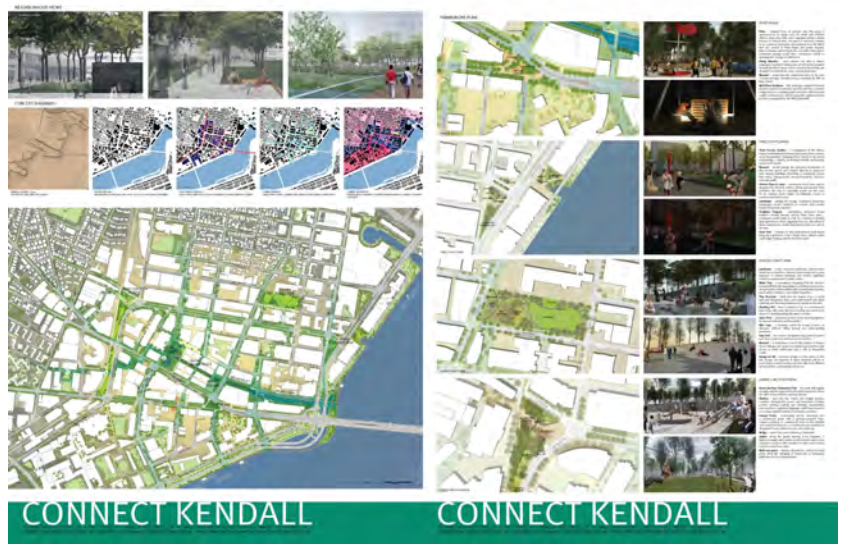


City of Cambridge Community Development Department

FY15 Major Accomplishments



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

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

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

Awards:

- [Pinnacle Leader](#)-MassCommute Excellence in Commuter Options (ECO)
- [First Place \(Large Employer category\)](#) - Walk/Ride Day Corporate Challenge
- [2014 Edgar Klugman Award](#) - Play, Policy & Practice Interest Forum of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for Healthy Parks and Playgrounds Task Force}
- [2015 "Bright Idea" in Government](#) - Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation (Harvard JFK School of Government) for Cambridge Food & Fitness Policy Council
- [White House Recognition](#) for Efforts toward Whole Building Data Access

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

- [Australia \(City of Wollagong\)](#) participants from Future Cities Program
- [China's Leaders in Development Program](#) (Harvard Kennedy School)
- [Reykjavik, Iceland Delegation](#)
- [Singapore and Heidelberg, Germany visitors](#) (International Building Exhibition)
- [Singapore Nanyang Technopreneurship Center](#)
- [Swiss Delegation](#) -Swiss-US Energy Innovation Days/Watt d'Or exhibition
- [Zhongguancun \(Chinese Silicon Valley\)](#) VIP Senior executive level program

Selected Conference/Public Presentations:

- [Aging + Place - Building Aging Friendly Cities](#) (Harvard GSD/Joint Center for Housing Studies)
- [Association of Public Data Users Annual Conference](#), Rosslyn VA
- [Biopharma Sustainability Roundtable](#), Cambridge
- [Boston Talks: The Bicycle Revolution](#), Boston
- [EcoDistrict Summit](#), Washington DC
- [Georgetown Climate Center Green Infrastructure Advisory Group](#), Washington DC
- [Inclusionary Zoning Solutions \(APA/MA\)](#), Plymouth MA
- [Living Future Conference 2015](#), Seattle WA
- [MIT Community Energy Innovations Symposium](#)
- [MIT Sustainability Summit](#), Cambridge
- [Moving Together Conference](#), Boston
- [National Association of City Transportation Officials](#) Transit Street Design Guide Development, Philadelphia
- [Net Positive Energy + Water Conference](#), San Francisco
- [Net Zero: North American Leadership Summit](#), Boston
- [Power of Ideas \(Boston Magazine\)](#), Boston
- [Society for College and University Planning](#) North Atlantic Regional Conference, Providence RI
- [Southern New England American Planning Association Conference](#), Providence RI
- [Urban Land Institute Living with Water Forum/Charrette](#)
- [Urban Sustainability Directors Network Conference](#), Houston TX



FY15 Major CDD Accomplishments

Introduction. The Community Development Department (CDD) is proud to report some of its major FY15 accomplishments within the framework of the City Council goals. Working with residents, businesses, local institutions, non-profits, and other community stakeholders, we have planned, implemented, and managed programs and projects to enhance livability, sustainability, affordability and economic health of the community. The success of these efforts has contributed to Cambridge's reputation as one of the most livable cities in the United States. More information about the department's work—past and present—can be found on the CDD website: www.cambridgema.gov/CDD.

