

City of Cambridge

# 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW.

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## 2024 Year in Review

# Message from the Mayor

As we reflect on the year past, it is clear that 2024 was a transformative year for the City of Cambridge. Together, we've made significant strides in creating a vibrant, inclusive, and accessible community where all residents can thrive.

This year, we continued to activate public spaces, enhance community connections, and strengthen support for the arts. Through initiatives such as the Cambridge Celebration of the Arts and the second annual Cambridgeliocious event, we celebrated our city's diversity and showcased the creativity of our community. With the successful Main Street and Queen Street Road closures, and events along King St., we transformed our core areas into lively, pedestrian-friendly spaces that hosted over 95 community events, fostering engagement and pride in our downtown.

Accessibility, age-friendliness and youth engagement will continue to be an important piece of what we do. From the development of an Older Adult Strategy to the launch of an Age-Friendly webpage, newsletter, and resource guide, we prioritized meeting the needs of our older residents. Accessibility improvements at our arenas, alongside continued investments in community grants and recreation to keep youth active, ensure that Cambridge remains a city for all.

Safety and wellbeing have also been key priorities. The launch of the Mobile Security Team and enhancements to our parking and by-law compliance systems have made Cambridge a safer, more connected community. Our Fire Department's annual open house, attended by over 5,500 residents, showcased our commitment to public education and engagement. Additionally, infrastructure projects like the Beverly Street reconstruction and new sidewalks on Preston Parkway emphasize our focus on active transportation and pedestrian safety.

Thank you to our community partners who came forward to help sponsor the many free community events offered this year. We also continued to move ahead with some exciting projects for the city of Cambridge; we were able to announce naming sponsors for some of these projects. Toyota Motor Manufacturing Company, for contributing \$250,000 for the naming of the Toyota Fieldhouse – Soccer



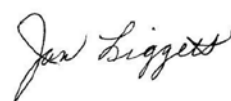
Complex and Greybrook for the \$100,000 sponsorship for the Greybrook Atrium in the new Preston Auditorium.

This year also brought exciting progress in addressing housing needs. With \$13.3 million secured from the Housing Accelerator Fund, we advanced key projects to increase affordable housing. Council's new incentive program for Additional Residential Units, combined with property tax exemptions for non-profit housing providers, marks a bold step toward building homes that meet the needs of our growing population.

To end the year, we received the welcomed news that Cambridge was approved for funding from a Provincial government initiative, the Building Faster Fund. By reaching our housing target, we are to receive \$4.4 million. We are grateful for our partnership with the Ontario government and will utilize the money for infrastructure projects throughout the community to achieve our shared goals.

As we look to 2025, I am inspired by the progress we have made together. I want to thank City Council, staff, community organizations, and residents for your contributions to building a Cambridge that is resilient, inclusive, and full of opportunity. It is your passion and dedication that make this city truly exceptional.

With gratitude and optimism for the year ahead,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jan Liggett".

**Mayor Jan Liggett**  
City of Cambridge

## 2024 Year in Review

# Message from the City Manager

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As we turn the page on another year, I'm inspired by the collective energy and dedication that fueled us through 2024 to accomplish all that we did.

It was a year marked not just by milestones, but the spirit of collaboration and belief that together, we can do so much. I'm also filled with pride and gratitude for the dedication of residents, businesses, City staff, volunteers and Council who made it all possible.

In 2024, we saw exciting investments in City infrastructure come to life with the grand opening of the new Soccer Complex on Linden Drive, renovation of the historical Dickson Park Grandstand and groundbreaking events for the Recreation Complex and the Preston Auditorium. These facilities will serve our community for years to come and create more jobs, improve our services, and enhance the overall quality of life for everyone who calls Cambridge home.

We've seen economic growth, with 103 business starts or expansions in the city supported by staff through the Small Business Centre. The City also made progress in sustainability by implementing initiatives that will reduce our carbon footprint and protect our natural resources including updates to the private tree bylaw, tree giveaways, and City lead community clean ups.

Our commitment to public safety, accessibility, and well-being can be seen through the fire services more than 400 public education events, work to replace passenger lifts at Galt Arena Gardens and Hespeler Memorial Arena, as well as road safety initiatives including the pedestrian underpass on Beverly Street and reduced speed limits on City streets, ensuring that all residents feel safe and supported.



None of these achievements would be possible without our community. Whether you attended an event, registered for a program, volunteered, or simply shared feedback, you contributed to the vibrancy and resilience of our city. Together, we are building a place where everyone belongs and remain committed to building a city that future generations will be proud of.

Thank you for your part in the City's successes. Together, with Mayor and Council, I look forward to all that we will accomplish together as we move forward into 2025.

**David Calder**  
City Manager

City of Cambridge

# 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

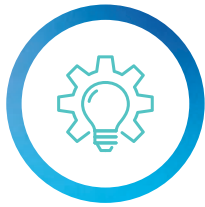
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## 2024 Progress By



# Strategy in Action

The City's Strategic Plan provides the foundation for decision making, priority setting and ongoing performance management to deliver high-quality public service that meets the needs of the community. Through our annual Business Planning process, we determine the projects and initiatives we will undertake to advance the strategic actions outlined in our Plan.

As a municipality, the City of Cambridge leads service delivery in some areas and collaborates closely with other municipal partners and agencies in others. There are six actions that the City has the mandate and capacity to lead and seven that we work on in collaboration with others.



# 2024





We are the lead for the following strategic actions:



Create and activate spaces that offer things for people to do.



#### Our projects and initiatives:

- The official grand opening of the [Cambridge Soccer Complex](#) took place June 15. This event offered an official ribbon-cutting ceremony, an inflatable obstacle course, face painting, crafts and an exhibition game.
- Concept design for the [Recreation Complex](#) project was approved by Council in May and construction began on October 24. The future joint-use campus with the Library and both School boards will offer educational, recreational, and cultural activities for all ages in a rapidly developing area of the community. It is projected that the facility will receive over 1.1 million visits annually.
- Construction began on the renovation and twinning of the [Preston Memorial Auditorium](#) and associated amenities annually in the new 77,000 square foot facility. Once completed, the Preston Memorial Auditorium will welcome approximately 600,000 visitors annually.
- The City completed a major renovation to the [Dickson Park Grandstand](#). This brought the 105-year old grandstand back to its former glory.
- Council approved the [Arts and Culture Action Plan](#) May 28. This plan aims to make Cambridge a thriving centre of creative and cultural development.
  - There are five pillars to this plan:**
    1. Highlight Cambridge's Uniqueness, and Artistic and Cultural Diversity.
    2. Amplify Municipal Support for an Arts Friendly City.
    3. Activate public spaces through creative placemaking and public art.
    4. Enhance community connection, communication, and collaboration.
    5. Strengthen special events.
- The City plans to transform 19 Cambridge Street into an [Arts and Culture Hub](#) as part of the 2025 budget.
- Public engagement commenced on the installation of a [new spray pad](#) at Lions Can Amera Park on Saginaw Parkway. This is the busiest and largest park within North Galt, with a large population of young families in the area.
- The City is moving forward with detailed design of a brand-new [Soper Park Outdoor Pool and Spray Pad](#).

