

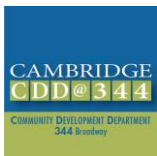


City of Cambridge

Community Development Department

# Envision Alewife Update

March 26, 2019





# Existing Conditions





# Existing Conditions





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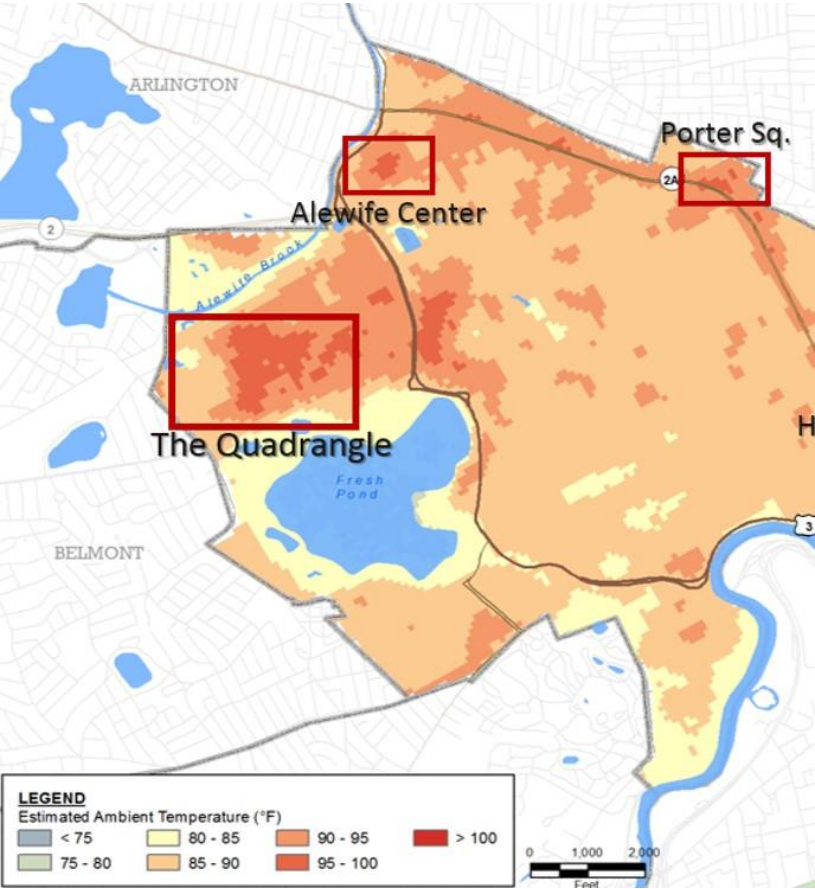


