

Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

2022 STRATEGIC PLAN – Chapters 6 - 8

November 10, 2022 – DRAFT

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6.0 INTERNAL OPERATIONS

Over the last nine years, the CRA has matured into a larger organization with greater financial obligations and substantial long-term obligations. At this point, a high priority is to create stronger management systems that will build institutional sustainability and resiliency over time and provide a rewarding workplace culture. This investment will in turn allow the CRA to carry out its mission-based activities. Over the next several years, management systems need to be robust in the following four interrelated areas.

1. Supervision and Mentoring
2. Project Management
3. Office Systems
4. Board Structure

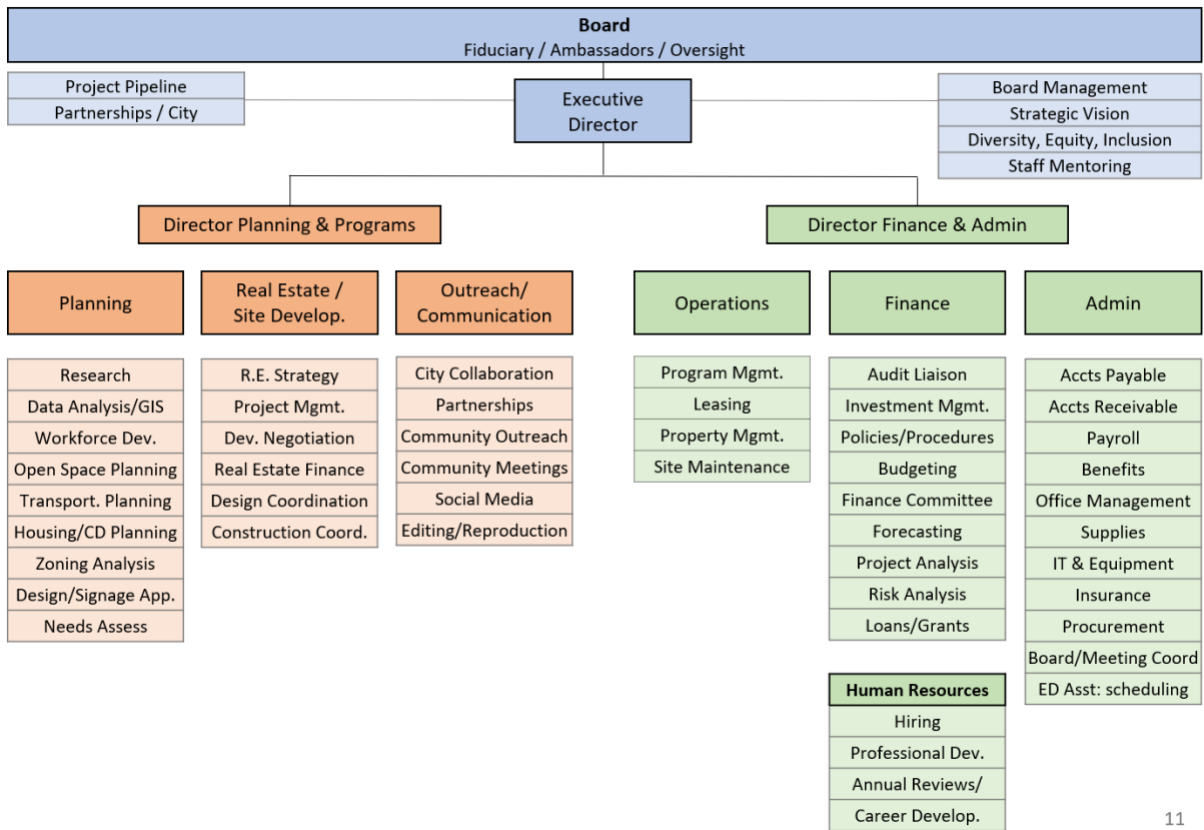
Supervision and Mentoring

The nature of the CRA's work is strategic in nature, with no two projects alike and often a demand for versatile and nimble responses. The current staff is relatively small (seven full time employees and one part-time employee), which allows for horizontal collaboration, but they are managing close to two dozen projects of varying sizes, budget, and complexities. To accomplish the goals set forth in this Strategic Plan, the CRA needs to establish a well-coordinated senior management team, a clear staff organizational structure, forums for internal collaboration, and consistent staff mentoring.

Senior Management Team: One of the changes that was made during the Strategic Plan process was to create a senior management team in order to minimize the number of direct reports to the executive director and provide a more collaborative team working on executive management decisions. The two new senior management positions are the Director of Projects and Planning and Director of Finance and Operations.

