

## **EXPLORING PRIORITIES**

On February 3rd more than 150 Cambridge citizens took part in a Citywide growth management workshop, organized by the Community Development Department and the Citywide Growth Management Advisory Committee. Another 160 persons participated in the exploration by responding to the City's questionnaire by mail or by the Internet.

At the workshop, a slide presentation reviewed the process leading to and following the 1993 Growth Policy Document *Towards a Sustainable Future*. Participants then divided into groups for discussing and adding to the thirteen "...*Sustainable Future*" goals. Each group selected its four or five highest priority concerns, and made a presentation of them when the groups reconvened. At the end of the meeting, participants voted their four priorities for City effort among the thirteen goals. Those participating by mail and Internet did similar voting.

## **RESULTS**

Results are strikingly consistent across groups and between the workshop and the questionnaires. Every one of the thirteen 1993 goals had substantial support, both in the final workshop voting and in the mail and web inputs. All seven workshop groups that selected priorities for their concerns chose as one of them "good housing for a wide spectrum of incomes and households." That same concern also gained the most individual "votes" at the end of the workshop, and among those voting by mail and Internet it was second only to "An environment where families and children can thrive."

Five groups selected some type of economic development as one of its top priorities. In every case they expressed specific development preferences, such as small neighborhood businesses or home-based businesses. Strengthening growth management was also selected as a priority topic by five of the seven reporting groups, even though that was not among the 13 published goals. Diversity, reduced auto traffic, and parks and open space each were a priority for three of the seven reporting groups.

Looking across all the results, participants stressed concern for the quality of life, and for protecting the City's diversity and environment. Participants suggested that large amounts of development are not necessary to sustain those qualities. They supported action to better manage growth, and sought a more effective voice for citizen participants in that management process. The challenge now is to move from these priority goals to effectively serving them, with a special focus on zoning, the topic with which this effort began.