

Community Wellbeing Group Draft Recommendations

Community Wellbeing Goals

- **Access to Opportunity:** Provide access to opportunities for all people regardless of differences
- **Art & Culture:** Cultivate a city where artistic expression and cultural traditions are integrated into all aspects of civic life
- **Civic Engagement:** Empower all people to participate in public life
- **Health and Wellness:** Ensure access to resources that support holistic health, well-being, and extended life.
- **Learning and Play:** Encourage lifelong learning and enriching opportunities for play and recreation
- **Racial Justice:** End race-based disparities and achieve racial equity

Community Wellbeing Strategies & Actions

Access to Opportunity

Strategy: Connect young residents and organizations through education and work programs

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Connect youth with Cambridge’s large institutions through employment programs	High	Existing	

Strategy: Promote culturally responsive and relevant service delivery from city departments

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing Actions			
Increase multilingual capacity among city staff through hiring and supporting access to language classes.	Medium	Existing	
Provide city staff training on sexual orientation and gender identity	High	Existing	

Strategy: Provide targeted support for people experiencing homelessness.

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Coordinate public and private efforts to create comprehensive services to persons experiencing homelessness	High	Existing	
Assess the size and experiences of Cambridge’s population experiencing homelessness	High	Existing	

Strategy: Safe and welcoming place for people of all genders, sexual orientation, and gender identity

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Expand the city’s Transgender Rights in Public Accommodations Training for local businesses (Cambridge Human Rights Commission, LGBTQ+ Commission, License Commission, ISD)	High	Existing	
Long-term actions (10+ years)			
Increase the number of public or publicly-accessible restrooms, including all-gender bathrooms.	Medium	Modified	Capital funding required.

Strategy: Provide programs and services that meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Provide programming and opportunities for special needs people of all ages	High	Existing	
Expand transportation assistance for people with disabilities (e.g. Cambridge taxi discount program, disability parking permit program, Wheelchair-Accessible Taxicab Program, MBTA Transportation Access Pass, Paratransit, and system-wide accessibility, Door2Door Transportation, etc.).	High	Existing	
Increase access to employment opportunities for people with disabilities in city government and private companies through accessibility support, internships, training and mentoring programs	High	Existing	
Ensure reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities	High	Existing	
Provide programming for youth with special needs, either through inclusion policies or dedicated programs	High	Existing	
Near Term (<5 years)			
Develop and implement a disability standard for web based services.	High	New	Operating funding required.

Strategy: Support older adults through targeted programming and services

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Expand programming through centralized senior centers	High	Existing	
Expand transportation assistance for seniors	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support Cambridge families through parental education, childcare services, and family-centered design

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Expand affordable childcare through out-of-school-time programming	High	Existing	
Expand education and support to families with young children, as well as prenatal education	High	Existing	
Support Find it Cambridge, an online resource that provides information on activities, services, and resources in Cambridge.	High	Existing	

Art and Culture

Strategy: Create new opportunities for public art and performance and preserve existing public art assets

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Incorporate public art into capital projects	High	Existing	
Program public spaces with art and performance development organizations to create new affordable housing units.	High	Existing	
Conduct maintenance on and restoration of public artworks	High	Existing	
Ensure public artworks are made to last and use resilient materials	High	Existing	
Relax restrictions on noise and large gatherings for street performances	Medium	Existing	
Organize and/or fund arts festivals that serve as a destination for artists and audiences in public and semi-public spaces (like Jazz Fest in Danehy Park)	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support the creative exchange between artists and audiences

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Create new opportunities for audiences to financially support artmaking	High	Existing	
Create new opportunities for audiences to engage with artmaking, particularly youth and populations who don't typically engage in the traditional art world	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support Cambridge's diversity and traditions through formal recognition and celebrations

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Plan an annual street celebration of Cambridge's history and communities	Medium	New	Operating funding required.
Host events and activities to recognize and communicate the diverse heritages of Cambridge's residents and promote cross-cultural dialogue, interaction, and knowledge-sharing	High	Existing	
Near-term actions (<5 years)			
Create a database of places that highlights Cambridge's history, traditions, and legacy, and publish a collection of walking routes based on those places	Medium	New	Operating funding required.
Long-term actions (10+years)			
Provide funding for the creation of a Cambridge History Museum to connect historically significant locations	Medium	New	Capital funding required.

