

# CENTRAL SQUARE CITY LOTS STUDY

CENTRAL SQUARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Agency  
Landscape + Planning

September 6, 2023

# AGENDA

1. Project Overview

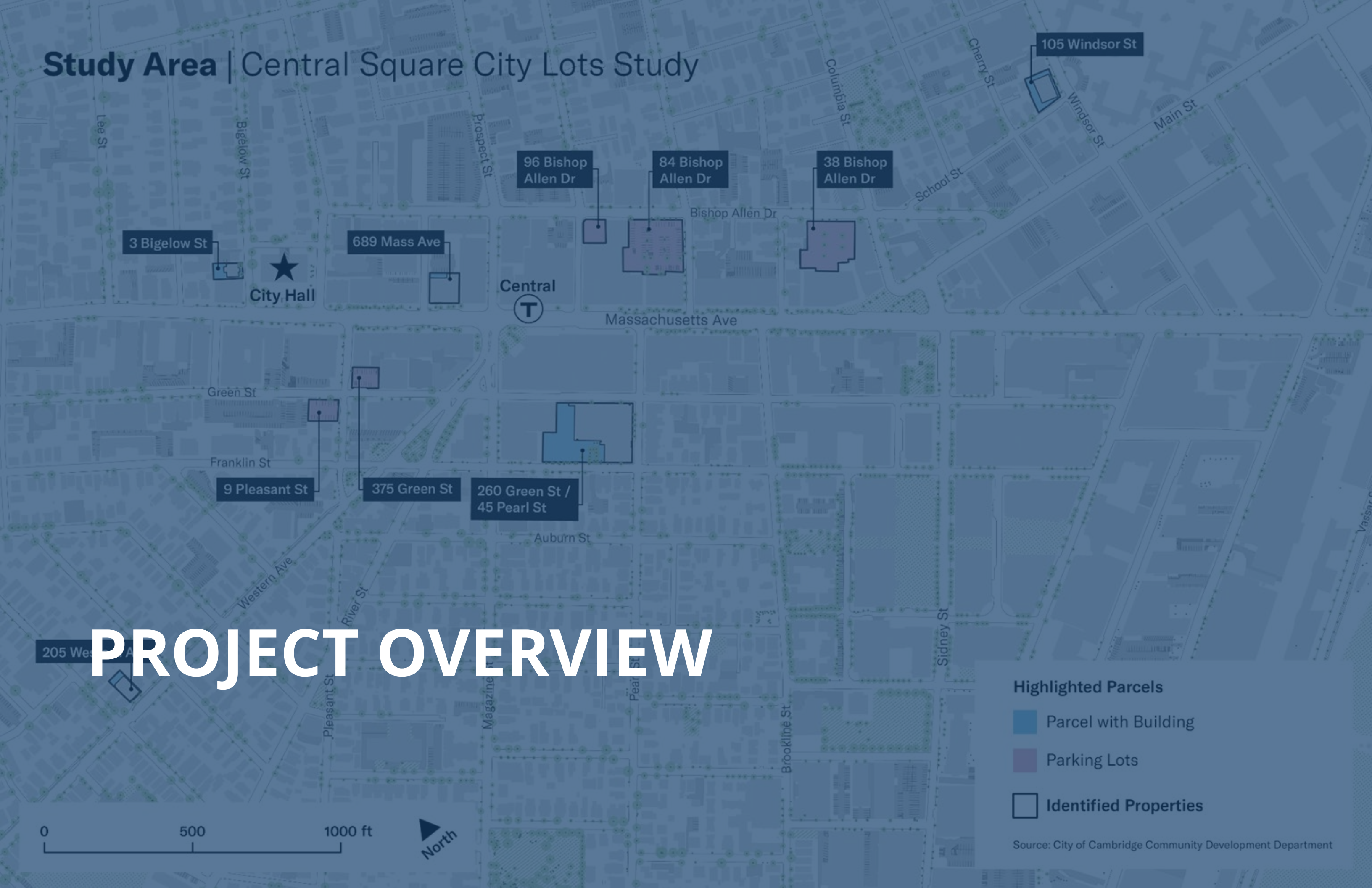
2. Highlights of What We Are Working On

- Technical Site Assessments

- Pop-up Engagement

3. Next Steps

# Study Area | Central Square City Lots Study



3 Bigelow St

★  
City Hall

689 Mass Ave

Central  
T

96 Bishop  
Allen Dr

84 Bishop  
Allen Dr

38 Bishop  
Allen Dr

105 Windsor St

