

# ADVANCING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY (AHA) PETITION

## Three-Part Proposal (pieces of a larger whole)

1. **Modify single-and-two family zoning to better use of our housing stock**
2. **Require rain permeable materials for residential outdoor parking**
3. **An area wide plan for large employers**

*\* The desire for housing in Cambridge is immense. We need to address this wisely.  
This is not an issue Cambridge alone can solve.*



# Three-Part Proposal (parts of a larger whole)

Our Process  
Sources  
Goals



Harvard Joint Center for Housing

[ADVANCING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY \(AHA\) PETITION - LANGUAGE AND GOALS BUTTON TEXT](#)

[SIGN THE ADVANCING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY \(AHA\) ZONING PETITION ONLINE HERE](#)

[DOWNLOAD THE AHA PETITION OVERVIEW GOALS](#)

[DOWNLOAD AHA PETITION GOALS - SHORT](#)

[AHA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS](#)

[DOWNLOAD the AHA PETITION LANGUAGE](#)

**UNDERSTANDING BOSTON**

## The Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2015

### The Housing Cost Conundrum

Barry Bluestone  
James Huessy  
Eleanor White  
Charles Eisenberg  
Tim Davis

*with assistance from*  
William Reyelt

*Prepared by*

The Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center  
for Urban and Regional Policy  
Northeastern University

*for*

The Boston Foundation

*Edited by*

Rebecca Koepnick  
Mary Jo Meisner  
Kathleen Clute  
The Boston Foundation

## KEY ISSUES

- Demand for housing in Cambridge is infinite. We need a far reaching and multi-dimensional plan
- Impact of our rich innovation-based technology on housing needs
- Increased population & arrival of wealthier residents (employees of new bio- and info-tech jobs and others) plus property investment fuels escalating housing costs and resident displacement.
- Cambridge has the brain power and financial resources to deal successfully with this problem, but it must be both a local and broadly regional plan



# Changing Housing Pressures

Local and regional factors are fueling housing demand and a wide variety of policies can help address this



**1 built for emigre families and workers. 2a Today: Millennials (jobs) & Students**

Image Source: *Charting the Past and Future Transformations of our Housing Infrastructure.*  
2018 Barry Bluestone, Tamara Roy, Peter Rose



**2b Empty nesters/seniors to Cambridge from suburbs**



**2d Seniors aging in place - smaller homes out of price range**

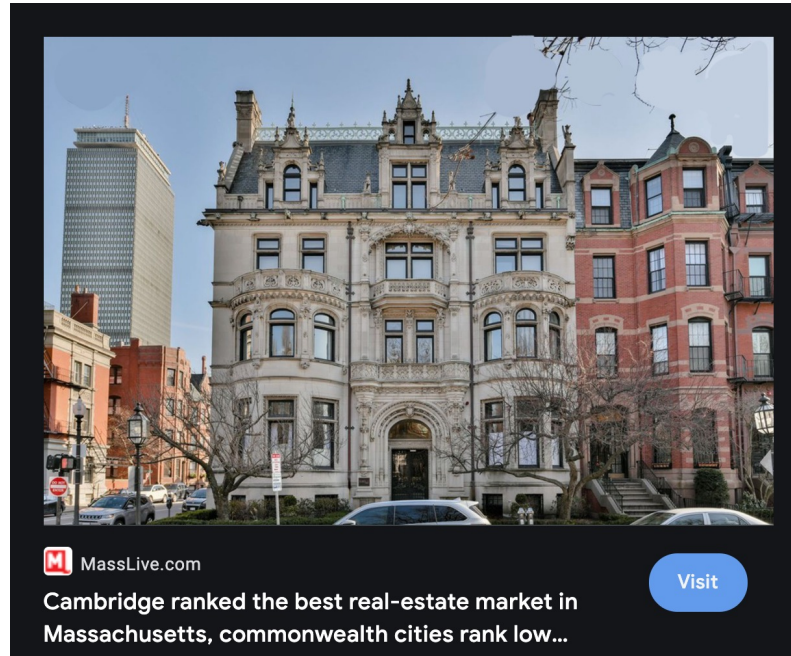


Senior population expected to grow over 40% in next 2 decades, by 4,000 in 2030). 2/3 area population

