
STRATEGIC PLAN

Roslindale Village Main Street
2023-2025

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2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Since 1985, Roslindale Village Main Street (RVMS) has served as the bedrock of a thriving commercial center, promoting Roslindale Village as an appealing destination and the dynamic center of our community. Our organization has done this by bringing together local volunteers, businesses, and public agencies to make Roslindale Village the dynamic, inclusive, and resilient center of our community it is today.

From our grassroots beginnings, RVMS has grown into an organization that in 2022:

- Employed three full-time and two part-time employees
- Produced 61 community events
- Held a weekly Farmers Market that produced \$91,084 in total SNAP and Coupon benefits spent
- Had \$303,000 in expenses, \$215,000 of which were paid to Roslindale-based employees or businesses

2022 marked the end of our prior strategic plan, so at the beginning of 2023, the RVMS Board set about creating a plan. The previous strategic plan was created by an external consultant and had a time horizon of five years. Before starting the planning process, we decided to produce the report internally and that the proper length should be two years, which aligns with our officers' terms.

As RVMS's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan expired, the Board Executive Committee made a plan to create a new strategic plan and planning process for 2023. A small strategic plan Action Team was created to take on the task of performing research, interviewing partners, businesses, community members, similar organizations, and other community stakeholders to be conducted mainly between January and May 2023; this process included:

- An extensive analysis of RVMS financials and past programming
- Deep-dive interviews with over 30 community stakeholders, including established Roslindale businesses, new businesses, elected officials, RVMS staff, City of Boston Staff, major area employers, neighboring Main Streets Districts, economic development professionals, and other nonprofits with missions and operating models both similar to and different from RVMS. The full list of interviewees is located in Appendix A.
- A community survey was sent to RVMS stakeholders via the organization's mailing list (distribution of over 7,000 addresses), as well as passed out to local RVMS businesses through several canvassing sessions. The survey was translated into Spanish to reach businesses, employees, and residents that may often go under- engaged by certain community outreach efforts. The survey was open from April 26, 2023, to June 12, 2023, and collected 147 responses.

RVMS is very grateful to all of our interviewees and those who responded to the survey for taking the time to help us improve and plan for the future.

This strategic planning process is meant to identify key assets and opportunities that RVMS should continue to develop, as well as assess risks or weaknesses the organization should address to fulfill its core mission. This process is thus not meant to reflect a full community census or an exhaustive analysis of stakeholder sentiment. The Action Team interviewed thought leaders and stakeholders broadly to assess new opportunities and learn from other organizations with high standards for service to their mission. This strategic planning process thus represented an opportunity for RVMS to learn new possibilities and ways of operating. The RVMS Board does not assume that this strategic planning process or the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan that resulted represents unanimity among its stakeholders.

We outline the five strategic priorities which emerged through this process:

- Build Core Organizational and Financial Capacity
- Infuse Inclusion and Community Engagement as a Core Operational Value
- Educate and Engage Stakeholders and Advocate for Positive Change to Advance Our Mission
- Strengthen RVMS's Programs and Services
- Serve as a Catalyst for Investment

For each strategic priority, we outline of several actions that can be completed to fulfill this priority. Additionally, there is a timeline that demonstrates the phases for each action. Moving forward, progress on the plan will be monitored by the RVMS Board quarterly, with course corrections made as necessary.

RVMS's Strategic Plan 2023–2025 is the road map for the critical years leading to the organization's forty-year anniversary in 2025. The plan is the result of months of research and discussion to identify areas of opportunity and correction. We look forward to enthusiastically stepping into our next chapter and setting the groundwork for the next 40 years of Roslindale Village Main Street.

**ROSLINDALE VILLAGE MAIN STREET
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

VINCENT FIEG <i>President of the Board</i>	ANTHONY GIORDANO <i>Vice President</i>	BRENDAN FOGARTY <i>Treasurer</i>	COURTNEY PONG <i>Clerk</i>
LAURA CHARLES	MELISSA CORDING	CARLA CORNEJO	AMY COUNTS
MAEVE DUGGAN	LORA ESTEY	JOSH FAIRCHILD	JOHN FREEMAN
SEYMORE GREEN	GENA MAVULI	KHEPRA MOSCILLO	STEPHANIE ORTIZ
ALLISON ROGERS	KIJANA ROSE	ANNA VANREMOORTEL <i>Executive Director</i>	



Photo top left

In the Winter of 2021-2022, RVMS commissioned several window paintings around the Square

Photo bottom left

In the summer of 2022, RVMS's Roslintrail committee completed 8 sidewalk dance murals in the areas surrounding the Village

Photo right

A photo of the RVMS Summer Farmers Market, a signature RVMS event



2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

OVERVIEW

In mid-2023, Roslindale Village Main Street stands as an organization with notable resources (three full time-staff, two part-time staff), a strong local reputation, and a strong financial position for considering its future. The organization closed calendar year 2022 with its largest budget to date: over \$303,000 in expenditures. This budget was neatly balanced to close out the year, further adding to resources. Recent strong growth in personnel and financial resources provides an opportunity to reflect on the organization's direction, its investments in programming, and its long-term role in the Roslindale Village community.



