2017 At a Glance
The City of Cambridge, Ontario, Canada
for Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2017
City of Cambridge, 2017 At a Glance

For the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2017

Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

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The City of Cambridge was officially formed by the Province of Ontario on January 1, 1973. Made up of the former communities of Galt, Preston, Hespeler and Blair, the history of this area dates to a far earlier period. Today, Cambridge is a modern, inclusive city with a rich architectural heritage providing a window to that past. Economic diversity, natural beauty, and vibrant culture have helped to make Cambridge the second largest community within the fast growing Waterloo Region.
133,900 year-end population (2017) with an estimated 48,640 households

A strong labour force of 71,880 and a diverse industrial base with over 11,726 businesses

50 minutes to Toronto Pearson International Airport and minutes to Region of Waterloo International Airport

Near Highway 401 for ready access to major cities in Canada and the USA

More than 100 parks covering 408 hectares and over 99 kilometres of trails

Numerous organized sporting and leisure activities and a variety of cultural facilities and events
The City of Cambridge is governed by an elected Council of nine members: the Mayor and eight Councilors who serve a four-year term.

The Mayor and Council are responsible for developing a long-range vision for the future of the community. Council establishes policies that affect the overall operation of the community and are responsive to residents’ needs and wishes.

To ensure that these policies are carried out and that the entire community receives equitable service, Council appoints a City Manager who is directly responsible for the City’s administration.
Message from the Mayor

Cambridge is a vibrant, beautiful place to live, work, play and learn, and as you’ll see in this 2017 Annual Report, we are continuing to work hard to make it even better. On behalf of City Council, I’m proud to showcase, in these pages, what we have achieved together with the community.

In 2017, we put a focus on continued engagement with our community. This includes more opportunities for the public to participate in decision-making, learn about city services and actively support key initiatives that they are passionate about. For example, we began live streaming our Council meetings, which means that more people can become involved in city decision-making. We have also focused on “opening the doors” to various city facilities, so that people can learn more about all the work behind the scenes.

Our city is growing and changing, but we continue to preserve and protect what makes us unique, from our heritage buildings to our natural landscapes. There is something for everyone in Cambridge and I want to congratulate the dedicated staff and partners who play a key role in building our community.

Mayor Doug Craig

Message from the City Manager

2017 was an exciting year as we continued to make significant progress towards achieving our collective vision as outlined by our strategic plan - Cambridge Connected: Our Voice. Our Vision.

A great deal of work was accomplished across all divisions which placed us in very positive position moving into 2018. For example, there was major progress on significant projects such as the old post office restoration, the new fire station, and the pedestrian bridge; a great deal of work upgrading our trail system, including the 2.2 km multi-use trail constructed on Conestoga Blvd; five new playgrounds, including a fully accessible playground in Hespeler; and 2.58 km of road construction. As well, internally, we streamlined the corporate structure and introduced new systems to make our processes more efficient, effective and accountable.

The local economy is strong and we are seeing a lot of momentum in terms of new businesses, expansion and investment in Cambridge. As well, we continue to focus on innovative solutions to drive change. In fact, I’m very proud that the City of Cambridge was selected by the World Council of City Data (WCCD) to be one of the first of a global network of Local Data Hubs using city data to improve quality of life for residents.

We continue to listen to what you tell us and understand the importance of putting our residents first. This means building strong partnerships with each other and all of the other agencies that work together to create a city that is “alive with opportunity.”

Gary Dyke, City Manager
The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) is led by the City Manager and includes the Deputy City Managers of each city department. It is responsible for implementing the direction set out by City Council, including the provision of high quality community-focused services, overseeing the responsible and sustainable management of resources and monitoring progress.

In recognition of the new direction provided by the strategic plan, the Corporate Leadership Team is committed to implementing the goals and objectives outlined under each of the themes **People, Place and Prosperity** based on the City’s corporate core values of **Integrity, Respect, Inclusiveness and Service.**

### 2017 CORPORATE STRUCTURE

- **Mayor and Council**
- **Gary Dyke**
  - City Manager
- **Hardy Bromberg**
  - Community Development
- **Dave Bush**
  - Corporate Services (Including Fire Services)
- **Steven Fairweather**
  - Office of the Chief Financial Officer
In addition to federal and provincial services, Cambridge residents and businesses receive services from two levels of local government – the City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo.

Below is an outline of the general services provided by each of these levels of government.

