

2018 – 2019

Community Development Department Year in Review

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Visiting Delegations

Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning
Energy Allies (Charlotte, NC and Nantes, France)
Shenzhen Urban Planning Commission

Conference & Panelist Presentations

Advanced Energy Stakeholder Series, [Boston, MA](#)
American Community Survey Data Users Conference, [Washington, DC](#)
BIO International Convention, [Boston, MA](#)
Bisnow Boston Life Sciences Summit, [Boston, MA](#)
Boston Area Research Initiative Conference, [Boston, MA](#)
Boston Municipal Aggregation Working Group, [Boston, MA](#)
BSA Symposium on Sustainability and Resilience, [Boston, MA](#)
BU initiative on Cities - Beyond Congestion, [Boston, MA](#)
Cities Renewables Accelerator Local Solar Procurement Boot Camp, [Boulder, CO](#)
Climate Adaptation Forum (Environmental Business Council of New England), [Boston, MA](#)
Energy Allies/German Marshall Fund Public Forum, [Cambridge, MA](#)
GCP Applied Technologies Green Team event, [Cambridge, MA](#)
Horizon18 Global Clean Economy Solutions Summit, [Boston, MA](#)
La Fabrique de la Ville dialogue, [Nantes Metropole, France](#)
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, [Worcester, MA](#)
Massachusetts Sustainable Communities and Campuses Conference, [Cambridge, MA](#)
MassDOT Transportation Innovation Conference, [Boston, MA](#)
MOBILIZE 2019 (international sustainable transport summit), [Fortaleza, Brazil](#)
National Adaptation Forum, [Madison, WI](#)
Our Driverless Futures, Museum of Science, [Boston, MA](#)
Public Forum, [Nantes Metropole, France](#)
Solving for Climate Neutrality, [Cambridge, MA](#)
Urban Land Institute 2018 Fall Meeting, [Boston, MA](#)

FY 19 Awards

2018 ACM-NE Video Festival Winner, *Alliance for Community Media - Northeast Region (Cityview Affordable Housing video)*

2018 Community Partner of the Year, *Center for Women and Enterprise (Community Development Department)*

2019 Donald E. Hunter Award for Excellence in Economic Development, *American Planning Association (Retail Strategic Plan)*

2019 Outstanding City of Cambridge Employee Award, *Pardis Saffari, Senior Economic Development Manager*

Downtown Achievement Award of Excellence in Urban Place Management, *International Downtown Association (Retail Strategic Plan)*

MVP Community Designation, *MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (\$118,000 MVP Action Grant)*

Innovative Transportation Solutions Award, *WTS-Boston (Boston BRT - Mt. Auburn Bus Priority Pilot)*

Collaborations

Local

Cambridge Community Compact for a Sustainable Future
Communities Responding to Extreme Weather
Resilient Mystic Collaborative
USGBC LEED for Cities and Communities Working Group

Regional

American Community Survey Data Products Redesign Group
Association of Public Data Users
Greater Boston Regional Economic Compact
Life Sciences Corridor
Metro Mayors Climate Change Preparedness Task Force
Metro Mayors Housing Task Force
New England Municipal Sustainability Network
Rail Vision Advisory Committee
Urban Sustainability Directors Network

International

Climate Change Memorandum of Collaboration
Marshall Fund Energy Allies
Net Zero Cities

A letter from our department head

As the planning agency for the City, the Community Development Department's work touches upon all elements of life in Cambridge, from affordable housing to economic development; urban design to zoning and development review; sustainable transportation planning, to climate resiliency and preparedness. While our projects vary, our mission unites them all: to foster a livable, sustainable, and equitable community for those who live, work, study, and play in Cambridge.

Throughout the past year, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to create and preserve affordable housing. In FY20, \$9.725 million in capital funds will be appropriated to the Affordable Housing Trust. Combined with CPA funds, this will provide \$20 million in City funds for affordable housing, bringing the total funding that the Trust has received to more than \$200 million. CDD will continue to work with affordable housing partners to offer a wide range of housing programs that meet the needs of low-, moderate-, and middle-income households.