Based on Board priorities, ideas discussed with partner organizations, and feedback from stakeholders from over 30 interviews and over 140 surveys, this Strategic Plan identifies a range of actions and investments RVMS staff, Board Members, and volunteers will need to take to make the most of many opportunities for community success. Many recommendations will require the achievement of early-phase objectives in order to become feasible for RVMS. This Strategic Plan thus details a certain sequencing to its recommendations, which will require periodic reflection to consider if they are still feasible. As a small organization that relies heavily on the work of volunteers, it is important to maintain some measure of fluidity with implementation planning.

VISION AND GOALS FOR 2023-2025 RVMS STRATEGIC PLANNING

RVMS Board members endorsed a Vision Statement to guide this strategic planning process that captures the community that members and stakeholders want to see develop. This vision asserts RVMS's role as an active and independent player in local economic development, and it paints a picture of a community that is known not only for good shopping and dining, but also diversity, economic opportunity, and local ownership/operation.

VISION STATEMENT

RVMS is a place-based economic development nonprofit that promotes a dynamic, resilient, and inclusive Roslindale Village. RVMS catalyzes a locally-powered, economically sustainable 18-hour “live, work, play, grow” community built around the Main Streets catchment area.

Some definitions of key terms can be useful for developing our full set of goals and recommendations for action that will feature through the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan:

- **Economic Development:** A process by which a community increases its sum total of foot traffic, job growth, business entrepreneurship, and opportunities for spending money locally.
- **Dynamic:** A community that changes as new residents and visitors arrive and reassesses its own shortcomings constantly to seek new opportunities.
- **Resilient:** A community that resists being based on the tastes or preferences of any one type of resident or stakeholder. A local economy that is balanced across different industries and business models, refusing to be pigeonholed as a nightlife neighborhood, a bedroom community, or a retail corridor exclusively. This is a community that can survive economic downturns and maintain service to many different types of customers and entrepreneurs.
- **Inclusive:** A community that serves a diverse mix of residents and visitors that travel to it, and one that actively supports housing opportunities that allow long-standing as well as new residents to find adequate places to live.
- **Locally Powered:** An economy that is notable for locally-held ownership; One where owners hire locally and support other businesses and celebrate shared success.

GOALS TO PURSUE IN 2023-2025

RVMS can structure its goals along the four dimensions of its vision for the local community: Live, Work, Play, Grow. These four concepts are defined broadly in developing overall goal statements. For example, “Work” is understood as encompassing not only employment in Roslindale Village district, but also local entrepreneurship and frequent visiting by neighbors in nearby communities. Similarly, the goal around “Grow” includes the early learning and schooling of children along with objectives related to lifelong health and wellbeing.

The goals outlined here are aspirational and describe what we are working towards. They are made to challenge us and move us forward rather than measure the success of this individual strategic plan.

GOALS TO PURSUE IN 2023-2025

GOAL 1: LIVE

Roslindale is an attractive and accessible place to live for both long-time residents and those wishing to move to the area

- It contains a variety of housing options to meet diverse needs in terms of household size, budget, and lifestyle
- It maintains rich racial and social integration in its neighborhoods
- Its residential community is dynamic with new neighbors and longtime residents living side-by-side
- Visitors from other neighborhoods come often and feel that the Village is a welcoming community

GOAL 3: PLAY

The RVMS catchment area and the surrounding neighborhood deliver a diverse set of leisure activities that engage residents, local employees, and visitors in the business of enjoying life, making friends, and getting creative

- Free and commercial opportunities for play and relaxation should be available for both young and old
- Retail opportunities encourage visits to Roslindale Village as a leisure time activity
- A variety of dining opportunities serve families and individuals at all different hours of the day, in both formal and informal settings
- The neighborhood is not afraid of businesses open after 5pm, and nightlife is seen as a part of a dynamic area

GOAL 2: WORK

The RVMS catchment area and the surrounding neighborhood provides good jobs to a full spectrum of Roslindale residents and members of nearby communities

- Business entrepreneurship is alive and well, and the neighborhood is a destination to new or expanding businesses with exciting ideas
- Businesses from multiple industries do well here
- Businesses reinvest profits in their own staff and in the local economy, furthering economic justice and job growth. Many businesses are locally-owned
- Commercial real estate partners are active members of the community who see themselves as community-building partners

GOAL 4: GROW

The RVMS area and nearby resources support growing children and families, students at all stages, and lifelong learners looking to enrich themselves

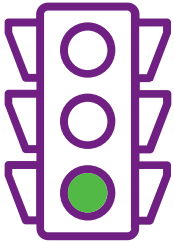
- There is adequate and affordable child care and early education in the RVMS area to support families wishing to live or work here. Affordable community services such as prenatal and postnatal care, as well as family medicine should also be locally accessible
- After-school, summer programming and there school-age programs for these children can be found locally
- Partnerships between community institutions such as ABCD, the library, and Community Center, local businesses and nearby artists are strong and offer many services to the public
- Build strong ties to higher education institutions in the neighborhood (New England College of Optometry and the Greater Roslindale Medical and Dental Center), and also pursue expanded investment by other “anchor institution” education groups, which could range from organizations like ABCD to community colleges like Roxbury and Mass Bay, or higher education
- There are ample opportunities for seniors to connect with enrichment opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCING GOALS

Extensive interviews and surveys with stakeholders, along with several board conversations on strategy, surfaced a variety of opportunities that the RVMS Board could consider in its selection of priorities. The simple graphic below groups high-level steps by the taxonomy used in interviews and surveys.

