

ENVISION CAMBRIDGE

5-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT
2019 to 2024





INTRODUCTION

Envision Cambridge is a roadmap to the year 2030, setting out a course of action to promote inclusive and sustainable growth. Created by and for the community, Envision Cambridge draws on the community's strengths—its people, businesses, institutions, history of innovation, and progressive values— to find solutions to pressing urban challenges. The plan articulates a shared vision for the future of our city and includes an action plan to realize that vision.

In the five years since the completion of the plan, we have made tremendous strides towards realizing our collective vision. This progress report provides a transparent look at how far we've come, while also showing us how far we need to go. It allows us to identify areas for improvement and course correct where needed. Together we will make sure that this plan remains a steadfast guide to supporting housing affordability, promoting economic opportunity, enhancing environmental sustainability and resilience, and providing resources and opportunities to make our city inclusive and welcoming to all.

CONTENTS

4 BACKGROUND

Envision Cambridge is our citywide plan for a more livable, sustainable, and equitable Cambridge. This section describes how the plan is organized to achieve goals across six planning topics.

8 PROGRESS SUMMARY

This update provides a look at how far we've come and shows us how far we need to go. It allows us to identify areas for improvement and course correct where needed.

10 PLANNING TOPICS

Each planning topic includes actionable steps and performance targets. This section provides detailed progress reports on each planning topic.

34 CONCLUSION

Moving forward, Envision Cambridge remains the keystone around which the City can make decisions and manage change over time.

PLANNING FOR TOMORROW

What does a citywide plan accomplish?

The Envision Cambridge Citywide Plan, released in Spring 2019, sets common goals and aspirations of the Cambridge community, including residents, business owners, workers, students, non-profits, property owners, local leaders, and City government. It acts as a guide, outlining actionable steps that help to achieve its goals.

Over a multi-year process, Envision Cambridge brought the city’s many voices together into conversation to build a shared vision for a more livable, sustainable, and equitable city. Together, the community discussed the greatest challenges and opportunities facing the city and set ambitious yet achievable goals. The

community identified 55 strategies and 183 new actions to achieve the community’s vision across the six planning topics: Climate & Environment, Community Wellbeing, Economy, Housing, Mobility, and Urban Form. Below are a few key achievements since the completion of the plan.

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
<p>CITY COUNCIL ADVANCES SAFE STREETS</p> <p>Cambridge City Council passed the Cycling Safety Ordinance, which requires the construction of separated bike lanes on streets designated for greater separation in the Cambridge 2020 Bicycle Plan.</p>	<p>98 NEW AFFORDABLE RENTAL UNITS COMPLETED AT FINCH CAMBRIDGE</p> <p>The City completed the largest new construction of permanently affordable housing development in the city in more than 40 years. Finch Cambridge is an ultra-energy-efficient, Passive House-certified building designed to provide a healthy living environment for its residents.</p> <p>CITY COUNCIL PASSES THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OVERLAY</p> <p>The City Council passed the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) zoning to facilitate the creation of new City-funded affordable housing. Through relaxed dimensional criteria and as-of-right approvals, the AHO helps to create new affordable units more quickly, more cost effectively, and in areas where there are fewer affordable housing options for residents.</p>	<p>THE CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY ELIMINATES FINES</p> <p>The Cambridge Public Library goes fine free. The elimination of overdue fines ensures equitable access to library services for everyone in our community.</p> <p>UNIVERSAL DESIGN PLAYGROUND COMPLETED AT DANEHY PARK</p> <p>A new 30,000 square foot play area is the first in Cambridge to fully incorporate Universal Design (UD) - the concept that all parts should be as usable as possible, without changes, by everyone. In addition to physical accessibility, UD takes sensory, cognitive, and emotional abilities into consideration to create an environment that is welcoming to all people to the greatest extent possible.</p>	<p>THE CITY DOUBLES THE SIZE OF ITS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM</p> <p>The Community Engagement Team is a team of outreach workers who engage with underserved, underheard, and historically excluded communities in Cambridge to ensure diverse representation in city decision-making and equitable provision of services.</p> <p>CITY ADOPTS CLIMATE RESILIENCE ZONING</p> <p>Cambridge adopted new zoning requirements to address the impacts of increased flooding and increased heat over time as a result of climate change.</p> <p>CITY ELIMINATES MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS</p> <p>The City no longer requires new buildings to provide off-street parking.</p>	<p>LANDMARK GHG EMISSION REDUCTION POLICY PASSES</p> <p>Cambridge became the first known city in the country to mandate non-residential buildings to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions with a net zero requirement by 2035 for large buildings and 2050 for mid-size buildings.</p> <p>LAUNCH OF FREE UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE</p> <p>City announces the new publicly-funded Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP), also known as Universal Preschool, that will provide free preschool to the families of all 4-year-olds and some 3-year-olds.</p> <p>CITY JOINS FOSSIL FUEL FREE BUILDING DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM</p> <p>Joining nine other municipalities in the Commonwealth, the City adopted an ordinance that will require nearly all new buildings to be fossil fuel free.</p>	<p>ALEWIFE ZONING ADOPTED</p> <p>In September 2023, City Council approved the Alewife Overlay District: Quadrangle (AOD-Q) Zoning. The new zoning will allow for, and encourage, increased housing supply, including affordable housing, promote neighborhood-based uses, and prioritize the early delivery of critical infrastructure to support the district. The zoning was accompanied by a set of district design guidelines to for public space and architecture.</p> <p>BLUEBIKES SYSTEM EXPANDS TO INCLUDE E-BIKES</p> <p>The City introduced electric-assist bikes into the regional bikeshare system.</p>

HOW IT WORKS

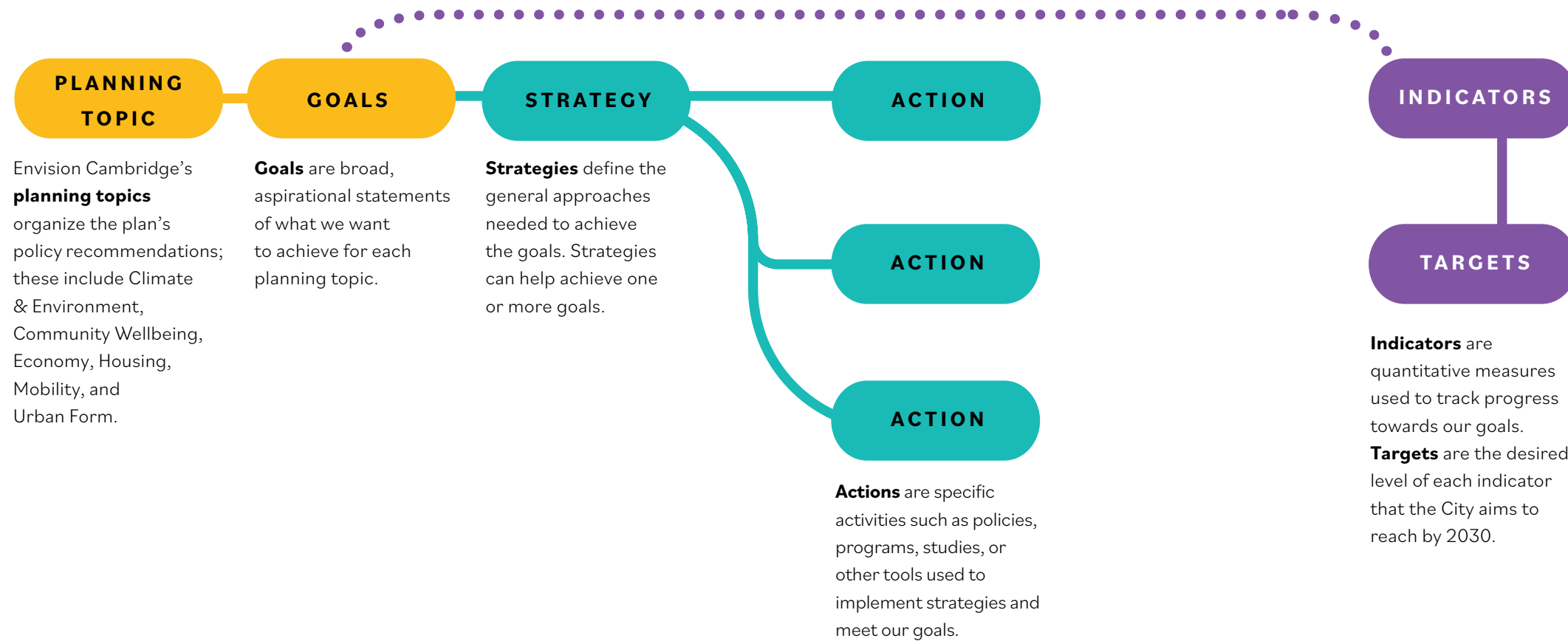
Understanding the Envision Plan Framework

The Envision Cambridge plan was structured around a set of key terms. Starting with big picture visioning, the terms crystallize towards specific steps the City can take to achieve a long-term vision, measuring progress along the way.

The vision for Cambridge articulates the city’s aspirations for its future. Community health & wellbeing, diversity & equity, economic opportunity, learning, livability, and sustainability & resilience are community values that shaped the plan’s recommendations.



