

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION



City of Cambridge

Executive Department

YI-AN HUANG
City Manager

April 28, 2025

To the Honorable, the City Council, and the Cambridge community,

I am pleased to present the submitted City of Cambridge FY26 Operating and Capital Budgets for the upcoming fiscal year, as well as the FY27-FY30 Operating and Capital Plans.

The FY26 Operating Budget of \$991,181,320 is an increase of \$35,596,970 or 3.7% over the FY25 Adopted Budget. This is lower than both the 5-year average Operating Budget increase of 6.8% and the 10-year average increase of 6.2%.

Over the past fiscal year, the City has worked closely with the City Council, through the Finance Committee, to provide increased transparency, input and guidance related to the budget process and decisions. Starting in fall 2024, there have been several public forums related to macroeconomic trends; budget considerations; public investment and capital planning; council priorities; as well as an update on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) supported programs.

Initial discussions regarding the FY26 Budget were guided by multi-year projections for budget growth, property tax levy increases, and excess levy capacity, which reflected a changing macroeconomic environment. Increased office and lab vacancy rates, slow and declining growth in assessed commercial values, and slowing development activity are projected to put increased pressure on the city's finances, including a greater dependence on property taxes, erosion of our excess levy capacity, and a potential shift of the tax burden from commercial properties to residential properties. Additionally, the city's debt burden continues to grow as we complete ongoing capital projects, placing additional pressure on our operating budget and challenging our adherence to adopted debt and reserve policies.

We are also now more keenly aware of the City's vulnerabilities related to unfavorable policy decisions at the federal level; direct and indirect federal support for grant programs; reduction of resources and staffing at key federal agencies; and reduced federal funding to important community institutions.

These factors can significantly impact our ability to invest in new areas and priorities, fund new projects, and respond to unanticipated needs.

Throughout the current fiscal year, we discussed the need to moderate budget growth in FY26. In addition, given the uncertainties created by the challenges noted and current trends in the macroeconomic environment, it was also critical to set targets to moderate budget growth in future years.

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

The FY26 Budget was developed within the framework of a multi-year approach in order to allow us to sustainably fund existing commitments, but which will also require prioritizing new investments and making strategic choices about new areas of spending.

At the municipal level, Cambridge has been at the forefront in making significant investments in bold and innovative strategies to meet community needs, support our most vulnerable residents, and lead the way in addressing regional, national, and even global issues. Our continued ability to make those types of investments requires the financial strength and flexibility provided by establishing and adhering to strong policies and financial practices.

We should be very proud of recent and ongoing initiatives that continue to be supported through the FY26 Budget. The City continues to provide substantial resources for affordable housing through direct support to the Affordable Housing Trust, providing access to affordable rental housing, and through homeownership education, counseling, and financial assistance. There is also close collaboration with internal and external partners to support housing navigation and stabilization services for housing search and placement support and services to help maintain housing tenancy.

The first year of the City's universal preschool program was launched and welcomed more than 800 4-year-olds and 3-year-olds into classrooms across 23 Cambridge preschool providers affiliated with the Cambridge Preschool Program. More than \$34 million was expended on these efforts in FY25, and new classrooms will open at Alewife and at the Tobin School in FY26.

The new Office of Sustainability was created in FY25 and builds on nearly two decades of work by multiple departments to move Cambridge off fossil fuel use and to prepare for extreme and unpredictable weather, with solutions focused on increasing climate equity across race, wealth, and language barriers.

Major investments in sewer and stormwater infrastructure and maintenance continue, including projects related to our watersheds, flood mitigation, drain infrastructure, and water quality.

Transportation and transit improvements are planned and underway improving access, safety, and opportunities for sustainable transportation in the City, as well as expanding the on-street bicycle network, and installation of traffic calming elements as part of street reconstruction in multiple locations across the city.

Improvements and deferred maintenance projects in our municipal buildings and facilities are ongoing, including construction of the Tobin Montessori and Darby Vassall Upper Schools Complex which will conclude in FY26. Major renovation has also begun at Fire Headquarters, and there are ongoing design and construction projects at related HVAC upgrades, renovations and improvements at 689 Massachusetts Ave, the Moses Youth Center, First Street Parking Garage, City Hall Annex, East Cambridge Firehouse, and the Robert W. Healy Public Safety Building.

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

City Council Goals

In Spring 2024, the City Council set high-level goals to guide overall priorities and support communicating major areas of work to the community. The goals are based on areas of consensus on priorities and incorporating the results community input. The FY26 Budget was developed in the context of these goals recognizing that they are intentionally broad, and there are also existing and ongoing expenditures and resources dedicated in other key areas related to City priorities (e.g. basic municipal services, infrastructure, public safety and development of public spaces, childcare / afterschool care, childhood education, and mental health and substance use disorders). Below is an outline of how the FY26 Budget responds to the adopted council goals.

- **Housing and Zoning:** *Address the housing crisis by making it easier to build more housing of all types with a focus on affordability and protections for low, middle-income, elderly, and disabled residents.*

The FY26 Budget maintains a high level of support for the development and preservation of affordable housing in Cambridge. Affordable housing is one of the top priorities for the City and remains a major community need. In FY26, the Budget will support continued work in response to the Resident Experiences of Inclusion and Bias in Inclusionary Housing study completed in FY23, by continuing to deepen its engagement with, and support for, residents to improve the experience of inclusionary housing residents and create stronger communities. The City will also continue to offer financial assistance to income-eligible homebuyers through the HomeBridge program which marked its 100th homebuyer purchase in FY25.

In FY26, funding in the Department of Human Service Programs, will support housing navigation and stabilization services that include housing application assistance, housing search and placement support, and other services that help individuals maintain permanent housing tenancies. Additionally, these funds will ensure the continuation of community meals and a shower program at the First Church Shelter, located at University Lutheran Church.

- **Economic Opportunity and Equity:** *Ensure the City of Cambridge offers economic opportunities to all residents and businesses and is taking steps toward greater economic equity, especially among our marginalized communities.*

As part of the FY26 budget document a new consolidated spending category was created to provide information on total expenditures related to economic opportunity and equity. For FY26, it's estimated that there will be over \$17 million in expenditures for programs and initiatives related to this area.

The FY26 Budget includes funding for programs that support entrepreneurship, business growth, and succession planning. In addition to providing education and grants, staff work directly with the community to enhance the vibrancy of Cambridge's commercial districts. The FY26 Budget supports efforts to build business capacity and commercial district vitality, among other programs within the Economic Opportunity and Development Division of the Community Development Department. Several departments will also collaborate to advance Cambridge's work toward enhanced Supplier Diversity. In FY26, the City will continue to review and

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

implement potential policy and program recommendations to achieve the goals stemming from its evaluation of procurement history.

Ongoing financial programs supported in the Budget include Storefront Improvement, Boosting Business Blocks, Retail Interior Accessibility, and Small Business Enhancement, along with small business workshops and technical assistance. Targeted support will be provided for women- and historically disadvantaged-owned businesses through a range of initiatives including procurement training, skill-building workshops, and enhanced marketing efforts.

- **Transportation:** *Improve the safety, efficiency, access, and sustainability of transportation options for all, and advocate for key transit priorities with the MBTA and other state and regional partners.*

In FY26, work will advance to significantly expand off-road facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, improving access and safety, and boosting opportunities for sustainable transportation in the City. Linear Park will be under construction and when completed, will feature a slightly wider path with new park amenities, including benches, lighting, drainage, and opportunities to play and explore.

The FY26 Budget includes funding for improvements to transit and expanding the on-street bicycle network, as well as the installation of traffic calming elements as part of street reconstruction in multiple locations across the city.

In FY26, a new study will focus on improving efficiency and access to shuttle service in Cambridge. In addition, through collaboration with MBTA, the next phase of the Bus Network Redesign project will improve frequency and reliability of bus service in more Cambridge neighborhoods.

The Budget supports key actions to improve bicycle mobility in FY26, including efforts towards the buildout of a connected network of separated bike facilities, and installing at least 150 bicycle parking racks, seasonal corrals, and multiple bike shelters, primarily in business districts, at schools and other key locations.

Significant capital projects related to street and sidewalk reconstruction as part of the City's Complete Streets project include the Port, Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square, and Massachusetts Avenue Partial Construction (from Harvard Square north to the Arlington town line). FY26 funds will be used for Central Square improvements on Massachusetts Avenue between Bigelow Street and Sidney Street, which is currently in design. These improvements will be integrated with ongoing work on Carl Barron Plaza and River Street.

- **Sustainability and Climate Resilience:** *Deepen the City of Cambridge's commitment to addressing the climate crisis through the use of sustainable energy and strengthening climate resilience and supporting our residents and businesses through this transition.*

The Office of Sustainability (OoS) is part of the FY26 Budget and will continue efforts to institutionalize climate actions across all City departments with solutions focused on increasing climate equity across race, wealth, and language barriers.

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

Guided by the Net Zero Action Plan and the Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO), the FY26 Budget includes funds to continue to create community energy programs that help residents and businesses save energy and phase out fossil fuels. Work to finalize and implement BEUDO regulations will continue, including technical support for building owners and efforts to explore thermal energy networks, and financing strategies to further decarbonization efforts across the city.

In FY26, the Budget supports initiatives to coordinate and prepare for increasingly hot summers, unpredictable winters, rising sea levels, and bigger storms which require actions across all City departments. Efforts will include engaging residents in problem identification and solution generation around managing increasingly hot summers.

The FY26 Budget includes over \$11 million in Capital funding as part of the Municipal Facilities Improvement Plan (MFIP) to fund ongoing deferred maintenance projects and implementation of the City's BEUDO ordinance, including the Tobin Montessori and Darby Vassall Upper Schools Complex which will be a Net Zero Emissions facility and will include open space and stormwater infrastructure to mitigate local street flooding; and Fire Headquarters which will feature a fossil fuel free heating system and solar panels to align with the City's Net Zero goals.

There is also significant funding included in the FY26 Budget related to sewer and stormwater projects. In collaboration with regional partners, work will continue on the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) control plan to protect and improve water resources and inform continued improvements to sewer and drainage systems.

- **Government and Council performance:** *The City Council is committed to effective decision making through close collaboration with each other and the City administration, to communicate transparently and to deepen accountability and engagement with the community.*

Throughout the process of developing this document, the following values have guided our process and decisions:

1. **Following Council priorities:** The City is guided by the policy direction set by the Council. I continue to believe deeply in our governance structure which drives decisions based on consensus across our elected representative body. Regular City Council meetings, policy orders, committee discussions, and conversations with Councillors provide direction on key priorities. This budget reflects the collective discussions across the City, Council, and community.
2. **Ensuring financial stability and strength:** The City is committed to the professional management of our finances to ensure that we can deliver high-quality services, build and maintain essential infrastructure, and invest in key Council and community priorities. This budget reflects continued commitment to that practice which will be more important given the economic uncertainties in the years ahead.
3. **Commitment to transparency:** Over the years, our annual budget has become increasingly comprehensive, including detailed breakouts across priority areas, budget highlights, data on performance and important trends, and long-term capital plans. This

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

year we worked to provide even more transparency throughout the budget process. We expect to continue and expand on these efforts in the future.

