

An aerial photograph of the Beacon Park Yard area in New York City, featuring a large highway interchange, surrounding urban buildings, and a distant city skyline. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

Beacon Park Yard Regional Framework Plan

Project Overview
September 2024

Vision & Mission

Vision

Our vision is inclusive and equitable infrastructure and development projects.

Read more about our Mission, Theory of Change and Action and sign up for Planning Department Newsletters on our project website.



bit.ly/B-P-Y

bit.ly/BPY-Public-Forum-4-Register

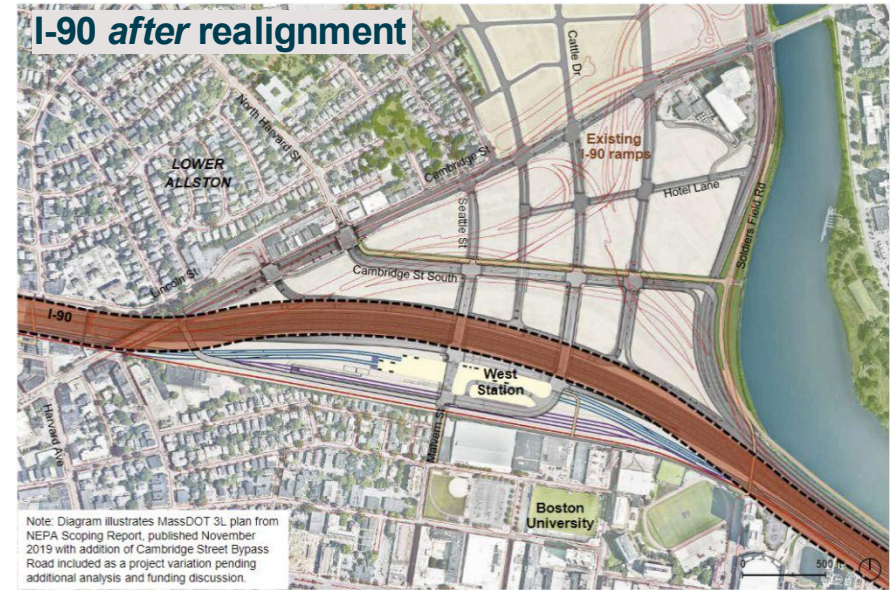


Overview

1. Project Timeline & Background
2. Frameworks and Guiding Principles Recap
3. Emerging Themes

Background

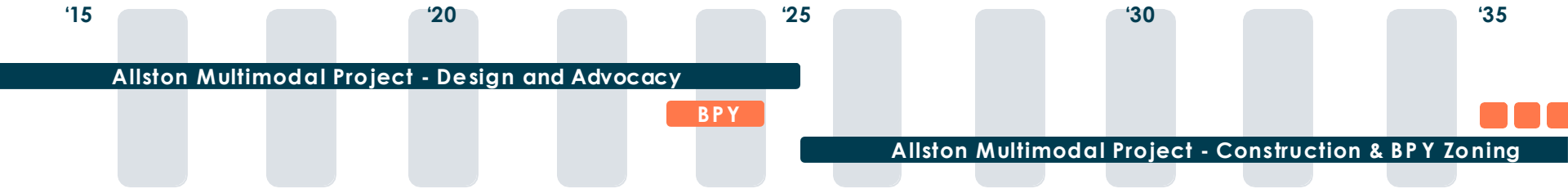
MassDOT's Allston Multimodal Project Enables the Beacon Park Yard Planning Process



The Allston Multimodal Project will deliver robust multimodal transit.

**depictions from the Harvard, Beacon Park Yard Pre-Planning Analysis (2023)*

Collaborative Process

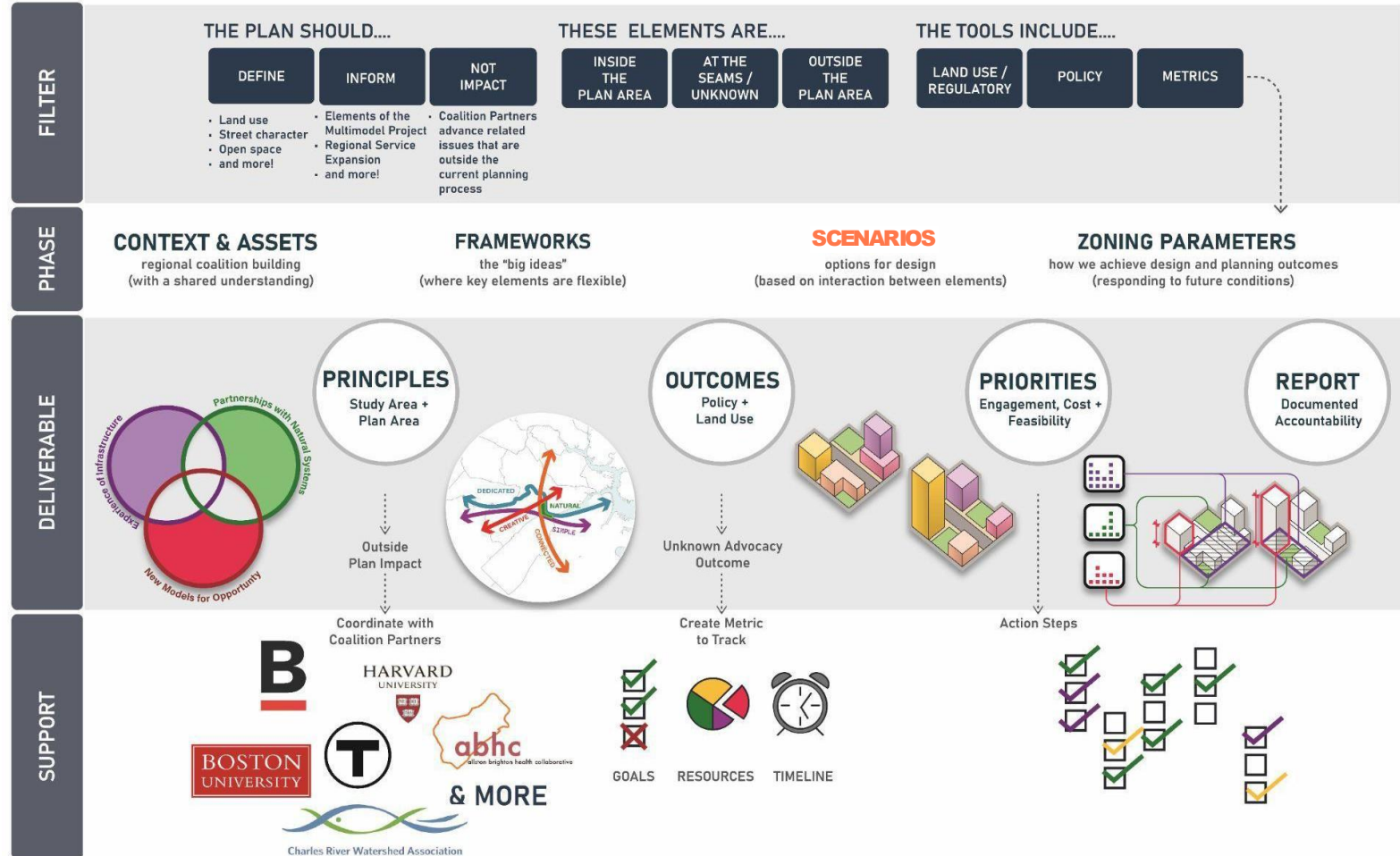


The Beacon Park Yard Regional Framework Plan will establish a regional, community vision for dense urban development to support and inform the transformational urban infrastructure project.

