Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study

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Summary, Recommendations and Action Plan

City of Cambridge ▪ Community Development Department

Winter 2005

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Many thanks to Steve Christos and the staff at the Frisoli Youth Center for hosting the public meetings for this process.

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Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study

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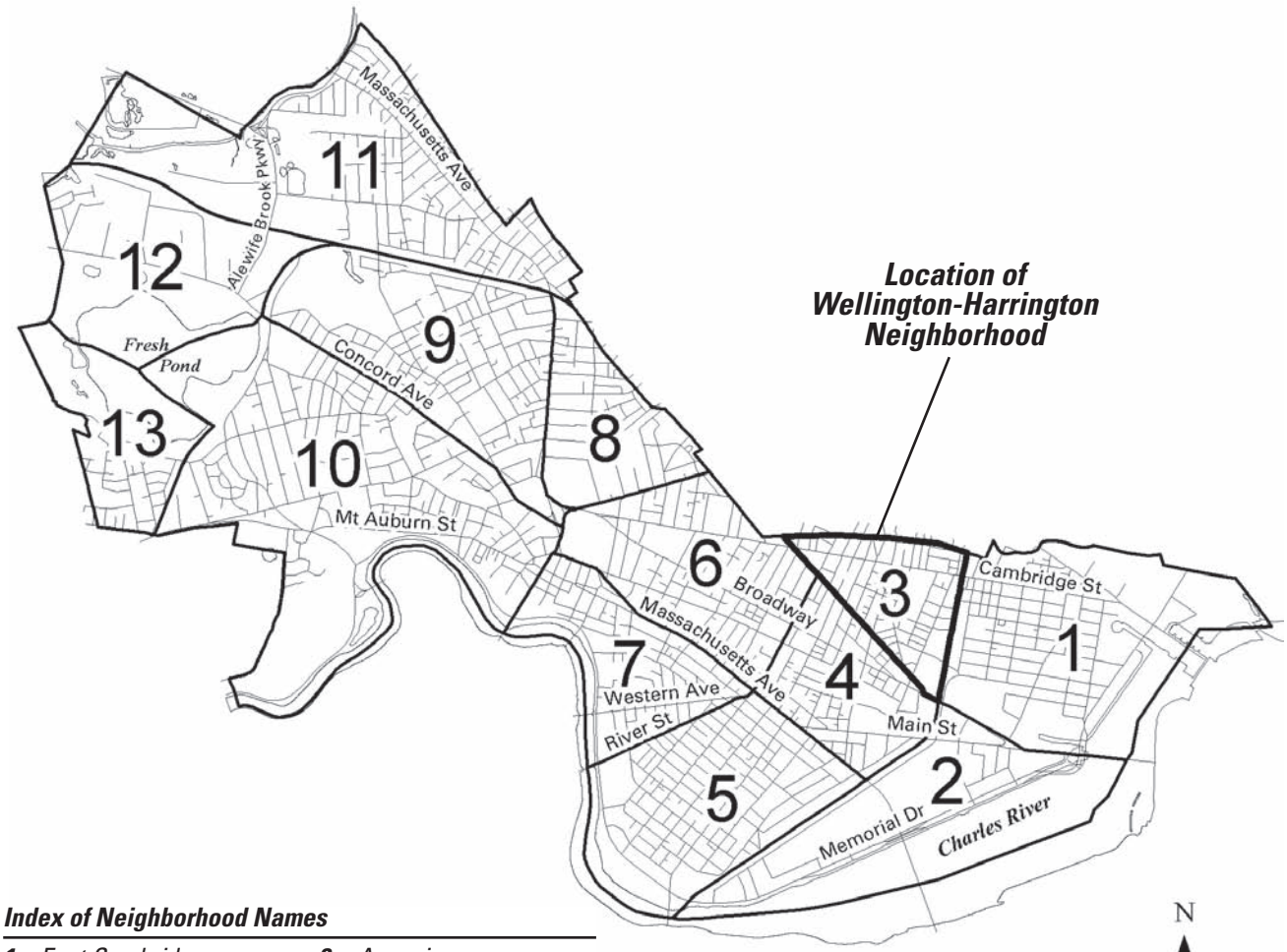
Introduction

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Location Map

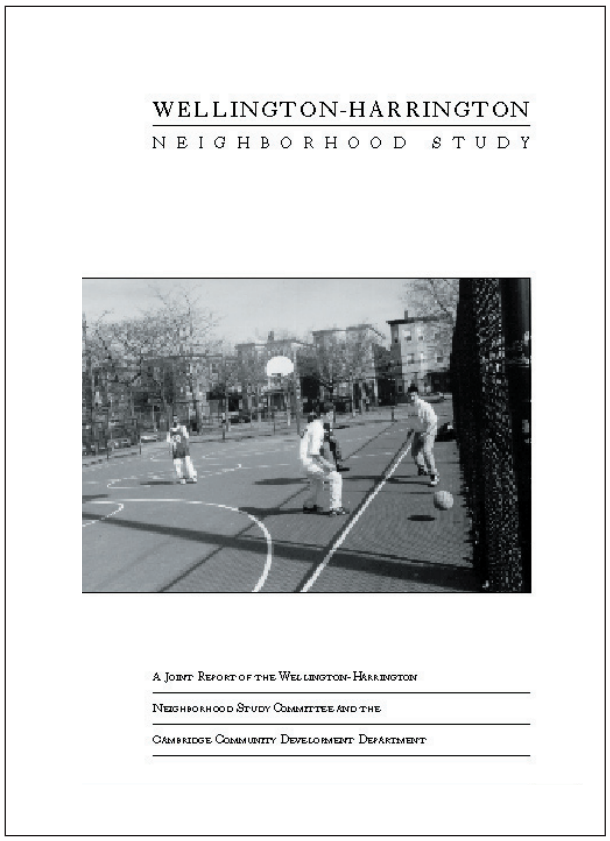


Index of Neighborhood Names

1 - *East Cambridge*
2 - *MIT/Area2*
3 - *Wellington-Harrington*
4 - *Area Four*
5 - *Cambridgeport*
6 - *Mid-Cambridge*
7 - *Riverside*
8 - *Agassiz*
9 - *Neighborhood Nine*
10 - *Neighborhood Ten*
11 - *North Cambridge*
12 - *Cambridge Highlands*
13 - *Strawberry Hill*

History

Since 1988, the Community Development Department (CDD), through its neighborhood planning program, has conducted comprehensive studies in ten of the city's neighborhoods. CDD staff work collaboratively with a citizen committee appointed by the City Manager to identify planning opportunities and make recommendations for a course of action. Recommendations address such issues as traffic and parking, housing affordability and homeownership, neighborhood commercial areas and employment, park maintenance, and rezoning for areas that are inappropriately zoned. As part of each neighborhood study, CDD collects data on demographic changes, as well as changes in housing markets, land use, and development potential in each neighborhood. Where appropriate, the recommendations resulting from the neighborhood studies are incorporated into the work programs of city departments for implementation. In some cases, this implementation takes place over a short period of time, in others it is part of long-term strategic planning. The neighborhood study process has also informed the city's growth policy document, *Towards a Sustainable Cambridge,* which outlines planning assumptions and policies in the areas of land use, transportation, housing, economic development, open space, and urban design.


WELLINGTON-HARRINGTON
NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY

A Joint Report of the Wellington-Harrington
Neighborhood Study Committee and the
Cambridge Community Development Department

Neighborhood Study Updates

To ensure that these studies remain current and useful, CDD has begun the practice of periodic study updates. Each neighborhood study will be updated approximately every three to four years. The update process involves a series of public meetings, where community members are invited to comment on the original study recommendations, suggest new items, and prioritize issues. City staff from various departments attend these meetings to give presentations and answer questions as needed.

