



Neighborhood  
Planning  
Initiative

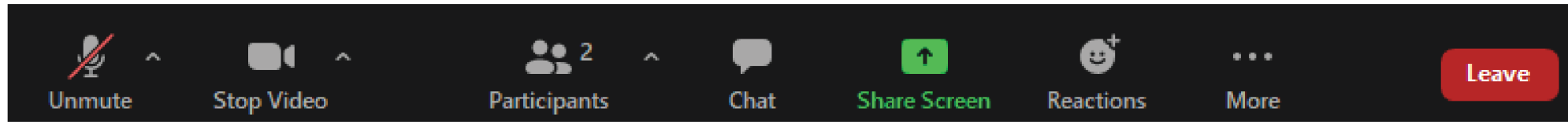
# Second Community Meeting

# Wellington- Harrington

September 13, 2023

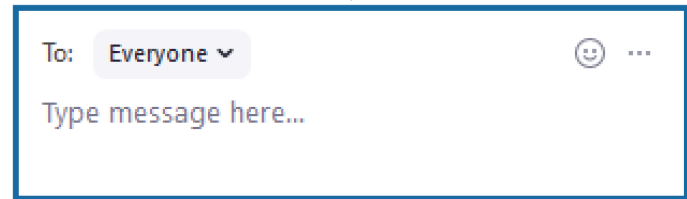


# Getting to Know Zoom

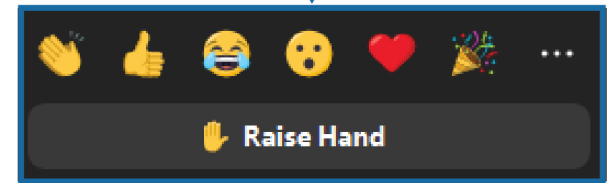


↑ ↑  
Please leave your **audio muted** and video on (if comfortable)

↑  
Click to open the **Chat** box. This will allow you to chat with the Hosts and Participants.



↑  
Click to open the **Reactions** box. This will allow you to give nonverbal feedback.



For Zoom-related questions reach out to Gary Chan via chat or email [gchan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:gchan@cambridgema.gov)



If you're having connectivity issues, call in at 929-436-2866  
Meeting ID: 814 1599 2553



We're recording!

# Meeting Purpose, Outcome, & Process



## PURPOSE (Why)

- Share emerging priorities from engagement so far
- Hear your reactions and ideas!

## OUTCOMES (What)

- Help to refine the Plan's goals
- Review proposed ideas, and generate new recommendations for how to achieve those goals
- Increase awareness of how you can stay involved in neighborhood planning

## PROCESS (How)

- A presentation and 3-part breakout group discussion

Connect with your  
neighborhood  
planner at City Hall!

**LEV MCCARTHY,**

Neighborhood Planner

[lmccarthy@cambridgema.gov](mailto:lmccarthy@cambridgema.gov)

617-349-9164

# Outreach & Engagement



We acknowledge that the entire community isn't present tonight

- Project mailings, signage, focus groups, and online engagement will help us reach members of the community who aren't here tonight
- Let us know your suggestions for how to reach a wider audience!

There will be more opportunities to engage!

- Over the coming months, we welcome your feedback, whether online or in-person
- We'll post a recording of tonight's meeting online, including the presentation slides

Connect with your  
neighborhood  
planner at City Hall!

**LEV MCCARTHY,**

Neighborhood Planner

[lmccarthy@cambridgema.gov](mailto:lmccarthy@cambridgema.gov)

617-349-9164

# Tonight's Agenda



1. Welcome Back + Intro to Neighborhood Planning 10 min
2. What We've Heard So Far 5 min
3. Breakout Discussions 45min
  - Land use and Buildings
  - Mobility (how we travel through the neighborhood)
  - Parks and Public Space
4. Report Back 15 min
5. Next Steps 5 min



Reminder!

Intro to Neighborhood Planning

# What is the Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI)?



Cambridge's Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) gives everyone in Cambridge access to local planning! City staff work with community members to **improve the places that are central to daily life.**

NPI includes four parts:



# What is the Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI)?



Cambridge's Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) gives everyone in Cambridge access to local planning! City staff work with community members to **improve the places that are central to daily life.**

NPI includes four parts:

## Focus for Tonight!

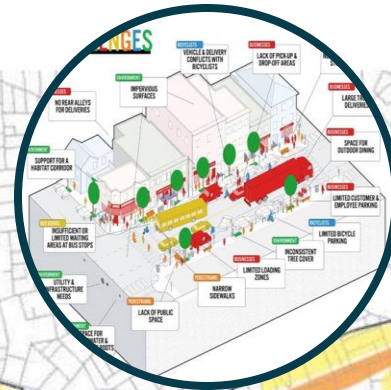




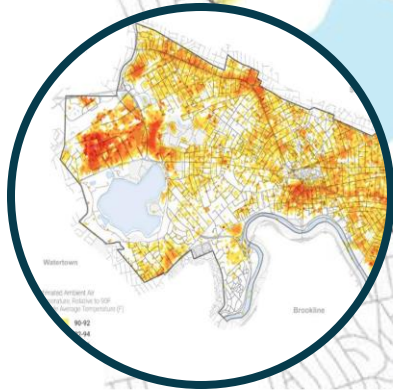
# How Neighborhood Planning fits in with other City projects