Staff Organizational Structure: The current chart of CRA staff functions is shown in Figure XX, with the Executive Director working in partnership with the two directors, who each have a range of functional responsibilities that reflect different types of CRA projects and related tasks. Outside consultants provide support for highly specialized tasks (e.g., legal counsel, real estate finance, design). Procurement processes for new staff and outside consultants ensure accountability, but need to be planned ahead since the process takes staff time and can be challenging at those moments when capacity is needed most.

INTERNAL OPERATIONS: CURRENT EXPERTISE AND FUNCTIONS



Staff organizational structure will be improved by executing many of the recommendations in this Strategic Plan. As positions are filled and/or new positions created, clear lines of reporting should be followed with a project manager assigned to each project. Staff need clarity on their role on various projects, especially when they are expected to be acting as project managers, even on small projects. Project assignments should be more transparent and wherever possible aligned with staff professional goals. Where CRA capacity is limited because of the number of active projects and/or the portfolio of skills of staff and/or consultants, then hard decisions need to be made about priorities in terms of new projects, partnerships, and project scope and timing, given the relatively long lead time for hiring.

Forums for Internal Collaboration: Regular project team meetings will improve communication among teams. Mentoring can occur by including new or junior staff in meetings and working together on preparation for and follow-through after each meeting.

Performance Reviews: Attention to performance reviews is essential for staff mentoring and professional development as discussed under Section 8.0, Learning, Growth, and Engagement.

Project Management

Project management is the backbone of the CRA workflow. Systems related to project management will need to mature to improve focus and efficiency including the project intake process, project assignments and responsibilities, budgeting and project financial reports, and contract review, approval, and tracking.

Project Intake Process: During 2021, the CRA staff discussed a decision-making process for new projects, a concern that aligns with Board requests for more advance information before making decisions. The proposed process of early due diligence and the use of a Project Initiation Form will add clarity for staff regarding their assignments and responsibilities, provide a check and balance on taking on more work than the existing staff can manage, and support Board decision-making.

Project Assignments and Responsibilities: Ideally, project assignments and responsibilities should align with the professional development goals and interests of individuals, something that is reinforced by a robust performance review process. As a small organization, however, CRA staff often need to be versatile - able to tackle a range of assignments and/or aid colleagues where needed, especially where there is some urgency. Table 1 summarizes the many topical areas of knowledge (rows) and the range of skills (columns) that are currently expected and needed on CRA projects.

Table 1. Matrix of CRA Topical Areas and Required Skills

TOPICAL AREAS	SKILLS						
	Research & Data Management	Policy Interpretation	Quantitative Analysis	Project Management	Writing	Community Engagement	Visual Communication
Land Use Planning/Zoning							
Transportation Planning							
Design							
Real Estate							
Property Management							
Community Development							
Workforce and Economic Opportunity							

A central question is whether the CRA can grow to meet the demands of so many different project types at different stages between planning and implementation, and do them all well, or whether it remains an organization with a small staff that focuses on a few key areas. Some projects fall toward

the conceptual planning side, others are immersed in the details of implementation or the nuances of policy, and other require skills at short and long term operations and maintenance. In some cases, a single project evolves through all of these phases: from planning and design to project delivery to long-term management and operations.

Budgeting and Project Financial Reports: Many CRA projects are one-off and unique, so detailed forward budgeting is not always possible, yet best estimate projections and actual expenditures are valuable to track. Further work is needed to design a monthly or quarterly project management report and synchronize this with the overall CRA financial systems and incorporate the project management report as tool for collaboration, supervision, and mentoring.

Contract Review, Approval, and Tracking: The CRA’s vendor contracts include professional consultants, property management businesses, real estate brokers, construction companies, and office equipment leases and service. These may be multi-year service agreements, services based on a specific scope, or work order “house doctor” contracts. Contracts are paid on a time and materials, flat fee, and/or purchase order basis. The CRA follows the State’s procurement policies, which vary based on the type and size of the service. Contract management goals are to develop standard terms and conditions, invest in project management training, improve protocols for review and tracking, and train staff in procurement laws.

Office Systems

As the CRA moves from start-up to mature organizational status, the office systems need to evolve accordingly. The strategic work in this area involves ongoing adaptation of financial software to manage the CRA’s different business lines and number of transactions, record keeping, and information technology. The CRA’s financial system becomes the foundation for the project management reports, contract data base, and tracking discussed above. Record keeping and information technology also needs to keep pace with a now larger organization with more assets. With many new and updated policies in place, the focus going forward is to embed these new protocols into the office culture.

