North Cambridge Neighborhood Study

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Summary, Recommendations and Action Plan

City of Cambridge ▪ *Community Development Department*

Fall 2008

Summary, Recommendations and Action Plan ■ 2008

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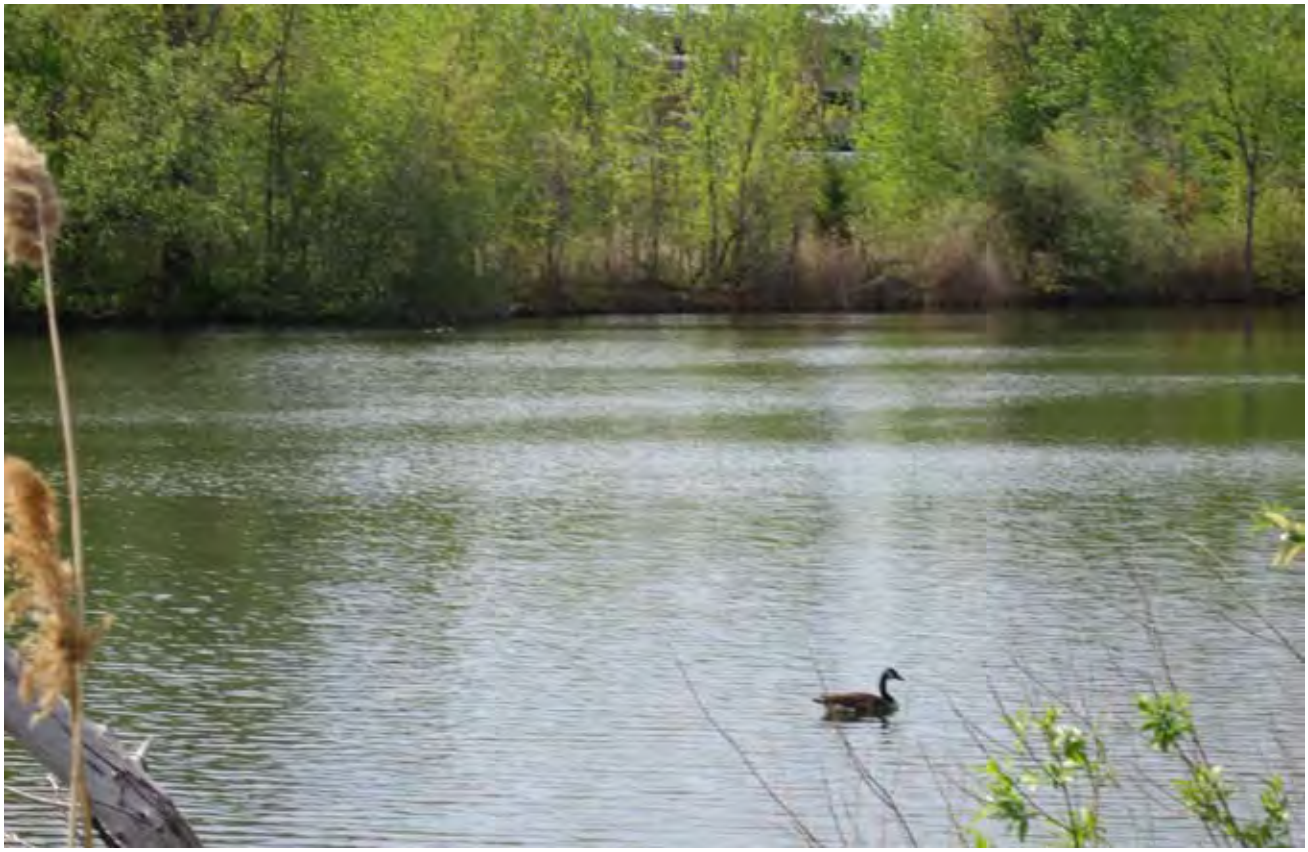

North Cambridge Neighborhood Study

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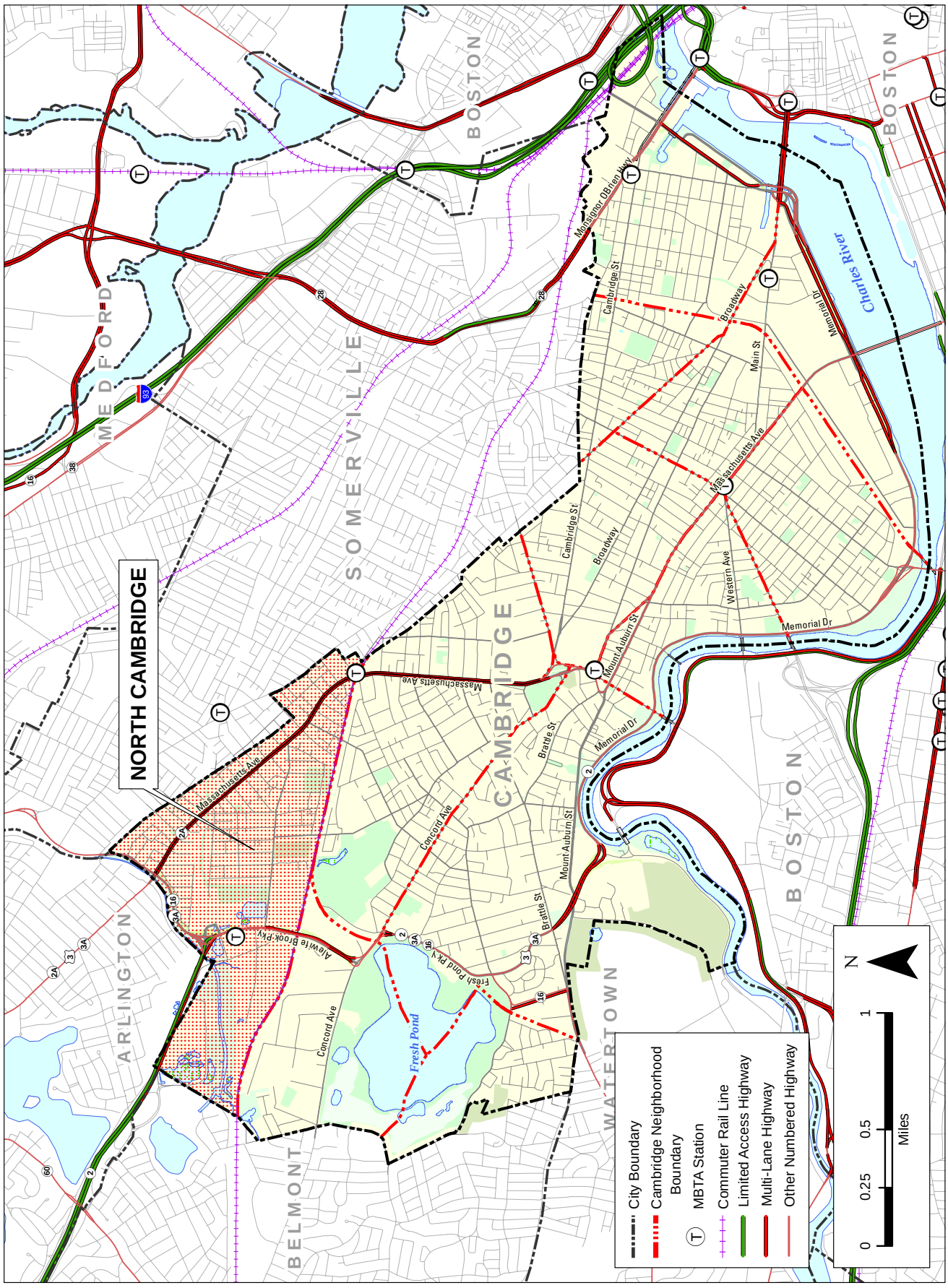
Introduction



Map prepared by Brendan Monroe on August 21, 2008. CDD GIS C:\Projects\Neighborhood_Studies\NorthCambridge\Locus.mxd

North Cambridge

North Cambridge, located in the northernmost part of the city and bordered by Alewife Brook Reservation, the city of Somerville, the town of Arlington, and railroad tracks currently used by the Fitchburg Commuter Rail Branch of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), is a diverse neighborhood of over eleven thousand residents in an approximately 0.85 square mile area. The residential portions of the neighborhood include several housing types ranging from single and multi-family homes to large apartment buildings. Porter Square, at the southeastern corner of the neighborhood, is a main commercial and transit center with MBTA subway, commuter rail, and bus service. At the western end of the neighborhood is an office/industrial area along Cambridgepark Drive. Massachusetts Avenue is the primary transportation corridor through North Cambridge, extending from Porter Square into Arlington and featuring a variety of retail, office, and residential uses.

Historically, North Cambridge featured a strong brickmaking industry with clay pits and brickyards spread throughout the neighborhood until the early 1900s. There are still pockets of more industrial land uses in the neighborhood, although mostly limited to parcels along and adjacent to the railroad, in the Alewife area, and to a lesser extent, along Massachusetts Avenue. Many of the larger redevelopment projects that have occurred in the neighborhood took place on larger parcels of land, which previously contained industrial uses.

Recent Planning Issues

Many of the current planning issues facing North Cambridge arose in large part due to the extension of the Red Line MBTA service into the neighborhood in the 1980's, with new stations at Porter Square, Davis Square (Somerville), and at Alewife, as well as a growing need for affordable housing throughout the city and region.

Today, the neighborhood continues to deal with the challenges of balancing the pressure for new development, with protecting the existing character, scale, and qualities associated with a diverse, urban neighborhood.

Major themes that have been a significant part of current planning discussions in North Cambridge include: promoting and protecting existing neighborhood scale and neighborhood serving retail, particularly along Massachusetts Avenue; enhancing the Massachusetts Avenue streetscape in order to encourage pedestrian activity and support the retail environment; understanding the potential for redevelopment of sites that may be currently underutilized; minimizing automobile traffic and parking pressures on neighborhood streets; monitoring the density of the neighborhood and its associated impacts, and exploring ways to increase public green space throughout the neighborhood. These themes are in essence a reflection of recent development proposals in the neighborhood as well as expressed neighborhood needs and anxieties. Some specific examples include: a proposal to build a new hotel in Porter Square; the recent conversion of a funeral home into condominiums; increased efforts to plant additional street trees along Massachusetts Avenue and enhance the overall streetscape; the potential for new development on several church properties; and the perception that retail establishments are threatened by new residential developments, especially along Massachusetts Avenue. These planning issues and concerns are discussed further in this study and are also reflected in the recommendations and action plan.

BACKGROUND

Growth Policy Document

The city' s Growth Policy Document, "Towards a Sustainable Future," outlines the city's planning assumptions and policies in the areas of land use, housing, transportation, economic development, open space and urban design. The document was drafted in 1993, after a series of workshops with citizens, businesses, and institutional representatives. It is recognized that the city's diversity of land uses, densities and population groups should be retained and strengthened. The Growth Policy Document also calls for careful development of the city's evolving industrial districts, such as Alewife and North Point. "Towards a Sustainable Future: Cambridge Growth Policy Update 2007" revises the original

plan and continues to address the issues with which neighborhoods, elected officials, the Planning Board, and the Community Development Department are concerned, while taking into account the extensive planning analyses and efforts that have happened throughout the city since the original study was completed. While the Growth Policy Document is comprehensive, it is recognized that each of the city's thirteen neighborhoods have distinctive concerns, needs, and resources that should be identified and addressed in the context of the city's overall planning policies.

Neighborhood Studies

The Community Development Department (CDD), through its neighborhood planning program, has conducted comprehensive planning studies in each of the city's neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Studies are an extension of the Growth Policy Document conducted at the neighborhood level. In producing each neighborhood study, CDD staff work collaboratively with a resident committee appointed by the City Manager to identify planning opportunities and make recommendations for a course of action. Recommendations address such issues as traffic and parking, housing affordability and homeownership, neighborhood commercial areas and employment, open space, and zoning. As part of each neighborhood study, CDD collects data on demographic changes, as well as changes in housing markets, land use, and development potential in each neighborhood. Where appropriate, the recommendations resulting from the neighborhood studies are incorporated into the work programs of city departments for implementation. In some cases this implementation takes place over a short period of time; in others, it is part of long-term strategic planning.

Neighborhood Study Updates

To ensure that the Neighborhood Studies remain current and useful, CDD updates each neighborhood study periodically. The update process involves a series of public meetings, where community members are invited to comment on the original study recommendations, suggest new items, and prioritize issues. City staff from various departments attend these meetings to give presentations and answer questions as needed.

The result of the update process is a "Summary, Recommendations, and Action Plan" document that is made available to the public, City Council, and city staff. The update process is intended to ensure that neighborhood studies remain current documents that evolve with changing times.

Implementation

The goal of these neighborhood studies is to create a strong link between community process and the everyday work done by the city's many departments. It is important that these studies remain an integral part of the strategic management, budgeting, and daily operations of city departments. For this reason, CDD maintains outreach to other departments while developing studies and, once they are completed, communicates recommendations to relevant departments to be incorporated into their work plans.

North Cambridge Neighborhood Study

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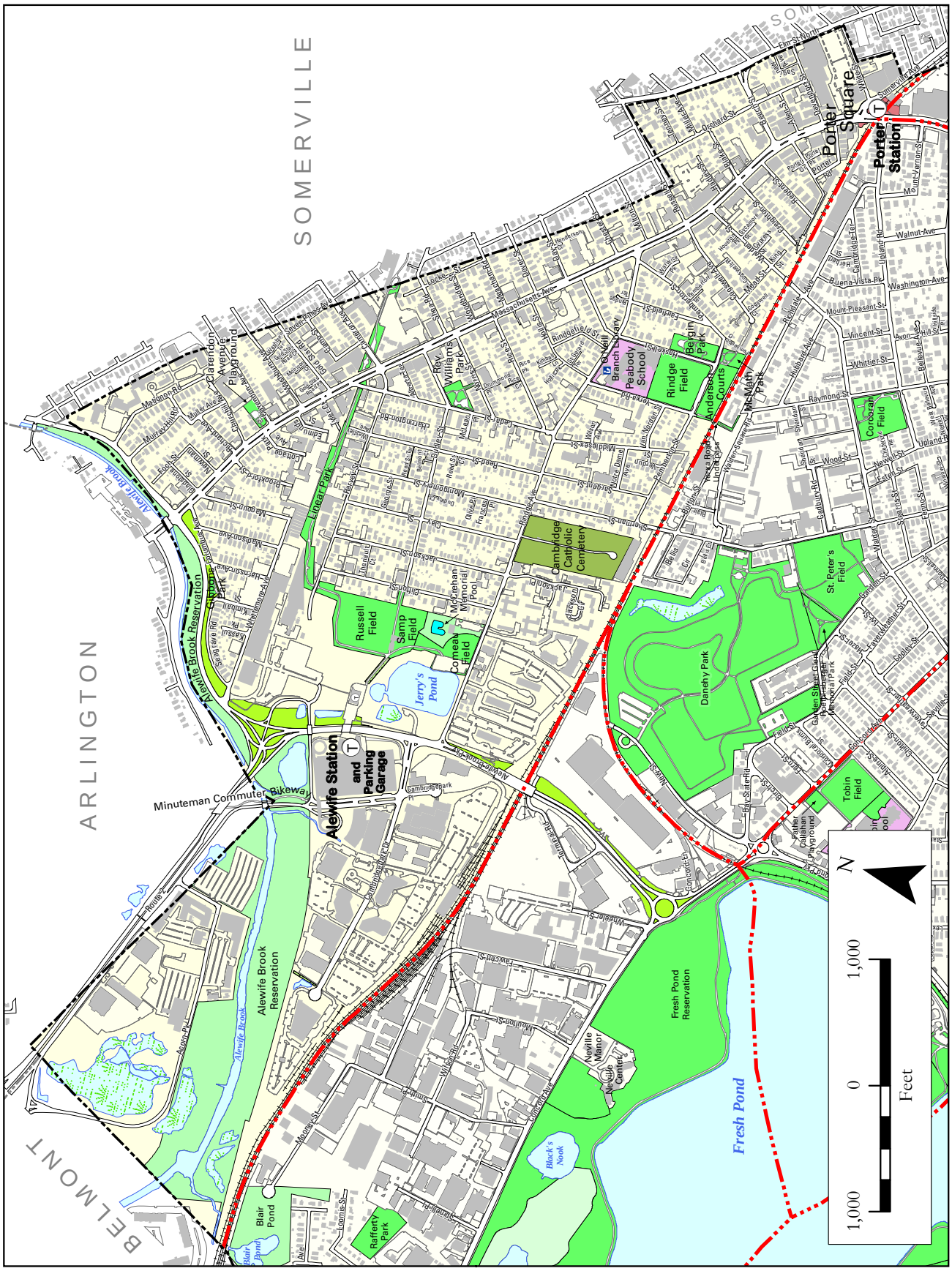
Summary

NORTH CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD MAP



Map prepared by Brendan Monroe on July 11, 2008. CDD GIS C:\Projects\Neighborhood_Studies\NorthCambridge\BaseMap.mxd

Original North Cambridge Neighborhood Study

The original North Cambridge Neighborhood Study began in 1988 with the purpose of assessing the impacts of then recent changes in the neighborhood, to a great extent spurred by the introduction of 3 new Red Line stations at Porter Square, Davis Square and Alewife Station; obtaining an updated profile of neighborhood residents; and establishing an action plan to address new issues. Staff from the Community Development Department (CDD) worked closely with a Study Committee made up of 16 neighborhood residents and held regular meetings from June 1988 to February 1989 to discuss the major issues facing the neighborhood: population changes, land use and zoning, the development process, Massachusetts Avenue, Alewife, traffic and parking, housing, and parks and open space. The report was published in 1990.

