

Data in this study has been modified using an updated analysis of the loss rate between 2009 and 2018 rather than 2014 and 2018.

Ongoing research by University of Vermont will provide a final analysis of 2018 canopy.



# Today, Cambridge has 26% of its land area covered by canopy.

Between 2009 and 2018, Cambridge's canopy declined on average by 16.4 acres\* every year.

At this rate, canopy cover would be 21.6% in 2030.

\*per updated analysis for the period between 2009 to 2018.

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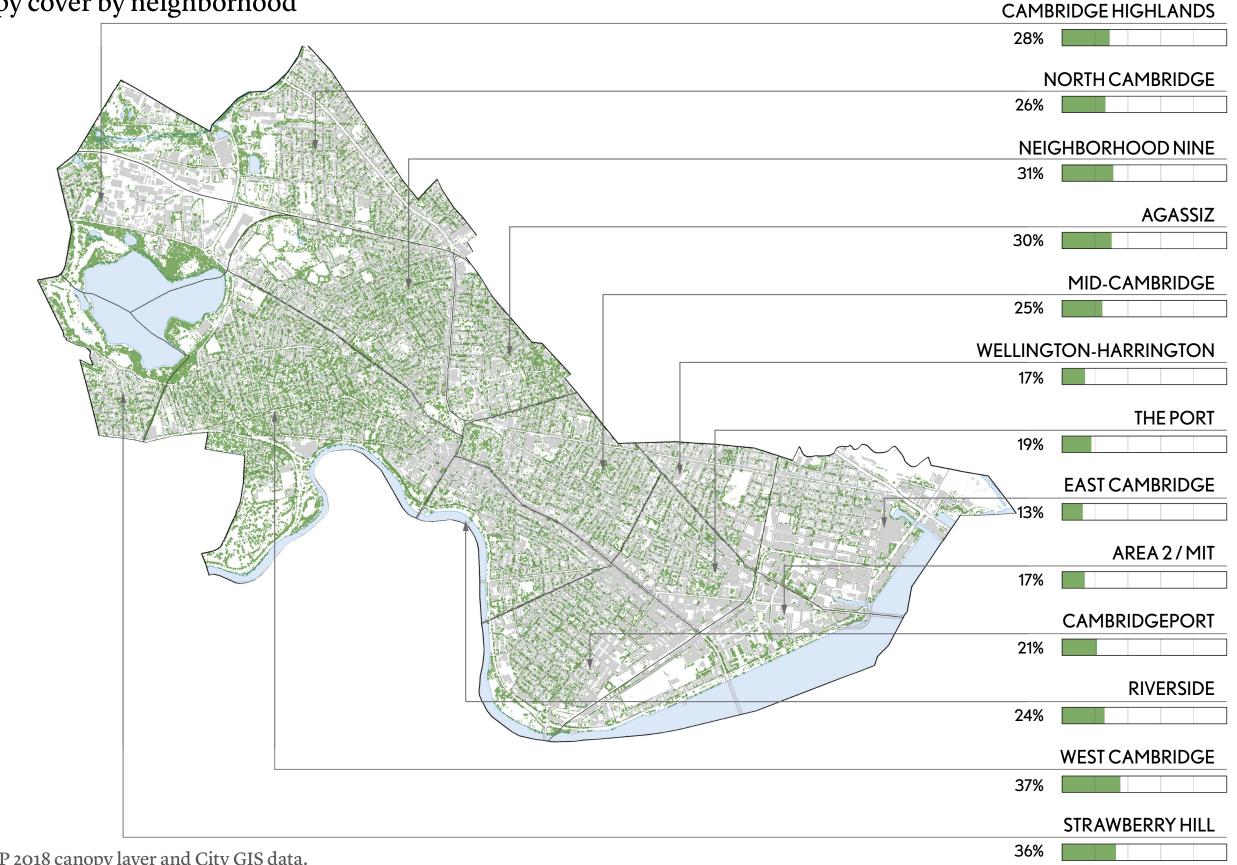
# The distribution of canopy across the city is **not equitable.**

More vulnerable populations tend to live in areas of Cambridge with less canopy cover.



### TREE CANOPY COVER

2018 canopy cover by neighborhood

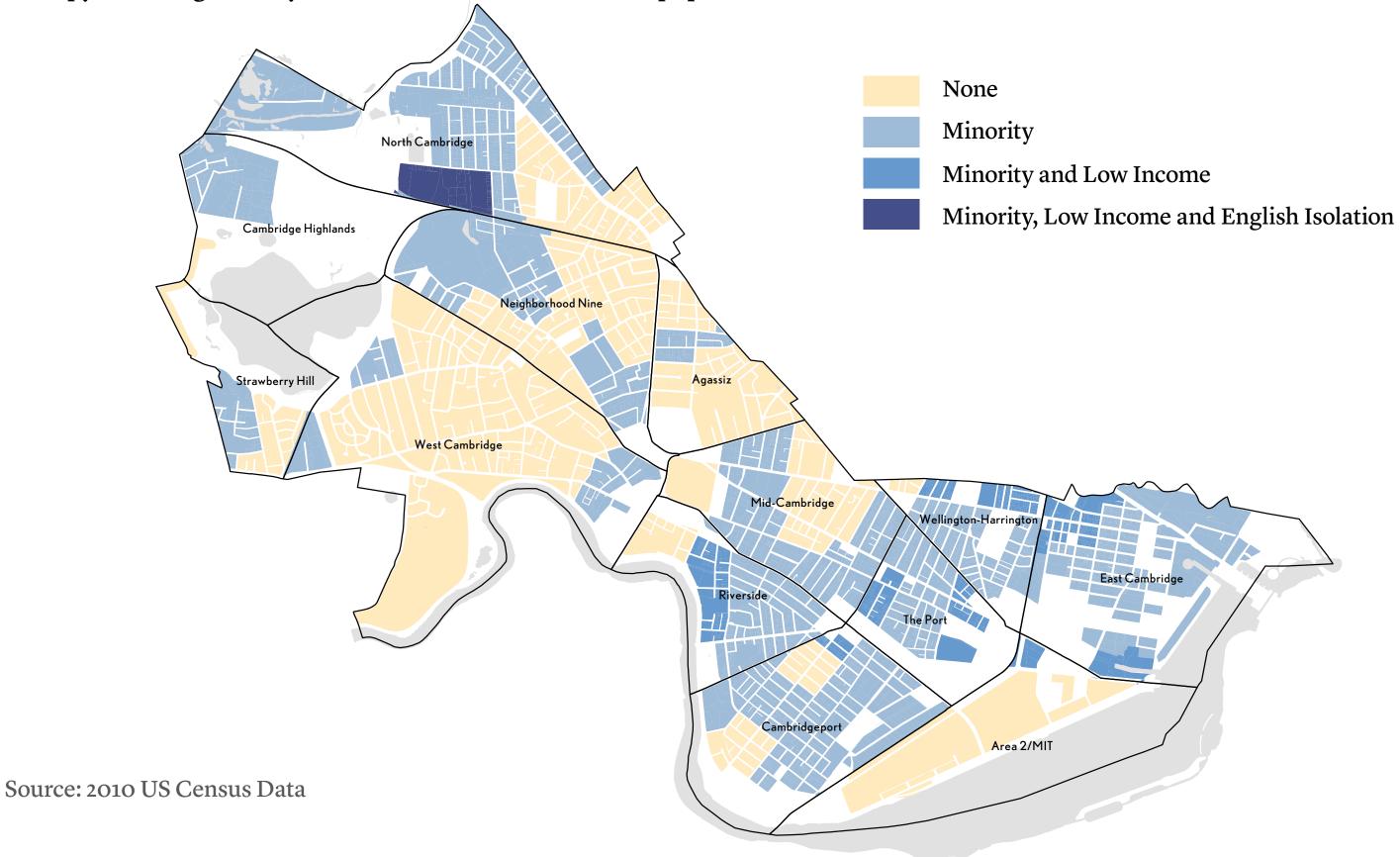


Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy layer and City GIS data.



# **VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

Canopy cover is generally lower in areas with vulnerable populations

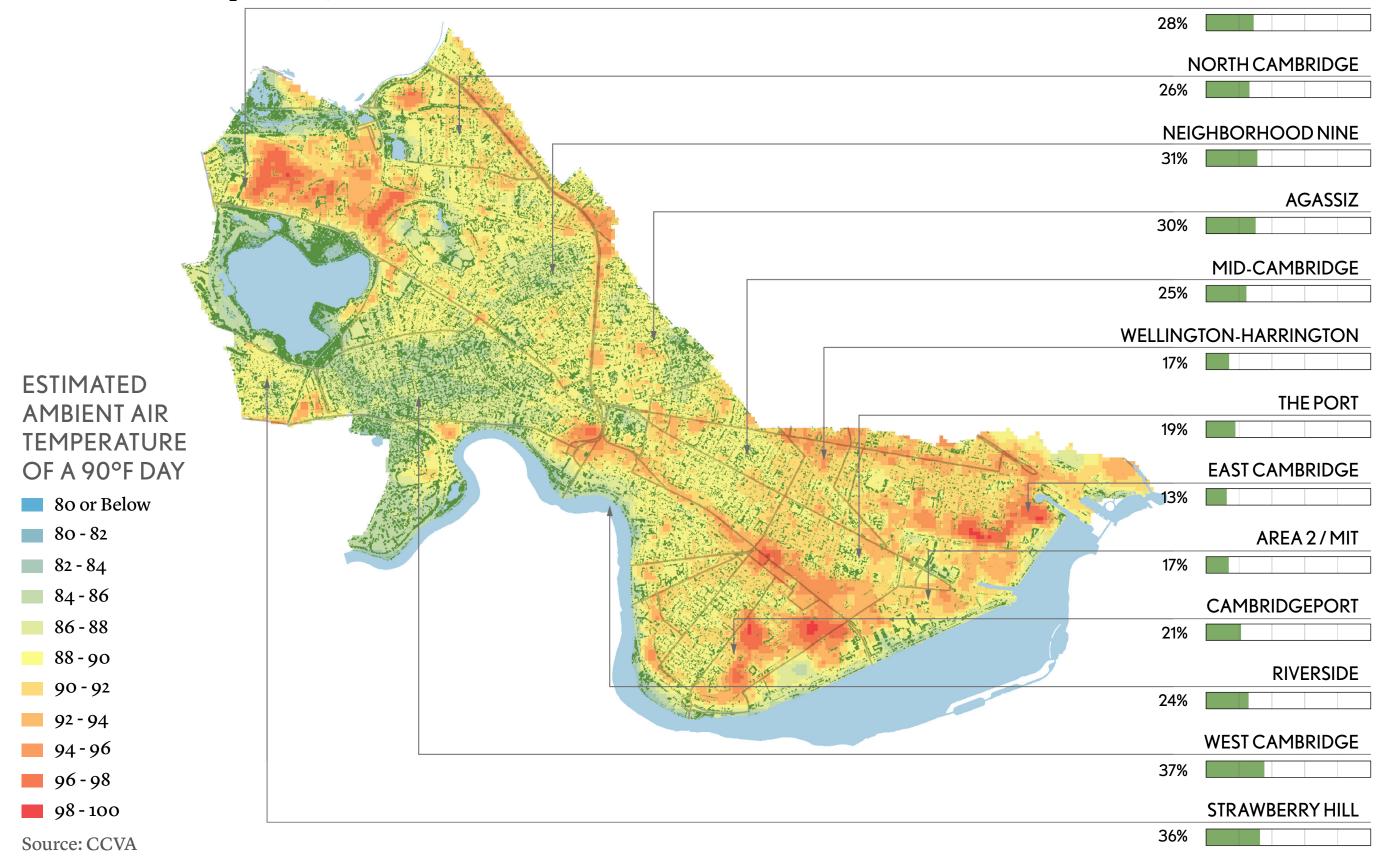


As summer temperatures rise, the impacts of the **urban heat island** will be more intensely felt by the **most vulnerable**.



### URBAN HEAT ISLAND AND CANOPY COVER

Predicted heat impacts 2030





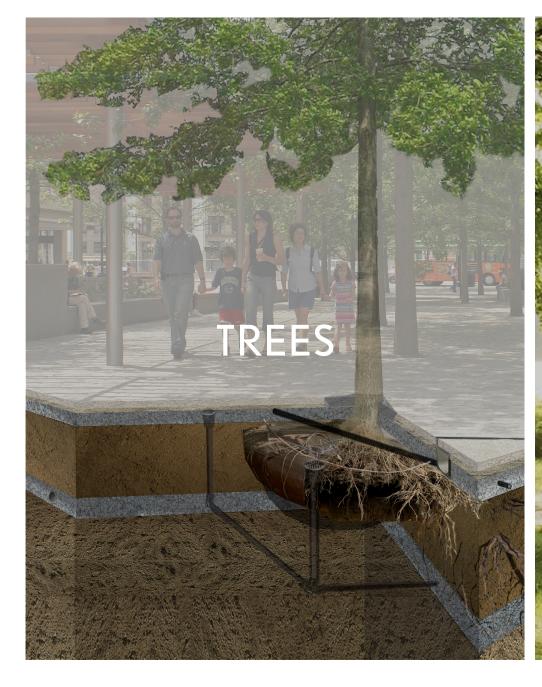
### **CHARGE**

To maintain, plan, build, and sustain a healthy, connective urban forest at a time when the urban forest is more important than ever before.

