

City of Cambridge

2023

YEAR
IN
REVIEW.

CELEBRATING OUR 50th

CAMBRIDGE 50



cambridge.ca/yearinreview

2023 Year in Review

Message from the Mayor

As I look back over the last year, I have seen a great many changes. I feel that the spirit of our 50th birthday took hold in the community starting in February with our Winter Levee when we all got Disco fever. This whole year we have celebrated the coming together of Preston, Hespeler, Galt and Blair into one amazing community. Each area offering a uniqueness that makes Cambridge truly special and a destination for local tourism.

We continue to look for ways to make Cambridge the best place to work, play and raise a family. This council has recognized the importance of placemaking with the launch of a Placemaking Study that will see the placement of a Pilot Project on City property in the Downtown Cambridge area.

Public spaces should be equitable, inclusive, and open to everyone. More than ever before, there is recognition of the importance of neighborhoods and the significance of factors such as walkability, public transportation, access to jobs, and diverse housing options.

As the City continues to grow, we have committed to help build 19,000 homes by 2031, by looking for ways to continue to find efficiencies to make the building process easier.

With this growth also comes investments in recreation and activities for our community. The city has committed approximately \$150 million over the next few years into our facilities.



As we look forward to the year ahead, I am excited to see some of our big projects come to fruition. Teams will be taking to the field at our new soccer complex this Spring. Our special events team continue to offer fun, free ways for our residents to engage with others in our community.

Cambridge council is looking forward to continuing the great momentum we have seen this year into 2024.



Mayor Jan Liggett
City of Cambridge

2023 Year in Review

Message from the City Manager

As I reflect on 2023 and our 50th Anniversary, I feel a great sense of pride for all we have accomplished in service to our community. I am pleased to present our 2023 Year in Review, a celebration of the achievements of our staff and how they have contributed to our success.

As City Manager, I have been extremely fortunate to lead and work with over 1,000 people who dedicate their skills and talents each day to serving the people who call Cambridge home.

In addition to the many projects and initiatives, our staff also deliver a wide range of programs and services our community depends upon every day. Our staff are engineers and planners, mechanics, fitness instructors, crossing guards and firefighters. Theirs are the smiling faces that welcome you to the customer service counters, and they are behind the scenes keeping our administration, buildings and facilities operating smoothly.

Every resident experiences at least one city program or service every single day, from the time you wake up, to the time you go to bed.

In fact, this year...

- our horticulture staff planted approximately 38,000 plants this year, grown in our very own greenhouse.
- roads staff plowed over a thousand km of residential streets and 235km of Regional Roads this past winter.
- recreation staff welcomed over three thousand campers and taught over six thousand residents the life skill of learning to swim.



- over 45,000 people visited the Cambridge Farmer's Market.
- Service Cambridge staff answered nearly 76 thousand calls from residents.

In September of this year, Council also endorsed the key components of the City's 2024-2026 Strategic Plan – Cambridge Connected. Looking ahead, this Plan will be our guide for decision making, priority setting and ongoing performance management to ensure we can continue to deliver high-quality services to the community.

Whatever challenges may lie ahead, I want to thank our exceptional staff for the work they do every day to serve this city. Together with our Mayor and Council, I am confident that we can continue to move Cambridge forward and create a place for people to prosper – alive with opportunity.

David Calder
City Manager

2023 Year in Review

In Memoriam - Donna Reid

On August 13 of this year, we mourned the loss of Councillor Donna Reid. Serving the residents of Ward 1 since 2010, Donna was known for her advocacy of inclusive policies and practices in the municipal government, her fierce protection of the rights of women, and her leadership in championing the causes of her constituents.

Born in Woodstock, Donna's family moved to Preston when she was 16 years old, calling Cambridge home for the rest of her life. Following her retirement as a teacher from the Waterloo Region District School Board, Donna served as executive director of the Waterloo County Women Teachers' Association and volunteered her time and expertise as part of countless other organizations such as Cambridge Women's Crisis Shelter, Planned Parenthood, the Cara Community Club, and the Waterloo County Women Teachers' Association.

Donna was first elected to Cambridge City Council as Councillor for the residents of Ward 1 in 2010. Donna was re-elected to this seat again in the 2014, 2018, 2022 municipal elections.

Donna will be especially remembered for her tireless work in making Cambridge an Age Friendly City and supporting initiatives like free menstrual supplies in city facilities, the work of the Canadian Federation of University Women in Cambridge and advocating for equity, diversity, and inclusion for all.

Donna leaves behind a legacy that will continue to positively impact the lives of those living in Cambridge.





City of Cambridge

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

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Cambridge 50th Celebrations

The City of Cambridge was formed when the City of Galt, the Town of Preston, the Town of Hespeler, and the Village of Blair were amalgamated in January 1973. To this day, community members still identify closely with their original municipalities. Residents play a key role in preserving our heritage as we progress into a unified and prosperous city.

For Cambridge's 50th Anniversary year, we celebrated the beauty of our architectural and natural environments, our booming restaurant industry, our inspiring arts and cultural scenes, and the history and heritage that shaped our community. From local art exhibits and public events to photography contests and restaurant promotions, below are some of the ways that the City celebrated our 50th.



Coordinating our 50th Anniversary:

- A [Steering Committee](#) planned celebrations for Cambridge's 50th in 2023, with a series of City-led events and activities as well as community-based events.
- Elements of the 50th Anniversary were [promoted and advertised](#) at a series of events throughout the City.
- The City requested that applicants of the [Community Grants Program](#) identify whether their funding request supported Cambridge's 50th anniversary celebrations.
- The City developed a [webpage](#) where community members could gain awareness of 50th Anniversary events, order Cambridge brand merchandise on the Cambridge 50th Year Buy and Sell portal, and learn about the history of our community.

