

Reinventing Kendall Square for the 21st Century

Preliminary vision and framework



KENDALL SQUARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JULY 21, 2011



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Agenda

- MIT zoning petition update
- Toward a Kendall Square vision
- Preliminary framework
- Strategies for sustainability
- Next steps
- Public comment



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

MIT rezoning petition update



Toward a vision: Priorities we heard at the June 21 public meeting



Enhancing neighborhood identity and sense of place

- Communicate better the many assets Kendall already has
- Convey a stronger, more memorable sense of place
- Let innovation take a central role in identity
- Identity should also include other aspects



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Creating a more active, extensive public realm

- Emphasize human scale at the street
- Create/improve *gathering* spaces
- Improve connections to Charles River
- Blur the boundaries between public and private space



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Attaining the right mix of land use/activities

- Land use should be mixed, diverse
- High density is important
- Emphasize amenities for people who work, study and live in/near Kendall
- Continue to add/improve choices in use/activity categories that already exist
- Create more hang-out opportunities for people working nearby
- Designate an organization with primary responsibility for cultural programming in Kendall



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Sustaining Kendall's strong innovation culture

- Maintain Kendall's momentum as a globally significant innovation center
- Create an "innovation ecosystem" enabling small and large companies to thrive together



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Expanding the amount and range of housing

- Expand range of available housing choices
- Locate housing to discourage driving
- Design housing so that the presence of its inhabitants is felt on the street
- Design housing to be sensitive in scale/character to traditional neighborhood housing



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Expanding retail choices

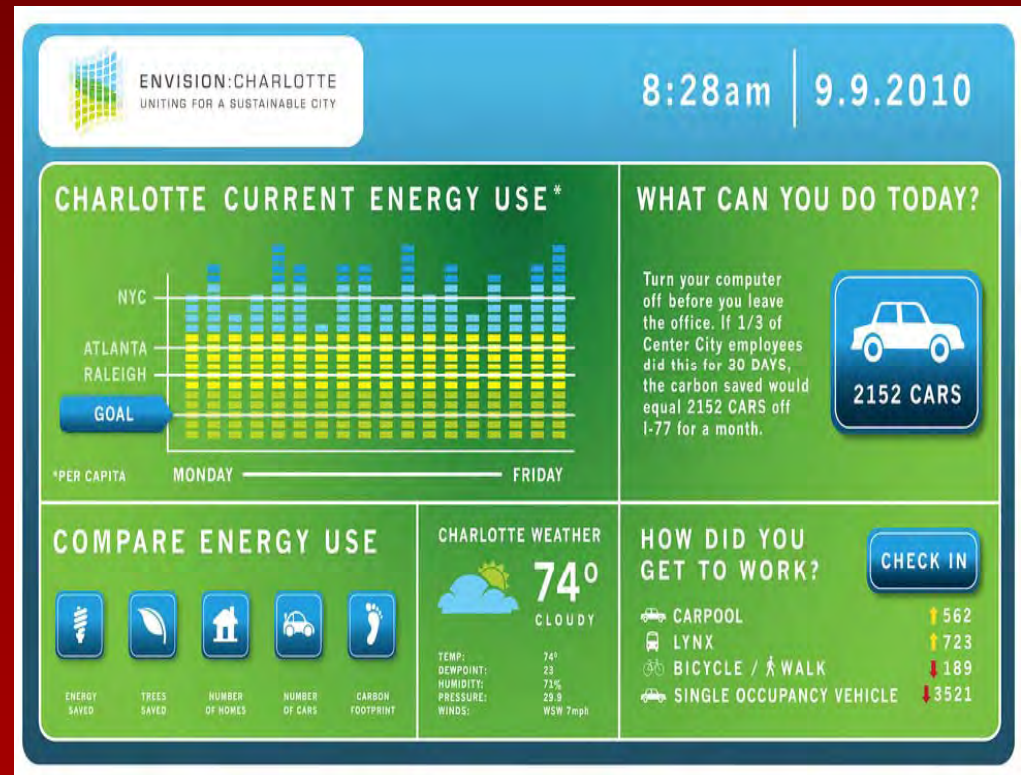
- Develop more economic diversity in the points of retail, dining
- Attract more retail serving day-to-day needs



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Making Kendall a global leader in sustainability innovation and practice

- Kendall Square should be a model of environmental sustainability innovation and practice



urban design/planning study for the **central** and **kendall square area**

Improving transportation choices

- Improve access to/from adjacent neighborhoods



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Ensuring plan implementation delivers effective results

- Support plan concepts and their implementation with sound demographics and economics
- Identify specific action steps with associated agents, timeframes, resources, standards of success



urban design/planning study for the **central** and **kendall square area**

Toward a vision:



Priorities we heard at the June 21 public meeting

- Enhancing neighborhood identity and sense of place
- Creating a more active and extensive public realm
- Attaining the right mix of land use/activities
- Sustaining Kendall's strong innovation culture
- Expanding the amount and range of housing
- Expanding retail choices
- Making Kendall a global leader in sustainability innovation and practice
- Improving transportation choices
- Ensuring plan implementation delivers effective results



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Translating vision (*what*) into a framework (*how*)

Framework elements  Vision priorities 	Nurturing Kendall's innovation culture	Demonstrating leadership in environmental sustainability	Creating places that foster community and vitality	Integrating complementary activities for creative interaction
Identity/sense of place	●	●	●	●
public realm	●	●	●	●
mix of land use/activities	●	●	●	●
strong innovation culture	●	●	●	●
housing choices	●	●	●	●
retail choices	●	●	●	●
global leader in sustainability	●	●	●	●
transportation choices	●	●	●	●
effective results	●	●	●	●

