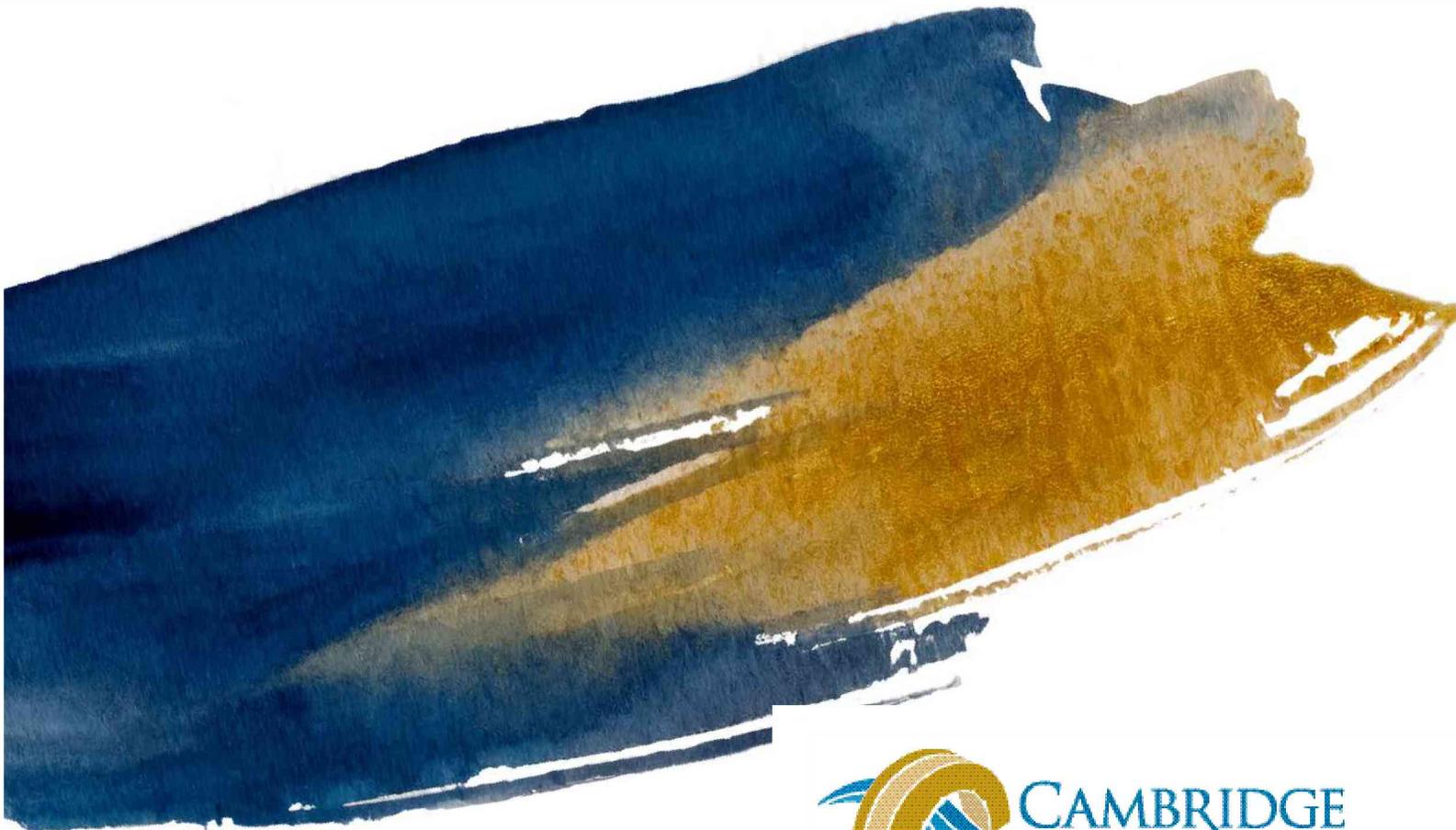
