



# FINANCE COMMITTEE

## COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

10:00 AM

Sullivan Chamber  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

**Finance Committee will meet to conduct hearing on FY 2023 budget.**

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Dennis J. Carlone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Patricia Nolan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Burhan Azeem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Alanna Mallon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sumbul Siddiqui	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E. Denise Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Quinton Zondervan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Paul F. Toner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of May 17, 2022 10:00 AM (Committee Reports)



**CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE**

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN, CHAIR

COMMITTEE MEETING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

MAY 17, 2022

10:00 AM, SULLIVAN CHAMBER

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of May 17, 2022 10:00 AM (Committee Reports)

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Meeting having arrived.

I call this meeting of the finance committee to order. The call of the meeting is to conduct a hearing on the FY 2023 budget. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, the city is authorized to use remote participation at meetings of the Cambridge City Council. To watch the meeting, please tune in to Channel 22 or visit the open meeting portal on the city's website.

Today's meeting will be conducted in a hybrid format. If you would like to provide public comment, please go to [www.cambridgema.gov](http://www.cambridgema.gov), G-O-V/public comment to sign up. We will not be allowing any additional public comments sign up after 10:30 a.m. With that, all of today's votes will be by roll call. Clerk Wilson. If you could take a roll call the members present.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

Councillor Burham Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Present

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Present

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Present.

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Absent

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Absent.

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Present.

**Present-5, Absent-4.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** The-- I'm sorry to interrupt. Um, public investments were pulled. They're not asterisk, but it was pulled. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Correct. Thank you. Um, with that, a couple of announcements before I start and I noticed that Counselor Toner is present. We can talk about this at-- at-- little at the end, but it is not lost on any of us that this, um, is City Manager DePasquale's last budget. We are likely to end the budget hearing today. We have reserved Thursday. The expectation is that we will finish today.

And I wanna acknowledge, uh, the incredible work he has done for longer than I've probably even lived in Cambridge, uh, rising up, including, uh, leading the budget

office for many, many years before, uh, rising up to be city manager. I-- I certainly acknowledge that, and I'm not sure if it's bittersweet or all sweet or all bitter, but I certainly wanna acknowledge that. Similarly, it is, uh, both Auditor Monagle's, uh, budget with us. Similar longevity to the city manager.

It is also Clerk Wilson's last budget, although I will say he has not been through quite as many budget cycles as the others.

Again, we can, uh, talk more about this at the end, but-- but it certainly is a momentous occasion in terms of that, um, and I wanted to remind us all of that and thank them all for their service, um, particularly the city manager.

I also wanna note that several members had indicated, uh, Councillor Zondervan is-- as we speak at his daughter's college graduation today and was not able to join us. He did send in questions, which I will make sure, uh, get read into the record and are asked.

Uh, I believe Councillor Azeem is on jury duty, so he is doing another form of public service. Um, and Councillor Simmons was not sure how long she would be able to join us.

Um, but the rest of the council is here and we are ready to move forward with the-- with the rest of the budget that we did not cover last week.

Uh, with that, I-- what may make sense is for me to read the-- the parts of the budget that I have and that the was communicated to the chairs-- the co-chairs of the finance committee as parts of the budget that members had questions on.

If there are any additional ones, we can add them, but otherwise, uh, we can move forward. So the ones I have is with member questions going from the list that was promulgated and sent out to folks of all the-- part of the budget that has not yet been, uh, passed to, uh-- to the full council. Public works, water department, community development, human services, financial summary section, and public investment.

Yes. There had been some questions on the city overview, but those have been answered. So that is not intended to be pulled. It's covered in other sections. Are there any other sections that members want to be discussed today? I mean, no, no one's there.

With that, then I would entertain a motion to pass the

following departments to the full council with a favorable recommendation. The Cambridge Health Alliance, the Historical Commission, the Peace Commission with the Police Review Advisory Board, Cable TV, Debt Service, Library, Women's Commission, Human Rights Commission, Veteran Services, the MWRA, Cherry Sheet, City Overview section, and the Revenue Section. Is that-- if the clerk could confirm, those are the correct.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Yes.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Do I have a motion to that effect by Councillor Carlone. Clerk Wilson, if you could take the roll.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burham Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Absent

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

**Yes-6, No-0, Absent-3. Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. And with that, I will ask, uh, the city manager and his team if they have anything they want to, uh, say before we go to the departments.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Through Madam Chair, no. Ready to stop. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Ready to rock and roll? Yeah. So the first order of business is we will, uh, go to public comment. There are two speakers, uh, signed up and waiting in public comment. Uh, Clerk Wilson, if you could let them speak, you'll-- each speaker will have three minutes.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** The first speaker is Alan Sadun.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Alan Sadun, 24 Union Street, indicated that housing affordability crisis is the most important planning issue facing Cambridge. Mr. Sadun indicated that Cambridge has dug itself into a housing deficit to the tune of over 30,000 units of housing, and with housing production at



only 500 units a year, the deficit is only getting worse and worse.

We know how to plan and budget for 30,000 units of housing, but the Community Development Department isn't going anywhere near it. Mr. Sadun expressed how hard it is from him to overlook his rent this year as it went up just like it does every year.

Amanda Beatty, 604 Franklin Street, stated that DHSP launched its community school lottery for fall 2022 and nearly 500 children did not get spots in community schools last year. Ms. Beatty indicated that 42 of these children were from households with low income and DHSP sited space and staffing as the main barriers to expanding access.

She insisted that the budget should reflect the needs of Cambridge families so that DHSP can adequately staff programming for all children who need it. Ms. Beatty indicated that there are 12 elementary schools in Cambridge and they must be able to find afterschool space for 1,500 children across these 12 locations. She indicated that CPS should provide transportation to afterschool even for locations that are less than a mile away from a child's school.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Are there any other speakers Clerk Wilson?

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** There are no further speakers currently signed up.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Okay. We will keep public comment open as, uh, promised until 10:30. Now we will move into discussion of the sections of the budget that members want to discuss. The first one on the list will be Public Works. Um, if, uh, Public Works wants to have an opening statement or if you just wanna go straight to questions, uh, through you, city manager to Commissioner O'Riordan.

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, thank you very much, Madam Chair. Um, perhaps the first thing I should do is introduce those members of the department tour with me this morning. Um, again, Ellen Katz. Ellen is our Finance Director, um, as well as Ellen is also in charge of our energy programs. Um, behind me, and if they could just raise their arms, um, we can, um, know who they are.

Um, John Nardone is the Deputy Commissioner for Public Works. Um, Rebecca Fuentes is the Assistant Commissioner for Planning and Administration of Public Works. Kathy

Watkins, Kathy's the city engineer and Assistant Commissioner for engineering at Public Works.

And then, um, we have, um, a new assistant commissioner for Architectural Services at Public Works, Nick Stoutt. Nick joined us three weeks ago, so this is his first introduction to the budgetary process in the city. Um, so that's who's here.

There maybe another 20 or 30 people on Zoom ready to respond to whatever questions you have to the best that we - the best that we can. Um, just appreciate the support of City Council for the last number of years. It's been obviously challenging for everybody, but we have a cookout tomorrow. And we-- if I don't remember to say this after we finished, um, we'd love to see you there tomorrow to celebrate, uh, Public Works with us. So with that, thank you very much.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you Commissioner O'Riordan and thank all of you, your team who is here, and also the team who are on Zoom or in the field working. Um, as-- as a Tuesday resident, I saw much of your team as I am over on my way with the trucks going around the city, helping us with our zero waste goals.

Um, so Public Works is before us. Are there members with questions? Councillor Carlone, what-- just to make sure people understand. Councillor Zondervan is previously indicated is-- his fantastic, uh, celebration. Um, so he did submit some questions, including a few for Public Works.

After members here have, uh, had any questions, I will read Quinton, uh-- Councillor Zondervan and then if I have questions, I will go last as chair. So Counselors Zondervan-- uh, Councillor Carlone, you have the floor.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you. Madam Chair, through you, I-- I did not submit this question, but I-- I mentioned it to your staff. Um, you're in the process-- it's a general question and no research needed. You're in the process of rebuilding your facilities and, um, you're renting space and Alewife.

Um, uh, So my question is about your master plan and vision-- your vision for DPW and what we need to know is about future needs, future plans, just in general. Nothing specific. Um, uh, well, not too specific. Are-- are we going to meet them? Is really what my question is.

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, through you, Madam

Chair, um, I would say Councillor that is the most significant, um, challenge that's facing the Department of Public Works at this point in time. Um, I think the city manager, treasurer's office, law department, a whole number of departments in the city have been working with the Department of Public Works over the last number of years trying to resolve the issue around space requirements at Public Works.

We have been out-- we've gone out for I think four RFPs trying to either lease or purchase property in the city or immediately outside the city. Thus far, we have been unsuccessful. We have a short term lease at this point in time on Mooney Street. That short term lease terminates next May. Uh, we're hoping to extend that for at least another year.

Uh, we're also looking at other properties in the city, not from the perspective of procurement at this point in time. We'd love to be able to procure something, but certainly from the perspective of a longer term lease. Um, I-- I would invite anybody to visit where we're located on Mooney Street at the moment.

We're occupying in the order maybe five to six acres

there. It is not possible for us to move everything that's there back to 147 Hampshire Street, regardless as to what we do in terms of making improvements there. So while I think as a department we're succeeding at the moment, um, we cannot succeed unless we, um, add the property that we have in the long term.

And so you know, we-- at this point in time are investing money in improving the property we have at DPW. We have all these goals about electrifying our fleet, about electrifying our buildings, about going-- getting-- becoming-- um, having net zero buildings effectively.

Uh, and that's going to take up more space as well in terms of, if you look at the infrastructure necessary to provide for, um, a net zero, uh, uh, um, uh, electric fleet. And so there are huge challenges in front of us in terms of modernizing the existing space that we have and then getting another space adequate provide for those essential services that that the Department of Public Works provides for the city.

And so, you know, we are doing fine at the moment, but unless we procure additional property in the not too distant future, we're going to be in significant trouble. I

don't know if the city manager wants to add.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Madam Chair, uh, through you back to Mr. O'Riordan. Um, as you know, we're going to be re-looking at Alewife and the zoning. And the reason I mentioned that is I don't know if a part of your facilities makes sense long term there, um, but one could integrate, um, zoning incentive with providing space, if not a building for your needs.

So I would ask that you consider that, uh, in your future plans with your-- the whole city and to let us know what facilities make sense, if at all possible. There are some large land owners as you probably know, and, um, so far they've been cooperative. So, um, I just throw that out and I don't know if anybody else would like to add any comments or if you have a response, but, uh, thank you Madam Chair.

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, briefly to you, Madam Chair. Councillor, again, we would-- uh, I think any space within the city, small or large would help us at this point in time.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Councillor Carlone. Is that the extent for Public Works? Any other members present? Councillor McGovern.

**COUNCILLOR MARC MCGOVERN:** Uh, thank you. Uh, through you Madam Chair. I just-- um, I have one-- one question, but before that, I-- I just want to thank your staff Commissioner O'Riordan and you, um, you know, for the work you do in the city.

And-- and as-- I think I said this before, uh, Commissioner O'Riordan, um, if I send you an email at 11 o'clock at night, I don't expect an answer at 11:05, even though I always get one. Um, so I appreciate that. Um, you know, you are, uh, tireless in-- in-- in-- in your commitment to, um, the work that you do and I just publicly want to tell you how much I appreciate that.

Um, sort of a weird-- maybe a weird question in the scheme of things, but, um, some folks have brought this up on occasion, and I see in the budget that there is-- uh, that we've-- that Public Works has initiated space optimization and beautification plan for the Cambridge Cemetery. How are we doing with space at the cemetery? I know that that's-- there's not a lot.



**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, through you, Madam Chair. Councillor, um, we expect to begin a public process associated with the chem--with the Cemetery Master plan this summer. Um, I expect that we will be coming to you with, um, a proposed committee, uh, of, um, members of the community in the next month or so.

We have about, um, six years in terms of new spaces, uh, in terms of the present layout. Now, it's possible for us to, um, expand that by narrowing roads or disappear-- or having pathways disappear. Um, we are also obviously need to look at different forms of burial, um, over the next number of years. And that's a critical, uh, aspect of the master plan moving forward. We have consultants that we have brought on board at this point in time, landscape consultants and people who specialize in cemetery redesign and so on.

And so, um, our expectation is that we'll be able to extend the life of the cemetery for new burials, um, in new sites, um, um, but it's going to take some additional design effort. And again, we want to bring people on from all parts of the community so that we can fully represent, um, you know, different religious-- people from different

religious backgrounds and different traditions as well as we-- as we put forward the next phase of the master plan. But, um, it's a challenge to continue to provide for new, uh, burial spaces.

Again, for those people with existing, um, lots in this-- and there-- there are lots of those available, but for people who are looking for new spaces, there's a limited number of those presently available.

**COUNCILLOR MARC MCGOVERN:** Thank you. Um, and I know-- through you, Madam Chair, and you know, I know we-- you know, we talk-- we-- we don't really talk about this much, um, but I think it is an important issue certainly for families that-- um, certainly families that have lived here forever, and, you know, people who have lived here forever, who, um, you know, want to be buried here.

Um, so thank you for doing that work. Um, it-- it's-- you-- you just said that for someone who has lots or plots, um, but you can't get a-- I thought you couldn't get a plot in Cambridge Cemetery until the person actually passed away, right?

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, through you Madam Chair, Councillor that's correct. So there may be one

person buried in a plot at the moment, but there's space for another person beside them. And so obviously those spaces have yet to be-- a lot of those spaces have yet to be occupied. And so that-- that continues to be an area where there is more room. However, when it comes to new plots, there are not that many left.

**COUNCILLOR MARC MCGOVERN:** Okay. Well, thank you. And, um, hopefully I-- you know, I won't need one anytime soon, but after growing up here, if I have to be buried in Somerville, I'm coming back haunting you. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Councillor McGovern. I also, uh, acknowledge and, uh, Councillor Simmons has joined us also remotely and the clerk will make sure if the remote participants have questions that we all, uh, get to hear them. And-- and now we'll go to Mayor Siddiqui.

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Hi, everyone. Good morning. Uh, Councillor McGovern that's a scary thought. Um, well, I echo my thanks to the commissioner and the team, uh, for their incredible work. Um, and most recently I wanna thank them for their work a few weeks ago, uh, during Arbor week to get residents, uh, involved in tree planting.

Uh, I had a blast planting a tree with first graders at the Baldwin School and it was really clear that all the students loved helping out. And, uh, I think as much as possible, I think we should be getting our students, uh, more involved in, uh, plantings throughout the year. So I look forward to working with, um, the team to do that.

My question for the budget is that the budget book notes that during FY 22 Public Works reached the Urban Forest Master Plan recommendation of planting a thousand trees annually and will soon exceed a thousand. So what is the current survival rate of newly planted trees and what is in the budget this year to increase the survival rate?

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, through you, Madam Chair, Councillor, and-- and again, I have, um, Andrew Putnam online as well, who can, um, further respond to your question. But generally, you look at perhaps a 10 percent failure of those trees that have been planted, um, in the last number-- the last year.

That's generally what can happen. I think what we've done over the last number of years and is that we've invested in an awful lot more money in the maintenance of new-- newly planted trees, be it in terms of, um, readying

the soil associated with the-- the-- the planting of the tree itself, um, intense watering of the tree, most particularly in the first year.

Uh, and, uh, and we expect in the next couple of years to begin to do some pruning of those newer trees as well. So that sort of helps strengthen the-- the-- the-- the-- the-- um, the major branches and roots of the trees. The other thing I would say that, um, I should emphasize is that, um, over the last number of years using both CPA funding and funding from our-- our--our typical budget is that we've invested in, um, uh, a nursery, uh, Beirut Nursery at Fresh Pond.

And so we-- we are trying to take, um, more responsibility of trees from cradle to grave, so to speak. Um, and so our urban forestry division has expanded as well, so as to provide for our own planting crews who basically take care of the Beirut Nursery, move the trees from the Beirut Nursery to have them planted in the streets, uh, uh, and then continue to manage those trees to the first years of their-- of their lives.

And so I think over the next number of years, you'll find that be more successful in term-- in terms of the

growth of those trees. Um, I'll stop there. I don't know if Andrew's online and wants to add anything additionally to what I have said.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Commissioner, can I-- uh, with indulgence, the Mayor's question is very similar to a question that Councillor Zondervan sent in-- in-- instead of having two separate questions, I thought I'd read that and then if it makes sense to answer them at the same time, we can do that. Um, and I also had a question on, uh-- on the survival rate. Thank you, Mayor Siddiqui.

The question on this issue from Councillor Zondervan was I didn't see a consolidated number for tree planting in the budget. Can you give us a sense of how our planned tree expenditures in FY23 compared to prior yours? Also, can you help us understand how the budget specifically addresses lack of tree canopy and denser neighborhoods of the city like Wellington-Harrington, and the port?

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, I-- I will start-- uh, through you Madam Chair, I will start and, um, I'll-- I'll have-- I'll allow Andrew to, um, uh, additional comments if you so wishes. So a number of years ago, the operating budget in terms of tree planting was \$25,000 per

year.

Um, working with the city manager, um, that number has now increased to \$400,000 per year. Over and above that, as I already indicated, um, we have hired additional staff in our urban forestry division. Um, we have specifically hired a planting crew. So rather than everything going out to contract, we have our own crews who now plant and take care of trees, which is a significant saving. Over and above that, I think one of the-- the major concerns as we went through the urban forestry master plan and where the idea of planting in excess of a thousand trees on the product right way year became, you know, uh, an issue.

The ability to be able, um, to fund that expenditure was a real concern. Um, but, uh, again, working with our urban forestry master plan-- our urban forestry master plan team and the advisory committee and, um, our consultants, um, we-- we concluded that the trees that have best chance of survival are Beirut trees and Andrew can speak more specifically about that.

And again, given the fact that we're not, um-- you know, have a nursery of our own, um, where we take care of those trees, where we plant them ourselves, it reduces the

cost to the city significantly. And so therefore, given the money that's in our operating budget year on, year out, um, and given that additional investment in our, um, own staff, our ability to plant in excess of a thousand trees a year, um, exists.