Board Structure

The CRA Board is legislated by the State to have five members, who must be Cambridge residents. Four members are appointed by the City Manager, subject to confirmation by the City Council, and one member is appointed by the State. Every member is a fiduciary of the redevelopment authority, and a quorum of three is needed to conduct business (M.G.L. ch.121B.s.5).

The five current members of the CRA have served continuously since appointed in May 2012, with the same chair presiding during that time. Terms are staggered by year with some appointments

coming due in 2022 and others extending to 2025. The officers are a chair, vice-chair, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and assistant secretary.

The monthly Board package should include the primary communications to the board, along with staff recommendations where warranted. Presentations from outside entities should be carefully managed to illuminate but not repeat key points already in the board package. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lens should be employed to evaluate the agenda and determine which outside entities are granted access to present. With robust board packages, including due diligence and staff recommendations, the time in the Board meetings can be used to facilitate board member discussion prior to making decisions.

A succession plan is needed to chart how new board members can be introduced on a staggered basis over the next several years. The Strategic Advisory Committee, the Foundry Advisory Committee, Forward Fund recipients, and other active partners represent a pool of potential candidates that are already knowledgeable, diverse, and committed to the CRA's mission-based work.

A full investment in improving management systems and building a strong workplace culture will set the stage for the CRA to grow staff over time, which in turn, will allow it to fulfil its mission with greater impact.

7.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Over the last seven years, the financial position of the CRA has grown due to development projects in the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area. With more complex undertakings, the CRA has begun to diversify its assets to include land and a loan portfolio in addition to development fee receivables. Its liabilities range from current accounts payable to the obligations of a 50-year Foundry Operating Lease.

The CRA has a rather unique financial structure that results in a very "lumpy" budget from year to year. It collects income from significant real estate development payments, which results in years with very high surpluses. Absent one-time payments of development fees in a fiscal year, the CRA operates with an annual deficit. Most of the CRA projects reviewed in this period have resulted in significant cash outflow with little anticipated returns (Table 2).

Table 2. Financial Characteristics of CRA Projects

TYPES OF PROJECTS		
Spend Down	Revenue Neutral	Revenue Generating
Open Space Improvements Mobility Studies Foundry Investment 99 Bishop Allen Investment Forward Fund / Business Grants	Foundry Operations 99 Bishop Allen Operations Small Business Loans	KSURP Development Agreements

The number of “business lines” has been growing to now include real estate development, grant making, licensing agreements, loan portfolio, property management, and office operations. Managing these business lines requires more robust use of the financial software systems as well as expanded accounting skills or professional development to employ these systems in day-to-day operations. Expertise in legal, insurance, taxation, and human resources are needed to support the portfolio of projects. Over the last several years, the CRA has updated its investment strategy, which has resulted in significant gains. This success has allowed the revenue from Kendall Square development projects to stretch much further.

A key point of discussion going forward is the ability to optimize the capital structure and use the available financial tools to maximize impact and to evaluate these investments over time. One question to ask is whether to carry out many small projects to disperse the impact or whether to focus on a few large initiatives that take advantage of the size of the resource pool? Another question is whether to leverage the CRA’s money by taking on more debt and/or whether to cross subsidize projects with a mix of market rate and below market rate rents. The financial planning scenarios laid out in this section provide a framework for understanding the choices, risks, and implications that the CRA now faces.

Financial Status

Over the period of the past five years, the financial position of the CRA has grown tremendously due to the development of 135 Broadway and 325 Main Street. As of the end of 2020, the assets of the CRA are nearly \$65 million with almost \$40 million in cash and investments. Its largest liability is the mortgage on 99 Bishop Allen property, at almost \$7 million.

Among its assets are land, receivables of development fees from the 88 Ames project, and a loan portfolio. The current liabilities are accounts payable, credit cards and Forward Fund grants committed but not yet distributed, pension and medical benefits, and the obligations of the 50-year Foundry Operating Lease.

Overall, the CRA is very liquid and has significant leverage to carry out its mission-based work. The CRA's rate of liquidity at the end of 2020 was 97X, a measure defined by the ratio of Current Assets/Current Liabilities. The higher the ratio, the stronger the position (i.e., less debt burden). The debt-to-equity ratio at the end of 2020 was 12%, a measure of how the organization has been financing its growth – in this case using cash instead of debt.

