



# Cambridge Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2023-2030

## Appendix B: Community Engagement Summary

August 1, 2023

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## Introduction

### *Why Do Community Engagement?*

The purpose of Our Parks, Our Plan is to:

- Provide useful information about the variety of open spaces in Cambridge.
- Describe the goals and objectives that guide the City's investments into these spaces.
- Outline actions and projects that will help to protect and enhance Cambridge's open space resources for current and future community members.

Research, data, observation, and analysis can help us achieve some of our purpose. These tasks, completed by City staff help us understand what we currently have, but we need community engagement to understand the community's goals and objectives, and set us on course to maintain and improve our parks and open spaces.

Research, data, observation, and analysis can only tell us quantitative details, like how many people live within a 5-minute walk of Danehy Park, or where we expect to have increased risk of flooding in 2050. Those quantitative tools cannot tell us what Cambridge parks are most popular and why, or what about a particular park makes someone feel welcome or unwelcome.

### *Our Commitment to Equitable and Inclusive Community Engagement*

The Cambridge Community Development Department (CDD) is committed to ensuring the communities most impacted by our work, including those who have been historically excluded, underheard, or underserved from public planning processes, have a say in the decision making that affects their daily lives. This commitment to equitable and inclusive community engagement guided us to lead community engagement activities that sought out people and communities that we have not reached in the past. We were intentional about who we engaged, where we engaged, and how we engaged.

Community engagement helped us create a collective vision for the future of our parks and open spaces. Community engagement helped us write twelve goals, identify over 120 actions, and set priorities for what the City and community should start working on first.

### *This Isn't the End*

The publication of this final plan document is not the end of community engagement! This Parks & Open Space Plan sets the roadmap for the next 7-10 years, and over those years City staff will need the communities help to make big and small decisions, offer feedback on specific projects, and help us be sure that the course we set out on from this plan is still the direction we want to go in the future.

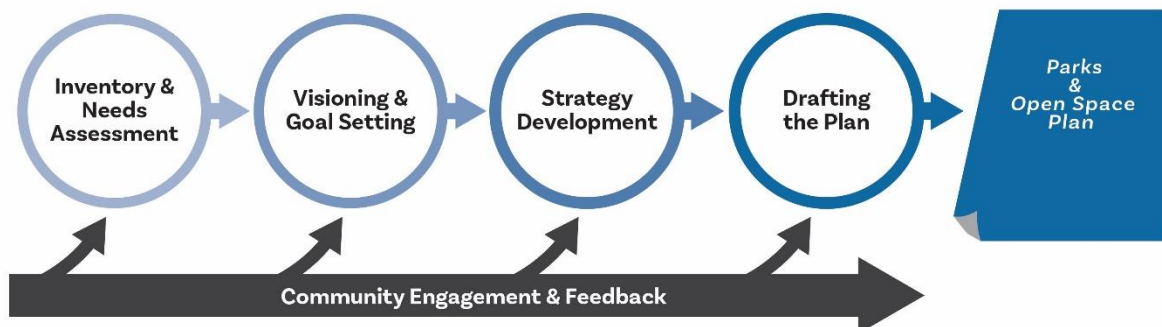
## Process Overview/Community Engagement Methods

The vision, goals, strategies, and actions for the process were created through a participatory process involving people who live, work, play, and learn in Cambridge. Over fourteen months, the Community Development Department (CDD) led a community engagement process that aimed to understand people's relationship and opinions of Cambridge's parks and open spaces, shape an ideal future, and develop a plan to reach our vision and goals. Engagement activities included:

- Four online surveys
- Seven in-park pop up events
- Three focus groups with Cambridge Youth Programs and the Cambridge Community Learning Center
- Four virtual community meetings and workshops
- Seven meetings with neighborhood groups, City advisory boards, and City-organized resident committees
- Virtual office hours with the planning team

These activities both helped the planning team speak to a diversity of people and provided a variety of opportunities for participation in the process. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the planning team relied predominantly on virtual methods, but when possible, visited parks, youth centers, and the Community Learning Center to meet people where they are.

The planning team divided the community engagement process into four phases, which aligned with four phases of the planning process: 1) Inventory & Needs Assessment, 2) Visioning and Goal Setting, 3) Strategy Development, and 4) Drafting the Plan.



### Surveys:

We used four online surveys to gather input and feedback throughout the planning process. The survey topics and timing varied on the subject, but all surveys were promoted using a variety of outreach methods, and were paired with other engagement methods.

### *Virtual Community Meetings*

We hosted four virtual community meetings to share updates on progress, gather feedback from attendees, and highlight key transition points throughout the process.

### *Presentations to Neighborhood Groups, Boards, etc.*

We presented updates on the planning process to a variety of groups within the City and the community. These presentations were typically general updates, but often included opportunities for participants to engage on subjects of particular interest to that group. Examples of groups included the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, the Fresh Pond Master Plan Advisory Committee, and the Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

### *Focus Groups*

We held focus groups with young people at the Russell and Gately Youth Centers and with English to Speakers of Other Language students at the Cambridge Learning Center.

### *In-Park Pop Up Events*

We hosted a series of in-park pop-up engagement sessions at various stages of the planning process to hear from people using parks. We chose locations based on neighborhoods where we heard from fewer people in our surveys.

### *Office Hours*

We provided virtual office hours as a flexible way for people to discuss topics related to the planning process with the project team.



**Figure 1:** The calendar of community engagement activities.

## Surveys

### *Survey 1: Tell Us How You Use Parks*

Compared to the other surveys, this first survey was open for responses for the longest period of time and contained the most questions. The survey questions asked what parks and open spaces in Cambridge people use and why. There were two reasons for this survey: 1) to identify range of topics community members would like to address as part of the planning process, and 2) get a sense of respondents' relationships with Cambridge parks and open spaces. This feedback was helpful in shaping the process, and responses from this survey were helpful as conversation starters in public meetings and other engagement events.

#### **Some of What We Heard:**

##### **Question 1: What is your favorite park in Cambridge? (386 answers)**

Responses included 51 of the City's 97 parks and open spaces. The top were:

- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Fresh Pond Reservation | 6. Magazine Beach            |
| 2. Danehy Park            | 7. Sennott Park              |
| 3. Cambridge Common       | 8. Donnelly Field            |
| 4. Joan Lorentz Park      | 9. Charles River Reservation |
| 5. Dana Park              |                              |

##### **Question 3: What are your favorite activities in parks? (362 answers)**

Walking: Over half of our respondents said one of their favorite park activities is walking. Some of these walkers mention dog walking as their favorite activity.