9 Pleasant St

375 Green St

260 Green St /  
45 Pearl St

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Highlighted Parcels

Parcel with Building

Parking Lots

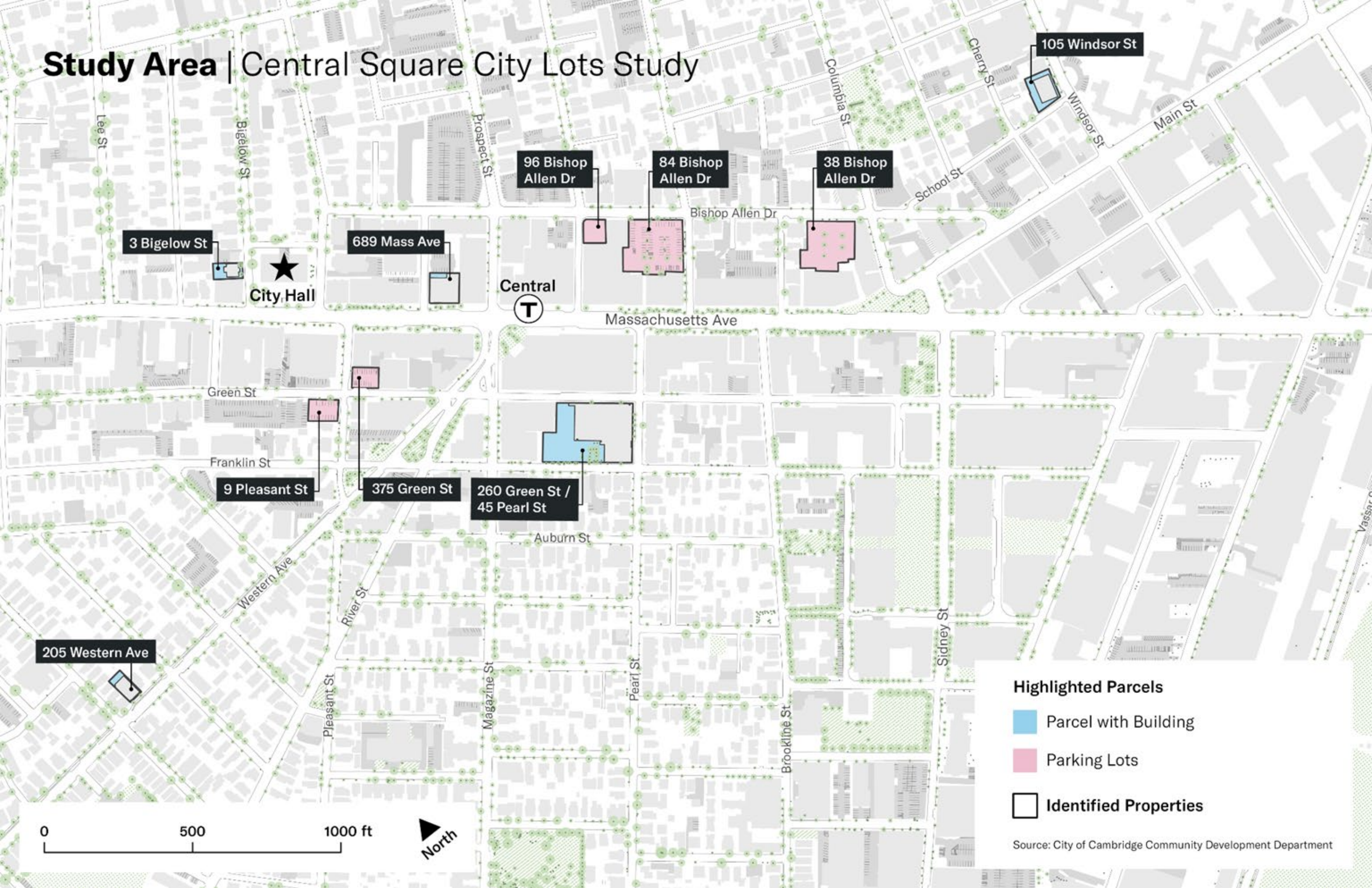
Identified Properties

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

0 500 1000 ft

North

# Study Area | Central Square City Lots Study



## Highlighted Parcels

Parcel with Building

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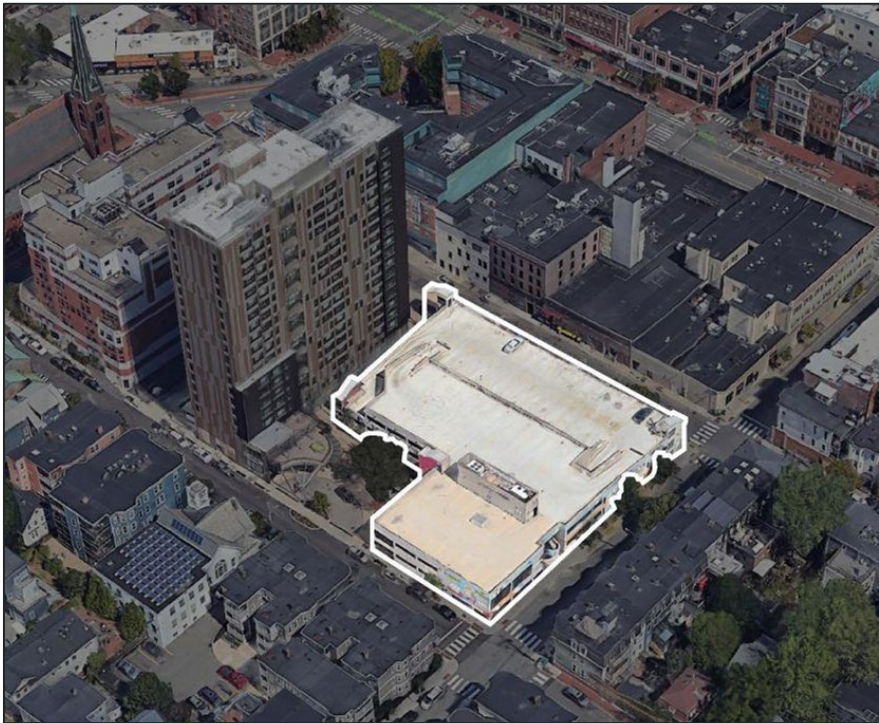
Identified Properties

