



Neighborhood  
Planning  
Initiative

# First Community Meeting

# Wellington- Harrington

June 21, 2023



# Getting to Know Zoom

The image shows a Zoom toolbar with icons for Unmute, Stop Video, Participants (2), Chat, Share Screen, Reactions, More, and Leave. Below the toolbar are three instructional callouts in blue-bordered boxes:

- Callout 1:** "Please leave your **audio muted** and **video on** (if comfortable)". Arrows point to the Unmute and Stop Video icons.
- Callout 2:** "Click to open the **Chat** box. This will allow you to chat with the Hosts and Participants." An arrow points to the Chat icon. Below it is a screenshot of the chat interface showing "To: Everyone" and a text input field "Type message here...".
- Callout 3:** "Click to open the **Reactions** box. This will allow you to give nonverbal feedback." An arrow points to the Reactions icon. Below it is a screenshot of the Reactions panel showing various emojis (clapping hands, thumbs up, crying face, surprised face, heart, confetti) and a "Raise Hand" button.



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: 816 6764 9144



We're recording!

# Meeting Purpose, Outcome, & Process



## PURPOSE (Why)

- Learn from you about day-to-day life in your neighborhood
- Discuss your ideas to make the neighborhood better

## OUTCOMES (What)

- Help create a neighborhood vision
- Guide the Plan's next steps
- Increase awareness of how you can stay involved in neighborhood planning

## PROCESS (How)

- A presentation and two breakout group discussions

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!

- This is the beginning of the engagement process, not the end!
- 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

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# Tonight's Agenda



1. Welcome + Intro to Neighborhood Planning 15 min
2. Getting to Know Wellington-Harrington & Updates on Current Projects 5 min
3. What We've Heard So Far 5 min
4. Breakout Groups: Neighborhood Assets + Needs 20 min
5. Emerging Themes 5 min
6. Breakout Groups: Visioning + Key Themes 20 min
7. Report Back & Next Steps 10 min
8. Questions & Discussion

