

ENVISION CAMBRIDGE



Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association
November 29, 2018

Our Process

2016

- Work with community to develop a shared understanding of key planning issues
- Determine vision and core values with community input
- Assess challenges and opportunities through data analysis and public feedback

2017

- Dive into planning topics with working groups
- Set goals
- Identify strategies
- Develop the Alewife district plan

2018

- Develop focus area recommendations with working groups
- Discuss trade-offs and scenarios
- Draft final plan
- Refine and integrate Alewife district plan

Planning Topics

Housing

Economy

Mobility

Climate and Environment

Urban Form

Community Wellbeing

Engagement Activities

- Public meetings, workshops, and panels
- Mobile Engagement Station at community events and select locations
- Corridors and Streets activities
- Walk-shops
- Focus Groups with underrepresented populations
- Surveys (paper and online)
- Newspaper
- Working groups and committees
- Drop-in sessions at senior centers
- Youth engagement workshops
- Hubway ads



Engagement by Numbers

4,000+ participants reached with the mobile engagement station and other mobile activities

2,000+ online and in-person survey responses

5,000+ social media interactions

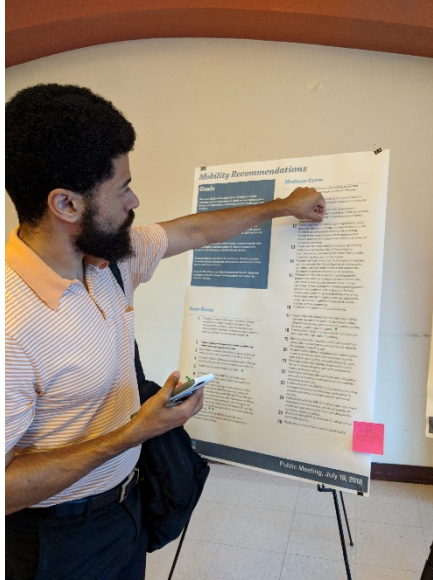
400+ public workshop attendees

115 working group members

138.5 hours of committee and working group meetings

160 participants in focus groups with hard-to-reach populations

