



HARVARD ERC DISTRICT AND GREENWAY PLAN

Advisory Group Meeting #4 - February 24, 2026



Planning Department

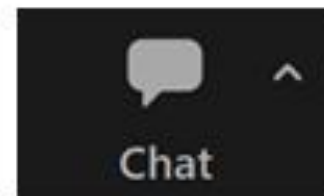
CITY of **BOSTON**

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 [Boston Plans](#) 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.



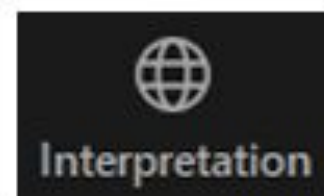
To raise your hand, click on “Participants” at the bottom of your screen, and then choose the “Raise Hand” option in the participant box



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



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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 Matthew Hussmann at matthew.hussmann@boston.gov

WELCOME + PURPOSE OF TONIGHT'S MEETING



Tonight we will:

- Reconnect on where we are in the ERC planning process
- Communicate the intended planning direction to ensure its reflective of what we have heard.
- Next steps



HOW WE GOT HERE



A brief overview of the planning history, community engagement, and major inputs that shaped the draft plan.

Launched in 2023, this planning study prioritized the engagement of stakeholders and neighboring residents. To accomplish this task, the Boston Planning Department sought to reach a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including renters, homeowners, artists, students and immigrant families. The ERC Advisory Group played a key role, bringing together neighborhood representatives, advocates, and institutional partners to advise on priorities



BACKGROUND: WHY THIS PLAN?



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 ERC is one of the major transformation districts in Allston.
- Community, elected officials, and stakeholders called for a **more transparent, City-led process.**

The goal: create a **clear, shared framework** for future development, mobility, housing, and public realm.

ALLSTON NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The Enterprise Research Campus catalyzes innovation and community through a mix of uses - commercial, residential, campus; improves connectivity and neighborhood infrastructure; and serves as a nexus for the University community and neighborhood. Phase-A is now complete, establishing the first buildings and open spaces that will anchor future phases of the ERC led by Harvard Allston Land Company on land owned by Harvard University.

Allston is defined by creativity, contrast, and deep community roots. In Lower Allston, where the ERC is located, residents describe the neighborhood as approachable, unpretentious, and shaped by an eclectic mix of homes, small businesses, cultural venues, and gathering spaces.

Development on this site must do more than bridge physical divides. It should reflect Allston's lived character, advance its core values, and support the community's long-term aspirations.

The ERC site has historically been used for logistics and light industrial trucking, and distribution use. The plan highlights the significance of a mixed-use innovation district that includes artists, longtime residents, and immigrant families, and the ERC should strengthen its connection to the broader neighborhood fabric.

Established residential streets reflect the neighborhood's modest scale, long-term residents, and strong sense of community.

The Honan-Allston Branch of the Harvard University serves as a key civic anchor in the neighborhood, providing educational resources, community gathering space.

A community event brings residents together, highlighting the neighborhood's culture, creativity, and social connections.

Recent mixed-use development includes grocery stores, and street-level activation, reflecting the neighborhood's built form and reimagined destination.

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DISTRICT CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The district is shaped by a complex set of physical, environmental, and infrastructural constraints that define what is feasible and when.

Several fixed constraints shape the ERC:

- **Sears Pad:** This large, inactive concrete slab divides the site and limits connectivity. To support new development, it must undergo demolition and site remediation.
- **District Energy Facility (DEF):** Due to operating noise, residential development must be buffered from the active district energy facility.
- **MWRA Sewer Easement:** A major sewer line crossing the site restricts buildable area and requires access coordination.
- **National Resilience Parcel:** This privately operated facility has been removed from the planning area.
- **Institutional Parking and Support Uses:** Adjacent Harvard-controlled properties at 114 Western Avenue and 2 Hague Street continue to function as active parking and institutional support facilities, limiting near-term development options.
- **North Allston Storm Drain Extension Project:** this critical project will address long-standing drainage deficiencies in North Allston. It is being constructed by Harvard University for the Boston Water and Sewer Commission at no cost to the City.

