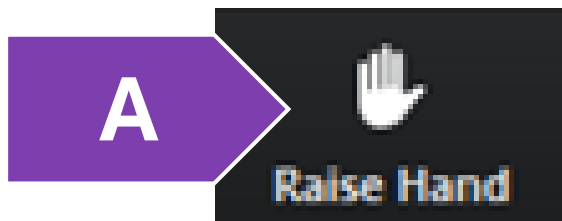


Before we start our meeting

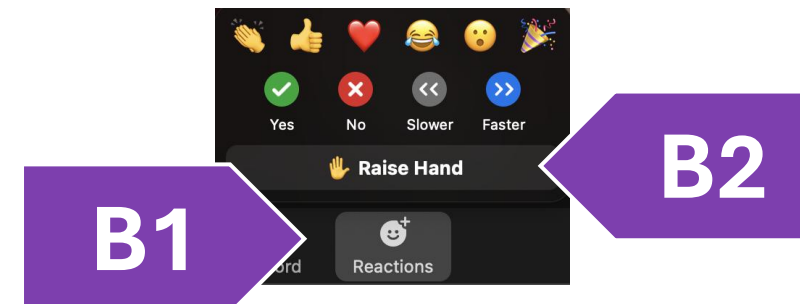
Remote Participants

- You will join the meeting **muted** and with **video off**
- We will ask you to turn on video and to unmute
- Please use the “**Raise Hand**” button during the meeting, we will call on you in order of raised hands
 - **To raise your hand** either click on Raise Hand (A) or click “Reactions” (B1) then Raise Hand (B2)



In person

- **On this floor**
 - 2 all-gender restrooms to the left
 - 1 accessible restroom to the right
 - Water fountain in atrium/lobby
 - Fire extinguisher in atrium/lobby
- **On the 3rd floor**, we have a first aid kit with an automated defibrillator Narcan (fob required for access)
- If we need to leave the building, we will meet at the traffic signal at the intersection of Broadway and Inman.





**CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Department of
Transportation

Welcome to the August 2025 Joint Meeting of the Transportation Committees

August 20, 2025 | 5:30 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.

Agenda

5:30 p.m. Zoom Protocol, Agenda Review, Minutes

5:35 p.m. Presentation: Mass Ave Planning Study

6:35 p.m. Announcements

6:40 p.m. Public Comment

Who We Are

Citizen Representatives

- Robin Bonner, *Pedestrian Committee Vice Chair*
- Richard Freierman, *Bicycle Committee Chair*
- Gregory Carey-Medlock, *Bicycle Committee Vice Chair*
- Randy Stern, *Secretary*
- Jackson Moore-Otto, *Transit Advisory Committee Chair*
- Matthew Kramer, *Transit Advisory Committee Vice Chair*
- Andrew Zhou, *Transit Advisory Committee Secretary*
- ...and many committee members

Dept. Representatives

- Andy Reker, *Transportation, Transit Advisory Committee Facilitator*
- Nick Schmidt, *Transportation, Pedestrian Committee and Bicycle Committee Facilitator*
- Marcella Cannatti, *Transportation*
- Mohamed Hammad, *Transportation*
- Stephen Meuse, *Transportation*
- Adam Shulman, *Transportation*
- Jerry Friedman, *Public Works*
- Steven Magalhaes, *Police*

Instructions for the public joining remotely



You will join the meeting with video and microphone off



You can type written questions or comments in the Zoom Q&A Panel

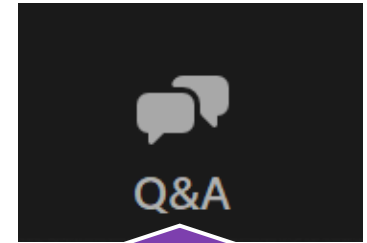


Public comment period will use the “**raise hand**” feature. We will provide more instruction then.



Please speak only for the amount of time available.

Bottom Panel of
Zoom Screen



Ask a
Question

Sometimes you
may find this in
the “More” or
“...” menu

Why We're Here

The Transit Advisory Committee meets monthly.

- The **purpose** is to get feedback from appointed members of the Transportation Committees, the City's "community experts" on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit issues
- The **outcome** is to summarize findings of the Mass Ave Planning Study for committee members and answer clarifying questions
- The **process** will include a presentation and discussion about study findings

01. Welcome and meeting summary approval

Roll Call

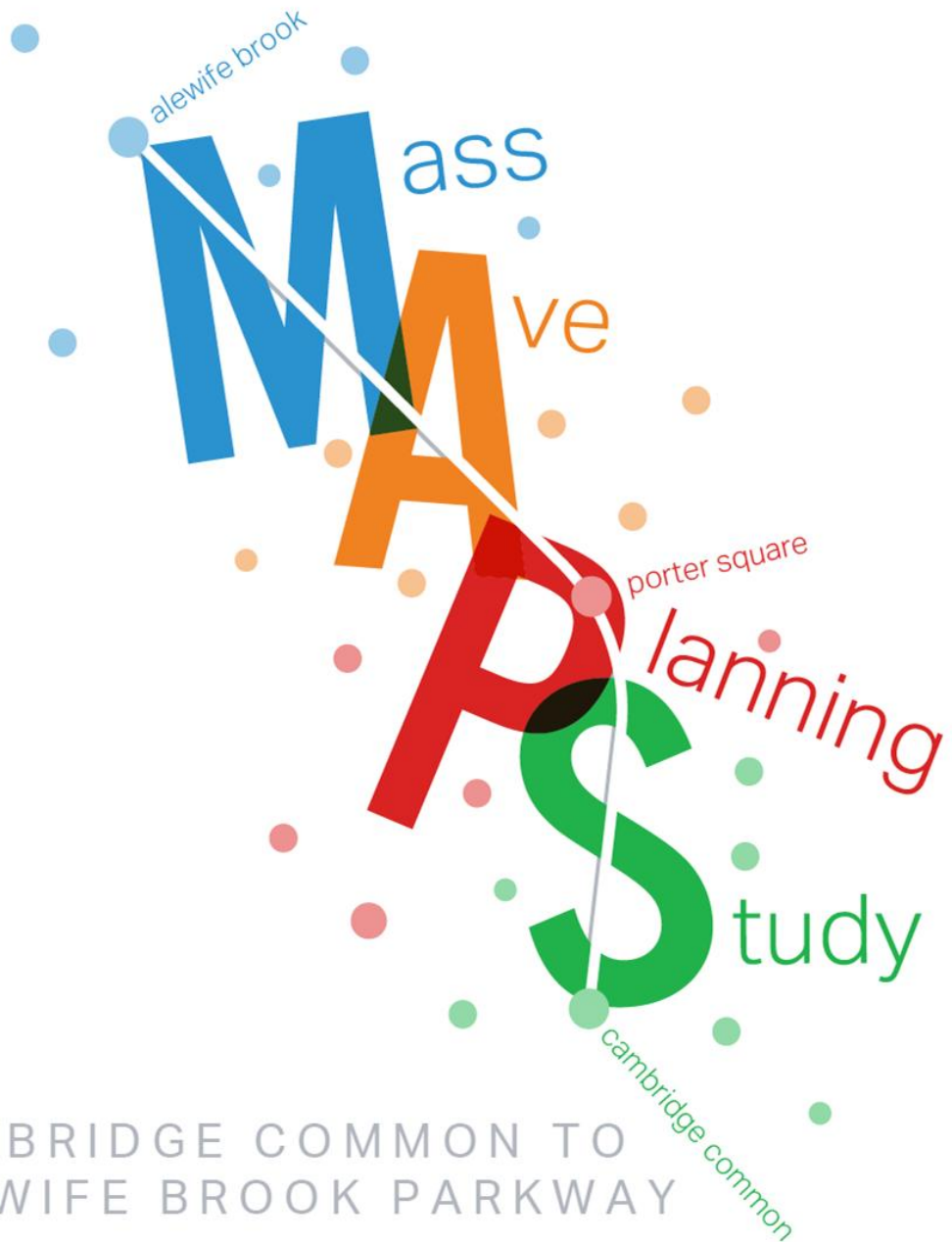
The Advisory Committee Secretary must take a roll-call to confirm attendance by committee members when the meeting is held with remote participation.

TAC secretary will call roll.

Meeting summaries

- City staff shared June 2025 and April 2025 meeting summaries with members and posted the document to the advisory committee webpage

02. Presentation: Mass Ave Planning Study



Ped/Bike/Transit Committees

Mass Ave Planning Study

08/19/25

CAMBRIDGE COMMON TO
ALEWIFE BROOK PARKWAY

**CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

CDD
Community
Development

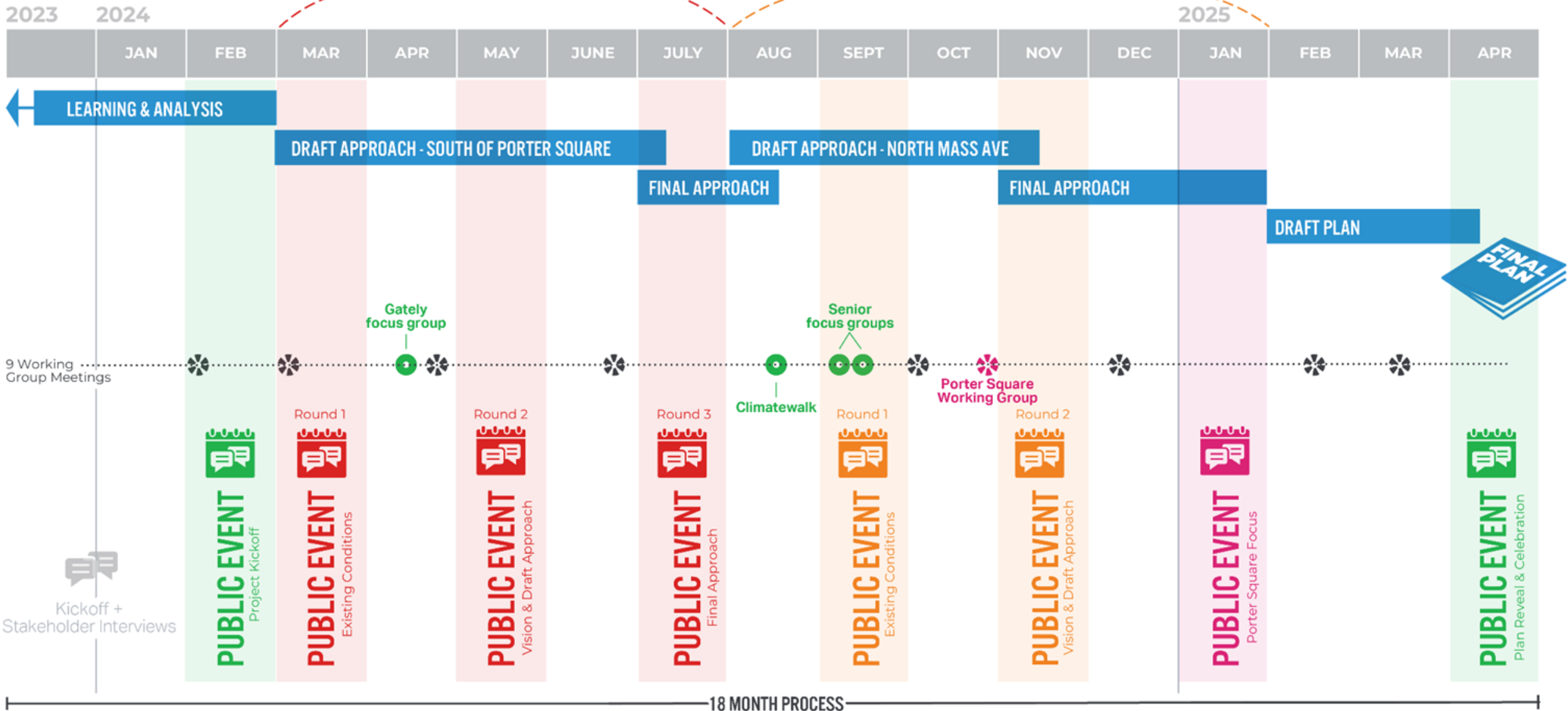
PROJECT RECAP

PHASE 1 PROJECT KICKOFF

PHASE 2 SOUTH OF PORTER SQUARE

PHASE 3 NORTH MASS AVE + PORTER SQUARE

PHASE 4 FINAL PLAN





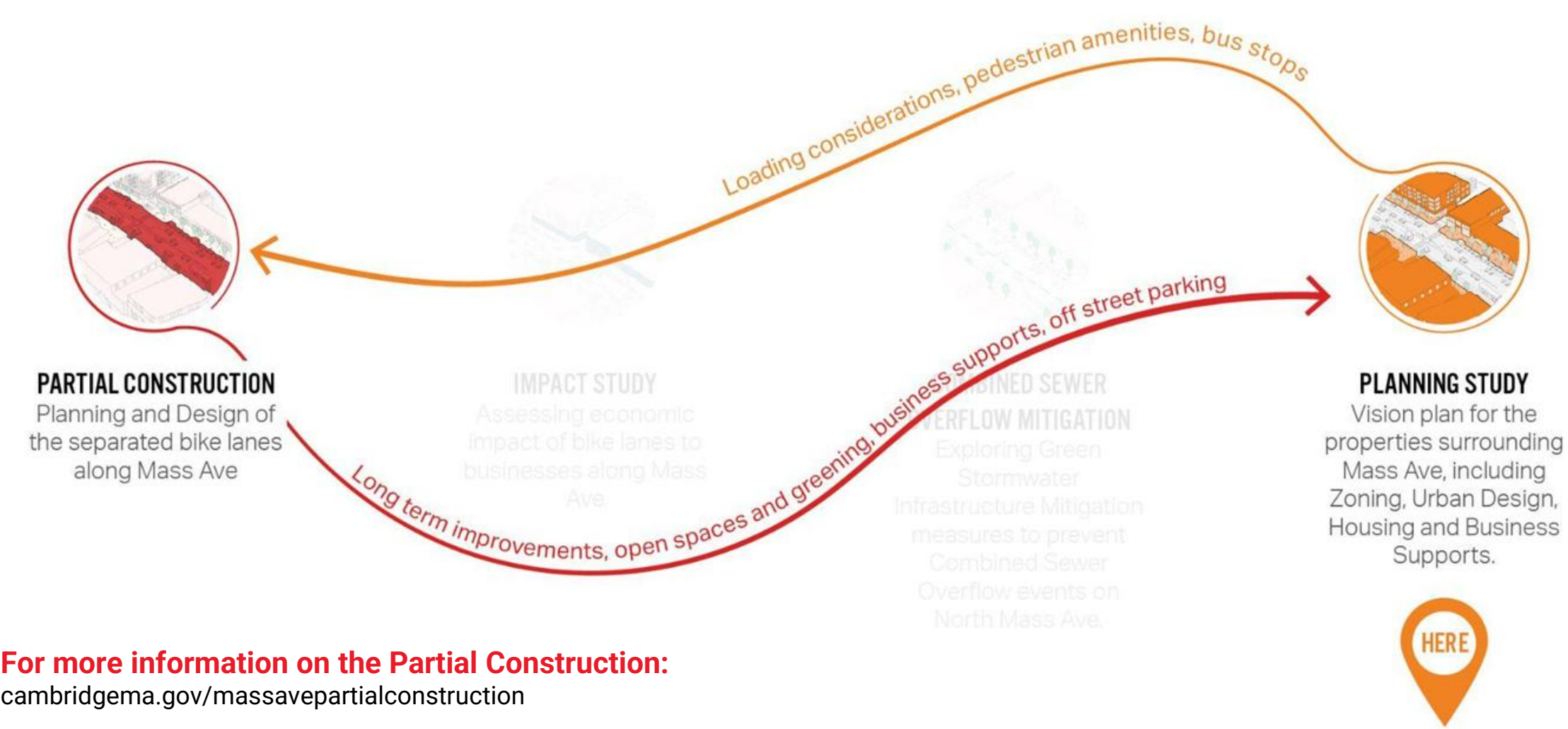
OUR CHARGE:

**WHAT DOES
MASS AVE
LOOK LIKE 15
YEARS FROM
NOW?**

... and HOW do we get there?

