

THE TREES OF WEST ROXBURY

With the neighborhood's tree lined streets and plentiful green spaces, West Roxbury and its residents continue to benefit from its mature urban forest.



"It's important for the neighborhood to have trees... they're as much a part of our neighborhood as our houses and our yards"
-Mary Rafferty, West Roxbury resident

Benefits of Trees



Improved Air Quality



Protection From High Temperatures



Beautification of Neighborhood



Stormwater Mitigation



Improved Public Health

Special Thanks go to:

1. Speak For The Trees
2. EmVision
3. Everyday Boston
4. John Hancock City of Boston Youth Engagement & Employment
5. MassCEC
6. Greening Youth Foundation
7. American Forests
8. Boston Beyond

PAST

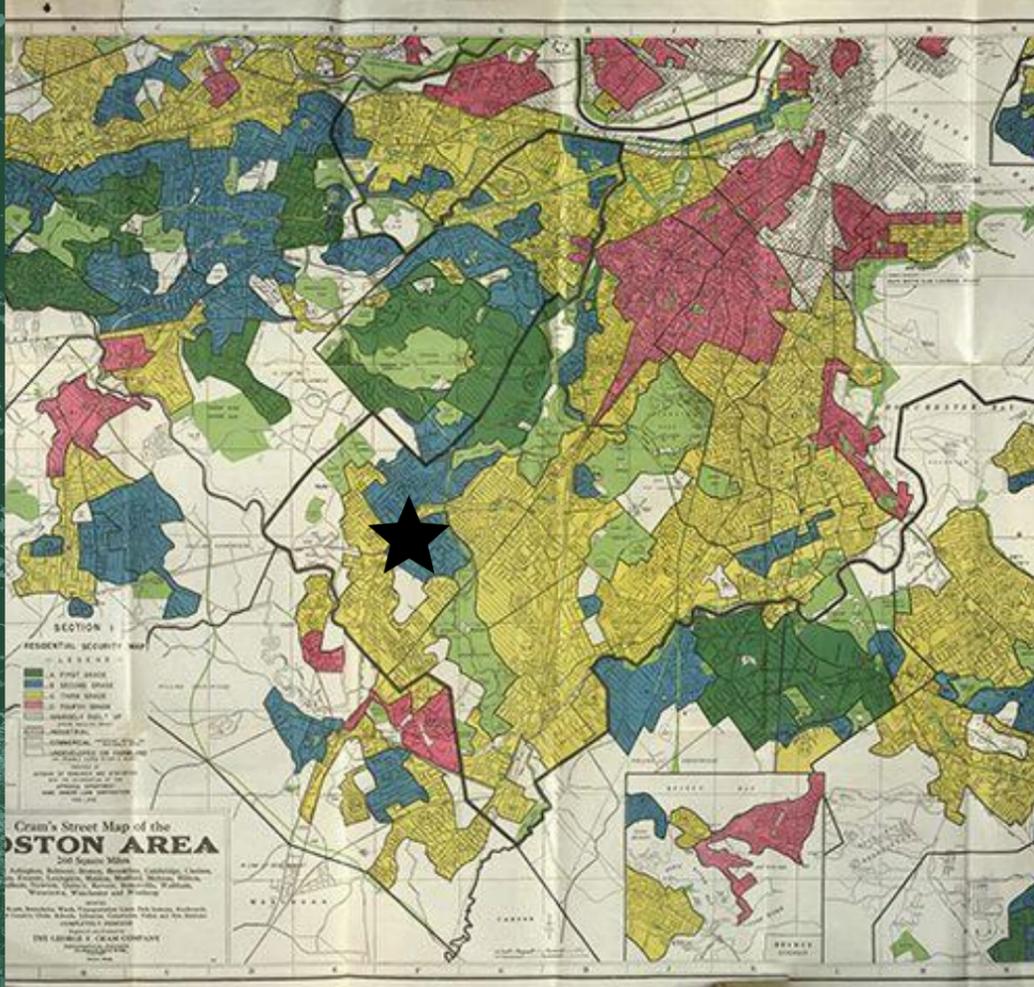
West Roxbury has a history of an abundant urban forest and the neighborhood continues to benefit from the trees of the past.



