

Committee on Evaluating Success Among People Released  
from Prison  
National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine  
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# Insights from Qualitative Research on Reentry

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# My research

- Project 1: *The Ex-Prisoner's Dilemma: How Women Negotiate Competing Narratives of Reentry and Desistance*
  - 49 women exiting prison in Illinois and going to a Chicago halfway house (4 interviews over year)
  - 26 members of their social networks (2 interviews over year)
- Project 2: *Intersecting Lives: How Place Shapes Reentry*
  - 100 men and women exiting Suffolk County House of Correction (1 pre-release, 4 post-release interviews)
  - 84 residents living in three Boston neighborhoods (1 interview)

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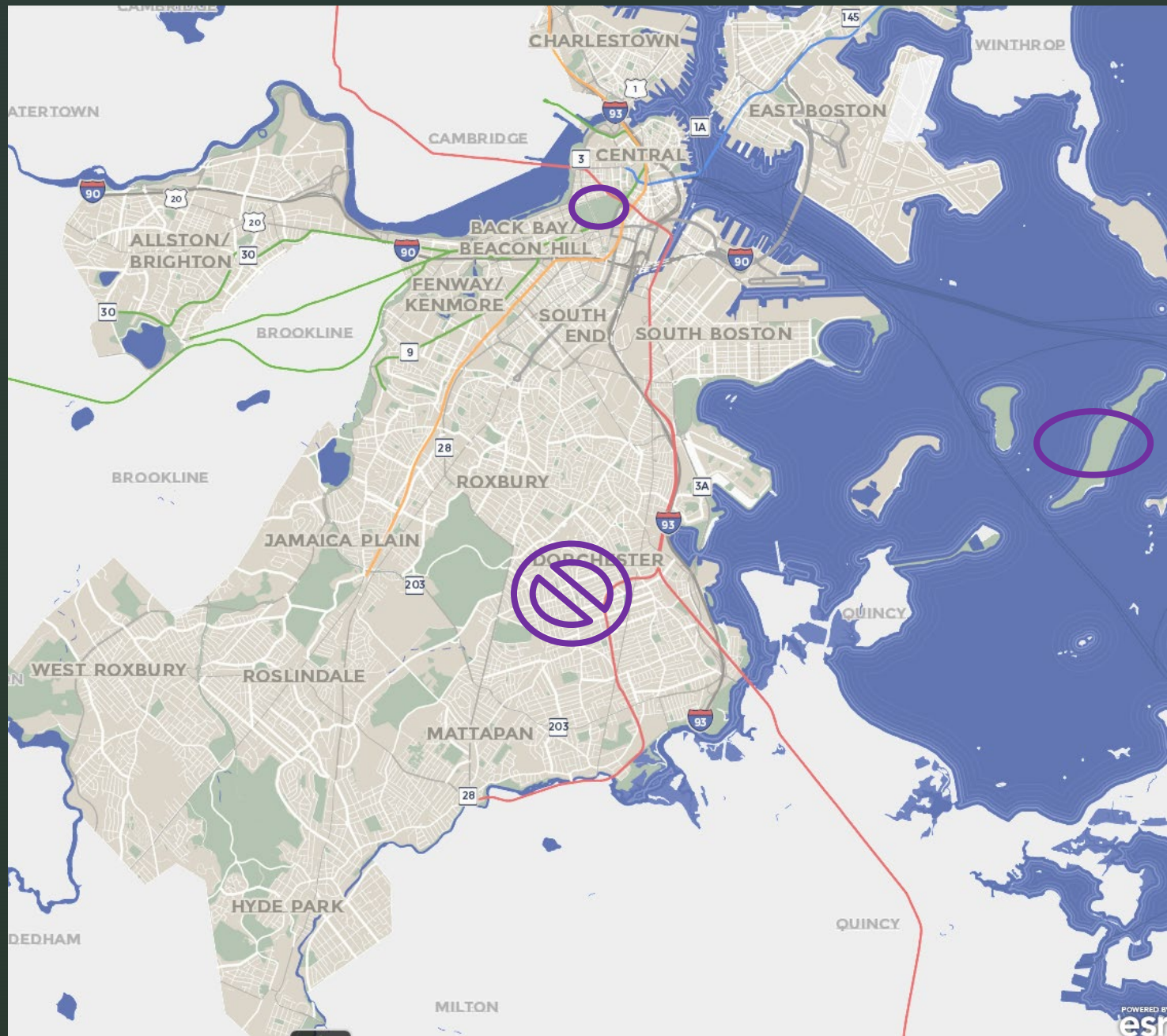
- 1. *Why* do people do what they do?
  - For example, what does it mean to “go on the run” and why do people do it?
  - Netta, “‘Well, I don’t trust you.’ That was the end of that. I never went back to probation. I never checked in again... I never got in any more trouble, but I never went back.”