The North Cambridge Neighborhood Study Committee used information from discussions, updated demographic data, a neighborhood survey, presentations from various city staff and individuals with expertise in relevant areas, and information from neighborhood residents, to establish a comprehensive set of planning recommendations for the neighborhood.

The study recommendations provided the city, as well as residents, with a sense of the most important issues facing the neighborhood at the time. In North Cambridge, these recommendations have been used to guide city planning efforts at both the neighborhood and city levels, and even on more regional issues.

In many cases, the recommendations led directly to, or formed the basis for new neighborhood and city initiatives: the rezoning of the former W.R. Grace site on Whittemore Avenue from an Industry A-1 district to Special District 3 in order to help protect sensitive lands and minimize neighborhood impacts from any new development there; the citywide zoning change that took place in 2001, significantly lowered the density allowed for new developments throughout the city; and regulatory changes made to the Massachusetts Avenue Overlay district which lowered the threshold for requiring a Special Permit from 50,000 to 20,000 square feet.

Important transportation projects in the neighborhood have also been guided by concerns identified in the original study: there have been traffic calming improvements in several locations throughout the neighborhood; comprehensive improvements along the Alewife Brook Parkway corridor have been made; and the reconstruction and improvement of the Yerxa Road Underpass has been completed.

In some instances, recommendations from the 1990 study led to further study or more detailed analysis of an area within the neighborhood. Trolley Square and Sheridan Square for example, were the focus of a comprehensive planning study, which was completed in 1995. The Trolley Square site which now includes housing, retail, community space, and public open space, was redeveloped in 2006 based on a set of recommendations made by a Trolley Square Study Committee.

Since the 1990 study, there has also been a significant amount of effort dedicated to the preservation and creation of affordable housing. In North Cambridge, affordable units have been created at 2525 Massachusetts Avenue, 2495 Massachusetts Avenue, the former Joyce Chen Restaurant site on Rindge Avenue, Bolton Street, Trolley Square, and the former VFW Post on Massachusetts Avenue. In addition, through the city's Expiring Use Program, the Just A Start Corporation acquired a 273-unit housing development on Rindge Avenue, preserving the units as affordable.

North Cambridge Neighborhood Study Update Process

The North Cambridge Study Update process began with a public meeting on March 31, 2007. At that meeting, Community Development Department staff presented information on progress that had been made on the original North Cambridge Neighborhood Study recommendations. Meeting attendees, through small group discussions, were given the opportunity to talk about current planning issues and concerns in the neighborhood regarding land use and zoning, transportation, housing, economic development, and open space. The comments from these small group discussions formed the basis for a new and updated set of planning recommendations for North Cambridge. The major concerns that were expressed by participants focused on ways to support the retail environment in the neighborhood, enhance the streetscape along Massachusetts Avenue through landscaping and design improvements, finding the right balance of land uses and density in the neighborhood, and exploring ways to increase public open space in the neighborhood. A second public meeting

was held on June 12, 2007 to provide an opportunity to review and discuss the new recommendations as well as how they will be used and implemented, and to further discuss the next steps in the process. The planning concerns for North Cambridge that were expressed throughout the process are reflected in the Study Update recommendations, which are detailed later in this report.

Demographics

The United States Census is a survey of every household taken every ten years by the U.S. Commerce Department Census Bureau as mandated by federal law. It collects demographic information on age distribution within the population, household composition, racial makeup, income, length of residency, ancestry, and other categories. Census data from the year 2000 is the latest data available at the time of this study update. However, throughout the report, census information from the year 2000, for both the North Cambridge neighborhood and the city as a whole, is compared with similar census data from 1990 and 1980 to help identify neighborhood and city demographic trends.

At 547 acres (0.85 square miles) North Cambridge is one of the largest neighborhoods in the City in terms of land area, second only to West Cambridge. However, with a population density of 13,148 residents per square mile, (2000 U.S. Census) North Cambridge actually ranks among the least dense of the 13 neighborhoods in the city. The population of North Cambridge increased 2.2% between 1980 and 2000 from 10,990 residents to 11,237 neighborhood residents. During the same time period, the Cambridge population increased 6.3%. The 35-44 year old age group saw the largest increase (97.9%) in North Cambridge during this time, while there was a decrease in the number of 18-24 year olds in the neighborhood of 40.3%.

Between 1980 and 2000, there was an increase in the number of total households in North Cambridge of 7.7%. However, there was also a decrease in the number of family households in the neighborhood during that time. According to the 2000 census, family households in North Cambridge make up just under half of the total households in the neighborhood (49.5%). In 2000, families with children made up 24.7% of all households in North Cambridge compared to 17.6% of all Cambridge households. The average household size in North Cambridge (2.24 persons per household) is slightly higher than for the entire city (2.03 persons per household). The average household size for both the neighborhood and the City have decreased since 1980 from 2.33 and 2.13 persons per household respectively.

The number of foreign-born residents in North Cambridge increased over 85% between 1980 and 2000. During the same time period there has been a 120% increase in the neighborhood in the number of residents that speak a language other than English.

North Cambridge's median household income in 1999 was $44,784, which was 93.3% of the median household income for the entire city. The median household income for the neighborhood grew at a slower rate when compared to the city between 1979 and 1999 (34.4% versus 40.4%). There was, however, a greater decrease in the poverty rate in North Cambridge compared to the city between 1980 and 2000 (41.9% and 10.3% respectively). In 2000, 7.8% of North Cambridge residents were at or below the poverty level compared to 11.1% of all city residents.

	Median Household Income			Change 1979 - 1999		As % of City Median Income		
	1979[1]	1989[1]	1999	Net	%	1979	1989	1999
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE	$34,169	$44,422	$47,979	$13,810	40.4%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
North Cambridge	$33,317	$42,245	$44,784	$11,467	34.4%	97.5%	95.1%	93.3%

	Persons in Poverty			Change 1980 - 2000		As % of Citywide Persons in Poverty			As % of Population		
	1980	1990	2000	Net	%	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE	12,593	8,794	11,295	(1,298)	(10.3)	100%	100%	100%	13.2%	9.2%	11.1%
North Cambridge	1,507	1,224	875	(632)	(41.9)	12%	13.9%	7.7%	13.7%	11.4%	7.8%

The educational attainment of North Cambridge residents has trended significantly upward between 1980 and 2000. The percentage of neighborhood residents aged 25 and older with at least a bachelor, graduate, or professional degree increased 115% during that time span to 52% of the population. During the same time period, there was a corresponding 45.7% decrease in the number of neighborhood residents with less than a high school diploma.

Complete information on neighborhood demographics can be found in the Community Development Department's Neighborhood Demographics Profile available on the web at www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/data.

Land Use And Zoning Update

North Cambridge features a mix of land use types. Although the neighborhood is mostly residential, there is a major commercial corridor along Massachusetts Avenue extending from Porter Square to the Arlington border, as well as some light industrial uses in the vicinity of Linear Park, Harvey Street, and Whittemore Avenue. Parks and public open space exist in various locations throughout the neighborhood.

North Cambridge currently consists of 12 zoning districts, which generally reflect land uses within the neighborhood.

Residence B – A two-family and townhouse district common in North and West Cambridge. Most residential areas in North Cambridge are zoned Residence B.

Business A1 – Neighborhood scale commercial district allows most retail with the exception of fast food establishments, as well as office and residential uses at a reduced density. In North Cambridge, this district is located in the Sheridan Square area (Rindge Avenue, Middlesex Street, and Cedar Street).

Business A2 – Allows general office and retail uses, housing. Found along Massachusetts Avenue in North Cambridge.

Business C - Found along Massachusetts Avenue in the vicinity of Porter Square. District allows general office and retail uses and housing.

Residence C1A – This is a multifamily district found in limited areas in North Cambridge along Rindge Avenue and along the Fitchburg Commuter Rail train tracks.

Residence C2 – A medium density residential district, which allows multistory apartment buildings and university activities. One – two family, townhouse and multifamily dwellings are also allowed. This district is found in North Cambridge at Fresh Pond Apartments on Rindge Avenue.

Residence C3 – A high-density residential district. In North Cambridge this district is found at the Burns Apartment Buildings on Churchill Avenue.

Special Districts 2 and 3 – Special districts 2 and 3 are located at the former W.R. Grace site and adjacent industrial sites along Whittemore Avenue and Harvey Street. The intent of Special District 2 is to encourage residential uses in a form and density that is compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. Special District 3 is intended to permit development that will help to protect sensitive environmental areas located there.

Industrial A1 – This is a limited impact business and industry district found in the neighborhood along a small portion of the Fitchburg Commuter Rail train tracks and not significantly affecting land uses in the North Cambridge neighborhood.

Office 2A – The base zoning district in the "triangle" section of Concord Alewife, bordered by the Fitchburg line MBTA railroad tracks, Alewife Reservation, and Alewife Brook Parkway. The district allows most types of residential and institutional uses as well as offices and laboratories.

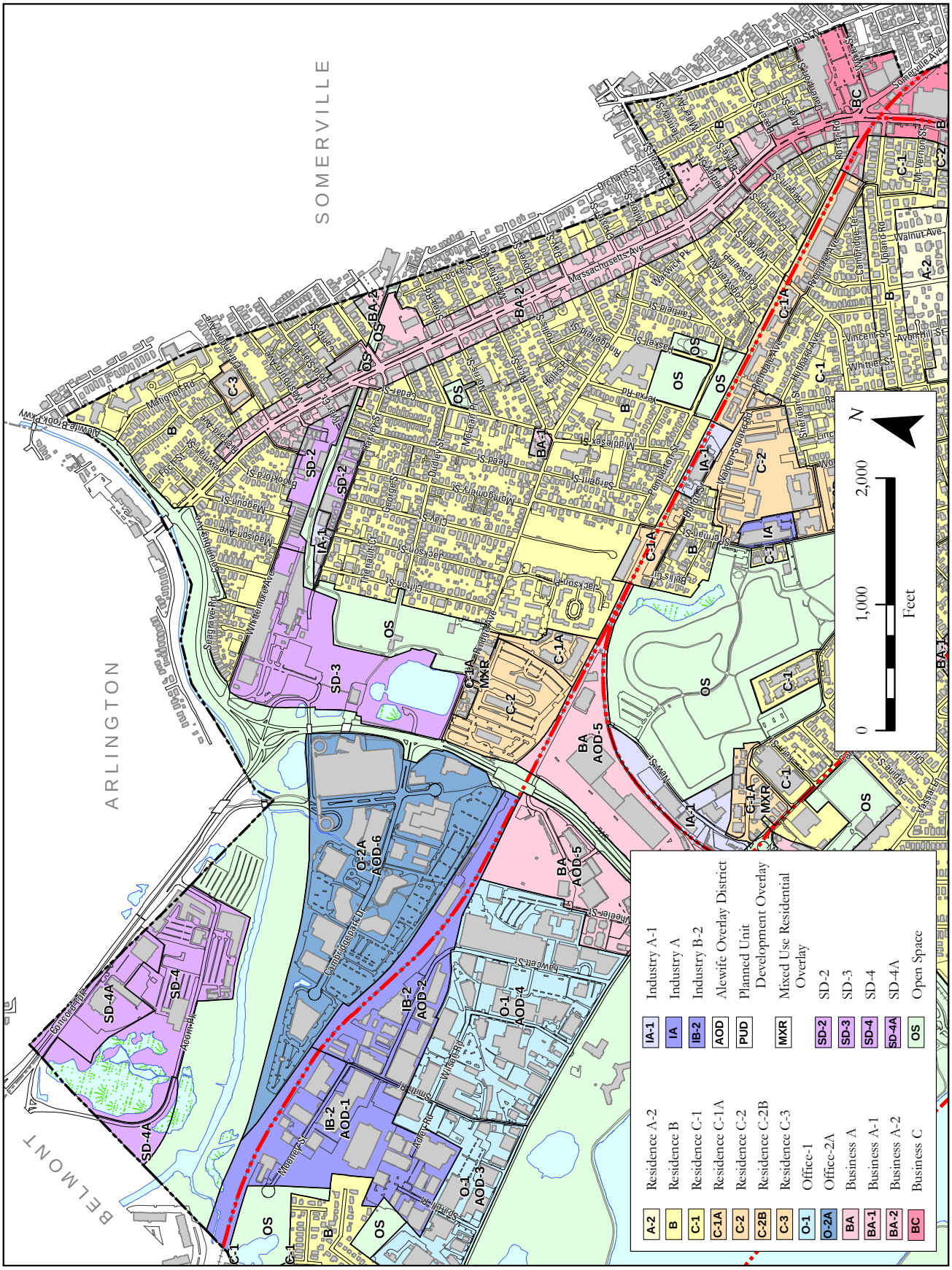
Alewife Overlay District 6 - One of 6 overlay districts in the Concord Alewife area. AOD 6 covers the "triangle" section described above. The Alewife Overlay Districts modify the dimensional provisions of the base districts, generally allowing greater height and FAR by Special Permit from the Planning Board, but also imposing additional requirements for open space, permeability, and setbacks.

Open Space - This District applies to publicly owned open space as well as some other kinds of open space. Most public parks in North Cambridge are zoned open space, including Alewife Brook Parkway and Reservation.

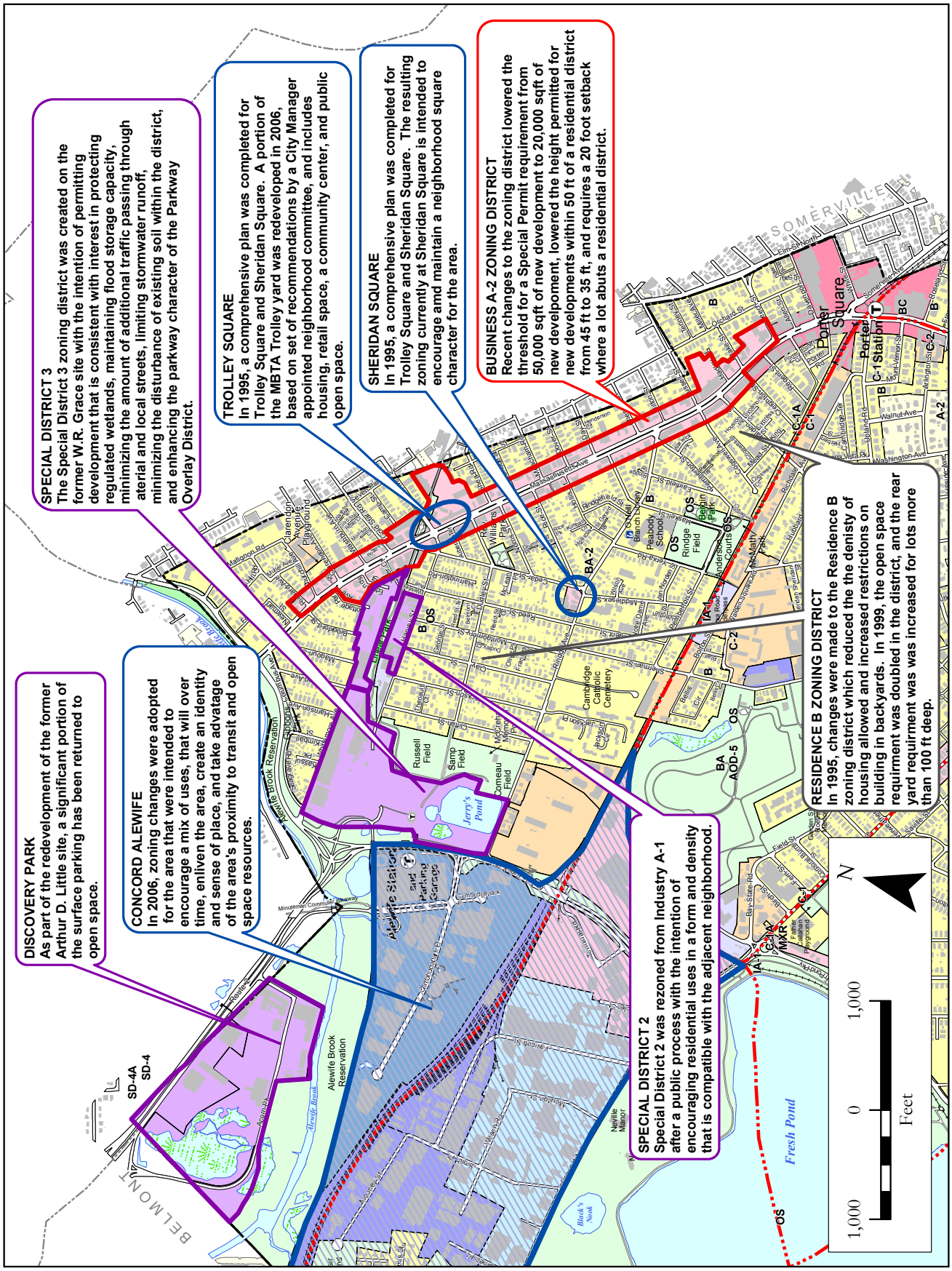
In 1991 the city began to develop a comprehensive growth policy in order to provide a framework to appropriately regulate development, and to help address increasing concerns about future density, traffic growth, the need for housing, (especially affordable units), and opportunities for review of large projects. The resulting document, Toward a Sustainable Future – Cambridge Growth Policy Document, was adopted by the City Council in 1993 and is still the primary guide for the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. The Growth Policy Document recommends policies that will sustain and enhance the city's urban form, scale, density, and mix of uses. The report was also used as a guide for a Citywide Rezoning Petition, which was adopted in 2001. The Growth Policy Document was revised and updated in 2007 to reflect the extensive planning work and tangible changes that have taken place in neighborhoods throughout the city since 1993.