4. **Preparing for uncertainty:** The FY26 Budget was created within the context of an increasingly uncertain environment at the local, regional, and national levels. The City administration worked closely with the City Council beginning at the initial stages of developing the FY26 Budget in order to communicate concerns, set a framework, and ensure alignment on our overarching values and strategies moving forward.

Consolidated Spending

As part of the FY26 Budget, the City is again providing information on consolidated expenditures across City departments on several priority areas identified by City Council, including housing and homelessness; early childhood programs; sustainability; Vision Zero / traffic safety; and anti-bias / diversity trainings and programs. For FY26, a new category was added related to economic opportunity and equity.

Over \$251 million in expenditures are reflected in these areas for FY26. The consolidated spending charts are intended to provide an alternative perspective of the total resources dedicated to these City priorities, including through City and grant funds, capital funds, Free Cash, and staff time as a percentage of salaries and benefits.

American Plan Rescue Act (ARPA) Funds

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provided a substantial infusion of resources to state and local governments, which helped mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The City allocated \$88.1 million of ARPA funds received in 2021 to implement a series of community programs that specifically targeted the most vulnerable populations within the city. ARPA funds are required to be spent by December 31, 2026.

Working with the City Council, across city departments, and hundreds of small business and nonprofit community partners, over 80% of ARPA funds have been expended to date, with many projects complete or in the final stages of implementation. Although the intent of ARPA funding was for one-time pandemic relief projects, there were some projects identified that addressed ongoing community needs.

The FY26 Budget includes \$1.83 million to support the continuation of projects and initiatives that had been created and or supported with ARPA funds related to out of school time scholarships; homeless services; language justice; rental assistance; student transportation; and immigrant related attorney services. While the use of ARPA funds is set to expire in 2026, these important programs will be supported through the Operating Budget in FY26.

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

Financial Outlook

Cambridge has long benefited from a strong local economy, which is enhanced by top institutions of higher education, a strong biotechnology sector, and continued investment. However, an uncertain and challenging economic environment as well as developments at the federal level, are already beginning to manifest in several ways.

In light of this, it becomes increasingly important to control budget growth and maintain healthy reserves, which are vital to providing financial flexibility, promoting stability, as well as protecting the ability to respond quickly to unforeseen circumstances and unanticipated financial challenges. As we look to the future, we anticipate further discussions regarding prioritization, timing, and possibly tradeoffs.

The City maintained its AAA bond rating from all three major rating agencies this year and continues to work to maintain long-term financial sustainability and health, which have allowed for the significant investments supported through this Budget including in the areas of education, early childhood, affordable housing, infrastructure, sustainability, public safety, and transportation.

At the end of FY24, the City was left with significant reserves including: \$233.2 million in Free Cash; \$38.8 million in the Debt Stabilization Fund; \$39.6 million in the Health Claims Trust Fund; \$3 million in the Parking Fund balance; and \$6.2 million in the Water Fund balance. The City's excess levy capacity for FY25 is \$189.1 million.

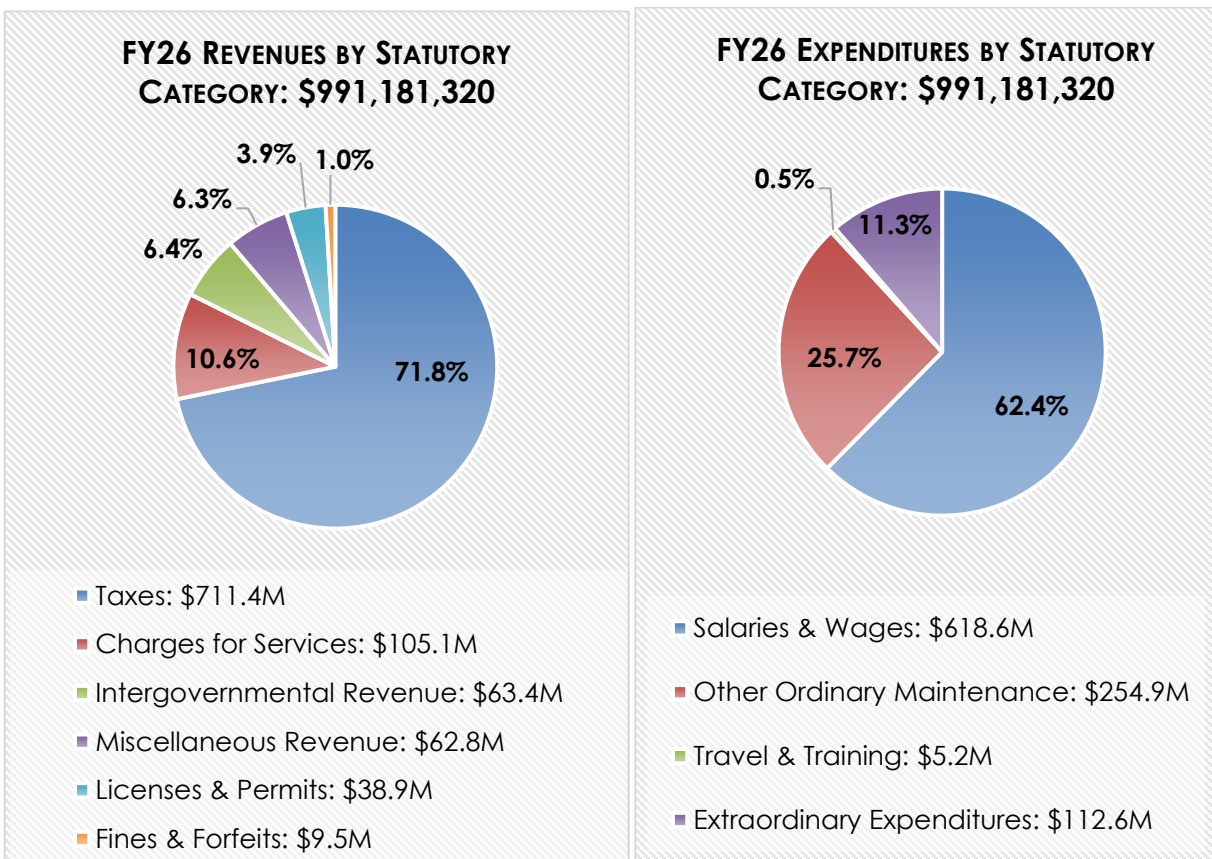
Free Cash provides important flexibility for the City to address unanticipated expenses and strategic initiatives or purchases through one-time appropriations. The City has used \$63.7 million of Free Cash in FY25 to date. Major appropriations included: \$29.4 million transfer into the Mitigation Stabilization Fund; \$30 million into the Debt Stabilization Fund; \$2.5 million to support improvements at Neville Place; \$846,000 for snow operations and related street repairs; \$570,000 for Police weapons replacement; \$250,000 for outside counsel; and \$160,000 for a Police transport van.

In addition to using Free Cash as a revenue source in the FY26 Operating Budget, it will also be used as a revenue source for several one-time items funded through the FY26 Capital Budget.

Working in partnership with, and under the policy guidance of, the City Council, the City will continue to adhere to our five-year financial and capital plan, debt and reserve policies as well as continue to leverage community and institutional resources, to maintain a level of financial strength and flexibility that will be critical in the face of new pressures in both the macroeconomic environment as well as from the federal level.

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

FY26 Budget Summary



FY26 Operating Budget

The proposed Operating Budget of \$991,181,320 includes the following:

- The FY26 School Budget is \$280,250,000 and includes a total of 1,747 full time equivalent positions (General Fund). The City increased property tax support to schools by 5% or \$12,075,000, to \$255,200,825.
- A total property tax levy of \$677,732,415 will support the General Fund Operating and Capital Budgets. This is an increase of \$49,343,662, or 7.85%, from the FY25 property tax levy, and reflects budget increases related to school department funding, salary increases, and increased debt service costs. The actual tax levy is determined in the fall as part of the property tax and classification process.
- \$1,000,000 in overlay surplus balances accumulated from prior fiscal years will be used to lower the tax levy increase.
- The FY26 Budget includes \$25,756,500 in Free Cash as a revenue source. This amount includes support for Pay-As-You- Go capital projects as well as funds to support the Operating Budget.
- The FY26 Budget includes an 8.2% increase in the water rate and a 6.5% increase in the sewer rate, resulting in a 6.9% increase in the combined rate, as adopted by the City Council on March 24, 2025.

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

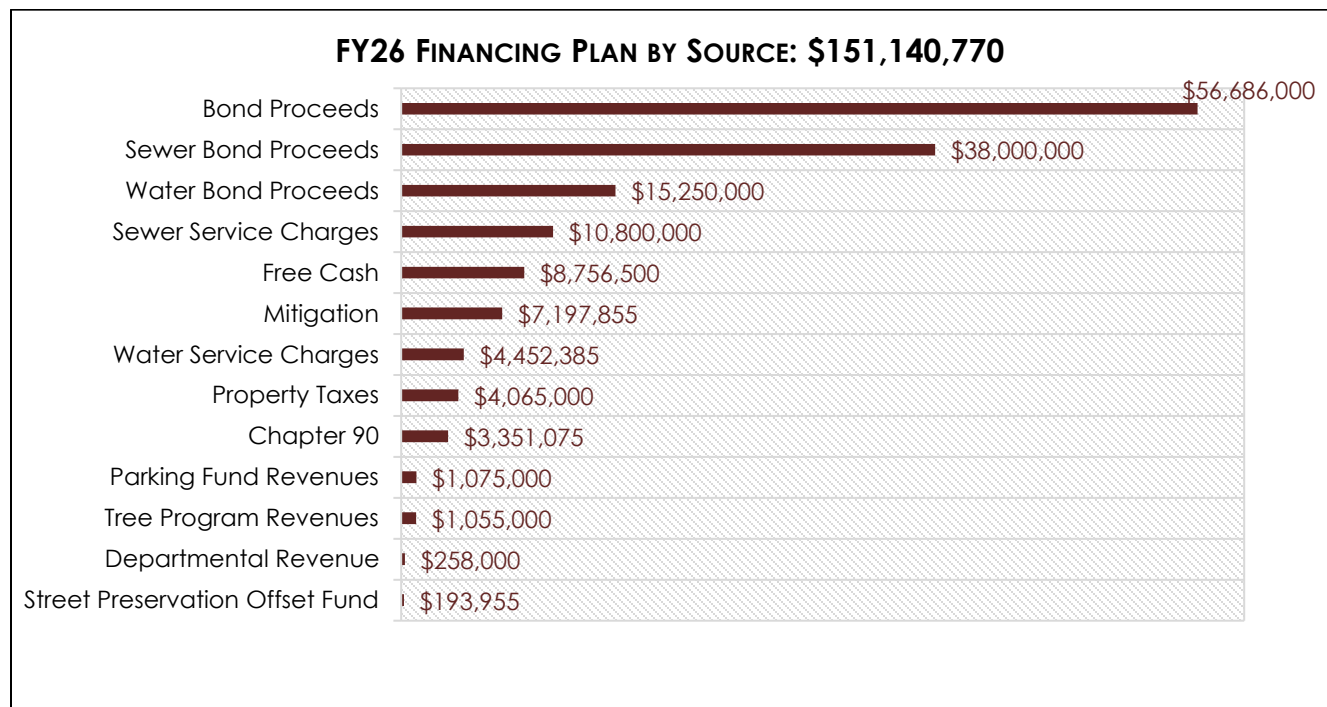
- Parking Fund revenues will provide \$21.1 million to support the operating budgets of various departments, including the Department of Transportation, plus an additional \$1.075 million to support Vision Zero safety improvements; traffic signals; garage repairs; a Harvard Square pedestrian study; and fleet vehicle upgrades through the Capital Budget.
- The City Debt Stabilization Fund will provide \$18 million to cover debt service costs, which is a slight increase from the \$17.8 million used in FY25, in order to address increased debt costs.
- This Budget includes a 3.5% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all non-union employees and unions with settled contracts, a 12.8% increase in health insurance, and a 31.6% decrease related to pensions.
- The Health Claims Trust Fund is providing \$18 million to support the health insurance budget.
- Consistent with FY25, the FY26 Budget includes an Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB) contribution of \$2 million.
- The FY26 Budget includes 19 new full-time positions.

