Our Parks Our Plan

Parks & Open Space Planning

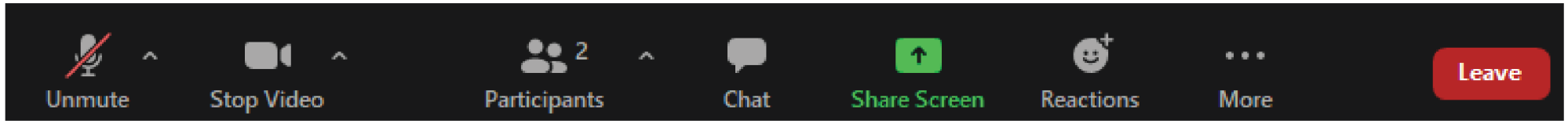
Setting Our Goals

June 30, 2022

City of Cambridge
Community Development Department

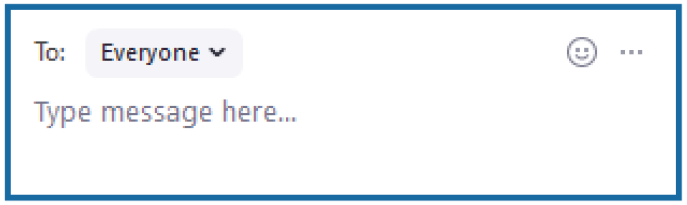
Danehy Park

Getting to Know Zoom

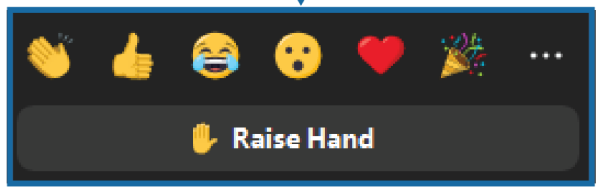


Please leave your **audio muted** and video on (if comfortable)

Click to open the **Chat** box. This will allow you to chat with the Hosts and Participants.



Click to open the **Reactions** box. This will allow you to give nonverbal feedback.



For Zoom-related questions reach out to Drew Kane via chat or email dkane@cambridgema.gov

If you're having connectivity issues, call in at

929-436-2866

Meeting ID: 871 9406 6485

We're recording!

Closed Captioning

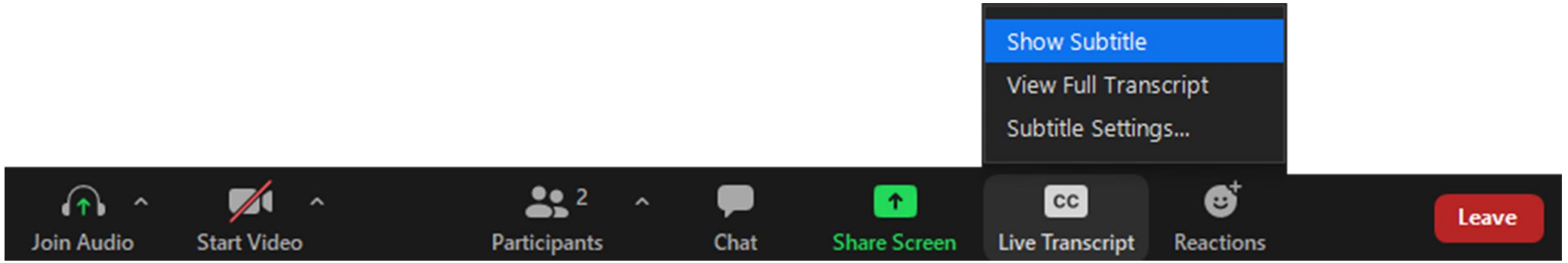
Turn on closed captioning by clicking the **'Live Transcript'** button on the bottom of your screen.

a) Turn on subtitles by clicking on **'Show Subtitle'**

b) View a streaming transcript by clicking on **'View Full Transcript'**

View a streaming transcript in a separate window by clicking the **link in the chat.**

If you require closed captioning for the breakout session, please **raise your hand** or send a private **chat message to the Hosts**.



