



*CAN member meetings are announced in advance and open to the public.
Everyone interested in CAN is invited to attend.*

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CURRENT LINKS

- CAN’s Website – <https://cambridgecan.org>
- JOIN CAN FOR FREE – <https://cambridgecan.org/join-can/>
- CAN Meeting Minutes – <https://cambridgecan.org/category/meetings/>
- CAN Meeting Videos – <https://www.facebook.com/WHCPRadio/videos> or
<https://www.youtube.com/@whcpstudio4716>
- CAN’s City Council Meeting Notes – <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/city-council-notes/>
- CAN’s Planning & Zoning Notes – <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/p-and-z/>
- CAN on Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cambridgeassociationofneighborhoods>
- Contact CAN – cambridgecan@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Chuck McFadden, President, CAN

As an old Budget Officer for the U.S. Treasury Department, I am probably one of the few people in Cambridge that likes to read the City budget which was 117 pages long this year. To make it easier for those who want to know what the City is planning but don’t want to wade through all the paperwork, I have broken the budget down to areas of interest, as follows:

What is the City’s budget? The City has several budgets which together add up to \$38 million. Most people however consider the City budget to be the General Fund which this year is \$17.9 million. The other funds



are the Sewer Fund, the Water Fund, the Marina Fund and the Special Projects Fund. All the funds shown ended the year with a surplus. The City has an \$8.5 million ending balance for all accounts which includes a \$3 million rainy day fund for emergencies. This is an excellent position on which to end the fiscal year.

Where does the City get its money? There are two parts to the City budget – revenue and expenses and they should balance. The revenue comes from approximately 44 different sources which must be tracked, recorded and projected. The largest revenue source is property taxes which provide 50% of the funding for the general fund budget. Other sources include hotel room taxes - \$1 million; income taxes - \$1 million; disposal fees - \$1.2 million; highway user fees - \$1.1 million; and, approximately 40 other minor sources.

What is the property tax rate and is it going up? The property tax rate in the 25/26 budget is the same .81 per \$100 of assessed value as it has been for the last four years. In 2020, the tax rate was .93 per \$100, so the City has done a great job in maintaining the .81 constant rate while inflation was pushing costs up. The federal government helped during this period with ARPA funds, however that era is over and there are no ARPA funds in this year's budget. Looking long term, the City needs to expand housing and commercial development. The new housing project at the Hyatt and the development of the Rt. 50 corridor should help with that effort.

What is in the 2026 budget? The new general fund budget funds 139 full and part-time city employees which is an increase of 4 full time positions from the previous year. The new positions are: a public information officer, a code enforcement officer, a tenant advocate, and a tech person in the engineering department. All the positions got a 3% raise except the City Manager. The police are allocated 41% of the budget and were funded for 47 positions, the highest level in several years. However, the police department cannot get to 47 positions because its officers are continually "poached" by the County Sheriff's department and other surrounding police departments which offer higher salaries. To offset this problem, the City has authorized an extra \$196,000 to the Police Department to increase salaries. Hopefully this will help in maintaining and increasing the police actual on-board numbers which are currently in the 30's.

Other interesting increases are: \$122,000 for Cannery Way – the walkway to the Harriet Tubman mural. The City is also continuing to fund Cannery Park, with a dog park and expansion of the playground area. The City is also giving \$72,000 to CWDI to continue the development of the Cambridge Harbor site which has been under development for the last 20 years.

Probably, the most interesting thing from a City financial operations point of view is the establishment of a Maintenance reserve fund of \$500,000. This is the new City Manager's idea and he should be commended for getting it in the budget. The City has physical equipment with a known life expectancy which will age out over time however the City has never set aside funds to replace this equipment. A good example of this is the heating and air conditioning equipment at the police and fire department which is 17 years old and is failing (\$30,000 was just spent to keep it going for a while). To replace the system will cost the City \$1.5 million which will have to be paid for by a bond which will have a substantial interest rate for many years. The City Manager's idea is to have a fund set aside to pay for such predictable costs. This is standard



practice in most financial systems. The advantage of a fund like this is that it earns interest while waiting to be used instead of paying interest after the fact. The City Manager's idea is to start with \$500,000 and add \$50,000 each fiscal year thereafter for the next 10 years. In my opinion, he should consider raising that to \$100,000 a year if possible.

