

CENTRAL SQUARE CITY LOTS STUDY

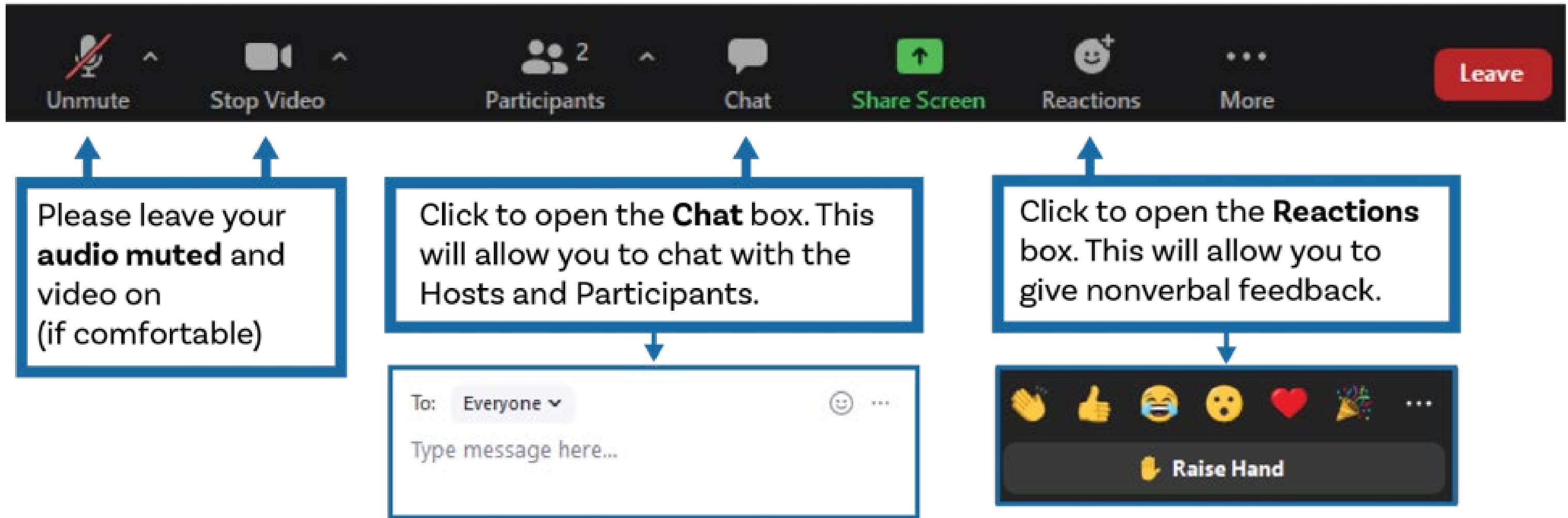
VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE



Agency
Landscape + Planning

October 25, 2023

GETTING TO KNOW ZOOM



For Zoom-related questions reach out to Annie Streetman via chat or email annie@agencylp.com



If you're having connectivity issues, call in at 929-436-2866 Meeting ID: 830 0980 8992



We're Recording!

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Project Overview (15 min)

3. Breakout Discussion 1 (30 min)

- Leverage the Potential of Large, City-owned Sites

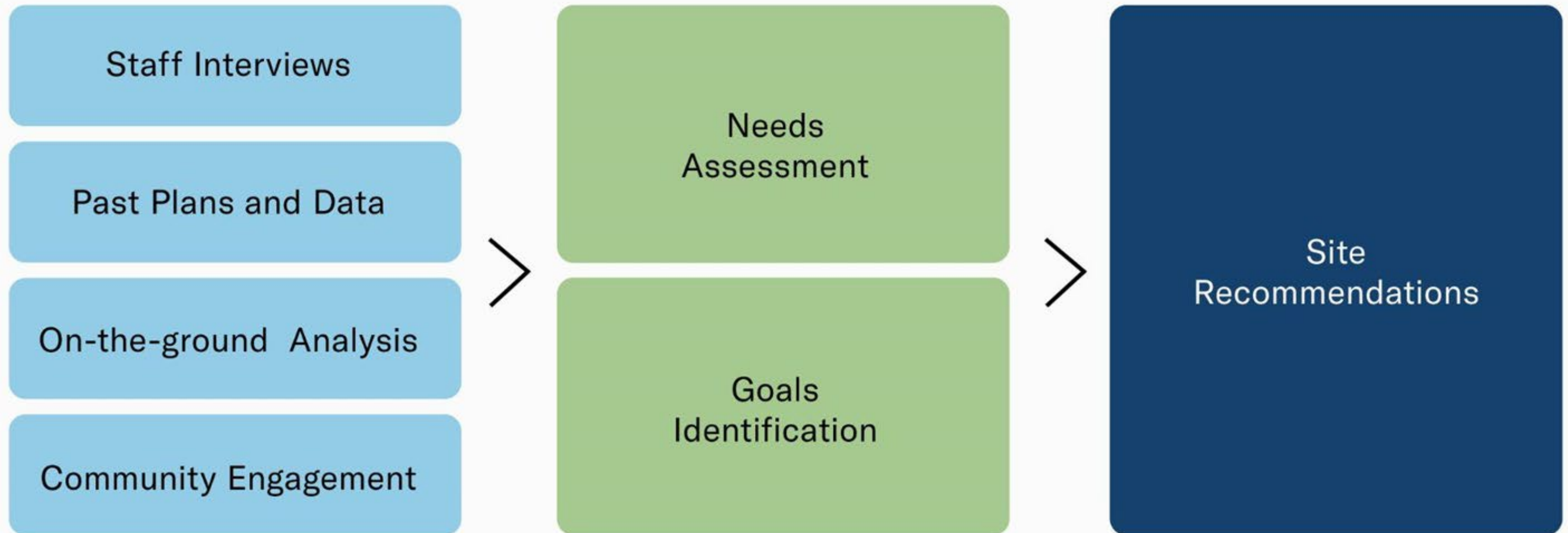
4. Breakout Discussion 2 (30 min)

- Bring New Life to Existing Buildings & Lots

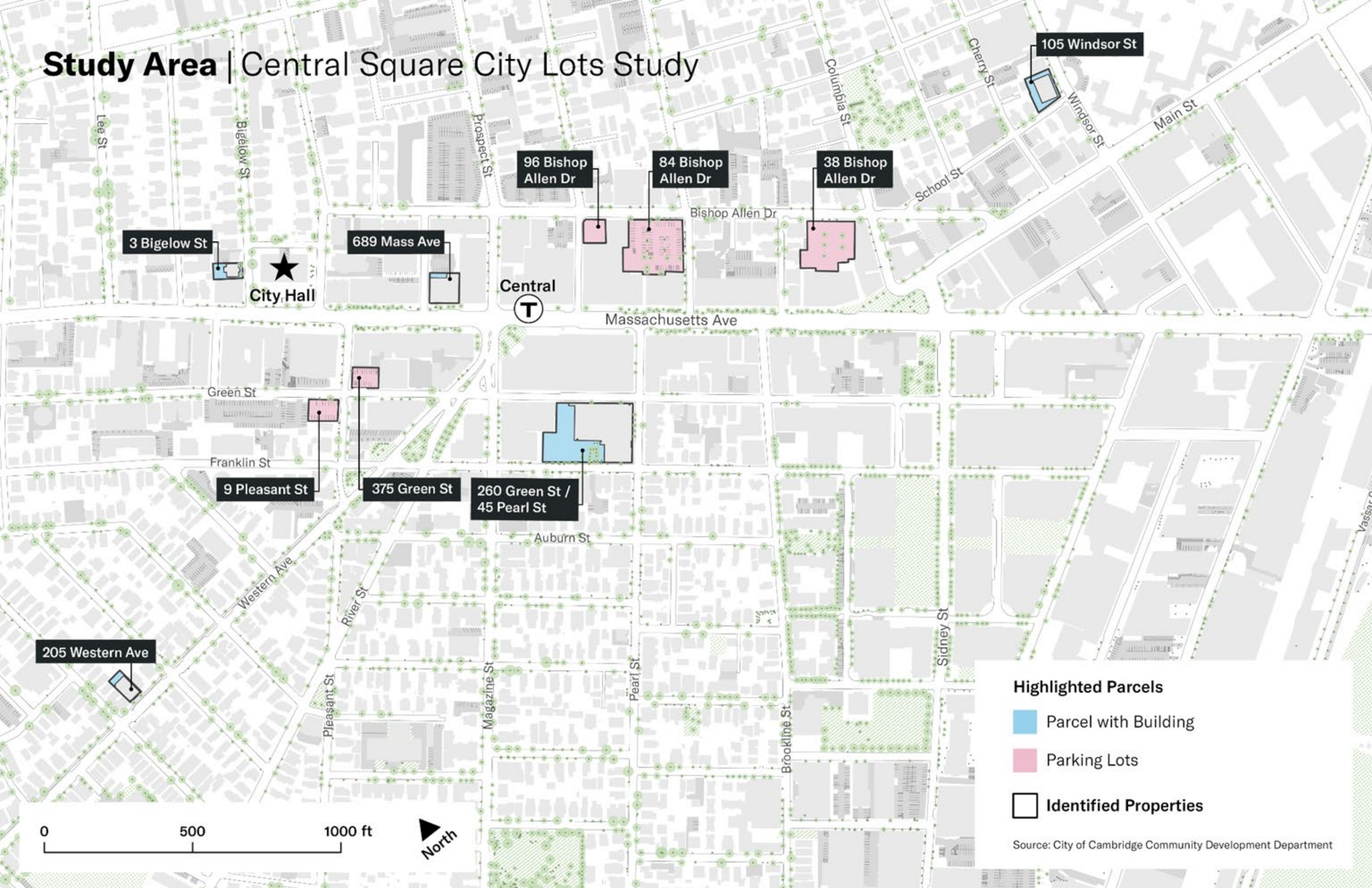
5. Report Back & Next Steps (15 min)