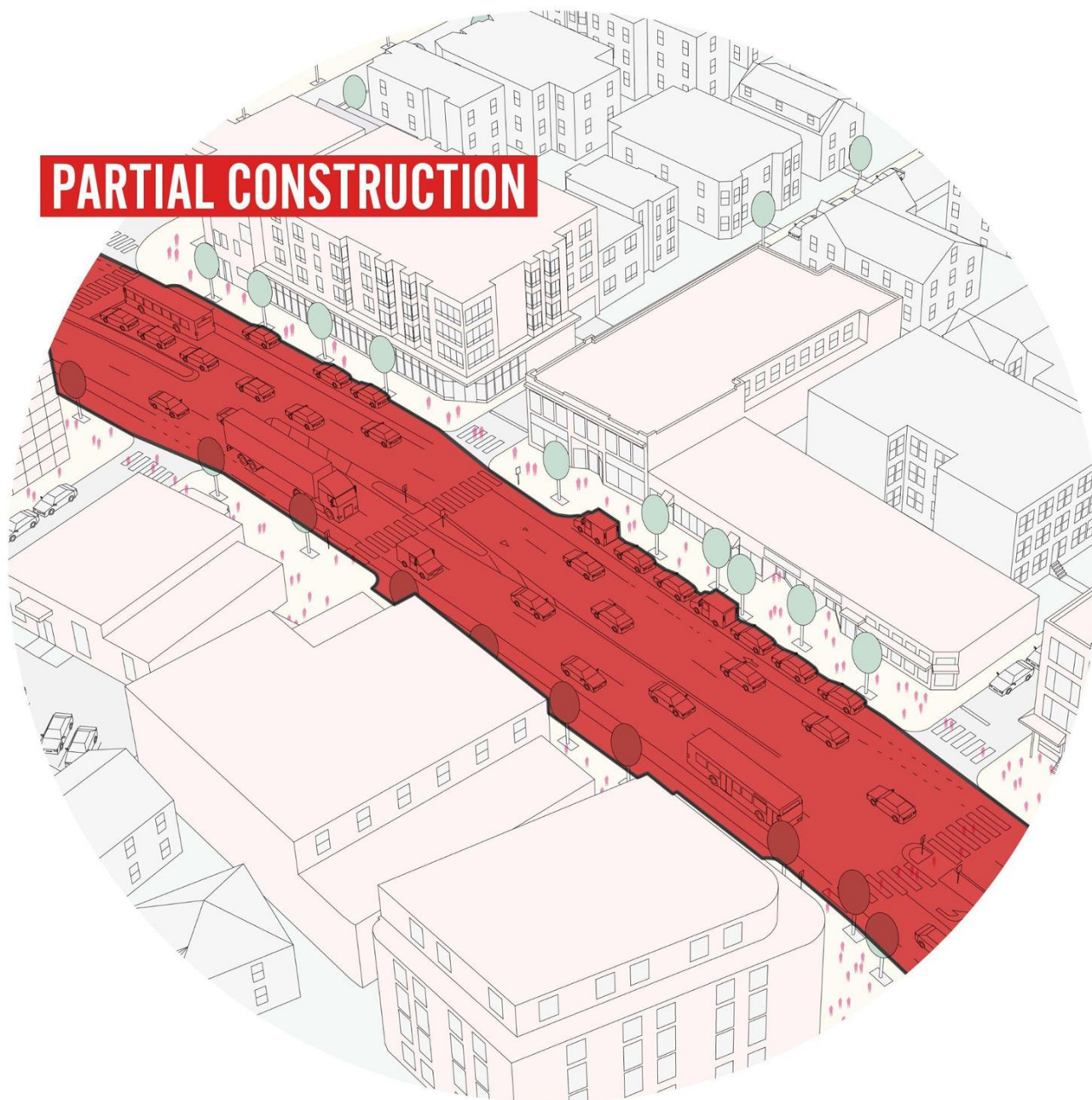
- **Prioritization of goals and implementation**
- **Coordination with other planning initiatives**
- **Policy recommendations**
- **Proposed changes in zoning**
- **Complementing Citywide Design Guidelines**
- **Long term infrastructure projects (public realm, open spaces, sidewalks, etc)**

CONCURRENT CITY INITIATIVES



For more information on the Partial Construction:
cambridgema.gov/massavepartialconstruction

Questions or comments? Contact: massave4@cambridgema.gov



The Mass Ave Partial Construction is focused on the **near term street design of Mass Ave, curb to curb**. The project was initiated in response to the city's Cycling Safety Ordinance (CSO) and includes:

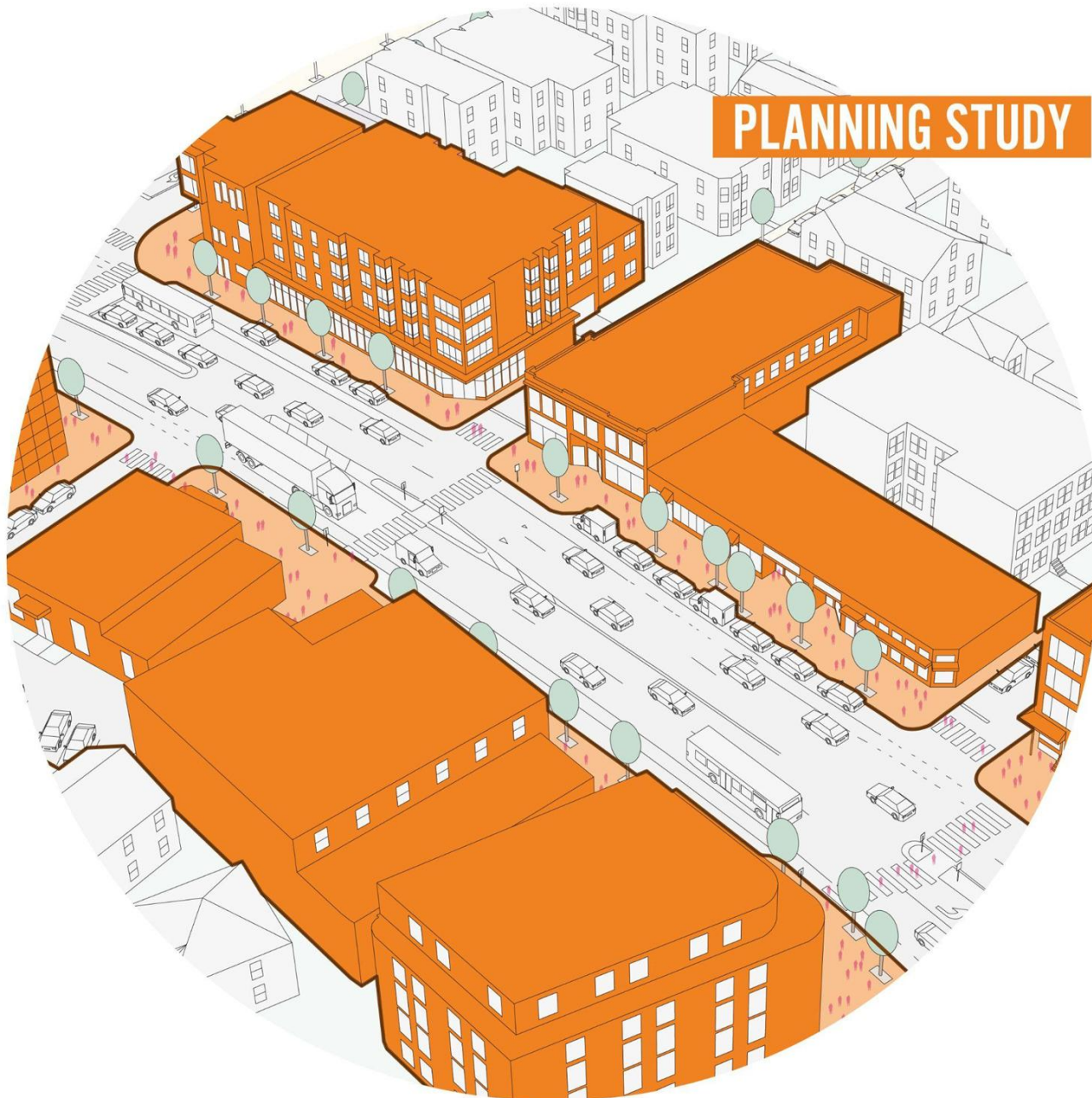
- The design of **separated bicycle lanes**
- Evaluating existing crossing locations for pedestrians and recommendations for additional crossing opportunities
- Curb use regulations (i.e., understand where parking/stopping/loading is possible and not possible)
- Options for bus priority to reduce travel times and improving the reliability of MBTA buses

For more information:

cambridgema.gov/massavepartialconstruction

Questions or comments? Contact:

massave4@cambridgema.gov



This Mass Ave Planning Study (MAPS) is a planning effort help map Mass Ave's future for the next 15 years and will focus on areas including:

- Increasing density & housing opportunities along the corridor
- Addressing affordability issues
- Supporting small & local businesses
- Creating and enhancing vibrant sidewalks & public spaces

For more information:

www.cambridgema.gov/massaveplan

Questions or comments? Contact:

Drew Kane, Senior City Planner
dkane@cambridgema.gov

REALIZING ENVISION CAMBRIDGE GOALS

Cambridge Street and Mass Ave were identified as two of the city's key commercial streets that have the potential to help the city achieve goals related to:



HOUSING

Address
affordability and
supply



BUSINESS

Support small
business
community



PUBLIC SPACE

Increase open
space resources and
improve our public
realm



CLIMATE

Plan for climate
mitigation and
resilience



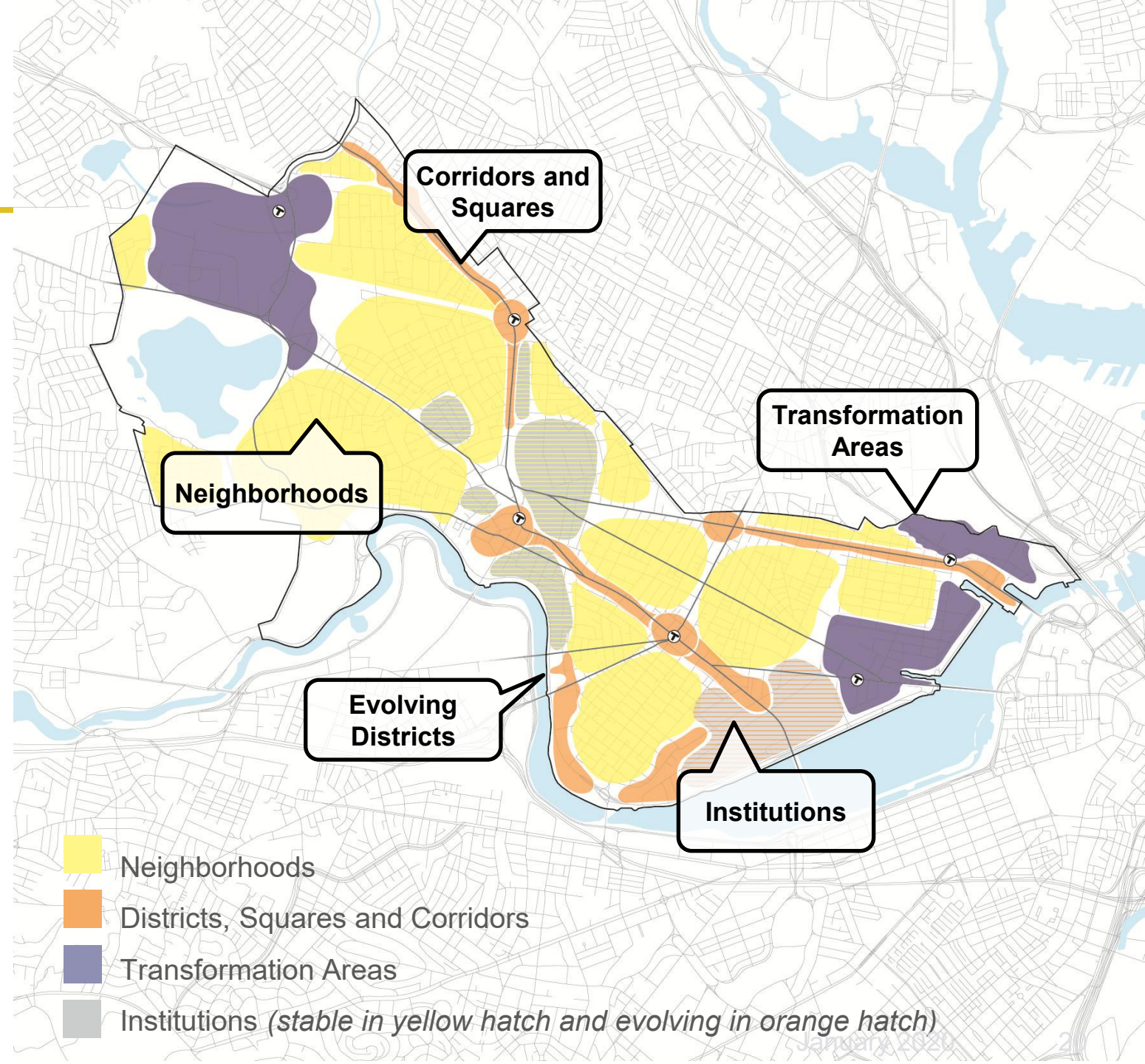
MOBILITY

Improve
infrastructure for
sustainable choices

ENVISION CAMBRIDGE

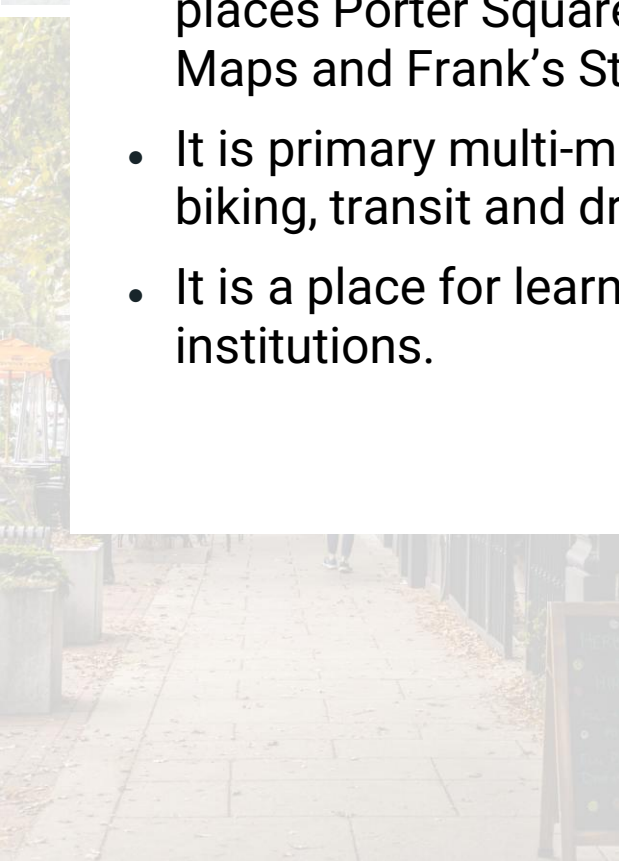
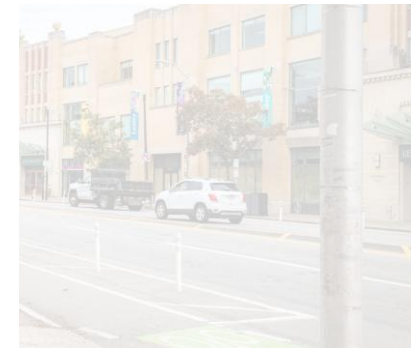
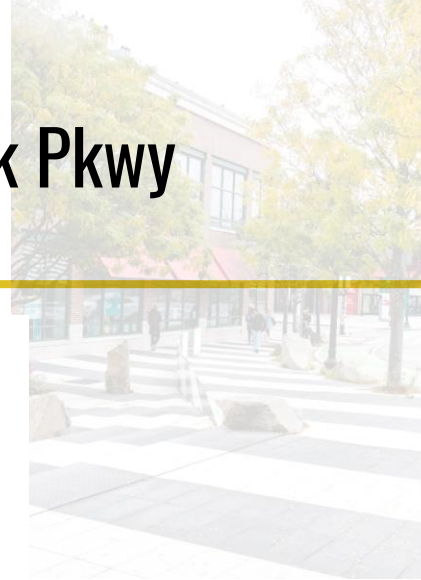
SHAPING CAMBRIDGE

- Corridors and squares were identified as areas for growth, specifically additional residential density near transit hubs.
- Recent planning for corridors and squares
 - **Mass Ave Planning Study**
 - Central Square Rezoning
 - Central Square City Lots
 - **Our Cambridge St**
- Recent upzoning affecting corridors and squares
 - Affordable Housing Overlay 2.0
 - Multi-family zoning

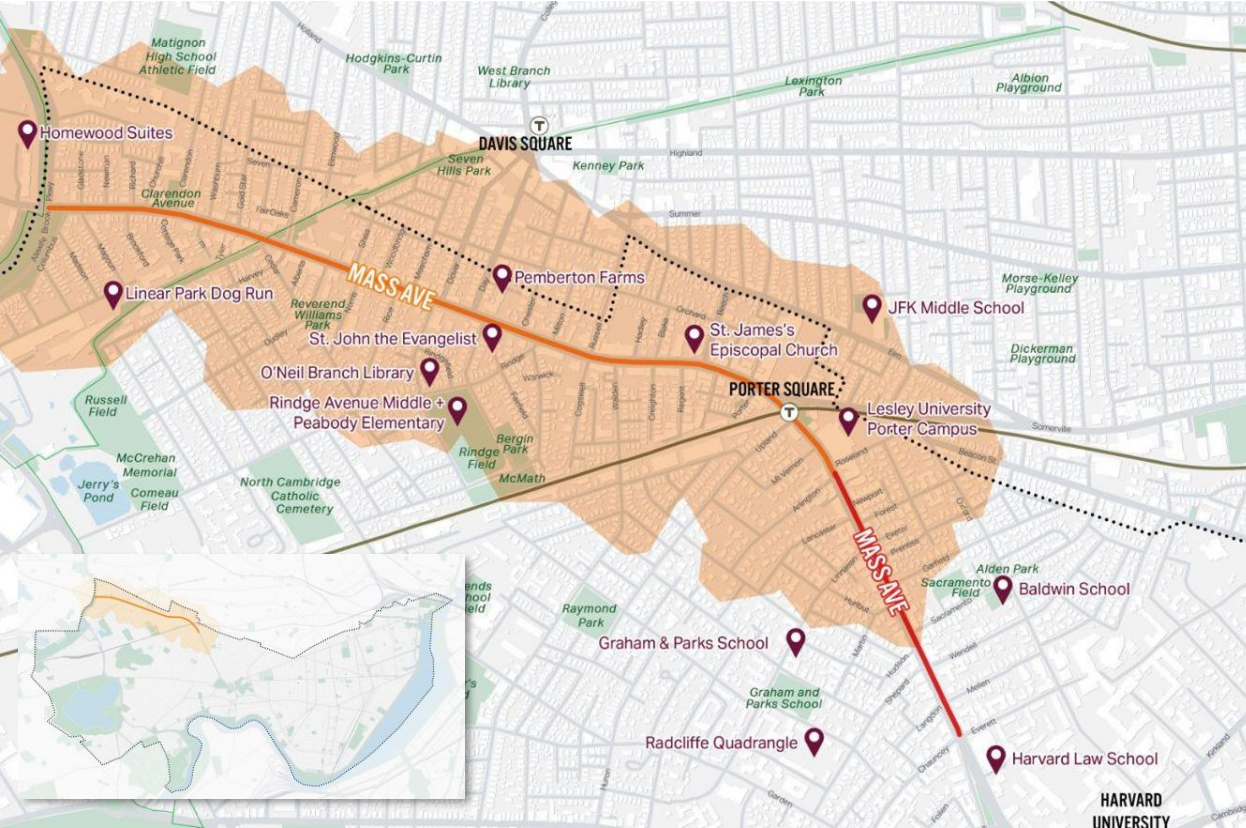


MASS AVE – Cambridge Common to Alewife Brook Pkwy

- **Mass Ave serves the everyday needs of the residents and neighborhoods** that call these streets home.
- They are **regional and citywide destinations** - think of places Porter Square Books, Pemberton Farms, Ward Maps and Frank's Steakhouse, among MANY others.
- It is primary multi-modal thoroughfare for walking, biking, transit and driving.
- It is a place for learning, lined with cultural and academic institutions.



STUDY AREA



North Mass Ave + Porter Square – 1.2 miles

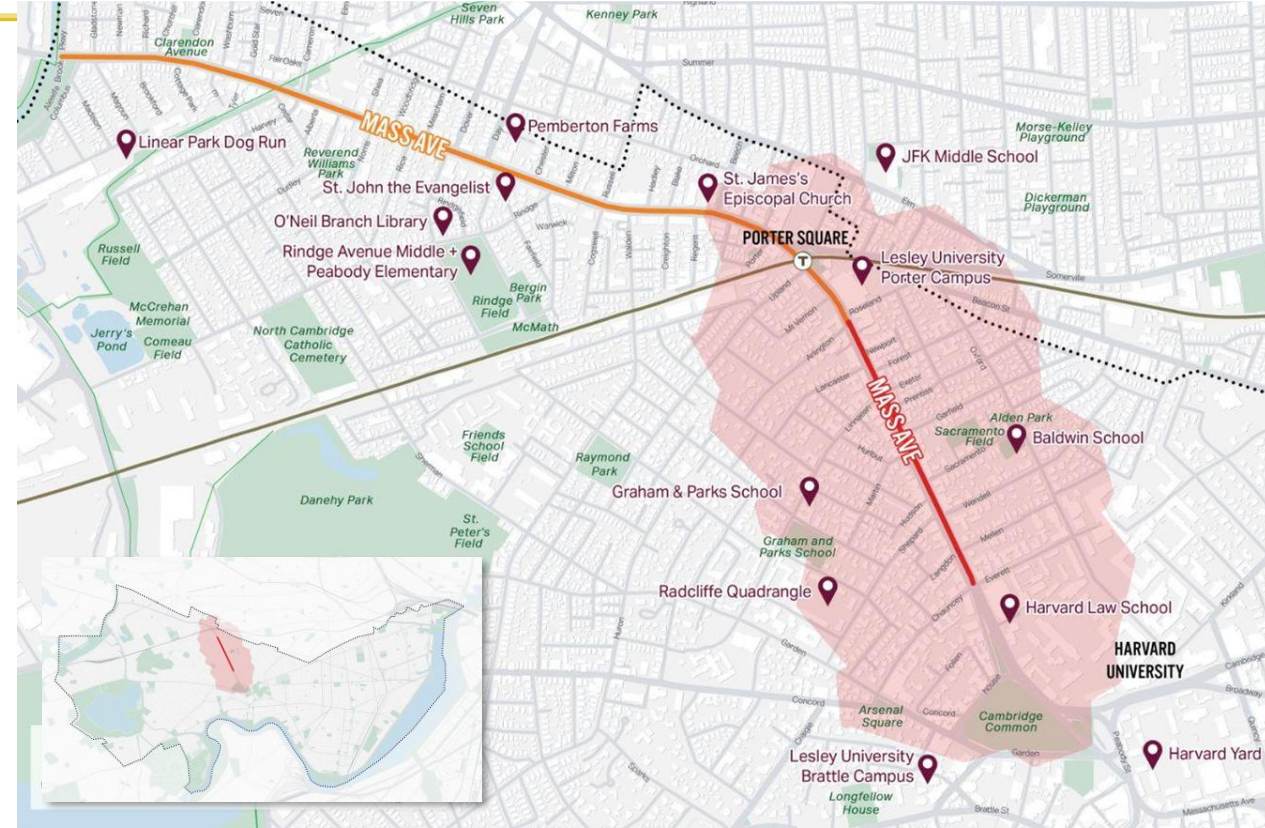
Within .25-mile walk of North Mass Ave + Porter Square:

Total population: 16,250

Total number of households: 7,500

Average Household Size: 2.14

203 first floor businesses



South of Porter Square – 0.8 miles

Within .25 mile walk of Mass Ave South of Porter Square:

Total population: 11,100

Total number of households: 4,700

Average Household Size: 1.89

88 first floor businesses

BUSINESSES

Mass Ave (North Mass Ave + Porter Square)

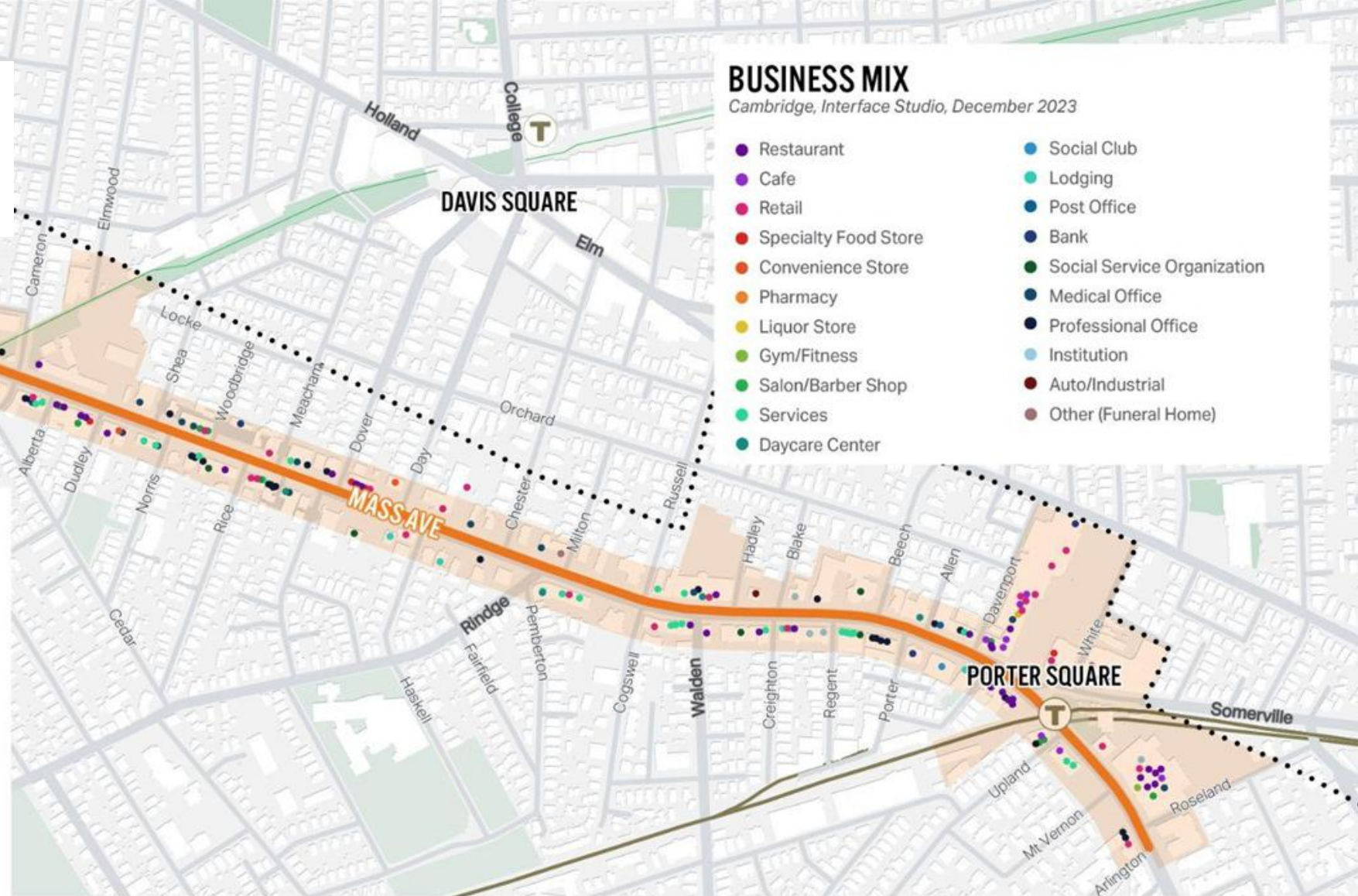
Total number of first floor businesses: **203**