**Events and activities:**

- Over 46,000 people attended the [Cambridge Farmers’ Market](#) in 2024, which was operated year-round on Saturdays.
- In 2024, [facility rental revenues](#) topped \$3.2 million, with more than 57,100 facility hours booked. This represents a 14% increase over 2023.
- The [Mayor’s Winter Levee](#) was hosted on February 17. For this event, there were food trucks, music, family entertainment and activities. Residents could access the Cambridge Farmers’ Market and enjoy synthetic curling rinks, crafts and hot cider.
- The City of Cambridge re-launched the bi-annual [2024 Activities Guide](#) (Spring/Summer and Winter/Fall) for the first time since 2020, to promote all of the City’s events and programs to the community.
- The [Summer Nights Live Series](#) offered a full line-up of outdoor summer entertainment for all ages. The series offered a combination of music and cultural experiences for the community to enjoy.
- The [Oktoberfest](#) community event returned this year with an estimated 1,000 people in attendance. This free public event included a ceremonial keg tapping, Bavarian music, appearances by Onkel Hans and Tante Frieda, and free Oktoberfest sausages. Donations were collected for the Cambridge Food Bank.
- In May, [Cambridge Centre for the Arts \(CCA\) Gallery](#) accepted proposals from Cambridge-based artists and programmed six month-long solo and two-person exhibitions for 2026. In October, the Gallery also accepted submissions from residents for the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Juried Art Exhibition, which featured the work of nearly thirty artists on display at CCA in October and November.
- An estimated 55,000 people attended [Winterfest](#), which offered exciting activities for all ages, including:
  - Phil Kline’s Unsilent Night.
  - e/motion - illuminated and interactive see-saws display.
  - Cambridge Christmas Market.
  - Winter Ice & Lights.
  - CPKC Holiday Train.
  - Music & Lights in the Village.
  - New Year’s Eve Party.





## Provide age-friendly services that are accessible to all.

### Our projects and initiatives:

- The detailed design of the fully accessible [Jumpstart Multi-Sport Court](#) has been completed. The construction phase of the project has begun.
- The City continues to develop the [Older Adult Strategy](#). The Strategy will look at the delivery of Older Adult and Age Friendly programs and service delivery.
- Access to information, services and supports are key to healthy aging and wellbeing. In alignment with the City's Strategic Plan and the World Health Organization Age Friendly Cities Framework 'Communication and Information' domain, the City:
  - Launched an [Age Friendly webpage](#) and a monthly Age Friendly E-newsletter.
  - Developed the [Age Friendly Community Services Guide: A Directory of Resources for Older Adults](#). The guide was made available in both print and digital formats. This project was made possible thanks to funding from the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program.
- The City continued to work on the development of a [Community, Culture and Recreation Services \(CCRS\) Affiliation Policy](#). This policy aims to create a formal relationship between the City and eligible organizations that acknowledges the importance of the organizations' services to the community and identifies how the City will support these efforts.
- The City invited organizations within Cambridge to apply to the annual [Community Grants Program](#). This year, the City approved a budget of \$414,800 and received 57 applications - this represents a 16% increase in the number applications received compared to 2023.
- The City commenced work on replacing passenger lifts at [Galt Arena Gardens](#) and [Hespeler Memorial Arena](#) to increase accessibility at our arenas.





### Events and activities:

- 178 [youth volunteers](#) contributed 8,500 volunteer hours to assist with various City programs and events this year.
- Nine-week City of Cambridge [summer camp programs](#) included theme weeks, arts, sports, swimming and more. Our spaces quickly filled to 95.05% capacity with 4,059 campers.
- 347 [Children's School Year Programs](#) were offered in (ages 2-12) to 1,971 participants.
- 2,404 youth attended our [youth drop-in and registered programs](#) as of October.
- Over 7,125 individuals participated in [swimming lessons](#) and an additional 345 individuals participated in [advanced leadership programs](#).
- There were 43,603 [registered participants](#) in the City's [recreational programs](#) including camps, sport aquatics, fitness, children and youth programs, and programs at the Arts Centre and 50+ Centres.
- [Adult Day Programs](#) and [Friendly Visiting](#) were held at the William E. Paulter Centre and Allan Reuter Centre.
- The City continued outreach through the [Without Walls \(WOW\)](#) social program with approximately 69 unique participants, to include those members of the community who have trouble accessing programs in person.
- The City hosted a [50+ Active Living Fair](#) on October 1 to spread awareness around all the programs and services that the City and community partners provide.



## Establish our core areas as attractive destinations.



Photo Credit: Explore Waterloo Region

# CORE

### Implementation and monitoring of financial incentives for Cambridge businesses through the Core Areas Community Improvement Plan (CACIP)

The Core Areas CIP program has been designed to support dynamic growth in Cambridge's three core areas and position them as key economic development drivers that attract investment, talent and cultural amenities. The impact of the program is evidenced by the increased demand for commercial space within the core areas, diverse and thriving small businesses, as well as increased placemaking opportunities that inspire both local residents and tourists to visit these vibrant neighbourhoods.

In 2024, eleven more [CACIP](#) applications were approved with City funding of \$338,979 (with a total development value of \$1,426,877). This translates into a 4.2 to 1 ratio regarding public to private dollars.