# Existing Conditions

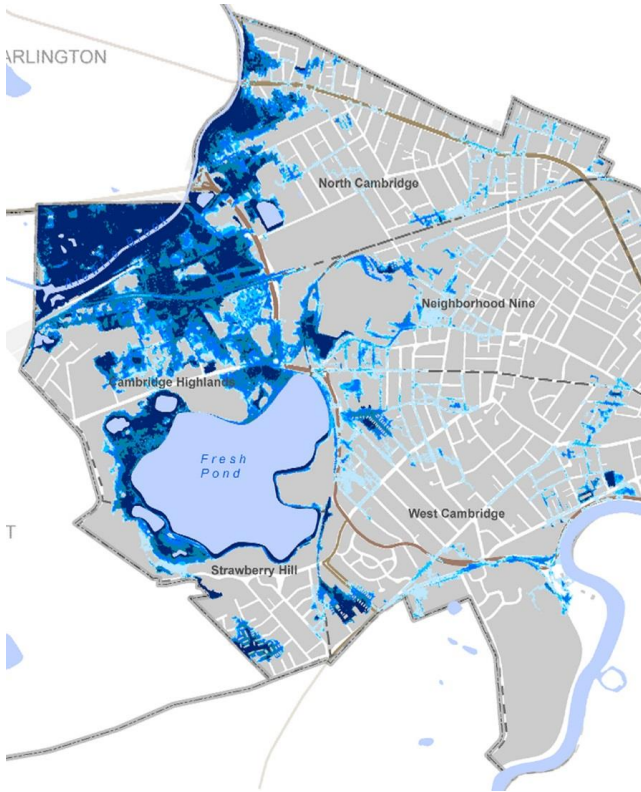




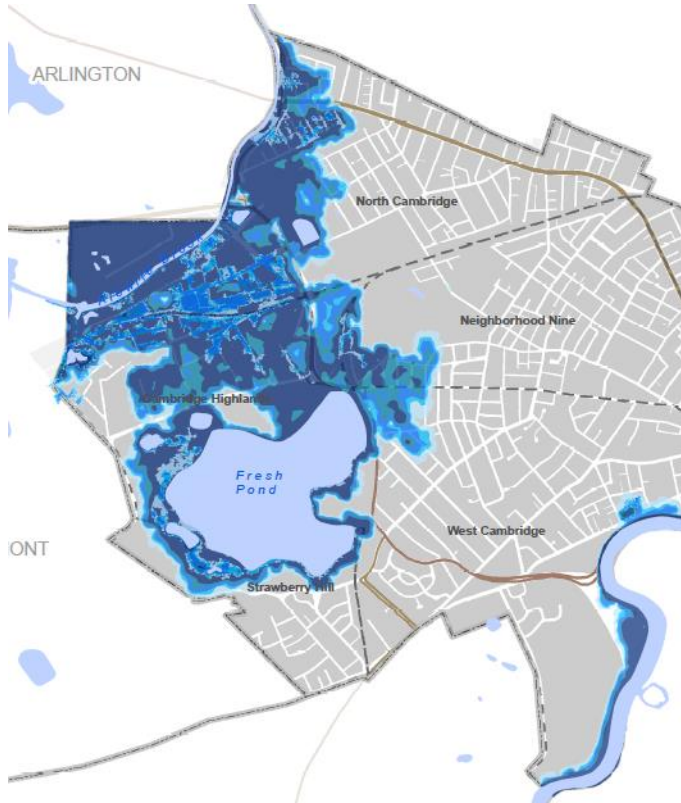
# Environmental Conditions



2030 Heat Islands



2070 100-yr  
Precipitation Flood



2070 100-yr  
SLR/Storm Surge Flood



# Goals for the Future Alewife District

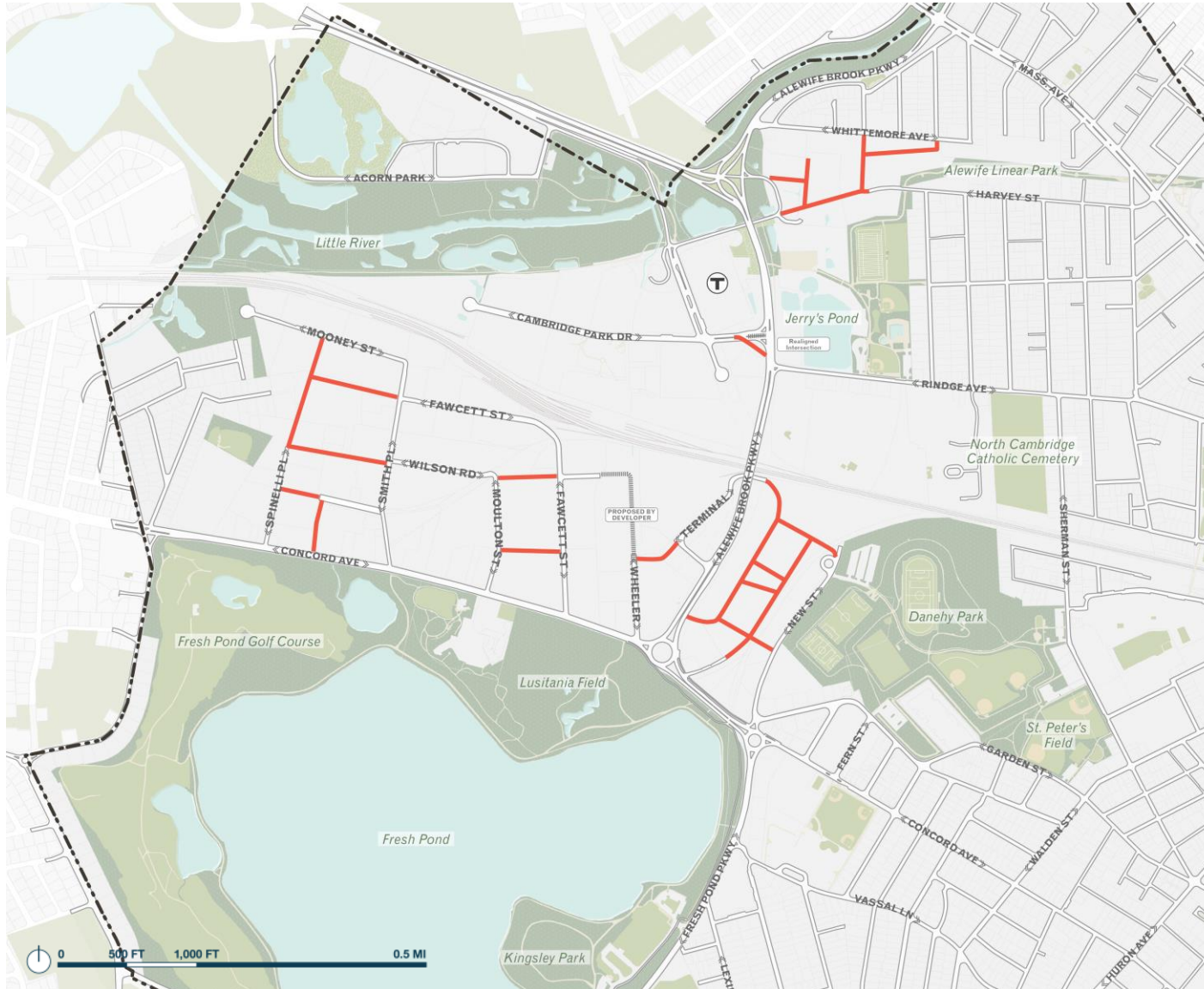


Conceptual Illustration

- Build a cohesive mixed-use district.
- Integrate Alewife with the rest of Cambridge.
- Limit Alewife's contribution to climate change and increase the district's resiliency to its effects.
- Encourage sustainable modes of transportation.
- Create a continuous open space and recreation network.



# Realizing a Vision for Alewife – Connectivity



Better integrate the district with the rest of the city through new walking and biking paths, streets, and open spaces.

— Recommended New Roads



# Realizing a Vision for Alewife – Connectivity

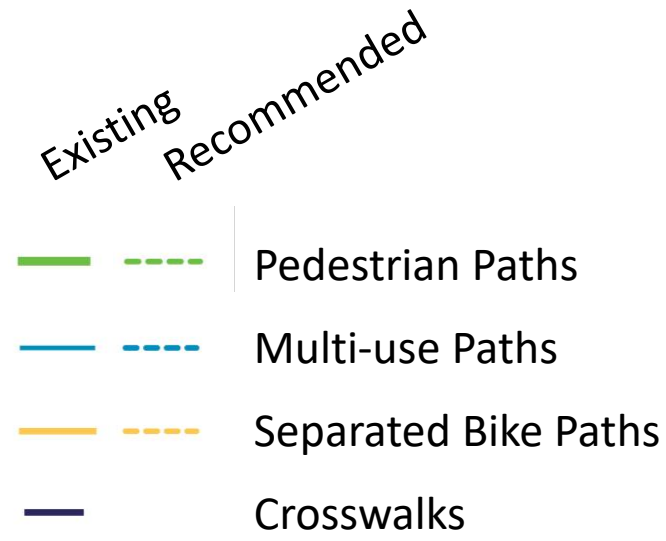
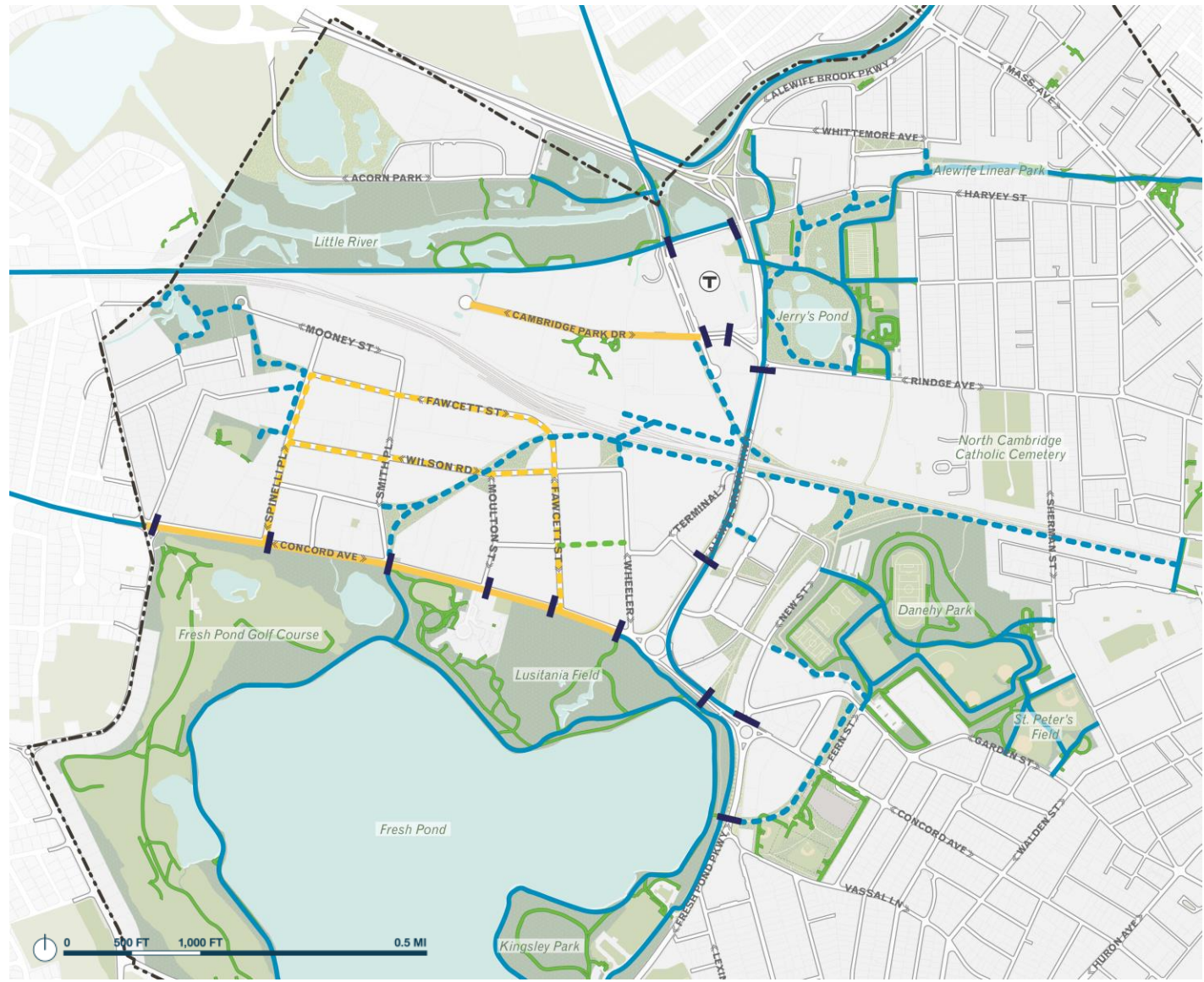