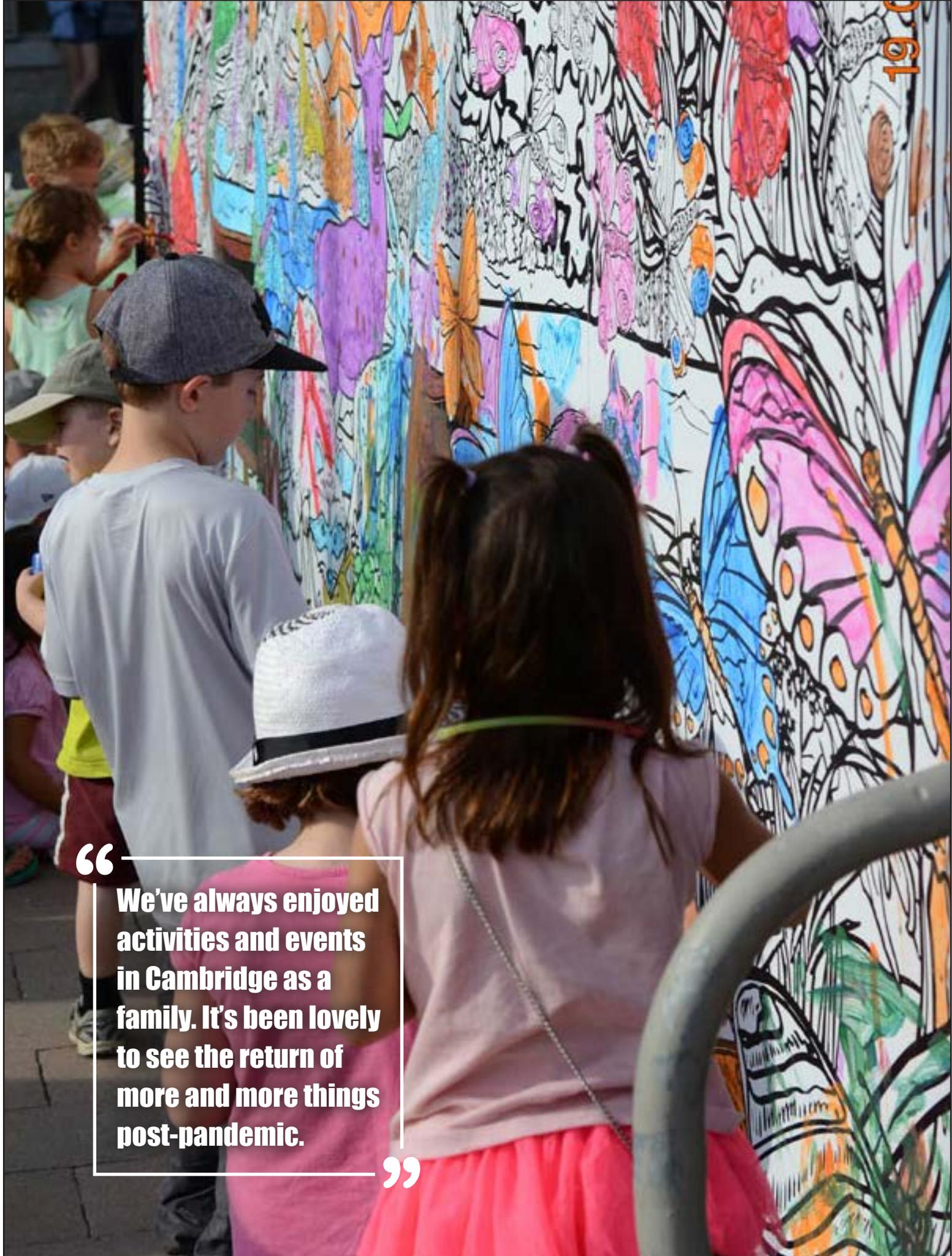


