

Public Participation Summary, Visioning Phase

This document represents a compilation of public comments collected by the Envision Cambridge planning team at public events during the visioning phase of the planning process. It is designed to capture the range of opinions we heard at different public events in a way that makes the information usable both to the planning team and to the public who are curious about what opinions were shared. The notes from these public events, taken together, will give a broader and clearer feel for the concerns voiced by the participants at these events. Please note that the opinions represented here are not necessarily the opinion of the City of Cambridge or the majority of community members, but rather serve as a compilation of singular voices from the community.

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1. Overview and Methodology

Envision Cambridge is a three-year public process to develop a plan for a livable, sustainable, and equitable city. With input from those who live, work, study, and play in our city, Envision Cambridge is creating a shared vision for the future of Cambridge. This vision is the result of two phases of community engagement: the Listening Phase and the Visioning Phase.

The following report highlights findings from both phases, with a particular emphasis on findings from the most recent Visioning Phase. This phase, lasting from late April through late July of 2016, was an opportunity for community members to voice their opinions on their vision for the City of Cambridge. The Visioning Phase culminated in the formation of a working Vision Statement. A brief timeline of the engagement efforts as well greater detail into the methodology of each is included below.

1.1 Listening Phase

During the Listening Phase, Envision Cambridge gathered community feedback through **four unique engagement strategies**: (1) a mobile engagement station, (2) a survey (collected online and in-person), (3) community workshops, and (4) targeted focus groups.

Listening Phase Timeline

Listening Survey (Online): March 1, 2016 through April 27, 2016

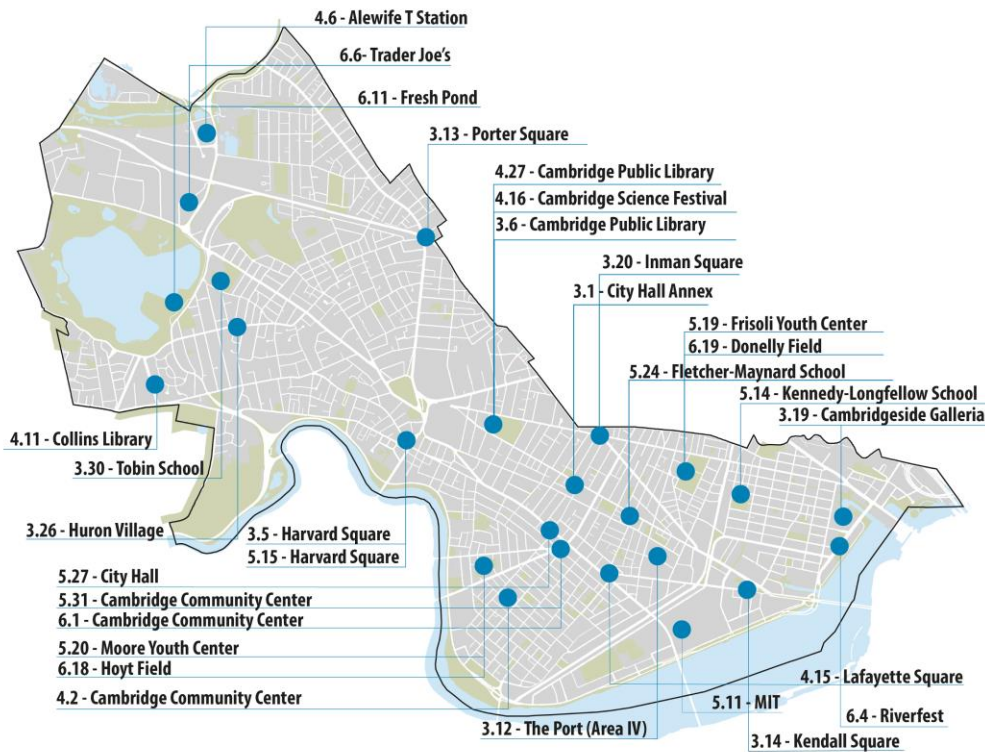
Listening Engagement Activities: March 2, 2016 through June 19, 2016

A detailed summary of findings from the Listening Phase can be found in the summary report, Envision Cambridge, Visioning Phase Findings.

Mobile Engagement Station

Within the Listening Phase, the mobile engagement station gathered data from **2,065 participants** on their favorite places, least favorite places, common routes and ideas for the future of Cambridge. The station traveled to **31 locations** between March 1 - June 19, 2016. **3,583 unique pieces of data** were gathered at the station during this phase, including 1,743 favorite places, 753 least favorite places, 502 ideas for the future, and 585 common routes through the city.

Mobile Engagement Station Locations



Surveys

In addition to the mobile engagement station, Survey 01: Listening was administered online and in-person at the mobile engagement station. During the Listening Phase, a **total of 634 surveys** were collected, 214 in-person surveys and 420 online surveys.

Workshops & Focus Groups

In addition to the survey and the mobile engagement station, the Listening Phase included **three workshops** and **two focus groups**. The focus groups met with members of Cambridge's African-American community and English as a Second Language community. Nearly forty people attended the focus groups and the workshops were attended by 130 people at locations across the city.

1.2 Visioning Phase

Feedback from activities in the Listening Phase informed the planning and development of the next phase of community engagement: Visioning. The Envision Cambridge Visioning Phase consisted of **four engagement strategies**: (1) the mobile engagement station, (2) three surveys administered online and in-person, (3) two community visioning workshops, and (4) two pop-up events.

Visioning Phase Timeline

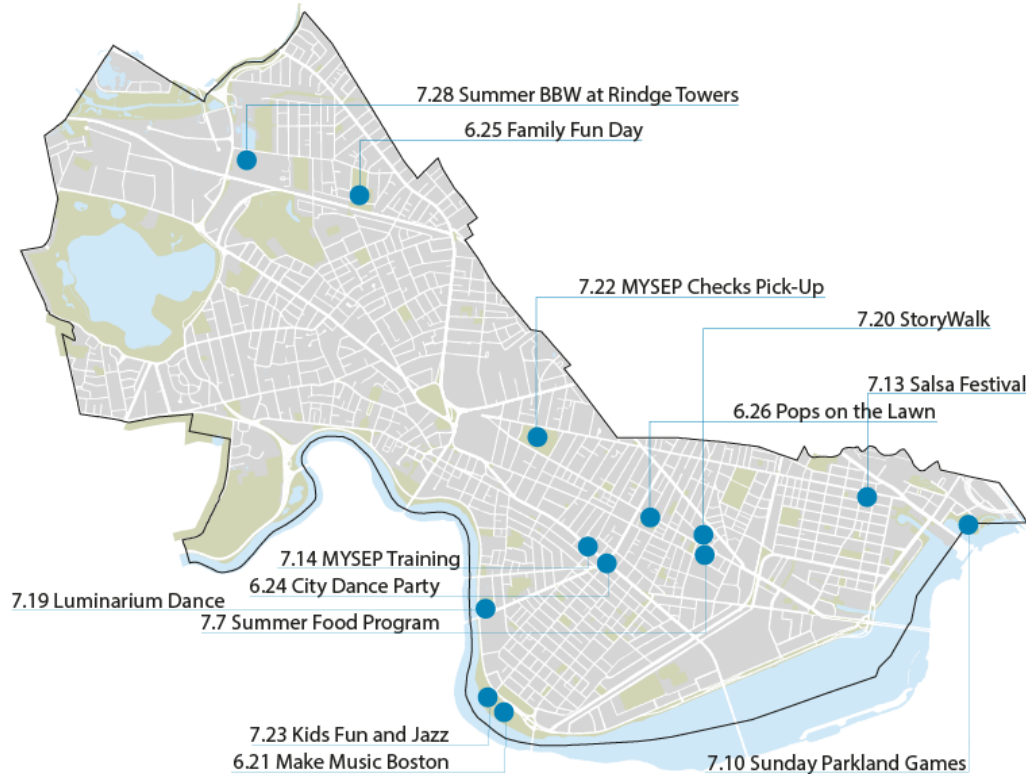
Visioning Surveys (Online): April 29, 2016 through July 28, 2016

Visioning Engagement Activities: June 21, 2016 through July 28, 2016

Mobile Engagement Station

The mobile engagement station travelled to **twelve locations** between June 21 and July 23 gathering feedback on what people envision Cambridge should be like in the future. Using word tiles developed based on the Listening Phase and draft vision statements from the visioning workshops, participants identified **608 visions** for the future of Cambridge.

Mobile Engagement Station Locations



List of Mobile Engagement Station Locations

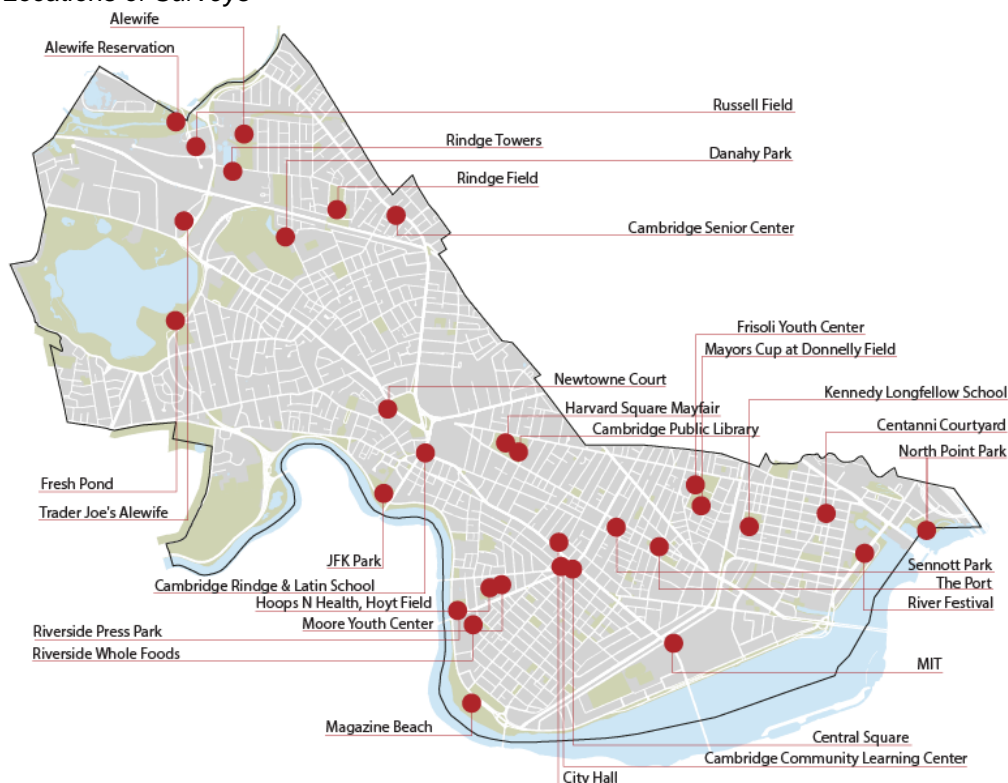
| Date | Location | No. of participants |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 6/21/2016 | Make Music Boston, Magazine Beach | 44 |
| 6/24/2016 | City Dance Party, Central Square | 45 |
| 6/25/2016 | Family Fun Day, Rindge Field | 67 |

| | | |
|--------------|--|------------|
| 6/26/2016 | Pops on the Lawn, Sennott Park | 25 |
| 7/7/2016 | Summer Food Program, Greene Rose Heritage Park | 25 |
| 7/10/2016 | Sunday Parkland Games, Northpoint Park | 25 |
| 7/13/2016 | Salsa Festival, Centanni Courtyard | 19 |
| 7/14/2016 | MYSEP Training, City Hall | 10 |
| 7/19/2016 | Luminarium Dance, Riverside Press Park | 16 |
| 7/20/2016 | StoryWalk, Newtowne Court | 34 |
| 7/22/2016 | MYSEP Checks Pick-Up, CRLS | 95 |
| 7/23/2016 | Kids Fun and Jazz, Magazine Beach | 25 |
| 7/28/2016 | Summer BBQ, Rindge Towers | 15 |
| TOTAL | | 445 |

Surveys

Survey 02: Visioning was administered starting on April 29 both online and in-person. 300 surveys were collected online and 330 surveys were collected in-person, for a total of 630 surveys. Survey 03: Visioning focused on core values and was administered online. 179 surveys were collected. Finally, a survey for non-English speakers in Cambridge was administered in Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Mandarin Chinese, and Haitian Creole. 206 people participated in this survey. All together, **1,015 surveys** were collected during the Visioning Phase.