PROJECT OVERVIEW


Intent: Support the City to best use its own assets (10 sites encompassing both land and buildings) to realize community goals and support City operations



Study Area | Central Square City Lots Study



Highlighted Parcels

 Parcel with Building

 Parking Lots

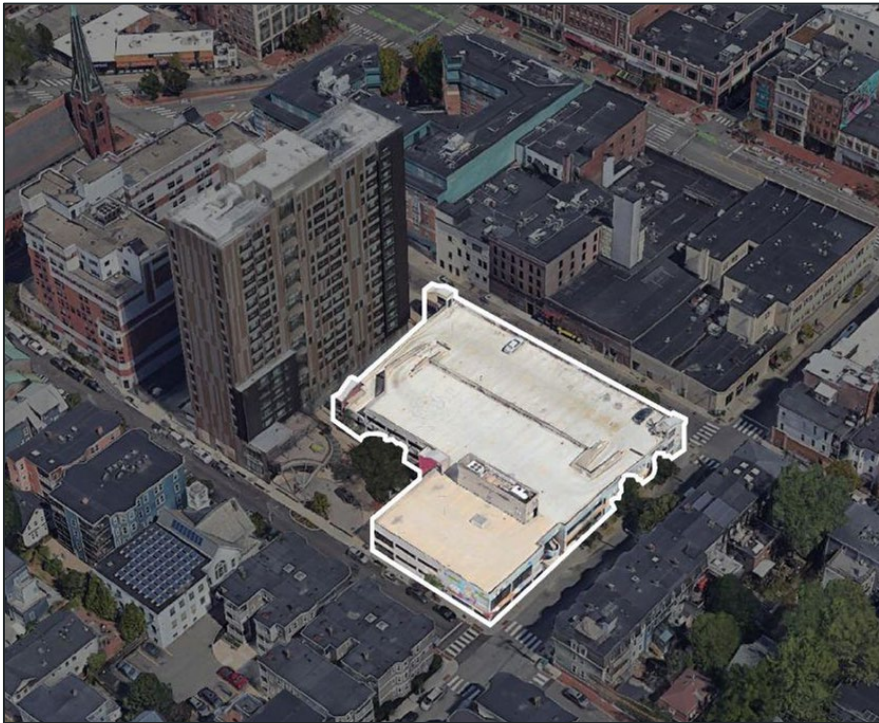
 Identified Properties

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

PROJECT SITES - Buildings



3 Bigelow St



260 Green St / 45 Pearl St



689 Mass Ave



205 Western Ave



105 Windsor St

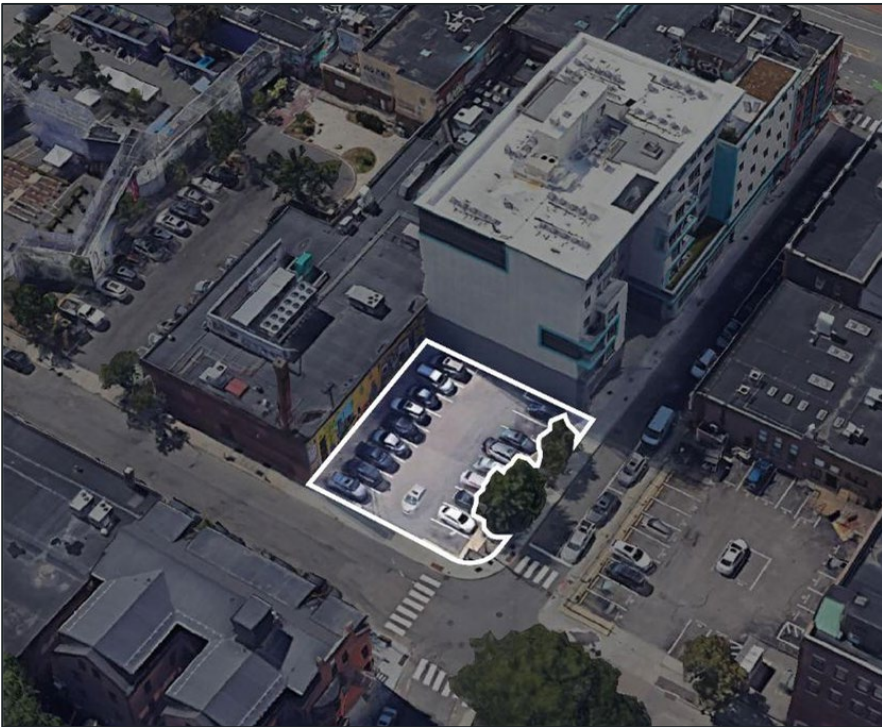
PROJECT SITES - Lots



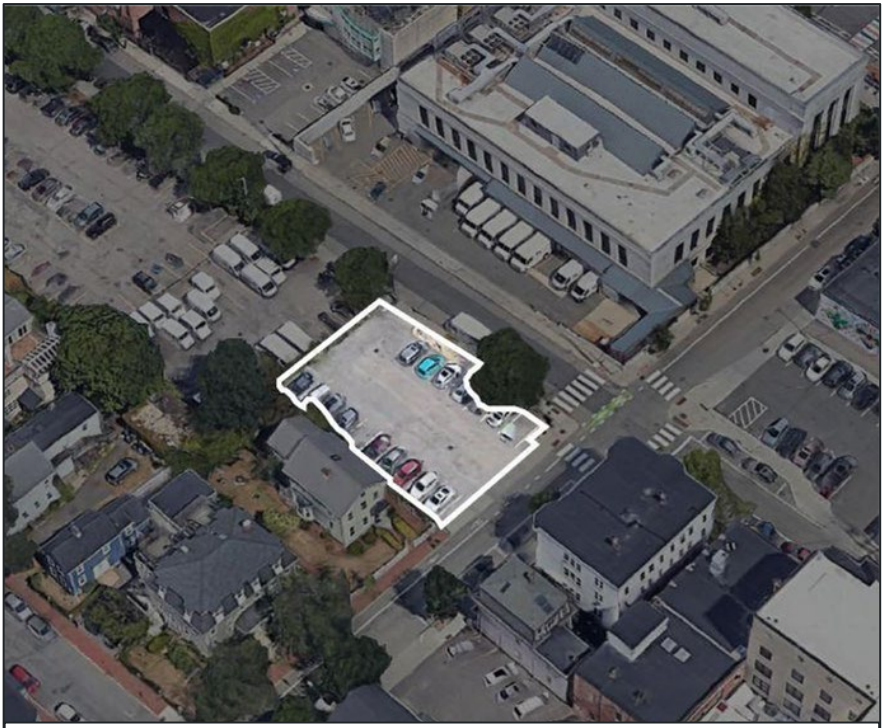
38 Bishop Allen Dr



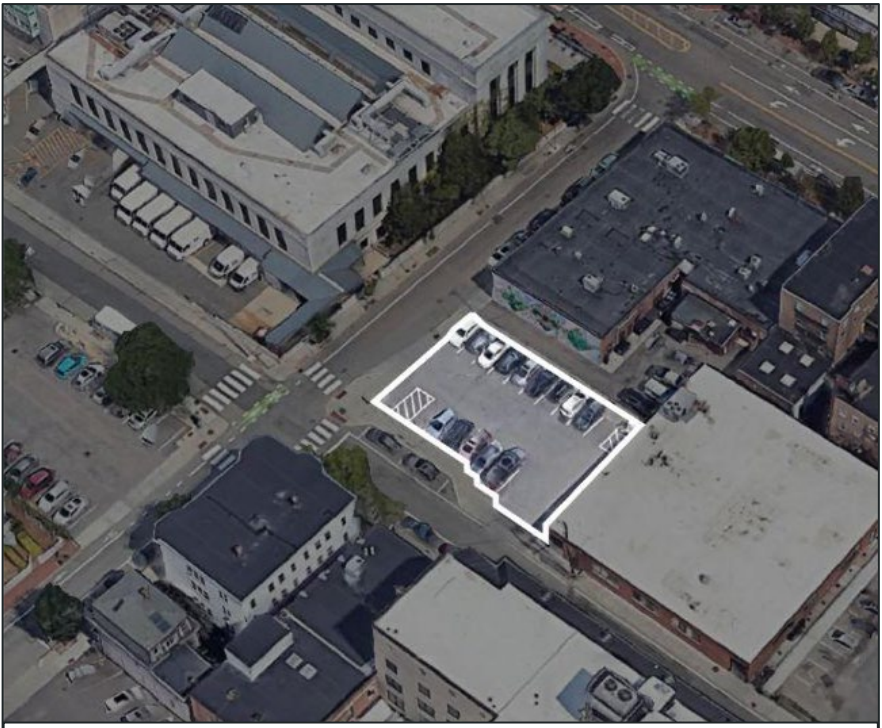
84 Bishop Allen Dr



96 Bishop Allen Dr



9 Pleasant St

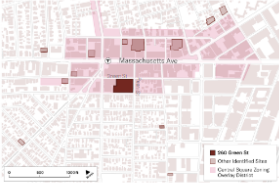



375 Green St

TECHNICAL SITE ASSESSMENTS

Through interviews, research, and site visits, we are working on technical assessments for each of the project sites.

