

PART B–OPEN SPACE

Increasing demand for commercial land in Cambridge as well as rising land values across the city has put tremendous pressure on existing open spaces in Cambridge. The tendency is to eat away at remaining open spaces with new development. This trend is of concern to the City. Keeping in mind the open space (i.e. ecosystem structure) and natural watershed (i.e. urban hydrology) diagrams in Assignment 2A, you have been asked by the City of Cambridge's Green Ribbon Committee to present proposals for the conservation, restoration, mitigation and/or creation of an open space network in Cambridgeport and East Cambridge.

Purpose: To introduce students to design thinking and methodology. To understand the relationship between stakeholder concerns and possible design alternatives. To synthesize priorities into schemes. To present a well executed open space proposal.

Task: You will work in groups to produce a scheme for an open space network for Cambridgeport and East Cambridge. I would recommend the following process:

1) Identify Stakeholders. Start by identifying a long list of stakeholders – possible users of open space in Cambridge, but also groups who would be impacted by the introduction of an open space network in the city. To get you started, consider the following stakeholders:

- 1) Environment'l groups (i.e. Sierra Club, Mass. Dept of Env'l Protection).
 - 2) State agencies (Metropolitan District Commission, Conservation Authorities).
 - 3) Transportation agencies/planners.
 - 4) Transit users (students, commuters, low-income residents in particular).
 - 5) Homeowners and renters.
 - 6) Business owners (small and large).
 - 7) Institutions (Harvard, MIT, etc).
 - 8) Dog walkers.
 - 9) People with children.
 - 10) Sports/fitness enthusiasts and joggers.
 - 11) The design community (architects, planners, etc.).
 - 12) Public housing advocates.
 - 13) Developers.
 - 14) The City of Cambridge (tax department, mayor, council, planning dept, etc).
 - 15) Cambridge CDC.
 - 16) Tourists.
- Etc. (think of others you might want to consider...)

2) Identify priorities/approaches. Now think of each stakeholder's priorities for an open space network in Cambridge. Try to think of 6-8 different generic approaches to an open space network, where each stakeholder group could support at least one approach (and possibly more than one). For each approach, think

4) Draw hypotheticals. Now for each of your approaches, draw a hypothetical diagrams that would best achieve the aims of that approach, without regard to any other approach or priority (i.e. the ideal scenario for that priority and that priority alone). For these diagrams, use 11"x17" vellum sheets and use the same base drawing so that you can overlay one hypothetical approach over another. These diagrams should identify the form that the open spaces should take (identifying existing and proposed), as well as the types of open space proposed (use a numbered key to indicate spaces). These diagrams should be rendered in color, with only the major streets or features of Cambridge illustrated plus the rendered open spaces.

5) Identify Overlaps. Now overlay your hypothetical diagrams over one another, so you can see one approach overtop of another. Identify the overlaps in approaches. Where are the approaches compatible and where are they incompatible? Draw conclusions about your analysis.

6) Synthesize and draw final scheme. At this stage, you need to decide how to weight the various stakeholders and their concerns and bring together the various independent schemes into one design scheme. This will involve omitting some approaches and stakeholders, while prioritizing others – indeed, you will need to compromise. Draw your overall scheme on 36"x24" bond, properly labeled and rendered (i.e. what you would present to a group of stakeholders). Identify several (5 or 6) key places in your scheme (i.e. the major ideas) that could be designed by a CDC or designer. Key places should be thought about carefully – where should they be located in Cambridge, how stands to benefit and lose, and how could they be implemented? (i.e. funded). Also, what is the basic design of each space? At this stage you are presenting the overall open space design. In Assignment 2C, each pair will pick one of their places (a park or plaza) and design it in detail.

Deliverables: Stakeholders/Approaches matrix (1 page).
Hypothetical approaches (6-8 plans), one 11"x17" sheet per approach.
A synthesized overall design scheme, one 36"x24" bond panel.