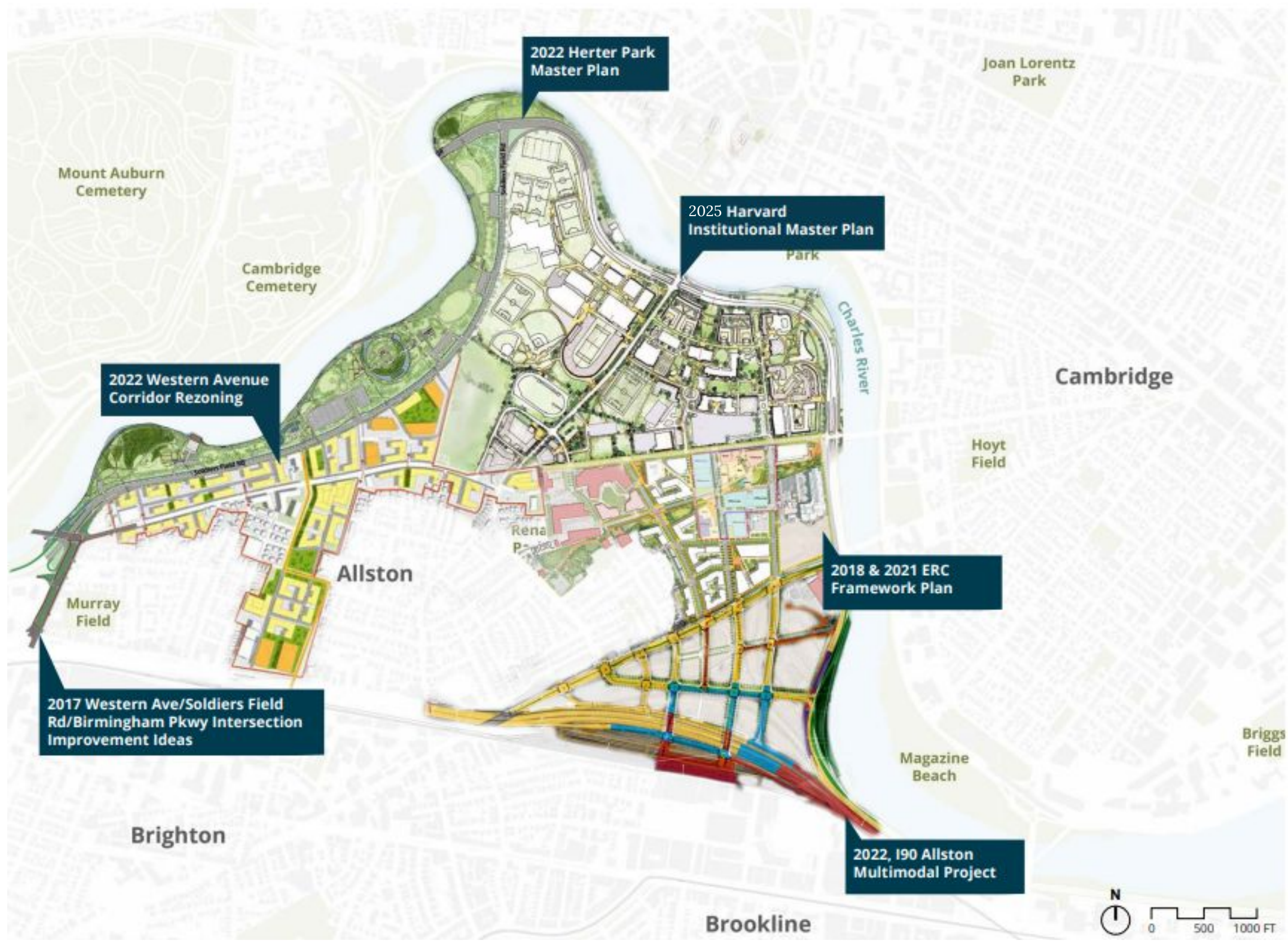
Much of the ERC's buildout benefits from the future implementation of the Allston Multimodal Project, which will reconstruct and realign roadways and rail, add transit, and create new development opportunities. These benefits also depend on the future north-south roadway alignment that will connect the ERC to the broader network. Until these improvements advance, development must adapt to a limited footprint of approximately 16 acres available in the pre-AMP condition.

The site-specific constraints underscore the importance of a phased, flexible planning approach. By recognizing these limitations up front, this plan guides development toward achievable, coordinated interventions.

Site constraints & existing conditions as seen on the ground today.

DISTRICT CONTEXT 7

PAST PLANNING EFFORTS WE ARE BUILDING ON



WHAT WE HEARD & HOW WE ENGAGED

Engagement at a Glance: Over the course of one year, the team conducted a range of engagement activities to gather community input and local insight.

Key Themes We Heard:

- The ERC must **feel connected to Allston-Brighton**, not isolated
- Need for **safe, multimodal connections** (walking, biking, transit)
- Strong interest in **housing options**, including affordability + family units
- Desire for **year-round open spaces** with flexible programming
Support for **active ground floors** and small business opportunities
- Importance of creating a public realm that **faces outward**
- Ongoing concern about affordability, access, and neighborhood fit