260 Green St Cambridgeport

Map Lot Number
106-122

Owner
City of Cambridge
(Parking Department)

Current Use
Green Street Garage and
Central Square Branch Library

Future Use
Unknown

Site Description
The site of the Central Square Branch Library and the Green Street Garage, neighboring a 19-story senior-living apartment building. The library is in need of more community programming space and the garage, recently renovated, serves permit parkers.

25,686 Garage
19,824 Library
55,828 Gross Building Area (sq ft)

\$100,244,200 Assessed Value

4 Garage
2 Library
257 Number of Stories

476_n / 2 min Walk
Distance to nearest T-Station

C-3 Zoning District

257 Parking Spaces

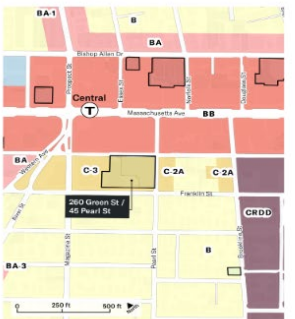



91.5% Impervious Surface

Site Conditions (Exterior)

260 Green is the site of the Central Square Public Library and adjoining public parking garage. The library main entrance faces Pearl St and can also be accessed on western side of the building via a plaza shared with the neighboring high-rise senior housing building.

Zoning

- Site zoning code: residence (C-3)
- Neighbor zoning codes:
 - Business (B, BA, BA-1, BA-3, BB), Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District (CRDD), Residence (C-2A)
 - Within Central Square Overlay District: YES

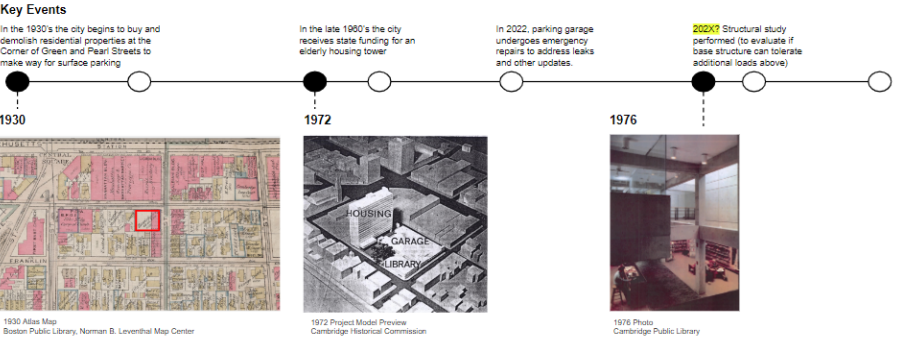
260 Green St
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

Site History

In the 1930's the City of Cambridge began to acquire and demolish the residential properties along Pearl and Green Streets to create parking lots. By the late 1960's planning began for a large municipal and state funded project combining elderly housing, a large public library branch and the 4 story parking garage. The complex was completed in 1972. At the time of its completion, the Central Square Library branch was one of the largest in the city and was well received by residents. Some saw the Library branch as a 'demarcation line' to prevent the encroachment of business into the residential neighborhood. At the same time, the Central Square Business Association welcomed the new parking structure to support retail and office rentals in the square.

Key Events

- 1930**: In the 1930's the city begins to buy and demolish residential properties at the Corner of Green and Pearl Streets to make way for surface parking.
- 1972**: In the late 1960's the city receives state funding for an elderly housing tower.
- 1976**: In 1972, parking garage undergoes emergency repairs to address leaks and other updates.
- 2023**: Structural study performed to evaluate if base structure can tolerate additional loads above.



1930 Atlas Map
Boston Public Library, Norman B. Leventhal Map Center

1972 Project Model Preview
Cambridge Historical Commission

1976 Photo
Cambridge Public Library

260 Green St
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

Mapping & Summary Statistics


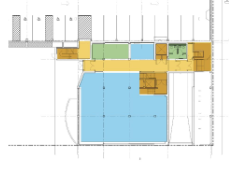

Site Conditions

Site History

Building & Structure - Library

The existing concrete Brutalist structure dates from 1972 and was built in conjunction with a new apartment tower at 237 Franklin Street to house the elderly. The parking garage and library branch are adjoining structures. The library is well-maintained though some of its interior finishes and building systems would benefit from an update. The ground floor consists of a circulation desk, public computer terminals, a large reading room with stacks and soft seating. A children's reading area and a large public meeting room is on the second level. The classrooms on the lower level host well-attended ESL and adult education classes.

The building is wheelchair accessible and has an elevator to all levels.

BUILDING USE

- Library Stacks/Reading Room **42%** (6,775 sqft)
- Meeting Rooms & Classrooms **24%** (3,226 sqft)
- Circulation **19%** (2,620 sqft)
- Utilities **5%** (691 sqft)
- Building support **5%** (670 sqft)
- Staff **5%** (617 sqft)

260 Green St
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

Parking Utilization


OFF-STREET PARKING UTILIZATION

Inventory	Sum of Spaces	Spaces Full	% Full	Average
Garage	257	88	26%	108

ON-STREET PARKING UTILIZATION

Regulation	Inventory	Sum of Spaces	% of Spaces	Spaces Full	% Full	Average
Permit Only		847	75%	656	77%	625
2 Hr, SAM-SPM		50	5%	62	105%	57
2 Hr, SAM-SPM		57	5%	55	96%	52
2 Hr, SAM-SPM except Sat		43	4%	42	98%	38
Disability Parking		43	4%	18	42%	18
1 Hr, SAM-SPM		25	2%	23	92%	24
Unregulated		16	1%	20	125%	23
30 Min, SAM-SPM		14	1%	9	64%	10
1 Hr, SAM-SPM		14	1%	11	79%	10
30 Min, SAM-SPM		2	0.2%	3	150%	2
2 Hr, 10AM-SPM, Loading Zone T&M-10AM		2	0.2%	0	0%	0
2 Hr, SAM-SPM except Sat		0	0%	0	0%	0
Total		1122	100%	899	80%	859

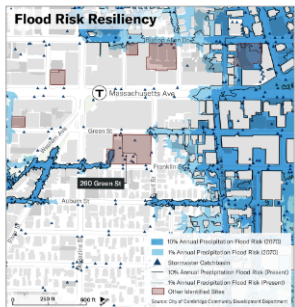
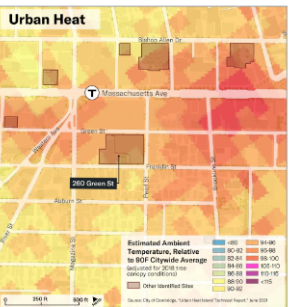
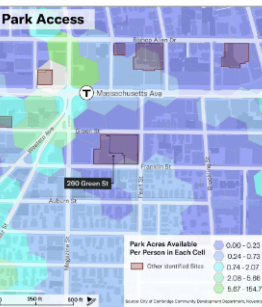
On-Street parking utilization was highest in the study area Sunday at 12:00pm, however, the Green Street Garage had very low occupancy during this time period. Green Street Garage averaged only 41% occupancy across all time periods.



GREEN ST GARAGE WALKSHED (0.25 MILE)
PARKING UTILIZATION, SUN 12PM

260 Green St
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

Environmental Conditions

Flood Risk Resiliency
260 Green St is at risk of precipitation flooding, today and in the near future (2023 - 2070). The southwestern corner of the site, alongside Franklin St, has a 10% chance of flooding as of 2023 and into 2070.

Urban Heat
From 2009-2010 to 2018, 260 Green St and its immediate surroundings, experienced ambient air temperatures significantly above the citywide average (90F), ranging from 92F to 100F.

Park Access
260 Green St has low park access, ranging from 0.00 to 0.23 acres of park per person. Park access improves significantly towards the North of the site.

260 Green St
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

Building Use

Parking Inventory & Utilization

Environmental Conditions

ENGAGEMENT ELEMENTS

COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

Project Website

Updates on Social Media

Flyering at local Central Square businesses & community centers/hubs

Canvassing or flyering at residences

FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS

City Staff

Central Square BID

Central Square Advisory Committee

CET Focus Groups

Senior Center

Community Organizations, Art, Businesses, others?

