

270 Elm – The Civic Space

Project Narrative

The existing open area between 58 Day and 256-260 Elm will be constructed as a Through Block Plaza and public gathering space to be enjoyed by the Davis Square community. The project reimagines the Elm Street Plaza as a lively, accessible, and inclusive cultural hub, with space for local events, gatherings, and exhibitions. The Civic Plaza is anchored by the 256-260 Elm Street project and will become the heart of the proposed development.

The existing condition is beautifully proportioned and woefully underused. The potential of activating this approximate 7,500 SF open space holds enormous community and retail benefits. The reimagined civic plaza is programmed with places to meet, reflect, and gather. As one approaches the plaza from Elm Street, (3) new trees, provide a shaded zone where one can enjoy a variety of seating options. Come meet a friend for coffee or a neighbor for a drink. The ground floor retail tenants spill out into the performative hardscape adding everchanging variety and programming throughout the week. Toward Herbert Street, one encounters 5 new trees that line the new ramp and stairs down to Herbert – making the Civic Plaza fully accessible and inclusive.

The proposed Civic Plaza will activate an underused open space with a renewed purpose. A place made specifically for Davis Square – the residents, co-workers, and visitors. Inspired by the success of Bow Market down the street, the Civic Plaza aims to concentrate the vibrancy of Davis Square into a unique, well-crafted, and finely detailed urban design project.