We have continued to implement recommendations from the Retail Strategic Plan to support and enhance our retail environment. The Vacant Storefront Creative Design Contest solicited designs from local artists that will be displayed in vacant properties throughout the city. CDD staff focused on construction mitigation efforts, including the launch of Inman Square and Harvard Square Loyalty Programs, to support small businesses while City construction projects are ongoing.

Cambridge has long been a leader in supporting and expanding sustainable transportation options. In the past year, the first bus-only lanes were introduced on segments of Mt. Auburn St. and South Massachusetts Ave., construction began on the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway, and the Bluebikes system continued to expand. CDD also initiated the Future of Mobility Blueprint to shape strategies that will support diverse transportation options, including micromobility devices, electric vehicles, and autonomous vehicles.

In FY19, the Envision Cambridge citywide planning process completed, culminating in the development of measurable indicators and targets related to the plan's focus areas. During the planning process, we worked with the Department of Human Services Programs' Community Engagement Team to connect with over 5,000 community members from various backgrounds. Following this success, CDD will establish an engagement team to broaden community outreach for our planning initiatives and better reach underrepresented communities.

As we reflect on the past year and look ahead to the next, we hope you'll enjoy reading about other highlights from the department. We look forward to working together as we continue to shape Cambridge's diverse, vibrant, and



Iram Farooq speaks at the Mt. Auburn St. Bus Priority Pilot launch event.

Iram Farooq
Assistant City Manager for Community Development

New Faces at CDD

Left to Right:

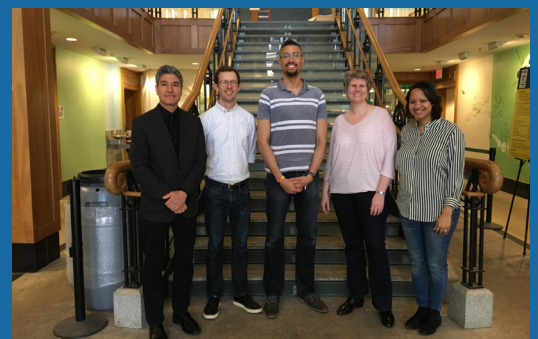
Khalil Mogassabi | Deputy Director, Chief Planner

Drew Kane | Land Use Planner

Dillon Harvey | Associate Housing Planner

Bonnie-May Shantz | Economic Development Specialist

Justine Cabrera | Senior Inclusionary Housing Rental Manager



Increase Access to Affordable Housing for Low-, Moderate-, and Middle-Income Residents

Photo: Gretchen Ertl

\$190
million

appropriated to invest in affordable housing initiatives to date

4,000+

affordable units have been completed or preserved with City assistance

565

applicants have been housed in inclusionary rental units in the past 5 years

More than 3,075 homes have been created or preserved with funding from the Affordable Housing Trust.



opening doors to affordable homes

Affordable Housing Month of Action was celebrated during May 2019 through a poster exhibit, events, and a 30th anniversary celebration of the Affordable Housing Trust. CDD also released a report highlighting Trust milestones over the past 30 years.

looking forward

- \$9.725 million in capital funds will be appropriated to the Affordable Housing Trust. Combined with CPA appropriation, this will provide \$20 million in City funds for affordable housing in FY2020.
- 63 new units of affordable rental housing will be under construction in FY20 between Squirrelwood and Frost Terrace projects.

Highlights

140 inclusionary rental applicants and 18 homebuyers were housed in affordable homes.

First contributions to the Affordable Housing Trust received through the 2015 amendment to the City's incentive zoning provisions.

Completed the preservation of 61 affordable units at the Close Building. Work to preserve affordability at the 504-unit Fresh Pond Apartments continued.

The revitalization of 104 affordable units was completed at Jefferson Park by CHA, using CPA funds.

Construction began on Concord Highlands to create 98 new units of mixed-income affordable housing.

The Affordable Housing Trust financed the acquisition of 2072 Mass. Ave. to be developed as affordable housing.

Two Cambridge developments were selected to receive funding from the Commonwealth:

- **Squirrelwood (Just-A-Start, The Port)** will include the refinancing and rehabilitation of 2 existing buildings & the construction of 23 new units at Linwood Court.
- **Frost Terrace (Capstone Communities & Hope Real Estate, Porter Square)** will create 40 new units of affordable rental housing.

