

Central Square Rezoning Outreach & Engagement Plan

June 2024

Summary

The Central Square Rezoning Outreach & Engagement plan identifies engagement goals and measures of success; outlines a variety of tools to meaningfully reach Cambridge's diverse communities; and includes a schedule of engagement activities. Staff will continually evaluate the impact of engagement in achieving the stated goals and adapt engagement strategies as needed.

Community feedback received from the public engagement process will inform the development of zoning recommendations in Central Square. Zoning. The purpose of the resulting zoning petition is to realize the community's long-term vision for this Square. As place-based experts, the community's knowledge, experiences, insights, and ideas are critically valuable, ensuring any resulting development aligns with and advances the community's collective goals and priorities. This process is focused on initiating, deep, meaningful, and ongoing conversations about the shaping of Central Square, which will in turn influence and set the stage for future discussions around individual sites and projects within it.

Engagement Goals & Measures of Success

Engagement goals are organized into three categories:

1. Building Awareness:
2. Getting Input
3. Balancing Priorities

The following table outlines specific goals under each category; the various tools employed to achieve the goals; and metrics used to measure success. The City does not have standard numerical goals for successful community engagement - **for this project we are defining successful community engagement as broad awareness with representative engagement as measured by the metrics listed below.** The number of people reached and engaged will be tracked across all engagements, and demographic data will be collected as appropriate.

	Goal	Tools	Measures of Success
Building Awareness	Share information with the community about past planning processes and zoning changes in Central Square	<i>Walking Tours, Pop-Ups, Block Party, Project Website, Email/Phone Communication, Social Media, Flyers, USPS Mailers, Email Notifications, Public Calendars</i>	Number of people information reaches, including informational conversations about the project. This will increase the number of community members who participate while also honoring the agency of each individual to choose their level of participation.
	Make engagement accessible, clear and focused	<i>Walking Tours, Pop-Ups, Block Party, Project Website, Email/Phone Communication, Social Media, Flyers, USPS Mailers, Email Notifications, Public Calendars</i>	
	Engage with an audience that is demographically representative of Central Square	<i>Walking Tours, Pop-Ups, Block Party, Project Website, Email/Phone Communication, Social Media, Flyers, USPS Mailers, Email Notifications, Public Calendars</i>	
Getting Input	Learn about existing needs, goals, and factors to be considered for future zoning changes	<i>Community Meetings, Focus Groups, Walking Tour, Pop-Ups, Block Party, Stakeholder Relationship Building, Project Website, Collaborative Online Mapping</i>	Attendance at public meetings, number of deep interactions with community members (i.e. conversations, focus groups), review of demographic data collected and shared by stakeholders, number of brief interactions
	Hear from and listen to new voices, including underheard,	<i>Community Meetings, Focus Groups, Walking</i>	

	underserved, and historically excluded communities in Cambridge	<i>Tour, Pop-Ups, Block Party, Stakeholder Relationship Building, Project Website, Collaborative Online Mapping</i>	
Balancing Priorities	Build on existing knowledge, history, and ideas while seeking new ideas	<i>Community Meetings, Focus Groups, Block Party, Stakeholder Relationship Building</i>	Attendance at events and public meetings, comments/feedback on draft recommendations, clear connections between recommendations and community input.
	Discuss community ideas including areas of different priorities	<i>Community Meetings, Focus Groups, Block Party, Stakeholder Relationship Building</i>	
	Gather information on specific project details to inform recommendations	<i>Community Meetings, Focus Groups, Block Party, Stakeholder Relationship Building</i>	

Project Audience

This engagement plan aims to reach several key audiences directly and indirectly impacted by the project. Each will require different engagement methods and outreach tools. These groups include:

- Residents (such as Neighborhood Associations, CHA properties, artists' housing, seniors, youth, long time residents and newcomers to Central Square)
- Business Owners (such as Central Square BID, property owners, small business network)
- Community Organizations (such as Churches and faith-based organizations, membership organizations)
- Arts & Culture Organizations (such as arts nonprofits and organizations, nightlife and performance venues, Arts Council)
- Mission-driven Organizations (such as nonprofits, sustainability advocates, unhoused support)
- Social Centers (such as Youth centers, Senior centers, unhoused service providers, Community Learning Center)

- Municipal Partners (such as Cambridge Housing Authority, Central Square Advisory Committee, Library, Health Alliance, Human Services)
- Users of Central Square services/businesses

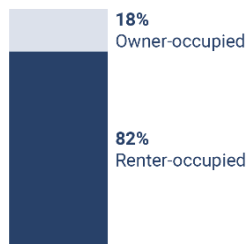
Cambridge Community

Hearing from the broader Cambridge community is crucial since Central Square is a destination and resource for all residents. We can engage this diverse group through CET outreach, which is not confined to a specific location, and by using Daily Updates, social media, email listservs, our website, and open public meetings, as well as building relationships with community based stakeholders whose communities may also not be bound by where someone lives.