- **Environment and Nature** (cemeteries, forestry, horticulture, natural areas and parks);
- **Getting Around** (parking, roads, sidewalks, street lighting, traffic management, trails and winter maintenance);
- **Infrastructure** (storm water, wastewater and water);
- **Jobs & Growth** (business attraction and retention, business licensing, employment land development, planning services and tourism);
- **Public Safety** (animal control, building code permits and inspections, bylaw enforcement, city wide emergency planning and management, crossing guards and fire services); and
- **Things to Do** (aquatics, arenas, art centres, community centres, day camps, farmers markets, libraries (Idea Exchange)*, recreation areas and programs, and special events).

* Idea Exchange is an independently governed body (as per the Public Libraries Act). For more information on Idea Exchange please visit: ideaexchange.org.

- **Public Health and Social Services** (including harm reduction and affordable housing);
- **Regional Police and Emergency Response Services** (paramedics);
- **Regional Planning** (including environmental and economic development);
- **Waste Management and Water/Waste Water Treatment**; and
- **Regional Transportation** (including Waterloo Regional International Airport, Grand River Transit, ION and regional roads).

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

Working closely with the regional government, neighbouring area municipalities and other community partners is an important part of developing and maintaining the high quality of life found in Cambridge.
2017 HIGHLIGHTS

NAMED LOCAL DATA HUB
World Council of City Data (WCCD) announces City of Cambridge as one of the first of a global network of local data hubs using city data to drive change.

BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY AWARD - BRONZE
230 km of bike lanes, paved shoulders, and signed routes for on-road cycling
50 km of natural off-road trails, some along the Speed and Grand rivers

WATERSHED AWARD FROM THE GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Cambridge City Green
Community action plan for the environment including litter cleanups, annual educational event and Cambridge Stewardship

AWARD WINNING FILMING
Handmaid’s Tale winner of 8 Emmy Awards, including Outstanding Drama Series
Designated Survivor, Dark Matter, Stickman, Frankie Drake Mysteries, Mystery Kids and Murdoch Mysteries

SPECIAL EVENTS
Approximately 150 special events held in 2017
Council approved funding towards over 30 events through grants to groups
$60,000 of Council approved funding for community events to celebrate Canada 150 in partnership with Cambridge and North Dumfries Community Foundation

TRAILS
Conestoga Blvd multi-use trail system has been completed
New and upgraded trails Devil’s Creek Trail, Linear Trail, Greenway Park, Perbeck Park, Mill Pond Trail, Melrose Street and New East River Walkway along Water Street

INVESTMENT
$367,246,130 of private investment in Cambridge in 2017 including industrial construction value

NEW JOBS
Over 1,316 new jobs expected within the next 24 months with the expansion of large companies such as Allianz, eSentre and IDT Biologika

ENVIRONMENT
6,500 energy efficient LED street lights
As part of a region-wide initiative, the new 42,000 lights throughout the Region will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20,000 metric tons per year and save $3.2 million per year in operating costs

PARKS
5 new playground structures
Greenway Park, Civic Park, Fairlake Parkette, Dickson Park and Victoria Park

NEW BUSINESS
32 new businesses throughout three business improvement areas
22 new businesses in Galt on the Grand
3 new businesses in Hespeler Village
7 new business in Preston Towne Centre
2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 2017 Annual Report provides an overview of City accomplishments during the past fiscal year. In addition to the delivery of core services, City departments completed a variety of projects and special initiatives.

The following section provides an overview of some of the statistics relating to the services and investments made by the City in 2017.

Accomplishments are presented by the themes and goals outlined in the strategic plan: Cambridge Connected: Our Voice. Our Vision.

For the full annual report including updates on all strategic actions, please visit cambridge.ca/annualreport.
Accessibility and diversity part of Cambridge’s future

There are many things Jackson Fitzpatrick enjoys about visiting the playground at Victoria Park in Galt.

At the top of his list, after the slide, teeter-totter and brightly-coloured climbing structures, are the swings.

“Because they go high,” says the rambunctious seven-year-old, under sunny skies during a recent visit to the park with his grandparents.

The couple, who live in West Galt and have been visiting the playground as often as possible since new equipment was installed in 2016, say it’s an ideal place to spend time with the family.

“We just love it,” says his grandfather Terry Babb, referring to the park and the rubber surfacing that covers the play area. “It feels so spongy and the kids can fall on it and you don’t have to worry about them. It’s very safe.”

He says they are thrilled to see new and accessible structures popping up in many Cambridge playgrounds.

Becoming more accessible and inclusive in all its services, programs and facilities are important objectives for the City of Cambridge.

“In a lot of the parks, some of the equipment was getting so rundown,” says Babb.

The city, which has playgrounds in 60 of its 105 parks, has been working steadily the last few years to introduce new equipment. In 2017 alone, the equipment was replaced in five parks to make them more accessible and enhance the play experience for all residents, many of whom have children and grandchildren with mobility and developmental issues.