Playing: Respondents indicated that playing is one of their favorite park activities. For many, this means watching or playing with their children. Many people describe playing on playgrounds, and some shared that they like to play in the park with their dogs.

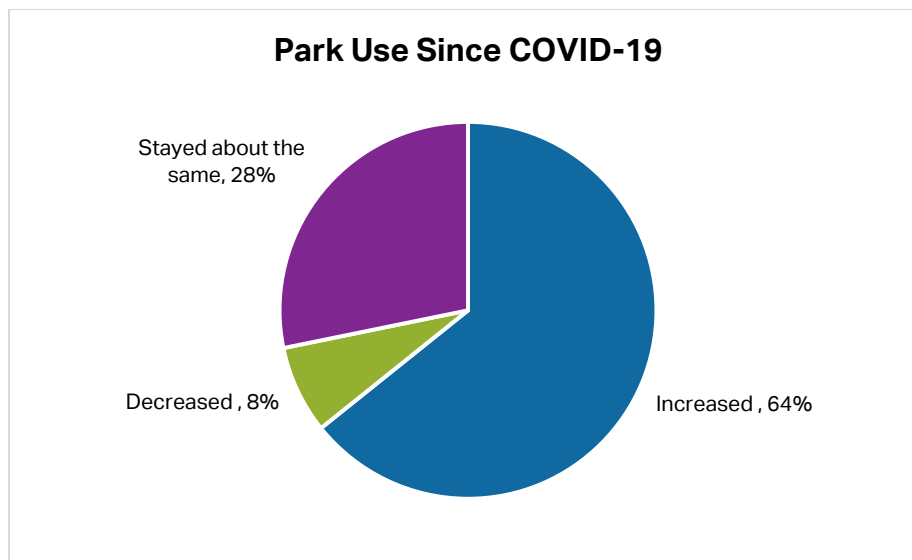
Dogs: About 1/5 of respondents said playing with or walking their dog is their favorite park activity.

Stationary Activities (relaxing, sitting, people watching, or reading): Many respondents let us know their favorite activities in parks are stationary. Some popular stationary activities include sitting, people watching, and reading.

Sports, Running, and Recreation: Respondents indicated that their favorite activities in parks are physically active. Running was a common response, along with organized or pickup sports like basketball, soccer, and tennis. Most of the people who listed running as a favorite activity also mentioned walking.

Other popular favorite activities included: gathering with friends, eating, and appreciating nature.

**Question 10: Has your park use increased or decreased since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic? (358 answered)**



**Survey 2: Community Core Values & Priorities**

The goal of the second survey was to gather information about what values and priorities the community would like to be reflected in our open space system. We encouraged to take into account not just your own personal park use and experience, but that of friends and family, neighbors, and the diverse needs of park users across the city.

**Some of What We Heard:**

For this survey, we provided a list of 13 park and open space priorities and asked respondents to rank each priority on a scale from 1 (low priority) to 5 (high priority).

**Question 1: For each statement, please provide a rating on the level of emphasis or priority each statement should have as we evaluate open space needs. (142 responses)**

The results in order, from highest to lowest priority:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Highest priority | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. It is important for people to live within walking distance of parks and open spaces.</li><li>2. It is important for parks and open spaces to be accessible without needing to drive.</li><li>3. It is important for parks and open spaces to provide shade or protection from heat.</li><li>4. It is important for parks and open spaces to be accessible to users of all abilities.</li><li>5. It is important for parks and open spaces to have abundant trees.</li></ol> |
|------------------|--|

6. It is important for parks and open spaces to contribute to climate resilience.
7. It is important for parks and open spaces to provide for spaces to gather.
8. It is important for park and open space improvements to be prioritized in areas with a higher proportion of lower income households.
9. It is important for park and open space improvements to be prioritized in areas with a higher proportion of people of color.
10. It is important for parks and open spaces to provide for active recreation, such as sports or walking/running.
11. It is important for park and open space improvements to be prioritized in areas with a higher proportion of family households.
12. It is important for park and open space improvements to be prioritized in areas with a higher proportion of older adults.
- Lowest priority 13. It is important for parks and open spaces to have a variety of activities (e.g., walking, basketball, playground play, sitting, etc.) available at a single location.

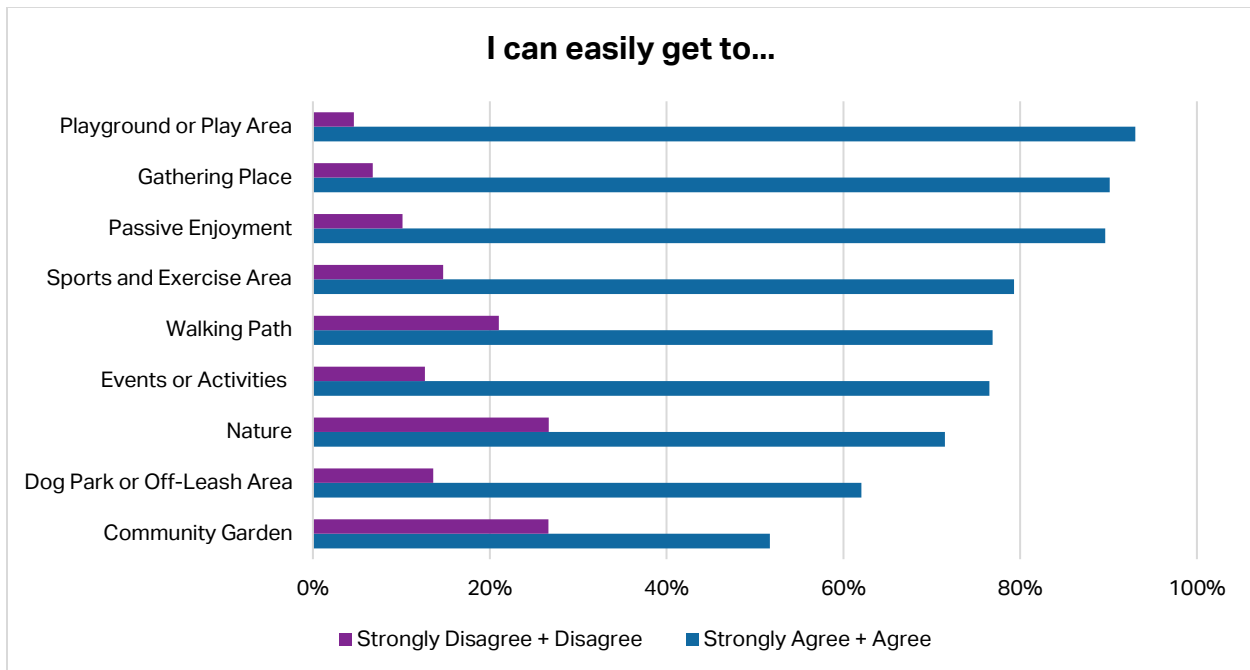
### *Survey 3: Park Use & Access*

The third survey was focused on park uses and park design. We aimed to hear what activities people do in our parks, how they get to parks, and what makes people feel welcome or unwelcome. The results from this survey helped us understand what uses (e.g., playgrounds, basketball courts, trails, community gardens, etc.) and design characteristics people would like to see in parks in their neighborhoods.

