Envision Cambridge

Planning Board Update

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Agenda

Project Schedule & Process Update

Goals for engagement
• Who are we reaching?

Tools for engagement (and what we’re hearing)
• Advisory committee and working groups
• Focus groups
• “What’s the Plan” panel
• Surveys
• Public workshops: Listening in March and April
• Mobile Engagement Station
• Newspaper

Next Steps
• Engagement
• Analysis

Discussion
Project Schedule

**2016**
Phase I: Establishing a Citywide Vision
- Listening & Researching
- Visioning
- Setting Goals & Targets
- Alewife Plan

**2017**
Phase II: Setting Priorities
- Refining the Vision
- Areas of Focus
- Testing Scenarios

**2018**
Phase III: Developing an Action Plan
- Developing a Strategic Plan
- Integrating Areas of Focus
- Integration of Alewife Plan

We are here.
Project Process

Community Priorities and Visioning → Research and Analysis

**Vision**

**Framework**
- How do we achieve this vision?

**Targets**
- How do we track progress?

**Testing The Scenarios**
- On-the-ground scenarios
- Trade-offs

**Action Plan**
- Policies
- Recommendations
- Refined vision
Research and analysis is focused around key planning topics.

- Urban Form
- Economic Opportunity
- Community Interaction (formerly social cohesion)
- Climate and the Environment
- Mobility and Transportation
- Housing

Research and analysis is focused around key planning topics.

- Urban Form
  - (re)development
  - neighborhoods
  - scale

- Economic Opportunity
  - job trends
  - training
  - technology

- Community Interaction
  - socioeconomic spectrum
  - change over time
  - social programs

- Climate & the Environment
  - energy
  - vulnerability
  - emissions

- Mobility & Transportation
  - transit
  - parking
  - sharing

- Housing
  - families
  - affordability
  - typologies
Goals for engagement
These activities target a wide range.

**Active community members**
- “What’s the Plan” panel, public workshops, surveys

**Less active community members**
- Email list, surveys, Mobile Engagement Station

**Cross-section of Cambridge population**
- Street team outreach with and without mobile engagement station, with surveys

**American-born blacks and linguistic minorities**
- Focus groups with Community Engagement Team
- Surveys distributed by CET interns

**Computer-savvy audience**
- Email updates and online survey

**Non-computer-savvy audience**
- Paper surveys, newspaper, public workshops

**Individuals well-versed in planning**
- “What’s the Plan” panel, public workshops

**Individuals new to planning**
- Newspaper, street teams
These activities reach different audiences.

**“What’s the Plan” panel**
- 100+ attendees

**Surveys**
- ~600 surveys total
- 160 collected by street teams
- 420 collected online

**Focus groups**
- 40 attendees
- American-born black, Arabic, Bangladeshi, Chinese/Mandarin, Dominican, East African, Ethiopian, French Creole, Haitian/Creole, Honduran, Peruvian, Spanish

**Public workshops**
- 130 attendees

**Mobile Engagement Station**
- 400 people engaged
- 1500 pieces of feedback
Tools for engagement

- Advisory committee and working groups
- Focus groups
- “What’s the Plan” panel
- Surveys
- Public workshops: Listening in March and April
- Mobile Engagement Station
- Newspaper
City formed an advisory committee and working groups.

City put out a call for members of a committee and working groups.

- First working groups are on public engagement and on Fresh Pond / Alewife
- Other working groups to be formed later
- The City received 150+ applications
- Invitations were sent out in April

The Advisory Committee and Engagement and Alewife working groups will convene in May.

How do I apply?
Send a letter or email by February 1 about your interest and background to:

- Melissa Peters
  Community Development Department
  344 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139
  Email: mpeters@cambridgema.gov

See cambridgema.gov/citywideplan for more information.

The Citywide Plan will craft a shared vision for a more livable, sustainable, and equitable city. It will include a broad range of topics such as housing, transportation, economic opportunity, urban form, and climate and the environment.

City of Cambridge cambridgema.gov/citywideplan
We organized focus groups to reach underrepresented groups.

**Working with Community Engagement Team (CET) to reach out to underserved populations.**

- Linguistic minorities and American-born blacks
- Other working groups to be formed later

**Working with CET, we organized small focus groups to meet with members of these communities.**

- Events took place in early April.
We held a “What’s the Plan?” panel to introduce the project.

First large Envision Cambridge event was on February 11 at the Cambridge Public Library.

- Lively discussion of topics ranging from urban agriculture and mobility, to challenges with current development and need to engage with wide range of community members.
- 100+ community members attended

Panelists

- Tim Love, Utile
- Dan D’Oca, Interboro
- Kevin Hively, Ninigret
- Lisa Jacobson, Nelson\Nygaard
- Ariella Maron, BuroHappold
Surveying

What have we been asking people?

Survey 01: Listening
(also administered online and in public workshops, March-April)

Survey 02: Visioning
(May-June)
What we heard so far

What matters to you most?

