

City of Cambridge Community Development Department

FY16 Major Accomplishments



As the City's planning department, CDD focuses on **enhancing quality of life** and the experience of those who **live, work, study, and recreate** in Cambridge. CDD seeks to strengthen **communication** and build productive **partnerships** with the community, businesses, property owners, and local institutions, advancing the City's goals by:

- ◇ Creating and preserving affordable rental and ownership **housing**;
- ◇ Developing and implementing initiatives to protect the environment, address issues of **climate change** and **resilience**, and institutionalize **sustainable** practices in the community;
- ◇ Conducting **neighborhood-focused** and **comprehensive planning** initiatives, and multidisciplinary review of **development** and **infrastructure** projects;
- ◇ Strengthening the vitality of the city's commercial districts and promoting a **diversified economy**;
- ◇ Attracting and retaining **businesses** of all sizes and providing direct technical assistance to Cambridge businesses and commercial districts;
- ◇ Renovating neighborhood **parks** and playgrounds, and working to provide a variety of **open space** and recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities; and
- ◇ Planning **transportation** infrastructure that enhances safety, encourages walking, cycling and public transit use, and supports the City's vehicle trip reduction goals.

Cambridge is viewed as a policy leader and model for planning best practices & programs, recognized by:

Awards:

- [STAR Communities 5-Star Rating](#)—Highest score (637.4) awarded to date
- [#1 of America's Best New Bike Lanes of 2015](#) (Western Ave Protected Bike Lane) - PeopleForBikes
- [#1 in nation in Bike Score](#) (93 points - "biker's paradise" tier)
- [#2 in the nation Walk Score](#) (88 points)
- [Second place \(Large Employer category\)](#) - Walk/Ride Day Corporate Challenge
- [Pinnacle Leader \(highest level\)](#) - Mass ECO Awards (Excellence in Commuter Options)

Visiting Delegation Presentations & Best Practices Study Tours (Topics include economic & environmental sustainability, urban livability, tech/entrepreneurial economy, and public/private/institutional partnership):

- [China Environment Forum/Wilson Center](#) program fellow visit for research into low-carbon certification programs/ STAR Communities
- [Dutch Engineering/Utilities Delegation](#)
- [NACTO Cities Delegation](#) review of cycling facilities for development of guidance for protected intersection design
- [Reykjavik, Iceland Delegation](#) (Affordable Housing focus)
- [Singapore Nanyang Technopreneurship Center](#)

Selected Conference/Public Presentations:

- [ACCO Rising Seas Summit](#), New Orleans LA
- [ACEEE Intelligent Efficiency Conference](#), Boston
- [American Community Survey Data Products Redesign Group](#), Washington DC
- [Association for Commuter Transportation](#), Baltimore
- [Association of Public Data Users Conference](#), Arlington VA
- [BisNow Future of Cambridge Summit](#), Cambridge
- [BisNow Life Sciences Summit](#), Cambridge
- [BioPharma Sustainability Roundtable Conference](#), Boston
- [BSA Committee on Resilient Environments](#), Boston
- [Harvard University Sustainable Cities](#), Cambridge
- [MA Environmental Business Council](#), Westborough MA
- [MA Legislator's Bicycle Safety Forum](#), Boston
- [MA Real Estate Bar Association Boston Chapter](#)
- [MAPC/MassCommute—Commuting Matters](#), Boston
- [Metro Mayors Climate Preparedness Task Force](#)
- [MIT Big Plans Class](#), Cambridge
- [NACTO Designing Cities Conference](#), Austin TX
- [National Community Land Trust Conference](#), Lexington KY
- [NESEA Conference](#), Boston
- [New England Clean Energy Council Summit](#), Andover MA
- [Post Carbon Cities of Tomorrow delegation member](#), Germany
- [Rockefeller Brothers Foundation](#), New York City
- [Southern New England American Planning Association Conference](#), Hartford CT
- [STAR Communities Tools and Technology Working Group](#), Washington DC
- [US Green Building Council MA Chapter](#), Boston
- [Xconomy BIO Debrief](#), Cambridge



FY16 Major CDD Accomplishments

Introduction. The Community Development Department (CDD) is pleased to report major FY16 accomplishments in alignment with the City Council goals. Working with residents, businesses, local institutions, non-profits, and other community stakeholders, we have planned, implemented, and managed programs and projects to enhance the quality of life and overall health of the community. The success of these efforts has contributed to Cambridge's reputation as one of the most livable cities in the United States. More information about the department's work—past and present—can be found on the CDD website: www.cambridgema.gov/CDD.