Strategy: Support public and private interior spaces for art production and display

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Create a program that pairs artists with vacant spaces waiting for tenancy or redevelopment for pop-up shops, studio space, or other artistic use.	Low	New	
Display art in municipal buildings	High	Existing	
Link artists with businesses/organizations who would like to display their art	High	Existing	
Near term (<5 years)			
Modify zoning to allow for live-work space for artists.	High	New	Rezoning required.

Strategy: Support creative expression and arts education for non-professional artists and youth

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Provide financial support for organizations that encourage artmaking by nonprofessionals	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support creative production among professional artists and arts organizations

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Provide financial support for professional artists and arts organizations	High	Existing	
Provide information and resources for Cambridge Artists	High	Existing	

Civic Engagement

Strategy: Expand residents understanding of local government issues

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Encourage transparency in planning and policy development processes through active reporting of planning outcomes (i.e. Open Data, annual reporting of planning processes) and production of fact sheets	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support new community organizations

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Provide information on neighborhood and business organizations (regarding size and number) on city website.	Medium	Existing	
Conduct an inventory of publicly-accessible indoor meeting spaces, including an analysis of the hours, capacity, location, and contact information, and make available to public.	High	New	

Strategy: Encourage voting, especially by historically underrepresented groups

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Conduct voter registration campaigns, especially in American-born Black and non-English speaking communities	High	Existing	
Partner with universities to expand local voter registration and voting among students.	High	Existing	

Make multilingual voter registration information available through existing programs	High	Existing	
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Strategy: Increase meaningful community engagement opportunities

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Expand the amount of money allocated to Participatory Budgeting to solicit ideas and community voting for new capital projects	High	Existing	
Study programs and policies aimed at increasing youth participation in community events and activities	High	Existing	
Create a mentorship program for youth to meaningfully engage with government (i.e. MSYEP)	High	Existing	

Strategy: Increase participation of underrepresented groups to weigh in on city policy and governance

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Solicit ideas and opinions from adults and youth for new capital projects the City should undertake (Participatory Budgeting).	High	Existing	
Provide consistent, high-quality, culturally appropriate translation and interpretation services, particularly for key City events or meetings	High	Expanded	Operating funding required.
Increase funding to Community Engagement Team, a multi-agency collaborative that reaches out to underserved Cambridge families and connects them to community events and resources, develops community leaders, and supports agencies in working with a diverse community, to train other departments to start similar programs.	High	Expanded	Operating funding required.

Research and implement innovative and non-traditional engagement tools and partnerships, including use of technology and art, and meeting people where they are	High	Expanded	
Prioritize outreach and promotion of city events in culturally specific publications.	High	Expanded	
Expand City efforts, including targeted outreach and recruitment, to ensure diverse representation on City boards, commissions and advisory committees	High	Expanded	
Invest in technology in additional meeting spaces to make meetings available for streaming online, including both high and low-tech options (i.e. Facebook Live)	High	Expanded	Capital funding required.
Near Term (<5 years)			
Streamline current engagement processes and develop a resource guide on engagement best practices outlining tools and techniques to increase public participation	High	New	
Study alternative models of neighborhood representation and civic engagement that increase representation from underserved communities	Medium	New	
Procure a cloud-based database to track community engagement requests and develop contact list that tracks stakeholder planning interests (i.e. CRM)	High	New	Operating funding required.

Health and Wellness

Strategy: Limit violent behavior and treat the physical and emotional effects of violence and exposure to violence.

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Educate the public on recognizing and responding to domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence	High	Existing	
Implement developmentally appropriate prevention activities in schools to educate youth about gender norms, healthy relationships, and gender-based and sexual violence.	High	Existing	
Adopt a policing strategy that works in partnership with the community to reduce crime through education and enforcement	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support affordable healthy eating options

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Improve access to community gardens and local food production	Medium	Expanded	
Improve access to farmers' markets	Medium	Expanded	
Study and implement recommendations to improve affordable and convenient access to healthy food, particularly for low-income communities and communities of color	High	Existing	
Increase the number of water fountains in public facilities and parks during renovations	Medium	Existing	
Support vendors in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	High	Existing	

Provide information and resources to business owners interested in expanding healthy food options (Healthy Markets, food truck program)	High	Existing	
Facilitate access to a variety of food sources (grocery stores, buying clubs, farmers markets, specialty markets) especially for vulnerable populations	High	Existing	
Adopt an urban agriculture ordinance to increase local food production	High	Existing	
Directly provide healthy food to those in need	High	Existing	
Directly provide healthy food to youth in City programs	High	Existing	
Educate the public on how to implement healthy eating options	High	Existing	
Medium-term actions (5-10 years)			
Provide information to new residents on ways to access affordable grocery stores	Medium	Expanded	

Strategy: Support healthy lifestyles

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Increase participation of and more widely publicize results of the Cambridge Teen Health Survey and Middle Grades Health Survey to track patterns of youth physical activity	High	Expanded	
Provide information about and promote access to affordable opportunities for people to participate in fitness and recreational activities and to enjoy the outdoors	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support healthy lifestyles and health care among historically underserved populations.