SETTING THE VISION GETTING IT DONE MEASURING PROGRESS



TYPES OF ACTIONS

Types of actions include policies, programs, zoning changes, community outreach and education, capital investments, and advocacy efforts at the state and regional level.

We track which actions are started, in-progress, complete, or ongoing. Much of the work the city does is never finished. Once established, a successful program may continue as part of the city’s ongoing work. As such, ongoing work is marked as “completed and ongoing.”

HOW WE MEASURE

Progress is measured in two key ways:

- 1) tracking the **implementation status** of actions (ie. has the work started? was the work completed?)
- 2) measuring **performance against our indicators** (ie. did we move the needle? are we seeing the outcomes that we’re targeting?)

By tracking both implementation and indicator progress, we can see how well the plan is working and adjust accordingly to meet our goals by 2030. We use many tools to measure our performance: for some indicators, you’ll see reference to a city-wide phone survey, whereas other indicators are measured using data provided by outside sources.

WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Since the publication of the plan in Fall 2019, some issues have become even more pressing, such as the impacts of climate change and housing affordability. This document is not the capstone to Envision Cambridge, but a snapshot in time.

We developed indicators to measure and demonstrate our progress in a transparent and accountable way. While there's not always a direct correlation between actions and indicators (cause and effect), they do serve as key performance measures, reflecting the impact of city policies, programs and plans. If an indicator shows we are improving or exceeding expectations, we can partly thank the execution of city initiatives, much of them driven by the Envision Cambridge process.

Twenty-five different city agencies and state departments are leading the implementation of at least one action. This requires a high level of coordination. All staff involved must understand how each division and department's work might interact with, and positively reinforce, the work of others.

There remains work to be done and progress to be made. Even when some issues seem immovable, we press on to become a better version of ourselves. We hope you'll use this document to help us celebrate our collective progress, hold us accountable to our shared vision, and explore what you can do to help us get there by 2030.



88%

of actions are completed or in progress.

We've completed **58%** of zoning changes, more than any other type of action. We've made the most progress overall on **programs & operations, with 76% in progress today.**

LET'S TAKE A LOOK...

Envision Cambridge identified six action types that broadly cover the work we do as a City. Many of these actions are ongoing, and embedded in our daily operations, while some are brand new and require additional resources.

ACTION TYPES

- Study or Plans
- Capital Investments
- Zoning & Other Regulatory Changes
- Community Interface & Outreach
- Advocacy
- Programs & operations

STATUS OF ACTIONS

- Not Started
- ▨ In Progress
- ▩ Completed



CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT
33 Actions

COMMUNITY WELLBEING
27 Actions

ECONOMY
15 Actions



HOUSING
16 Actions

MOBILITY
42 Actions

URBAN FORM
40 Actions

ACTIONS AT A GLANCE

Completed

7

In Progress

16

Not Started

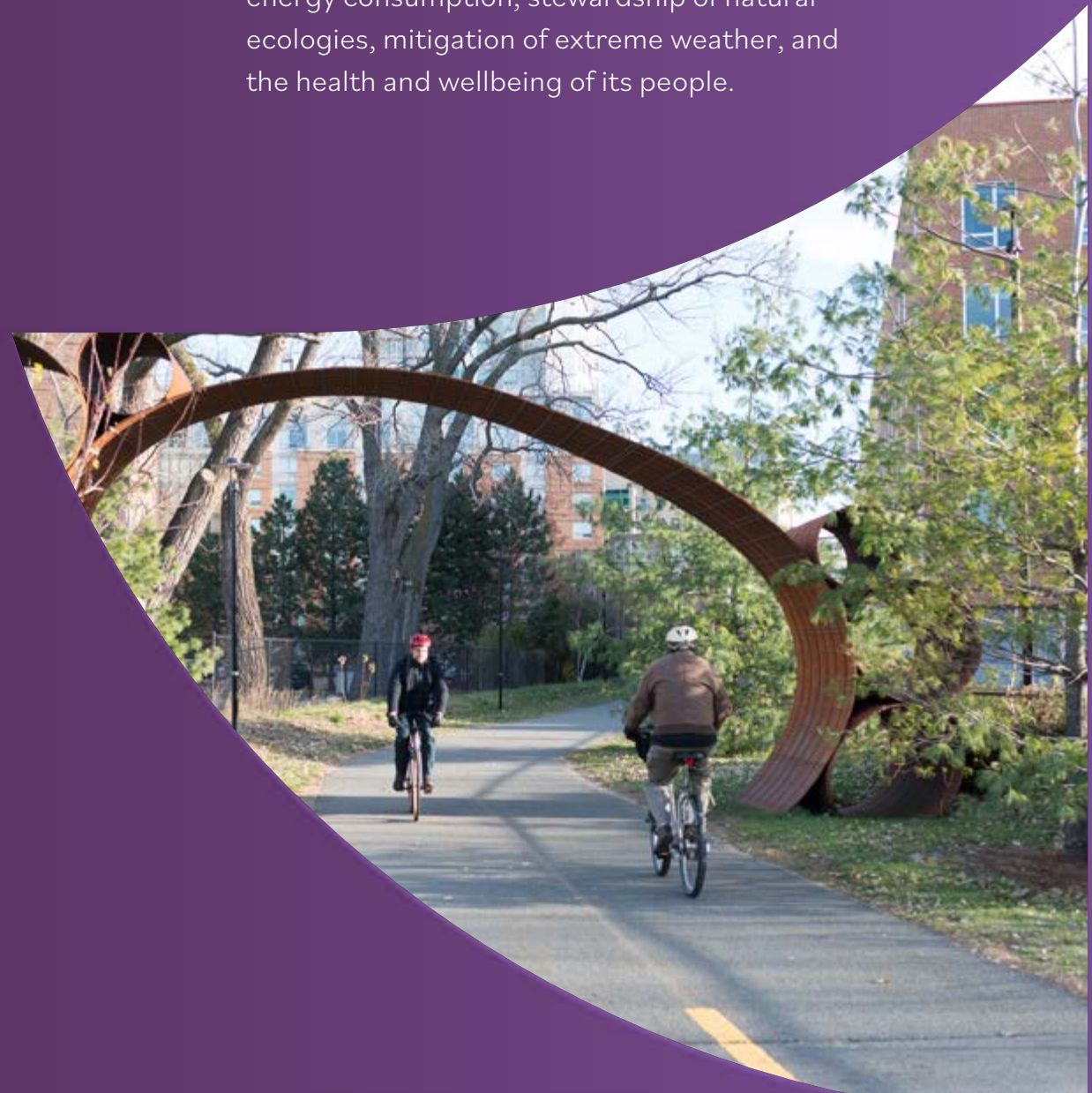
10

Total

33

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

Cambridge strives to be a sustainable city that cultivates its natural systems, limits its greenhouse gas emissions, and is resilient to the impacts of climate change. Cambridge actively develops green infrastructure, sets smart environmental regulations, and incentivizes private action to create a sustainable environment for all. The City's programs, policies, and plans aim to illuminate the connections between energy consumption, stewardship of natural ecologies, mitigation of extreme weather, and the health and wellbeing of its people.



PROGRESS AT A GLANCE: CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

 MEETING OR EXCEEDING TARGET
  IMPROVING
  NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Since 2008, the city has cut trash consumption by 35% by expanding curbside composting, mattress and textile recycling, launching the Zero Waste Cambridge app, and piloting a small business compost initiative.

The City has installed 30 public EV charging ports and 32 ports for our municipal fleet, 10 of which are open to the public after work hours.

In 2023, the City adopted a Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration ordinance that requires nearly all new buildings to be fossil fuel free


The city adopted the Resilient Cambridge Plan in 2021, and enacted Climate Resilience Zoning in 2023, requiring developers to address flood mitigation measures based on 50-year climate projections.

The city planted 1,260 trees in 2023 and we're continuing to implement the Urban Forestry Master Plan to strategically build and maintain the city's tree canopy.


In 2023 the City Council amended the Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance to require large, non-residential building to be net zero by 2035.

Amidst growth, the city is proactively integrating green infrastructure into streetscape redesign projects like Binney Street, Ames Street, and Western Ave.

REDUCE CITYWIDE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

 **HOW WE'RE DOING:** The City is emitting an estimated **1.413** million metric tons of CO₂ annually as of 2019, **up from 1.308 million metric tons** in 2012. Our goal is **0.77** million metric tons by 2030.


REDUCE AND DIVERT WASTE

 **HOW WE'RE DOING:** Thanks to recycling and composting, we have reduced the average amount of trash collected per household per week from **17.3 lbs in 2016** to **14.8 lbs in 2023** with a goal of **12lbs** per week by 2030.

PRESERVE AND GROW THE TREE CANOPY

 **HOW WE'RE DOING:** The City's tree canopy has remained steady at **26%**. Our goal is to improve over time.


REDUCE IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

 **HOW WE'RE DOING:** **38%** of Cambridge is covered by non-building impervious surfaces today; our goal is to keep that percentage steady with new development.