RVMS has traditionally been an organization animated by three recurring programs it has run: marketing and promotion of local businesses, management of a farmer's market, and ongoing technical assistance to businesses in the RVMS catchment area. This opportunities section focuses on programming, partnerships, or organizational changes that RVMS could likely execute upon over the period of 2023-2025. This list is not exhaustive, but meant to contextualize the possible field of activities the organization should consider in developing its "Way Forward." This section is heavily influenced by stakeholder input and ideas, as the process of interviewing and surveying businesses, residents, partners, elected officials, volunteers, and others unearthed wonderful ideas for new programs, reformed practices, and possible opportunities for community service.



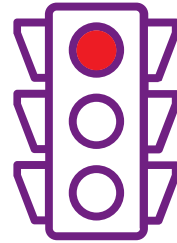
NEW THINGS RVMS COULD START DOING

- Attracting New Residents and Flagging Down "anchor employers"
- Advocating for specific types of businesses
- Influencing commercial real estate landscape
- Begin investing directly in business
- Advocate for specific public investments



THINGS RVMS IS ALREADY DOING, BUT COULD DO DIFFERENTLY

- Engaging existing residents and attracting visitors
- Reach out and connect with businesses and landlords more systematically
- Connect RVMS activities with fundraising
- Connect fundraising with economic development



THINGS RVMS COULD STOP DOING

- Relying on in-house talent for technical assistance
- Basing volunteer work on bottom-up project portfolios
- Relying on in-house talent for marketing and design
- Reduce number of discretionary events to focus on TA

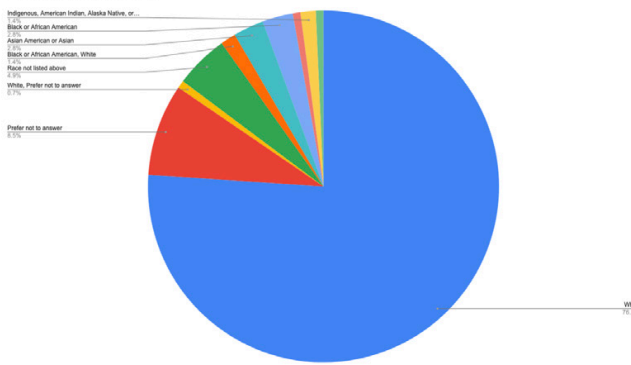
RVMS STAKEHOLDERS AND OUTREACH

As a longstanding nonprofit, RVMS is watched by many members of the community and receives helpful feedback and active support from many corners. Interviews and survey results, however, suggest that RVMS has great difficulty reaching non-white community members through its traditional communication channels.

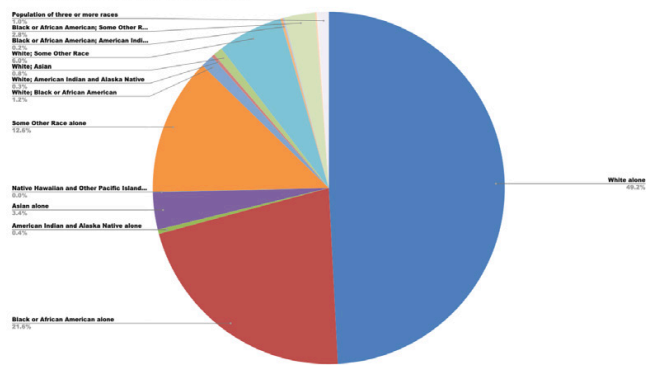
Below to the left are graphs with the self-reported race, age, and living situations of the respondents of our survey. To the right, are graphs with the corresponding race, age, and living situations of the neighborhood of Roslindale based on 2020 US Census data. For example, over 75% of respondents to the RVMS survey identified as white, while only 49% of residents do. Additionally, while over 85% of respondents identified as homeowners, only 54% of Roslindale housing units are owner-occupied.

For more information on the survey results, please see Appendix B. For more information on interviewees, please see Appendix A.

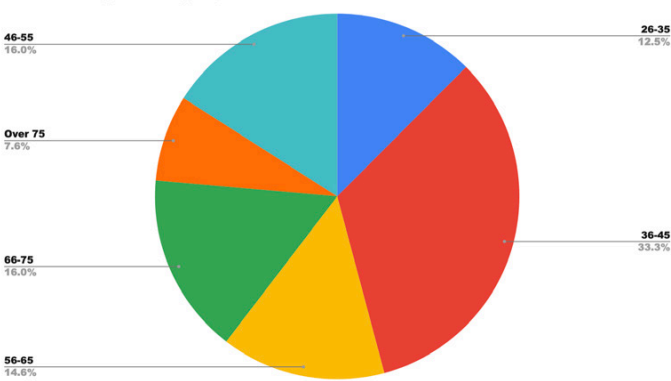
Overall Responses by Race



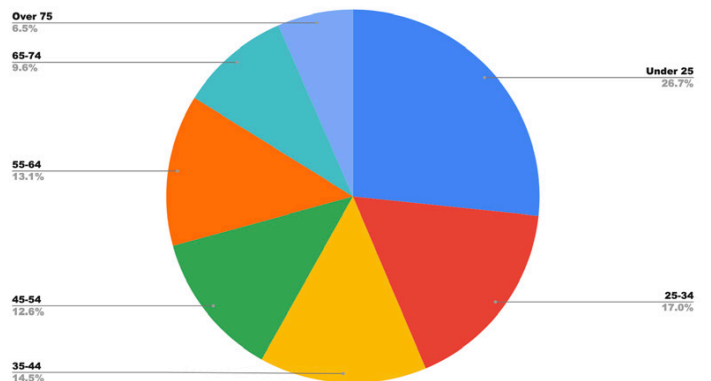
Overall Responses by Race - 2020 US Census



