

Central Square Advisory Committee

April 4, 2012



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Agenda

- **Infill: exploring scale, character, and public space benefits**
 - Criteria
 - Program potential
 - Opportunity sites
- **Discussion**
- **Next steps**



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Key criteria for Central Square

- Enrich public spaces with more activity
- Increase support for vital, local retail
- Add and diversify housing choices
- Promote architecture and urban design that enhances the character of Central Square and adjoining neighborhoods



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Existing development – and opportunities for change

Potential soft sites 



Potential today – current zoning

*1,300-1,500 new housing units; 200,000sf updated/new retail space;
new residents would support 13-18%*



*Image depicts a potential development scenario;
not intended to represent a specific plan or design intent for specific sites*

Potential with modest increases in density:
1,800-2,000 housing units; 200,000sf updated/new retail;
new residents would support 20-25%



*Image depicts a potential development scenario;
not intended to represent a specific plan or design intent for specific sites*

**Potential with modest increases in density and height:
2,200-2,400 housing units; 200,000sf updated/new retail;
new residents would support 25-30%**



*Image depicts a potential development scenario;
not intended to represent a specific plan or design intent for specific sites*

Opportunity areas: where public realm, redevelopment and neighborhood connections can work together



Western-
River-
Magazine-
Green

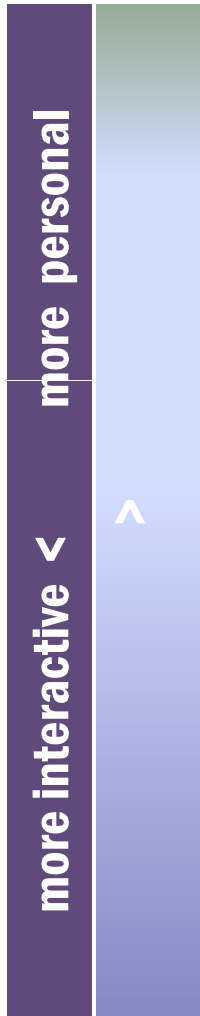
Essex-
Pearl-
Norfolk

Brookline-
Columbia

Main-
Bishop
Allen

Sidney-
Blanche-
Green

Active sidewalks and interiors



Residential front doors



Live/Work



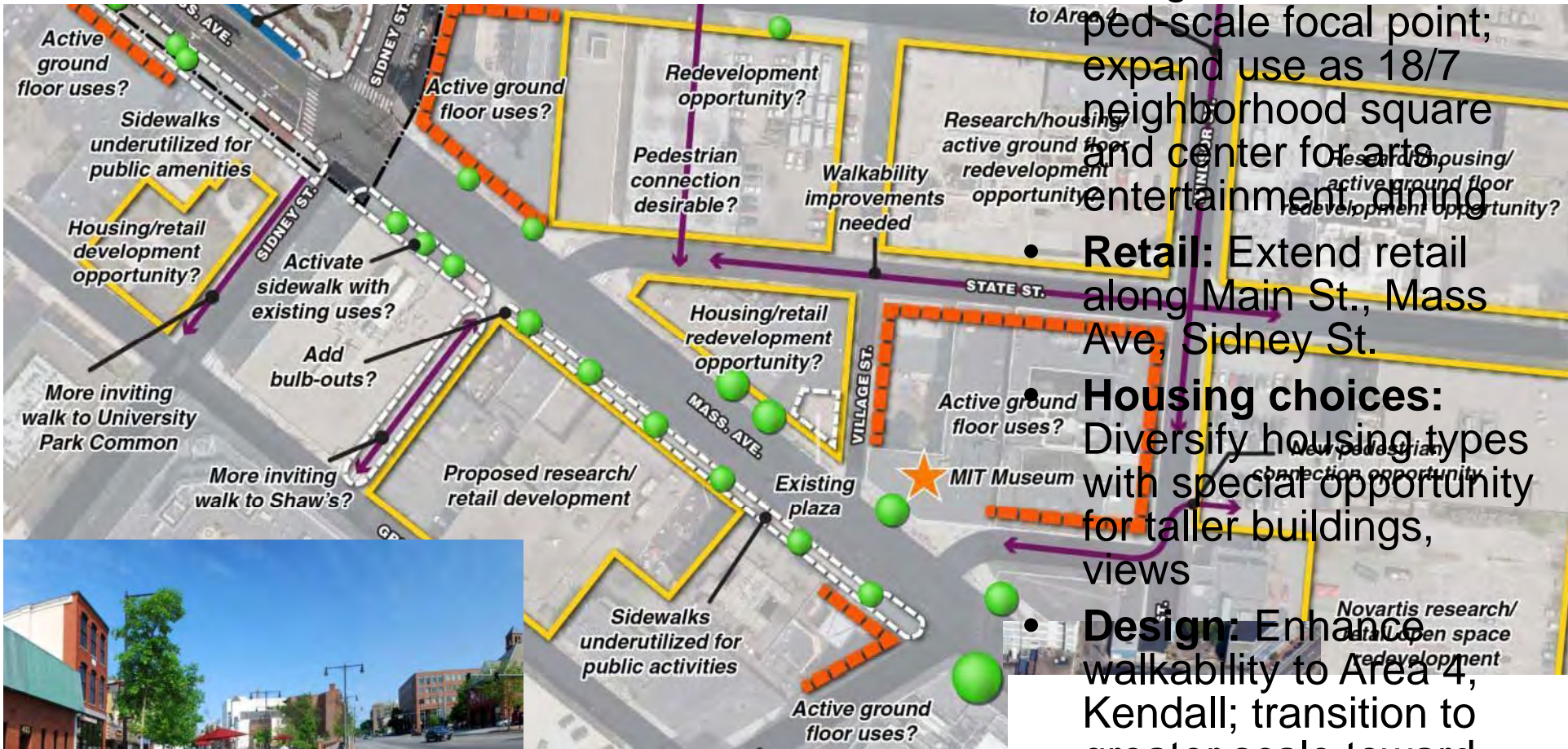
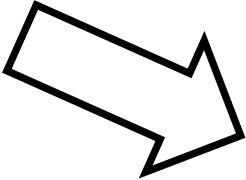
Retail/entertainment



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Redevelopment opportunity
Jill Brown-Rhone Park: Columbia St.

Jill Brown-Rhone Park: special opportunities



- **Public spaces:** Extend or create active edges along all sides; add ped-scale focal point; expand use as 18/7 neighborhood square and center for arts, entertainment, dining
- **Retail:** Extend retail along Main St., Mass Ave, Sidney St.
- **Housing choices:** Diversify housing types with special opportunity for taller buildings, views
- **Design:** Enhance walkability to Area 4, Kendall; transition to greater scale toward MIT; modern expression

