

Harvard ERC District and Greenway Plan

Advisory Group Meeting 02

Welcome!
The meeting will begin shortly.

09.26.2023

Harvard ERC District and Greenway Plan

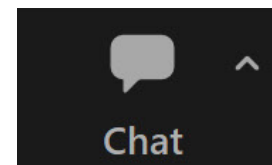
Advisory Group Meeting 02

Meeting Recording

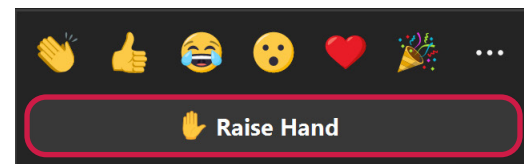
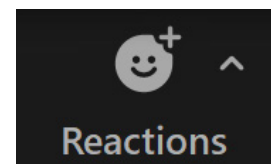
- At the request of community members, this event will be recorded and posted on the **Harvard ERC District and Greenway Plan** project web page at <https://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/harvard-erc-district-and-greenway-plan> for those who are unable to attend the Zoom event live.
- If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.
- If your camera and microphone are off, you can still participate through the text chat feature at the end of the presentation.

Zoom Tips

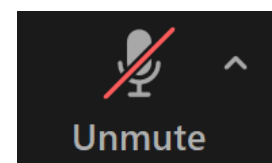
Welcome! Here are some tips on using Zoom for first-time users. Your controls are at the bottom of the screen



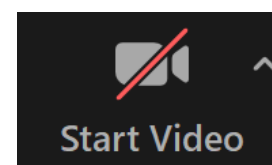
Use the chat to type a comment or ask a question at any time. The team will enable the chat at the end.



To raise your hand, click on "Participants" at the bottom of your screen, and then choose the "Raise Hand" option in the participant box



Mute/unmute – Participants will be muted during the presentation – the host will unmute you during discussion if you raise your hand and it is your turn to talk



Video on/off

Zoom Etiquette

- Please remain muted until called on. If you'd like to speak during this time please use the **"Raise Hand"** function in Zoom.
- The chat function will be enabled during the discussion agenda item. (In keeping with convention from in-person meetings.)
- Please be respectful of each other's time.
- We ask that participants limit their questions so that others may participate in the discussion. If you have more questions, please wait until all others attending have an opportunity to ask questions.
- If we are unable to get to your question at this meeting please put them in the Chat at the end or reach out to Breeze Outlaw at breeze.outlaw@boston.gov

- 1. Overview**
- 2. Public Outreach Key Takeaways**
- 3. Draft Potential Community Vision Statements**
- 4. Discussion**
- 5. Focus Groups & Site Activation**
- 6. Next Steps**

Overview

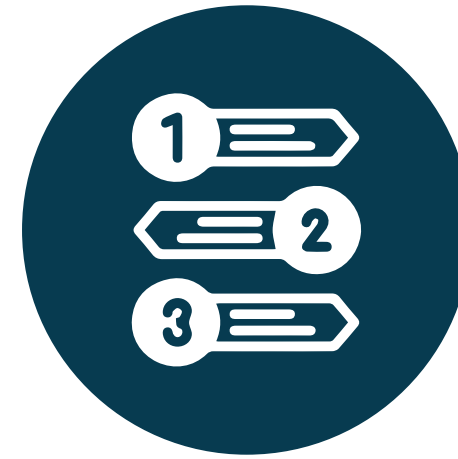
Meeting Objectives



**Confirm What We
Heard**



**Provide Feedback on
Engagement Process &
Strategy**



**Workshop Draft
Community Goals &
Statements**



**Review Focus Group
Structure & Site
Activation**

Project Objective

The project aims to develop a **District and Greenway Plan** for the ERC area, grounded in a community driven planning process to outline **neighborhood vision and priorities.**

The Project Goals



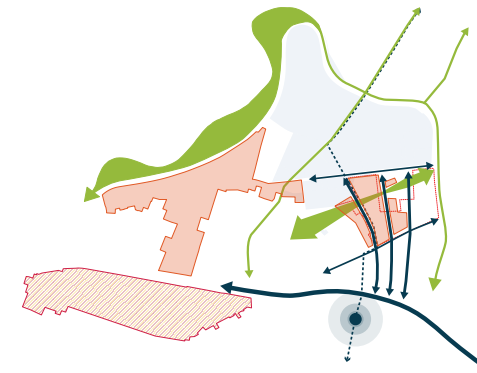
Consensus-Driven Vision

Develop a consensus-driven vision for the ERC area



Create a Predictable & Enforceable Framework

Incorporate and refine existing planning efforts to create a predictable and enforceable framework for future inclusive, equitable, and community focused development, including community benefits accompanying development



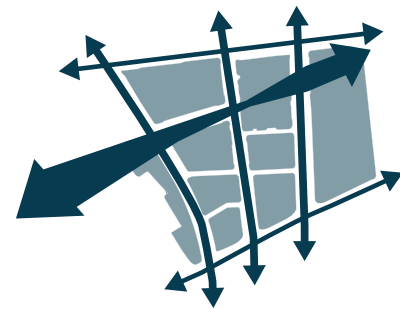
District Wide Approach

Take a district-wide approach for urban design, public realm, and transportation recommendations that emerge from the community process and are sensitive to the needs and goals of the neighborhood



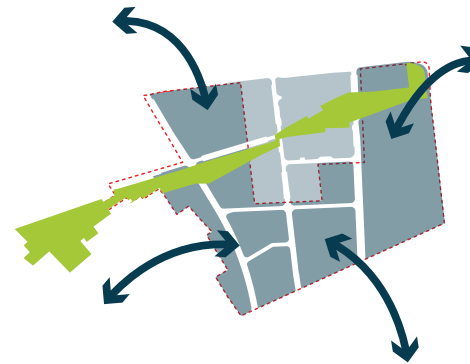
Sustainable Infrastructure Strategies

Establish sustainable infrastructure strategies, including a smart utilities approach



Establish Meaningful Connections

Establish meaningful connections to surrounding open space, streets and linear connections, the Allston-Brighton neighborhood, and future Beacon Park Yard development area



Develop Cohesive Strategies

Develop cohesive strategies for open space, development, and neighborhood edge conditions and gateways



Land Use & Urban Design Plan

Create a land use and urban design plan that can be codified into regulatory and zoning documents to implement plan recommendations.

