



City of Cambridge

Executive Department

YI-AN HUANG
City Manager

CMA 2026-72
IN CITY COUNCIL
March 30, 2026

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Please see attached a memo transmitted by Claire Spinner, Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs, and Jay Fusco, Chief Information Officer, regarding an overview of the City's initial Artificial Intelligence efforts.

Very truly yours,

Yi-An Huang
City Manager





To: Yi-An Huang, City Manager

From: Claire Spinner, Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs

Jay Fusco, Chief Information Officer

Date: March 25, 2026

Subject: Where We're Starting with AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI), including Generative AI tools, is increasingly being integrated into everyday technologies. As these tools become more widely available, the City is taking proactive steps to establish a foundation for how AI may be used in our operations. Our goal is to ensure that any use of AI aligns with City values, complies with legal and privacy requirements, and benefits both employees and the public.

To begin this work, the City has taken several initial steps:

- **Cross-departmental working group:** Established a working group to support the Chief Information Officer in shaping how the City explores and uses AI.
- **Guidelines for staff:** Published initial [guidelines](#) to help City staff understand how to use Generative AI tools responsibly and effectively.
- **Internal AI chatbot:** Released a secure, internal chatbot (**Microsoft Copilot**) available to all City staff.

This memo provides an overview of these initial efforts. As a next step, the City proposes bringing this topic to the Government Operations Committee to allow for a more detailed discussion of current efforts and future opportunities and safeguards.

Cross-Departmental Working Group

The City created a cross-departmental working group to support the Chief Information Officer in developing the City's approach to AI. The group includes representatives from multiple departments and helps ensure that legal, operational, equity, and security considerations are incorporated as the City evaluates potential AI use cases. The working group also helps coordinate training and other efforts across departments and identify practical opportunities where AI tools may support staff in their work.

Guidelines for Staff

The City has published initial guidelines to help staff use Generative AI tools safely, responsibly and effectively. These guidelines provide direction on appropriate uses of AI, expectations for privacy and data protection, and the importance of human review of AI-generated content.

The guidelines are intended to be iterative and will be updated regularly as technology, regulations, and best practices evolve.

Internal AI Chatbot

Recently, the City made a secure internal chatbot (**Microsoft Copilot**) available to all City staff. The purpose of this tool is to provide employees with a safe and secure AI assistant that can help with day-to-day tasks such as drafting content, brainstorming ideas, summarizing information, and conducting preliminary research.

Providing a City-supported tool offers several advantages over employees independently using external chatbots. The internal tool helps keep work-related prompts and data within City systems, reduces the risk of staff sharing information through personal accounts or third-party platforms, and ensures that all staff have access to a consistent and secure AI resource.

Responsible Implementation

As the City begins exploring AI tools, we are paying close attention to issues such as bias, fairness, and environmental impact.

AI systems can unintentionally reflect biases present in the data used to train them—similar to how human decision-making can reflect bias. For this reason, staff are expected to carefully review AI-generated outputs and remain attentive to potential errors or biased outcomes, particularly in areas affecting community services, policies, or communications.

We are also mindful that some AI technologies require significant computing power and energy. The City will continue monitoring the environmental implications of these tools and will follow emerging best practices and vendor approaches as the technology evolves.

These initial steps are intended to establish a thoughtful and responsible foundation as the City evaluates how AI tools may support operations and improve service delivery in the future. Staff will continue monitoring developments in this area and will provide updates as the City evaluates additional opportunities and safeguards related to the use of AI.