And our expectation is that-- that that number of trees will continue to expand to include, um, more trees in park-- parks and so on. And-- and over the last two years, we've been successful in-- in providing for that specific to, um, areas, uh, of social justice.

Again, if you look at the urban forestry master plan, and if you think specifically about the Wellington-Harrington area, um, the canopy on the public right of way in the Wellington-Harrington area, at least in terms of the master plan, was, um, in the order of 31 percent of the public-- of, uh-- in terms of coverage at the right of way. Um, the average in the city is 28 percent, and so it was in excess of the average. If I look at East Cambridge, if I look at the port, if I look at the MIT area, it's much lower than that. And so we have invested a lot of, um, money and effort in terms of trying to, uh, place additional trees in those areas. And that is not to say



that the Wanging area has been ignored.

In fact, I think we're planting 30 trees in that area this year. And again, to the extent that it includes the Inman Square area, again as part of the Inman Square Infrastructure project, there will be more trees planted as a result of that as well. And so, um, again, we're very conscious of making sure that areas, um, social justice areas are properly catered for.

And again, I think you need to look at, um, our plans not in-- in terms of an individual year, but over perhaps a five-year period as well. Um, I don't know if Andrew wants to add anything to this with your permission, Ms. Madam Chair.

**MR. ANDREW PUTNAM:** Through you, Madam Chair,

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Go ahead. Thank you.

**MR. ANDREW PUTNAM:** Uh, Owen-- Owen touched on a lot of the points and one of the main considerations in trying to ramp up right away in part plantings was, um, obviously, the burden on the department and the contractor for watering and soils.

Owen said that the fibrous roots of a-- of a Beruit tree and amending the soil to include a lot more organic

matter for water retention, uh, has improved survivability and reduced the amount of watering frequency that we need. Uh, and so we've-- we've set-- you know, with an in-house planting crew, we've been able to get trees established and-- and survive at a higher rate just from the amount of water retention in the soil through prep work that we're doing.

And to-- currently to kind of Quinton-- uh, Councillor Zoundervan's question about Wellington Harriet-- Harrington, we have 30 right of way trees currently scheduled to be planted in the upcoming fiscal year planting season and one of the PB7 micro forests is located in Wellington Harrington at Lincoln and Windsor. Um, and so, you know, with tho-- those are mainly the-- the broad points.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Mayor Siddiqui, did that, uh, answer your question?

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Yes, I'm all set. Thanks.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Um, I will-- uh, there's two other questions that Councillor Zondervan sent about this area and one is very similar to mine, so I'll merge them. Um, from Councillor Zondervan incomplete

sewer separation continues to be a problem with combined sewer overflow events increasing due to climate change driven amplification of major rain events. Are we building enough future funding into the capital budget to address this problem?

And what I had was asking-- going ask about what the combined sewer overflow is that it's mentioned in the budget book, the numbers are that we've actually mitigated 98 percent of the overflow into the Charles River and 85 percent in Alewife.

So wrapping this all together is our goal to get to the similar 98 percent in Alewife and that dovetails, I think or-- is in conjunction with the-- the question about are we building future funding in the capital budget about this CSO?

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, to you Madam Chair, or to you Madam Chair, uh, the short answer to your question is yes, we continue to invest year on year in infrastructure associated with sewer separation, uh, be it in on River Street. That is a--fundamentally, it is a sewer separation project and in the port neighborhood that is fundamentally a sewer separation project.

A sewer separation project that effectively has been going on for the last 15 years. But I think Kathy can perhaps add a lot more, um, detail to this than I can. So perhaps I'll ask Kathy to respond.

**COMMISSIONER KATHY WATKINS:** Um, through you Madam Chair, uh, there's a couple different answers. So Owen talked a little bit about the projects that we have ongoing. And so again, continued commitment to investment in our infrastructure. You know, when-- back in March when we set the, um, the sewer rate, that's really where a lot of that funding comes from.

So, you know, you'll see it in terms of projects here, but in terms of a lot of the funding and you know, where the money comes, it comes from the sewer rate. And so, um, when we set that in March, we really look to out years and again, you see continued increases of 5, 6, 7 percent trying to make it manageable, but also really understanding incre-- you know, continued need for investment in our infrastructure.

Um, the other thing I would just point out is that, and we talked a little bit this-- about this a couple meetings ago, is that we are currently just beginning a

process really collaboratively with the MWRA Somerville, DEP, and EPA to look at what is the future, um, combines to are overflow control.

And so over the next year and a half we'll really be working on a plan that says what level of control can we get to, what does it take to get there? And that really-- you know, there's projects that the MWRA needs to do, there's projects Cambridge needs to do, and Somerville.

So it's a fairly complex situation with a lot of different parties involved. But over the next year and a half we'll really be diving into that, you know, what's the continued prioritization of those kinds of projects?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Right. And the state needs to be involved as well because the Amelia Earhart Dam project is something that is directly tied to-- to Cambridge as well, but that is not on our budget. Um just noting that I understand you're working very closely with-- with that group as well.

Um, I believe that is in response to Councillor Zondervan's question, thank you, and to mine. Um, another question Councillor Zondervan sent in is, uh, glad to see the Moses Youth Center HVAC improvements listed under the

Municipal Facilities Improvement program. It would be good to clarify whether the entire project is funded this year or if it's just planning.

I recently toured the Moses Youth Center and saw how bad the issue has gotten, and I understand the intent of doing this over two years, but our commitment to racial justice demands we move more quickly and fund the entire repair through this budget so it can be done as soon as possible. Where do things stand? And my question on that of course is, will this HVAC improvement mean that it will go to net zero fossil fuel free as we replace whatever systems there are?

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Um, through you are-- to you and through you Madam Chair. Um, so the project is fully funded this year, both design and construction. And, um, we will move forward with that as quickly as we can. Um, and, um, our expectation is that it will be an all electric system once it is complete.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Excellent. And to remind people, the only way to get to fossil fuel free is to have all electric and then for the electricity to be a hundred percent renewable and fossil fuel free. Thank you

for that answer.

Um, I did have, um, another question, but it's related to DPW and it'll probably come out under the, um, public investment section, which is the question about as we're doing these street projects, DPW is involved and how does it tie into laying conduit for eventual municipal broadband possibility and a possible geogrid. So I think that will come under public investment unless it makes more sense to answer that here.

**COMMISSIONER KATHY WATKINS:** Um, through you, Madam Chair, we can go ahead and answer it now if that's a-- acceptable. Um, so the first question, um, was about the, um, uh, conduit. So we do-- there's a couple different res-- types of situations.

So, you know, like on a situation on River Street, we are looking to add the conduit, um, that would provide existing, um, capacity to meet the fire station needs and then also potential for future needs.

And so on the major street corridors where we're doing that level of construction, and then also where there are not currently overhead, um, poles, because that can affect the answer as the best way to do, um-- provide fiber

for any future expansion. And so, you know, we are looking at that. We're also just now really beginning the con-- the detail design in the port and we'll be looking similarly on-- particularly on those major corridors like Windsor Street and other streets that don't have above ground utilities.

Um, and then we're also really excited to see the, um, you know, the broadband work continues so that we have more clarity in terms of what the future holds so that we can make sure if we're doing investment, that it's really-- it's good investment that will be used. And so those are sort of ongoing discussions.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Great. And then again, on the eventuality of a possible, uh, geogrid district energy kind of systems, which would also be-- it would be incumbent on us to think proactively into the future that as we engage in these projects, we're not doing what sometimes happens just because of scheduling that we dig up a street, we cover it up, we dig it up, we cover it up.

So to try to, uh, reduce the cost for any kind of eventuality. Is that included in eventual planning if that were to come through for the city to-- to do any projects



related to that?

**COMMISSIONER KATHY WATKINS:** Sure. Through you Madam Chair. So, you know, working closely with CDD, and this is where, you know, there's a lot of overlap in terms of CDD and Public Works and, um, I know sometimes that can be confusing for folks, but it's also partly what makes a lot of our projects work really well is that we have different approaches and, you know, different priorities.

And so, um, you know, we're really working closely with CDD and following, um, the pilot program in Framingham that is really just beginning, they haven't really started design work and really understanding how that, um, pilot will go in terms of understanding, you know, the complexity of the underground system, the aboveground needs.

As, um, Owen spoke earlier about, you know, electrification requires space above ground and that's one of the really challenging things we have in Cambridge. And so we're excited to really follow along that process and, you know, take as much information from that as we can. So, you know, I would say right now we're not sort of preserving a corridor in these streets, but, you know, really looking to expand on the work that Eversource is

doing in Framingham and understand how that can be really scaled up into a, um, utility scale type system.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thanks. I think the answer is let's make sure we build it in if necessary into future budgets because it will have implications, but it'll be a lot more cost efficient to do it in conjunction with other projects. Those were the questions I had. Are there other questions from the body? Councillor Carlone?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Uh, thank you Madam Chair. Uh, first, um, a major compliment, uh, Councillor McGovern brought up one issue, but I wanna say the difference we see on our sidewalks with the tree planting is pretty phenomenal.

And especially when you have linear planting strips. I mean, it's like night and day. And even with trees that are two-years-old, eight feet high or so, um, it changes the whole character. And I know beyond the forestry and the health.

But there's an apartment building near Aurora I live, and I believe there are four trees planted in front. Um, and the character of the sidewalk in the street has changed. And the people in the building have stopped me to

say how happy they are.

They take care of the planting strip, the five-foot planting strip on their property, but it's like they've been recognized. And so I see it all over the city and, um, from an urban design point of view, it-- it's a bonus. Um, my question is not a difficult question, Madam Chair. It's-- um, I welcome, uh, another architect in the city, Nick, uh, I hope to get to know you. And I-- I realized the way-- I didn't realize architectural services was in DPW.

So my question is on city projects. I know Nick and his office will be very involved. Is community development-- I was, uh-- Nick, I was, for 30 years, a consultant of community development, did design review, was never involved in any owned buildings, uh, except the Waterworks, which wasn't a city owned.

Well, it's the water department. Um, there's some talented people in community development. Are they involved in design review of schools, or is it strictly your department? Is any anybody involved in design review? Let me put it that way.

**COMMISSIONER OWEN O'RIORDAN:** Through you Madam Chair, Councillor, um, I don't know if there's any project that we

have done in the last number of years that we have not, um, included, um, CDD, um, in. Um, we work really closely with, um, Iram and, uh, everybody at Community Development Department and we always welcome their input in all our various projects.

And that, from our perspective-- perspective will continue to be the case and-- and certainly we-- we see enormous benefit, uh, in working closely with members.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: That's a good answer to end with. Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you. Councillor Carlone and Commissioner O'Riordan and your whole team. Any other questions or comments? Personally, I have experienced the death of a tree in front of my house of a city tree, and also the latest one with the expanded, uh, tree well. I'm not sure if that's what did it, or the stopping of the construction in front of the house for five years.

But it is thriving and it is definitely something we need to have across the city, every place we can get it. Uh, with that, I'll entertain a motion to forward the Public Works, uh, department budget. Councillor Carlone moves that we move this department budget to the full city

council with a favorable recommendation.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burham Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Yes

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes.

**Yes-7, No-0, Absent-2. Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Next up on our, uh, list of departments is the water department. We have the water department budget before us. I believe we have Director Corda here. Is there anyone else you'd like to introduce or would you like to open-- opened up this discussion with any remarks before I turn to questions?

**DIRECTOR SAM CORDA:** Sorry about that. Uh, I-- there is no other per-- people at the-- at-- here, at-- at city council. And I'd be happy to just have you start question--

with the questions, please.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Uh, I do have a question from Councillor Zondervan and myself. Is there any councillor here with the question? All right. I'll start with, uh, uh, Councillor Zondervan's question and then merge in the question I had around this same topic.

The question from Councillor Zondervan is, how much is the city spending on PFAS mitigation and what would it cost to switch the water supply to MWRA at least until we are convinced our PFAS levels are at or near zero?

And my question was very similar in that our PFAS levels are below the state standard of 20. Uh, at-- the latest one from April of 2022 was that our PFAS, uh, sum was 15. Um, but that is still far above two or three times the MWRA PFAS levels. The last report, uh, from their website of, uh, a year ago is that it was negligible or trace amounts.

In one report, I said at the highest it was about six or seven, which is half of ours. So-- so those are the questions before us on-- on what it is that we're spending on mitigation and what our expectation for coming in line

with, um, MWRA levels.

**DIRECTOR SAM CORDA:** Yes. Uh, what we're planning on doing is we have a contract in place to actually replace our filter media, and the cost of that is \$1.5 million and we would expect that that's-- that would be an annual cost approximately to, um, replace the filter media on an annual basis.

And with that-- with that result, basically we'll have negligible or no PFAS items in the water, uh, once that's completed. We do expect that to be completed by September of this year, um, and hopefully sooner. And if-- if we did want to purchase MWRA water in the interim, which I-- I would see, there's absolutely no difference in my opinion.

Um, they're both excellent water qualities, Cambridge Water is an excellent quality water. We've exceeded every single regulation we have for decades. And the cost to purchase MWRA water from let's say tomorrow to September 1st would be 6.7 million. So that's a pretty significant amount of money to really not do very much at all, if anything, in my opinion.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Through you Madam Chair, I think it's important to note that if in any way,

shape or form, the city's administration or Mr. Corda thought there was safety involved in our water, we would spend whatever it takes.

This is not about the 6.7 million, it's about the fact that we do believe our water is excellent. It is safe. And with the 1.5 million appropriation, it will be even better. So I just wanna make that clear. This is nothing to do with the dollar amount. This is because our water is in good position and we will fix-- and we will make it even better.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you for that. And then the other questions, right now, we, uh, most recently did purchase some additional land in order to ensure that our watershed was protected. Are there any other expected budgetary implications for needing to expand our watershed to further protect it?

And of course, our understanding is part of the reason we did that was to ensure that we had a buffer. So that feeding into our water supply, we have, uh, clean land that makes sure that-- as the city manager just said, continues the safety of our water supply.

**DIRECTOR SAM CORDA:** We-- we have over the last 20 years purchased several hundred acres, either purchased or,



um, had, uh, conservation, um, restrictions-- significant conservation restrictions on their property. And so as-- as these opportunities do arise, we will plan to do that and as in this particular case, we're actually able to get a grant-- state grant that actually covered most of all the cost to that.

And-- and it-- it, um-- but yes, we did purchase that-- we going to purchase that very soon and that should be completed. And then we are always looking for opportunities to purchase other real estate to, again, further protect our watershed.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Any other questions from the body? Councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, I'm thinking, um, just, uh, what you mentioned the conservation land. I take it-- it's highly restricted, of course, because we want to protect the water, but could it be a camping site for Cambridge kids? Is that in-- a possibility? I'm not sure we even need that, but I suspect we would like it.

**DIRECTOR SAM CORDA:** Through you Madam Chair, we-- again, over the years we've bought quite a few different

pieces of property and we obviously own a different bunch of different property as well. And yes, those that can be used for, you know, walking, hiking by, uh, cantabrigians and-- and other people as well.

Um, I'm-- I'm not sure about the camping. It-- it may-- it may or may not be allowed, but we-- certainly, it is open for anyone from Cambridge or cantabrigians to use, walk, and enjoy that real estate. Absolutely.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. And one last question that came up, what's-- there had been an, uh, pilot project to try to cover some of the energy costs of running the system by having micro turbines inside the-- um, the pipes. Is that still ongoing? Is that ended? Is that something that we had results from?

**DIRECTOR SAM CORDA:** Through you, Madam Chair to you, um, yes. We have a hydroelectric design that we are working on the design of. We hope to get that completed shortly, and we expect that to be-- to contribute about 450,000 kilowatt hours per year and we expect that to be completed in 2024.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Great. And that would represent what percent of the energy of the department and it would be clean energy, right? But's okay.

**DIRECTOR SAM CORDA:** Yes, it would be renew-- it's totally renewable energy. Right. There would be no fuels or anything else used to get that 450,000 kilowatt hours. Um, I think our-- our baseline is somewhere around six or seven million kilowatt hours, so I'd have to do the calculation. So it'd be 450,000 over, say 6 million. So it'd be a small percentage, but--but obviously every little bit helps.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Right. Okay. Thank you. That was my last question. Any other questions from the body before I accept a motion to move the water department budget to the full city council with a favorable recommendation? Was that a question or a move to do that? A motion to do that by Councillor Carlone. Clerk Wilson.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burham Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Yes

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

**Yes-7, No-0, Absent-2. Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Before we go to the next department, which is community development, I will entertain a motion to close public comment on that motion by Councillor Carlone.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burham Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Yes

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes.

**Yes-7, No-0, Absent-2. Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. With that public comment closed, we are moving on to the Community Development Department. Uh, before I turn to member questions. Director Farooq, if you would like to either open it up or introduce any of your team here, uh, in-- in-person or, uh, by Zoom.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, thank you Chair Nolan and I'm Iram Farooq, assistant city manager for community development. Uh, good morning. I'm joined by Sandra Clark, our, uh, Deputy Director and-- and Chief of Administration and Operations.

Um, and, um, on the Zoom we have our, um, division directors, Suzanne Rasmussen in charge of, uh, environment and transportation planning. Uh, Jeff Roberts, uh, in charge of zoning and development. Melissa Peters, uh, Director of Community Planning. Um, Chris Carter, um, Director of Housing and Pardis Saffari, Director of Economic Development.

Um, we also have, um, Khalil Mogassabi, our chief planner, as well as our, uh, budget team. So Kevin Gookin and Judith Tumusiime and, uh, Peggy Kutcher are all on the line. Did I miss anybody, did I? So that is it. And we're

happy to entertain questions Chair. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, ACM Farooq. Uh, the floor is open for, uh, member questions on the Community Development Department, which as-- has been noted, spans, uh, a range of areas and the full-- uh, part of the team is here. Councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Uh, thank you, Madam Chair. My-- my question is very straightforward. Uh, we're all very happy that you're undertaking an open space plan and, uh, as you know, um, some neighborhoods are very low in open space, and I realize it's going to be difficult to find land for new open space. But I-- when I read the--

**COUNCILLOR DENISE E. SIMMONS:** All right, Denise here. So the address has been up to--

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Counselor Simmons, if you could mute yourself, that would be helpful.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Um, as, you know, some neighborhoods are quite low, one fifth of the national average. Um, in fact, the whole city is a half of the national average. It's one of the reasons why we're statistically as dense as we are.