A stylized pencil logo where the pencil body is a blue circle with a blue 'P' inside, and the pencil tip is a blue triangle with a gold eraser on top.

# ARTS & CULTURE ACTION PLAN

THE BRIDGE TO THE NEXT IDEA





**“ We’ve always enjoyed activities and events in Cambridge as a family. It’s been lovely to see the return of more and more things post-pandemic. ”**



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May of 2022, the City of Cambridge engaged Nordicity to develop a new Arts and Culture Action Plan to lead the City's efforts in supporting arts and culture in the city for the next 10 years. The goal of the plan is to make Cambridge a thriving center of creative and cultural development – by making it a destination for artists and creatives, developing new and leveraging existing partnership structures to grow the local cultural network, enhancing how local cultural spaces are used, and clarifying the City's role in arts and culture within Cambridge.

The plan was developed in a five-phase process, which involved extensive research to contextualize arts and culture in Cambridge including a background review of key internal documents, existing strategies and priorities, and cultural mapping. A rigorous engagement process also took place and included internal consultations with City staff, external consultations with the arts and culture sector, and consultations with those who live, work, and play in Cambridge.

To view the full plan, please visit [cambridge.ca/culture](https://cambridge.ca/culture)

# ABOUT THE ARTS AND CULTURE ACTION PLAN

This Arts and Culture Action Plan aligns with and bolsters existing City-wide priorities, as identified in the **City of Cambridge's Strategic Plan – Cambridge Connected (2020-2023)**. Cambridge Connected highlights three key goals, which – as this Action Plan recognizes – can be advanced through arts and culture:

**People:** Foster a community with heart, where everyone belongs and is cared for

**Place:** Embrace and celebrate our city's unique character while enhancing the spaces where people connect

**Prosperity:** Build a vibrant and resilient city where current and future generations will live well

The Cambridge Arts and Culture Action Plan includes several components: **a vision** for arts and culture; **strategic goals** (or pillars); **objectives** to help achieve the pillars; and **specific actions** linked to each objective.

## Key Objectives



Creating an arts friendly city



Building community capacity



Clarifying and strengthening the City's role in culture



Developing and expanding cooperative programs/create partnership structures



# A VISION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE IN CAMBRIDGE

A vision for arts and culture in Cambridge was developed through the engagement process and sought to align with existing City goals and priorities.

## Vision

“Home to rich built heritage and beautiful natural assets, Cambridge is an attractive, diverse, and growing community where arts and culture promotes a sense of people, place, and prosperity. Whether for residents or visitors, arts and culture is an economic driver, and is what makes Cambridge an enjoyable experience. In Cambridge, arts and culture ignites endless creativity, curiosity, and exploration, all the while enhancing our sense of community, well-being, and belonging.”



**“ I am satisfied with the overall diversity of events/ opportunities in which to participate. i.e. from powwows to museum exhibits. ”**

# THE STRATEGY:

## Summary of the Pillars, Objectives, and Actions

The Strategy is structured by five key pillars, summarized below:



### Pillar 1

Celebrate Cambridge's  
Difference and  
Diversity



### Pillar 2

Bolster Municipal  
Support for an Arts  
Friendly City



### Pillar 3

Activate Public Spaces  
through Creative  
Placemaking and Public Art



### Pillar 4

Enhance Community  
Connection,  
Communication, and  
Collaboration



### Pillar 5

Strengthen  
Special Events

# PILLAR 1

## Highlight Cambridge's Uniqueness, and Artistic and Cultural Diversity

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### GOAL STATEMENT

Celebrate the richness and diversity of Cambridge's arts and culture scene, and embrace the Cambridge experience.

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#### Objective 1.1:

Ensure that City-led programming provides interesting and inclusive opportunities for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

**Action 1.1a:** Implement diversity, inclusion and accessibility-related criteria and targets for City-led events and programming, and track performance and progress.

**Action 1.1b:** Investigate an annual keystone festival or event that celebrates and displays the diversity of arts and culture in Cambridge.

