

## General Information

### Basics

Population: 92,000  
 School Zone: East  
 Police District: C-11

### City Government

#### City Councilor:

Maureen Feeney

#### Coordinator:

Lauren Smyth, 617-635-3485

### Public Services

#### Fire Stations:

Engine 16, 9 Gallivan Boulevard  
 Engine 18, 1884 Dorchester Ave

#### Police Stations:

40 Gibson Road  
 617-343-4330

#### Library:

1520 Dorchester Avenue  
 617-436-2155

#### Post Office:

551 Columbia Road  
 800-275-8777

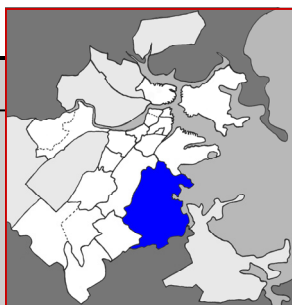
#### Neighborhood Paper:

Dorchester Reporter  
[www.dotnews.com](http://www.dotnews.com)

### Transportation

#### Major T stops

*All Red Line T stops south of  
 Broadway are in Dorchester,  
 including Fields Corner, Savin Hill,  
 and JFK/UMass.*



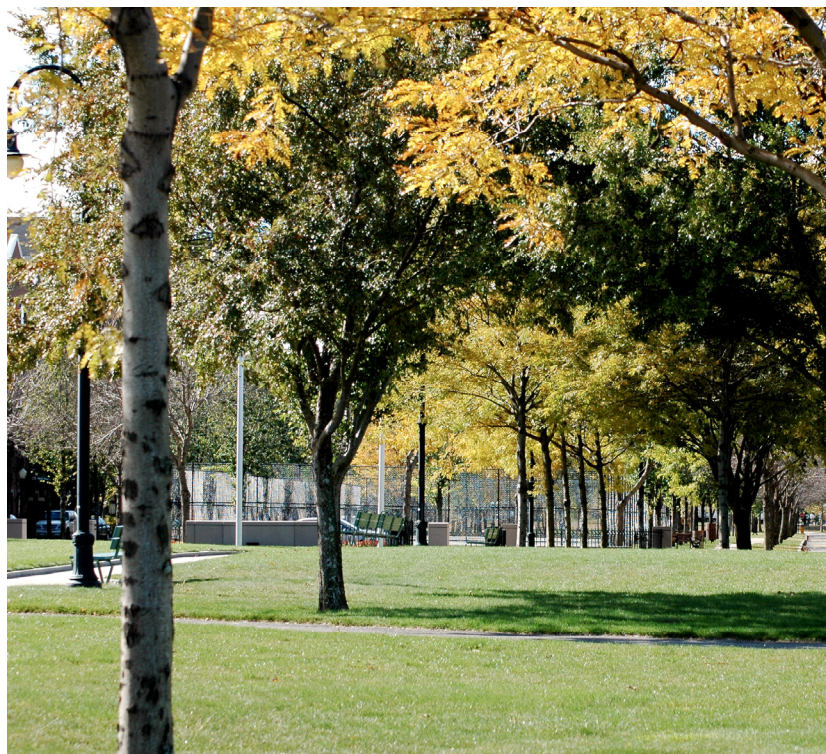
# Dorchester Diversity in Action

Dorchester, Boston's largest neighborhood, is also one of its most diverse. Extending south from the South End, Dorchester runs parallel to the Boston Harbor and borders Roxbury and Mattapan to the west. Dorchester, or "Dot" amongst its residents, is sometimes broken up into a northern and southern section, based on the commercial streets and ethnic identity of the areas. Throughout Dorchester, long-time residents mingle with new immigrants from Ireland, Vietnam, and Cape Verde. The nation's first Vietnamese Community Center is located in Fields Corner, and is the heart of the Vietnamese community in Boston. On the whole, Dorchester is a more residential section of the city with a large working class population.

Dorchester Avenue, which runs north and south from South Boston to Milton, anchors the neighborhood business districts with a unique mix of ethnic restaurants, beauty salons, electronics stores, and pharmacies. Dorchester is often broken down into smaller communities, based around a main commercial hub or area; major centers include the Uphams Corner neighborhood, Columbia Point, Savin Hill, Fields Corner, Four Corners, Codman Square, Ashmont and Neponset. Because of the size of Dorchester in its entirety (over 92,000 people), each sub-section of the neighborhood has its own identity.

There is no one economic center for Dorchester, because of the size of the neighborhood. However, Uphams Corner was once the largest commercial district in the city outside of Downtown crossing. It is now the cultural center of Northern Dorchester and home to a large segment of the neighborhood's Cape Verdean population. Fields Corner is one of Dorchester's largest business districts - it boasts largest selection of Asian foods and retail outside of Chinatown, primarily Vietnamese. The Bowdoin/Geneva area is one of the oldest sections of the neighborhood, and is known for its long-term residents and the annual Ronan Park Multicultural Festival in August. Fields Corner, Four Corners, and the Bowdoin/Geneva areas have all undergone commercial revitalization through the city of Boston's "Main Streets" program, increasing the retail space and popularity of those neighborhoods.