The end result of the update process is a "Summary, Recommendations, and Action Plan" document that is made available to the public, City Council, and City staff. The update process is intended to ensure that neighborhood studies remain current documents that evolve with the changing times.

The following are the goals and objectives underlying the neighborhood study and update process:

Goal

To enhance and inform the delivery of municipal services through collaborative planning between citizens, City Council, and city departments.

Objectives

- To create a planning process that has input from community members.
- To inform members of the community by making neighborhood study reports available to the public, in print and online.
- To provide information to department heads and other city staff about community needs and values.
- To assist with the budget and management process.
- To formulate long-term plans for neighborhood improvements.
- To conduct work on a neighborhood level that is reflective of larger citywide planning practices (such as the Growth Policy Document and the Report of the Green Ribbon Open Space Committee).

Implementation

The goal of these neighborhood studies is to create a strong link between community process and the everyday work done by the city's many departments. It is important that these studies remain an integral part of the strategic management, budgeting, and daily operations of city departments. For this reason, CDD will increase outreach to other departments while developing studies and, once they are completed, will communicate recommendations to relevant departments to be incorporated into their work plans.

Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study

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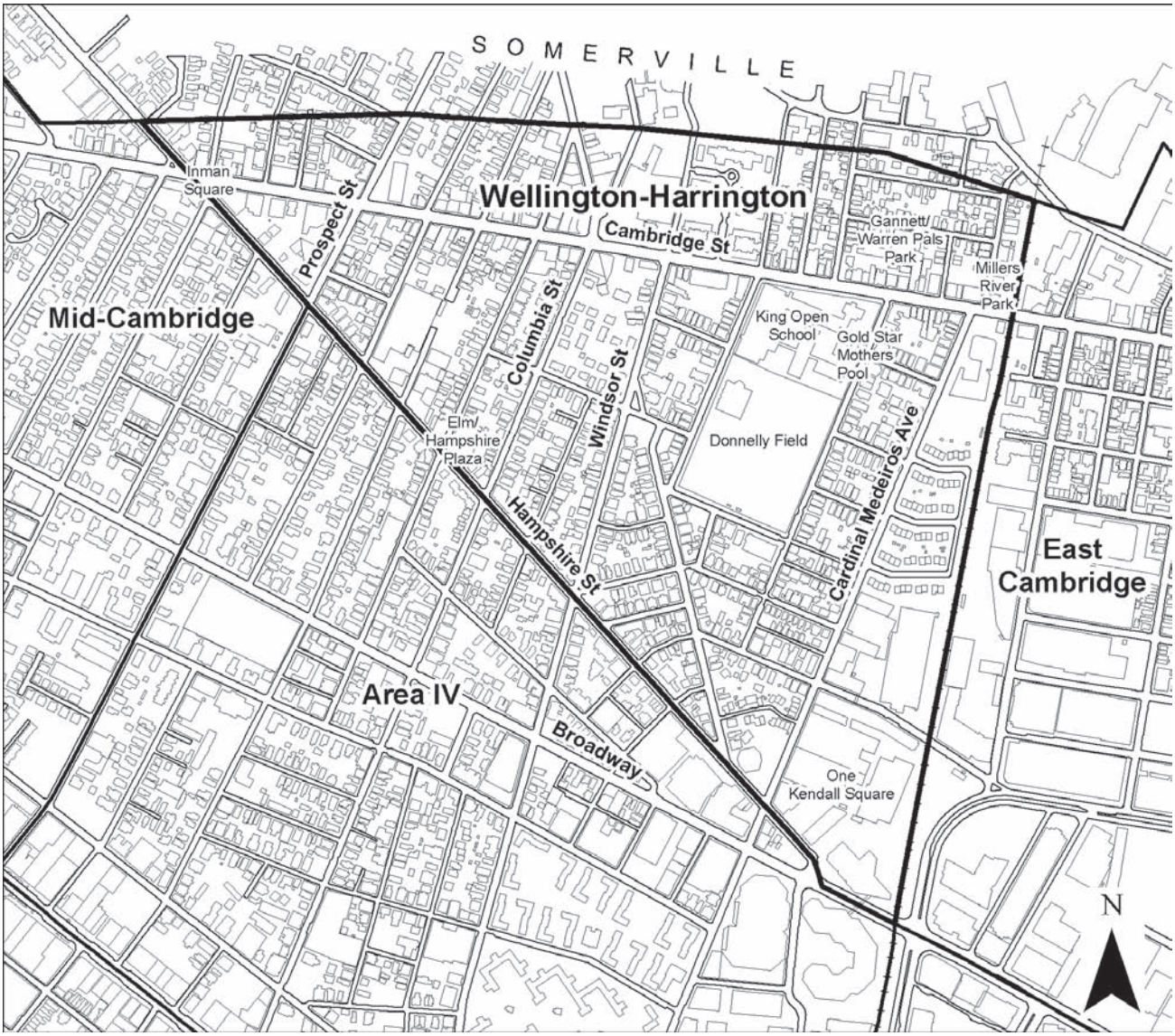
Summary

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Boundaries



Original Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study

The original Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study Committee consisted of nine members of the Wellington-Harrington community, who met regularly between November 1992 and May 1993. During their meetings, this committee discussed a wide variety of issues affecting the neighborhood, heard presentations from Community Development Department staff, and received input from other members of the Wellington-Harrington community. The topics discussed by this study committee include land use, transportation, housing, economic development and employment, and open space. Their effort resulted in a document, the *Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study* (published in 1996), containing an analysis of each of these topics along with recommendations to help guide long-term planning within the neighborhood. These recommendations are listed in the "Recommendations and Action Plan" table at the end of this document, with an implementation status and progress-to-date summary for each.

WELLINGTON-HARRINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY UPDATE

The Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study Update process involved a series of three public meetings held in spring 2003, at which Community Development Department staff described some activities the City has undertaken since 1996 to address land use, transportation, housing, economic development, and open space issues in the neighborhood. Summaries are presented below.

At these meetings, members of the Wellington-Harrington community also discussed the recommendations of the original *Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study* (1996) and made some new recommendations to supplement the original set. These new recommendations are included in the "Recommendations and Action Plan" table at the end of this document, with an implementation status and progress-to-date summary for each.

Land Use Update

Since the publication of the original study, the Cambridge City Council has enacted a number of changes to the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. The two most significant sets of changes for Wellington-Harrington were the Citywide Rezoning in February 2001 and the Eastern Cambridge Rezoning in October 2001.

The **Citywide Rezoning** applied an integrated package of changes to the zoning ordinance. The purpose of these changes was to manage urban growth and enhance the livability of Cambridge, while preserving its urban diversity and economic health. The Citywide Rezoning Petition was developed between 1998 and 2001 through an extensive process involving the Citywide Growth Management Advisory Committee (a City Manager-appointed citizen group), the Cambridge Planning Board, the Cambridge City Council, and a series of public meetings. This petition, enacted by the City Council in 2001, included measures to promote the creation of more housing (including affordable housing) in all parts of the city, new limits on building heights and density in commercial districts, measures to discourage above-ground structured parking, and requirements for public review of large projects.

The **Eastern Cambridge Planning Study** (ECaPS) focused on the part of Cambridge east of Windsor Street and north of Main Street, which includes part of Wellington-Harrington. This study took place between 2000 and 2001 during an 18-month moratorium on development in the area. A study committee of neighborhood residents, representatives of area businesses and institutions, and City staff, working with professional urban planning consultants, explored concerns about the impacts of excessive development, developed a vision for the study area, and formed implementation strategies. ECaPS resulted in a package of zoning changes called the Eastern Cambridge Rezoning Petition, which was enacted by the Cambridge City Council in 2001. While the Eastern Cambridge Rezoning Petition did not include changes to the zoning in residential parts of Wellington-Harrington, it did include changes that will guide future development in former industrial areas nearby.

