

Harvard ERC District and Greenway Plan

Public Forum 01

September 6th, 6:30pm

Welcome!

Please go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and input the code **7643 7663** or scan the QR code below to share your thoughts as you enter the meeting today!



The meeting will begin shortly.

09.06.2023

Harvard ERC District and Greenway Plan

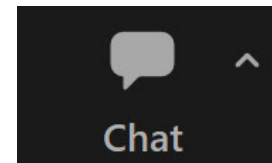
Public Forum 01

Meeting Recording

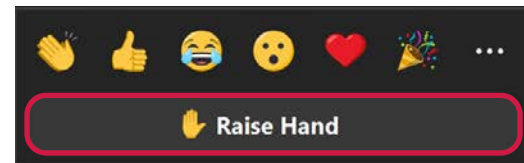
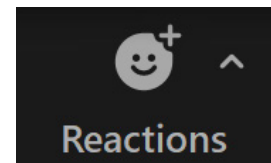
- At the request of community members, this event will be recorded and posted on the **Harvard ERC District and Greenway Plan** project web page at <https://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/harvard-erc-district-and-greenway-plan> for those who are unable to attend the Zoom event live.
- Also, it is possible that participants may be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices. 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

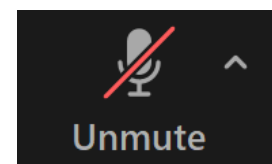
Welcome! Here are some tips on using Zoom for first-time users. Your controls are at the bottom of the screen



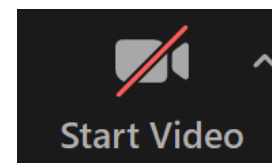
Use the chat to type a comment or ask a question at any time. The team will enable the chat at the end.



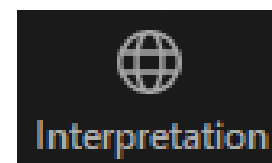
To raise your hand, click on "Participants" at the bottom of your screen, and then choose the "Raise Hand" option in the participant box



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



Click the interpretation icon for language translation options

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



Outline of Mayor Wu's Vision for the BPDA + What's Coming

May 2023



**boston planning &
development agency**

The need for change

Mayor Wu charged the BPDA with improving how planning and development are done in Boston to make the process more predictable for both community members and developers.

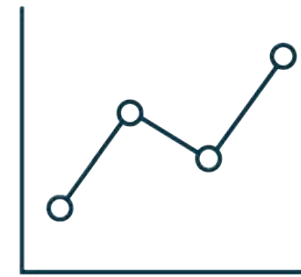
Our Goals



Address today's challenges: **resilience, affordability, equity**



Lead with **planning** to set a **citywide vision**



Embrace growth while creating a **predictable process**



Build **trust** with communities through **transparency**



boston planning & development agency

Our Approaches



- Implement a new charter and mission
- Legally end Urban Renewal and replace it with modern tools
- Ensure public land serves public good



- Plan for growth and the future through neighborhood and citywide initiatives, such as our Design Vision
- Establish new Planning Advisory Council



- Update Article 80 code and process for staff, developers, and community members
- Update and modernize our zoning code to be more predictable



- Improve coordination and communication across agencies and with Boston residents
- Create community process for Article 80 that is consistent, inclusive, and predictable

Upcoming changes + engagement

2023

2024 and on

Winter-
Spring

- Home Rule Petition passed Council and sent on to State House
- Two RFPs issued for analysis of Article 80 operations and community engagement

Summer

- Lead public engagement efforts for -
 - Design Vision
 - Article 80 process improvements
 - Opportunity to weigh in on city's progress towards resilience, affordability & equity

Fall-
Winter

- Kick off Planning Advisory Council
- Continue public engagement
 - Share early findings from Article 80 analysis
 - Finalize City Design Vision

- Move staff to become a City agency
- Update approach to planning through increased coordination across departments and focus on city-wide efforts
- Kick off efforts to update city-wide zoning code



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Learn more here:

<https://www.bostonplans.org/about-us/mayor-wu-vision-for-the-bpda>

Stay updated by signing up for our newsletter. Receive emails with our progress and opportunities to be part of shaping the future of Boston.



**boston planning &
development agency**

- 1. Overview**
- 2. The ERC Overview**
- 3. Workshop / Discussion**
- 4. Next Steps**

Overview

Meeting Objectives



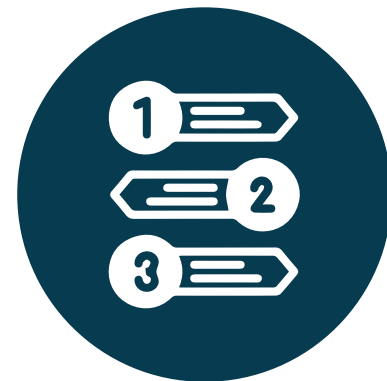
**Introduction of
Engagement Process
and Timeline**



**Introduce Consultant
Team, Scope & Schedule**



**Review the Existing
Conditions & Past
Planning Work**



**Gather information on priorities,
issues, and opportunities**
(presentation, polling, and breakout
groups format)



**Work to develop a set
of draft Community
Goals**

Who is Involved

The Team



bpda

Client

WXY

Urban Design, Landscape,
Development & Community Engagement

ARUP

Infrastructure &
Transportation



DEPARTMENT OF PLAY

Interactive Engagement

Advisory Group

Content Experts

- Charles River Conservancy
- Charles River Watershed Association
- MassBike
- Allston Resident
- LivableStreets Alliance
- Mikyoung Kim Design
- McNamara House

Neighborhood Organization Representatives

- Allston Brighton Health Collaborative
- Allston Village Main Streets
- Charlesview Inc.

Harvard Allston Task Force Members

Allston Residents

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



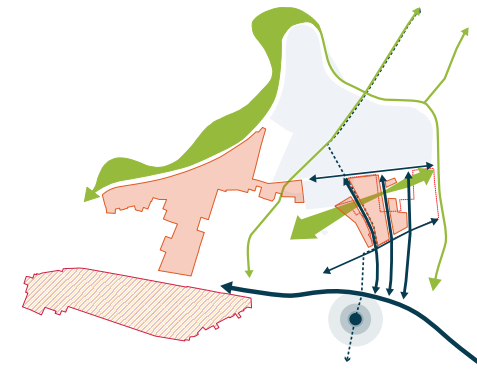
Consensus-Driven Vision

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



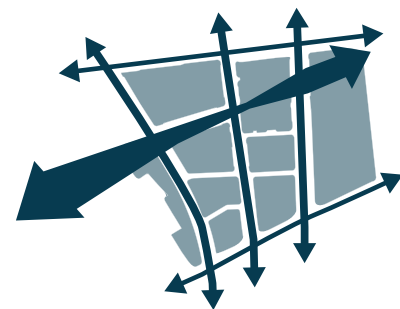
District Wide Approach

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



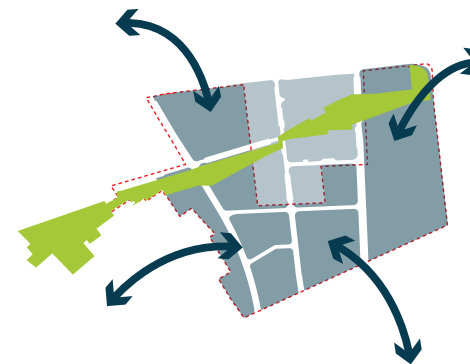
Sustainable Infrastructure Strategies

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

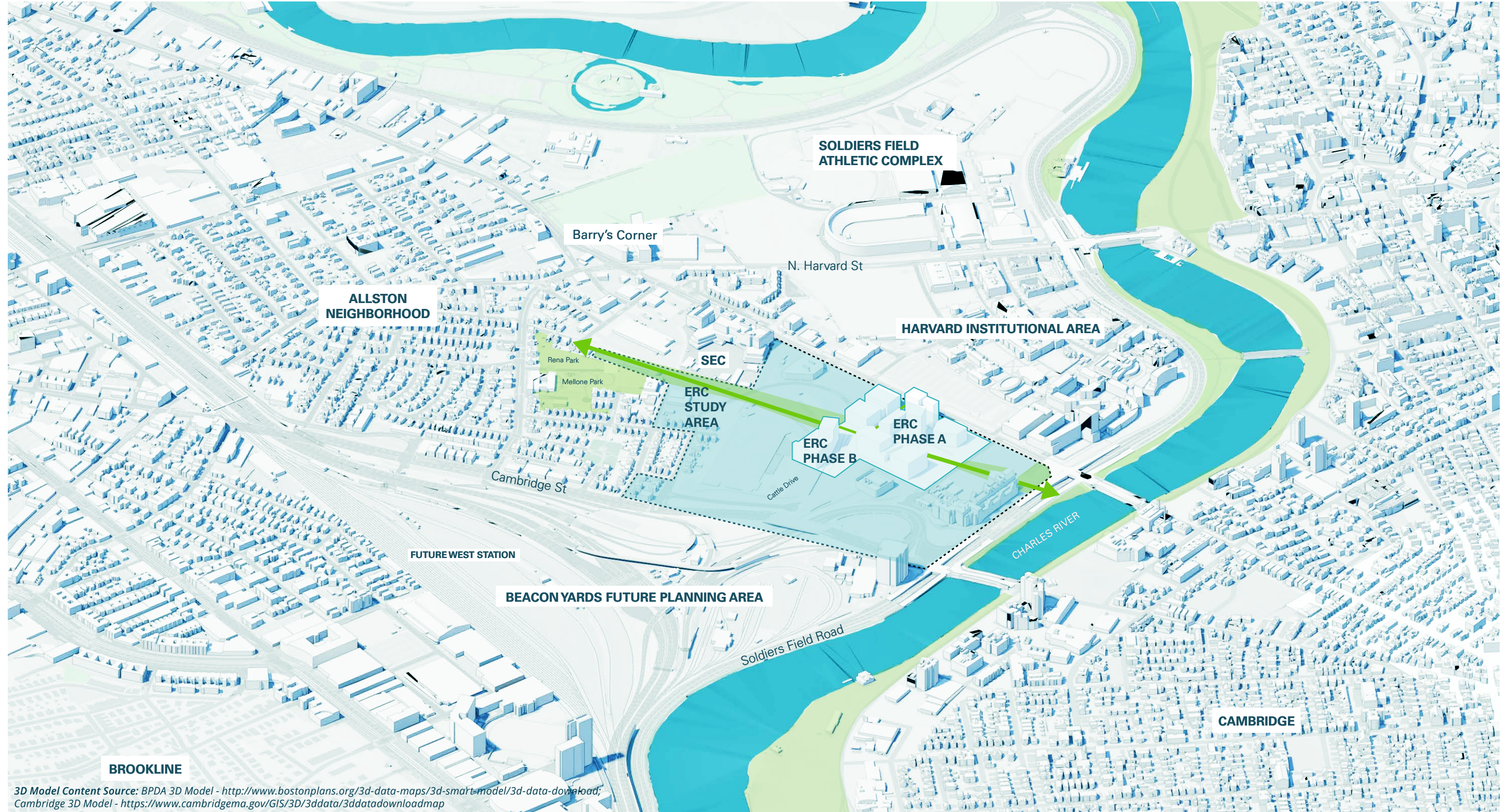
Develop cohesive strategies for open space, development, and neighborhood edge conditions and gateways



