



**UNION SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**  
Vision Meeting #1  
January 7, 2015





**PRINCIPLE** +

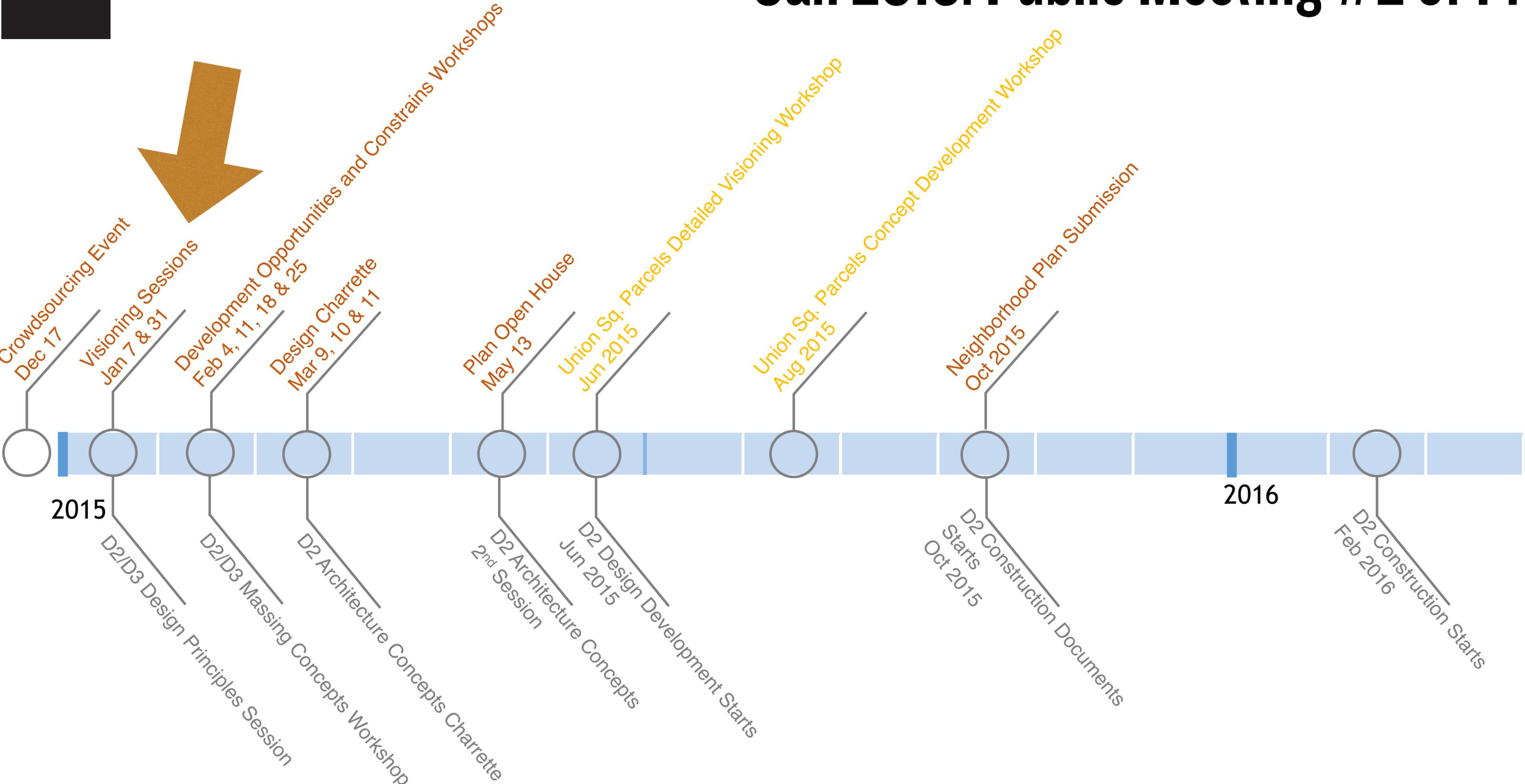
**Somerville** *by*  
**DESIGN**

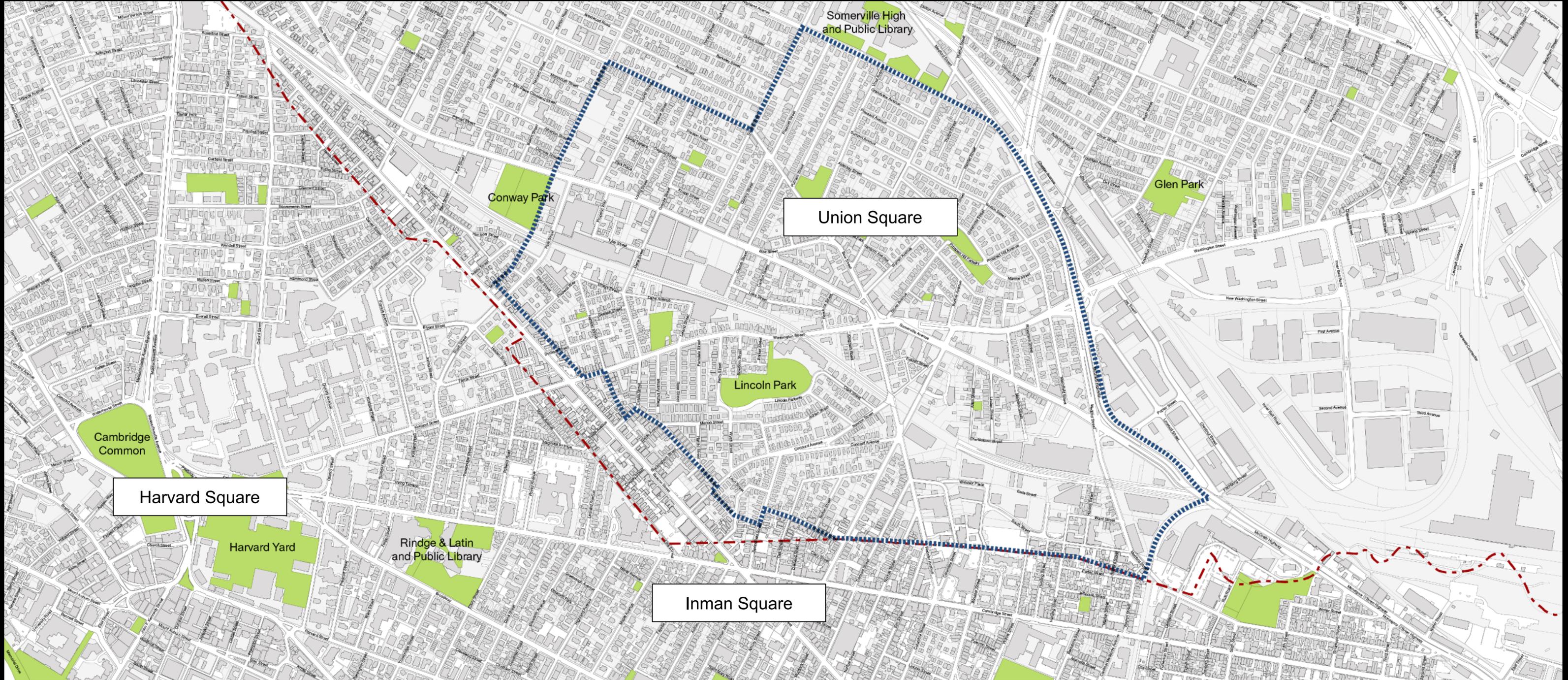
**utile**





# Jan 2015: Public Meeting #2 of 14







# TONIGHT'S AGENDA

**1. Crowdsourcing Feedback Presentation**

**2. Mapping Activity**

**3. Visual Preference Survey**

**4. US2 Presentation & Activity**

**5. Groups Report Out**



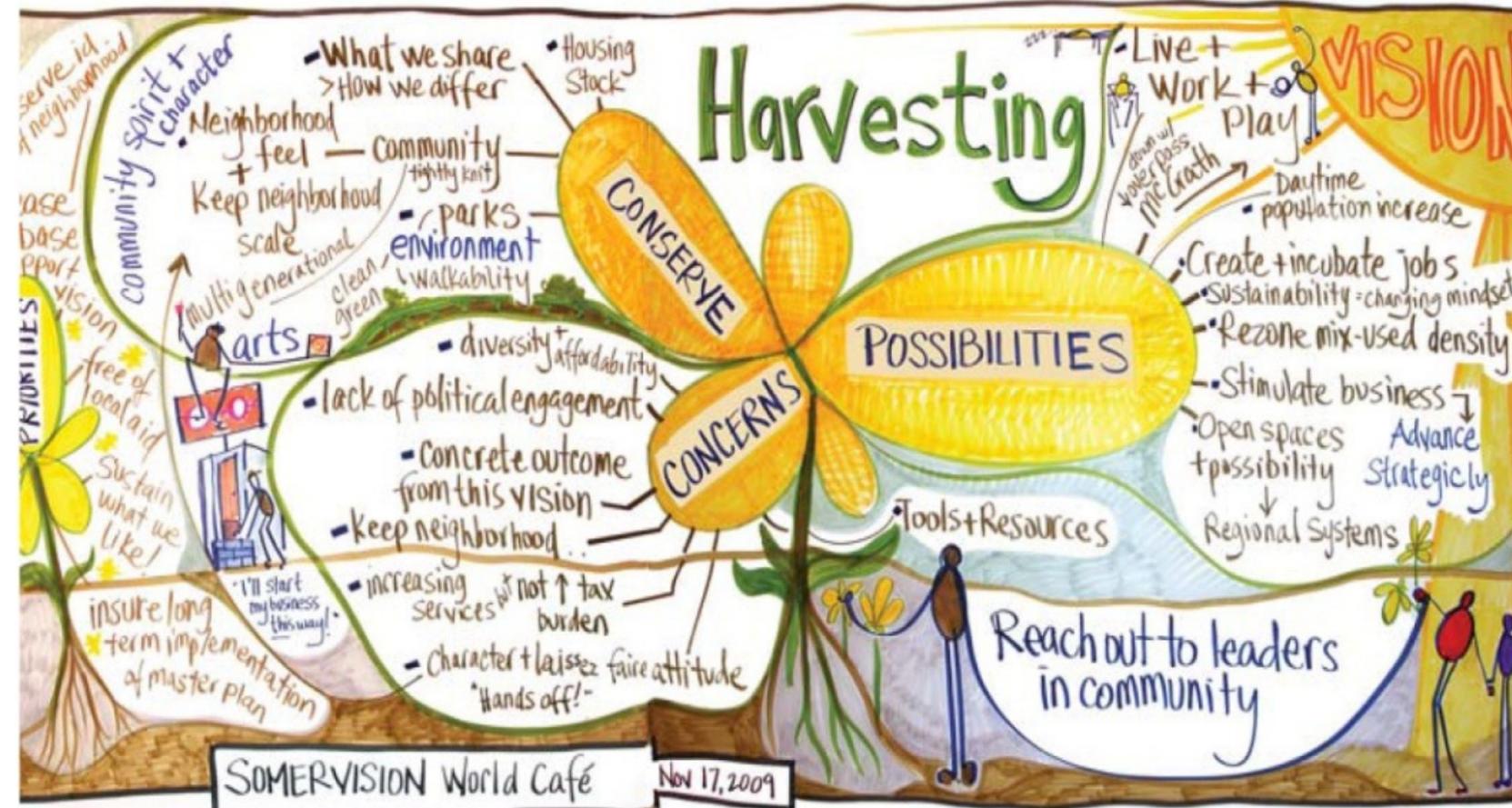
# WHY CREATE A NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN?