Besides a large accessible swing, the new and colourful equipment includes platforms to provide better access to slides for those in wheelchairs, ramps and more ground-level games. The bright colour scheme also helps the visually impaired to navigate their surroundings.

“They seem very receptive to it,” says Shane Taylor, landscape architect for the City of Cambridge, referring to the new equipment, which this past year included a large installation at Victoria Park in Hespeler and updated attractions in Civic, Greenway, Dickson and Fairlake.

The new equipment, which can cost anywhere from $200,000 to $250,000 for the larger installations and between $55,000 to $65,000 in the smaller parks, has been earmarked for newly constructed and redeveloped playgrounds making them fully compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

In many cases, Taylor says consultations are conducted with community groups to ensure the equipment will meet most of their needs. He points to the recent involvement the Fiddlesticks Neighbourhood Association had with the city in the introduction of new equipment at Duncan Ferguson Park. He says the group even fundraised to cover the costs of installing an additional piece of equipment that couldn’t be included in the city’s budget.

“They were over the moon with their playground and even had their own ribbon-cutting ceremony,” says Taylor. “It’s nice to have to community groups that are so engaged.”

Community engagement is a key part of the city’s move towards inclusivity and integration, which includes the development of an official Diversity and Accessibility Planning Strategy.

The city already relies on a close relationship with members of its Accessibility Advisory Committee, which in the first six months of 2018 have already been involved in 15 projects, to help ensure its facilities, programs and services meet the needs of those with mobility issues.
But the new strategy, or action plan, extends those community commitments even further.

“Last year we started a number of community conversations around what is diversity and what does it mean?” says Vanessa Lopak, supervisor of Accessibility and Diversity Services. “We held a number of community focus groups and talked to internal staff to find out what the gaps are.”

She says the action plan that developed stems from the city’s corporate strategic plan to create accessible, inclusive and age-friendly programs, services and facilities.

Representatives from many groups, including members of the Muslim, Hindi, Portuguese and LGBTQ2+ communities as well as service clubs and neighbourhood associations, were consulted.

“They (associations) have a more personal relationship with what’s going on,” says Lopak.

Larger groups were also consulted such as the Immigration Partnership Waterloo Region and the National Indigenous Peoples Day planning committee.

“It’s really exciting,” says Lopak, referring to the process.

She also says the community discussions resulted in some very positive responses to what the city is already doing.

“I was very proud to hear the feedback that we got from the community consultations about the things we are doing right.”

Among these were the construction of more accessible parks, the accommodation process for kids camps and the continuation of the Sensitive Santa program that was expanded to a fourth Sunday this past year to ensure more children with disabilities had the opportunity to visit with Santa at the Cambridge Centre.

For Jackie Pearle, Jackson’s grandmother, checking out the accessible parks is one of the things they enjoy about living in Cambridge.

“We love the parks and being outdoors,” she says. “It’s nice to visit different parts of the city.”

Lopak says there is much excitement to build on the momentum surrounding inclusion and accessibility as they pertain to the spectrum of diversity.

“There’s a lot of excitement about what that means for us as a community,” she says. “The conversations are new and evolving.”
Engaging, informing and creating opportunities for people to participate in community building was truly a key focus.

And how did we accomplish this?

We worked with our partners to help make our community safer, more inclusive and accessible. Leveraging the resources of those around the community, we continued to have important conversations and made significant progress around the opioid problem, diversity and inclusion, youth engagement, emergency preparedness, fire safety, living wage and community wellbeing.

We facilitated community access to services and promoted our neighbourhoods. While the city does not provide all services, we have an important role to play in advocating for our residents and businesses. We continued that role and found new ways to meet community challenges surrounding increased needle debris and access to services such as affordable housing, social services, public safety and addictions and mental health.

We delivered more accessible services. More businesses, parks, trails and city facilities are now accessible because of the work completed in our community. The StopGap ramp program was an innovative collaboration that provided more than 20 portable ramps in our downtown business community. Infrastructure across the city received accessibility upgrades including five playgrounds. The City started a new diversity initiative that will make sure we continue to be a welcoming and inclusive community.

We opened up government and found more ways to communicate. New city website pages, live streaming Council meetings, open houses at our facilities, capital project updates, new digital apps for services and the roll-out of “Service Cambridge” were just some of the ways that the City aimed to make the lives of our residents and businesses easier. Much of this work laid the foundation for even more exciting developments to come in 2018.

We found new ways to innovate, leading to improvements and efficiencies. Working across all our departments, the staff-led continuous improvement initiative resulted in more than 50 big and small innovations. Staff continued to be engaged in the ongoing governance of the City, improving internal communication and collaboration.