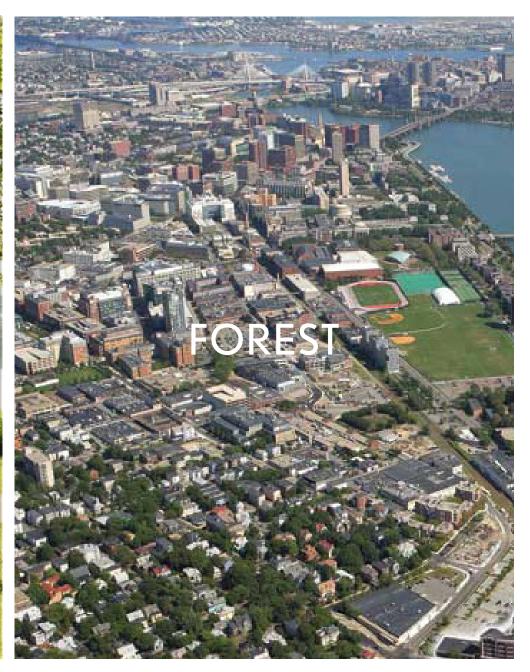


# **APPROACH**

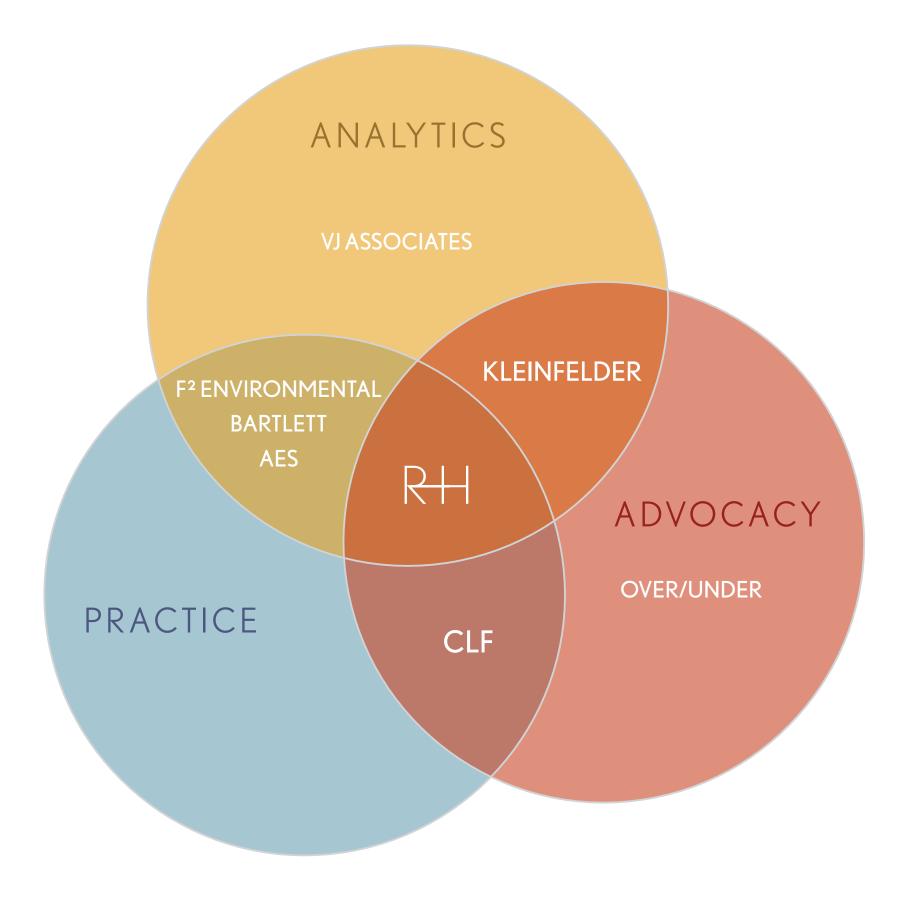
# Healthy and Connected Systems





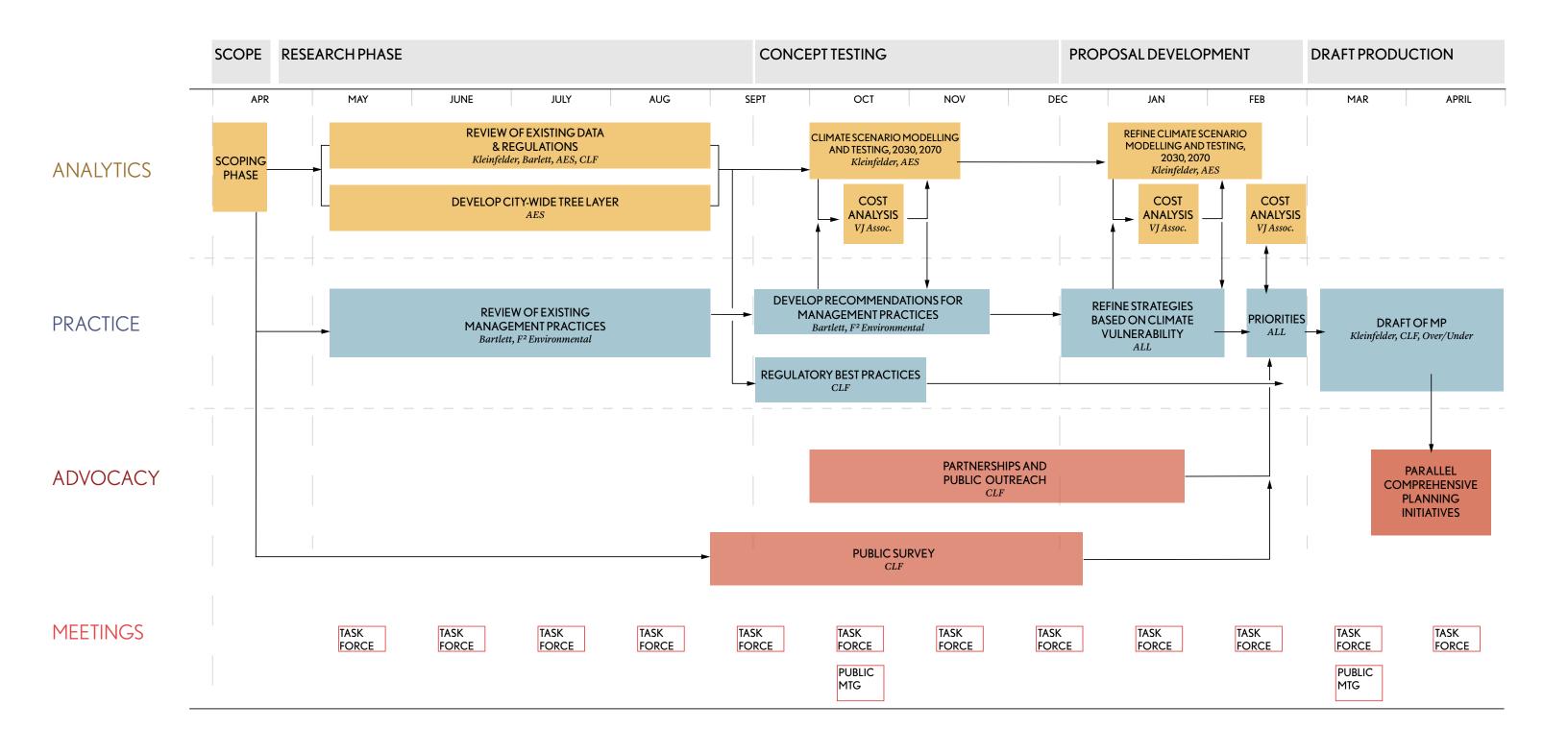


# **PROJECT TEAM**





### **PROJECT SCHEDULE**



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# RESEARCH FINDINGS

RESPONSE STRATEGIES

**NEXT STEPS** 

OPEN HOUSE

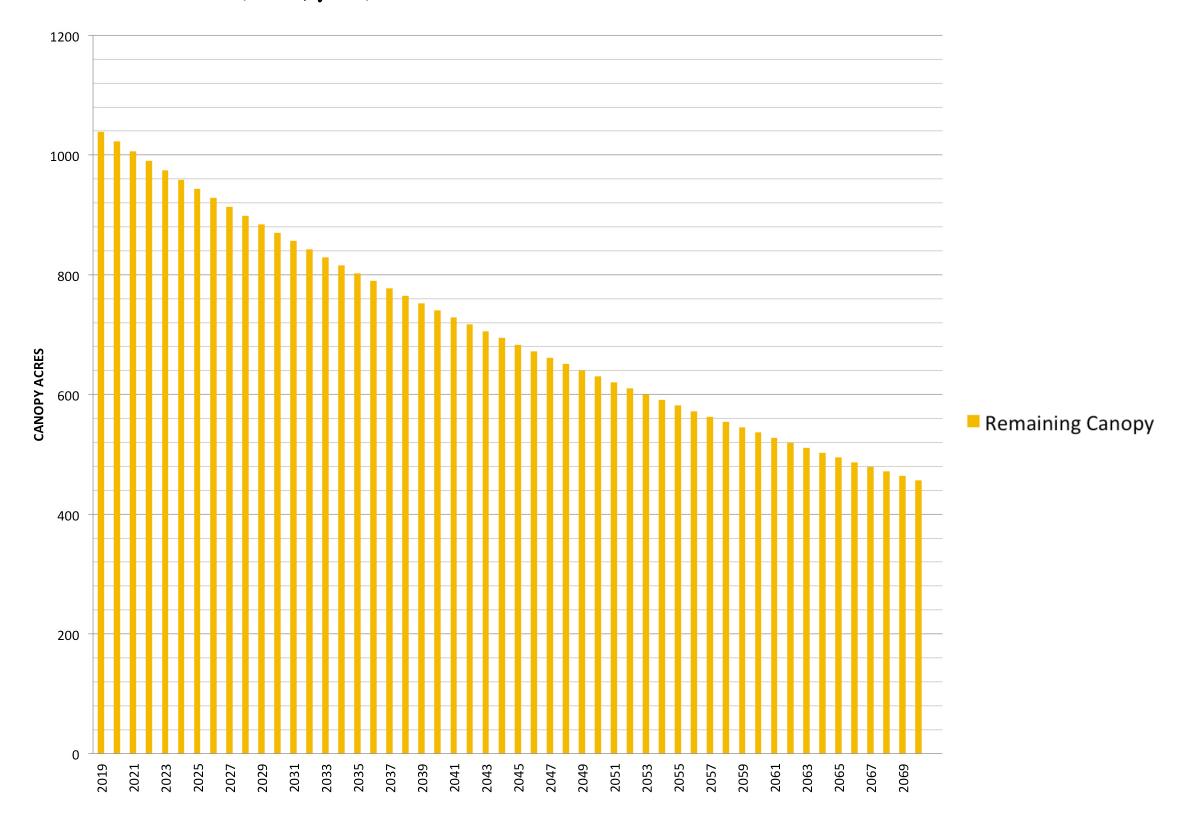
### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The percent of the city covered by canopy is declining.



# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The trend is for continued loss (1.6%/year)

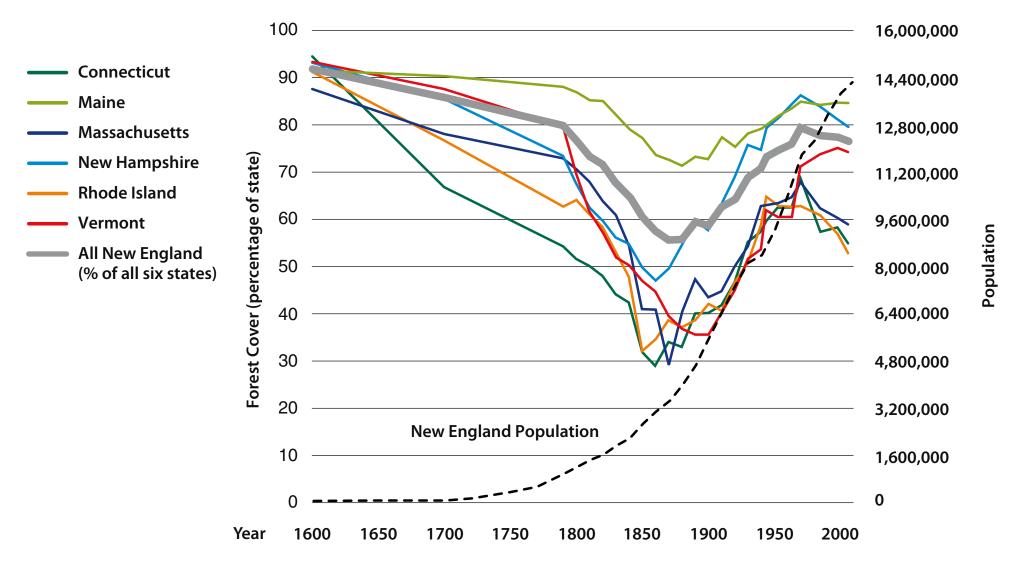


Graph assumptions: 1.6% annual net loss rate from 2009 to 2018 derived from CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis



### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

### Forest cover trends are regional

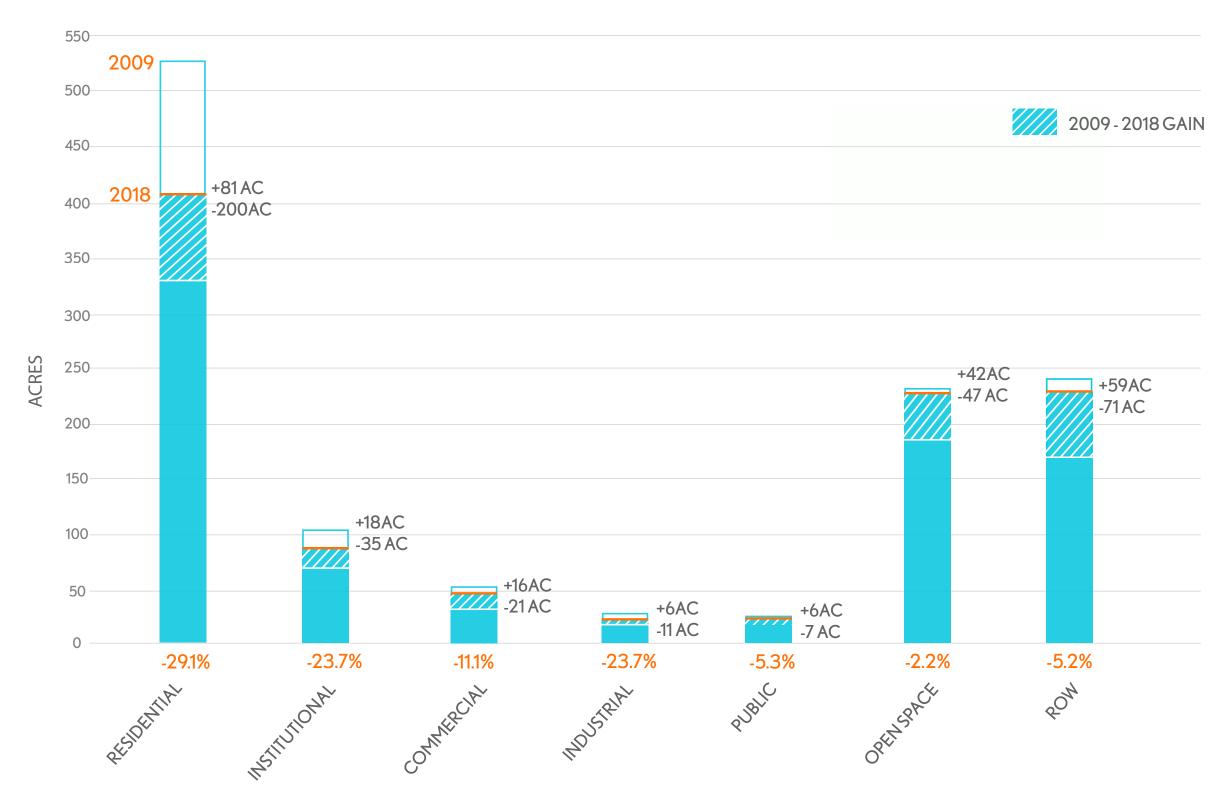


**FIGURE 1:** Long-term trends in forest cover and human population in the six New England states shows that even as the population grew, forest cover increased between 1850 and the early 2000s. In recent years, forest cover has again declined due to conversion of forests to developed land.

Source: "Changes to the Land: Four Scenarios for the Future of the Massachusetts Landscape", Harvard Forest, Thompson, et. al., 2014

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The highest rates of loss are on Residential, Industrial, and Institutional land uses



Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis and City GIS data.

# There is no one reason for canopy decline

Causes are historical, systemic, and cumulative...



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### Planting happens in cycles along with residential development

Properties with homes built around 1920 have unusually high percentage of tree canopy. These trees are now likely reaching maturity. Development tapered off after 1930 so we can surmise that the residential canopy will also begin to taper off as those trees age.