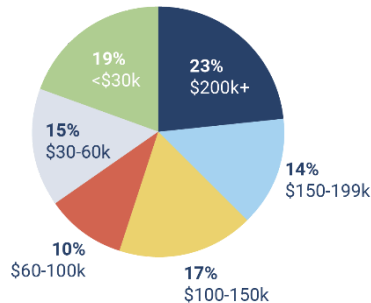
Central Square

This group, consisting of residents, business owners, and workers in Central Square, is directly impacted by the rezoning. Their involvement in the process should be meaningful and substantial, given their significant presence and time spent in the area.

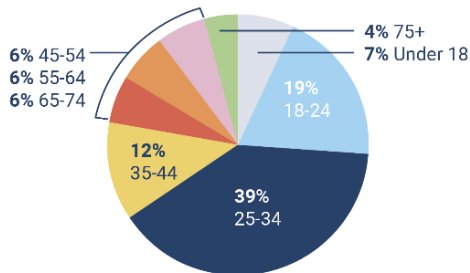
Tenure



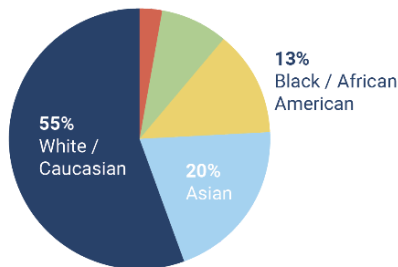
Household income



Age



Race & Origin



The project aims to hear from a demographically representative audience of Central Square. However, participation in sharing demographic information will be optional, ensuring it is never a barrier to be a part of the process. The diverse demographics of Central Square will be kept in mind as we develop our plan, using various tools outlined in the engagement tool section below to achieve this goal.

Underheard, Underserved, and Historically Excluded Communities

The City of Cambridge and the Community Development Department acknowledges the need to make community engagement accessible to all community members. This means community engagement is designed to reach community members who have been underheard, underserved, and historically excluded.

These are defined by the Community Engagement Team as:

- **Underheard:** a person or group that does not have equitable access to government planning processes or civic participation
- **Underserved:** a person or group that does not have equitable access to a resource
- **Historically excluded:** a group that was not given full rights, privileges, and opportunities by systems and people. Members of these groups experience discrimination due to laws, traditions, and societal norms.

Increasing accessibility for these groups increases accessibility for **all** community members. While the work of the CET@CDD focuses on reaching these community members, all community engagement tools are created to be as inclusive and welcoming as possible. Understanding that we need to build trust with the community deeply informs this approach.

Additionally, engagement to ensure that **community members most impacted by this study** have ample opportunity to engage and give input into the study area.

Both of these goals are addressed by strategic engagement strategies including:

- Plain language review on public facing materials
- A variety of community engagement events to give community members choice
- Area specific outreach
- Multi-lingual Helpline
- Optional sharing of demographic information
- Collaboration with the Community Engagement Team at CDD (CET@CDD)
- Collaborating with stakeholders to receive their feedbacks in ways that work for them

Schedule & Summary of Project Phases

The project is separated into three phases and is anticipated to span roughly fifteen (15) months from February of 2024 through April of 2025. The process has been designed to deliver the Draft Zoning Petition and Design Guidelines to the City Council by early 2025 to facilitate potential adoption in Spring 2025. The project will leverage the engagement of prior planning efforts such as the C2 Study (2013),

Envision Cambridge (2019), and the Central Square City Lots Study (2023) to advance the project in a time-sensitive manner while still ensuring robust, diverse, and meaningful engagement.