What is not in the Budget? The biggest decrease in the budget is the unfortunate loss of \$18 million in Federal grants to fund the Shoreline Resiliency project which was to build up the shoreline from Great Marsh Park to Cambridge Creek. The river is rising and flooding will increase without this project, so it remains uncertain how the City will handle this problem. Also, there was a major decrease in City funding of the City's non-profits. Only \$45,000 was given out which is about a 75% decrease from prior years. The City reasoned it had to do this to offset increases, specifically those in the Police Department. Finally, there is an estimated \$27 million in unfunded capital improvements – roads, sidewalks, city buildings, etc. that the City needs to address in the future.

Housing Facts in the Budget – Cambridge has 6,600 houses of which 1,100 are vacant. Of the occupied houses, 15% don't have cars. The high number of vacant homes affects code enforcement efforts and the lack of cars affects how the city should manage its transportation systems.

Shout Outs – We should give a shout out to the new City Manager for producing a balanced budget without increasing the tax rate in these challenging times and for putting the City in a better financial situation with the establishment of a Maintenance Fund. I would also like to thank Finance Director Perry Peregoy and his finance staff of six people who track and record and project all the funds in the City including your trash, water and marina bills (if you are so lucky to have a boat). In addition, they pay salaries and bills not only for the general fund but for all the funds. The paperwork involved is considerable and we should be grateful that such a small staff can handle and keep track of everything.

Come to the June 18th CAN meeting at the Library at 6:30 to hear the City Manager speak on the budget and take your questions.

CAMBRIDGE CORNER

CAMBRIDGE REAL ESTATE TRENDS

Fred and Martha Phillips-Patrick

National Residential Real Estate Developments:

According to Freddie Mac, the thirty-year fixed rate mortgage interest rate has hovered around 6.85% for the last few weeks, showing only slight variations from week to week.

The U.S. housing market is exhibiting a complex mix of trends. Home prices are still climbing, but the pace of growth has slowed significantly, particularly in the Northeast, while the Southeast and West are also seeing more price discounts and lower gains. Mortgage rates at 6.85% are relatively high and are still a



significant factor for buyers, leading to a mismatch between sellers and buyers, creating in general more of a buyer’s market across the nation.

How did Cambridge fare in this market environment in May 2025? Let’s see.

Cambridge Market Update:

Realtor.com characterizes Cambridge as a Buyers Housing Market, which means prices tend to be lower and homes stay on the market longer. In April 2025, the latest available, the Cambridge housing market saw a median home price of \$274,990, a 16.5% increase compared to last year. However, while home prices are up, the number of homes sold decreased by 50.5% year-over-year, and homes were on the market for a longer period, averaging 64 days, compared to 50 days last year. Given market conditions, buyers are now offering more bids with contingencies and inspection requirements. Sellers are sometimes offering closing cost coverage among other concessions.

Sales

Currently, Realtor.com shows that there were 236 homes for sale (158 single family homes and 78 condos, townhouses, and multifamily units) in the Cambridge area, a 50% increase for single family homes over April. There are also 46 farms and plots of land. The property’s asking prices range from \$25,000 for a small plot of land on Park Lane to \$3,100,000 for a 46.4-acre farm on 4890 Drawbridge Road.

Realtor.com details that in May 2025, 26 houses, condos, and townhouses were sold in Cambridge. The properties sold ranged in value from \$34,000 on Willis Street to \$1,195,000 on Broadview Drive.

1317 Broadview Dr	\$1,195K	900 Marshy Cv #307	\$275K	105 Mariners Way	\$290K
801 Truman St	\$203K	601 Wood Duck Dr	\$203K	618 High St	\$ 75K
206 Bowline Dr	\$300K	804 Phillips St	\$ 34K	815 Phillips St	\$ 34K
615 Wells St	\$245K	702 Travers St	\$153K	5543 Bonnie Brook	\$261K
5630 Ross Neck Rd	\$1,150K	502 Seaway Lane	\$275K	628 High St	\$ 58K
617 Rigby Ave	\$ 72K	304 Riverside Lane	\$290K	507 Riverton Ct	\$575K
411 Linden Ave	\$220K	501 Goldsborough Av	\$248K	307 Riverside Lane	\$310K
302 Riverside Lane	\$275K	24 Riverside Wharf	\$421K	300 Riverside Lane	\$290K
305 Riverside Lane	\$315K	822 McBrides Ave	\$240K		

Cambridge Real Estate Market Developments

According to the May 21, 2025, edition of the Dorchester Star: “Last week, Cambridge Waterfront Development Inc. did its first “big pour,” according to Treasurer Frank Narr.

The concrete base for Cambridge Harbor’s promenade was poured May 10, a visible sign for the community that progress is underway. The project, spearheaded by CWDI, aims to develop the waterfront similarly to Baltimore’s Inner Harbor. Progress has been slower than many hoped as CWDI has faced significant headwinds.