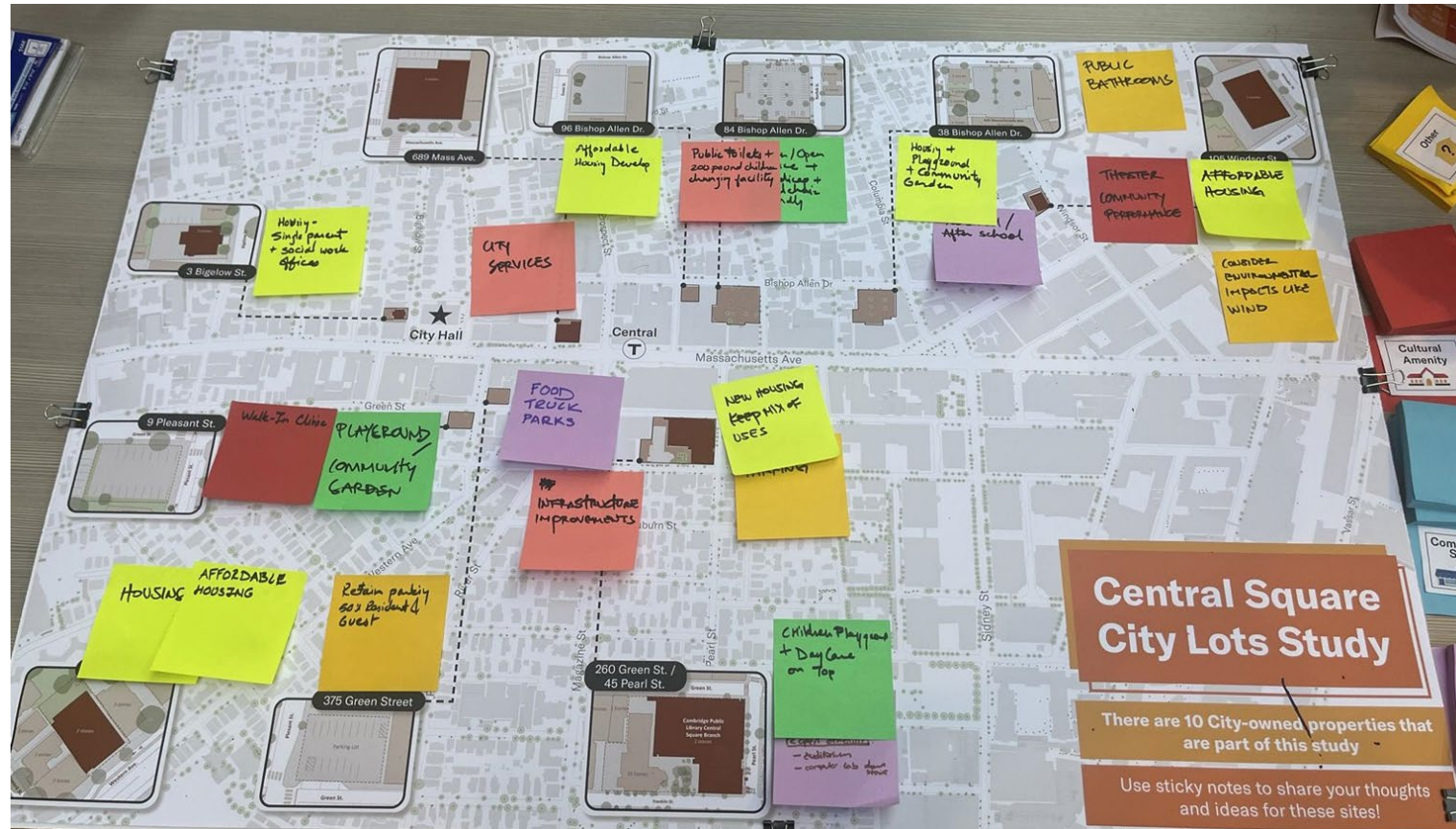
POP-UPS / SURVEY & COMMUNITY MEETING

Pop-ups with general project info, learn about community needs

Online Survey

October Community Meeting to share preliminary findings & opportunities

AUGUST POP-UPS

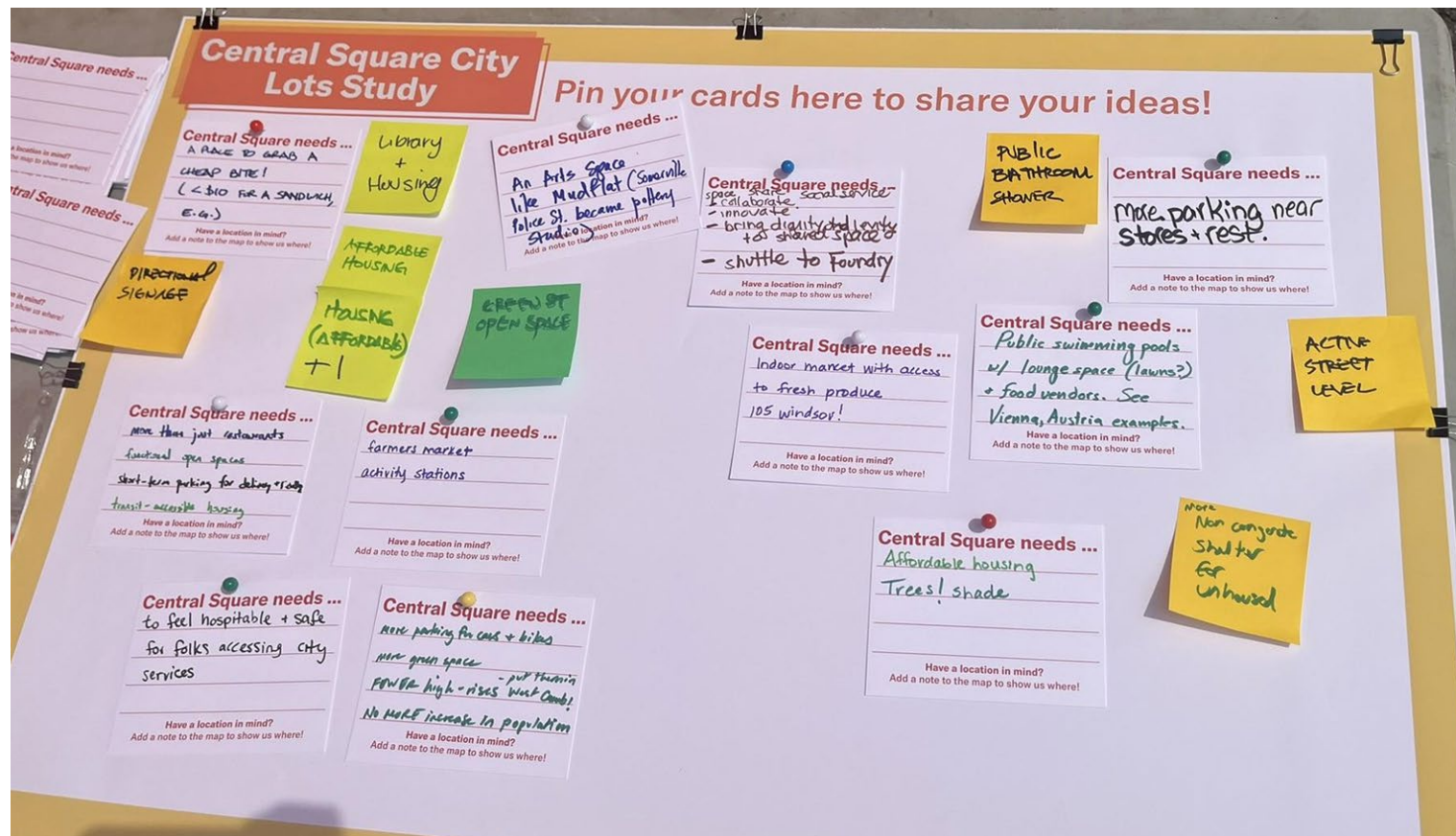


75+ In-person Comments

85+ Online Comments

Join one of our

Monday August 21	Central Square	Online Comments
Thursday August 24	Central Square Library MLK Jr. Plaza on Franklin St.	Online Comments
Sunday August 27	MathTalk Summer Family Day at Starlight Square (12-3pm)	Online Comments
Saturday September 9	Port Pride Day Clement G. Morgan Park (11am-2pm)	Online Comments

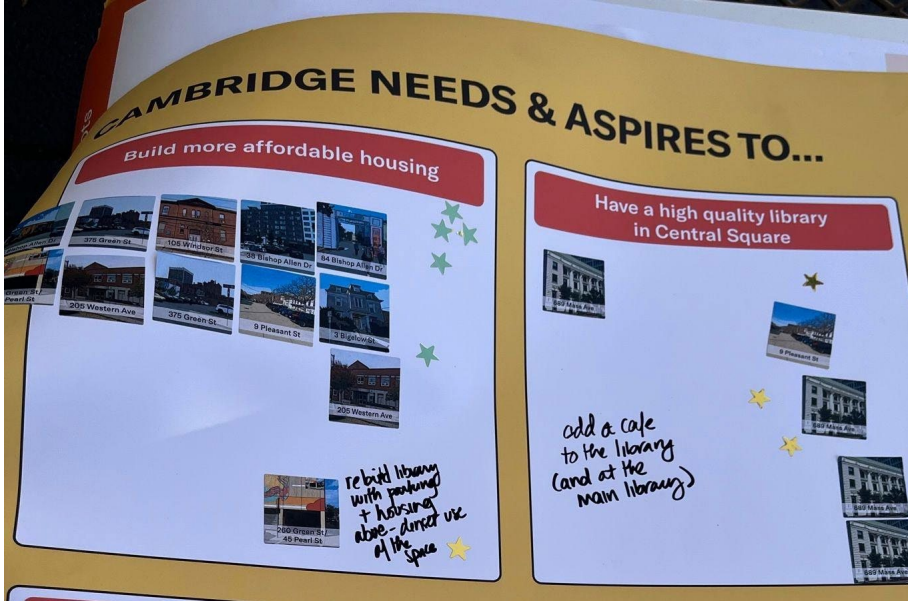
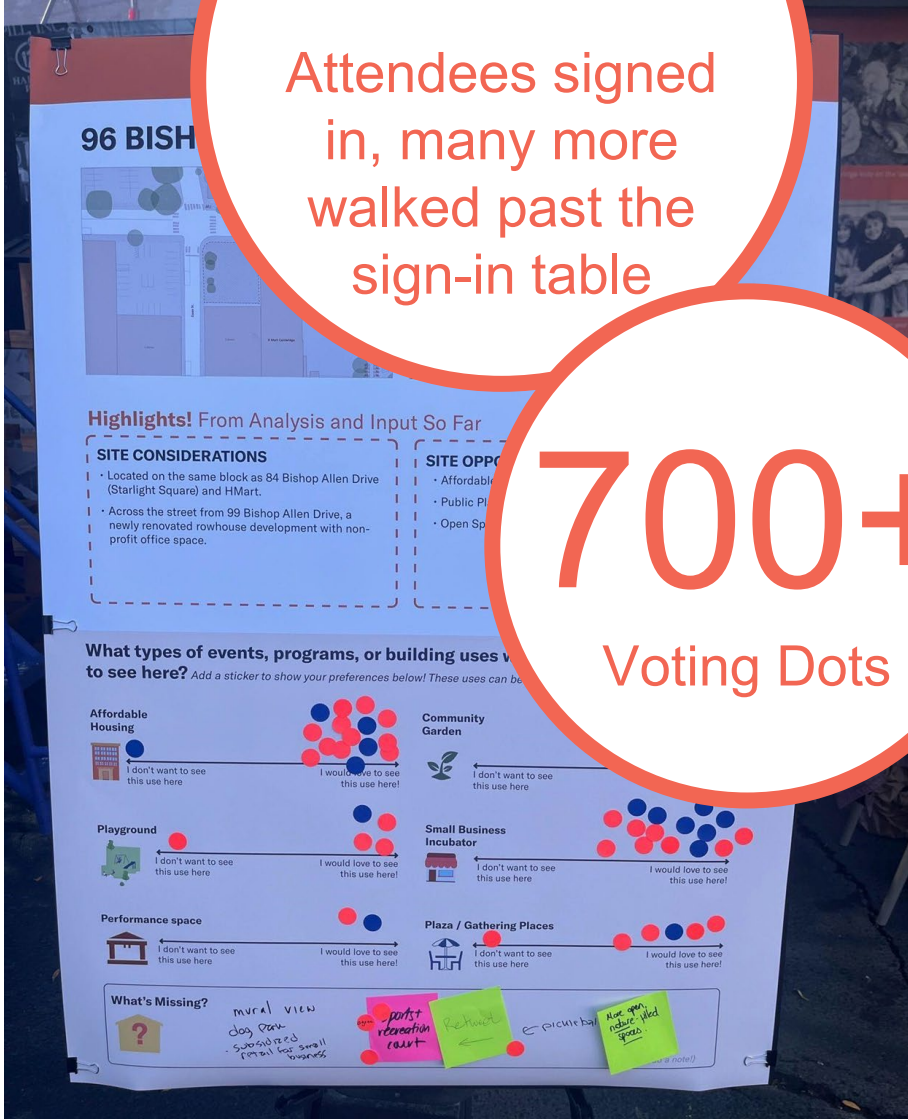


