

ALLSTON-BRIGHTON COMMUNITY PLAN VISION + POTENTIAL FUTURES SURVEY!

ENGLISH



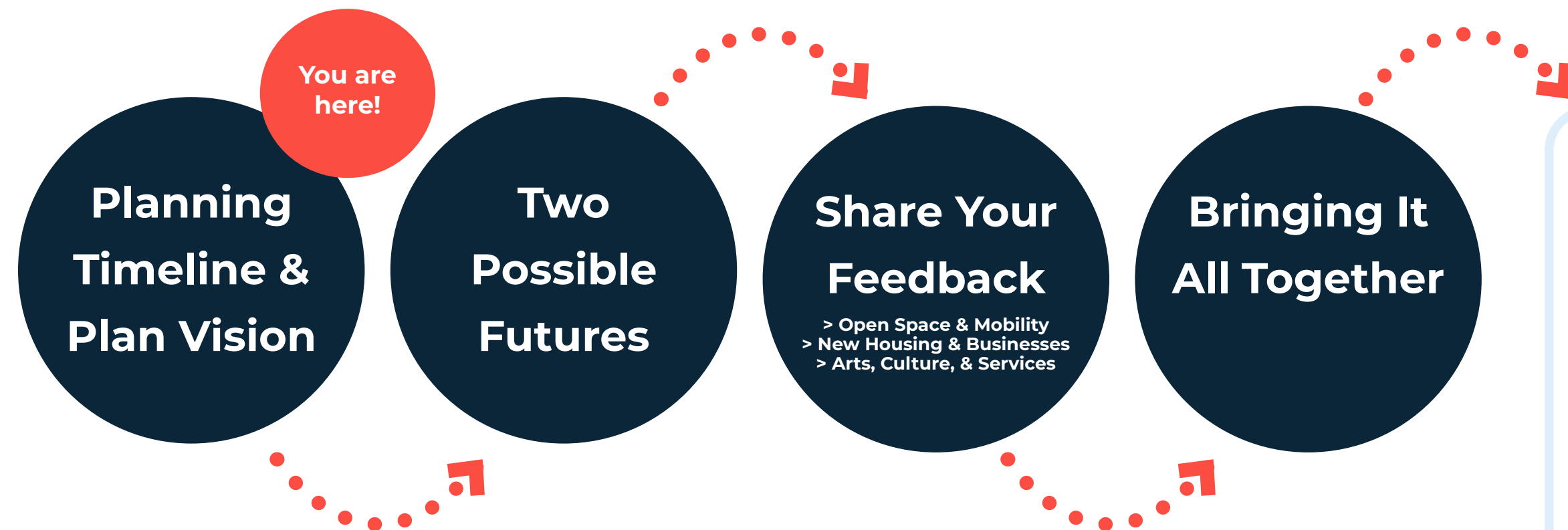
City of Boston
Planning Department

ALLSTON-BRIGHTON IS CHANGING

Allston-Brighton is changing. What do you want that change to look like in the next 10 years?

Learn more and share your feedback about two possible futures for Allston-Brighton (aka “scenarios”)! These scenarios explore different ways to realize the Allston-Brighton Community Plan vision for open space, new housing, new businesses, mobility, amenities, and more.

Today is not about choosing one scenario over another, but instead to think about which aspects of each scenario resonate most with you. This might differ based on where you are in Allston-Brighton.



How will your feedback shape the final Plan?

Your voice is important! Based on feedback collected today and at follow-up events, the project team will identify shared community preferences and begin to blend preferred aspects of the scenarios together. We will look at Allston-Brighton as a whole, and also as three distinct geographic zones (aka “subareas”) within Allston-Brighton.

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE ALLSTON-BRIGHTON COMMUNITY PLAN!

The Allston-Brighton Community Plan process is focused on:

Sharing **information**
and sharing **power**

Investing in **place-**
based leadership

Facilitating
meaningful
dialogue within
and across
communities

What is a community plan?

A community plan guides future development (changes to the physical environment) for all parts of a community.

The Allston-Brighton Community Plan will look at the next 3-10 years (from 2028-2035). Events like this one will help define recommendations and implementation strategies that answer:

> What kinds of changes are desired by residents, businesses, large institutions, and others who may be impacted by future development in the community?

> How will these changes be achieved?

What changes can I expect to see as a result of the Allston-Brighton Community Plan?

A community plan is a powerful tool to achieve the types of changes that are desired for the future. This includes:

- > New buildings, including housing and businesses
- > Street improvements
- > Preservation of important cultural landmarks
- > Improved open space
- > Better access to public transit

Where are we in the plan process?



WHAT THE COMMUNITY HAS TOLD US SO FAR

Allston-Brighton Community Plan engagement principles:

- > Making engagement **as easy as possible**
- > Engaging with **diverse, non-traditional stakeholders**
- > Using both **in-person and online engagement methods**

Priorities for Future Change

We asked: What matters most to you and why?

Community + History

“Allston needs a “Wow” factor. ex: the Beehive in NYC Chicago”

“More housing for artists/ musicians & concert practice space”

Mobility

“We need more reliable public transit! Fix the MBTA!”

“More public transit connections to JP, Roxbury, Dot, & Mattapan”

Housing

“Dense + plentiful = affordable (upzone everything)”

“More family >3 [bedroom] housing! More ownership”

Employment + Economy

“Keep small independent businesses like grocers & restaurants”

“Job training for immigrant communities”

Amenities + Services

“Affordable child care”

“Improve our elementary and secondary schools”

Open Space

“Make Comm Ave between Packards Corner & BC a true parkway!”

“We need an interactive outdoor green/play space”

Important and Beloved Spaces in Allston-Brighton

We asked: What is a place that you love in Allston-Brighton? What is a place that you rely on?

Some Places that People Rely On

Johnny D's

Ringer Park

Chestnut Hill Reservoir

Faneuil Branch - Boston Public Library

St. Elizabeth's



Some Places that People Love

Super 88

YMCA

Brighton Farmers Market

Jackson Mann Community Center

Speedway

Who We've Talked To

From June 1, 2024 - September 30, 2024

500

People directly engaged through public events

12

Community Advisory Board or Planning Collaborative Core Group meetings

17

Community events attended by project team

28

Longform interviews with:

1,410+

Community members reached through email and print materials

Young people
Immigrants
Business owners
Renters
Working class parents
Recent & long-term residents

440+

Digital StoryMap views

ALLSTON-BRIGHTON COMMUNITY PLAN VISION

The Community Plan Vision was built from community voices:

“Art Center for performing and visual arts”

“Housing should have retail spaces underneath!” buildings should contribute to beautifying the area”

“Preserving what makes Allston-Brighton edgy, the diversity of business and people!”

“More green spaces, trees and parks... More “third places” for community building”

“To see more families and young people to be able to stay”

“I would like to see a real effort to include lots of affordable housing along with the development”

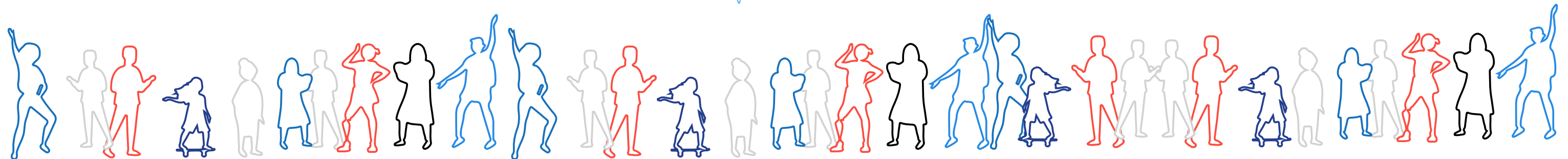
“I want to see a more diverse demographic in terms of ages”

“Focus on communal structures”

“Greater accessibility leads to better communities”

“Improve our elementary and secondary schools”

“Safe streets for families, delivery workers, bikes & transit users”



The Plan will help support a community that...



Is welcoming, diverse, with a culturally rich community fabric - where residents, businesses, workers, immigrants, families, creatives, and community organizations find belonging and can build roots for future generations



Preserves its unique identity with distinct yet connected districts, with an eclectic food, arts, and culture scene and one of the strongest networks of community-based organizations in Boston



Fosters a high quality of life that provides a clean and safe experience with well-maintained streets, public spaces, and connected transportation infrastructure to support all modes of mobility



Is well-resourced, with multi-generational access to critical services such as food, housing, healthcare, schools, job opportunities

HOW WILL THE SCENARIOS IMPACT YOUR LIFE?

Follow the stories of these fictional Allston-Brighton residents to explore how these possible futures could affect your own story.