21% of elderly face cost-burden. (*Housing Needs Assessment*). Dividing homes is a double advantage

2c City is an Investment target:  
Local  
National  
International

# OUR PROCESS: SEVERAL YEARS AND SEVERAL MONTHS OF WEEKLY CITYWIDE MEETINGS INCLUDING SOME EXPERTS



## Working Group Process & Focus

### Agenda for August 1, 2021 - Housing meeting

#### Where we are:

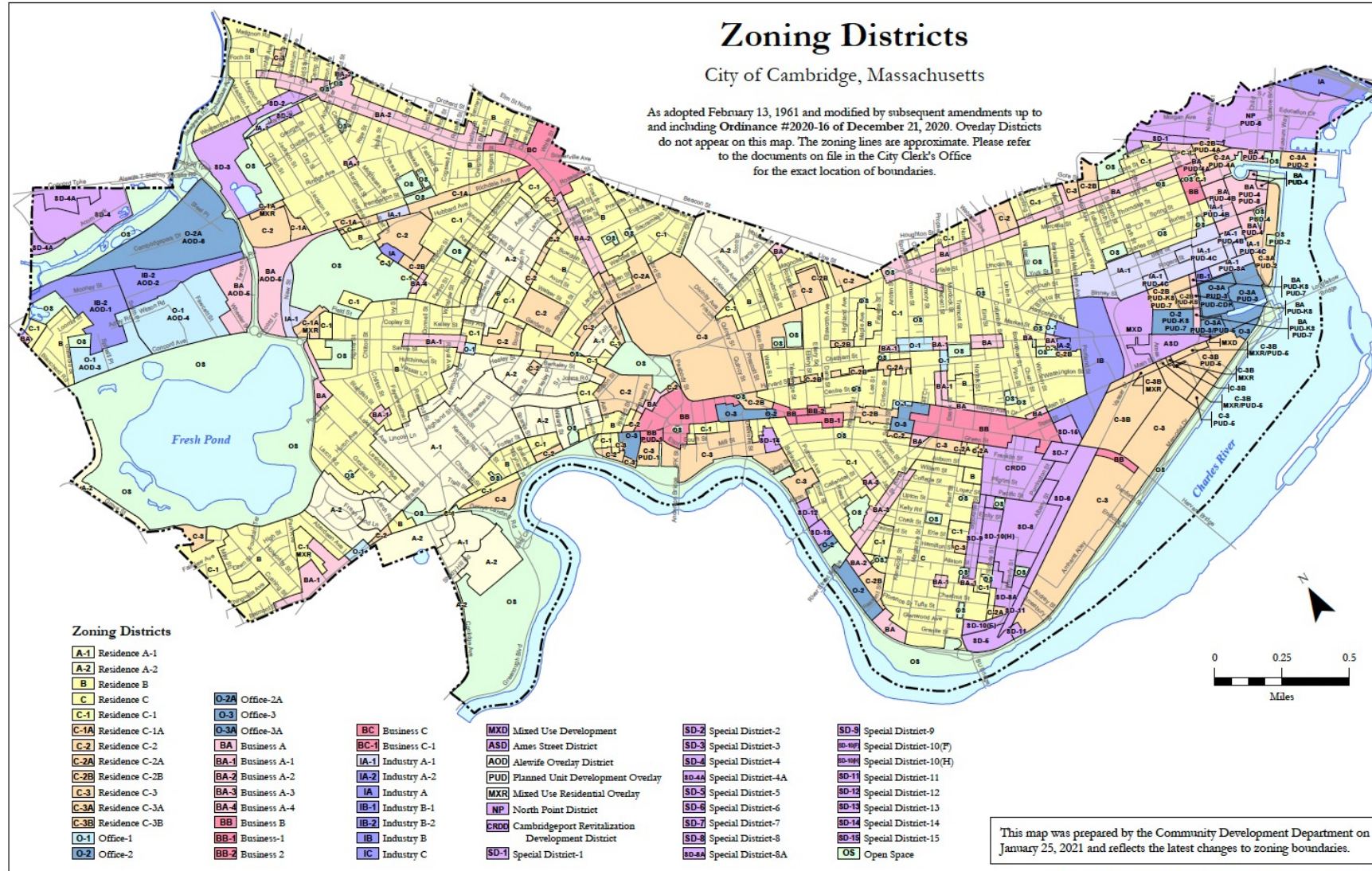
- We seem to have broad support greater height/density on corridors (Parts of Ma. Ave) and looking at what is missing and what we can encourage (carrot and stick).
- We seem to have majority support on SFH – but what is the thought on specifics in Donovan on structure/green spaces.
- Where are we with parking? Are there ways to frame by area?
  - See below on parking on where we are so far.
- How to deal with affordability within zoning?
- Guests to invite for further meetings