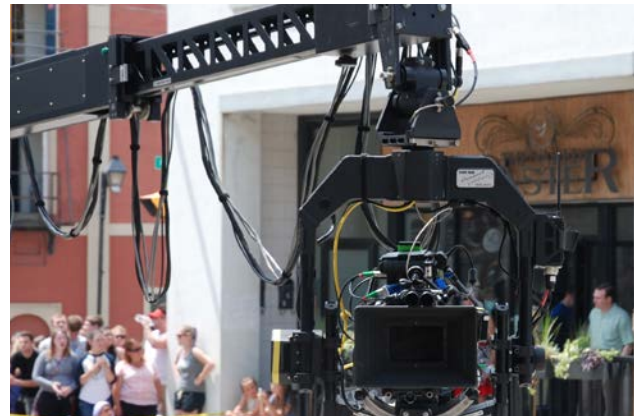
**Our projects and initiatives:**

- The City of Cambridge, in partnership with the Downtown Cambridge and Hespeler Village Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), once again closed sections of [Main Street and Queen Street](#) to create pedestrian-friendly spaces for the community to enjoy this spring and summer.
- During the summer, the Downtown Cambridge BIA successfully hosted 88 diverse and engaging events on the Main Street Closure. Signature events included the [Grand River Pride Party](#), [Galt Jazz](#) and [Family Fun Days](#), offering entertainment and activities for all ages.
- [Cambridge Celebration of the Arts](#) returned to Downtown Cambridge in June, showcasing fantastic live entertainment and local artists connected to our community.



**Filming in Cambridge:**

- The City continued to be a sought-after destination for filming with 22 [film inquiries](#) and 25 [days of filming](#). Highlights include the productions “Twisted Metal” and “Motorheads”.
- The economic [impact of filming](#) in the City was estimated at \$889,600.





## Enhancing equity and inclusion efforts.



GROW

The Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee provides crucial expertise to City projects to ensure that we continue to build a barrier-free community for all citizens of all abilities.

### Our projects and initiatives:

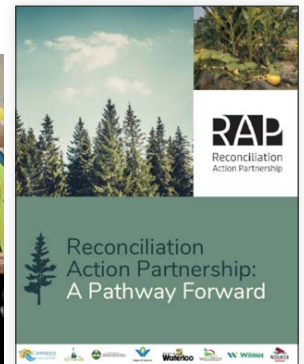
- Council's [Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee](#) reviewed provided comments to City staff on 18 projects, sharing valuable feedback to support the City in its efforts towards increased accessibility in the community.
- The City advanced work related to the development of an [internal engagement framework](#) for staff, with the goal of ensuring effective and consistent engagement with the community.
- The City is developing [internal training](#) for all City Staff to ensure that staff have a deeper knowledge and understanding of EDIA concepts and approaches.



## Events and activities

In 2024, the City recognized and honoured the diversity within the community through the following events and activities:

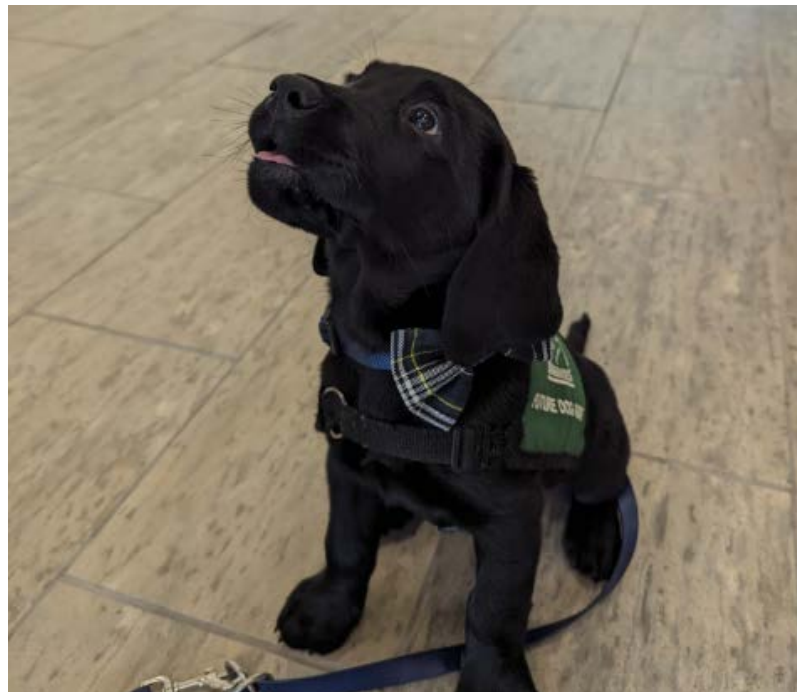
- The City of Cambridge established **Institutional Dates of Recognition** where dates are celebrated and acknowledged through social media channels in a campaign format, aimed to share awareness or information about these dates. You can find more information regarding Institutional Dates of Recognition by visiting: <https://www.cambridge.ca/en/learn-about/days-of-significance>
- Rhythm & Blues Cambridge partnered with the City of Cambridge, Idea Exchange, the KW Multicultural Centre and Kinbridge to present **Black History Month 2024** - a month-long series of in-person events for Cambridge residents of all ages.
- The **Cambridge Newcomer Outreach Program (CNOP)** successfully completed High-Five Training, certifying 30 newcomer youth participants. Furthermore, the program organized an Easter event for individuals celebrating from Ukraine. Additionally, the CNOP hosted its annual Newcomer Connections Event, which attracted 700 attendees and included the participation of 25 community partners. The CNOP submitted the Call for Proposals – Grant application for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).
- Staff engaged in various learning activities to support **Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)** efforts. As we continue to align with the TRC's Calls to Action, the City of Cambridge encourages non-Indigenous people to learn and join us on this journey.
- The City raised the Survivor flag at City Hall and lit the Cambridge sign orange on September 30, to commemorate **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day**. The City promoted various events in the region including the unveiling of the Grand River Transit Bus Wrap, Every Child Matters Walk/Reconciliation Walk, Sacred Fire workshops, and many more.
- Inspired by the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address, the White Pine Tree of Peace Teaching, and the Anishinabek Seven Grandfather Teachings, the **Reconciliation Action Partnership (RAP)**, a collaborative group of municipal representatives, engaged in strategic planning and drafted “A Pathway Forward” plan. “A Pathway Forward” uses the metaphor of a tree to represent the intentions and actions of the RAP. It outlines a shared path to strengthen respectful and meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities while defining objectives, goals, and actions that acknowledge, honour, and learn from Indigenous traditions and ways of knowing and doing.
  - The City of Cambridge hosted the third annual RAP Community Feast on November 18, 2024, in the Bowman Room, welcoming over 40 attendees from the community. At the Community Feast, Indigenous leaders and community members were invited to reflect on the journey, share input on the draft plan, and provide insights into the next steps.
  - On December 6, RAP presented the Pathway Forward and its strategic directions to the Regional Council.