These characters are not based on specific people but are based on real experiences.

ANA

AGE: 56

LIFE: Ana was born in Brazil but immigrated to Brighton 25 years ago. She lives with her partner and teenage kids and owns a car.

WORK: works at a community-based organization that supports Brazilian families.

Priorities:

- Educational opportunities
- Housing, and food access
- Supporting Brazilian-owned businesses
- Having spaces for her community to gather
- Language accessible resources



LI

AGE: 43

LIFE: Li is from China and primarily speaks Mandarin. She immigrated to Allston last year and lives in a home with roommates of mixed immigration status and does not own a car.

WORK: works at an Asian hairdresser in Brookline.

Priorities:

- Affordable housing and culturally-relevant groceries
- Being able to access the neighborhood's sources, including job training
- Getting around the neighborhood



MARCUS

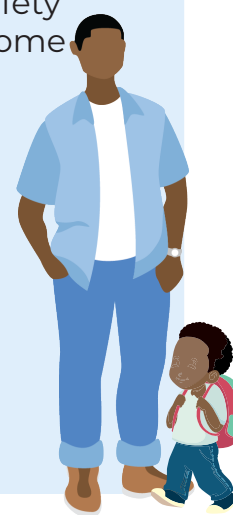
AGE: 34

LIFE: Marcus is from Ohio and moved to Brighton three years ago. His son, Jarvis, is four years old. Marcus lives with his wife and drives to work.

WORK: works at a healthcare center in Downtown Boston.

Priorities:

- Good schools
- Neighborhood safety
- Wants to buy a home in Brighton



ALICE

AGE: 71

LIFE: Alice grew up in Brighton and lives in her childhood home with her husband. She owns a car and wants to ensure there is enough parking in the area.

WORK: owned a restaurant in Brighton Center but sold it to a new owner and is now retired

Priorities:

- Preserving Brighton's history
- Supporting local businesses in the area
- She doesn't want big box stores in



DEVEN

AGE: 21

LIFE: Deven is a senior at the Boston University School of Visual Arts and lives with three roommates who also work in creative fields. Deven bikes to school from Allston.

WORK: works as a server at a popular restaurant nearby.

Priorities:

- Fun and affordable things to do in the neighborhood
- Ensuring they can continue to live in Allston-Brighton
- Finding opportunities to share their art and build their artistic practice



POSSIBLE FUTURE 1

A HOP, SKIP, AND A JUMP

Growth and development are concentrated in a few areas within Allston-Brighton.

This scenario explores one way to realize the Allston-Brighton Community Plan vision for open space, new housing, new businesses, mobility, amenities, and more.

Think about which aspects of each scenario resonate most with you. Visit all the stations to learn more and share your feedback!

In this version of the future, Allston-Brighton has...

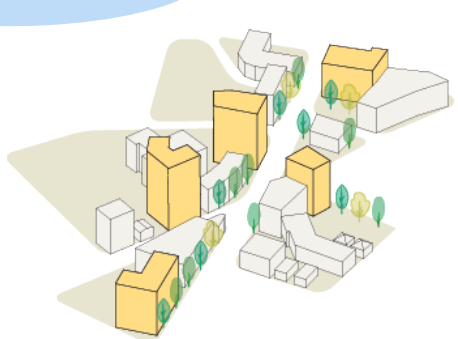


- several **walkable, bikeable** boulevards with street trees and rain gardens
- frequent buses with dedicated lanes and bus stop shelters

>> It's easy to move throughout Allston-Brighton and to places outside the community.



"It's a lot easier to get to the parks on the river now, so the families I work with gather there more often."
-Ana



"My grocery store is right next to the English language class I go to, and I can get there quickly by bus."
-Li

- a few **big squares and districts** with taller buildings
- affordable housing; large culturally diverse grocery stores; new businesses
- community resources **concentrated** in these areas

>> Other parts are more residential with smaller buildings overall.



"I love that there's so much to do near my son's daycare, so I can park once, pick him up, go to the playground, get a snack, and do our shopping in one place."
-Marcus



"I got an income-restricted apartment with friends in the arts district, and I have a show opening at one of the small galleries there soon."
-Deven

- a few vibrant **cultural districts and arts districts** that include food, dining, art, cultural centers, and nightlife

>> These places are easy to get to and are destinations for the whole city.



"I love that where I live is still pretty quiet, and restaurants are thriving in the new cultural district."
-Alice

POSSIBLE FUTURE 2

JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Growth and development are distributed throughout Allston-Brighton.

This scenario explores one way to realize the Allston-Brighton Community Plan vision for open space, new housing, new businesses, mobility, amenities, and more.

Think about which aspects of each scenario resonate most with you. Visit all the stations to learn more and share your feedback!

In this version of the future, Allston-Brighton has...



- lots of **small parks and plazas** throughout the community
- residential cross streets with **slowed traffic and improved signage**

>> It's easy to get most of the things you need within a short distance of where you live.



"We have two smaller locations for the community organization I work at now, making it easier for more families to walk to one of them."

"There's a small bodega right near my house – I can't get all my groceries there, but it makes it much easier when I'm in a rush!"
-Li



- renovated homes and properties** to accommodate more families
 - corner stores and cafes** mixed into residential areas
 - 4-6 story mixed-use buildings** in main squares
- >> Community resources are scattered throughout in smaller buildings, libraries, and schools.

"My son loves the new mini park near our house and the streets feel much safer for kids, so we love going on long walks (which often end with ice cream)!"
-Marcus



"I got an income-restricted apartment with friends in the arts district, and I have a show opening at one of the small galleries there soon."
-Deven



- more public art, murals, and galleries** in places that didn't have them before
- local restaurants and bars** throughout

>> Arts and culture are celebrated everywhere in the community.

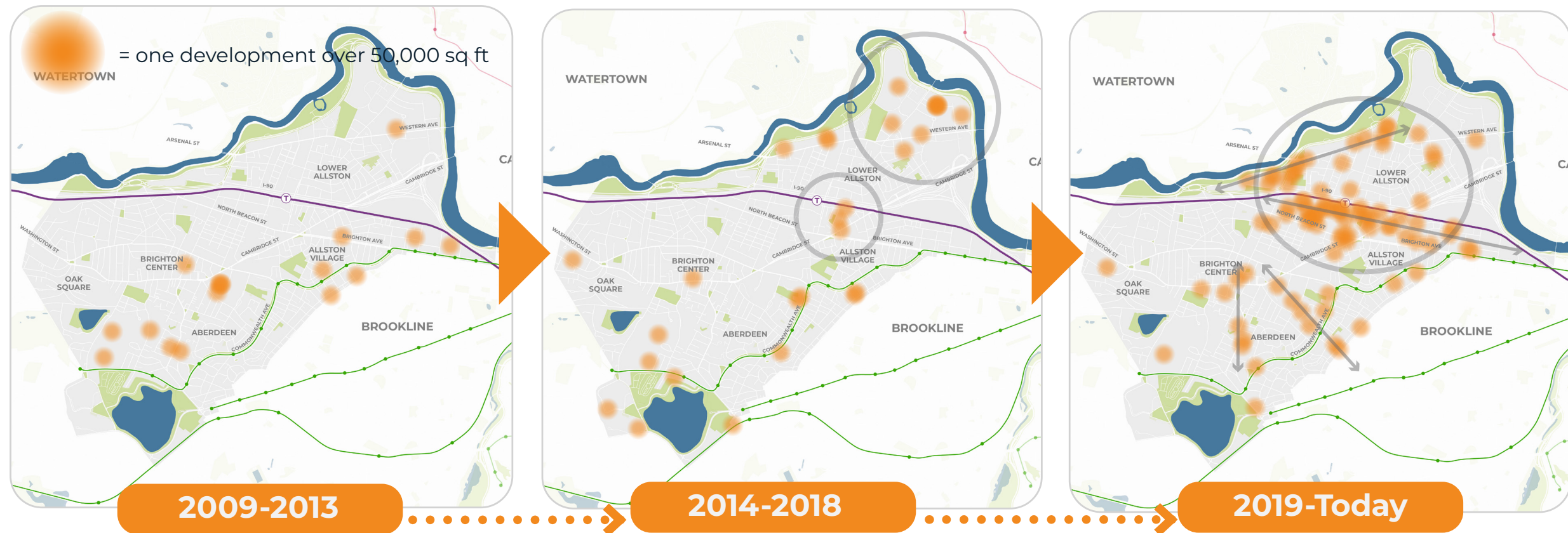
"I see lots of new small businesses throughout the community, which really brings more character to the places I love."



DEVELOPMENT TRENDS TODAY

The community's vision for the future centers on the need for affordable housing and commercial space that ensures current residents and business owners can put down roots in the neighborhood.

