



BACK BAY STAKEHOLDERS' REPORT

SPRING 2019



STEVEN COHEN TEAM
BOSTON REAL ESTATE

For all your real estate needs, call the best. Check out our testimonials on Zillow and Yelp, then call the **real estate economists of choice.**

CONTACT THE STEVEN COHEN TEAM

607 Boylston Street #500
Boston, MA 02116

1313 Washington Street #115A
Boston, MA 02118

617-861-3636

www.stevencohenteam.com

info@stevencohenteam.com

Subscribe to our Stakeholders' Reports at
stevencohenteam.com/publications



MARKET ANALYSIS

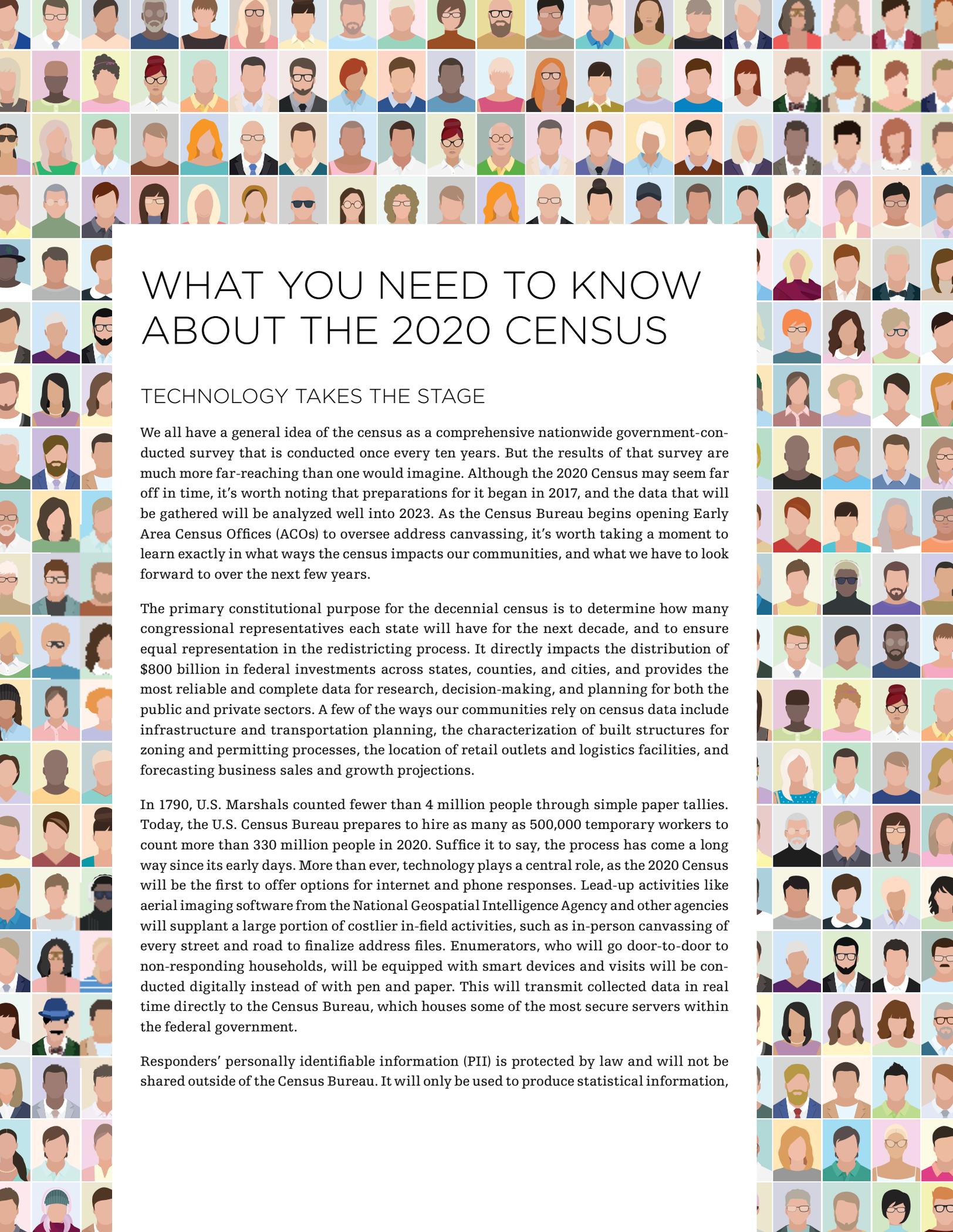
- What you Need to Know About the 2020 Census 2
- America’s Most Profitable Markets 4
- 30-year mortgages 5
- Housing Boston 2030 6
- Boston’s Top 10 Neighborhoods..... 8
- Focus on the Back Bay 10
- Top 20 Most Expensive Back Bay Sales for 2018 11
- Notable Back Bay Sale 14

COMMUNITY FEATURES

- Meet a Back Bay Building: The Vendome 16
- Big City Gardens 18
- Back Bay Social Calendar: Spring 2019..... 20

THE BACK BAY REAL ESTATE ECONOMISTS OF CHOICE

- The Steven Cohen Team..... 12
- Your Buyer Agent and You..... 22
- Market Movement Index 24
- Sunday Open House Guide..... 25



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE 2020 CENSUS

TECHNOLOGY TAKES THE STAGE

We all have a general idea of the census as a comprehensive nationwide government-conducted survey that is conducted once every ten years. But the results of that survey are much more far-reaching than one would imagine. Although the 2020 Census may seem far off in time, it's worth noting that preparations for it began in 2017, and the data that will be gathered will be analyzed well into 2023. As the Census Bureau begins opening Early Area Census Offices (ACOs) to oversee address canvassing, it's worth taking a moment to learn exactly in what ways the census impacts our communities, and what we have to look forward to over the next few years.

The primary constitutional purpose for the decennial census is to determine how many congressional representatives each state will have for the next decade, and to ensure equal representation in the redistricting process. It directly impacts the distribution of \$800 billion in federal investments across states, counties, and cities, and provides the most reliable and complete data for research, decision-making, and planning for both the public and private sectors. A few of the ways our communities rely on census data include infrastructure and transportation planning, the characterization of built structures for zoning and permitting processes, the location of retail outlets and logistics facilities, and forecasting business sales and growth projections.

In 1790, U.S. Marshals counted fewer than 4 million people through simple paper tallies. Today, the U.S. Census Bureau prepares to hire as many as 500,000 temporary workers to count more than 330 million people in 2020. Suffice it to say, the process has come a long way since its early days. More than ever, technology plays a central role, as the 2020 Census will be the first to offer options for internet and phone responses. Lead-up activities like aerial imaging software from the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency and other agencies will supplant a large portion of costlier in-field activities, such as in-person canvassing of every street and road to finalize address files. Enumerators, who will go door-to-door to non-responding households, will be equipped with smart devices and visits will be conducted digitally instead of with pen and paper. This will transmit collected data in real time directly to the Census Bureau, which houses some of the most secure servers within the federal government.

Responders' personally identifiable information (PII) is protected by law and will not be shared outside of the Census Bureau. It will only be used to produce statistical information,

and no other government agency or court will see or use it. In addition, the complete census questionnaire will be available in 12 languages other than English, and language guides and glossaries will be available in 50 non-English languages, plus Braille.