Better integrate the district with the rest of the city through new walking and biking paths, streets, and open spaces.



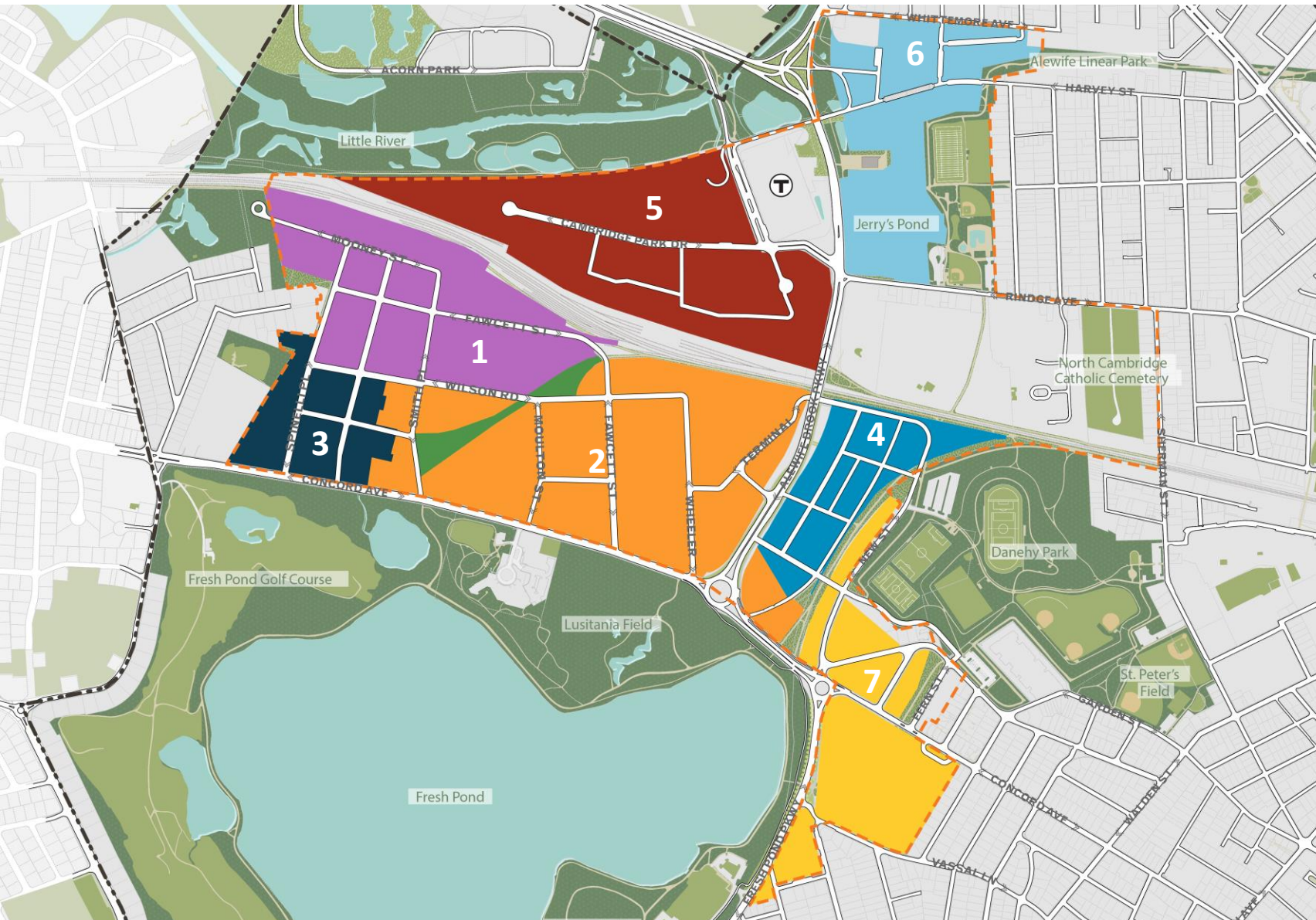
# Realizing a Vision for Alewife – Connectivity

Better integrate the district with the rest of the city through new walking and biking paths, streets, and open spaces.





