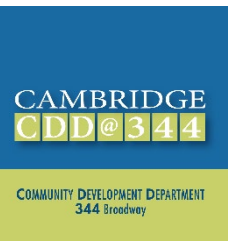
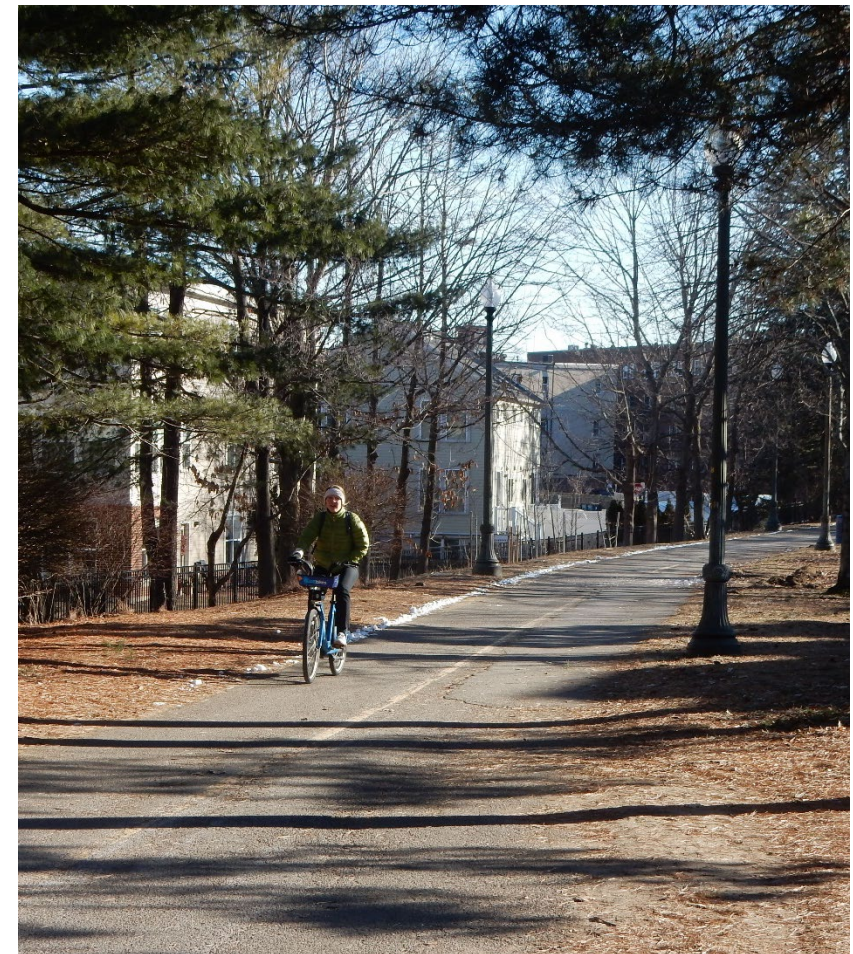


CITY OF CAMBRIDGE | NOVEMBER 14, 2023  
LINEAR PARK REDESIGN PROJECT



Neighborhood and Long-Term Planning, Public Facilities,  
Arts and Celebrations Committee

PARK DESIGN UPDATES





## PROJECT BACKGROUND

### Linear Park Redesign

- Renovation of Linear Park from Russell Field to Somerville-Cambridge line
- New path surface, trees and understory plantings, lighting, drainage, signage, seating, and opportunities for play
- Public art & placemaking





# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

## Public meetings

- Public Meeting 1: May 2022
- Public Meeting 2: November 2022
- Public Meeting 3: June 2023

## In person events

- Site walk 1: May 2022
- Site walk 2: June 2022
- Paint the Path event: June 2022
- Park Design Tabling Event: June 2023

## Survey

- Survey open for 5 months in 2022, with over 600 responses





# KEY THEMES FROM ENGAGEMENT

## Movement/Path Experience

- Path can feel crowded
- Path width, space for passing
- Bicyclist speeds

## Tree Canopy

- Appreciate forest-in-a-city feeling
- Concern about tree removals

## Park Furnishings and Fixtures

- More benches, seating
- Add park elements and amenities
- Wayfinding and etiquette signage



## PROJECT VISION

The Linear Park Redesign project will reimagine a beloved and highly used community park and multi-use pathway.