Tensions between the organization and the City of Cambridge came to a head when the city filed a lawsuit in May of 2024 over a transfer agreement. The lawsuit was dismissed without prejudice a few months later, and the city and CWDI entered a memorandum of understanding to address issues that were not included in the lawsuit settlement.

“And, you know, honestly, that has actually kind of been a blessing in disguise,” said CWDI Board President Angie Hengst about the lawsuit. “It has allowed us to open up those doors of communication with the county and city even more,” Hengst said.

The City and County Managers now sit on the board of CWDI, which has helped bridge divides between the development project with the community. “It is really great to have their constant input,” Hengst said.” Despite these modest developments, however, CWDI has yet to select a site developer, a critical first step in making serious progress.

FUN FACTS AND LORE

The Eastern Shore's Three Attempts to Secede from Maryland

The Eastern Shore of Maryland comprising nine counties east of the Chesapeake Bay, has a history marked by efforts to break away from the state. These attempts, driven by cultural, economic, and political differences, occurred in 1833–1835, 1852, and 1998, reflecting the region's distinct identity and sense of alienation from Maryland's more urban Western Shore.

1833–1835: The First Push for Independence

In the early 1830s, Eastern Shore residents sought greater autonomy, feeling marginalized by Maryland's state government, which was dominated by wealthier, urban areas. In 1833, a Delaware resolution proposed absorbing Maryland's Eastern Shore counties into Delaware, gaining traction in both states' legislatures. The measure passed Delaware's Senate and House and Maryland's House of Delegates with a 40–24 vote but stalled in Maryland's Senate, failing to move out of committee. The following year, a Caroline County representative suggested a referendum to allow the Eastern Shore to secede, but the Maryland House of Delegates overwhelmingly rejected it, voting 60–5 to postpone the measure indefinitely. These early efforts highlighted the region's desire for self-determination, rooted in its rural, agricultural economy and closer ties to Delaware and in its fierce regional pride.

1852: A Renewed Call for Separation

The second secession attempt came in 1852, spurred by similar grievances. Eastern Shore delegates, frustrated by perceived neglect from Annapolis, again proposed separation. Dorchester County delegate Thomas Holliday Hicks, later Maryland's governor, introduced an amendment allowing the Eastern Shore to vote itself into Delaware. The proposal failed in the Maryland House of Delegates, losing 51–27. This attempt underscored ongoing tensions, as the Eastern Shore's economy – reliant on fishing, farming, and small-scale trade – diverged from the industrializing Western Shore.



1998: The Modern Delmarva Proposal

The most recent secession effort was in 1998, led by state Senators Richard F. Colburn and J. Lowell Stoltzfus. They proposed creating a new state called “Delmarva,” encompassing Maryland’s Eastern Shore counties, though the proposal lacked specifics on the counties’ status post-secession. Driven by conservative values and frustration with Maryland’s liberal-leaning policies, the plan reflected the Eastern Shore’s political divergence from the state’s urban centers. The proposal gained little traction in the Maryland General Assembly, but it echoed historical sentiments of isolation and disregard, amplified by the region’s geographic separation. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge built in 1952 reduced physical isolation but did little to bridge cultural and political divides.

Sources: *Eastern Shore of Maryland and Delmarva Peninsula, Wikipedia*

COMMUNITY NEWS – COOPERATING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

CAMBRIDGE EMPOWERMENT CENTER

Judy Prah

Thank you to the many donors who are already helping with our Summer Program! The Cambridge Empowerment Center is still urgently seeking support from the community to sustain its long-running Summer Program, which is licensed by the State of Maryland, for local children, as funding cuts threaten to reduce services or limit access for families in need. **YOU ARE HELPING!**

For years, the Empowerment Center has provided a safe, structured, and enriching environment for 45 children, ages 5 to 12, from the Pine Street neighborhood and surrounding areas. With federal and state budget reductions—and Dorchester County announcing potential cuts to nonprofit grants and the elimination of summer school—many families now face a summer without access to critical academic and social resources.

“This program isn’t just a summer camp—it’s a lifeline,” said Sharon Chester, Executive Director, Cambridge Empowerment Center. “Our children need this kind of stability, learning, and care to stay on track academically and socially.” Running four days a week for nine weeks, the program serves children from predominantly low-income and underserved families. Without immediate financial support, the Center may be forced to reduce the number of participants or cut the length of the program.

Believe it or Not – Our After school and Pre-K programs are now open to enroll!



How You Can Help:

Community members, local businesses, and organizations are encouraged to contribute. Donations directly fund educational materials, field trips, and program operations. We also have volunteer opportunities like reading to kids, helping with technology, teaching a hobby or skill, answering phones etc.