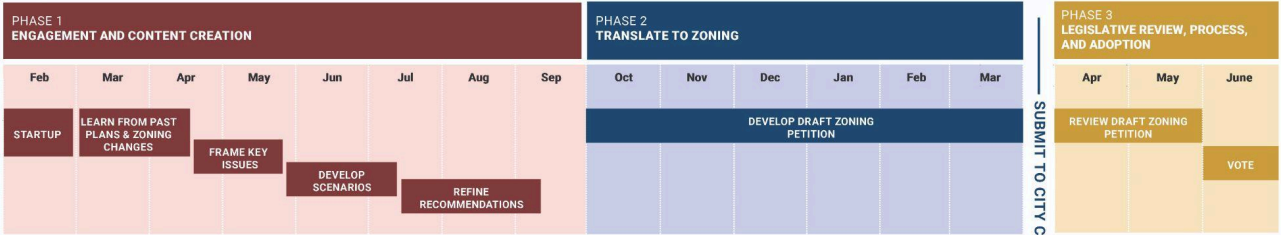
The first phase, Engagement and Content Creation, centers on community engagement and collaborative content creation, leveraging residents and stakeholders as place-based experts to confirm community priorities and help shape the initial framework. This phase is organized around three community meetings across four months, each providing an opportunity to reflect on the work being advanced in the interim. Between the first and final meetings, a series of focus group sessions, online collaborative mapping, and pop-ups at City events provide additional opportunities to meet with and learn from the community in-person where they are. These meetings will surface additional stakeholders for outreach; influence the format, focus, and locations of future meetings; uncover additional areas of research and study; and provide opportunities to share information and conclusions to-date. At the final community meeting, the project team will share potential outcomes, truth-test conclusions, and demonstrate how the community's comments and feedback will influence the development of the zoning petition language.

In the second phase, Translate to Zoning, the CDD Zoning & Development and Urban Design teams will advance the Draft Zoning Language and corresponding Design Guidelines respectively. Community recommendations will shape and influence the production of the zoning petition by providing a framework of goals and hierarchy of priorities that the language will strive to enable through future development. Internal engagement and close collaboration with other City departments and agencies will ensure a high level of coordination with related City projects and priorities.

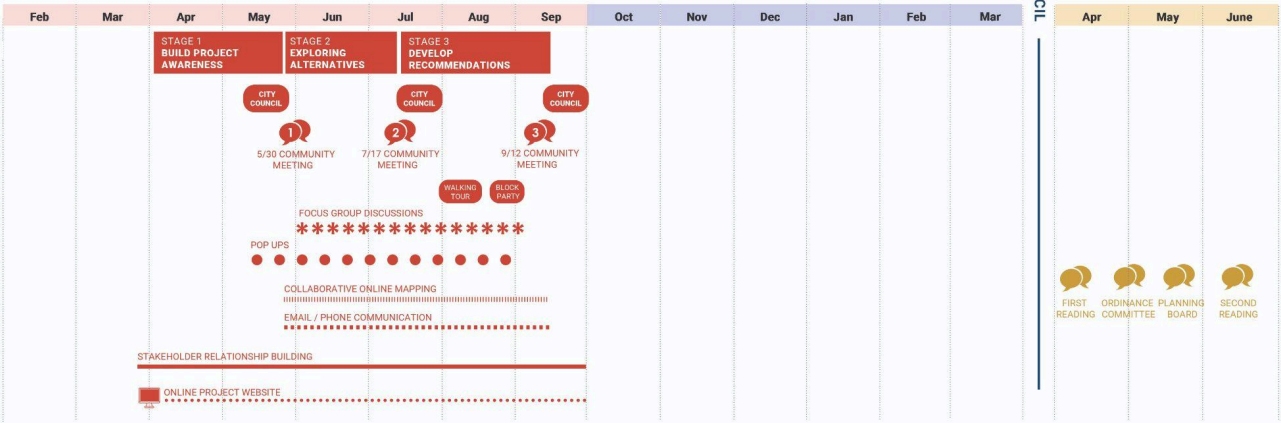
In the final phase, Review and Adoption, the zoning petition will be sent up to City Council for review and potential adoption. The public engagement process will shift to public meetings held by legislative bodies and boards such as the City Council, Council Subcommittees, and the Planning Board. These will allow for additional opportunities for public input and comments, and allow elected officials to verify that the petition language accurately reflects the community's priorities, goals, and vision for Central Square. CDD staff will support these public meetings by providing information and materials, answering Councilor's and Board Member's questions, and recording and responding to community questions and feedback where appropriate. Two weeks after the second reading, the City Council will then vote to adopt or reject the zoning petition.

SCHEDULE | Central Square Rezoning

PROJECT SCHEDULE



ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE



See appendix for larger version

Engagement and Outreach Tools

This plan was developed intentionally using a variety of engagement tools and strategies. In this plan **engagement tools** are the different methods used to engage with community members. Different engagement tools reach different audiences and are most productive for different types of feedback. For instance, public meetings are a great way to communicate with a large group of people all at once but tend to be attended more frequently by community members who are older, white and own property (*Einstein, Katherine Levine, Maxwell Palmer, and David M. Glick. “Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes.” Perspectives on Politics.). Focus groups and conversations with stakeholders reach smaller groups of people but allow for more in depth conversation and feedback. These take time and relationship building to create.