**Alewife District Plan**



**Our Cambridge Street**



**Resilient Cambridge**

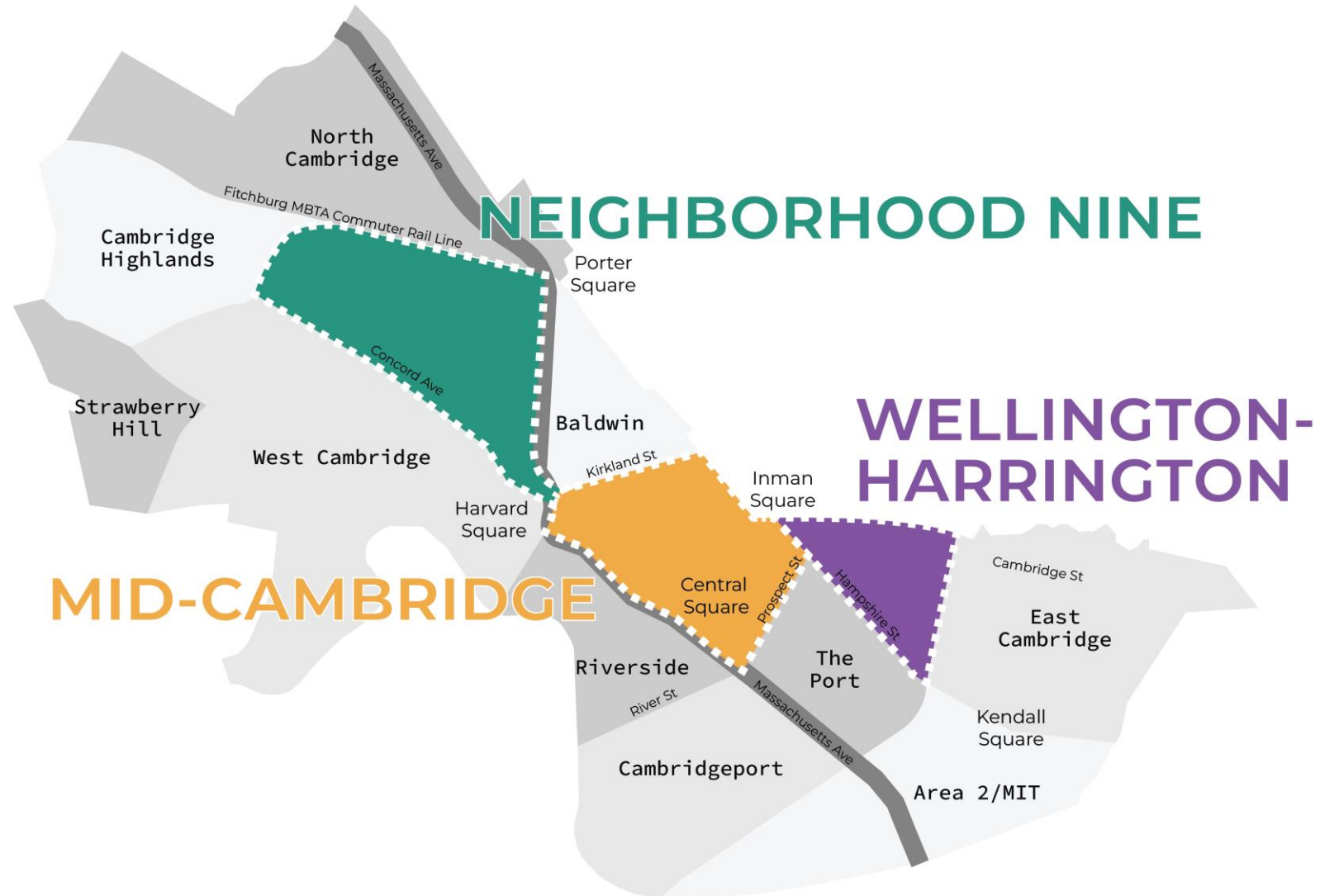


**Urban Forestry Master Plan**



**Vision Zero Action Plan**

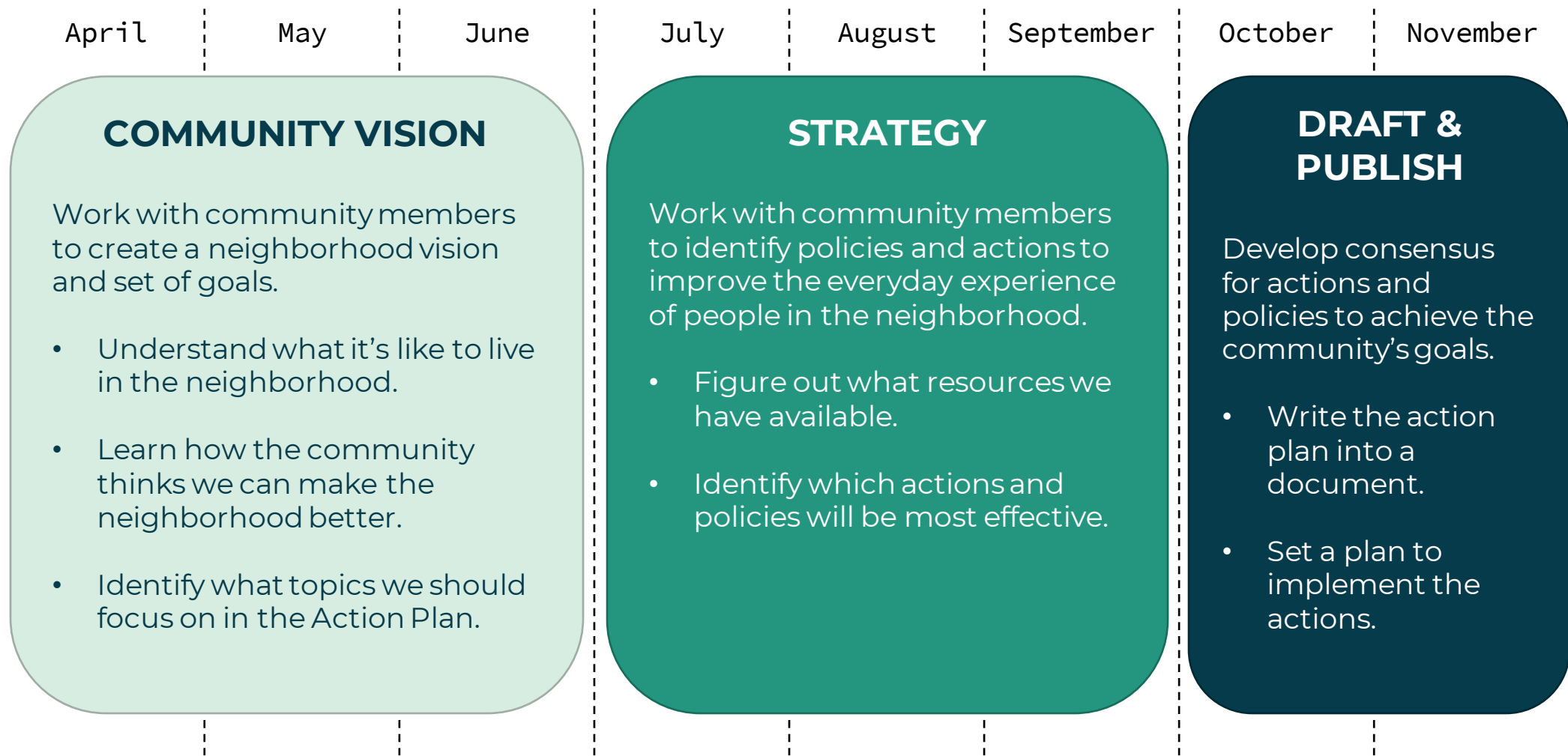
# 2023 Action Plan Neighborhoods



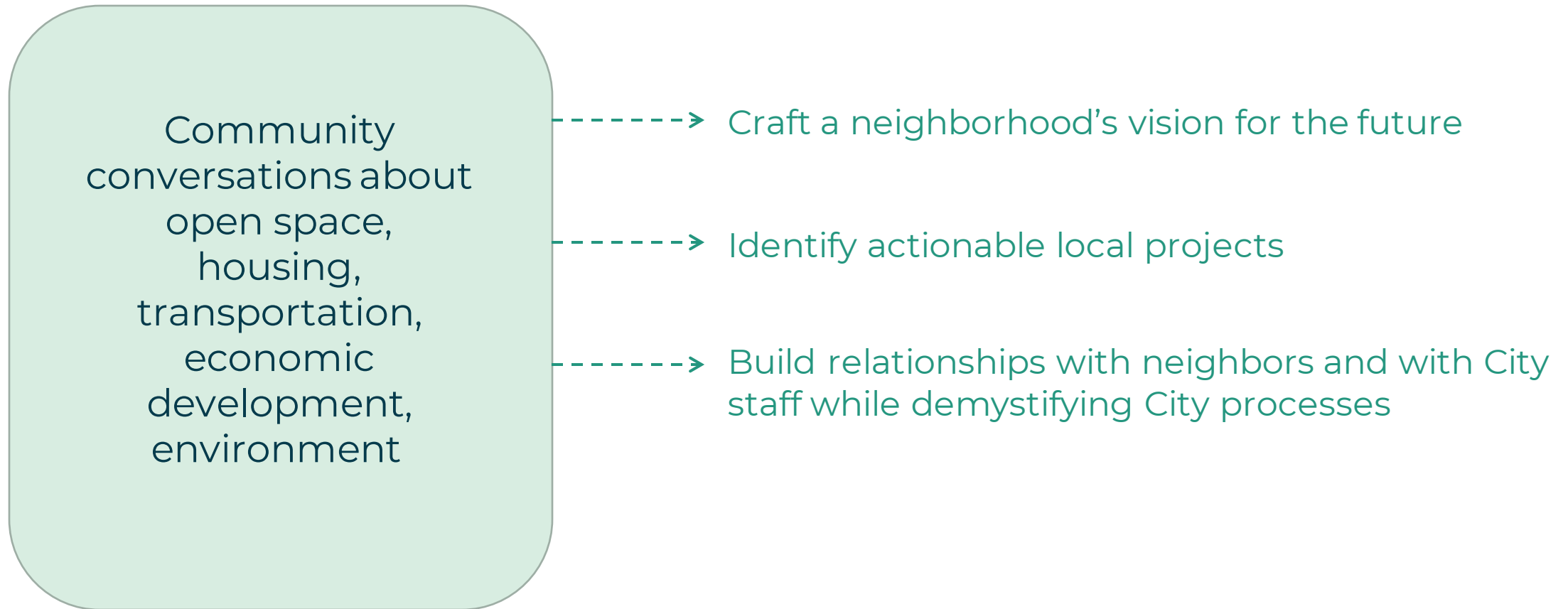
# NPI Overall Scheduling



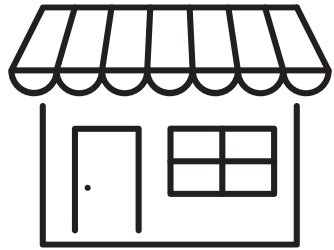
# Action Plan Schedule



# What Do Action Plans Do?



# Example Actions from Past Neighborhood Studies



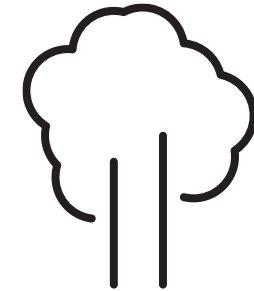
Connect small businesses to financial supports