Agenda

1. Our Process
2. What We've Heard So Far
3. Our (Draft) Vision
4. Our (Draft) Goals
5. Breakout Groups
6. Next Steps

Danehy Park

Our Process

Open Space Planning Process

Community Core Values

- Livability
- Diversity and Equity
- Economic Opportunity
- Sustainability and Resilience
- Community Health and Well-Being
- Learning

Parks and open spaces are a key part of the City's infrastructure for maintaining and increasing quality of life

What We’ve Heard So Far

Community Engagement So Far

Online Surveys

- *Tell Us How You Use Parks* online survey
- *Community Values and Priorities* online survey
- *Park Use and Access* online survey

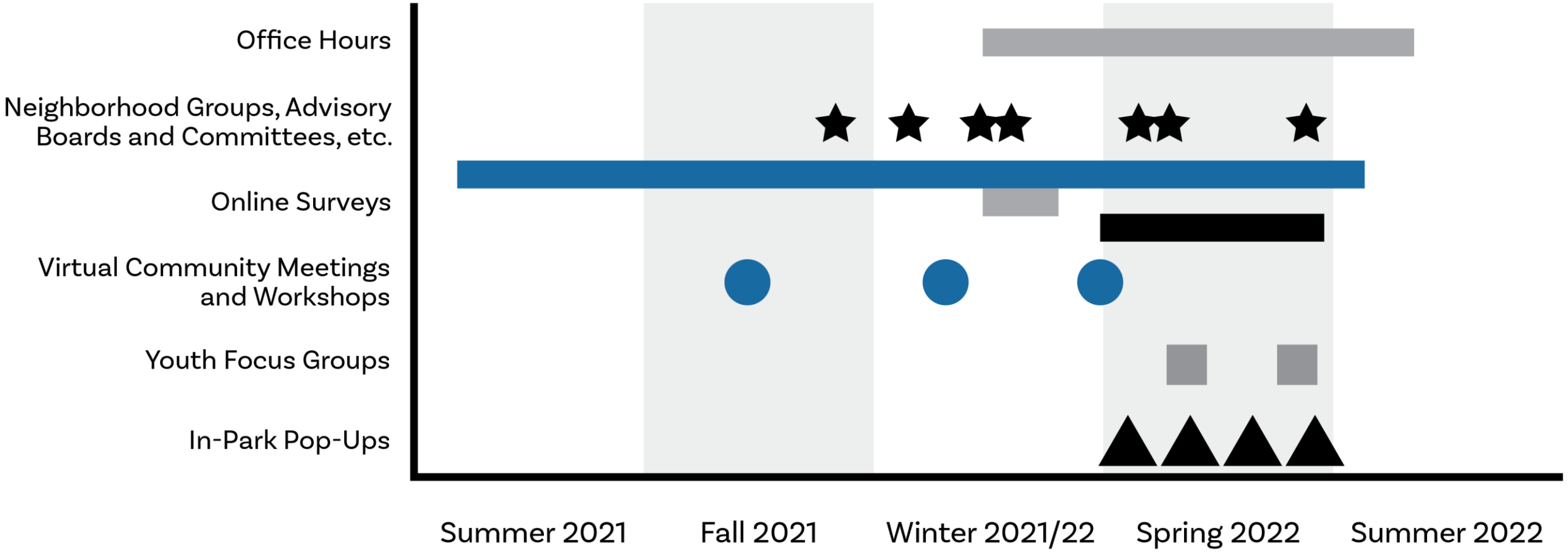
Public Meetings

- Kickoff Community Meeting
- Core Values and Priorities Community Discussion
- Visioning Workshop

