



HARVARD  
UNIVERSITY

# 2025 Town Gown Presentation

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City of Cambridge

Planning Board Meeting

February 3, 2026





- 
- An aerial photograph of the Harvard University campus, showing a dense collection of brick buildings, green trees, and a river in the foreground. The image is darkened to serve as a background for the text.
- Introduction
  - Campus Planning and Projects
  - Campus Sustainability
  - Harvard in the Community



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Burlington, Vermont, showing a dense urban area with many brick buildings, a large green park area, and a river (Lake Champlain) in the foreground. The image is darkened to serve as a background for the text.

# → Introduction

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Harvard University

# → Harvard's Campus in Cambridge



# Harvard Schools

## → Harvard's Schools and Institutes in Cambridge include:

Harvard College

Harvard Divinity School

Harvard Division of Continuing Education

Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Harvard Graduate School of Design

Harvard Kennedy School

Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Harvard Graduate School of Education

Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences

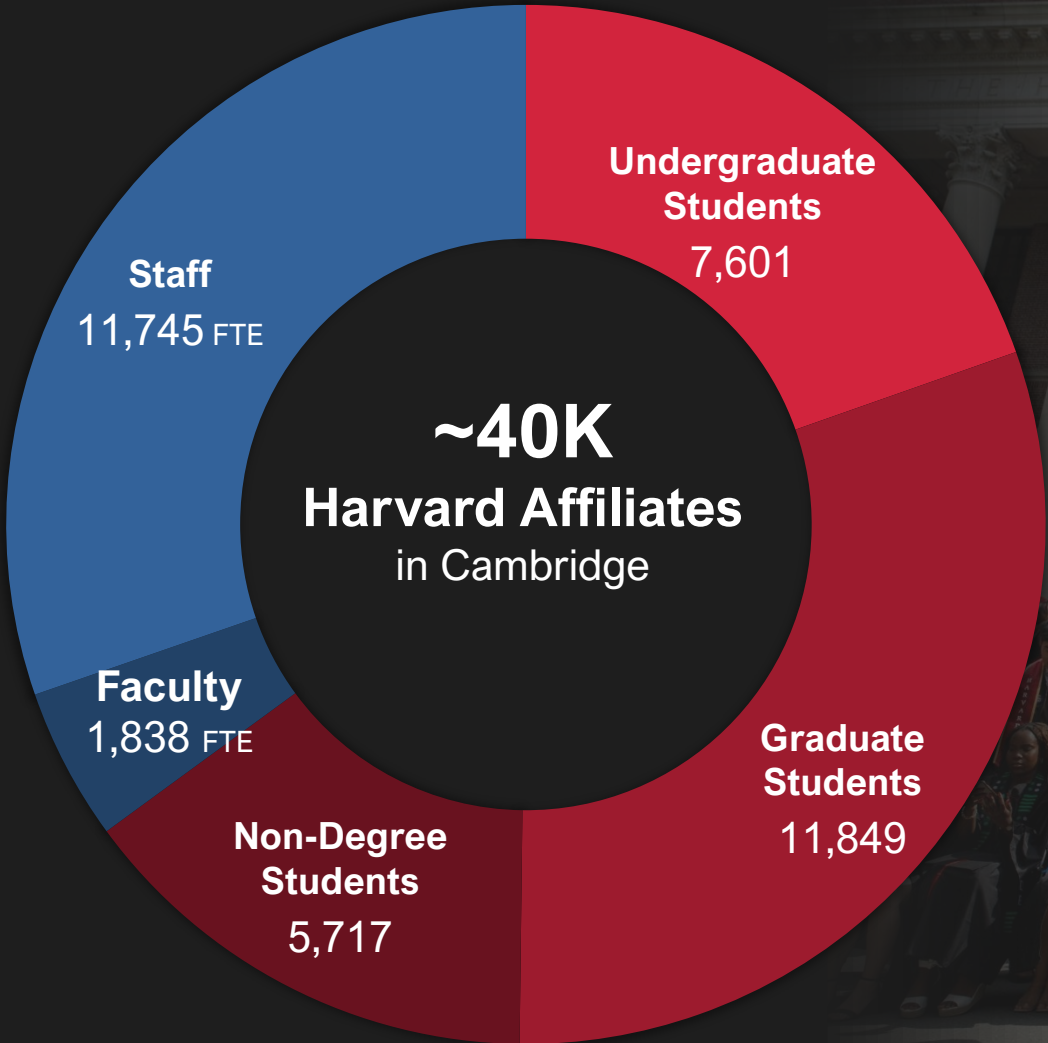
Harvard Law School

Harvard Radcliffe Institute



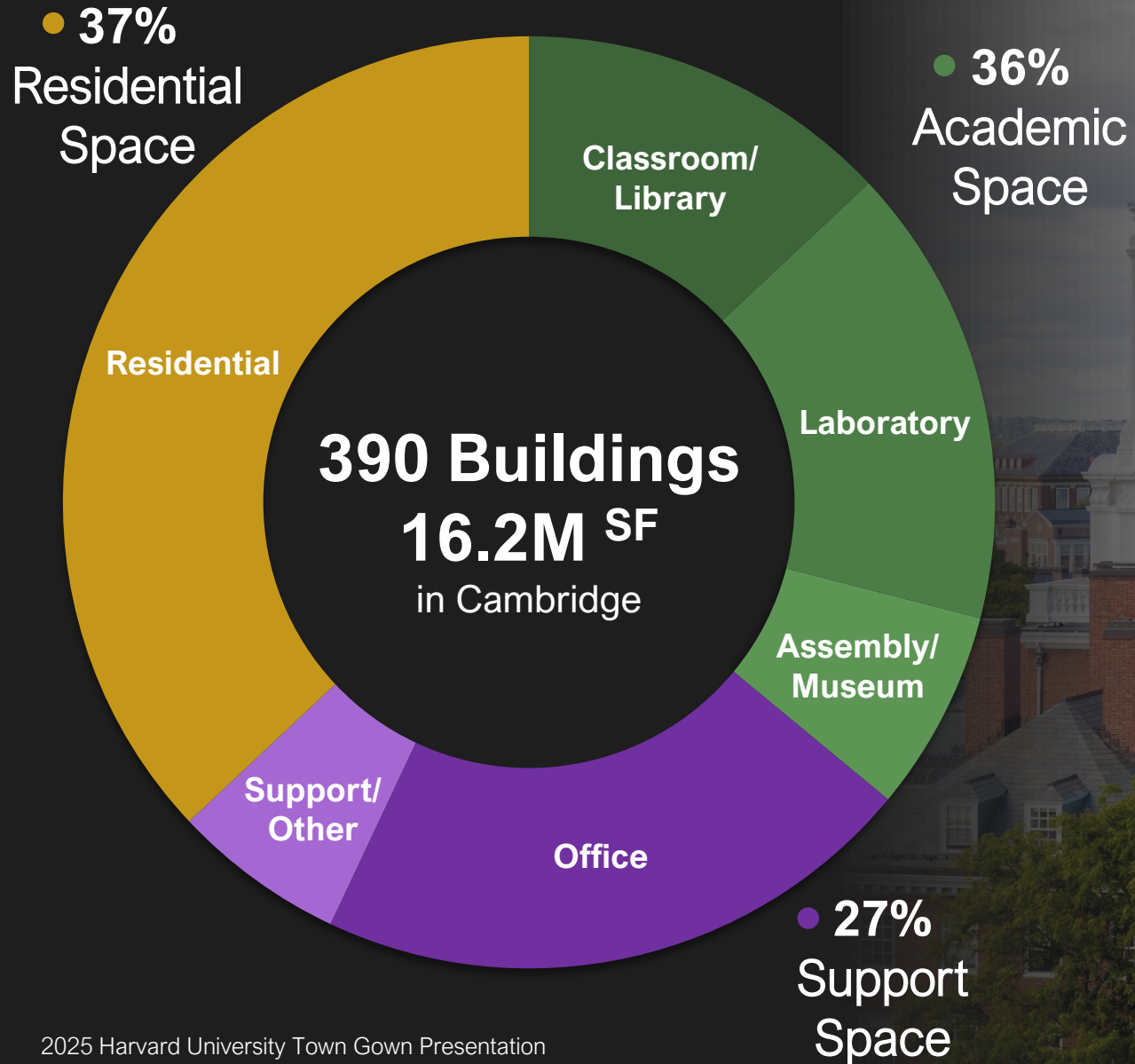