Make streets safer to cross with signal improvements

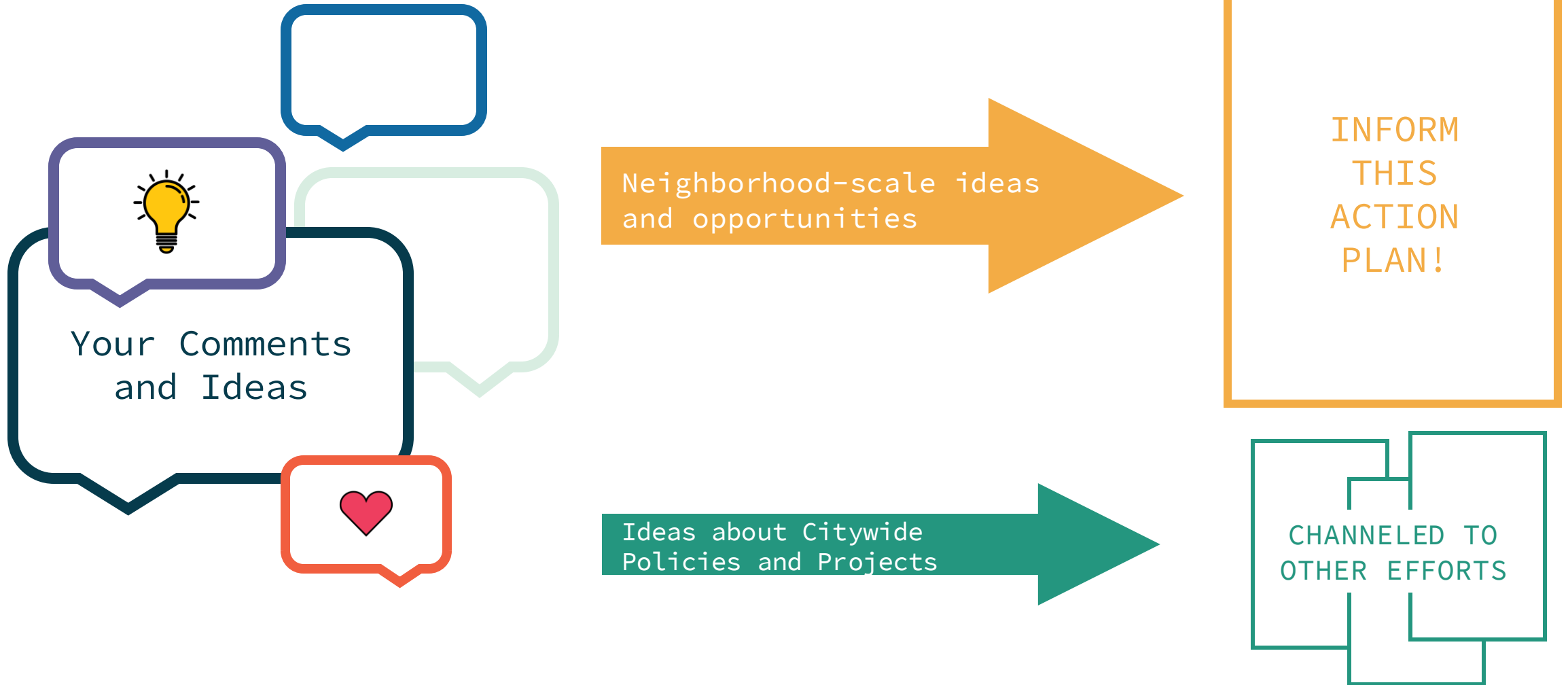


Encourage more family-sized housing through the permitting process



Improve parks and make better access to parks

# What's the Focus of the Neighborhood Planning Initiative?

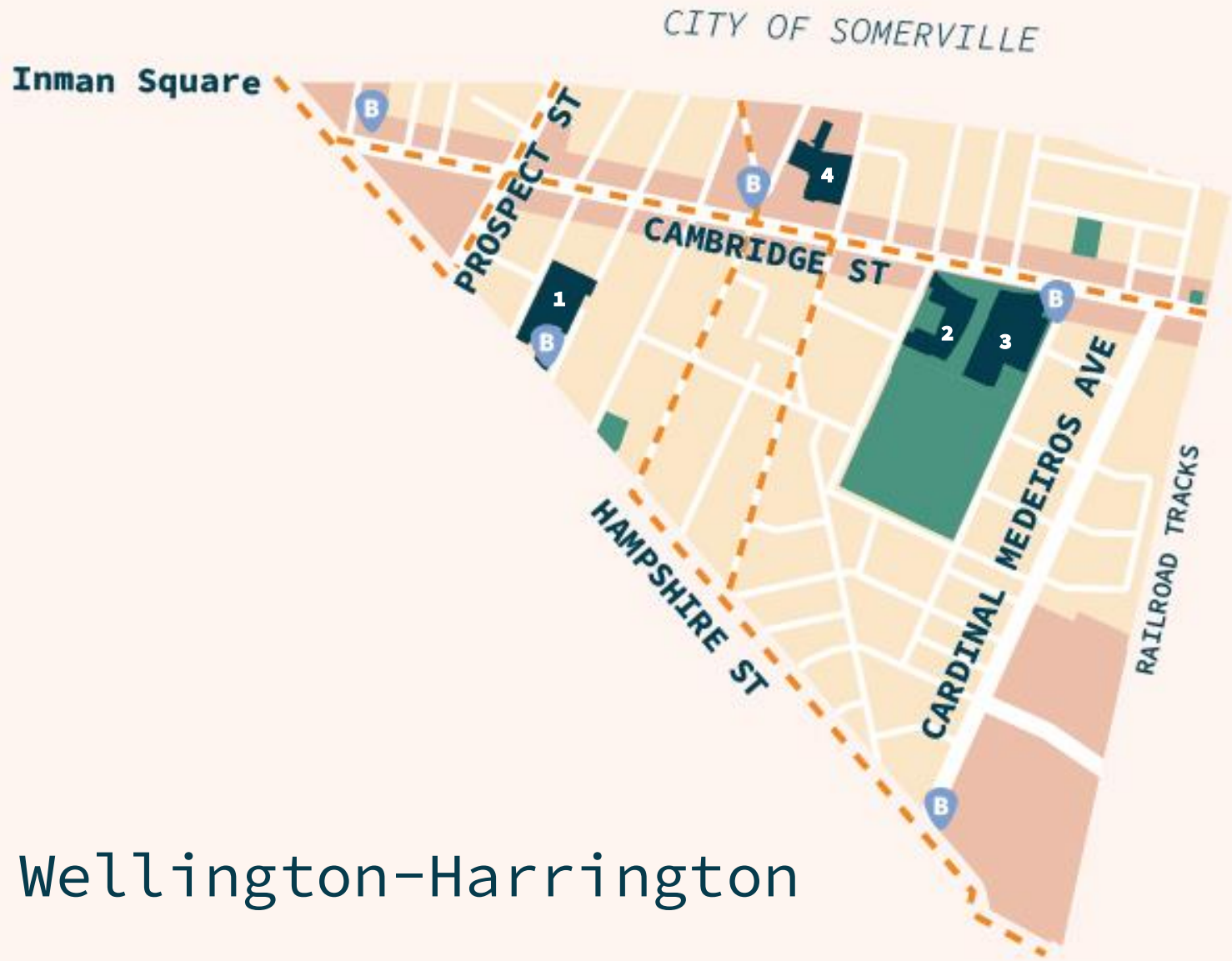




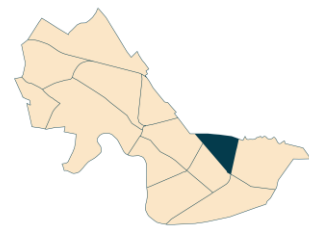
*Wellington-Harrington*

What We've Heard So Far



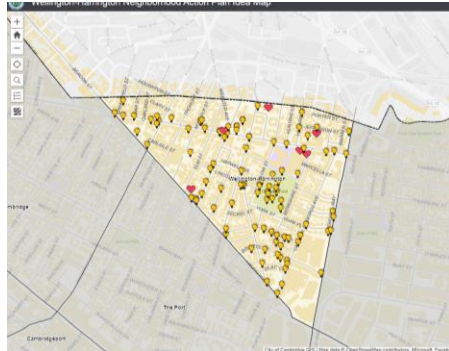


# Wellington-Harrington



- 1** Cambridge Dept. of Public Works
- 2** King Open School/ Cambridge St Upper School
- 3** Valente Branch Library
- 4** Just-A-Start Youthbuild GED Training Center
- B** Bluebikes Station
- Commercial District
- MBTA Bus (1,64,68,69,83,86,91)