Events and Activities:

- [Cambridge 50th Winter Levee](#) was hosted on February 18. For this event, there was free ice skating, disco party DJ, ice sculpture carving, and food trucks.
- An open house at Bishop Street Operations Centre (BOC) was held on Saturday May 27, in celebration of [Public Works Week](#). Over 1,000 members of the public attended the event to meet staff who work in Infrastructure Services, and to participate in various activities.
- [Cambridge Celebration of the Arts](#) returned in June, showcasing fantastic live entertainment and local artists connected to our community. Awards were given out for the top pieces in the categories of Juror's Choice, 50th Anniversary Commemorative and Peoples' Choice.



Cambridge 50th Celebrations

Events and Activities:

- [Whimsical Wednesdays](#) were extended into August and took place in Forbes Park, Central Park and City Hall; entertaining record crowds each week averaging approximately 200 attendees for a total of well over 1,400 participants. New this year, a variety of entertainers delighted audiences of all ages.
- The Cambridge Farmer's Market hosted the "[Cambridge Grown](#)" Culture Day event. At this event, attendees celebrated the important role of agriculture and the farmers market within the City for the past 50 years.
- The City of Cambridge hosted the first ever [Cambridgelicious](#) food event in October. Cambridgelicious aimed to support the city's local restaurant industry by celebrating our diverse culinary scene and to mark the city's 50th anniversary this year. Seven local restaurants participated in the event and sold 933 combined meals over ten days. The combined earnings from all restaurants totaled \$32,775.
- An estimated 36,000 people attended [Winterfest](#), which offered exciting activities for all ages, including:
 - CPR Holiday Train Preshow [4,000](#)
 - Phil Kline Unsilent Night [12,000](#)
 - Winter Ice and Lights [8,000](#)
 - Music and Lights in the Village [3,000](#)
 - Cambridge Christmas Market [5,000](#)
 - New Year's Eve Party [4,000](#)



Our projects and initiatives:

- Over 3,000 flowers were grown at the Riverside Park greenhouse for [floral displays](#) to celebrate the City's 50th anniversary. Updated planting plans and improvements in Operations provided for a brighter and bigger display of flowers in planters and flower beds throughout the city.
- On behalf of the City, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee called upon local artists to create an [original public art piece](#) that would commemorate the 50th anniversary of the City. The final public art piece will be selected and installed in 2024.
- The [Fire Hall Museum and Education Centre](#) unveiled a new exhibit in celebration of Cambridge's 50th anniversary. The exhibit honors the creation and evolution of the fire department.
- [Cambridge Fire](#) wrapped one of their fire trucks with Cambridge 50th logo design and displayed it at many community events.

2023 Progress By Strategic 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.



Old Post Office Makerspace / Day Program activity completed to celebrate the 50th.

2023



We are the lead for the following strategic actions:



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

Our projects and initiatives:

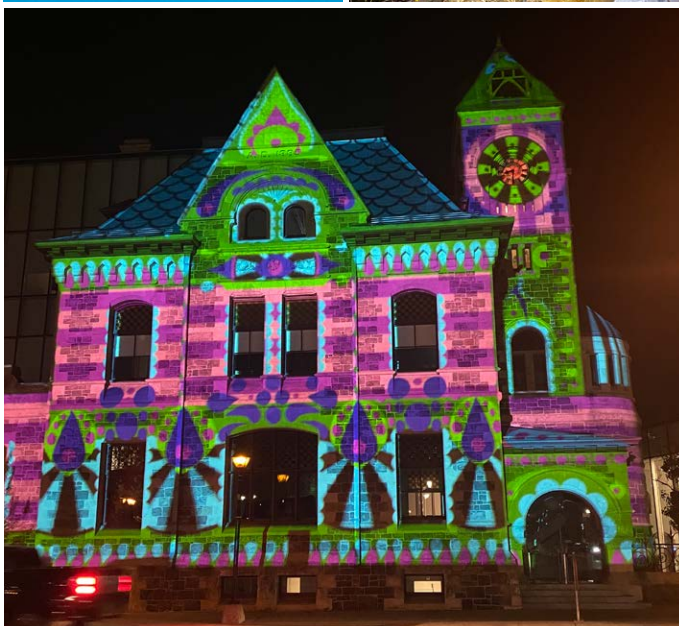
- Council approved an agreement with [Buckingham Sports Properties](#) in 2022 to expand the privately-owned Cambridge Sports Park for community use. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.
- Work continues for the [Arts and Culture Master Plan](#). This strategic document will guide us to achieve goals for developing and enhancing culture services, facilities, public art, programming, and events over the next ten years.
- The [Community Group Registry Program](#) project aims to develop a policy that will support corporate-wide community development initiatives, and to provide engaged community partners with spaces at affordable pricing.
- Schematic design for the [Recreation Complex](#) project was approved by Council in October, and the detailed design is currently underway. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2024. The future joint-use campus will offer educational, library services, 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, approximately 77,000 square feet including new and renovated areas. Once completed, the Preston Memorial Auditorium will welcome approximately 600,000 visits annually.
- Construction of the [Fountain Street Soccer Facility](#) was substantially completed in 2023, with finishing touches to be completed early 2024. A grand opening is scheduled in Spring 2024. This facility includes multiple sports fields consisting of both grass and artificial fields of various sizes, washroom and change-room facilities, parking, and natural amenities.
- The City supports the operations of four [community gardens](#).
- The grand re-opening of [Ed Newland Pool](#) in Preston was hosted in August. This project involved the creation of one pool tank from two, enlarging the footprint of the pool, and adding a graduated (beach) entry that made the pool more accessible to community members.





Fun Fact:

Over 45,000 people attended the Cambridge Farmers Market.



Events and activities:

- Close to 100 events were hosted on City property in 2023, continuing to climb as we recover from the pandemic.
- In 2023 facility rental revenues topped \$2.8M, with more than 75,000 facility hours booked. This represents a 31% increase over 2022.
- Over 45,000 people visited the Cambridge Farmers' Market in 2023.
- The Old Post Office offered free light shows throughout the year.
- The City has 10 Neighbourhood Associations servicing community members. For the year of 2023, Neighbourhood Associations offered approximately 26,100 hours in programming collectively.
- The Art Attic event was incredibly successful at the Cambridge Centre for the Arts - the Arts Guild raised almost \$14,000.
- The Oktoberfest community event had an estimated 1,400 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 encouraged to the Cambridge Food Bank.
- Cambridge Centre of the Arts continued to host a wide variety of community programs such as the Art Attic Silent Auction, Cookies and Kids, Music Together, Studio Tour, Gallery Exhibits, and more.
- The Christmas Market returned to City Hall. Within four weeks, vendor spaces were sold out.
- The Cambridge Studio Tour event returned with 11 studios and 13 artists participating. 945 visitors came to enjoy the artwork.