The **outcomes** of a redesigned Linear Park are:

- To be an inclusive space and accommodating of all users
- Create an engaging community open space
- Strengthen neighborhood connections
- Be a resilient and biodiverse landscape suited for a changing climate

To **enhance the experience** of path users and park visitors, we will:

- Include playful and creative features
- Add new seating for all to enjoy
- Widen and differentiate paths of travel, where space allows



# PARK DESIGN CHARACTER: MOVEMENT



Make moving through the park—at different paces, for different reasons—more comfortable for people

## Side Paths/Secondary Paths

- Add variety to the experience of moving through the park
- Incorporate opportunities to meander through the space
- Also have a landscape protection benefit

## Creative paths through the landscape

- Reinforce where there are desire lines to mitigate future erosion



# PARK DESIGN CHARACTER: PAUSE



Incorporate creativity and playfulness, and opportunities to slow, linger, pause, and rest.

## Formal moments to rest

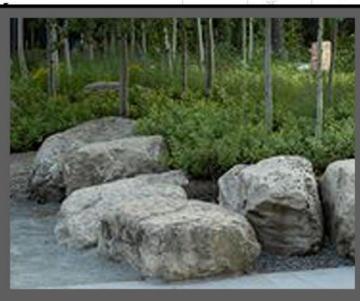
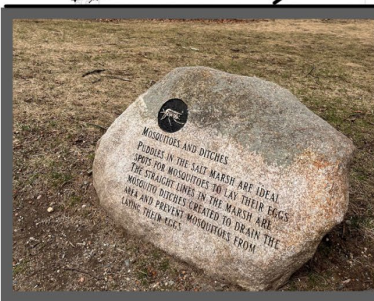
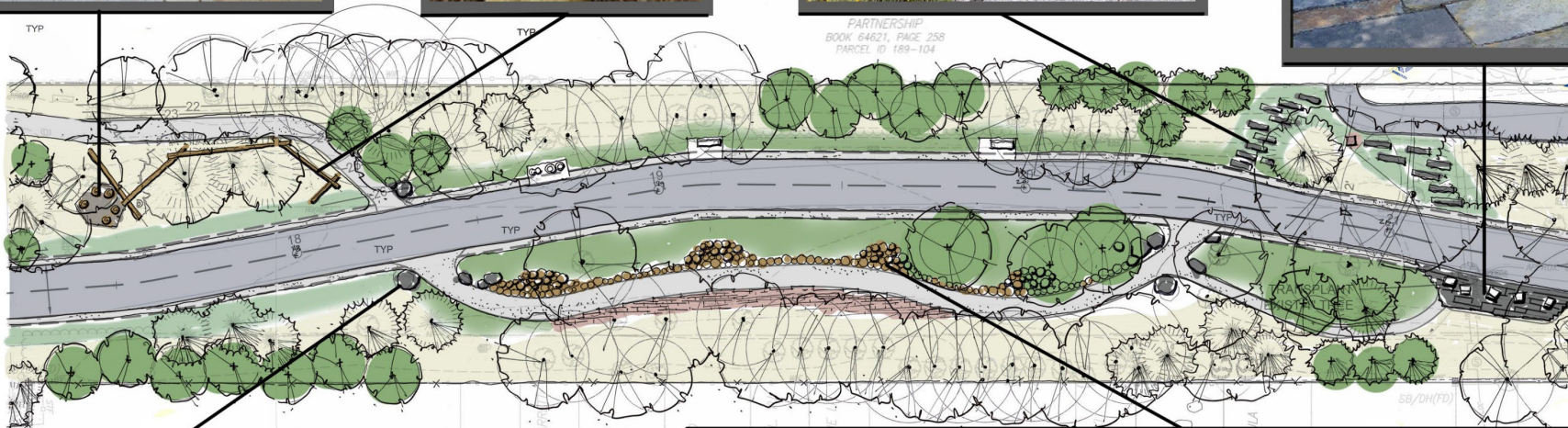
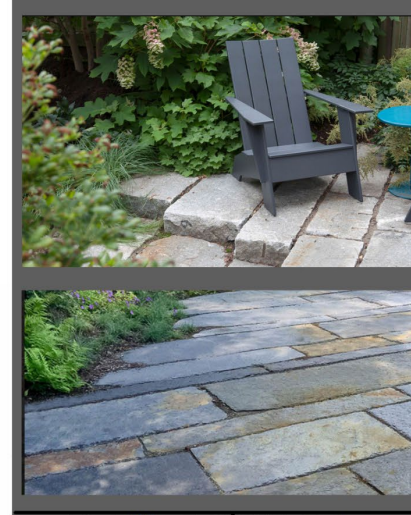
- Benches
- Movable tables and chairs

