

Envision Cambridge

A plan for the
future of the city







Dear Cambridge Community,

I am excited to share with you Envision Cambridge, the blueprint for the future of our city. This plan was shaped by you: those who live, work, play, and study in Cambridge. Whether your family has called Cambridge home for generations or you immigrated here from overseas; whether you're a small business owner or an employee at one of the city's largest companies; or whether you are a senior or a student, your voice was an instrumental part of this plan.

Over the past three years, we visited every corner of the city to understand what is most important to Cantabrigians and to listen to the community about our shared values. We heard clearly that you want our city to be a vibrant, diverse, livable, sustainable, and equitable place to live, work, and play.

When you look at the extensive community engagement process that was conducted through Envision Cambridge, the public's involvement in this plan is remarkable. There were 115 committee and working group members representing all sectors of Cambridge life, over 165 hours of working group meetings, and over 5,000 people engaged through our street teams. From East Cambridge and Wellington-Harrington, to North Cambridge and the Highlands, and every neighborhood in between, we conducted surveys, public meetings, activities, and open houses to collect feedback on how to draft a plan that outlines concrete actions we can take to attain our shared vision and values.

Drawing on this extensive community engagement, as well as national and international best practices for urban development, we identified six focus areas for the plan: Climate & Environment, Community Wellbeing, Economy, Housing, Mobility, and Urban Form. Seven advisory committees helped shape goals for these focus areas. We consulted those who know Cambridge best—you—as we refined the goals and actions related to each focus area and identified connections across them.

In tandem with this citywide plan, we worked closely with residents and stakeholders to develop a plan for the Alewife district. The community's vision for the Alewife area is to create a sustainable, resilient, and connected mixed-use district that creates economic opportunity.

Our work has just begun. Future policies, programs, and developments will be shaped by Envision Cambridge for years to come, and implementation of the plan's 183 actions will depend on your input and support, as well as budget decisions that will guide the plan's priorities. Together, we can ensure that housing and transportation are accessible and that our economy continues to thrive. We can prepare our neighborhoods to be resilient to climate change and provide resources to make our city inclusive and welcoming to all.

I look forward to working with you to bring our vision for Cambridge to life.

Louis A. DePasquale
Cambridge City Manager

Prepared for the City of Cambridge Community
Development Department, 2019.

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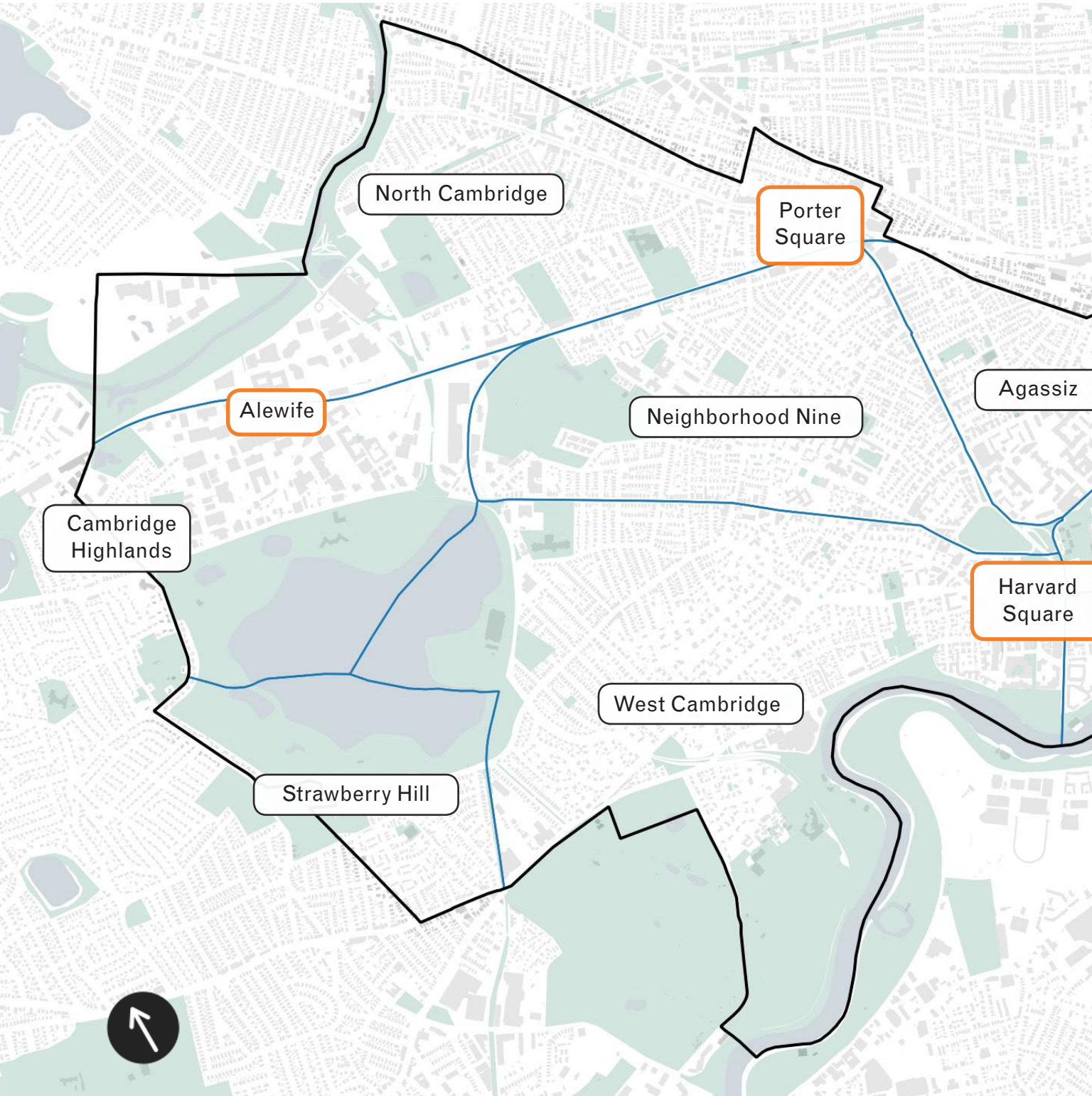
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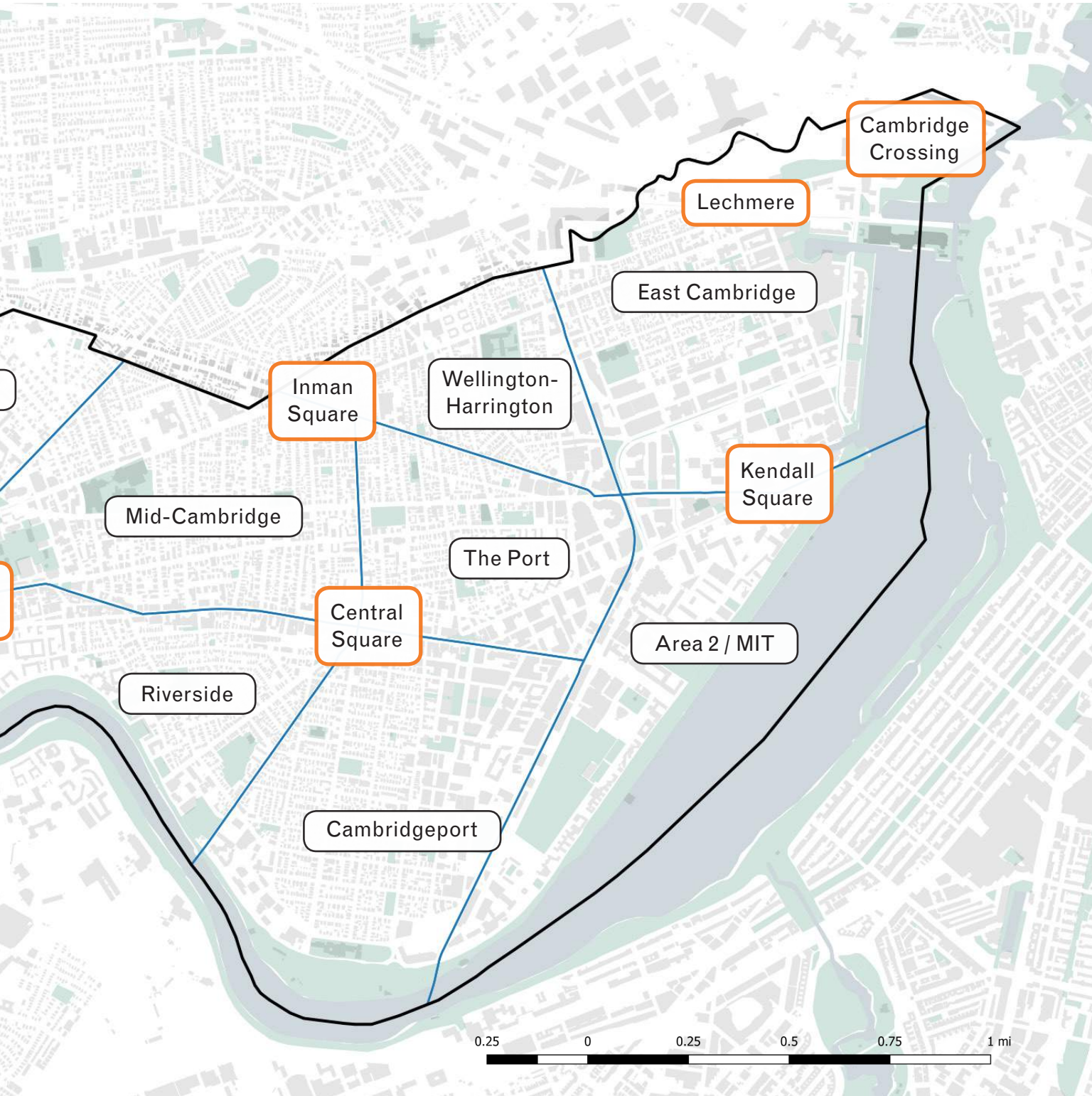
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Cambridge's neighborhoods and public squares.



Introduction







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Planning for Tomorrow

Creating a citywide comprehensive plan is an exciting endeavor, a time to take stock of where we are today and to consider what kind of city we want to be in the future.

Cambridge is a lively city brimming with a diversity of people, destinations, and ideas. Composed of 13 varied neighborhoods, stretching from East Cambridge and Wellington-Harrington to Strawberry Hill and the Cambridge Highlands, our city includes longtime residents, young families, recent immigrants, and students. We host a dynamic mix of local businesses, international corporations, innovative start-ups, world-renowned research institutions, thriving community-based organizations, a wide-ranging artistic community, and much more. This spirited and diverse mix of voices, cultures, and perspectives makes Cambridge the exceptional place that it is today.

Throughout history, successful and thriving cities have been those that rise to demographic, social, economic, and environmental challenges by changing and

growing. Today, these trends place Cambridge at a crossroads where the key question is: How do we manage change while preserving the character of our community? To develop answers, Envision Cambridge brought the city's many voices together into conversation to build a shared vision for a more livable, sustainable, and equitable city.

This plan provides a guide for how the city can manage change over time, while supporting values the community recognizes as essential to our identity. Created by and for the community, Envision Cambridge draws on the community's strengths—its people, businesses, institutions, history of innovation, and progressive values—to find solutions to pressing urban questions. Envision Cambridge articulates our collective vision and then connects this vision to goals and actionable recommendations.

Over the past three years, the Envision Cambridge team has engaged our diverse community in discussions about the greatest challenges and opportunities facing the city. Incorporating input from thousands of members of the public—young and old, longtime residents and new immigrants, from business sector, educational institution, and nonprofit representatives—and with guidance from seven working groups, this plan sets ambitious yet achievable goals. Envision Cambridge recommends 55 strategies and

183 new, expanded, or modified actions to achieve the community’s vision across six domains of action: Climate & Environment, Community Wellbeing, Economy, Housing, Mobility, and Urban Form.

This plan sets us on a path to support housing affordability, promote economic development, improve environmental sustainability and resiliency, enhance the public realm, and create social and economic opportunities that will foster a thriving and inclusive community for future generations to enjoy.

Envision Cambridge is a roadmap to the year 2030, setting out a course of action to promote inclusive and sustainable growth.



Envision Cambridge planning topics.



The crowd at CX Summer Nights in North Point/Cambridge Crossing.

Building on earlier efforts

This report is the next installment in a series of documents released by Envision Cambridge. The first report, *Cambridge Today*, details the city's existing conditions, reviews the history of the city's development, and highlights the issues and opportunities this plan seeks to address. Envision Cambridge also conducted the *Alewife Planning Study*, which provides recommendations to create a more connected and resilient district. This report, *Envision Cambridge*, contains the plan's citywide recommendations, which respond to the issues identified in *Cambridge Today*, and builds on recommendations for Alewife.

Background

Cambridge is a recognized leader in urban planning. The growth policy document *Toward a Sustainable Future* (1993, updated in 2007) has guided much of the City's planning work over the past quarter century, placing sustainability as the front and center focus of thinking across the full range of plan domains. The document has provided detailed policy guidance for Cambridge's overall urban development.

A significant body of more recent work serves as a foundation for the current citywide planning process. Research and reports cover climate change, transportation, land use, open space, housing affordability, community health, homelessness, income insecurity, early childhood education and many other topic areas. The City

has a long history of developing plans for both neighborhoods and commercial districts, such as the Kendall Square and Central Square Plans (2011-2013) and 2006 Concord-Alewife Plan.

Why Plan Now?

In the 10 years marked by the beginning of the Great Recession, Cambridge has experienced varied and accelerated trends affecting many aspects of city life. These include the resurgence of the Boston region as an international technology development hub, rapid population and economic growth, national shifts in labor force composition and demographics, the effects of climate change, renewed interest in urban living across the country, cumulative effects of aging regional

infrastructure, and more. These changes have had ripple effects on Cambridge's housing stock, economy, transportation system, environment, and social fabric.

In response to changing times, the community recognized the imperative to develop a new comprehensive plan to guide future change. A range of pressing urban planning issues shaped the three-year Envision Cambridge planning process. The following are eight key trends that informed the work of the community and the project team. Comprehensive planning treats all topics as interconnected; none exists in isolation from others. An effective process is one that weighs all elements of the city's character together.

ENVISION
CAMBRIDGE

ENVISION
CAMBRIDGE
CONCEPT LIFERS

ENVISION
CAMBRIDGE
CONCEPT LIFERS

Color	Material
Yellow	Polystyrene
Red	Polystyrene
Blue	Polystyrene
Green	Polystyrene
White	Polystyrene



Key Planning Trends

Envision Cambridge builds on the city’s strength and guides growth to address key challenges.

1. Growing Economy

Cambridge is a center of the global knowledge economy. The city has gained nearly 16,000 new jobs since 2008. More than half of total jobs in Cambridge are in education or professional and technical services, including the life sciences and technology industries. These jobs compete for highly skilled workers by offering high salaries, and they attract workers and students to the region from all over the world. Meanwhile, employment in industries that typically

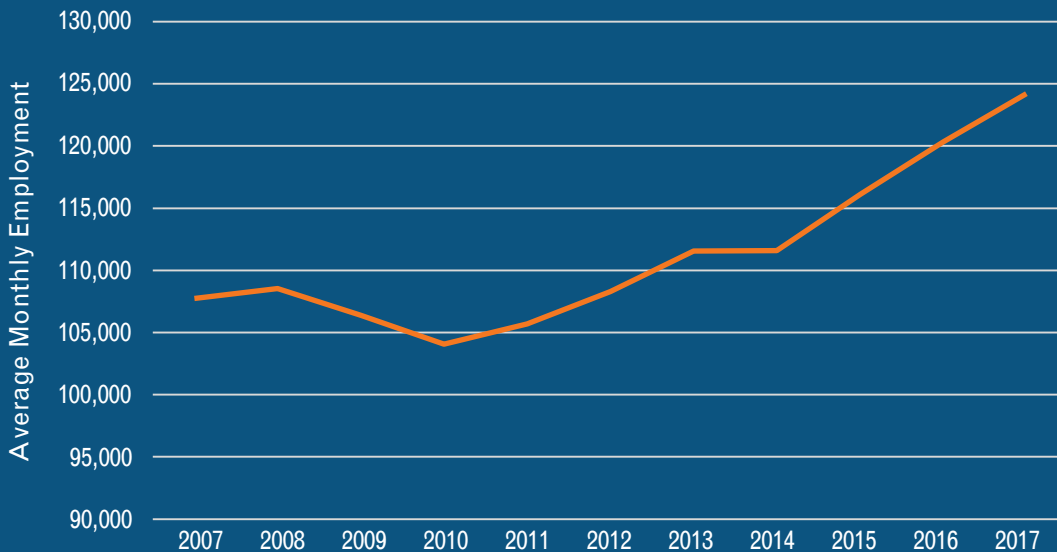
offer middle-income wages, such as construction and manufacturing, has decreased over the same period.

The strong economy supports a healthy real estate sector, whose strong property tax revenues both fund high quality services and underpin a low residential tax rate. However, our productive economy increases both the demand for and cost of housing and commercial space, driving change in the City’s character.

2. Growing Population

Fueled by economic growth, expansion of Cambridge’s educational institutions, and a desire for urban living, Cambridge’s population is growing rapidly. By 2030 we are on track to once again reach our 1950 peak population of approximately 120,000 people. Growth has brought shifts in the character of the population. Changes to the composition of the city’s population has mirrored changes to the national population, including

Employment in Cambridge, 2007–2017



Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Employment and Wages (ES-202) data, 2007–2017 annual reports.

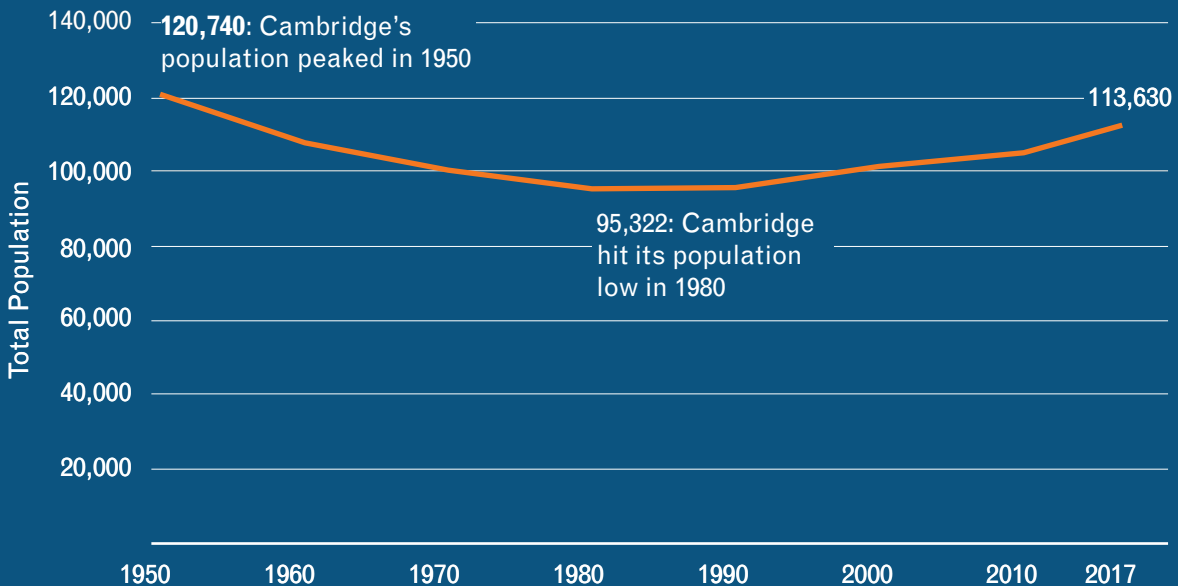
more households with smaller household sizes, fewer and smaller families, and widening income stratification. Increased competition and prices for market-rate housing (discussed below), among other factors, have caused low-, moderate-, and middle-income households to leave the city for more affordable areas. These changes reflect a combination of national, regional, and local trends.

3. Changing Nature of Work

The shift from manufacturing to an information-driven economy has changed traditional home and work boundaries. Improved office automation technology and evolving workplace communication systems enable smaller business footprints and lead businesses to move back to cities despite higher costs. Changes in workplace design enable higher employment densities than in the past. Along with the rise of flexible

working and self-employment, the proximity of large numbers of knowledge workers and idea-driven businesses facilitates innovation and knowledge transfer. These business trends create demand for mixed-use development, central meeting points, and good transit. Additionally, the rise of e-commerce is changing the nature of retail. Daily freight and delivery traffic has noticeably increased in recent years.

Population, 1950–2017

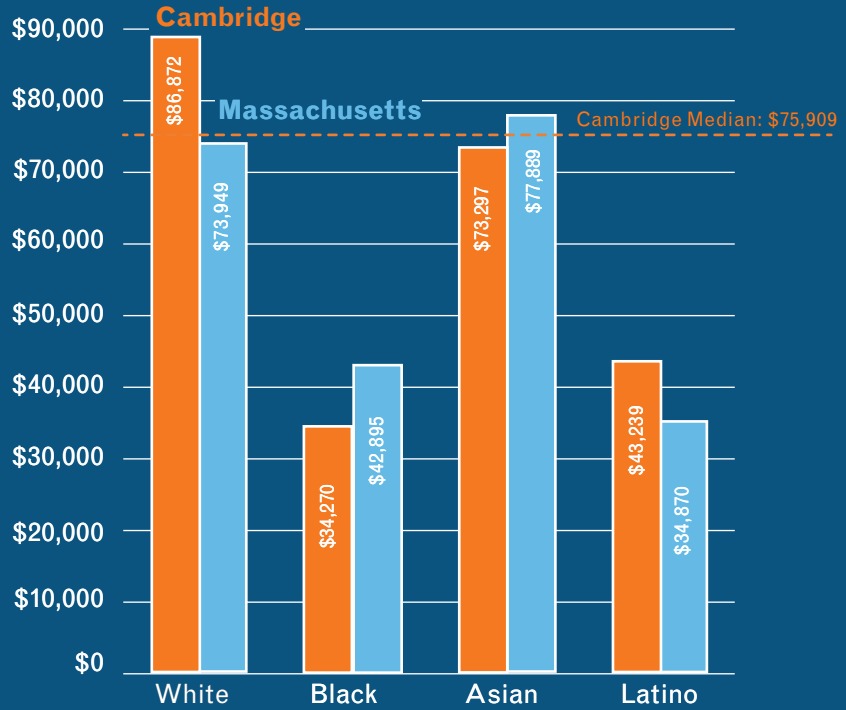


Source: US Census, 1950–2010, Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates, 2017

4. Rising Inequality

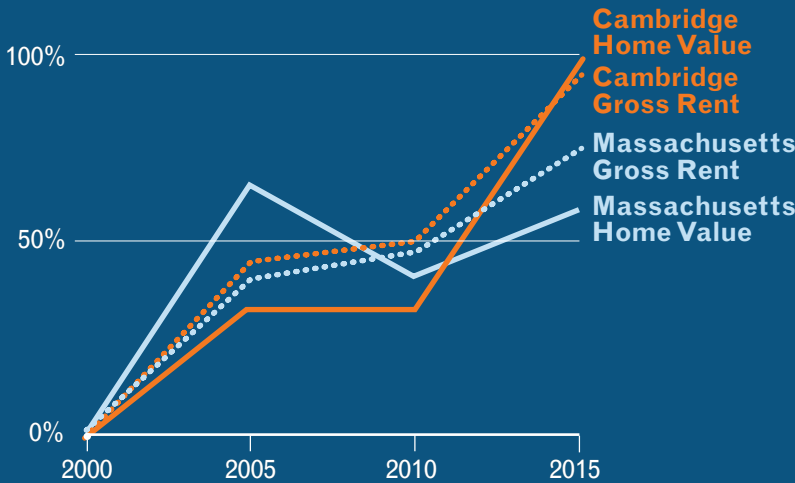
Despite our productive economy, not all people share in the benefits of growth. Significant disparities exist in wage growth, educational attainment, homeownership, and other factors across racial and ethnic lines. Incomes for Cambridge residents are unequal across racial and ethnic groups. Wage growth has disproportionately favored high-skilled workers, who can better afford increasing prices for housing, services, and more. Income inequality and uneven wage growth threaten the economic diversity of the city. Many residents, especially immigrants, youth, and lower income populations, lack financial security or the educational opportunities that enable upward mobility.

Median Household Income by Race and Ethnicity



Source: American Community Survey, 2010–2014 5-year estimates

Percent Change in Median Rent and Home Value, 2000–2015



Nominal figures indexed to year 2000. Source: US Census, 2000–2010; American Community Survey, 2005; American Community Survey, 2011–2015, 5-year estimates; Zillow Home Value Index, 2000–2015. Graph reflects figures from every five years.

5. Declining Affordability

Increased demand for housing and commercial space has led to rising housing and commercial prices. Low housing vacancy and increasing demand for units means that individuals and families need increasingly higher incomes and/or greater wealth to compete in the private market. The city has experienced a net decline in households earning between 30–80% of Area Median Income, exacerbating the loss of our community's socioeconomic diversity. Similarly, high demand for commercial space, particularly in the knowledge economy, drives up rents. Larger, wealthier firms that can pay more for real estate displace small businesses, local start-ups, and retail tenants.

6. Changing Climate

Cambridge's climate—its temperature, humidity, precipitation, and sea level—is shifting to a hotter and wetter range. By the 2050s, the city's average climate will be closer to today's mid-Atlantic region. Without action, flood risks will increase due to more extreme rainfall in the near term and rising sea levels later in the century. Warmer temperatures will lead to more energy being used for cooling buildings than heating them. Extreme heat—both more days over 90 degrees Fahrenheit and more frequent and longer heat waves—present a growing risk. Since Cambridge was designed and constructed based on the climate of the past, the city will need to adapt to a hotter and wetter climate.

7. Evolving Mobility Technology

With the future of mobility being shaped and reshaped at an ever-increasing speed, rapidly evolving technologies are driving fundamental change in the way we get around our city and the region. These changes, together

with a growing resident and employee population, allow more people to travel to and through the city on existing streets and paths. New types of mobility devices and transportation options are introduced regularly. Autonomous vehicles are being tested locally and around the world. People use shared transportation, such as carshare, bikeshare, ride-hail services, and car rentals, as daily travel choices in ever greater numbers. By 2030 we can reasonably expect transportation to be provided as a service that is automated, electrified, and offered in shared vehicles as well as shared rides. We also need to prioritize and strengthen sustainable transportation options. Public transit will become even more vital to the region than is the case today. An expanded separated bike lane network is needed to enable people of all ages and abilities to bicycle safely and comfortably throughout Cambridge.

8. Changing Urban Form

Cambridge has a distinct and mature physical form. Cambridge

is a city of neighborhoods, and much of our current residential housing stock was built prior to World War II. The city also includes many historic commercial and institutional districts. These areas contrast with areas that have seen more recent redevelopment. Growing mixed use districts support contemporary building types that are larger in scale and have less articulation than historic buildings, in response to current economic factors. Increasingly, areas contain a mix of different construction types, sometimes with differing levels of density. The tension between existing and new urban development can drive conflicts among residents, developers, businesses, and other community members. The changes to the economy, community, population and environment touched upon here will likely continue to drive an evolving real estate market. The rapid physical redevelopment of the past decade is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Planning Process

To create a clear and inspiring plan for the city through 2030, the Envision Cambridge planning process addressed key planning trends on a local level, shaped by extensive analysis and public engagement. The goal throughout has been to develop a robust set of recommendations with input from thousands of community members and guidance from our seven working groups.

Work on the plan proceeded according to the following broad schedule:

Phase 1: Creating a Bold Vision

In the first phase, Envision Cambridge drew on community ideas and input, along with data analysis and planning research, to identify key issues and opportunities, develop a

citywide vision, and define core values. *Cambridge Today* is a comprehensive report on the state of the city that highlights findings from the plan's first phase. Meanwhile, Envision Cambridge also set a vision for the Alewife area.

Phase 2: Setting Priorities

Envision Cambridge delved deeper into the planning topics in the second phase. The City established topic-focused working groups and drew on community input to identify draft goals, strategies, and actions for each topic. The working groups identified draft indicators and targets to track progress towards each goal. Envision Cambridge also collected community input about the design of major corridors and the nature of future development in specific areas of the city. A plan for the Alewife area was developed in the second phase.

Phase 3: Developing an Action Plan

In the final phase, community input refined the working groups' draft recommendations. Community conversations sought to balance recommendations across each planning topic and articulate shared priorities. The result is an action plan that identifies short-, medium-, and long-term steps to guide implementation over the next several years. Building from foundational work during Phase 2, the plan finalized targets and indicators to measure progress towards our shared goals. The City also refined the implementation plan for Alewife in the final phase.

The Envision Cambridge Street Team engaged the public at locations around the city, including Lafayette Square (pictured).







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Community Care

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Planning Framework

Envision Cambridge developed a planning framework by defining a set of key terms. This shared language helped community members debate and discuss the future of Cambridge.

Vision and Core Values

The vision for Cambridge is a succinct statement articulating the city’s collective understanding of its future. The vision forms the foundation of the plan. Cambridge’s core values support the vision, providing more detail on the attributes cherished by the Cambridge community. Any policy direction the City takes must be measured by how well it realizes the vision and core values.

Planning Topics

Envision Cambridge’s planning topics—Climate & Environment, Community Wellbeing, Economy, Housing, Mobility, and Urban Form—organize policy recommendations made by the action plan. These segments correspond, in part, to the operations of city government and the traditional elements of a comprehensive plan. Envision Cambridge partnered with working groups of subject matter experts and community members to develop a vision, goals, strategies, actions, indicators, and targets for each planning topic.

Goals

Goals are broad, aspirational statements of what we want to achieve for each planning topic.

Strategies

Strategies define the general approaches needed to achieve the goals. Strategies can help achieve one or more goals.

Actions

Actions are the specific policies, programs, studies, capital investments or other tools that City departments use to implement each strategy.

Indicators and Targets

Indicators are the quantitative measures used to track the City’s progress toward each goal. Moving forward, the City will use indicators to assess whether the plan is working to meet these goals and adjust policy directions if necessary. Targets are the desired level of each indicator that the City will reach by 2030.



Plan Implementation

This plan includes 183 new, modified, or expanded actions across the six planning topics, selected through a rigorous community engagement and prioritization process. These actions include recommendations for policies, programs, zoning changes, community outreach and education, capital investments, and advocacy efforts at the state and regional level. The community identified which actions should be implemented in the short-term (less than 5 years), medium-term (5-10 years), and long-term (greater than 10 years). To do so, each action was analyzed according to its impact (ability to achieve stated goals), and level of difficulty (resources needed or challenges faced in implementation).

High impact actions are recommended for implementation,

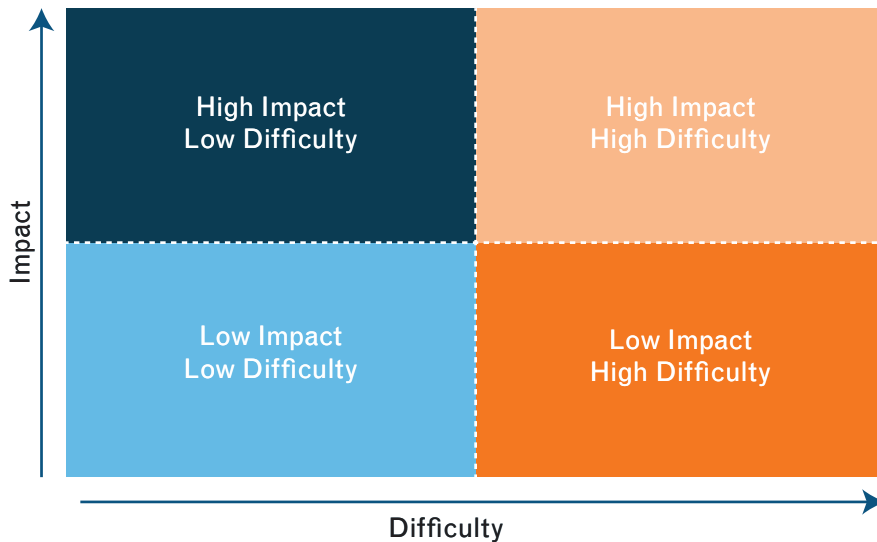
but the level of difficulty dictates when the City can realistically implement each one. Actions identified as low impact and low difficulty are ranked low priority and only recommended for implementation as time and/or resources allow. Actions identified as low impact and high difficulty are not recommended for implementation.

The action prioritization serves as a starting point for implementation. However, actions will “ripen” at different rates and for different reasons. Many actions require additional analysis, significant operating and capital funding, and/or continued community engagement. Accordingly, Envision Cambridge provides a flexible approach for implementation and recognizes that opportunity is based on a variety of logistical, financial, and technical needs, as well as other variables that

change over time. The selection of actions for future implementation will be based on the current and projected status of the City’s budget, emerging priorities, community input, and contribution towards achieving the City’s goals.

Envision Cambridge is intended as a flexible plan—a living document—that will adapt to the changes over time. To ensure that these actions align with our community’s priorities, values, and shared vision, the plan will be updated on a regular basis. The City will measure and communicate progress to ensure we are on track to achieve our shared goals. Together we will make sure that this plan remains a steadfast guide in supporting housing affordability, promoting economic development, enhancing environmental sustainability and resilience, and provide resources to make our city inclusive and welcoming to all.

Action Prioritization



Action Annotations

This plan annotates each action recommendation with additional information to assist the public and policymakers to discuss and implement ideas in this plan. Definitions for these annotations are provided below:

Action Type

Zoning Changes: Actions that propose changes to the City's zoning ordinance.

Other Regulatory Changes: Actions that will need to be pursued through regulatory changes not covered by the zoning ordinance.

Capital Investments: Special projects that require the City to pay for infrastructure improvements, new open space, or other one-time investments.

Programs and Operations: Actions that require the City to identify a new or redirected existing revenue source to pay for a program on an ongoing basis.

Community Interface and Outreach: Actions that require the City to change its structure for interacting with residents and stakeholders, and actions that involve City efforts to build public awareness about a particular issue.

Regional Partnerships: Actions that require partnerships and consensus-building on regional and statewide policy issues.

Study or Plan

Actions that require further analysis or planning to determine specific future legal, policy, or programmatic changes.

Status

Existing: Actions the City currently undertakes that will continue without change.

Modified: Actions the City currently undertakes that should be modified to better meet the community's needs.

Expanded: Actions the City currently undertakes that should expand beyond their current capacity.

New: Actions that the City does not currently undertake and should initiate during the plan's implementation.

Completion Timeframe

Near term: Actions that will be completed within the first 5 years of the plan.

Medium term: Actions that will take between 5 to 10 years to complete.

Long term: Actions that will be completed in 10 years or more.

Ongoing: Actions that continue without completion, such as training or education programs.

Vision and Core Values

The Envision Cambridge team worked with the community through workshops, one-on-one discussion, surveys, and more to craft a vision statement for the city.

Following extensive community outreach, the plan identified six core values expressed by the Cambridge community that shape the plan's goals and recommendations. The vision and core values together form the foundation upon which the plan's recommendations for the evolution of Cambridge are built.

Vision

“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

Livability

We value a vibrant built and natural environment and support sustainable transportation with affordable and convenient access to daily needs and recreational resources.

Livability means that Cambridge:

- Offers a high quality of life through affordable, accessible, and safe housing and transportation options, employment and educational opportunities, vibrant public spaces, community services, and cultural and recreational possibilities.
- Fosters connected and accessible city services and amenities.
- Promotes access to quality and diverse neighborhoods.
- Forges a built environment that is safe and a great place to raise families.

Diversity and Equity

We are a welcoming community that celebrates our diversity and ensures access to affordable housing choices and opportunities to succeed.

Diversity and Equity means that Cambridge:

- Welcomes people of all backgrounds and celebrates diverse voices and opinions.
- Enables people of all races, cultures, incomes, and viewpoints to call Cambridge home.
- Ensures cultural, economic, and social diversity.
- Develops strong connections between a diverse range of people and places.
- Provides a vibrant built environment suitable for different races, cultures, and ideas.

- Promotes the ability for all people who live and work in Cambridge to participate and prosper in the life of the city.
- Fosters the ability for all community members to have access to robust city services, housing, jobs, educational and employment opportunities, affordable nutritious food, and quality health care.
- Ensures all residents share the costs and benefits of growth.
- Provides the means for all residents to have access to the same opportunities.
- Ensures opportunities and benefits are available to all people.
- Forges fair and just opportunities and outcomes for all people.

Economic Opportunity

We provide opportunity and stability through access to quality jobs, workforce development and training, and livable wages that support economic security for residents.

Economic Opportunity means that Cambridge:

- Supports a sustainable, entrepreneurial, and diverse economy with a fully educated and employed workforce that supports a high level of public amenities and services.
- Encourages innovation and the creation of quality business ideas and proposals for a wide range of people and interests.
- Fosters diversity in entrepreneurship, innovation, and job training programs.
- Promotes a sustainable economy and diverse economic base through pragmatic programs and policies.
- Believes a pathway to employment is fundamental in maintaining the quality of life of all residents.
- Ensures all residents find stability through access to high quality jobs, education, training, and livable wages.
- Supports the access and availability of education and workforce training for emerging industries and innovative employment opportunities.
- Promotes a qualified and diverse workforce that meets employers' needs.
- Forges the means to support local businesses and business retention.
- Invests in a creative and sustainable economy that taps into the entrepreneurial spirit and quality education of the city.

Sustainability and Resilience

We take responsible action to reduce our impact on the environment and build a resilient city and strong community.