With the award of the City's **5-Star rating from STAR Communities**, came the affirmation that Cambridge's interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to policy and planning has tangibly advanced our long term social, economic and environmental sustainability. CDD was proud to lead and coordinate the certification process, working with our City colleagues and partners in the broader community. It provided an opportunity to fully appreciate the depth and breadth of activity that not only supports the Council's stated goals, but also demonstrates the spirit of cooperation and richness of interconnected resources that together make Cambridge unique among cities worldwide.

Foster community and support neighborhood vitality. Support opportunities for citizens to participate and to know each other within their neighborhoods and across the city.

Initiated design phase for **FOUR OPEN SPACES IN THE EASTERN CAMBRIDGE AREA** (Binney Street, Triangle, Rogers Street, and Point Parks), building on the Connect Kendall Square Open Space Planning Competition and the ideas generated by its Framework Plan for an integrated open space network. First public meeting anticipated in June 2016.

With interdepartmental Open Space Committee, began process to update **OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN**, encompassing a 7-year strategy to guide open space priorities and inform decisions. As part of this process the Committee conducted assessment of park conditions to evaluate need/priorities for potential renovation. A telephone survey addressing use of open space, community satisfaction and open space priorities was completed in 2016. This process also provides for annual updating of open space maps and information.

ADDITIONAL PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACE: Completed renovation of Hurley Street/VFW Memorial Park, Bishop Allen/Main Pocket Park, Elm/Hampshire Plaza, and Haggerty School Playground. Each of these open spaces offers distinct character and amenities shaped by community input including waterplay, community and CitySprouts gardens, creative play equipment/features, group and individual seating options, public art, and a "Little Lending Library."

Launched **ENVISION CAMBRIDGE**, a comprehensive multi-year planning process to create a shared vision for the community and develop policy and design goals and actionable recommendations to guide future changes in the city. Fundamental to this work is an inclusive, wide-reaching process that looks beyond traditional planning efforts to engage the public, analyze information, discuss difficult tradeoffs, and craft solutions. Active stakeholder participation will be key to ensuring



that the citywide plan reflects the values of the entire community.

The **ALEWIFE AREA** was identified as a high priority for early action in the process, providing a focused opportunity to discuss and explore the cross-fertilization of key planning topics at a neighborhood scale. City staff are working with a community advisory committee and an interdisciplinary consultant team led by Utile Architecture + Planning (Utile). Together, they will develop a strategic framework that addresses a broad range of issues including mobility, housing, land use, urban design, climate resiliency, social equity, economic development, and open space. The end result will be a shared vision on how Cambridge can remain livable, sustainable, and equitable not just for the current generation, but also for generations to come.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Expanded social media presence in all program areas to accompany direct outreach to audiences within the community, increasingly involving new technology and collaborations. From **Glocal and Climate Colab competitions** for environmentally sustainable ideas and designs, to housing information sessions in neighborhoods throughout the city, bicycle training classes for youth and seniors, and the **PARK(ing) Day** conversion of a record 65 street parking spaces into temporary “parklets” to raise awareness around use of the public realm, CDD continues to lower barriers to civic participation and offer imaginative, less structured ways for the public to connect to projects and programs.



Evaluate City expenditures with a view of maintaining a strong fiscal position and awareness of the impact on taxpayers while providing a high quality array of city services.

SUPPORTED SUSTAINABLE GROWTH through project review and development permitting, with projects in construction that will generate significant new property taxes while pursuing long-term sustainability in design and operation. Cambridge’s fiscal stability and promising future have helped to attract additional investment to support services for the entire community. CDD’s role in requiring Transportation Demand Management and ensuring compliance over time has yielded measurable success in reducing traffic impacts from development.

