



# CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA • MARCH 29, 2021

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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. 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 vaccination rollout.  
**CMA 2021 #53**  
City staff gave a COVID update.

**City Services Update:** The Commonwealth's temporary homeless shelter on Green Street, which the City has assisted in opening, will be open through June 30th, with the possibility to run through September. The City is awaiting guidance from the U.S. Department of the Treasury on how municipalities can use funds from the [American Rescue Plan](#) to support our community. In the meantime, residents and small businesses that need support can find resources on [the City's website](#).

**Schools Update:** Since last October, 21,538 tests have been administered to 1,463 CPS educators and staff as part of a voluntary testing program. 4,185 tests have also been administered to 1,266 students through this testing program, which has identified 50 positive cases since it was introduced. CPS has started conducting pool testing in the schools, and on Monday, March 22nd, approximately 1,450 students were swabbed as part of this program. Thanks to the vigilance of the School Committee, the Cambridge Public Health Department, and our CPS staff, no case spikes have been documented since CPSD opened up for expanded in-person learning. For more information on CPS' reopening, see Communications and Reports from Other City Officers Item #1.

**Vaccine Update:** To date, [24% of Cambridge residents](#) have received at least one vaccine dose, compared to 29% of Massachusetts residents. Residents aged 55+ or with one certain health condition will become eligible for the vaccine next Monday, April 5th, while the general public will be eligible starting on Monday, April 19th. Everyone, including those who aren't currently eligible, can pre-register for a vaccine appointment by [clicking here](#), or [click here](#) for more information on the safety and efficacy of the vaccine.

Massachusetts is receiving 25% more doses from the federal government than before, and the Hynes Convention Center will soon receive 6,000 additional doses each day, compared to the 1000 doses it currently receives daily. Interpreters are available onsite for Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Mandarin speakers, and tele-translation services are available for other languages, free of charge. So far, the Cambridge Pandemic Collaborative has administered vaccines to 2,607 people at City-run clinics, and

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is continuing to vaccinate elderly residents in senior housing. To date, over 90% of CHA residents and staff have been fully vaccinated, a testament to the careful planning and dedicated hard work of CPHD staff and the Cambridge Community Corps members reaching out to residents. Currently, CPHD is working with City and community partners to identify and screen residents for the [Homebound Vaccination Program](#), and 11 homebound residents have already been vaccinated with leftover doses from other clinics.

Data shows that black and Latinx residents are being vaccinated at slightly higher rates in Cambridge than they are statewide, while we're trailing statewide numbers in the Asian, multiracial, and white categories. As we work to mitigate disparate health outcomes and address community concerns about the vaccine, the City is focusing its multi-pronged outreach strategy on people of color, immigrants, and other vulnerable residents. Community forums with clinicians are being planned in several different languages, and information on vaccine eligibility has been sent to over 700 local businesses.

**Testing Update:** The City is continuing to offer [free, daily testing](#). Appointments aren't required, but recommended, and you can reserve a slot by [clicking here](#) or calling 617-349-9788. More than 22,000 tests have been administered through this program throughout the month of March, and the Cambridge Community Corps has been working to build community awareness of and trust in this testing program. Cambridge's positivity rate stands at .43%, with a daily average of 22 cases per 100,000 residents.

**Public Health Update:** Cambridge's [COVID case count](#) currently stands at 5,485 cases, 16% of which are active. While we're holding steady at a devastating 121 deaths, statewide trends indicate that infections are continuing to increase. Most new infections are among residents in the 20-29 years age range, and variant forms of the virus, which are more infectious than the original strain, are circulating widely across the Commonwealth. The prominence of variants, pandemic fatigue, and loosening restrictions statewide are likely playing a factor in the increasing case counts. Cambridge is currently classified as a moderate-risk community, and it's critical that residents remain vigilant with mask use, physical distancing and good hand hygiene, especially with the Passover, Holi, and Easter holidays here. [Click here](#) for spring holiday guidance from CPHD.

[Click here](#) for CPHD's full presentation.

This item was placed on file.

2. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the reappointment of the following person as a Constable With Power for a term of three years, effective January 1, 2021: Timothy Puopolo.  
**CMA 2021 #54**  
To learn more about the appointee's qualifications, [click here](#).