INCREASE RESILIENCE TO FLOODING

 **HOW WE'RE DOING:** **95%** of the City is protected from flooding in a 10-year storm (goal is 96%), and **85%** is protected in a 100-year storm (goal is 87%) based on 2070 flood projections.

REDUCE TOTAL WATER USE

 **HOW WE'RE DOING:** Non-residential water use was **23% less in 2022 than 2017**. Residential water usage has maintained pace with the city's population growth.

INCREASE REFLECTIVE ROOFS TO REDUCE URBAN HEAT ISLAND

 **HOW WE'RE DOING:** **37%** of flat roofs in the City have reflective roofs, up from **30%** in 2018. Our goal is continued improvement.

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

Strategies and Actions

○ Not Started ◐ In Progress ● Completed and Ongoing

1. ACCELERATE THE TRANSITION TO NET ZERO GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FOR BUILDINGS IN THE CITY.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Establish solar and/or cool roof requirements for new construction.	Zoning Change	●
Streamline existing efforts to expand access to energy-efficiency funding and technical assistance, including supporting expanded use of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) to finance retrofits.	Community	●
Increase energy efficiency requirements for building projects, including new construction and renovations.	Regulatory	●
Investigate outcome-based requirements for new building greenhouse gas emissions.	Study or Plan	●
Implement demonstration community solar projects.	Capital Project	◐
Purchase 100% of municipal electricity from renewable sources.	Programs & Ops	◐
Participate in statewide working groups to develop safety and performance codes and standards for energy storage systems. Once established, adopt those codes locally.	Advocacy	◐
Develop architectural green guidelines (i.e. desirable materials, amount of glass, etc.) to complement Article 22: Sustainable Design and Development.	Zoning Change	◐
Establish demonstration projects for safety of energy storage systems.	Capital Project	○

The City launched Electrify Cambridge, a new program to support Cambridge residents with a wide range of clean, green, and all-electric home energy upgrades.

The City of Cambridge adopted an ambitious amendment to the Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO) that will require large nonresidential buildings to reach net zero emissions by 2035 and medium-sized ones to do so by 2050.

2. MODERNIZE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PREPARE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Create resiliency hubs within 1/2 mile of all housing units.	Capital Project	◐
Study regulatory barriers and identify potential leverage points and sources of incentives for adaptive retrofits for existing buildings (utility placement, floodable ground floors, etc.).	Study or Plan	◐
Develop disaster preparedness plans at the neighborhood level in conjunction with neighborhood organizations, service providers, public housing residents, and other vulnerable populations.	Programs & Ops	◐

The city adopted a Climate Resilience Zoning Amendment which requires that developers address the impacts of increased flooding and heat in Cambridge.

Establish a network of temperature sensors at pedestrian level to track heat island impacts.	Capital Project	○
Leverage new communication technologies to alert residents and workers, by geography, of risks in the event of an emergency.	Community	○
Specifically serve low-income/high-vulnerability individuals and public housing residents with targeted preparedness and outreach programs (CCPR).	Programs & Ops	○

3. REDUCE POTABLE WATER DEMAND.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Study Cambridge's greywater supply assets and non-potable demand.	Study or Plan	○

4. REDUCE SOLID WASTE GENERATION AND DIVERT RECYCLABLE AND ORGANIC WASTE FROM LANDFILL OR INCINERATION.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Advocate for statewide Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs and policies.	Advocacy	◐
Add recycling bins in places where there are only waste bins.	Capital Project	◐
Require new developments to submit a waste management plan to ensure adequate space for recycling and organics infrastructure.	Regulatory	○
Study the feasibility of different programs to incentivize trash reduction that does not have a disparate impact on low-income communities.	Study or Plan	○

The Zero Waste Cambridge app provides residents with trash and recycling schedules and helps people sustainably recycle textiles, mattresses, and use curbside compost.

5. WORK WITH THE ENTIRE CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY TO STRENGTHEN THE CITY'S CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVES.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Engage large institutions to collaborate to advance waste reduction and green their supply chains.	Advocacy	◐
Develop and implement a cost/benefit methodology for City capital allocation/budgeting processes that allocates monetary value to environmental benefits.	Regulatory	○

Strategies

6. REDUCE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Install electric vehicle charging stations in accessible locations.	Capital Project	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Develop a zero emissions transportation plan, addressing both mode shift and zero emissions vehicles.	Study or Plan	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Require electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new buildings.	Zoning Change	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

7. RESTORE AND GROW CAMBRIDGE'S GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND TREE CANOPY, AND SUPPORT BIODIVERSITY.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Purchase additional land reserved to be used as open space and prioritize locations that improve open space connectivity and increase public access	Capital Project	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Include green infrastructure in city park, open space, sidewalk, and street reconstruction projects.	Capital Project	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Implement recommendations from the Urban Forest Master Plan and Resilient Cambridge.	Capital Project	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Evaluate strategies for increasing open space requirements and limiting the creation of impervious surfaces.	Study or Plan	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Evaluate environmental impacts and heat vulnerability of artificial turf and other man-made materials used in parks and playgrounds.	Study or Plan	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Study ways to incentivize building integrated vegetation (i.e. green walls, balconies).	Study or Plan	<input type="radio"/>
Commission a study to collect local air quality data and recommend indicators, targets, and data collection methods for the City to adopt on a permanent basis.	Study or Plan	<input type="radio"/>
Assess opportunities to enhance habitat for local flora and fauna on public and private properties in Cambridge.	Study or Plan	<input type="radio"/>

Implementation of the City's Urban Forestry Master Plan is improving Cambridge's tree canopy. The investments in tree plantings and maintenance combined with tree preservation initiatives are reversing the loss of tree canopy. In 2022 the City planted 1,385 trees (837 street trees and 550 open space trees).





ACTIONS AT A GLANCE

Completed

6

In Progress

18

Not Started

3

Total

27

COMMUNITY & WELLBEING

The wellbeing of our community rests on Cambridge being a place where everyone is included— where residents can live healthy lives in vibrant neighborhoods, connect with neighbors, and have a say in the future of their city. The community-based actions range from funding arts, to workforce training, to building healthy public spaces. They aim to further diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in our city.

ENSURE PEOPLE FEEL SAFE LIVING IN CAMBRIDGE

HOW WE'RE DOING:

In the 2023 Mayor's survey **86%** of respondents say they feel safe living in Cambridge, up from **78%** in 2016. Our goal is that **90%** of respondents report feeling safe living in Cambridge.



FOSTER AN EXCELLENT SENSE OF COMMUNITY LIFE

HOW WE'RE DOING:

In 2023, **68%** of phone respondents say Cambridge has a "good" or "excellent" sense of community life, **up from 67%** in 2016. Our goal is 80%.



PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR ADULTS



HOW WE'RE DOING:

86% of adults in Cambridge report engaging in physical activity (2020), **up from 83%** in 2016. Our goal is **86%**.

The City backs community projects promoting healthy eating and physical activity via the Cambridge in Motion Mini Grant program and extended its partnerships with local restaurants to provide healthy meals to homeless residents. Additionally, it fosters food security resources through the Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) unit.



OFFER EXCELLENT OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

HOW WE'RE DOING:

In 2022, **70%** of phone respondents now rate Cambridge's open space and recreational opportunities as "good" or "excellent," up from **60%** in 2016. Our goal is for that to be **80%** by 2030.

PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



HOW WE'RE DOING:

88% of middle school students (2020) and 85% of high school students (2021) report consistent physical activity, up from **78%** in 2016. Our goal is **85%**.

In 2023, the Department of Human Service Programs expanded its summer offerings to enhance youth mental and physical well-being, including programs like the Recreation Basketball Leagues, Empowerment Program, Sports Leadership Academy, Discovery Program, and Swag Academy.

ENSURE PEOPLE OF ALL RACES AND CULTURES FEEL WELCOME AND AT HOME IN CAMBRIDGE



HOW WE'RE DOING:

In 2023, **83%** of phone respondents rate Cambridge "good" or "excellent" as a welcoming place to all races and cultures, down from **84%** in 2016. Our goal is **90%**.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

○ Not Started ● In Progress ● Completed and Ongoing

Strategies and Actions

1. BOLSTER ARTISTIC ACTIVITY THROUGH AUDIENCE BUILDING AND SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL AND NONPROFESSIONAL ARTISTS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Create new opportunities for audiences to financially support art-making.	Community	●

2. BRING RACE TO THE FOREFRONT OF LOCAL POLICYMAKING, AND INCREASE CULTURAL COMPETENCY AROUND ISSUES OF RACE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Hold citywide conversations on race and equity.	Community	●
Evaluate staff training programs on topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency. Expand mandatory training.	Programs & Ops	●
Develop a citywide racial equity framework and increase capacity to conduct ongoing racial equity analyses of new and existing policies, programs, services, procurement practices, and community engagement to evaluate how each proposal advances racial equity, addresses gaps in services and disparities in access, addresses institutional racism, and mitigates unintended consequences.	Programs & Ops	○

3. SUPPORT CAMBRIDGE'S DIVERSITY AND TRADITIONS THROUGH FORMAL RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATIONS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Create a database of places that highlight Cambridge's history, traditions, and legacy, and publish a collection of walking routes based on those places.	Capital Project	●

4. ENSURE ARTISTS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE SPACE IN CAMBRIDGE TO WORK, MEET, PERFORM, AND DISPLAY THEIR WORK.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Modify zoning to allow for live-work space for artists.	Zoning Change	●

5. INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS TO WEIGH IN ON CITY POLICY AND GOVERNANCE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Research and implement innovative and non-traditional engagement tools and partnerships, including meeting people where they are, and using technology and art to increase representation from underserved communities.	Community	●
Invest in technology in additional meeting spaces to make meetings available for streaming online, including both high- and low-tech options.	Programs & Ops	●
Expand City efforts, including targeted outreach and recruitment, to ensure diverse representation on City boards, commissions and advisory committees.	Community	●
Work with the Community Engagement Team (CET) to support other departments in developing their own outreach teams.	Programs & Ops	●
Provide consistent, high-quality, culturally appropriate translation and interpretation services, particularly for key City events or meetings	Programs & Ops	●

By eliminating block party permit fees, providing free party games, and offering cash awards to support celebrations, the City made it easier for residents to host block parties in 2023.

