# Table of Contents

Chief Public Health Officer Message  2  
Who We Are  3  
National Accreditation  4  
Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)  5  
CHIP Health Priorities Update—Year 3  
  Healthy Eating and Active Living  6  
  Mental Health and Substance Abuse  12  
  Violence  16  
  Healthy, Safe, and Affordable Housing  20  
Our Work  26  
Knowledge and Leadership  34  
Financial Overview  35  
Acknowledgments  36
DEAR FRIENDS,

The Cambridge Public Health Department was awarded national accreditation in 2018, a transformative process that is helping us address some of the most pressing health issues facing our community.

When city and community partners came together several years ago to create Cambridge’s first-ever community health improvement plan, equity and social justice were common threads in nearly all of our conversations. For many people, good health is impeded by lack of access to quality education, good jobs, transportation, safe housing and neighborhoods, nutritious food, and affordable health care. Dig a little deeper and you will find policies and systems—deliberate or not—that benefit certain groups of people and exclude others.

As a city, we have come to realize that creating social change that leads to better health for everyone begins with challenging beliefs and structures that perpetuate inequality, discrimination, and racism.

Amid partisan national efforts to erode long-standing protections for vulnerable populations, Cambridge is showing that there is another, brighter way forward. Our city’s public schools are adhering to Obama-era healthier meal guidelines despite the recent rollback of these standards by the federal government. Our city recently allocated funding to expand the number of children in public schools and city-run preschools who have access to free meals. Our police department is setting the national bar for procedural justice, with a new office dedicated to proactively monitoring data related to possible racial profiling, racially-biased policing, and other issues.

I also want to highlight several health department accomplishments this past year. In addition to achieving accreditation, we released the city’s first comprehensive overdose data report; expanded the services of our school-based Healthy Smiles oral health program; and implemented a beekeeping regulation as part of a broader urban agriculture initiative.

Read on for more stories about Cambridge and its journey to better health.

Claude A. Jacob
Chief Public Health Officer
Cambridge Health Alliance
City of Cambridge
**Who We Are**

**PUBLIC HEALTH IS ABOUT PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF AN ENTIRE POPULATION.**

For us, that means all people who live, learn, work, or spend time in Cambridge. Cambridge is a close-knit community of people of different races, ethnicities, cultures, languages, faiths, incomes, and lifestyles. To increase opportunities for all people to live healthy lives, the Cambridge Public Health Department provides services, analyzes and shares information, implements policies, and enforces regulations in ways that benefit everyone. After all, improving quality of life is what public health and Cambridge are all about.

**VISION**

The Cambridge Public Health Department is a leading, innovative, and model agency that facilitates optimal health and well-being for all who live, learn, work, and play in Cambridge.

**MISSION**

The Cambridge Public Health Department improves the quality of life for all who live, learn, work, and play in the city by preventing illness and injury; encouraging healthy behaviors; and ensuring safe and healthy environments.

**VALUES**

Professionalism and Excellence
Innovation
Collaboration
Social Justice and Equity
The Cambridge Public Health Department achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) in August 2018. Over 200 health departments in the United States currently meet PHAB’s rigorous national standards for delivering quality programs and services to the community.

Locally, the Cambridge Public Health Department joins the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the Boston Public Health Commission, and the Worcester Division of Public Health/ Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance as the only accredited public health departments in the Commonwealth.

The accreditation process in Cambridge began in 2013 with the development of a community health assessment to identify the city’s major health needs, which brought together leaders in public health, health care, urban planning, public safety, and other sectors, as well as hundreds of residents. Data and key themes in the 2014 community health assessment informed the city’s first ever community health improvement plan (CHIP). In 2019, the health department will embark on a new community health assessment and five-year CHIP planning process.

Among the organizational strengths cited by the PHAB site reviewers were the department’s committed staff and progressive leadership, strong community partnerships, use of data to improve health, and collaborative approach to health equity.

“This is a tremendous honor for Cambridge, and affirms the city’s longstanding commitment to leveling the playing field when it comes to health by investing in education, affordable housing, social services, public safety, and public health.”

— Cambridge City Manager Louis A. DePasquale

The national accreditation program, jointly supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, sets standards against which the nation’s nearly 3,000 governmental public health departments can continuously improve the quality of their services and performance.

“Accreditation has been a transformative journey for us,” said Claude Jacob, chief public health officer and director of the Cambridge Public Health Department. “We gained the knowledge and tools that allowed us to engage hundreds of residents in identifying the city’s top health, social, economic, and safety concerns; build effective and strategic partnerships to tackle these issues; and improve internal systems to better serve the community.”

For the five-year accreditation cycle that began in 2018, the health department will submit annual reports to PHAB that highlight its dedication to high-quality programs and services. In 2023, the department aims to complete the reaccreditation process, certifying its continued capacity to provide the essential services of public health to the community.
Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

The 2015 City of Cambridge Community Health Improvement Plan has set the city’s health agenda through 2020.

The plan lays out goals, objectives, and strategies for making tangible progress in four health priority areas: healthy eating and active living; mental/behavioral health and substance abuse; violence; and healthy, safe, and affordable housing. Two additional topics—health access and health equity/social justice—are integrated across priority areas because they are the foundations of a healthy population.

In 2018, the health department and partner organizations worked on CHIP strategies identified for implementation in Year 3 (July 2017–June 2018) and developed a Year 4 action plan. The following pages describe progress in each priority area during Year 3, including challenges and opportunities encountered while implementing the city’s first-ever community health improvement plan.

CHIP PARTNERS

Here are some of the many city and community partners that are implementing the community health improvement plan.

City of Cambridge
Birth to 3rd Grade Partnership
Cambridge Public Schools
City Manager’s Office
Community Development Department
Conservation Commission
Department of Human Service Programs
Department of Public Works
Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative
Fire Department
Food and Fitness Policy Council

Community Partners
AIDS Action Committee/Access: Drug User Health Program
Bay Cove Human Services/CASPAR
Cambridge Community Center
Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee
Cambridge Health Alliance
Cambridge Housing Authority
Cambridge YWCA
CitySprouts Garden Program
Community Conversations: Sister to Sister
Eliot Community Human Services

Food For Free
Institute for Community Health
Institute for Health and Recovery
Learn to Cope
Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Mount Auburn Hospital
Pro EMS
Spaulding Hospital
Transition House

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION
CHIP HEALTH PRIORITY

Healthy Eating and Active Living

**GOAL:** Make it easy for people to improve health and well-being through healthy eating and active living.

Cambridge is nationally recognized for its collaborative and innovative approaches to healthy eating and active living. Two decades ago, a team of public health professionals, city staff, parents, and the Cambridge Public Schools came together to address obesity among the city’s school children. This collaboration resulted in school cafeterias serving healthier and locally grown foods, the establishment of school gardens in all elementary schools, and the adoption of school nutrition policies.