For more information, contact the Community Planning Division at 617-349-4651 or visit their website at:
www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/cp.

Transportation Update

Since the original study was published, a comprehensive **Traffic Calming Program** has been undertaken by the Environmental and Transportation Planning Division of the Community Development Department, working with the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department. Traffic calming projects involve physical changes to streets, such as raised crosswalks and curb extensions at intersections, which help to lower vehicular speeds and increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Traffic calming projects have already been implemented on Berkshire and York streets near the Harrington School and Donnelly Field, on Columbia Street, and at the intersection of Broadway and Market streets. The installation of traffic calming features is currently underway on Cardinal Medeiros Avenue and on Willow Street next to Donnelly Field, both expected to be complete in early 2005.

The **Cambridge Street Corridor Improvements** project is the largest roadway/sidewalk project recently completed in the neighborhood. City staff worked with a committee of residents and business owners and held several public meetings to develop a comprehensive streetscape design for Cambridge Street. Construction of the project began in fall 2002 and was completed in fall 2004. Some highlights of the project are listed below.

- **Roadway and Sidewalk Improvements:** The road and sidewalk surfaces of Cambridge Street have been reconstructed between Lechmere Station and Inman Square. The roadway includes two 11-foot wide travel lanes, one eastbound and one westbound, with 7.5-foot wide parking lanes on each side of the street and a 5-foot buffer zone in between to minimize conflicts between moving vehicles and parked cars. Sidewalks are concrete with a 3-foot wide brick edging strip along the side closest to the curb. Street trees, lights, signage, parking meters, bicycle parking, and trash receptacles are located on the brick edging strip.
- **Curb Extensions:** Portions of the sidewalk have been widened at intersections and crosswalks. This makes it easier for pedestrians and drivers to see each other, shortens the distance pedestrians have to cross, and slows turning vehicles.
- **Lighting:** All of the existing street lights between Lechmere and Inman Square have been replaced with new lighting that includes attractive pedestrian and vehicular scale fixtures.
- **Street Trees:** Approximately 140 new street trees have been planted along Cambridge Street. The location and species of street trees have been carefully selected to minimize conflicts with utilities, parking, street lights, loading zones, and bus stops.
- **Signage:** All street signs on Cambridge Street have been replaced. The new street name signs are larger and easier to read than existing signs. The parking regulation signs are located in such a way as to minimize their number.
- **Municipal Parking Lots:** Signage, landscaping, and lighting improvements have been installed at the municipal parking lots on Springfield Street, Windsor Street, and Warren Street. These lots provide vital parking for the Cambridge Street business community.
- **Open Space:** Improvements have been made to Vellucci Community Plaza in Inman Square, the seating area by the Miller's River housing complex, and the side yard of the Valente Library. These areas are intended to serve as "pocket parks" for sitting and passive recreation. The Valente Library area also features three cat-shaped bronze benches designed by Cambridge artist Judy Kensley McKie.
- **On-Street Parking:** Maintaining an adequate inventory of on-street parking spaces has been a priority throughout the planning process. The total number of free, handicap, and metered parking spaces on Cambridge Street has increased by over 20 spaces.

Housing Update

The Community Development Department actively pursues opportunities to support affordable housing throughout Cambridge in a number of ways, including the development of new affordable rental and ownership units, the preservation of properties whose affordability restrictions are in danger of expiring, the use of zoning as a tool to increase the affordable housing stock, and counseling and special mortgage products for potential low- to moderate-income homebuyers.

The **Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust** is one of the ways in which the City of Cambridge can fund the creation of new affordable housing units. Through the Incentive Zoning provision in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, developers of certain large commercial projects are required

to contribute $3.28 to this Trust for each square foot of commercial space developed. The City also contributes funding to the Trust. Using funds from the Trust and other sources, the Housing Division of the Community Development Department works with non-profit organizations such as Just-A-Start, Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. (HRI), and CASCAP to identify opportunities to create affordable housing through new construction or renovation. The City also uses funding from the Trust to preserve units with expiring affordability restrictions. Since the end of rent control in 1995, the City has helped to create or preserve more than 2,600 affordable units.

Additionally, the **Inclusionary Zoning** provision in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance requires developers of any new or converted residential development with ten or more units to provide 15% of the total number of units as affordable housing. In return, developers are allowed a 30% increase in the maximum amount of floor space that can be developed.

The Housing Division also offers **First Time Homebuyer's Classes** that are free and open to all Cambridge residents, and allow some income-eligible households to apply for special mortgage products. For more information about this and other programs of the Housing Division, call the Housing Information Line at 617-349-4622 or visit their website at www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/hsg.

Economic Development and Employment Update

The Economic Development Division of the Community Development Department offers a variety of programs to assist small business owners. Some of these programs are open to business owners who meet certain income qualifications, and some are open to businesses within Cambridge's Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area, which includes a section of Wellington-Harrington. Others are open to all Cambridge businesses.

The **Façade Improvement / Signage and Lighting Program** has already been utilized by several neighborhood businesses. Available citywide since July 2002, this program provides technical and financial assistance to property owners or tenants seeking to renovate or restore their storefront façades. These improvements can help to build a stronger customer base for individual stores and to enhance the quality of entire business districts. The program provides a matching grant of up to $35,000 for full facade improvements, which may include the restoration of architectural details, better windows and doors, new signage, and lighting.

Several neighborhood businesses have also participated in the **Best Retail Practices Program**. This program includes a free workshop and one-on-one consultations for retailers and restaurant owners who want to improve the interior of their shops and restaurants. The City also offers some $5,000 grants to cover up to 80% of the cost of interior improvements.

For more information about these programs, contact the Economic Development Division at 617-349-4637 or visit their website at www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/ed.

The Economic Development Division also provides support to make certain career development programs available to low-income residents, particularly within Cambridge's Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area, which includes parts of Wellington-Harrington. Two such programs are **Just-A-Start's Biomedical Careers Program**, a two-year program to prepare residents for entry-level biotechnology jobs, and the **Cambridge Health Alliance's Health Care Career Advancement Program**, which provides courses and career coaching to Cambridge Health Alliance employees, preparing them for higher level health care jobs and degree programs. For information about these respective programs, contact Just-A-Start at 617-242-0562 or the Cambridge Health Alliance at 781-306-8762.

Open Space Update

The original *Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study* (1996) recommended that the City acquire additional land for open space within the neighborhood. This recommendation was supported by the later work of the **Green Ribbon Open Space Committee** (1999-2000), which set priorities for open space creation throughout the city using a variety of criteria, including the existing supply of open space, population density, income distribution, density of children, current programmed park use, and projected recreation needs. While the area closest to Donnelly Field was found to have sufficient open space, the parts of Wellington-Harrington closer to Inman Square were found to be in need of almost all types of open space, including "tot lot" playgrounds, neighborhood parks, and larger community parks. In addition, the Grand Junction Railroad, which borders the neighborhood to the east, was

identified as a first priority for conversion to a park trail. Over the long term, the City's goal is to create open space within these priority areas. However, acquiring land for additional open space in Wellington-Harrington is challenging, due to the current land use patterns—predominantly small, residential lots—and the high cost of real estate. In the short term, the City seeks to maximize the utility of existing open spaces, by renovating existing parks and by creating smaller "pocket parks" in areas such as park edges and other small urban open spaces.