6. ENCOURAGE CREATIVE PLAY FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Revise permitting process for reserving parks/open space and holding block parties to eliminate barriers for underserved communities	Regulatory	●
Design inclusive and age-friendly open spaces.	Programs & Ops	●
Build partnerships with local organizations to create more community programs in parks and squares.	Programs & Ops	●

Strategies

7. SUPPORT HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND AFFORDABLE FOOD OPTIONS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Improve access to community gardens.	Programs & Ops	◐
Directly provide healthy food to those in need and evaluate how food is delivered to ensure equitable and humane distribution.	Programs & Ops	◐

8. SUPPORT THE MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF ALL AND REDUCE SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Implement an educational campaign about mental/behavioral health to destigmatize mental illness, increase awareness of substance abuse prevention, and promote existing mental/behavioral health services in Cambridge.	Community	◐
Increase mental/behavioral health prevention, screening, and treatment programs and services to vulnerable populations, including the elderly, LGBTQ+, homeless, immigrant, parent, and youth populations	Community	◐
Provide direct outreach, counseling, and programming for people abusing substances and provide information on substance abuse prevention	Programs & Ops	◐

9. SUPPORT CAMBRIDGE FAMILIES THROUGH PRENATAL EDUCATION, CHILDCARE SERVICES, PRESCHOOL, AND FAMILY-CENTERED DESIGN.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Create equitable access to and expand the number of high-quality early learning services, and support families so that their children are prepared for school.	Programs & Ops	●
Expand after-school and summer programs for children of all ages.	Programs & Ops	◐
Expand scholarships and the number of slots in quality early education programs with a focus on low income families, which will facilitate workforce participation for adults and positive educational outcomes for children.	Programs & Ops	◐

Cambridge named best place in the country for families, according to Fortune's 2023 ranking, in part due to our robust social services and programs.

10. ENCOURAGE FORMAL AND INFORMAL PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY LIFE THROUGH DIRECT PROGRAMMING AND SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY GROUPS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Conduct an inventory of publicly accessible indoor meeting spaces, including the hours, capacity, location, and contact information for each space, and make available to public.	Capital Project	○

11. WORK TO ERADICATE HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORT THOSE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS TO FIND SHELTER AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Coordinate public and private efforts to provide comprehensive services to persons experiencing homelessness.	Community	◐

12. ENSURE THAT CAMBRIDGE IS A SAFE AND WELCOMING PLACE FOR PEOPLE OF ALL SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS AND GENDER IDENTITIES.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Increase the number of public or publicly accessible restrooms, including all-gender bathrooms.	Capital Project	●

13. SUPPORT THE MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF ALL AND REDUCE SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Provide safe and consequence-free disposal of medication and drug paraphernalia.	Programs & Ops	◐

ACTIONS AT A GLANCE

Completed

8

Scheduled or
In Progress

7

Not Started

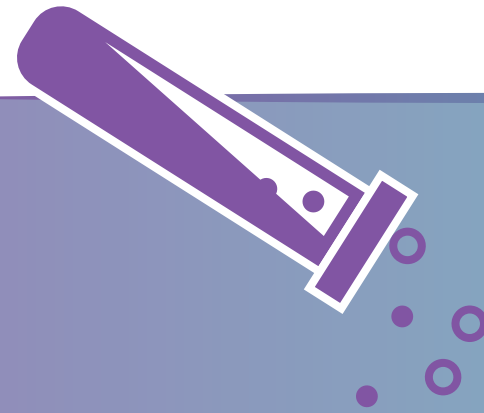
0

Total

15

ECONOMY

Cambridge intends to preserve its diverse and unique commercial districts and foster an economy that works for everyone. Cambridge's diversity is an important part of its identity, and can only be retained if all residents, regardless of background, have access to quality jobs, the ability to start their own businesses, and programs that provide skill development and growth opportunities.



MAINTAIN ADVANTAGE IN LIFE SCIENCES JOBS

HOW WE'RE DOING: In 2022, the growth rate of **Cambridge Life Sciences Jobs** was **3%** higher than MA and **9%** higher than the US as a whole.

... AND HIGH TECH JOBS

HOW WE'RE DOING: In 2022, the growth rate of **Cambridge High Tech Jobs** was **2%** higher than MA and **1%** higher than the US as a whole.

LIFE SCIENCE AND HIGH TECH EMPLOYMENT AS % OF PRIVATE SECTOR JOBS IN CAMBRIDGE

HOW WE'RE DOING: In **2021**, **27%** of all private sector jobs were in Life Sciences and **13%** were in High Tech. This a significant increase for Life Sciences, which were **19%** of private sector jobs in **2017**, and a steady trend for High Tech jobs, which comprised **14% in 2017**. The goal is to maintain the strength of these high-value economic sectors within a diversified workforce.



ENSURE ALL CAMBRIDGE RESIDENTS CAN MAKE A LIVING WAGE

HOW WE'RE DOING: In 2022, **68%** of couples with two children (one age 3-4, one age 5-13) made a living wage, down from **74%** in 2018.

30% of single parents with a 3-4 year-old child made a living wage, up from **20%** in 2018. For single adults living alone, **49%** made a living wage in 2022, up from **41%** in 2018.

IMPROVE INCOME DISTRIBUTION BY RACE

HOW WE'RE DOING: Hispanic Households' median income is **65%** of the median income for all of Cambridge. Black Households' median income is **33%** of the city-wide median. Our goal is for both to be **80%** by 2030.

DIVERSITY IN BUSINESS OWNERSHIP AND BUSINESS PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Data based on business self-reporting

HOW WE'RE DOING: Last year, **26.4** small businesses per 1,000 residents were minority- or women-owned businesses, **down from 27.8** in 2015. Our goal is 30 by 2030.

HOW WE'RE DOING: Last year, **59%** of participants in grant and consultation programs were minority- or women-owned businesses, up from **9%** in 2018. Our goal is **18%**.

CLOSE THE GAP IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AMONG STUDENTS

HOW WE'RE DOING: In 2018, the share of Hispanic students who earned a degree within 6 years of graduation was **23%** less than for all other students. In 2015, the share of Hispanic students earning a degree was **2%** more than all other students.

The share of low-income students earning degrees within 6 years was **20%** less than all other students in 2018, down from **21%** in 2015.

For Black students, the gap was **3%** in 2018, a significant improvement from the **15%** gap in 2015.

REDUCE INEQUITIES IN LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BETWEEN CAMBRIDGE RESIDENTS

Black residents labor force participation compared to non-Hispanic Whites:
2016 BASELINE: 90% **HOW WE'RE DOING (2022): 87%** **2030 TARGET: 90%**

Hispanic residents labor force participation compared to non-Hispanic Whites:
2016 BASELINE: 90% **HOW WE'RE DOING (2022): 95%** **2030 TARGET: 90%**

Women residents labor force participation compared to men:
2016 BASELINE: 92% **HOW WE'RE DOING (2022): 89%** **2030 TARGET: 100%**

Residents with disability labor force participation compared to those with no disability:
2016 BASELINE: 63% **HOW WE'RE DOING (2022): 65%** **2030 TARGET: 75%**



Strategies and Actions

1. ENCOURAGE A BUSINESS CLIMATE THAT PRIORITIZES LOCAL, INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES AND ENABLES INCLUSIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Provide additional informational sessions offered to minority- and women-owned business about the procurement process	Programs & Ops	●
Develop a mentorship program for underserved entrepreneurs.	Programs & Ops	◐
Evaluate ways to streamline permitting processes for small businesses.	Study or Plan	◐
Change zoning to allow more housing and business development in certain areas on Mass Ave and Cambridge Street.	Zoning Change	◐

Starting in 2019, the City has provided information sessions on how to do business with the city, as well as vendor fairs, connecting diverse businesses with the city and other larger Cambridge organizations.