#### Non-Zoning housing issues.

- See below on land trusts etc.

# PART I Modify Zoning for Single Family Housing

Allow more units within the existing structure; And with three or more units, affordable unit(s) required



Map of Zoning Areas  
AHA impacts yellow areas especially

A-1 and A-2: Single Family  
B Single and Two Family

## Zoning Districts

- A-1** Residence A-1
- A-2** Residence A-2
- B** Residence B

The AHA would help meet core current needs for new multi-family homes in cost effective, sustainable way

**EXAMPLE:** Current West Cambridge Single Family Home in B District



Hawthorne St. West Cambridge (now on the market) – African American couple have rented out rooms for students

## A THREE PLUS ONE PLAN

Using current buildings is the best, fastest, least expensive and easiest way to add units.

One way is to add 1 more unit to existing triple-deckers.

Create adaptable design templates for plus 1 units for triple-deckers

With c. 4,000 triple-deckers, adding 1 more unit to each would create 4,000 new homes – inexpensively, quickly, & sustainably.

Streamline permitting & disseminate the adaptable design templates.



Dudley St.



“THE MOST EFFECTIVE  
THING WE CAN  
POSSIBLY DO IS  
FIGURE OUT HOW TO  
USE AND REUSE THE  
PLACES THAT WE’VE  
ALREADY BUILT” —  
**DANIEL BLUESTONE**

Go extra step and retrofit each building for energy efficiency<sup>8</sup> as well





Nov. 2019



Pre-sale 2020 photo



Nov. 2020

### CHANGES TAKING PLACE NOW IN CAMBRIDGE

Two years and one Mid-Cambridge home (loss of trees, green spaces, rain absorbency) plus increased neighbor property values



Nov. 2021



Nov. 2021

## PART II - RAIN PERMEABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Modify open yard residential parking to require rain permeable materials

Many forms of hydro pavers available that provide water absorbing and drainage capability



### COST FACTORS

Rain Permeable Pavers come in many styles and the costs are on par with other pavers. Image source: homeadvisor.com



