

City View

WINTER 2015

Engaging Our Community in Planning for the Future



Ever wonder what Cambridge will be like in 2040? Or think about what might happen along the way? Now is your chance to collectively reimagine and reinvent Cambridge. This November, Cambridge is launching an exciting, multi-year process to develop a new Citywide Plan. The Citywide Plan is an opportunity to set a new direction for a sustainable, prosperous future. Continued on Page 6

City Manager's Message

I am pleased to report on some exciting initiatives the City has been working on to help improve the well-being and quality of life of our residents.



Richard C. Rossi, City Manager

Our ongoing investment to create and preserve affordable housing is one of the most direct ways to preserve the diversity of our community. Since FY05, the City has created over 1,100 units of affordable housing and preserved 1,120 affordable units. This fall, we launched a pilot program for middle-income affordable rental units in Kendall Square to serve those who don't qualify for traditional programs, but are challenged to afford the current market. In September, the City Council approved a dramatic increase in and expansion of the City's incentive zoning requirements for non-residential development. These changes will significantly increase funds generated for the Affordable Housing Trust. The incentive zoning rate increased from \$4.58 to \$12 per square foot, the highest in the Boston area, and will continue to increase annually up to \$15 in 2018.

This summer, we enacted the most comprehensive changes to the City's Tobacco Ordinance since 2003, when smoking in restaurants and bars was prohibited. With these changes, Cambridge has one of the most stringent tobacco laws in the Commonwealth.

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The amended ordinance prohibits smoking in smaller parks and tot lots in Cambridge, raises the purchase age for tobacco products and e-cigarettes to 21, and deters youth from smoking or using e-cigarettes.

The City continues to collaborate with the School Department and the community to meet the needs of our children and youth. Our Early Childhood Task Force is expected to deliver its report to the City Council and the School Committee in November to recommend development over the next several years of a Birth to Grade 3 plan to ensure that all children enter school ready to thrive.

Given the importance of science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) to the local and regional economies, we are establishing a STEAM Coordination Office to develop a coherent network of learning and internship opportunities for students. In collaboration with the School Department, we will hire a STEAM Coordinator by year end to expand meaningful opportunities for students to gain STEAM skills and exposure to STEAM-related careers. The Coordinator will collaborate with companies and higher education partners and market opportunities to families to ensure diverse learners have access to a wide variety of educational, work-based, and enrichment opportunities.

The new City of Cambridge Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance takes effect on March 31, 2016 and impacts grocery and convenience stores,

retailers, pharmacies, restaurants, liquor stores, seasonal and temporary businesses, jewelry and household goods stores. Businesses that provide a checkout bag to customers at the point of sale must use compliant bags, such as: 1) recyclable paper bags with at least 40% post-consumer recycled content, 2) reusable bags with handles designed for multiple reuse (plastic 3 mil thick are allowed) or 3) compostable bags that meet the ASTM D6400 standard. Businesses must charge customers 10 cents per compliant bag, and show this as "Checkout Bag Charge" on receipt. Bags exempt from the Ordinance include produce bags, laundry, dry-cleaner and newspaper bags, and bags used to wrap meat or frozen foods. Learn more at: CambridgeMA.gov/BYOB.

Finally, Cambridge is expanding its commitment to the Open Data Program with the passage of the new Open Data Ordinance and hiring of a full-time program manager. This ordinance builds on current City efforts to make government data available in easy-to-find and usable formats, thereby creating and fostering meaningful opportunities for the public to help solve complex community challenges.

Richard C. Rose

New Domestic Violence Initiative

The City Manager's Office is pleased to celebrate the launch of the Cambridge Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative, a unique and pioneering collaboration that includes community organizations, residents, City departments and a newly created Coordinator position.



Since the Coordinator's arrival, the Initiative has undertaken several key projects. Earlier this year, we joined with community providers from Emerge, Transition House, and the Guidance Center to offer a comprehensive set of Domestic Violence trainings for local police officers. Over a four month period, the team trained 260 Cambridge Police Officers, 56 Harvard University Police Officers and 38 MIT Police Officers.

This spring and summer, a subcommittee of the Initiative conducted a comprehensive, citywide assets and needs assessment, interviewing staff from domestic and sexual violence specific organizations, human service organizations, and a variety of others, including faith leaders, community members, universities and City departments, such as Police and School.

Those interviewed shared a wide range of experiences and suggestions for how Cambridge can prevent and respond to domestic and sexual abuse. Several primary themes emerged from across the interviews. Not surprisingly, housing was identified as the number one challenge for anyone trying to leave or stay out of an abusive relationship. We also heard that most interviewees would benefit from learning about what domestic violence is, how to recognize it, and what to do once it is identified.