Where have large developments happened to date?



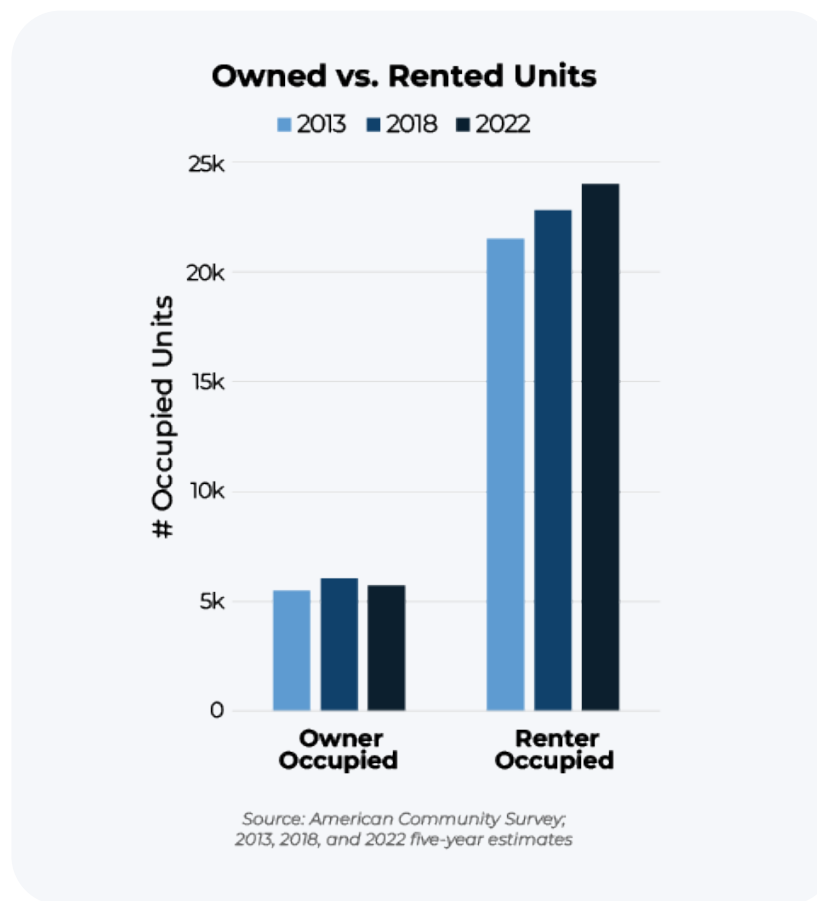
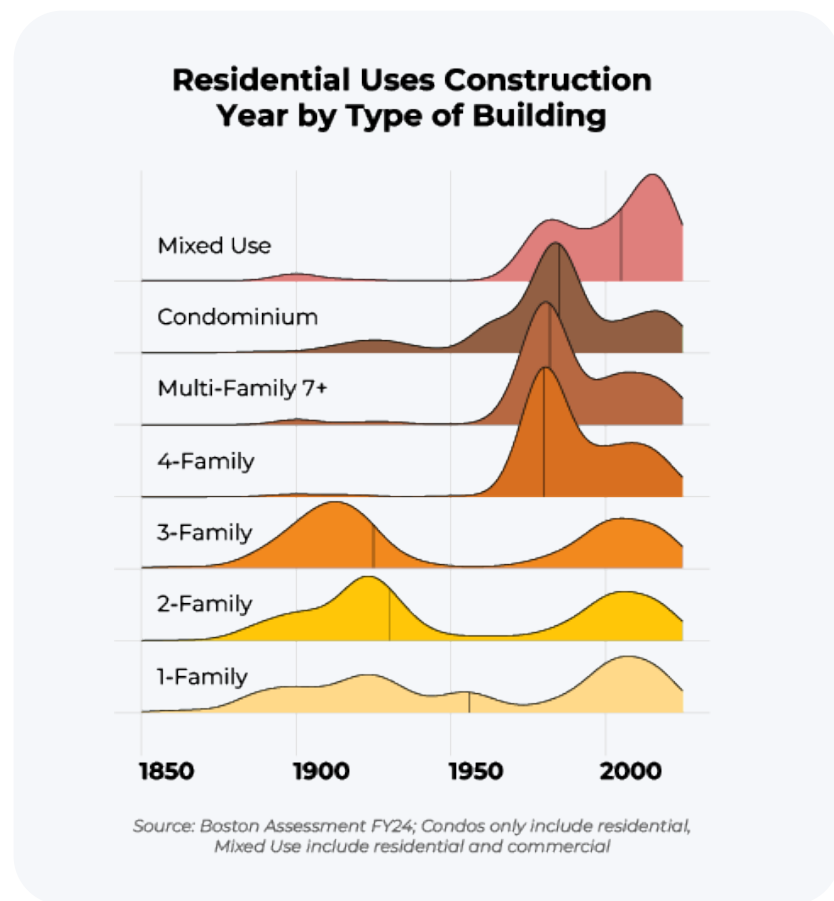
Large developments have consistently been built near the **Green Line**.

Large development grew near **Packard's Corner and Boston College** then much more in **Lower Allston**.

More recently, **Boston Landing** and areas along **I-90** have seen the most large development.

SOURCE: Article 80 Projects, Analyze Boston

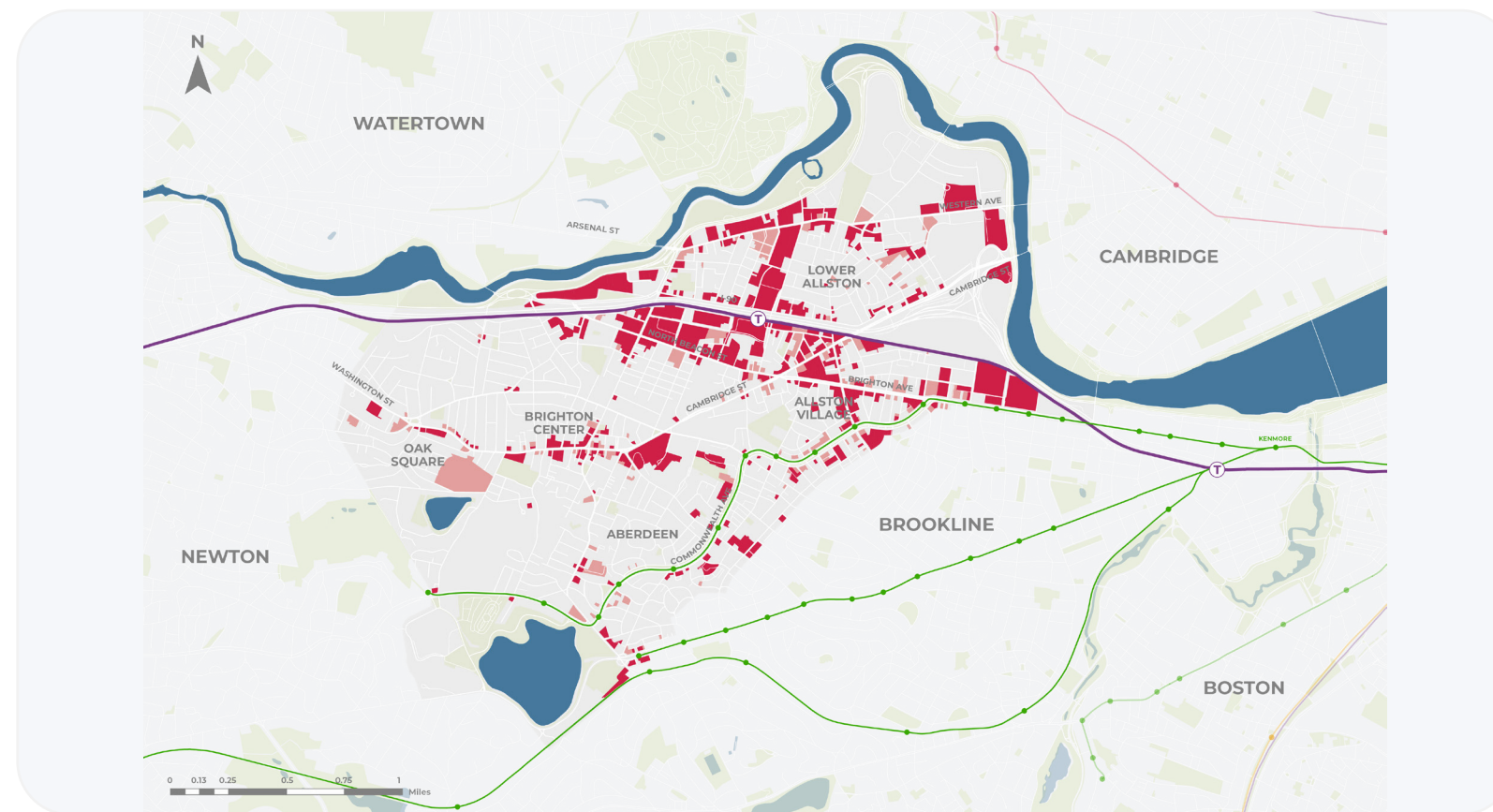
How has housing changed over time?