Locations of Surveys



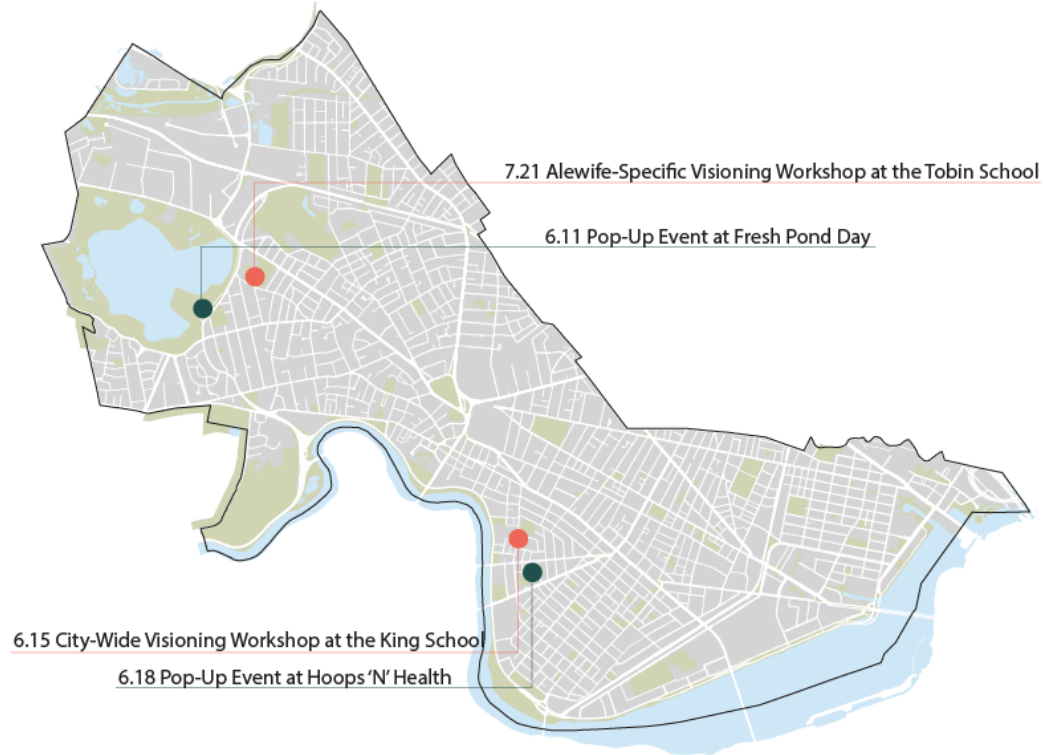
List of Surveying Locations

| Date | Location | No. of participants |
|------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| - | Online (Survey 02) | 300 |
| - | Online (Survey 03) | 179 |
| 3/12/2016 | The Port | 10 |
| 4/2/2016 | Cambridge Senior Center | 2 |
| 4/29/2016 | Cambridge Public Library | 18 |
| 5/7/2016 | Kennedy Longfellow School | 13 |
| 5/11/2016 | MIT | 6 |
| 5/15/2016 | Harvard Square Mayfair | 33 |
| 5/19/2016 | Frisoli Youth Center | 2 |
| 5/20/2016 | Moore Youth Center | 2 |
| 5/21/2016 | Danehy Park | 11 |
| 6/1/2016 | Cambridge Learning Center | 3 |
| 6/2/2016 | Russell Field | 36 |
| 6/4/2016 | River Festival | 14 |
| 6/6/2016 | Trader Joe's Alewife | 3 |
| 6/7/2016 | Alewife | 17 |
| 6/12/2016 | Alewife Reservation | 4 |
| 6/18/2016 | Hoops N Health at Hoyt Field | 4 |
| 6/19/2016 | Mayors Cup at Donnelly Field, East Cambridge | 6 |
| 6/20/2016 | Riverside Whole Foods | 2 |
| 6/2/2016, 6/11/2016 | Fresh Pond | 11 |
| 6/24/2016 | Central Square | 7 |
| 6/25/2016 | Rindge Field | 14 |
| 6/26/2016 | Sennott Park | 15 |
| 7/10/2016 | North Point Park | 7 |
| 7/13/2016 | Centanni Courtyard | 1 |
| 7/14/2016 | City Hall | 6 |
| 7/17/2016 | JFK Park | 11 |
| 7/19/2016 | Riverside Press Park | 6 |
| 7/20/2016 | Newtowne Court | 8 |
| 7/22/2016 | CRLS | 23 |
| 7/23/2016 | Magazine Beach | 19 |
| 7/28/2016 | Rindge Towers | 9 |
| TOTAL | | 860 |

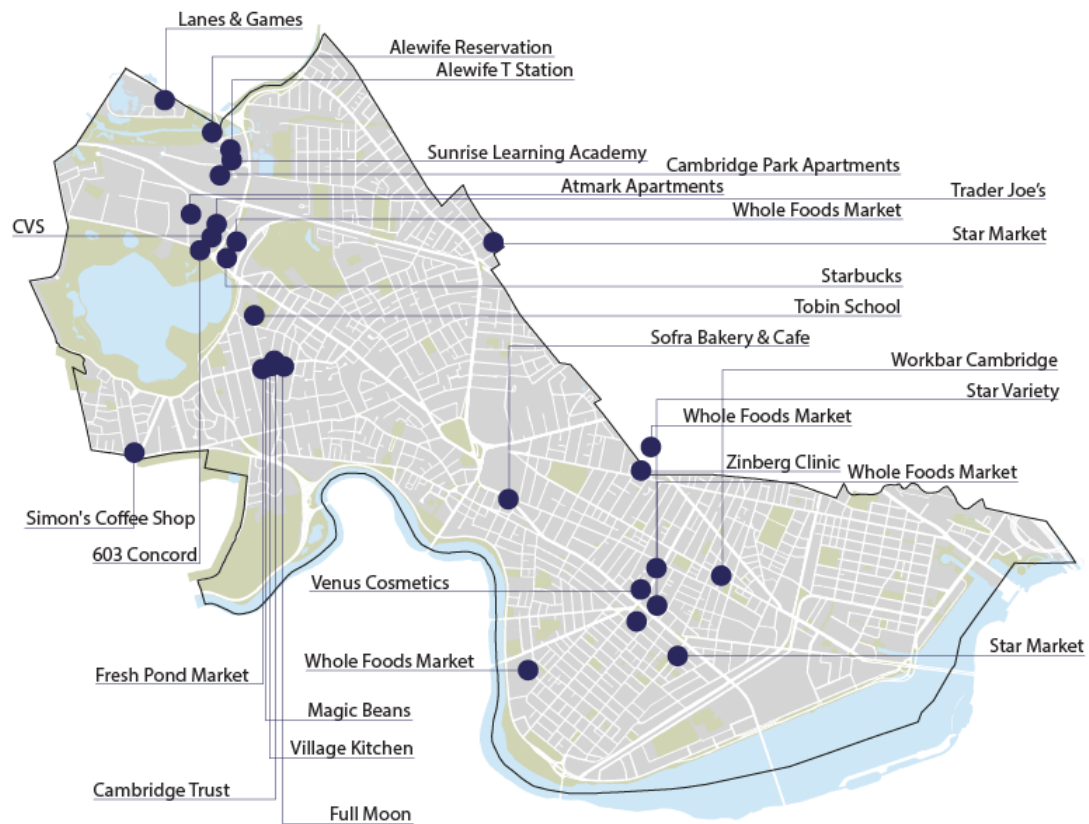
Visioning Workshops & Pop-Up Events

Two Visioning Workshops were held during this phase, a city-wide Visioning Workshop on June 15 and an Alewife-specific Visioning Workshop on July 21. In addition, **two pop-up events** were held. These events featured the mobile engagement station as well as additional visioning activities. The pop-up events were held on June 11 with Fresh Pond Day and on June 18 with Hoops 'N' Health at Hoyt Field.

Locations of Workshops and Pop-Up Events



Locations of Flyering for all Visioning Phase flyers



2. Core Values

The data collected from the first two phases of community engagement -- including 1,443 surveys and 4,191 pieces of feedback from the mobile engagement station -- were distilled into **seven core values** for Envision Cambridge to follow.

2.1 Livability

- People of different income levels, stages in life, and types of households require a **diverse set of housing choices**.
- The community is **affordable and accessible** to a wide range of people.
- The city has a **human scale and character**.
- Connections between neighborhoods are improved by **open space and transit**.
- All who live in or travel to or through Cambridge **feel safe**.
- **Vibrant public spaces** provide opportunities for leisure and social cohesion.

2.2 Equity

- **All residents have access** to robust city services, housing, jobs, and educational opportunities.
- All residents have access to affordable nutritious food and quality health care.
- Strategies are in place to **prevent current and future displacement** of City residents.

2.3 Sustainability and Resiliency

- **Green spaces and natural resources** are protected.
- **Growth is accommodated** through sustainable means.
- **Sustainable modes of transportation** are safe, efficient, convenient, reliable, and accessible to all residents.
- The city's infrastructure, economy, and human services enable the community to **withstand, adapt to, and recover from disasters** and major stresses.

2.4 Economic Opportunity

- All residents find opportunity and stability through **access to jobs, education, training, and livable wages**.
- **Education and workforce training** are available for a range of jobs and emerging industries.
- Cambridge is committed to **innovation and entrepreneurship**.
- Cambridge provides **economic security for all residents** through a vibrant local economy.

2.5 Diversity

- There is a strong **sense of community and pride in place**.
- All residents have access to opportunities for **lifelong learning** in academics, arts, and cultural programs.
- Access to **quality and diverse neighborhood amenities** make the city a good place to raise families.
- The **built environment encourages active lifestyles** and promotes public health and safety.

2.6 Community Health and Wellness

- Cambridge is a place **welcoming to all people**.
- Cambridge is a **vibrant community of diverse races, cultures, and viewpoints**.
- Economic and cultural **diversity is celebrated and protected**.

- An **equitable distribution of opportunities** sustains a diverse city.

2.7 Learning

- Cambridge values education and lifelong learning in academics, arts, and cultural programs.
- The city and community value open-ended exploration for learning and discovery.
- All residents find opportunity through **access to education and training** at all points in their lives.

3. Vision Statement

During the Listening and Visioning Phases, it was necessary to craft a Vision Statement that reflects the aspirations of the community members and those who live, work, study, and play within Cambridge. The below is a working version of this statement, based on the findings of engagement thus far. The Vision Statement is meant to capture the broad range of voices that were heard throughout the engagement process and reflect the Core Values that were established.

Cambridge is an open-minded, forward-looking city with a healthy, rich cultural environment that respects diverse traditions and where neighbors feel proud of their home and connected to each other.

4. Surveys

As a continuation of surveying done in the Listening Phase, two surveys were conducted as part of the Visioning Phase. (Note: Results from Survey 01 can be found in the Listening Phase summary report, *Envision Cambridge, Visioning Phase Findings*.) The graphs below reflect data from the Visioning Surveys, Survey 02 and Survey 03. They show which core values and vision statements emerged as most important to respondents.

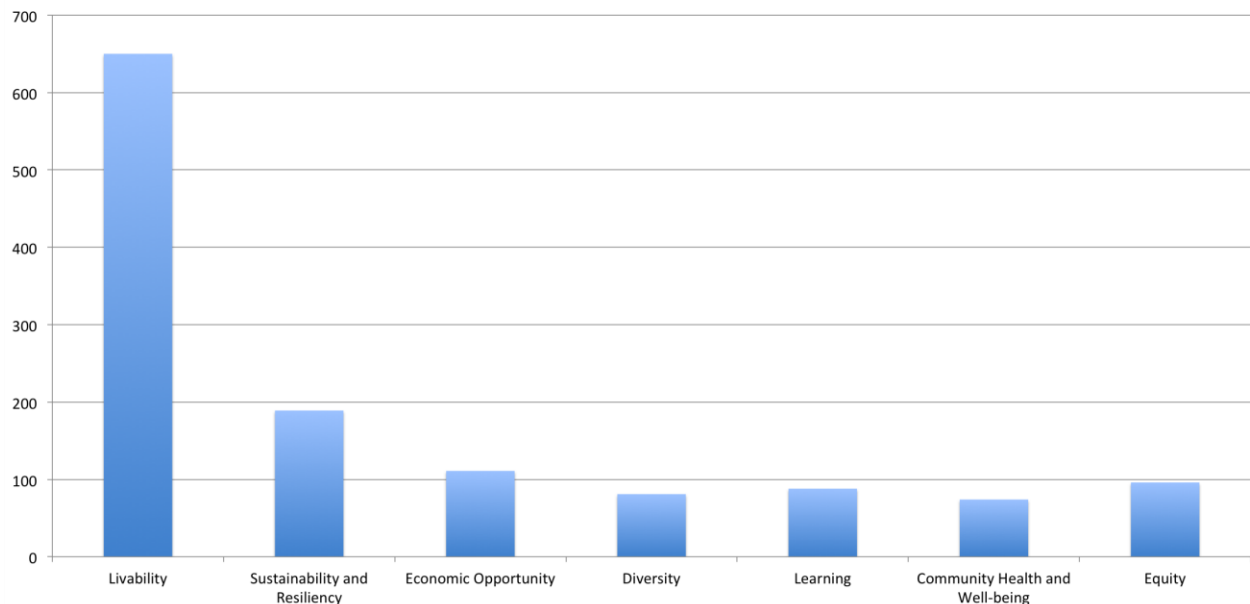
4.1 Survey 02: Core Values

Survey 02 asked respondents about their hopes and visions for Cambridge's future. The survey posed questions about the future of transportation, housing, community interaction, urban form, climate and environment, and economic opportunity. Respondents were also tasked with creating goals for the plan, and specific focus areas for the Alewife / Fresh Pond neighborhood.