# Realizing a Vision for Alewife – Land Use & Zoning

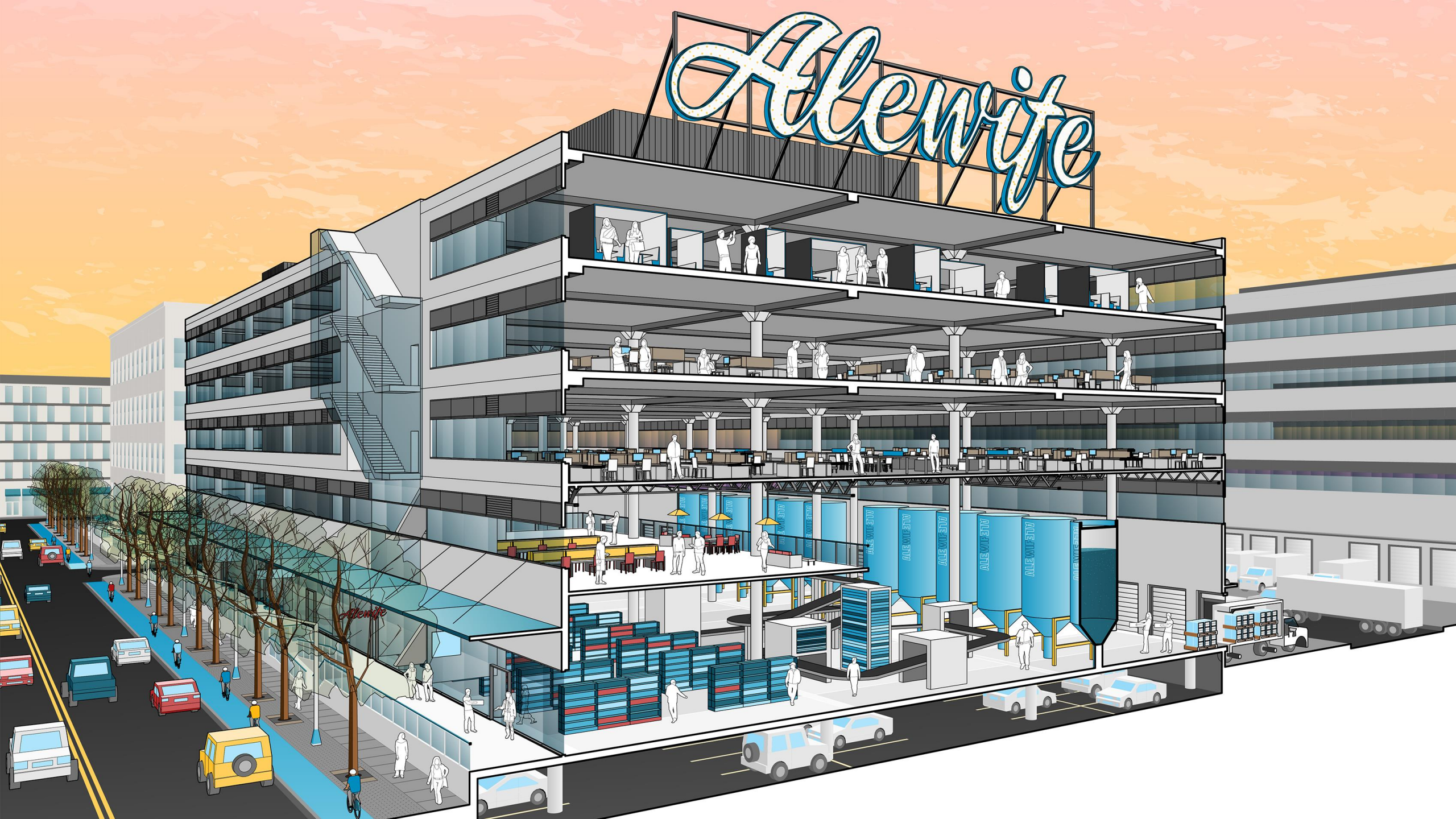


Create a mixed-use neighborhood and encourage space for light industrial use and low-barrier to entry jobs.

## Sub-Areas

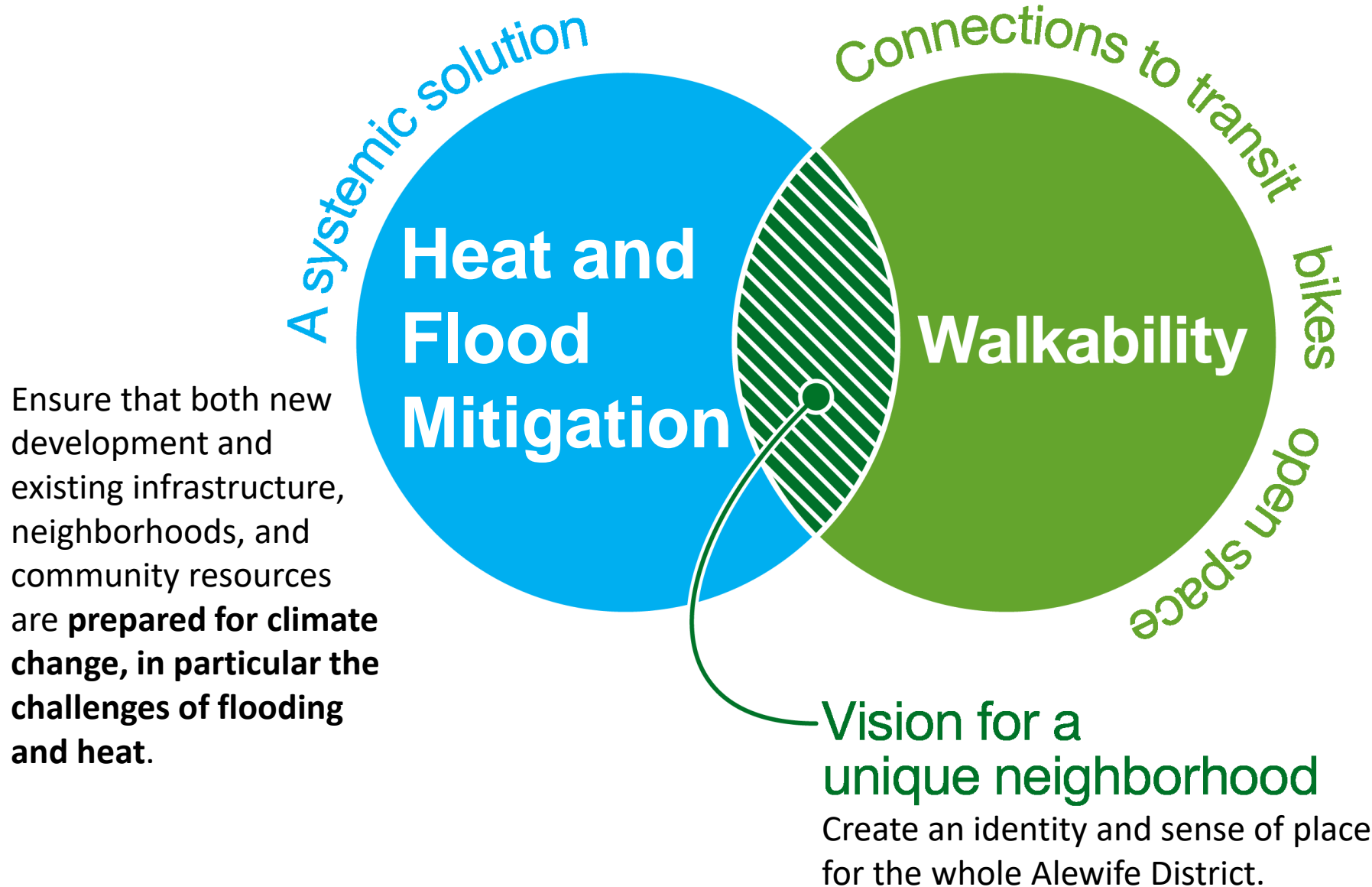
1. Quadrangle Mixed-Use Light Industrial
2. Quadrangle Mixed-Use
3. Quadrangle Residential
4. Shopping Center
5. Triangle
6. Whittemore Avenue
7. Parkway







# Urban Design Framework



Encourage forms of development, a mix of uses, and a range of improvements that will **facilitate and encourage walking, biking, and transit use** and reduce the growth of vehicular trips.



# Alewife Design Guidelines



# The Guidelines Support and Supplement the Alewife Planning Study

- They support zoning recommendations.
- They convey the intended character of the district.
- They relate to the on-going work of Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force, the Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience Plan, and the Urban Forest Master Plan.
- Sustainability and resiliency are infused throughout.
- They are guidelines, not mandatory standards.
- They are intended to assist the Planning Board in design review.