With our accomplishments, we would like to honor the memory and reflect on the profound loss to the city of our leader, colleague and friend, Brian Murphy, Assistant City Manager for Community Development and former City Councillor. We move forward with the energy, vision, and spirit of collaboration that he cultivated during his tenure at CDD, and we are grateful for the time that we had to work with him, though it was far too short.



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

Concluded the **CONNECT KENDALL SQUARE OPEN SPACE PLANNING COMPETITION**, a three stage process spanning eight months. Four teams of finalists were guided by a vision and planning and design goals identified through robust public process and work of the **EASTERN CAMBRIDGE AND KENDALL SQUARE OPEN SPACE (ECKOS) STUDY**.

Goals included promoting complementary uniqueness of networked open spaces and building identity of place, establishing connections to surrounding neighborhoods, activation strategies, and elevating the user experience. The winning framework, along with principles and ideas from the competition, will inform park designs and the character and role of public and private open spaces in the area.

ADDITIONAL PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACE: Advanced renovation of Hurley Park, Bishop Allen/Main and Elm/Hampshire plazas, and Haggerty School playground to construction phase. Guided by public input, these open spaces will incorporate public art and create new recreation options for people of all ages and physical abilities.

PLANNING INITIATIVES:

- ◆ Conducted **CAMBRIDGE CONVERSATIONS** outreach process to guide **CITYWIDE PLANNING** and consultant selection that will move forward in FY16. Priority topics will include: transportation & mobility, shaping change, access to housing, economic opportunity, community cohesion & interaction, and civic engagement.
- ◆ **KENDALL SQUARE/CENTRAL SQUARE (K2C2) PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:** Engaged discussions with U.S. General Services Administration and other stakeholders about transformation of the 375,000 square foot Volpe Center (USDOT) into a mixed-use, public-private development. Worked with Planning Board on zoning for Volpe site and advanced Central Square rezoning discussions in conjunction with consideration of Normandy/Twining petition.



- ◆ Advanced interdepartmental work on **Harvard Square Placemaking** with the Harvard Square Business Association, Harvard University, and community participants.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Expanded social media to accompany outreach to new audiences within the community, increasingly involving technology and collaborations. Integrated social media strategy into targeted community-building initiatives such as **Lovin' Local** campaign to support independent businesses in the wake of a difficult winter. Reworked **Getting Around Cambridge** map to prioritize messaging on roadway sharing and safety of all transportation modes.

Refined outreach strategy to improve access to information, broaden public interaction and offer varied opportunities to connect through less structured activities such as **PARK(ing) Day**, which converted a record 45 parking spaces into parks for the day to invite engagement around use of the public realm.

Organized public biking, walking and other transportation-related events to support healthy lifestyles and build community. Developed events, including competitions and workshops, tailored for target audiences at locations throughout the city, and worked more intensively through the schools to engage children/youth and encourage ongoing civic participation. Through early adoption program, obtained solar-powered charging **Soofa** benches for citywide installation, offering a creative amenity, designed by local entrepreneurs, that will support Cambridge's social and environmental goals.



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

SUPPORTED SUSTAINABLE GROWTH through project review and development permitting, with projects in construction that will generate significant new property taxes. Cambridge's fiscal stability and promising future have helped to attract additional investment to support services for the entire community.