# University Population





# Campus Facilities





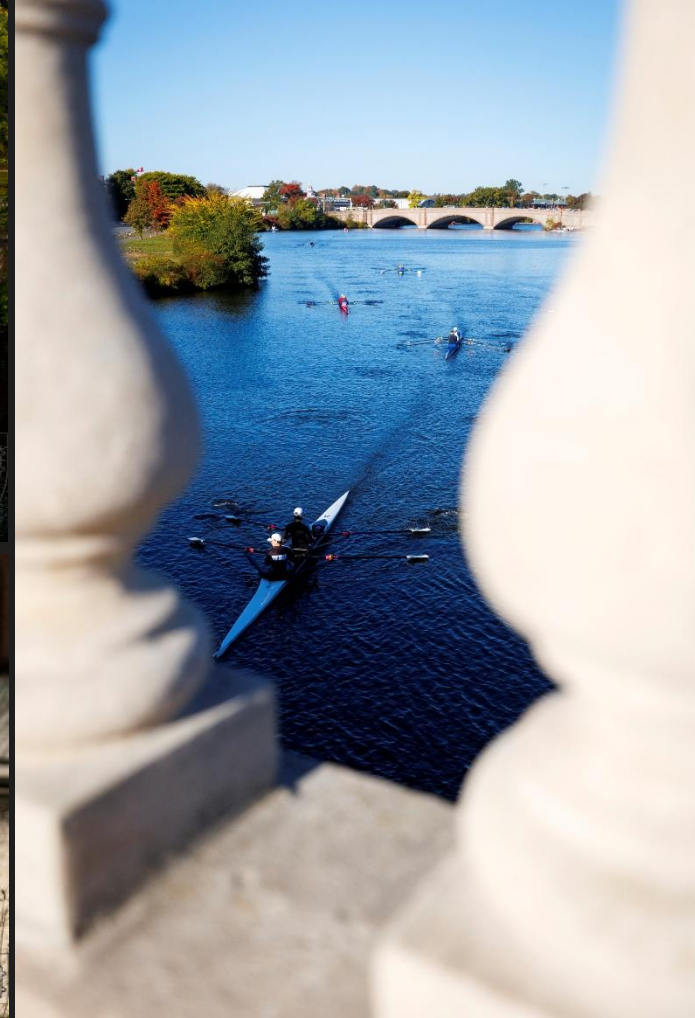


Harvard University

# Campus Context

➔ Harvard Square





Harvard University

# Campus Context

→ Charles River





# Campus Context

→ Public Access to Harvard Facilities



A background image of a busy university hallway with students walking. The image is dimmed to allow the text to stand out. The hallway has a brick floor, white walls, and a staircase on the right side. Students are walking in both directions, some carrying backpacks and others holding water bottles.

# → Campus Planning and Projects

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# Planning Principles



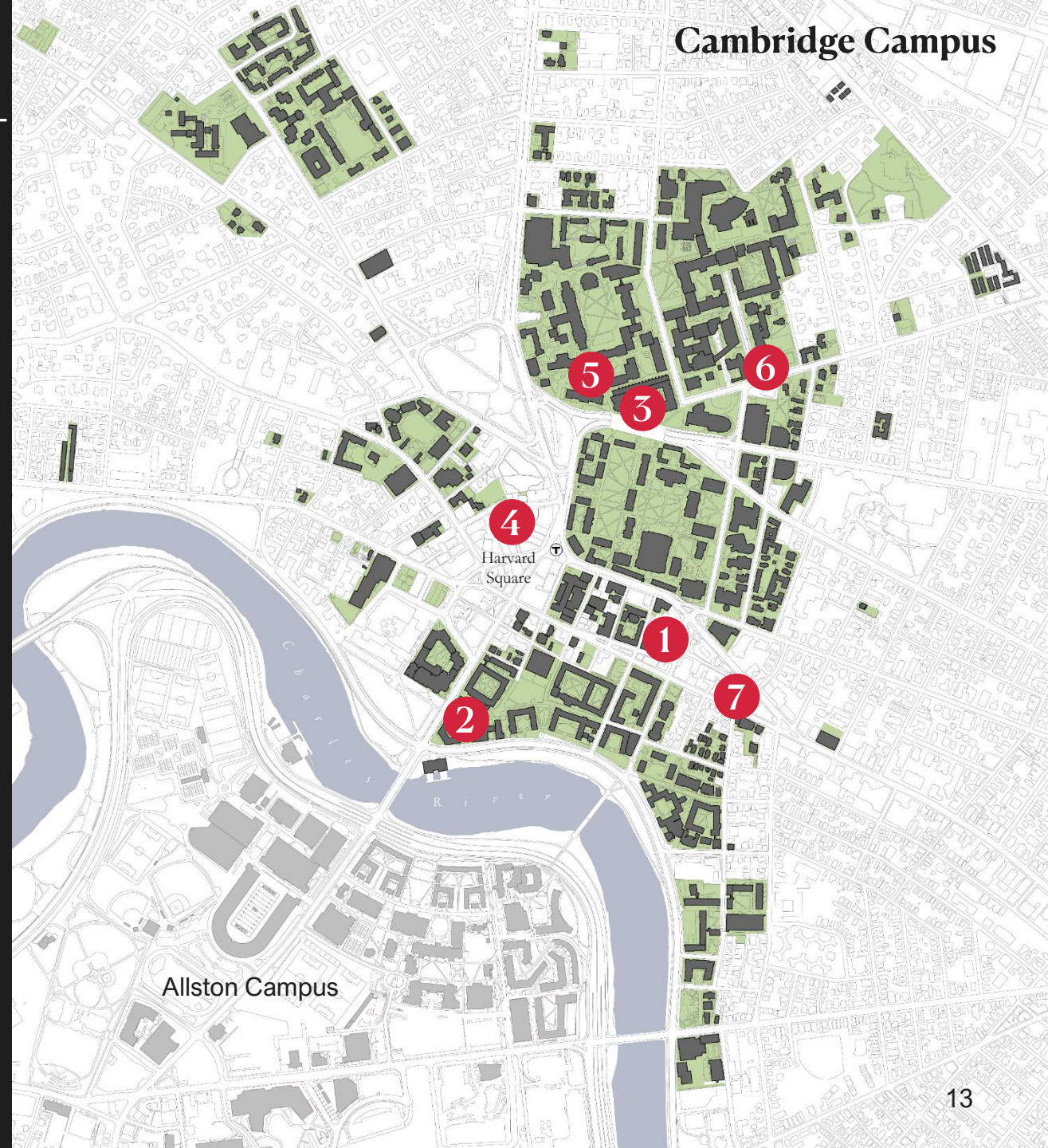
- **Campus Character**
- **Community**
- **Porosity**
- **Connectivity**
- **Public Realm**
- **Sustainability**
- **Stewardship**





# Current Projects

- 1 Adams House:  
Russell Hall & Westmorly Court
- 2 Eliot House
- 3 Harvard Science Center
- 4 12-18 Palmer Street
- 5 Pritzker Hall
- 6 William James Hall
- 7 15 Mount Auburn Street





# Adams House: Russell Hall & Westmorly Court



Third and final phase of undergraduate dorm renewal project

Restoration approach to preserve notable interior spaces and exterior elements

Significant upgrades to building accessibility, systems, and sustainability





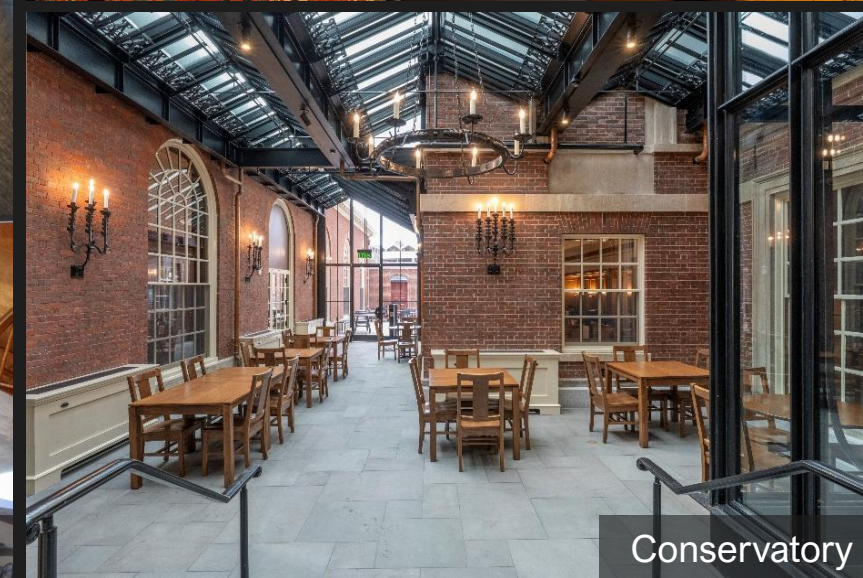
# Adams House: Russell Hall & Westmorly Court