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

# PROJECT SITES



3 Bigelow St



260 Green St / 45 Pearl St



689 Mass Ave



205 Western Ave



105 Windsor St

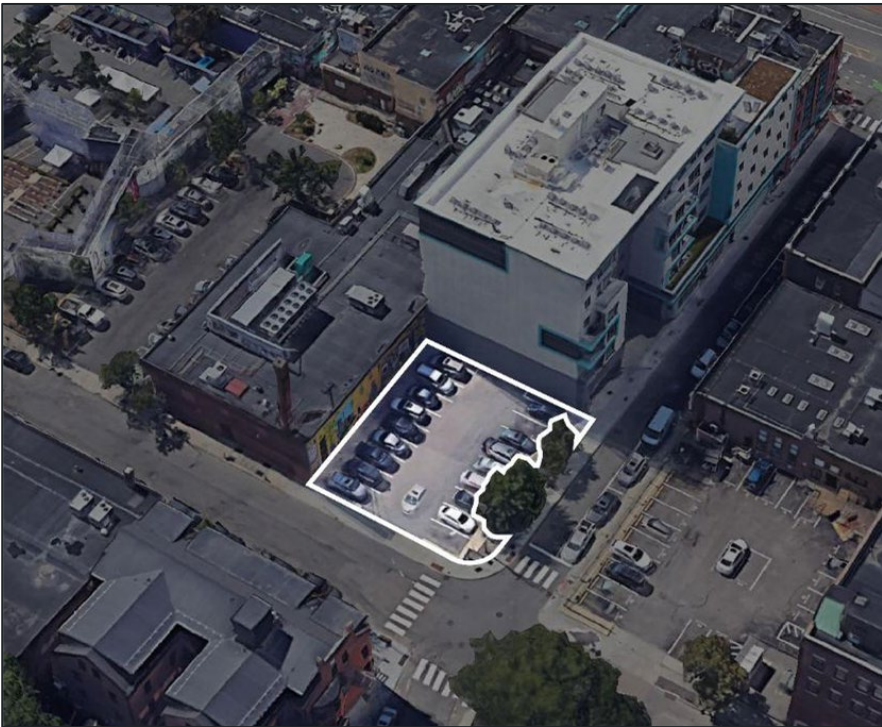
# PROJECT SITES



38 Bishop Allen Dr



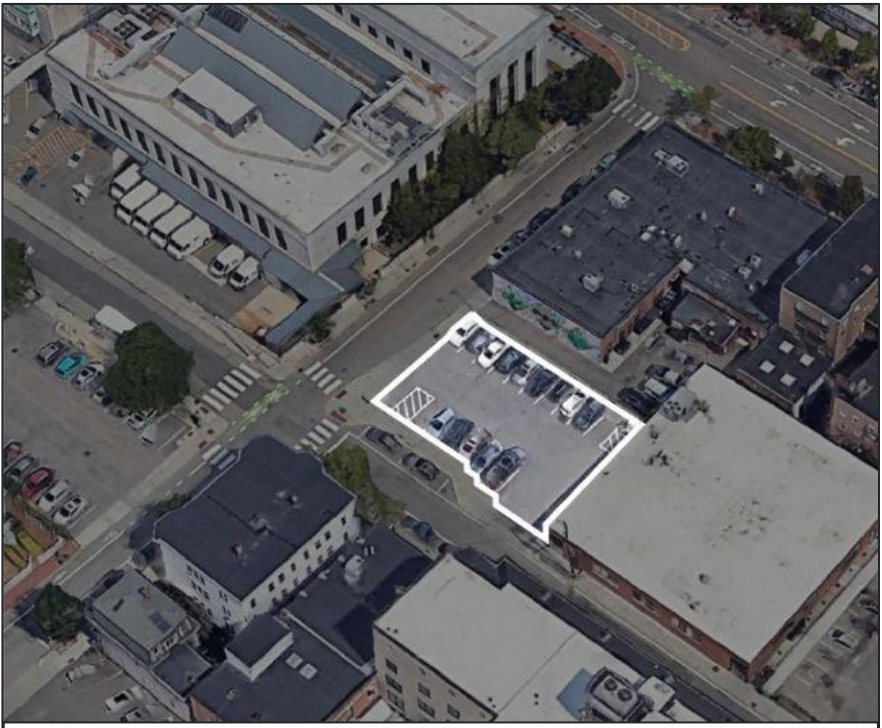
84 Bishop Allen Dr



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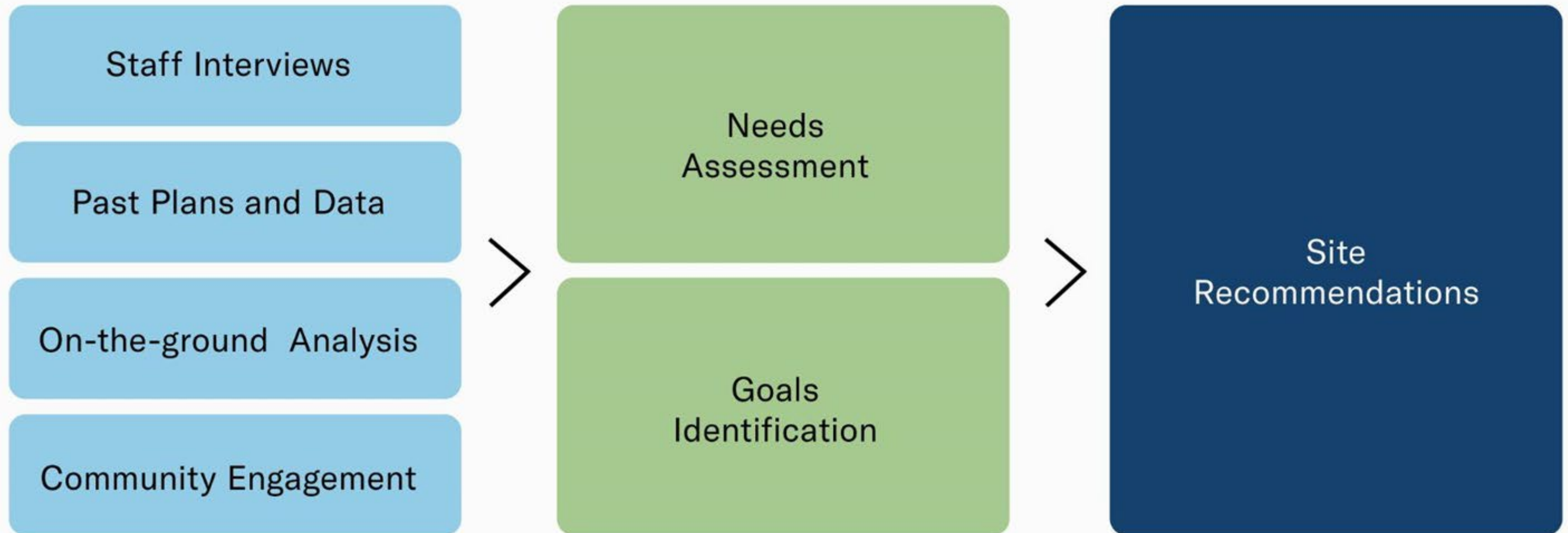
9 Pleasant St



375 Green St

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

**Intent:** Support the City to best use its own assets (10 sites encompassing both land and buildings) to realize community goals and support City operations







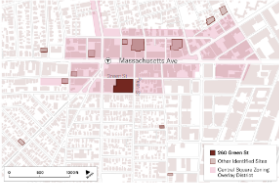

# HIGHLIGHTS



# TECHNICAL SITE ASSESSMENTS

Through interviews, research, and site visits, we are working on technical assessments for each of the project sites.

### 260 Green St Cambridgeport

**Map Lot Number**  
106-122

**Owner**  
City of Cambridge  
(Parking Department)

**Current Use**  
Green Street Garage and  
Central Square Branch Library

**Future Use**  
Unknown

**Site Description**  
The site of the Central Square Branch Library and the Green Street Garage, neighboring a 19-story senior-living apartment building. The library is in need of more community programming space and the garage, recently renovated, serves permit parkers.

**25,686** Garage  
**19,824** Library  
**55,828** Gross Building Area (sq ft)

**\$100,244,200** Assessed Value

**4** Garage  
**2** Library  
**257** Number of Stories

**476<sub>n</sub> / 2** min Walk  
Distance to nearest T-Station

