

Shade is Social Justice

Shade is Social Justice is funded by an Accelerating Climate Resiliency grant from the [Metropolitan Area Planning Council \(MAPC\)](#). It is one of the innovative ways the City of Cambridge is building climate resiliency and preparedness—and using the power of art and design to shape perception, strengthen communities, and find solutions. Each approved project will receive a budget of approximately \$27,000.



Shade is Social Justice provides:

- **Imaginative solutions:** Artists are uniquely skilled at cross-disciplinary responses to complex challenges that also engage a multi-generational public. Shade is Social Justice is an opportunity for artists and designers to explore imaginative solutions to the problem of heat islands throughout the city, particularly in areas with the highest risks. Because we know that social connection increases preparedness and resiliency, we are looking for solutions that combine reasons for gathering with cooling.
- **Material Science and Engineering:** Shade is Social Justice is also an opportunity to investigate material science and engineering to identify ways in which sustainable material choices and methods of fabrication can best serve the mission of the project.
- **More Than Shade:** Shade structures are not effective unless they are used. Shade is Social Justice is an opportunity for artists and designers to consider how to incorporate interactive attractions in a shade structure, such as playful elements, data collection, lighting, educational messaging, or misting. Seating will be an important part of the design. Programming will further the impact and promotion of the project.
- **Social Justice and Replicability:** Climate change is complicated to communicate, heat is invisible, and heat risk is unequally distributed across the city. The problems and the solutions around climate change go beyond any one municipality. Shade is Social Justice aims to offer replicable designs for

shade structures that could be used in multiple neighborhoods and by other municipalities.

Locations:

1. Jill Brown-Rhone Park, also known as Lafayette Square, in Central Square
2. Donnelly Field, near Frisoli Youth Center and King Open/Cambridge Street Upper School complex
3. Russell Field and playground, off Rindge Avenue
4. Additional locations TBD.

Designers

Teams developing projects to be installed in 2024:

Gabriel Cira and **Matthew Okazaki**: Gabriel Cira and Matthew Okazaki practice collaboration – with community groups, nonprofits, scientists, advocates, artists, students, and friends. They believe common-izing spatial thinking and material knowledge helps build collective power and a sense of belonging in the public realm. Cira is a licensed architect and Assistant Professor in the History of Art at MassArt. He received a Master in Architecture from Princeton University. Okazaki is a Professor of the Practice in the History of Art and Architecture at Tufts University and received a Master of Architecture from Harvard University.

The MIRROR is an interdisciplinary team composed of **Buildingways**, **Citizens of the World**, **Equity Roadmap**, **Olin College of Engineering**, and **Pneuhaus** alongside international architectural collaborator **Yusuke Obuchi Laboratory**. The group brings expertise from community organizing to computer science, from restorative justice to youth-centered placemaking. We are guided by the question: “What can we do together, as a network of nonprofit partners, a community, and a college, that we can't do alone?”

Alejandro Saldarriaga: Alejandro Saldarriaga Rubio is a Colombian architect who was born and raised in Bogota. He has had an international professional trajectory, having lived and worked in various countries including Denmark, Switzerland, and the United States. He holds a master's degree in architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. In 2020, he founded his architecture practice, ALSAR-ATELIER, during the midst of the pandemic. The studio is dedicated to investigating low-cost and low-tech design solutions for global states of emergency, focusing on sustainable construction methods and community engagement. He currently resides in Cambridge MA and will be joining the Northeastern University Faculty as a Research/ Teaching fellow for the 2023-2024 academic term.

Teams developing projects to be installed in 2025:

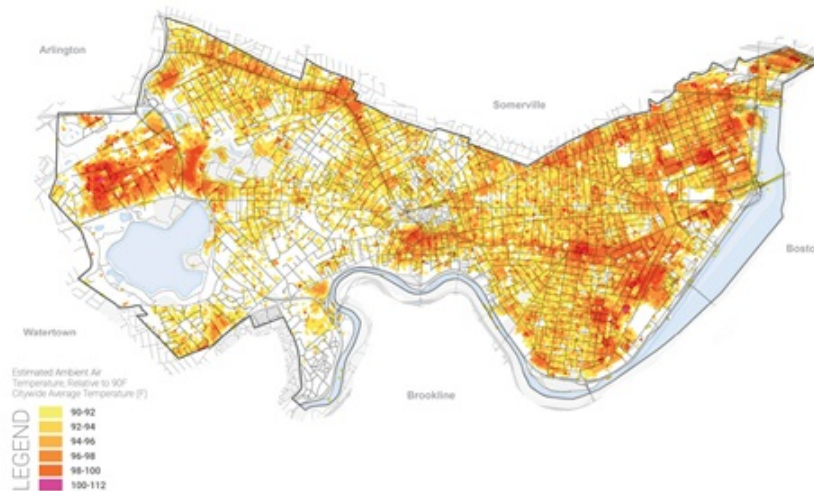
Carolina Aragon: Carolina Aragón is an associate professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and the director of Art for Public Good Group. Her award-winning creative work blends artistry and transdisciplinary practices that bring together research, craft, and community engagement to address issues of climate change and environmental justice. Carolina's artwork has been recognized by national and international organizations. In 2021, her FutureSHORELINE project was awarded the Climate Change Communication Award "Rebecca Ballestra" by the Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change. Carolina was named as one of the top 25 Creative Revolutionaries by the CODAworx organization in 2020. Her artwork has been displayed at the World Bank's Art of Resilience Exhibition 2019 in Washington, DC, as well as showcased in multiple venues, including the U.S. National Park Service's video: 100 Years of Arts in the Parks.

Calvin Zhong + Justin Brazier: Justin Brazier is an architectural designer based in Boston, interested in sustainable architecture, housing, food security, and cultural spaces for historically under-represented and under-served communities. Calvin Zhong is a spatial designer, fabricator, and informal cultural critic. Together, they are one-half of the design collective, Architecture Group of New York, which currently operates out of Cambridge, Chile, and Mexico City. They work on books, exhibitions, advertisements, fashion, research, websites, and last, but not least, architecture.

Heat in Cambridge

The City of Cambridge is taking a variety of actions to create a resilient city and address the impact of a warming climate.

Neighborhoods across Cambridge are experiencing hotter summers and more severe heat waves. **Average summer temperatures in Cambridge are expected to increase 6-10 degrees Fahrenheit by the 2070s.** Extreme heat exposure is a health risk and has a disproportionate impact on communities of color and lower income levels. Increasing development, use of building materials that retain heat, loss of tree canopy, and socio-economic factors contribute to heat risks for residents, workers, and visitors. The city is actively addressing these factors through efforts such as green building requirements, promoting reflective roof materials and green roofs, urban forestry planning, and numerous programs to strengthen community cohesion and individual health. Finding ways to stay cool and safe, both at home and outside, is more important than ever.



Estimated Ambient Air Temperature

Improving access to open space and increasing tree canopy and shade are key priorities of the Resilient Cambridge Plan. Locations identified for this project are places of community interaction and work and play activity, offering opportunities to expand social services. Social connection, a key ingredient in building community resilience is critical to ensure that people have access to services or spaces that are, by design, resilient to extreme heat.