We collaborated with other levels of government. The City works closely with our local government partners to accomplish key priorities that impact us all. These partnerships resulted in trade missions abroad, the first community wellness report (Wellbeing Waterloo Region Initiative), and a joint federal smart cities application that is moving on to the next phase. The City is working with other communities along the Kitchener and Milton GO Rail lines to find new opportunities for connections. The Community Outreach Task Force was also a key partnership created to look at the specific challenges faced in Cambridge surrounding the broader opioid problem.

We were transparent and accountable. The City continues to develop its corporate performance management framework. Reporting on key deliverables related to our annual business plans, capital project status, financial management and yearly budget was a priority. The City approved new codes of conduct for staff as well as Advisory Boards and Committees of Council. Supporting these efforts was the appointment of an ombudsman and integrity commissioner and the launch of new internal systems to organize, manage and share key information.

Goal 1: Community Wellbeing
Promote a caring community where people can make strong connections with others and lead safe, healthy and productive lives.

Goal 2: Governance and Leadership
Provide open, transparent, accountable and innovative leadership in local governance and service delivery.
Farmers’ market built on quality and community

When it comes to food, fresh means everything to Jaime Fulcher of Cambridge. That’s why for the past 20 years or so she has been a regular visitor to the Cambridge Farmers’ Market.

“Everything always seems so fresh at the market,” says Fulcher, one Saturday morning while waiting for her cheese order to be packaged at the Daniel’s Cheese and Deli counter by its owner George Batarseh, a staple at the market since 1997.

Around her the bustling market crowd browses and buys from among a bevy of vendors selling meat, fish, nuts, dairy products and even handmade soaps that fill the historic market downtown. Meanwhile, just outside the doors more market visitors navigate their way around a cluster of vendors selling fresh produce and sweets from among the booths that line the parking area.

“It’s a really nice place to go and get some really good treats,” says Fulcher. “I also love the fact it’s all local products.”

Her observation doesn’t surprise Market Manager Alix Aitken who, along with her dedicated team, do their best every week to ensure the year-round market, one of the oldest in Ontario, continues to thrive. She estimates the market sees approximately 30,000 visitors each year.

“People are coming here to find local food. Cambridge residents are very passionate about the market and even support us on those rainy days,” she says, noting 10% or less of the goods sold among the vendors, which total about 55 at peak season, are non-food related.

“It’s a very traditional market.”

It’s this kind of tradition Aitken says many people are seeking as new developments bring more residents and consumers downtown.

“We’re definitely seeing a resurgence, which is so exciting. I think more development in the core is helping us,” she says, pointing to The Gaslight District and pedestrian bridge as prime examples.

As well, Aitken says the market’s website (www.cambridgefarmersmarket.ca), launched in June of 2017, has been a major enhancement to the market experience. Up until that time, the market had been included as a page on the city’s website.

The market site, which continues to see a steady increase in hits, includes an interactive map to help visitors locate specific vendors as well as a comprehensive vendor directory and photo gallery of their products and services.

“To get our own site was huge. Shoppers would call us every day, looking for a specific vendor,” she says. “And even though there is a business name on the booth, a lot of people don’t really remember it. The map helps you find the person you bought from the last time.”

The vendor directory portion of the site, which includes links to their various web pages, raises their exposure even more and solidifies the market as an important small business incubator.

“We recognize the market is a gateway for small business,” says Aitken, referring to the many vendors who’ve moved on to larger opportunities. “It’s hard to be a feeder market, but it’s also fun to watch people grow and succeed.”

She points to the success of Wylde Rose Handmade Soaps as a recent example. The Brantford-based family-run business, founded by Jeannine Webster, has steadily expanded its product line and customer base since first setting up at the market in 2013. After being noticed by a representative of the organic food store chain Goodness Me! who visited the market in 2016, Wylde Rose has now begun selling some of its products in nine of that company’s stores in 2017. More stores are on the radar taking the brand nationwide.
As well, Wylde Rose recently moved into a 2,300-square-foot production facility in Brantford to keep up with the growing demand for its products, which now include 170 different soap scents.

“It took a long time. That first year and half was tortuous,” says Webster’s husband, Don, who along with one of their daughters, regularly manages the two carts of products Wylde Rose now operates at the market.

“You have to convince people your product is good,” he says, adding being at the market gave Wylde Rose the chance to conduct some valuable market research. “It can take a bit of time, but you will see growth.”

That is exactly what Richard Giles, owner of Cambridge-based Backyard Fungi Farm, wants to hear. Giles, who operates his organic mushroom business out of his home only 10 minutes from the market, is brand-new on the scene this year and is already seeing a steady stream of regular clients.