# Principles

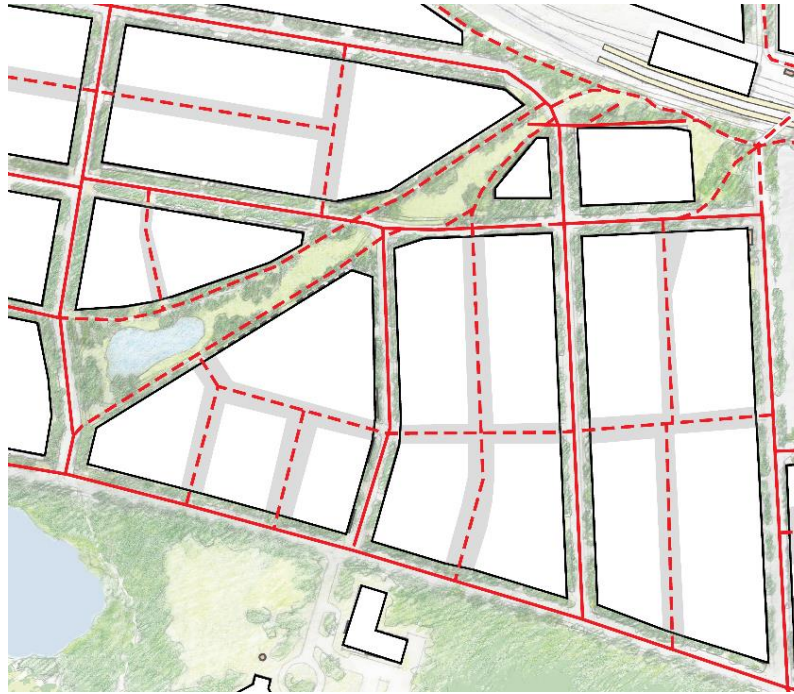
- Enhance Alewife's sense of place.
- Promote excellence in design.
- Create pedestrian friendly streets.
- Create well-connected and programmatically rich open spaces.
- Integrate sustainability and resilience in buildings and open spaces.
- Integrate large development parcels into community context.



# Pattern of Urban Blocks and Open Spaces



**Existing Pattern:**  
Very Large Blocks.  
Discontinuous Street Network.  
Poorly defined Public Space.



**Recommended:**  
Connective Network of Open Spaces,  
Streets, and Paths.



**Recommended:**  
Fine Grained Pattern of Landscaped  
Parks, Courtyards, and Paths.

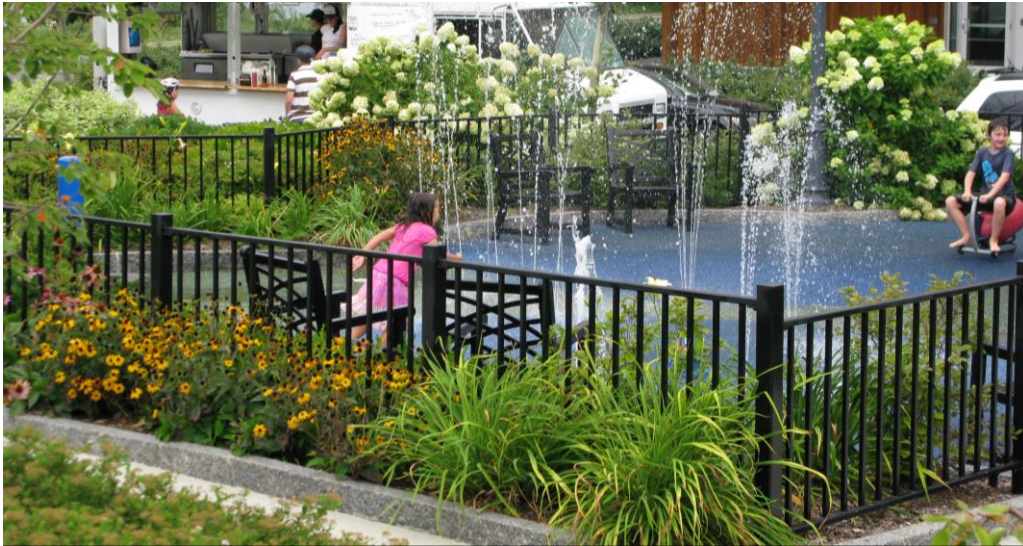
## Create human scaled blocks and landscaped open spaces



# Open Space and the Public Realm



Create legible and memorable open spaces, varied in size and character, designed for comfort, enjoyment, and a wide range of uses – public rooms at the scale of the city.



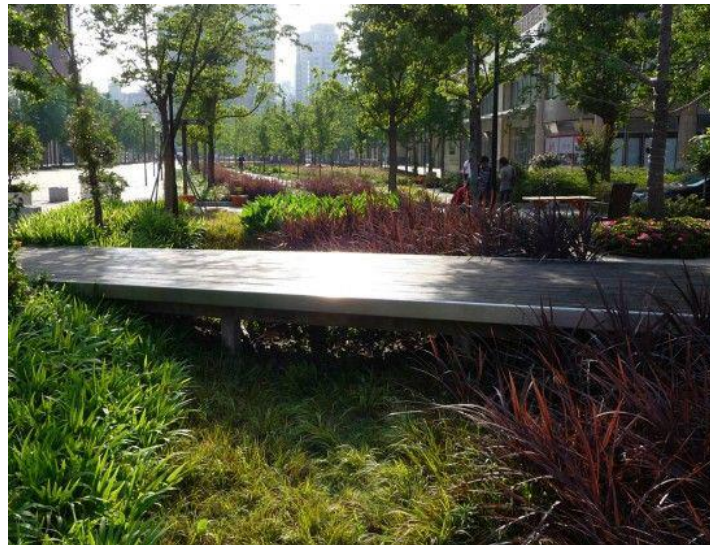


# Open Space and the Public Realm

## Design in response to anticipated future flooding



Incorporate landscaped open spaces, permeable surfaces, native plants, rain gardens, bioswales, and retention ponds to retain, absorb, and purify stormwater.





# Open Space and the Public Realm

Protect residents and workers from extreme heat



Create shaded streets and parks, increase vegetation, and provide high albedo surfaces to minimize the urban heat island effect.



# Open Space and the Public Realm

## Augment Cambridge's urban forest



Create a connected ecosystem and enhance natural habitat by providing a connected and diverse tree canopy throughout Alewife's streets and other open spaces.