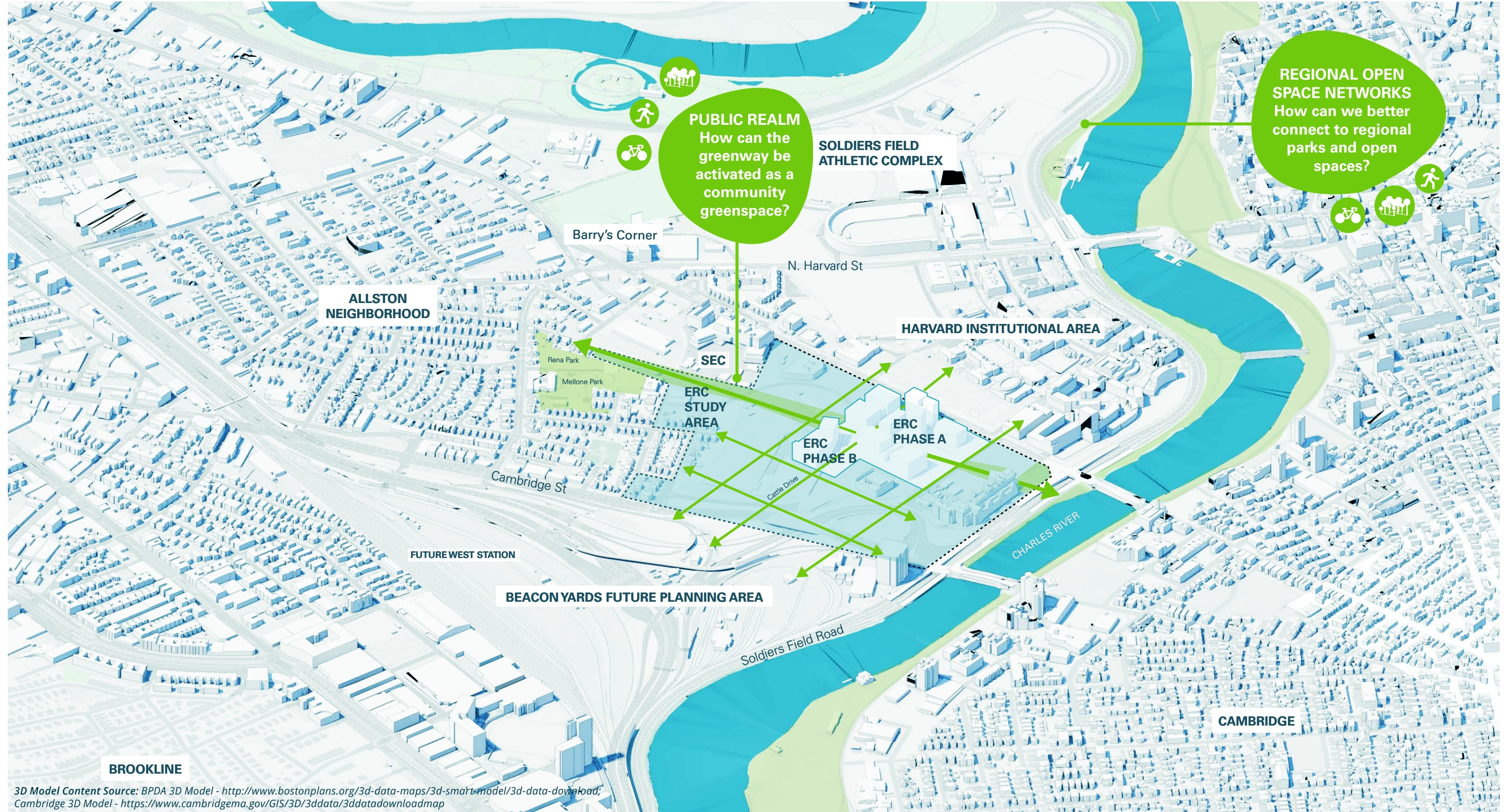
Land Use & Urban Design Plan

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

ERC District & Greenway

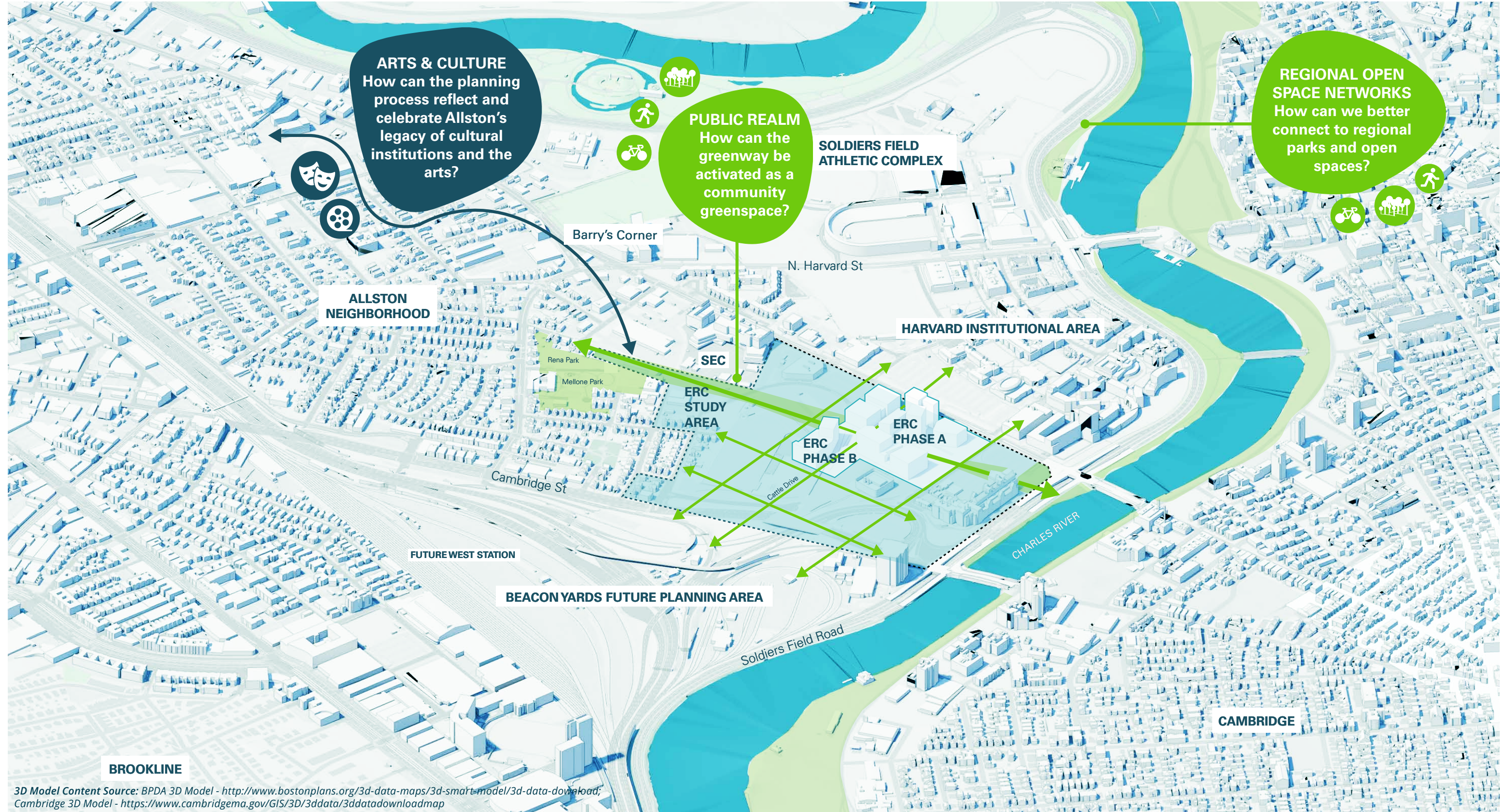


Open Space & Greenway



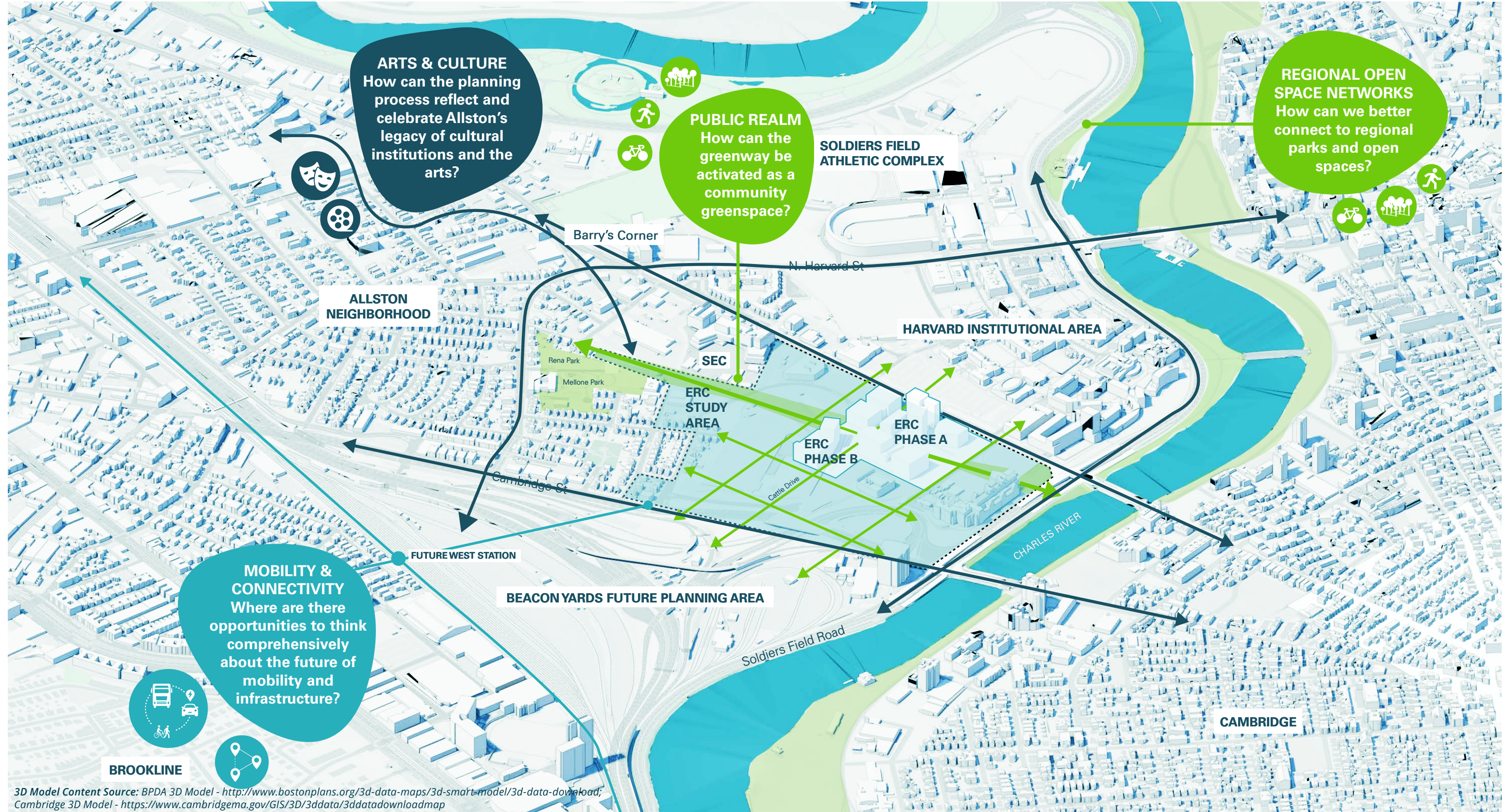
3D Model Content Source: BPDA 3D Model - <http://www.bostonplans.org/3d-data-maps/3d-smart-model/3d-data-download>;
Cambridge 3D Model - <https://www.cambridgema.gov/GIS/3D/3ddata/3ddatadownloadmap>

Arts & Culture

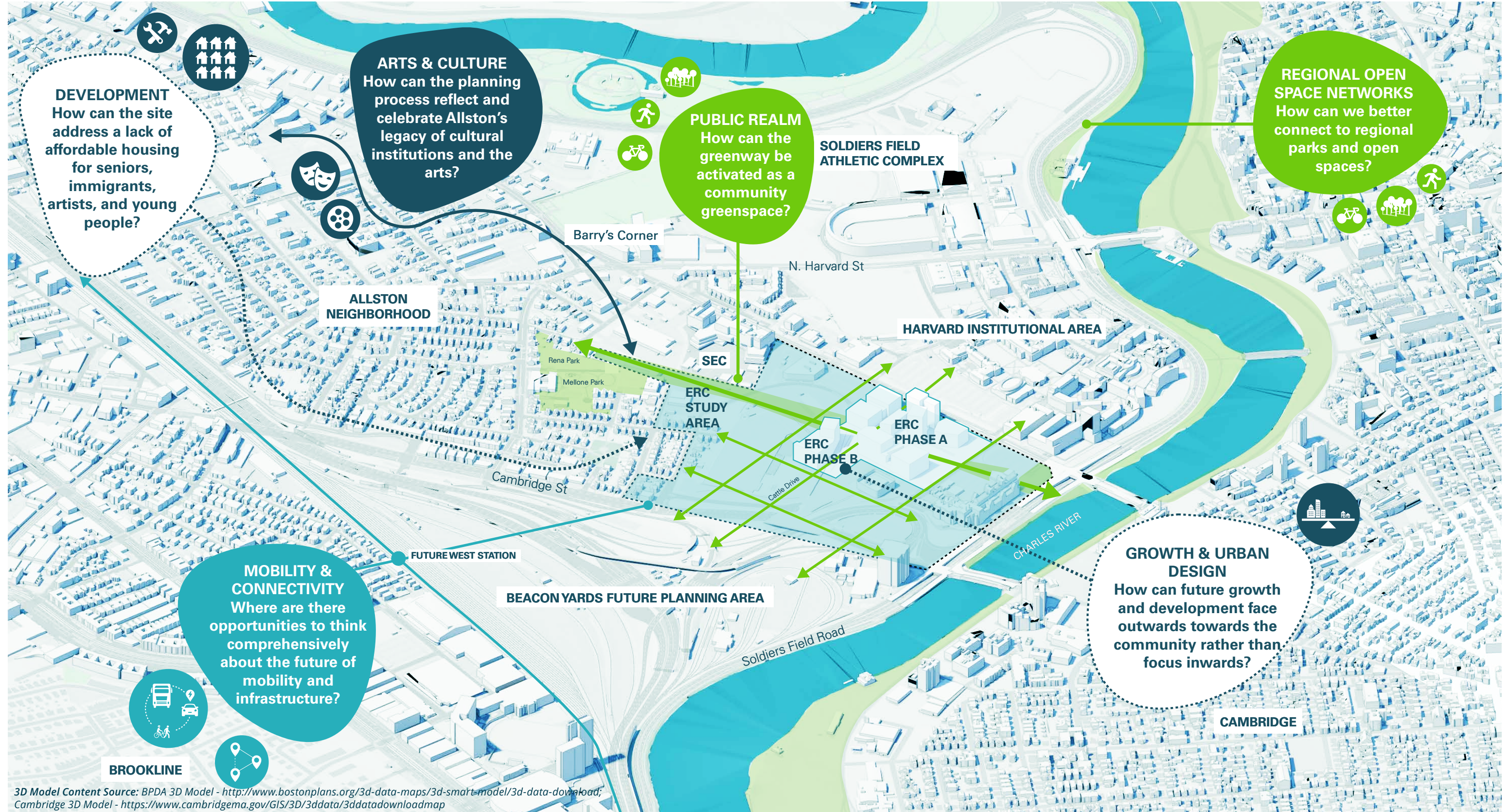


3D Model Content Source: BPDA 3D Model - <http://www.bostonplans.org/3d-data-maps/3d-smart-model/3d-data-download>;
 Cambridge 3D Model - <https://www.cambridgema.gov/GIS/3D/3ddata/3ddatadownloadmap>

Mobility & Connectivity



Urban Design & Development



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 C

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

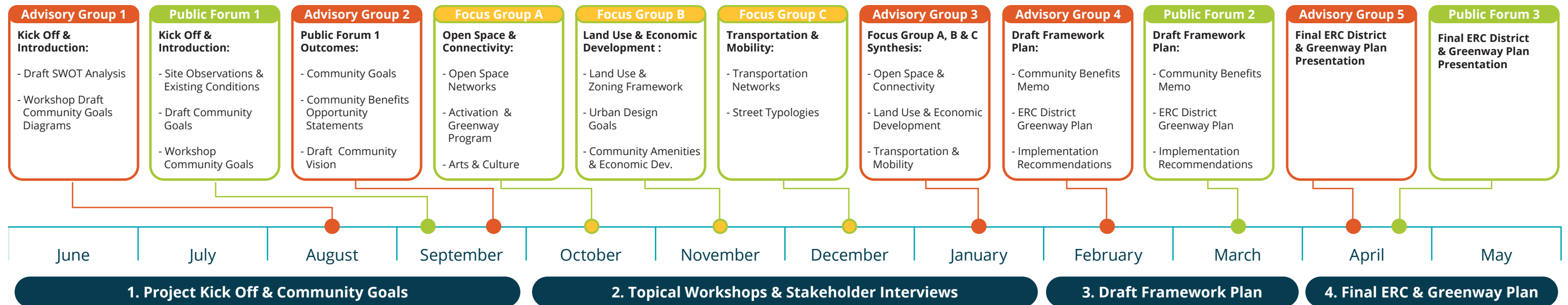


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↑
We are here

Who's in the room?

