

THE CAMBRIDGE LIFE



Parks and Open Spaces Issue

SPRING 2026

A Publication of the City of
Cambridge, Massachusetts
cambridgema.gov/digital

Parks and Open
Space Gems

New
Developments

Care &
Maintenance

Arts &
Climate





In This Edition

City Manager Message	03
A Game Plan for Danehy Park	04
Danehy Park's Play Space for All	06
Fresh Pond: Your City Escape	08
Cambridge's Urban Forest on the Rise	10
The Team Behind Danehy Park	12
Spring Park Care in Action	13
Parks and Open Spaces	14
Parks Renewed: New Improvements and Additions	16
Public Art: Insights & Adaptation	18
Hoyt Field: Through the Eyes of Cambridge Youth	19
The Cooling Power of Parks	20
Multilingual Highlights	23

City Manager Message

Our latest issue of Cambridge Life explores what are among our most valuable assets: the City's parks and open spaces. They are essential to our community well-being, environmental resilience, and the overall quality of urban life. From neighborhood tot lots to destination parks, our valued green spaces provide residents with opportunities for recreation, relaxation, ecological learning, and connection with one another across all ages and backgrounds.

The City of Cambridge proudly continues to make significant, sustained investments to ensure these spaces remain vibrant, accessible, and welcoming. Through ongoing capital improvements, upgraded amenities, ecological restoration efforts, and climate-resilient design, the City is strengthening its open-space network for current and future generations. Expanded programming, community engagement, and partnerships with local organizations further activate parks year-round.

Residents are encouraged to explore the breadth of Cambridge's green spaces, from major sites like Danehy Park and the Fresh Pond Reservation to the many neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and green spaces woven throughout the community. Whether enjoying a walk around Fresh Pond, visiting a playground, or discovering a new open space close to home, these parks offer meaningful ways to connect with nature, stay active, and



experience the City's commitment to a healthy and sustainable urban environment.

I look forward to seeing readers this spring and summer out in our many vibrant places.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yi-An H. J.', written in a cursive style.

A Game Plan for Danehy Park



This spring, the City will release a long-range planning document plan for Danehy Park. The plan will guide investment in the park over the next 10–15 years. Multiple city departments and a 15-person Danehy Park Working Group spent two years gathering community feedback, setting project goals, and prioritizing renovation projects. The goal is to maintain what works well today for current users while also adding new features and spaces.

■ Turning Trash to Treasure

Before Danehy Park opened in 1990, this area of Neighborhood Nine and North Cambridge went through many changes prior to European settlers arriving. The land was known as the "Great Swamp," where thick layers of clay built up over time. That clay helped drive Cambridge's brick industry, and the New England Brick Company (NEBCo.) mined clay here for nearly 50 years, digging as deep as 30 feet. When the clay ran out, the City bought the property in 1951 and turned it into a dump. Over time, trash piled up to nearly 60 feet high.

Eventually, Cambridge's Planning and Development Department studied what to do with the land long-term and concluded that a park was the best option. While park planning was underway, the MBTA was expanding the Red Line. The City made a deal with the MBTA to use soil dug up during that project to cover the trash and create a safe surface for the park.

Planning and building Danehy Park took almost 10 years. The trash and fill underneath created the park's hilly landscape, including Cambridge's highest point. Sports fields were built partly to handle the unstable ground caused by decomposing trash. A man-made wetland was installed to collect rainwater and ensure no contaminated water leaves the park. A trench around the park's edge released methane gas that generated from the decomposing trash below. At the time, Cambridge was a leader in this kind of park project, and Danehy became a model for similar efforts across the country.

■ 35 Years of Love

When Danehy Park opened, it increased Cambridge's open space by nearly 20%. As one of the City's largest parks, it has become a central part of community life. The park hosts youth sports, including Cambridge Rindge and Latin School's (CRLS) baseball, softball, and track teams. It also hosts annual events like Jazz Fest, Danehy Family Day, and Shakespeare in the Park. Every day, visitors use the park's walking paths, off-leash dog area, and playgrounds, including the DePasquale Universal Design Playground, built for children of all abilities. The park's high point is popular with runners, kite flyers, and sledgers, and public art is featured throughout the park. Natural areas like the wetland and Miyawaki forest have become urban wildlife habitats, attracting birds, pollinators, coyotes, and red-tailed hawks. It's easy to forget there's decomposing trash beneath it all.

As the park has aged, it has needed more and more upkeep. A recent renovation to the Cambridge Champions Track & Field uncovered unexpected methane, highlighting just how complex repairs on a former landfill can be. This reinforced that the park needs a thoughtful, long-term investment plan.