2. PRESERVE AND PROMOTE LIGHT INDUSTRIAL LAND USES THAT SUPPORT LOW BARRIER-TO-ENTRY JOBS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Support the light industrial economy by encouraging the development of a manufacturing incubator space and analyzing financing mechanisms (e.g. low-interest loans, increment financing, land trust) to facilitate infrastructure improvements or land assembly.	Study or Plan	●
Revise zoning to require light industrial uses in certain areas of the city.	Zoning Change	●
Undertake targeted business recruitment efforts to attract firms that offer low barrier-to-entry jobs with relatively high wages and job training opportunities, which could include many jobs in light industrial sectors.	Programs & Ops	◐

As of September 2023, over \$8 million in grants have been provided to the Cambridge small business community, non-profits, and business associations.

3. MAKE INVESTMENTS IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION THAT SUPPORT CAMBRIDGE'S LONG-TERM ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS AND VIBRANT QUALITY OF LIFE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Explore additional opportunities to ensure equitable internet access.	Study or Plan	◐

4. INCENTIVIZE THE CREATION AND PRESERVATION OF AFFORDABLE COMMERCIAL SPACE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Revise the commercial land use classification to allow for flexible retail formats and business models, providing new opportunities for unconventional businesses.	Zoning Change	●
Explore mechanisms to facilitate site assemblage to support targeted commercial development in Alewife.	Capital Project	●
Change zoning to increase commercial density to encourage job growth in areas such as Alewife.	Zoning Change	●
In large developments, require ground-floor commercial spaces of a small size aligned with the needs of new and small businesses.	Zoning Change	●

In 2021, the City Council adopted changes to the City's zoning regulations for retail businesses and home occupations, resulting in more clearly defined retail uses being allowed in more business districts throughout the city.

5. ENHANCE CURRENT TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND EXPAND PARTNERSHIPS WITH EMPLOYERS AND INSTITUTIONS TO MEET THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING NEEDS OF THE CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Provide funding for STEAM internship opportunities for Cambridge students. Work with local business and academic institutions to create programs.	Programs & Ops	●
Expand existing industry-focused training programs to incorporate pre-vocational education that addresses barriers preventing residents from accessing training or "earn and learn" opportunities.	Programs & Ops	●
Conduct an assessment of the training and education needs of low- and moderate-income residents. Design new programs and revise current programs based on the recommendations of the needs assessment.	Study or Plan	◐

The Science Research Mentoring Program is an internship program run by the Office of Workforce Development, the Cambridge STEAM Initiative and the Harvard & Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics where teens work with scientists on projects related to planets outside of our solar system or related to understanding the Earth's climate.

HOUSING

The need for affordable housing, and more housing in general, was consistently raised as a high priority in the Envision Cambridge process. The city's strong job market and high quality of life have made demand for housing in Cambridge high, driving up costs for renters and new homeowners alike. Additional actions to accelerate the construction of more affordable housing, provide housing for all stages of life, and leverage institutional partnerships to create more housing are critical to meeting the housing goals set for Envision Cambridge.



ACTIONS AT A GLANCE

Completed

9

In Progress

5

Not Started

2

Total

16

INCREASE FUNDING DEDICATED TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

HOW WE'RE DOING:
 In FY024, **\$41.1 million** dollars of operating funds were invested in affordable housing initiatives from City sources, more that double our goal of **\$20 million** dollars by 2030.

The City continually secures capital funds for housing development through state, federal, and private partnerships. In 2021, the City secured about \$1 billion in investments for ongoing and upcoming efficient, high-quality, long-term construction efforts.



INCREASE OVERALL RACIAL DIVERSITY IN CAMBRIDGE

HOW WE'RE DOING:
 This indicator uses the Gini-Simpson Index to estimate the probability that any two randomly selected Cambridge residents will be members of two comparison groups.

In 2022 there was a **61%** chance that any two residents would be of any two different races, up from **54%** in 2016.

ENSURE FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ARE A CORE PART OF THE CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY

HOW WE'RE DOING:
 In 2022, **17%** of households had children under 18, about the same as in 2016. Our goal is for **20%** of households to have children under 18 by 2030.

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS PRODUCED

HOW WE'RE DOING:
474 affordable units were built between 2018-2023. Our goal is 3,175 by 2030. In 2023, 34 of the 43 (**79%**) new housing units were dedicated affordable units.

City Council adopted the 100%-Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in 2020 to allow for denser development of affordable housing and streamline the review and permitting process. As of 2023, there are 7 proposed AHO projects in progress, and the City is actively planning to maintain affordability in existing units while creating new projects through its Affordable Housing Trust.

PROVIDE MORE HOUSING

HOW WE'RE DOING:
3,181 housing units have been built in Cambridge since 2018, **25%** of goal of 12,500 by 2030.

SUSTAIN CAMBRIDGE'S MIXED-INCOME COMMUNITY

HOW WE'RE DOING:
 In 2020, **26%** of residents made **50% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI)**, better than our goal of 30% of residents. **21% of residents made between 50-100% of the AMI**, an increase from 18% in 2016. Our goal is for 20% of residents to make 50-100% of the AMI.

As of June 2023, over 150 units were under construction and over 675 applicants were housed into inclusionary rental units within the last five years. The City is poised to spend over \$15.8 million dollars on homelessness and housing stability efforts this year.

HOUSING

Strategies and Actions

○ Not Started ● In Progress ● Completed and Ongoing

1. DEVELOP A BROADER COALITION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTITIES AND RESIDENTS TO SUPPORT HOUSING PRODUCTION, ESPECIALLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING, IN CAMBRIDGE AND THE REGION.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Identify opportunities to require local academic institutions to use their assets, especially their land, to build more housing, explore new housing partnerships and models that can better serve university-affiliated populations and the community, and encourage universities to house more of their university-affiliated populations.	Advocacy	●
Advocate for more affordable housing throughout the region and state and help develop strategies for zoning reform.	Advocacy	●

In the five years since the completion of Envision Cambridge, the City assisted more than 70 new homebuyers in purchasing affordable homes through its homeownership program and housed more than 700 low- and moderate-income households in affordable rental units offered through CDD's rental housing program.

2. ENCOURAGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION FOR LOW, MODERATE, AND MIDDLE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS THROUGH REGULATORY AND ZONING INCENTIVES.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Modify and streamline the development approval process for 100% affordable housing projects.	Zoning Change	●
Make it easier and faster to build affordable housing through bonuses and relief from certain regulations for developers.	Zoning Change	●
Institute an incentive for owners of multifamily buildings who construct more affordable units than required by the Inclusionary Housing Program.	Zoning Change	●

Since its adoption in 2020, the 100%-Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) zoning has facilitated the development of over 700 new affordable units.

3. EXPAND RESOURCES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION AND PRESERVATION.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Increase funding for affordable housing.	Capital Project	●
Prioritize City and other public property that is available for disposition to develop affordable housing.	Capital Project	●
Establish or expand the use of taxes that provide dedicated revenue for affordable housing including a local real estate transfer tax (supplemental to state stamp tax), a speculative owner tax, and lodging tax on short-term rentals.	Regulatory	●

In the five years since the completion of Envision Cambridge, the City allocated more than \$155 million to the Affordable Housing Trust for the production of affordable housing units.

4. EXPAND TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO PREVENT DISPLACEMENT AND HOUSING INSECURITY AND ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Evaluate gaps in supportive housing services and assistance provided by the City, increase capacity and funds to address identified gaps, and increase awareness of available services	Programs & Ops	●
Expand homelessness prevention services. (Emergency resources, housing search, counseling & education).	Programs & Ops	●
Support legislative and other efforts to improve protections for tenants at risk of displacement.	Advocacy	●

The City started construction on 62 new affordable rental units for individuals moving out of homelessness at 116 Norfolk Street.

5. INCREASE OVERALL HOUSING PRODUCTION.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Change zoning to allow more affordable housing to be built along major streets, squares, and in other areas that are well-served by transit.	Zoning Change	●
Require the creation of significant new housing in areas that are being rezoned.	Zoning Change	●

In 2023, City council rezoned the Alewife Quad for more than 3,000 housing units by 2040.

6. MAINTAIN A RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS TO ENABLE HOUSEHOLDS TO TRANSITION TO THE UNITS BEST-SUITED TO THEM AS THEIR NEEDS CHANGE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Engage housing and service providers to produce quality permanent supportive housing for the homeless and other vulnerable populations.	Capital Project	●
Establish a set of family-oriented services and amenities to be encouraged in new development.	Study or Plan	○
Change base zoning to require that developers of multi-family projects of at least 10 units provide a certain number of family-sized units (i.e. units with at least 3-bedrooms).	Zoning Change	○

MOBILITY

The City's successful transportation policies have limited the growth of automobile traffic, despite significant population growth locally and regionally. Still, the city's transportation systems will need to adapt over time as the region grows, technology advances, and the economy changes. Cambridge will address these challenges by enhancing its multi-modal network locally, expanding connections to regional sustainable transportation, and advocating for progressive transportation policies across the region.

ACTIONS AT A GLANCE

Completed

14

In Progress

23

Not Started

5

Total

42



PROVIDE MANY TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

HOW WE'RE DOING:

In 2022, 11% of Cambridge residents lived near four or more sustainable transportation options, up from 8% in 2018. Our goal is for 15%.