Responding to these needs, the Coordinator worked with Transition House to provide a comprehensive citywide training to provide this information. In September and October, a nine session, 27-hour training was delivered to 45 people by a series of 26 local experts in domestic and sexual abuse. Demand was so great that we plan to offer the training again in the near future.

For more information about the assets and needs assessment, along with other upcoming Initiative events, please visit: cambridgema.gov/domesticviolence.

Cambridge Responds to Opioid Crisis

"Living on the street — getting high is a numbing technique. Recreational use is actually rare when you are homeless."

—Cambridge Needle Exchange and Overdose Prevention Program staff member

Massachusetts is in the midst of an opioid crisis. In 2014, an estimated 1,256 residents died from unintentional opioid overdose, the highest number ever recorded in the Commonwealth.

Last year in Cambridge, fire and ambulance personnel used the overdose-reversing drug Narcan to save the lives of 100 people experiencing overdose symptoms.

"This is a complex issue that requires a variety of approaches and partnerships," said Claude Jacob, the City's Chief Public Health Officer and Director of the Cambridge Public Health Department. "Opioid addiction is a disease that is difficult to treat and often exacerbated by mental illness, poor health, homelessness, and poverty."

While many of the City's resources are directed at the acute opioid crisis, City and community partners are also working on a long-term response that encompasses prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery. City efforts align with the statewide opioid action plan.

Some recent City initiatives include:

- **Overdose Prevention and Education Network (OPEN):** This four-city coalition, led by the Cambridge Public Health Department, is developing regional prevention strategies and sharing resources with the public.
- **Overdose Tracking System Pilot Project:** This system, expected to go live in 2016, will help identify overdose "hotspots" and trends in Cambridge.
- **Cambridge Recovery Coach Program:** Pro EMS, in partnership with City and hospital partners, is launching a program to assist people in greatest need in navigating treatment and recovery services.
- **Learn to Cope Support Group:** Established by the City in 2013, this support group for people whose loved ones are addicted to opioids, alcohol, or other drugs meets at Spaulding Hospital on Monday nights. To learn more, visit learn2cope.org.

For information and local resources, visit the OPEN website, odprevention.org.



Keisha Antoine (center) of the Cambridge Public Health Department discusses regional strategies for addressing the opioid crisis at a graduate student forum in April.

2016 Resident Permits Available

Although current permits do not expire until Jan. 31, 2016, residents are encouraged to renew online early to avoid delays. You must have an active 2015 residential parking permit to renew online.

Households without vehicles that have an active 2015 visitor permit may also be eligible to renew online. The new permit features the winning entry from the 2016 Resident Permit Photo Contest, which was the Robert W. Healy Public Safety Facility submitted by Holly Donaldson. The City is again offering the opportunity for residents to make a voluntary contribution that would be allocated to climate change initiatives. For more information, call 617-349-4700 or visit: cambridgema.gov/permit2016.



Are You Ready for Winter 2016? We Are!

Last winter was one for the records books. The Department of Public Works (DPW) operated day and night to keep the City's roadways and sidewalks as safe and passable as possible.

SNOW 2015 NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

- 110 inches of snow
- 26,000 overtime hours
- 200 pieces of equipment used to plow/haul snow
- 9,400 tons of salt dispersed

Below are a few reminders and lessons learned as we gear up for the upcoming winter season.

New Equipment for 2016

To prepare for Winter 2015/2016, DPW has acquired additional pieces of equipment, including two sidewalk tractors, seven roadway plows, two roadway plows with salters, and two large dump trucks equipped with plows and salters to help with winter operations.

What We Will Do

As always, DPW will work around the clock to keep the City's roadways and sidewalks as safe and passable as possible, as soon as possible. Our goals are to chemically treat all major arteries within three hours of when snow begins, to keep main arteries plowed during all stages of a storm, and to clear all streets and the sidewalks bordering City property once a storm has stopped.

What You Can Do

Help us, help your neighbors, and help the entire community by keeping sidewalks, fire hydrants, and catch basins snow and ice free. Property owners are responsible for clearing snow from sidewalks adjacent to their property or business within 12 hours after it stops falling in the daytime, and before 1 p.m. when it has fallen during the night. Remove or melt all ice within 6 hours of the time it forms.

Paths on shoveled sidewalks must be wide enough for wheelchairs, walkers, or strollers (at least 3 feet, preferably 4 feet wide). Corner properties must also clear sidewalks on all sides and clear ramps at crosswalks. Even if you aren't around, it is your responsibility to ensure someone clears sidewalks and ramps next to your property.

The fine for failing to comply with the City's sidewalk clearance ordinances is \$50/day for each day of non-compliance.