Accessibility improvement approaches have included:

- **National AccessAbility Week (NAAW)** was held from May 26 to June 1. This year's theme "Forward Together: Accessibility and Inclusion for All," emphasized the importance of collective efforts in creating a barrier-free society. Our city's strength lies in the diversity of its people, and everyone has a role to play in achieving this vision. In partnership with local municipalities and community organizations, two educational workshops were provided across the Waterloo Region to promote inclusivity.
  - The City held its very first in-person NAAW event to promote inclusivity and connect residents to services and programs in their local community. This event united community members, agencies, and residents to build a more accessible and inclusive society.
- **Treat Accessibility** aims to make Halloween inclusive and accessible for all families, especially for the approximately 400,000 Canadian children with disabilities who may face trick-or-treating barriers, such as stairs. Since 2020, the City of Cambridge, in partnership with RE/MAX Real Estate Centre Inc. Brokerage, has supported this movement by providing free Treat Accessibly lawn signs and offering tips to help households distribute treats in a safe, accessible manner.
- The City, in partnership with Cambridge Centre Mall and FotoArca Corporation, hosted the highly popular **Sensitive Santa** event. This sensory-friendly experience for children with social, emotional, accessible, behavioural, and sensory needs has grown in demand each year since it began 11 years ago. It provides families with a quiet, low lit visit with Santa leading up to the holiday season. Families receive a complimentary digital photograph with Santa to commemorate their visit and a holiday gift.

- **New Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS)** were adopted by the City in December. The FADS provide in-depth guidance regarding accessibility standards for the design, construction, retrofit, alteration or addition to facilities owned, leased or operated by the City of Cambridge. Through FADS, the City reaffirms its commitment to promoting accessibility and fostering inclusive environments that accommodate individuals of all ages and abilities.



Photography Credit: Devin Sisak



## Lay the foundation for future community building.

### Our projects and initiatives:

- Council approved the [2024-2026 Strategic Plan – Cambridge Connected](#), setting a plan in motion to implement priorities that reflect Cambridge’s most pressing needs and biggest opportunities going into 2026. To learn more about this community focused plan, visit [cambridge.ca/strategicplan](https://cambridge.ca/strategicplan)
- The review of the City’s [Zoning By-law](#) is currently underway. A Zoning By-law sets the rules for what you can build and where. The updated by-law will focus more on the structure of a building (height and size) rather than focus on what the inside of the building looks like.
- The City has begun to update the [Asset Management Plan](#), with an anticipated completion date in summer 2025. This project is important as it will identify and categorize all assets (e.g., vehicles, buildings, pipes, etc.) with respect to their condition and expected useful life, with the objective of defining proposed levels of service and identifying financial strategies to meet the City’s asset rehabilitation and replacement needs.
- The [Operations Facility Master Plan](#) is being undertaken by the City to evaluate corporate facilities used to support the staff, equipment, materials needed to deliver services by Infrastructure Services. This plan identifies what is needed to address current gaps and provide direction to support the growing needs of a growing community into the future. This plan is anticipated to be complete in 2025, providing a series of capital investments for the capital forecast.
- After overseeing the care of the [Blair Cemetery](#) for the last 60 years, the Chislette family transferred ownership of this historic cemetery to the City of Cambridge.
- The City commenced work on the development of a [long-term sustainability plan for cemeteries](#) for the next 30-40 years. This plan aims to address the current and future needs of the Cambridge community for burial services.



128

Development applications received (OPA, ZBA, condominiums, part lot control exemption, consents and minor variances)



34

Site plan applications received



1,678

Number of building permits issued



\$793,263,610

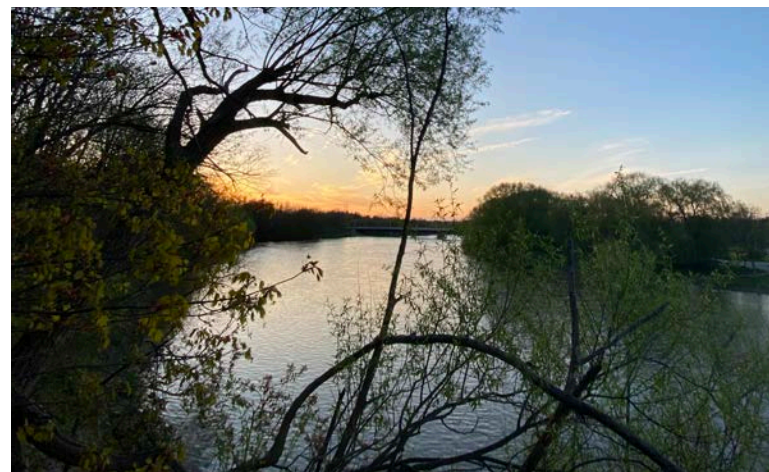
Total construction value for building permits (with \$467,615,084 of the total value for Industrial, commercial, and institutional permits)



## Enhance opportunities to enjoy built and natural heritage.

### Our projects and initiatives:

- The [Parks Master Plan](#) is a multi-year effort to understand the levels of services currently being provided in our park spaces. An extensive public engagement effort has identified what is needed to align with public expectation as well the anticipated needs of a more diverse and urbanized community for a 30-year horizon. This plan is expected to be presented to Council in 2025 and will provide a set of recommendations for Council to consider.
- A [Heritage Conservation District Study](#) is underway in the Hespeler Core and the Galt Core. Through these projects, the City will have planning tools that will help guide change in these neighbourhoods while honouring heritage and resources.
- The City has begun to review properties listed on the [municipal heritage register](#) to determine whether they should be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA).
- The City's stewardship of its own heritage assets continued this year through:
  - Heritage restoration construction projects on Landreth Cottage and the Community Theatre.
  - Design work for heritage restoration work to the Farmers' Market building.
  - Conducting 13 heritage condition assessments of additional properties to understand the needs and plan for the work of additional preservation work in future years.





We collaborate on the following Strategic Actions:



Enable small business to succeed.



Photo Credit: Explore Waterloo Region



Fun Fact:

**103** new businesses and expansions supported by the Small Business Centre.



### Our projects and initiatives:

- The City is nearing completion of a five-year **Economic Development Action Plan**, which will articulate a vision and series of actions for how Cambridge can harness its unique strengths, leverage partnerships and create a thriving environment where businesses, residents and visitors can flourish.
- There were 103 **new businesses and expansions** supported by the Small Business Centre.
- We supported small business in a big way by responding to 1,047 **inquiries**, conducting 223 **new client consultations**, 38 **repeat client consultations** and leading 15 **workshops and seminars** through our Small Business Centre.