Provide age-friendly services that are accessible to all.

Our projects and initiatives:

- Work started 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 ongoing development of an [Older Adult Strategy](#) will create a framework and long-term plan for the delivery of our older adult services, to ensure we are continuing to contribute to an age friendly community.
- The City is the recipient of a \$500,000 gift from the [Canadian Tire Jumpstart program](#) to expand inclusive park amenities within the City. Community engagement and design are underway with construction anticipated to begin in Hespeler Optimist Park in 2024.





Child and Youth Programming

- **Summer Camp** this year ran between June and September.
 - Five locations throughout Cambridge offered 162 camps (including new specialty camps such as Water Sports, Crafty Creatures and Swing & Sport).
 - Camps served a total of 3,611 campers - 95% of spots were filled.
 - 117 youth volunteers in camp contributed 6,100 hours.
- New summer camp programming was introduced for the 2023 season known as '**Xplore Preston**'. This summer camp provided recreation services to 178 children and operated out of the vacated RBC bank in Preston.
- **Summer camp spots at the Cambridge Centre for the Arts** filled up to 98% in the summer.
- 193 **Children's School Year Programs** were offered in 2023 (ages 2-12) to 2,095 participants.
- New children's programs were offered including Little Medical School, Once Upon a Craft, Fun with Messy Play, and Lego Robotics.
- 1,779 youth attended our **youth drop-in and registered programs** as of October.
- Youth attended the Drayton Youth Academy's production of Legally Blonde at the St. Jacobs Theatre and the Newcomer youth program organized a trip to the African Lion Safari this summer.
- **Skateboarding lessons** returned this summer for the first time in over five years.
- A Program called **Sports for the non-athletic person** was added, teaching the basics of multiple sports to allow youth the opportunity to have fun in sport.
- **Girls only Yoga** for 10-14-year-olds was introduced in collaboration with different organizers.
- The **Mix and Mingle event** brought 16 youth serving organizations together for youth to connect.
- **2023 Youth Awards** brought 65 youth, their families, and friends. Council members also joined to celebrate all things youth.



50+ Programming

- We continued outreach through the [WithoutWalls \(WOW\) social program](#) with approximately 325 participants. This program connects with members of the community who have trouble accessing programs in person.
- [Adult Day Programs](#) were held at the William E. Paulter Centre and Allan Reuter Centre.
- The Cambridge 50+ Centres hosted a [community picnic and barbecue](#) on August 2nd at Riverside Park. This event featured a variety of games and provided residents with an opportunity to socialize.
- Age Friendly enhancements were incorporated into the [Fall 50+ Active Living Fair](#). The Fair is a public education initiative developed for older adults to increase awareness about programs and services available, enhance knowledge on healthy aging and lifestyles, and to recognize the contributions of older adults.
- To support the [Friendly Visiting Program](#), the City launched a volunteer recruitment campaign in August. In the month of September, there were 38 new applications.

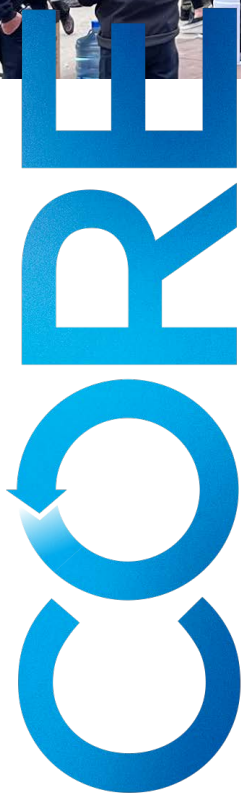


All Ages

- There were 3,025 [registered recreational program/services](#) offered in 2023.
- Over 10,100 participants attended activities at W.G. Johnson and Dolson facilities for [swimming lessons and aquatic programming](#).
- [Culture Days](#) returned in partnership with the IDEA Exchange, Cambridge Farmers Market, Studio Tour Exhibition, Hespeler Heritage Centre, the Madame Buskerfly Event and other opportunities complementing the cultural listings.
- The City continued partnership with [Stemotics for STEM Lego robotics](#) coding programs at John Dolson and W.G. Johnson along with multi sport, basketball, soccer, ballet, gymnastics, and creative spark programs.
- 75+ [youth volunteers](#) contributed 100+ volunteer hours to assist with various City programs and events this year.



Establish our core areas as attractive destinations.



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

The [Core Areas Community Improvement Plan \(CIP\)](#) financial incentives program has been designed to help stimulate revitalization, increased diversification and talent attraction within Cambridge's three core areas, leading to increased property values, new small business opportunities and a thriving local economy.

In 2023, 16 CIP grants were provided, totaling \$754,292 and resulting in \$8.6M of private sector spending on revitalization efforts, a ratio of approximately 11.5 to 1 of private to public dollars invested.

Our projects and initiatives:

- Council approved a [Placemaking Study and Pilot Project](#) that aims to provide a shared and creative space within the Downtown core that makes the community proud and attracts people to the core to live, work and play.
- The Downtown Cambridge BIA completed an [urban alleyways reimagined project](#) to support the City's placemaking efforts to beautify and activate some of the more unique areas downtown.
- The Queen Street (Hespeler) and Main Street (Downtown Cambridge) [seasonal road closure program](#) continued this summer through to Thanksgiving. These closures created safe, pedestrian zones to enable additional space for walking, shopping, and dining.