FY26 Capital Budget

The proposed Capital Budget of \$151,140,770 includes the following:

- Sewer and stormwater capital repairs (\$7 million), remedial construction (\$10.8 million), Combined Sewer Overflow program (\$3 million) and climate change projects (\$500,000).
- A \$12,821,500 Pay-As-You-Go Public Investment allocation for various one-time as well as recurring capital items, which are funded through property tax (\$4,065,000), and Free Cash (\$8,756,500).
- In FY26, \$56,686,000 will be authorized for General Obligation Bond issues to fund significant building improvements as part of the Municipal Facilities Improvement Plan, open space projects, complete streets projects, and school building repairs.
- Water service charges of \$4,452,385 to cover all water-related capital projects.
- Water Bond authorizations to fund Ozone Generator replacement (\$1,750,000), lead service line removal (\$9,500,000), and water works construction (\$4,000,000).
- On March 5, 2025, the City sold \$165.9 million in General Obligation Bonds to finance capital projects such as open space and path projects; fire station headquarters; Massachusetts Avenue bike lanes; street and sidewalk reconstruction projects; municipal facilities; sewer reconstruction; water works construction projects; and school construction and building repairs. The City's AAA bond rating allowed the City to sell these bonds at a true interest cost of 2.96%.

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE



Significant Budget Modifications

The FY26 Operating Budget represents a \$35,596,970, or 3.7% increase from the FY25 Adopted Budget. Major increases include \$12 million in additional funding for the School Department; \$11.3 million in increased salaries and wages, which includes a 3.5% cost of living adjustment (COLA); \$7.2 million for increased debt payments; \$1.7 million in increased state assessments; and \$1.5 million for increased Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) costs. There is a net decrease of \$7 million in employee benefits costs due to the City resetting the timeframe to fully fund the pension liability to 2029.

There are also budget increases related to new positions (\$1.7 million); an amended contract with the Cambridge Health Alliance (\$214,280); new preschool classrooms at the Tobin School (\$781,749); the Body Worn Camera Program (\$495,000); preschool scholarships and meals (\$340,000); expanded inclusion services (\$111,000); as well as various contractual increases across departments.

The FY26 Budget includes nineteen (19) new full-time positions in the Department of Human Service Programs, Capital Buildings Department, Housing Department, and the Police Department. The majority of these positions (11) are Tobin Preschool classroom staff.

The Budget also supports several department reporting and organizational adjustments anticipated and underway. As of April 2025, staff from the Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department and the Transportation Planning Division of the Community Development Department have been reorganized into the new Department of Transportation in order to enhance and integrate the work happening between the two departments and encompass a broader range of transportation functions.

CITY MANAGER'S BUDGET MESSAGE

In addition, the Cambridge Arts Council (formerly Public Celebrations) will remain an independent department operating under the reporting umbrella of the Assistant City Manager for Community Development. This will provide additional direct support for the department, improve visibility, and build upon the existing synergy and collaboration on various initiatives such as arts and cultural planning, public realm improvements, and street activation programs.

Conclusion

The FY26 Budget maintains our strong support for long time and ongoing city priorities including affordable housing; early childhood education and universal preschool; school infrastructure; transportation safety; and sustainability. While we remain cognizant of the need to moderate budget growth for the near future, it is important to also acknowledge that the budget continues to support prior and existing commitments related to these areas.

However, the FY26 Budget also demonstrates the influence of macroeconomic factors and uncertainty, particularly at the federal level, and the need to preserve future financial flexibility. The Operating Budget growth for FY26 is significantly more moderate than in recent years and is projected to remain moderate in future years. We will also continue to monitor and work to understand impacts related to budget growth, excess levy capacity, property tax burden, reserves, federal funding, debt and other liabilities.

Our proven resilience, financial management, planning, and preparation, which have repeatedly allowed us to maintain a high level of essential services while also making new investments in key priority areas, year after year, should be a source of pride for the entire community.

I want to recognize and thank city departments and leaders, City Council and the community for your collective understanding, communication, and response in the face of uncertainty and economic challenges. There is more work ahead, but your efforts and dedication to the ideals that make Cambridge so special, combined with the City's continued fiscal strength, should provide us all with a measure of confidence moving forward.

I am extremely grateful to the Mayor, Vice-Mayor, the Finance Committee chair, and Councillors for their leadership and collaboration. I continue to be honored with the trust that has been placed in me and the City leadership team.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yi-An Huang', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Yi-An Huang, City Manager

CONSOLIDATED SPENDING

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Affordable Housing	Department	Amount
Affordable Housing Trust Fund - (all sources)*	CDD	\$42,325,750
Housing Department (<i>excl.</i> Aff Housing Trust and CDBG)	Housing	\$3,884,150
Comm. Development Block Grant (CDBG), Fed HOME Grant (HUD)	CDD	\$2,128,973
CPA preservation grants	Historical	\$350,000
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to affordable housing	Historical	\$73,667
Total Affordable Housing		\$48,762,540
Homelessness and Housing Stability	Department	Amount
Continuum of Care (HUD Funding)	DHSP	\$6,379,162
Homelessness prevention, grants and spending	DHSP	\$2,140,855
Eviction prevention, rental assistance, legal services	DHSP	\$1,361,730
Individual shelter (Salvation Army)	DHSP	\$1,206,863
Multi Service Center	DHSP	\$938,795
City Manager Housing Liaison Office	Executive	\$865,574
Homeless outreach, comm. court, outreach in squares, warming center	Police	\$841,624
Transportation for homeless students	Schools (CPS)	\$750,000
Warming Center	DHSP	\$485,350
Library social services	Library	\$139,520
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to housing (City/HUD)	HRC	\$138,803
Cleaning services Portland Loo Harvard Square plus other locations	Public Works	\$87,300
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to housing and homelessness	Veterans	\$72,774
Central Square BID - sharps collection	Public Works	\$64,992
Central Square BID - maintenance of Portland Loo in Central Square	Public Works	\$50,508
McKinney Vento Homeless Grant	Schools (CPS)	\$30,000
Total Homelessness and Housing Stability		\$15,553,850
FY26 Total Affordable Housing & Homelessness		\$64,316,390

*Estimated for FY26 assuming 80% CPA allocation to affordable housing

CONSOLIDATED SPENDING

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND EQUITY

Economic Opportunity and Equity	Department	Amount
Office of Workforce Development (general and grant funds)	DHSP	\$4,769,432
Rindge School of Technical Arts - career and technical education	Schools (CPS)	\$4,316,777
Community Learning Center (general and grant funds)	DHSP	\$1,996,484
Economic Opportunity and Equity Division	CDD	\$1,283,429
HIVE staff and digital equity programs	Library	\$1,269,003
STEAM program	DHSP	\$586,808
College Success Initiative	DHSP	\$577,209
Office of Early Childhood - CDA and Early Childhood Educator Programs	DHSP	\$467,103
Apprentice program	Public Works	\$329,073
CYP teen internships	DHSP	\$315,043
Educator Pathway Program	Schools (CPS)	\$315,000
The Workforce Program - partnership with Housing Authority	Schools (CPS)	\$231,825
Storefront improvement program	CDD	\$200,000
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to economic opportunity and equity	Purchasing	\$160,424
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to economic opportunity and equity	HRC	\$159,062
Art for Social Justice Grants	Arts Council	\$82,500
Gaming Commission Grant - Commercial District Marketing Campaign	CDD	\$75,000
Apprentice program	Water	\$40,000
Commercial Drivers License (CDL) training	Public Works	\$40,000
McKinney Vento Grant - outreach, engagement, professional development	Schools (CPS)	\$30,000
Trade specific employee training	Public Works	\$25,000
PSIT CRLS Internship Program	ECC	\$20,000
SEED Leadership Training	Schools (CPS)	\$9,300
FY26 Total Economic Equity and Opportunity		\$17,298,471

* Does not include contracts for goods and services with diverse suppliers as part of normal City operations.

CONSOLIDATED SPENDING

SUSTAINABILITY

Climate Net Zero	Department	Amount
Municipal Facilities Improvement Plan (MFIP)	Capital Buildings	\$11,100,000
Office of Sustainability	Sustainability	\$3,024,772
Net Zero Emissions - Virtual Net Metering (renewable energy) credits	Public Works	\$1,076,390
Clean Fleet Prog. - staff, biodiesel fuel, charging stations and vehicles	Public Works	\$1,011,205
LED conversion at Cambridgeport and Peabody Schools	Public Works	\$400,000
Net Zero Emissions - PV inspection and maintenance	Public Works	\$400,000
CDD related programs and Bluebikes	CDD	\$269,650
Net Zero Emissions - Personnel	Public Works	\$215,396
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to sustainability	CDD	\$207,709
Gaming Commission Grant - 50 Ebikes	CDD	\$175,000
Wireless dimming for streetlights	Public Works	\$100,000
Total Climate Net Zero		\$17,980,122
Climate Resilience	Department	Amount
Climate Change - Central Square surface enhancements (25% of \$27.5M)	Public Works	\$6,875,000
Climate Change - Engineering Division	Public Works	\$3,259,613
Climate Change - Sewer/stormwater (100% of \$3,000,000)	Public Works	\$3,000,000
Climate Change - Alewife Watershed infiltration and inflow removal	Public Works	\$2,683,927
Climate Change - Remedial Construction (25% of \$10,400,000)	Public Works	\$2,600,000
Climate Change - Capital Repairs (25% of \$7,000,000)	Public Works	\$1,750,000
Climate Change - Capital improvements	Public Works	\$500,000
Resilient Mystic River Urban Forests MVP Grant	Public Works	\$276,800
Total Climate Resilience		\$20,945,340
Open Space	Department	Amount
Open space projects - Ahern Field improvements	CDD	\$7,500,000
Open Space Preservation & Revitalization (park and cemetery maint.)	Public Works	\$7,381,222
Open Space projects - CPA*	CDD	\$2,210,000
Open space projects - Wilder Lee and 359 Broadway	CDD	\$1,600,000
Park restoration and improvements	Public Works	\$1,200,000
Reservoir improvements	Water	\$395,000
Participatory Budgeting (PB11) - Shaded seating in parks	DPW	\$250,000
Fresh Pond Master Plan implementation	Water	\$250,000
Danehy Park maintenance	DHSP	\$100,000
Participatory Budgeting (PB11) - Pollinator Garden	Public Works	\$75,000
Total Open Space		\$20,961,222