The makeup of housing tenure and housing stock has shifted to **larger mixed-use buildings** with many **rental units**. New construction has shifted from 1-, 2-, or 3-family homes in the early 1900s to 4+ family homes in the late 1900s. Mixed-use developments have boomed since 2000. There are also many units occupied by renters now than 10 years ago, whereas the number of ownership units has stayed fairly steady.

SOURCE:
ACS, Boston Parcel Assessment FY24

Where are stores and business today?



In some neighborhoods like Boston Landing, Allston Village and Brighton Center, stores and businesses are **concentrated in a few blocks**. In places like Aberdeen and Oak Square, they are **scattered amidst residential areas**. The trend of new large developments could mean that future businesses are concentrated in a few areas.

■ = Commercial

■ = Mixed Use

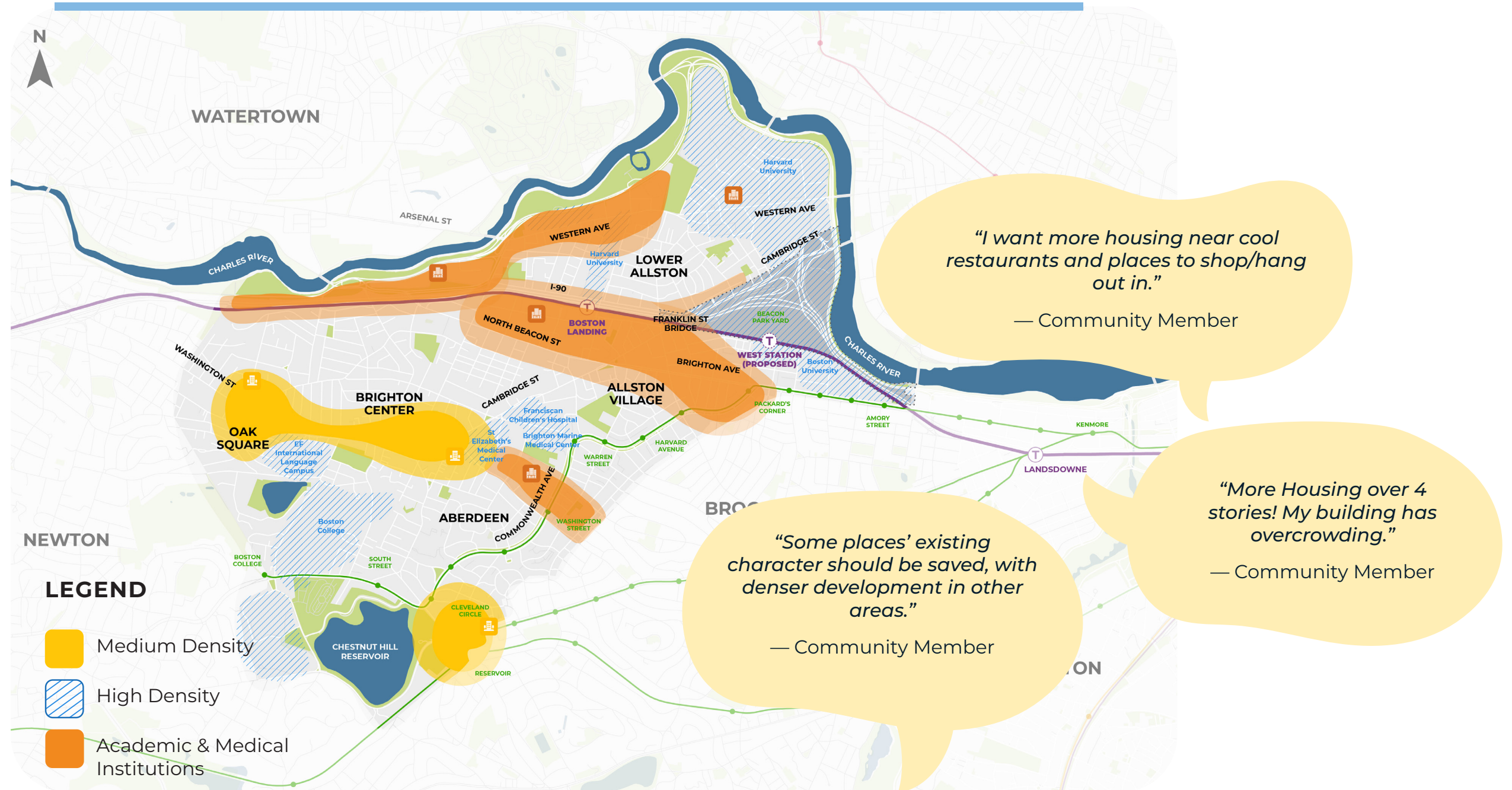
SOURCE:

Land Use Data, Boston Parcel Assessment FY21

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

NEW HOUSING AND BUSINESS

1 A Hop, Skip, and a Jump

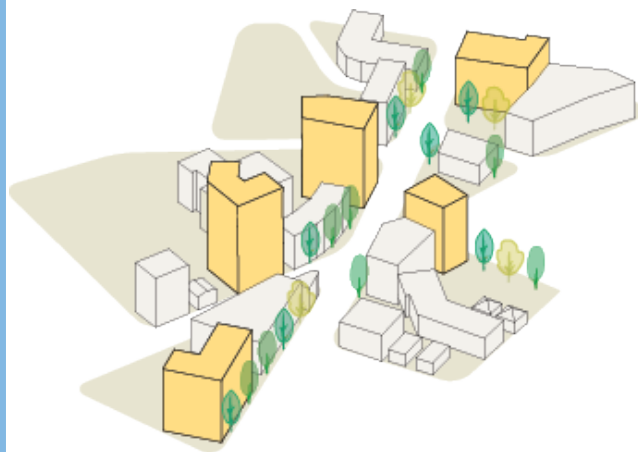


COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

NEW HOUSING AND BUSINESS

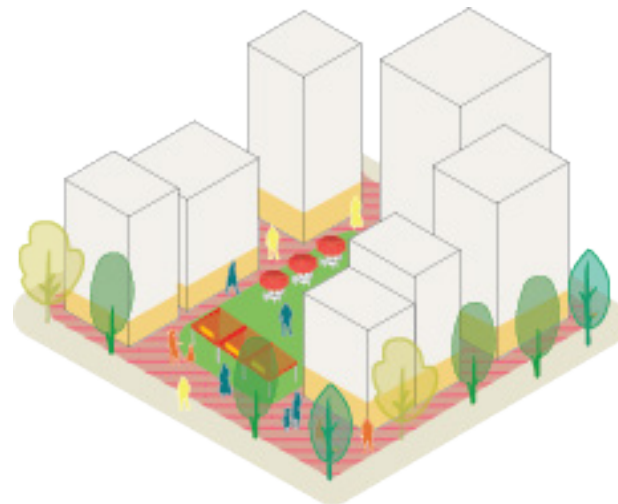
Big Squares

Allow additional large-scale (6+ story) housing in areas that already have similar scale buildings such as squares, along main streets, and in areas of high development activity today.



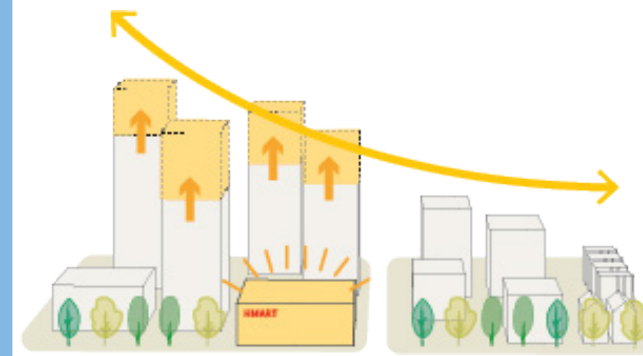
Tall Buildings

Expand a few existing mixed-use districts to allow taller buildings as well as promoting large, culturally diverse grocery stores (density goes down as you move away from these districts).



Mixed-Use

Concentrate large scale (6+ story) mixed-use business centers with galleries, small businesses, or other public amenities on the first floor.



