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SECTION 1

Introduction

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

The purpose of the Commercial Districts Customer Intercept Survey is to give the Economic Development Division (EDD) a better understanding of how Harvard Square visitors and residents utilize the district and how they would like the district to evolve in the future.

Understanding the different types of consumers in the district improves our ability to assist business owners seeking a location, to help current business owners understand their local market, and to collaborate with property owners to recruit new business.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Using the Intercept Survey (Section 6 – Appendix A), a variety of Community Development Department staff surveyed people in the Harvard Square area over two weeks in September of 2016. We received a total of 214 surveys from this effort. The goals of the survey are to get a better understanding of:

- Who comes to the area
- How long they stay
- How they get there (mode of transit)
- Why they come
- Where they visit and shop
- What they like and dislike
- How the area could better meet their needs
The survey was conducted during the following times of day:

- AM Peak (7am-9am)
- Noon (12pm-2pm)
- PM Peak (4pm-6pm)
- Evening (5pm-7pm)

Surveyors were positioned in Brattle Square, Winthrop Park, around Out of Town News, and outside of Grafton Street Pub. The Cambridge Artists Cooperative also had surveys available during the survey period.

Map Source: ArcGIS

1.3 TABULATIONS

There were 214 survey respondents. Since not every respondent chose to answer each question, the tabulations for each question were based on the percentage of total respondents per question. For example: 162 respondents shared their gender, so percentages for male, female, and other are calculated based on those 162 replies and not
the total 214 survey participants.

Surveyors found that it was more difficult to find survey participants in Harvard Square compared to previous customer intercept reports, which resulted in a low number of respondents compared to previous commercial districts’ intercept studies.

In Section 3, the number of retail and service businesses are based on the Economic Development Division’s Business Directory. The definition of each type of business is based on their North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code, the standard used by federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting and analyzing business data.

1.4 KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Fast Facts on Respondents:
• 38% of respondents live in Cambridge and 48% of respondents work in Cambridge.
• 29% of respondents are between the ages of 25 and 34, and 58% respondents are between the ages of 20 and 44.
• 39% of respondents get to Harvard Square by walking, and only 19% of respondents said they drove to the square.
• 45% of respondents said they shopped in Harvard Square multiple times a week.
• 39% of respondents cited work as a primary purpose for visiting the square.

Top five most visited businesses (by type):
• Restaurants
• Cafes
• Book, Comic Book, and Art Stores
• Harvard University
• Professional Services and Offices

Top five current businesses that respondents rate as “good”:
• Coffee Shops and Bakeries
• Sit-Down Restaurants
• Take-Out Restaurants
• Bookstores
• Florists

Top five business that respondents would like to see added to Harvard Square:
• Restaurants
• Grocery Store
• Businesses that are independent, affordable, high-quality, or open late
• Entertainment Venues (movie theaters, live music venues, etc.)
• Specialty Retail Stores

Top five characteristics that respondents rated as “good”:
• Access to Transportation
• Sense of Safety
• Attractiveness of Area
• Business Hours
• Friendliness of Service in Shops

Overall findings:
• Although parking access was rated as “poor” more consistently than any other district characteristic, and although it was often mentioned in the open answers, only 19% of respondents cited a car as a primary mode of transit to the square. Additionally, few people listed parking as an important characteristic or as an important characteristic in determining where to shop.
• Participants’ average length of stay is much higher than other districts, although the frequency of visits is lower, demonstrating that Harvard Square is a tourist and shopping destination.
• Throughout many different questions, respondents expressed concern for rising housing and commercial rents, and consumer prices as a result. In the open-ended question about what people would like to change, 10% of responses were related to affordability.
• Another significant theme was the desire to protect and encourage independent, small, local, and minority-owned businesses in Harvard Square. Many respondents said that Harvard Square felt increasingly corporate, and that the unique specialty retail was something that should be preserved.
In this section, we review general information about respondents, including demographic information, statistics about their typical visits, and the reasons they came to the district.