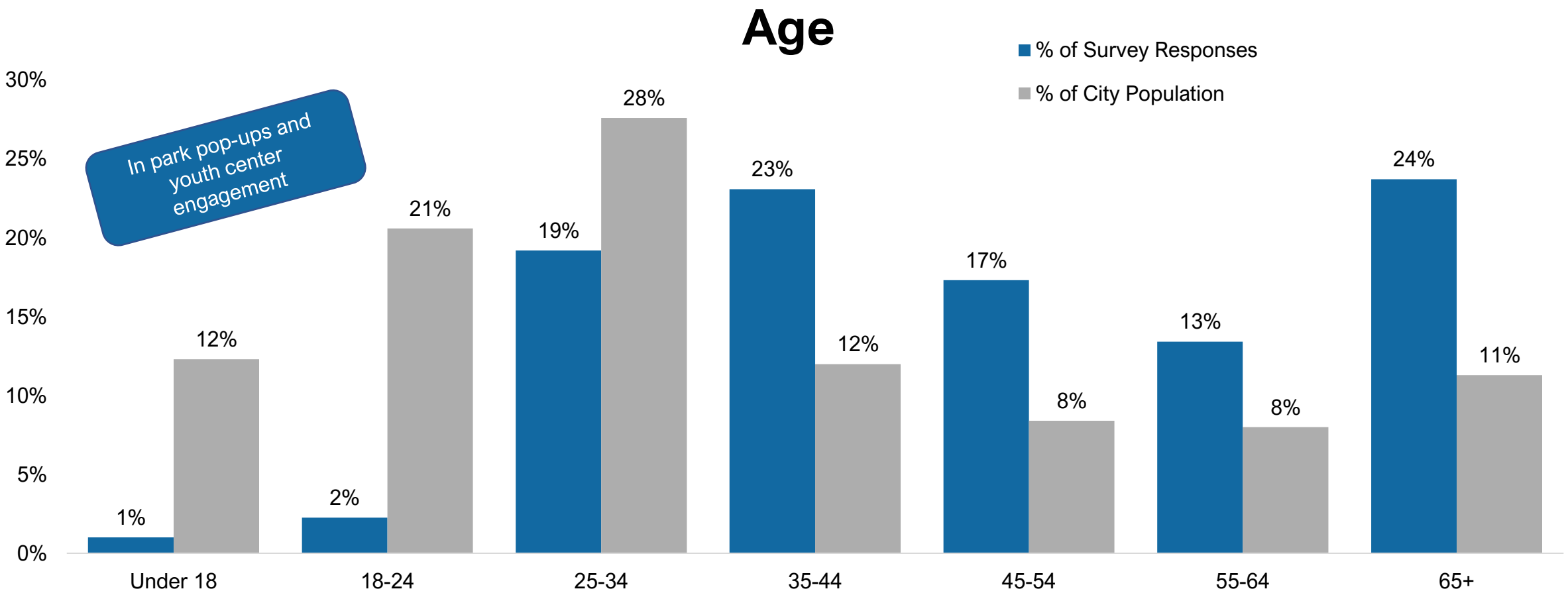
Meeting People Where They Are

- Focus groups with youth at Gately and Russell Youth Centers
- In-Park Pop-Ups at Joan Lorentz Park, Danehy Park, Toomey Park, and Hoyt Field
- Presenting to Neighborhood Groups, Advisory Boards and Committees, and Other Groups (reach out to us!)
- Virtual Office Hours

Community Engagement So Far



Who We've Reached - Surveys



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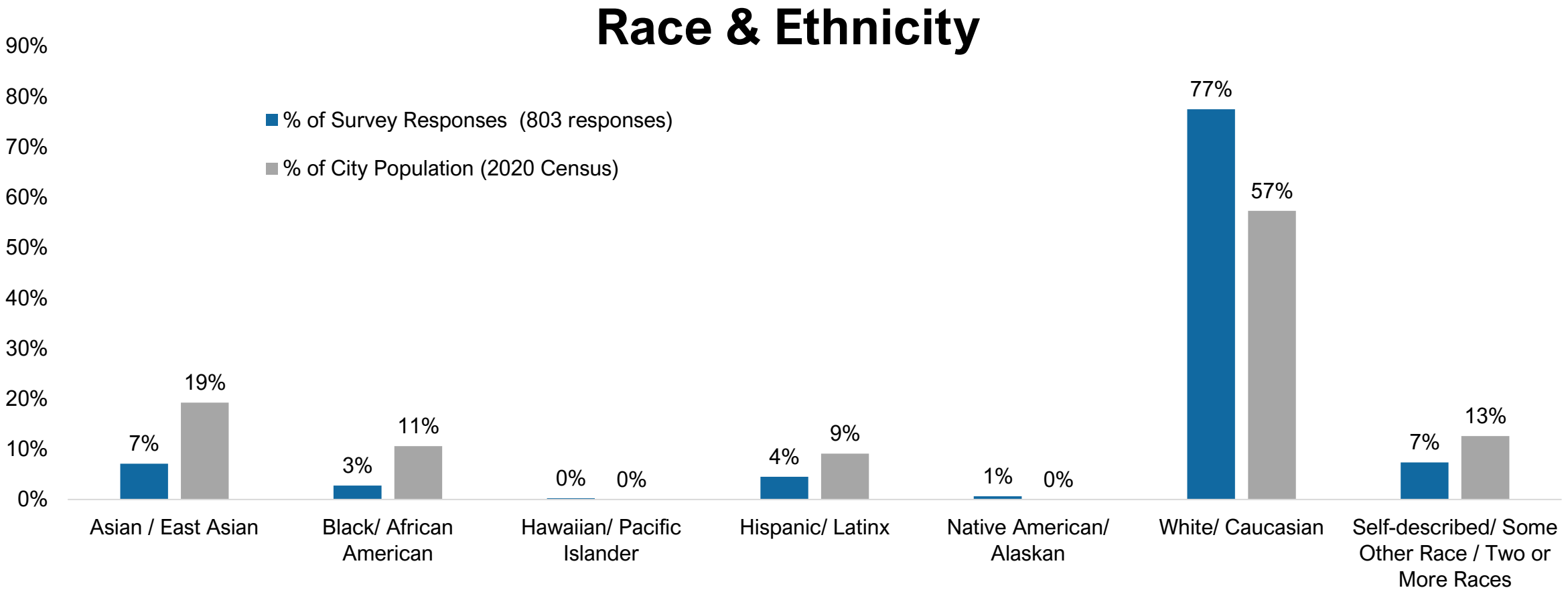