Permeable Pavers – N.H. Town Hall

## PART III - SEEKING AN AREA-WIDE APPROACH

**AHA - an area wide plan for major Cambridge employers to house 85% of employees and affiliates in area by year 2040**



December 2019 PTDM Meeting

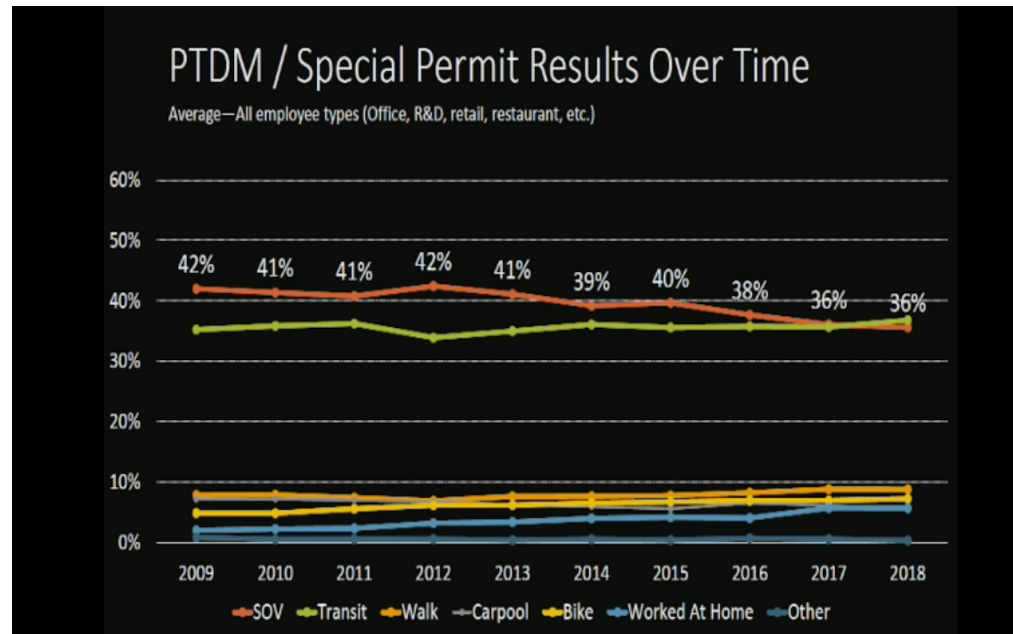
PTDM addresses 30% of all Cambridge employees, plus educational facilities, R&D development, a hospital, & 10,000 graduate & primary students.

**\*Adding housing to PTDM (Article 6 via Article 9 will help keep current residents & address housing costs**

**\*\*Adding housing** is natural next step for the PTDM and the annual Town Gown report that now includes infrastructure.

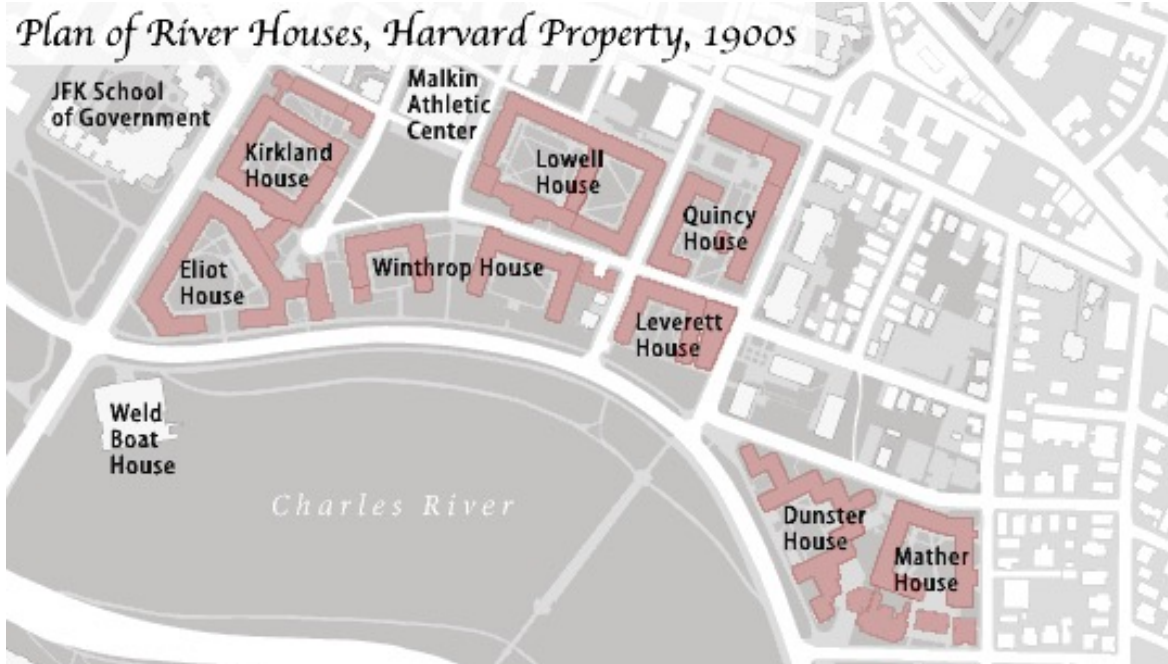
**Is 100 employees/affiliates and 85% the right numbers?** The PTDM ordinance uses “Large Projects” and “Small Projects” as criteria. That could work instead, but City should be included as big employer. On policy: when CDD requires 20% of a new company’s employees to be housed in Cambridge, for a company of 4,000, this means 800 new units. AHA would address impacts & enhance linkage fees.