#### *Some of What We Heard*

***Question 6: We'd like to understand how easy or difficult it is for you to get to different types of park amenities. For each of the following, please select the choice that best describes your level of access. (388 answered)***





**Question 9: Is there anything about parks that stops you from using them or limits how you use them? (These could be physical, social, or geographical barriers. For example, "I don't use parks because there is not one close to me", or "they're too loud," or "the way they are designed makes me feel unwelcome." etc.) (226 answered)**

Dogs: Many respondents indicated they felt uncomfortable around off-leash dogs. Some people specifically mentioned Fresh Pond Reservation as a place they would like to walk more, but are weary of the dogs that roam on and off the pathways. Conversely, some respondents explained they would feel more welcome in parks if there were defined spaces for their dog to play off-leash.

Lighting: Respondents answered that better lighting would help them use our parks more. Especially in the winter when the sun sets as early as 4:15pm, it would be welcoming to have more lighting in parks and especially along walking paths in parks.

Bathrooms: Many respondents shared they would be able to use the parks more and for longer if there were more bathrooms available.

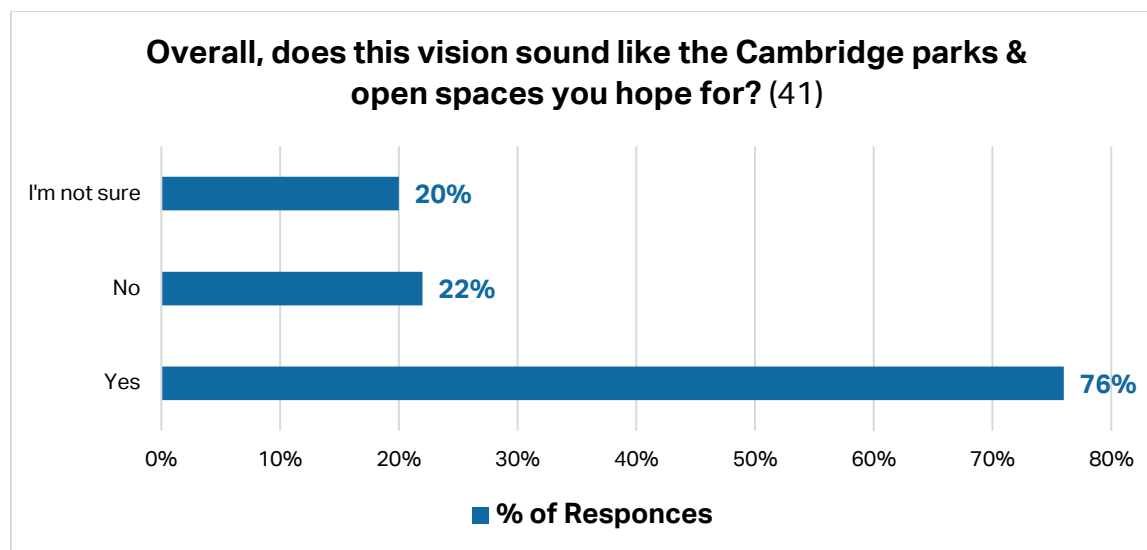
### Survey 4: Draft Vision and Goals Feedback

Our third survey was used to gather feedback on the draft vision and a set of twelve draft goals for our parks and open spaces. Results of this survey helped us to further refine the vision and goals to create recommendations for the final plan.

For each goal we asked the respondent: Does this goal feel important to you? Could it be improved? Any idea for how we can achieve it?

### Some of What We Heard

**Question 1: Overall does the draft vision sound like the Cambridge parks & open spaces you hope for?**



For **Questions 2-13**, we listed out each individual draft goal and asked, **“Does this goal feel important you? Could it be improved? Any ideas for how we could achieve it?”**

**Question 2: Goal A is, “Eliminate barriers and actively welcome people to enjoy parks and park programs, ensuring they are welcoming spaces for all”. Does this goal feel important you? Could it be improved? Any ideas for how we could achieve it?**

Most respondents agreed that this was an important goal. Several respondents proposed we edit the language to be more specific. One respondent summed up this sentiment by writing, “Barriers may mean different things to different people—are they physical barriers or systemic ones? And ‘ensuring they are welcoming for all’ maybe would ring more true if you said ‘engaging all park neighbors, park users, and staff to identify how parks could be made welcoming spaces for all’. At places where black and brown people don’t feel welcome currently the process is going to be a longer one.”

**Question 8: Goal G is, “Activate public spaces”. Does this goal feel important you? Could it be improved? Any ideas for how we could achieve it?**

Many people replied to this goal with questions and confusion. Respondents asked for more clarity about what this goal means, specifically what it means to “activate” a space.

In response to this confusion, we edited the goal language from “Activate public spaces” to “Increase active and passive activity in public spaces”.