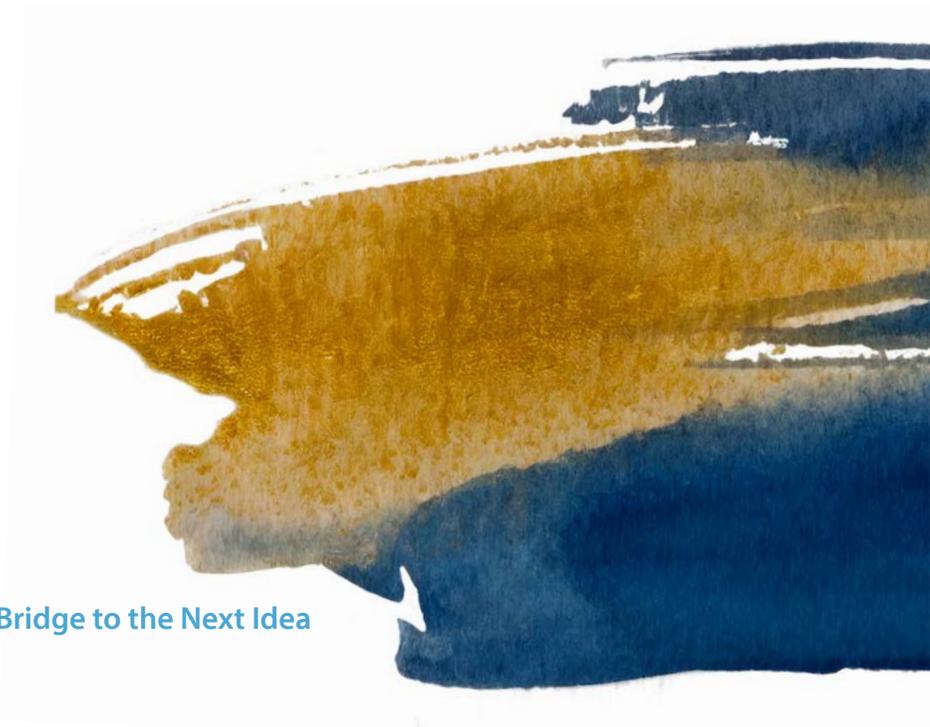
**Action 1.1c:** Further invest in youth and children cultural programming at the Cambridge Centre for the Arts (CCA), leveraging the use of multi-purpose arts and culture spaces available.

#### Objective 1.2

Increase visibility of arts and culture offerings for historically under-represented groups in Cambridge.