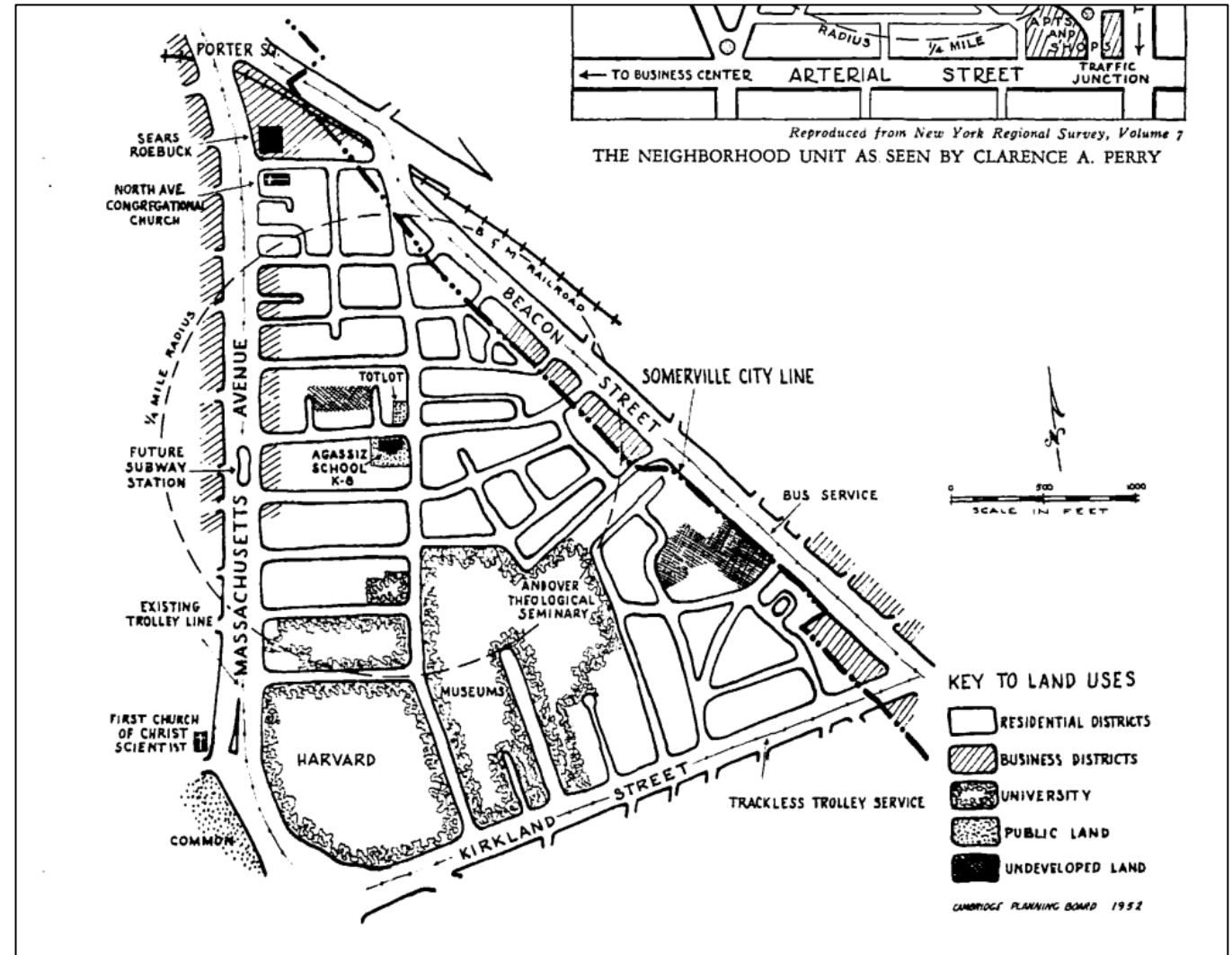


# Intro to Neighborhood Planning

# 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?

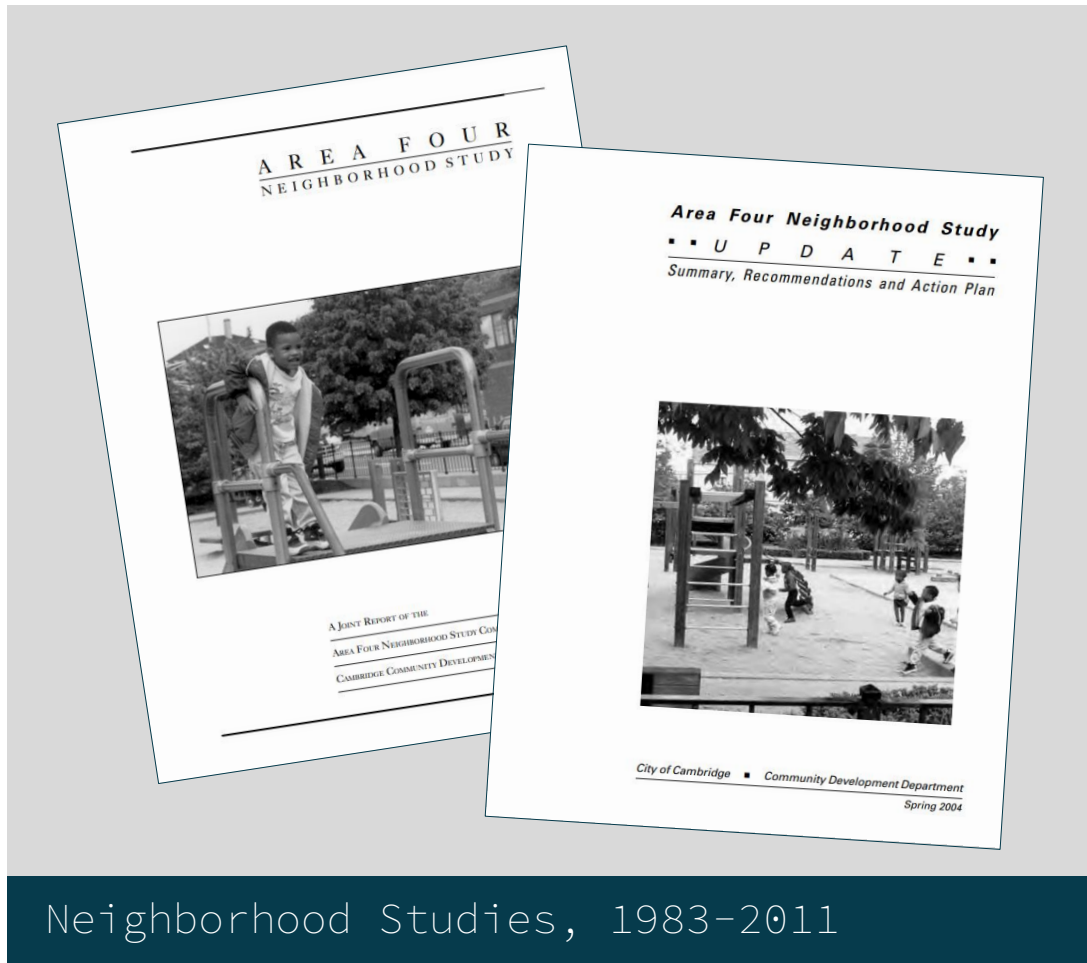


- Venue for discussions that aren't planned for as part of other City initiatives
- Understand how Citywide topics relate to neighborhoods
- Small scale allows for community-led project ideas
- Foster connections
- Focus on day-to-day