Sustainability and resilience mean that Cambridge:

- Preserves and enhances the quality of our built and natural environment with strong environmental leadership and builds resiliency to climate change impacts with sustainable social, environmental, and infrastructure systems.
- Ensures a commitment to prepare for a range of social and physical risks.
- Manages urban and natural ecosystems in a coordinated and sustainable manner.
- Promotes growth that is equitable and sustainable.
- Ensures sustainable modes of transportation are safe, efficient, convenient, reliable, and accessible to all residents.
- Strengthens the city's infrastructure, economy, and human services to enable the community to withstand, adapt to, and recover from disasters and major stresses.

Community Health and Wellbeing

We promote healthy and active lifestyles in a supportive, safe community with diverse opportunities to connect with our neighbors and nature and to engage in civic life.

Community Health and Wellbeing means that Cambridge:

- Promotes healthy and active lifestyles in a supportive local community with quality human and social services.

- Supports a strong sense of community and pride in place.
- Facilitates personal independence and engagement of residents in civic and social life.
- Encourages access to affordable nutritious food, places to be physically active, and quality health care.
- Forges a built environment that encourages active lifestyles and promotes public health and safety.
- Promotes healthy, affordable, and sustainably-produced foods.

Learning

We embrace lifelong learning and celebrate art and creativity in our culturally rich community.

Learning means that Cambridge:

- Ensures all residents have access to opportunities for lifelong learning in academics, arts, and cultural programs.
- Ensures the city is known for its institutions of higher learning.
- Encourages the formal and informal active pursuit of learning and skills.
- Facilitates the ability for all residents to find opportunity through access to education and training at all points in their lives for personal or professional reasons.
- Fosters the ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge.



Community Engagement

Envision Cambridge was a collaborative community planning process. From the outset, we made the process as inclusive as possible, valuing and leveraging the existing knowledge, relationships, and insights within our diverse community.

Thousands of community members shaped Envision Cambridge through a three-year public process. The input came from those who live, work, study, and play in our city. Through this engagement process, Envision Cambridge created a shared vision for the future of the city that shaped the plan's specific recommendations. The plan is the culmination of this work and contains recommendations on a broad range of topics: Climate & Environment, Community Wellbeing, Economy, Housing, Mobility, and Urban Form.

Community engagement was essential to creating a meaningful, long-term plan that has strong public support and provides an accurate representation of what the Cambridge community wants the city to become. A successful plan must reflect the aspirations of all in our community, and we made a special effort to engage groups typically underrepresented in the planning process.

Engagement Approach

The following objectives guided our engagement approach:

- Collect deep local knowledge to serve as a key source of information.
- Gather feedback on important questions for the future.
- Build an understanding among members of the public about the process and the variety of perspectives held by community members.
- Create an engaged community through an inclusive and wide-reaching public engagement program.
- Develop a shared vision representative of all community stakeholders to set priorities for the city's future.
- Create a framework for ongoing outreach, collaboration, and engagement.

To meet these objectives, we developed a variety of in-person and online approaches to engage our residents, including surveys in multiple languages, public workshops, committees and working groups, and focus groups targeting underrepresented community members including immigrant and racial and ethnic minority communities. This inclusive and wide-reaching engagement program provided many ways for community members to have their voice heard.

Engagement Methods

Street Team

The Street Team was out and about in every neighborhood of Cambridge to administer surveys, answer any questions about the plan, and collect feedback from three interactive activities: the Mobile Engagement Station, Envision Cambridge Corridors, and Envision Cambridge Streets.

Mobile Engagement Station

The Mobile Engagement Station is a large, interactive table shaped like Cambridge that the Envision Cambridge Street Team brought to local events, festivals, parks, farmers markets, libraries, senior housing, and other neighborhood locations where people gather. On its surface is a printed map of the city that community members could write or draw on with markers to share their ideas and concerns. It also features a 3D model showing all of the buildings in the city. The Envision Cambridge Street Team asked participants to indicate which parts of the city they liked most, which they liked least, and which they thought should be the focus of future planning. Participants also drew their path from home to work or school and offered additional thoughts about the future of the city.

Corridors and Streets Activities

Envision Cambridge built two mobile activities to collect community input on the future of planning for Cambridge's major mixed-use corridors, Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street.

The Corridors activity invited

participants to design their ideal corridor, specifying the mix of building uses, the density of buildings, and the location of amenities, like retail and open space. Participants were given a worksheet where they could tally the outcomes (like the number of housing units and retail space) of their ideal corridor design.

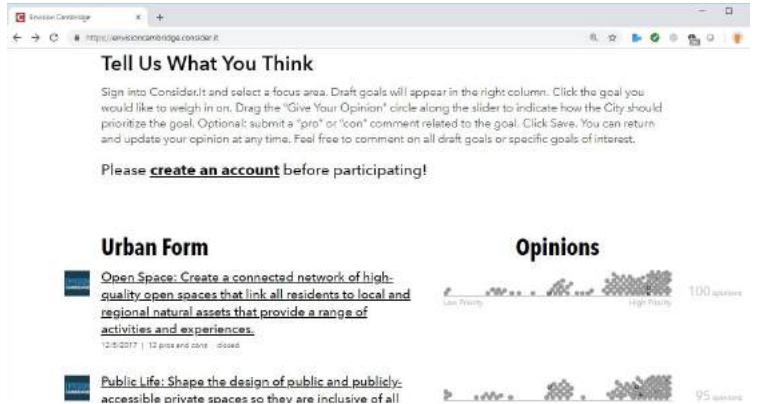
In the Streets activity, participants built their ideal street by allocating space in the right-of-way to different transportation modes, public realm amenities, and green infrastructure. During both activities, the Street Team used the exercise as a way to discuss the tradeoffs inherent in the development of a citywide plan.

Envision Cambridge Newspaper

Featuring maps, data, history, fun facts, portraits of public spaces, and interviews with community members, the Envision Cambridge Newspaper provided updates on the planning process, highlighted planning and policy issues, and offered in-depth stories about our community. The newspaper was distributed across the city, including in newspaper boxes in major public spaces.

Community Engagement Team

Envision Cambridge partnered with the City's Community Engagement Team (CET) to reach underserved Cambridge families through focus groups and surveys. The CET's outreach workers are community members from the Bangladeshi, Chinese, Ethiopian, Haitian, American-born Black, and Spanish- and Arabic-speaking communities.



The Mobile Engagement Station (top) collected community input about specific places, while the Envision Cambridge Newspaper (bottom) brought voices from the community together into a free and easily accessible format.

The Envision Cambridge Street Team used colorful, inviting activities such as the Streets activity (top), to engage the public in the planning process. Envision Cambridge's digital engagement included a tool (bottom) to collect feedback on draft goals.

Surveys

Envision Cambridge distributed online and paper surveys to get public input on the plan. These surveys covered the issues facing the city, the community's vision for the future, and draft goals.

Digital Engagement

Public meetings are not always convenient for community members, due to professional schedules, childcare responsibilities, and other personal factors. To ensure that everyone had

a chance to provide feedback on the plan, Envision Cambridge launched a digital engagement tool. This tool allowed the public to indicate their support of the goals, leave specific comments, and interact with other users. It collected over 2,000 opinions, which helped refine the working group goals and inform the City's future policies and programs. The tool was also crucial for outreach to millennials, who make up 48% of the city's population but do not often attend public meetings.



Small group discussions at public workshops offered opportunities for in-depth conversations on specific topics.

Public Workshops, Open Houses, and Panel Discussions

Envision Cambridge hosted several public workshops, open houses, and panel discussions. At these events, community members held discussions with each other and the Envision Cambridge planning team to discuss planning issues, identify recommendations, and weigh priorities. There were 13 workshops and one panel discussion over the course of the planning process.

Walkshops

The Envision Cambridge team conducted a series of combination walking tours and public workshops—or “walkshops”—along Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street. These events highlighted the combined effects of market forces and regulations on the built environment.



“Walkshops” on and around the city’s major mixed-use corridors brought participants onto the street to view and comment on the ways that the real estate market and City regulations shape the physical form of the city.

Advisory Committee and Working Groups

The Envision Cambridge planning process assembled 115 community members into seven working groups to hold focused discussions on the plan’s content. These groups generated ideas, refined approaches, negotiated conflicts, and prioritized the recommendations for the plan. The groups consisted of Cambridge residents, representatives of local businesses and institutions, and property owners.

- The Envision Cambridge Advisory Committee guided the overall planning process. They worked to balance recommendations across all six planning topics and set priorities for the plan.

- The Engagement and Communications Working Group provided guidance and advice on how the development of a citywide plan could engage the entire community and ensure that dialogue represented the city’s diversity.

Planning Topic Working Groups

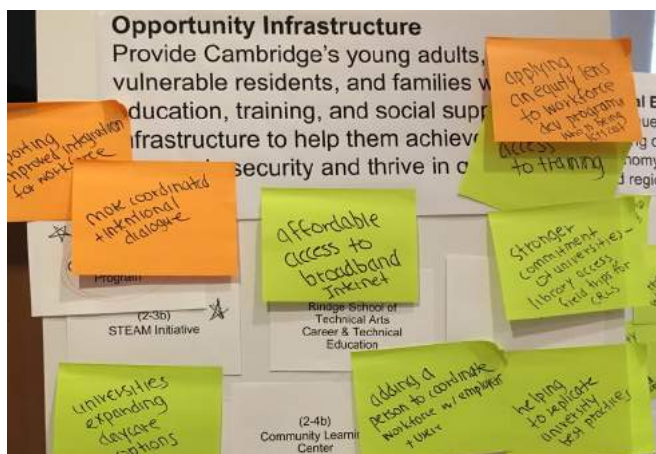
Planning topic working groups were formed to develop recommendations on four of the six planning topics: Climate & Environment, Economy, Housing, and Mobility. The Envision Cambridge Advisory Committee and Engagement and Communications Working Group developed recommendations on the other two planning topics, Urban Form and Community Wellbeing.

- The Housing Working Group addressed issues specific to housing, including affordability, supply, production, universal design, homelessness, emergency housing, and housing health and safety, among other priority topics.

- The Economy Working Group addressed issues of business, labor, entrepreneurship, economic mobility, business mix and industry diversification, workforce training, and commercial real estate, among other priority topics.

- The Mobility Working Group addressed urban mobility, transportation mode-share, multimodal network design, transit accessibility, traffic, and automobile and bicycle parking, among other priority topics.

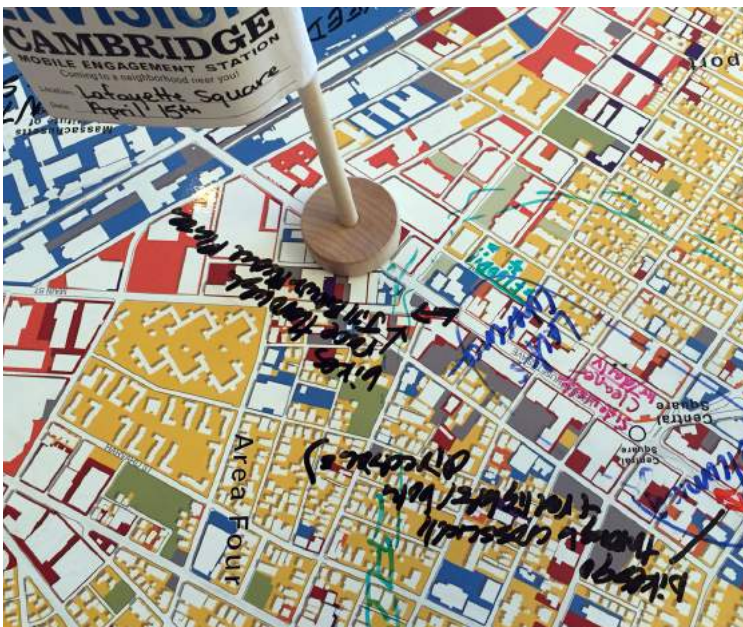
- The Climate & Environment Working Group addressed Cambridge’s environmental concerns, such as greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency, low-carbon energy supply, environmental justice, landscape and ecology, air and water pollution, flooding, extreme heat and weather events, urban tree canopy, and solid waste, among other priority topics.



Envision Cambridge’s planning topic working groups spent more than a year suggesting, editing, and refining a suite of goals, strategies, actions, indicators, and targets for each of the plan’s focus areas.



At a joint meeting of all the Envision Cambridge committees, members of the committees discussed their priorities in small groups and collectively voted on the recommendations they felt were most important to pursue. Envision Cambridge collated each small group’s votes and used insights from those discussions to craft the implementation plan.





Engagement by Numbers

5,000+

Participants reached with the mobile engagement station and other mobile activities

2,000+

Online and in-person survey responses

5,000+

Social media interactions

500+

Public workshop attendees

115

Committee members on seven committees and working groups

165

Hours of committee and working group meetings

160

Participants in focus groups with hard-to-reach populations

74

Public meetings, including workshops, panels, and working group discussions

Recommendations



The following chapters present Envision Cambridge’s vision for the future in more detail, along with goals, strategies, and actions intended to realize that vision. These recommendations include a flexible framework for managing urban growth and change, as well as specific actions for each planning topic: Climate and Environment, Community Wellbeing, Economy, Housing, Mobility, and Urban Form. Each planning topic cannot be fully understood without the others, and each chapter should be read with reference to the other chapters, as well as to the vision and core values which drive Envision Cambridge.





Shaping Cambridge

Envision Cambridge sets out a framework for growth management that builds upon and complements existing patterns of development. This plan seeks to preserve the history that provides the unique character of the city and its neighborhoods, while meeting the needs of today's community and of future generations.

Change is a constant presence in successful, vibrant cities across the world. Cambridge is no exception. Cities change because people and times evolve in response to a range of forces, causing changes in the community, the environment, the economy, and ultimately to the physical form of the city.

Some of the current factors influencing Cambridge include the changing global climate, the technology-driven national economy, rising income inequality regionally and nationally, the shifting demographics of the country, rising income inequality regionally and nationally, the regional transportation system, and the local demand for housing. Cities evolve in response to interactions among these, and that evolution in turn is what drives change.

Cambridge has a centuries-long history of change, starting as a small settlement near Harvard Square and later evolving into an educational center, a farm town, a streetcar suburb, an industrial manufacturing center, and most recently a global leader in life science and technology-driven

industries. In just the past decade, accelerating shifts in regional, national, and global economies and a renewed interest in urban living have had significant effects in Cambridge. As Cambridge has become more attractive to residents and businesses, demand for housing and commercial space has risen, resulting in increased costs, rising real estate values, and new development unable to meet increased demand. These changes have made affordability an increasingly serious concern for the community.

The Greater Boston region has added over 400,000 new residents since 2000, with 150,000 more residents projected to move to the metro area by 2030. Already, Cambridge's population has increased from 101,355 in 2000 to 113,630 as of 2017. Our strong economy, prominent universities, urban amenities, robust public services, and high quality of life make our city one of the most desirable locations to live, work, study, and visit, both regionally and nationally. Consequently, demand for both commercial space and

housing in Cambridge is expected to continue to grow.

Cambridge has faced these types of challenges before and has evolved to meet them. What that experience teaches us is this: that we must view today's conditions not as an existential challenge, but as an opportunity to build the community that we want. This plan seeks to answer a question: How can Cambridge manage future growth while advancing our core values of equity and diversity, livability, economic opportunity, sustainability and resiliency, community health and wellbeing, and lifelong learning?

Targeted, well-regulated urban development is one of the most effective ways to respond to and channel the pressure to change. Planned growth can absorb demand for housing and commercial space and bring with it benefits for the broader community, like increased affordable housing, greening of the building stock, climate resilient infrastructure, new jobs and economic development opportunities, additional open space, and other amenities.



Members of the Cambridge community weighed in on the future of development and change in the city, often with differing views.

During the planning process, Envision Cambridge held extensive community conversations to understand what type of community we want. The shared vision and core values articulated during this process helped guide strategies for managing growth, including where growth should be directed and how change can improve our neighborhoods and build a more equitable city.

This plan outlines an approach to inclusive growth management that will enable us to capitalize on the benefits of change while recognizing the need to maintain Cambridge's positive urban qualities and overall livability. The plan seeks to preserve the historic urban fabric that underlies the unique character of Cambridge while prioritizing growth near public transit, employment centers, civic services, shopping districts, and other community amenities. Regulating development though

this framework, we can achieve our shared goals and support a thriving, diverse, and forward-looking community.

Balancing Growth and Preservation

The future of urban growth is a hotly contested issue in many cities. While community members may have many different opinions and perspectives, Cambridge must forge a shared vision of its future and pursue policies that both address the city's challenges and promote a common set of values. With Cambridge's thriving economy, high quality of life, and robust public services, the demand for housing and commercial space is likely to remain high through 2030. This demand will continue to put strains on affordability but also enable continued urban redevelopment. The tensions this creates also

provides an opportunity. Envision Cambridge aims to take a balanced approach toward regulating development, one that would generally maintain current policies regarding the scale and type of new development while suggesting novel approaches to improve urban form and to leverage the value of increased development to create additional affordable housing, open space, civic amenities, and more.

This approach also values the existing historic resources of the city, preserving existing patterns of development and encouraging the preservation and reuse of existing structures where they are economically viable. If scaled and sited with care, new development will add to the city's character and meet the needs of today's community, as well as future generations, so that all will have an opportunity to thrive.

The Cambridge community has many different opinions about urban development. These comments from participants in the Envision Cambridge process reflect a “middle ground” between preservation and redevelopment that supports the community’s identity and needs.

“We’re a victim of our own success... We must strike a balance between moderate growth and NIMBYism... Build [new buildings] consistent with the neighborhood.”

—Visitor to Danehy Park

“Cambridge feels like a neighborhood and should stay that way.”

—Alewife resident

“[I envision...] mid-sized structure, not sky scrapers, but buildings large enough to accommodate more housing.”

—Worker in Central Square

“[I envision urban form will be...] similar in scale (height) to the current Cambridge, but more dense, with infill and more people in the less populated parts of the city.”

—Porter Square resident

“[I envision Cambridge will have...] some density close to MBTA stations, while preserving the character in other parts of the city.”

—Visitor to River Festival

“Density is OK to increase as long as the character of the neighborhoods are maintained.”

—Porter Square resident

Development and Community

A balanced approach to development looks to direct and channel growth to those locations and districts where change would have the most positive impact, at the same time preserving neighborhoods with stable patterns of development and enhancing attributes that help achieve our overall community goals. The first step is to take stock of the different districts and neighborhoods of Cambridge. The following taxonomy broadly characterizes different parts of the city based on present-day conditions and the potential for future change:

Residential Neighborhoods should be areas of low expected growth, largely retaining their

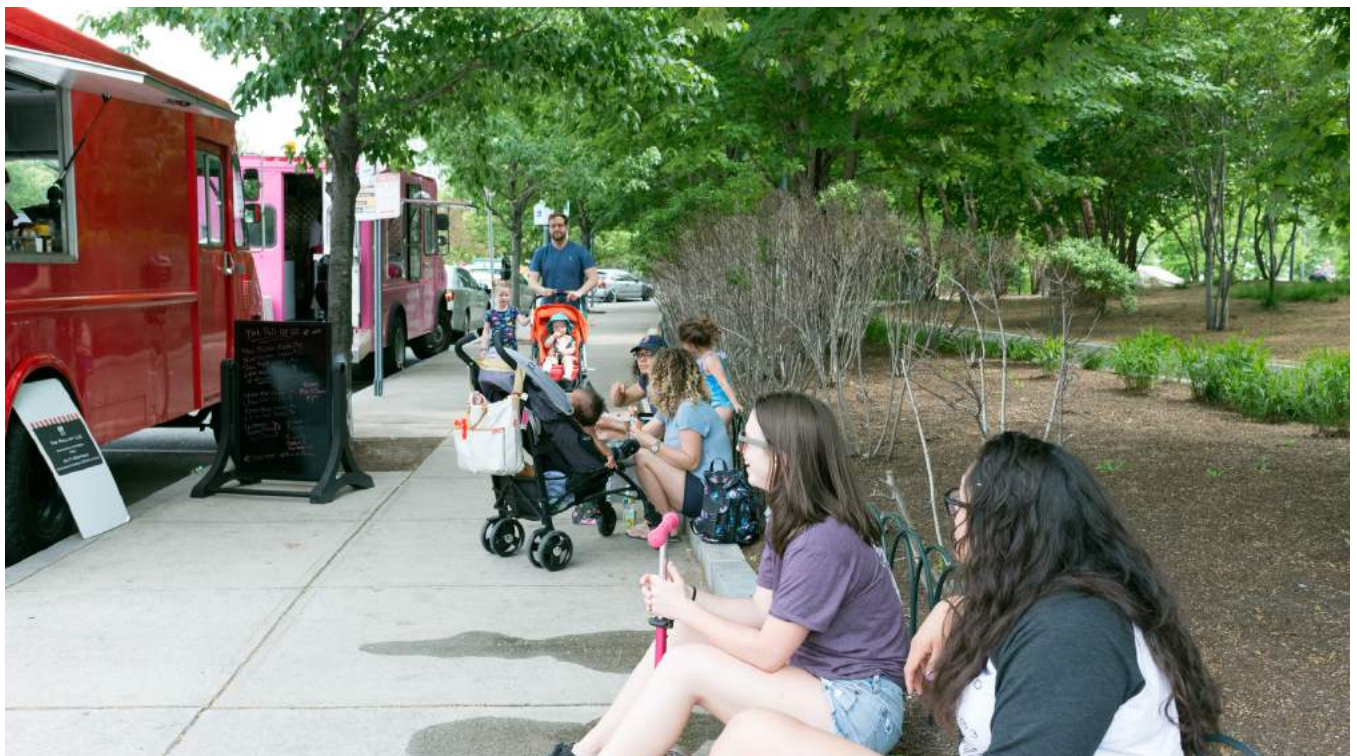
existing fabric while allowing for complementary infill development, consistent with broader city goals. More varied, mixed-use development may occur along secondary transportation corridors.

Squares and Major Mixed-Use Corridors along Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street should grow at a moderate, measured pace that takes advantage of transit proximity and enhances their unique character and sense of place.

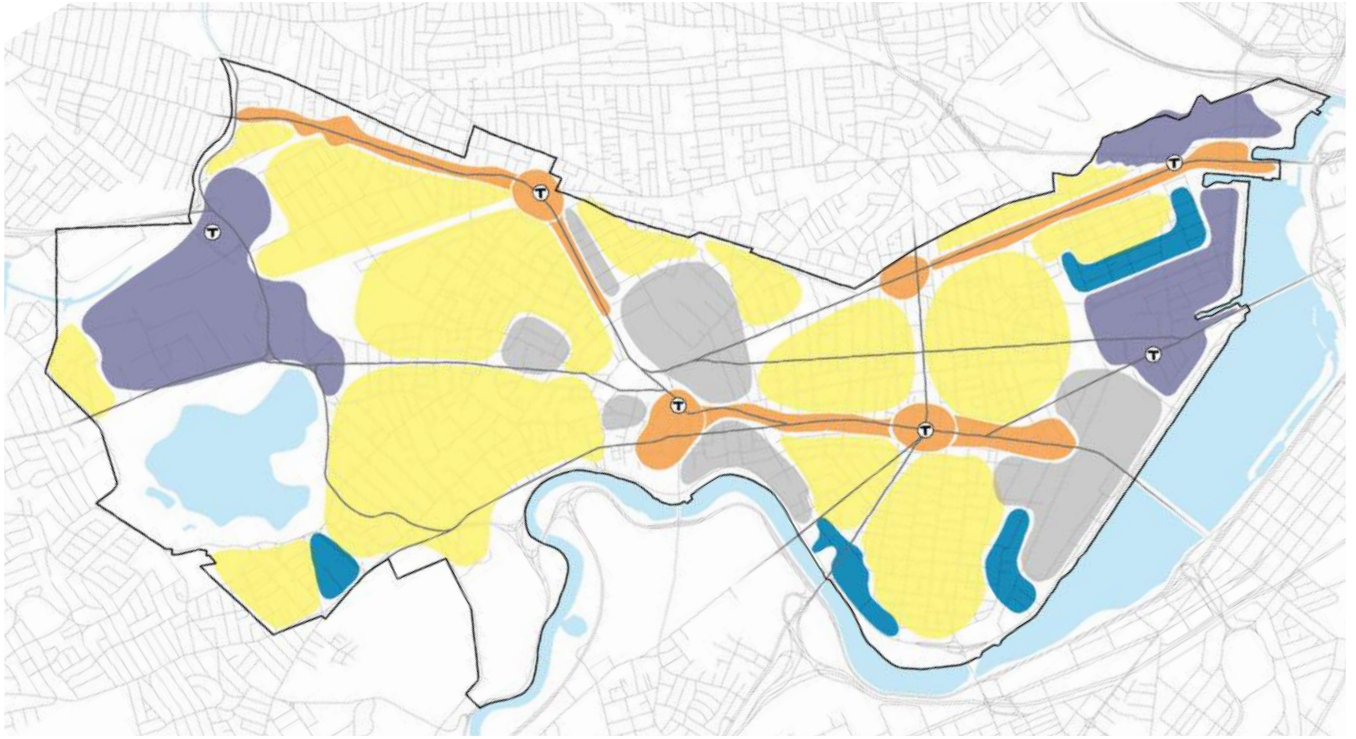
Higher Education Institutional Areas should grow primarily within their traditional core campuses, with more substantial campus additions adjacent to mixed-use areas and scaling down adjacent to traditional residential neighborhoods.

Transition Areas should accommodate development of varying types that creates an intermediate sense of scale between adjacent activities and emphasizes the benefits of proximate land uses.

Evolving Mixed-Use Districts, such as Kendall Square, North Point/Cambridge Crossing, and Alewife, should continue to accommodate the bulk of the city's growth and change, taking advantage of transit proximity, and positively transforming areas characterized by surface parking lots, automobile-oriented uses, and obsolete commercial buildings.



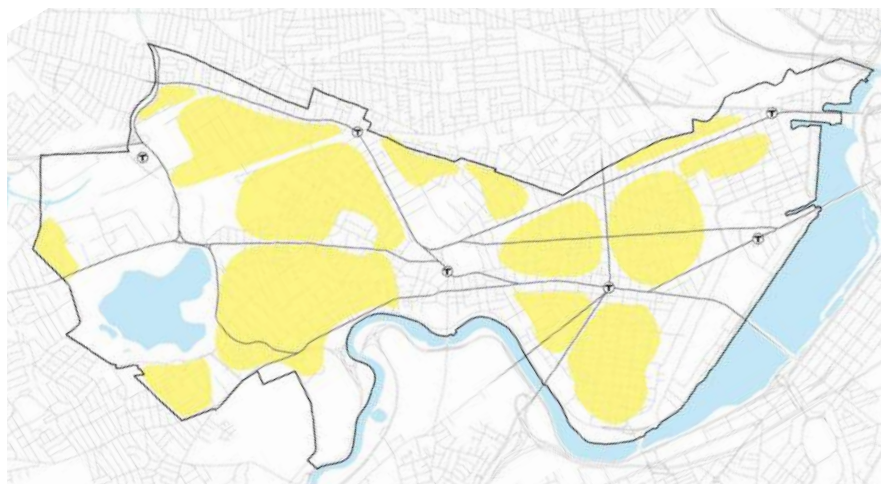
Food truck patrons at of North Point Park.



Existing district classification

- Residential Neighborhoods
- Squares and Major Mixed-Use Corridors
- Higher Education Institutional Areas
- Transition Areas
- Evolving Mixed-Use Districts

This diagram broadly characterizes different parts of the city based on present-day conditions and the potential for future change.



While Cambridge's largely residential neighborhoods will change more slowly than other parts of the city, infill development can complement the historic context and create affordable housing options for a diverse population.

Residential Neighborhoods

Cambridge has many thriving residential neighborhoods, each with a unique character. Envision Cambridge recognizes that development should happen much more slowly and incrementally in these areas, and that the essence of each neighborhood is unlikely to change. Such stability is a good thing for the livability of the city. However, even the most stable neighborhood areas will experience economic and demographic changes, and redevelopment will occur on some sites within those neighborhoods. Cambridge should take advantage of these small changes in the urban fabric to support citywide goals, including an increase in and equitable distribution of affordable housing throughout the city.



Historic neighborhood fabric in Cambridge.

Cambridge and higher education institutions should partner to ensure institutional actions support the goals and values of Envision Cambridge.



Harvard Yard, one example of a Higher Education Institutional Area, contains a mix of historic academic buildings, contemporary developments, and semi-public spaces.

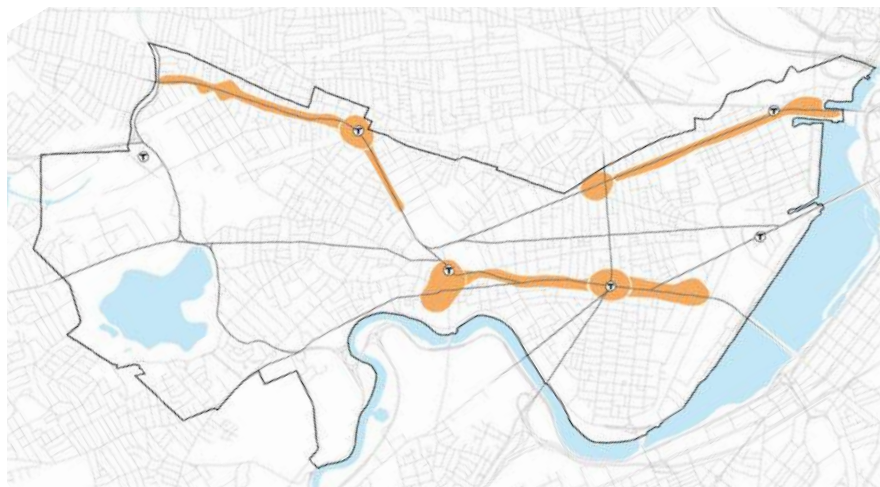
Higher Education Institutional Areas

Institutions of higher education occupy an important place in the city's history, demographics, economy, and urban form. Cambridge is their home, much as it is to residents and local businesses. The iconic core campuses of the institutions cover large areas of Cambridge. Students, faculty, and staff, many of whom also live in Cambridge, are integral to the community and the city's identity.

Like cities, universities evolve over time as their missions and identities change to suit current needs. In recent years, the institutions and Cambridge have worked together to address a variety of issues, such as climate change. Cambridge and the institutions should continue to cooperate to ensure that their actions support the goals and values of Envision Cambridge. Maintaining an open and ongoing conversation between Cambridge and its institutions is key to this partnership.

A productive relationship may lead to physical outcomes, such as producing more housing and partnering on joint infrastructure systems. Cooperation with institutions can also address aspects of livability and community that go beyond physical change, such as breaking down the social barriers between campuses and nearby neighborhoods.

Focus development along major commercial corridors, in order to fill the gaps in the street wall, improve the public realm, provide small retail and community spaces, expand walkability, and increase density near transit stations.



Squares and Major Mixed-use Corridors

Cambridge's squares and the major mixed-use corridors along parts of Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street are the heart of public life in the city, providing a setting for employment, housing, retail, services, entertainment, culture, and places to meet the everyday needs of Cambridge's residents, students, workers, and visitors. The corridors also serve as major transportation arteries, connecting neighborhoods, campuses, and commercial districts. These spaces are among Cambridge's most distinctive and memorable places. With their mix of activities, they are also among the city's densest and liveliest areas, allowing people to congregate and experience life as members of an urban community. While similar

in many ways, each square and corridor segment has developed its own unique character over time, one that can and should be complemented and enhanced when opportunities arise.

These areas are unlikely to experience wholesale redevelopment, but contain many individual sites that will likely change in some way, such as significant buildings that might be rehabilitated to new uses or underdeveloped sites that might have new construction. Any redevelopment should affirm the squares and corridors as the mixed-use centers of civic life, accommodating greater densities than the surrounding neighborhoods to strengthen the mix of uses and incentivize sustainable transportation choices such as walking, bicycling, and public transit. In addition, new development

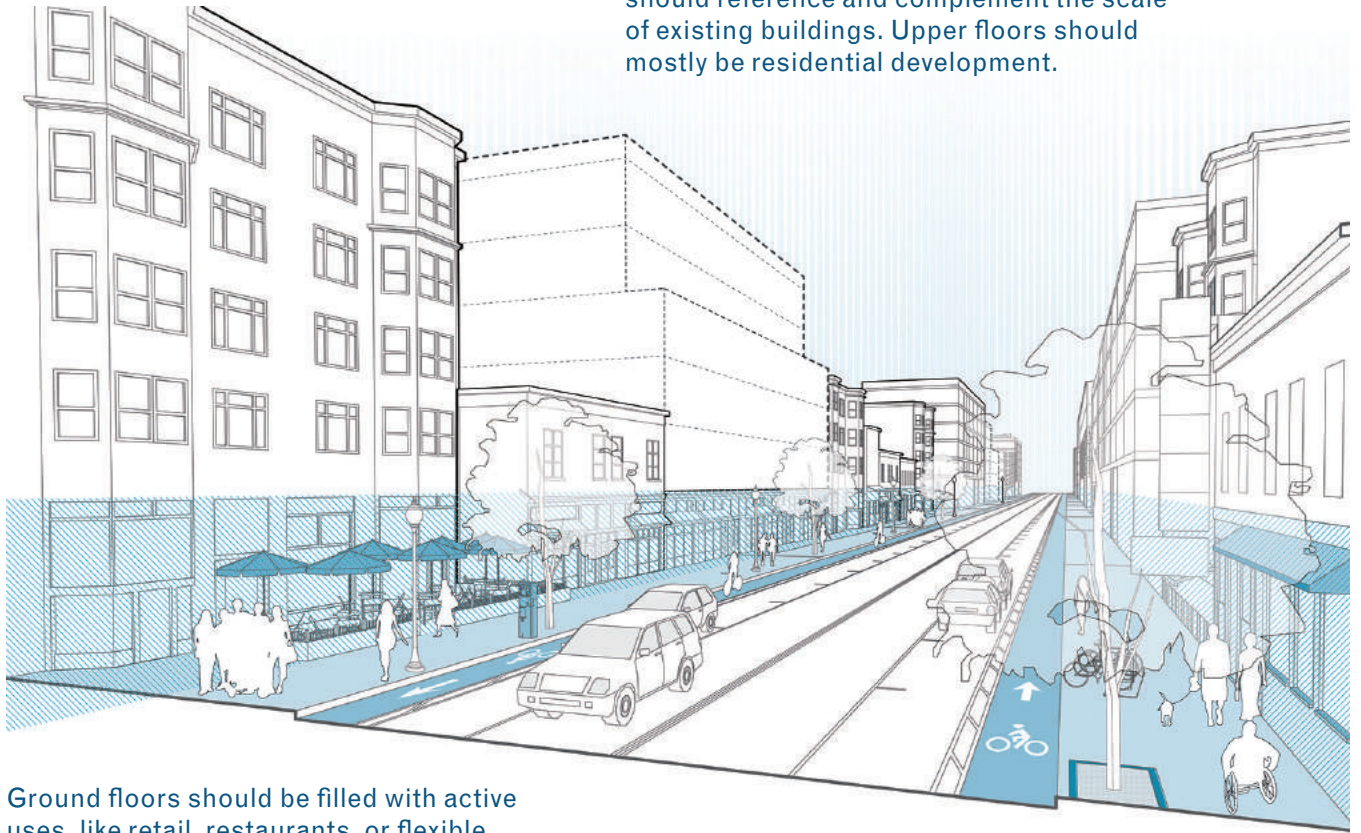


Walkable mixed-use development in Central Square.

along the corridors can support Cambridge's independent retail businesses. Thriving commercial districts will draw in more customers for existing businesses, and regulated redevelopment can add flexible retail spaces that relieve cost pressure.

One of the overriding concerns raised through the Envision Cambridge process has been the escalating cost of housing and its effects on the community. While by no means offering a complete solution to this problem, redevelopment in the squares and along the corridors offers opportunities for the addition of housing above ground-floor retail through the redevelopment of parking areas and other underutilized sites. Redevelopment also provides opportunities for improvements to the public realm that will help ensure the future vitality of these districts.

New development along the major corridors should reference and complement the scale of existing buildings. Upper floors should mostly be residential development.



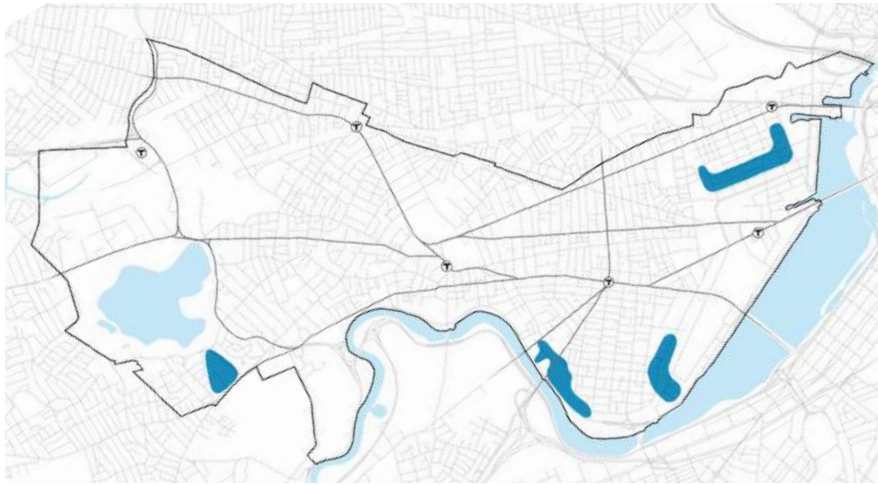
Ground floors should be filled with active uses, like retail, restaurants, or flexible community spaces. Less active uses like banks, lobbies, real estate offices, daycares, and loading zones should be limited in their frontage along major corridors.