Um, so I-- when I read the summary of the study, it

didn't specifically not include acquisition, but it talked more about improvement. Uh, may I-- can I assume that when we look at this plan, it will look-- it will analyze where open space-- additional open space is needed in the future, um, and even make recommendations if they exist. Um, is-- is that true, um, that the scope includes that, or is it strictly to improve what we have?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, through you Chair Nolan, um, I would say Councillor, that, um, we are absolutely looking at, uh, needs and as part of our needs assessment, we are looking at parts of the city where-- um, where the amount of park space is-- is lower.

Uh, we're not comparing to, uh, national benchmark just because it's-- it's a hard thing for us to do, as you noted in Cambridge, given-- um, given the density of our, um, existing development and the amount of land area available.

Uh, but we are absolutely looking at the full city context and trying to identify where there are needs. And we're doing that both in terms of, um, uh, is there need for additional park space? And we are looking at where we can, uh, improve, which certainly will be a big part of the

focus. How can we make the space that we have, uh, serve, uh, the-- the community better.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Uh, through you, Madam Chair, uh, let me be-- let me word that in a different way. We know which neighborhoods are extremely low and have very relatively small backyards. Um, uh, Agassi-- excuse me, Baldwin, um, is very low, except they have good size backyards, whereas other neighborhoods are low, some of the lowest in the city and have tiny backyards.

That's what I'm getting at, is maybe we don't do it nationally, but we look across the city in a certain neighborhoods because it was later developed Western Cambridge as more open space than Eastern Cambridge to be general. So we will look at that as a priority that there's certain areas that are in greater need.

They might also be, I assume you're gonna look at this and your statistics show it, that certain neighborhoods have more kids than other neighborhoods and still have low open space. So that'll be part of the study.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Through-- through the chair, um, yes, Councillor that we are looking at that level of granularity, and particularly using an equity lens



as well, um, so that we get-- get that comprehensive picture.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Great. And one last question. Uh, is there, um, a goal time-wise to complete the study? I know that can change depending on council priorities and other things. Two to three years, I'm assuming.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, through the chair, I'm actually-- uh, if I could ask Melissa Peters, who's on the zoom to-- to just tell us the ETA.

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR SANDRA CLARK:** The summer time is, the end of the summer.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Oh, the summer. So I-- I did think we were-- oh, there's Melissa. She can respond.

**MS. MELISSA PETERS:** Yeah. Um, thanks Iram, through you chair. Um, Councillor Carlone, we're expecting to finish the study by-- by the end of the summer.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** So much less than two to three years. Thank you. Thank you both.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Well, through you, Madam Chair. Can I just jump in with this? Uh, Councillor

Carlone, I know you've been a leader on this, but I wanna make one thing clear. For the last 30 years, it's been a priority of every city manager to win open spaces available no matter what neighborhood we be a player in purchasing it.

And when BBN became available, there was no question we were gonna be a player when we were able to purchase it. So obviously, we want to try to put it in the neighborhoods that need it the most, but from my stance, if there's open space in any neighborhood, it's a-- it's a plus for the city. And we should be interested in purchasing this. I just want-- and I know you've been a leader in that, so I just wanted to bring that home.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** And-- and-- and I agree it-- it's just when there are parking lots available too, uh, they can be converted and, uh, one of the neighborhoods that I mentioned, uh, that existed and was not pursued, and I understand the need for affordable housing is key, but that neighborhood is gaining a lot of affordable housing and is the most affordable in the city, and with the least open space, um, with-- as I mentioned, so I'm not arguing, I'm just saying this has to be part of the bigger plan,

what is most needed in-- in areas. Thank you very much for everybody's comments. Thank you. Chair. I yield.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you Councillor Carlone. Um, if you didn't hear, uh, ACM Farooq, the-- Councillor Zondervan at his college-- uh, his daughter's college graduation, he did send in a couple questions. I'm not sure if you received them. Um, so I will be reading them and then I have a couple questions, uh, myself. The first question is, back in 2009, 2010, the main recommendation from the climate crisis was to have a department head level sustainability director for the city of Cambridge.

The recommendation has not been acted on, and sustainability planning and execution has not risen to the level it needs to in order to protect our community. Would there be a budget impact if we move this position to a city manager direct report?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, through your chair, I-- I would say that, um, we in Cambridge are very lucky to have one of the most highly respected sustainability directors in the country in Suzanne Rasmussen. Um, she reports to me and-- and, uh, not to the

city manager.

Um, and I would say it-- there probably would be a budget impact if that were to change, just because her portfolio currently includes both environmental planning and transportation planning. And if that were to, um, to be separated, uh, that would have implications, uh, for new positions. Um, I would also say that in terms of, uh, thinking about direct reports to the-- the city manager, there's-- um, it's probably not the right thing for budget hearing, but organizational theory really talks about how many direct reports a person can actually responsibly handle and, um, and supervise, uh, effectively.

And the number is typically in the six to seven as a-- as a, uh, outer limit. Um, and so those kinds of considerations would be, I think, important to also keep in mind as when thinking about, um, any kind of structuring, um, related to that. Um, I would say that, uh, the other thing to-- um, I guess I would push back on the issue that, or the comment that, um, that there is a, uh, a failure or, uh, uh, suboptimal, uh, execution of our sustainability planning because, um, I would say that we have, um, you know, we can always do better than we are doing.

And that's something that we across the city take very much to heart and are constantly trying to improve. Um, but I would say also that we have our-- our implementation, our planning and our implementation has been of an extremely high caliber. And we are, um, almost always getting, um, questions, requests from other cities and towns across the country, and, um, also globally to-- to learn more about how it is that we do our work.

Um, our NetZero action plan and resilient Cambridge on the adaptation side are really together encompass probably as comprehensive, uh, planning, um, on the sustainability of spectrum that any community has, looking at mitigation, uh, and adaptation and resilience. And our implementation happens in partnership with many city departments.

So CDD does some implementation, but really a lot of it happens, um, through the Department of Public Works or through the city's, uh, capital and construction management process when we are looking at NetZero buildings or looking at upgrading existing buildings. Um, it-- we work with, um, the schools when looking as-- as well as DPW when looking at onsite, uh, renewables, for instance. And when we're looking at, um, emergency preparedness with re-- in

relation to long-term climate impacts, we're working with the fire department as well as, um, DPW on thinking about what are regulations that will make us more resilient across, um, storm water, um, through stormwater impacts, but also thinking about what our, um, implementation needs to be now, um, related to trees and-- and other shade strategies, um, to protect us in the future from, um, heat impacts.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you for that answer. Um, the second question from Councillor Zondervan was, what is the progress on a hundred percent renewable electricity procurement and how will that anticipated contract impact the budget?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, thank you chair. So, um, we, um, in CDD as well as, uh, the Department of Public Works are, um, working along with the City Manager's, office, finance department, law department, and others, um, on, um, a municipal procurement strategy.

Um, and I can't-- I guess I can't really get into too much detail because this is, um, still in process, but what we are looking at is, um, how, you know, to go a hundred percent renewable for city procurement, city energy, uh,

and we're also looking to combine the, um, the aggregation, the-- uh, into that and analyzing how much more renewables we can add, uh, through the Cambridge Community Electricity program, um, through an offsite renewable, uh, PPA. Uh, so we're currently actively evaluating proposals, which is why it's a little hard to-- to talk in-- in detail about it.

Um, but the idea is that we would-- we are a-- our attempt is to actually have a-- a completely new, um, system, a comu-- where commercial operations would begin in the next couple of years, but that they really would be spurred, um, because of the-- the city and purchased as well as other partners who might be as part-- part of that PPA.

Um, so what-- what is just currently being evaluated is the financial and legal feasibility of some of the elements, uh, as well as making sure that the climate and social impacts are fully, uh, considered and that there are no externalities. Um, but we hope to have some, um, the most optimal outcome and we hope to be able to share information with the council in the not too distant future.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Do I detect city manager? Did you want me-- Okay. Um, then I have a few

questions. Um, the first one is, uh, to acknowledge the, um, tremendous number of housing that has been produced with the, um, chart and the goal starting in FY 10, the number of affordable housing in number of categories was, uh, 1,046 in the cumulative progress over time in FY21.

That number is now 3,587. That was on, um, uh, overall department. And then on just, um, on Page V130, there's the owner-- the production goals for the ownership-- for affordable housing, which includes another several hundred expected, uh, units to be added through inclusionary or other measures. One of the numbers mentioned is, uh, sets the goal for 15 of home ownership goals, if I'm reading it right.

And I'm curious as to how is that number determined? We have talked a lot about not only having affordable housing be an opportunity for affordable rents, but also to ensure that a greater number of people would've access to home ownership opportunity through a range of units either limited equity co-op. It's, uh, uh, something the council has discussed a lot and the department has been involved in. So the question on if that is-- if I'm reading it correctly, the home ownership, uh, production goals would



be 15. How is that determined and is there a different number where we could increase that?

And would there be either resources in the budget needed to ensure that a higher number of units could be available to folks, particularly as we know it would be good to provide this opportunity to, uh, people across the city who have traditionally been left out of home ownership opportunities and using an equity lens would-- it's something the-- the council and the city has been working on, uh, quite strongly to try to, uh, allow more people from marginalized communities who were either redlined or doesn't-- don't have the-- the family history not to be in a position to buy. So if that makes sense, is a question I'm-- I'm-- and if I've read it correctly, then, uh, uh, please go ahead, uh, ACM Farooq.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Uh, thank you Chair. Um, I am actually gonna ask, uh, Chris Carter to respond in detail. Uh, but the two things I-- I would say before I turn it over to him is that, um, we-- we very much are focused on, uh-- when-- when looking at home ownership, um, and actually all of our programs are trying to reach the most impacted communities.

Um, there is-- uh, there is limit to how-- uh, to the kinds of criteria that can be used. And so income is the most-- um, most easily available criterion that we are able to-- to use to determine who can-- who can qualify, uh, just given that there are federal, um, fair housing rules that limit the-- um, thin slicing beyond a particular-- um, beyond a particular scale.

So, um, the number of housing units created, uh, partly depends on how many buyers we have, either in the, um, HomeBridge program who are able to, uh, utilize the city's, um, program to support, um, what is it called? I'm suddenly blanking on the word. The-- um, the initial-- the payment--

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR SANDRA CLARK:** The subsidy.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** No, the, um--

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Down payment.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Down payment, thank you Chair. The-- the down payment. Um, so the down payment assistance there. And also, um, on the production side, there are-- uh, there are reasons, you know, if-- if we are creating new home ownership construction, um, that has tended not to be, what the-- um, what the rest of the

incentives the non-city incentives have favored.

So the city has been really strong on wanting to support home ownership, but when we look at state and other subsidies there, um, there are fewer available for home ownership. And so it ends up being less of a easy choice for our, um, non-profit builders to-- to do. And it becomes much more contribution from the-- the city, especially for, uh-- and then it's hard to build large projects.

But I will say that the Cherry Street project, uh, as we've done the planning work, uh, has-- you know, home ownership has really risen to the top. So the city will be, uh, we have not gone through the trust process on that, but that is one where the city will very much be looking for, um, home ownership production.

Um, so I will, and-- and that will include much higher subsidies coming from the-- the city and from the trust in order to support that. Um, so with that, I'm gonna turn it over to Chris Carter to speak to the specific numbers.

**DIRECTOR CHRIS CARTER:** Thanks, Iram. Uh, to you, Madam Chair, so, uh, as Iram said, the, uh, goal regarding the number of home buyers who purchase affordable homes each year is, uh, determined in a couple of ways. So we

will, uh, look at the HomeBridge program, uh, as well as, uh, new all affordable developments that are coming online, uh, and inclusionary units that are being completed.

As we look at FY 23, um, we included in that 15, uh, uh, seven or eight units that we would expect to close through the, the HomeBridge program. Uh, on average, over the last three or four years, we've seen seven or eight buyers purchase each year with funding through HomeBridge. HomeBridge is available to any, uh, income eligible household earning less than 120 percent of median.

Uh, it is a no wait list, uh, program we've ever had to turn people away. Uh, so as we look at that, uh, uh, that demand, we would expect to see seven or eight buyers who would close with HomeBridge assistance in FY 23. Uh, to that we would then add units that we would expect to be produced through our resale program, uh, whereby owners are selling their homes.

Uh, we have a, uh, mechanism in place where we will work with Justice Art to repurchase the home, and then sell it to a new buyer. And that would probably net us about eight or 10, uh, purchases a year. Looking forward beyond FY 23, there are more units that are in the pipeline or

will be coming into the pipeline.

I think there's another, uh, inclusionary site or two, uh, that will be home ownership. I don't think that we will be, uh, in a position to offer those in FY 23. So we'll like to look at those in the following year. Uh, and then as Iram mentioned, there are other new developments that are, uh, further, uh, uh-- a little bit further out, uh, in terms of production.

Uh, one being the 35 Cherry Street, uh, lot where we'll be talking with the Affordable Housing Trust about choosing a, uh, an affordable housing builder to build new affordable home ownership there. Uh, and Justice Art has, uh, proposed to build, uh, 15 units on a piece of property they own on Broadway. But again, I don't think that those are units that we would expect to be available to be sold the first time buyers in FY23. So they would be likely be look-- looking at that in FY24.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Right. And I asked because for 15 units out of more than 300, it's a relatively small percentage. I'm glad to hear it sounds like in the future there is an expectation that may increase. We also-- the council a few times has asked for

the city to look into using our resources to actually buy already constructed homes.

Is that something also that's in planning and to use some of the resources and the budget dollars for a-- as-- as we know to run a-- a-- a six family as a rental requires a level of oversight that is quite challenging, but it's a perfect home ownership opportunity.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, thanks Chair. Um, we absolutely do look at existing buildings and, um, and purchasing those for affordable housing. Um, the-- the thing that we do have to factor in though, which often does-- um, does end up being a-- a limiting factor, is the amount of renovation that is needed for-- for some of the buildings that are, uh, for sale. And so-- excuse me.

And so that's something that, you know, a-- a sticker price when one might see, uh, on the market that seems, um, affordable for that number of units often can-- in reality mean that it's the per unit cost is gonna be significantly higher when we factor in the renovation cost. So-- but the housing team, uh, when they take a look at those properties for sale, they are keeping in mind both of those aspects.

And then, um, evaluating the-- the opportunity,

comparing it to what it would-- what our per unit cost is that-- that the city expands in-- in new construction, just to determine whether it's a-- uh, it's the opportunity to pursue or not.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Uh, my next question is related to the Cambridge Energy Alliance. Uh, there's a major investment in this over many-- many years, I think more than a decade. So the question is, uh, I understand we are evaluating in some ways the return on investment for that.

So are there any budget adjustments that will be made in line with, uh, ensuring that that, uh, investment is something that moving forward gets us to the goals that, uh, we're established for it?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, thank you Chair. Yes, we are, um, currently going through that process to look-- uh, to evaluate the-- um, the CA and its-- its impact and the various programs. Um, and so we have not created additional, um, funding in-- I mean, there are specific things that we know are needed for which we have created added additional funding, but for the most part, not, um, specifically tying it to the, um, the audit simply

because as-- once we evaluate-- we don't yet know what those changes might be.

So once we are able to really evaluate and dig into the audit findings, uh, we will then reconfigure. Uh, but we do have additional funds, and I will, um-- so for instance, um, on home performance contracting, uh, and outreach and engagement, uh, related to that, like, which we are doing through all in energy, that's what-- uh, an area where we are looking, um, to increase the funding because we know that there has been demand for that in the community.

So even without the audit findings, that seems like a good area to-- to invest, but if the findings reveal something different, we could certainly make modifications. So that's an example.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Great. It would be important, which you'll notice in the next two questions to establish those goals and understand there may be a demand, but if-- if we haven't met the goals, then why? So that we can-- whatever we do-- do budget wise, additional resources will hopefully have the impact we want.

My second question is on the, um-- or another question



in this, the community electrical aggregation, uh, which is, uh, mentioned on, uh, page V 121, there-- I-- I didn't see any goals for participation. I know this is under review. It's something we have talked about is, um, in many groups have suggested the structure of the program, uh, should be changed.

Uh, one question is whether maybe in line with the CEA or others, the-- the number participating in the-- in the opt up for a hundred percent renewable is still less than five percent. Are there, uh, expected-- are there specific goals that are being established for the CCE in terms of participation and the goal of how its impact will be on citywide, uh, reduction of greenhouse gas emission pollution?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, thank you Chair. I-- I am gonna ask, uh, Suzanne Rasmussin to-- to weigh in, um, on this particular topic. Um, I will say that it's-- it's challenging to have uptake goals in something like that because it's so much, um, dependent on not just what the city is offering through CCE but oftentimes how it compares to the Eversource based rate at that time.

And so people can make different decisions during the

course of the, um, the aggregation cycle. Um, so we have-- we have not explicitly made those goals, but I-- I will-- um, I will turn it over to Suzanne to-- to say a little to add more nuance to-- to what I have said.

**DIRECTOR SUZANNE RASMUSSEN:** Thank you and good morning. Uh, through you Madam Chair, it is the hope, um, as was discussed a little earlier in-- in the meeting that we will be able to purchase a significant amount of renewable energy on behalf of all of the aggregation consumers so that, uh, in a way this opt up program will be much less, uh, uh, relevant and-- and needed.

So that-- that's really the main strategy that we're pursuing right now, so that you would automatically just be able to consume renewable energy through the edu-- aggregations, um, basic level.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Right. For the-- that's-- that's for the future that we expect, whatever PPA. Well, right now, the Eversource base rate is more than a cent higher than a hundred percent renewable, so-- and-- and yet-- so I guess that was part of my question, that right now on an economic level, a hundred percent renewable is less than the Eversource base rate, which is 18 percent

renewable.