### *Survey Tool Limitations*

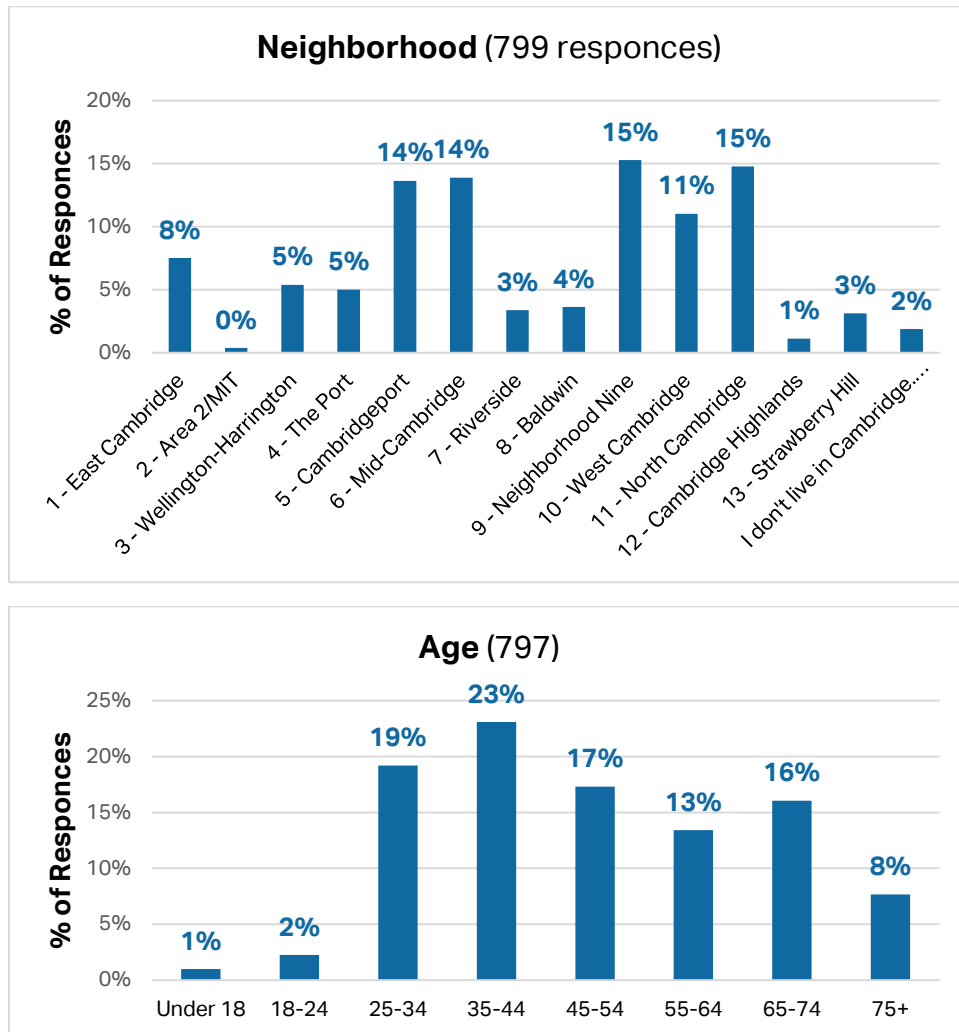
It is important to recognize some of the limitations of online surveys. We promoted the online surveys in lawn signs in parks, on the Community Development Department’s social media accounts, and an email list dedicated to this planning process. We provided paper versions of the surveys at pop up engagement activities, but almost all surveys were completed online, which means we were more likely to hear from people who are active and comfortable online.

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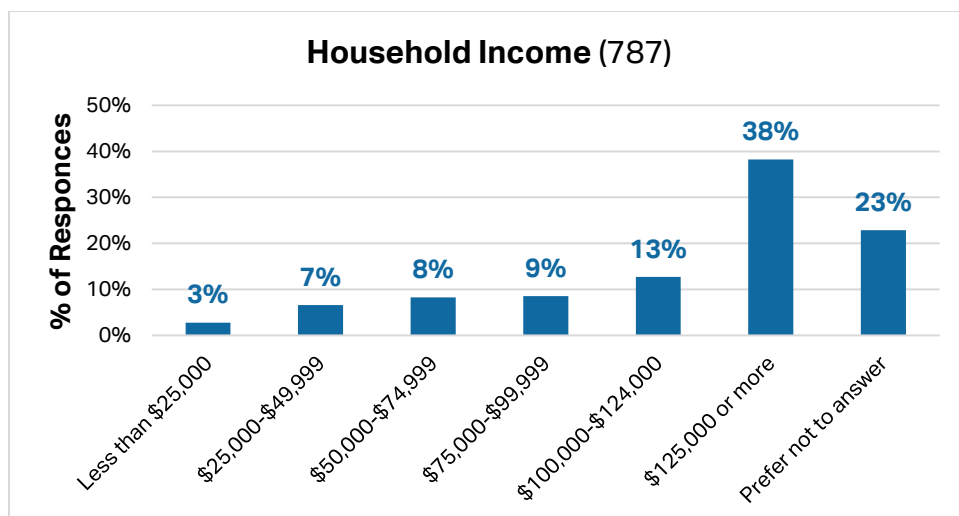
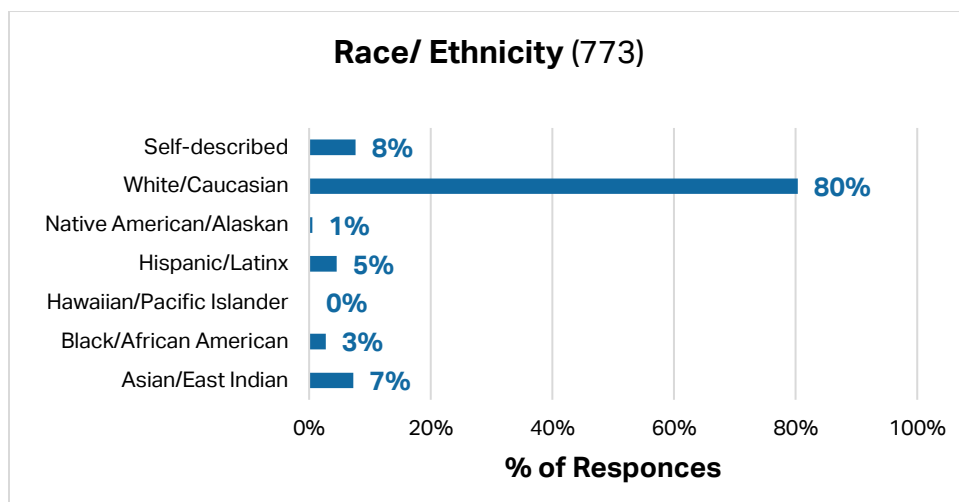
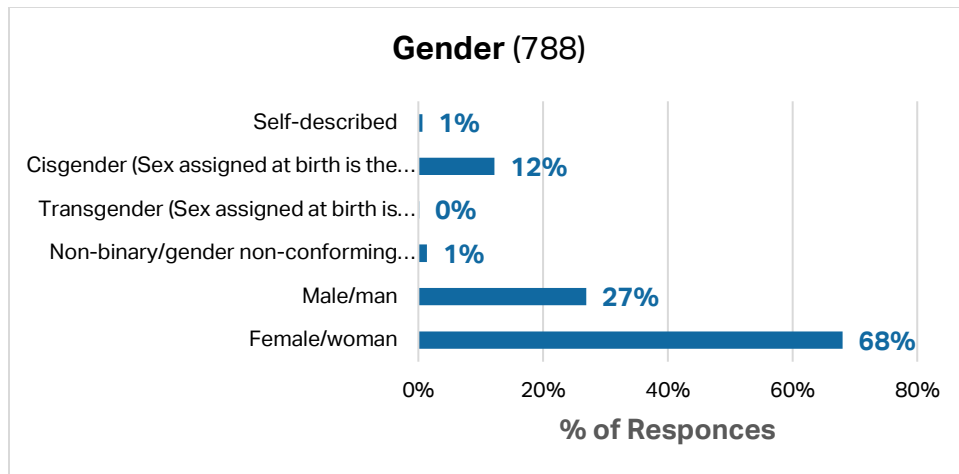
These limitations influenced how the project team interpret results from the surveys: these are treated as a way to hear from a broad number of people, at scale, but not necessarily understood to be statistically significant.