The Planning Board reviewed 22 major projects in FY15 totaling 1.3 million sq. ft. of office and commercial space and 1,726 housing units. Examples include:

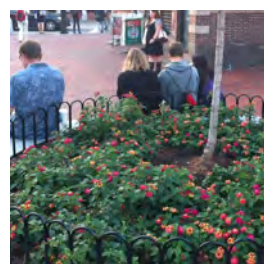
- ◆ 88 Ames Street (Cambridge Center) – 280 housing units with ground floor retail
- ◆ 100 Binney Street – 386,000 sq. ft. of office space and 1,000+ of ground floor retail space (part of the Alexandria Master Plan)
- ◆ 400, 500, 600 Discovery Park for 317,000 sq. ft. of office space, a 150 room hotel and a garage (part of Discovery Park Master Plan)

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT of City resources has leveraged public and private funding and foundation grants to support CDD initiatives including:

- ◆ Approximately \$46 million of additional public and private affordable housing investment in the last fiscal year



- ◆ \$200,000 from Our Common Backyards Program (offered through Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services) for renovations to Hurley Park.
- ◆ \$25,000 (in kind) from MAPC's District Local Technical Assistance Program (DLTA) to undertake emergency preparedness and post disaster recovery planning with the Cambridge small business community.
- ◆ \$5,000 (in kind) from MAPC's DLTA program to advance regional work with other communities on analysis and best practices relating to production of middle income housing.
- ◆ Collaborated with Food & Fitness Policy Council and to obtain Council on Aging Mass in Motion grant (\$10,000) do work around Healthy Aging and Bikes. Partnership with Council also supported Healthy Corner Markets, Urban Agriculture efforts, Hubway ads targeting immigrant populations, and immigrant focus groups on access to physical activity.
- ◆ Worked with Harvard University and the Harvard Square Business Association on Harvard Square Place-making efforts, sharing resources to enhance public space in Harvard Square.
- ◆ Leveraged mitigation funds from rezoning to fund critical planning analysis, for purposes including Grand Junction shared path and bus transit in Central Square.
- ◆ Advanced work of Kendall Square EcoDistrict using 2nd year grant funding from Barr Foundation.



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

WORKFORCE TRAINING - Supported skills training for 120 at-risk youth through **Just A Start's YouthBuild** program and supported Just A Start's **Cambridge Biomedical Careers** program to enable nine Cambridge residents to upgrade their skills in preparation for jobs in this local growth sector. Previous graduates have shown great success, with six FY14 graduates in full time lab positions with employers such as MIT, Shire, Biogen and Genzyme.

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

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



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

HOUSING: The City's commitment to creation/preservation of affordable housing directly supports diversity goals. CDD's Housing staff offers monthly information sessions at locations citywide and reaches out at community events to publicize opportunities and assistance available through the Division.

- ♦ Educated over 500 participants at monthly workshops and provided one-on-one counseling to approximately 125 individuals, facilitating access to homeownership for Cambridge residents. Offered classes on understanding and repairing credit to prepare for homeownership, and managing income/expenses.
- ♦ Assisted more than 30 households with home repairs, rehabilitation, and owner stabilization services.

TRANSPORTATION: HEALTHY AGING THROUGH COMMUNITY DESIGN project engaged seniors to address transit and bicycle usability, mobility and accessibility issues. Intense outreach to immigrant and underserved communities has helped to engage those groups around healthy, sustainable modes of transportation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Over FY14/FY15, added accessibility component to Storefront Improvement and Best Retail Practices programs to fund physical improvements that encourage people of all ages and abilities to visit and support local businesses. Workforce development/education programs also support full economic participation.



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

Along with financial investment and policy leadership in the affordable housing arena, Cambridge protects its commitment through **long term lease restrictions** and ongoing **monitoring of affordable units**. In FY15:

- ♦ Completed **Nexus Study for Incentive Zoning Ordinance**, recommending significant increase in housing contribution rate and expansion of requirements. Commissioned **Inclusionary Housing Study** to analyze need and make recommendations for potential changes to current Ordinance.
- ♦ Housed over 115 new households in affordable units offered through CDD rental housing program and assisted 18 new homebuyers in purchasing affordable homes through homeownership program. CDD manages access to 500+ affordable homeownership units through First Time Home Buyer Resale Applicant Pool and to 450+ completed affordable rental units at more than 20 properties, with over 200 new affordable units now under development.