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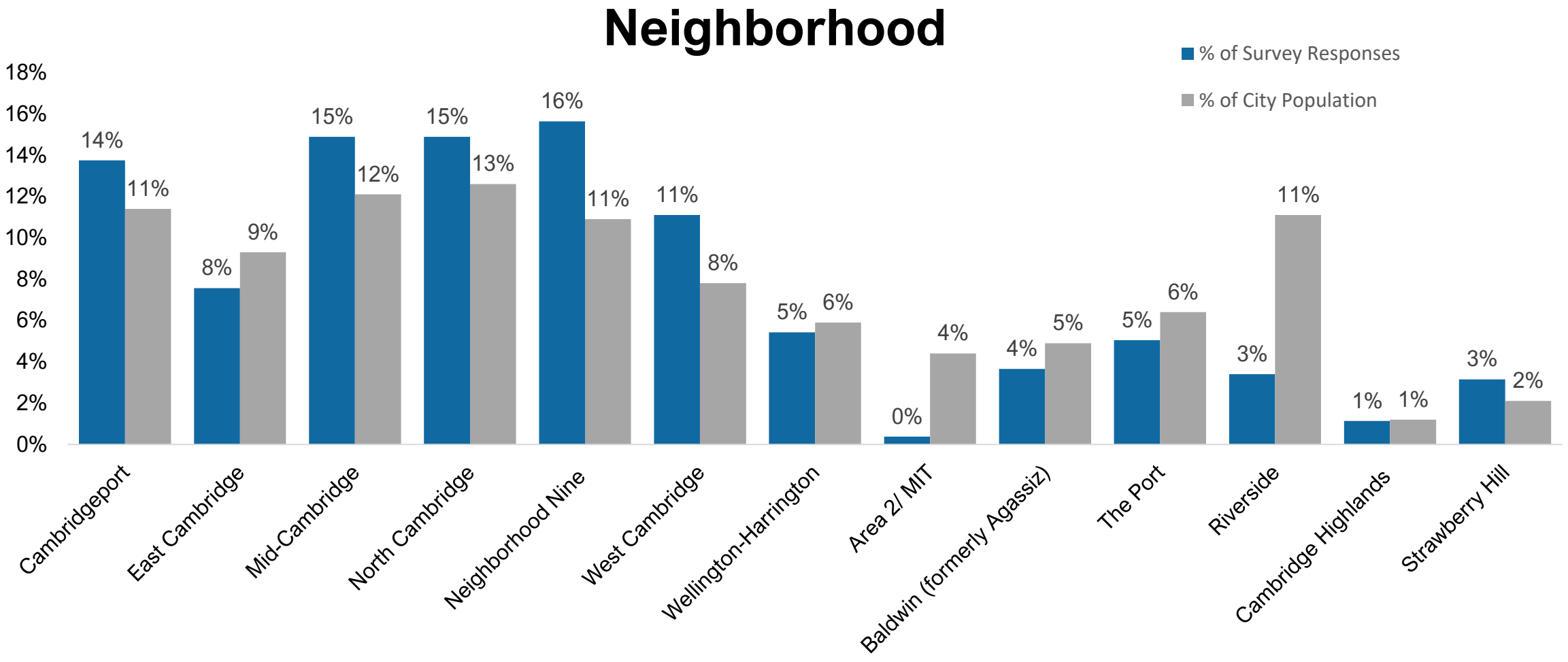


