



## TRANSITION HOUSE

January 29, 2015

Via email: [council@cambridgema.gov](mailto:council@cambridgema.gov)

To The Honorable Cambridge City Council:

Re: Community Benefits and Mitigation Fund Plan

I am writing on behalf of Transition House, Inc. in support of the plan recommended by the City Manager for a new Community Benefits and Mitigation Plan.

Transition House is a founding member of the Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition, which was created in 2012 with a mission to strengthen the Cambridge nonprofit sector by building collective voice and promoting collaboration in order to meet changing needs and improve the quality of life for the community.

As the leader of an organization that works at the intersection of some of the most pressing social issues: domestic violence, poverty homelessness, affordable housing, economic and gender inequality, and immigration, I understand many of the challenges and unmet needs facing marginalized members of our community. I believe that by working together--and across sectors--we can leverage community resources to both better identify and quantify community needs, prioritize them conscientiously, and drive policies to tackle tough problems in a sustainable way.

As a long time community member, I know that we, collectively, can do a better job alleviating the social and economic injustices that hold many in our community back. Innovation is not just about emerging technology and start-up businesses. It's about breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for new kinds of connections to develop among community members in Cambridge. It's about creating a civic culture that embraces community challenges with all deliberate intention and necessary resources to solve them.

This is how Transition House approaches its work every day. This is what motivates the members of Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition to join together. This is what our city needs to thrive.

Creating a fair and transparent Community Benefits plan is one part of an evolving



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strategy.

The Manager's proposed plan incorporates key criteria that are crucial to the Cambridge nonprofit community and the people we serve, including:

- Community and data-driven needs assessment
- Funding decisions are based on the outcomes of the needs assessment
- Inclusion of nonprofits in the needs assessment, process oversight and decision making
- Transparent process that is simple, clear, and value-driven
- Informed design process based on best practices
- A decision making body that is inclusive and represents Cambridge diversity

I strongly urge you to support this plan. And I look forward to continuing work with each of you as well as with Mr. Rossi and his team to advance collaboration between the Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition and the City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Risa Mednick". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Risa Mednick  
Executive Director