### Survey Demographics

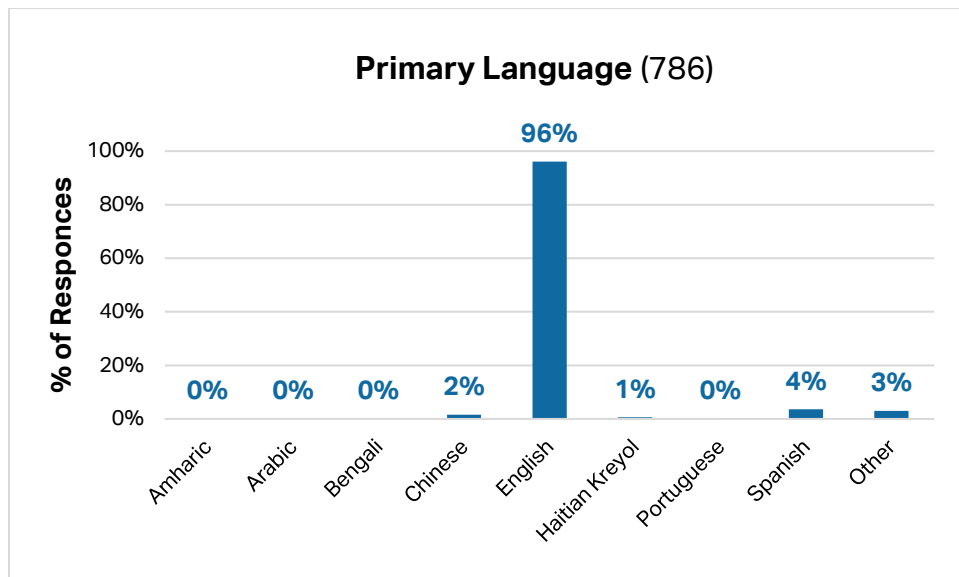
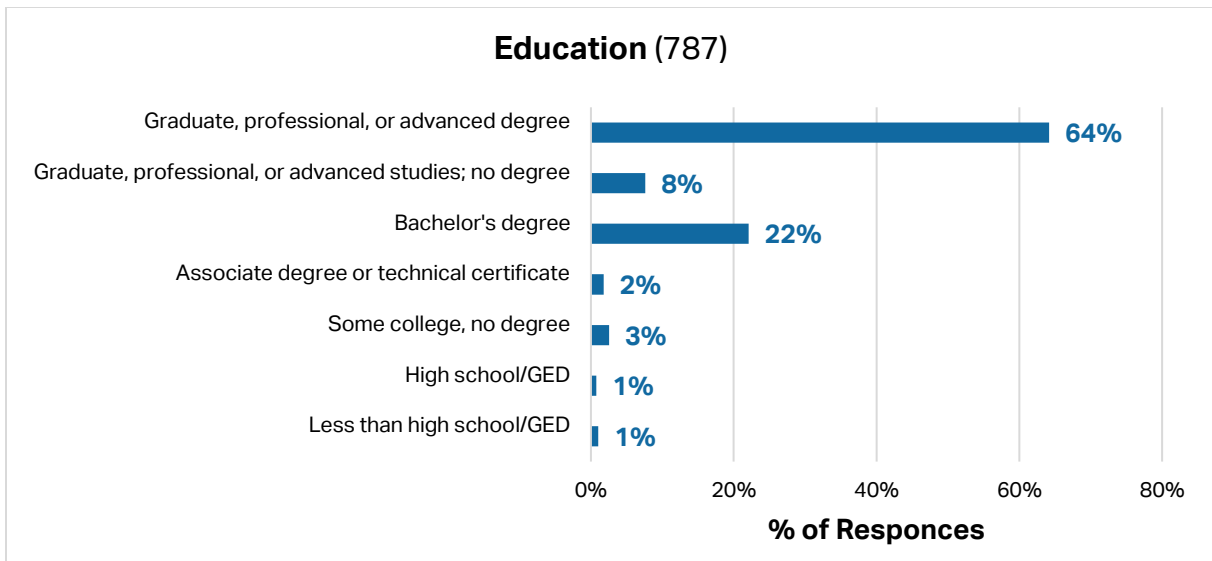
Three of the four surveys included a set of demographic questions. Here, we've combined responses from all three surveys to summarize who we heard from.