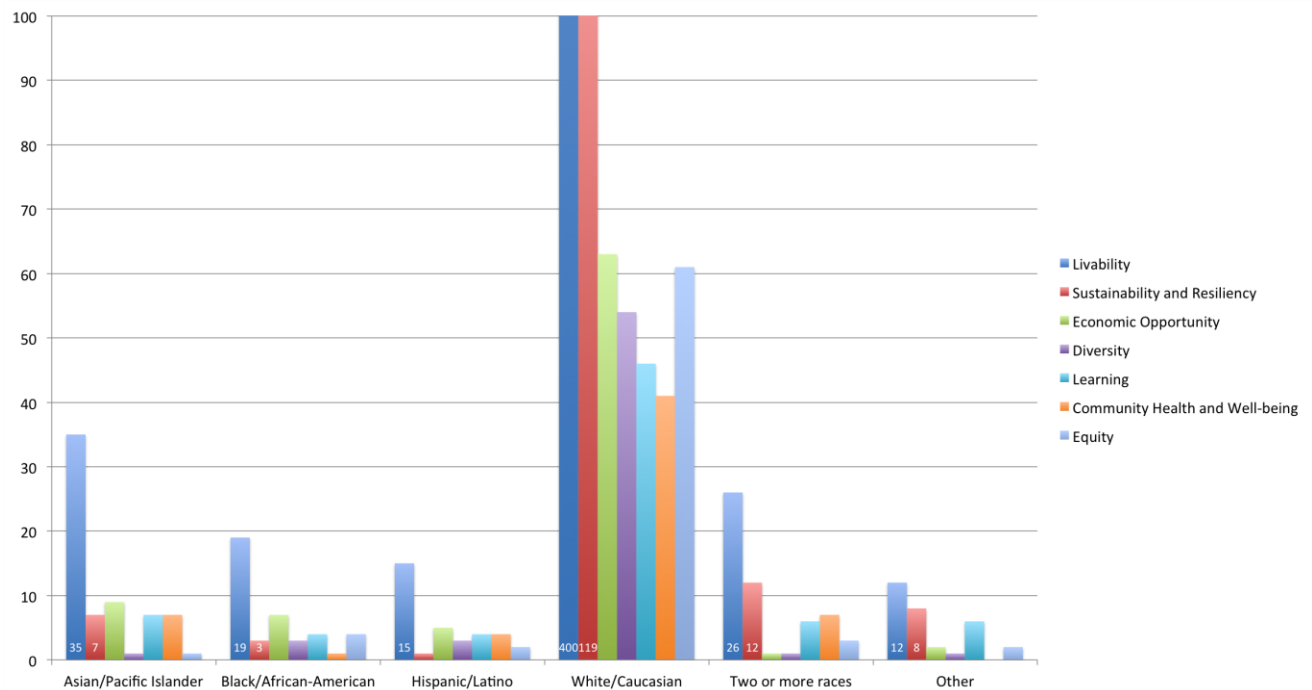
Responses varied based on several factors. A general overview of the survey as well as responses broken down by self-reported socioeconomic and demographic indicators is provided below.

4.1.1 General Findings

"Livability" dominated among the values since it includes concerns about affordability, access to transit, safety and open space. "Sustainability and resiliency" came second with a focus on natural systems in Cambridge, as well as preparing the city's infrastructure for climate change.

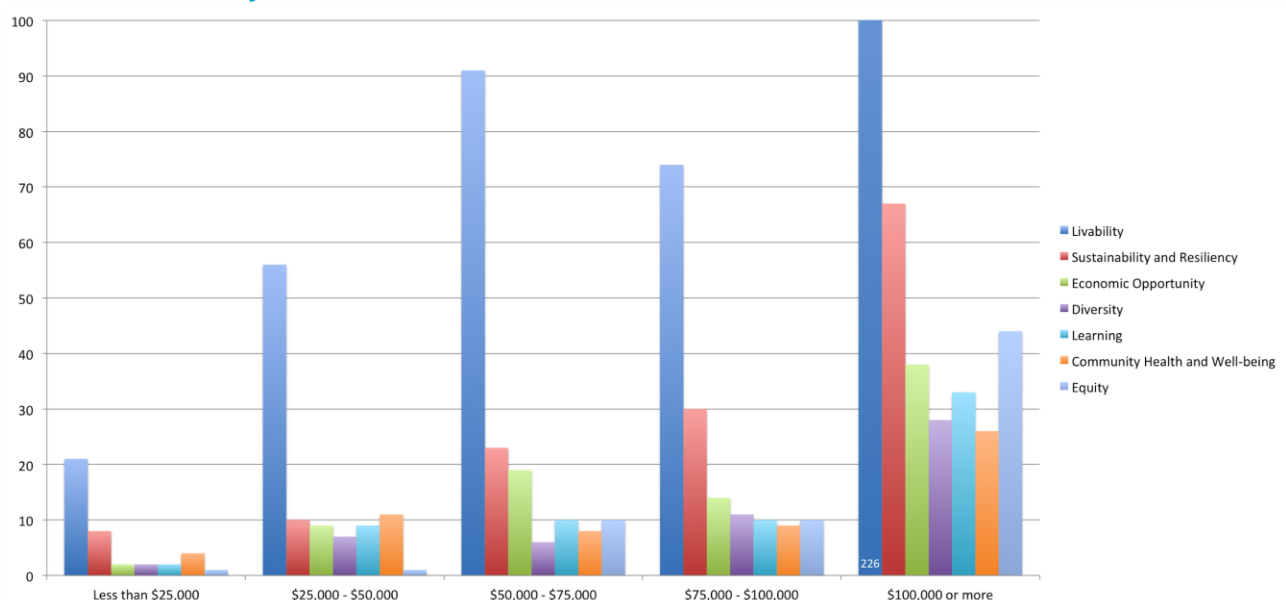


4.1.2 Core Values by Race/Ethnicity



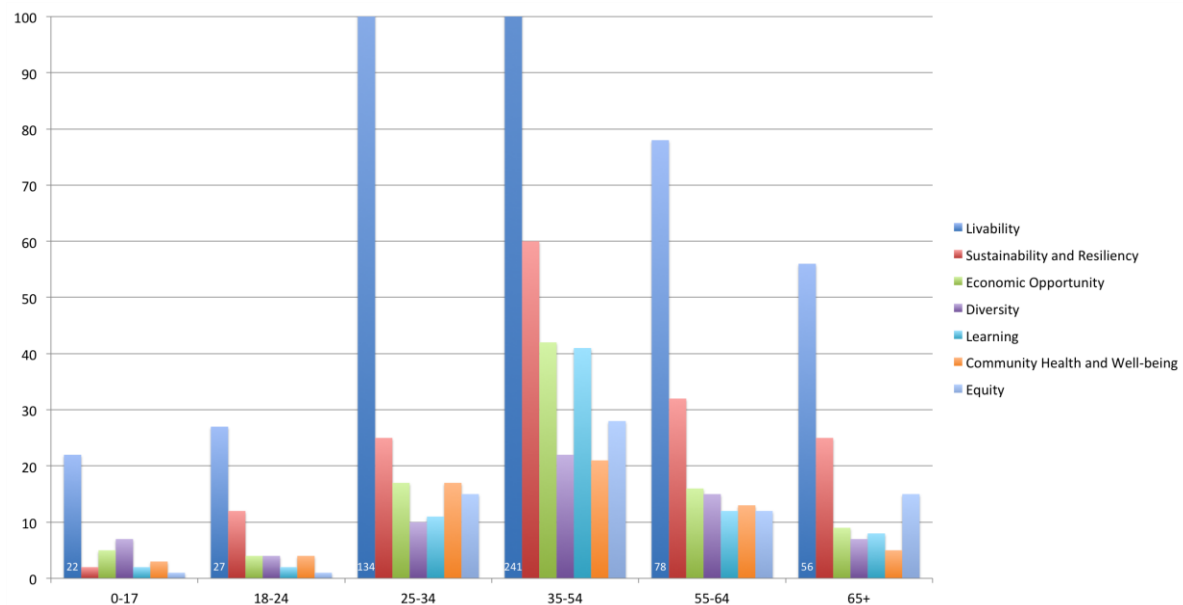
In terms of race, White/Caucasian was the most highly-reported race/ethnicity. (Note: The graph is cut-off at 100 responses to show variability among responses at the lower end of the chart.) White, Two or more races and “Other” reported Sustainability/Resiliency as the second most important value, while Asian, Black and Hispanic respondents chose Economic Opportunity as second most important value. Overall, Diversity and Equity were much more popular with White respondents than non-White respondents. Additionally, Community Health and Well-being were much more popular with non-White than White respondents, with the exception of Black respondents

4.1.3 Core Values by Income



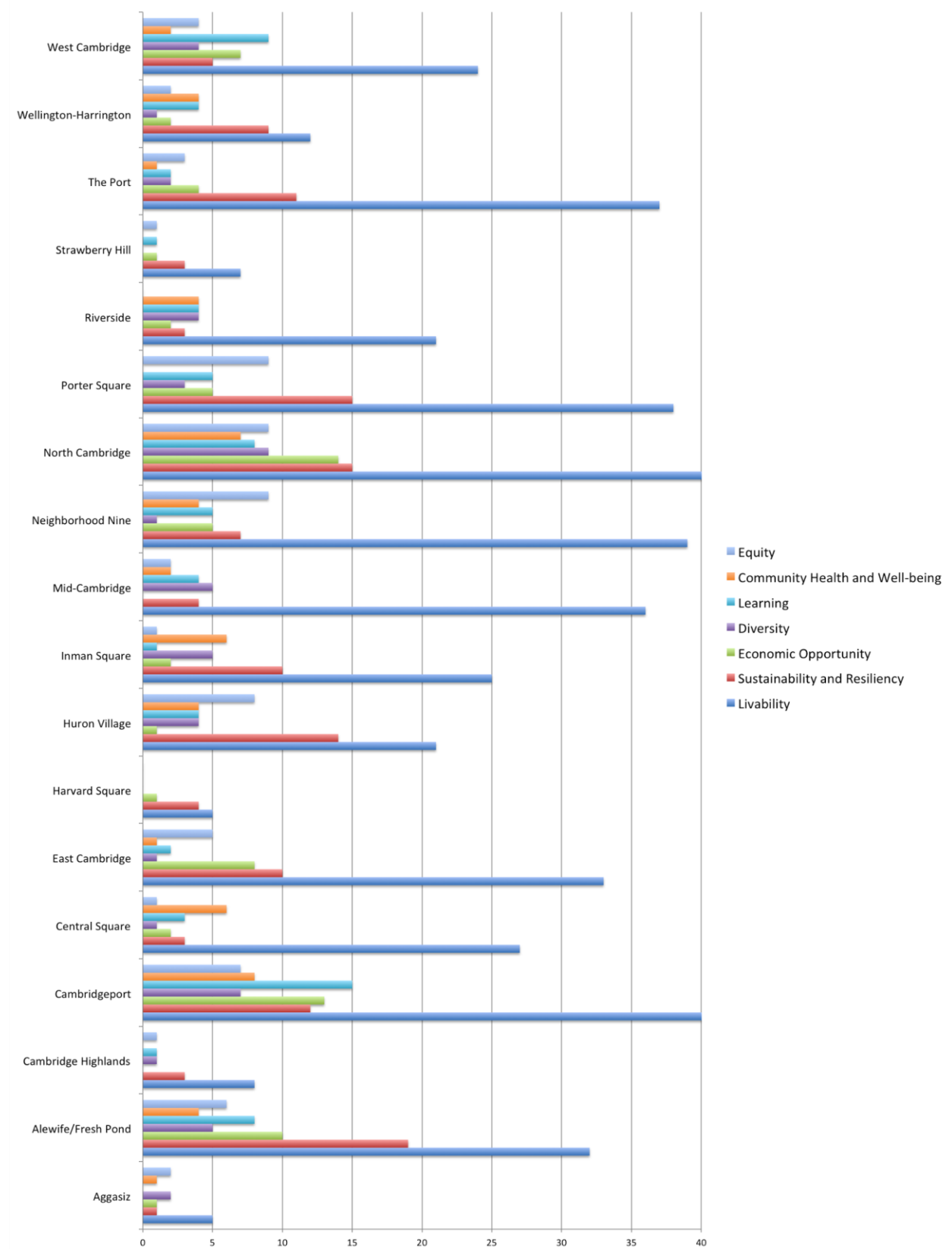
Of those who took the survey, the largest group of respondents who completed it make over \$100,000 annually. Equity is most important to the wealthiest respondents (\$100,000+). Those making between \$25,000 and \$50,000 are the only group that does not report Sustainability/Resiliency as second most important concern, electing Community Health/Well-being instead.