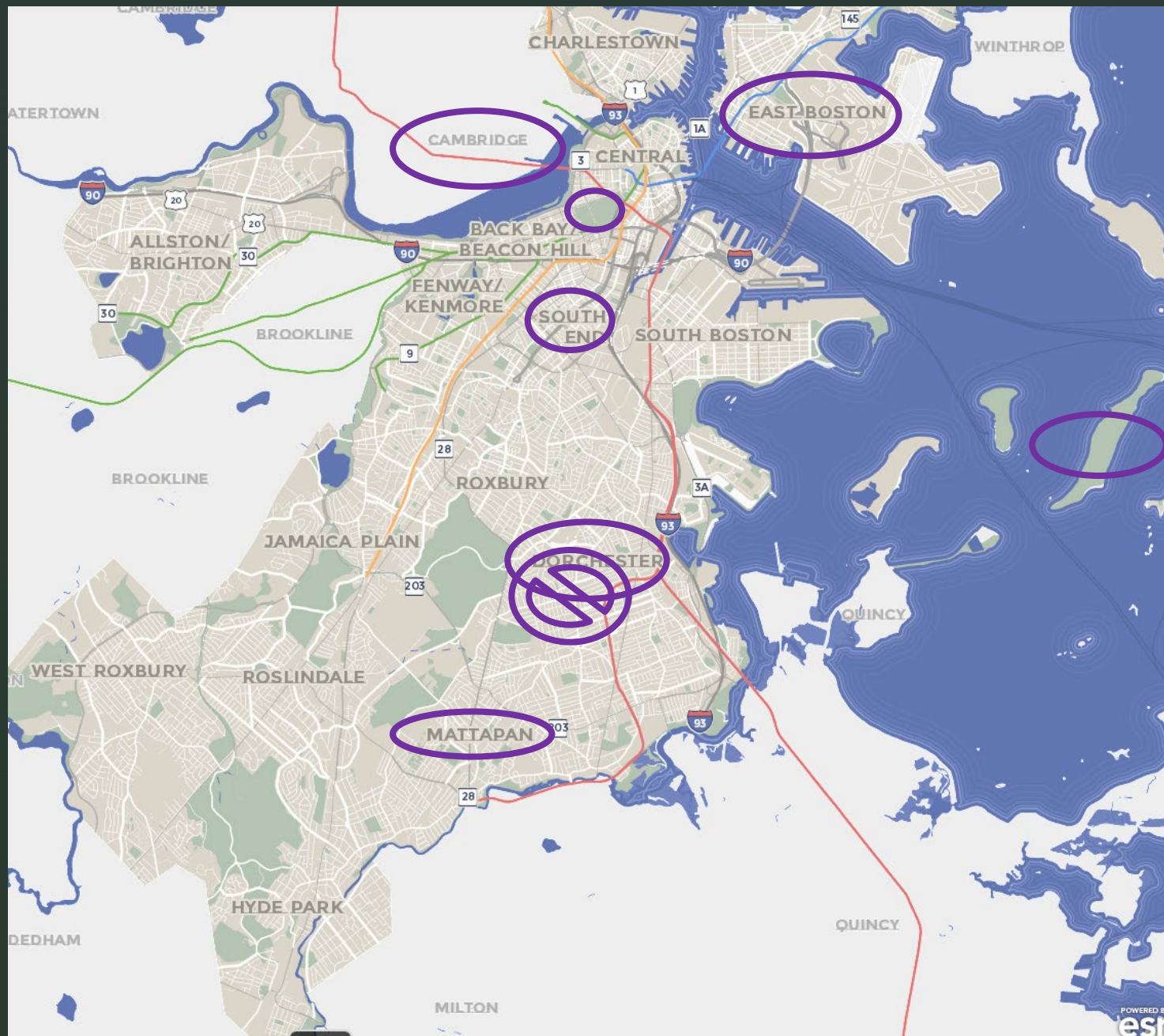
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- 2. What questions – that you didn't think to ask – might you answer?
  - For example, what is life like for those who are 'bouncing,' or extremely unstably housed?









## *Take aways*

- Complexity of what common variables represent
- Individual successes and failures also reflect actions of CJ system and its actors.
- *How can we learn from qual research?*
  - Listening to what people are saying, not just the answers to your direct questions
  - Allowing (and valuing) projects that are more fluid in execution, e.g., following up on emerging themes