Park Use and Access Results

27% say it is not easy to get to **nature**

87% "Always" or "often" **walk to parks**

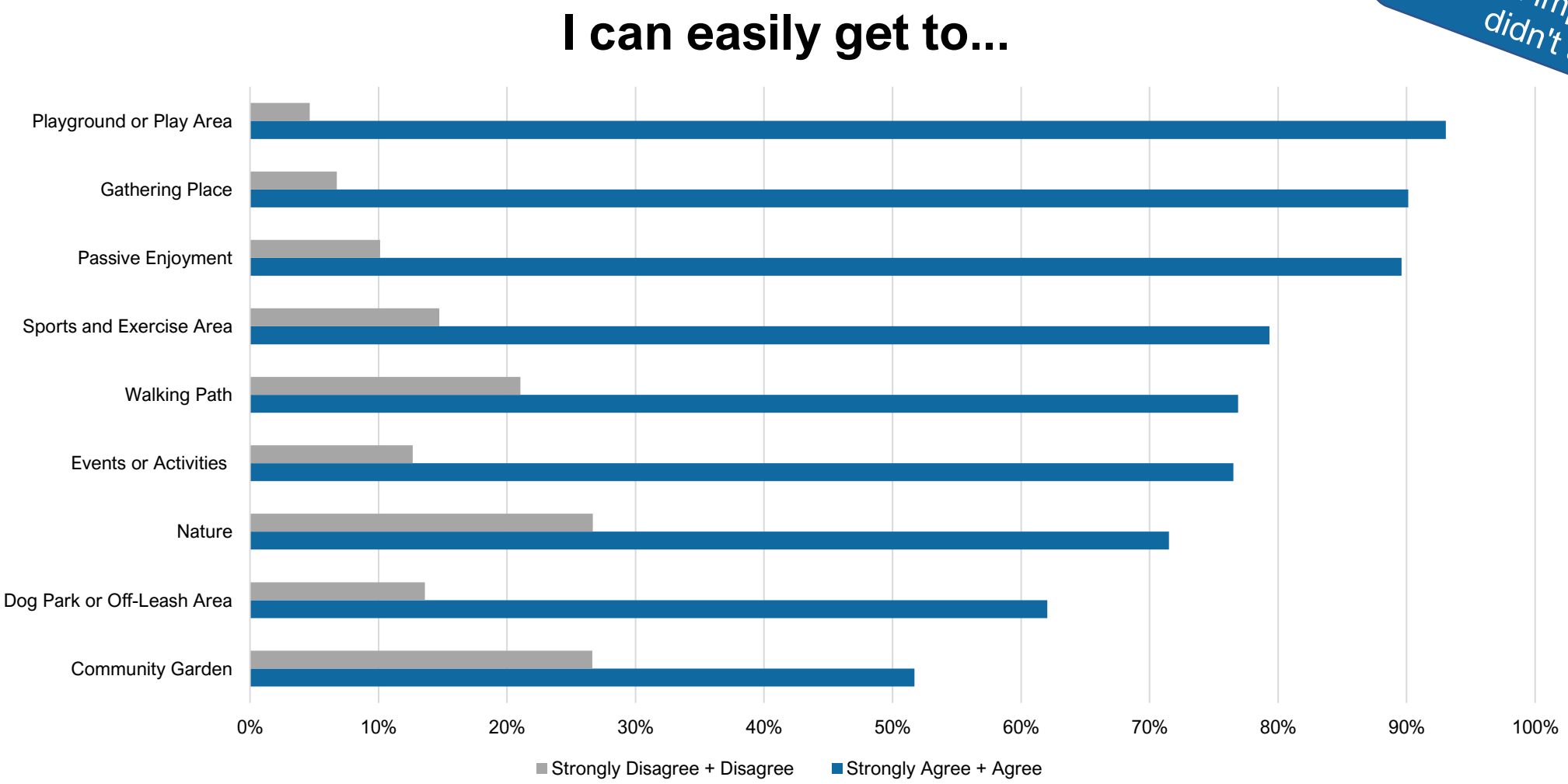
People sometimes feel unwelcome because of:

Uneven walking surfaces
Dog time/space too limited
Dogs off leash when they're not supposed to
Uncomfortable seating
Not enough shade
Lack of diversity
Nighttime/ darkness