Worked with the Housing Committee to develop a 100% Affordable Housing Overlay proposal.

Initiated the Incentive Zoning Nexus Study to reexamine the connection between new commercial development and projected affordable housing needs.

Encourage Economic Vitality

Central Square Business Association used a grant from the 2018 Small Business Challenge to update an old Blockbuster sign with a new facade that reflects the cultural vibrancy of Central Square.

Highlights

The Retail Strategic Plan received several awards for excellence in economic development (see p. 1) and was featured in the American Planning Association's newsletter.

The Small Business Data Dashboard Launched, providing data from Cambridge's local business market in accessible graph, chart, and text formats.

The Vacant Storefront Creative Design Contest engaged local artists in energizing commercial districts. Designs are available for property managers to display in vacant storefronts.

Completed the Inman Square Commercial District Report.

The Inman Square and Harvard Square Loyalty Programs launched to encourage patrons to support local businesses during City construction projects.

The Cambridge Food Truck Pilot Transitioned to a Year-Round Program. The 2019/2020 vending season began in May 2019.

Coordinated Cambridge and Boston bus tours during the 2018 BIO International Convention.

Organized National Small Business Week, connecting small businesses and entrepreneurs to local events, workshops, resources, and networking opportunities.

Year-Round Support to Small Businesses:

- **The Small Business Challenge Expanded** to provide up to \$5,000 in grant funding.
- **Small Business Open Houses were hosted** in every commercial district.
- **Storefront Improvement, Retail Interior Accessibility, and Small Business Enhancement** grants helped small businesses owners afford improvements.



70% of applicants to the 2019/2020 Food Truck Program identified as women or minority-owned



46 small business grants were provided to local businesses

255 participants attended small business workshops



The Cambridge Food Truck Pilot allowed Robin Brown, the owner of The Pull Up, LLC, to test menu options and branding for his new business.

looking forward

- The 2019 Small Business Saturday marketing campaign will encourage the Cambridge community to shop local.
- The Porter Square Commercial District Assessment will be conducted.
- Small business educational programming will expand to include panels and round-tables.
- Small business construction mitigation efforts will continue.
- Best practices for diversifying the life sciences sector will advance.

Conduct Proactive, Inclusive & Transparent Planning Processes



Highlights

9 zoning petitions were reviewed:

- New Street self-storage facility
- Stormwater separation from flat roofs
- Cannabis
- Monsignor O'Brien Highway
- Accessory Apartments
- Alexandria Grand Junction Overlay
- Grippo, et al (hotels in IB district)
- CambridgeSide PUD-8
- Ware Street Innovation Space Overlay

Established zoning for adult-use cannabis establishments, effective April 2019.

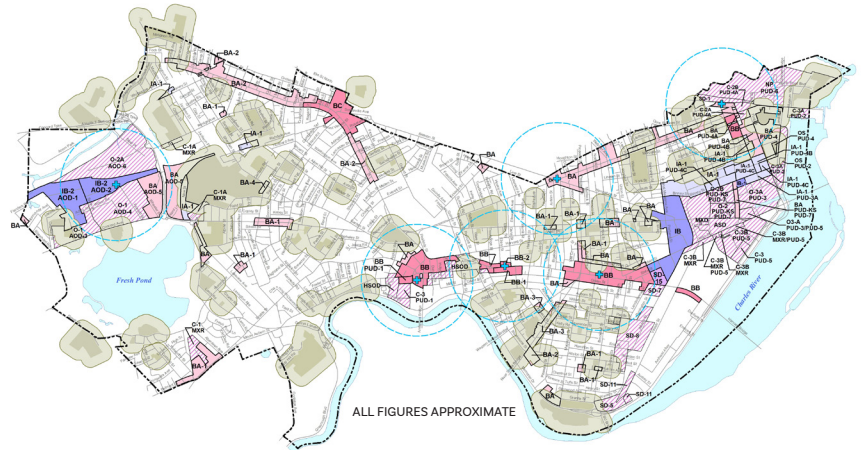
300+ new housing units and 2 new medical cannabis dispensaries were permitted.

Managed the Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force to advise on development standards to make the city more resilient to climate change impacts.

Began revisions to Green Building Requirements, per recommendations in the Net Zero Action Plan.