Plan framework: four perspectives

- Nurturing Kendall's innovation culture
- Demonstrating leadership in environmental sustainability for the world
- Creating places that foster community and vitality
- Integrating activities that support creative interaction



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Nurturing Kendall's innovation culture

- Build upon the remarkable successes of this culture to reach still greater achievements for people ...
- ...and remain globally competitive
 - This culture has grown in planned and unplanned ways
- Bring different minds together, formally and informally
- Share the innovation – within and beyond Kendall's community



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Share the innovation

Innovation culture



Share the innovation

Innovation culture



Demonstrating leadership in environmental sustainability

- Be aware of leadership by others
 - Cities
 - Institutions
 - Businesses
- Build upon Cambridge's established leadership
- Focus on the opportunities most intrinsic to Kendall
- Create an eco-district



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Creating places that foster community and vitality

- Walkable streets
- Active street edges
- Green spaces and recreation connections
- Where new investment can contribute to place



urban design/planning study for the **central** and **kendall square area**

Placemaking

Creating places

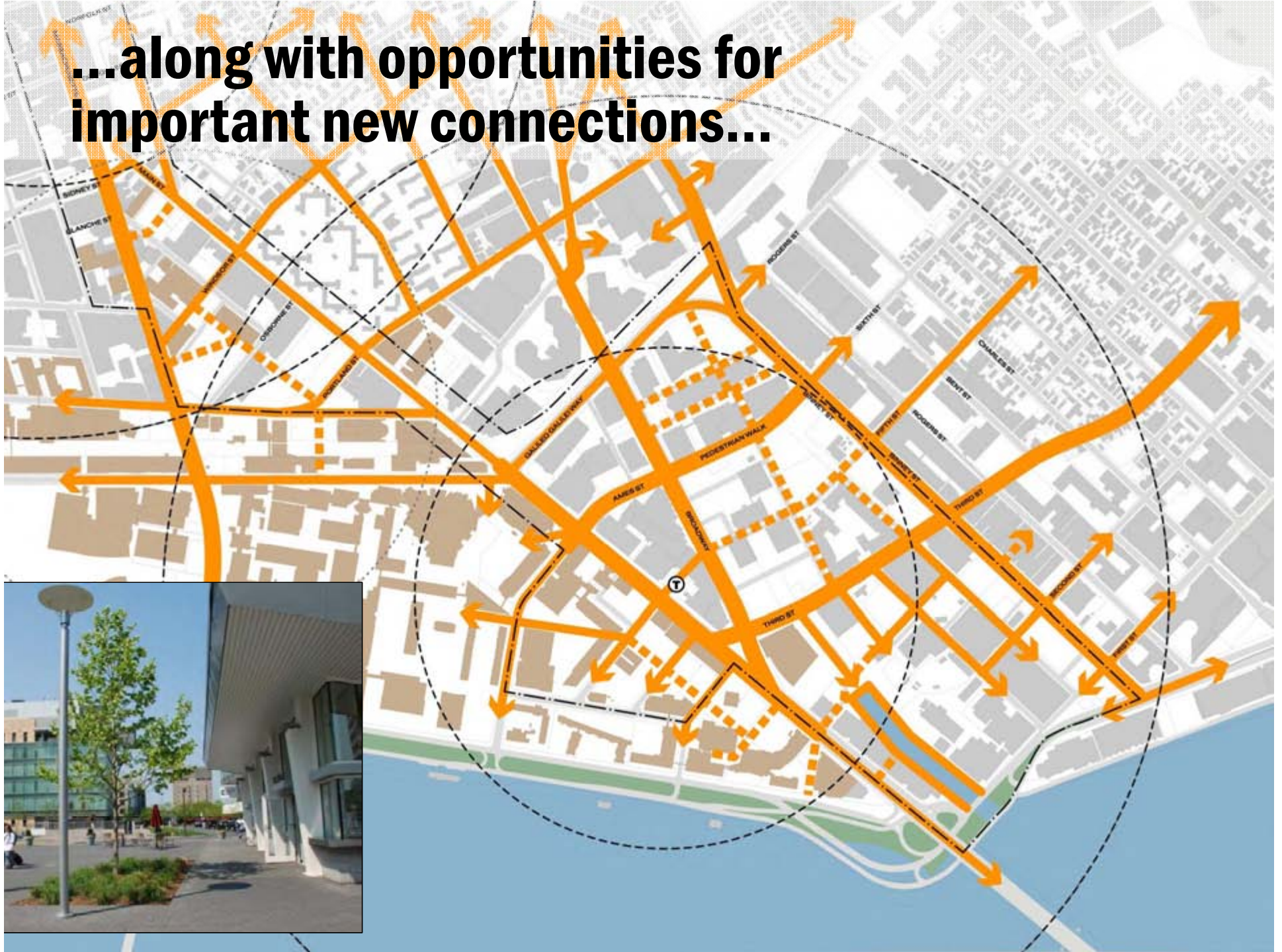


Placemaking starts with walkability...a framework of streets already exists

- 30,000-50,000 people are within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of Kendall on a typical workday



...along with opportunities for important new connections...