4.1.4 Core Values by Age



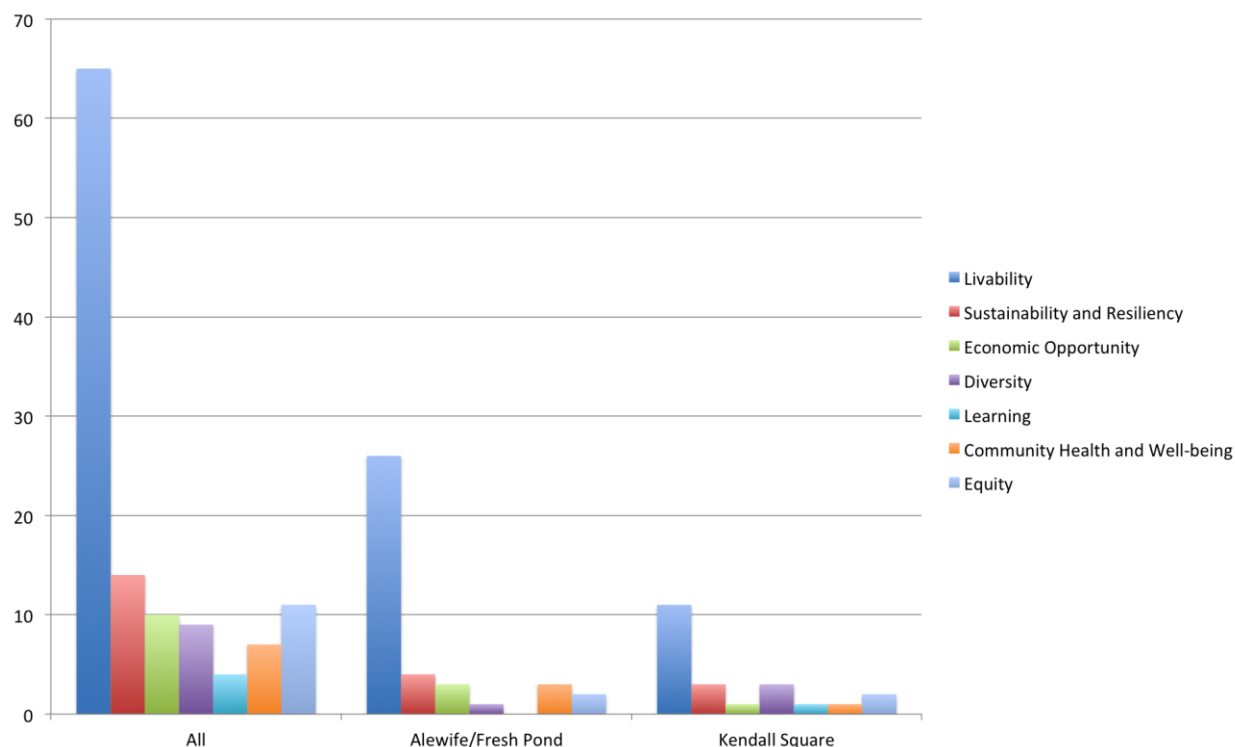
Regardless of age, respondents greatly valued livability. The majority of respondents are between 25 and 52, falling in the 25-34 and 35-54 age ranges. Among the youngest respondents, Diversity is a more important value. Middle-aged respondents highly value Economic Opportunity and Learning, and seniors consider Equity an important value.

4.1.5 Core Values by Neighborhood



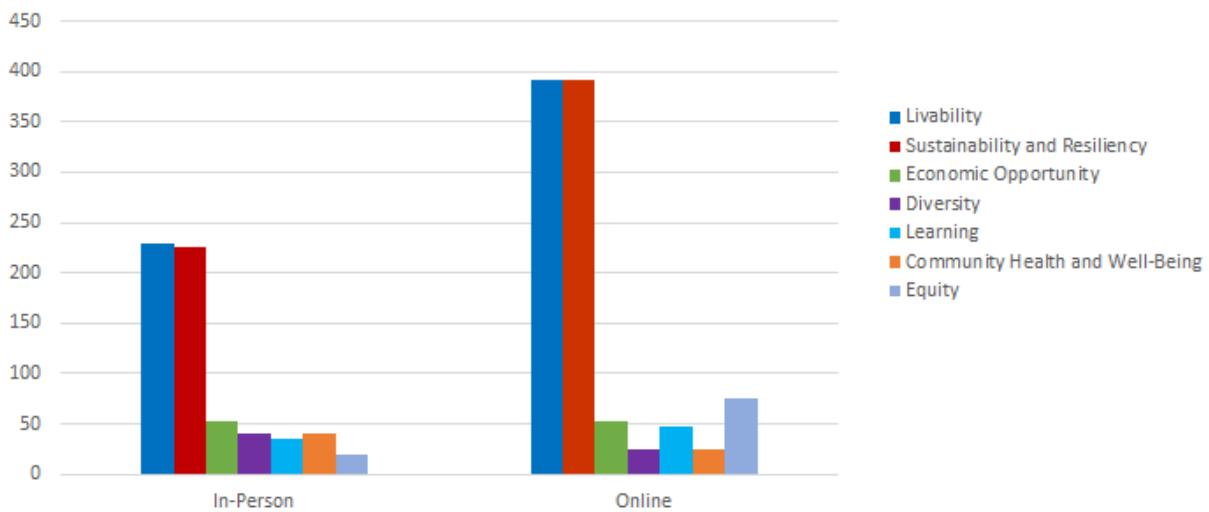
The neighborhoods with the greatest number of respondents were North Cambridge and Cambridgeport. Economic Opportunity was more important to respondents in North Cambridge, Fresh Pond/Alewife, East Cambridge and the Port. Learning was very important in Cambridgeport and West Cambridge. Equity registered as a top concern in Porter Square, Neighborhood Nine and Huron Village, while Community Health and Well-being were very important to residents of Central Square.

4.1.6 Core Values for Non-Resident Workers



This graph shows the top concerns for people that work in Cambridge but are not residents of Cambridge. Overall, this population reflects concerns of Cambridge residents with slightly more concern for Equity and slightly less concern for Economic Opportunity. Workers in Alewife/Fresh Pond are concerned about Community Health and Well-being, as well as Livability and Sustainability/Resiliency. Workers in Kendall Square are concerned about Diversity at higher rates than workers overall.

4.1.7 Core Values by Survey Method (Online vs. In-Person)

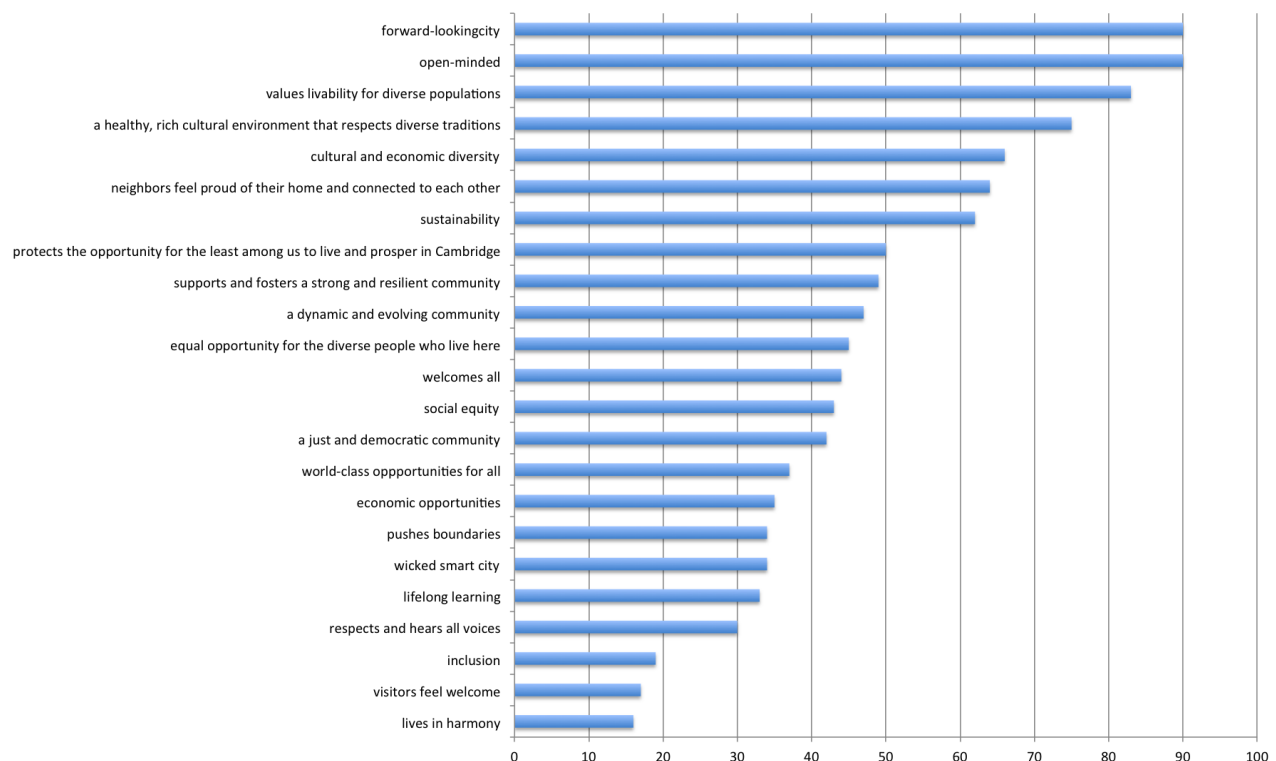


In general, online and in-person surveys yielded fairly similar outcomes. Respondents of both valued Livability and Sustainability and Resiliency the most. The greatest discrepancy between the two survey methods is that online respondents valued Learning and Equity more than in-person survey respondents. The online survey was able to capture a larger audience in terms of total survey counts, compared to the in-person survey. However, there may have been less diversity in the type of respondent than the in-person survey.

4.2 Survey 03: Vision Phrases

Survey 03 asked respondents to identify words or phrases that resonated with them and that they deemed important in a Vision Statement for Cambridge. This survey followed a public Citywide Visioning Workshop on June 15, 2016 at the King School and used words and phrases that came out of the workshop. The survey asked respondents to vote on the words and phrases that are most important to them and were asked to identify other phrases or words they would like to see included in a vision for Cambridge.

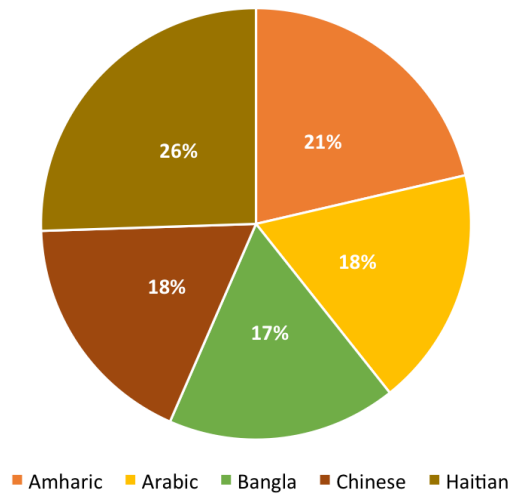
Taken from Survey 03, these words and phrases were used to build the vision statement. “Forward-looking” and “Open-minded” topped the list, but phrases that mention the word “Diversity” and referring to culture were very popular among respondents. “Social Equity” and “Economic Opportunity” fell lower on the list in terms of popularity, near middle of the pack. Lowest priority items include “lives in harmony,” “visitors feel welcome,” and “inclusion.”



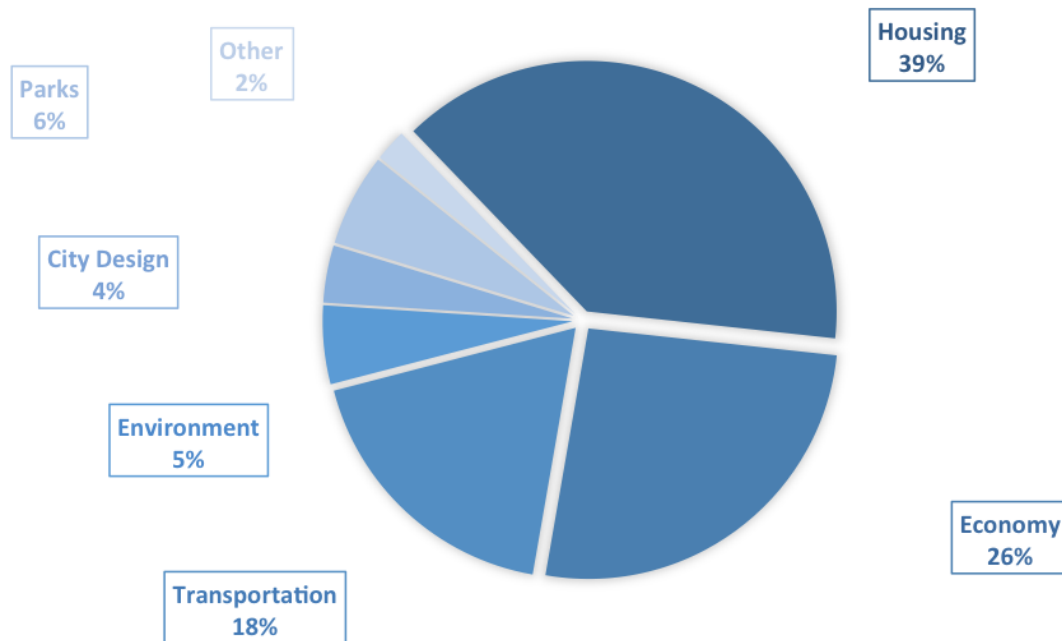
4.3 Non-English Speaker Survey

Surveys were conducted by the Cambridge Engagement Team interns with non-English speakers in Cambridge. Respondents spoke several languages, and were relatively evenly spread across the five languages, reflecting the largest non-English speaking minorities in Cambridge (Amharic, Arabic, Bangla, Chinese, and Haitian). Within the group that was surveyed, Housing emerged as the most important topic to non-English speakers, followed by the Economy.