# Your Input So Far



**1<sup>st</sup> Public Meeting**  
June 21, 2023



**Focus Group Input**

**164 Online Survey Responses**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Public Meeting**  
Sept. 13, 2023



**196 Idea Map Entries**

**Pop-ups & Focus Group Input**



**We're Here Now!**

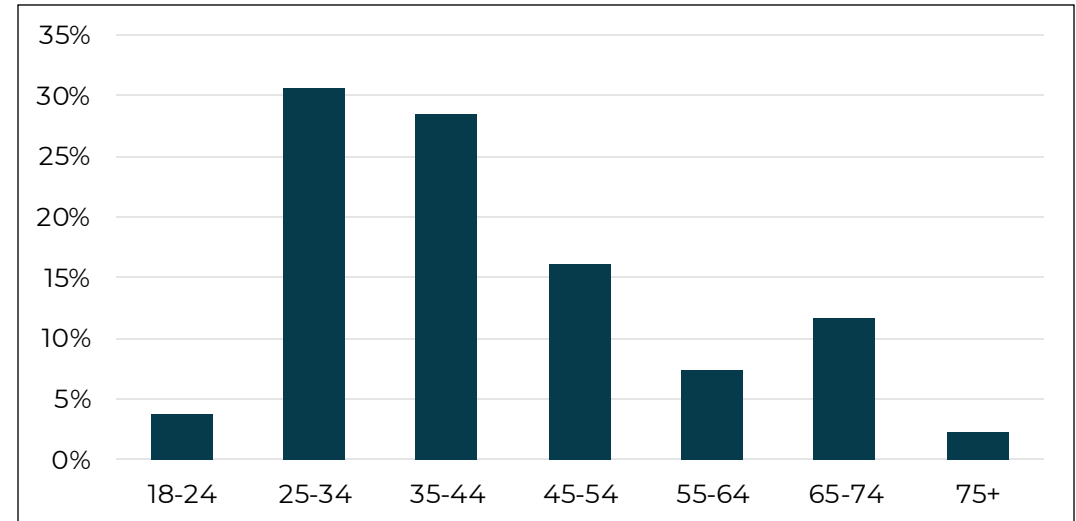
# Who We're Hearing From – Survey Highlights



*Different Methods Reach Different Audiences*

**73%** of respondents indicated this survey is their **first time engaging with this project**

*A Mix of Ages*



*Many residents*

**164**  
responses

**86%** of respondents indicated they **live** in Wellington-Harrington

*Highly-educated*

**95%** of respondents who indicated education **have a Bachelor's or Graduate degree.**

**Make it safer and more comfortable for people who walk in the neighborhood.**

**Create more and improve existing shared outdoor spaces, such as parks and plantings along the streets.**

**Support a thriving local business environment.**

**Expand affordable housing opportunities.**

**Improve waste management & rodent control in parks and around homes.**

**Make it safer and more comfortable for people who bike in the neighborhood.**

**Encourage the revitalization and use of vacant properties.**

**Build community through events, festivals, and increasing access to public community spaces.**

# 3 Categories



## Land Use and Buildings

Support a thriving local business environment.

Expand affordable housing opportunities.

Encourage the revitalization and use of vacant properties.

## Mobility (How we move through the neighborhood)

Make it safer and more comfortable for people who walk in the neighborhood.

Make it safer and more comfortable for people who bike in the neighborhood.

## Parks and Public Space

Create more and improve existing shared outdoor spaces, such as parks and plantings along the streets.

Improve waste management and rodent control in parks and around homes.

Build community through events, festivals, increasing access to public community spaces.



# BREAKOUT GROUPS: Let's Discuss!

- Land Use and Buildings
- Mobility
- Parks and Public Space

45 minutes

You will spend approximately 15 minutes on each category!

# Groups



BREAKOUT GROUP	TOPIC 1 (15 MIN)	TOPIC 2 (15 MIN)	TOPIC 3 (15 MIN)
Group 1	Land Use and Buildings	Mobility	Parks and Public Space
Group 2	Mobility	Parks and Public Space	Land Use and Buildings
Group 3	Parks and Public Space	Land Use and Buildings	Mobility

# Group Discussion Guidelines



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



# Land Use and Buildings



1. Support a thriving local business environment
2. Encourage the revitalization and use of vacant properties
3. Expand affordable housing opportunities

15 min

## Today's Discussion



*Let's dig in deeper on each of these goals!*

- What do actions to support these goals look like in Wellington-Harrington?
- What City programs could be expanded in this neighborhood?
- What models can the City look to from other areas?

15 min

# 1. Support a Thriving Local Business Environment



*What we've heard so far...*

- People especially want businesses that **serve daily needs**, such as grocery and corner stores
- There is a desire to preserve existing **local small businesses**
- People would like to see neighborhood commerce that is throughout the neighborhood (not just at the edges)

*More **local grocery and corner stores** are needed.*

Goals Survey

*Affordable rents to keep **local small businesses***

Inman Sq Pop Up

*I would love to see a **more local grocery stores**. I walk everywhere and do have a decent amount of trouble with the nearest grocery store being a 15-20 minute walk away*

June Public Meeting

*More **corner stores!!***

June Public Meeting

# 1. Support a Thriving Local Business Environment



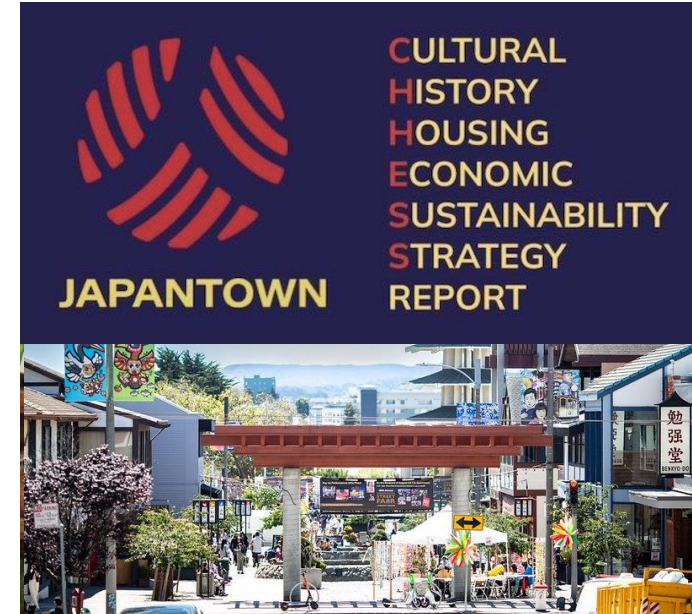
*Here are some things the City is doing, and some ideas from nearby. What would you like to see in Wellington-Harrington? What else should be done?*



★ **Boosting Business Blocks Grant**



★ **Direct Business Grants**



**Master Lease Model for Affordable Rents**  
*Japantown Task Force, SF*



## 2. Encourage the revitalization and use of vacant properties

*What we've heard so far...*

- There is concern about recent **small business closures**
- Community members observe a “surprising” amount of **vacant properties**
- Community members see vacant spaces are **opportunities** for housing, small businesses, or community/open spaces
- Community members would like to see businesses and experiences that bring **vitality and life**

*After Covid many **local restaurants, coffee shops and businesses** closed. It is important to create opportunities for establishments to thrive and help bring life back to the neighborhood.*

Goals Survey

*There are a **surprising amount of vacant properties around ...** would love for these properties to be used in some way - local business, affordable housing, community center, etc.*

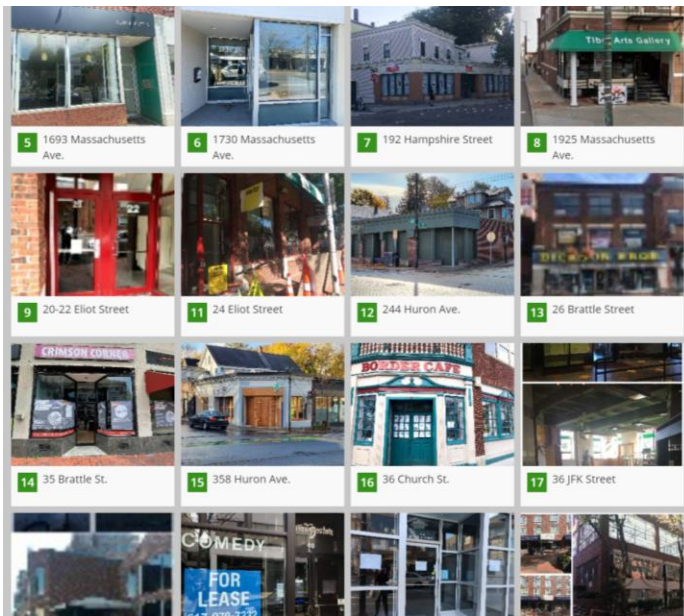
Goals Survey

*It's such a shame to know there's a housing crisis or small businesses are looking for homes and yet **many properties are vacant***