What began as a medicinal quest to help his son, who suffers from a genetic disorder that causes tumours to form on nerve tissue called neurofibromatosis, has literally mushroomed into a thriving business.

“I’m learning as I go,” he says. “But it’s been phenomenal. I’m meeting all kinds of people.”

Besides selling six types of mushrooms, Giles also offers grow bags which he says provide customers with the chance to learn to grow their own mushrooms and reap the medicinal benefits.

“The kids are really fascinated by it,” he says.

For deli owner George Batarseh, this kind of education is one of the reasons which makes the market a great place to do business.

“It’s all about educating the consumers,” he says, adding he takes great pride in the quality of products and service he offers which can’t be found in many grocery stores.

“It’s a like a Ferrari versus a Chevette. Both will get you from point A to point B, but the ride is different,” jokes Batarseh.

When it comes to food, Aitken says more people are interested in knowing where their food comes from which is why the market offers monthly workshops, often on various food-related topics, in partnership with a variety of community groups. She also hopes to one day see a kitchen created in the market building to not only assist vendors, but provide another teaching space for the community.

“Ultimately, the market wants to be known as the food hub in the city,” says Aitken. “We want to work with people who are interested in food.”

Her enthusiasm to make this a reality is one of the things that attracted Amanda Bilek of Chilligo Creek Farm in Moorefield, who has just entered her fourth season as a vendor at the market.

“They (customers) definitely like the food here,” she says. “But they also like the community aspect of it because the people are so welcoming.”

Bilek says that same sense of community holds true among the vendors as well.

“You’re all a community and what’s good for one person is good for another,” she says.

Aitken agrees, “We want all our vendors to be successful,” she says.

The market operates year-round Saturday from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. and seasonal Wednesday (June 6 to Oct. 3, 2018) from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
We celebrated our past and continued to build a sustainable future.

And how did we accomplish this?

We advanced arts and culture and continued to protect our heritage. In honour of Canada’s 150 years, the City created the Celebrating Cambridge book and interactive online story map. The restoration of the Queens Square fountain was completed and work continued on the pedestrian bridge and the Old Post Office Digital Library. Further, over $16,000 in heritage property grants were provided and another 24% of funding from our Grants to Groups program went to arts and culture events, programs and organizations.

We supported a diverse range of events that brought people together. The City provided direct support to 11 special events and helped facilitate another 11 events with total estimated attendance of more than 182,000 people. This included events like Canada Day, Celebration of the Arts, Christmas in Cambridge, Street Art Festival, and Ribfest. In addition, the Manulife LPGA Classic was held from June 7 – 11, 2017 at Whistle Bear Golf Club. Sponsored by the City of Cambridge, approximately 57,000 people attended the tournament, generating an economic impact in Ontario of more than $8.7 million.

We focused on sustainability, resiliency and encouraged innovative approaches to challenges by working with our partners. Approximately 6,500 standard streetlights were replaced with LED fixtures as part of a broader partnership with our other local municipalities. This will reduce our annual energy usage and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, and help the City save approximately $243,500 in the operating budget ever year. Cambridge is a partner in the local Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Plan and continues to make improvements in our facilities, fleet, and City operations.

We continued to look for ways to ensure the City can meet the recreational needs of the community in the future. The City was successful in leveraging nearly $250,000 in financial contributions and $117,000 in in-kind contributions to deliver a range of recreational programs, events, facility improvements and other community-focused services.

We supported community participation in the care of our parks and natural spaces. Recognizing that we are all stewards of our community, the City supported several groups to help clean-up garbage and other debris in our valued environmental areas. For its efforts to protect and enhance the Grand River Watershed, Cambridge City Green was recognized with a Watershed Award from the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA). It was also recognized with the “Protecting Tomorrow Today” award by the Ontario Parks Association.

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Goal 3: Arts, Culture, Heritage and Architecture
Promote a creative environment that encourages arts, culture, heritage and values our unique architectural assets.

Goal 4: Environment and Rivers
Be good stewards of the rivers, waterways and natural environment that this community enjoys.

Goal 5: Parks and Recreation
Facilitate and deliver a wide range of accessible and diverse community recreation opportunities.
The Queens Square Fountain restoration was completed with the help of the Canada 150 Grant.

Grants to Groups program total $99,350 with over 24% going towards arts and culture events, programs and organizations.

Planted 527 trees, 300 shrubs, and 50,000 flowers.

6,500 standard streetlights were replaced with LED fixtures.

The Queens Square Fountain restoration was completed with the help of the Canada 150 Grant.