■ Feedback Shapes Plan

The Danehy Park Improvements Plan launched in 2024 with a working group representing a wide range of park users and nearby residents. City staff from the Department of Human Services Programs (DHSP), Community Development Department

(CDD), and Department of Public Works (DPW) worked alongside engineering and landscape architecture consultants. The project included over 20 community feedback sessions using online surveys, virtual meetings, pop-up events, and in-person focus groups. The engagement collected more than 1,100 responses in total.

That feedback shaped four project goals: building a strong foundation, creating a welcoming and safe space, connecting people to nature, and encouraging a culture of creative uses of the park. **One message came through loud and clear: the community's top priority is fixing what already exists before adding anything new.**

The plan organizes project ideas into near-term, medium-term, and long-term phases, with estimated costs ranges for each. The ideas are recommendations that can be adjusted as needed. All projects are designed with resilience in mind, including the expectation that Cambridge's future climate may resemble today's Atlanta, Georgia, with hotter temperatures and more intense storms. Projects must also ensure equal access for people of all ages, abilities, and genders. Long-range work from the Fitchburg Crossing and Danehy New Street Connector Path projects will also be incorporated.

■ Stay Tuned and Stay Involved

The City will review near-term recommendations and begin the design process for specific projects. Some near-term ideas include renovating the Sherman Street Water Garden, softball field improvements, replacing sports lighting, upgrading utilities, improving drainage, developing a plant health management plan, a wayfinding system, and more. Each project will include community input to make sure the work meets the needs of residents today and in the future.



Learn more at:

 <https://camb.ma/DanehyPark>



Danehy Park's

Play Space for All



This fall marks the 5-year anniversary of the opening of the Louis A. DePasquale Universal Design Playground at Danehy Park. Universal design means all parts are as usable as possible for everyone without adaptation. The design, led by Weston & Sampson, considers the widest range of physical, cognitive, sensory, and emotional experiences throughout the playground. Public art woven into the design of the playground celebrates the history of the site and diversity of voices that help to shape this exciting playground. Here are five fun facts about the design of the playground:

1 The playground design is inspired by history

Play structures reflect the industrial brick kilns and train cars used to transport bricks to construction sites. The public artwork and play sculpture **Pipe Dreams** draws on the more recent past of Danehy. Led by architect Ethan Lacy, high school students at the **NuVu Innovation School** noted the use of perforated underground pipes to manage landfill decomposition. They designed a structure shaped like a pipe with windows, handholds,

and undulations. Its smooth wood surfaces invite climbing for all ages.

2 The project gave new life to local trees

As a master woodworker, Cambridge artist Mitch Ryerson has built many popular play features for Cambridge playgrounds using local wood. This project was no exception. Ryerson used Black Locust logs gathered from the nearby Fresh Pond Reservation.

3 The design celebrates diverse sensory and play experiences

In addition to climbing structures, the playground provides a multitude of sensory experiences with motion, sound, texture, and touch. When one needs some refuge from the noisier active areas, there is a quiet path that offers ground textures and sound instruments to play. Plantings on both sides of the path engage one's sense of sight, smell, and touch. Elsewhere in the park are structures geared towards "stimming" through swinging and spinning. The park also features a splash pad, which is a popular feature in parks



for water play and keeping cool in the summer. This location feels connected to the playground, but it is not so central that it's hard for parents or caretakers to avoid if they want to keep kids dry for the day.

4 Site reflects, benefits from, and celebrates our community's diversity

The focus group for the project represented different backgrounds and experiences. This range of voices was critical to the success of the playground and design process. They helped the design team and City staff shape a space that celebrates differences in how we experience the world. This sense of celebration is also a part of 10 artwork panels throughout the playground. **Dominic Michael Killiany** is a prolific young painter living with autism who finds his subject matter in whatever captures his curiosity: sights around Boston, photos he sees in magazines or in his own imagination. In his own words, Dominic's art is "his visual poetry and connection to the world." Ten of his pieces were translated into durable material and mounted at select locations around the playground. These pieces enliven



the play space and bring vibrant color, as well as Dominic's experience of the world.

5 The existing topography create opportunities for movement

Designers took advantage of the existing site topography to incorporate playful up-and-down free movement from one end of the playground to the other.

For his public artwork **Sensory Hilltop**, Ryerson worked with the design team to design a winding accessible path to take you to the top of the hill. There, you can view the whole playground and beyond. There's a shade structure, a marimba, log sitting stools, a Boston puddingstone boulder with a shallow polished dip that collects water after a rain, a bench with tactile features using copper inlay, and river stone texture under one's feet.