61 public meetings, including workshops, panels, and working group discussions



Vision and Core Values

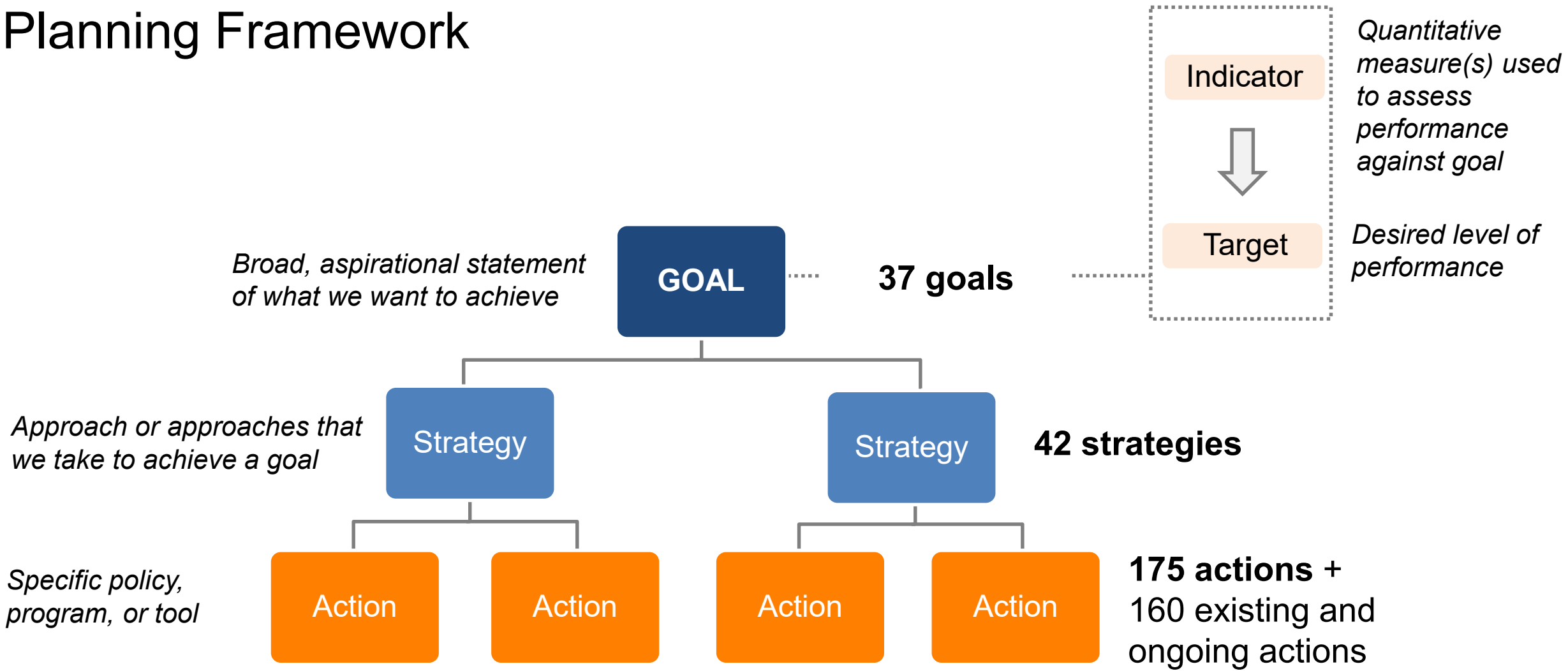
Vision: What we want to be

“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



Planning Framework



Housing Working Group

Goal Topics

- Affordable Housing
- Housing Diversity
- Livable Communities
- Housing Stability
- Market Affordability
- Opportunity Neighborhoods

2030 Targets

- 3,175 new dedicated affordable housing units
- 12,500 total new housing units
- Reduce the number of evictions annually
- Maintain the proportion of low-income households
- Grow the proportion of moderate- and middle-income households



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

Goal Topics

- Shared Community Prosperity
- Equity
- Global Economic Center
- Employment Diversity
- Business Diversity
- Great Commercial Districts

2030 Targets

- Accelerate growth in jobs overall, as well as jobs in life sciences, high tech, and light industrial sectors
- Reduce the post secondary degree attainment gap between Black and Hispanic vs White Non-Hispanic and low-income vs. higher income for CRLS students
- Growth in labor force participation for Black, Latina/o, and women workers, and workers with disabilities
- 90% of workers earn a living wage
- 120 MWBEs participating in City grants and consultations and 205 MWBEs participating in technical assistance
- 30 small businesses per 1,000 residents, with 9 small retail, food service, or accommodation businesses per 1000 residents



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...