Public rights-of-way along major corridors should be allocated to allow for efficient and safe movement of all street users; create space for street trees, green infrastructure, sidewalk cafes, wayfinding, and more; and provide flexible space for parking, loading, drop-off, and amenities like food trucks.

Other Corridors

Like residential neighborhoods, Cambridge's secondary travel corridors have stable, lower-scale development patterns with some sites that may experience future change. These areas tend to be more active than neighborhood streets

because they are larger, carry more traffic (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto), and have existing pockets of non-residential use. These areas would not accommodate the same intensity of development as major corridors, but could provide some opportunities for infill development.



A transitional area with surface parking and single-story commercial development at the edge of Cambridgeport.

Transition Districts

Transition areas abut well-established and stable residential neighborhoods but contain different types of buildings and uses that are more likely to change over time. Older low-rise industrial and retail buildings as well as auto-oriented uses (including surface parking) tend to dominate many of these areas. Some transition areas form a buffer between lower-scale residential neighborhoods and larger-scale commercial or mixed-use districts. Larger, underdeveloped sites within these areas can be particularly attractive opportunities for redevelopment to uses that better meet the community's needs.

Transition areas pose one of the greatest challenges for growth management. The redevelopment opportunities in these areas have the potential to serve the high demand for housing and commercial space while minimizing displacement. They also have the potential to create more pedestrian-oriented places with amenities serving nearby areas. However, new development must be managed more carefully to mitigate the potential impacts on abutting areas. In areas that lie between lower-scale residential districts and higher-scale mixed-use districts, it can be challenging to determine what mix of development scales and uses is appropriate to bridge those different types of districts.

Development at the edges of residential neighborhoods should expand the high-quality pedestrian environment, offer housing options, add amenities not already offered in adjacent neighborhoods, and provide transition between traditional neighborhood fabric and denser mixed-use and commercial districts.



Cambridgeport Riverfront

This area sits between several job centers, including the forthcoming Harvard Enterprise Research Campus and additional future development at Beacon Yards in Allston. New residential development can match the existing high-rises at the river, while stepping down to the neighborhood.



Cambridgeport South

The area between Cambridgeport and MIT is a mix of vacant parcels and single-story R&D space. This land should redevelop with residential and institutional uses, especially with housing for the university-affiliated population.



Charles Street

The area between the Kendall Square planning area and East Cambridge is increasingly seeing redevelopment, including mixed-use residential and R&D. Mid-density housing should be prioritized here, with some opportunity for retail near First Street, and with an urban form that transitions to the neighborhood.



Mount Auburn Triangle

The commercial land north of the Mt. Auburn Cemetery is very low density with lots of surface parking. This area should become residential-commercial mixed-use, scaled to complement the surrounding neighborhood.

Evolving Mixed-Use Areas

Cambridge's major mixed-use districts continue to experience the most significant growth in the city. These include Kendall Square, Alewife, and North Point/Cambridge Crossing, including areas surrounding the Lechmere Green Line MBTA station. Through 2030, most new development in the city is expected to occur here. Transformation of these areas offers the potential to create great new neighborhoods and advance the City's goals in providing affordable housing, environmental resilience, cohesive urban form, and community wellbeing.

With these considerations in mind, Cambridge has undertaken rigorous land use planning processes to set objectives and provide guidance for development in these areas. Development plans for North Point and parts of Kendall Square have been approved and are underway, while zoning for the Volpe Center site in Kendall Square has been adopted and zoning for other sites is being considered. Envision Cambridge recently completed a planning study for Alewife, an area that continues to experience a great deal of redevelopment, particularly in new housing.

While each evolving area requires a different approach to

managing urban change, the plans all call for a relatively balanced mix of development types, including significant commercial development to absorb current demand and support the property tax base, as well as significant new housing to support the increasing population of the city and region. Overall, these areas should continue to prioritize mixed-use development that is sensitive to its context. Cambridge should continue to engage in additional fine-grained analysis of each area, focusing on urban design and working with the community and property owners to create plans that will result in great places with benefits for the broader community.



Harness the transformation in evolving mixed-use areas to create great new neighborhoods and advance the city's goals in affordable housing, environmental resilience, cohesive urban form, and community wellbeing.



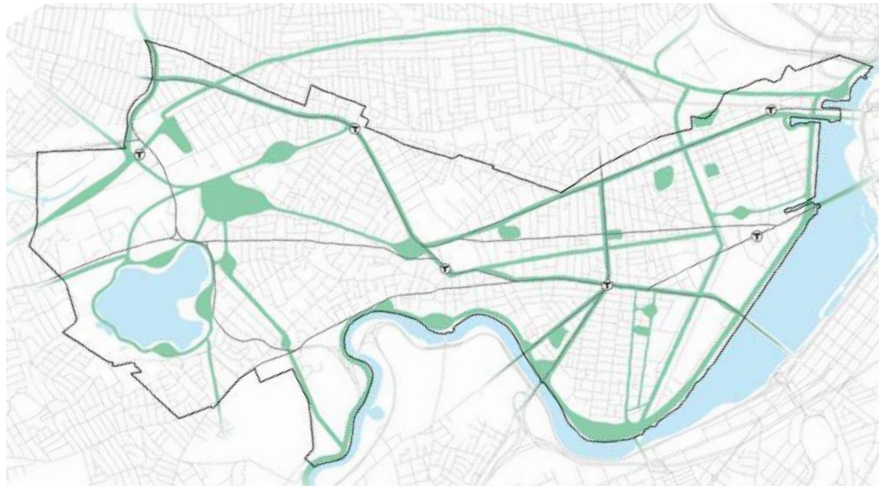
Planned development under construction at North Point/Cambridge Crossing, 2018.

Alewife Planning Study

Goals of the Envision Cambridge Alewife Planning Study include supporting commercial development that includes low barrier-to-entry jobs and creating an active, resilient urban form that feels connected to the rest of Cambridge. One strategy for accomplishing this involves an innovative, well-regulated raised plinth along the active streetfronts in the district. Raising the habitable portions of a building protects inhabitants from potential flooding, but can negatively impact the public experience of the street. By mandating and regulating the design of the plinth, Alewife can be both resilient to climate change and a well-functioning neighborhood that is connected to the rest of the city.



The Alewife Planning Study sets a vision for a new community in Cambridge that is resilient to the impacts of climate change and connected to the rest of Cambridge.



Connect the city through a network of open spaces and green pathways that incentivizes active mobility choices, transports people to emerging regional job centers and residential areas, and supports a high quality of life.

Open Space Network

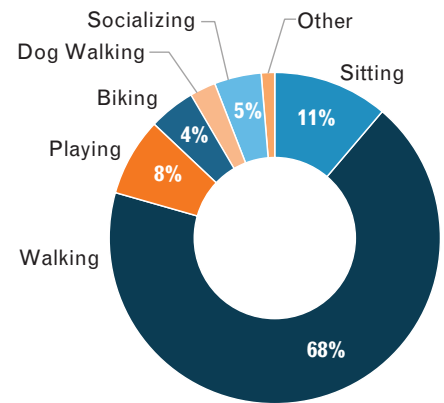
Cambridge is fortunate to possess a wide-ranging open space network. The city’s open space assets are as multifunctional as they are expansive. They range from large citywide parks like Danehy Park and Magazine Beach, to neighborhood parks like Clement Morgan Park, to linear parks and paths such as those along the Charles River. There are nature preserves like the Fresh Pond Reservation, urban plazas like Lafayette Square, and privately owned public spaces like North Point Common. Streets that are designed for pedestrians and bicycles also serve as an important part of the public open space network.

Together, these parks, squares and streets are more than just “the spaces in between.” They form the basis of a network of public amenities that serve the diverse needs of Cambridge residents, workers, students, and visitors.

Linking together these network “nodes” with paths designed for walking and cycling, Cambridge can create a true system of open spaces—an alternative way to experience the city that is available to all members of the community and promotes mobility, public health, and wellbeing.

The City should construct an open space network attuned to the diverse needs of its residents, with a variety of open space types throughout the city, connected by paths that are safe and comfortable for all ages and abilities. These parks and paths should provide space for the community to come together, recreate, enjoy nature, and relax.

Protection, maintenance and expansion of the network is critical to managing growth. Balanced development across the different districts of Cambridge requires that the City, as the primary steward of the public interest, serve as chief advocate for this network.



Use of Cambridge parks by use type, 2017

The most common activity in Cambridge’s open spaces is walking, according to Envision Cambridge’s 2017 visual survey of open spaces across the city.



Large Open Spaces

Cambridge's large public parks and reservations are the anchors in the open space network, giving people access to outdoor amenities that cannot fit in smaller neighborhood open spaces, such as running tracks and large ball fields, as well as expansive areas for passive recreation. Though nearby residents can use these parks every day, they also serve as a destination for people across the city and region.



Small Open Spaces

Smaller open spaces like neighborhood parks, tot lots, and plazas are important nodes in the network of open spaces. They are plentiful throughout Cambridge and provide a diverse array of open space types across the city. These spaces give nearby residents and workers opportunities for everyday recreation, supplementing opportunities offered by larger facilities that may require further travel from some parts of the city.



Linear open spaces and high-quality multimodal streets

Linear open spaces, along with streets that are designed to be safe and comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists, connect the large and small open spaces to each other, to neighborhoods, to commercial areas, and to the regional open space network.



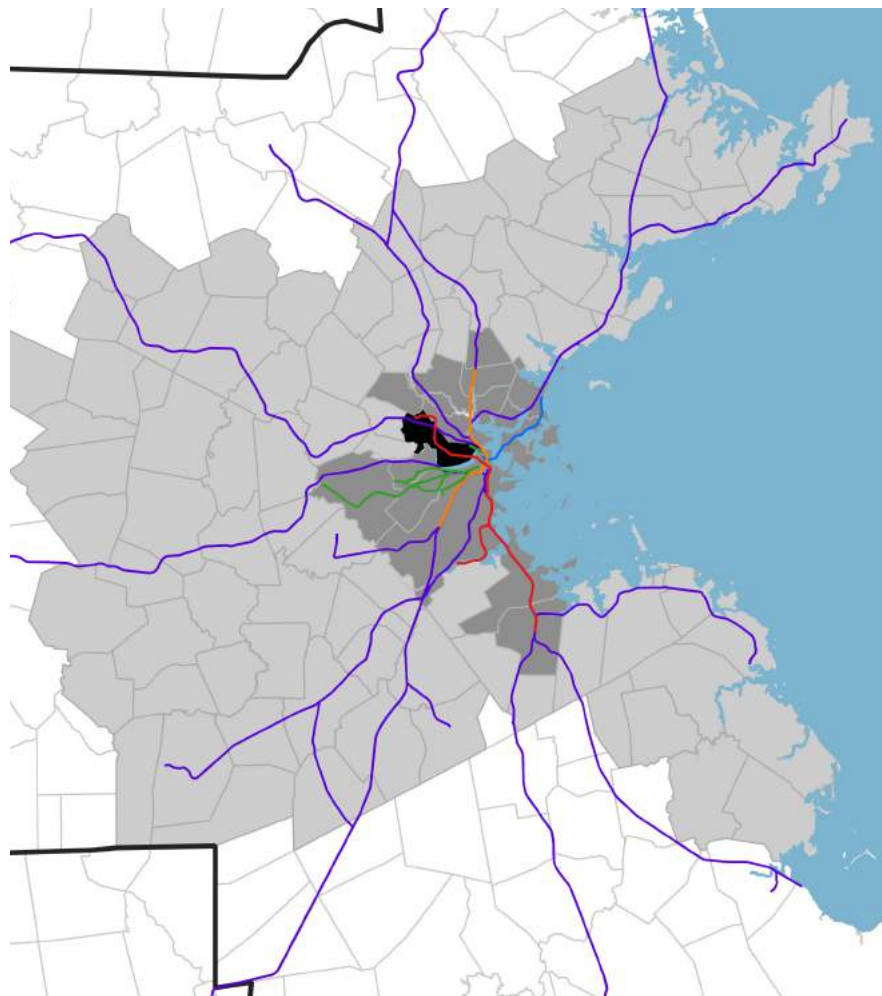
Neighborhood and Corridor Connections

In key places, the open space network connects to commercial corridors, secondary routes, and neighborhood streets. As redevelopment occurs in some parts of the city, and public infrastructure improvements are made in others, attention should be given to how these areas intersect with the broader open space network. Walking and bicycling connections should provide a high-quality, attractive, and convenient way for the community to access jobs, retail, services, recreation, transit, and other urban amenities.



Regional Collaboration

Many of the biggest challenges affecting urban development in Cambridge—housing affordability, an overburdened transportation system, climate change, and social inequality—are regional or even global in nature. The City can act to address these issues, but more effective solutions will require regional approaches.



Regional Partnerships

Cambridge plays an active role in the region, in part through its coordination with the regional transit authority MBTA, regional planning authority MAPC, and the Metro Mayors Coalition (MMC), which brings together leaders from the region's inner core cities.

- Cambridge
- MMC communities (MMC also includes Cambridge)
- MAPC communities (MAPC also includes all MMC communities)
- MBTA Commuter Rail
- MBTA Subway
- MBTA Subway
- Massachusetts Boundary

Collaboration with regional partners is needed to address the housing crisis, connect people with good jobs, build resilient infrastructure, and create a more sustainable transportation system.

As an example, Cambridge's policies already recognize the need for more local housing options, especially affordable ones. Yet Cambridge is part of a regional housing market. Regardless of actions the City might take, the demand for housing within the region will likely remain strong into the future, and Cambridge's location and overall desirability will ensure that demand for housing in Cambridge will also remain strong relative to the region as a whole. Cambridge cannot solve this housing imbalance on its own. Surrounding communities must take a proactive role in addressing the region's housing supply shortfall by providing options that will be attractive to residents who would otherwise seek housing in Cambridge. The City will need to continue to work collaboratively with other communities to advocate for regional housing growth, especially in towns with adequate transit access.

Some growth is already occurring in surrounding

communities, such as at Assembly Row and Union Square in Somerville, at Sullivan Square and Beacon Yards in Boston, and along Arsenal Street in Watertown. However, these areas are not well connected to Cambridge via existing transportation networks. Cambridge can be proactive in improving connections to areas of future housing and job growth, in part through the expanded open space network and mobility recommendations given by this plan, while also advocating for greater mobility choices regionally and within surrounding communities.

The sprawling regional development patterns of past decades, along with regional automobile-focused investments, have contributed to the current peak-hour traffic congestion in Cambridge, especially on Commonwealth-controlled roads and parkways that run through the city. Cambridge can continue to play a role in advocating for a more coordinated sustainable transportation investment strategy to mitigate this traffic impact.

Cambridge is also a leader in green infrastructure and resilience planning. The potential effects of climate change are so

significant that Cambridge must do everything it can locally to prepare for a resilient future and to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Yet some of the most impactful infrastructure solutions will require investment in resources not controlled by the City or outside Cambridge's borders. The City must work with regional partners to reduce GHG emissions, mitigate environmental damage, and prevent the worst impacts of climate change.

All these issues are deeply tied to social equity in the region, which is affected by housing affordability, employment opportunities, availability of reliable transportation, and many other factors. Municipal governments can take steps to promote opportunity and justice within their own communities, but since inequity plays out across municipal borders, policy must also be made at the state or regional level. Cambridge is advancing a regional approach both through advocacy to state agencies, and through regional coordinating bodies like the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Metro Mayors Coalition, and Greater Boston Regional Economic Compact.



Leaders from communities in the Metro Mayors Coalition announced a regional housing production target at a press conference in October 2018.

Working with Neighboring Communities

In 2001, the leaders of 15 cities in the Boston metropolitan region came together to form the Metro Mayors Coalition (MMC) to commit to regional solutions for the area's most pressing crises. Some of the MMC's accomplishments include the signing of a historic Climate Preparedness Commitment by

each city in 2015, which includes a pledge for the region to have net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050; a commitment to a host of regional affordable and fair housing goals; dissemination of best practices to combat the opioid crisis; and the promotion of a unified legislative agenda in the Massachusetts State House. In 2018, to address the housing crisis affecting inner core communities, MMC set a regional housing production target of 185,000 new housing units by 2030.



Climate and Environment Plan

Cambridge is a dense, transit-oriented city with a progressive environmental tradition and ambitious environmental planning underway. The City is working to enhance environmental quality for all and decrease its impact on the climate and regional ecosystems. Cambridge's soil, air, water, and waste stream have improved in the decades of regional deindustrialization, growing acknowledgment of environmental issues, and concerted action by local government. However, as the impacts of climate change become more apparent, we must also contend with increased risk of flooding and extreme heat. These risks stem from a changing physical environment, but social and economic conditions will affect who is most impacted by climate change. While Cambridge works to address these issues, the task is complicated by aging infrastructure, our regional role as an economic engine, and the need for regionally and globally coordinated action.



Coordinated Efforts

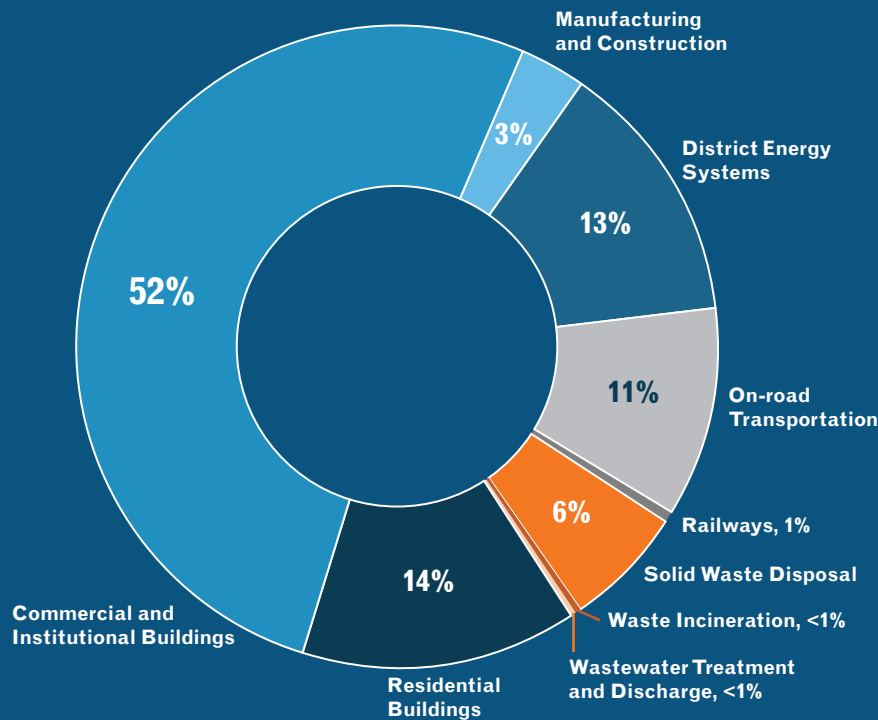
The City of Cambridge has several current or recent efforts that directly address climate change, including the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience Plan, the Climate Action Plan, the Net Zero Action Plan, and the Urban Forest Master Plan. Each of these plans addresses a different aspect of environmental policy, including greenhouse gas emissions reduction, dealing with the risks of climate change, and restoring natural ecologies. Envision Cambridge takes a comprehensive view, tying these plans to changes in development patterns, as well as the aspirations and core values of the Cambridge community.

Climate and Environment

Context

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in Cambridge by Source, 2012

Source: Cambridge GHG Emissions Inventory, 2017.



"A resilient physical environment nurtures an equitable social and cultural environment."

— Wellington-Harrington resident via online survey

Climate Change Mitigation and Resilience

Climate change impacts are already being felt in Cambridge, and they will become more serious in the coming years. Cambridge will face triple the current number of high heat days by 2030. Extreme heat will be pervasive citywide, but it will have the greatest effect in areas with limited cooling capacity from vegetation, like Alewife and much of eastern Cambridge. The city also faces more regular and more extreme episodes of flooding. Cambridge's riverfront was historically a tidal estuary. After the construction of the Charles River Dam in 1910, areas of marshland were filled and developed for institutional, industrial, and residential uses. Residents of Alewife and the Port are particularly vulnerable to flooding.

Throughout the engagement process, many people expressed a concern about climate change and the City's role in mitigating its impacts. Some participants interacting with the Envision Cambridge Street Team noted the role green infrastructure could play in natural mitigation for extreme heat and flooding. Some public meeting participants said that emergency planning and the creation of resilient communities are important. They stressed that the planning process must accommodate vulnerable people

“The City needs to take a much more aggressive role in creating healthy green spaces, supporting trees, and reducing air, light, and noise pollution.”

— Huron Village resident via online survey



Members of the public discuss actions proposed by the Envision Cambridge working groups.

who have fewer resources at their disposal. The City is tackling these issues through the Climate Change Resilience and Preparedness Plan, a process that builds upon the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Renewable Energy

Cambridge has set ambitious energy and greenhouse gas emissions goals, including a plan for net zero emissions from all buildings by 2050. Since buildings generate 82% of greenhouse gas emissions, this is an important goal. Solar energy generation capacity has increased more than 500% since 2010, but this represents only 2% of the city's potential capacity. The electric grid also produces fewer emissions than previously, but these improvements are limited, and Cambridge cannot expect similar progress in the future.

Sustainability and resilience are among the city's core values identified through the Envision Cambridge process. Many survey respondents stated they want the city to fully transition away from

fossil fuels to renewable energy. Some of these respondents said they want Cambridge to achieve the present targets, but also do more to craft innovative solutions for emissions reductions and renewable energy.

Waste Reduction

In 2008, the City set a goal of reducing trash by 30% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. As of 2017, trash has decreased by 24%. More than 50% of Cambridge's waste can be recycled or otherwise diverted from landfill or incineration. The City already provides weekly pickup for residential compost and recycling citywide. However, more can be done to ensure all of Cambridge's divertable waste is sustainably disposed of.

Protection of Cambridge's Natural Environment

Cambridge has some of the best natural assets in the region, and residents who engaged with the Envision Cambridge Street Team stressed the importance of both protecting these assets and ensuring greater and more equal access to them. In recent years, the City and its regional partners have improved the

water quality in local water bodies, set environmental standards, and established new open spaces. This work has improved Cambridge's natural environment after centuries of air, water, and soil pollution, paving over of green areas, and disruption of local habitats.

Where possible, Cambridge has proactively rebuilt infrastructure and rehabilitated landscapes to reduce pollution and restore ecologies. For instance, the City now plants 300–500 trees per year, and today there are more than 19,000 public trees in Cambridge. However, air and water quality, tree canopy, and impervious surfaces are unevenly distributed across the city's neighborhoods. Investments in natural resources and green infrastructure will make Cambridge healthier, more resilient, and overall a better place to live.

Vision

Cambridge is a sustainable city that cultivates its natural systems, limits its greenhouse gas emissions, and is resilient to the impacts of climate change. The City understands connections between energy consumption, stewardship of natural ecologies, mitigation of extreme weather, and the health and wellbeing of its people. Cambridge actively develops green infrastructure, sets smart environmental regulations, and incentivizes private action to create a sustainable environment for all.

Goals

Climate Action: Achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Through a broad-based reduction in energy consumption and investment in sustainable energy, Cambridge can set its course to achieve overall carbon neutrality by midcentury.

Climate Change Preparedness: Protect the lives and livelihoods of the Cambridge community from the impacts of climate change.

Cambridge must adapt its current physical and social infrastructure to protect the community—especially its most vulnerable populations—from the risks associated with climate change.

Ecological Protection: Preserve and enhance Cambridge's biodiversity, open spaces, and habitats.

Cambridge must reduce pollution, restore ecosystems, and create a symbiotic relationship between the built and natural systems that comprise Cambridge's environment.

Water Quality: Maintain sustainable water resources and enhance water quality.

Cambridge should preserve its water resources through reduced water usage, elimination of point-source water pollution, and aggressive stormwater runoff management.

Waste Management: Minimize waste generation and eliminate landfill waste.

Cambridge should limit its impact on local and global ecosystems by reducing the overall production of waste—including recyclables, compostables, and trash—and diverting the remaining waste away from landfills.

Environmental Justice: Ensure that all Cambridge residents are protected from environmental impacts and benefit equally from environmental resources.

The benefits of a healthy environment should be shared by everyone in Cambridge, including all residents, workers, students, and visitors, regardless of their background and identity.

Connections to Our Core Values

Outlined here are key ways that the core values of the Cambridge community, identified through the Envision Cambridge process, are reflected in the Climate and Environment goals and recommendations. For more about the community's vision and core values, see page 26.

Livability: We value a vibrant built and natural environment and support sustainable transportation with affordable and convenient access to daily needs and recreational resources.

This section focuses on strategies and actions to improve Cambridge's climate resilience and reduce our ecological footprint, which serve to enhance livability. Efforts to reduce air, water, light, and noise pollution and waste bring with them overall improvements to quality of life.

Diversity and Equity: We are a welcoming community that celebrates our diversity and ensures access to affordable housing choices and opportunities to succeed.

As we work toward enhancing environmental quality and addressing the risks of climate change, this section recognizes that we must work with the entire Cambridge community. Recommendations included here speak to keeping a focus on environmental justice and social equity to ensure that all Cambridge residents are protected from environmental impacts and benefit equally from environmental resources.

Economic Opportunity: We provide opportunity and stability through access to quality jobs, workforce development and training, and livable wages that support economic security for residents.

Recommendations in this section recognize that employees and businesses have a role in, and benefit from, efforts to create a more sustainable and resilient community that is prepared for, and will more readily recover from, social and physical impacts of climate change. These efforts will involve work across sectors and will include opportunities to develop green infrastructure, create smart regulations, and support public-private-institutional participation in problem solving.



Community members and the Envision Cambridge Streets activity.



Community members write their thoughts about the city's future on the Mobile Engagement Station in Lafayette Square.

Sustainability and Resilience:

We take responsible action to reduce our impact on the environment and build a resilient city and strong community.

This section focuses on building upon Cambridge's progressive environmental tradition and ambitious environmental planning currently underway to help us continue to reduce our impact on the environment, and to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climate change. These efforts involve collective action at scales ranging from hyperlocal to regional to global, and they can also help to foster social resilience.

Community Health and Wellbeing:

We promote healthy and active lifestyles in supportive, safe community with diverse opportunities to connect with our neighbors and nature and to engage in civic life.

Ecological sustainability and preparedness for the impacts of climate change include changes to infrastructure and the built environment, but also highlight the importance of the social fabric to protect our community—and especially the most vulnerable—from the risks of climate change. Recommendations in this section encourage forging connections with neighbors to foster community resilience.

Learning:

We embrace lifelong learning and celebrate art and creativity in our culturally rich community.

In the arena of evolving climate science, we learn together as we develop an understating of the impacts of climate change and action, cultivate greater community awareness of the impacts, and frame policies, including those recommended in this section. This is particularly important as climate actions and solutions span a wide range of scales—from regional interventions to collective and individual action.

Strategies & Actions

1 Accelerate the transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions for all buildings in the city.

The City has a goal of net zero GHG emissions from all buildings by 2050. It can help achieve this goal by moving its own operations to renewable energy, incentivizing net zero adoption, and modifying regulations to allow for or require sustainability improvements for new and existing buildings.

Net Zero Action Plan
 The Cambridge Getting to Net Zero Task Force convened in 2013 to create a plan to reduce net GHG emissions from buildings to zero. The City Council adopted the Task Force's recommendations as the Net Zero Action Plan in 2015. The plan's actions include building retrofits, new construction standards, a low-carbon energy supply strategy, and more.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Establish a solar and/or cool roof requirement for new construction in all zoning districts.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Participate in statewide working groups to develop safety and performance codes and standards for energy storage systems. Once established, adopt those codes locally.	Regional partnerships	New	Near term
Establish demonstration projects for safe energy storage systems.	Capital investments	New	Near term
Investigate outcome-based requirements for GHG emissions in new buildings.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Implement community solar demonstration projects.	Capital investments	New	Near term
Develop architectural green guidelines (i.e. desirable materials, amount of glass, etc.) to complement Article 22: Sustainable Design and Development.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term

1 Accelerate the transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions for all buildings in the city. (Continued)

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Offer a density bonus incentive through zoning for net zero projects until net zero requirements are in place for each building type.	Zoning changes	New	Medium term
Procure 100% of municipal electricity from renewable sources.	Programs and operations	New	Medium term
Streamline existing efforts to expand access to energy-efficiency funding and technical assistance, including supporting expanded use of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) to finance retrofits.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Ongoing
Revise Article 22 of the zoning ordinance: Sustainable Design and Development to require higher levels of green building design and energy efficiency for new construction and major renovations.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Ongoing
Implement the Net Zero Action Plan, a comprehensive set of strategies aimed at achieving net zero emissions from building operations.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Regularly update the Climate Action Plan.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to offer the Cambridge Community Electricity Aggregation program.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Work with the Commonwealth to advocate for a stronger Renewable Portfolio Standard and more stringent cap levels for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Ongoing
Require buildings to report energy use.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing
Implement the recommendations of the Low Carbon Energy Supply Strategy.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

2 Reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions.



Electric vehicle charging stations in a Cambridge parking lot.

After buildings, transportation is the largest producer of greenhouse gas emissions in Cambridge. In the mobility section, Envision Cambridge proposes a number of actions that will grow the proportion of people making mobility choices which produce no or few GHG emissions, while reducing traffic and improving public health. *See the chapter “Mobility” on page 157 for this plan’s mobility recommendations.* Cambridge should take additional action to reduce GHG emissions from transportation through planning, policy, and infrastructure investment.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Develop a zero emissions transportation plan, addressing both mode shift and zero emissions vehicles.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Develop a pilot program to experiment with electric vehicle charging technology integrated into streetlights.	Capital investments	New	Near term
Require electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new buildings.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Install high-visibility electric vehicle charging stations at publicly accessible locations.	Capital investments	Expanded	Near term
Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT).	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Promote a shift to electric/clean emissions vehicles.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

3 Restore and grow Cambridge’s green infrastructure and tree canopy, and support biodiversity.



The reconstructed wetland at Alewife Brook, an example of green infrastructure, attenuates and treats stormwater, enhances wildlife habitats, and provides recreational and educational opportunities for Cambridge residents and visitors.

“Green infrastructure” takes advantage of living ecosystems and habitats to accomplish important ecological functions, such as cooling the city during extreme heat events, absorbing water during storms and floods, or filtering out noxious chemicals from the air. Green infrastructure can be as small as a street median planting or as large as a wetland. Large-scale green infrastructure can sometimes double as recreation space for the community. Cambridge should restore existing green infrastructure and increase investment in new green infrastructure, especially in areas that lack existing tree canopy or permeable surface.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Implement recommendations from the Urban Forest Master Plan.	Capital investments	New	Ongoing
Commission a study to collect local air quality data and recommend indicators, targets, and data collection methods for the City to adopt on a permanent basis.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Assess opportunities to enhance habitat for local flora and fauna on public and private properties in Cambridge.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Evaluate strategies for increasing open space requirements and limiting the creation of impervious surfaces.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Purchase additional land for use as open space, and prioritize locations that improve open space connectivity and increase public access.	Capital investments	New	Long term

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Incorporate green infrastructure into City park, open space, sidewalk, and street reconstruction projects as conditions and space allow.	Capital investments	Expanded	Near term
Develop an urban forest master plan that establishes tree canopy expansion and tree planting goals by neighborhood.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing
Restore watersheds.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Promote and improve the quality and diversity of public planting.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Implement the Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Implement the Charles River Basin Master Plan.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Implement the Alewife Reservation Master Plan.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Create and implement an Open Space and Recreation Seven-Year Action Plan.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing

“We need more trees and more green space.”

—North Cambridge resident via online survey

4 Modernize emergency management systems and existing infrastructure to respond to climate change impacts.

The “new normal” of climate change will be marked by extreme weather events and natural disasters that particularly impact the most vulnerable populations. Cambridge is already undertaking an extensive process, the Climate Change Preparedness and Resiliency (CCPR) Plan, to prepare to mitigate the impact of these extreme events

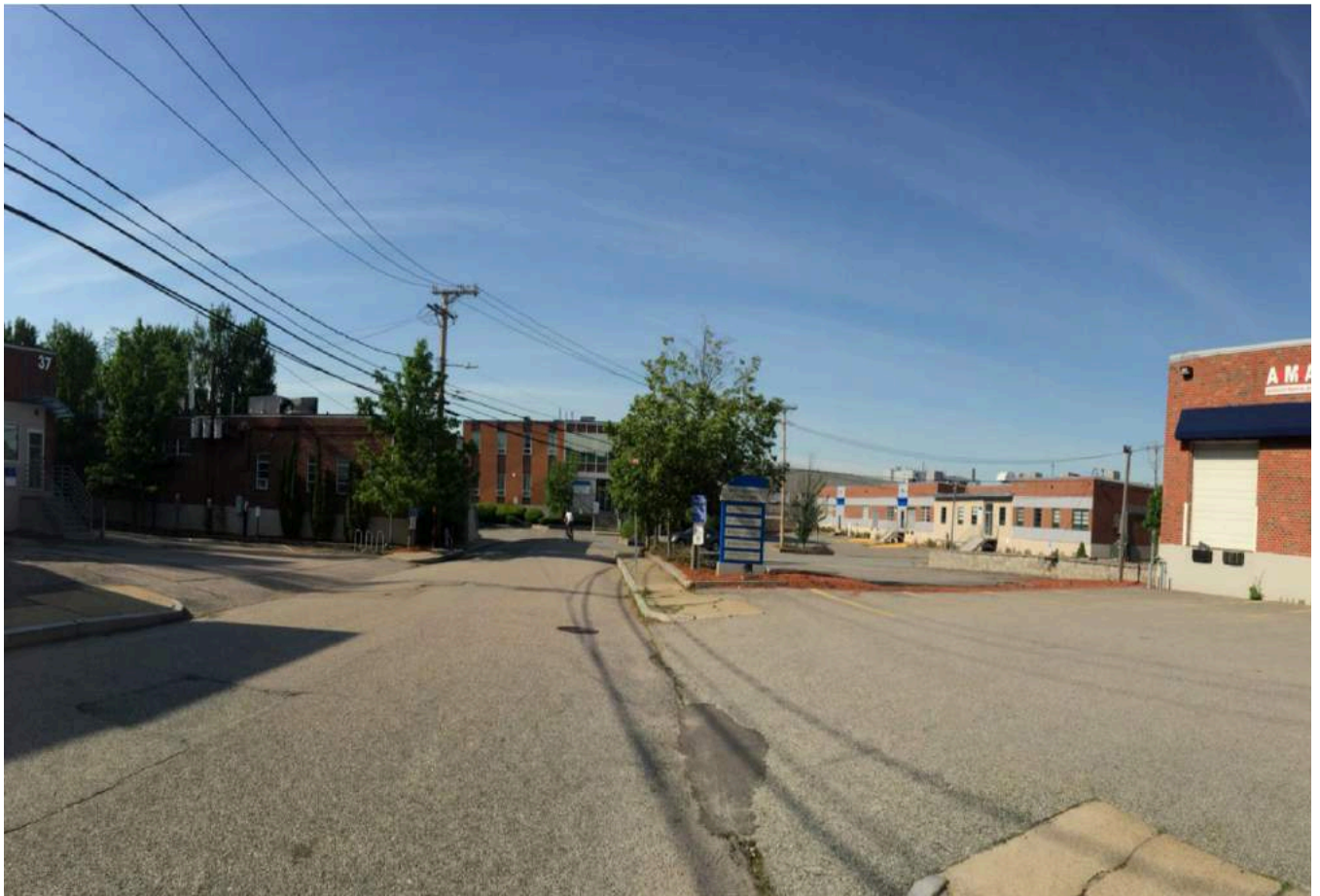
through improvements to the built environment. Cambridge should address regulatory barriers to climate adaptation and implement innovative and district-level approaches to emergency management. Historic building retrofits should emphasize mitigation techniques while maintaining historic integrity.

“We need a clear understanding of the effects and timeframe of climate change, and our options to prevent some of the effects.”

—Neighborhood Nine resident

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Develop disaster preparedness plans at the neighborhood level in conjunction with neighborhood organizations, service providers, public housing residents, and other vulnerable populations.	Study or plan	New	Ongoing
Leverage new communication technologies to alert residents and workers by geography of risks in the event of an emergency (e.g., text message).	Community interface and outreach	New	Near term
Specifically serve low-income/high-vulnerability individuals and public housing residents with targeted preparedness and outreach programs (CCPR).	Programs and operations	New	Near term
Study regulatory barriers and identify potential leverage points and sources of incentives for adaptive retrofits for existing buildings (utility placement, floodable ground floors, etc.).	Study or plan	New	Near term
Create “resiliency hubs,” or community centers that coordinate local energy responses during disasters and hazardous events, within a half-mile of all housing units.	Capital investments	New	Long term
Establish a network of temperature sensors at the pedestrian level to track heat island impacts.	Capital investments	New	Long term

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Assess Cambridge’s climate risks and vulnerabilities.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing
Participate in Arlington Belmont and Cambridge (ABC) Flooding Board.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Ongoing
Conduct outreach campaigns about property-level flood vulnerability and mitigation strategies.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Develop a citywide preparedness and resilience plan.	Study or plan	Existing	Near term



The Alewife Quadrangle has large amounts of impervious surface and little tree canopy, making it vulnerable to climate-related natural disasters.

5 Reduce solid waste generation and divert recyclable and organic waste from landfills or incineration.

A large portion of Cambridge’s waste can be recycled or otherwise diverted from landfills or incineration. The City provides weekly citywide pickup for residential compost and recycling.