Since the late 2000s, city and community partners have focused on policy and systems change for creating a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food and fitness environment throughout Cambridge. Accomplishments have included establishing the Cambridge Food and Fitness Policy Council; introducing salad bars and international cuisine in school cafeterias; increasing the purchasing power of residents with low income at farmers markets; launching a popular bike share program; renovating city parks and playgrounds; and creating safer streets for people who are walking, biking, or taking transit.

**YEAR 3 HIGHLIGHTS** *(July '17 – June '18)*

- The Cambridge SNAP Match Coalition, led by the Cambridge Public Health Department, gave out over $24,700 in matching funds (a nearly 60% increase from 2017) to help residents with low income buy fresh, local food at Cambridge farmers markets. SNAP Match funds allow shoppers using federal SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits to double their purchasing power up to a $15 value per visit at three participating farmers markets.

- As part of the Food and Fitness Policy Council’s effort to develop a comprehensive urban agriculture policy for Cambridge, the city began putting formal legal structures in place for allowing and regulating these activities. In December 2017, the City Council ordained a beekeeping zoning amendment and the Commissioner of Public Health promulgated “A Regulation for the Keeping of Honeybees.” The health department has primary responsibility for issuing permits, holding public hearings, and enforcement. The Community Development Department sought input from the city’s fire and inspectional services departments on a draft zoning amendment that would allow new commercial farming activities in Cambridge, including expanding locations for rooftop farming, hydroponic gardens, and community supported agriculture (CSA) drop-off sites.
Healthy Eating and Active Living

The health department partnered with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council on a health lens analysis of the Food and Fitness Policy Council’s urban agriculture policies to assess their potential social, environmental, nutritional, and economic impacts on the community. A formal report is expected to be released in 2019.

- The Healthy Markets Program works with local convenience stores and neighborhood markets to promote healthy foods and beverages. In Year 3, staff provided store owners with information on equipment grants, business workshops, local produce distributors, and how to become authorized SNAP and Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) retailers. As of June 2018, four participating markets accepted SNAP benefits, of which two also accepted WIC benefits. Healthy Markets is an initiative of the health department, Community Development Department, and Inspectional Services Department.

- The Cambridge Public Schools continued to adhere to or exceed the nutritional standards set forth in the 2012 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act despite a temporary ruling issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2017 to roll-back the Obama-era standards for sodium targets, whole grain requirements, and flavored milk. The temporary ruling became permanent in December 2018.

- The International Flavors Program, a partnership of the Cambridge Public Schools’ Food and Nutrition Services and the health department, continued to introduce cuisine on school menus that reflect the district’s diverse student body. In Year 3, the program piloted a Puerto Rican stew, Fricasé de Pollo, in two elementary schools.

- To make healthier food and activity choices more available for children in a variety of care settings, the health department developed healthy food and physical activity guidelines for child care and out-of-school time providers, in collaboration with the city’s Birth to 3rd Grade Partnership.

- The Cambridge Public Health Department, through its Cambridge in Motion campaign, awarded a total of $6,500 in mini-grants to ten local organizations in spring 2018 to develop activities that promote healthy eating and active living. The mini-grant program, now in its seventh year, is a partnership of the Cambridge Public Health Department, the Healthy Children Task Force, and the Cambridge Food and Fitness Policy Council. The mini-grants were funded by the health department and the Cambridge and Somerville Whole Foods Market stores.

- To make drinking water more accessible in public places, the city approved the installation of new drinking fountains with water bottle fillers in 10 parks. This $100,000 project is funded through the city’s Participatory Budgeting Initiative.

The Cambridge Tap Water Task Force, an interdepartmental group led by the health department, redesigned its popular “Wicked Good” tap water sticker and participated in citywide events in
Bluebikes, the municipally owned bike share program, has over 2,500 bikes and 260 stations in Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, and Somerville.

June to promote the benefits of drinking tap water instead of sugary beverages.

● To create a safer environment for walking and biking in Cambridge, the city continued to make significant policy changes and roadway improvements in Year 3. In February 2018, the city released the Vision Zero Action Plan, which lays out strategies for eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

Following the successful introduction of a 25 mph citywide speed limit in December 2016, the city implemented 20 mph “safety zones” in Central, Harvard, Inman, Kendall, and Porter squares. The city also began an evaluation of the separated bike lanes on portions of Massachusetts Avenue, Brattle Street, and Cambridge Street; and completed plans for the redesign of the complex Inman Square intersection, with implementation starting in 2019.

The Cambridge Police Department received a state grant in spring 2018 to improve safety on city roads for pedestrians and bicyclists. Over 90 bicyclists and pedestrians a year in Cambridge are involved in crashes requiring emergency transport to the hospital, according to recent police department data. The initiative will focus on speeding, crosswalk and red light violations, distracted driving, and other violations that may put pedestrians or cyclists at risk.

● The Safe Routes to School program, launched by the Community Development Department in 2015, continued to support and encourage safe walking and biking to school. In Year 3, the city expanded the program to all Cambridge public elementary and three upper schools, providing bicycle and pedestrian safety training to over 500 students in second grade and an on-bike training program to over 500 students in sixth grade. The program also purchased 30 bikes to use during on-bike trainings; collected information on how Cambridge students travel to school, and produced A Guide to Walking and Biking to School (in English and Spanish) for children and parents.

Through workshops at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School and the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program, over 900 teens learned about the rules of the road for bicyclists and bicycle maintenance.

● The Hubway bike share program transitioned to Bluebikes in May 2018, following a title sponsorship from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. The system is publicly-owned by the municipalities of Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, and Somerville. The sponsorship will allow for bicycle and station expansion, as well as upgrades to mobile app features.

Bluebikes launched an income-eligible bike share membership program, allowing residents who qualify for a wide range of public assistance programs to obtain discounted memberships of $5 per month or $50 per year.
Healthy Eating and Active Living

- The Community Development Department hosted 22 bicycle education workshops that helped 200 residents improve their cycling confidence and skills. The city installed 170 bike racks and 13 seasonal bike stalls, which created 508 bike parking spaces in high-demand locations. In total, the city maintains over 3,000 permanent bike racks and 13 seasonal bike stalls, creating over 6,000 bike parking spaces across Cambridge.

- To engage the public in sustainable transportation and traffic safety, the Community Development Department made transportation the theme of the 2017-2018 Glocal Challenge at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School; mailed the second annual Getting Around Cambridge magazine to 52,000 Cambridge households; and translated its popular guide, The Cambridge Street Code: Rules and Etiquette for Getting There Together into Amharic, Bangla, French, and Spanish.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

City policies and actions taken over the past two decades have given Cambridge residents greater opportunities to eat healthy, be physically active, and use active transportation. Healthy eating and active living (HEAL) strategies are embedded in many citywide plans and are being implemented by a committed group of city and community partners.

As HEAL initiatives gain in sophistication and reach, partners acknowledge they need to better understand attitudes and beliefs toward healthy eating, fitness, and active transportation among residents from diverse backgrounds. Without this knowledge, it will be challenging to meet the needs of all residents, especially those who face systemic barriers to healthy living due to income, disability status, or cultural background.