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Create ongoing healthy living support programs for underserved groups. Programs include the Men’s Health League (including Fit for	High	Existing	

Life, Fitness Brothers, Cambridge in Motion, Healthy Markets, Snap Match Program)			
Continue to offer events for targeted health programming and assessment	High	Existing	
Provide transportation and other indirect support for seniors seeking non-emergency healthcare (e.g. MassHealth Transportation Program)	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support the mental, behavioral, and emotional health of all and reduce substance abuse

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Expand overdose education, naloxone use training, and naloxone distribution.	Medium	Existing	Operating funding required.
Provide direct outreach, counseling, and programming for people abusing substances	High	Existing	
Provide information on substance abuse prevention	High	Existing	
Screen youth for potential substance abuse or mental/behavior health needs and connect them to service providers.	High	Existing	
Implement an educational campaign about mental/behavioral health to destigmatize mental illness, increase awareness on substance abuse prevention, and promote existing mental/behavioral health services in Cambridge.	Medium	New	Operating funding required.
Connect vulnerable populations, including the elderly, LGBT, homeless, immigrants, parents, and youth, to mental/behavioral prevention, screening, and treatment (Homeless Outreach Team, Injury Violence Prevention, Safety Net Collaborative).	High	Modified	Operating funding required.
Near-term (<5 years)			
Expand safe and consequence free disposal of medication and drug paraphernalia, providing exchanges if necessary. (i.e. sharps disposal)	High	Expanded	Operating funding required.

Learning and Play

Strategy: Create and/or publicize formal and informal adult learning opportunities

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Offer subject-focused classes and other learning opportunities	High	Existing	
Enable informal and self-directed learning experiences	High	Existing	
Work with colleges, universities, other institutions of higher learning, and community-based organizations to promote lifelong learning opportunities	High	Existing	

Strategy: Create out-of-school-time learning opportunities for children and youth

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Offer after-school programming within schools	High	Existing	
Offer educational programming outside of a school setting	High	Existing	
Offer career-focused educational experiences	High	Existing	
Create equitable access to high-quality early-learning services and support families so that their children are prepared for school	High	Existing	
Expand after-school and summer programs for children of all ages	High	Existing	

Strategy: Create entertainment and recreational programming for young residents

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing			
Provide citywide entertainment and recreation options for youth of all ages	High	Existing	
Create neighborhood-specific recreation opportunities to bring together youth of diverse backgrounds and ages	Medium	Existing	
Expand evening programming to bring youth from different neighborhoods together	Medium	Existing	
Support safe, all-ages entertainment venues that accommodates youth through the negotiation of community benefits conducted in development review (i.e. Volpe Community Center, Foundry)	Medium	Existing	Capital funding required.

Strategy: Develop a robust open space network that provides access to a variety of uses to meet the needs of a diverse population

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Assess open space needs at citywide and neighborhood scales, with attention to diversity of open space uses and identify gaps in the open space system	High	Existing	
Design and program open space to encourage intergenerational use of open spaces	Medium	Existing	
Provide open space for both athletic and non-athletic activities (sports and performance), including both organized and spontaneous games	Medium	Existing	
Respond to changing demographics with a flexible park system and programming	High	Existing	

Strategy: Encourage creative play for all ages and abilities

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Sponsor arts performances and installations in Cambridge parks	High	Existing	
Hold City-sponsored festivals/community events	High	Existing	
Provide a diverse range of play environments across the city to serve a full range of age groups, ability levels, and interests during all seasons of the year and all-weather conditions.	Medium	Existing	
Make each play area unique by varying its size, location, and elements, as well as incorporating cultural and natural history of the surrounding area.	Medium	Existing	
Incorporate play into public realm improvements and capital projects	Medium	Existing	
Encourage play spaces in POPS or open space provided as a community benefit during private residential development	High	Existing	
Redesign and renovate playgrounds for more robust play experiences	High	Existing	
Increase programming for community events at parks and squares, including culturally specific programming	High	Expanded	Operating funding required.
Integrate unstructured play in the design of parks and playgrounds	High	Existing	
Provide opportunities for children to interact with the natural environment and de-emphasize the sole reliance on manufactured play equipment for play in play areas.	Medium	Existing	
Near Term (<5 years)			
Revise permitting process for reserving parks/open space and holding block parties to eliminate barriers for underserved communities	Low	Modified	