Scope & Deliverables

Existing Conditions Analysis

- Summary of past plans & initiatives
- Existing conditions
- SWOT analysis

Community Visioning & Goals

- Develop goals and vision
- Conduct comprehensive and equitable engagement
- Interview stakeholders
- Establish community benefits matrix

Draft Frameworks

Open space frameworks

- Network map
- Open space activation & programming recommendations
- 3-5 Visualizations / storyboards

Land use & economic development

- Three draft development scenarios
- Metrics for scenarios
- Urban design and performance guidelines

Transportation & mobility

- Confirmation & synthesis of ERC roadway network
- Parcel guidelines in transportation context
- Typical street typologies
- Utility phasing & coordination

Final ERC District & Greenway Plan

- Community benefits priorities
- Greenway activation and character recommendations
- Transportation network
- Urban design and development recommendations
- Implementation recommendations

Engagement Structure & Schedule



1. Project Kick Off & Community Goals
(June - September)

2. Topical Workshops & Stakeholder Interviews
(October - January)

3. Draft Framework Plan
(February - March)

4. Final ERC District & Greenway Plan
(April - May)

Advisory Group 1

Kick off
SWOT Analysis

Public Forum 1

Kick off
Draft Community Goals

Advisory Group 2

Community Goals
Draft Community Vision

Focus Group A

Open Space & Connectivity

Focus Group B

Land Use & Economic Development

Focus Group C

Transportation & Mobility

Advisory Group 3

Focus Group Synthesis

Stakeholder Interviews

Advisory Group 4

Draft Framework Plan

Public Forum 2

Draft Framework Plan

Advisory Group 5

Final ERC District
& Greenway Plan

Public Forum 3

Final ERC District
& Greenway Plan

Engagement Structure & Schedule

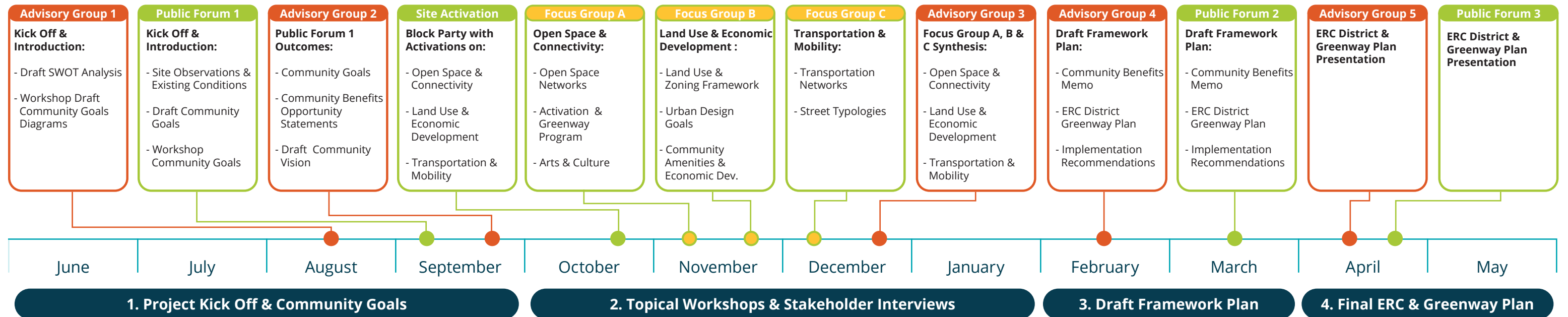


1. Project Kick Off & Community Goals
(June - September)

2. Topical Workshops & Stakeholder Interviews
(October - January)

3. Draft Framework Plan
(February - March)

4. Final ERC District & Greenway Plan
(April - May)



Public Outreach Key Takeaways

Advisory Group 01 Goals from ERC Planning Process

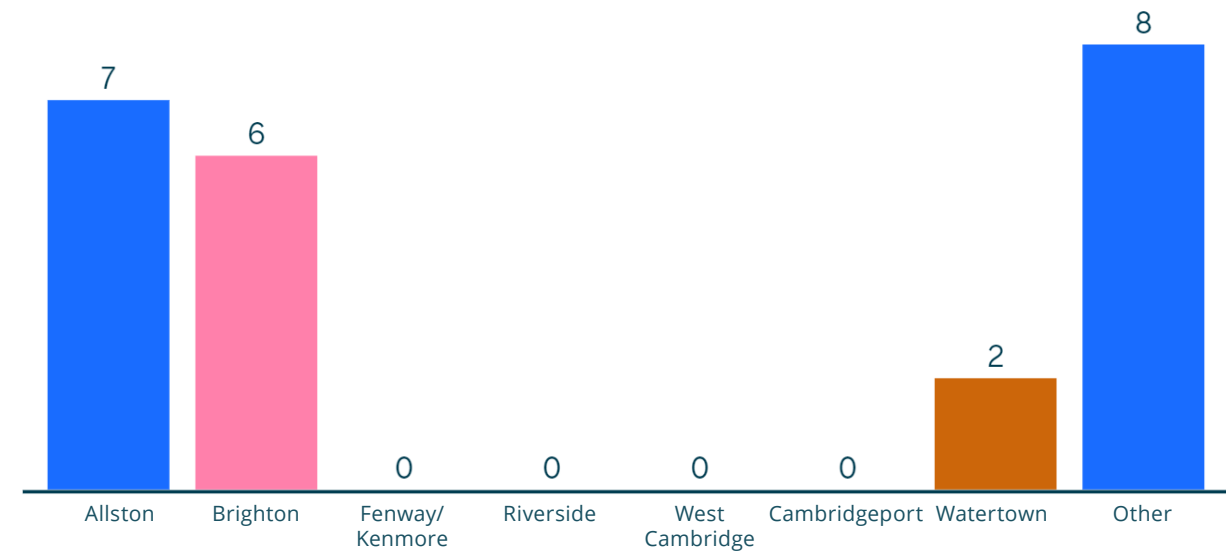


Public Forum 1 Familiarity

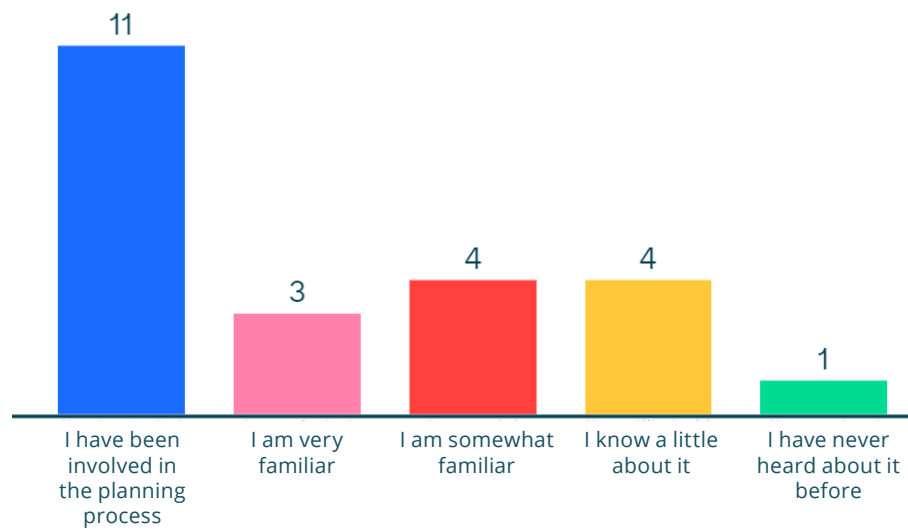
What is your connection with the project area?



What neighborhood do you live in?

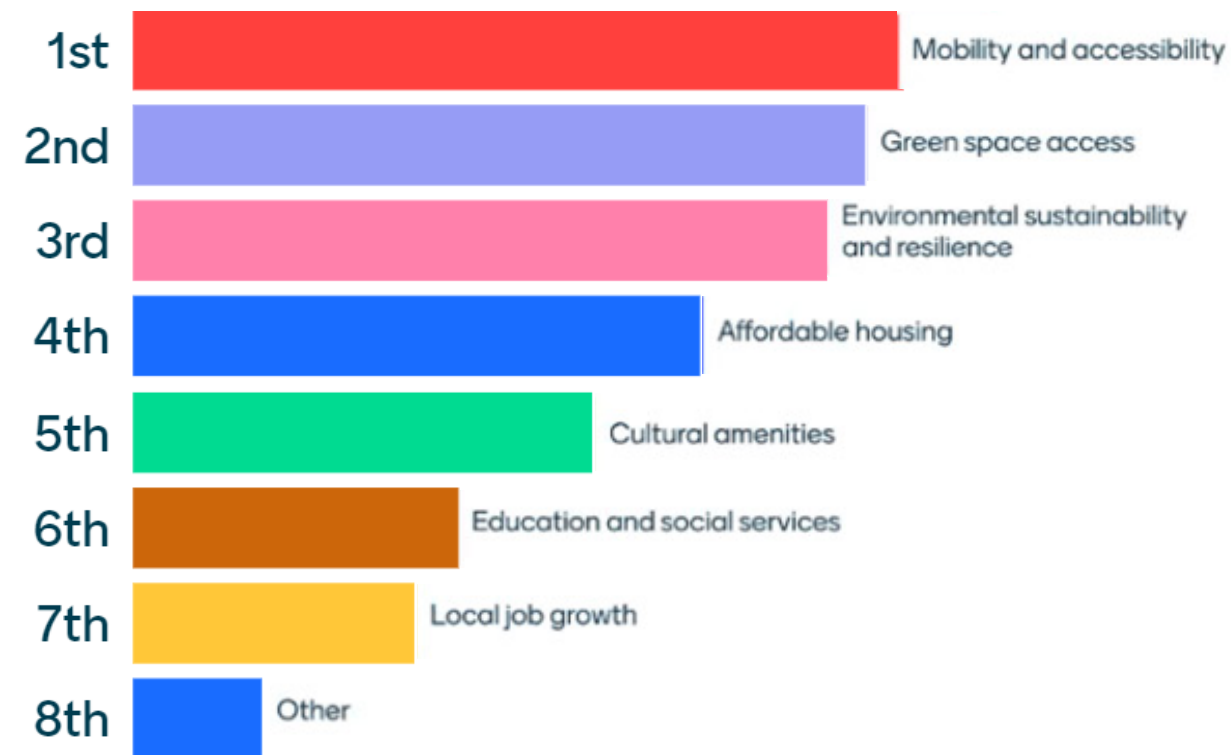


How familiar are you with the existing plans for the ERC and Greenway?