Expand 1998 **Parking, Transportation (PTDM) Ordinance** to include housing and address unintended housing-related consequences of commercial development and growth. Monitoring & accountability through annual review. **Linked to zoning article 19, via quasi-zoning Article 6.**



## Universities have added housing at key moments in our history

Exponential institutional growth in undergrads, graduate students, post docs, and staff  
– impacts the city. We need their help to address the future –



## HARVARD

The significant % of the students, grad students, & staff living in non-affiliated Cambridge housing, many in rental units (with stipends rising annually) now impacts city housing needs and costs. If universities help address local AND area housing, these units could go to others. The AHA's 2040 goal of 85% coverage of undergraduates, graduates, post-docs, and staff would enable us to better track this and redress needs on a broader local AND area-wide basis.

## MIT



# LOCAL AND AREA HOUSING POLICIES THAT COULD BENEFIT FROM AN AREA-WIDE APPROACH



Facebook Bay Area Planned Community with 300 affordable units, 120 geared to seniors (July 2021 Archpaper.com)



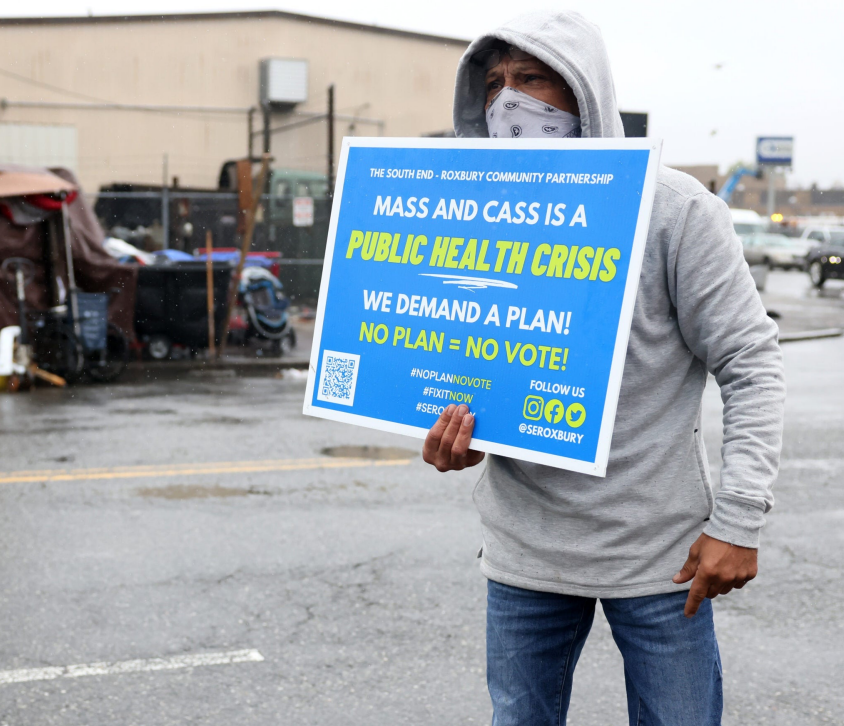
**Working Remotely**  
(types of work & % of employees)

**Private/public shared buses or parking partnerships: reuse of sites (for a fee) off hours (nights, weekends, summers)**