Build partnerships with local non-profit and community organizations to develop additional year-round park programming for all ages.	Low	New	
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Strategy: Create formal and informal opportunities for neighbors to interact with one another

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Hold City-sponsored block parties/barbecues in residential neighborhoods.	Medium	Existing	
Invite people to hold neighborhood events and centralize advertising of those events.	Medium	Existing	

Strategy: Provide structured and informal athletic opportunities for adults and youth of varying abilities and interests

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Provide organized athletics programs and leagues citywide and near residential neighborhoods	High	Existing	
Provide athletic opportunities for people with special needs	High	Existing	
Program athletic facilities that support sports and activities reflecting Cambridge's diverse demographics	High	Existing	

Strategy: Provide a mix of active and passive recreational spaces within a half-mile walking distance of all Cambridge residences and employers

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Assess diversity of open spaces and identify gaps in the open space system	High	Existing	

Racial Justice

Strategy: Increase cultural competency and dialogue around issues of race

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Hold regular series of citywide conversations on race and equity	High	Expanded	
Require mandatory training for city staff, including public safety personnel, on topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency	High	Existing	
Support City Committee on Diversity to create discussion opportunities for city staff to increase cultural awareness and understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion.	High	Existing	

Strategy: Review new and existing government actions for their impact on racial justice.

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing Actions			
Develop a citywide racial equity plan and increase staff capacity to conduct ongoing racial equity analyses of new and existing policies, programs, services, procurement practices, and community engagement to evaluate how the proposal advances racial equity, address gaps in services and disparities in access, addresses institutional racism, and mitigates unintended consequences (i.e. Seattle Racial Equity Toolkit)	High	New	Operating funding required.

Strategy: Ensure the public safety system actively protects and addresses issues that disproportionately impact communities of color

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Educate the community on the existing process for bringing complaints and concerns forward about police interactions, as well as the accountability process following complaints.	High	Existing	
Continue the efforts of public safety personnel to build strong community relationships and trust through outreach and hosting informational events	High	Existing	
Participate in the Police Data Initiative to collect, analyze, and make publicly available data on hate and bias-crime to proactively address any potential issues of racial disparity.	High	Existing	
Continue to review the composition, decisions, and practices of the Police Review and Advisory Board	High	Existing	

Strategy: Support racial and ethnic equity in employment in Cambridge

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Ongoing actions			
Expand availability and access of mentorship, job training, internship and apprenticeship programs for racial and ethnic minorities through partnerships with universities, businesses, and organizations, targeting populations with the highest unemployment rates (Cambridge Works; Harvard Internship Program, Summer Jobs Program)	High	Expanded	Operating funding required.
Provide adult basic education (i.e. GED, English, math, and literacy classes), citizenship education programs, and preparation for college or training programs (CLC, Multiservice Center)	High	Existing	
Review city employee demographics, including police, and research and implement best practice strategies for diversifying recruitment, hiring, and retention of city employees of color.	Medium	Existing	

Strategy: Provide targeted programming, support, and services to racial and ethnic minorities

Actions	Priority	Status	Notes
Medium Term			
Programing to improve life outcomes of Black men and youth in education, employment, family stability, and criminal justice. (i.e. Cambridge Haitian Program)	Medium	Existing	

Actions considered by not recommended

- Develop a stipend program for multilingual youth and adults to assist with city events and outreach activities to increase dialogue with members of the public with limited English proficiency.
- Increase staff capacity to provide regular childcare at public meetings

- Open community kitchens in existing public facilities, such as schools or libraries, that are open to the public, and/or have programming such as healthy cooking classes
- Grow the number of beds and treatment opportunities for opioid users.
- Grow the American with Disabilities Act enforcement function of the Commission for People with Disabilities
- Create project-specific stakeholder committees to review development proposals in lieu of standing neighborhood Advisory Committees.
- Establish a "Health in All Policies" standard by the inclusion of health impact analyses in policymaking processes