Over 30,000 visitors to the Cambridge Farmers Market.

Approximately 57,000 people attended the Manulife LPGA Classic.
Aging Oak in Hespeler Village
Small business booming in Cambridge

Big things are happening for Cambridge’s small business community.

In 2017, the City’s Economic Development division responded to 1,147 inquiries from small businesses and assisted 123 businesses to open their doors. Of these, 32 opened in the downtown core areas of Hespeler, Galt and Preston.

But this news doesn’t come as a surprise to Economic Development Director James Goodram.

“Cambridge is an ideal location for small business,” he says. “Our INVEST Cambridge office acting as your single point of contact and working with our business development partners are here to assist in any way possible whether you are a start-up, scale-up or established. In addition, there is a growing population and Cambridge is committed to creating an environment for investment and a great quality of life for your employees.”

As of June of 2018, Goodram says nearly 2,000 businesses in Cambridge provided employment for one to four employees and that many small businesses are experiencing growth in the downtown cores. In fact, he says more and more have now expressed a desire to move into larger spaces to accommodate their growth.

This is exactly what has happened to The Art of Home. The popular home and lifestyle shop, which opened on Main Street in downtown Galt in 2012, is moving to a larger location this fall on Ainslie Street, a stone’s throw away from its current spot.

“Our business is experiencing growth every month and the time was right for us to expand,” says Pamela Mangos, who operates the shop with her mother, Joanne Malone, and sister, Laura McKenna. “Our new space is three times the size of our current space.” Mangos says the charm of the downtown core was what lead them to open here in the first place.

“We also were very encouraged by the other businesses that were operating downtown and felt that our business fit right in.”

When it comes to being successful, Mangos says offering a unique and personal shopping experience is key.

“There is a real return to boutique shopping,” she says. “While there is little doubt that online shopping has taken the place of some brick and mortar shopping, when a customer chooses to shop in person, they are searching for something unique, something of quality and they are looking for excellent customer service.”

Tony Schmidt, chair of the Preston Towne Centre Business Improvement Area, agrees.

“People get tired of the whole big-box store experience,” says Schmidt, who has operated Howie Schmidt Realty just steps away from King Street East for more than 20 years.

He says having an arterial road like King Street East run through Preston’s core is a benefit because of the potential consumers it brings.

“The more that we can do to create a walking community the better,” says Schmidt.

He admits there will likely be ‘teething pains’ in the near future as Preston Towne Centre undergoes a major streetscaping project – including new planters, transition curbs, and enhancements for Central Park - but that it will be worth it in the end.

“We will be providing people with more of an opportunity to join together for events at the park,” says Schmidt, adding redevelopment of the former Preston Springs Hotel is another long-term goal.

“The next logical step for us (Preston) is the confirmation of an LRT (Light Rail Transit) stop. That will bring more walking traffic into our core.”
Business Liaison Officer with the City of Cambridge Trevor McWilliams expects the LRT will spark development along its route, in addition to the current investments already taking place in the cores.

“The Gaslight District is the perfect example. HIP Developments also has other projects in the region and view it as a whole,” says McWilliams, adding being close to Kitchener-Waterloo does help Cambridge businesses.

“Municipal boundaries are only visible on a map. More and more they disappear for the consumer,” he says. “Proximity to the other municipalities is an obvious benefit.”

But when it comes to creating a successful small business, Hespeler BIA Vice-Chair Cory de Villiers, who is also a local realtor, say operators must be prepared to work hard.

“Be open when other people aren’t at work. Be consistent, choose your hours and products and stick with them,” he says. “You have to earn long-term repeat customers.”

It’s advice that has worked well for De Villiers’ wife, Natasa, who operates the successful olive oil business O&V Tasting Room. Her shop has become a popular destination in downtown Hespeler since opening in 2013.

The couple now provide 18 other small businesses with homes in the several buildings they own in Hespeler.

“We are seeing an increased number of shoppers looking for alternatives to mass products and marketing,” he says, adding the buy local mentality and an increase in urbanism is pulling consumers back to downtown cores.

To keep that momentum going, De Villiers urges business owners to invest in their spaces.

“Bricks and mortar shopping has to compete with cheaper prices and convenience from online competitors by offering cooler and attractive shopping environments.”

Goodram says having a proper well thought out business plan outlining future goals and objectives as well as potential risks is also very important.

“Entrepreneurs need strategic focus,” he says. “As Benjamin Franklin said ‘If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail’ so don’t hesitate to contact the INVEST Cambridge office for assistance.”

As well, Schmidt says business owners must also look to the future in order to create new shopping habits.