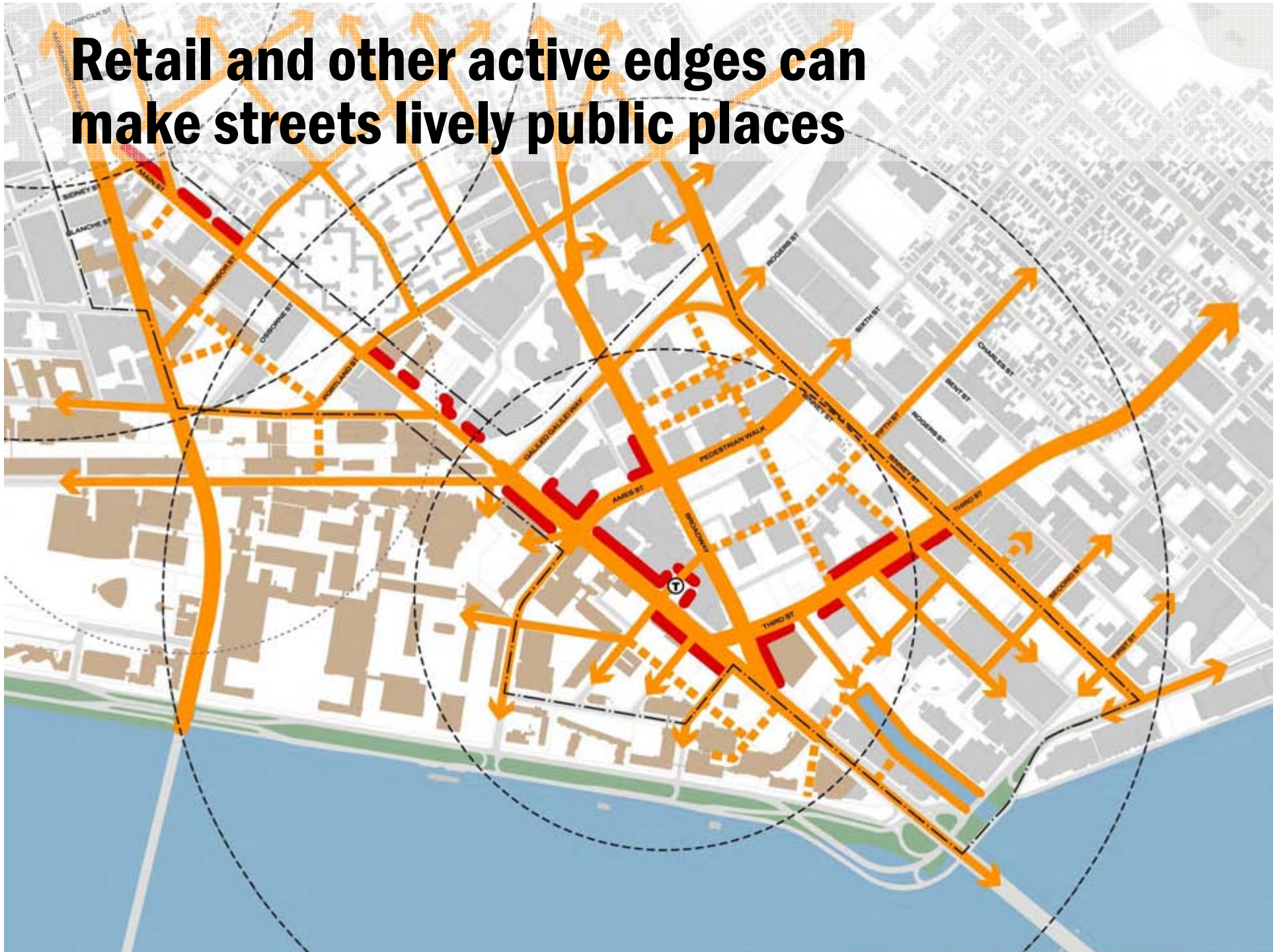


...and strengthening existing connections



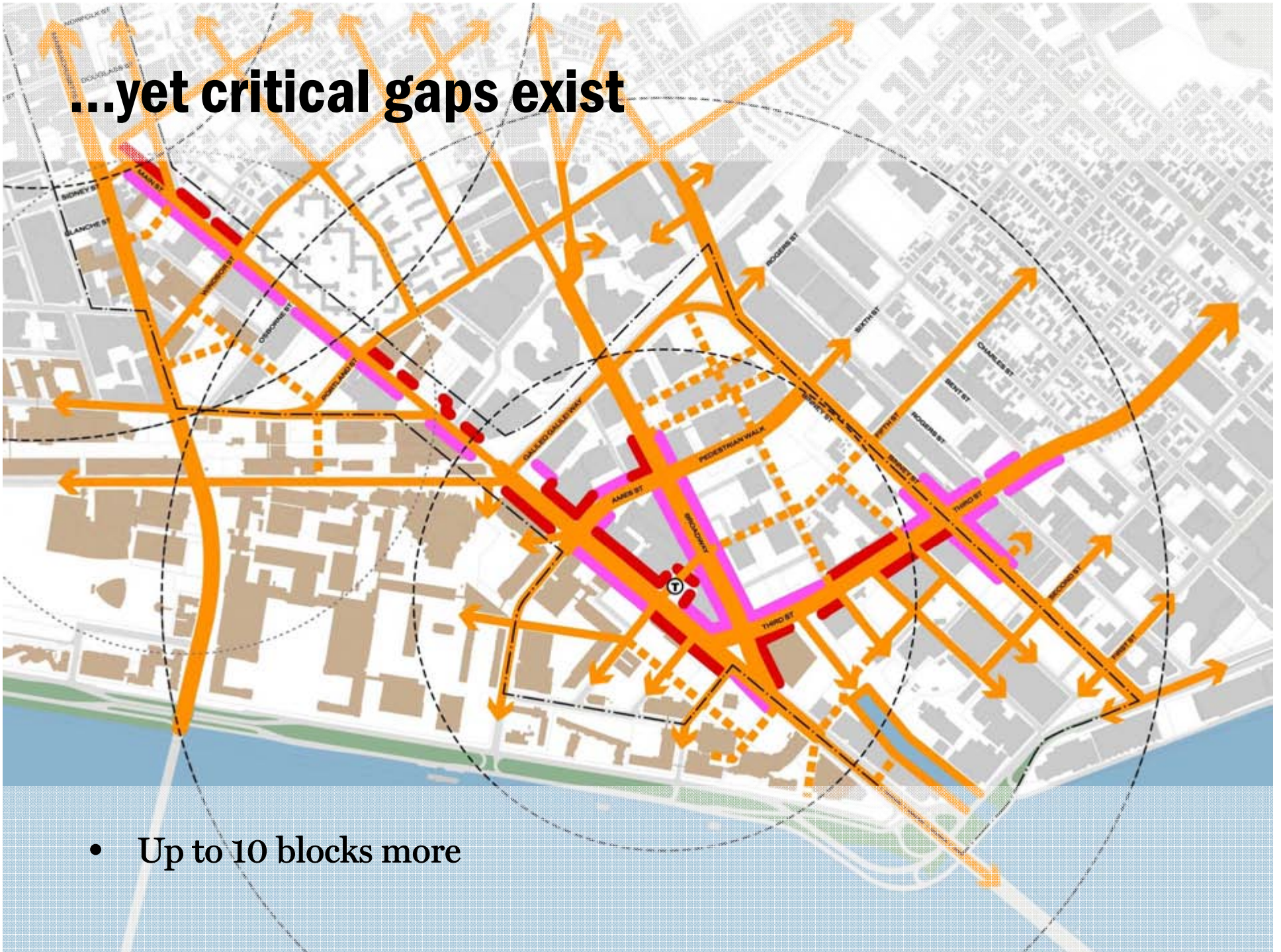


**Retail and other active edges can
make streets lively public places**





...yet critical gaps exist



- Up to 10 blocks more



Various green spaces invite gathering



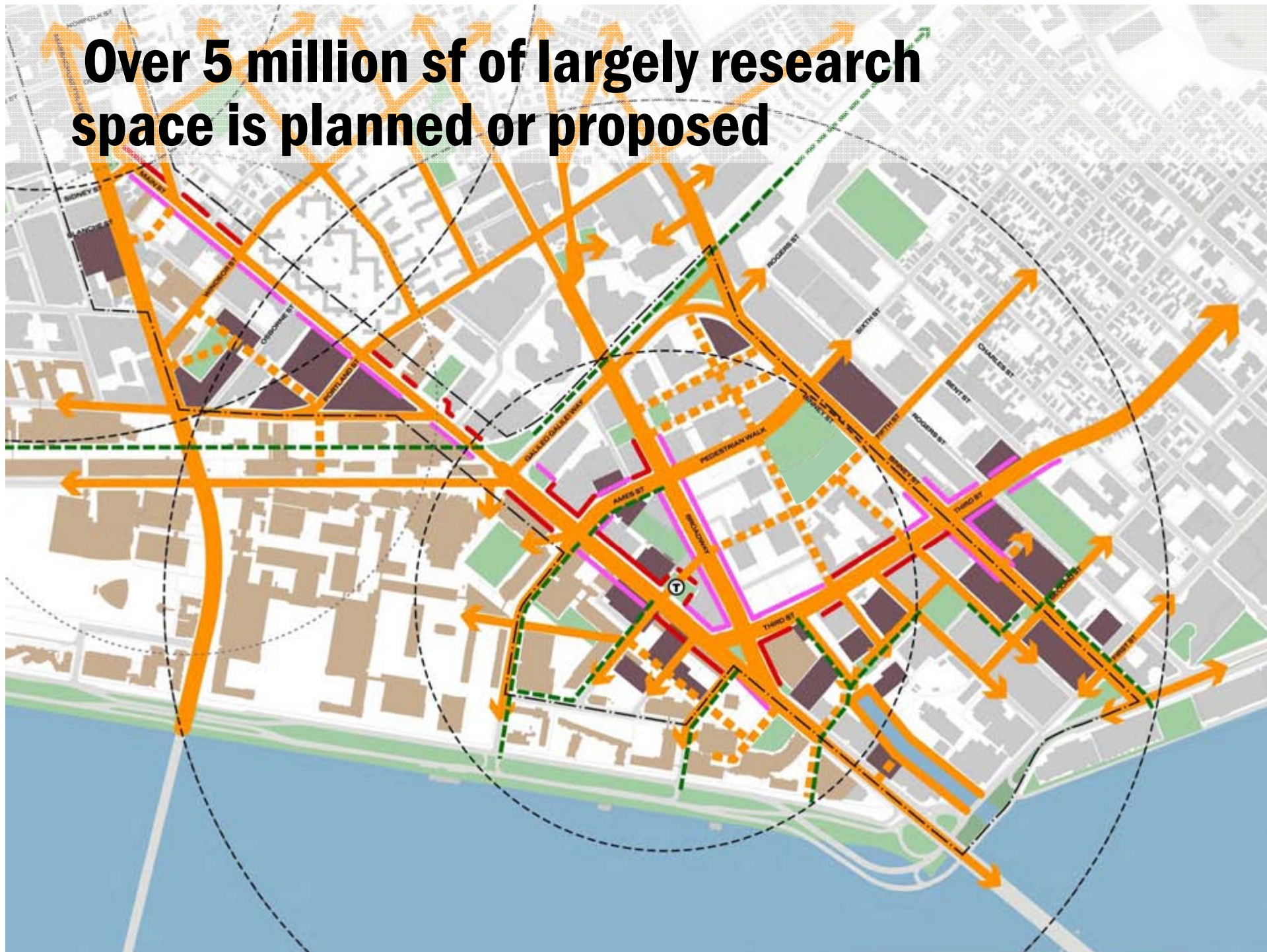


...and can grow into a network that incorporates the riverfront

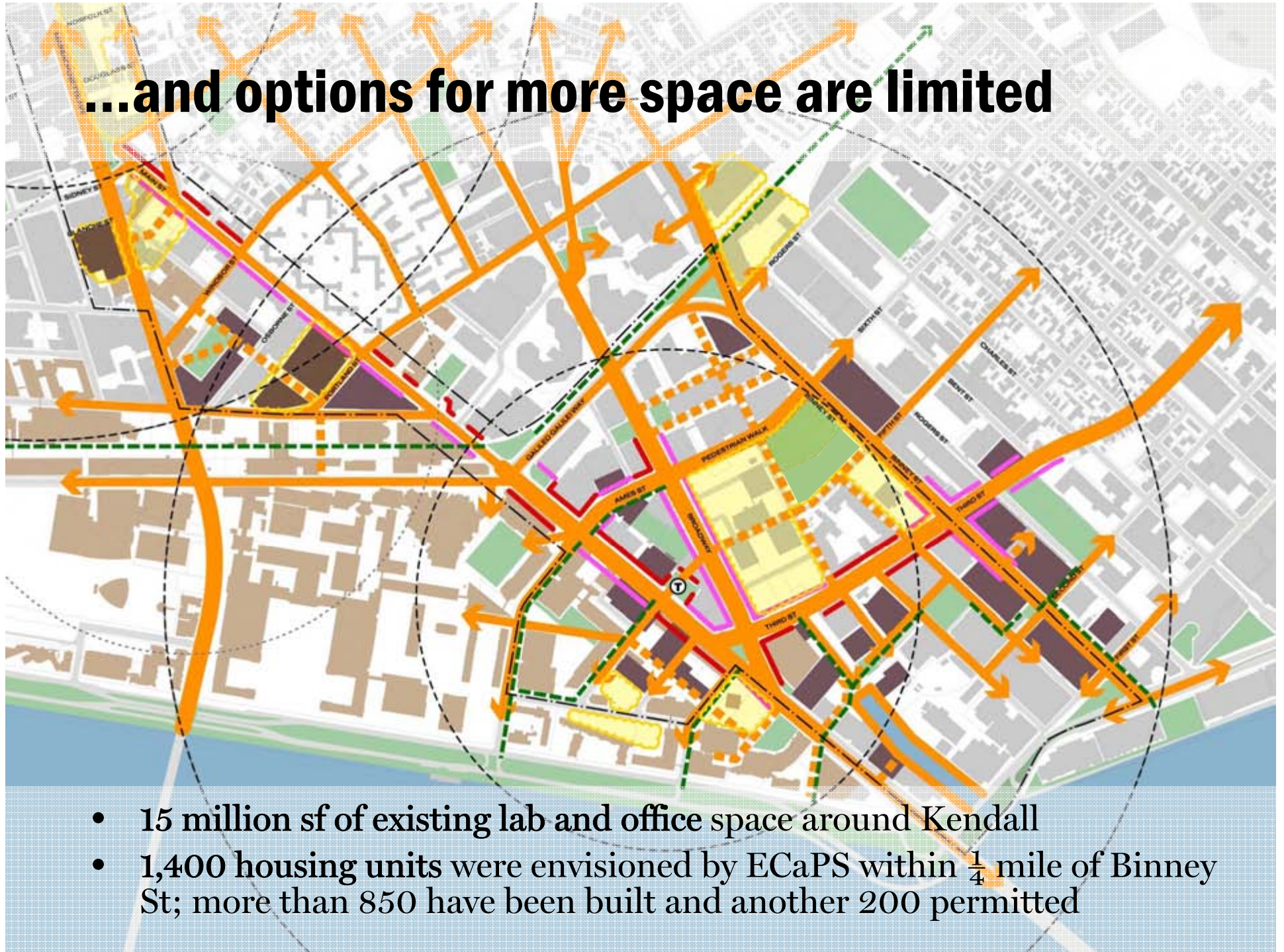




Over 5 million sf of largely research space is planned or proposed

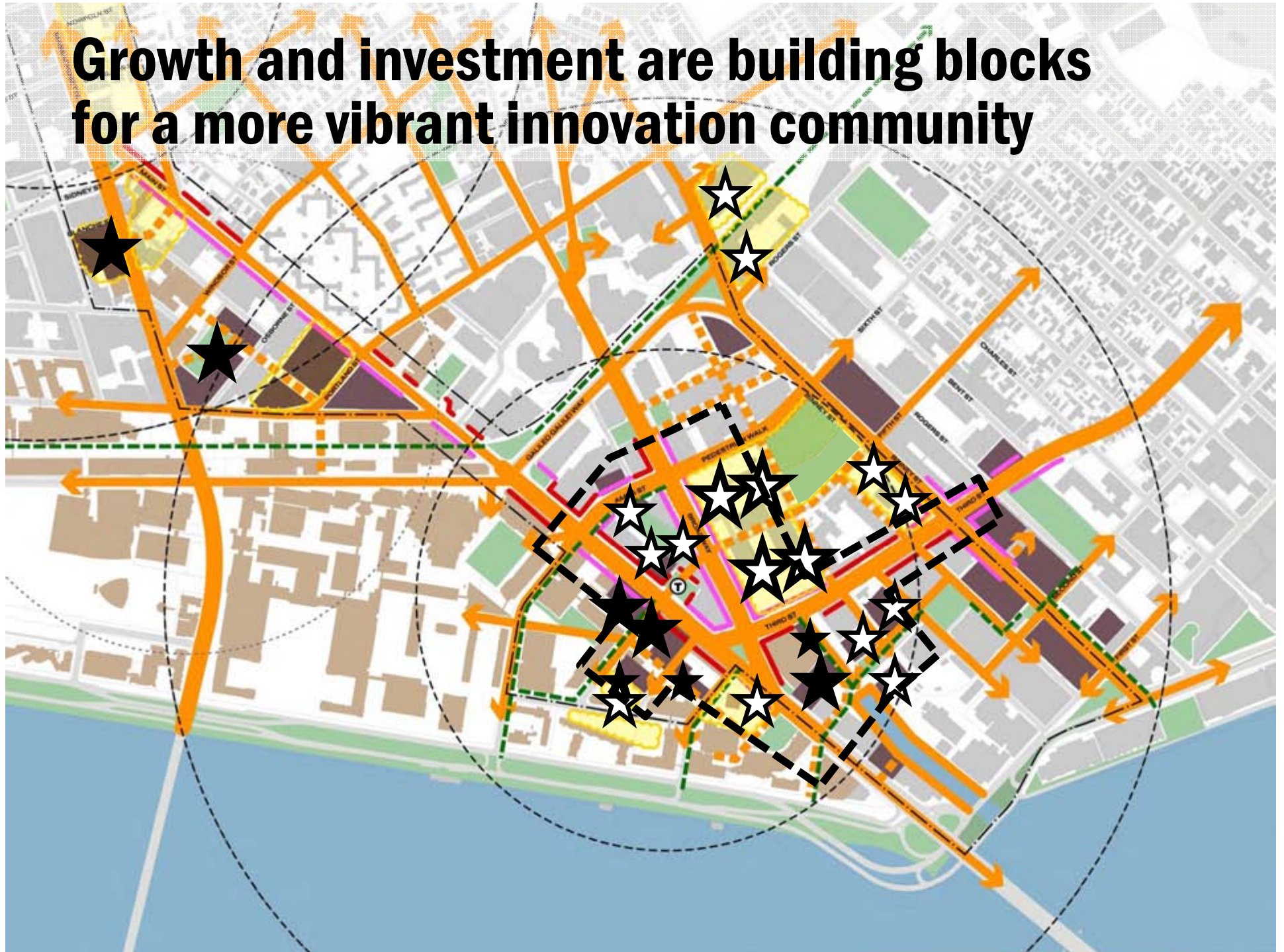


...and options for more space are limited

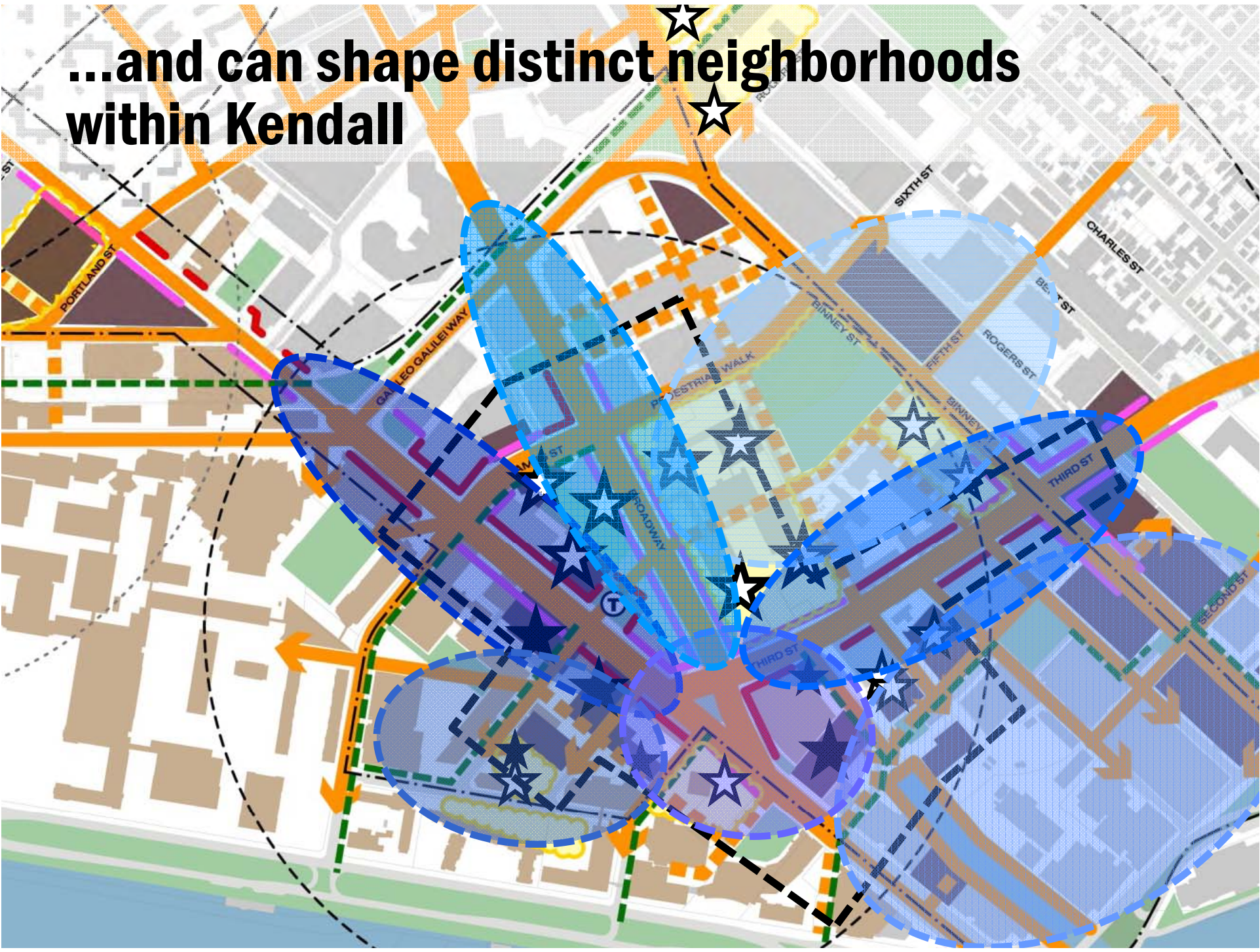


- 15 million sf of existing lab and office space around Kendall