For more information see:

- [Resilient Cambridge Plan](#)
- [Heat Strategies by City of Cambridge](#)
- [Resident Preparedness for Extreme Heat](#)

Extreme Heat Resources

[Cambridge Arts](#) > [News](#) > Innovative Shade Structures Arrive To Help Cambridge Address Warming World

Innovative Shade Structures Arrive To Help Cambridge Address Warming World

7/10/2024 • 2 weeks ago



"Growing Shade" by Alejandro Saldarriaga and Northeastern University located near the Russell Field playground, between Rindge Avenue, Clifton Street and Harvey Street, North Cambridge.

Innovative Shade Structures Arrive To Help Cambridge Address Warming World

Looking for a place to cool down and admire some public art? As part of the City of Cambridge's Shade Is Social Justice program, temporary public art structures are being installed to provide shade and seating across the community to further the city's efforts to address our warming world.

You can sit down in the shade at "Growing Shade" located near the Russell Field playground, between Rindge Avenue, Clifton Street and Harvey Street, North Cambridge. It's designed by Colombia-raised, Cambridge-based architect Alejandro Saldarriaga and Boston's Northeastern University.

Additional installations are expected to arrive in Central Square and Donnelly Field near Kendall Square in July. Community celebrations will happen at each location at a later date.

The Shade Is Social Justice program helps Cambridge adapt to global warming by strengthening our climate resilience and preparedness. It uses the power of art and design to shape perception, stimulate discussion of the challenges, and find solutions. Cambridge's additional climate efforts include an ordinance requiring large commercial buildings to eliminate the use of fossil fuels by 2035, an electric vehicle charging program, and improving infrastructure for bicycle and bus transportation.

How Can We Help You?

- ARTISTS & PERFORMERS**
 ▼
- RESIDENTS & VISITORS**
 ▼
- SPONSORS**
 ▼
- ARTISTS & VENDOR APPLICATIONS**
 ▼



[Reserve Your Share of Local Art!](#)



[E-Newsletter Sign-Up](#)



[Donate Now](#)

Cambridge Arts Council
 344 Broadway, 2nd Floor
 Cambridge, MA 02139
 Phone: 617-349-4380
 Fax: 617-349-4669
[Contact Us](#)

Hours
 Monday: 8:30am-8pm
 Tuesday-Thursday: 8:30am-5pm
 Friday: 8:30am-12pm





"Growing Shade" by Alejandro Saldarriaga and Northeastern University located near the Russell Field playground, between Rindge Avenue, Clifton Street and Harvey Street, North Cambridge.

Shade Is Social Justice was initially funded by a \$100,000 Accelerating Climate Resiliency grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. The City of Cambridge has identified additional funds to increase the number of artists and sites. The budget includes mitigation funds from New England Development, the developer of CambridgeSide.

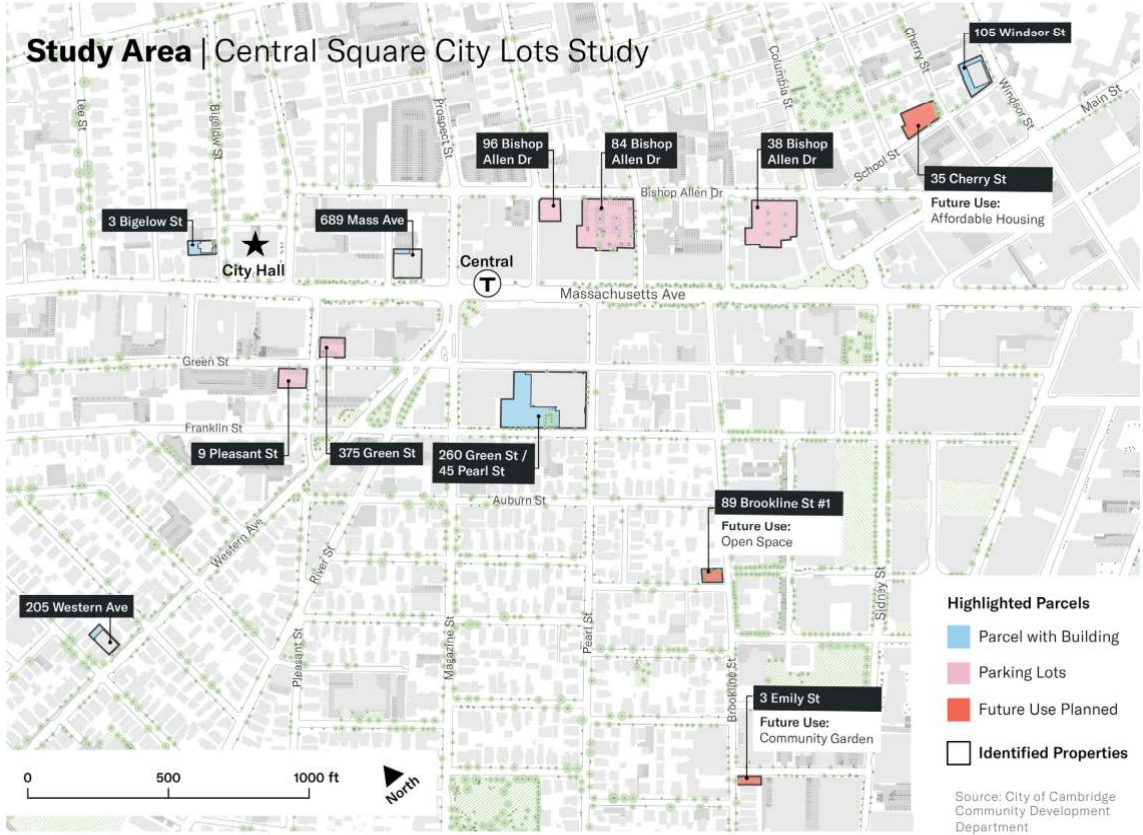
A call for designers was announced in spring 2023. A panel of community members selected five winning designers from 18 applicants from the region based on past work and interviews with the candidates. Two additional shade structures are expected to be installed at locations across the city the summer of 2025.

Remember, hot weather and extreme heat can cause serious illness and can even be life-threatening. Seeking shade and staying hydrated can help you cool down during extreme heat.

Shade Is Social Justice is led by Claudia Zarazua, Arts and Cultural Planning Director for the City of Cambridge, and Lillian Hsu, Cambridge Arts Director of Public Art & Exhibitions. The project team includes staff from multiple departments: Cambridge Arts, Community Development Department, the Department of Public Works, and the Public Health Department. The project team is part of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's regional Resilience Community of Practice, which supports grantees, advances better practices, and reduces barriers to progress.



"Growing Shade" by Alejandro Saldarriaga and Northeastern University located near the Russell Field playground, between Rindge Avenue, Clifton Street and Harvey Street, North Cambridge.



ACHIEVING GOALS ACROSS 10 CITY SITES

The goals informed how to use the City's property to make progress in three major areas: 1) expanding community and city services; 2) increasing housing and amenities that contribute to civic life; and 3) maintaining flexibility for the future to continue to meet infrastructure, open space, and parking needs across Central Square.

For the purposes of this report, recommendations for each site are discussed by grouping sites into these three categories by their predominant recommended use. This does not mean that a site only achieves the goals in one category - many of these sites include proposals for mixed use development, open space, and utilities solutions that address multiple goals. Icons throughout the report illustrate where this overlap occurs.