CONSOLIDATED SPENDING

SUSTAINABILITY (CONTINUED)

Zero Waste	Department	Amount
Zero Waste - Recycling Division	Public Works	\$7,000,601
Zero Waste - Compost collection staff	Public Works	\$941,957
Zero Waste - DEP Recycling Dividends Grant	Public Works	\$97,500
Zero Waste - Household hazardous waste collection	Public Works	\$88,000
Participatory Budgeting (PB11) - mobile recycling	Public Works	\$75,000
Total Zero Waste		\$8,203,058
Urban Forestry	Department	Amount
Urban Forestry division	Public Works	\$3,033,071
Urban Forestry capital projects	Public Works	\$1,660,000
Alewife Reservation restoration - CPA	Public Works	\$80,295
Total Urban Forestry		\$4,773,366
FY26 Total Sustainability		\$72,863,108

*Estimated for FY26 assuming 10% CPA allocation to open space

CONSOLIDATED SPENDING

VISION ZERO / TRAFFIC SAFETY

Programs & Planning	Department	Amount
Traffic Enforcement Unit	Police	\$3,849,476
Transportation Planning Division	CDD	\$2,939,556
Operating funds dedicated to Vision Zero / traffic safety	TPT	\$907,772
School Crossing Guards	Police	\$698,315
Street Patching and Sidewalk Shaving Contracts	Public Works	\$572,650
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to Vision Zero / traffic safety	Public Works	\$394,306
Bike parking; bus stop amenities; Bluebike equipment	CDD	\$350,000
Capital improvement projects -Vision Zero	TPT	\$300,000
Harvard Square pedestrianization study	TPT	\$300,000
Participatory Budgeting (PB11) - Slower speeds for safer streets	TPT	\$250,000
Traffic safety grants, training, and materials	Police	\$141,782
Traffic Analyst	Police	\$117,544
Gaming Commission Grant - high visibility traffic enforcement	Police	\$47,800
Driver training programs	Public Works	\$17,000
Total Programs & Planning		\$10,886,201
Infrastructure Projects	Department	Amount
Complete Streets program	Public Works	\$21,892,533
Central Square surface enhancements	Public Works	\$13,750,000
Engineering staff positions and/or time -Vision Zero / traffic safety	TPT	\$1,272,350
Operating funds dedicated to Vision Zero / traffic safety	TPT	\$1,178,800
Engineering staff positions and/or time -Vision Zero / traffic safety	Public Works	\$394,306
Snow clearing equipment	Public Works	\$310,000
Gaming Commission Grant - traffic signal equipment and improvements	TPT	\$200,000
Total Infrastructure Projects		\$38,997,989
FY26 Total Vision Zero & Traffic Safety		\$49,884,190

CONSOLIDATED SPENDING

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Early Childhood Programs	Department	Amount
Baby U/Center for Families	DHSP	\$1,996,682
Main Library: early childhood programs, services, and outreach	Library	\$719,112
Branch libraries: early childhood programs, services, and outreach	Library	\$667,845
Exec Dir. and Lead Teachers - Early Childhood	Schools (CPS)	\$629,171
2/3 Funding for Community Engagement Team (CET)	DHSP	\$387,548
Home Based Early Childhood Program	Schools (CPS)	\$285,603
Early childhood collections and resources (system-wide)	Library	\$100,320
First Steps	Schools (CPS)	\$66,030
IDEA Early Childhood allocation	Schools (CPS)	\$55,000
Building maintenance for childcare facilities	Public Works	\$50,000
Total Early Childhood Program		\$4,957,311
Universal Pre-Kindergarten	Department	Amount
Cambridge Preschool Program community-based contracts	DHSP	\$12,700,000
Preschool (City only)	DHSP	\$8,152,202
Cambridge Public Schools Preschool Program	Schools (CPS)	\$8,090,666
Office of Early Childhood	DHSP	\$5,179,387
Rindge Ave Pre School lease and maintenance costs	Public Works	\$535,950
Total Universal Pre-Kindergarten		\$34,658,205
FY26 Total Early Childhood		\$39,615,515

CONSOLIDATED SPENDING

ANTI-RACISM, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION TRAINING AND PROGRAMS

Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion training and programs	Department	Amount
Office of Equity and Inclusion	Office of E&I	\$2,283,405
Office of Equity, Inclusion & Belonging	Schools (CPS)	\$1,828,132
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to anti-bias / diversity	Schools (CPS)	\$947,679
Professional Standards, work with PRAB	Police	\$395,369
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to anti-bias / diversity	Library	\$334,170
Educator Pathway Program (EPP)	Schools (CPS)	\$315,000
Language Justice Division	HRC	\$308,004
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to anti-bias / diversity	DHSP	\$239,464
Training programs	HR	\$215,000
Staff positions and/or time dedicated to anti-bias / diversity	HRC	\$167,434
Legal advisor	Police	\$148,523
CALEA Accreditation, trauma informed training	Police	\$134,783
Race and equity training and consultants	DHSP	\$110,000
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, trainers, guest speakers, materials	Library	\$93,177
Staff positions/time and supplies	HR	\$82,166
Equity, inclusion, and anti-racism training	CDD	\$65,000
LGBTQ+ Commission	HRC	\$15,820
FY26 Total Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion Training and Programs		\$7,683,126

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET MODIFICATIONS

Description	Department	Cost
Schools (CPS)		
Increase in the School Dept. Budget	Schools (CPS)	\$12,000,000
Total Schools (CPS)		\$12,000,000
Salary, Wages, and Benefit Increases		
Salary and overtime increases (3.5% COLA, step increases, longevity)	All Depts (excl. Schools)	\$11,345,376
Health, pension & Medicare costs	Employee Benefits	(\$7,044,079)
New positions (excluding benefits)	Various	\$1,694,918
Total Salary, Wages, and Benefit Increases		\$5,996,215
Contractual Increases		
Increase in debt payments per debt service schedule	Debt	\$7,210,080
Increase in state assessments (Cherry Sheet)	Cherry Sheet	\$1,699,765
Increase in MWRA allocation	MWRA	\$1,468,515
Other contract maintenance and supply cost increases	Various	\$988,816
Increased costs for street cleaning, rubbish, and recycling contracts	DPW	\$1,028,900
Contractual increase	Camb. Health Alliance	\$214,280
Total Contractual Increases		\$12,610,356
Continuation of APRA Programs		
Out of School Time scholarships	DHSP	\$781,749
Homeless services	DHSP	\$497,250
Language Justice services	Human Rights (CIRC)	\$150,000
Rental assistance	DHSP	\$300,000
Student transportation	Finance	\$50,000
Attorney/paralegal services	Human Rights (CIRC)	\$50,000
Total Continuation of ARPA Programs		\$1,828,999
Operations increases		
To provide funding for new preschool classrooms at the Tobin School	DHSP	\$756,000
To provide funding for software licenses and maintenance costs	Various	\$709,400
To provide funding for the Body Worn Camera Program	Police	\$495,000
To provide funding for job listing, brokerage, and legal fees	Human Resources	\$400,000
To provide funding for reservoir gauging station maintenance	Water	\$250,000
To provide funding for additional preschool scholarships and meals	DHSP	\$340,000
To provide funding for expanded inclusion services	DHSP	\$111,000
To provide funding for the Cambridge 250 celebration	Executive	\$50,000
To provide increased funding for arts grants, conservation and maint.	Arts Council	\$50,000
Total Operations Increases		\$3,161,400
TOTAL FY25 TO FY26 INCREASE		\$35,596,970

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET MODIFICATIONS

Position	Department	Count	Cost (excl. benefits)
Building Manager	Capital Buildings	1	\$143,621
Resident Engagement Services Manager	Housing	1	\$123,378
Housing Development Planner	Housing	1	\$118,919
Body Worn Camera Unit	Police	4	\$489,000
Tobin Preschool Classroom Staff	DHSP	11	\$730,000
Inclusion Specialist for afterschool program	DHSP	1	\$90,000
TOTAL		19	\$1,694,918

BENEFITS ALLOCATION

Starting in the FY26 Budget, estimated costs associated with health and dental insurance and pensions are budgeted centrally in the Employee Benefits department. This change will simplify operations for the benefits administration team and help departments better track their personnel budgets. Estimated benefits costs will continue to be budgeted directly in departments for employees supported by Community Development Block Grant funding in order to comply with federal regulations related to accounting for grants.

As a result of this accounting change, most department budgets will be reduced, while the Employee Benefits department budget will have a significant increase. This change is cost-neutral and will not impact the actual benefits costs or level of support for departmental programming.

To help facilitate a more accurate comparison across years, an additional chart titled “Adjusted Expenditures by Statutory Category” is included on the Department Overview page in Section V for each department with personnel, and includes information on expenditures for FY24 and FY25 without benefits included.

ANTIRACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

As many organizations are reducing their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, the City of Cambridge remains committed to dismantling inequity. The Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) and City departments believe an enduring Antiracism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) strategy requires a shared commitment to fostering an inclusive environment that values diverse perspectives, enhances community engagement, boosts employee morale, and builds public trust. OEI's initiatives aim to cultivate a culture that champions social justice, ensuring the rights and contributions of all employees, residents, and visitors are valued and protected.

The following pages highlight a non-exhaustive series of initiatives that provide a snapshot of the ADEI work throughout departments in FY25 and into FY26. Highlights include the work of the Office of Equity and Inclusion, Human Rights Commission, the Human Resources Department, Department of Public Works, Department of Human Service Programs, Human Resources Department, Library, and Cambridge Police Department. Many internal-facing ADEI initiatives will reflect the equitable and inclusive services that departments provide. Beyond those highlighted, there continue to be several City initiatives pursued through a lens of antiracism, diversity, equity and inclusion.

OFFICE OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Employee Engagement: The Office of Equity and Inclusion organized culturally responsive events for national observances, such as Hispanic/Latine Heritage Month and Juneteenth. They also hosted wellness events for city staff. By collaborating with cross-departmental committees, the office ensured diverse representation and promoted an equity-minded approach to event design. The planning strategy was improved to offer multiple employee participation options, including in-person attendance, live-streaming locations, and virtual access, drawing over 2,500 participants from city employees, residents, and partners like Cambridge Public Schools staff.

Safety Security and Compliance: In FY25, the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) collaborated with Human Resources, the City Solicitor's Office, the Language Justice Division, and the Commission for Persons with Disabilities to establish the city's first Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy and revised the Reasonable Accommodation Policy to proactively ensure workplace safety. Both policies comply with federal and state laws, are written in plain language, and feature an online reporting process, training resources, and ongoing support from the Equity and Inclusion Investigator to promote a safe and inclusive work environment.

Economic Opportunity and Equity: The Office of Equity and Inclusion manages the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program for construction contracts valued at \$100,000 or more. This program requires that at least ten percent of the total bid or materials costs be sourced from certified minority businesses. To facilitate this, OEI has redesigned the review and approval process to improve access for qualified MBE firms, allowing them to compete for substantial subcontracts. The annual allocation is expected to surpass 15% of the total bid price in FY25.