BPY PLAN

PROJECT PROCESS

PLANNING TIMELINE



Engagement Recap

Cumulative Engagement from October 2023 through August 2024

4 Coalition Partners Meetings

3 Public Forums

10 Public Broad Engagement Events

21 Focus Groups

Postcard campaign to **690** abutting addresses

Deployed **5** digital engagement feedback tools throughout

Total of **40** engagement events

Reached out to **85** community and advocacy groups in Allston-Brighton via email.

4,126 total number of website views.

2,432 total number of unique individuals who visited the website.

21,667 total recipients of 14 email campaigns.



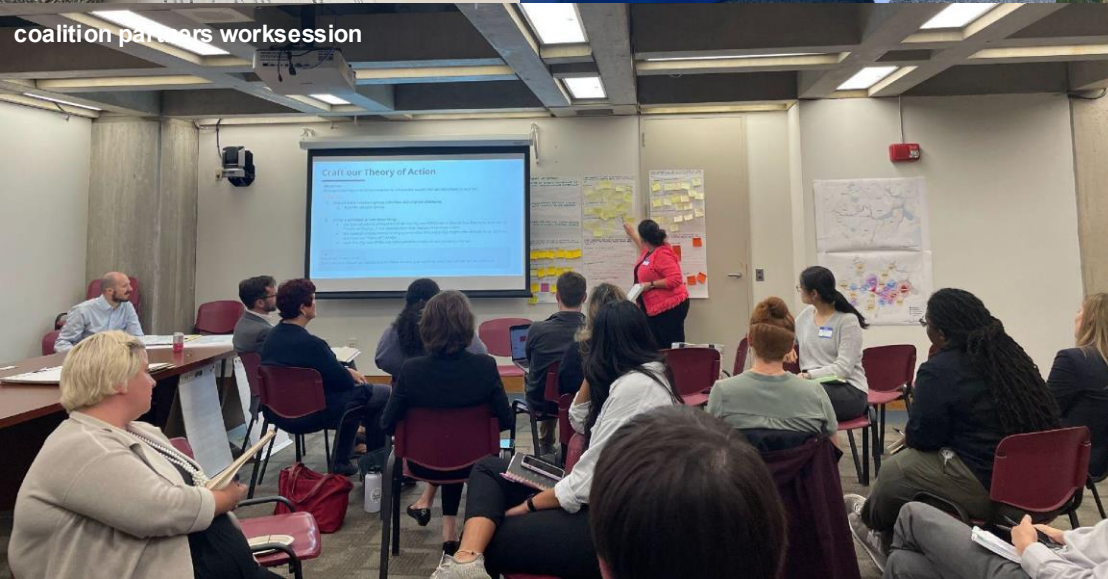
public forum



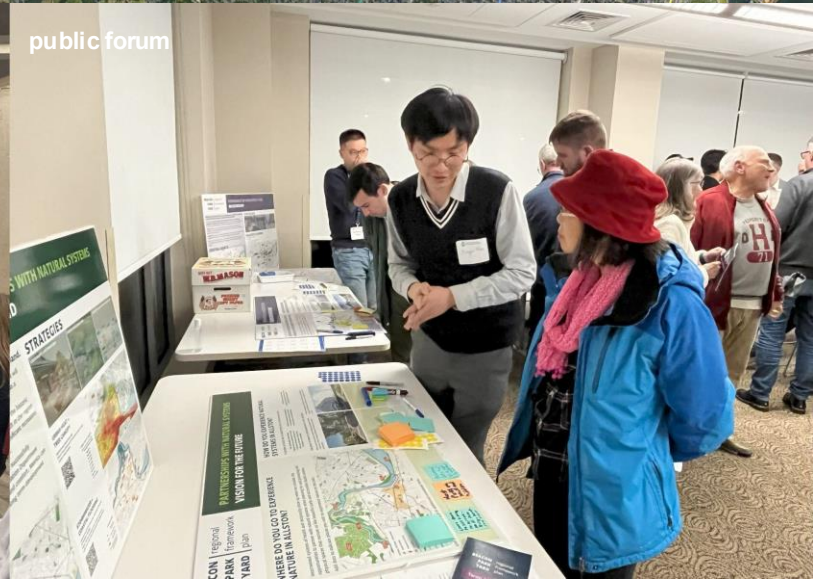
brighton farmers market



intercept survey routes

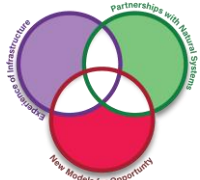


coalition partners worksession



public forum

Guiding Principles



Improve Pedestrian + Cyclist Experience in and around Allston



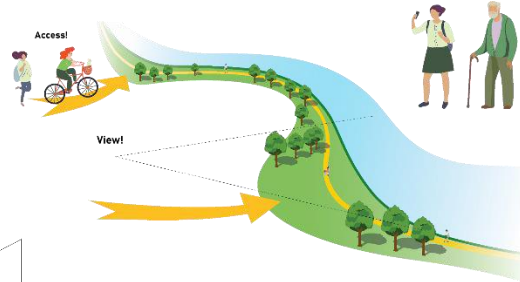
Develop with the City



Create Accessible + Reliable Multimodal Connections Regionally



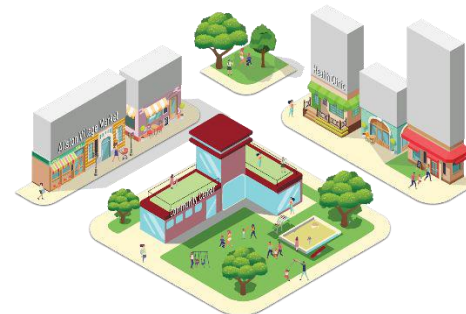
Connect to the Charles



Amplify Allston's Creative Capital



Invest in Community Anchors



Employ Nature-Based Solutions



What We Heard, Phase 2

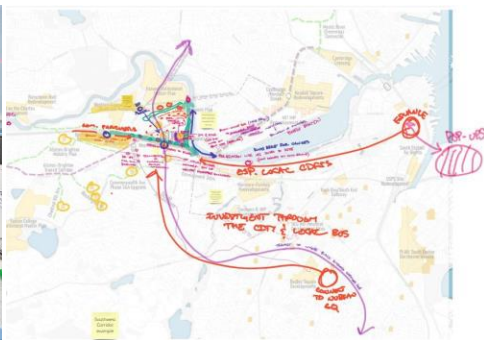
Framework Co-Design Sessions

Community #1

NGO Staff

Community #2

Core Group



In Phase Two of the project, community and staff co-created options for regional frameworks. These frameworks describe the big ideas that we imagine will transform the region over the next 20+ years.

