) - OpenStreetMap

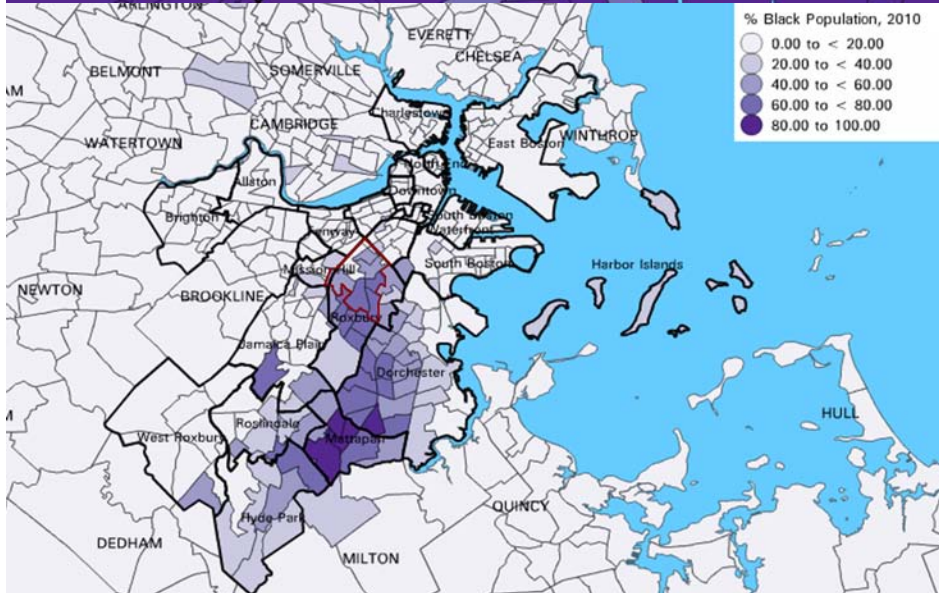
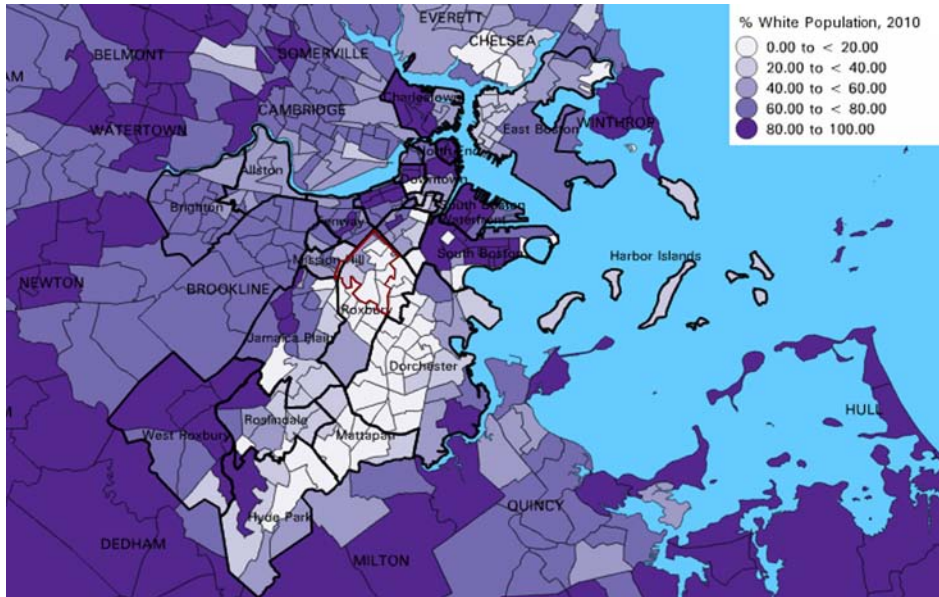






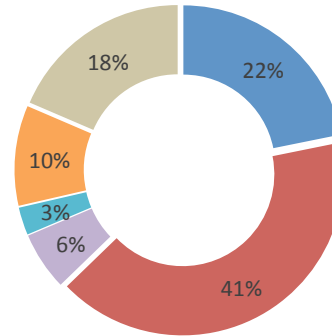
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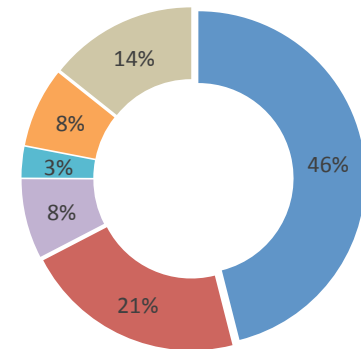


Population Breakdown By Race

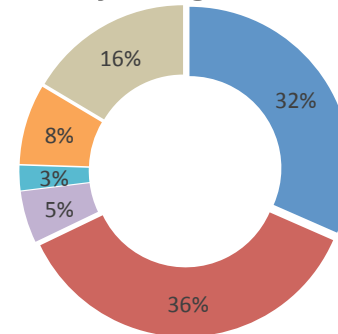
Roxbury – Target Area - 2010



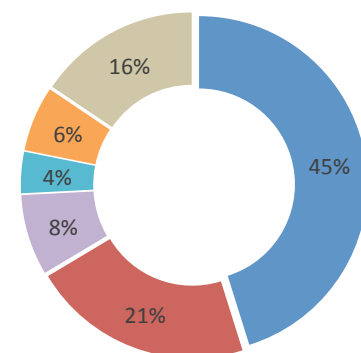
Boston – 2010



Roxbury – Target Area - 2014



Boston 2014



- White
- American Indian
- Black or African American
- Two or More Races
- Asian + Native Hawaiian and other pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latino
- Some Others

Source: <http://www.bostonindicators.org/>



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17.6% of families had income in the past 12 months below the poverty level in Boston (2009-2013).