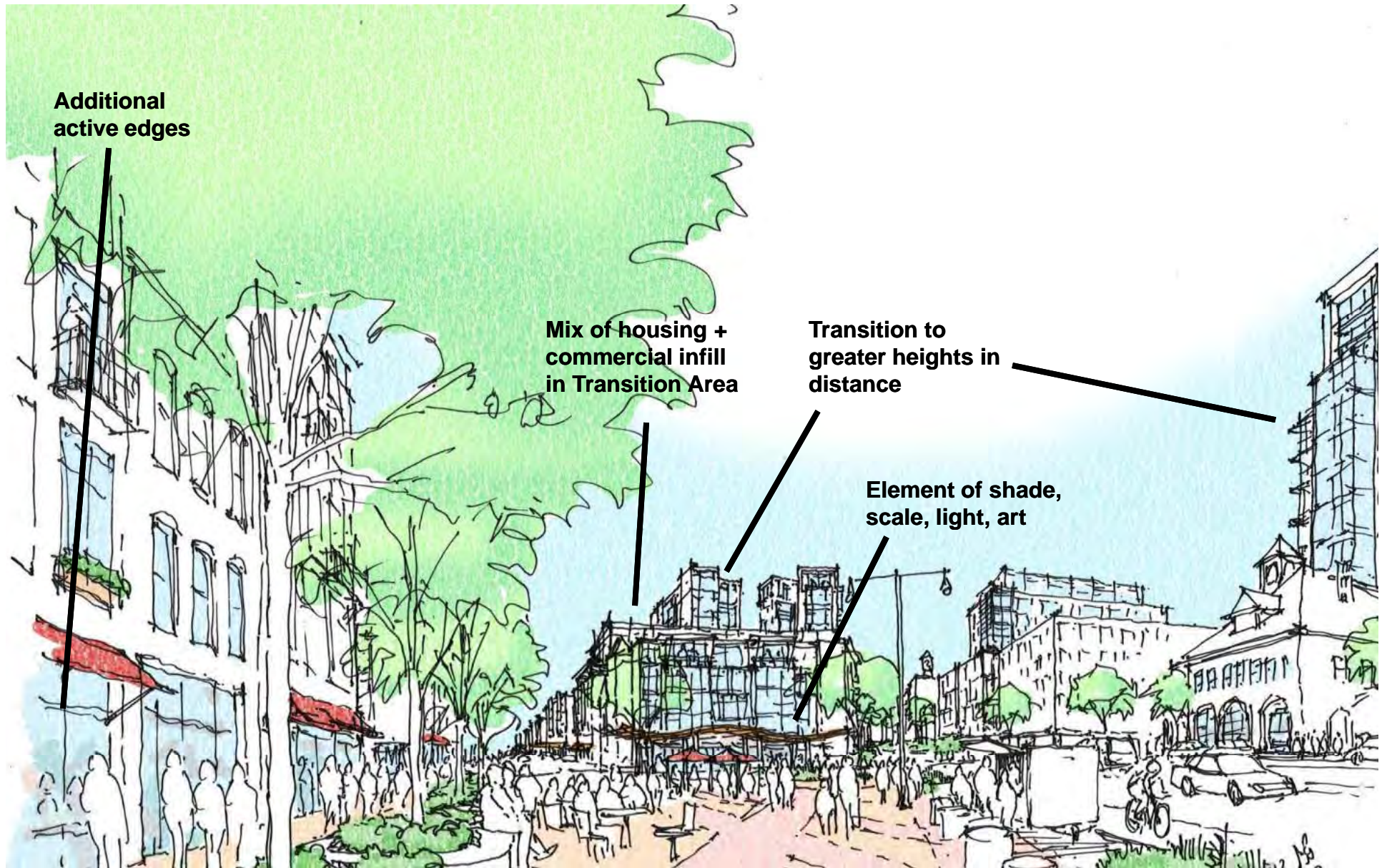
Jill Brown-Rhone Park



Jill Brown-Rhone Park



Jill Brown-Rhone Park



Bishop Allen Drive:
special opportunities

- **Public spaces:** Green Bishop Allen with rain gardens, compact planting beds.

- **Retail:** Reinforce retail node at Main/Mass Ave

- **Housing choices:** Engage Area 4, Mid-Cambridge communities with complementary housing choices, walkable streets, live/work space

- **Design:** Transition to Area 4 with 45' height, bays scaled to context



Bishop Allen Drive



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Bishop Allen Drive



Bishop Allen Drive



Building heights
proportions
scaled to context

Live/work

Planting beds

Rain garden

Mass Ave:
special opportunities

- **Public spaces:** Create new plaza space, activate existing sidewalks
- **Retail:** Unique opportunity to create new spaces tailored to market and community interest
- **Housing choices:** Establish an attractive transit-oriented neighborhood at Central Square's core. Special opportunity for height.
- **Design:** Activate sunny Mass Ave. and plaza edges; Reinforce Mass Ave. streetwall, avoid negative scale/shadow impacts