OCTOBER OPEN HOUSE



30+
Attendees signed in, many more walked past the sign-in table

700+
Voting Dots



HIGHLIGHTS: WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR

- Develop affordable housing
- Retain, expand, and diversify flexible arts spaces (e.g. Starlight)
- Create more parks and open spaces
- Support small businesses
- Create spaces for people of different age groups to gather

Most heard suggestions

DISCUSSION: Breakout Groups



1 | Leverage the Potential of Large City-Owned Sites

84 BISHOP ALLEN DR

Highlighted From Analysis and Input So Far

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- [Diagram]
- [Diagram]

SITE OPTIONS - More than 1 is possible!

- [Diagram]
- [Diagram]

What types of events, programs, or building uses would you like to see here?

Share Your Ideas!

1 | Leverage the Potential of Large City-Owned Sites

38 BISHOP ALLEN DR

Highlighted From Analysis and Input So Far

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- [Diagram]
- [Diagram]

SITE OPTIONS - More than 1 is possible!

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- [Diagram]

What types of events, programs, or building uses would you like to see here?

Share Your Ideas!

1 | Leverage the Potential of Large City-Owned Sites

260 GREEN ST / 45 PEARL ST

Highlighted From Analysis and Input So Far

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- [Diagram]
- [Diagram]

SITE OPTIONS - More than 1 is possible!

- [Diagram]
- [Diagram]

What types of events, programs, or building uses would you like to see here?

Share Your Ideas!

Breakout Instructions

Two 30-minute sessions

Brief presentations on considerations for each site followed by a discussion activity

Group Discussion Guidelines

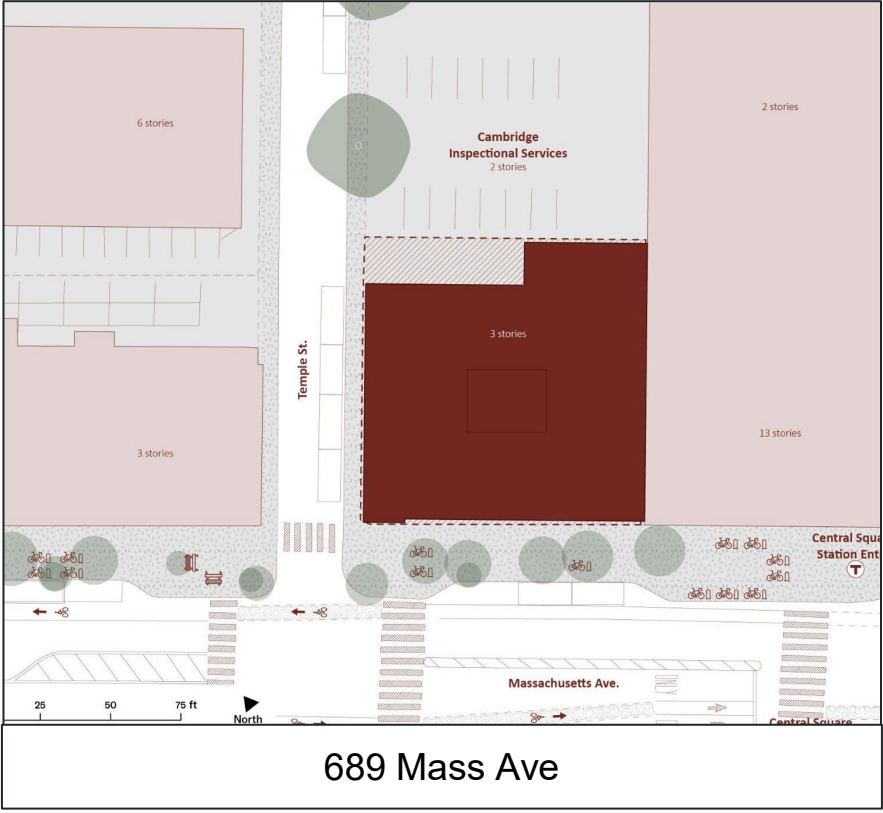
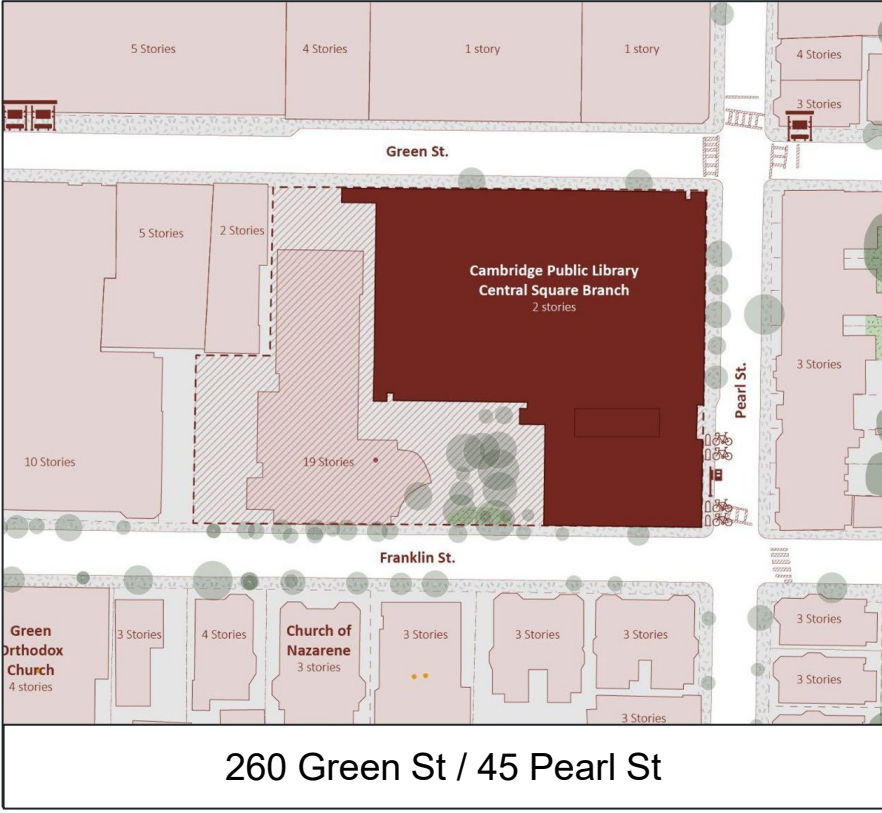
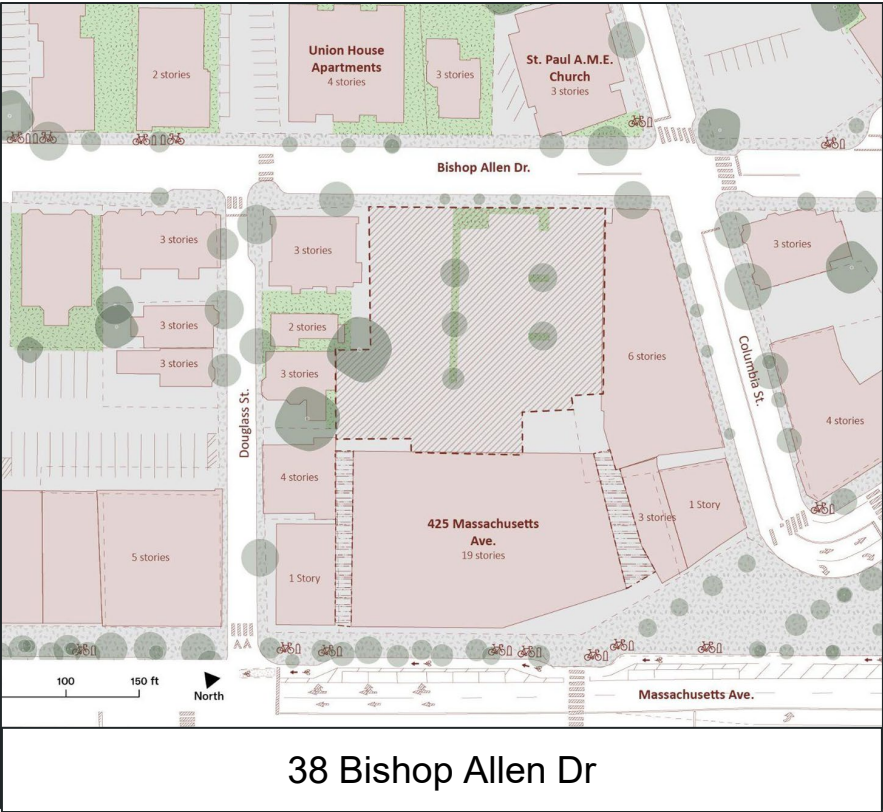
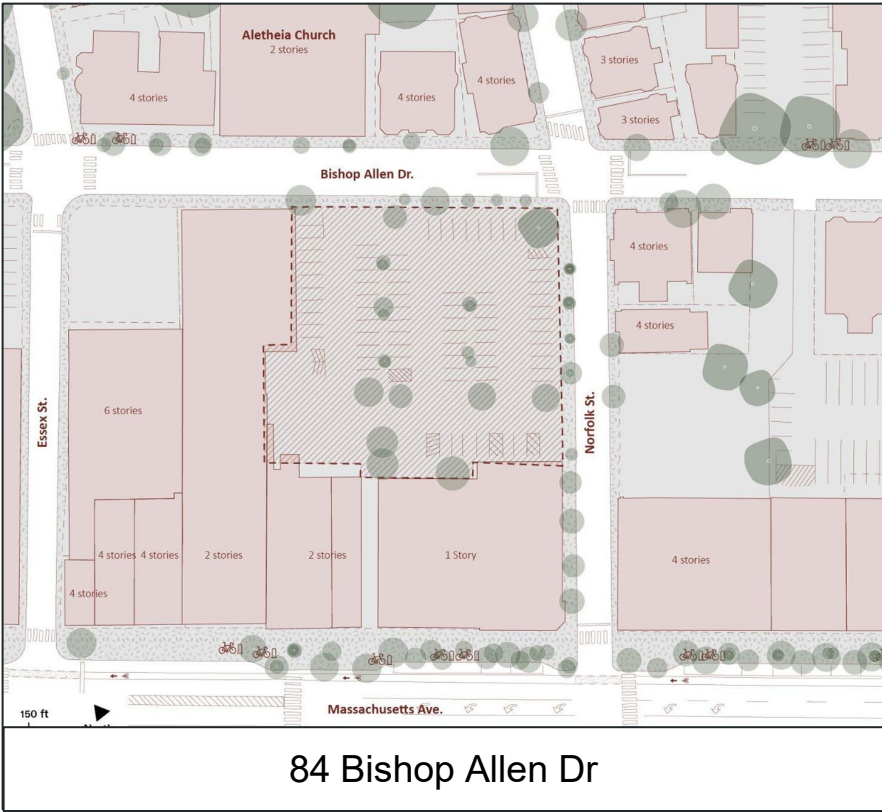
- Be respectful, be kind
- Embrace diverse points of view
- Avoid debates and interruptions, one person speaks at a time
- Listen to understand, not to respond
- All stereotyping and hateful comments are not tolerated

