



July 2, 2019

Members of the Cambridge City Council,

This letter is written on behalf of the Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition (CNC) to express our support for the 100% affordable housing overlay. Our statement represents the voices of many nonprofit leaders serving the Cambridge residents most deeply impacted by the affordable housing crisis.

Although there are clear differences of opinion on this proposal, there are values we all share in Cambridge. We want to live in a community that takes care of its residents, and that celebrates diversity in all forms. We believe that diversity is a key driver for making Cambridge such a vibrant place to live and work. We love Cambridge deeply, or we wouldn't be fighting for its future.

The current lack of available affordable housing options, however, is in sharp contrast with the values we express. The Cambridge Community Needs Assessment (2017) details some alarming statistics that are affirmed by previous citizen surveys and assessments.

1. **In 2014 a market rate one-bedroom apartment was out of reach for over half of Cambridge households.** This gap only widens for larger units.
2. **In 2013 the waitlist for housing vouchers and public housing was over 9,000 households long, demand outstripping supply by roughly 300%**
3. **Furthermore, because income and housing affordability are closely linked, and the median income by race is inequitable, access to housing is inequitable by race as well.**

CNC supports the 100% affordable housing overlay because it will add a tool to create additional units affordable housing. At its core, we believe this is an issue of equity. If the Cambridge community is serious about maintaining our rich diversity, we must be willing to change our systems in ways that allow all residents access to safe, affordable, and appropriate housing.

The opponents of this proposal will say that they believe in affordable housing but not this proposal, and that the City of Cambridge and the Council should wait until another alternative is identified. We strongly disagree, as we know that waiting is a privilege that the clients our

members work with simply do not have. We need to do something now to create more affordable units and use every tool at our disposal to do so.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Maria LaPage, Agassiz Baldwin Community
Rouwenna Altemose, All in Energy
Gina Scaramella, Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
Elissa Spelman, Breakthrough Greater Boston
Sharon Zimmerman, Cambridge Camping Association
Darrin Korte, Cambridge Community Center
Tina Alu, Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee
Bob Gittens, Cambridge Family and Children's Service
Theodora Skeadas, Cambridge Local First
Jennifer Fries, Cambridge School Volunteers
Laura Jasinski, Charles River Conservancy
Jane Hirschi, CitySprouts
David Gibbs, Community Action Agency of Somerville
Eryn Johnson, Community Art Center
Gail Packer, Community Dispute Settlement Center
Michael Delia, East End House
Ben Clark, Enroot (formerly Cambridge Community Services)
Jessica Taubner, FII- Greater Boston
Sasha Purpura, Food for Free
Shiela Moore, Hildebrand Family Self-Help Center
Peter Daly, Homeowner's Rehab
Michael Dawson, Innovators for Purpose
Deborah Ruhe, Just-A-Start Corporation
Selvin Chambers, Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House
Paulo Pinto, Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers
Martha Sandler, On the Rise
Sarah Gyorog, Transition House
Kathryn Fenneman, Tutoring Plus of Cambridge
Bruce Bird, Vinfen
Jessye Kass, The Women's Center
Joan Squeri, The Union Partnership for a Whole Community
Eva Martin Blythe, YWCA Cambridge

(CNC Member Abstentions: Cambridge Community Television, Eradicate Childhood Obesity Foundation(EChO), The Loop Lab)