## Creative landscape detailing

- Infuse a sense of playfulness, through the lens of a forest landscape
- Moments of interest along corridor

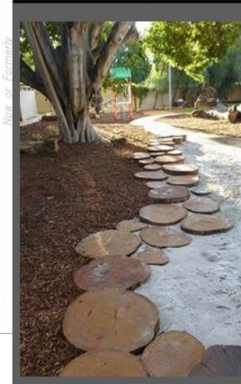
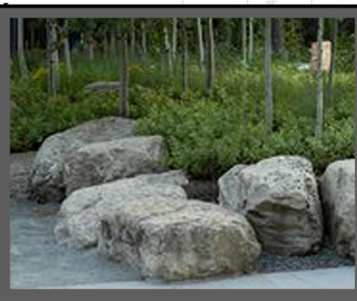
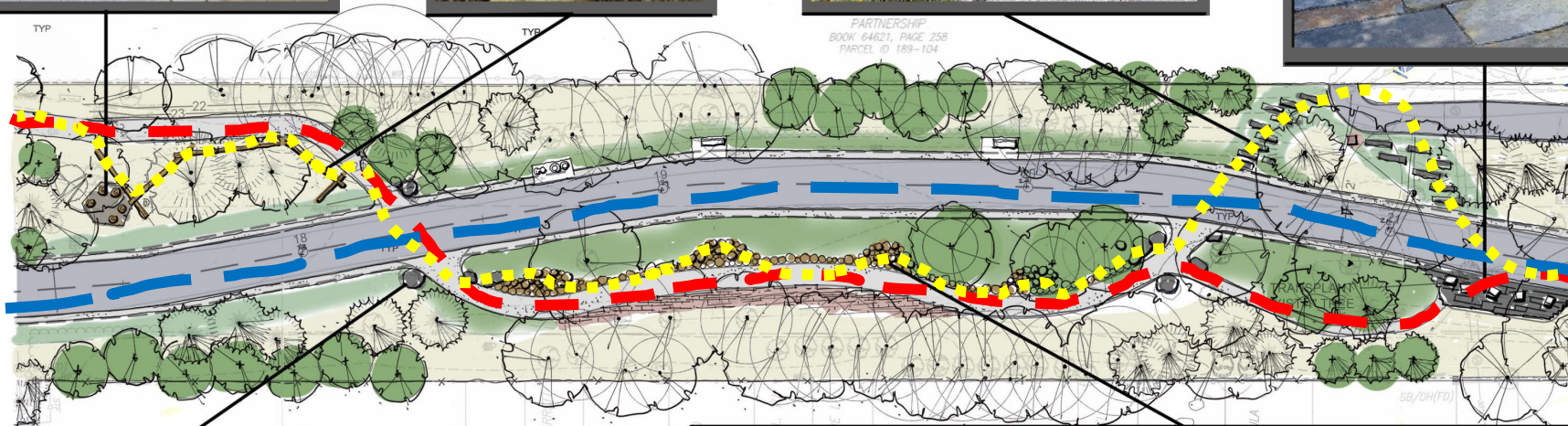
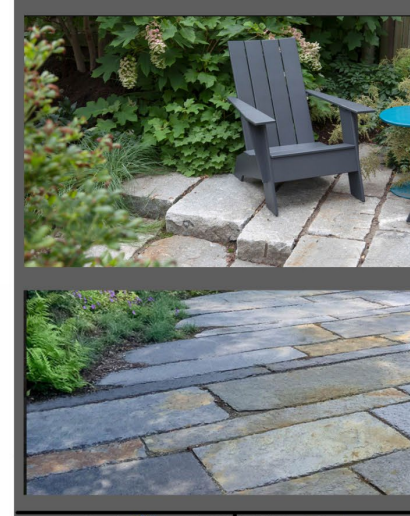


