

**MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL  
ROXBURY CULTURAL DISTRICT APPLICATION  
SUBMITTED 11.15.16**

**A. City/Town Information**

Chief Elected Official: Mayor Martin J. Walsh

Population: 667,137

Median Income: \$54,485 (2014, ACS)

Will the city/town be submitting more than one application for cultural district designation in the next 12 months?: Currently, there are two cultural districts in Boston: Fenway Cultural District and Boston Literary District. Three other neighborhoods are exploring cultural district status: Chinatown, the Seaport, and the Theater District.

**B. Third Party Management**

The Roxbury Cultural District will apply for independent 501(c)(3) status immediately upon designation. Before this determination is received from the IRS, there will be an interim third party agreement for management of the district between the City of Boston and Madison Park Development Corporation, Haley House, and The American City Coalition. After the 501(c)(3) determination is made, the interim agreement will be dissolved and replaced by a new third party management agreement between the City of Boston and the Roxbury Cultural District.

**C. Application Fields**

1. Name/Title of District:

Roxbury Cultural District (RCD)

2. How was the name of the district decided? (500 characters)

The first working title was the Dudley Square-Eliot Square Cultural District, signifying the anticipated geographic center of the district around the commercial center of Dudley Square and historic center of Eliot Square. During the planning process, stakeholders stated that they wanted to locate a name that included the community's name, Roxbury. Noticeably, participants defaulted to RCD, clarifying that Roxbury in the title is also critical to marketing.

3. Identify the boundaries of the district by street name with directional coordinates, and number of square blocks? (500 characters)

Begin at Ruggles MBTA and head N to Melnea Cass. At Melnea Cass, move E. At Albany, head S, moving E for one block on Eustis and then S on Dearborn until the street terminates. At Winthrop, head W. At Warren, move S one block and then continue W on St. James. At Washington, head S

one block and then W on Guild and Millmont before heading S on Highland for one block and then W on Linwood. At Columbus, head N, using the soft W edge of the Southwest Corridor Park to return to the Ruggles MBTA.

4. List any zoning overlays, municipal incentives or special designations that would have relevance to a state-designated cultural district (e.g. municipally designated cultural district, artist overlay zoning, Chapter 40-R). Please submit relevant reports as supplemental documents, following the instructions for supplemental materials in the Cultural District Initiative guidelines. (Up to 500 characters)

The following are some relevant overlays, incentives, and designations. Additional can be found in supplemental documentation.

- Dudley Square Main Streets (City of Boston)
- Dudley Square Economic Development Area (BPDA)
- Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (BHA)
- Boulevard Planning (BPDA)
- Planned Development Areas (BPDA)
- Urban Renewal Area; Urban Renewal Overlay District (State)
- Historic Tax Credits (State)
- Community Preservation Act (City of Boston)
- Historic districts (City, state, and federal)

#### **D. Background Information**

5. Describe the characteristics of the district. What makes the proposed district unique? (Up to 2,500 characters)

The proposed district is a diverse neighborhood whose unique multifaceted cultural history is reflected in its rich cultural assets and the wide-ranging artistic talents of its residents.

Roxbury is the geographic center of Boston. This mass of land, one of the first towns in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and originally named Roxborough (an English place name that goes back to the Latin word rex or king), holds a fertile history that includes the First People, early English settlers (the Colonists John Ruggles, John Eliot, William Pynchon), and the American Revolution (William Heath, William Dawes). Roxbury was a key position during the Revolutionary War (Fort Hill, Boston Neck and all early land traffic to Boston), home to abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison after the Civil War, and the urban expansion of Boston (annexed in 1868).

During the mid-19th century, the Irish immigrant population began to grow and the neighborhood was a center of Irish social life (Hibernian Hall), and later, there was a growing Jewish community. Increased transportation from an expanded trolley car system and elevated

rail line helped the commercial center of Dudley Square flourish. By the early 20th century, Dudley was a vital retail center with movie theaters, a bowling alley, and department stores including Ferdinand's, the largest furniture store in New England (Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building).

Throughout the mid-20th century and continuing to this day, Roxbury became the center of African American culture in Boston. The district has strong ties to jazz (Roy Haynes, Makanda Ken McIntyre) and early leaders of the civil rights movement (Malcolm X, Rev. James Breeden, and Melnea Cass). This period was also characterized by the impact of both urban renewal and land acquired by the Commonwealth for the expansion of I-95. The land that was cleared and acquired during this period remains a tangible part of Roxbury's living history.

Today, many of the neighborhood's racially and ethnically diverse residents live in public housing or subsidized units that were built after community leaders worked to replace housing on cleared land. The need for more housing throughout Boston (Housing a Changing City: Boston 2030) and strategies to redevelop publically owned land to increase economic opportunities and build wealth for residents are critical community issues.

6. Give examples of important cultural, historical and recreational facilities in the district. (Up to 1,000 characters; due to length, included in expanded answers with supplemental materials.)

The community has identified 161 cultural assets; additional assets will be added over time. The following representative examples of the district's facilities reflect Roxbury's rich past as well as recent investments:

- Roxbury Heritage State Park (RHSP): Opened in 1992, RHSP is comprised of the Dillaway-Thomas House (1750), a historic structure that served as the headquarters of the Continental Army during the siege of Boston (1775), and a park with a scenic overlook of downtown Boston. Scheduled to reopen in 2018 after a \$3.56M rehabilitation by the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the facility will include a public archeology lab.
- First Church of Roxbury (FCR): In continuous use since English settlers built the first meetinghouse on this site in 1632, the present structure is the fifth built on the site (1804) and the oldest wooden frame church in Boston. Currently the headquarters of the United Universalists Urban Ministries (2003), the building is undergoing renovation.
- Hibernian Hall (HH): Built in 1913 by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a group that promoted Irish cultural heritage. The hall served as a social club for Irish immigrants and was a popular Irish dance destination through the early 1960s. After falling into disrepair, the hall was fully restored in 2005 and is an active gathering place for music, dance, and theater.

- Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building (BMB): Opened in 2015 as the new headquarters of the Boston Public Schools, the city invested \$125M to transform the long-vacant Ferdinand Building into a community anchor.

7. Give examples of cultural programs that have taken place in the district in the last 12 months and any significant upcoming events. (Up to 2,000 characters)

The following are representative examples of cultural programs that have taken place in the district during the last 12 months:

- Roxbury Open Studios: This annual event is an opportunity for Roxbury's visual artists to welcome the public (600 attendees) to view and purchase their work.
- Roxbury Music Festival: An annual event hosted by the Fine, Performing, and Media Arts Department at Roxbury Community College. The festival features music, dance, food trucks, and kid-friendly programming.
- Community Tables: An annual outdoor event hosted by Haley House Bakery Café; designed to celebrate and unite the Roxbury community over well-prepared, delicious, and healthy meals. Event attracts approximately 400 attendees. Also held weekly on a smaller scale and indoors.
- Patriots' Day Event: Annual reenactment of William Dawes's horseback ride from Roxbury to Lexington and Concord, trolley tours of historic sites, breakfast, and family programming that attracts over 125 participants. Two awards recognize service to the community: a high school student is presented with the Brown Memorial Scholarship and a local Roxbury resident is presented with the Unsung Hero Award.
- Roxbury International Film Festival: The largest film festival in New England dedicated to celebrating film by, for, and about people of color. Now in its eighteenth year, this annual festival gives voice to diverse cultures both locally and globally. The festival has welcomed over 35,000 attendees and has featured over 600 films.
- Roxbury Strong: A Story of Emergence: Madison Park Development Corporation commissioned a teen performance on the history of Roxbury since the 1960s. Written by Ron Jones based on research he conducted through numerous interviews with residents of Roxbury; Boston Arts Academy students performed in the production.
- The Makanda Project: An ensemble dedicated to performing the previously unrecorded compositions of Makanda Ken McIntyre; they give regularly-scheduled free concerts at the Roxbury Community College Media Arts Center.

8. Describe how the city or town's public amenities enhance the district. (Up to 2,000 characters; due to length, included in expanded answers with supplemental materials.)

The following public amenities support access and usability in the district, making it more inviting for those participating in district activities:

- Public Transportation: Each day, over 30,000 passengers pass through Dudley Bus Station, a nexus for the MBTA Silver Line and a large network of routes. The district includes Ruggles and Roxbury Crossing MBTA train stations.
- Bikes and Bike Paths: 15 Hubway bikes are stationed at the corner of Melnea Cass Boulevard and Washington Street, providing easy access to the bike path in the Southwest Corridor Park; additional stations throughout Roxbury.
- Public Restrooms: Public restrooms can be found in the Dudley Bus Station, the library, and the Bolling Building, RCC, and the RHSP.
- Signage: In Dudley Bus Terminal, Eliot Burying Ground, Ruggles MBTA, and RHSP, there is public signage about the history of Roxbury.
- Walking Trails: A growing network of walking trails (Roxbury Memory Trail, Jazz Heritage Trail) will encourage those participating in district activities to explore the district further.
- Library: The Dudley Branch Boston Public Library is in the district.
- Parks: See attached map.
- Public Wifi Zones: Wifi is publically available at the Bolling Building, library, Dudley Cafe, Haley House Bakery Cafe, and Northeastern Crossing.
- ATMs: There are multiple ATMs in Dudley Square at Citizens Bank, Bank of America, One United, and Webster Bank (in Walgreens), as well as in the Ruggles and Roxbury Crossing MBTA stations.
- Restaurants: The district includes a range of restaurants that reflect the rich ethnic and racial diversity of the neighborhood representing a range of cultures including Nigerian, Somali, and Caribbean.
- Anticipated: Community plans include a visitor/orientation center in the 1880 Nawn Factory that will serve as a starting/orientation point and encourage further exploration of assets. Plans also include enhancements to Ruggles Street and the abutting parks that will improve connectivity within and into the district for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly between the Ruggles MBTA station and Dudley Square.

#### **E. Vision and Goals**

9. Why does your city and town want to become a state designated cultural district? (Up to 1,000 characters.)

Roxbury wants to become a state designated cultural district in order to foster and measure the connections between art, culture, and economic development.

By establishing a district, we will develop the backbone organizational structure needed for a sustained, collaborative focus on activating and marketing the neighborhood's arts and cultural assets in order to build physical and social connectivity between people and place, strengthen collective impact, and expand the potential economic opportunities for residents (artists, business owners, entrepreneurs) that are aligned with a more vibrant cultural district.

10. Outline the vision for the cultural district. (Up to 1,500 characters)

The vision for the RCD is to lift up the community of Roxbury as a living repository of arts and cultural expression--past, present, and future.

To help guide the RCD toward making incremental progress in realizing this vision, the community has identified the following mission statement: To build and maintain a cultural district that identifies and recognizes Roxbury's cultural assets and establishes the tools, strategies, resources, and spaces needed to sustain and grow the district's activities.

Roxbury is rich in arts and cultural assets—people, places, objects, artistic expression, and organizations that are the connection to the neighborhood's past and its future. However, many of these assets are underutilized by residents and remain relatively unknown to those beyond the neighborhood. This is a missed opportunity to connect residents, young and old, to the historic trajectory and cultural fabric of their community.

There is a need for greater connectivity to encourage the movement of people into and within the neighborhood to live, work, learn, and play and to better ensure that stories, ideas, and lessons learned are transmitted from one generation to the next.

Celebrating the cultural assets of the neighborhood is also a vital component of expanding economic opportunity for all residents. Specifically, there is a concentrated need to increase economic activity by thoughtfully and systematically leveraging the assets to increase the number of dollars circulating in the community.

11. Outline the goals for the district and how they relate to the goals of the Cultural District Initiative. (Up to 1,500 characters.)

The RCD will be guided by four primary goals. Using examples from MCC as a starting point, these local-driven goals were developed from community input throughout the planning process. The minutes from the first public meeting on April 11, 2016 capture the input from the 75 attendees and demonstrate close alignment between early community input and the final goals listed below.