ICON KEY	
	Community Space
	Library
	Arts & Cultural / Performance Space
	Retail space
	Office Space
	Housing
	Supportive Housing
	Park / Open Space
	Parking
	Stormwater Infrastructure

EXPAND COMMUNITY & CITY SERVICES IN CENTRAL SQUARE



105 WINDSOR ST



689 MASS AVE



3 BIGELOW ST

INCREASE HOUSING & CIVIC LIFE IN CENTRAL SQUARE



260 GREEN ST



84 BISHOP ALLEN DR



96 BISHOP ALLEN DR



375 GREEN ST



205 WESTERN AVE

MAINTAIN FLEXIBILITY, MEET INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS, AND INCREASE OPEN SPACE IN CENTRAL SQUARE



38 BISHOP ALLEN DR



9 PLEASANT ST

84 BISHOP ALLEN DRIVE (LOT 5)

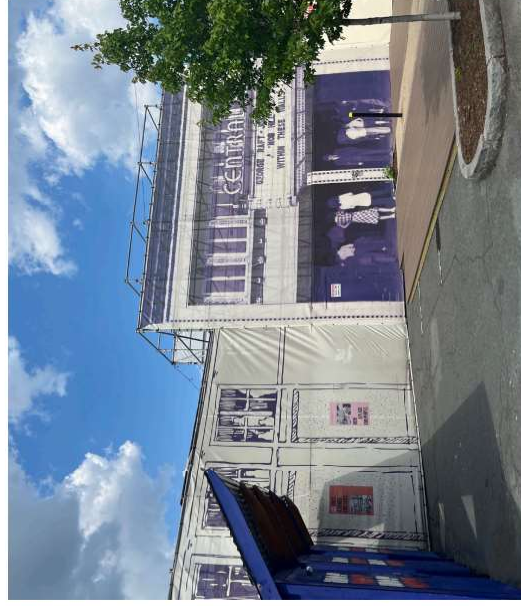
Existing Conditions

Lot 5 is the largest municipal surface parking lot and hosts the Central Square Farmer's Markets. Prior to 2020, the lot provided 82 parking spaces to service surrounding businesses. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Starlight Square, a temporary outdoor performance space, was built to provide a safe community gathering space. The parking lot is also used to house Popportunity, an economic development initiative that provides affordable commercial space for local entrepreneurs.

33,715	N/A
Site Area (sq ft)	Number of Stories
BB	23
Zoning District	Parking Spaces
N/A	407ft/2min walk
Gross Building Area (sq ft)	Distance to nearest T-Station

Site Considerations

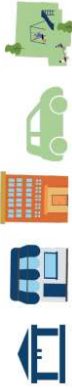
- H-Mart and other retailers rely on nearby parking.
- Important public realm considerations include Graffiti Alley, current performance and retail incubator use as Starlight Square, the Farmer's Market, and other events.
- 84 Bishop Allen Dr has two vehicle entrances, along Bishop Allen Dr and Norfolk St. Three pedestrian entry points exist; one along the southwest side of the site connecting the site to Massachusetts Ave via 'Graffiti Alley' and two paths along Bishop Allen Dr and Norfolk St.
- 84 Bishop Allen Dr is located in an area with low open space access.



84 BISHOP ALLEN DRIVE (LOT 5)

RECOMMENDATION

As the largest City-owned surface parking lot in the study area, 84 Bishop Allen Drive offers a unique opportunity to build on current, temporary activation uses and develop a mixed-use building that provides a significant amount of housing, as well as integrate a flexible indoor/outdoor performance space, an outdoor public plaza, and retail/market space. There should be a significant focus on affordable housing and commercial space. The site should be studied for underground parking.

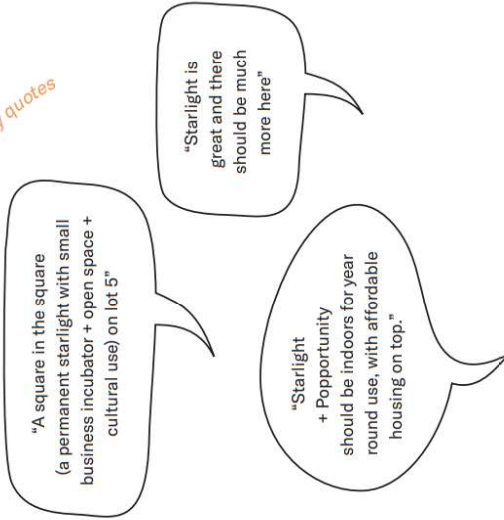


Community Input Highlights

At this location, community members expressed a lot of love for...

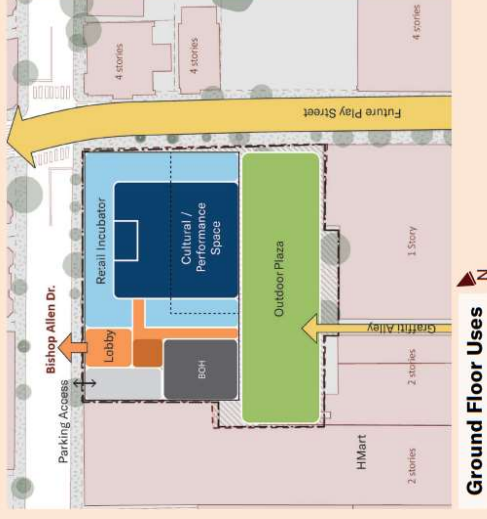
- Flexible Arts & Market Space
- Small Business Incubator
- Outdoor Plaza
- Affordable Housing

sample community quotes



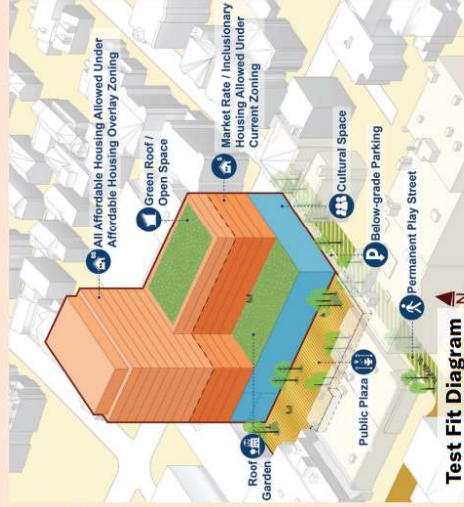
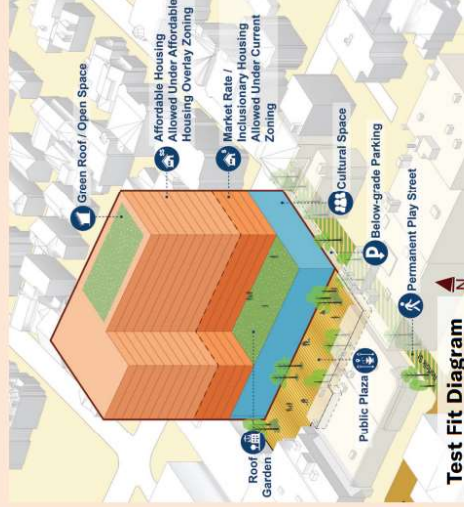
Test Fit Highlights

Note: These are sample possible program options but will be refined with the community



- Up to 14 stories of housing above retail, civic/cultural space and performance space
- South-facing outdoor plaza
- One level of underground parking (note: could be tested for more)

- 120-180 Housing Units
- 40-80 Parking Spaces
- 19,000 SF Flexible Market / Cultural / Performance Space
- 0.11 Acres Open Space



96 BISHOP ALLEN DRIVE (LOT 4)

Existing Conditions

This public parking lot serves the patrons of neighboring businesses, including the adjacent HMart. The lot is flanked by a wall adorned by a new mural and is across Bishop Allen Drive from a nonprofit center, recently renovated/operated by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority.