- ◆ Approved **inclusionary housing** plans for 7 new developments, which will create 82 new affordable units and increase the number approved/created by inclusionary housing (and related requirements) to 849 units by the end of FY15.
- ◆ Worked with owners, tenants, non-profits and the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) to **preserve housing with expiring affordability restrictions**. Developed/advanced plan to preserve 105 affordable units at Briston Arms. Of 1,094 affordable units at 10 properties with affordability restrictions expiring before 2021, by end of FY15 529 affordable units at 8 properties will have been preserved since 2011. Began significant rehab on previously preserved projects (Bishop Allen Apartments and Putnam Square Apartments) and completed rehab at Chapman Arms in Harvard Square.
- ◆ Assisted 250 renters, landlords, and condominium owners to **resolve housing issues** through Just A Start's Mediation for Results program.
- ◆ Collaborated with non-profit housing providers & CHA to create **new affordable housing** including 10 rental units in East Cambridge, 14 SRO units for formerly homeless women with disabilities on Rindge Avenue, and 20 rental units in Area Four (construction to start FY16).
- ◆ Worked with the CHA to address the **capital needs of public housing developments**. Through the Affordable Housing Trust, more than \$13.5 million in CPA funds has been allocated to replace obsolete units owned by CHA, most recently at Jefferson Park with \$6.4M committed to create 104 new sustainable units (construction to start in FY16).



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

- ◆ Launched **Safe Routes to School** program, including pilot encouragement initiatives at two schools and a district-wide celebration of Massachusetts Walk and Bike to School Day.
- ◆ Advanced **Bike Network Plan** through intensive public outreach including open houses, survey tool, and on-line WikiMap. Achieved high level of engagement, receiving approximately 3,000 separate comments that will inform the final plan.
- ◆ Continued focus on **Hubway** operation and expansion yielded growth in ridership, with the system logging over three million trips since inception. Six of the ten most heavily used stations in the system are located in Cambridge.
- ◆ Updated **Transit Strategic Plan** including goals, objectives and work plan. Completed studies of how to improve efficiency of major bus routes at key locations where buses experience delay and improve circulation



of buses in Central Square. In response to feedback from seniors on barriers to transit use, installed **3 electronic transit screens** providing real-time arrival information at key public locations.

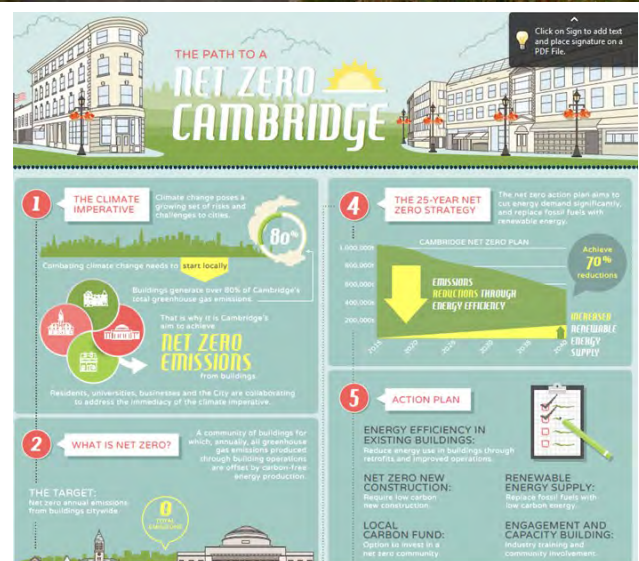
- ◆ Began construction of **Cambridge Common/Flagstaff Park** to be completed by fall 2015; completed **Waverly Multiuse Path**; and completed design and construction of multiple **traffic calming** projects across the city to reduce vehicle speeds. Western Avenue **protected bike facility** opened for use.



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

The integrated work of CDD is driven by the overarching goal of community health and sustainability. Specific milestones in FY15 include:

- ◆ Secured adoption of **Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance** and provided outreach, education and technical assistance to about 400 property owners of over 1,000 buildings required to report in 2015. Continued to promote standards for Green Affordable Housing Initiative to ensure that city-funded housing is energy efficient and sustainable.
- ◆ Presented interim report on **Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment** for 2030 and 2070 focused to understand the risk and degree of resiliency of buildings, infrastructure and the population to increases in temperature and precipitation. Entered into Metro Mayors Climate Resiliency Collaboration. Received MAPC technical assistance grant to develop business continuity and emergency preparedness programs and policy.
- ◆ Completed **25-year Net Zero Action Plan** for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from building operations citywide, with implementation framework and timeline.
- ◆ Advanced development of **Kendall Square EcoDistrict** through initial assessment and proposed goals; launched study of low carbon energy opportunities.
- ◆ Worked with City Council on adoption of **Climate Change Goals and Objectives**.
- ◆ With community partners, launched **CoLab** competition to engage public in generating creative crowd-sourced solutions to address urban heat island effect.
- ◆ Selected to compete as a semifinalist in the 2-year, \$5 million **Georgetown University Energy Prize**. Launched intensive outreach/engagement through call for action and ideas.
- ◆ With four other **Urban Sustainability Director's Network** cities and private sector partners, convened 2-day work/design session focused on development of innovative parking agreements, including infrastructure installation and maintenance, financing, enforcement, and liability issues associated with **sharing parking assets**.



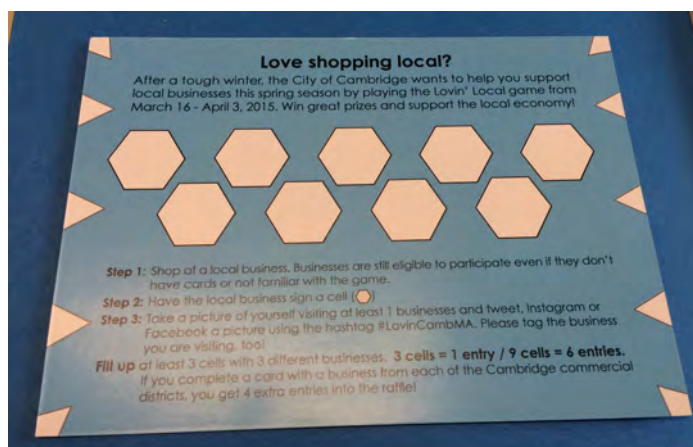
Promote doing business in Cambridge and work to strengthen our mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses and universities.

ATTRACTED BUSINESSES to move to or expand their facilities in Cambridge. Attended BIO 2014 as part of continuing focus on life science sector and attended Venture Café events to promote the City's economic development services to innovation businesses. Supported workforce and entrepreneurial skill development.

- ◆ Arrival of companies including Baxter International, Nanobiotix, Oryzon, WuXi, Nihon Kodon, Sarepta Therapeutics, Ipsen Pharma, Azzur, Intellimedix, and AMSBIO to Cambridge due to BIO participation. **Life science and technology** expansion continues with relocation/expansion of Pfizer, Broad Institute, Google, Lab Central, ModeRNA, Dicerna Pharmaceuticals.
- ◆ Assisted over 193 **entrepreneurs** through 26 educational workshops; worked with 75 businesses on issues ranging from start-up assistance to site searches for a new location and interfaced with 20 new businesses, representing over 1000 Cambridge jobs.
- ◆ Launched the **Life Sciences Corridor**, a regional initiative involving Cambridge, Boston, Quincy, Somerville and Braintree, to focus on attracting business from outside the region, retaining businesses within the region, and promoting cross collaboration between area universities, institutions and businesses.
- ◆ Expanded workforce focus with new **Cambridge Entrepreneurship Assistance Program** to effectively match skill development with growth economy.

COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT, INTERIOR and MARKETING PROGRAMS: Through **Retail Best Practices Program**, assisted 47 Cambridge retailers and provided 12 matching grants for interior and marketing improvements to businesses. Over 13 years the **Storefront Improvement Program** provided 165 projects with both storefront and/or signage construction grants. FY15 includes 25 projects: 10 for design services & 15 projects for various amounts that total \$250,000 and are expected to be completed before the end of the fiscal year (5 signage; 9 storefront improvement projects with an ADA component; and 1 façade project that is already accessible).

- ◆ Provided **technical assistance to business associations**, helping to launch the new Alewife Business Association and support the city's **commercial districts** through year-round special events programming.
- ◆ Conducted the **Inman Square Customer Intercept Survey** acquiring responses from 318 individuals. Produced report showing demands for traffic improvements, more evening activity, and additional retail and restaurants.
- ◆ **Lovin' Local Program** encouraged increased shopping at Cambridge businesses with over 2,000 postcards delivered, 2,828 Facebook views and 23,000 Twitter impressions.





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

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