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

3. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to new appointments and reappointments of the following members of the Cambridge Public Planting Committee for a term of 2-years, effective March 1, 2021: New Appointments: Vinita Bhaskar, Ruth Loetterie, Tracy Orr, Ahron Lerman, Maria Hottelet, Belinda Tato, Cindy Carpenter, Jill Costello, Sandra Fairbank, Sara Cohen. Reappointments: Chantal Eide, Cynthia Smith, Maggie Booz, Michael Hanlon, Paula Cortes, Sophia Emperador, Seanna Berry and Joan Krizack.

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### **CMA 2021 #55**

To learn more about the appointees' qualifications, [click here](#).

This item was placed on file on the consent agenda.

4. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$1,500,000, from Free Cash, to the Public Investment Fund Public Works Extraordinary Expenditures account, to purchase and distribute standardized trash barrels to all residential buildings in the City's trash program.

### **CMA 2021 #56**

In this communication, the City Manager is requesting an appropriation to provide standardized trash barrels to residential buildings across Cambridge. These receptacles will be offered in different sizes based on residents' needs, helping to deter rodents by giving adequate space for waste, and the sizes will be standardized, increasing worker safety, as this ensures that trash receptacles can be emptied with semi-automatic collection, rather than manual collection. The City currently provides standardized compost and recycling barrels, and adding standardized trash barrels will align with recommendations from the City's [Zero Waste Master Plan](#).

This item was adopted.

5. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$335,000 from Free Cash to the Public Investment Fund Public Works Extraordinary Expenditures account, to purchase and install Big Belly solar compactors on Cambridge Street between Inman Square and Lechmere Station.

### **CMA 2021 #57**

This appropriation calls for existing trash receptacles on Cambridge Street between Inman Square and Lechmere Station to be replaced with 40 [Big Belly](#) solar compactors. The City is transitioning to using Big Belly bins because, while they're more expensive than traditional barrels, they hold more trash, are more effective at deterring rodents, and are accompanied by a single-stream recycling receptacle.

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

6. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 19-58, regarding a report on drafting an ordinance banning single use plastic items.

### **CMA 2021 #58**

This communication responds to [a policy order](#) that Councillor Zondervan, former Vice Mayor Devereux, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor McGovern, and Councillor Carlone sponsored to ask City staff to draft an ordinance that bans single-use plastic items, in line with recommendations from the City's [Zero Waste Master Plan](#). This report recommends against a blanket ban on single-use plastic items, based on a survey conducted with the local business community. Instead, this report suggests other ways to promote environmentally friendly practices, such as strengthening the [Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance](#). As he is working to schedule a Health & Environment Committee meeting on the Zero Waste Master Plan, Councillor Zondervan asked that this communication be referred to the committee.

This item was referred to the Health & Environment Committee.

7. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-23, regarding a report on implementing a curbside textile recycling program.

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### ***CMA 2021 #59***

This communication responds to [a policy order](#) that Councillor Toomey filed in 2020 calling for a curbside textile recycling program to divert clothing and other cloth materials from landfills. In this response, Department of Public Works Commissioner O’Riordan explains what a textile recycling program could look like, with potential curbside and drop-off options. The City expects to announce its textile recycling program by the end of the year, and I’m thankful for this additional opportunity to reduce Cambridge’s environmental footprint and fulfill recommendations from the City’s [Zero Waste Master Plan](#). As he is working to schedule a Health & Environment Committee meeting on the Zero Waste Master Plan, Councillor Zondervan asked that this communication be referred to the committee.

This item was referred to the Health & Environment Committee.

8. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to request for approval to submit a Home Rule Petition that (1) would authorize the City of Cambridge (“City”) to relocate land protected by Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution (“Article 97”) at the Father Callanan Playground and Fields in Cambridge (“Callanan Field”) that are adjacent to the Tobin Montessori and Vassal Lane Upper Schools (the “Site”), and (2) would authorize the City to construct subsurface geothermal wells under a portion of the Callanan Field.

### ***CMA 2021 #60***

This communication asks the City Council to approve a Home Rule Petition to send to the state legislature. If approved by the state legislature, this Home Rule Petition would allow the City to relocate protected land at the Father Callanan Playground and Fields, adjacent to the Tobin Montessori and Vassal Lane Upper Schools (Tobin Schools), and construct subsurface geothermal wells under a portion of the field. These accommodations are needed to ensure the [Tobin Schools Project](#) is viable and environmentally sustainable. If approved, this Home Rule Petition will create 14,500 square feet of newly designated park land.