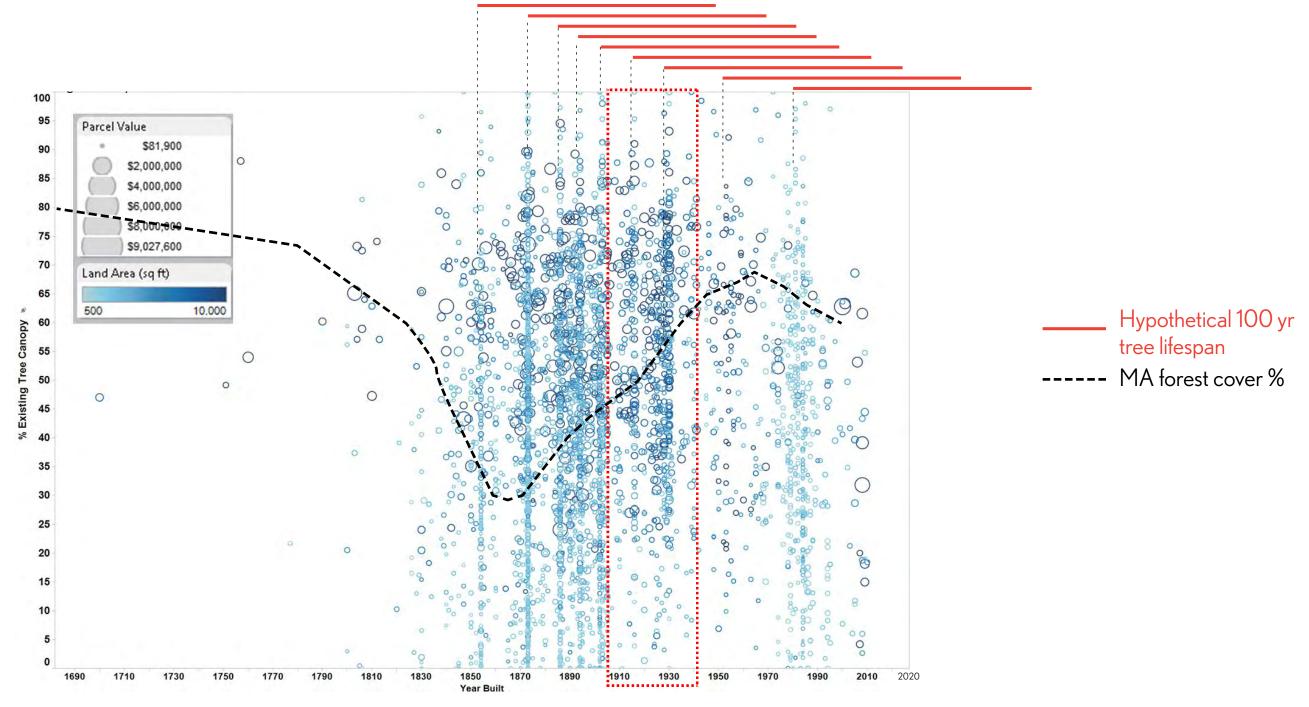
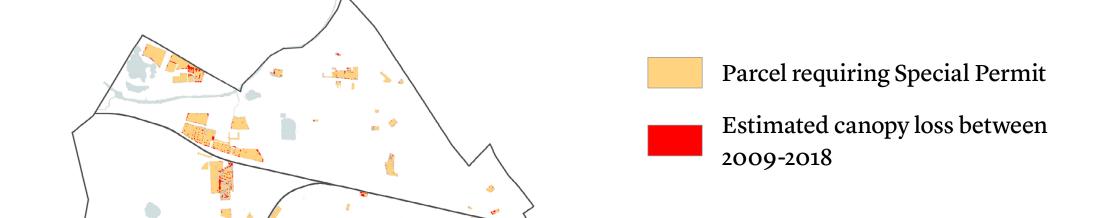


Figure 8: % Existing Tree Canopy in relation to year built, parcel value, and land area for single family residential parcels.

Source: UVM, "A Report on the City of Cambridge's Existing and Possible Tree Canopy", 6/1/12

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Special permits for large projects only account for 4.7% percent of loss over the last 10 years



**207 acres** (148 projects)

**20.1 acres** of canopy in 2009

**12.9 acres** (~1,484 trees) removed 2009-2018

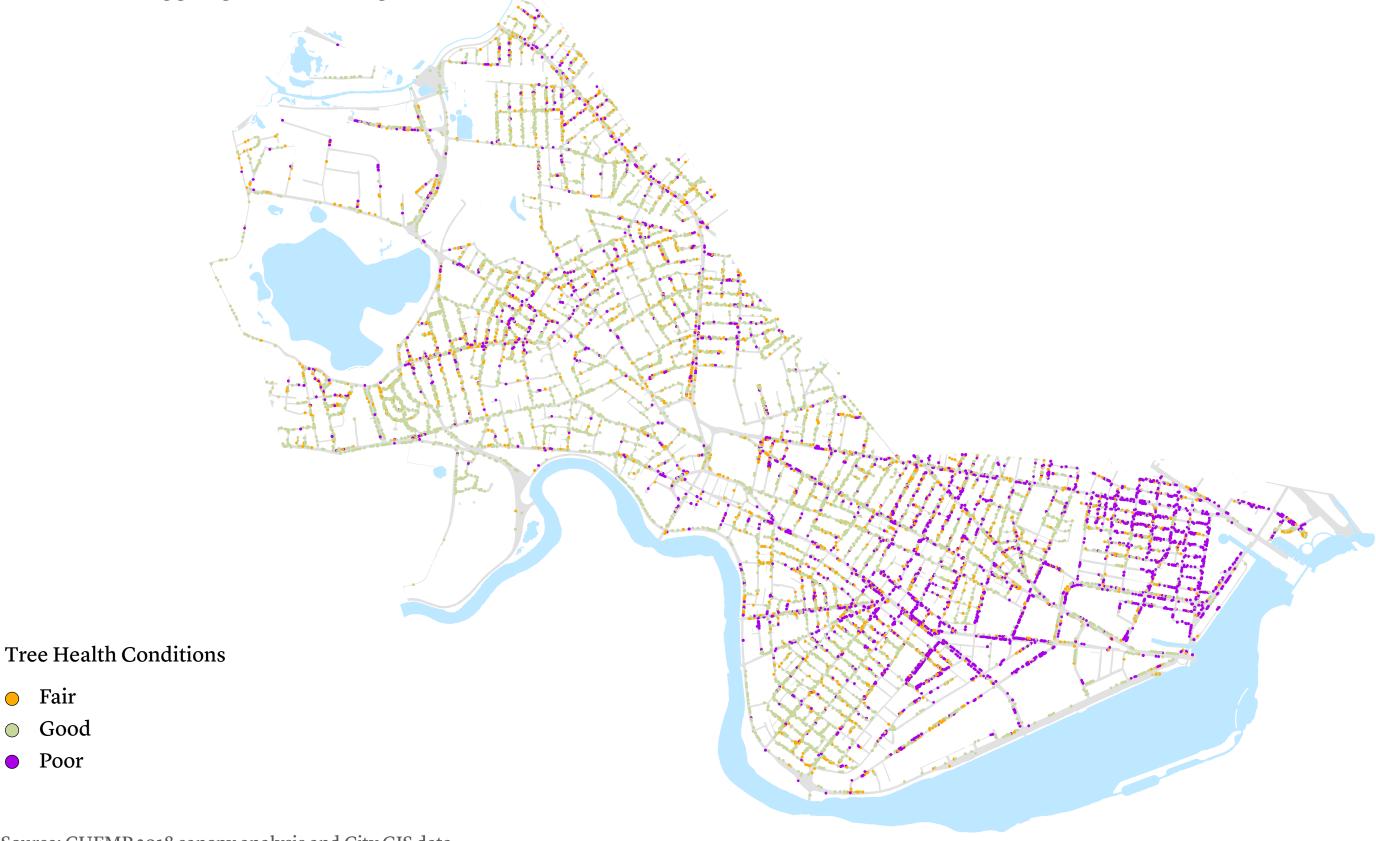
**7.8 acres** of net canopy loss after replanting/growth

Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis and City GIS data.



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Trees are struggling with limiting horticultural conditions



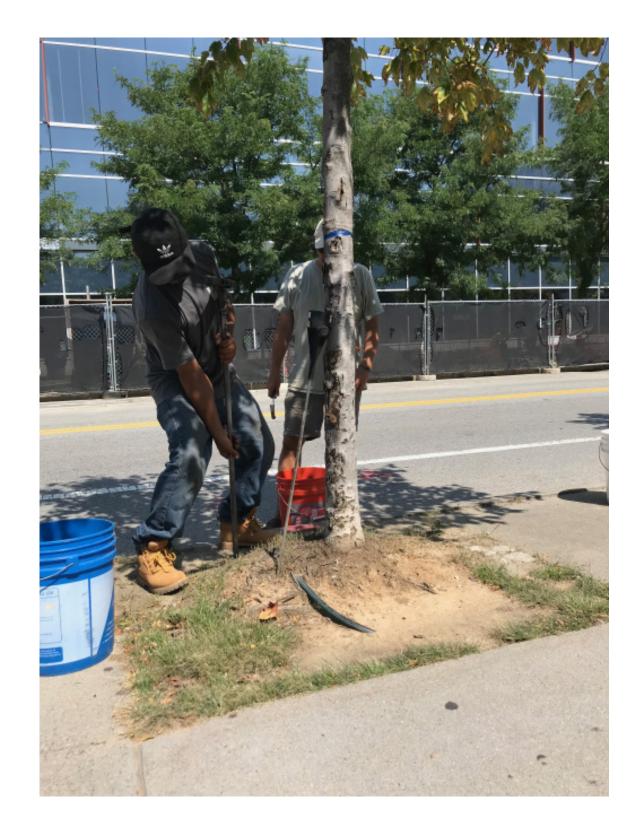
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Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis and City GIS data.

Fair



Soils are overly compacted, have low nutrient cycling and have limiting drainage

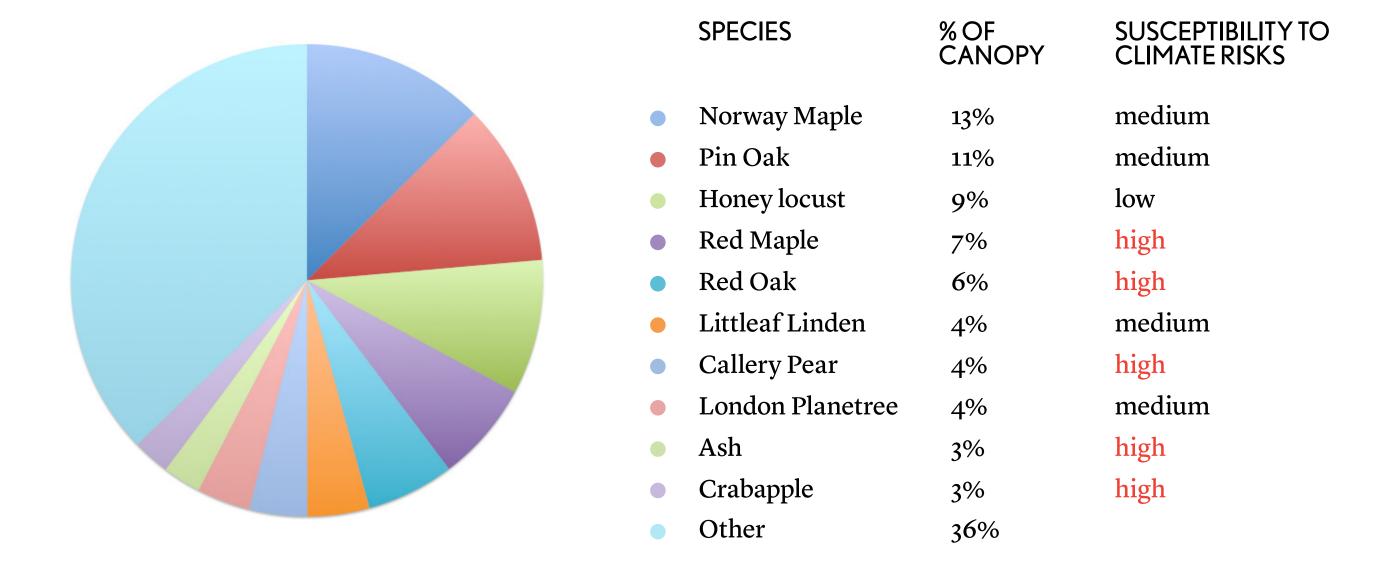




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#### WHAT ARE FUTURE RISKS?

Existing species makeup is susceptible to climate risks of increased pests/diseases, drought and flooding



Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis.



# RESEARCH FINDINGS

# RESPONSE STRATEGIES

**NEXT STEPS** 

OPEN HOUSE

### **RESPONSE STRATEGIES**

There are two primary approaches to reversing the current trend of urban forest contraction —

Curb the loss of existing trees

Grow canopy by planting new trees



# BALANCE COMPETING PRIORITIES

**MAKE MORE SPACE FOR TREES** 

**EXPAND TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE** 

**INCREASE COSTS TO REMOVE TREES** 

**PRESERVE OPEN SPACE** 

**ENHANCE MAINTENANCE PRACTICES** 

**MAKE MORE SPACE FOR BIKES** 

**DISCOURAGE PRIVATE PLANTING** 

**IMPACT VULNERABLE POPULATIONS** 

**EXACERBATE HOUSING COSTS** 

**INCREASE STAFF AND OVERHEAD COSTS** 



### **CORE CONCEPTS**

Value the forest as a public resource

— Invest in canopy in the public realm

Share responsibility for a healthy forest



#### **CORE CONCEPTS**

# Value the forest as a public resource

The urban forest is a public resource and has **measurable value and impacts** everyone. It provides shade to cool our environment, gives scale and character to our streets, provides habitat for diverse species, improves our air quality, reduces stormwater impacts, and improves our health and well-being.

To shift the trend from increasing loss to sustainable growth, we must manage the urban forest as **urban infrastructure** (like water, sewer, power) investing for the long term, managing resources collectively, and understanding the value (ie., ecosystem services) of the canopy.

To balance the value of the forest with the complex needs of the city, we should focus on the performance of the **forest as a system** over the specific value of individual trees.

# THE BENEFITS OF THE URBAN FOREST

# Ecological, cultural and economic values

Table 5 Urban tree benefits reported in the 115 research papers on urban trees examined in this study.