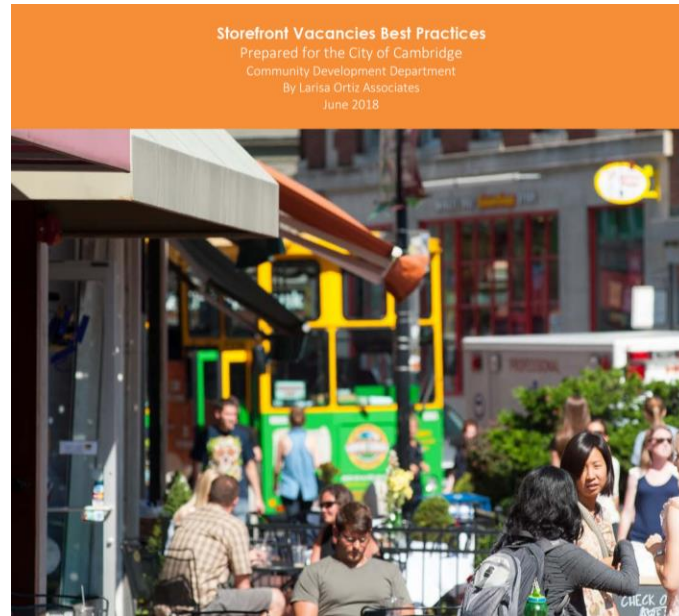
Goals Survey

## 2. Encourage the revitalization and use of vacant properties

*Here are some things the City is doing, and some ideas from nearby. What would you like to see in Wellington-Harrington? What else should be done?*



★ Vacant Storefront Database



★ Storefront Vacancies Best Practices, 2018 (Larisa Ortiz)



Succession Planning Employee Training

### 3. Expand affordable housing opportunities



*What we've heard so far...*

- **61%** of survey comments about housing focus on the **high cost of living** and unaffordability of Cambridge
- There is appreciation for **existing affordable housing** in the neighborhood
- Neighbors would like to **add to what exists** and share successes with other neighborhoods

*It's so expensive to live here and I'm afraid that everyone will be priced out!*

Goals Survey

*It seems like people, especially families who want to stay in the neighborhood, are **constantly getting priced out***

Goals Survey

*Rents are crazy high, and I'd love to see **opportunities to pursue new affordable housing projects** and/or cooperative / shared equity models*

June Public Meeting

# 3. Expand affordable housing opportunities

Here are some things the City is doing, and some ideas from nearby. What would you like to see in Wellington-Harrington? What else should be done?

**Housing**  
[CDD > Housing > For Homebuyers > Homebuyer Education](#)

Housing Development and Preservation

For Applicants

For Homebuyers

Homebuyer Education

Credit 101 Workshop

Downpayment Assistance

HomeBridge

Affordable Mortgage Products

Limited Equity Cooperatives

Homebuyer FAQ

For Homeowners

For Renters

Inclusionary Housing

For Developers and Property Managers

For Owners of Multi-Family Properties

Affordable Housing Trust

Resources and Additional

**Homebuyer Education**

**First-Time Homebuyer Class**

Are you tired of renting? Is your goal this year to own a home but the process seems overwhelming? The City of Cambridge can help.

The Housing Division offers a free four-week workshop which provides participants with an overview of the homebuying process from professionals that are involved in the process. Classes include a combination of presentations by City homebuyer counselors and local real estate professionals.

Topics Include:

- Budgeting and Credit
- The Housing Search Process
- Obtaining a Mortgage
- Legal Issues
- Home Inspections
- Insurance
- Successful Homeownership
- Financial Assistance Programs

Classes are open to everyone, including non-Cambridge residents. You do not need to be eligible for other City housing programs to attend the class. Space is limited and preregistration is required. The City of Cambridge offers the First-time Homebuyer Workshop several times each year.

**Registration for First-time Homebuyer Class**

★ Homebuyer Classes & Affordable Housing Education

**100% Affordable Housing Zoning Overlay**  
 Why It's Needed & What It Will Do

**Housing in Cambridge is getting less affordable.**

A family must earn over \$125,000 per year to afford to rent a 2-bedroom home at market rate.

Affordable Housing helps:  
 Teachers • Healthcare workers  
 Senior citizens • Social workers  
 Small business owners  
 Non-profit staff  
 Maintenance workers

**How Affordable Housing Is Built**

Affordable Housing Partners (Just-A-Start, Homeowner's Rehab Inc, Cambridge Housing Authority) + City Funding & Funding from Other Sources + Available Land & Buildings = Affordable Housing for the Cambridge Community

**Current Challenges**

- Cuts in federal funds for affordable housing
- Rising prices of land & buildings
- Competition between affordable housing developers & market-rate developers (who can afford to pay more)
- Multi-family housing cannot be built in all areas of the city, limiting the supply of affordable units
- Many residents are forced to leave Cambridge as rents continue to rise

★ 100% Affordable Housing Zoning Overlay



★ Attend 100% AHO Project Public Meetings

★ Indicates City of Cambridge Example



# Mobility



1. Make it safer and more comfortable for people who walk in the neighborhood.
2. Make it safer and more comfortable for people who bike in the neighborhood.

15 min

## Today's Discussion



*Let's dig in deeper on each of these goals!*

- What do actions to support these goals look like in Wellington-Harrington?
- What City programs could be expanded in this neighborhood?
- What models can the City look to from other areas?

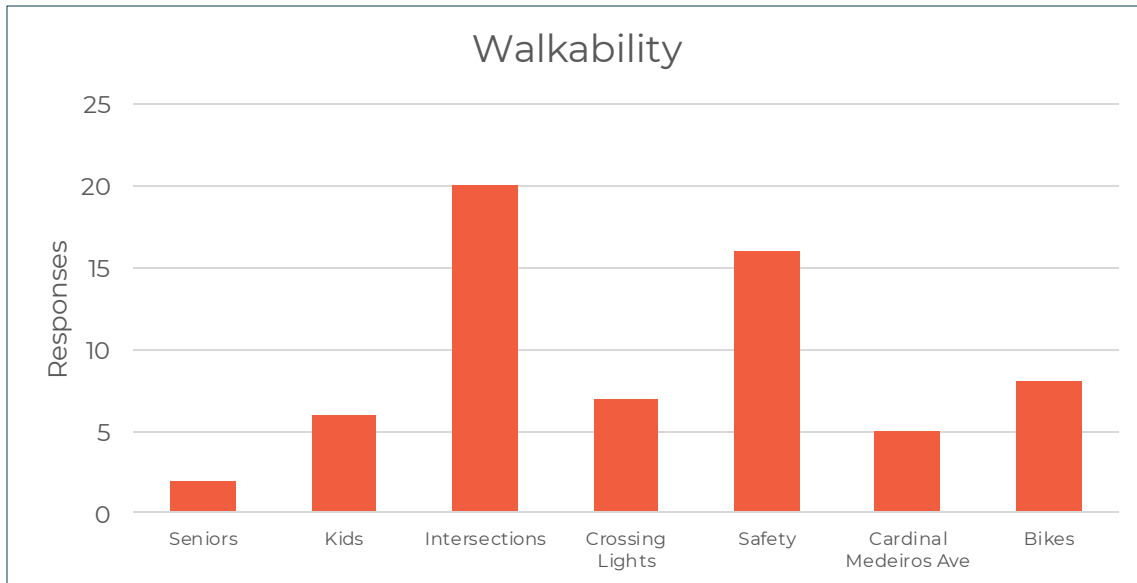
15 min



# 1. Make it safer and more comfortable for people who walk in the neighborhood

What we've heard so far...