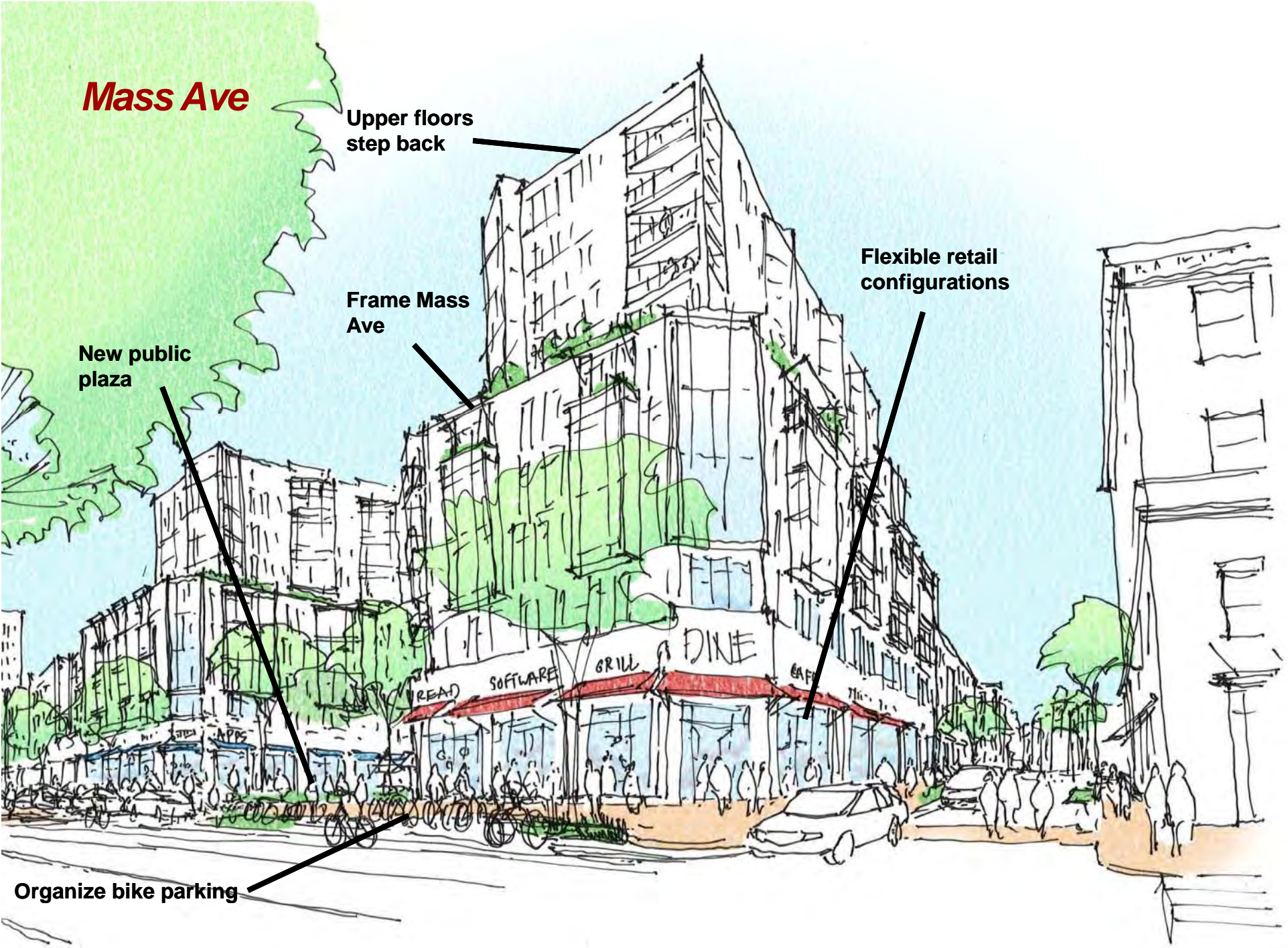
Mass Ave



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Mass Ave





Mass Ave

**Upper floors
step back**

**Frame Mass
Ave**

**Flexible retail
configurations**

**New public
plaza**

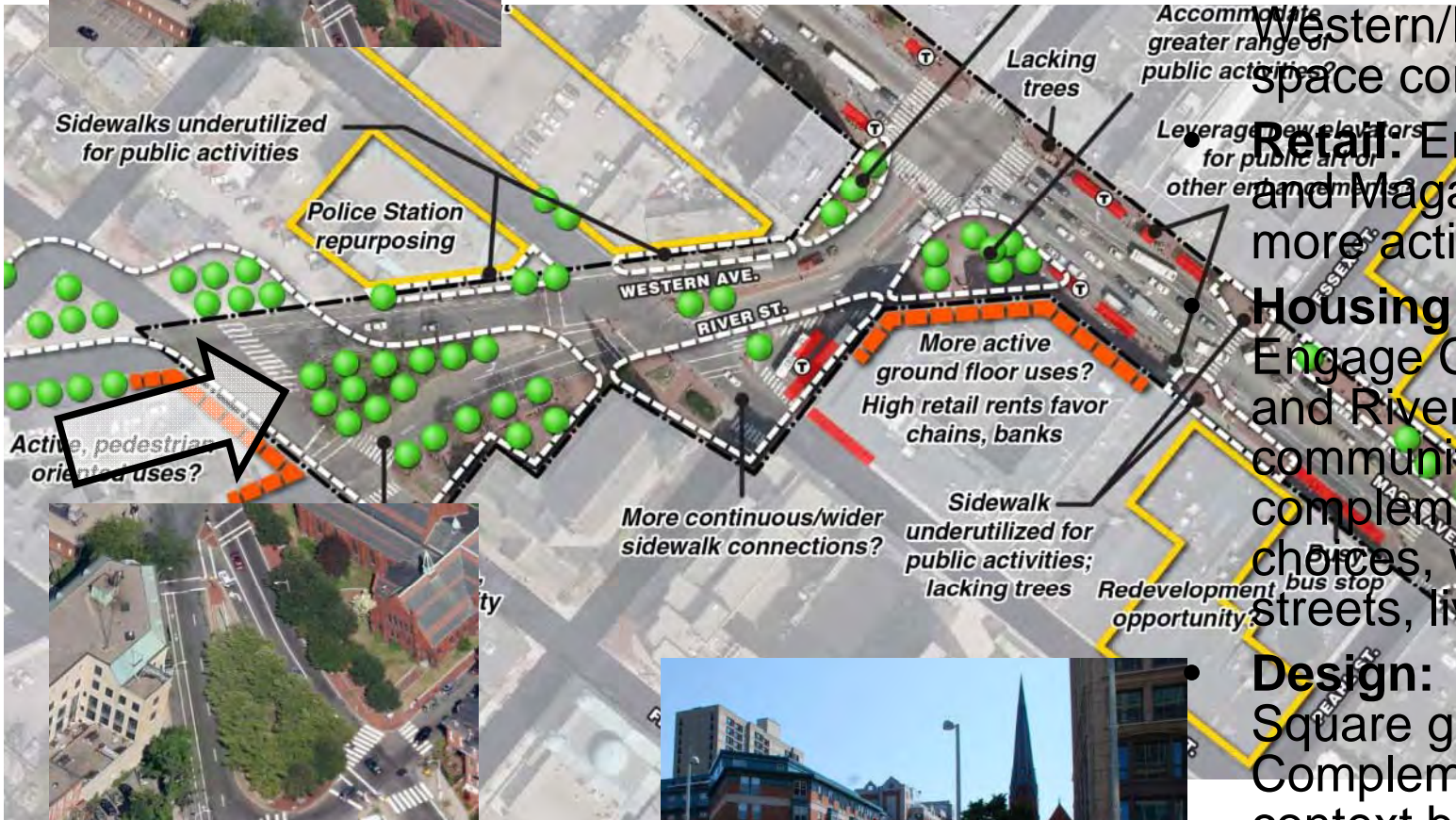
Organize bike parking

Mass Ave



Western Ave- Carl Barron Plaza: special opportunities

- **Public spaces:** Activate Carl Barron Plaza and connect into Western/River green space corridor
- **Retail:** Engage Western and Magazine with more active retail
- **Housing choices:** Engage Cambridgeport and Riverside communities with complementary housing choices, walkable streets, live/work space
- **Design:** Create Central Square gateway; Complement taller context buildings; transition to 45' height at neighborhood edges