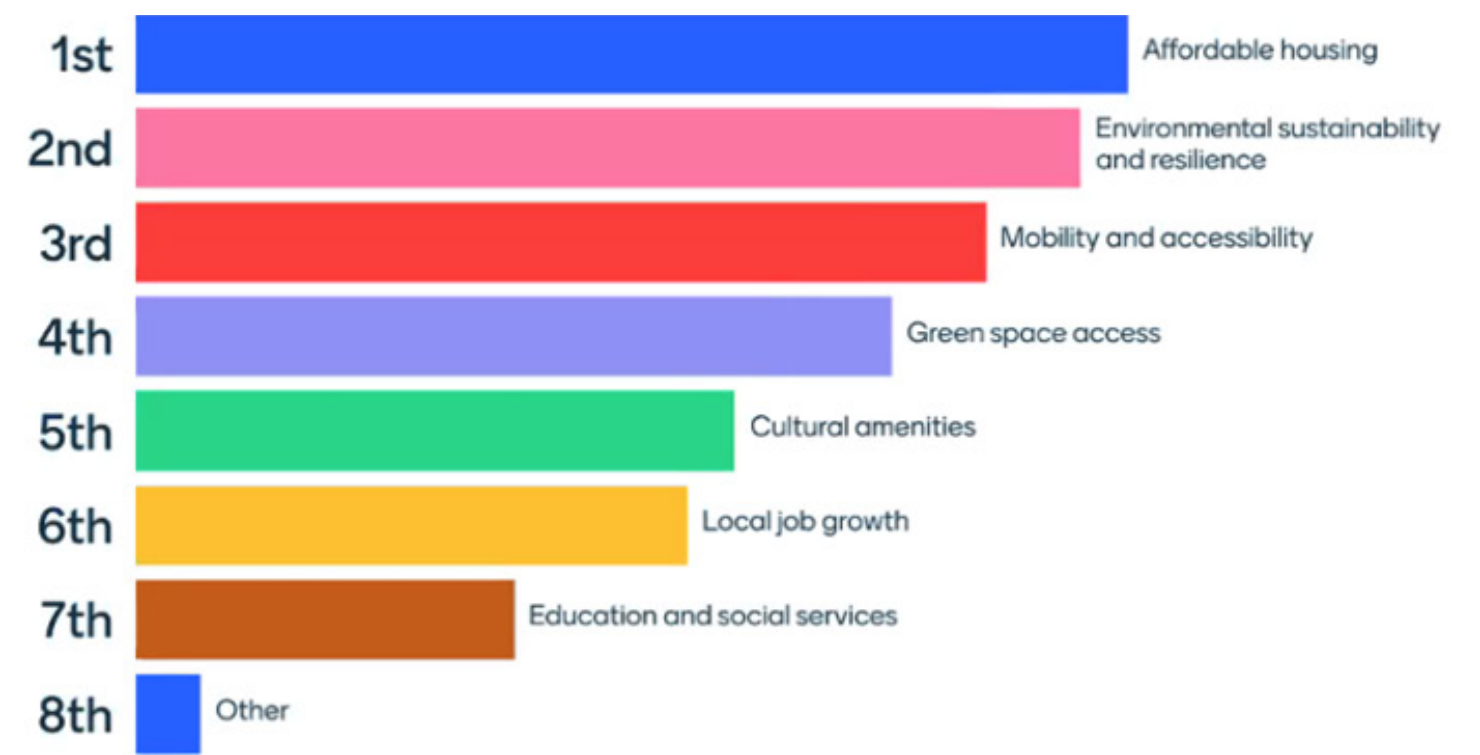


What are the most critical topics you believe we need to address in this process?

Public Forum 1



Advisory Group 1



Public Forum 1 Jamboard Comments

SWOT

Strengths

- Cool corridor, with shade and trees!
- Expanded opportunities and additional housing for a diverse community
- Reconnecting the community to the river, increasing access
- No more dirty rail yard
- Location at the nexus of key local anchors
- Edit Me!
- Edit Me!
- Edit Me!

Weaknesses

- Timing of development - questions about predictability
- Running too many concurrent planning efforts can create fatigue and confusion
- Even if the greenway is great, getting across the river by bike can still be challenging
- but can be an opportunity
- Edit Me
- Edit Me
- Edit Me!
- Edit Me
- Edit Me

Opportunities

- small storefronts, tapestry of local businesses
- Land-scape scale stormwater management; offset pollution, mitigate flooding.
- pedestrian first spaces and access
- Creating public meeting spaces, indoor and outdoor, for community use. Especially the potential capacity to create rooms that are hybrid capable.
- Intersection with I-90 project can generate momentum for the community and in engagement
- build upon the local (and global) innovation ecosystem
- reduce flooding from rain storms across Allston
- Opportunity to connect and re-stitch neighborhoods
- enhance local arts and culture
- Create affordable housing and a great place to live

Threats

- Monolithic retail: (e.g., chains, vacant store fronts)
- Street intersections/ conditions vehicularizing the greenway
- Challenges with multiple transportation projects
- Edit Me
- Edit Me
- Edit Me
- Edit Me
- Edit Me

Public Forum 1 Jamboard Comments

SWOT

Strengths

Edit Me!

Edit Me!

Edit Me! **Edit Me!**

Edit Me! **Edit Me!**

There is an immense possibility to coordinate this entire process into something great

access to river path makes larger connectivity really possible

Weaknesses

Edit Me

Edit Me **Edit Me!**

Edit Me

Edit Me **Edit Me**

lack of communication between departments, which could end up with a giant mishmash

really need the green space - in high temps like today, it's very uncomfortable and makes it a ghost town. There needs to be relief.

Opportunities

high quality streetscape/public realm - not huge multi lane roads, but smaller streets that promote connectivity.

Edit Me

bring together all city departments and private enterprises to communicate regularly together to allow for coordination

bike connections to/from the river, and making the existing narrow connection much better. Needs to do more than just connect to SFR. Connect to city & harvard climate vision

We need housing - 2021 Harvard framework talked about 1,000+ units. many of these units are already planned, need to make sure these acres also have housing

public safety through activation

mode shift is possible here

really be renowned green space with innovative stormwater management, outdoor education uses and multimodal access

Threats

Edit Me

Edit Me

Edit Me

Because this area is getting so much attention, there is a threat that coordination among different projects may impact sequencing or delay things we want to see sooner

place types that feel artificial

every sf being filled with concrete and buildings

ending up with an office park/campus that is only active 9-5

Greenway could end up being all paved - needs to be a greenway, not just a paved path. Keep the greenway green.

