Riverside Neighborhood Study Update

City of Cambridge
Community Development Department
February 12, 2011

Why Are We Here?

- Information about planning in Cambridge
- Your thoughts, concerns, vision for the future of the neighborhood
- Dialogue about long-term planning issues –
  How will the neighborhood change over 10 years or more?

Today's Agenda

- Introduction to Neighborhood Planning
- Your Thoughts and Questions
- Review and Summarize Main Points
- Open Discussion, Next Steps

Neighborhood Studies

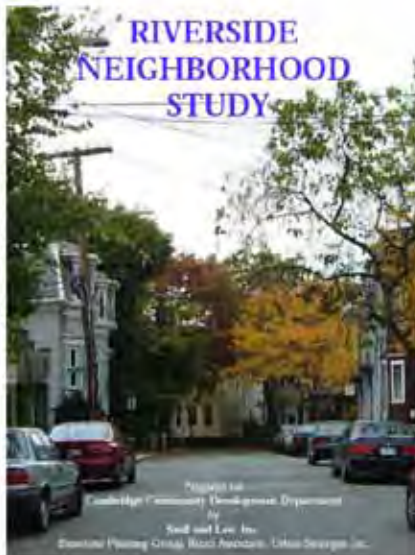- Riverside Neighborhood Study (1993)
- Riverside Neighborhood Study Update (2003)

Study Update Process

- Series of 2-3 community meetings
- Online questionnaire
- Discuss planning in the neighborhood
- Develop recommendations for future planning
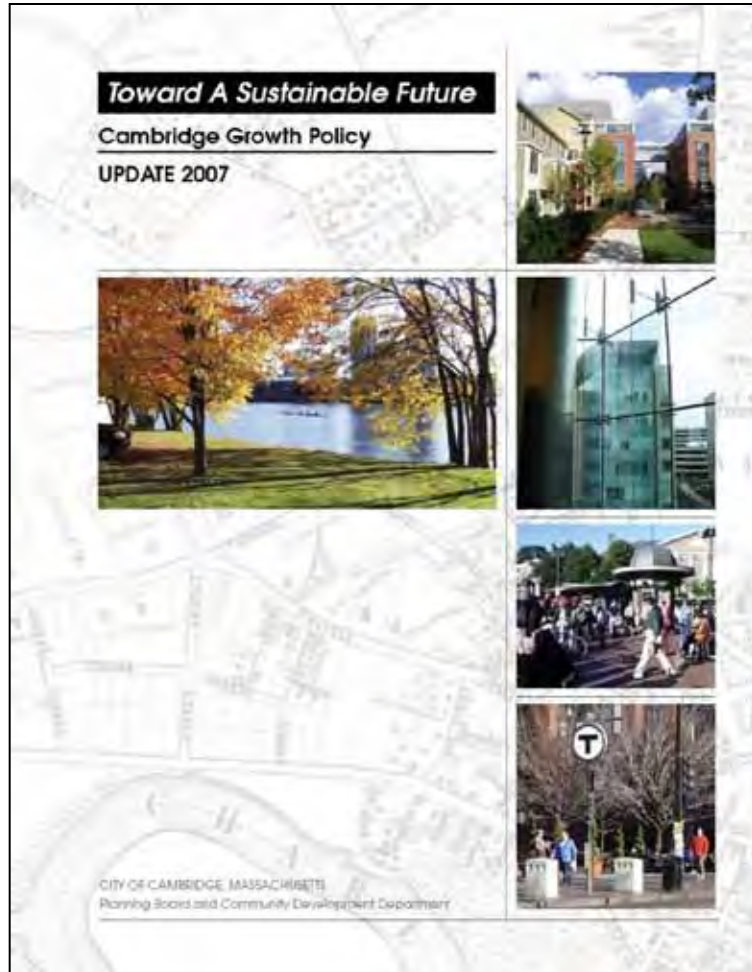- Report: Summary, recommendations and future action steps

What is City Planning?

- Providing a vision for the city's future
- Managing city growth over time
- Creating a more **sustainable** city

Planning Tools

- City ordinances, policies (Zoning, Design Guidelines, and others)
- Public investment (e.g. transportation, parks and open space
- Programs and services

What Guides Cambridge's Planning Today?