Planning Considerations

Decisions about financial scenarios must take into account some of the long-term obligations of the CRA, as illustrated in Table XX (in *Section 2.0*). These expire at different times and have different implications for both revenues and costs. The Kendall Square Urban Redevelopment Plan (KSURP), which is the basis for most of the CRA revenues, expires in 2035. Several mitigation responsibilities are tied to the KSURP including Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) agreements, Infill Development Concept Plan (IDCP), Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Program (KSTEP) and annual transportation report (ATR). The CRA now owns 99 Bishop Allen and Parcel 6 fee simple and has a 50-year lease on the Foundry, which extends to 2072. In addition, the CRA has invested in and manages public open spaces on old urban renewal parcels including the Grand Junction Park, the Sixth Street Walkway and Galaxy Park. The CRA also is responsible for Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) for all former and current employees that are vested in the system.

Boston Properties has a number of proposed developments within the KSURP over the next decade as a part of the Eversource project. Together these are projected to generate an additional \$100 million for the CRA in development fees, bringing the CRA's total assets to approximately \$140 million. Some of these assets are tied up in property and loans, but overall, the CRA has a high rate of liquidity. While these assets are considerable, the equity alone does not go far in the Cambridge real estate market, with its scarcity of land and high construction costs characteristic of the Boston region.

The ability to optimize the capital structure and use available financial tools to maximize impact and evaluate investment will be critical as greater investment in projects are made. Currently the CRA restricts equity investment to 30% of its assets and restricts its investments to the state's designated 'legal list.' Going forward, the CRA needs to put together a comprehensive investment plan that aligns the CRA policy goals and strategic interests.

Long Term Strategic Financial Planning

The CRA is at a point of inflection where it can take stock of its considerable resources and decide how best to make this capital work to carry out its mission over the mid to long term. To aid in this decision-making, four different financial scenarios have been developed based on knowledge of past revenues and expenses and future projections of overhead plus known financial commitments and likely revenues from rents and anticipated development in the MXD.

The four scenarios use metaphors to capture the main elements of the strategy. All consider the CRA's net position through 2035. The first two scenarios, the Stockpiling Cash and Spending Everything Down, are designed as extreme cases to bracket the potential future. The last two scenarios offer choices for a more balanced approach to the future. These scenarios are summarized as follows:

1. **Stockpiling Cash**
2. **Spending Everything Down**
3. **Planning Ahead and Saving Resources**
4. **Working to Grow Assets**

Scenario 1 – Stockpiling Cash. This scenario makes no additional programmatic commitments through 2035. Under this scenario, the CRA would collect its funding from the development of the residential tower at 135 Broadway, and the two commercial buildings anticipated by the Eversource Substation Plan. The income is based on a flatlined value of gross floor area from 2020, based on the terms of the current Development Agreement with Boston Properties. In years when there is not a major project expense, the expenses are held at one million dollars for the purposes of the model, with the implication that the CRA would not need to hire more staff if it is carrying out limited projects. This results in the CRA accumulating approximately \$124 million of assets by 2028. Through a conservative investment program of two percent annual growth, the CRA budget would net \$1.5 million annually and CRA assets would grow to \$135 million by 2035. Staff does not expect that this hoarding approach would ever be applicable, especially since it conflicts with the CRA mission, yet the scenario sets a baseline of potential assets and investment opportunities the CRA may have available to spend.

Scenario 2 – Spending Everything Down. This scenario portrays a nearly opposite spending pattern for the CRA. This scenario imagines that the CRA will undertake significant new projects every year that drawdown saving by millions of dollars every year. While the income projections remain the same as in the first scenario, including investment income, once the gross floor area sales are complete, the CRA assets diminish rapidly as it spends in a manner similar to the current pace of project delivery. Thus, under Scenario 2 the CRA spends all its resources by 2035, and likely would close at that time. While this is an extreme scenario, it does illustrate that high levels of spending can deliver strong public benefits, that approach does not set the CRA on a course for long term sustainability or fulfilling its long-term stewardship commitments.

Scenario 3 – Planning Ahead and Saving Resources. While holding the income expectations and administrative costs constant, Scenario 3 limits the number of new projects that are launched by the CRA over the next 10 years. Once the CRA's Kendall based income is received, the CRA would take on

new projects up to a limit where an operating endowment is established. This forecasts that by maintaining \$40 million in assets, the CRA could sustain its operations indefinitely but likely would do this by carrying out a series of relatively smaller revenue-neutral projects (say 5 to 7) in the \$15 million range. These projects do not bring about returns, but if paced appropriately, leave the CRA with stable resources to live off of by 2035.