Adams House Library



Upper Common Room



Conservatory



# Eliot House



Comprehensive renovation  
of 1931 undergraduate  
residential complex

Includes updated layouts,  
circulation, accessibility, and  
building systems, consistent  
with House Renewal  
program

Full restoration of exterior  
envelope respectful of  
historic structure





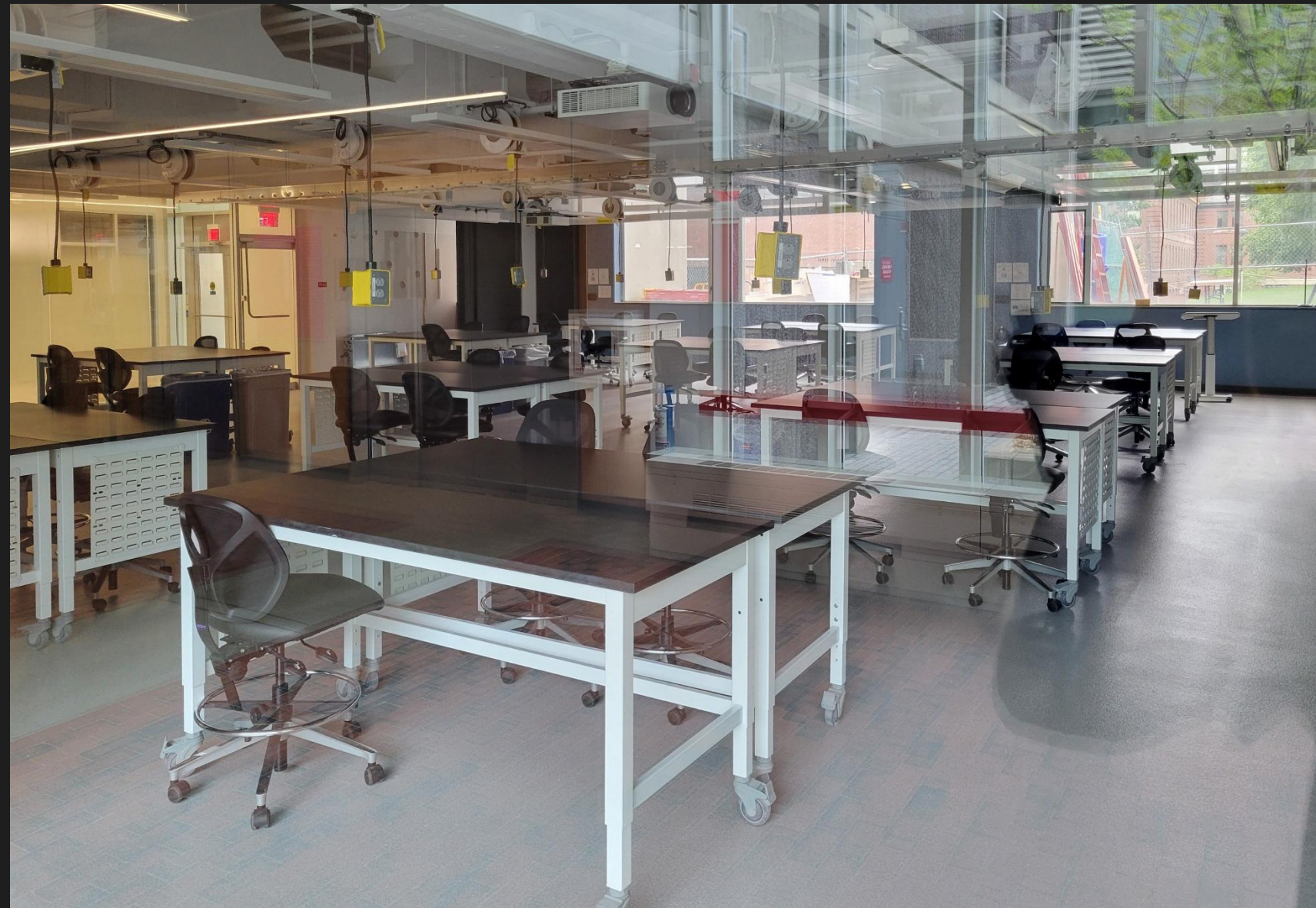
# Harvard Science Center



Renovation of  
undergraduate teaching  
labs, classrooms, faculty  
offices, lounges

Design for abundant natural  
light to support community  
and wellbeing

Significant upgrades to  
building accessibility,  
systems, and sustainability





# 12-18 Palmer Street



Renovation in partnership  
with The Coop

Active ground floor with  
institutional and office uses  
above

Activation of Palmer Street  
as a more inviting,  
pedestrian-oriented public  
space





# Pritzker Hall



New building to serve as  
home for FAS Economics  
Department

Harvard's first major fully  
electric building, sustainably  
designed

Transforms former surface  
parking into landscaped  
open space





# William James Hall



Renewal of plaza facing Kirkland Street includes new entrance vestibule and addresses basement waterproofing

Improved accessibility and landscaping includes new trees and plantings that soften conditions and mitigate downdrafts



Michael Van Valkenburg Associates



# 15 Mt Auburn Street



Home for Harvard University  
Native American Program

Fully electric, fully  
accessible new building

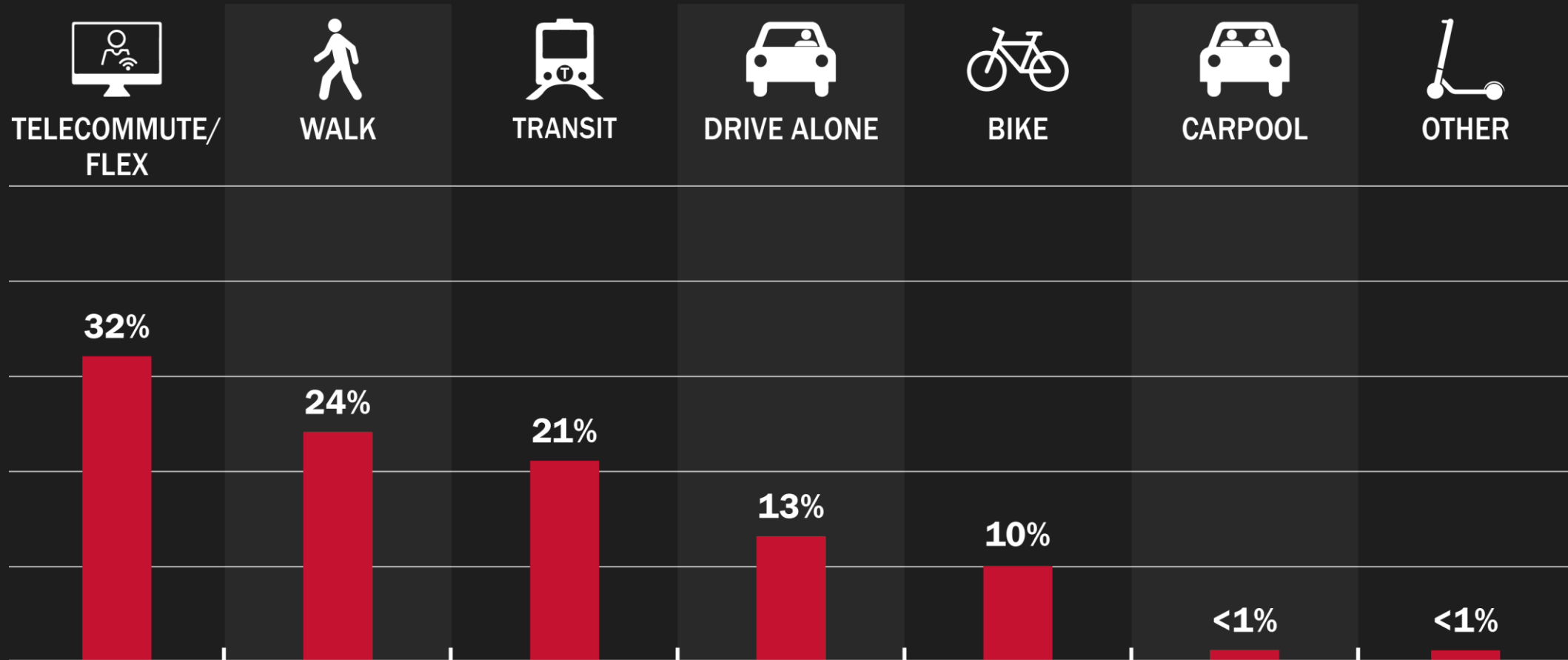
Façade inspired by  
traditional Native American  
materials: Wampum and tree  
bark

Public realm improvements:  
improved sidewalks, bench,  
native plantings





# Transportation







Enterprise Research Campus



Goel Center for Creativity and Performance  
& 100 South Campus Drive

# → Allston Update



A background image of a university campus. In the foreground, two students with curly hair are sitting on the grass, looking at a laptop. In the background, a large building with white columns and a wide set of stairs is visible. A large tree is on the left, and other students are walking on the path. The scene is bathed in the warm light of late afternoon or early morning.