Mandatory Staff Training Delivery: The OEI delivered the Valuing, Antiracism, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (VADEI) and the Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (PSHW) classes for City staff. These sessions are designed to familiarize participants with the City's core values on these critical topics and to foster a safe, inclusive, and respectful work environment for all. Since October 2025, the OEI has scheduled nine training sessions for each class from October to July. A total of 240 employees have registered for the courses, with 70% of those who registered having successfully completed the training.

ANTIRACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

Equity-Lens Interview Panel Participation: To promote equitable hiring practices throughout the City, OEI staff members participate in interview panels for various departments and Commission Selection Committees, ensuring an equity-focused perspective during candidate evaluations. The OEI offers insight into inclusive questioning and bias awareness, followed by debriefing with hiring managers and Commission Selection Committees to reflect on equitable practices. The goals of the panel participation are to:

- Integrate equity and inclusion into hiring and selection processes.
- Provide thought partnership to hiring managers and Commission Selection Panels on inclusive evaluation and build relationships and trust across departments through collaboration.

Established the City's Inaugural Antiracism, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (ADEI) Council: The inaugural ADEI Council includes 12 staff members from across departments committed to advancing racial equity and systems change within their respective departments. The ADEI Council aims to:

- Advise OEI on developing strategies and implementing citywide initiatives focused on antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion, including employee resource group development.
- Engage with department leadership and employees to gather feedback, ensuring OEI remains responsive to workplace needs and improving the impact of its initiatives.

With the inaugural cohort of the ADEI Council now underway, the program serves as a model for future internal and external equity development efforts.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

City Employee Fair Housing Webinar: The Cambridge Human Rights Commission (CHRC) conducted a Fair Housing training session for city staff in FY25. This internal training aimed to educate employees about local fair housing laws and the CHRC's investigative process. It provided them with the knowledge necessary to recognize housing discrimination, understand their rights, and raise awareness in the community. Additionally, the training outlined advocacy steps employees could take to support fair housing and uphold anti-racist policies.

The session focused on defining discrimination under the law and explaining how fair housing policies apply in Cambridge. It empowered employees to take action if they encounter housing discrimination. Ultimately, the goal of this training was to increase staff awareness of housing discrimination and to highlight the resources available through CHRC while reinforcing our commitment to equity and inclusion in housing practices for all.

ANTIRACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

HUMAN RESOURCES

Expanded Equitable Recruitment Through Community Partnerships: In FY25, the Human Resources (HR) Department focused on enhancing recruitment by partnering with community organizations to attract diverse talent that reflects the city's population. Collaborating with over 30 non-profits, schools, and workforce programs, HR aimed to reach underrepresented individuals. The initiative sought to strengthen relationships with community groups, increase applicants from diverse backgrounds, and improve hiring outcomes through referrals. The recruitment team emphasized outreach to candidates with unique skills and connections to BIPOC colleges.

HR participated in over five job fairs and held two targeted recruitment events with MassHire to connect with underrepresented job seekers. These efforts began to boost the number of diverse candidates applying for jobs. The Equitable Recruitment Community Partnership will continue into FY26 to expand partnerships, refine outreach strategies, and track the impact on hiring outcomes.

Inclusive Parental Leave Policy Enhancement: This initiative revised the City staff parental leave policy to promote inclusivity across all family structures. The updated policy eliminates previous restrictions focused solely on birth mothers, now extending benefits to adoptive parents, non-birth parents, and other caregivers. In FY25, HR conducted a policy audit on inclusivity and equity, benchmarking against industry standards, and collaborated with legal advisors and the Office of Equity & Inclusion to draft revisions. The Department communicated these updates through various channels, including a Q&A session for employees.

Expanding Accessibility in HR Communications: To enhance employee access to HR-related information and support, the Human Resources Department has revamped its communication strategy. This now includes HR forums, City Leadership Together meetings, and an open HR email inbox to foster ongoing, two-way dialogue. The objective is to establish a transparent, responsive, and accessible HR function that meets staff where they are, building trust through consistent and clear communication.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS (DPW)

The Apprentice Program: The Apprentice Program launched in 2022 and is a partnership with DHSP's Office of Workforce Development/Cambridge Works Program (OWD). The program supports Cambridge residents with historical barriers to employment as they build work experience, develop marketable skills, and pursue a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Eligible program participants are provided with onboarding, on the job training, and CDL training courses. The program offers up to 24 months of work experience in a benefitted position, with potential for future employment at DPW, other City departments, or externally with marketable work experience and skills. Since its launch, the Department has seen significant success with current and former apprentices, with one former apprentice now a full-time DPW employee, and another with the Department of Transportation. Three current apprentices are actively pursuing CDLs and on track for permanent employment at DPW.

ANTIRACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAMS

Drop Everything and Learn: The Drop Everything and Learn (DEAL) is an internal, department-wide initiative and a key part of the Race and Equity Initiative. DEAL aims to eliminate racism within the department by providing engaging experiences that help everyone better understand systemic racism, build strong relationships among colleagues, and reflect on personal experiences. This initiative allows all DHSP employees to bring these important ideas into their daily lives and work. The DEAL Subcommittee, which includes staff from different divisions, organizes monthly learning opportunities tailored to small groups. On a quarterly basis, DEAL activities are designed to convene as many staff as possible in a group discussion setting to foster deeper connection and dialogue.

Approximately 250 staff across divisions and roles participated in DEAL activities last year. In a 2024 staff survey, 86% of respondents reported that they learned something in DEAL that they have implemented in their life or that changed their behavior. In addition, the number of staff volunteers who lead DEAL activities has increased.

LIBRARY

Library Antiracism, Equity, and Inclusion (AREI) Committee: The AREI Committee is a group of Library staff focused on implementing strategies and initiatives that create welcoming library spaces allowing for diversity and engagement of patrons/staff, ethnicities, cultures, languages and thought. The goal of the AREI Committee is to continue advancing DEI work at CPL by prioritizing an inclusive environment for patrons and employees. Key Committee activities in FY25 included:

- Planned and implemented the Ways of Being (WOB) a set of behaviors, norms and attitudes that embody CPL's commitment and values.
- Introduced AREI into the onboarding process for new hires, highlighting the WOB and resources available through the City of Cambridge.
- Offered Freedom Lifted, Justice at Work, asynchronous learning module for all staff.
- Developed a quarterly AREI communication structure summarizing DEI efforts through programming and community collaboration at all branch locations for the previous quarter.

The AREI Committee positively impacted internal staff dynamics by promoting collaboration and inclusivity. Externally, the CPL is committed to improving its programs and services to reflect community diversity and ensure equity. AREI work will continue in FY26.

Library Programs for Older Adults: The Library's new Staff Librarian for Older Adults actively engages the community and enhances programs for older adults. In the coming year, the focus will remain on health and wellness, artistic expression, and community building. Notable key activities for FY25 include two meet and greet sessions for community input, along with programs like Drum Alive, the CPL Nature Club: Elder Walk, and sessions with Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services.

Popular offerings include the Aging with Mindfulness series, averaging 85 weekly participants, and a new low-impact fitness class at the Valente Branch with a virtual option. Virtual Zumba Gold continues to draw 25 attendees per session. Special programs such as Virtual Culinary Classes (53 participants) and Creative Aging: Drawn to Nature received enthusiastic feedback. A highlight this year was Good Neighbor Day 2024, which fostered intergenerational connections through collaboration with community partners.

ANTIRACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Cambridge Police Department strives to reflect the community it serves. The Department's initiatives are thoughtful, purposeful, collaborative and developed through the lens of Antiracism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Procedural Justice Dashboard: The Department launched its Procedural Justice Dashboard in FY24 to delve deeper into race and transparency issues, two significant barriers to building community trust in law enforcement. The community is encouraged to join the CPD in critically examining the Department's data and gaining a better understanding of its interactions. The Center for Policing Equity (CPE) completed its initial independent review of the Department's data and methodologies. CPE also analyzes data gaps and recommends future improvements and harm reduction strategies to promote safer and more equitable policing outcomes. This data analysis includes information gathered from the Co-Response Pilot Program, which started in the fiscal year 2025. CPE and the Department will continue to collaborate to track and manage community engagement data in its efforts in achieving safer outcomes for all.

Community Engagement: The Department has enhanced its community engagement strategy. A key initiative is the Game Night program, which is held at various CHA properties. This program has been expanded beyond the Lincoln and Walden Square neighborhoods to include Newtowne Court and Washington Elms. The CPD Game Night serves as an opportunity for community engagement, helping residents build stronger relationships with one another and with the Cambridge Police Department. Residents and officers participate in activities such as board games, sports, and music. Additionally, there are plans to reach out to other neighborhoods in FY26, particularly in North Cambridge.

Senior Support: In FY25 the Department reinvigorated its outreach efforts geared toward Cambridge Seniors. The Department's Senior Police Academy was revived and officers met with seniors to provide the opportunity for open dialogue, community updates and recreational activities. In collaboration with local non-profits and community agencies the Department held its first ever Senior Prom in November 2024. This event was well-received, and plans are underway for another prom this upcoming fall, in FY26.

Youth Advisory Board: In partnership with the Cambridge Public School (CPS) and Charter Schools the CPD expanded its Youth Advisory Board program to include both 8th and 9th graders. The program provides mentorship, relationship building, and community organizing skills to youth beginning in the 8th Grade. Topics of discussion include race and ethnicity, empowerment of black leaders and inventors, anti-bullying, gender identity, and community development. Program participants reflect a diverse cross section of the community with a goal to break down barriers to communication while also providing a pathway to a potential career in public safety. Expanding upon this work the Department is working on a mentorship program for elementary school students centered sports education and mentorship.

Partnerships with the Faith Community: The Department has worked hard to refresh its partnerships with the faith community. In FY23, CPD held its first "Creating Connections" event, bringing together over 100 people from various faiths with public safety staff to participate in important dialogue. In FY24 the Department has expanded faith-based programming through relationships that faith organizations have in the community to design programming for youth aimed at fostering stronger relations. Examples include soccer nights, Pentecostal Tabernacle in the park (a musical celebration), and ice cream socials. In FY25 and beyond, the Department is working to expand the number and range of events such as community cleanups and block parties.

ANTIRACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

Violent Crime Reduction Road Map: In recent years, communities across the country have experienced substantial increases in gun violence, which remains a pressing concern. In response to these concerns, the United States Department of Justice launched the Violent Crime Reduction Roadmap to provide local jurisdictions with a central resource for implementing strategies to address violent crime, especially community gun violence. The Roadmap outlines ten essential action items, which can be viewed at [ojp.gov](https://www.ojp.gov).

Police, prosecutors, city officials, and jurisdictions can request training and technical assistance (TTA) on how to use the Roadmap strategies to reduce violent crime while building community trust, tailored to each community's needs. In FY25 the Cambridge Police received the TTA from the Police Executive Research Forum to implement the Roadmap strategies in Cambridge. The results of the TTA report were shared with city partners and stakeholders. In FY26, these results can be utilized to better align the city's violence prevention efforts with the 10 essential steps to implement a proactive and wholistic response to violence reduction in Cambridge.

