



# CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA • JUNE 8, 2020

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**Regular Meeting**

**Sullivan Chamber**

**5:30 PM**

Cambridge City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge, MA 02139

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## I. MINUTES APPROVAL

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1. Minutes of the Regular Meeting City Council held on September 9, 2019 5:30 PM  
*These minutes were accepted.*

## II. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA

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1. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to an update on COVID-19.

***CMA 2020 #117***

City staff gave a COVID-19 update.

**Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Update:** [The pilot of closing Memorial Drive](#) to vehicular traffic and opening up space for pedestrians and cyclists was a resounding success, so the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department is working with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to expand closures for Sundays and Saturdays. Although nothing has been officially decided yet, we can expect Memorial Drive to close on Saturdays soon, and potentially expand closures to every day in the future. Staff from the Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department also shared that the start date for [the Shared Streets Pilot](#) may be pushed back from the originally anticipated start date of June 15th. The City is currently in the process of conducting community outreach to the neighborhood, and making tweaks on their feedback. Opening up additional street space for pedestrians and cyclists so they can physically distance, and creating a network of safe streets is a key way we can ensure our residents can safely travel throughout the City. This will become even more important as Cambridge continues to reopen and as more residents will begin physically reporting to work, so I am hopeful we can move forward with the Shared Streets Pilot as soon as possible.

Additionally, parking regulations, including parking meter payments, will be in effect starting June 15th. The Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department has also begun taking online appointments, and taking payments in person.

**City Reopening Update:** City buildings are continuing to reopen to staff, and employees reporting to the 51 Inman Street location and the Water Department will begin to return on June 15th. The City has been working with employees to answer questions on returning to work, and to create an internal feedback system. All City employees are also eligible for free COVID-19 testing at the [Cambridge Health Alliance testing site in East Cambridge](#).

[The Recycling Center will also be opening](#) on June 13th. The City Clerk's Office and the Treasury will begin accepting in-person appointments next week as well. As Cambridge has a dense urban environment, the City has been moving slowly on reopening certain high-contact areas. Tennis courts and dog parks are expected to reopen on June 15th, and though [playgrounds will remain closed](#) for now, City leadership is hoping to open them the week of June 22nd. The Main Cambridge Public Library will also begin offering [contactless holds pickup](#) on June 16th. Creating a contactless system to give residents access to physical library materials is something [I've been advocating for](#) these past several weeks, so I am thankful to see this step forward. However, we need to expand this system to other libraries, especially the branch libraries in East Cambridge and North Cambridge. A lot of residents don't live in close proximity to the Main Library, so we have to ensure these library materials are being distributed in an equitable and accessible way.

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**Public Health Update:** Cambridge's [COVID-19 case count](#) currently stands at 1,040 positive cases, and 95 devastating fatalities, most coming from residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities. Although we may feel disheartened at the incredible loss we've experienced from these deaths, the Public Health Department is seeing more residents recover from COVID-19, a hopeful sign. The City's COVID-19 data center has also been updated to include a 'classification' section distinguishing between confirmed COVID-19 cases (those with a positive viral/molecular test) and probable cases (those with a positive antibody/serology test, or those with a clinical COVID-19 diagnosis).

[Free COVID-19 testing has begun in the North Cambridge neighborhood](#); 122 tests have already been administered at this site, and more testing dates to come. Throughout Cambridge, we're seeing a positivity rate of 7.97%, lower than Somerville, Arlington, Boston, and Chelsea, and we also expect this number to further drop, as more and more COVID-19 tests give negative results. The Public Health Department is continuing to provide guidance, explore workforce and remote capabilities, and further examine how we can better support communities of color feeling a disproportionate impact from this public health crisis.

This item was placed on file.

2. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of 24,000 received from Audible, an Amazon Company, to the Grant Fund Human Service Programs Other Ordinary Maintenance account which will help fund the City's restaurant meals to shelters program.

***CMA 2020 #118***

See Policy Order and Resolution List Item #4 for discussion.

This item was adopted on the consent agenda (no discussion).

3. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of a grant from the Cambridge Health Alliance, through the National Foundation for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Inc. (CDC Foundation), in the amount of \$185,000 to the Grant Fund Finance Department Other Ordinary Maintenance account that will be used to support costs associated with the War Memorial Temporary Shelter.

***CMA 2020 #119***

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

4. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the transfer of \$65,000 from the General Fund Employee Benefits (Insurance) Salary and Wages account to the General Fund Public Works Travel and Training (Judgment and Damages) account to cover medical bills and settlements anticipated through the end of FY20 for personnel injured in the course of their job.