**C-3** Zoning District

**257** Parking Spaces

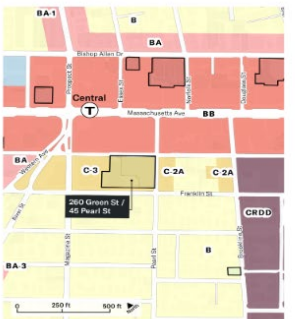



**91.5%** Impervious Surface

### Site Conditions (Exterior)

260 Green is the site of the Central Square Public Library and adjoining public parking garage. The library main entrance faces Pearl St and can also be accessed on western side of the building via a plaza shared with the neighboring high-rise senior housing building.

**Zoning**

- Site zoning code: residence (C-3)
- Neighbor zoning codes:
  - Business (B, BA, BA-1, BA-3, BB), Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District (CRDD), Residence (C-2A)
- Within Central Square Overlay District: YES


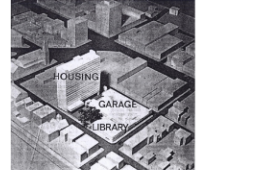

260 Green St  
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

### Site History

In the 1930's the City of Cambridge began to acquire and demolish the residential properties along Pearl and Green Streets to create parking lots. By the late 1960's planning began for a large municipal and state funded project combining elderly housing, a large public library branch and the 4 story parking garage. The complex was completed in 1972. At the time of its completion, the Central Square Library branch was one of the largest in the city and was well received by residents. Some saw the Library branch as a 'demarcation line' to prevent the encroachment of business into the residential neighborhood. At the same time, the Central Square Business Association welcomed the new parking structure to support retail and office rentals in the square.