# → Campus Sustainability

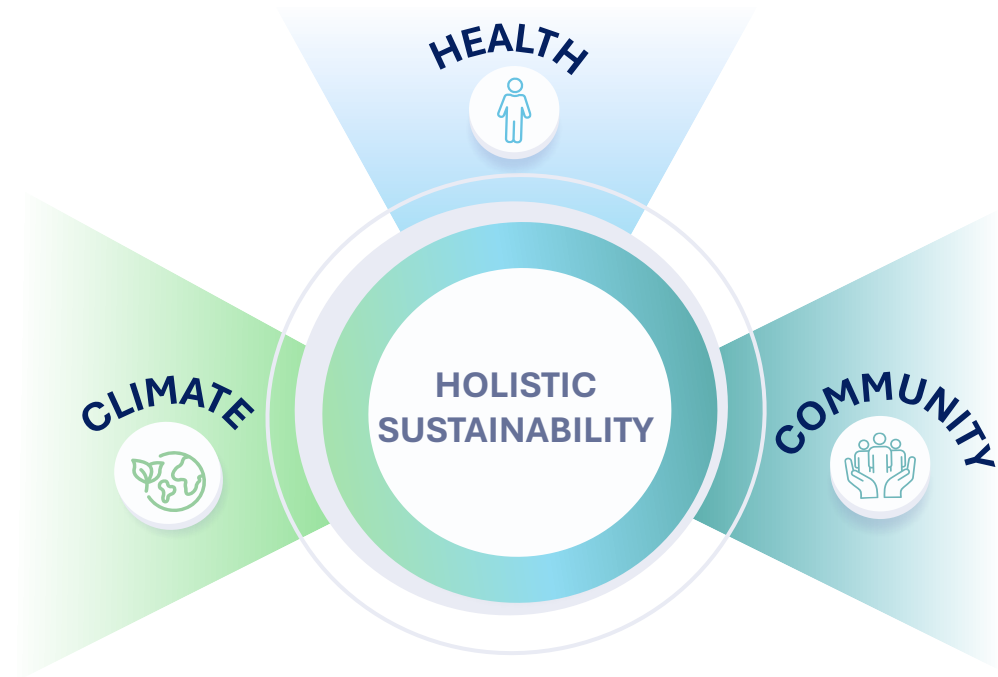
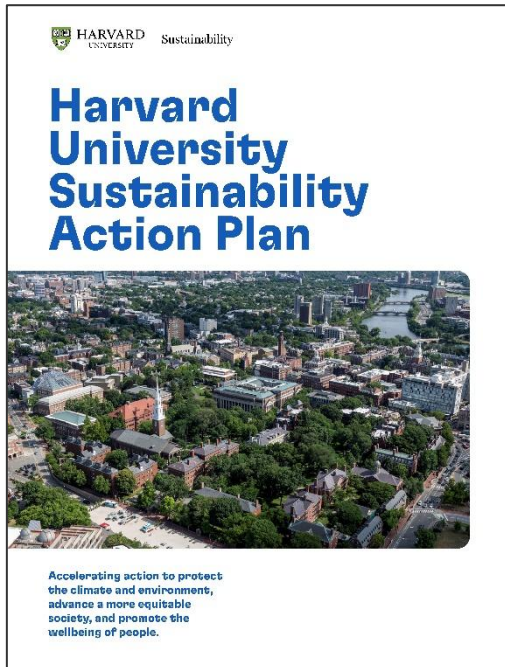
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# Advancing Sustainability Action



- **Vision** and **holistic framework**
- **Harvard's Climate Goals**
- **Sustainability Standards** for all key operational practices (buildings, food, cleaning, landscaping, IT)
- **Pilot projects** that scale impact beyond Harvard





# Leveraging Harvard's World-Class Faculty, Researchers



## Salata Institute for Climate & Sustainability



## Presidential Committee on Sustainability



## Innovation Labs (i-Lab)



## Council of Student Sustainability Leaders





## 2025 ACHIEVEMENTS:



10

### Core Research initiatives

Focused on climate & sustainability across many of Harvard's 12 graduate & professional Schools.



122

### Events

Held on campus globally.



202

### Faculty Associates

Leading on climate, sustainability at 12 Harvard Schools.



\$276K

### Internships

Supported by the Harvard Climate Internship Program & the Salata Climate Policy Summer Internship Program.



\$6.6M

### Research Support

For clusters, programs, and initiatives.



3,000

### Students

Supported participated in programs



# How We Advance Innovation & Action



## GOALS



## POLICIES



## PROGRAMS



## PLANNING





# Harvard's Climate Action Goals



**FOSSIL FUEL-FREE BY 2050**

**FOSSIL FUEL-NEUTRAL BY 2026**

CALENDAR YEAR-END GOAL

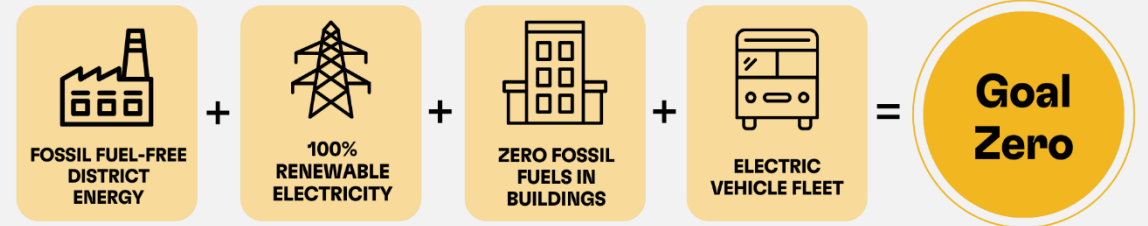
**SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS TARGETS**

FOOD & EMBODIED CARBON IN CONSTRUCTION

**CLIMATE RESILIENCY**

**30% ABSOLUTE GHG REDUCTION  
ACHIEVED IN 2016**

**FFF BY 2050:**



**SCOPE 3 GOALS:**

**Food**

**25% reduction in food  
emissions by 2030 (set in 2019)**

Inaugural Global Coolfood Pledge signatory

**Embodied Carbon**

**20% cut in embodied  
carbon in major capital  
projects (2024)**



# Renewable Energy Consortium



## Harvard's Portion Covers 100% Of Harvard's Electricity Use

- Helping develop new, utility-scale renewable electricity through partnership with City of Cambridge, MIT, MGB, & providing access for other non-profits
- Together, both projects **avoid ~1 million metric tons GHG** emissions per year, which is equivalent to **providing clean electricity to ~130,000 homes**