### 2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

**Residency.** Of the 154 respondents who provided their zip code, 38% are from Cambridge and 62% were not. Those who were not from Cambridge were mostly from other local municipalities, mainly Boston and Somerville. See Chart 1 and Appendix B, which includes a map, for more detail.

**Chart 1: Respondents by Residency**

![Pie chart showing residency distribution]

- Cambridge, MA, 38%
- Somerville, MA, 16%
- Boston, MA, 14%
- Other Mass. Municipalities, 25%
- Other, 6%

\[ n = 154 \]
Workers and Students. One hundred and thirty-three (133) respondents replied to the question of whether they work or attend school in Cambridge. Forty-nine percent (49%) of our respondents worked, and 31% neither worked nor attended school in Cambridge.

Chart 2: Respondents by Whether Working or Studying in Cambridge

Gender. One hundred and sixty-two (162) respondents shared their gender. Fifty-three percent (53%) were female.

Chart 3: Respondents by Gender
**Age.** The ages of the 166 respondents who answered this question clustered towards the 25-34 bracket.

**Chart 4: Respondents by Age**

**Race and Ethnicity.** When asked about ethnicity, 145 people responded; 12% of these respondents identified as Hispanic. One hundred and sixty-six (166) respondents provided their race; 83% of these respondents are white, 8% are Asian, and 8% are black. One respondent identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native.

**Chart 5: Respondents by Race**
**Language.** Respondents were asked what languages they spoke predominantly at home. One hundred and fifty-seven (157) respondents answered; 90% said they only spoke English, and 96% included English in their answer. Other languages mentioned were: Spanish (9 respondents); Arabic (2); Portuguese (2); French (1); Polish (1); Swedish (1); and Norwegian (1).

**2.2 TYPICAL VISIT**

**Mode of Transit.** Respondents were asked to select the one mode of transit they use most frequently to get to Harvard Square; 181 provided an answer. Although the survey requested respondents to select one, 15% opted to include more than one mode of transit. Chart 6 captures all of the modes of transit respondents listed. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents who answered this question citing walking as their primary form of transit to the square, and 29% of respondents mentioned the subway.

**Chart 6: Mode of Transit**

![Chart 6: Mode of Transit]

\[ n = 214 \text{ responses, which were provided by 181 respondents.} \]

**Frequency of Visits.** Respondents were asked how frequently they used the services and shops in Harvard Square and 191 people answered the question. Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents said they shopped in the square nearly every day.
Length of Visit. One hundred and thirty-seven (137) respondents replied to the question regarding the length of the visit to the square. The majority of respondents have an average visit of under two hours.
2.3 PRIMARY PURPOSE

Respondents were asked what their primary purpose for being in the area was on the date of the survey. Although the question asked for a single answer, 26% of the 207 respondents provided more than one answer. Forty percent (40%) of respondents mentioned work as a primary purpose for being in the square.

Chart 9: Primary Purpose for Being in Harvard Square

- Personal Service: 5
- Transportation: 6
- Live Here: 8
- Shopping: 10
- Visiting/Tourist: 12
- Event/Meeting: 15
- Services: 17
- Dining: 19
- School: 25
- Recreation: 34
- Work: 81

$n = 231$ from 207 respondents. Two responses for Post Office were collapsed into Services. One response for “Other: Movie theater” was collapsed into recreation.
SECTION 3
District Businesses

In this section, we will review which businesses respondents use and desire, and how they rate these current offerings.

3.1 BUSINESSES VISITED

Chart 10: Most Visited Businesses by Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Retail</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardware Stores</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Services</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater and Performance Venues</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery/ Specialty Food Shops</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Stores</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Retail</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services &amp; Offices</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Institutions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book, Comic Book, Art Stores</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafes</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$n = 225$ from 141 respondents. Other includes Cambridge Artists Cooperative, Hotels, Offices, and other institutions.
Respondents were asked to name which businesses they were visiting on the day of the survey. We excluded places of employment for the purposes of this analysis. One hundred and forty-one (141) respondents provided an answer, and many included multiple businesses. The answers were grouped into business type to generate Chart 10.

