

# BOSTON FOOD FOREST COALITION

## *STATEMENT OF VISION, MISSION, VALUES*

### **Vision**

Imagine walking down a street in Boston on a Saturday morning in June, picking a handful of blueberries and currants from an edible park, sitting in the shade of an old oak to chat with neighbors, and grabbing a basket of fresh veggies on your walk home for dinner. It's 2050, climate-induced storms are stronger, sea-level rise is worse – but we planted a Forest City rooted in hope and environmental justice.

Boston Food Forest Coalition aims to endow healthy food forests as part of the renewable green infrastructure of Boston. In 50 years time, at a slow and steady rate of growth, this could mean over a hundred food forests have taken root throughout the city (each with their own annual harvest festivals and cultural events). Every healthy food forest is a garden of connectivity, renewing community leadership for adaptation and resilience, and signifies a cultural realignment of urban life with the natural world, creating nourishing relationships between neighbors, land, and food.

Together we are asking: How do we embody “beloved community” (in which all people are cherished and nurtured) as we engage gracefully with the work of realigning humanity with nature?

### **Mission**

At the intersection of racial equity and climate resilience, the Boston Food Forest Coalition is a community of neighbors transforming vacant lots into public edible parks placed into permanent community control and ownership. Together, we are building resilience in Boston through more equitable access to healthy green space and greater connection to each other and the natural world.



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## Values

<i>Value</i>	<i>Description</i>
Joyful grace "Compassion & respect for yourself and all life"	We believe in supporting the wellbeing of all stakeholders (e.g., staff, board, stewards and their neighborhoods) so that they have the opportunity to show up to the work from a place of joy and grace. We believe in creating culture and systems to promote individual and communal well being, while recognizing it is the individual's responsibility to take care of themselves by advocating for what they need, setting boundaries, etc. We believe it is important to recognize that impact is different than intent, and in taking responsibility for repairing harm caused. Conflict and disagreement are natural parts of the work; the goal isn't to avoid them but to gracefully learn from them and to care for each other along the way.
<a href="#">Racial equity &amp; justice</a> at the center "Overcome racialized land injustice"	We believe in working towards racial equity and collective liberation for all Bostonians with a focus on increasing healthy green space for Black and Brown Bostonians and Indigenous Peoples. To achieve a vision of racial justice in Boston, we believe we must understand Boston's history of structural racism and how it manifests in policies, institutions, and culture related to BFFC's work. For example, a history of racist mortgage lending practices in Boston led to a 20% disparity in parkland between mostly white Bostonians and Bostonians of color, a 7.5 degree disparity in daytime temperature, and 39% disparity in trees. We pair this knowledge with humility and curiosity as we work across diverse communities in pursuit of greater racial equity and justice.
Inclusivity "Collective land ownership"	We believe in strengthening a Boston culture of belonging through collective ownership of land by a multi-racial, multi-generational, democratically-



	<p>engaged community, that has the information and decision rights to govern and operate a Community Land Trust that serves all Bostonians. We believe authentic representation and power-sharing is critical. We believe we must examine the roots of the systems BFFC participates in as a nonprofit land trust in Boston, and take action to increase inclusion toward racial justice, e.g., address the historic exclusion of Black and Brown leadership in decision-making roles in nonprofits.</p>
<p>Adaptability "Let's get curious"</p>	<p>We believe a proactive learning culture is necessary in times of rapid change – i.e., social, economic, and environmental transformation (e.g., <a href="#">sea-level rise</a>, <a href="#">temperature increase</a>, and <a href="#">heat island effect</a>). We believe in listening deeply to stakeholders, analyzing and learning from data (perspectives, stories, and numbers), and making adjustments based on learnings. We <u>also</u> believe it is critical to "get curious" about our own (and others) opinions and assumptions and to slow down to hear each other in our day-to-day work. We believe individually we don't hold all the answers, but collectively we can learn from each other <i>and</i> the natural world to build a stronger path together. (Related: Here's our first draft of how to build a <a href="#">learning organization</a>.)</p>
<p>Baseline trust and appreciation "You are valued"</p>	<p>We believe in the competency of each member of the BFFC team (board, staff, stewards). We believe mutual respect is vital to the psychological safety and well being of our team, and must be rooted in each person's inherent value. We believe it is important to support each other to take risks, make mistakes, communicate forthrightly and learn together.</p>
<p>Ecological imagination "Realigning with the natural"</p>	<p>We believe in realigning urban life with the natural world by inspiring an ecological imagination in all</p>



<p>world”</p>	<p>Bostonians. We believe we must listen deeply to the natural world to find our place within it so we might live adaptably and resiliently as it changes.</p> <p>We also believe in living into The Seventh Generation Principle which is based on an ancient Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) philosophy that the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future.</p>
<p>Community “We are better to each other when we know each other”</p>	<p>We believe we are stronger and smarter together. We believe in listening to and seeing each other, and celebrating differences. We believe, as Jessie, an Edgewater food forest steward put it, “we are better to each other when we know each other.” We believe that relationships move at the speed of trust. BFFC was founded as a multi-racial, multi-generational coalition and intends to keep this at the core of our work.</p>

\* For Reference only:  
[2019 document](#), [2021 document](#), Current [Theory of Change](#) draft



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