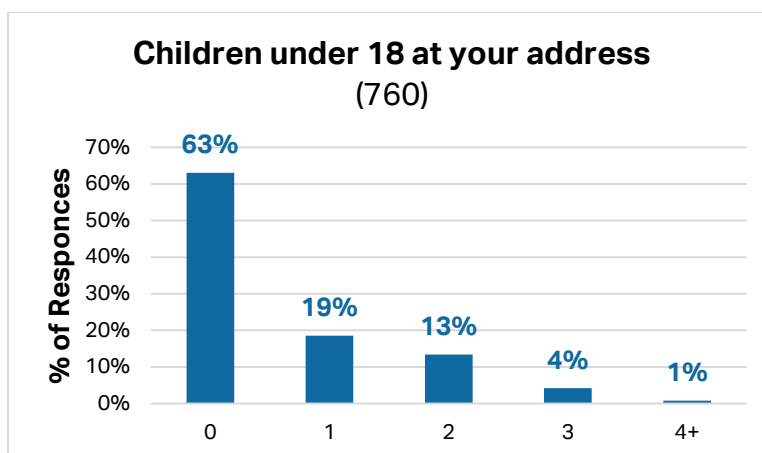
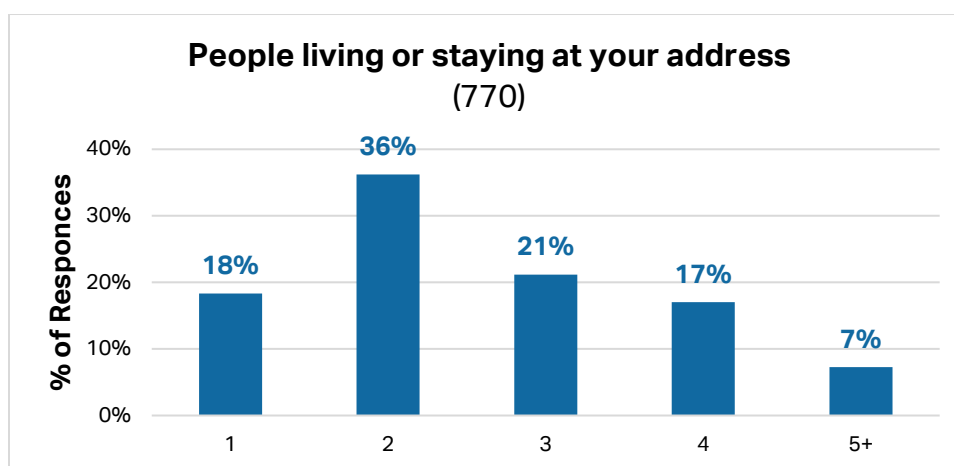
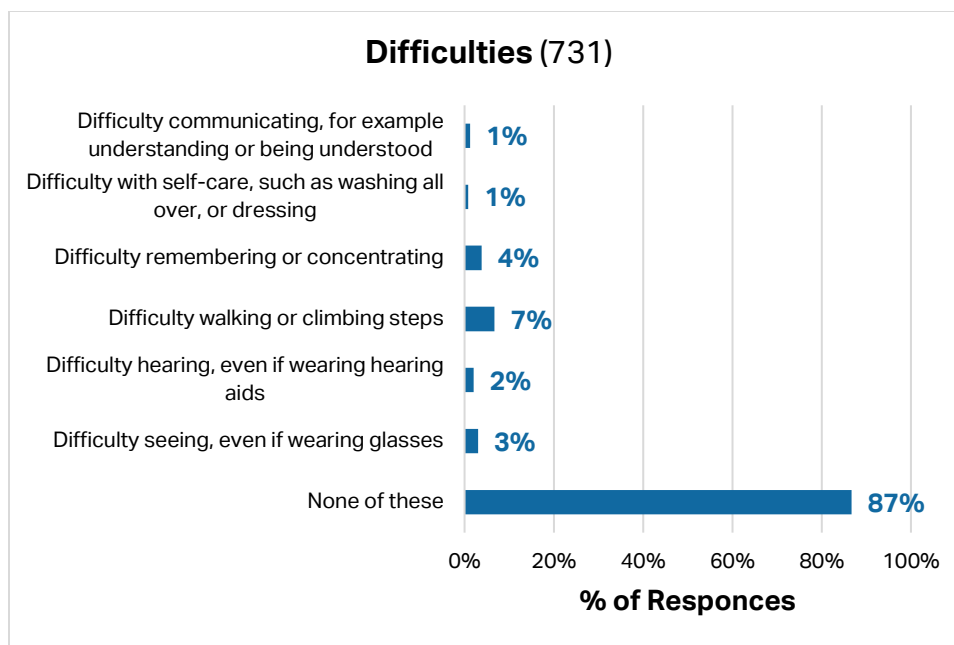
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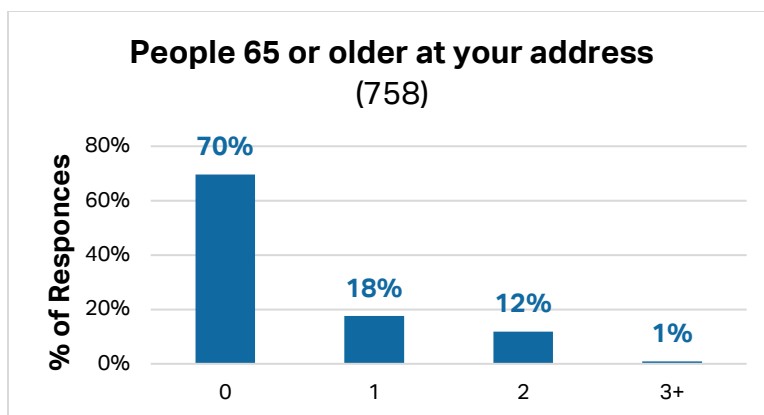


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### *Addressing the Survey Limitations*

#### **Targeted Engagement**

The planning team used demographic information from the survey/questionnaire process to adjust our overall outreach approach to reach people who we were not hearing from through the survey instruments. This included siting some in-person engagement in areas where response rates were lower than expected based on population distribution. We also worked with organizations and partners to hold engagement sessions with people who may be less likely to participate in an online survey.

#### **Plain Language**

Throughout the planning process we consistently tried to use plain language. Plain language is communication an audience can understand the first time they read or hear it.<sup>1</sup> Plain language is important because when done correctly it can help people:

- Find information they need.
- Understand what they find.
- Use what they find in a meaningful way to meet their needs.

Using plain language in the community engagement process, including in the survey questions, helped us make the surveys more accessible to people who may not typically participate in a City survey.

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<sup>1</sup> This definition and explanation of plain language is from the City of Cambridge's Language Justice Initiative.

## In-Park Pop Up Events

Throughout the planning process, the planning team tried to reach people who use our parks and open spaces by leading engagement activities at our popular parks and the Cambridge Community Learning Center. We promoted these in-park pop ups on social media and the project webpage, but the goal was to reach people who did not know about the Open Space Plan before they saw our tables in a park. In all, there were eight in-park pop ups.

During the visioning process we asked park visitors at Danehy Park, Tim Toomey Park, Joan Lorentz Park, and Hoyt Field to tell us what our parks and open spaces would be like if they could make them any way they wanted. Thinking about these ideal parks people told us what they would be doing, how they got there, who they would be with, what they would see, and what they would be doing. We offered a chance for people of all ages to draw us their dream park and had many conversations with people about their vision for Cambridge's parks and open spaces.