Warning of Potential for Roof Collapse as Snow Accumulates

With the record setting snowfall we experienced last season, many commercial and residential roofs were strained by the weight of snow and ice accumulation. When needed, work safely to clear your roof of ice and snow on a regular basis being mindful that snow and ice must not be removed onto a public way. Seek the advice and help of professionals, if necessary.





Parking During Storms

Check the City of Cambridge website, CambridgeMA.gov, for information and updates about snow emergency parking restrictions and alternative off-street parking. Even if no snow emergency has been declared, remember these general on-street parking guidelines:

- Always park at least 20 feet from the street corner so plows can push snow away from crosswalk. Parking away from the corner improves visibility and safety year-round.
- It is illegal to use space savers to hold a cleared parking space; objects left in on-street parking spaces will be removed.
- Think safety: dig out fire hydrants and street drains while digging out your car.
- When digging out your car, think about how you pile snow: don't create new problems in the street or sidewalk.
- Please don't take it personally if plows push snow back into your driveway or parked car. This may be unavoidable as we work to keep streets passable during all stages of a storm.

Snow Exemption Program/Shoveling Assistance through Council on Aging

If you are a homeowner on a low income and/or are elderly or have a disability, you may qualify for the City's Snow Exemption Program, in which case the City will shovel your sidewalk. To find out whether you are eligible, please call the Cambridge Council on Aging, 617-349-6220 (voice) or 617-349-6050 (TTY). If you do not qualify, the Council on Aging can provide you with a limited list of professional snow removal companies and students who will shovel for a fee to be negotiated.

Sign Up for Snow Alerts!

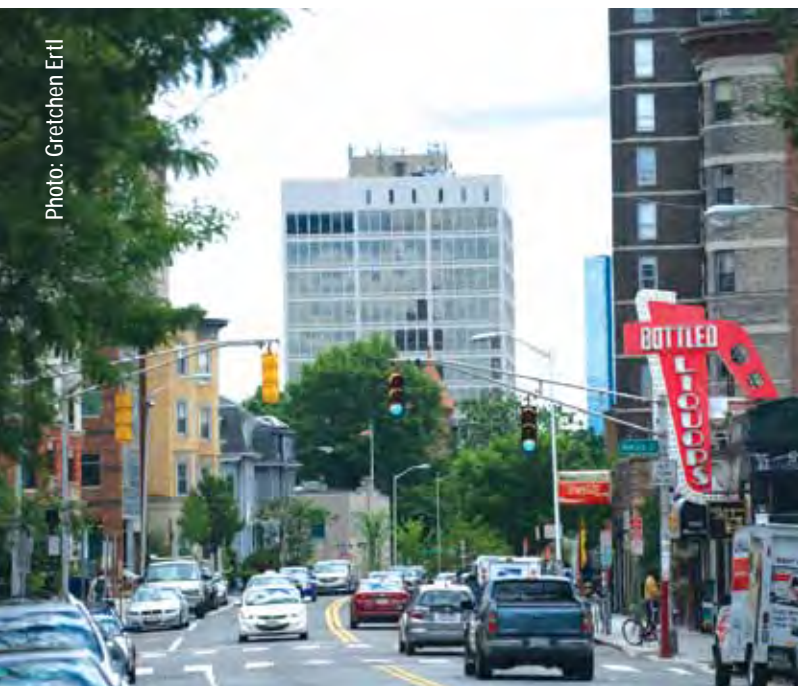
Register to receive Snow Emergency Parking Ban notifications via phone, text, or email at CambridgeMA.gov/AlertNetwork. Also follow us on Twitter at @CambMA and Facebook at CambridgeMA.Gov. The City is utilizing the hash tag #CambMASnow on Twitter to help the public follow the conversation. For more information, including parking during bans and winter weather tips, visit CambridgeMA.gov/snowalert16.



A Shared Vision for a Diverse City

Cambridge is a city of diverse places, people, and ideas. Made up of 13 neighborhoods—from East Cambridge and Wellington-Harrington to Strawberry Hill, North Cambridge and everywhere in between—the city’s multifaceted community includes long-time residents, young families, students, local businesses, innovative startups, international corporations, revered educational institutions, and lots more. This mix of voices makes Cambridge the exceptional place it is today.

Photo: Gretchen Ertl



Citywide planning will bring these voices together into conversation, and craft a shared vision for a more livable, sustainable, and equitable Cambridge. It will serve as a guide for how the city changes over time. To do this, the plan will create a well-defined roadmap that identifies effective, short and long-term actions to produce tangible results.