# Somerville Vision

City of Somerville, Massachusetts  
Comprehensive Plan | 2010-2030



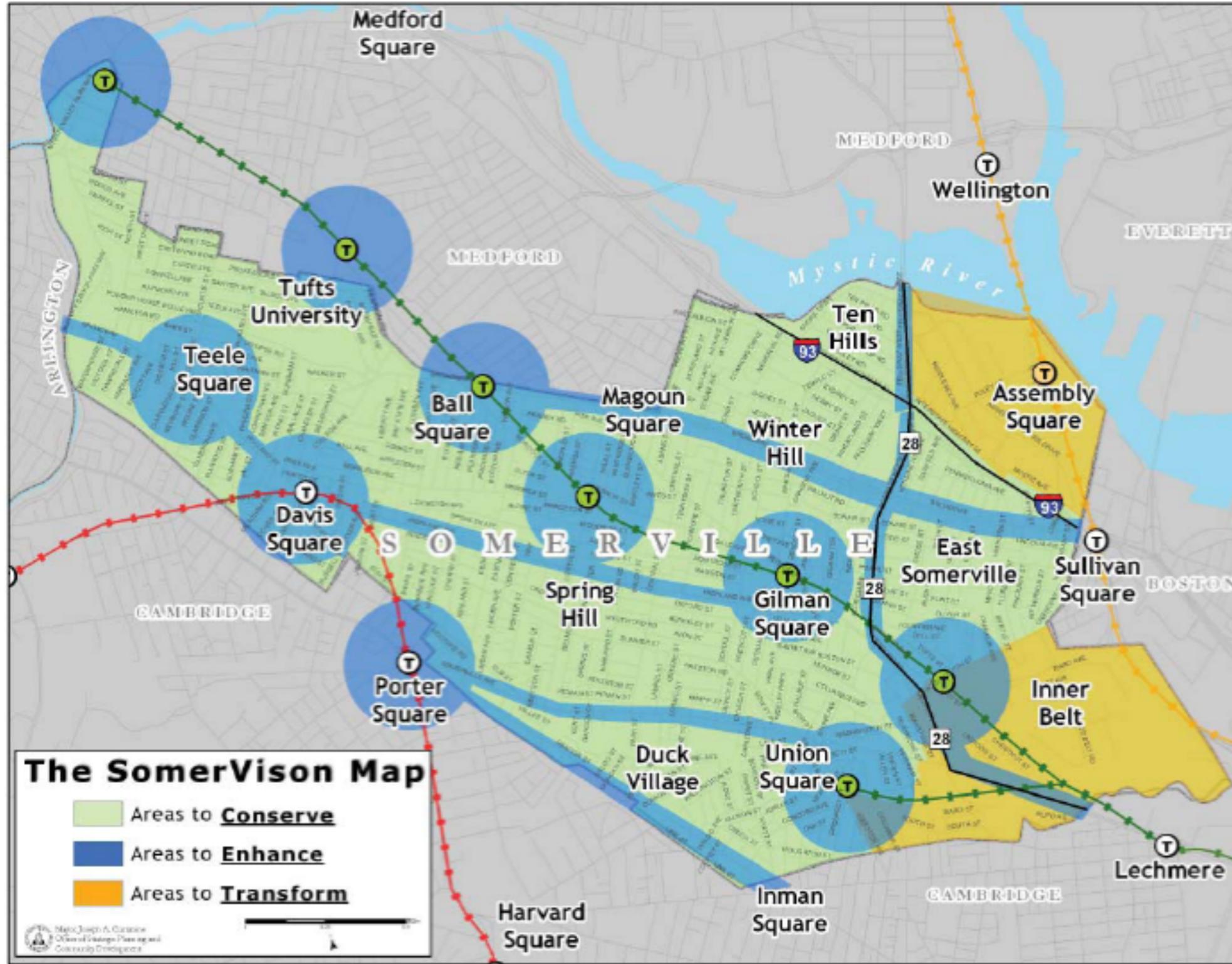
Endorsed by the  
Somerville Board of Aldermen  
April 12th, 2012

Adopted by the  
Somerville Planning Board  
April 19th, 2012

*Somerville: an Exceptional Place to  
Live, Work, Play, and Raise a Family*







The SomerVision Map illustrates our Vision for the community to:

**Conserve**

our great residential neighborhoods

**Enhance**

our funky squares and commercial corridors

**Transform**

opportunity areas on the eastern and southern edges of Somerville.





***30,000 New Jobs*** as part of a responsible plan  
to create opportunity for all Somerville workers and entrepreneurs



***125 New Acres of Publicly-Accessible Open Space***  
as part of our realistic plan to provide high-quality and well-programmed community spaces



***6,000 New Housing Units - 1,200 Permanently Affordable***  
as part of a sensitive plan to attract and retain Somerville's best asset: its people.



***50% of New Trips via Transit, Bike, or Walking***  
as part of an equitable plan for access and circulation to and through the City.



***85% of New Development in Transformative Areas***  
as part of a predictable land use plan that protects neighborhood character



# WHAT DID WE LEARN AT THE CROWDSOURCING EVENT?







# SURVEY RESULTS

Preliminary

[www.somervillebydesign.com](http://www.somervillebydesign.com)



## UNION SQUARE CROWDSOURCING "What is Important to Me" Survey

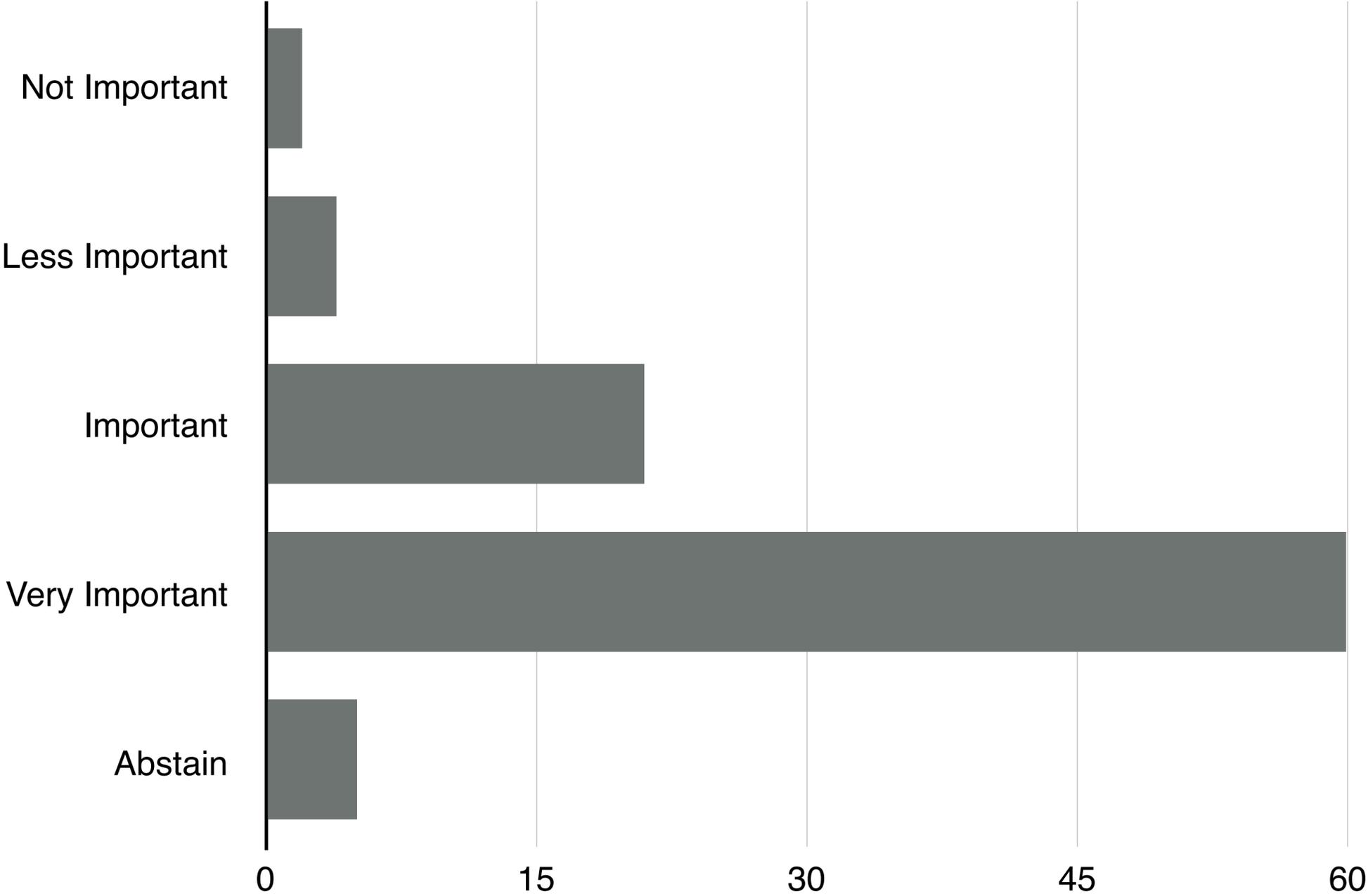
More questions on the reverse side

Not Important Very Important

Traveling About	Ability to <b>safely walk</b> to and through Union Square.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ability to <b>safely bicycle</b> to and through Union Square.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ability to find <b>convenient parking</b> when driving to Union Square.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ability to <b>drive quickly</b> through the square en route to Cambridge or I-93/Boston.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ability to access <b>convenient &amp; reliable transit</b> , including future Green Line & bus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping & Services	A <b>mix of restaurants</b> that provide eating and entertainment options.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Retail stores that meet <b>daily needs</b> (grocery, hardware, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Regional destinations</b> (movie theater, department stores, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Independent and locally-owned stores</b> that are unique to the square.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Access to <b>national brands</b> that I am familiar with and know well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home Fix-It	<b>Clear rules</b> for how homeowners can expand their house.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Flexible rules</b> for how homeowners can expand their house.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	All home additions (porches, dormers, decks, etc.) should be <b>subject to review by neighbors</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Some small home additions should be allowed <b>without review by neighbors</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing	More new housing for <b>families with children</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	More new housing for <b>senior citizens</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	More new housing for people with <b>low- and moderate-incomes</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	More new <b>market-rate housing</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	New development in Union Square should be more <b>commercial than residential</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Spaces	More public spaces for people to <b>sit and linger</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	More public spaces where <b>children can play</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	More space to display <b>public art</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Issues related to <b>trash, graffiti and rodents</b> should be addressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	More <b>flexible public spaces</b> that allow for a variety of activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development & Finance	New commercial and residential development that <b>preserves the character</b> of Union Square.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Additional commercial development in Union Square that provides <b>jobs</b> for Somerville.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Affordable space to fabricate, assemble, bake, shape or make</b> things.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Maintain Union Square's <b>cultural and social identity</b> through incentives & programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Minimize the amount of development</b> that occurs in Union Square.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