6,210

Site Area (sq ft)

N/A

Number of Stories

BB

Zoning District

17

Parking Spaces

N/A

Gross Building Area (sq ft)

0.1m/2min walk

Distance to nearest T-Station

Site Considerations

- A corner property with one vehicle entrance, along Bishop Allen Dr.
- Located on the same block as 84 Bishop Allen Drive (Starlight Square) and HMart.
- Across the street from 99 Bishop Allen Drive, a newly renovated row house development with non-profit office space.

- Shade conditions at this site make the space less suited for a park or open space.



96 BISHOP ALLEN DRIVE (LOT 4)

RECOMMENDATION

Together with 84 Bishop Allen Drive, 96 Bishop Allen Drive offers an opportunity to activate this block of Bishop Allen Drive and increase housing development in the area. Opportunities for ground floor active uses, such as retail or community spaces, should be explored with housing above.

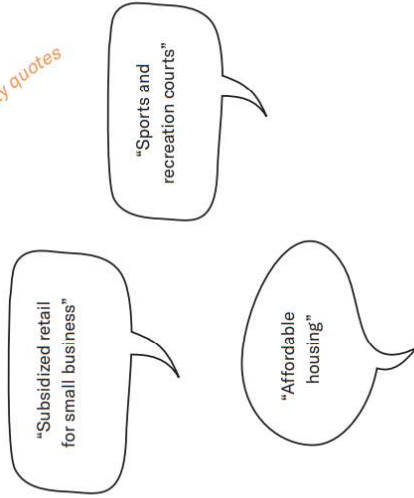


Community Input Highlights

At this location, community members expressed a lot of love for...

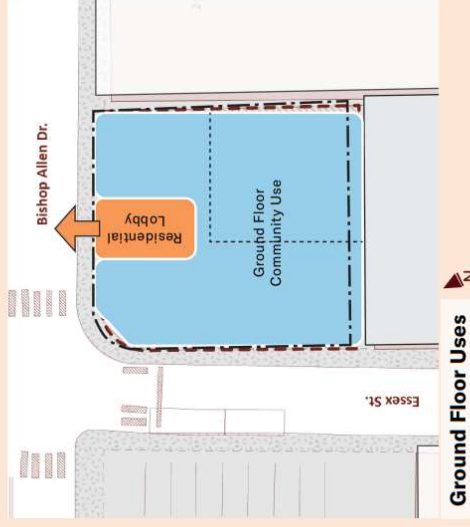
- Affordable Housing
- Small Business Incubator
- Community Garden
- Outdoor Plaza

sample community quotes



Test Fit Highlights

Note: These are sample possible program options but will be refined with the community

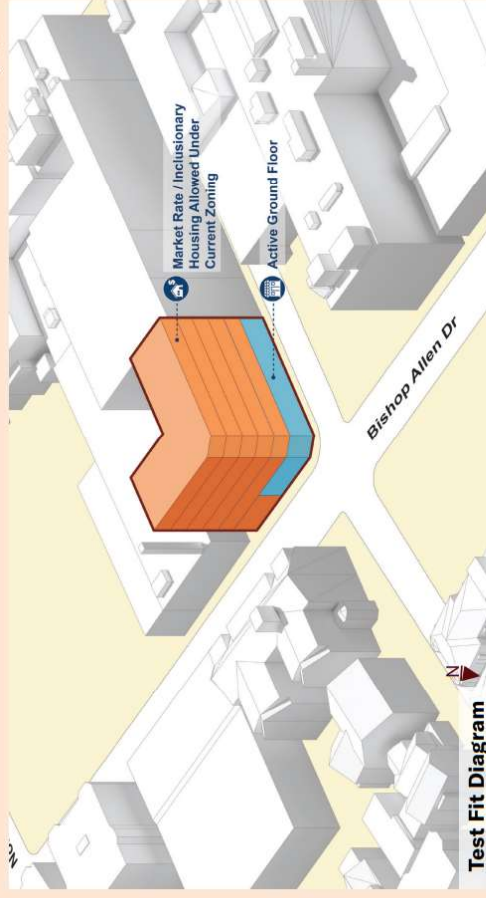


- 15-20 units, six stories
- Active community use on the ground floor
- AHO allows height up to 15 stories, but not feasible due to parcel size and construction technologies
- Loss of existing parking spaces; consider relocating lost parking spaces to other sites
- Single-loaded configuration, 3-4 units per floor



15-20 Housing Units

5,000 SF active ground floor or community use





84 and 96 Bishop Allen Drive

The Community Development Department (CDD), in partnership with the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, has drafted a Request for Information (RFI) for the potential redevelopment of 84 & 96 Bishop Allen Drive. The community identified a strong preference in the [Central Square City Lots Study](#) to see these two municipal parking lots transformed into a mixed-use development that includes:

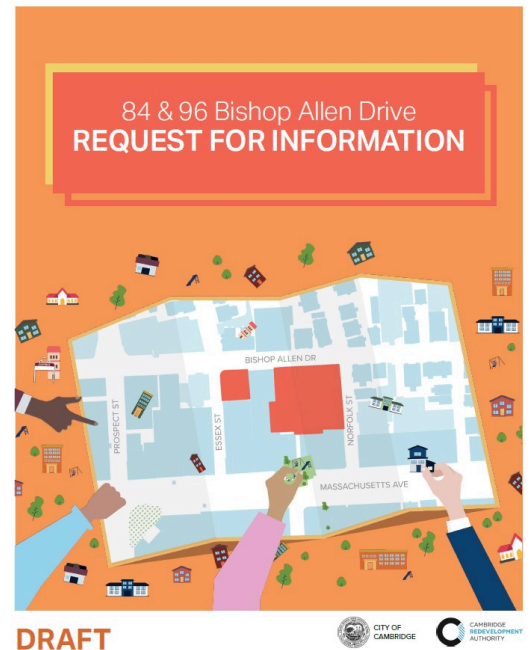
- a significant amount of affordable housing,
- a permanent space for arts and culture activities similar to Starlight Square,
- affordable commercial space,
- open space, and
- public parking.

The purpose of the RFI is to seek information that could inform future planning. This RFI does not commit the City to issue a subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP).

The Latest

We want to hear from you!

The Draft Request for Information (RFI) for 84 and 96 Bishop Allen Drive is available [here](#) for public review and comments now through **July 12th**. Please take a look and let us know your thoughts and feedback on the document. All correspondence can be sent to Melissa Peters at mpeters@cambridgema.gov.