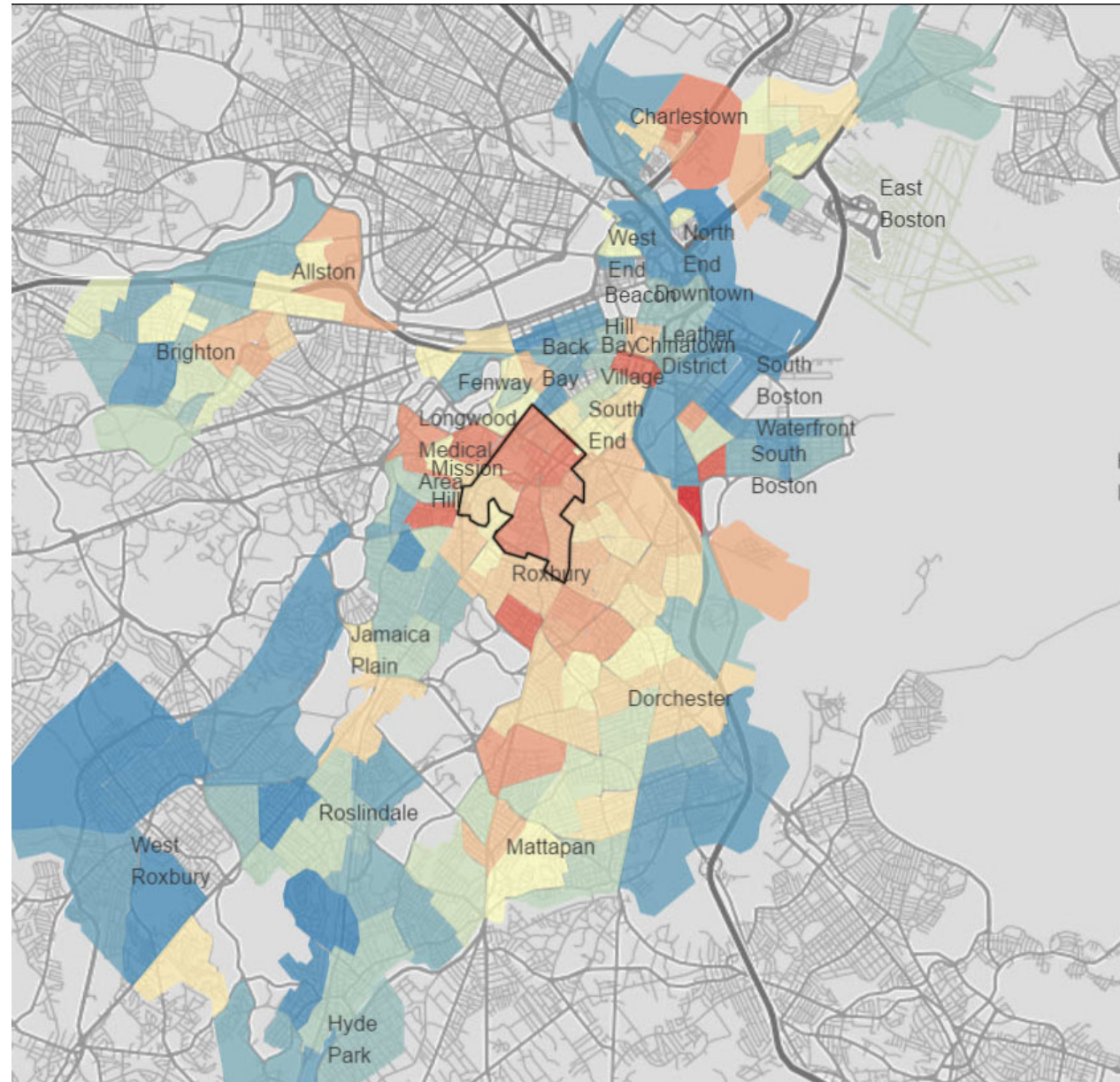
**Blue** census tracts had lower rates of poverty. **Red** census tracts had higher rates of poverty.



- Target Area Roxbury

The percentage of families that had an income below the poverty level ranged from 25% to 43% in the Target Area (2009-2013).