Cambridge’s active and sustainable transportation options—walking, biking, public transit—contribute to residents’ health and well-being, the viability of local businesses, and the city’s efforts to reduce cumulative greenhouse gas emissions. For the future, Cambridge must continue to address issues of regional traffic, high transit demand, the needs of a growing population and workforce, and emerging technologies in transportation infrastructure.

Furthermore, the city must continue to implement policies and practices that ensure the fundamental safety and accessibility of all transportation modes in the city, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, including seniors, people with mobility issues, children, and those who are walking and bicycling.
CRLS students set up a dedicated bus-bike lane for PARK(ing) Day 2018. The students’ proposal to install a priority bus-bike lane on Mass. Ave. during rush hour won honorable mention in the 2018 Cambridge Glocal Challenge.

Healthy Eating and Active Living

LOOKING AHEAD

In Year 4, city and community partners will remain focused on making healthy food more accessible and affordable, and creating safer streets for walking and biking.

The city will allocate funding that will allow the Cambridge Public Schools to provide free breakfast to all students (K–12) and expand its free lunch program to include all students who qualify for reduced-price meals under federal guidelines. The local funding will also support free breakfast for all children in city-run preschools.

The Food and Fitness Policy Council will use a racial justice lens to better understand why Black and Hispanic school children (K–8) in Cambridge experience a higher prevalence of overweight and obesity than their White and Asian classmates. The council will explore underlying cultural, economic, and systemic barriers that may be preventing these residents from accessing healthy food and being physically active.

The council will continue to advocate for public health regulations and related zoning policies that will expand commercial farming opportunities, and will begin a multi-year project to develop a citywide food plan.

The city will continue to make street safety improvements, promote bike sharing, teach adults and children about pedestrian and bicycle safety, and expand the number of bike racks and Bluebikes stations in the city. In Year 4, the Community Development Department will complete safety improvements on South Massachusetts Avenue from Sidney Street (near Central Square) to the Charles River. The improvements will include a new crosswalk, separated bus and bike lanes, and ride hail pick-up/drop-off zones.
A Safe Routes to School instructor teaches second graders about pedestrian and bicycle safety.
**CHIP HEALTH PRIORITY**

**Mental Health and Substance Abuse**

**GOAL:** Support and enhance the mental, behavioral, and emotional health of all, and reduce the impact of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

The city selected mental health and substance abuse as a health priority because many residents and service providers were concerned about the prevalence of mental disorders and addiction in Cambridge; the cost and availability of services; and how stigma and other underlying issues may keep people from seeking help. Year 3 activities focused on training teachers, parents, and youth service providers how to identify and respond to mental health issues in teens; preventing substance misuse among youth; and strengthening the local response to the opioid crisis.

**YEAR 3 HIGHLIGHTS (July ’17 – June ’18)**

- Mental Health First Aid is a groundbreaking public education program offered by the Cambridge Public Health Department that helps the community identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health issues and substance use disorders. Since 2013, the department has trained over 300 people in adult Mental Health First Aid. In fall 2017, the department offered its first training on Youth Mental Health First Aid, which teaches adults how to help adolescents experiencing mental health or addiction challenges. A total of 75 people completed the eight-hour course for adults or youth in 2018.

- Community Health Network Area 17, a regional consortium, published *Mental Health and Racial Equity in CHNA 17*, a report that explores the experiences of American-born Black residents in accessing mental health services in Cambridge and five other communities. Black community members identified systemic and institutional racism, a dearth of Black mental health providers, stigma associated with mental illness, and historical mistrust of the medical system as barriers to Black residents seeking mental health services.

- Trauma, violence, and toxic stress have a profound impact on children’s learning and can manifest in challenging behavior. The Cambridge Public Schools’ social emotional learning (SEL) initiative aims at establishing a district-wide framework for supporting students who have experienced trauma and building more peaceful and safe learning environments. In Year 3, the district established a set of SEL competencies and benchmarks, and eight schools identified specific areas that required improvement. For instance, at Tobin Montessori, paraprofessionals received training to strengthen their...
de-escalation and student support practices. Rindge Avenue Upper School implemented a whole-school mindfulness program. Cambridgeport School focused on identifying and reducing student anxiety.

Also in Year 3, a health education specialist began teaching a curriculum on healthy relationships, communication skills, and other health topics to all students in grades 2-12. Previously, classroom teachers were responsible for delivering instruction in these areas to students in grades 2-3, and practices were variable among schools. In April, the health department and school district hosted a series of “Minding Your Mind” presentations on teen mental health for Cambridge Rindge and Latin School students and staff.

In April 2018, the Cambridge City Manager formed an opioid working group to review disease surveillance data, identify best practices for addressing the crisis locally, and develop recommendations for strengthening the local response. Staffed by the health department, the 18-member group includes representatives from public health, hospitals, public safety, emergency medical services, and treatment programs.

The city encouraged residents to safely dispose of unwanted medication by maintaining a 24/7 medication disposal kiosk at the police department (125 Sixth St.), sponsoring community “take-back” events at household hazardous waste collection days and the senior center, and offering prepaid medication disposal mailers to the public. In 2018, the city collected over collected over 10,700 units (1,260 pounds) of unwanted medication.

● The Institute for Health and Recovery and the health department’s OPEN (Overdose Prevention and Education Network) initiative organized several community conversations for older adults about the risk of prescription opioid misuse and dependence. In June, the Cambridge Elder Abuse Prevention Coalition presented an interactive workshop on the social impacts of opioid misuse in which actors dramatized scenes of older adults experiencing drug misuse. Over 60 people attended the event.

● Cambridge Police Department detectives reached out to hundreds of opioid users on the street and in hospitals through the department’s PARTNER Initiative. Detectives referred motivated individuals to the department’s licensed social worker and newly hired recovery coach, who then connected them with appropriate treatment centers and helped coordinate care. This initiative aims to empower opioid users and their families with strategies for problem-solving and managing addiction, as well as connecting them to services. The coaching team supports people who are active drug users, have recently overdosed, are actively seeking treatment, or are in early recovery.
Youth from Cambridge, Arlington, Everett, and Somerville met with state legislators in April 2018 to share their strategies for preventing underage alcohol use.

Public health, public safety, and community partners continued to promote the use of naloxone, a drug that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose. The health department and the Access: Drug User Health Program in Central Square continued to offer free overdose recognition and response trainings to the business community. By summer 2017, all Cambridge police officers were trained and equipped with naloxone.

In fall 2017, a team from the health department visited every pharmacy in Cambridge to advocate for pharmacy-based naloxone distribution. The team learned that while all pharmacies stocked naloxone, as required under state law, there was varied interest among pharmacists in promoting the product and counseling patients. Nearly all pharmacists reported low demand for naloxone, many citing cost as a barrier. The health department is aware that many people seeking naloxone, especially those who are uninsured or underinsured, are receiving free kits through the Access program, which distributed 809 first-time naloxone kits and 853 refill kits to clients in 2017.