Time people are willing to travel to…

Park Use Results

Water and water play are an important use we didn't ask about



Pop-Ups & Youth Center Focus Groups

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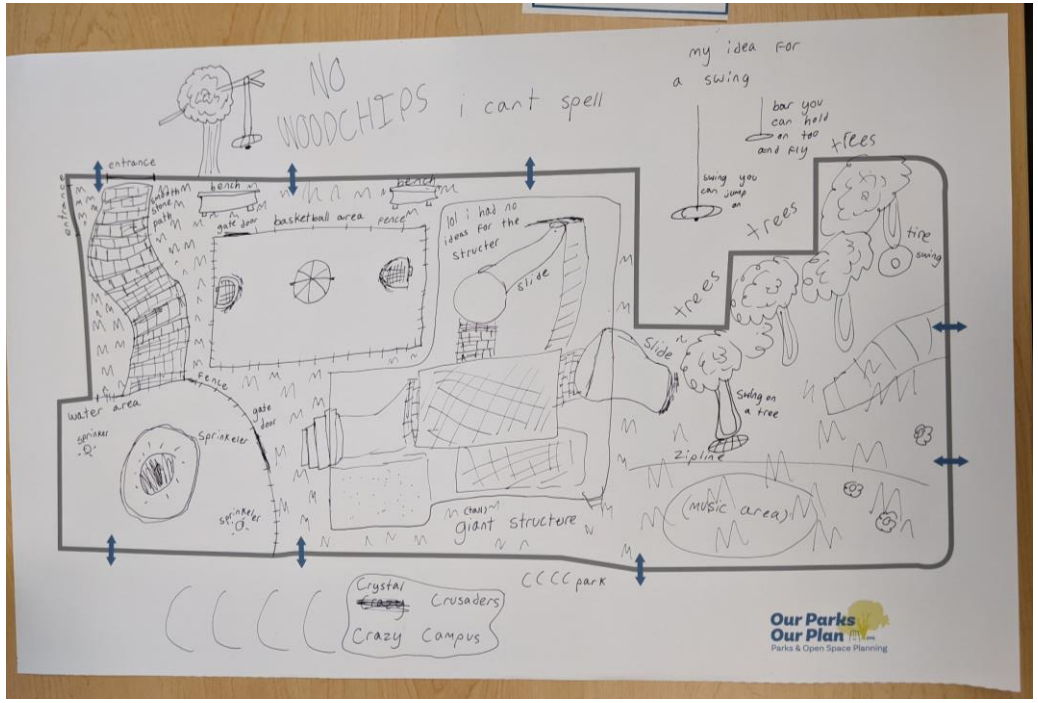
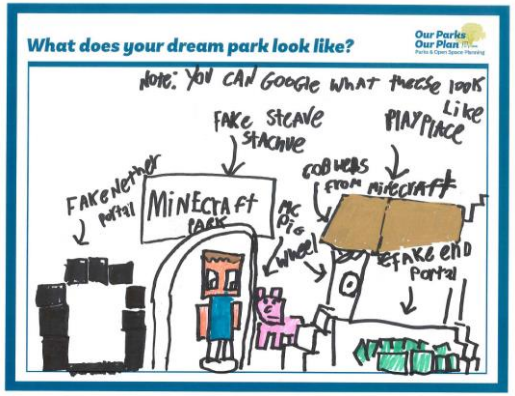
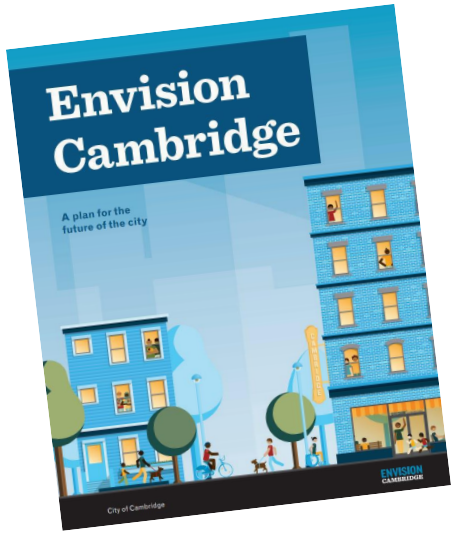




Our Community Vision

What is a Community Vision?

- Both a process and a statement
- **Process:** Discover the future we want. What does the community want our parks and open spaces to be like in 7 – 10 years?
- **Statement:** The vision statement is then used to guide the planning process.