- Growth Policy (1993, 2007)
- "Citywide Rezoning" (2001)
- Climate Protection Plan (2002)
  - Topic-Specific Studies:
    - Green Ribbon Open Space (2000)
    - Green Zoning Task Force (2009)
  - Area-Specific Studies:
    - Eastern Cambridge (2001)
    - Concord-Alewife (2006)
  - Neighborhood Studies and Updates (1989-present)

Overall City Goals

- Serve a diverse population
- Good housing, neighborhoods
- Sustainability
- Beautiful parklands and pathways
- Healthy economic base – jobs, retail
- High-quality city services
- Public process to address growth

Riverside: At a Glance

- Of the neighborhood's 10,000+ residents ...

    ~ 8% are under 18 (13% citywide)

    ~ 41% are 18-24 years old (21% citywide)

    ~ 51% attend college or graduate school (26% citywide)

    ~ 34% live in group quarters (dorms, hospitals)

    ~ 66% of households are "non-family"

    ~ Average 1.93 persons per household (2.03 citywide)
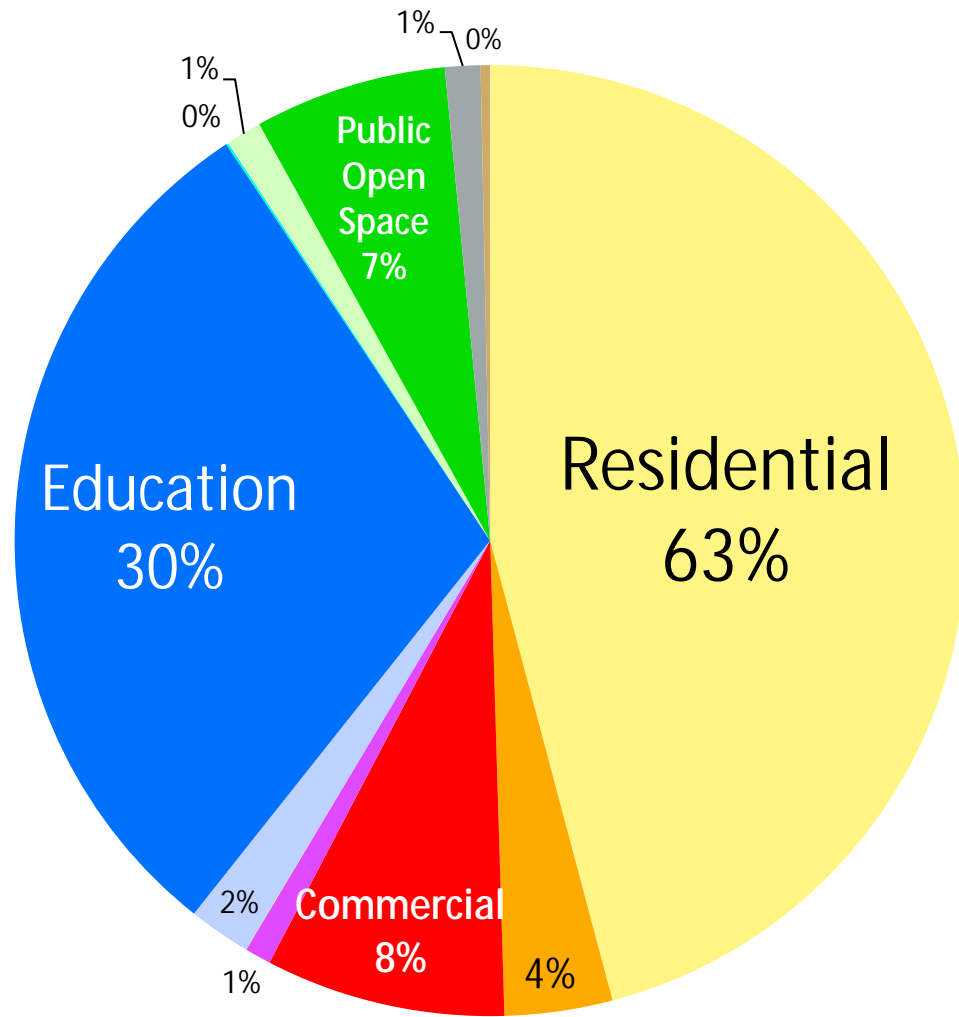
Source: US Census, 2000