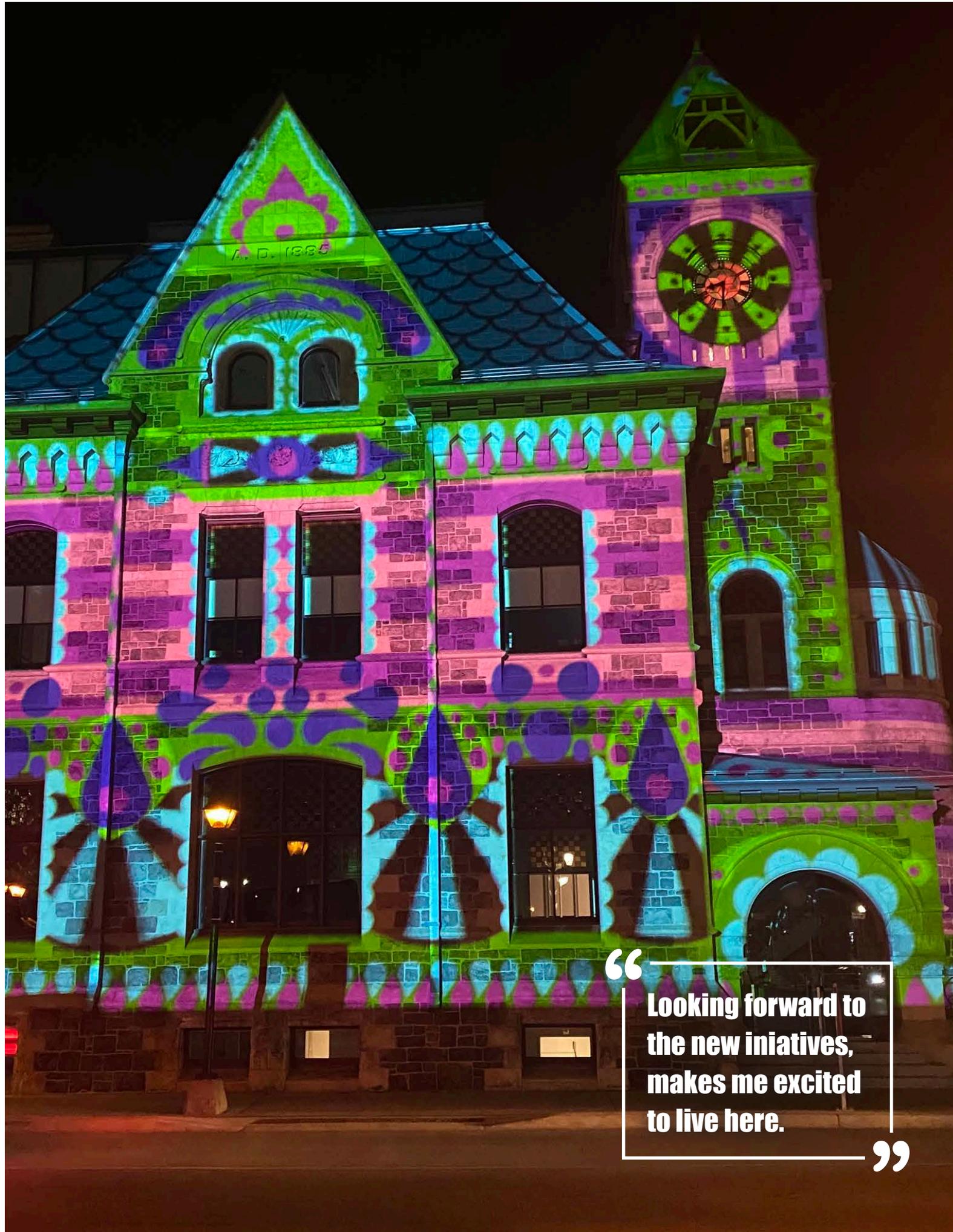
**Action 1.2a:** Leverage existing City supports, resources, and assets to build engagement, promotion, and access to cultural opportunities among under-represented groups (i.e., First Nations, Black, and other racialized groups, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, people with disabilities, etc.).

**Action 1.2b:** Create a targeted campaign for newcomers to Cambridge to ensure that they are aware of all the various ways in which they can get involved in arts and culture in the city.





**“ Loved the public outdoor art. Loved the outdoor chalk festival too. Unsilent Night is so unique. ”**



A. D. 1885

“ Looking forward to the new initiatives, makes me excited to live here. ”

# PILLAR 2

## Amplify Municipal Support for an Arts Friendly City

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### GOAL STATEMENT

**Solidify the City's role in supporting and incubating a strong, vibrant, and sustainable arts and culture sector in Cambridge.**

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#### **Objective 2.1:**

Address capacity needs at the City while bolstering support for the arts and culture sector

**Action 2.1a:** Explore the establishment of a regional or local arms-length body (e.g., a Cambridge Arts Council) that would have autonomy in its operations to provide tailored support services for the arts and culture community.

**Action 2.1b:** Add staff positions within the City to serve dedicated roles that will improve arts and culture service delivery and support.

**Action 2.1c:** Review staff responsibilities and proactively assess initiatives (on an ongoing basis) to address capacity issues and create more integration between departments.

