

# ENVISION CAMBRIDGE

## Planning Board Update

June 5, 2018



City of Cambridge

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Envision Cambridge

Planning Board Update – June 5, 2018

[envision.cambridgema.gov](http://envision.cambridgema.gov)

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# Agenda

## **Citywide Plan Update & Next Steps**

Working Group Process

Draft Recommendations

Next Steps

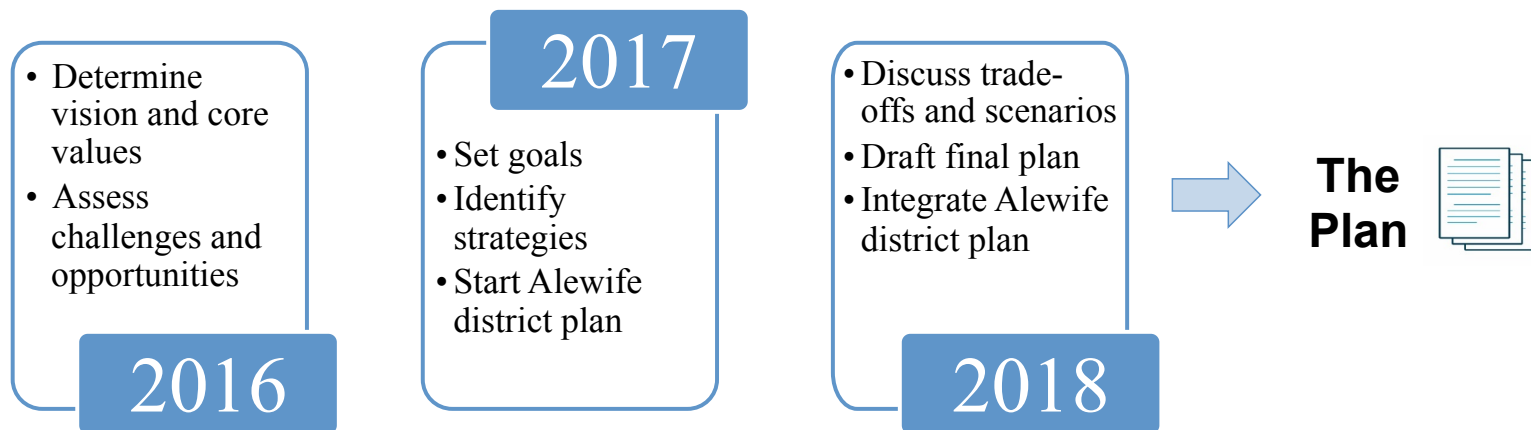
## **Discussion**



# Citywide Plan Update



# Planning Process





# Vision and Core Values

## Vision: What we want to be

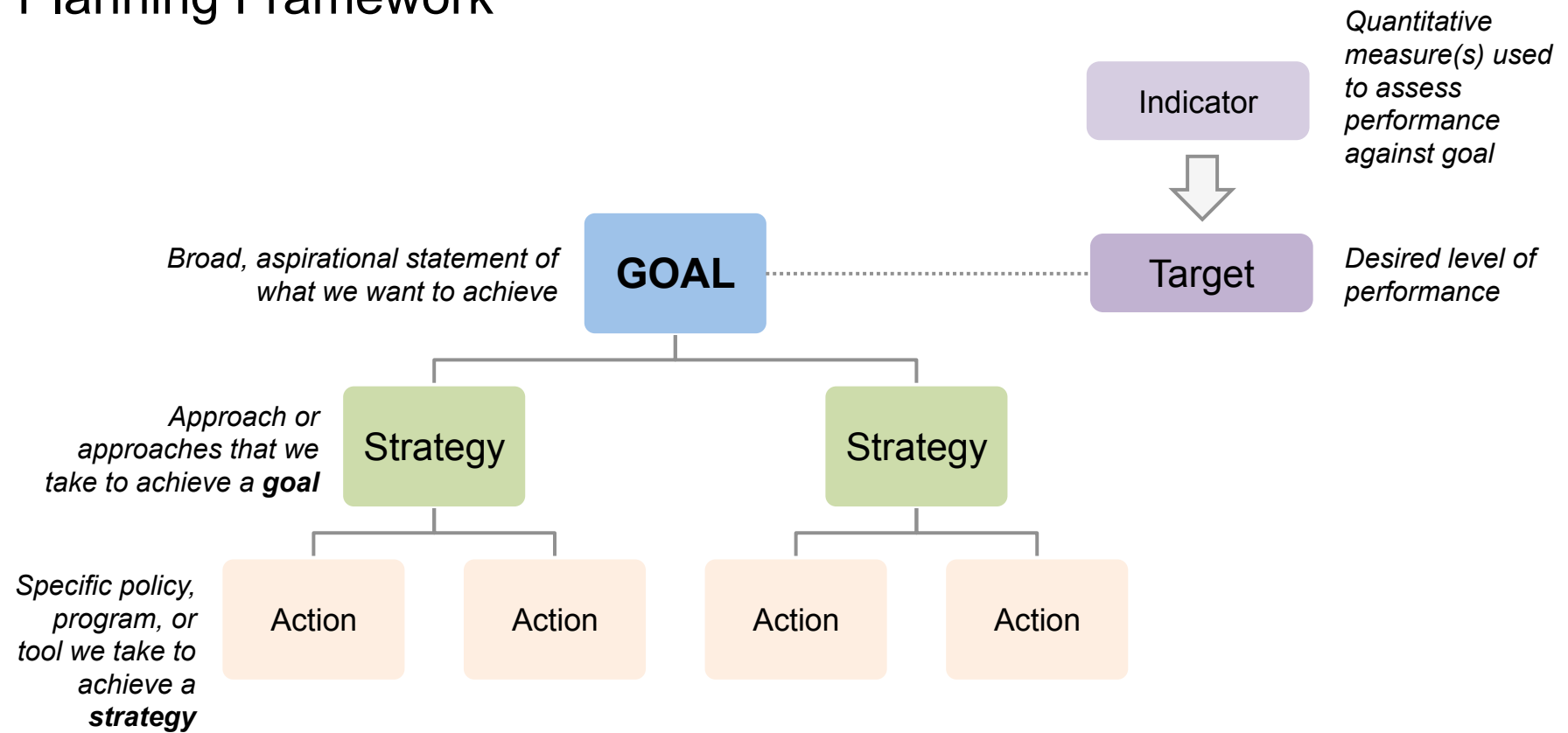
*“Cambridge is a forward-thinking, welcoming, and diverse city. We enjoy a high quality of life and thrive in a sustainable, inclusive, and connected community.”*