- 44% of survey comments about Walkability refer to **intersections** and 36% concern **pedestrian safety**
- Many comments refer to the **speed of vehicular traffic** in Wellington-Harrington



*Drivers and cyclists are **not stopping at crosswalks***

Goals Survey

*I experience **many close calls** while on foot*

Goals Survey

***Cambridge Street and Cardinal Medeiros intersection** is a nightmare*

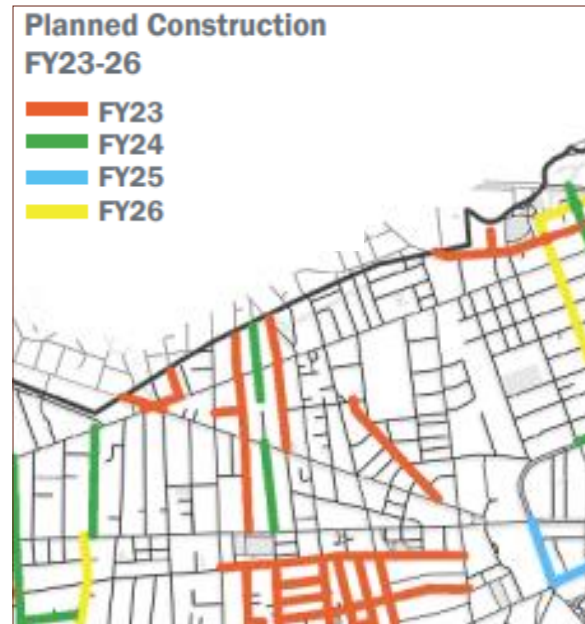
Goals Survey

# 1. Make it safer and more comfortable for people who walk in the neighborhood

*Here are some things the City is doing, and some ideas from nearby. What would you like to see in Wellington-Harrington? What else should be done?*



★ Cambridge 2023 Street Code



★ Five Year Plan for Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction



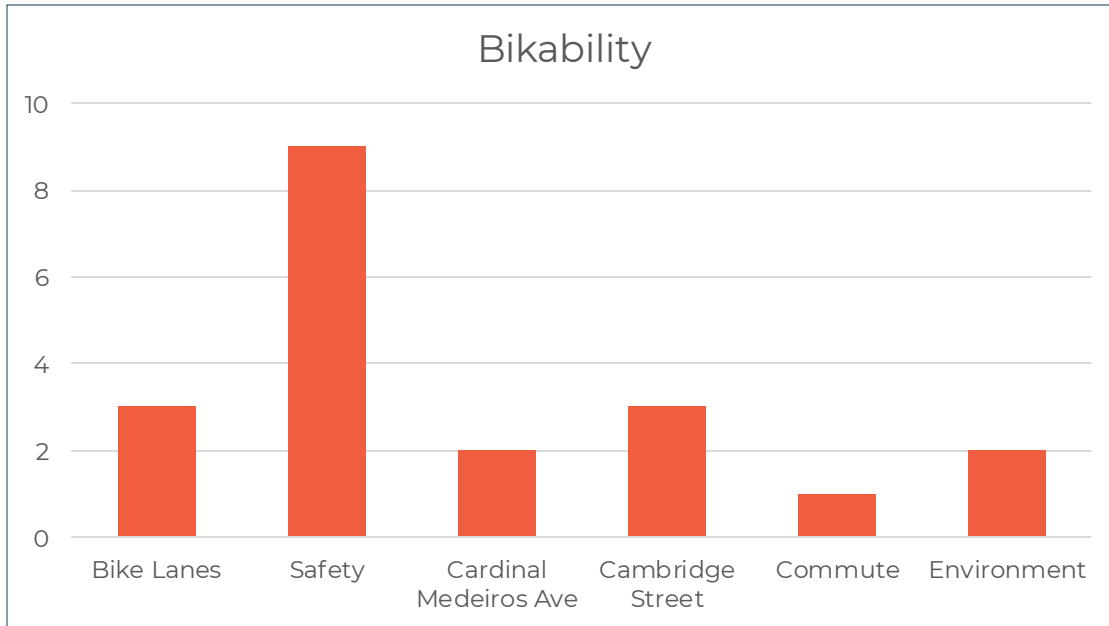
Street Mural Traffic Calming (Somerville)



## 2. Make it safer and more comfortable for people who bike in the neighborhood

What we've heard so far...

- 45% of survey comments about bikability concern **cyclists' safety**



**Cardinal Medeiros is a raceway** that is in dire need of both a road diet and protected bike infrastructure.

Goals Survey

I love the proposed plan for the **Grand Junction multi-use path** - it would be a great addition to the neighborhood and increase safer pedestrian/bike commuting and physical activity

June Public Meeting

## 2. Make it safer and more comfortable for people who bike in the neighborhood

*Here are some things the City is doing, and some ideas from nearby. What would you like to see in Wellington-Harrington? What else should be done?*



★ **On-Bike Skills Clinic and Group Ride Series**



★ **Blue Bike Access & Discount Programs**



★ **Curb Extension/Traffic Calming Program**

# Parks and Public Spaces



1. Create more and improve existing shared outdoor spaces, such as parks and plantings along the streets
2. Improve waste management and rodent control in parks and around homes
3. Build community through events, festivals, and increasing access to public community spaces

15 min

# Today's Discussion



*Let's dig in deeper on each of these goals!*

- What do actions to support these goals look like in Wellington-Harrington?
- What City programs could be expanded in this neighborhood?
- What models can the City look to from other areas?

15 min

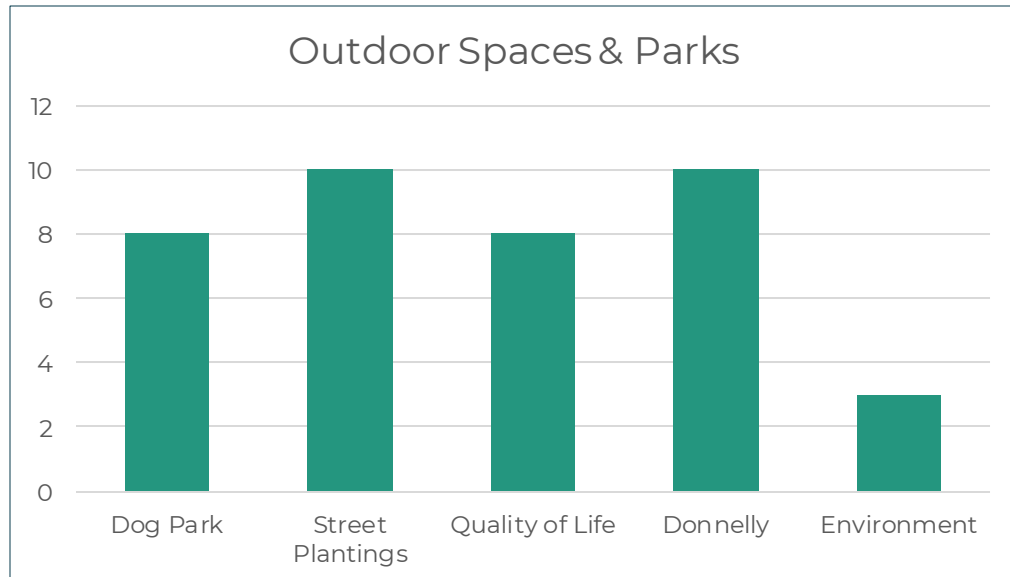


# 1. Create more and improve existing shared outdoor spaces, such as parks and plantings along the streets



## What we've heard so far...

- 28% of survey comments related to Outdoor Spaces & Parks mention **Donnelly Field**
- Expanding **tree canopy** has consistently been expressed as a priority



*Donnelly is the backyard of the neighborhood, would be great to help sustain it for the future.*

Goals Survey

*Take a closer look at uses & needs at **Donnelly field**.*

June Public Meeting

***More trees here!***

June Public Meeting

*More **green space** connecting across neighborhoods*

June Public Meeting

# 1. Create more and improve existing shared outdoor spaces, such as parks and plantings along the streets

*Here are some things the City is doing, and some ideas from nearby. What would you like to see in Wellington-Harrington? What else should be done?*



★ Cambridge St Plantings & Seating



★ Shade is Social Justice, Donnelly Field



★ Adopt-a-Plot/Plant Bed Program

## 2. Improve waste management and rodent control in parks and around homes



*What we've heard so far...*

- 75% of survey comments related to cleanliness mention **Rat/Rodent Control**



*Rodents remain a problem, even if they are less so than recent years*

Goals Survey

*Resolve **rat problems** and conflicts with landlords*

June Public Meeting

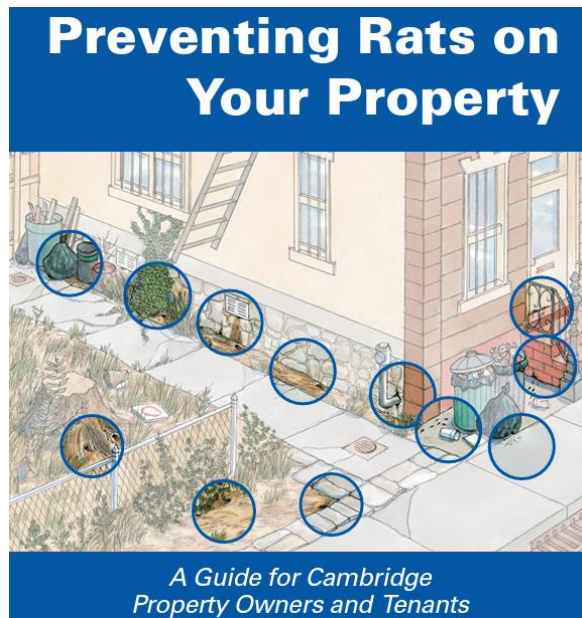
*Apartment buildings need more **monitoring and enforcement** in particular*