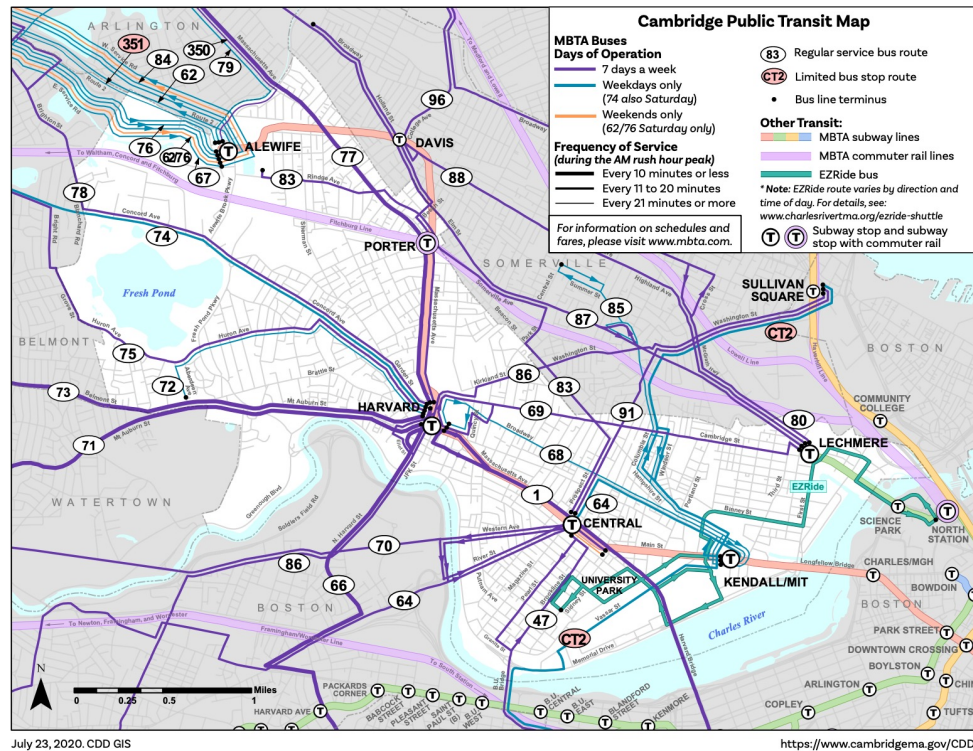


**Note:** the AHA intent is not to have 85% of employees/affiliates live in employer housing by 2040, but for these groups to come to the table to address housing impacts as they do now to address transportation, parking and infrastructure following key goals and annual reviews for accountability.

# AREA WIDE ISSUES, INPUTS, AND ENGAGEMENTS



We need a local and regional plan for the unhoused: recent changes in Mass and Cass have made this



Now have both local and regional interconnecting buses and subways. We now need more & better service



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE BICYCLE PLAN**

**TOWARD A BIKEABLE FUTURE 2020**

Now creating area corridors for safe bicycle travel and adding more

# Conclusions

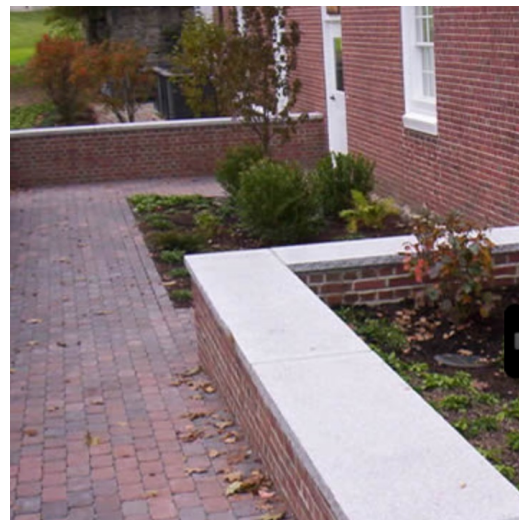


- Town Gown Report
- Transportation
  - Infrastructure & Enhance housing

**Our Challenges:** More & Different Housing Demands

**Our Plan:** 3 Pieces of the Whole

**I. Modify 1 and 2 family zoning; II. Rain Permeability; III. Area Approach (expand PTDM).**



## Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM)

### Employee Commute Comparison ACS-PTDM/SP