## Core Values: What is important to us

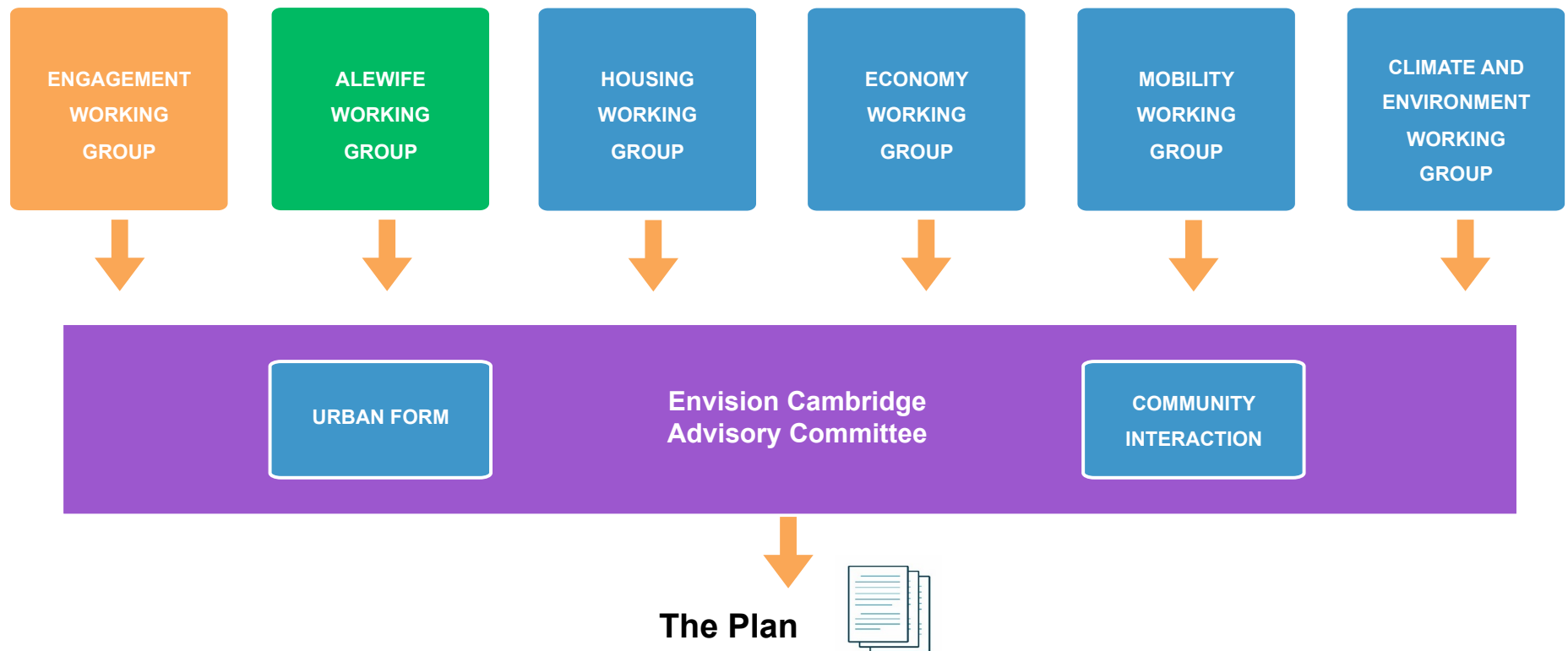
- Livability
- Diversity and Equity
- Learning
- Community Health and Wellbeing
- Economic Opportunity
- Sustainability and Resilience



# Planning Framework



# Envision Cambridge Advisory Committee and Working Groups



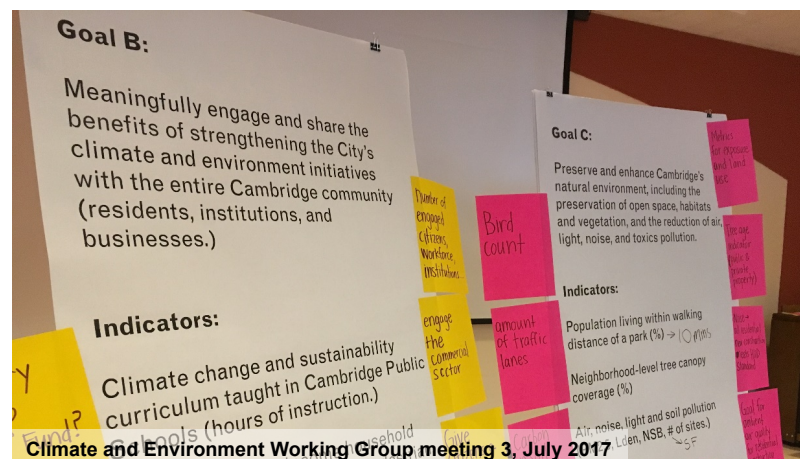
# Working Group Process

## Process to date:

- **Six rounds of Working Group meetings (May '17–May '18):** Developed goals; developed and prioritized strategies and actions; identified indicators and targets.
- **Recommendations:** Identified ongoing, short-, medium-, and long-term actions
- **Advisory Committee, Interdepartmental, and Joint Working Group Meetings:** Identified synergies and conflicts, identified citywide priorities from Working Group actions.