The Planning Board reviewed 15 development projects in FY16 totaling 2.46 million sq. ft. of gross floor area, including 1.1 million sq. ft. of office/lab/R&D space, 176,000 sq. ft. of retail space and 950 housing units. Key projects include:

- ◆ 1 Broadway (MIT NoMa PUD) - 36,800 sq. ft. of retail space and 295 housing units [currently under review]
- ◆ Main Street (MIT SoMa PUD) - 873,000 sq. ft. of office/lab, R&D space, 99,000 sq. ft. of retail space, 404,000 sq. ft. of institutional space and 262 housing units [currently under review]
- ◆ 85-139 First Street PUD—46,010 sq. ft. of office space, 32,920 sq. ft. of ground floor retail and 134 housing units.
- ◆ 399 Binney Street—170,000 sq. ft. of office space



STRATEGIC INVESTMENT of City resources leveraged public and private funding to support initiatives including:

- ◆ Approximately **\$27.4 million of additional public and private affordable housing** investment in last fiscal year ; sources of leveraged funding include mortgage financing from local banks, private investment through the Federal low-income housing tax credit program, public funding through a variety of other state and federal programs, and private charitable contributions.
- ◆ As member of **STAR Communities Leadership Program**, Cambridge received technical support to gather data and complete the certification process.
- ◆ **Citywide Storefront Improvements:** For 14 years, the project investment ratio has been more than \$2 in private money for every \$1 provided by the City in reimbursement grant funds. With the City's increased commitment of 90% reimbursement for **ADA accessibility improvements**, the ratio held steady, making the impact especially significant .
- ◆ Participation in collaborative initiatives, such as **Greater Boston Regional Economic Compact, Compact of Mayors, Kendall Square EcoDistrict** and the **Community Compact for a Sustainable Future**, allows Cambridge to share costs and best practices to advance common goals.
- ◆ Through the **Community Development Block Grant**, and in collaboration with the Department of Human Service Programs, provided over **\$376,000 in public services** targeting seniors, youth, employment skills training, and domestic violence programs, among others. With technical assistance funding from Mass Department of Public Health, piloted **on- bike training for upper school students**.



Strengthen and support human services, public education and out of school learning in Cambridge for the benefit of residents of all ages.

WORKFORCE TRAINING: Supported skills training for over 100 at-risk youth through **Just A Start's YouthBuild** program and supported Just A Start's **Cambridge Biomedical Careers** program to enable nine Cambridge residents to upgrade skills in preparation for jobs in this local growth sector. Previous-year graduates have shown great success, with seven in full-time lab positions with employers such as Boston Scientific, Addgene, and Boston Children's Hospital.

The **Cambridge Entrepreneurship Assistance Program** supports participation of five HUD-eligible Cambridge residents and/or business owners in The Capital Network's Accelerated Education Program . Topical business workshops throughout the year support continuous learning for established and would-be entrepreneurs.

Hosted students/interns to conduct outreach, community engagement, climate initiatives, and urban planning, supporting career skills development and broader youth involvement in civic activity.



Value and support the racial, socioeconomic, cultural and religious diversity of our city.

The City's commitment to **CREATION AND PRESERVATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING** directly supports diversity of the community. CDD staff offer frequent information sessions at locations citywide and reach out at community events to publicize housing opportunities and assistance available through the department.

- ◆ Educated over 450 participants at monthly workshops and provided one-on-one counseling to approximately 125 individuals, facilitating access to homeownership for Cambridge residents. Offered classes on understanding and repairing credit to prepare for homeownership, managing income/expenses, and condominium ownership.
- ◆ Assisted more than 30 households with home repairs, rehabilitation, and owner stabilization services.

Input received through the **HEALTHY AGING THROUGH COMMUNITY DESIGN** process and targeted outreach to immigrant and underserved communities led to audience-specific bicycle training programs, real-time transit screens for City buildings, and recommendations for public transit improvements.