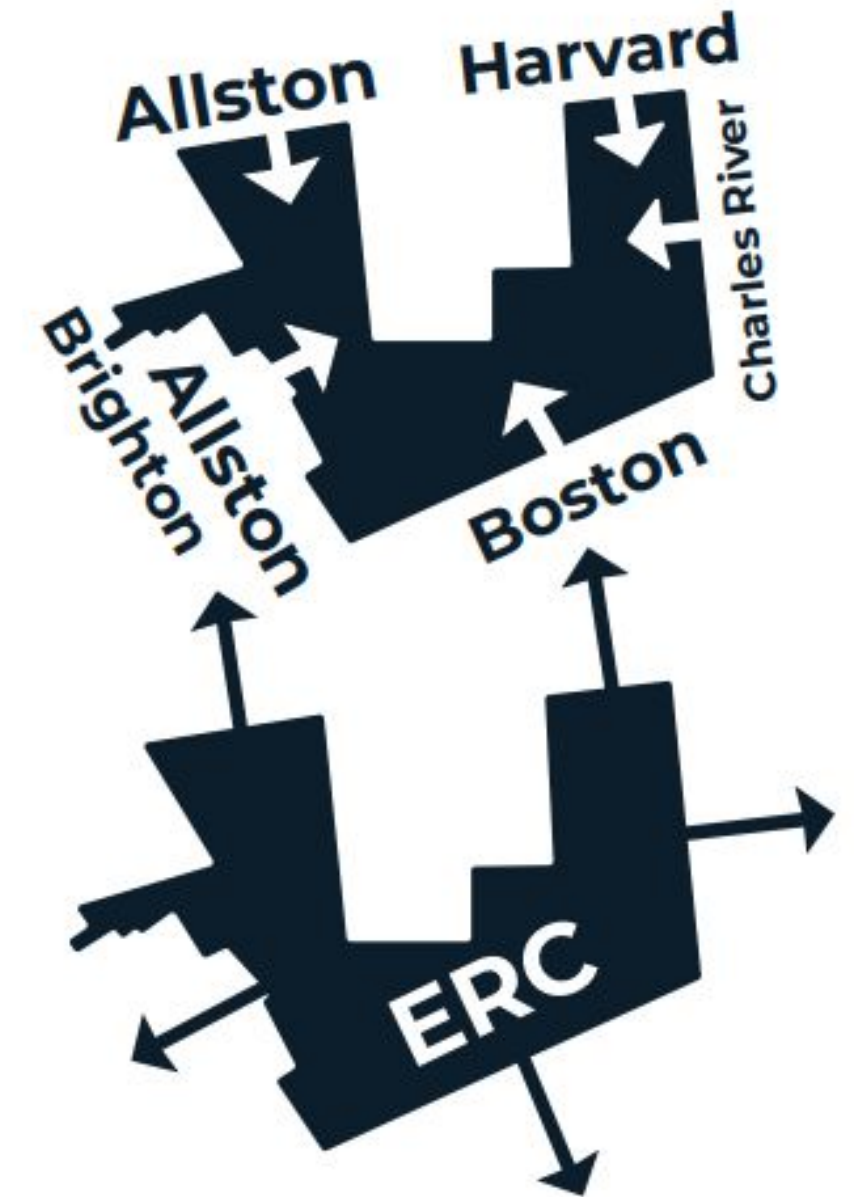
Engagement Activities Since 2023:

- 3 Advisory Group meetings
- 1 Public Forum
- 5 stakeholder interviews
- 3 topical focus groups (open space, land use, mobility)
- Online survey + ongoing correspondence
- Site activation and walk-throughs
- Coordination with Harvard, DCR, MassDOT, and local organizations

HOW COMMUNITY INPUT SHAPED THE DRAFT PLAN

Your feedback shaped the draft in several key ways:

- **Housing is centered** as a core component of the district, with early-phase units and long-term flexibility for additional housing
- **Connectivity improvements** prioritize safer, clearer east-west and north-south routes, including Stadium Road, Trotting Avenue, and connections to Western Ave and Cambridge St
- **Public realm design** emphasizes active, inclusive, and year-round open spaces that feel like part of Allston-Brighton
- **Height transitions and massing** better reflect neighborhood edges and community concerns
- **Ground-floor activity** is strengthened to support small businesses, cultural uses, and a more welcoming pedestrian environment
- **Phasing and flexibility** are built in, recognizing interdependencies with the I-90 project and other long-term efforts