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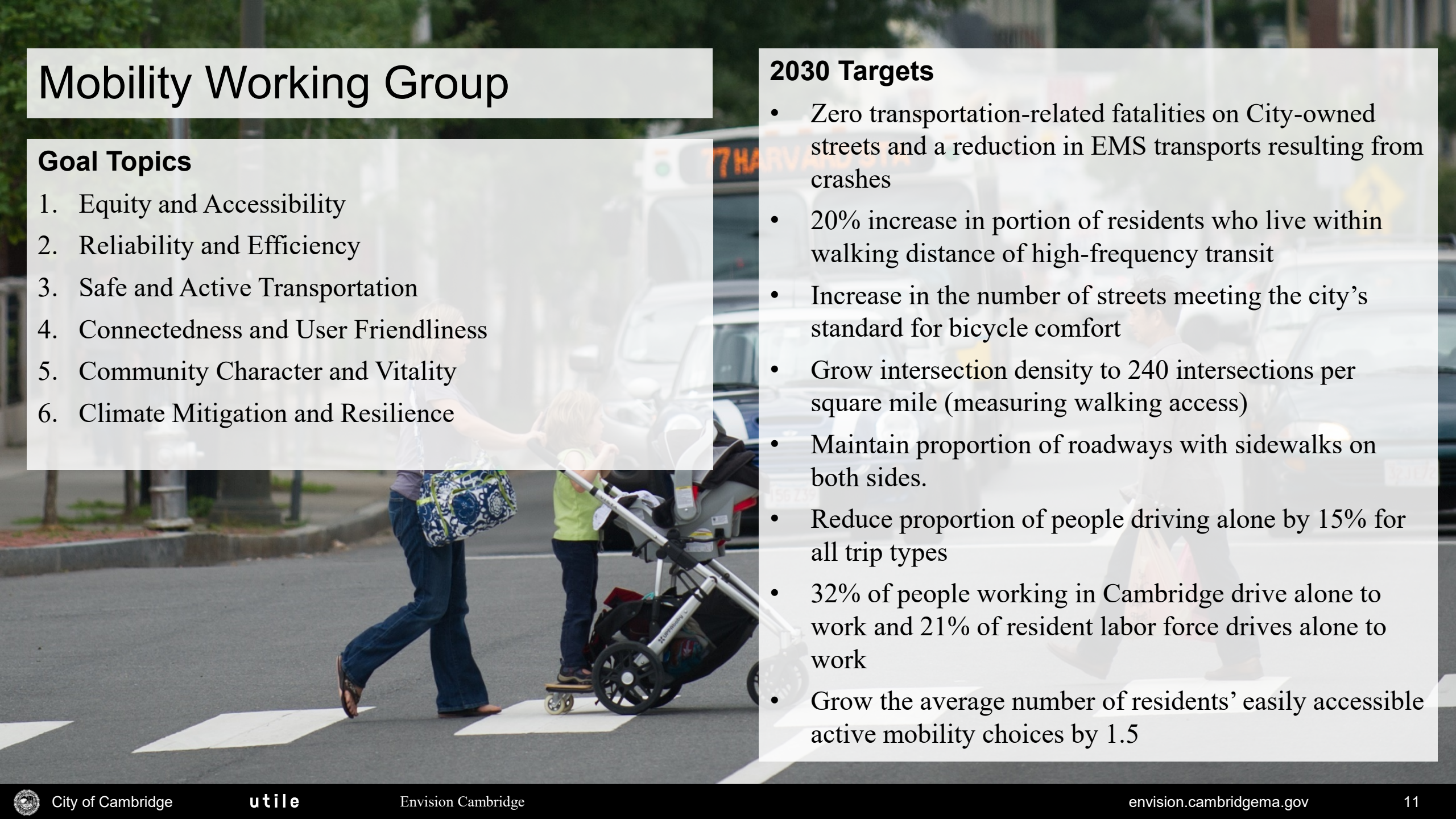
Mobility Working Group

Goal Topics

1. Equity and Accessibility
2. Reliability and Efficiency
3. Safe and Active Transportation
4. Connectedness and User Friendliness
5. Community Character and Vitality
6. Climate Mitigation and Resilience

2030 Targets

- Zero transportation-related fatalities on City-owned streets and a reduction in EMS transports resulting from crashes
- 20% increase in portion of residents who live within walking distance of high-frequency transit
- Increase in the number of streets meeting the city's standard for bicycle comfort
- Grow intersection density to 240 intersections per square mile (measuring walking access)
- Maintain proportion of roadways with sidewalks on both sides.
- Reduce proportion of people driving alone by 15% for all trip types
- 32% of people working in Cambridge drive alone to work and 21% of resident labor force drives alone to work
- Grow the average number of residents' easily accessible active mobility choices by 1.5



Top Mobility Actions

Develop an implementation plan and increase funding to complete gaps in the updated 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...