**Action 2.1d:** Make the Placemaking Working Group (PWG) a permanent body.

#### **Objective 2.2:**

Enhance internal sightlines and inter-department collaboration to better advance City priorities through arts and culture

**Action 2.2a:** Assemble a standing Interdepartmental Arts & Culture Working Group for arts and culture comprised of City staff.

**Action 2.2b:** Develop internal process documents that support more effective cross-departmental

workflows for special events, public art and placemaking projects, sector support services, and promotion of arts and culture in Cambridge.

#### **Objective 2.3:**

Leverage existing supports and infrastructure to create a stronger, more vibrant, arts and culture scene

**Action 2.3a:** Formalize a minimum percentage of the Community Grants Program to be guaranteed for arts and culture, and events – and a minimum percentage from this amount for emerging artists and organizations.

**Action 2.3b:** Connect the artistic community to existing local and regional studio, creative, and performance spaces to improve awareness, increase access, and optimize use of these spaces for art and culture community members in Cambridge.

**Action 2.3c:** Enhance visibility of designated City liaisons for arts and culture, such as the Film Liaison and Special Events Assistant who serves as a liaison for Special Events.

**Action 2.3d:** Develop and launch a marketing strategy and campaign to boost awareness of the City-owned arts and culture facilities and assets, and resources available for arts and culture.

**Action 2.3e:** Invest in sector development programming, leveraging the use of spaces and equipment available at City-owned facilities (e.g., Cambridge Centre for the Arts).

# PILLAR 3

## Activate Public Spaces through Creative Placemaking and Public Art

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### GOAL STATEMENT

Leverage placemaking and public art to enhance and celebrate Cambridge's heritage and natural assets, create visible indicators of arts and culture throughout the city, and increase vibrancy of the downtown cores and neighbourhoods across the city.

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#### Objective 3.1:

Enhance capacity to support growth and investment in public art and placemaking

**Action 3.1a:** Expand the role and authority of the Public Art Subcommittee to become a standing committee tasked with providing guidance on the selection, acquisition, stewardship, and de-accession of works of art.

**Action 3.1b:** Pursue the inclusion of an allocation for public art in the Community Benefit Charge Strategy and by-law to encourage investment in public art.

**Action 3.1c:** Review possibility of allocating 10% from Cambridge's municipal allocation of the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) revenue to the Public Art Reserve Fund.

**Action 3.1d:** Explore the possibility of updating the one percent requirement for capital projects to bolster funding for public art.

#### Objective 3.2:

Incorporate arts and culture space needs within urban and park development plans

**Action 3.2a:** Continue to explore and identify opportunities for mixed use space for arts and culture purposes in the three downtown cores and all corners of Cambridge.

**Action 3.2b:** Building on the Urban Guidelines for the three downtown cores (Galt, Preston, Hespeler), target specific placemaking and public art initiatives to enhance each core and tell their unique story.

**Action 3.2c:** Identify strategic locations for new public art initiatives at locations across the city, in discussion with City staff, the BIAs, and the community.

#### Objective 3.3

Ensure that City controlled public art remains open, accessible, inclusive, and culturally sensitive

**Action 3.3a:** Ensure City support is provided to an expanded definition of public art that includes community art.

**Action 3.3b:** Prioritize functional and interactive public art pieces to define public spaces and engage residents.

**Action 3.3c:** Explore opportunities for co-commissioned public art within the Waterloo region and other municipalities across the province and Canada.





**“ Cambridge has wonderful artists and arts organizations who put on excellent events, programs and exhibitions. ”**



**“ I’m new to the community and have enjoyed the cultural opportunities. ”**

# PILLAR 4

## Enhance Community Connection, Communication, and Collaboration

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### GOAL STATEMENT

Create stronger community connections through shared experiences, connect audiences to arts and culture opportunities across Cambridge, and build a stronger, more connected local arts and culture sector.

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#### **Objective 4.1:**

Enhance communications around arts and culture in Cambridge to grow community engagement

**Action 4.1a:** Create a robust, local arts and culture brand and marketing plan that speaks to a wide variety of audiences including newcomers, youth, and Indigenous peoples.