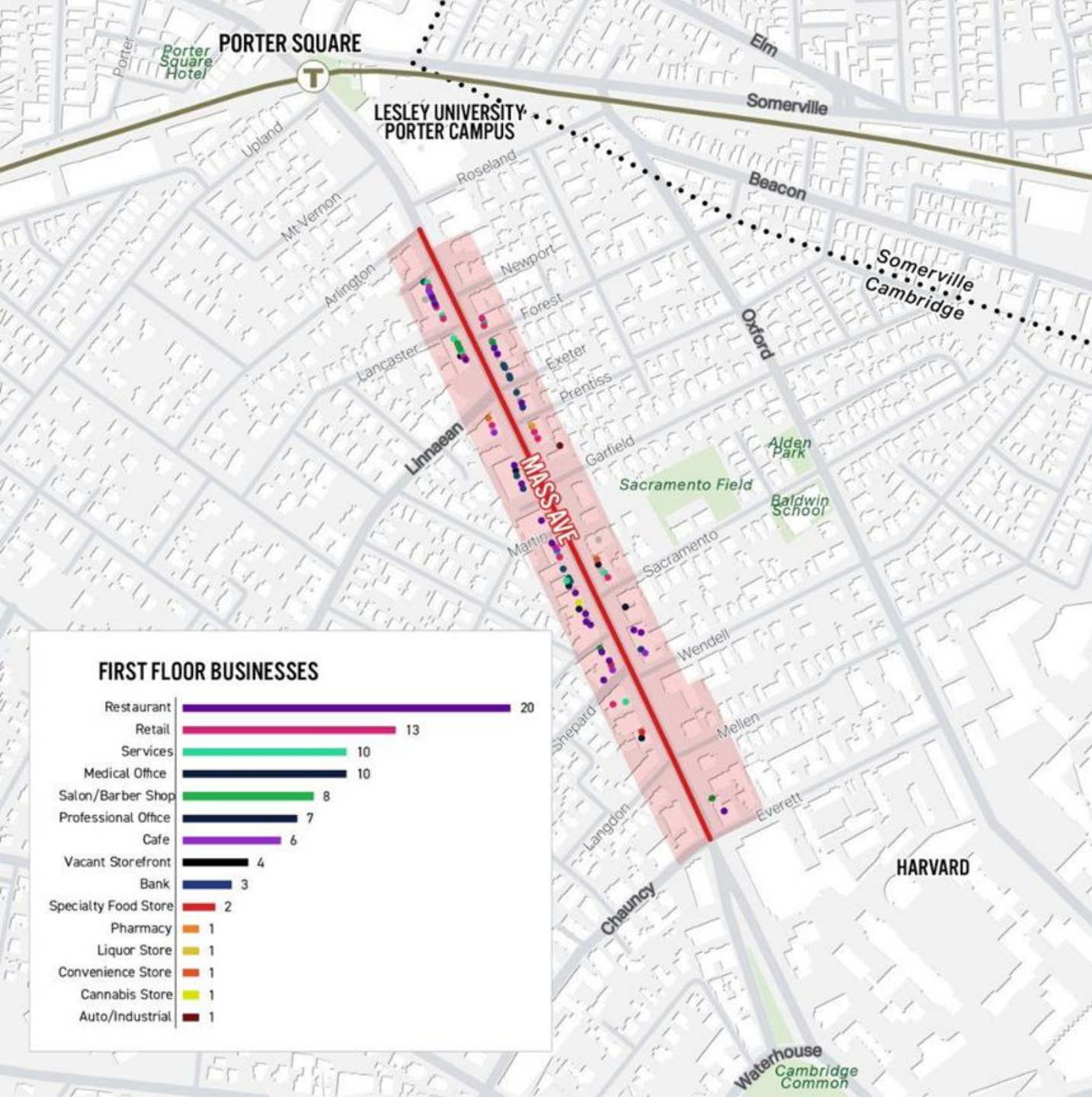
STOREFRONTS



BUSINESS MIX

Cambridge, Interface Studio, December 2023





BUSINESSES

Mass Ave (South of Porter)

Total number of first floor businesses: 88

BUSINESS MIX

Cambridge, Interface Studio, December 2023



HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PIPELINE

Cambridge Open Data: Development Log, Affordable Housing Overlay Pipeline, Somerville Permits 2022-Present, Interface Studio, January 2024

- South of Porter Square Study Area
- North Mass Ave + Porter Square Study Area
- ... City Boundary

Market Rate Development Pipeline

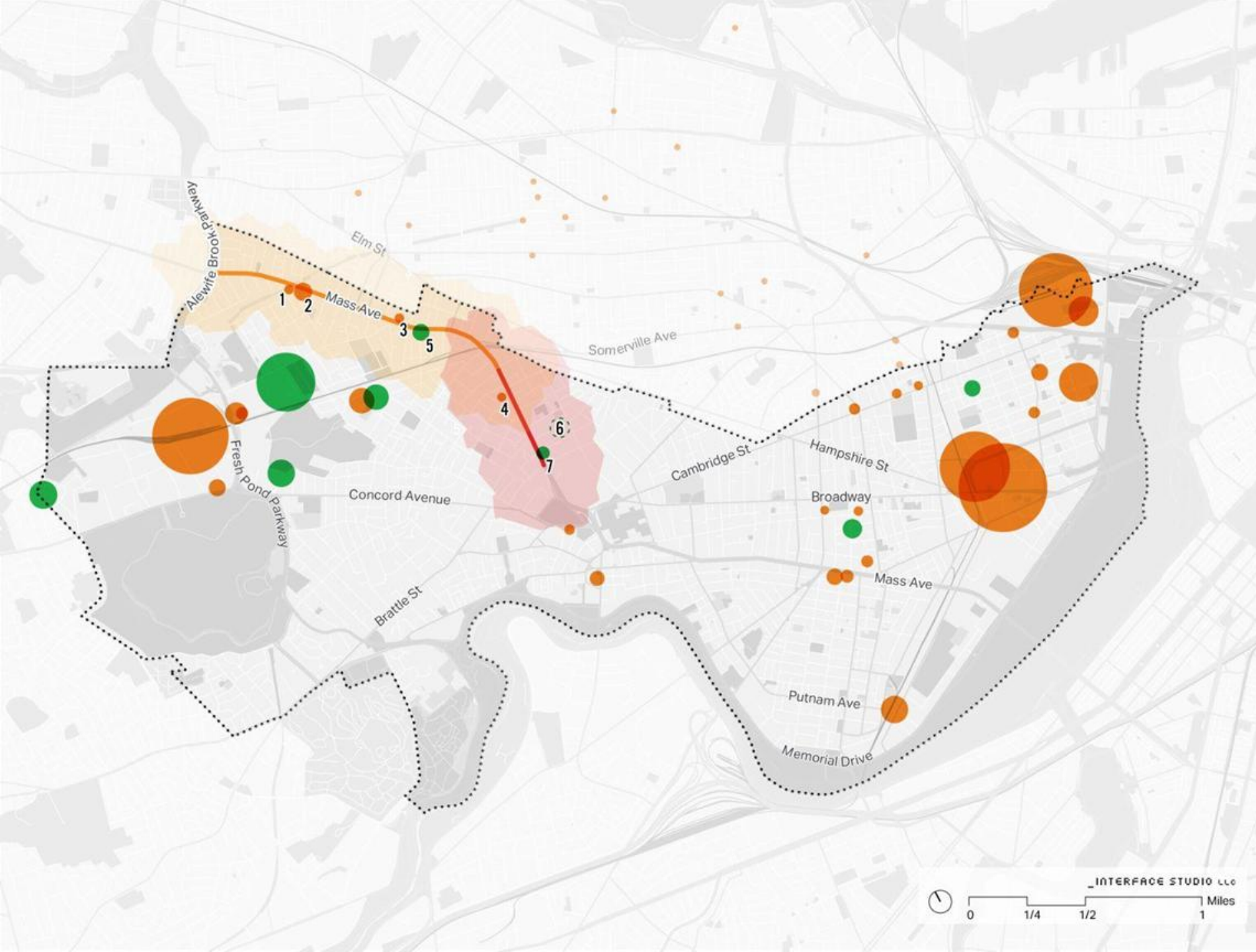
Developments in Service Area

1	1 Cedar St	8 Units
2	2400 Mass Ave	56 Units
3	2161 Mass Ave	8 Units
4	3-5 Linnaean St.	5 Units

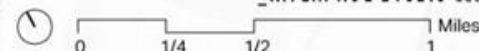
Affordable Housing Overlay Development Pipeline

Developments in Service Area

5	2072 Mass Ave	TBD
6	28+30 Wendell St	TBD
7	1627 Mass Ave ("4 Mellen St")	29 Units



INTERFACE STUDIO LLC

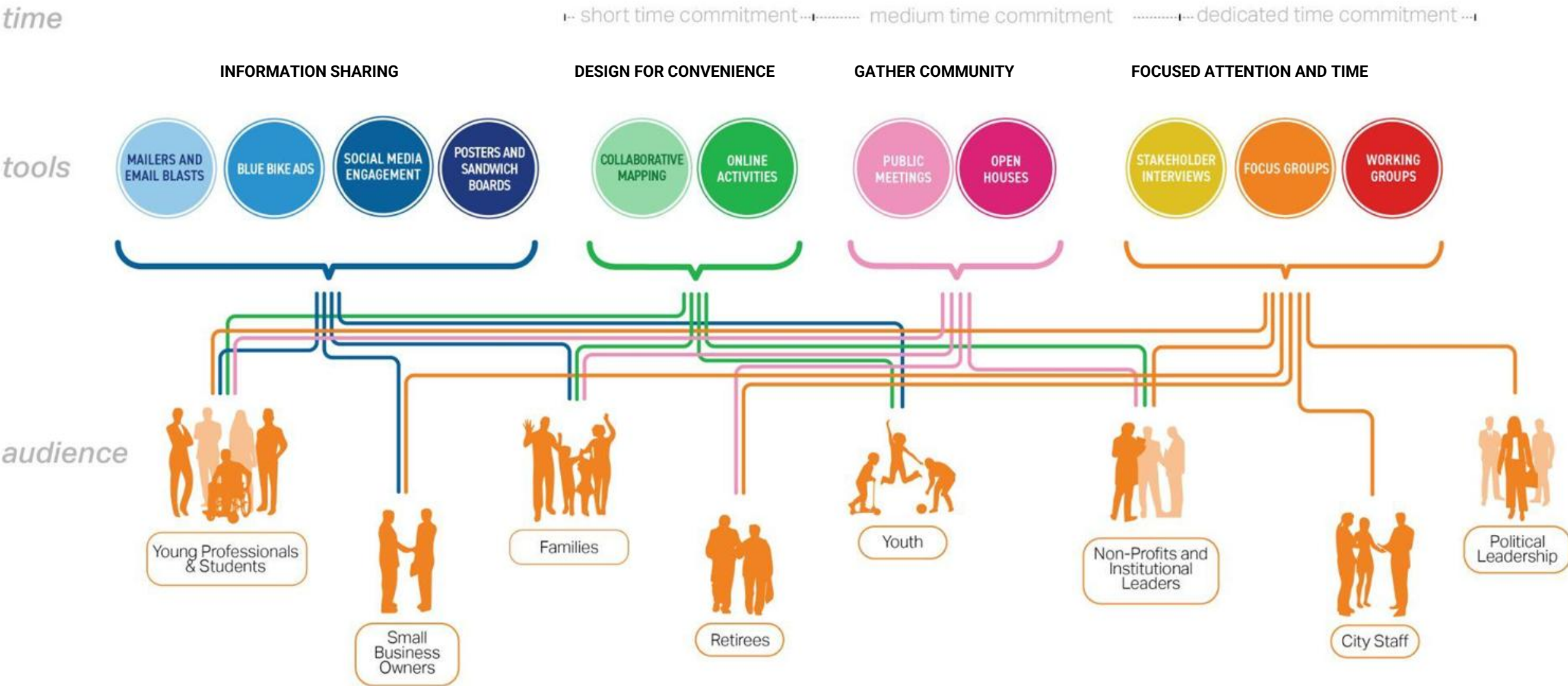


COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS: ENGAGEMENT AND TAKEAWAYS

MASS AVE PLANNING STUDY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



ENGAGEMENT METHODS



ENGAGEMENT METHODS



THEMES from the MAPS Community Engagement Process

MORE OF A NEIGHBORHOOD & DESTINATION

Transform the corridor as a **livable, walkable neighborhood** with improved amenities and places for all ages and abilities and **create a more vibrant atmosphere** by encouraging pop-up shops, events and active storefronts.

MORE INVITING

Focus on **creating a more attractive public realm and sense of place** along Mass Ave through greening, public artwork, and more places to gather.

EASIER TO GET AROUND

Develop a **balanced and integrated sustainable transportation network** that focuses on actions to **improve accessibility and space for people walking**.

MORE HOUSING OPTIONS

Accommodate more **housing development along Mass Ave** through increased density and infrastructure planning. **Address the need for affordable housing** and integrate it into the existing neighborhood fabric.

GOAL

1

MORE OF A NEIGHBORHOOD & DESTINATION

Transform the corridor as a livable neighborhood with places for all ages and create a more vibrant atmosphere by encouraging pop-up shops, events and active storefronts.