2020 CENSUS OPERATIONS TIMELINE

January–February 2019	Bureau begins opening 40 Early Area Census Offices (ACOs) to oversee address canvassing.
Spring 2019	Bureau begins recruiting in-field address canvassers.
April 2019–January 2020	Bureau works with local governments to include addresses of new housing stock expected to be closed to the elements by Census Day.
June–August 2019	Remaining ACOs open.
August–October 2019	Bureau conducts local in-field canvassing, covering about 30% of addresses, primarily in high-growth and less-stable areas.
November 2019	Bureau begins the process of hiring 500,000 enumerators and other field staff for peak census operations. Census communications campaign begins.
March 2020	Peak operations in cities begin, self-response starts.
February–April 2020	Census staff contact (February) and then enumerate (April) group facilities, such as college dorms, skilled nursing homes, and prisons. An effort is made to enumerate persons in Targeted Non-sheltered Outdoor Locations (TNSOLs). Starting in late 2019, Census Bureau staff will work with local officials to identify these locations.
May 2020–July 2020	Nonresponse Follow-Up (NRFU). Bureau conducts in-person visits (“door-to-door knocking”), and uses administrative records and other methods to fill in gaps from households that don’t self-respond.
November 2020	Bureau completes processing of census data.
December 2020	Bureau reports state population totals and resulting congressional appointment to the President by December 31.
February–March 2021	States receive detailed population counts, by voting age, race, and ethnicity, for redistricting purposes.
Spring 2021	Bureau begins releasing detailed population and characteristics data for all government units, including cities, on a flow basis.
June 2021– June 2023	Bureau will provide an opportunity for local governments to challenge the accuracy of their final 2020 Census counts. Revised census counts are not used for congressional reapportionment or redistricting.

For more information, contact one of the Census Bureau’s Northeastern regional offices:

NEW YORK REGIONAL OFFICE — 32 Old Slip, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10005 • 212-584-4300 or 1-800-991-2520 • FAX: 212-584-3402
• TDD: 212-478-4793 • EMAIL: NewYork.Regional.Office@census.gov

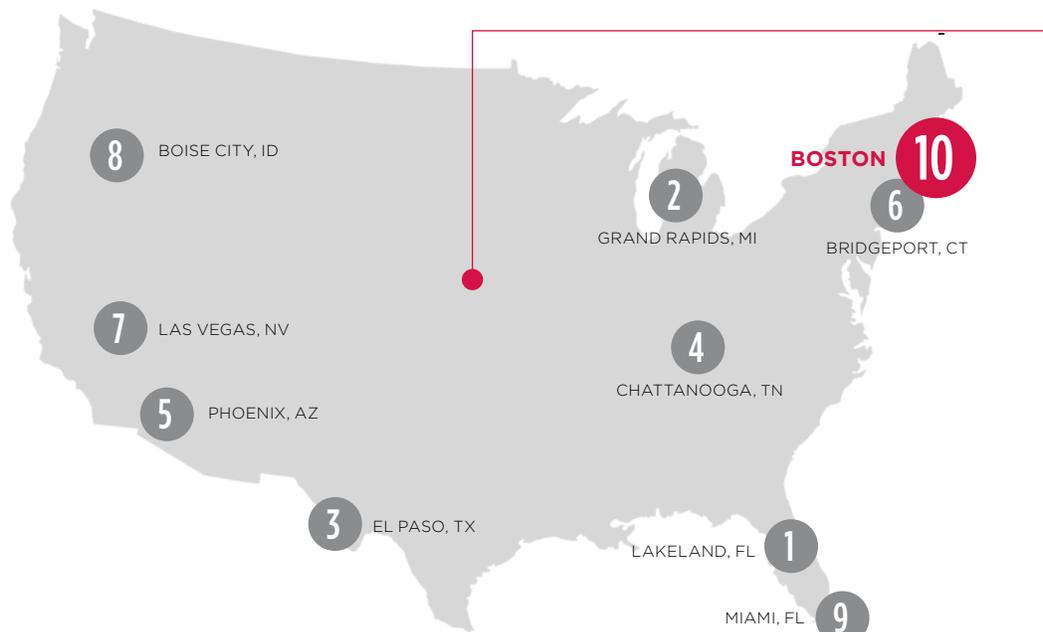
PHILADELPHIA REGIONAL OFFICE — 100 South Independence Mall West, Suite 410, Philadelphia, PA 19106-2320 • 215-717-1800 or 1-800-262-4236
• FAX: 215-717-0755 • TDD: 215-717-0894 • EMAIL: Philadelphia.Regional.Office@census.gov

AMERICA'S MOST ROBUST MARKETS

BOSTON ONE OF TOP 10 HOUSING MARKETS POISED TO RULE 2019

Nationally, annual price spikes are waning, more properties are hitting the market, and there are fewer buyers to compete with. In short, the real estate market is slowing down. However, according to Realtor.com, there are still housing markets expected to outperform the national average in 2019. Based on the number of sales of existing homes and their prices, the amount of new home construction, local economies, population trends, unemployment rates, median household incomes, and a host of other factors, this is the list of the top 10 superstar metropolitan areas where both the number of sales and prices are expected to jump, bucking the national trend. It's not surprising to see Boston on that list. The city limits construction in several of its downtown historic districts, so the limited supply of homes for sale keeps the market hot and the prices up. In addition, more millennials have been drawn to Boston over the past few years, attracted not only to standby industries like education and health care, but also big growth in the tech sector.