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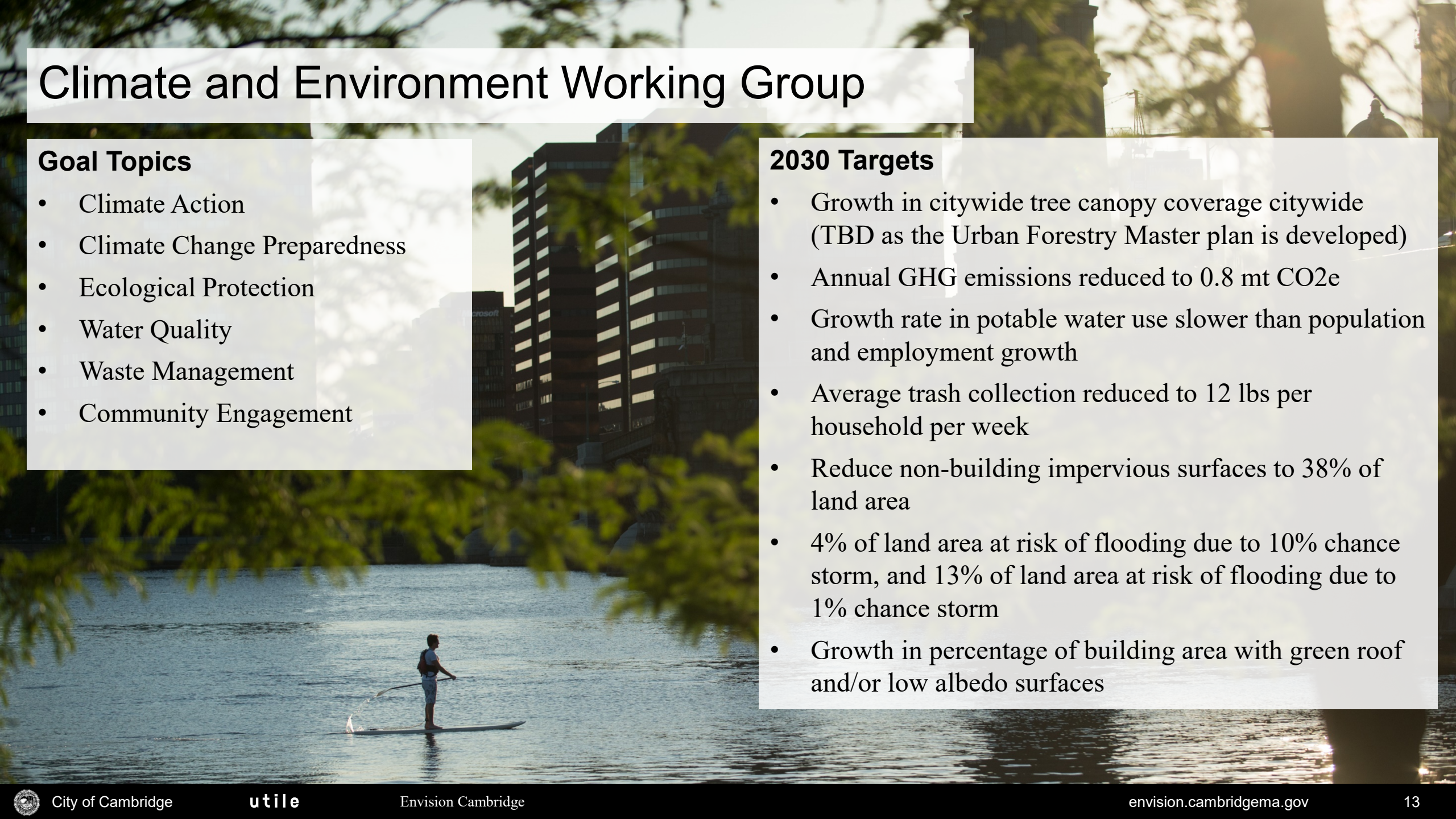
Climate and Environment Working Group

Goal Topics

- Climate Action
- Climate Change Preparedness
- Ecological Protection
- Water Quality
- Waste Management
- Community Engagement

2030 Targets

- Growth in citywide tree canopy coverage citywide (TBD as the Urban Forestry Master plan is developed)
- Annual GHG emissions reduced to 0.8 mt CO₂e
- Growth rate in potable water use slower than population and employment growth
- Average trash collection reduced to 12 lbs per household per week
- Reduce non-building impervious surfaces to 38% of land area
- 4% of land area at risk of flooding due to 10% chance storm, and 13% of land area at risk of flooding due to 1% chance storm
- Growth in percentage of building area with green roof and/or low albedo surfaces



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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Urban Form Working Group

Goal Topics

- Development Patterns
- Growth in Evolving Areas
- Transitional Development
- Public Realm
- Activation
- Design Process

2030 Targets

- On Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge St, and in major squares, grow the percent of blocks that foster active street life (based on specific targets around building entrances, retail and restaurant frontages, street wall, transparency, curb cuts, and street furniture).
- 87% of homes within walking distance to three or more different parks
- 90% of survey respondents rate Cambridge's overall appearance as good or excellent

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.