Source: [github.io/boston](https://github.io/boston) - OpenStreetMap







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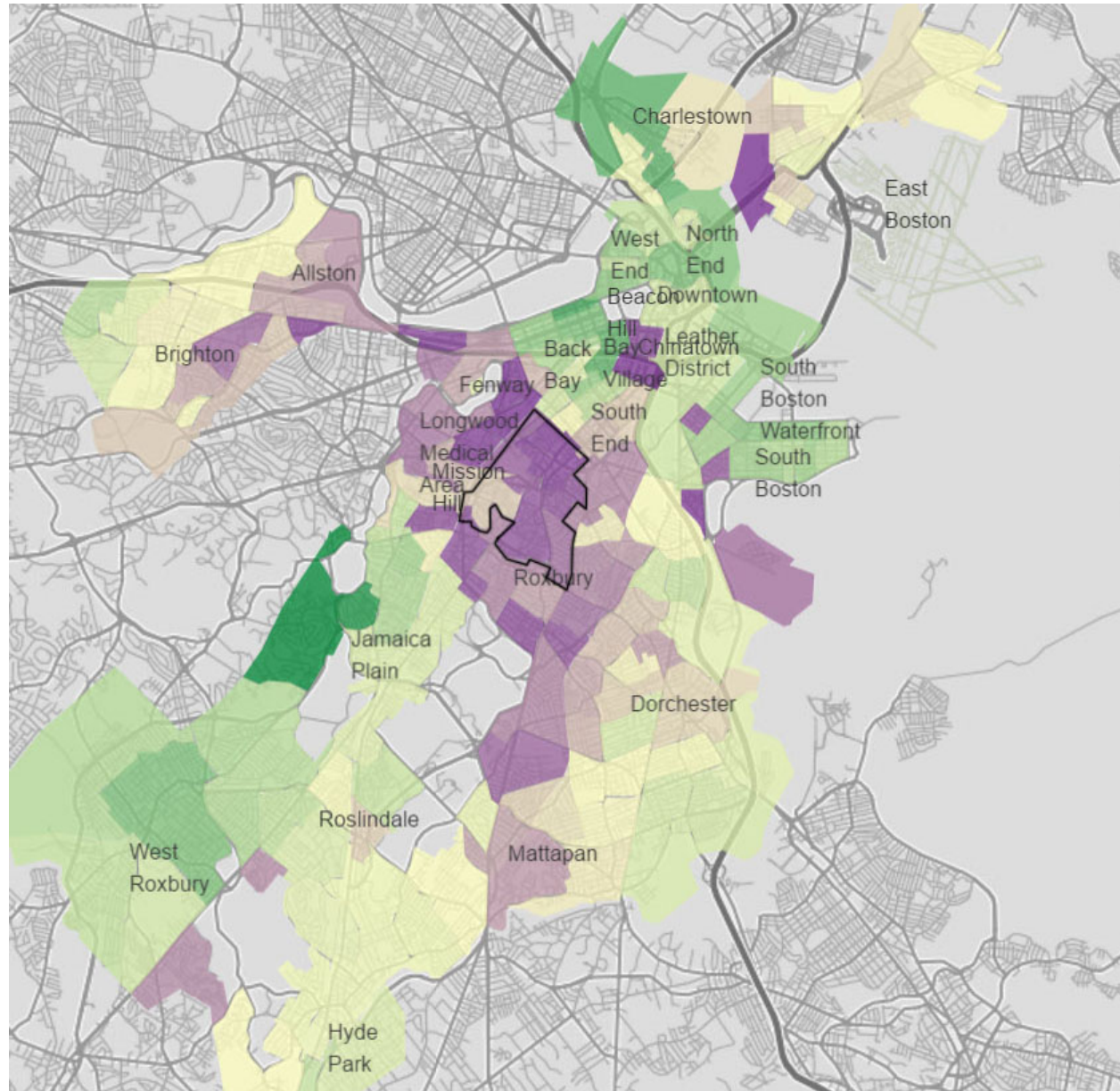


The median household income in Boston was \$53,601 (2009-2013).

**Purple** tracts had lower median household incomes. **Green** tracts had higher median household incomes.



- Target Area Roxbury



The median household income in the Target Area ranged from \$18,000 to \$44,000 (2009-2013).

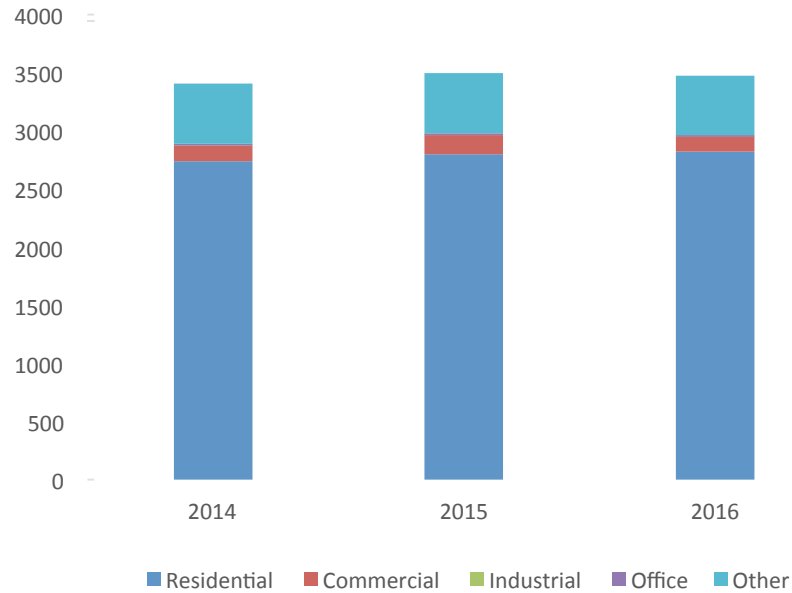
Source: [github.io/boston](https://github.io/boston) - OpenStreetMap