As part of the 2001 Citywide Rezoning, the allowed density in many commercial districts in the city was lowered while the allowed density for residential

North Cambridge Land Use and Zoning



North Cambridge Land Use and Zoning Changes



SUMMARY

North Cambridge Zoning Districts

Base District	Max. Far	Min. Lot Area/Du	Min. Setback Front Yard	Min. Setback Side Yard	Min. Setback Rear Yard	Max. Height	Min. OS Ratio	General Range of Allowed Uses
RESIDENCE								
B	0.50	2,500	15	10 sum to 25	25	35	50%	residential: single-/two-family townhouses apartments, condos some institutional (limited in C-1)
C-1A	1.25	1,000	10	(H+L) ÷ 7	(H+L) ÷ 5	45	15%	
C-2	1.75	600	(H+L) ÷ 4 at least 10	(H+L) ÷ 5	(H+L) ÷ 4 at least 20	85	15%	
C-3	3.00	300	(H+L) ¸ 5 at least 5	(H+L) ¸ 6	(H+L) ¸ 5 at least 20	120	10%	
BUSINESS								
BA-1	1.00/0.75	1,200	No min	No min	(H+L) ¸ 5 at least 20	35	No min	residential institutional offices/laboratories most retail uses
BA-2	1.00/1.75	600	5	10	20	45	No min	
BC	1.25/2.00	500	No min	No min	20	55	No min	
BC-1	2.75/3.00	450	No min	No min	20	50	No min	
INDUSTRY								
IA-1	1.25/1.50	700	No min	No min	No min	45	No min	residential institutional, offices/laboratories, some retail, most light industrial some heavy industrial
Special District 2	Along Linear Park in North Cambridge. Regulations similar to Residence B with exceptions. Conversion to housing is encouraged.							
Special District 3	Near Alewife Station. Allows residential, office, institutional, and limited retail uses. Aggregate gross floor area of the entire district is limited to 782,500 square feet not including MBTA facilities or existing residential buildings.							
Special Districts 4 and 4a	Acorn Park in North Cambridge. Regulations similar to Office 2 with exceptions. Preservation of open space is encouraged.							
OPEN SPACE								
OS	0.25	N/A	25	15	25	35	60%	open space, religious, civic uses

NOTES ON ZONING REGULATIONS TABLE

Max. FAR = maximum allowed ratio of gross floor area on a parcel divided by the total land area of the parcel ("floor area ratio"). Where a slash (/) separates two figures, the first applies to non-residential and the second to residential & dormitory uses.	**Min. Lot Area/DU =** minimum allowed ratio of a parcel's lot area, expressed in feet, divided by the number of dwelling units on that parcel.	**Min. Setback** = minimum required distance between a parcel's lot line (front, side, or rear) and the wall of a building, in feet. The symbol (H+L) in a formula represents the height of the building plus the length of the building parallel to that lot line.	**Max. Height =** maximum allowed building height on a parcel, in feet. A slash (/) has the same meaning as under Max. FAR (see above).	**Min. OS Ratio =** minimum required ratio of usable open space on a parcel (not including parking) to total land area, expressed as a percentage.	**General range of allowed uses** gives an overview of the types of uses permitted by zoning in that district, but does not refer to specific allowed uses. Refer to Article 4 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance for a detailed Table of Use Regulations.

CAUTIONARY NOTE: This table is intended to give an overview of the zoning regulations specifically pertaining to the North Cambridge Neighborhood. It does not provide a full description of the City of Cambridge's zoning regulations, and may not serve as a substitute for the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

Land Use And Zoning Update - continued

uses remained the same, thus encouraging the development of new housing or mixed-use projects in commercial areas. The Citywide Rezoning changes also established a review process for large projects within a new part of the zoning ordinance, Article 19.000. Under Article 19, projects of 50,000 square feet or more must undergo a public hearing and receive a special permit from the Planning Board. As part of the review process, specific urban design objectives and traffic impact indicators are used to consider any negative impacts, if any, the project wil have on the surrounding neighborhood.

The North Massachusetts Avenue Overlay District created in 1986, established guidelines to encourage good building design, site development, pedestrian amenities, and ensure that changes to the Avenue are compatible with the scale and character of abutting neighborhoods. Since 2007, under the Overlay District, every new project over 2,000 square feet is subject to a non-binding public review.

In 1995, significant modifications were made to the Residence B Zoning District, which covers most residential areas of North Cambridge, that reduced the density of housing allowed and increased restrictions on building in backyards. Further, in 1999, the open space requirement was doubled from 20% of the total lot area to 40% in the Residence B District, and the rear yard requirement was increased for lots more that 100 feet deep.

In 2007, changes to the Business A and Business A2 districts which, for the most part, are located along Massachusetts Avenue in the neighborhood, lowered the threshold for a special permit requirement from 50,000 to 20,000 square feet of new development. Also, the height allowed for new development within 50 feet of a residential district was lowered from 45 feet to 35 feet, and a 20-foot setback requirement where a lot abuts a residential district was introduced.

Several sub-areas within North Cambridge have been subject to rezoning as a result of further analysis and public processes. The former W.R. Grace site, which is bordered by Alewife Brook Parkway, Rindge Avenue, Russell Field and Whittemore Avenue, was rezoned to Special District 3, after a public process in 1999. The intent of this rezoning was to permit development that was consistent with public interest in protecting regulated wetlands within the district, maintain flood storage capacity, minimize additional traffic, limit stormwater runoff onto adjacent and nearby property, minimize the disturbance of existing soil to limit exposure to possible harmful residual substances in the soil, and to enhance the parkway character of the Parkway Overlay District.

In 1995, a comprehensive plan for both Trolley and Sheridan Squares was completed. The resulting zoning currently in place at Sheridan Square was intended to encourage and maintain a neighborhood square character for the area. Trolley Square was redeveloped in 2006 based on a set of recommendations made by a City Manager appointed study committee, and includes housing, retail, community space, and new public open space.

Concord Alewife

In 2003, the city embarked upon a multidisciplinary planning study of the Concord Alewife area, bounded by the Fresh Pond Shopping Center, Alewife Brook Parkway, Concord Avenue and the Arlington and Belmont borders. City staff and a City Manager appointed Study Committee worked closely with a team of professional planning consultants, led by Goody, Clancy and Associates, to address a variety of planning issues in the area. The zoning changes associated with the Concord Alewife Planning Study were adopted in 2006. The Study includes a vision for the area that encourages a mix of uses that over time; will enliven the area, create an identity and sense of place, and will take advantage of the area's proximity to transit and open space resources. In addition, design guidelines associated with the zoning encourage better pedestrian environments, environmentally sensitive development, and housing for families of all sizes.

Transportation Update

Like much of Cambridge, transportation concerns are an important part of any planning discussions for North Cambridge. It remains challenging to meet the mobility needs of residents and employees while at the same time protecting the quality of life that makes Cambridge a desirable place to live and work. North Cambridge is relatively well served by public transportation. MBTA Red Line subway service extends through the neighborhood with stops at Porter Square, Davis Square (Somerville), and Alewife Station, connecting to downtown Boston. There is also commuter rail service available at Porter Square station with connections to North Station as well as to suburban communities. Several MBTA bus routes travel through the neighborhood: the #77 Massachusetts Avenue and Arlington Heights route provides service along Massachusetts Avenue and into Harvard Square, the #83 Rindge Avenue route includes Massachusetts Avenue and Rindge Avenue and provides connections to Central Square. Despite the availability of public transportation, there is still a significant amount of automobile traffic that travels through the neighborhood, particularly along the larger roads and transportation corridors. According to the 2000 U.S. Census over 72% of North Cambridge households own at least 1 vehicle, similar to the percentage for the rest of the City. Also, over 44% of North Cambridge residents drove alone to work, compared to 35% of City residents.

Alewife Brook Parkway extends along the northwesterly edge of the neighborhood adjacent to Alewife Brook Reservation and is controlled by the State through the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). In addition to neighborhood and city traffic, much of the volume along this road consists of automobiles with no origin or destination in the neighborhood or even the City. The Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) completed a License Plate Survey and Study in July 2007. The purpose of the study was to identify origin and destination patterns of drivers who use roads in the area. The information generated by the study will be used to assist in providing travel alternatives to driving in the Alewife area.

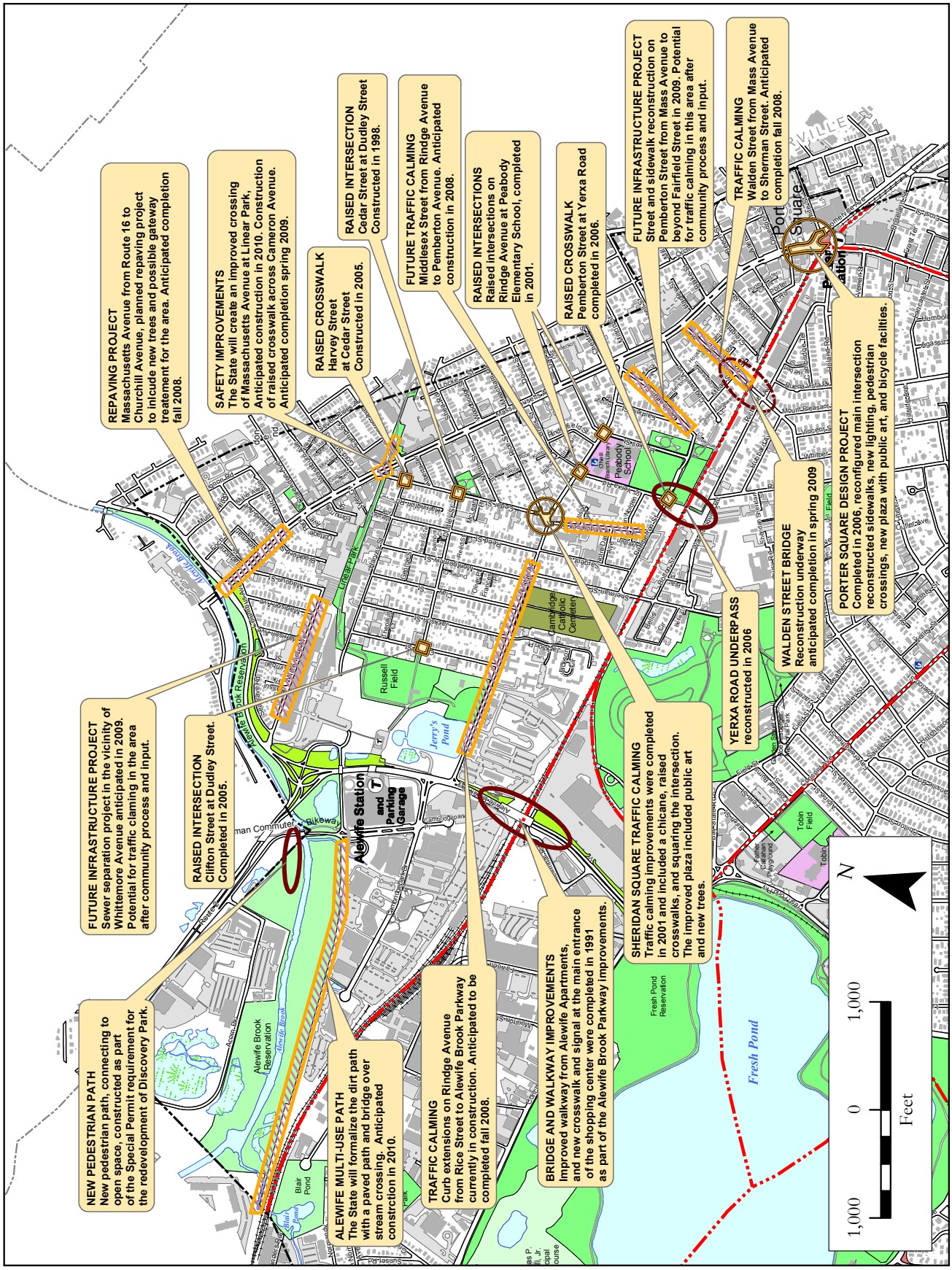
Over the past several years the city's strategies for dealing with transportation concerns have been to: work to keep regional traffic on the parkways, while at the same time pushing at various levels of government for transportation corridor studies and transit improvements; improve conditions for non-automobile travel such as walking, biking, and transit; reduce vehicle speeds through traffic calming; and minimize new traffic generated by development projects.

These strategies have resulted in several projects and programs to deal with transportation and environmental issues. The Parking Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Ordinance, adopted in 1998, is part of a citywide effort to reduce automobile trips throughout Cambridge. This ordinance requires developers or businesses that create new parking spaces to submit a plan for reducing the number of single occupancy vehicle trips made to that location. As part of their PTDM plan, businesses may provide subsidized transit passes, private shuttles, incentives for carpooling, flexible work hours, and facilities for bicycle commuters, among other things.

The Article 19 review process (see land use and zoning update) requires that developers of large projects prepare a traffic study to be reviewed by the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department and the Planning Board. Developers may then be required to provide mitigation for adverse traffic impacts that might result from the project. Mitigation requirements may include upgrades to roadways or intersections, traffic calming measures, improved pedestrian, bicycle or transit facilities or any of the other transportation demand management measures described above.

The goal of the City's traffic calming projects is to improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods and allow cars to peacefully coexist with other modes of transportation. Generally, the physical and visual cues associated with traffic claming features are implemented at the request of the community with construction often taking place in conjunction with other projects such as street repaving and sewer reconstruction.Traffic calming features in North Cambridge include raised intersections at Clifton Street and Dudley Street and on Rindge Avenue at the Peabody School. There are also raised crosswalks on Pemberton Street at Yerxa Road and on Cedar Street at Harvey Street. Sheridan Square, at the intersection of Cedar and Rindge Avenues features raised crosswalks a chicane and curb extensions. Traffic calming features are under construction on Rindge Avenue between Rice Street and Alewife Brook Parkway, and on Walden Street between Sherman Street and Massachusetts Avenue. Traffic calming is also planned for Middlesex Street from Rindge

North Cambridge Transportation Improvements



Avenue to Pemberton Avenue and a raised crosswalk across Cameron Avenue at Trolley Square.

There are areas where infrastructure work such as sewer separation or street and sidewalk reconstruction is planned. These locations might also be appropriate for traffic calming. Sewer separation work is planned in the vicinity of Whittemore Avenue and street reconstruction is planned on Pemberton Avenue near Massachusetts Avenue. Any potential traffic calming features in these locations would involve a community process and input.

The Porter Square Design Project was completed in 2006 and included the reconfiguration of the main intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Somerville Avenue, reconstruction of the sidewalks, upgrading of lighting and the addition of new pedestrian crossings and bicycle facilities. There is also a new pedestrian plaza and left hand turn out of the Porter Square Shopping Center and on to Massachusetts Avenue southbound.

Since 1993, the City of Cambridge and neighborhood residents have been planning for safe and direct crossings of the Fitchburg commuter rail line that runs through North Cambridge. In 1994, as part of comprehensive improvements to Alewife Brook Parkway, the pedestrian walkway from Fresh Pond Apartments was improved and a crosswalk and signal was created across the Parkway at the main entrance to the shopping center. In 2006, the Yerxa Road Underpass was completely reconstructed. The project improved the safety of the connections between the dense residential areas around Walden Square and Richdale Avenue to numerous community facilities including the Peabody Elementary School, Bergin Park, McMath Park, the Gately Youth Center, and MBTA bus access on Rindge Avenue. The new underpass is also fully ADA compliant and can accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists.

In 2004, the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway), working with the City of Cambridge, began a design process for an improved crossing of Linear Park at Massachusetts Avenue. The project aims to improve safety for users of the Linear Park multi-use path that runs between Alewife MBTA station and Davis Square in Somerville, by creating a direct signalized and fully accessible crossing of Massachusetts Avenue. The plan includes re-aligning the intersection of Cedar Street and Massachusetts Avenue. An adjacent landscaped area will be relocated to the opposite side of Cedar Street and new trees will be planted. Crosswalks of Cedar Street and Massachusetts Avenue will be located at this new intersection and will allow path users to cross during each cycle of the traffic signal without having to push a pedestrian button.