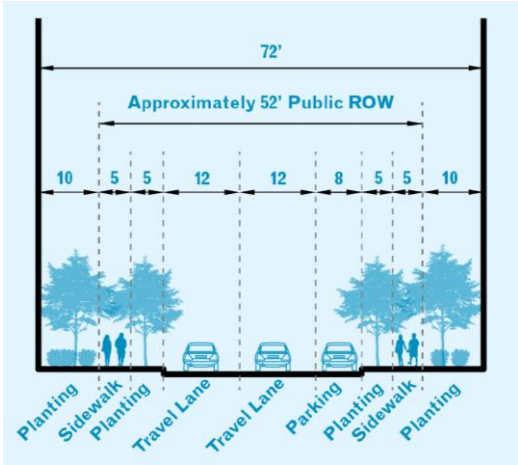
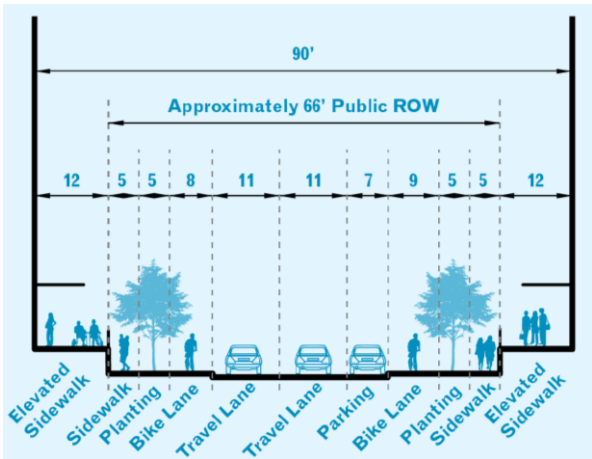


# Open Space and the Public Realm

## Streets and Paths



Sidewalks should accommodate pedestrian passage, street trees, street furniture, and where appropriate, seating for cafes and restaurants.



A range of street types are recommended to accommodate bicycles, cars, trucks, pedestrians, and street trees.



Multi-use paths enhance connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of other travel modes.



# Open Space and the Public Realm

## Parks



Parks should include flexible open areas that can accommodate a wide range of uses.





# Open Space and the Public Realm

## Parks



Incorporate bordering loggias, trees, low plantings, paths, and benches to help define larger spaces and to provide more intimate sheltered places.



Combine flexible open areas and small seating areas to offer a variety of ways to use parks.



# Open Space and the Public Realm

## Parks



Stormwater mitigation features should be integral parts of the design.



Celebrate park entrances to enhance a sense of place



Provide protected play areas with inventive structures



# Open Space and the Public Realm

## Squares and Plazas – vessels for community life



Squares and plazas should incorporate trees and other plantings, benches, water features, public art, outdoor seating areas for adjoining retail, and areas for temporary retail.

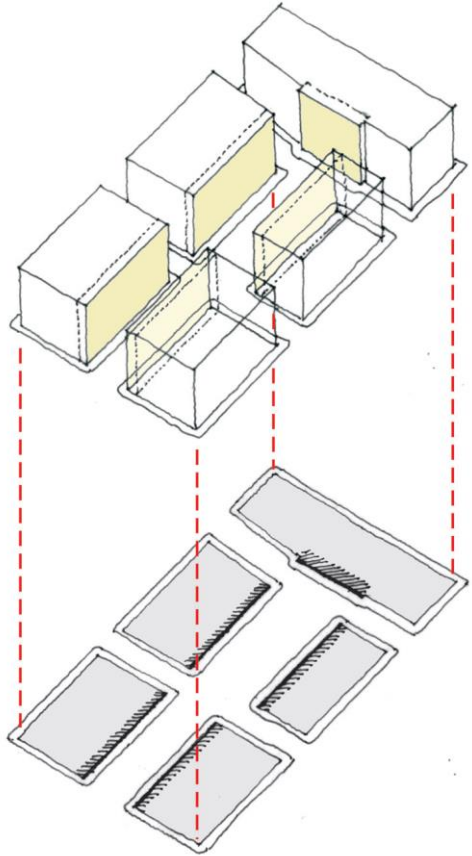


Squares and plazas should be framed by building facades and activated by their ground floor programmatic uses. They should include a broad clear ground plane that can be used in a wide variety of ways.



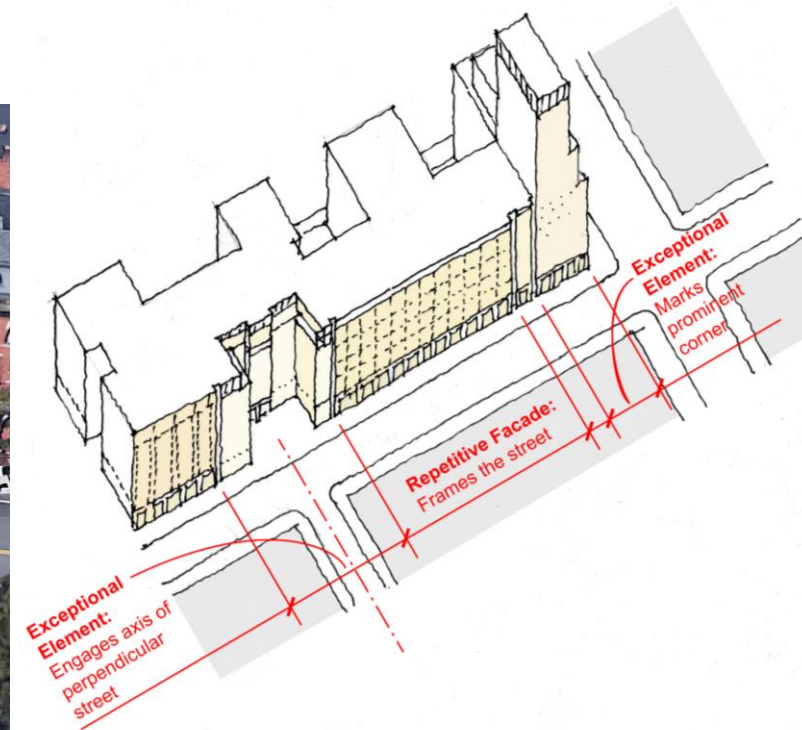
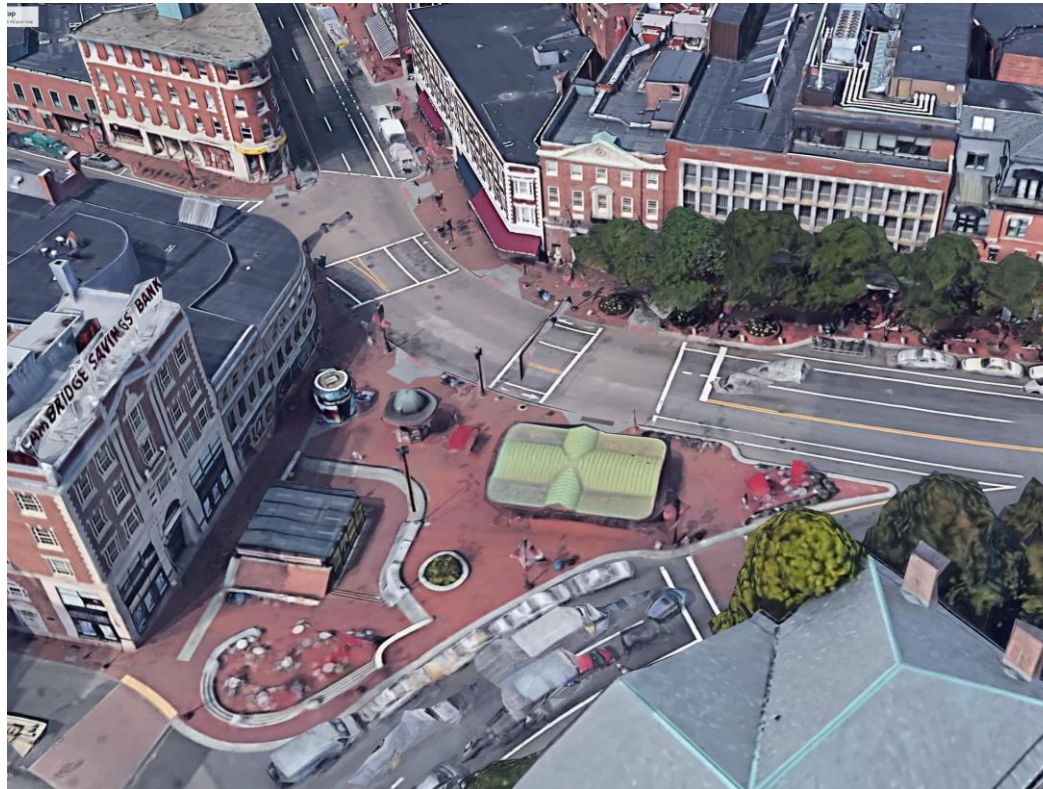
# Built Form