A

FOSTER A MIX OF
NEIGHBORHOOD-SERVING,
FAMILY-FRIENDLY GOODS AND
SERVICES

B

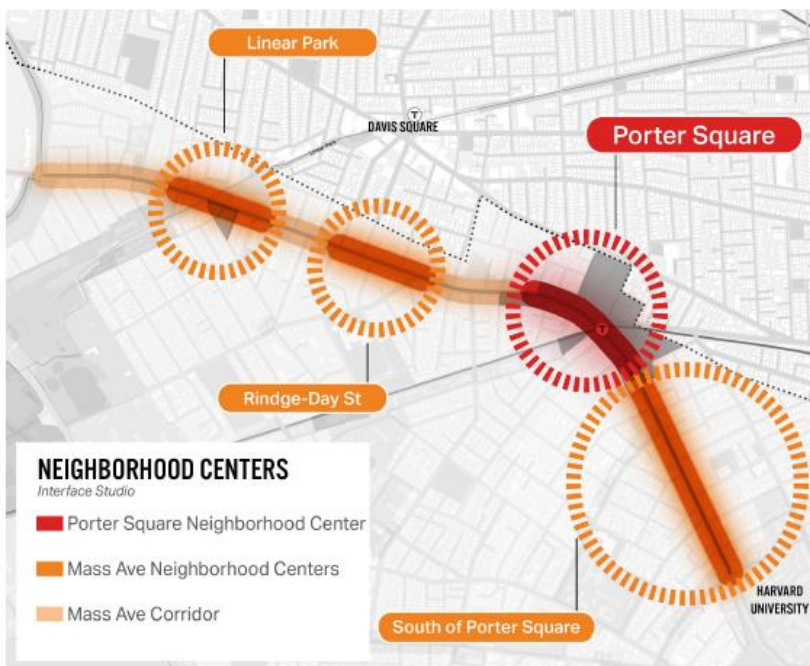
MARKET THE CORRIDOR TO
SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

C

ORGANIZE AND HOST MORE
COMMUNITY EVENTS AND
PERFORMANCE ART

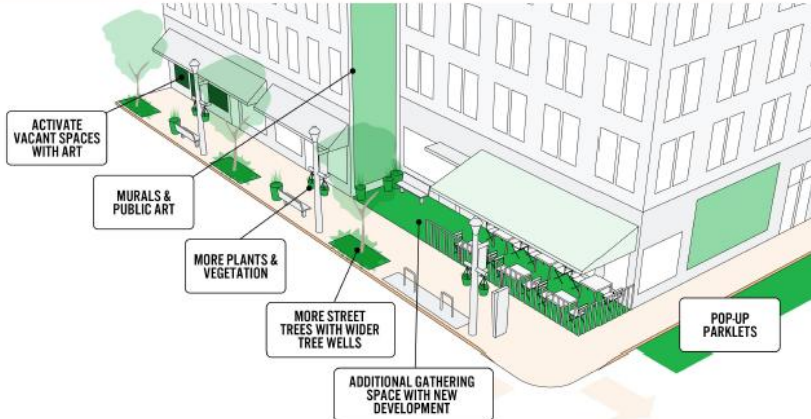
KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Conduct a feasibility study to understand how businesses in the Mass Ave study area can best organize, such as a business association.
2. Target outreach to existing businesses on available grants and programs.
3. Explore ways to keep commercial rents affordable and vacancies low.
4. Create and implement a branding strategy to highlight Mass Ave's identity.
5. Recruit new businesses to the corridor.
6. Connect with local artists and performers from the community and local student population.



GOAL 2 MORE INVITING

Focus on creating a more attractive public realm along Mass Ave through greening, public artwork, and more places to gather.



LUNDER ARTS PLAZA



Collaborate with private property owners to help activate publicly accessible spaces



A SHARE COMMUNITY IDENTITY THROUGH CREATIVITY AND ART

Public art, murals, and creative installations can tell local stories, highlight cultural diversity, and make shared spaces more welcoming and engaging for residents and visitors alike.

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Target larger walls and open spaces as locations for neighborhood murals and public art.
2. Install decorative street lighting and tree lighting in key commercial areas.
3. Activate vacant commercial spaces with public art.



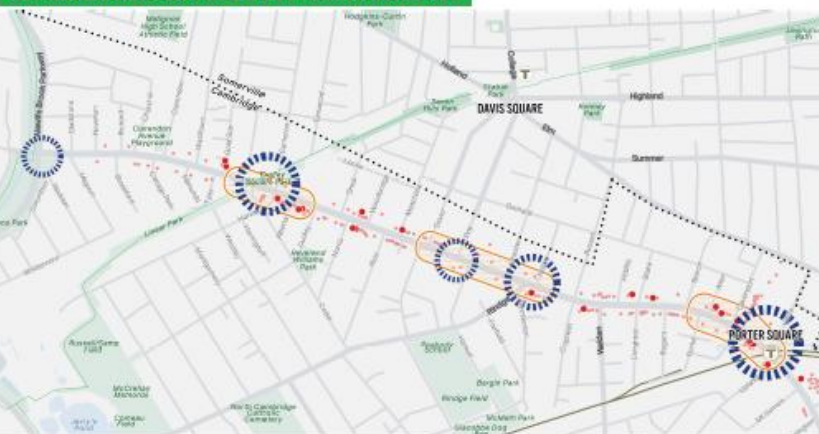
DECORATIVE LIGHTING



TREE LIGHTING



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ART - NORTH MASS AVE



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ART - SOUTH OF PORTER



Source: Interface Studio, Cambridge Retail Vacant Storefronts

- Existing Businesses
- Vacant Storefronts
- Potential for Public Art
- Potential Area for Decorative Street/Tree Lighting and Murals

"Night lighting!.. Inviting, human-level lighting along entire length..."

- community quote

"More impromptu art!"

- community quote

B PLANT MORE TREES AND VEGETATION ALONG CORRIDOR AND OPEN SPACES

More trees are needed to help the city create Cool Corridors for all modes of travel and activity. These recommendations are aligned with the Urban Forestry Master Plan.

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Install more street trees and maximize planting in public spaces.
2. Enlarge existing street tree wells and provide more space for additional ground-level vegetation.
3. Work with property owners to maintain trees and vegetation on their property.
4. Explore opportunities to expand public realm space for trees and more plantings.
5. Coordinate with citywide green stormwater infrastructure mitigation measures.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TREES & SHADE - NORTH MASS AVE



OPPORTUNITIES FOR TREES & SHADE - SOUTH OF PORTER



"New development with setbacks could provide space for more greenery and make it easier to walk."

- community quote

Source: Interface Studio, Urban Heat Island Technical Report, Cambridge ClimateWorks

- High Priority**
Areas that lack street trees and are recommended to explore adding street trees in those locations.
- Medium Priority**
Areas with opportunities to plant more street trees to create a more consistent placement of street trees.
- Lower Priority**
Areas that currently have a consistent placement of street trees.
- Shade Priority Areas**
These are areas that need to be prioritized for tree plantings and near-term interventions to increase pedestrian comfort.

SHADE STRUCTURES



WIDE TREE WELLS





CREATE MORE PLACES FOR THE COMMUNITY TO GATHER

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Partner with property owners and institutions to activate underutilized spaces.
2. Identify opportunities for pop-up parklets and curb bumpouts on Mass Ave and side streets.
3. Advocate for affordable indoor community event or meeting space on ground floor in new developments.
4. Create meaningful connections to existing open spaces nearby.
5. Leverage new large-scale development to create new open space.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVED PUBLIC SPACE



NORTH MASS AVE

Key locations include:

- Alewife Brook Parkway
- Clarendon Ave Park
- Linear Park
- St. James's Lawn
- Lunder Arts Plaza

Create better connections from Mass Ave to: Russell Field, Reverend William Park, Peabody School, Rindge Field, Gerard Bergin Park, McMath Park

PORTER SQUARE

Key locations include:

- Porter Square Plaza
- MBTA Plaza
- Potential significant new open space with large-scale redevelopment

SOUTH OF PORTER SQUARE

Key locations include:

- Cambridge Common

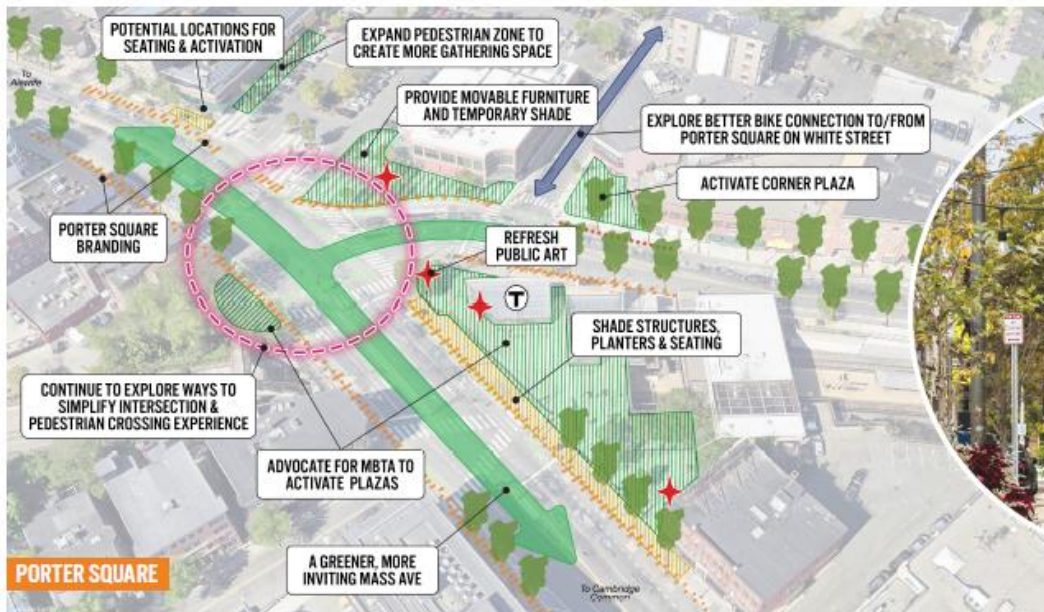
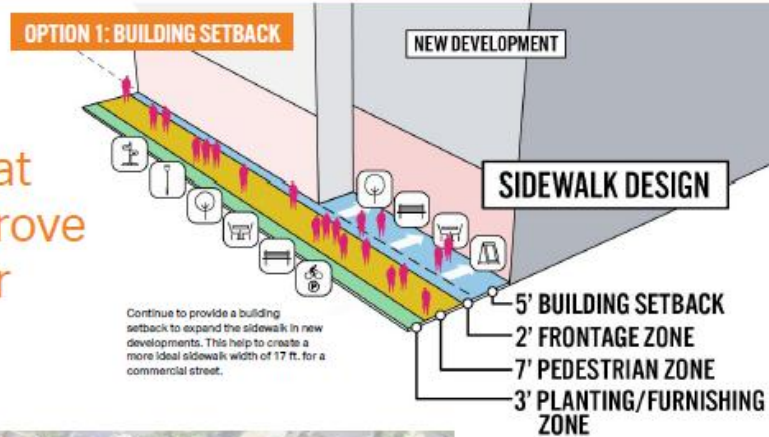
Create better connections from Mass Ave to: Sacramento Field, Alden Park, Graham and Parks School

GOAL

3

EASIER TO GET AROUND

Develop a balanced and integrated sustainable transportation network that focuses on actions to improve accessibility and space for people walking.

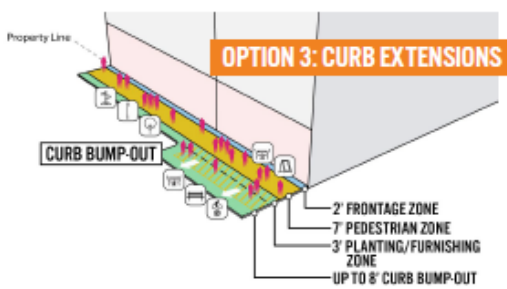
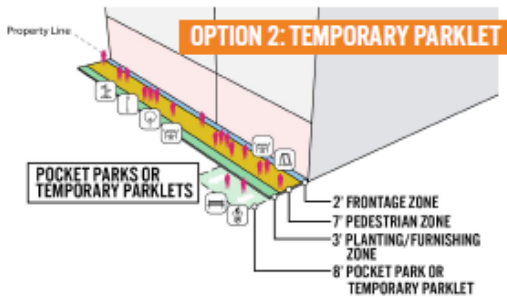


A DESIGN FOR PEDESTRIAN COMFORT AND ACCESSIBILITY

A pedestrian-friendly environment is essential for creating a vibrant, inclusive, and accessible Mass Ave. Prioritizing pedestrian comfort and accessibility helps to increase foot traffic for businesses, promotes social interaction, and enhances safety for all users, including individuals with disabilities, seniors, and families with young children.

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Install more benches, shade structures, and other public infrastructure.
2. Balance sidewalk activity with access.



B PROVIDE SAFE, CONVENIENT ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Enhancing access to sustainable transportation options along Mass Ave will promote safer, more convenient mobility for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders while balancing the needs of local businesses and vehicle access. While the scope of this study does not include street design, continued coordination will be necessary for long-term safety and mobility goals.

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Provide safer, more visible crossings on Mass Ave and intersecting streets.
2. Work with MBTA to install more bus shelters where appropriate.
3. Provide additional bike parking and Bluebike station areas.
4. Encourage shared off-street parking facilities.
5. Coordinate for better curb management.



C STREAMLINE SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

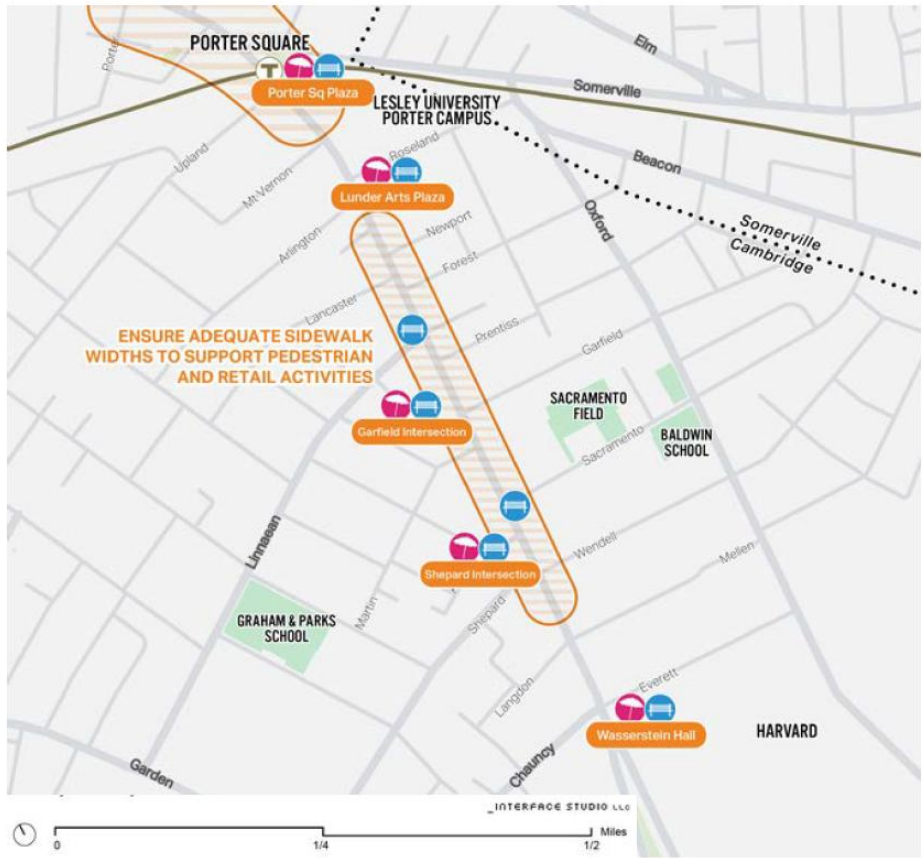
Improving signage and wayfinding along Mass Ave will enhance navigation for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers while contributing to a more cohesive and visually appealing streetscape. Focusing on clear, well-placed signage at key locations will help residents and visitors easily find destinations, transit connections, and key landmarks, while reducing visual clutter caused by outdated or redundant signs.