Photo Credit: Near & Far Imaging - Brian Duggan



Filming in Cambridge:

- We fielded 22 [film inquiries](#) and hosted 12 days of [filming](#). Some highlights include the movie "Christmas Casanova", "The Invisibles", and the Disney channel series "Ruby and the Well".
- The [economic impact of filming](#) in the City was estimated at \$1,080,000.
- There was a steep drop in days filmed and inquiries in 2023 due to the lengthy negotiations that are taking place between the Writers Guild of America (WGA), Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) which has led to an industry wide strike and has impacted markets across the country.



Enhancing equity and inclusion efforts.



Photo Credit: Em Roswell

grow

Our projects and initiatives:

- In 2023, the City continued to strengthen awareness, education and action related to the systemic inequity faced by members in the community. We achieved progress in this area through the ongoing implementation of our [Stronger Together: Diversity, Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plan](#).
- The City aims to develop a [Community Engagement Framework](#) to ensure meaningful consultation and engagement with residents.
- [Cultural Competency Series](#) training for City staff brought awareness to the cultures, identities, and communities within the City of Cambridge. Topics included 2SLGBTQI+, reconciliation, Black History Month, religious inclusion, and antisemitism training.
- We reviewed our [Employment Equity Policy and statement](#). We recognize and appreciate how diversity and inclusion as an employer enhances our public value commitment. Through this, we reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing equity and inclusion efforts within the organization.
- To streamline the customer experience, a [new customer service desk](#) was built on the main floor lobby of City Hall. This reception desk has three work areas, including an area at accessibility height.
- The City has undergone accessibility improvements to the [Newland Pool](#) that will provide greater access and amenities to all persons.
- To provide citizens with [multi-channel access to City Services](#) with self-service options, 'Kiosks' were installed in four locations including City Hall, Allan Reuter Centre, John Dolson Centre, and W.G. Johnson Centre.

Recognizing and honouring the diversity within the community in the following ways:

- In collaboration with YMCA of Three Rivers, Spectrum, and various guest speakers, a [Newcomer 2SLGBTQ+ Virtual Workshop](#) was held on accepting identity and finding connections on January 12th.
- The City supported [Black History Month](#) events in collaboration with Rhythm and Blues Cambridge throughout February.
- The City recognized and celebrated [International Women's Day](#) on March 8th by honouring a community leader, and by highlighting the achievements and contributions of women worldwide.
- Two [Newcomer Connections](#) events were hosted in 2023. These events aim to support new Canadian residents and ethno-cultural communities to gain a better understanding of local services and programs available to them, as well as to socialize with other residents.
- The City connected with the [Newcomer Outreach and Youth Programs](#) at Kinbridge Community Center and introduced joint programs such as the Newcomer youth skating program at Galt Arena, picnic at the Royal Bank of Canada, and a swim at Ed Newland.
- Collaborated on [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#), an international event with the Belong Steering Group of Immigration Partnership.
- In collaboration with Muslim Women of Cambridge, we aim to bring awareness to the [Month of Fasting \(Ramadan\)](#) observed by the Muslim community. Followed by a celebration of Eid and what it looks like for the Muslim community.
- In honour of [Red Dress Day](#), the City of Cambridge hosted a sacred fire ceremony in Civic Square on May 5th.
- City of Cambridge supported the [Multicultural Connections Event](#) hosted by Immigration Partnership on May 10th.
- For [Pride Month](#), which is celebrated throughout the month of June, the City supported a number of events coordinated by Grand River Pride. This included but was not limited to:
 - Raising of the Progress Flag at City Hall.
 - Hosting Pride Prom on June 2nd, in partnership with Grand River Pride and OK2BEME.
 - Facilitating a Pride training session in partnership with YMCA.
 - Supporting the Robin's Nest Revisited documentary event.



Photo Credits: Muslim Women of Cambridge



Recognizing and honouring the diversity within the community through:

- To celebrate [World Refugee Day](#) on June 20th, the Community Coalition on Refugee and Immigrant Concerns hosted a launch event and walk. The City supported by providing an honorarium for refreshments, participated in speeches and activities, as well as the walk.
- The City participated in the [Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Festival](#) hosted on June 24th and 25th.
- The [Cambridge Multicultural Festival](#) was hosted in Forbes Park on July 22nd.
- On August 1st, Rhythm and Blues hosted first ever [Emancipation Day](#) celebrations at Cambridge City Hall.
- Supported and sponsored a community member to host the [National Day of Truth and Reconciliation](#) on September 30th, honouring the 'Every Child Matters' campaign.

Participating in the following committees and learning opportunities:

- [Reconciliation Action Partnership](#) group, provided funding for a regional Pow Wow, Every Child Matter's crosswalk within the region, and has increased awareness on Indigenous reconciliation. The City Clerk became Co-Chair of The Reconciliation Action Partnership group.
- The City assisted the Hindu community in organizing the [festival of Holi](#) at the Hespeler Arena parking lot.
- [EDIA training](#) was coordinated and delivered to Advisory Committee members.
- Hosted an education and awareness campaign about [missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls](#) in collaboration with SOAHAC, WRPS, UW School of Architecture, and Idea Exchange.
- [Cambridge Fire](#) invited a trainer to provide awareness education to all staff about equity, diversity, and inclusion. This training aims to create a safe workplace for everyone, both psychologically and physically.

Accessibility improvement approaches have included:

- The review of 16 projects by the [Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee](#).
- Free [accessible trick-or-treating lawn signs](#) were made available at local recreation centres and City facilities.
- [Sensitive Santa](#) returned to greet children with social, emotional, accessible, and behavioral needs. In a sensory inclusive environment, 80 families took pictures with Santa and received gifts.
- An [Accessibility Awareness Workshop](#) was delivered in collaboration with Immigration Partnership, City of Kitchener, and Extend-a-Family to engage and inform newcomers, ethnic communities, and service provider of the various programs and services available to them at municipality and in the community.
- Support for the planning of [National AccessAbility Week](#) in partnership with local municipalities.
- Furthered the partnership with [Oakbridge Academy](#) – connecting them with program rental space and providing information nights regarding City of Cambridge programs including our youth nights and LIT programs.





Lay the foundation for future community building.