Youth and Diversionary Resources: Through its Family Justice Group (FJG), CPD works closely with other law enforcement agencies and community partners to identify youth in need of services and may make referrals to the Safety Net Collaborative (juvenile diversion program). This program has transformed the way Cambridge youth come into contact with the police and juvenile justice system, resulting in a significant reduction in juvenile arrests over several years. FJG is comprised of Youth Resource Officers (YROs) who are assigned to public schools and youth centers to provide daily contact for students, staff, and parents. The FJG also includes juvenile detectives who investigate crimes by juveniles with the goal of diversion to prevent recidivism and promote rehabilitation.

The City of Cambridge Police and Behavioral Health Integration Model also prepares officers to divert youth when appropriate, intervene for youth with behavioral health conditions, and collaborate with service providers. In this model, the officer acts in a case management capacity to use the first point of contact with law enforcement as an opportunity to engage community supports rather than the juvenile justice system. The Department's diversionary efforts were expanded through the Emerging Adult Diversion Program aimed at diverting youth aged 18-26. CPD partners with the Middlesex District Attorney's office to offer diversion to Emerging Adults who have committed prosecutable offenses to link them with supports and services (e.g., employment, housing, mental health) that will address the issues that brought them into contact with the police. This diversionary process helps Emerging Adults to avoid criminal charges that could present barriers to future employment or housing opportunities.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The FY26 Budget maintains a high level of support for the development and preservation of affordable housing in Cambridge. Affordable housing is one of the top priorities for the City and remains a major community need. Historically, 80% of taxes raised through the Community Preservation Act (CPA) surcharge have been allocated to the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT). The anticipated CPA allocation for affordable housing in FY26 is \$17.7 million. In addition, since 2018, the City has budgeted direct support to the AHT, and the FY26 Budget includes over \$24.6 million from several revenue sources, including: Property Taxes (\$1,550,000); Free Cash (\$12,500,000); Building Permit revenue (\$10,245,750); and Short-Term Rental Impact Fees (\$350,000). City support and anticipated CPA funds total \$42.3 million in direct support to the Affordable Housing Trust in FY26.

	FY25 PROJECTED	FY26 BUDGET*
GENERAL FUND	\$24,645,750	\$24,645,750
CPA FUND	\$17,040,000	\$17,680,000
TOTAL	\$41,685,750	\$42,325,750

*assumes 80% CPA allocation for affordable housing

Through FY25, the City has appropriated more than \$400 million to invest in affordable housing initiatives. These funds have been used to preserve or create more than 4,100 affordable units to date.

The City will also continue to support this effort through zoning tools that promote affordable housing, by providing access to affordable rental housing, and by providing homeownership education, counseling, and financial assistance for homebuyers.

BUILDING NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The City continues to use funds appropriated to the Affordable Housing Trust to expand a pipeline of new affordable housing throughout the city. The adoption of the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Zoning Ordinance in FY21 helped to advance 100% affordable developments toward completion, with three developments (446 units) under construction, including the first AHO development to be completed, and an additional ten developments with more than 680 affordable units that are now advancing under the AHO or have completed the AHO review process.

Notable developments include:

- **116 Norfolk Street:** Residents have moved into 62 new units of affordable permanent supportive rental housing with on-site services completed in FY25.
- **35 Harvey Street:** Renovations are complete on the conversion of a former single-room occupancy (SRO) with shared facilities into 12 self-contained affordable rental units for individuals moving beyond homelessness.
- **16-18 Wendell Street:** The Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) has acquired and converted a former dormitory into 22 units of affordable permanent supportive rental housing for residents who have experienced being homeless.
- **52 New Street:** Construction is continuing on 106 units of affordable rental housing in a mixed-use development that will be completed in FY26.
- **Jefferson Park Federal Public Housing:** The Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) is underway with construction of 278 new affordable units in a multi-phase development to replace 175 obsolete rental units and create more than 100 new affordable units.
- **49 Sixth Street:** Construction will begin in late FY25 or early FY26 on 46 new units of affordable rental housing at the former Sacred Heart rectory, school, and convent in East Cambridge.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- **1627 Massachusetts Avenue / 4 Mellen Street:** Construction will begin in late FY25 or early FY26 on 29 new units of affordable rental housing at the former Lesley University property purchased with funding from the Affordable Housing Trust in FY23. This development of a prominent site near Harvard Square will include the renovation of the historic structure and new construction on a surface parking lot.
- **35 Cherry Street:** Plans have been advanced for new construction of 10 affordable condominiums on this City-owned property where construction is targeted to begin in FY26.
- **87-101 Blanchard Road:** Funding from the Affordable Housing Trust will be used to create 110 new affordable rental units for seniors where construction is targeted to begin in FY26.
- **37 Brookline Street:** Plans have been advanced for new construction of 13 affordable rental units on this property that was purchased with funding from the Affordable Housing Trust in FY24.
- **Walden Square 2:** Funding from the Affordable Housing Trust will be used to create 95 new affordable rental units.
- **2072 Massachusetts Avenue:** Planning for new affordable rental housing is underway for this property purchased with funding from the Affordable Housing Trust several years ago.
- **28 & 30 Wendell Street:** Funding from the Affordable Housing Trust was used in FY24 and FY25 to purchase these properties in the Baldwin neighborhood where 95 new affordable rental units have been proposed.
- **Corcoran Park:** The Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) is underway with planning for the revitalization of this site in Strawberry Hill and has proposed building 290 new affordable units to replace 153 obsolete rental units.
- **1826 & 1840 Massachusetts Avenue:** Funding from the Affordable Housing Trust was used in FY25 to purchase these properties in Porter Square where new affordable rental housing will be proposed.
- **Roseland Properties:** Funding from the Affordable Housing Trust was used in FY25 to purchase these properties in Porter Square where new affordable rental housing will be proposed.

In FY25, the City Council adopted two zoning petitions to allow multifamily housing citywide. The main goals of the zoning changes are to remove requirements that make it more difficult to build multifamily housing and to promote more housing production. The new zoning will continue to provide opportunities for the creation of additional affordable housing units citywide. More information is available at www.cambridgema.gov/multifamilyzoning.

INCLUSIONARY HOUSING

More than 150 new inclusionary rental units have been completed in the past year, including 48 inclusionary rental units at 40 Thorndike Street. New inclusionary housing units will continue to be made available to new residents in FY26 along with units turning over in the stock of more than 1,250 inclusionary rental units. More than 200 applicants were housed in FY25, and more than 890 applicants have been housed in inclusionary rental units in the past 5 years. Construction of more than 100 new inclusionary units will continue in FY26.

In FY26, the City will continue work in response to the Resident Experiences of Inclusion and Bias in Inclusionary Housing study completed in FY23, by continuing to deepen its engagement with, and support for, residents to improve the experience of inclusionary housing residents and create stronger communities.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP

The City will continue to offer homeownership education and counseling to prospective homebuyers in FY26. In FY26, the City will also continue to offer financial assistance to income-eligible homebuyers through the HomeBridge program which marked its 100th homebuyer purchase in FY25. HomeBridge funding will continue to be available to households earning up to 120% of area median income and will offer up to 65% of a home purchase price to income-eligible homebuyers looking for homes on the market, with purchased homes becoming part of Cambridge's affordable housing stock. The City now oversees more than 575 affordable homes throughout Cambridge. When these homes are sold by current owners, new buyers are selected through the City's homeownership resale program. In FY26, the City will continue to use funds to reinvest in affordable units being made available to homebuyers through the resale program. In the last 5 years, 75 residents purchased affordable homes with assistance from the City.

HOMELESS SERVICES & RENTAL ASSISTANCE

The City of Cambridge is dedicated to supporting community members who are experiencing homelessness and the local service providers who provide critical services to uphold this mission. The Department of Human Service Programs' (DHSP) Planning and Development division and Multi-Service Center work closely with internal and external partners, including First Church Shelter, Bay Cove Human Services, HomeStart, and Eliot Community Human Services, to coordinate services for people experiencing and at risk of homelessness.

In FY26, DHSP will contribute \$497,250, along with continued ARPA funding, for Housing Navigation and Stabilization services that include housing application assistance, housing search and placement support, and other services that help individuals maintain permanent housing tenancies. Additionally, these funds will ensure the continuation of community meals and a shower program at the First Church Shelter, located at University Lutheran Church. The shower program is available five days per week and provides a safe, clean space for people experiencing homelessness to access showers. Community meals are served at the shelter two days per week. The City also helps residents who are facing eviction or at risk of losing their housing.

IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

In a time of heightened fear and uncertainty for immigrant communities across the country, the Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship (CIRC) continues to serve as a trusted resource for Cambridge's diverse immigrant population. Since CIRC's inception in 2016, CIRC has provided resources, organized trainings and informational programs, and partnered with other City departments and community providers. CIRC provides critical access to legal support through a free monthly legal clinic and referrals that help residents navigate complex systems and safeguard their rights.

With additional funding in FY26, the City will expand its partnership with the De Novo Center for Justice and Healing to increase access to immigration legal services, which remains in high demand. This investment will enable De Novo to go beyond the existing monthly legal clinics by hiring a part-time legal staff member to take on immigration cases in Cambridge. This expansion ensures that more residents, regardless of income or immigration status, can access timely legal support for issues ranging from visas and asylum to DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and deportation defense. This investment reflects the City's ongoing commitment to equity, inclusion, and ensuring that all residents feel supported.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME/AFTERSCHOOL

Afterschool care is critical to working families and an important contributor to the social and emotional development of children. The Department of Human Services Programs (DHSP) continues to be dedicated to increasing access to high-quality, affordable Out-of-School Time programming, particularly in response to the growing demand. Over the last two years, DHSP has continued to expand afterschool seats, adding 246 seats to



programs leading to a 20% increase in offers to families. In 2025, over 90% of those offers were for families' first choice location. DHSP's outreach efforts produced a 7% increase in applicants from low-income households, which continues to drive racial diversity in programs. There was significant reduction in the waiting pool numbers this year, with 238 applicants in the DHSP waiting pool, an improvement from the 334 applicants as of August 2024 and from 518 in August 2023.

In FY25, DHSP successfully placed 81% of applicants with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in programs and provided supports to meet their needs. This achievement reflects DHSP's commitment to ensuring that children with IEPs have access to quality afterschool care. However, despite this success, staff capacity remains a significant barrier. The ability to match each child who would benefit from the support of a one-on-one Inclusion Aide continues to be a challenge, limiting the program's full potential to serve every child who requires this level of support.

In FY25, DHSP worked with The Agenda for Children Out-of-School Time and Withinsight, a local consulting firm, on an Out-of-School Time (OST) Expansion Study to examine opportunities and challenges that exist in the Cambridge OST ecosystem. The report, along with its recommendations, will be released soon and identifies space sharing, the inclusion of children with special needs, and workforce stabilization as key areas of focus. DHSP will work with the Agenda for Children to begin work on report recommendations in FY26.