“We’re always looking forward about how to bring out the next generation of consumers,” he says.
Cambridge is a place for people to prosper.

The City supported growth and opportunity for everyone through innovation, sound investments and hard work.

And how did we accomplish this?

We became a destination of choice for business and entrepreneurship. Cambridge saw more than $367 million in investment, including federal and provincial infrastructure improvements and building permits. Boxwood Business Campus sales topped 13.82 acres for a value of $3,969,950. The Cambridge location of the Waterloo Region Small Business Centre increased its focus on providing 30 seminars and workshops and more than 155 individual consultations.

We promoted our vibrant downtown cores. The City's core areas continued to attract investment with 32 new businesses opening in Galt, Hespeler and Preston. On September 16, 2017 the community came out to celebrate a "Day in the District" attracting more than 12,000 people to celebrate the opening of the new Gas Light District. The City hosted 16 days of filming which generated an economic impact of over $300,000 in our downtown cores.

We leveraged local economic strengths and collaborated with partners. As part of the Innovation Corridor from Waterloo Region to Toronto, Cambridge is an active partner in the Waterloo Economic Development Corporation (region-wide). The City participated in several trade missions across Canada and internationally (New York and Boston) to highlight our local competitive advantage for businesses.

We promoted travel options and continued to increase accessibility of our infrastructure. The City completed a new 2.2 km multi-use trial along Conestoga Boulevard. We upgraded several walkways, made accessibility improvements and held neighbourhood bike rides. As recognition for this work, the City was awarded a bronze level Bicycle-Friendly Community Award from Share the Road.

We opened our doors and increased the coordination of infrastructure with our partners. More than 350 community members attended the first Bishop Street Operations Open House that highlighted the interesting and important work our staff do every day to keep water running and roads clear. The City held a workshop in partnership with REEP Green Solutions and the Fiddlesticks Neighbourhood Association that helped develop 26 recommendations to reduce urban flooding.

We were leaders in asset management. The City was recognized with the Peter J. Marshall Award for Municipal Innovation from the Association of Municipalities Ontario for its "Ice Pigging" underwater sanitary siphon cleaning project. The City completed assessments of 87 storm water ponds and continued to make progress in its water loss reduction efforts.

Goal 6: Economic Development and Tourism
Support and promote a strong, dynamic, and innovative local economy.

Goal 7: Transportation and Infrastructure
Create and maintain a highly effective, sustainable and coordinated local infrastructure and transportation network.
Over $367 million in local investment

32 new businesses opened in Galt, Hespeler and Preston

45 filming inquiries and 16 days of filming - generating an economic impact of over $300,000

12,000 people came to celebrate the opening of the Gas Light District

Over 15 local road projects completed

Over 350 community members attended the Bishop Street Operations Open House

2 km new multi-use trail on Conestoga Boulevard

Trade missions across Canada and internationally including New York and Boston
The Financial Discussions and Analysis and Financial Report is published to provide the City’s Council, staff, citizens and other readers with detailed information concerning the financial position and activities of the City. A summary of key highlights is provided in the following sections; for the complete analysis and financial report as well as the audited financial statements and five year financial statistics, please refer to the 2017 Annual Report which can be found on the City’s website.

2017 Financial Highlights

The audited financial statements indicate that the City is fiscally strong with net financial worth, as at December 31, 2017 of $681.6 million. Strong fiscal management is also confirmed by the City’s debt capacity ratio of 11.03% which is well below the established guideline by the Ontario Municipal Board of 25% of own source revenues.

Total revenue plus other income for 2017 is $191.3 million compared to total expenses of $164.9 million resulting in annual surplus of $26.4 million which is used to fund capital assets and contribute to reserves and reserve funds. Reserve and reserve funds balances increased from $70.4 million to $74.3 million.

Financial Highlights:

- The City was able to take advantage of low interest rates with the issuance of $17.1 million in debentures for funding of the Grand River Pedestrian Bridge/East Walkway Improvements, LED Street Lights Installation and Historic Post Office Renovations.
- New infrastructure in the form of roadways, underground networks and development of parks were provided to support continued growth within the community.
- Significant investment in replacement infrastructure has occurred in 2017 and total capital investment exceeded amortization in 2017. Investment in replacement infrastructure has a direct impact in managing the infrastructure deficit.
**Revenues**

The City’s revenues (excluding other income) for 2017 were $168.8 million, compared to a budgeted amount of $167.6 million. The variances between budget and actual primarily relate to differences in user fees and charges, penalties and interest on taxes, and land sales & other. Penalties and interest on taxes revenue for 2017 performed better than budgeted by $0.4 million primarily due to additional supplemental levies and lower tax write-offs than planned. This and other increases were partially offset by user fees and charges coming in under budget by $1.7 million, largely resulting from the actual amount of water usage being below the estimated levels as well as regional contract revenues being lower than budgeted.