### 3.2 CURRENT BUSINESS AND SERVICES RATINGS

A portion of this survey asked respondents to rate how well different types of businesses in Harvard Square met their needs. The rating scale was Good, Fair, and Poor. For each of the business types in this section, the survey also asked whether there should be new or more of that business type in the district.

Different survey participants used this portion of the survey differently; many filled out every rating, but others only rated some business types based on how often they used them or the relative strength of their opinion. The average response rate for each rating question was 35%; Restaurants (Take Out), Restaurants (Sit Down), and Coffee Shops/Bakeries had the highest response rates at 50%, 50%, and 47% respectively. The average response rate for whether there should be new or more of each business type was even smaller at 26%. Theaters, grocery stores, and specialty retail stores had the highest response rates at 33%, 32%, and 31% respectively.

**Overview.** The business types that had the most positive rating overall (defined by the percentage of people rating that type “Good”) are:

- Coffee Shops/Bakeries
- Restaurants (Sit Down)
- Restaurants (Take Out)

The top three types of businesses respondents would like to see more of are:

- Grocery Stores
- Theaters
- Specialty Retail
Chart 11: Summary of Business Type Ratings (Sorted by Highest % Rating as Good)

Chart 12: Summary of Whether Harvard Square Needs More Businesses (Sorted by % Yes)
Barber/Hair Salon. There are currently 21 barbers and hair salons in the district.

Chart 13: Assessment of Barbers and Hair Salons

Bars and Night Life Venues. There are currently 16 bars and night life venues in the district.

Chart 14: Assessment of Bars Night Life Venues
Coffee Shops and Bakeries. There are currently 8 coffee shops and bakeries in the district.

Chart 15: Assessment of Coffee Shops and Bakeries

![Bar chart showing the assessment of coffee shops and bakeries.](chart)

- **Rating of Current Offerings**
  - Poor, 5%
  - Fair, 16%
  - Good, 79%

- **Should There Be More?**
  - No, 51%
  - Yes, 49%

\[n = 100\text{ for ratings, and }n = 57\text{ for whether there should be more.}\]

Convenience Stores. There are currently 3 convenience stores in the district.

Chart 16: Assessment of Convenience Stores

![Bar chart showing the assessment of convenience stores.](chart)

- **Rating of Current Offerings**
  - Poor, 18%
  - Fair, 40%
  - Good, 42%

- **Should There Be More?**
  - No, 49%
  - Yes, 51%

\[n = 77\text{ for ratings, and }n = 61\text{ for whether there should be more.}\]
Apparel and Clothing Stores. There are currently 27 apparel and clothing stores in the district.

Chart 17: Assessment of Apparel and Clothing Stores

Accessory Stores. There are currently 18 stores selling accessories in the district.

Chart 18: Assessment of Accessory Stores
Restaurants (Take Out). There are currently 25 take out restaurants in the district.

Chart 19: Assessment of Take Out Restaurants

Restaurants (Sit Down). There are currently 37 sit down restaurants in the district.

Chart 20: Assessment of Sit Down Restaurants

$n = 107$ for ratings, and $n = 62$ for whether there should be more.
Dry Cleaners and Tailors. There are currently 5 dry cleaners and tailors in the district.

Chart 21: Assessment of Dry Cleaners and Tailors

Healthcare Offices. There are currently 23 healthcare offices in the district.

Chart 22: Assessment of Healthcare Offices
Fitness Centers and Spas. There are currently 11 fitness centers and spas in the district.

Chart 23: Assessment of Fitness Centers and Spas

- **Rating of Current Offerings**
  - Poor, 13%
  - Fair, 55%
  - Good, 32%

- **Should There Be More?**
  - Yes, 34%
  - No, 66%

*n = 47 for ratings, and n = 50 for whether there should be more.*

Hardware Stores. There are currently 2 hardware stores in the district.

Chart 24: Assessment of Hardware Stores

- **Rating of Current Offerings**
  - Poor, 12%
  - Fair, 30%
  - Good, 58%

- **Should There Be More?**
  - Yes, 31%
  - No, 69%

*n = 57 for ratings, and n = 51 for whether there should be more.*
Pharmacies. There are currently 2 pharmacies in the district.