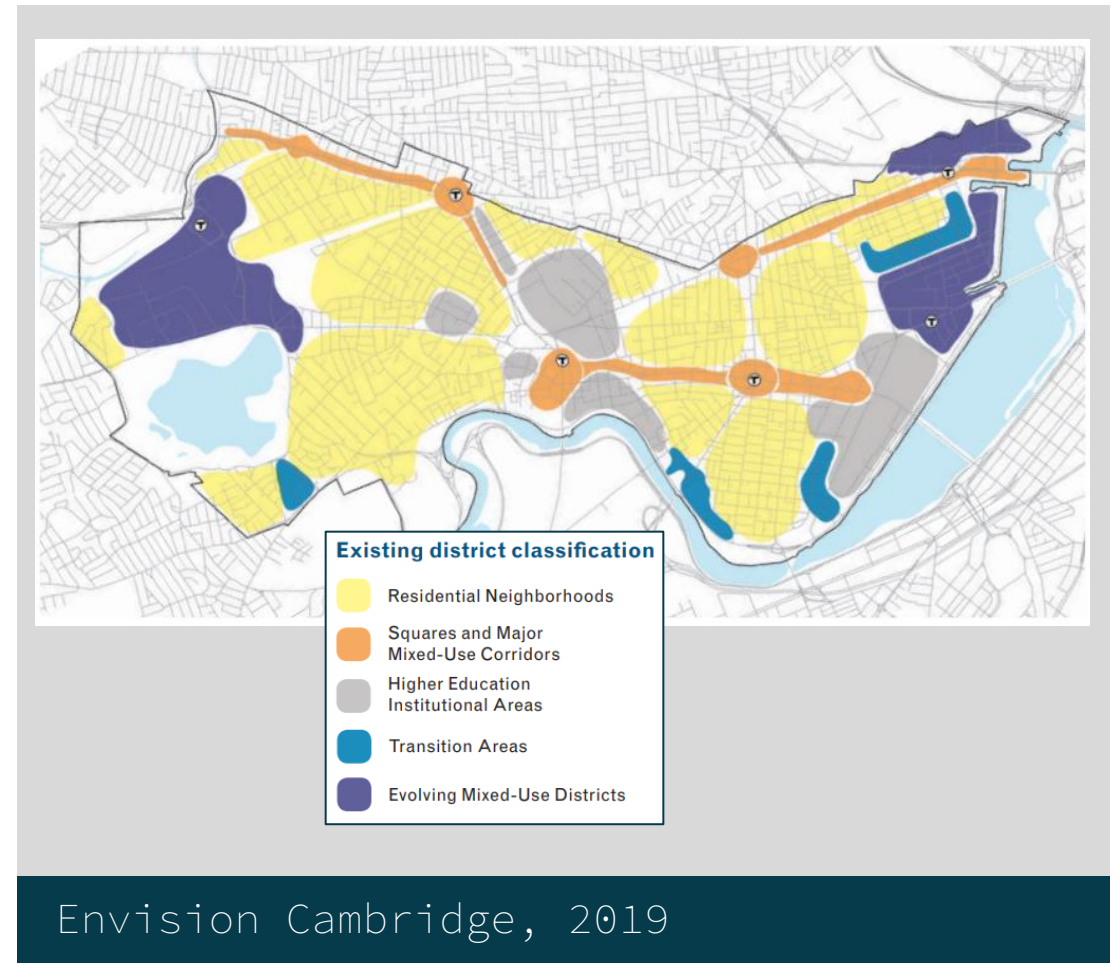




# Neighborhood Planning Initiative Builds on Past Work



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

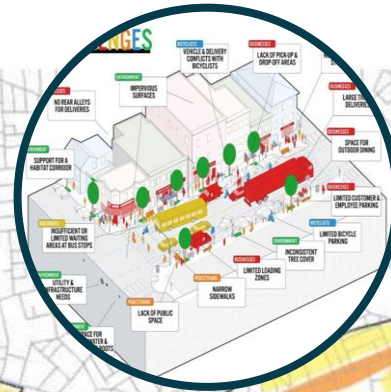
## Learning

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

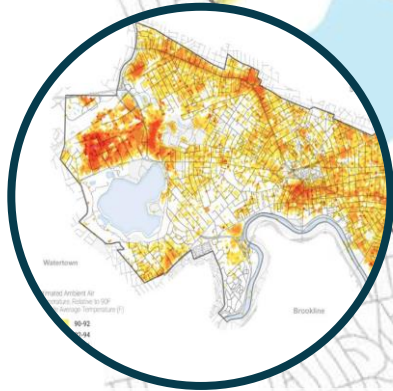
# How Neighborhood Planning fits in with other City projects