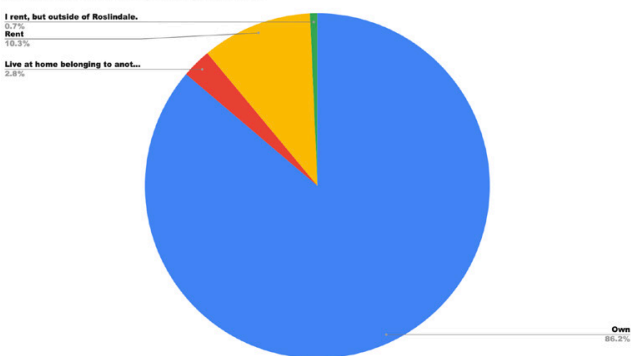
Overall Responses by Age



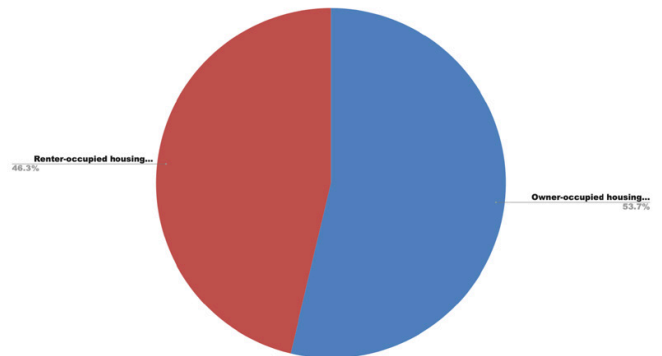
Overall Responses by Age - 2020 US Census



Overall Responses by Living Situation



Overall Responses by Living Situation - 2020 US Census



THE WAY FORWARD: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the period of 2023-2025, RVMS should strive to build itself into a modern, organizationally sound nonprofit with an operating budget of \$500,000, four full-time staff, and brand-new programming related to direct financial investment in the Village community and issue advocacy at both the local and state levels. In order to attain this level of growth and sustain these commitments to the community, RVMS will need to both invest funds from its savings into strategic organizational initiatives and stretch itself for new revenue sources and donor commitments.



**ROSLINDALE VILLAGE
MAIN STREET**

2023-2025 Strategic Plan Overview

BUILD CORE ORGANIZATIONAL AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Empower the board of directors to achieve key organizational goals and objectives
- Invest in digital resources
- Overhaul financial infrastructure and budgeting process of RVMS
- Develop a staff structure that can carry out core functions
- Grow fundraising operation to fund expansion to a total budget of \$500,000 in CY2025
- Evolve RVMS Volunteer Committee work to align with new structure

INFUSE INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS A CORE OPERATIONAL VALUE

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Make investments to gain a fuller understanding of our stakeholder ecosystem with a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens
- Create a more inclusive organization through leadership and volunteer recruitment and programming
- Engage residents of all ages and incomes
- Develop a vision for housing and transportation expansion that increase opportunities for lower-income and nonwhite renters to live close to and participate in civic and economic life in Roslindale Village

EDUCATE AND ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS AND ADVOCATE FOR POSITIVE CHANGE TO ADVANCE OUR MISSION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Expand our communication channels
- Continue to develop and circulate brand awareness and connect better with various demographics by using partnerships
- Develop a vision for city/state service and policy improvement
- Focus locally on long-running, major capital investments