**DIRECTOR SUZANNE RASMUSSEN:** Correct. And-- and we have-- we have been seeing an increase, there's been about a 10 percent increase over the--the past year, but you are correct, as you said earlier, that it's still a low percentage. So, uh, we do have the opportunity over, uh, the next period of time until the new contract is in place in-- um, which should be January 24, to try to boost those numbers through additional outreach and engagement, uh, to make that steady growth that we are seeing, um, increase more.

But in it-- it is the-- the intention that when we switch over to hopefully procuring through a power purchase agreement that, like, the vast majority of-- of-- or all of the participants, which actually is also an increasing number by the way. Um, in the aggregation would be able to access a high percentage of renewable energy directly without having to opt up.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Right. That would be terrific. That's something that was hoped for and-- at the beginning of this. Does a 10 percent increase mean we've gone from 5-5.5 percent?

**DIRECTOR SUZANNE RASMUSSEN:** So I-- I don't-- I-- I don't have off the top of my head whether it's-- it-- it's five percent exactly, but it's not a high percentage.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** It's okay.

**DIRECTOR SUZANNE RASMUSSEN:** If you're looking at-- you can see, um-- so we chart these, uh, as we get the reports from the aggregation vendor, and you can just see there's a-- there's a steady increase over time. It's not steep, but it just keeps going up a little bit, the number of people that are participating.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Okay, thanks. I-- and I just ask because for the budget, in terms of marketing or whatever, we can do whatever resources you need to get that up. Again, right now, when Eversource is more expensive for 18 percent renewable and are a hundred percent renewable, is-- it would be great.

Okay. My next question is, um, also in the area of setting specific goals on sustainability, uh, the goals on Page V 128 are really around numbers of participation, but don't have specific goals related to reducing the greenhouse-- the-- the actual impact-- the actual specific, uh, impact of this.

And we know from the many, many discussions we've had about, uh, BUEDO and BUEDERO we're moving towards performance requirements since, um, our greenhouse gas emissions have actually gone up over the last eight years for buildings, um, including all the Bhutto buildings, including many who are there.

So the question is, in sustainability, does this budget represent an increase in our ability to ensure that we're monitoring, that we're able to work with, uh, folks across the city in order to, one, I think making those goals explicit so that they are goals in our budget book that we are in line with not just numbers of various initiatives, but the actual impact of them. Do we have the resources in place to do that in order to explicitly make sure that we can-- we can reach the goals that are set, um, in other parts of the city?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, thank you Chair. Um, I'm gonna ask Suzanne to come back and speak to this, um, but I'm gonna take the-- a moment to-- to just say that as we are-- you know, through the envision process, we did try to focus more on outcome goals, uh, across the board, across all disciplines, and not just, um,

in terms of the number of initiatives.

And, um, we-- we are definitely in our work trying to pivot to that approach so that we are, uh, focusing much more on outcomes than on just effort. Um, we are-- um, so I'll-- I'll make the pitch that we just this morning, um, put out the-- um, the dashboard-- the envision dashboard that will allow people to take a look at, um, at how we are doing across all of the benchmarks that are-- um, that are in that document.

Um, it's still a work in progress, so everything is not, um-- you know, you'll see a lot of under-- underdevelopment on uncertain items. But-- uh, but we are absolutely, I would say, moving towards the goal that you-- the-- the goal for goals that you have articulated. I'll turn it over to Suzanne to-- to say more.

**DIRECTOR SUZANNE RASMUSSEN:** Thank you. And through you, Madam Chair. So there's-- there's two pieces here. Uh, the-- one piece is do we have the ability to, um, set goals? And-- and that is, um, a-- as you know, we-- we currently only have four citywide emissions, the-- the long term, uh, 2050 goal.

And it is the intention that we will come up with some

mile posts for, um, interim goals and-- and the outcome of the BUEDO ordinance, of course, is, um, relevant here because it-- the BEUDO buildings represents such a high percentage of the citywide emissions. So we will be, um-- and it's not a budgetary issue, but we will-- we will establish interim goals, um, uh, as part of the FY23 work.

Um, the-- the second part of that is, do we have the ability to measure outcomes? And that is, of course, uh, always a-- a big issue because, um, we are reliant on others for supplying that information. It is entirely possible to understand on an annual basis what-- how much electricity and-- and-- and gas is consumed in the city.

We get that data from Eversource on an annual basis. So in terms of-- of the portion of emissions that relate to buildings, we can-- uh, we can report on that on an annual basis. Um, with respect to transportation, um, we-- we cannot, because the data is-- is just not available in any reliable form. And-- and we don't have a way of-- of accessing that data, um, easily because it is controlled by other agencies like the registry of motor vehicles.

So it's-- it's more complicated to say that on an annual basis like we could actually understand, um, in its

entirety what-- how greenhouse gas emissions are, um, uh, changing. So we-- with buildings, uh, yes, with-- with transportation in waste, um, data availability and having to use proxies make it more meaningful to try to report on-- on a five year basis.

And we're just-- we just finished, um, uh, last year, the transportation emissions inventory and we're working on the-- the waste right now. So we'll have sort of a-- a full picture, uh, a 2019 full community-wide update that is to compare with the last inventory, which was based on 2012 data.

So, um, we-- we will certainly and-- and-- and have it within our budgetary capability to-- to get the building emissions data on an annual basis. And we will ask for-- um, on a five year rotation for, um, emissions data for transportation and waste as well. So hope that answers your question.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. I was just asking because the goals listed in the budget book, and this is all about resources being dedicated to that, uh, aren't tied to the goals. There's actually are published goals over time for a number of years.



The city council has passed some, there's been a number of interim, uh, points along the way. So it'd be good to have those tied to the budget so that we understand how it is that we are making progress towards them. As ACM Farooq said, not just initiatives, but what's the outcome of the initiatives? Because if-- if the initiatives aren't having the impact we want, then we need to adjust the budget in order to make sure that whatever form of resources can be deployed to that we'll-- we'll meet that. That's, uh, a longer conversation.

I appreciate, um, Director Rasmussen's, uh, answer on the difficulty of getting this. But again, if we don't have the outcomes, then we're-- it's hard to tell whether the budget is effectively deployed. Those are my main questions. Any other? Uh, Councillor McGovern?

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Uh, thank you, Madam Chair. This is, um, more of a comment and a-- and a plea to the manager. Um, you know, I would, uh-- first of all, I know that we invest a tremendous amount of money in affordable housing, and that's to be applauded and-- and it's increased, um, dramatically over the last couple years.

Um, but I would like-- and I know the budget's 99.99999 percent cooked, um, but I-- I-- I would like to see additional funds, um, allocated, uh, to affordable housing, particularly to the trust. And I know Mr. Manager that you have always been great about, um, using funds from free cash if there's an opportunity, uh, whether it's preservation or creation of affordable housing.

But as we know, this is your last budget as-- as we've acknowledged. And, um, you know, there's no way to know if the-- the next person, uh, sitting in that chair will be as flexible, uh, and as willing to take money out of free cash, um, and that concerns me, that unknown. Um, and secondly, that process of using money from free cash and having to come to the council for allocations and all that takes longer. It's less flexible.

It-- if the trust had more money at their disposal, they could move more quickly. Um, and so I just, uh, you know, I-- I-- I-- I appreciate certainly and I think we all do the-- the money that that has been allocated and is allocated. But, um, you know, I-- I-- I-- I-- I do hope that, um, there's an opportunity, um, to increase those funds, um, to the trust, um, so that they can be more

nimble in-- in purchasing property.

Councillor or the chair, Councillor Nolan brought up, um, you know, some properties that the council passed a policy order on back in whenever that was, um, uh, to look at some particular properties that were sort of mo-- more move-in ready, um, and, uh, that didn't come to pass. And I'm not sure why that didn't come.

I'm not saying it was because there was not enough funds in the-- for the trust, but, um, it's those kinds of things that we-- we-- we've gotta be quick. And-- and so, um, again, it-- it's not to-- uh, not for a lack of appreciation of what's been done, but I, um, you know, there's gonna be a new person in that seat, um, Mr. Manager, um, you know, for the next budget and-- and then-- and-- and in FY23 and, um, you know, your philosophy of, um, being willing to take free cash may not be that next person's philosophy and that worries me.

So if there is any way to add additional funds, um, I would like us to do that. I-- I-- I think, you know, beyond what we get from, um, not community development funds--

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Incentive.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** No. No. The, uh,--

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Oh, uh, community preservation.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Yeah. Community preservation funds, you know, beyond that money, I-- I-- I think, you know, we have other budgets that in city departments that run closer to 10 percent of the city budget. I-- I think that's the least we can do around housing as well. Um, and so, uh, I hope that you'll consider that, uh, and, um, I just felt that I needed to sort of make that plea, uh, at this time. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Councillor McGovern. And, um, on a similar note, do we have a total that we're actually spending on another crisis of the climate crisis of the total that we're spending specifically towards the environmental justice problem of people continuing to have public health implications from the emission pollution that happens in the city?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Chair, I don't think that we have, um, consolidated that because just like some of the other consolidated spending sections, um, that effort is spread out across multiple departments. So I can't answer that question just yet, but, uh, perhaps that

is, I-- I'd say that's a good idea for us to do for next year.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. And I recognize that it's not just your department, ACM Farooq, it crosses others and-- and yet it's certainly something incumbent on us, because it-- it is at the heart of some of the environmental justice and equity work at the heart of us doing our part to stop the emissions pollution for us to address and be a leader.

It really is something that we haven't, um, committed the funds to in the way that we have to some other crisis areas. Those, uh-- any other questions from the body or with that, do I have a motion to move the-- oh, the Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui.

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** You're not done yet. Um, I'll be quick. So I, um, I was looking for this and I couldn't find it. I was on the Affordable Housing Trust, um, meeting minutes seems, um-- the last minutes that are on the website or from March 25th, 2021. Um, but that's not my-- my-- my question.

My question's related to something that was on topic a few months ago, I think it was March, um, around some of

the work that CDD is doing for looking at HomeBridge and analyzing HomeBridge because that I think was a question from the council. And, uh, I'm wondering, is that work happening in-house? Um, is that reflected somewhere in the budget? Um, I know it seems like it's really complex work, and so I was curious, um, if you could speak to that.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Through you chair, um, just to clarify, was, um, ma-- Mayor, is this specifically around HomeBridge or is it through-- the-- the broader analysis of the home buyer program?

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Uh, yeah, I apologize. It's the-- the-- all the-- the broader, uh, affordable housing-- uh, affordable home ownership--

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Yeah.

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** --um, policy.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Thank you. Um, through-- through you chair, um, I will-- um, I will ask Chris Carter to speak to this, but the-- the really short answer is that we are doing the work in-house and, um, we have-- we are-- we are lucky to have one of the, uh, the foremost experts on this work as part of our, um, our CDD home buyer program team, Anna Dolma.

So, um, she is doing the, uh, the principal work along with the-- the rest of the team, but I'll turn it over to-- to Chris to-- to say more about the work.

**DIRECTOR CHRIS CARTER:** Thanks, maa'm. Yes. Um, uh, through you, Madam Chair, uh, Madam Mayor, um, we are doing this work in-house. We did have a discussion with the Affordable Housing Trust in March, uh, to review the approach and kind of where we were, uh, in responding to those requests that the council had, uh, asked us to look at the home buyer program, uh, and several policies within that program.

Uh, I'll be sure to share the news with you. I think they're on the website, but I'll make sure that they're there and, uh, get you a copy. Um, so, uh, as I said, we had that discussion with the trust to-- to really lay out for them how we expect to look at this, uh, what some of the considerations were, what, uh, some of the thoughts that we have initially about what's working and what can change. Um, where we are now is, uh, we've heard from a number of home buyers.

We actually had really good turnout at the trust meeting from, uh, homeowners in the program, which was

really great to see. And we got a lot of good, uh, comments, uh, for that meeting. Our next step will be to survey all, uh, participating homeowners in the program, uh, and then look to have meetings with owners, uh, in the next couple months to get feedback.

Uh, we'll do the same then with applicants that are in our pool looking for affordable home ownership to get their perspective and also have, uh, public, uh, uh, opportunities to-- to-- to weigh in on some of the ideas. So that's more the public facing.

We're also doing, uh, a review of home ownership programs across the country to look at what-- uh, what the range of policies are, uh, just to look at some of the options, uh, to understand some of the mechanics that we might look at differently, uh, as we hope to take from the, uh, public discussion.

Where do we wanna be? What do we want the home buyer program to be? Uh, and then to have a-- an understanding of what the-- the tools are that might get us there. So I hope that answers your question. Certainly, happy to talk more if-- if that's helpful any-- any time.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** And Chair--



**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Sorry, through you, um, Assistant City Manager Farooq, what's the timeline of that, Chris? Like, next few months, six months?

**DIRECTOR CHRIS CARTER:** Yeah, I think it's gonna take several months. I think our next step is to get the survey out. We're hoping to have the survey out in June to get, uh, responses back to that.

Certainly, we wanna talk with the councillor of the housing committee about, uh, the-- the approach and our-- our, uh, preparing, uh, and update for you, uh, to come to, uh, hopefully one of the next meetings.

Um, but we'll wanna review that, uh, what we hear back from owners to, uh, you know, have a chance to hear from folks that wanna, uh, talk with us directly, uh, go back to the trust with some ideas and some recommendations, and also come back to the council with-- with some ideas at that point. But I-- I-- I think we are looking at probably, uh, something that will, uh, uh, take, uh, several months to-- to go through to get to that point.

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Okay. Thank you. Yeah, it-- I think it's, uh-- I was at that trust meeting and I think that it's really an important issue that I think the

council's been really, um, wanting to, you know, move and make progress on.

So I'm glad there's progress being made and I hope, um, we can have a housing discussion-- housing committee discussion soon. So thank you for the update.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** You yield, Mayor Siddiqui?

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Yes. Thanks.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Any other? All right. I'll entertain a motion to forward the community development--

**COUNCILLOR DENISE E. SIMMONS:** Uh, so moved.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** --budget to the council with the favorable recommendation by Councillor Simmons on that motion.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burham Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Yes

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes.

**Yes-7, No-0, Absent-2. Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you all. Thank you, ACM Farooq and your team. Uh, next up we have the Human Services Department.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Thank you, chair.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Welcome, ACM Semonoff. If you could introduce yourself and your team here, and if you would like to have any opening remarks before we go to questions and comments, happy to have you do so.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Thank you so much, Madam Chair. Um, first I just wanna say how happy I am to be in person. Um, and, um, as you know, from the past, we usually fill many of the seats with our staff, and today most of them are online.

And I just wanna take a quick moment. You won't see them, but I just wanna take a quick moment to acknowledge them because the work of our department depends so much on

their leadership, so I just want the chance to acknowledge them. Um, so Melissa Castillo, who directs all of our youth programs, Adam Corbeil, who directs our recreation programs, Tawanya Garrett, who's the Director of the College Success Initiative.

I'm going in alphabetical order in case you're wondering. Um, Lisa Grant, who's the director of the Birth to Third Initiative, Maria Carvalho, who's the Director of the Community Learning Center, um, Susan Mintz, who directs the Office of Workforce Development, Susan Pacheco, who directs the Council on Aging. Susan Richards, who co-directs the Agenda for Children with Carrie Miller from the school department, Raj Choy, who directs our community school programs, Rachel Tanenhaus, who directs the Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

Nancy Tauber, the Director of the Family Policy Council, Megan White, who directs our Childcare and Family support programs. Sharlene Yang, who directs the Cambridge Steam Initiative. Also, online is Giovan Alvarez, who, um, is the leader of our fiscal and budget office, without whom none of this would be possible. And then present with me today are our three assistant directors, Janice Alger,

who's our Assistant Director for administration, Michelle Farnum, who's the Assistant Director for Children Youth and Families, and Sue Walsh, our Assistant Director for Adult and Family Services.

And if it's okay with you, I would like to take just a minute. Um, first I really wanna start by expressing my gratitude to-- on behalf of the department and the residents of Cambridge to this city council and to your predecessor city council, and to this city manager and his predecessors for the extraordinary financial support that you have provided over the years to Human services, um, that supports the work of this city.

At every turn over the years, the council has provided the financial resources to this department, and I don't think there's probably any city in the country who could say that they have done as much as the city council and its predecessors have done for human services. Um, I also wanted to say that I think you're aware that we're both a major provider of human services as well as a funder of services in the community.

And we coordinate many of the efforts, um, with our community partners. Our staff are deeply representative of

the communities that we serve. As I think, you know, from the budget book, close to 50 percent of our full-time staff are people of color with the largest percentage identifying as black or African American.

Close to 50 percent of our professional staff are staff of color and close to 30 percent of the officials and administrators, the way the EEO categorizes things are also people of color. And we believe that it's an incredibly important aspect of who we are as we plan and deliver services with and to the community.

Um, I also wanna say that while we provide services across the board, and many of our programs are universal, the majority of the residents we serve across the board in our programs are low income and/or residents of color. This is true of our workforce development programs for adults and teens. It's true in steam, it's true in the out of school time programs.

It's true in in our preschools, our family support programs, our adult education and our training programs. Our commitment as a department to directing our services in that way really matches the desires of the staff who come to work for us. But it is so clearly also really reflective

of what the City Council has said in its goals is critically important.

And I just, as we talk about more directly, I want you to know that it's deeply influenced the way in which we do our work. And I wanna say that like the nonprofits that we all talk about, our staff have been deeply impacted by the pandemic and by systemic racism, along with the residents that we serve. We're still working hard to figure out the best ways to support our staff and to support our residents moving forward.

Despite enormous efforts that we can talk about, we are still deeply understaffed, and we can talk about the things in this budget that the city manager has, um, put into the budget that will help us. But that, like our nonprofit partners who close their programs some of the time, because they are understaffed, we suffer from many of the same things.

And part of that has to do with who our workforce is, which is the workforce you want us to have. But it remains individuals who themselves are deeply impacted. Um, we hire staff and we lose staff, and we're finding that often our managers are providing frontline services on a daily basis.