Later in the planning process the project team used community input to draft a set of twelve parks and open space goals. We launched a second round of pop ups. We set up tabletop engagement activities to get feedback on the draft goals at Dana Park, Greene-Rose Heritage Park, Cambridge Common, and the Cambridge Community Learning Center. People who stopped by our pop ups used stickers to show how much they agreed with each of the twelve draft goals and had an opportunity to provide comments.



*Figure 2: From top left, clockwise. A park visitor shows off their dream park drawing at Greene-Rose Heritage Park, Joan Lorentz Park, Timothy J. Toomey Jr. Park, and Danehy Park.*



### *Visioning Pop Up Events*

The table-top activities at these pop ups generated a wide variety of ideas for the future of Cambridge's parks and open spaces, but there were some common themes.

#### **What We Heard**

- People want to:
  - Play, walk, people watch, and eat
  - Walk or bike to our parks and open spaces
  - Be together with friends and family
  - See nature and people. We want to see trees, birds, alongside young people playing and organized sports
  - Hear birds, music, conversation, or quiet

### *Goals and Vision Feedback Pop Up Events*

The project team used community input and findings from related City plans and reports to draft a set of twelve goals and a draft vision statement for the final Open Space and Recreation Plan. We presented these draft goals to the community and gathered feedback in a variety of outlets, including a series of four pop ups in parks. We wanted to know which goals were especially important to people, and what we were missing.

#### **What We Heard**

Three goals received the most positive responses:

- Goal A: Make parks and park programming welcoming for all.
- Goal E: Use our parks and open spaces to make Cambridge more resilient in a changing climate. This means use parks and open spaces to protect people from floods and extreme heat. Design open spaces for a changing climate.
- Goal H: Make comfortable spaces where people can meet and connect.

Along with feedback on the meaning of the goals, we also received input on how the language could be improved so readers can understand as quickly, easily, and as completely as possible. One example of a goal that was edited for clarity is Goal G.

- Draft Goal G: Activate public spaces.
- Revised Goal G: Increase active and passive activity in public spaces.

## **Focus Groups**

Early results from the first online survey and first two public meetings showed that we were not hearing from many young people, specifically people under 24 years old. Young people, whether they're on the playground, playing organized (or pickup) sports, or just looking for places to spend summer afternoons, are significant park and open space visitors. To hear from young people, and hopefully young people of color, we led two focus groups with young people at Cambridge's Gately and Russell Youth Centers. These focus groups also had the advantage of people who may not have known about the Open Space Planning process and would not have attended a community meeting or taken a survey. Like the pop-ups, these focus groups helped broaden who we heard from by reaching people where they are.

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The focus group format allowed us idea-generating activities similar to what we used at the pop-ups to inspire some in-depth discussions like the breakout groups at the community meetings.

### What We Heard

- Food (especially affordable snacks) near the parks.
- Some favorite parks were Danehy, Russell Field, and Rindge Field and Peabody School Playground.
  - What they liked about these parks:
    - Fields where they play organized sports
    - The variety of activities
    - Memories at the park
- Parks should have separate spaces for people of different ages. Some older young people feel unwelcome in spaces where there are a lot of younger folks.
- Middle schoolers would like some larger climbing structures, or other ways to have a little more excitement and adventure.
- Basketball courts are popular. We heard that some people are frustrated by double-rimmed hoops that make scoring baskets frustratingly difficult. It would also be good to have adjustable hoops that can be raised or lowered.



*Figure 3: We hosted two focus groups with young people at the Gately Youth Center and Russell Youth Center. We asked them to work in groups to draw their dream park. We then led group discussions about each team's drawing and ideas.*

## Community Meetings

The planning team held four virtual community meetings over the course of the planning process. All four meetings were held virtually, using Zoom video conferences. These meetings generally included an update from the planning team and Q&A discussion. The latter three meetings also included facilitated breakout discussion sessions for more in-depth discussion.

### *Meeting 1: Kickoff Meeting (November 10, 2021)*

Project staff presented an overview of the planning process and information about Cambridge's open space network.

#### **What We Heard:**

This kickoff meeting was primarily meant to be an introduction to the process. The question and answer section at the end of the meeting was mostly used by participants to ask clarifying questions about the process. Attendees asked how we would be doing community engagement, how long the planning process would take, and which City staff and departments would be working on the plan.

### *Meeting 2: Community Core Values and Priorities (Open Space Needs Assessment) (December 15, 2021)*

At this meeting we presented the results of the Needs Assessment portion of the planning process. The goal of the Needs Assessment was to answer the question, "what are our open space needs in Cambridge, and are benefits of open space equally distributed across the city?" In this meeting we divided participants into smaller discussion groups where we sked them for feedback on the data we used for the needs assessment, and how much we should prioritize addressing each need.

Open Space Needs: Factors and Metrics			
Park Access		Resilience	
Park type walksheds		Tree canopy density	
Proximity to multiple park types		Urban heat island (current day)	
Access to open space acreage		FEMA 100-yr flood (current day)	
Population density with housing starts		Projected flooding (100 and 500-yr flood by 2070)	
Accessible acres of park space per resident			
Public Health		Community	
Asthma (estimated prevalence)		Age Distribution (65+)	
Diabetes (estimated prevalence)		Family populations	
High Blood Pressure (estimated prevalence)		Person with any disability	
Obesity (estimated prevalence)		Population at or below 200% poverty level	
Lack of Physical Activity (estimated prevalence)		Percentage Minority Population by Census tract	
		Population without vehicle access	

*Figure 4: In our second community meeting we discussed in small groups which of the above factors and metrics should be prioritized and what we were missing.*

#### **What We Heard:**

Many people used the breakout rooms to ask clarifying questions about the needs assessment. Along with those questions, attendees offered some comments and suggestions:

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- The park access metrics focus on people walking to parks. Can we also consider transit access? Which parks are easiest or hardest to get to on public transit?
- We should use plain language and definitions for the needs assessment.
- Can we incorporate mental health into our considerations of public health?
- When we analyze how many people are within walking distance to a park, we should include both where people work and where they live. Some parts of the city are employment hubs and have a lot of daytime visitors with particular park and open space needs.

### *Meeting 3: A Visioning Workshop for Our Parks and Open Space (March 24, 2022)*

We led attendees through a visioning exercise so we could write a shared vision for our parks and open spaces. This information also helped guide the formation of goals and actions for the final plan. We used an online survey tool called Mentimeter to gather people's feedback during the meeting, and left the survey open after the meeting for any additional thoughts.