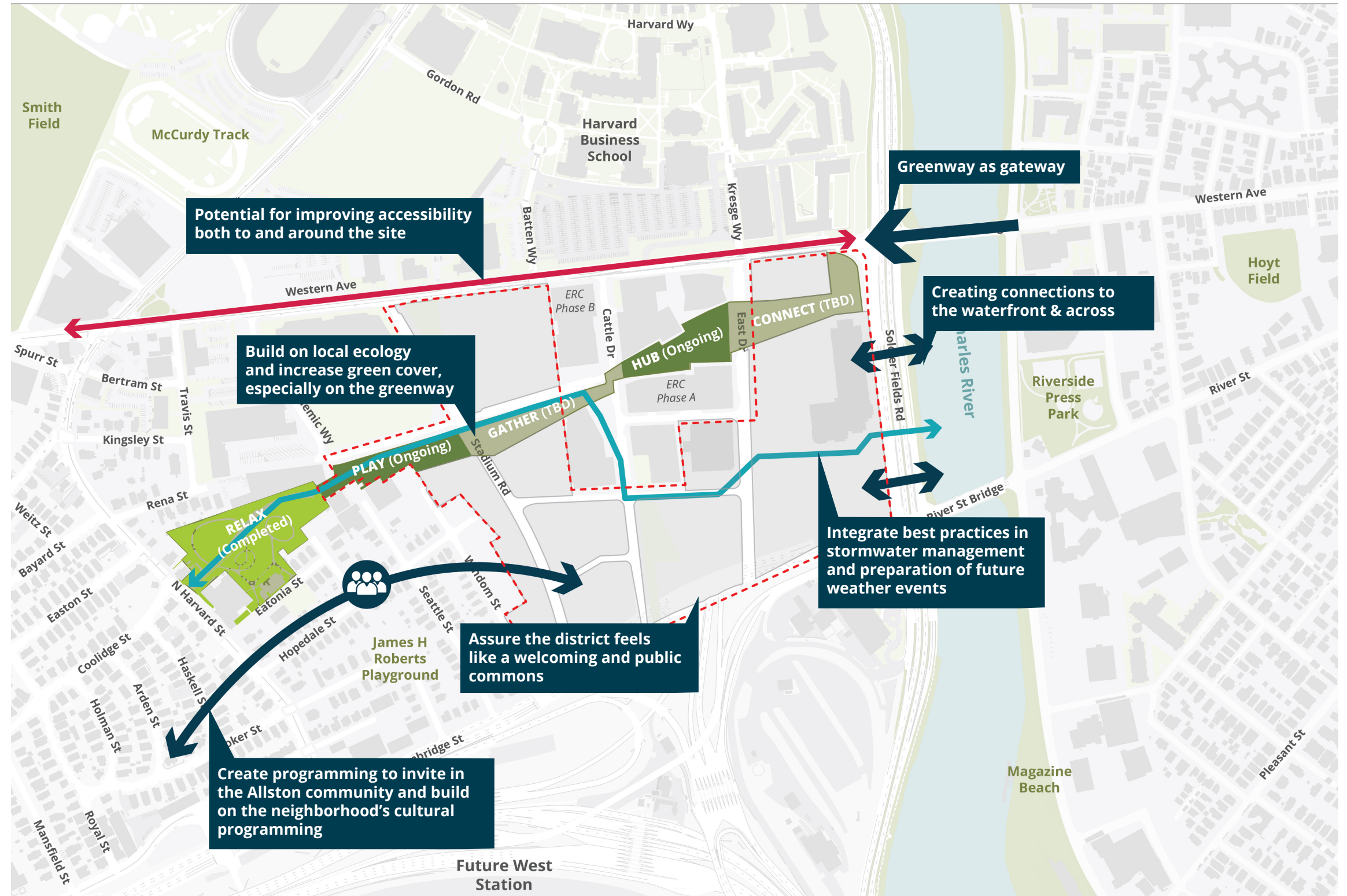
Overall Takeaways: Open Space & Connectivity

“Found that historically we plan the buildings and then everything else, like greenspace. Would like to see the greenery and landscape first and then plan the building”

“One of the threats already noted in the engagement is that this district might feel like a campus and not inviting to local residents”

“Getting people to the river and across is a great opportunity but also a great challenge”

“Opportunity for greenway, especially the eastern end, to serve as a gateway into the district and connection to the river”