Learn more about green job opportunities in Cambridge!

www.cambridgema.gov/greenjobs



Fresh Pond:

A City Escape

Once a key part of the global ice industry and a refuge for vacationers from urban life since 1889, Fresh Pond Reservation has been an integral part in protecting Cambridge's water supply. Today, much of the water that flows through Cambridge taps has passed through the Fresh Pond Reservation on its way into homes and businesses. It is also one of Cambridge's most well-loved open spaces. This makes the careful stewardship that goes into balancing the water supply, habitat, and recreational aspects of this space all the more important.

Over the past 15 years since visitation data has been collected, the Reservation has seen a steady rise in passive recreational use, punctuated by a steep increase during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the pandemic, its popularity continues to grow.

The Reservation consists of 162 acres of land area, including the Lusitania Meadow, Black's Nook, and Kingsley Park. The 165-acre Fresh Pond Reservoir is surrounded by a 2.25 mile perimeter road, a well-used loop path enjoyed on average by over a thousand people each day. This path also connects users to the variety of different spaces within the Reservation, including Glacken Field, two community gardens, and Maher Park, which support baseball, play, gardening, and soccer.

The Reservation is also home to the Fresh Pond Golf Course, Cambridge's 9-hole municipal course adjacent to the reservoir. Its maintenance approach emphasizes environmental protection, resulting in a shared green space – for people, and wildlife - where sustainability and playability go hand in hand.

Thanks to the implementation of the Master Plan priorities to restore native plant communities and manage invasive species, Reservation bird and animal habitat values have skyrocketed. The diversity of species speaks to the value of Fresh



“ *What sets the Reservation apart is its meadows, woodlands, wetlands, small secluded ponds habitat, and 16 acres of pine forest that afford a respite from hectic urban life*”

Pond as an ecological resource. According to Fresh Pond’s Rangers, recently-sighted species include the merlin, ring-necked ducks, mute swans, Downy woodpeckers, and herons - among many others. The Reservation is also home to or regularly visited by coyotes, deer, field mice, and muskrats.

This multi-faceted nature of the Reservation makes the careful and considered stewardship of the Reservation critical to its operations - and the shared effort that goes into keeping this vital resource - all the more noteworthy.

The day-to-day management of the Reservation is directed by City’s Water Department. Their work

is guided by the Water Board, whose role is to advise the City Manager and Managing Director of the Water Department. Though their priority is the protection of water supply water quality, their work also advances the protection of an ecological gem for the City and region.



Investing in the Reservation’s Future

Over the years, improvements at the Reservation continue to bolster water supply protection as well as landscape quality and recreation access - a delicate balance that stems from the collaboration of different partners and stakeholders.

The ongoing care and stewardship of, and planning for the Reservation is a multi-agency collaboration that spans the City’s Recreation Division, Department of Public Works, Conservation Commission, and others, working closely with the Water Department. This work is also supported by the Advisory Board, an appointed advisory committee that helps to advise on the implementation of the Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan and ongoing work at the Reservation. Recent improvements in the Reservation included the Glacken Slope Restoration and pathway, Little Fresh Pond Restoration and access, and other investments.

This also includes restoration and stabilization of sloped landscape areas, with the goal of reducing erosion onto pathways and into the pond. There have also been opportunities to improve access and restore native plant communities, which increases the habitat value for wildlife.



To find out more about and celebrate Fresh Pond Reservation, please join us this year for the City’s annual Fresh Pond Day hosted at:



The Water Department
250 Fresh Pond Parkway



Saturday June 13th ⌚ **11 a.m.- 3 p.m.**

Cambridge's Urban Forest on the Rise!



Cambridge takes pride in its trees. They help keep the City cooler and cleaner, make our neighborhoods more inviting, and provide important habitat for wildlife.

Each year, the City's Urban Forestry team plants more than **1,000 trees** and prunes about **3,600**, caring for roughly **24,000 trees** citywide. This includes about **15,500 street trees** and **8,500 trees** in parks and other open spaces, representing more than **150 different species**.

Last year, the City also planted 100 new trees at Danehy Park through the Participatory Budgeting process, helping replace trees lost during recent drought conditions.

■ **Urban Forest Master Plan – 5-Year Update**

In 2019, Cambridge released the Urban Forest Master Plan, followed by the Healthy Forest, Healthy City report in 2020. These reports set the stage for growing and caring for the City's trees, covering policy, planting practices, design, and community engagement.

In 2024, Cambridge reached an exciting milestone: trees now shade 30% of the City!

This goal focused on expanding tree cover in public areas to create “cool corridors” that help reduce heat in the neighborhoods that feel it most.

The Urban Forest Master Plan guides how we plant, protect, and care for trees. Five years later, the City is updating the plan with new strategies to ensure our urban forest thrives for generations. The update has three phases—planning and analysis, recommendations, and documentation. We are finishing the recommendations phase and plan to hold a second public meeting in late spring.