In October 2006, MassHighway began reconstruction of the Walden Street Bridge, which spans the MBTA Commuter rail tracks between Richdale Avenue and Mead Street. Construction will last approximately 2 years.

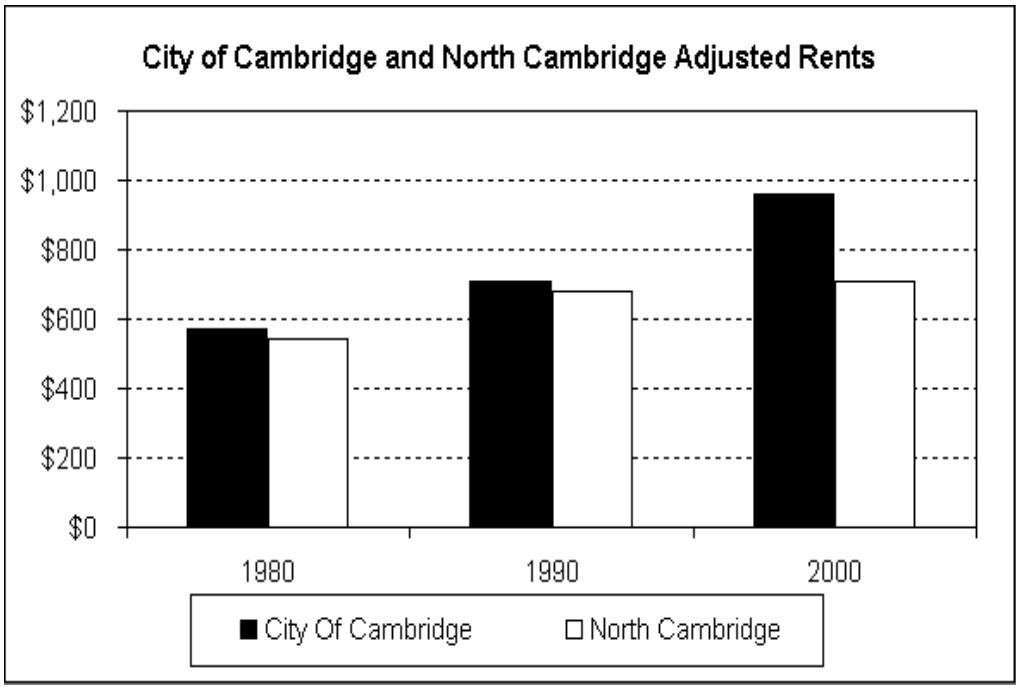
Housing Update

The availability and affordability of housing in Cambridge continues to be an important issue facing residents. Housing prices throughout the city and the region have climbed dramatically since the North Cambridge Neighborhood Study was first completed in 1990. In addition, rent control was phased out in Cambridge between 1995 and 1997 as a result of changes to State Law.

	Median Rent			Change 1980 - 2000		As % of City Median Gross Rent		
RentAdjusted[1]	1980	1990	2000	Net	%	1980	1990	2000
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE	$571	$711	$962	$391	68.4%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
North Cambridge	$540	$678	$711	$171	31.6%	94.6%	95.4%	73.9%

1. All 1980 and 1990 figures have been converted to 2000 dollars using the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Wage Earners for the Boston-Brockton-Nashua MA-NH-ME-CT Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area.

In 2005, the median sales price for houses in North Cambridge ranged from $400,250 for a condominium to $568,750 for a single-family home. The median rent for units in North Cambridge in 2000 was $711 per month up from $540 per month in 1980 in adjusted 2000 dollars. The 31.6% increase in median neighborhood rents between 1980 and 2000 is lower than the increase citywide of 68.4%.



The goals of the City's affordable housing program are to maintain diversity in the City, to keep Cambridge families (especially those with children) in the city, and to support opportunities for rental and homeownership. The City, along with other non-profit development partners, offers a number of programs intended to encourage the creation and preservation of affordable housing units, assist Cambridge residents who are considering buying a home for the first time, and help owners of affordably priced housing maintain their properties.

In 1988, to help meet affordable housing needs, the City established the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust, an organization that combines funding from local, state, federal, and private sources to develop new units of affordable housing and preserve affordability restrictions on existing housing units. Community Development Department staff work with non-profit community development organizations to identify opportunities for new affordable housing through renovation of existing units, rehabilitation of non-residential buildings for housing use, new construction, or other means. Since 1995, over 2,800 units of affordable housing have been created or preserved throughout the city due to these efforts.

In North Cambridge, the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust, working closely with non-profit housing organizations, has helped to create new affordable homeownership and rental housing throughout the neighborhood:

Name	*Location*	*Units*	*Type*
Churchill Court	2525 Massachusetts Avenue	12	Rental
Alewife Condominiums I and II	Rindge Avenue (former Joyce Chen Site)	20	Ownership
68 Bolton Street	68 Bolton Street	6	Ownership
Gateview	2495 Massachusetts Avenue	14	Ownership
Trolley Square	Trolley Square	40	Rental & Ownership
North Cambridge VFW	Massachusetts Ave at former VFW Post	9	Ownership

The City created an expiring use program that provided assistance to tenants and landlords of federally assisted rental housing that was in jeopardy of being converted into market rate units. In 1997, Just-A-Start Corporation acquired the 273-unit expiring use housing development at 402 Rindge Avenue, consequently preserving the affordability of these units.

As part of the 2001 Citywide rezoning, housing became permitted in all zoning districts throughout the City; the permitting process for converting former industrial buildings into residential uses was streamlined; and the allowed floor area ratios (FAR) were reduced for commercial uses in order to provide an incentive to create housing.

The Inclusionary Zoning provision (section 11.200) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that any new housing development of 10 units or more is required to set aside 15 percent of the units for low-to-moderate income buyers or tenants. In return, the developer receives a "density bonus" allowing a 30 percent increase in floor-to-area ratio (FAR) and the creation of additional units at a one-to-one ratio of affordable to market rate. The inclusionary units must reflect the type and distribution of the market rate units.

In 2001, Cambridge voters approved the Community Preservation Act (CPA), which makes funding available for housing, open space and historic preservation. Currently, the majority (80%) of funds received through the CPA are allocated towards the creation of affordable housing via the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust. To date $72 million has been appropriated through the CPA program for all uses.

The City and its non-profit partners also offer programs that assist residents and homeowners to revitalize the housing stock, preserve affordability, and stabilize owner-occupancy of housing units. The Home Improvement Program, offered by the non-profit Just-A-Start, provides technical assistance and low-interest loans to income-eligible homeowners to renovate their houses. Another organization, Cambridge Neighborhood Affordable Housing Services, provides loans to help rehabilitate apartment buildings if the rents are kept affordable. The Cambridge Lead-Safe program, offered by the Community Development Department, implements educational outreach programs about the risks of lead paint and provides technical assistance and forgivable loans for owners to remove lead paint from their units. The Community Development Department also offers a monthly First-Time Homebuyers Class, which is free and open to all Cambridge residents. The City offers up to $130,000 in downpayment and closing cost funding and financial assistance to assist income eligible residents in purchasing their first home.

Information about all of these programs is available in the brochure A Guide to Affordable Housing Programs in Cambridge, by calling the Housing Information Line at 617-349-4622, or on the Community Development Department website at www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/hsg.

Economic Development Update

North Cambridge features a substantial number of smaller and independently owned businesses, concentrated mostly along the Massachusetts Avenue corridor. There has been increased development pressure on land uses within the neighborhood, as a result of both the MBTA Red Line extension into the neighborhood at Porter Square, Davis Square and Alewife, as well as changing city and neighborhood demographics.

Balancing, the economic pressure to create housing as well as the need for affordable housing, with encouraging the appropriate type and amount of retail to meet neighborhood needs has become a significant challenge in recent years.

Through the Community Development Department, the City of Cambridge offers several assistance programs to local businesses throughout the City. The primary goal of these programs is to help ensure that small independent businesses are able to thrive and compete with nationally owned chains.

The Façade, Signage, and Lighting Improvement Program provides technical assistance and matching grants to interested business owners or property owners to restore or renovate the exterior of commercial buildings. The Façade Program facilitates the restoration and improvement of the physical appearance of small independent Cambridge businesses while also improving the overall character of commercial districts. There is also a Best Retail Practices Program, which provides interior design and marketing assistance to retailers, including matching grants of up to $5,000. Some businesses in North Cambridge that have used these programs include: Verna's, Thai Kitchen, Frank's Steakhouse, and Capone Foods.

The Community Development Department also provides a variety of services to small business owners or people looking to start a new business in Cambridge, including one-on-one counseling from CDD's Economic Development staff. A Site Finder Database service helps match prospective business owners with available commercial property in the city. Through a partnership with the Center for Women and Enterprise, the City offers a set of classes on topics related to starting a new business, maintaining and expanding existing businesses, financial literacy, and obtaining loans. The Community Development Department also publishes information on permitting processes, business associations in the city, and organizations that provide other types of business support, as well as a regularly updated Cambridge Women and Minority-Owned Business Directory.

The City provides employment services to Cambridge residents through the Office of Workforce Development (617-349-6243) and the Cambridge Employment Program (617-349-6166). The Community Development Department also co sponsors employment development programs including the Cambridge Health Careers Program, which offers classes to Cambridge Health Alliance employees to help them apply to nursing or radiology programs, and the Just-A-Start Biomedical Careers Program, which helps Cambridge residents qualify for entry level jobs in the biomedical industry.

Information about all of these programs and services is available in the brochure Doing Business in Cambridge, or by contacting the Economic Development Division at 617-349-4637, or on the web at www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/ed.

Open Space Update

The City of Cambridge's open space planning goals are to maintain a high quality system of parks and open space resources throughout the City, provide a variety of recreational opportunities for children and adults of all ages and abilities, and help to improve and beautify the overall urban environment. The City also actively looks for opportunities to expand the system by creating new open spaces.

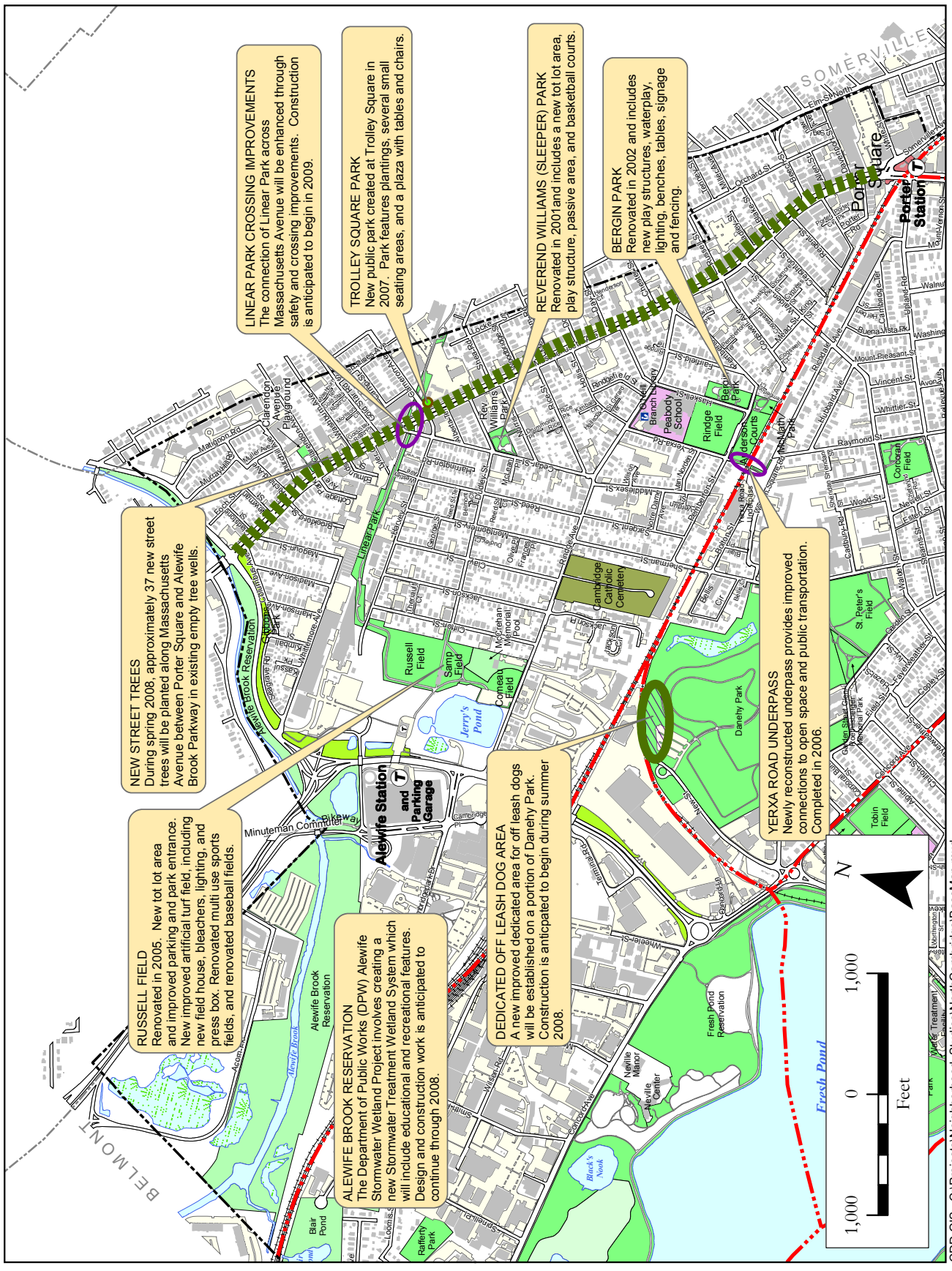
In 2000, a City of Cambridge planning study conducted by the Green Ribbon Open Space Committee established criteria for open space acquisition and identified and prioritized open space needs throughout the City. The study report makes recommendations regarding open space acquisition and priorities based on an analysis of existing facilities, population density of various age groups, income, recreational need, types of open space uses, as well as a comprehensive graphic analysis of neighborhoods and open space using GIS mapping. In North Cambridge, the areas in the vicinity of Russell Field and near Porter Square were identified as priorities for tot lots. The area near Porter Square was also identified as a priority for a neighborhood park. In addition, there are several areas in the neighborhood noted in the report as in need of, or providing opportunities for, park trails and open space connections. Identified goals include: improving access to Alewife Reservation; connecting the Minuteman Commuter Path to the Charles River Reservation; increased access over the commuter rail tracks to Danehy Park; and access to Porter Square in the vicinity of the commuter rail tracks.

The Cambridge Zoning Ordinance is increasingly being used as a tool to both encourage and require the creation and enhancement of public open space through private sources. Certain amounts of open space are required in residential districts, as well as in some commercial districts. Furthermore, through the project review process for developments between 25,000 to 50,000 square feet there are minimum standards for open space that must be met. The special permit process for developments over 50,000 square feet often requires the inclusion of open space.

Most renovations of public parks are coordinated through the Community Development Department although, in some instances, outside firms or consultants are hired to oversee the renovation process. In North Cambridge, several parks have been renovated in recent years. In 2001, Sleeper Park (Reverend Williams) underwent a comprehensive renovation and features a new tot lot area, play structure, passive areas, waterplay. and a basketball courts. The next year, Bergin Park was completely renovated. The new park features new play structures, waterplay, lighting, benches tables, signage and fencing. The nearby tennis courts were also resurfaced with new lighting installed. A full renovation of Russell Field was completed in 2005. The renovation included an upgraded artificial turf field, new field house, new bleachers, lighting and a press box. There were also renovations to the baseball fields (Comeau and Samp), two new multi use grass fields, a new tot lot playground and a renovated entrance and parking area.

Besides new parks, playgrounds, and recreational areas the City seeks opportunities to create "pocket parks" or plazas by adding landscaping, seating, and sometimes lighting, to beautify and encourage the use of small public spaces. The new open space at Trolley Square features several small seating areas at the edges of the new space and along Linear Park, as well as a plaza that features tables and chairs. The MBTA has expressed interest in reissuing a Request for Proposals for development rights over a portion of the Porter Square station and tracks. Improvements to the existing plaza may be a part of the development at the site. As part of traffic calming improvements to the area of Sheridan Square, the main intersection was squared off which facilitated the creation of a small plaza with trees and a public art component.

North Cambridge Open Space Improvements



North Cambridge Neighborhood Study

▪ ▪ U P D A T E ▪ ▪

2008 Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation Types:

MA - Massachusetts Avenue
LU - Land Use and Zoning
T - Transportation and Environment
ED - Economic Development
H - Housing
OS - Open Space

Action Items - Issues expected to be added to work plan in the future.

MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
MA1	There should be a new landscaping, streetscape, and beautification plan for Massachusetts Avenue in the neighborhood. Improvements should promote pedestrian amenities and neighborhood connections. Sidewalks along the Avenue should be upgraded to encourage a more lively and active atmosphere.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range/Long Range:** The City is currently exploring both short term and long-term strategies to improve the streetscape, pedestrian environment, and retail climate along Massachusetts Avenue in North Cambridge. The City will plant 37 trees along Massachusetts Avenue in the neighborhood starting in spring 2008. In addition, approximately 13 new trees will be planted as part of sidewalk reconstruction on Massachusetts Avenue between Alewife Brook Parkway and Churchill Avenue. Further improvements to the street, sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting will be coordinated when future street reconstruction in planned.
MA2	Strategies should be explored to deal with the volume of cars on Massachusetts Avenue and with cars blocking intersections while waiting in traffic.	Intersections will need to be examined on an individual basis in order to find an effective solution to automobiles blocking intersections. This request will be forwarded to the Traffic and Parking Department.
MA3	Address safety concerns at the intersection of Tyler Court and Massachusetts Avenue.	Tyler Court provides access to several properties on Massachusetts Avenue and paved areas behind those buildings, yet it is too narrow to adequately include both sidewalks and two-way traffic. As part of the new residential building that was constructed at 2440 Massachusetts Avenue, the existing curb cut was replaced with a curb, new sidewalk, and street trees. These changes helped improve the safety and accessibility of the sidewalk in this location. Traffic volumes on Tyler Court are low and it crosses Massachusetts Avenue with the same design treatments as a driveway, which signals to drivers that it is a pedestrian area and caution should be used when entering and exiting.
MA4	Evaluate the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Cameron Avenue and whether there should be "no turn on red" established there.	The City Traffic Department evaluates signal and sign changes for intersections on an individual basis. Specific requests will be forwarded to the Traffic and Parking Department. In 2004, the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway), working with the City of Cambridge, began a design process for an improved crossing of nearby Linear Park at Massachusetts Avenue including a raised intersection on Cameron Avenue at Trolley Square. Improvements are anticipated to be completed by spring 2009.
MA5	Address neighborhood concerns with the MBTA bus schedules for routes that run on Massachusetts Avenue.	The MBTA bus delays on Massachusetts Avenue are most seriously affected during rush hour. The City meets on a bimonthly basis with the MBTA to discuss issues. The MBTA will be asked to look at the times and scheduling on these bus routes.
MA6	Census data and other available data should be analyzed to understand retail turnover and landlord issues along North Massachusetts Avenue.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Ongoing:** Economic Development Division uses U.S. Census data regarding households, income, education, and employment, as well as business sales data to help determine what types of retail needs exist in certain areas. The Economic Development Division also works closely with neighborhoods to determine what type of retail is desired by residents. However, other factors and market conditions outside of city control also play a significant role in where neighborhood residents choose to shop.

MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
MA7	Work to establish incentives for neighborhood focused retail and family owned businesses along Massachusetts Avenue. Possibly rezoning areas to more strongly encourage ground floor retail uses along Massachusetts Avenue.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range:** There were discussions, in 2005, on how to encourage ground floor retail without necessarily encouraging significant redevelopment of existing retail sites at higher densities. Proposals intended to support ground floor retail along Massachusetts Avenue, particularly from Harvard Square to Porter Square, were considered by City Council. A consensus was not reached, as there was some concern with adding FAR incentives to encourage retail. The City will study this area in further detail through a process that will involve focused public discussions and participation by residents and property owners. It is anticipated that this effort will begin in fall 2009.
MA8	Address the perceived wall effect created along Massachusetts Avenue by new developments. Zoning along north Massachusetts Avenue should also have a lower threshold for special permits; lower building heights, and rear yard requirements for corner lots.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range:** In March 2007 the City Council adopted a rezoning petition which addressed rear yard requirements for corner lots and lowered the threshold for a Special Permit in the BA districts (including BA-2 along North Massachusetts Avenue between Porter Square and the Arlington line). This area has characteristics and planning issues that distinguish it from other sections of the Avenue. The City will study this area in further detail through a process that will involve focused public discussions and participation by residents and property owners. It is anticipated that this effort will begin in fall 2009.
MA9	Develop a plan to reinvigorate businesses along north Massachusetts Avenue.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range:** The City's Economic Development Division works with businesses to improve appearances, services, practices, and marketing on an ongoing basis. Approximately every 2 years the Economic Development Division surveys a particular retail area (such as along North Massachusetts Avenue) and gathers information on the mix of businsess types and vacanies. The information gathered is used to help facilitate an appropriate retail mix for the area based on the community's needs and requests. The City offers several programs and services to business owners to assist in upgrading their properties. These include: Best Retail Practices Program; Facade, Signage and Lighting Improvement Program; workshops, training and counseling; and support to Cambridge Business Associations and Organizations. The Façade, Signage and Lighting Improvement Program, in particular, seeks to improve the physical appearance of independent businesses and enhance the commercial districts of Cambridge to help them compete in the marketplace. Some businesses that have used these programs in North Cambridge include: Verna's, Frank's Steakhouse, Thai Kitchen, and Capone Foods. Massachusetts Avenue will be targeted for information about programs and services available to businesses through the City.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
MA10	Explore areas that may be suitable for a destination cluster along Massachusetts Avenue.	The City works to match potential businesses with available space throughout the city. If a cluster type of opportunity exists the City will approach owners and certain potential businesses, often working with an existing business group or association.
MA11	The vacant gas station at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Magoun Street is an eyesore that should be addressed.	The gas station site is privately owned, relatively small, zoned for small scale uses, and potentially has contamination issues that may need to be addressed. These factors help to inhibit redevelopment of the site. The City's Inspectional services Department is the primary City agency responsible for enforcing sanitation issues on private lots. The department can be reached at 617-349-6100.
MA12	There is currently a lack of open space along Massachusetts Avenue.	The City is currently pursuing opportunities for pocket parks, in particular taking advantage of underutilized areas at the edges of public spaces or new developments. In North Cambridge, the new open space at Trolley Square features several small sitting areas at the edges of the new space and along Linear Park, as well as a plaza that will feature tables and chairs.
MA13	Consider widening the median strip on Massachusetts Avenue and adding green plantings.	There are currently no plans to widen the median strip on Massachusetts Avenue. The City is exploring ways to improve major entry points through new signage and landscaping. Massachusetts Avenue in the vicinity of Alewife Brook Parkway is one potential area.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

LAND USE AND ZONING Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
LU1	Provide updated information on the following properties: a. W.R. Grace site / Jerry's Pit b. Fawcett / Norberg property c. The former "Faces" on Route 2 d. Acorn Park area e. Pemberton Market	a. There are currently no proposed plans for the W.R. Grace site or Jerry's Pit. b. The parcels associated with the Fawcett Oil/ Norberg Property are zoned Special District 2 (SD2). A project review special permit is required for developments where construction is located within 100 feet of a public way. c. The owners of the property participated in a preliminary discussion with the Planning Board regarding redevelopment ideas and site considerations in March 2008. d. There is an existing plan for Acorn Park that has been approved by the Planning Board. e. There are currently no new proposals for the Pemberton Market site. Potential new development at the Pemberton Market parcel was affected by zoning changes in 2007 to the BA 2 District along Massachusetts Avenue.
LU2	Re-evaluate the business zone at Sheridan Square to ensure that it is an appropriate size given the uses in the area.	In 1995, the Community Development Department and the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee completed a comprehensive plan for Trolley Square and Sheridan Square. Most of the retail parcels at Sheridan Square are zoned Business A1, a neighborhood commercial district that allows most retail uses with the exception of fast food establishments, as well as office and residential uses at a reduced density. The zoning at Sheridan Square was intended to encourage and maintain a neighborhood square character for the area. There was consideration given to expanding the BA1 district to include additional existing commercial uses, this was not done however because of concerns about a potential increase in traffic due to possible additional commercial uses.
LU3	Work to make Trolley Square become a destination.	The Trolley Square site was redeveloped in 2006, and includes housing, retail, a community space, and public open space, which together, are intended to make the area a neighborhood destination.
LU4	Explore ways to meet changing parking demands in the neighborhood, as well as find a balance between parking and desired land uses. Possibly by increasing the parking requirements for new developments.	Citywide parking requirements currently require 1 off-street parking space for every unit in all residential developments. The City will continue to work to maintain a proper balance between parking and desired land uses.
LU5	Explore ways to enforce or discourage people from paving over yards.	In 1995, the Residence B district, which covers much of the residential areas of North Cambridge, was significantly modified to reduce the density of housing allowed and restrict building in backyards. In 1999, the open space required was doubled in the Residence B district, from 20% of the total lot area to 40%, and the rear yard requirement was increased for lots more than 100' deep.

TRANSPORTATION Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
LU6	Work to capture additional public improvements through private developments.	Under Article 19 of the Zoning Ordinance most new development over 50,000 square feet requires a special permit from the Planning Board. As part of the review, specific Urban Design Objectives and Traffic Impact Indicators are used to consider any negative impacts, if any, the project will have on the surrounding neighborhood. It is through this review that allows the Planning Board to set conditions, and seek mitigation to reduce or eliminate negative impacts. Landscaped open space is frequently part of such a project. Under inclusionary zoning residential projects over 10 units must also provide affordable housing.
LU7	The City should create a map of all non-conforming structures.	In large part due to the significant rezoning that took place Citywide in 2001, as well as through other zoning initiatives since then, there are likely many properties and structures that are currently non-conforming.
LU8	Increase mandatory design standards for developments.	As part of the Massachusetts Avenue Overlay District, new developments over 2,000 square feet along Massachusetts Avenue from the Cambridge Common to the Arlington line are subject to a non binding public review. In 2007, changes to the BA2 district, which covers most of North Massachusetts Avenue, require that every project over 20,000 must obtain a special permit from the Planning Board. Special Permit approval includes a review of the projects design under the citywide urban design objectives.
LU9	Work to ensure that residents get proper notification regarding zoning issues.	The City provides legally required notification for zoning issues to residents. Any proposed zoning changes are posted with the City Clerk at least 14 days in advance of a hearing, in the Cambridge Chronicle at least 14 days in advance of a hearing, owners of the affected area are notified along with abutters and abutters to abutters of the affected area. Special Permits require a public hearing within 65 days of the filing of the application. Abutters within 300 feet of the site's property line are notified. The applicant is also required to erect and maintain at least one notification panel at the site for which the special permit is requested.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
T1	Work to get increased traffic controls at the Fresh Pond Shopping Center.	Alewife Brook Parkway is controlled by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Traffic signals were added to the location in 1994. The Fresh Pond Shopping Center is privately owned. Therefore there are limits on what the City is able to do on the land. Due to the size of the parcel, if the site is redeveloped at some point in the future it will likely require a project review special permit including a traffic impact study, and will provide an opportunity for additional review and improvements.
T2	Address cut through traffic in the vicinity of Whittemore Avenue and Madison Avenue.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range:** The City's approach to improving public ways is generally to combine the upgrading of streets and sidewalk with larger infrastructure projects so that the entire design is coordinated and more cost effective. This area is scheduled for infrastructure in 2009. At that time the area will be looked at more closely, including through a community process, to determine what types of street improvements are appropriate.
T3	Consider a stop sign on Clifton Street at Dudley Street.	The City Traffic Department evaluates signal and sign changes for intersections on an individual basis. A request will be forwarded to the Traffic and Parking Department for consideration.
T4	Work to ensure that public transportation is adequate for the amount of density allowed.	North Cambridge has both bus and subway in operation and serving the neighborhood. The MBTA's Redline subway serves the North Cambridge neighborhood through stops at Porter Square, Davis Square (in Somerville) and Alewife Station. The #77 MBTA bus route provides service along Massachusetts Avenue, and the #83 bus route provides service along a portion of Massachusetts Avenue as well as Rindge Avenue.
T5	There should be more education for drivers regarding crosswalks. Consideration should be given to new crosswalk designs, and or additional raised crosswalks.	The City is making a variety of improvements to enhance pedestrian safety at intersections. Improvements may include curb extensions, raised crosswalks, improved crosswalk markings, and countdown signals.
T6	The condition of Upland Road should be addressed.	Upland Road is currently being repaved and new traffic clamming features are being installed. The project is anticipated to be complete in 2008.
T7	Right turn on Red should be prohibited at certain intersections.	The City Traffic Department evaluates signal and sign changes for intersections on an individual basis.
T8	Explore increasing the cost of parking permits.	The City Council has considered raising the costs of the permits in the past and has chosen to maintain the current price.
T9	Address school buses that park on Rindge Avenue and disrupt traffic.	The Community Development Department will forward this concern to the School Department.

Rec. Type & Number	Study Update Recommendation	Action and Progress to Date
T10	The City should continue to support the license plate survey, which is being undertaken by the State.	The Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) completed the License Plate Survey and Study in July 2007. The purpose of the study was to identify origin and destination patterns of drivers who use Alewife area roads as well as the origin of park and ride users of Alewife Station. The study found that vehicular traffic passing through the area had many destinations in addition to Boston. There appear to be some opportunities to convert vehicular traffic into transit use, although somewhat fewer than initially expected. A follow up study is in progress based on the information gathered, to create recommendations to increase transit ridership.
T11	The City should continue to explore ways to discourage regional traffic through Cambridge and especially on neighborhood streets.	The City works to keep regional traffic on the parkways and major streets through North Cambridge. Part of this strategy includes improving conditions for non-automobile travel such as walking, biking, and public transit; reducing vehicle speeds through traffic calming; and minimizing new traffic generated by development projects. The City also participates in a number of regional organizations that deal with transportation issues including: Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Advisory Board.
T12	Bicycle facilities in the City should be improved.	The City actively works to improve and promote bicycles facilities throughout the City. Bicycle improvement programs include installing bicycle lanes and other bicycle improvements as streets are repaved, bicycle safety campaigns in schools and elsewhere to teach safe cycling to both children and adults, and the installation of bicycle parking throughout the city.
T13	The City should establish incentives for people to walk.	Through the Pedestrian Program, the City works to encourage walking in several ways including: making traffic signals work better for pedestrians, reducing crossing distances where possible, repairing and improving sidewalks, reviewing proposed developments to make sure they are as pedestrian-friendly as possible, and encouraging landscaping and building designs that make walking pleasant. Cambridge also promotes walking through promotional activities and educational projects.
T14	Study the safety of the bike lanes on Massachusetts Avenue regarding how close they are to parked cars.	In 2003, the City embarked on a major study to evaluate the influence of bike lanes and other pavement markings on how motorists and bicyclists travel on the road (using Hampshire Street as the study site). The study was particularly focused on how far away bicyclists travel from parked cars. The study found that when bike lanes or other pavement markings were present, bicyclists traveled further away from parked cars than when no markings were present.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	Study Update Recommendation	Action and Progress to Date
T15	The City should consider ways to balance and provide facilities for both faster and slower bicycle riders, including alternate bike route maps for riders that aren't as comfortable on main streets. Neck down traffic calming features should take bicycles into account.	The City produces a Bicycle Facilities Map that shows the locations of existing and proposed bike lanes, bike paths, and pavement marking regarding bikes. Bicyclists are taken into account whenever traffic calming is considered for a location. Traffic neck downs in particular are designed to be (clear of) the path of bicyclists. There are also bicycle accommodation guidelines that apply to all construction projects that take place in the city, including for street reconstruction and new street construction; sewer storm drainage and water projects; private site developments; and utility construction.
T16	The transportation component of the Cambridge Energy Alliance should be supported.	The City supports the transportation component of the Cambridge Energy Alliance. The City undertakes a number of actions for climate protection in regards to transportation including: a green fleet committee which is developing policies and procedures to improve fuel economy and lower emissions in municipal vehicles; incentives for municipal employees to commute by means other than a single occupancy vehicle; the Parking and Transportation Demand Management Ordinance; promoting and supporting bicycling and walking, among others.
T17	Owners of older homes and businesses should be educated on how to achieve better energy efficiency.	The Cambridge Energy Alliance will reach out to residents, businesses, institutions, and municipal government with programs to reduce the use of electricity, natural gas, oil, gasoline, diesel fuel, and water in Cambridge. The Cambridge Energy Alliance will offer independent expertise, project management, flexible financial assistance, centralized coordination of services, and other assistance to all energy users in the City.
T18	The MBTA Porter Square Station plaza currently features a lot of pavement. Options for adding green or permeable space should be considered.	In 2003, the MBTA issued a Request For Proposals inviting developers to bid for a long term lease of the air rights over the Porter Square Commuter Station and tracks. No agreement wth a developer was reached at the time. The MBTA may issue another RFP in the future. The plaza area will likely be a part of any discussions.
T19	Consider ban on new asphalt that takes into account ground water issues.	The City's stormwater management plan is a program of stormwater mitigation actions based on the guidelines established under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) stormwater management program by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Phase II Rule. The program was created with the intention of improving the quality of the nation's waterways by reducing the quantity of pollutants that stormwater picks up and carries into stormwater systems and discharges to surface water bodies. The City works to meets goals of the program through: public outreach and participation, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction and post construction site runoff control, and pollution prevention.