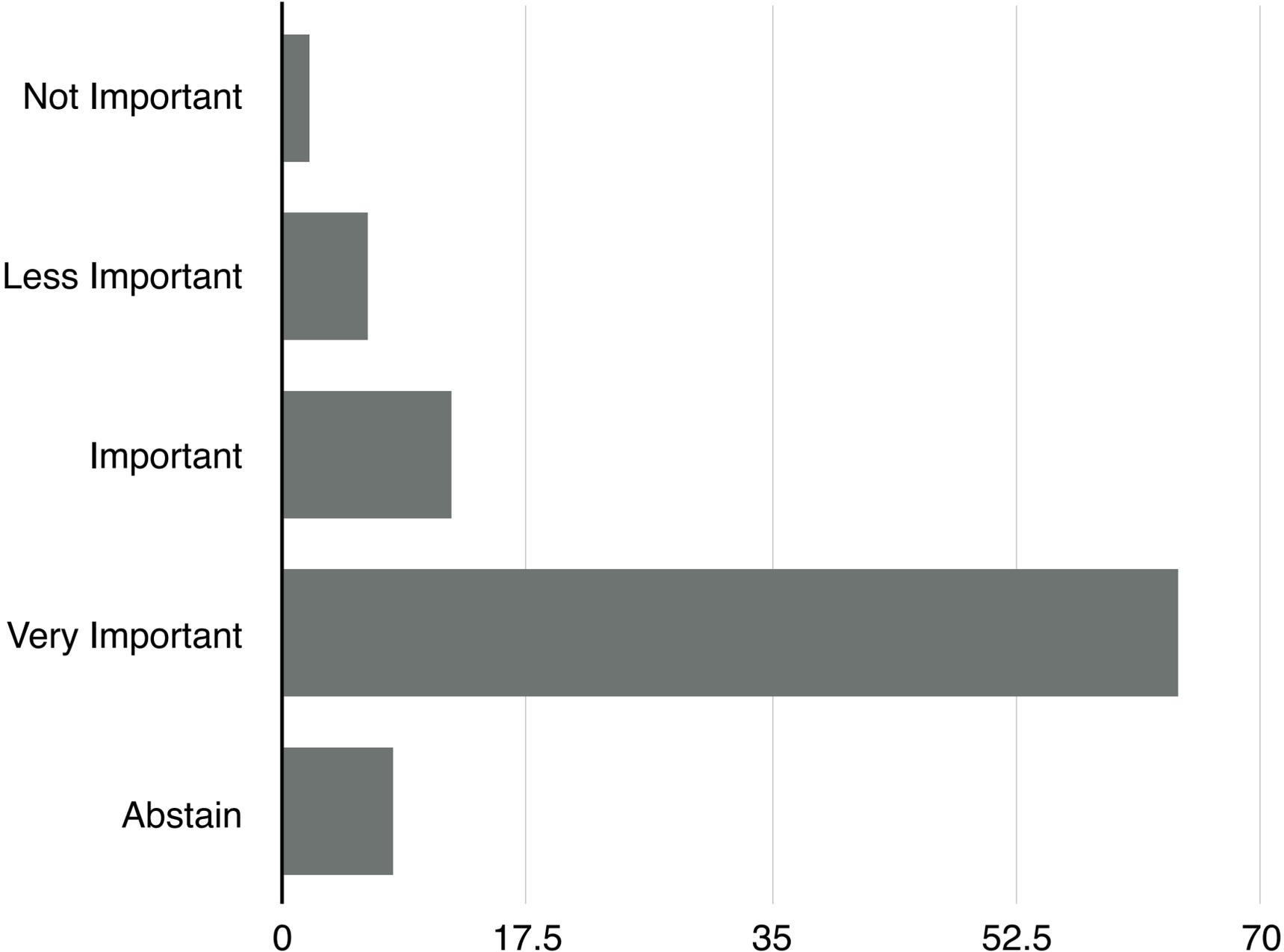
# MORE FLEXIBLE PUBLIC SPACES THAT ALLOW FOR A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES



**65% AGREE**



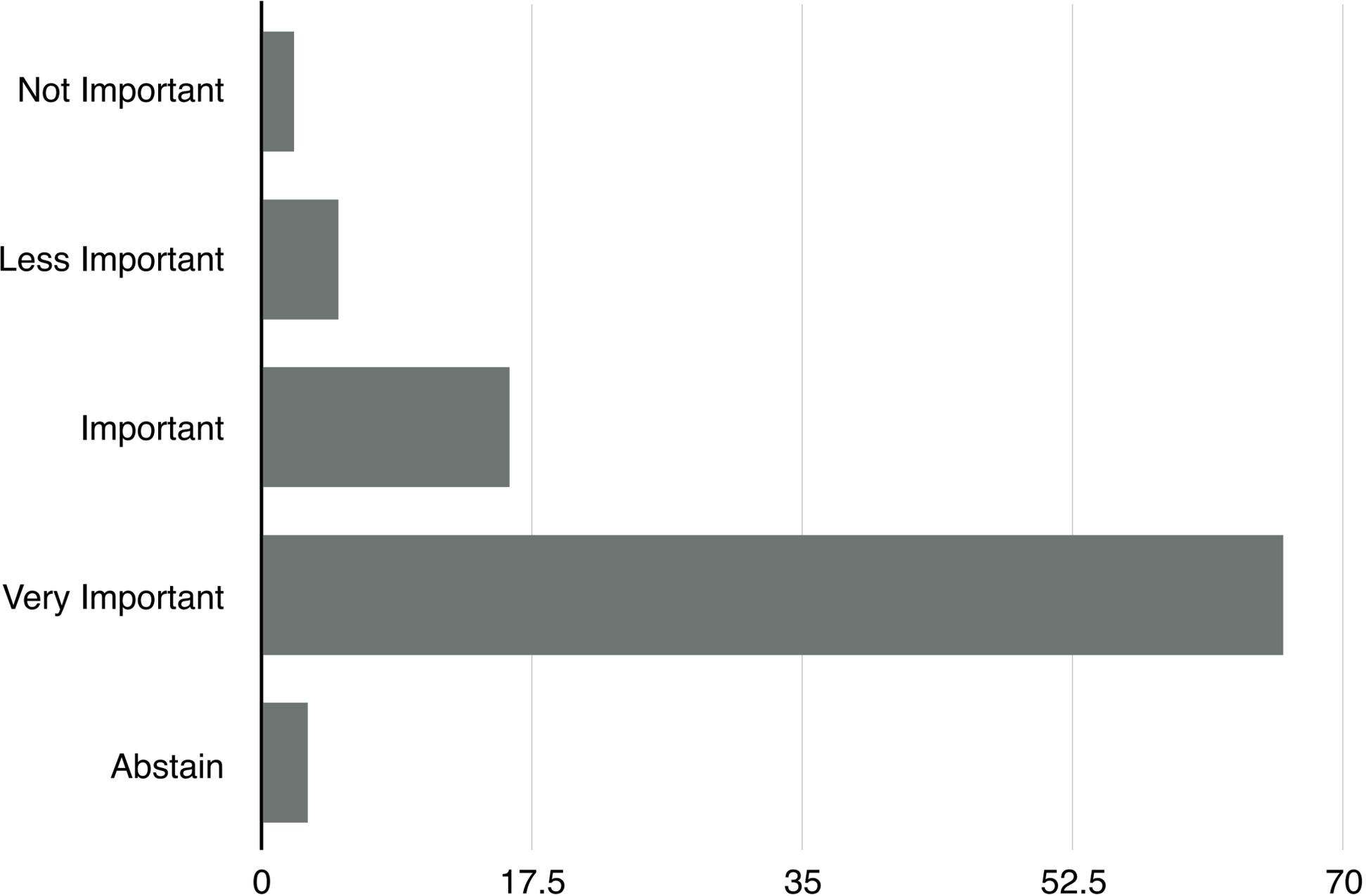
# NEW COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT PRESERVES THE CHARACTER OF UNION SQUARE