Housing Working Group meeting 2, June 2017



Climate and Environment Working Group meeting 3, July 2017



## Working Group Schedule

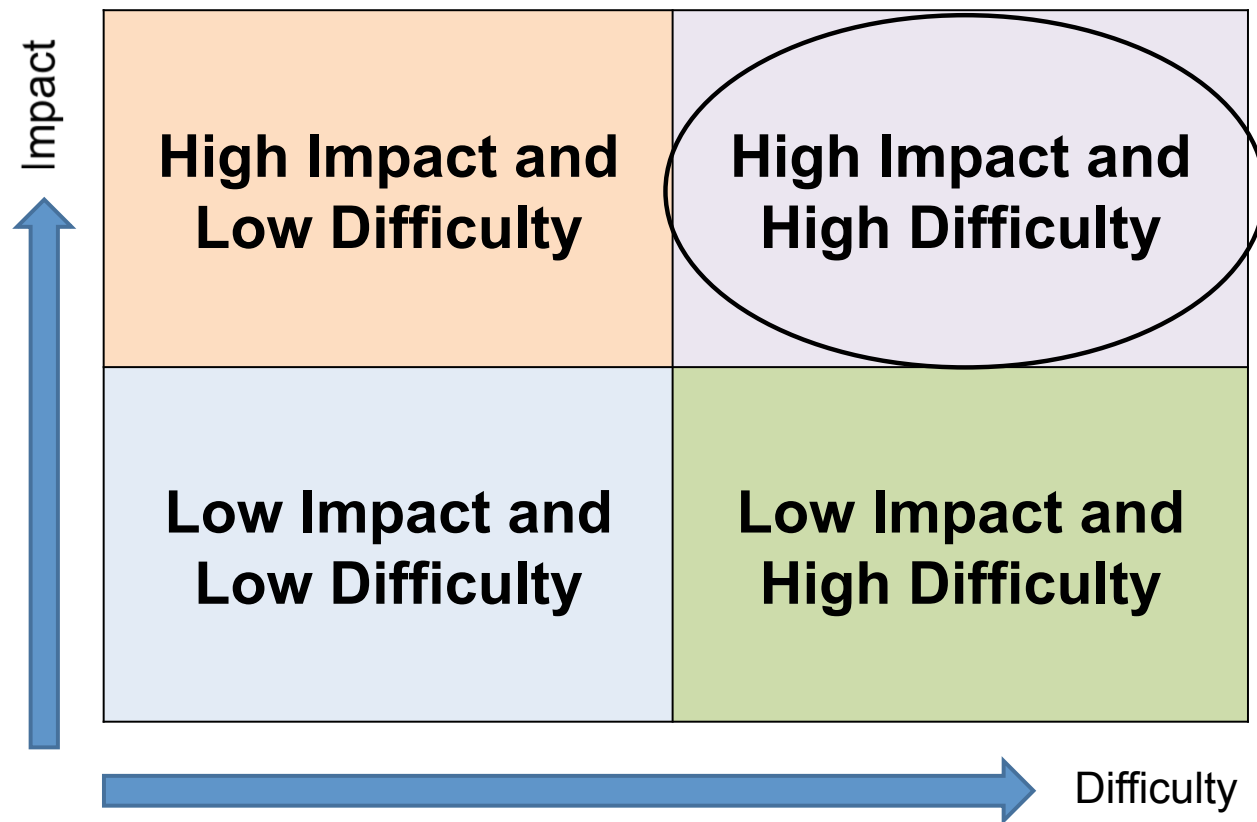


## Goal Development and Alignment with Values

Core Values	Livability	Diversity and Equity	Economic Opportunity	Sustainability & Resilience	Community Health & Wellbeing	Learning
Goal 1. Increased Housing Supply						
Goal 2. Increased Housing Diversity						
Goal 3. Affordability for Individuals and Families						
Goal 4. Healthy and Resilient Housing						
Goal 5. Reduced Income Insecurity						
Goal 6. Mixed-Income Neighborhoods of Opportunity						



## Action prioritization



## Joint Working Group Meeting

- Members of 4 focus area working groups, Advisory Committee, Alewife Working Group, and Engagement Working Group
- Split into small groups, who collectively voted on priority actions and discussed development incentives

### **Discussion 1: Prioritize high impact/high difficulty actions across focus areas**

- Top actions largely balanced across focus areas
- Emphasis on housing affordability

### **Discussion 2: Development requirements and incentives**

- Support to incentivize affordable housing beyond 20% inclusionary requirement and incorporate family-sized units with density bonuses
- Support to incentivize public gathering spaces (community rooms, childcare facilities, library)
- Support to incentive net zero construction ahead of required schedule
- District energy to be incentivized as part of large-scale developments (as part of PUDs).
- Increased trees and additional open space should be required rather than incentivized.





## Housing Working Group



# Housing Goals

**Housing Diversity:** Provide a variety of housing options for individuals and families at different socioeconomic levels, life stages, and physical needs (including those requiring supportive services).