- 1,400 housing units were envisioned by ECaPS within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of Binney St; more than 850 have been built and another 200 permitted

Growth and investment are building blocks for a more vibrant innovation community



...and can shape distinct neighborhoods within Kendall



Integrating activities that support creative interaction

- Respond to current and future values
- Combine the uses that characterize innovation “communities”
- Considerations for research, housing, location, height/massing
- Initial scenarios



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Respond to current values

1950s to 1990s:

- Golf courses
- Large backyards
- Homogeneity
- Escape from work



2000s:

- Main Streets
- “Social places”
- Diversity
- Live near work
- Social and environmental responsibility



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Combine the uses that characterize innovation “communities”

1. Variety of research (life science, IT, materials etc.)
2. Physical, social, and intellectual proximity between academic and commercial activities
3. Culture and environment that attract and retain an innovation workforce...and foster formal and informal interaction
4. Flexible research facilities (wet, dry etc.)
5. ...paired with flexible synergistic uses—housing, support activities (marketing, finance, legal, fabrication...), services...
6. Design and the arts to promote and express creative vitality
7. Convenient transit connections to downtown, other activity centers, neighborhoods
8. A leadership entity to manage synergies
9. Ability to grow while maintaining these qualities



Considerations: Research/office

- Minimum floorplate 25,000sf; larger floors preferred
- Proximity to transit
- Wet lab height constraints
- Relative contribution to retail demand



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Considerations: Housing

Consider optimal amount from multiple perspectives:

- Workforce availability per job (survey)
- Relative contribution to retail (quantitative)