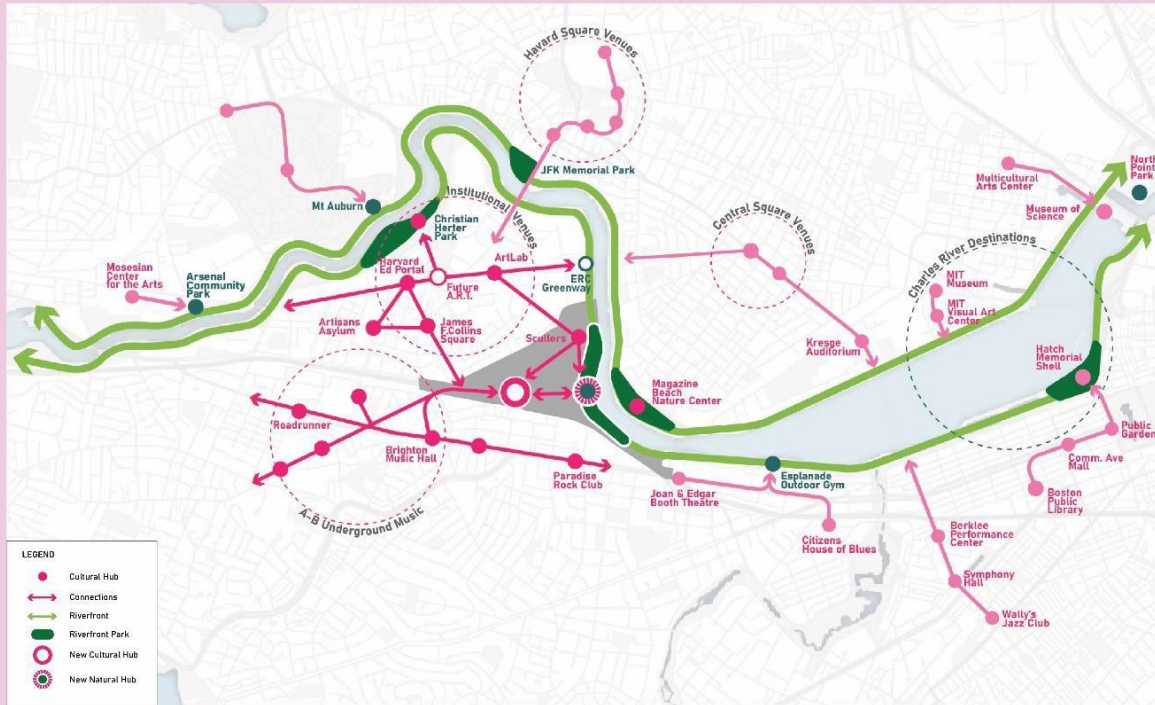


Two Cultural Hubs



**BEACON
PARK
YARD** | regional
framework
plan

ARRIVE AT THE GATEWAY + JOURNEY TO THE BEACON FRAMEWORK - CULTURAL & NATURAL ASSETS



Summary:

West Station cultural hub focused on indoor civic, arts, and cultural services to create a new gateway, drawing in regional visitors. Connecting closely to the future transit station will encourage arrival by public transit and ensure a vibrant center, accessible and visible to all that connects to Allston's existing cultural hubs and to the new the transformational investment cultural hub at Charles River waterfront.

The waterfront cultural hub can service permanent and more flexible outdoor civic, arts, and cultural activities. The future BPY cultural corridor will align and support Allston's current vibrant arts presence while providing an opportunity to provide unique experiences to fill in gaps that exist today.

Embrace the Resources



Summary:

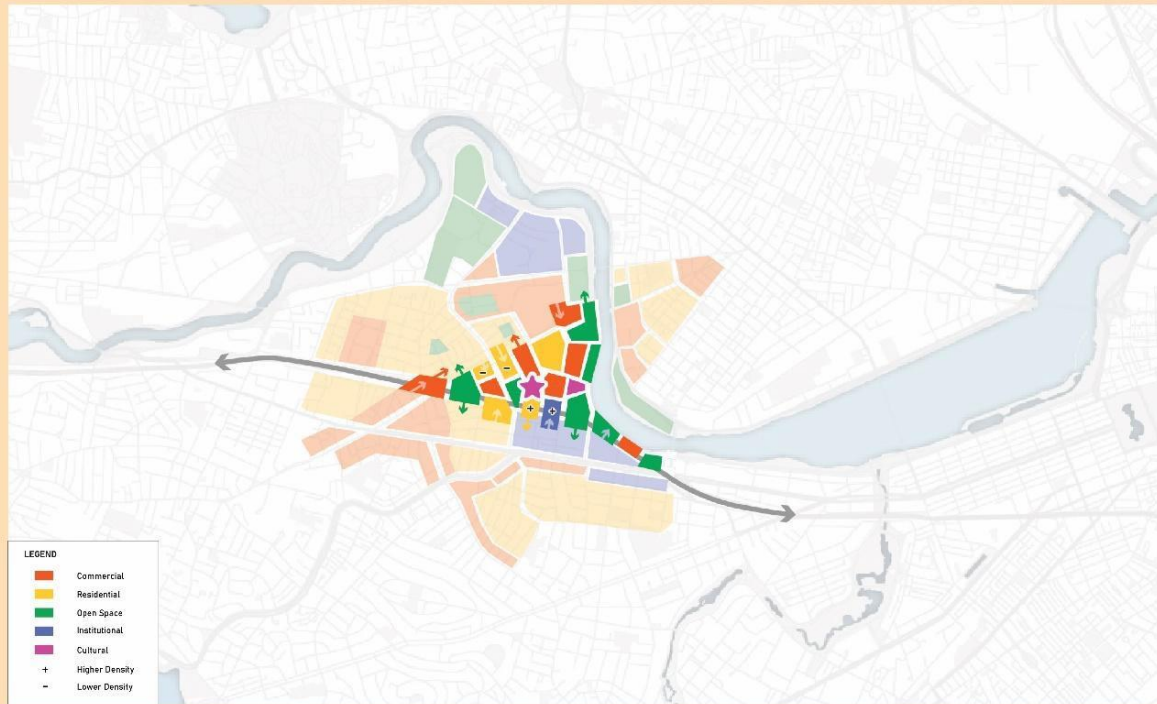
Create a regional destination at the new transit station with multimodal infrastructure and robust MBTA bus service. This will be balanced with small unique experiences and "little streets" through the rest of the area for pedestrians and cyclists. The Cambridge Street Bridge is a critical connector across the Mass Pike and into the Plan Area. Aligning transportation investments with key existing corridors will expand opportunities for community and regional partnerships. Emphasizing connections through infrastructure and state of the art wayfinding to the rail, bus, Charles River, and commercial corridors are necessary to create an inclusive sense of place with new opportunities for resource generation.