***CMA 2020 #120***

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

5. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (MassEVIP) in the amount of \$25,000 to the Grant Fund Public Works Other

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Ordinary Maintenance account to be applied toward payment of five Nissan Leaf electric vehicle leasing fees.

***CMA 2020 #121***

This item was adopted.

6. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the transfer of \$276,600 in the General Fund between School Department statutory accounts as follows: \$276,600 from the School Department Salaries and Wages account to the School Department Travel and Training account (\$276,600) to cover costs associated with all CPS educators participation in six hours of district-wide training focused on social emotional and trauma sensitive supports for educators and students, and on school-based reflection and planning.

***CMA 2020 #122***

This appropriation provides funding for Cambridge Public Schools teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals to receive training focused on social emotional and trauma sensitive supports for educators and students, and school-based planning. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit our students and our educators especially hard, and the shift to remote learning has been difficult for everyone, so this training will give educators the skillset to better support struggling students, both emotionally and academically. See Communication and Reports from Other City Officers Item #1 to learn more about the work being done in Cambridge Public Schools.

This item was adopted.

7. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to efforts to respond to the restaurant community's need to expand outdoor dining services in response to Governor Baker's announcement that restaurants will be permitted to provide outdoor dining services at the commencement of Phase II of the Commonwealth's Reopening Plan; and to request that the City Council vote to temporarily authorize me or my designee to issue all permits for temporary street obstructions, including Sidewalk Business Use Permits to restaurants that seek to operate outdoor dining on the sidewalk from this date until November 30, 2020 without prior City Council authorization, as explained below.

***CMA 2020 #123***

This item gives the City Manager the authority to issue permits for temporary street obstructions without City Council approval until the end of November. While these permits would usually require City Council approval, removing this barrier will help expedite the process for small businesses, especially restaurants, looking to expand into our public ways. As Cambridge continues to reopen, this will allow restaurants to create or expand outdoor dining, enabling them to accept more customers and increase much-needed revenue. [Applications](#) for this went live last Saturday, and 34 applications have already been received. We have to be creative about the ways we're supporting struggling small businesses, so I also hope we'll be able to deploy a model similar to last year's outdoor kerosene heat lamp pilot to extend the outdoor dining season, and to continue to remove licensing fees and other barriers posed.

This item was adopted.

### III. CALENDAR

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#### ON THE TABLE

1. That the City Manager is requested to direct the City Solicitor, Community Development, Public Works, Inspectional Services and any other related departments to review the proposed amendments regarding the prohibition of Natural Gas Infrastructure in New Buildings.

**TABLED ON JANUARY 27, 2020**

**POR 2019 #339**

No action was taken.

2. That the “2020 Cycling Safety Ordinance” be forwarded to the Ordinance Committee for discussion and recommendation.

**TABLED ON MARCH 23, 2020**

**POR 2020 #50**

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Zondervan, and I originally filed the 2020 Cycling Safety Ordinance back in March, but it was tabled when Committee meetings were suspended and as the City Council sole focus shifted to COVID-19. The 2020 Cycling Safety Ordinance would create a specific timeline when the City Manager must build dedicated bike lanes on certain key streets. As we will continue to weather the effects of this public health crisis for months to come, and as we anticipate a potential second wave, it is crucial we move forward to expand safe travel options for residents. This item was also amended to allow for more flexibility in the proposed timeline, due to the uncertainty and delays this pandemic has caused. [Click here](#) to read more about these amendments.

This item was referred to the Ordinance Committee for further discussion.

3. An application was received from Duncan MacArthur, requesting permission for a curb cut at the premises numbered 56 Creighton Street; said petition has received approval from Inspectional Services, Traffic, Parking and Transportation, Historical Commission and Public Works. No response has been received from the neighborhood association.

**TABLED BY IN COUNCIL JUNE 1, 2020**

**APP 2020 #22**

No action was taken.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 18-108, regarding a report on offering early voting in City Council and School Committee Elections.

**PENDING RESPONSE FROM LEGISLATURE**

**CMA 2018 #286**

No action was taken.

