

ACTUAL FY06	PROJECTED FY07		BUDGET FY08	VETERANS' SERVICES/BENEFITS
\$308,975	\$309,540	ADMINISTRATION	\$305,600	PURPOSE & OVERVIEW: Mandated by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 115, the department's mission is to advocate on behalf of Cambridge veterans and their families, provide them with quality support services and direct a financial assistance program for those veterans and/or their dependents who are in need. The primary function of the department is to administer a benefits program which provides monetary aid to qualified veterans and/or their dependents for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, personal needs, insurance, fuel, telephone and transportation, as well as medical, dental, hospital and burial expenses. The Commonwealth reimburses the City 75% of the cost of this benefits program. The department assists Global War on Terrorism veterans in applying for a state cash bonus of \$1,000 for those who served in Iraq or Afghanistan and \$500 for all others. In addition, the department assists veterans who are 100% disabled, parents or wives of veterans killed-in-action, and surviving spouses of veterans who died as a result of a service-connected injury, in receiving an annual \$2,000 annuity at no cost to the City. The department also assists veterans and their dependents in applying for federal VA benefits such as service connected compensations, disability pensions, personal needs/aids and attendance pensions, medical, education, housing, employment, life insurance and death benefits as well as social security/disability benefits. In FY07, Cambridge veterans and/or their dependents received \$2.9 million in federal Veterans' Administration benefits. The department also provides assistance in filing for City tax exemptions and abatements earmarked for veterans or their surviving spouses. The department coordinates public events on Patriots', Veterans' and Memorial days, including the Memorial Day parade. On Memorial Day, in conjunction with the Cambridge Veterans' Organization (CVO), over 9,000 flags are placed on the graves of veterans interred in Cambridge cemeteries. In addition, the department participates in the dedication of streets, squares and parks for veterans killed-in-action. The department also serves as Burial/Graves Agent for indigent Cambridge residents (non-veterans) that are buried in the Cambridge cemetery.
<u>\$278,490</u>	<u>\$301,500</u>	BENEFITS	<u>\$314,500</u>	
\$587,465	\$611,040		\$620,100	
		<p>SIGNIFICANT BUDGET MODIFICATIONS: An increase of \$28,000 for veterans' benefits based on the FY07 projected costs and estimated FY08 increases is included in the FY08 Veteran's Budget. The veterans' benefits budget is \$314,500 with this increase. It is anticipated that the state will reimburse the City for a portion of these cost increases. In addition, \$6,000 has been added to cover increased costs of ceremonial events.</p> <p>FY07 MAJOR DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a new automated computer software system to enhance office operations, state reporting and establish a client-based information system, in addition to streamlining the client payment process. • Continued to enhance the department's Web site, ensuring that quality up-to-date information is available 		

to veterans and their families.

- Implemented revised changes in policies and procedures, pursuant to CMR 108 (Massachusetts Veterans Benefits Laws and Regulations), effective July 2006.
- Worked closely with the Assessing Department to reach veterans who may be eligible for "new" FY07 property tax exemptions/abatements.
- In conjunction with the School Department, implemented a new state program that allows certain Massachusetts war veterans who withdrew from high school permanently to serve as a member of the armed forces in World War II, the Korean Conflict or Vietnam, and who did not receive high school diplomas, to be awarded a diploma.
- As a member of the State's Legislative Commission on Veterans' Employment Opportunities, issued a report recommending the enforcement of veterans' preference laws: designating Global War on Terrorism veterans as a "protected class" in state and local hiring; giving tax relief to employers that hire veterans; and establishing a "Veterans' Medical Leave Act", that grants additional time away from work for those veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of combat duty.
- Implemented a new federal Department of Veterans' Affairs program that allows for the placing of a Veterans' Grave Marker on private graves.
- Assisted 20 veterans/dependants in accessing federal VA benefits, exclusive of Ch. 115 clients. To date 8 cases have been awarded favorably and 12 cases are pending.

Figure 1: FY06 Veterans, Spouses and Dependants Receiving City Subsidies

The Veteran's Services Department has the primary responsibility to assist veterans, their spouses and dependants in applying for federal benefits and also provide them with a City/State subsidy when eligible.