For the purposes of this plan, **outreach tools** are how awareness is shared both about the project in general and about specific community engagement opportunities. Sharing this information intentionally with the communities most impacted and with the Cambridge community in general will be done in a multitude of ways to ensure that we reach the largest audience. The variety of **engagement tools** give community members many opportunities to give feedback and maintain agency in choosing if and how they engage in the process.

Meaningful engagement begins before a project starts, and continues long after it has concluded. Building and leveraging sustained community relationships will allow the project team to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the community, reach out to existing community groups to better understand the social context, and identify new stakeholders to begin engaging with. Community engagements with stakeholders will be co-created and responsive to the needs of stakeholders/community based organizations.

Demographic information will be collected on an opt in basis whenever appropriate for the audience and community engagement tool. This is to ensure that data is gathered to measure progress without creating a barrier for participation for community members who may not be comfortable sharing. CET@CDD outreach workers will also share demographic information for the communities they work with as appropriate and with permission. When collaborating with community based organizations, with their consent, demographic data for their communities may be used as proxy data when collecting demographic data for this project may be a barrier to participation.

CET at CDD

The Community Engagement Team at the Community Development (CET@CDD) is the second community engagement team in the City of Cambridge. CET@CDD focuses on reaching community members who are underserved, underheard, and historically excluded and represents six linguistic communities and the American born Black community. Outreach workers also partner deeply with the Community Engagement Team at the Department of Human Service Programs. While CET@CDD follows a school year calendar, outreach workers do have hours this summer to support outreach for this project.

Communities represented by CET@CDD:

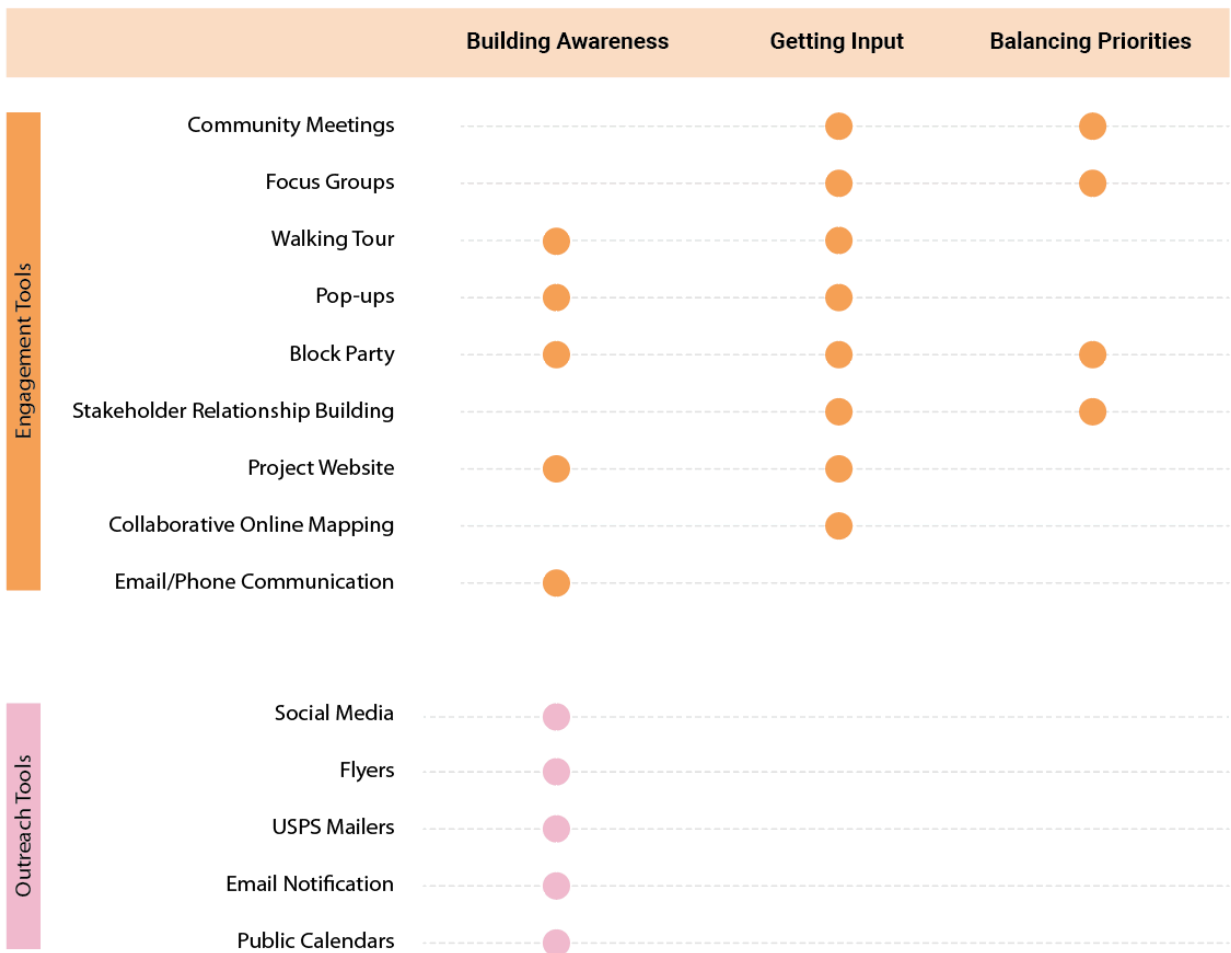
- Arabic speaking
- American born Black
- Amharic speaking
- Bangla speaking
- Chinese speaking
- Haitian Creole speaking
- Spanish speaking