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Locate branded pedestrian wayfinding signage at key gateways and destinations.
2. Consolidate and clarify roadway signage.

D STUDY SPECIFIC LOCATIONS AND INTERSECTIONS ALONG MASS AVE

This plan recommends further study of Porter Square, Linear Park crossing, and Alewife Brook Parkway in greater detail. These locations experience high volumes of pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles, creating complex circulation challenges that require significant data collection and traffic analysis to identify targeted improvements. Future studies should explore potential solutions such as signal optimization, intersection redesigns, pedestrian safety enhancements, and bicycle infrastructure improvements.



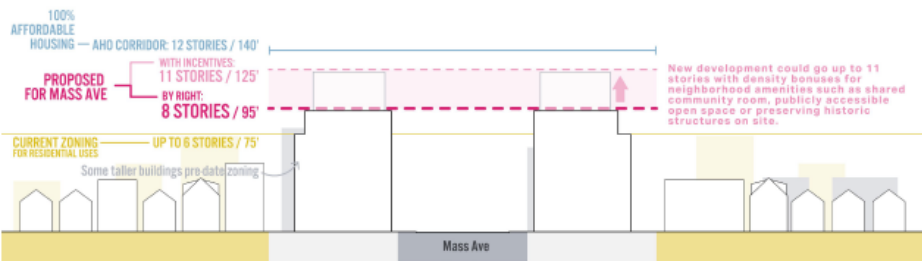
GOAL

4

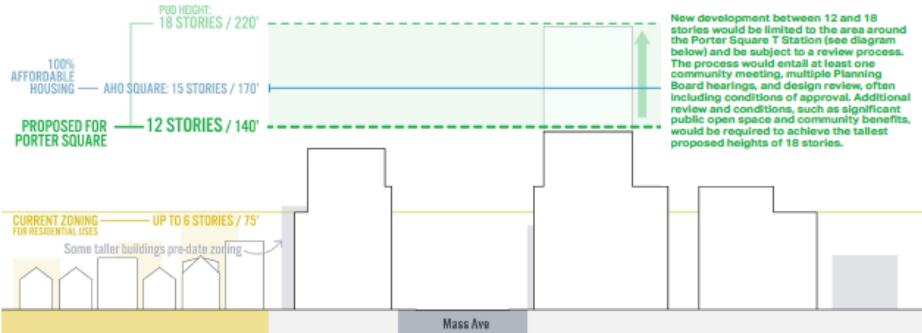
MORE HOUSING

Accommodate more housing development along Mass Ave through increased density and infrastructure planning. Address the need for affordable housing and integrate it into the existing neighborhood fabric.

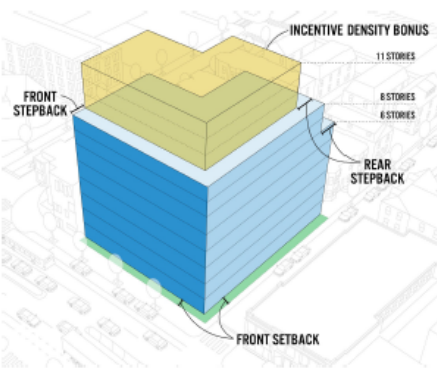
PROPOSED HEIGHTS FOR MASS AVE



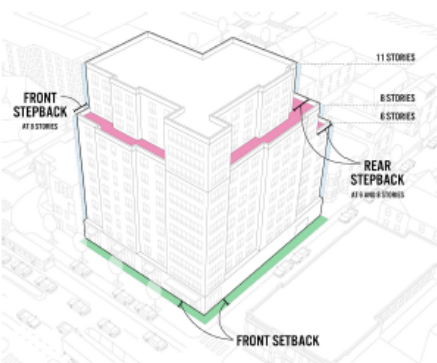
PROPOSED HEIGHTS FOR PORTER SQUARE



ZONING MASSING EXAMPLE



CONTEXT SENSITIVE DESIGN



A ENCOURAGE MORE HOUSING ON THE CORRIDOR

More housing and residents on the corridor will help to support more retail activity, transit ridership and non-car travel, and help reduce some of the housing pressure due to limited supply. Increasing density can also provide opportunities to gain community benefits, such as active ground floor uses and additional public space.

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Simplify the zoning code and streamline processes.
2. Adjust zoning along the corridor to achieve zoning objectives to build more housing and prioritize mixed use development.

B CONTINUE TO SUPPORT CITY POLICY FOR A DIVERSE MIX OF HOUSING PRICE POINTS

As Mass Ave evolves over the next 15 years, it is essential to ensure that new development contributes to a range of housing options at different price points, with a strong emphasis on affordability. Supporting the city's broader housing goals means encouraging both market-rate and income-restricted affordable units, expanding access to housing for a diverse range of residents.

KEY STRATEGIES:

1. Encourage the development of both market-rate and affordable housing.
2. Explore other strategies and funding mechanisms for encouraging affordable and mixed-income housing.

FROM PLANNING TO ZONING:

What makes a good main street?

What makes a good Main Street?

Buildings are primarily mixed-use with community-oriented active uses on the ground floor and housing above.

Commercial-only buildings are allowed but at a much lower density.



What makes a good Main Street?

To boost street-level activity, ground floor uses that encourage foot traffic should be incentivized.



Retail



Restaurants & bars



Convenience & grocery stores



Bakeries



Arts & cultural spaces



Community gathering spaces



Libraries

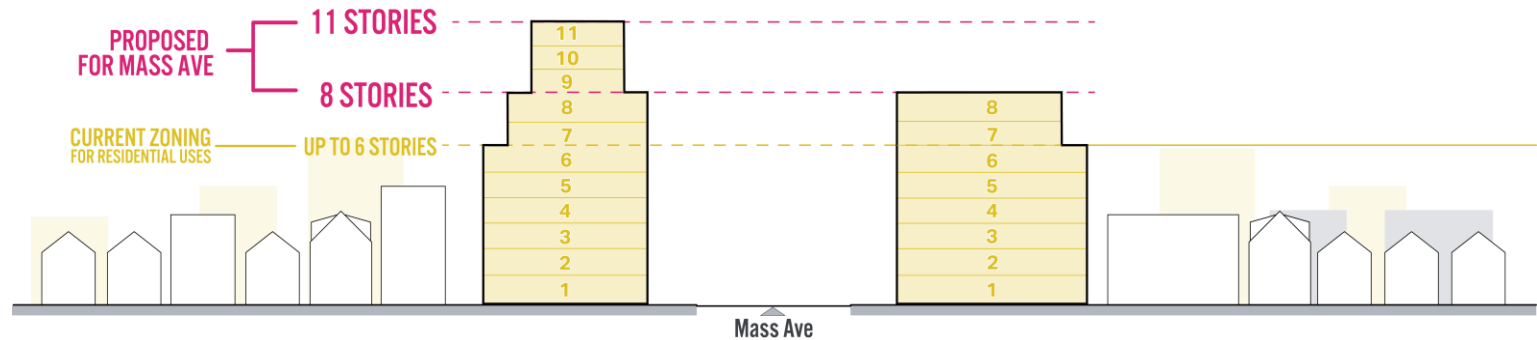


Daycare centers

What makes a good Main Street?

Building heights generally follow a 1:1 ratio of street wall height to roadway width.

Additional height may be allowed if it is set back further from the street and heights decrease towards the neighborhoods.



What makes a good Main Street?

Buildings are set back from the property line to extend the public realm. It could include expanded sidewalk space or spillover space for the uses inside the building, like outdoor dining.

Side setbacks are minimal to encourage a continuous street wall and rear setbacks are used to transition from the main street to the neighborhoods.



What makes a good Main Street?

Main streets have some scattered open spaces like pocket parks and plazas. Residential buildings may have private open spaces on the upper floors like balconies and roof decks.



What makes a good Main Street?

Buildings are designed with taller ground floors to support active uses like shops and restaurants.

Facades maintain a decent level of transparency, avoiding blank walls.

Long stretches of building frontage have multiple entrances to maintain an active street.

Facades have a variety of projecting and recessing elements, creating visual interest.



ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Allow taller heights for housing, maintain existing non-residential density limits.
- Encourage active ground floor uses through residential height bonuses.
- Implement building and site design standards that support an active streetscape.
- Allow greater development potential in Porter Square in exchange for community benefits.
- Keep current development review thresholds.



PRIORITIZE HOUSING + INCENTIVIZE ACTIVE USES

Allow greater heights for **housing** than commercial uses and offer even more residential height for projects that activate the streetscape.

Active uses should include both neighborhood-serving and destination activities.

Zoning can allow for a range of uses but cannot create the exact businesses people want to see. The market likely will not support retail everywhere.

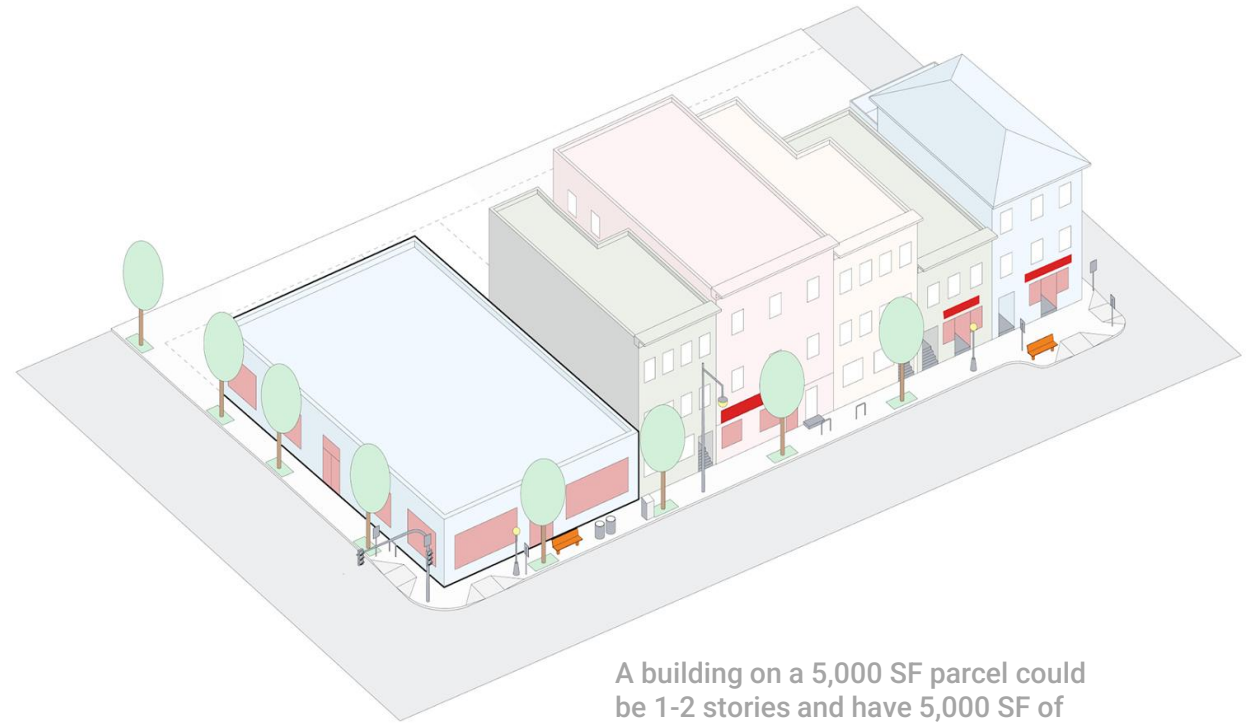


MAINTAIN DENSITY LIMITS ON COMMERCIAL ONLY BUILDINGS

Maintain density and height limits on commercial only buildings to mitigate potential introduction of large lab and commercial office buildings.

Mass Ave

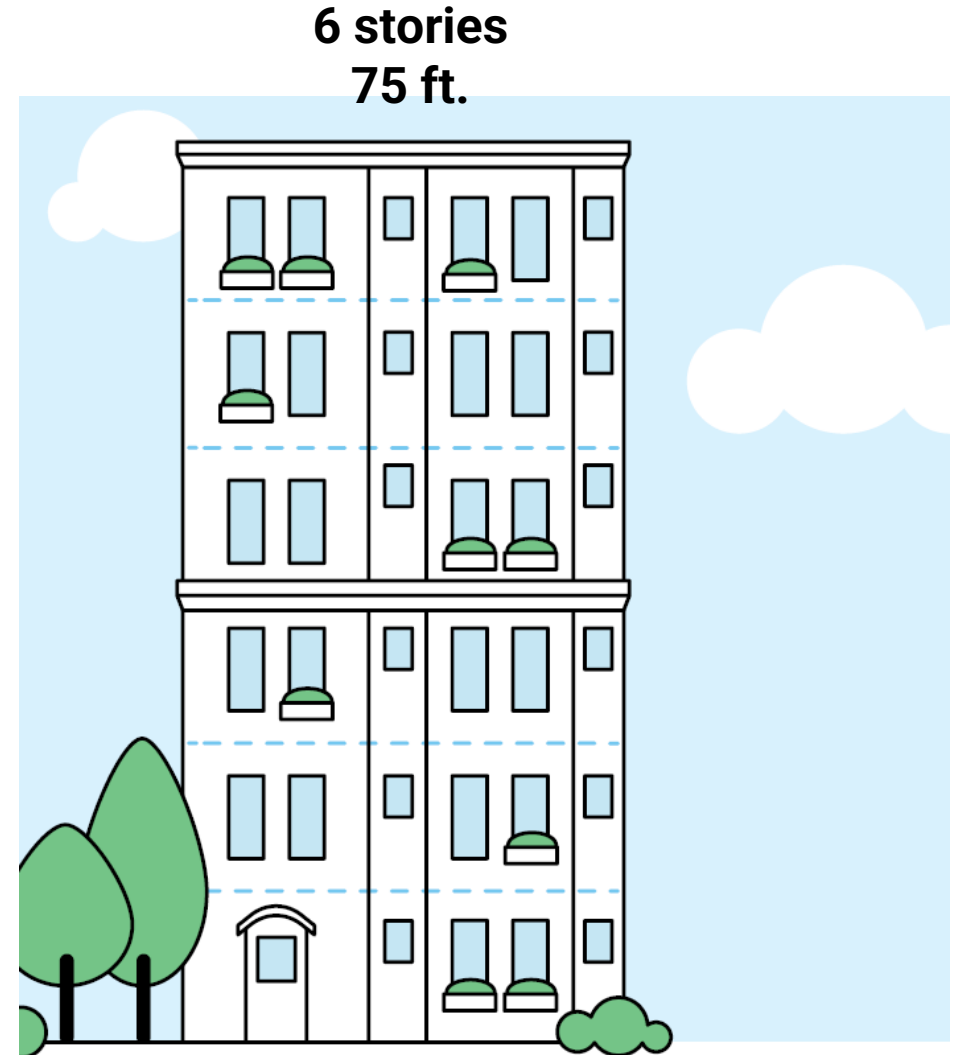
- Height: 45' / 2-3 stories
- FAR: 1.0



A building on a 5,000 SF parcel could be 1-2 stories and have 5,000 SF of commercial use space

CURRENT RESIDENTIAL HEIGHT LIMITS

The multifamily housing zoning petitions made 6 stories / 75 ft. the baseline height limit for most of Mass Ave and Cambridge Street.