In 2022, 49% of residents live within 0.5 miles of a MBTA station, up from 45% in 2018.

22% of residents live within 0.5 miles of a high frequency bus line, down from 38% in 2018.

MAKE IT EASIER TO BIKE

HOW WE'RE DOING:

As of 2020, 65% of roads and paths have achieved a 1 (highest) or 2 (second highest) Bike Level of Comfort rating, up from 63% in 2015. Our goal is 90% by 2030.

From May 2022 to April 2023, the City added 3.58 miles of separated bike lanes, totaling 9.81 miles since May 2020. By April 2024, they plan to add more quick-build separated bike lanes on streets like Brattle Street, Garden Street, and Hampshire Street and Mt. Auburn Street.

ELIMINATE TRAFFIC FATALITIES

HOW WE'RE DOING:

According to the most recent Annual Crime Report in 2022, there were 265 serious injuries caused by vehicle crashes, down from 316 in 2015. There were 0 fatalities in 2021, 2 in 2022. Police Dept Crash Data reports 1 fatality in 2023 and 2 bicycle fatalities in 2024, to-date. Our goal is 0 fatalities and 0 serious injuries caused by vehicle crashes.

To ensure safe access for everyone, the City is creating Complete Streets with its Five-Year Plan for Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction. Key projects include River Street, Huron Avenue, the Port, and Massachusetts Avenue in Harvard Square and Central Square.

DECREASE CAR DEPENDENCY FOR THOSE WHO WORK IN CAMBRIDGE

HOW WE'RE DOING:

The share of people who work in Cambridge (they may live elsewhere) and drive alone to work has decreased every year since 2016 (42%) to 38% in 2022, putting us on track to reach our goal of 32% in 2030.

The share of people who live in Cambridge (no matter where they work) and drive alone to work in 2022 was 22%, just above our 2030 goal of 21%

In October 2022, the City Council eliminated minimum parking requirements and is investing in pedestrian and bicycle paths, like the Grand Junction Multi-use Path, which is within half a mile to 42% of Cambridge jobs (49,000) and 31% of residents (33,000).

MOBILITY

Strategies and Actions

○ Not Started ● In Progress ● Completed and Ongoing

1. ENHANCE AND EXPAND SAFETY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALL STREET USERS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Increase funding to improve intersection safety in locations with high rates of crashes.	Capital Project	●
Commit funds to improve pedestrian comfort and safety on key streets and paths that connect parks & open spaces	Capital Project	●
Expand the Safe Routes to School program to ensure all students receive pedestrian, transit, and bicycle education.	Programs & Ops	●
Develop a “walking school bus” program by hiring local residents to lead groups of children walking to school.	Programs & Ops	○

Safety improvements have guided the River Street Reconstruction (2022-2025) which includes reconstruction of River Street from Memorial Drive to Massachusetts Avenue, as well as the Carl Barron Plaza and MBTA bus adjacent to the plaza.

2. ADVOCATE FOR THE EXPANSION OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS THE REGION, ESPECIALLY WHERE IT WILL DIRECTLY IMPACT TRAFFIC IN CAMBRIDGE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Work with MassDOT to advocate for urban rail on the Fitchburg Line and along the Grand Junction Railroad.	Advocacy	●
Partner with surrounding communities to create multi-jurisdictional BRT/bus priority routes, for example, collaborating with MassDOT and Boston on Route 1 improvements, with Watertown on Route 71 and Route 73 improvements, with Arlington on Route 77 improvements, and with MassDOT and the MBTA on Alewife bus priority for all routes entering and exiting.	Advocacy	●
Collaborate with the MBTA to provide more corporate and other pass options to expand the market in Cambridge	Advocacy	●
Sign-on to Shared Mobility Principles for Livable Cities.	Regulatory	●
Work with regional partners to study a Charles River ferry or water taxi service.	Study or Plan	○

MBTA Green Line service to Medford/Tufts began in December 2022, providing entire Cambridge neighborhoods with increased access to public transportation.

3. BETTER MANAGE FREIGHT MOVEMENT TO LIMIT FREIGHT-RELATED CONGESTION AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND SAFETY.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Require vehicles owned by the City and companies contracted with the City to have truck sideguards and other vehicle safety devices that reduce the likelihood of pedestrian and cyclist fatalities.	Regulatory	●
Create incentives and new loading zones that encourage large trucks to deliver off-peak.	Regulatory	●
Increase enforcement of truck violations.	Programs & Ops	●
Study peak period pricing in loading zones to ensure that trucks find curb space without double parking.	Study or Plan	●
Analyze consolidated neighborhood delivery pick-up spots which can minimize excessive door-to-door deliveries and offer reduced shipping costs.	Study or Plan	○
Advocate at the state level for policies that encourage use of smaller trucks for local deliveries	Study or Plan	○

4. ADJUST REGULATORY INCENTIVES AND PRICING OF PUBLIC ASSETS LIKE SPACE FOR PARKING TO LIMIT UNNECESSARY CAR TRIPS AND PARKING AND TO ALLOCATE PUBLIC SPACE EFFECTIVELY.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Work with the MBTA to improve multi-modal access to the Alewife T station through demand-based pricing and improved bus service and infrastructure.	Advocacy	●
Evaluate restructuring the City’s resident parking permit program to reflect a balance between people who use parking and people who use other modes, including: (a) Increasing the resident parking permit fee (can be combined with a discount for low-income residents and grandfathering of existing recipients); and (b) Introducing an escalating fee scale, so that each additional permit at a given address is more expensive.	Study or Plan	●
Create an impact fee on new development proportional to a project’s vehicle traffic generation to support multi-modal infrastructure and safety improvements.	Regulatory	●
Implement demand-based pricing for all parking meters owned by the City of Cambridge to reduce circling and improve parking availability for those driving while incentivizing the use of other modes.	Regulatory	○

City of Cambridge Parking Study was completed in 2022, making recommendations on how the City can update its parking regulations.

5. ADJUST LAND USE POLICY TO SUPPORT MORE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES AND LIMIT UNNECESSARY AUTOMOBILE TRIPS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Change zoning to allow reduced parking requirements in key areas while balancing impacts of parking spillover on residential streets.	Zoning Change	●

6. EXPAND ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES AND THE PHYSICAL REACH OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Develop an implementation plan and increase funding to complete gaps in the Bicycle Network Plan to create a completely connected network of high-quality infrastructure citywide.	Capital Project	●
Collaborate with the MBTA on bus service planning to support bus priority initiatives, particularly in underserved areas, and advocate for additional service.	Advocacy	●
Install co-located car share, bike share, and transit nodes in areas that are currently underserved to help reduce automobile traffic.	Capital Project	●
Use quick-build infrastructure to complete a network of separated bicycle facilities while long-term implementation of the Bicycle Network Plan is proceeding.	Capital Project	●
Perform feasibility analysis of bicycle network vision presented in the Bicycle Plan.	Study or Plan	●
Build a pedestrian, bicycle and transit connection across the railroad tracks connecting the Alewife Quadrangle to the Triangle.	Capital Project	◐
Increase funding to improve multimodal access to key public facilities such as schools, parks, community centers, recreation centers, retail zones, and libraries by adding crosswalks, bus shelters, protected bike lanes, and bike parking, etc.	Capital Project	◐
Encourage and incentivize the use of sustainable transportation by City employees through increased transportation benefits and programming.	Programs & Ops	◐
Update the Citywide Pedestrian Plan.	Study or Plan	◐

As of April 2023, the BlueBikes system has over 28,500 members and almost 20 million trips have been taken; there are 80 stations in Cambridge out of 451 system wide. Consistently, the majority of the 10 most heavily used stations in the system are in Cambridge.

The city passed the Cycling Ordinance in 2019, requiring separated bike lanes on all major streets.

7. ENHANCE PUBLIC INFORMATION ON HOW TO SAFELY AND EFFICIENTLY MOVE WITHIN AND THROUGH CAMBRIDGE AND EXPAND PUBLIC EDUCATION EFFORTS ON TRANSPORTATION SAFETY.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Display real-time information at City buildings, in locations near mobility services, at bus stops, and on City websites to expand the availability, accessibility, and visibility of transit, bike share, and car share services.	Community	●
Expand engagement with people with disabilities and seniors on mobility and infrastructure projects.	Community	●
Investigate working with nearby drivers' education programs to enhance curricula and offer mobility education workshops.	Study or Plan	◐
Expand and increase funding for marketing of sustainable transportation modes within the city, in order to encourage broader participation, with a focus on better translation and interpretation services.	Programs & Ops	◐
Expand citywide pedestrian and bike wayfinding between key destinations, such as transit hubs, bike share locations, and community resources like libraries, retail areas, and parks.	Capital Project	◐

In 2023, the City hosted Adult fitness and bike workshops for 250 youth and adults.