Ana

I'm working on getting my clients, fellow Brazilian immigrants to the neighborhood, new homes in the new buildings on Western Ave. They're so close to new jobs there.



Li

I chose to live in the Allston Village Cultural District since it's known for great Chinese restaurants and grocery stores.



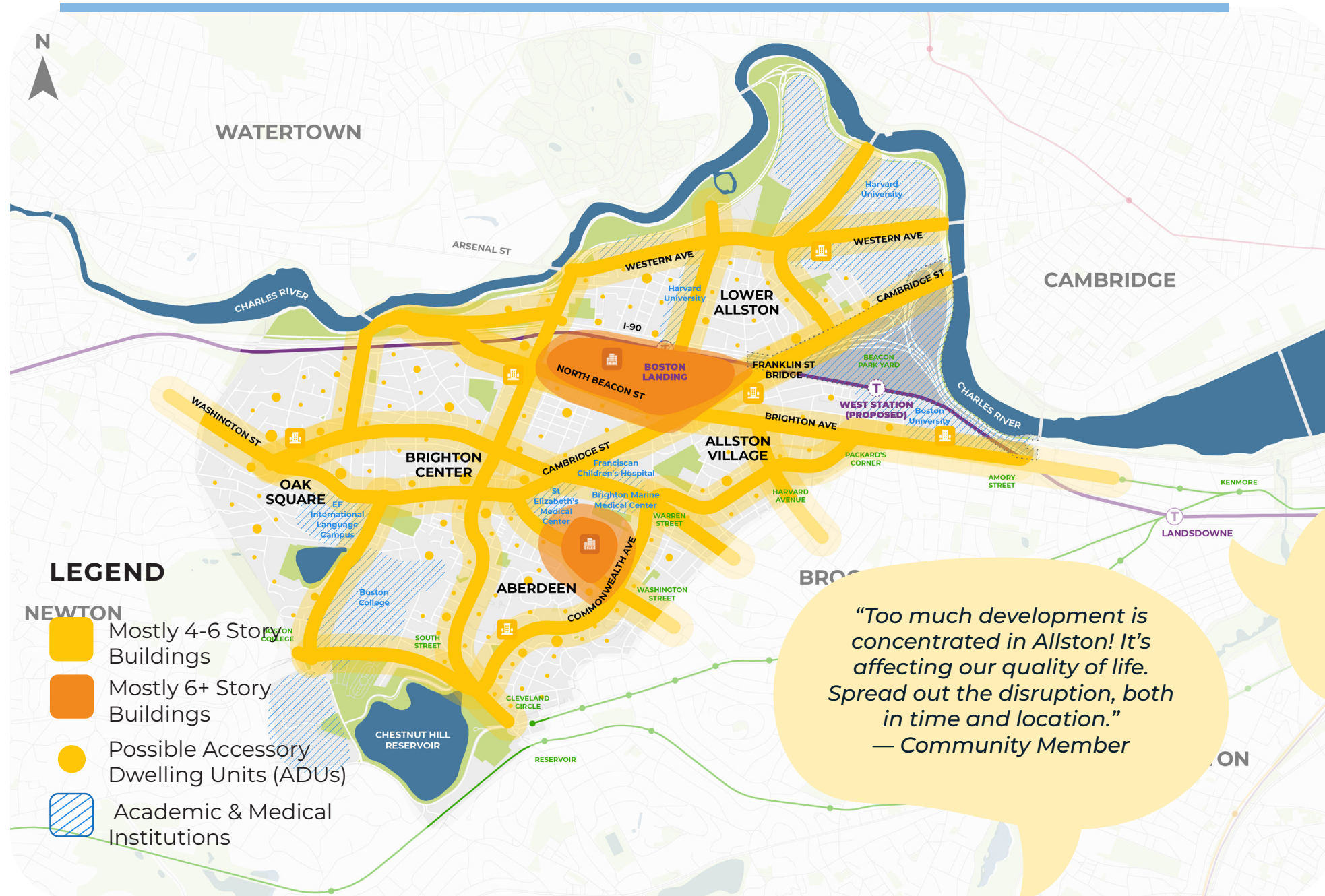
Marcus

I've been taking first-time home buyer classes at the big community center next to my son's daycare in the new buildings on Washington Street, and I just put my offer in on a condo in a new 6-story building near Brighton Center!

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

NEW HOUSING AND BUSINESSES

2 Just Around the Corner



"Too much development is concentrated in Allston! It's affecting our quality of life. Spread out the disruption, both in time and location."
— Community Member

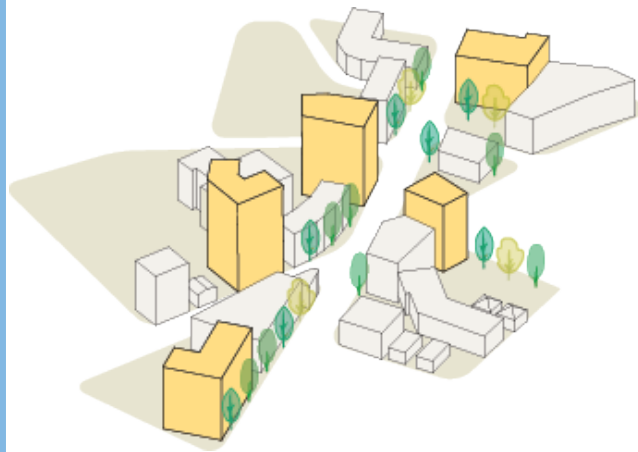
"Keep small independent businesses like grocers, restaurants so it's not corporate owned and retains a unique 'village' charm."
— Community Member

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

NEW HOUSING AND BUSINESSES

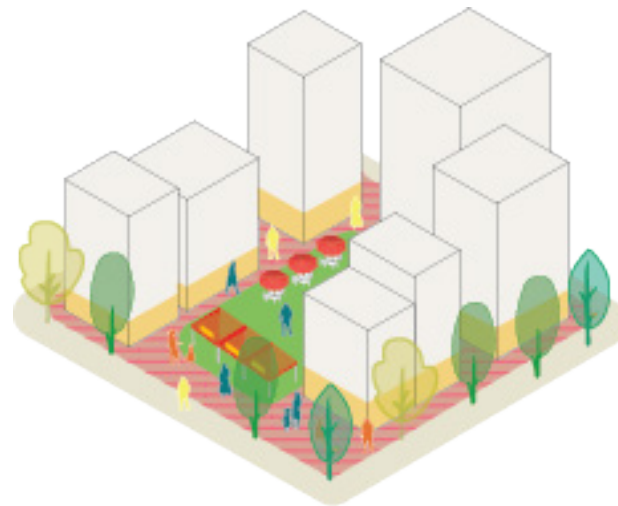
Small Scale

Expand housing while retaining existing neighborhood character and scale by limiting renovations to single family and duplex houses with: 1) smaller housing unit additions (accessory dwelling units), or 2) renovations that result in 3 or 4 units.



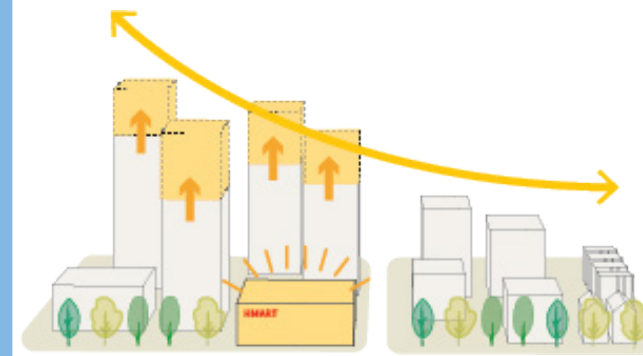
Corner Stores

Encourage more corner stores, small markets, and cafes in residential areas by providing support for small businesses and entrepreneurs.



Small Businesses

Identify a few 4-6 story buildings with small businesses on the ground floor and work space for specific communities, like artists or students.



Ana

I've helped my clients, recent Brazilian immigrants to the neighborhood, find affordable rentals in the newly renovated triple deckers that are going up in Lower



Li

I live on Commonwealth Ave, near a small market which is really convenient. I love that I can walk to a couple different stores to explore new cuisines too.