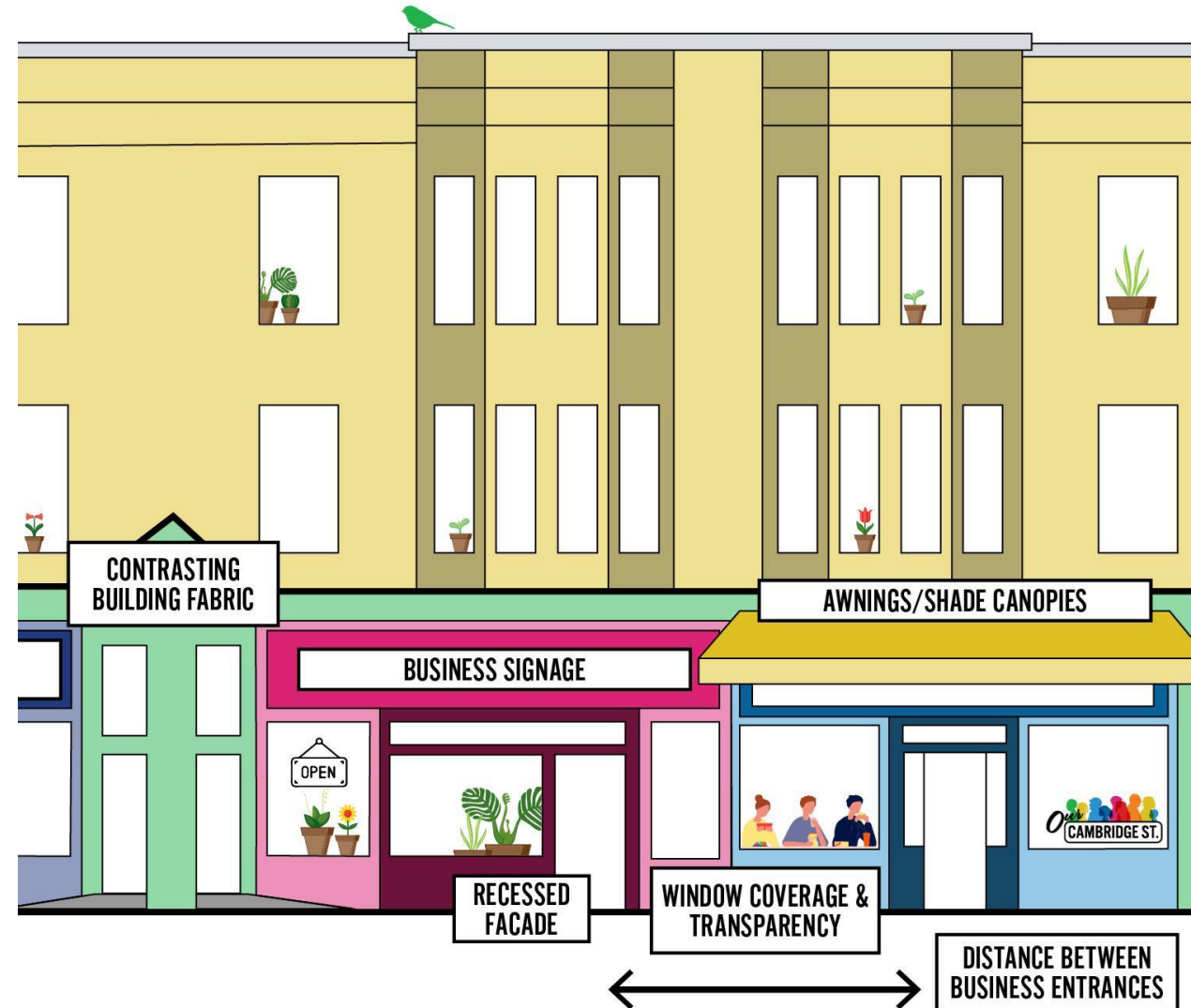


PROVIDE DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Develop design standards and guidelines for ground floor treatments and new development, and align with the Citywide Urban Design Guidelines

Mass Ave design standards and/or guidelines should address:

- Site design and sidewalk frontage
- Ground floor design, entrances and accessibility
- Window coverage/transparency
- Treatment of blank walls
- Activation strategies for dormant ground floor spaces
- Climate resilience standards



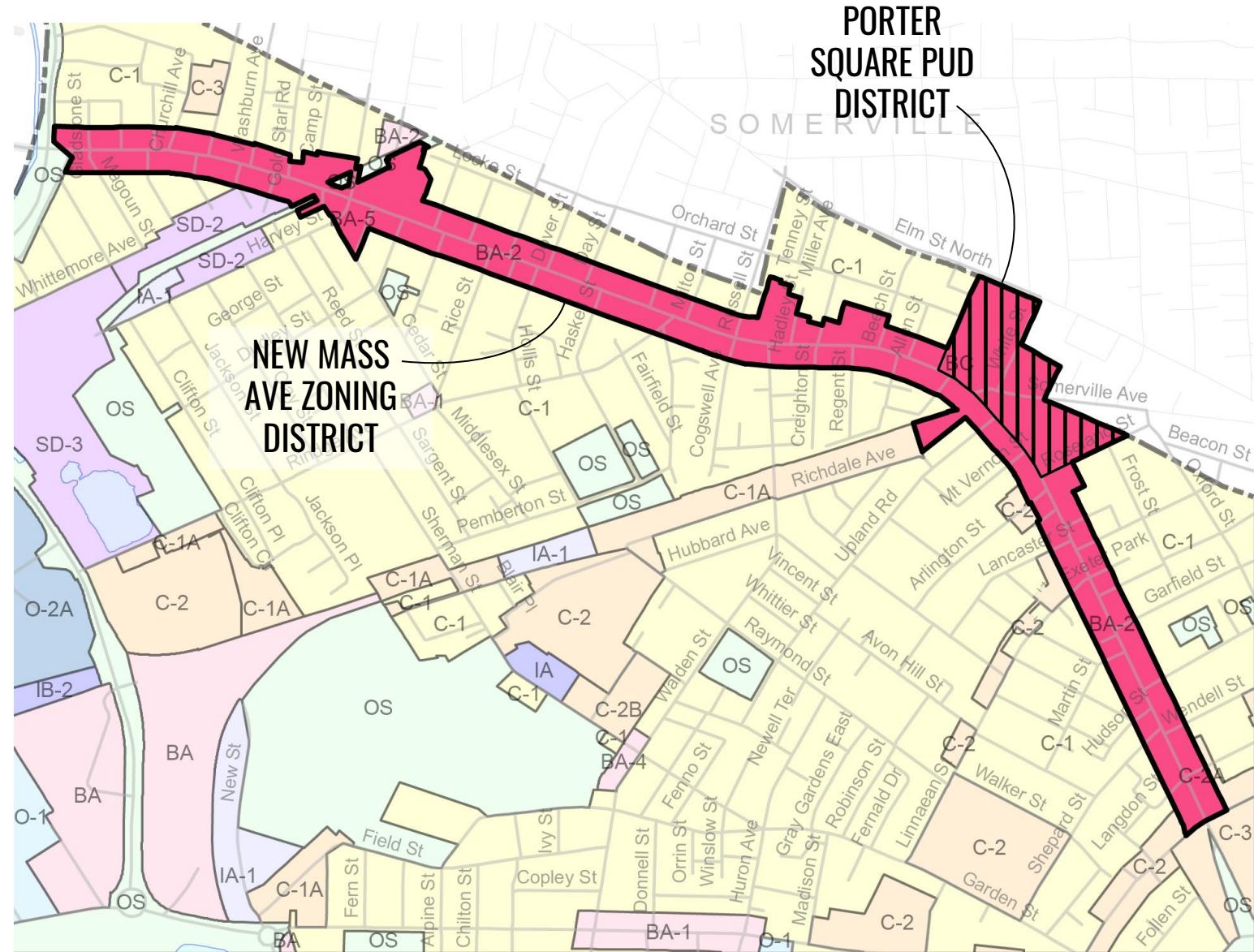
KEEP CURRENT DEVELOPMENT REVIEW THRESHOLDS

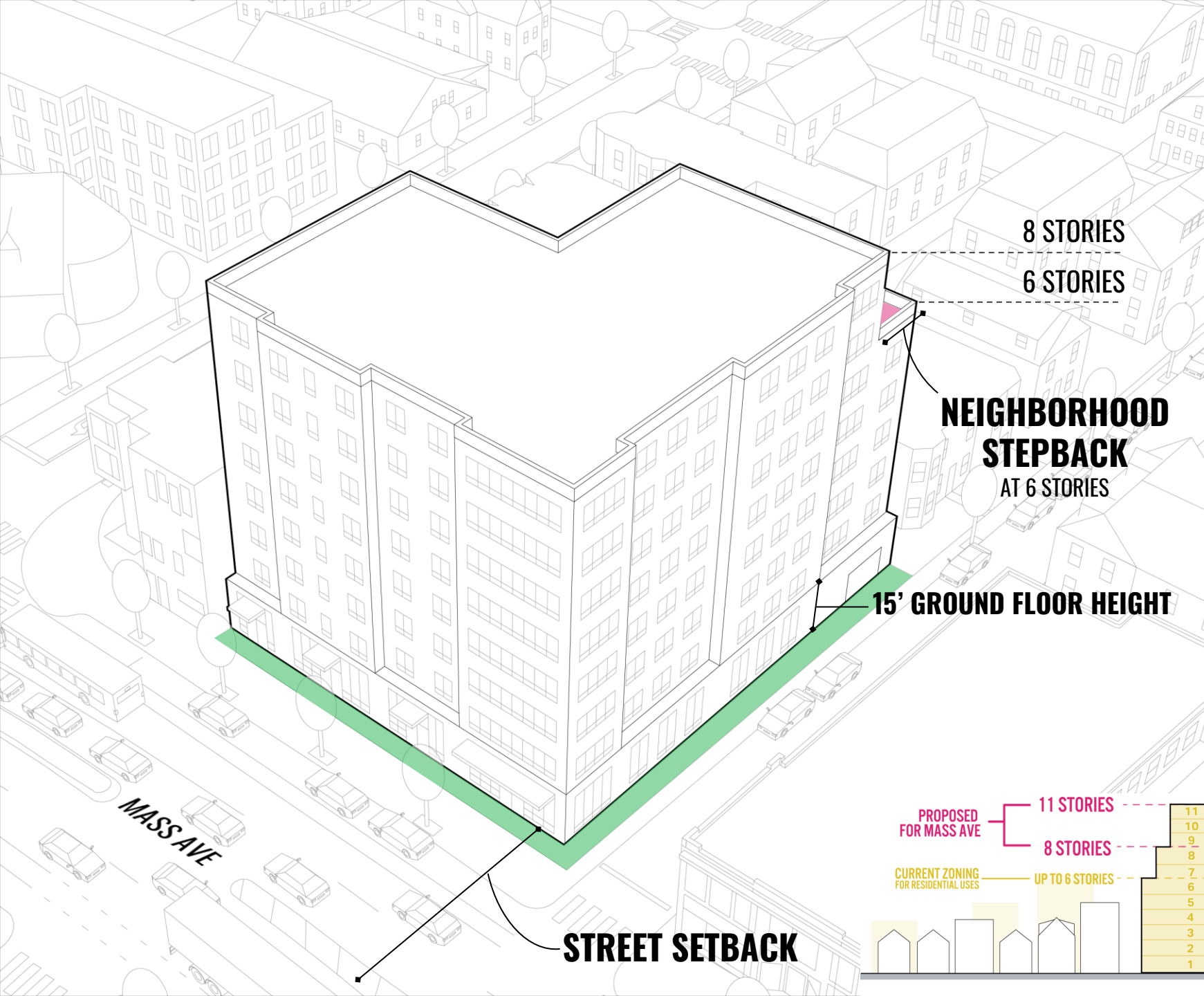
Review Type	Residential	Non-residential
Staff Advisory Consultation	0 – 2,000 sqft	0 – 2,000 sqft
Public Advisory Consultation	2,000 – 50,000 sqft	2,000 – 20,000 sqft
Planning Board Advisory Consultation	50,000 – 75,000 sqft	N/A
Project Review Special Permit	75,000+ sqft	20,000+ sqft

CREATE NEW ZONING DISTRICTS – MASS AVE

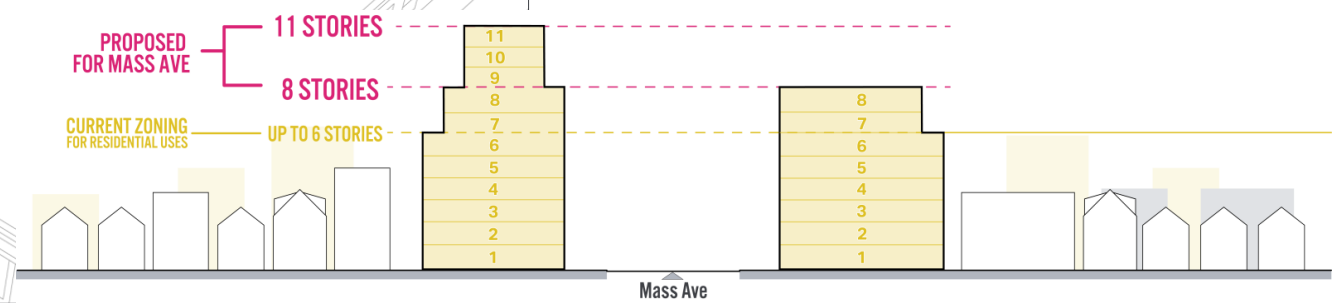
Creating new zoning districts would better implement the goals and priorities of the Our Cambridge Street and Mass Ave Planning Studies.