**Housing Supply:** Increase the overall housing supply in Cambridge and encourage additional regional supply in order to manage housing costs, lessen future housing price increases, and continue policies that result in new affordable housing.

**Affordable Housing:** Maintain and expand affordable rental and homeownership opportunities to enable Cambridge to thrive as a mixed-income community that includes very low-, low-, moderate, and middle-income individuals and families.

**Housing Stability:** Support the ability for current Cambridge residents and families to remain in Cambridge and contribute to the community.

**Livable and Sustainable Communities:** Support high-quality housing that is healthy, climate-resilient, and energy-efficient without increasing costs for low- and moderate- income individuals and families.

**Neighborhoods of Opportunity:** Focus on fostering communities of opportunity by providing housing that is close to public transit, places of employment, and social services.



# Top Housing Actions

**Increase existing City funds dedicated to affordable housing...**

**Explore options for new revenue sources to support affordable housing**

**Change zoning to enable more housing, including affordable housing, to be built along major corridors and in other transforming areas that have the capacity to accommodate growth...**

**Establish or expand the use of taxes that provide dedicated revenue for affordable housing...**

Expand existing financial support to match rising costs associated with nonprofit efforts to develop affordable housing...

Require the creation of significant new housing in areas that are being rezoned.

Prioritize City and other public property that is available for disposition to develop affordable housing.

Offer density bonuses and relief from other dimensional regulations for fully affordable housing developments.

Change base zoning to require that developers of multi-family projects... provide a certain amount of family-sized units...

Evaluate gaps in supportive housing services provided by the City, increase capacity... to address identified gaps, and increase awareness of available services.

**Bold actions were rated as priorities by three or more small groups at the Joint Working Group meeting.**  
Other listed actions received multiple votes by individuals at the Joint Working Group meeting.





## Economy Working Group



# Economy Goals

**Shared Community Prosperity:** Provide opportunities for Cambridge residents of all educational backgrounds and skill levels to access jobs that pay a living wage in Cambridge and the surrounding region so that they can share in the city's prosperity.

**Global Economic Center:** Continue to support Cambridge as a leading center of the global knowledge economy that generates jobs for city and regional residents.

**Opportunity Infrastructure:** Connect Cambridge's young adults, vulnerable residents, and families with education, training, and necessary social support infrastructure to help them achieve economic security.

**Equity and Fairness:** Support efforts to erase racial and gender disparities in economic opportunity.

**Economic Diversification:** Enhance the strength of new and emerging sectors to encourage business and industry diversity in the economy and reduce risks associated with hyper-concentration in a few large industry clusters.

**Diverse Real Estate Options:** Support a range of diverse real estate options that enable Cambridge to attract and retain businesses of different types, sizes, and growth stages.

**Thriving Commercial Districts:** Preserve and enhance the distinctive character of Cambridge's mixed-use districts, while also helping local businesses adapt to shifting market trends.



# Top Economy Actions

**Undertake targeted business recruitment efforts to attract firms that offer low barrier-to-entry jobs...**

**Change zoning to increase density and achieve a mix of uses in targeted areas...**

**Explore financing mechanisms to support the industrial economy through infrastructure funding or land assembly, supporting firms that provide light industrial jobs, and encouraging the development of a manufacturing incubator space.**

Allocate resources to assess the training and education needs of low/moderate income residents to access existing industry-focused training program...

Expand capacity and funding to provide additional “earn and learn” opportunities with local employers for Cambridge residents...

Expand existing industry-focused training programs to incorporate pre-vocational education...

Expand scholarships and number of slots in quality early education programs with a particular focus on low income families...

**Bold actions were rated as priorities by three or more small groups at the Joint Working Group meeting.**

Other listed actions received multiple votes by individuals at the Joint Working Group meeting.





## Climate and Environment Working Group



# Climate and Environment Goals

**Climate Change Preparedness:** Protect the lives and livelihoods of Cambridge community members, particularly those who are at greater risk of climate change and environmental impacts.

**Community Engagement:** Meaningfully engage and share the benefits of strengthening the City's climate and environment initiatives with the entire Cambridge community (residents, institutions, and businesses).

**Environmental Protection:** Preserve and enhance Cambridge's natural environment, including the preservation of open space, habitats and vegetation and the reduction of air, light, noise, and toxic pollution.

**Climate Action:** Achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

**Water Quality and Management:** Maintain sustainable water resources by taking action to reduce water usage, manage storm water runoff, and improve the quality of surface water and groundwater.

**Waste Management:** Minimize waste generation and eliminate landfill waste.





## Top Climate and Environment Actions

**Develop disaster preparedness plans at the neighborhood level in conjunction with neighborhood organizations, service providers, public housing residents and other vulnerable populations**

**Incorporate green infrastructure into city sidewalk and street reconstruction projects as conditions and space allow**

Procure 100% of municipal electricity from renewable sources

Leverage new communication technologies to alert residents and workers, by geography, of risks in the event of an emergency (e.g. text message, smartphone app)

Purchase additional land reserved to be used as open space

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## Mobility Working Group



# Mobility Goals

**Safety and Active Transportation:** Eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries, while encouraging active living and improving comfort.

**Equity and Accessibility:** Ensure a diverse set of travel options that meet the access and mobility needs for people of all ages and abilities.

**Reliability and Efficiency:** Ensure transit and goods movement reliability and encourage the use walking, biking, taking transit and carpooling.

**Community Character and Vitality:** Ensure that the transportation system supports placemaking and shared community spaces, and protects neighborhood streets.

**Connectedness and User Friendliness:** Create an easy-to-understand, integrated, continuous, and comfortable transportation network for all people.