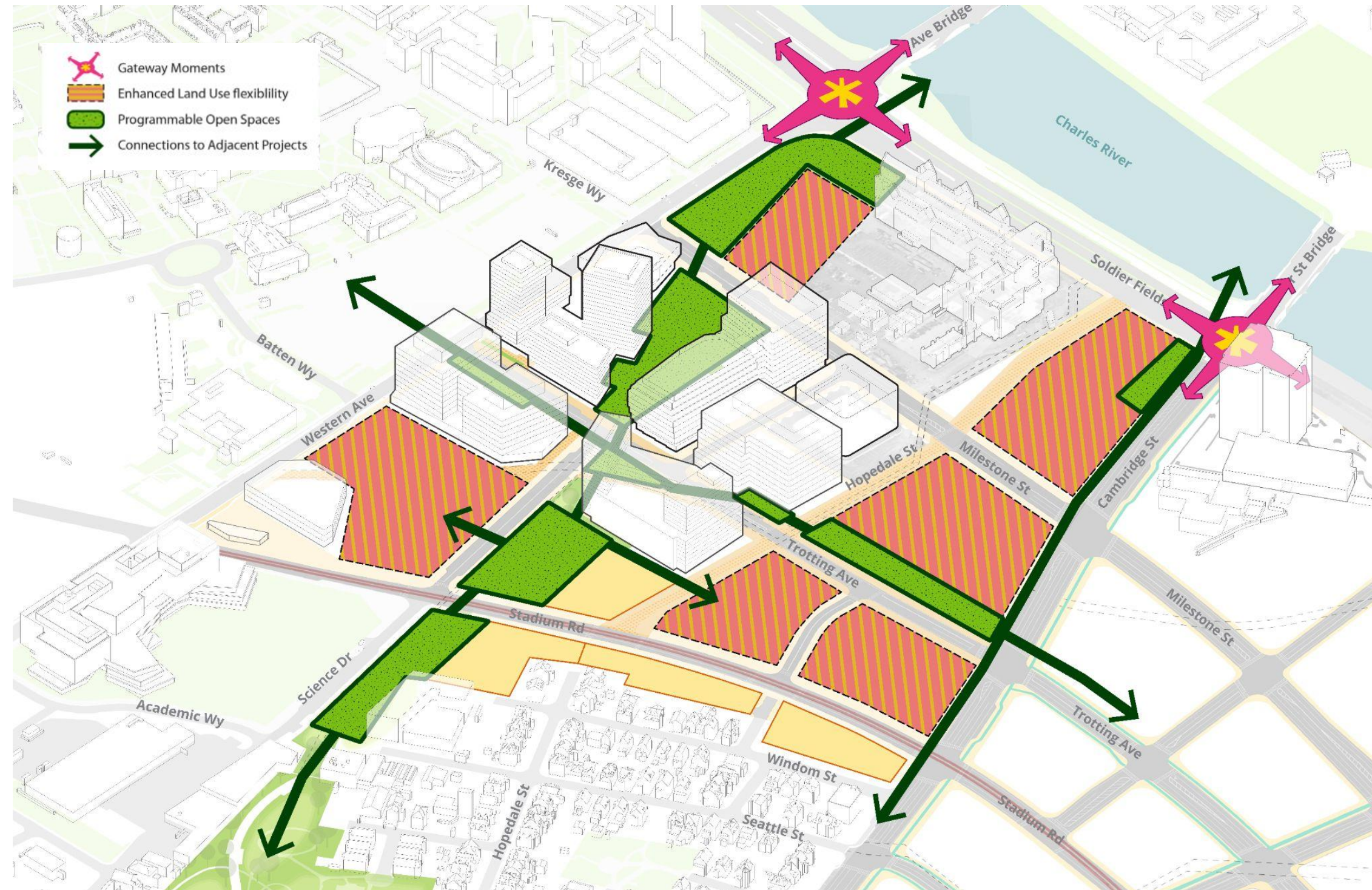


LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT APPROACH



The draft plan outlines a flexible land use approach that:

- Establishes the ERC as a **mixed-use innovation district** centered on employment, housing, retail, and community-serving spaces
- Provides a **balanced land-use mix** that generally aligns with future markets and flexibility, with Residential along Stadium Road.
- Supports phasing that aligns with major infrastructure changes, including the Allston Multimodal Project
- Focuses higher-intensity uses toward the district core while **stepping down toward neighborhood edges**