STRENGTHEN RVMS' PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

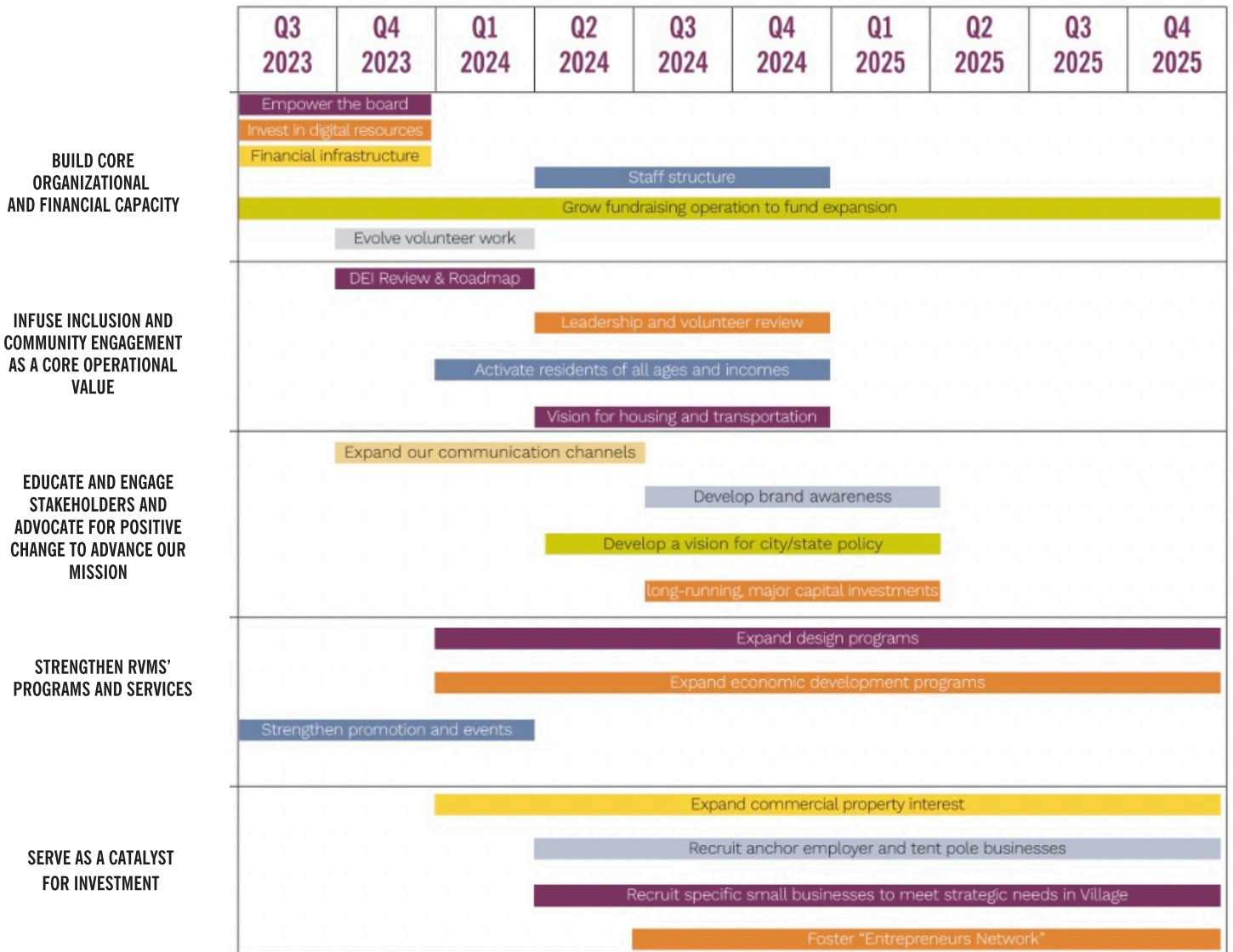
- Expand design programs to support the physical and visual assets of the catchment area
- Expand economic development programs to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators
- Strengthen promotion and events programs to continue to position Roslindale Village as the center of the community and hub of economic activity

SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR INVESTMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Explore opportunities for RVMS to become a landlord or other similar investor in local entrepreneurship
- Recruit anchor employer and tent pole businesses
- Recruit specific small businesses to meet strategic needs in the Village
- Foster an "Entrepreneurs Network"

STRATEGIC PLAN PHASING: SEQUENCING WAY FORWARD ACROSS 2023-2025



APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWS

Representatives from the following organizations were interviewed during the strategic planning process. Interviews normally lasted from 30-60 minutes and included several questions about the state of Roslindale Village and RVMS. RVMS is very grateful to all of our interviewees and those who responded to the survey for taking the time to help us improve and plan for the future.