Rec. Type & Number	Study Update Recommendation	Action and Progress to Date
T20	There should be an MBTA commuter rail stop at Alewife.	The issues that MBTA typically considers in determining whether a new stop should be introduced on a line are: • The impact of a new stop on the whole line – additional time a stop would add to a route– and possible resultant loss of ridership • Number of potential new riders that would be served by the creation of the stop • Cost per rider The Program for Mass Transportation (PMT) outlines a 25-year vision for the Boston region's public transit system, the long-range vision and goals for the transit system, as well as the specific projects that are selected to achieve them. The MBTA updates the PMT every five years. The MBTA has considered adding a stop in Alewife in the past and found at the time that it wasn't warranted.
T21	There should be shuttle buses that provide service to and from businesses in the area.	The shuttle buses that serve specific businesses are typically started by the businesses on their own, and are privately owned and operated. There is a privately run shuttle bus that serves several businesses in the nearby Concord Alewife area including BBN, New Boston Fawcett, Abt Associates, and West Cambridge Science Park. This shuttle serves approximately 45 passenger trips per day (total for all of the sites).
T22	The MBTA Rindge Avenue bus (#83) should continue over the bridge and into the shopping center in order to provide for elderly citizens that would otherwise have to walk up the hill.	The Shopping Center is located on privately owned land; therefore, it would be very difficult to find an appropriate location for the MBTA buses to stop after completing such a route. Liability issues would also have to be addressed. The rotaries on Fresh Pond Parkway further discourage such a route because of the likely delays the bus line would experience especially during peak hours.
T23	Work with the MBTA to address #83 bus delays.	The City meets on a bimonthly basis with the MBTA to discuss issues. The MBTA will be asked to look at the times and scheduling on the #83 bus route.
T24	Work to improve the Trolley yard and nearby bus stop.	As part of the redevelopment of the Trolley Square site there is a new residential building that extends along a stretch of Massachusetts Avenue in front of the remaining MBTA owned trolley yard. The building, along with the new park at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Cameron Avenue, new retail and community space, and new street trees along Massachusetts Avenue screens the trolley yard.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

HOUSING Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
H1	There should be an appropriate balance between housing and retail uses.	The preservation and creation of affordable housing remains a priority for the City. Housing is allowed in all zoning districts of the City. Part of the City policy regarding retail is to strengthen existing retail districts and direct new retail activity to existing retail squares and corridors. Retail uses in Cambridge also generally rely on support from nearby residents to be successful.
H2	The city should review the affordable housing inclusionary percentage, and consider making the 15% level for the total project not just the base.	The Inclusionary Housing Provision of the zoning ordinance was created in 1998 in response to the phasing out of rent control in the City. Research was done on other programs at the time and the 15% requirement, with incentives to facilitate the objectives of the program, was considered appropriate.
H3	Consider controls on the number of new units that are developed on empty lots.	All residential developments are subject to the limitations and requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
H4	Evaluate the priority placed on creating affordable housing. Other community needs should be considered when spaces in the neighborhood become available.	There is still a considerable need for affordable housing throughout the City. Providing affordable housing also remains a City Council priority. When space does become available, the City considers a broad array of needs and appropriate uses.
H5	There should be continued and increased outreach and education on housing affordability, and available resources.	The City continues outreach to residents regarding affordable housing programs available. Staff provides information, and answers questions at community and neighborhood events. The Housing Division also maintains a mailing list of residents interested in receiving information on affordable housing opportunities, and offers a First-Time Homebuyer Workshop throughout the year to assist potential homebuyers in understanding the home buying process.
H6	There should be more open discussions on the housing process. Neighborhood study recommendations should also be considered and implemented, and city boards such as the planning board should have community representation.	The preservation and creation of affordable housing is a goal of the City Council. The Neighborhood Study Updates were created as a way of reporting back to neighborhood residents on the progress on implementing recommendations made in Neighborhood Studies. Part of the implementation process for the recommendations involves working with Department and Division heads and other staff throughout the city to address issues identified in the studies. The Planning Board is composed of 9 volunteer community representatives.
H7	Open house previews should be offered to neighbors when new units are being marketed.	Often there is an opening ceremony when a new development is created, and people are invited to tour the building and units. Sometimes there are also informal tours provided for neighbors. The Housing Division will continue to work to provide more opportunities for neighbors, neighborhood groups, and nearby residents to tour new developments and units.
H8	The City should keep track of occupant's eligibility after a unit is occupied.	There is a monitoring process in place to track the eligibility of occupants of affordable rental units.

HOUSING Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
H9	More 3 – 4 bedroom units should be encouraged.	Emphasizing the construction of affordable housing designed for families with children is a goal of the City. The new housing development at Trolley Square features 32 rental (mix of one, two, and three bedrooms) and 8 homeownership (all 3 bedrooms) units.
H10	There should be additional study on housing developments and the relationship to transportation, parking, and density issues.	The City is currently discussing the relationship between parking, residential uses, and transit proximity. Further discussions will likely occur at the relevant City Council Committees.
H11	Examine whether the City's affordable housing policy gives fewer incentives for private developers to develop affordable housing through chapter 40b.	The Inclusionary Housing Provision of the zoning ordinance was created in 1998 in response to the phasing out of rent control in the City. Research was done on other programs at the time and the 15% requirement with incentives, to facilitate the objectives of the program was considered appropriate. More than 2,800 affordable units have been created or preserved since 1995.
H12	The population density of different areas of the City should be monitored.	The City uses U.S. Census data for information on neighborhood populations and demographics. This information is used to calculate population densities of neighborhoods when new census data is released (approximately every ten years). There is not a feasible way of updating this information without associated data from the U.S. Census.
H13	Examine the setbacks and scale and character of abutting areas in order to address concerns about denser developments moving into the neighborhood.	As a result of changes in 2007 to the BA-2 zoning district, which extends along most of Massachusetts Avenue in North Cambridge, the threshold for a special permit requirement was lowered from 50,000 to 20,000 square feet of new development, the height of new development within 50 feet of a residential district was lowered from 45 feet to 35 feet, and there is a 20 foot setback requirement where a lot abuts a residential district.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
ED1	Consider ways to coordinate between business owners and neighbors on retail needs for the neighborhood, possibly through a community survey.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range:** The Economic Development Division will actively look for ways to include useful economic development questions on City community surveys.
ED2	Explore ways to address or assist with retail rents.	The Economic Development Division tracks available commercial inventory and pricing throughout the City. However, market forces determine the actual rents that are charged by landlords.
ED3	Provide additional assistance for owners to upgrade their buildings.	The City offers several programs and services to business owners to assist in upgrading their properties. These include: Best Retail Practices Program; Facade, Signage and Lighting Improvement Program; workshops, training and counseling; and support to Cambridge business associations and organizations. The Façade, Signage and Lighting Improvement Program in particular seeks to improve the physical appearance of independent businesses and enhance the commercial districts of Cambridge. The goal of these programs is to help local independent businesses compete in the marketplace. Some businesses that have used these programs in North Cambridge include: Verna's, Thai Kitchen, Frank's Steakhouse, and Capone Foods.
ED4	Explore whether FAR bonuses are appropriate for retail uses.	In some areas of the city there are exemptions for retail limits included for supermarkets. There were discussions, in 2005, on how to encourage ground floor retail without necessarily encouraging significant redevelopment of existing retail sites at higher densities. Proposals intended to support ground floor retail along Massachusetts Avenue, particularly from Harvard Square to Porter Square, were considered by City Council. A consensus was not reached, as there was some concern with adding FAR incentives to encourage retail.
ED5	City should explore providing financial incentives to create business synergies.	The City does not provide financial incentives for this type of activity. The City, through the Economic Development Division does work to identify vacancies and recruit businesses that meet neighborhood needs. City Economic Development Policy encourages the cross promotion of businesses within commercial districts.
ED6	Work to preserve Marino's as a restaurant. If the Rounder Records site is redeveloped it should promote retail space that is conducive to neighborhood needs.	If desired, the City will work with property owners to find a match for retail space that becomes available based on community preferences.
ED7	Examine the effect of breaking the liquor cap on developments in the neighborhood.	The Economic Development, Training and Employment Committee of the City Council is meeting to discuss possible changes to the liquor license cap policy.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
ED8	The City should address empty storefronts in the neighborhood and encourage a small business retail atmosphere.	The Economic Development Division provides a site finder service through which a listing of available commercial space is maintained. The Division works with property owners to provide information on available properties. Many of the City's economic development programs are designed to assist small and independent retailers to compete in the marketplace.
ED9	Examine ways to encourage people to walk to retail.	Many smaller retail establishments in the City are located in or adjacent to residential areas and are supported by local residents and employees. In addition, through the Pedestrian Program, the City works to encourage walking in several ways including: making traffic signals work better for pedestrians, reducing crossing distances where possible, repairing and improving sidewalks, reviewing proposed developments to make sure they are as pedestrian-friendly as possible, and encouraging landscaping and building designs that make walking pleasant.
ED10	Work on ways to better identify Cambridge at major entry points.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range:** The City through the Department of Public Works is currently engaged in an effort to improve and identify major entry points, for instance with new signage and landscaping. One such area of focus may be along Massachusetts Avenue at Alewife Brook Parkway.
ED11	Efforts to get neighborhood residents to neighborhood businesses, such as retail maps, should be supported.	The goal of many of the programs offered by the City's Economic Development Division is to help local independent businesses market themselves and compete in the marketplace. Some examples include workshops that are offered on Best Retail Practices, E-Marketing, Pricing Strategies, and One on One Consulting.

OPEN SPACE Recomendations and Action Plan

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
OS1	There should be additional street trees on Route 16, as well as tree replacement on Cameron Avenue and also on Alewife Brook Parkway.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range:** The City Arborist position was created with the goal of addressing issues relating to trees throughout Cambridge. The Arborist meets monthly with the Committee on Public Planting to review plans for landscaping and tree planting on public lands. There are a variety of City programs available to add trees to public spaces around buildings and homes. The City will replace existing trees that have been removed, plant new trees where there previously was not one (Client Tree Program), as well as plant commemorative trees (Commemorative Tree Program). Plantings generally take place in spring, or in fall when necessary. All street trees depend on the help of residents for weeding and watering. For new street trees, weekly watering and weeding is critical for their survival. The Community Development Department will contact the City Arborist about potential new areas for street trees. The City is currently exploring both short term and long-term strategies to improve the streetscape, pedestrian environment, retail climate along Massachusetts Avenue in North Cambridge. New trees will be planted along Massachusetts Avenue from Alewife Brook Parkway to Churchill Avenue as part of a street repaving project, and to help create a Gateway into the City.
OS2	Explore planting trees along Route 2 to help screen the neighborhood from idling automobiles.	
OS3	Tree wells throughout the neighborhood should be beautified and maintained.	
OS4	There should be more street trees throughout the neighborhood.	
OS5	The corner of Rindge Avenue, Pemberton Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue should be enlarged to accommodate additional tree plantings there.	This location was studied as part of a Massachusetts Avenue improvement plan several years ago, which was not implemented. The area may be looked at again in the future.
OS6	Developers should be required to plant trees at development sites (i.e. the new Dunkin Donuts site).	Currently, only trees that are removed or cut down are required to be replaced at development sites. Landscaping is also a consideration of the Planning Board when reviewing a special permit application for a project.
OS7	Ensure that Linear Park is adequately maintained during the winter months.	A private contractor is used for maintenance during the winter months at Linear Park. If there are problems with maintenance at the park the Department of Public Works should be notified at 617-349-4880.
OS8	A number of safety and maintenance issues at Alewife reservation should be addressed, in particular regarding homeless populations, trash, and safety of visitors.	The Alewife Brook Reservation is under the authority of the State's Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The City of Cambridge is working to establish and maintain effective communication with DCR on a number of issues and in particular the maintenance and improvements of public open space.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

Rec. Type & Number	*Study Update Recommendation*	*Action and Progress to Date*
OS9	There should be new incentives for green developments.	The Cambridge Energy Alliance will reach out to residents, businesses, institutions, and municipal government with programs to reduce the use of electricity, natural gas, oil, gasoline, diesel fuel, and water in Cambridge. The Cambridge Energy Alliance will offer independent expertise, project management, flexible financial assistance, centralized coordination of services, and other assistance to all energy users in the City. Currently, through Article 19 of the zoning ordinance a LEED checklist is required as part of the Planning Board review. Consideration is being given to increasing these requirements.
OS10	There should be more open space opportunities at Trolley Square.	The new public park at Trolley Square was completed in spring 2007. The new park includes trees, plantings, a flower garden, lighting, and benches and tables. Improvements to the open space also include a landscaped pedestrian link to Linear Park and improvements at the connection to Linear Park. The pedestrian link contains new lighting, trees, benches and plantings. The Linear Park improvements also contain similar features, as well as bike racks and a piece of play equipment that can also function as a warm-up station for exercisers.
OS11	The City should consider purchasing Jerry's Pit.	The City is currently not considering the purchase of Jerry's Pit.
OS12	The City should work with the MBTA on liability issues in order to facilitate the improvement of the public spaces at the Porter Square Plaza.	The MBTA recently removed several trees in the Porter Square plaza at neighbors request in order to increase openness and light. The MBTA has expressed interest in reissuing a Request for Proposals for development rights over a portion of the Porter Square Station and tracks. Improvements to the plaza may be a part of the development at the site.
OS13	There should be more informal plazas for people to sit.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Medium Range:** The City is pursuing opportunities for additional pocket parks with particular attention given to the getting better uses of the edges of other existing open spaces. In North Cambridge, the new open space at Trolley Square features several small sitting areas at the edges of the new space and along Linear Park, as well as a plaza that features tables and chairs.
OS14	Any new development at the Fawcett / Norberg site should include rich landscaping.	There are no proposals currently under review by the City for this site. Landscaping remains an important consideration of the special permit review process.
OS15	There should be opportunities for dogs to be off leash. One location that should be explored is a section of Russell Field near Harvey Street.	■ **ACTION ITEM - Short Range:** The City is currently working to establish dedicated off-leash areas for dogs. An off leash area is planned for of Danehy Park (adjacent to New Street). An additional off leash area in the North Cambridge Neighborhood is being considered for the area behind the tennis courts at Rindge Field. However, establishing such an area in the location will also include a public process and gathering community input. There are currently no plans to create an off-leash area at Russell Field.

■ ***ACTION ITEM - Timeframe***

Short Range - less than 2 years; Medium Range - 2-6 years;
Long Range - 6-10 years

APPENDIX:

1990 North Cambridge Neighborhood Study
Original Recommendations

Appendix:
LAND USE AND ZONING Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
LU1	Rezone the Industry C and Industry A-1 districts to make them more compatible with the surrounding residential areas: Arrange a dialogue between area residents and property owners to see if an appropriate rezoning package could be negotiated. Study carefully the relationship between density, economic viability and traffic generation. Encourage an appropriate balance of residential and commercial uses. Investigate all options to maximize affordable housing opportunities. Create an urban design plan for the parcels of land on Rindge Avenue. Involve the residents of Jefferson Park and Fresh Pond Apartments in formulating this plan. Continue to restrict access from Harvey Street, if the remaining sites in the Industry C zone are developed commercially as part of Alewife Center	After public processes both the Industry C and the Industry A-1 districts were rezoned to Special District 3 and Special District 2 respectively. The intent of the Special District 2 requirements is to encourage residential uses in a form and density compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. The intent of Special District 3 is to permit development that is consistent with the public interest in protecting regulated wetlands where they occur within the district; maintaining flood storage capacity in the district consistent with federal regulations; minimizing the amount of additional traffic passing through congested intersections on arterial streets, and on local, neighborhood streets, that could provide access to the district; limiting stormwater runoff onto property located outside the district ensuring adequate visual buffers and screening of buildings and parking facilities from adjacent public parks and recreation facilities; minimizing the disturbance of existing soil within the district to limit dispersal and exposure to possible harmful residual substances in the soil; and in enhancing the parkway character of the Parkway Overlay District.
LU2	Examine ways to create a viable neighborhood retail district in Sheridan Square. Explore available programs or funding sources to assist property owners and small businesses to upgrade their buildings	In 1995 the Community Development Department and the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee completed a Comprehensive Plan for Trolley Square and Sheridan Square. The final document included a set of recommendations for Sheridan Square as a neighborhood retail district, and for improving traffic circulation in the area. The Economic Development Division of CDD provides a Façade and Signage and Lighting Programs for retail establishments as well as a Best Retail Practices program. Staff from the Economic Development Division also forward information and market their programs to businesses on a targeted basis.
LU3	Explore the feasibility of various roadway and other improvements such as creating an island with grass and trees, to Sheridan Square. These improvements would make the area safer by creating better-defined traffic patterns and would help give the Square a better sense of identity.	In 2001, the Community Development Department completed traffic calming improvements to the area including a Chicane on Rindge Avenue, raised crosswalks, and a squaring off of the intersection. The narrowed intersection helped to create a small plaza with trees, which also included a public art component.