BREAKOUT SESSION 1

30 MINUTES

Leverage the Potential of Large, City-owned Sites

Leverage the Potential of Large, City-owned Sites



Highlights! From Analysis and Input So Far

Flexible Arts/ Market Space

Affordable Housing

Flexible Arts/ Market Space

Small business incubator

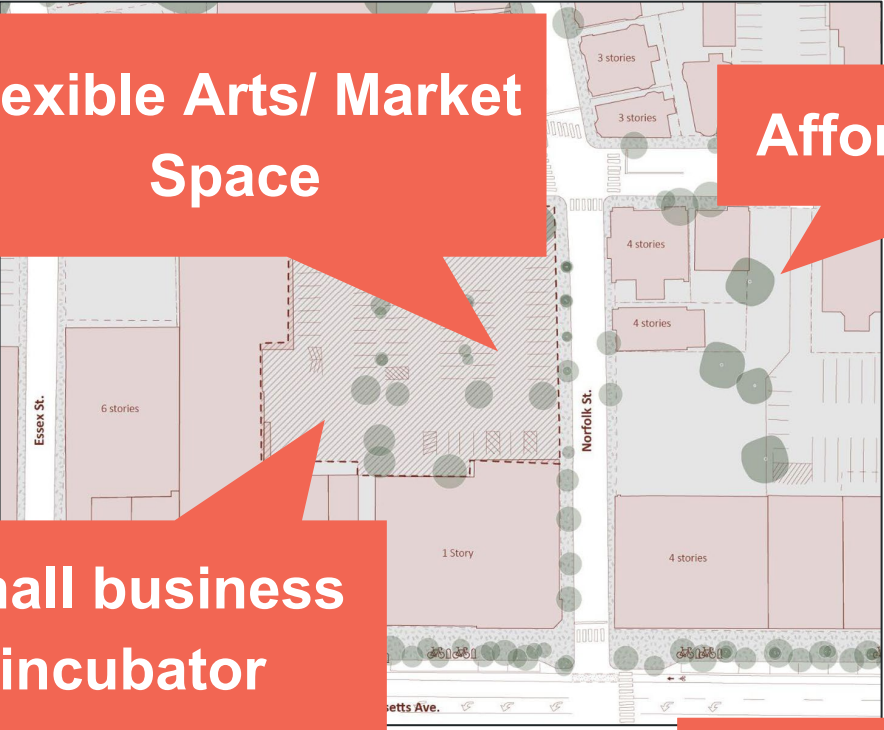
Park/Playground or Outdoor Plaza

Cultural amenities / spaces

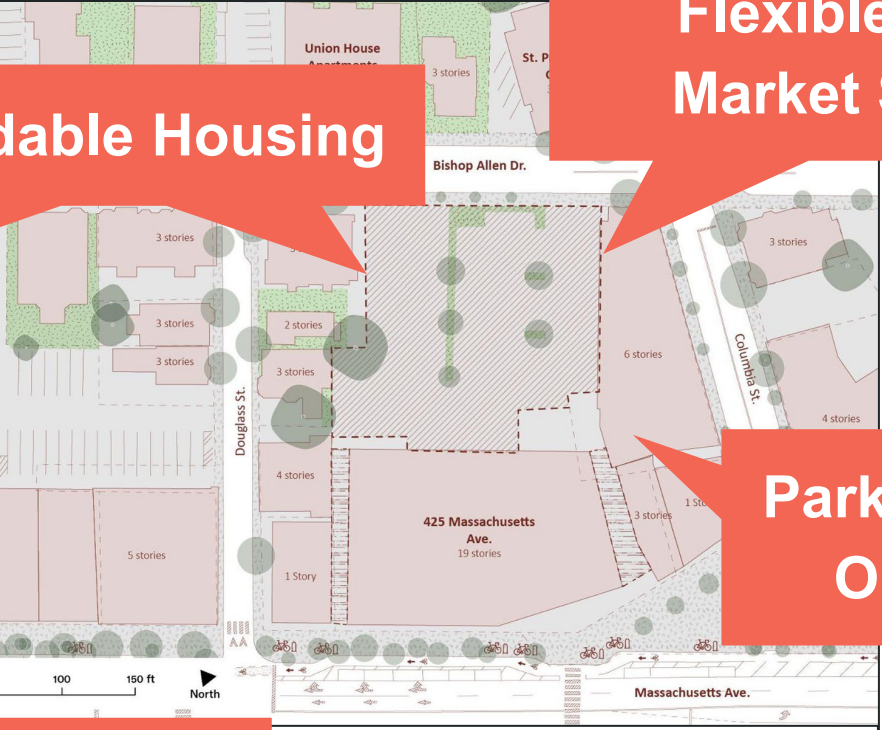
High-density Affordable Housing

Library

Municipal Offices



84 Bishop Allen Dr



38 Bishop Allen Dr



260 Green St / 45 Pearl St



689 Mass Ave



84 Bishop Allen Dr

The Port

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- H-Mart and other retailers rely on nearby parking.
- Buildings of up to 7 stories (80 feet) are allowed by zoning; up to 15 stories may be possible under the proposed Affordable Housing Overlay amendment.
- Important public realm considerations include Graffiti Alley, current use as Starlight Square, the Farmer's Market, and other events.



N/A

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

33,715

Site Area (sq ft)

23

Parking Spaces

BB

Zoning District

N/A

Number of Stories

PARKING

Current Use



38 Bishop Allen Dr

The Port

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Development is limited to certain areas of the site due to underground stormwater retention tanks and an access easement granted to Market Central for garage access and loading.
- Only the middle section (~1/3) of the lot is buildable in the future.
- Surrounded by high density new housing and retail.