Aerial photo of West Roxbury, 1925

REDLINING AND TREES

- In the late 30's neighborhoods were rated according to their "risk" on a scale of "A" meaning "Best" to "D" meaning "Hazardous" based on the demographics of the neighborhood
- The majority of West Roxbury was rated a "B" by the Home Owners' Loan association, meaning "still desirable"
- To this day West Roxbury remains an affluent, majority white community due to the consequences of redlining
- Compared to other neighborhoods in Boston with lower ratings, West Roxbury has much more tree cover, bringing up questions about equity and environmental justice.



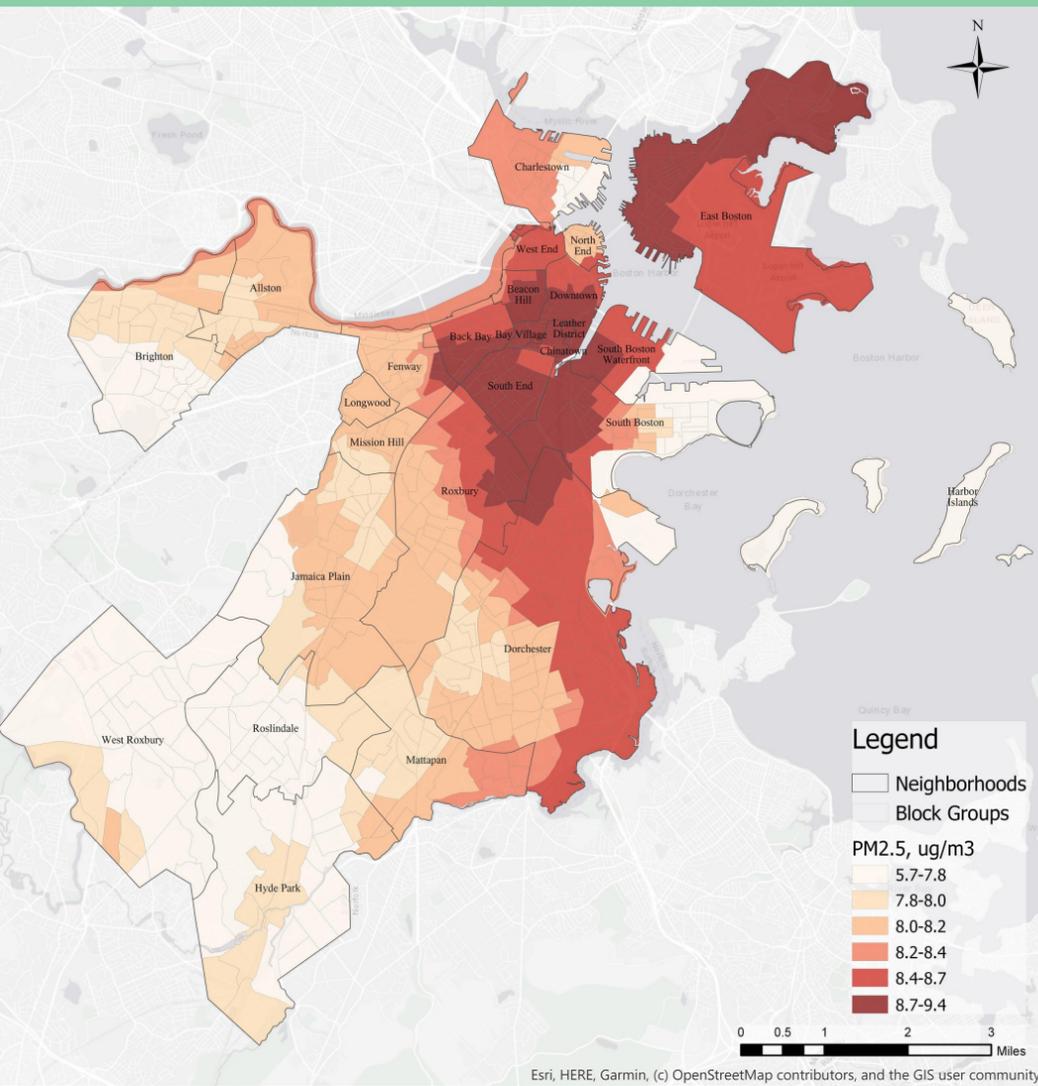
GREEN SPACES

- West Roxbury is home to several beautiful parks and reservations, including part of Stony Brook Reservation, where the historic Bellevue water towers sit
- Parks such as Billings Field have existed in the neighborhood for over a century
- Millennium Park in was originally a landfill, but was renovated in the mid to late nineties and now offers residents soccer fields, walking trails, and access to the Charles River



PRESENT

Today, West Roxbury has many trees and green spaces that benefit the neighborhood and need to be protected.



AIR QUALITY

The tree canopy of West Roxbury has dramatic effects on the air quality in the neighborhood. Compared to other neighborhoods in Boston, West Roxbury has much lower amounts of air pollution, which is taken out of the air by trees. ¹

"My neighbors always say that 'West Roxbury has the best air in Boston,' There is something about it that just feels fresh,"
- Katie Carr, West Roxbury resident ²



PARKS

West Roxbury residents have access to many parks. Some of the largest include Millennium Park, Billings Field, and the Allandale Woods. There are 23.06 acres of protected open space for every thousand residents in West Roxbury, which is over 3 times Boston's average. ³

PROTECTING OUR TREES

In 2015, a large gas pipeline was built through West Roxbury, despite protests from residents. Gas leaks are one of the largest threats to urban forests and damage trees by polluting the soil. ⁴



1. Maps created by Raquel Jimenez from 2018 5-Year American Community Survey data

2. Carr, Katie. Personal interview. 30 Jul 2020.