Chart 25: Assessment of Pharmacies

- Poor, 7%
- Fair, 32%
- Good, 61%
- No, 73%
- Yes, 27%

$n = 75$ for ratings, and $n = 48$ for whether there should be more.

Grocery Stores. There are currently 2 grocery stores in the district.

Chart 26: Assessment of Grocery Stores

- Poor, 60%
- Fair, 31%
- Good, 9%
- No, 14%
- Yes, 86%

$n = 67$ for ratings, and $n = 69$ for whether there should be more.
Bookstores. There are currently 8 bookstores in the district.

Chart 27: Assessment of Bookstores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating of Current Offerings</th>
<th>Should There Be More?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good, 74%</td>
<td>Yes, 54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair, 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor, 6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$n = 96$ for ratings, and $n = 65$ for whether there should be more.

Film and Performing Arts Theaters. Many survey respondents mentioned, both verbally to survey takers and in open responses, that they missed the AMC theater in Harvard Square, which closed in 2012. The building had been a theater since 1925. There are currently 4 theaters and performing arts centers in the district.

Chart 28: Assessment of Theaters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating of Current Offerings</th>
<th>Should There Be More?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good, 29%</td>
<td>Yes, 81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair, 39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor, 32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$n = 82$ for ratings, and $n = 70$ for whether there should be more.
Florists. There are currently 2 florists in the district.

Chart 29: Assessment of Florists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating of Current Offerings</th>
<th>Should There Be More?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good, 65%</td>
<td>Yes, 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair, 31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor, 4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$n = 68$ for ratings, and $n = 53$ for whether there should be more.

Furnishings and Home Goods Stores. There are currently 8 home goods stores in the district.

Chart 30: Assessment of Furnishings and Home Goods Stores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating of Current Offerings</th>
<th>Should There Be More?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good, 18%</td>
<td>Yes, 55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair, 47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor, 35%</td>
<td>No, 45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$n = 62$ for ratings, and $n = 56$ for whether there should be more.
Specialty Retail Stores. There are currently 26 specialty retail stores in the district.

Chart 31: Assessment of Specialty Retail Stores

3.3 BUSINESSES DESIRED

In addition to rating the current mix of retail and service businesses in Harvard Square, respondents were asked an open-ended question about what types of businesses they would like to see in the area that are not there now. We received 218 suggestions from 122 respondents.

The top responses were restaurants and grocery stores. In terms of grocery stores, three respondents requested affordable options, while others suggested Whole Foods, Trader Joe’s, and Bfresh as desired companies.

There were quite a few other suggestions for different retail stores, ranging from specialty retail (specifically those selling musical instruments, art supplies, gifts, and cheese) to department stores. Respondents also mentioned interest in additional clothing stores, captured by the 12 people mentioning clothing as well as the 7 who requested a thrift store.

Another popular answer to this question involved entertainment: 14 people requested a new movie theater, often verbally citing the closed Harvard Square Theater. Three people suggested another live music venue, and one suggested a mini-golf course.
Chart 32: Businesses Desired in Harvard Square

$n = 218$ responses from $122$ respondents. “Other” in this chart includes non-profits and substance abuse support, places that sell lottery tickets, maker space, public pool, shopping plaza.

Many respondents opted to answer with general qualities they sought for new stores in Harvard Square rather than specific businesses. These qualities are captured in Chart 33.
In general, the most ideas offered were related to restaurants (see Chart 34, Chart 35, and Table 1). Although some survey respondents only mentioned “restaurants,” others were more particular about what kinds of eating establishments they wanted to add to the Harvard Square area. For example, 47% requested some type of takeout restaurant or suggested a specific takeout restaurant.

Other respondents were more focused on certain qualities or ability to meet certain dietary restrictions.
Some respondents were specific about the style of foods or particular restaurants they wanted to see (Table 1).