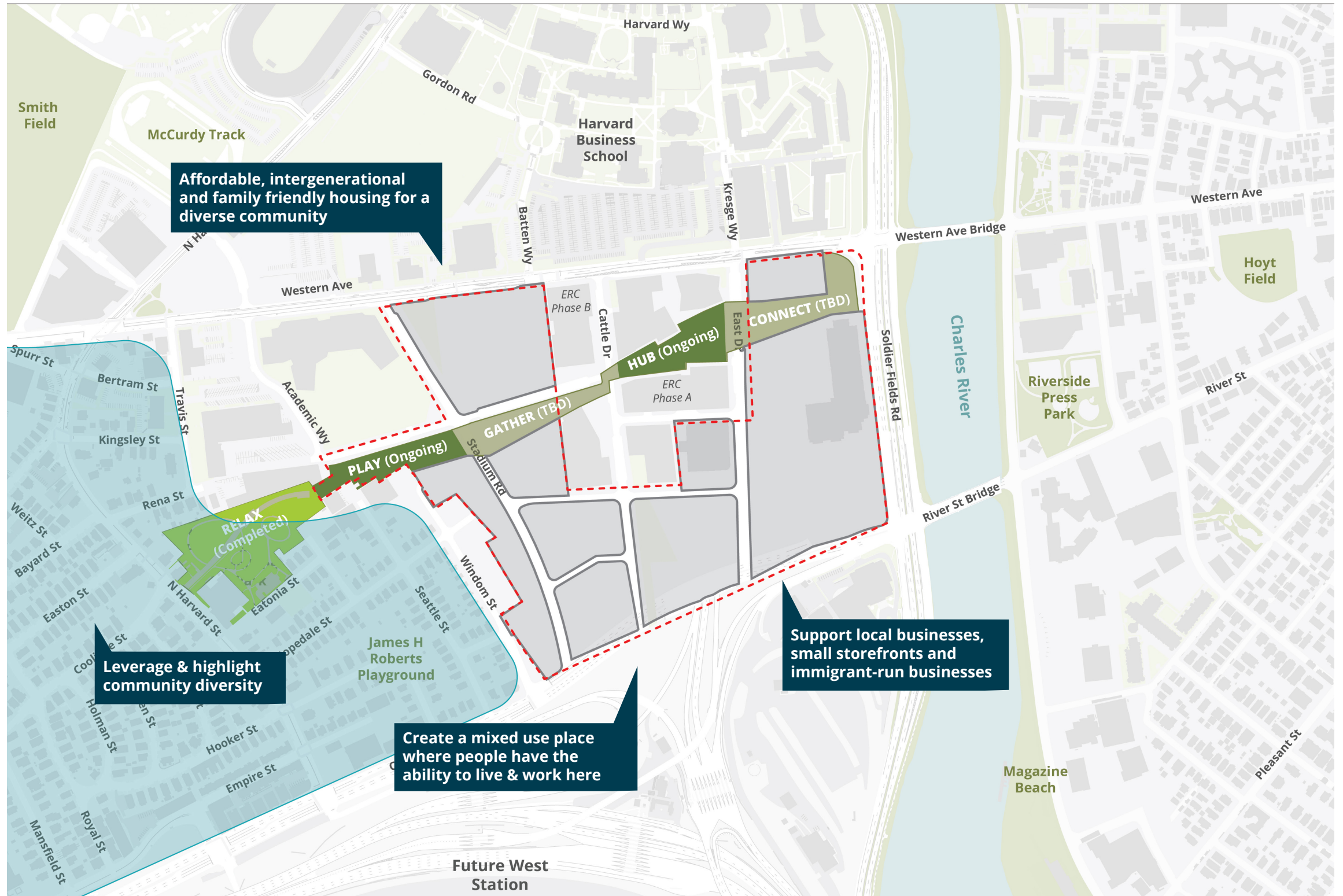
Overall Takeaways: Land Use & Economic Development

“Good opportunity to build a new neighborhood/community with housing, retail, office compared to previous Harvard plan”

“a holistic plan for different parcels instead of discrete plans”

“Affordability and ability of residents to stay here”

“Diversity within the existing neighborhoods, school system, food, art, etc. to be leveraged and highlighted”



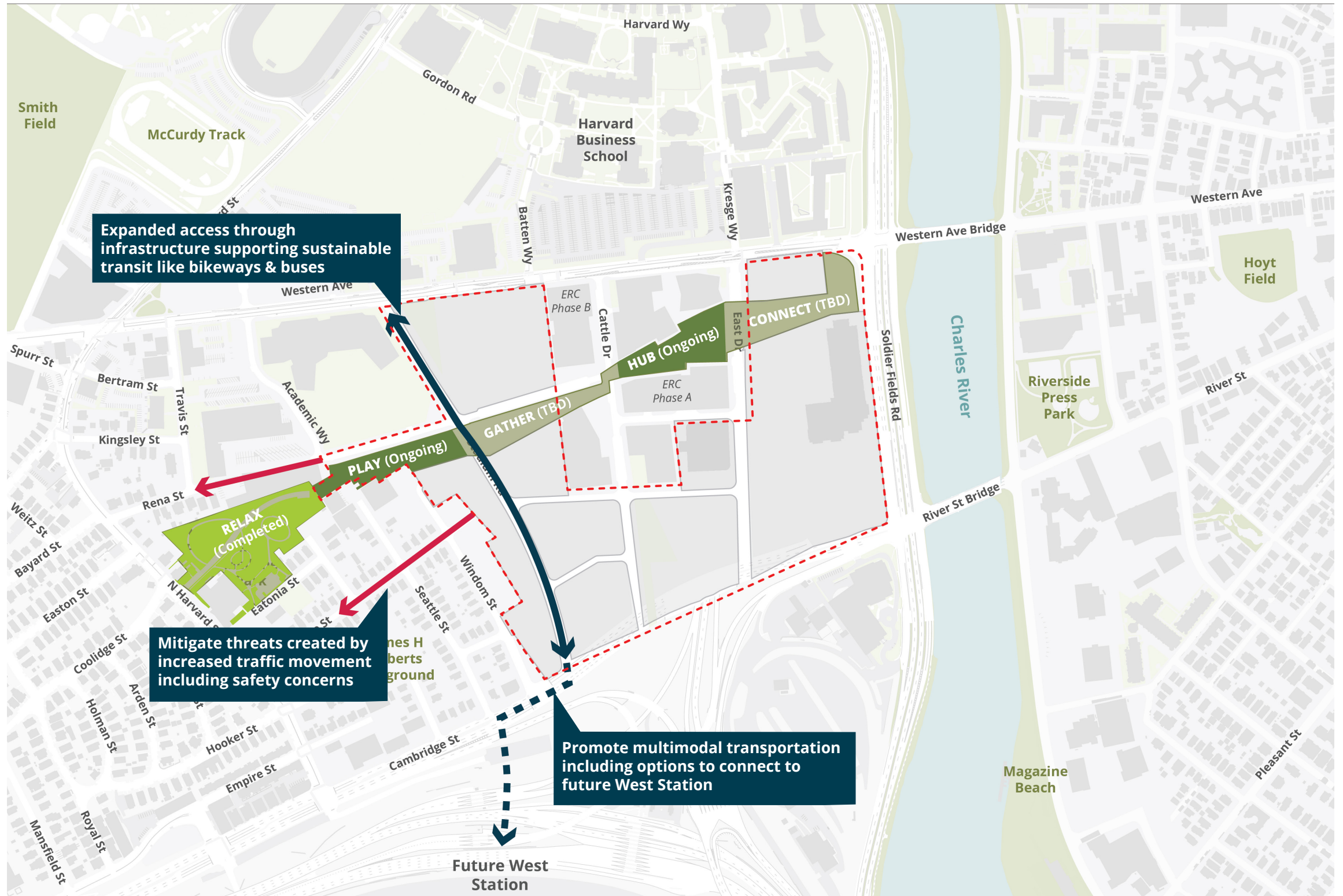
Overall Takeaways: Transportation, Mobility & Infrastructure

“Increased traffic without adequate transit improvements and safety implications of more vehicular traffic”

“What are the transportation options for people without cars?”