However, more should be done to ensure all of Cambridge’s divertable waste is disposed of sustainably. New approaches to commercial waste are particularly important.

“Waste reduction, especially eliminating food waste, is a top priority.”

—The Port resident

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Require new developments to submit a waste management plan to ensure adequate space for recycling and organics infrastructure.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term
Study the feasibility of different programs to incentivize trash reduction without causing a disparate impact on low-income communities.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Advocate for statewide Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs and policies.	Regional partnerships	New	Near term
Mandate and enforce residential and commercial food waste diversion.	Other regulatory changes	New	Medium term
Institute commercial waste zones with reporting requirements.	Other regulatory changes	New	Long term
Maximize recycling rates across all sectors by stepping up enforcement and education.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Ongoing
Add recycling bins around the city in places where there are only waste bins.	Capital investments	Expanded	Ongoing

Citywide Curbside Composting



In 2008, the City set a goal to reduce residential trash disposal by 30% by 2020, and by 80% by 2050. Removing food scraps reduces trash in landfills. By diverting our food scraps, we are helping protect the environment by:

- Reducing our impact on climate change. Our food scraps become clean energy through anaerobic digestion.
- Returning nutrients to the Earth in the form of fertilizer.

In April 2018, Cambridge expanded its curbside organics collection program to the entire city. In the citywide program's first four months, more than one million pounds of food scraps were diverted from landfills, reducing the City's trash by 9%.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Expand curbside organics collection citywide.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Implement a food waste education program in public schools.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Prohibit polystyrene food service containers.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing
Encourage recycling via single-stream collection.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

6 Reduce air, light, water, and noise pollution.

Cambridge has made progress in recent decades to limit pollution of the city’s natural environment and restore the quality of natural resources. These efforts include protection and restoration of air,

water, and soil systems vulnerable to chemical pollution, as well as protection from non-chemical light and sound pollution experienced in urban environments. The City should continue to act as a steward

of the environment by cleaning up existing pollution, reviewing projects that could potentially pollute, and studying new ways to limit pollution.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Evaluate environmental impacts and heat vulnerability of artificial turf and other man-made materials used in parks and playgrounds.	Study or plan	New	Medium term
Combat light trespassing, light pollution, and energy waste.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Monitor hazardous waste reporting and remediation.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Ensure that new development and infrastructure projects undergo a review to ensure they do not result in noise pollution that could interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life in Cambridge.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing

7 Reduce potable water demand.

Water remains a precious resource everywhere, and Cambridge should use the least amount of water necessary. Reducing unnecessary water consumption will require action by the City, private property owners, businesses, and individuals. Innovative use of ‘greywater’ can help limit demand for potable water.

Water Use Disclosure
 As a result of the 2014 Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance, properties with large buildings (or a large collection of buildings) must report their annual water usage (in addition to energy usage) to the City each year. The City compiles this data and produces a report each year. These data can help the City identify uses that consume a great deal of water and take action where appropriate.

7 Reduce potable water demand. (Continued)

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Study Cambridge’s greywater supply assets and non-potable demand.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Require buildings to report water use.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing
Conduct water conservation outreach.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

8 Manage stormwater with public investment in stormwater infrastructure and maintenance.

The City has increased its sewer separation and stormwater management efforts because of stricter environmental compliance regulations and a desire to provide a better quality to residents’ daily lives. These efforts aim to improve the water quality of waterways in Cambridge, reduce or eliminate combined sewer overflows, reduce or eliminate sanitary sewer backups, and reduce flooding.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Implement Cambridge’s Stormwater Management Plan.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Separate the combined sewer system into storm and sanitary systems.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Mandate stormwater management for private developments.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing
Partner with private property owners to implement stormwater management strategies that exceed City requirements.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Implement the Surface Water Protection Plan.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing

9 Work with the entire Cambridge community to strengthen the City’s climate and environment initiatives.

Governance is most successful when residents and stakeholders can meaningfully weigh in and affect the City’s decisions. Cambridge should continue to engage the community in its environmental policymaking and it should expand the universe of stakeholders who are involved in achieving the community’s climate goals.

“Engaging in civic life is the most important. We must make sure all ages are engaged and heard in the community.”

—Wellington-Harrington resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Engage large institutions to collaborate to advance building energy efficiency, reduce waste, and green their supply chains (i.e. EcoDistricts, Cambridge Compact for a Sustainable Future).	Regional partnerships	New	Near term
Continue to work with the Climate Protection Action Committee.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to work with the Bicycle Committee.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to work with the Pedestrian Committee.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to work with the Transit Advisory Committee.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to work with the Recycling Advisory Committee.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to work with the Committee on Public Planting.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing



Solar panels on a residential rooftop in Cambridge.

10 Communicate to the public the City’s climate and environment initiatives and the environmental impact of policy decisions.

Cambridge has many progressive environmental policies and programs, but not everyone in the city knows how to take advantage of them. The City should expand opportunities to inform the community of its work and collect

feedback on these initiatives. Furthermore, the City should analyze and properly communicate the environmental costs of any proposed policy or program while crafting that policy or program.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Establish a coordinated outreach and engagement approach, including the use of volunteers, regarding environmental programs and issues.	Community interface and outreach	New	Ongoing
Develop and implement a cost/benefit methodology for City capital allocation/budgeting processes that allocates monetary value to environmental benefits.	Other regulatory changes	New	Medium term
Connect home and business owners with information on existing incentive programs and financing for energy upgrades to their buildings through the Cambridge Energy Alliance program.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

Indicators and Targets

Citywide Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Cambridge is working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit the city’s impact on climate change. This indicator demonstrates the City’s efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

Indicator	2012 Baseline	2030 Target
Community-wide greenhouse gas emissions	1.46 million metric tons of CO ₂ equivalent	0.77 million metric tons of CO ₂ equivalent

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

Roof Conditions

Approximately 27% of Cambridge is covered in buildings. Building roofs represent a large area that can become more sustainable and resilient. Strategies to make these spaces more sustainable include

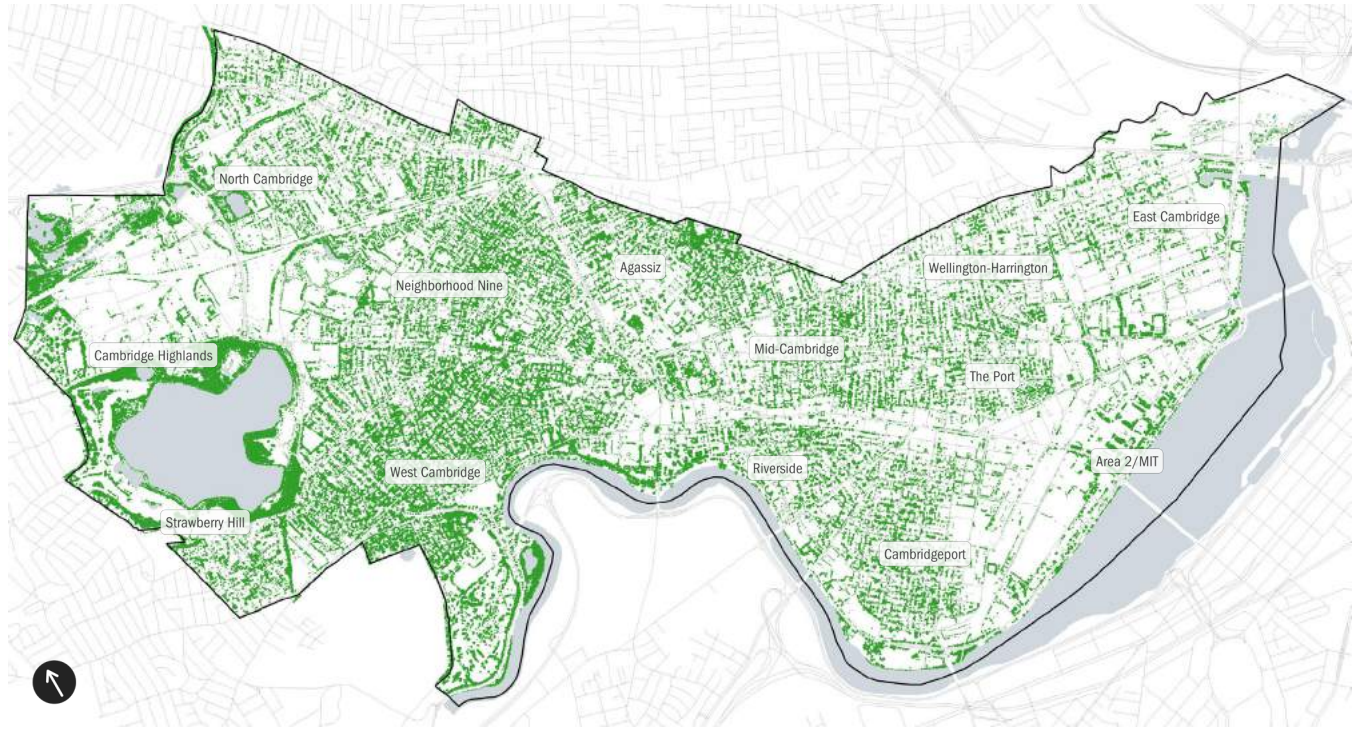
green roofs, which are planted and provide benefits for both heat and stormwater; white roofs, which are made of high albedo materials that reflect, rather than absorb, sunlight; and blue roofs, which capture

stormwater. Cambridge is working to collect data on roof conditions in order to better track sustainable roofs citywide.

Indicator:	Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of roof area that is covered in green roofs	<i>The City plans to collect a baseline measurement for this indicator.</i>	<i>This targets will be set once initial data is collected.</i>
Percent of roof area covered in high albedo surfaces	<i>The City plans to collect a baseline measurement for this indicator.</i>	<i>This targets will be set once initial data is collected.</i>

Tree Canopy Coverage by Neighborhood

This indicator provides insight into the success of actions to preserve and expand Cambridge’s tree canopy, particularly in neighborhoods that currently lack trees. These efforts benefit the natural environment and contribute to general quality of life.



Citywide Tree Canopy Coverage, 2014

Source: Cambridge Community Development Department

Indicator

Tree canopy coverage

2018 Baseline

26%

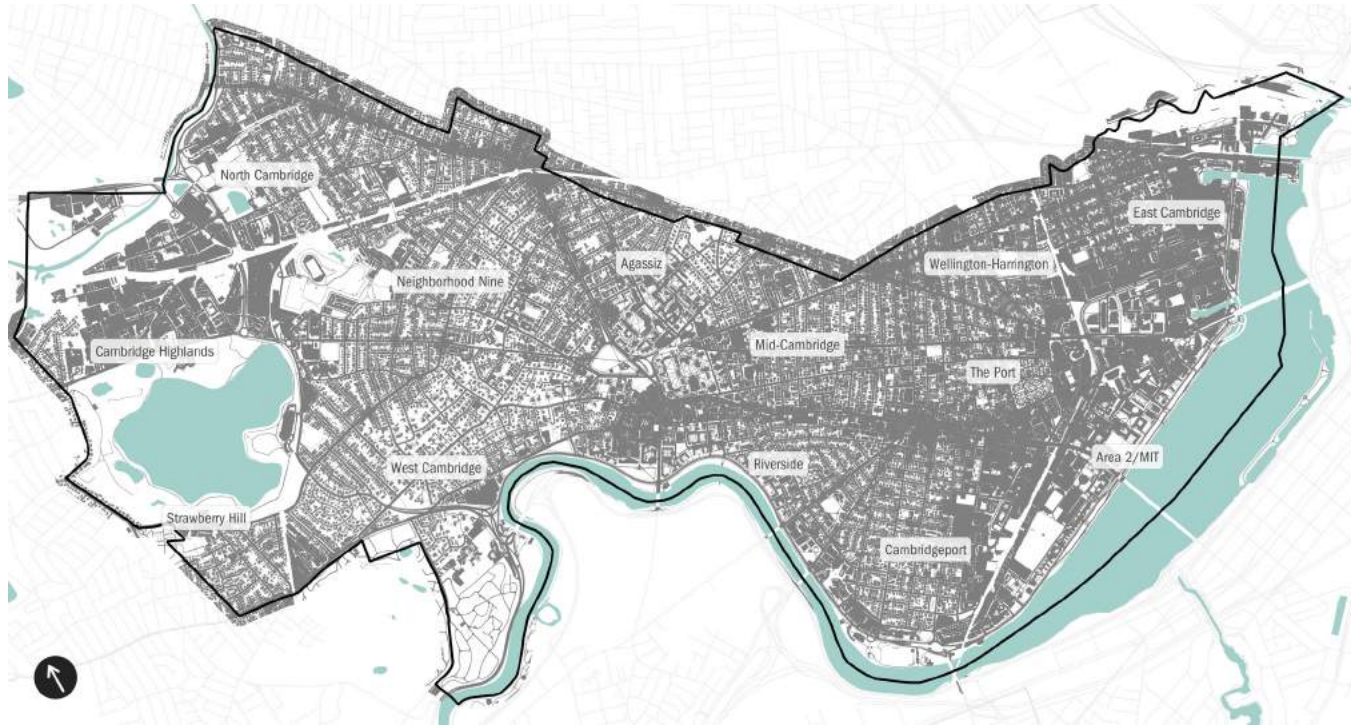
2030 Target

Targets to be established by the Urban Forest Master Plan in 2019.

Source: City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

Impervious Surfaces

Impervious surfaces create numerous environmental problems, including limiting natural filtration of stormwater into soil and absorption of heat from the sun, generating an “urban heat island.” Impervious surfaces can include buildings, streets, parking lots, and other paved areas.



Citywide Impervious Surface

Source: Cambridge Community Development Department

Indicator:

Percentage of land area covered by non-building impervious surfaces

2017 Baseline

39.8%

2030 Target

36%

Flood Risk

As the climate changes, Cambridge will be more at risk of flooding, both from stormwater during major storms and the combined effects of sea level rise and storm surges. Some parts of Cambridge are more at risk than others. This indicator tracks our success at adapting to this risk through infrastructure investment and regulation.

Some areas of Cambridge, including Alewife (pictured), are particularly at risk of flooding, due to their low elevations, poor drainage, and risk of failure of legacy flood protection infrastructure.



Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Percentage of land area at risk of flooding due to a 10-year storm (a storm with 10% chance of occurring in any given year)	5%	4%
Percentage of land area at risk of flooding due to a 100-year storm (a storm with 1% chance occurring in any given year)	15%	13%

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

Provision of Open Spaces

Open spaces serve a crucial role in urban environments. These landscapes filter air, help to infiltrate stormwater, relieve the urban heat island effect, and more. Of course, they are also important

gathering spaces for people. As Cambridge grows, it is imperative that the amount of open space relative to the number of people remains at a healthy level. This indicator tracks the amount of

space. Though privately owned public spaces are also an important component of Cambridge’s open space inventory, this indicator specifically tracks the amount of publicly owned open space.

Indicator

Acres of publicly owned open space

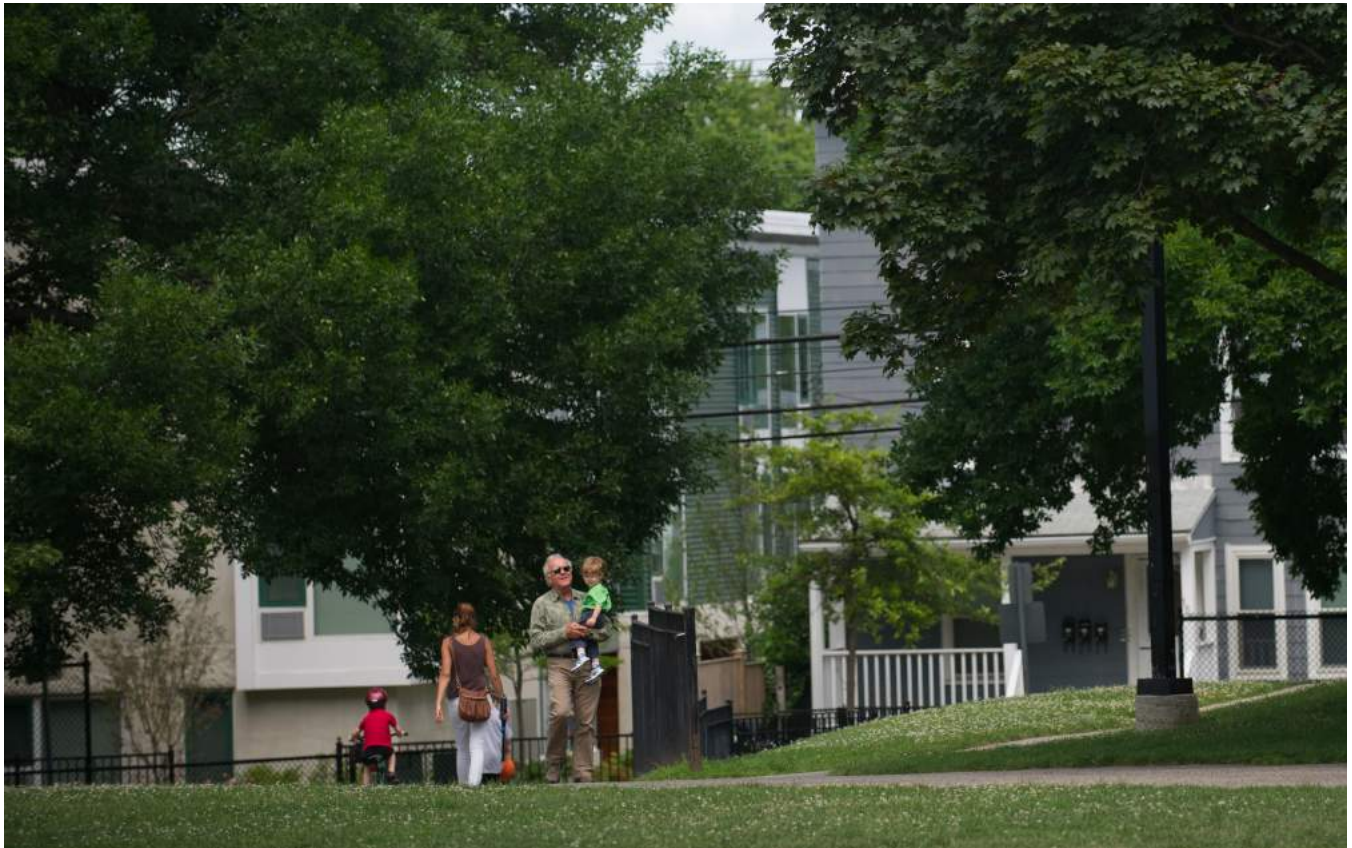
2014 Baseline

446 acres

2030 Target

462 acres

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department



Community members enjoying Raymond Park in Neighborhood Nine.

Trash Collection

This indicator provides insight into the City’s efforts to reduce and divert waste from landfills via recycling and separation of organics from other waste streams. Reducing the amount of trash produced per household contributes to a zero-waste future in Cambridge.



Solid waste collection now includes trash, recycling, and compost.

Indicator

Pounds of trash collected per household per week

2017 Baseline

17.3 pounds

2030 Target

12 pounds

Source: City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

Potable Water Use

Tracking the total consumption of potable water will provide insight into conservation and efficiency efforts. These efforts contribute to a more sustainable future for Cambridge.

Indicator:

Average daily potable water use by billed usage

2017 Baseline

12.9 million gallons

2030 Target

Change at a rate slower than increases in population and employment.

Source: Cambridge Water Department



Harperly Farms

CAMBRIDGE ARTS CREATIVITY MARKET

CAMBRIDGE ARTS

Community Wellbeing Plan

A community is more than a collection of buildings, streets, and infrastructure—it is more than just a place. A community is built from the diverse backgrounds, experiences, beliefs, desires, identities, and resources of its members. In the case of Cambridge, this diversity imbues the city with its unique sense of place and dynamism. While inclusion and social cohesion have long been important City goals, ongoing changes in the economy threaten to limit the diversity Cambridge enjoys. Historically marginalized populations like people of color, immigrants, and lower-income people, as well as middle-income people, increasingly face displacement, housing and financial insecurity, and a growing sense that they may be excluded from Cambridge's future. Furthermore, many residents worry that community ties are being lost as lives get busier and the city's population changes. The wellbeing of our community, therefore, hinges on Cambridge remaining a place where everyone is included—where residents can live healthy lives in vibrant neighborhoods, engage with neighbors, and have a say in the future of their city.

Coordinated Efforts

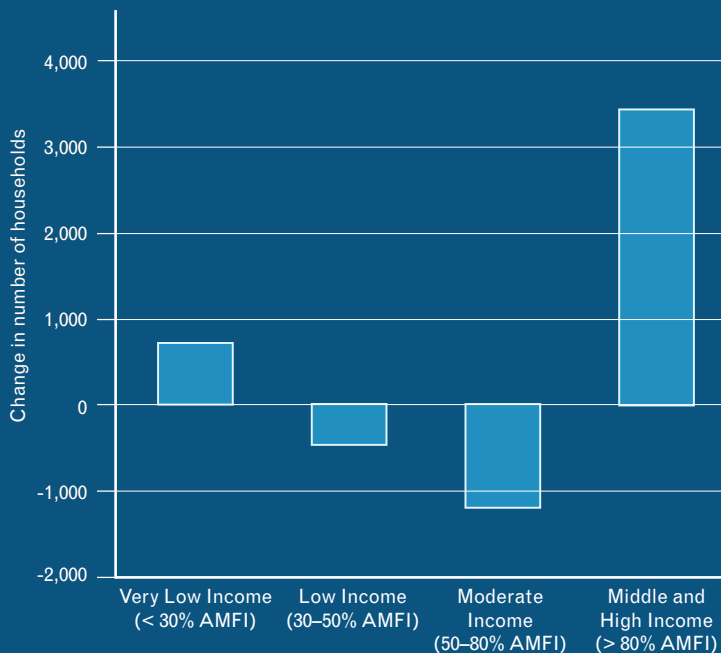
Protecting Cambridge's diversity, health, and sustainability requires actions that touch on housing, the economy, mobility, the environment, and more. All sections of this plan should be read as efforts to enhance community wellbeing. Additional plans from Cambridge's Community Development Department, the Public Health Department, the Department of Human Service Programs, and the Cambridge Arts Council are also fundamental to these efforts. Relevant plans include (but are not limited to) the Cambridge Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), the Healthy Parks and Playground Task Force Report, and the Play in the Public Realm Design Guidelines.

Community Wellbeing

Context

Change in Number of Households by Annual Income, 2000–2013

Source: HUD, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2000 and 2009–2013. Income brackets follow definitions used by the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council. Area Median Family Income (AMFI) is calculated regionally.



“Where are the places where we can celebrate diversity? We could have many different celebrations for a variety of communities and religious beliefs. It’s a way to maintain our diversity, but also expose other cultures to each other.”

— Alewife Resident in a Community Engagement Team focus group

A Changing Population

After decades of population decline, Cambridge’s population has steadily grown since 1990 to approximately 110,000 people, nearly half of whom are between 18 and 34 years old, and 75% of whom have a bachelors or advanced degree. The population continues to grow steadily toward the city’s historic peak of approximately 120,000 people in 1950.

Cambridge’s demographics are also changing. Household sizes are small and declining, with an average household size of roughly two people. The proportion of households that are family households has decreased, though there was a recent increase in school enrollment. The university-affiliated population is growing; more than one in four Cambridge residents is a university student, faculty, or staff member. The proportion of residents who are people of color has plateaued, with the share of Asian residents growing and share of Black residents decreasing. The share of foreign-born residents continues to grow.

The income distribution of Cambridge residents has changed rapidly, with declines in those making moderate and lower-middle incomes and growth in the upper-middle and high-income population. Incomes vary significantly by race, with non-Latino white households having more than double the median income of Black households.

“I love the city’s diversity, both ethnic and socioeconomic.”

— Agassiz resident via online survey

For more context and data on demographics in Cambridge, see pages 94–113 of *Cambridge Today*, the Envision Cambridge report on existing conditions.



A woman voices her concerns for the future of Cambridge at an event outside the Fresh Pond Apartments on Rindge Avenue.

Perceptions of Change

Deep concerns about demographic change were voiced by many people participating in Envision Cambridge engagement activities (such as focus groups conducted by the Community Engagement Team and widely distributed surveys) and by high school students in the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program. Many people expressed a fear that Cambridge would soon be dominated by a wealthy elite, with a few very low-income people in subsidized housing, and no moderate- or middle-income households. Some of these participants cited a decline in the number of families and a loss of intergenerational communities as a particular problem. They noted the demand

for housing by new high-wage workers as a major concern. Participants felt the cost of housing also had an impact on Cambridge’s racial, ethnic, and religious diversity. For this reason, some participants encouraged the City to increase participation in planning and governance by people from underserved communities. Importantly, some participants referenced a related loss of neighborliness, social cohesion, and feelings of community.

A Healthy City

The changing profile of Cambridge also drives concern that the benefits of a healthy city flow equally to all residents. Being a healthy city is about more than delivering quality

health care to residents. Where you live, learn, work, and play all have an enormous impact on your health. The four health priority areas for the City, developed in the 2015 Community Health Improvement Plan, are healthy eating and active living, mental health and substance abuse, violence, and healthy, safe, and affordable housing. A commitment to health access, equity, and social justice is woven into each of these priorities. Participants in the Envision Cambridge Listening and Visioning workshops consistently framed health in relation to a healthy environment, including adequate open space and clean water, as well as access to affordable healthy food options.

Vision

Cambridge is a city where everyone has the opportunity to live a healthy, engaged, and enriching life. People believe that they can help shape their community. The city celebrates its unique history and institutions, while opening its doors to newcomers and embracing our shared future.

Goals

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

Cambridge should have opportunities open to all, regardless of demographic differences such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief, or any other characteristic.

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

Cambridge must work to eliminate inequality based on race and ethnicity with both targeted policy and increased representation of historically marginalized groups.

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

Cambridge should support opportunities for everyone to take ownership of their community, whether through formal processes or informal engagement.

Health and Wellness: Ensure access to resources that support holistic health, wellbeing, and extended life.

The Cambridge community should have access to healthy choices, adequate physical and mental health care, and healthy opportunities for social life.

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

Art, art-making, and engagement with culture are fundamental parts of living together as a community. Cambridge must protect and enhance opportunities to produce art and enjoy the city's shared culture.

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

Cambridge should expand opportunities to learn, play, and engage with others in fun ways that enrich health and development.

Sense of Belonging: Strengthen our social connections and provide a safe and welcoming community.

Cambridge should help its residents, students, workers, and visitors feel a connection to one another and to the city itself.

Connections to Our Core Values

Outlined here are key ways that the core values of the Cambridge community, identified through the Envision Cambridge process, are reflected in the Community Wellbeing goals and recommendations. For more about the community's vision and core values, see page 26.

Livability: We value a vibrant built and natural environment and support sustainable transportation with affordable and convenient access to daily needs and recreational resources.

This section recommends ways for Cambridge to continue to be a welcoming, supportive community where residents feel a sense of belonging and have access to high-quality services and amenities that enhance livability for all segments of the community.

Cultural and recreational resources provide opportunities to enhance social bonds and overall quality of life in the city.

Diversity and Equity: We are a welcoming community that celebrates our diversity and ensures access to affordable housing choices and opportunities to succeed.

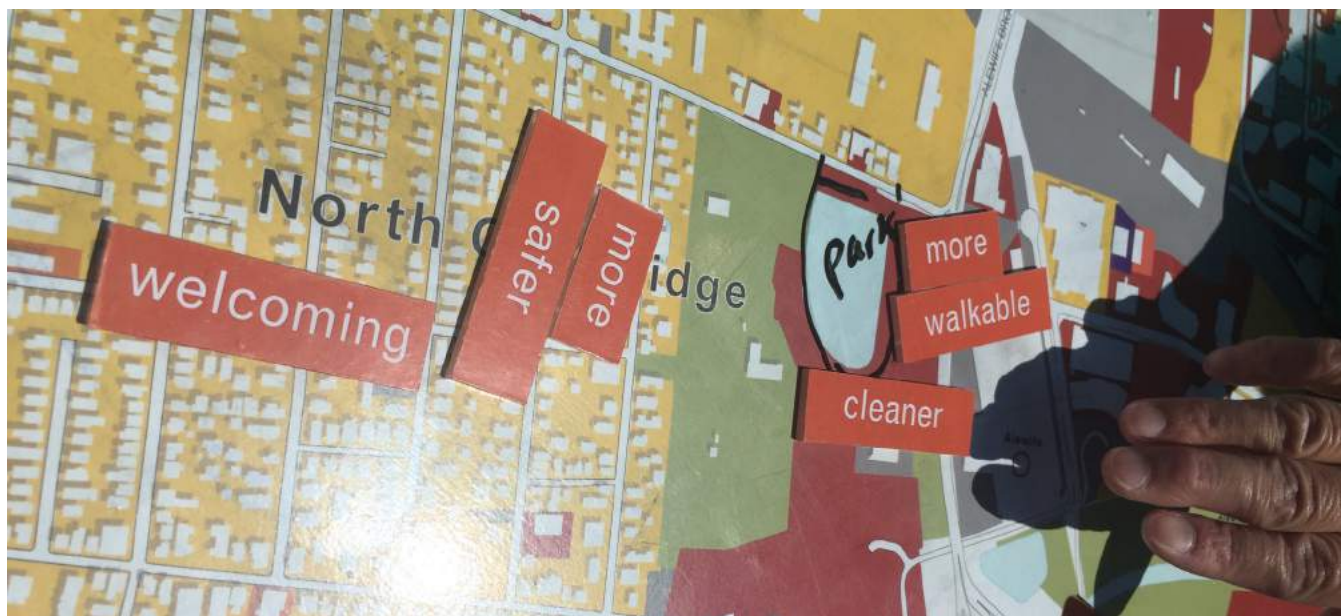
A diverse and equitable community is welcoming to all, works toward increasing access to opportunity regardless of differences, encourages people to participate in civic life, and fosters a sense of belonging. This section includes recommendations to enhance public participation, remove race-based disparities and other barriers, and work as a community toward equity and inclusion for all members of our community.

Economic Opportunity: We provide opportunity and stability through access to quality jobs, workforce development and training, and livable wages that support economic security for residents.

This section includes recommendations that support access to opportunity for all members of the Cambridge community, regardless of differences in background, identity, beliefs, or other characteristics. This extends beyond economic opportunity to civic participation and engagement.



A community member with the Envision Cambridge street team near Porter Square during PARK(ing) Day, 2018.



Mobile Engagement Station responses at the Center for Families Family Fun Day, 2016.

Sustainability and Resilience:

We take responsible action to reduce our impact on the environment and build a resilient city and strong community.

A key element of a resilient city is social resilience and support for a strong community. Recommendations in this section include providing and enhancing access to programs and services that support people in holistic health, wellbeing, and extended life regardless of background, identity, or circumstance to build an inclusive and connected community that helps to foster social resilience.

Community Health and Wellbeing:

We promote healthy and active lifestyles in supportive, safe community with diverse opportunities to connect with our neighbors and nature and to engage in civic life.

This section includes strategies and actions to foster safety and support for all members of our community, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Encouraging affordable food access and athletics or recreational programs for all provides for opportunities to pursue healthy and active lifestyles. Supporting participating in civic and community life, whether through civic groups, community celebrations, or other avenues, helps to strengthen connection with one's community.

Learning: We embrace lifelong learning and celebrate art and creativity in our culturally rich community.

Recommendations in this section celebrate our diversity as one of our community's strengths. Support for art and artmaking, and expression and sharing of our diverse histories and traditions, help us learn from each other and the diversity of our city. Opportunities for play, an important part of human development, can be available for people of all ages and abilities.

Strategies & Actions

1 Bring race and cultural diversity to the forefront of local policy-making, and increase cultural competency around issues of race.

Institutional racism persists as a regular part of life in Cambridge. By ensuring diverse representation in City institutions, creating processes that ensure all functions of government further racial equity, and driving the conversation on race and equity forward, Cambridge should combat the institutional racism within the City and advance its values of diversity and equity.

“I envision Cambridge will be lively, diverse, and an international model for a ‘just’ city.”

—The Port resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Develop a citywide racial equity framework and increase capacity to conduct ongoing racial equity analyses of new and existing policies, programs, services, procurement practices, and community engagement to evaluate how each proposal advances racial equity, addresses gaps in services and disparities in access, addresses institutional racism, and mitigates unintended consequences.	Programs and operations	New	Ongoing
Evaluate and expand mandatory training for City staff, including public safety personnel, on topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Hold citywide conversations on race and equity.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Ongoing
Participate in the Police Data Initiative to collect, analyze, and make publicly available data on hate and bias-crime to proactively address any potential issues of racial/ethnic disparity.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to review the composition, decisions, and practices of the Police Review and Advisory Board.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing

2 Ensure that Cambridge is a safe and welcoming place for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

Everyone’s experience of life in Cambridge, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, must be characterized by safety, inclusion, and opportunity.

LGBTQ+ Commission
 The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus (LGBTQ+) Commission advocates for a culture of respect and monitors progress toward equality for LGBTQ+ people in Cambridge. The Commission promotes policies that improve the health, welfare, and safety of persons with regard to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Increase the number of public or publicly accessible restrooms, including all-gender restrooms.	Capital investments	Modified	Long term
Provide City staff training on sexual orientation and gender identity.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Expand the City’s Transgender Rights in Public Accommodations Training for local businesses.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

3 Limit violent behavior and treat the physical and emotional effects of violence and exposure to violence.

Cambridge should build a social environment that ensures freedom from violence, including violence targeting or disproportionately

impacting women, girls, and the LGBTQ+ community. The City should also work to eliminate the fear of such violence.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Implement developmentally appropriate prevention activities in schools to educate youth about gender norms, healthy relationships, and gender-based and sexual violence.	Community interface and outreach	New	Near term
Educate the public on recognizing, preventing, and responding to domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

4 Encourage voting, especially by historically underrepresented groups, and diverse representation in government.

Voting is one of the most accessible ways for Cambridge residents to affect the future of their community. However, not everyone with the opportunity to vote chooses to vote in Cambridge. Some populations were historically marginalized from participation

and feel disconnected from governance. For others, language is a barrier to participation. Others (often students) choose to vote in other jurisdictions. The City should encourage voting in Cambridge, particularly among underrepresented groups.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Work closely with public schools to expand students’ knowledge regarding voter registration, voting, and elections.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Partner with universities to expand local voter registration and promote voting among students.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Ongoing
Make multilingual voter registration information available through existing programs.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Review City employee demographics, and research and implement best practice strategies for diversifying recruitment, hiring, and retention of City employees of color.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing



Volunteers conducting voter registration on behalf of the Cambridge Election Commission.

5 Increase participation of underrepresented groups in City policymaking and governance.

Civic participation in a democratic society extends beyond the ballot box. In Cambridge, City leaders and policymakers consistently engage the community and solicit feedback on existing and proposed policies. Not all community members are engaged equally, however. Historically marginalized groups, such as American-born Blacks,

immigrants, as well as young people, lower-income people, and renters, continue to be underrepresented in Cambridge’s governance process. Cambridge should continue to correct these imbalances. By leveraging new communications technologies and expanding proven engagement models, the City should reach more people in historically

underrepresented groups and involve them in governing. This should include the development approval process, the identification of historically significant landmarks and districts, the design of new services and programs, and all other policymaking decisions.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Expand City efforts to ensure diverse representation on City boards, commissions, and advisory committees, including targeted outreach and recruitment.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Ongoing
Research and implement innovative and non-traditional engagement tools and partnerships to increase representation from underserved communities, including meeting people where they are and using technology and art.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Ongoing
Work with the Community Engagement Team (CET) to support City departments in developing their own outreach teams. CET is a multi-agency collaborative that supports the City’s agencies in work with a diverse community by reaching out to underserved Cambridge families to connect them to community events and resources and developing community leaders.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Invest in technology for additional public meeting spaces to make meetings available for streaming online, including both high- and low-tech options.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Provide consistent, high-quality, culturally appropriate translation and interpretation services, particularly for key City events or meetings.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing

“We need actual involvement and leadership and input from diverse communities, especially people with low incomes and people experiencing homelessness.”

—Riverside resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Solicit ideas and opinions from adults and youth for new capital projects within the city (i.e., Participatory Budgeting).	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Support the City Committee on Diversity to create discussion opportunities for City staff to increase cultural awareness and understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Continue the efforts of public safety personnel to build strong community relationships and trust through outreach and hosting informational events.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Educate the community on the existing process for bringing complaints and concerns forward about police interactions, as well as the accountability process following complaints.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Encourage transparency in planning and policy development processes through active reporting of planning outcomes (i.e. Open Data, annual reporting of planning processes) and production of fact sheets.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

6 Encourage formal and informal participation in community life through direct programming and support for community groups.

Involvement in one’s community can include both organized and spontaneous activities with neighbors and friends. People need opportunities to participate in community life in order to grow their connection with their home. Participation could mean

being active in a neighborhood organization focused on community issues, involvement in an interest-based club, or even simply showing up to a block party and talking to one’s neighbors. To some extent, the City can foster civic life directly through programming, but much

of this activity must grow from the initiative of private individuals. To that end, the City should help individuals start organizations, organize events, and find existing organizations or efforts where they can become involved.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Conduct an inventory of publicly accessible indoor meeting spaces (including the hours, capacity, location, and contact information for each space) and make this information available to the public.	Programs and operations	New	Ongoing
Hold City-sponsored block parties or barbecues in residential neighborhoods.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Support Find It Cambridge, an online resource that provides information on activities, services, and resources in Cambridge.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Provide information on neighborhood and business organizations on the City website.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

“I envision citizens of Cambridge contributing in a participatory manner in some way, however small. Each of us can contribute by volunteering, mentoring, helping in the smallest way.”