**70% AGREE**



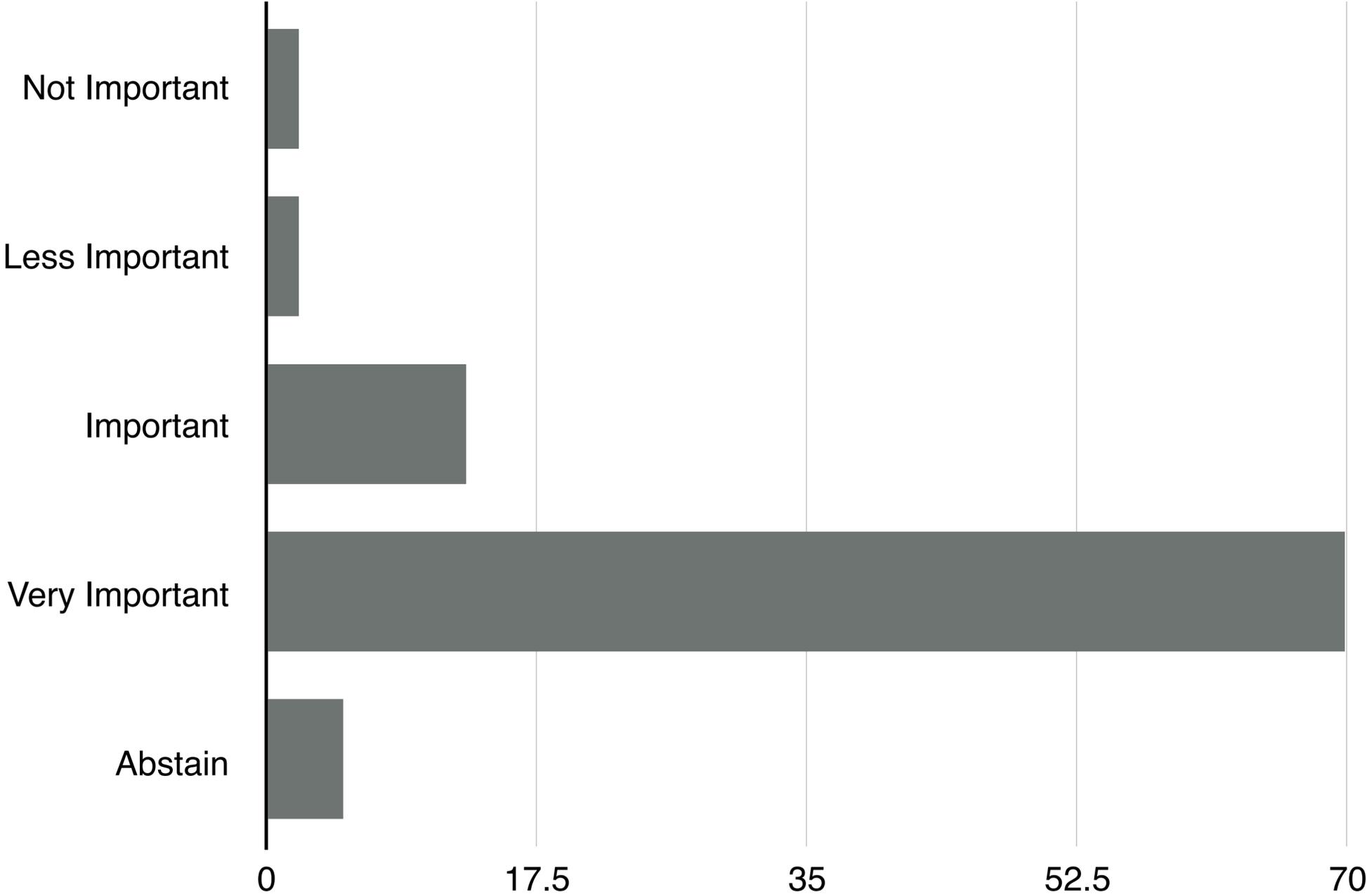
# ABILITY TO SAFELY BICYCLE TO AND THROUGH UNION SQUARE



**72% AGREE**



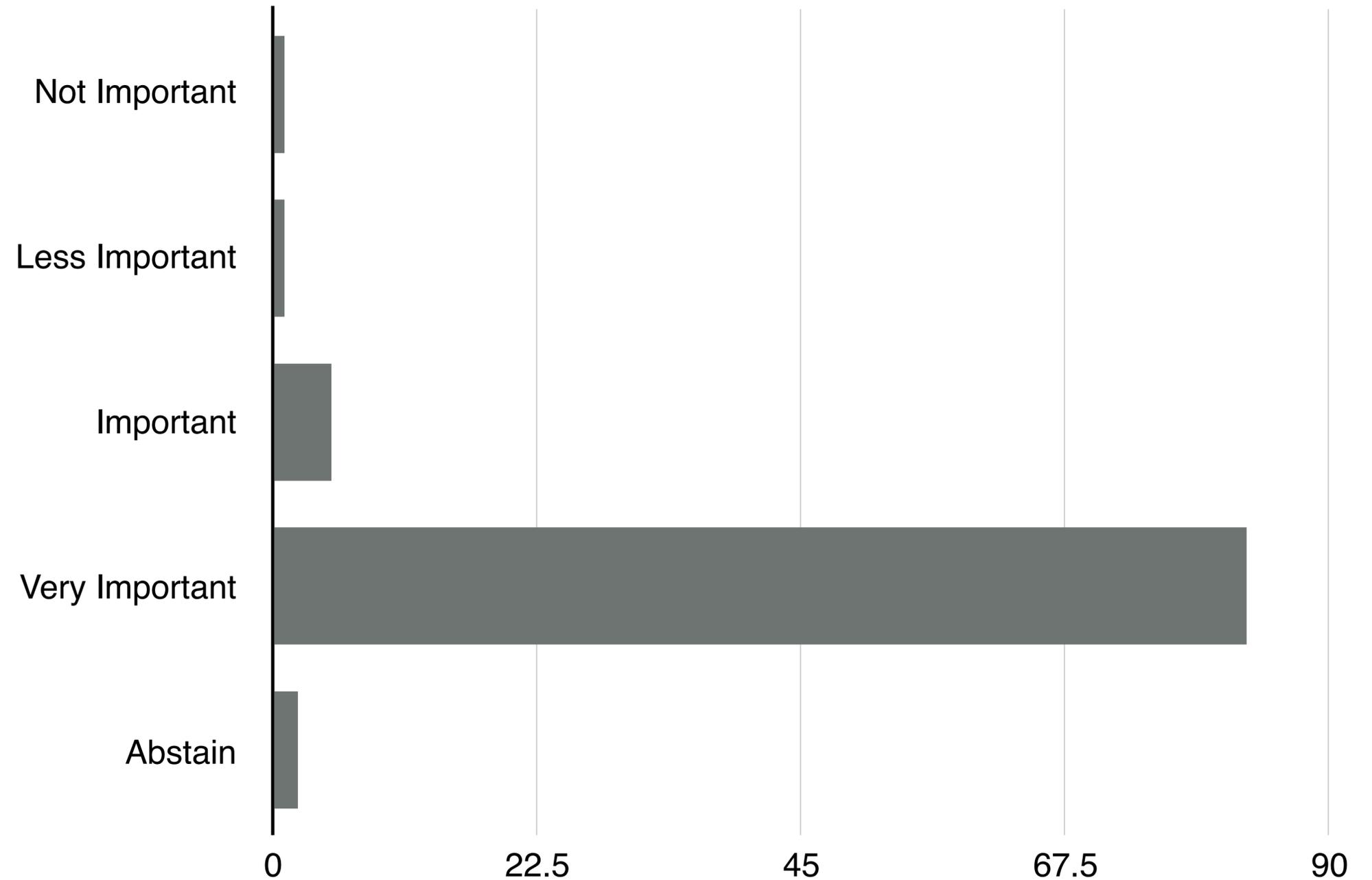
# INDEPENDENT & LOCALLY OWNED STORES THAT ARE UNIQUE TO THE SQUARE.