“bike connections to/from the river, and making the existing narrow connection much better. Needs to do more than just connect to SFR. Connect to city & harvard climate vision”

“high quality streetscape/public realm - not huge multi lane roads, but smaller streets that promote connectivity.”



Engagement Feedback

- What's going well?
- What do we want to see happen?
- What else would we like to learn from the community?
- How can we improve our engagement activities?

Draft Potential Community Vision Statements

Harvard's 2021 ERC Framework Vision Statement

Vision for the Enterprise Research Campus

The Enterprise Research Campus will be a hub of innovation and will foster connections between the academic community and its counterparts in private sector companies; between the campus and the neighborhood; between the new residential neighborhood and the existing residential community; between the area's numerous higher education institutions; between would-be entrepreneurs and investors; and between local companies and global partners. Its buildings and services will support a diversity of uses, with new residential units, space for offices and innovative labs, areas for research and conference space, and active ground floor uses that activate and engage the community—all united by a public realm network that is both special and performative.

Co-Creating a Community Vision Statement

The Harvard 2021 Framework proposes creating a mixed use **Innovation Hub** that fosters connections between cutting edge research, academia, and private sector investment.

How might we frame a community vision for the ERC?

This community plan frames the ERC and Greenway as...

- *A community innovation district*
- *A climate innovation district*
- *What else?*

The ERC builds on Allston's strengths of...

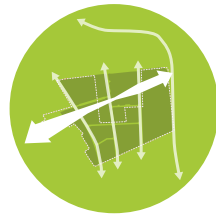
- Diversity
- Arts + Cultural Assets
- *What else?*

The ERC can serve as a bridge between...

- Campus + Neighborhood
- Allston + The Charles River
- *What else?*

Potential Community Vision Goals

Open Space & Connectivity



1. Cohesive & Connected

- Community-facing district
- Regional open space connections



2. Public & Accessible

- Welcoming + inviting
- Inclusive + open access



3. High Performing & Resilient

- Climate resilient district
- Adaptive + sustainable

Land Use & Economic Development



1. Affordable & Intergenerational

- Community-oriented development
- Meets local housing needs
- Reflects Allston's diversity



2. Vibrant, Active & Diverse

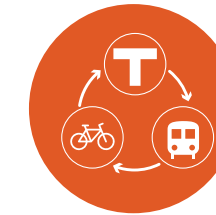
- Active ground floor environment
- Emphasis on the public commons
- Hosts community programs



3. Economic Driver for Community Growth

- Taps into local resources
- Meets local needs for jobs, education, + incubation
- Fosters community-oriented economic development

Transportation, Mobility & Infrastructure



1. Connected and Multi-modal

- Creates mobility options
- Thoughtful local + regional connections



2. Mobility & Infrastructure Futures

- New mobility + infrastructure paradigms
- Focus on sustainable + active transportation



3. Safe Mobility

- Mitigate any negative outcomes from increased traffic
- Center street safety + all-ability, intergenerational mobility