We really hope and expect that we will be able to move beyond that.

But as today, I believe we have over 10 staff out with COVID today in our programs. So we are still deeply impacted by this, and we anticipate it will get better, but I just wanna be honest about the situation that we find ourselves in and the way in which that impacts us.

And finally, I just wanna say that despite what I just said, there is amazing, amazing work that is happening with teams that's happening in expanding opportunities for seniors, in supporting individuals, leaving homelessness, getting them access to vouchers, and expanding supports for families with young children. So--so much good is happening and so many challenges. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, ACM Semonoff, and for introducing your team, remote and in person, quite an array of programs. The floor is now open for councillors with questions, and I'll start with Councillor McGovern.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Thank you, Madame Chair through you. Thank you, Ms. Simonoff, and thank you to your staff that's here and all of those that are out in the



field. Um, and hopefully those staff that are out sick will get better soon. Um, uh, we could talk 12 hours about all the different things that are-- that are going on and questions and-- and things that we want to see.

So I'm gonna-- I'm going to try to keep this just really focused on the budget, and I want to talk about three particular areas. Um, I sent you these questions ahead of time, but, um, so first, you know, can you talk a little bit about how this budget is going to advance our goal for universal pre-K? Um, and I know that there's a process. We-- we had that meeting a few months back, but I'm thinking also, not just the longer term process, but anything in this budget that's gonna help get us there a little more quickly, whether that-- that's the-- to serve more-- to serve more kids, um, in programs that already exist or able to expand, um, any program-- any programming. So if you can talk a little bit about this budget and how it pertains to that goal.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Uh, thank you. Through you, Madam Chair, um, I'm gonna start, but then I'm gonna ask, um, Dr. Lisa Grant, who's the, um, head of our birth to third program, um, who is online. And I believe

Naomi was, um, promoting her to be a panelist if she isn't already.

Um, and I'm gonna let her also, um, answer, uh, there she is. Um, and I just wanna say that, um, a lot is happening and has happened, um, to move this forward, not the least of which is, um, the work that Lisa's been leading and that the mayor working to create the ad hoc committee, um, will also help support. But let me turn it over to Lisa and then I'm happy to follow up.

**DR. LISA GRANT:** Thank you, um, for that question. Um, I'd be happy to share more about kind of the, uh, budget implications for UPK, this particular, um, fiscal year. Um, so I wanna talk a-- about a couple of things. So first, um, talking about our internal capacity on our team, um, we're in the process of hiring a UPK project manager.

Um, and that is accounted for in our budget this year, um, with the hope that that person, um, would start relatively quickly. And we had a setback where we offered the position to an individual who, um, decided to take another direction, but, um, we are not gonna let that stop us in our progress, um, with-- with the work. And so knowing that that's an important role so that we can make

sure that we're hitting milestones and benchmarks and keeping, um, the work of UPK moving forward.

Um, we're also increasing our staff capacity in terms of, um, how we're supporting the existing programs in the community. So adding an additional education coach to our team, um, that's very strategic, um, in that when we often talk about building capacity for UPK.

We talk about slots in centers and that is a component of the work. Um, but building capacity also means building program capacity. And so this year, um, a huge focus of our work will be to, um, continue to work with community-based programs and family childcare to, um, improve their programs capacity, um, and quality level to host UPK children in-- in their sites. Um, so that is reflected in our budget this year.

The other thing that's reflected in our budget, um, relates to building educator capacity. As you might be aware, there is a staffing crisis, um, in education in early childhood specifically. And so part of being able to implement a system of UPK is ensuring that we have enough highly qualified teachers in order to support the system.

And so we've already begun the work, um, and we'll

continue to do the work, um, this fiscal year in terms of, um, a couple of things. So one, working closely with the Office of Workforce Development to, um, create training opportunities to recruit and retain brand new educators into, um, the early childhood workforce. Um, that's, again, already in progress and-- and we expect to roll that out this year. We're also working very closely with our higher education partners, um, to create, um, professional pathways and degree completion pathways so that we are able to take our existing workforce to the next level. Um, we're also working closely with Harvard University on a early childhood workforce study.

That study's already in process, um, and will yield us some really good data about how we continue to support the early childhood workforce so that we can ensure, um, that the workforce, um, is built out as such that it can support, um, the universal pre-K that we hope to see, um, implemented in this community.

So, you know, again, doing a lot of data collection and-- and things that don't have budgetary im-- um, impact as we're looking at physical capacity, but already starting and doing a lot of the work in terms of workforce capacity,

our internal staff capacity and building program capacity and improving quality of existing programs.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Uh, thank you. Uh, thank you very much for that. Um, I, you know, I typically don't-- don't like to speak for the council as a whole because, you know, but I think it's fair to say that we all know that this is a priority for all of us and-- and, um, has been for-- for-- for a while.

So I-- I-- certainly, uh, anything that we-- I think that we can do. Um, this is sort of a-- just a follow up and-- and maybe this-- this goes beyond sort of the early childhood staffing piece and this kind of more general. What are you-- what are you see-- what are you seeing as sort of the roadblocks to finding? Is it just people aren't wanting to do this right now? Is it COVID related? Is it-- is it a-- a salary issue? We know early childhood educators don't make a lot of money, right? Is there-- is there an issue or, you know, how-- are we able to pay more money and attract more people? And what-- what-- what do you-- what are you seeing on the ground when you're looking for people as sort of the main obstacles?

**DR. LISA GRANT:** I can speak to that. So I mean, I

think there are a couple of components. Um, I don't think any of them are insurmountable. Um, I think, you know, coming out of a pandemic where a lot of programs are really, um, focused on just keeping their doors opening and sustaining operations and-- and the health and safety of their children and families and workforce, you know, that was primary, um, goal for many of them. And so, you know, unfortunately, we're still kind of coming out of the pandemic, but I do anticipate that, um, enrollment over time will, you know, rise back to the levels that it-- it might have been pre pandemic.

Um, so, you know, B3 has been doing a lot of work in terms of just supporting, you know, existing operations, you know, all with the goal that UPK is, um, kind of that North Star that we're working towards. Um, I do think compensation will be a part of the-- the conversation and part of our workforce development efforts is to, you know, not only just, um, ensure that we have highly qualified educators, but also ensuring that there's pay parity and that, um, those working of across different, um, educational contexts are-- are being paid on par with one another.

Um, so that will be a part of the conversation as well. Um, and then I think it's just a matter of, you know, navigating some of the nuances of this community. We have a lot of employer sponsored early childhood programs in this city, probably more than most. And so there are just some, um, you know, logistical barriers I guess in terms of how we partner with those-- those organizations. But we are already having conversations with those organizations and, um, and working to overcome those barriers so that we can incr-- increase our capacity.

Um, we've done a lot of, uh, data analysis already and we will continue to do more. Um, there are, you know, almost 500 early childhood slots and programs, um, for four year olds that we haven't tapped into yet because those organizations are not current, um, city or school partners. Um, but we will continue to-- to forge those relationships so that we can increase our capacity.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Great. Thank you. Um, I don't know if-- did you--

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** I-- I think the only thing I would add to that, um, is that, um, I think the city itself as, uh, funder, uh, in our own

preschool programs, I think we pay at a higher rate than almost any other program in the city. And yet we still-- I cannot tell you how often I am signing, um, vacancy notices or new staff.

We're fortunate that we keep finding new staff, but I do think it is a moment in which people are reconsidering what they wanna do, either because they have to, or the pandemic has changed the way they think. So many things are required for us to move this forward across the board.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Thank you. Um, and through-- through you, um, Madam Chair, my next question, um, and I should say at the outset, this is about after school. Um, but just so folks know and we-- we-- we had a-- a public comment on this.

Um, Ms. Semonoff and I are in the process of scheduling a human services meeting, uh, hopefully for some time, uh, in June, uh, to discuss after school and summer, uh, programming. So there'll be a lot more of this conversation to come, some related to the budget, some not. Um, but my question is similar to the-- to the first one, uh, in terms of this budget, um, and how does this budget support our goal of expanding after school, um, and you



know, for that summer opportunities?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Through you, Madam Chair, um, there are a number of things in the budget which will help us, um, and we face big challenges. I wanna be honest about that. The things that are actually in the budget. Um, we are in our second round, um, and built into this budget of raising the rates of all of the part-time staff who support our programs.

We did it, um, early in this fiscal year and we did it again, um, fairly recently. Um, uh, raising the rates across the board of all of our part-time staff because it was the-- what we needed to do to be able to recruit and retain. Um, the budget includes seven new positions for our community school programs so that all of our programs would have program directors that would appear to be something that should expand our capacity and ultimately it will support that.

I will say, as I was referencing earlier, right now, as soon as we hire people, they're in fact in the classrooms supporting. So they help prevent us from closing when we don't have adequate staff for a variety of reasons. It hasn't allowed us to expand as much as we might have

liked.

Um, I do believe we will get beyond the hiring crisis, but I think that's gonna take some time. Um, and then I would say the other thing that we have in the budget is significant funding for us working with the agenda for children, um, uh, Carri Miller and Susan Richards, along with Michelle Farnham from our team to do an in-depth look with our community partners, with the schools, with ourselves at what is it that parents want?

So understanding family and caregiver desires for out-of-school time program. What is the current capacity of the system, what are the opportunities for expansion within community programs, within city programs, within school programs, and how should that be structured? And our expectation, um, the city manager included in the budget, and we have the funding for that. We've been working, I think as you know, um, to establish a caregiver's council calling it something a little bit differently. But we've been doing that work and expect to be able to talk more about that, um, going forward.

So there isn't a magic bullet here to significantly expand capacity. And some of what you are hearing and we

are hearing is because we have very significantly shifted to prioritize low-income families in our programs. Um, this summer right now, um, 50 percent of the families who are in our summer camp programs are low-income families.

Fortunately, um-- and Michelle, correct me if I'm wrong here, fortunately, we are able likely to serve every family that applied on time. We took every low income family and we are close to-- as we move through the wait list, we are close to offering spots to every family who applied on time. And we anticipate that we will be able to include some of the families who didn't apply on time. And in part that's because we're working closely with the school department.

We are operating three joint programs with them. And as families who have already accepted our programs, get an offer for the joint program, we anticipate and will support families who wanna make that move. So we anticipate there may be some more movement. Um, we're in the midst of our lottery right now, um, for fall programming. I think as, um, the, um, speaker earlier indicated gratitude that we were going to be informing families much earlier, which we acknowledged was critically important this year than we had

last year.

Um, but we anticipated, again, there won't be adequate capacity for every family who might decide that they want care. There is no community that actually has that. The data is many communities serve about 25 percent. We are at about 40 percent as a system, which doesn't mean we don't need to do better than that, but as we serve more low-income families that does impact higher income families who you hear more from.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Uh, tha-- thank you. Through you Madam Chair. Um, thank you for that. And I-- and I will get-- we'll get deeper into this. Um, but I do also want-- I do want to thank you about, you know, the-- the notice and the-- the getting-- getting things out to families sooner. Um, that was a huge improvement and a huge effort on-- on your part. Um, before I move on to my last question, I'll just put the plug in.

And this was mentioned in public comment. I do think we have to think about transportation a-- a little bit. Um, I know that's hard, but, um, you know, it's one thing if you're talking about, you know, you know, my kids who are in sixth grade, having them walk less than a mile to go to

an afterschool is one thing. But if you're talking about a five-year-old, um, you know, or a six-year-old, that's-- that's obviously much more complicated.

So I-- I do wanna make that plug for, you know, continuing to look at that and-- and think about how we can make that a little bit easier for folks, um, and then, um, I don't know if the, you know, we-- we filed a policy order. The vice mayor was the lead sponsor in a policy order around our youth centers in terms of after school. And-- and I-- I don't know if you're prepared to give a-- an-- an update on where that-- where that stands at this point, but I certainly want to put the plug in to, um, expand, um, you know, the hours of our youth centers, uh, as well.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Um, through you Madam Chair. Let me give a brief update and then we will give more. Um, in, um, most of our youth centers are in fact open five nights a week. They are not generally open on the weekend. So right now, both the Gateley Youth Center and the Russell Youth Center, um, we have been struggling, um, with staffing.

And so those two youth centers have not regularly been

open in the evening, but the more the Moses and the Frisoli are all open five nights a week. We are looking at and appreciate the, um, council order at what our planning is for summer, um, and what we might be able to do in the evenings in summer, and what we might partner with other people to do, um, in the summer.

So we appreciate, um, and wanna reassure you, and maybe this isn't the moment for that. There is very-- there are many extraordinarily-- extraordinary, exciting things happening within the youth centers. And I think that, um, you-- we need to give you better information so that you understand. And when I say that, that doesn't mean that there aren't things we'd like to do differently, but I just wanna make sure, and if I could highlight two of those for you. When I was meeting with the staff, there are a bunch of 8th graders, um, who have been coming three days a week to the more youth center after school.

So that's a-- that is the one youth center that provides team programming all the time. And those young people were identified as perhaps needing some support for transition. And so they've been engaged in a structured program three afternoons a week, and they have been, um, I

believe they are all young men, and I believe that they are all black and brown young men.

And they have been coming, I think there are 16 of them, three days a week, to work with our staff and our young people that we anticipate un-- that we are supporting as they're making their transition into high school. The other thing that's about to happen later this week is our youth center staff have partnered as a part of the Biogen big funding for Steam began this process, but with Sue QX from Leslie was the, um, have been partnering and will be offering later this month, a two credit graduate course for our own staff, led by our staff in developing success plans for young people. Um, and they will be, this is the work that our staff have been doing.

They're then partnering with, um, Principal Smith from the high school to pilot success plans in the fall for some entering 9th graders. So there is a lot that we haven't shared, and we are challenged by staffing issues, and we do wanna make sure that we are across the board being able to provide services. So we will continue to look at what are the ways that we can partner to ensure that more of our young people have the opportunities.

**COUNCILLOR MARC MCGOVERN:** Thank you. Um, and I-- I think that, you know, the, that partnership is key because if we're having staffing problems, that's, you know, working with a lot of the programs that are operating in-- in other spaces to maybe operate within our youth centers and help with that as a way to look at that. But that's, uh, I'm gonna move on.

And, um, I have one last question, Madam Chair, and I appreciate everybody's patience. I don't think I have any more questions the rest of the day for the-- the other department, so I'll use, use them up now. Um, lastly, um, is around, um, homelessness and our unhoused community. I know there's a lot happening. We-- we just issued the report that you were-- you were a member of that task force. Can you talk a little bit about this budget and what are we gonna see in terms of allocations to support our unhoused community? And if you specifically, uh, can talk about some of the recommendations from the working group and-- and what we're gonna be funding in FY 23.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Um, through you, Madam Chair. Um, the, um, there,--as you know, were a lot of things that were beginning to be in underway and



that many things that were brought to light by the incredible work of that task force. Um, and we have a number of things that are currently being funded, um, either through city funding in this budget, um, federal funding that we can bring to bear, um, and some of these that are already approved for ARPA funding and some things that are in the requests for ARPA funding.

So just to highlight a few of those things that connect directly to the recommendations. Um, the work that I know you know, um, Councillor McGovern on taking the emergency housing vouchers and making it possible for our unhoused residents to take advantage of those vouchers and ultimately get housing, the process for getting people from where they are in a shelter or on the street actually into a unit is incredibly complex.

And so through both ARPA funding and city funding, um, we have funded housing navigators directly tied to the shelters. So the people who know the residents and guests of the shelter best are the people who are working with them to help get them document ready, which, as you know, can be tremendously challenging because you need to get those documents and you may need to get them from places

that it's really hard to get them from.

Um, and then walking them through the process to actually get the voucher, which is that next step. But then once you have a voucher, actually finding a unit in which you can use, so the housing search component of that. And so we now have, um, much increased funding for the individual shelters to have navigators.

Um, and we have other funding for, um, housing search support and for the support of the system, which helps ensure that we are serving equitably the folks who have been unhoused in Cambridge and what their Cambridge connection is. And I'm not sure you want me to go into great detail on that, but it is a process in which we're trying to be both as HUD wants us to be incredibly sensitive to, um, ensuring the racial equity of our processes and ensuring that those people who have been unhoused for the longest period of time are getting the supports in order to be housed.

So, um, there's a lot of funding, both city funding and ARPA funding, which is going directed towards that. Second recommendation from the report, which is something that, um, Councillor McGovern, I know you know a lot about,

which we started working on pre-pandemic, which was a program, a version of, it's called Critical Time Intervention, but it really is ensuring that those who are closest to the individuals who've built relationship with individuals who are unhoused actually stay connected to them when they move into housing, and that there is ultimately the warmest of handoffs to who might support them later.

And, um, we have been working and there's funding in the approved ARPA requests for a project with healthcare for the homeless, which was the entity we had been working with pre-pandemic to actually implement that. Um, and I think everybody in the homeless task force identified that that's one of the critical supports.

There also is general housing stabilization supports for people going into housing, but it's that critical time before people are connected to ensure that they get the services that they need and that they are willing to connect with someone they already identify.

Um, just a couple of other, um, things, um, in terms of the emergency, continued emergency response, um, I think it's okay for me to share that. Um, wanna make sure, um,

that both the Meals program, which has been, uh, critical program for both, um, uh, many of our programs that that will continue at least through September. This is both support to the restaurants, but it's deep support to all of our shelters and other programs to be able to get one, two, or three meals a day for the, um, residents.

And we'll evaluate again, um, in-- at the end of September about the demand and desire for that program. Um, in addition to that, the Wellness Center, um, the contract I think right now was extended through the end of December, but there was no way the city was going to wanna close a facility in December. So at least for now, the, um, contract will continue through June of 2023.

And so the conversations can continue after that. So, and that's an-- has been an incredibly important resource and the housing navigators associated with that program, helping people then move from that, um, site into housing. Um, more medical support for right now, um, we have continued to provide, um, a primary care doctor who's been part of the First Step program, and there's a request for additional funding for medical services because for people who are unhoused on the street, who helping them access

medical services. So on the emergency health services side, that's another critical piece here.