Please answer the poll that will pop up on your screen now. Thank you!

Introductory Poll

1. Open a browser
2. Go to **menti.com**
3. Enter the code: **5169 3627**

OR

Scan the QR Code with your
smartphone!



The ERC Overview

1. Understanding the Site in Context
2. Past & Ongoing Plans
3. Harvard's Current Plans & Process
4. Draft SWOT Analysis

Neighborhood Fabric



Source: "The Emerson Grad Life Blog," Juan Molina Velarde, Emerson College, 2023.

Greetings from Allston Village mural by artist Gregg Bernstein in 2015



Source: "Art-Ston: The Many Murals of Allston," Emily Bass, 2018.

Saya Patri (One With A Hundred Petals) by artist Imagine in 2017.



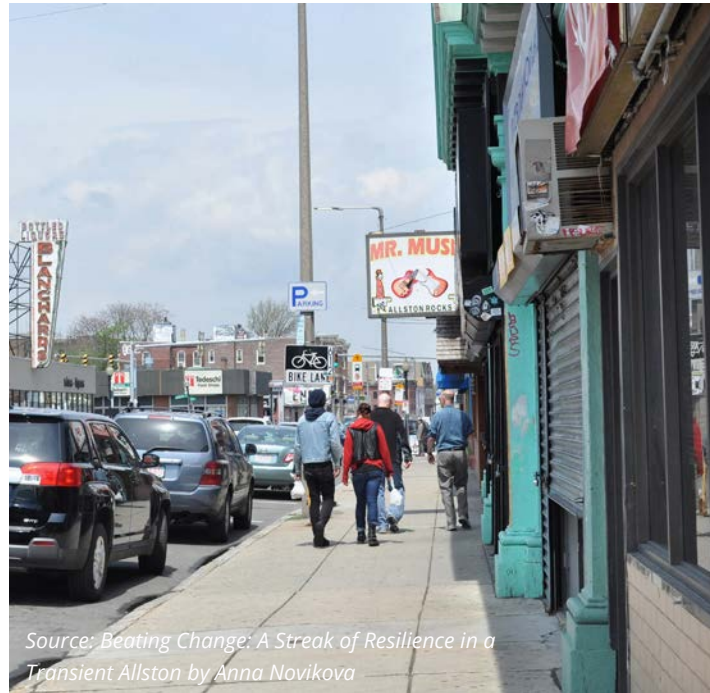
Source: "I Dream of Doughnuts: One Family's Sweet Saga of the American Dream," Rachel DeSimone, Boston University, 2010.

Twin Donuts



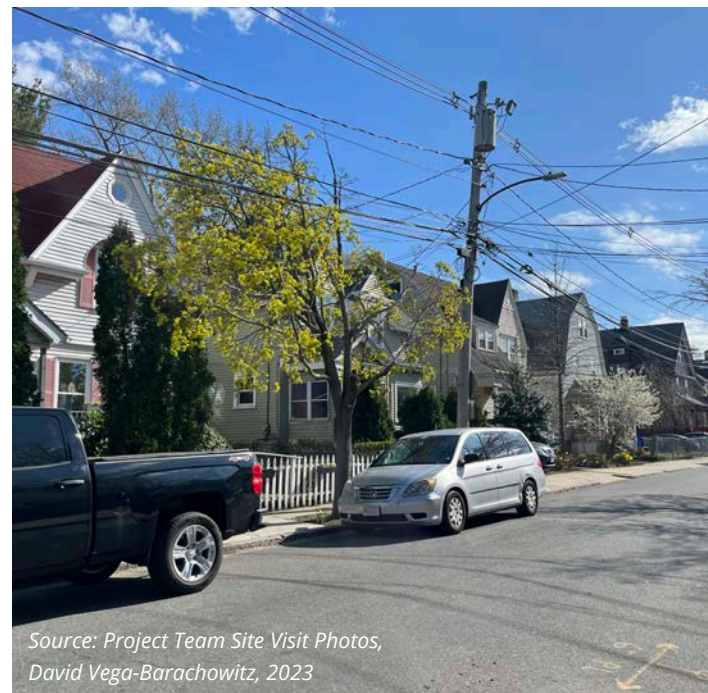
Source Barry's Corner, Thomas Maisonneuve, The Harvard Crimson, March 4, 2021

Barry's Corner



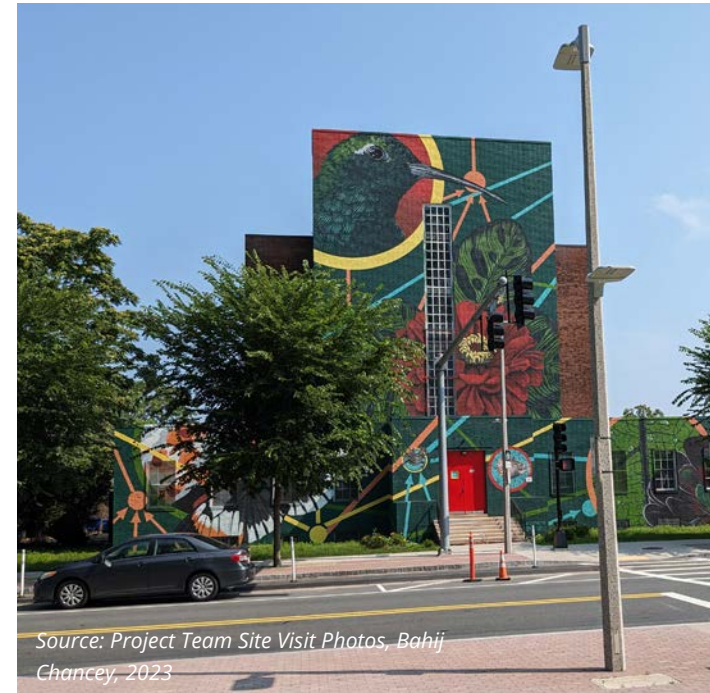
Source: Beating Change: A Streak of Resilience in a Transient Allston by Anna Novikova

Harvard Ave



Source: Project Team Site Visit Photos, David Vega-Barachowitz, 2023

Bayard Street



Source: Project Team Site Visit Photos, Bahij Chancey, 2023

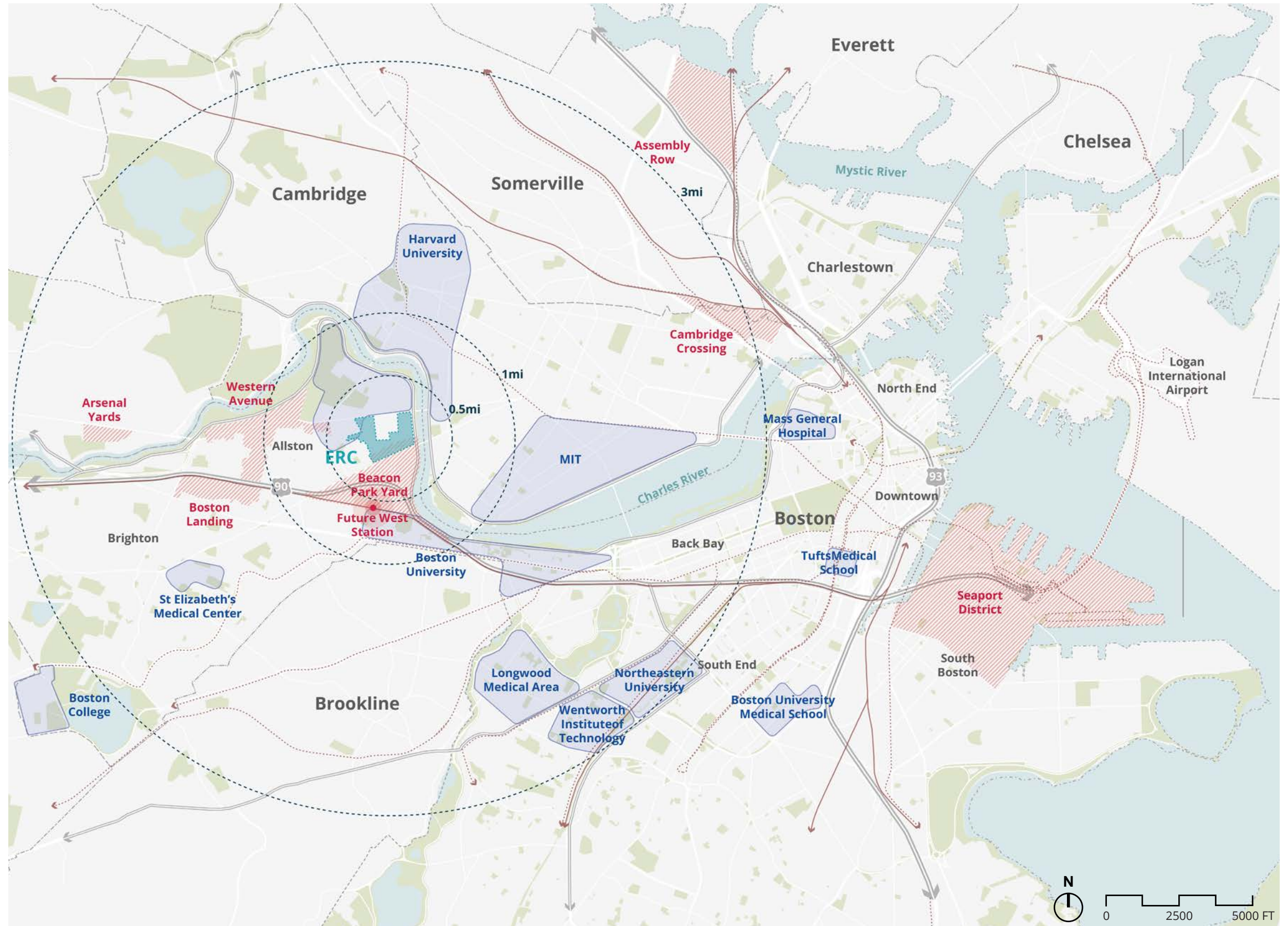
Walls on Western by artist Sophy Tuttle in 2020



Source: <<Everything in Focus>> by Cosmo Rowley, Photograph by Brooke Northrup, 2023