**Climate resilience and Environmental Health:** Achieve a carbon neutral transportation system and adapt to climate change.



# Top Mobility Actions

**Develop an implementation plan and increase funding to complete gaps in the Bicycle Network Plan...**

**Prepare transportation infrastructure to be more resilient to periodic flooding...**

Implement bus priority treatments on key bus corridors at points of recurrent delay to increase transit speed and reduce traffic delays.

Install co-located carshare, bikeshare, and transit nodes in areas that are currently underserved...

Increase funding to improve multimodal access to key public facilities...by adding crosswalks, bus shelters, bike lanes, and bike parking, etc.

Increase funding to improve intersection safety in locations with high rates of crashes.

Better manage freight movement and delivery to improve safety and efficiency...

**Bold actions were rated as priorities by three or more small groups at the Joint Working Group meeting.**

Other listed actions received multiple votes by individuals at the Joint Working Group meeting.





# Urban Form



# Urban Form Goals

**Patterns of City Development:** Maintain the existing patterns of the city where they are strong and well-established, including mature residential neighborhoods, major squares, pedestrian-oriented commercial corridors, institutional campuses, and open spaces.

**Growth in Evolving Areas:** Promote redevelopment and/or rehabilitation of areas currently characterized by obsolete commercial buildings, surface parking lots, automobile-oriented patterns of development, and other development that is inconsistent with the city's urban design objectives.

**Transitions between Uses and Districts:** Where redevelopment occurs at the edges of well-established districts and neighborhoods, the development pattern should be compatible with the prevailing pattern of the adjacent districts but may accommodate some variation in use and scale

**Public Realm:** Create a connected network of high-quality open spaces, including public spaces (e.g., parks, plazas, streets) and publicly-accessible private spaces, that link all residents to local and regional natural assets, provide a range of activities and experiences, are inclusive of all people, and encourage social connections.

**Activation:** Shape new development, in terms of its form, use, design, and relationship to public spaces, so that it supports an active public realm.

**Design Process:** Strive for design excellence in all new development by providing clear guidelines to developers and by implementing review processes that are clearly defined in the ways they engage with City staff, boards and commissions, and community members.



## Top Urban Form Actions

**Build the connections to integrate “Alewife Square” into the fabric of the City...**

**Establish development standards to promote street-activating uses (such as retail) on ground floors, including minimum ground-floor heights, limitations on the frontage length occupied by lobbies, etc....**

Design and implement clear wayfinding for biking and walking routes to the City’s open spaces and other destinations.

Encourage family-friendly design in residential and commercial buildings and public realm improvements through development review (i.e. playgrounds, etc.)

Eliminate minimum parking requirements for development along the corridors.

**Bold actions were rated as priorities by three or more small groups at the Joint Working Group meeting.**  
Other listed actions received multiple votes by individuals at the Joint Working Group meeting.





# Community Wellbeing





# Community Wellbeing Goals

**Access to Opportunity:** Provide access to opportunities for all people regardless of differences

**Art & Culture:** Cultivate a city where artistic expression and cultural traditions are integrated into all aspects of civic life

**Civic Engagement:** Empower all people to participate in public life

**Health and Wellness:** Ensure access to resources that support holistic health, well-being, and extended life.

**Learning and Play:** Encourage lifelong learning and enriching opportunities for play and recreation

**Racial Justice:** End race-based disparities and achieve racial equity



# Top Community Wellbeing Actions

Expand City efforts, including targeted outreach and recruitment, to ensure diverse representation on City boards, commissions and advisory committees

Increase funding to Community Engagement Team, a multi-agency collaborative that reaches out to underserved Cambridge families and connects them to community events and resources, develops community leaders, and supports agencies in working with a diverse community.

Increase staff capacity to conduct ongoing racial equity analyses of new and existing policies, programs, services, procurement practices, and community engagement

**Bold actions were rated as priorities by three or more small groups at the Joint Working Group meeting.**  
Other listed actions received multiple votes by individuals at the Joint Working Group meeting.



## Top voted actions across focus areas

CLIMATE	Develop disaster preparedness plans at the neighborhood level...
	Integrated green infrastructure into sidewalk and street reconstruction when feasible
ECONOMY	Undertake targeted business recruitment efforts to attract firms that offer low barrier-to-entry jobs...
	Change zoning to increase density and achieve a mix of uses in targeted areas...
HOUSING	<b>Increase existing City funds dedicated to affordable housing...</b>
	<b>Establish new City funding sources...to support affordable housing at the project or district scale.</b>
	<b>Explore options for new revenue sources to support affordable housing</b>
	<b>Change zoning to enable more housing, including affordable housing, to be built along major corridors and in other transforming areas that have the capacity to accommodate growth...</b>
MOBILITY	Develop an implementation plan and increase funding to complete gaps in the Bicycle Network Plan...
	Prepare transportation infrastructure to be more resilient to periodic flooding...
	Change zoning to allow low maximum parking requirements near transit nodes...
URBAN FORM	Build the connections to integrate “Alewife Square” into the fabric of the City...