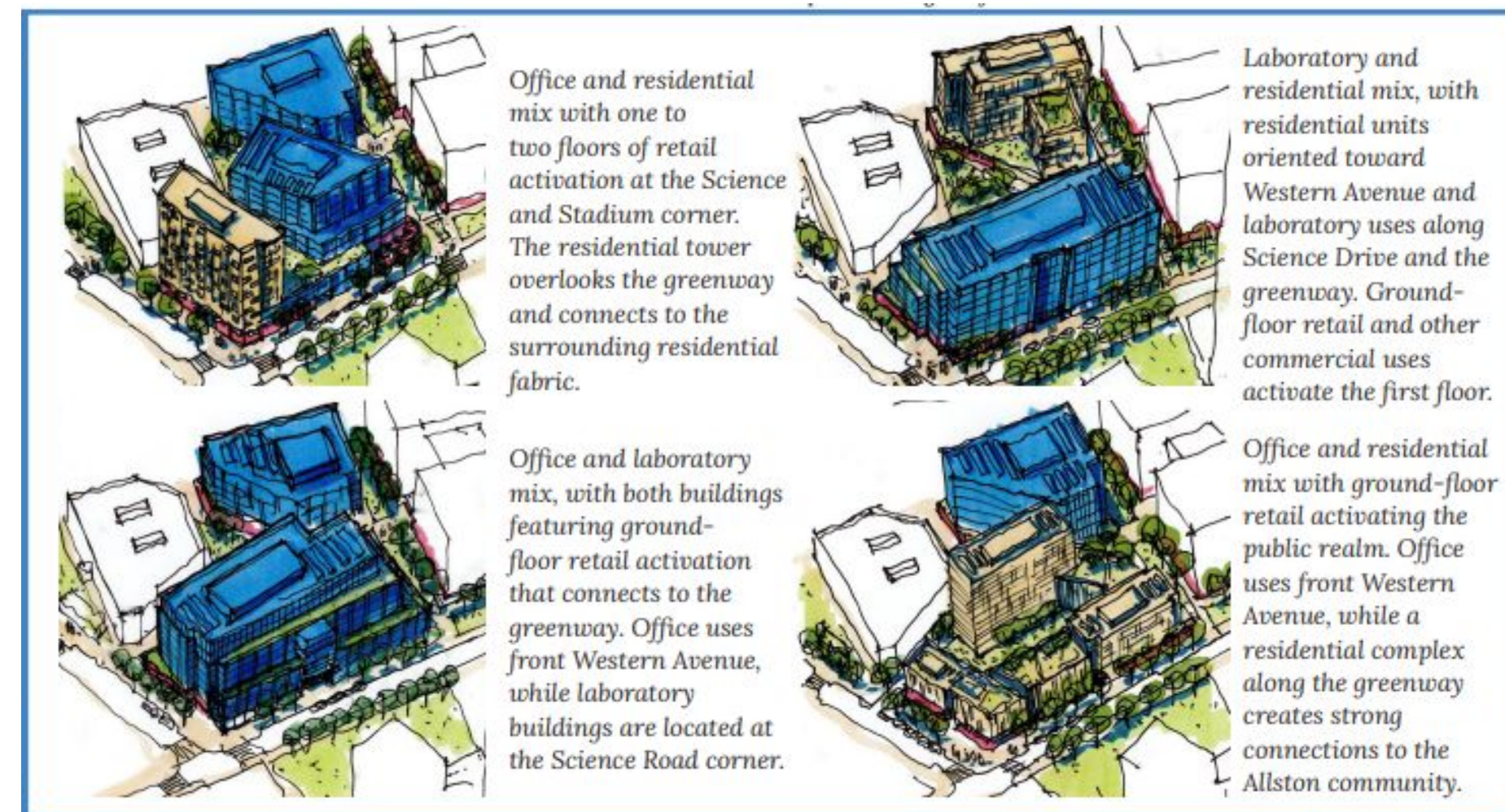
URBAN DESIGN & HEIGHT TRANSITIONS



The strategy focuses on creating a human-scaled district with clear transitions and outward-facing public realm.

Key elements include:

- **Intentional height transitions**—taller buildings concentrated in the district core, stepping down toward **Stadium Road, Cambridge Street**, and residential edges
- **Active ground floors** along Trotting Avenue, Stadium Road, and Science Drive to support a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented public realm
- **A connected street grid** that improves walkability, visibility, and intuitive movement through the district
- **Block patterns and building orientations** designed to maximize sunlight, comfort, and access to open spaces
- **Edges that face outward** to stitch the ERC into Allston–Brighton