Launched improved Special Permits webpage to enhance searchability for special permits cases and materials. cambridgema.gov/SpecialPermits

Worked with the Housing Committee to develop a 100% Affordable Housing Overlay proposal to allow affordable housing developers to build affordable units more quickly and cost effectively.



A map of cannabis establishment zoning.

Envision Cambridge Citywide Plan Completed

The citywide plan's third and final year culminated in the development of measurable indicators and targets to track progress toward goals for each focus area. Envision Cambridge produced an action plan that identified short, medium, and long-term actions to guide implementation. In tandem with the citywide plan, the Alewife Plan was completed. The City worked closely with residents and stakeholders to develop a community vision for a sustainable, resilient, and connected mixed-use district that creates economic opportunity.

Some implementation actions have begun. In FY20, Envision Cambridge's recommendations for key focus areas - housing, economy, climate, environment, mobility, urban form, and community wellbeing - will be further vetted and prioritized for implementation.

looking forward

- CDD will establish an engagement team to conduct inclusive planning processes, broaden civic engagement, and better reach under-served communities.



Foster Community & Neighborhood Vitality

Highlights

Created a vision for the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza's future use, operation, and governance. A Request for Information was issued to inform the scope for a future operator of the public space, which will provide regular programming to the community.

Completed renovations to the Amigos School and Morse School play areas.

The Community Benefits Advisory Committee issued a Request for Proposals from non-profit organizations to provide services consistent with the Guiding Principles for Community Benefits Funding. The committee selected 4 partnerships to receive a \$30,000 planning grant.

5,000+

community members engaged through Street Team outreach

500+

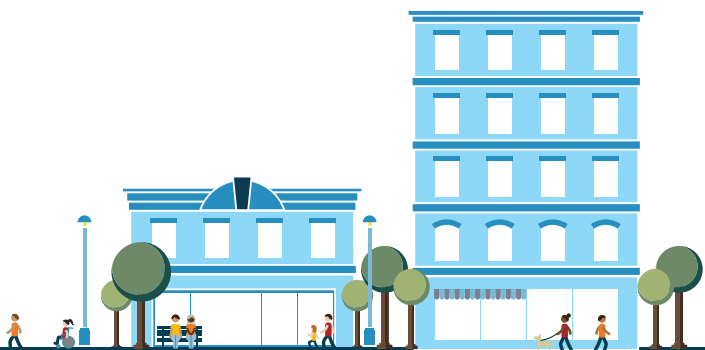
public workshop attendees

183

proposed actions related to housing, economy, mobility, climate & environment, urban form, and community wellbeing

115

committee and working group members



Innovative design techniques were used to maximize play options for the linear play area at the Amigos School.

looking forward

- Construction on the Graham and Parks School play area will begin.
- Community processes for Sennott Park, Carl Barron Plaza, and the Peabody School Playground will begin.
- Renovations to Clarendon Avenue Park in North Cambridge will continue.
- Development of the Universal Design playground at Danehy Park will continue.
- Completion of the Binney Street, Rogers Street, and Triangle Parks in East Cambridge.
- A study of open space and public spaces in Cambridge will provide guidance on future investments and design considerations.

Deepen Commitment to Sustainable Energy & Strengthen Capacity for Resilience

Photo: Kyle Klein

**\$8.6
MILLION**

saved on cumulative electricity bills since the Community Electricity Program launched in January 2017

1,350

households received energy efficiency services through the Multi-Family Retrofit Pilot Program

750+

homes and businesses receive **100% renewable energy** through the Cambridge Community Electricity Program.

looking forward

- The Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience (CCPR) Plan will be completed.
- The Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO) will require approximately 1,100 buildings to benchmark their energy and water usage to provide data for net zero planning.
- The Net Zero Action Plan will further develop energy efficiency standards for existing and new buildings and an equitable electrification strategy.
- The Cambridge Energy Alliance will operate a renewable thermal energy pilot program.
- The Cambridge Sustainability Compact will continue to develop sustainability strategies, services, and best practices.

Highlights

The Cambridge Community Electricity Program launched a new, innovative model. Participants in the Standard Green and 100% Green Plus options contribute a small portion of their electricity bills to funding a new local solar project.