### BOWMAN WIND

Came online in Dec 2025



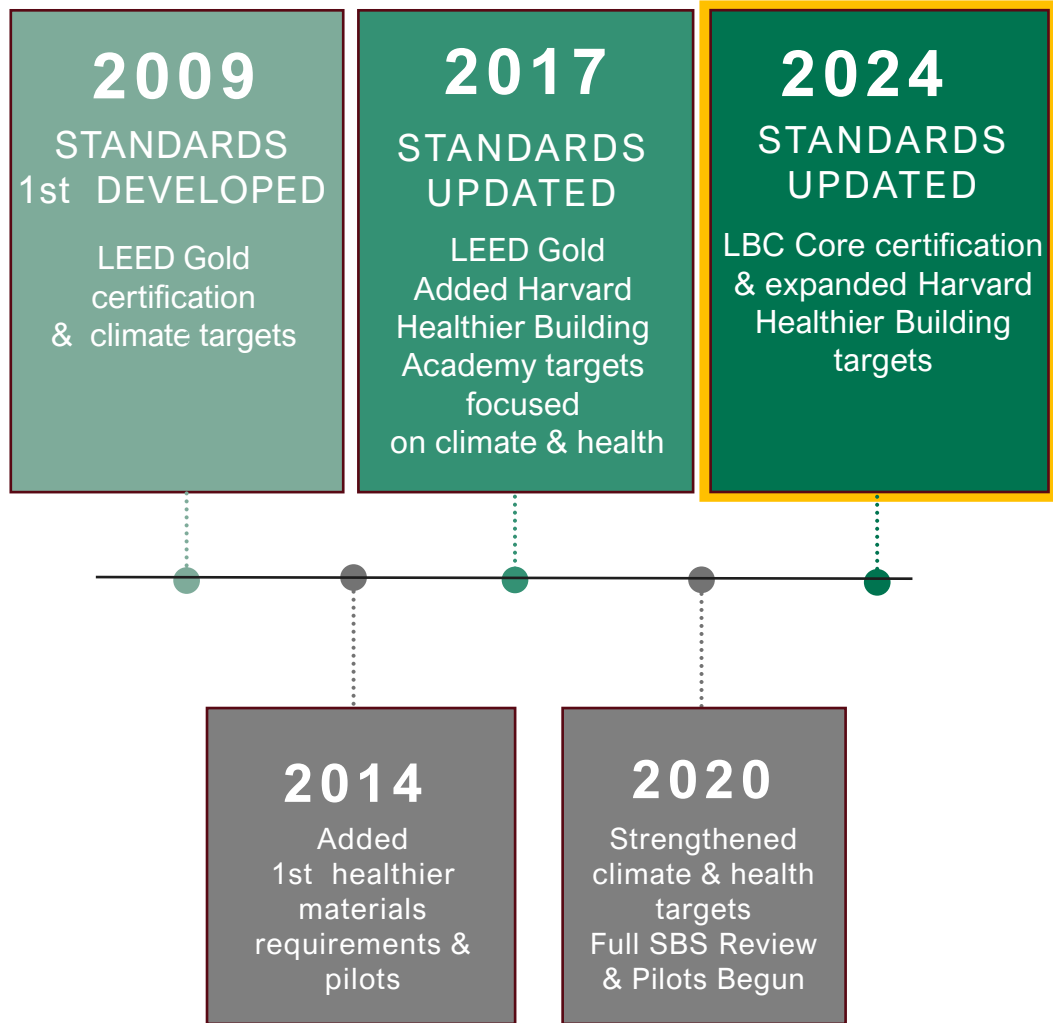
### BIG ELM SOLAR

Came online in 2024





# Holistic Sustainable Building Standards (SBS)



**NO fossil fuels allowed in buildings**

**At least 20% cut embodied carbon**

**Health & resiliency requirements**





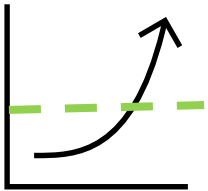
# 2025: Living Building Challenge (LBC) Core + Harvard Healthier Building Academy (HBBA)



**Holistic requirements**



**Performance-based**



**Net-positive goals**



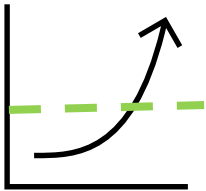
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**Holistic requirements**



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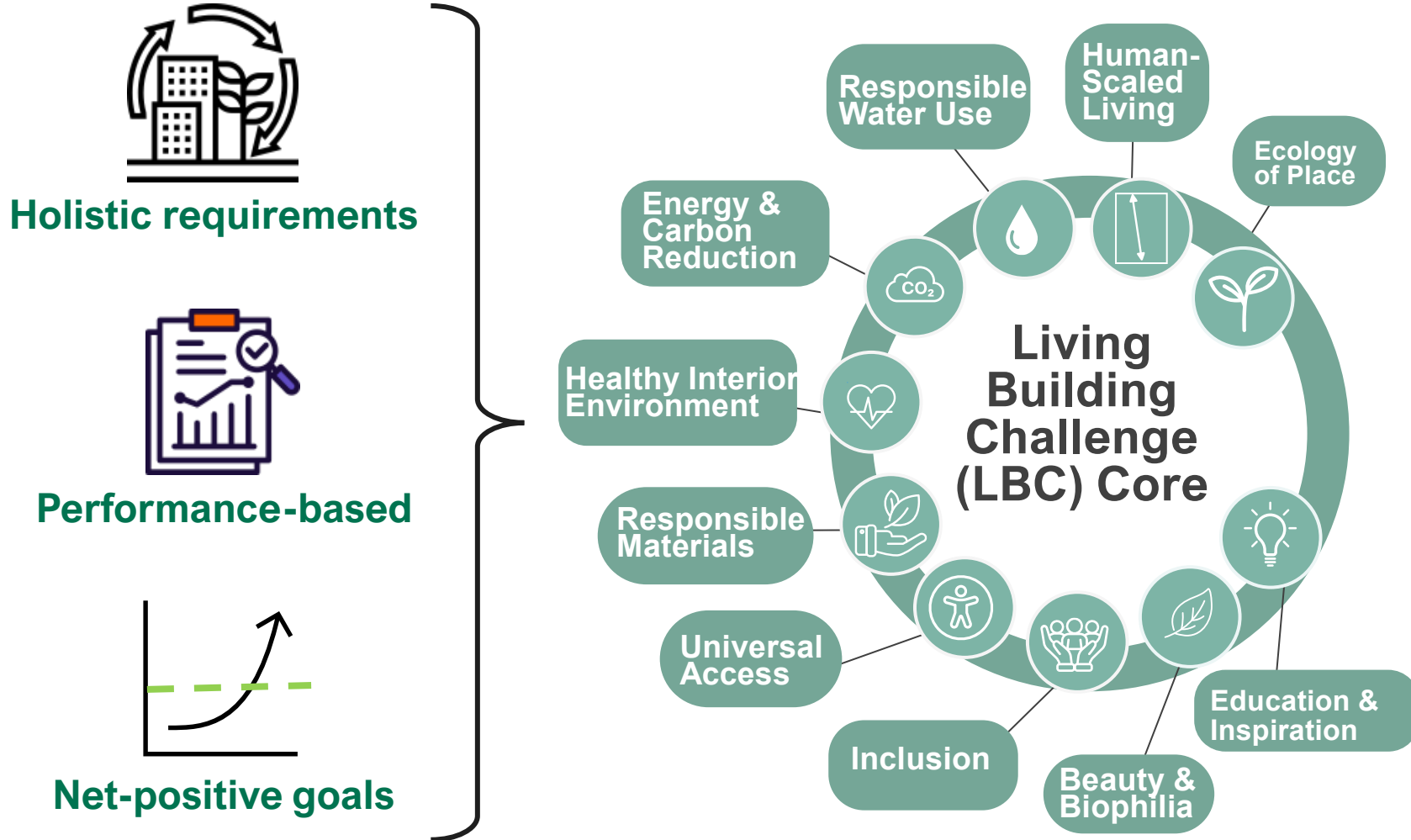