Appendix:
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
DEV1a	The City should develop a procedure to improve the coordination of the review of proposed development projects with all appropriate City agencies, such as the Community Development Department, Inspectional Services Department, Traffic Department, License Commission, Conservation Commission and Rent Control Board. As part of this process, the following methods should be considered: Study the possibility of timing permit review processes, whenever legally possible, so that they occur sequentially.	As part of the Citywide rezoning in 2001, through Article 19 of the zoning ordinance, developments over 50,000 square feet in most zoning districts now require a Project Review Special Permit. To obtain this permit, the proposed project must undergo a design review and public hearing to address the impact the new development might have on existing nearby properties. To the extent possible the City looks to coordinate the permit review process.
DEV1b	Initiate a process whereby a City department or board, upon receiving a building, demolition, or special permit application, or a variance request, would notify all other boards and departments with jurisdiction over the project.	Through regular cross-departmental meetings and communication, proposed projects are shared and coordinated throughout the city.
DEV1c	Recommend a process to ensure that the notification of these applications and of all public hearing notices will be mailed to the Neighborhood Planning component and to the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee Chairperson. These notices should be written in clear language, understandable to the general public.	Special Permits and variances require that abutters within 300 feet of the site's property line are notified. As of 1997 rezoning, the applicant is also required to erect and maintain at least one notification panel at the site for which the special permit is requested.
DEV1d	Improve communication between the board of Zoning Appeals and Planning Board through an ongoing dialogue concerning zoning, planning and necessary ordinance changes.	Communication has improved significantly between the The Planning Board and the Board of Zoning Appeal. The Planning Board has become more consistent in making comments and recommendations on BZA issues in a timely manner and will send staff to certain BZA hearing s if it is felt appropriate.
DEV2a	The Community Development Department will work with neighborhood groups to improve communication between the Department and the community and to clarify what the City considers to be "valid community input" The Department could achieve this through the following: Increase outreach and educational efforts to help residents better understand the development process, the roles of different groups involved in the process, as well as their powers and jurisdictional limitations. These efforts could include: Writing and distributing fliers and pamphlets which explain different facets of the development process; and Inviting City officials to attend Stabilization Committee meetings to make presentations and answer questions on a variety of development related issues.	The Community Development Department (CDD) publishes a Zoning Guide, which contains a basic overview of the zoning process and summary of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. This document along with the Zoning Ordinance is available to the public and can be obtained in print or can be downloaded from the CDD website at: www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD CDD staff will also consult with property owners or prospective owners on request. City staff have attended numerous Stabilization Committee meetings to answer questions on development related issues and are willing to return as issues arise.

Appendix:
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
DEV2b	Try to ensure that all hearing notices mailed to residents are written in clear understandable language and include more information about the proposed development, special permit or variance application, or other request.	Hearing notices are written in as clear and understandable language as possible while providing the legally required information for the notice.
DEV2c	Establish procedures to ensure that the neighborhood planners work closely with other department staff on all projects.	Neighborhood Planning staff convene a meeting of department staff twice a year to review proposed projects as part of Neighborhood Study's implementation.
DEV2d	Communicate its viewpoints on various projects as early as possible and keep the public informed of any changes in the project or Department's positions.	The Community Development Department website is continuously updated with new information, project reports, and graphic materials related to the Department's projects and plans.
DEV2e	Listen to the community's concerns over particular projects or issues and either: Work with the planning Board or the developers to help them take those concerns into account; or Clearly articulate the reasons why the department disagrees with the neighborhood.	As part of the Article 19 review process, City staff work with neighbors, the Planning Board, developers and interested parties to discuss key issues.
DEV2f	Work closely with the neighborhood to help residents understand exactly the legal jurisdiction of the planning board and what issues they may or may not consider regarding a particular project. If, in an individual project, many residents continue to have concerns which cannot be addressed legally by the planning board, especially under the special permit criteria, the Community Development Department will provide assistance to the neighborhood to address those concerns.	Article 19 of the zoning ordinance, as adopted in 2000, more clearly defines the range of attributes for Planning Board deliberation including criteria for approval.
DEV2g	Involve the Community at an early stage in the development of new policy recommendations.	The City continuously works to involve the community in important policy recommendations, whether through public meetings, newsletters, online information or one on one conversations and phone calls.

Appendix:
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
DEV3a	In cases where the neighborhood has continual problems with specific land use policies, the Community Development Department will work with the neighborhood to examine the relevant issues and determine whether recommendations should be made to change these policies. For example, the Community Development Department will work with the neighborhood to: Look at special permit criteria to see if they could be revised and improved to better address the community's concerns.	As part of the Citywide rezoning in 2001, a project review special permit is required for developments over 50,000 square feet in most zoning districts. As part of the special permit review process, current traffic conditions are assessed and measured along with future projections for traffic growth. The impacts of the proposed project are considered within the context of existing and proposed development in the area, and developers are required to perform mitigation where appropriate. In addition, businesses and developers creating new parking must prepare a Parking and Transportation Demand Management Plan with the goal of reducing the number of single occupancy vehicle trips made by employees. Design review, including specific urban design objectives are also a component of the Special Permit approval process.
DEV3b	Develop a mandatory design review process for all developments over a certain size.	
DEV3c	Develop a process whereby traffic mitigation measures would be required of all project over a certain size.	

Appendix:
MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
MA1	Examine the special permit criteria for Trolley Square to determine how they can be revised to more effectively produce amenities for the neighborhood. In particular, consider changes which would require that open space be visible, or accessible, from the Avenue.	In 2001 the City acquired title to the Trolley Square site in North Cambridge located at the intersection of Linear Park, Massachusetts and Cameron Avenue and previously owned by the MBTA. A stipulation in the deed transferring ownership to the City required any new use of the property to serve a public benefit. A group of citizens and business owners, appointed by the City Manager, began meeting in February 2002 to discuss potential uses and physical configurations for the site. The Trolley Square site was redeveloped in 2006 and consists of affordable housing units, retail space, a community space and pubic open space.
MA2	The City is currently working on the establishment of a design review process and guidelines which would require all new projects over a certain size to go through a binding review process. This concept should be supported.	As part of the Citywide rezoning in 2001, through Article 19 of the zoning ordinance, developments over 50,000 square feet in most zoning districts now require a Project Review Special Permit. To obtain this permit, the proposed project must undergo a design review and public hearing to address the impact the new development might have on existing nearby properties. Under the North Massachusetts Avenue Overlay District, guidelines are set in order to encourage good building design, site development, pedestrian amenities and ensure that changes to the Avenue are compatible with scale and character of abutting neighborhoods.
MA3	Work with the Historical Commission and area residents to either create an historic district or give landmark status to the appropriate houses on Massachusetts Avenue.	The process of designating a Cambridge Landmark may begin when ten registered voters petition the Historical Commission to study a property for landmark designation. Alternatively, the Historical Commission may initiate the landmark study process on its own. The Commission staff then prepares a report on the proposed landmark, detailing its significance, developing boundaries and standards for the property, and, if justified, recommending a landmark designation order.
MA4	Work with area residents and local businesses to establish reasonable delivery and trash pick-up hours.	The Cambridge License Commission enforces garbage collection hours. Different areas have different time restrictions. A noise investigator can address complaints and adjust hours of operation in an area as needed. The Cambridge License Commission can place any reasonable restriction on a business that requires a license.
MA5	Remove all existing and disallow any new billboards on Massachusetts Avenue, to the extent permitted by state statute. Strengthen and enforce the sign ordinance. Give owners a certain amount of time to put up new signs, which conform to the ordinance.	Changes were made to the zoning ordinance to prohibit billboards in the City. However, existing billboards are allowed to stay as nonconforming uses.

Appendix:
MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
MA6	Encourage landscaping, tree planting and seating areas along the Massachusetts Avenue corridor.	Under the North Massachusetts Avenue Overlay District guidelines are set in order to encourage good building design, site development, pedestrian amenities and ensure that changes to the Avenue are compatible with scale and character of abutting neighborhoods. Also in the Massachusetts Avenue Overlay District developments over 2,000 square feet are subject to a large project review procedure.
MA7	Investigate existing programs and available funding sources to assist businesses to upgrade their properties.	The Economic Development Division of CDD provides a Façade and Signage and Lighting Programs for retail establishments as well as a Best Retail Practices program. Staff from the Economic Development Division also forward information and market their programs to businesses on a targeted basis.

Appendix:
ALEWIFE Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
ALWF1	Any improvements to the Alewife Brook Parkway/ Route 2 should be done in such a way as to: • improve safety and reduce traffic congestion in the area; • ensure that the water supply at the Fresh Pond Reservoir and the wetlands at the Alewife Reservation are not adversely affected; • continue the long standing public policy that through traffic into Boston should not be encouraged; • preserve and enhance the Metropolitan District Commission and the City of Cambridge's greenbelt concept at Alewife Brook Parkway/ Route 2; • create safe and pleasant ways to allow people to walk through Alewife, as well as to cross the roadways to the shopping center; and • prevent a barrier from being created which would separate North Cambridge from Alewife	• Much of the traffic on Alewife Brook Parkway does not originate nor have destinations in Cambridge. Therefore solving congestion problems will require a regional approach. As part of the Alewife Brook Parkway improvements, the pedestrian walkway from Alewife Apartments was improved and a crosswalk and signal was created across the Parkway at the main entrance to the Shopping Center. • The Department of Public Works is addressing runoff pollution from non-point sources to the Little River and Alewife Brook through its Stormwater Management Plan. In addition, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's (MWRA) revised long term Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) plan for Alewife Brook was recently approved by MEPA. Through this program combined sewers in the Neighborhood will be separated, reducing CSO discharges into Alewife Brook. • Staff from the Environmental and Transportation Division of CDD are involved in a number of regional planning and transportation projects, as well as those taking place in adjacent communities. The Division participates in several regional organizations that deal with environmental and transportation issues including the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization MPO, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, MAPC MBTA Advisory Board and Transitworks. More information on these and other programs is available on the web at: www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/et/et_regional.html • The Alewife Reservation and Alewife Brook Master Plan was developed by the Metropolitan District Commission in 2003. The Alewife Master Plan includes recommendations regarding Alewife Brook Parkway/Route 2. • DPW's Alewife Stormwater Wetland Project is a component of the MWRA's Long Term CSO control plan for Alewife Brook. This project will include a new Stormwater Treatment Wetland System that will include the provision of education and recreational features. The Concord Alewife Planning Study completed in 2006 includes an infrastructure plan with recommendations for facilitating travel across the roadways as well as to and from the shopping center and provides incentives for the creation of important infrastructure that will facilitate movement within the area and beyond through new pedestrian paths, roadways, and a new pedestrian/bicycle bridges over the railroad tracks.

Appendix:
ALEWIFE Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
ALWF2	Request that the Massachusetts Department of Public Works (sic) prepare a new Environmental Impact Report, containing a thorough environmental study of the Alewife Brook Parkway area and an analysis of the proposed roadway changes and their impacts, before the Fall 1988 roadway proposal for Route 2/ Alewife Brook Parkway is approved.	The Alewife Reservation and Alewife Brook Master Plan was developed by the Metropolitan District Commission in 2003. The Alewife Master Plan includes a comprehensive set of planning and design recommendations to help restore wildlife habitat, and ecological and hydrological functions enhanced recreational and educational opportunities and improved connections to the system of protected natural areas and corridors in metropolitan Boston.
ALWF3	Establish a working committee composed of residents from north and west Cambridge neighborhoods and Alewife property owners to update the 1979 Alewife Revitalization Plan. This committee should take a comprehensive look at the entire Alewife area and make recommendations to the City Council concerning the amount and type of development, which is most appropriate for each area within Alewife. As part of this comprehensive planning process, the following issues should be addressed: Develop an urban design plan which will provide guidelines and recommend actions to achieve an appropriate environment for Cambridge, e.g.: buildings whose design reflect the City's rich urban architectural heritage as well as extensive landscaping, trees, and other open space amenities, and water bodies which could more naturally serve as flood retention areas; consider the most attractive and environmentally sensitive manner for addressing parking in Alewife; and explore options for enhancing the Alewife Parkway concept. Take measures to ensure that new development will not adversely affect traffic flow, flood plains, wetlands, or water quality. Recommend ways to encourage the development of mixed uses, including housing. Not only is housing needed in this area, but the presence of residential units would make Alewife a safer and more interesting area: active at night as well as during the day. Examine employment and daycare options at Alewife. Consider possible mechanisms, which would strengthen the Cambridge Employment Plan, thereby ensuring that more Cambridge residents benefit from new development projects in Alewife. Consider ways to encourage day care centers for Alewife employees and Cambridge residents.	Working with a committee representing area residents, businesses and state agencies, CDD produced the draft plan, Alewife: A Plan for Sustainable Development in 1995. The recommendations of this plan were not adopted at the time and the plan was deferred for future study. In 2003, the City embarked upon a multidisciplinary planning study of the Concord-Alewife area. City staff and a City manager appointed Study Committee worked closely with a team of professional planning consultants, led by Goody, Clancy & Associates, to address a variety of planning issues in the area. The zoning changes associated with the Concord Alewife Planning Study were adopted in 2006. The Study includes a vision for the area that encourages a mix of uses that over time will enliven the area, create an identity and sense of place, and take advantage of the area's proximity to transit and to open space resources. Design guidelines associated with the zoning, encourage better pedestrian environments, environmentally sensitive development, and housing types for families of all sizes. More information on the Concord Alewife Planning Study is available on the web at: www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/cp/zng/concalew/index.html

Appendix:
ALEWIFE Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
ALWF4	Work with regional, environmental, and local officials to complete a comprehensive environmental plan for the entire Mystic River Valley Watershed area. The plan should examine the sensitive and fragile ecology of the area, as well as recommend measures to ensure that the flood plains and wetlands are protected and the open space will be preserved	As part of a study for a new Upper Mystic Lake Dam, the MDC completed a hydrologic and hydraulic study of the Mystic Watershed. The findings were presented to the public in 2003. The Alewife Brook sub-watershed forms part of the Mystic River Watershed. The Alewife Reservation and Alewife Brook Master Plan was developed by the Metropolitan District Commission in 2003. The Alewife Master Plan includes a comprehensive set of planning and design recommendations to help restore wildlife habitat, and ecological and hydrological functions enhanced recreational and educational opportunities and improved connections to the system of protected natural areas and corridors in metropolitan Boston.
ALWF5	The following recommendations apply to the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC):	
	• Work with area residents to create a management plan for the reservation land. Ensure that ecologically sensitive land is protected adequately, while opening up less critical land for public use and enjoyment.	• DPW's Alewife Stormwater Wetland Project is a component of the MWRA's Long Term CSO control plan for Alewife Brook. This project will include a new Stormwater Treatment Wetland System that will include the provision of education and recreational features.
	• Conduct environmental educational programs to increase the public's awareness of the sensitivity and importance of the Alewife wetland areas.	• Friends of Alewife Reservation is an advocacy group that desires to protect and preserve DCR managed lands associated with Alewife Brook. The organization works to bring public attention to the reservation, wetlands, and environs.
	• Work with area residents to investigate the possibility of acquiring Jerry's Pond, Blair's Pond, and additional reservation land near Arthur D. Little.	• Jerry's Pond is privately owned. Blair's Pond is owned and managed by the State through the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The City of Cambridge is establishing and maintaining more effective communication with DCR regarding the maintenance and improvements of public open space.
	• Request that Arthur D. Little return the parking lot to open space.	• As part of the redevelopment of the Arthur D. Little site, a significant portion of the surface parking has been returned to open space.
ALWF6	Update the comprehensive hydrological data.	FEMA has recently updated flood zone data for the Alewife area in Cambridge. Preliminary maps are released in Summer 2008. There will be a public comment period until September 2008. It is estimated that the maps will become effective in June 2009. More information is available on the web at: www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/stormwater/fema.html.
ALWF7	Study the need for a local wetlands protection ordinance which would give the Cambridge Conservation Commission increased control over development in the wetlands	Currently, wetlands and floodplains in the City are under the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Conservation Commission per the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. In Cambridge this includes: Fresh Pond, Charles River, Alewife Brook, Blair Pond, Jerry's Pond, and land surrounding these water bodies.
ALWF8	Increase filing fees so that the Conservation Commission can hire consultants to assist them in their technical reviews.	Legislation has been adopted to make this possible.