The health department released the city’s first comprehensive opioid overdose data report in June 2018. The report analyzes 2016 data from ProEMS ambulance service, Cambridge Health Alliance, and other sources to show where overdoses are occurring in the city, which populations are most impacted, and the role of naloxone in preventing overdose deaths.

Staff from the health department and Cambridge Public Schools conducted individual interviews with 725 seventh and ninth graders to assess each student’s risk for substance use, as part of a state-mandated screening. In addition, health department staff met with youth groups and student leaders to gain insight into substance use prevention messages and activities that would resonate with teens; and provided guidance to students in CCTV’s Youth Media Program who produced four 30-second videos that explored the connection between teen substance misuse and academic pressure, mental health, and references to drug use in pop music.

As part of a four-city collaborative to reduce underage drinking, the health department conducted a “sticker shock” campaign at two Cambridge liquor stores to discourage adults from buying alcohol for people under 21 and met with state legislators in April to share information about how youth are accessing alcohol.

In Year 3, the department approved an online training program that could be completed in lieu of the department’s in-person “21 Proof” training. In 2018, the health department gave “21 Proof” trainings to 28 bartenders, waiters, managers, and owners of Cambridge establishments licensed to pour alcohol.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Under the Baker administration, Massachusetts has mounted a multifaceted response to the opioid crisis, including enacting breakthrough legislation, revamping the state’s prescription monitoring program, and adding 1,200 substance use disorder treatment beds to the system since 2015.
The governor signed a second major piece of legislation into law in summer 2018. This new law will strengthen the state’s education and prevention efforts, expand the role of recovery coaches, improve access to medication-assisted treatment, and provide liability protections for those who prescribe and dispense naloxone in good faith.

While the statewide opioid crisis is far from over, there are early signs of progress. In 2017, the overdose death rate in Massachusetts decreased 5% from 2016, the first decline in seven years. The downward trend continued through September 2018, the most recent period for which data is available.

In Cambridge, there were 12 confirmed opioid-related overdose deaths among residents in 2017, down from 27 deaths in 2016. Many more lives would have been lost if not for the use of naloxone by first responders and bystanders.

While Cambridge will to continue to benefit from statewide opioid abuse prevention policies and funding, the city will also need to remain committed to implementing local programs, including “out-of-the-box” initiatives; supporting youth prevention and anti-stigma campaigns; and nurturing partnerships among city departments, community organizations, and local businesses.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

CHNA 17 will award six $7,000 grants to local organizations to address needs identified in its 2018 report on mental health and racial equity.

With support from the NOVO Foundation, the Cambridge Public Schools will design a professional development course for staff on understanding gender identity and supporting LGBTQ students.

The police department will establish a new division that brings together its family justice, social justice, and clinical support units, with the goal of better serving and protecting vulnerable populations.

The city manager’s opioid working group will release a formal action plan in early 2019 with recommendations for addressing gaps in the areas of prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery. The health department will publish its second opioid overdose data report, which will analyze 2017 ambulance, hospital, and program data.

The police department and health department will continue to work with the Cambridge Licensee Advisory Board to educate alcohol licensees on safe alcohol operations and underage drinking.
The annual candlelight vigil at Cambridge City Hall on the first Wednesday in October commemorates the Massachusetts women, men, and children who have lost their lives to domestic violence.

GOAL: Establish a new community norm that strives for peace and justice, and provide a comprehensive approach to address all forms of violence.

Cambridge remains committed to preventing and reducing all forms of interpersonal violence.

Interpersonal violence encompasses acts of violence between intimate partners, between family members, and between individuals who may or may not be known to one another. Acts of violence may include physical, sexual, emotional, social, and/or financial abuse. Domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, and bullying are all examples of interpersonal violence.

The Cambridge Police Department responded to 803 domestic incidents in 2017. While the majority of incidents were perpetrated by current or former romantic partners or spouses, the police also responded to disputes between parents and children, extended family, and roommates.

The most common type of violent domestic incidents reported in Cambridge involve simple assaults—assaults without a weapon and with no serious injuries. This category accounted for 18% of all reported domestic incidents in 2017.

Through multiple initiatives, city and community partners are raising awareness about interpersonal violence, mobilizing groups to take action, and working to better support survivors of violence.

Year 3 activities focused on engaging men in exploring their role in the #MeToo movement; training service providers and public housing staff on domestic violence and responding to disclosures of abuse; providing healthy relationship workshops to immigrant mothers; training police personnel in trauma-informed practices; and raising awareness about domestic violence, sexual assault, and elder abuse.

YEAR 3 HIGHLIGHTS (July ’17 – June ’18)

- Mending Cambridge invited men to explore their roles in the #MeToo movement at two community conversations in winter 2018. Over 25 men participated in the sessions and shared ideas on how they could prevent gender-based violence and the culture that promotes it in homes, at work, with youth, and in public spaces. This group and city partners also organized the city’s annual domestic violence vigil in October and White Ribbon Day events in March. Mending Cambridge is a partnership of the city’s Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative and the Cambridge Public Health Department.
City staff and residents participated in a facilitated MeToo conversation in March 2018 on how men can be active participants in preventing gender-based violence.

- The Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative and Cambridge-based Transition House gave a free daylong training in October 2017 for 27 community and city service providers that covered the dynamics of abuse, working with survivors, and responding to disclosures. In January 2018, this team trained Cambridge Housing Authority’s 250 staff members on the agency’s new policies and protocols for responding to disclosures of abuse.

- Transition House, in partnership with the Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative, organized a six-session parenting group for Ethiopian mothers and a three-session group for Bengali mothers. In addition to parenting topics, both groups addressed power dynamics in intimate partner relationships.

- Transition House hired a full-time elder abuse advocate to provide counseling, advocacy, and support to older residents (age 60+) experiencing domestic violence or other forms of abuse. The position is funded by the City of Cambridge and the Tufts Health Plan Foundation.

- The Cambridge Police Department formed the city’s first Sexual Assault Response Team in December 2017. The team, which comes on the heels of the department’s trauma-informed law enforcement training, was developed to network with partners, review best practices, and identify gaps in services to create a seamless process for survivors as they navigate the criminal justice system. The team has met regularly since its formation.

- The police department was awarded a one-year Violence Against Women Act STOP grant from the state in December 2017 to support the department’s domestic violence services and programs.

**CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES**

Women’s rights activists began advocating for services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in the 1970s. A decade later they spearheaded the movement that led to the passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994. This landmark legislation reshaped the criminal justice system, educated law enforcement and judges about domestic violence, and funded lifesaving services, including here in Massachusetts.

Yet despite VAWA and countless awareness campaigns, violence against women persists. The #MeToo movement has exposed the pervasiveness of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and violence against women and girls in all corridors of society. At this pivotal moment, Cambridge has an opportunity to have an open dialogue about violence against women, masculinity, and the role of men in stopping abuse and changing attitudes.