Um, and then, um, this is not a funded project right now, but a high priority project for the, um, task force. And they're certainly both ARPA requests, affordable housing requests is for the project at 1/16 Norfolk Street, um, which is a project which would provide for studio apartments in an opportunity for people to live, um, in their own unit, but to be part of a community in which there are direct supports. Because one of the things that we heard over and over again was the need for community, but the desire for people's own spaces. And so that's a project which there have been a number of meetings between the housing authority, community development, and our staff as well. Um, and I think that's a high priority project for the Homelessness Task Force.

**COUNCILLOR MARC MCGOVERN:** Thank you. And thank you, um, Madam Chair and everyone's patience. Again, I could go on with a million things, but I won't. Um, and then hopefully it's-- it's not in the budget, but, um, I still want to keep plugging for the day drop in center, which was really the top priority.

Um, you know, just-- I mean, just across the street from my house, there's an ever-growing community of folks that have nowhere to go during the day, and they sit out in the heat, in the sun and, you know, snow when it's cold. And, you know, it's not about, oh, let's have a place so they can be hidden somewhere.

But it's really actually when I talk to them as a place that they want, you know, they want something to do, they want a place to go, they want, you know, some place to be rather than sitting out. So I hope that, um, over the course of this year, we, even though it's not in the budget, we continue to explore that and push that. Thank you, um, everyone's patience. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Councillor McGovern. It's-- this is why we're here, so you don't have to apologize. This is the time to go deep and understand where it is that these resources are going. I have next is, uh, Councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you, I totally agree on the day center. In fact, I think the whole council and probably the administration agree that that is, uh, coming priority.

I wanna thank you and your staff, every staff member I've met for your compassion and passion about what you do and, um, human services. It makes sense that it would be there, but, uh, it makes these discussions very enjoyable and we know that there's a receiving, um, sense that we're all on the same team.

And if anything, we wanna do more, even though Cambridge does a lot and we see there's the need. So my questions, uh, are focused on Pre-K and early childhood, um, are saying we have to do more, but in no way am I saying to you, to Michelle, to the whole staff, to Dr. Grant that I don't appreciate everything that's going on because we've come a long way. So, um, I noticed in the writeup on V-- page V188, it said there are 61 Universal pre-kindergarten scholarships that are budgeted for the upcoming year.

Um, I-- I don't know how many that is of all the Pre-K. I-- this is in my list of questions and I think statistics, we're all human, human services. We're all human. We see the positive in the 61 and I'm-- I think that's hallelujah. I want it to be 62, but hallelujah. What is it of the whole program?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Um, through you Madam Chair, I'm gonna take a stab and then, um, I might need Lisa to jump in in here.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Of course.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Um, what I wanna say is, first you'll see that the-- if, um, if I'm looking at the same thing you're looking at, how many we had for this year was 61. We have 75 and we are currently for the coming year. And, um, uh, Dr. Grant and her team right now are working with families.

Um, and so, um, and right now we are able and to serve--we've done huge outreach to families and we are able to serve pretty much all of the families who have come through that process, um, who are low income families. And I can let, um, Dr. Grant speak more to this. And I heard you the other night talking about how is it possible that they're, you know, there are families who are not being served.

And I'm not saying to you there are no families who are not being served, but we go door to door and all the housing developments, we do mailings to all of the subsidized housing developments, our outreach workers, um,



reach out to all of their networks. It's why when you look at who makes up the scholarship, the children who are scholarship children, they are largely children of color.

They are often, um, English language learners. But what I wanna say, if you take that number of 75 and you add to that, the number of chil-- four-year-olds served in the Cambridge public schools and the number of four-year-old, so that's all free programming. And this is essentially free programming for these 75. And you add to that the number served in our preschools where, and we're gonna get to that in a moment. I know you had a question, 50 percent - over 50 percent of the children are low income and therefore deeply subsidized.

You were talking about a very large number of four-year-olds in this city who are in affordable or no cost programs. What that doesn't tell you is the full quality of every program that every four-year-old in this city is in or the affordability of every program. So the work that Dr. Grant is leading this year is to move us, to help us understand and to help ensure that all of the four-year-olds that we are trying to deserve.

And it also means having to pay attention to ensuring

that the three-year-olds that you want to be, those four-year-olds are in a position to take advantage of those four-year-old seats. So we'll do more, and I know you all have asked for more to give you data so that you have a better understanding of how-- of who's currently being served and who needs to be served.

But the issue is much more about ensuring the quality of the program sites, ensuring the access for families and ensuring the affordability of those sites. When-- and I can let Dr. Grant, um, speak to this more, but when you look at the families who are entering the Cambridge Public Schools, the number of families who are four-- who are entering kindergarten, who are not coming from a program is incredibly small. So it is not as if there are a huge number of four-year-olds not being served.

It's how are we serving them, where are we serving them, and is it affordable? And that's really our work and the work that Dr. Grant will be leading. Um, let me see if there's something more she wants to add.

**DR. LISA GRANT:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I think Ellen, you captured it, um, wonderfully. You know, the, the 75, um, children that we project to be able to serve this

coming year, it's just a small, um, percentage of the total number of four-year-olds in the city.

And as Ellen noted, um, you know, part of our work is not just serving those through the scholarship program, but really having a handle on the entire early system. Um, the programs that were mentioned between the school department, um, DHS P programs, headstart and B3 partner programs we're serving through those-- those entities, almost of four-year-olds, which is a huge percentage of the four-year-olds who are residing in Cambridge.

Um, and almost 70 percent of those children through those programs alone are subsidized with some way, shape, or form. And so a lot of our work, um, now is to ensure that we're closing that gap so that every four-year-old has access and that we have a handle on those four-year-olds. Um, but that there's equity across the board. So in quality and access, affordability, all the things that Ellen just mentioned.

Uh, the other thing I will note too is that as part of our capacity building, we are adding to, um, additional, um, scholarship sites this year. One is a center-based program, and then we're also expanding to include family

childcare, um, to increase our capacity to place, um, children in programs that are, um, meeting their needs that meet family preference and choice, um, and that are, um, geographically close to-- to families, homes and things of that nature. So introducing family childcare is a key partner, um, in this work is something very unique in childhood. Not a lot of other communities are doing it, um, but it's a strategy for us to be able to increase our capacity.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Madam Chair, thank you for those answers. And as I said, compassion and passion, it's very obvious in all of you. Um, as Ellen knows, I studied pre-kindergarten programs, uh, for my thesis. And what I learned is as good as we're doing, we'll never do enough because we,--the earlier we start, the better the results for the family as well as the children.

So my next question is less for you, but it's the reason why I want to be on the mayor's ad hoc committee. I'm a true believer that we can construct more and in development areas when there is special permits approved, especially up zonings, we can get them to help us construct classrooms and centers, especially on side streets,

especially next to planned open space.

So that's something that I feel we are, not your department, we as a city are extremely weak on in all infrastructure planning. And I know things happen behind the scenes, but that's an issue. So on page, uh, to,--to move on, on page V197, 50 percent of all UPK priority families are served. I don't know what that means. Uh, it's like saying 50 percent of my kids are brilliant and I love them. Which kid? Well, it's all of my kids. There's only two. So what does that mean in numbers?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Um, through you Madam Chair. Um, so if you, um, in that-- we're talking about the city run preschool programs there, and we have, um, let me just check to make sure my number's right, 168 children right now, three and four- year-olds that we are serving.

And that percentage is when we shifted to a lottery-based system in which we prioritize lower-income families and we keep ratcheting that up. What this means is that 50 percent of the chil,-- 56 percent this year, and I know you have a question about that, 56 percent this year of the children in our programs, um, are at or below 65 percent of

median income, which is what we define as low-income, which is higher than the free and reduced lunch.

We've chosen a different, um, level. The reason why it says 50 percent for what our goal is for next year is that we commit to holding 50 percent of the seats for low-income, but we didn't limit it and it turned out that we had 56 percent low-income this year. So I can't-- I can tell you the number won't be lower than 50 percent for the coming year when we do the lottery, but I can't tell you now exactly what it would be.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Well, needless to say, uh, emphasizing helping those most in need is just tremendous and I thank you for that. Last question, three and four-year-olds, 168, what is the breakdown between three and four about?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Yeah, it's roughly 50/50, although that depends, um, entirely on the year, depending on, um, how many children come to us as, um, very young and therefore stay a second year. How many of them come to us and they're older and they leave us to go on to junior kindergarten.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** And my last question,

which you're expecting, uh, the 168 is fabulous. Do we have a sense of how many more children, three and four-year-olds we need to-- who are not served, who need to be served in the city? And I know this is a vague number, I know it's a big number and some people have the means to go privately. Um, but do we have a sense, are we serving 30 percent?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** So don't hold me to the answer because you're asking me to give you a ballpark. Let's start with the four-year-olds. I would say that the percentage of four-year-olds who are not in a program anywhere in this city, if I had to guess, and I'm just giving you a guess, it's probably under 10 percent.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** I'm sorry.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** It's probably under 10 percent.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Wow.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Which doesn't mean that the family may not be struggling deeply to pay for that care, or it doesn't mean that the place where the child is, is of the quality for sure that we want, which is part of why so much of our effort through the birth to third initiative goes into working on the quality of all of

the programs that are our partner programs. So that's one thing.

When it comes to three-year-olds, I'm not sure what that answer is. I suspect that it is lower than what I said to you in terms of 10 percent, but I don't know how low because we have lots of programs in the city.

We have lots of families in those programs who work in this city, don't necessarily live in this city. And so exactly. And we have families whose children are not in programs in the city. If you work in another community and there's childcare for your child there, you may be taking your child with you.

So I've-- I'm think the number for four-year-olds will know because we're going to do a better capacity study, which is something that Dr. Grant has committed. We've done one previously to doing now. Um, and we'll see how far off I am.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Madam Chair, through you. So, um, Ms. Semonoff, you're telling me that at least 90 percent of three and four-year-olds—

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** I was saying four-year-olds. I wasn't telling you three-year-olds.



**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** I-- sorry, didn't say that, but that is much higher than what I sensed. And that's statistic should be in the next budget because I-- I-- frankly, I think any of us that love Pre-K, it's not perfect, but it's much better than we thought we were doing.

And, um, I'm sure that happened because Louie is retiring and he-- he's been holding the SPAC for years for today. Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you Councillor Carlone. I wanna take a sense of the body just to make sure we, um, we do have a couple more questions in this area. There's a couple from Councillor Zondervan, just two, from-- from me. The other two, uh, departments I believe will be short unless other people have questions.

I know on the financial summaries there is, uh, one. So a sense of this body just to lay the groundwork, the mayor, uh, will be-- has another appointment from 12:45 to 1:45. We can either keep going, we do have a quorum with the five of us here, or we can take a break in a little bit and reconvene.

So I-- it would be good to have a sense of this body

since the five of us are the quorum here. And-- and we would, uh, I believe Councillor Simmons had to, um, step off, but we-- we can keep going. I don't think it'll be too long, but I can't guarantee that. So if I could-- I don't know if you have to take a, a vote, but if we could have a sense of the body whether we keep going or take a break.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** I-- I-- I'm hungry.

**COUNCILLOR MARC MCGOVERN:** Should-- should we finish human services and then quick break and come back?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Yeah, and we-- and we-- I mean, if the break is partly to get food, we could literally-- if we all agree, just take a 10-minute break and come back. So, um, all right. So what we'll do is-- is go through human services and then see where we're at, assess where we're at. Are-- do you yield Councillor Carlone?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Yes, Madam.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Okay. Councillor Toner, Vice Mayor Mallon, did you have questions on this budget? Okay. Um, I,--unless the mayor has a question before she has to leave.

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** All set. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Mayor Siddiqui. Um, these are, uh, again to remind the department about Councillor Zondervan, uh, circumstances. Um, I think it's okay for CRS grad to have her college graduation for the councillor to not be able to be here.

Um, I believe these questions were, uh, in advance. Uh, um, so the first one was, does this budget include enough funding to ensure that workers at the Albany Street Shelter are paid a living wage?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Yes. Through you-- to you. Yes.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** That was easy. Um, the next two are related to the Golf Course. Um, the Golf Course, which is in the recreation department, which is part of human services.

The Golf Course is funded through membership dues and fees. Can you provide information on the number of members per zip code for Cambridge and the surrounding area, which I believe was also in a policy order. The council passed just eventually to have a meeting. So if that information will be available at some point soon, or--

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** I-- I can give

you the percentages, which I think might be useful. 70 percent of the members live in Cambridge and 30 percent of the members right now live in the surrounding communities. We can provide the information by individual zip code, but that's the summary of that.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you very much. And the other question from Councillor Zondervan on the Golf Course was the Conservation Law Foundation recently sued the MWRA over the PFAS laden fertilizer it sells including too many Golf Courses. Do we know if our Golf Course purchases this fertilizer?

**ASSITANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** We've been in communication with our vendor who, um, assures us that the answer is no. But actually we are in the process of contacting the manufacturer as well, just to ensure and if we learn something different, we can report back to the council.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** That'll be good. I will say many of you may not know, but having run a composting toilet company, I know a lot about sludge and much of the sludge uses fertilizer actually does have toxic chemicals that we don't want anywhere near land that is being used

particularly on that pro-- percolates into the ground for, uh, our water supply.

Um, the other question that Councillor Zondervan was mostly answered, I believe with other questions from, um, uh, because you asked about does the budget add immediate capacity for universal Pre-K, how does it ima-- add immediate capacity for out-of-school time options and what are the expected budget implications from the universal Pre-K study? Those were answered because other colleagues asked those questions. So I wanted to, um, make sure we are-- all understand that.

The questions I had were, um, a little bit stepping back, um, somewhat touched upon. But, uh, two questions. One is overall, uh, the-- the number and range of programs in this department is huge and wide ranging and extends across all ages, which is appropriate. Uh, we've talked mostly about universal Pre-K and children, and yet there's a range of programs for a college success for young adults for work, uh, workforce development. There's also adult learning opportunities. There's senior services.

Overall, um, do we assess the success of these programs? Again, whether it's youth centers, I know there

was in the past a concern that they weren't utilized enough. For instance, we-- how is it that-- that we assess that in-- do we have a specific budget allocation to ensure that, um, that assessment happens with an eye towards understanding how it is that we're adjusting in response to the need that's available in order to make sure that, uh, the investments that we're making in all these programs are, uh, filling the need? I-- I recognize it's quite challenging, but I hope you understand the question.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Um, I understand the question and let me give you two answers. Um, one is we actually have a position of an evaluation and data manager, which is currently unfilled. Um, and we will move forward and fill that man-- that position. And I believe that that will help assist us, um, in doing a better job. And that's primarily focused on our child and youth serving, um, side of the house. But it doesn't have to be exclusively. That's one thing.

And I would say the second thing is for many of our programs, um, we actually are assessed, um, in different ways. So the Community Learning Center, which you mentioned, um, is assessed to a great degree by the

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

We, um, and we come out, I will say, um, we are one of their leading programs and they come back over and over again with the depth of evaluation of our programs. We're about to apply for a new five-year round of funding and certainly the standing that they hold us in. So some of our programs we actually have built in evaluation because of, um, the nature of who part of our funder is, um, in others of our programs.

Um, we do, um, resident satisfaction in some of our pro-- some-- many of these things I will say have been interrupted by the pandemic. So many of the things that would have been in place for that have not, um, been in place.

And I would say that we, um, spend a fair amount of time when we are fully staffed, um, in thinking about whether the program designs we have are the program designs that make most sense.

When I referenced to you earlier, some of the work that the youth centers were doing, um, as a part of their design work with Leslie was very much driven by what is it that we want our programs to look like? What is it that we

expect from our staff and our students? And I think we welcome the opportunity to do more of that.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Uh, thank you. Yes, it-- the whole idea is that we under-- I need to understand usage. We also need to understand impact. I believe the largest segment of our population in terms of, uh, different communities is I think over 30 percent not, uh, non-English language.

Uh, not native English speakers so that the ESL-- the English, uh, is a second language program statewide have a dramatic underfunding. I know our programs are able to meet the need. It's that kind of impact again, across the age span that, um, I'm glad to hear you're paying attention to and hopefully we can all have-- have more of that understanding.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Um, if it's all right, I didn't mention one other piece, which I think is really important and it relates to, again, on the child and youth serving side, um, the work that the Agenda for Children has done, um, in, um, looking at, uh, and this is a-- a partnership between the city and the schools in, um, looking at programs and in looking at the impact of young



people who spend time on their habits of mind, um, and the sort of changes in the way young people think about themselves because of their participations in programs.

And I think we all know at this moment, even more so than in the past, the social emotional, um, and self, um, regulation and self-confidence are things which are critically important for our young people to succeed. And there has been a lot of work done in the past and I would say moving into the future to try to look at some of the impacts of young people's participation in programs.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. And my, uh, next question is similarly just overarching. Um, because most of my colleagues have asked other specific questions in areas that, um, I had on my list is there's been, uh, men-- much talk over the years, uh, um, certainly from what is on school committee of this question, of coordinating from a almost information perspective, whether it's IT or others, to ensure that again, this myriad of programs are tied together in a way to ensure that the best possible services could be ordered so that we might know that some child is at the community art center and is also served by an afterschool program and is also served by, um, a summer

program in the city.

Similarly at the adult level to ensure that, uh, families who are in our, uh, community learning center or others are also, um, perhaps interface with the community engagement team. I'm just curious as to whether that, uh, how that is in place, whether that's something that, um, is going to include further budget allocation to ensure that we in essence have a seamless information system to ensure that the various programs can talk to each other, can work with each other, and that as a result we are, uh, providing the best possible services and sharing information in a way that the various providers in different programs understand that if Patty Nolan is their client and I have a range of needs that that's all together in one place so that I can get the best services.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER ELLEN SEMONOFF:** Um, it's a great question and it's complicated as you might imagine, because families' desires or willingness to have information shared about them or their children, um, varies greatly. What I would say is we have a system, which I know you've heard some complaints about, um, called tracks, um, which is, um, not necessarily the most user-friendly

system, but the backend of tracks.