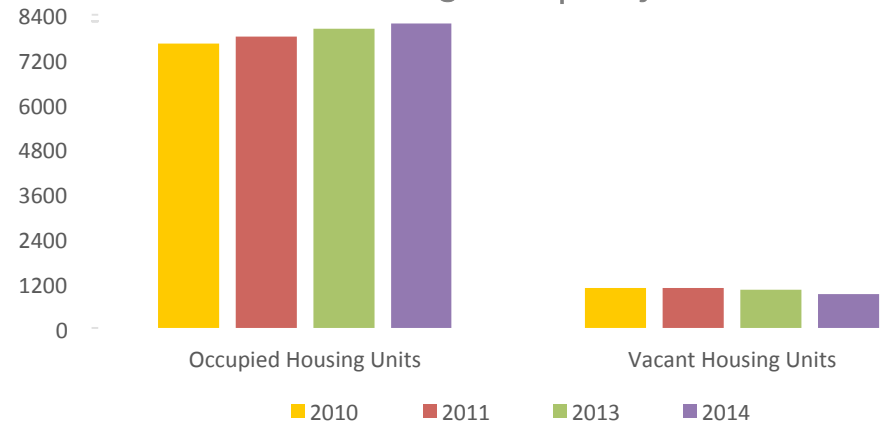
# I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis

- Key Indicators

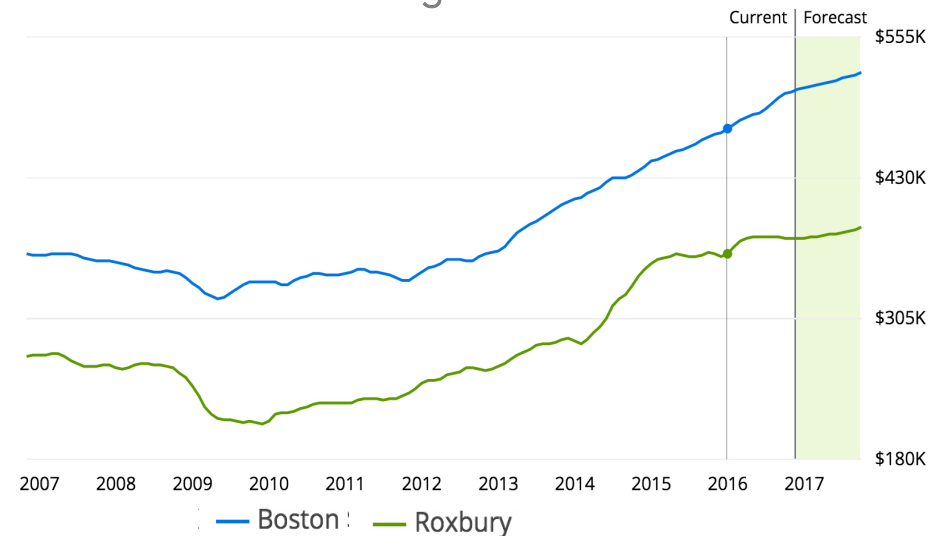
Property Type



Housing Occupancy



Housing Value



Source: www.zillow.com





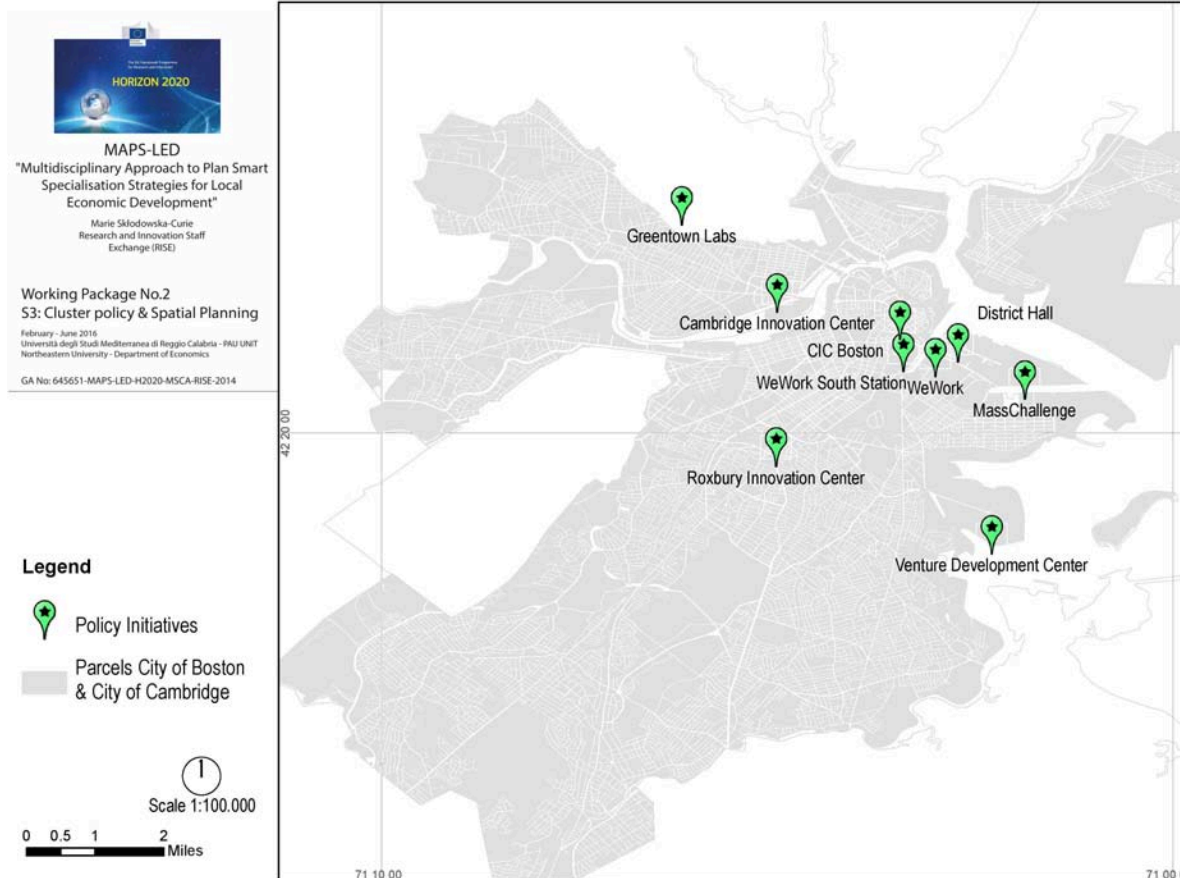
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# I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis

- General Description



**ROXBURY INNOVATION CENTER**



Roxbury Innovation Center is a civic innovation center that supports local economic development by encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship.

**"I want to bring the future economy to every Boston neighborhood. The Roxbury Innovation Center will be the catalyst for Dudley Square."**  
Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston



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## I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis

- General Description
  - The Venture Café Foundation operates Roxbury Innovation Center as a mission-driven not-for-profit gathering and event space.
  - The Venture Café's mission is to connect the innovation community and build a more inclusive innovation economy.
  - The Roxbury Innovation Center enhances and accelerates the innovation process through **spaces, programs, and events** for individuals and organizations to gather and build relationships.
  - It provides training programs and hosts open classes targeting the needs of the community.

BUILDING PARTNERS







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# I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis







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# I. FIRST PART: Target Area Analysis



TECHNO-FUTURISM: DUDLEY SQUARE RE-VITALIZATION

POST INDUSTRIAL DUDLEY SQUARE

**INDUSTRIAL ROXBURY**  
ECONOMIC + SOCIAL MOBILITY: ECONOMICAL SUCCESS

1890 Expanding streetcar lines, rapid industrialization + growing population transformed Dudley Square from a small trading post to the 2nd most important commercial destination outside Boston central business district.

1910 Became area's most active transportation transfer point because bus service terminating at Dudley began replacing crosstown trolley lines.

1920 Became premier commercial center among Boston's neighborhoods since it linked the square to border commercial regions in Boston's resulting in retail + lighting industry growth.

1930 Manufacturing in Lower Roxbury area began to decline since companies were land lock where they were unable to expand... low cost land was lost to residential development.

1950 As Depression approached business decline increased resulting in population shifts. As Roxbury became predominantly African American community, Dudley became the economic + spiritual center for the new community.

Figure 1.2: Dudley Square in the 1920s.



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## SECOND PART

*Innovation Policies and Tools*



2014-2020  
 2014-2020

ref: 2014-2020  
 2014-2020



## II. SECOND PART: Innovation Policies and Tools

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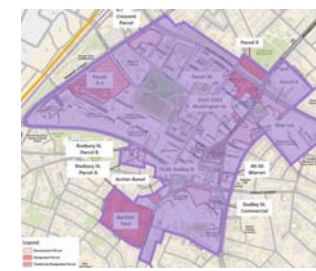