Table 1: Restaurants Desired in Harvard Square by Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Restaurants Suggested</th>
<th>General Restaurant Types Suggested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Respondents</td>
<td>Suggestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Au Bon Pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Life Alive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Panera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bruegger’s Bagels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chick-Fil-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Food Not Bombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hale &amp; Hearty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sweetgreen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Tasty Sandwich Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Veggie Galaxy</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
3.4 NIGHTLIFE

Respondents were asked how often per month they visit Harvard Square at night for dining or entertainment purposes. One hundred (100) people replied; the distribution of answers was fairly even across categories, but generally 61% visited less than twice per month.

Chart 36: Times Per Month Respondents Visit Harvard Square at Night

3.5 OUT OF TOWN NEWS

As part of a broader placemaking effort coordinated between the City of Cambridge, the Harvard Square Business Association, and Harvard University, there has been discussion about reimagining Out of Town News. The Harvard Square Customer Intercept Survey asked respondents for suggestions about what they’d like to see the kiosk used for.

One hundred and five (105) respondents told surveyors whether they were familiar with the Out of Town News building in the center of Harvard Square. Sixty-four percent (64%) of these 105 respondents were familiar with it.

However, only forty-seven (47) respondents offered suggestions for what they’d like to see in that space. Sixty-five percent (65%) wanted to keep the building as-is: as Out of Town News.
Chart 37: Suggestions for Out of Town News’ Future Use

- Curious George: 1
- Bike Valet: 1
- Non-Commercial Use: 1
- Event Tickets: 1
- Café: 2
- Exhibit/Performance Space: 3
- Public Space with Rain Protection: 4
- Something Different or Innovative: 4
- Visitor Information/Shop: 5
- Keep it As-Is: 32

$n = 54$
SECTION 4
District Characteristics

In this section, we assess what survey respondents think about the general qualities of the commercial district.

4.1 BARRIERS TO SHOPPING

In order to better understand customer reactions to the Harvard Square area, surveyors asked fifteen questions regarding different characteristics and their importance.

Chart 38: What Would Make You Visit or Shop More Often in Harvard Square?

- Nothing: 2
- Other: 2
- Public Space Improvements: 4
- Indy/Minority-Owned/Local Business: 4
- Safety: 5
- Parking: 24
- Availability of Goods: 33
- Special Events: 52
- Variety in Price: 66

\[ n = 192 \text{ from 139 respondents. Public space improvements includes additional seating, additional green space, and reduction in homelessness.} \]
Respondents were asked “What would make you visit/shop more in Harvard Square?” They were asked to check one option from the following: Special Events, Variety in Price of Goods/Services, Availability/Selection of Goods/Services, Parking, Safety, and Other, which had a space for free-form answers. One hundred and thirty-nine (139) people answered the question, and many people selected multiple options, and therefore Chart 38 displays all provided answers.

4.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SQUARE

Respondents were asked to rate the following traits of Harvard Square. The rating scale was Good, Fair, and Poor. Surveyors also asked respondents to rate the importance of each characteristic when deciding where to shop. That scale was Very, Somewhat, and Not Very Important. The characteristics rated are as follows:

- Access to Convenient Parking
- Access to Public Transit
- Variety and Range of Goods and Services
- Quality and Prices of Goods and Services
- Friendliness of Service in Shops
- Attractiveness and Cleanliness of Storefronts and Area
- Infrastructure (Sidewalks, bike racks, lighting)
- Sense of Safety
- Business Hours
- Presence of Independent Businesses
- Cultural Attractions
- Outdoor and Nightlife Activity

The characteristics that had the most positive rating overall (defined by the percentage of people rating that type “Good”) are: access to public transportation, sense of safety, and attractiveness of area. The response rates to these questions varied from 51% to 69%. The most important characteristics are: presence of independent businesses, access to public transportation, and the quality and price of goods and services. The response rate to these questions varied from 24% to 35%.