Alewife District Plan



Our Cambridge Street



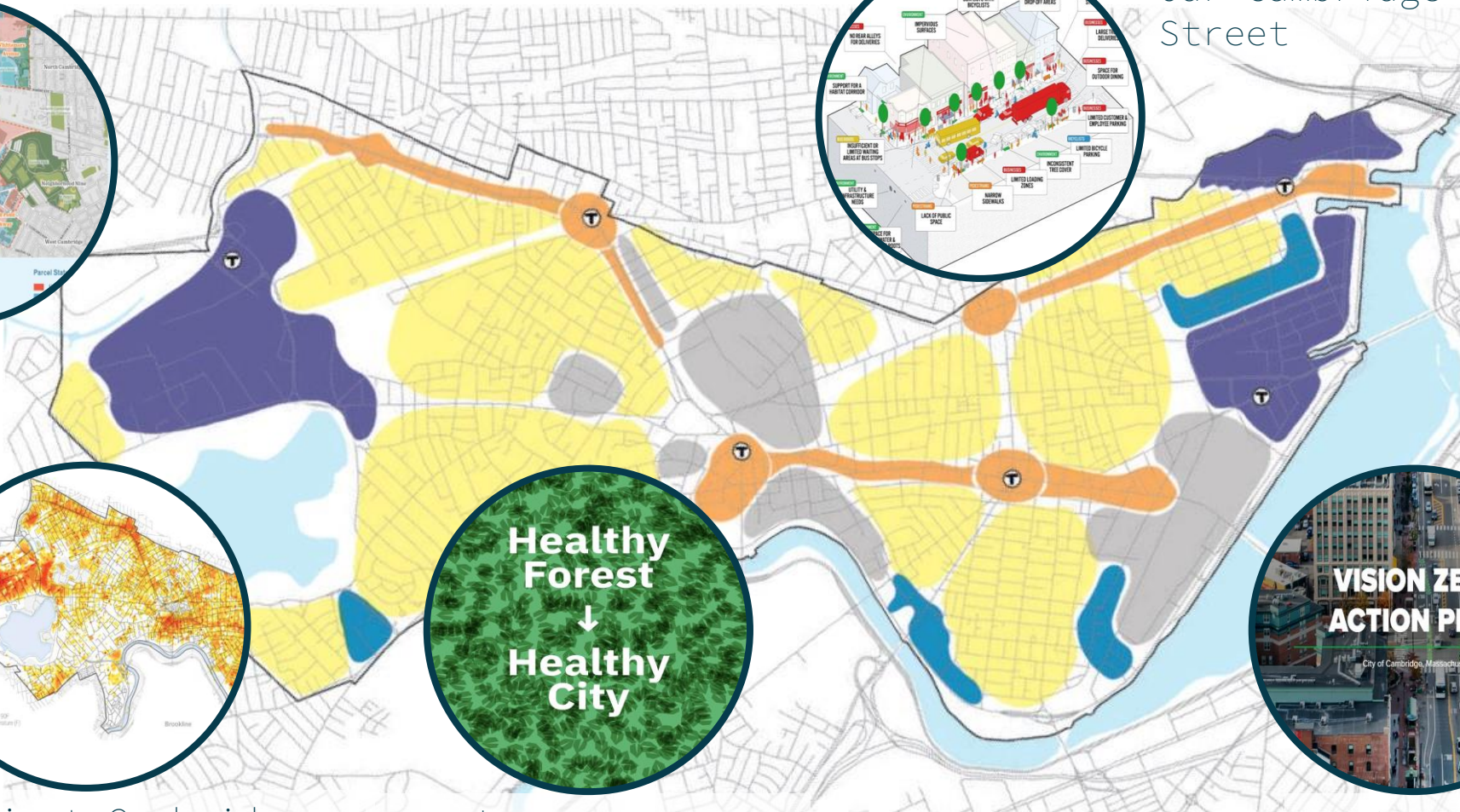
Resilient Cambridge



Urban Forestry Master Plan



Vision Zero Action Plan



# 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:



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Focus for Tonight!



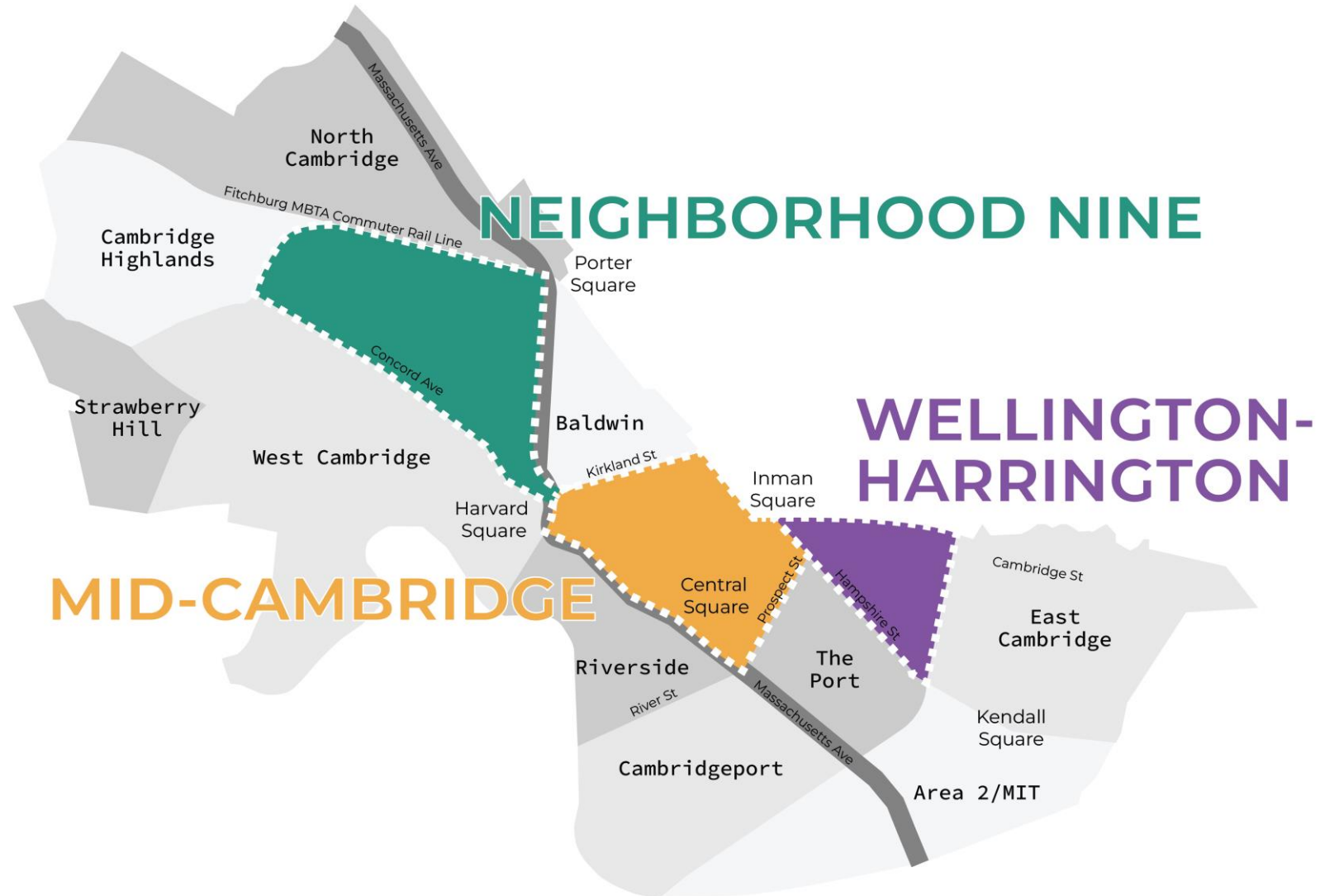


A one-year planning process to identify neighborhood priorities.