In FY26, DHSP will continue its efforts to increase access to quality afterschool care and to expand system capacity, with a focus on placing as many priority applicants and students with IEPs as possible. Specifically, Department efforts will:

- Add an additional full-time Inclusion Specialist who will support the assessment of children with special needs, training for staff, as well as site-based program coaching. This will allow for assessments to happen more quickly, and for communication improvements.
- Stabilize the workforce with additional full-time positions at Tobin, Haggerty and King Open Community Schools sites.
- Add 20 additional afterschool seats to the Tobin Community School and approximately 50 seats will be added to the M.L. King Community School and King Open Extended Day to address the closure of the Kennedy Longfellow School and the loss of the afterschool program at that site.
- Continue funding 91 expansion seats in non-profits with City support. These seats, which were added in 2023, were initially funded through ARPA money.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

CAMBRIDGE PRESCHOOL EXPANSION

In September 2024, Cambridge welcomed more than 800 4-year-olds and 3-year-olds into classrooms across 23 Cambridge preschool providers affiliated with the Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP). The City committed more than \$34 million in total funding to CPP during FY25, covering the school-day and school-year tuition cost of all 4-year-olds and prioritized 3-year-olds. The launch of CPP marked a significant milestone in the City's investment in Cambridge families, early childhood educators, and access to high-quality education.

In FY26, the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood (OEC) will focus on efforts that strengthen the CPP system through collaboration with early childhood providers and families. OEC plans to expand pathway opportunities for Cambridge preschool educators to achieve credentials by identifying and implementing additional strategies for supporting teachers as they work towards earning their early childhood credentials. This will include continuing to partner with the Community Learning Center to offer the Early Childhood Education Career Training Program. OEC staff will also be working with a CPP Program Advisory Board to develop a policy that will elevate the early childhood workforce by moving towards pay parity for early childhood educators across sectors.

Since launching the CPP application for the 2024-2025 school year, OEC has continually sought feedback from providers and families to improve the process for these core stakeholder groups. OEC will build on this engagement effort by creating a CPP Parent Advisory Board, which will focus on caregiver experience. OEC staff will incorporate parent / caregiver feedback into the engagement process for the next CPP application cycle. In line with these efforts, OEC will design and implement a quality monitoring system to ensure that all participating CPP programs continue to offer high-quality early childhood programming. This system will include regular classroom observations by a trained early childhood instructional expert.

The Department of Human Service Programs' preschool division, a CPP provider, will open two new preschool locations in FY26: the DHSP Alewife Preschool will have 4 classrooms and the DHSP Tobin Preschool will have 3 classrooms.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT DIVISION

The formation of the Community Engagement and Family Support Division at the Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP) brought together the Center for Families, which includes Cambridge Dads and Baby University, and the DHSP Community Engagement Team (CET). By combining into one division, DHSP has built up and expanded the Department's grassroots community engagement and family support strategies. The Division has created an intentional system of outreach that serves all Cambridge families, with a focus on serving and giving voice to families who are isolated, marginalized, or underserved. For example, the Division served as an internal consultant to engage families with children in the Danehy Improvement Plan's outreach efforts and community process. Community Engagement and Family Support staff supported the project's planning team in forming a comprehensive approach that has engaged more than 1,000 Cambridge residents across demographics, ensuring their voices were a part of the planning process.

The Division provides technical assistance, such as logistical planning and partnering with CET Outreach Workers to engage linguistic communities, across the City to help other programs build authentic engagement and support when developing and implementing programming. Staff coordinate with local housing developments to implement programs, supports, and targeted outreach where families live. This key partnership and facilitation results in increased participation from residents who live in housing developments in the Cambridge Preschool Program, DHSP summer camps and afterschool programs, and other City programs and services.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER (CLC) STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROJECT

The Student Leadership Project at the Community Learning Center (CLC) helps students develop transferable leadership skills. It is designed to foster a sense of community and belonging within the CLC and increase student engagement and persistence. The project empowers students to strengthen their voices in program decision-making. They become ambassadors who inform and engage the broader student community through workshops and presentations. The project also provides opportunities for students to become teachers in the Adult Public Education profession.

Over the past several years, student leaders participated in a variety of activities to enhance and highlight their skills. A group of students and staff attended the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) national conference in Nashville in 2024, and another group attended the 2025 conference in Dallas. CLC has also created pathways for students interested in teaching careers: five students completed Teaching English to Speakers of Other languages (TESOL) Certification in 2024, two co-teach an ESOL class, one teaches an English class for parents, and one works as an Instructional Aide. Another student is employed as an advising assistant in the CLC's evening ESOL program and three students volunteer as Classroom Aides; in total, there are currently nine staff at the CLC who are or were former students. In FY25, eleven students participated in an ADEI training series. All these efforts seek to infuse leadership and student voice into CLC's work.

AMERICAN FREEDMEN COMMISSION

In November of 2023, the City Council voted unanimously to establish the American Freedmen Commission. The Commission's primary goal is to investigate the historical and ongoing injustices inflicted upon the descendants of enslaved individuals and to determine the appropriate reparations. In FY25, staff from the OEI worked with key stakeholders in the Cambridge community to confirm the proposed focus areas of the Commission and implementation timeframe. Recruitment and selection of Commission members began in spring 2025. Once formed, the Commission will elect a chairperson and advise the City Manager on hiring an Executive Director. Beginning in the summer of 2025, the Commission will commence toward providing recommendations to the Mayor and City Manager for transitional justice for Cambridge residents.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

CAMBRIDGE 250

In FY25, the City launched the Cambridge 250th campaign which is a part of the Commonwealth's Massachusetts 250 campaign commemorating the 250th anniversary of American independence and Massachusetts' pivotal role in the Revolution. Supported by a State Tourism grant, the initiative includes a dynamic series of events designed to engage residents and visitors in exploring Cambridge's revolutionary past and enduring spirit of innovation. Highlights in FY25 include guided walking tours, tributes to veterans and local changemakers, an American Army 250th Birthday celebration, and a Revolution-themed Citywide Dance Party expected to draw thousands in June. With additional resources allocated for FY26, the City will continue expanding the campaign with more inclusive, educational, and celebratory programming throughout the anniversary year.

CLIMATE ACTION

Carbon-neutral Cambridge: Guided by the Net Zero Action Plan and the Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO), the Office of Sustainability (OoS) leads the City's work to secure renewable energy and transition buildings off fossil fuels. In FY26, the Department will continue to create community energy programs that help residents and businesses save energy and phase out fossil fuels. Finalization and implementation of BEUDO regulations will continue in FY26, including technical support for building owners. OoS is exploring thermal energy networks and funding, and financing strategies to further decarbonization efforts across the city.

Safe, Cool Cambridge: Preparing Cambridge's people and places for increasingly hot summers, unpredictable winters, rising sea levels, and bigger storms requires action across all City departments. OoS directs resources to prioritize people and places that require public support to prevent harm. OoS's most significant resilience initiative engages residents in problem identification and solution generation around managing increasingly hot summers.

Sustainable Cambridge: The OoS launched the Sustainable Cambridge web page in April of 2025, to bring the City's climate-related work together where it can be better understood and communicated inside and beyond the City. Sustainable Cambridge can be viewed at www.cambridgema.gov/sustainable. The Department will increase communication efforts and partnerships to provide regional and national leadership in the face of federal budget, policy, and staffing cuts.

URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN UPDATE

The City continues to implement the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP), which was published in 2019. The UFMP guides the development of Cambridge's tree assets by establishing annual planting recommendations, guiding street and sidewalk design standards, informing soils management and pruning efforts, and emphasizing the importance of community engagement and education. Public Works' Urban Forestry Division has undertaken many promising initiatives informed by the original UFMP. Since 2019, the Division has added five positions, established five new tree care programs, constructed a bare root nursery with over 700 trees, and planted over 5,000 trees.

In FY25, Public Works engaged a consultant to assist with a five-year update of the UFMP. The update process will continue in FY26 and include a thorough evaluation of progress made to date, as well as revised targets and strategies to maintain the UFMP as a vital planning initiative. The Urban Forestry Division will work closely with Public Works' Community Relations team to engage key stakeholders and the broader Cambridge community with the update process.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

OFF-ROAD PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES

In FY26, work will advance to significantly expand off-road facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, improving access and safety, and boosting opportunities for sustainable transportation in the City. Notable projects include:

- Linear Park will be under construction and when completed, will feature a slightly wider path with new park amenities, including benches, lighting, drainage, and opportunities to play and explore.
- Designs will be completed for a new pedestrian and bicycle path between Fresh Pond and Danehy Park.
- Design work will continue on the Grand Junction multi-use path.

In combination, these paths provide 2.8 miles of landscaped pathway separated from traffic. In addition, the design will advance for a new pedestrian and bicycle bridge across the Fitchburg commuter rail line, which will create a long-desired, safe connection between the Rindge Avenue neighborhood, Danehy Park, and retail destinations.

MULTIMODAL STREET DESIGN, SAFETY, AND TRANSIT ACCESS

Sustainable mobility and safety will be prioritized in FY26 through improvements to transit, expanding the on-street bicycle network, and installation of traffic calming elements as part of street reconstruction in multiple locations across the city, in addition to a new speed hump program to control vehicle speeds.

Transit access will improve through CDD's collaboration with MBTA. The next phase of the Bus Network Redesign project will improve frequency and reliability of bus service in more Cambridge neighborhoods. Bus rider experience will be improved with additional amenities that increase comfort, access to information, and make bus stops more accessible for people of all abilities. In FY26, a new study will focus on improving efficiency and access to shuttle service in Cambridge.

Key actions to improve bicycle mobility in FY26 will include supporting the buildout of a connected network of separated bike facilities and installing at least 150 bicycle parking racks, seasonal corrals, and multiple bike shelters, primarily in business districts, at schools and other key locations, based on public requests. Safe bicycling is supported through the Safe Routes to School program giving all Cambridge students access to information about rules of the road and on-bike training and a series of classes for residents on safe riding and bike repair. A new class focusing on micromobility, including e-bikes, will launch in FY26.



BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



COMPLETE STREETS/CYCLING SAFETY

The Department of Public Works uses the Five-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan to design and construct Complete Streets that safely accommodate all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities. Additionally, the Cycling Safety Ordinance (CSO), enacted on April 8, 2019, and modified on October 5, 2020, sets an ambitious timeline to implement a 25-mile network of separated bicycle lanes network across the city by 2026. The CSO informs many ongoing Public Works projects.

Public Works projects prioritize the City's commitment to Complete Streets, Vision Zero, and the Urban Forestry Master Plan. The FY26 Capital Budget funds this important work, furthering capital appropriations from prior fiscal years. Significant projects for FY26 include the Port, Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square, and Mass. Ave. Partial Construction (from Harvard Square north to the Arlington town line).

Street construction in the Port will begin in fall 2025 and include work on Harvard Street, Bishop Allen Drive, Essex, Norfolk and Columbia Streets. Part of the larger Port Infrastructure Project, this work will include extensive utility improvements, roadway reconstruction, new sidewalks, and shared streets that minimize paving and increase tree plantings. Central Square improvements on Mass. Ave. between Bigelow Street and Sidney Street are currently in design and FY26 capital funds will go toward construction. These improvements will be integrated with ongoing work on Carl Barron Plaza and River Street. Utility construction is anticipated to begin in late 2025 and will be supported by FY26 capital funds.