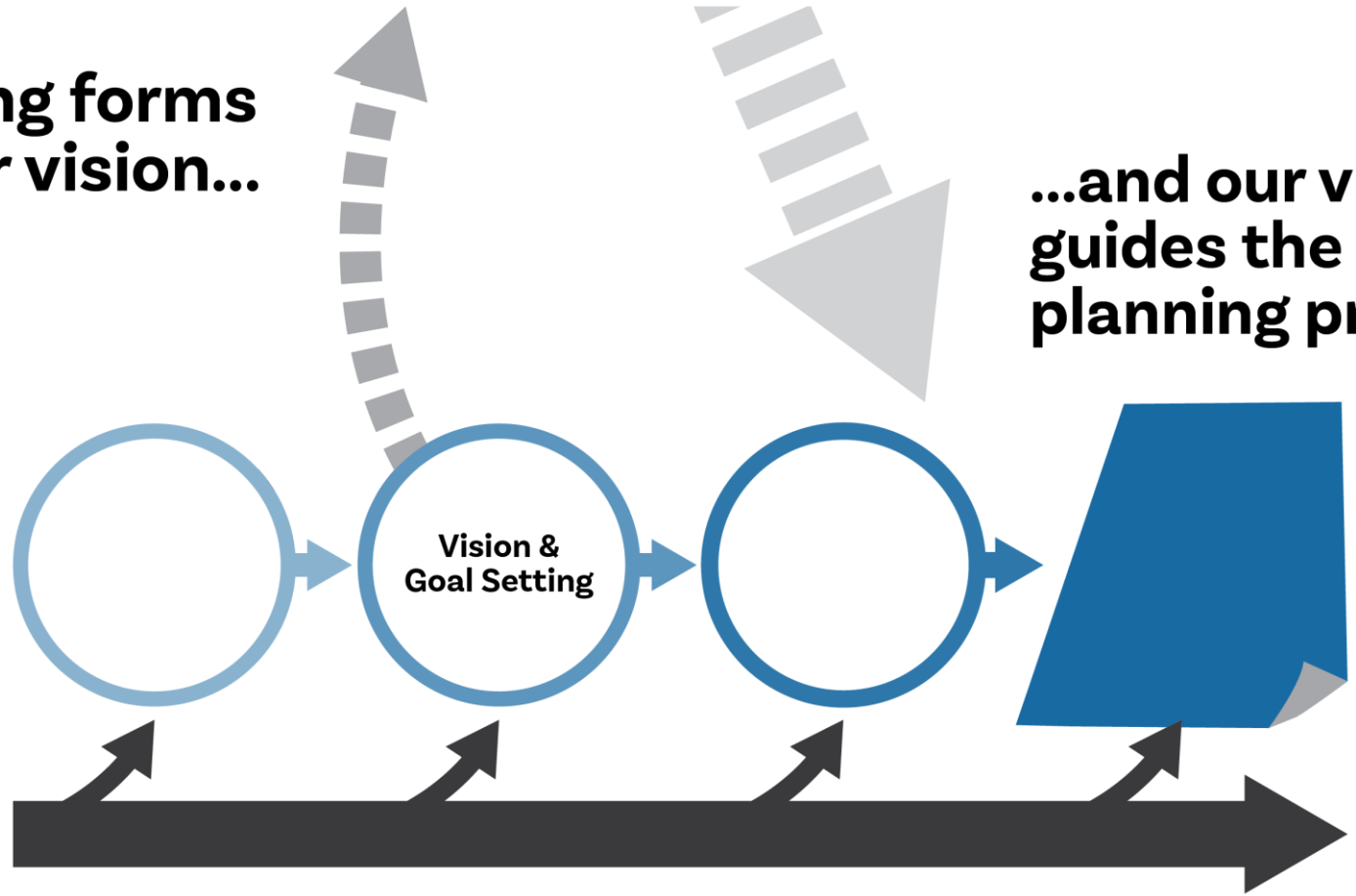
"(In 2030,) Cambridge is a forward-thinking, welcoming, and diverse city. We enjoy a high quality of life and thrive in a sustainable, inclusive, and connected community."

- Envision Cambridge

PARKS & OPEN SPACE VISION

Visioning forms our vision...

...and our vision guides the planning process



What would our parks and open spaces be like if we could make them any way we wanted?

Our Parks & Open Space (Draft) **Vision**

Cambridge's parks and open spaces are **essential and interconnected** spaces that **welcome** all members of our **diverse community**.

Our parks and open spaces welcome people to engage in a wide variety of **active or passive activities**. In our parks and open spaces people can come to **be together or spend time alone**.

Our parks and open spaces are **inclusive and accessible** places for **gathering, relaxing, being active, and playing** in **well-maintained facilities, landscape, and nature**.

Our parks and open spaces **foster culture and the arts**, providing spaces for spectacle and performance to express and inspire peoples' **creativity**.

Our parks and open spaces support our everyday **quality of life** and provide places and moments where **memories** are made.

Our (Draft) **Open Space Goals**

Draft Open Space Goals

Expanding & Improving Park Access for All	Providing Environmental Benefits in our Urban Context	Activating & Enhancing Public Spaces	Enhancing & Improving Design, Operations, and Management
Goal A: Eliminate barriers and actively welcome people to enjoy parks and park programs, ensuring they are welcoming spaces for all.	**Goal D:** Protect and enhance natural areas, including Cambridge's water supply areas as well as smaller spaces that support biodiversity.	**Goal F:** Promote healthy play and active recreation for people of all ages, abilities, genders, and backgrounds.	**Goal J:** Develop high-quality parks to advance community priorities and incorporate uses that reflect community interests.
Goal B: Improve access to open space, with an emphasis in areas of high open space need.	**Goal E:** Leverage parks and open spaces to foster climate resilience, and design and program open spaces with a changing climate.	**Goal G:** Activate public spaces.	**Goal K:** Strive toward well-maintained parks and systems of operation that balance efficiency and effectiveness with adaptability and responsiveness.
Goal C: Support active and sustainable modes of access to, and through-use of, parks and open spaces.		**Goal H:** Cultivate comfortable spaces for gathering and connections.	**Goal L:** Enhance public information about parks and open space, and highlight ways the community can engage with parks that foster learning and community-building.
		Goal I: Celebrate, integrate, and highlight creativity, arts, and culture.	

Goal A:

Eliminate barriers and actively welcome people to enjoy parks and park programs, ensuring they are welcoming spaces for all.