N/A

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

27,799

Site Area (sq ft)

Unknown

Assessed Value

BB-CSQ

Zoning District

N/A

Number of Stories

40

Parking Spaces



260 Green St

Cambridgeport

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Structural study suggests only 1-2 additional levels may be built on top of existing garage and building.
- Recent analysis shows the garage is only half full on average and mostly used by monthly parkers.



25,686

Garage

19,824

Library

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

55,828

Site Area (sq ft)

257

Parking Spaces

C-3

Zoning District

4

Garage

2

Library

Number of Stories

MIXED

Current Use

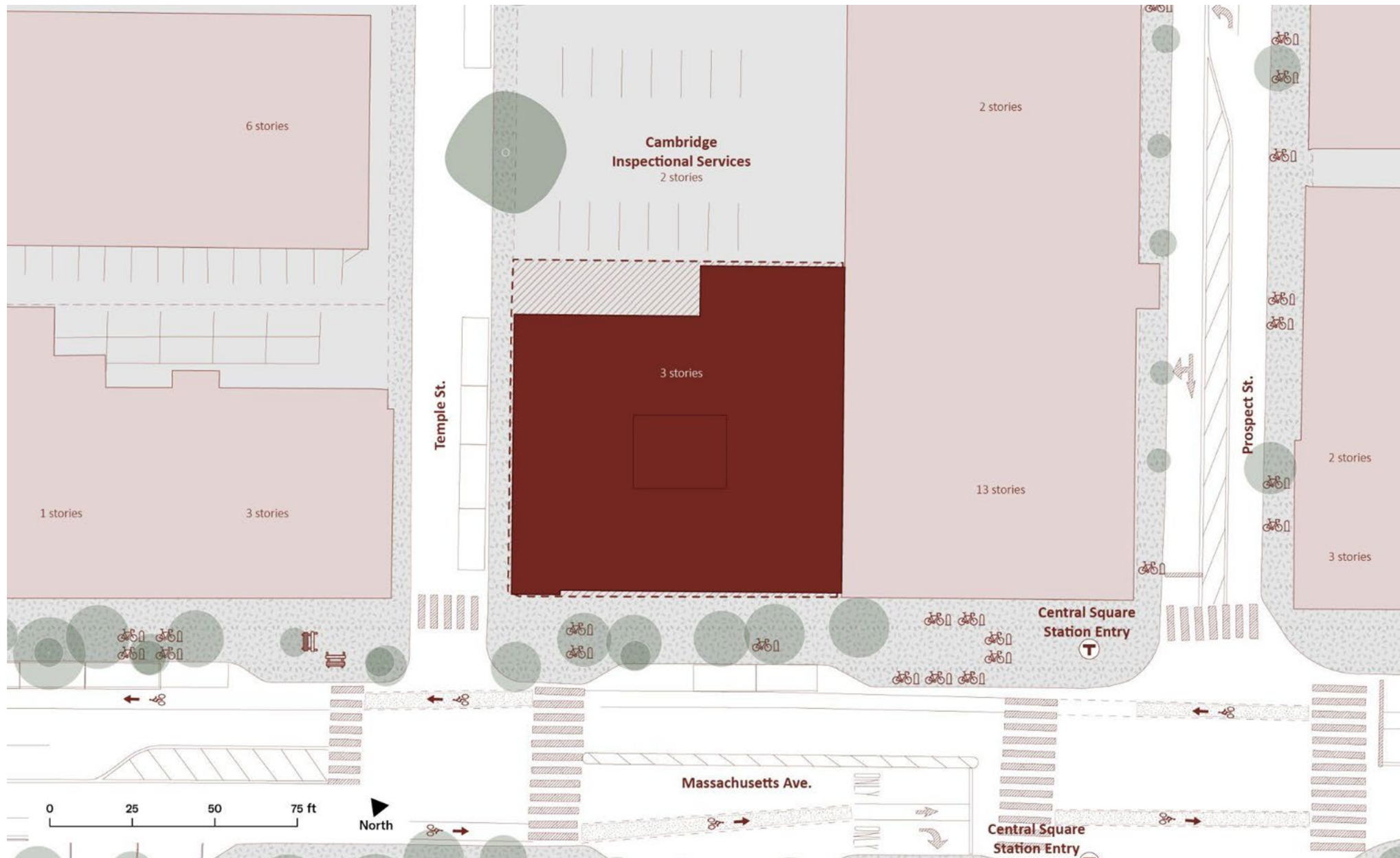


689 Massachusetts Ave

Mid-Cambridge

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- The City recently acquired this building with the approval to use it for municipal uses.
- The building has historic value and limited expansion potential.



33,456

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

10,101

Site Area (sq ft)