We collaborate on the following Strategic Actions:



## Increase housing options.



### Our projects and initiatives:

- The City received \$13.3 million through the [Housing Accelerator Fund](#) to complete a series of projects that support building more homes, faster. The Fund is helping to boost housing supply, while supporting affordable communities.
  - City projects supported by this Fund include, but are not limited to:**
    1. Updates to the City's Zoning Bylaw.
    2. Finalizing secondary plans for Strategic Growth Areas in the City.
    3. Providing City land for use as an affordable housing development.
    4. Creation of a new program to encourage a range of housing options through [Additional Residential Units \(ARU\) financial incentives](#). ARUs include secondary units within existing buildings as well as detached houses and tiny houses on existing residential properties. This program offers homeowners up to \$10,000 to offset costs of constructing an ARU on their property, increasing the housing supply in the City.
- To ensure that existing affordable housing units remain affordable, Council supported the City's participation in the Region's [property tax exemption program](#). This will provide a property tax exemption for the City's portion of property taxes to non-profit and cooperative affordable housing services providers for a period of 20 years, starting in 2025.
- [Core Area Financial Incentives](#) contributed to building permits being issued for renovating 8 residential units.
- To facilitate the increase of housing in Cambridge, the City approved [planning applications](#) to create over 4,000 new dwelling units, and saw [building permits](#) issued for a total of 817 new residential units, with 261 of those units for new ARU's.



## Improve access to social supports.

### Our projects and initiatives:

- The City of Cambridge was the first municipality in the region to donate to [Nutrition for Learning](#). Nutrition For Learning is a charity that provides universal food access at schools in Waterloo Region.
- Council and city staff led delegations advocating for further [mental health and addictions](#) support at the 2024 Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) Conference. At this conference, Councilors and city staff distributed and discussed results to a mental health and addictions survey which was funded by the City of Cambridge.
- The City is in the process of updating an [interactive map](#) on the City of Cambridge website, to support residents in finding local social services.
- 268 individuals accessed the [Activities for Less Fee Assistance program](#) to participate in qualifying activities, membership and passes offered by the City.
- This year, the City offered space at the former Royal Bank in Preston for Cambridge Salvation Army's annual [Toy Mountain toy drive](#). The Toy Mountain campaign provides approximately 3,000 Cambridge children with a new toy or gift each Christmas.





## Encourage safe and healthy neighbourhoods.



### Our projects and initiatives:

- The [Snow Removal Assistance Program](#) returned this winter. This program provides snow clearing service for 50 residents who are both physically and financially unable to clear snow from their sidewalk or driveway.
- Cambridge residents and visitors can now get a [24-hour Parking Exemption Permit](#) for residential streets through the city's online parking exemption permit portal or by using city's Service Cambridge mobile app.
- Council approved the creation of a [Mobile Security Team](#) in 2024. The creation of this team has centralized all alarm response for all City facilities (Fire and Intrusion), supported crime prevention efforts through proactive mobile patrols, reduced vandalism at City facilities, and launched the "See Something, Say Something" campaign for staff.
- The City of Cambridge introduced a [New Parking Enforcement System](#) that will send parking tickets via mail to the owners of illegally parked vehicles. Initial implementation of the program concentrated on school zone safety.
- A [Municipal By-law Compliance Strategy](#) was developed in 2023, with implementation beginning in 2024. This strategy focuses on five objectives: 1) by-law modernization, 2) education and outreach, 3) partnership and collaboration, 4) leverage technology, and 5) workforce optimization.
- In 2024, Municipal By-law Compliance implemented an [Administrative Penalty Program](#) and developed a new [Nuisance Noise By-law](#).
- The [Beverly Street Reconstruction](#) project - which includes a pedestrian underpass under the CP Rail - is complete. This project was important from a safety perspective as it created a new, safer multi-use trail and pedestrian underpass for residents.
- Repairs have been completed on the [Soper Park Heritage Underpass](#) that connects Soper Park on either side of Dundas Street, and allows pedestrians, cyclists, and maintenance vehicles to safely avoid busy Dundas St traffic. It is an important heritage structure within the City and the repairs will extend its life for many years to come.



## Encourage safe and healthy neighbourhoods cont.

- The Cambridge Fire Department **annual open house** in 2024 was a resounding success, drawing approximately 5,500 residents for a day filled with engagement, education and community spirit. The day highlighted our ongoing commitment to community engagement, equipping residents with life-saving knowledge, education and strengthening partnerships within the community.
  - Residents were able to connect with their local firefighters, explore some of the specialized equipment used to keep our community safe.
  - Community partners joined the event, offering valuable resources and support, and enhancing the experience with information on safety, health, and emergency preparedness.
  - Interactive demonstrations such as fire extinguisher training and automobile extrication techniques educate attendees of all ages on fire safety practices.
  - Children enjoyed many hands-on activities including a “Junior Firefighter” challenge obstacle course.
- **Emergency calls** for service increased by 6.8% with a total fire loss of \$5,020,590 and 80 fire events with dollar losses.
- Cambridge Fire dedicated approximately 1,700 hours of **volunteer time** to organize, plan, and operate events that support the residents of Cambridge.
- A **new sidewalk** was installed on the south side of Preston Parkway, from Fountain Street to Woods Lane. This sidewalk was identified as a key priority for pedestrian safety and accessibility. It is an important active transportation connection that connects the Preston Heights area to existing multi-use trails on Fountain Street that connect to the Cambridge Soccer Complex and City’s greater trail network.
- The **Old Mill Road Traffic Calming** project is currently underway and includes the development of a traffic calming plan for Old Mill Road between Dickie Settlement Road and Blair Road.
- Many school zones across the city saw their 40 to 50 km/hr **speed limits** reduced to 30 km/hr, to further promote public safety.