8. ESTABLISH NEW REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS TO PREPARE FOR TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN DISRUPTIONS IN MOBILITY.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Prepare for self-driving vehicles and motorized micromobility devices by developing policies that address equity and safety and ensure that vehicles are both shared and electric.	Regulatory	◐
Create policies for flexible curb regulations within business districts at times of increased demand.	Regulatory	◐



9. ENHANCE EXISTING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE TO BE MORE CONVENIENT, RELIABLE, AND RESILIENT.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Advocate for the MBTA to conduct a vulnerability assessment of all transit facilities in Cambridge, primarily the Red Line.	Advocacy	●
Develop a policy to allocate space within public rights-of-way to balance cars with sustainable modes of transportation.	Study or Plan	●
Collaborate with the MBTA to effectively implement next generation Automatic Fare Collection, which will enable off-board fare payment and all-door boarding on all transit lines, reducing delays.	Advocacy	●
Collaborate with the MBTA to review and modify bus layover locations to find increased efficiencies.	Advocacy	●
Prepare transportation infrastructure to be resilient to periodic flooding, possible salt water contamination, and high temperatures associated with climate change by relocating mechanical and electrical equipment and introducing more passive cooling features.	Capital Project	◐
Finalize a Transit Strategic Implementation Plan to create a high-quality transit experience in the city.	Study or Plan	◐

Bus Priority Program - A cross-cutting initiative that places priority on finding opportunities to dedicate space, and time at signals to buses.

URBAN FORM

The city is home to a mix of architectural styles, as well as unique commercial districts and corridors. This makes Cambridge an exciting and attractive place to live, work, learn, and play. A strong economy means that some areas of the city are undergoing change. These include the major squares and mixed-use corridors, as well as former industrial districts, and areas next to parkways and institutions. Cambridge works with developers to provide community benefits and ensure that the urban form of new districts advances the community's values and complements existing neighborhoods.

ACTIONS AT A GLANCE

Completed

10

Scheduled or
In Progress

29

Not Started

1

Total

40

ENSURE THE MAJORITY OF NEW HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL SPACE IS NEAR MBTA STATIONS

HOW WE'RE DOING:

Every year since 2015, almost **100%** of new commercial floor area has been within a 0.5-mile walk of an MBTA subway station. Our goal is to keep this above **85%**.

69% of the cumulative new housing units built in 2023 were within a 0.5-mile walk of an MBTA subway station, short of our 75% target.

MAKE CAMBRIDGE A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO LIVE

HOW WE'RE DOING:

89% of respondents to the 2022 City Manager Survey rated Cambridge's overall appearance as good or excellent, up from 80% in 2016. Our goal is 90%.

The City is actively redesigning streets, enhancing pedestrian comfort, and improving landscaping and public art. The Community Development Department is updating its Urban Design Guidelines, aligning future development with global best practices and community-determined public space principles.



MAP LEGEND	
Existing Parks	Recently Planning Study Area
Recently Completed Parks	Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) Study Area
Parks to be Renovated by 2030	

ENSURE RESIDENTS CAN WALK TO A VARIETY OF PARKS

HOW WE'RE DOING:

60% of the Cambridge population can walk to three or more types of parks. Our goal is to improve this, ensuring more people have open space options near them.

The City has been enhancing public parks for a better user experience, including renovations of Gold Star Mothers Park Court and the construction of Triangle Park and Binney Street Park. From Summer 2021 through Fall 2022, the City led a planning process to develop an Open Space Plan Update to guide future work.

INCREASE PUBLICLY-OWNED OPEN SPACE

HOW WE'RE DOING:

As of 2022, Cambridge has 506 acres of open space, up from 502 acres in 2016. Our goal is to have 518 acres by 2030.

INCREASE STREET TREES

HOW WE'RE DOING:

As of 2022, 25% of the Cambridge streets and sidewalks are covered by tree canopy, up from 22% in 2014 but slightly down from 26% in 2009. Our goal is to continuously increase our street tree canopies.

Cambridge is conducting ongoing planning work, such as Our Cambridge Street, Central Square City Lots Study, and Mass Ave Planning Study, based on growth recommendations from Envision Cambridge. Areas will experience varying degrees of change over time.

Strategies and Actions

1. ENCOURAGE ACTIVITY ON THE GROUND FLOORS OF NEW BUILDINGS, PARTICULARLY ALONG MIXED-USE CORRIDORS.		
Actions	Action Type	Status
Allow the maximum height of mixed-use projects with active ground floor uses to be increased in order to achieve taller ground floor spaces that better support active uses.	Zoning Change	●
Establish design guidelines for all mixed-use corridors.	Regulatory	◐
Establish development standards to promote a continuous street wall on commercial corridors, including uniform standards for front setbacks and building facade lengths that are compatible with the established patterns of the area.	Regulatory	◐
Establish development standards to promote street-activating uses (such as retail) on ground floors, including minimum ground-floor heights, limitations on the frontage length occupied by lobbies and other non-active uses, standards for the frontage length of individual storefronts, and requirements for smaller-sized commercial or community spaces in larger buildings.	Regulatory	◐
Require primary building entrances to be located on the mixed-use corridors to create visual variety and to encourage the mixing of building residents, shoppers, and passers-by on the sidewalk.	Zoning Change	◐
Streamline the approval process to allow more street-activating elements in or above the public way, such as awnings, entry canopies, street furniture, etc.	Regulatory	◐
Prohibit parking and vehicular loading and service between buildings and the street, and prohibit curb cuts unless the parcel only has frontage on the mixed-use corridor, the frontage is no less than 40 feet wide, and the garage entrance is no more than 20 feet wide.	Zoning Change	◐

2. INCREASE DENSITY NEAR TRANSIT NODES WHILE ACCOMMODATING THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF OUR SQUARES AND AREAS ALONG THE CORRIDORS.		
Actions	Action Type	Status
Eliminate minimum parking requirements for development along the corridors.	Zoning Change	●
Adjust existing zoning near transit nodes to allow greater density while complementing the character of the surrounding area.	Zoning Change	◐

The City is actively redesigning streets, like Kendall Square's Urban Redevelopment Plan and River Street Reconstruction, enhancing pedestrian comfort with street furniture, landscaping, and art.

3. PRESERVE THE HISTORICAL INTEGRITY AND DIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE'S NEIGHBORHOODS, INCLUDING BUILDINGS AND THE PUBLIC REALM.		
Actions	Action Type	Status
Utilize CPA-funded preservation grants to preserve and promote the restoration of significant historic properties.	Capital Project	●
Disseminate information about the city's history.	Community	●
Investigate potential additions to the historic inventory through public engagement, planning, and designation studies.	Study or Plan	◐
Adjust zoning in residential districts to be more compatible with prevailing patterns of development, including building setbacks, maximum heights, open space, parking requirements, and uses.	Zoning Change	◐

4. IMPROVE THE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE NETWORK BY PRESERVING, MAINTAINING, AND ENHANCING EXISTING OPEN SPACES TO SERVE A DIVERSE POPULATION.		
Actions	Action Type	Status
Incorporate the principles of Universal Design in open space projects.	Capital Project	●
Create open space and recreational facilities with a wide range of uses that meet the needs and interests of Cambridge's diverse population.	Programs & Ops	●

5. PROACTIVELY GUIDE DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WITH A STRONG POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE THROUGH AREA-SPECIFIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW.		
Actions	Action Type	Status
Amend development standards to encourage fine-grained architecture including balconies, roof terraces and decks, and projecting bays to overlook streets and other public spaces.	Study or Plan	◐
Initiate district plans for specific areas to develop new zoning approaches and design guidelines that support the Envision Cambridge objectives.	Regulatory	◐
Prepare a streetscape/landscape character master plan that identifies different character types, determines desired uses and setbacks, and sets guidelines for types of landscaping, building frontages, etc.	Study or Plan	◐

The City also developed new open spaces including the new Triangle Park, Timothy J. Toomey, Jr. Park in East Cambridge, the renovated Glacken Field and Playground, and the Louis A. DePasquale Universal Design Playground at Danehy Park - a first-of-its-kind in Cambridge.

Strategies

6. LEVERAGE PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN HIGH-QUALITY PUBLIC OPEN SPACES AND TO PROVIDE DYNAMIC PROGRAMMING.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Implement recommendations developed in the Urban Forest Master Plan to increase tree canopy on private property through development review.	Zoning Change	●
Conduct a citywide assessment to determine where new public or publicly accessible open space should be added as part of redevelopment projects.	Study or Plan	●
Partner with the private sector and community groups to provide, sponsor, and contribute funds or in-kind assistance to the maintenance and programming of the public realm including plazas, open spaces, sidewalks, and recreational facilities.	Community	◐
Establish citywide guidelines for programming, design, signage, and maintenance and operations of publicly accessible private open space.	Regulatory	◐
Establish guidelines to promote the addition of public pathways on large development sites where they would create desired neighborhood pedestrian and bicycle connections.	Regulatory	◐
Encourage family-friendly design elements (such as playgrounds) in residential and commercial buildings and public realm improvements through development review and design guidelines.	Regulatory	◐
Incentivize flexible publicly accessible indoor space in private and institutional developments.	Regulatory	◐
Allow developers to contribute to a fund for open space in areas where a need for such space is identified but it cannot be reasonably provided on-site.	Regulatory	○

From Summer 2021 through Fall 2022, the City led a planning process to guide future work around all of Cambridge's parks and open spaces. The 7-year Open Space Plan identified areas for new and improved open space.