City staff work with community members to identify projects and policies to improve day-to-day life.

Action Planning

# 2023 Action Plan Neighborhoods



# NPI Overall Scheduling





# Action Plan Schedule



April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

## COMMUNITY VISION

Work with community members to create a neighborhood vision and set of goals.

- Understand what it's like to live in the neighborhood.
- Learn how the community thinks we can make the neighborhood better.
- Identify what topics we should focus on in the Action Plan.

## STRATEGY

Work with community members to identify policies and actions to improve the everyday experience of people in the neighborhood.

- Figure out what resources we have available.
- Identify which actions and policies will be most effective.

## DRAFT & PUBLISH

Develop consensus for actions and policies to achieve the community's goals.

- Write the action plan into a document.
- Set a plan to implement the actions.

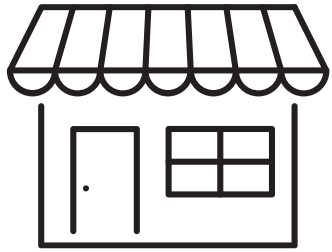
# What Do Action Plans Do?



Community conversations about open space, housing, transportation, economic development, environment

- > Craft a neighborhood's vision for the future
- > Identify actionable local projects
- > Build relationships with neighbors and with City staff while demystifying City processes

# Example Actions from Past Neighborhood Studies



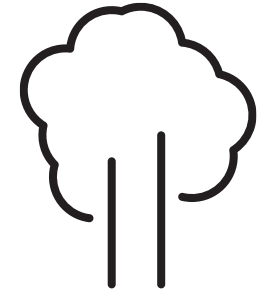
Connect small  
businesses to  
financial supports



Make streets  
safer to cross  
with signal  
improvements

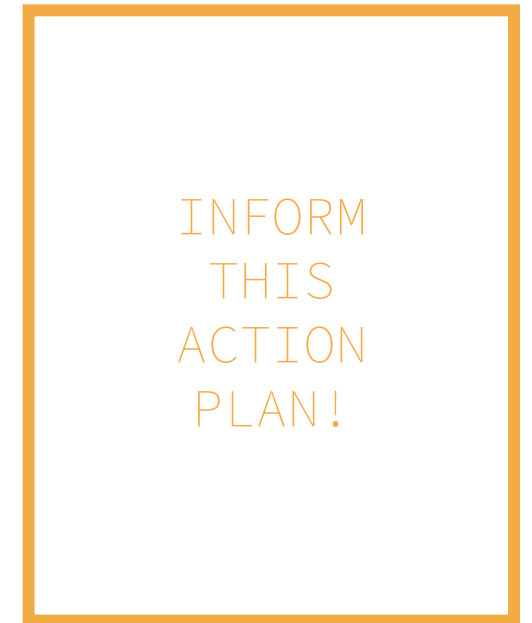
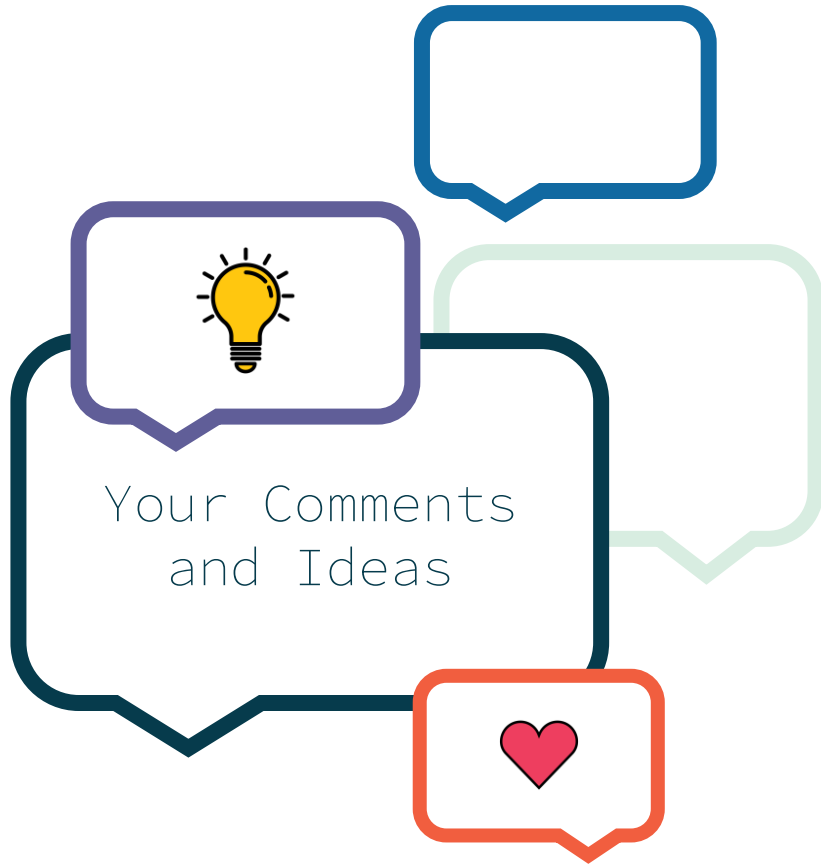