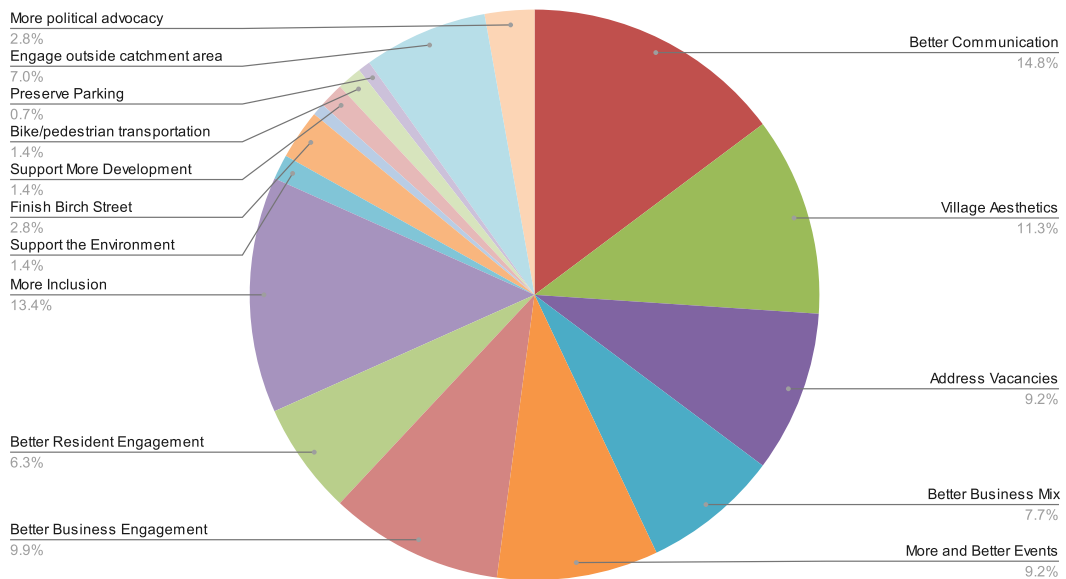
Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. Kathy Vo, Director	Alexandra's Beauty Alexandra Hidalgo, Owner	Arx Urban Benjamin Moll, Principal
Beacon Academy Panel of educators	Beacon Academy Panel of students	Birch St. House & Garden Elizabeth Swanson, Owner
City of Boston - City Councilor, District 5 Ricardo Arroyo	City of Boston - City Councilor, At-Large Ruthzee Louijeune	City of Boston - Boston Centers for Youth & Families Ann Siegel, Administrative Coordinator for BCYF Roslindale Community Center
City of Boston - Office of Economic Opportunity & Inclusion Emily Patrick, Senior Neighborhood Business Manager	Commonwealth of Massachusetts - State Representative, 14th Suffolk Robert Consalvo	Commonwealth of Massachusetts - State Senator, Suffolk, and Norfolk district Michael F. Rush
Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Office of Business Development Susan Whitaker, Regional Director – Greater Boston Margaret Laforest, Boston Regional Director	Distraction Brewing Lora Estey, Co-Owner	Greater Roslindale Medical Dental Center Courtney Urick, Executive Director Arielle Albert, Administrative Manager
Hyde Square Task Force Celina Miranda, Executive Director	Insight Realty Kris MacDonald, Managing Partner; Mike Maguire, President	JP Centre/South Main Streets Ginger Brown, Executive Director
Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation Gina Hudson, VP of Economic Development Programs	Longfellow Area Neighborhood Association Kathy Mccabe, President	Mi Finca Mexican Food & Pizzeria Oscar Bonilla, Owner
The Muncey Group Josh Muncey, Team Lead	Roslindale Congregational Church Reverend Wallace Averell Hurd IV, Pastor	Roslindale Village Main Street Alyssa MacNeill, Program Manager
Roslindale Village Main Street Nina Pralour, Bookkeeper & Former Board Member	Roslindale Village Main Street Steve Marcelin, Events Manager	Shaking Seafood Jenny Wang, Owner
Sophia's Grotto John Garufi, Co-Owner	The Substation Adam Rogoff, Co-Owner	Weesh Bake Shop Elyse Purbaugh, Owner
West Roxbury Main Streets Jacob S. Robinson, Executive Director	Joanne Rossman Joanne Rossman, Owner	

APPENDIX

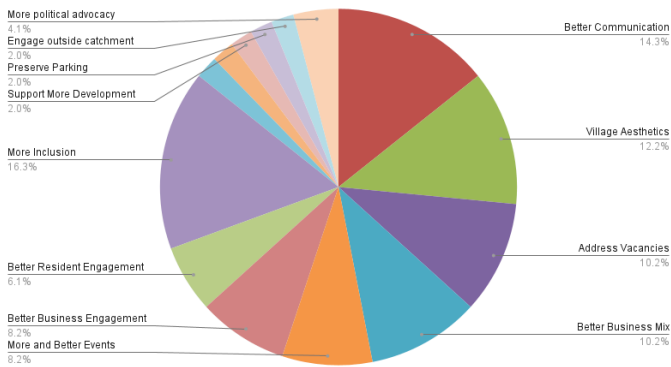
APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESULTS

What could RVMS do better?