1. Activating Assets and Marketing Community Programming: Increase the capacity of the cultural district to share and celebrate its cultural assets with all of its residents and visitors.
2. Economic Development: Use the arts, culture, and the creative economy to stimulate inclusive economic development and increase the amount of money spent and circulated in Roxbury.

3. Built Environment: Conserve and develop physical spaces, facilities, and public art in order to preserve history, support arts and cultural organizations, and the creative economy, while also meeting the needs of local artists and creating spaces for the public to enjoy.
4. Governance and Sustainability: Ensure the long-term successes of the district through strong, collaborative leadership, a sustainable funding stream, and regular data collection and evaluation.

Each of these goals is closely linked to short-term and long-term activities as well as metrics to measure its success. These metrics will be integrated into the district's annual report.

12. Elaborate on any past accomplishments as well as future plans to maximize the potential of the cultural organizations, real estate opportunities and cultural programs in the district as they relate to the goals. (Up to 2,500 characters; due to length, included in expanded answers with supplemental materials.)

The past accomplishments and plans to maximize potential are closely tied to district conditions. Representative examples include:

- The Roxbury Cultural Network and Common Thread Coalition, two grassroots cultural groups, identified the need for joint marketing, collective programming, as well as state cultural district designation that set the groundwork for this application through two previous community-led efforts (2011, 2013).
- The Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building opened in 2015. Local advocates worked to ensure that the building housed public amenities and public art: "Roxbury Rhapsody" by local artist, Napoleon Jones-Henderson and funded by the Boston Arts Commission and "CrissCross Signal Spire" by Meejin Yoon marks the historic transportation crossroads (Dudley Bus Terminal, former elevated Orange Line).
- Through the work of Historic Boston Inc. (HBI), a cluster of four historic places that comprise the Eustis Street Architectural Conservation District are being put back into productive reuse. After sitting vacant for 50 years, the Eustis Street Firehouse (1859 and oldest firehouse in Boston) reopened in 2011 following a \$2.5M renovation. The 1630 Eliot Burying Ground, Roxbury's oldest remaining landscape and an extraordinary "outdoor museum" of 17<sup>th</sup> century stone carving and neighborhood history, is now substantially more accessible to the public, having recently undergone complete renovation of its walkways and installation of a comprehensive interpretive signage program. Plans are now underway to restore and reactivate the 1880 Nawn Factory as a visitor center and mixed-use development, an effort that will also articulate and interpret the below-grade foundations of two 18<sup>th</sup>-century houses at the corner of Melnea Cass Boulevard and Washington Street as a reminder of the critical geographic position Roxbury played in early Massachusetts at one end of Boston Neck.
- The centerpiece of Tremont Crossing, a 1.9M sq. ft. redevelopment of Parcel-3, will be a state of the art museum facility (34,000 sq. ft.) for the Museum of the National Center for Afro-

American Artists (NCAAA). Founded in the 1950s by Elma Lewis, a nationally recognized arts leader, the original museum was lost in a fire and it has since been operating in a beautiful, but insufficient space on Walnut Street in Roxbury.

- The Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (WCNI) outlines three key investments in anchor cultural institutions: 1) Support for the development of a visitor center as part of the rehabilitation and productive reuse of the Nawn Factory; 2) A new 15,000 sq. ft. public plaza at Bartlett Place to connect art and commerce; and 3) Funds for the build out of a performance space/screening room within the new Museum of the NCAAA.
- The WCNI also outlines improvements to Ruggles Street, a key route that connects the Ruggles MBTA Station with Dudley Square. This five-lane, one-way street is an uninviting remnant of urban renewal. The architecture firm of Stull and Lee, the City of Boston, and MPDC worked closely with residents to develop a plan for \$7.4M in improvements that include reducing the number of car lanes, adding a protected bike lane, rebuilding the public park at Dewitt Crossing, as well as enhancements to fencing, landscape, and street furniture. Significantly, the intersection of Tremont Street and Ruggles Street is identified as the Ruggles Gateway, a key site for public art that marks the entry to the neighborhood. Here, and at three other locations along Ruggles Street, there will be a \$400K investment in public art.

These investments highlight the need for continued public engagement and establishment of community planning processes for public art and creative placemaking, which must in the end reflect the unique multifaceted cultural heritage and the wide-ranging artistic talent of Roxbury. The increased pace of planning and development throughout Dudley Square brings added urgency to this need.

13. Describe any relevant zoning, planning or financial tools that will be utilized in the district.  
(Up to 1,000 characters)

There are multiple planning processes underway in the proposed district:

- Dudley Complete Streets, planning is complete and the Department of Public Works will invest \$9.8M;
- Melnea Cass Boulevard Redesign;
- Roxbury Heritage State Park Master Plan (1987), outlines the need for public investment in cultural infrastructure;
- Whittier Choice Neighborhood Initiative Transformation Plan;
- The RCD falls within an area guided by the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan (2004), a strategic planning agenda that provides a framework to guide change and economic growth; plan calls for infrastructure investment in community arts centers and for incentivizing private investment in the arts. The document is being updated through PLAN: Dudley Square.

- As a part of the City of Boston, the district will also utilize citywide tools identified in the Creative Economy Report (2005), Neighborhood Innovation District Committee Report (2015), Small Business Plan (2016), and Boston Creates (2016).

14. Outline the action plan for the first six months following designation. (Up to 2,500 characters; due to length, included in expanded answers with supplemental materials.)

The action plan for the first six months following designation is organized around start-up organizational tasks in months 1 to 3 and meeting short-term goals of the four overarching RCD goals (outlined previously) in months 4 to 6.