The Climate Change Preparedness Plan for The Port was completed.

Net Zero Action Plan advanced. Key initiatives included:

- Conducting workshops with building owners and operators to develop a proposal for BEUDO.
- Initiating a technical study and workshop with Alewife property owners to discuss opportunities for energy efficiency through a district energy system.
- Collaborating with 10 other US cities to develop strategies for achieving deep energy reductions in buildings.

The Cambridge Energy Alliance continued extensive outreach:

- Advanced development of online marketplace that will help the public access resources for green heating and cooling equipment.
- Launched a Retrofit Advisor Service to enhance the Multi-Family Energy Pilot.
- Completed a citywide analysis of solar potential by sector and building type.
- Held LED Bulb Swaps at community events.

Electric Vehicle Advancement:

- Began installation process for 7 new dual-head EV charging stations in municipal parking lots.
- Changed the rate structure for City-owned charging stations to usage rates based on energy consumption.

Photo: Kyle Klein



Children use a bike to power a light bulb during a CEA outreach event.



Facilitate Safe & Sustainable Transportation and Mobility

Photo: Kyle Klein

Highlights

The Mt. Auburn St. Bus Priority Pilot implemented dedicated bus lanes and transit signal priority along Mt. Auburn St., which serves 12,000+ daily trips on MBTA route 71 and 73.*

The South Mass Ave. Corridor Safety Improvements Project added segments of bus-only lanes and separated bike lanes. Plans for a new pedestrian crossing are underway.*

Post-implementation evaluation was completed for the Brattle St. and Cambridge St. separated bike lanes.*

Watertown-Cambridge Greenway construction began.*

River Street Reconstruction and **Grand Junction Multi-Use Path** planning processes began.*

The Future of Mobility Blueprint was initiated to shape strategies that will support diverse transportation options.*

Collaborated with neighboring cities to propose amendments to scooter regulations and other micro-mobility devices.*

Pearl Street traffic calming project was completed.* It includes 3 raised intersections, 7 new crosswalks, and curb extensions.

Participated on the state RailVision Advisory Committee charged with developing a long-term vision for the future of rail transit.

4 real-time transit signs were piloted in Central and Porter Squares.

8 new Bluebikes stations were installed in Cambridge, totaling 58 stations citywide. 34 Cambridge residents are enrolled in the Income-Eligible Program.

570 ideas for Cambridge bus service improvements were collected through the MBTA's Better Bus Project.

Getting Around Cambridge magazine was delivered to all Cambridge residences in June 2019.

**Reflects the Vision Zero and Complete Streets mission to ensure that Cambridge streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for users of all ages and abilities.*



92.25+ miles

of bicycle facilities have been implemented in Cambridge to date

450+ participants

in community bike workshops



The South Mass Ave. Corridor Safety Improvements Project added segments of a bus-only lane to one of the busiest bus routes in Cambridge.

looking forward

- The Watertown-Cambridge Greenway will be completed.
- A pilot program for electric scooter share will be developed.
- The River Street surface design will be substantially completed.
- The conceptual design for the Grand Junction Path Multi-Use Path will be completed.
- An update to the Cambridge Bike Network Plan will advance.

Expand & Deepen Community Engagement

“Place of Peace” by local artist Deidre Tao was voted one of five winning designs in the Vacant Storefront Creative Design Contest.

Youth Engagement

45 high school students completed summer internships at CDD through the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program.

75+ CRLS students created proposals to communicate the realities of climate change through the Glocal Challenge. 5 five winning teams will travel to Panama for a STEAM-focused trip to learn about environmental sustainability.

Safe Routes to School expanded to all 2nd and 6th grade students enrolled in Cambridge Public Schools. 6th graders are trained on a 30-bike fleet owned by the City.

Bluebikes Youth Discount program launched, offering \$25 annual memberships to Cambridge students ages 16-19.

Hundreds of Cambridge youth learned about CDD’s work during “Science in the City.” The event brought together 28 departments and organizations.

Community Events

150 metered parking spots were converted into parklets during PARK(ing) Day 2018.

Organized the annual community bike rides with the Cambridge Bicycle Committee.

Co-hosted 3rd annual Fair & Affordable Housing Open House with the Human Rights Commission.