## Frame and articulate public space



### Frame Urban Space

Create continuous streetwalls to define streets and other public spaces.



### Articulate Urban Space

Break down building massing and differentiate facades to respond to and enhance streets and squares.



# Built Form

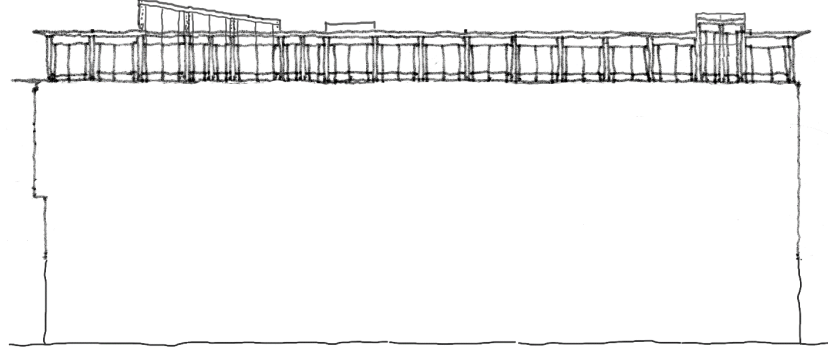
## Resilient Design – protect from flooding and extreme heat

- Elevate first floors and provide flood barriers.
- Uses below first floors are limited to parking and storage.
- Elevate critical mechanical, electrical, and communications systems.
- Passive solar design.
- Energy efficient envelope.
- Solar ready.
- Facilitate emergency access and egress.



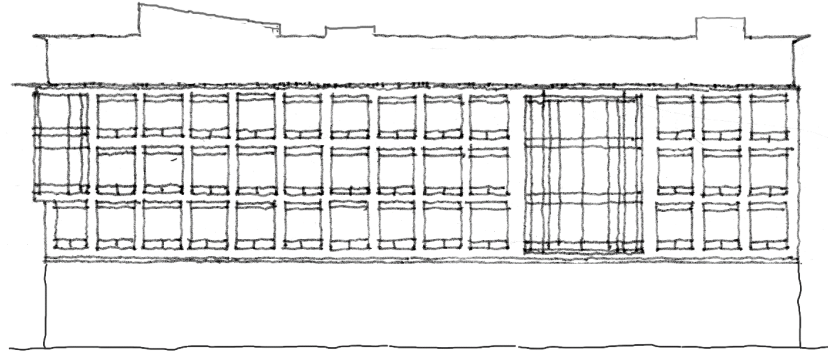
# Built Form

## Engage the multiple scales of the urban environment



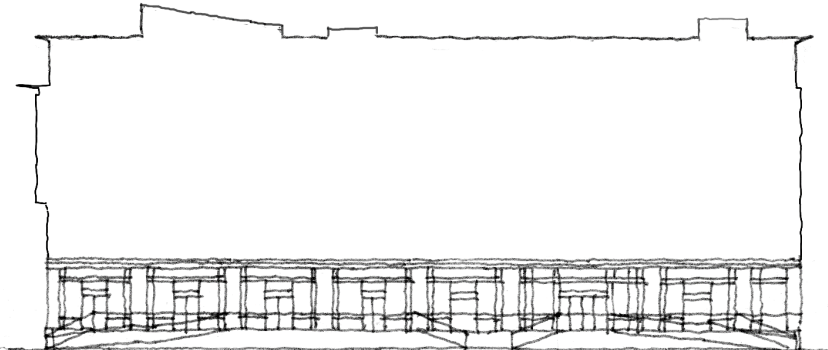
### Building Top

Contributes to the building's articulate massing, to the ways the building defines public space, and visually engages the sky.



### Streetwall Zone

Defines and shapes adjoining public spaces. Accommodates the bulk of the building's program.



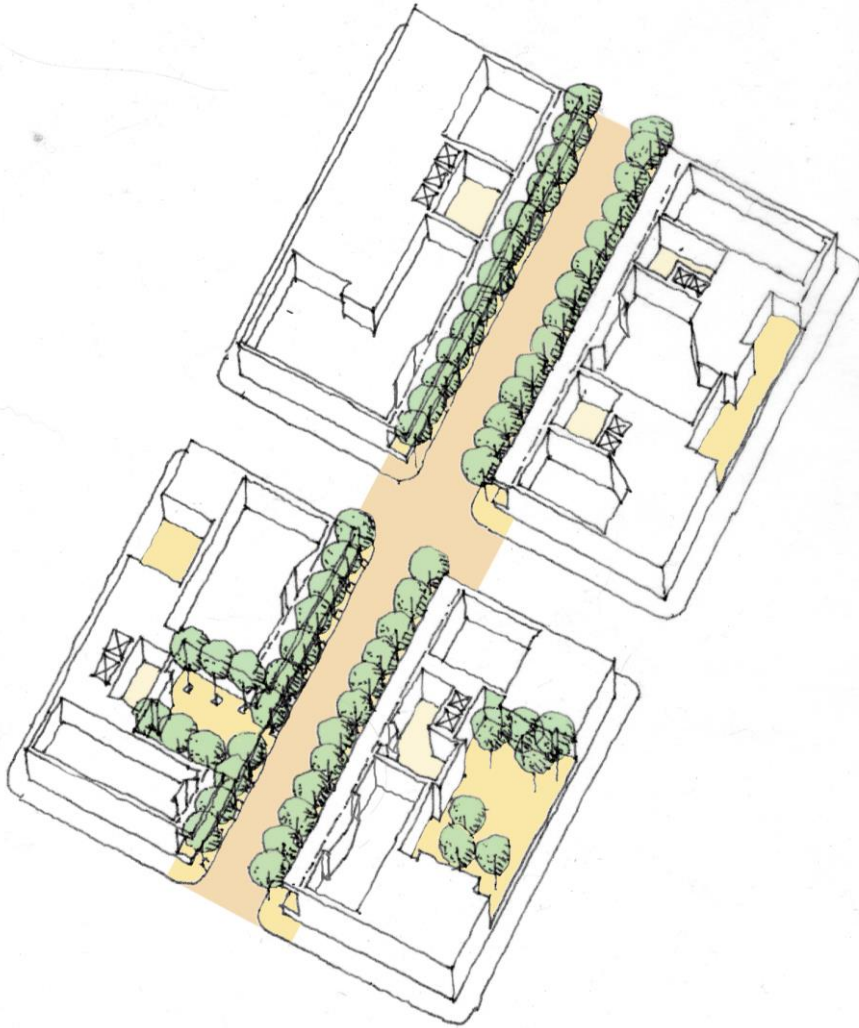
### Pedestrian Zone

Offers amenity, comfort, shelter, and visual enrichment. Where appropriate, accommodates enlivening retail and community uses.