■ Miyawaki Forests

Cambridge is home to three Miyawaki forests—dense, fast-growing mini-forests made up of native trees and shrubs.

- At Danehy Park, maintenance work improved species diversity to help the forest thrive.
- The Green-Rose Heritage Park forest continues to flourish this year.
- The newest forest, planted in 2025 at Peabody Elementary School, covers about 2,000 square feet and includes more than 40 native tree and shrub species. As it enters its first full growing season, we’re excited to watch it provide shade, habitat, and green space for students and the surrounding community.

■ How Cambridge Keeps Track of Its Trees

Have you ever wondered how the City keeps track of tens of thousands of trees across Cambridge?

Each City tree has its own record with important details like its species, size, condition, and location. We also track the work each tree needs such as inspections, pruning, watering, pest or disease treatment, and, when needed, removal and replanting.

All of this information is stored in the City’s tree management system, which is connected to a digital map. This allows staff to see exactly where every tree is and what work is needed. The system also connects to SeeClickFix, so when a resident submits a tree-related request, it goes directly to the right Urban Forestry staff.

Together, these tools help the City monitor tree health, respond to requests, and care for Cambridge’s growing urban forest more efficiently.



Pruning is best left to trained arborists. Urban Forestry prunes every City tree on a regular cycle. If your street tree needs pruning outside of this schedule, submit a SeeClickFix request at:
🌐 www.cambridgema.gov/seeclickfix

Want to grow the tree canopy in your own yard? Green Cambridge can plant a free tree at your home to help expand our urban forest. Learn more and sign up at:
🌐 <https://www.greencambridge.org/canopycrew>

New trees need extra care to grow strong and healthy and you can help! Pick a street tree near your home, business, or school and help keep it healthy by watering and tending to the tree well. Learn more, sign up to volunteer using the new interactive map, and receive the monthly Forest Friends newsletter at:
🌐 www.cambridgema.gov/forestfriends



Explore a Story Map of some of Cambridge’s favorite trees:
🌐 <https://camb.ma/FavoriteTrees>





The Team Behind Danehy Park

Whether you come to play or watch athletics, travel the walking paths connecting Alewife and North Cambridge neighborhoods, explore the park's two playgrounds, marvel at the Miyawaki forest, relax in the picnic areas, or enjoy annual events, Danehy Park is a place that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy. Meet the team that keeps Danehy Park thriving! Keith Fay is Danehy Park's site supervisor. He works alongside Frankie DeJesus, Shyee Douglas, Chris Febles, Gideon Gonzalez, Dave Hintlian, Taquaine Mason, Scot Megan, Mike Spartichino, and Jacob Witty as part of the Department of Human Service Programs' Recreation Division. Collectively, they manage the daily operation and maintenance of Danehy Park.

↳
Learn more at:
🌐 <https://camb.ma/danehyparkteam>



Funds That Preserve City's Character

In 2001, Cambridge residents voted to adopt the **Community Preservation Act (CPA)** after it was initially created by state law to help cities and towns preserve the character of their community. In support of the CPA, the City implements a 3% surcharge on property tax bills. Money raised through the CPA, which includes matching funds from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is then used to acquire and improve our open space and other important areas. The preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of Open Space projects, includes land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, land for wildlife or nature preserve, and land for recreational use.

Spring Park Care in Action

The Department of Public Works (DPW) has a citywide program to maintain and improve parks. This includes replacing playground safety surfaces, renewing athletic fields, repairing or replacing playground equipment, and fixing hardcourt surfaces like basketball and tennis courts.

In the spring, crews start by fertilizing and seeding all grass areas throughout the City—a process that takes about three weeks. During this time, they groom all ball fields, paint and chalk the lines, and make sure soccer fields are smooth, playable, and draining properly.

This year, DPW is expanding the program to include repairs and maintenance of water play areas. These features see heavy use during the summer and help the community stay cool. Across the City, DPW manages about 80 irrigated sites, 800 irrigation zones, 105 water fountains, and 35 water play areas.

Planned improvements for this year include:

- **Dana Park:**
Repairs to playground safety surfaces
- **Lindstrom Field:**
Replacement of the field, benches, bleachers, and batting cages
- **Cooper Square Park:**
Repairs to water play equipment
- **Corporal Burns Playground:**
Replacement of basketball, hockey, and pickleball courts

These improvements help keep our parks safe, fun, and enjoyable for everyone.