Create a Mosaic



**BEACON
PARK
YARD** | regional
framework
plan

CREATE A MOSAIC FRAMEWORK - LAND USE



Summary:

Acknowledge that land use changes over time, creating a mosaic across the Study Area with a balance of residential and institutional from the north to south and a patchwork of commercial and open space from west to east. Focus on the mixing of uses along the edges of the Plan Area and creating options for housing and small businesses with density near the new transit station.

Key Questions & Considerations, Phase 3

An aerial photograph of an urban area in Boston, featuring a large, mostly empty industrial or parking lot (Beacon Park Yard) in the center. To the left, there's a multi-lane highway with traffic. To the right, there are several large industrial buildings and a baseball field. The background shows a dense city skyline with various skyscrapers under a clear blue sky. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue layer containing white text boxes and a white horizontal line.

How can this site help achieve Boston's goals for housing?

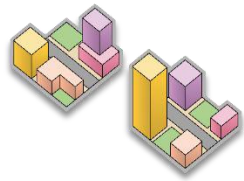
How can this site best respond to changing needs over time?

How does your built district respond to or build on the given framework?

How can Beacon Park Yard be transformed into a destination?

What are the key corridors and key connections that Beacon Park Yard can build and enhance?

What We Heard So Far, Phase 3



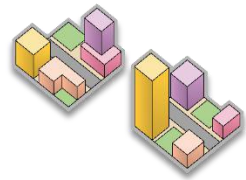
'Beacon in a Box' Scenario Co-Design Sessions



In Phase Three of the project, community and staff co-created scenarios by playing "Beacon in a Box" and hosting topic based discussions.

The analysis of these sessions and past engagement will inform the topic area recommendations and 2-3 Draft Scenarios for the BPY Plan Area that will be refined through community engagement in September for the final report.

Beacon in a Box



06/13
Harvard Core
Team



06/25
Allston-Brighton
CDC Staff + Board



06/26
Allston-Brighton
CDC Residents



07/01
Veronica Smiths
Senior Center



07/10
Public Forum
Table 1



07/10
Public Forum
Table 2



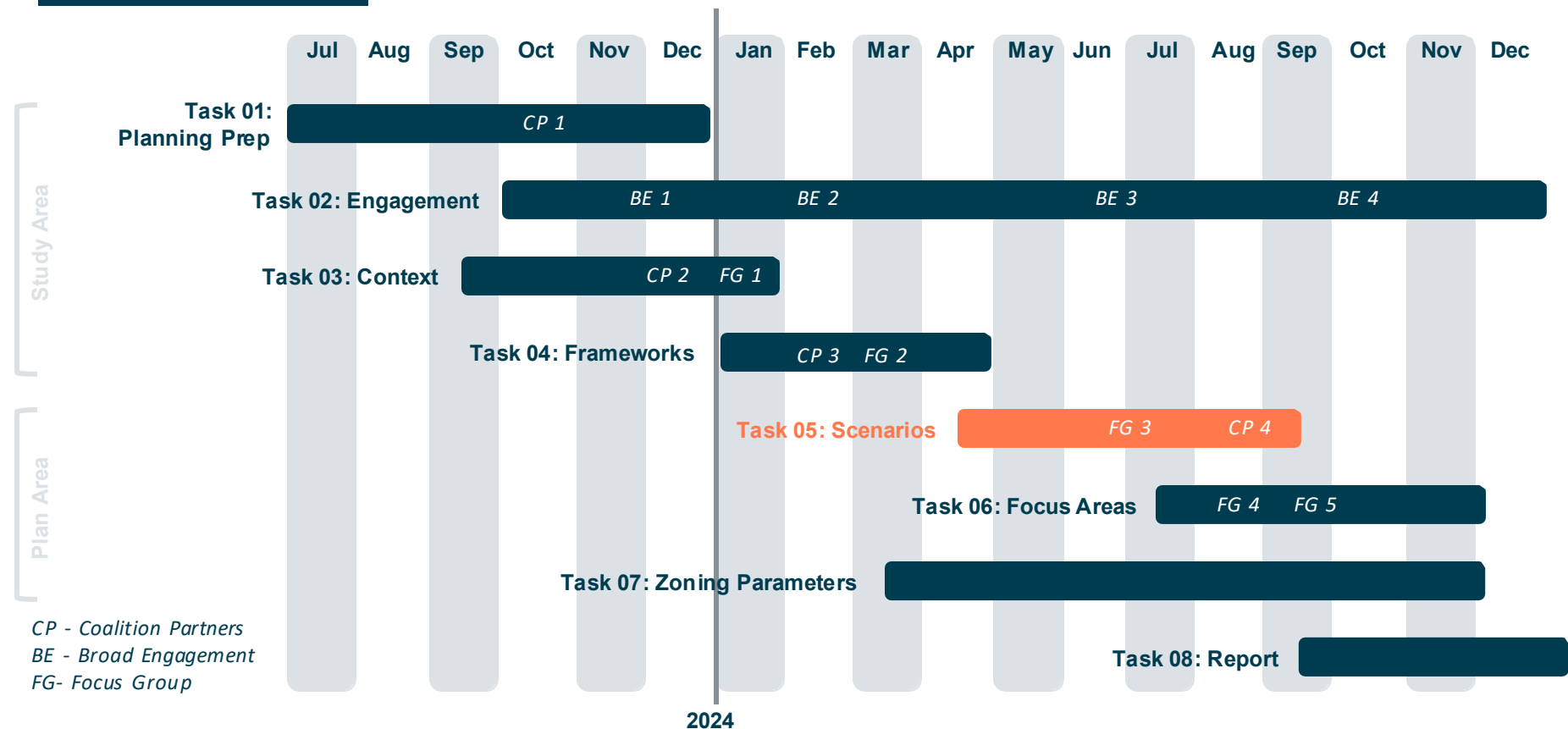
07/10
Public Forum
Table 3



07/11
Allston-Brighton
Health Collaboration



Project Timeline



What's Next?