Our projects and initiatives:

- Work continued on the development of the new [2024-2026 Strategic Plan](#), which is expected to be launched in early 2024. This community-focused plan will provide a foundation for decision-making, priority setting and ongoing performance management to continue delivering high quality public service to our community.
- The City has begun to develop a [Cemeteries Master Plan](#) to support 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 cemeteries.
- Council endorsed the [2023 Engineering Standards and Development Manual](#), which underwent a comprehensive review to alter the designs of our subdivisions to encourage the planting of more boulevard trees, narrower neighborhood road widths and curb bump outs to address traffic concerns.
- Council approved new [Subdivision and Site Plan Agreement templates](#), which is in direct alignment with Council's commitment to simplify development approvals through their Municipal Housing Pledge.
- The City has begun to undertake the background preparation for the review of the [City of Cambridge Official Plan](#). An Official Plan ensures that new development and growth considers a variety of perspectives and that land use planning reflects local values.
- The City continues to work with consultants to update the [Comprehensive Zoning By-law](#) to align with the updated Official Plan.
- Through the [Streamline Development Approval Fund \(SDAF\)](#), City divisions have collaborated on several initiatives such as e-permitting systems, hiring temporary staff (including full-time staff or interns) to address backlogs, online application portals, updated terms of reference and other provincial priorities.
- Construction began on the next phase of [Intermarket Road in the North Cambridge Business Park](#) to provide shovel ready lands for employment opportunities.



Enhance opportunities to enjoy built and natural heritage.



Our projects and initiatives:

- Maintenance repairs were completed to the [Mill Race Park Amphitheatre](#) to extend the useful life of the amphitheater.
- A significant front-end public input phase was complete in 2023 for the [Parks Master Plan](#). This plan aims to address the needs of our growing community for natural areas and parks. A draft of the plan will be developed in 2024.
- Preserving our heritage facilities was one of the key priorities for the City this year. Some key projects include [Ferguson Homestead Roof replacement](#); [Riverside Grandstand seats' replacement](#); and [Dickson Stadium renovation](#) including structural work, roof replacement and seats' replacement. These investments extend the life of these important heritage assets.
- The [Grand River Access Point Improvement Project](#) was completed in September 2023. This project enhanced accessibility and user friendliness to the Grand River in Cambridge, providing a great place-making and recreation opportunity on the river.
- The City has initiated a [Heritage Study for the Hespeler Core Area](#) which could result in the area being designated as a Heritage Conservation District.
- The City has initiated a review of the [Municipal Heritage Register](#). This review will help our community to align with the Ontario Heritage Act which only permits listing heritage properties for a two-year period.
- In 2023, three properties were designated and added to the [Municipal Heritage Register](#) including the Preston Carnegie Library, Forbes Park, and the Preston Woolen Mills.
- Council and City Staff led delegations advocating for additional resources and timeline extensions for designating heritage properties at the [2023 Association of Municipalities Ontario \(AMO\) Conference](#).
- Designs were completed for [Blackbridge Road and bridge renewal](#).

We collaborate on the following Strategic Actions:



Enable small business to succeed.

Our projects and initiatives:

- In 2023, we supported small business in a big way by responding to 1,087 [small business centre inquiries](#), conducting 133 [new client consultations](#), 32 [repeat client consultations](#) and leading 16 [workshops and seminars](#) through our small business centre.
- There were 75 [new businesses and expansions](#) in 2023.
- Staff continued to develop the [Economic Development Review and Action Plan](#) which has a target completion date in summer 2024. This will provide a road map of activities for the City to grow and enhance the Cambridge local economy.



Prepare for emergency prevention and recovery.

Our projects and initiatives:

- Cambridge Fire is in the process of developing an implementation plan for the [Master Fire Plan](#). The implementation plan provides a proposed multi-year schedule guiding better decision-making and determining priorities.
- Emergency Management developed and implemented an [emergency exercise](#) inviting many key partners and stakeholders with the goal of reviewing emergency plans and identifying areas for improvement for the future.
- [Emergency Preparedness Week](#) occurred between May 7 to 13 this year. The City offered information booths at multiple locations to ensure that residents could ask questions and get support.



Fun Fact:

75 new businesses
and expansions
this year.





Increase housing options.

Our projects and initiatives:

- As part of Ontario's Bill 23, the City pledged to [build 19,000 homes by 2031](#). The City is also committed to providing a range and mix of housing options for residents. To achieve these objectives, the City has:
 - Approved numerous [Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments](#) to increase housing options including significant high density developments such as 193 Water Street South and 62 Highman Avenue (for 991 units) as well as affordable housing developments at 581-595 Langs Drive and at 30 Lauris Avenue.
 - Begun to develop a [Housing Strategy](#).
 - Applied to [CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund](#) (HAF) to obtain funding for a series of initiatives that will help the City meet the housing pledge as well as address missing middle housing such as additional residential units, triplexes, townhouses, and low to mid-rise apartments.
- Amendments were made to the [City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law](#) to align with the Provincial legislation further relaxing rules which permit up to three units on a residential property.





Encourage safe and healthy neighbourhoods.

Our projects and initiatives:

- Council hosted two [Community Safety Town Halls](#) to ensure that residents thoughts and concerns were heard. These Town Halls brought together both Waterloo Region Officials and Police.
- Council endorsed a [Municipal By-law Compliance Strategy](#). This strategy sets out a path for how the city will deliver its by-law compliance and enforcement services with a strong focus on public awareness, consistency, fairness, and commitment to service quality.
- The City extensively engaged with Neighbourhood Associations on updating the current [Neighbourhood Association Policy Framework](#) to ensure that Associations get the support and funding they need to provide services to communities.
- The City offered one [free aquatic leadership course](#) to residents interested in becoming a fully certified lifeguard, program, or aquafit instructor. This aims to assist with current and expected shortage of lifeguards.
- Events team offered three [virtual event training sessions](#) to community event organizers and created new resources such as an emergency management poster for outdoor events.
- Council approved [neighbourhood area 40 km/h speed limits](#) across the entire city while also reducing speed limits in school zones to 30 km/h. Reduced speed limits are intended to encourage more conscious driving behaviours and create more welcoming environments for pedestrians and active modes of transportation. A phased approach to implementing the reduced speed limits will be undertaken.
- The [Snow Removal Assistance Program](#) launched 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.
- The Cambridge Fire Department completed approximately 8,200 [emergency responses](#), 616 [property compliance inspections](#), and 392 [public education events](#).
- A [new pedestrian crossover was activated on Speedsville Road](#) at the Mill Run trail. This new crossover not only supports our overall active transportation network which provides options for alternative modes of travel, it enhances the Mill Run trail experience by providing a controlled crossing.