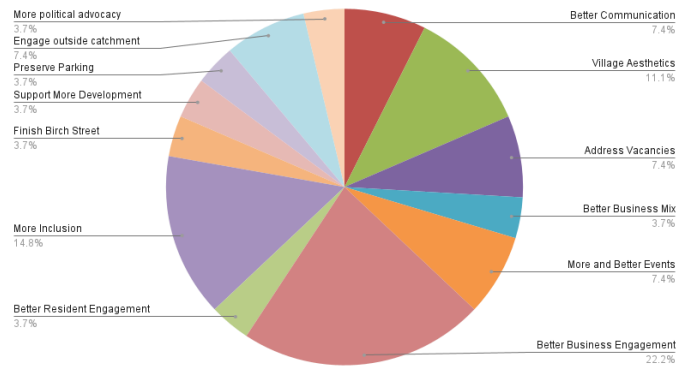
All Survey Results



Donors and Sponsors



Business Owners

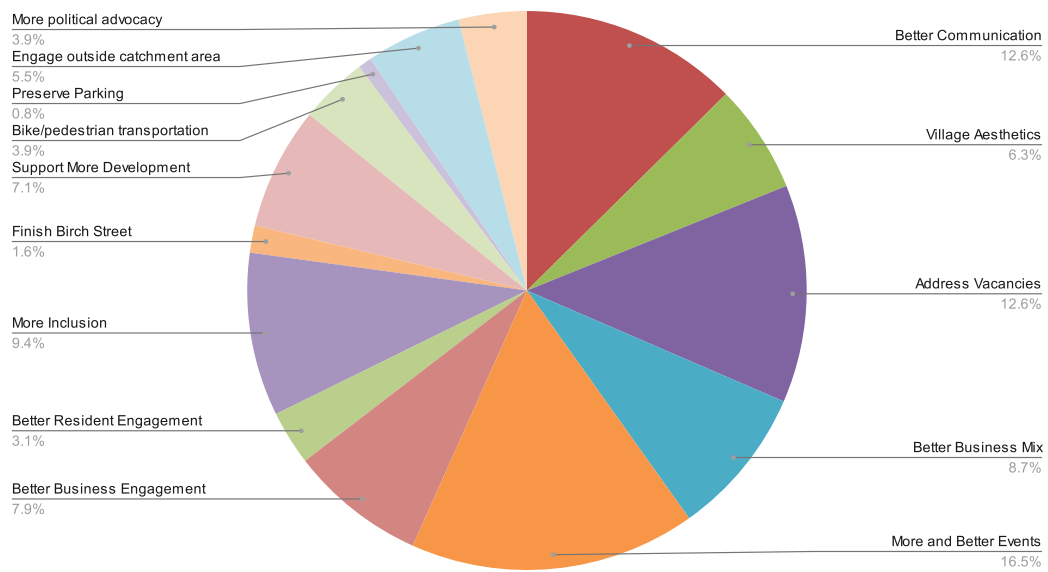


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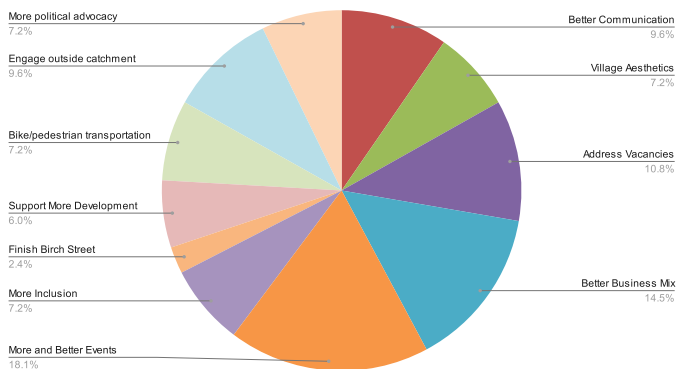
APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESULTS

What new things should RVMS start doing?

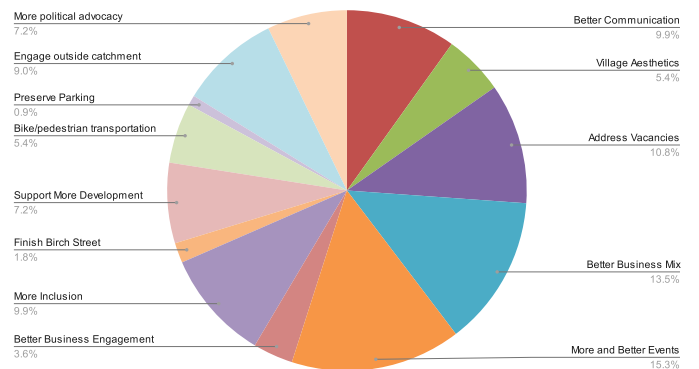
All Survey Results



Donors and Sponsors



Business Owners

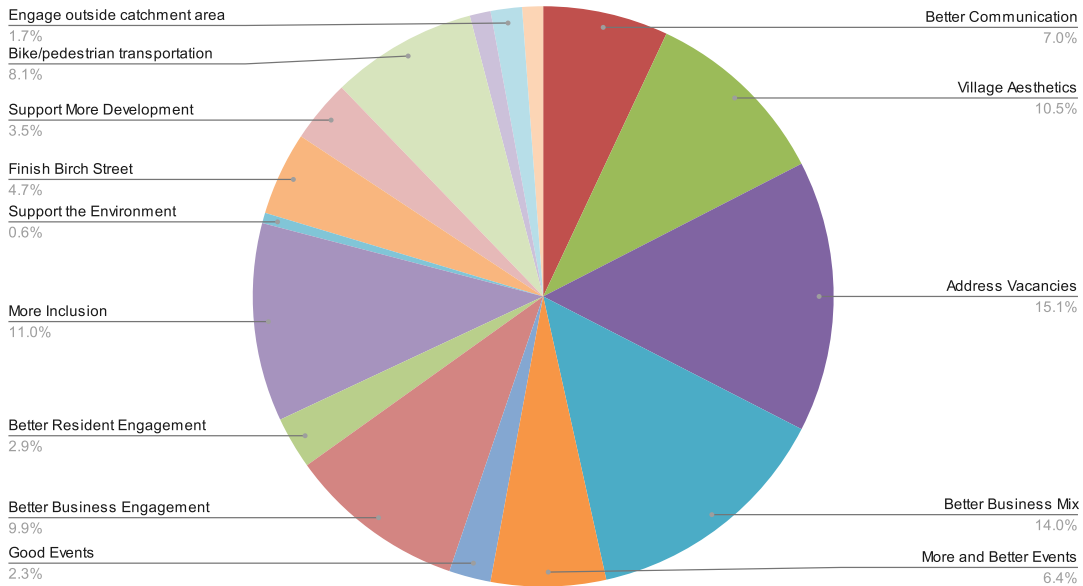


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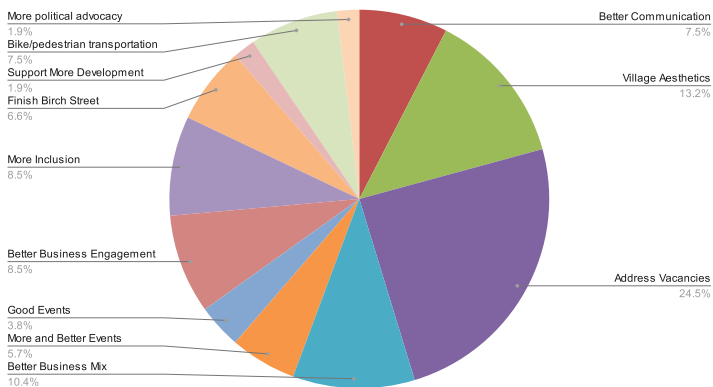
APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESULTS

What is the most important thing RVMS should focus on over the next three years?