EXIT Gallery, <<Everything in focus>> by Cosmo Rowley

The ERC in the Region



Scalar Comparisons

Total ERC Site
(Including Phase A & B)
Boston, MA
36 Acres



PDA Phase A
6 Acres
PDA Phase B
8 Acres



Boston Landing
Boston, MA
45 Acres



North Point
Cambridge, MA
82 Acres



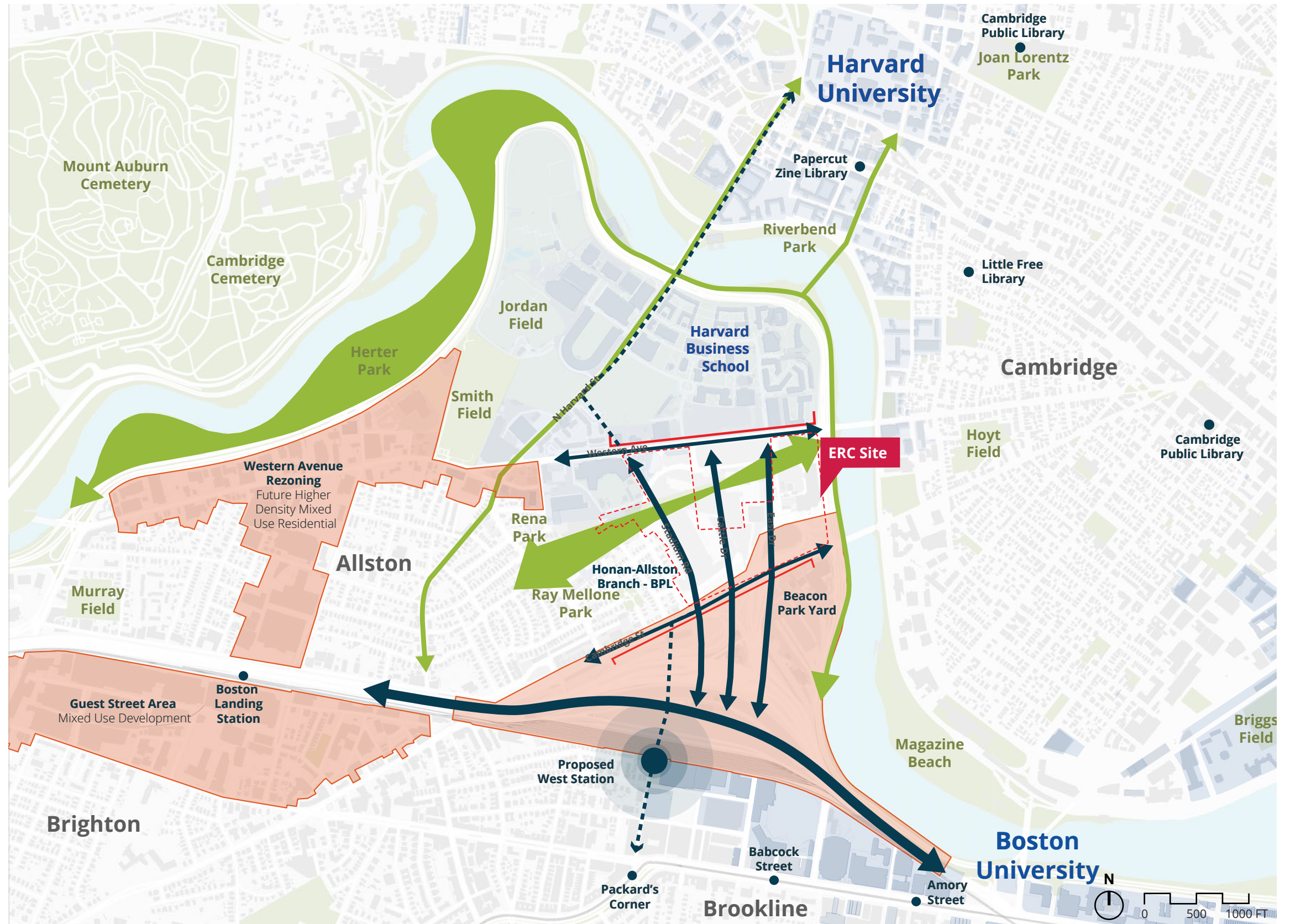
Assembly Row
Somerville, MA
122 Acres



Boston Seaport
Boston, MA
300 Acres

N
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The Site in Context



- Institutions
- Open Space Network
- Contextual Planning Areas



Future West Station

I-90 / Beacon Park Yard

Dr. Paul Dudley White Bike Path

National Resilience Building

District Energy Facility (DEF)

Sears Pad

North Allston Storm Drain Extension Project (NASDEP)

Existing MWRA Sewer

Harvard Business School

Cambridge St

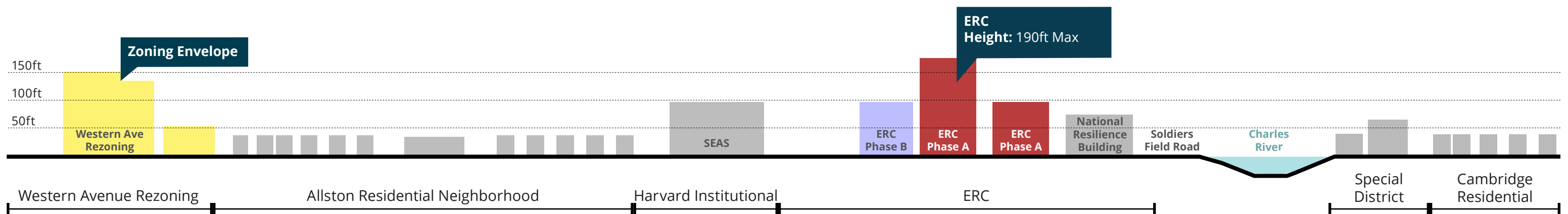
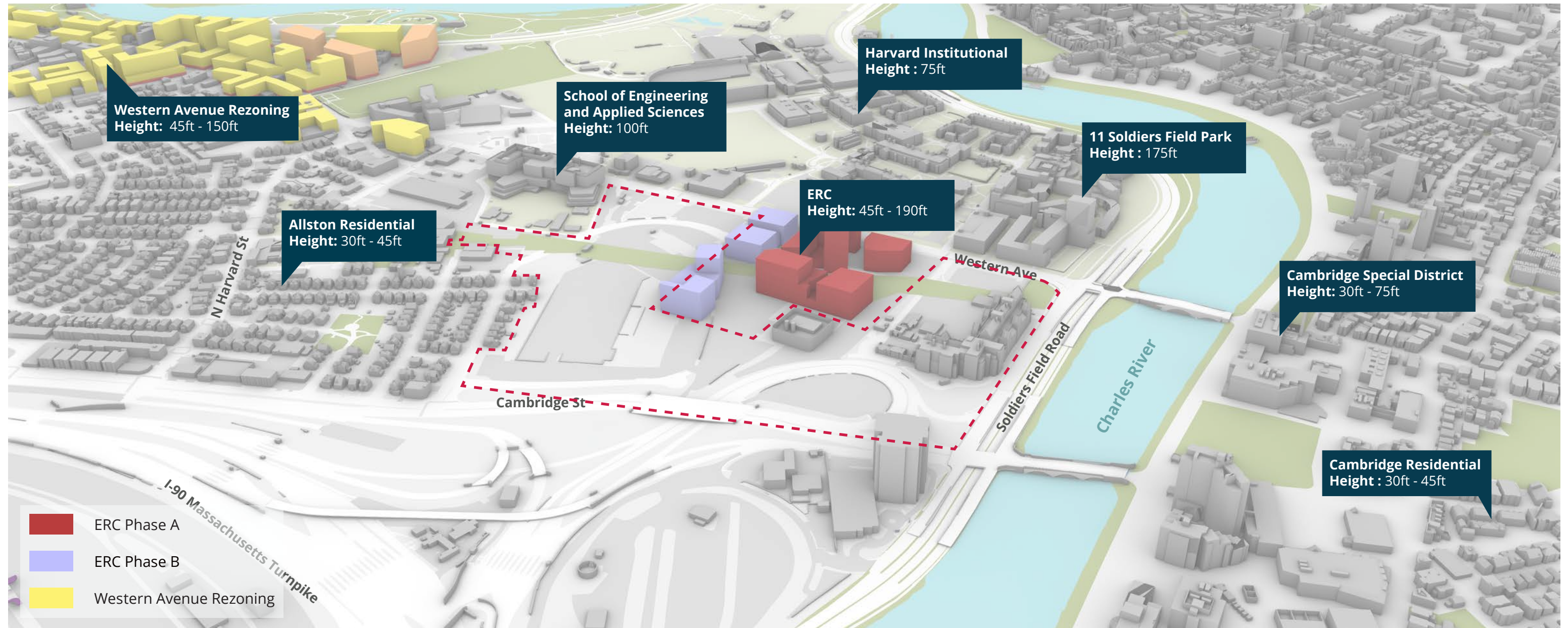
Soldier's Field Road