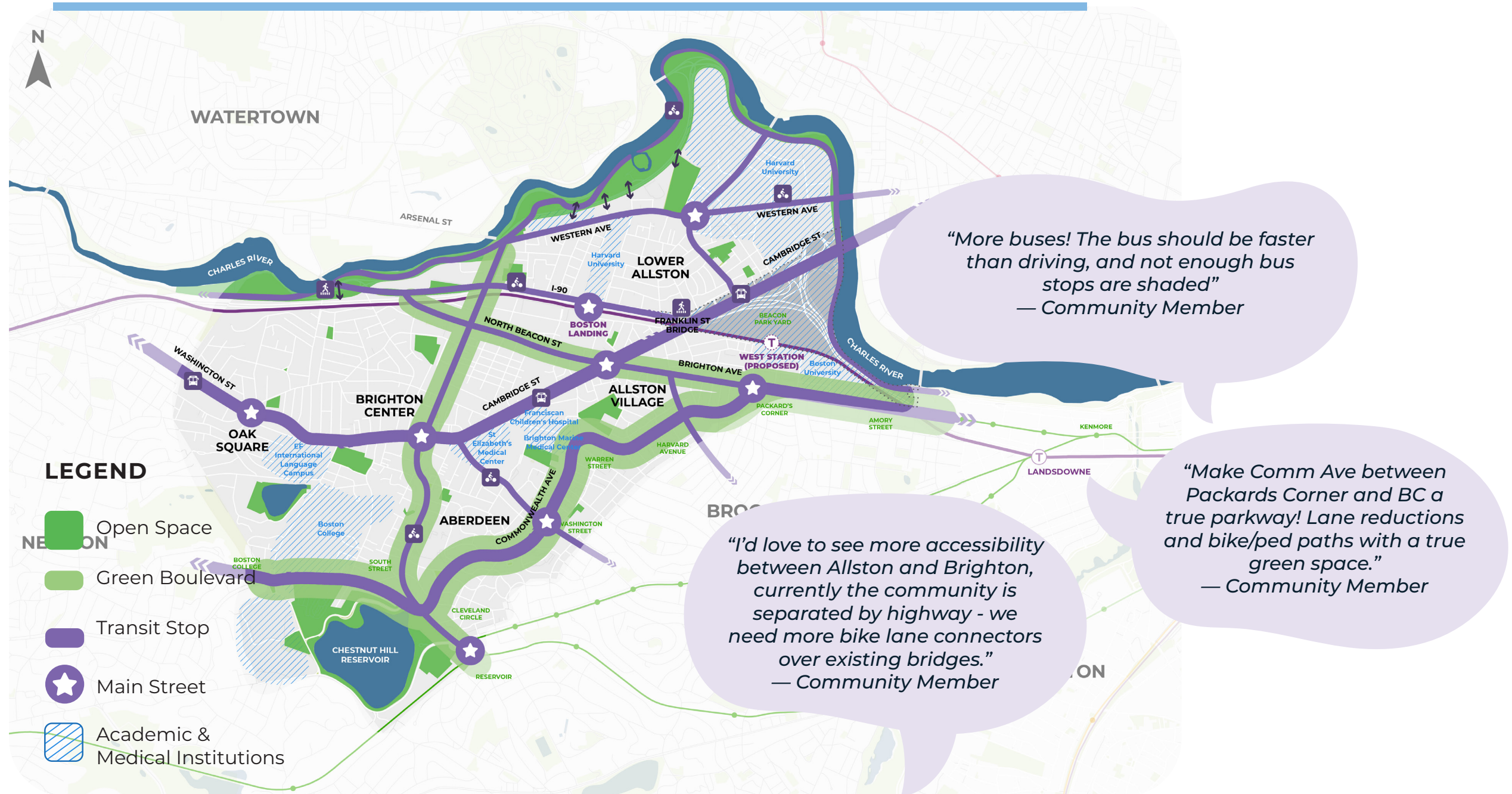
Marcus

I've been taking first-time home buyer classes at the small community center near my house. After class, I jump on my bike to pick my son up at daycare nearby. I just put my offer in on a duplex near Oak Square!

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

OPEN SPACE AND MOBILITY

1 A Hop, Skip, and a Jump



COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

OPEN SPACE AND MOBILITY

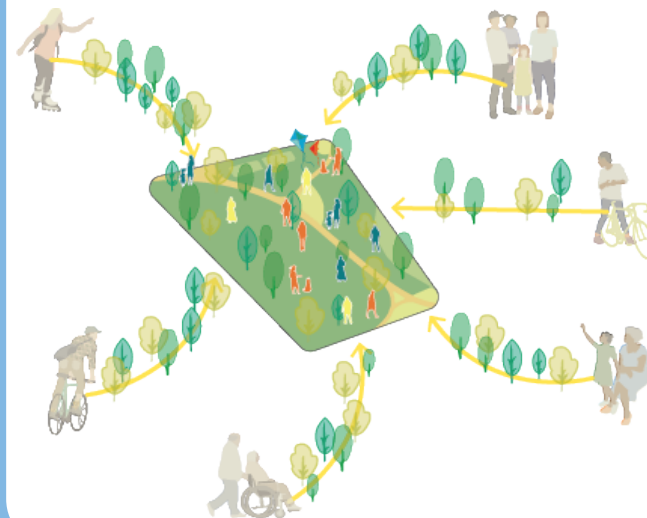
Transit Stops

Enhance existing bus and train stops with protected shelters and comfortable seatings.



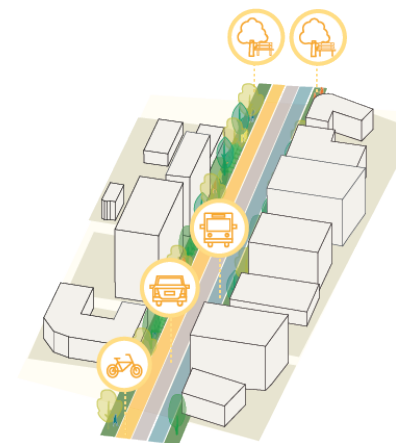
Enhance Parks

Enhance existing large parks and increase pedestrian and bicycle access with better programming, landscape design, and targeted streetscape enhancement.



Green Boulevards

Improve pedestrian safety and walkability with green boulevards along major streets by introducing separated bus and bike lanes with expanded street trees and rain gardens.



Li

I live in Allston Village but it's easy to take the bus from my house to the salon, which is close to a lot of other businesses – even in the summer, I don't mind waiting for the bus because it's covered and shaded!



Alice

I just went to a little league game in the newly renovated Ringer Park. They've really improved Ringer Park, a lot of the neighborhood came out for this game!