Focus Areas informed by Photo Walks



The purpose of the series of photo walks was for participants to capture urban design elements (streetscape, public spaces, building design, open spaces, transportation, etc.) in different areas in the city. These images and comments will be incorporated in the focus areas phase of the plan to inform an inclusive design vision for the future – learning from the community’s lived experience.

Each walk concluded with a reflection through a postcard activity ‘Postcard from the Future’.

Emerging Themes

1. Beacon in a Box Overview
2. Synthesis & Key Takeaways



Beacon in a Box

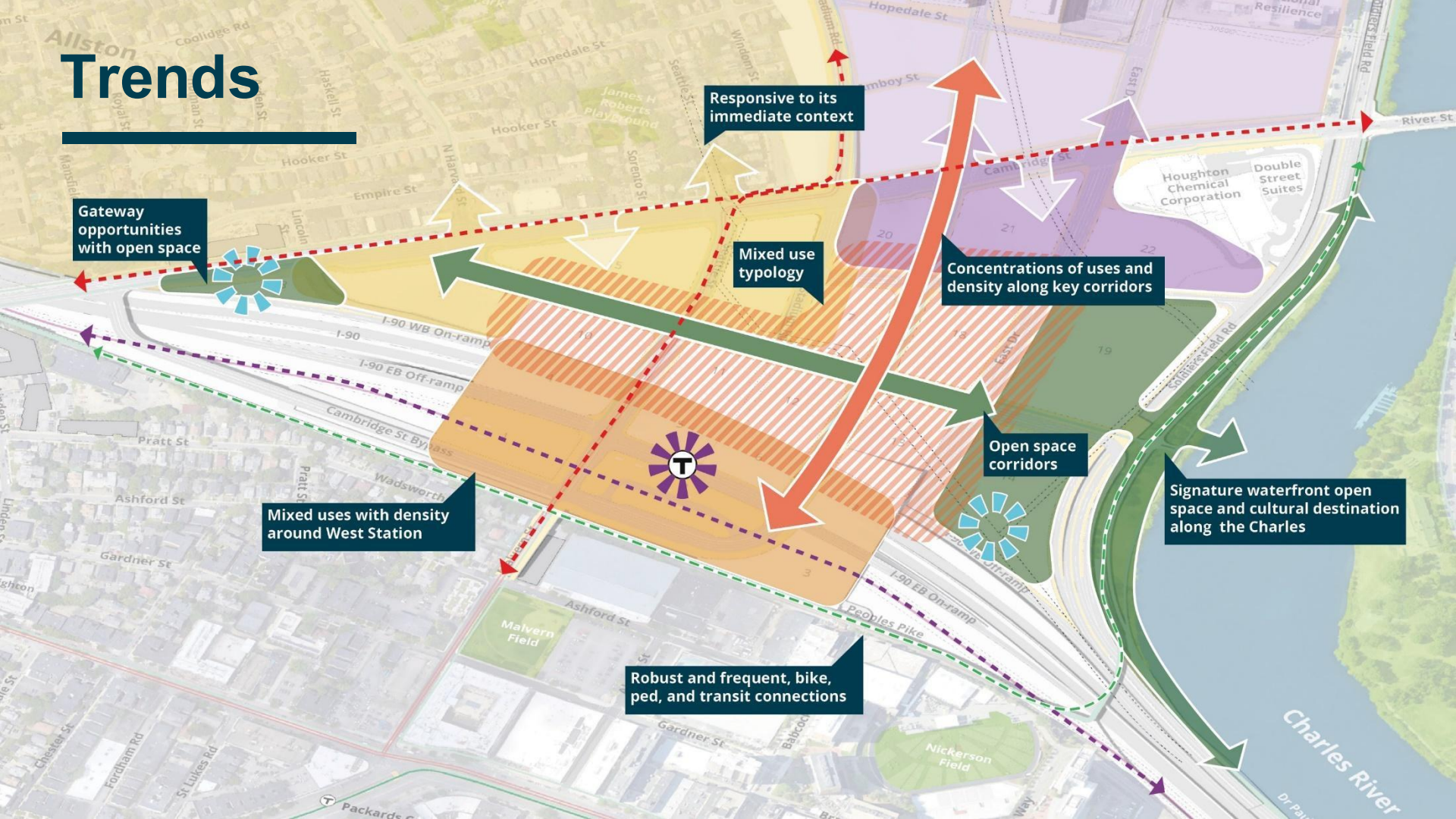
We created a world building game for the Beacon Park Yard site to garner site specific ideas for the mix of land uses, distribution and location of open space, and other critical amenities and institutions



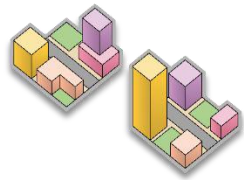
Emerging Trends: Beacon in a Box

1. Most groups advocated for a **signature waterfront open space and cultural destination along the Charles**. Some groups concentrated height along the water, while others felt that a lower density waterfront would be more appropriate.
2. Many groups advocated for **mixed uses with density around West Station**, including some building over 30 stories. Groups were split on whether to build on the overbuild parcels or leave them as open spaces.
3. Cambridge Street was generally viewed as **responsive to its immediate context**, with labs and residential density adjacent to the ERC and townhomes and civic amenities across from the Allston neighborhood fabric. Several groups buffered the Houghton chemical and Doubletree sites with Labs or open space.
4. The triangular western parcels along Cambridge street and the highway were viewed as **gateway opportunities with open space**, though there was little consensus on how those parcels should be used.
5. Most groups, with a few exceptions, advocated for **mixed uses**, and some **mixed use buildings** throughout the site area. Labs and residential uses were concentrated in key areas in some scenarios.
6. While larger open spaces were typically located at the edges, several groups suggested **interspersed open space** along Cambridge Street South **or ecological corridors** along key routes.
7. Several groups advocated for **concentrations of uses and density along key corridors**, including Cattle Drive, and Cambridge Street, though this was not consistent among the groups.
8. Participants recommended more **robust and frequent, bike, ped, and transit connections**, though the locations of these interventions were not consistent.