3. Boston Parks and Recreation Department, "Community Open Space & Recreation Mission." Open Space Plan 2002-2006, City of Boston, www.cityofboston.gov/parks/pdfs/os3o.pdf.

4. Hunter, Maxine. Personal interview. 3 August 2020.

FUTURE

West Roxbury's extensive tree canopy has provided countless benefits to its residents, so it's time to consider how it can be preserved for future generations.

What threats are over the horizon? And how can we mitigate them?



Gas Leaks

Underground gas lines can leak into the soil, and deprive trees of oxygen. The removal and replacement of dead street trees costs the city and its residents thousands in tax dollars.

Monitor trees planted along gas lines. By keeping a close eye on at-risk trees, harmful leaks could be discovered before any obvious evidence of pipe damage. Treating sick trees early on gives them the best chance of survival



New Developments

As the city population grows, more housing and office developments will take place. This also means that existing trees will be removed, and buildings will take their place.

Requiring developers to replace or carbon offset any trees removed or damaged during construction ensures that the benefits trees have to offer continue to do so in the future



Climate Change

Climate change affects all life on Earth, and trees can help mitigate some of the repercussions. Trees can prevent floods, and even save on heating and cooling costs.

Care for our trees. West Roxbury is incredibly fortunate to have the most tree cover in the city of Boston. Preserving it is vital to ensure a sustainable future.



Ways to get involved:

Learn more about Boston's urban forest:

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/caring-bostons-urban-forest>

Find out how to get a street tree planed:

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/how-get-tree-planted-city-land>

Non-profit Organizations: Mothers Out Front, American Forests, Environmental League of MA, Mass Audubon

City of Boston. "How to Get a Tree Planted on City Land." Boston.gov, 14 July 2016. www.boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/how-get-tree-planted-city-land.

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Special thanks to Maxine Hunt from Mothers Out Front