Neighborhood Planning Topics

- Land Use and Zoning

- Energy and Environment

- Transportation

- Housing

- Economic Development

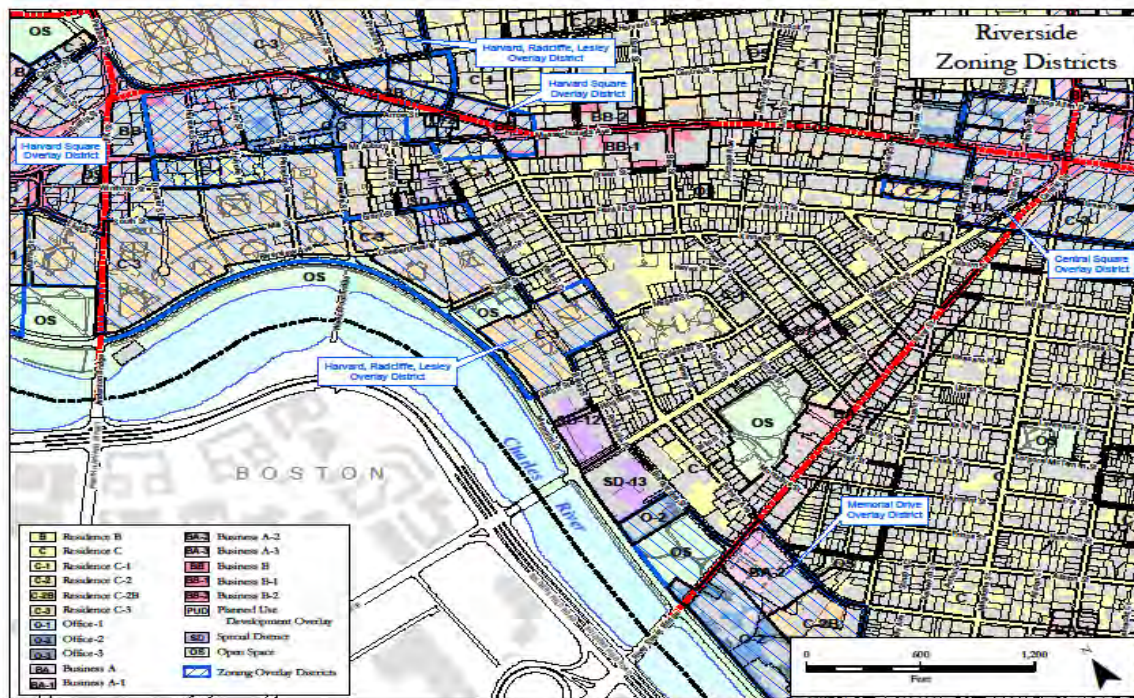- Open Space

Land Uses in Riverside

Pie chart data:
- Residential 63%
- Mixed Use 4%
- Commercial 8%
- Industrial 1%
- Charity 2%
- Education 30%
- Health 0%
- Government 1%
- Public Open Space 7%
- Transportation 1%
- Vacant 0%

Legend:
- **Residential**
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Charity
- **Education**
- Health
- Government
- Public Open Space
- Transportation
- Vacant

Land Uses by Area
Source: Cambridge Assessing Department
(all figures approximate)

Land Use and Zoning Goals

- Support a healthy mix of uses
- Preserve existing character where appropriate
- Support housing, economic growth
- Address impacts of development

Residential Neighborhoods

- Maintain pattern of development
- Rehabilitate existing housing stock
- New housing at existing height and scale