The city’s violence prevention efforts, which historically focused on domestic violence, have expanded to include other forms of abuse, such as bullying and maltreatment of older adults. City departments
CHIP HEALTH PRIORITY

Violence

are also training and providing tools to staff to address psychological trauma, treat trauma survivors with greater compassion, and break cycles of violence.

In assuming a greater role in addressing violence and trauma, the city will face challenges including identifying priorities and best practices, and reaching traditionally underserved groups.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative and partners will continue implementing a five-year strategic plan focused on creating a network of culturally aware services for survivors, fostering cultural awareness among service providers, and ensuring early and consistent prevention education to youth. Year 4 activities will include community trainings on working with domestic violence survivors, as well as workshops for youth on healthy relationships. In addition, the initiative will hire a part-time prevention specialist who will focus on youth.

The police department will continue to train personnel in trauma-informed law enforcement and raise awareness about community resources available to survivors.

Police personnel will continue to serve on the Cambridge, Arlington and Belmont High Risk Assessment and Response Team, which focuses on preventing domestic violence homicides by identifying high-risk cases and implementing crisis intervention plans for victims and their families.

The police department will establish an Office of Procedural Justice to monitor data related to police-citizen interactions for indications of possible racial profiling, racially-biased policing, or use of force incidents.
Members of the Cambridge Police Department and community partners wore purple on October 18, 2018 to honor victims and support survivors of domestic violence.
**GOAL:** Ensure a socioeconomically diverse community through the preservation and expansion of high-quality, healthy, and safe housing that is affordable across income levels.

A shortage of safe, affordable housing directly impacts the health of the community. Poor indoor air quality, lead paint, and other hazards can lead to serious illness and injury. Families who lack affordable housing may experience financial difficulties, housing instability, overcrowded living conditions, and other issues.

Year 3 CHIP strategies focused on preserving and expanding affordable housing for residents with low to moderate incomes, as well as securing housing for residents experiencing homelessness.

Affordable housing has been a top priority in Cambridge since the end of rent control in the 1990s. To sustain an economically diverse community, the city has made substantial investments in affordable housing in the past 20 years. The city’s Community Development Department manages and implements these efforts in partnership with governmental, nonprofit, and private-sector organizations.

Housing is considered affordable when tenants or homeowners pay no more than 30% of their household income on housing costs. In Cambridge, there are over 8,100 affordable units—about 15% of the city’s current housing stock. These units are located throughout the city and include Cambridge Housing Authority rental units, inclusionary housing located in market-rate developments, and city-subsidized affordable housing.

The most significant funding mechanism for creating and preserving affordable housing in Cambridge is the Community Preservation Act* (CPA), adopted by the city council and voters in 2001. Between fiscal years 2002 and 2018, the city allocated over $144 million in CPA funds for affordable housing, which leveraged over $500 million in public and private investments and resulted in the creation and preservation of 1,792 affordable units.

*The Community Preservation Act is a financing tool for Massachusetts communities to leverage funds to preserve open space, protect historic sites, and expand and preserve the supply of affordable housing.
CHIP HEALTH PRIORITY

Healthy, Safe, and Affordable Housing

For people experiencing or at risk for homelessness in Cambridge, city and community partners provide a range of services. The city’s Department of Human Service Programs facilitates a network of housing and service providers, known as the Cambridge Continuum of Care (CoC), to alleviate homelessness through prevention, assistance toward self-sufficiency, and the provision of a continuum of housing and support services.

YEAR 3 HIGHLIGHTS (July ’17 – June ’18)

- The Cambridge City Council voted to allocate 80% (over $10.1 million) of fiscal year 2018 Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for affordable housing, the maximum amount allowed under Massachusetts law.

- Cambridge was recognized as a “Housing Choice Community” by the state in May 2018, based on recent new housing production. Municipalities that receive this designation have exclusive access to new financial resources and receive preferential treatment to many other state grant and capital funding programs.

- The Cambridge nonprofit Homeowners Rehab, Inc. (HRI) completed construction of nine new affordable units at Auburn Court Apartments, part of a broader renovation of this affordable housing development in Central Square.

- The Community Development Department continued to work with HRI to advance plans to create 98 new affordable rental units on Concord Avenue across from the Fresh Pond Reservoir. The department also worked with Cambridge-based developer Capstone Communities to create 40 new affordable rental units on Massachusetts Avenue in Porter Square.

- The Community Development Department worked with the Cambridge nonprofit Just-A-Start Corporation to secure permitting and financing to create 23 new affordable rental units at Linwood Court apartments in the Port neighborhood.

- The Community Development Department continued its substantial efforts to preserve affordable units in privately-owned
The city’s affordable housing programs have helped many families stay in Cambridge.

Healthy, Safe, and Affordable Housing

The city’s affordable housing programs have helped many families stay in Cambridge.

The Community Development Department implemented amendments to the city’s Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, adopted by city council in 2017, that require developers of new market rate housing to “set aside” 20% of net floor area for affordable units. In Year 3, the department placed 80 low- to moderate-income households in affordable inclusionary rental apartments.

The Community Development Department assisted 16 new homebuyers in purchasing affordable homes and offered 10 multi-session homebuyer workshops.

The Human Rights Commission partnered with the Community Development Department to organize and expand the city’s second annual Fair and Affordable Housing Open House in April. Information was provided on enforcement of housing discrimination laws, tenant rights, voucher programs, eviction and foreclosure prevention services, affordable housing, and financial assistance for first-time homebuyers.

The Human Rights Commission revised its fair housing ordinance, in collaboration with the LGBTQ+ Commission and Commission for Persons with Disabilities. The revised ordinance provides updated definitions of “gender identity” and “disability,” and uses “people first” language (e.g., “person with a disability” will replace “handicapped person”). The changes were approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in May 2018. The Massachusetts Legislature must also approve the amended ordinance, a process that is expected to be completed in 2019.

The city celebrated Affordable Housing Week of Action in May by hosting a panel discussion, an affordable housing rally and celebration, and a “Voices of Affordable Housing” exhibit at City Hall.
The Department of Human Service Programs received more than $4 million in federal Continuum of Care Program funding that supported over 250 permanent supportive housing beds for people who were formerly homeless. Over half the beds were designated for people who had been chronically homeless.

Renae’s Place for Homeless Families opened in Central Square in June 2018. The three-story family shelter is owned by the city and managed by YWCA Cambridge. Renae’s Place offers a warm, stable environment and case management services for up to 10 families at a time. YWCA Cambridge has partnered with the City of Cambridge for more than 30 years to provide shelter for homeless families.

To help homeless individuals who do not use the existing shelter system stay warm and safe on cold winter nights, the city opened a nighttime warming center that operated from January to April 2018. The warming center provided access to showers, a hot meal, and a safe place to shelter from inclement weather to 482 unique individuals. The city contracted with BayCove Human Services to operate the center.

The Continuum of Care’s Cambridge Coordinated Access Network aims to assess and prioritize the community’s most vulnerable homeless clients for limited housing resources. In Year 3, the program assessed 341 clients and 65 were placed in stable housing.