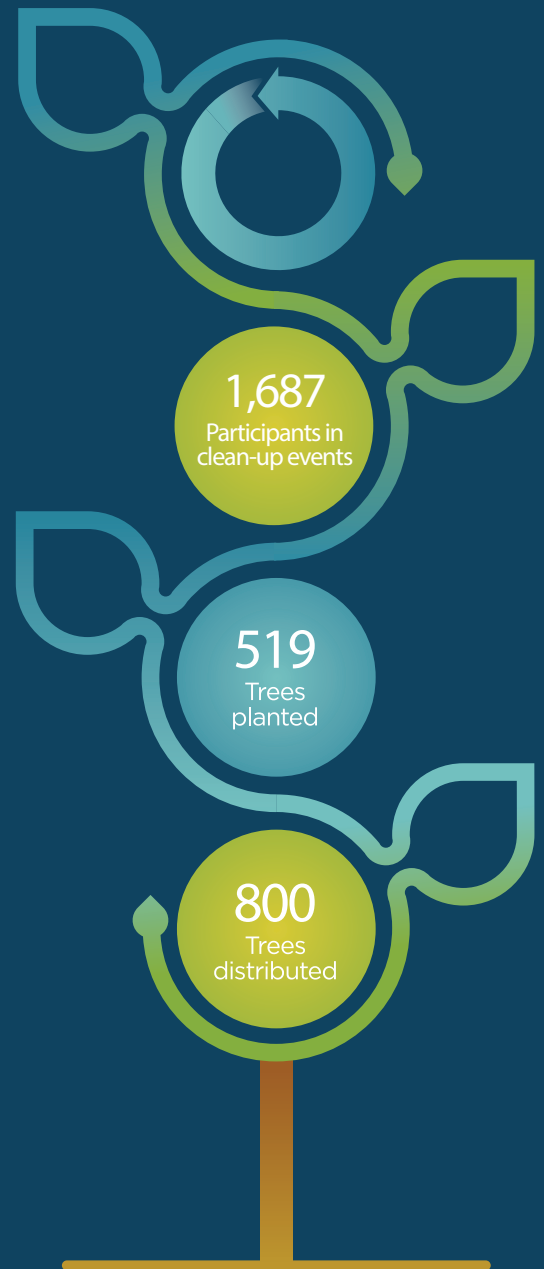
## Take action to combat climate change.

### Our projects and initiatives:

- The City continues to work with the Region, area municipalities, and utility companies to develop a [High-Performance Development Standard \(HPDS\)](#) for the Waterloo Region. HPDS are building design standards for new development to encourage all new buildings align with our community environment, energy and sustainability goals. Public consultation on the HPDS occurred throughout 2024 and continues into 2025.
- [Private tree removal permits](#), issued through the Private Tree By-Law revised in 2023, has resulted in more residents choosing to plant replacement trees on their own property than in prior years.
- In September, Council passed a [new design standard for globe light poles](#) across the city, including those in the Dickson Hill Heritage Conservation District (HCD).
- In accordance with the City of Cambridge Energy Conservation & Demand Management Plan to support efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the City is conducting a [carbon reduction assessment](#) of City-owned buildings. A [Carbon Reduction Assessment](#) is a comprehensive analysis of current greenhouse gas emissions and identifies areas where emissions can be reduced.

### Events and activities:

- Approximately 1,687 individuals participated in [Cambridge Cleanup events](#) in the City of Cambridge, including the City Council led event hosted on World Cleanup Day.
- In partnership with the organization REEP Green Solutions, residents were invited to a [tree planting event in Churchill Park](#).
- The City gave away [free trees](#) to residents on September 28 at the Duncan McIntosh Arena.





## Prepare for emergency prevention and recovery.

### Our projects and initiatives:

- The City conducted a [flood wall installation exercise](#) on the Main Street Bridge as part of annual flood preparations.
- The [Emergency Management \(EM\) Program](#), delivered through the City's Fire Department, provides a comprehensive service to the community by helping to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from a major emergency. The EM Program enhances the safety of our residents and reduces property damage and economic loss in the event of an emergency.
  - City staff received 2,880 hours of [emergency preparedness training](#).
  - Cambridge Fire's [Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs](#) provided valuable multiple training sessions internally to 898 staff and over 40 community partners members.
  - Emergency Management coordinators also provided numerous hours of education to the public including [Emergency Preparedness Week](#), which occurred between May 5 to May 11 this year.
- In 2024, [Cambridge Fire Department Fire and Life Safety Education](#) program made significant strides in increasing community awareness and preparedness.
  - Throughout the year, Cambridge Fire participated in over 421 [educational events](#) from school visits to public events to our residential home program, designed to engage residents of all ages in essential fire and life safety education.
  - Leveraging the power of [social media](#), we expanded our reach and connected with a broader audience with over 17,700 profile visits and 458,800 viewings of content.



### Fun Fact:

City staff received  
**2,880** hours  
of emergency  
preparedness training.





## Prepare for emergency prevention and recovery cont.

### Our projects and initiatives:

- The **Fire Prevention division** upheld its commitment to ensuring public safety through mandatory legislated inspections, enforcement and complaint inspections completing 473 inspections over the year.
  - In addition, 26 **Vulnerable Occupancy inspections** were completed consisting of hospitals, long term care and care occupancies to safeguard these critical occupancies.
  - **Enforcement efforts** were strengthened with an approach to addressing compliance issues by working closely with property owners to meet safety requirements.
  - Cambridge Fire responded promptly to **public feedback**, reinforcing our dedication to maintaining a safe environment for all residents. Through these efforts, the Fire Prevention Division has made significant progress in enhancing fire safety across the city.
- The **Training Division** under Cambridge Fire delivers a variety of programming to ensure Fire Fighters maintain a high level of proficiency in all skills including technical rope rescue, water/ice rescue, hazardous materials, emergency patient care and fire and rescue. This training equated to over 187 hours per Firefighter in 2024.





## Promote and develop more transportation options.

- **Multi-use trails** on Bismark Drive and Christopher were completed this year.
- Cambridge Council continued to support the efforts to bring a **GO Train** between Cambridge and Union Station.
- A **new pedestrian crossover** was installed on Elgin Street North at Galt Avenue. The new pedestrian crossover includes rapid flashing beacons and push button activation, new traffic signs and pavement markings, additional street lighting and new accessible sidewalk connections.
- The Region endorsed the **Stage 2 route for the Light Rail Transit (LRT)** to add seven new stops from the Fairway Station to downtown Cambridge. The Region has commenced work on the initial business case for Stage 2.

