



City of Cambridge

Executive Department

YI-AN HUANG
City Manager

CMA 2025 #184
IN CITY COUNCIL
June 30, 2025

To the Honorable, the City Council:

I'm looking forward to discussing the proposed City Manager performance review process and goals for 2025, following our discussion at Government Operations Committee in May.

I am also grateful that we continue to work together to ensure a fair, transparent, and accountable process, all of which I have been committed to since beginning in this role three years ago.

I believe that that this process and structure has worked well, and did not exist for the City Manager position over the past many decades. We have built a clear way to provide the City Manager with formal feedback and assess performance, and I'm grateful to the City Council for working through this process in both 2024 and 2025.

I also recognize from our discussions that the goal setting process has felt separated from the core Council priorities and goals that we are working on together - and that the City Manager goals proposed, while important, feel more distant from the main work the Council is interested in.

My reflection is that the City Manager goals have been focused on the nuts and bolts of running the City administration which are directly under the City Manager's control, while Council goals prioritize high level policy initiatives. Over time City Manager goals could include more fixed metrics that capture our performance on employee engagement, operational excellence, or resident service.

I also want to highlight and appreciate the nature of how collective and collaborative the work is between the City Council and the City administration. For instance, on housing, it was clear coming into 2025 that Multi-Family Housing was a major priority. But the work depended on not just the City administration developing policy recommendations and specific zoning language. It also depended on Council deliberations, committee meetings, and ultimately, votes on changing zoning law. In the end, we collectively were successful in passing one of the most prominent residential zoning reforms in the country, but it was a collaborative effort and took all of us working together. Similarly, at the beginning of 2025, I would not have anticipated that reviewing our inclusionary zoning policy would become an important policy discussion. But as I look at the work we are set to do on housing over the summer and fall, I believe it's one of the most important policy deliberations we will embark on during the second half of the year.

All this is to say that I believe it's important for the Council to be focused on its goals, for there to be strong leadership and collaboration coming from the City Manager and City administration, and that these policy initiatives ultimately represent the most high profile and impactful work that we do together.



This should be an important part of my performance review and I believe the current template provides that forum with an overall rating and rationale, and open text on areas of strength and accomplishment, and areas for growth and development. But the work we do collectively doesn't feel like a fit for City Manager goals, especially as agendas evolve over the course of the year.

This feedback as we are now in our third year together has been valuable, and I would propose that we follow the same process and structure for 2025, while considering a larger change for 2026 that could evolve this template to reflect our discussions.

Thanks so much, and as always, I'm grateful for the privilege to serve in this position.

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

City Manager Performance Review Process

- The City Council and City Manager will approve annual goals, the performance evaluation process and timeline, and a template for performance assessment with defined evaluation metrics. The Mayor will designate a City Manager Performance Evaluation Committee with a chair to coordinate the process.
- By Fri, August 29, the Chair will meet with the City Manager as an opportunity for a mid-year check-in.
- By Fri, November 14, the following will be provided to the Chair and the full City Council:
 - The City Manager's self-review
 - The results of an annual resident survey
 - Feedback from the City Manager's direct reports and senior leadership team; this will include the Deputy City Manager, Assistant City Managers, City Solicitor, Chief of Equity and Inclusion, Chief People Officer, Chief of Staff, Chief Public Health Officer, Police Commissioner, Fire Chief, etc.
- By Fri, Dec 5, the Chair will gather feedback from the City Council using the evaluation template on the City Manager's performance based on the agreed upon performance categories and goals.
- The Chair will write a consolidated review using the evaluation template that synthesizes the themes and key points across the City Council's individual reviews
- By Fri, December 19, the City Manager Performance Review will be delivered to the City Manager in a Special Meeting of the City Council. The written review will be provided to the City Manager at least 48 hours in advance of the open session.
- There will be an opportunity for the City Manager to respond both verbally during open session and in writing afterwards if desired.

City Manager Overall Performance Assessment

The City Council will provide an overall rating and high-level summary that synthesizes feedback on performance.

Overall Rating	Rationale

4=Exceeds Expectations, 3=Met Expectations, 2=Partially Met Expectations, 1=Did Not Meet Expectations

Areas of Strength and Accomplishment	Areas for Growth and Development

City Manager Performance Categories

Ratings: 4=Exceeds Expectations, 3=Met Expectations, 2=Partially Met Expectations, 1=Did Not Meet Expectations

Area	Rating	Rationale
Leadership: Effectively carry out the vision and direction set by the City Council including through development of goals and strategies as well as work closely with the Council to lead the City through significant events and crises		
City Council Relationship: Establish a collaborative and transparent working relationship with the City Council		
Management: Develop a strong City organization that has the people, processes, and systems to deliver on day-to-day operations and existing and new initiatives		
Community Engagement: Proactively communicate with the community, and create a range of opportunities for all stakeholders and residents to provide input and feedback, particularly communities whose voices are not typically heard by City Hall		
Culture: Define and establish a healthy culture across the City that fosters collaboration, trust, empathy, and effective and efficient decision making		
ADEI: Advance anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts across the City, including strategy, organizational culture, HR, policy development, and service delivery		
City Operations: Oversee effective delivery of resident services including day-to-day operations, maintaining city infrastructure, and major capital projects		
Fiscal Management: Provide effective financial management and oversight of the budget, ensuring fiscal stability while allocating resources to meet community needs		

City Manager 2025 Goals - DRAFT

The City Manager will report results for each goal as part of the self-assessment

Measures

Area	Description / measurement
Leadership	Coordinate with the City Council on response to federal actions and funding challenges, including addressing direct impacts to the City, community, and affected organizations in the City
	Engage on regional priorities and advocate on behalf of the City to the state administration and legislature
City Council Relationship	Collaborate with City Council to prioritize initiatives and programs aligned to Council goals
	Continue to maintain an efficient process for awaiting reports and provide summary report in early 2026
Management	Contract with benefits broker to assess current City benefits and develop initial recommendations on potential changes
	Conduct Class and Compensation study to address non-union compensation in relation to the market as well as internal equity across departments
Community Engagement	Pilot new methods of improving communications and engagement with the community
	Review boards and commissions and produce recommendations on strengthening engagement with members who are serving
	Resident survey performance of >60% Excellent/Good on 2025 survey for overall performance of City government
Culture	Develop action plan based on the 2025 employee engagement survey and begin implementation
ADEI	Establish the American Freedman Commission as a new city department in line with the 2023 ordinance
	Develop a citywide plan to enhance communication and foster engagement with the community around the City's core values of Antiracism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI)
City Operations	Achieve compliance with established service level agreements (SLAs) for operating department requests in SeeClickFix at an 80% level or above in the top 30 request categories
	Provide preliminary framework for a comprehensive 10-Year Public Investment Plan
Fiscal Management	Implement greater City Council engagement in the budget development process, including Finance Committee meetings prior to formal submission of the budget regarding: 1) operating budget, 2) capital budget, 3) police budget, and 4) ARPA program
	Maintain strong fiscal position and AAA bond rating
	Finalize ARPA contracts and amendments with all funding obligated