Western Ave

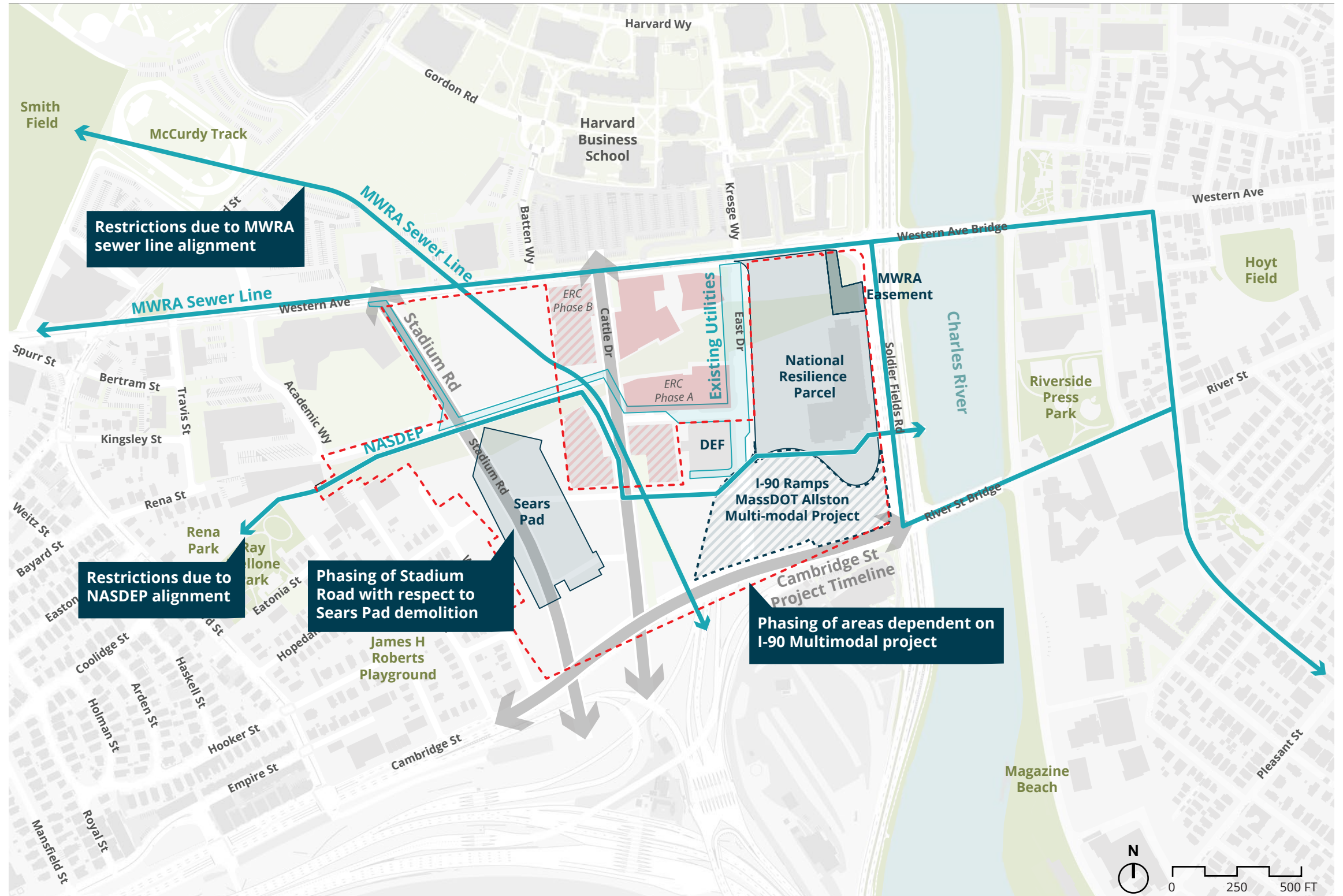
Phase A

Phase B

Existing & Future Urban Fabric



Site Conditions

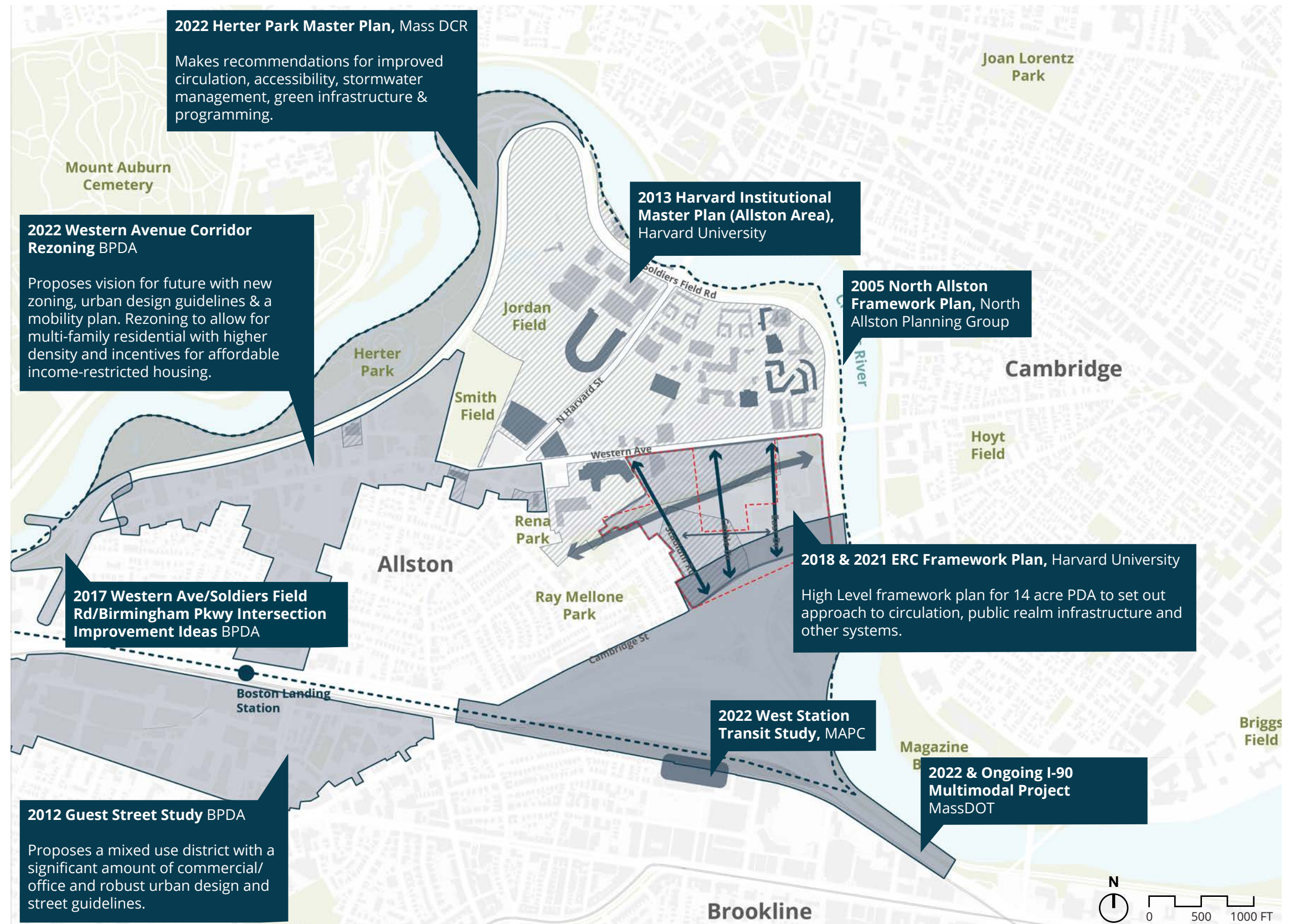


Past & Ongoing Plans

Past Plans

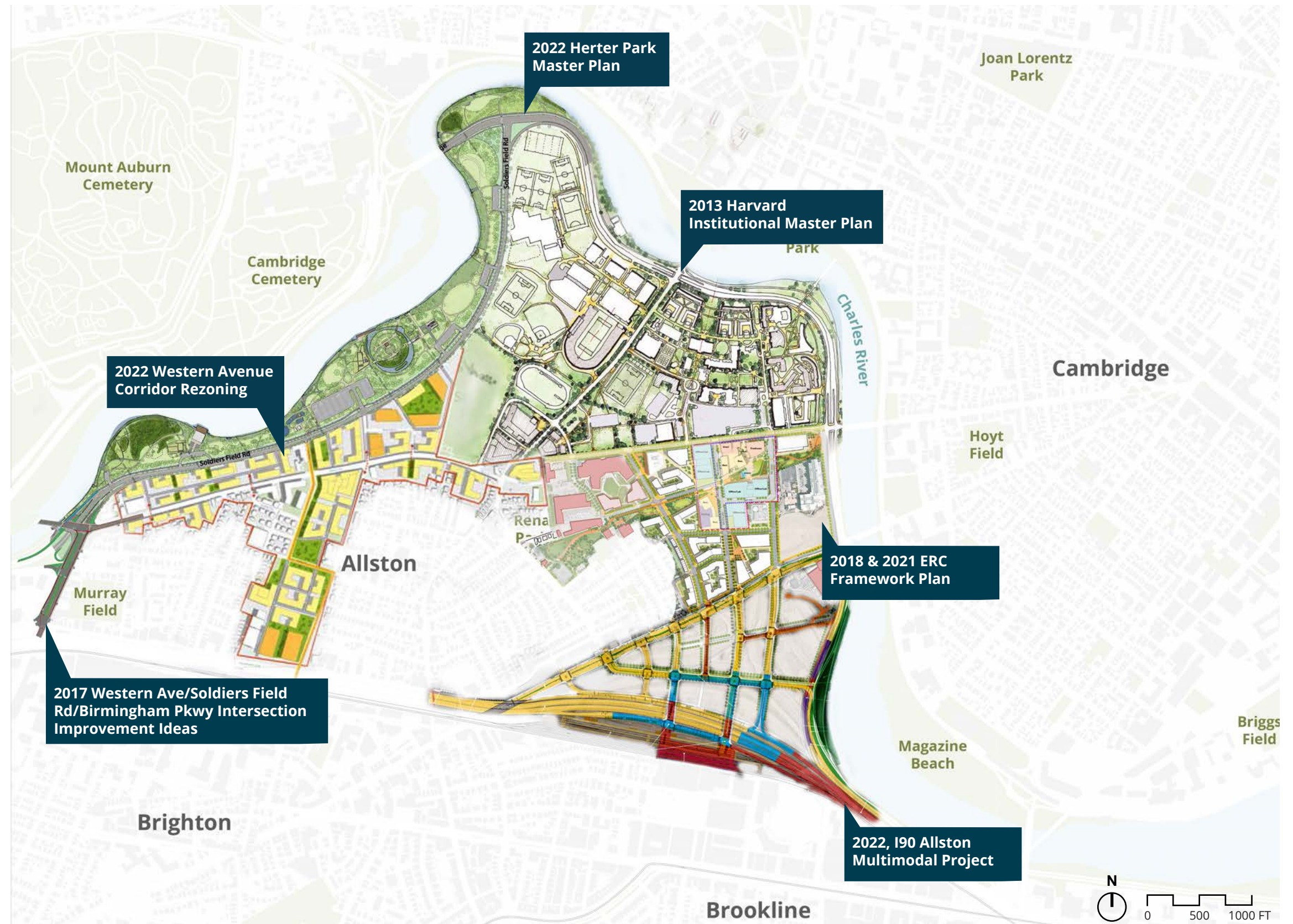
Other Past Plans:

- 2017, Imagine Boston 2030
- 2018, Allston Early Action Transit Study, MassDOT
- 2020, Mass DCR Parkways Plan
- 2021, Allston-Brighton Mobility Plan
- 2021 Allston-Brighton Arts Culture and Placekeeping Report
- 2023, MBTA Bus Network Redesign



Past Plans Composite

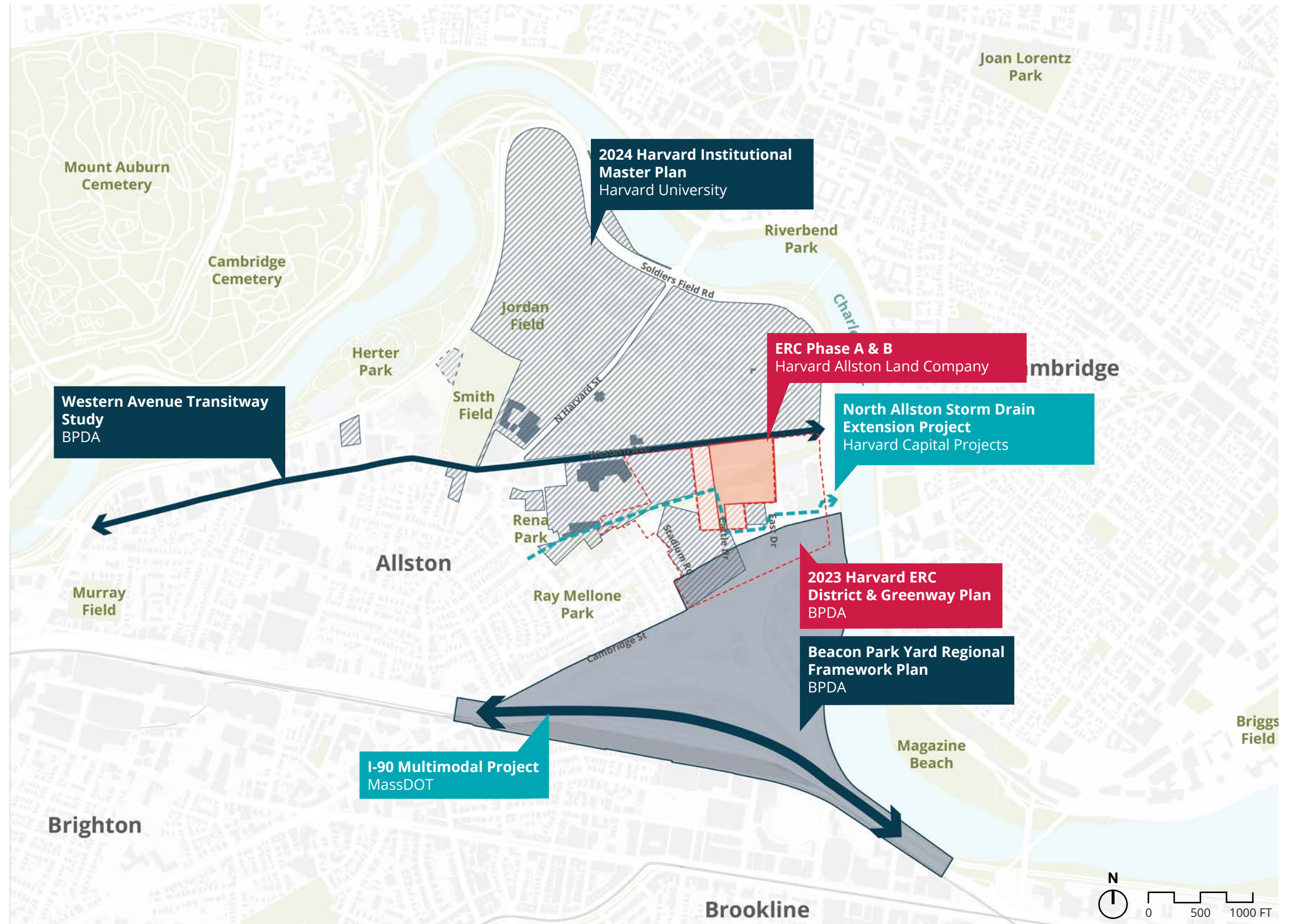
- **2013 Harvard Institutional Master Plan** - The 2013 Harvard IMP sets out the institutions long-term vision for its properties in Allston
- **2018 ERC Framework Plan** - Harvard University seeks to develop the newest mixed-use innovation district in Boston south of the Harvard Business School campus in Allston
- **2021 ERC Framework Plan** - Provides an update to the 2018 framework plan including updates to the greenway footprint, sidewalk room and open space strategy and building orientations
- **2022 Herter Park Master Plan** - The plan aims to analyze and make recommendations for improved circulation and accessibility, storm-water management and green infrastructure, utility infrastructure, and programming, particularly for the Herter Center and the Amphitheater
- **2022 Western Avenue Corridor Rezoning** - WACRZ sets out a vision for the future of the Western Avenue in Allston-Brighton through new zoning, urban design guidelines and a mobility plan
- **2022 I90 Allston Multimodal Project** - The project intends to reclaim land and allow for better multimodal connectivity adjacent to the Charles River, including bicycle access, a new train station, and a new elevated bridge structure



Ongoing / Future Plans

Other Neighborhood Wide Forthcoming Plans:

- Allston-Brighton Needs Assessment
- Allston-Brighton Neighborhood Plan



Our Understanding of Harvard's Current Plans & Process

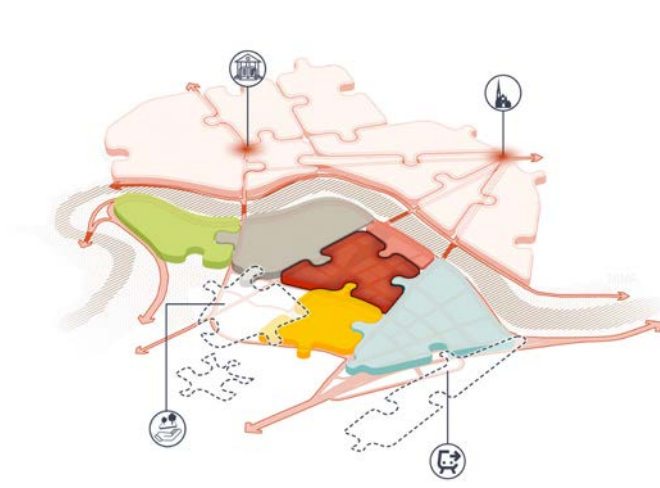


The ERC will be a hub of innovation and will foster connections:

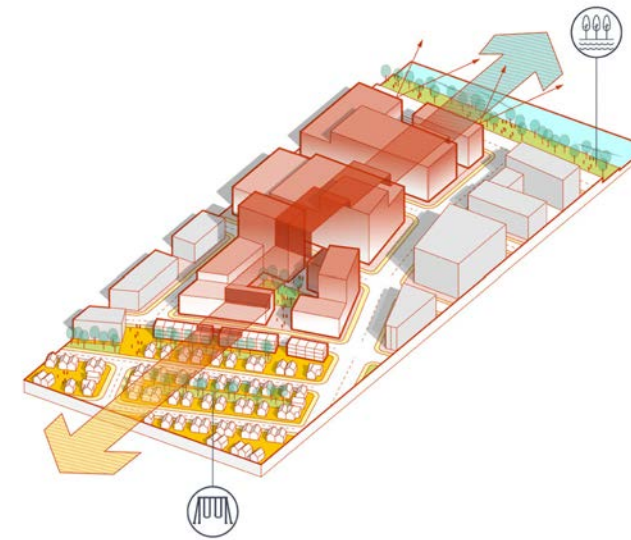
- between the **academic community** and its counterparts in **private sector** companies
- between the **campus** and the **neighborhood**
- between the **new residential** neighborhood and the **existing residential** community
- between the area's numerous **higher education institutions**
- between would-be **entrepreneurs** and **investor**
- and between **local companies** and **global partners**