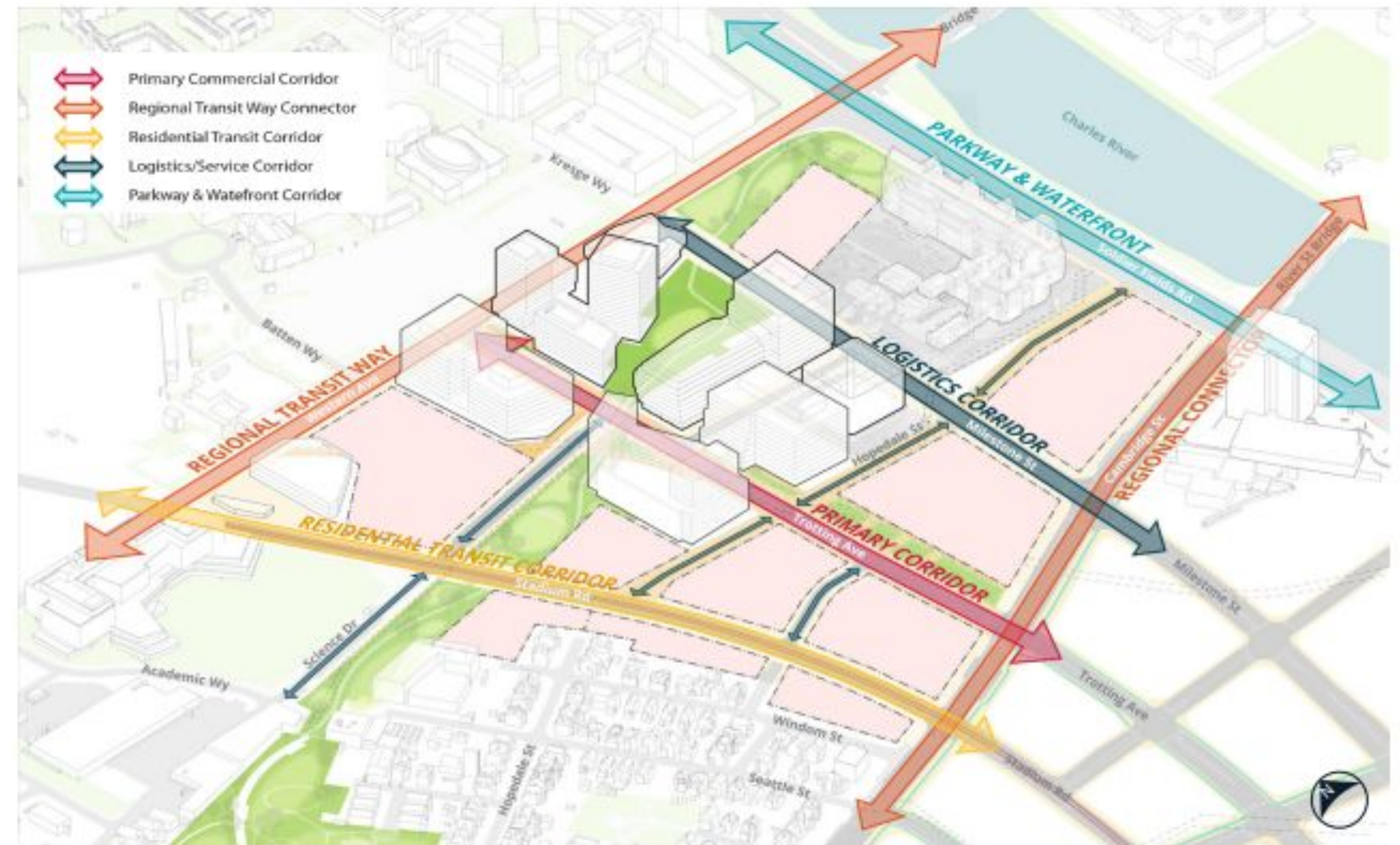
Mixed-use blocks offer flexible development opportunities. The above examples illustrate how uses could be arranged on Parcel E10 at the intersection of Stadium Road and Science Drive.

MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



The draft mobility framework focuses on creating a safe, connected, and flexible street network that serves residents, workers, and visitors. Key elements include:

- Safer and more comfortable walking and biking conditions
- A clear hierarchy of streets
 - **Stadium Road:** neighborhood-facing multimodal corridor
 - **Trotting Avenue:** main east–west district spine
 - **Cambridge Street:** regional connector to Allston Village and Harvard campus areas
 - **Milestone Street:** service, loading, and logistics corridor
- **Transit-supportive street designs**, including dedicated bus lanes where feasible and improved connections to future West Station
- A mobility network designed with **flexibility** to adapt as the Allston Multimodal Project advances and long-term travel patterns evolve



OPEN SPACE & PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK



The ERC's open space network is designed to create an inclusive, connected, and active public realm that complements surrounding neighborhoods. The draft framework includes:

- A commitment that **at least 20% of developable land** will be publicly accessible open space
- The **Greenway** as the district's central spine, providing a continuous, active linear park
- Additional programmed spaces; including **Open Space** along Stadium Road to support community events, recreation, and seasonal activities
- **Strong connections** to the Charles River, Western Avenue, and Cambridge Street, improving access and walkability
- A mix of **active, flexible, and quieter spaces** that serve residents, workers, and visitors throughout the year
- Open space that supports placemaking, local culture, arts, and community identity