**76% AGREE**



# ABILITY TO SAFELY WALK TO AND THROUGH UNION SQUARE



**90% AGREE**



# WHAT ARE THE WORKSHOP TOPICS FOR FEBRUARY?

**FEB 4, 11, 18, & 25**

**Development Opportunities  
& Constraints Workshops**

6:30 PM



# FEB 4th

**Development Opportunities  
& Constraints Workshops #1**  
6:30 PM

## PLACEMAKING

**Keeping Union Square unique using art, retail, public space and more.**



**FEB 11th**

**Development Opportunities  
& Constraints Workshops #2**  
6:30 PM

**REAL ESTATE MARKETS**

**Housing and commercial development economics.**



**FEB 18th**

**Development Opportunities  
& Constraints Workshops #3**  
6:30 PM

**PROJECT REALITIES**

**Traffic, parking and brownfield redevelopment.**



**FEB 25th**

**Development Opportunities  
& Constraints Workshops #4**  
6:30 PM

**GIVING SHAPE TO D2 & D3**

**Massing and program workshop.**



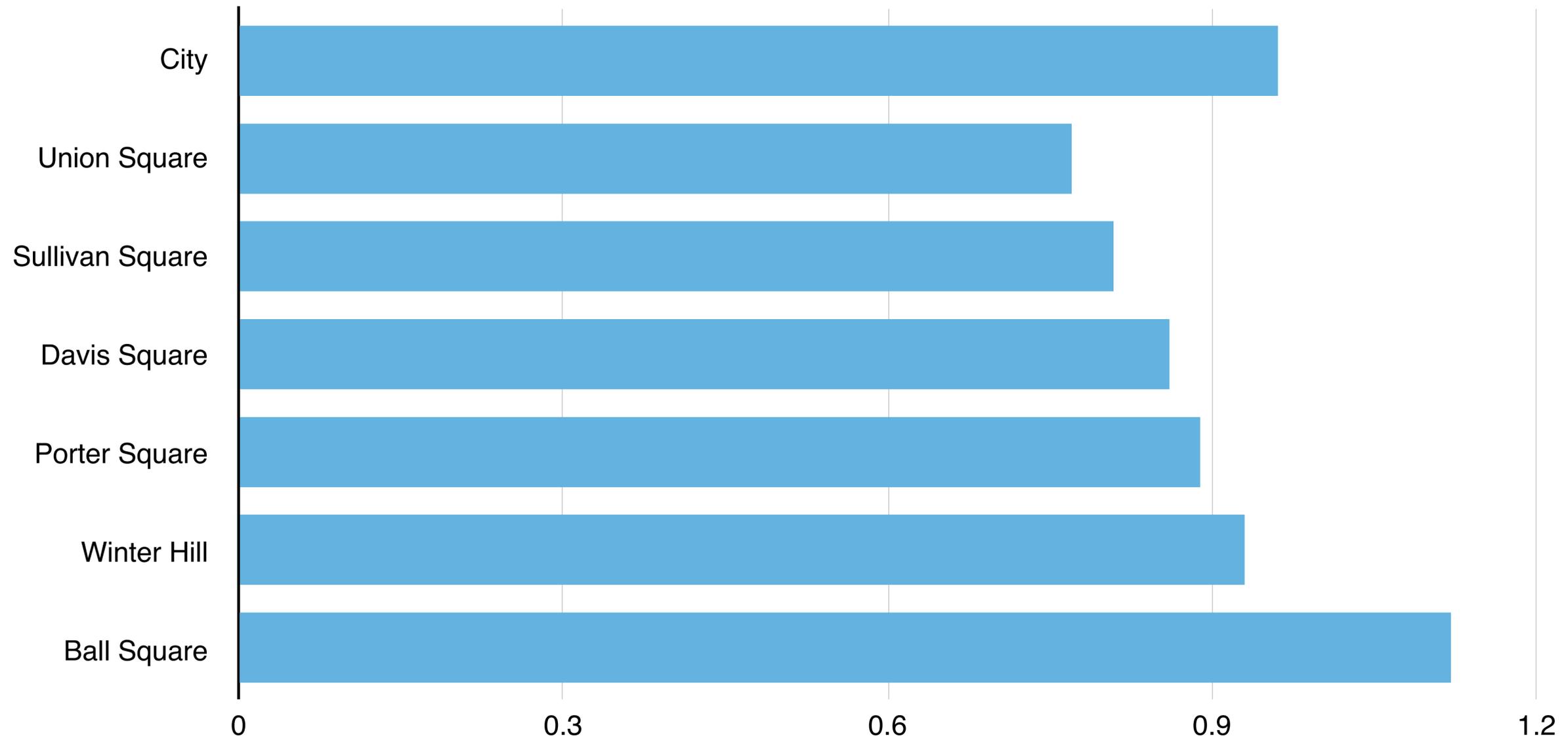


# WALKABILITY

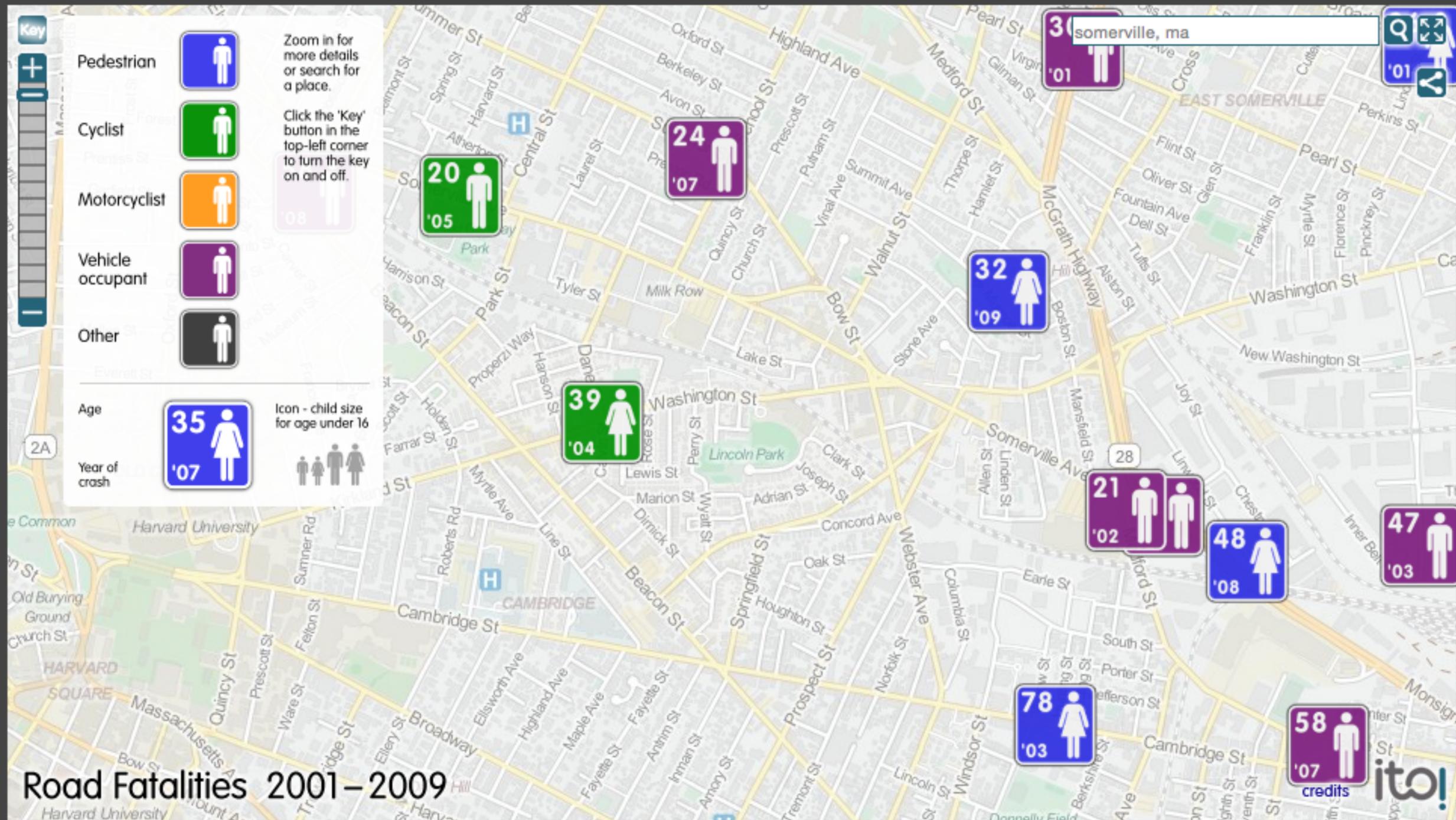




# Registered vehicles per household within 1/4 mi. of square



# ito! road fatalities usa



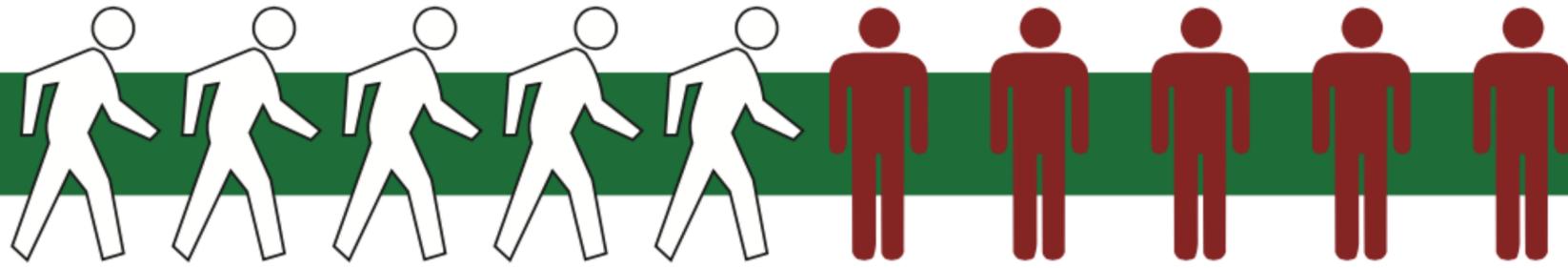
# PEDESTRIAN SURVIVAL PROBABILITY

IF HIT BY A VEHICLE AT



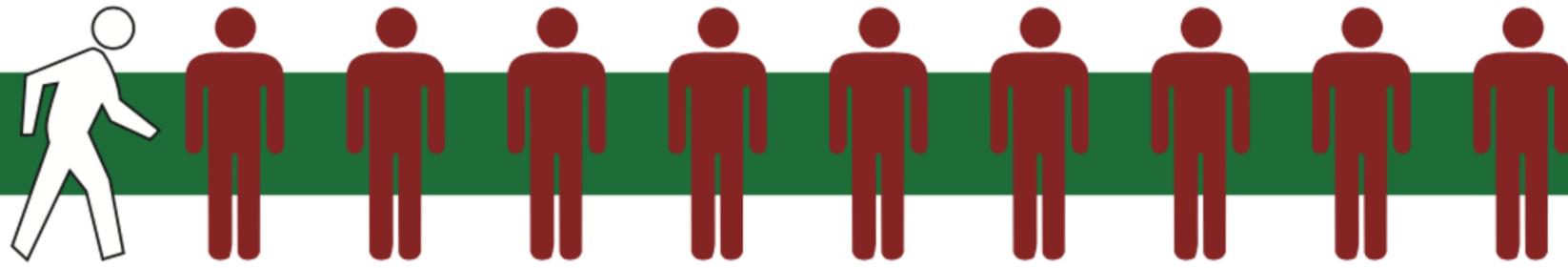
9 out of 10 pedestrians survive.

IF HIT BY A VEHICLE AT



5 out of 10 pedestrians survive.

IF HIT BY A VEHICLE AT



Only 1 out of 10 pedestrians survive.



# Team Better Block installation in 2014





LA CRÉMAILLÈRE 1900

RESTAURANT  
CHEZ EUGÈNE

AU PETIT COMPTOIR

Restaura



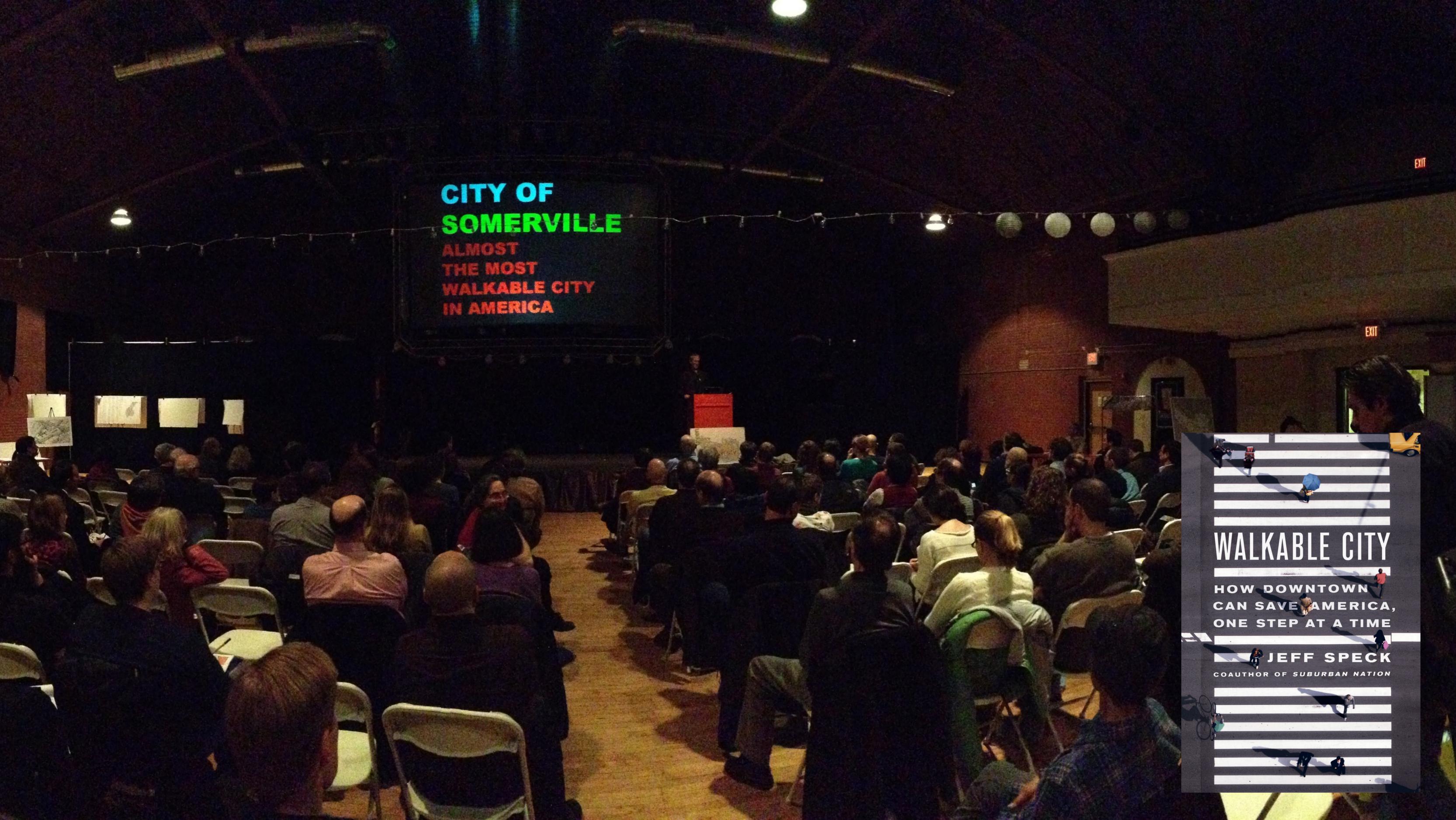
**CITY OF  
SOMERVILLE**  
ALMOST  
THE MOST  
WALKABLE CITY  
IN AMERICA

**WALKABLE CITY**

HOW DOWNTOWN  
CAN SAVE AMERICA,  
ONE STEP AT A TIME

**JEFF SPECK**

COAUTHOR OF *SUBURBAN NATION*





# UNIQUE, LOCAL & INDEPENDENT RETAIL



*Silvana's*  
BEAUTY SALON  
617-718-0142

*Aldine's*  
Beauty Salon  
Tel. 617-718-0142  
Hair Care Specialist  
Beauty Supplies  
Senior & Student Specials

ERIC CRAC  
Money Transfer  
Tel. 617-764-1979

C.A.M.