# Proposed park design concepts





# Proposed park design concepts



# Proposed park design concept





# KEY PARK UPGRADES

## Drainage

- Addressing ponding & slick areas

## Lighting

- Replace existing lighting given its age and condition

## Pavement Surface

- New pavement with a stone dust shoulder for running/walking

## Signage

- Wayfinding to area destinations and etiquette signage

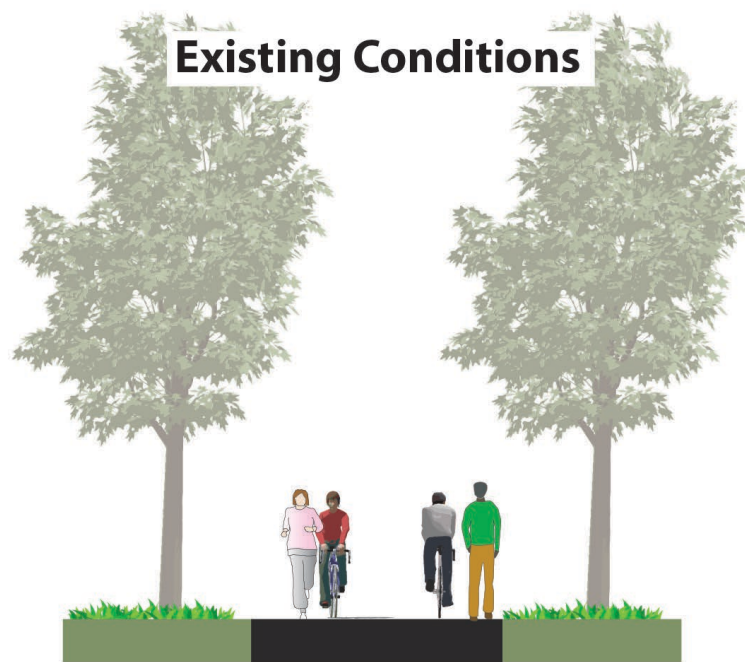




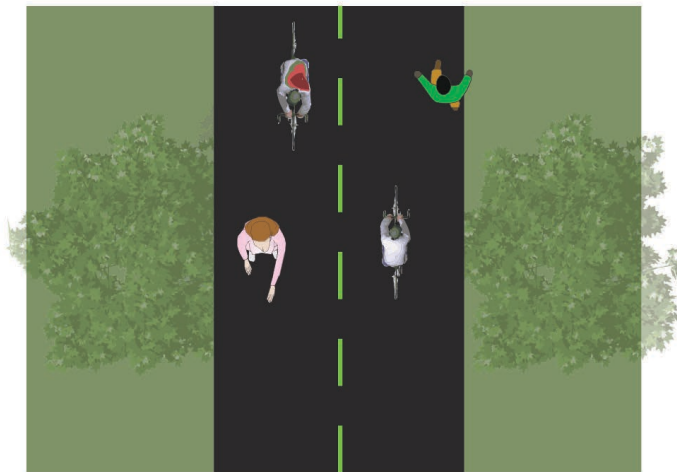
# SLIGHT PATH WIDENING

- Widening to 12' - 14' allows path users traveling at different speeds better conditions for spreading out and giving more space when passing