To donate, visit: www.cambridgeempowermentcenter.org. **Or mail a check to:** Cambridge Empowerment Center, PO Box 494, Cambridge, MD 21613.

ONE MISSION CAMBRIDGE

Shelly Houlihan

We need YOU!

Would you like to support your community in a direct and impactful way? Choose to volunteer at the One Mission Cambridge Food Pantry. Our Food Pantry Attendants are vital to our operations and work directly with our clients to assist them when shopping through the food pantry and filling out paperwork. This simple, meaningful volunteer opportunity is open Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 1:00-5:00pm. A variety of shifts are available.

Please visit the One Mission Cambridge website for more information or contact us to learn more at manager@onemissioncambridge.org!

THE CAMBRIDGE SPY

P. Ryan Anthony, Senior Writer

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I write to you not just as a fellow resident of Cambridge, but as a great believer in the value of thoughtful, independent journalism – especially at the local level. In an age when national headlines dominate our attention and clickbait threatens to replace meaningful reporting. The Cambridge Spy has remained a steadfast and thoughtful voice for our community. Its commitment to in-depth coverage, historical context, and intelligent commentary sets it apart from the noise.

Simply put, the Spy provides something increasingly rare, journalism that respects the reader's intelligence and speaks to our shared civic life. But such work doesn't happen by accident – and it certainly doesn't happen for free. Independent outlets like The Cambridge Spy survive not on corporate backers, but on the support of people like you – people who care about good writing, strong communities, and holding a mirror up to the place we call home.



Your financial support does more than keep the lights on. It allows The Spy to:

- Continue highlighting the arts, history, and culture that make Cambridge unique.
- Provide space for long-form reporting and thoughtful opinion, rather than soundbites and fluff.
- Amplify local voices and tell stories that might otherwise go unheard.
- Remain free of corporate influence, answering only to its readers.

When you support The Cambridge Spy, you're not just backing a publication – you're investing in the civic fabric of our town. You're saying that you value truth over trends, depth over distraction, and community over commerce. So, I ask you – if you read The Spy, if you've ever learned something from it or found yourself thinking more deeply after reading it, please consider making a contribution.

Let's ensure that The Cambridge Spy continues to be not just a chronicler of our times, but a trusted companion in them.

CAN MISSION, MEMBERSHIP, BOARD of DIRECTORS, and COMMITTEES

MISSION. The Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN) fosters neighborhood cohesion and community involvement to enhance the quality of community life for all residents of Cambridge through community events, social activities, and neighborly assistance. CAN protects and enhances properties in Cambridge by improving building and zoning codes, supporting adherence to those codes, and engaging constructively with City Government, including the Historic Preservation Commission. CAN's Bylaws can be found on the CAN website at <https://cambridgecan.org/welcome/about/bylaws/>.

MEMBERSHIP. CAN welcomes members from **all Cambridge area neighborhoods** (broadly defined) who are interested in organizing and working together, building a diverse membership reflecting the diversity of Cambridge residents. **Membership is FREE** – information is available on the CAN website at <https://cambridgecan.org/join-can/>

CAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS. CAN is governed by a Board of Directors elected by CAN members at its annual January Business Meeting. Board Members: President – Chuck McFadden; Vice President – Roman Jesien; Treasurer – Dave Thatcher; Secretary – Alison Kennedy; Members at Large – Andre Duerinckx, Mary Ellen Jesien, Brad Rice, Sharon Smith, Donna Tower, and Judd Vickers.

CAN HOUSING QUALITY COMMITTEE – PLANNING AND ZONING ISSUES. The Housing Quality Committee monitors issues affecting the quality of housing and the maintenance of property values in the City, including code enforcement. Committee members attend Planning Commission meetings to monitor zoning-related issues and report the information to the Board and membership. *Please contact* Chuck McFadden at Raqtme31@gmail.com to volunteer.



NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SOCIAL EVENTS & ‘NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS’. "Neighborhoods" are organized by small groups willing to work together to address neighborhood issues through small social events and "neighbor-helping-neighbor" activities. The **Social Events Subcommittee** organizes community-wide events. *Contact* Chuck McFadden at Raqtime31@gmail.com to volunteer.

CAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE – WRITERS NEEDED. CAN'S Communications Committee needs writers, including volunteers to take unofficial notes at public meetings. *Contact* Chuck McFadden at Raqtime31@gmail.com to volunteer.

POWER WASHER AVAILABLE - CAN has an electric power washer available to members. *Contact* Chuck McFadden at Raqtime31@gmail.com.