- ***Example Action:*** *Develop inclusive design guidelines and best practices*
- ***Example Action:*** *Encourage expanded language access to park programs and park information*
- ***Example Action:*** *Continually evaluate and address barriers to park and open space enjoyment*

Goal B:

Improve access to open space, with an emphasis in areas of high open space need.

- ***Example Action:*** *Pursue opportunities for open space expansion, particularly in areas of high open space need*
- ***Example Action:*** *Evaluate feasibility of improving connections to open space, such as across the Fitchburg line rail tracks between Danehy Park and Rindge Ave*
- ***Example Action:*** *Identify opportunities to create pocket parks*

Goal C:

Support active and sustainable modes of access to, and through-use of, parks and open spaces.

- ***Example Action:*** *Increase access to BlueBikes in and near parks*
- ***Example Action:*** *Add more seating to parks and paths*
- ***Example Action:*** *Evaluate wayfinding opportunities to better connect people to parks*

Goal D:

Protect and enhance natural areas, including Cambridge's water supply areas as well as smaller spaces that support biodiversity.

- ***Example Action:*** *Continue implementation of Fresh Pond Master Plan and Surface Water Supply Protection Plan*
- ***Example Action:*** *Establish pollinator gardens and naturalized planting areas*
- ***Example Action:*** *Leverage parks and open spaces to improve water quality*

Goal E:

Leverage parks and open spaces to foster climate resilience, and design and program open spaces with a changing climate.

- ***Example Action:*** *Continue tree planting program in parks (implementation of Urban Forest Master Plan)*
- ***Example Action:*** *Mitigate against the impacts of heat through design (e.g., tree planting, shade structures, choices of material, and access to water)*
- ***Example Action:*** *Align stormwater retention/detention opportunities with planned large-scale parks and open space projects*

Goal F:

Promote healthy play and active recreation for people of all ages, abilities, genders, and backgrounds.

- ***Example Action:*** *Examine and address barriers to participation and sense of belonging in recreation programs and activities*
- ***Example Action:*** *Continue to encourage play in the public realm and playful urban design*
- ***Example Action:*** *Create play opportunities for people of all ages*

Goal G:

Activate public spaces.

- ***Example Action:*** *Continue Summer in the City, Screen on the Green, and other programs and events by the Arts Council, DHSP, and other City departments*
- ***Example Action:*** *Continue and expand Cambridge Plays initiative*
- ***Example Action:*** *Help residents/organizations activate public spaces (e.g. Play Streets, Block Parties)*

Goal H:

Cultivate comfortable spaces for gathering and connections.

- ***Example Action:*** *Continue creating public patios with playful or engaging elements through the Public Space Lab initiative*
- ***Example Action:*** *Explore feasibility of limited vending in parks*
- ***Example Action:*** *Design and program parks to foster four-seasons use*

Goal I:

Celebrate, integrate, and highlight creativity, arts, and culture.

- ***Example Action:*** *Integrate public art into park design*
- ***Example Action:*** *Encourage unique, creative, and memorable design*
- ***Example Action:*** *Encourage and help develop creativity and diversity in programming*

Goal J:

Develop high-quality parks to advance community priorities and incorporate uses that reflect community interests.

- ***Example Action:*** *Continue program of park capital improvements*
- ***Example Action:*** *Incorporate diverse uses and activities into new park designs*
- ***Example Action:*** *Design for flexible use*

Goal K:

Strive toward well-maintained parks and systems of operation that balance efficiency and effectiveness with adaptability and responsiveness.

- ***Example Action:*** *Continued use and promotion of Commonwealth Connect for reporting park maintenance needs*
- ***Example Action:*** *Develop detailed database of park furnishings and features to facilitate repairs*

Goal J:

Enhance public information about parks and open space, and highlight ways the community can engage with parks that foster learning and community-building.

- ***Example Action:*** *Develop enhanced, user-friendly open space maps and resources to help people better connect with our parks*
- ***Example Action:*** *Organize or support volunteer opportunities such as cleanup days*
- ***Example Action:*** *Make community events in parks easier to find on the City calendar*

Breakout Groups

Group Discussion Guidelines

- Show respect to all that participate
- Embrace diverse points of view
- Avoid debates and interruptions
- Listen to understand, not to respond
- Do not engage in personal attacks
- All stereotyping and hateful comments are not tolerated

Next Steps

What's Next

We are here!
Inventory & Needs Assessment
Vision & Goal Setting
Strategy Development
Open Space Plan
Community Engagement & Feedback

How you can stay involved

- **Keep the discussion going!**
  - Feedback form around draft goals
  - (Virtual) office hours
- **Stop by a pop-up!**
  - Times and locations on our project website
- **Sign up for email updates**
- **For more information:**
  - Visit cambridgema.gov/openspaceplan
  - Contact Gary Chan at gchan@cambridgema.gov