- 2021 Harvard ERC Framework Plan

Harvard's Principles as Expressed in the 2021 Harvard ERC Framework Plan



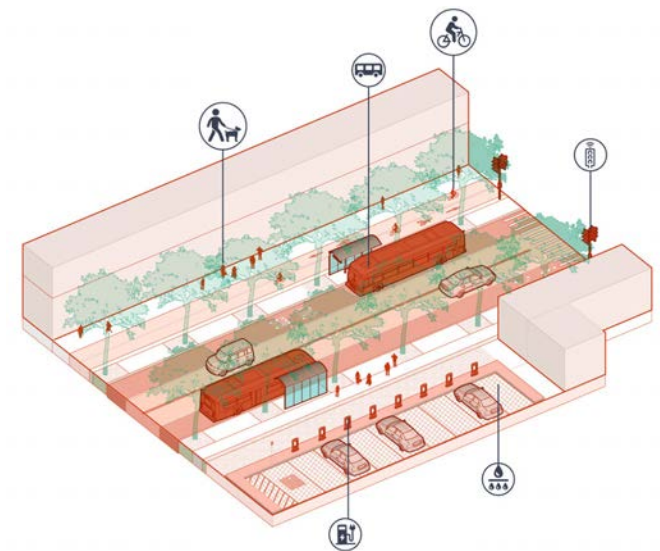
Respond To Change In Context



Create An Appropriately-Scaled Mixed-Use District



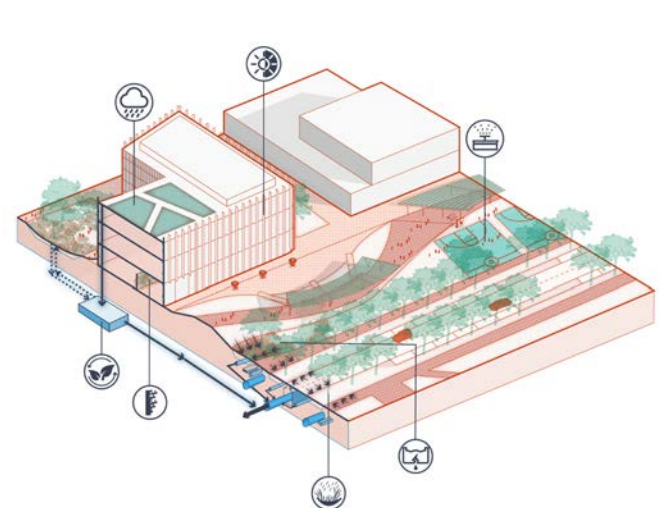
Plan Comprehensively for an Active Public Realm and Robust Landscape



Advance Sustainable Transportation Options



Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Construct High Performance Buildings and Landscapes Supported by Smart Infrastructure Systems

Recent and Anticipated Harvard Developments in the ERC



Greenway Development as Understood in the 2021 Harvard ERC Framework Plan

Relax (existing Rena Park/Ray Mellone Park)

- Multi-use path with amenities, passive use.
- Low points in lawn can double as storm-water surcharge storage

Play

- Pockets of outdoor recreation & play along the neighborhood edge
- Storm-water storage & treatment can be integrated in the landscape

Gather

- Central green gathering space, with programmable space for events etc.
- Opportunity for storm water management

Hub

- Heart of outdoor collaboration and innovation in the district
- Flexible surfaces for events

Connect

- Landscape corridor connecting the Greenway to the riverfront
- Pedestrian/bicycle connections from the Greenway to the Charles River landscape and path network

- Greenway Profile
- Proposed Mural
- Greenway Built Area
- ▨ Greenway Implementation in progress
- Greenway Adjacent Proposed Development



ERC Phase A Full Build-out



Draft SWOT Analysis

Draft SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Site characteristics and contextual elements that provide a benefit to the project from an infrastructural, social, or institutional perspective.

(i.e. waterfront access, proximity to institutions)

Weaknesses

Site characteristics and contextual elements that represent limitations for the project's potential.

(i.e. a utility easement, flooding)

Opportunities

Areas of potential growth and opportunity where the project can expand its potential, take advantage of a parallel effort, or benefit further from its site context.

(i.e. an upcoming adjacent project, a parallel planning effort underway)

Threats

Elements that may threaten the project's success in the near or long-term future, including physical, social, or economic challenges.

(i.e. lack of affordability, economic competition from similar sites)

Strengths: Neighborhood Cultural and Institutional Networks

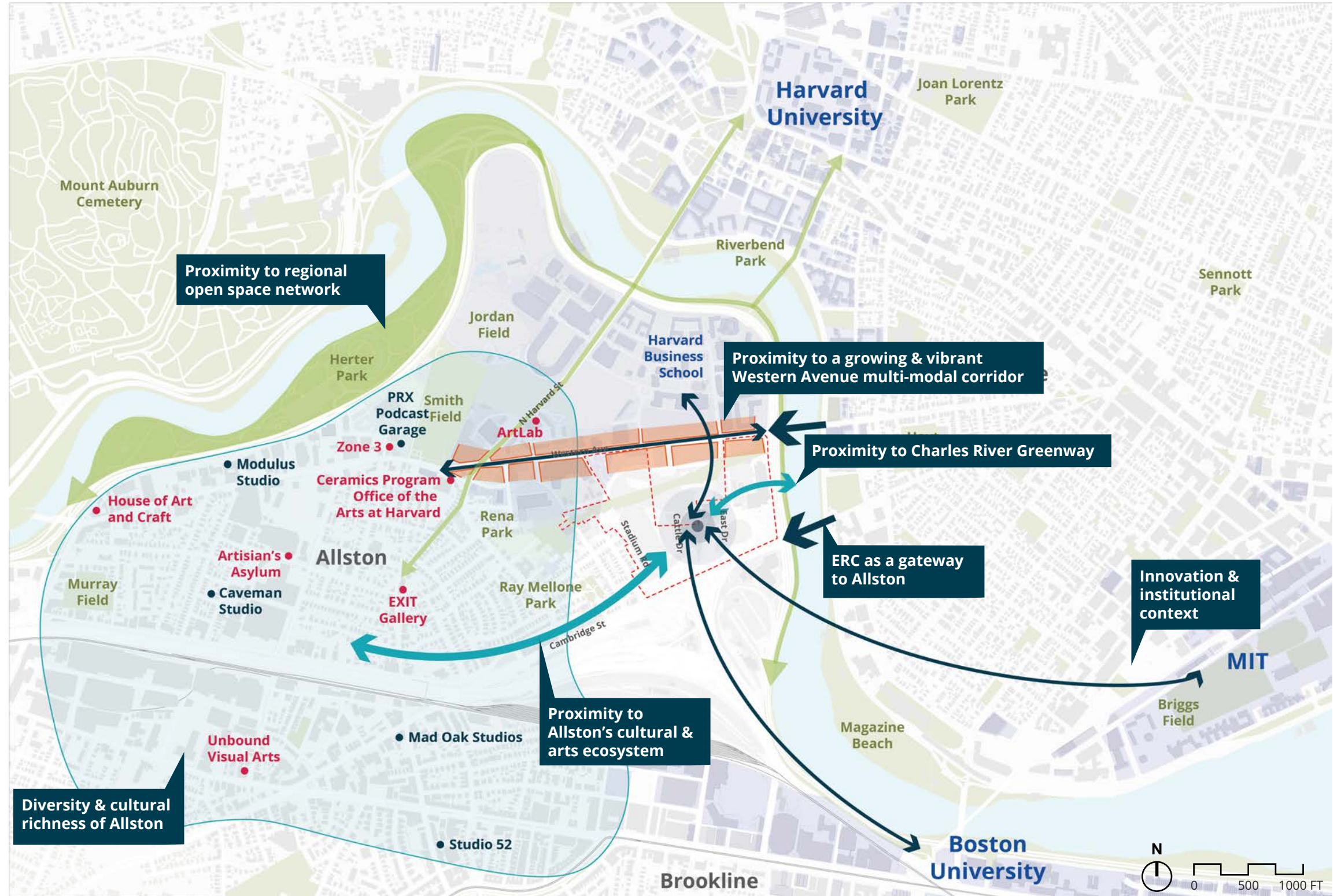


Zone 3, Creativity Hub



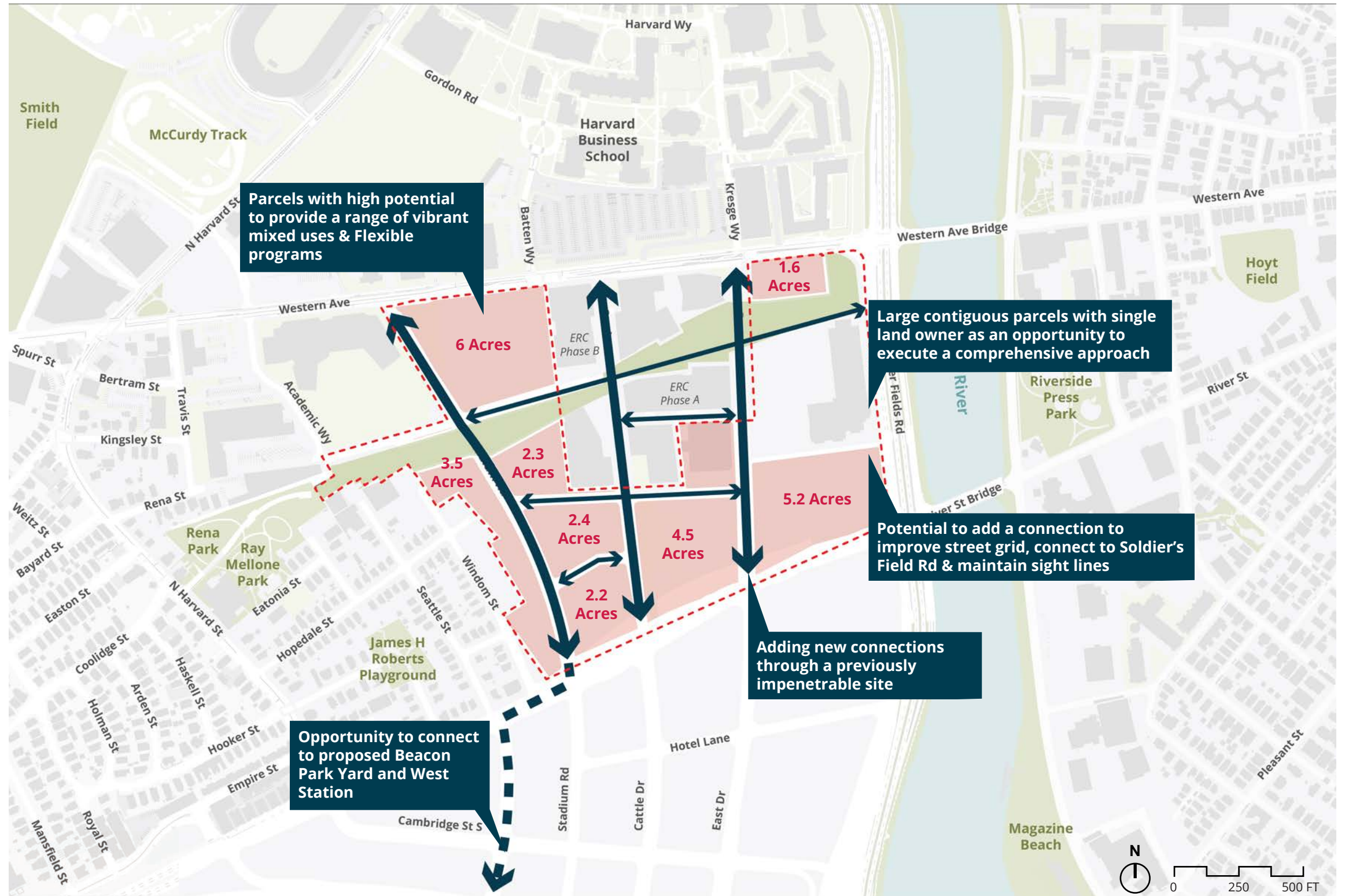
EXIT Gallery, Art Gallery

- ERC Site
- Institutions
- Open Space Network
- Allston Cultural Assets / Neighborhood
- Commercial Corridor
- Art Galleries/Programs
- Recording Studios