The city’s Multi-Disciplinary Homeless Street Outreach Team identified and engaged people at high risk for poor health outcomes. In Year 3, the team conducted over 1,000 hours of street outreach, visiting with over 110 individuals who were chronically homeless to monitor their well-being and help them stay healthy.

No city in the Commonwealth is as committed to affordable housing as Cambridge. . . . By using various strategies, like inclusionary zoning, we are advancing our housing goals, and we have been able to help thousands of residents.

— Cambridge City Manager Louis A. DePasquale on November 1, 2017, on the announcement that the city had approved its 1000th inclusionary housing unit.

The Multi-Service Center provided housing search guidance, assistance with moving costs, time-limited rental subsidies, and tenancy support services to 51 households. Among this group, 20 households moved from emergency shelters to permanent housing. This work was supported by two federal rapid re-housing grants.

The Multi-Service Center provided federally funded homelessness prevention services to 50 households, which included assistance with preventing evictions, resolving landlord-tenant disputes, and paying back rent.
Healthy, Safe, and Affordable Housing

access medical care. The outreach team is a collaboration of the city’s police, veteran’s services, and human services departments; Cambridge Health Alliance’s Healthcare for the Homeless program; Pro EMS; substance abuse treatment programs; and youth services programs.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The Cambridge housing market remains one of the most expensive in the nation. The median sale price of a condominium was $730,000 in 2017, up from $655,000 in 2016. According to a Community Development Department analysis in March 2018, the median asking rent for a three-bedroom apartment had increased to $3,600 a month. These prices are beyond the reach of most low- to moderate-income households.

Meanwhile, the cost of producing affordable housing in Cambridge has risen dramatically in recent years, a problem exacerbated by stiffer competition for increasingly limited state and federal resources. It is also difficult for affordable housing developers to find and secure properties due to the relative scarcity of sites in Cambridge and competition from market-rate developers. Once a site has been purchased, the permitting process can be challenging, particularly if there is opposition to the project.

For the homeless community, housing challenges are even greater. Families and individuals transitioning out of homelessness often need access to both permanent affordable housing and supportive services, such as ongoing case management and assistance accessing health care and social services. Shifting federal funding priorities have resulted in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reducing funding for supportive services, which has impacted Cambridge’s ability to provide these services.

Currently, demand for permanent supportive housing—a model that combines permanent affordable housing with access to supportive services—far exceeds the current supply in Cambridge. Many Cambridge households that are prioritized for a spot in a permanent supportive housing project relocate to other communities because they cannot find an apartment with rent low enough to qualify for federal housing subsidies.

Despite these difficulties, there remains widespread support for affordable housing in Cambridge among city officials, city councillors, and residents. This longstanding commitment is demonstrated by
Healthy, Safe, and Affordable Housing

the city’s housing programs, policies, and financial investments that have helped thousands of individuals and families remain in Cambridge since the end of rent control.

LOOKING AHEAD

In Year 4, the city will continue to seek opportunities to protect and expand its supply of affordable housing, including creating new affordable housing, preserving expiring-use developments, and expanding existing zoning tools that support affordable housing.

The Community Development Department’s housing division will continue to advance new and existing affordable housing developments, and provide an array of housing services to the community. Staff will continue to work with tenants, owners, advocates, and others on preserving the affordability of the remaining housing developments with affordability restrictions at risk of expiring in 2020.

The Cambridge Continuum of Care, Multi-Service Center, and partner agencies will continue implementing the Cambridge Coordinated Access Network and operating homelessness prevention, crisis intervention, rapid re-housing, and permanent housing projects. In September 2018, the Continuum of Care applied for $4.9 million in homeless assistance funds through HUD’s annual Continuum of Care competition.

In July 2018, Governor Baker fully funded the expansion of the state’s housing court system so that all communities, including Cambridge, will have access to these specialized legal services. Massachusetts Housing Court oversees civil and criminal actions that involve the health, safety, or welfare of homeowners and renters, and has the expertise to resolve complicated issues involving landlords and tenants. The city’s Inspectional Services Department will seek to use housing court for persistent landlord-tenant issues and violations of city ordinances related to housing.
Our Work

The Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) offers an array of vital services. Some programs respond to urgent health matters, such as investigating foodborne illness or treating sick and injured children in the public schools. Others set the stage for a healthy life, such as the Let's Talk! early childhood literacy program and environmental health services that reduce hazards in homes and neighborhoods.

The department is also a key source of credible information and data on health issues impacting the city. Through health marketing campaigns, data reports, and outreach activities, the department empowers residents to make healthy choices and seeks to engage the public in local health issues.

Finally, the department advocates for change and develops policies that improve the health and well-being of all people in Cambridge. This work ranges from enforcing health laws to contributing to the city’s climate change efforts to building coalitions, such as the Cambridge Food and Fitness Policy Council.

Here is a snapshot of health department activities in 2018.

ADMINISTRATIVE

National Accreditation. The Cambridge Public Health Department achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) in August, becoming one of the first health departments in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to meet PHAB’s rigorous national standards for delivering quality programs and services to the community. The department also worked with partner organizations on community health improvement plan strategies identified for implementation in Year 3 (see CHIP Health Priorities section).

National Leadership. Claude Jacob, Chief Public Health Officer, serves as a member emeritus of the National Association of County and City Health Officials’ Council of Past Presidents, which advises the NACCHO Board of Directors. Mr. Jacob also serves on the PHAB Board of Directors.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION

148 Communicable disease reports that required follow-up by public health nursing and epidemiology staff in 2018.

Hepatitis A Outbreak. In response to a statewide hepatitis A outbreak that sickened over 200 people experiencing homelessness, unstable housing, and/or substance use disorder, staff coordinated with local partners and shelters to distribute educational materials and vaccinate at-risk individuals and shelter staff. Through this partnership, the Cambridge Health Alliance Healthcare for the Homeless program and partners vaccinated 84 people at the largest homeless shelters in Cambridge and at AIDS Action’s Access: Drug User Health Program in Central Square.

876 People who received free flu shots from health department staff at public flu clinics and by appointment at the department.

2,161 Patient visits to the Schipellite Chest Center at Cambridge Hospital for evaluation and treatment of latent and active tuberculosis in 2018. The Cambridge tuberculosis program is operated by the health department. CPHD public health nurses also made home visits to Cambridge residents with active or suspect TB.
CPHD nurses are “ready” to administer flu shots at a 2018 fall flu clinic.
COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Early Literacy. To support parents in talking and reading with young children, the Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative, through its Let’s Talk! program, distributed 8,209 children’s books to families and child care providers; made home and maternity ward visits to 619 families with newborns; led 62 workshops for parents and childcare providers; organized StoryWalks and multi-session playgroups for young children; and co-organized Family Literacy Fun Day and the fifth season of Cambridge Book Bike.

The literacy initiative’s Pathways to Family Success program serves low-income immigrant parents and their elementary school-aged children, with a focus on family engagement and family literacy. During two program cycles offered in 2018, staff organized parenting and family literacy activities for participating families.