—Cambridge Highlands resident via online survey

7 Support Cambridge families through prenatal education, childcare services, and family-centered design.

Families are the backbone of any enduring community. Cambridge should support parents and children in the community through the direct provision of services, building infrastructure that meets the needs of families, and regulating development to encourage family-centered design.

“Keep Cambridge family-friendly—for all kinds of families.”

—Cambridgeport resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Expand after-school and summer programs for children of all ages.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Create equitable access to, and expand the number of, high-quality early learning services, and support families so that their children are prepared for school.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Expand scholarships and the number of slots in quality early education programs, with a focus on low-income families, which will facilitate workforce participation for adults and positive educational outcomes for children.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Near term
Expand affordability of childcare through out-of-school-time programming.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Expand education and support to families with young children (0-4 years old).	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

8 Provide programs and services that meet the needs of seniors and people with disabilities.

The City provides a variety of transportation assistance for seniors and people with disabilities, which helps to facilitate moving

about the city to meet their everyday needs. Furthermore, City services provide social and recreational options that enhance quality of life.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Expand transportation assistance for seniors and people with disabilities.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Expand programming through centralized senior centers.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Provide programming and opportunities for people with disabilities.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

9 Work to eradicate homelessness and support those experiencing homelessness in obtaining shelter and supportive services.

Homelessness affects a diverse group of people facing widely varied conditions. Cambridge should continue to address this problem through prevention, support for emergency housing, provision of housing assistance, and supportive services that holistically address the needs of people experiencing homelessness. [\(Learn more about goals related to housing on page 67.\)](#)

Addressing Homelessness
 The Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs works with numerous other City departments and local nonprofits in addressing homelessness in the city. These organizations work together through the Cambridge Continuum of Care to offer a coordinated and comprehensive local response to this issue.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Coordinate public and private efforts to provide comprehensive services to persons experiencing homelessness.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Ongoing
Assess the size and experiences of Cambridge’s population experiencing homelessness.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing

10 Support the mental, behavioral, and emotional health of all and reduce substance abuse.

Organizations in Cambridge are well known for their holistic treatment of mental health and substance abuse. The City should maintain and expand its support for this important work and help to create an environment where mental health treatment and harm reduction are a stable component of the healthcare landscape in the city.

Overdose Surveillance System
 In order to respond locally to the opioid crisis, the Cambridge Public Health Department developed a faster, more specific surveillance system that combines data from a variety of sources to compile an annual report on all overdose-related incidents in Cambridge. Data sources include Cambridge Health Alliance, Pro EMS Ambulance, AIDS Action Committee, and the Massachusetts State Department of Public Health. This annual report is the result of a multi-year effort, and tells the story about how the opioid crisis affected the people that lived, worked, and played in Cambridge.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Implement an educational campaign about mental/behavioral health to destigmatize mental illness, increase awareness of substance abuse prevention, and promote existing mental/behavioral health services in Cambridge.	Community interface and outreach	New	Ongoing
Provide direct outreach, counseling, and programming for people abusing substances, and provide information on abuse prevention.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Provide safe and consequence-free disposal of medication and drug paraphernalia, and provide exchanges if necessary (i.e. sharps disposal).	Programs and operations	Expanded	Near term
Increase mental/behavioral health prevention, screening, and treatment programs and services to vulnerable populations, including the elderly, LGBTQ+, homeless, immigrant, parent, and youth populations.	Community interface and outreach	Modified	Ongoing
Provide overdose education, naloxone use training, and naloxone distribution.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Screen youth for potential substance abuse or mental/behavioral health needs and connect them to service providers.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

11 Encourage creative play for all ages and abilities.



The playground at North Point Park.

Play, the act of engaging the world in a fun and relatively unstructured way, is an important part of human development that is enjoyed by people no matter their age. Cambridge has worked to incorporate more opportunities for play into the built environment, and to make these opportunities accessible to everyone. Furthering this work with more formal and informal programming will help more people engage in play in these spaces.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Design and program open space to encourage intergenerational use of open spaces.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Evaluate ways to increase programming at parks and squares, including culturally specific programming, by building partnerships with local non-profit and community organizations.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Revise the permitting process for reserving parks and open space and holding block parties, in order to eliminate barriers for underserved communities.	Other regulatory changes	Modified	Near term

“I envision a haven for families from a diverse assortment of backgrounds, where children are encouraged to play, walk, and congregate freely in our public spaces, including spaces transformed to support natural free play.”

—Mid-Cambridge resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Assess open space needs at citywide and neighborhood scales with attention to diversity of open space uses and changing demographics, and address gaps through new or improved open space for underserved communities.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing
Provide a diverse range of play environments across the city to serve a full range of age groups, ability levels, and interests.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Incorporate play into public realm improvements and capital projects.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Encourage play spaces in privately owned public spaces (POPS) or open space provided as a community benefit during private residential development.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing
Provide open space for both athletic and non-athletic activities, including both organized and spontaneous games and events.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing



The City renovated the playground at the Amigos School in 2018.

12 Support healthy lifestyles and affordable food options.

Everyone should have the option of living a healthy lifestyle. Too often, income and historic patterns of racial segregation restrict who has access to healthy foods, who can exercise regularly, and who can otherwise live in a healthy way. Ensuring equitable access to healthy food, lifestyle choices, and health care in Cambridge will help people take control of their health, make the best decisions for themselves, and improve the overall health of the community.



The Hurley Street Neighborhood Farm in East Cambridge opened in 2016 and is one of 14 community gardens in the city.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Study new opportunities for access to affordable supermarkets in underserved neighborhoods.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Directly provide healthy food to those in need and evaluate how food is delivered to ensure equitable and humane distribution.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Annually evaluate the community garden program to ensure equitable distribution of community gardens citywide, minimize wait times for interested residents to obtain a plot, and ensure universal design in construction and renovation.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Provide organized athletics programs and leagues citywide and near residential neighborhoods.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Provide athletic opportunities for people with special needs.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to support the Winter Fuel Assistance Program, Cambridge Food Pantry Network, Summer Food Program, and Childcare Voucher programs.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

“We need access to clean air and water; affordable healthy food and recreation; public spaces that encourage mingling and exercising.”

—Mid-Cambridge resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Study and implement recommendations to improve affordable, culturally appropriate, and convenient access to healthy food, particularly for low-income communities and communities of color.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Program athletic facilities that support sports and activities reflecting Cambridge’s diverse demographics.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Increase the number of water fountains and public restrooms in public facilities and parks.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Provide information and resources to business owners interested in expanding healthy food options (Healthy Markets, food truck program).	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Adopt an urban agriculture ordinance to increase local food production.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing
Educate the public on how to implement healthy eating options.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Provide information about, and promote access to, affordable and culturally appropriate opportunities for people to participate in fitness and recreational activities and to enjoy the outdoors.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Create ongoing healthy living support programs for underserved groups (Men’s Health League, Fit for Life, Fitness Brothers, Cambridge in Motion, Healthy Markets, SNAP Match Program).	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to offer events for targeted health programming and assessment.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

13 Support Cambridge’s diversity and traditions through formal recognition and celebrations.

Celebrating our Histories

The Cambridge Historical Commission is the City's historic preservation agency. In addition to protecting Cambridge's valuable historic landmarks and neighborhoods, the Commission promotes a wider understanding of Cambridge's diverse histories through publications, outreach in schools, and public events like Cambridge Discovery Day.

Cambridge’s population has a varied set of histories and traditions, all of which are important in making Cambridge what it is today. Likewise, Cambridge itself has a deep history, which impacts today’s communities while often going unnoticed. Highlighting the many traditions of Cambridge’s people along with the histories embedded in our city fabric can help people connect with their neighbors in the present, as well as the generations before them, and grow the community’s sense of place.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Create a database of places that highlight Cambridge’s history, traditions, and legacy, and publish a collection of walking routes based on those places.	Programs and operations	New	Near term
Provide funding for the creation of a Cambridge history museum or other landmark, such as a Cambridge version of the Boston Freedom Trail, to connect historically significant locations.	Capital investments	New	Long term
Host events and activities to recognize and communicate the diverse heritages of Cambridge’s residents and promote cross-cultural dialogue, interaction, and knowledge-sharing.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

“Cambridge needs spaces of inclusivity, with cultural and social infrastructures that celebrate diversity.”

—Wellington-Harrington resident via online survey

14 Ensure artists have space in Cambridge to work, meet, produce, perform, and display their work.



Artist IMAGINE putting up a mural as part of the Central Square Mural Project sponsored by the City of Cambridge.

Artists bring people together in Cambridge. People gather to create art, to enjoy artwork, and to connect with artists and audiences. As demand for space in Cambridge increases, there are fewer places for artists, audiences, and arts organizations to gather or to engage in collaborative creative activity. Many studios, galleries, and performance spaces have closed in recent years. Protecting space for these activities will ensure these critical community functions will not be lost.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Modify zoning to allow for live-work space for artists.	Zoning Changes	New	Near term
Incorporate public art into capital projects.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Sponsor arts performances and installations in Cambridge parks.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Display art in municipal buildings.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

15 Bolster artistic activity through audience building and support for professional and nonprofessional artists.

Art is a vital part of Cambridge’s civic life, and the production and enjoyment of creative work should not be limited to dedicated art spaces or for professional artists alone. Cambridge already works to bring artistic activity and performance into the community

through financial support, public space programming, and more. By continuing this work and expanding the ways artists can sustain themselves and their art production, Cambridge can maintain the creative energy evident across the city.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Create new opportunities for audiences to financially support artmaking.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Ongoing
Program public spaces with art and performance.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing
Organize and/or fund arts festivals that serve as a destination for artists and audiences in public and semi-public spaces (e.g. Jazz Fest in Danehy Park).	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Provide financial support for organizations that encourage artmaking by nonprofessionals.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Provide financial support for professional artists and arts organizations.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Link artists with businesses and organizations who would like to display or present visual and performing art.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Create new opportunities for audiences to engage with artmaking, particularly youth, elders, and populations who don’t typically engage in the traditional art world.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

Cambridge Arts' FLOW Program



In June 2018, Cambridge celebrated the completion of a new mural at the Community Art Center on Windsor Street. The “Home Port” mural, painted in the roadway outside the building, is the creation of the center’s Teen Public Art Crew, overseen by public art coordinator James Pierre, in collaboration with visiting artist

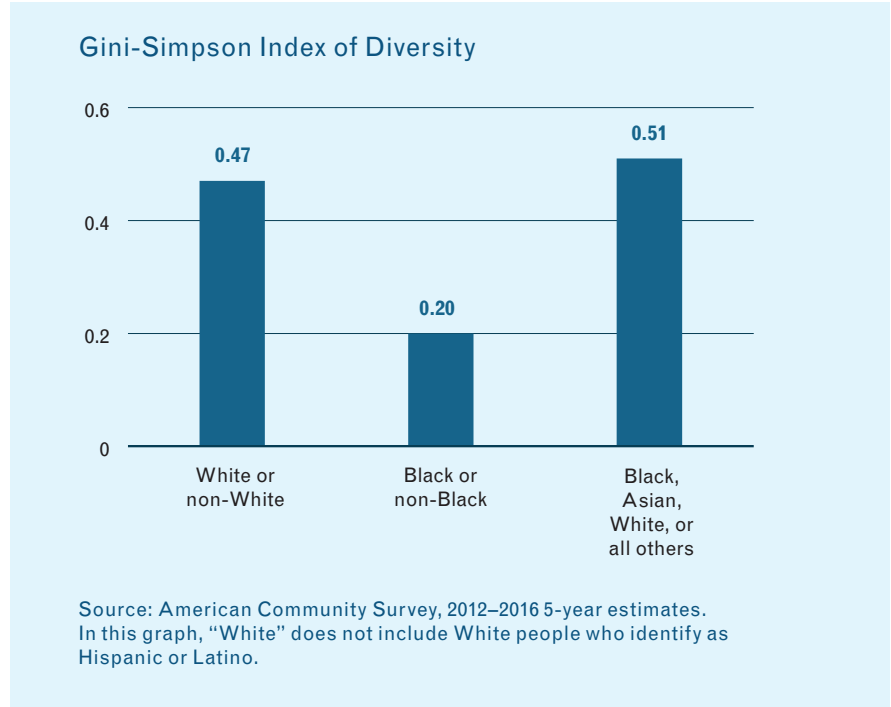
IMAGINE (aka Sneha Shrestha).

The project was funded by Cambridge Arts’ FLOW program, which will bring 11 cultural projects to Cambridge’s Port neighborhood. Funded with \$300,000 through the City’s Percent-for-Art ordinance, FLOW is tied to a major City infrastructure project to reduce flooding in this neighborhood.

Indicators and Targets

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

For several decades, Cambridge has become increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. However, growth in the proportion of people of color in Cambridge has slowed in recent years, and the proportional size of the Black community shows indications of decreasing. This indicator, the Gini-Simpson Index, measures diversity in the population. The index measures the probability that two residents selected at random are members of given groups. The Gini-Simpson Index can illuminate different dimensions of diversity by comparing two or more groups. This indicator will monitor our ability to maintain a diverse population over the coming years.



Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Probability that a selection of two residents at random would include one non-Latino White person and all others	0.47	0.47
Probability that a selection of two residents at random would include one Black person and all others	0.19	0.20
Probability that a selection of two residents at random would include two people from different racial groups (given racial categories of Black, Asian, White, and all others)	0.51	0.50

Source: American Community Survey, 2012–2016 5-year estimates. In these indicators, “White” does not include White people who identify as Hispanic or Latino.

Diverse Representation on City Committees

Each of Cambridge’s boards, commissions, and committees should reflect the city’s diverse population. This indicator tracks the diversity of those committees in an effort to make those bodies more representative and ensure that new policy will reflect the city’s diversity. While the racial, ethnic, and gender balance of these committees was not historically monitored, it will be tracked moving forward.

Indicator	Baseline	2030 Target
Proportion of City committee members who are people of color	<i>The City does not have a baseline measurement for this indicator at this time, but it will collect this information moving forward.</i>	<i>This target will be set once the initial data is collected.</i>
Proportion of City committee members who are women	<i>The City does not have a baseline measurement for this indicator at this time, but it will collect this information moving forward.</i>	<i>This target will be set once the initial data is collected.</i>

Perceptions of Racial Inclusion

Cambridge should not just be diverse, but everyone here should feel welcome. This indicator will track the population’s qualitative understanding of inclusion in the city. In the coming years, surveys should be structured to uncover differences in responses by the respondent’s race, if those differences exist.



Street life on Broadway at Joan Lorentz Park.

Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of survey respondents who rate Cambridge “good” or “excellent” as a welcoming place to all races and cultures	<p>80% online</p> <p>84% by phone</p>	<p>90% online</p> <p>90% by phone</p>

Source: City Manager’s biannual survey

Physical Activity

Moderate physical activity is important for both the physical and mental health of Cambridge’s community. This indicator will track engagement in physical activity across all age groups.



A cyclist in Kendall Square.

Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of middle schoolers who engage in physical activity	78%	85%
Percent of high schoolers who engage in physical activity	78%	85%
Percent of adults who engage in physical activity	80%	85%

Source: Cambridge Teen Health Survey, Cambridge Middle Grades Health Survey, 500 Cities

Perceptions of Recreational Opportunities

All people in Cambridge should feel their recreational needs and desires are met by the City’s public spaces and recreational programming. This indicator tracks the community’s qualitative understanding of Cambridge’s open spaces and recreation assets.



The Charles River waterfront.

Indicator

Percent of survey respondents who rate Cambridge’s open space and recreational opportunities as good or excellent

2016 Baseline

72% online

60% by phone

2030 Target

75% online

75% by phone

Source: City Manager’s Biannual Survey

Perceptions of Community Life

What constitutes “community” is difficult for people to define and differs from person to person, but a feeling of being part of a community is important for individual and social wellbeing. This indicator tracks our collective perception of community in the city.

Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of survey respondents who say Cambridge has a “good” or “excellent” sense of community life	63% online	80% online
	67% by phone	80% by phone

Source: City Manager’s Biannual Survey

Perceptions of Safety

Everyone deserves to be safe, but it is also important for people to feel safe. This indicator tracks the sense of security felt by Cambridge residents.



Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of survey respondents who rate Cambridge as a safe place to live	87% online	90% online
	78% by phone	90% by phone

Source: City Manager’s Biannual Survey





Menu items and prices visible in the window:
MILK SHAKE \$4.99
REG. SAMOSA \$1.50
PANEER \$10.99
SO BHAJI \$10.99
SO BHAJI CH \$10.99

Ticket Numbers
Are Identifiers
Only

OPEN

PUNJABI DH

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Economy Plan

Cambridge is at the cutting edge of the global economy. The city's core economic sectors have generated overall prosperity and helped the city thrive as the regional economy has shifted from manufacturing to knowledge-based industries. However, this success has not been felt by all. Cambridge wants to preserve its diversity and unique commercial districts, become a more equitable city, and foster an economy that works for everyone. Cambridge's diversity is an important part of its vibrancy. This diversity can only be retained if all residents, regardless of background, have access to quality jobs, the ability to start their own businesses, and programs that provide skill development and growth opportunities. The plan includes recommendations to expand partnerships with businesses and institutions to create a more inclusive labor market and regulate development to create an environment that will serve the city's economic goals.

Coordinated Efforts

The City works with residents, businesses, institutions, and people working in Cambridge to create better economic outcomes in the city. For instance, Cambridge's Office of Workforce Development (in the Department of Human Service Programs) and its Economic Development Division (in the Community Development Department) both work to create an inclusive economy for the city. These efforts include funding targeted job training programs, transitional and youth employment programs, job search assistance, workshops and technical assistance to small businesses and entrepreneurs, and more. The City also crafts plans to ensure continued economic vitality. In order to support and enhance Cambridge's unique commercial districts, the City released a Retail Strategic Plan in 2017 that will guide the City's current and future retail policies and programs.

Economy

Context

Global Connections

With Cambridge's prominent universities and booming technology and life science industries, the city is a regional jobs center and a critical hub in the global economy. More than half of people working in Cambridge are employed in education and professional and technical services, such as scientific research and pharmaceuticals. The proportion of jobs in the life sciences in Cambridge is more than 18 times greater than in the national economy. Life sciences and

technology have driven recent job growth, while education remains a stable core sector for the city. Food service and entertainment are small but growing parts of the economy, while the manufacturing, construction, and retail sectors are shrinking.

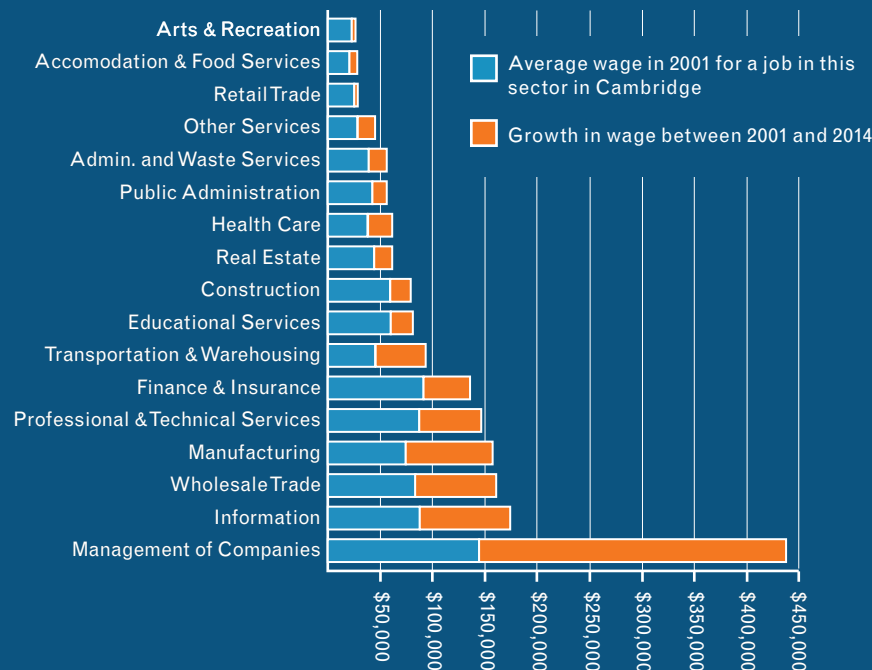
Opportunity and Equity

Cambridge's economic success has not been even. Cambridge workers in high-paying industries like corporate management saw their wages grow much faster in recent years than workers in lower-paying industries. The

average worker in Cambridge makes more than \$10,000 more per year than the average resident, indicating that many of the high-paying jobs in Cambridge are held by people who live elsewhere. Among Cambridge residents, men earn more than \$9,000 more than women, while non-Latino white households earn nearly \$44,000 more than Latino households, and nearly \$53,000 more than black households. These demographic disparities also exist in median net worth, poverty, and economic security.

Average Annual Wage by Sector, 2001–2014

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2001–2014; US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2001–2014



“Cambridge is increasingly a place of ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’ in the local economy. While the city is benefiting from the growth of large, high-tech businesses, it needs to bring along those at the bottom of the economic ladder, with fewer skills, to maintain a healthy community.”

— Listening Workshop participant



Port Pride Day attendees discuss the future of Cambridge's economy and development.

Perceptions of the Economy

While many online survey respondents and participants in Envision Cambridge listening workshops recognized the positive impacts the city's core industries have had on Cambridge, they expressed reservations about their continued growth. Some participants were concerned about the effect of high-wage workers and large companies on housing costs, the displacement of people and businesses, and the creation of "two worlds" (rich and poor) living side-by-side in Cambridge. A subset of participants also worried Cambridge would lose its economic edge as large companies crowd out smaller firms, including those in the knowledge economy.

To address economic inequality, some survey respondents said the technology

and life sciences industries—as well as the city's universities—could do more to establish ties with local hiring and job training programs. Workshop participants said that Cambridge should build up its other industries, especially those that create good jobs that do not require an advanced degree.

Changing Commercial Districts

Demand for commercial space in Cambridge—including office, lab, and retail space—has grown significantly in the last 10 years, changing the face of the city's commercial districts. Office rents are up more than 40% since 2010. Furthermore, the city's few remaining industrial areas are under pressure to redevelop as higher-value laboratory space.

For more data and context on Cambridge's economy, see pages 74–93 of *Cambridge Today*, the Envision Cambridge report on existing conditions.

“Attracting technology start-up jobs is wonderful, but this city isn’t going to sustain itself entirely with high-paying jobs.”

— Mid-Cambridge resident via online survey

The Future of Retail

Thriving retail districts are crucial to the quality of life for the Cambridge community. Across the US, retail is evolving, requiring ingenuity on the part of independent retail operators. Small retailers in Cambridge face high real estate cost growth, especially in locations like Harvard and Central Squares, where proximity to transit creates high demand. National chains are also increasingly likely to open stores in urban areas like Cambridge, and Cambridge retailers also face new competition from emerging regional retail centers nearby, as well as online retailers. Participants at public meetings and focus groups repeatedly cited concerns for independent businesses in general, and especially those businesses catering to middle- and low-income people.

Vision

Cambridge is a leading global center of the knowledge economy and a regional economic powerhouse that offers a mix of good jobs, thriving commercial districts, and a high quality of life for all. The City actively supports the strong performance of its core sectors, emerging sectors, and industries that generate positive social outcomes. Residents can access stable jobs paying a living wage, education, and services that generate economic opportunity. All people, regardless of their background or identity, should have access to opportunity in Cambridge.

Goals

Shared Community Prosperity: Ensure access to job opportunities and living wages, as well as access to robust education, training, and support services.

Good jobs and living wages will ensure that everyone benefits from the city's economic development. Cambridge must assist young adults, vulnerable residents, and families to participate in Cambridge's economy.

Equity: Eliminate racial, gender, and other disparities in economic opportunity.

Cambridge should act to end unequal access to economic opportunity, particularly for women, people of color, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people.

Global Economic Center: Maintain Cambridge's centrality in the global knowledge economy.

Cambridge's core business sectors drive employment and help fund the city's high-quality services. Cambridge should ensure these industries continue to thrive.

Employment Diversity: Diversify employment opportunities beyond high-skill work in a few industries.

The City should strengthen new and emerging sectors and low barrier-to-entry jobs to ensure economic inclusion and avoid the risks of over-concentration in a limited set of industries.

Business Diversity: Ensure local businesses of different types, sizes, and growth stages are able to start, grow, and remain in Cambridge.

Cambridge should act to retain the dynamism of the city's business landscape despite growing competition, dominance of large firms, and a changing global business landscape.

Great Commercial Districts: Preserve and enhance the distinctive character of Cambridge's commercial districts, especially its major squares and mixed-use corridors.

Cambridge must ensure the city's centers of everyday commerce continue to thrive and meet the needs of residents.

Connections to Our Core Values

Outlined here are key ways that the core values of the Cambridge community, identified through the Envision Cambridge process, are reflected in the Economy goals and recommendations. For more about the community's vision and core values, see page 26.

Livability: We value a vibrant built and natural environment and support sustainable transportation with affordable and convenient access to daily needs and recreational resources.

The city's commercial districts and mixed-use corridors are not only areas where everyday needs can be met, but also places that support a vibrant, connected community.

Several recommendations in this section support public realm improvements and other initiatives and programs to encourage active street life in these districts to help them continue to thrive.

Diversity and Equity: We are a welcoming community that celebrates our diversity and ensures access to affordable housing choices and opportunities to succeed.

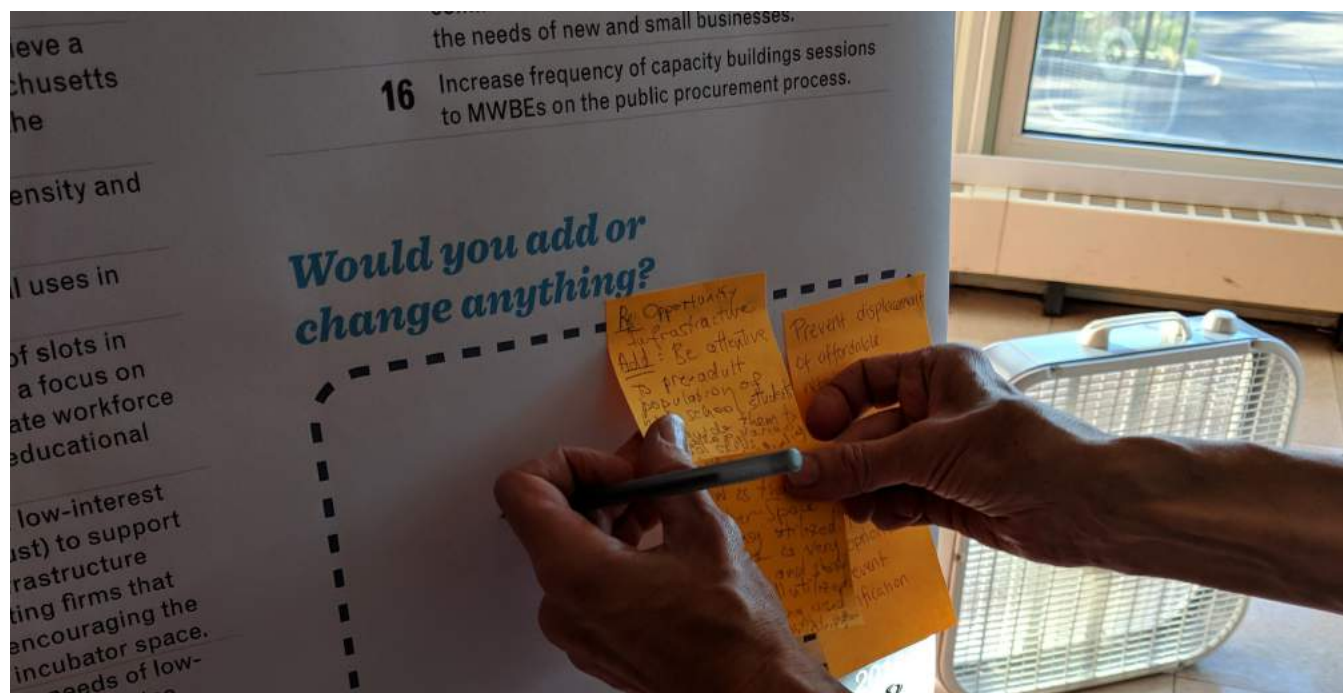
Since Cambridge's diversity is an important part of its vibrancy, recommendations in this section focus on investments in social and economic inclusion to support efforts toward equity and eliminating racial, gender, and other disparities in economic opportunity.

Economic Opportunity: We provide opportunity and stability through access to quality jobs, workforce development and training, and livable wages that support economic security for residents.

Recommendations in this section focus on leveraging strengths in Cambridge's economy, as well as supporting employment diversity across sectors and business diversity across stages of growth. Suggested strategies and actions would support access to job opportunities and living wages for Cambridge residents and access to robust education, training, and services to build shared community prosperity.



A community member with the Corridors activity at Hoops N Health 2018.



A community member responds to proposed ideas for the economy at a public meeting, July 2018.

Sustainability and Resilience:

We take responsible action to reduce our impact on the environment and build a resilient city and strong community.

Economic stability for Cambridge families is a bedrock of community sustainability and resilience. These recommendations include strategies and actions to encourage employment and business diversity and inclusive entrepreneurship. Diversifying employment opportunities, including through strengthening new and emerging sectors and access to low barrier-to-entry jobs would enhance the city's economic sustainability and support social and economic inclusion and equity.

Community Health and Wellbeing:

We promote healthy and active lifestyles in supportive, safe community with diverse opportunities to connect with our neighbors and nature and to engage in civic life.

Several recommended strategies and actions are designed to support vibrancy of our commercial districts, squares, and mixed-use corridors—areas that provide basic needs and services for the community and areas where neighbors connect with each other. Local, independent businesses are often integral to the identity of these unique districts and to local entrepreneurship and economic empowerment. Programs and assistance programs for small businesses help these businesses more effectively serve the diverse community.

Learning: We embrace lifelong learning and celebrate art and creativity in our culturally rich community.

This section recommends enhancing access to training and education programs to further support economic opportunity and security, skill development, and career growth. These can range from internships to industry-focused training programs to adult basic education to career counseling and training to help Cambridge residents advance to the next level of employment.

Strategies & Actions

1 Enhance current training and education programs and expand partnerships with employers and institutions to meet the education and training needs of the Cambridge community.

Some Cambridge residents do not have the educational attainment or skills suited for today’s high-paying jobs in Cambridge, which are often in the life sciences and high-tech industries. Robust workforce development programs are available in Cambridge, but these programs have identified needs beyond their current capacity. The City should address gaps in its current workforce development programs and create a system that can equip even more people to work in today’s knowledge economy.

Career Counseling
 In addition to job readiness and transitional jobs programs, the City offers free individualized career counseling for residents of all levels of experience and across a wide variety of occupations and industries. Counseling includes resume development, interview preparation, job search strategies, and identifying next steps.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Provide funding for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) internship opportunities for Cambridge students. Work in collaboration with local businesses, academic institutions, and foundations to develop strategies for implementation.	Programs and operations	New	Ongoing
Assess the training and education needs of low- and moderate-income residents to determine readiness to access existing industry-focused training programs and inform design of new programs. Design new programs and implement strategies based on the recommendations of the needs assessment.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Expand existing industry-focused training programs to incorporate pre-vocational education addressing barriers that prevent residents from accessing training or “earn and learn” opportunities.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Medium term

1 Enhance current training and education programs and expand partnerships with employers and institutions to meet the education and training needs of the Cambridge community. (Continued)

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Expand capacity and funding to provide additional “earn and learn” opportunities with local employers for Cambridge residents, training to help current employees advance to the next level of employment, and partnerships for employers to hire graduates of City-supported workforce development programs.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Through the College Success Initiative, work collaboratively with community-based and educational partners to increase the college completion rate of Cambridge’s low-income and first-generation students and students of color.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Through the STEAM Initiative, convene stakeholders to build a system that enables all students to participate in quality STEAM learning experiences.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Provide adult basic education (i.e., GED, English, math, and literacy classes), citizenship education programs, and preparation for college or training programs.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

“We need to provide employment opportunities for everyone, regardless of education levels, and then provide supplemental training when desired. This can be done through community programs, as well as specialized case management for those in need.”

—Central Square resident via online survey

2 Make investments in social and economic inclusion that support equity, Cambridge’s long-term economic competitiveness, and its vibrant quality of life.

Cambridge cannot thrive unless everyone in the community is thriving. While the City cannot eradicate inequality on its own, it should help level the playing field through direct assistance to those in need, offering employment to Cambridge’s youth, and by ensuring fairness in the private labor market wherever possible.

Youth Employment
 Cambridge partners with private businesses, nonprofits, and education institutions through the City's youth employment programs, including the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program, YouthWorks, the Harvard Internship Program, and the Summer Jobs Campaign.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Explore additional opportunities to ensure equitable internet access.	Study or plan	Expanded	Near term
Enforce the City’s Living Wage Ordinance for City contracts and workers .	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Provide youth with summer employment opportunities (e.g., Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program, Youthworks).	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

3 Incentivize the creation and preservation of affordable commercial space.

Both new and existing businesses face stiff competition for affordable commercial space. Without more options, only the largest firms in the most profitable industries will be able to locate in Cambridge, pushing out small and independent businesses. More commercial development is needed to meet demand, but that development should also be calibrated to suit the needs of new and independent businesses.



Mixed-use development in Kendall Square.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Change zoning to increase commercial density to encourage job growth in areas such as Alewife.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Explore mechanisms to facilitate site assemblage to support targeted commercial development in Alewife.	Capital investments	New	Long term
In large developments, require ground-floor commercial spaces of a small size aligned with the needs of new and small businesses.	Zoning changes	Expanded	Ongoing
Revise the commercial land use classification to allow for flexible retail formats and business models.	Zoning changes	Modified	Near term
Implement vacant property activation strategies that support property owners with retail vacancies.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

4 Encourage a business climate that prioritizes local, independent businesses and enables inclusive entrepreneurship.

Local, independent businesses should thrive in Cambridge, and business owners should reflect the diverse population that they serve. Cambridge should ensure more people have the opportunity to start and grow businesses. As the retail environment changes due to local pressures and shifting technology, it is particularly important to help independent retailers, so that the city can retain this distinctive element of Cambridge’s economy.

Entrepreneurship Assistance
 Each year, the Cambridge Entrepreneurship Assistance Program awards five low- and moderate-income Cambridge entrepreneurs with a scholarship to The Capital Network, a program of workshops, panels, bootcamps, and a network of entrepreneur mentors.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Develop a program to provide ongoing mentorship to match new and experienced underrepresented entrepreneurs, help them access City resources, and support peer-to-peer learning.	Programs and operations	New	Ongoing
Change zoning to increase density and achieve a mix of uses in targeted areas along Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, in order to build the customer base for retail.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Evaluate the most effective ways to streamline permitting processes for small businesses.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Increase frequency of capacity-building sessions on the public procurement process offered to minority- and women-owned businesses (MWBEs) .	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing

4 Encourage a business climate that prioritizes local, independent businesses and enables inclusive entrepreneurship. (Continued)

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Proactively set the agenda for regional collaborations to focus on core sector recruitment and marketing by participating in major conferences and events, scaling up effective workforce development, and advocating for regional infrastructure improvements.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Ongoing
Through the Small Business Enhancement Program, provide funding to help eligible retail, food, home-based, and creative for-profit businesses enhance marketing and make interior improvements.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Through the Storefront Improvement Program, provide funding to renovate or restore commercial exterior facades.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Through the Retail Interior Accessibility Program, provide funding to renovate stores' interiors to be more accessible to those who are sensory and/or physically disabled.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Through the Small Business Coaching Program, offer free consulting services to increase small businesses' visibility and profitability.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

“I envision the economy will be entrepreneurial, with a diverse job set providing livable wages.”

—The Port resident via online survey

5 Encourage active street life in Cambridge's retail districts.

Street life is a key driver of retail success in dense cities like Cambridge. By encouraging vibrancy on streets in the city's retail districts, Cambridge can ensure these commercial areas continue to meet the everyday needs of the city's population. Vibrancy can be fostered both through street design and retail district programming.



Street life in Harvard Square.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Carry out public realm improvements to support placemaking in Cambridge's commercial districts and corridors.	Capital investments	Expanded	Ongoing
Conduct annual customer intercept surveys and commercial district demographic research to inform development review and public realm improvements in commercial districts and along commercial corridors.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Increase competitive funding for events and programming put on by local business organizations.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

6 Preserve and promote light industrial land uses that support low barrier-to-entry jobs.

Light industrial jobs tend to offer relatively high wages without requiring advanced degrees. As demand for commercial real estate in Cambridge escalates, industrial businesses (which cannot afford the rents typical for office and lab tenants) may leave the city. Cambridge should ensure it retains a base of light industrial businesses that can provide good, low barrier-to-entry jobs for Cambridge residents.

“I envision quality jobs with compensation that is in line with the cost of housing in the town.”

—Huron Village resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Revise zoning to require light industrial uses in certain areas of the city.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Support the light industrial economy by encouraging the development of a manufacturing incubator space and analyzing financing mechanisms (e.g. low-interest loans, increment financing, land trust) to facilitate infrastructure improvements or land assembly.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Undertake targeted business recruitment efforts to attract firms that offer low barrier-to-entry jobs with relatively high wages and job training opportunities, which could include many jobs in light industrial sectors.	Programs and operations	New	Long term

Mixed-Use Light Industrial in Alewife



The proposed mixed-use light industrial building type will combine industrial uses with other commercial functions, allowing for profitable redevelopment of the Quadrangle that both improves the public realm and retains industrial jobs. This prototype relates to existing uses in Alewife like Iggy's Bakery or Longleaf Lumber, both of which have light industrial operations paired with retail spaces.