## Existing Conditions



Paths 10.5' wide or narrower operate with two travel lanes

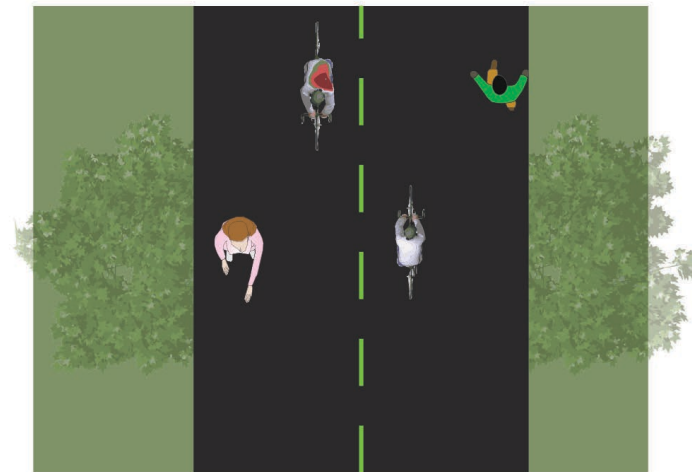


10'-6"  
Multi-Use Path

## Proposed Conditions



Paths 11' - 14.5' operate with two travel lanes and one shared central pass lane



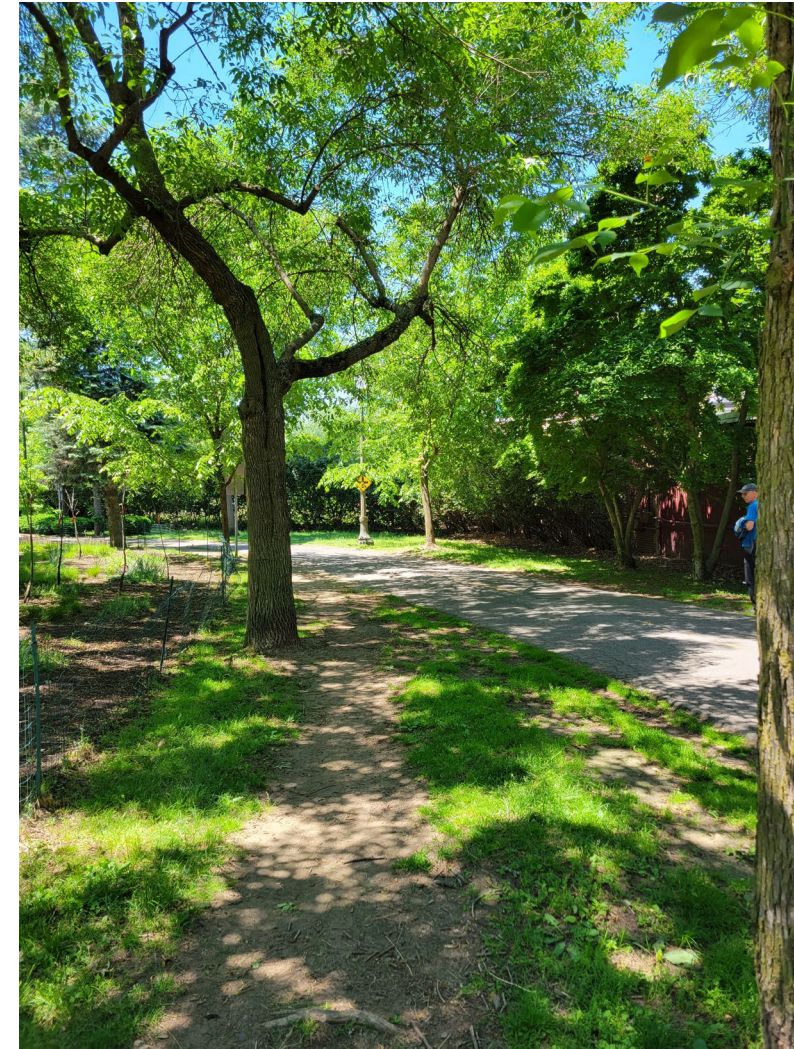
12' - 14'  
Multi-Use Path



# TREE PROTECTION AND PLANTINGS

One of our main goals is to improve the health and diversity of Linear Park's plantings. We intend to do this by:

- Planting additional trees, shrubs and groundcover species
- Improving soils
- Replacing unhealthy trees & Removing invasive species
- Protecting existing trees
  - Protect existing mature trees
  - Transplant rather than remove smaller trees when needed