It is worth noting that, despite access to parking ranking the lowest attribute, this was also the least important according to survey respondents. In addition, only 7% of the respondents who rated parking “poor” cited car as a mode of transit they used to access Harvard Square.
Chart 39: Summary of Characteristics Ratings (Sorted by Highest % Ranked as Good)

Chart 40: Summary of Characteristics Importance (Sorted by Highest % Ranked as Very Important)
Chart 41: Access to Parking

- Poor: 61%
- Fair: 34%
- Good: 5%
- Not Very Important: 33%
- Somewhat Important: 29%
- Very Important: 38%

$n = 110$ for rating and $n = 63$ for importance

Chart 42: Access to Public Transit

- Poor: 1%
- Fair: 13%
- Good: 86%
- Not Very Important: 88%
- Somewhat Important: 15%
- Very Important: 77%

$n = 146$ for rating and $n = 60$ for importance
Chart 43: Range of Services

Chart 44: Quality of Goods & Services

\[ n = 132 \text{ for rating and } n = 58 \text{ for importance} \]

\[ n = 135 \text{ for rating and } n = 63 \text{ for importance} \]
Chart 45: Friendliness of Service in Shops

![Chart 45](image)

- **Rating of Characteristic**
  - Poor, 4%
  - Fair, 37%
  - Good, 60%

- **Importance of Characteristic**
  - Not Very Important, 5%
  - Somewhat Important, 43%
  - Very Important, 49%

$n = 131$ for rating and $n = 51$ for importance

Chart 46: Attractiveness of Storefronts

![Chart 46](image)

- **Rating of Characteristic**
  - Poor, 3%
  - Fair, 32%
  - Good, 65%

- **Importance of Characteristic**
  - Not Very Important, 5%
  - Somewhat Important, 33%
  - Very Important, 57%

$n = 147$ for rating and $n = 54$ for importance
Chart 47: Infrastructure (Sidewalks, Bike Racks, Lighting)

Chart 48: Sense of Safety

n = 145 for rating and n = 55 for importance

n = 147 for rating and n = 54 for importance
Chart 49: Business Hours

- **Rating of Characteristic**
  - Poor, 4%
  - Fair, 36%
  - Good, 60%

- **Importance of Characteristic**
  - Not Very Important, 8%
  - Somewhat Important, 53%
  - Very Important, 40%

*n = 129 for rating and n = 53 for importance*

Chart 50: Presence of Independent Businesses

- **Rating of Characteristic**
  - Poor, 25%
  - Fair, 39%
  - Good, 36%

- **Importance of Characteristic**
  - Not Very Important, 1%
  - Somewhat Important, 16%
  - Very Important, 82%

*n = 134 for rating and n = 74 for importance*
Chart 51: Cultural Attractions

- Poor: 10%
- Fair: 37%
- Good: 54%
- Somewhat Important: 42%
- Very Important: 58%

$n = 125$ for rating and $n = 57$ for importance

Chart 52: Outdoor and Nightlife Activity

- Poor: 6%
- Fair: 45%
- Good: 49%
- Somewhat Important: 39%
- Very Important: 49%

$n = 119$ for rating and $n = 51$ for importance

39
SECTION 5
Open-Ended Responses

Respondents were asked what they would change, keep, or eliminate in the district, and what word they would use to describe Harvard Square. The answers to these open-ended questions are analyzed in this section.

5.1 CHANGE

One hundred and fourteen (114) people responded to the question concerning change, and they had 172 suggestions in all. When respondents made multiple suggestions, we included each suggestion in Chart 53.

Chart 53: What would you change in Harvard Square?

$n = 172$ from 114 respondents
Nearly 10% of all of these changes had something to do with affordability, whether it was about commercial rents, housing prices, or price of goods available. However, only instances where people requested lower rents or affordability in general were included in the Affordability (In general) category; suggestions like “cheaper restaurants” would be included in business instead.

Because most of the survey deals with businesses in a more systematic way, we will not exhaustively break down the business-related answers to the change question. However, a few points from within these answers are worth noting:

- 14% of those who mentioned businesses were specifically concerned about affordability—affordable grocery stores, affordable healthcare, affordable lunch, etc.
- 35% of business-related changes were specifically about bringing in independent stores, protecting the unique stores already present, and preventing additional chains from entering the district.
- 9% mentioned venues specifically, requesting a movie theater or nightlife venues.