Strengths: Site Scale



- ERC Site
- ERC Parcels



Weakness: Site Connectivity

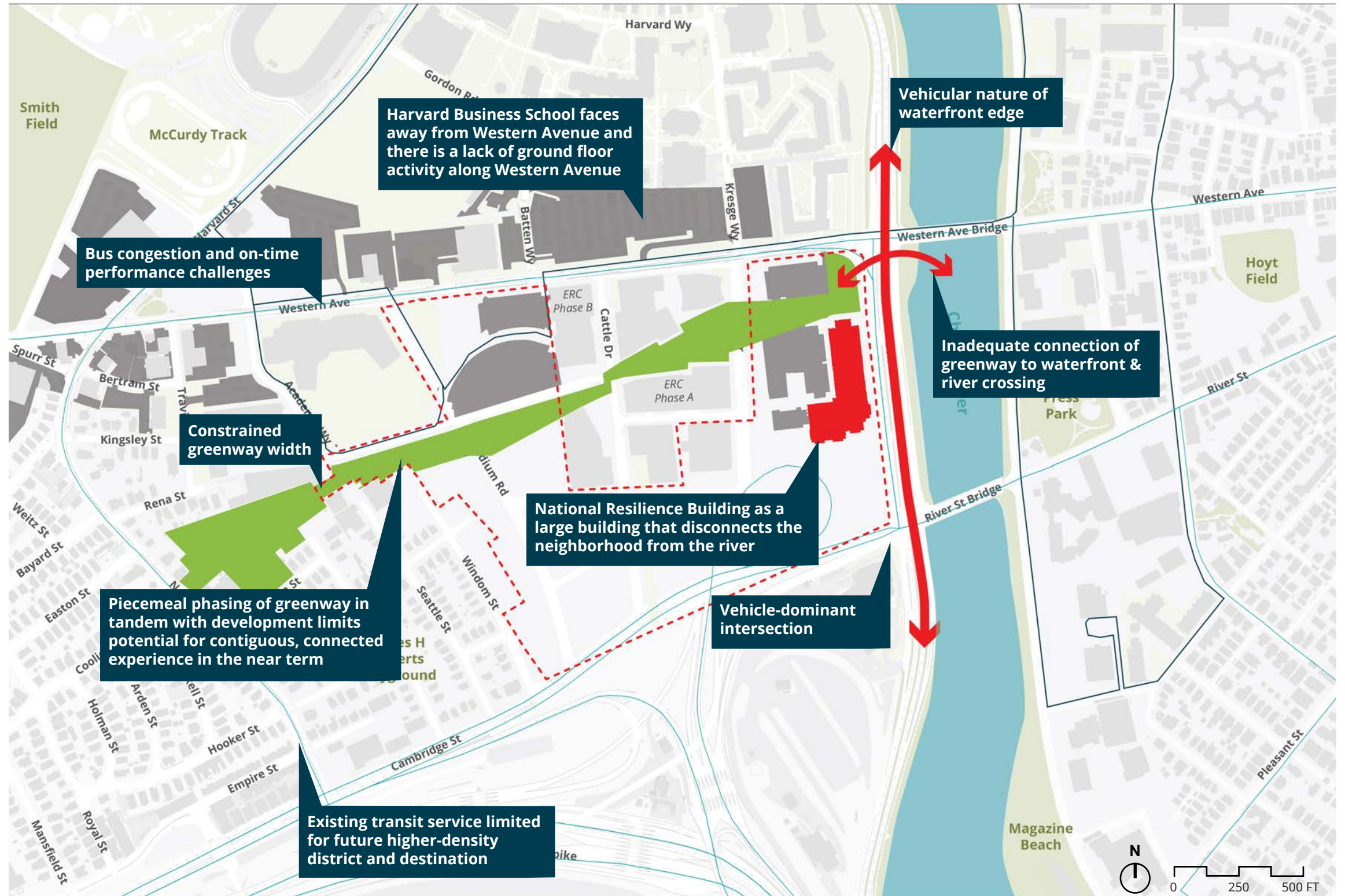
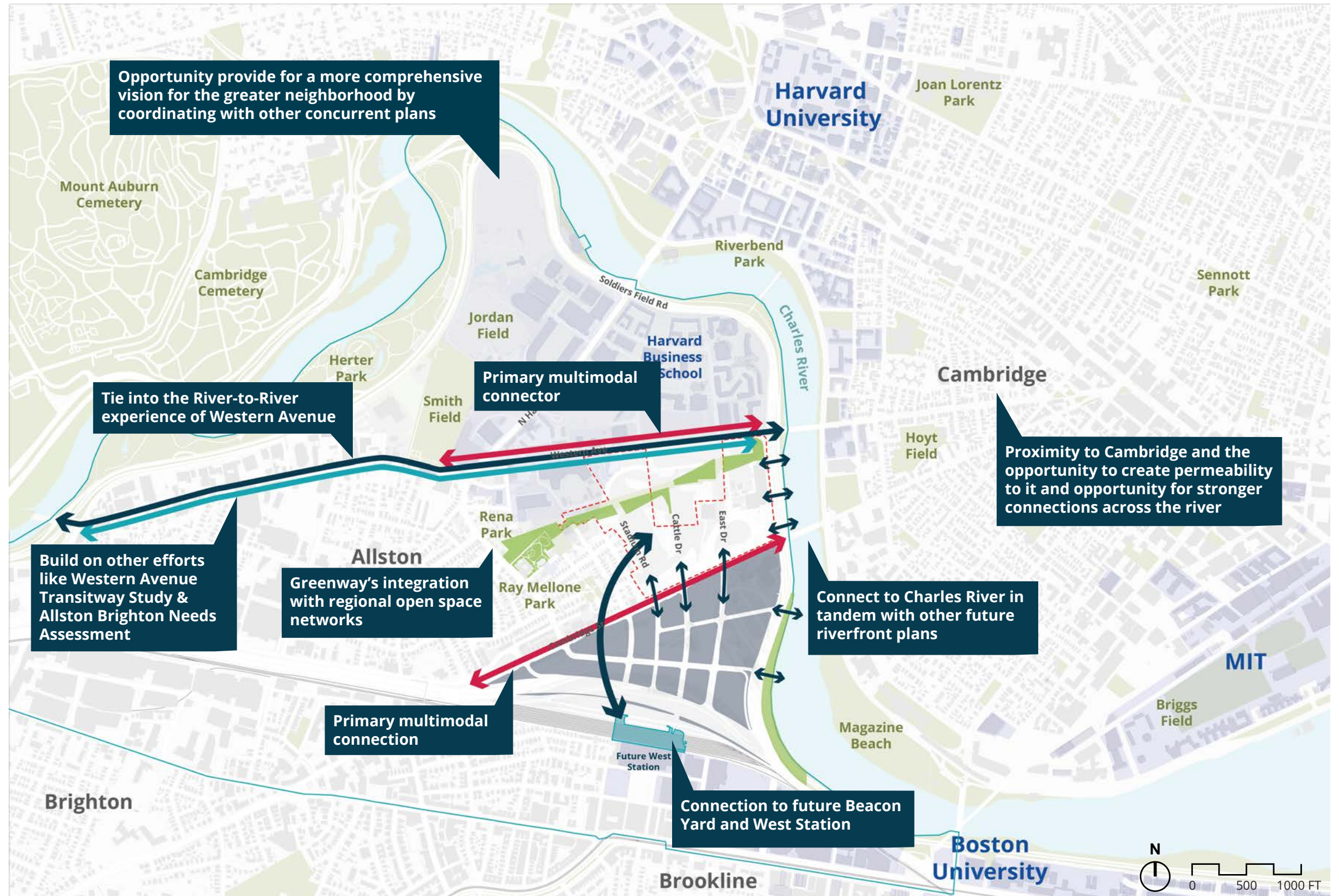
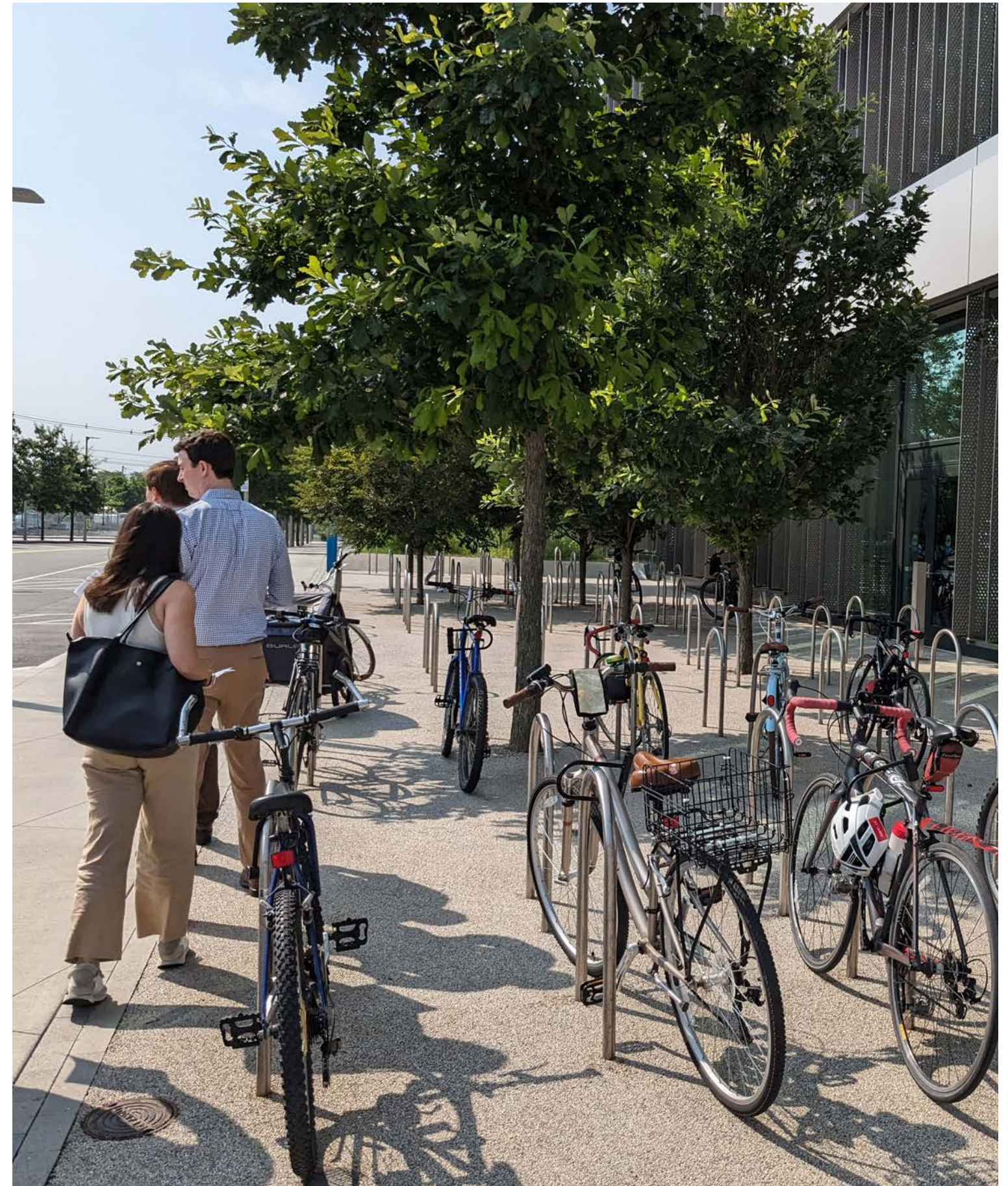




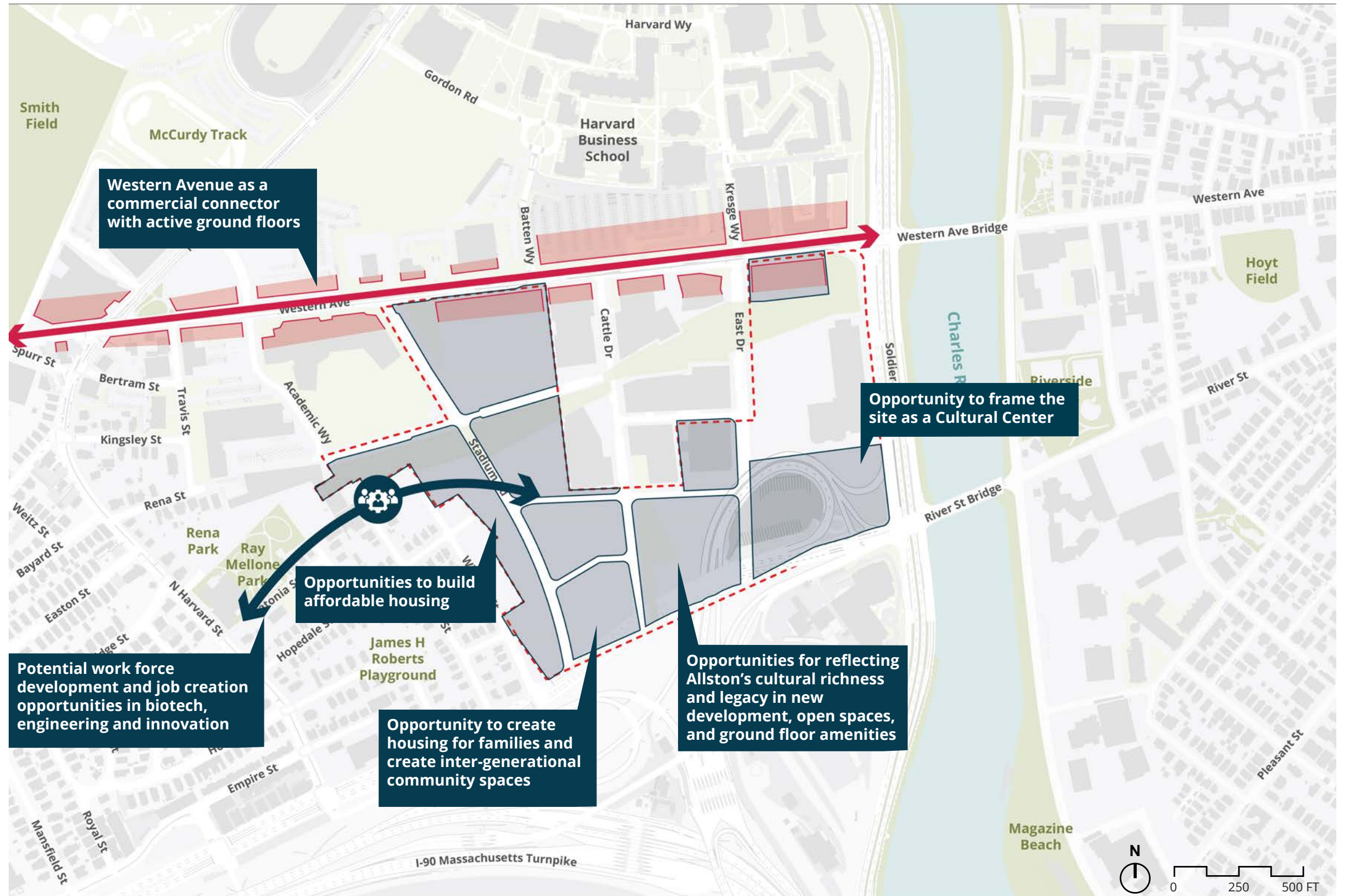
Photo Credit: Tishman Speyer
Public Forum 01