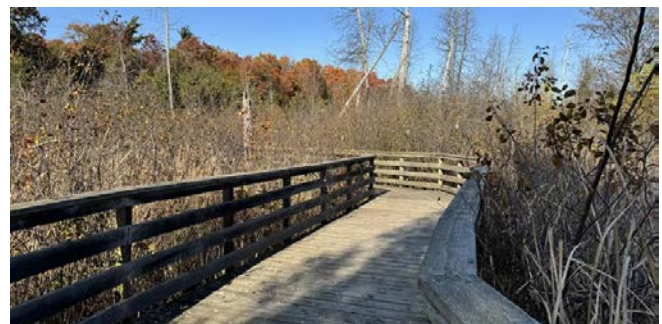


Photo Credit: Explore Waterloo Region



2024 Progress By

# Public Value.



2024

## The City is committed to delivering public value.

Public value means that we commit to considering the “big picture” impact of all our actions and communicating how we are delivering value through our work. The principles of sustainability, leadership, collaboration, transparency, and engagement are core to how we deliver service excellence and promote pride of place in Cambridge.



## Sustainability.

We focused on the responsible management of financial and environmental resources:



- Council approved the use of **surplus funds to reduce debt funding** for the Preston Auditorium - resulting in savings on interest payments for the community.
  - With the 2024 Budget, Council approved a **dedicated 1% infrastructure levy** and the establishment of an **Infrastructure Renewal Fund** reserve to address infrastructure gaps, and ensure sufficient funding will be provided to maintain service levels.
  - We continue to apply for a multitude of **grants** to support key organizational initiatives. Staff are committed to finding ways to lessen the financial burden on residents while maintaining or enhancing our service levels. This year, staff had 12 successful grant applications and obtained a total of \$20.6 million this year in grant funding.
  - 147 km of **sanitary pipe flushed**.
  - In 2024, we upgraded 800 water meters as part of our **Smart Metering Upgrade Project**.
  - 26.4% of total **catch basins** were cleaned in 2024, exceeding our target of 20% per year. Catch basins are used to collect runoff water and convey it to local ponds, stream and rivers to prevent flooding on properties and roads.
  - The **inflow and infiltration (I&I) rate** was approximately 17.0% of our total wastewater treatment volumes which is 3% less than the 2023 rate. I&I originates from ground and surface water seeping into our collection system through cracks and holes in the system. Reducing the volume of I&I reduces the overall cost to the City to treat its wastewater, minimizing wastewater rates for our customers.
  - 21.6 km of **watermain was cleaned** using swabbing or unidirectional flushing. This kind of targeted cleaning of our water system helps us deliver high quality water that is safe, clean and refreshing.
  - 2 park **playground replacements** were completed for Sault Park and Stirling MacGregor Park.
- The City continues to renew and maintain key infrastructure including:**
- 6.0 kilometers of **road renewal** including:
    - 2.5 kilometers of road reconstruction.
    - 3.5 kilometers of road resurfacing.
  - 2 **pedestrian bridge replacement/renewal projects** completed for Thompson Park boardwalk and the Mill-Run Trail Bridge.
  - 50+ kilometers of **trails maintained**.
  - 3.4 kilometers of **sanitary main renewal**.
  - 4.4 kilometers of **watermain renewal**.
  - 1.3 kilometers of **stormwater main renewal**.
  - 1 **stormwater pond rehabilitation** completed.



## Leadership.

We took pride in our city and helped create positive change:

- The Mayor and several Councilors attended the annual [Federation of Canadian Municipalities \(FCM\)](#) conference in Calgary in May where they had the opportunity to meet with Federal leaders as well as Mayors from municipalities across Canada.
- Mayor Liggett continues to take part in [Ontario Big City Mayor's Meeting \(OBCM\)](#) and [Auto Mayor's Group](#).
- Council attended the [2024 Association of Municipalities Ontario \(AMO\)](#) Conference where they advocated for key issues in our community including mental health and addictions supports, strengthening measures to prevent scrap metal thefts, and increasing supports in Ontario's legal system.
- 6 [government relations](#) reviews and advocacy initiatives were completed, ensuring that the Cambridge experience informs the discussions of other levels of government.
- Mayor Jan Liggett and council adopted the City's first ever [Strong Mayor budget](#).

### Our Community:

- 78 [High Five certifications](#) resulted from 6 [Principles of Healthy Child Development \(PHCD\)](#) courses and one [Quest 2](#) course.
- 345 participants completed [Aquatics Leadership courses](#) in 2023. Courses included National Lifeguard Pool Option, Standard First Aid with CPR-C, Swim Instructor, Lifesaving Instructor, Aquatics Supervisor, Pool Operator, and Assistant Instructor.





## Collaboration.

We worked together with staff and community partners to deliver exceptional services:



- The Province invested \$2.9 million, through the [Housing-Enabling Water System Fund](#), to help build a new Well House at 39 Dianne Street in Cambridge. This Well House will provide drinkable water to up to 2,700 existing and new homes.
- The Region of Waterloo, in partnership with the City of Cambridge, initiated a [Water Supply Strategy Update](#) to look at current water supply sources, assess future water demand, and investigate possible new water sources for our drinking water system.
- The Cambridge Fire Department collaborated with local agencies such as St Benedict Secondary School, Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services, Waterloo Regional Police Service, Waterloo Regional REACT, and Grand River Transit to develop and implement a [joint training day](#) which prepares a unified response to a local large-scale emergency.
- Enbridge Gas & Fire Marshal's Public Safety Council teamed up with Cambridge Fire Department for [Safe Community Project Zero](#) – a public education campaign to improve home safety and reduce/eliminate carbon monoxide-related deaths. Cambridge Fire Department received 390 combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms through the campaign.
- St. Peter Catholic Elementary School community and their neighbours celebrated the launch of the [Neighbours Helping Neighbours](#) initiative, made possible through grant support from the City of Cambridge. This new initiative includes traffic-calming measures, a dedicated pedestrian path for students, and the introduction of student safety foot patrollers, ensuring that families feel more confident in choosing active transportation options.