Months 1 to 3: Key tasks include:

1. Complete the governance structure and apply to Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts for pro bono legal counsel.
  - a. Draft the formal roles and responsibilities of the board, youth board, directors, officers, board committees, advisory committee; draft staff job descriptions;
  - b. Prepare Articles of Incorporation;
  - c. Prepare Corporate By-Laws;
  - d. Establish financial and reporting structure;
  - e. Refine budget;
  - f. Establish office and address;
  - g. Arrange directors and officers insurance;
  - h. Decide what type of board the district needs and what roles board members should play; same for the executive committee;
  - i. Recruit, appoint initial officers and directors;
  - j. Establish banking relationship;
  - k. Apply for incorporation;
  - l. Apply for 501(c)(3) status;
2. Complete the strategic plan.
3. Define the membership/sponsor offer and structure.
4. Update the website.
5. Announce district status in the media.
6. Solicit members and sponsors.
7. Recruit staff.

Months 4 to 6: During this period, the staff and leadership will work together to make incremental progress on the four key goals including:

1. Activating Assets and Marketing Community Programming: Develop a logo; convert the planning website into a permanent website; refine and launch the shared marketing strategy; build the number of followers on social media; begin regular communication with followers

- about local programming; utilize events as an opportunity to advertise; represent the district locally.
2. Economic Development: Build a collaborative working relationship with Dudley Square Main Streets and develop shared goals to support local businesses; conduct outreach to local artists and assess their economic development needs.
  3. Built Environment: Attend relevant neighborhood planning meetings: Be a voice for the district's arts and culture needs in local and city-wide planning processes; take steps to strengthen local processes for the planning and maintenance of cultural facilities and public art that expresses the history of Roxbury and its residents over time; support the preservation of historic buildings, putting them into sustainable, productive reuse.
  4. Governance and Sustainability: Continue to expand district membership to garner funds and solidify working relationships and networks that bring the public and private sectors together into a shared governance structure to break down silos in support of arts and culture; utilize mapping, surveys, and other means to further establish community needs and opportunities; set up systems of evaluation and data dissemination for the district. Continue to study and explore other existing models and best practices in order to create a strong, sustainable entity.

#### **F. Evaluation and Impact**

15. Based on the goals for the district, identify and describe the evaluation methodology to be used in measuring the district's impact. Be specific and concrete. Include information about how the project's impact will be tracked and linked to relevant statistical, economic impact, and audience participation measurements. (Up to 1,000 characters)

Annual report will be submitted to MCC, as well as a report to residents as a living document celebrating goals and community collaboration. A range of stakeholder input on the district's effectiveness is critical to achieving goals. In addition to MCC required baseline and annual data (visitors, occupancy rates), data to measure specific goals will be tracked, for example:

- Goal 1: Work with stakeholders to create standard tracking form to gather information on major events. (# tickets sold; # attendees; revenue from ticket sales; revenue for vendors at events and surrounding locations).
- Goal 2: # new businesses; # new full-time employees; vacancy. Source: Dudley Square Main Streets, COB permit data. Economic impact to capture demographic nuances (i.e., resident vs. non-resident) of goals.
- Goal 3: # historic properties put into productive reuse. Source: HBI.
- Goal 4: # members; membership revenue. Source: RCD staff.

Data collection to be adjusted as goals are refined.

#### **G. Public/Private Partnership & Management Narrative**

16. Outline the plan for overseeing and managing the district and the district partnership. Include information about how decisions be made for/by the district; how often the partnership will meet; whether there will be a staff person assigned to administer the cultural district's goals; and who the staff person will report to on a day to day basis. (Up to 2,500 characters; due to length, included in expanded answers with supplemental materials.)

#### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ENTITY FORMATION

The RCD will receive third-party designation from the City of Boston to oversee, lead, and manage the district. After evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a range of organizational structures and reflecting on the history of arts and cultural organizations in Roxbury, the RCD determined that it will move forward as an independent entity and apply for incorporation as a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation that is exempt under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. For the first six months, or until independent tax-exempt status is issued, RCD will be managed through a third party agreement between the City of Boston and MPDC, Haley House, and The American City Coalition. The will then be dissolved and replaced with a third party agreement between the City of Boston and the RCD.

#### GOVERNANCE

The oversight and management model is a system of shared governance that is lead by a board of directors and executive committee (a subgroup of the board); these are members drawn from the full membership of the RCD. In addition, a RCD advisory committee will create a role for individuals with expertise and interest that want to serve as ambassadors for the district. These three roles are further defined below:

- Board of Directors: The board will meet quarterly. Comprised of 12 to 15 individuals from dues paying member organizations or members located in the district, in Roxbury, and beyond. Decisions will be made by vote with each individual receiving one vote. With limited exceptions (City of Boston, elected officials), these individuals will be selected from dues paying member organizations or individual members from the following groups:
  - Institutions and organizations;
  - Private sector including financial institutions and businesses;
  - Government entities; and
  - Residents and artists from the district and Roxbury.

The board of directors will have the following officer roles:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Treasurer
4. Clerk
5. Ex-Officio

6. Director (artist)
7. Director (cultural)
8. Director (education)
9. Director (community & economic development)
10. Director (business owner)
11. Director (Roxbury Oversight Committee Member)
12. Director (financial)

Executive Committee: The board of directors will appoint a smaller executive committee of 4 to 5 board members. The executive committee will meet monthly and have management oversight of the staff. The executive committee will oversee the strategic plan and assure that incremental progress in being made on the district's goals.

Roxbury Cultural District Advisory Committee: The committee will be comprised of a group of individuals with expertise and interest that wish to serve as ambassadors for the district in order to promote the RCD and help conduct outreach to form and maintain new partnerships. They will meet on an ad hoc basis and serve as "boots on the ground" in representing community voices and promoting the district. Committee members will be appointed by the board and recommendations can be submitted to the board who will appoint the committee.

Staff: The board will hire an executive director who will administer the goals of the cultural district and report to the executive committee generally and to one member of the executive committee on a day-to-day basis. The executive director will oversee the daily operations of the organization and have oversight of volunteers and other consultants and staff.

Youth Governance: The goals of the district include a specific focus on working with youth. Youth will play an active part in the governance structure. While further consideration is needed, it is anticipated that a youth board will be formed.

17. Describe the strategy that will be established to ensure that all the district's partners and stakeholders are kept up to date about opportunities and decisions. (Up to 2,500 characters; due to length, included in expanded answers with supplemental materials.)