C.A.M.

C.A.M.

C.A.M.

C.A.M.

C.A.M.

FIRST 100% PURE  
VEGETARIAN INDIAN RESTAURANT  
IN BOSTON AREA  
LIVE DELIVER  
SERVING SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

DOSA N' CURRY

PIZZA

# Can't just be about cafes, what's missing from the main street?



- FOOD**
- Cafe -
- Bar -
- American -
- Italian
- Asian -
- Middle Eastern
- Pizza
- Seafood -
- Bakery
- Vegetarian
- Latin -
- Ice Cream
- Breakfast
- Grocery -
- Deli -
- Sports Bar -
- Irish -
- Fine Dining -
- Brewery -

- RETAIL**
- Gift -
- Home Accessory -
- Furniture -
- Sporting
- Liquor -
- Apparel - womens -
- Apparel - mens -
- Apparel - junior -
- Apparel -
- Shoes
- Technology
- Toys
- Music
- Books -
- Apothecary
- Personal Accessories
- Pharmacy -
- Hardware
- Handmades -
- Antiques -

- SERVICE**
- Dry Cleaner -
- Laundromat
- Bank -
- Gym -
- Shipping/Copying -
- Locksmith -

27' to 40'





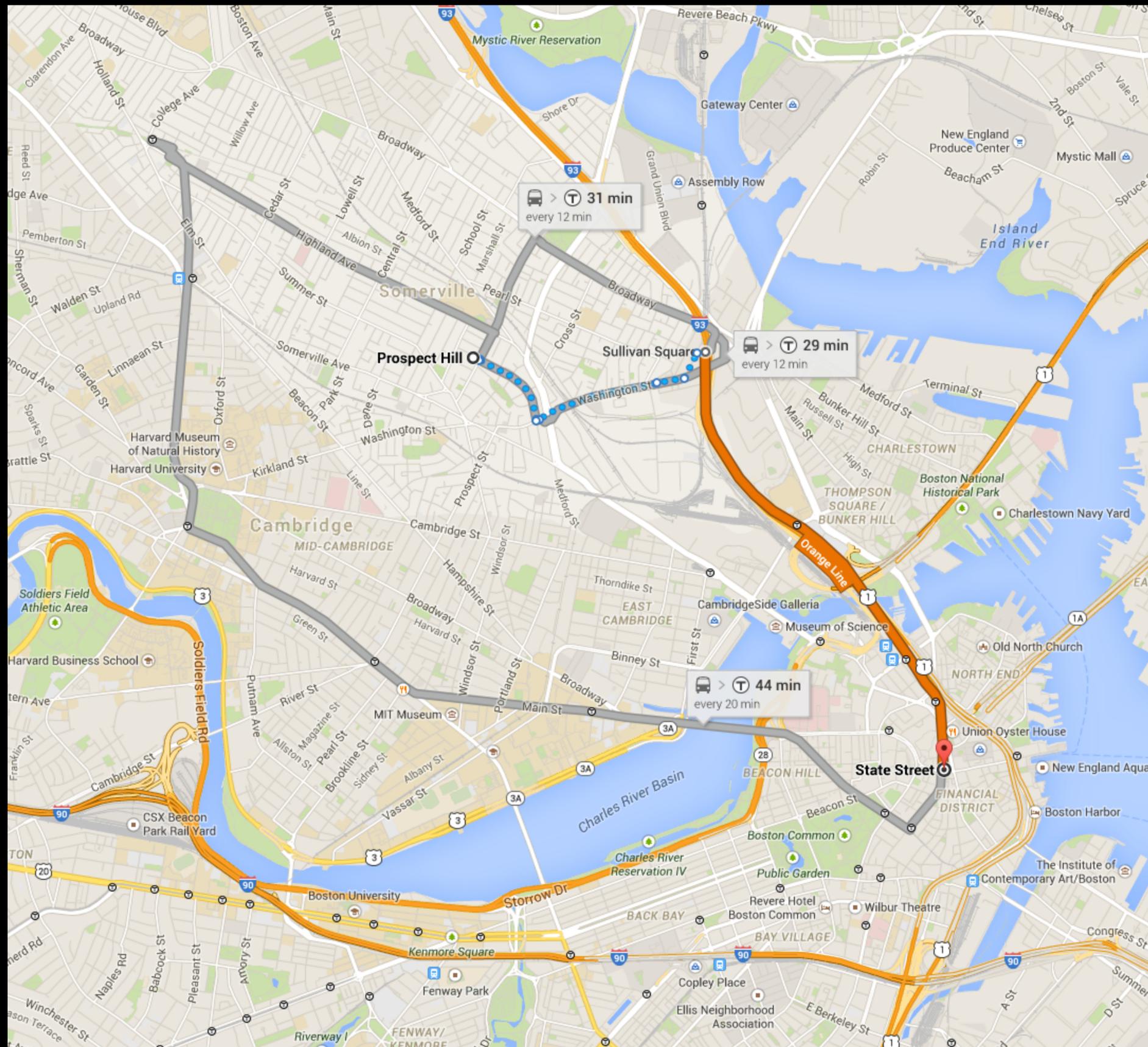
**Managed Together**



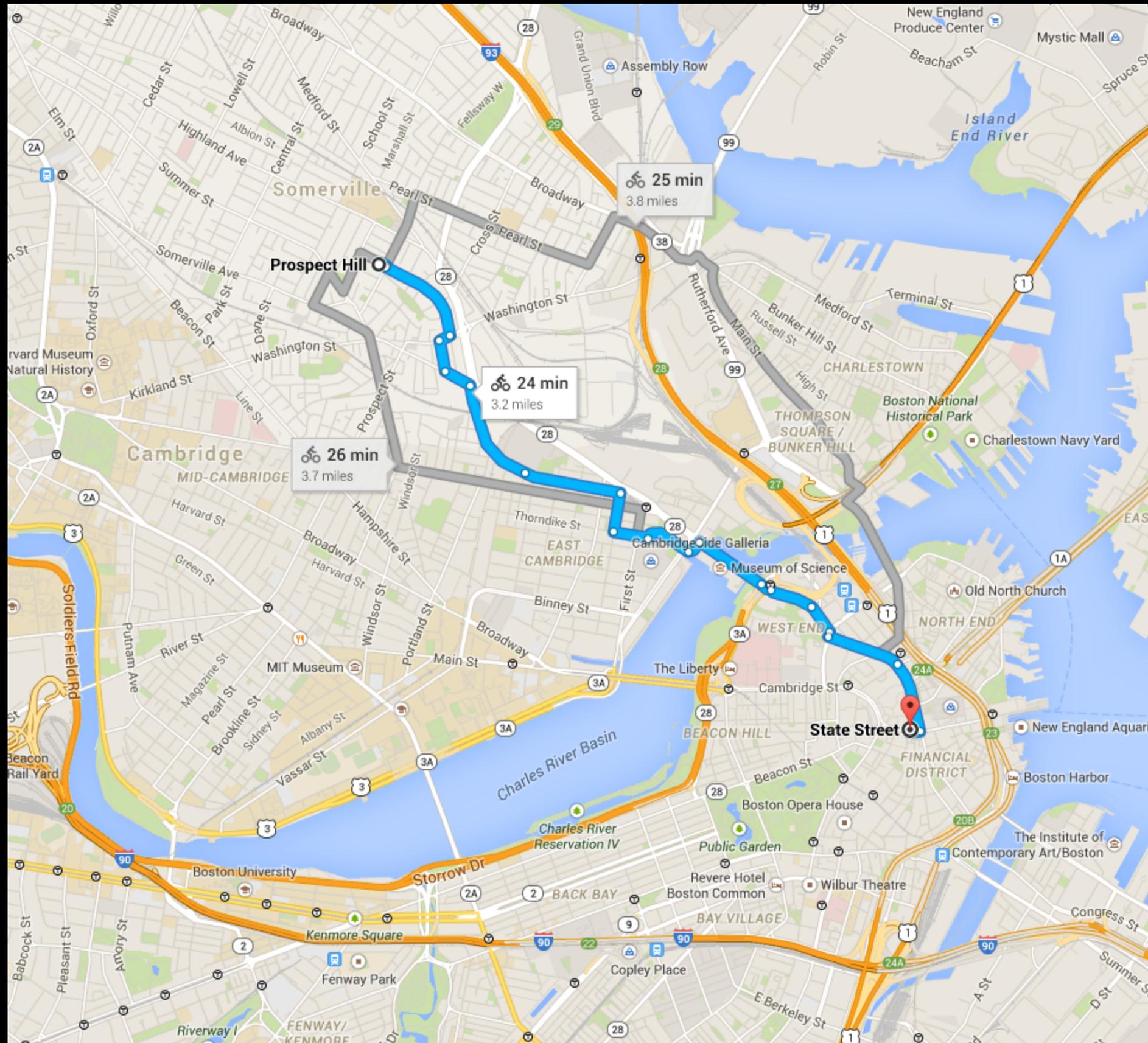
# BICYCLING



# Transit Ride 29 to 44 Minutes



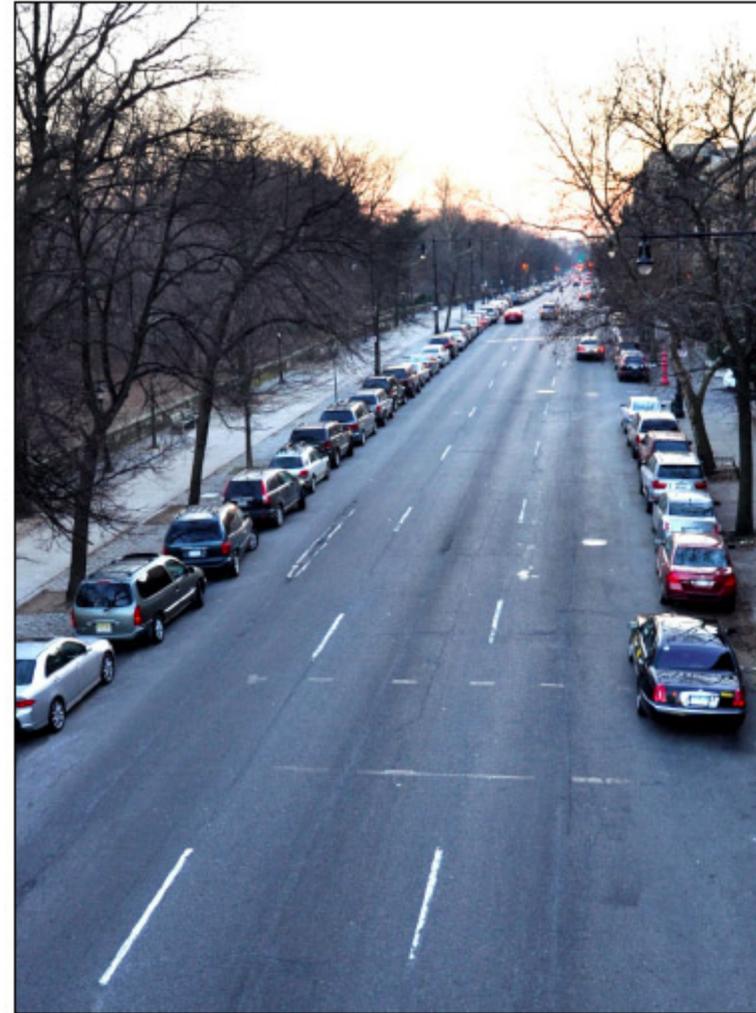
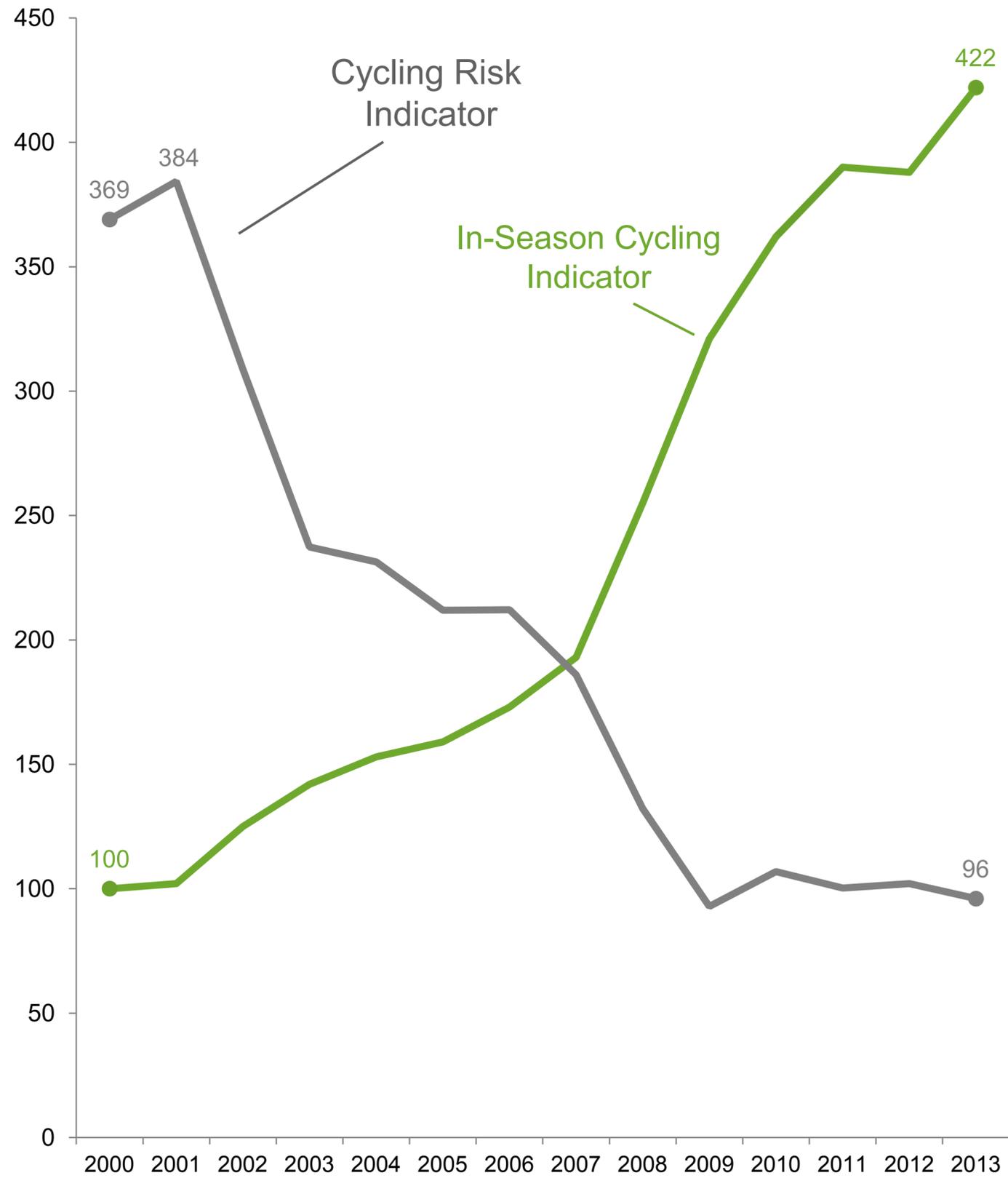
# Bike Ride 24 to 26 Minutes





**A FASTER WAY TO GET AROUND.**

# New York City Cycling Risk



34