**Action 4.1b:** Establish methods for ongoing communication and feedback with the community.

**Action 4.1c:** Enhance and increase the promotion of regional tourism packages to highlight arts and culture in Cambridge across the region and beyond.

#### **Objective 4.2:**

Support career advancement for local talent

**Action 4.2a:** Review the establishment of a new Artist in Residence program.

**Action 4.2b:** Be a central resource that assists artists in accessing appropriate toolkits, resources, and supports they require to succeed.

**Action 4.2c:** Build on being an ambassador for volunteerism, working alongside the Volunteer Waterloo Region (VWR).

#### **Objective 4.3:**

Increase connections among the arts and culture community

**Action 4.3a:** Host regular informal arts sector meet ups (i.e., quarterly or biannually) to improve visibility and increase collaboration and idea sharing across the arts and culture sector, as well as increase touchpoints between the sector and the City.

**Action 4.3b:** Create and maintain a directory of artists to increase visibility across the artistic community and highlight the profiles of local artists – emerging and established alike.

# PILLAR 5

## Strengthen Special Events

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### GOAL STATEMENT

Allow for all special events in Cambridge to thrive and contribute to the vibrancy of the city.

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#### Objective 5.1:

Ensure balanced opportunity for special events

**Action 5.1a:** Implement a Special Affiliated Events Policy that recognizes special events with considerable community impact.

**Action 5.1b:** Grant the Cambridge Santa Clause Parade and Cambridge Celebrates Canada Day Event and Parade status as directly sanctioned special events.

**Action 5.1c:** Provide financial support through the Community Grant Fund or MAT allocations for Affiliate Events to offset a portion of their special liability insurance costs.

#### Objective 5.2:

Build capacity for events organizers and support for special events

**Action 5.2a:** Formalize an Events Training Incubator.

**Action 5.2b:** Develop and circulate updated tools and resources for successful event planning and execution.

**Action 5.2c:** Host an annual special event organizers meeting.

**Action 5.2d:** Support ongoing work being completed by the City on the MAT policy and request to include an arts and culture lens.

**Action 5.2e:** Conduct a regular (i.e., every four years) review of by-laws and policies pertaining to and which impact events to ensure Municipal structures are event-friendly and mitigate barriers to event planning and execution.





“Great community, great people, great resources.”

**Objective 5.3:**

Enhance data collection, monitoring, and reporting for evidence-based decision-making

**Action 5.3a:** Establish parameters for quantifying, measuring, and tracking the levels of in-kind support provided by the City,

**Action 5.3b:** Establish a framework for allocation of in-kind support to events

**Action 5.3c:** Create a Success Evaluation Framework for Affiliate Events to understand if they are meeting the needs and desires of all those who live, work, and play in Cambridge.

**Objective 5.4:**

Improve marketing and visibility of events

**Action 5.4a:** Continue to gather input from a diversity of community events to populate the Cambridge events calendar.

**Action 5.4b:** Identify asset needs and invest in expanding Cambridge’s marketing content to portray Cambridge’s diversity and unique identity more effectively.