Goals Survey

## 2. Improve waste management and rodent control in parks and around homes



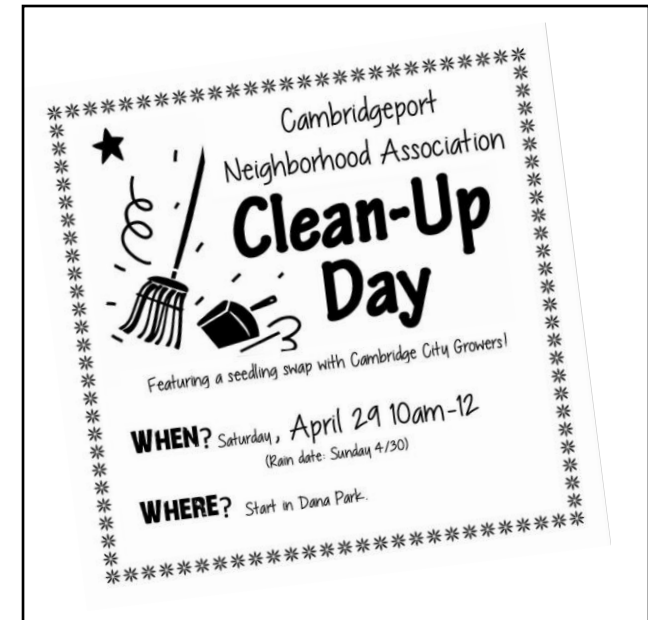
Here are some things the City is doing, and some ideas from nearby. What would you like to see in Wellington-Harrington? What else should be done?



★ **Community Education and Commonwealth Connect for Reporting**



★ **Waste Receptacles**



**Community Clean-up Days**

★ Indicates City of Cambridge Example

### 3. Build community through events, festivals, and increasing access to public community spaces



*What we've heard so far...*

- 31% of survey comments related to **Community Events** indicate a desire for greater connections with neighbors
- Also mentioned frequently: Block Parties & Valente Library



*We don't know our neighbors and in an emergency that can be a life-or-death situation*

Goals Survey

*I love the library and want more opportunities to meet my neighbors!*

Goals Survey

*Opportunities for **people to come together** & interact with each other*

June Public Meeting

### 3. Build community through events, festivals, and increasing access to public community spaces



Here are some things the City is doing, and some ideas from nearby. What would you like to see in Wellington-Harrington? What else should be done?



★ Play Streets Toolkit

City of Cambridge  
**DANEHY PARK FAMILY DAY 2023**

Saturday, September 23, 2023  
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Rain Date: Sunday, September 24

Free Event for All Ages!

- Activities
- Arts & Crafts
- Amusement Rides
- Food & Giveaways (while supplies last)

CHILDREN'S STAGE:	ROVING PERFORMERS:
11:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. ▶ Trend N Motion Hip Hop Dancers	11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. ▶ Colorful Stiltwalker
12:15 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. ▶ Peter Panic Juggler	12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. ▶ Chinese Lions
1:15 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. ▶ Magician Darren Yong	12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m. ▶ Trend N Motion Hip Hop Dancers
2:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. ▶ Vibe Check	12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. ▶ Balloon Artist
	12:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. ▶ Grooveriversity Drum Band
	1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. ▶ Spirit of Africa Trio

★ Festivals in Neighborhood Parks



Encourage Third Places, *Indoor Play at the Well, PA*

## Recap



For each topic:

What new or existing actions is this group most interested in? Why?

Try to come to a consensus on one action for each topic!

Select one person from the group to share.

5 min

## **REPORT BACK**

Share from your group's discussion!

10 minutes (3 minutes per group)



# What's Next?



- We will share your input with other relevant City processes, where applicable
- Refine Action Items
- Draft Neighborhood Action Plan for Wellington-Harrington
- Public review period for comments on draft plan



# Contact Us



Connect with your neighborhood planner at City Hall!

**LEV MCCARTHY**, Neighborhood Planner  
[lmccarthy@cambridgema.gov](mailto:lmccarthy@cambridgema.gov)  
617-349-9164





Neighborhood  
Planning  
Initiative

# Thank You!

June 21, 2023



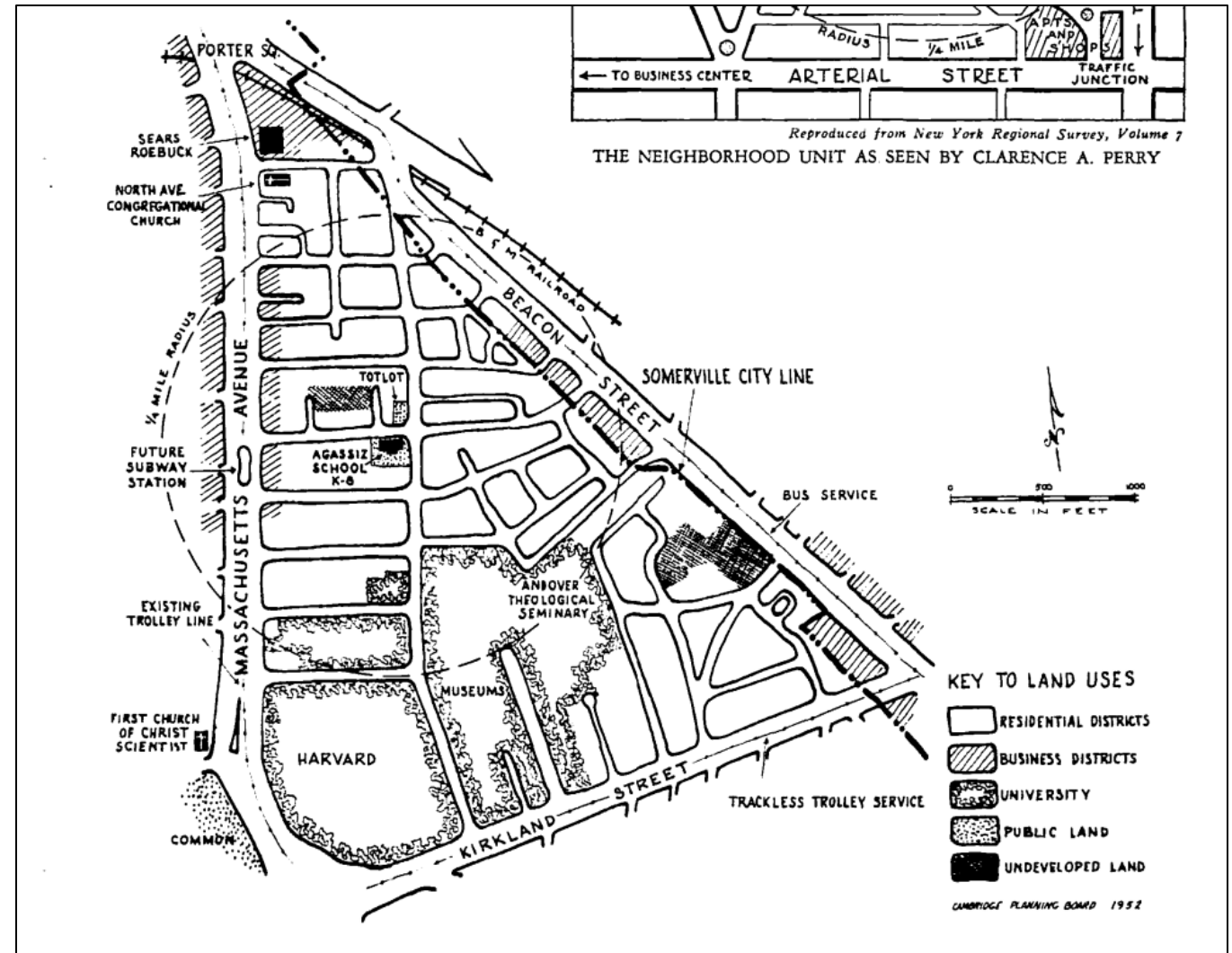
# APPENDIX

# Neighborhood Planning in Cambridge



- Cambridge's 13 "official" neighborhoods date back to a 1953 Planning Board report
- These neighborhood boundaries likely don't align with lived experience, and that is okay