Scenario 4 – Working to Grow Assets. This scenario builds off the previous scenario but sets a course for the CRA whereby some new projects do not represent losses but are instead investments that deliver returns over time. The project selection process for the CRA would consider a mixture of projects that may include projects that draw down funds (e.g., parks, Forward Fund), revenue neutral projects (below market rents that cover operating costs) and real estate investment or other financial tools such as loans that provide a return or at least a rotating source of funds.

From the analysis of the CRA’s financial status and these scenarios, the following seven principles can be derived to inform project selection and priorities.

1. **Invest in financial systems and human resources** (management, retention, professional development): The CRA needs to be highly accountable for its assets and investments, while delivering projects successfully.
2. **Balance our future project portfolio:** A mix of projects would include those that draw down funds, those that are revenue-neutral, and those that are revenue-generating (Working to Grow Assets scenario).
3. **Manage expectations:** Recognize that the CRA’s capacity in this real estate market is somewhat limited and may involve a series of relatively small capital projects over the next 10 to 15 years (Planning Ahead and Saving Resources scenario).
4. **Make the CRA’s assets work harder:** The CRA can optimize when and how it borrows money to leverage its assets and increase its impact.
5. **Leverage our impact through partnerships:** in addition to resources, the CRA’s value proposition is its staff expertise and redevelopment tools, which can complement private for-profit, non-profit, and public agency initiatives.
6. **Invest in due diligence:** A contingency fund can be built into the budget to vet projects according to staff capacity, opportunity cost, risk, and alignment with mission and these financial planning strategies, prior to bringing them to the Board or the City.

This approach to managed growth suggests the need for the CRA to add staff selectively to ensure a strong operational infrastructure and the expertise to carry out projects. The CRA should determine and consistently re-evaluate the minimum asset portfolio, likely a mixture of cash investments and

income producing properties, that could provide a baseline set of resources that support the CRA's long term sustainability.

8.0 LEARNING, GROWTH, AND ENGAGEMENT

The CRA works within a complex public, nonprofit, and private network. Each of the many organizations have their own mission, with many overlaps, suggesting the value of collaboration to realize shared interests, to minimize redundancy, and to fill gaps. Throughout the Strategic Planning process, the CRA staff have worked to identify key partners and to build an office culture that values time spent in building relationships with those in other organizations. Informal relationships, especially those that reach into underrepresented communities, can become the basis for future partnerships.

From its restart in 2013, the CRA has been deeply committed to community engagement in all of its endeavors, yet acknowledges that there were community members that were not reached and not involved or involved enough. Too often these are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color residents and small businesses that are consistently underrepresented in public outreach processes. The CRA should always be learning from previous community input and processes, working to engage a more diverse and inclusive representation of community, while also respecting people's time and minimizing community fatigue.

The CRA is committed to not just listening, but acting based on knowledge and ideas generated in the community. True community engagement works to involve people on greater and greater levels of decision making. To this end, the CRA has been instrumental in forming the Foundry Advisory Committee and more recently put in place a Strategic Advisory Group, both of which represent the diversity of the city on multiple dimensions. In the future, the hope is that some members of these committees could become candidates to fill future CRA Board positions.

Partners, Stakeholders, and Constituencies

Through the CRA's many programs and projects, a wide range of neighborhood residents and other constituencies have come into contact with the work of the CRA over the last few years (Figure XX, *Partnership Relationship Diagram*). A commitment to the public interest, transparency, action, and community engagement has gained the CRA many allies across Cambridge. The CRA also has developed relationships with a large population of Forward Fund grantees now that the program is in its ninth year. The Forward Fund in particular gives the CRA a unique insight into the needs and challenges of many non-profits and small businesses in the city. In some cases, this has become fertile ground for collaboration and ultimately more formal partnerships. This growth in relationships, as people and organizations move from constituents to partners, animates the work of

the CRA and ensures that it is grounded in the community and working alongside relevant and diverse organizations.

The overlapping spheres of work can be confusing to many, particularly the role of the City as compared to the CRA. Mapping out these roles in relation to key topics helps illustrate some of the differences while also highlighting the strength of the non-profit sector in tackling these issues as well (Table 3).