Benefits	Discussed	Demonstrated
Social benefits	7	5
	3	
Making urban environment more pleasant to	3	2
live, work and spend leisure time	2	2
Providing significant outdoor	3	2
leisure/recreation opportunities	4	4
Providing nature in the city	1	1
Enhancing quality of urban life	5	3
Promoting environmental responsibility and ethics	1	_
Building stronger sense of community	1	_
Enhancing community's sense of social	1	_
identity and self esteem		
Providing settings for significant emotional	1	_
and spiritual experiences		
Providing opportunities for inner city	1	_
children to experience nature	-	
Economic benefits	28	27
Saving substantially on fuel expenditure	1	
Increasing land value	3	3
Increasing property value	13	12
Increasing property value	1	1
Increasing neighbouring property value	2	1
Reducing 'time on market' for selling	1	1
property	1	1
Increasing property taxes	1	_
Increasing property taxes Increasing tourism revenue	1	_
Increasing tourism revenue  Increasing business activity	1	_
Contributing to the economic vitality of the	1	_
city	1	_
Providing annual returns on municipal	2	1
investments	Z	1
Alleviating the hardships of inner city living	1	
	1	_
for low – income groups	7	6
Reducing expenditure on air pollution removal	/	O
	4	2
Reducing expenditure on storm water	4	3
infrastructure	2	2
Saving annual heating and cooling costs	2	2
Savings on electricity costs	1	1
Avoiding investment in new power supplies	3	2
Providing potential for future carbon	2	2
offsetting trade		

Table 6 Urban tree ecosystem services reported in the 115 research papers on urban trees examined in this study.

Ecosystem services	Discussed	Demonstrated
Carbon related ecosystem services	30	27
Storing/sequestering carbon	30	27
Air quality related ecosystem services	38	34
Producing oxygen	2	2
Filtering air	11	9
Removing ozone	18	16
Removing carbon monoxide	12	10
Removing sulphur dioxide	17	15
Removing nitrogen dioxide	15	14
Removing airborne particle	22	20
matters/suspended particles		
Removing dust	1	1
Reducing smog	3	3
Reducing carbon dioxide emissions	9	8
Storm water related ecosystem services	10	9
Reducing rate of storm water runoff	10	9
Reducing volume of storm water runoff	8	7
Reducing flooding damage	4	3
Reducing water quality problems	3	2
Recharging ground water	1	1
Energy related ecosystem services	20	18
Reducing annual energy use	14	11
Reducing summer time energy use	5	5
Reducing seasonal cooling energy	4	4
Reducing carbon dioxide emission from	3	2
power plants		
Habitat related ecosystem services	7	5
Providing habitat for wildlife	7	5
Enhancing biodiversity	1	_
Providing stability to urban ecosystems	1	_
Noise related ecosystem services	8	5
Reducing noise	8	5
Reducing apparent loudness	2	1
Micro climate related ecosystem services	25	25
Providing shade	16	16
Reducing solar radiation	4	4
Modifying microclimate	9	
Reducing relative humidity	1	1
Reducing air temperature	15	15
Reducing heat island effect	10	10
Reduction of glare/reflection	3	3
Controlling wind	6	6

Source: Roy, et al., Urban Forestry and Urban Greening, 2012

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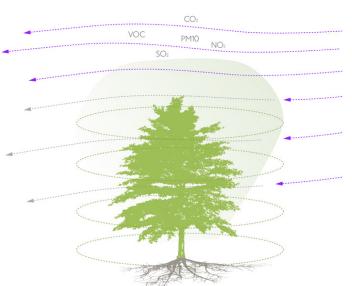
### THE BENEFITS OF THE URBAN FOREST

### Infrastructure Performance

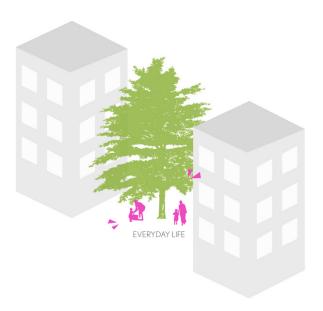








PROPERTY VALUE Add Value: \$276.55



# Ecosystem services for an average Pin Oak in Cambridge

Source: i-Tree Streets - Annual Savings for Average Pin Oak in Cambridge

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#### THE BENEFITS OF THE URBAN FOREST

### Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

- Improved air quality and less urban heat
- Lower risk of diseases and mortality rate
- Lower stress levels
- Better cognitive function in students
- Improved attention among children
- Enhanced performance in the workplace
- Lower risk of mental health disorders



Source: Wolf, K.L., S. Krueger, and M.A. Rozance. 2014. Stress, Wellness & Physiology - A Literature Review.
In: Green Cities: Good Health (www.greenhealth.washington.edu). College of the Environment, University of Washington.

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### **CORE CONCEPTS**

# Invest in canopy in the public realm

The urban forest is felt most strongly in our **public realm and common spaces** (sidewalks, front yards, parks, schoolyards, and commercial and institutional campuses).

Enhancing the canopy within the public realm, where the impact of loss is felt most strongly and the significance of gain is most equitably distributed, deserves our **primary attention and investment**. Specifically prioritize:

### **Canopy corridor**

A resilient, connected ecosystem that enhances shading and cooling along networks and connects green spaces across the City relies on thriving trees within the public right of way, publicly accessible spaces, and front yards and private lands that front on the public realm.

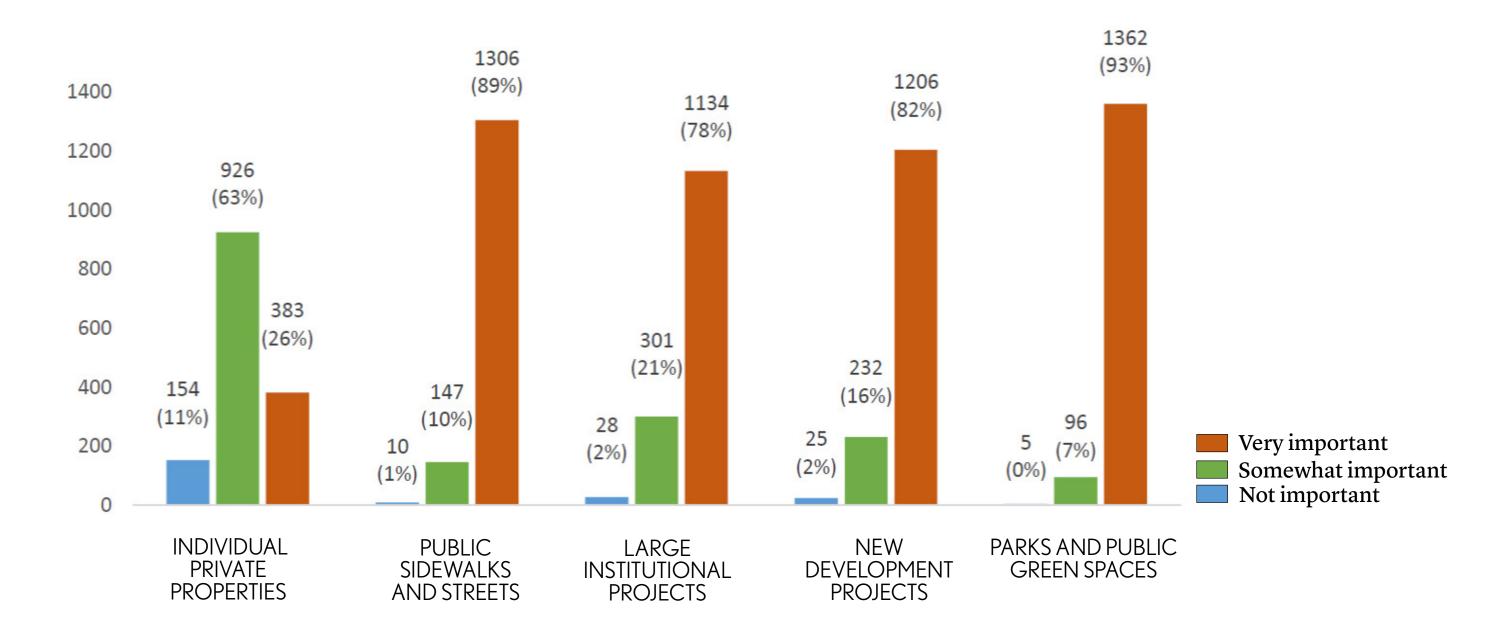
# Areas of canopy deficit and inequity

A more evenly distributed forest increases equity in the distribution of canopy cover, reduces disproportionate impacts urban heat island effects, and increases the well-being of vulnerable populations.

### **PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS**

People value the trees in the public realm

A majority (55%) stated that public sidewalks and streets were the single most important location to plant new trees when asked a follow up question about the single most important location



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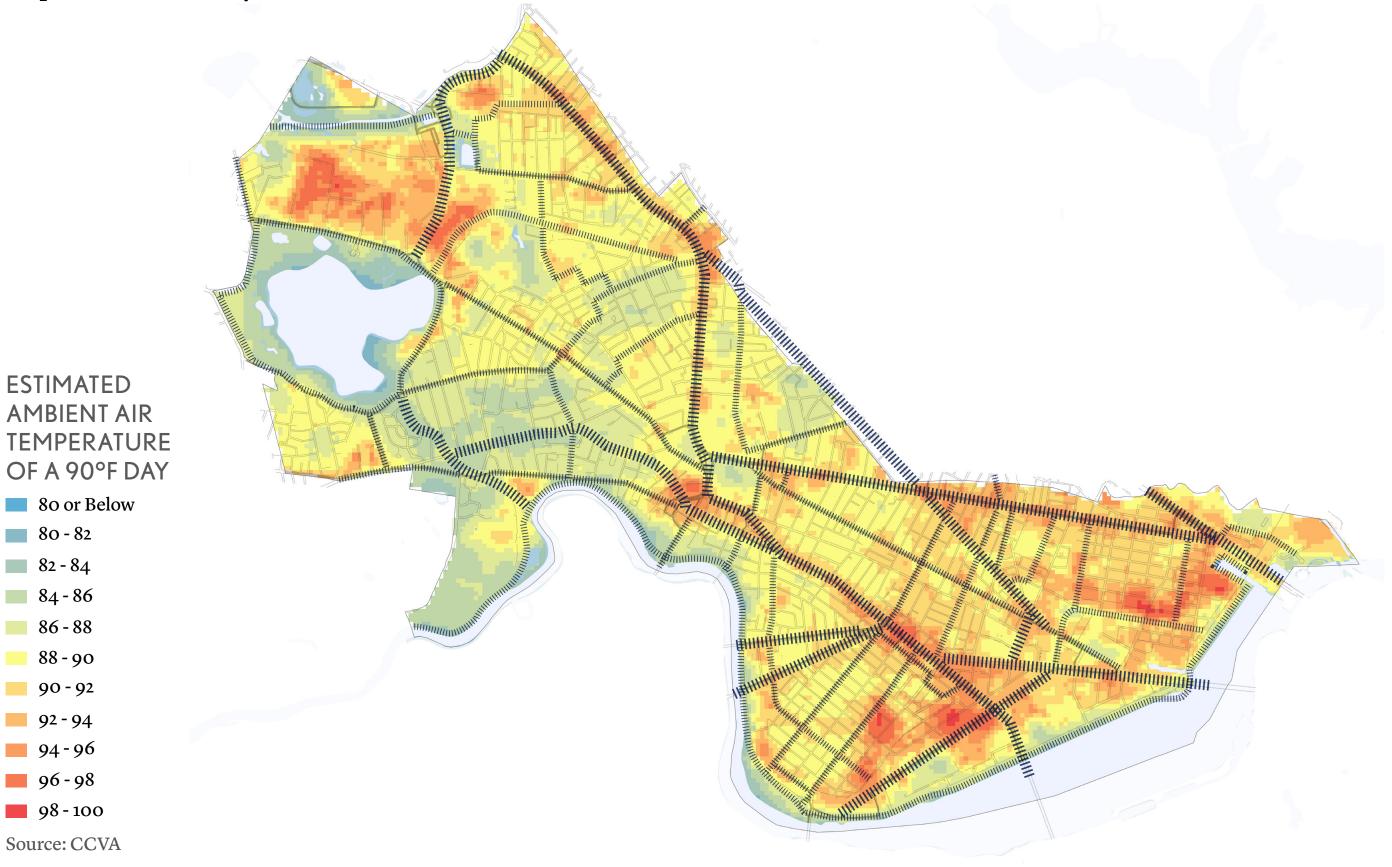
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### HEAT ISLANDS AND CANOPY CORRIDORS

Improve connectivity with a network of shaded routes



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# CONDITION OF STREET TREES

24% of street trees are in poor condition **Tree Health Conditions** Fair Good Poor

Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis and City GIS data.



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### CONDITION OF STREET TREES

39% of trees in sidewalks greater than 8' are in poor condition. Frequently these areas have no front yard setbacks



Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis and City GIS data.