There will be a multi-pronged communications strategy that seeks to keep stakeholders up to date on opportunities and decisions, as well as to reach the greatest number of people in order to publicize district activities.

The following types of communication will be used: quarterly community meetings, social media such as Twitter and Facebook, MailChimp e-blasts, website, flyers, postcards, and an annual report.

The target audiences includes: RCD dues paying members, board members, advisory committee members, community residents, youth, seniors, residents of Greater Boston, national and international visitors, business owners, donors, elected officials, faith community, learning community, community advocates, and civic groups.

<b>Type of Communications</b>	<b>Key Target Audience</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
1. Community Meetings	All audiences	Quarterly
2. eBlasts	All audiences	Monthly
3. Social Media	All audiences	Weekly
4. Flyers	Community Residents	Quarterly
5. Postcards	Community Residents	Quarterly
6. Annual Report	MCC/members/donors	Annually
7. Community Report	Community residents	Annually
8. News Releases	Traditional/digital media	Monthly

In addition, the RCD will conduct media relations to targeted reporters and editors in digital and traditional media outlets to inform a broader public about district news. This will provide free or “earned” media coverage in community and mainstream outlets.

18. Describe any current collective marketing efforts in your community. (Up to 1,000 characters)

Current collective marketing efforts in Roxbury include:

- Community Calendar Boards: Throughout the district, there are boards to post paper copies about upcoming events and opportunities. Prominent examples can be found at the Dudley Branch Library, Haley House Bakery Cafe, Dudley Cafe, and the Bolling Building.
- Local Newspaper: The Bay State Banner (30,000 circulation) is a respected local and free publication. Each week, The Banner publishes news and event listings in hard copy and online editions.
- Radio and Television: The community is home to several established radio and television stations. Radio outlets include a new radio station, the BASS, also known as WZBR 1410 AM Radio. The BASS went on air in July 2016. Boston Neighborhood Network TV promotes and broadcasts news, as well as cultural and arts programming of community interest.
- Dudley Square Main Streets: With an extensive email list, Main Streets takes an active role in promoting public events in the area.

19. Describe the marketing and promotion plan for the district. Include information about developing a brand for the district; a promotion strategy; and social media plan. (Up to 1,500 characters)

Marketing and promotion will focus on communicating the RCD’s vision, mission, and

goals through a variety of communication channels. The key to effective communication is to engage cultural ambassadors who serve on the advisory committee and can work with the district to amplify messaging across multiple channels.

To brand the RCD, the executive committee will work with the executive director to create a logo, tag line, visuals, and refined overall marketing strategy. The approval process for branding materials will include focus groups for community input, and the board and advisory committee for review. The executive director and executive committee will oversee marketing with support from other stakeholders.

The RCD branding is also an opportunity to collaborate with youth through the BPS to provide ideas for messaging, visual content, and help spread the word. The district can also secure interns from Roxbury Community College, MassArt, and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and create meaningful events that bring youth of different ages and abilities together to promote the district and further connections to culture in Roxbury.

In addition, partnerships with public and private sponsors can help to pay for advertising, video, and digital marketing in exchange for visibility by highlighting their logos and linking to their social media.

We will amplify messaging and engagement through the regular use of Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Messaging can be scheduled in advance based on the goals of the marketing strategy.

#### **H. Management Team**

Complete the following for each organization involved in the management of the district.

#### **Examples of potential cultural district partners include:**

- a. Municipal government office
- b. Non-profit - cultural organization
- c. Non-profit - community development organization
- d. Non-profit – other organization
- e. Library
- f. Local cultural council
- g. Cultural alliance
- h. Artist association
- i. Individual artist
- j. Historic commission
- k. Community foundation
- l. Chamber of commerce/business association
- m. For-profit– service industry

- n. For-profit–creative economy business
- o. For-profit business – other
- p. College or university
- q. Regional planning commission
- r. Regional tourism council
- s. Main Streets
- t. High School
- u. Elementary School
- v. Church

**20. Name of Organization 1: City of Boston, Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture**

- Contact: Kara Elliot-Ortega, Director of Planning and Policy
- Address: One City Hall Plaza, Room 802
- City, State, Zip: Boston, MA 02110
- Type of organization: Municipal government office
- Telephone: 617.635.9311
- Email: kara.elliott-ortega@boston.gov
- Role and qualifications: The Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture fosters the growth of the cultural community and participation in the arts citywide. They will help to align the district with the citywide plan, Boston Creates (2016).

**21. Name of Organization 2: Hibernian Hall at Madison Park Development Corporation (MPDC)**

- Contact: Dillon Bustin, Artistic Director
- Address: 184 Dudley Street
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02119
- Type of Organization: Non-Profit, Community Development Corporation
- Telephone: 617.849.6322
- Email: dbustin@madison-park.org
- Role and qualifications: Local CDC that fosters neighborhood revitalization through creation/preservation of affordable housing; own and operate Hibernian Hall, a vibrant performing arts center that produces quality theater, dance, and music events in Dudley Square.

**22. Name of Organization 3: Haley House Bakery Cafe**

- Contact: Bing Broderick, Executive Director
- Address: 12 Dade Street
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02119
- Type of Organization: Non-Profit, Social Services and Restaurant
- Telephone: 617.445.0900
- Email: bing.broderick@haleyhouse.org

- Role and qualifications: Local non-profit that uses food as a vehicle to help alleviate suffering, build new skills, revitalize neighborhoods, and serve as a venue for arts and cultural celebrations and exhibition space for local artists.

**23. Name of Organization 4: The American City Coalition (TACC)**

- Contact: Charlotte Rice, Interim Executive Director
- Address: 2136 Washington Street, 2nd Floor
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02119
- Type of organization: Non-Profit, Place-Based Initiative
- Telephone: 857.308.3012
- Email: charlotte\_rice@tamcc.org
- Role and qualifications: Through interrelated programs in community planning, economic development, and supportive service strategies, TACC advances partnerships that positively impact the built environment and quality of life for low-income residents of Lower Roxbury.