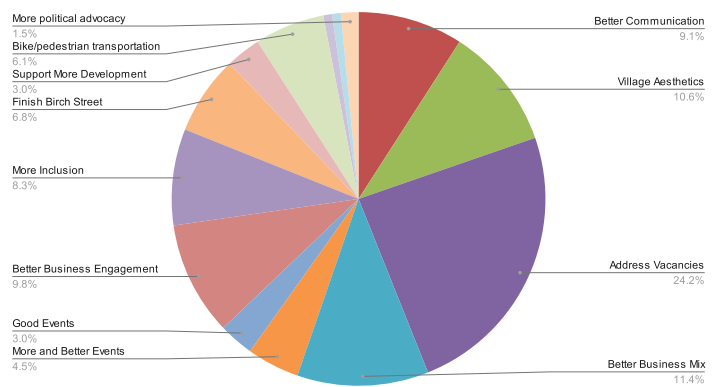
All Survey Results



Donors and Sponsors

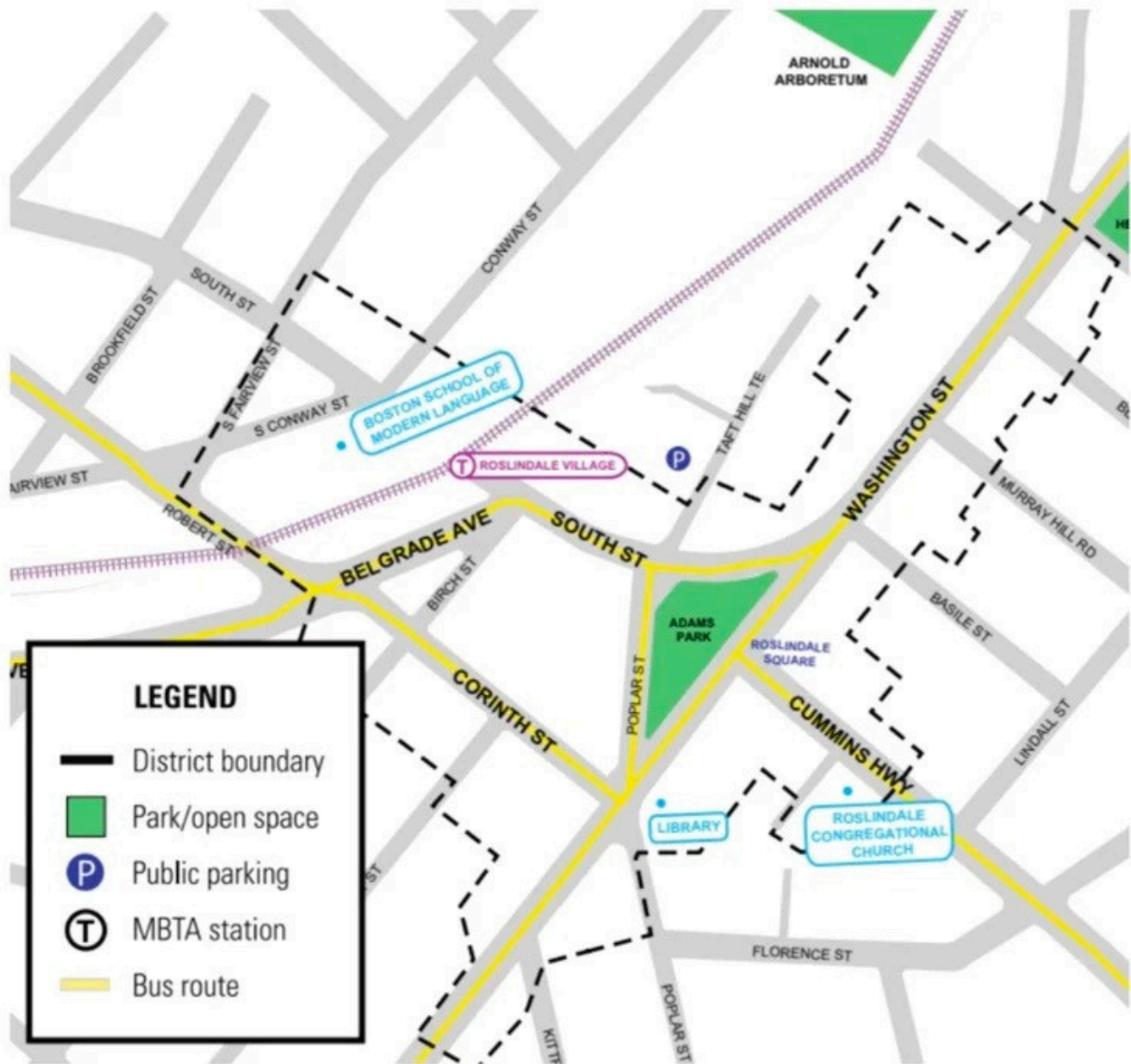


Business Owners



APPENDIX

APPENDIX C: RVMS CATCHMENT AREA



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25

**ROSLINDALE VILLAGE
MAIN STREET**

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