[Access the RFI Here](#)

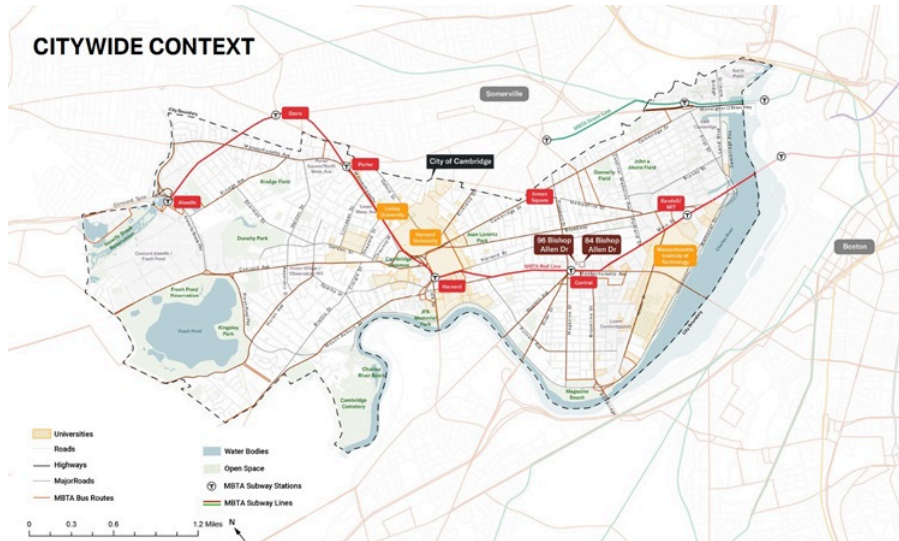
Community Engagement

Prior to releasing the Request for Information (RFI) to developers, a draft is being released to the community for a two-week public review period. We encourage all community members to submit their feedback on the draft RFI (link above) through **July 12th**. Comments can be sent to Melissa Peters at mpeters@cambridgema.gov.

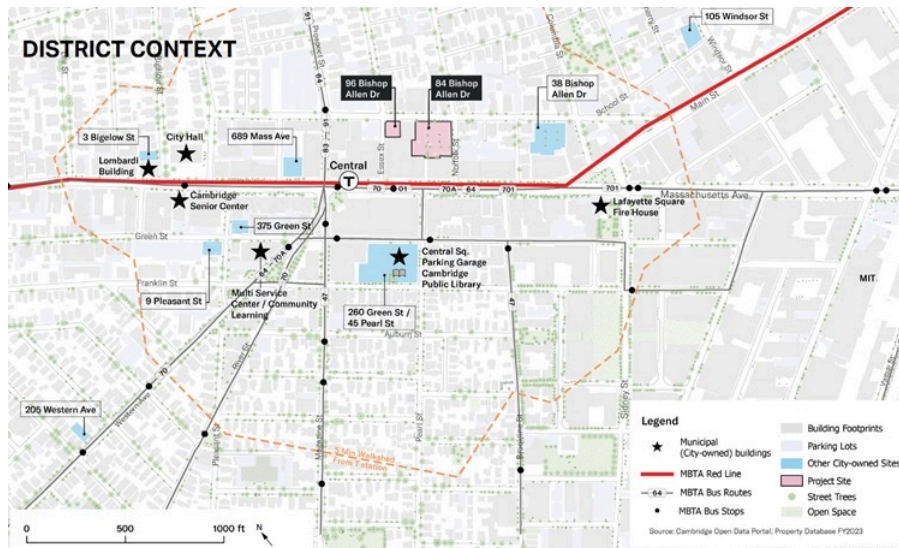
Your input is critical for ensuring the redevelopment of these two important and publicly-owned sites advances the community's goals and vision for Central Square.

The feedback received will influence the final version of the RFI. After being updated accordingly, the RFI will be released to the wider development community. Please check back here for updates on meetings, information, and ways you can stay involved!

Maps



To view this map larger, click [here](#).



To view this map larger, click [here](#).

Key Documents and Resources

Central Square Plans

- > [Central Square Rezoning](#) (Ongoing)
- > [Central Square City Lots Study](#) (2023)
- > [Central Square Planning Study \(K2C2\)](#) (2013)
- > [Central Square Design Guidelines](#) (2013)
- > [Central, Squared - Red Ribbon Commission](#) (2011)

Neighborhood Plans

- > [Neighborhood Planning Initiative](#) (ongoing)
- > [The Port - Neighborhood Study Update](#) (2010)
- > [Cambridgeport - Neighborhood Study Update](#) (2010)
- > [Mid-Cambridge - Neighborhood Study Update](#) (2011)
- > [River Street Reconstruction](#) (ongoing)

Citywide Plans

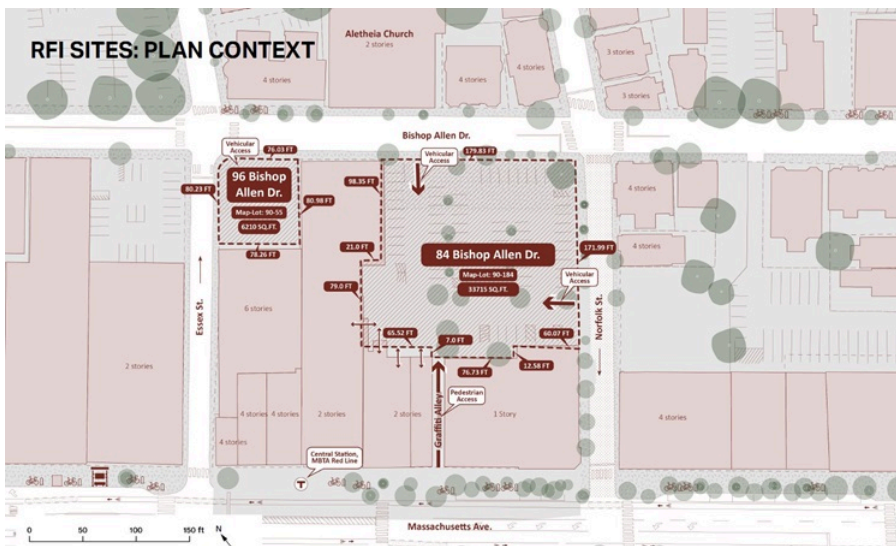
- > [Envision Cambridge](#) (2019)
- > [Parks and Open Space Plan](#) (2022)
- > [Resilient Cambridge Plan](#) (2021)
- > [Five-year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plans](#) (ongoing)
- > [Ten-year Infrastructure Plans](#) (ongoing)
- > [Cambridge Bicycle Plan](#) (2020)
- > [Vision Zero Action Plan](#) (2018)

Zoning Documents

- > [Cambridge Zoning Ordinance](#)
- > [Central Square Overlay District](#)
- > [100% Affordable Housing Overlay](#)
- > [Climate Resilience Zoning](#)



To view this map larger, click [here](#).