Fair

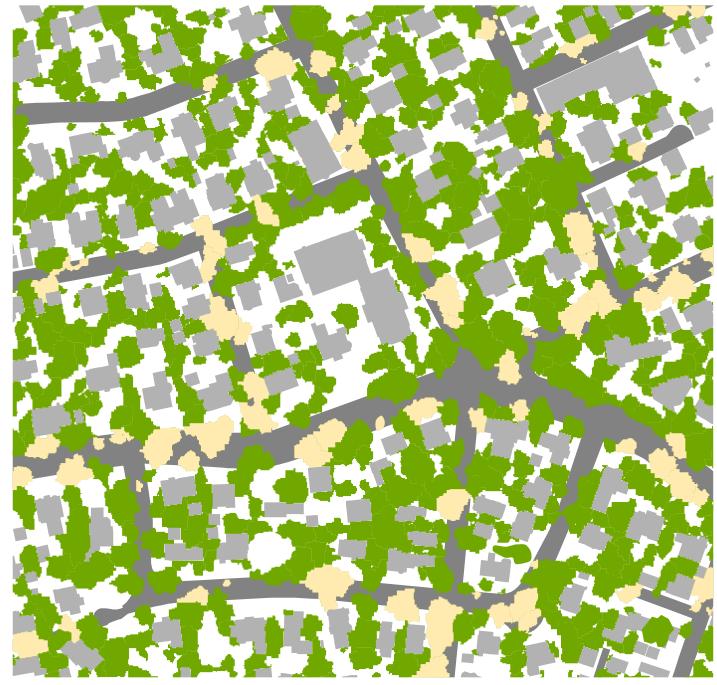
Good

Poor

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#### **R.O.W. CANOPY**

# Areas without front yard setbacks rely on street trees for canopy







**EAST CAMBRIDGE** 

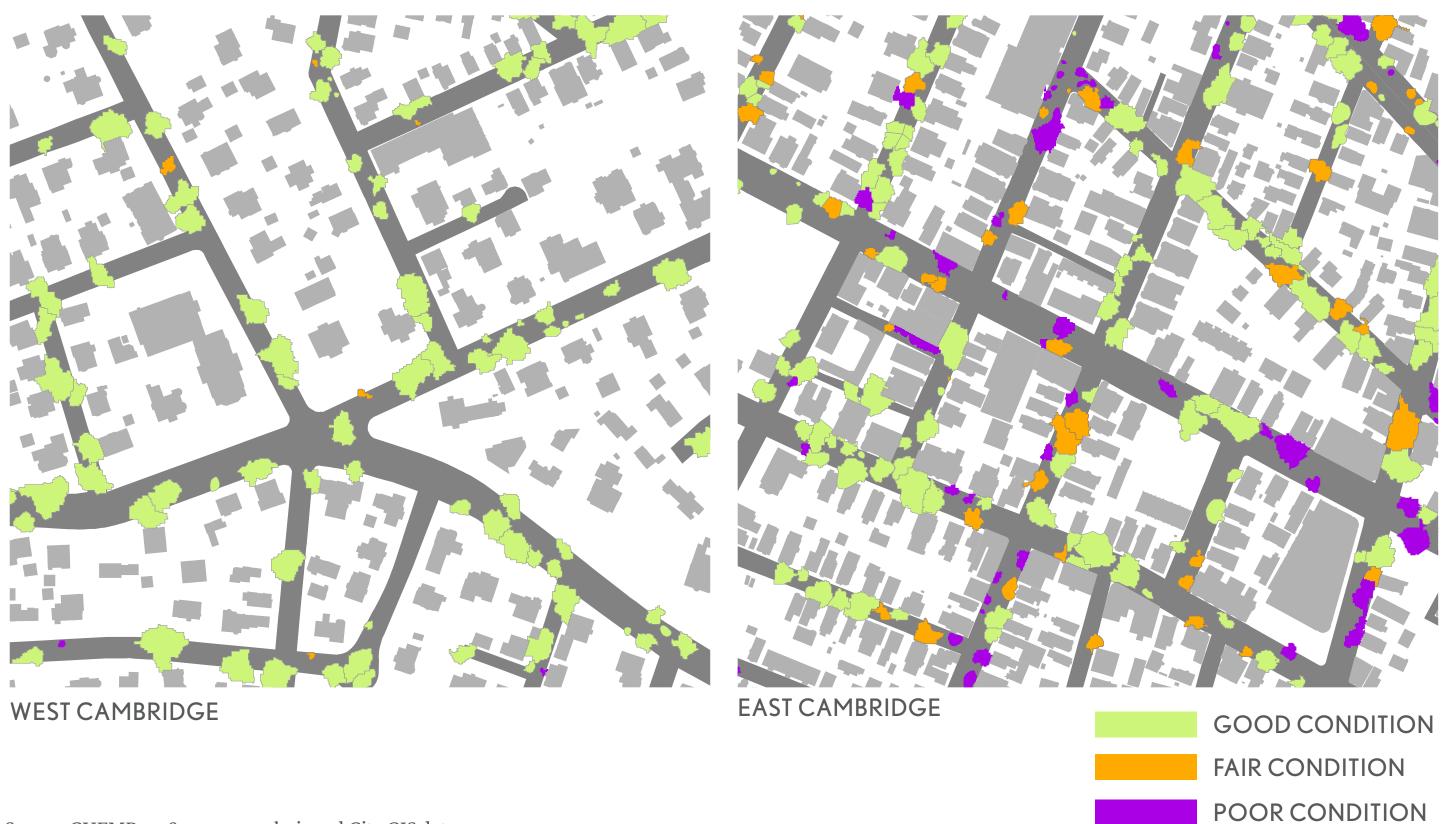


Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis and City GIS data.



#### R.O.W. CANOPY

## Street trees with setbacks are in better condition



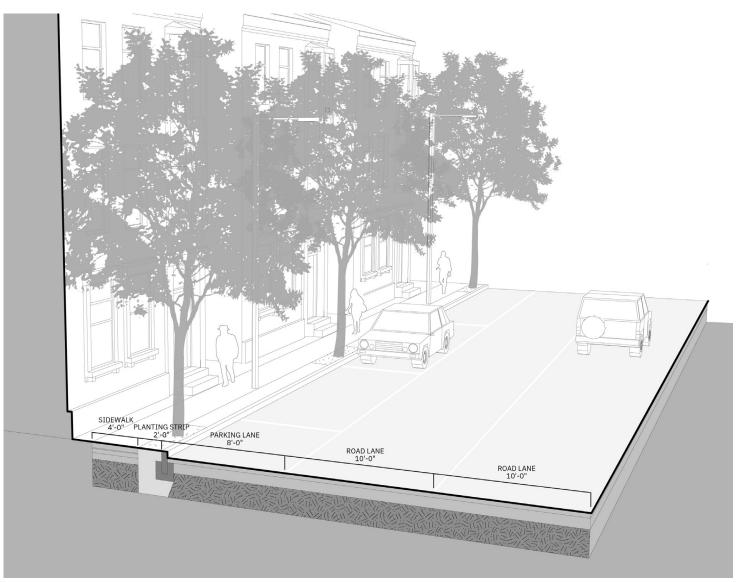
Source: CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis and City GIS data.



# **R.O.W. CANOPY**

# Front yard setbacks





**WEST CAMBRIDGE** 

EAST CAMBRIDGE

#### **CORE CONCEPTS**

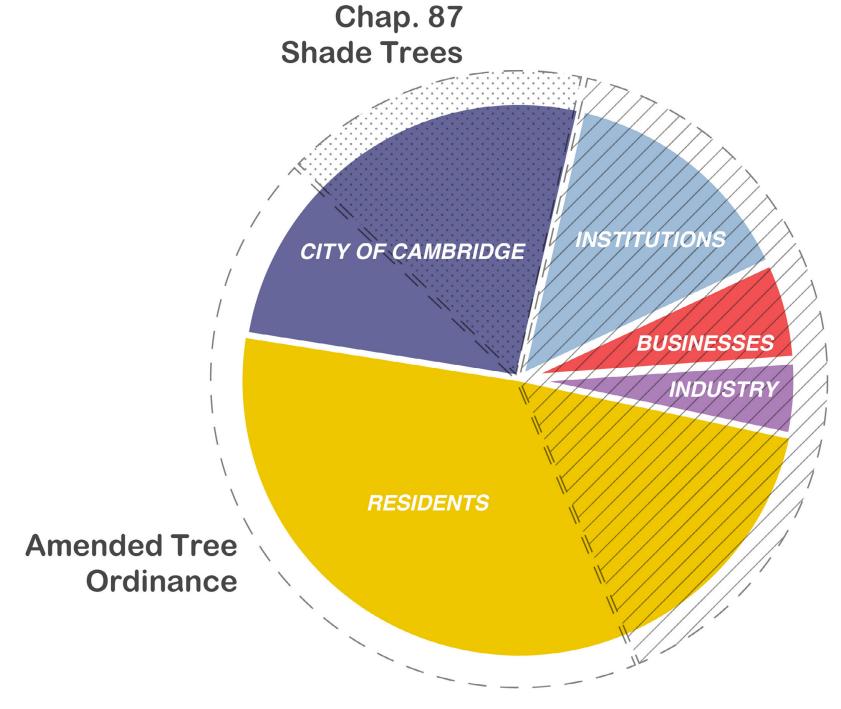
# Share responsibility for a healthy forest

A thriving urban forest requires the **mutual care of many parties**, including city government, homeowners, businesses, developers, local organizations, institutions and state agencies.

Policy should be **balanced and fair**, linking the interests of all parties around smart solutions that encourage tree preservation, planting of new trees, and effective maintenance.

The city should support **education** efforts and as a catalyst for **partnerships** between interest groups to encourage stewardship of the urban forest.

#### SHARE RESPONSIBILITY + COMBINE ACTION



**Tree Protection Ordinance** (Large Project Review)

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#### **Curb loss**

- Enhance management practices, especially around soil health, that improve tree vitality and longevity
- Protect exceptional trees of unique age and size
- Increase the cost of removals for large projects (de-incentivize removal and increase mitigation when retention is not possible)
- Enhance the city permitting and review process to track and seek alternatives to tree removals
- Educate residents on the value of their canopy as an important ecological/health resource for themselves and their community

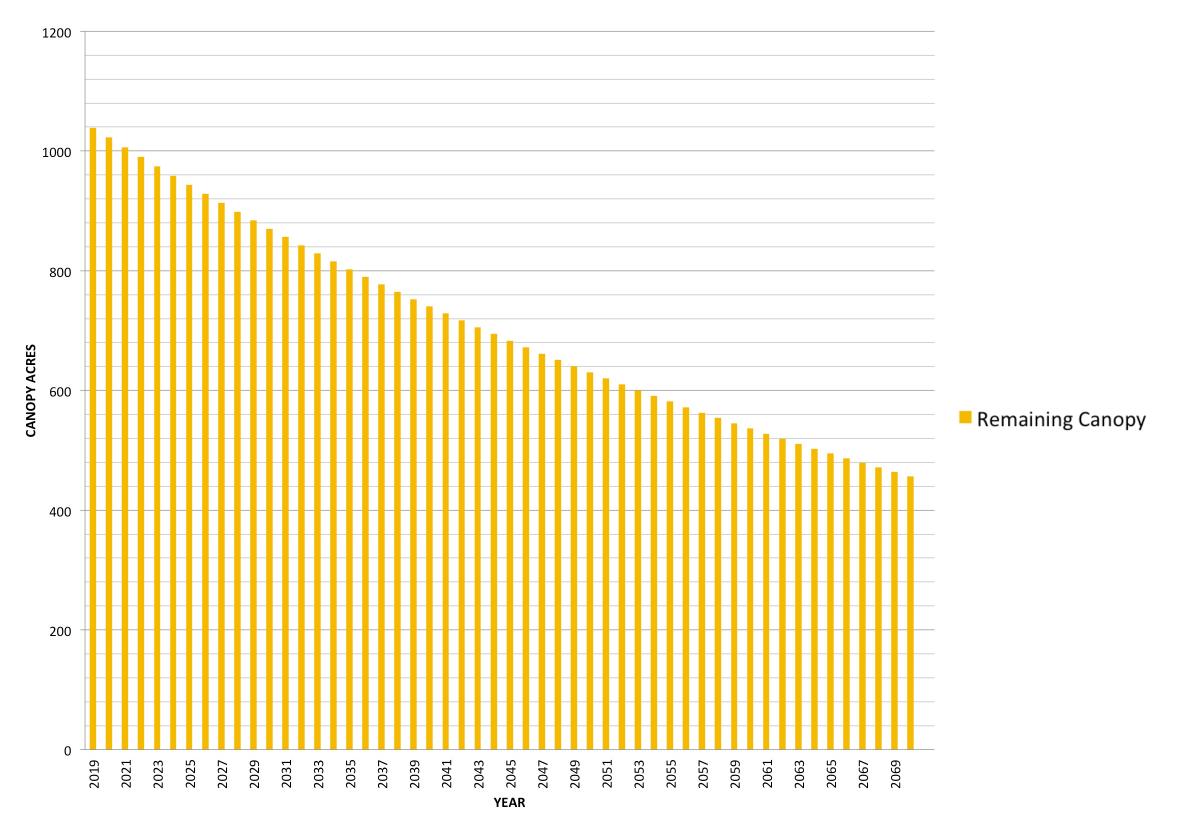
# **Grow canopy**

- Increase rate of planting within the public realm
- Enhance soil specifications and planting details to improve establishment and long-term success
- Develop alternative approaches to public realm design that increase opportunities, expand plantable areas, and enhance viability
- Provide resources for planting and maintenance to private landowners, especially in front yards
- Educate the public about the resources that are available and increase trust within the community
- Partner with local institutions and landowners to make commitments, set internal targets, and support community-wide goals
- Implement comprehensive zoning guidelines that represent the value of trees
- Modify recommended species and diversify forest to respond to a changing climate and increased risks of pests and diseases

# Encourage alternative approaches that advance the goals of the Urban Forest Master Plan

- De-pave and enhance permeability
- Implement green roofs and living structures
- Encourage alternative shade structures where trees are not viable

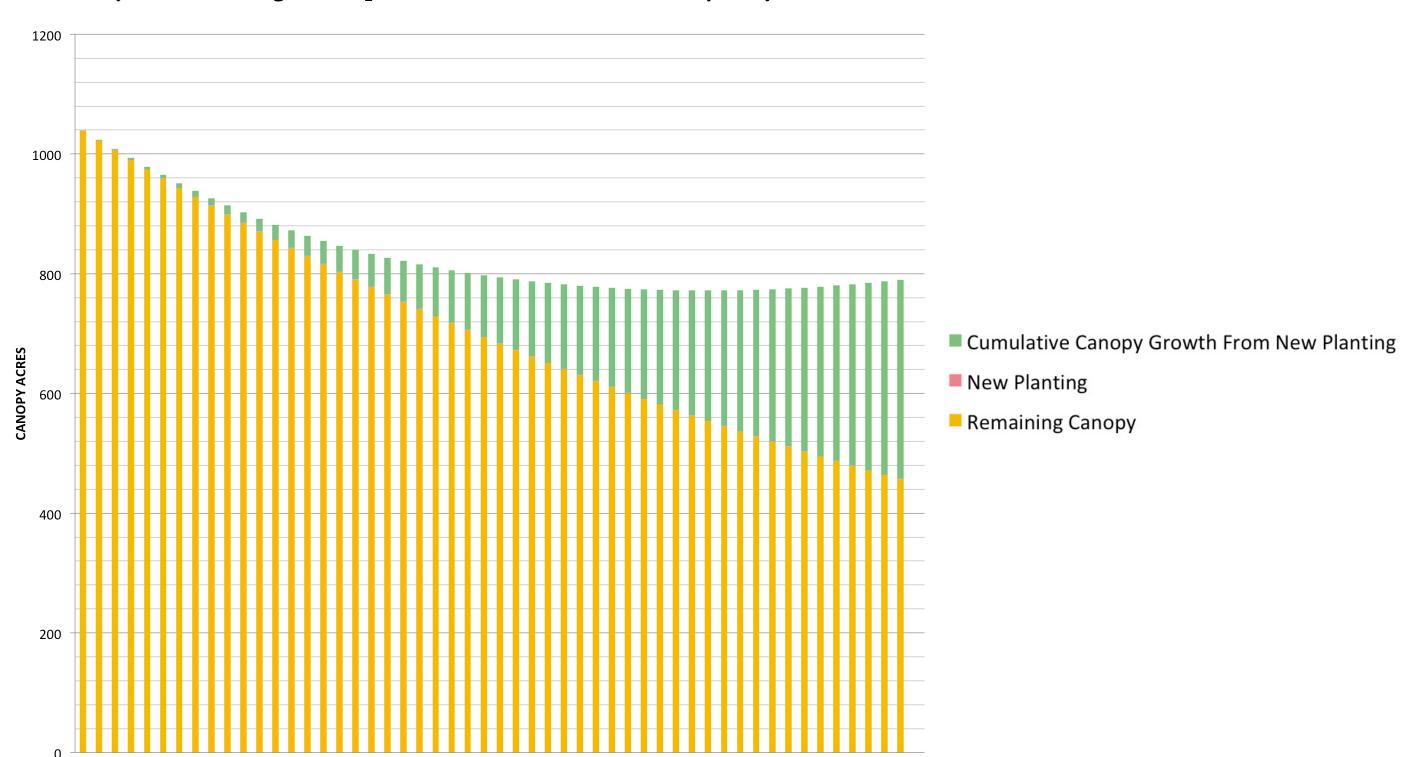
If the mortality rate remains unchanged with the current rate of planting ...



Graph assumptions: 1.6% annual net loss rate from 2009 to 2018 derived from CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis



If the current mortality rate unchanged but plant 1,000 additional trees/yr citywide...