Retail and Office Districts

- Support new retail where it exists
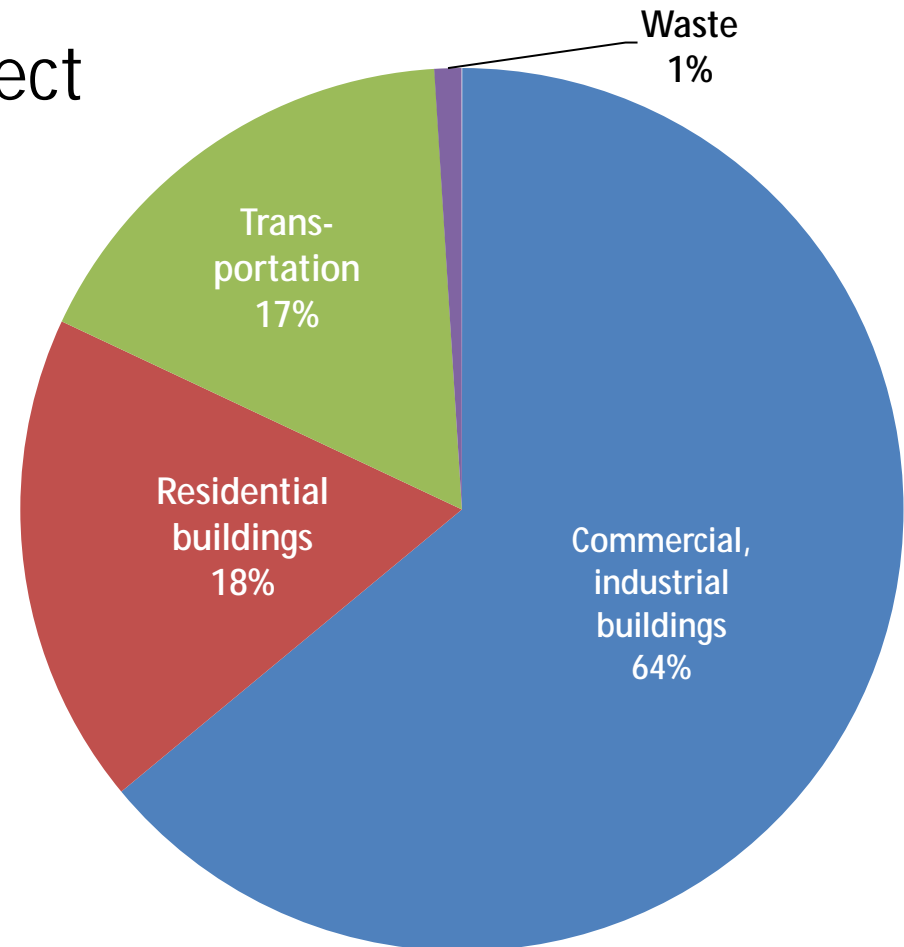- Allow new housing

Institutions

- Institutional Use Overlay Districts
- Limited growth in residential districts
- Economic and cultural activity near campus

Energy and Environment Goals

- Energy efficiency, renewable energy
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Moderating heat island effect
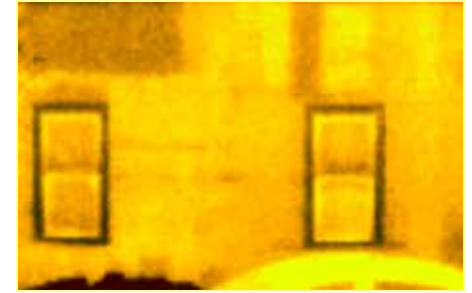- Stormwater management
- Reducing waste, increasing recycling

Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Cambridge
Source: Community Development Department
(all figures approximate)

Waste
1%

Trans-
portation
17%

Residential
buildings
18%

Commercial,
industrial
buildings
64%

Energy and Buildings

Thermal Scan of Building

Before insulation

After insulation

- Improved energy efficiency for existing buildings (Insulation, efficient appliances and mechanicals)