## Engagement.

We used Engage Cambridge to share information and hear from residents on the following 16 initiatives:

- 1 2023 Parks Replacements
- 2 2024 Park Playground Replacements
- 3 2025 Budget & Business Plan
- 4 Cemetery Master Plan Community Engagement
- 5 Cricket Strategy (Regional initiative)
- 6 Downtown Cambridge BIA Expansion Request
- 7 Edward Street and Preston Parkway Sidewalk Design
- 8 Fireworks By-law Review
- 9 Housing Needs Assessment
- 10 Lions Can-Amara Park Spray Pad
- 11 Main Street and Peck Street Reconstruction Design
- 12 New Comprehensive Zoning By-law with Form Based Residential Zoning
- 13 New Playground Amenities Proposed in Sault Park East
- 14 Old Mill Road Traffic Calming Assessment
- 15 Property Standards By-Law Review
- 16 Queen Street W Design Assignment



**We asked for input and involved the public in decision-making:**



**We launched new and innovative ways for the public to engage with the City:**

- Mayor Jan Liggett gave her second [State of the City](#) address in September at the new Soccer Complex. In her speech, she celebrated the positive work that has taken place in the last year both by the City and local businesses and community members.
- [Pop Up Mayor](#) concept has provided residents with an informal and relaxed space to express their ideas, concerns, and compliments to the Mayor. There were 5 Pop Up Mayor events this year.
- The Mayor held [Annual Meetings](#) with the downtown business owners within the three cores, and attended over 115 [Community Events](#).
- Municipal By-law Compliance consulted the public to complete a [Fireworks By-law Review](#) and a [Noise By-law Review](#).
- Municipal By-law Compliance attended several events including [job fairs](#), [community events](#) and [open houses](#).
- An [open house](#) at [Bishop Street Operations Centre \(BOC\)](#) was held on Saturday May 25, in celebration of [Public Works Week](#). Residents met City Staff who work in the Infrastructure Services department, saw the vehicles they operate, and various activities like face painting and paint a plow took place.

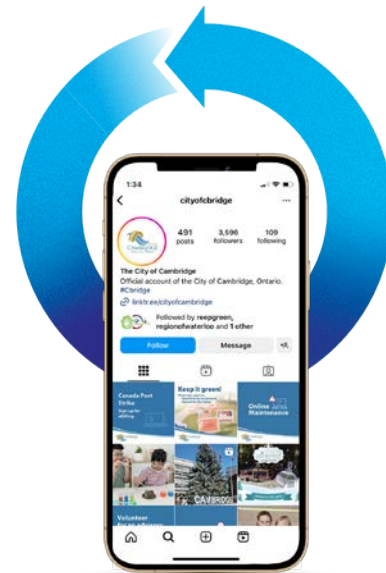




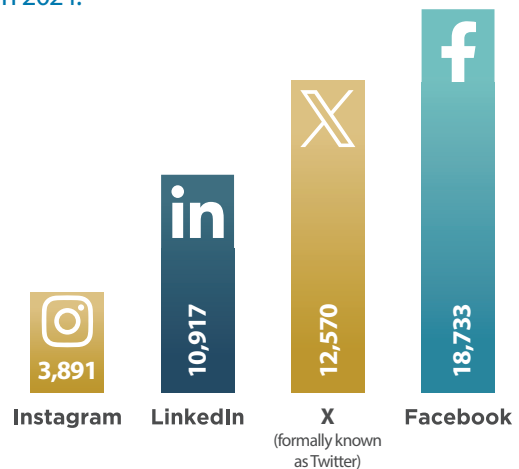
## Transparency.

We shared information about our services, progress, and results:

- Corporate Communications responded to:
  - 343 media requests.
  - Issued a combined 100 media releases & news posts.
  - Create more than 2,071 social media posts across City Corporate channels.
- Approximately 69,748 customer service calls were answered by Service Cambridge.
- Cambridge Archives staff responded to:
  - 557 (397 External / 160 Internal) requests for information.
  - Had 236 (183 External / 53 Internal) visitors.
  - Toured 4 (3 external / 1 internal) groups.
- Fulfilled 84 Freedom of Information access requests.
- Cambridge City Council has approved a new template design and distribution system for public notices as part of its Public Notice Policy to promote clearer communication with residents. Public notices follow a one-of-a-kind colour coding system designed to help residents connect the colour to the type of notice, (i.e. yellow for construction matters, green for forestry matters, etc.). A QR Code can be scanned to obtain more information about the notice subject on the City's Public Notice webpage. Hard copies of notices will be posted for public inspection at City Hall.



We widened our reach and grew our corporate social media accounts by increasing our followers in 2024:

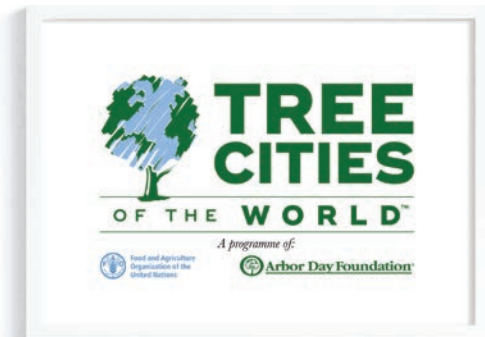




## Awards.

The City is **proud to have received** the following awards:

- The City received national recognition for its outstanding participation in **Culture Days 2024**, ranking 5th overall in Canada and 2nd among mid-size cities. Culture Days is an annual event where communities of all sizes celebrate artistry and creativity. This achievement was made possible by the numerous community volunteers who worked tirelessly to deliver over 100 events this year.
- **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award** (for the fifth straight year) from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). This award is provided to local government budget documents that are of the very highest quality and reflect best practices on budgeting. To earn this recognition, the budget document must meet GFOAs program criteria and excel as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and communication tool.
- For the 9th straight year, Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded a **Canadian Award for Financial Reporting** to the City of Cambridge for its annual financial report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023.



## Designations.

The City is **proud to retain** the following designations:

- **Bee City designation** from Bee City Canada, whose mission is to inspire cities, towns, First Nations, schools, businesses and other organizations across the country to take-action to protect pollinators.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized the City as an **age-friendly community**. An age-friendly city is one who adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.
- The **Tree City of the World** designation, which recognizes cities and towns who are committed to ensuring that their urban forests and trees are properly maintained, sustainably managed and duly celebrated.
- **HIGH FIVE**® is Canada's quality standard for children's recreation, culture and sport programs. The City is an Accredited Organization, meaning we focus on children's healthy development by providing programs with the highest recognized level of quality and safety.

City of Cambridge

# OUR CITY. OUR FUTURE.



## Celebrating the people of our City and their vast accomplishments

As we build on the momentum of our 2024-2026 Strategic Plan and reflect on all that we have collectively accomplished, we wish to thank the incredible people who bring this important work to life each day. They are our Mayor and Council, our staff, our community partners and volunteers. Their inspiring work contributes to the renewal and enhancement of city infrastructure as well as the delivery of events, programs and services our community relies on and enjoys each day. Together we will continue to work diligently towards advancing our strategy over the remaining two years of our plan to fully realize our vision of being ***a place for people to prosper, alive with opportunity.***



[cambridge.ca](https://www.cambridge.ca)