Graph assumptions: 1.6% annual net loss rate from 2009 to 2018 derived from CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis

**YEAR** 

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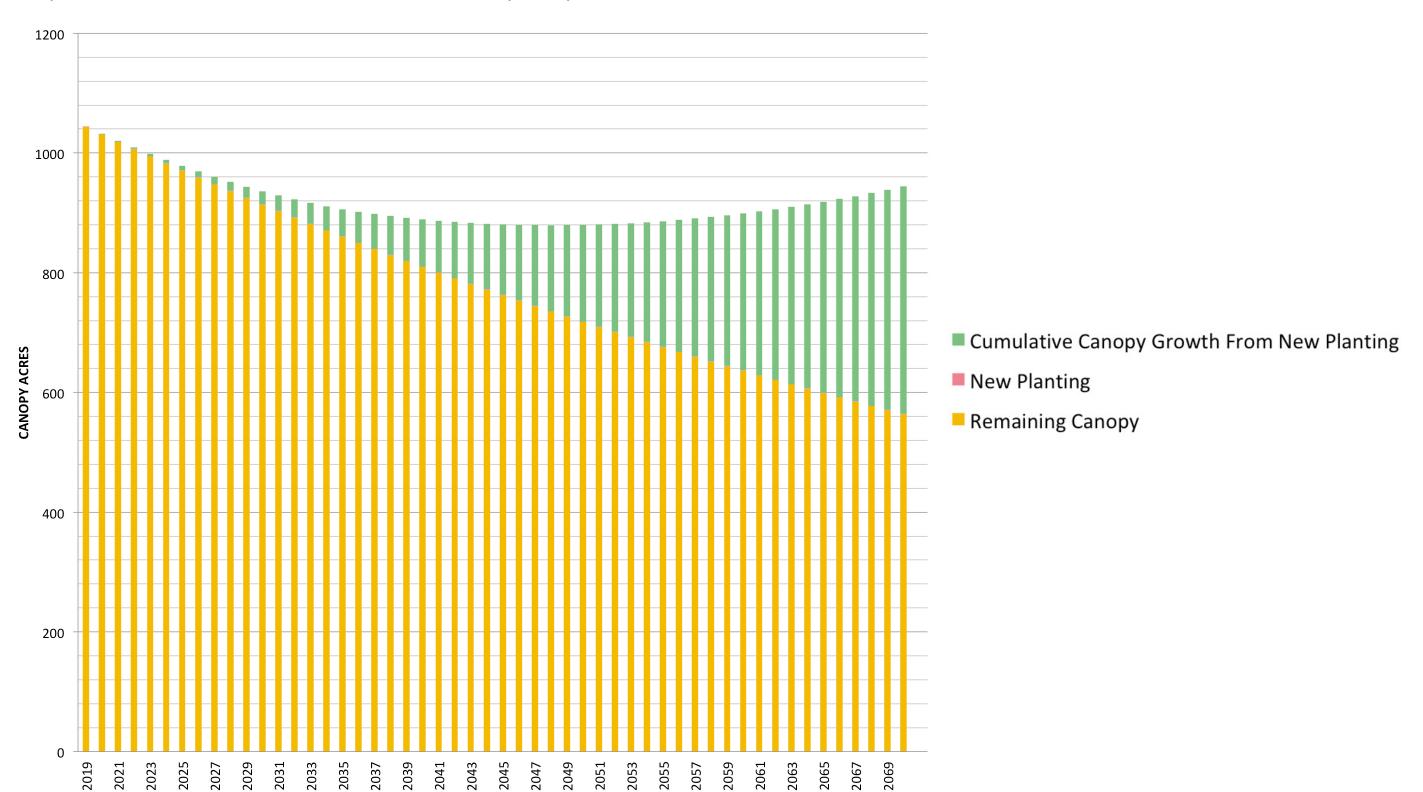
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If we curb loss by 25% and plant 1,000 additional trees/yr citywide ...

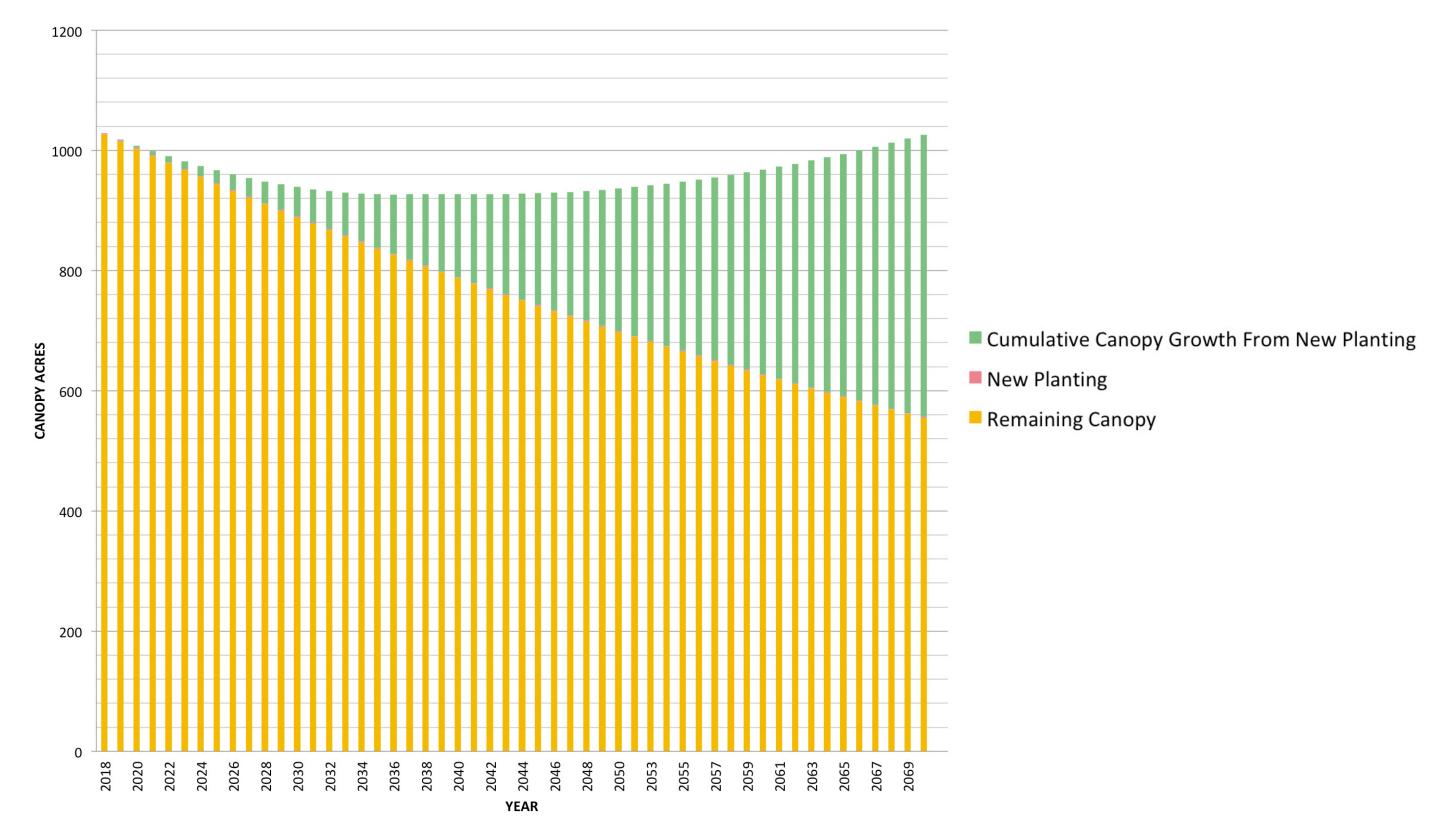


Graph assumptions: 1.6% annual net loss rate from 2009 to 2018 derived from CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis



**YEAR** 

If we curb loss by 25% and plant 3,000 additional trees/yr for 5 yrs then 1,000 additional trees/yr citywide...



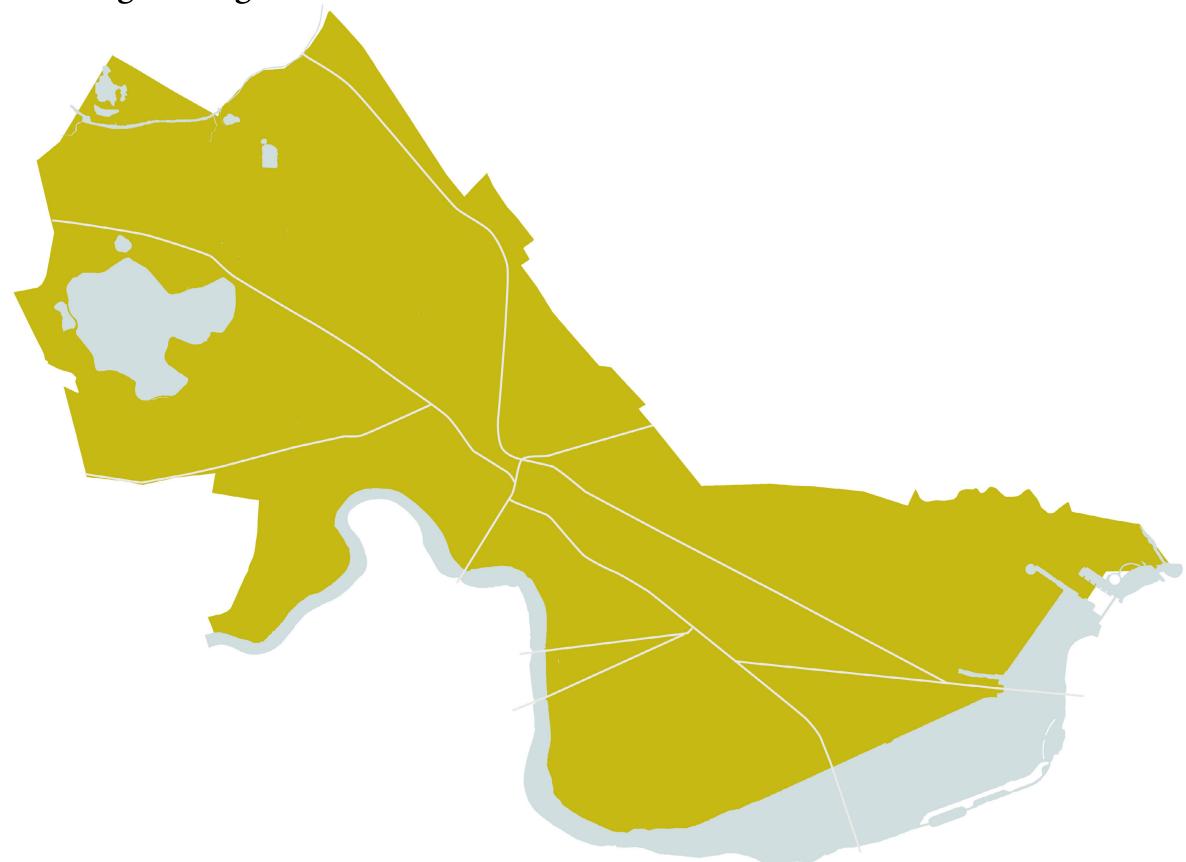
Graph assumptions: 1.6% annual net loss rate from 2009 to 2018 derived from CUFMP 2018 canopy analysis



		STRATEGIES															
RESPONSE STRATEGIES			Policy			Planning/Design					Practices				Outreach/Other		
			Enhance Current Tree Protection Ordinance	Formalize City Practices	Integrate Canopy Values into Planning and Zoning	Leverage Envision Cambridge and CCPR planning studies	Restrict Street Tree Planting to Only Suitable Areas	Create New Typologies for Street Tree Planting	Implement City-Wide Planting Plan to Focus Efforts	Site New Parks/Open Spaces Strategically	Improve City Planting Practices	Improve City Maintenance and Care Practices	Implement Soils Management Program	Monitor Tree Canopy and Adapt	Invest in Educational Programs	Build Community Partnerships	Seek Alternative Green Strategies
	ACTION	in response to	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Curb loss	Mature canopy decline	•													•	
		Land conversion	•		•	•							•			•	
		Residential removals	•		•										•	•	
		Poor tree condition	•	•	•		•				•	•	•		•	•	
		Narrow sidewalks			•		•										•
		Inadequate soil volume			•		•				•		•				
		Understanding the value of trees													•	•	
	Grow canopy	Equity in distribution of canopy cover	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
		Shading and cooling / pedestrian thermal comfort	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	
		Environmental quality / wellbeing and public health	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
		Ecological connectivity	•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•
		Diversity of forest composition						•	•		•			•			
		Disaster response preparedness				•			•		•			•	•	•	•

# PLANNING APPROACH

Curb loss by protecting existing trees



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#### **POLICY STRATEGIES**

- 1. Enhance Tree Protection Ordinance
  - a. Change the definition of Significant Trees
  - b. Create an "Exceptional Tree" category
  - c. Change mitigation requirements
- 2. Enhance the role of the Committee on Public Planting
- 3. Expand tree protections to private property
- 4. Earmark Tree Replacement Fund dollars for community grants
- 5. Align planting protocols with City's commitment to equity
- 6. Increase oversight to ensure compliance
- 7. Strengthen zoning ordinance requirements
  - a. Establish canopy coverage requirements
  - b. Increase ratios for trees to parking spaces and/or dwelling units
  - c. Increase setback and open space requirements in priority areas
  - d. Establish flexible landscape mandate like Green Factor or Green Area Ratio
  - e. Resilience Task Force zoning opportunity

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#### **ENHANCE PRACTICES**

# MONITOR —Increase tree assessments —Expand pest monitoring —Expand Cartegraph tracking to monitor success of practices PLANT —Enhance soil specs —Ensure proper drainage — Plant bare root trees

#### MAINTAIN

- —Formalize a City-wide management plan
- —Manage soils
  - -Mulching
  - —Liquid biological amendments
- —Structural pruning for young trees
- —Expand watering program



#### **EDUCATION / OUTREACH STRATEGIES**

Educate the public on the value of trees and how to be stewards of them.

Empower existing NGOs to plant and maintain more trees, including on private property.

Educate city staff, institutions, and other grounds managers on the value of trees and how to be stewards of them.

