



Future of (How We) Work Task Force

Meeting #1: Open Space and Small Business 6/4/2020

Notes

Resources from the KSA

The KSA is working to develop some resources to help employees learn about open space and the small businesses that are open in Kendall. Those resources include:

Map of Kendall Open Spaces

The KSA has partnered with the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority to develop a map of Kendall's open spaces. At the meeting, a draft of this map was shared and it shows: open spaces, bike racks, transit and bus stations and blue bike stations. After collecting feedback during the meeting, the KSA will update this map and share a final version on their website.

List of Restaurants and Retailers

The KSA has connected with 30 small businesses in Kendall who are planning on reopening in the next few weeks. The KSA will compile a list of those businesses on their website as well as what services they are currently offering.

Jesse Baerkahn, Graffito SP

Founder and President of Graffito SP, Jesse Baerkahn shared an update about Kendall's small business community. He shared that small businesses have been some of the hardest hit by the economic impact of COVID-19. In Kendall, businesses are contending with the cancellation of all special events, as well as a significant loss to their regular lunch and breakfast crowds.

As employees start to return to Kendall, the KSA is working with restaurants to use technology to streamline their pick up and delivery operations. They also are working to refine their menus to make it easier to prepare single serve for large-scale catering. Jesse asked attendees: "if the KSA could create meaningful connections with local restaurants what would you need to feel comfortable? What services are most valuable to you right now."

Joseph Barr, Director of Traffic, Parking, and Transportation, City of Cambridge

Joe Barr shared an update on the City's work related to streets and sidewalks. Their primary focus is how can they use streets to better support physical distancing, biking and transit, and create space for small businesses. He shared information about a new pilot program called "Shared Streets," where streets will be closed to non-local traffic to create more space for walking, biking, and access to small businesses.

Joe asked meeting attendees to think about the streets around their offices and see if there were any opportunities for adjustments that help meet City goals.

Small Group Discussion Takeaways:

Below are some highlights from the small group discussions.

- Employers are encouraging employees that have to come into the office to bring their own lunch. However, as small businesses reopen they are interested in:
 - Making sure that small businesses are adopting the best possible health and safety practices including, single servings, and access to screenings for employees.
 - Working with small businesses to cater single serve meals
 - Allowing employees to order meals for pick up the day before
 - Piloting pick up zones that can be advertised to employees

- Limiting the number of trips employees have to make is in everyone's best interest, so many companies recognized that coordinating grocery or meal delivery for employees will be a valuable benefit moving forward.

- Employers should designate "delivery" and drop off zones in their building to accommodate and streamline deliveries.

- Ames Street, Third Street, and especially Main Street were all streets that were identified as areas where we should look to prioritize space for social distancing, access to transit, and more space for small businesses.

- There was significant concern about the amount of open space that is typically under construction right now in Kendall and several attendees asked about private open spaces and if there was a way to make them accessible to the public.

- There is a lot of concern about traffic and gridlock returning as employees return. As COVID-19 changes behavior it is much harder for the City to guess what this return will look like. Employers will be an important partner in identifying problems as we move forward.

- Many employers identified access to the river as one of Kendall's best open space assets and asked that we highlight access points.