# Land Use



# Land use-related goals by focus area

## Housing

- Increase the overall housing supply
- Provide a variety of housing options
- Expand affordable rental and homeownership opportunities
- Provide housing that is close to transit, employment centers and social services
- Prevent displacement

## Economy

- Provide economic opportunity for all educational backgrounds and skill levels
- Support Cambridge as center of global knowledge economy
- Encourage business and industry diversity
- Preserve and enhance the distinctive character of mixed-use districts
- Support local businesses

## Urban Form

- Maintain strong existing patterns of development
- Promote redevelopment of areas currently characterized by obsolete commercial buildings, surface parking lots, automobile-oriented patterns of development, etc.
- Promote mixed-use development that include open space and civic amenities
- Promote development that is compatible with the prevailing pattern of the adjacent districts but may accommodate some variation in use and scale

## Mobility

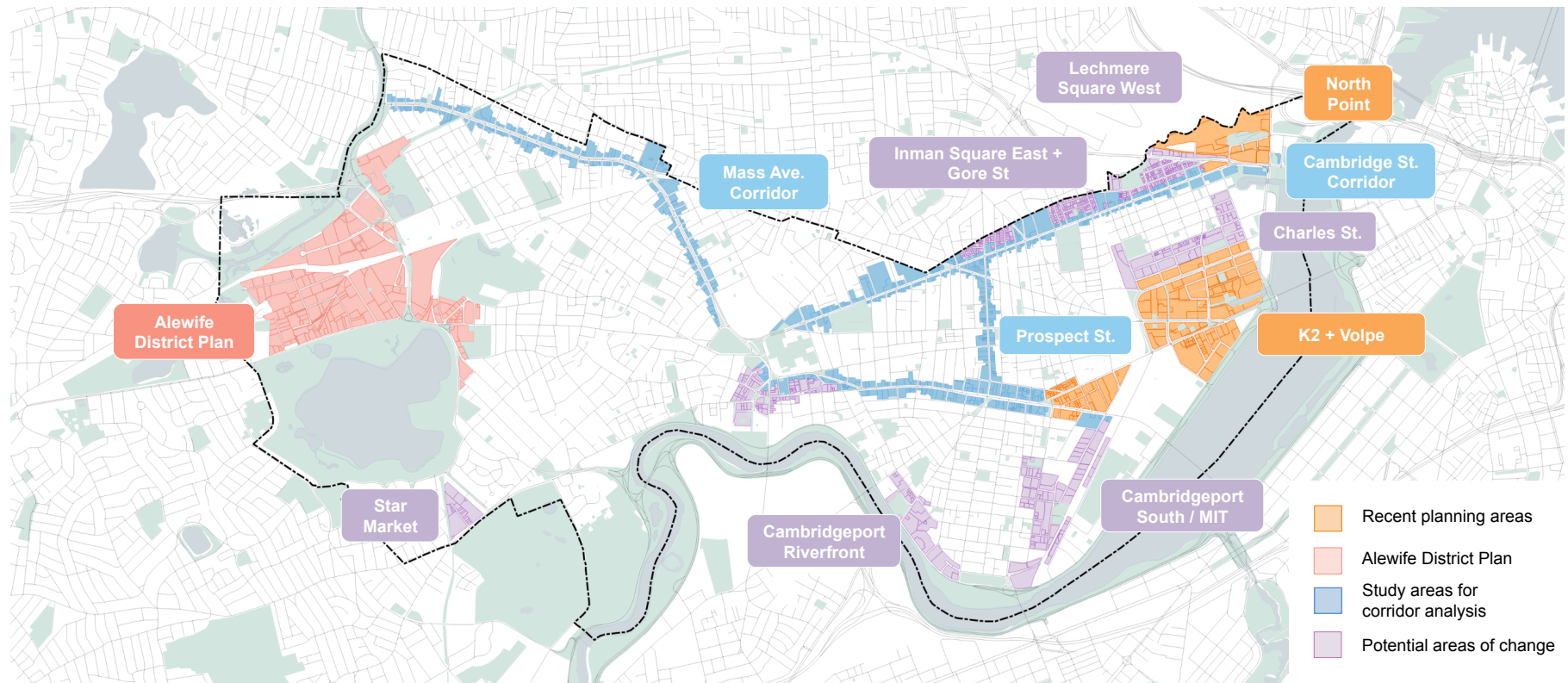
- Create a connected network of high-quality open space that serve as local and regional connections