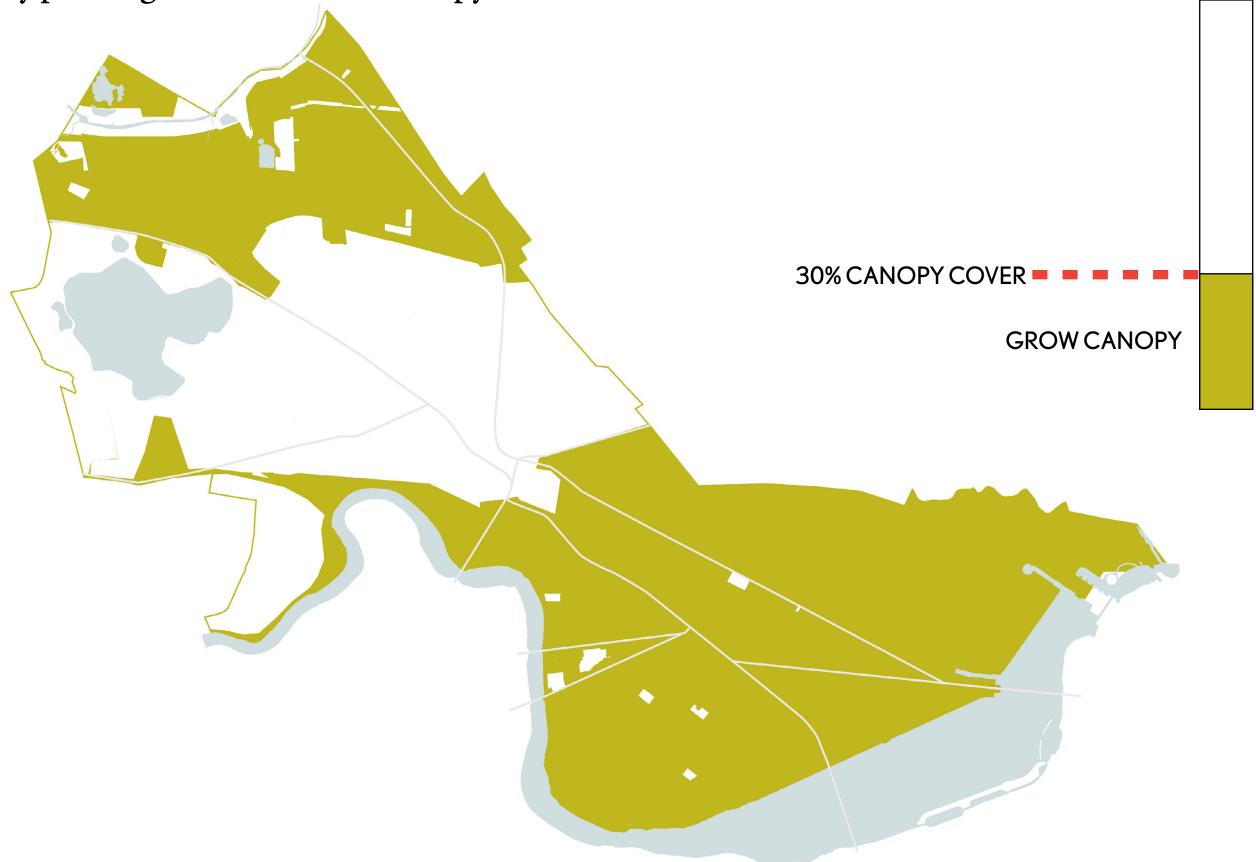
Support community employment and involvement in tree planting and constructing bioswales.

Build capacity of existing NGOs through partnerships with national organizations.



## PLANNING APPROACH

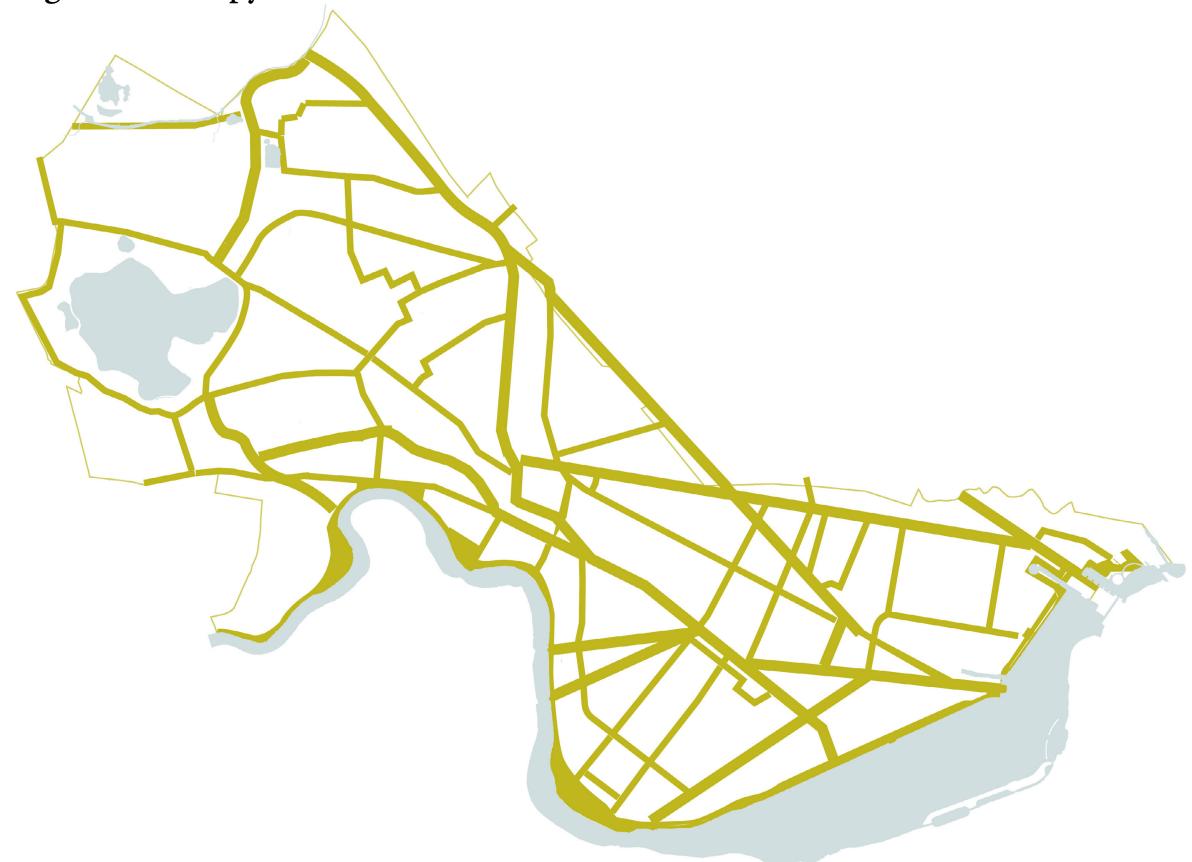
Grow canopy by planting trees in areas of canopy deficit



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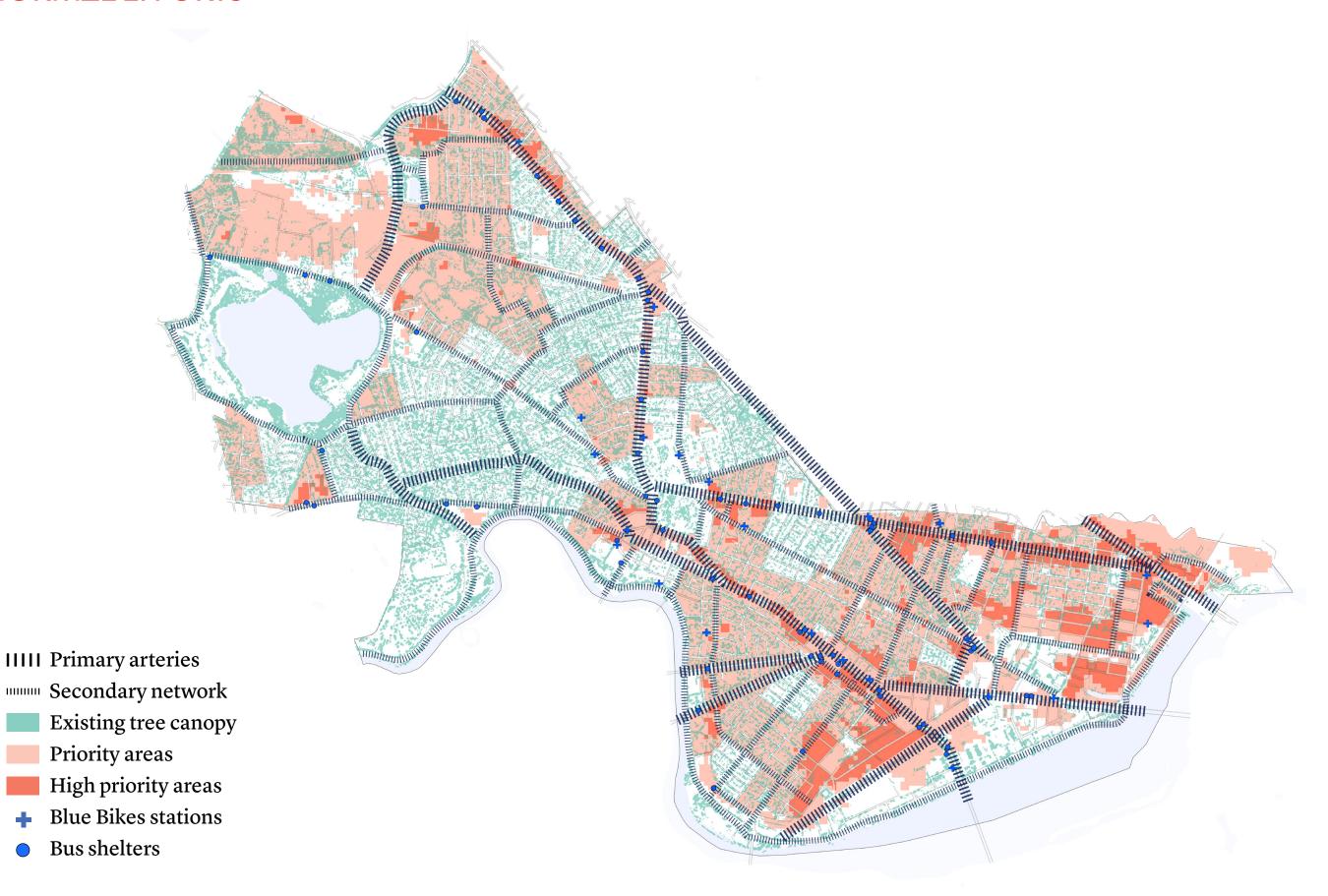
# PLANNING APPROACH

Focus on creating robust canopy corridors



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#### PRIORITIZE EFFORTS



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#### PRIORITY AREA CRITERIA







# ENVIRONMENTALLY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Minority population
Low income population
Non English speaking population

#### **HEAT ISLAND HOT SPOTS**

Greater than 92 degrees
on a 90 degree day
as modeled by KLF for 2030
ambient air temperature

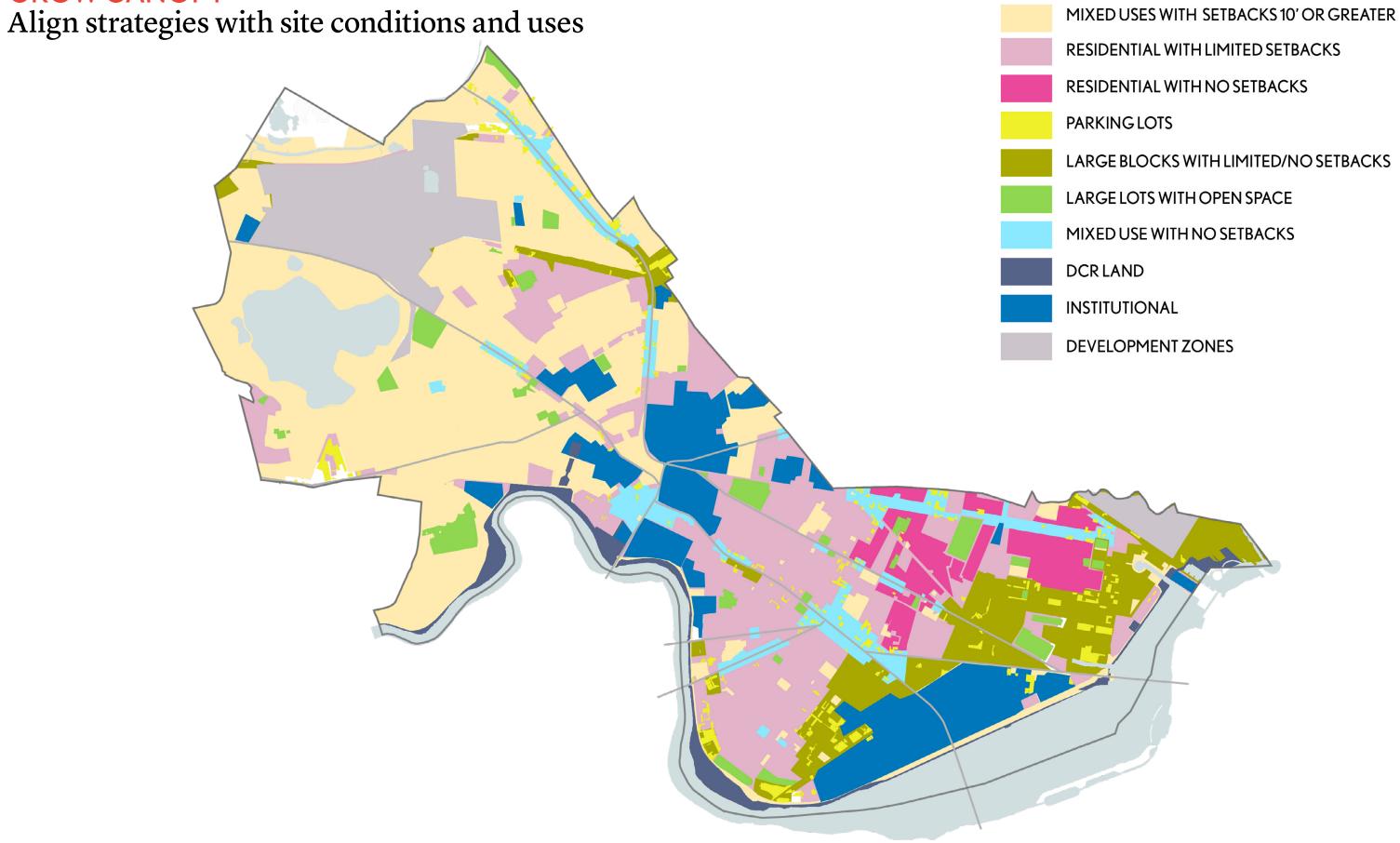
#### COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Public Schools and Hospitals



#### **GROW CANOPY**

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#### SIDEWALK WIDTH + FRONT YARD SETBACK













SIDEWALKS LESS THAN 6' WIDE

SIDEWALKS BETWEEN 6' AND 8'

SIDEWALKS 8' OR GREATER



FRONT YARD SETBACKS GREATER THAN 10'