- "Green Zoning" for new construction

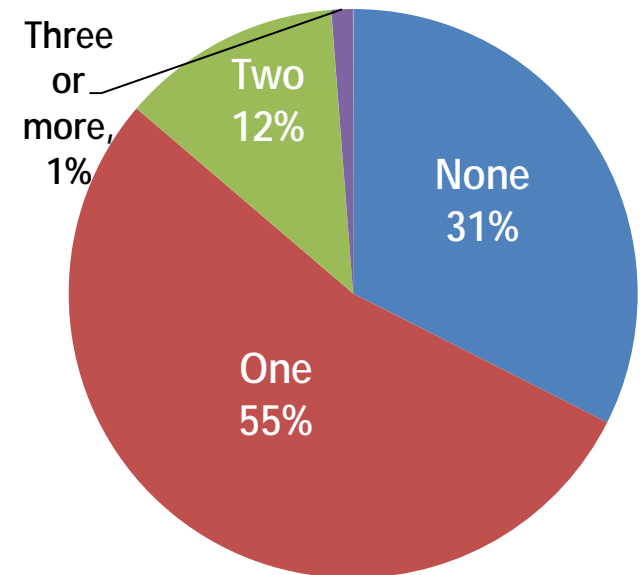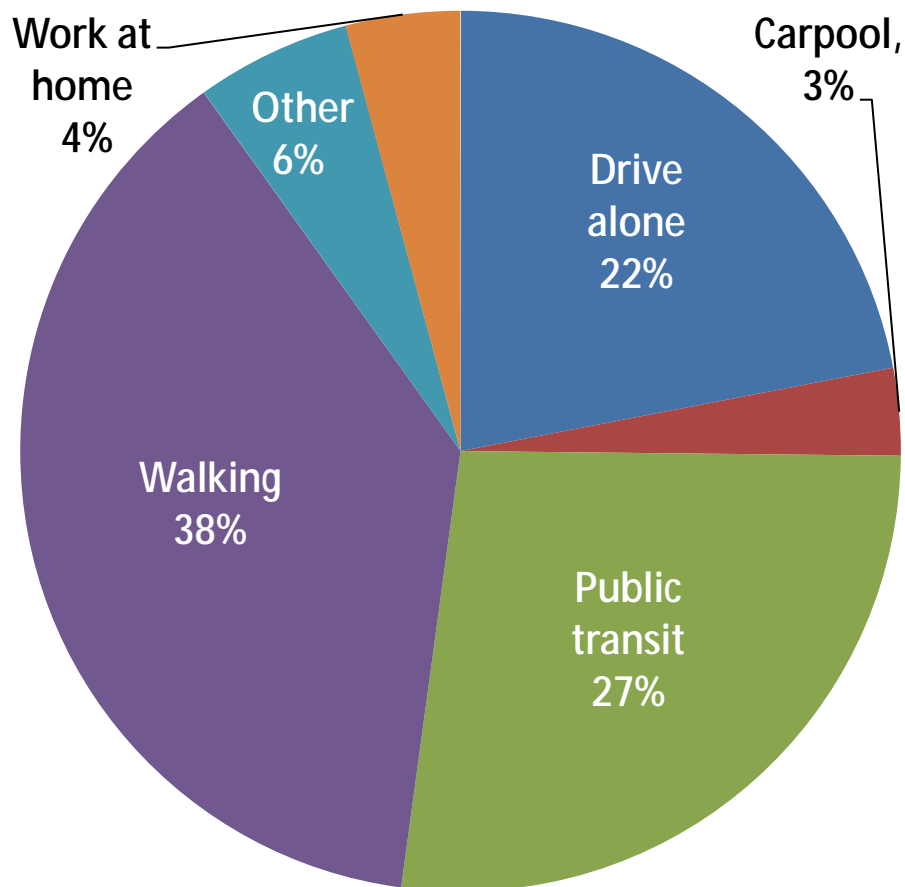- Renewable Energy – solar, wind

Stormwater and Urban Heat Island

- Vegetation, trees, rain gardens
- Green roofs and white roofs

Transportation in Riverside

Journey-to-Work for Riverside Residents
Source: US Census, 2000
(all figures approximate)

Pie chart – Journey-to-Work:
- Drive alone 22%
- Carpool, 3%
- Public transit 27%
- Walking 38%
- Work at home 4%
- Other 6%

Pie chart – Cars Owned by Household:
- None 31%
- One 55%
- Two 12%
- Three or more, 1%

Cars Owned by Household
Source: US Census, 2000
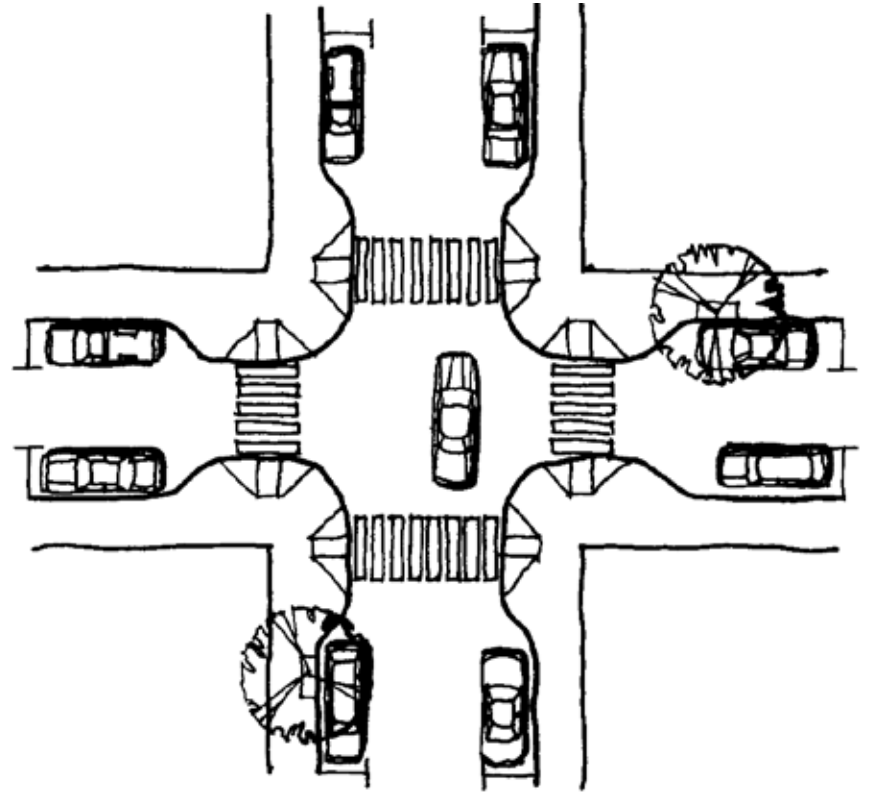*(all figures approximate)*