Park Renovations have occurred at two parks in Wellington-Harrington since 1996. At Donnelly Field, the playground was fully renovated in 1997, and renovations to the playing fields and basketball courts were completed in summer 2004. The upgrades to the fields and courts included: improved lighting; better turf and drainage in the outfield; new bleachers, seating, and picnic areas; better baseball, softball, and basketball amenities; improved plantings, pathways, and entrances; and seasonal portable toilets. Gannett/Warren Pals Park also received an upgrade to its water play equipment in 2003.

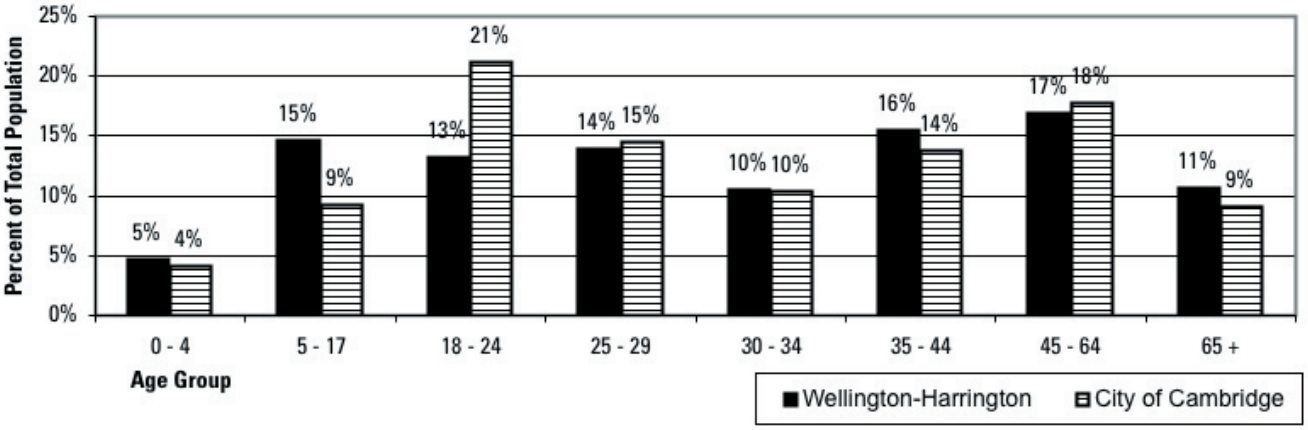
Pocket Parks have been developed as part of the Cambridge Street Corridor Improvements project (described in the "Transportation Update" section on page 18), where a few areas along the sidewalk have been improved to serve as attractive urban plazas and seating areas. Improvements have been completed at Vellucci Community Plaza in Inman Square, the yard outside of the Valente Library, and near the Miller's River housing complex.

For further information about the Green Ribbon Open Space Committee or parks in general, contact the Community Planning division at 617-349-4651 or visit their website at www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/cp/parks.

Demographics Update

The 1990s were a period of population growth and change for the City of Cambridge. The overall population of Cambridge grew 6% between 1990 and 2000, from 95,802 to 101,355. Along with this overall growth, there have been substantial changes in the composition of the city with regard to age, ethnicity, income, and household and family types. The Wellington-Harrington neighborhood likewise experienced an increase in population of about 3%, from 7,105 to 7,345, and has also experienced many changes in its composition. In some respects the neighborhood's changes reflect the same changes that have occurred across the city at large, while in other ways the neighborhood has retained its unique characteristics.

Age Distribution (2000 US Census)



Age

During the 1990s, the number of children in both Cambridge and Wellington-Harrington declined. In Wellington-Harrington, the number of children age 4 and under decreased by about one quarter, while in Cambridge that number decreased by about one eighth. Wellington-Harrington also experienced a small decline in the number of school-age children (5 to 17 years old) while Cambridge experienced a slight increase. Wellington-Harrington still has a larger proportion of children than the city at large, with 19% of the Wellington-Harrington population under 18, as opposed to 13% citywide.

Wellington-Harrington has a smaller proportion of residents in the 18-to-24 age range than Cambridge at large, with 13% compared to the citywide figure of 21%. Still, the number of 18- to 24-year-olds in Wellington-Harrington increased by about 18% in the 1990s, compared to a 13% citywide increase. The number of 25- to 29-year-olds increased as well, by 25% in Wellington-Harrington and by 15% citywide. On the other hand, Wellington-Harrington experienced only a 3% growth in the number of 45- to 64-year-olds, while in Cambridge at large this figure increased by 30%, more than any other age group.

The chart on the previous page compares the age distribution of Wellington-Harrington residents to the citywide age distribution for 2000. As noted, Wellington-Harrington has a larger percentage of school-age children and a smaller percentage of college-age adults than the city at large.

Race and Ethnic Diversity

Wellington-Harrington is one of the more culturally diverse neighborhoods in Cambridge. A large proportion of neighborhood residents are foreign born and speak a language other than English at home. About one-third of Wellington-Harrington residents come from a foreign country, compared to about one-fourth of residents citywide. Among foreign-born Wellington-Harrington residents, about 41% are of European origin, greater than the citywide figure of 25%.

Wellington-Harrington includes a large Portuguese-speaking population. About half of the residents of Wellington-Harrington over 5 years old speak a language other than English at home, and about 24% of the residents of Wellington-Harrington claim Portuguese, Brazilian, or Cape Verdean ancestry. In 1990, over 30% of Wellington-Harrington residents claimed a Portuguese-speaking heritage and spoke Portuguese at home.

Distribution of Races	**Wellington-Harrington**		**City of Cambridge**	
	1990	**2000**	**1990**	**2000**
Total Population	***7,105***	***7,345***	***95,802***	***101,355***
White	80%	65%	75%	68%
Black	13%	12%	14%	12%
Asian / Pacific Islander	3%	6%	8%	12%
Other	4%	17%	3%	8%

Households and Families

Wellington-Harrington and the city at large both experienced increases in the number of resident households in the 1990s. From 1990 to 2000, the number of resident households in Wellington-Harrington increased 10%, to 3,021, while the number of households in Cambridge increased 8% to 42,615. The percentage of households that are considered "families" decreased in Wellington-Harrington, from 63% in 1990 to 53% in 2000, and the citywide percentage decreased from 45% to 41%.

As shown in the table on the following page, during the 1990s the distribution of family types in Cambridge changed little, while Wellington-Harrington experienced some significant changes. In Wellington-Harrington, there was an 18% decrease in the number of married couple families along with a 26% decrease in the number of married couples with children, and conversely, a 23% increase in the number of families headed by unmarried females and a 36% increase in the number of single females with children.

Households and Families		Wellington-Harrington				City of Cambridge			
		1990		2000		1990		2000	
Total number of households		2,734		3,021		39,405		42,615	
Total number of family households		1,725		1,588		17,575		17,595	
Distribution of family types by head of household and children as a percent of total family households									
Married couple		71%		62%		69%		71%	
	with children		33%		26%		28%		28%
Unmarried female		22%		30%		24%		23%	
	with children		12%		18%		13%		13%
Unmarried male		7%		8%		7%		6%	
	with children		2%		2%		2%		2%
All families with children			47%		46%		43%		43%

Note: A "Household" as defined in the U.S. Census is a group of people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. A "Family Household" as defined in the U.S. Census is a household containing at least two people related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

Education and Income

The level of education among Wellington-Harrington residents remains lower than that of the city as a whole. According to 2000 Census statistics, 65% of Cambridge residents 25 or older earned a Bachelor or Graduate degree as their highest level of education. Only 34% of Wellington-Harrington residents have reached the same level of educational attainment, however, this represents a significant increase from 21% in 1990.