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Community Wellbeing Working Group

Goal Topics

- Access to Opportunity
- Racial Justice
- Civic Engagement
- Health and Wellness
- Art and Culture
- Learning and Play
- Sense of Belonging

2030 Targets

- Maintain the median length of housing tenure for renters and owners
- Maintain or increase population size of racial and ethnic minorities
- Grow the proportion of people of color on city committees
- 90% of survey respondents rate Cambridge as good or excellent as a welcoming place to all races
- 85% of the population engages in physical activity
- 75% of survey respondents rates Cambridge's open spaces and recreational opportunities as good or excellent
- 80% of survey respondents say there is a good or excellent sense of community in Cambridge
- 90% of survey respondents rate Cambridge as a safe place to live



Top Community Wellbeing Actions

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

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

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Next Steps

- Project completion by end of year 2018
- Implementation of recommendations – now through 2030
 - 175+ new recommendations
 - Many recommendations will require additional study and public engagement

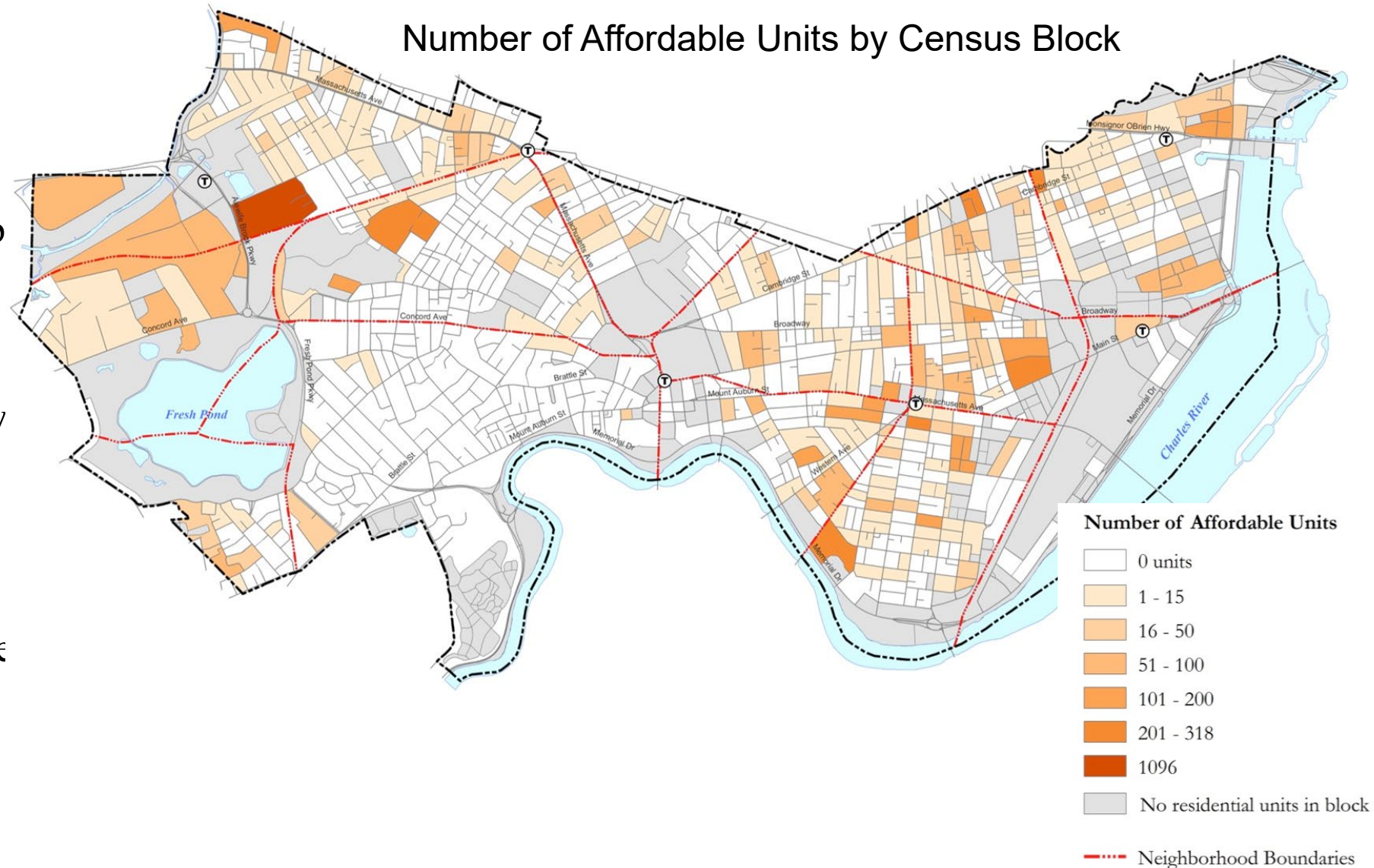


100% Affordable Citywide Overlay Analysis



Challenges to building affordable housing

- High land costs and competition from market-rate developers
- Affordable housing providers outbid for land by market buyers
- Appeal of discretionary approvals can add significant cost, long delay and significant risk to affordable housing developers.