The Cambridge Dads program supports fathers in taking an active role in parenting. The program hired a full-time coordinator in May. Between July and December, Cambridge Dads hosted eight family events for fathers and children, with a total attendance of 354 people; launched a 13-week “Nurturing Fathers” workshop series; hosted five drop-in “dad’s basketball” events; and began surveying fathers to better understand their needs. Cambridge Dads is a partnership of the Center for Families and the Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative.

Healthy Eating and Active Living. The department led the Cambridge SNAP Match Coalition, which distributed over $24,700 in matching funds to residents with low-income to purchase food at Cambridge farmers markets. The program allows shoppers using federal SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits to double their purchasing power up to a $15 value per visit at participating markets.

The Healthy Markets Program worked with seven local convenience stores and food markets to promote healthy foods and beverages, and assisted one store owner in becoming an authorized SNAP retailer.

The department’s newly hired registered dietitian nutritionist met with school food service staff at 12 schools and evaluated each cafeteria using the evidence-based Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard; led a back-to-school training for all cafeteria staff in August on salad bar best practices; and surveyed elementary and upper school staff and parents to learn about their school wellness guidelines and practices. The school nutrition team also helped introduce a Puerto Rican dish, Fricasé de Pollo, on school menus and conducted taste tests and lunchroom surveys to get children excited about the new dish.
Our Work

As part of an out-of-school time pilot project with the Community Art Center’s School Age Child Care Program, staff provided recommendations on healthy foods and portion sizes, led weekly taste tests that introduced children to a variety of seasonal vegetables; and helped the program change its purchasing practices so that some produce is now bought from Drumlín Farm in Lincoln.

The department awarded a total of $6,500 in mini-grants to ten local organizations to develop activities that promote healthy eating and active living. The mini-grants were funded by CPHD and the Cambridge and Somerville Whole Foods Market stores.

The department continued to facilitate the bimonthly meetings of the Cambridge Food and Fitness Council, co-lead the urban agriculture initiative, and support the city’s Safe Routes to School program.

Mending Cambridge is a men’s leadership group that engages men in challenging stereotypes around masculinity and becoming active allies in working to end gender-based violence. Mending Cambridge hosted two community discussions on the role of men in the #MeToo movement and co-organized White Ribbon Day events in March and the city’s domestic violence vigil in October. Members also received training on facilitating workshops for men on how to actively intervene if they witness sexual harassment or other forms of gender-based violence. Mending Cambridge is a partnership of the city’s Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative and the Cambridge Public Health Department.

75 People who completed Mental Health First Aid training for adults or youth in 2018. The daylong training teaches participants how to help people experiencing mental health challenges or substance use disorder.

The Men’s Health League hosted five community conversations with men of African descent about prostate cancer and treatment options during winter 2018. The project was funded through a $1,000 grant from Mount Auburn Hospital. In June, the Men’s Health League organized a “Boys to Men” leadership brunch attended by over 100 people and co-hosted the 25th annual Hoops ‘N’ Health sports tournament and health fair, which drew over 300 players who participated in health workshops and screenings, as well as a basketball tournament. The Men’s Health League played an active role in Mending Cambridge and local fatherhood initiatives.

Substance Abuse Prevention. The Cambridge City Manager formed an opioid working group in April to review disease surveillance data, identify best practices for addressing the crisis locally, and develop recommendations for strengthening the local response. The 18-member group is staffed by the health department.
In June 2018, the department released the city’s first comprehensive opioid overdose data report. The report analyzes data from the ProEMS ambulance service, Cambridge Health Alliance, and other sources to show where overdoses are occurring in the city, which populations are most impacted, and the role of naloxone in preventing overdose deaths.

OPEN (Overdose Prevention and Education Network), a four-city coalition led by the health department, helped organize several presentations for older women about the risk of prescription opioid misuse and dependence; co-facilitated opioid recognition and response trainings for local businesses and city leaders; and with city partners, hosted a documentary screening and other awareness events for National Recovery Month in September.

The department also worked with students in CCTV’s Youth Media Program on producing short videos that explored the connection between teen substance misuse and academic pressure, mental health, and references to drug use in pop music.

As part of a four-city collaborative to reduce underage drinking, the health department conducted a “sticker shock” campaign at two Cambridge liquor stores to discourage adults from buying alcohol for people under 21 and met with state legislators in April to share information about how youth are accessing alcohol. The health department also gave mandated “21 Proof” trainings to 28 bartenders, waiters, managers, and owners of Cambridge establishments licensed to pour alcohol. Staff at these establishments also had the option of completing an online course in lieu of the department’s in-person training.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Local Emergency Preparedness. The department received a federal grant renewal to plan and prepare for major emergencies. As part of this grant, the department conducted three annual drills related to the rapid distribution of vaccines and medication, including an emergency dispensing site facility set-up drill at a public flu clinic in November. To meet state and federal requirements, staff worked with state partners to prepare for an audit of the CPHD’s emergency dispensing site plan.

Regional Public Health Emergency Preparedness. The department belongs to the Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition that serves 60 communities in metro Boston and the Urban Area Strategic Initiative (UASI), a nine-city coalition. UASI activities focused on preparing a multi-year training and exercise program to meet updated federal requirements for dispensing vaccines and antibiotics during a catastrophic event.

Climate Change. As a member of the city’s Climate Change Steering Committee, the department piloted strategies for raising awareness about climate change in the Port, one of the city’s most vulnerable neighborhoods. The health department partnered with a professional videographer to produce a “mini-documentary” on how climate change may impact the health of Port residents and how...
Our Work

they can prepare for extreme weather; created heat and flooding fact sheets, climate change posters, and a “climate change and health” web page; and reached out to Port residents at community events.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

72 Home visits by the department’s Healthy Homes program to families of children with asthma who reside in Cambridge and surrounding communities. Visits last approximately two hours, and include a clinical assessment and home evaluation for asthma triggers. Asthma home visits increased 22% and referrals 15% from 2017. Healthy Homes was invited by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to participate in a state-wide effort to advance the use of national asthma guidelines in clinical practice and community programs, and piloted an initiative at Cambridge Health Alliance’s Windsor Street Care Center and a Cambridge elementary school in fall 2018.

Mold Concerns in Schools. Staff met with administrators, teachers, and parents on multiple occasions to address moisture and mold issues in the Morse, Peabody, and Baldwin elementary schools that emerged over the summer. Staff shared health information related to mold, provided guidance to contractors on safe removal of mold-contaminated materials, recommended testing methods, and helped develop strategies to identify and prevent excessive humidity in the schools in the future.