TOP 10 HOUSING MARKETS

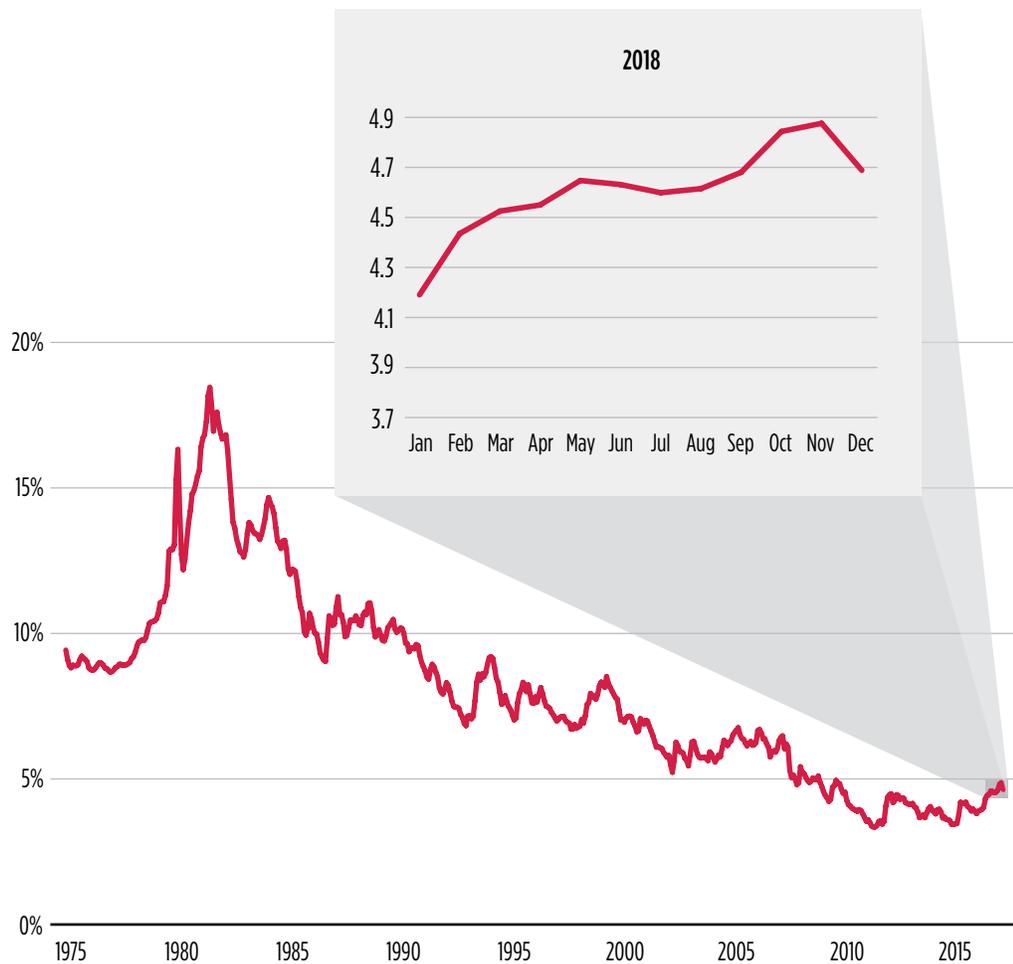


- 1. Lakeland, FL**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$224,950**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **5%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **7.4%**
- 2. Grand Rapids, MI**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$278,750**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **4%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **8.2%**
- 3. El Paso, TX**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$175,050**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **7.9%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **2.5%**
- 4. Chattanooga, TN**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$269,950**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **5.2%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **4.3%**
- 5. Phoenix, AZ**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$329,975**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **3.6%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **5.6%**
- 6. Bridgeport, CT**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$749,050**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **5%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **4%**
- 7. Las Vegas, NV**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$320,049**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **0.9%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **7.9%**
- 8. Boise City, ID**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$330,045**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **1.5%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **6.9%**
- 9. Miami, FL**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$385,050**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **3.3%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **5%**
- 10. BOSTON, MA**
 MEDIAN LIST PRICE: **\$500,675**
 PREDICTED SALES GROWTH: **3.6%**
 PREDICTED PRICE GROWTH: **4.6%**

MORTGAGE RATES

While interest rates climbed steadily throughout the past year, volatility in the stock market and tame inflation reports prompted the Fed to take a breather from its campaign to raise rates to more normal levels. According to Fed chairman Jerome Powell, the goal was to gradually move to a place where interest rates would be neutral, meaning they would neither fuel the economy, nor inhibit it. However, when the central bank boosted rates by another quarter point in December, it also cut the number of expected rate hikes for 2019 from three to two. In addition, the Fed has made it clear it would take investors concerns to heart and be flexible and patient when charting the course of interest rates.

30-Year Fixed-Rate Mortgages 1975 to 2018



HOUSING 2030

WHAT'S COMING TO BOSTON OVER THE NEXT DECADE

High-paying jobs and the increasing draw of city living mean that Boston has remained absurdly popular. As a result, the city has grown even faster than expected. Boston will have 759,727 residents by 2030, up from a 2030 estimate of 709,400 four years ago. That's the equivalent of adding a Somerville to Boston in a little over a decade. Mayor Marty Walsh's 2014 housing plan called for 53,000 new units by 2030, a pace the city is actually on track to beat, but that number is now obsolete. Even the largest building boom Boston has experienced in generations, with 18,000 units of housing opened since 2011, isn't enough to keep pace with the demand to live in the city.

In response, the Walsh administration released a Housing Boston 2030 Update, increasing its target by 30% to 69,000 units by 2030. There will also be added emphasis on creating affordable housing and protecting lower-income renters at risk of eviction, as 22% of the homes will be set at rents affordable to lower- and middle-income residents. According to The Boston Globe, officials estimate that subsidizing that amount of affordable housing will cost the city \$50 million annually, along with state and federal money. It will also require funding for a new program to help buy 1,000 existing apartments and set them at affordable rents. However, as Boston is running low on sites for major complexes, particularly ones in or close to its downtown core, the plan will put most of the new housing in the outer neighborhoods, where land costs are lower. The focus would be on a few areas—from Suffolk Downs in East Boston, to the Readville section of Hyde Park—targeted for major development in the city's Imagine Boston 2030 plan.

The September 2018 Housing Boston 2030 Update focused on three major housing affordability categories:

1 PRODUCTION OF NEW HOUSING

- ▶ **Build 69,000 new housing units** across a range of incomes by 2030.
- ▶ **Redirect development pressures** away from core neighborhoods and toward opportunities for growth.
- ▶ **Create 15,820 income-restricted long term affordable homes**, bringing the total number of income restricted homes in Boston to nearly 70,000.

2 PRESERVATION OF EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- ▶ **Retrain Boston's existing income-restricted/affordable housing**, preserving 97% of all affordable housing units and 84% of the 4,000 units in privately-owned affordable units at highest risk of being lost.
- ▶ **Rebuild Boston's public housing** by re-developing and renovating up to 4,500 BHD units with both public and private financing.

3 PROTECTION OF THOSE HOUSEHOLDS MOST AT RISK

- ▶ **Purchase 1,000 rental housing units** from the speculative market and income-restrict them via an expanded Acquisition Opportunity Program, to be counted as part of the 15,820 affordable unit production plan.
- ▶ **Prevent evictions** and promote housing stability.
- ▶ **Strengthen communities** through homeownership by increasing the resources the City and others provide to first time homebuyers, offering additional pathways for moderate and middle income families to become homeowners in Boston.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

It's important to note that the city's goal alone won't be enough to alleviate the crisis, as the housing market is regional. If prices are going to ease, more housing will be needed in suburbs that build at a much slower rate than Boston. This is where the Metro Mayors Coalition (MMC) comes in. It is a group of 15 Boston-area communities — Arlington, Boston, Braintree, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Newton, Quincy, Revere, Somerville, and Winthrop — dedicated to exchanging information and creating solutions for common problems, including housing.

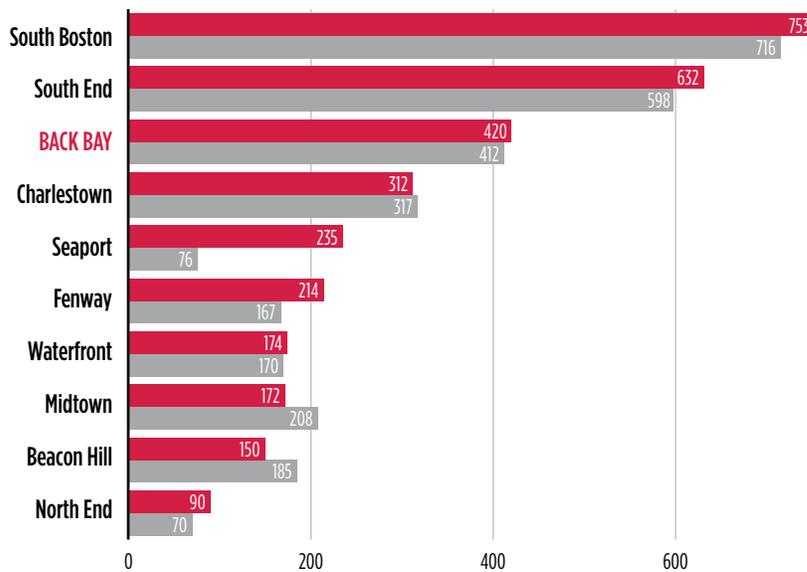
The 15 cities and towns that make up the coalition have added nearly 110,000 residents and 148,000 new jobs since 2010, but they have permitted only 32,500 new housing units. Meanwhile, the region is on track to add 235,000 new jobs from 2015 to 2030. Combined with the imminent retirement of the area's Baby Boomers, this robust economic growth will attract hundreds of new workers to fill the available jobs. The MMC has set its own goal, as it says that eastern Massachusetts will need 435,000 new units by 2040.

BOSTON'S TOP 10 NEIGHBORHOODS

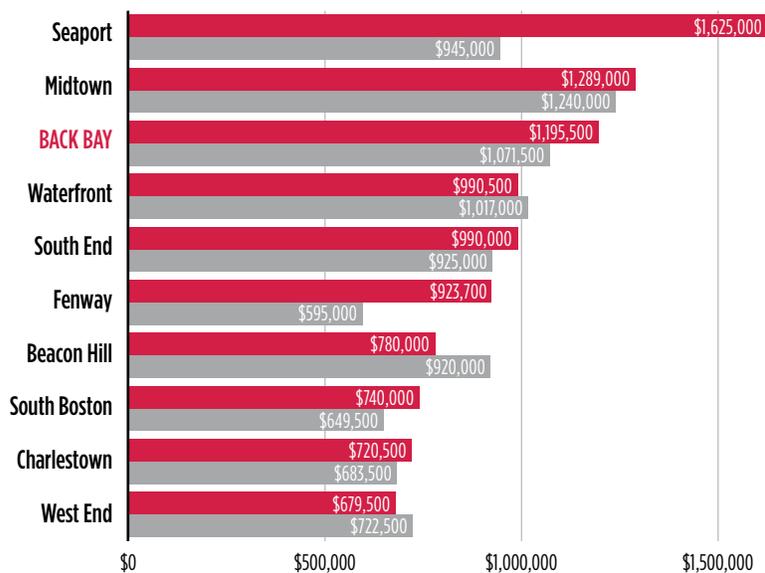
BY NUMBER OF SALES AND MEDIAN SALES PRICE

Back Bay remains one of Boston's top-performing neighborhoods. Even though the number of sales rose by only 1% from 2017 to 2018, the area's median sale price increased by 11%.