**Net-positive goals**



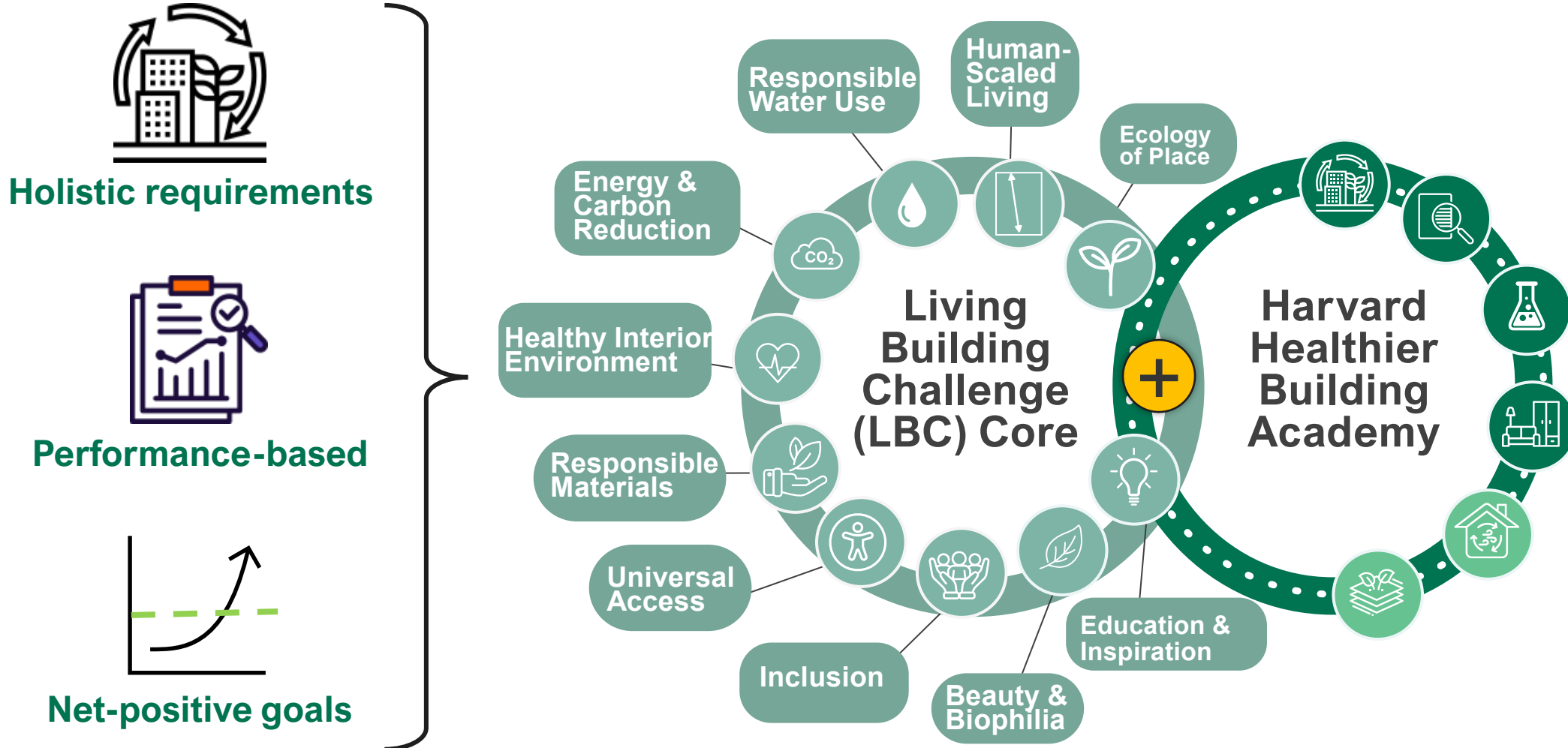


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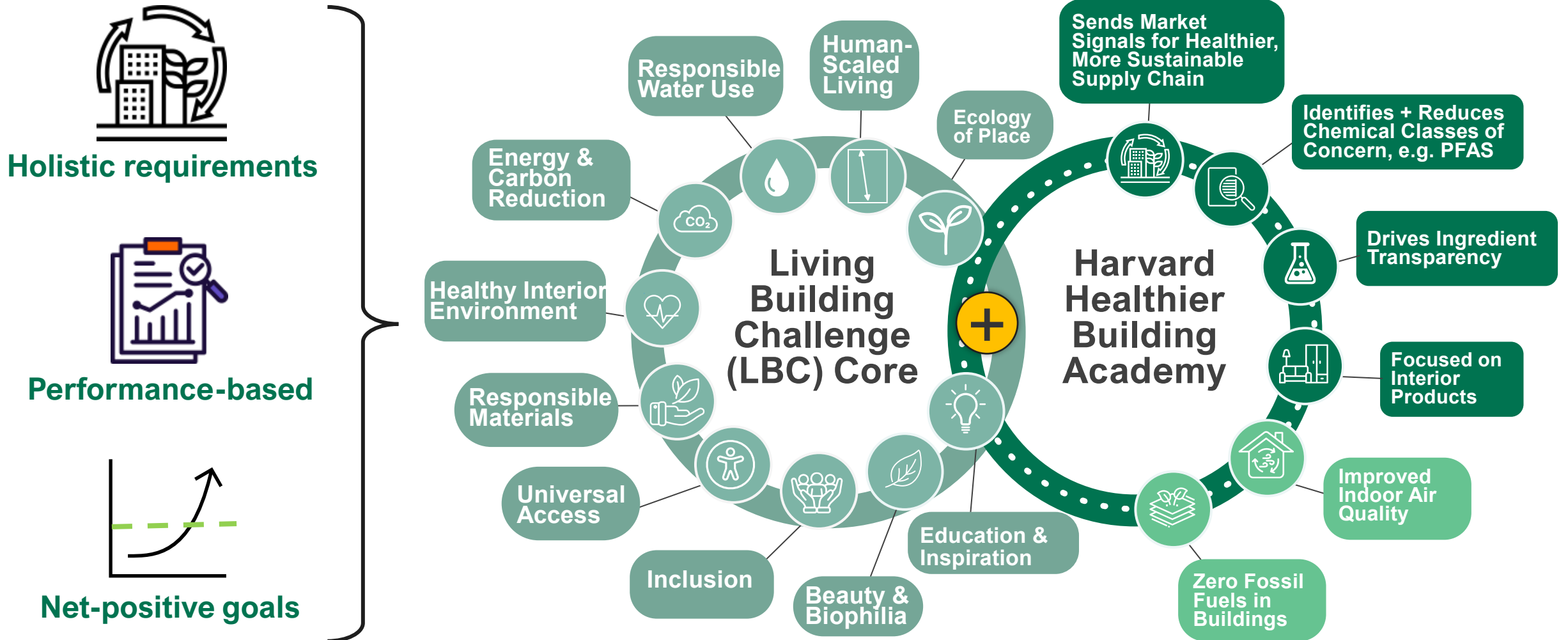


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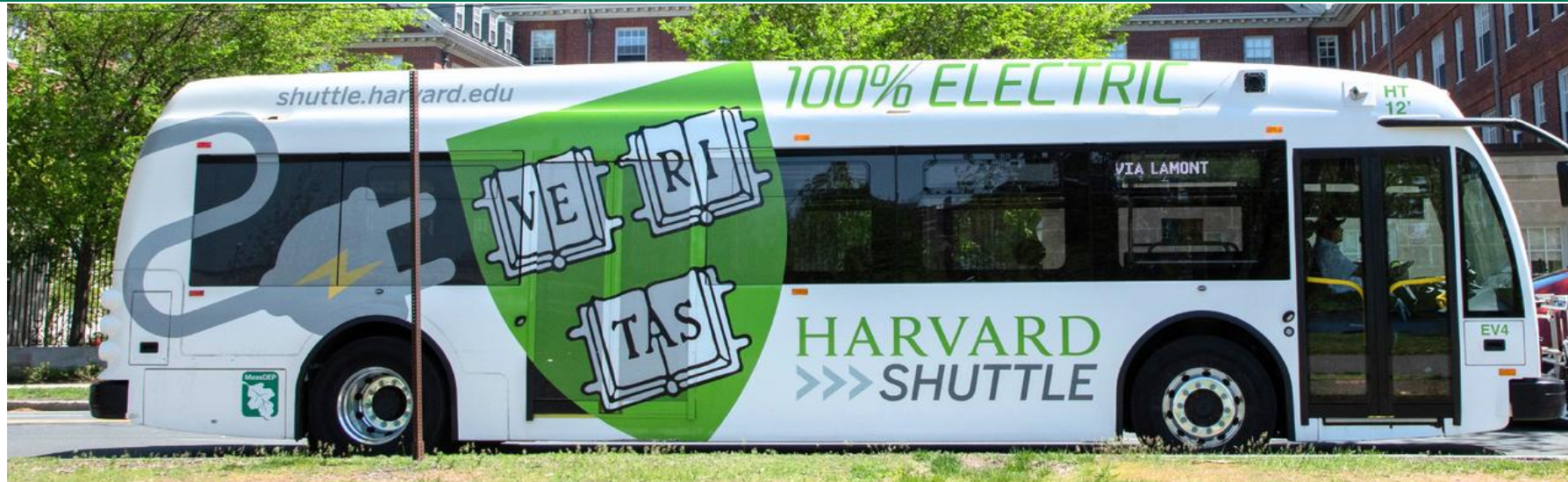



# 2025: Living Building Challenge (LBC) Core + Harvard Healthier Building Academy (HBBA)






# Expanding Electric Vehicle Fleet



73%   
more efficient  
EV bus MPGe vs.  
diesel MPG

~1/3 shuttle   
**buses EV**  
Harvard's Electric  
Vehicle fleet is  
growing (18+)

51.5K   
miles  
Traveled by EV  
buses last year

50 EV   
parking stations  
In Cambridge



# Two-pronged Decarbonization Strategy



**Seizing  
opportunities in  
current projects**

**Engineering  
studies & longer-  
term planning for  
University-wide  
decarbonization**



# Holistic Sustainable Design: Climate & Resiliency



## 1<sup>st</sup> two mass timber buildings @ Harvard

- The **Rubenstein Treehouse Conference Center** and the **Goel Center for Creativity & Performance** are designed with **no fossil fuels on-site** + healthier materials throughout.