80 Irrigated sites



800 Irrigation zones



105 Water fountains



35 Water play areas



To submit a park maintenance request or report park equipment in need of repair, visit:

www.cambridgema.gov/seeclickfix

Parks & Open Spaces



Cambridge's parks system ranges from small tot lots to large reservation areas, and includes a variety of City parks, as well as state reservations managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and even open spaces on private land that are open to all. We're highlighting some neighborhood gems, local favorites, and hidden treasures across the City that speak to the diversity of parks in Cambridge.

↘
Check out the City's recently-updated interactive Parks and Open Space map:
🌐 <https://camb.ma/openspacemap>



1 ALEWIFE BROOK RESERVATION

Wooded wetlands and trails by Alewife MBTA, where a native wetland cleans stormwater & reduces flooding.
🌊 Water 🚶 Walking 🌿 Nature 🦅 Birdwatching

2 CEMETERIES (Cambridge Cemetery & Mount Auburn Cemetery)

Mount Auburn and Cambridge Cemeteries, where historic landscapes and notable burials meet park-like scenery.
🚶 Walking 🌿 Nature 🏛️ Heritage 🤍 Quiet Space

3 SACRAMENTO FIELD

A Baldwin park with a walking loop, play areas, an off-leash lawn, and a community garden and court.
👥 Community 🌿 Nature 🐕 Dog-friendly 🏀 Sports

4 ALEXANDER KEMP PLAYGROUND at the Cambridge Common

A creative playground with artist-built sculptures and spaces for climbing, swinging, and sand & water play.
🚶 Walking 🏠 Playground 🎨 Art 👥 Community

5 FRANKLIN STREET PARK

A park near Harvard and Central Squares, marked by a dramatic gate and shaded seating.
🌿 Nature 🎨 Art

6 MAGAZINE BEACH

Located along the Charles River, it offers fields, a riverside path, fitness, boating, & summer swimming.
🌊 Water 🏀 Sports 🌿 Nature 🛶 Kayak

7 GREENE-ROSE HERITAGE PARK

A Port park with a playground, splash pad, community garden, open field, microforest, courts, and public art.
🌿 Nature 🏠 Playground 🏀 Sports 🎨 Art

8 RICHARD MCKINNON STATE PARK (and Lynch Skatepark)

A riverfront state park with a playground, splash pad, skyline views, a skatepark, & public restrooms at nearby EF.
🌊 Water 🏠 Playground 🛹 Skate 🏞️ Views

9 HURLEY STREET PARK

An East Cambridge park with play areas, water play, a garden, a performance space, & swinging benches.
🌊 Water 🏠 Playground 👥 Community

10 COOPER SQUARE PARK

A playground near Central Square with swings, slides, a splash pad, and popular play features.
🌊 Water 🏠 Playground 👥 Community

11 URBAN PARK ROOF GARDEN

A rooftop public space at Kendall Center with a pickleball court, seating, garden beds, and programs.
🌊 Water 🌿 Nature 🏞️ Views 👥 Community

12 POPS AT BROAD CANAL

Offers seating, a seasonal market, waterfront paths, table tennis, & boating.
🏪 Market 🌿 Nature 🏞️ Views 👥 Community

Parks Renewed:

New Improvements and Additions



The City of Cambridge takes pride in its parks and open spaces. By continuing to invest in maintaining and improving our parks, we ensure they support a wide range of users and uses. Here are some recent improvements and additions to parks in Cambridge, as well as some projects currently in design or under construction:

■ **Binney Street Park, East Cambridge**

In 2024, the City completed a new fenced dog park at the edge of Kendall Square. Designed as more than just a dog run, the park includes seating areas, naturalized plantings with native trees and perennials and a segment of the future Grand Junction Multi-Use Path.

Two mature linden trees were preserved at the center of the dog park.

Looking for other places to bring your dogs?

Learn more about off leash spaces in Cambridge at:

🌐 www.cambridgema.gov/offleash

■ **Peabody School Playground**

In 2025, the City re-opened the Peabody School Playground following a major renovation. The updated playground features a central play hill, swings, and a carousel for younger children, and a play tower and expanded swing options for older children.

The project also included Bankshot Basketball, an inclusive twist on the game featuring a series of creative backboard and hoop challenges for players to try to make a basket (think basketball meets mini-golf!).

■ **Automated External Defibrillators, Multiple Locations**

You may have seen a new yellow cabinet pop up recently in a park near you. These are Automated External Defibrillator (AED) units that are being installed in parks across Cambridge this spring. These devices analyze a heart's rhythm, and if needed, can deliver a shock to re-establish an effective rhythm. The AEDs will be installed in

highly visible locked cabinets, and are unlocked by calling 911 and inputting the code you are given. They provide visual and verbal instructions to users, and they are remotely monitored and temperature-controlled so they are available year-round. The cabinets will also contain a Stop-the-Bleed kit.