## Climate & Environment

- Preserve and enhance natural environment
- Promote sustainable development



# Study areas for development scenarios



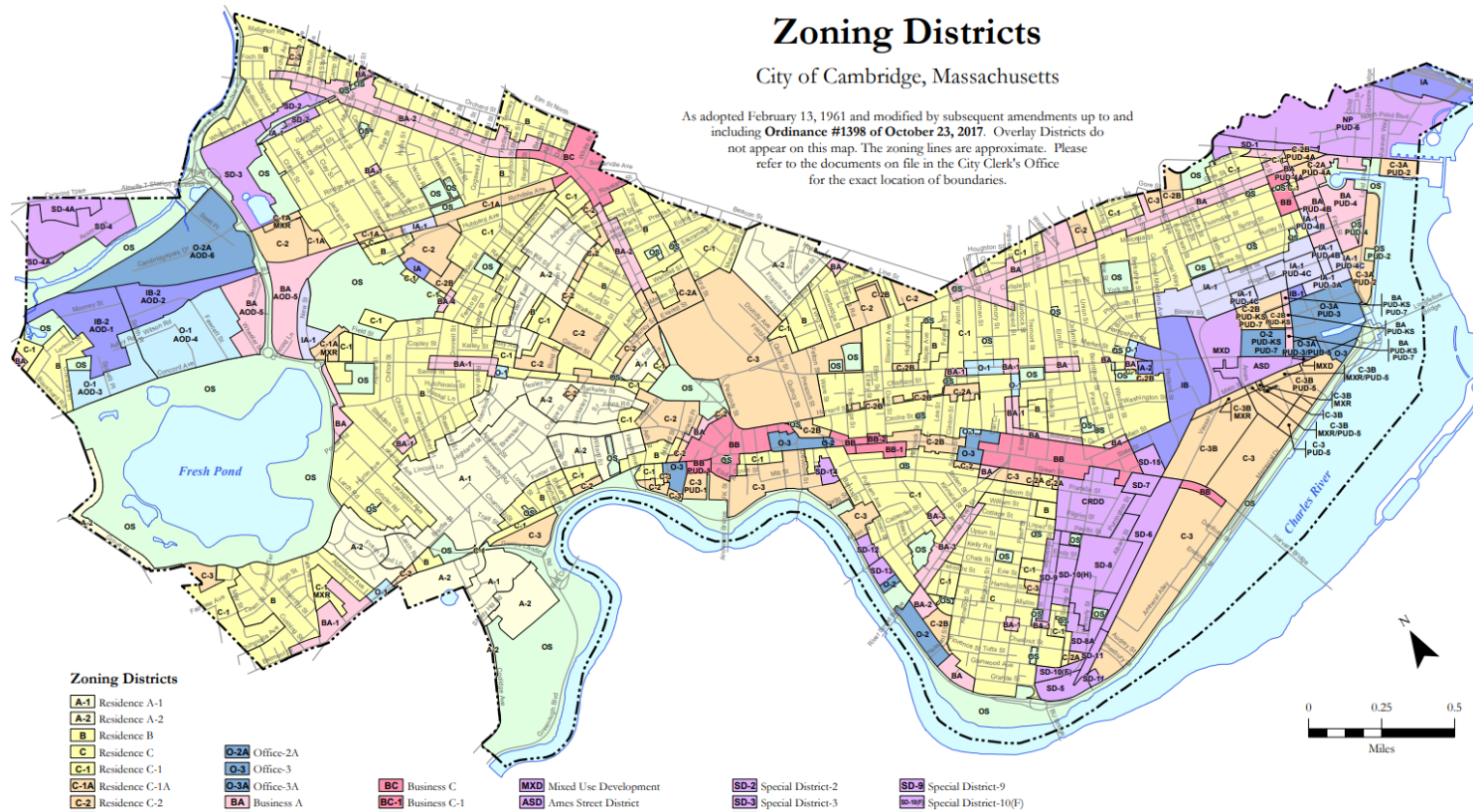
- What mix of uses?
- How much development?
- What form/character of development?
- How can use, intensity, and form promote sustainability?
- How can use, intensity, and form promote equity?



# Zoning Districts

City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

As adopted February 13, 1961 and modified by subsequent amendments up to and including Ordinance #1398 of October 23, 2017. Overlay Districts do not appear on this map. The zoning lines are approximate. Please refer to the documents on file in the City Clerk's Office for the exact location of boundaries.





# Urban Form Typologies: Commercial Corridors

Corridor 4-story (North Mass Ave)



Corridor 5-story (Henderson Carriage, North Mass Ave)



Corridor 6-story (Central Square)



Corridor 10/12-story (Fenway)



# Urban Form Typologies: Areas of Potential Change

Historic high lot coverage 3-story (The Port)



5/6-story, low lot coverage (Cambridgeport/University Park)



High-rise mixed-use residential (Kendall Square)