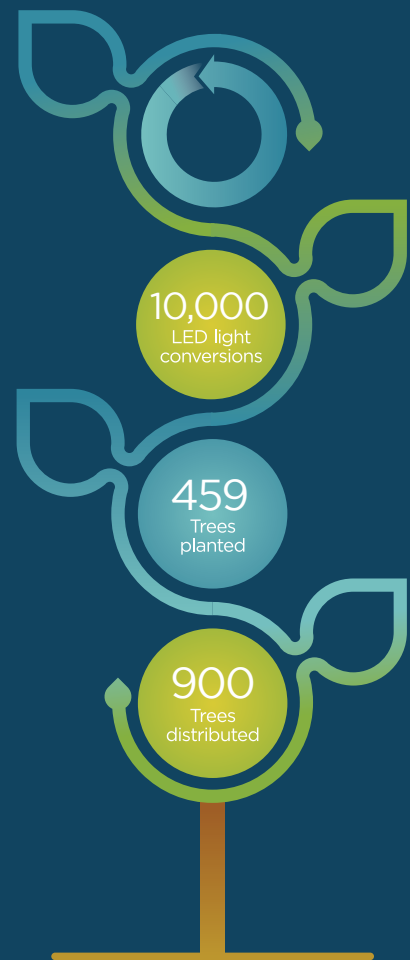
Take action to combat climate change.

Our projects and initiatives:

- The City revised its [Development Standards Manual](#). One of the positive outcomes achieved through this update was facilitating the planting of more trees on City boulevards.
- The City, in collaboration with ClimateActionWR, launched a [new online dashboard](#) for reporting Community Action on Climate Change.
- As part of the City's [Green Fleet Strategy](#), we continue to replace fleet units with electric units if operationally feasible. Four new electric vehicles were procured to replace older fossil fueled vehicles.
- The City obtained [two new electric Olympia ice resurfacers](#) which have replaced older propane-powered machines.
- Installed six [electric vehicle \(EV\) charging stations](#) in five City municipal parking lots.
- The [City Hall Green Wall](#) has been updated with new plants and materials. The Green Wall is a key component of the building's Gold Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification. The living wall also provides many health benefits, such as humidification in the winter, improved air quality, and reduced noise pollution.

Events and activities:

- The City was recognized in 2023 by the [Federation of Canadian Municipalities' \(FCM\) Partners](#) in Climate Protection Program for achieving Milestone 5 for its 2009-2019 corporate climate action plan, and Milestones 1-3 of its 2020 corporate climate action plan.
- The City, Region and area municipalities hosted a workshop on implementing the [Community Climate Adaptation Plan](#).
- [Cambridge Community Clean Up](#) events occurred in April and September and involved 1,778 participants in 2023.





Promote and develop more transportation options.

- The City opened the [Transit Oriented Development Grant \(TODG\)](#) program to create transit-oriented spaces within the city and increase transit ridership.
- Region of Waterloo and area municipalities partnered with [Neuron Mobility](#) to bring micromobility to the Region including e-scooters and e-bikes to the City of Cambridge for public use.



Improve access to social supports.

Our projects and initiatives:

- Cambridge was the first municipality in the region to provide funding for [Food4Kids Waterloo Region](#) - an organization that prepares and distributes food packages to local schools for children.
- Council and City Staff led delegations advocating for further mental health and addictions support at the [2023 Association of Municipalities Ontario \(AMO\) Conference](#).
- 132 children were able to participate in summer camps by accessing the [Region of Waterloo Childcare Subsidy](#).
- City of Cambridge launched [Links2Wellbeing: Social Prescribing for Older Adults](#), a means for healthcare providers to use a formalized pathway of referral to connect patients to a range of non-clinical programs and services in the community, to improve their social, mental, and physical health and wellbeing.

2023 Progress By Public Value.



2023

As set out in the Strategic Plan, the City of Cambridge 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:



- We continue to apply to 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.
- The City launched a [fundraising campaign website](#) in order to obtain donations for three recreation centre projects.
- In 2023, we upgraded 1,300 water meters as part of our [Smart Metering Upgrade Project](#).
- 22% of total [catch basins](#) will be cleaned in 2023. Catch basins are used to redirect water in an aim to prevent flooding.
- 20% [inflow and infiltration rate](#) as a percentage of total flows (on target). Inflow and infiltration (I&I) occurs when water from the environment enters the wastewater collection system, increasing the volume of water needing to be treated. Reducing I&I is important for minimizing treatment costs to the City and for keeping wastewater rates low for our customers.
- 19% of [non-revenue water use and loss](#) (water that has been produced and is “lost” before it reaches the customer) as a percentage of purchased water
- Three park [playground replacements](#) completed for Angewood Park, Otto Klotz Park and Red Wilfong Park
- Construction is substantially complete on 5 full [road reconstruction projects](#).
- 8.6 kilometers of [road renewal](#) including:
 - 2.12 kilometers of reconstruction
 - 2.26 kilometers of urban road resurfacing
 - 4.24 kilometers of rural road resurfacing.
- Two [pedestrian bridge replacement/renewal projects](#) completed for Churchill Park and Woodland Park
- [Trenchless rehabilitation](#) completed on Hespeler Road Trunk Watermain
- 1.4 kilometers of [sanitary main renewal](#)
- 2.4 kilometers of [watermain renewal](#)
- 600 meters of [stormwater main renewal](#)
- One [Stormwater pond rehabilitation](#) completed



Leadership.