Top 10 Boston Neighborhoods by Number of Sales
2018 vs. 2017



Top 10 Boston Neighborhoods by Median Sales Price
2018 vs. 2017

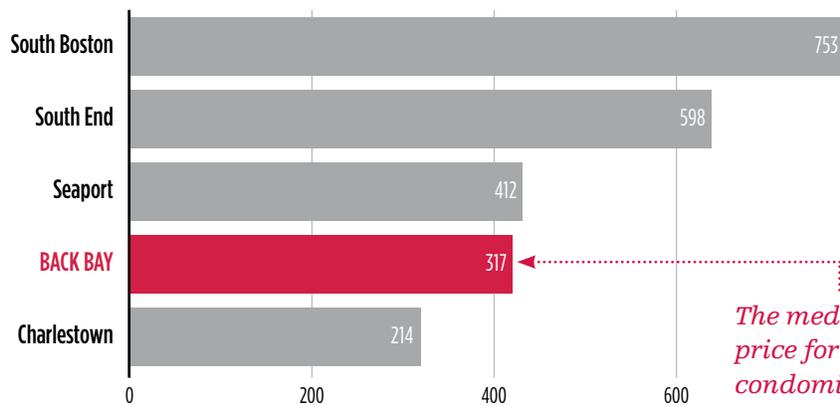


2018
2017



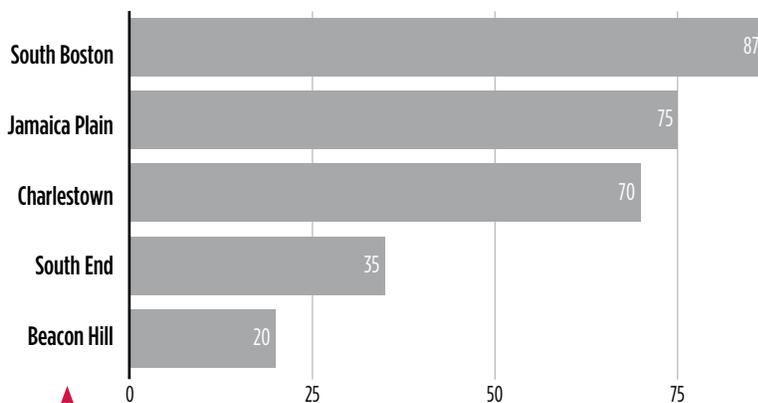
HOME SALES BY HOUSING TYPE

Top 5 Neighborhoods for Condominiums, 2018



*The median sale price for a Back Bay condominium was \$1,195,500, an **11.2% increase** year-over-year.*

Top 5 Neighborhoods for Single Family Homes, 2018

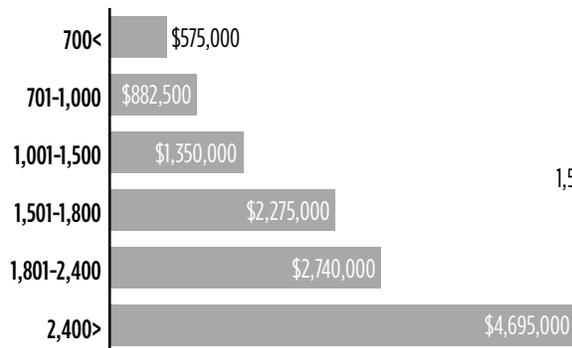


*Back Bay just missed the list. Six single family homes sold in the neighborhood this past year at a median sale price of **\$4,850,000.***

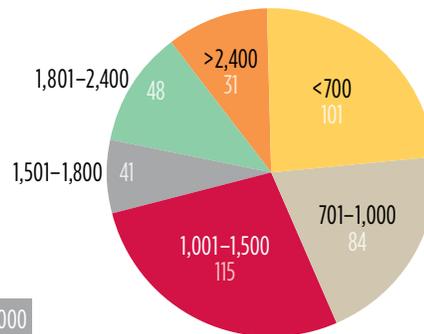
FOCUS ON BACK BAY

Number of sales and median sale prices in Back Bay increased across the board year over year. The median sale price for the biggest seller, two-bedroom homes, increased by 5% from 2017 to 2018. Even one-bedroom homes, which decreased in number of sales by 11%, rose by 5% in median sale price.

Back Bay Median Selling Price by Square Footage, 2018



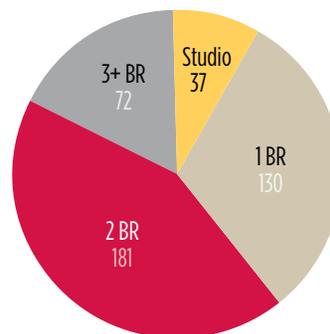
Back Bay Sales by Square Footage, 2018



Back Bay Median Selling Price by Number of Bedrooms, 2018



Back Bay Number of Sales by Number of Bedrooms, 2018



TOP 20 MOST EXPENSIVE BACK BAY SALES IN 2018

	ADDRESS	SALE PRICE	PRICE/SF	TYPE
1	4 Marlborough Street LL/PH	\$12,550,000	\$1,547	CONDOMINIUM
2	305 Commonwealth Avenue #1/4	\$10,900,000	\$2,706	CONDOMINIUM
3	Zero Marlborough @ 6 Arlington Street PH	\$10,400,000	\$2,172	CONDOMINIUM
4	157-159 Newbury Street #1	\$10,000,000	\$2,105	CONDOMINIUM
5	344 Beacon Street	\$9,235,000	\$1,423	SINGLE FAMILY
6	Belvedere @ 100 Belvidere Street #11D	\$8,750,000	\$2,860	CONDOMINIUM
7	Trinity Place @ 1 Huntington Avenue PH1801	\$8,000,000	\$1,861	CONDOMINIUM
8	Four Seasons @ 220 Boylston Street #1111	\$7,945,000	\$2,613	CONDOMINIUM
9	The Carlton House @ 2 Commonwealth Avenue #16-F	\$7,682,000	\$3,022	CONDOMINIUM
10	100 Beacon Street #7	\$6,800,000	\$1,643	CONDOMINIUM
11	Heritage @ 300 Boylston Street	\$6,500,000	\$2,833	CONDOMINIUM
12	381 Beacon Street	\$6,175,000	\$1,270	SINGLE FAMILY
13	90 Marlborough street #7	\$6,150,000	\$2,227	CONDOMINIUM
14	Four Seasons @ 220 Boylston Street #1206/08	\$5,575,000	\$2,040	CONDOMINIUM
15	Belvedere @ 100 Belvidere Street #10A	\$5,500,000	\$2,384	CONDOMINIUM
16	16 Marlborough Street	\$5,500,000	\$886	MULTI FAMILY
17	Four Seasons @ 220 Boylston Street #1214/16	\$5,400,000	\$1,979	CONDOMINIUM
18	169 Marlborough Street #3	\$5,395,000	\$2,061	CONDOMINIUM
19	The Carlton House @ 2 Commonwealth Avenue #11-H	\$5,350,000	\$2,126	CONDOMINIUM
20	169 Marlborough Street #1	\$5,210,000	\$1,899	CONDOMINIUM

Average price per square foot among the 20 most expensive Back Bay sales for Q2 of 2018: **\$2,083**



MEET THE REAL ESTATE ECONOMISTS OF CHOICE

The Steven Cohen Team provides expert insight, guidance and representation for discerning residential property buyers and sellers in Boston's Back Bay and adjacent neighborhoods. Our unmatched experience in the local real estate market, long-term approach to customer service, and coordinated teamwork make us an industry leader in Back Bay and beyond.