And when I mentioned that we need our evaluation and data manager back. Um, we are able to look across programs. So, and to be able to see the families at the community learning center, that same family is being served by our Cambridge employment program. That same family has a child in the youth center, that same family has a child in preschool. What level of information it's appropriate for us to share across those families actually depends a lot on what families want us to share.

And so it's not uncomplicated, but part of why we chose the track system, both because we wanted it for enrollment and data management, but we also wanted a system that would allow us to have the mayor's Summer Youth employment program youth entered into it, the families who work with the Center for Families.

And that gives us the opportunity with the appropriate permissions from families to actually be able to look at who's being served across the system, who starts in our programs when they come to Baby U and ends up in our programs. And we know that's true, um, because they're now, you know, in the, uh, 5th grade, um, or wherever. So yes.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. I know it's complicated and yet investment in the right kind of, not surveillance, but sharing and-- information is a way that we can get to this comprehensive approach to ensure that needs are met. Uh, those were my questions. Are there any other from the body on this? Entertain a motion to move the Human Services Department budget to the full City council with a favorable recommendation by Councillor Toner. Clerk Wilson.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burhan Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Absent

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

**Yes-6, No-0, Absent-3, Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** It sounds like people

would like a 10-minute break. If we convene in 11 minutes at 1:00 o'clock. Or Vice Mayor, do you have a-

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Councillor, uh, Chair Nolan, I think if we could have 30 minutes to have a break, catch up on email, eat a little lunch. I think that would be, um, uh, that's more amenable to me.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Yeah, that is fine. I-- and just so people know, there's only a couple departments left. I think they're relatively short, so we may be reconvening, um, and then have a very quick meeting. And if that's okay with everybody, that's, um, pardon? So we need to vote on, uh, that we'll be in recess for 30 minutes, which means until 1:19-- 1:20.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson Called the roll:**

On returning at 1:20 after a brief recess.

Councillor Burhan Azeem - Absent.

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes.

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes.

Council Marc C. McGovern - Yes.

Mayor Sambul Saddiqui - Absent.

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Absent.

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes.

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent.

Council Patricia M. Nolan - Yes.

**Yes-5, No-0, Absent-4, Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** The time of the recess having expired, we are reconvening our hearing on the FY 2023 budget. Clerk Wilson, if you could call the role of members present.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson Called the roll:**

Councillor Burhan Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Council Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sambul Saddiqui - Absent

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Absent

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Council Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

**Yes-5, No-0, Absent-4, Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. And with that, we are reconvened for the last, uh, two sections of the budget that we have not yet covered. Uh, one is the-- the next is the financial summary section, which if you

haven't had a chance to peruse it, is, uh, quite a good summary of everything that we've talked about over the-- the last couple days of, um, of hearings expenditures by, um, by a range of departments.

The reason I, um, pulled this and wanted to talk about is I wanted to hear from, uh, our city staff, our, um, uh, Director Kale or city manager, and also our auditor, uh, Mr. Monagle, who worked on an investment policy that this body asked to be placed before the council as part of the budget process, uh, about a year ago. They worked on it for the last year.

And I'm calling our attention to it. It is on, uh, section 3-18 of the budget book. I have to say, it is really exciting, uh, that this has been worked on and has come through to us. That includes the directive from the city council around city funds, those controlled by the city, and the range of, uh, accounts that we have that they will be prohibited from, uh, being invested in institution-- including financial institutions or other stocks and securities obligations of any company, um, related to fossil fuel investment and also related to, uh, for-profit prison. So if-- I'd like to-- to ask, uh, auditor Monagle,

or, uh, director Kale or the city manager to just talk about the process that led to this and where we're at.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER DAVID KALE:** Um, through you, Madam, uh, Chair, um, as you noted, we were asked to take a look at our investment policy to see if we could come up with a, uh, inclusion in our current investment policy that would, um, prohibit the, uh, city investment in fossil fuels and for-- for-profit prisons.

Um, and we have worked, uh, with the city council, finance co-chairs and internal, uh, constituents, uh, such as the City's investment committee. Um, myself and Michelle Kincaid and Jim Monagle and Gear Willette, um, sit on the investment, uh, committee as well as working with, um, Federated Hrmies, which is the, uh, asset manager for the Massachusetts Municipal Depository Trust in our investment advisor, um, to come up with a policy, um, in our investment policy that basically achieves what the city council asked us to take a look at.

Um, we've been able to, um, easily achieve, um, um, this goal because we frankly didn't have a lot of, um, uh, we were very limited in our exposure to investments in fossil fuels and for-profit pri-- prisons anyway. Um, but,



uh, one of the places where we did have exposure was with our OPEB Trust, which invested in the legal list of 22 stocks certified by the Commissioner of Banking.

Um, and, uh, the investment committee, uh, voted, um, to, uh, sell our shares in the, um, consolidated Edison and Southern Company, which are two energy, uh, en-- uh, companies. And we sold those stocks and we redistributed the funds into the other 20 stocks that are on the legal list that we use to, uh, invest our OPEB trust funds. So that, um, is completed.

And we've been working, um, very closely with representatives from the, uh, Federer Hrmis who manage the Massachusetts Municipal Depository Trust funds, which is a, uh, pooled, um, uh, investment pool. Uh, we invest in our, uh, the cash pool, um, which has short-term durations.

Um, there is typically not a lot of exposure to fossil fuels or for profit prisons, uh, but we did account for that in the policy. Uh, they are well aware of the fact that Cambridge and Boston, uh, that has investment policies related to fossil fuels and for-profit prisons, um, and others, I think that will join, uh, based upon the council action to send a letter to the MMDT Advisory Board in

December, asking them to take a look at how communities who choose not to have any investments in fossil fuels or for-profit prisons can continue to use MMDT, but be assured that, um, they-- their pooled investment would not, um, uh, use those vehicles.

Uh, they are actively looking at that. I know that the MMDT Advisory Board, um, which oversees the fund with, uh, Federer Hrmis who does the, um, day-to-day cash management. They are meeting, they are looking at that. They're, uh, looking at some alternatives, one of which may be an alternative, uh, pooled, um, investment pool that does not have any of these type of funds in them. So I think, uh, with the council's leadership and with the, um, um, cooperation with the investment, uh, advisory committee of the city, and, um, as I said, our investment advisors at MMDT, we've been able to craft a policy that, uh, limits, um, the amount of funds, uh, that can be in our pooled investments related to fossil fuels and for-profit prisons.

Um, and we've implemented the first step, which is the, uh, stocks that, uh, we no longer own. And, uh, as I said, we have very limited exposure with the MMDT but they're working on to eliminate the exposure altogether. So

I think we've move the ball forward and, um, um, I think that, uh, others will join also from what I understand. So that provides a summary of where we've come from, uh, last budget cycle.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Director Kale. Do you wanna add anything?

**AUDITOR JIM MONAGLE:** Yeah. Um, through the leadership of David and, uh, ev-- everybody that's on the, um, OPEB committee, uh, right from the beginning has, um, dedicated themselves to-- to rid fossil fuel, in fact, to get, uh, you know, net zero action plan that the city council has. But the other part that David didn't bring up is, uh, the re the auditor is on the, uh, retirement board.

We have done the same, and David Kale also sits in the retirement board as an advisor. And, um, uh, well, the retirement board hasn't outright committed every single time a-- an investment's being made are being-- have to be looked at again. We take a look at all the fossil fuel, we look at all that stuff. And we had a study by an MIT professor a couple years ago, and, uh, the professor was highly impressed.

He had less than three percent. Three-- about three

percent in fossil fuel. But the problem we have, which is a similar problem we had in OPEB in order to break away for some of it is pooled assets. And as we go along, we try to pull ourselves out of those pools.

And, uh, again, David sits there during the, uh, the investments and, uh, there is no pushback from the retirement board not to continue this. And I-- and I, uh, I would've liked to have seen it before I left, but the-- I-- I know David will continue the cause. So--

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. You can always stay on as an advisor. Let us know, but we're certainly grateful for your work, uh, Auditor Monagle and Director Kale. It's really exciting. I think we're at this point, we have, uh, as Director Kale mentioned, the, um, the Treasurer's Office is aware of it and is known the councillors move this forward.

So those, uh, that was the only question I had on this financial summaries. Are there other members of the body who had questions on this part of the budget? Then I would entertain a motion to, uh, pass the financial summary section of the budget to the full council, the city council with a favorable recommendation.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson Called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burhan Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Council Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sambul Saddiqui - Absent

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Absent

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Council Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

**Yes-5, No-0, Absent-4, Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** All right. That means we're onto our, uh, the last section of the budget that has-- not been moved, which is, uh, public investment. Uh, a couple of my questions related to this public investment, um, were answered partly under the DPW unless we wanted to more information, uh, about how that moves forward, uh, for the, the conduit and the-- and the, uh, for broadband and the, um, uh, geo grid that was answered on before.

But how-- my questions on this, are there other members of the body of questions on the-- this is on the

public Investment capital budgeting process, which is 164 million for this year. Councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you, uh, Madam Chair. My questions really, um, I highlighted in the traffic transportation and traffic parking and transportation discussion what I was gonna bring up. But, uh, it also includes home-- the home improvement program, which is in a different area, but covered in this and that the sum of traffic signals \$350,000 budget, vision zero, \$300,000 budget, traffic calming may be the most confusing of all, 250,000.

And I'll add, for the time being home improvement program, 465,000, all seem extremely low. Um, traffic-wise, uh, our streets are designed for much higher speeds, and the city and the staff have been trying to curtail that in many different ways. Posted mileage, um, redesign in some cases. Um, and home improvement program is so broad, but I'll start with, uh, transportation related.

And I just select, uh, suggested that the five million we've gotten back from the MBTA for the Lechine Train Station be considered, um, as a potential source of beefing up these numbers. I know we can only do so much each year

in redesigning streets, but I have to say the department really has worked hard on this, and I'm impressed when I see a new inter, uh, sorry, a redesign intersection or even retried and it's retried in a very intelligence way.

I just wish we can do more of this. So this is a compliment in every way, and I'm bringing this up only because these-- I know we-- we balance our budget, but these are all areas, and I haven't even spoken about the home program yet, um, that are so positive and so needed. And I know you concur, Mr. Manager, from your comment at-- the other day. But, uh, I'm bringing that up as a question and a suggestion.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Uh, so true you, Madam Chair. I certainly would not be opposed if the council wanted to put in an order. I don't know if you can do it from finance. I believe you can. That recommends that the money that came, this \$5 million be put to a series of projects related to what's the request here.

And we will put that in writing and I will forward something up before I leave and just so it's on record. And then as those projects become available, we will take it from that fund. If that's the wish of the council, I

certainly am not opposed to it. I think it's a very good idea.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Uh, if I could follow up, that was easy. Uh, thank you Madam Chair. I've,--well, um, on home improvement, it's the same thing. We-- we know-- I remember when I, I first moved here in East Cambridge, a house was taken-- was assisted-- a house in bad shape on Thorndyke Street where I lived was improved through a city program.

I don't know which program then, but it was the outside of the house and it was night and day, and I was so impressed by that. Um, I had come from New York City and I didn't remember a similar program in New York City at that time, 50 years ago. But, um, 465 is certainly more than the other sums that I mentioned.

But again, it's-- it seems to me that this is an area that we can do more helping people insulate. I know there are different programs, but doing more and hopefully we can do the same and that even though it's not transportation related.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Through you, um, chair, um, to Councillor Carlone, I-- I will just say, um,



this might be what you were saying at the end, is that this is the-- our federal allocation through the home improvement program. Um, and so that is determined by the federal government based on our particular population.

And it has, um, that amount has been diminishing over, um, the last number of years. Um, I will say that the total amount of funds that we do have available in a loan fund for home improvement, uh, is, uh, more in the \$4 million vicinity. And we are, excuse me, um, currently able to, um, to serve each year approximately or by, in-- in average about 30 households per year, um, utilizing that fund and it varies. Some are condos, some are single family, and some are two, three family homes.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** And if I could ask, Madam Chair, through you, is that primarily exterior work, insulation, heating systems? What is the range?

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Um, it's-- it's, uh, um, it varies by project. Uh, it's not specifically focused on, um, energy efficiency, but we are-- it's worth mentioning, and we've had this conversation with you and with, um, uh, chair Nolan around the, um, ARPA allocations to take a look at whether some of that could be channeled

towards energy efficiency upgrades for, um, for both for residents and businesses. So that's something we are looking at the feasibility of that as well.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you. Thank you all. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Councillor Carlone, are you intending to put forth a motion that the city manager is hereby directed to explore using the \$5 million reimbursement from the, uh, GLX project towards a specific type of traffic?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** If, uh, my co-chair agrees with that strategy, yes, I am.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Okay. Uh, it's then-- it is that the city manager's directed to explore using the, oh, is, you know what, if someone else could work on that language or is-- we can just do it right now, is hereby-- since the city manager said this makes, is hereby requested to explore using the \$5 million reimbursement from the Glx project for-- what was it that you said, Councillor Carlone?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Uh, for, um, efforts for expanding the budget for traffic signals home and-- I'm

sorry, vision zero and traffic calming.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Madam Chair?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Vice Mayor Mallon.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Are we gonna have discussion on that before we vote?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Yes.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Uh, thank you. Through you, um, to my colleague, I believe that \$5 million, we originally put together a policy order to direct it to specific transportation issues in East Cambridge. There was a whole list of things on that policy, the original policy order for that \$5 million that we discussed several weeks ago.

I-- I wouldn't feel comfortable moving that forward with-- in this direction without having had a conversation about why we would change it from the original strategy, which we all signed onto as councillors. It was a-- a policy order from the full counsel.

So I would welcome the opportunity to either have a conversation offline with my colleague, um, and maybe put something forward for the next council meeting, or I just would have to vote no here today.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Uh, Madam Chair, uh, am I correct, uh, and I could be very wrong. Does this money from the MBTA have to be directed to transportation only projects, or it could-- it could be for a range of other areas as well? I'm seeing yes.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** That is correct. I think the easier the guidelines we get in terms of what type transportation projects would be easier to work with. So if you wanna make it a bigger group of transportation projects, I certainly think that makes sense then. That certainly could come up next Monday. I would think as well, if--

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** I'm very happy to delay this vote and we can chat with the Vice Mayor and other councillors on priorities. I wasn't trying to only do this. I saw this as low-budget items, and this is, in many ways, a huge need in any city, uh, that's rethinking their transportation priorities.

Uh, streets are an enormous part of every city. I don't know what it is in Cambridge, but I know there are places that I've studied, Plymouth, uh, excuse me, parking lots and streets were 28 percent of the city, downtown

city. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. So we don't have that motion before us now that-- do you yield the floor on this-- this area? The public investment?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** I yield. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Okay. Any other questions? I, um, have a couple questions. Uh, in this area, one of the, um, public investment mentioned are, um, EV chargers, which is on, uh, 6-27, and it just anticipates two charges a year.

I'm just curious as to whether there could be a more accelerated timeline for deploying more chargers across the city, given the, um, intent of the city to deploy, uh, EV charging capability, which is one of the concerns that city residents have for buying EVs, which is in line with many of our goals.

**ASSITANT CITY MANAGER DAVID KALE:** Through you, Madam Chair, before, um, uh, assistant city manager Farooq responds. I would just also note, hopefully we've been asked to submit some applications for federal funds that we believe that may support this effort.

We haven't got final confirmation. I suspect if we're

successful, we should know when the federal budget is, uh, adopted. But, uh, we have been asked to submit, um, an application for these kind of projects, including EV and hopefully we'll have good news for the council, uh, soon.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. ACM Farooq, if you—

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Thank you, Chair. Um, now I-- I agree with, um, with what, uh, David just said, and we, um, we are, uh, as you know, looking at a pilot right now that's on street. And, um, we are very much interested in thinking about how best to expand that pilot in addition to the, um, deployment and in city municipal parking lots.

Um, there is-- I will say there is also, uh, currently a zoning petition, uh, that is in front of council and the planning board. Um, and if that is adopted, that would create greater access on private property. Um, you know, when thinking about, um, EV chargers, one of the things we are also thinking about is what is the future of, uh, EVs is gonna look like in the city? Will it all be municipal responsibility or will there be, um, will the gas station of the future really have principally, uh, EV chargers?

And, uh, we're starting to see some moves towards that transition and, um, uh, are, we're hearing that, uh, the Shell station, uh, on Magazine St-- Street and the gas station at, uh, Aberdeen and Mount Auburn, um, are working with a private entity called Taxi Chargers, uh, to install then, um, publicly accessible charging, um, at those gas stations.

And so I think part of it is that we are also, uh, thinking through what that-- what is the municipal responsibility going forward, uh, what will be the private side share in that. Um, so trying to keep all of those moving at the same time.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Um, another question on public investment is, Councillor Carlone, there's a number of, just a couple traffic related, but we've also heard some future allocations for-- in line with the cycling safety ordinance for a very large sums of money expended.

How is it that those would or wouldn't be reflected? Would they eventually, if their move forward, be reflected in the capital investment budget or-- or would they be in another section of the budget? Unless I missed it, I didn't

see it in here.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** So I'll let Kathy add, but we have a multi-year, uh, bonding schedule, so clearly that's included in that, and the timing of that will be dependent upon the implementation. So I'll let Kathy talk about the details, but it is provided for in our financial plan.

**COMMISIONER KATHY WATKINS:** Um, through you, Madam Chair. So there's a couple places it shows up in the capital budget. So let me find this sheet. So the, um, the Mass Ave, um, the-- the two different Mass Ave fours, which are the sort of the large significant capital, um, are in the budget. So on sheet 6-45 is the sort of Mass Ave Harvard Square out to L Wife Brook, and that's in there for \$40 million.

So that's as we've discussed at the city council. So that's included as an appropriation FY24 for \$40 million. Um, the other large, um, cycling safety ordinance project that's sort of come up as the other part of Massau four in Harvard Square, and that's included in the Complete Streets reconstruction. So on page, um, 6-42 and 43, um, there's identified as a partial funding and that would be-- we



would be funding it over the next couple years, but the Basa four Harvard Square bus stops is identified there. So those are the two big ones that have come out of the cycling safety ordinance.