Coming Attractions

■ **Linear Park, North Cambridge**

Construction is underway at Linear Park, which connects Alewife Station and the Somerville city line. It is a critical link that connects to the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway and the Somerville Community Path, and a beloved destination in itself.

The pathway through a forested park will be improved to support the level of use the park now enjoys. The project will also make modest improvements to the passive spaces to include small areas for seating and pause, planting improvements, and playful moments to encourage a sense of discovery along side paths that invite a meandering journey through a beloved space. Construction is expected to be complete by late 2026.

■ **Gold Star Mothers Park, East Cambridge**

As part of the Gold Star Mothers Park court renovation project, the City conducted standard testing of the soil in the park. Unfortunately, the first round of testing found contamination under the former basketball court. Additional testing showed similar contaminants in other areas of the park. The contaminants identified were largely typical of historic uses of the site and/or urban fill used in construction and landscaping in urban areas.

As a result, the City has begun coordination with state and federal environmental regulators to review conditions and permit remediation work. We have received approval to reopen the playground (tot lot) this spring 2026. Before reopening, a protective fabric layer will be installed

beneath the existing playground mulch and sand to provide an additional safety barrier.

The City has also begun the design process for long-term remediation and park improvements with our environmental consultant. This process allows for minor updates to support current and anticipated uses of the park, such as new play equipment, additional seating in the park, integrating a future connection between the park and the future Grand Junction Multi-Use Path, and public art components.

■ **Raymond Park**

This well-loved neighborhood park in the Neighborhood Nine area of the City is undergoing a renovation to address drainage issues in the field, needed repairs to a retaining wall and the court area, and updates to the playground area and pathways to meet current accessibility standards. The renovated park will retain the shaded seating area at the eastern corner of the site while incorporating improvements like a loop path, public art picnic grove, and terraced seating. Park construction is expected to be completed in late 2026.

■ **Rafferty Park, Cambridge Highlands**

This neighborhood park is located at the back of the Sancta Maria Nursing Facility parking lot. In addition to updated playground, tennis and basketball court, and field spaces, the park will include a loop path, and the installation of a Gaga Ball pit. Construction is slated to begin later this year.

As the Percent for Public Art component of this project, Maine artist Thomas Berger will be carving two stone sculptures in the form of sheep, tying to the meadow-like character of the field and historic farms in the area.



Learn more at:

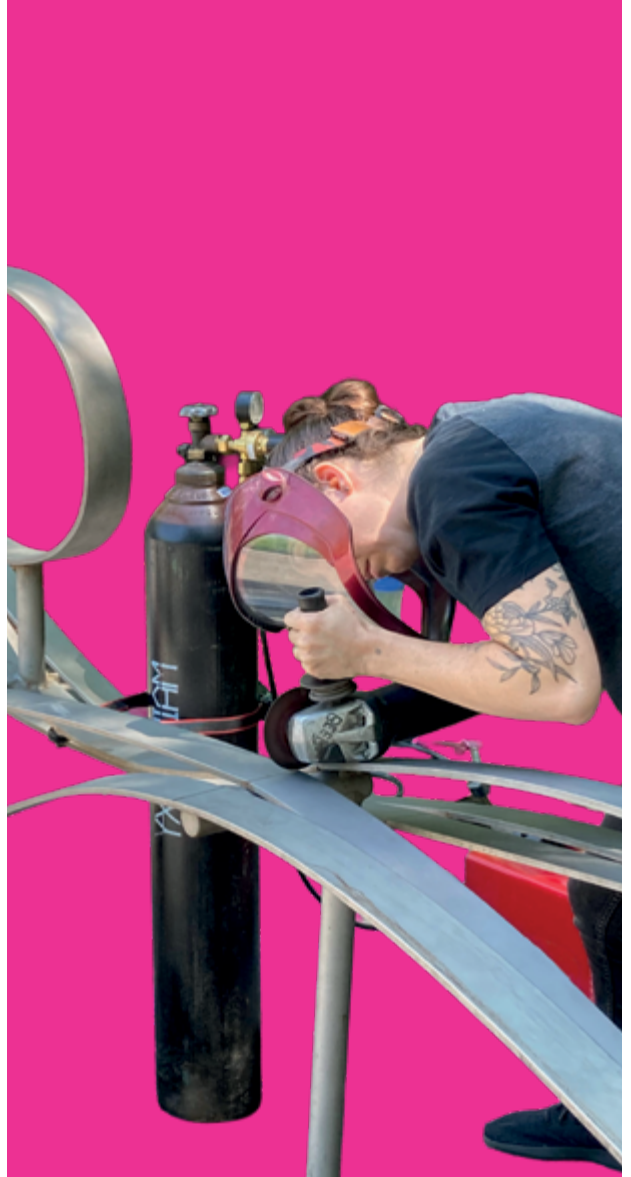
 www.cambridgema.gov/parks

Public Art:

Insights & Adaptation

If you install a couple hundred works of art in public spaces indoors and outdoors over 40 years, which is what the Cambridge Arts Public Art Program has done, you need a knowledgeable team to address these impacts in every case. You also need to be ready for unanticipated surprises and continuous learning.