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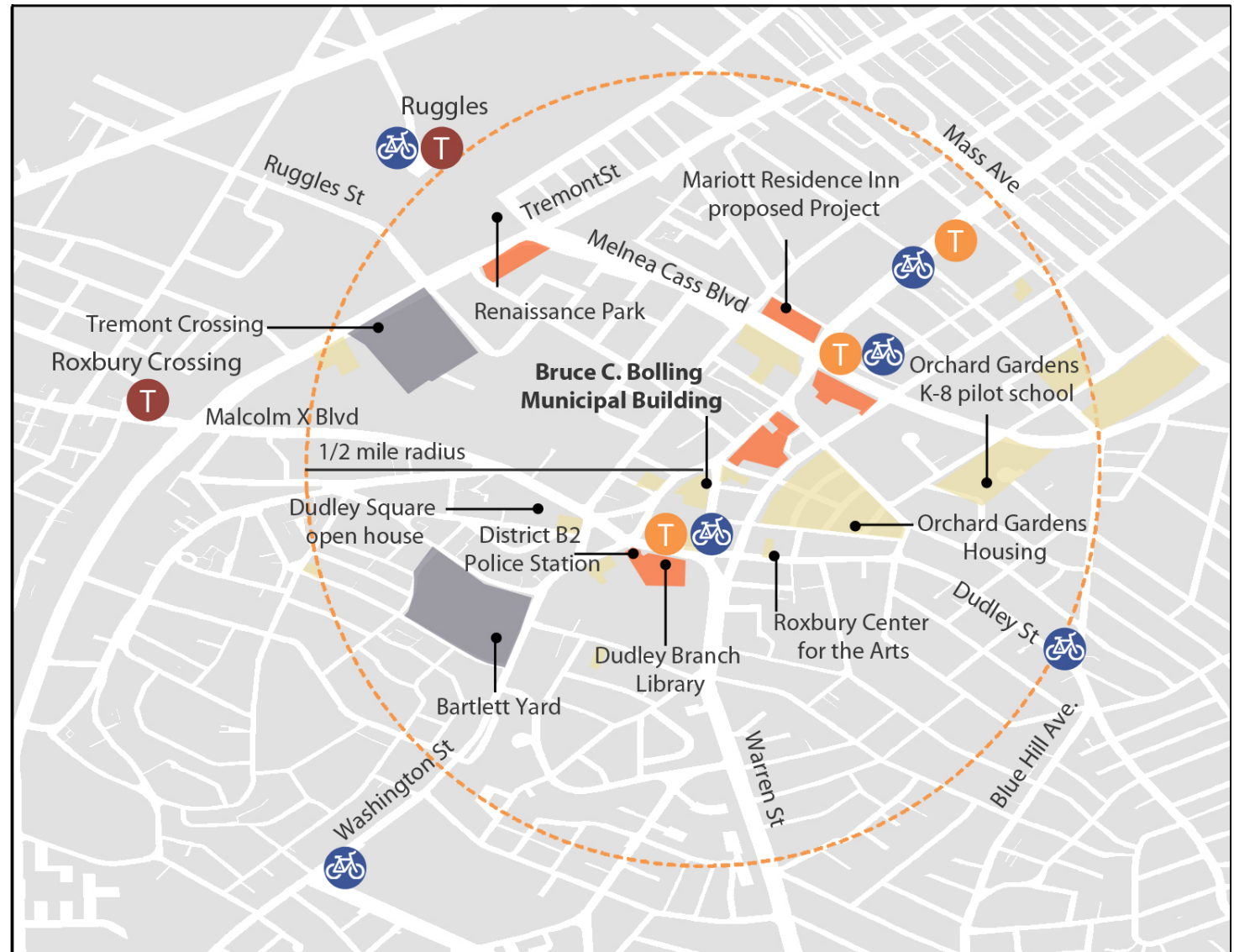
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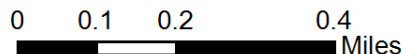
## II. SECOND PART: Innovation Policies and Tools

### Legend

-  Metro
-  Bus Stop
-  Bike Sharing
-  Recently Completed
-  Future Projects
-  Development Opportunities
-  Parcels City of Boston & City of Cambridge



Scale 1:15.000







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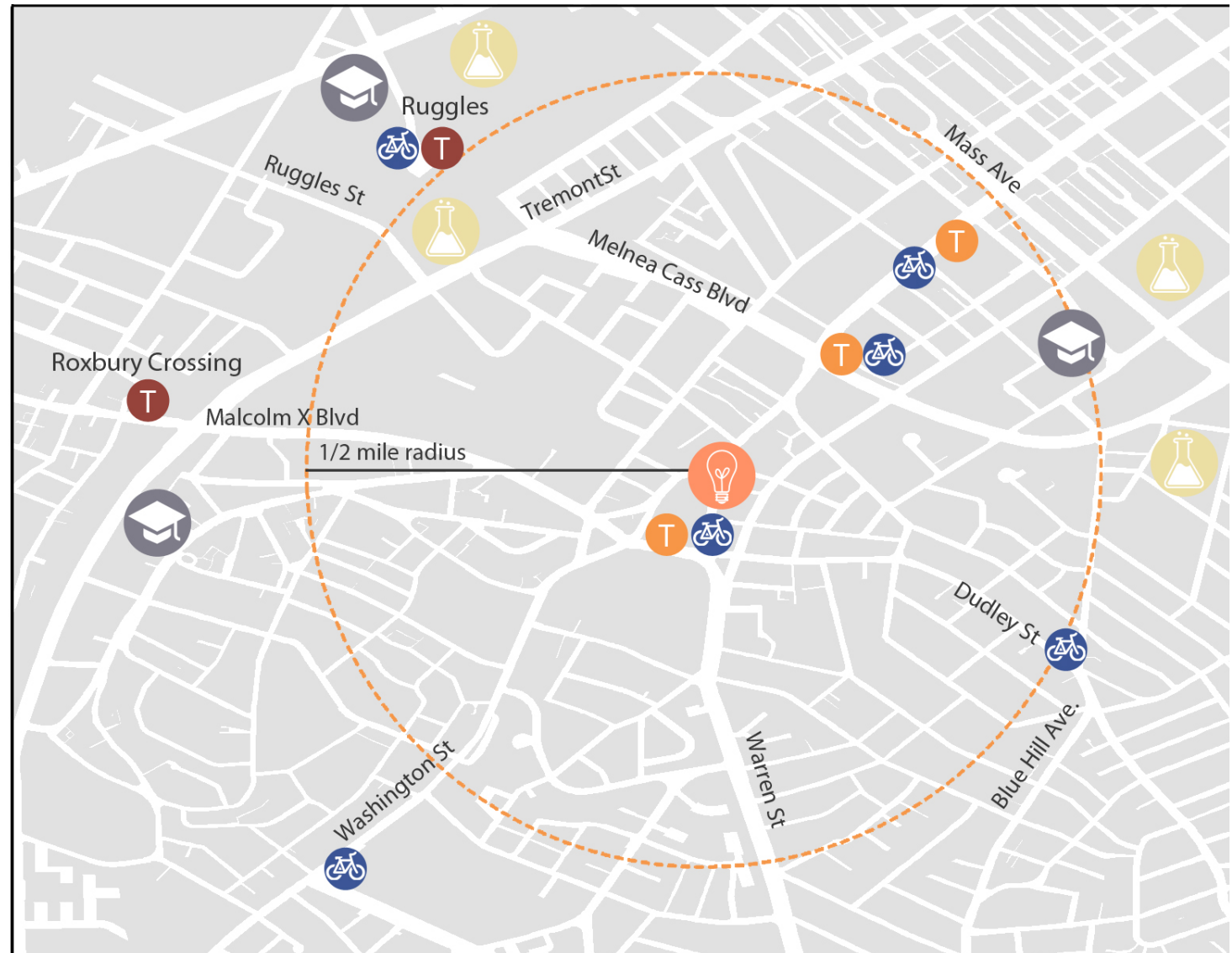
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## II. SECOND PART: Innovation Policies and Tools