**1<sup>st</sup> Mass. building to use healthier, low-embodied concrete** made with recycled ground glass pozzolan (GGP) instead of traditional fly ash additive (byproduct from burning coal) in the Rubenstein Treehouse's building structure.

**90-100% of stormwater at both buildings is managed or treated on-site and reused for irrigation and toilet flushing**



## David Rubenstein Treehouse Conference Center



### From Allston to Cambridge: Piloting + Scaling Sustainable Building Strategies

- ✓ Targeting **Living Building Challenge (LBC) Core** certification
- ✓ **Harvard Healthier Building Academy** eliminates harmful, fossil-fuel derived classes of chemicals instead of RedLists
- ✓ **No fossil fuels on-site + reducing embodied carbon (~60%)** through mass timber, ground glass in concrete instead of fly ash
- ✓ **Integrated water management builds resiliency: ~90%** of stormwater captured on-site + reused for irrigation, flushing
- ✓ **Enhanced indoor air quality**, access to **daylight**
- ✓ Uses **bird-safe glass**, regional + **native plantings** to support habitat, **reduce irrigation demand**



# All-Electric, Low-Energy Design at Pritzker Hall



## Scaling, applying learnings to new Cambridge home of FAS Economics Department

- ✓ Targets **Living Building Challenge (LBC) Core** certification
- ✓ Harvard's first all-electric building under the new energy codes and designed to be resilient to extreme cold and heat (-15°F and 105°F)
- ✓ Targeting **all 14 HHBA healthier materials categories**
- ✓ Increased outside air. Public & densely occupied spaces designed to **provide 75% more fresh air than code**
- ✓ Glazing designed with **bird-safe glass** to prevent collisions
- ✓ **Resilient stormwater management system:** designed for **~95%** of stormwater to be managed on-site.





## Smith Campus Center (SCC) Mechanical Replacement Project

- Two rooftop air handling units (AHUs), several exhaust fans, and one rooftop generator.
- Partial electrification via heat pumps with hot water backup, **enabling the ventilation system to operate on electricity for >90% of the year.**



# Climate & Health Outcomes for Historic Renovations



## Renovating historic Harvard houses to be highly sustainable, energy efficient

**Adams House Renewal Phase 3 complete**, with renovations of Russell Hall, Library Commons, Westmorly Court.

- Achieved **LEED Gold** certification
- Achieved **Harvard Healthier Building Academy (HHBA)** healthier materials without harmful chemical classes of concern (forever chemicals, chemical flame retardants, etc.)
- **Replaced 1,400+ windows** to reduce energy usage

**Eliot House renovation is underway:**

- Targeting **LBC Core certification + HHBA** healthier materials
- Designed with a **Konvekta energy recovery** system
- **Replacing 1,000+ windows**



# 1<sup>st</sup> Fully-Certified Passive House Multi-Family Projects



**13 Kirkland Street + 5 Sacramento Street** are the **first-ever Passive House Institute US (PHIUS) Core Revive 2021 multi-family certified projects.**

- Also striving for **Living Building Challenge (LBC) Core Certification.**
- **Achieved Harvard Healthier Building Academy** healthier materials in all 14 categories.
- Received **Cambridge Historical Commission 2025 Awards** for **excellence in Historic Preservation** and Sustainable Living for preserving historic exterior while **significantly reducing embodied carbon** through reuse of existing materials.



# Replicability & Scaling Solutions

Across Harvard and beyond for impact



## Meeting Ambitious Certifications @ Scale



**1** certified **LBC Core**  
**10+** targeting **LBC Core**

## Applying Lessons Learned @ Harvard



**Healthier AND Lower-  
Embodied Carbon Concrete**



Ground Glass Pozzolan  
(**GGP**), NOT Fly Ash  
Cement Replacement

## Scaling Beyond Harvard



Rendering by MDS Architects/Sasaki.

**Healthier Materials  
in Public Schools**



# Transparency: Sharing Our Learnings to Scale Solutions



## **100% renewable energy**

By end of 2026, Harvard will purchase the equivalent of 100% of its electricity from new renewable sources.



## **~40% reduction GHG emissions per sq. ft.**

since 2006. Total emissions declined 32% despite a 14% increase in building square footage.



## **3.22 MW of solar photovoltaic (PV) Equals ~600 homes 25+ locations**



## **2 mass timber buildings**

Offering more sustainable alternative to traditional materials, contributing to significant reductions in embodied carbon.



## **1 LBC certified, 10 targeting LBC Core certification**

6 in Cambridge



## **155 LEED certified projects**

115 in Cambridge



## **2 Passive House certified projects**

in Cambridge

Explore Harvard's Annual Sustainability Report:



[sustainable.harvard.edu/  
annual-report](https://sustainable.harvard.edu/annual-report)





# → Harvard in the Community

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## → Key Areas of Harvard Engagement

- Partnerships with Cambridge Public Schools
- Community Engagement
- Supporting Cambridge-Based Initiatives
- Housing Support for Cambridge Residents
- Access to Harvard Institutions & Programming





# Partnering with Cambridge Public Schools



- Harvard's educational programs are **available in every CPS school for all CPS grade levels and interests**
- Programs range from **internships to curriculum-based programming**
- CPS educators can access **free professional development workshops & academic coursework**
- Family Engagement and Parent Workshops

## → Cambridge Students Accepted to Harvard

- **23 students** from Cambridge were accepted to Harvard College last year.
- **120** have been accepted over the last 5 years





# Partnering with Cambridge Public Schools



## → CURRICULUM SUPPORT

### Building College Awareness:

- **All CPS 7<sup>th</sup> Graders** participate in **Project TEACH** and visit campus for a day of workshops and activities led by Harvard College students.
- **Harvard Education Day** is a partnership with Harvard Athletics that brings **CPS 6<sup>th</sup> graders** to campus to meet student athletes and experience campus life.
- As part of **Evolution Day**, CRLS students tour labs and meet with scientists to learn about their work and STEM career paths. **45 students attended in 2025.**
- The **Emerging Scientists Program** connects CRLS students with Harvard researchers to provide meaningful and accessible research experiences in the life sciences





# Partnering with Cambridge Public Schools



## → Internship & Mentorship Programs:

- The **Summer Youth Employment Program** provides students with valuable work experience, helping them develop positive work habits, gain professional experience, and increase their motivation to further their education and pursue career options.
- The **Science Research Mentoring Program** (SRMP) provides an opportunity for high school students to work on a year long independent research project in astrophysics under the guidance of a Harvard or MIT scientist.

## → Leadership & Fellowship Programs:

- The **Radcliffe Emerging Leaders Program** is a youth leadership development program that connects CRLS sophomores with Harvard undergraduates for year-long mentoring.
- The **James Bryant Conant Fellowship fund** supports the professional growth of outstanding teachers and administrators from Cambridge and Boston Public Schools who are accepted to Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) degree programs.
- **Harvard Business School's Leadership Fellows program** offers nonprofit and public sector organizations the opportunity to leverage the experience, expertise, and skills of Harvard's MBA students for one year with a salary subsidized by the Harvard Business School





# Partnering with Cambridge Public Schools



- The **Cambridge Harvard Summer Academy** is funded by Harvard University and takes place every summer at CRLS, aiming to help bridge the achievement gap for students who require academic intervention throughout the summer months.
- **Crimson Summer Academy** provides traditionally underserved high school students with a mix of classes, projects, and cultural activities on Harvard's campus.
  - **90%** of Crimson Summer Academy graduates complete college in 4 years.
- The **Design Discovery Program** was developed by Harvard Graduate School of Design students and introduces high school students to architectural design, urban planning, graphic, industrial, and fine arts design and helps to put students on track for exploring these ideas at the collegiate level.





# Supporting Key City Goals & Initiatives



## → Long-Term Partnership with Food for Free

- Address food insecurity
- **2000+** meals distributed weekly
- **12K+** pounds of food donated in FY25

## → Pro bono legal services for Cambridge residents

- Open to all Cambridge residents, the Clinical and Pro Bono programs provide thousands of hours of free legal services annually to Cambridge residents.