Thanks to the City's Percent-for-Art Ordinance of 1979, the people of Cambridge own an impressive Public Art Collection that brings art into daily life for all. Our Collections Care Program not only takes care of artwork after it is installed but works throughout the design phase so that decisions about materials and methods best serve our ability to care for the collection. Meanwhile, the science of materials and technologies keeps changing. Artists continue to expand their interpretations of the public realm, offering new prompts for our imagination.



Hoyt Field:

Through the Eyes of Cambridge Youth

Last fall, City staff worked with students at the Cambridge Community Center (CCC) on a photography project called Photo Voice, to highlight young people's perspectives and experiences at Hoyt Field. Students spent part of the afternoon around the park taking photos. Photo Voice is part of the early community engagement for an improvement project at Hoyt.

This activity helped students reflect on their experience at Hoyt. They were able to name what they love and what aspects could improve. A gallery of their photos is on display at the park. As the project team continues engagement over the spring and summer, we plan to continue to use creative ways to learn about and share different experiences of the park.

Located in the Riverside neighborhood (also known as The Coast), Hoyt is an important community hub both for those who live in the immediate neighborhood, as well as those who are further away. It hosts community events and celebrations like Hoops 'N' Health, Battle of the Bridge, and roller-skating parties, and regular summer programming such as the City's Summer Food Program and Screen on the Green. It is also home to the Moore Youth Center. The improvement project is focused on replacing old play equipment so it responds to today's needs and accessibility standards. This summer, the project team will continue additional community engagement to gather ideas for improving play in the park.

The improvements at Hoyt will aim to celebrate what has made Hoyt a special place, while preparing it for the future. Most recently, Hoyt was one of the parks in the Shade is Social Justice Initiative, a climate focused project to help Cambridge residents adapt to warming temperatures with public art. Led by architects Justin Brazier and Calvin Zhong, local



residents and members of the CCC participated in engagement activities about community collaboration and storytelling. Their stories became symbolic flags that provide the shade on the structure installed near the Hoyt courts.

The City has also partnered with an MIT electrical engineering course to understand heat levels and use of different areas around the park.

The involvement of Hoyt residents, nearby organizations, and Cambridge youth ensures that Hoyt Field is, and will remain, a celebrated and special place.



Learn more about Hoyt Field at:

 www.cambridgema.gov/hoyt

The Cooling Power of Parks



Massachusetts had the third hottest year ever in 2024 (2023 was tied for the hottest). The rest of New England had the hottest year in more than 130 years. Our weather is getting warmer, and we are having more heat waves that last longer and feel hotter. This new climate causes more physical-heat stress on people in Cambridge, during the day and often at night. Because of this, our parks and the shade they provide are very important. They help keep people cool and give everyone a safe place to rest.

Shade plays a crucial role for cities in mitigating heat and creating a more comfortable environment on summer days, particularly in the context of increasing urban heat islands and rising temperatures. Shade from trees, even buildings, significantly reduces surface temperatures and lowers the ambient air temperature, which in turn enhances comfort for anyone outdoors, including pedestrians and cyclists.

Recent projects like Shade is Social Justice, Cool Spots, and the City Heat Sensor project, and the City Heat Sensor project (in collaboration with MIT) show how Cambridge is using art, design, and public space to help people stay cool and healthy.

Shade is Social Justice is a public art and climate resilience program funded by an Accelerating Climate Resiliency grant from MAPC. This initiative frames shade as an equity issue: neighborhoods with fewer trees and less access to cooling infrastructure, like parks, experience higher temperatures and greater health risks during heat waves. Shade is Social Justice commissioned artists and designers to create temporary shade

structures that are both functional and expressive, using art to shift public perception about heat and climate change. Installations have appeared at Jill Brown-Rhone Park (Lafayette Square), Brattle Square, Hoyt Field, Donnelly Field, and Russell Field, with each site hosting a unique design that provides shade, seating, and a community.