STÅR SHOES

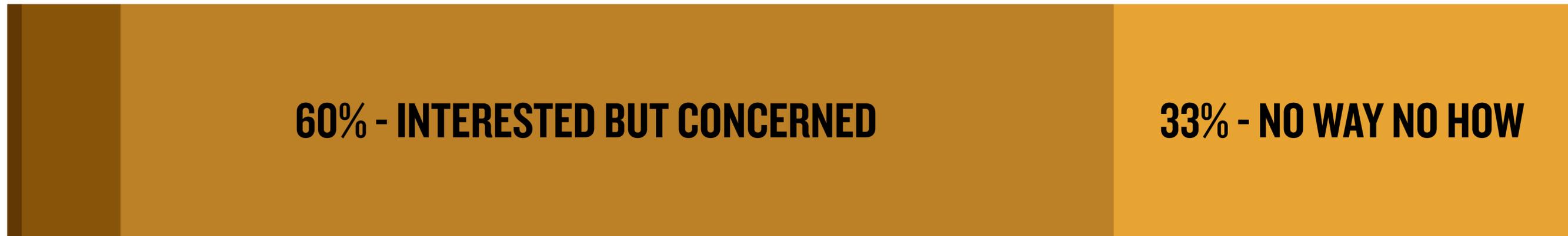
STÅR SHOES

tipico

SCOP



**1% - STRONG & FEARLESS**  
**7% - ENTHUSED & CONFIDENT**



**60% - INTERESTED BUT CONCERNED**

**33% - NO WAY NO HOW**



# **Four Types of Transportation Cyclists in Portland**

# 7.8% Bike Commuters

## TOP 20 BIKE COMMUTE CITIES BY REGION

Which cities have the highest bike commuting modeshare by region? We've categorized cities into four regions: East, Midwest, South and West.



### EAST

CITY	% BIKE COMMUTERS	# BIKE COMMUTERS	POPULATION
SOMERVILLE, MA	7.8%	3,631	78,814
CAMBRIDGE, MA	6.5%	3,836	107,276
WASHINGTON, DC	4.5%	14,986	646,449
NEW HAVEN, CT	2.7%	1,471	130,654
PHILADELPHIA, PA	2.3%	14,177	1,553,165
PITTSBURGH, PA	2.3%	3,349	305,838
BOSTON, MA	2%	6,662	644,710
PROVIDENCE, RI	1.7%	1,361	177,995
UNION CITY, NJ	1.6%	524	68,248
BUFFALO, NY	1.6%	1,661	258,945
PORTLAND, ME	1.6%	537	66,316
WILMINGTON, DE	1.5%	419	71,520
NEWTON, MA	1.4%	592	87,977
NEW YORK, NY	1.2%	46,065	8,405,837
ELIZABETH, NJ	1.2%	643	127,552
BETHESDA, MD	0.97%	325	66,364
HARTFORD, CT	0.94%	420	125,035
PASSAIC, NJ	0.91%	258	70,876
SYRACUSE, NY	0.9%	527	144,675
SILVER SPRING, MD	0.8%	346	76,563