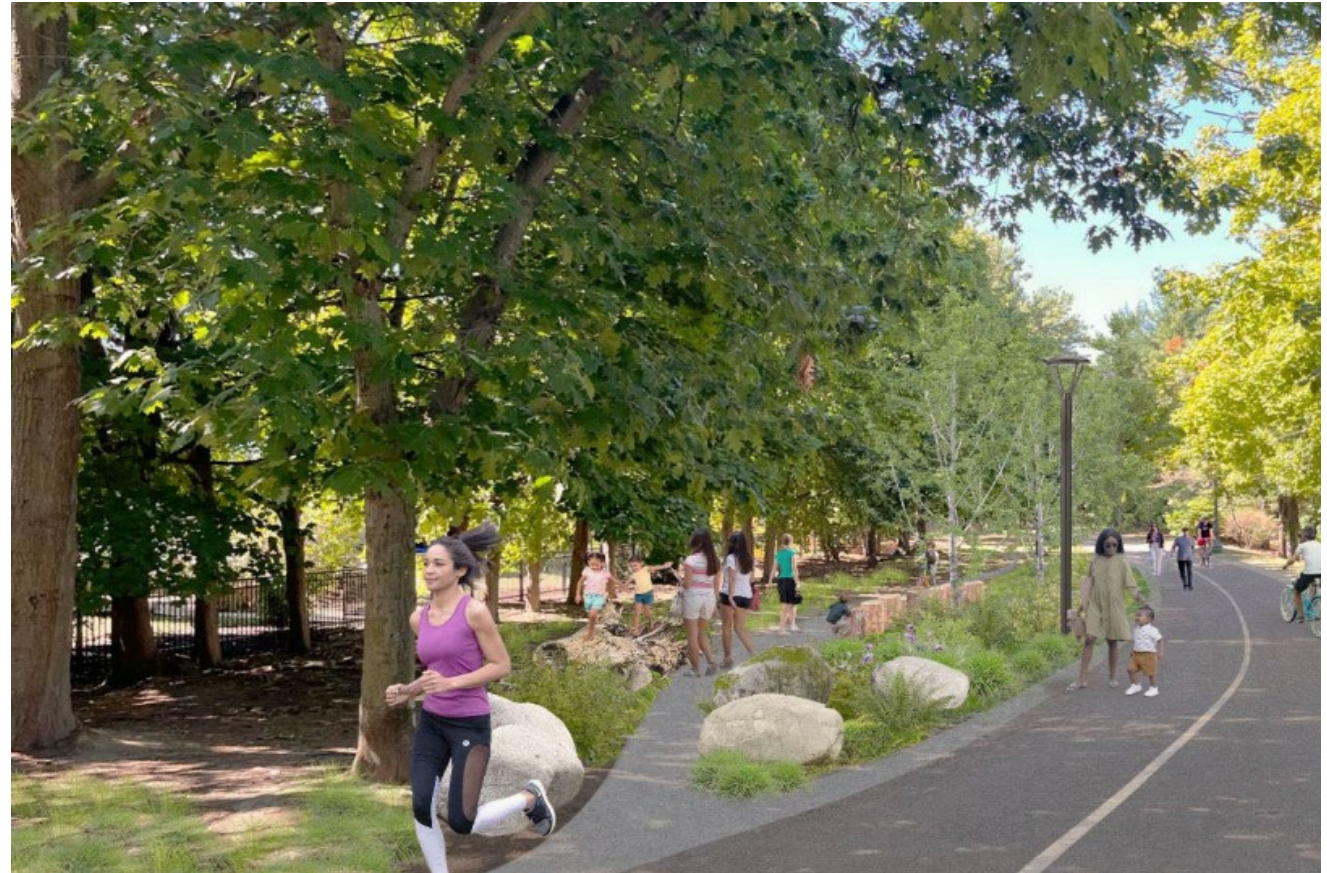




# TREE PROTECTION AND PLANTINGS

## Planting additional trees, shrubs and groundcover species

- We estimate that we'll plant between 120 and 150 trees as part of the Linear Park redesign process
- Roughly 200-300 new caliper inches





# TREE PROTECTION AND PLANTINGS

## Improving Soils

- Construction
  - De-Compaction
  - Amendments/Top-dressing
- Post-Construction
  - Plant selections - high percentage of root biomass
  - Ecological maintenance techniques





# TREE PROTECTION AND PLANTINGS

## Replacing unhealthy trees & Removing invasive species

- Replacements: 5 unhealthy cherry trees will be replaced with new cherry trees in the same area
- Invasive shrubs and small (less than 6") Norway Maples will be removed and replaced with new plantings



**A decaying Cherry tree planned for replacement**





# TREE PROTECTION AND PLANTINGS

## Protecting existing trees

- Design: Air spading investigation
- Construction: Fencing, watering, fertilizing and monitoring

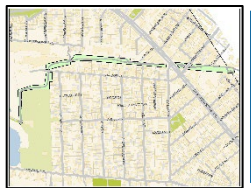




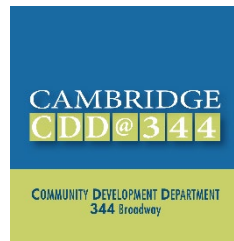
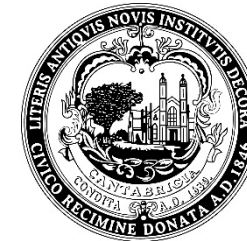
## NEXT STEPS

- Continue to review design and make revisions as necessary to complete design
- In-person open house event in early 2024
- Targeted date for project bidding in 2024
- Continued public engagement through regular construction updates

[Camb.ma/linearpark](https://Camb.ma/linearpark)



# THANK YOU



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