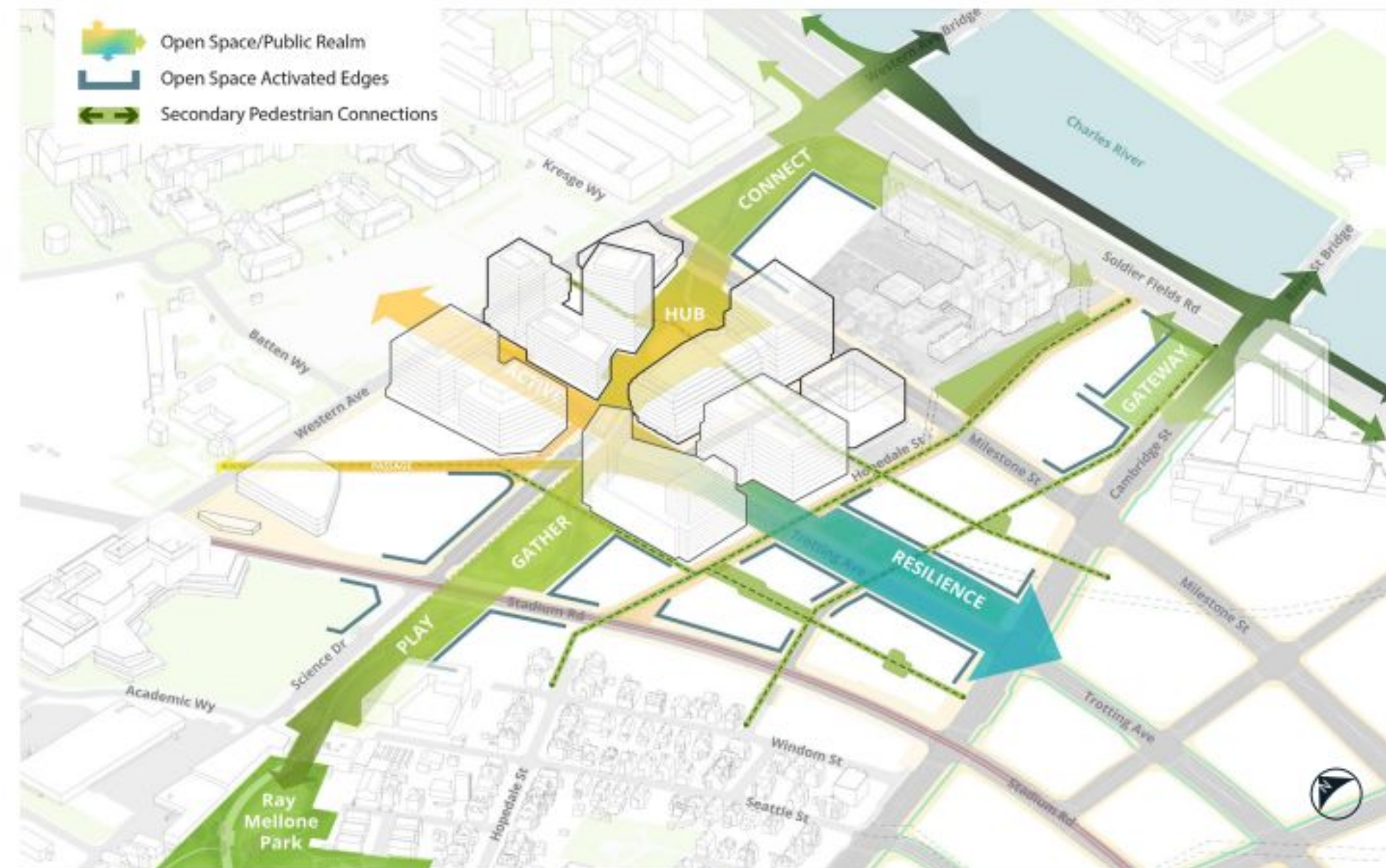


Diagram illustrating public realm and open space activity and how these spaces connect to the surrounding community.

CODIFYING THE PLAN

After the draft plan is refined and finalized, the next steps will follow a multi-phase process:

1. Final Draft Plan

- Incorporates Advisory Group + public comments
- Establishes the shared planning framework for the ERC

2. Future Master Planned Development Area (PDA)

- Will occur sometime in the future **after** the district plan is finalized
- Covers **detailed zoning, massing, design guidelines, phasing, and infrastructure**

3. Subsequent PDA Development Plan + Parcel-Level Review (Later Stages)

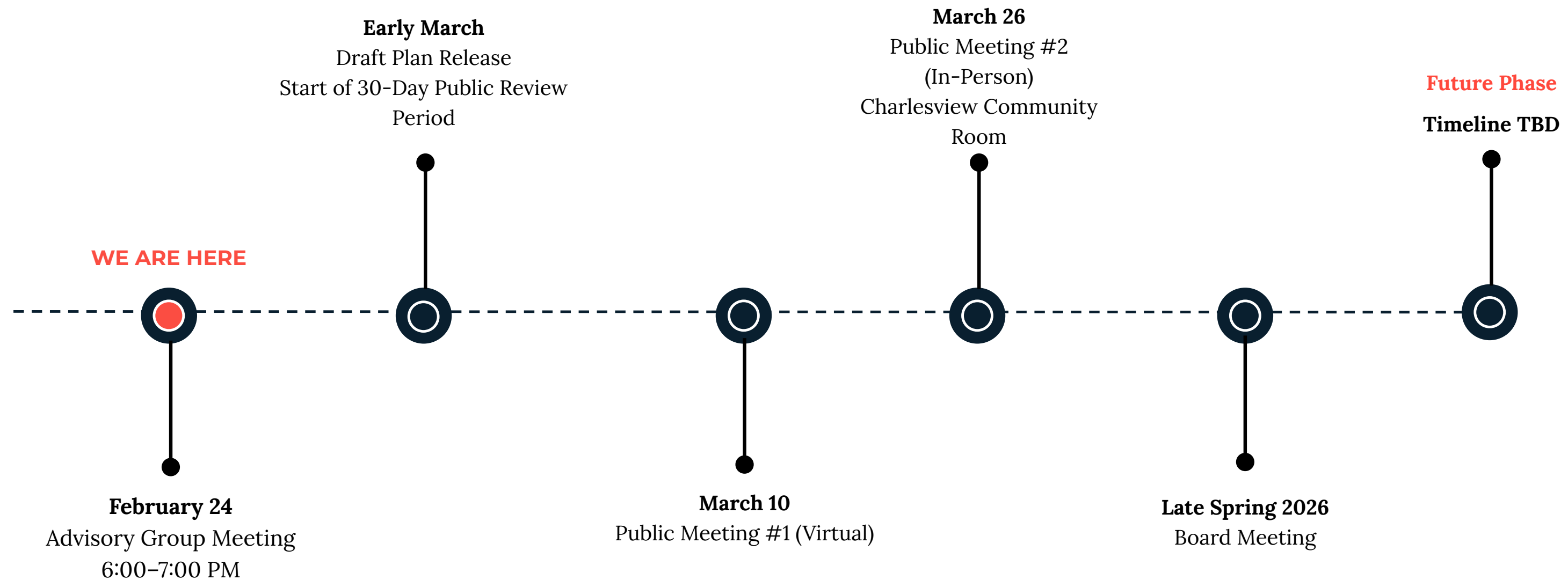
- Design review, Article 80 (as applicable), and additional public engagement