# Supporting City Initiatives & Residents



## → Economic Inclusion

- Harvard's **Workforce Development Program** offers innovative and market-driven skills-based programs, workshops, and events that support **Cambridge residents** in their professional and career goals.
- Harvard is proud of its ongoing partnership with organized labor to support career development for next generation tradespeople
- Committed to the success of Harvard Square through intentional leasing of properties to small businesses, most of which are locally-owned and offer unique retail and dining options
- Focused on fostering a vibrant and pedestrian friendly retail environment throughout the Square

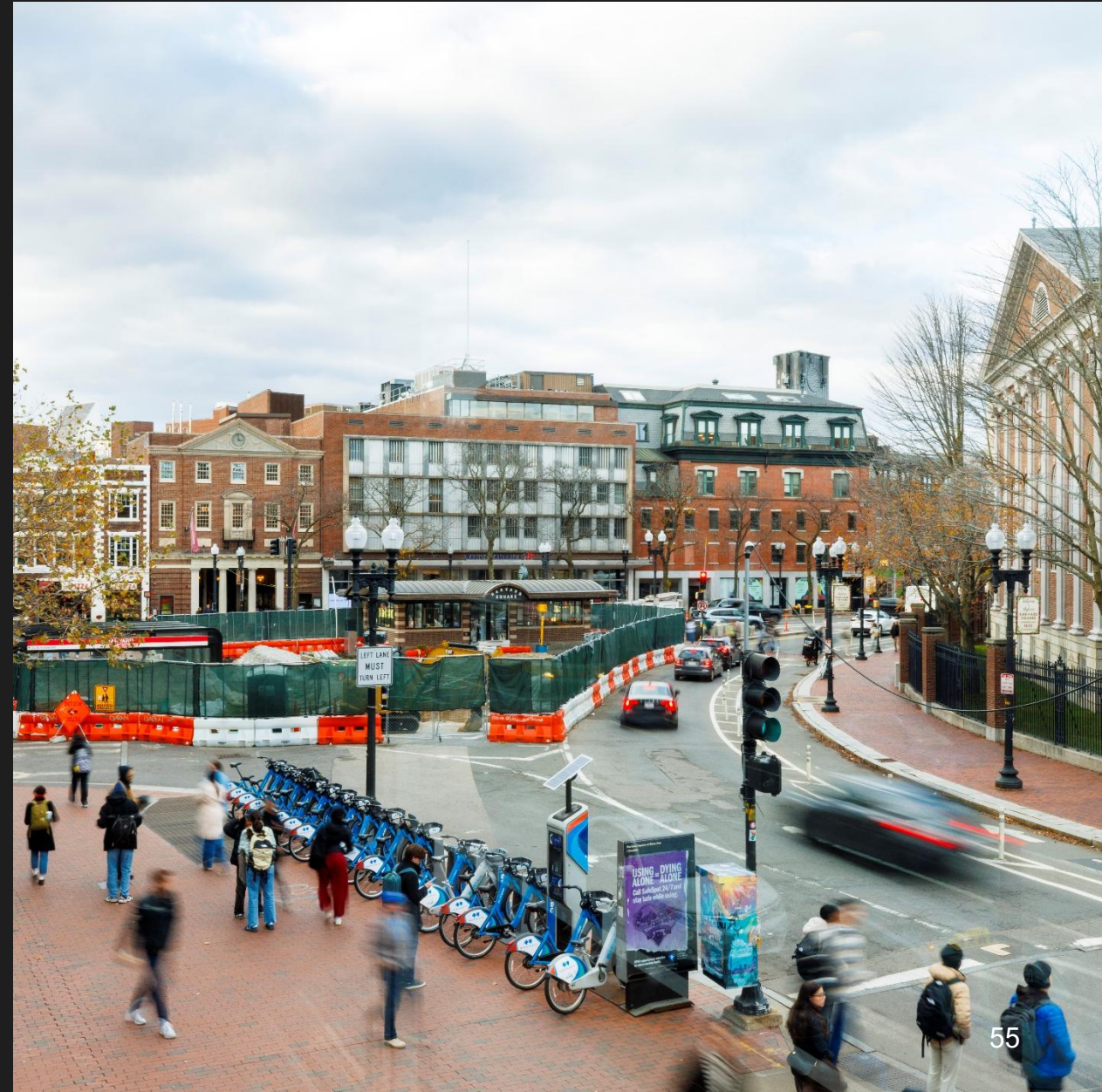




# Supporting City Initiatives & Residents



- Harvard has implemented over \$10M in public realm and infrastructure improvements throughout Harvard Square.
- Harvard manages and maintains five acres of public open space at JFK Memorial Park.
- Harvard provides City projects with rent free parking and land for material storage, saving the City millions of dollars on capital projects.
- During winter storm events, Harvard creates a snow farm for the City to remove and store snow to ensure safety for Cambridge pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Harvard provides free parking for Cambridge residents during snow emergencies.





# Housing Support for Cambridge Residents



## → Housing Support for Cambridge Residents

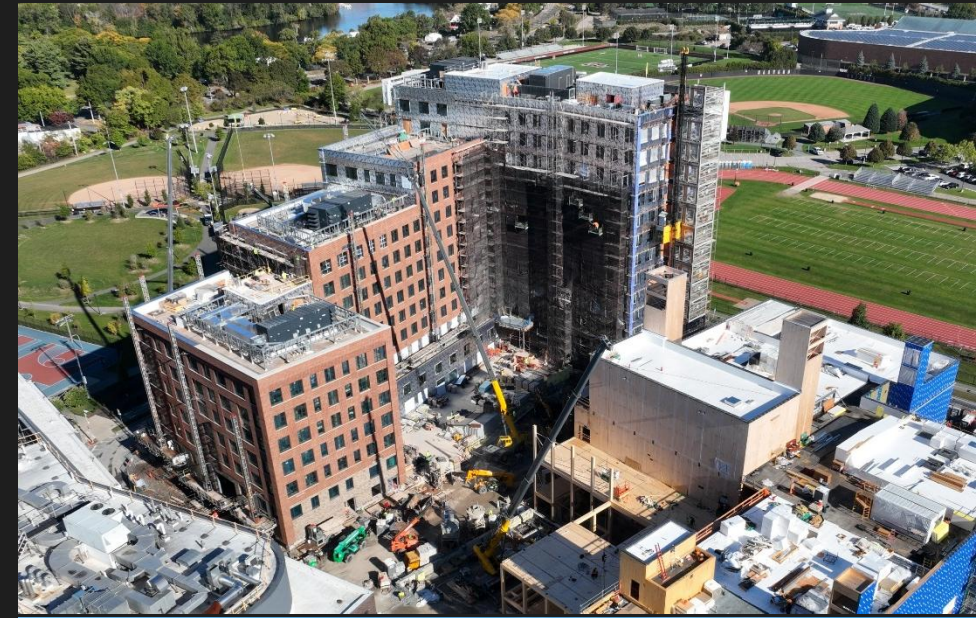
- Long-standing collaboration with Cambridge Housing Authority
- Harvard Local Housing Collaborative has helped enable over \$1 billion in affordable housing development throughout the area

## → Housing for Harvard Students & Affiliates

- **~500 bed** Harvard University Housing development under construction in Allston
- **99% of undergraduates** live in dorms on campus
- Strategic interventions to create graduate student housing in Cambridge by converting properties to residential uses.
- **30+ new beds** developed for University Affiliates in Cambridge

## → Harvard's Housing Partnerships in Allston

- The first Phase of the ERC is complete and includes **345 new units** of housing, **25% of which are affordable housing** units.
- Harvard has worked with the City of Boston and local partners to enable the creation of **1,300+ new units** of housing in Allston, with **over 300** of these units being **affordable**.





# Access to Harvard Institutions & Programming



## → Museum Access

Harvard Museums are free to Cambridge residents

## → Access to Performing & Visual Arts on Campus

### ArtsFest

- This four-day celebration in Harvard Square welcomes the wider community to experience the many arts at the heart of Harvard's diverse, creative community of students, faculty, staff, affiliates and alumni.

### Arts Thursdays

- The University regularly opens its doors to the wider community for free performances, exhibitions and lectures on Thursday nights.

## → Attracting Tourism

- As a cultural anchor, Harvard's historic campus and world-class museums draw visitors from around the world.
- Harvard is one of the most visited tourist destinations in Massachusetts.
  - 650K+ visitors to Harvard Museums each year
  - 30K+ people come to Harvard Square to attend the University's Commencement each year







# → Resources for Additional Information

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## Planning

Harvard University Planning  
and Design

[www.hupad.harvard.edu](http://www.hupad.harvard.edu)

Construction Mitigation

[www.construction.harvard.edu](http://www.construction.harvard.edu)

## Sustainability

Office for Sustainability

[www.green.harvard.edu](http://www.green.harvard.edu)

## Harvard in the Community

[www.community.harvard.edu](http://www.community.harvard.edu)