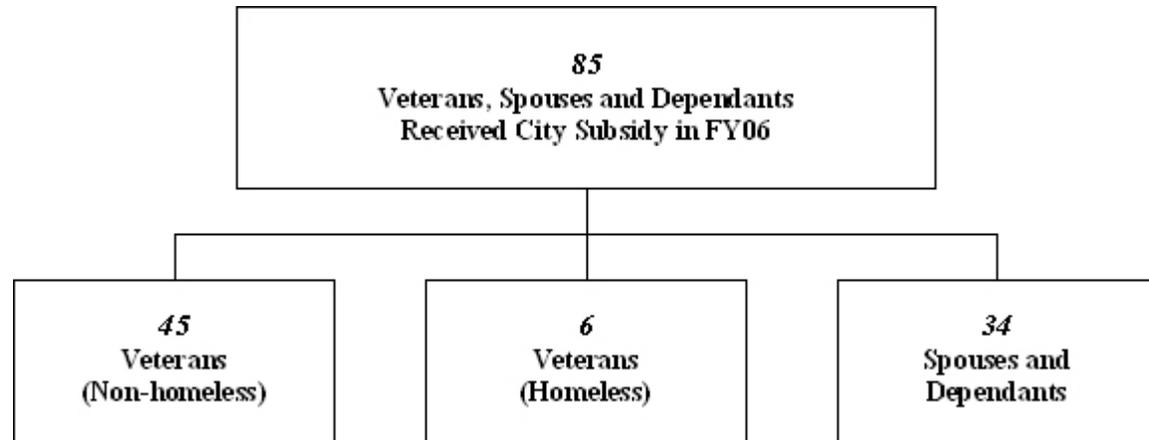
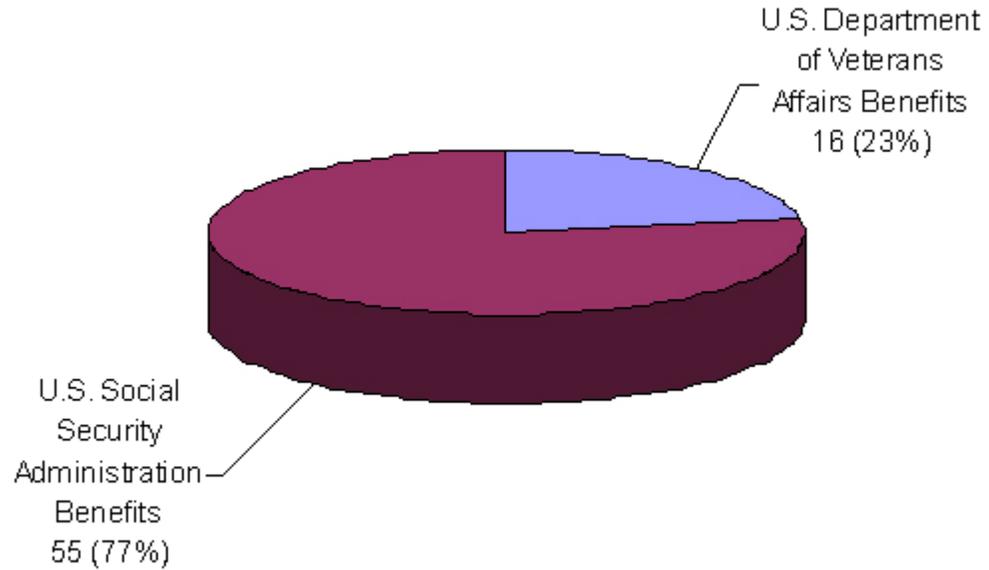


Figure 2: FY06 Clients Receiving a City Subsidy and Federal Assistance

Between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006 there were 71 clients, Veterans, Spouses and Dependents that received both a City Subsidy and Federal Assistance from either the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or the U.S. Social Security Administration. In addition, the Veterans' office reviews all new federal benefits programs to ensure that all eligible clients apply for any benefits that they are entitled to.



FY08 GOALS

- *GOAL 1: Continue compliance with MGL Chapter 115 (Veterans' Benefits) regulations.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY06 ACTUAL	FY07 BUDGET	FY07 PROJECTED	FY08 PROPOSED
1. Ensure applications are forwarded for approval to the state within 10 days after intake	100%	100%	100%	100%

■ *GOAL 1: (continued)*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY06 ACTUAL	FY07 BUDGET	FY07 PROJECTED	FY08 PROPOSED
2. Develop a case management plan for each new client within 30 days of intake	100%	100%	100%	100%
3. Ensure state returns for reimbursement are forwarded to the state within 30 days following the payment month	100%	100%	100%	100%

■ *GOAL 2: Increase public awareness of veterans' benefits, services and events by issuing informational announcements on City TV 8.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY06 ACTUAL	FY07 BUDGET	FY07 PROJECTED	FY08 PROPOSED
1. Number of informational announcements televised on municipal cable TV	n/a	n/a	3	6

■ *GOAL 3: Increase community participation in veterans' ceremonial events by increasing public awareness through personal presentations, media utilization, linkages with schools, community organizations and other City departments. Continue the ceremonial and public events function of the Department by honoring both living and deceased veterans.*

■ *GOAL 4: Produce timely updates to the Veterans' Department Web page.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY06 ACTUAL	FY07 BUDGET	FY07 PROJECTED	FY08 PROPOSED
1. Number of veterans benefits updates	12	12	12	12
2. Number of informational/current event updates	13	14	14	14

- *GOAL 5: Continue to upgrade staff skills with an emphasis on team building, skill sharing and accountability.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY06 ACTUAL	FY07 BUDGET	FY07 PROJECTED	FY08 PROPOSED
1. Number of internal staff trainings	4	4	4	4
2. Number of external trainings	12	12	12	12

- *GOAL 6: Aggressively identify and access federal and state resources for eligible clients.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY06 ACTUAL	FY07 BUDGET	FY07 PROJECTED	FY08 PROPOSED
1. Conduct assessments and evaluations of client eligibility for federal and state benefits; number of assessments	4	4	4	4

FINANCING PLAN	DETAIL	SUMMARY
TAXES		\$418,770
Real Estate Taxes	\$418,770	
INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE		\$201,330
Veterans' Reimbursement	\$4,500	
Cherry Sheet-Veteran Benefits	\$196,830	
TOTAL FY08 BUDGETED REVENUE		\$620,100

STATUTORY ANALYSIS	SUMMARY
SALARIES & WAGES	\$246,050
OTHER ORDINARY MAINTENANCE	\$54,900
TRAVEL & TRAINING	\$319,150
EXTRAORDINARY EXPENDITURES	\$0
TOTAL FY08 BUDGETED EXPENDITURES	\$620,100

FULL TIME BUDGETED EMPLOYEES	FY06	FY07	FY08
	3	3	3