Table 3. Chart of City, CRA, and Non-Profit Sector Roles

ISSUES	City	CRA	CDC's (HRI, JAS)	BID	Other Partners
Affordable Space for Small Business/ Non-Profits	Citywide: data, programs, resources, COVID-19 funds	Forward Fund, COVID-19 funds, 99 Bishop Allen, Foundry		Marketing Ambassadors Clean/Safe	Business Assoc's; Black Business Network, Chamber
Affordable Housing	Citywide: inclusionary housing, Trust Fund, CPA, homebuyer classes and financing, CHA	JAS loans; Margaret Fuller lot; MXD off-site housing	Affordable housing development, preservation, and resident services		Cambridge Residents Alliance
Culture	Cambridge Arts Council	Foundry; Forward Fund		Marketing; pop-ups; murals; events	Many dance, theater, arts, youth orgs.
Workforce	Neighborhood Jobs Trust; youth and other programs	The Link; Foundry; research studies	Workforce training (JAS)		Many education and training providers
Parks/ Civic Spaces	Citywide: planning, design, construction, maintenance	Parcel 6, Point Park, Kendall Sq. activation		Activation	Open space advocacy groups
Transportation	Citywide: planning, design, maintenance of bike lanes, sidewalks, streets	KSTEP, Kendall Square studies, 6 th Street, Binney Street			Bike and transit advocacy groups
Climate Change and Energy	Citywide: planning and policies	Project-based sustainability	Project-based sustainability		Environmental advocacy groups
Development Approvals	Citywide: design review; zoning and permitting	MXD development and design review			

Notes: “The Community Development Department is the planning agency for the City of Cambridge.” (CDD website); “As a real estate entity that works in the public interest, [the CRA offers] distinctive public policy tools and a human dimension to our projects and partnerships throughout the city.” (excerpt CRA Mission)

Strategic Advisory Group

The CRA’s Strategic Advisory Group was established in in November 2021 during the middle of this strategic planning process. This group of knowledgeable residents, small business owners, non-profit leaders, and others have broadened the CRA’s access to diverse voices, different perspectives, and various areas of expertise in order to inform our Strategic Plan and its implementation. The Advisory Group is developing its voice as it serves as a sounding board for reflecting on CRA initiatives and informing future ones.

The Strategic Advisory Group currently has 12 members with members representing many neighborhoods across the City as well as a wide diversity of lived experience, skills, and talents. The SAG is advisory to the Executive Director and has been established initially for a one-year term to advise in relation to the Strategic Plan. The members committed to meeting four to six times per year from fall 2021 to fall 2022. At this point, the CRA should consider extending this governance structure with a set of staggered terms for members of the Advisory Group to make it a more permanent element of the CRA’s governance.

Professional Development and Staff Support

Professional development offers opportunities for staff learning and growth, and when done together, can build a stronger sense of team within the agency. Staff experienced the power of joint learning when they participated in the 12-week professional development program, Inclusion Drives Innovation (IDI). This program, which was offered by the Kendall Square Association (KSA) focused on building anti-racist organizations.

In many other areas identified throughout this report, staff could benefit from participating in professional development, which should be considered an investment for the organization as well as an employee benefit. Currently staff can identify professional development programs on their annual performance review report, but it seems that additional mentoring and awareness may be needed make this opportunity more feasible.

As the staff has grown, there are more transactions related to benefits, more coaching necessary for professional development, more support needed to ensure complete and timely performance reviews, and more support for hiring and procurement processes. Processes need to be in place to support staff when issues arise to ensure a healthy working environment.

Performance reviews are an opportunity for staff to reflect on and communicate their goals for the upcoming year. This may include requests for support in the workplace, improved mentoring, and/or professional development. It also provides a forum for honest feedback from management on jobs well done and performance areas that need more work or could benefit from additional training.

APPENDIX A. STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The Strategic Plan has been developed through three overlapping phases of work:

- Discovery Phase (February to July 2021)
- Strategic Priorities (August 2021 to June 2022)
- Mission Alignment (September 2021 to August 2022)

Over the course of the planning process, certain recommendations have been implemented, especially regarding internal operations and strategic processes. Learning and discovery, especially with its focus on community outreach, has been continuous, although many aspects of working through the pandemic have been challenging. The process of developing ideas, listening to others, and testing strategies has allowed the CRA team to move forward with some aspects of the Strategic Plan over the last 18 months, while refining the final recommendations.

The Board participated in early work sessions in 2020 and were regularly briefed on the scope of the staff's findings in the Discovery Phase (March, April, and July 2021). Individual interviews with Board members in August 2021 form the basis for the strategic plan vision and strategic priorities. The Board was briefed on the formation of the Strategic Advisory Committee in Fall 2021 and participated in mission-based discussions in September 2021 and January 2022.