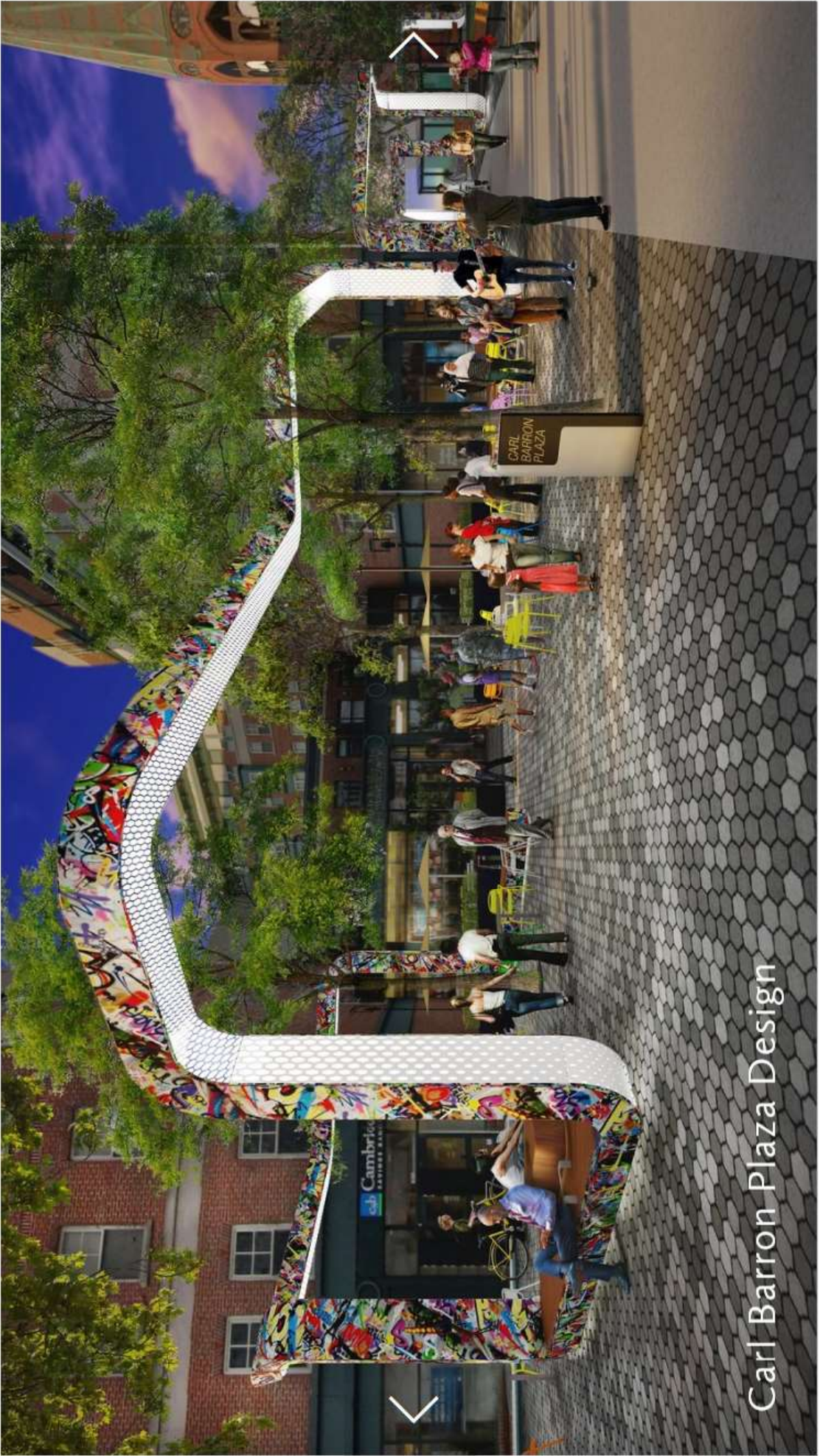
To view this map larger, click [here](#).

Stay Informed

To stay up-to-date about this project and related community events and meetings, please sign up for our [Central Square email list](#).

For additional information, please contact Melissa Peters at mpeters@cambridgema.gov

To stay informed about all things Cambridge, please sign up for the [City of Cambridge Daily Update Newsletter](#).