Addition of **ACCESSIBILITY COMPONENT** within Storefront Improvement and Best Retail Practices programs funds physical improvements that encourage people of all ages and abilities to visit and support local businesses. Workforce development/education programs also support full economic participation.



Preserve and create affordable housing for low, moderate and middle-income families and other residents across the city.

- ◆ Facilitated zoning amendment to implement recommendations from 2015 **Incentive Zoning Nexus Study**. New provisions increased contribution rate to \$12/s.f. and broadened the applicability to large non-residential development across the city. The contribution rate will increase annually up to \$15/s.f. in 2018.
- ◆ Completed the **Inclusionary Housing Study**, which recommends increasing the set-aside standards for affordable units in new market rate housing development, along with other recommendations to strengthen the program and produce family-sized units. Through inclusionary housing and related requirements, more than 900 affordable units have been created.
- ◆ Approved **inclusionary housing** plans for new developments, which will create 110 new affordable units. Housed more than 180 low- and moderate-income households in affordable rental units offered through CDD's rental housing program. Housed 15 middle-income households through a new pilot for affordable rental in Kendall Square.

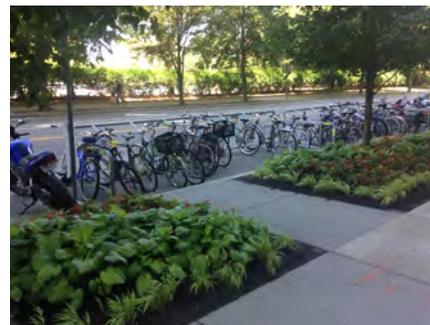


- ◆ Collaborated with non-profit housing providers & CHA to create **new affordable housing**. Completed construction of 40 new affordable rental units at Temple Place (Central Square) and began construction of 20 new affordable units at Port Landing (Harvard Street).
- ◆ Worked with owners, tenants, non-profits and the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) to **preserve housing with expiring affordability restrictions**. Preserved affordability of 105 at-risk units at Briston Arms through intensive work to develop preservation plan and a \$4.25 million commitment to assist in a \$66 million purchase and rehab plan for the 154-unit property. Completed significant rehab on 32 affordable units preserved in Bishop Allen Apartments and on 94 affordable units preserved in Putnam Square Apartments.
- ◆ Closed on \$7.9 million CPA funding to allow Cambridge Housing Authority to begin a **\$57 million reconstruction of Jefferson Park to create 104 new sustainable units** (under construction). Through the Affordable Housing Trust, more than \$15 million in CPA funding has been committed to replace obsolete public housing units owned by CHA since 2009.
- ◆ Assisted more than 225 renters, landlords, and condominium owners and addressed 90 cases of housing-related issues through Just A Start's **Mediation for Results** program.
- ◆ Along with **financial investment and policy leadership** in the affordable housing arena, Cambridge protects its commitment through **long term lease restrictions** and **ongoing monitoring** of affordable units.



Promote public safety and address the challenges and opportunities for multiple modes of transportation to safely share roads and sidewalks.

- ◆ Completed bicycle network plan, a core component of the broader vision set forth in **Towards a Bikeable Future**. The planning process used innovative methods to gather public input, resulting in a visionary document that will help Cambridge become a place where people of all ages and abilities will be able to choose to bicycle comfortably and safely throughout the city.
- ◆ Expanded **Safe Routes to School** program to 7 public schools and held 22 bicycle and pedestrian training sessions at four different Cambridge Public schools covering approximately 450 students. Facilitated Council's formal adoption of **Vison Zero** and **Complete Streets** policies to support public safety.
- ◆ Continued focus on **Hubway** operation and expansion yielded growth in ridership and membership, with the system logging over four million trips since inception. Six of the ten most heavily used stations in the system are located in Cambridge. Installed 128 Bike racks; 9 Bike parking stalls in use with 10 additional ordered for expansion.



- ◆ Improved user access to transit via real time information and improved bus shelters.
- ◆ Completed construction of **Cambridge Common/Flagstaff Park** and **Western Avenue**; completed design and construction of multiple **traffic calming** projects across the city to reduce vehicle speeds. Advanced design of **Wartertown Branch** path and engaged in efforts to acquire additional right-of-way between Concord Avenue and Danehy Park.