Trends



Waterfront: Signature Open Space



Most groups advocated for a **signature waterfront open space and cultural destination along the Charles**. Some groups concentrated height along the water, while others felt that a lower density waterfront would be more appropriate



High density mixed-use with landmark (Public Forum Table 3)



Residential Towers (Veronica Smith Sr Center)

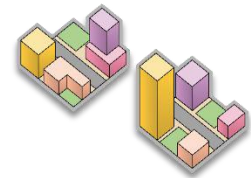


Protected Open Space with Landmark (Public Forum Table 1)



Residential/ Civic Parcel (Allston Brighton Health Collaborative)

West Station: Mixed Use with Density



Many groups advocated for **mixed uses with density around West Station**, including some building over 30 stories. Groups were split on whether to build on the overbuild parcels or leave them as open spaces



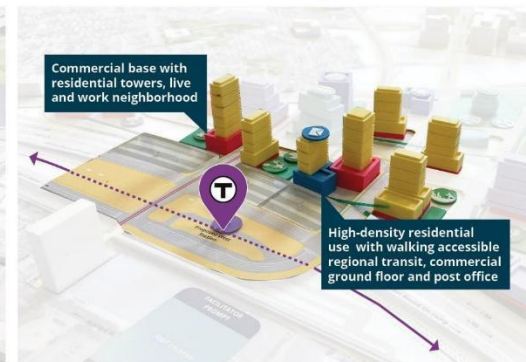
Mixed-Use Development (Core Team)



High Density Residential Development (CDC Residents)

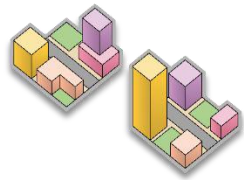


High Density residential (Public Forum Table 3)



Live-Work Neighborhood (Veronica Smith Sr Center)

Cambridge St: Context Responsive



Cambridge Street was generally viewed as **responsive to its immediate context**, with labs and residential density adjacent to the ERC and townhomes and civic amenities across from the Allston neighborhood fabric. Several groups buffered the Houghton chemical and Doubletree sites with Labs or open space



Commercial Program (Veronica Smith Sr Center)



Residential (Public Forum Table 3)

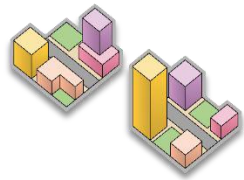


Residential (CDC Board & Staff Members)



Residential (Public Forum Table 2)

Open Spaces: Gateway Opportunity



The triangular western parcels along Cambridge street and the highway were viewed as **gateway opportunities with open space**, though there was little consensus on how those parcels should be used



Open Space Gateway (Public Forum Table 1)



Western Open Space (Public Forum Table 2)

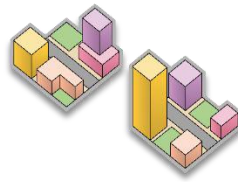


Gateway with Cultural Anchor (CDC Board & Staff Members)



Gateway with Cultural Anchor (CDC Residents)

Mixed Use Typology



Most groups, with a few exceptions, advocated for **mixed uses**, and some **mixed use buildings** throughout the site area. Labs and residential uses were concentrated in key areas in some scenarios.



Mixed-use Waterfront Development (CDC Residents)



Mixed-use Station Destination (CDC Board & Staff Members)

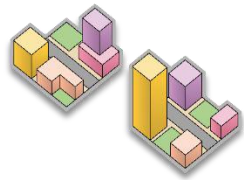


Mixed-use Waterfront Development (Public Forum Table 3)



Live-work Neighborhood (Public Forum Table 2)

Open Spaces: Interspersed or Corridors



While larger open spaces were typically located at the edges, several groups suggested **interspersed open space** along Cambridge Street South or **ecological corridors** along key routes.



CDC Residents



CDC Board & Staff Members

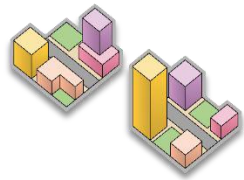


Public Forum 03: Table 01



Public Forum 03: Table 03

Key Corridors: Focused Use & Density



Several groups advocated for **concentrations of uses and density along key corridors**, including Cattle Drive, and Cambridge Street, though this was not consistent among the groups



Cattle Dr Innovation Corridor (Public Forum Table 02)



Cattle Dr Commercial/Civic Corridor (Public Forum Table 01)

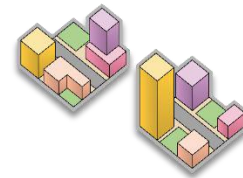


Civic/Commercial Corridor (Veronica Smith Sr Center)



Commercial and Innovation Hub (Public Forum Table 03)

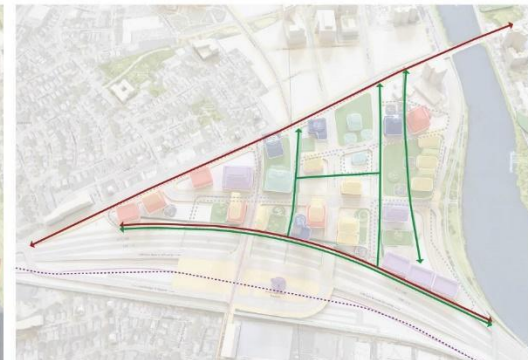
Multi Modal Network



Participants recommended more **robust and frequent, bike, ped, and transit connections**, though the locations of these interventions, were not consistent.



West Station Loop (CDC Board & Staff Members)



Multi-modal Transit Path (Veronica Smith Sr Center)



Beacon Bus Loop (Public Forum Table 02)

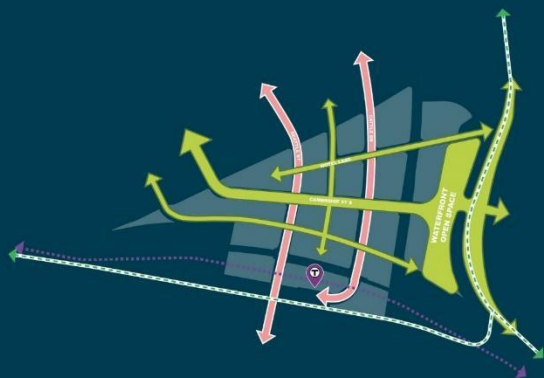


Cambridge St S Bike Corridor (Allston Brighton Health Collaborative)