CET@CDD will support this project's community engagement by:

- Providing feedback on project materials, messaging, and focus group design
- Participating in a focus group representing the concerns of their communities
- Recruiting members of their communities to participate in a focus group
- Providing outreach for the project and events by:
 - Posting project materials at places of community (i.e. places of worship, small businesses, community spaces)
 - Sharing project materials with community members/community leaders in person, via intentionally created groups (not specific to Central Square)

- Sharing information 1:1 with community members including providing context and sharing feedback
- Sharing any feedback from community members with the project team
- Connecting community members to give the Multilingual Helpline to give feedback in languages other than English
- Sharing the online collaborative mapping tool with their community members

The chart below shows how each engagement and outreach tool supports the broader community engagement goals:



Engagement Tools

- **Community Meetings (3 total, 1-2 hours each with 70-100 participants per meeting)** - These large gatherings are held to engage a wide audience in information sharing and discussion in an open, collective setting. They provide opportunities for team members to hear from and

listen to community members, business owners, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders. They will likely be virtual to promote increased accessibility, however the format may change based on community feedback. A variety of interactive tools such as Slido and Miro will facilitate real-time collaboration and real-time audience participation.

- **Focus Groups (6-10 meetings with representatives from 75+ groups/organizations, 1-2 hours each with 10-15 participants)** - Focus groups will provide smaller group discussions around a variety of themes, topics, and geographic focus areas. Responses are typically verbal, open-ended, broad, and qualitative, allowing for deeper conversations than possible in surveys or larger community meetings.. Focus groups will be used to capture the emotional aspects of a participant's response and make room for discussion between people. These meetings will provide the team with targeted feedback and insights from the groups identified in project audience. *See appendix for current list of groups and organizations.*
- **Meetings with Existing Stakeholder Groups (6-8 meetings with existing stakeholder groups)** - Meetings with existing organizations, including the Central Square Advisory Committee, neighborhood organizations, and other standing committees will be held to hear directly from the organizations.
- **Walking Tour (1-2 hours with 15-30 participants)** - The walking tour will provide an opportunity for the team, residents, business owners, and other community members to come together in Central Square to experience the space, learn, listen, and talk in real time about existing conditions and potential changes. Collaboration with the Cambridge Historical Commission will provide additional insights into the history and evolution of Central Square. Accommodations will be provided to ensure all abilities and ages are able to participate, incorporating interactive activities designed to make it fun and interactive.
- **Pop-ups (Number determined through engagement process)** - Team members will attend events in Central Square and throughout the surrounding neighborhoods to build awareness and meet residents in their communities. These will employ a variety of formats; some may involve flyering at Citywide events (i.e. Citywide Dance Party, River Fest), attending resident-organized neighborhood block parties, participating at CHA and BID-sponsored events, and tabling at parks and farmer's markets in the surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Block Party (1 day)** - The closure of Norfolk Street to vehicular traffic will create a temporary community gathering space to bring residents together in the heart of Central Square to connect, enjoy the space, and learn about the project. Tactical urbanism strategies will be employed to transform the space into a welcoming environment with music, food, and games. Hosting the event within the Square will allow for place-based conversations about community priorities and trade-offs between different scenarios. The team will reach out to local partners such as the BID to co-host.
- **Collaborative Online Mapping (800 - 1,000 engagements)** - An online website will allow residents and stakeholders to geo-tag locations in and around Central Square with comments, suggestions, concerns, feedback, and insights. Once collected, the team will be able to apply spatial analysis tools to identify common assets, challenges, opportunities, and trends.
- **Email/phone communication** - Project staff are continuously available via email or phone to answer resident's questions, receive feedback and input, and share information. The

Multilingual Helpline, a public-facing phone number for free interpretation services, will be leveraged to ensure that all residents have access in the language they are most comfortable using.

- **Other Events as Identified** - As conversations are ongoing with stakeholders, other events that may be appropriate from a member of the project team to attend will be identified to receive input from community members.