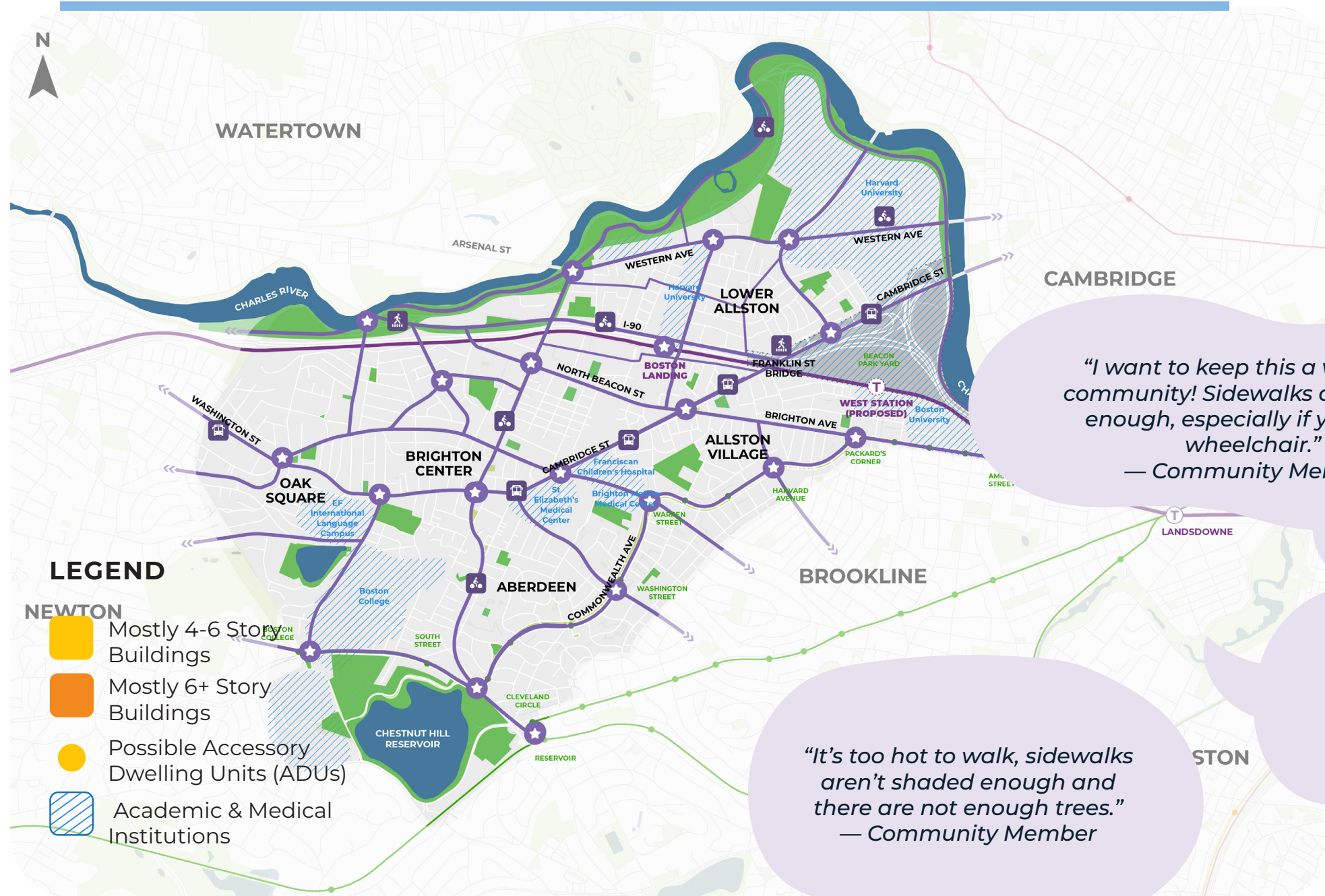
Deven

I used to worry about biking at night down Cambridge Street - now it's a really fun bike ride to get to my job in Cambridge.

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

OPEN SPACE AND MOBILITY

2 Just Around the Corner



"I want to keep this a walkable community! Sidewalks aren't wide enough, especially if you use a wheelchair."
— Community Member

"It's too hot to walk, sidewalks aren't shaded enough and there are not enough trees."
— Community Member

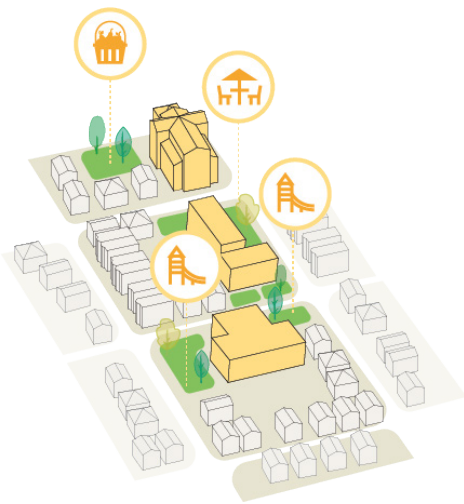
"Without a car, getting groceries is a burden."
— Community Member

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

OPEN SPACE AND MOBILITY

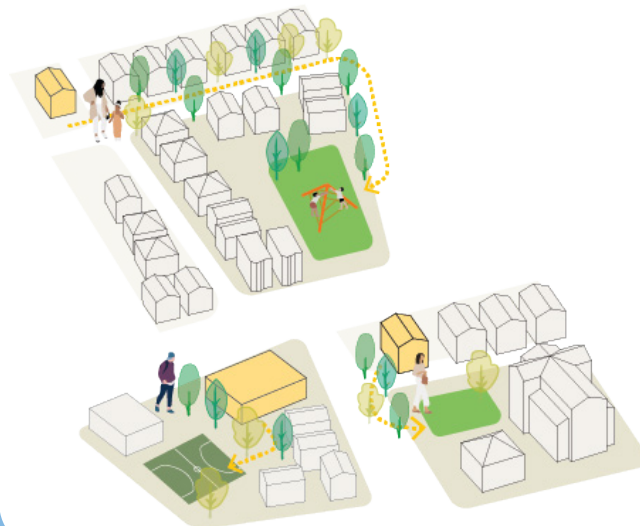
Mini Parks

Introduce new mini parks and spaces for small gatherings in residential areas that have relatively less green space today.



Partnerships

Identify and activate under utilized open spaces by partnering with nearby institutions (such as universities, police stations, libraries, churches).



Safe Streets

Improve pedestrian safety and walkability in residential areas with speed bumps, well-maintained crosswalks, and pedestrian light signals etc.



Li

I love the small park near my house, it's right next to the community fridge and while it's small, it's a lovely, quiet place to relax.



Alice

I just met up in one of the new mini parks in Aberdeen with my old friend who owns a business near there. That area used to be so hot, but now it's pretty green!



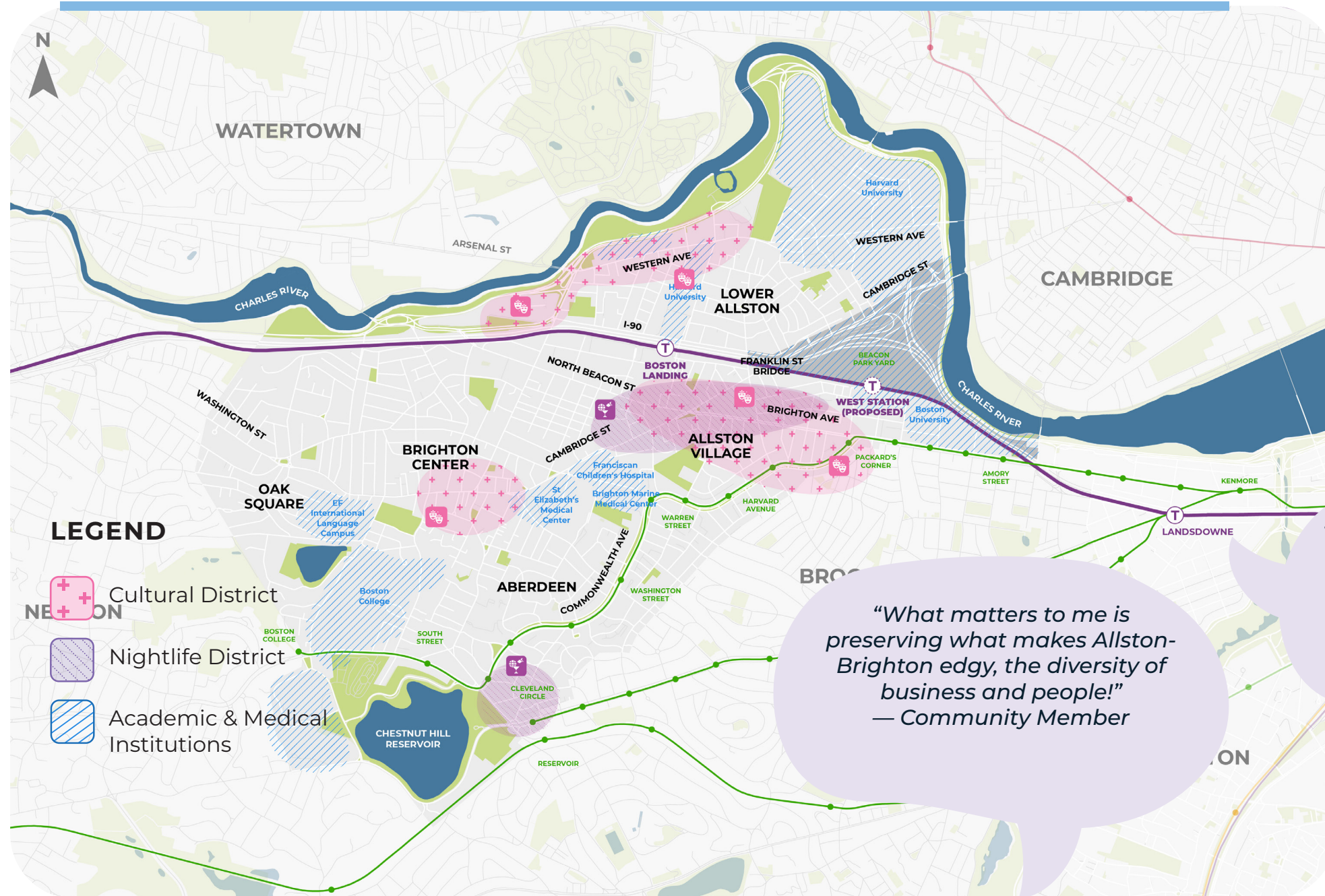
Deven

I tend to walk if it's under 20 minutes since the streets are so nice. I like to cut through residential streets to one of the campuses and picnic with friends there.