- More difficult to build affordable housing in some areas of the city given zoning limitations



Affordable Housing Development – recent trends

- City funds used for property purchases; CDD tracks properties analyzed by affordable housing providers
- Approximately 1 in 10 opportunities recently assessed results in a successful purchase
- Often strong market interest makes a competitive offer infeasible;
- Purchase prices that can be supported by affordable housing providers cannot be supported by the amount of housing that can be built
- One recent example – affordable housing provider based an offer on 2x as many units as allowed by zoning, and offered more per-unit in land costs than we have ever seen -- and was outbid

	New Opportunities Analyzed by Affordable Housing Providers	Existing Multi-family Housing	Sites for New Development	Offers Made	Properties Purchased
FY2016	14	6	8	7	2
FY2017	13	6	7	2	1
FY2018	15	7	8	3	1

Why consider an Affordable Housing Overlay district?

- Help affordable housing providers have more success in pursuing opportunities to create new affordable housing
- Foster equitable distribution of affordable housing citywide by expanding the viability of affordable housing in areas where there are fewer affordable units;
- Create opportunities in all neighborhoods for residents of all incomes;
- Make it easier to permit 100% affordable developments so that affordable housing developments can be build needed housing more quickly; and
- Help reduce costs of building new affordable housing to allow limited City funds dedicated to affordable housing to accomplish more.