WHAT'S NEXT:



In the coming weeks, we will:

- Release the **Draft ERC Plan** for public review
- Host **two public forums** (one virtual, one in-person) to introduce the plan
- Open a **30-day public comment period** for written and verbal feedback
- Compile and synthesize all comments into a transparent summary
- Refine the draft based on Advisory Group, public, and partner input



DISCUSSION & ADVISORY GROUP INPUT



We'd like your feedback on:

- Whether the engagement summary and themes feel accurate to past conversations?
- Are we missing anything?
- Whether the framework reflects what you've communicated over the past two years
- Any areas that feel misaligned with expectations



HOW IT COMES TOGETHER

This illustration presents a possible future for the Cambridge Street gateway into the Enterprise Research Campus.

Viewed from the Charles River Bridge, the sequence of images shows how today's auto-oriented corridor could evolve into a vibrant, welcoming entrance to the district. In this scenario, mixed-use buildings frame the approach from Cambridge and activate the street with new retail, lab, and commercial spaces, while taller residential buildings offer views toward Cambridge, the Charles

River, and Downtown Boston. Enhanced streetscapes introduce safer pedestrian and bicycle connections, expanded tree canopy, and generous public spaces, creating a more accessible arrival experience. The rendering is not a final design, but an illustration of how coordinated development, transit access, and high-quality open space could transform this important neighborhood gateway over time.



A view of Cambridge Street from the Charles River Bridge, marking the southern gateway into

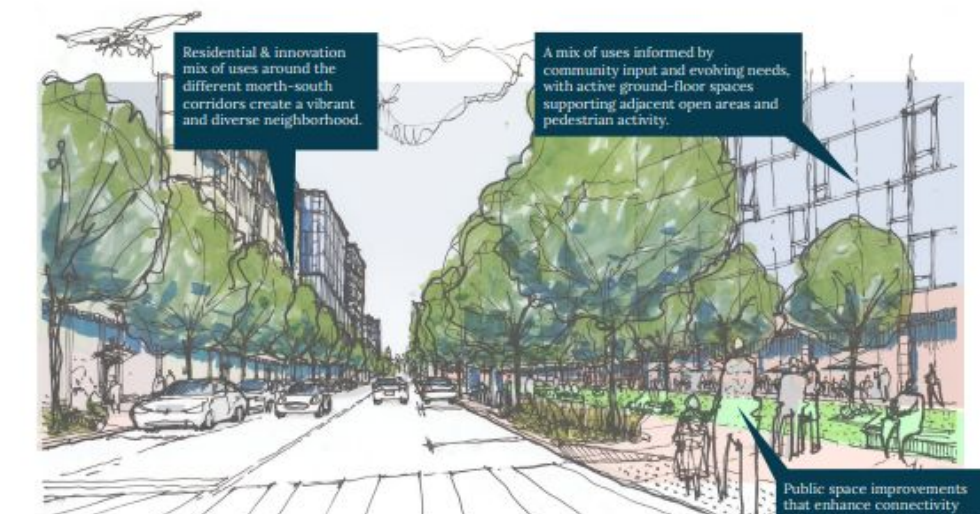


Existing view from Cambridge Street Bridge looking west

This illustration depicts a possible future for Cambridge Street at Trotting Avenue, looking north toward the new Greenway.

Today this area is largely undeveloped, but over time it has the potential to evolve into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood with a blend of residential, office, and lab spaces. In this scenario, active ground floors support shops, restaurants, and community-serving uses, while generous street trees, wide sidewalks, and

connected public spaces create a comfortable and welcoming public realm. The mix of building types and uses would be shaped gradually through market conditions and future planning, resulting in a diverse and flexible district that strengthens the relationship between Cambridge Street, the Greenway, and the broader Allston-Brighton community.



Pedestrian sketch on Cambridge Street & Trotting Avenue looking north.



Existing view from Trotting Avenue looking north



View Location Map



THANK YOU

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