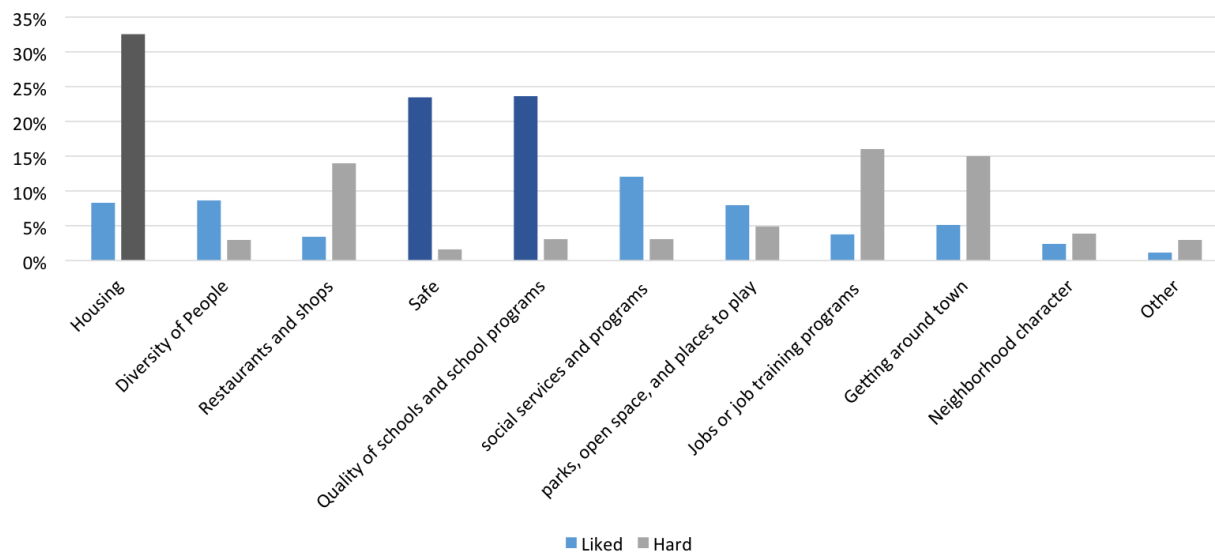
CET Survey Responses



MOST IMPORTANT PLANNING TOPICS

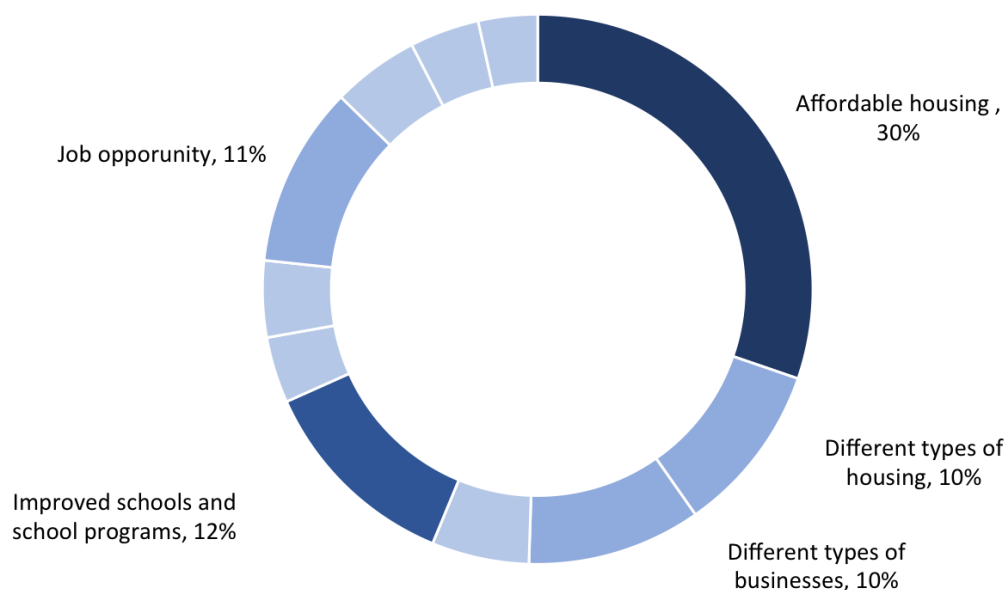


When asked what they like and Cambridge and what is difficult, respondents emphasized housing and the economy. People like how safe the city is and the quality of its schools and school programs. While Housing is consistently regarded as hard, jobs and training programs and getting around town is considered difficult to a lesser extent.



In order to improve Cambridge, respondents felt there should be more affordable housing, more job opportunities, improved schools and school programs and different types of housing and businesses.

What would make Cambridge a Better City?



4.4 Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program Surveys

Envision Cambridge worked with Cambridge high school students through the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP). Activities included a session with the Mobile Engagement Station at the MSYEP check pick-up (see section on Selected Events in the Engagement Station summary below) and a mapping activity with interns working at the Community Development Department of the City of Cambridge. Several themes emerged from these activities, including:

- MSYEP interns like the following about Cambridge:
 - Green and open spaces like Danehy Park and Mt. Auburn Cemetery
 - Public transportation
 - Neighborhoods and squares, including the Port/Area IV, Harvard Square, Porter Square, Kendall Square
 - The diversity of Cambridge
- MSYEP interns did not like the following about Cambridge:
 - Feeling of segregation and concerns of gentrification
 - Deficiencies in public transportation, especially bus routes
 - Disruptions from extended road maintenance projects
 - Unaddressed homelessness
 - Over-crowding
- MSYEP interns had many ideas for how to change Cambridge for the better:
 - Alewife Station should be renovated and downsized and traffic in the area should be organized better
 - Central Square needs more efforts to keep it clean and free of trash
 - The Charles River should be kept clean and free of trash
 - Increase tree plantings and open spaces around the city
 - Improve bike infrastructure with more bike lanes
 - Improve transportation system for cross-town trips, de-emphasize routes that connect close neighborhoods
 - Increase accessibility to Fresh Pond
 - Offer subsidies to small, locally-owned businesses
 - Add more stores to improve malls in Cambridge
 - Combat issues of public intoxication at the Port/Area IV playground
 - Increase parking
 - Increase swimming opportunities
 - Offer wifi hotspots

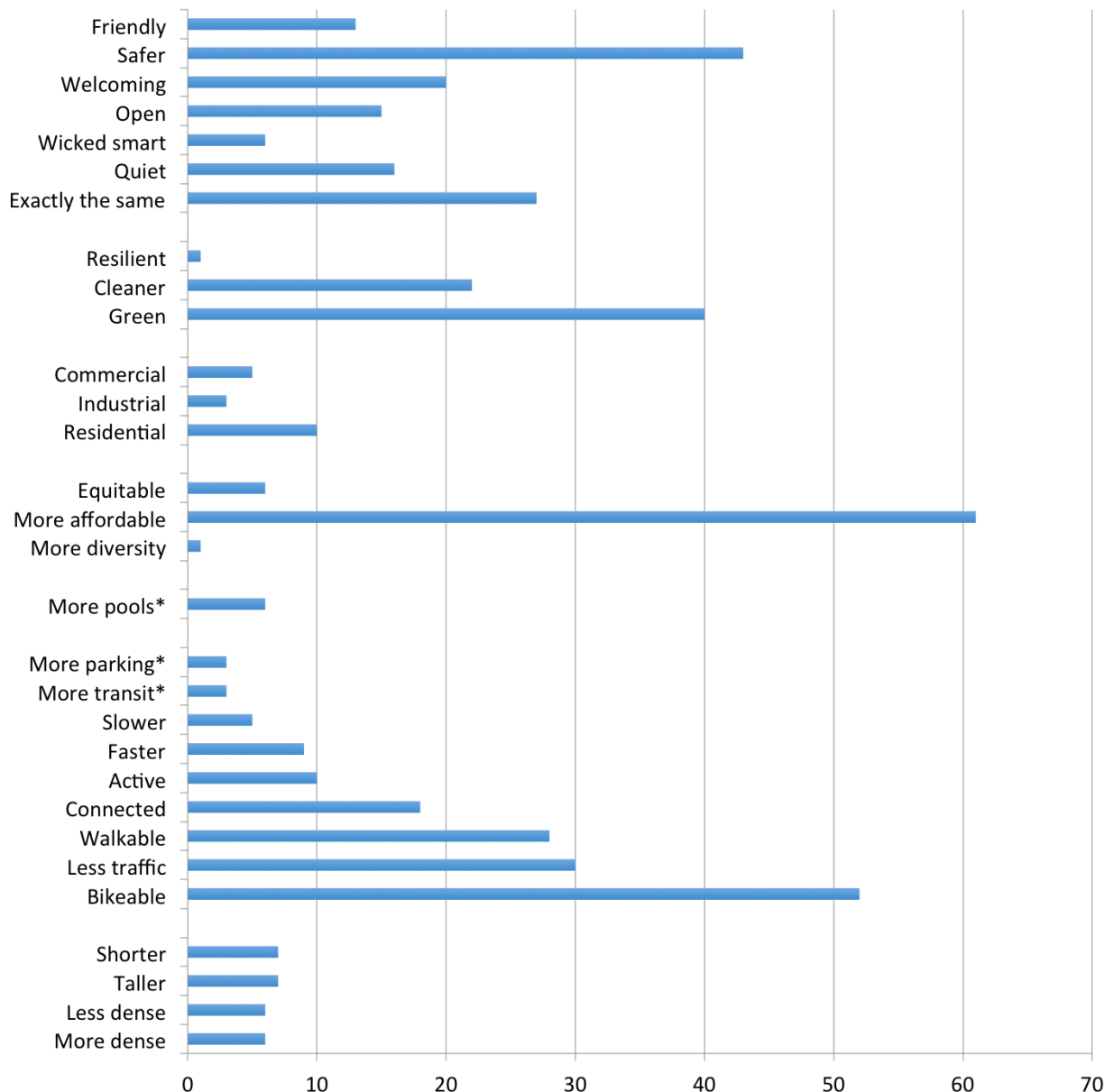
5. Engagement Station Visioning Exercise

The Visioning Exercise made use of the Mobile Engagement Station, asking participants to arrange words and phrases that were identified through the online survey as part of their core values and vision statements. The magnetic tiles were placed on geographic locations that participants deemed significant or that requires attention in the planning process. All data was captured via photograph and recorded, then mapped for analysis.



5.1 General Findings

- The most popular vision words throughout all of the events are listed below. Those with an asterisk (*) are words that were not written on tiles, but emerged as popular nevertheless (these included words such as “pools,” “parking,” and “transit”).
- Most popular: More Affordable, Bikeable, Safer, Green
- Also popular: Less traffic, Walkable, Cleaner, Exactly the same



5.2 Results from Selected Events

Below are mapped findings from three visioning events. They were selected as a representative sample of overall findings in the Visioning Phase due to a high degree of racial, income, and age diversity at each event.

The Make Music Boston event took place at Magazine Beach on June 21, 2016. It total, 44 people participated in the activity and 74 Vision Words were placed on the Mobile Engagement Station. Themes that emerged include: a desire for less traffic on major roadways; greater affordability city-wide; less density and height, especially between Central Square and Kendall/MIT; a cleaner Harvard Square; and lastly, considering the location of the event, a more walkable, bikeable, and welcome area around Magazine Beach.

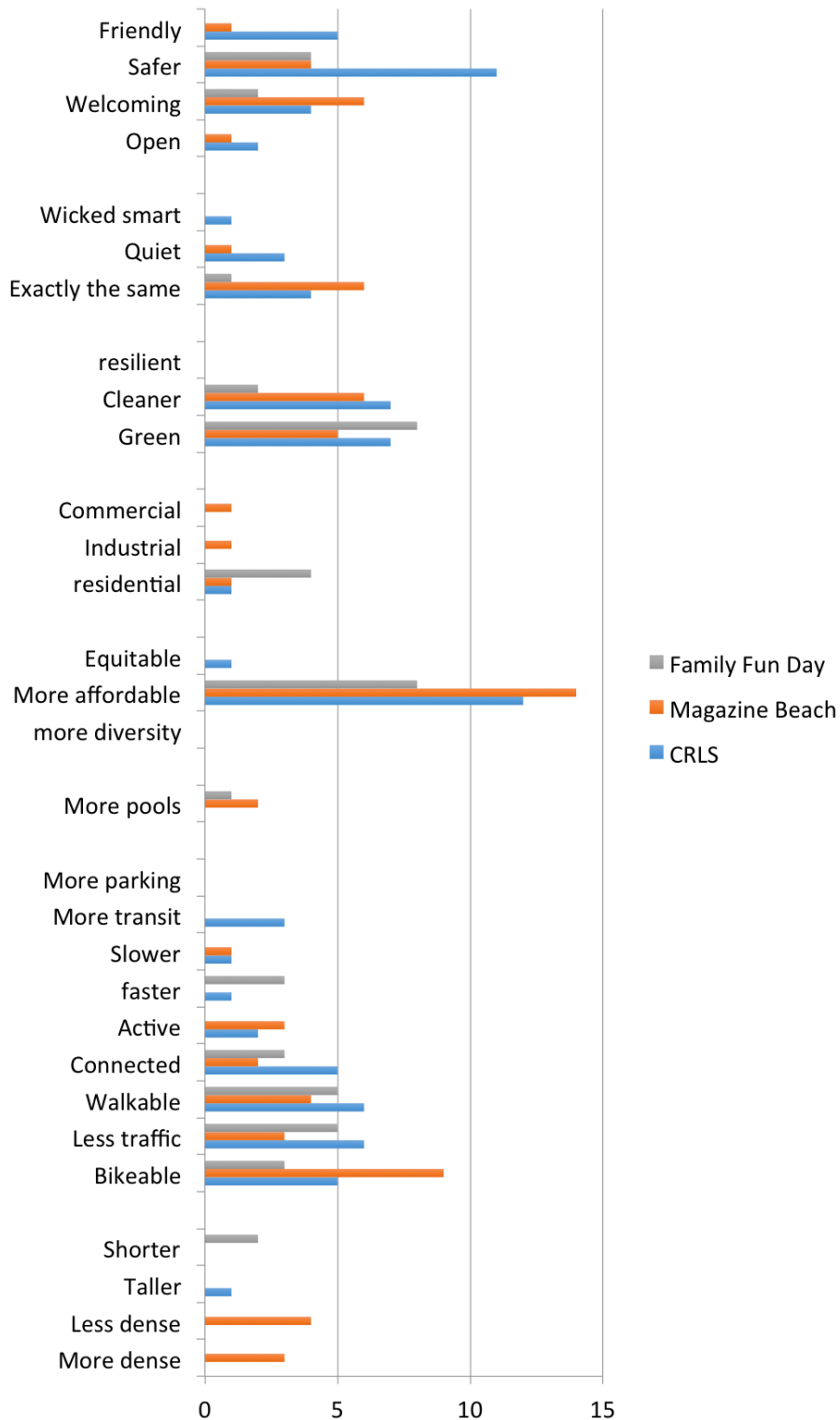


The Family Fun Day event took place on Rindge Field on June 25, 2016. 67 people participated in the activity, placing 56 tiles on the Engagement Station. Themes that emerged from this event include: less traffic between Central Square and Kendall/MIT; a desire for more affordability city-wide; more green space between Central and Kendall/MIT; and greater walkability and connectivity surrounding Alewife.



Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program Paycheck Pick-Up

The Summer Youth Employment Program Paycheck Pick-Up took place Cambridge Rindge and Latin Field House on July 22, 2016. This was the most well-attended event, with 95 individuals placing 106 Vision Words on the table. Overall themes that emerged from this session include: greater connectivity to and around Alewife; greater affordability, especially in Harvard Square; a quieter and safer MIT/Kendall Square with less crime; a more welcoming West Cambridge; at least two mentions of possible transit extensions; and specific suggestions for locations of a new basketball courts and fountains, removal of a fence, and working streetlights.



Safety remained a top priority for participants, along with affordability and quality of life aspects such as walkability and biking. “Pools,” a term that was not included originally as a Vision Word, emerged a few times as a desire in two out of the three events.

5.4 Location-Specific Findings

The placement of Vision Words tend to cluster in particular locations, suggesting several location-specific findings. Outlined below are the most common findings from not only the three selected events, but all engagement events in which the Visioning Exercise was performed at the Engagement Station

Harvard Square

A common concern was the cleanliness in Harvard Square and desire to make it cleaner. Bikeability and walkability were concerns along with a desire to make Harvard Square more open. Affordability, a common city-wide concern, was raised particularly in this location.

Alewife

Alewife received particular attention for its connectivity issues. Participants desire less traffic and envision the area as a place more connected to the remainder of Cambridge and more walkable. Traffic also arose as a concern in this location. Additional information from an Alewife-specific workshop can be found in the following section.

Central Square

Central Square and the greater neighborhood was another location for which participants had a vision for improvement. More commercial activity was desired in the area and participants envisioned the area surrounding the T station in particular as cleaner and safer. Traffic was a concern in Central Square as well.

Kendall/MIT

Participants envisioned Kendall/MIT as an area that could be more walkable and more welcoming. Safety emerged as a concern here as well. This was one of the only neighborhoods in which participants stressed a desire for contained density and height in the built form.

6. Visioning Workshops & Pop-Up Events

Four Visioning Workshops and Pop-Up Events were conducted over the course of a month. All of the findings from these Workshops is incorporated in the summary of the Engagement Station Visioning Exercises. However, a detailed description of the Alewife-specific and Citywide Visioning Workshops can be found below.

Visioning Public Workshop

June 15, 2016 | King School

Introduction

After a several-month-long process in early 2016 to listen to community members and research their values and aspirations for the City, Envision Cambridge began the visioning phase of the project to establish a City-wide vision to guide the planning process. On June 15, 2016, the City held a public meeting at the King School for this purpose. At this meeting, The Envision Cambridge team shared the core values that it identified from its listening phase and presented draft vision statements that built on those values.

Once they are developed, the vision—“what we want to be”—and the core values—“what is important to us”—will be used to determine the focus areas on which the plan will concentrate. Those focus areas will inform the goals and strategies of the plan, which in turn will determine the actions the City will take and the indicators and targets towards which it will aim.

Below is a summary of the discussions at the June 15 public meeting on the City's core values and vision.

Core Values

Meeting participants were divided into six groups, each of which was assigned to discuss one core value, either 1) Livability, 2) Equity, 3) Sustainability and Resiliency, 4) Economic Opportunity, 5) Community Well-being, or 6) Diversity. In these small groups, participants analyzed and critiqued the statements about their core value that were provided as a starting point as well as shared their own understanding of the core value and their thoughts on what was most relevant to emphasize about the value. In small groups, the participants were also given the opportunity to mention any other value that they felt should be considered “core” to Cambridge's vision that was not included in the list of six. The group as a whole suggested adding “Learning” as a core value, which the planning team subsequently adopted as a seventh value following this meeting.

The following is a summary of the six core value discussion groups:

Livability

The following statements were provided as an initial working descriptor of Livability:

- People of different income levels, stages in life, and types of households require a diverse set of housing choices.
- The community is affordable and accessible to a wide range of people.
- The city has a human scale and character.
- Connections between neighborhoods are improved by open space and transit.

- All who live in or travel to or through Cambridge feel safe.
- Vibrant public spaces provide opportunities for leisure and social cohesion.

Participants provided the following feedback on the concept of livability as a core value:

- Several participants commented that concepts of “human scale” and “character” felt like jargon and were unclear. They emphasized the need for access to useful resources that everyone uses (i.e. grocery stores, banks, etc.) in neighborhoods.
- They also called for more clarity around the use of the word “community” in the core value description. They commented that activating community—and not just connecting existing community—should be among Cambridge’s goals. Rather than simply aiming for social cohesion, the City should aim to improve social justice and move the community forward through its use of the City’s resources.
- In discussions of common spaces, participants emphasized the need to think broadly about the range of uses, including for recreation and work, when working to create vibrant public spaces.
- They emphasized that open space improves neighborhoods and does more than just serve as a connection between areas.
- Feeling safe and feeling empowered to determine the future of the City were highlighted as necessary components of livability.

Equity

The following statements were provided as an initial working descriptor of equity:

- All residents have access to robust city services, housing, jobs, and educational opportunities.
- All residents have access to affordable nutritious food and quality health care.
- Strategies are in place to prevent current and future displacement of City residents.

Participants provided the following feedback on the concept of equity as a core value:

- Equity means equal access to resources and services, including a range of transportation options, housing, schools, jobs, recreation and open spaces, stores, food and water security, public safety, etc.
- Equity means that resources are distributed evenly throughout the city
- Diversity, balance, and inclusion are connected to equity. People of different backgrounds and means should be afforded the same options.

Sustainability and Resiliency

The following statements were provided as an initial working descriptor of sustainability and resiliency:

- Green spaces and natural resources are protected.
- Growth is accommodated through sustainable means.
- Sustainable modes of transportation are safe, efficient, convenient, reliable, and accessible to all residents.
- The city’s infrastructure, economy, and human services enable the community to withstand, adapt to, and recover from disasters and major stresses.

Participants provided the following feedback on the concept of sustainability and resiliency as a core value:

- The core value ought not to be so vague or attempt to address everything such that it doesn’t suggest anything specifically and isn’t operational.

- Environmental sustainability and resiliency is an important aspect of this value, including food systems planning, assuring good access to healthy affordable food, prioritizing green space, being mindful of energy efficiency in the built environment, and retrofitting buildings.
- Provide critical resources, including transportation options, especially for those who are most vulnerable.

Economic Opportunity

The following statements were provided as an initial working descriptor of economic opportunity:

- All residents find opportunity and stability through access to jobs, education, training, and livable wages.
- Education and workforce training are available for a range of jobs and emerging industries.
- Cambridge is committed to innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Cambridge provides economic security for all residents through a vibrant local economy.

Participants provided the following feedback on the concept of economic opportunity as a core value:

- Participants called for a demand-side approach to setting wages to provide all with access to basic needs. Economic opportunity policies need to address poverty in the City and need to target specific populations in need, such as young people, elderly, and families.
- The City needs to create an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and innovation, including reduction of red tape, local government support of small businesses, and policies that are adaptive to meet the needs of business at multiple scales, including franchises and small businesses.
- Workforce education should form a real jobs pipeline, not just training. K-12 education should prepare children for the Cambridge economy. More opportunities for high school internships should be developed.

Community Well-being

The following statements were provided as an initial working descriptor of community well-being:

- There is a strong sense of community and pride in place.
- All residents have access to opportunities for lifelong learning in academics, arts, and cultural programs.
- Access to quality and diverse neighborhood amenities make the city a good place to raise families.
- The built environment encourages active lifestyles and promotes public health and safety.

Participants provided the following feedback on the concept of community well-being as a core value:

- Community well-being comes from people engaging with each other and lifting each other up in times of need. To have community well-being is to have neighborliness and activities that bring people together within and across neighborhoods in the City.
- Civic engagement, community activism, and a sense of being able to work to improve and be proud of one's own community are ingredients of community well-being.
- Housing security, a feeling of safety, and protection from undue invasions of personal privacy contribute to community well-being.
- Central places to gather are key to forming and maintaining a healthy community.

Diversity

The following statements were provided as an initial working descriptor of diversity:

- Cambridge is a place welcoming to all people.
- Cambridge is a vibrant community of diverse races, cultures, and viewpoints.

- Economic and cultural diversity is celebrated and protected.
- An equitable distribution of opportunities sustains a diverse city.

Participants provided the following feedback on the concept of diversity as a core value:

- Diversity should be understood and respected in all senses—racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, etc.
- Valuing diversity means protecting individuals and populations from discrimination based on their differences.
- Participants saw finding common values across differences as important to valuing diversity. [The] “vibrancy [of our diversity] comes from open-hearted mingling of people who are equal and different.” People from all walks of life should feel a sense of belonging. Arts and cultural institutions should reflect the diversity of the community.
- Diversity of ideas and thought is important, including respecting the perspectives of people educated in non-traditional ways and of kids.
- The City should provide services tailored to diversity of its community. This means getting diverse input into the City’s activities and priorities, and having a range of options—not just catering to the lowest common denominator.

Learning

The participants as a group recommended the addition of “learning” to the previous six core values during the course of the workshop.

Vision Statements

After the six small groups discussed their assigned core values, they then discussed the overall vision statement templates that the planning team put forward and generated their own vision statements, first as individuals and then among their small groups.

The six small groups developed the following vision statements:

- Group 1:
 - Cambridge will be a strong and diverse community in which locals and visitors are enriched by its livability, sustainability, equity, and economic opportunity.
 - Cambridge aspires to be a city where we work together to build a just and democratic community where all voices are respected and heard, and work to always protect the opportunity for the least among us to live and prosper in Cambridge.
- Group 2: Cambridge is a dynamic and evolving community that provides world-class opportunities for all and demands inclusion, cultural and economic diversity, and embraces lifelong learning.
- Group 3: Could not find vision statements agreed upon by the group members in notes.
- Group 4: Cambridge is a wicked smart city that pushes boundaries and welcomes all.
- Group 5: Cambridge will be an open-minded, forward-looking city, where visitors feel welcome, neighbors feel proud of their home and connected to one another.
- Group 6: Cambridge will actively support and foster a strong and resilient community that values livability for diverse population, social equity, economic opportunities, and sustainability.

Alewife Visioning Public Workshop

July 21, 2016 | Tobin School

Introduction

Background on the process

After a several-month-long process in early 2016 to listen to community members and research their values and aspirations for the City, Envision Cambridge began the visioning phase of the project to establish a City-wide vision to guide the planning process. The City first held a city-wide visioning meeting in June and then held an Alewife-specific visioning meeting on July 21, 2016. At this Alewife meeting, participants discussed how Cambridge's core values applied to the Alewife context.

How information gathered from this meeting will be used

Analysis of these conversations on how the City's core values are manifested in Alewife will be used to determine the focus areas on which the Alewife plan will concentrate and will inform the planning for Alewife in the Citywide plan. Those focus areas will inform the goals and strategies of the plan, which in turn will determine the actions the City will take and the indicators and targets towards which it will aim for both Alewife and the City as a whole.

Meeting format

At the July 21 meeting, Envision Cambridge's consultant team described past planning efforts in Alewife, existing conditions including traffic congestion levels, transit and mobility options, flooding risk (including vulnerability due to climate change), temperature projections, land use, and land ownership to help participants understand previous goals for the area and assess where Alewife stands on a range of issues.

Participants were assigned to seven small groups, each of which discussed one of the following core values: Livability, Equity, Sustainability and Resiliency, Economic Opportunity, Community Health and Well-being, Diversity, and Learning. In these groups, participants were first asked to describe a place, event, or activity in Cambridge that reflected the value they were assigned to discuss. Participants then discussed their perceptions the value in relation to Alewife. They then moved to discussing goals and aspirations for how Alewife might more fully match their value. Finally, participants worked to define strategies to achieve the goals they identified, by drawing on a map of Alewife any changes or developments they would like to see in the area. Each discussion group then summarized the the goals they had identified and reported these summaries to the group at large.

Below is a summary of these small group discussions.

Core Values

Livability

Seven (7) participants discussed livability.

Participants identified a range of spaces with the concept of livability, including many public spaces. Participants commented especially on parks (particularly Danahy Park in Alewife), places for youth to play sports, the Squares (especially those connected to the T), the MBTA broadly, and housing developments that provided a large proportion of affordable housing.

In discussing Alewife specifically, participants felt that the area embodied livability in some ways and not in others. Broadly, they commented that Alewife's potential to feel livable was compromised by its disconnectedness and that many parts of Alewife are hard to access without a car, and even with a car

transportation is difficult. They commented on the value of places such as Danehy Park and the Alewife Reservation and paths, but lamented that they were very hard to access. One commented that many of the amenities in Alewife felt as if they were designed for commuters, and not those who lived there. Participants specifically highlighted the triangle and quadrangle as areas that were not livable, saying that the developments there felt inhospitable.