- Contribution to sense of place (qualitative)
- Contribution to non-auto transportation mode share (quantitative and qualitative)
- Other housing options within walking distance (quantitative ... nearly 3,200 more permitted at North Point/Lechmere beyond approx. 950 completed)



Considerations: Location (any use)

- Reinforces critical mass?
- Sense of place
- Impacts on existing/historic buildings or places
- Support for innovation culture
- Property ownership
- Phasing



Considerations: Height and massing (any use)

Promote:

- Scale that is comfortable for people
- Well-defined public streets and parks/plazas
- Landmarks
- Intensity of activity and value

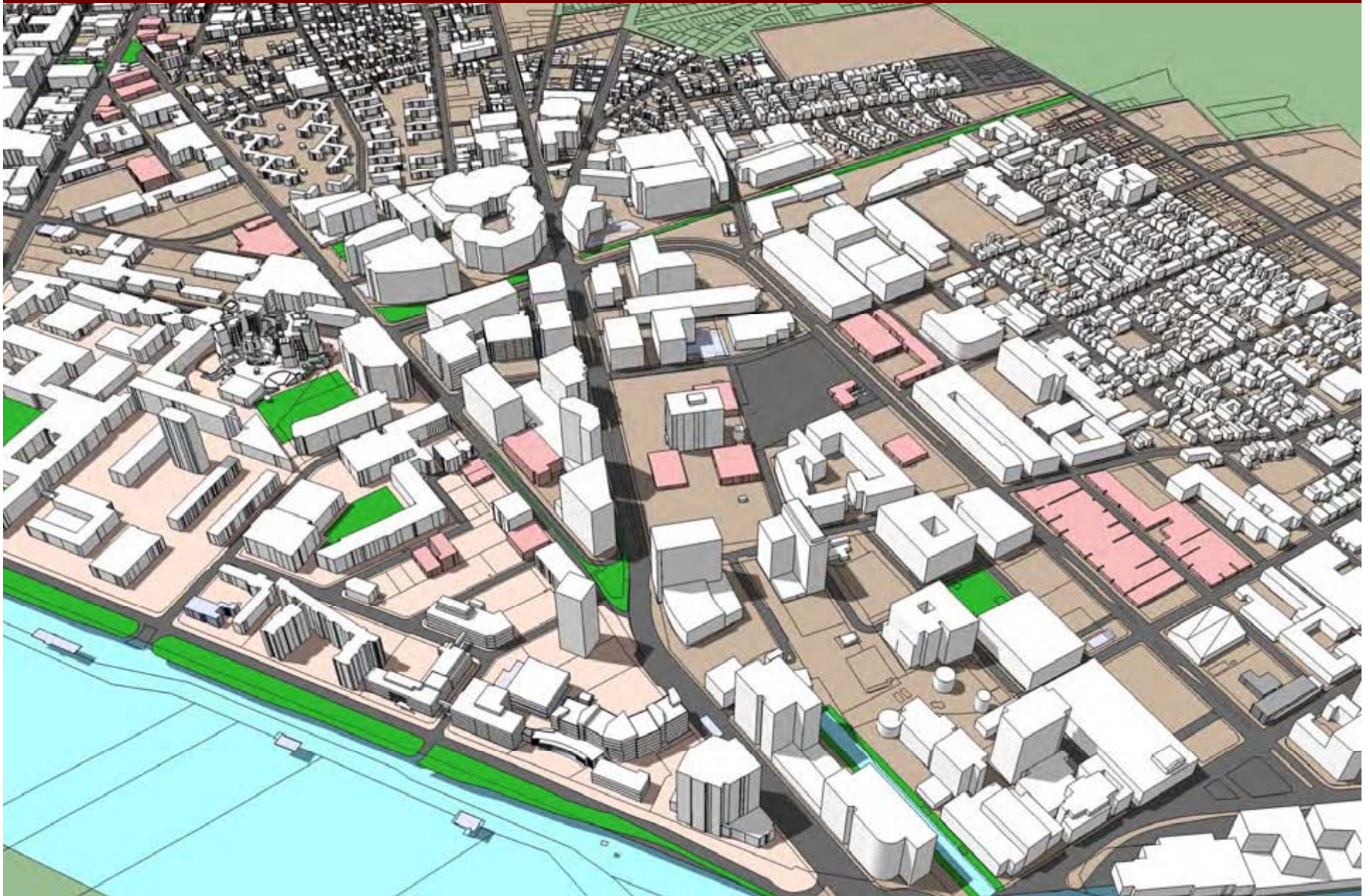
Prevent:

- Undesirable shadow, wind impacts
- Obstructed views
- Inhuman scale



Development scenario - existing

Integrating activities



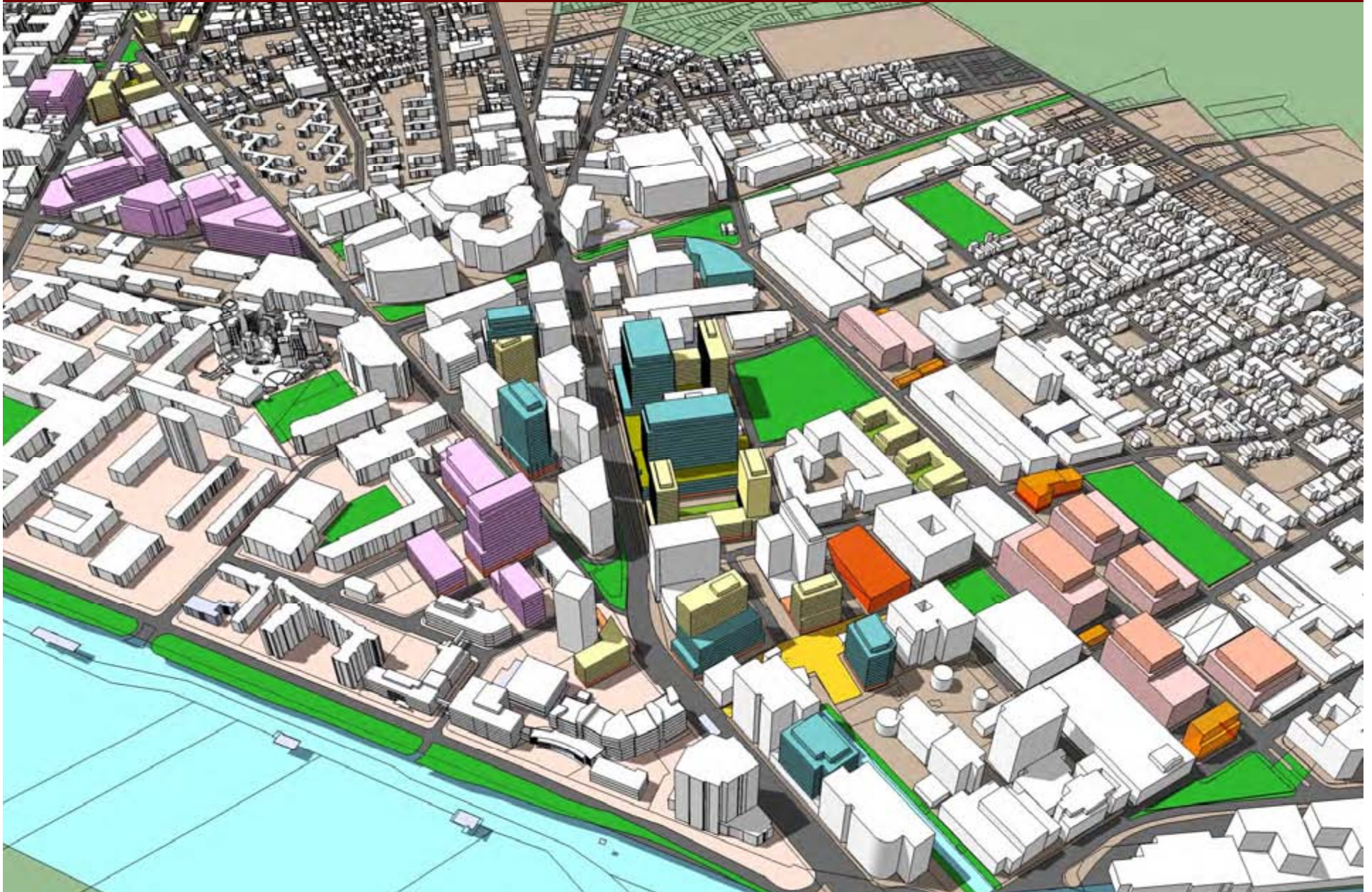
Development scenario - A

Integrating activities



Development scenario - B

Integrating activities



Development scenario - C

Integrating activities