#### Key Events

- 1930**: In the 1930's the city begins to buy and demolish residential properties at the Corner of Green and Pearl Streets to make way for surface parking.
- 1972**: In the late 1960's the city receives state funding for an elderly housing tower.
- 1976**: In 2022, parking garage undergoes emergency repairs to address leaks and other updates.
- 2023**: Structural study performed to evaluate if base structure can tolerate additional loads above.

260 Green St  
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

## Mapping & Summary Statistics


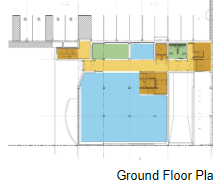

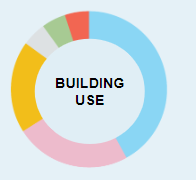
## Site Conditions

## Site History

### Building & Structure - Library

The existing concrete Brutalist structure dates from 1972 and was built in conjunction with a new apartment tower at 237 Franklin Street to house the elderly. The parking garage and library branch are adjoining structures. The library is well-maintained though some of its interior finishes and building systems would benefit from an update. The ground floor consists of a circulation desk, public computer terminals, a large reading room with stacks and soft seating. A children's reading area and a large public meeting room is on the second level. The classrooms on the lower level host well-attended ESL and adult education classes.

The building is wheelchair accessible and has an elevator to all levels.

Category	Percentage	Area (sqft)
Library Stacks/Reading Room	42%	(5,775 sqft)
Meeting Rooms & Classrooms	24%	(3,226 sqft)
Circulation	19%	(2,620 sqft)
Utilities	5%	(691 sqft)
Building support	5%	(670 sqft)
Staff	5%	(617 sqft)

260 Green St  
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

### Parking Utilization

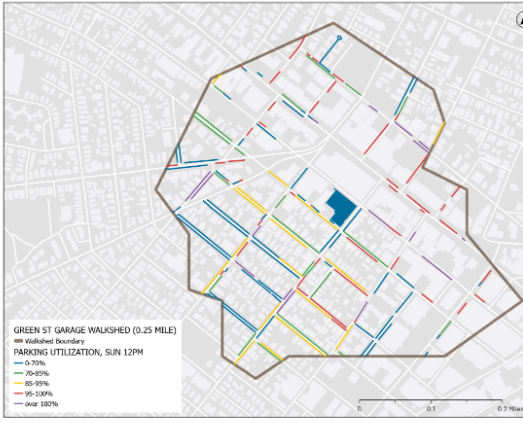
**OFF-STREET PARKING UTILIZATION**

Inventory	Sum of Spaces	Spaces Full	% Full	Average
Garage	257	88	26%	108

**ON-STREET PARKING UTILIZATION**

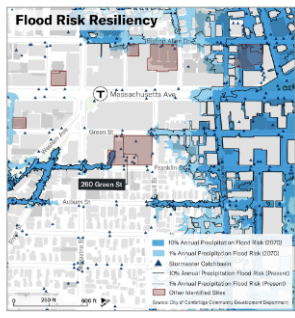
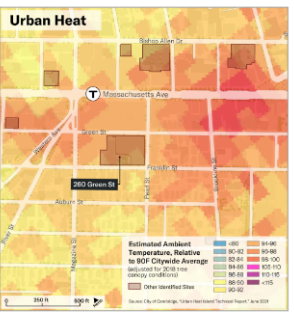
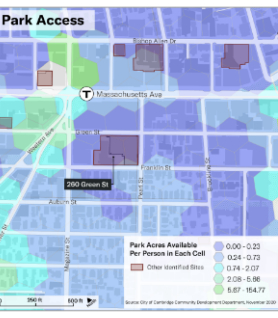
Regulation	Inventory	Sum of Spaces	% of Spaces	Spaces Full	% Full	Average
Permit Only		847	75%	656	77%	825
2 Hr. SAM-SPM		50	5%	62	105%	57
2 Hr. SAM-SPM		57	5%	55	96%	52
2 Hr. SAM-SPM except Sat		43	4%	42	98%	38
Disability Parking		43	4%	18	42%	18
1 Hr. SAM-SPM		25	2%	23	92%	24
Unregulated		16	1%	20	125%	23
30 Min. SAM-SPM		14	1%	9	64%	10
1 Hr. SAM-SPM		14	1%	11	79%	10
30 Min. SAM-SPM		2	0.2%	3	150%	2
2 Hr. 10AM-5PM, Loading Zone 7AM-10AM		2	0.2%	0	0%	0
2 Hr. SAM-SPM except Sat		0	0%	0	0%	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1122</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>859</b>

On-Street parking utilization was highest in the study area Sunday at 12:00pm, however, the Green Street Garage had very low occupancy during this time period. Green Street Garage averaged only 41% occupancy across all time periods.



260 Green St  
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

### Environmental Conditions

**Flood Risk Resiliency**  
260 Green St is at risk of precipitation flooding, today and in the near future (2023 - 2070). The southwestern corner of the site, alongside Franklin St, has a 10% chance of flooding as of 2023 and into 2070.

**Urban Heat**  
From 2009-2010 to 2018, 260 Green St and its immediate surroundings, experienced ambient air temperatures significantly above the citywide average (90F), ranging from 92F to 100F.