Outreach Tools

The tools listed below represent the strategies planned to ensure community members are aware of each engagement tool. Summaries of each completed engagement will include which outreach tools were used.

- **Project Website** - The website provides a centralized, single source for reference materials, project contact information, schedules, maps, meeting recordings, and engagement milestones, and project updates.
- **Email Notifications** - Constant Contact emails will be sent to both the project-specific and Central Square listservs a minimum of 2 weeks ahead of events and public meetings with pertinent information, links to registration, and methods for providing feedback and input.
- City of Cambridge calendar
- CDD calendar
- CDD news
- City Daily Update
- A-frame and lawn signs
- **Flyers** - 8.5x11" color flyers will be posted on community boards in key locations throughout Central Square such as businesses, restaurants, cafes, and municipal buildings as well as hand-delivered to local businesses through the Square.
- Digital flyer distributed to Neighborhood Associations
- Digital flyer distributed to CHA resident services staff to be included in CHA resident newsletter
- USPS Mailers in and around Central Square
- Sharing information with partner networks (CHA, Neighborhood Associations, other stakeholder communications/announcements)
- Posting to social media
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
 - Threads
 - Instagram
- **CET@CDD** outreach strategies as described above
- Cambridge Day

Stage 1: Build Project Awareness and Understand Needs

[April-May]

Description: The first stage of the project is focused on confirming approach to engagement, developing outreach materials and a project webpage, and identifying key stakeholders for engagement. Stage 1 will end with a public meeting focused on introducing the community to the project and summarizing relevant past plans and recommendations for Central Square.

Objectives for Stage 1:

1. Develop a responsive community engagement plan, receiving input from City staff and City Council that will reach a representative group of community members, including those who are underheard, underserved and historically excluded.
2. Develop outreach materials in alignment with the community engagement approach, ensuring accessibility.
3. Identify key stakeholders and begin reaching out to understand their capacity for engaging, preferred methods and timing, and to identify additional stakeholders.
4. Research and summarize engagement outcomes from prior planning efforts and create a clear, accessible narrative of stated goals and priorities to share with the community as a starting point.

1.1 Create an Online Presence - completed

Timing: Webpage launched by April 1, 2024

Description: The project webpage will serve as a landing page for information about the project, advertise key milestones and engagement opportunities, and be a resource for past project presentations and other materials.

Format: City-hosted website created via SiteCore

1.2 Identification of Existing Organizations and Key Stakeholders for Focus Groups - completed

Timing: Draft list by May 10th, continually updated

Description: The team will identify a list of key stakeholders from information provided by City staff, local partners, and City Council members. This will be guided by demographic data and past reports to ensure that the diversity of people who live, work, visit, worship, and learn in Central Square are accurately reflected. Input from the CET will aid in identifying underheard, underserved, and historically excluded voices. The list will be added to throughout the course of the project as additional stakeholders are

identified. Stakeholder contacts will include directors/leadership of organizing and/or utilizing existing relationships as appropriate.

Format: List for review by City Council, Excel database with contact information

1.3 Presentation & Discussion with the City Council's Neighborhood & Long-term Planning Committee - completed

Timing: May 21, 2024

Description: This will include a presentation of the project's engagement plan, overview of the purpose and process, and how it relates to other past and ongoing planning efforts.

Format: Powerpoint presentation at City Hall.

1.4 Public Meeting: Project Introduction - completed

Timing: May 30, 2024, 6-7:30pm (1.5 hours)

Description: The first public meeting will be focused on communicating project background, process, and timeline. The City team will summarize goals and zoning recommendations that have emerged from past planning efforts (such as C2, the Red Ribbon report, Envision), what has been implemented, and what recommendations remain. Community members will be asked to provide input on:

- Whether past recommendations are still relevant or need to be adjusted
- What additional goals or needs are missing and should be considered

Following the community workshop, engagement results will be synthesized and presented in an easily digestible and clear format that can be shared on multiple digital platforms.

Format: Virtual presentation via Zoom & discussion in breakout rooms using Miro



Map of USPS postal routes, where mailers about the Central Square ReZoning project were delivered.

1.5 Stakeholder Relationship Building

Timing: Ongoing

Description: The team will leverage internal established networks and those of strategic partners to build awareness about the project, share its purpose and goals, and maximize engagement. Outreach to the neighborhood organizations for The Port, Cambridgeport, Riverside, and Mid Cambridge will encourage participation by residents most immediately impacted by any zoning changes. City agencies and organizations such as CET, the Cambridge Housing Authority, and the Community Learning Center will ensure underheard, underserved, and historically excluded groups are purposefully included. Schools, libraries, and youth programs provide opportunities to engage with children and families, and the Senior Center and Council on Aging provide access and understanding for seniors.