This community meeting was one among several activities we did to understand people's vision for our parks and open spaces. In addition to this meeting we did visioning exercises at pop ups in parks and an online survey.

#### **What We Heard:**

Participants provided many ideas for ways to improve our parks and open spaces. Some people focused on new activities, such as: a giant public telescope to look at the night sky, seasonal flower plantings in Cambridge Common, or a mobile park program where we bring park activities into underused public spaces.

Participants also describes some ways we expand on or slightly improve what we already have, such as: make it easier to travel between parks, make it easier to find out what events are happening in parks and open spaces, and add labels to street trees to help people learn and care about the trees.

The online survey tool, Mentimeter, allowed meeting attendees to give us brief feedback on a few visioning questions. We asked attendees to imagine what our parks and open spaces would be like if we could make them any way they wanted, then respond to a set of questions about that ideal place. We show the question prompt and answers to a couple of the questions in the word clouds below.

**Imagine what our parks and open spaces would be like if you could make them any way you wanted.**

**Now imagine you're visiting an ideal single park or open space...**

***...what are you doing?***



***...who are you with?***



\*larger words represent more popular responses

### *Meeting 4: Setting Goals (June 30, 2022)*

We presented an update on the visioning process and draft goals for feedback. In this meeting we divided participants into smaller discussion groups where we asked them for feedback on the twelve draft goals. Specifically, we asked attendees:

- Which one of these goals resonates with you? Why?
- Pick one of the goals and tell us what you think? What is your initial response?
- What are we missing?
- Do you have an idea for an action that could help the City achieve one of these goals?

#### **What We Heard:**

- One participant mentioned they would love access to low barrier physical activities like Bocce. These activities can be family friendly. They are about being outdoors and together.
- An attendee said it was great to see biodiversity as part of the goals.
- One participant suggested we explore land acquisition and partnerships with local land trusts.
- One participant said they appreciate the public art around parks and encourage the City to do more about creating awareness of it.
- A couple people talked about eating in our parks and open spaces. They suggested there should be better space to eat outside even in bad weather, and they would like some food vendors in or near parks.
- Participants discussed the need for safe and clean restrooms.
- One participant wanted to be sure we keep spaces for rest, relaxation, and quiet activities in parks. Not all parks have to be "active".
- Participants emphasized the importance of community engagement and outreach in all park projects.



## Neighborhood Group, Advisory Board, and Committee Meetings

In addition to meetings hosted by the planning team, staff also made themselves available to present updates to neighborhood groups and a variety of advisory groups and boards, including:

- East Cambridge Planning Team
- Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association
- Food and Fitness Policy Council
- Commission for Persons with Disabilities
- Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan Advisory Board
- Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Pedestrian Advisory Committee

The primary purpose for these meetings was to share information about the planning process. We focused on introducing the group to the planning process and how it fits into the City's stewardship of public parks and open spaces. For some groups we focused the presentation and discussion on a particular topic that fits the group's interests.

### What We Heard:

- Wayfinding should be improved. Both online and on the ground information and directions can help improve the impact of already existing parks and open spaces.
- Food at our parks
- Questions about park type classifications
- Consider workforce in addition to residents

## Virtual Office Hours

The project team also held virtual office hours throughout the planning process. These office hours provided flexible options for people interested in the process or in particular topics to have discussions with the planning team and to find out more about the process.

Office hours were held remotely and offered at a variety of days and times, to provide flexibility for people whose schedules may not align with the community meetings, pop-ups, and other scheduled engagement opportunities. People who signed up for office hours included those affiliated with community organizations and individuals.

### What We Heard

Topics discussed included:

- Technology and social capital
- Community gardens and streetscape planting areas
- Partnerships with schools and non-profit organizations
- A proposal for shoreline restoration at Jerry's Pond
- Park design, and what makes parks memorable and comfortable spaces
- Ideas for park programs
- Skateboarding



## Next Steps

### *Coordination with Other Initiatives*

The open space planning process offered an opportunity to engage with the community about Cambridge's parks and open space.

Through this planning process, we have identified an action plan that includes several larger scale park renovation projects. These individual park projects would each include a community engagement process, guided by both the work of this planning process as well as subsequent engagement through the Neighborhood Planning Initiative and other City initiatives.

The City's Neighborhood Planning Initiative will begin action planning processes in each of Cambridge's residential neighborhoods beginning in 2023. We expect that parks and open space would be a topic of interest for these processes, and they will offer an opportunity to look more closely at neighborhood parks and open spaces, including more focused looks at the types of uses available in parks in the neighborhood and whether or how those may evolve over time to better meet neighborhood needs.

### *Ongoing Engagement*

#### **Community Collaboration**

Cambridge benefits from a strong ecosystem of people and organizations who care deeply about their community, and parks and open spaces represent an opportunity put that care into action. Even though the plan is done, we will continue engagement through partnerships with local organizations and community members. This can include ongoing work around the creation of Public Patios through the City's Public Space Lab or supporting public space programs and events. This engagement can also include community-led stewardship of open spaces, such as establishing pollinator gardens or supporting "Friends of" groups that build community around a public park or open space.

#### **Equitable and Inclusive Community Engagement**

In addition to periodic updates to this open space plan, it is important for us to continue to engage with community members to learn how parks are or are not working. The Community Development Department is committed to equitable and inclusive community engagement. We will continue to engage with community members we do not typically reach or hear from in community engagement processes.

We will build off our experience with the Parks and Open Space Plan. The planning team believes we were successful at engaging with young people, people who use our parks and open spaces, parents of young children, and highly-involved individuals and groups who advocate for or work in our parks and open spaces. Our future engagement about parks and open spaces will continue the ways we successfully engaged with those groups, and we will need to focus on reaching those individuals and groups we did not hear from in this process. In particular, we will focus on reaching people of color, people who primarily speak a language other than English, and people who do not currently use our parks and open spaces. A commitment to equitable and inclusive community engagement means we will continuously assess who we're reaching and change our methods to try to reach our target communities.

### Public Information About Our Parks and Open Spaces

Goal L in the plan tasks us with improving how the City shares information about our parks and open spaces. In our research and community engagement we heard that it was difficult to find clear information about our parks including what events are happening, what amenities there are, and how to plan events in our parks.

To lead ongoing engagement about our parks and open spaces, we need to improve the content and delivery of our parks information. This may improve improvements to signage, improvements to maps, improvements to the website, and improvements to how we divide up and make public the responsibilities of various City departments.