**LIMITED SETBACKS** 



NO REQUIRED SETBACKS

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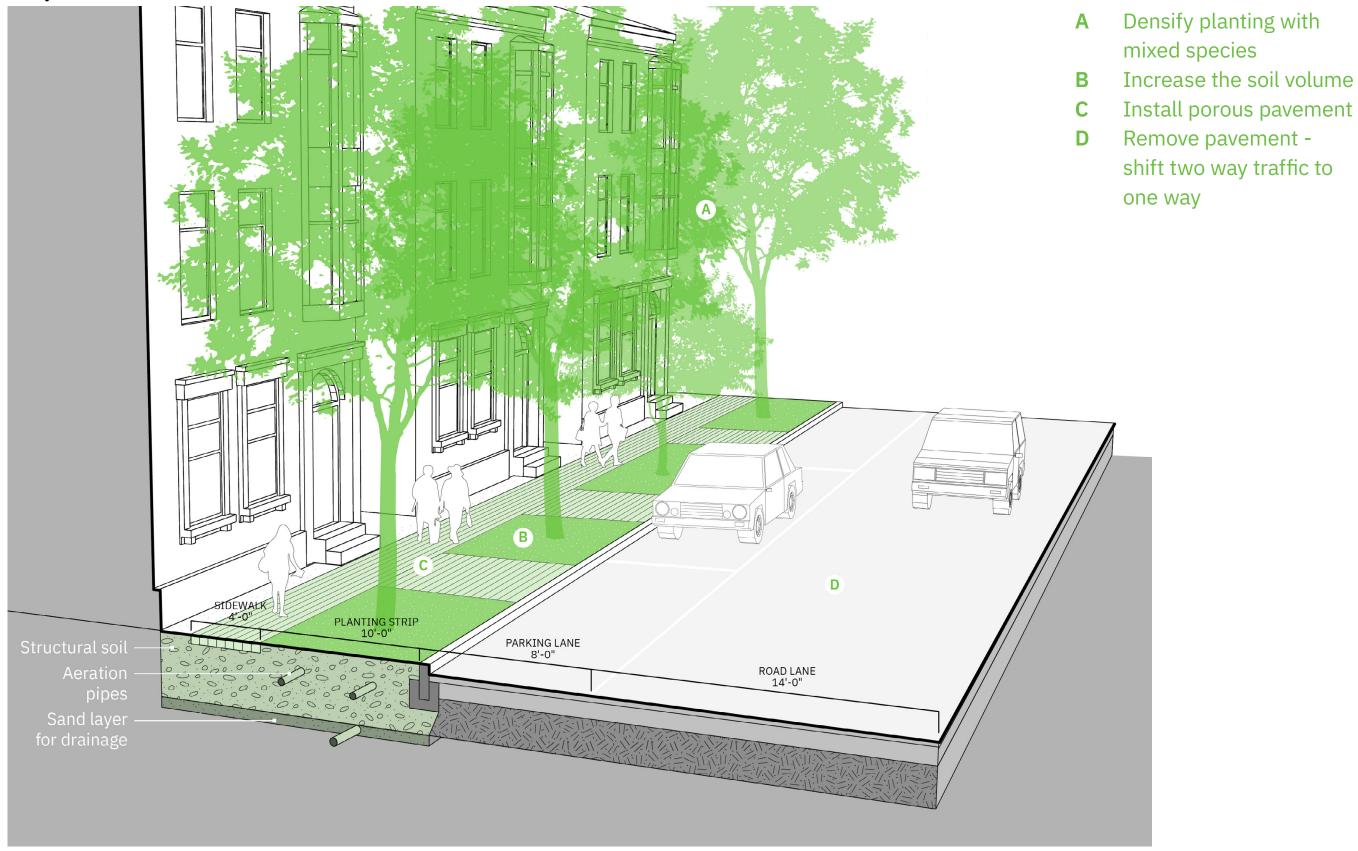
# ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STRATEGIES: MAJOR STREETS, WIDE SIDEWALKS



THE CAMBRIDGE
DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC
WORKS

## ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STRATEGIES: NARROW RESIDENTIAL STREETS, NO SETBACK

Lane diet, one-way travel



#### ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STRATEGIES: NARROW RESIDENTIAL STREETS WITH FRONT YARD

Planting area fit into parking lane



# RESEARCH FINDINGS RESPONSE STRATEGIES

**NEXT STEPS** 

OPEN HOUSE

#### **NEXT STEPS**

Cost / Benefit Analysis

Prioritization

Refinement and Clarification

— Public Meeting #3

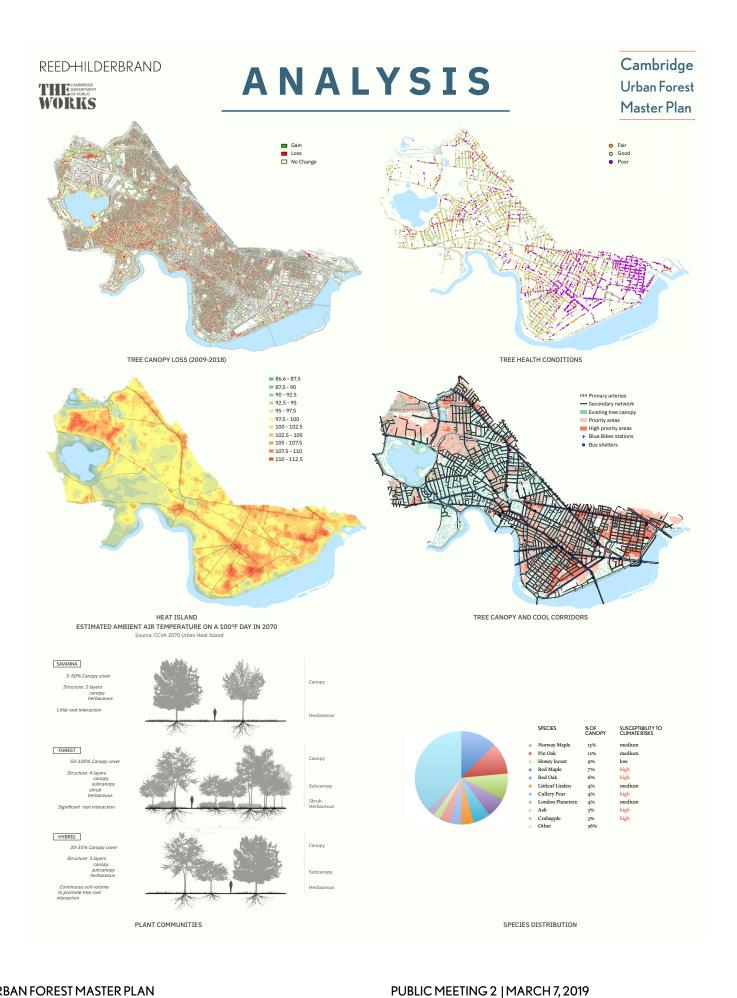


# RESEARCH FINDINGS RESPONSE STRATEGIES

**NEXT STEPS** 

OPEN HOUSE

#### **ANALYSIS**





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## POLICY

Cambridge **Urban Forest** Master Plan

#### **ENHANCE CURRENT TREE** PROTECTION ORDINANCE

• Change the Definition of Significant Trees

Today, only trees greater than 8" dbh require mitigation and only when part of new development projects.

· Create an "Exceptional Tree" category

The addition of an "Exceptional Tree" category in the City's Tree Protection Ordinance would allow for a more stringent set of protections than those currently applied to Significant Trees in order to protect the city's most valuable trees.

- Change Mitigation Requirements
- Enhance the Role of the Committee on Public Planting

Provide the Public Planting Committee with resources to extend the discussion of subjects raised by the UFMP, including

- interpreting recommendations
- updating analysis based on current research
- reviewing pilot projects
- reviewing progress toward targets

#### Expand Tree Protections to Private Property

Many cities locally and across the country have expanded the jurisdiction of local governments through tree protection ordinances by requiring a removal permit for all trees, regardless of whether they are on public or private property. Circumstances under which the city approves a tree removal permit vary in stringency but could range from approving every request to prohibiting removal of any healthy tree. However, the success of this approach has not been well established.

• Earmark Tree Replacement Fund dollars for **Community Grants** 

The city could earmark some of the funds in the Tree Replacement Fund for community-based grant making that could help fund operations to encourage planting on private property.

#### **FORMALIZE CITY PRACTICES**

- Align Planting Priorities by City's Commitment To Equity
- Increase Oversight to Ensure Compliance

Currently, there is limited City oversight to ensure compliance. The Tree Protection Ordinance does not currently define standards for tree protection during construction.

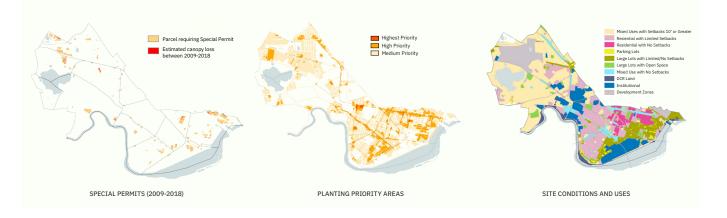
- Require increased offset from tree dripline to protect tree roots
- Require periodic review per an order of conditions to improve tree protection measures (fencing, watering) during construction - Require city arborist/city engineer inspection

prior to obtaining Certificate of Occupancy

#### **VALUES INTO PLANNING** AND ZONING

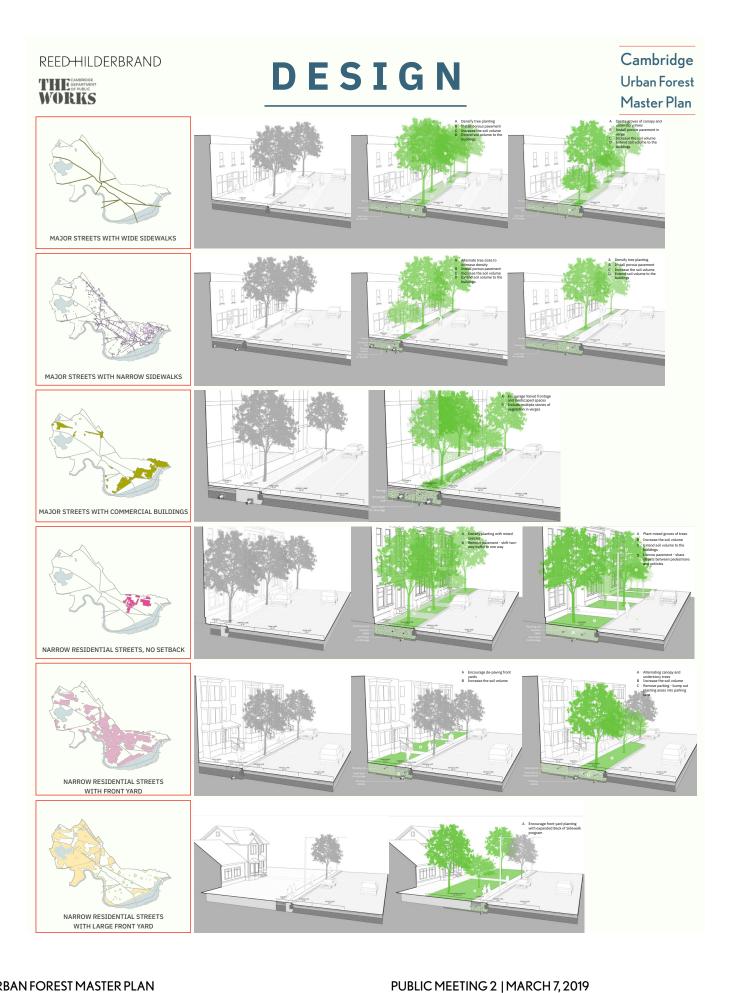
**INTEGRATE CANOPY** 

- Broaden and Align Zoning Requirements
  - Establish canopy coverage requirements
  - Increase ratios for trees to parking spaces and/or dwelling units
  - Increase setback and open space requirements in priority areas
  - Establish flexible landscape mandate like Green Factor or Green Area Ratio
  - Resilient Task Force zoning opportunity



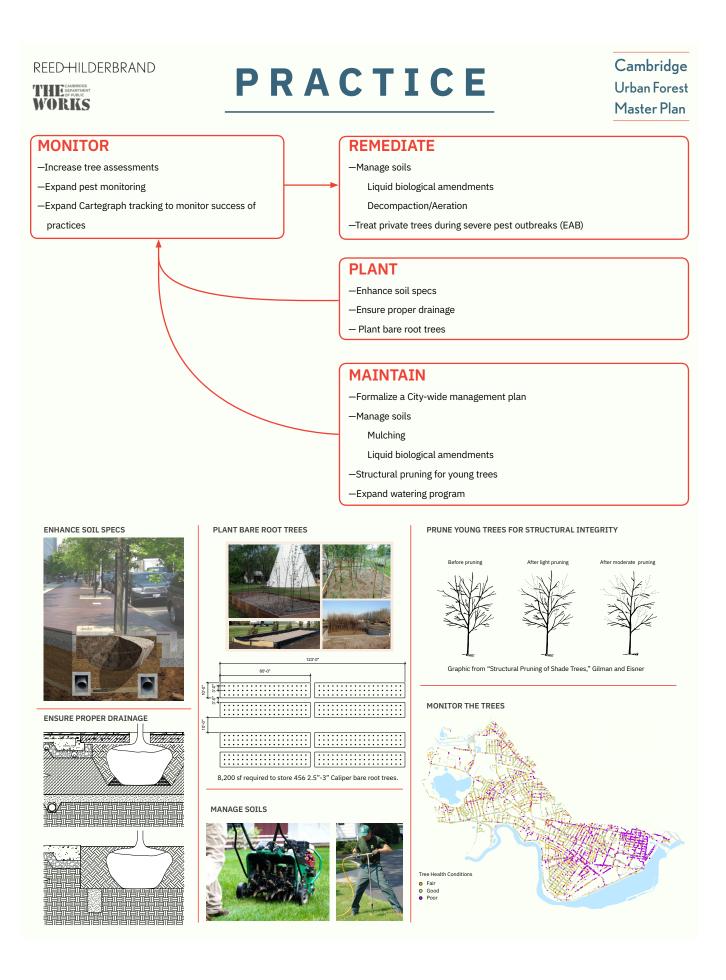


## **DESIGN**





#### **PRACTICE**



CAMBRIDGE URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN

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#### **OUTREACH/EDUCATION**

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## OUTREACH

Cambridge **Urban Forest** Master Plan

#### Empower existing NGOs to plant and maintain more trees, including on private property.

- Hands-on tree care training, covering biology, identification, planting and proper care
   Tree Planting Opportunities Map for tree planting events
- Book Club
- · Video Library



TREE TENDERS (PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY)

#### Support community employment and involvement in tree planting and constructing bioswales.

- Community Greenspace provides material supplies, technical advice, and clasroom-based and hands-on training to support resident-driven community greening projects.
   GreenSkills is a local green jobs program that employs high school students and adults with employment barriers through the planting of trees.



YALE LIRBAN RESOURCES INITIATIVE

#### Build capacity of existing NGOs through partnerships with national

Nonprofit organizations, urban forest councils, municipalities and individuals can join the alliance.
 Offering education & training to its members and providing online tree planting and care resources.



ABROR DAY FOUNDATION - ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY NETWORK

#### Educate city staff, institutions, and other grounds managers on the value of trees and how to be stewards of them.

· Supporting arboriculture and urban forestry education





DAVEY TREE

#### Educate the public on the value of trees and how to be stewards of them.

a training program that enables educators to start school gardens

a training program for starting community gardens on vacant lots, in parks, around schools and churches etc.

thousands of seedlings are started at neighborhood-based greenhouses by nonprofit partners as well as by inmates of the Philadelphia Prison System at a prison greenhouse through a training program.

PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

#### Educate the public on pests.

Citizen science project helps to protect the forest and tree species





BACKYARD BARK BEETLE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

#### Train citizens to survey trees in the city and for diagnosis and management of diseases.

· sanitation measures to reduce the risk of spreading pathogen

- · knowing the hosts and symptoms,
- best management practices, · treatments and restoration options,
- · response plans

#### Create a program that prevents the spread of pests from imported wood pellets.





SUDDEN OAK DEATH (SOD BLITZ)

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# **OPEN HOUSE**

**FURTHER INFORMATION** 

www.cambridgema.gov/ufmp