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



Our Mayor and Council:

- Mayor Jan Liggett was extended [Strong Mayor Powers](#) by the Province, as part of the City's pledge to build 19,000 homes by 2031. These powers allow mayors to streamline the development and passing of housing-related by-laws.
- Mayor Liggett is a member of the [Ontario Big City Mayors](#). This group provides the Mayor with the opportunity to meet regularly with other Mayors and advocate for all large cities in Ontario.
- In November, a By-Election was held for Ward 1. We are happy to welcome [Helen Shwery](#) to the City of Cambridge who was sworn in on November 28th, 2023.
- The Mayor and many members of Council attended the annual [Federation of Canadian Municipalities \(FCM\) conference](#) in Toronto in May where they had the opportunity to meet with Federal leaders as well as Mayors from municipalities all across Canada.
- Mayor and Council attended the [2023 Association of Municipalities Ontario \(AMO\) Conference](#) where they advocated for key issues in our community including the protection of heritage properties, mental health and addictions supports, closing the infrastructure gap, skilled trades shortage, and more.
- The City has responded to numerous Provincial legislative policy, program, and funding changes this year – including the [Affordable Housing Task Force](#) recommendations. To ensure that our community can effectively adapt, the City continues to educate and advise regarding the implications of changes.
- Mayor of Cambridge, Jan Liggett along with City Manager David Calder and Waterloo EDC President & CEO Tony LaMantia led a [successful four-day mission to Germany and Paris](#) as part of a delegation of Region of Waterloo mayors with a mandate of fostering international ties and strengthening economic partnerships. Missions of this sort are integral in maintaining strong business relationships and attracting new investment to Cambridge and across the Region.



Leadership.

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

Our Staff:

- Six [government relations reviews and advocacy initiatives](#) were completed.
- [Council Orientation](#) has involved a variety of initiatives including networking sessions with leaders from City divisions, council workshops, and a full day orientation on a variety of topics.
- The City continues to [partner with post-secondary institutions](#) within the Region on planning projects such as infill development, alternate transportation, and 15-minute neighbourhoods.
- To support all citizen committees, each citizen volunteer was provided with [training](#) from the Clerk's division as well as a [New Citizen Handbook](#) was established to provide ongoing support and advice to our volunteers.
- This year, we initiated a six-week [Emerging Leaders program](#), where 35 employees connected and learned about leadership including strengthening authenticity and building trust; strategies to create a sense of belonging in your work teams; employee development; performance management; and managing difficult interactions.
- The City and our outside workers, [CUPE 32](#), agreed upon a revised Collective Agreement ensuring service continuity.

Our Community:

- [Leaders in training programs](#) have allowed wider the connection to youth volunteers throughout the City of Cambridge. Connecting youth to events like the Emancipation Day, and upcoming Winterfest.
- 197 [High Five certifications](#) resulted from 11 Principles of Healthy Child Development (PHCD) courses and one Quest 2 course.
- 523 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.
- In 2023, nine candidates became fully certified through the first [Complete Lifeguard Course](#). Most of these candidates work for the City as a Head Guard, Instructor Guard, Aquafit Instructor, and Fitness Instructor.





Collaboration.

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



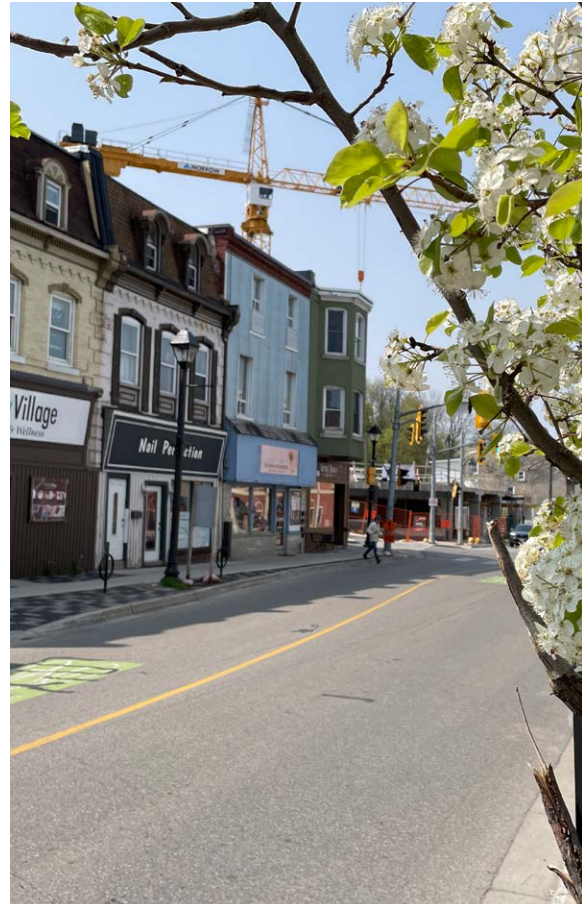
- **BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region**, led by Habitat for Humanity Waterloo Region announced that it will work with a variety of partners and all governments to provide local stock of 10,000 affordable and attainable homes across Waterloo Region.
- The City hosted a **Community Volunteer Fair** on August 31st in hopes of getting residents involved in a variety of events. Residents could volunteer for the Friendly Visiting Program, Winterfest, Canada Day festivities, Tuck Shop, Adult Day Services, and more. Approximately 400 visitors and 20+ community organizations participated.
- **Youth volunteers** helped multiple events across the City including the Porch Light walk for Mental Health, Blue Jays viewing at the Gaslight District, Emancipation Event, Newcomer Event, Robins Nest Event and Mayors Levee.
- Cambridge Fire Department partnered with Enbridge Gas Inc. and the Fire Marshals Public Fire Safety Council for the **Safe Community Project Zero campaign**. Safe Community Project Zero is a public education campaign that will provide over 10,000 alarms to residents in 50 municipalities across Ontario.



Engagement.