The team stands ready to answer your real estate questions!



LISTING AGENT AND TEAM LEADER



Steven
Cohen

LISTING AGENT



Zach
Jay

BUYER SPECIALISTS



Barrie
Stavis



Nicole
Spencer

RENTAL SPECIALISTS



Josh
Leibowitz



Lisa
Cavicchioli



Michael
O'Driscoll

OPERATIONS MANAGER



Tim
McCarthy



Margaret
Marder

MARKETING & COMMUNICATION



Bruce
Withey



Anastasia
Yefremova



Ronnie
Lee

THE STEVEN COHEN TEAM IN 2018

A YEAR IN REVIEW

#1 among Keller Williams associates in the Boston-Metro market center*

#42 among 186,000+ Keller Williams Realty International associates worldwide*

\$160+ million in sales volume in 2018*

#1 Team by Transaction Volume in Massachusetts, as advertised in the Wall Street Journal and America's Best Real Estate Agents**

#141 Team by Transaction Volume nationwide in The Thousand, as advertised in the Wall Street Journal and America's Best Real Estate Agents**

Top 5% Producer by Sales Volume for agents in the Boston area***

*Source: Keller Williams Realty

**Source: Real Trends

***Source: Best of HomeLight 2018

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

"...embodied the *utmost* in *professionalism, responsiveness, and attention to detail...*"

"...made these first-time home buyers seem *like experts...*"

"...*absolutely recommend* the folks at the Steven Cohen Team..."

"...*transparent, supportive, and made the process seamless from start to finish...*"

"...*simply put, they were the best...*"

"...*known for their integrity, their commitment and their ability to work collaboratively with their clients and with other brokers...*"

"...*an incredible experience...*"

NOTABLE STEVEN COHEN TEAM BACK BAY SALE

392 MARLBOROUGH STREET #3

Direct elevator access from the entrance or the parking space to this beautiful 3 bedroom penthouse duplex in the historic Back Bay. A gracious, light-filled entry leads to a wonderful open kitchen/family room perfect for entertaining. The chef's kitchen features granite countertops with a breakfast island and state-of-the-art stainless steel appliances including 6-burner DCS gas range, Sub Zero refrigerator, Bosch dishwasher, and a wine cooler. There is a large dining area in the bay window, lovely custom built-ins, a sitting area, and a gas fireplace complete the room. The living room faces peaceful, tree-lined Marlborough Street and includes a large bay window, a gas fireplace, and an adjacent office with built-ins. A sweeping staircase leads to the bedroom level featuring 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, laundry, and a wet bar. The spacious master suite has Venetian plaster tray ceiling, his/her closets, and en suite marble bath. Brazilian cherry floors and generous storage throughout. A full staircase up to huge mahogany roof deck offering panoramic skyline views. Includes deeded parking.

SALE PRICE: \$3,500,000

SIZE: 2,590 sq. ft.

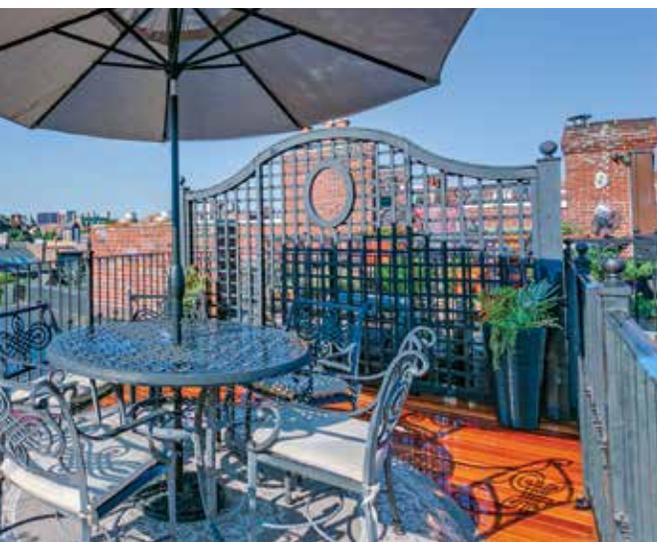
BEDROOMS: 3

PARKING: 1 Deeded

BATHROOMS: 2 full, 1 half

BUILT: 1899





MEET A BACK BAY BUILDING

THE STORIED PAST OF THE VENDOME AT 160 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE

The original Hotel Vendome at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Dartmouth Street was designed by architect William G. Peterson for wealthy insurance agent and real estate investor Charles Austin Wood and his wife, Caroline Elizabeth (Wilson) Wood. Built as a “family hotel” meant primarily to serve permanent residents rather than transient guests, it was completed in 1872. The Hotel Vendome featured an Italian marble facade, a dining room, billiard and reception rooms, an office, and a conservatory filled with birds and flowers. The striking interior was accented by white and colored marbles, and walnut finished halls and stairways. The overall effect was tasteful, with a harmonious color scheme and elegant design evident in all parts of the structure. Residents were offered all the conveniences of hotel life at the time, including speaking tubes, annunciators, and an elevator.

Lumber merchant and real estate investor Charles Whitney and his wife, Sarah Kimball (Bradley) Whitney purchased the Hotel Vendome in 1879 and expanded the original building with a 156 foot addition to the west on Commonwealth Avenue. The new structure was designed by Ober and Rand and was completed in 1882. Architect J. Foster Ober outfitted the addition with a Tuckahoe marble facade, central steam, two passenger elevators, elegant, grand parlors, an exquisitely finished rotunda, and even a special entrance for ladies on Dartmouth Street. There were five dining rooms, and a great dining hall with seats for 250 people decorated with fresco-work and a beautiful frieze, richly adorned with mirrors, carved mahogany, and cherry wood. After the expansion, the hotel served both transient guests and permanent residents. The first commercial installation of electric lights in the city was made here.



For decades, the Vendome was Boston's premiere hotel. It hosted most of the notables who visited the city, including President Ulysses S. Grant and renowned French stage actress Sarah Bernhardt. The Vendome stood as the finest evocation of the Second Empire in Boston, stylistically reminiscent of French Renaissance architecture, its facade incised with elaborate, Neo-Grec details. However, a series of small fires in the 1960s would serve as foreshadowing of the building's future.

The last time the Vendome was certified as a hotel was December 31, 1969, at which time the required certificate, issued by the Division of Inspection from the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety was revoked because of recent fire damage and the lack of proper rehabilitation and maintenance of the structure. In 1971, the building was sold to real estate developer Pasquale Franchi, who opened a restaurant called cafe Vendome on the first floor, and began renovating the remaining hotel into condominiums and a shopping mall.



On June 17, 1972, a worker discovered that a fire had begun in an enclosed space between the third and fourth floors. A total of 16 engine companies, five ladder companies, two aerial towers, and a heavy rescue company responded. The fire was brought largely under control by late afternoon, when all but five floors of a 40-by-45 foot section at the south-east corner of the building collapsed burying Ladder 15 truck and 17 firefighters beneath a two-story pile of debris. Eight firefighters were injured, nine lost their lives. It was the worst firefighter tragedy in Boston history. While the cause of the fire remains unknown, the collapse was attributed to the failure of an overloaded seven-inch steel column whose support had been weakened when a new duct had been cut beneath it, exacerbated by the extra weight of water used to fight the fire on the upper floors.

