

## City of Cambridge MA - City Manager Candidates Suggested Interview Questions

### Oral Presentation – 7-10 minutes

You are the newly appointed City Manager for Cambridge and you are addressing the senior staff at your first staff meeting. You plan to outline your vision for the City and the organization and how you see moving that vision forward. Please outline your background and how your experiences will assist you and the City in enacting this vision and how you plan to work with the Department Heads to move your vision forward.

### Introductory Questions

1. Welcome! Thank you for your interest in our City Manager position. What is it about the City of Cambridge that makes you want to be our next City Manager?
  
2. What do you see as the key issues facing our City?

### Other Questions

3. As you probably know, we have an engaged citizenry and many active neighborhood associations, not-for-profit organizations and other active stakeholder groups. How would you get to know our community if you were our next City Manager? What specific process would you use?
  
4. Tell us about your experience with addressing affordable housing issues. How would you approach this issue if you were the next City Manager? What are your accomplishments in this area?
  
5. Income inequity is a very specific issue in Cambridge that the City has attempted to address. However, due to the rising property values in Cambridge, the disparity is becoming greater in some areas. What is your experience in dealing with this issue and how would your experience benefit Cambridge?

6. What experience do you have working with neighborhoods and what do you see as their role in a complete city?
  
7. Understanding among other competing interests Public Safety is a critical component of any jurisdiction. Please relate your management style and interaction with the Public Safety entities that you have been associated with in a management/support position.
  
8. The City of Cambridge works closely with not-for-profit organizations on a wide variety of issues. What experience do you have in developing and advancing these types of partnerships? Is there a success story you can share to illustrate your experience?
  
9. Productive and positive relations with our City's universities is very important. What experience do you have in town/gown relations? What specifically would you do to ensure an excellent working relationship?
  
10. The next City Manager will be expected to work regionally to address transportation issues in Cambridge. What do you know of Cambridge's transportation issues and do you have experience in this area?
  
11. How do you balance economic development with preserving the essential character of the City?
  
12. How would you get to know our Department Heads and other key staff and assess their skill levels? What methods have you used to collaborate with staff and ensure you are tapping into their abilities?

13. Cambridge is in an enviable financial position and it would be easy to spend a lot of money very quickly on some of the issues we have discussed today. How do you move forward on issues while at the same time being fiscally responsible?
  
14. Cambridge enjoys an excellent working relationship between the City and the Public Schools. How would you ensure that the relationship continues? What involvement do you have with the Schools in your community currently? Are you familiar with the school funding formula in MA?
  
15. Based on your knowledge of the City of Cambridge and all of its diverse stakeholders, how would you go about evaluating and balancing all of the competing interests? (Equity does not necessarily mean equal.)
  
16. The Cambridge City Council at times has very diverse opinions. How would you protect the City government and the staff from political whims and resident demands that are brought forward by individual City Council members?
  
17. What is the highest profile public issue with which you have been involved? What was the outcome and would you do anything differently?
  
18. Small businesses are a significant employer in Cambridge. How would you evaluate the impacts of the initiatives that the City Council proposes on small businesses? How would you ensure small businesses have a say in initiatives that may impact them significantly from a cost perspective?
  
19. Tell us about your most significant work related accomplishment. What was the accomplishment and who helped you to achieve this success?

### Closing Questions and Comments

20. Do you have any reservations about serving as our next City Manager? What would be your steepest learning curve related to this position? Where would you hit the ground running?

21. Do you have any questions for us?