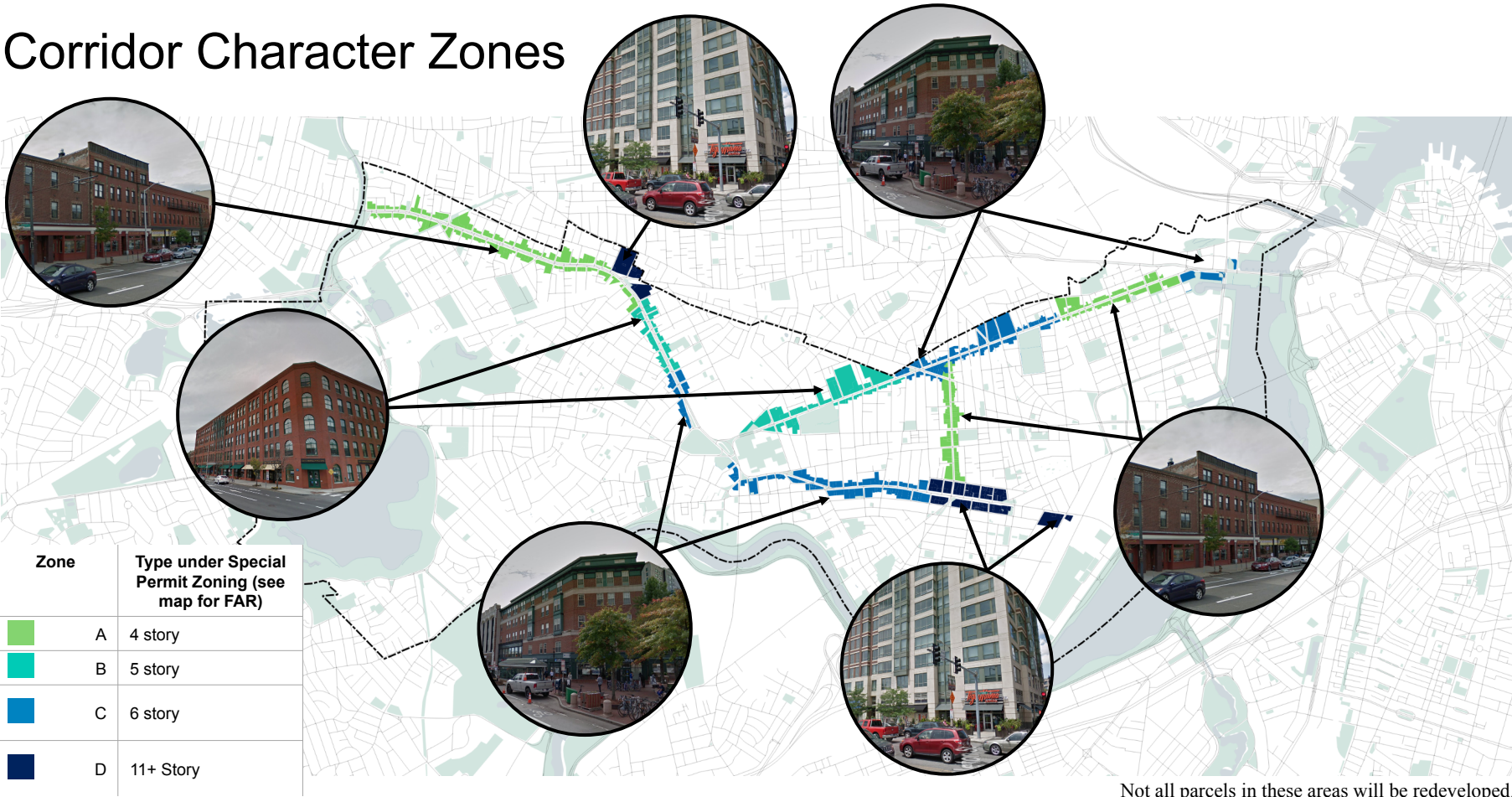


5/6-story, high lot coverage (Cambridgeport/University Park)



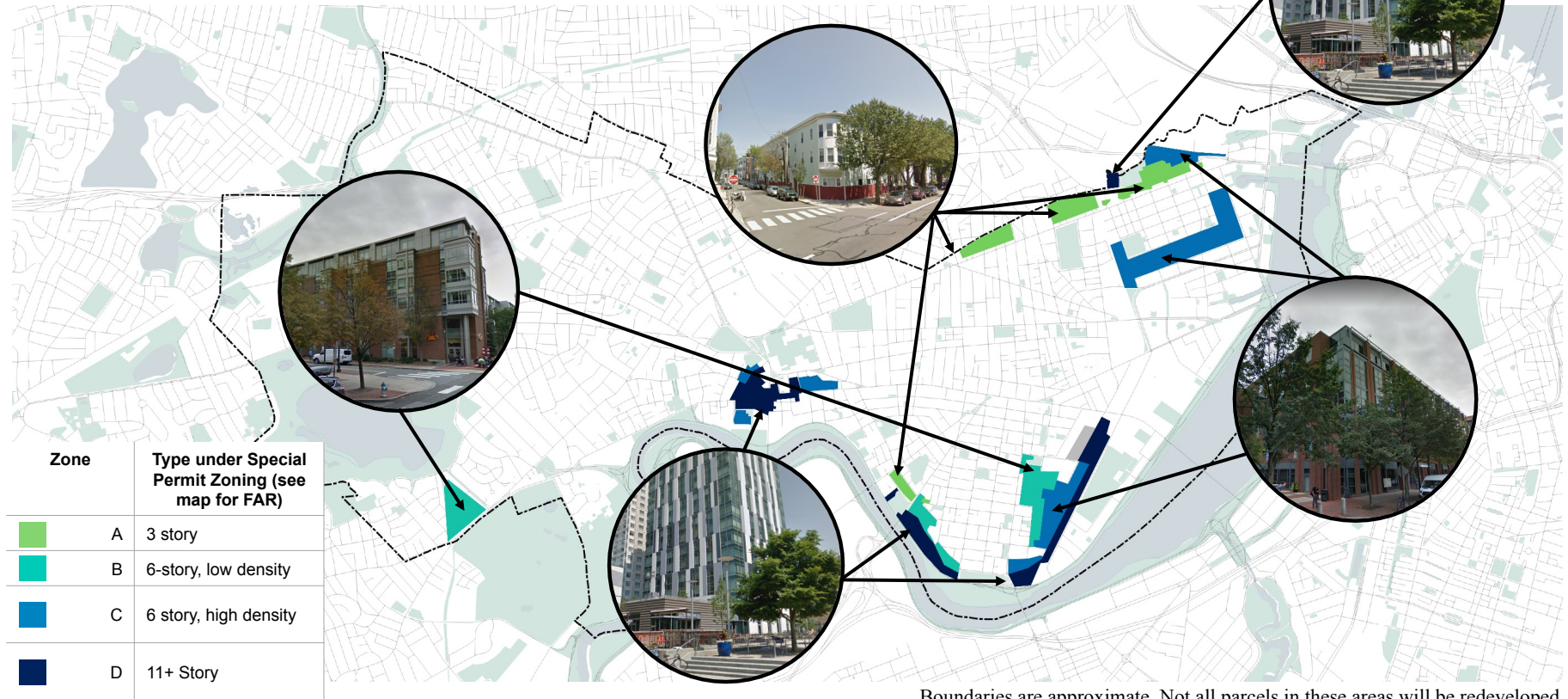


# Corridor Character Zones



Not all parcels in these areas will be redeveloped.

# Areas of Potential Change Character Zones



Boundaries are approximate. Not all parcels in these areas will be redeveloped.



## Next Steps

- City Council Roundtable, June 11<sup>th</sup>
- ECAC Meeting, June 20<sup>th</sup> to review indicators and targets for Community Wellbeing and Urban Form
- Analysis to determine incentives needed to support 100% affordable development
- Public meetings on scenarios to be scheduled in summer, and will result in:
  - Zoning recommendations for corridors
  - Guiding principles for study areas to inform future planning studies
- Final plan released end of year



# Discussion