The Vendome was finally converted into 110 residential condominiums and 27 commercial units in 1975, but the original Tuckahoe and Italian white marble facade remains. On June 17, 1997, on the 25th anniversary of the fire, a monument honoring the lost firefighters was dedicated on the Commonwealth Avenue Mall. Only a few yards from the site of the fire, it features a firefighter's helmet and coat cast in bronze, draped over a low arc of dark granite.

Sources: "Without Warning — A Report on the Vendome Hotel Fire" by the Boston Fire Historical Society, Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), Back Bay Houses

BIG CITY GARDENS

TIPS FOR THE URBAN GARDENER

Even in a relatively park-rich city like Boston, having your own bit of private green space can soothe the senses on a hot summer afternoon, and brighten a gloomy winter day. Whether you have an entire backyard, or a free spot on the balcony or patio, don't be afraid to explore your options. Or course, the urban gardener has a unique set of obstacles to overcome. Below are a few of the ones we believe you should consider:

SPACE

Perhaps the most obvious problem urban gardeners face is space, or the lack of it. The easiest solution is to think vertically. Thread stainless steel rods through terra-cotta pots and suspend them from horizontal surfaces to punch up the smallest balconies and patios. Spray-paint a wooden ladder and adorn it with pretty pots and planters, and use it to store garden tools and potting soil. Stack crates or handmade boxes and secure them vertically to a wall. If you're renting and not allowed to hang anything from your outdoor walls, make a free-standing plant wall using wood and mesh rebar. Hang pot plants using S-hooks and they'll provide privacy for your space as they grow. A tiered potted garden tucks nicely into the corner of any deck or patio. Also, consider plant varieties that will help you get the most out of a small area with a more rapid harvest, such as cherry tomatoes or Japanese eggplant instead of their regular cousins.

CONSIDER POLLUTION AND SOIL QUALITY

Smog and ozone damage are common in inner-city areas, but it's not so much what's in the air that you should worry about, but what's in the ground where your plants grow. Urban soil can often be toxic from years of industrial activities, poor land use, and vehicle exhaust. Choose your garden site carefully and consider the ways the land has been used in the past. The ground may look pristine and ready to plant, but the soil may contain toxic substances such as pesticide and herbicide residue, lead-based paint chips and asbestos, and oil and other petroleum products. Surround your garden with a hedge or a fence to protect it from windblown debris. Dig in plenty of organic matter to enrich the soil, improve its texture, and help it replace some of the lost nutrients. Worst case scenario, you may need to bring in clean topsoil provided by a reputable dealer. A raised bed or container gardens are also options.



An aerial photograph of a garden and patio area. The patio is paved with grey rectangular stones. There are several potted plants, including a large green plant in a white pot and a smaller one in a blue pot. A white table and chairs are visible. The garden is filled with various green plants and flowers. The background shows a stone wall and more greenery.

DON'T OVERDO IT

While tilling before planting loosens the soil and spreads nutrients around, too much of it throws off the delicate balance of the soil, encourages erosion, kills beneficial worms and nematodes, and unearths weed seeds. Plants' root systems are specialized, and while the top roots absorb nutrient-rich topsoil, the lower roots bring in minerals from deep within the soil and provide an anchor against the wind (especially at balcony or roofdeck elevation). Rather, consider a no-dig garden bed. If your desired spot already has grass or weeds, don't dig them up. Mow or cut them close to the ground, lay your frame, then cover the ground with a few sheets of wet newspaper that will eventually kill the grass and decompose with it. Cover your newspaper with alternating layers of compost, manure, and mulch, and sow your seeds. The key to creating raised beds in urban settings successfully is disturbing the soil as little as possible.

If your green space is a patio, roofdeck, balcony, or even your windowsill, you're probably familiar with container gardening. You need to water container plants often, especially considering how hot exposed balconies in high-rises can get as the sunlight reflects off other structures. However, make sure the water drains properly and doesn't sit in the saucer holding the pot. This can lead to root rot, fungus, and mildew.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLANTS

Be aware of your microclimate conditions. The urban climate is influenced by a variety of factors, including solar radiation, surrounding air temperatures, air movements, sun orientation, humidity, topographical location, proximity to lakes or waterfront exposure, paved surfaces such as roads and parking lots, buildings, and existing rooftop conditions. Native plants are the easiest choice. They're well adapted to your environment and require little to no maintenance since they've evolved and adapted to local conditions. Natives are vigorous and hardy, able to withstand local weather patterns, including Boston's freezing winters and scorching summers.

However, that is not to say that the dedicated gardener can't or shouldn't get creative. You can grow pretty much anything other than pumpkins or melons in a small space and, above all, you should take delight in the final product.

DESIGN FOR THE SENSES

Think about height and depth and keep the tallest plants on the north side of the garden so they don't shade-out or hide smaller plants. On decks shaded by house walls or trees, plant hostas, caladiums, or lush ferns. Small hydrangeas look great in pots in light shade on patios. If the deck is on the west side of your home, a trellis will cast shade on hot summer afternoons. Flowering vines soften the architecture. Ornamental gourds or feathery cypress vines will cover an arbor in no time, and can easily be grown in pots for deck or patio gardening. Consider the time of day you enjoy your plants. White and pastel flowers show best at night, while deep blues and purples need sunlight to show off their colors. Incorporate fragrance by planting heliotropes, flowering tobacco, herbs, or roses, and remember that moonflowers and nicotiana release their aroma at night. Add a soothing water feature like a self-contained bubbling-fountain. With a little planning and a few choice plants, a deck or patio can become the heart of your garden, instead of just a useful extension of the house.

SOCIAL SPRING

A BACK BAY SOCIAL CALENDAR

Are you feeling cabin fever after months of cold weather? Here's a list of fun neighborhood activities to get you out of winter hibernation and put a spring back in your step. From theater performances to science conventions to foodie tours, Back Bay offers events for everyone to enjoy.

R E C U R R I N G

MCGREEVY'S FREE COMEDY	Every Mon & Tu , 7:30pm	McGreevy's Boston 911 Boylston Street
DEATH BY CHOCOLATE: BACK BAY CHOCOLATE TOUR	Every Sat , 10am-1pm	Gourmet Boutique 10 Huntington Avenue
KINGS KARAOKE	Every Thu , 9pm	Kings Dining & Entertainment 50 Dalton Street
MIDDAY OASIS: FRIDAYS AT TRINITY	Every Fri , 12:15pm-1pm	Trinity Church Boston 206 Clarendon Street
100 DAYS OUT SUPPORTED LONG RUNS	Every Sun , 9am-12:30pm	The Tracksmith Trackhouse 285 Newbury Street
COMMUNITY CLASS \$5 SLOW FLOW	Every Mon , 2pm-3:30pm	Yogaworks Back Bay 364 Boylston Street, 2nd Floor
BACK BAY SCAVENGER HUNT	Every Sat & Sun	206 Clarendon Street
EMMANUEL MUSIC	Every Sun , 10am	Emmanuel Church in the City of Boston 15 Newbury Street

M A R C H

MIT SLOAN SPORTS ANALYTICS CONFERENCE 2019	3/1-3/2	Hynes Convention Center 900 Boylston Street
BEYOND BUBBIE'S KITCHEN	3/3 , 5:30pm-7:30pm	Back Bay Events Center 180 Berkeley Street
ALICE PHOBE LOU	3/5 , 8:00 PM	The Red Room @ Cafe 939 939 Boylston Street
LILY & MADELEINE / BROTHER BIRD	3/9 , 8:00 PM	The Red Room @ Cafe 939 939 Boylston Street
AMERICAN ROOTS 10TH ANNIVERSARY	3/12 , 7:30pm-9:30pm	Berklee Performance Center 136 Massachusetts Avenue
ICO-IO COMBINATIONS SUMMIT 2019	3/19-3/21	The Colonnade Boston Hotel 120 Huntington Avenue