Participants identified increased safety and more character and beauty in the area as goals for improving livability in Alewife. Transportation and connections within Alewife and into the rest of Cambridge were important to participants. One participant suggested a shuttle bus going around the area to increase access. Another proposed more trees and green space, especially upon entering Cambridge to make the first impression more pleasing. Several called for better walkability, including a ramp or stair from the Parkway going to the mall. Several commented on the need for more public amenities, including public art, community events, a farmers' market, and some kind of public institution, park and/or hub, especially in the quadrangle/triangle areas. On the whole, the group aimed to make Alewife an appealing destination rather than place that drivers passed through.

Equity

Six (6) participants discussed equity.

Participants identified affordable housing, the public high school, the universities, public events and public amenities such as the Public Library as potential drivers of equity. The limitations and costs of transportation, whether public or not, were seen as obstacles in working towards equity.

Participants commented that many of the features they identified that can improve equity in the community were absent in Alewife. They noted that the limitations on transportation inside Alewife, unfriendliness to pedestrians and bicyclists, the disconnectedness of different parts of the area, and the lack of public spaces and amenities (such as playgrounds or a public square, etc.) were obstacles to improving equity.

For the group, increasing connections among areas and increasing access to amenities was a key strategy proposed to improve equity in Alewife. They suggested creating a centralized square, construction of bridges to connect areas that were isolated from each other by traffic, a public institution such as a YWCA, and more appealing commercial and retail spaces that were easily accessible by pedestrians or bicyclists. They believed that these developments would help create more opportunities for those in the area to come together.

Sustainability and Resiliency

Eight (8) participants discussed sustainability and resiliency.

Participants commented on a wide range of ways in which Cambridge's vision for sustainability is "at the forefront of the country," including ecological restoration projects, public funding for sustainability initiatives such as public composting and recycling, good trees and parks, the Cambridge Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, fairly good transit and a large percentage of the population walking or biking to work. They also commented on aspects of social resiliency where Cambridge was strong, including mixed-income and -ethnicity neighborhoods, inter-faith relationships, and police training on stress reduction and leadership in times of stress.

In discussing Alewife specifically, participants noted that the resiliency achieved by integrating people from different backgrounds was compromised by the structural obstacles of new developments in Alewife,

which tend to be walled off from their neighbors and other parts of the area. They also commented that there was untapped potential to improve green spaces, such as in the Russell Field area. Some commented on the lack of investment in infrastructure, especially regarding transportation and efforts to manage traffic. They felt that more attention is needed on the regional effects and impacts of traffic.

Members of the group were in disagreement about the role of housing in Alewife vis-à-vis sustainability and resiliency. Some thought that more housing was needed, but needed to be built thoughtfully to address issues in previous residential developments, while another thought that building more housing in an ecologically sensitive and flood-prone area such as Alewife was irresponsible in the first place and that more green space should be prioritized.

Participants' goals for Alewife were to create "human-scale" development that was focused on the residents of the community, not those who travelled through. They aimed for development that is more connected to open spaces, infrastructure, and amenities. They also emphasized the need to take the sustainability challenges of flooding and other issues in Alewife seriously and take bold action to address them. As strategies, participants suggested more a fine-grained network of roads and pathways through neighborhoods, especially in new developments in the quadrangle and triangle. They called for better transportation-related infrastructure, including bike lanes and traffic calming, as well as improved green space, street trees, and storm water management.

Economic Opportunity

Five (5) participants discussed economic opportunity.

Participants identified the universities, the Alewife Quadrangle, some of the Squares, and other commercial/retail hubs in Cambridge with economic opportunity for the City. Affordability and accessibility were important components of economic opportunity for the participants. In Alewife specifically, participants noted that the Alewife T station promoted economic opportunity, but that that other aspects of the built environment in Alewife detracted from economic opportunity for the area. They commented that the quadrangle catered to a niche demographic and industry (i.e. tech start-ups) and that the lack of walkability in the area proved an obstacle to opportunity.

To increase economic opportunity in Alewife, participants set goals of higher density, creative building design to incorporate green spaces, more networked neighborhoods with more character, and improved transportation. Their specific proposed strategies included a bridge over the train tracks to improve access to businesses, an Alewife-centric public transit system, City assistance and incentives to encourage businesses to come to Alewife, and promoting Alewife as a green tech and innovation district.

Community Health and Well-being

Seven (7) participants discussed community health and well-being.

Participants identified a wide range of Cambridge places and programs with community health and well-being, including parks, community centers, youth centers and programs, conservation land, the City's commitment to alternative modes of transportation, and public spaces such as the library, squares, and community gardens.

Participants commented that many of these features that contributed to Cambridge's community health and well-being over all were missing in Alewife. They saw Alewife as lacking in attractive public spaces, walkable commercial hubs, and green space. They felt it was inaccessible to non-motorists and did not invite community. One commented that there were no places for community members to bump into one

another. They suggested developing bicycle and pedestrian pathways and perhaps a bridge to cross traffic, encouraged efforts to bring in businesses and pop-ups that would facilitate public congregating and socializing, and the location of more public amenities (such as libraries and parks, etc.) in the area.

Diversity

Five (5) participants discussed diversity.

Participants commented that for the most part, they felt Alewife did not reflect the value of diversity. With respect to retail spaces, participants commented that the limited number of options and lack of independent/small businesses meant that the options did not cater to a diverse population. They commented that the majority of racial and income diversity in the area was in the Rindge Towers, but because it was so concentrated it amounted to segregation. Participants saw the transportation system as primarily serving those with cars and commented that this presented an obstacle to non-motorists. They commented that the lack of schools in Alewife meant the absence of a typical point of cultural and racial diversity. Participants mentioned Danehy Park as an exception to their perception of Alewife, saying that it attracted a diverse set of people doing different activities.

Participants said that they aspired to improved transportation, making travel by any mode easy in Alewife. They hoped this would attract people to come to Alewife for leisure and make it easier for a wider range of businesses to open in the area. Ideally, this would lead to a more diverse and attractive set of retail options as well as a wider range of job options for people with a diverse range of skillsets. One participant suggested tax breaks or other incentives for small businesses in the area. Participants also called for improved access to Fresh Pond and Alewife Preservation, which have the potential to be destinations in Alewife. Finally, participants called for development that had a more human-scale aesthetic to be more attractive and feel more welcoming to a broad range of people. The development of a Square in Alewife was proposed.

Learning

Seven (7) participants discussed learning.

Participants identified a wide range of places, events, and activities with learning in Cambridge, including the following: school fairs, science week and public science projects (such as rocket building), the quality and range of school options, inter-generational learning opportunities (e.g. between nursing homes and schools), farmers' markets, participatory budgeting and civic engagement, public nature spaces, libraries, and public festivals, among others.

With respect to Alewife specifically, they commented that the lack of accessibility and transportation options made it difficult for people to take advantage of these types of opportunities in Alewife or Cambridge broadly. Participants considered public green spaces such as Danehy Park valuable learning spaces, and called for more such spaces and more learning offerings in public spaces.

As goals for furthering learning in Alewife, participants advocated for schools more often using outdoor spaces for play and learning, more inter-generational learning opportunities, a public gathering space (such as a square) for interaction among people, the construction of a community center, better pedestrian and alternative transportation options to facilitate connections, and a good network through which to publicize events. Participants proposed the following strategies: a circulator bus to help people get around the area, the creation of one or more squares in which the community could gather, and a cultural/ecological "walk" to activate people's awareness of offerings in the area.

7. Focus Groups

In October and November of 2016, the Envision Cambridge planning team worked with the Cambridge Community Engagement Team (CET) to hold a round of focus groups designed to reach members of the American-Born Black community and linguistic minorities (people who do not speak English as their first language). The goals of these focus groups were to present and receive feedback on the vision statement and core values and to introduce the next phase of the planning process by discussing a number of potential tradeoff scenarios. This input and feedback will inform the citywide planning process. Approximately thirty-five (35) members of the public participated in the focus groups in total, which were held as follows:

- October 24, 2016 at the Cambridge Health Alliance with linguistic minorities (8 community members)
- November 2, 2016 at the Margaret Fuller House with American-Born Black community (20 community members)
- November 7, 2016 at the, Peabody School with linguistic minorities (7 community members)

American-Born Black Community

A summary of feedback from the focus group with the American-born Black community is summarized below.

Vision Statement and Core Values

Through extensive community engagement and outreach, the Envision Cambridge team developed a vision statement and set of community core values to inform later stages of the planning process. In working with the focus groups, it was important to assess whether the Envision Cambridge team had accurately summed the input received from the community to date. In discussing the vision statement and core values, the group focused primarily on the questions: **What are your thoughts on the vision statement and core values? Are there any key points that we missed?**

Livability

Several participants mentioned that Cambridge is a wonderful place to raise a family but also touched on the difficulty of doing so, especially in matters of affordability and social mobility. Many families – especially larger families – are being priced out of Cambridge due to a lack of 3-bedroom units in inclusionary housing and the overall supply of affordable housing stock not keeping pace with demand. Additionally, many Cantabrigians face extremely limited access to affordable food options. Some participants highlighted the fact that the Port neighborhood is a “food desert,” while others questioned why the only Market Basket, a low-price grocer, in the area is in Somerville. Unaffordable housing and food options contribute to a lack of economic and social mobility - the ability to work one’s way toward a higher income and socio-economic status.

In addition to affordability, the group highlighted transportation issues in the city. These included the challenge of balancing parking availability with the desire for sustainable and alternative modes of transportation, the need for bikers to follow the rules of the road, and clear traffic signs and signaling that respond to the multiple modes of transportation that share the streets.

Diversity & Equity

The participants also discussed the impact of affordability on diversity and equity across the Cambridge community, noting that Cambridge is not as diverse or equitable as it once was. The Black community is shrinking due to displacement: families are selling their homes and leaving the city; retirees cannot afford

to keep up with the costs of owning or renting a home; and many of those who rely on inclusionary housing are forced to choose between economic mobility and keeping their home. Ultimately, many people have found themselves in the unfortunate position where they no longer can afford to live in the city they grew up in, a city that now seems to cater more to students than longtime residents. The participants also touched on the disparity in employment opportunities in the city. For example, a percentage of company workforces should be comprised of local residents rather than those who live outside the city, or a number of jobs should be allocated to Cambridge residents. Additionally, Cambridge needs to ensure that residents and their children can get the proper education and skills training to obtain the kinds of jobs necessary to afford living in Cambridge. This can be accomplished through programs like co-ops or internships with local companies.

Sustainability & Resiliency

The group's discussion of sustainability and resilience focused largely on social aspects of resilience. For example, the participants noted a lack of stability for some residents who depend on the Cambridge Housing Authority, as they may be required to move residences several times in a single year. Some participants suggested the City raise the maximum income threshold for social services to better account for Cambridge's high cost of living. This concern was reflected by some participants as a fear of getting a raise or a promotion at work and subsequently losing Section 8 vouchers and inclusionary housing due to the increase in income. Participants indicated necessary renovations to existing public housing structures. The group stated that affordable housing ought to be transitional, allowing families to build wealth while continuing to be part of the Cambridge community. However, those who are recipients of affordable housing units should not be treated like second class citizens, as they sometimes are. Participants also spoke of the need for peace gardens and open spaces for victims of violence throughout the city, and for public squares to have more amenities like benches and "Little Free Libraries."

Economic Opportunity

The participants briefly touched on their experiences in Cambridge regarding the core value of economic opportunity. For one, because housing in Cambridge is in such short supply, the city seems to be a "*land of waitlists*," particularly for individuals who are in the moderate middle income bracket. Participants also pointed out that there are little-to-no opportunities for Cambridge youth past a certain age. Asked one participant, "*After 18 years old, where do you go?*" Youth centers don't cater to "after age" youth, creating a need for training programs (mechanic, HVAC, apprenticeships, etc.) or trade schools to serve as an alternative to college. While Cambridge must continue to work to address these concerns, it is also important to better promote the programs that are currently in place. For example, the Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee (CEOC) is a great housing, financial education, and public benefits resource for low-income residents, Just-A-Start (JAS) combines affordable housing development and young adult workforce training and Cambridge's youth centers do provide training as a youth worker to those that meet age requirements.

Community Health & Wellbeing

Participants voiced an appreciation of the fact that the City is organizing community events, such as the focus groups, as it shows a commitment and willingness to listen, but they also made it clear that they feel there is room for improvement. The participants stated that civic engagement needs work, and the City needs to do a better job of publicizing events. One suggestion was to use more text message alerts, particularly for important citywide events. Some members of the group mentioned that School Committee meetings would do well to provide childcare services and food in order to allow busy parents to become more involved. Other comments included the lack of access to Wi-Fi in public spaces, and concerns regarding the Community Development Department's commitment to public relations.

Time ran out to discuss the core value of *Learning*.

Tradeoffs

This section of the conversation introduced hypothetical tradeoffs in different focus areas: housing, mobility, and commercial development. The purpose of these discussions is to better understand the priorities between and within topic areas, and to get a sense of the complex nature of the decisions that are made based on these priorities. The following are the participants' comments and concerns:

Housing

Tradeoff Scenario: Should Cambridge pursue more housing and development, including new affordable units to preserve diversity, with increased population and a denser urban form **OR** less new development and more preservation of the existing buildings and lower-density neighborhoods in Cambridge (triple-decker, two-family homes)?:

- The participants seemed less concerned with whether we should have more or less development, than they were with addressing homelessness across the city, with an emphasis on Central Square.