The staff were actively engaged in the development of the Strategic Plan, especially the Discovery Phase. Bi-weekly meetings were held virtually between February and July 2021, and staff worked in teams to analyze and evaluate the CRA's work to date and the current status of external activities, internal operations, financial considerations, and learning and development. Each team led discussions and produced a draft memo, all of which has been foundational to this report. From these many sources, the CRA's Strategic Planner has prepared this current plan.

In order to understand better its position in the community, the staff mapped out key partners, stakeholders, and constituencies and developed strategies for outreach. An important goal of this effort was to strengthen individual relationships, learn about the work of other organizations, and hear different perspectives regarding the CRA and its work. The pandemic made this outreach particularly difficult to carry out, although several informal conversations were held over the course of 2021 and 2022.

During the planning process, the Board decided to establish a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), which would have a diverse representative membership and would provide a sounding board for elements of the Strategic Plan. Between August and December 2021, the staff focused on developing a call for applications, reviewing applications, interviewing potential candidates, and finally selecting the 12 members of the SAG. SAG meetings were held in December 2021, and January, March, and June

2022 to discuss the CRA mission, Discovery Phase findings, the role of diversity/equity/inclusion in the CRA's work, and issues and community priorities in Kendall Square, Central Square, and elsewhere in the city. These discussions are valuable in helping to set priorities for external activities discussed in this Strategic Plan, in clarifying the CRA identity in the community, and in advising the CRA as it charts its course forward.

APPENDIX B. CRA PROJECTS 2013-2022

The CRA's role has evolved considerably over the last seven years also. Most of the CRA's responsibilities at the time of the previous Strategic Plan were grounded in project review and approval of development projects in Kendall Square. The 2014 Strategic Plan developed a framework for future activities that has helped guide decision-making, with categories defined as real estate transactions, placemaking, strategy, and management, across different geographies. In recent years, the CRA has become more pro-active, generating ideas for projects, partnering with more organizations, conducting research, influencing policy, participating in streetscape design, retrofitting space for new programs, and implementing parks and building developments.

Design review, transportation mitigation, and open space maintenance have been ongoing responsibilities in Kendall Square, while major projects such as new parks, streetscapes, the IDCP, and the Eversource project represent major implementation steps toward realizing the City's K2 Plan. Over the last seven years, the CRA has also been growing its Cambridge-wide presence (Figure XX). The Forward Fund has helped to expand the CRA's footprint and has connected the CRA to non-profit and community organizations across the city (Figure XX). In 2020-2021, in response to the COVID crisis, the CRA in partnership with the City provided \$1,500,000 zero interest five-year loans to 104 small business (Figure XX). Notably the loans included businesses in Harvard Square and Porter Square, areas of the city with which the CRA had little previous interaction. Projects such as the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House, work with the Central Square BID, and the redevelopment of 99 Bishop Allen Drive has worked to expand the CRA's presence in Central Square, while the Foundry and loans to Just-a-Start have expanded the activities in East Cambridge.

Out of the roughly two dozen projects that the CRA has undertaken, approximately half of them are complete. The CRA also balances projects that have short-term and long-term obligations (Figure XX). Long-term projects include regulating the KSURP, stewardship of the Foundry, ownership and operation of 99 Bishop Allen, and maintenance and programming of open spaces in Kendall Square. Other projects, such as the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House, the Binney/Broadway/Galileo Streetscape redesign project and Rindge Neighborhood Connectivity are examples of current medium to short-term initiatives. Current and Ongoing Projects as of 2022 are outlined below.

Grant Funding/Loans

- Forward Fund Grants
- COVID Small Business Relief Grant (East Cambridge/Kendall Square)
- COVID Small Business Relief Loan (underwriting and servicing loans)
- COVID Childcare Safety Support Grant + Equipment Grants

Placemaking (mostly in Kendall Square)

- Broadway/Main/Third Streetscape Design
- Binney/Broadway/Galileo Streetscape Design

- Open Space POPS - Signage Identity
- Grand Junction Park
- Galaxy Park
- 6th Street Walkway
- Third and Binney Civic Space/Parcel 6
- Ames Place Open Space (Danny Lewin Park)
- Rindge Connectivity
- 325 Main Street Wayfinding + Art Master Plan (Art Block)
- Walk of Fame expansion in KS Plaza (DEI)

Development Projects

- Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House
- 99 Bishop Allen Drive
- The Foundry

Asset Management

- 99 Bishop Allen Drive
- The Foundry

Oversight / Coordination / Mitigation

- Link
- Innovation Space
- Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Program (KSTEP)
- Annual Transportation Report