Stage 2: Exploring Alternatives [June-July]

Description: The goal of the second stage of the project is to generate robust community conversations around different alternatives and trade-offs that will drive the resulting zoning priorities. The team will use digital modeling to create a spectrum of alternatives that clearly illustrate the range of outcomes and potential resulting development scenarios. Candid discussions around physical impacts, funding, timing, and the desired mix of uses will promote an understanding of realistic possibilities and constraints, and empower community members to make informed decisions about how best to advance a collective vision for Central Square.

Objectives for Phase 2:

1. Clearly define community goals and priorities, and begin to link them to different zoning implementation tools.
2. Create a shared understanding of the different potential scenarios and outcomes that the rezoning could result in, including their benefits and challenges.
3. Facilitate a civil and transparent dialog around trade-offs, what outcomes are achievable, and what it would require to realize them.
4. Foster consensus around a shared prioritization and vision for the future of Central Square that can directly inform the Draft Zoning Recommendations and Draft Design Guidelines.

2.1 Focus Group Discussions and Meetings with Existing Organizations

Timing: Ongoing starting in early June, 1-2 hours each

Description: Based on the Stakeholder list, focus groups will be scheduled to spread the word about the project and capture key perspectives.

Format: Virtual Zoom meetings, in-person meetings, or hybrid based on stakeholder preference. If in-person or hybrid, these will be held at spaces in the respective community such as their offices, CHA community rooms, Community Centers, Youth Centers, or municipal facilities like libraries.

2.2 Webpage Updates

Timing: Ongoing

Description: The project webpage will be frequently updated with announcements, recordings of meetings and events, the mapping survey, and engagement summaries so community members can follow along with the process and access newly created information and materials.

Format: Updates to the city-hosted project webpage in “The Latest”, “Engagement”, “Project Materials”, and “Meeting Materials” sections.

2.3 Public Meeting: Scenarios

Timing: July 17, 2024, 6-8pm (2 hours)

Description: The second public meeting will focus on clearly illustrating different potential scenarios and alternatives that could be achieved through updates to the zoning as the basis for subsequent breakout room discussions. Community goals, priorities, ideas, and concerns gathered throughout Stage 1 will be summarized and used to inform the range of outcomes for the different scenarios. Diagrams and charts

using plain language will be employed to visualize the different trade-offs and possibilities. Each will list potential benefits and drawbacks of that strategy, as well as outline timing and funding implications. Breakout rooms will allow for open and transparent conversations where community members and stakeholders can share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns about different scenarios, debate the merits of different alternatives and trade-offs, and attempt to reach a consensus regarding a hierarchy of priorities. Feedback will be facilitated, illustrated, and captured utilizing shared Miro boards.

Format: Virtual Zoom presentation & discussion in breakout rooms using Miro, potential physical viewing location at Library or Senior Center for those facing technological access challenges.

2.4 Walking Tour

Timing: Saturday morning in late July or early August, roughly 2 hours

Description: City Staff will lead a walking tour of Central Square for residents, business owners, and other stakeholders. This setting will provide an opportunity for staff and community members to experience and discuss the Square in situ, and to directly reference and react to potential opportunities and challenges. The Cambridge Historical Society will join CDD staff to co-lead the tour, adding a historical lens and speaking about the Square's place in the City's evolution. The tour will begin at City Hall and head down Massachusetts Avenue to Landsdowne Street, return up Franklin Street to Carl Barron Plaza, and then back down Bishop Allen Drive to end at Lafayette Square. Interactive activities will help prompt conversations, spur engagement, and share information in a fun and approachable way. These include:

- A visual scavenger hunt or bingo cards
- Guessing games about building heights, ages, and architectural styles

Accommodations will be provided to ensure access for all ages and abilities. A map of the route and notes on points along it will be uploaded to the project website to allow those who aren't able to participate in person to learn from the activity.

2.5 City Council Presentation

Timing: Late July 2024

Description: A presentation to City Council in late July will update Council members on the different potential scenarios and alternatives being explored, how they align with community goals and priorities, the trade-offs and implications of each, and the results to date of the engagement process and Community Meeting 2.

Format: Powerpoint presentation at City Hall.

Phase 3: Developing Recommendations [August-September]

Description: The third phase of the engagement process has two primary objectives. The first focuses on translating the community feedback and input on alternative scenarios and potential outcomes explored during Stage 2 into draft zoning and design guideline recommendations. These will be shared with the community through clear and visually compelling methods online and at events and public meetings to ensure the results accurately align with the community's vision and priorities as conveyed throughout Stages 1 & 2. A final round of input and feedback will be incorporated before the project team begins to draft the updated zoning ordinance language.