We used Engage Cambridge to share information and hear from residents on the following 12 initiatives:

1. Cambridge Recreation Complex Design
2. Jumpstart Inclusive Multi Sport Court
3. Hespeler Heritage Conservation District Study
4. 2024 Budget
5. Cooper Street Reconstruction
6. Blenheim Road Reconstruction Survey
7. Parks Master Plan
8. 2023 Park Playground Replacements
9. Older Adult Strategy
10. Arts & Culture Master Plan
11. Noise By-law Review
12. 2023 Seasonal Road Closures



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



280

Staff reports submitted.



94

Delegations heard at Council meetings.



41

Council meetings streamed live and posted on YouTube.



402

Responses to the Cambridge Budget 2024 Survey.



9

Individual Council motions passed.



5,500+

Residents shared ideas and feedback online through Engage Cambridge.

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

- Mayor Jan Liggett gave her first [State of the City](#) address in September. In her speech, she celebrated the positive work that occurred in the City in the last year.
- [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 five Pop Up Mayor events this year.
- Several of City Councilors have hosted [Ward drop-ins](#) where their constituents have had the opportunity to speak with them one-on-one.
- The Office of the Mayor and Council [launched Facebook, Instagram, and X accounts](#) as well as relaunched the monthly newsletter to better engage with residents.
- The City engaged students at [Jacob Highschool in the Special High Skills Major \(SHSM\) program](#) on how the City builds a skate park and discussed how to create a model.
- Working with the Parks Master Plan team, City Staff created a [Youth Summit](#) for youth to come out and participate and give input to the new plan.

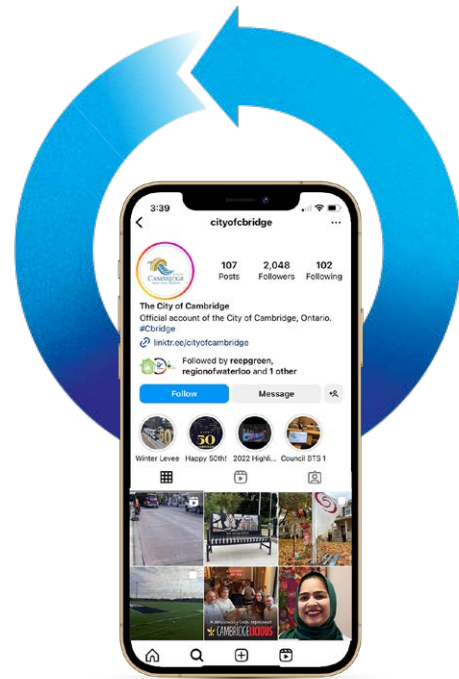




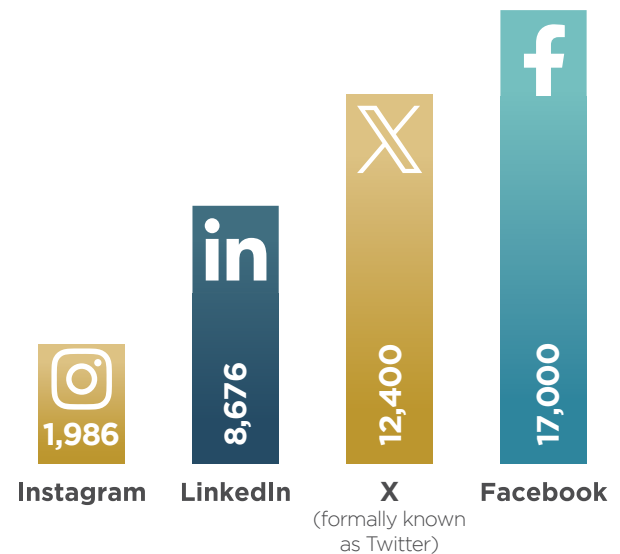
Transparency.

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

- 350+ media requests.
- 130+ news releases and news posts.
- Approximately 75,900 customer service calls were answered by Service Cambridge.
- Cambridge Archives staff responded to 794 requests for information. This is an increase of 33% compared to 2022.
- The Cambridge Archives welcomed 765 visitors in 2023. This included researchers, staff and tours.
- Fulfilled 55 Freedom of Information access requests.
- In July Council passed an updated Procedure By-law and Hybrid Meeting Procedure.
- The Digital Transform Citizen Portal Enhancement project aims to improve staff efficiency and deliver exceptional service delivery for residents by:
 - consolidating online service platforms for all city provided services, accessible 24/7 through multiple channels (computer, phone, and kiosk);
 - providing single sign on citizen portal to access city information and use city services (ex. tax, water, permits, license, registration etc.);
 - providing digital payment platforms; and
 - offering interactive messaging platforms.



We widened our reach and grew our corporate social media accounts by increasing our followers in 2023:

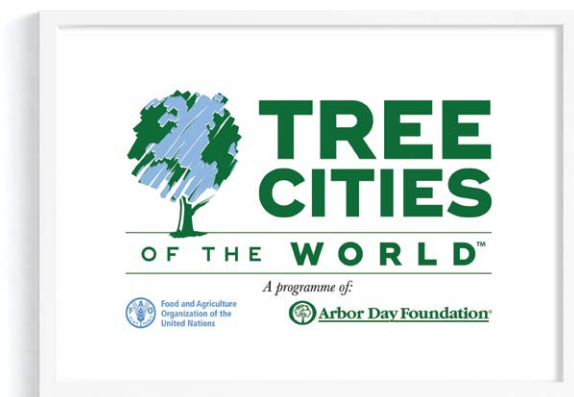




Awards and recognition.

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

- The **Canadian Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting** (for the seventh straight year) from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). This honour is awarded to Canadian local governments that go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles, as set by the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, to prepare annual financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency and full disclosure.
- **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award** (for the third 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.



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**.
- 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.



Photo Credit: Near & Far Imaging - Brian Duggan

Celebrating the successes of our City and looking forward to 2024.

As we build on the momentum of our 50th Anniversary and reflect on all we have achieved together, we look forward to the launch of our new 2024-2026 Strategic Plan. This plan will be our community priority road map, ensuring the alignment of projects and resources across the Corporation's departments and many divisions. We will work diligently towards advancing our strategy over the next three years to continue to realize our vision of being a **place for people to prosper, alive with opportunity.**



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