**24. Name of Organization 5: The National Center for Afro-American Artists (NCAAA)**

- Contact: Edmund Barry Gaither, Founder and Executive Director
- Address: 130 Walnut Avenue
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02119
- Type of organization: Non-Profit, Cultural Organization
- Telephone: 617.442.8614
- Email: gaither@mfa.org
- Role and qualifications: NCAAA is an integral part of the cultural celebration in Roxbury, serves as a gateway to a global visual arts heritage of the African Diaspora, is a key venue for arts and cultural education, and a key partner on the RCD planning team.

**25. Name of Organization 6: Historic Boston Incorporated (HBI)**

- Contact: Kathy Kottaridis, Executive Director
- Address: 20 Eustis Street, 2nd Floor
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02119
- Type of Organization: Non-Profit, Developer of Historic Properties
- Telephone: 617.442.1859
- Email: kathy@historicboston.org
- Role and qualifications: HBI redevelops at-risk historic buildings in order to help Boston's neighborhoods thrive. HBI devotes its own technical and financial resources to projects and also attracts capital from conventional lenders and philanthropic sources.

**26. Name of Organization 7: JazzBoston**

- Contact: Don Carlson, Chief Financial Officer
- Address: 17 Gloucester Street, Unit 5

- City, State, Zip: Boston, MA 02115
- Type of organization: Non-Profit, Cultural Organization
- Telephone: 617.390.3163
- Email: dcarlson@jazzboston.org
- Role and qualifications: JazzBoston produces jazz concerts in Roxbury and other Boston neighborhoods; it is planning the Boston Jazz Heritage Trail, which will include locations in Roxbury; two of its officers have actively participated in the RCD planning process.

**27. Name of Organization 8: Dudley Square Main Streets (DSMS)**

- Contact: Joyce Stanley, Executive Director
- Address: 2343 Washington Street
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02119
- Type of organization: Main Streets
- Telephone: 617.541.4644
- Email: joyce@dudleysquare.org
- Role and qualifications: DSMS is a city-run commercial revitalization entity that recruits new businesses, assists businesses with storefront renovations, provides technical assistance to business owners, and celebrates the rich cultural diversity and history of Dudley Square.

**28. Name of Organization 9: Boston Public Schools (BPS)**

- Contact: Myran Parker-Brass, Executive Director for the Arts
- Address: 2300 Washington Street
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02119
- Type of organization: Public Schools
- Telephone: 617.635.6769
- Email: mparkerbrass@bps.org
- Role and qualifications: BPS is undertaking a multi-year initiative to expand arts education in schools. BPS will work with the RCD to strengthen coordination and sustainable partnerships between youth living and attending school in the RCD and cultural resources in Roxbury.

**29. Name of Organization 10: SkyLab Boston**

- Contact: Bridgette Wallace, Founder and Co-Principal
- Address: 2300 Robinwood Street
- City, State, Zip: Dorchester, MA 02125
- Type of Organization: Non-Profit, Incubator
- Telephone: 617.898.8138
- Email: Bridgette@skylab.org
- Role and qualifications: Through programming in the Roxbury Innovation Center, SkyLab serves as a gateway for residents to partner with advisors and mentors to explore

entrepreneurial concepts. SkyLab will support support innovation and entrepreneurial pathways for residents.

**30. Name of Organization 11: Roxbury Cultural Network (RCN)**

- Contact: Derek Lumpkins, Member
- Address: Northeastern Crossing, 1175 Tremont Street
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02120
- Type of Organization: Local Cultural Network
- Telephone: 617.373.2533
- Email: d.lumpkins@neu.edu
- Role and qualifications: RCN is a grassroots arts and culture association. Their membership is comprised of leaders of local arts and culture organizations, many of whom are actively leading the current RCD planning process.

**31. Name of Organization 12: Museum of African American History (MAAH)**

- Contact: Marita Rivero, Executive Director
- Address: 46 Joy Street
- City, State, Zip: Boston, MA 02114
- Type of Organization: Non-Profit, Cultural Organization
- Telephone: 617.720.2291
- Email: mrivero@maah.org
- Role and qualifications: MAAH is a landmark cultural institution dedicated to preserving, conserving and interpreting the contributions of African Americans. In the district, they are a media sponsor and will be conducting educational programming.

**32. Name of Organization 13: Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation (NC)**

- Contact: David Bresnahan, Director of Resource Development and Marketing
- Address: City, State, Zip: 56 Warren Street, Suite 200
- Type of Organization: Non-Profit, Community Development Corporation
- Telephone: 617.989.1206
- Email: dbresnahan@nuestracdc.org
- Role and qualifications: NC is one of Boston's oldest CDCs with roots in the Roxbury Latino community. NC supports entrepreneurship and placemaking; at the new Bartlett Station Plaza, they will foster connections between art and commerce.

**33. Name of Organization 14: Roxbury Community College (RCC)**

- Contact: Marshall D. Hughes, Director Visual, Performing, and Media Arts
- Address: 1234 Columbus Avenue
- City, State, Zip: Roxbury, MA 02120
- Type of Organization: College

- Telephone: 617.541.5380
- Email: mhughes@rcc.edu
- Role and qualifications: RCC operates the Media Arts Center to engage, encourage, and educate the college and the community through fine, visual, and performing arts. RCC seeks to heighten creativity and foster critical thinking in the community.

**34. Name of Organization 15: Celebrity Series of Boston, Incorporated**

- Contact: Robin Baker, Senior Manager of Community Engagement
- Address: 20 Park Plaza, Suite 1032
- City, State, Zip: Boston, MA 02116
- Type of organization: Non-Profit, Cultural Organization
- Telephone: 617.482.2595
- Email: rb@celebrityseries.org
- Role and qualifications: One of the most extensive education/community service programs regionally, it will bring programming from master classes to interactive concerts for youth to organizations in the district.