**Expenses**

The City’s 2017 expenses were $2.2 million less than budgeted expenses of $167.1 million. The favourable variance in expenses was primarily driven by environmental services. This was mainly due to being under budget in salaries, wages, and benefits, regional contracts, structural maintenance, sewer treatments and private work orders.
On January 19, 2016 Council approved a new corporate strategic plan - Cambridge Connected: Our Voice. Our Vision. Cambridge Connected identifies the vision, mission and values that will shape the corporation over the long term. It also identifies the strategic direction for the City, outlined by three key themes: People, Place and Prosperity.
People
To actively engage, inform and create opportunities for people to participate in community building – making Cambridge a better place to live, work, play and learn for all.

This theme includes the following goals and objectives:

**Goal 1: Community Wellbeing**
Promote a caring community where people can make strong connections with others and lead safe, healthy and productive lives.

**Objectives:**

1.1 Work with partners to create a safe, inclusive and accessible city.

1.2 Support and facilitate community access to services related to health, wellness and personal development.

1.3 Deliver accessible, inclusive and age-friendly services, programs, and facilities.

1.4 Promote, facilitate and participate in the development of affordable, welcoming and vibrant neighbourhoods.

**Goal 2: Governance and Leadership**
Provide open, transparent, accountable and innovative leadership in local governance and service delivery.

**Objectives:**

2.1 Provide a wide range of ways that people can become involved in city decision making.

2.2 Communicate often and make sure messages are clear, timely and delivered in a variety of ways.

2.3 Encourage a culture of innovation and engagement that allows all staff to contribute to the ongoing renewal of city services and programs.

2.4 Work collaboratively with other government agencies and partners to achieve common goals and ensure representation of community interests.

2.5 Focus on the responsible management of financial resources, ensuring transparency and accountability.
**Place**

To take care of, celebrate and share the great features in Cambridge that we love and mean the most to us. This theme includes the following goals and objectives:

**Goal 3: Arts, Culture, Heritage and Architecture**

Promote a creative environment that encourages arts, culture, heritage and values our unique architectural assets.

**Objectives:**

3.1 Advance arts and culture initiatives through strong partnerships, collaboration and promotion.

3.2 Conserve and make positive contributions to our heritage districts and buildings throughout the community.

3.3 Facilitate, support and provide a diverse range of activities, events and festivals that bring all people together from across the city, region and beyond.

**Goal 4: Environment and Rivers**

Be good stewards of the rivers, waterways and natural environment that this community enjoys.

**Objectives:**

4.1 Ensure that sustainability principles are a part of city decision making processes.

4.2 Encourage innovative approaches to address environmental challenges.

4.3 Work with other partners to educate the public and help make changes to improve and protect our natural heritage features.

4.4 Manage city resources in a responsible and sustainable manner, considering future needs for resiliency and community adaptation.

**Goal 5: Parks and Recreation**

Facilitate and deliver a wide range of accessible and diverse community recreation opportunities.

**Objectives:**

5.1 Work with the community to provide the right mix of recreational opportunities that meet the needs of a changing and diverse population.

5.2 Increase community participation in the ongoing care of our parks, natural spaces and environmental areas.

5.3 Develop a strategic approach to programs and services that tie investments and resources to community outcomes.
Prosperity

To support and encourage the growth of a highly competitive local economy where there is opportunity for everyone to contribute and succeed.

This theme includes the following goals and objectives:

Goal 6: Economic Development and Tourism
Support and promote a strong, dynamic, and innovative local economy.

Objectives:
6.1 Support the creation and retention of high quality and diverse employment opportunities by becoming the destination of choice for business and entrepreneurship, including helping existing firms thrive and grow.
6.2 Promote vibrant and inviting downtown cores by encouraging partnerships and creating a wider range of unique, exciting destinations and activities.
6.3 Identify local economic strengths and leverage opportunities through collaboration with our partners.

Goal 7: Transportation and Infrastructure
Create and maintain a highly effective, sustainable and coordinated local infrastructure and transportation network.

Objectives:
7.1 Find new ways to help people move within and beyond the city without using a car (walking, cycling and transit).
7.2 Work with the Region and other partners to better coordinate the planning, communication and delivery of infrastructure (including roads and other transportation assets) in Cambridge.
7.3 Provide innovative leadership in the management of city assets to help plan, fund and maintain city assets in a sustainable way.
7.4 Continue to improve the accessibility of all built infrastructure in the community.