Light industrial uses are at risk in Cambridge. Due to the high land costs and low financial return for light industrial uses, owners of existing light industrial properties are experiencing pressure to redevelop those properties for residential, office, and laboratory use. For the same reason, few parcels in Cambridge are likely to be redeveloped for industrial use without a requirement for those

uses. However, light industrial businesses provide good, low barrier-to-entry jobs. Preserving light industrial uses in Cambridge is therefore an important part of creating an inclusive economy.

In order to preserve those jobs, Envision Cambridge has proposed establishing a mixed-use light industrial district in the Alewife Quadrangle. This district would require light industrial

uses on the ground floor, but would allow for more profitable retail and office uses to be built above and alongside those ground floor industrial uses, effectively subsidizing the industrial uses. Through this model, Cambridge can achieve multiple goals at once, including the preservation of good, low barrier-to-entry jobs.

For more information on the plans for mixed-use light industrial in Alewife, see the *Alewife Planning Study*.

Indicators and Targets

Job Growth Rate by Sector

Job growth is a standard indicator for overall economic health that is easily tracked and compared to state and national levels. Cambridge’s recent economic success is driven by strong and growing biotechnology and high tech sectors, whose local job growth has recently outpaced both the state and nation. Maintaining our comparative advantage in these industries requires that they expand at faster rates than other places. Cambridge should continue this trend and aim for more diverse job growth over the long term, including in the light industrial sector.



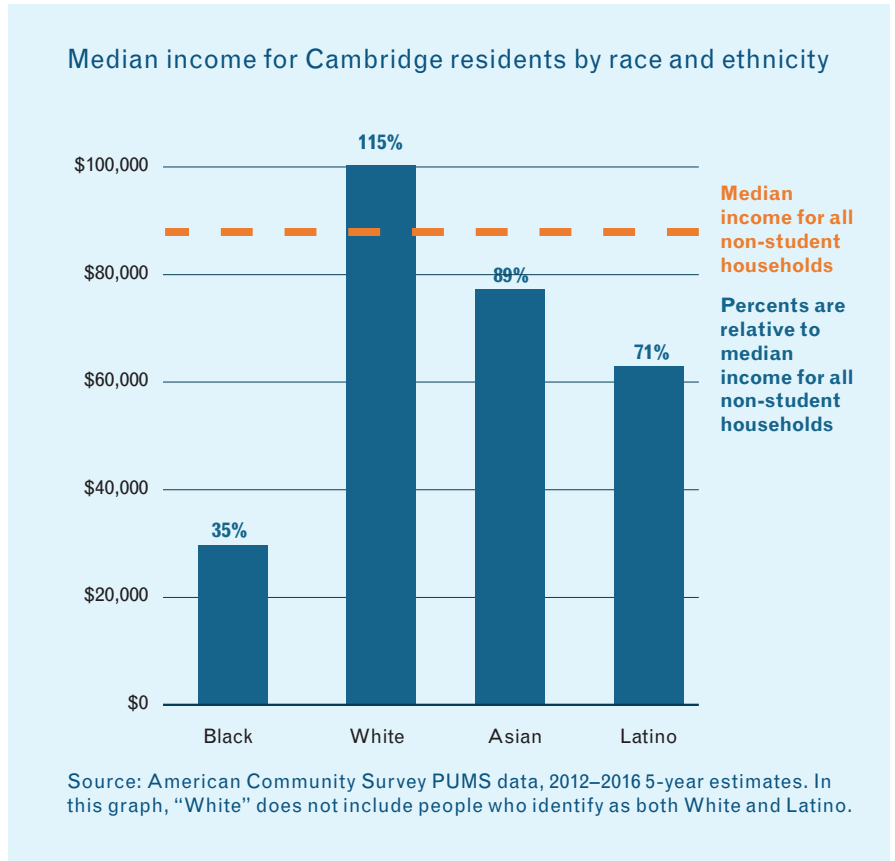
Open space in Kendall Square, a commercial center.

Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Annual job growth rate of life sciences	Higher than the state by 7%	Higher than the state and nation by 3%
	Higher than the nation by 12%	
Annual job growth rate of high-tech sector	Higher than the state and nation by 3%	Higher than the state and nation by 3%
Annual job growth rate of light industrial sectors	Higher than the state by 3%	<i>Light industrial job growth should at least match state and national rates.</i>
	Higher than the nation by 1%	

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

Median Income by Race and Ethnicity

This indicator tracks Cambridge’s progress toward economic inclusion. If Cambridge is going to become a more equitable city, it is imperative that income distribution by race becomes more equal. These targets aim to ensure that in 2030 no group’s median income is less than 80% of the median income for all of Cambridge’s households. For this indicator, households that are headed by students are excluded from the analysis.



Indicator

Median income of Black non-student households as a percent of median income of all non-student households

Median income of Latino non-student households as a percent of median income of all non-student households

2016 Baseline

35% median income for Black households as percent of median income for all households

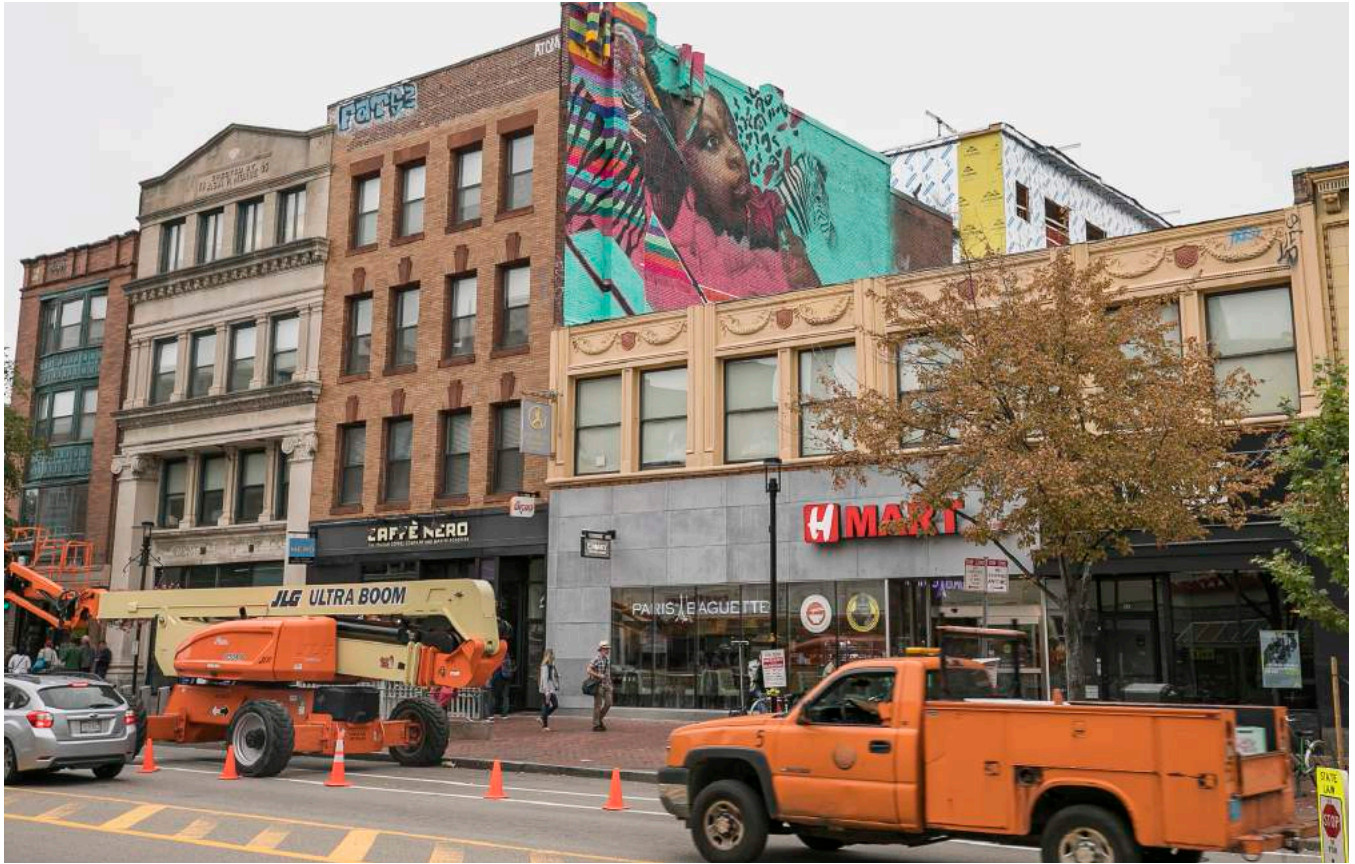
71% median income for Latino households as percent of median income for all households

2030 Target

80% median income for Black households as percent of median income for all households

80% median income for Latino households as percent of median income for all households

Source: American Community Survey PUMS data, 2012–2016 5-year estimates



Retail along Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square.

Full-Time, Year-Round Workers Receiving a Living Wage

The City of Cambridge's Living Wage ordinance sets a minimum standard for compensation capable of contributing to the support of a family of four. The living wage indicator evaluates what portion of the full-time, year-round labor force meets the standard set by the ordinance.

Indicator

Portion of full-time, year-round workers living in Cambridge achieving a living wage

2016 Baseline

86% of full-time, year-round workers living in Cambridge meet or exceed the City's current full-time living wage standard

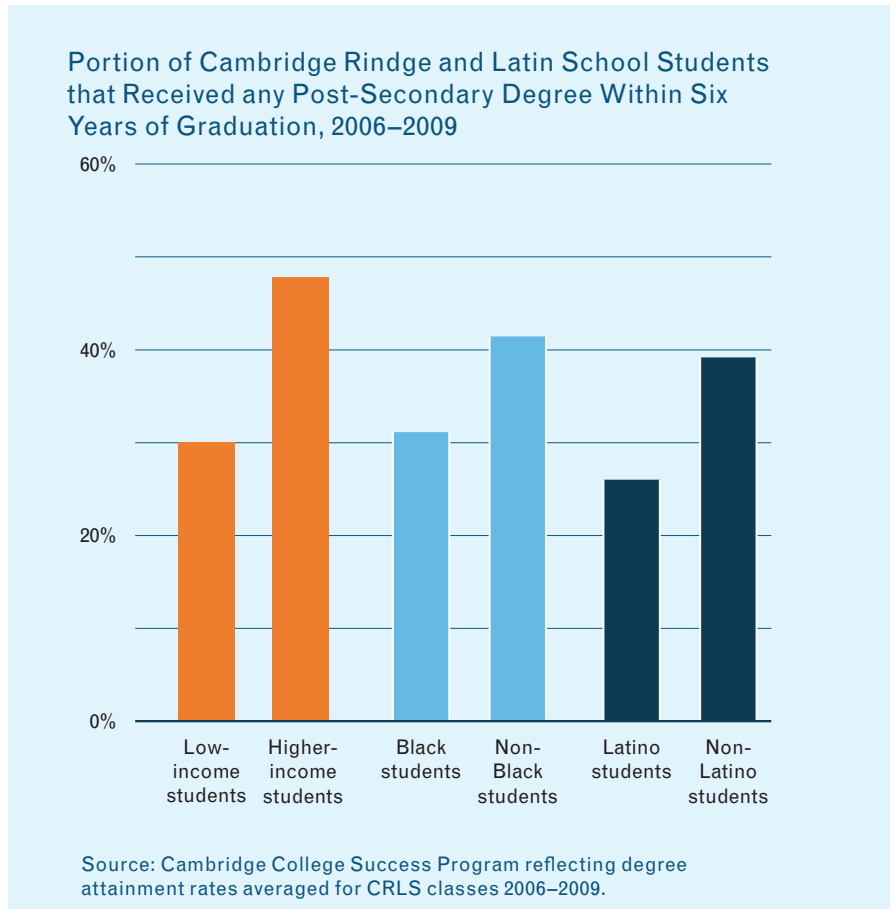
2030 Target

90% of full-time, year-round workers living in Cambridge meet or exceed the City's current full-time living wage standard

Source: American Community Survey, 2012–2016 5-year estimates

Postsecondary Degree Attainment by Public High School Graduates

This indicator tracks long-term educational attainment for young adults who graduated from Cambridge Rindge and Latin School (CRLS). Since educational attainment tends to be correlated with positive long-term employment and income outcomes, this is one of the best available measures to track long-term outcomes for children.



Indicator

Gap between low-income and higher-income public high school students in attaining any degree or certificate within six years of graduation

Gap between Black and non-Black public high school students in attaining any degree or certificate within six years of graduation

Gap between Latino and non-Latino public high school students in attaining any degree or certificate within six years of graduation

2015 Baseline

17% fewer low-income students earn a degree than higher-income students

10% fewer Black students earn a degree than non-Black students

13% fewer Latino students earn a degree than non-Latino students

2030 Target

Reduce the gap between low-income and higher-income students

Reduce the gap between Black and non-Black students

Reduce the gap between Latino and non-Latino students

Source: Cambridge College Success Program. Baseline data reflects the rates of degree attainment averaged for CRLS classes of 2006–2009

Disparities in Labor Force Participation

This indicator tracks progress towards reducing unequal access to economic opportunities between Cambridge residents at a finer grain than other indicators. The City has limited capability to directly impact change for these indicators, but they remain an important way to track the cumulative overall impact of Envision Cambridge.



Rush hour at Porter Square.

Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Labor force participation disparity for Black residents	80% of Black residents participate in the labor force relative to non-Latino White residents	90% of Black residents participate in the labor force relative to non-Latino White residents
Labor force participation disparity for Latino residents	80% of Latino residents participate in the labor force relative to non-Latino White residents	90% of Latino residents participate in the labor force relative to non-Latino White residents
Labor force participation disparity for women residents	94% of women participate in the labor force relative to men	100% of women participate in the labor force relative to men
Labor force participation disparity for residents with disabilities	63% of residents with disabilities participate in the labor force relative to residents without disabilities	75% of residents with disabilities participate in the labor force relative to residents without disabilities

Source: American Community Survey

Growth of Small Businesses

Small businesses create a sense of place unique to Cambridge and drive local and global economic development. This indicator tracks progress towards maintaining and growing the number of small businesses in Cambridge.

Indicator	2015 Baseline	2030 Target
Number of business establishments per 1000 residents with fewer than 20 employees	27 small businesses (1-19 employees) per 1,000 residents	30 small businesses per 1,000 residents
Number of small retail, food service, and accommodation establishments per 1000 residents with fewer than 50 employees	7.3 small retail, food service, and accommodation businesses (fewer than 50 employees) per 1,000 residents	9 small retail, food service, and accommodation businesses (fewer than 50 employees) per 1,000 residents

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and ZIP Code Business Patterns

Engagement with Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses (MWBEs)

As of 2012, Cambridge had an estimated 1,140 minority- and women-owned businesses

Equal access to entrepreneurial opportunities is crucial to closing the racial and gender wealth gaps. This indicator tracks how Cambridge businesses are directly taking advantage of available resources. It tracks progress towards racial/ethnic and gender economic equity.

Indicator	FY2017-2018 Baseline	2030 Target
Proportion of minority- and women-owned businesses participating in grants and consultation programs	8.7%	18%

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department; US Census Bureau Survey of Business Owners (2012). Note: Cambridge should look beyond the US Census Bureau for a more consistently updated measure of MWBEs in the city.



Housing Plan

Like many cities in the Boston region and around the country, Cambridge is experiencing a strong demand for housing. The resultant increases in housing costs place much of market-rate housing out of reach for low-, moderate-, and even middle-income households. The need for affordable housing, and more housing in general, was consistently raised as a high priority in the Envision Cambridge process. The city's strong job market and high quality of life have made demand for housing in Cambridge particularly high, driving up costs for renters and new homeowners alike. The City has many programs already in place to increase the stock of permanently affordable housing, but these programs face challenges as the real estate market becomes more competitive.

Coordinated Efforts

The City and its partners have been working to address the housing crisis for many years. The City provides significant funding to the Affordable Housing Trust to fund affordable housing development, especially initiatives sponsored by nonprofit housing providers. The City's Inclusionary Housing and Incentive Zoning policies have linked affordable housing to broader development and community planning processes. The City also offers several programs supporting homeownership, including education and funding assistance for first-time homebuyers, and funding for homeowners to complete needed home repairs and improvements. Housing is also recognized as a critical pillar of public health in the City's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

Housing

Context

Supportive Housing for All

Across all engagement activities, including public meetings, Street Team activities, and online surveys, housing emerged as the clear priority for Cantabrigians. Community members wanted housing to be affordable, safe, supportive of family life, and connected to opportunity and varied options to meet the diverse needs of the population. Housing was additionally cited as a critical factor in ensuring a diverse and equitable Cambridge for the future.

Housing Affordability

Today more than 45,000 households, including nearly 19,000 families, call Cambridge home. Unfortunately, rising

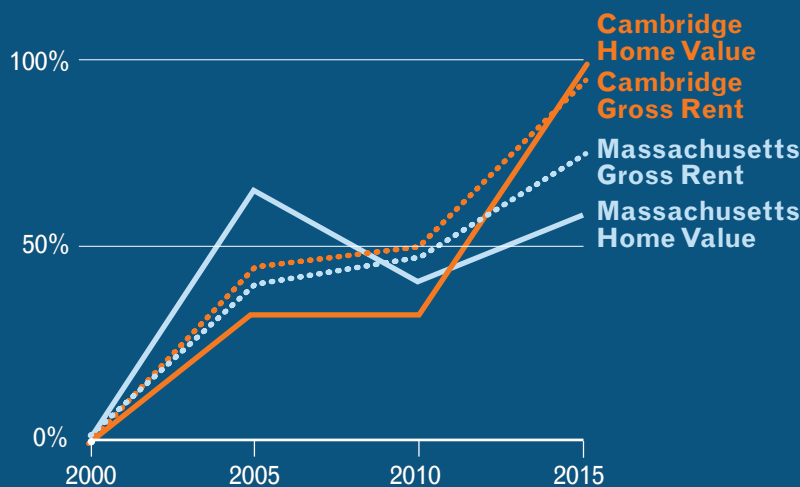
housing costs and a lack of affordable housing options make it increasingly difficult for many people to live here. Housing availability and affordability affect not only the residential makeup of Cambridge, but almost every facet of daily life.

Housing costs in Cambridge have increased dramatically since 2000, particularly since 2010. Both home values and rents nearly doubled between 2000 and 2015. While the median household income in Cambridge is roughly \$75,000, households must now earn approximately \$100,000 per year to afford rent for a 1-bedroom apartment, and approximately \$135,000 to afford rent for a 3-bedroom apartment. Required incomes are even

greater for those looking to own a home. Moderate-income households are becoming burdened by the cost of housing at the fastest rates.

Housing Stock and Distribution

More than 75% of Cambridge homes contain fewer than three bedrooms, and the portion of Cambridge homes that are studios is small but growing. The majority of residential buildings in Cambridge are small, containing between one and three units. However, a significant portion of the city's housing is found in large buildings of 50 or more units.



Percent Change in Median Rent and Home Value, 2000–2015 (Nominal figures indexed to 2000)

Source: US Census, 2000–2010; American Community Survey, 2005; American Community Survey, 2011–2015, 5-year estimates; Zillow Home Value Index, 2000–2015. Graph reflects figures from every five years.

“Housing is critical. I have lived here for 49 years because of affordable housing. Without this I would be unable to continue to live here. This needs to continue. Anybody should be able to live here.”

— Listening Workshop participant

For more data and context on housing in Cambridge, see pages 54–73 of *Cambridge Today*, the Envision Cambridge report on existing conditions.



Members of the public discussing action recommendations at a public meeting in July 2018.

Housing is distributed in neighborhoods across the city, though there are fewer units in the west side, where the majority of single-family homes are found. Transit-oriented and mixed-use development is increasingly common in certain areas, as residents desire access to amenities near their homes.

Many participants in focus groups, at public meetings, and at Envision Cambridge Street Team events said that family-sized housing units—those with three or more bedrooms—were needed in the city. Other participants felt there should be more studio and one-bedroom housing units, which could absorb demand from singles, who otherwise live as roommates and compete for family-sized housing.

Affordable Housing

Almost 15% of Cambridge's housing stock (more than 8,100 units) is held as affordable for households of given incomes. These units are “deed-

restricted,” meaning they must be rented or sold at affordable rates. The majority of those units are either owned by nonprofits or the Cambridge Housing Authority. Nonprofit housing is developed and managed by private organizations, but it is typically subsidized by the City, the Commonwealth, and the federal government. The City's Inclusionary Housing Program, which requires a portion of new large housing developments to be dedicated as affordable, provides a growing share of affordable units. In 2017, the City expanded that program, now requiring developers to set aside 20% of their development for new affordable housing.

Participants in Envision Cambridge working groups agreed with the need to build more affordable housing. They stated that, in addition to housing for low-income households, there must also be affordable housing options for people with middle incomes.

Housing Stability and Homelessness

Communities thrive when people can stay in their homes and neighborhoods without facing the prospect of eviction or homelessness. Persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness require varied and often multifaceted interventions to access and maintain stable housing. Examples of these interventions include short-term and time-limited supports such as eviction prevention, rapid rehousing and transitional housing, and long-term supports such as permanent supportive housing, which is subsidized housing paired with long-term stabilization services. The current supply of housing and capacity of supportive services dedicated to addressing housing instability in Cambridge are not adequate to significantly decrease the number of households entering and experiencing homelessness.

Vision

Residents of Cambridge live in safe, affordable, and life-enriching housing. People of all backgrounds choose to live here, and housing options are readily available to those at any socioeconomic level and life stage, meeting the diverse needs of all Cantabrigians. Furthermore, there is continuity in housing support for those in need. The City is actively involved in the provision of housing, and serves as a regional leader in advancing innovative and effective housing policies.

Goals

Affordable Housing: Maintain and expand long-term, deed-restricted affordable rental and homeownership opportunities to allow Cambridge to thrive as a mixed-income community.

Cambridge must act to ensure deed-restricted affordable housing is created to provide housing options for low-, moderate-, and middle-income households. These units should be available to renters and those wishing to buy.

Housing Diversity: Provide a variety of housing options for individuals and families of different socioeconomic levels, life stages, and physical needs.

Cambridge residents should be able to seamlessly transition between homes that are appropriate to their needs as their circumstances and preferences change.

Livable Communities: Support high-quality housing that is healthy, climate-resilient, and energy-efficient.

Housing in Cambridge should keep residents safe and complement a high-quality environment, without increasing costs for low-, moderate-, and middle-income households.

Housing Stability: Support the ability of Cambridge residents to remain in Cambridge. Maintain a range of housing options to enable households to transition to units best suited to meet their needs.

A diverse community has made Cambridge what it is today. In order to preserve its diversity, the City must help residents remain in Cambridge in the face of rising costs and demographic change.

Market Affordability: Support overall market affordability and lead the region in mitigating housing cost increases.

Only broad market affordability will maintain Cambridge as a community for everyone. Cambridge should lead the region to increase local and regional housing supply.

Opportunity Neighborhoods: Foster communities of opportunity by providing housing in diverse neighborhoods close to public transit, places of employment, and social services.

Cambridge must plan for housing not in isolation of other factors, but with access to opportunity and amenities in mind.

Connections to Our Core Values

Outlined here are key ways that the core values of the Cambridge community, identified through the Envision Cambridge process, are reflected in the Housing goals and recommendations. For more about the community’s vision and core values, see page 26.

Livability: We value a vibrant built and natural environment and support sustainable transportation with affordable and convenient access to daily needs and recreational resources.

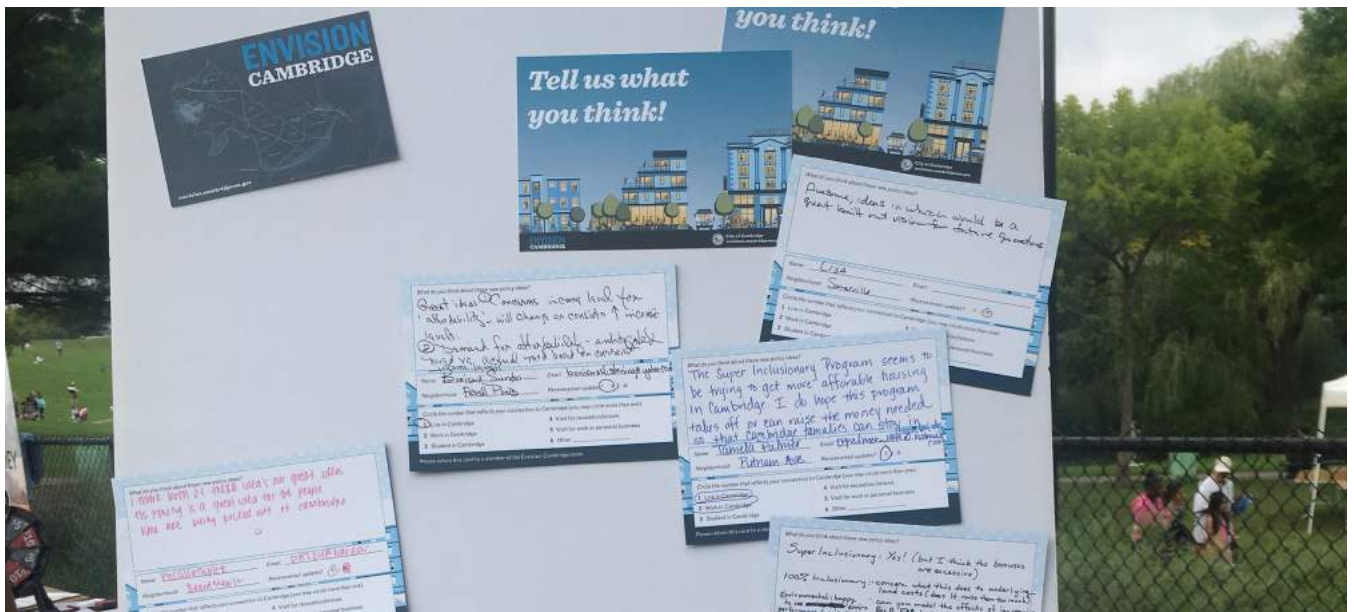
Safe, affordable, and life-enriching housing is an important part of a livable community. This section recommends encouraging housing in locations with access to mobility options, jobs, and amenities support the city’s livability and enhance everyday convenience.

Diversity and Equity: We are a welcoming community that celebrates our diversity and ensures access to affordable housing choices and opportunities to succeed.

Creating a variety of housing options to support the diversity of our community is a key goal of this section. We celebrate our status as a mixed-income community that is welcoming to all, and several recommendations focus on creating housing for households of different socioeconomic levels, family size, life stages, and physical needs.

Economic Opportunity: We provide opportunity and stability through access to quality jobs, workforce development and training, and livable wages that support economic security for residents.

Housing in Cambridge provides residents convenient access to public transit, places of employment, and social services, and recommendations to increase our housing supply further support economic opportunity in our community. Housing affordability and access to economic opportunity are mutually supportive in furthering economic security.



Responses to housing action ideas at Danehy Park Family Day, 2018.



Children weigh in at a Youth Visioning Event at Fresh Pond Apartments in 2017.

Sustainability and Resilience:

We take responsible action to reduce our impact on the environment and build a resilient city and strong community.

Recommendations in this section support housing stability and the ability of residents to remain in Cambridge even as housing needs change, which encourages community bonds and social resilience. Housing in Cambridge with convenient access to transit or sustainable modes of travel helps to reduce ecological impacts.

Community Health and Wellbeing:

We promote healthy and active lifestyles in supportive, safe community with diverse opportunities to connect with our neighbors and nature and to engage in civic life.

Ensuring a variety of housing options to meet the needs of people and families of varying sizes and through life stages provides greater opportunity for residents to stay in the city and cultivate stronger civic bonds. Housing that is affordable and meets the varying needs of residents in turn supports a sense of community and connections with neighbors.

Learning: We embrace lifelong learning and celebrate art and creativity in our culturally rich community.

Living in Cambridge offers residents access to an excellent school system and proximity to large academic institutions. Housing recommendations related to supporting a diversity of housing options would allow a wide range of residents access to workshops, classes, and other programs and lifelong learning. Recommendations in this section also speak to better connecting people with information and resources to support housing stability and homeownership, including workshops to help prospective homebuyers and homeownership education and counseling.

Strategies & Actions

1 Increase overall housing production.

The Boston metropolitan region faces a housing shortage, and particularly a shortage of homes with easy access to good jobs and high-quality amenities. Cambridge should take advantage of the booming housing market to increase housing production and fulfill part of that demand where new housing is appropriate. Cambridge cannot solve this problem alone, but it should lead the region in addressing market affordability through quality development that complements the existing urban fabric and developing neighborhoods.

Regional Housing Solutions
 The demand for housing production is ultimately regional, though it is particularly high in Cambridge. In addition to working to address this issue locally, Cambridge is part of the Metro Mayors Coalition, a group of regional municipal city leaders, who set a goal to produce 185,000 new housing units across fifteen towns and cities in the region by 2030.
 Learn more about regional approaches to the city's future on page 55.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Change zoning to enable more housing, including affordable housing, to be built along major corridors, squares, and in other areas that have the capacity to accommodate growth and are well served by transit (e.g., increase base zoning, allow multifamily residential development citywide, offer density bonuses for increased percentage of affordable housing units).	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Require the creation of significant new housing in areas that are being rezoned.	Zoning changes	Expanded	Ongoing

“I envision housing that is more plentiful and less expensive to buy as a result.”

—Cambridgeport resident via online survey

2 Encourage affordable housing production for low-, moderate-, and middle-income households through regulatory and zoning incentives.

Cambridge’s real estate market is extremely competitive. In this context, regulation can be an effective tool to produce more affordable housing, which here means homes with below-market rents or prices that are only available to households with certain incomes. Income ranges are determined by the Boston region’s “Area Median Income”

(AMI), which was approximately \$106,000 for a family of four in 2018. Low-income households earn less than 50% of AMI, moderate-income households earn 50%–80% of AMI, middle-income households earn 80%–100% of AMI, and high-income households earn more than 100% of AMI.

The City’s existing Inclusionary Housing Program is a testament to

the effectiveness of using regulation to produce housing under “hot” market conditions. The City should work to ensure that the program continues to provide affordable units, while simultaneously exploring other regulatory measures that give developers of fully affordable projects an advantage in the real estate market.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Offer density bonuses and relief from other dimensional regulations for fully affordable housing developments through a citywide affordable housing overlay or other regulatory mechanism.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Modify the development approval process for fully affordable housing projects to require design review instead of a discretionary approval.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term
Institute an incentive for owners of multifamily buildings who construct more affordable units than required by the Inclusionary Housing Program.	Zoning changes	Modified	Near term
Continually evaluate incentive and inclusionary zoning ordinances.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing

“We need more housing stock at diverse price points so that people who have lived in the city can continue to live in the city.”

—Central Square resident via online survey

Inclusionary Housing Program

The Inclusionary Housing Program (IHP), which was expanded in 2017, requires housing developers to set aside a portion of new development for affordable housing. In a competitive market like Cambridge, where affordable housing projects are more difficult to pursue, the IHP is a key mechanism to maintain the production of affordable

housing. However, this mechanism requires more market-rate housing development, a prospect that has faced resistance from some in Cambridge. Also, there is a gap between the income limit for housing assistance and the income needed to afford market-rate rents, posing a threat to middle-income residents and families in particular.



The nonprofit-developed Auburn Court housing community in Cambridgeport is a mixed-income development with low-, moderate-, and market-rate units.

3 Expand resources for affordable housing production and preservation.

Through the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust, the City of Cambridge directly funds the production and preservation of affordable housing, using both general and dedicated funding streams. The City should continue to increase funding for affordable housing by expanding existing funding mechanisms and creating new ones. Where possible, the City should expand direct, dedicated funding sources, including contributions of land.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Establish or expand the use of taxes that provide dedicated revenue for affordable housing, including a local real estate transfer tax (supplemental to state stamp tax), a speculative owner tax, and lodging tax on short-term rentals.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term
Study ways to provide incentives for landlords who provide affordable housing (i.e., tax incentives and assistance with capital improvements).	Study or plan	New	Near term
Prioritize City and other public property that is available for disposition to develop housing.	Capital investments	Modified	Ongoing
Increase existing City funds and explore options for new revenue sources and support for dedicated affordable housing.	Programs and operations	Modified	Ongoing
Continue ongoing monitoring of impacts of the Inclusionary Housing Program to ensure program is calibrated to maximize the production of inclusionary units.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing
Provide funding support (low-cost predevelopment, acquisition, construction, and permanent financing) to enable local housing development organizations to create new affordable housing units.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to support affordable housing projects in historically significant buildings through the Community Preservation Act-funded preservation grants program.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing



4 Maintain a range of housing options to enable households to transition to units best suited to them as their needs change.

For Cambridge to attract and retain its demographically diverse community, it needs a range of housing options. A variety of housing options allows all to find a place to call home and enables residents to transition along the “housing ladder.” Housing options should account for typical households in the housing market, new arrivals as well as long-term residents, and especially populations that are shut out of or at-risk in the current market, including those with special housing needs.

“I envision more robust affordable housing options, especially for families and seniors”

—Inman Square resident via online survey

Homeownership Assistance

In addition to programs for renters, Cambridge has many existing homeownership programs. The City offers affordable units for sale to low-, moderate-, and middle-income purchasers, as well as financial assistance in purchasing a home on the open market. These programs target family-sized units, and participants enter into an Affordable Housing Covenant with the City to ensure continued affordability. The City also offers homeownership education and counseling, pre-purchase counseling, and workshops to help new homebuyers. For residents already living in their home, the City offers access to funding for home repairs and improvements, residential property tax exemptions and targeted tax abatements, saving individual homeowners more than \$2,000 annually.



The City has facilitated the development and sale of hundreds of dedicated affordable homeownership units, including those at 821–825 Main Street (pictured).

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Change base zoning to require that developers of multifamily projects of at least 10 units provide a certain number of family-sized units (i.e., units with at least 3-bedrooms).	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Establish a set of family-oriented services and amenities to be encouraged in new development.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term
Engage housing and service providers to produce quality permanent supportive housing for homeless and other vulnerable populations.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Ongoing
Provide funding to income-eligible households to purchase their first home, in exchange for permanent affordability restrictions that keep the home attainable for income-eligible households in the future.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Provide free workshops, counseling, and advanced classes on the homebuying process for first-time homebuyers and homeowners.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Provide low-cost financing to homeowners to make needed home repairs and improvements.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
For all homeowners whose primary residence is in Cambridge, provide a residential tax exemption that removes a set value from the total assessed value of the property.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Offer property tax relief to specific groups authorized by state statute: elderly persons, blind persons, disabled veterans, surviving spouses or orphaned minor children, and persons suffering extreme hardship.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

5 Expand tools and resources to prevent displacement and housing insecurity, and address homelessness.

As housing becomes more and more expensive in Cambridge, residents are at increased risk of being displaced from their home, neighborhood, and the city itself. Not only is this trend detrimental for those individuals, but it harms the city overall, as it risks losing the diversity and vitality that makes Cambridge a desirable place to be. The actions below work to prevent displacement and mitigate the housing insecurity that leads to it.

“My priority is to eliminate homelessness.”

—Central Square resident

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Expand homelessness prevention services, including emergency resources and support, legal and mediation services, housing search assistance, foreclosure prevention counseling, and education on tenants’ rights.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Evaluate gaps in supportive housing services and assistance provided by the City, increase capacity and funds to address identified gaps, and increase awareness of available services.	Study or plan	Expanded	Ongoing
Support legislative and other efforts to improve protections for tenants at risk of displacement.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Ongoing
Ensure issues of fair housing are considered in housing program and policy decisions, and regularly assess housing patterns and practices for adverse impacts on protected classes.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing
Support rapid rehousing programming to quickly move persons experiencing homelessness into stable housing and support sustainable tenancies.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

6 Develop a broader coalition of public and private entities to support housing production, especially affordable housing, in Cambridge and the region.

Large academic institutions and other actors in the regional economy have a long-term interest in limiting rapid increases in housing costs and ensuring adequate affordable housing. However, their prioritization of non-housing uses may exacerbate the affordable housing crisis by increasing demand for housing. Cambridge should use its influence as a regulator and a center of economic activity to shepherd other entities toward affordability goals.