Franklin Park, considered the "crown jewel" of Frederick Law Olmsted's Emerald Necklace, is located in Dorchester. The park houses the Franklin Park Zoo, an 18-hole municipal golf course, and 527 acres of parkland (making it many times the size of the Boston Common). Green space is common throughout Dorchester. Most sections of the neighborhood have some form of park or athletic field nearby.



## AVERAGE RENTAL COSTS

### STUDIO

\$700-\$1000

Some in apartment buildings

### One-Bedroom

\$1000-\$1400

Common in apartment buildings

### Two-Bedroom

\$1400-\$1800

Fairly common

### Three-Bedroom

\$1800-\$2700

Can span wide range

### Four-Bedroom

\$2400 and up

Common in areas with houses

Neighborhood pride is strong in Dorchester, as former residents have been known to wear T-shirts proclaiming “OFD” - “Originally From Dorchester.” Dorchester is, along with Jamaica Plain and Allston/Brighton, among the most racially diverse neighborhoods in the city. With a strong population of African-Americans, Vietnamese, Cape Verdean and Irish, Dorchester has many fine ethnic restaurants and a particularly strong set of community organizations.

Dorchester offers so many diverse social opportunities, it is hard to pinpoint them. Each sub-section of the neighborhood offers something different. Fields Corner offers fantastic Vietnamese cuisine and shopping, the Polish Triangle by Andrew Station at the border of South Boston offers traditional Polish cuisine and good soccer bars like the Banshee, and Savin Hill and Columbia Point both offer access to the JFK Library and UMass Boston. For many students, close proximity to the red line train or the #8 bus offer them the fastest route to get downtown to more centralized entertainment.

One particular area that has drawn a number of students from the BUMC over the years is the Columbia Point/Savin Hill neighborhood. Directly south of South Boston is Dorchester Bay, and a small peninsula that juts southward into the Boston Harbor. Originally the home of one of the most infamous housing projects in the city, in the late 1980s Boston turned a significant chunk of the peninsula over to private developers who created the Harbor Point apartment complex. Harbor Point, with its 1,300 units situated on 50 acres of land, is the largest apartment facility in the city. The University of Massachusetts at Boston also makes its campus on the Columbia Point peninsula. Those same developers recently opened a new apartment complex right down the street: the Peninsula, a large luxury apartment facility.

The Savin Hill area is sandwiched between Morrissey Boulevard to the east and the Southeast Expressway I-93 to the west. The neighborhood is somewhat isolated from the rest of Dorchester, and has been a target of significant gentrification over the past 15-20 years. Many of the traditional double- and triple-decker homes have been converted to condominiums. A number of BUMC students have lived either on Columbia Point or in Savin Hill because of the relatively low rent, the access to the ocean, and because the #8 bus runs directly to campus.



Parking is generally easy in Dorchester; many places have parking spots, or easily accessible on-street parking.

## Types of Housing

Dorchester's age as a neighborhood is easy to see in its housing stock. Dorchester spans the range from older, Victorian homes of its original 17th and 18th century residents to the more modern, two and three family homes of recent immigrant families. The most identifiable housing from Dorchester is the “triple-decker,” or a three-family house. Because it is farther away from Downtown Boston, rents in Dorchester are often less expensive than some of the other areas of the city (fairly comparable to Allston/Brighton). Properties closer to the harbor tend to be a bit more expensive than their inland counterparts. While there are larger, complex-style apartments in Dorchester, most apartments will be a floor of a multiple-family house, or a unit in a small 15-20 apartment building. Triple-decker houses tend to offer more space and cheaper rents than small apartment buildings, but they may not include the cost of heat and hot water in the rent. Make sure to ask any landlord about what utilities are included in the rent.

## Living in Dorchester

### Safety

Dorchester is a very large area and some sections of the neighborhood are quiet and suburban. Areas closer to the BUMC tend to be more urban. Dorchester and the neighboring Roxbury were historically areas of high gang violence in the early 1990s. Operation Ceasefire, a comprehensive program linking police to community organizations and schools dramatically lowered crime in the neighborhood and encouraged a number of young professionals and white-collar workers to purchase property in the area. However, in the last year, sections of Dorchester and Roxbury have seen a rise in gang related violence.

Areas close to the center of the city, like Grove Hall, have seen a resurgence in gang-related violence in the past few years. Many of the neighborhoods in Dorchester are working class and the presence of poverty is more visible than in neighborhoods that attract more tourism. Still, Dorchester is very large and most sections of the neighborhood are very safe and quiet.

### Transportation

*Approximate Commute Time: 10-30 minutes*  
Dorchester is primarily served by the Ashmont branch of the Red Line train—there are five stops on the red line throughout the neighborhood (from North to South: JFK/UMass, Savin Hill, Fields Corner, Shawmut, Ashmont).

A typical commute from Dorchester involves taking the #8 bus to campus, or taking the Red Line to the Broadway T-stop and taking the #47 bus to Albany Street, or walking. In general, parking is much easier in Dorchester than other areas of Boston.

### Why Live Here?

*Cheap and actually diverse*

Dorchester rents are significantly lower than those in the South End, Fenway/Kenmore, or the Back Bay. Also, because houses tend to be a common housing option, finding housing for three or four people is much easier to do in Dorchester than many other neighborhoods. Dot is also a minority white neighborhood, meaning that there is actual, true ethnic diversity in this area, and it can offer a much more varied and exciting living situation as a result.