The second objective is to close the loop on the engagement process, a critical aspect of circular engagement. While this does not mean engagement for the project will end, it is important at key milestones to revisit the process with the community to demonstrate how their feedback has directly influenced and impacted the process and outcomes. It provides an opportunity to thank participants for sharing their insights, time, and experiences, to make them aware of next steps and how to stay engaged, and to notify them of any upcoming City projects and initiatives to maintain a continuous dialog.

Objectives for Stage 3:

1. Demonstrate the outcomes of discussions about trade-offs and alternatives so community members can clearly understand why certain conclusions were arrived at and what values and priorities generated them.
2. Collaboratively craft draft zoning recommendations and draft urban design guidelines with the community and key stakeholders.
3. Widely publicize the draft recommendations translated into plain language that clearly links zoning tools with community goals to allow broad accessibility and understanding.
4. Solicit broad community feedback and input on the draft zoning recommendations and draft urban design guidelines.

3.1 Focus Group Discussions and Meetings with Existing Organizations

Timing: Ongoing

Description: Focus groups that were begun in Stage 2 will continue in Stage 3. Some groups may be reconvened a second time to discuss more detailed recommendations as they develop and are refined.

Format: Virtual Zoom meetings, in-person meetings, or hybrid based on stakeholder preference. If in-person or hybrid, these will be held at spaces in the respective community such as their offices, CHA community rooms, Community Centers, Youth Centers, or municipal facilities like libraries.

3.2 Webpage Updates

Timing: Ongoing

Description: The project webpage will be frequently updated with announcements, recordings of meetings and events, the mapping survey, and engagement summaries so community members can follow along with the process and access newly created information and materials. Final project documents will be displayed prominently once created to allow for review and additional feedback.

Format: Updates to the city-hosted project webpage in “The Latest”, “Engagement”, “Project Materials”, and “Meeting Materials” sections.

3.3 Public Meeting: Recommendations

Timing: September 12, 2024, 6-8pm (2 hours)

Description: The third public meeting will focus on communicating project recommendations. This is an opportunity for the project team to summarize the feedback received throughout the engagement process, to verify project findings and conclusions with the community, and to demonstrate how community input has shaped the process and outcomes. It will also provide a final opportunity for community members to come together to ensure that priorities have been correctly balanced and that trade-offs have been clearly defined and discussed. A final round of edits/adjustments will be made prior to finalizing recommendations based on the results of the meeting. The team will also communicate next steps, how recommendations will proceed through a process to become approved zoning updates, and how to stay involved and engaged.

Format: Virtual Zoom presentation & discussion in breakout rooms utilizing Miro, potential physical viewing location at Library or Senior Center for those with technological access challenges.

3.4 Norfolk Street Block Party

Timing: Saturday in late August or early September, 12-4pm

Description: Norfolk Street will be temporarily closed between Bishop Allen Drive and Massachusetts Avenue to host a City-sponsored neighborhood block party to celebrate the end of the summer and the winding down of the engagement portion of the project. The space will be transformed through tactical urbanism strategies into a vibrant and welcoming space with games, food, and music. The Block Party will provide an opportunity for the team to meet residents and stakeholders in the space, continue to hear feedback and input from residents, and thank them for their participation. Project information, potential outcomes, and summaries of the engagement results will be featured on large printed boards at stations staffed by team members. This project will also allow the City to test whether this portion of

Norfolk St should be permanently closed to vehicular traffic in the future and permanently pedestrianized.

Format: In-person community celebration at temporarily pedestrianized Norfolk Street.

3.5 City Council Presentation

Timing: Mid to late September 2024

Description: A presentation to City Council in mid to late September will update Council members on the outcomes from Community Meeting 3, the results of the public engagement process to date, the final draft zoning recommendations, and gather their feedback prior to zoning ordinance development.

Format: Powerpoint presentation at City Hall.

Conclusion

The Engagement Plan for the Central Square Rezoning Project has been purposefully designed to gather representative community input by employing a wide variety of tools and approaches and centering access and inclusion of those tools. It seeks to leverage the knowledge, insights, and lived experiences of the Cambridge community to ensure the outcomes of the project align with the community's priorities, goals, and vision for a revitalized and thriving Central Square.

While this document describes the formal engagement for the project, the best engagement is not static and does not end once a project is completed. New strategies may be added based on community feedback or to better meet engagement goals. The relationships and conversations that result from this project need to be fostered and sustained in an ongoing fashion to ensure that the results and outcomes of the project in the future remain true to the community's vision and goals, and to create and open and transparent dialog that builds trust and understanding as the foundation for future projects and planning initiatives.