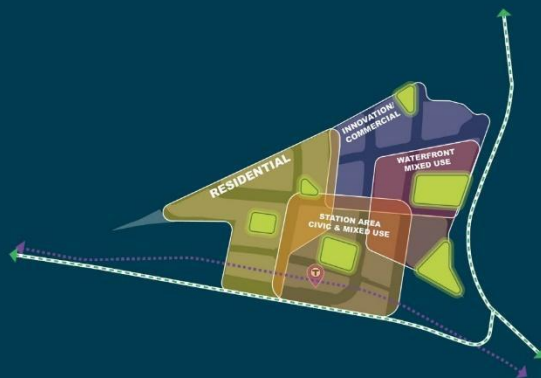
What We Tested

1. Site Plans
2. Trade Offs & Key Themes

Draft Scenarios Overview



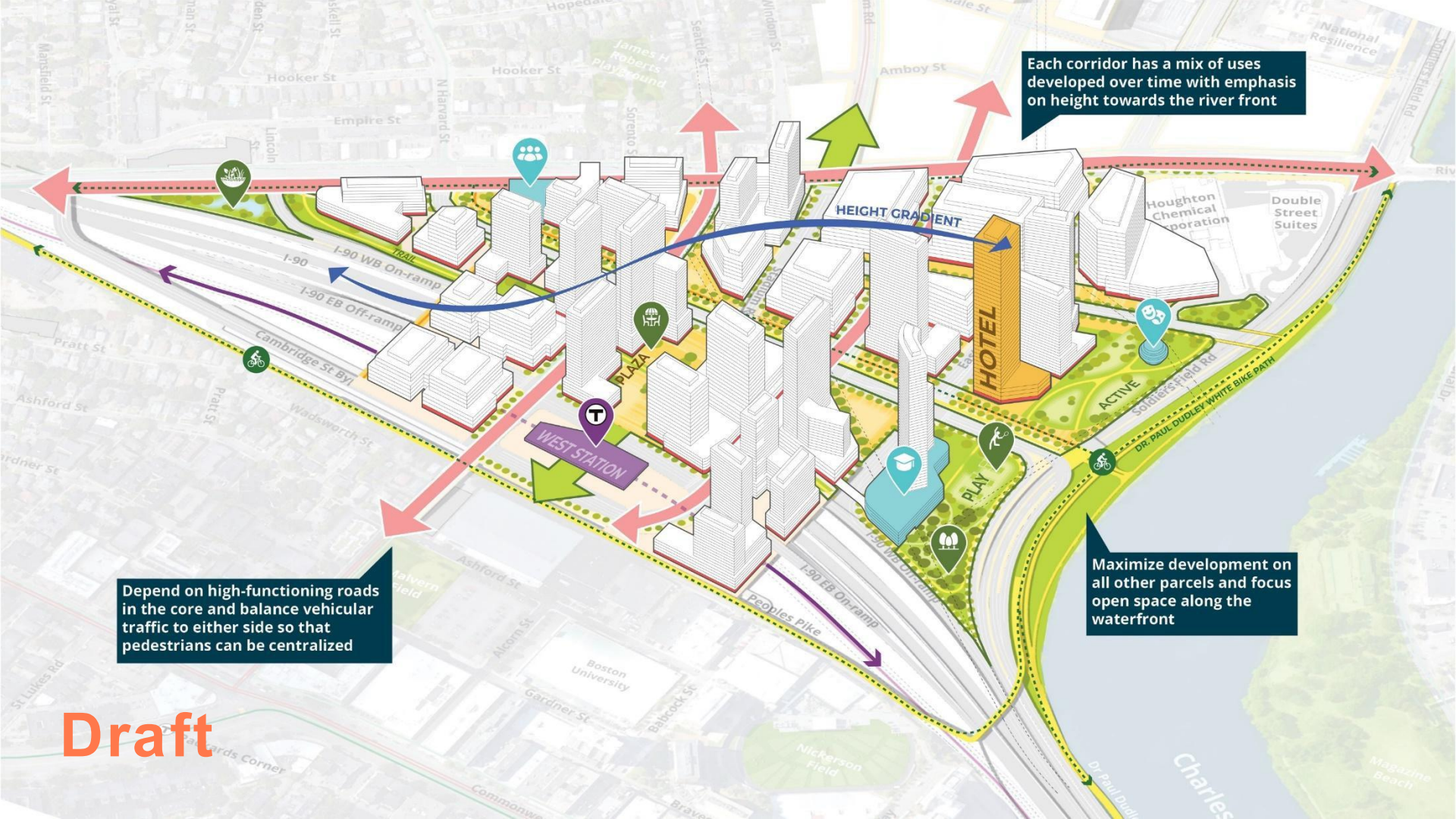
Corridors



Clusters



Hubs



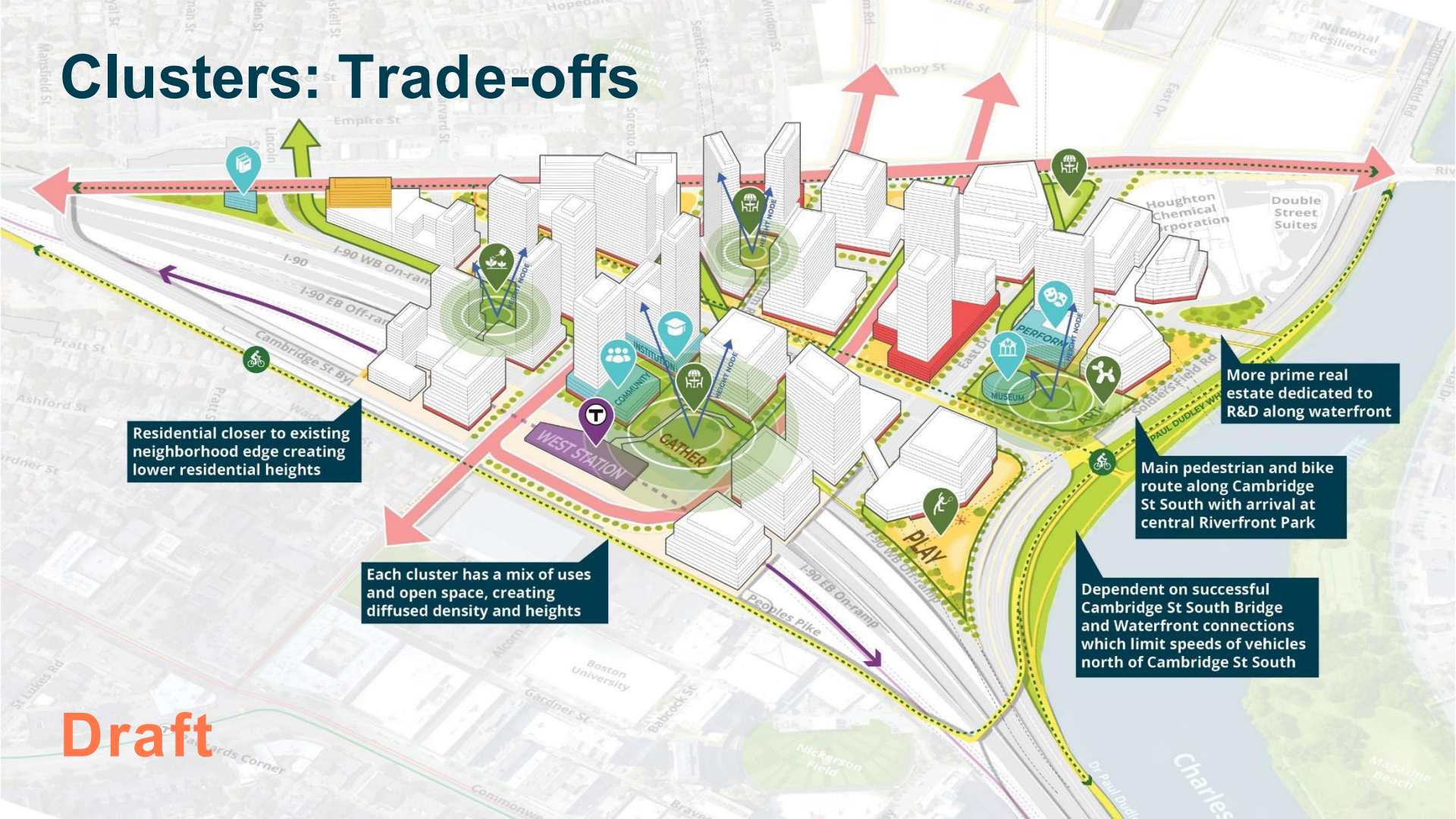
Each corridor has a mix of uses developed over time with emphasis on height towards the river front