Appendix:
ALEWIFE Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
ALWF9	Simplify the review process by transferring all flood plain permitting to the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Conservation Commission.	Through the Wetlands Protection Act, Flood plains are under the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Conservation Commission.
ALWF10	Complete Alewife Boulevard following the Alewife comprehensive planning study.	The Alewife Reservation and Alewife Brook Master Plan was developed by the Metropolitan District Commission (Now DCR) in 2003, and builds upon past studies.
ALWF11	Complete Alewife Boulevard following the Alewife comprehensive planning study.	The Alewife Reservation and Alewife Brook Master Plan was developed by the Metropolitan District Commission in 2003. The Alewife Master Plan includes a comprehensive set of planning and design recommendations to help restore wildlife habitat, and ecological and hydrological functions enhanced recreational and educational opportunities and improved connections to the system of protected natural areas and corridors in metropolitan Boston. Planned improvements to the area are expected to increase recreational use and visits, which will help to increase levels of safety.
ALWF12	Identify the specific agencies, which have jurisdiction over portions of the Alewife area. Improve the coordination of maintenance and public safety issues between these agencies.	Much of the Alewife area in Cambridge is in the 100-year floodplain and falls under the jurisdiction of the Cambridge Conservation Commission. Much of the green space in the area and including the adjacent parkway is under the control and management of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR, formerly MDC). Portions within Cambridge are also subject to the City's Zoning Ordinance.
ALWF13	Improve pedestrian access from the Fresh Pond Apartments/Jefferson Park area to the Fresh Pond Shopping Center and Thomas Danehy Park. This should be done by adding a stairway to the Alewife Brook Parkway bridge to be constructed by the State Department of Public Works. Once the Thomas Danehy Park is completed and is being used, the feasibility of a pedestrian overpass will be reconsidered.	As part of the Alewife Brook Parkway improvements, the pedestrian walkway from Alewife Apartments was improved and a crosswalk and signal was created across the Parkway at the main entrance to the Shopping Center. The Railroad Safety Task Force was established by CDD to address the additional concerns expressed in the study related to pedestrian crossings between Fresh Pond Shopping Center, Danehy Park and residential areas on Rindge Avenue. As part of this process the Yerxa Road underpass was completed this past fall.

Appendix:
TRAFFIC AND PARKING Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
TP1	Establish strict traffic mitigation measures for all new commercial developments in North Cambridge.	As part of the Article 19 special permit review process established in the 2001 Citywide Rezoning, any project receiving a project review special permit, which includes projects over 50,000 square feet in most districts, must submit a traffic and parking plan and have a plan to mitigate any adverse impacts. The City's Parking and Traffic Demand Management (PTDM) Ordinance is section of the Cambridge Municipal code seeks to reduce vehicle trips and traffic congestion within the City by requiring parking and transportation demand management (PTDM) plans for commercial parking facilities and other types of non-residential parking facilities over a specified size.
TP2	Work with local, regional, and state officials to create an effective forum for regional transportation planning efforts.	City staff is involved in a number of regional transportation and planning projects. Staff also actively participates in several regional organizations that deal with transportation issues, including: the MBTA Advisory Board, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).
TP3	Cambridge residents and officials should form a task force to work with state representatives on an ongoing basis to accomplish the following recommendations: The MBTA should build satellite parking along Route 128 and in Belmont and Arlington. The number of buses traveling between Boston and Cambridge area and these communities should then be increased. The MBTA should expand their marketing of T passes to encourage the use of public transportation. The MBTA should improve North Cambridge bus and trolley service along Massachusetts Avenue and Rindge Avenue, and by ensuring that its schedules are met. The MBTA should improve its service on the Red Line trains to encourage people to use public transportation.	City staff participates on the MBTA Advisory Board, which provides public oversight as well as technical assistance and information on behalf of the 175 community members and transit riding public. The Advisory Board also issues reports on a variety of issues including reviews of the fares of the Authority, the MBTA's five-year capital plan, the Program for Mass Transportation, and other issues of interest.

Appendix:
TRAFFIC AND PARKING Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
TP4	The Community Development Department is currently working with Cambridge businesses and CARAVAN for Commuters to establish a city-wide program in which employers would offer alternative transportation services to their buildings. The Committee supports this effort, but recommends that the program include an aggressive strategy to target the Alewife area.	Many private companies and institutions in Cambridge fund their own shuttle services to connect people with public transportation. The City of Cambridge commissioned a "Transportation Service Study," completed in 2000, to explore possible transit service improvements such as expanding MBTA service or operating shuttle services. The study utilized data on current service usage and demographics as well as a telephone survey and a series of community meetings. The study concluded that there seemed to be limited demand for additional shuttle services, while there was more demand for improvements to existing MBTA service.
TP5	Ensure that new commercial developments keep their parking to a minimum in the Alewife area.	The PTDM Ordinance section of the Cambridge Municipal Code seeks to reduce vehicle trips and traffic congestion within the City by requiring parking and transportation demand management (PTDM) plans for commercial parking facilities and other types of non-residential parking facilities over a specified size. Most projects involving new non-residential parking require a PTDM plan.
TP6	Ensure that new commercial parking is kept to a minimum in the Porter Square area with no construction of any public parking facilities.	
TP7	The Traffic and Parking Department should aggressively enforce the resident sticker, visitor pass and double-parking regulations.	Currently, households are issued only one visitor parking permit instead of two. City parking permits have recently been redesigned to discourage abuse. Parking control officers also now use hand held computerized devises to more efficiently enforce parking rules. If there are requests for additional enforcement in a particular area, the traffic department will change enforcements patterns appropriately. To request additional enforcement in a specific area, residents can call the enforcement coordinator in the traffic and Parking Department at 617-349-4689. Comments and feedback can also be submitted via the web at www.cambridgema.gov/traffic.
TP8	Work with area businesses and residents to establish reasonable truck delivery hours in those commercial areas which directly affect residential properties.	A citizen committee was formed to create a truck management plan for Cambridge. The recommended truck restrictions have not been approved at the state level.
TP9	Ensure that area residents who will be affected by new parking regulations or changes to the one-way street system are notified when these changes are being considered, and are included in the formulation of these policies.	In most cases the City looks to residents to initiate a process of changing parking in an area to resident only. A signed request can be submitted to the Traffic Department by a significant number of affected residents. The Department will then send out a survey to determine if there is support among all affected residents from implementing the change. Residents can also submit a signed request to change a street to a one-way. The Traffic Department will then review the request in order to determine if there are any traffic concerns with such a change. The Traffic Department will also get feedback from the Fire Department to ensure that response times will not be negatively affected. The Traffic Department then send out a survey to determine if there is support among the affected residents.

Appendix:
TRAFFIC AND PARKING Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
TP10	Consider the installation of a traffic signal walk light on Rindge Avenue across from the Fitzgerald School (sic).	Two raised crosswalks were installed at this location.

Appendix:
HOUSING Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
H1	Given the scarcity of vacant land in North Cambridge, as well as high land values and construction costs, public agencies, non-profit groups, and the Stabilization Committee should concentrate their efforts on preserving the existing housing stock. The following methods should be employed: • Continue to target and publicize public resources for housing rehabilitation to low and moderate income residents. • Continue to work with neighborhood non-profit agencies to deliver housing rehabilitation services. • Continue the level of coordination between public agencies and non-profit groups in order to maximize affordable housing opportunities. • Support the conversion of existing rent controlled multi-family properties to resident-owned limited-equity cooperatives. • Consider the creation of a program, which could help capture some of the existing stock of affordable housing by offering to purchase a house before a homeowner places it on the open market. The house could then be sold at a below market rate to a qualified resident	• Although the Stabilization Committee no longer receives funding, the City, through the Home Improvement Program, the Cambridge Neighborhood Affordable Housing Service, and non-profit partners, provide loans and technical assistance to homeowners and landlords to renovate their properties, and encourage rental prices to be kept affordable to low and moderate income households. • The city works with non-profit organizations and the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust to create and preserve affordable units throughout the city. Since 1995, more than 2,700 affordable housing units citywide have been created or preserved due to these efforts. Furthermore, Cambridge's Inclusionary Zoning, adopted in 1998, requires housing developments of ten or more units to include units affordable to low and moderate income households. • The rent control program in Cambridge was phased out between 1995 and 1997 as a result of changes to the State law. • The Community Development Department actively pursues opportunities to create affordable housing in appropriate sites. Residents are encouraged to notify the department if they are aware of properties on the market that may be suitable for affordable housing by contacting the Housing Division of CDD at 617-349-4622.
H2	Consider ways in which rent control could better serve low and moderate income people and incentives could be created to help landlords (or interested tenants) maintain or improve their buildings	The rent control program in Cambridge was phased out between 1995 and 1997 as a result of changes to the State law. Currently, the City, through the Home Improvement Program, the Cambridge Neighborhood Affordable Housing Service, and non profit partners, provide loans and technical assistance to homeowners and landlords to renovate their properties, and keep rents affordable to low and moderate income households.
H3	The City should set up a special Task Force to examine the expiring use restrictions and Section 8 subsidy programs in order to retain these units as affordable housing for low and moderate-income tenants. It is critical that steps be taken immediately to preserve these affordable rental units.	The City's Expiring Use Program provides technical and financial assistance to tenants and landlords of federally assisted rental housing that is in danger of being converted into market rate housing. In recent years, Just A Start Corporation took over the 273-unit, expiring-use, housing development at 402 Rindge Ave in 1997 in order to preserve the affordable units there, and affordability was extended at the Fresh Pond Apartments and at Walden Square.

Appendix:
HOUSING Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
H4	Examine the conversion of two and three family homes to condominiums in order to determine how such conversions affect the supply of affordable housing. Explore ways in which these conversions could become a potential source for creating new homeownership opportunities, such as forms of limited equity ownership.	Data on condominium conversions are available in the Housing Information Report published by the Community Development Department (CDD) and also available on the CDD website. The CDD works with non-profit partners and the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust to create and preserve affordable housing units throughout the city, and has been successful in acquiring properties at risk of being converted to condominiums. With City assistance they are then operated as affordable rental or homeownership housing.
H5	Work with private developers and public agencies to ensure that all new housing developments are built in scale and character with the surrounding neighborhood. Try to retain the present mix of housing types as development continues in the neighborhood by encouraging the inclusion of affordable units in all new housing developments in North Cambridge.	The scale of any new housing is regulated through the City's zoning ordinance. In addition, Article 19 of the zoning ordinance requires that all large projects (over 50,000 sq ft) in applicable districts, meet certain additional requirements including a review of whether the design is appropriate within the neighborhood context.
H6	In those areas of North Cambridge which will undergo rezoning efforts, particular attention should given toward rewriting the zoning so that affordable housing opportunities can be more easily created.	The Inclusionary Zoning provision in the City's zoning ordinance adopted in 1998, requires developers of any new or converted residential development with 10 or more units to provide 15% of the units as affordable to low and moderate income households. A citywide rezoning initiative was passed in 2001, which permitted housing in all districts; rezoned numerous districts to housing; facilitated the conversion of industrial buildings by streamlining the permitting process; and reduced commercial Floor Area Ratios (FARs) (increasing incentives to build housing).
H7	Due to the high costs of new housing production, a wide range of options for strengthening the recently adopted incentive zoning amendment should be considered	The Incentive Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1988 and requires that non residential developers with projects over 30,000 sqft that require a special permit, mitigate the impact of their development through a contribution to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust. The contribution requirement was last increased in June 2006 to $4.25 per sqft. Funds generated by the Incentive Zoning Ordinance are used by the Trust to preserve and create housing that is affordable to low and moderate income residents.
H8	The Planning Board is in the process of revising the City's townhouse ordinance to reduce the bonuses currently given for townhouse development. These changes will help to ensure that new townhouses being built will better conform to the surrounding neighborhoods and should be supported.	Currently, Article 11.10 in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance deals with townhouse development and is intended to promote development designs that are compatible with traditional neighborhood development patterns and sensitive to existing streetscapes. Provisions for townhouse development use are intended to overcome obstacles to the development of one and two family townhouses, through incentives where appropriate, and ensure detailed examination and review of the site, building plans, and neighborhood impacts for larger developments.

Appendix:
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE Recommendations from 1990 Original Neighborhood Study

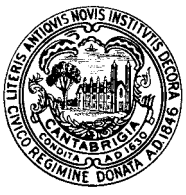
Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
OS1	The City is currently working on developing a comprehensive maintenance plan for its parks. As part of this effort, the City should: Examine ways to improve the coordination among the various city agencies involved in park services.	The Open Space Committee, consisting of representatives from the Department of Public Works, the Community Development Department, the Department of Human Services Programs, the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, the Conservation Commission, the Electrical Department, and the Water Department, was created to coordinate park planning, development and maintenance.
	Take measures to ensure that sufficient funds exist to hire an appropriate number of skilled, or train current employees in all aspects of park maintenance, and to provide the staff with adequate resources to carry out their jobs effectively.	The organizational structure of the Parks and Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Public Works (DPW) has changed in recent years to include new specialized staff positions, increased training, and sector maintenance crews responsible for different districts of the City. In addition, some parks are maintained through private maintenance contracts.
	Consider the creation of a formal Adopt-a park program, whereby a park employee would coordinate efforts of resident groups, community organizations and neighborhood businesses to help maintain the parks.	The Open Space Committee has discussed a possible framework for creating "Adopt A Park" groups, and may implement a pilot program in the future.
	Dispense more trash receptacles throughout the neighborhood.	The Department of Public Works Street Cleaning Division is responsible for maintaining clean public ways. The Division utilizes contractors and both full time and temporary staff to help with litter pick up and street cleaning. The City also recently changed the refuse and liter ordinance in order to address growing concerns about street cleanliness and rodents: Trash placed at the curb the night before collection must be in rodent-resistant barrels with tight-fitting lids, no earlier than 6pm. Trash in plastic bags can only be placed at the curb on the day of collection, no later than 7am.
	Enforce the dog laws and post more signs about dog laws in the parks.	Signage, bag dispensers and trash receptacles for dog waste are currently provided in most parks. The Cambridge Animal Commission patrols parks on a regular basis and issues violation notices to owners of dogs that are not leashed, not licensed, or in a prohibited area. Patrols are more frequent in areas that receive high numbers of complaints. For more information or to report violations, call the Cambridge Animal Commission at 617-349-4376. The Public Facilities Committee of the City Council has been discussing the topic of off-leash dog areas in the City to help meet the open space desires of dog owners and their pets as well as to alleviate some of this type of demand from other parks. In North Cambridge, Danehy Park will have a dedicated off leash area.

Appendix:
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS from 1990 Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
OS2	Undertake a thorough open space plan for North Cambridge to establish future open space and recreational priorities. The plan should: Document the types of open space uses which exist in the neighborhood; Determine whether this amount and mix is appropriate given the current and projected demographic composition of the neighborhood. Recommend ways to create additional open spaces and community gardens in North Cambridge; encourage landscaping tree planting, and sitting areas throughout the neighborhood, and ensure that all residents have access to the type of open space which meets their needs.	The 2000 Report of the Green Ribbon Open Space Committee, published by the Community Development Department, presents an analysis of existing public and private open space that is used to establish priorities for the acquisition of new open space. The Green Ribbon Report makes recommendations for the open space acquisition including community gardens and passive areas. Park renovation processes involve an analysis of neighborhood demographics, nearby open space, and community open space needs and desires.
OS3	Expand the Community Development Department's outreach process to encourage community involvement during the park planning and design stages. The following are some suggestions for ways to improve the participation process: Encourage park users (children, teenagers, adults, and other persons) to participate in all phases of planning, design and maintenance; Make the process as creative and fun as possible; Place signs in parks inviting people to attend meetings when any kind of park renovations are planned.	The Community Development Department (CDD) continues to try different methods of increasing participation in the park planning process including: open houses, informal drop in sessions, weekend events, signs posted in parks, and surveys in addition to mailings, and posting flyers and meeting notices.
OS4	Continue to work with the Commission on Handicapped Persons and area residents to ensure that those people with special needs have sufficient amounts of recreation areas and equipment accessible to them.	The Commission for Persons with Disabilities works closely with the Community Development Department and reviews all park designs for compliance with ADA guidelines. Staff from the Commission also participates in the Open Space Committee to help coordinate park planning, development and maintenance.
OS5	Increase the level of safety so that residents, particularly older people, feel safe using the parks.	The City works to improve lighting for safety in all existing parks and as part of park renovations. Newly renovated parks also all have emergency call boxes, which allow park users to communicate directly with Cambridge Police to report suspicious or illegal activity.

Appendix:
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS from 1990 Neighborhood Study

Rec. Type & Number	*Original Study Recommendation*	*Status*
OS6	Improve safety in Linear Park by keeping it better maintained, including shoveling the snow and ice in the winter and repairing light fixtures when necessary.	The organizational structure of the Parks and Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Public Works (DPW) has changed in recent years to include new specialized staff positions, increased training, and sector maintenance crews responsible for different districts of the City. DPW will also clear snow from sidewalks and pathway surrounding city parks. The City Electrical Department maintains all streetlights including those in parks, and makes repairs to the fixtures as needed with a priority for public safety.
OS7	Investigate potential funding sources to allow the Committee on Public Planting to purchase more trees for North Cambridge streets.	If a property owner wishes to have a tree planted where no tree well currently exists, the City will share the cost under its Client Tree Program. For $140 the City will prepare a tree well and plant a tree, in exchange for a pledge to keep the tree well watered. On average, the contribution covers about one-half to one-third the cost of planting. In either case, the City Arborist will consult with the property owner about the type of tree that is appropriate for the location. The City Arborist may be contacted at (617) 349-6433.
OS8	Encourage the establishment of an ongoing program for the maintenance and grooming of City trees and public plantings.	The Parks and Urban Forestry Division of the Department of Public Works which includes the City Arborist, Forestry Supervisor, and two forestry maintenance crews is responsible for planting and care of public trees.
OS9	Renovate the Pemberton Street lot next to the tennis courts to some form of open space, which can be agreed to by area residents.	This park, renamed the Don McMath Memorial Park, was renovated in 1995 with City funds budgeted through the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee, and includes a community garden and sitting areas.



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