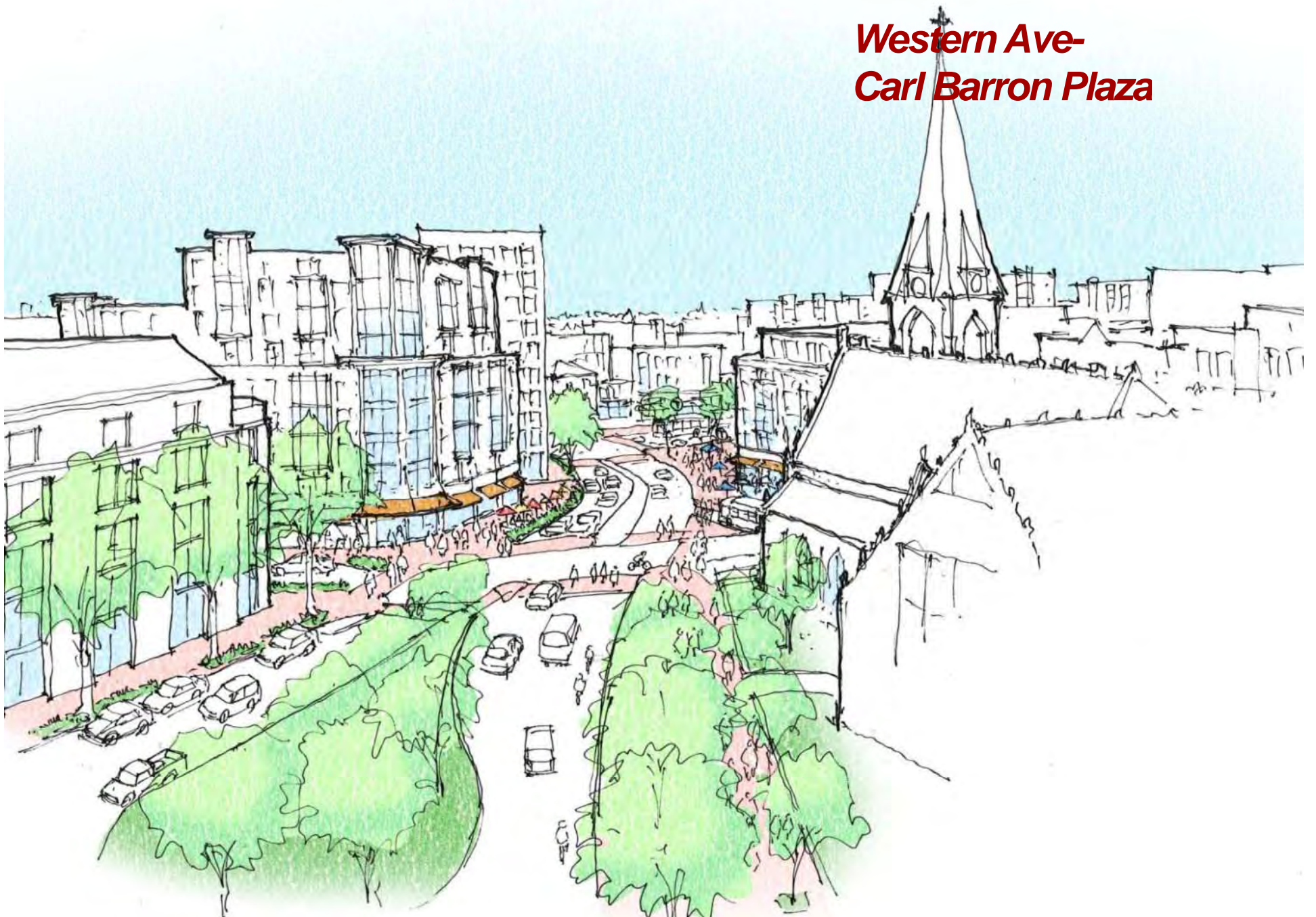


Western Ave- Carl Barron Plaza

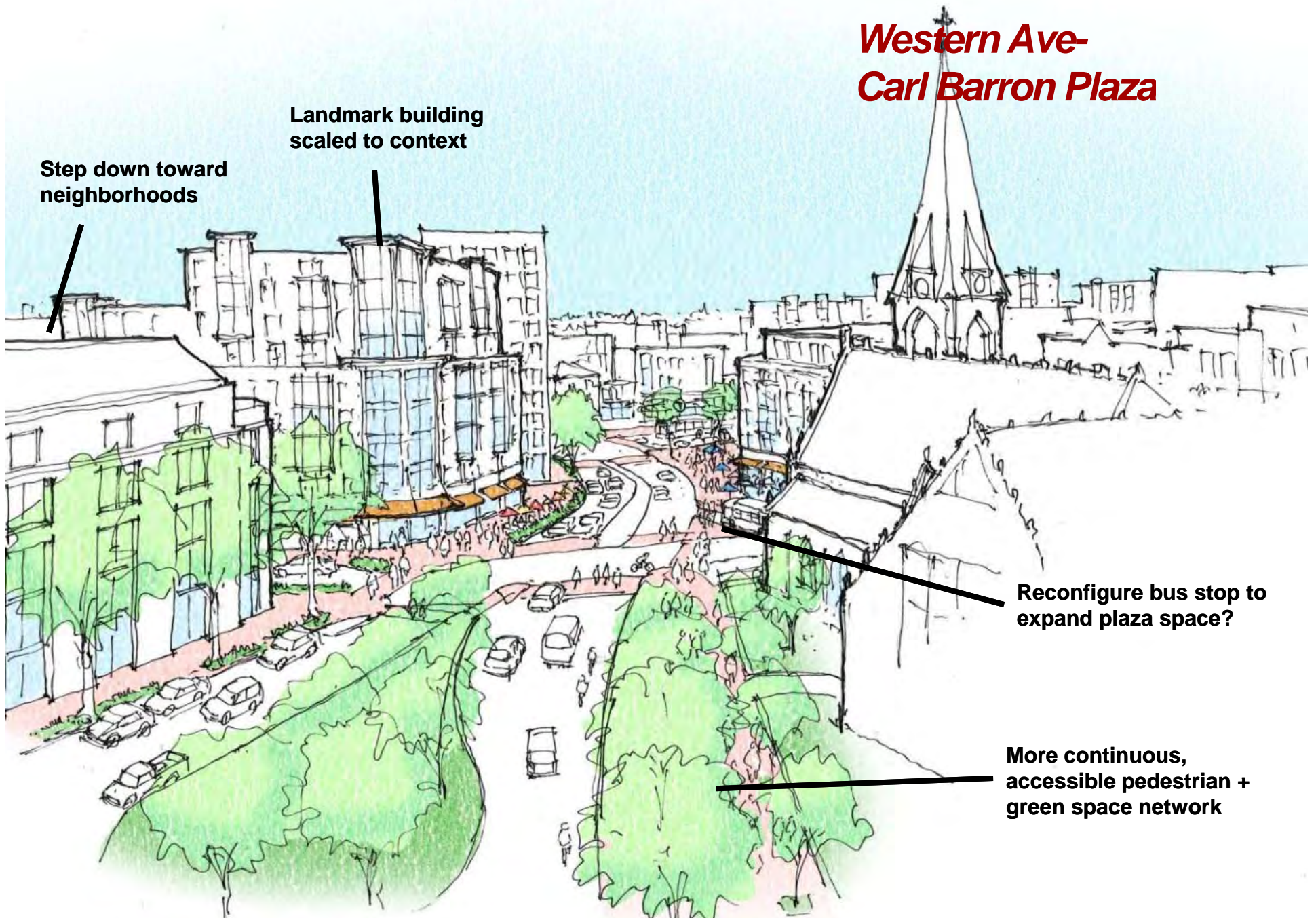


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***Western Ave-
Carl Barron Plaza***



Western Ave- Carl Barron Plaza



Step down toward neighborhoods

Landmark building scaled to context

Reconfigure bus stop to expand plaza space?

More continuous, accessible pedestrian + green space network

Discussion