Depend on high-functioning roads in the core and balance vehicular traffic to either side so that pedestrians can be centralized

Maximize development on all other parcels and focus open space along the waterfront

Draft

Clusters: Trade-offs



Residential closer to existing neighborhood edge creating lower residential heights

Each cluster has a mix of uses and open space, creating diffused density and heights

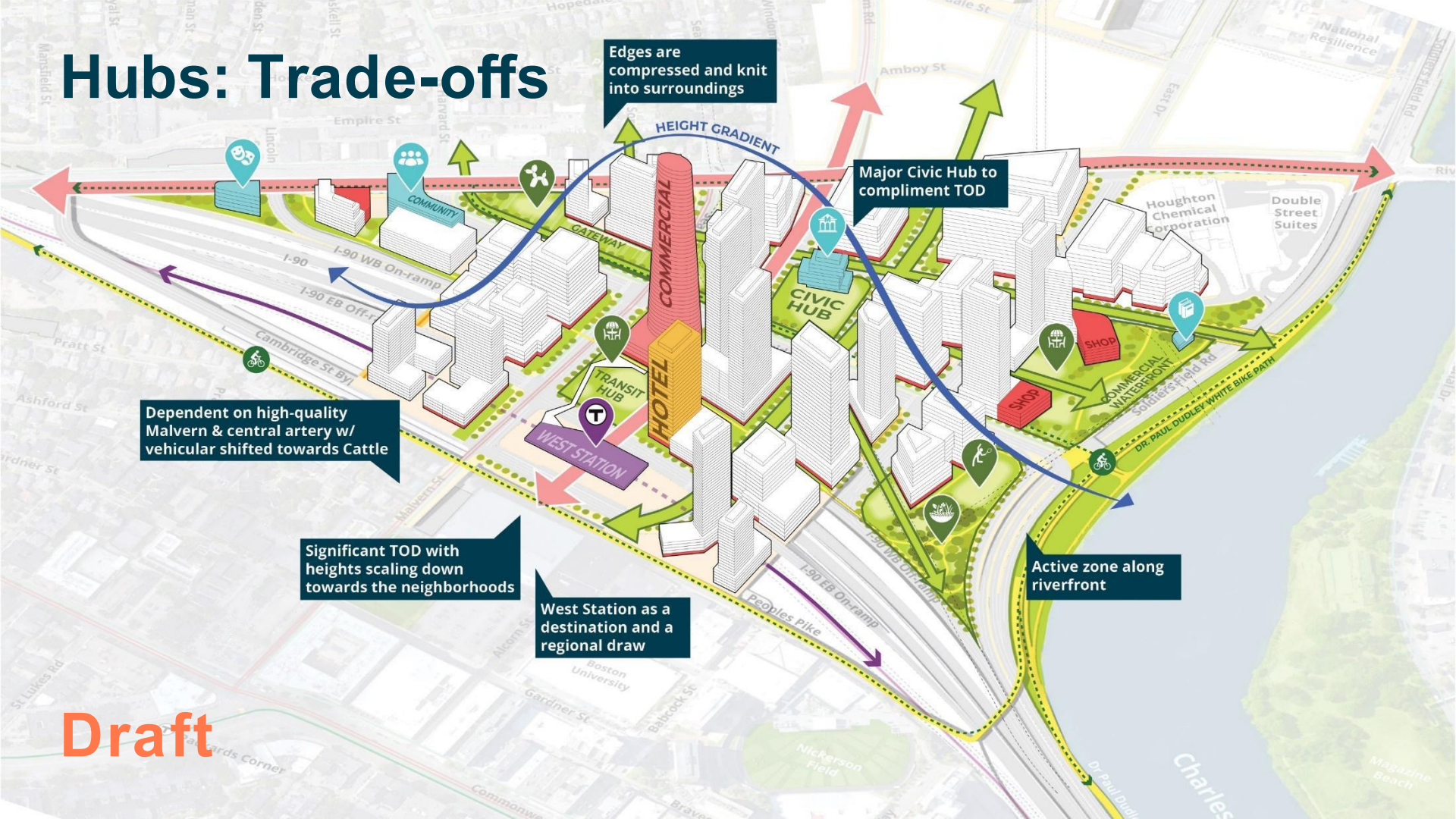
More prime real estate dedicated to R&D along waterfront

Main pedestrian and bike route along Cambridge St South with arrival at central Riverfront Park

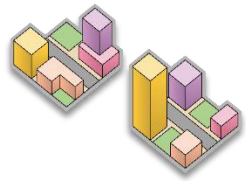
Dependent on successful Cambridge St South Bridge and Waterfront connections which limit speeds of vehicles north of Cambridge St South

Draft

Draft



Draft Scenarios: Trade-offs



Corridors

- Each corridor has a **mix of uses developed over time** with emphasis on height towards the riverfront
- Maximize development on all other parcels and **focus open space along the waterfront**
- Depend on high-functioning roads in the core and **minimize vehicular traffic to both sides** so that people walking & biking can be centralized

Clusters

- Each cluster has a mix of uses and open space, creating **diffused density and heights**
- **Main walking and biking route along Cambridge St. South** with arrival at central Riverfront Park
- Residential closer to existing neighborhood edge creating **lower residential heights**
- More prime real estate dedicated to **R&D along waterfront**
- Dependent on successful Cambridge St South Bridge and Waterfront connections which **limit speeds of vehicles north of Cambridge St. South**

Hubs

- **Significant TOD** with heights scaling down towards the neighborhoods
- **West Station as a destination** and a regional draw
- **Major Civic Hub** to compliment TOD
- **Active zone along riverfront**
- Edges are compressed and **knit into surroundings**
- **Dependent on high-quality Malvern & center Cambridge St. South** w/ vehicular shifted towards Cattle

Thank You

An aerial photograph of a city highway interchange, likely in Boston, with a blue overlay. The highway runs vertically through the center, with multiple lanes and overpasses. To the left, there are residential houses and a red brick building. To the right, there are more buildings, including a large multi-story brick building with many windows. In the background, a dense city skyline is visible under a clear sky. The text "Thank You" is overlaid in large white letters on the left side.

City of Boston Planning Department

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