### Legend

- Metro
- Bus Stop
- Bike Sharing
- Research Centers and Labs
- Colleges/Universities
- Innovation Centers/Hubs
- Parcels City of Boston & City of Cambridge



Scale 1:15.000

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 Miles

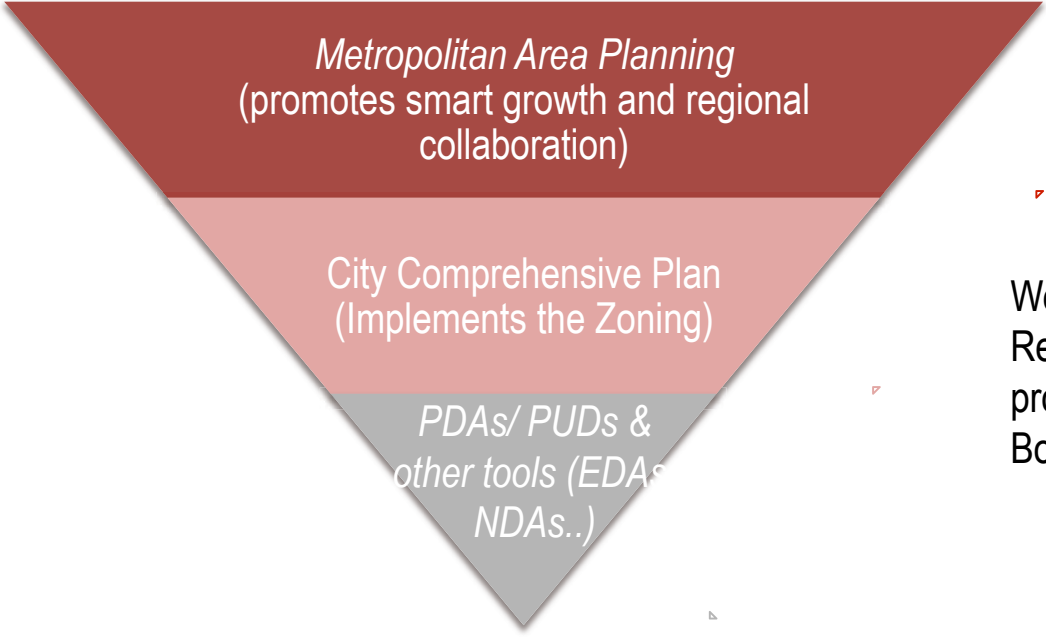


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## II. SECOND PART: Innovation Policies and Tools

- Innovation-oriented tools: PDA Boston



We focus on PDAs/PUDs because they are the Regulatory Processes by means of which are promoted new developments into the cities of Boston and Cambridge.

*PDA: "An overlay zoning district which may be established under Article 80 where a development that is well-suited to its location cannot be accommodated by the general zoning for the area. For example, a PDA may be appropriate where a development involves a large building, a cluster of buildings, or a mix of uses."*

*The Planned Unit Development (PUD): zoning designation intended to create a built environment superior to that which is accomplished through conventional zoning districts. This is achieved by allowing the PUD rezoning applicant to propose the uses, development standards, and design guidelines for a site, and by doing so, entering into a collaborative review process.*



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Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE) : Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE) : RISE



## II. SECOND PART: Innovation Policies and Tools

Localization of the *Roxbury Innovation Center* Target Area with respect to all the PDAs and PUDs of the cities of Boston and Cambridge.