Commercial Development

Tradeoff Scenario: Currently, two thirds (2/3) of local property taxes come from commercial property, which keeps residential property taxes low and supports robust services. Therefore, should Cambridge promote more commercial development and taxes to pay for city services, resulting in an increase in employment (and, therefore, a likely increase in housing demand) **OR** strive for less commercial development, and thus higher residential property taxes or reductions in services?:

- Kendall has been very successful as Massachusetts' Silicon Valley
- Gentrification due to an influx of highly-paid workers is a concern
- Not all of Cambridge should be like Kendall
- We must preserve the distinct character of each neighborhood
- Participants prefer more human scale development and the inclusion of green space
- We must prevent overcrowding
- Cambridge should strive to maintain diversity
- Participants appreciated the positive changes in Kendall Square, but felt that Central Square has slipped into demise
- Specifically, some noted there are too many banks in Central Square, which deteriorates an active, urban pedestrian experience
- The group agreed on a preference against tall buildings
- Development should help pay for cleaning Central Square

Time ran out before a detailed discussion on mobility trade-offs. However, the group mentioned their concern that people who work in Cambridge are using on-street parking which makes it difficult for residents to park. The City should better enforce this so that residents are not impacted by the large worker population.

Linguistic Minorities

A summary of feedback from the two focus groups with linguistic minorities is summarized below.

Vision Statement and Core Values

A series of questions asked for participants' feedback on the plan's draft vision statement and core values. Participants were asked: **What are your thoughts on the vision statement and core values? Are there any key points that we missed?**

Livability

Concerning livability, participants shared several concerns, such as Cambridge's high cost of living and the displacement that it causes, the inconvenience and unreliability of public transportation for some, and unsafe pedestrian conditions. Here are additional comments from the participants:

- "I moved to Cambridge in August so I'm new to the area. One Sunday, I went for a walk around the neighborhood and I realized that Memorial Drive was closed. The whole road. People were exercising there and I was surprised. No one told me so I didn't know. Where I lived on Harvard's campus, no one told us. I love the idea of it but sometimes I just wish I could know this information in advance. I don't know if some areas have a similar arrangement where they close for a Saturday or a Sunday. It's nice that we have it."
- "We have a lot of Uber drivers that don't really park well. They just stop in the middle of the street and wait for their passenger. In Cambridge, we have a lot of one way streets so that creates problems. Are there some regulations so that this sort of stuff doesn't happen? That would help out a lot."
- "For the new people who move here and bike every day, sometimes they don't know what transportation rules they have to obey. This gets especially complicated with the irregular intersections. What do you do? How do you know what to do and when? I got stopped by a policeman one time and got fined. It can get dangerous."
- "I'm new to Cambridge also. I've been here for two years. My kids like it here, they like the school system. The only thing I don't like about living here, is the public parking on the streets. I live very close to a commercial area. It's very difficult to find parking for residents. I would like to see more parking for residents."
- "I live behind the fire department. Parking is only difficult on street cleaning day."
- "I like the public transportation here. It's so convenient. I can get almost anywhere by metro."

Diversity & Equity

The participants praised the diversity in Cambridge but also commented on how much that has changed over the years. Many of the people who helped make Cambridge what it is today are no longer a part of the community. Concerning equity, there are lots of programs that are available to residents, but the group cited a lack of follow-through and the need for more guidance when navigating the process of getting help:

- "One of my colleagues told me that he was in training to buy a home. After the session was over, no one contacted him for a follow up. There was nothing. It's not clear exactly how to buy houses in Cambridge. There are still many questions. This is for the middle income classes."
- "I like the diversity in Cambridge. The colleges and universities bring lots of people here from different cultures."
- "I think we have a lot of different cultures, but I don't see a lot of festivals. I'm not trying to compare us to New York City, but I am. Almost every weekend they have something else going on. There are always activities around cultural exchanges. I just hope the City could bring more people in and more people together."

- “The city is losing its diversity because of its housing issue. If you compare Cambridge 10 years ago to now, it looks very different. I’ve been here for 15 years. The housing program right now for middle income folks is a good thing. We need that. I think it’s going to be helpful in bringing that diversity back.”

Sustainability & Resiliency

The discussion on sustainability and resiliency spanned from aspects of the urban environment that have immediate impacts on participants’ daily lives, to the natural environment and the impacts of climate change on heating and energy use needs:

- “My concern is gas leaks. I can smell it when I walk to and from work. I don’t know how every is using it, whether they’re doing it properly or not. Syphoning? But I know some places, every day when I walk by, I can smell the gas. How do we address this? How do we work with these people to reduce gas leaks and fix them?”
- “There’s always roadkill, usually rabbits and squirrels. Nobody cleans them up. It just stays there and decomposes until it disappears.”
- Some focus group participants do not have air conditioning in apartments
- Many expressed concern for elderly people during hot days
- Surface parking lots should be redeveloped to a more sustainable – higher value use
- Cambridge should pursue more renewable energy
- More education on recycling for tenants, especially for students at end of the school year

Economic Opportunity

The participants commented on the need to partner with universities and companies for the right kind of training that prepares them for the jobs that are available in Cambridge. For example, current job prep services are basic – there is a need for advanced training programs for better, higher-paying jobs. There is also a need for people to be trained as childcare providers since the current cost of daycare is unaffordable for low-income families (especially considering that financial assistance is not available to two-parent households), and growing waitlists indicate continued demand. Further, some people are hesitant to earn more money as they fear the resulting increase in their monthly rent or losing their subsidized housing altogether. Additional comments about economic opportunity in Cambridge are as follows:

- “A training center for immigrants is what we’re missing here in Cambridge. CLC [Cambridge Learning Center] provides some services for newcomers, but it’s not enough. The career resources center in Alewife is focused more towards people with higher education. So, it’s not for everybody. I think, as long as we have biotech companies here, what we need is training in this industry.”
- “Biotech training is nice, but people don’t know about that. We need to advertise what we have and reach people. For low-income people, the training is available for them but they don’t know it. Once they do know it, then there are difficulties. If we really go into the communities, maybe then we can solve some problems. Maybe taking shifts in watching kids so that others can attend training sessions. If we show them how some people succeed in these sessions, that will motivate them do to so as well. We need some strategies to show people the benefits of taking advantage of these resources.”
- “When I first got here, I was applying for jobs. I had resumes and cover letters. But I needed help. I found a number and called but they told me I needed to attend an orientation first. But, I needed someone to look at my papers right away because the interview was coming up soon. I had to follow some procedure to find the help I needed. The receptionist told me that because they were understaffed, I couldn’t get the instant help that I needed. Maybe we could have tutors that are on standby all the time so that if people need some help immediately, they can get it. Maybe we can

have a “Cambridge Information Center” for tourists and immigrants where they can find out everything about Cambridge in one place.”

- “Cambridge has something called the workforce office that belongs to the City. This resource is available to people. But again, if you don’t know this...”
- “It would be useful if telephone companies could push useful information to devices when people are new to Cambridge. If I don’t know anyone or anything, it would be very helpful to get this kind of information on my phone right away. At least something that could point me in the right direction.”

Community Health & Wellbeing

Drugs and drug use were a concern for the participants and they expressed a desire to see the city free of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana. They also mentioned the need to provide additional parks and open spaces for families and users of all ages and to better connect citizens to the open spaces that currently exist. Some felt that the City should arrange a shuttle for residents to get to city parks (e.g. Danehy Park), state parks or other recreational opportunities outside of the city (e.g. Walden Pond in Concord). Additional comments addressed programs for kids, homelessness, mental health, safety, and public restrooms follow:

- “I love Cambridge. But there are problems with housing and public restrooms. I have kids. When they are playing outside or we’re just walking around and they have to use the restrooms, there’s nowhere to go. When we’re out in the park, there are no public restrooms around. It’s a problem.”
- “There are children who are very talented in Cambridge. If there was a center where they could organize different activities for children to perform, it would be very beneficial. It could be competitive like they do on *The Voice* or *American Idol*. We could do something like that in Cambridge where we showcase kids’ talents. We need to support these kids who have all this talent. If the City could provide that opportunity to these kids and promote them, we could get a sense of what they could do tomorrow. Someone might sing or play very well, but they can’t do anything with it if they don’t have the support to do that.”
- “When I walk around Central Square, sometimes I’m scared. I know that homeless people aren’t bad people, but if I don’t give them money, I feel bad sometimes. I’m just wondering what programs the City has to help them.”
- “When I walk to my job, I’ll see three people in the park and I think they have mental health issues. They need help. Their numbers are increasing. We need to create programs to help them so that we can address these issues.”
- “Homeless people need the freedom. When they stay in the shelter, sometimes they drink. That’s why they stay outside. Sometimes, food gets delivered to them.”

Learning

The participants commented on how valuable a resource the Cambridge Learning Center (CLC) is, especially in their experience as immigrants and/or ESL individuals. However, it is difficult for some residents to pursue learning opportunities for a number of reasons, including expensive courses, balancing work and family responsibilities, and the lack of affordable childcare services. Here are additional comments on the CLC:

- “I took a class at CLC in getting a high school diploma. I have learned a lot about American culture and that helps me to relate to people. If I didn’t have American friends, I would never learn about these things. It’s very important for people who are new here. I know that Harvard offers a lot of lecture or talks that are open to the public and that’s good. Maybe the City could do something similar?”
- “We need to advocate the CLC for those who are just staying at home. It’s good for people to come and improve their language and also be exposed to different kinds of information.”

- “The CLC is one of the great opportunities for immigrants. I’ve been there for two years. I would highly recommend it to people. The classes are great. There are classes there to help people with citizenship. Whatever you want for your life, you can find it at CLC and get the help you need. I’m very grateful about CLC. When I came here and applied for jobs, they kept asking me for resumes. I couldn’t do that because I didn’t know how. In my country, it was very different when it came to resumes. But, I found someone at the CLC who helped me with it. She helped me with everything. CLC is my life in America.”
- “CLC has a program called Bridge to College English where they prepare you to go to college. When you complete the program, they give you \$2000.”

Tradeoffs

This section of the conversation introduced hypothetical tradeoffs in different focus areas: housing, mobility, and commercial development. The purpose of these discussions is to better understand the priorities between and within topic areas, and to get a sense of the complex nature of the decisions that are made based on these priorities. The following are the participants’ comments and concerns:

Housing

Tradeoff Scenario: Should Cambridge pursue more housing and development, including new affordable units to preserve diversity, with increased population and a denser urban form **OR** less new development and more preservation of the existing buildings and lower-density neighborhoods in Cambridge (triple-decker, two-family homes)?:

- “I like the mixture of new and traditional buildings in Cambridge. Before I lived here, I lived in California. The neighborhood I lived in was very new. I like the old, colonial look and feel here and I want to keep it. But more and more people are in need of housing. I would like to see a balance of new and traditional buildings.”
- “For the old buildings, just leave them as they are. I don’t think we should get rid of the old buildings in favor of new ones. If it’s in a neighborhood, keep the look and feel the same. In other areas, though, we can go a little higher, i.e. the commercial corridors, maybe.”
- “I like the idea of four stories over two stories of commercial uses. I like the mixed use. It could be beneficial for the residents.”

Mobility

Tradeoff Scenario: Should the City implement more traffic calming measures and dedicate more roadway spaces for bikes, pedestrians, and buses **OR** keep existing roadway space for cars to drive and park?:

- “I want to see more parking. We get a lot of parking tickets from Cambridge. Doesn’t matter where it is.”
- “One of the problems for the parking is the meters. After two hours, you have to move the car to another place. If you’ve already parked your car and you move it, you’ll probably lose your spot. It would be better to keep feeding the meter than to keep moving your car around. This is mainly in the commercial areas to give other people a chance to park there as well.”
- “We need more bicycle infrastructure, but I don’t think every road needs bike lanes.”
- “What if we had a designated time for bikes? During peak hours?”
- “Street parking during the day is difficult. Evening is difficult as well. For me, I prefer more parking spaces. But, if I decide to bike, I would like the lane to be safe for me. I think it’s a good idea to have time zones for bikes. In certain roads and lanes.”

Commercial Development

Tradeoff Scenario: Currently, two thirds (2/3) of local property taxes come from commercial property, which keeps residential property taxes low and supports robust services. Therefore, should Cambridge promote more commercial development and taxes to pay for city services, resulting in an increase in employment (and, therefore, a likely increase in housing demand) **OR** strive for less commercial development, and thus higher residential property taxes or reductions in services?:

- “More biotech and pharmaceutical jobs would be great but it would be also great to provide more training and education for Cambridge residents to be a part of this industry. Last year, they (the City) graduated 25 people in the biotech program but only half of them actually got jobs. We need to work on this area.”
- “If we have more people, that means we need more restaurants. More restaurants mean more businesses. All the commercial corridors should have residential units on top of retail/commercial uses. But that creates a parking problem. We should have parking under the building or on the first floor. No more on street parking.”

8. Appendix

Other Visioning Exercise Events

The below maps are the result of additional visioning exercise events in which the mobile engagement station was present.

06/24/16 - City Dance Party, Central Square



[illegible]

Green

Less Traffic
More Green

Walkable
Less Traffic

Bikeable

More Green

More Affordable EVERYWHERE

More support for small businesses

More Affordable

More Green

Exactly the same - Open

More Walkable

Exactly the same

Cleaner

More coffee shops

More Active

Welcoming

More Swimming

07/13/16 - Salsa Festival, Centanni Courtyard



07/14/16 - Training for MSYEP, City Hall



07/19/16 - Luminarium Dance, Riverside Press Park



07/20/16 - StoryWalk, Newtowne Court