KSURP Development Approval and Oversight

- Infill Development (IDCP) master plan and building design approval to Certificate of Completion (coordination with PB)
- Signage review
- Eversource Substation (MXD Petition and KSURP Amendment 11)
- 325 Main Street
- 145 Broadway
- 75 Ames Expansion (M-1)
- Retail activation (255 Main Street)
- Marriott Walkway
- DNA Atrium (415 Main Street)
- 135 Broadway

Policy Research and Information

- Legacy eminent domain and displacement study

- Land parcel actions from urban renewal
- Sasaki Kendall Square Visualization
- Historic and photographic archives

APPENDIX C. CONTEXT OF CURRENT CAMBRIDGE TOPICS

Although much has changed due to the pandemic, many other urban challenges and aspirations remain constant, and Cambridge is no exception. The Board, staff, and Strategic Advisory Group identified a wide range of topics that the City, the community, and other stakeholders are working on, which provides context for the CRA as it determines priorities. These include mobility, green infrastructure, housing, affordable non-profit and retail space, and job training, and are outlined in more detail below.

Mobility: The shared use of streets and the allocation of the right-of-way for pedestrians, bike lanes, parking, bus service, trucks, and automobiles presents an ongoing challenge in various districts and neighborhoods. In some parts of the city, the bike network is incomplete, such as Alewife, while in others, opportunities to connect remain undecided, such as the Grand Junction corridor. The CRA work on KSTEP projects, bike lanes, and streetscapes has helped address these issues.

Green Infrastructure: As a fully developed city, the amount, quality, and accessibility of open space for a wide range of uses and users is a constant dialogue. The health of the urban forest, storm water management, climate change resiliency, brownfield reclamation, and design of proposed parks are frequent topics. The CRA has been involved in addressing this issue in the IDCP approval process, its stewardships of Galaxy Park and Grand Junction Park, and its planning for Alewife connections, but the need is ongoing.

Housing: Cambridge is fortunate to have a strong infrastructure for delivering affordable housing, with inclusionary zoning, the Housing Trust Fund, Community Preservation Act, and an active Housing Authority, City Housing Department, and community development corporations. Yet with growing wealth inequality and the desirability of Cambridge as a location, constant topics of concern are the need for affordable housing and housing rehabilitation, unhoused population and the need for supportive housing, the cost and availability of land, home ownership and wealth building opportunities, moderate income housing, the quality of neighborhoods, and the wellbeing of vulnerable populations (access to food, services, etc.). The CRA has issued loans to Just-a-Start, is working on improved facilities and infill housing at Margaret Fuller, and has committed to new affordable home ownership development as part of the Eversource development.

Affordable Non-Profit and Retail Space: The pandemic exacerbated the challenges faced by many small businesses, including the need for affordable space, a desire to maintain and foster diverse business ownership, competition from national chains, online shopping, and other platforms for product delivery. Redevelopment and reinvestment in properties inevitably leads to rent increases. Rising rents also affects non-profits' ability to remain in Cambridge, particularly in Central Square and on Cambridge Street. Non-profit capacity and operation costs remain a concern for some. The emergency response to acquire and redevelop 99 Bishop Allen Drive is a reflection of this issue. The CRA partnered with the City in issuing small business grants and loans during the pandemic, acquired

and renovated 99 Bishop Allen as a home for non-profit organizations, has supported many small businesses and non-profits through Forward Fund grants, and has provided affordable space for food trucks on Third Street. The CRA leveraged its Innovation Space requirement to create a non-profit center focused on workforce development (the LINK) and foster the planning for an entrepreneurial food hall in Kendall Square.

Cultural Spaces: With rising rents and change in property ownership, several long time cultural spaces have been lost or are under threat, especially in Central Square, including dance studios, art studios, galleries, and nightclubs. Civic and cultural facilities and settlement houses have facilities that are frequently in need of repair. New projects like the Foundry and the proposed performance center at 585 Third Street offset these losses to some degree, but more could be done to preserve and expand opportunities. The CRA helped establish the Central Square Business Improvement District (BID), which has a prominent role in promoting and stewarding cultural resources, but long term operations will need to be sustainable. The CRA has been asked to get more deeply involved in cultural facilities creating in Central Square, including the evaluation of City owned lots, such as Lot 5.

Job Training: An ongoing concern for many is how to better connect neighborhood residents with access to jobs, especially upper level positions, recognizing the divide between low-income underrepresented populations and the tech world centered on Kendall Square. The CRA was instrumental in establishing the LINK, has held up workforce training as a central mission of the Foundry, and worked jointly to publish the recent UMass Donahue Center report on the Cambridge workforce.