The changes related to public space highlighted landscaping and green space as priorities. A few people suggested additional public restrooms and outdoor seating (see Chart 54). Infrastructure recommendations largely focused on making Harvard Square more bike and pedestrian friendly (see Chart 55).

For parking, six people requested additional longer-term parking options specifically, and one person requested increased resident parking. Everyone else seemed to indicate they wanted just more parking in general. Surprisingly, only half of these respondents also indicated that they drove to the square—the others all used public transit. This is consistent with Section 4, wherein respondents ranked parking poor more often than any other attribute, but few of these respondents actually drive to the square.
Chart 54: What would you change in Harvard Square? (Public Space)

- Create a Splash Pad: 1 mention
- Establish a Street Performance Space: 1 mention
- Designate a Non-Smoking Area: 1 mention
- Historic Plaques: 1 mention
- Provide Additional Outdoor Seating: 3 mentions
- Add Public restrooms: 3 mentions
- Create Additional Green Space: 4 mentions
- Improve the Landscaping: 5 mentions

Chart 55: What would you change in Harvard Square? (Infrastructure)

- Improve the safety: 1 mention
- Make more drive-able: 1 mention
- Improve the lighting: 1 mention
- Add local buses: 1 mention
- Improve the sidewalks: 2 mentions
- Improve the signage: 2 mentions
- Make more bikeable: 6 mentions
- Make more walkable: 8 mentions

$n = 19$

$n = 22$
5.2 KEEP

One hundred and fifteen (115) people responded to the question about what to keep in Harvard Square. In the event that a respondent included more than one answer, we counted each separately. See Chart 56.

Thirty-two (32) responses discussed something about the feel or atmosphere in Harvard Square. Ten specifically mentioned the historic elements, while others used words like “charm,” “funky,” “lively,” “personality,” “wealthy,” “unique,” and “weird.”

Chart 56: What would you keep in Harvard Square?

About half of the responses were about businesses, perhaps because of the nature of the rest of the survey had people thinking about the businesses they wanted to preserve in Harvard Square. Many people mentioned the desire to keep independent, local or small businesses. Others were more interested in preserving the diversity of business offerings.

Quite a few people cited specific stores and restaurants: Curious George and Out of Town News were both mentioned multiple times, likely because both of these institutions are slated for possible redevelopment.
Chart 57: What would you keep in Harvard Square? (Business)

5.3 ELIMINATE

Fifty-eight (58) people responded to our question about what to eliminate from Harvard Square. In the event that respondents mentioned more than one answer, we counted each. The most-cited element to change was chain stores.

Ten people felt there were too many banks in the area. Seven suggested attempting to eliminate some vehicular traffic.
5.4 ONE-WORD VISION

Finally, we asked respondents to share the one word that described Harvard Square to them. One hundred and forty-five respondents provided an answer; the results are captured in the following word cloud.
SECTION 6
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: The Harvard Square Customer Intercept Survey

APPENDIX B: Survey Respondents by Zip Code
A: The Harvard Square Customer Intercept Survey

HARVARD SQUARE CUSTOMER SURVEY

The City of Cambridge is sponsoring this survey in order to get information that will help us create a business district that better meets your needs. Thank you for your participation!

Surveyor Initials: ____________________________

Date: ______ TIME OF DAY: ____AM Peak (7am-9am) ____ NOON ____ PM Peak (4pm-6pm) ____Evening

1. What is your primary purpose for being in Harvard Square today? (Check only 1)
   ____ Shopping  ____ Dining  ____ Recreation (Hang out, Yoga)  ____ Event/Meeting  ____ Work  ____ Personal
   ____ Service (Salon/Eye Care)  ____ Post Office  ____ Services (e.g. lawyer, daycare)
   ____ Transportation  ____ School  ____ Visiting /Tourist  ____ Other: ____________________________

2. What particular businesses or offices are you visiting today? (list each)
   __________________________________________  __________________________________________  ____________________

3. Please tell me three types of businesses you would like to see that are not here now.
   __________________________________________  __________________________________________  ____________________