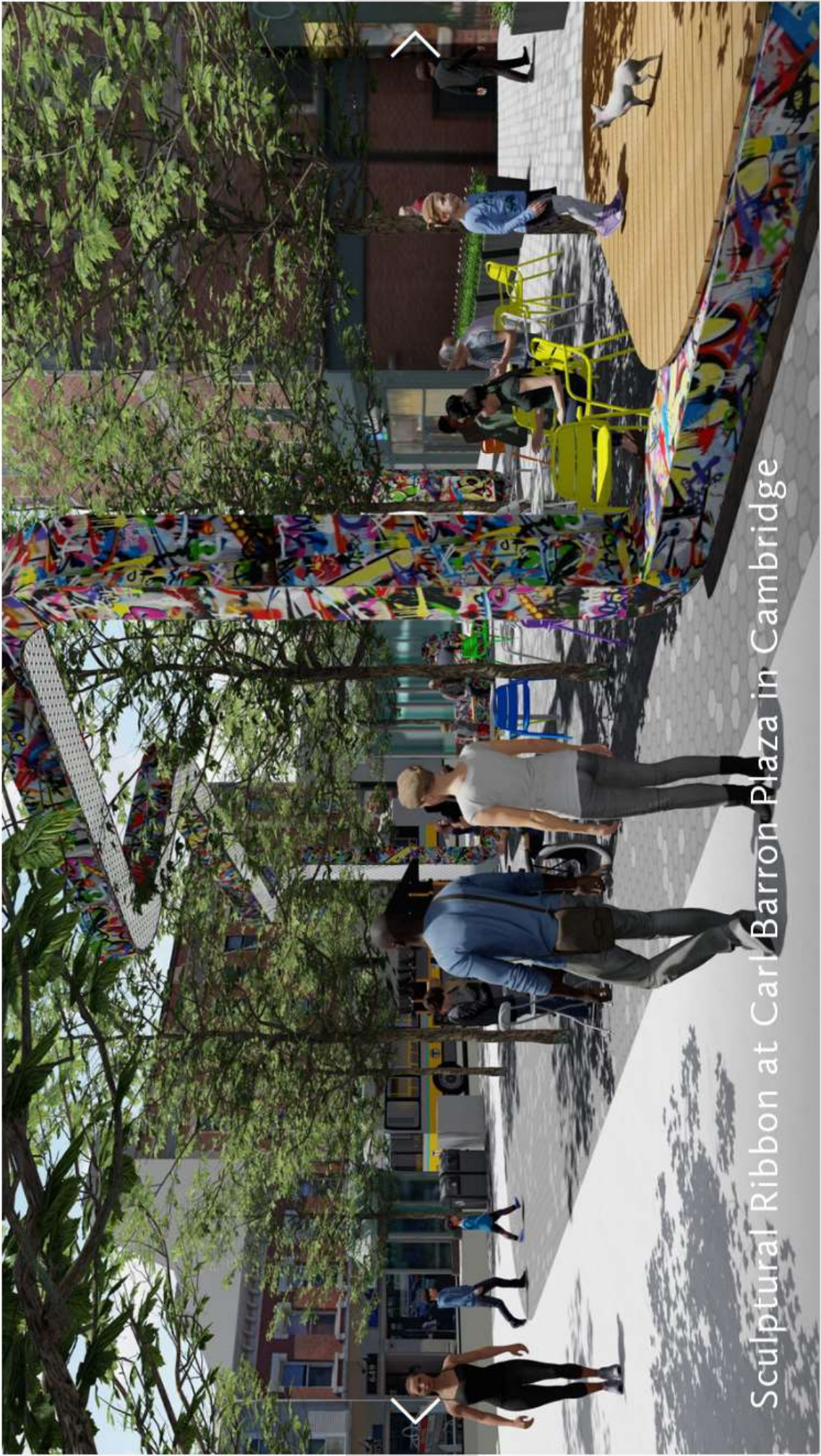
Carl Barron Plaza Design



Evening View of Cambridge Carl Barron Plaza



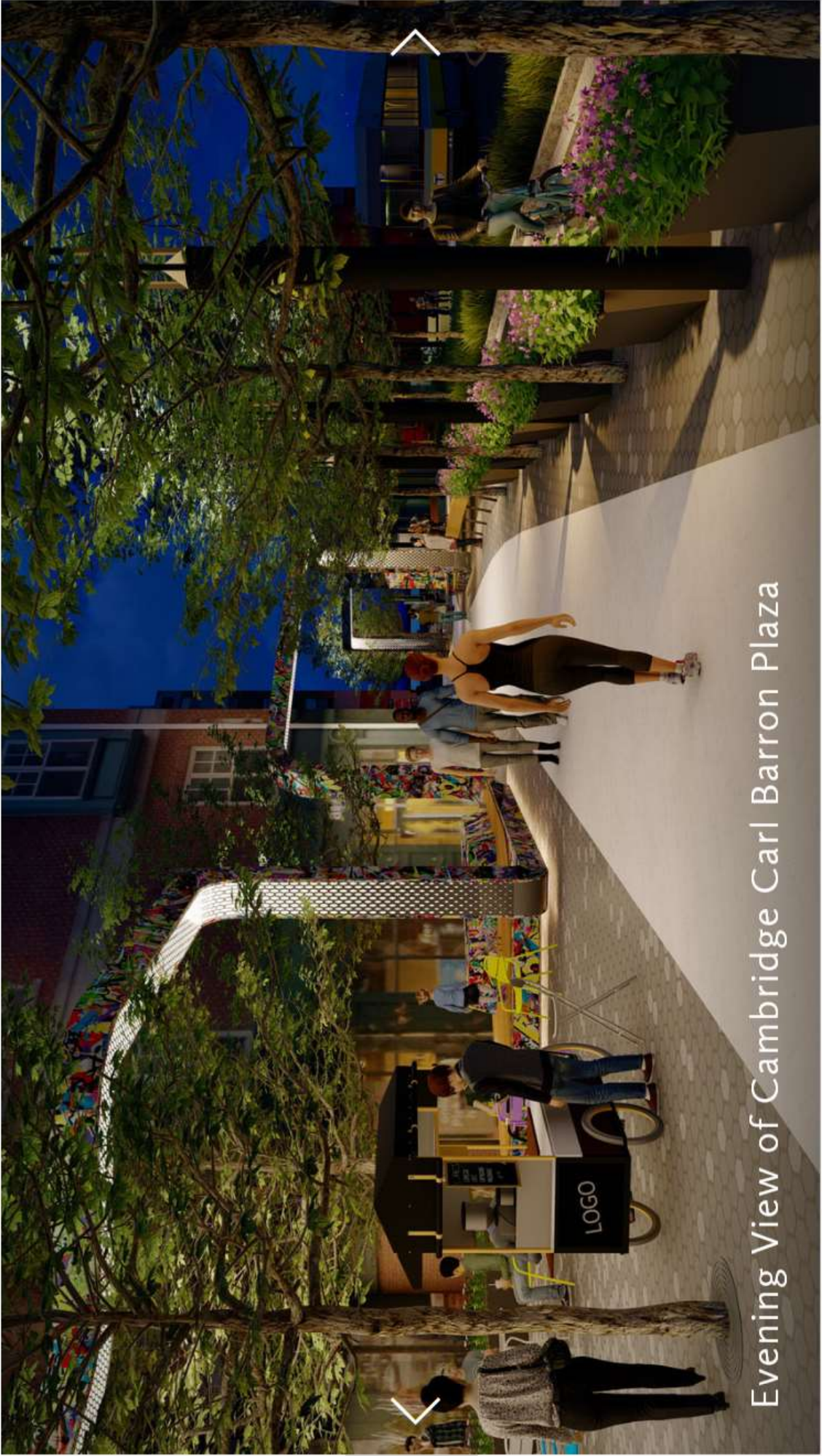
Cycle Track at Cambridge Carl Barron Plaza



Sculptural Ribbon at Carl Barron Plaza in Cambridge



Cambridge Carl Barron Plaza Bus Shelters



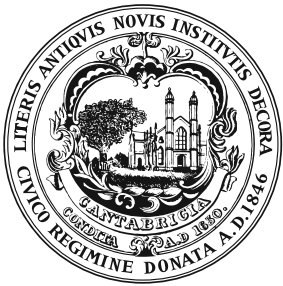
Evening View of Cambridge Carl Barron Plaza

PROPOSED TREE QTY = 22
EXISTING TREE QTY = 8





Future Carl Barron Plaza viewed from Mass Ave/River St corner. Color shown for the "Ribbon" is a placeholder, pending artist's final design.



River Street Infrastructure and Streetscape Project

Carl Barron Plaza Construction Update

DECEMBER 2023

Dear Central Square Neighbor,

We are pleased to inform you of the start of construction at Carl Barron Plaza, as part of the River Street Infrastructure and Streetscape Project. This is the first in what will be a series of construction-phase communications specific to Carl Barron Plaza. We will transmit occasional high-level project **Updates** such as this one, as well as more frequent **Notices** which will detail specific short-term construction operations impacting the Plaza and MBTA bus terminal.

We know that living, working, operating a business, and traveling through an active construction project will be challenging. We truly appreciate all of the efforts that the Central Square community have put forth so far during the planning and design phases of the project. Your active participation in the process has led to continuous improvements in the design. We join you in looking forward to a successful project, which will help reinvigorate the heart of Central Square and be a welcoming, attractive, and lively space for the entire Cambridge community.

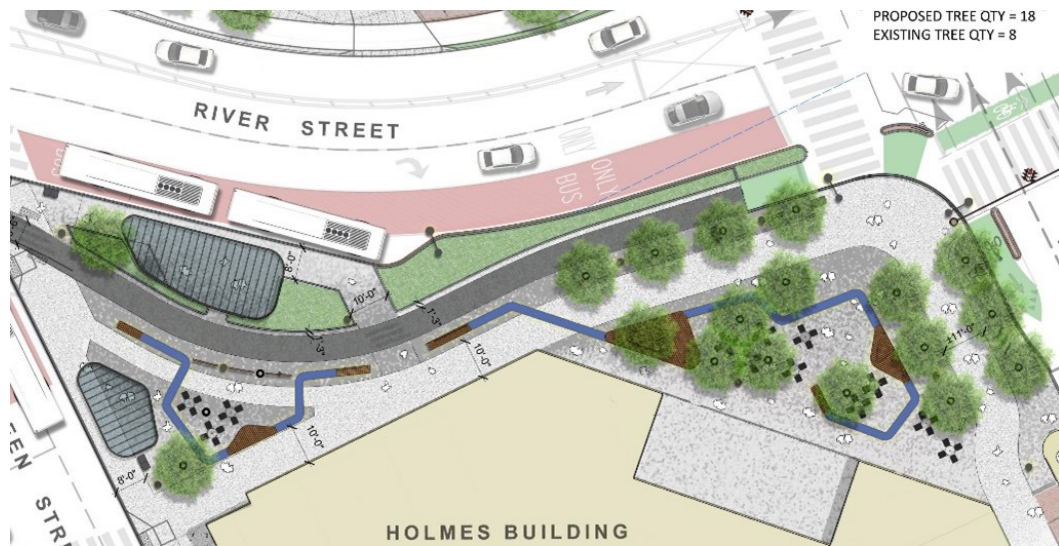
The City is committed to working with the Central Square community throughout the construction. We encourage you to reach out to us with any questions, concerns or suggestions; visit the Project website at www.CambridgeMA.gov/RiverStreet; and attend planned community events. We also urge you to continue to show your support for the local businesses that make Central Square the unique and vital heart of our city.