\$15,112,200

Assessed Value

BB-CSQ

Zoning District

3

Number of Stories

0

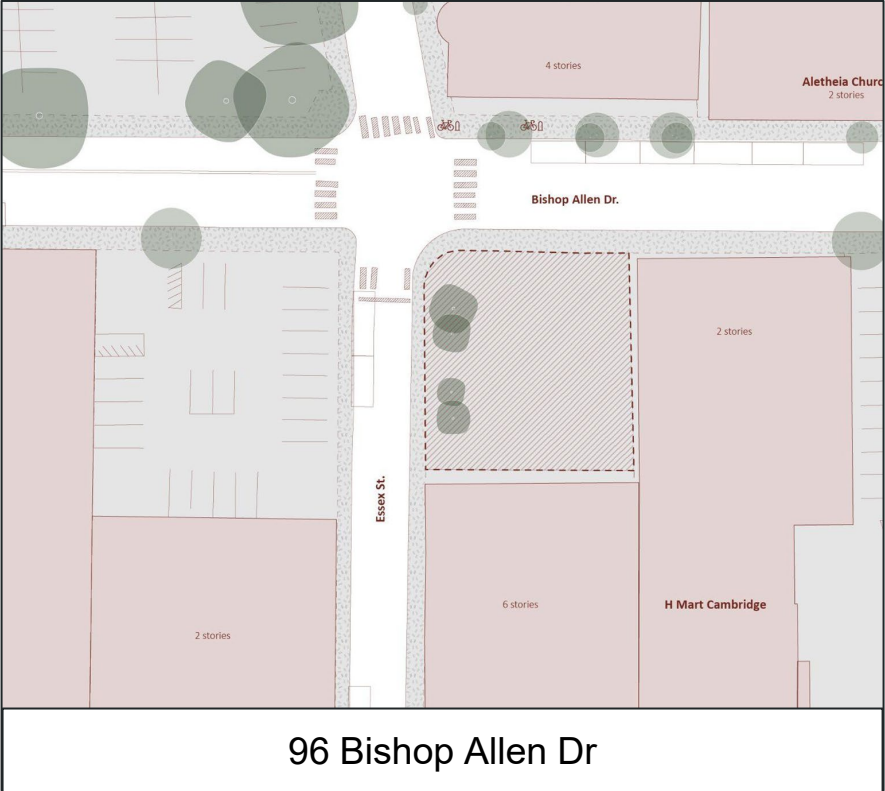
Parking Spaces

BREAKOUT SESSION 2

30 MINUTES

Bring New Life to Existing Buildings & Lots

Bring New Life to Existing Buildings & Lots

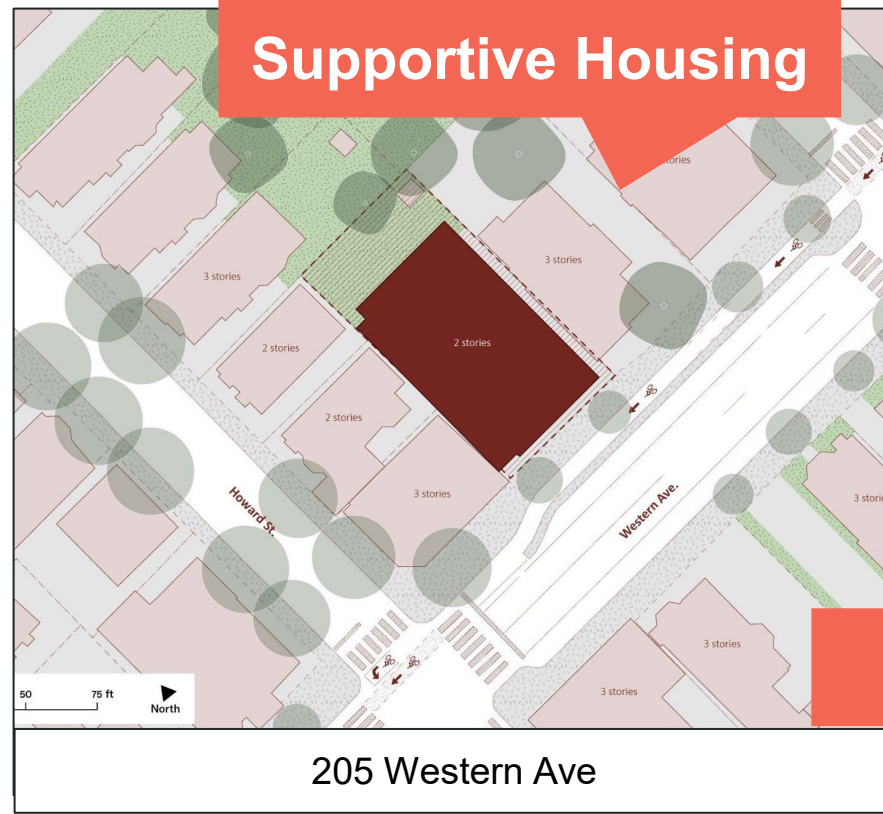


Highlights! From Analysis and Input So Far

Municipal Offices



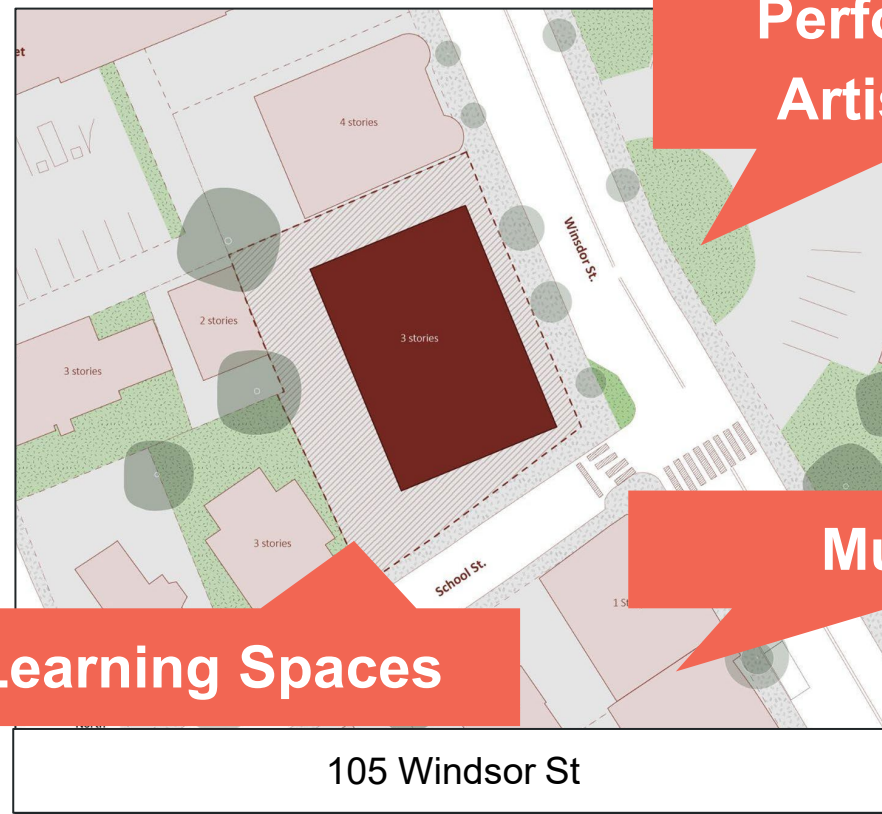
Supportive Housing



Performance & Artist Spaces

Museum

Learning Spaces



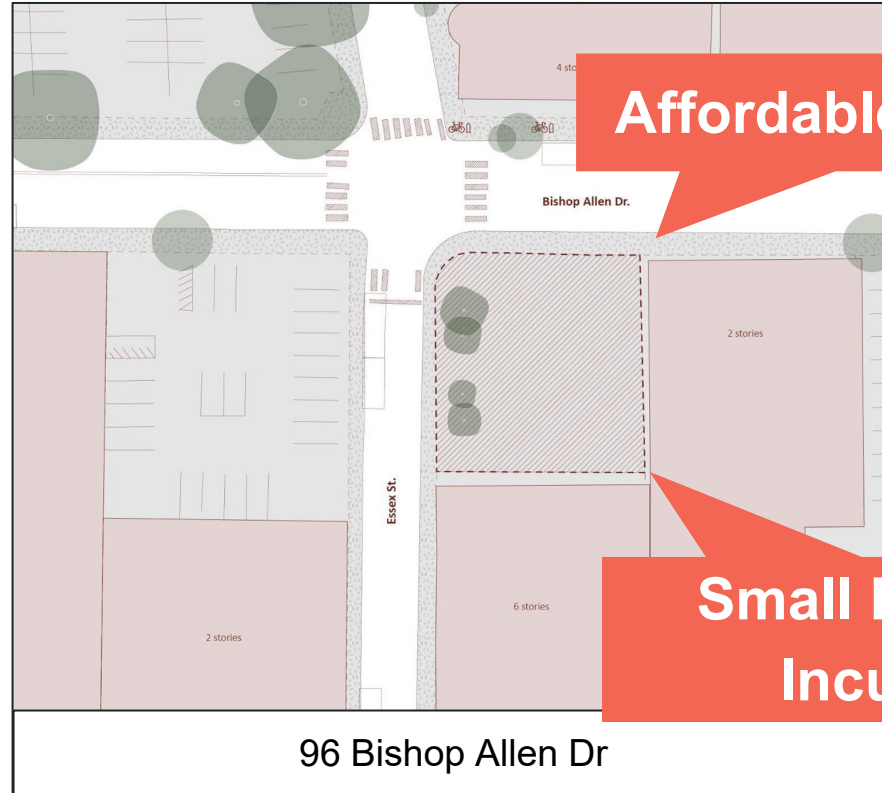
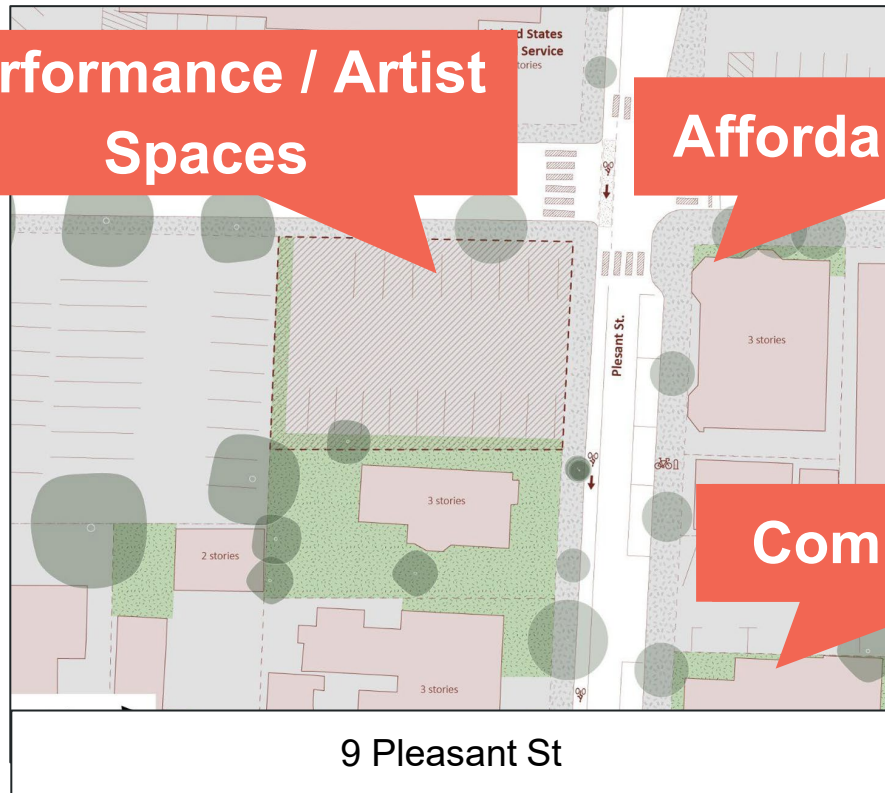
Performance / Artist Spaces

Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing

Community Garden

Small Business Incubator





3 Bigelow St

Mid-Cambridge

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- The building is vacant, requires extensive renovations, and has historic character.
- Most recently used by the Department of Human Services as transitional housing.
- Adjacent to Cambridge City Hall and the Lombardi office building.



6,386

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

5,175

Site Area (sq ft)

1869

Year Built

C-2B

Zoning District

3

Number of Stories

Vacant

Current Building



205 Western Ave

Riverside

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Building is vacant and requires extensive renovations.
- Does not have significant historic value.
- If demolished, the replacement building may not be able to be as large as is currently built due to current zoning requirements for the site.



4,280

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

5,258

Site Area (sq ft)

1993

Year Built

BA-3

Zoning District

2

Number of Stories

VACANT

Current Use



105 Windsor St

The Port

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Located across from Newtowne Court and near various nonprofit and health providers.
- Originally built as the Alphabet School, the first public school in the Port. Later uses included recreation facilities, the Cambridge Health Alliance and the Windsor House, a Senior daycare facility.
- Rear of site required for above ground utilities.



13,104

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

10,018

Site Area (sq ft)

1868

Year Built

C-1

Zoning District

2

Number of Stories

VACANT

Current Use



375 Green St

Riverside

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Next to a building with an extensive mural that fronts on Mass Ave.
- Low open space access and potential for flooding.
- Zoning allows for full development of the site.



N/A

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

6,436

Site Area (sq ft)

17

Parking Spaces

BB-CSQ

Zoning District

N/A

Number of Stories

Parking

Current Use



9 Pleasant St

Riverside

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Located across from the US Post Office building and surrounded by public and private parking lots.
- Low open space access.
- Future buildings could be up to 85 tall, but have setback requirements and a 15% open space requirement that limit development opportunities.



N/A

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

7,449

Site Area (sq ft)

17

Parking Spaces

C-2

Zoning District

N/A

Number of Stories

PARKING

Current Use



96 Bishop Allen Dr

The Port

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

- Located on the same block as 84 Bishop Allen Drive (Starlight Square) and H Mart.
- Across the street from 99 Bishop Allen Drive, a newly renovated row house development with non-profit office space.



N/A

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

6,210

Site Area (sq ft)

17

Parking Spaces

BB

Zoning District

N/A

Number of Stories

PARKING

Current Use

REPORT BACK

What are 2-3 Highlights from your group's discussions?



NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS

- Focus groups

Let us know if there are groups we should connect with!

- Online Comments

Please visit the website to share any further thoughts in the comment form and share the project with your networks!

- Test fits to identify opportunities and constraints

THANK YOU!