The median income of Wellington-Harrington residents also remains lower than the citywide median income. As shown in the table below, the median household income of Wellington-Harrington households in 1999 was 83% of the citywide median household income. For family households, the difference is greater, with the median family income in Wellington-Harrington at 68% of the citywide figure.

	Median Household Income		Median Family Income	
	1989	1999	1989	1999
City of Cambridge	$44,422	$47,979	$53,604	$59,423
Wellington-Harrington	$40,523	$39,899	$43,719	$40,675
Wellington-Harrington as Percent of Citywide	91%	83%	82%	68%

Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study

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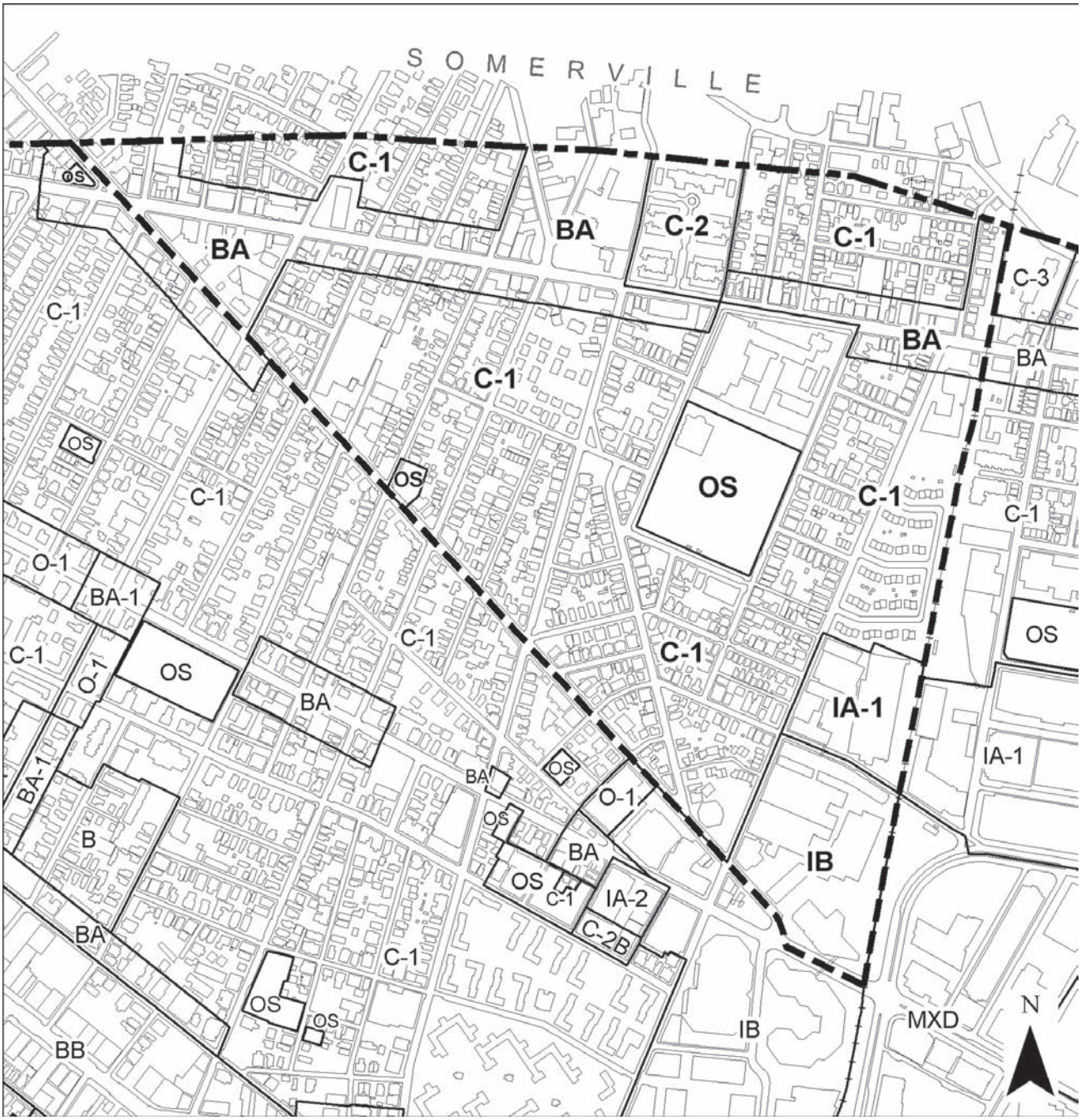
Recommendations and Action Plan

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Zoning Map



Zoning Districts

B	*Residence B*	**O-1**	*Office 1*	**IA-1**	*Industry A-1*
C-1	*Residence C-1*	**BA**	*Business A*	**IA-2**	*Industry A-2*
C-2	*Residence C-2*	**BA-1**	*Business A-1*	**IB**	*Industry B*
C-2B	*Residence C-2B*	**BB**	*Business B*	**MXD**	*Mixed Use Development*
C-3	*Residence C-3*			**OS**	*Open Space*

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN

Since the publication of the *Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study* in 1996, many of the recommendations from that study have been addressed. Some have been addressed through completed actions or are being addressed through the ongoing programs of city departments. Others will be addressed through future actions, which could take place within a short-range, medium-range, or long-range timeframe. In some cases, recommendations are being addressed through actions taking place on a citywide scale.

The following "Recommendations and Action Plan" table provides a list of all recommendations, old and new, along with an implementation status and progress-to-date summary for each. Items that are part of the City's present or future action plan are denoted by a ■ symbol. An estimated timeframe is also provided for each action item, describing whether it is expected to occur within a short-range (less than 2 years), medium-range (2-6 years), or long-range (6-10 years) period.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ORIGINAL STUDY (1996)

Rec. Type & Number	Recommendation	Status and Progress to Date
LU1	Zoning should be modified to allow for the preservation of the neighborhood density. • The Committee would like to see the dense, urban character of the neighborhood preserved particularly as the aging housing stock is replaced with new structures. The Committee recommends that a study be done to look at the possibility of rezoning Cambridge Street - from Inman Square to Cardinal Medeiros Avenue - to limit building heights to three - five stories and encourage smaller storefronts on the ground floors and housing on the upper floors.	***Zoning Regulations in Effect*** Most residential parts of Wellington-Harrington have a "Residence C-1" zoning designation, which allows medium-density, multi-family housing similar to the housing that currently exists in the neighborhood. See Housing Recommendation "H7" for further explanation of the Residence C-1 zoning requirements. Along Cambridge Street, the zoning designation is "Business A" or "BA", which allows commercial and residential uses. The maximum floor area ratio allowed for commercial uses in BA districts is 1.0, while the maximum floor area ratio for residential uses is 1.75, meaning that more space can be built for residential uses than for non-residential uses. This encourages developers to include housing in buildings along Cambridge Street. As part of a citizen-led rezoning petition in 1997, the maximum building height in the BA district was reduced from 85 feet to 45 feet for residential buildings, to 35 feet for commercial buildings, and to 65 feet for buildings along Hampshire Street, which intersects Cambridge Street at Inman Square. Under the Inclusionary Zoning provisions, developers also receive incentives for making housing units affordable to low- and moderate-income households. There are no zoning limitations on the size of storefronts along Cambridge Street. However, because most lots along the street are relatively small, the development of large storefronts seems unlikely.