Climate Preparedness Week (Sept 2018) raised awareness about preparedness efforts and actions through events, discussions, and a poster exhibit.

Affordable Housing Month of Action (May 2019) raised awareness about affordable housing in Cambridge through events, info sessions, and discussions.

The Climate Pavilion at River Festival (June 2019) educated and engaged the community around energy efficiency and climate resiliency initiatives through interactive activities.



Photo: Kyle Klein

Youth learn about urban form at Science in the City.

Arts Partnerships

400+ original designs were submitted to the Vacant Storefront Creative Design Contest, a program created by CDD and Cambridge Arts.

Partnered with Cambridge Arts to develop content and fund the Climate Change Exhibit on display May – October 2019.

Local artists and staff from Cambridge Arts and advised high school students on their art-focused project proposals during the 2019 Glocal Challenge.



2nd graders participate in Safe Routes to School.

Digital Engagement

The Vacant Storefront Creative Design Contest People’s Choice Poll determined the 5 winning designs that will be displayed in vacant properties.

The Food Truck Program People’s Choice Poll used public votes to inform 2019/2020 shift schedules.

Provide Innovative, Data-Driven Analysis & Solutions

Each neighborhood web page on CDD's website includes a 3D map that the public can explore.

Highlights

Published the 2019 Neighborhood Statistical Profile, which provides a statistical snapshot of each Cambridge neighborhood, including diversity indexes.

Completed the 2020 US Census LUCA program. CDD and GIS worked together to collect and verify 58,000+ Cambridge addresses in preparation for the 2020 US Census.

Launched the Small Business Data Dashboard to provide data about the city's business climate to current and prospective business owners.

Created a Vacant Storefront Database and Story Map to document vacancies throughout the city.

Worked with GIS to create and embed 3D maps of each neighborhood on CDD's website.

Assisted with the City's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Plan.

Launched new landing page for CDD's website, using Google Analytics to inform content hierarchy and organization for improved user experience.

Initiated the rollout of software platforms to support more robust and accountable project management.

Migrated department mailing lists to Constant Contact to streamline outreach, resulting in increased open, click, and subscription rates.

New or Updated Open Datasets & Dashboards:

- Labor Condition Applications (H-1B, H-1B1, E-3 Visas)
- Reduced-Price School Lunches at CRLS
- SNAP, TAFDC, EAEDC Participation in Cambridge
- Languages Spoken at home by Cambridge Public School students
- Non-profits in Cambridge
- Quarterly Development Logs for each neighborhood
- ACS neighborhood open data series

DEMOGRAPHICS & DIVERSITY

Race



Hispanic Origin

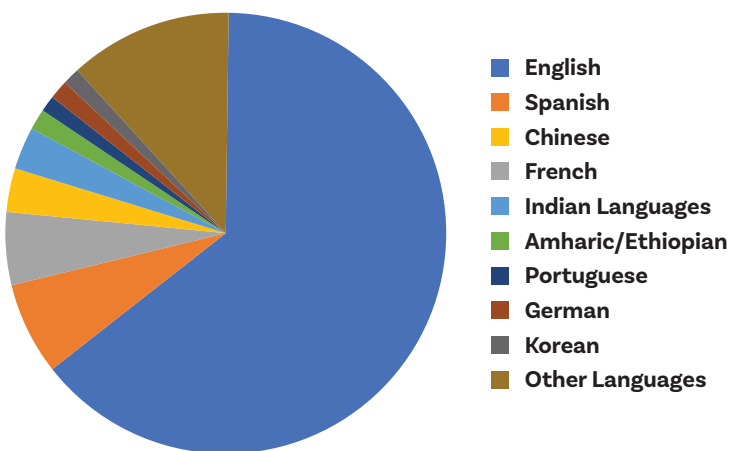


Language Spoken at Home



A segment from the citywide diversity index included in the 2019 Neighborhood Statistical Profile.

Primary Language Spoken at Home



A graph displaying data from the "Public Schools - Language Spoken at Home" data set.

looking forward

CDD will support the 2020 US Census, including the creation of a Complete Count Committee to develop a communications strategy for Census outreach.

Recent and Forthcoming Publications

Download these and more at:
cambridgema.gov/CDD/publications