4. How often do you use services or shops in Harvard Square (Check only one)?
   ____ Every day/almost every day  ____ 3-5 times per week  ____ About once a week  ____ 2-3 times per month
   ____ About once a month  ____ Rarely/Never

5. How long is your average visit (outside of work) to Harvard Square?
   ____ Less than an hour  ____ 1-2 hours  ____ 2-3 hours  ____ 3-4 hours  ____ 4 or more

6. How do you most frequently get to Harvard Square? (Check only 1).
   ____ Bike  ____ Walk  ____ Bus  ____ Subway  ____ Drive  ____ Carpool  ____ Hubway

7. Please rate how well the current businesses in Harvard Square meet your needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/Product</th>
<th>Rate how well existing businesses meet your needs.</th>
<th>Do you feel there should be new/more of this in the district?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barber/Hairdresser</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars/Night Life Venues</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee Shops/Bakeries</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience Stores</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel/Clothing</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories (Shoes, Jewelry)</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants (Take out) (ex: Qdoba)</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants (Sit Down) (ex. Russell House)</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Cleaning/Tailoring</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare (Dentists/Doctors)</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness Centers/Spa</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardware Stores</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Stores</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstores</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theaters (Movies/Performing Arts)</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florists</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furnishings/Home Goods</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Retail Stores (ex. Black Ink, Hidden Sweets)</td>
<td>□ Good □ Fair □ Poor □</td>
<td>□ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Approximately how many times a month do you come to Harvard Square for dining/entertainment purposes in the evening?  ____ Rarely/Never  ____ 1-2  ____ 3-5  ____ 5 or more
9. Are you familiar with the Out of Town News Kiosk? ____ No ____ Yes. If YES, what would you like to see the building used for? ____________________________________________________________________

10. What would make you visit/shop more often in Harvard Square? (Check only 1)
    Special Events ______ Variety in Price of Goods/Services ______ Availability/Selection of Goods/Services ______
    Parking ______ Safety ______ Other ______

11. Please give your opinion on the following characteristics of Harvard Square.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/Product</th>
<th>Rate this characteristic of Harvard Square</th>
<th>How Important is that characteristic to you when decided where to visit/shop?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to convenient parking</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to public transportation</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety/Range of Goods and Services</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality/Prices of goods and services</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendliness of service in shops</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness/Cleanliness of store fronts/area</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure (sidewalks, bike racks, lighting)</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Safety</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Hours</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Independent Businesses</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Attractions</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor and Nightlife Activity</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CUSTOMER PROFILE

1. What is your zip code? ______
   a. If Cambridge zip, what neighborhood? ___________________________________________________________________

2. a. Do you work in Cambridge? ____ Yes ____ No
   b. Do you go to school in Cambridge? ____ Yes ____ No
      If yes, where: ________________

3. Gender? ___ Male ___ Female ___ Other

4. What is your age range?
   ____ 15-19  ____ 20-24  ____ 25-34  ____ 35-44  ____ 45-54  ____ 55-59
   ____ 60-64  ____ 65-74  ____ 75-84  ____ 85 +

5. What do you speak most often at home?
   ___ English ___ Spanish ___ Portuguese ___ Other ________________

6. Do you: ___ Rent or ___ Own your own residence?
   __________________________________________________________________

7. What is your ethnic background?
   ___ Hispanic ___ Non-Hispanic    If Non-Hispanic: ___ Ethiopian ___ Haitian ___ Brazilian ___ Portuguese
   ___ Other: ________________

8. What is your race?
   ___ White ___ Black or African American ___ American Indian or Alaska Native
   ___ Asian ___ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander ___ Other

VISION

In one word, how would you describe Harvard Square?

________________________________________________________________

What would you change, keep or eliminate in the district?

Change: __________________________________________________________________

Keep: __________________________________________________________________

Eliminate: __________________________________________________________________
B: Survey Respondents By Zip Code

Not shown: Respondents from California, Illinois, Kentucky, New Jersey (2), and North Carolina.