Mosquito-Borne Disease. Forty-four residents statewide tested positive for West Nile virus in 2018, including three Cambridge residents. This was the highest number of laboratory-confirmed West Nile virus cases ever recorded in Massachusetts in a single year. The health department ensured that over 7,000 storm drains on city and university property were treated with larvicide and that all municipal storm drains received a second treatment in August to reduce mosquito populations during peak breeding season; oversaw posting of over 70 mosquito advisory signs in designated parks and playgrounds; and published regular updates on the department’s website and Twitter account.
At the department’s request, the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project, which provides mosquito control services to Cambridge, continued surveillance for the Asian tiger mosquito (Aedes albopictus). For the first time, this mosquito species—which can transmit the Zika, chikungunya, and dengue viruses—was detected on the border between Cambridge and Somerville. This discovery signals new mosquito-borne disease risk in the area and will inform further surveillance for this species.

**Water main treatment technology.** Staff provided guidance to Cambridge Water Department staff, their consultants, and the Cambridge Water Board on strategies for assessing whether the use of a water main treatment technology called Cured-in-Place Pipe (CIPP) could pose a risk to human health. This treatment would be limited to sections of the water main that are difficult to reach without major traffic or rail disruption.

**REGULATORY**

**1,091** Licenses and permits issued in 2018 related to laboratory biosafety, laboratory animals, indoor ice rinks, beekeeping, tanning salons, body art, bodywork, burials, and funeral directors.

**Recreational Cannabis.** Following a successful statewide referendum in 2016 to legalize the sale of recreational cannabis to adults, a group of city officials began meeting regularly to discuss all aspects of the new law. In 2018, the group focused on creating effective zoning amendments and drafting a template for a Cambridge host community agreement, a state requirement that sets forth the conditions for a recreational establishment to locate in a Massachusetts municipality.

**Beekeeping.** The department implemented its new public health regulation on the keeping of honey bees. Responsibilities included holding public hearings, issuing permits, and enforcement. Seven beekeeping permits had been issued as of December 31, 2018.

**SCHOOL HEALTH**

**51,824** Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) student visits to School Health Program* nurses for illness, injury, medication administration, and medical procedures during the 2017–2018 academic year. School nurses also cared for 1,403 children diagnosed with a physical or developmental condition.

**Vision & Hearing.** School nurses provided vision screenings to 3,986 students (resulting in 502 referrals for care), hearing screenings to 3,075 students (resulting in 41 referrals), and postural screenings to 1,913 students (resulting in 51 referrals) during the 2017–2018 academic year.

---

*School health services are provided to the Cambridge Public Schools through a collaborative agreement with the Cambridge Public Health Department.
**Our Work**

99% CPS kindergartners who met state immunization requirements by late October 2018, including 12 children with medical or religious exemptions.

**Children’s Oral Health.** The department redesigned its Healthy Smiles Program, a school-based oral health program that has served Cambridge elementary schools since 1997. In fall 2018, the program began providing classroom education and screenings to children in grades 1, 3, 6, and 9. By expanding beyond the elementary grades, the program is able to reach students in different stages of tooth development and better assess overall dental wellness among public school children. The Healthy Smiles team now screens children for oral cancer and improper alignment of teeth, in addition to a visual exam to detect tooth decay.

1,423 Public high school students who took the 14th annual Cambridge Teen Health Survey in April, answering questions about substance use, violence and safety, mental and sexual health, physical activity and nutrition, and other topics. Findings from the biennial Teen Health Survey and Middle Grades Health Survey are shared with a variety of groups to raise awareness about student health issues and inform prevention programming. The survey program is a partnership of the health department and Cambridge Public Schools. In 2018, the health department awarded $500 mini-grants to two Cambridge upper schools to use data from the middle grades survey to address an issue of concern. The winning proposals were student-produced anti-bullying videos and a parent night on warning signs of depression and self-harm.

**Healthy Weight Screenings.** School nurses completed state-mandated body mass index (BMI) screenings of tenth grade students at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School in April. Epidemiology staff analyzed BMI data from elementary, upper school, and tenth grade students to monitor overweight and obesity trends, with a focus on persistent weight disparities among Black and Hispanic children.

725 Seventh and ninth graders who were individually interviewed to assess their risk for substance use, as part of a state-mandated screening. The interviews were conducted by school nurses and CPS staff.

**Clinical Oversight.** The School Health Program continued to provide health care oversight and clinical guidance to three Cambridge nonpublic schools, as well as city-managed preschools and camps.
Knowledge and Leadership

2018 CONFERENCES AND FORUMS

Staff were moderators, panelists, or presenters at the following conferences and events:

American Public Health Association Annual Conference, San Diego, CA

National Environmental Health Association Annual Education Conference, Anaheim, CA

Massachusetts Farm & Sea to School Conference, Leominster, MA

National Association of City and County Health Officials, Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA

Global Community Bio Summit, MIT Media Lab, Cambridge, MA

REGIONAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Administrative Council

Boston Biosafety Committee (Boston Public Health Commission)

Community Health Network Area 17 (CHNA 17)

Food Security and Health Subgroup (Massachusetts Food Systems Collaborative)

Massachusetts Healthy Cosmetology Committee

Medical and Biological Waste Alternative Treatment Advisory Group (Massachusetts Department of Public Health)

Metro Regional Preparedness Coalition

National Advisory Committee / Practical Playbook (de Beaumont Foundation)

Suffolk-East Middlesex Mosquito Control Commission

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Biowatch Program
Financial Overview

**REVENUE**
FISCAL YEAR 2018

$7.5 M

- City Appropriation: 84%
- Clinical Service Fees: 4%
- Licenses, Permits, and Other Fees: 5%
- State, Federal, and Other Funding: 7%

**EXPENSES**
FISCAL YEAR 2018

$7.5 M

- School Health Services: 32%
- Environmental Health and Emergency Response: 7%
- Cambridge Health Alliance Facilities and Administrative Services: 11%
- Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention: 15%
- Communicable Disease Prevention, Epidemiology, and Data Management: 18%
- Administration, Operations, and Quality Improvement: 17%
Acknowledgments

Louis A. DePasquale
City Manager
City of Cambridge

Lisa C. Peterson
Deputy City Manager
City of Cambridge

Patrick R. Wardell
Chief Executive Officer, Cambridge Health Alliance
& Commissioner of Public Health
City of Cambridge

Claude A. Jacob
Chief Public Health Officer
Cambridge Health Alliance
City of Cambridge

2018 CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Mayor Marc C. McGovern
Vice Mayor Jan Devereux
Councillor Dennis J. Carlone
Councillor Craig A. Kelley
Councillor Alanna M. Mallon
Councillor Sumbul Siddiqui
Councillor E. Denise Simmons
Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE
Ellen Semonoff, Chair
Brian Burke
Madge Kaplan
Katharine Kosinski
Paula Paris
Patrick R. Wardell, ex officio

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAFF

EDITOR
Susan Feinberg

PHOTO CREDITS
Molly Akin, John Arias, Cambridge Community Development
Department, Cambridge Police Department, Cambridge Public
Schools, Greg M. Cooper (EF Education First), Fiona Crimmins
(Food for Free), Susan Feinberg, Ashley Herrin, Ian Mac,
David Oziel, Natalia Schiller, Title IX Girls Running Club,
YWCA Cambridge, and Chad Makaio Zichterman

DESIGN
Ambit Creative Group / Fenway Group