

# Recover Boston

*A proposal to end the open-air drug market, increase treatment options and reduce homelessness in Boston and beyond.*

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# DRAFT

## The Problem:

- **People with substance abuse disorders are struggling with recovery** while dealing with the pressures of combatting homelessness.
- Newmarket and the surrounding neighborhoods have become **increasingly unsafe** due to crime, violence, and human trafficking.
- The **quality of life** in these areas is severely diminished by the open-air drug market and homelessness issues.
- These issues have a **direct negative effect on the 1,300 elementary and middle school students, that go to school in this area.** Another 850 students will be negatively impacted when Roxbury Prep opens in Fall 2024.

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## The Problem (cont.)

- The **Long Island Shelter**, which provided countless crucial services in the area, has been closed since 2014 and is **not scheduled to open as a long-term treatment facility for at least 5 years.**
- The Redevelopment of the Shattuck Hospital campus will not be completed for 4-5 years.

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## Goals:

- To **eliminate “Mass & Cass”** as a **distinct activity center** that negatively impacts safety and public health.
- To move the populations into proper modalities that will move them into recovery programs.
- To identify a campus and create temporary housing with a variety of support for those currently on the street

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## The Solution:

- The creation of a **timely, temporary, and comprehensive program that reduces homelessness and puts those with substance abuse issues on a realistic path to recovery.**
- The consolidation of **mental health services, drug detox services, workforce development training, and housing options** that are safe, stable, and affordable.
- **The creation and enforcement of the city's and state's no-encampment policy and no open-air drug use laws.**
- The creation of **additional similar programs in other parts of Massachusetts, as part of a larger statewide effort to reduce drug addiction & homelessness in the Commonwealth.**

# Proposed Location: Widett Circle

*The temporary campus could be located at the 24 acre **Widett Circle** site*

*5-7 acres on either side of Foodmart Road are needed for this plan*



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# Why Widett Circle?

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- Its proximity to Atkinson Street makes it easily **accessible to those who are most vulnerable to substance abuse disorder** and are struggling with recovery.
- Owned by the state with no immediate plans for use.
- Proximity to **Boston Medical Center**.
- Proximity to **public transportation**.

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# The Campus: Pathways & Recovery

- House **200+ people** in temporary **pallet-style housing units** which can be **quickly constructed before winter**.
- **Establish 5 zones** with 30-50 pallet houses each. Each zone will support individuals in varying stages of recovery.
- Each zone will have ground rules.
- **Mental health** resources must be robust.
- The campus will include **medical, mental health, and addiction recovery facilities** as well as **life skills training** and **pathways to housing and jobs**.



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# Working Together:

## Support and coordination required from:

- The Mayor and the City of Boston
- The Governor and the Commonwealth of MA
- Boston City Council
- The MBTA
- Federal, state, and city financial resources.
- Private funders, businesses and local residents.
- Public and private partners

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## Who would run the Campus?

A **non-profit organization** needs to be established with a strong leader and board of directors to manage the campus.

Board should include members from the City, State, Community, public health and enforcement experts and others to be determined.

Major components of the Campus that will need to be managed:

- Housing at the Campus
- Healthcare (physical and mental health)
- Jobs training, life skills, & employment
- Permanent housing assistance
- Security

Additional services, including those currently offered by the Engagement Center, should be provided as well.

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# Campus Recovery Zones

## Zone 1: Starting the Journey

- First step to start working their way toward recovery

## Zone 2: Taking Control

- Traditional detox zone helping people through withdrawal

## Zone 3: Moving Forward

- Post detox recovery

## Zone 4: Transition to Sober Living

- Preparing residents for re-entry

## Zone 5: Living in Recovery

- Working toward a stable future

## Zone H: Pathway to Housing Stability

- For those who are homeless but do not have a drug addiction

# Public Safety

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## Commitment to:

- Laws against open-air drug use must be enforced in all neighborhoods, including Newmarket.
- A no-tent ordinance must be passed and enforced by the City.
- All appropriate jurisdictions must play a role in the enforcement of the law.
- Crimes such as drug dealing, violence, and human trafficking must be met with appropriate legal consequences.
- Section 35 procedures should be utilized as needed.
- The 100 bed facility near the Suffolk County House of Correction should be considered for diversion with leadership by public health professionals.

# Why Widett, why now?

## **A recovery campus at Widett Circle can accomplish many things:**

- Quickly create temporary housing for people on the street
- Tackle challenges of Mass and Cass
- Provide important data and information that will inform the transition to the Shattuck and Long Island
- Better use of limited resources to support people in housing rather than on the street
- Publicly owned site

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