



City of Cambridge

Executive Department

YI-AN HUANG
City Manager

CMA 2026-24
IN CITY COUNCIL
February 9, 2026

To the Honorable, the City Council:

I am pleased to submit this memo and the attached Administrative Order to the City Council to present a plan to align all housing and homeless services and programs into an unified Housing Department. Bringing housing support and homeless service programs together will facilitate the many ongoing collaborations between staff currently in three separate departments and allow for more coordination among staff providing housing support to residents.

Staff from the City Manager's Office, the Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP), the Community Development Department (CDD) and the Housing Department have been working on the approach to this reorganization over the past several months to plan for an expanded and consolidated Housing Department to begin operation in FY2027.

Pursuant to Article 5, Section 5-1 of the charter, I am first submitting this plan to reorganize the Housing Department to the City Council for approval. This planned reorganization will advance the City's affordable housing and homeless services goals through a shared and unified mission, vision, and program planning and delivery strategy.

This reorganization will not result in a reduction of any staff positions or material changes to any housing programs or services offered.

BACKGROUND

Affordable housing and homelessness continue to be one of the biggest challenges facing the City and the region. It is a top priority for the City, reflected in the Council's continued allocation of resources and commitment to addressing the on-going housing crisis and housing needs of residents.

As our work in the housing and homeless service areas has grown and evolved in recent years, we have also seen an increased need for collaboration and coordination between staff working across several City housing programs. The City's wide range of work to address the housing crisis, including affordable housing development, support for residents, and services for people who are unhoused, currently sits across four separate teams in three different departments. The Housing Department is already its own department reporting to the Assistant City Manager for Community Development; the Planning and Development division and Multi-Service Center are separate teams reporting up to the Assistant City Manager for Human Services; and the Office of the Housing Liaison sits within the City Manager's Office.



While there is great communication between these teams, a closer alignment of work will enhance and allow for easier coordination and improved support for staff doing this work across several program areas.

As the need for new or expanded responses to residents housing needs has grown, so too have our efforts. Each housing program team has expanded the depth and breadth of its work in recent years. Through close work with residents and internal and external partners, we have recognized the value and need in becoming more deeply interconnected internally to provide coordinated responses and support for housing needs in the community. We have seen natural collaborations develop as staff across departments have worked more closely together on efforts that span housing program areas. For example, we have seen staff across departments come together to create new permanent supportive housing, better linkages to support residents living in affordable housing, and to plan and launch new municipally-funded voucher programs.

Over the past few months, Housing team leaders have re-envisioned the current framework of a decentralized housing support model and developed a plan to bring together housing program areas into one unified department. This reorganization will build the collaboration into the City's organization structure to ensure that coordinated and collaborative work on housing issues will continue and expand.

This reorganization will result in:

- o A single, clearer way to present the City's housing assistance and resources for residents, providers, and the community;
- o Improved cross-program coordination between affordable housing development and planning, affordable housing access, housing stabilization and support, homelessness prevention, and resident support;
- o Shared clarity of mission, roles, and accountability, especially relating to support for residents and homelessness strategy alignment; and,
- o An improved organizational structure to support staff in doing this work.

REORGANIZATION PLAN

The reorganization of the Housing Department will align function and focus under 5 programmatic divisions in 3 areas:

- A. Housing Services:
 - 1. Housing Support Services
 - 2. Homeless Program Planning
- B. Affordable Housing Programs:
 - 3. Affordable Rental Programs
 - 4. Homeownership Programs
- C. Affordable Housing Development and Planning:
 - 5. Affordable Housing Development

The Housing Department will continue to staff the Affordable Housing Trust and also continue work closely with the CDD on site-specific, area, neighborhood and city-wide housing planning and development review. Development. CDD will continue to support administrative operations of the Housing Department and provide staffing for fiscal, human resources, communications, and data needs.

We believe this reorganization will allow us to better carry out our work across housing and homeless assistance programs and improve the City's ability to address the priority of providing affordable housing and housing support and assistance to residents and the community.

I am excited to submit this Administrative Order for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yi-An Huang". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Yi-An Huang
City Manager