Rec. Type & Number	Recommendation	Status and Progress to Date
LU2	Amend the City's zoning code to require new large developments on Cambridge Street to construct a neighborhood park as part of the project or at another location. • The Committee was concerned about the lack of available land in the neighborhood and recommends that the city make Wellington-Harrington an open space priority neighborhood and acquire land parcels as they become available.	***Zoning Changes in Effect*** It is unlikely that new large developments will occur along Cambridge Street in Wellington-Harrington. However, the Eastern Cambridge Rezoning in 2001, which accompanied the ECaPS work, has made open space a requirement in some East Cambridge districts that are likely to be redeveloped in the future. For instance, the approved master plan for North Point includes a required 5-acre park. Also, if a large development were to occur at some point in the future on the site currently owned by the US Department of Transportation near Kendall Square, the creation of a seven-acre (approx.) public open space would be required. In addition, ECaPS encouraged the creation of public open spaces in two locations along the Grand Junction Railroad, one near Binney Street and another across from Ahern Field. These open spaces might be created if developers were to buy these lots and transfer the development rights (as allowed by the Eastern Cambridge Rezoning) to another location south of Binney Street. ***Open Space Study Completed*** In 2000, the Community Development Department published the *Report of the Green Ribbon Open Space Committee*, which used a variety of criteria to establish priority areas for open space across all of Cambridge. The report identified large areas in Wellington-Harrington, including the entire area west of Columbia Street, as top priorities for "tot lot" playgrounds and neighborhood parks. While existing land uses and the cost of land make acquisition difficult, the City will continue to look for opportunities to acquire open space in the neighborhood whenever possible.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The original Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Study (1996) does not include any specific transportation recommendations. However, the study does note concerns about traffic enforcement in the area of the Harrington School and Donnelly Field, as well as concerns about traffic speeds and signal timing at the intersection of Cambridge and Columbia Streets. These issues are being addressed through traffic calming and through the Cambridge Street Corridor Improvements project, described in the "Transportation Update" section of this document on page 18.

HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS from Original Study (1996)

Rec. Type & Number	Recommendation	Status and Progress to Date
H1	Establish city-wide housing "hot-line" • The Committee recommends that the city establish a housing telephone service modeled after the 666-Movie line that would inform residents of all the housing agencies in the city and the services they provide.	***Housing Information Line and Brochures Available*** Residents are encouraged to call the City's Housing Information Line at 617-349-4622 for information about affordable housing programs in the city. Residents can also call the Cambridge Housing Authority at 617-497-4040 for information about public housing. Staff will refer callers to other agencies and non-profit organizations where appropriate. The City also produces a booklet called *A Guide to Affordable Housing Programs in Cambridge*, which contains descriptions and contact information for the many different programs and agencies dealing with housing in the city. The latest version of this booklet was published in spring 2003, and versions have recently been made available in Spanish and Haitian Creole. Information is also available on the Housing Division webpage at www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/hsg.
H2	Establish a clearinghouse of affordable housing opportunities in the city. • The Committee suggests that the clearinghouse be placed in a non-intimidating, accessible place, and should be staffed by individuals who are able to deal with residents from a wide range of cultures.	***Information on Affordable Housing Opportunities Available*** Residents seeking opportunities for affordable housing are encouraged to contact the City's Housing Information Line at 617-349-4622 or the Cambridge Housing Authority at 617-497-4040. The Housing Division in the City of Cambridge is located within the offices of the Community Development Department at 344 Broadway, 3rd Floor. The Cambridge Housing Authority offices are located at 19 Prospect Street, on the corner of Prospect Street and Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made upon request, and an effort is always made to effectively serve residents from a wide range of cultures. The City maintains a list of residents who want to be notified when affordable rental and ownership units are being marketed by the City. For more information, call the Housing Information Line (above). The Cambridge Housing Authority also maintains a list of residents interested in public housing opportunities (see contact information above).

HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS from Original Study (1996) - (cont.)

Rec. Type & Number	Recommendation	Status and Progress to Date
H3	Offer city-sponsored classes to inform residents on how to prepare for home ownership. • The Committee recommends the city sponsor classes to educate renters on how to prepare to buy a house. The Committee suggests the classes inform residents of the criteria for eligibility (income levels, number of persons per household, etc.) for city-sponsored home ownership programs. The classes would also serve to create a pool of prospective homebuyers in the city.	***First-Time Homebuyer Classes Ongoing*** The Community Development Department offers monthly First-Time Homebuyer Classes. These are open to all residents, and benefit income-eligible households by making them eligible for special mortgage products. Special classes on "How to Buy a Multi-Family Property" and "Post-Purchase Information" are offered, as well as classes for non-English speakers. For more information or to enroll in these classes, call the City's Housing Information Line at 617-349-4622 or visit the Housing Division webpage at www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/hsg.
H4	Expand and augment both the Home Improvement Program (HIP) and the Small Property Owners Rehab and Loan Program. • The Committee recommends that the capabilities of both the HIP and the Small Property Owners Program be increased. Both programs should offer more technical assistance to housing developers on reducing construction costs, thereby, making more housing affordable to low-income residents.	***Housing Improvement Programs Ongoing*** Home Improvement Programs are offered by two non-profit organizations, Homeowners Rehab, Inc. (HRI) and Just-A-Start, Inc. (JAS). These programs offer low-interest rehabilitation loans for owner-occupied, 1-to-4-unit buildings owned by low- or moderate-income homeowners. Upon making improvements, the owner must keep rents affordable to low- and moderate-income households. In addition, Cambridge Neighborhood Apartment Housing Services (CNAHS) offers low-interest rehabilitation financing to private owners of multi-family residential buildings (not necessarily owner-occupied) if more than half of the units are made affordable to low- and moderate-income tenants for up to 20 years. These programs are supported by the City's Community Development Block Grant funds. Just-A-Start also manages a 3% Home Improvement Revolving Loan through Cambridge Savings bank.
H5	DPW site on Norfolk Street. • The Committee recommends that the DPW site on Norfolk Street be developed into a mix of affordable housing and open space should DPW ever decide to relocate.	At some future time, the Department of Public Works (DPW) may relocate from its present site. However, it has not yet identified a site for relocation. If a new site is identified and DPW plans to move, the City will work with the neighborhood to consider the use of the current site. Potential uses include affordable housing and open space.
H6	Create a program that would advise non-English speaking tenants of their rights and obligations. • The Committee recommends that the city offer counseling to tenants on their rights in languages other than English (Spanish and Creole).	***Tenant/Landlord Support Programs Ongoing*** A number of agencies and organizations provide legal assistance and mediation services to assist tenants and landlords. These include Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services (617-494-1800), Just-A-Start (617-494-0444), and the City of Cambridge Consumers' Council (617-349-6150). Information on all of these groups is listed in the City's *Guide to Affordable Housing Programs in Cambridge* brochure, which is available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. Call the Housing Information Line (617-349-4622) for more information.

HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS from Original Study (1996) - (cont.)