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

ARTS, CULTURE, AND SERVICES

1 A Hop, Skip, and a Jump



"What matters to me is preserving what makes Allston-Brighton edge, the diversity of business and people!"
— Community Member

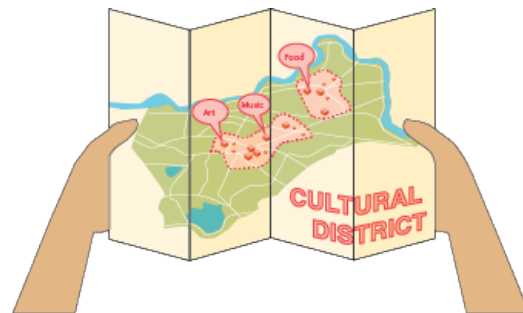
"I dream of a safe community that supports and attracts immigrants and the creative class."
— Community Member

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

ARTS, CULTURE, AND SERVICES

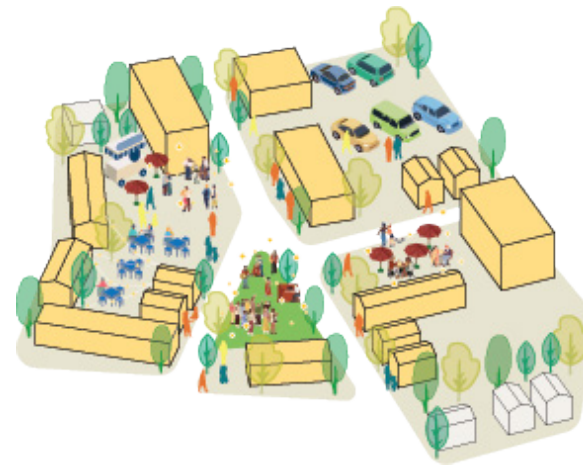
Culture District

Establish a large cultural district with art galleries, studios, and community art spaces, to support existing cultural organizations and local businesses.



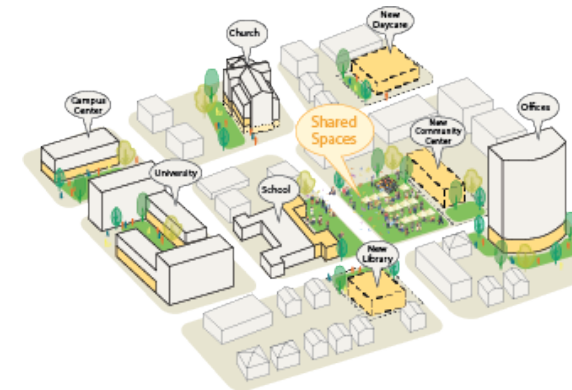
Nightlife District

Establish a few destination nightlife districts with music venues, restaurants, and bars.



Community Center

Identify opportunities for a large community center to host programs and provide working spaces for community-based organizations and people of all ages.



Deven

I live with roommates in an Artist Certified Housing apartment building in the new Franklin Street Arts District. I'm excited because a friend's show is opening in the gallery on our first floor tonight.



Alice

I like to take the bus to Western Ave since so many new restaurants have opened there. I'm meeting some lifelong friends there tonight and will run a few errands beforehand since that's where all the stores are.



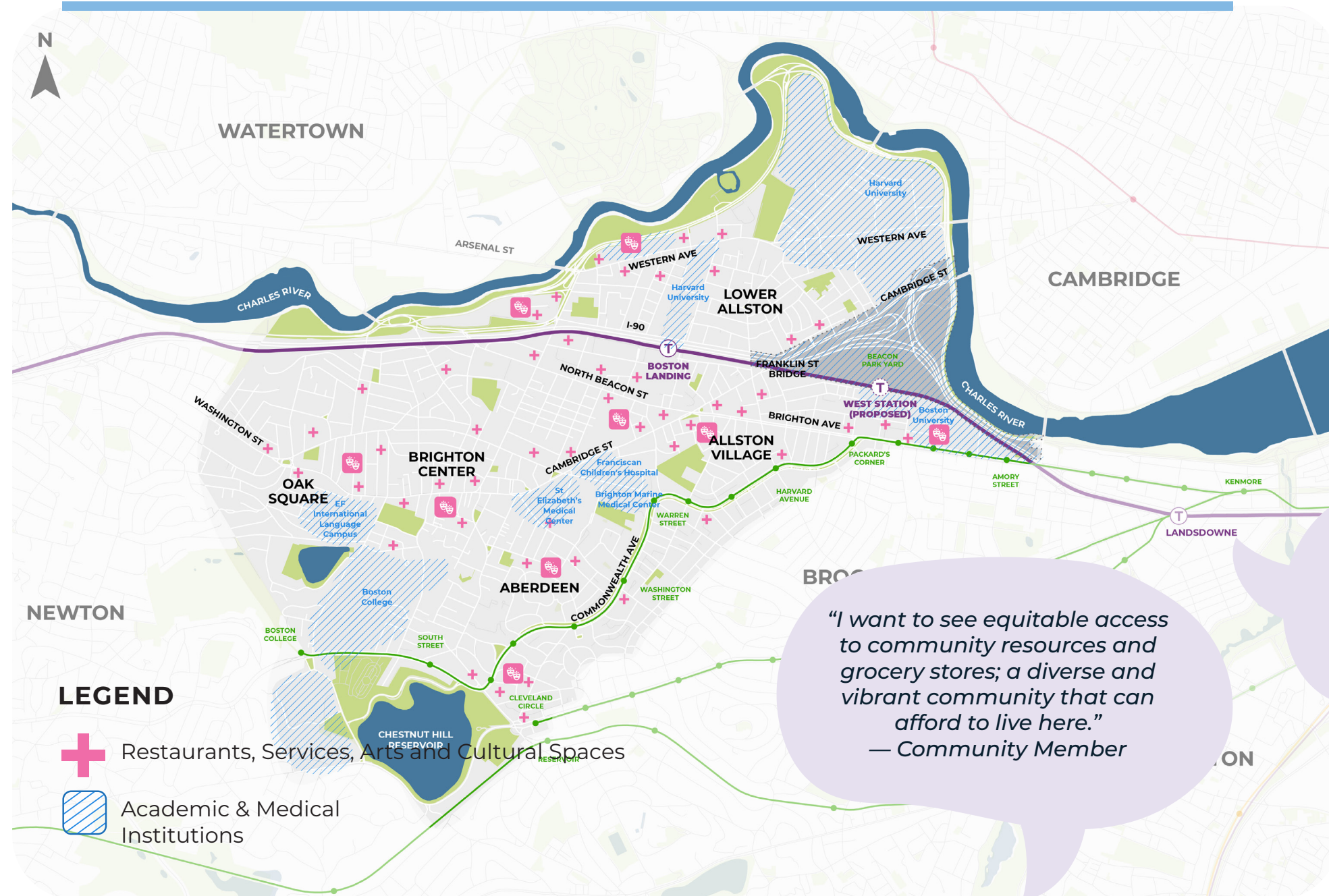
Ana

I'm planning an event at the big new community center. We make sure people have transportation to get there, but once they arrive, it has everything they need!

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

ARTS, CULTURE, AND SERVICES

2 Just Around the Corner



"I want to see equitable access to community resources and grocery stores; a diverse and vibrant community that can afford to live here."
— Community Member

"Let's make affordable art markets and no empty storefronts."
— Community Member

COMPARING POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR...

ARTS, CULTURE, AND SERVICES

Public Art

Encourage and incentivize small but meaningful expressions of art throughout the community such as murals and temporary exhibitions in existing community spaces.



Restaurants

Encourage local restaurants and bars to be distributed throughout Allston-Brighton instead of a few concentrated areas.



Partnerships

Strengthen and expand partnerships with schools and institutions to provide youth and community programs throughout Allston-Brighton.



Deven

I live with roommates in an Artist Housing Certified apartment in a mixed building on Commonwealth Ave – today, I'm heading to Oak Square to finish a mural with friends on the Boston Public Library Branch!



Alice

I love getting dinner with friends at the local restaurants near my house.



Ana

I'm planning an event for my community organization – we're going to do one at Winship Elementary and one at Boston Green Academy.Oak Square!

POTENTIAL FUTURES SURVEY



Your voice is important! Please complete this survey to share your thoughts on two possible futures for Allston-Brighton (aka "scenarios"). These scenarios explore different ways to realize the Allston-Brighton Community Plan vision for open space, new housing, new businesses, mobility, amenities, and more.

This is not about choosing one scenario over another, but instead to think about which aspects of each scenario resonate most with you. This might differ based on where you are in Allston-Brighton.

How will your feedback shape the final Plan? Based on community feedback, the project team will identify shared community preferences and begin to blend preferred aspects of the scenarios together. We will look at Allston-Brighton as a whole, and also as three distinct geographic zones (aka "subareas") within Allston-Brighton.

We'll work with our Community Advisory Board and Planning Collaborative Core Group to understand: what is possible for the next 10 years? What challenges or conflicts need to be addressed? Where are there opportunities to build on existing projects?