Encourage more  
family-sized  
housing through  
the permitting  
process



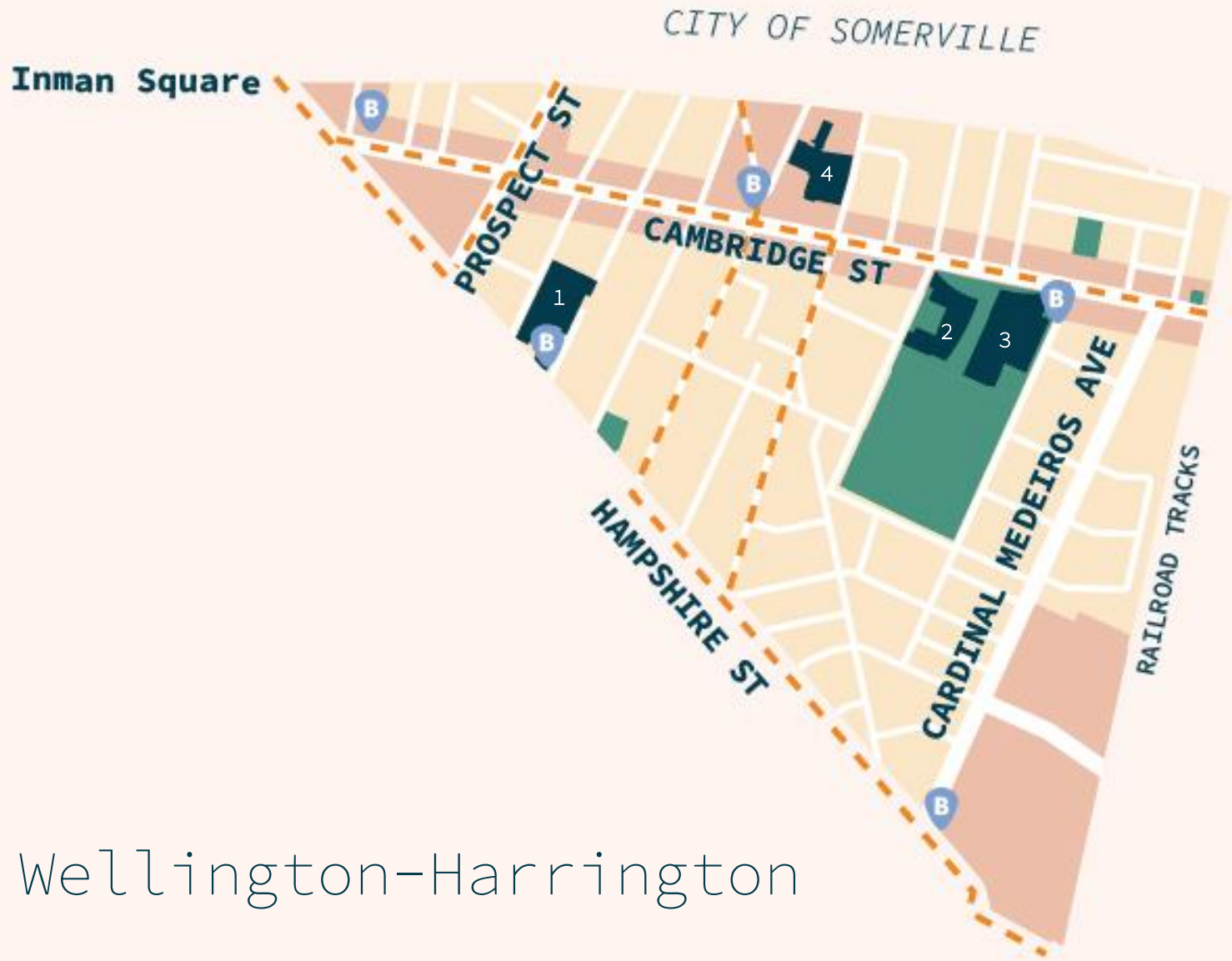
Improve parks  
and make  
better access  
to parks

# The Path, from Ideas to Action

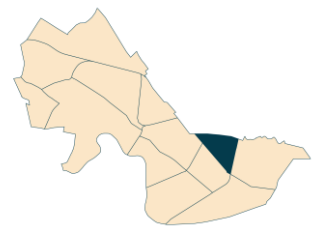




Getting to Know Wellington-Harrington!



# Wellington-Harrington



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

# Snapshot Highlights



152  
Acres

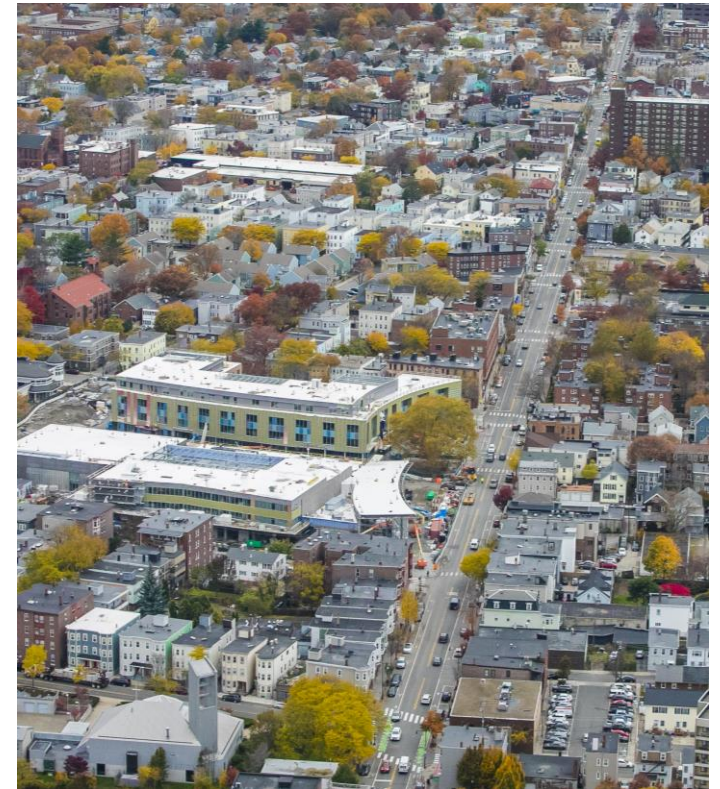
4% of Cambridge

7,083  
Residents

6% of Cambridge

Smallest  
neighborhood in  
Cambridge, but very  
dense!