A map of the Baldwin neighborhood from the 1953 *Thirteen Neighborhoods, One City* Planning Board report



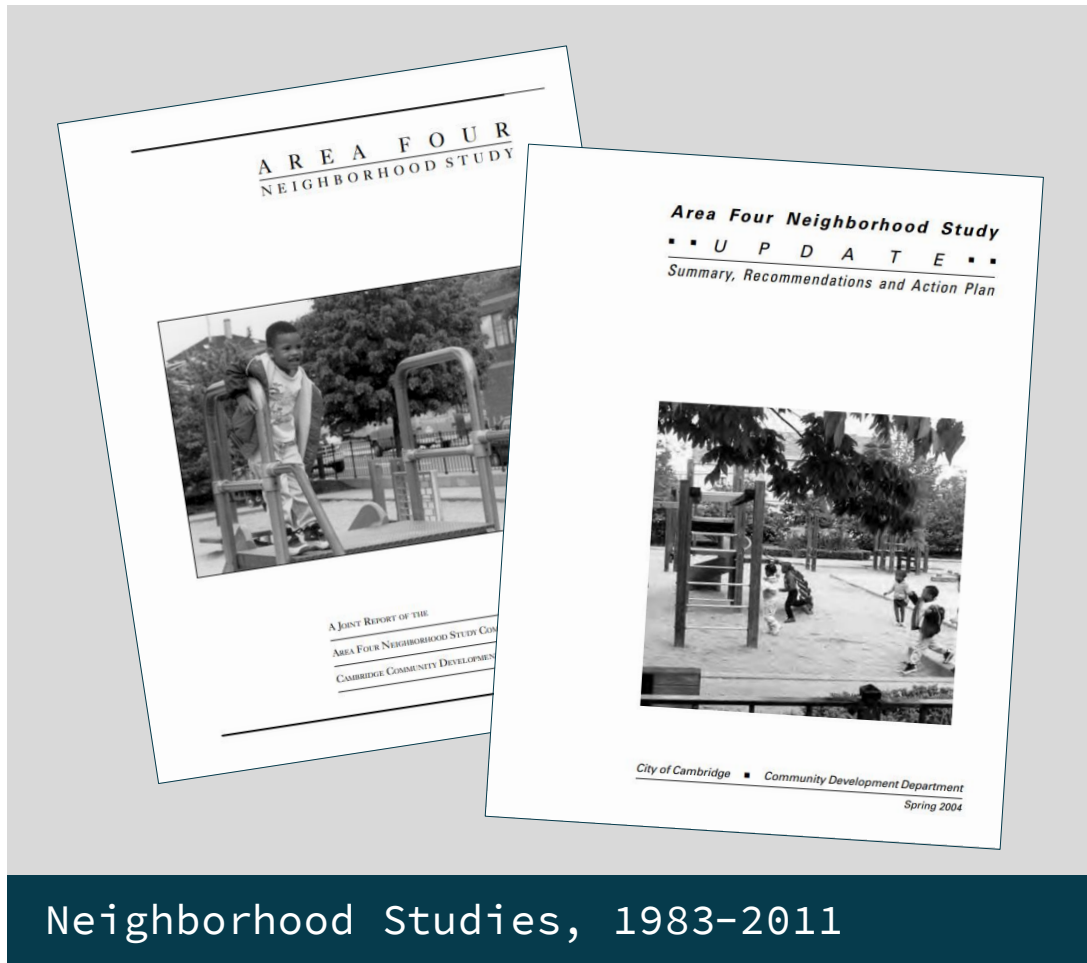
# Why Focus on Neighborhoods?



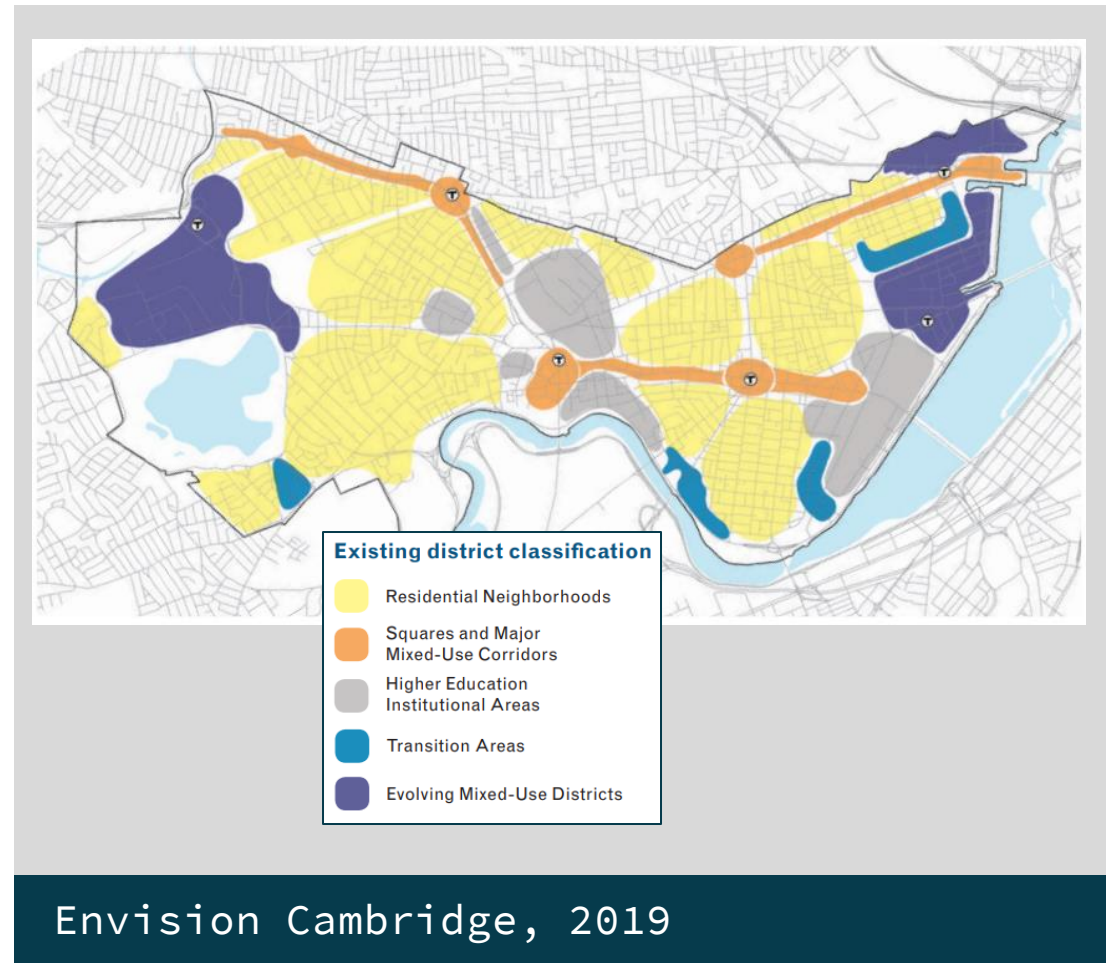
- Venue for discussions that aren't planned for as part of other City initiatives
- Understand how Citywide topics relate to neighborhoods
- Small scale allows for community-led project ideas
- Foster connections
- Focus on day-to-day



# Neighborhood Planning Initiative Builds on Past Work



Neighborhood Studies, 1983–2011



Envision Cambridge, 2019

# Envision Cambridge Core Values



## Livability

- Vibrant built & natural environment
- Sustainable transportation
- Affordable & convenient access to daily needs & recreational resources

## Diversity & Equity

- Welcoming community
- Celebrate our diversity
- Ensure access to affordable housing choices & opportunities to succeed

## Economic Opportunity

- Access to quality jobs
- Workforce development and training
- Livable wages that support a high level of services

## Sustainability

- Reduce our impact on the environment
- Build a resilient city & strong community

## Community Health & Wellbeing

- Promote healthy & active lifestyles
- Supportive, safe community
- Diverse opportunities to connect with our neighbors & engage in civic life

## Learning

- Embrace lifelong learning
- Celebrate the pursuit of knowledge
- Celebrate our culturally rich & creative community