Transportation Goals

In order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve livability and sustainability;

- Reduce auto use

- Support walking, bicycling, public transportation (livability, sustainability)

- Make roads safer – slow speeds on residential streets

Transportation Projects/Programs

- Roadway, sidewalk improvements
- Bicycle facilities (lanes, paths, parking)
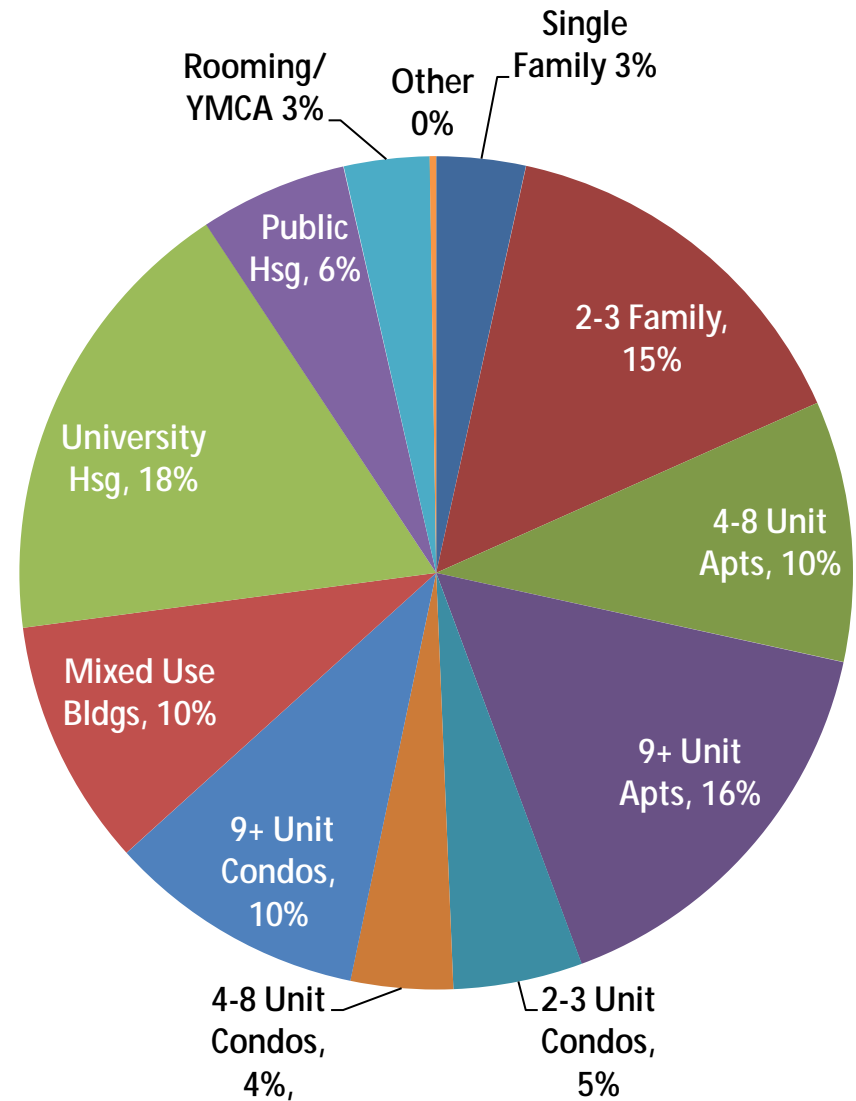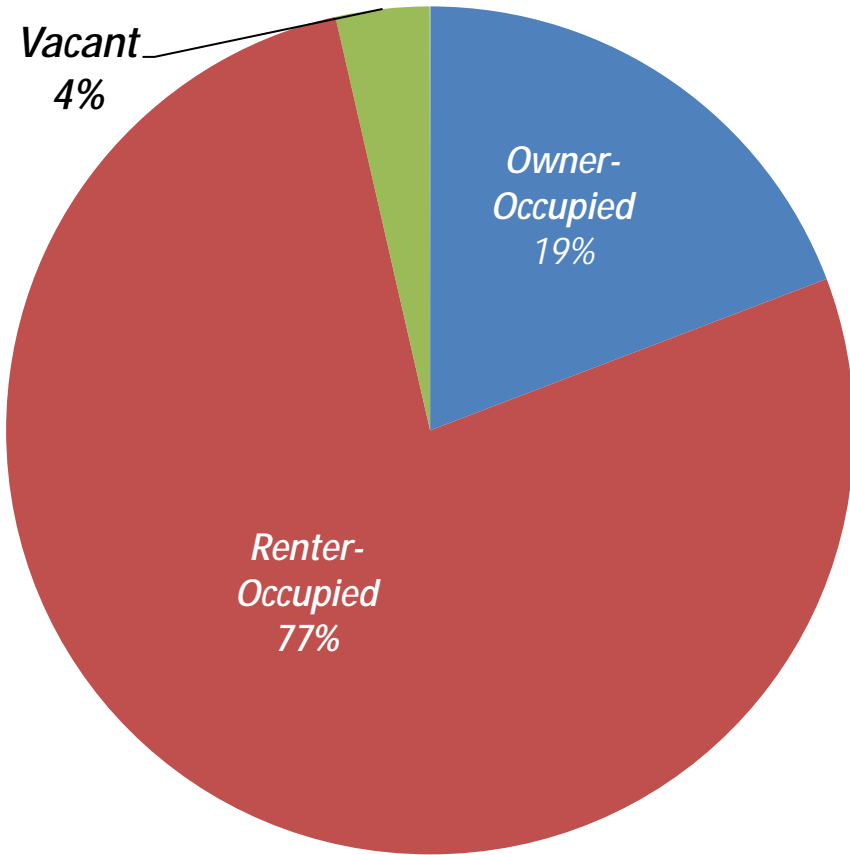- Parking and transportation requirements for new development