Um, the other thing, and just goes a little bit back to what Councillor Carlone was talking about in terms of the overall capital investment program. So when you really look at the streets that we anticipate reconstructing over the next five years, you know, it's about a \$350 million program. And so that includes utility work as well as street and sidewalk reconstruction.

Um, and so that also includes River Street, which is a significant, um, cycling, uh, priority as well. So there's a number of different streets included in the capital budget that are, you know, furthering the goals of the cycling safety ordinance didn't necessarily come directly out of it, but it does, you know, further our ability to implement safe biking infrastructure.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. I see  
Director Barr at the—

**DIRECTOR JOSEPH E. BARR:** Sure.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Did you wanna add to

this?

**DIRECTOR JOSEPH E. BARR:** Sure. Uh, Chair Nolan, I just wanted to mention that in addition to all the capital funding that the-- the city engineer just mentioned, all of the quick build projects that we're gonna be doing under the cycle-- cycling safe ordinance are actually generally in our operating budget because the-- the work is not considered to be capital work.

It's more the sort of typical operating, uh, and as I think we may have alluded to during our budget hearing last week, um, those allocations will likely come in the future through supplemental appropriations from the-- from the general fund as we did earl-- earlier this fiscal year. So I just wanna make sure it's clear there is kind of this division between the types of capital project that the city engineer was mentioning and the-- the rest of the-- the quick build work.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. That's helpful. Sorry, I didn't see some of that in the budget. Um, my last question on this area, which we've discussed a little bit, and I mentioned to Engineer Watkins, the-- there's \$15 million for a range of linear path, um, Dunhill

New Street, um, others. Does that include design, uh, exploration of the-- a connection between, uh, the north side of the railroad track into Dunhill Park?

I know we're talking mostly about New Street, but there has certainly been renewed community interest in, um, some kind of underpass or connection to ensure North Cambridge is connected to Dunhill Park through a safe means for pedestrian and cyclists. Is that design possibility included in this?

**COMMISIONER KATHY WATKINS:** Um, through you, Madam Chair, I don't know, uh, Assistant City Manager Farooq can respond to that. Thanks.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER IRAM FAROOQ:** Thank you, Chair. Um, so--so yes, this is the, um, immediately there will not be a connection. Um, but it-- it sets up the stage so that in the future a connection that-- that connection that you're talking about could be possible. Uh, and exploring those options is part of the analysis and, uh, that's included in the scope of work.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. And the reason I bring it up is there's so much construction and development going on there. This is the optimal time to

ensure that eventual connections are possible. It's been in the community for a long time. There was a very extensive connectivity report done by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, which I think is now two years old, that anticipates connections.

So I wanna make sure that as we're planning that, that planning is in place now because if-- we will lose that opportunity as we know if everything's built out and we haven't taken that into account. So I'm glad to hear that that is part of this, um, exploration. Well, I could go on for a long time. There are many other questions I could ask.

I think, uh, some of them are going to be more appropriate for other meetings in the future, which means we've come to the end of this unless there are other colleagues who have questions on the public investment section. I don't see any hands. So I will entertain a motion to pass the public investment section of the budget to the full city council with a favorable recommendation by Vice Mayor Mallon.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson Called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burhan Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Absent

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

**Yes-6, No-0, Absent-3, Motion Passed**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Unless I'm mistaken, we have come to the end of this and I would like to thank everyone in the entire city. This is an incredible budget book. If you haven't read it, read it. It is a real, um, uh, a-- a document that lays forth how it is that we are making good on many of the goals that we have set. It is extensive information. It is moved along forward as I understand it from, uh, a document to become more and more, uh, user friendly.

There are a number of goals in it that are smart goals. There's still some areas that don't quite have smart goals and there's some that, uh, don't quite have goals.

And yet it is a huge step forward compared to many of the budgets in the past. And it is incredibly difficult to put this, uh, larger document together. It is an \$800 million budget.

The operating budget's 801 million. The capital budget is 164 million. There is a increase in the property tax levy continued support and expansion for many of the priorities of the city council from affordable housing equity and inclusion, community safety, sustainability infrastructure, early childhood, universal Pre-K and education.

The only other thing I wanna add is that in addition to the \$38 million to the affordable housing trust, this budget in a time of COVID, of pandemic of retrenchment has 23 new full-time positions in the city.

Again, in line with the goals that we are-- we as a body, the city council and also the city and the community have set, are really important for us to move forward and-- and achieve our goals that we have-- we have set forth. It is in in that respect, um, I don't like to say we're all that unique, but we are unique in many ways in this area of funding. And it is a remarkable testament to how it is that

we can be as a city in this position now, again, at the time of an incredibly difficult, uh, financial time.

Uh, again, as I said at the beginning, at least of today, this is city manager, uh, DesPaquale, uh, last budget, uh, with the city council. And I wanted to offer him, uh, the opportunity to talk about, uh, this process or the budget or whatever-- whatever he wants to do. Uh, city manager, you have the floor.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be brief. I would first of all just wanna say thank you to the finance chairs and the council, uh, for moving this budget forward. I think as you mentioned this budget-- I started doing budgets back in the 70s and I've been budget director, finance director and city manager now.

I believe that this will be my 40-- at the 41st budget. And I can tell you we've come a long way and a lot of it's to do with the council pushing us, especially over the last five or six years of coming up with new ideas. And I think the key initiative section is continues to get better. I think really concentrating on city council goals has been a priority that I can't thank the departments

enough for.

I think working on the consolidated spending really to show where our priorities are and what we're spending. And this year for the first time adding the 12 goals and putting dollars to it, it's really made the budget even more informative document in a lot of those ideas came from the council. So I want to thank them for that.

I want to thank David and Taha. I'm proud to say that I appointed David as assistant city manager for finance and Taha as budget director and I do not believe we can be in better hands than having them to-- on our financial front. Wanna recognize that deputy budget director Angel Pier, who's also done an incredible job and the entire budget team, most of which have been appointed in the last three to four years.

And this team has really come together under Taha's leadership and I can't thank them enough. I want to thank the city departments because finance gets a lot of credit for our AAA rating and putting us in the position we're in, but it's the departments who do the work and understand the importance of managing their budget and not being afraid to turn money back. And I think that's so important to us. So



this all really ties into the tax rate.

I think as everybody knows, it can be a little confusing because you're approving a budget in June and you're doing a tax rate in September. But the goals with this budget have always been to provide the best services for our residents while controlling tax bills. And it's something that has been a priority going back to city manager Hailey, who we recognized last Friday about the importance of providing services to all our residents, especially our residents who need it the most while still controlling taxes.

And I am incredibly pleased that over these years we have been able to do both. I don't believe any city provides more services than the city of Cambridge and the council deserves a lot of credit for that. But I also believe that we have the lowest tax-- residential tax rate of any city as well. So you put those two together and it's an incredible story.

And, you know, we've been able to have tax levy increase over the last 10 years, just around 5.2 percent and over the last five years, 5.8 percent and it's amazing. But even in the middle of COVID, even in the middle of the

most difficult financial times, we have been able to grow our budget, continue to grow our budget and keep our taxes in a reasonable position.

So when you get a AAA rating, it's not to say you have a AAA rating, but it's to say that you manage your finance as well. And also, you know, when you take a look at the fact that we'll have spent over \$500 million in controlled taxes as well, this all adds up to a team effort. And I can say this city has really been about a team effort.

It's the council working with the manager and the manager working with the department heads and the residents came-- playing a key pot because you have to listen to your residents to provide the best services possible. So, uh, this is always gonna be my love.

The budget office was my home when I first started and I still consider it that and I know Toha has had to put up with me a lot because it's hard sometimes to leave the budget outta my day-to-day operations. But I want to thank everybody for all their support, all the employees.

As I've said many times, there is no city that has a more dedicated staff in any area than the city in Cambridge. So again, thank everybody. This is a budget we

all can be incredibly proud of. In September, we'll produce a tax rate that will recognize the importance of keeping the taxes down to a reasonable number and provide the best services that I believe the city has ever provided because we clearly listened in this budget to say we already initiatives the council have the highest priority of and make sure we put additional funds in there. So I'm very proud of that and just want to thank everybody for all their support. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR DENISE E. SIMMONS:** So Madam Chair?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Uh, Councillor McGovern and Councillor Simmons. Councillor Simmons, do you wanna go first?

**COUNCILLOR DENISE E. SIMMONS:** Uh, thank you. Uh, very just quickly, I just wanted to say to you, Mr. City Manager, uh, we are very proud of you as well and I could probably go on for a long time, but we'll probably have more opportunities to do that.

Leadership starts at the top and you have been an extraordinary budget leader, so through you to your budget team, thank you so much for the hard work you do. But back to you, uh, Mr. DePasquale, thank you so much for your

incredible good stewardship when it comes to not only the budget, but the city of Cambridge.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR DENISE E. SIMMONS:** I yield.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Councillor Simmons. Councillor McGovern.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Uh, thank-- thank you. Um, first I want to thank the finance co-chairs. Um, I was finance chair for my first two terms, so I know what goes into that and and I appreciate your stewardship through this. Um, Mr. McConnell, thank you for your service.

Um, your, the auditing department is, uh, not all-- not necessarily the most front facing, um, you know, department. Um, and so a lot of folks don't necessarily know you or-- or what-- what you do, what the auditing department, uh, does, but it makes the city run and helps the city run. And-- and, um, you know, I'm still sorry about the time that I inadvertently cut up the mayor's credit card when I was mayor by mistake. And-- and you-- you-- you--you worked with me on that, so thank you.

Um, and Mr. DePasquale, um, we'll have time, I'm sure we'll, you know, uh, to say our-- our thanks and our

farewells. But, um, you know, I mean, I-- I say this all the time and it's just, I-- I think-- I don't think we always appreciate, um, the financial stability that we have. Just on the news. I won't name the town.

Um, but just on the news last night, um, there was a walkout at the high school of a neighboring town because they're cutting so many teachers and so many staff, um, because of budget cuts. And-- and I can't remember the last time that we were in that situation. And I think sometimes we can, you know, we can forget or-- or not appreciate because we have the stability and we always want to do more and more and more, which we should.

Um, but we also have to stop and appreciate what, you know, where we are and-- and, um, you know, that has been, you know, through your leadership, not just as city manager, but, you know, prior, um, and that, you know, better serves the residents of our-- of-- of our city, right? And-- and, um, so it-- it's-- I can't thank you enough, um, thank your staff enough.

Um, you know, again, it-- it's, uh, we're really in a unique situation and it holds us to a higher standard and we have to continue to push to meet that higher standard.

Um, but we're doing things and having conversations that most other cities can't even begin to even think about. And, um, I really appreciate and-- and I-- I appreciate all your work and dedication.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Uh, thank you, Madam Chair. And through you, um, I-- I think we all can be proud of, uh, this budget. Um, I love the way it's structured. Um, I love, um, and I've mentioned this to Louis, the dedication of his staff, um, at the front table sitting down behind, um, I'd love, um, the character of new people that have been taken on by the city under your leadership.

And, um, and starting out as a consultant in 1976, by the way, the last educational crisis was 1975, um, 1980. 1980, sorry. Um, so a long time ago. And, um, I appreciate strong leadership, but with an openness to listen and even when we disagree to smile afterwards.

And, um, and if I-- and I think even more so, the fact that you wanted to name a very unique special playground in your honor, says a lot. I'm surprised it wasn't a baseball field or two, but I, uh, I think you chose absolutely one

of the high points in the whole city that represents your spirit. So thank you very much and to all the staff because I know they worked very hard on this one. Thank you.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Vice Mayor Mallon.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Oh, thank you, Madam, uh, Chair. I just wanted to say thank you to both you and Councillor Carlone, uh, for bringing this-- these budget hearings to us. And I-- I can't believe we're out at 2:00 o'clock on a-- on a day two. So kudos to both of you for getting us here and getting us through these meetings, um, quickly and, you know, with great questions.

And, uh, I also wanted to say, of course, thank you to the city manager and his team, uh, for putting forward this budget, which really is a reflection of our city's values and what we care about and what we, um, wanna accomplish together here in the city. I know that there are so many people that are, uh, that work behind the scenes to get this budget produced.

I know we see Angela and-- and Taha and David here today, but there are countless others that have been here,

uh, both in person and on Zoom, um, working towards this-- this document, this statement of our values. And so I'm appreciative. I just wanted to say thanks to everybody, to the city manager, his team, and everybody who was here and not here.

I-- I think you all know, I hope you know that we as a city council appreciate that we can say whatever we want in here. We can decide on any kind of policy in here. It's-- it's up to you to find the money for it, to make it happen and make it successful. So, uh, my gratitude to, uh, the employees, uh, the co-chairs and the city manager and his team. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. I will briefly before we end, also extend my thanks. As, uh, the vice mayor said, I appreciate, uh, resources and the attention to the council goals and our values as a council and as a community and as a city.

A budget is a document central to good management. Um, and we have a budget before us as, uh, all of us who have read these budgets over the years feel has continually improved in terms of, uh, being explicit, clear and



intentional about that. And I will just end by saying thank you Auditor Monagle.

As was often said, it is really, really good news when the auditor is not well known because if the auditor is well known, it probably means you have a problem. So thank you for keeping yourself and us out of the news and out of sight. Definitely not out of mind. Um, but it has been, uh, central to our success also to have a finance team and also the, um, auditor working together to ensure that we follow the rules that we spend the money the way it's supposed to be spent to ensure that-- that we are stewards of public funds, which is the-- the heart of this budget hearing right now. Um, I have, uh, Mayor Siddiqui, but city manager, would you like to--

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Uh, if you don't mind, I would just, again, uh, I-- I should have recognized that I have been so fortunate. I think the auditor's position clearly is a city council position and is a fine line of those-- the councils, your bosses, how you work with the manager and the finance team. But I've been so fortunate to have Jim as an auditor, as finance director, as budget director, and a city manager.

And I just can't thank him enough, uh, understanding his role, both with the council, but also trying to make things work in this summit with-- with us as best as he can. And I really appreciate it, and it's been a short time with the clerk, but I can't thank him enough, uh, all his partnership and friendship when items came. So to the two of them, thank you and congratulations.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Uh, Councillor Simmons, you had your hand up again, or is that from before? And Councillor Toner, did you, uh, want to say anything before we end?

**COUNCILLOR PAUL F. TONER:** Sure, yeah. Well, I-- I-- I'll just say ditto to everything that's been said. I don't wanna waste anybody's time, but I appreciate, uh, Louise's long service. Uh, this being my first budget, I'm thankful that it was such a clean, crisp budget document, easy to understand.

And, uh, thanks to the entire staff for being able to answer my questions during the process. And thank you Madam Co-chair and to your fellow co-chair Councillor Carlone for, uh, leading us to this process. And, uh, also thank you to Mr. Monagle for as many years of service and for, as

you said, keeping us out of the news. I yield.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Mayor Siddiqui, did you have your hand up?

**MAYOR SAMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Yeah, I, um, thank you, uh, Madam Chair, thank you to you and Councillor Carlone. Um, you know, I wanna appreciate everyone involved who makes the process, um, who's a part of the process, you know, from the budget, an analyst who, you know, I've had experience working through the budget, um, my budget, I'm-- and everyone's so patient with the questions and really helpful, so really appreciate it.

I know there's so much behind the scenes work that goes on. Uh, and it is-- it's such a-- such a detailed process. So, uh, and the end result shows it. So, uh, I echo everyone's thanks, uh, appreciate our long, um, standing auditor as well.

We'll miss you. Uh, and to the team that's before us as well. Um, you know, we-- we're-- we've been really lucky in the city, so thank you.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Um, to end in the right spirit, um, we know it's important to name things if you really want them to happen. So I-- I don't know if you've heard, but the council has put together an additional budget, but we're gonna call it a DePasquale budget, hoping that you would approve it, um, but maybe in another world. Thank you again.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** With that, I-- clerk, have we concluded all the business set up for this hearing?

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Yes.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. I would entertain a motion then to adjourn.

**COUNCILLOR DENISE E. SIMMONS:** Madam Chair?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Oh, Councillor Simmons.

**COUNCILLOR DENISE E. SIMMONS:** Before you adjourn, uh, I had to step away, uh, to, um, to Mr. Maloney. Maloney, what's your last name?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Monagle.

**COUNCILLOR DENISE E. SIMMONS:** You know who you are? Monagle. There it is. I get the two, uh, gentlemen that do what? Purchased, uh, budgeting stuff. I couldn't see you on

the screen when talking about Mr. DePasquale, and I realized that you're taking, uh, your leave from us.

And I would be remiss if I did not, you know, seeing that we have-- seeing that your son is my son-in-law and all, I wanted to make sure I said, uh, I wished you all the best in this new chapter of your life. Uh, Patty's trying to figure out what it is, don't tell him.

And just, um, know this. I have appreciated your counsel and your hard work over the years. Um, I will miss you much and I hope that you'll come back and stick your head in from time to time to see how we're doing. My best to your wife and family, uh, and have-- have all the best in, uh, your future endeavors, whatever these--those may be. I yield, Madam Chair, and I will, uh, move to, uh, adjourn.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Councillor Simmons. There's a motion on the table to adjourn.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson Called the roll:**

On that motion,

Councillor Burhan Azeem - Absent

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Councillor Denise E. Simmons - Absent

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

**Yes-7, No-0, Absent-2, Motion Passed.**

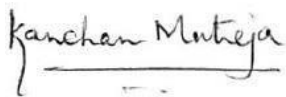
**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** With that, we will not be having a meeting on Thursday, at least a budget meeting.

**The Cambridge City Council Finance Committee adjourned at approximately 2:18 pm.**

**C E R T I F I C A T E**

I, **Kanchan Mutreja**, a transcriber for Datagain, do hereby certify: That said proceedings were listened to and transcribed by me and were prepared using standard electronic transcription equipment under my direction and supervision; and I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of the proceedings is a full, true, and accurate transcript to the best of my ability.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 3rd day of February 2023.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kanchan Mutreja". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature of Transcriber

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of May 17, 2022 10:00 AM (Committee Reports)