Rec. Type & Number	Recommendation	Status and Progress to Date
H7	Stabilize the neighborhood and preserve its character. • The Committee recommends that the dense, urban character of the neighborhood be preserved. In view of the aging housing stock, identical types of houses should be allowed to be constructed when old structures collapse or are condemned.	***Zoning Regulations in Effect*** Most residential parts of Wellington-Harrington have a "Residence C-1" zoning designation, which allows medium-density, multi-family housing similar to the housing that currently exists in the neighborhood. Housing can be built to a maximum floor area ratio of 0.75 and maximum height of 35 feet. In 1999, Cambridge adopted a "Backyard Rezoning" petition that changed some of the C-1 district regulations. The allowed dwelling unit density was decreased, from one dwelling unit per 1,200 square feet of lot area to one unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area. This lowers the overall number of housing units that can be built, but does not change the amount of floor space that can be built, thus encouraging either smaller houses or larger units. The rezoning also raised the required amount of open space on a residential lot, from 15% of the lot area to 30% of the lot area. This means that when a new house is built, almost one third of its lot must be left as yard space (parking does not count as open space). Most houses in the neighborhood would meet this requirement as they currently exist.
H8	Encourage, through incentives and regulations, the construction of housing appropriate for families with children. • The Committee strongly recommends that incentives be made available for landlords to delead the units they own.	***Lead-Safe and Other Programs Ongoing*** The City's Housing Division works to create family-size affordable units wherever possible and appropriate. Cambridge's Lead-Safe program provides five-year forgivable loans for lead paint removal, along with other lead abatement services, in housing that is occupied by low- or moderate-income households. Landlords of rental properties can receive these loans if they keep their rents affordable. For information, call 617-349-5323 or visit www.cambridgema.gov/~LeadSafe.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS from Original Study (1996)

Rec. Type & Number	Recommendation	Status and Progress to Date
EDE1	Create a "Cambridge employment hot line" for the city's residents. • The Committee recommended the creation of a city sponsored toll-free telephone line that would offer Cambridge residents a variety of employment-related information, ranging from actual employment opportunities, to the location of training and apprenticeship programs. The Committee agreed that a telephone line is a good tool for addressing the needs of linguistic minorities on a 24 hours a day basis.	***Employment Program Information Available*** Residents may contact the City's Office of Workforce Development (OWD) to find information about a variety of employment programs at 617-349-6234 / TTY: 617-492-0235 . OWD also publishes a directory, *Cambridge Works and Learns*, which contains references to a number of employment programs for adults and teenagers as well as job training and placement programs. OWD assesses and responds to the unmet needs of the local workforce, working with area businesses on such initiatives as: the Business Advisory Committee, the Cambridge Employment Program (CEP), Workplace Education, Profit from Experience: Guest Speakers Bureau, Summer Jobs Campaign for Cambridge Youth, Youth Employment Center, and Job Fairs. OWD has formed partnerships with local employment, training, and education providers including Bunker Hill Community College and Just-A-Start. OWD also works with a Business Advisory Committee that offers guidance to help plan and promote efforts that increase skills and training of current and future workers.
EDE2	Concentrate information about all the city's employment-related services in one location. • The Committee recommends that all the information about employment-related services should be located in one well-publicized central location. The Committee agreed that this recommendation is complementary to the "employment hot line." The Committee also recommends that a facilitator be appointed to coordinate the activities of all employment and training program in the City.	***Employment Program Information Available*** Residents may contact the Office of Workforce Development at 617-349-6234 / TTY: 617-492-0235. OWD publishes a directory, Cambridge Works and Learns, which contains references to a number of employment programs for adults and teenagers as well as job training and placement programs. Cambridge residents may also participate in the Cambridge Employment Program (CEP) at no cost. This program offers personalized counseling on how to conduct a job search and can provide advice and references to job training and job placement programs. Both the OWD and CEP are located in the Cambridge municipal office building at 51 Inman Street.
EDE3	Rewrite the brochures on employment and training programs to make them friendlier to readers in the neighborhood. • The Committee recommends that Employment Resources, Inc. (ERI) rewrite and vividly illustrate their brochures to make them more user-friendly to neighborhood residents	***Employment Directory Available*** The City's Office of Workforce Development (OWD) publishes a directory, Cambridge Works and Learns, which contains references to a number of employment programs for adults and teenagers as well as job training and placement programs. This brochure has been made available for the past five years, and the information is currently in the process of being updated. The brochure is available directly from the OWD (51 Inman Street, 617-349-6234 / TTY: 617-492-0235, as well as at libraries and other locations throughout the city.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS - *(cont.)*

Rec. Type & Number	Recommendation	Status and Progress to Date
EDE4	Explore alternative options for structuring summer programs for pre-teenage neighborhood children (12 to 13 years old).	***Summer Youth Programs Ongoing*** For about four years, the City has run two summer programs focused towards youth age 9 to 13. The Summer Sports Leadership Academy uses athletics to promote leadership development and community involvement, and the Summer Arts Program helps youth develop creative abilities through collaboration with artists and performers, field trips, and projects. These programs are located at the Area Four Youth Center and the Frisoli Youth Center and are open to all Cambridge youth. In addition, the City continues to organize summer youth basketball leagues for pre-teens and teenagers. For more information about youth programs, contact the Department of Human Service Programs at 617-349-6200.
EDE5	Form a partnership between the city and Cambridge Street merchants to employ neighborhood children in the summer. • The Committee recommends that the city create a program to address the summer employment needs of children ineligible for the Mayor's Summer Program. The Committee recommends the city provide incentives for Wellington-Harrington merchants to employ neighborhood children.	***Youth Employment Programs Ongoing*** The City's Office of Workforce Development (OWD) collaborates with schools, non-profit organizations, institutions, and businesses to develop career exploration, community service, and employment opportunities for Cambridge youth. The Youth Employment Center at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School can provide teenagers with referrals to employment and development programs. The City sponsors a number of programs, including the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program and Fall Youth Employment Program. Various other non-profit organizations and institutions provide employment, service, or other development programs for teenagers as well. Businesses that are interested in hiring teenagers through these types of programs may contact OWD at 617-349-6234 / TTY: 617-492-0235.
EDE6	Establish a forum where neighborhood residents and business owners can meet and exchange views and ideas.	A permanent forum of this kind has not been established. However, the business community and the residential community of Wellington-Harrington sometimes meet in a public forum to discuss specific issues that are of interest to the entire neighborhood. For instance, the public meetings associated with the Cambridge Street reconstruction project drew broad participation from area residents, property owners, and business owners.

Rec. Type & Number	*Recommendation*	*Status and Progress to Date*
EDE7	CDD should make its presentations of Wellington-Harrington's demographic composition and employment profile to all neighborhood schools and parent associations. • The Committee strongly recommends that the Community Development Department make its demographic and employment presentations to the teachers and students of the Harrington School and its parent association.	***Demographic Information Available*** The City's Planning Information Manager in the Community Development Department (CDD) regularly receives, analyzes, and reports demographic information made available by the state and federal governments, primarily from the US Census Bureau. A wide range of information, both citywide and neighborhood-specific, is available on the CDD website at www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD. This information may also be requested by contacting the Planning Information Manager at 617-349-4656. In April 2003, the Planning Information Manager gave a presentation of demographics in Wellington-Harrington based on the 2000 Census. A summary of this presentation is included in this report, and is also available on the CDD website (above). Schools and neighborhood groups may discuss the possibility of hosting a demographics presentation by contacting the Neighborhood Planner for Wellington-Harrington at 617-349-4639.
EDE8	Encourage cottage industries within Wellington-Harrington households. • The Committee recommends the creation of a neighborhood revolving loan fund to assist lower income households to buy materials.	***Small Business Support Programs Ongoing*** Several years ago, the City helped to establish a small business loan fund administered by local Cambridge banks. Since that collaboration was started, many of the banks have developed loan funds specifically designed to meet the needs of small businesses. The Economic Development Division of the Community Development Department will provide a list of these banks upon request. For information, contact the Economic Development Division at 617-349-4637.
EDE9	Increase the funding for the Harrington School Computer Learning Center. • The Committee recommends that additional funding be made available to enable the Harrington School to hire an instructor and buy more software.	As a result of the consolidation of Cambridge Public Schools in 2003, the Harrington School has been closed and the former Harrington School building is now occupied by the King Open School. This building no longer contains a Computer Learning Center. Computer classes are available to members of the Frisoli Youth Center at 61 Willow Street (617-349-6312), and are available free to all Cambridge residents at the Community Learning Center at 19 Brookline Street (617-349-6363) and at the Cambridge Public Library Central Square Branch at 45 Pearl Street (617-349-4010).

OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS from Original Study (1996)

Rec. Type & Number	*Recommendation*	*Status and Progress to Date*
OS1	The City should commit itself to increasing open space in Wellington-Harrington through purchasing land and developing parks and playgrounds whenever opportunities exist. • The Committee felt that the need for open space is more acute between Prospect and Columbia Streets and from Hampshire Street to the Somerville line.	***Open Space Study Completed*** In 2000, the Community Development Department published the Report of the Green Ribbon Open Space Committee, which used a variety of criteria to establish priority areas for open space across all of Cambridge. The report identified large areas in Wellington-Harrington, including the entire area west of Columbia Street, as top priorities for "tot lot" playgrounds and neighborhood parks. While existing land uses and the cost of land make acquisition difficult, the City will continue to look for opportunities to acquire open space in the neighborhood whenever possible. Open space acquisitions in nearby Area Four include 238 Broadway and the Squirrel Brand site at Broadway and Boardman Street. ***Pocket Parks Projects Completed*** In addition to acquiring land for new parks, Cambridge is seeking to improve open space in the neighborhood by constructing small seating areas, or "pocket parks," along with public infrastructure projects such as sidewalk improvements. For example, the Cambridge Street reconstruction project included the construction of pocket parks in the space next to the Valente Library, the seating area by the Miller's River complex, and Vellucci Community Plaza at Inman Square.
OS2	The Elm Street Park/Hampshire Street sitting area should be redesigned to incorporate an active playground for children. • The Committee recommends that the new sitting area include fencing and benches to make the space more inviting. A new shade tree and water fountain should be added. The Committee suggests that a neighborhood workshop be conducted around the redesign of the space.	■ ***PARK IMPROVEMENTS UNDER CONSIDERATION – Medium Range*** The Department of Public Works has improved the attractiveness of this sitting area by adding new plantings and improving overall maintenance. In the future, staff on the Open Space Committee will evaluate the potential cost and scope of a redesign of this park.
OS3	The City should allocate more funds towards park maintenance and attach a service contract to all newly constructed parks.	***Park Maintenance Programs Ongoing*** The organizational structure of the Parks and Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Public Works (DPW) has changed in recent years to include new specialized staff positions, increased training, and sector maintenance crews responsible for different districts of the city. In addition, some parks are maintained through a private maintenance contract.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS - *(cont.)*

Rec. Type & Number	Recommendation	Status and Progress to Date
OS4	Redesign Donnelly Field for better definition of play spaces	***Renovations Completed*** In 1997, the Donnelly Field playground was renovated and the Frisoli Youth Center established nearby. In 2003, plans for the renovation of the playing fields were developed with participation from the public. Construction was completed in summer 2004. The improvements include: improved lighting; better turf and drainage in the outfield; new bleachers, seating, and picnic areas; better baseball, softball, and basketball amenities; improved plantings, pathways, and entrances; and seasonal portable toilets.
OS5	Upgrade and improve maintenance of Gold Star Mother's Pool. • The Committee recommends that the pool should be enclosed to allow use throughout the year.	■ ***RENOVATIONS TO OCCUR – Short Range*** Funding has recently been allocated for a complete renovation of Gold Star Mothers Pool, including replacement of all pool systems and the pool surface, improvements to circulation by users within the complex, upgrades to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, renovations to the plumbing and electrical systems, and possibly the construction of amenities such as spray pools and additional seating. The renovation plans do not include enclosure of the pool for year-round use.
OS6	Street trees should be planted on Cambridge Street, Columbia Street, and on Norfolk Street in the area abutting the DPW site.	***Tree Plantings Ongoing*** The City's has planted about 50 street trees in this area since 1996, as a result of requests from residents. In addition, about 140 street trees have been planted along Cambridge Street through the recent improvements project. For information about requesting tree plantings, contact the City Arborist at 617-349-6433 or visit the Urban Forestry webpage at www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/services/forestry.html
OS7	Street cleaning on Cambridge Street should be done more frequently, particularly around bars and restaurants.	***Street Maintenance Programs Ongoing*** The Department of Public Works' street cleaning program includes monthly sweeping of all streets from April to December. Also, daily hand-vacuuming and litter collection is done in major squares.

OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS from Update Process

Rec. Type & Number	*Recommendation*	*Status and Progress to Date*
OS8	Create play spaces for older children, rather than focusing exclusively on tot lots. One recreation resource that is needed is a skateboard park.	The City works to create parks for people of all ages, and has varied the design of play spaces throughout the city in order to accommodate a variety of age ranges. In addition to playgrounds of various sizes and types, the City incorporates water play areas, basketball and tennis courts, and field spaces into many of its parks. ■ ***SKATE PARK PLANNING IN PROGRESS – Short Range*** The City is planning to build a skate park near Danehy Park within the next couple of years. Additionally, the Charles River Conservancy is in the process of designing a large skate park near the North Point area in East Cambridge, to be developed over a longer timeframe.
OS9	Create good pathways to existing and future open spaces that border Wellington-Harrington, like North Point's parks and Grand Junction Railway linear park.	***Sidewalk Improvements Completed*** The recently completed Cambridge Street Corridor Improvements project has enhanced the sidewalks connecting Wellington-Harrington to the North Point area through the addition of trees, sidewalk furniture, crosswalks, and improved lighting fixtures. In the special permit for the North Point master plan, significant attention is given to pedestrian access to the future North Point parks from adjoining neighborhoods. ■ ***RAILROAD REUSE STUDY UNDERWAY - Short Range*** The Community Development Department is currently conducting a feasibility study of the reuse of the Grand Junction Railroad as a multi-use path for pedestrians, bicyclists, and possibly a part of the "Urban Ring" public transit line under consideration by the MBTA.
OS10	Look for opportunities to renovate small pocket parks whenever possible. Some sites that might be renovated include: • The corner of Windsor and Lincoln Streets • The corner of Windsor and Hampshire Streets • The corner of Webster Avenue and Hampshire Streets (across from the CDM building) • The old trucking company site on Binney Street • Site on Winter Street (in East Cambridge)	■ ***ISSUE UNDER CONSIDERATION – Medium Range*** The Community Development Department, working with the Open Space Committee, expects to request funding for the development of such pocket parks. As funding becomes available, the City will evaluate these locations as potential pocket park sites. Some pocket park areas have recently been constructed as part of the Cambridge Street reconstruction, including Vellucci Community Plaza at Inman Square, the yard next to Valente Library, and the seating area by the Miller's River housing complex.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS - (cont.)

Rec. Type & Number	*Recommendation*	*Status and Progress to Date*
OS11	The Department of Transportation Building site in East Cambridge could provide an opportunity to create new open space.	***ECaPS Zoning Requirements in Effect*** As a result of the rezoning that accompanied the Eastern Cambridge Planning Study (ECaPS) in 2001, if a large development were to occur at some point in the future on this block, the creation of an approximately seven-acre public open space would be required along with that development. It is currently unknown whether development might occur on this block in the near or distant future.
OS12	The City should acquire land across the street from the Kennedy School's Ahern Field. While not located in the Wellington-Harrington neighborhood but in nearby East Cambridge, this is an important open space for a large number of students and local residents.	***Issue Considered in ECaPS*** The Eastern Cambridge Planning Study (ECaPS) in 2001 encouraged the creation of public open space on this site as well as on another site next to the Grand Junction Railroad near Binney Street. These open spaces might be created if developers were to buy these lots and transfer the development rights (as allowed in the Eastern Cambridge Rezoning) to another location south of Binney Street.

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