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5. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, requesting the appropriation and authorization to borrow \$6,500,000 to provide funds for the design and construction of various water pollution abatement projects, including but not limited to Sewer Capital Repairs Program and climate change preparedness efforts.  
**ON OR AFTER JUNE 15, 2020 THE QUESTION COMES ON ADOPTION**  
**CMA 2020 #101**  
*No action was taken.*
  
6. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, requesting the appropriation and authorization to borrow \$1,800,000 to provide funds for various Schools for repairs to electrical service, roof replacement, chiller replacement, floor replacement and replacement of bi-directional amplifier and antenna in various school buildings.  
**ON OR AFTER JUNE 15, 2020 THE QUESTION COMES ON ADOPTION**  
**CMA 2020 #106**  
*No action was taken.*
  
7. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, requesting the appropriation and authorization to borrow \$5,000,000 to provide funds for the reconstruction of various City streets and sidewalks.  
**ON OR AFTER JUNE 15, 2020 THE QUESTION COMES ON ADOPTION**  
**CMA 2020 #102**  
*No action was taken.*
  
8. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, requesting the appropriation and authorization to borrow \$16,000,000 to provide funds for the Municipal Facilities Improvement Plan which will support improvements at the Department of Public works Complex including the Ryan Garage, Lafayette Square Firehouse structural repair, and other municipal buildings.  
**ON OR AFTER JUNE 15, 2020 THE QUESTION COMES ON ADOPTION**  
**CMA 2020 #103**  
*No action was taken.*
  
9. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, requesting the appropriation and authorization to borrow \$9,000,000 to provide funds for the construction of improvements of the Lexington Avenue and River Street Firehouses.  
**ON OR AFTER JUNE 15, 2020 THE QUESTION COMES ON ADOPTION**  
**CMA 2020 #104**  
*No action was taken.*
  
10. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, requesting the appropriation and authorization to borrow \$237,000,000 to provide funds for the design and construction of the Tobin Montessori and Vassal Lane Upper School.  
**ON OR AFTER JUNE 15, 2020 THE QUESTION COMES ON ADOPTION**  
**CMA 2020 #105**  
*No action was taken.*

## IV. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

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1. An application was received from Central Square Business Improvement District requesting permission for 60 temporary banners along Massachusetts Avenue from Hancock Street through Albany Street welcoming back business's into Central Square with Project Neighbor, Hello Again campaign from mid-June 2020 through September 2020.

***APP 2020 #24***

This application from the [Central Square Business Improvement District \(BID\)](#) is a part of their new “Hello Again” campaign, welcoming residents back to Central Square as Cambridge begins to reopen. Central Square is home to so many local, small businesses, and it also serves as our Cultural District, so ensuring it is well-supported in the coming months has to be a priority. This is a time when many small businesses, arts organizations, and individual artists are struggling, so the City and residents alike have to come together to protect the vitality of our Main Streets.

This application was accepted on the consent agenda.

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V. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

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1. That the Cambridge City Council schedule a hearing to discuss the possible use of body cameras by the Cambridge Police Department

**Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor Simmons**

***POR 2020 #127***

Municipalities across the country are looking towards reforming their policing practices in the wake of George Floyd's tragic murder, and Cambridge is no exception. Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons, and I submitted this order to schedule a special City Council meeting on the possibility of having our police officers wear body cameras. This is a conversation that is long overdue, with some pointing out that body cameras do not prevent police violence, while others advocate for their ability to increase transparency and accountability. By holding this hearing at the City Council level, rather than in the Public Safety Committee, we're elevating this issue, and giving each Councillor, not just those on the Public Safety Committee, an opportunity to weigh in.

This order was adopted.

2. That the Executive Assistant to the City Council confer with the Dedication Committee to consider the request from Peter Watchorn for an appropriate dedication at the corner of Watson Street and Salem Street in honor of the late Greg Miller; and be it further

**Councillor Simmons**

***POR 2020 #128***

This order was adopted.

3. 100% Affordable Housing Overlay Zoning Petition 2020

**Councillor McGovern, Councillor Simmons, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Toomey**

***POR 2020 #129***

The Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) seeks to relax certain zoning restrictions for new affordable housing developers, who typically have a difficult time competing with market-rate developments with more resources. This version includes all of the amendments made when the AHO was originally discussed in the last City Council term. The COVID-19 public health crisis has truly laid bare the striking inequities present in our community, especially surrounding affordable housing. As more residents continue to weather the financial consequences of this pandemic, and as we can only expect the economic recession to worsen in the coming months, we need to act urgently and intentionally on how to promote affordable housing, which is why I asked to be added to this order as a co-sponsor. I look forward to discussing the AHO with my colleagues on the Ordinance Committee as we work towards addressing these disparities and the affordable housing crisis.