To help lead this effort, the City will work with an interdisciplinary team of consultants, led by Boston-based Utile Architecture + Planning. The Utile team will provide technical expertise in a range of fields, from transportation and housing to urban design and community engagement. The Utile Team will also lead a planning study for the Fresh Pond/Alewife area which will be integrated into the overall Citywide Plan. The area study will address key issues, such as the character of future development, climate change preparedness, infrastructure, mobility, and zoning changes needed to accomplish City goals.

The planning process is expected to conclude in 2018, and will inform the City’s capital and operational budgeting, neighborhood and district plans, and zoning and other policies going forward.

A Comprehensive Study Built on a Strong Foundation

Cambridge is a recognized leader in urban planning, and a significant body of recent work will serve as a foundation for the citywide planning process. This includes work on climate change, transportation, land use, open space, housing affordability, community health, homelessness and income insecurity, early childhood education, and many



other topic areas. Studies and plans have also been conducted for geographic areas of the city, most recently the K2C2 effort examining Kendall Square and Central Square.

The Citywide Plan will build upon this foundation and offer additional ideas to ensure that the City’s plans and programs are aligned to support a common direction for Cambridge. We will use six lenses to look at the various planning topics. These include:

- **Social Equity and Diversity:** Celebrating the cultural, demographic and economic mix in our community
- **Environmental Resiliency:** Reducing our environmental footprint while preparing for impacts of climate change
- **Character of Neighborhoods and Squares:** Preserving our strong architectural heritage of quiet neighborhoods and vibrant commercial areas

Photo: Gretchen Ertl



- **Healthy Community:** Improving the health and well-being of our community
- **Learning Community:** Expanding access to education and lifelong learning in academics, arts, and cultural programs
- **Coordination with the Region:** Leveraging regional partnerships to improve shared resources

These lenses represent community values and will help shape the vision and recommendations of the plan.



Photo: Gretchen Ertl

Engaging the Cambridge Community

Success of the Citywide Plan rests on its ability to engage the entire community. It is a core goal of the Plan to provide an accessible forum for all stakeholders to share ideas. Toward this end, the City aims to reach as many people as possible and ensure that dialogue is representative of the City's diversity. This will include multiple approaches, including partnering with the City's Community Engagement Team and lowering potential barriers to meeting attendance by providing childcare, translation, and food for participants.

"The Citywide Plan is a plan for and by the community," said City Manager Richard C. Rossi. "We need all voices represented in the process."



Working with Utile, the City will also look beyond traditional methods of public engagement and employ creative methods to get people involved. A strong online and social media presence will be key to this effort, as will abundant opportunities to engage in-person.

Help Us Name this Plan!

This is your plan and we need your help in naming it. Cast your vote by Dec. 4, 2015 at: surveymonkey.com/r/citywideplan.

Send suggestions to: Community Development Department, 344 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139, Att: Melissa Peters, Project Planner, or contact her at mpeters@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-4605.

Sign up for updates and join us in upcoming engagement activities: cambridgema.gov/citywideplan.



The glass mosaic images featured on pg. 1 were designed and built by local artists David Fichter and Joshua Winer to honor the memory and efforts of Geneva Malenfant, a Cambridgeport community leader and affordable housing activist who spearheaded the rezoning of this formerly industrial area to encourage residential development. It is located on a façade of Putnam Green Apartments. This 40-unit affordable rental housing development on Putnam St. was completed by Homeowners Rehab, Inc. in 2012 (with substantial City investment in the project).



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Martin Luther King Jr. School to Open Soon

The City's first near Net Zero school, the Martin Luther King Jr. and Putnam Avenue Upper Schools, is scheduled to be completed in December and turned over to the School Department, with inaugural classes expected to commence shortly thereafter. Part of the Cambridge Public Schools' Innovation Agenda, the M.L. King School located at 100 Putnam Avenue, will be the first school to be redesigned to include a JK-5 Program, an Upper School Program, Community School and Afterschool programs. The M.L. King School contains an indoor parking garage, all new facilities and equipment for its classrooms, library, auditorium, gymnasium, community rooms, and new outdoor play space.

The City's sound financial practices and continued AAA Bond Rating enable us to finance major capital projects, such as the M.L. King renovation and the upcoming King Open and Cambridge Street Upper Schools & Community Complex Project, at very favorable rates that, in turn, result in significant savings to taxpayers and enable us to further invest in the City's youth.

The King Open School, located at 850 Cambridge Street, will be the second school to be redesigned to include a JK-5 Program, an Upper School Program, Community School and Afterschool programs. This anticipated Net Zero project will also include the redesign of the Valente Branch Library and the Gold Star Pool. The anticipated school opening is September 2019.



Participatory Budgeting is Back!

How Would You Spend \$600,000 to improve Cambridge??

Vote for your favorite projects December 5-12, 2015!!

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