**Park Access**  
260 Green St has low park access, ranging from 0.00 to 0.23 acres of park per person. Park access improves significantly towards the North of the site.

260 Green St  
Central Square City Lots Study Preliminary Site Assessments | July 2023

## Building Use

## Parking Inventory & Utilization

## Environmental Conditions



# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK AT AUGUST POP-UPS



A word cloud of community feedback. The most prominent words are 'affordable housing' and 'housing' in large red font. Other words include 'services', 'one-stop-shop', 'food vendors', 'parking', 'unhoused', 'public bathroom', 'market', 'stores', 'green space', 'playground', 'open space', 'park', 'community garden', and 'public space'.

services one-stop-shop food vendors parking  
unhoused public bathroom market stores  
**affordable housing**  
green space playground **housing**  
open space park community garden public space

**Central Square needs ...**

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**Have a location in mind?**  
Add a note to the map to show us where!

# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK AT AUGUST POP-UPS - SPECIFIC PROPERTIES



# ENGAGEMENT ELEMENTS

	COMMUNICATION MATERIALS	FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS	POP-UPS / SURVEY & COMMUNITY MEETING
ONGOING	Project Website	City Staff	Pop-ups with general project info, learn about community needs
	Updates on Social Media	Central Square BID	
		Central Square Advisory Committee	
UPCOMING	Flyering at local Central Square businesses & community centers/hubs	CET Focus Groups	Online Survey
	Canvassing or flyering at residences	Senior Center	October Community Meeting to share preliminary findings & opportunities
		Community Organizations, Businesses, others?	

# DISCUSSION



One mission one way through the park square area  
equipment services for animals  
the services one stop shop  
"nurturing family" important space too

Affordable Housing  
Urgent Need

THEATER  
COMMUNITY  
PERFORMANCE  
Community center

Public Toilets +  
200 pound children  
changing facility

Affordable Housing  
San Diego has  
done that with  
a courtyard

Green  
Space!!  
(and)

Children Play area  
+ Day Care  
on Top

## Central Square City Lots Study

There are 10 City-owned properties that are part of this study

Use sticky notes to share your thoughts and ideas for these sites!

# DISCUSSION

## QUESTION 1

Central Square needs

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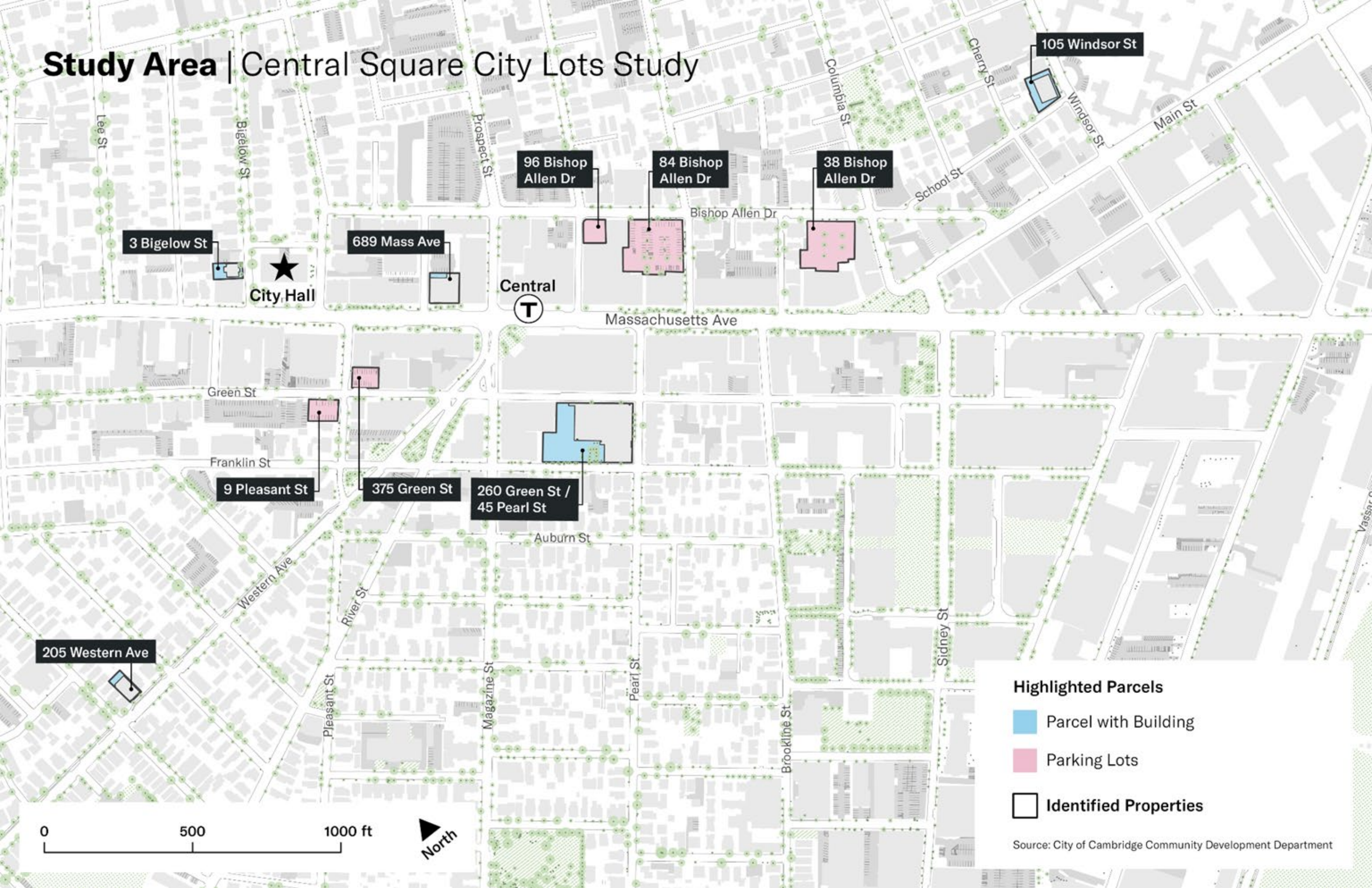
*Tell us what you think are the most pressing  
QUESTION 2s for Central Square!*