- Urban Form 19%
- Housing 22%
- Social Cohesion 13%
- Economic Opportunity 8%
- Climate and the Environment 14%
- Mobility and Transportation 24%
Survey write-in comments: concerns

- My priority is people and ensuring that Cambridge welcomes everyone.
- More and more, the city feels like two cities.
- Opportunities for Cantabrians of all types and education levels.
- The city remains very familiar even after decades, in spite of huge changes.
- Pricing out young and middle-income people will make a community boring or unbalanced.
- Middle class families are being pushed out and we need to focus on building housing, open space, local retail for them.
- Regional planning outside of Cambridge has a lot of impact.
Survey write-in comments: suggestions

- Plan holistically, not project-by-project.
- Having affordable housing available is critical to the fabric of the community.
- Each of the plan’s issues are important and interrelated.
- Preserve the character of the neighborhood while expanding housing options to keep up with growth.
- Beyond housing, the citywide conversation and planning efforts need to be better synthesized in how open space, health, transportation, etc. become collectively woven.
- Do not forget about middle-class families.
- Make Cambridge a net zero city and model for the nation and the world.
- Having affordable housing available is critical to the fabric of the community.
- Each of the plan’s issues are important and interrelated.
We held Public Workshops to hear from the community.

Three public workshops
- Thu, Mar 24, Kennedy-Longfellow School Cafeteria
- Thu, Mar 31, Tobin School Cafeteria
- Sat, Apr 2, Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Avenue
- Approximately 130 community members attended

Team listened to community members on what is important to them for the plan
- We solicited top concerns beforehand through an online survey, street teams, and live-polling at the start of the workshop.
What did we hear from community workshops?

Top discussion topics:
- Housing
- Mobility
- Urban Form

Other topics community members wanted to discuss:
- Community Health
- Learning and Kids
- Regionalism
- Resilience
- Urban Forest
- Making cities fun and beautiful
Mobile Engagement Station

What is it?

• The Mobile Engagement Station is a 4’ x 8’ interactive model of Cambridge. The Station has three layers.

1. The top layer is a 3D model of Cambridge showing all the buildings in the city.

2. The second layer is a map of Cambridge color-coded by land use and showing all streets and building footprints.

3. The last layer consists of stools in the shape of each of Cambridge’s neighborhoods.
Mobile Engagement Station

What have we been asking people to do?

Draw on the model:

• Draw your commute or another frequent route through the city in **black**
• Circle favorite places in **green** and write words that come to mind
• Do same for least favorite places in **red**
• Do same for things you'd like to see in the future in **blue**
Mobile Engagement Station

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Mobile Engagement Station

Where have we used it?
18 outings over 2 months

- March 1, City Hall Annex (Presidential Primary Day)
- March 5, Harvard Square (Brattle St & Brattle Square)
- March 6, Cambridge Public Library Main Branch
- March 12, The Port (Area IV), Windsor and Harvard Streets
- March 13, Porter Square, Mass Ave & Somerville Ave
- March 14, Kendall Square, 309 Main St
- March 19, Cambridgeside Galleria
- March 20, Inman Square, Vellucci Community Plaza
- March 24, Envision Cambridge Public Workshop, Kennedy Longfellow School
- March 26, Huron Village Easter Egg Hunt (Huron and Standish St)
- March 30, Alewife Sewer Separation Update Meeting, Tobin School
- March 31, Envision Cambridge Public Workshop, Tobin School
- April 2, Winter Farmers Market, Cambridge Community Center at 5 Callender Street
- April 2, Envision Cambridge Public Workshop, Senior Center, 806 Mass Ave
- April 6, Alewife T Station
- April 11, Story Time at Collins Branch Library, 64 Aberdeen Avenue
- April 16, Cambridge Science Festival, CRLS Field House, 459 Broadway
- April 27, Cambridge Public Library Main Branch, 449 Broadway
- April 29, Walk/Ride Day Corporate Challenge Kick-Off, Joan Lorentz Park, 449 Broadway
Mobile Engagement Station

March 12, Green Rose Heritage Park, Area IV / The Port
Mobile Engagement Station

March 14, Kendall Square
Mobile Engagement Station

April 6, Alewife T Station
Mobile Engagement Station

A sample of what we heard....
Mobile Engagement Station

Preliminary results

• What do you love about Cambridge?
We will be sharing through a newspaper.

First issue will be released in late spring 2016.

- Designed and written in a friendly tone and graphic language
- Updates the public on the planning analysis and process
- Teaches the public about planning and complex policy issues
- Offers in-depth stories about community members and happenings
Next steps
What’s Next?

Public Workshops
- Visioning Workshops in early summer

Advisory Committee and Working Groups
- Members selected
- To be convened in May

Surveys
- New survey launching, focused on Visioning and Alewife

Focus groups
- Continued outreach to linguistic minorities, immigrants, and American-born blacks

Mobile Engagement Station
- In City Hall
- On the street

Alewife / Fresh Pond Area
- Alewife / Fresh Pond area engagement through the summer, close coordination with the Preparedness Plan
- Street teams, surveys, workshop

Additional forms of engagement
- CET outreach workers
- Mayor’s Summer Youth Program
- Targeted outreach with seniors and youth
Discussion Questions

• What do you hope the plan will address?

• What about the key planning topics is most important for the planning team to know?

• What about the city in general is most important for the planning team to know?

• What resources or individuals should the team be aware of on this topic?