Outreach Programs

- Transportation choices
- Reducing energy use
- Recycling programs
- Recognizing community efforts

Housing in Riverside

Units by Tenure
Source: US Census, 2000
(all figures approximate)

- Owner-Occupied 19%
- Renter-Occupied 77%
- Vacant 4%

- Single Family 3%
- 2-3 Family, 15%
- 4-8 Unit Apts, 10%
- 9+ Unit Apts, 16%
- 2-3 Unit Condos, 5%
- 4-8 Unit Condos, 4%,
- 9+ Unit Condos, 10%
- Mixed Use Bldgs, 10%
- University Hsg, 18%
- Public Hsg, 6%
- Rooming/ YMCA 3%
- Other 0%

Units by Building Type
Source: Cambridge Assessing Department
(all figures approximate)

Affordable Housing Programs

- Inclusionary Zoning
- Affordable Housing Trust
- Home Improvement Programs
- Homebuyer and Renter Assistance

Businesses in Riverside

- Mostly small independent businesses
- Some retail or office "mini-districts"
- Several "non-conforming" businesses

Small Business Support Programs

- Grant programs (façade designs, store renovations)
- Workshops
- SiteFinder service, one-on-one consulting

Open Space in Riverside

- About 17.5 acres total
- Hoyt Field, Riverside Press Park and the Charles River make up the largest spaces
- With smaller playgrounds and "pocket parks"

Open Space Goals

- Maintain and improve what exists
- Provide variety of open space uses
- Expand supply and improve access as appropriate (Green Ribbon Study)
- Support "play" for community health and well-being (not just for kids!)

Open Space Improvement

- Making better use of public space
- Encouraging new types of activity
- Giving places a unique character

Neighborhood Planning Questions

- What do you like about the character of the neighborhood?

- What concerns do you have about the neighborhood?

- What do you see as opportunities for change and improvement over time?