Have a location in mind? Tell us  
which site you're thinking of!





# Study Area | Central Square City Lots Study



## Highlighted Parcels

 Parcel with Building

 Parking Lots

 Identified Properties

Source: City of Cambridge Community Development Department

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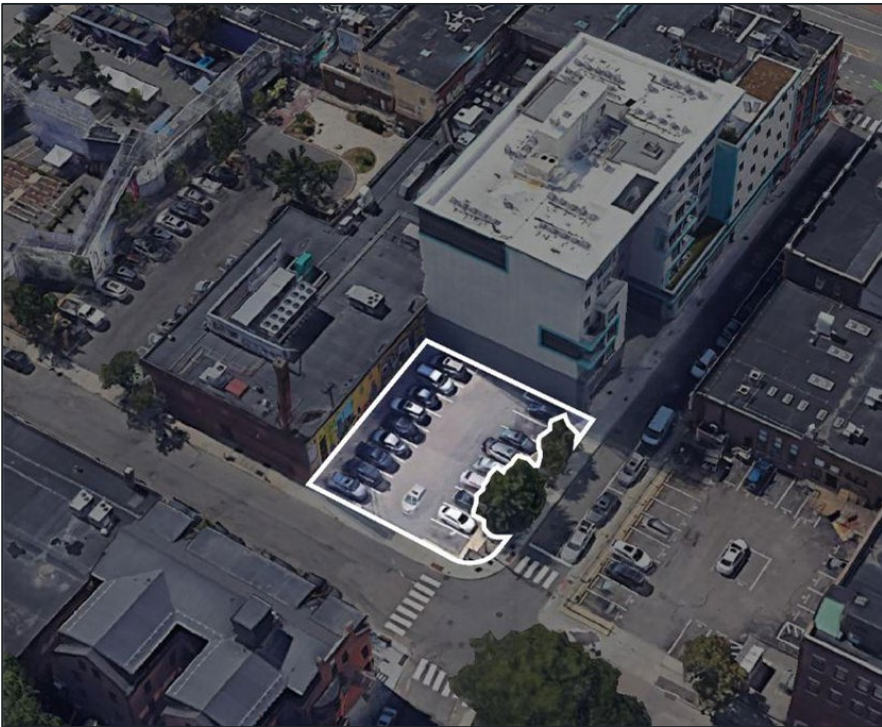
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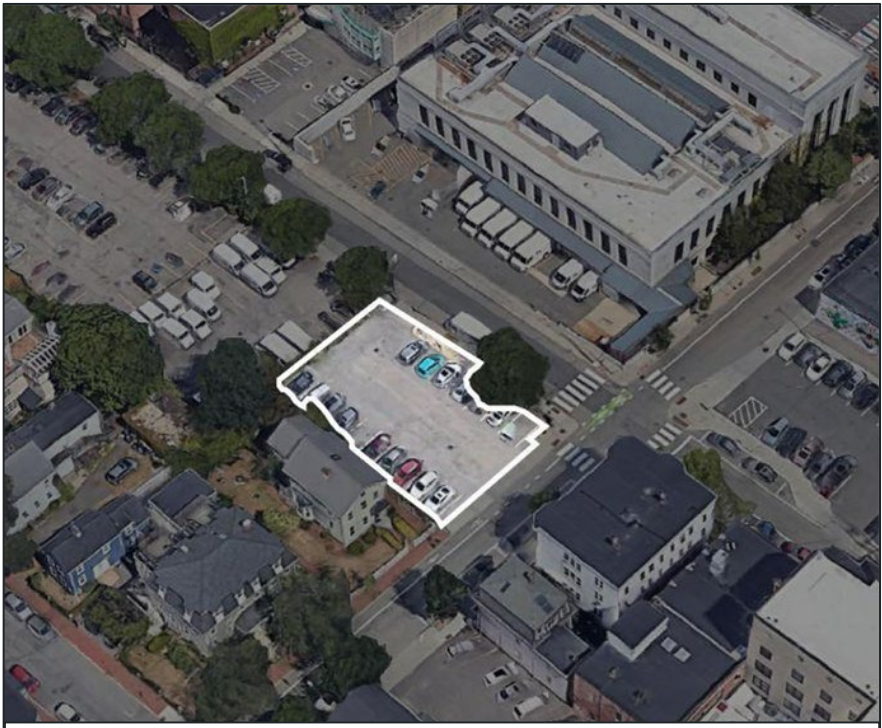
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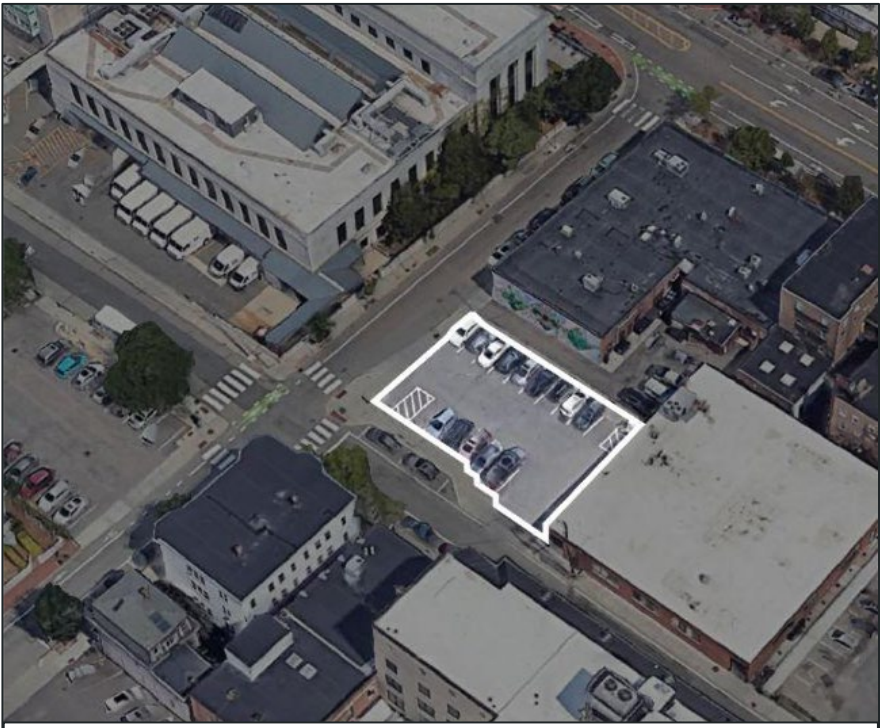