7. REVISE THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS TO CREATE PREDICTABLE OUTCOMES WITHOUT COMPROMISING DESIGN QUALITY.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Develop design guidelines for as-of-right affordable housing development.	Regulatory	●
Create clear design- and performance-based guidelines to address the environmental impacts of new development through green building standards. Where guidelines are area-specific, prioritize guideline development in areas likely to see significant change.	Regulatory	●
Continue to update area- and neighborhood-specific design guidelines to ensure that new developments' urban design outcomes complement their neighborhood context and the review process is more predictable to stakeholders and developers.	Regulatory	◐
Establish a consolidated set of citywide urban design guidelines based on development types, design themes, and respect to the historic context, while enhancing the overall character of the city.	Regulatory	◐
Update the citywide urban design objectives in the City's zoning ordinance to reflect Envision Cambridge recommendations.	Zoning Change	◐
Clarify the development review process by publishing a process diagram to clearly articulate requirements and expectations at every step.	Capital Project	◐
Review and assess which districts are designated "Areas of Special Planning Concern" in the Zoning Ordinance.	Zoning Change	◐
Review and simplify the various elements of project review established by Article 19 of the zoning ordinance to provide a clearer set of procedures.	Zoning Change	◐

The Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Urban Design Guidelines were developed to complement the Affordable Housing Overlay Zoning, which was passed in Fall 2020.

URBAN FORM

○ Not Started ● In Progress ● Completed and Ongoing

Strategies

8. EXPAND THE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE NETWORK THROUGH NEW OPEN SPACES, NEW PROGRAMMING, AND IMPROVED LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS.

Actions	Action Type	Status
Work with state agencies and other parties to encourage greater access to and more active use of the Charles River and other state-owned parks and recreational areas, including tables and seating areas, canoe/kayak launches, boat rentals, public swimming, and restaurants.	Advocacy	●
Establish public realm design guidelines for street infrastructure, landscaping, trees, seating, and public art to provide a greater sense of continuity between open spaces	Regulatory	●
Build open space, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to integrate the “Alewife Squares” into the fabric of the City (as recommended in the Alewife District Plan)	Capital Project	●
Allocate funds to convert paved traffic islands into green spaces, or reconfigure roadways to eliminate them.	Capital Project	●
Prioritize the planning and implementation of routes providing physical and visual connections to citywide open spaces and regional paths and trails, including the Charles River, Fresh Pond, Danehy Park, Alewife Reservation, and the regional greenway system.	Capital Project	●
Design and implement clear wayfinding, using signage and other means, for biking and walking routes to the City’s open spaces and other key destinations.	Capital Project	●

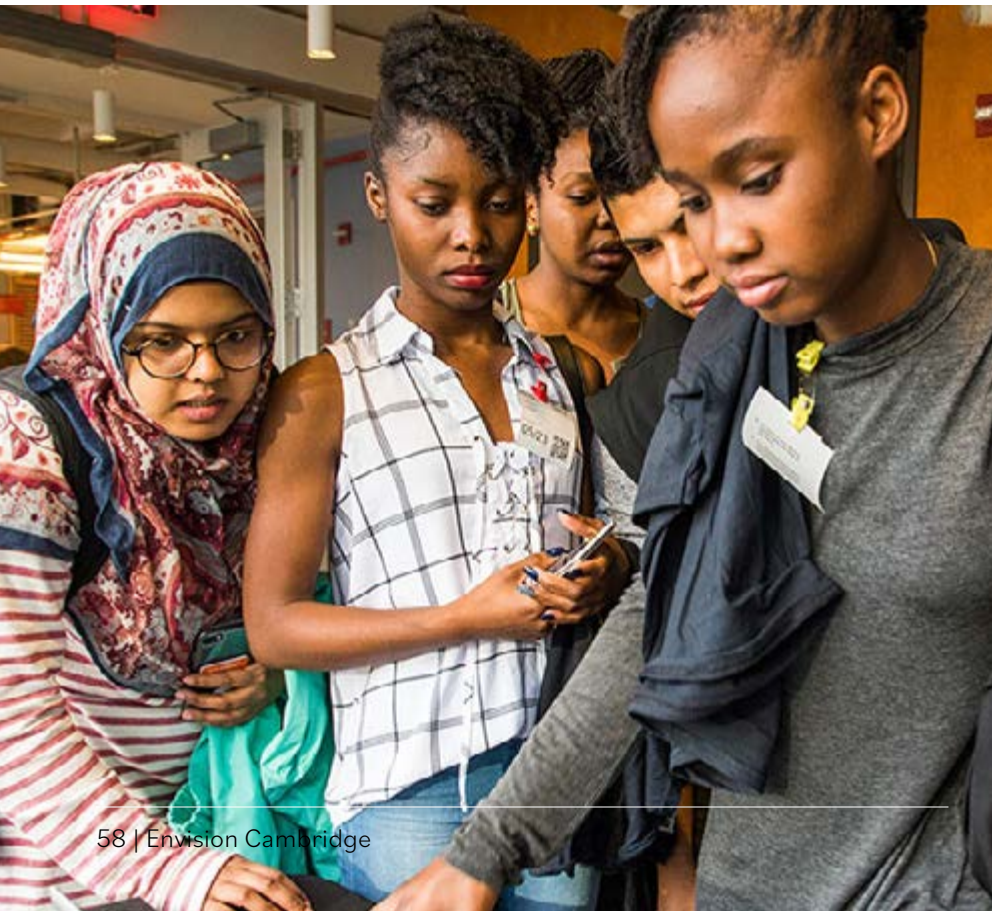


CONCLUSION

Who's involved, and what's next?

THE ROLE OF THE CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY

The Cambridge community continues to be our biggest partner as we plan for the future and act in the present. The community holds us accountable and relays their needs, priorities, hopes, and desires. Many of the initiatives found in this document stem from community interests and the voices that represent them. From large public meetings to individual conversations with neighbors, we collect feedback and input and translate that into actionable steps the City can take to address pressing concerns. We will continue to engage in conversations with the community about Envision Cambridge to ensure that it remains a living document.



CITY STAFF

Staff from across City departments, will continue to collaborate on pursuing and executing the programs, plans, policies and projects outlined in Envision Cambridge. Without a cross-disciplinary approach to Envision Cambridge, little would come to fruition.

CITY COUNCIL

The Cambridge City Council is essential in establishing some of the initiatives that reside within Envision Cambridge. Their support and ability to fund programs and codify policies are critical to the continued implementation of Envision Cambridge.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Some of the challenges we face, such as climate change, traffic congestion, and housing affordability don't recognize municipal boundaries; they require regional collaboration to address fully. Partners like the Resilient Mystic Collaborative, the MBTA, the Metro Mayors Coalition, and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council are needed to develop regional strategies to address pressing issues.

LOOKING FORWARD

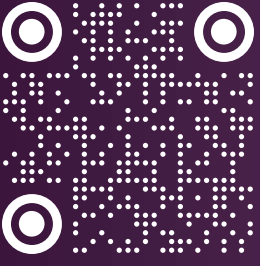
Reflecting on the past five years, we recognize that Cambridge has made demonstrable progress towards its aspirations.

- Cambridge continues to be a leader in innovative climate mitigation and adaptation planning and programs, such as the Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO) ordinance and the Climate Resilient Zoning.
- Cambridge engages with partners to help fund and develop affordable housing, while instituting zoning regulations to incentivize its production.
- Cambridge provides a high quality of life through its community and social services, offering everything from after-school programs to homelessness and eviction prevention services, addressing the needs of a broad spectrum of Cambridge's residents.
- Cambridge builds off its walkable, historic and engaging urban form, by designing for density and an active street life in its new transformational areas, squares and corridors, and planning for incremental and context sensitive growth in its neighborhoods.
- Cambridge's small business economy continues to thrive, in part due to the support of City programs and initiatives to provide foundational and ongoing assistance.

- And lastly, Cambridge remains a national leader in designing a multi-modal and accessible transportation system, from the deployment of safety-based infrastructure for bikes to the installation of electric vehicle charging stations across the city.

There are a number of ways that the City is working to improve the lives of residents in Cambridge and we recognize there is still work to be done. Work must build off of past and ongoing successes, as well correct course and move forward when a roadblock is hit. The Envision Cambridge plan is a living document: based on City priorities, we are often evaluating our strategies and actions to best meet our goals. It is in partnership with the Cambridge community and City Council that we identify where our efforts should most urgently be placed. At the same time, it is our job to monitor our progress for the long-term, balancing the immediacy of short-term actions with our forward-looking plans. Our annual departmental work plans demonstrate this structure and approach; and in sound management practice, they are coordinated with the work across departments and agencies to make sure we are working towards a consensus-based agenda and future.

Cambridge residents and the Cambridge city government can forge a more equitable and resilient path together, but it will take work, determination, and mutual support. 2030 is just around the corner. Let's keep working.



The City of Cambridge

View the Envision Cambridge plan and other materials at
www.cambridgema.gov/envision

**Agency Landscape & Planning
Scitalis Design**

©2024