Cool Spots launched in 2025 to provide shaded, comfortable places for residents to rest and gather during extreme heat. The first round of Cool Spots installations included four pilot locations—Sennott Park, Greene-Rose Heritage Park, Cambridge Common, and Donnelly Field—each offering shaded seating and social spaces designed to help residents cool down and rest during the summer months. The project was funded through the City’s Participatory Budgeting process, specifically the 2024 proposal **“Shaded Seats on Hot Streets.”**

In the summer of 2025, the City of Cambridge and the MIT Office of Sustainability set up a network of air-temperature sensors. These sensors were placed in both sunny and shaded areas in Porter Square, Central Square, Hoyt Park, the Court/Yard on Cambridge Street, and outdoor areas on the MIT campus. The City and MIT are studying the data to learn how hot different places get, how humidity affects heat, and how shade helps cool public spaces.

Together, these projects show that Cambridge sees parks as important cooling spaces. By using art, community ideas, and smart design, the City is creating shaded, welcoming places that help everyone stay safe, connected, and cool as our summers get hotter.



Multilingual Highlights

ENGLISH



More Stories

Want to learn more about Cambridge programs, initiatives, and opportunities? Visit our online **"Feature Stories."** Read in-depth articles about housing, transportation, economic development, and other topics.

BANGLA



আরও স্টোরি

ক্যামব্রিজ প্রোগ্রাম, উদ্যোগ এবং সুযোগ সম্পর্কে কি আরও জানতে চান? আমাদের অনলাইন "ফিচার স্টোরিগুলো" দেখুন। আবাসন, পরিবহন, অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়ন এবং অন্যান্য বিষয় সম্পর্কে গভীর বিশ্লেষণধর্মী নিবন্ধ পড়ুন

SPANISH



Más historias

¿Quieres saber más sobre los programas, las iniciativas y las oportunidades de Cambridge? Visita nuestras «Historias de interés» en línea. Lee artículos detallados sobre la vivienda, el transporte, el desarrollo económico y otros temas.

ARABIC



المزيد من القصص

هل تتوق إلى اكتشاف المزيد عن برامج كامبريدج ومبادراتها وفرصها الرائعة؟ تفضل بزيارة "قصصنا المميزة" على الإنترنت. اقرأ مقالاتنا المتعمقة التي تغطي كل ما يتعلق بالإسكان ووسائل النقل والتنمية الاقتصادية وغيرها من الموضوعات الهامة

CHINESE



更多精彩内容

想要进一步了解剑桥计划、项目与机遇吗?欢迎访问我们的在线栏目“专题故事”，阅读有关住房、交通、经济发展及其他话题的深度文章

AMHARIC



ተጨማሪ ታሪኮች

ስለ ካምብሪድ ፕሮግራሞች፣ ተነሳሽነቶች፣ እና እድሎች የበለጠ ማወቅ ይፈልጋሉ? የእኛን የመሰመር ላይ "የተለያዩ ታሪኮች" ይጎብኙ። ስለ መኖሪያ ቤት፣ ትራንስፖርት፣ ኢኮኖሚያዊ ልማት፣ እና ሌሎች ርዕሰ ጉዳዮች ጥልቅ ጽሁፎችን ያጎብኩ

PORTUGUESE



Mais histórias

Quer saber mais sobre os programas, iniciativas e oportunidades de Cambridge? Aceda às nossas **"Histórias em destaque"** online. Leia artigos detalhados sobre habitação, transportes, desenvolvimento económico e outros tópicos.

HAITIAN CREOLE

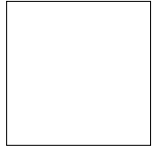


Kiyès pou mwen rele pou mwen aprann plis sou

Vizite biwo admisyon nou an. Li atik apwofondi sou lojman, transpò, devlopman ekonomik, ak lòt s



THE CAMBRIDGE LIFE



A publication of the Office of the City Manager
City of Cambridge, 795 Massachusetts Avenue,
Cambridge, MA 02139 • 617-349-4300
Cambridgema.gov



🌐 Cambridgema.gov/digital 🐦 [@CambridgeMass](https://twitter.com/CambridgeMass)
± [Cambridgema.Gov](https://www.facebook.com/Cambridgema.Gov) 📷 [@cambridgemass](https://www.instagram.com/cambridgemass)



Summer Events!



Porchfest

Cambridge NITES

Soccer Watch Parties

Arts River Festival



Jazz Festival

Dance Party

Sign Up for the Parks & Open Space Newsletter!



The new quarterly newsletter will let you know about all things parks and open space in Cambridge.

🌐 <https://camb.ma/parksemail>

Learn more at: 🌐 www.cambridgema.gov/calendar

Multilingual Highlights Inside On Page 23

City Manager:
Yi-An Huang

Cambridge City Council:
Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui
Vice Mayor Burhan Azeem

Councillor Ayah Al-Zubi
Councillor Timothy Flaherty
Councillor Patricia M. Nolan

Councillor E. Denise Simmons
Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler
Councillor Catherine Zusy