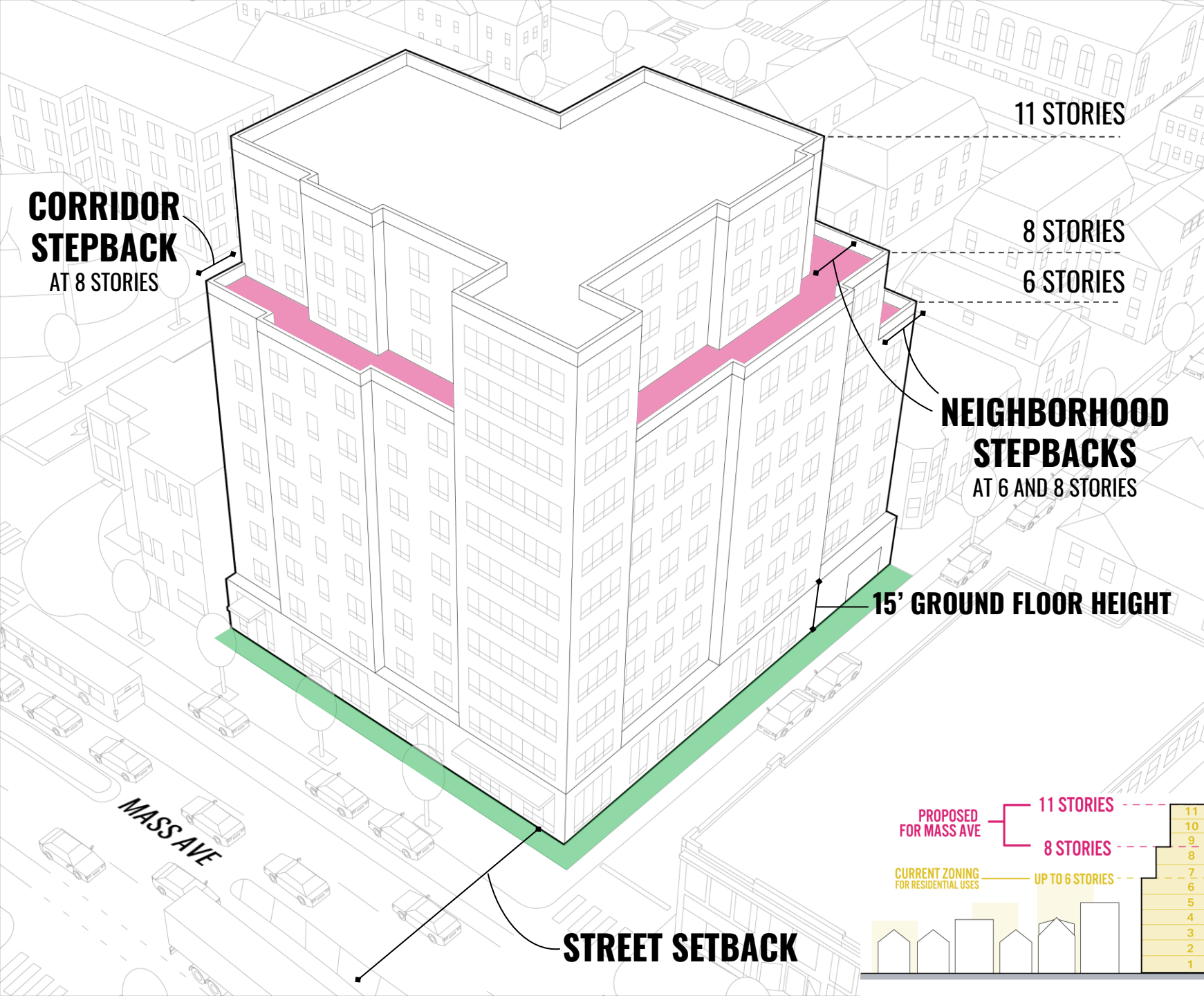
The zoning would include a base set of standards with bonus height allowed if developments follow an additional set of use and design standards.





MASS AVE	
BUILDING HEIGHT	
Residential	8 stories
Corridor step-back	None
Neighborhood step-back	10 ft above 6 stories
SITE DESIGN	
Setback from centerline	55 ft
Side yard setback	None
Rear yard setback	5 ft
Open Space	None





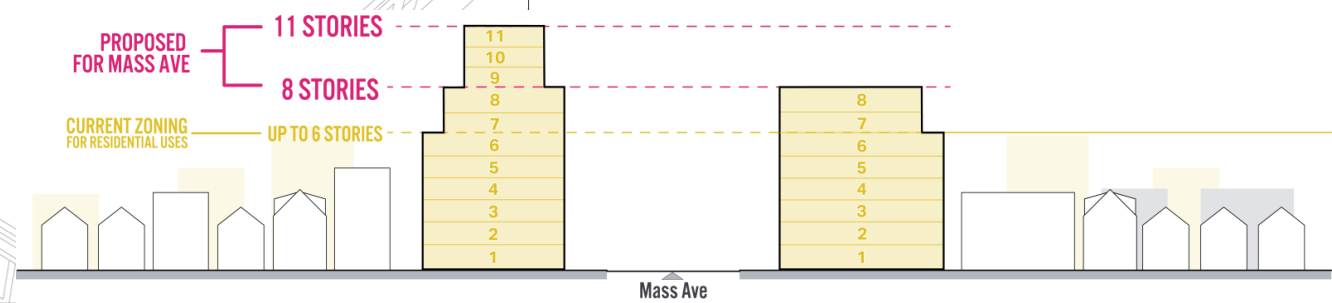
MASS AVE – WITH ACTIVE GROUND FLOOR

BUILDING HEIGHT

Mixed-Use	11 stories
Corridor step-back	10 ft above 8 stories
Neighborhood step-back	10 ft above 6 and 8 stories

SITE DESIGN

Setback from centerline	55 ft
Side yard setback	None
Rear yard setback	5 ft
Open Space	15%



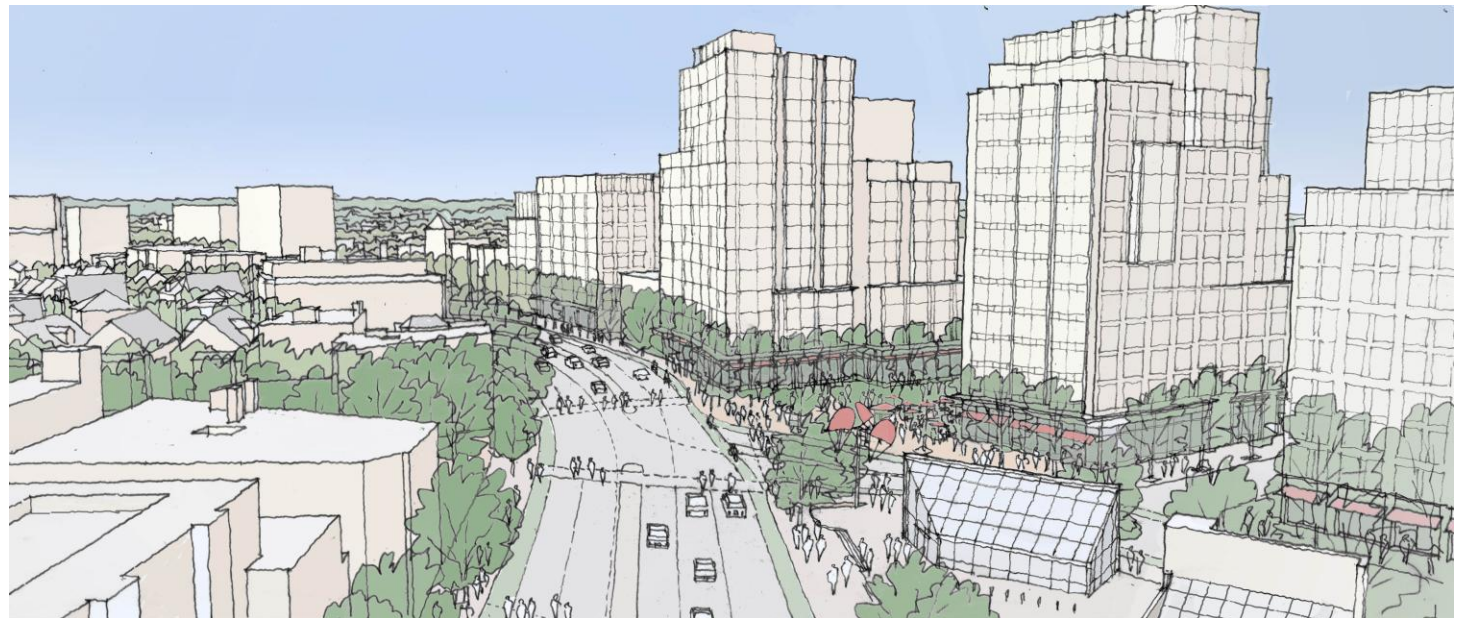
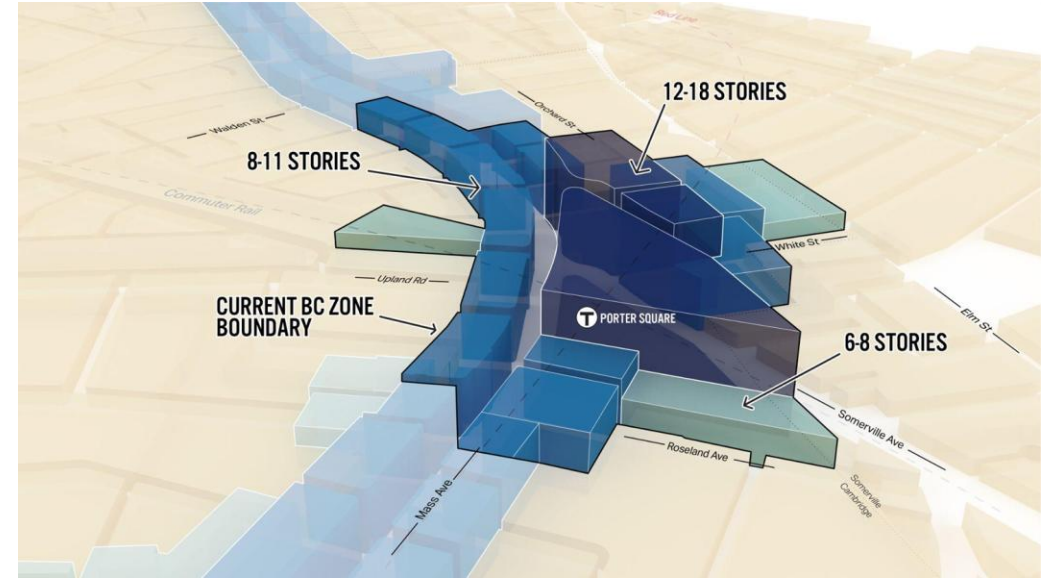
PORTER SQUARE PUD DISTRICT

Development Benefits

- Relaxed dimensional standards
- Higher density development potential; up to 18 stories for residential
- Consolidated review (single process for multi-site development)

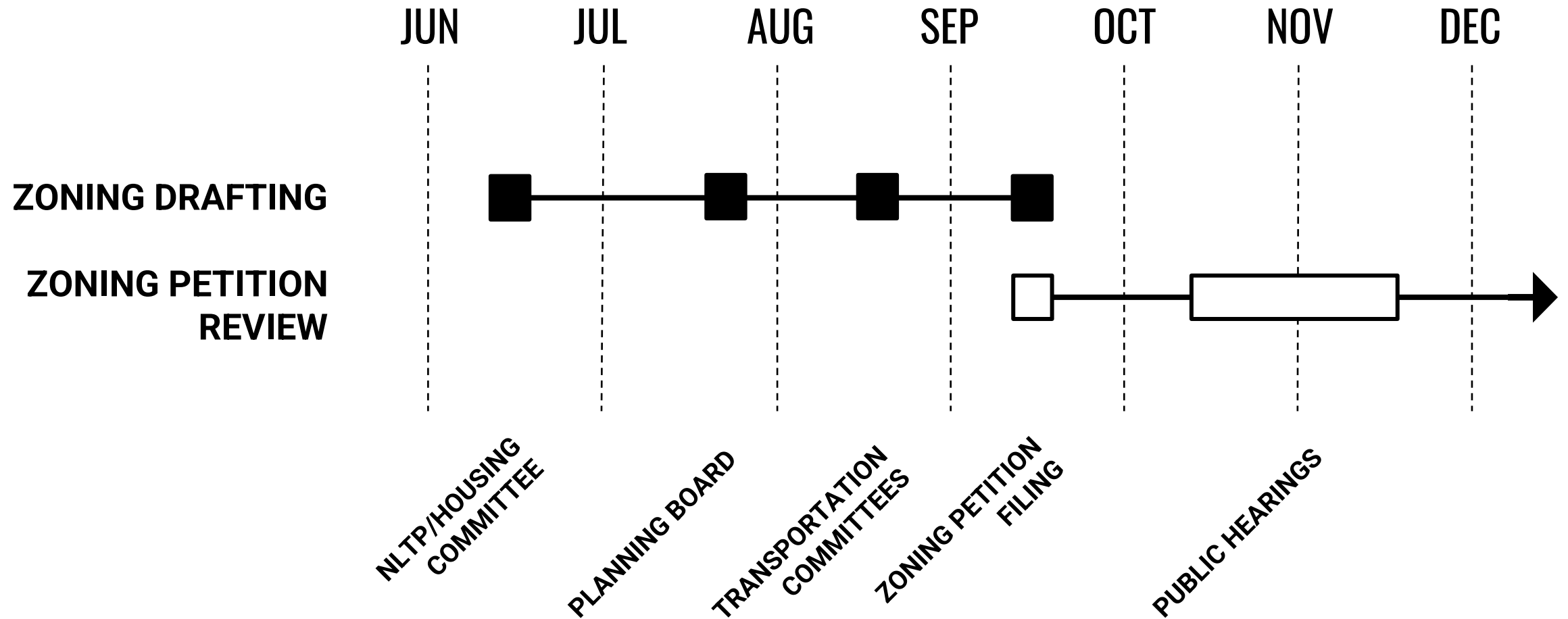
Public Benefits

- Public open space
- Destination retail
- Shared parking



NEXT STEPS

TIMELINE



PROJECT WEBSITES

Mass Ave Planning Study:

www.cambridgema.gov/massaveplan

Our Cambridge Street:

www.cambridgema.gov/ourcambridgestreet

03. Announcements

04. Public Comment

Zoom Webinar Instructions

- Computer and mobile devices: Use the “Raise Hand” button to signal you have a question/comment
- Phone only: enter *9 to raise hand
- A staff member will then enable you to speak and you will have to unmute before speaking

**Bottom Panel of
Zoom Screen**



Comments from the public

Members of the public may make a comment on the Transit Advisory Committee



Use the “Raise Hand” feature in the Zoom application. By phone, use * 9 on the dial-pad to “raise hand”.



This agenda item is planned to end at 6:55 PM.



Each member of the public will have up to **3 minutes** to make a comment or ask a question.

Thank you!