This order was referred to the Ordinance Committee for further discussion.

4. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to determine the feasibility of extending funding for the homeless meals program through September 2020

**Councillor McGovern, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler**

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### ***POR 2020 #130***

Early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, many meals programs frequented by homeless residents closed due to safety concerns, and staffing issues at homeless shelters prevented them from preparing meals on-site. As part of the City's broad efforts to combat food insecurity, [the City began contracting with restaurants to provide meals](#) for homeless residents. Around 2,600 meals are distributed through this program each week, so this is a critical resource for our most vulnerable residents. Audible recently made a generous \$30,000 donation to this meals program, but Councillor McGovern, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, and I submitted this order in the hopes we can continue funding this program through September.

This order was adopted.

5. That the City Council renews its observance of Loving Day on June 12, 2020 and encourages all Cambridge residents to embrace the diversity of families and recognize the importance of this day  
**Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler**  
***POR 2020 #131***

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

6. That the flags half-staff will serve as a reminder that every life lost to COVID-19 was a loved community member, and those lives were lost too soon due to this deadly virus  
**Mayor Siddiqui, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor Toomey, Councillor Carlone**  
***POR 2020 #132***

This policy order from Mayor Siddiqui, myself, and Councillors Toomey and Carlone asks the City Manager to fly the flags in front of all City and school buildings at half-staff for the remainder of June. We have lost so many of our loved community members to the COVID-19 public health crisis, and while the need to practice physical distancing prevents us from gathering to mourn and honor those who have passed, this small gesture will help symbolize our collective grief in these difficult times.

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

7. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to report back to the Council on how some, or all, of the \$4.1 million dollar increase in the Police Department budget between FY20 and FY21 may be redirected towards measures that promote public health and safety in other departments  
**Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Zondervan**  
***POR 2020 #133***

This policy order asks the City Manager to report back to the City Council on how the FY21 budget increase for the Police Department could be redirected. It also asks the City Council to go on record with the intention to only support an FY21 budget that includes significant reallocations of the budget from policing to public health. The budgeting process for the next fiscal year is currently underway, and we, as the City Council, have the authority to make budget cuts, but must have the approval of the City Manager to increase funding. This policy order has gathered a lot of attention, garnering five hours of public comment, and sparking broader community conversations as well. As we address the ways racism permeates our community, and examine ways we can reform policing, it is clear that residents, City Councillors, and City staff alike have passionate, but sometimes conflicting, views on what specific action must be taken. This is a conversation that has only just begun, and it will remain at the forefront of our minds for months to come. These past few weeks, I have been taking the opportunity to listen to those most impacted, and hope to use the invaluable insight I've gained to support reforms that will make

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Cambridge a safer place for our communities of color. As this order requires further discussion, and collaboration with City departments, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler exercised his charter-right. [Click here](#) to listen as the City Council, the City Manager, and the Police Commissioner discuss this issue (beginning at the 1:28:10 mark).

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler exercised his charter-right (no vote was taken, and it will appear on next week's agenda).

8. That the Cambridge City Council declare racism as a public health crisis

**Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons, Councillor Zondervan, Vice Mayor Mallon**  
***POR 2020 #134***

This order, filed by Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons, Councillor Zondervan, and myself, asks the City Council and the Public Health Department to declare racism as a public health crisis. As we mourn the countless beautiful, black lives we have lost, we must look towards holistic reform addressing the ways in which racism has permeated every aspect of society. By institutionally acknowledging that racism pervades our schools, healthcare, housing, criminal justice system, and workforce, we'll continue to build momentum and deepen a sense of urgency to work towards dismantling oppressive systems. This order was amended to add the entire City Council as co-sponsors.

This order was adopted.

## VI. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

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1. A communication was received from Mayor Siddiqui, transmitting information from the School Committee's Special Meeting and Regular Meeting  
**COF 2020 #33**  
This communication from Mayor Siddiqui serves as an update on the work she and the School Committee are doing to support Cambridge Public Schools Students. To learn more about the work they're doing to uplift students of color, support special education students, and plan for the summer ahead, [click here](#).  
  
This item was placed on file.
2. A communication was received from Councillor Zondervan, regarding Funding our Community, Transforming our Policing.  
**COF 2020 #34**  
This item was placed on file.
3. A communication was received from Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, transmitting comments on 2020 Cycling Safety Ordinance Amendment.  
**COF 2020 #35**  
See Calendar Item #2 for discussion.  
  
This item was placed on file.