**36. List other organizations that are collaborating on the initiative.** (Up to 1,000 characters)

Boston Housing Authority, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Roxbury Heritage State Park, Roxbury Memory Trail, Northeastern University, Berklee College of Music, School of the Museum of Fine Arts, The Bay State Banner, Kelley Chunn & Associates, Bennu Arts, Black Ministerial Alliance, Dudley Branch Boston Public Library, The Catalyst Fund, Boston Art Commission, Fenway Cultural District, Boston Literary District, Venture Cafe Boston, Frugal Bookstore, Catalyst Ventures, Gail Jackson Communications, Darryl’s Corner Bar & Kitchen, BAMfest, PressPass TV, Sasaki Associates, United Housing Management LLC, Afrodesiacity, Boston by Foot, OrigiNation, Timothy Smith Network.

**I. Cultural Assets Inventory**

The following inventory will help you identify cultural assets within your district. The MCC does not expect that a city or town will have all of the assets on the list. We recognize that each community has a unique mix of arts and cultural assets.

Quantify the relevant cultural asset, special event, business or historical asset located in your city or town’s proposed cultural district. If you have an asset that is not on the list please include them in the “Other Related” field at the bottom of the page.

Cultural Assets (See also see application map.)

# of Theaters: 5

# of Museums: 3

# of Movie Houses: 0

# of Cultural Centers: 3  
# of Art Galleries: 2  
# of Performance Spaces: 5

#### Special Events

# of Annual Festivals: 10  
# of Farmers Markets: 4  
# of Restaurant Weeks: 0  
# of Open Studios: 1  
# of Gallery Nights: 0  
# of Concerts: 36  
# of Walking Tours: 12

#### Historic Assets

# of buildings on the National Historic Register: 8  
# of historic districts of corridors: 7 (full and partcial)

#### Artist Production Spaces

# of live/work studios: 9 (estimated)  
# of work studios: 23 (estimated)  
# of rehearsal spaces: 2  
# of recording studios: 2  
# of film studios: 3

#### Businesses

# of creative economy businesses and incubators: 18

#### **Other**

36. If you have an asset that is not on the list above please describe it and quantify it here. Use this space to explain any asset listed. (Up to 1,000 characters.)

As documented more fully in the application map, the district includes other assets not on the list above. Specifically, the community has worked to identify public art, other historic buildings and landmarks, and churches. Work has also been done to identify restaurants and schools, both of which are assets to the community.

Note: The list of assets on the map and documented in the application have been identified by the community; additional assets will be identified and added over time.

#### **J. Public Infrastructure & Amenities Inventory**

The following checklist will help you identify public assets within your district. The MCC does not expect that any city or town will have all of the amenities in the proposed cultural district.

Check any relevant public infrastructure amenities located in your city or town’s cultural district from the list below.

**Public Space & Amenities**

- Public Gardens-Yes
- Public Plazas/Commons-Yes
- Public Art-Yes
- Waterway-No

**Public Buildings**

- Convention or Civic Center-Yes
- Library-Yes
- Tourism /Visitor Centers-No (anticipated in Nawn Factory)
- Public restrooms-Yes

List any additional, relevant public buildings here. (Up to 1,000 characters)

Bruce C. Bolling Building, Northeastern Crossing, Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center, Dewitt Community Center, Yawkey Boys & Girls Club, Roxbury Municipal Court, Boston Police Department Headquarters, Boston Police Department B-2, Roxbury Innovation Center.

**Transportation Amenities**

- Pedestrian path-No
- Bicycle path-Yes
- Public Transportation-Yes
- Parking-Yes

**Way finding**

- Special signage-Yes
- Self-guided walking tours-Yes

**Technology**

- Public Wi-Fi Zones-Yes

**K. Marketing**

The following checklist will help you identify various types of marketing efforts within your district. The MCC does not expect that any city or town will have all of the marketing tools listed.

37. Check any relevant collective marketing tools being utilized in your city or town's district.

List only what is being used to brand or market a cluster of organizations or the district as a whole, not the marketing efforts of individual organizations.

**Collective Marketing Checklist**

- a. Visioning exercises-No
- b. Marketing plan-No
- c. Branding plan-No
- d. Brochure-No
- e. Postcards-No
- f. Flyers-No
- g. Banners-No
- h. Map-No
- i. Website-No
- j. Social media-No
- k. Email blasts-Yes
- l. Newsletters or e-Newsletters-No
- m. Member of regional tourism entity-Yes, Main Streets
- n. Online cultural calendar-No
- o. Advertising – newspaper-No
- p. Advertising – magazine-No
- q. Advertising – radio-No
- r. Advertising – web-No
- s. Advertising – television-No
- t. Familiarization tours-Yes
- u. Visitor booths-No
- v. Cultural ambassadors-No

38. If you have a marketing tool that is not on the list above, please describe it here. (Up to 1,000 characters)

Collective marketing of the district is limited. Dudley Square Main Streets does some marketing of local businesses. Roxbury Cultural Network represents a group of arts and culture organizations and has done some marketing in the past. Discover Roxbury markets walking tours and annual open studios.

**L. Incentives: Planning & Financial Tools Checklist**

The following checklist will help you identify planning and financial tools in your district. The MCC does not expect that any city or town will have all of the tools on the list.

39. Check the relevant zoning, planning and/or financial tools that have been implemented in the proposed cultural district:

**Overlay Zoning/Special Designation**

- Cultural/Arts District Overlay Zoning-No
- Existing Zoning Overlays for Artist Live-Work Space-No
- Deed Restrictions for Artist Space-No
- Business Improvement District (BID)-No

**Planning**

- Arts/Cultural District Plan-Yes
- Artist Surveys-No
- Artist Database-Yes
- Artist Certification Process-Yes
- Economic Market Analysis-No
- Community Development Plan-Yes
- Historic Property Survey-Yes

**Financial Tools**

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)-No
- Empowerment Zone-No
- Property Tax Abatement-Yes
- Economic Opportunity Areas-Yes

40. If there is an incentive being utilized that is not listed please identify it here: (Up to 1,000 characters) NA

41. For the items you identified above, indicate if the incentive currently applies to, or is implemented in, the cultural district. (Up to 1,000 characters) NA

42. For the items you identified above, note start dates here: (Up to 1,000 characters) NA

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

The Massachusetts Cultural Districts Initiative has a rolling application process. There are no deadlines and the program accepts applications on an ongoing basis unless otherwise noted.