**Objective 5.5:**

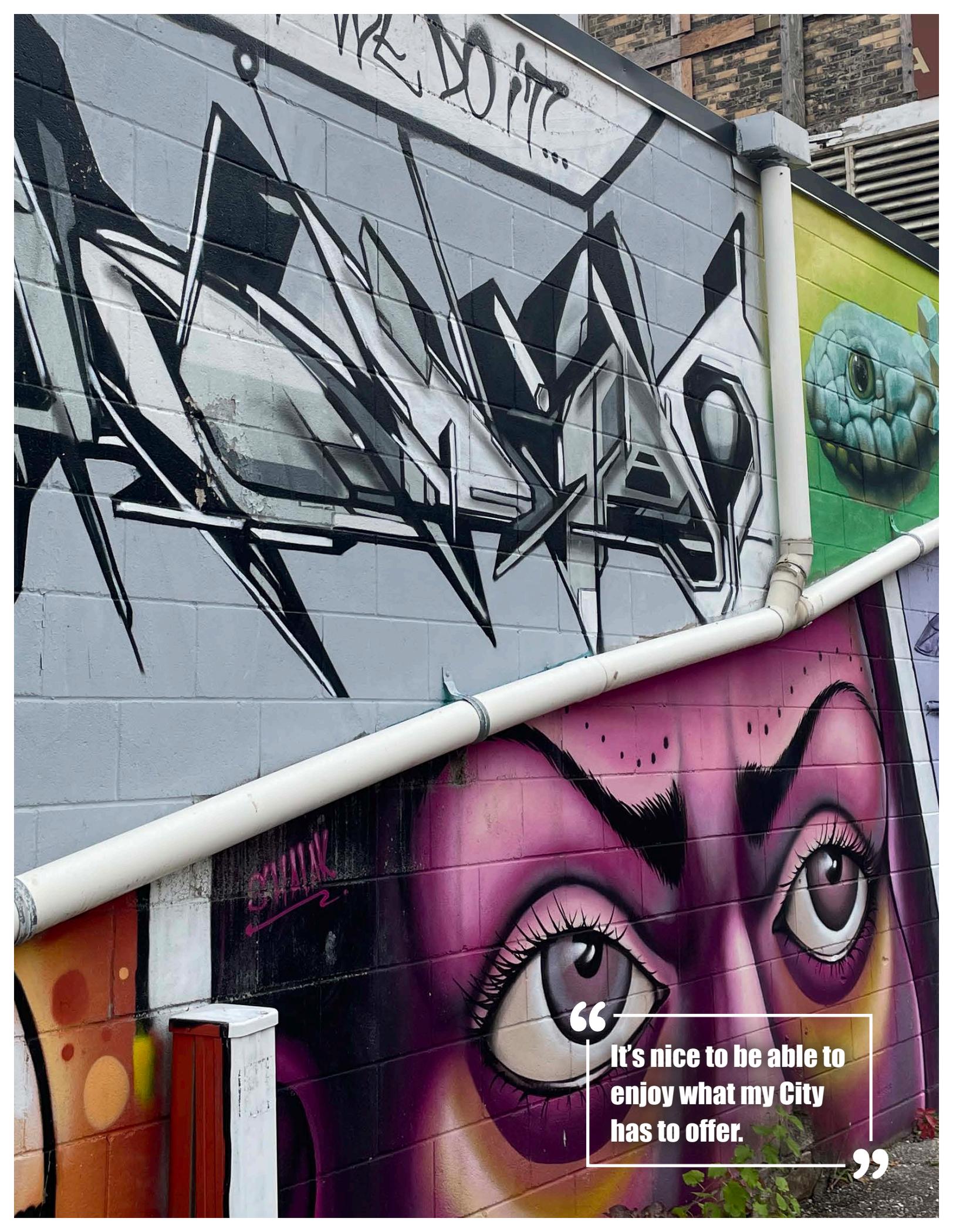
Optimize outdoor spaces for events usage

**Action 5.5a:** Consider various outdoor spaces across the City of Cambridge to be chosen as priority events spaces, including Riverside Park (Preston), Churchill Park (Galt), Dickson Park (Galt), Forbes Park (Hespeler), and the new Recreation Centre (Galt).

**Action 5.5b:** Enhance each of the four chosen priority events spaces through the provision of additional amenities and/or capital projects.

**Action 5.5c:** Review and propose a category-based pricing strategy based on user type (commercial versus not-for-profit), size of event, and bundled amenities.

**Action 5.5d:** Establish a lending inventory of staple event supplies.



WE DO IT

A

STANK

“ It’s nice to be able to enjoy what my City has to offer. ”

“

Love the arts community  
in Cambridge.

”

Originals  
Small \$25  
Large \$35





[cambridge.ca/culture](http://cambridge.ca/culture)