The Mass. Ave. Partial Construction project will establish separated bike lanes and other significant improvements along Mass. Ave. from Harvard Square north to the Arlington town line. Given the complexity of this 2-mile corridor, the project is divided into four segments. Construction on the Waterhouse Street to Linnaean Street segment will be underway in FY26. In-depth planning, outreach and coordination with businesses along the route is ongoing as the City works to improve this vital transportation corridor for all users.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



OPEN SPACE

Several open space projects will conclude and continue in FY26:

- Construction of improvements will conclude at Peabody School Playground and Gold Star Mother's Park.
- Construction will be underway at Rafferty Park in the Cambridge Highlands. The renovation will include improvements to the play areas at the park, an improved tennis/basketball court, and new seating and landscape areas.
- FY26 construction at Raymond Park in Neighborhood Nine will include drainage improvements to the park, a renovated playground, and improvements to park circulation and plantings.
- The Danehy Park Capital Improvements Plan will be completed in FY26 to guide strategic investments over the next 10-15 years.
- Planning and community engagement will begin in FY26 to guide future improvements to Hoyt Field and parks in Mid-Cambridge, including Ahern Field, Wilder-Lee Playground and the play spaces at 359 Broadway.

ELECTRIFICATION / EV CHARGING

EV Charging: The City continues to expand its network of publicly available electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, with the goal of adding at least 100 new chargers between FY23 and FY27. These charging stations are being sited to provide easy access to charging for residents without off-street parking. Public Works also administers the new Across Sidewalk EV Charging Permit, which allows eligible residents without driveway access to safely charge EVs across public sidewalks.

All Electric Rubbish Packers: The City continues to implement the recently revised Clean Fleet Policy. The Clean Fleet Policy guides the City's transition to EVs and net zero emissions from City vehicles and sets corresponding GHG emissions reduction targets. DPW continues to expand the City's fleet of all-electric trash collection trucks. The first truck went into operation in November 2024, two additional trucks arrived in early 2025, and a fourth truck will be added in FY26. This will make 31% of the City's active solid waste fleet all-electric, marking a significant milestone in the Clean Fleet Policy and advancing broader climate action and GHG emissions reductions goals. While the trucks were funded through previous fiscal years' capital and operating budgets, as well as state and federal incentives, FY26 funds go toward operational costs.

The City is on track to reach its first target under the Clean Fleet Policy, reducing municipal fleet GHG emissions by 20% from 2008 baseline levels by the end of 2025. A chart of the City's Clean Fleet progress by vehicle type can be seen on page II-34.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

SEWER & STORMWATER INVESTMENTS

The City continues to make major investments in sewer and stormwater infrastructure and maintenance through the FY26 Capital and Operating budgets. Funding will go toward projects to remove infiltration/inflow sources impacting the Alewife Watershed, planning and design of a future floodwater storage tank on City land on Sherman Street, and ongoing repairs of existing sewer and drain infrastructure. Historical investments have significantly improved the quality of water discharged to the Charles River, the Little River, the Alewife Brook, the Mystic River, and the Boston Harbor. Investment in infrastructure over a long period of time provides a more reliable system that better serves residents, who experience fewer backups, reduced flooding, and fewer emergency repairs.

The City continues to collaborate with the City of Somerville and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) to develop a Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Control Plan to protect and improve our water resources and inform continued improvements to the sewer and drainage systems. Over the last 25 years, the amount of combined sewer overflows has decreased to the Charles River by 98% and Alewife Brook by 85%. The CSO Control Plan will continue this important work, with a particular focus on considering the impacts of climate change. A draft CSO Control Plan will be completed in December 2025 with a final plan to follow in December 2026.

Public Works' Engineering Division will also use FY26 capital funds for rehabilitation of 96 feet of combined sewer pipe on Binney Street. This investment to preserve rather than replace pipe will ultimately save money while significantly improving infrastructure in Kendall Square.

INVESTING IN CITY BUILDINGS

A Municipal Facilities Improvement Plan (MFIP) allocation of \$11.1 million in FY26 will fund ongoing deferred maintenance projects and implementation of BEUDO requirements. In FY25, several significant building repair and renovation projects were completed, including a comprehensive renovation project for the DPW Simard building, façade repairs to the Inman Square Firehouse, a full interior renovation at River Street Firehouse, fire alarm upgrades at 8 city buildings, and façade restoration and accessibility improvements at City Hall.

The City Hall façade project included replacement, repair, and cleaning of stone masonry on all facades, window cleaning and painting, refurbishment of gilding on the clock faces and balcony, flagpole replacement, tower lighting improvements, and the addition of lightning protection. Accessibility improvements at City Hall include new railings at building entrances and the main stair, a new accessible counter at the cashier's office, and modifications to various office entrances and doorways.

Construction of the Tobin Montessori and Darby Vassall Upper Schools Complex is anticipated to be completed in FY26. The project will also provide new facilities for Special Start and Department of Human Services Programs preschool and after school programs. The complex will be a Net Zero Emissions facility and will include open space and stormwater infrastructure to mitigate local street flooding. The facility is anticipated to reopen for the school year beginning in September 2025.

A major renovation at Fire Headquarters at 491 Broadway is in construction. The project will provide enhanced safety features, updated locker rooms, updated dormitories, improved kitchen facilities, enhanced fitness facilities, and will feature a fossil fuel-free heating system and solar panels to align with the City's Net Zero goals. The City has appropriated \$77 million for this project.

Other ongoing MFIP projects include upgrades at Moses Youth Center, repairs to the First Street Parking Garage, HVAC improvements at City Hall Annex, upgrades at East Cambridge Firehouse, as well as improvements to various DPW facilities.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



BUSINESS IN THE CITY

The City continues to expand and develop programs to further support entrepreneurship, business growth, and succession planning. In addition to providing education and grants, staff work directly with the community to enhance the vibrancy of Cambridge's commercial districts. The FY26 Budget includes more support for building business capacity and commercial district vitality, among other programs within the Economic Opportunity and Development Division of the Community Development Department.

Staff collaborated across City departments to advance Cambridge's work toward enhanced Supplier Diversity. In FY26 the City will continue to review and implement potential policy and program recommendations to achieve the goals stemming from its evaluation of procurement history. Cambridge remains committed to supporting small businesses. Ongoing financial programs include Storefront Improvement, Boosting Business Blocks, Retail Interior Accessibility, and Small Business Enhancement, along with small business workshops and technical assistance. Staff continue to provide targeted support for women- and historically disadvantaged-owned businesses through a range of initiatives including procurement training, skill-building workshops, and enhanced marketing efforts.

DIGITAL EQUITY INITIATIVE

The Library will continue to expand its efforts to close the digital divide and ensure equitable access to the information and communication technologies necessary for full and effective participation in society, the economy, and democracy. All seven library locations offer a range of Takeout Technology that include mobile hotspots with free Wi-Fi access and Chromebook laptops. The Library currently circulates over 230 Chromebooks and over 95 mobile hotspots to patrons with additional devices being added each year. In response to patron needs for both a laptop and Wi-Fi at the same time, the library piloted lending new Chromebooks with built-in Wi-Fi access as an all-in-one solution. The successful pilot will be expanded to add more of these all-in-one devices.

The Library is committed to offering high-quality STEAM programming, resources, and skill building opportunities in The Hive makerspace as well as the branch libraries and in the community. The Library works to build strategic community partnerships, such as with Innovators for Purpose, ensuring that patrons engaged in STEAM programming reflect the diversity of the City. The Library now offers an average of over 85 STEAM monthly programs, with an average of over 1,200 patrons attending a STEAM program each month.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

CORRIDORS AND SQUARES PLANNING

Following Envision Cambridge recommendations to conduct area-specific planning within the City's key mixed-use corridors and squares, the City has advanced several planning and zoning initiatives that will extend into FY26. These include:

- Our Cambridge Street Corridor Plan (FY24-25) – This plan has recommendations including taller residential heights along the Cambridge Street corridor, ground floor, neighborhood-scale retail and consumer service uses, and a refreshed streetscape. The next step in this process is to initiate a zoning petition to enable these changes to occur over time.
- Mass Ave Planning Study (FY25-26) – A working group concluded its planning for the Mass Ave corridor from Cambridge Common to Alewife Brook Parkway. The planning effort incorporated broad public engagement, including several community meetings, focus groups, and in-person and virtual workshops. Recommendations include taller residential development throughout the corridor and climate resiliency interventions in publicly-owned spaces along the corridor.
- Central Square Plan & Rezoning (FY25-26) – Approaching conclusion in FY25, this process incorporated 3 community meetings, 12 focus groups, 8 pop-up events, a walking tour, block party, and robust social media outreach. The next step would be the development of a zoning petition in FY26 to implement recommendations. These include increased heights and density for residential development, incentives for arts and cultural uses throughout the district, and requirements for including active uses along the Mass Ave frontage.
- Alewife MBTA/Shopping Center Rezoning (FY26) – The City will partner with the MBTA and its selected development partner and form a working group to revisit Envision Alewife recommendations for changes to the Alewife MBTA station and adjacent shopping center, following the adoption of new zoning for the Quadrangle in FY24. New zoning will consider the area's stormwater challenges, tree canopy, opportunities for new transit-oriented housing and commercial development, and streetscape recommendations to improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility and connectivity.



BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

POLICE REFORM

BODY WORN CAMERAS

One of the key tools to help enhance Cambridge Police Department's accountability and transparency with the community is the implementation of its Body Worn Camera (BWC) program. The Department formally rolled out the program along with a comprehensive BWC policy in April 2025. Additionally, a new BWC unit was established and housed within the Procedural Justice Section of the Department. The unit is responsible for managing all aspects of the BWC program including training, maintenance, conducting audits and responding to Public Record Requests.

As the program was rolled out, the Department conducted ongoing community engagement to ensure the community and other stakeholders' questions were answered regarding BWC deployment. Examples include coordination with the school department, housing developments (CHA), BWC focused Coffee with a Cop, senior outreach and the youth centers. The BWC program will become an integral part of all community outreach efforts going forward to ensure that all community are provided ample opportunities to engage and ask questions. This approach will enable CPD to continuously improve the BWC program as it moves forward to ensure that the Department continues using best practices.

CO-RESPONDER PILOT PROGRAM

The Department received Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH) grant funding for a pilot co-response program in FY24, which provided funding for one co-response clinician. The funding has allowed the Department to enhance its capacity to respond to the city's most vulnerable populations (e.g., those with mental illness, substance use disorders and the unhoused) who are also at-risk for criminal-legal involvement. The co-response clinician responds to police calls as they occur and works collaboratively with the department's licensed independent social workers to ensure a continuum of effective response from the call on the street to the follow up after the incident. Since its inception, the program has been able to divert 65% of eligible calls from the ER. The department plans to seek funding from DMH to add a second clinician to provide coverage for up to 16 hours a day.

JAIL RE-ENTRY SUPPORT INITIATIVE

The CPD Jail Reentry Support Initiative was established in FY25 as a collaboration between the Cambridge Police Department and the Middlesex County Sheriff's Office to support and guide incarcerated individuals in their transition back into the community. Using a case management model, Clinical Support Unit (CSU) staff meet with incarcerated individuals inside the facility to discuss their goals for post-release. CSU staff then work in collaboration with jail support staff to create a reentry plan that includes strategies to maintain sobriety, scheduling medical and behavioral health services appointments, and navigating educational and housing opportunities. This initiative works in conjunction with the MassHealth Behavioral Health Supports for Justice Involved Individual, a state program dedicated to helping formerly incarcerated individuals transition back safely into their communities.