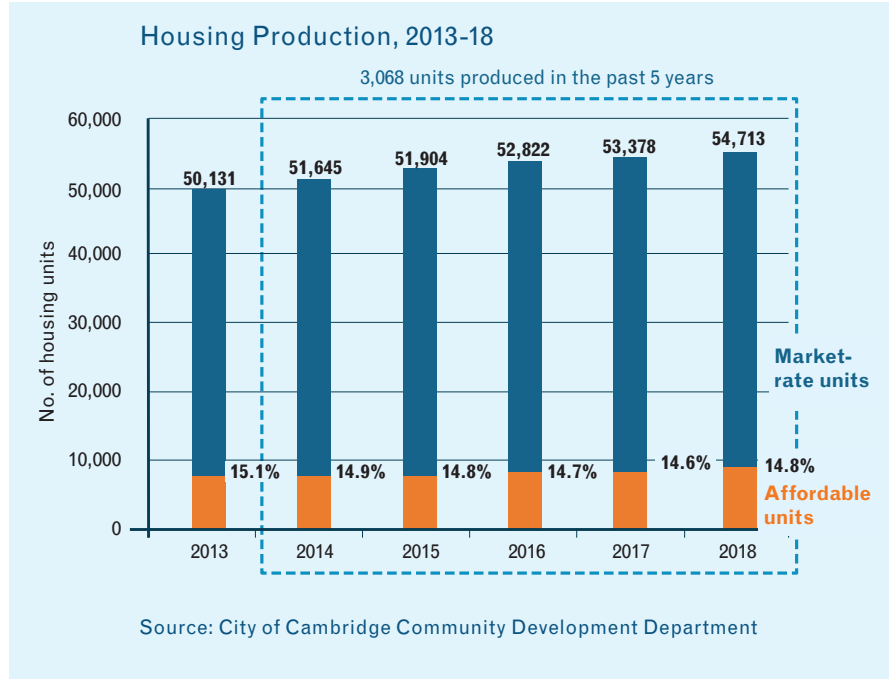
MIT has committed to building 950 additional graduate student beds, all of which will either be completed, under construction, or permitted by 2020. MIT's first project under this commitment (architectural rendering pictured) is under construction as of 2018.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Identify opportunities to require local academic institutions to use their assets—especially their land—to build more housing, explore new housing partnerships and models that can better serve university-affiliated populations and the community, and encourage universities to house more of their university-affiliated populations.	Zoning changes	Modified	Ongoing
Play an active role in regional and state advocacy efforts to facilitate increased affordable housing production, including the development of strategies for zoning reform.	Regional partnerships	Modified	Ongoing

Indicators and Targets

Total New Housing Units Produced

The community set a goal to increase housing supply in order to mitigate cost increases driven by demand. Though Cambridge cannot tackle the region’s under-supply of housing on its own, this indicator will track Cambridge’s contribution to the regional effort.



Indicator

Total housing units in Cambridge

2018 Baseline

54,713

2030 Target

+12,500

net new housing units

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

Dedicated Affordable Housing Production

The development of dedicated affordable housing (homes that are subject to rent or sales price limits and occupant income restrictions) measures the City’s progress in ensuring the long-term availability of homes for the city’s diverse population.

Indicator	2017 Baseline	2030 Target
Share of new housing produced in Cambridge that is dedicated as affordable	12.5% share of new housing production that is dedicated as affordable, 2014–2018	25% share of housing production that is dedicated as affordable, 2019–2030
Number of new affordable housing units	8,117 total dedicated affordable housing units	+3,175 minimum net new affordable housing units

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

Total Investments in Affordable Housing Production and Preservation

As costs continue to rise and funding for housing from federal and other sources becomes increasingly constrained, Cambridge must increase its support for affordable housing. This indicator tracks the City’s financial commitment to preserving and growing its affordable housing stock.

Indicator	FY2019 Baseline	FY2020–FY2030 Target
Annual investments in affordable housing initiatives from City sources	\$13m annual funding for affordable housing	\$20m minimum annual funding for affordable housing

Source: Annual City Budget and CDBG, HOME, and ESG Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report



Households with Children Under 18 Years

Families are an integral part of the Cambridge community, yet their housing needs are not always adequately met by the housing market. This indicator will track overall success in retaining families in the city and allowing new families to live here.

Indicator

Percentage of Cambridge households with children under the age of 18

2016 Baseline

17.7%

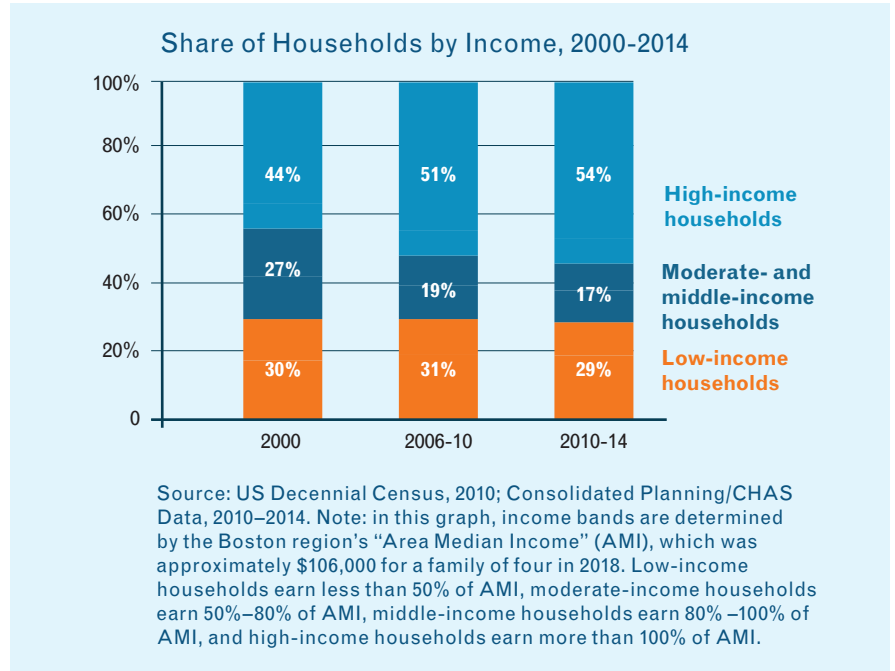
Source: American Community Survey, 2012–2016 5-year estimates

2030 Target

20%

Share of Low- to Middle-Income Households

Cambridge has historically been a mixed-income city, but today that diversity is increasingly threatened. This indicator tracks success in maintaining Cambridge as a place for everyone, regardless of economic background or circumstance.



Indicator

Share of households earning less than 50% of Area Median Income

Share of households earning 50%–100% of Area Median Income

2016 Baseline

29%

17%

2030 Target

30%

20%

Source: Consolidated Planning/CHAS Data

MARKET

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Money Order

← ONE WAY

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HAITIAN PRODUCTS JAMAICAN PRODUCTS

FRESH VEGETABLES

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30 MINUTE PARKING



Mobility Plan

Universal access to safe, reliable, efficient, and sustainable transportation is key to building an inclusive economy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving public health, and creating a high quality of life for all people in Cambridge. The City's mobility policies have restrained the growth of automobile traffic, despite significant population growth locally and regionally. Yet the city's transportation systems will need to adapt over time as the region grows, technology advances, and the economy changes. Cambridge should address these challenges by enhancing its multimodal network locally, expanding connections to regional sustainable transportation, and advocating for progressive transportation policies across the region.

Coordinated Efforts

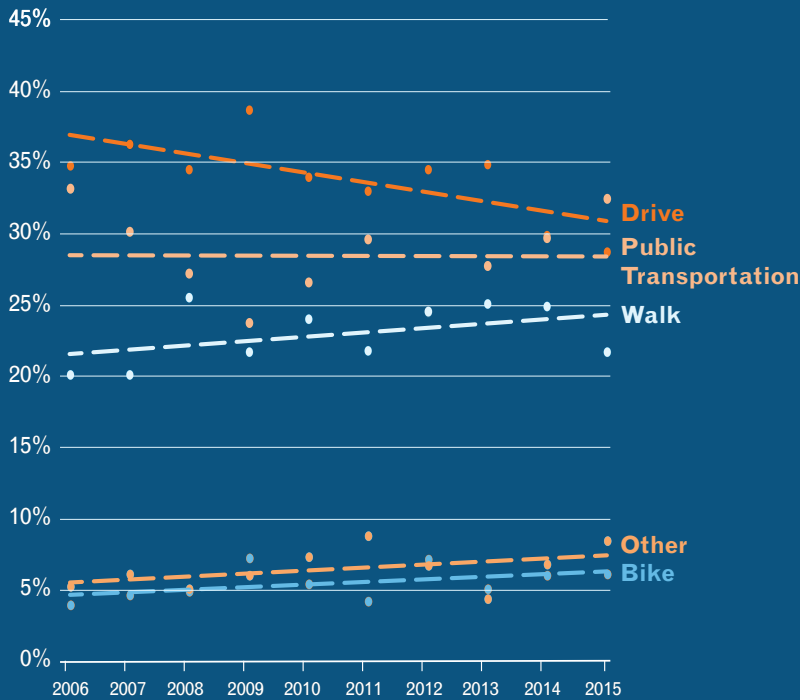
The City of Cambridge has multiple plans and projects to improve mobility across the city and region, including the 2015 Bicycle Plan, 2015 Transit Strategic Plan, the Pedestrian Plan, and the annually updated Five-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan, as well as targeted efforts such as the Grand Junction Greenway and Watertown-Cambridge Greenway. These plans align with City's Vision Zero Action Plan, which is a blueprint for eliminating fatalities and serious injuries resulting from transportation. Implementing these plans involves collaboration between City departments, including Community Development; Traffic, Parking, and Transportation; and Public Works. The City also works closely with MassDOT, MBTA, and DCR on regional projects including the Green Line Extension and Allston I-90 Interchange Reconstruction, in order to secure the most progressive outcomes that align with Cambridge's mobility goals.

Mobility

Context

Cambridge Residents' Mode Choice for Commuting, 2006–2015

Source: American Community Survey, 2006–2015 1-year estimates. "Drive" includes people driving alone and with others, but excludes those taking taxis. "Other" includes taxis, motorcycles, or mode choices not otherwise listed.



Sustainable Transportation

Cambridge's residents commute by walking, bicycling, and transit at uncommonly high rates for the region: 30% choose to walk or cycle and 27% commute by transit. Similarly, the majority of shoppers use sustainable transportation modes to get to all of Cambridge's commercial districts, with the exception of Alewife. Despite significant local and regional population growth, automobile traffic volumes have remained stable over time, and the share of Cambridge residents commuting by car has trended down. Nonetheless, some areas of Cambridge still face very high levels of traffic congestion, much of which is unrelated to homes or jobs in Cambridge.

A majority of Envision Cambridge survey respondents mentioned walking, cycling, and transit as important features of their vision for the future of mobility. Many expressed a desire to reduce traffic, though different groups proposed markedly different solutions. A majority of participants across engagement events and in surveys felt expansion of sustainable transportation to be the best way to reduce automobile traffic, though a portion of people felt that sustainable infrastructure investments like bike lanes exacerbate traffic congestion.

"I support 'livable streets' and want Cambridge to rethink all public roads to incentivize green transportation with protected lanes for walkers and cyclists, prioritizing bus and bike traffic at lights, and slowing down all motorized traffic."

— North Cambridge resident via online survey

For more context and data on mobility in Cambridge, see pages 94–113 of *Cambridge Today*, the Envision Cambridge report on existing conditions.



A young community member at Danehy Park Family Day 2017 designs his ideal right-of-way using the Envision Cambridge Streets activity.

“I want transportation to be safe for walking and biking, with strong public transit options that are clean, reliable, affordable.”

— Cambridgeport resident via online survey

Transportation Safety

Approximately 1,500 crashes were reported in Cambridge in 2017, of which 17% resulted in an injury of some kind. Most crashes exclusively involve people driving automobiles. While the overall number of reported crashes involving people riding bicycles has increased since the mid-2000s, the rate of bicycle crashes has decreased as the total number of bicycle trips has grown. Even one crash resulting in a serious injury or death is too many, and Cambridge has adopted a Vision Zero Action Plan, with the goal of eliminating these serious crashes entirely.

Many respondents to Envision

Cambridge surveys stressed the importance of safe mobility options for all users, regardless of mode choice, age, or physical ability. Some respondents framed clear separation of transportation modes in streets and sidewalks as a solution. Safety was a particular concern for focus group participants discussing conditions in Alewife. They pointed to heavy traffic and a lack of connectivity as problems, especially for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

The Future of Mobility

The mobility landscape is changing in Cambridge. Nearly

6.8 million ride hailing trips originated in Cambridge in 2017. More people are choosing personal mobility devices like scooters and one-wheelers, as well. Autonomous vehicles are on the horizon, though it is unclear how soon they will be adopted on a mass scale. Meanwhile, destinations are changing with the growth of new regional job centers like Assembly Square that do not have robust transit connections to Cambridge. As the nature of mobility changes in the region, Cambridge will need to ensure systems can adapt to maintain access for all.

Vision

Everyone who lives, works, studies, or plays in Cambridge has a variety of mobility choices that are safe, affordable, convenient, sustainable, and resilient. Transportation in the city is not just about moving between locations efficiently. It is also about creating access to opportunity and spaces for community in the process. Cambridge transportation initiatives reflect innovation and promote equity, and the City remains a national leader in progressive transportation policy.

Goals

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

Everyone should have a robust set of mobility choices to meet their needs. These choices should be equitably distributed across Cambridge and should adhere to universal design principles.

Reliability and Efficiency: Ensure people and goods can reliably move within Cambridge and around the region, and encourage space-efficient transportation choices like walking, biking, transit, and carpooling.

Cambridge's transportation system should ensure all trips occur with minimal delay, and all people should be able to choose the most space- and time-efficient mode that suits their needs.

Safe and Active Transportation: Eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries while encouraging active living and improving comfort for people of all ages and abilities.

Cambridge's streets should be safe for all users, enabling more people to choose active mobility options such as walking, cycling, transit, and micromobility devices like scooters, which is key to improving public health.

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

Moving within and through Cambridge should be easy and enjoyable for all, with street designs and wayfinding that help people choose the most safe, effective, and pleasant route.

Community Character and Vitality: Ensure that the city's transportation system supports shared community spaces and enhances neighborhood streets.

Mobility in Cambridge should add to the character of the city's unique places. Streets, which make up the majority of city-owned land, should also be spaces for social connection.

Climate Mitigation and Resilience: Achieve a carbon-neutral transportation system and adapt to climate change.

Cambridge should create a resilient, carbon-free mobility system by increasing walking, biking, and transit use, shifting to renewable energy, and preparing for flooding and extreme heat.

Connections to Our Core Values

Outlined here are key ways that the core values of the Cambridge community, identified through the Envision Cambridge process, are reflected in the Mobility goals and recommendations. For more about the community's vision and core values, see page 26.

Livability: We value a vibrant built and natural environment and support sustainable transportation with affordable and convenient access to daily needs and recreational resources.

The way we move through the city plays a large part in our everyday experience the city. This section focuses on mobility options that are safe, sustainable, reliable, efficient, friendly to use, and that provide convenient access to our everyday needs as well as to recreational

resources. Our walkable, bikeable city provides opportunities for social connections and supports shared community spaces and enhanced street life.

Diversity and Equity: We are a welcoming community that celebrates our diversity and ensures access to affordable housing choices and opportunities to succeed.

Everybody should have access to a robust set of mobility choices that are equitably distributed around Cambridge. Recommendations in this section focus on ensuring a range of travel options that meet the access and mobility needs of people of all ages, abilities, and incomes to support access to economic opportunity as well as participation in civic life for all members of our community.

Economic Opportunity: We provide opportunity and stability through access to quality jobs, workforce development and training, and livable wages that support economic security for residents.

The ability to move about the city should not be a barrier to economic opportunity or security. Recommendations in this section emphasize affordable, convenient, and reliable ways to move around the city and support access to quality jobs, training and education, and other resources.



Small-group discussion at a public workshop in 2016.



Mobile engagement station responses during StoryWalk Cambridge at Newtowne Court in 2017.

Sustainability and Resilience:

We take responsible action to reduce our impact on the environment and build a resilient city and strong community.

This section recommends strategies and actions that encourage a greater share of our transportation to be through active and sustainable modes, an important part of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing walking, biking, micromobility, and transit use, shifting vehicles to renewable energy, and preparing for the flooding and extreme heat support a more resilient mobility system.

Community Health and Wellbeing:

We promote healthy and active lifestyles in supportive, safe community with diverse opportunities to connect with our neighbors and nature and to engage in civic life.

Sustainable modes like walking and biking are not just about meeting everyday needs or getting from one place to another as quickly as possible, but these mobility choices support a healthy lifestyle and improved public health. Public rights-of-way can be more than spaces for movement, but also spaces that can foster social connection and create community.

Learning: We embrace lifelong learning and celebrate art and creativity in our culturally rich community.

Access to a variety of ways to move around the city facilitates participation in civic life. Strategies and actions recommended in this section include continuing to improve public information, outreach, and educational resources about ways to move sustainably, efficiently, and safely within and through Cambridge.

Strategies & Actions

1 Expand access to sustainable transportation choices and the physical reach of sustainable transportation infrastructure.

Access to sustainable mobility options is uneven across Cambridge and beyond the city’s borders. These disparities cause unnecessary traffic congestion, limit economic opportunity, and create artificial

social barriers. Expanding infrastructure for walking, cycling, and public transit into underserved areas will improve mobility for all street users.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Install co-located car-share and bike-share at transit nodes in areas that are currently underserved to help reduce automobile traffic.	Capital investment	New	Ongoing
Undertake a detailed feasibility analysis of the bicycle network vision presented in the Bicycle Plan.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Build a pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connection across the railroad tracks connecting the Alewife Quadrangle to the Triangle.	Capital investment	New	Medium term
Develop an implementation plan and increase funding to complete gaps in the updated Bicycle Network Plan to create a completely connected network of high-quality infrastructure citywide.	Capital investment	New	Long term
Increase funding to improve multimodal access to key public facilities such as schools, parks, community centers, recreation centers, retail areas and libraries by adding crosswalks, bus shelters, protected bike lanes, bike parking, etc.	Capital investment	Expanded	Ongoing
Develop a program framework for shared micromobility services, including a scooter-share system.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Encourage and incentivize the use of sustainable transportation by City employees through increased transportation benefits and programming.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing

1 Expand access to sustainable transportation choices and the physical reach of sustainable transportation infrastructure. (Continued)

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Collaborate with the MBTA on bus service planning to support bus priority initiatives—particularly in underserved areas—and advocate for additional service.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Medium term
Update the Citywide Pedestrian Plan.	Study or plan	Modified	Near term
Undertake a community engagement process to prioritize the implementation of separated bicycle projects and bus priority treatments on key street segments.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Near term
Use quick-build infrastructure to complete a network of separated bicycle facilities while long-term implementation of the Bicycle Network Plan is proceeding.	Capital investment	Existing	Medium term
Promote a shift to electric/clean emissions vehicles, including electric buses.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Integrate planning efforts for walking, cycling, public transit, and other mobility services to ensure the highest degree of flexibility in mobility choices with minimal disruptions to connectivity between them.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to provide reduced-priced bike share memberships to income-eligible people.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Improve the health and wellbeing of Cambridge residents by prioritizing programs and projects that encourage active transportation, as outlined in the Community Health Improvement Plan and the Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance.	Capital investment	Existing	Ongoing
Supplement the public transportation network by owning, operating and expanding the regional bike-share system with Boston, Somerville, and Brookline.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Ensure that streets reconstructed through the Five-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan, the Sewer Separation and Stormwater Programs, and development mitigation include sidewalks and bicycle facilities that adhere to the Complete Streets approach to design streets for all users.	Capital investment	Existing	Ongoing
Provide affordable transit access for low-income young people by offering the MBTA Youth Pass Program.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Advocate for high-quality greenway links that complete gaps in the regional shared-use path network to alleviate cut-through traffic in Cambridge.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Long term



Grand Junction Park in Kendall Square is the first constructed portion of the Grand Junction Greenway.

2 Enhance existing sustainable transportation infrastructure to be more convenient, reliable, and resilient.

While Cambridge’s infrastructure for walking, cycling, and transit is already well-developed compared to most US cities, infrastructure should be improved to make a more convenient and reliable mobility system for all users, including those using emerging mobility choices. This infrastructure also must be able to withstand the impacts of climate change.

“We need great public transportation options that are easy to access, cheap, and convenient in terms of stops and timing, with better public transport for people from elsewhere, so fewer cars are coming in town.”

—Huron Village resident

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Prepare transportation infrastructure to be resilient to periodic flooding, possible salt water contamination, and high temperatures associated with climate change by relocating mechanical and electrical equipment and introducing more passive cooling features.	Capital investment	New	Ongoing
Advocate for the MBTA to conduct a vulnerability assessment and preparedness planning of all transit facilities in Cambridge, primarily the Red Line.	Regional partnerships	New	Ongoing
Finalize a Transit Strategic Implementation Plan to create a high-quality transit experience in the city.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Develop a policy to allocate space within public rights-of-way to balance cars with sustainable modes of transportation.	Study or plan	New	Medium term
Collaborate with the MBTA to effectively implement next-generation Automatic Fare Collection, which will enable off-board fare payment and all-door boarding on all transit lines, reducing delays.	Regional partnerships	New	Medium term
Collaborate with the MBTA to review and modify bus layover locations to find increased efficiencies.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Ongoing

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Attract more people to walk, especially in high pedestrian traffic locations, through interventions such as: (a) adjusting signal timing to prioritize pedestrians; (b) installing raised crosswalks; (c) widening sidewalks and/or adding curb extensions; (d) converting underutilized vehicle space into pedestrian plazas and/or shared streets; (e) advocating to DCR for improvements along DCR-owned lands; and (f) developing guidelines for sidewalk widths for a range of sidewalk use types and volumes.	Capital investment	Existing	Ongoing
Increase bike parking in neighborhoods and at transit nodes.	Capital investment	Existing	Ongoing
Improve conditions for people biking in Cambridge and promote bicycling as a means of transportation through the Bicycle Program (e.g., Bicycle Committee, Bicycle Parking Program, bike workshops, and the implementation of the Cambridge Bicycle Plan).	Capital investment	Existing	Ongoing
Implement amenities as defined in the Bus Stop Improvement Program (including real-time information) as well as the Bus Shelter program to improve the experience of people using transit.	Capital investment	Existing	Ongoing

Mount Auburn Street Bus Priority



In Fall 2018, the City of Cambridge and its project partners (Watertown, MBTA, and DCR) launched the Mount Auburn Street bus priority project to bring more efficient and reliable bus service to 12,000+ daily trips on MBTA routes 71 & 73. The City also expects shuttle riders and bicyclists to benefit. The pilot features:

- Dedicated, all-day bus & bike lanes
- “Queue jumps” at intersections giving priority to buses and shuttles
- Retimed traffic signals and transit signal priority

3 Enhance and expand safety infrastructure for all street users.

Safety of all street and transit users is the most important factor in developing Cambridge’s mobility system. The City has already committed to Vision Zero, the goal to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries. Cambridge should focus on these efforts to create a mobility system that is both safe and comfortable for all users.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Increase funding to improve intersection safety in locations with high rates of crashes.	Capital investment	New	Medium term
Develop a “walking school bus” program by hiring local residents to lead groups of children walking to school.	Programs and operations	New	Medium term
Commit funds to improve pedestrian comfort and safety on key streets and paths that connect the open space network, and keep them well maintained with periodic renovations.	Capital investment	Expanded	Ongoing
Expand the Safe Routes to School program to ensure all students receive pedestrian, transit, and bicycle education and are encouraged to use active transportation to commute to school.	Capital investment	Expanded	Medium term
Continue and enhance the pedestrian program to promote a more comfortable, safe, and pleasant environment for walking in Cambridge through public education and engagement, traffic law enforcement, and monitoring implementation of pedestrian improvements.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Carry out the Vision Zero Action Plan to meet the goal of zero fatalities and severe injuries.	Capital investment	Existing	Ongoing
Design streets using physical measures to encourage people to drive more slowly, to provide a more livable environment and allow people to walk and bicycle more comfortably and safely.	Capital investment	Existing	Ongoing
Prioritize the safety and availability of mobility services for Cambridge seniors and residents with disabilities through door-to-door transportation programs.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Develop a comprehensive database of mobility-related deaths and serious injuries to guide safety improvements.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

4 Adjust regulatory incentives and pricing of public assets like space for parking to limit unnecessary car trips and parking and to allocate public space effectively.

Incentives and pricing are two of the strongest tools the City has to influence how people use public assets, such as space on the street. Cambridge should encourage sustainable transportation choices and limit unnecessary use of the transportation system with these regulatory tools.

Parking and Transportation Demand Management
 Cambridge's Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) ordinance ensures that large property owners who increase parking will limit the percent of drive-alone trips to their properties, for example by offering discounted transit passes.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Implement demand-based pricing for all parking meters owned by the City of Cambridge to reduce the amount of driving spent looking for empty spaces and to improve parking availability for those driving while incentivizing the use of other modes.	Other regulatory changes	New	Medium term
Create an impact fee on new development proportional to a project's trip generation to support multimodal infrastructure and safety improvements.	Other regulatory changes	New	Medium term
Evaluate Residential Parking Permit pricing structure with the goal of supporting sustainable transportation	Study or plan	New	Medium term

“I envision transportation will be priced, automated, seamless, customer-friendly, and focused.”

—Visitor to Russell Field

5 Adjust land use policy to support sustainable transportation choices.

Transportation choices are shaped by not only transportation infrastructure but also the types and density of uses that the infrastructure connects. For a transportation system to be most effective, land use policy should be coordinated to concentrate density near transit hubs, disincentivize driving when other choices are available, and co-locate uses like housing, neighborhood retail, and open space to incentivize walking.

See the chapter “Urban Form” on page 181 for relevant land use goals, strategies, and actions.

Urban Design for Sustainable Mobility
 Cambridge’s citywide urban design objectives, which are codified in the City’s Zoning Ordinance, explicitly encourage new developments that are pedestrian-, bike-, and transit-friendly.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Change zoning to reduce maximum parking requirements near transit nodes and in key squares and corridors, with lowered parking requirements citywide, while balancing impacts of parking spillover on residential streets.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Revise traffic impact study guidelines and process.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Require development projects to minimize adverse traffic impacts by complying with Article 19 of the Zoning Ordinance, which establishes traffic and urban design standards and requires transportation demand management measures and mitigation measures.	Zoning changes	Existing	Ongoing

“I envision we will maintain community-oriented, walkable design.”

—North Cambridge resident via online survey

6 Better manage freight movement to limit freight-related congestion and improve efficiency and safety.



Large trucks transport goods on mixed-use streets, such as Cambridge Street (pictured).

Freight transportation is an often overlooked issue, but goods movement is a key component of the mobility ecosystem. While the movement of goods is critical to a functional economy, trucking (especially by large trucks) is especially disruptive to quality of life in Cambridge and the movement of automobiles and bicycles. Deliveries are of particular concern, as they are growing in number with the rise of online shopping, and they generate more stops than traditional freight movement.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Study peak period pricing in loading zones to ensure that trucks find curb space without double parking.	Study or plan	New	Medium term
Advocate at the state level for improved regulation of truck safety.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Ongoing
Advocate at the state level for policies that encourage use of smaller trucks for local deliveries.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Ongoing
Require vehicles owned by the City and companies contracted with the City to have truck sideguards and other vehicle safety devices that reduce the likelihood of pedestrian and cyclist fatalities.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term
Create incentives and new loading zones that encourage large trucks to deliver off-peak.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Medium term
Analyze consolidated neighborhood delivery pick-up spots which can minimize excessive door-to-door deliveries and offer reduced shipping costs.	Study or plan	Expanded	Medium term
Increase enforcement of truck violations.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Medium term

7 Enhance public information on how to safely and efficiently move within and through Cambridge, and expand public education efforts on transportation safety.

A transportation system can be very efficient, but if people do not believe it serves their needs, know how to navigate the system, or use it reliably and safely, that efficiency is wasted. Modern communications

tools and an expanded education program will improve mobility, especially when grouped with improvements to physical infrastructure.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Investigate working with nearby driver’s education programs to enhance curricula and offer mobility education workshops.	Study or plan	New	Medium term
Expand and increase funding for marketing of sustainable transportation modes within the city, in order to encourage broader participation, with a focus on better translation and interpretation services.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Display real-time information at City buildings, in locations near mobility services, at bus stops, and on City websites to expand the availability, accessibility, and visibility of transit, bike share, and car share services.	Capital investment	Expanded	Ongoing
Expand citywide pedestrian and bike wayfinding between key destinations, such as transit hubs, bike-share locations, and community resources like libraries, retail areas, and parks.	Capital investment	Expanded	Medium term
Continue outreach and education programs and events (e.g. CitySmart, Park(ing) Day, Cambridge Street Code, Getting Around Cambridge map and magazine, and Walk/Ride Day) to connect residents with information and resources to encourage the use of sustainable transportation.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

8 Establish new regulatory frameworks to prepare for technology-driven disruptions in mobility systems.

Autonomous Vehicles

In April 2018, the Cambridge City Council voted to allow testing of autonomous vehicles on city streets, as long as those vehicles have appropriate safety oversight, obey posted speed limits, and submit all data to the City of Cambridge.

Technology is changing the way people and goods move through the city, and more change is likely to come soon. Regulations and physical infrastructure will both need to adapt to this shifting context to ensure our transportation system is focused on people’s safety, convenience, sustainability, and efficiency of movement.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Prepare for the introduction of autonomous vehicles and motorized micromobility devices by developing policies that address equity and safety, and ensure that vehicles are both shared and electric.	Other regulatory changes	Modified	Ongoing
Create policies for flexible curb regulations using new sign designs, pricing, and electronics within business districts at times of increased demand. These regulations should better accommodate loading, bike and scooter parking, transit lanes, and shared-ride or autonomous vehicle loading.	Other regulatory changes	Modified	Medium term
Develop and implement a ride-hail curb use management policy to ensure the safety of other road users.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing

“I envision transportation will be more autonomous and seamless.”

—Visitor to Alewife

9 Advocate for the expansion of sustainable transportation infrastructure across the region, especially where it will directly impact traffic in Cambridge.

Many of Cambridge's mobility challenges are rooted in regional gaps in the multimodal transportation system, resulting from decades of underinvestment in non-automobile infrastructure.

Cambridge cannot rebalance regional mobility infrastructure alone, and it should work with other communities and state agencies to advance its policy goals.



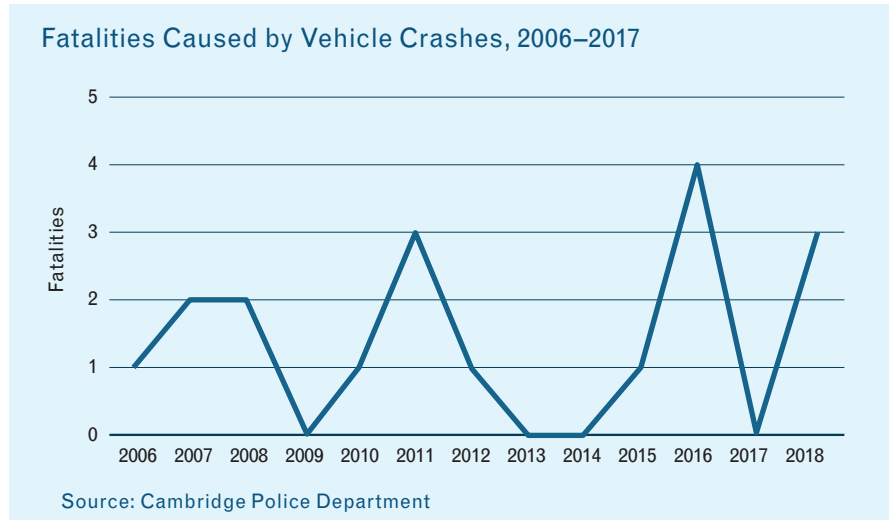
An MBTA Commuter Rail Fitchburg train entering Porter Square Station.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Work with regional partners to study a Charles River ferry or water taxi service.	Study or plan	New	Long term
Advocate for new funding sources for the MBTA and/or regional transit improvements.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Ongoing
Partner with surrounding communities to create multi-jurisdictional bus rapid transit and bus priority routes. For example, collaborate with MassDOT and Boston on Route 1 improvements, with Watertown on Route 71 and Route 73 improvements, with Arlington on Route 77 improvements, and with MassDOT and the MBTA on bus priority for all routes entering and exiting Alewife Station.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Near term
Work with MassDOT to advocate for urban rail on the Fitchburg Line and along the Grand Junction Railroad.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Medium term
Create a conceptual design and continue to explore demand for two-track rail service (in conjunction with a bike/pedestrian path) on the Grand Junction rail corridor between a future West Station and North Station.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing
To reduce cut-through traffic, promote state transportation infrastructure improvements, such as the bus/bike/pedestrian only Inner Belt Bridge, to enable reliable cross-town bus service between Sullivan Square, Kendall Square, and the Longwood Medical Area.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Ongoing
Advocate for regional solutions, including coordination between municipalities, employers, and other stakeholders, to move commuters from cars to transit.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Ongoing
Advocate for transit expansions, including extending the Green Line from Union to Porter, introducing light rail service along the Grand Junction between West Station and North Station, providing new Sullivan-Kendall-Kenmore-LMA bus service on the proposed CT4 alignment, constructing the Red-Blue connector, and introducing urban rail service on the Fitchburg Line.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Ongoing
Encourage property owners and employers to promote the use of mass transit, bicycling, walking, and carpooling to reduce vehicle traffic congestion and air pollution.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

Indicators and Targets

Progress Toward Vision Zero

The City of Cambridge’s Vision Zero policy sets a goal to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries, while encouraging active living and improving comfort for pedestrians and cyclists. This indicator tracks Cambridge’s ongoing progress toward this goal.



Indicator

Number of fatalities caused by vehicle crashes

Number of serious injuries caused by vehicle crashes

Baseline

Significant variability from year to year, ranging from zero to four fatalities since 2006. See above chart for more information.

A data source is currently being investigated by the Vision Zero team.

2030 Target

0 fatalities each year

0 serious injuries each year

Source: Cambridge Police and research via Vision Zero

How Residents and Employees Commute to Work

The US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey reports mode share for residents and employees annually. Tracking this data will illustrate success in reducing automobile dependence for both residents and employees.



Pedestrians, cyclists, automobiles, and the private Longwood Medical Area (LMA) Shuttle sharing the street along Main Street.

Indicator	2016 Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of people who work in Cambridge that drive alone to work	42%	32%
Percent of people who live in Cambridge that drive alone to work	26%	21%

Source: American Community Survey, 3-year averages

Walking and Bicycling Infrastructure

Modal access indicators measure progress towards improving important multi-modal infrastructure and expanding access for all to a variety of mobility modes.

Indicator:	Baseline	2030 Target
Bicycle infrastructure comfort level	<p>63% of street segments in the Bicycle Network Plan meet the City's standard for bicycle comfort level in 2018</p>	<p>90% of street segments in the Bicycle Network Plan meet the City's standard for bicycle comfort level</p>
Intersection comfort level for pedestrians	<p><i>This measure has not been developed and data has not been collected. The Community Development Department will develop this indicator, contingent on the approval of funding.</i></p>	<p><i>A target for this indicator will be set upon development of the indicator and collection of baseline data.</i></p>

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

Modes of Transport for all Trip Types by Neighborhood

Current data on mode share comes from the US Census, which asks about travel to work. To fully understand travel choices for Cambridge residents, it is important to understand the mode share of *all* trip types.

Indicator	Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of trips made by single-occupancy vehicles (all trip types)	<p><i>This data has not yet been collected. The Cambridge Community Development Department will administer a new survey to collect this information.</i></p>	<p><i>A target for this indicator will be set upon collection of baseline data.</i></p>

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

Access to Transportation Modes

Measuring the number of transportation options that the average Cantabrigian has available is an indicator of overall freedom of movement.

One measure is the average number of high-quality transportation options available to Cambridge residents and workers, measured by whether their home or work is within:

- a quarter-mile to a bike-share dock
- a quarter-mile to a bicycle facility with a bicycle level of comfort of 1 or 2 (as defined by CDD)
- 150 feet to a pedestrian crossing
- a half-mile to an MBTA rapid transit station or a bus stop with a scheduled peak-hour frequency of 10 minutes or less (six buses per hour from 7am to 9am and 4pm to 6:30pm)

Related measures show how near people live to the bus or subway.



A bike-share dock in Harvard Square.

Indicator

Average number of mobility options available to residents of Cambridge

Average number of mobility options available to people working in Cambridge

Residents with access to an MBTA subway line

Residents with access to an MBTA high-frequency bus

Baseline

This data is currently being collected.

This data is currently being collected.

48% residents live within 0.5 miles of an MBTA subway station

39% residents live within 0.25 miles of a high frequency bus line

2030 Target

This target will be set once the initial data is analyzed.

This target will be set once the initial data is analyzed.

68% residents live within 0.5 miles of an MBTA subway station

59% residents live within 0.25 miles of a high frequency bus line

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, Bluebikes, Cambridge Bicycle Infrastructure Data, MBTA



Urban Form Plan

The design of buildings, open spaces, and streets affects how we experience the city. Cambridge has a distinctive urban fabric of major squares, mixed-use districts, commercial corridors, neighborhoods, campuses, and open spaces. The city is also home to a vibrant mix of architectural scales and styles. This collage makes Cambridge an exciting and pleasant place to live, work, learn, and play. At the same time, a strong economy means that some areas of the city are undergoing redevelopment. These include the major squares and mixed-use corridors, as well as once-industrial districts, the edges of residential neighborhoods, and areas adjacent to parkways. Cambridge has the opportunity to utilize the momentum of redevelopment to generate community benefits and ensure that the urban form of new districts advances the community's values and complements the existing context.