Primarily residential  
(56%) with some  
commercial (17%),  
institutional (15%), and  
only 1% open space.



# Climate Resilience

Wellington-Harrington has the highest percentage of Heat Islands and among the lowest percentage of tree canopy cover in Cambridge.





# Activity Centers



Inman Square



Cambridge Street



One Kendall Square



# Wellington-Harrington Projects

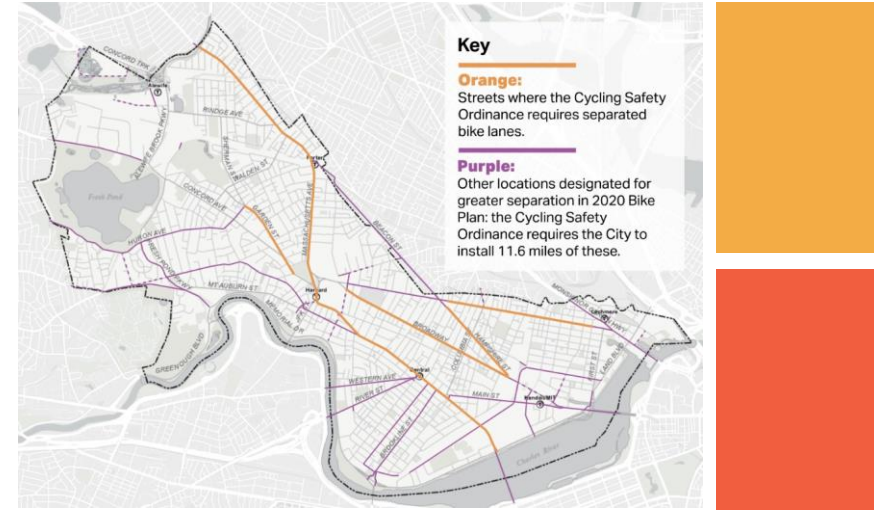


## Current and Upcoming Projects and Plans:

- [Our Cambridge Street](#)
- [Inman Square Intersection Improvements](#)
- [Grand Junction Multi-Use Path](#)
- [Cycling Safety Ordinance](#)
  - [Hampshire Street Safety Improvement Project](#)

## Citywide Policies and Plans:

- [Envision Cambridge](#)
- [Resilient Cambridge](#)
- [Urban Forest Master Plan \(UFMP\) and Healthy Forest, Healthy City](#)
- [Our Parks, Our Plan \(Open Space Plan Update\)](#)
- [Cambridge Bicycle Plan](#)
- [5-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan](#)





What We've Been Hearing So Far

# Your Input So Far!



Wellington-Harrington Neighborhood Action Plan Idea Map

Comments

I have an idea	29
I have an idea	20
I have an idea	17
I have an idea	15
I have an idea	15
I have an idea	14
I have an idea	11
I have an idea	11
I have an idea	10
This is a special place	10
I have an idea	10
I have an idea	9
I have an idea	9
I have an idea	9
I have an idea	9

+ Add Comment

CAMBRIDGE CDD@344

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT 344 Broadway

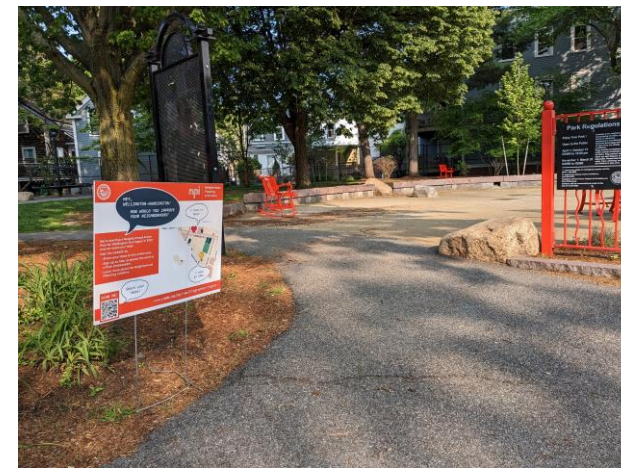
CLIMATE & ENERGY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FACTS & MAPS HOUSING PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN

Planning & Urban Design

Neighborhood Planning Initiative

### Neighborhood Planning Initiative

What is NPI?  
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# Your Input So Far!



**Inman Square**

CITY OF SOMERVILLE

PROSPECT ST

CAMBRIDGE ST

HAMPSHIRE ST

CARDINAL MEDEIRIS AVE

RAILROAD

This [intersection] should provide space for outdoor dining, that was so great last year.

This is such a dangerous intersection. Please add traffic lights.

The library and the outdoor spaces are an amazing community space

Pickle Ball Courts/Tennis Courts would be great

Adding pedestrian crossing lights would be very helpful. This is a common place to cross the street where cars drive pretty quickly. I walk this way to work every day and it would help especially during rush hour.