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

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### II. CALENDAR

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#### ON THE TABLE

1. Vaccinating CPS Staff Plan PO.

**TABLED IN COUNCIL FEBRUARY 3, 2021**

**POR 2021 #21**

I filed this policy order in February to ask City staff to develop a comprehensive plan to rapidly vaccinate CPS educators and staff, potentially at a City-run clinic. Ensuring that CPS staff are vaccinated is key in protecting their health, restoring families' confidence in the safety of in-person learning, and supporting parents as they return to work, and as CPHD shared information on how they were going to support CPS staff's vaccination, I moved to place this order on the table. Since then, my office and the Mayor's office have helped secure over 150 vaccine appointments for educators and school staff, and the Commonwealth has begun offering [designated days for educators](#), childcare workers, and school staff at mass-vaccination sites. As most CPS staff have received at least their first vaccine dose now, this order was placed on file.

This item was placed on file.

2. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-64, requesting Home Rule language to allow for acoustic live entertainment performances in small businesses under certain conditions without a license.

**TABLED IN COUNCIL FEBRUARY 22, 2021**

**CMA 2021 #32**

No action was taken.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3. 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.

4. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a Zoning Petition which amends Article 8.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

**PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL MARCH 22, 2021**

**CMA 2021 #3**

No action was taken.

### III. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

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1. An application was received from Fun Antiques, requesting permission for an awning at the premises numbered 33 Belmont Street. Approval has been received from Inspectional Services, Department of Public Works, Community Development Department and abutters.

***APP 2021 #12***

**This application was approved.**

## IV. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

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1. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Community Development Department and other relevant City staff to coordinate efforts to formally recognize and promote National Black Business Month in August and Women's Small Business Month in October, and to report back to the City Council on these efforts in a timely manner.

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

***POR 2021 #59***

Councillor Simmons, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor McGovern, and I filed this policy order to ask the City to formally recognize and promote [National Black Business Month](#) in August and [Women's Small Business Month](#) in October. [Minority-owned businesses have been hit especially hard](#) by this pandemic, and as we transition from relief into recovery, it's critical to ensure we uplift diverse businesses in any ways we can.

This order was adopted.

2. That the Cambridge City Council go on record expressing its gratitude for Dr. West's time in Cambridge, its disappointment to see him leave the city, and wishing him the best of luck at Union Theological Seminary and in his future endeavors

**Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Zondervan, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons**

***POR 2021 #60***

This resolution has the City Council express its gratitude for Dr. Cornel West, a professor at Harvard who is moving on to teach at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. [Click here](#) to learn more about Dr. West's work and his impact on Cambridge.

This resolution was adopted.

3. Budget Roundtable

**Councillor Nolan**

***POR 2021 #61***

This order asks the Finance Committee Co-Chairs to convene a roundtable discussion with City staff and the City Council to open up a dialogue on shared priorities as we enter into budget season this spring.

This order was adopted.

4. That the Chair of the Civic Unity Committee be and hereby is requested to schedule a virtual meeting of the Safe Streets, Safe City initiative as soon as possible to provide a forum for the Cambridge Police to report back on any information about the murder of Mr. Louis-Jacques and other recent episodes of gunshots that can be shared with the community, and for area stakeholders to begin sharing information and planning on how we can all work collaboratively to keep this community safe as we enter the summer months.

**Councillor Simmons**

***POR 2021 #62***

This late order from Councillor Simmons sets up a conversation on gun violence in our community following the tragic death of [CRLS graduate Xavier Louis-Jacques](#), who was just 19 when he was

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murdered last weekend. As we mourn this community loss, we must take steps to address this senseless gun violence, so this order calls for a Civic Unity Committee hearing to develop strategies to keep Cambridge safe. This order was amended to add the full City Council as co-sponsors.

This order was adopted as amended.

## V. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

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1. A communication was received from Mayor, Sumbul Siddiqui, communicating information from the School Committee.

***COF 2021 #30***

This letter from Mayor Siddiqui serves as an update on the work she and the entire School Committee are doing to prepare for full-time in-person learning, continue the search for our next Superintendent, and more. [Click here](#) to read her full communication.

This item was placed on file.

2. A communication was received from Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, transmitting questions for the City Manager's COVID-19 update.

***COF 2021 #31***

This communication contains questions asked by City Councillors that were answered in the City Manager's COVID update (City Manager's Agenda Item #1).

This item was placed on file.