Coordinated Efforts

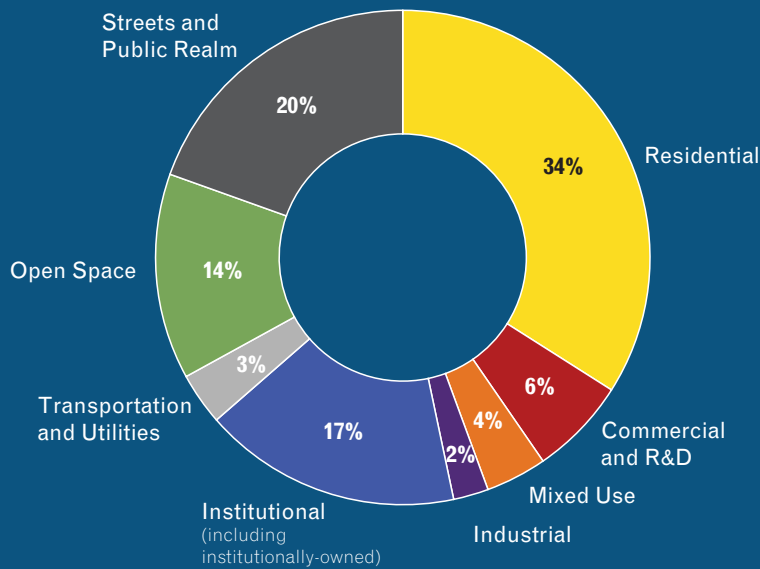
Many plans, codes, and policies developed over time influence the urban form of the city. The Zoning Ordinance regulates land use and standards for new development, and contains urban design objectives that are applied by the Planning Board through its review of major development projects. The City Council amends the Zoning Ordinance regularly, responding to new planning concerns, and the City creates plans and design guidelines for certain areas or specific aspects of development. The Historical Commission also regulates development through the City's Demolition Delay Ordinance, historic districts, and Neighborhood Conservation Districts. Many City departments are involved in the design, development, and maintenance of the City's public spaces, including streets and parks.

Urban Form

Context

Land Use as Percent of Citywide Land Area

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development and Assessing Departments. Water bodies such as Fresh Pond that sit within Cambridge's borders were not considered part of the citywide land area for this analysis.



“I value the beauty and character of the city, which makes a huge psychological impact on all—even if people aren’t aware of it. Beautiful and compelling architecture and ample open space make Cambridge a nice place, not just to visit—but to live in.”

— Neighborhood Nine resident via online survey

Land Use and Density

Cambridge has an urban structure that has been defined over the centuries through its patterns of land use and buildings. Today’s Cambridge is marked by distinctive residential neighborhoods, connected by commercial and mixed-use corridors (such as Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street), institutional campuses, and open spaces, and flanked by evolving commercial districts such as Kendall Square and Alewife, which are becoming more mixed-use.

The city is relatively dense overall, with moderate-density residential areas and higher-density mixed-use areas around major squares, such as Kendall Square, Central Square, and Harvard Square. The arrangement of buildings along the corridors and in much of eastern and northern Cambridge position buildings along the street, defining a “street wall,” and creating a sense of enclosure for the public realm. This pattern dissipates at the edges of the city, particularly along the highways and parkways, such as Fresh Pond Parkway and Memorial Drive.

The Public Realm

The most ubiquitous public spaces in Cambridge are streets. City streets are not just spaces for transportation, but they also serve as open spaces that

“Cambridge should be a dense, mixed-use, mixed-income city.”

— Huron Village resident

For more context and data on urban form in Cambridge, see pages 18–37 of *Cambridge Today*, the Envision Cambridge report on existing conditions.



Envision Cambridge conducted several walking tours of Cambridge's mixed-use corridors and side streets to assess recent development and workshop new ideas.

“ The urban landscape is changing rapidly... Good public green space and walkable connections are extremely important to incorporate now.”

— East Cambridge resident

provide opportunities for social interaction and civic action, especially where sidewalks are wide and street trees are located at regular intervals.

Cambridge's public realm shapes the experience of everyday life for Cambridge residents, workers, students, and visitors. Much of the city's public realm is traditionally urban, with narrow streets, many building entrances, active ground floor uses, relatively wide sidewalks, consistent street lighting, street furniture, and some presence of street trees and plantings. This high-quality public realm is important in creating a vibrant atmosphere, especially at the city's squares. The squares are important in defining the “mental map” of Cambridge

for many residents; they often serve as transit nodes, and are centers of retail and other neighborhood amenities.

Development patterns in the middle and late 20th century did not prioritize a consistently high-quality public realm. The City has reinvested in public realm infrastructure, and City agencies have pushed private development to make a positive contribution to the public realm. Consistent regulation of private development to ensure it contributes to good urban form is especially important in areas where new development concentrates and new neighborhoods take shape.

Open Spaces

A diverse collection of open spaces—including large parks,

neighborhood pocket parks and tot lots, linear paths, and plazas—offer the Cambridge community a variety of public spaces for recreation and congregation. Envision Cambridge's research on open spaces shows that the most intensive use for many public spaces is simply walking, either for recreation or for travel. Traditional publicly owned open spaces are augmented by an emerging system of privately owned public spaces. In some areas, parts of the university campuses also serve as usable open spaces. However, some engagement participants noted that campus spaces are not public and not all residents feel comfortable using them as everyday open space.

Vision

Public and private development in Cambridge creates vibrant, healthy, beautiful places for the city's residents, workers, students, and visitors. The form of the city honors Cambridge's history, while meeting the needs of today's community and future generations. Urban development balances preservation of the city's urban character and growth to accommodate new residents and activities, with an equitable distribution throughout the city.

Goals

Development Patterns: Maintain the existing patterns of the city where they are well-established, and advance the city's values through a mix of preservation and complementary infill development.

Significant existing buildings should be preserved and new development should support the existing development patterns of residential neighborhoods, major squares, mixed-use corridors, campuses, and open spaces.

Growth in Evolving Areas: Promote redevelopment that is mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, and sustainable within areas currently characterized by surface parking lots, automobile-oriented uses, and obsolete commercial buildings.

New development should serve a mix of functions (e.g., housing, employment, education), include open space and other civic amenities, and allow development patterns that would be difficult to accommodate in the city's more well-established districts and neighborhoods.

Transitional Development: Where redevelopment occurs at the edges of well-established districts, shape new development to complement the prevailing pattern of adjacent districts, accommodate variations in use and scale, and add greater density to areas well-served by public transit.

New development at the edges of well-established neighborhoods should fit into and improve the existing context, transitioning between scales or uses, particularly where sensitive residential uses abut other uses.

Open Space: Create a connected network of high-quality open spaces that links all residents to local and regional natural assets, provides a range of activities and experiences, encourages social connections, and is inclusive of all people.

Cambridge's open space network should include public space, such as parks, plazas, and streets, as well as publicly accessible private spaces.

Activation: Shape the form, use, and design of development, especially its public spaces and street frontages, so that it supports an active public realm.

New development should create spaces for informal social life, particularly on the commercial corridors and in evolving areas.

Design Process: Strive for design excellence in all new development by creating a review process that is clear and efficient in its engagement with City staff, boards and commissions, and the community.

Cambridge's process for approving new developments should encourage dialogue among property owners, the City, and community members. All development should be held to consistently high design standards.

Connections to Our Core Values

Outlined here are key ways that the core values of the Cambridge community, identified through the Envision Cambridge process, are reflected in the Urban Form goals and recommendations. For more about the community's vision and core values, see page 26.

Livability: We value a vibrant built and natural environment and support sustainable transportation with affordable and convenient access to daily needs and recreational resources.

The structure of the city and design of the built environment directly affect livability and how we experience the city. Cities are also continuously evolving. This section includes recommendations that redevelopment be characterized by high quality urban design, and that there be a citywide focus on an

inclusive public realm consisting of parks and open spaces, squares and plazas, and streetscapes and pathways that provide opportunities for recreation and social connection.

Diversity and Equity: We are a welcoming community that celebrates our diversity and ensures access to affordable housing choices and opportunities to succeed.

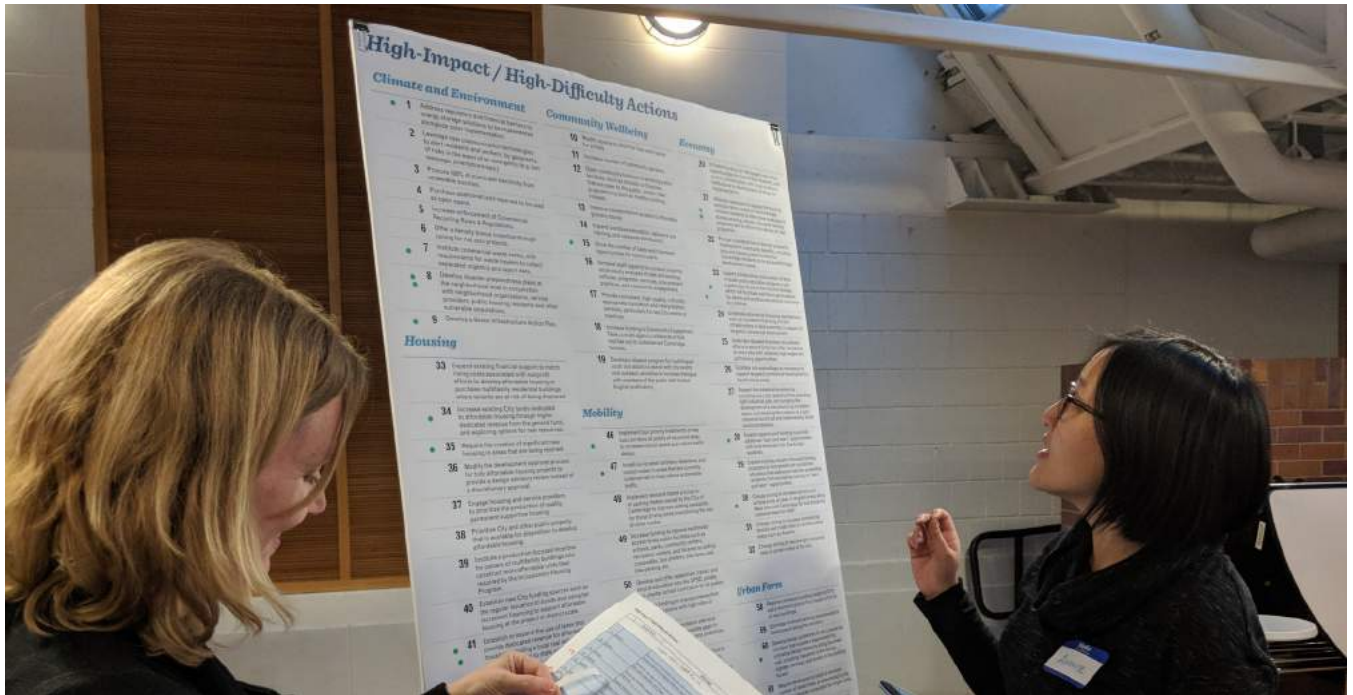
Recommendations in this section address how public and private development can advance community goals and bring about new opportunities for housing, jobs, community benefits and amenities for our diverse community. They also support a welcoming and inclusive public realm throughout the city that provides opportunities for recreation and social connection for people of all ages, incomes, races, and abilities.

Economic Opportunity: We provide opportunity and stability through access to quality jobs, workforce development and training, and livable wages that support economic security for residents.

A high quality public realm and pedestrian-friendly design can encourage active street life that is supportive of local businesses, particularly in commercial districts and mixed-use corridors, contributing to their vitality. This section includes recommendations to support this and suggests that redevelopment in areas like Alewife create opportunities for building types that incorporate businesses and industries that provide low barrier-to-entry jobs.



A community member participates in the Envision Cambridge Corridors activity at Inman Square Movie Night in 2017.



Members of Envision Cambridge committees rate their priorities among proposed actions across all planning topics.

Sustainability and Resilience: We take responsible action to reduce our impact on the environment and build a resilient city and strong community.

The design of streets and public spaces in the city can help to reduce impact on the environment, for instance by facilitating access and travel through sustainable modes of transportation. This section includes recommendations that encourage sustainable modes, as well as recommendations to incorporate sustainability and resilience measures at the building and district level to support both environmental and social resilience.

Community Health and Wellbeing: We promote healthy and active lifestyles in supportive, safe community with diverse opportunities to connect with our neighbors and nature and to engage in civic life.

This section emphasizes continuing to build and enhance Cambridge’s vibrant public realm, including parks, plazas, open spaces, as well as streetscapes that contribute to a pleasant, walkable environment. A high quality public realm encourages healthy and active lifestyles and provides opportunities for connecting with neighbors. These opportunities for connections can take many forms, from impromptu interactions walking down the street to community gatherings in parks and open spaces.

Learning: We embrace lifelong learning and celebrate art and creativity in our culturally rich community.

This section’s recommendations to enhance public spaces, particularly those that encourage social connection and activation, can support and reflect the cultural richness and diversity of the city. Parks and playgrounds encourage creativity and play for people of all ages and abilities, host community celebrations, and provide opportunities to engage with art and culture.

Strategies & Actions

1 Increase density near transit nodes while accommodating the unique character of our squares and areas along the corridors.

Cambridge’s corridors are the center of community life and have the greatest access to amenities in the city. Contextual redevelopment on the corridors should be encouraged where existing buildings detract from the corridors’ appearance or function. Existing buildings that support the historic urban character of an area should be preserved and repurposed where practical, and new development should complement that character. To mitigate traffic congestion and encourage walkability, parking requirements should be eliminated and larger buildings should be concentrated.



A mix of building densities on Massachusetts Avenue near Porter Square.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Eliminate minimum parking requirements for development along the corridors.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Adjust existing zoning near transit nodes to allow greater density while complementing the character of the surrounding area.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term

2 Preserve the historical integrity and diversity of Cambridge's neighborhoods, including buildings and the public realm.

Cambridge has many historically significant places, including individual landmarks and districts that communicate our connections to the past. New development should not disrupt this historical continuity, while accommodating changes that meet our present and future needs.



Traditional neighborhood fabric in western Cambridge.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Investigate potential additions to the historic inventory through public engagement, planning, and designation studies.	Study or plan	Expanded	Ongoing
Disseminate information about the city's history.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Ongoing
Utilize CPA-funded preservation grants to preserve and promote the restoration of significant historic properties.	Capital investments	Expanded	Ongoing
Adjust zoning in residential districts to be more compatible with prevailing patterns of development, including building setbacks, maximum heights, open space, parking requirements, and uses.	Zoning changes	Expanded	Medium term
Protect buildings in historic and neighborhood conservation districts, as well as individual landmarks and properties governed by preservation restrictions.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing
Maintain and protect reservations and other natural resource areas, carefully balancing public access and use with preservation and conservation.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Preserve small open spaces that provide passive or visual benefits to the public, even where they do not allow for intensive or active recreational use	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Honor local projects with Preservation Awards.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing
Work with private land owners owners, institutions, and public agencies on historic preservation issues, and participate in reviews of state and federal projects that impact historic resources.	Regional partnerships	Existing	Ongoing
Ensure new development reinforces and enhances the complex urban aspects of Cambridge as it has developed historically, and where appropriate, ensure historical contexts are respected.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing

3 Encourage activity on the ground floors of new buildings, particularly along mixed-use corridors.

Active street life is partly a function of the use and design of buildings located on the street. Street-activating uses and pedestrian-friendly design features should be incorporated into new developments. This is especially important on existing commercial

corridors, where street activity is crucial for the healthy functioning of the city, its residents, and its businesses. Elsewhere, new development should not shun the street, but rather embrace it in a way that is appropriate to the surrounding context.

“We need spaces that have a sense of place—not just thoroughfares that look like mini-highways.”

—Neighborhood Nine resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Allow the maximum height of mixed-use projects with active ground floor uses to be increased in order to achieve taller ground floor spaces that better support active uses.	Zoning changes	New	Near term
Streamline the approval process to allow more street-activating elements in or above the public way, such as awnings, entry canopies, street furniture, etc.	Other regulatory changes	New	Medium term
Establish development standards to promote a continuous street wall on commercial corridors, including uniform standards for front setbacks and building facade lengths that are compatible with the established patterns of the area.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term



People enjoying the public realm in Harvard Square.

3 Encourage activity on the ground floors of new buildings, particularly along mixed-use corridors. (Continued)

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
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 and other non-active uses, standards for the frontage length of individual storefronts, and requirements for smaller-sized commercial or community spaces in larger buildings.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term
Along mixed-use corridors and in major squares, prohibit parking and vehicular loading and service between buildings and the street, and prohibit curb cuts along the mixed-use corridor unless the parcel only has frontage on the mixed-use corridor, the frontage is no less than 40 feet wide, and the access is no more than 20 feet wide.	Zoning changes	Expanded	Near term
Require primary building entrances to be located on the mixed-use corridors (including at corners on the corridors) to create visual variety and to encourage the mixing of building residents, shoppers, and passers-by on the sidewalk.	Zoning changes	Expanded	Near term
Establish design guidelines for all mixed-use corridors that include provisions for activating design elements along the street wall, such as signage, awnings, frequency of entrances, and breaks in the building facade.	Other regulatory changes	Modified	Near term

4 Proactively guide development in areas with a strong potential for change through area-specific planning and development review.

Some areas of Cambridge are more likely than others to see redevelopment, and further thought is needed to shape any redevelopment to meet the needs of the community. Development review and finer-grained planning efforts should shape the direction of the districts that emerge in line with Envision Cambridge goals.

Area Planning
 The Cambridge Community Development Department has undertaken 23 neighborhood or area plans since 2000, as well as topic-specific planning studies, citywide planning studies, and parcel- or street-level planning studies.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Initiate district plans for specific areas to inform new zoning approaches and design guidelines that support the Envision Cambridge objectives.	Study or plan	New	Near term
Prepare a streetscape/landscape character plan that identifies different character types, determines desired uses and setbacks, and sets guidelines for types of landscaping, building frontages, etc.	Study or plan	New	Medium term
Amend development standards to encourage balconies, roof terraces and decks, and projecting bays to overlook streets and other public spaces.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term

“We need buildings that are oriented to the street, have green spaces and street trees and support biking and walking.”

—Cambridgeport resident via online survey

5 Revise the development review process to be more transparent to developers and the public while striving for high-quality design.

Cambridge is subject to a unique set of market, social, and physical conditions, and these conditions require a distinct approach to the review of new development projects. Like much of the Boston region, Cambridge has a public

discretionary review process for most developments. This process should be calibrated to create reliable, high-quality outcomes for all parties, including the City, the community, and developers.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Develop design guidelines for as-of-right affordable housing development.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term
Establish a consolidated set of citywide urban design guidelines based on development types or design themes that reflect historic contexts, while enhancing the overall character of the city and responding to contemporary circumstances.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term
Continue to update area- and neighborhood-specific design guidelines to ensure that new developments' urban design outcomes complement their neighborhood context and the review process is more predictable to stakeholders and developers.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term
Create clear design- and performance-based guidelines to address the environmental impacts of new development through green building standards. Where guidelines are area-specific, prioritize guideline development in areas likely to see significant change.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term
Encourage developers to meet with the City's urban design team early in the design process to frame the essential urban design issues of a project, as defined by Envision Cambridge and other relevant plans and guidelines, before conceptual design commences.	Community interface and outreach	Modified	Ongoing



Construction in Cambridge in fall 2018.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
For larger-scale projects, encourage applicants to present initial design concepts to the Planning Board for pre-application advisory review.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term
Clarify the development review process by publishing a process diagram to clearly articulate requirements and expectations at every step.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Near term
Update the citywide urban design objectives in the City’s Zoning Ordinance to reflect Envision Cambridge recommendations.	Zoning changes	Modified	Near term
Review and assess which districts should be designated “Areas of Special Planning Concern” in the Zoning Ordinance.	Other regulatory changes	Modified	Near term
Review and simplify the various elements of project review established by Article 19 of the Zoning Ordinance to provide a clearer set of procedures.	Zoning changes	Modified	Near term

6 Leverage private development to create and maintain high-quality public open spaces and to provide dynamic programming.

Private development, especially large-scale private development, plays an important role in expanding the city’s open space network. In order to make the most of these redevelopments, new public open spaces should be encouraged on private property in locations where they are most needed or will provide important connections. Furthermore, partnerships with private property owners to provide open space programming can encourage more use of new and existing open spaces.



A farmers market in the privately owned public space at the the Kendall/MIT MBTA station.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Incentivize flexible publicly accessible indoor space in private and institutional developments, including community rooms and other community facilities.	Other regulatory changes	New	Ongoing
Establish citywide guidelines for programming, design, signage, and maintenance and operations of publicly accessible private open space.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term
Establish guidelines to promote the addition of public pathways on large development sites where they would create desired neighborhood pedestrian and bicycle connections and a continuous tree canopy.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Near term
Implement recommendations developed in the Urban Forest Master Plan to increase tree canopy on private property through guidelines and development review.	Zoning changes	Modified	Near term

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Allow developers to contribute to a fund for open space in areas where a need for such space is identified but it cannot be reasonably provided on-site.	Other regulatory changes	New	Medium term
Encourage family-friendly design elements (such as playgrounds) in residential and commercial development projects and public realm improvements through development review and design guidelines.	Other regulatory changes	Expanded	Ongoing
Partner with the private sector and community groups to provide, sponsor, and contribute funds or in-kind assistance to the maintenance and programming of the public realm including plazas, open spaces, sidewalks, and recreational facilities.	Community interface and outreach	Expanded	Near term
Conduct a citywide assessment to determine where new public or publicly accessible open space should be expected as part of redevelopment projects, when the amount of land area can accommodate such spaces.	Study or plan	Modified	Near term
Facilitate community use of private recreational and open space facilities where the recreational activity provided by the private facility is not well served in available public facilities.	Community interface and outreach	Existing	Ongoing

“I envision a vital, diverse city that values its open spaces as key places for people to interact and live life happily.”

—Central Square resident

7 Expand the public open space network through new open spaces, new programming, and improved local and regional connections.

Creating a robust network of open spaces is a critical way to advance many of Envision Cambridge’s goals. Cambridge should build upon its existing network by providing

new spaces, redesigning existing spaces, improving walkable and bikable open space connections, and focusing on generating increased activity in these open spaces.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Design and implement clear wayfinding, using signage and other means, for biking and walking routes to the City’s open spaces and other key destinations.	Capital investments	New	Ongoing
Build open space, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to integrate the “Alewife Square” into the fabric of the City (as recommended in the Alewife Planning Study).	Capital investments	New	Long term



Waverly Path in Cambridgeport.

“We must protect the environment, create new parks and green spaces, and plant more trees in all areas of the city, especially in East Cambridge.”

—Alewife resident via online survey

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Establish public realm design guidelines for street infrastructure, landscaping, trees, seating, and public art, to result in a consistent, though varied, family of materials and street furnishings that can provide a greater sense of continuity between open spaces.	Other regulatory changes	New	Near term
Allocate funds to convert paved traffic islands into green spaces, or reconfigure roadways to eliminate them.	Capital investments	New	Medium term
Prioritize the planning and implementation of routes providing physical and visual connections to citywide open spaces and regional paths and trails, including the Charles River, Fresh Pond, Danehy Park, Alewife Reservation, and the regional greenway system.	Capital investments	New	Long term
Work with state agencies and other parties to encourage greater access to and more active use of the Charles River and other state-owned parks and recreational areas, including tables and seating areas, canoe/kayak launches, boat rentals, public swimming, and restaurants.	Regional partnerships	Expanded	Long term
Identify opportunities for increasing the amount of open space in or near remaining priority areas identified in the Green Ribbon report (2000) and other planning studies.	Study or plan	Existing	Ongoing

8 Improve the public open space network by preserving, maintaining, and enhancing existing open spaces to serve a diverse population.

Cambridge currently has many great public open spaces, but these spaces can be improved through better accommodations for different populations and by maintaining Cambridge’s variety of open space types to

meet diverse needs. Cambridge should ensure there are easily-accessible open spaces that create active and passive recreational opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Encourage open space and recreational facilities that serve a wide range of uses that reflect the needs and interests of Cambridge’s diverse population, through expansion of the existing inventory, location of multiple uses of existing facilities, and creative programming.	Programs and operations	Expanded	Ongoing
Incorporate the principles of Universal Design in open space projects.	Capital investments	Expanded	Ongoing
Design playful public spaces that are fun, physically challenging, creatively stimulating, and socially engaging, following the recommendations and guidelines of the Healthy Parks and Playgrounds and Play in the Public Realm reports, and balancing safety considerations with developmentally-appropriate levels of challenge and risk-taking.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing
Maintain and protect reservations and other natural resource areas, carefully balancing public access and use with preservation and conservation.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Preserve small open spaces that provide passive or visual benefits to the public, even where they do not allow for intensive or active recreational use.	Programs and operations	Existing	Ongoing
Prioritize the repair, maintenance, and timely upgrade of existing open space and recreational facilities.	Capital investments	Existing	Ongoing

Kendall Square Parks



Cambridge has long maintained an integrated, citywide network of public and private open spaces that enhance our community. Construction will soon begin on additions to this network: three new parks in East Cambridge: Rogers Street Park, Binney Street Park, and Triangle Park.

Over the past decades, the Kendall Square area in eastern Cambridge has transformed from an industrial area into a world-renowned center of biotech, high tech research, and innovation

companies. The area has also seen increased housing development, with over 1,200 housing units built during the past two decades. As the onetime office district becomes a lively neighborhood, the new parks—products of extensive planning and work with community members—will work together to support both longtime and new residents alike. The three new parks will provide a range of opportunities for people to engage, relax, play, and include features like dog runs, open fields, and play areas.

9 For Cambridge's institutions, including university and hospital campuses, support growth within existing campus boundaries and adjacent evolving mixed-use areas, and discourage intrusion into residential neighborhoods.

The major institutions, including Lesley University, Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, other educational institutions, and hospitals, should be limited to those areas that historically

have been occupied by such uses and to abutting areas that are reasonably suited to institutional expansion, as indicated by any institutional overlay district formally adopted by the City.

Action	Action Type	Status	Completion Timeframe
Permit reasonable densities for large institutions within their core campuses to forestall unnecessary expansion into both commercial districts and low-density residential neighborhoods.	Zoning changes	Existing	Ongoing
Continue to engage with major institutions on future development plans through the Town-Gown reporting process.	Other regulatory changes	Existing	Ongoing



The MIT campus and Kendall Square.

Indicators and Targets

Street-activating Features on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, and in Major Squares

The design and uses of streets and the buildings along them greatly impacts the activity along the street, which in turn impacts the sense of community, the viability of retail, and the sense of safety. Design features like regular building entrances and transparent facades activate sidewalks along an entire block. This set of indicators measures small design features that come together to enhance street life.



Street-activating features on Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square.

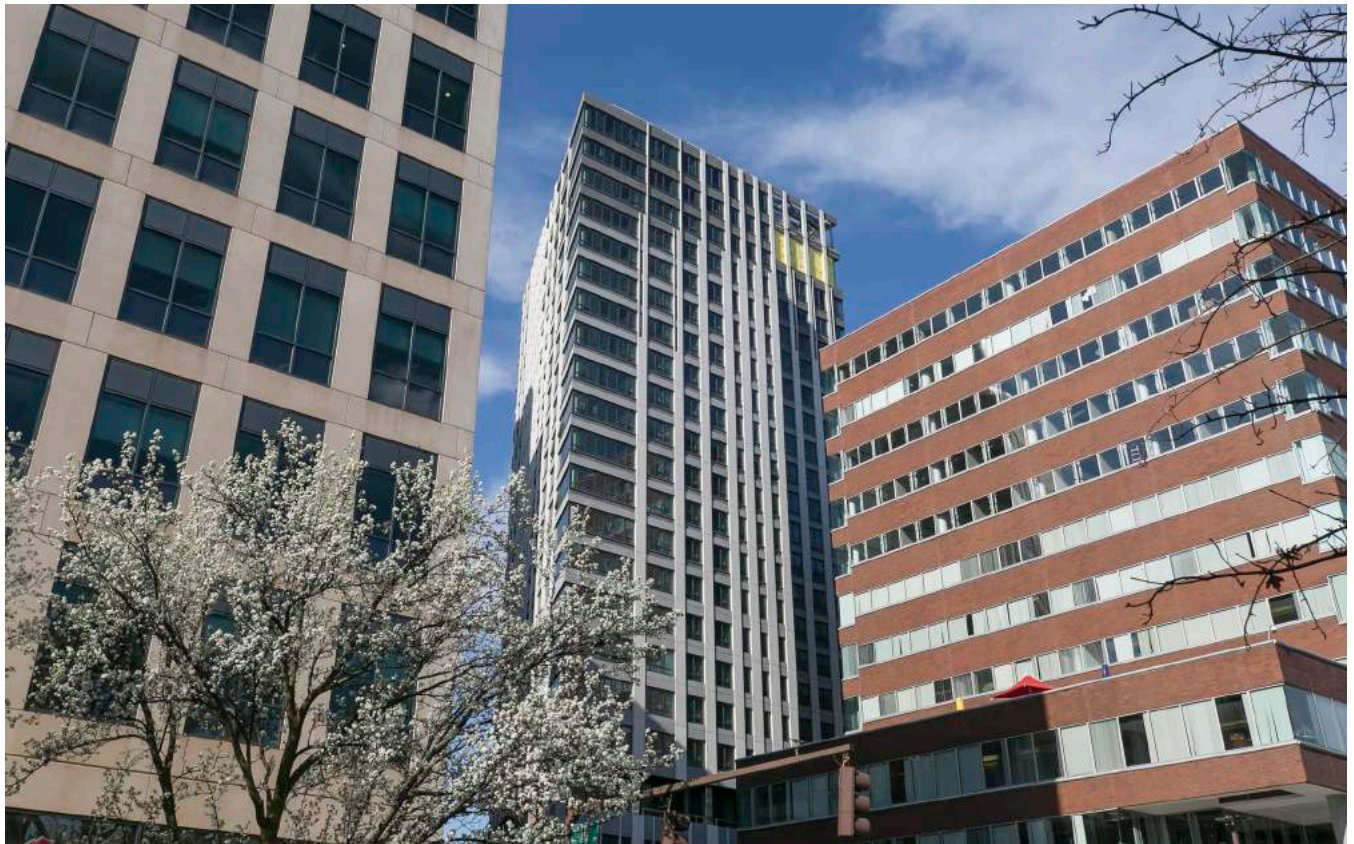
Indicator	Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of blocks with at least three building entrances per 200 feet	<i>The City does not have a baseline measurement for this indicator at this time, but will collect this information moving forward.</i>	<i>This target will be set after initial data collection.</i>
Percent of total building frontage that is restaurant, retail, or other active space	<i>The City does not have a baseline measurement for this indicator at this time, but will collect this information moving forward.</i>	<i>Targets for major squares, active pedestrian segments, and mixed residential segments will be set after initial data collection.</i>
Percent of building frontage that is transparent (no posters or curtains, and no tinted glass or other window treatments within 10 feet of the ground)	<i>The City does not have a baseline measurement for this indicator at this time, but will collect this information moving forward.</i>	<i>Targets for major squares, active pedestrian segments, and mixed residential segments will be set after initial data collection.</i>

Transit-Oriented Development

New development density is best suited for places well-served by urban amenities such as transit. This indicator tracks whether development in Cambridge is distributed in areas with a high concentration of urban amenities, using transit as a proxy.

Indicator	2015 Baseline	2030 Target
Percent of new housing units within a half-mile walk from an MBTA subway station	72.7%	75%
Percent of new gross floor area within a half-mile walk from an MBTA subway station	80.8%	85%

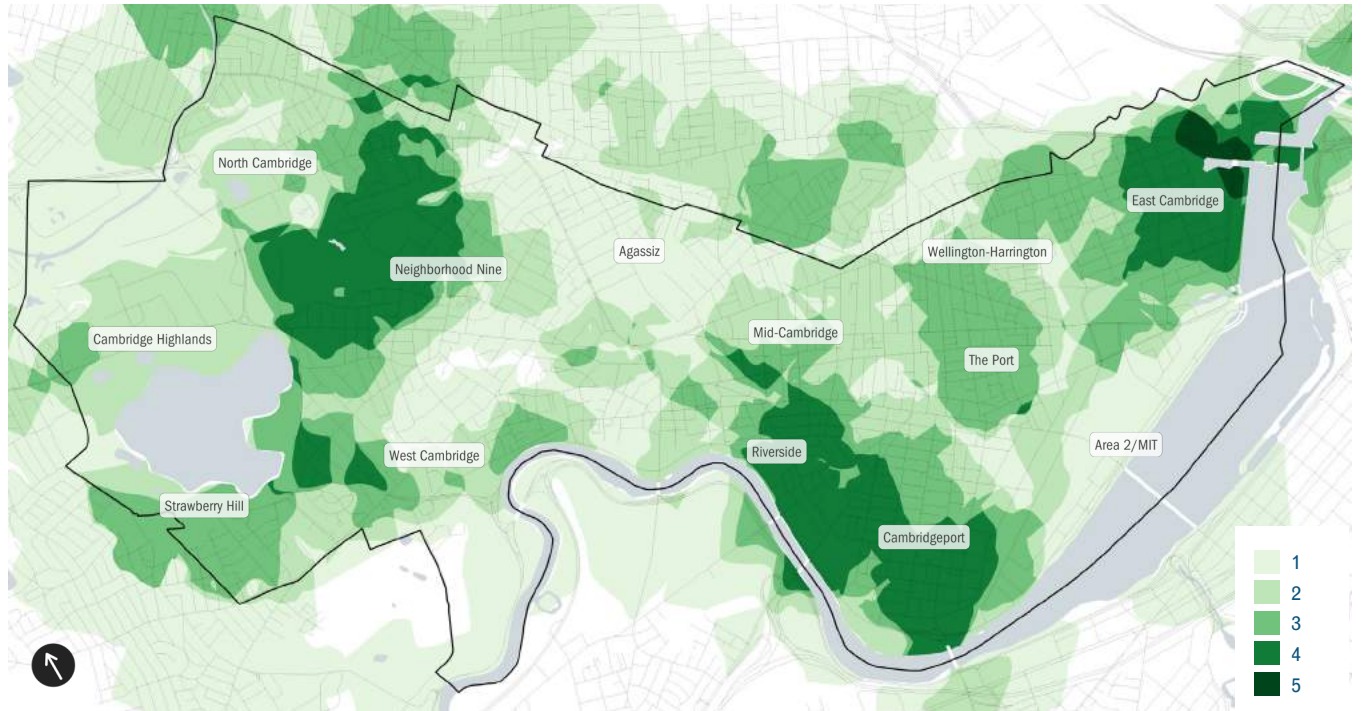
Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department and City of Cambridge GIS, 2013–2015



Dense development near the Kendall Square MBTA station.

Proximity to a Variety of Park Uses

Cambridge has many high quality open spaces, serving different needs for people at different times. Through this indicator, Cambridge will track whether the community has access to several kinds of park uses, increasing the likelihood that they can find a nearby open space that serves their needs.



Number of Different Kinds of Park Uses Within Walking Distance
 Source: City of Cambridge GIS

Indicator

Percent of housing units that are within the given distance to three or more different parks, including parks in adjacent municipalities:

- Quarter-mile walking distance for playgrounds and passive open space
- Half-mile walking distance for active recreation, trails and nature, and specialty spaces such as off-leash dog areas or exercise equipment

2018 Baseline

85.2%

Source: City of Cambridge GIS

2030 Target

87.0%

Tree Canopy over Sidewalks and Streets

The tree canopy covering our streets and sidewalks has a significant impact on the comfort of pedestrians, as well as the public health, sustainability, resilience, visual appeal, and livability of the city as a whole. This indicator will track street trees' contribution to creating a more healthy, resilient, and pleasant environment.



Street trees shading the sidewalk in Inman Square.

Indicator

Percent of tree canopy over sidewalk and streets

Baseline

The City does not have a baseline measurement for these indicator at this time. Data is being collected by the Urban Forest Master Plan.

2030 Target

Targets to be established by the Urban Forest Master Plan in 2019

Design quality

Most people have an intuitive understanding of what makes the design of a city great, whether or not they have formal design training. Of course, reasonable people can disagree on designs they like. Nonetheless, this indicator tracks Cambridge's progress in building a city that people find aesthetically pleasing overall.

Indicator

Percent of survey respondents who rate Cambridge's overall appearance as good or excellent

2018 Baseline

79% online

87% by phone

2030 Target

90% online

90% by phone

Source: City Manager's Biannual Survey



Next Steps

Publication of the final plan brings the formal Envision Cambridge process to a close, but the work of building a better future for the city is not done. The recommendations of this plan create a roadmap for action to address the issues that Cambridge and numerous other cities are facing. The vision and values articulated in community meetings, the goals and strategies laid out in these pages, and the specific action ideas will guide policymakers, City staff, the Planning Board, and other boards and commissions as they develop area and topical plans, write legislation, craft budgets,

consider development proposals, advocate for regional action, design infrastructure, make policy, and more. The actions in the final plan will no doubt be debated and refined during the implementation process, and new ideas may also gain salience as the needs of the city change. Even so, the indicators and targets defined by Envision Cambridge will help future policymakers and the community make those decisions.

In the coming years, with diligence and determination, we will continue to bring our community's vision for Cambridge to life.



**ENVISION
CAMBRIDGE**
MOBILE ENGAGEMENT STATION
Coming to a neighborhood near you!
Location: Cotton Library
Date: April 1st

**ENVISION
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MOBILE ENGAGEMENT STATION
Coming to a neighborhood near you!
Location: Cambridge Com. Center
Date: April 2nd

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Coming to a neighborhood near you!
Location: Cambridge Senior Center
Date: April 2nd

**ENVISION
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Coming to a neighborhood near you!
Location: La...
Date: April...

EXPO

Cambridgeport

Area Four

Handwritten notes:
Central Square
Downtown Crossing
La...
Date: April...





Acknowledgments

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City of Cambridge (pages 57, 74, 77, 93, 101, 107, 194)

Kevin Klein (pages 2, 13, 38, 53 (top-left), 83, 105, 113, 130, 132, 193, 200, 202, 208)

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Utile (pages 32 (both), 33(both), 34 (bottom-left, bottom-right), 44, 45, 46, 48, 53 (bottom row), 61, 68, 71, 84, 109, 111, 117, 120, 124, 127, 134, 136, 139, 141, 145, 156, 161, 171, 179, 180, 183, 186, 187, 188, 190, 201, 207)

STOSS Landscape Urbanism (page 199)

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