PHOTO BY PAMELA PALMA



METER  
REMAINS AS A  
COURTESY TO CYCLISTS  
PLEASE PAY AT PAY BOX



METER REMAINS AS A  
COURTESY TO CYCLISTS

INSERT VALID COINS ONLY  
PLEASE REINSERT  
YOUR PURCHASE



# CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENT THAT PRESERVES CHARACTER



**NOT CONTEXTUAL**





**Base, Middle, Top**



# Scale & Rhythm of the Facade



# Proportion of Openings



**Respect the Street Wall**

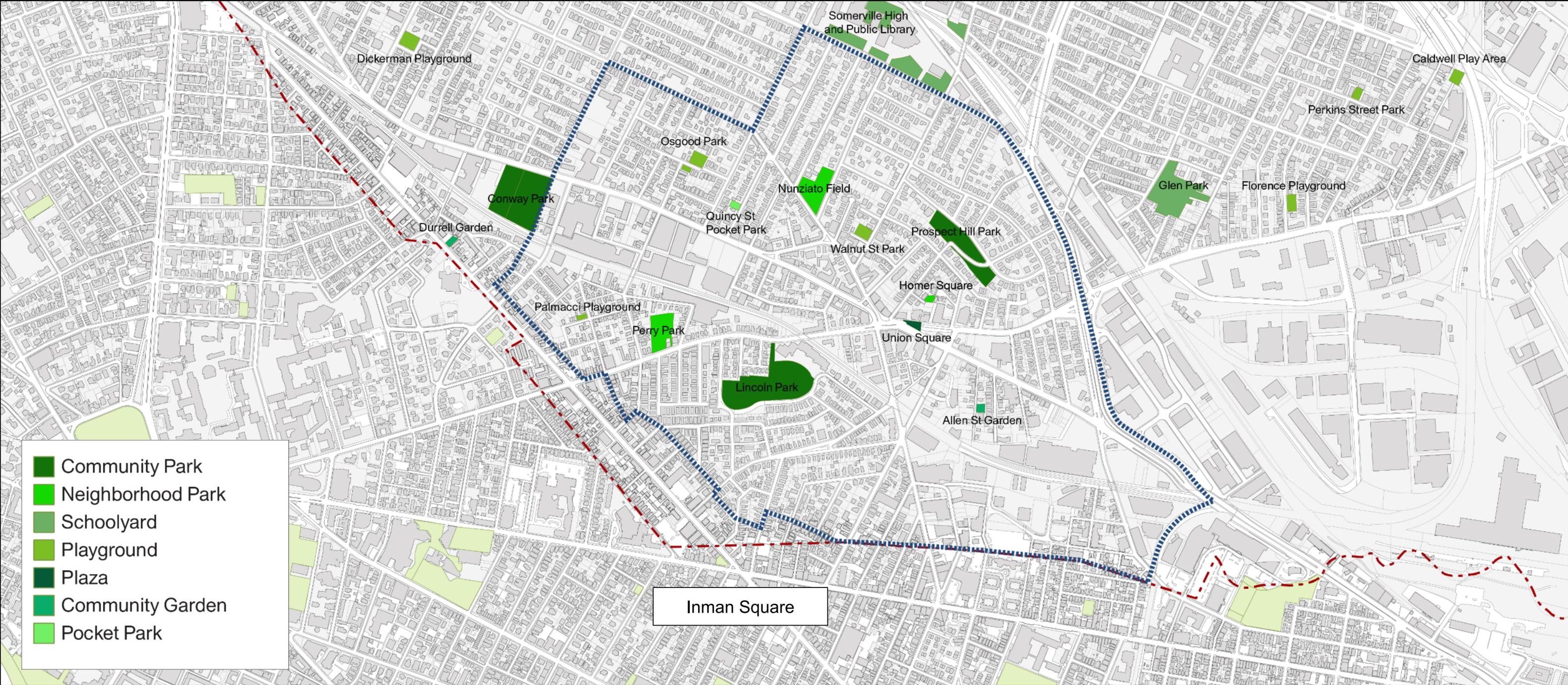


# PUBLIC SPACE



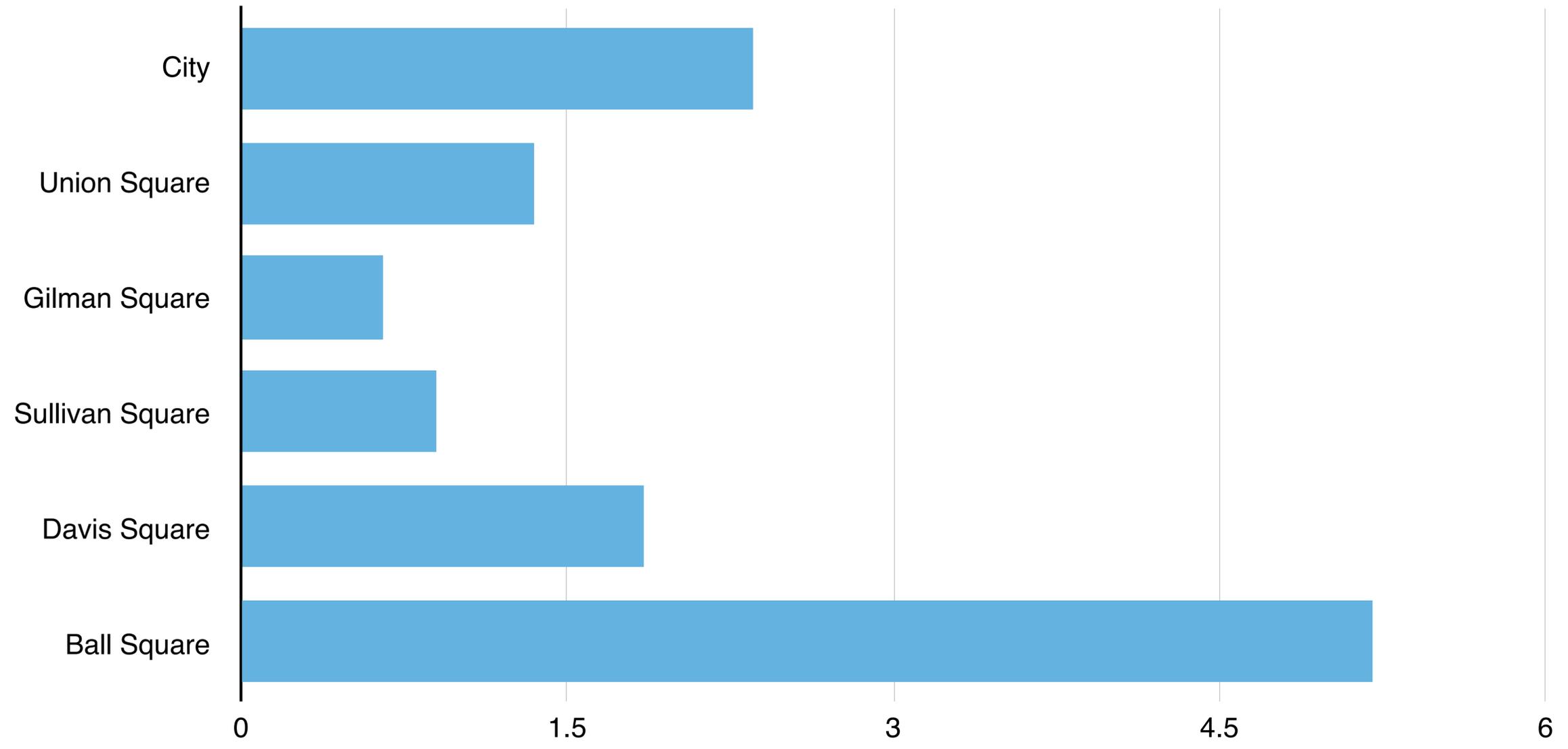


**The National Recreation and Park Association recommends between 6.25 and 10.5 acres of park land, per 1,000 residents.**





# Acres of Open Space per 1,000 Residents











MAJORCA BUILDING

FIVE

LOSTER

NOKIER

COFFEE SPECIAL  
Reg \$3.00  
Large \$3.50  
No extra charge  
4 oz  
ALSO available:  
Milkshakes  
Ice Chocolate  
Tea Coffee

A man in a grey tank top and blue shorts, wearing a white visor and sunglasses, walking away from the camera.

A woman in a blue dress, seen from behind, walking away from the camera.

A man in a black shirt, seen from the side, looking towards the camera.







# WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF UNION SQUARE?





# TONIGHT'S ACTIVITIES

## 1. Introduce Yourself

## 2. Pick a Spokesperson

## 3. Write / Draw as much as possible.



**UNION SQUARE**  
Visioning Session  
Table Instructions

**Somerville**  
**DESIGN**  
www.somervillebydesign.com



OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING &  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
Joseph A. Curtatone, Mayor

**Say hello...** Take a moment to allow everyone at your table to introduce themselves, share their affiliation (city employee, resident, etc), and mark on the map where they live.

### 1 MAPPING ACTIVITY

**PURPOSE:** The mapping activity is an opportunity to gather information from the community. This information will help the Somerville by Design team begin the process of generating the neighborhood plan. The more information you can provide about the details of living, working, and enjoying your neighborhood, the better.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** TALK WITH YOUR MARKERS and draw ideas on the map. If ideas can't be drawn, make written notations **in marker**. Everyone should work together to keep the conversation moving forward, so we can capture as many ideas as possible.

Topics to discuss might include the following:

**Development:** Where are the best locations for new development? Where are there occupied sites that should have their buildings improved or rebuilt entirely. Are there buildings that should be protected from new development?

**Community Character:** Where are the places that you feel best define Union Square's unique character? Where are places that need improvement?

**Building Height:** Are there places that would be appropriate for greater building height?

**Building Scale:** Are there examples of new buildings that fit well into the scale of Union Square? Are there examples of buildings that appear to be too big in scale?

**Civic Space:** Where are your favorite gathering places? Where should additional parks, playgrounds, plazas or squares be located? Where is there open space that is underutilized?

**Housing:** Is there a need for additional housing? Where should it be located? Are there other types of housing not already found in Somerville that are appropriate?

**Streets:** Where are the best streets for walking and biking? What makes them feel right? Which streets feel uncomfortable and could use improvement?

**Linkages:** Identify important linkages, including transit, biking, and walking routes. Where do better connections need to be made?











Prospect Street

McGrath Highway

Windsor Place

Earle Street

South Street

Windsor Street

Windsor Place

Windsor Street

Windsor Street

Windsor Street

Windsor Street

Allen Street

Linden Street

Merrim Street

Charlestown Street

Windsor Place

Earle Street

South Street

Windsor Street

Windsor Place

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# ACTIVITY 2: Visual Preference Survey - 20 Minutes



The logo consists of a bright orange square with a thin white border. Inside the square, there are several thin white lines that intersect to form a complex geometric pattern, resembling a stylized 'U' or a series of overlapping triangles. The text 'US2' is centered within the square in a white, bold, sans-serif font. The 'U' and 'S' are of similar height, while the '2' is smaller and positioned to the right of the 'S'.

**US<sup>2</sup>**



# REPORT OUT



[sommervillebydesign.com](http://sommervillebydesign.com)



### Welcome to MyUSQ!

As part of the Mobility Revolution event hosted by CNU New England and sponsored by the Audi Urban Future Initiative, we've developed a graphic mapping survey to understand use and route patterns. Please tell us about how you use and experience Union Square and the broader Somerville area today — where you hang out, how you move throughout the area, and possibilities for Union Square. Findings from this survey will be presented at the September 13th event at The Armory. Thank you for participating. Your feedback is invaluable!

### Ground rules:

- You can zoom in and zoom out using the + / - signs, or by using the mouse scroll wheel.
- You can use the hand tool to move around the map.
- The extent of the map defines the boundary of the survey. Please place icons and routes on the map.
- You can write a comment after placing the icon.

### Instructions:

- **Step 1:** MyPlaces asks you to place icons on the map related to specific categories.
- **Step 2:** MyRoutes asks you to draw your typical routes.
- **Submit Page:** We ask a few questions to get to know you.

**Step 1: MyPlaces**  
Please use the icons below to identify the following places. You may place up to 5 icons per category.

- Click to select an icon
- Click to place on map (do not drag)
- Write a comment
- Finished? Click "Routes"

Where do you hang out?	Where do you go out to eat?
Where do you go for community events?	Where do you live?
Where do you go to school?	Where do you work?
Where are your favorite open spaces?	Where are the most congested areas?
Where do you typically park?	Where do you end up waiting for the bus or a crosswalk light?
Where would you like to see new elements in Union Square?	What areas do you consider unsafe and why?

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**#PlanUnionSquare**



# THANK YOU!

# JANUARY 8

**Utility and Streetscape Improvements**

6:30 PM

at the Argenziano School

**#PlanUnionSquare**

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