Cities and towns should assess their readiness to apply and allow ample time to complete the application as the process can take several months.

There are several stages to the designation process. Review all the requirements thoroughly.

- Creating and submitting a map of the proposed district with an asset key for MCC review
- Completing an online application
- Submitting supplemental documents by mail
- Coordinating and conducting a site visit

### **1. Creating and submitting a map of the proposed district with an asset key for MCC review**

A map of the proposed district must be submitted to the MCC prior to completing the online application and supplementary documents.

- Use the online application inventory of assets to define and locate the proposed district's cultural assets.
- Submit three copies of a map that outlines the preliminary boundaries of the proposed cultural district (Color maps are preferred). Include a key to the assets and define a scale of distance.
- The map should clearly mark the proposed boundaries of the district as well as the location of any cultural assets. Include cultural facilities, artistic spaces, cultural activities (in and out of doors such as festivals etc.), and creative businesses.
- Cultural assets located outside the boundaries of the proposed district can also be marked on the map for informational purposes. Cultural district partners located outside of the cultural should also be noted.

Maps can be created by a city or town's Redevelopment Authority, Planning Department, GIS department, or a web tool such as Google Maps.

Submit the map by mail to:  
Cultural Districts Initiative  
Massachusetts Cultural Council  
10 St. James Avenue, 3rd floor  
Boston, MA 02116

Following a review of the submitted map and accompanying materials, Cultural Districts Initiative Manager Meri Jenkins will be in contact to discuss the map, and any potential boundary issues.

Please note that in most prior cultural district designation applications the map boundaries have been revised based on the review process.

### **2. Completing an Online Application**

The online portion of the application is designed as a work plan. Use the narrative section as a tool to help refine district goals and objectives, and the inventory section to assess cultural assets.

### **3. Submitting Supplementary Application Documents**

All items are required for an application to be reviewed. Allow plenty of time to collect all the documents.

Mail or hand-deliver the following attachments to the MCC in the order listed:

REQUIRED - 2 identical sets

Print and use the following as a check list:

\_\_\_\_\_ Letter of Endorsement from Chief Elected Official

\_\_\_\_\_ Copy of Resolution from City Council / Board of Selectmen making a commitment to establish a state designated cultural district (See Sample Resolution.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Master Map: Please provide a map of the cultural district. One copy should be signed by the appropriate municipal official, denoting approval of the proposed boundaries. (Julie Burros to sign.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Evidence of Resources/Planning for the district using the Municipal Resources Sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_ Third party agreement (if relevant): If the municipality has made a third party arrangement for the oversight and management of the cultural district, there must be a written agreement, in line with municipal regulations and reviewed by the municipality's legal counsel, between the municipality and the organization that outlines each party's responsibilities.

\_\_\_\_\_ Audited accounts (if relevant): If the municipality has made a third party arrangement for the oversight and management of the cultural district, the managing organization must submit its most recent audited accounts.

\_\_\_\_\_ 501c3 verification (if relevant): If the organization with oversight and management of the cultural district is an IRS non-profit incorporated in Massachusetts, the letter confirming this status must be submitted.

\_\_\_\_\_ Official legal documentation regarding any special zoning overlays or ordinances that is relevant to the cultural district. (If relevant)

\_\_\_\_\_ Marketing materials, if relevant to the cultural district.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reports, feasibility studies, visioning results, and/or news articles that have been generated regarding a proposed district (if relevant).

Submit to:

Cultural Districts Initiative

Massachusetts Cultural Council

10 St. James Avenue, 3rd floor  
Boston, MA 02116

The Massachusetts Cultural Districts Initiative staff will review the narrative and supplementary documents of the application.

#### **4. Site Visit**

Once the application is complete, staff will be in contact to set up a site visit to tour the proposed cultural district with MCC staff and a site advisor to the Massachusetts Cultural Districts Initiative on a mutually agreed date.

Please note: site visits are not conducted during the winter months of January and February.

- The site visit has three distinct parts:
  - a meeting with the chief elected official and other municipal representatives
  - a walking tour of the proposed district
  - a meeting with the cultural district partners and stakeholders.
- The applicant and partners should be prepared to respond to questions about the proposed district during the meetings.
- The site visit agenda and attendees must be confirmed at least two weeks in advance of the site visit.
- The site advisor will write a site visit report based on the review criteria and his /her observations during the site visit that will be reviewed by the board of the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The report will be made available to the applicant after the board vote.

[Learn more about what's involved in the site visit. \(PDF\)](#)

#### **5. Review Criteria**

Applications will be assessed based on the following categories:

- I. Management Plan
- II. Cultural Assets
- III. Creative Programming
- IV. Public Infrastructure & Amenities
- V. Marketing plan
- VI. Goals and Evaluation Measures

#### **6. Final Decisions**

The MCC staff and site advisor will make recommendations to the MCC board. The MCC Board will make all final decisions regarding state designation.

Following the MCC board vote, the city or town will be notified of the outcome of the application by letter, usually within two weeks of a MCC board meeting.

If the application is successful, MCC staff will be in contact to arrange a designation ceremony and media announcements. If the application is unsuccessful, staff will discuss next steps in the process for reapplication.

## **7. Reporting Requirements**

An Annual Progress Report is required each year of the five year designated period. The report deadline is aligned with the MCC's fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

The impact of a cultural district is tangible and measurable. In the first year, all designated cultural districts must gather the following baseline data in the first year of designation, and yearly thereafter:

Visitors – Track number of visitors to the district

Building Occupancy – Changes in occupancy rates

You must also track data that measures the impact of the district and reflects the district's specific goals. Examples include, but are not limited to: aggregate sales tax in the district, number of full time jobs, number of artists, box office sales, consumer surveys, and so on.