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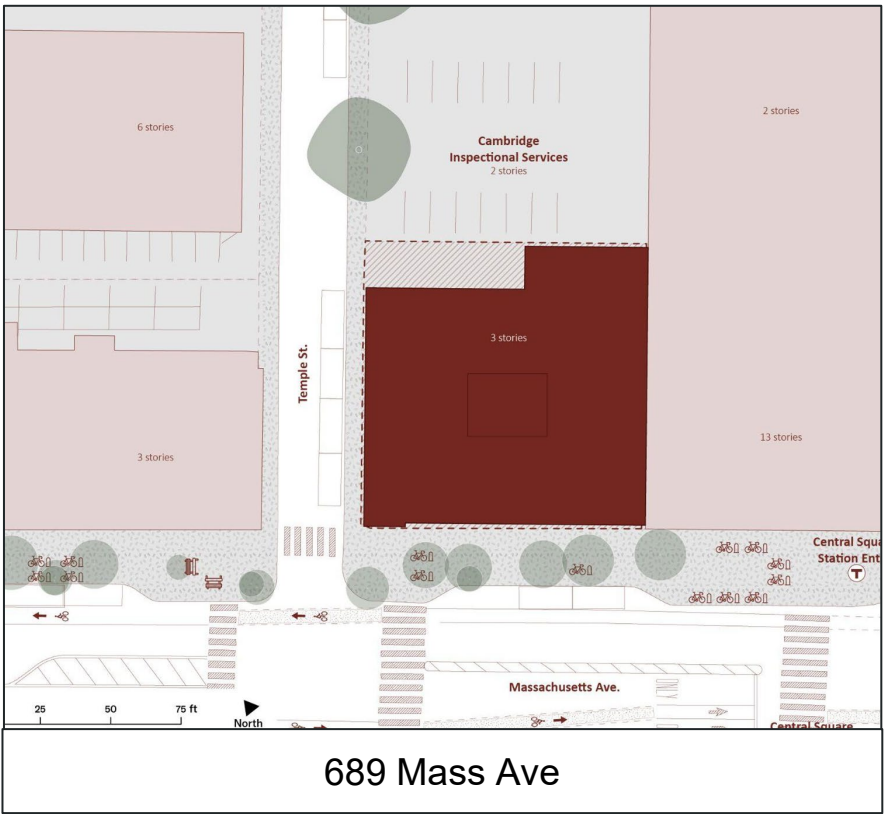


9 Pleasant St



375 Green St

# PROJECT SITE PLANS



# PROJECT SITE PLANS



38 Bishop Allen Dr



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105 Windsor St



**NEXT STEPS**

# NEXT STEPS THIS FALL

- Focus groups  
**Let us know if there are groups we should connect with!**
- Future Survey  
**Please fill out and share with your networks!**
- Public meeting in October  
**More information coming soon!**
- Test fits to identify opportunities and constraints

**THANK YOU!**