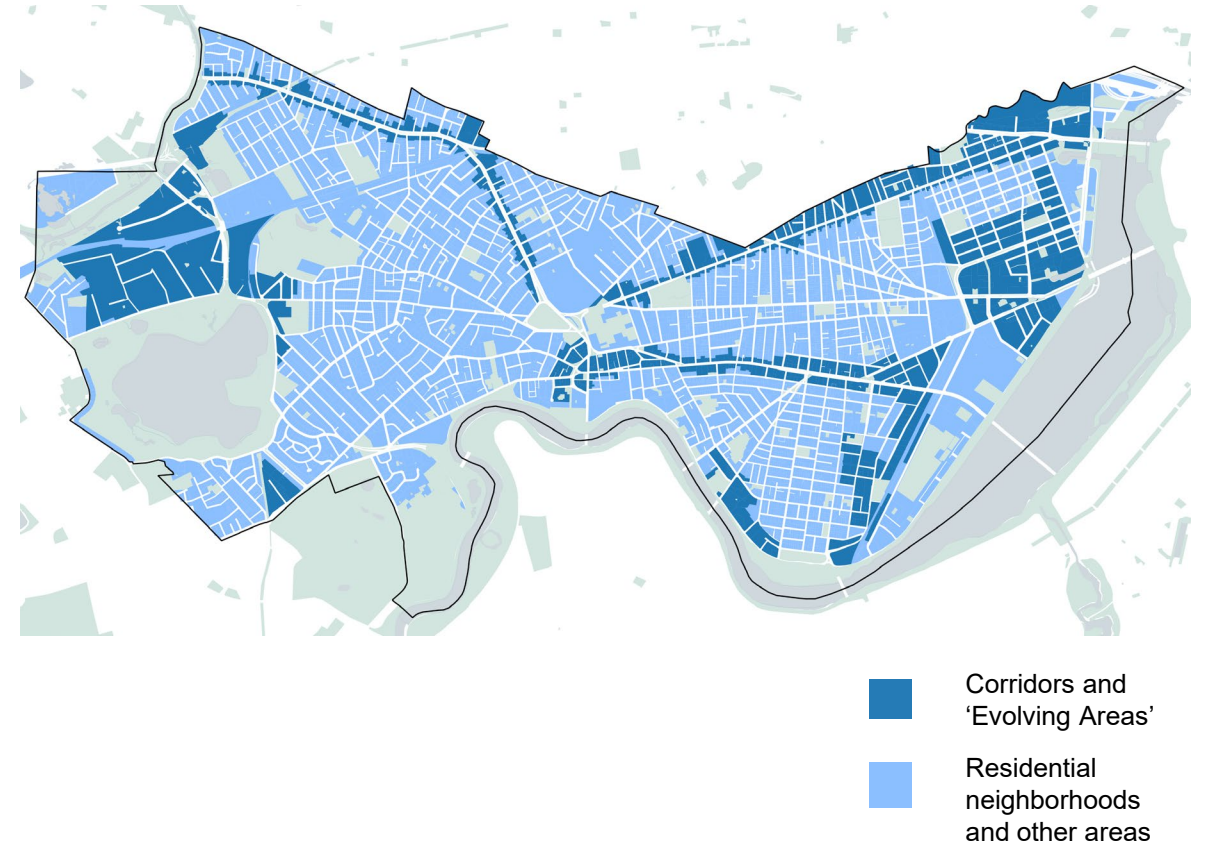
What would the 100% Affordable Housing Citywide Overlay include?

For 100% affordable housing developments only:

- Offer density bonuses and relief from dimensional standards (height, setbacks, open space) and parking where necessary (varies by zoning district)
- Allow for as-of-right approvals with required design review and community input instead of discretionary permitting approvals
- Allow affordable multi-family and townhouse developments in all districts (e.g. not currently an allowed use in Residence A and B districts);
- Allow for conversion of any existing structure (including existing residential) to affordable multi-family housing

100% Affordable Housing Overlay Ideas for Discussion

- The 100% Affordable Housing Overlay would apply to the entire city
 - In areas such as mixed-use corridors and evolving areas (dark blue), affordable developments would need 2.5 times the density allowed by current base zoning to be competitive in the market
 - In residential neighborhoods and other areas (light blue), affordable developments would need an FAR of 2.0 to be financially feasible in all areas



Development Standards – What needs to be considered

How to balance related development standards to achieve target density:

- Open space vs parking on open areas
- Height vs. bulk (setbacks)

Development Standard	Residential Neighborhoods	Main Corridors and Evolving Areas
Density	TBD analysis = 2.0 FAR to be feasible in all areas	TBD analysis = 2.5X zoning to be competitive
Height	TBD examples shown at 33 and 44 feet	TBD
Setbacks	TBD	TBD
Open Space	TBD	TBD
Parking	TBD analysis of parking use underway	TBD analysis of parking use underway

Development Process: Community & Design Review

- Design Requirements / Design Standards
 - Building massing, articulation, bays, roofs
 - Mixed-use (e.g. retail) where desired
 - Considered as part of review process
 - Entrances, windows, roofs, ground floors
 - Relationship to adjacent buildings
- Create New Design Review Process for 100% Affordable Housing – as-of-right permitting with advisory approval
 - Community review and input into proposals
 - Design review- Planning Board
 - Historic review – Cambridge Historical Commission and NCD where applicable



625 Putnam Ave is an example of a 100% affordable housing development built by a nonprofit developer in Cambridge.

Next Steps

- CDD continuing work to develop concept
- Housing Committee comments will inform how & where to advantage affordable housing development and balance trade-offs
 - Affordable housing distribution/density
 - Height/bulk
 - Open space/parking
 - Design review or approval / expediated permitting
- Design requirements/ design guidelines
- Suggested schedule
 - January – February: develop proposal with Housing Committee
 - March – April: file zoning petition & begin hearings