Discussion

Focus Groups & Site Activation

Overall Structure



* Dates are tentative and subject to change

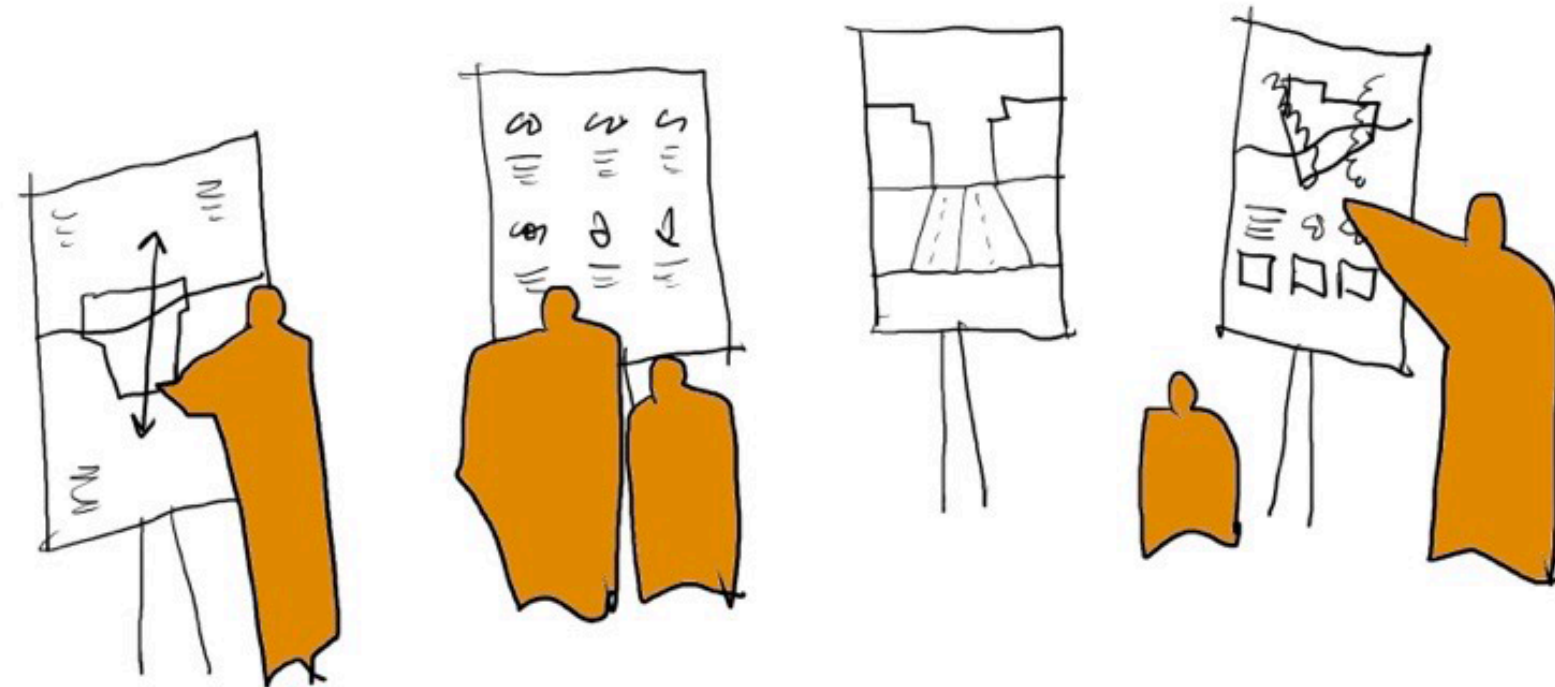
Site Activation - Objectives

- Activate the space in and around the ERC District and Greenway to help the public understand the site's potential, scale, and context
- Offer participants an opportunity to engage in the planning process in novel ways, using a variety of mediums
- Provide an informal space for the community to gather, share its ideas and hopes for the future of the area
- Strengthen partnerships with different community efforts/organizations
- Build trust by being transparent and available



Site Activation - Run of Show

- **Tours start:** 10:00 am
- **Stations open:** 11:00 am
- **Stations close:** 2:00 pm
- **Project team meet/greet:** 2:15pm
- **Social hour ends:** 4:00pm



Site Activation - Potential Topical Activities

General Activities

Kid's Table



Tell Your Allston Story



Allston Costume Contest



Open Space & Connectivity

Landscape Painting



Tape / Chalk Artist

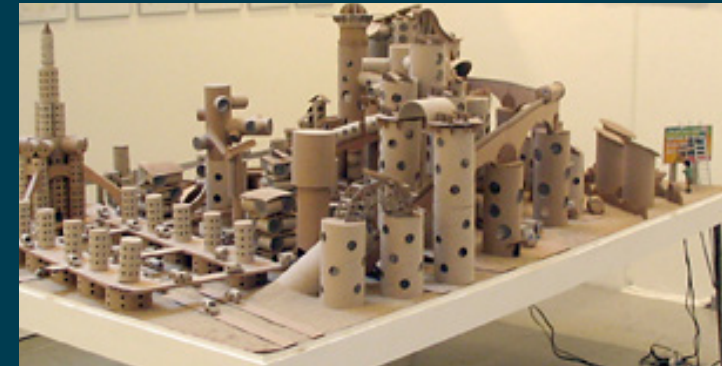


Greenway Walking Tour

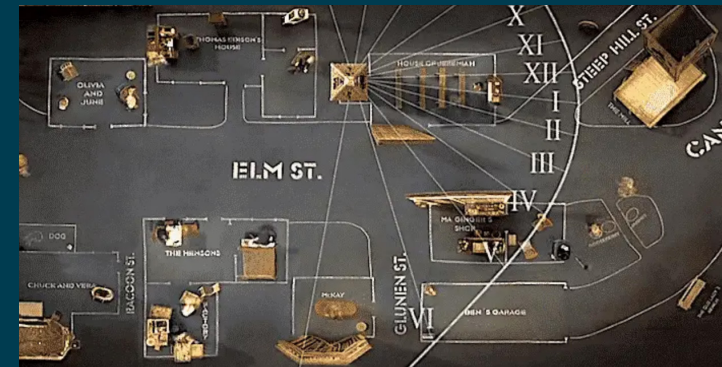


Land Use & Economic Development

Physical Model/Block Model



Site Plan/Map Interaction



Neighborhood Character Description



Transportation, Mobility & Infrastructure

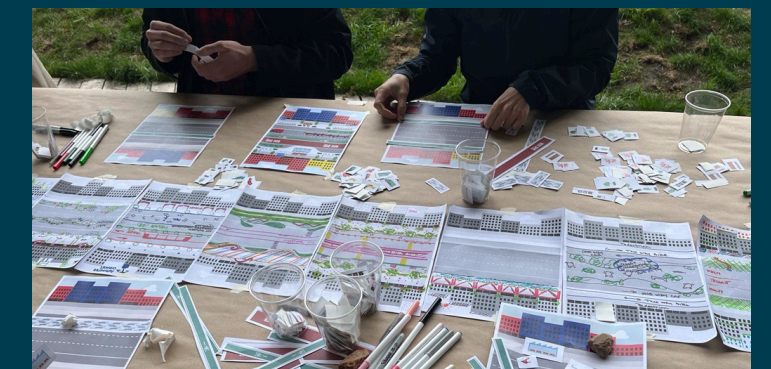
Bike Tour



Circulation Map



Create Your Own Streets



Focus Group - Objective

- Hold a topic-focused discussion on key issues in the ERC District and Greenway Planning Process
- Encourage discussion between the general public and content matter experts
- Identify community-defined challenges and opportunities, and ideate community-defined solutions

Focus Group - Draft Run of Show

- Opening Remarks
- Overview Presentation
- Live Polling/Question Selection
- Panelist Discussion & Public Q+A
- Break Out Groups
- Close out

Next Steps

How You Can Help!

- **Spread the word**
- **Come to the Site Activation**
- **Respond to post meeting survey that will be circulated via email**
- **For any questions please contact Breeze Outlaw at breeze.outlaw@boston.gov**

Thank You!

WXY architecture + urban design
25 Park Place, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10007
T 212 219 1953
E office@wxystudio.com