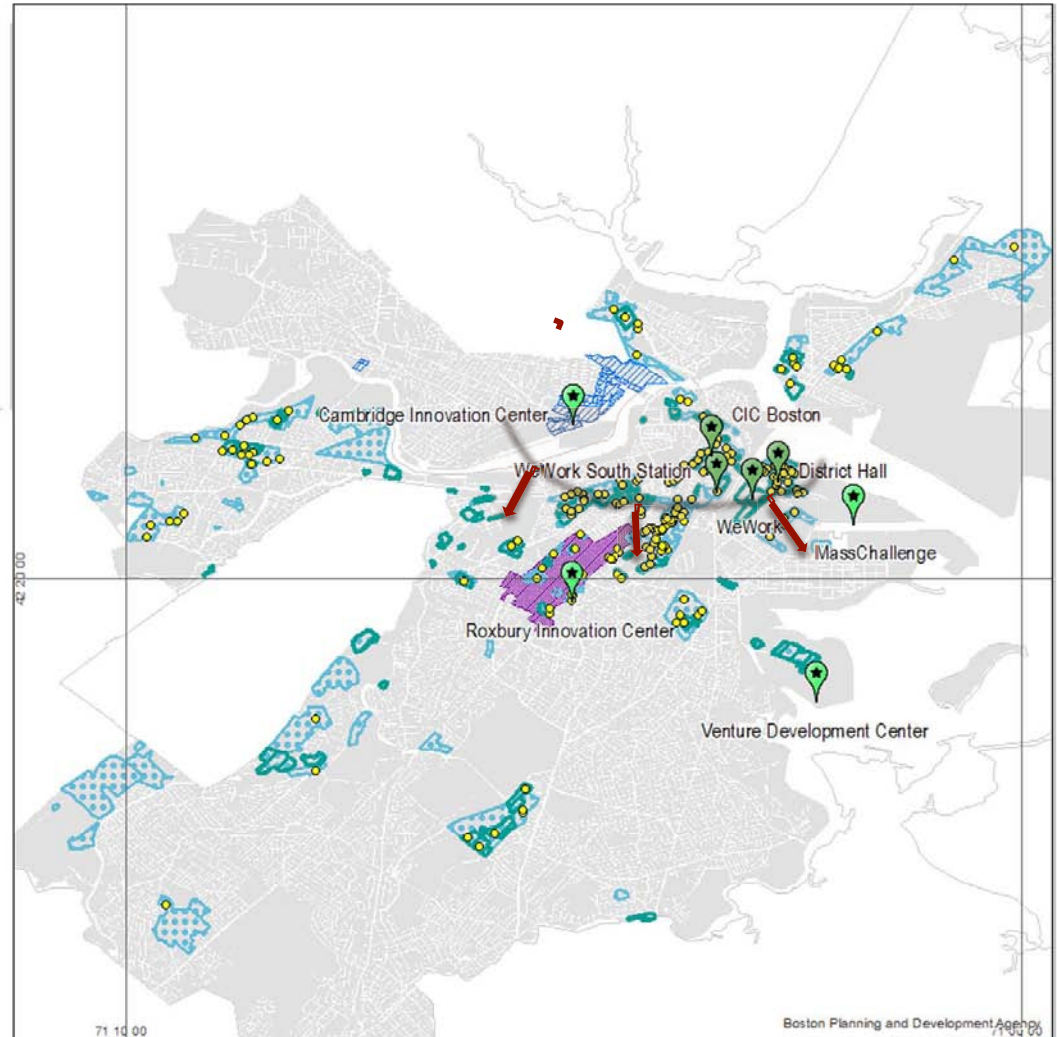
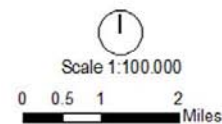


The **expansion of innovation** is following the directions of the knowledge dynamics, determining urban transformations.

  
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### Legend

-  PDA
-  Planned Development Areas - Permitted
-  Planning Development Areas (PDAs) - Boston
-  Planning Unit Development (PUD) - Cambridge
-  Target Area Roxbury (wards)
-  Policy Initiatives
-  Parcels City of Boston & City of Cambridge















The European Commission is the executive branch of the European Union. It is responsible for proposing and enforcing legislation, implementing external relations, and managing the day-to-day business of the EU.



## II. SECOND PART: Innovation Policies and Tools



$\sigma' 4$



$\sigma' H2$



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## CONCLUSIONS





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## The role of innovation Spaces as expression of knowledge dynamics

**Colm Lydon**, Deputy Superintendent, Boston Police Department (Personal Interview on 30/06/2016)

There has been a huge plan to **connect Roxbury down**... The administration hopes Roxbury will be the next South End neighborhood, it wants to make sure that **people go back there** with their families...

**Kevin Wiant**, Executive Director of the Venture Cafè Foundation (Personal Interview on 25/06/2016)

... Here in Roxbury every intervention is very **much locally focused**, there are a lot of local community outreach activities... people come in, involved in very **productive programs** which give the basics of starting a company up, as well as basics on how to use some technology which you might need to start a company, so we do what we call **stem training** for both adults, as well as students... we are also more active in doing some **students programs**...

An innovation center into a deprived neighborhood is an **opportunity**... and... One reason why Menino administration wanted a new building here was to provide not just headquarters for Boston Public Schools, but a **gathering point for people**...



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## The role of innovation Spaces as expression of knowledge dynamics

- Through the target area analysis of the MAPS-LED project, it emerged the role of the overlay districts, as **PDA**s and **PUD**s. They can be considered as tools related to **Urban Regeneration processes** representing the **on-going transformations** in the areas, locally acting in the direction of the **knowledge dynamics**, as a boost for the economic development and urban competitiveness of the whole urban system.
- **Possible output:** it does not exist a “one size fits all”, yet this is a good example of how to trigger urban regeneration processes and augment innovation in the most lagging regions of Europe, where it can be considered a policy intervention of the S3.



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## References

- [American Community Survey](#)
- [Bostonindicators.org](#)
- [Boston Plans](#)
- [Boston Redevelopment Authority](#)
- [Census.gov](#)
- [City-data.com](#)
- [Cityofboston.gov](#)
- [Municode.com](#)
- [Zillow.com](#)



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Thank you!

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*MAPS-LED First Mid-term Meeting*  
30.05.2016  
Northeastern University, Boston, MA, USA