Sincerely,

Katherine Watkins
Commissioner, Dept of Public Works

What is Happening at Carl Barron Plaza?

Carl Barron Plaza, located at the intersection of Mass Ave and River Street, is the most significant public open space in Central Square. The redesign and reconstruction of the Plaza and the adjacent MBTA bus terminal at Green and Magazine Streets, has been a key component of the River Street project from the start. During the planning and design of the project, City staff and consultants worked closely with the Project Working Group, key stakeholders including the Central Square business improvement district (BID), users of the Plaza, the MBTA, and the broader community to develop goals and a vision for the plaza. Important goals which came out of this process included providing a Plaza that would be welcoming and safe for all users, and more fully integrated into the daily life and cultural activities of Central Square. The resulting design was shared with the public and stakeholders in 2021 and 2022.



Aerial view of Carl Barron Plaza. Color shown for the "Ribbon" is a placeholder, pending artist's final design.

Key Features

■ A significantly larger and more cohesive plaza.

The existing configuration of the MBTA bus area and its narrow connection to Carl Barron Plaza results in a number of awkward and indirect street crossings for pedestrians. It also can be crowded and confusing both for bus passengers and those just passing through. The new design connects the plaza at Mass Ave with the MBTA bus area, creating a single, more coherent and usable space.

■ Urban Design Features accommodating a variety of uses.

A combination of flexible and fixed seating and tables will offer numerous gathering opportunities, and can also allow for larger programmed events. Unique platform seating is included, which can also be used for performance opportunities. In total, seating in the Plaza is increased by about 50%. Other Plaza amenities include drinking water/bottle fill stations; trash and recycling receptacles; and numerous public power and USB charging outlets.

■ Lighting and surfacing have been designed with an emphasis on safety, accessibility, durability, and attractiveness.

Pedestrian-scale LED lighting is provided on poles, within the bus shelters, and as an integrated feature of the "Ribbon", which is described below. All of the existing brick surfacing is being removed. The primary pedestrian routes through and around the Plaza will consist of wide concrete sidewalks; with accessible concrete unit pavers used around seating areas.

■ Landscaping.

The expanded Plaza includes more than double the number of trees which exist today, providing shade at seating and gathering areas. Extensive grasses, groundcover and perennials will also be planted to provide seasonal color and interest. To promote the long-term health of the trees and plantings, the design includes a sophisticated yet proven system of pervious pavers, extensive subsurface horticultural soil, and irrigation.



Night view of Carl Barron Plaza. Color shown for the "Ribbon" is a placeholder, pending artist's final design.



View of new River Street bus shelter at Carl Barron Plaza.

■ **"The Ribbon"** is a bold sculptural feature which winds horizontally and vertically through the Plaza, visually and functionally connecting the Mass Ave and Green Street halves. It will frame the plaza at the key Mass/River/Western corner, and serve as an iconic feature both day and night. The Ribbon integrates seating and lighting, as well as a platform which can be used for performances. The Ribbon will also reflect the artistic character of Central Square, as it will be painted by artist Sophy Tuttle, recently selected by the Cambridge Arts Council. The City is excited to be engaging Sophy, and will provide information about her design as it develops!

■ **Reconfigured bus stops along the outside of the Plaza.** These bus stops will be equipped with custom shelters featuring real-time bus information, and provide enough space for passengers to wait comfortably and get on and off buses free of obstacles. One shelter includes an integrated workspace for MBTA bus operations staff, replacing the current wooden shed structure.

■ **A separated bicycle lane** will connect people riding in the new River Street separated lane with existing and planned bike facilities on Mass Ave.

Construction Schedule & Plaza Conditions

The Contractor for the River Street/Carl Barron project, P. Gioioso & Sons (PGS), plans to begin initial exploratory and demolition activities in the Plaza and MBTA area in December 2023. As a complex project in a busy urban environment and transit crossroads, the total duration of Plaza work is expected to be around 24 months.

During all phases of the work, there will be unavoidable disruption to the Plaza. DPW will review all proposed PGS work plans prior to each activity or phase of construction. The safety of the public is critical, and as space becomes more constrained not all current Plaza activities will be able to be maintained.

Construction Phase Priorities



Maintaining access to building and business entries which directly abut the Plaza



Maintaining safe and direct-as-possible pedestrian access between Green Street and Mass Ave. It is likely that various portions of the Plaza will be fenced off during construction, and fencing and pedestrian routes will shift from time to time. We will be working with PGS, the BID, and others to develop ornamental scrims for the fences to provide an attractive visual environment.



Maintaining efficient and convenient MBTA bus operations and bus passenger access. It is likely that bus stop locations will need to change during construction, and we are working closely with MBTA to plan these changes so that inconvenience is minimized. Detailed public notifications will be posted on-site and distributed electronically by the City and MBTA prior to any changes.

What Activities Will Occur First?

■ **Tree removals.** In December, PGS will remove the existing trees from the Plaza. These trees are near the end of their life span due to their confined condition in raised planters. As noted above, the final design features significantly more trees and much better growing conditions. A public tree removal hearing was held on November 17, 2022, and additional details may be found at www.CambridgeMA.gov/RiverStreet.

■ **Partial Demolition/Exploratory Test Pits.** Following the tree removals, PGS will excavate test pits at various locations in order to verify underground soil and utility conditions, especially where foundations for the future Ribbon and bus shelters will be located. A number of these locations coincide with existing bench seating and other elements in the Plaza, so these items will need to be removed. It is expected that this work will first be performed in the “north” Plaza closest to Mass Ave; and then in the “south” or MBTA area closest to Green Street.

■ **Subsurface work.** After the initial preparatory items above are completed, PGS will begin to work “from the bottom up” to construct the new Plaza. Work in 2024 is expected to consist of installation of utilities, foundations, and subsurface horticultural soils and irrigation systems. Work in 2025 is planned to include above-ground structures, trees and landscaping, lighting, curb and sidewalks, and urban design furnishings.

Stay Informed!

To learn more about the project or to receive future project updates by email please sign up for the project email list by scanning the QR code below or visit:

www.CambridgeMA.gov/RiverStreet



Birds-eye view of Carl Barron Plaza. Color shown for the “Ribbon” is a placeholder, pending artist’s final design.