I really like the new wide sidewalks and protected bike lanes. These wider sidewalks create a more comfortable experience for pedestrians [...]

Close down Inman Square on Cambridge Street more often for fairs and events. It's a perfect locale to bring the area together.

The east area of Cambridge doesn't have any natural spaces with walking paths or trees and wild growth. It would be great to add a nature section to this field with benches to get away from the city.



# Your Input So Far!



*Affordable rents to keep local small businesses*

Inman Sq Pop Up

*A toy store (like the former Stella Bella)*

Inman Sq Pop Up

*loved the outdoor dining in Inman Sq during the pandemic. Miss it.*

Inman Sq Pop Up

*I've been very pleased to see the investments in safe bike infrastructure and traffic calming to make it safer for pedestrians.*

General Comment Form

*[sad about] Ryles Jazz Club closing and Bank of America opening in space*

Inman Sq Park Pop Up

*Improve mobility for older people and people with disabilities*

Inman Sq Pop Up

*[sad about] complicated new traffic patten in Inman Square*

Inman Sq Pop Up

*Busses often don't stop along the curb [on Cambridge St], which is hard for people with disabilities.*

Valente Pop Up



# BREAKOUT GROUP 1: Neighborhood Assets + Needs

20 minutes

Choose someone to report back on a quick summary of what you talked about!

# Group Discussion Guidelines



- Show respect to all that participate
- Embrace diverse points of view
- Avoid debates and interruptions
- Listen to understand, not to respond
- Do not engage in personal attacks
- All stereotyping and hateful comments are not tolerated



# Envision Cambridge Core Values



## Livability

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

## Diversity and Equity

- Welcoming community
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## Economic Opportunity

- Access to quality jobs
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## Sustainability

- Reduce our impact on the environment
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## 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

# Emerging Topics in Wellington-Harrington



## Livability

- Pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety (especially along Cambridge St, Cardinal Medeiros Ave, and Colombia St)
- Tree planting and green space improvements (e.g. dog facilities, natural plantings, ball courts)

## Diversity and Equity

- Need for more affordable housing

## Economic Opportunity

- Vacant retail spaces on Cambridge St.
- Encourage and support community-serving businesses

## Sustainability

- Tree plantings, bioswales, and other green infrastructure

## Community Health & Wellbeing

- Community festivals and events

## Learning

- Appreciation for the Valente Branch Library

Let's Discuss!  
What do these core values look like in your neighborhood?

# Emerging Themes in Wellington-Harrington



- Transportation and safety on our streets and sidewalks
- Parks and recreation
- Community spaces and community building with festivals and events



Let's Discuss!  
What do you think?  
What's missing?



## BREAKOUT GROUP 2:

What 3 words describe your neighborhood today and in 10 years?

20 minutes

Choose someone to report back on a quick summary of what you talked about!



## REPORT BACK

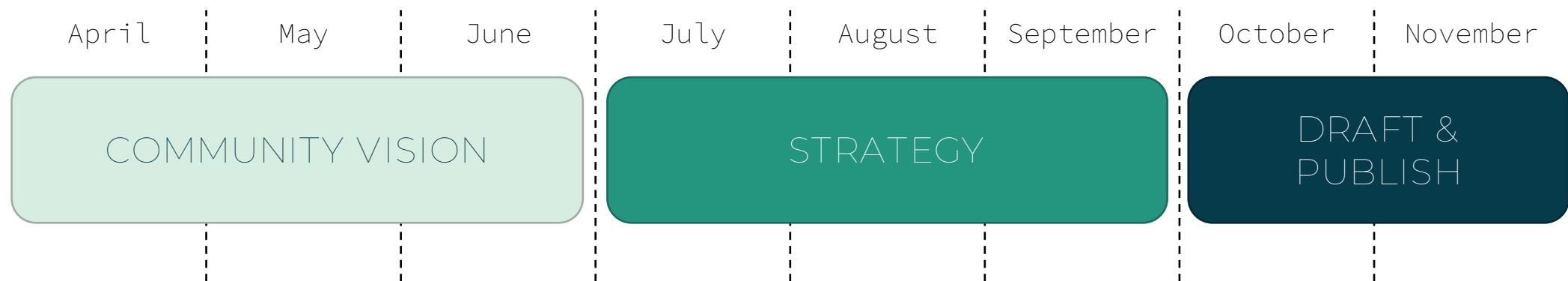
Share a couple of themes from your group's discussion!

5 minutes

# What's Next?



- Summarize what we've heard so far
- Identify key themes / priorities for Wellington-Harrington
- Move from Vision to Strategy! Start to identify specific policies and actions
- More opportunities to engage!
  - Online survey
  - Next round of pop-ups/pop-ins and focus group discussions
  - Share feedback at our next workshop in September!



# Contact Us



Connect with your neighborhood planner at City Hall!

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[lmccarthy@cambridgema.gov](mailto:lmccarthy@cambridgema.gov)  
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# Upcoming City Meetings & Events for Wellington-Harrington



## *City Dance Party*

June 23 (6 - 10 p.m.) in Central Square

[Event Information](#)

## *Pride Flag Art Workshop for Children and Families*

June 28 (3 p.m.) at Valente Branch Library

[Event Information](#)

## *Summer Reading Program*

July 24, 26 (various dates and times) at  
Valente Branch Library

[Library Calendar for Dates and Details](#)







Neighborhood  
Planning  
Initiative

# Thank You!

June 21, 2023