ASSOCIATION OF ENERGY ENGINEERS GLOBALCON CONFERENCE AND EXPO 2019	3/21-3/22	Hynes Convention Center 900 Boylston Street
5TH ANNUAL NEW ENGLAND CANNABIS CONVENTION	3/22-3/24	Hynes Convention Center 900 Boylston Street
ДДТ АКУСТИКА В БОСТОНЕ!	3/26, 8pm-10pm	John Hancock Hall 180 Berkeley Street
COPLEY SQUARE: HISTORY THROUGH ARCHITECTURE	3/27, 6pm-7:30pm	Boston Public Library Commonwealth Salon 700 Boylston Street
THE 18TH ANNUAL BOSTON TATTOO CONVENTION	3/29-3/31	Hynes Convention Center 900 Boylston Street

A P R I L

CHAMELEON ARTS ENSEMBLE PERFORMS SCHUBERT'S CELLO QUINTET	4/6, 8pm 4/7, 4pm	First Church in Boston 66 Marlborough Street
45TH ANNUAL DWIGGINS LECTURE - RICK POYNTER: DAVID KING	4/10, 6pm-8pm	Central Library in Copley Square 700 Boylston Street
GOOD FRIDAY CONCERT: CHARLES WOOD'S ST. MARK PASSION	4/19, 5:30pm-7:30pm	Trinity Church Boston 206 Clarendon Street
ANIME BOSTON 2019	4/19-4/21	Hynes Convention Center 900 Boylston Street
ZAKIR HUSSAIN MASTERS OF PERCUSSION	4/21, 7:30 PM	Berklee Performance Center 136 Massachusetts Avenue
CHAMELEON UP CLOSE: SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE AND LOVE	4/28, 4pm-6pm	Old South Church 645 Boylston Street
OPEN DATA SCIENCE CONFERENCE (ODSC) EAST 2019	4/30-5/3	Hynes Convention Center 900 Boylston Street

M A Y

ANOUSHK SHANKAR AT BERKLEE PERFORMANCE CENTER	5/4, 8pm-10:30pm	Berklee Performance Center 136 Massachusetts Avenue
PROJECT BREAD'S WALK FOR HUNGER & 5K RUN	5/5	Boston Common
DUCKLING PARADE	5/12	Boston Public Garden
IN THE TWILIGHT AIR: BRAHMS' G MAJOR STRING QUINTET	5/18, 8pm-10pm	First Church in Boston 66 Marlborough Street
EMMANUEL MUSIC: TANGO!	5/18, 8pm-9pm & 10pm-11pm	Emmanuel Church in the City of Boston 15 Newbury Street
YANN TIERSEN AT BERKLEE PERFORMANCE CENTER	5/25, 8pm-9pm	Berklee Performance Center 136 Massachusetts Avenue
INDIAN AMERICANS OF MASSACHUSETTS	5/15, 6pm-7:30pm	Central Library in Copley Square 700 Boylston Street

YOUR BUYER AGENT AND YOU

88% of buyers purchased their home through a real estate agent or broker in 2017—a share that has steadily **increased from 69%** in 2001.

#1 factors that determine a buyer's decision to work with an agent are **honesty and integrity**, followed by **experience and reputation**.

7 in 10 buyers interviewed **only one** real estate agent during their home search.

89% of buyers would use their agent again or recommend their agent to others.

Contact one of our award-winning buyer agents to find your next home.