# Built Form

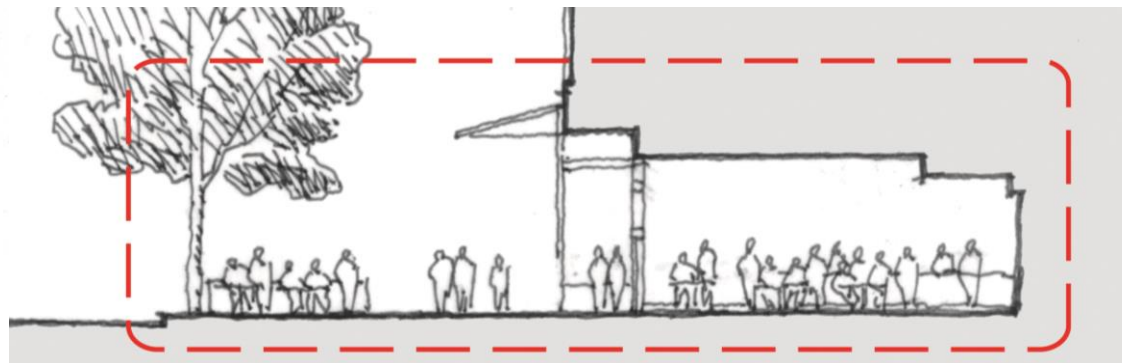
## The Pedestrian Zone – activate and enrich the pedestrian realm



Emphasize the horizontal continuity of the pedestrian realm.



Provide canopies, awnings, recessed entrances and shopfronts, and open restaurant windows.

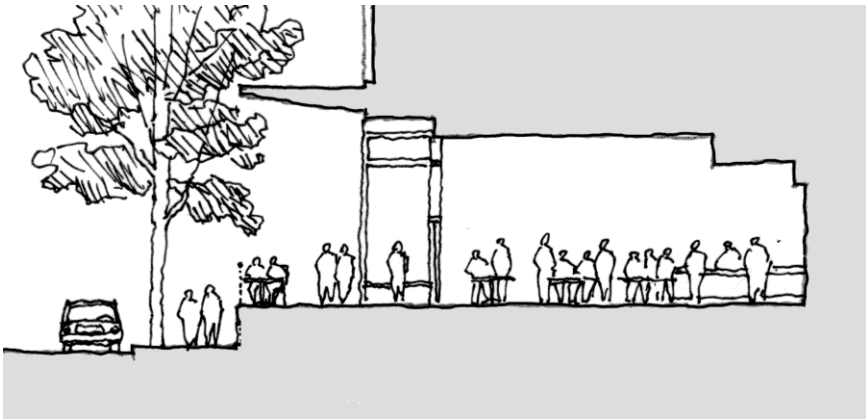


Transparent facades visually connect the public space of the street to the interior retail space.



# Built Form

## The Pedestrian Zone – protect from flooding



Elevated sidewalks give continuous access to elevated retail space.



Forecourts break up long facades and include stairs and ramps up to elevated first floors.





# Built Form

## Streetwall Zone



Align building streetwalls to define streets as room-like public spaces.



Provide variety in style and materials to visually enrich the pedestrian experience.



# Built Form

## The Building Top



Differentiate top floors to celebrate the building's profile at the skyline, and to reflect the presence of mechanical equipment, rooftop terraces, or other specialized functions.

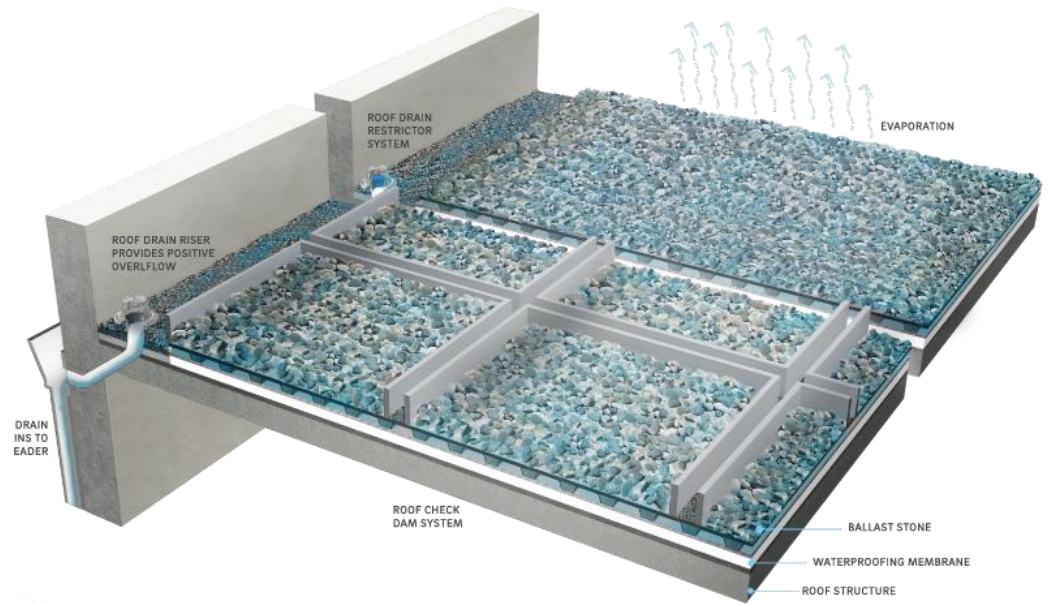


# Built Form

## Roofs



Utilize high albedo roofs, blue (stormwater retaining) roofs, or green roofs to slow stormwater runoff, and minimize the urban heat island effect. Solar energy ready. Incorporate roof gardens to hide parking garages and provide open space.





# Built Form

## Building Materials



- Utilize high quality, durable materials, designed and selected to minimize energy use.
- Avoid predominately glass facades.
- Consider:
  - Green walls.
  - Fixed and operable sun shading devices.
  - Light colors.



# Built Form

## Architectural Character



- Provide diversity and variety.
- Frame a coherent and meaningful public realm.
- Provide visual interest - scale, detail, proportion, relief, and shadow lines.



This has been a preliminary overview of the Guidelines, they're still in process.

The results of ongoing plans and studies, including the Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force, the Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience Plan, and the Urban Forest Master Plan, will be incorporated as they are developed.

Please give us your feedback, including additional topics that should be addressed.

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## Thank You