Promote a healthy community and environment to advance Cambridge as a leader in public health and environmental sustainability.

The integrated work of CDD is driven by the overarching goal and broad view of community health and sustainability. Specific milestones in FY16 include:

- ◆ Achieved 95% compliance rate for **Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance**, supported with outreach, education and technical assistance to about 400 property owners of over 1,000 buildings required to report in 2015. In 2016, coverage expands to require non-residential properties with 25,000-50,000 s.f. of floor area to report. Work continues to promote green building standards in the city and on Green Affordable Housing Initiative to ensure that city-funded housing is energy efficient and sustainable.
- ◆ Completed **Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment** and began preparedness planning based on documented risk and degree of resiliency of buildings, infrastructure, and the population to increases in temperature and precipitation. Completed process to develop business continuity and emergency preparedness policy, programs, and resources.
- ◆ Began implementation of early action items laid out in **Net Zero Action Plan** for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from building operations citywide, including strengthening green building requirements for new buildings and developing a citywide low carbon energy supply strategy .
- ◆ Advanced development of **Kendall Square EcoDistrict** through investigation of low carbon energy opportunities and partnering with MIT's Climate CoLab for **High Density Urban Bike Parking** competition.
- ◆ Completed **municipal greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories**, with community-wide inventory underway.
- ◆ Launched **Sunny Cambridge** initiative to promote communitywide solar installations and support the City's pursuit of the \$5 million **Georgetown University Energy Prize**. Intensive public outreach/ continues around sustainability, focusing particularly expanded efforts to engage youth and underserved communities.

Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

November 2015
City of Cambridge, Massachusetts



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The CCA Report



Promote doing business in Cambridge and work to strengthen our mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses and universities.

ATTRACTED BUSINESSES to move to or expand their facilities in Cambridge. Attended BIO 2015 as part of continuing focus on life science sector and attended Venture Caf  events to promote the City’s economic development services to innovation businesses. Supported workforce and entrepreneurial skill development.

- ◆ Arrival of companies to Cambridge including Cyclica, Unum Therapeutics, Editas Medicine, Nanobiotix, and AMSBio due to BIO participation. **Life science, technology expansion and venture capital expansion** continues with relocation/ expansion of companies like Nextthink, Novartis, Biogen Idec, Momenta Pharmaceuticals, KAYAK Software, Dicena Pharma, Aegerion, Boston Biomedical, ModeRNA, and MPM Capital.
- ◆ Assisted over 183 **entrepreneurs** through 34 educational workshops, including a 10-week business planning course for first-time entrepreneurs; worked with 75 businesses on issues ranging from start-up assistance to site searches for a new location.
- ◆ In December 2015, six area Mayors and City Managers jointly announced the formation of the **Greater Boston Regional Economic Compact**, which will facilitate regional planning and problem solving among the municipalities of Boston, Braintree, Cambridge, Chelsea, Quincy, and Somerville. .

COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT, INTERIOR and MARKETING PROGRAMS: Through **Retail Best Practices Program**, assisted 28 Cambridge retailers and home-based businesses through in-store consultations and grants for interior and marketing improvements. Over 14 years the **Storefront Improvement Program** has provided 179 projects with both storefront and/or signage construction grants. FY16 included 14 projects: 5 with accessibility and fa ade improvements and 9 with new signage, totaling over \$156,000, and are expected to be completed before the end of the fiscal year. With recent commitment to 90% reimbursement on accessibility projects, the ratio of private to public funding continues at 2:1.

- ◆ Provided **technical assistance to business associations** and support for the city’s **commercial districts** through year-round special events programming.
- ◆ Conducted the **Fresh Pond-Alewife Customer Intercept Survey** acquiring responses from 542 individuals. Produced report showing demands for traffic improvements, more evening activity, and additional retail and restaurants.



GREATER BOSTON REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMPACT



Special thanks to photographers Gretchen Ertl and Stefan Malner, who provided many images for this report.

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