Source: National Association of Realtors



STEVEN COHEN TEAM
**BUYER
 TRANSACTIONS**



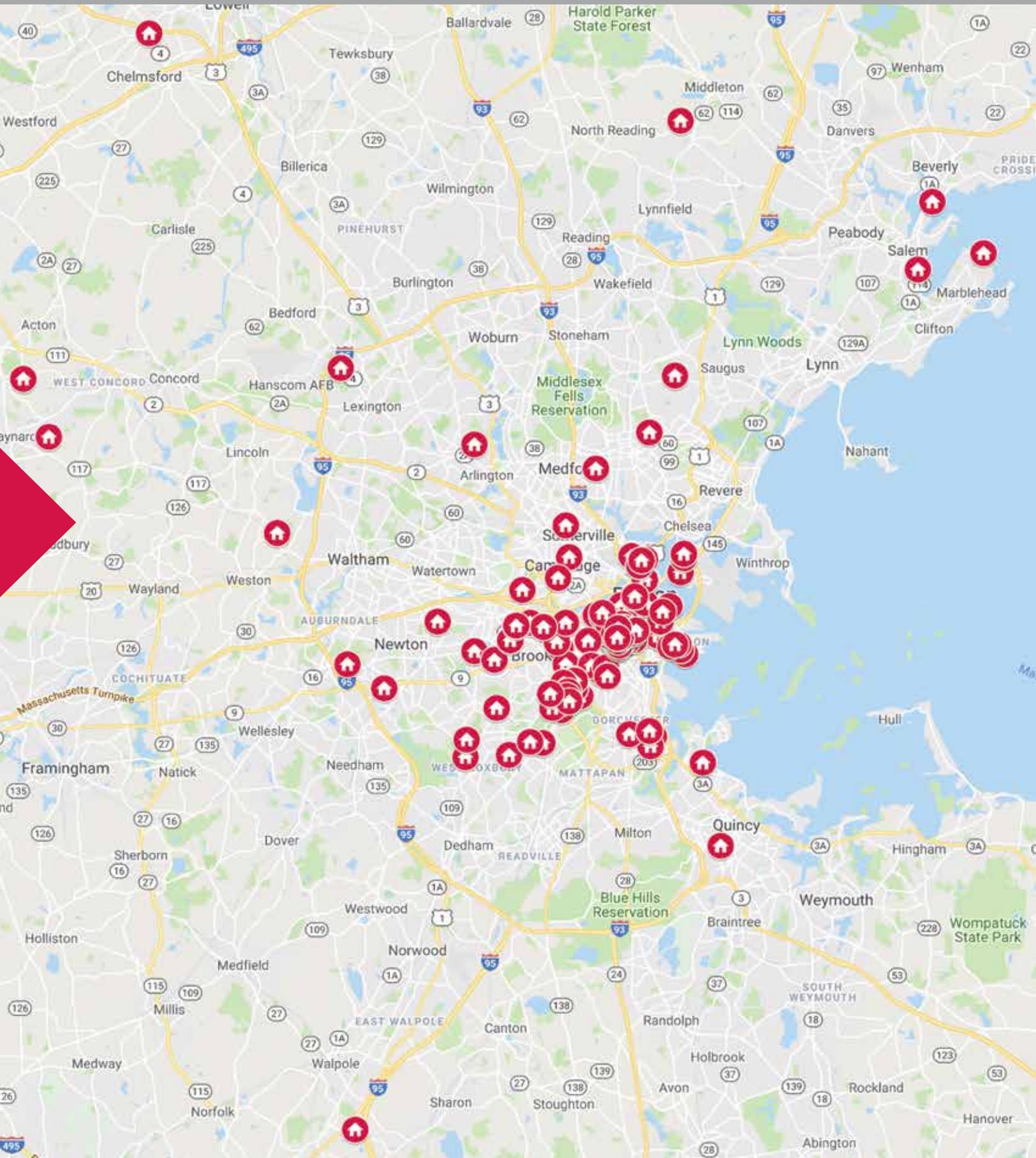
Barrie Stavis
 M 978.973.3229

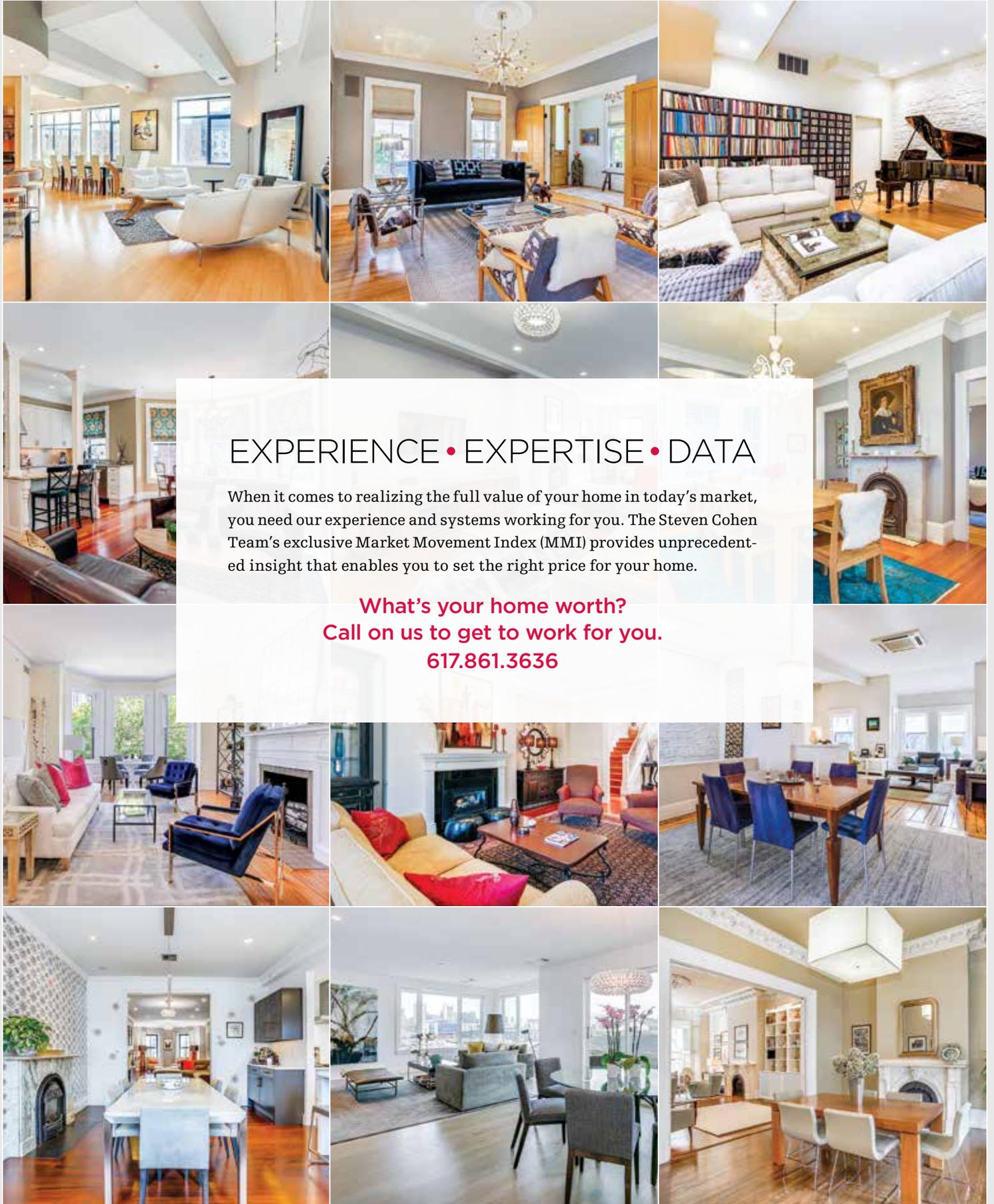
E barrie@stevencohenteam.com

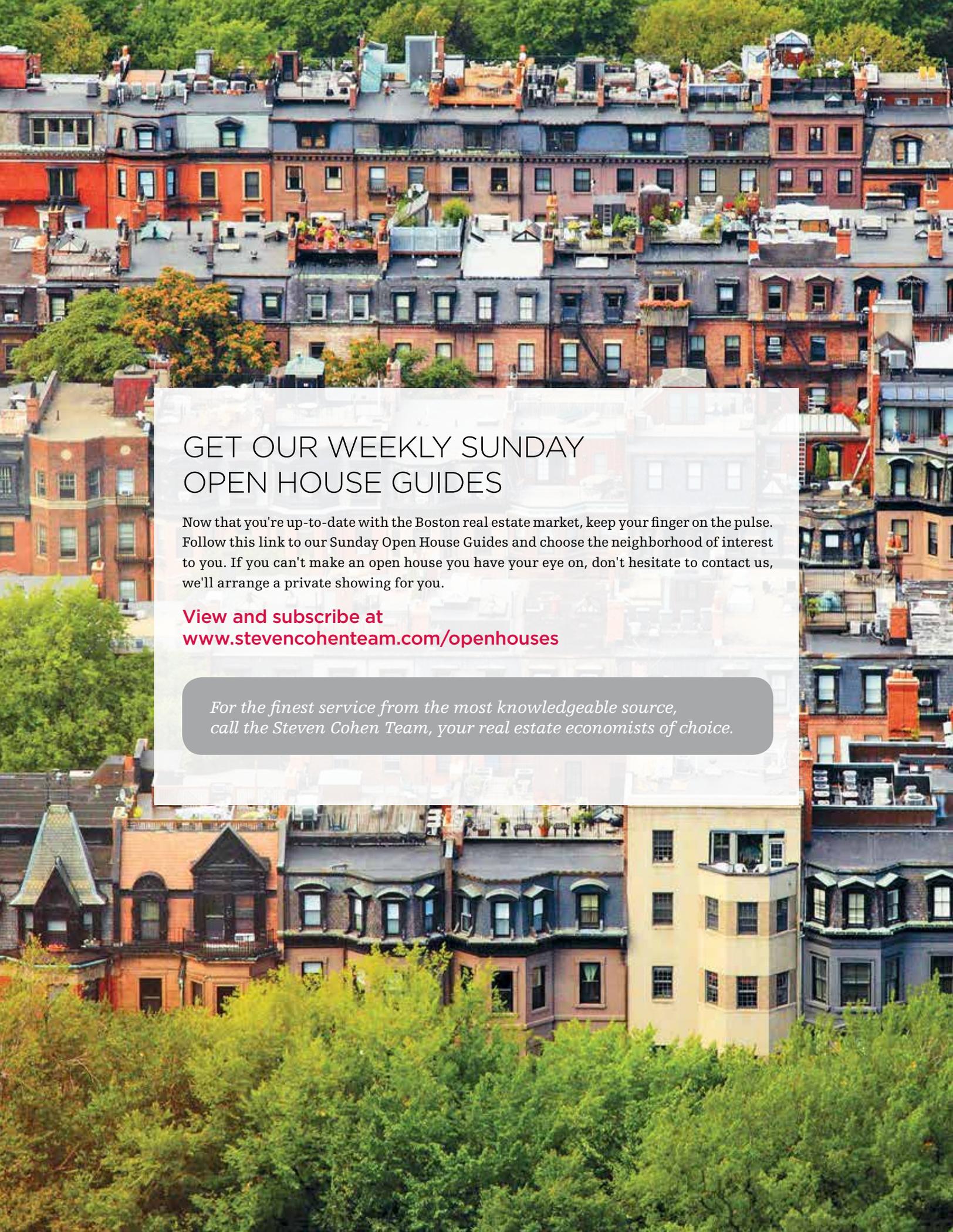


Nicole Spencer
 M 978.771.4764

E nicole@stevencohenteam.com







GET OUR WEEKLY SUNDAY OPEN HOUSE GUIDES

Now that you're up-to-date with the Boston real estate market, keep your finger on the pulse. Follow this link to our Sunday Open House Guides and choose the neighborhood of interest to you. If you can't make an open house you have your eye on, don't hesitate to contact us, we'll arrange a private showing for you.

View and subscribe at
www.stevencohenteam.com/openhouses

*For the finest service from the most knowledgeable source,
call the Steven Cohen Team, your real estate economists of choice.*