Opportunities: Neighborhood Connectivity

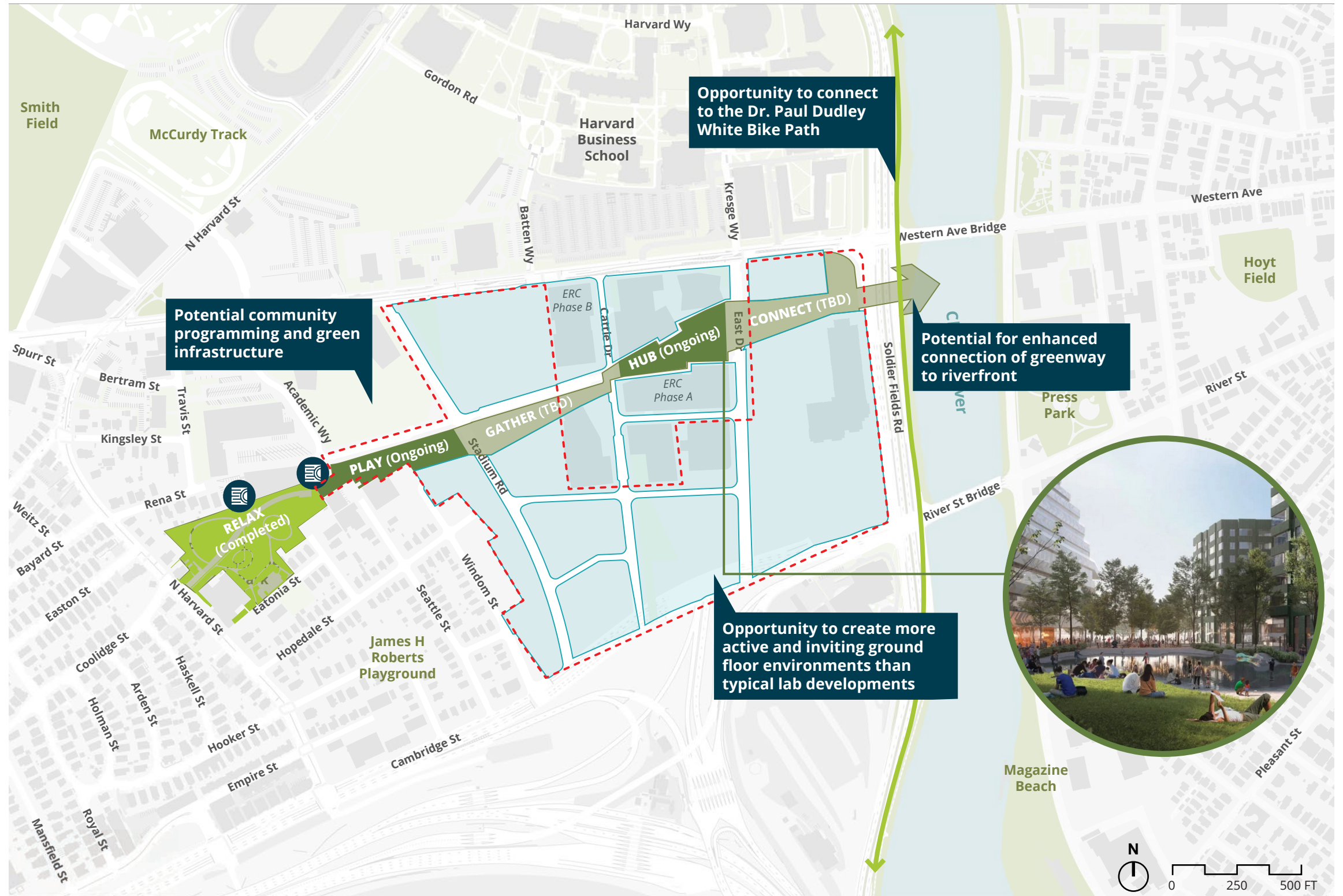




Opportunities: Site as Economic & Community Benefit



Opportunities: Site Activation









Opportunities: Resilience & Ecology

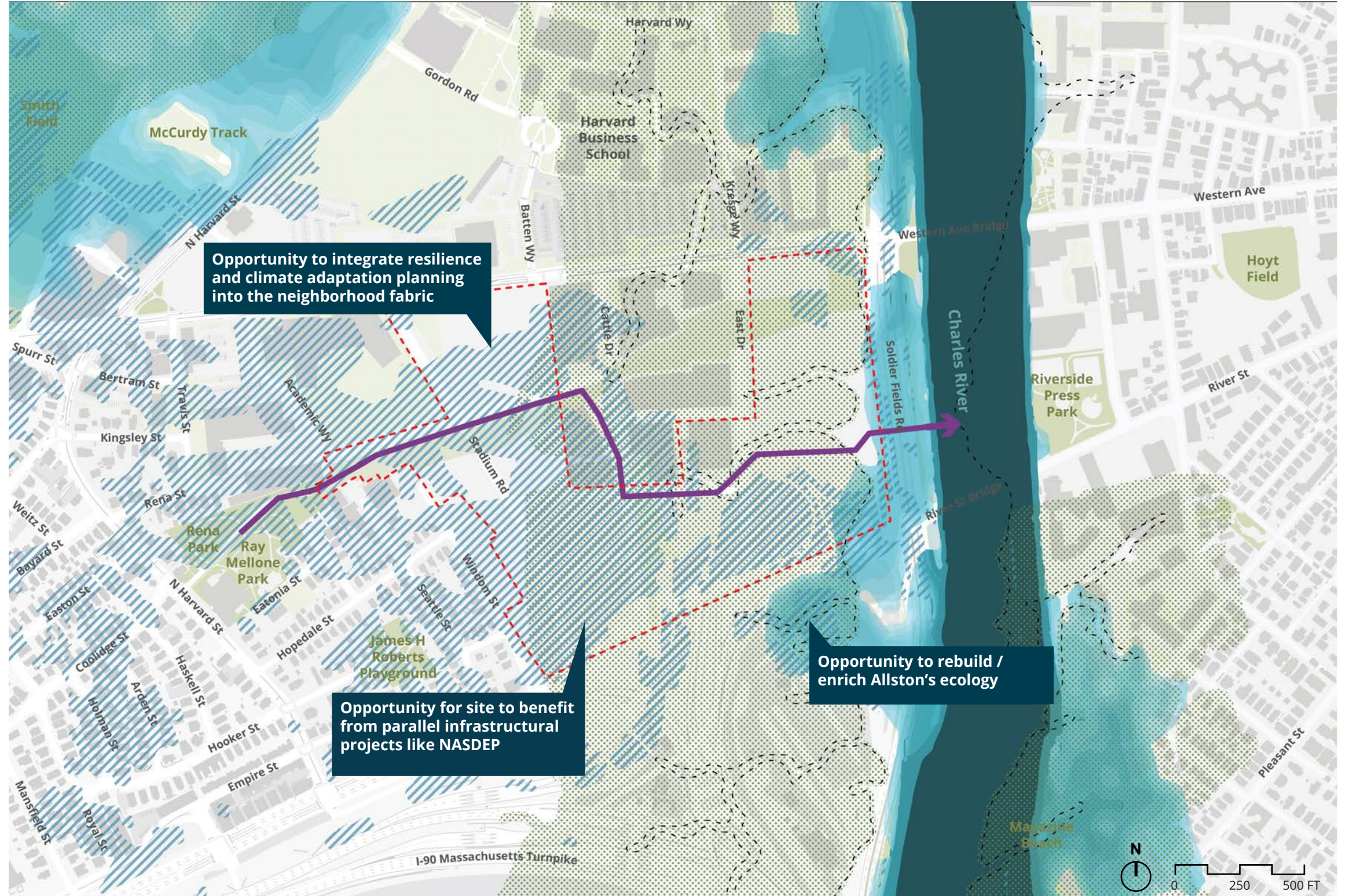


1770 Map, Historic Wetlands and Salt Marsh Landscape of Allston



1900 Map, Allston

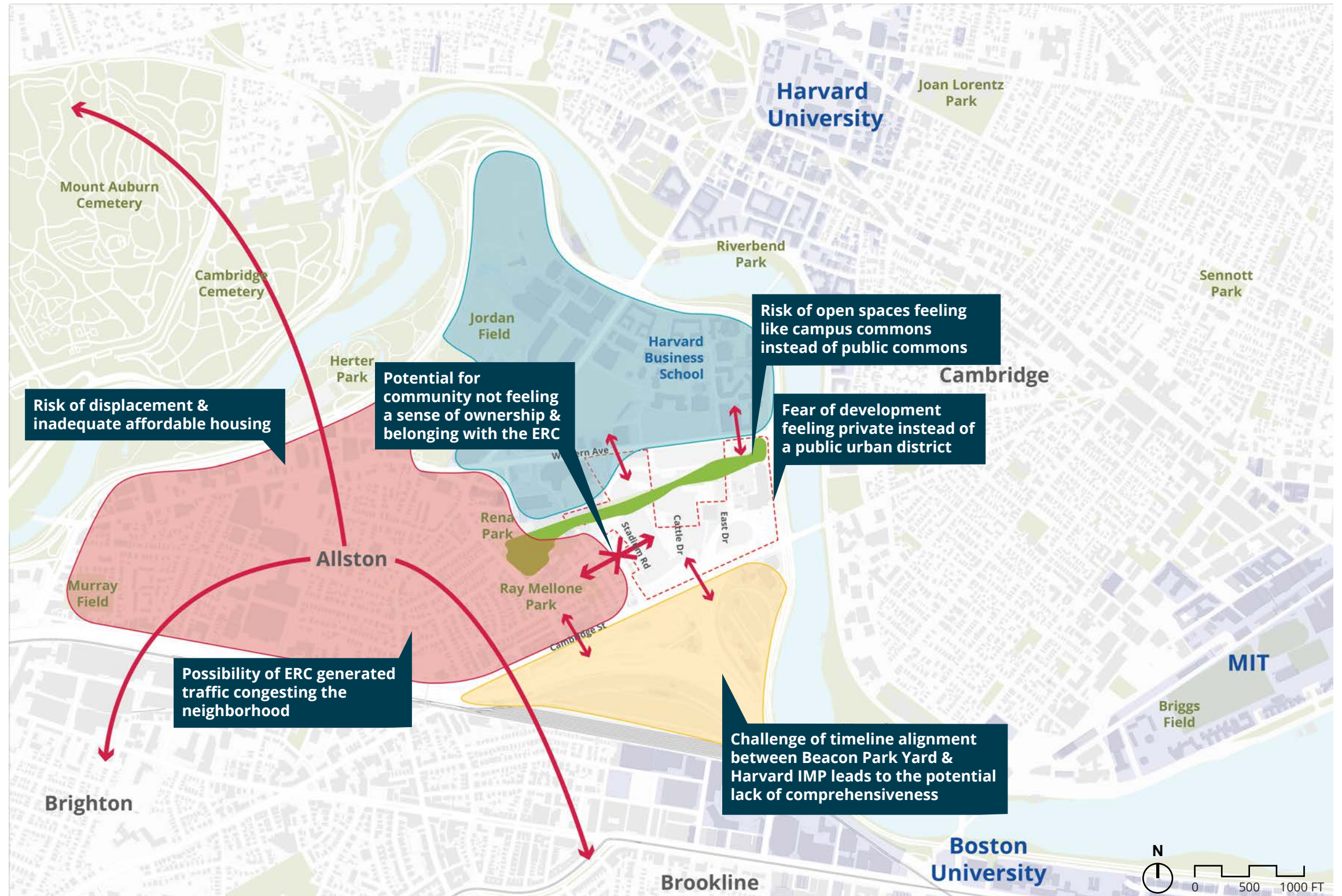
-  ERC Site
-  Proposed NASDEP
-  Historic River Edge and Creeks
-  Historic Wetlands and Salt Marsh Landscape
-  Storm-water Flooding: 10-year, 24-hour rainfall event under various climate conditions due to combined future sea level rise and extreme precipitation (5.6-inch, 5.8-inch, and 6-inch rainfall).
-  Massachusetts Coast Flood Risk Model 2050 1% Annual Exceedance Probability



SCIENCE DR PVT
ROTTERDAM ST WAY PVT



Potential Challenges & Threats: Community Connections





Discussion

Your thoughts!

1. Open a browser
2. Go to **menti.com**
3. Enter the code: **6311 1951**

OR

Scan the QR Code with your
smartphone!



Community Agreements

- **Share the air time** – work together to make sure everyone gets a chance to speak
- **Respect the diverse viewpoints and experiences in the group** – together, we know a lot; alone, we won't know it all; Please keep an open mind
- **Use "I" statements** – share from your own experience and avoid generalizations
- **Check your negativity bias** – focus on constructive discussion instead of what you dislike

Discussion Format



1. Break Out Groups
(35 minutes)



2. Report Out
(15 minutes)

Upcoming Meetings

Advisory Group 2 (20th Sept)*

Public Forum 1 Outcomes:

- Community Goals
- Community Benefits Opportunity Statements
- Draft Community Vision

Focus Group A,B,C (Oct 16th - Dec 15th)*

Workshops on:

- Open Space & Connectivity
- Land Use & Economic Development
- Transportation & Mobility

*Dates pending final confirmation

Thank You!

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