
State of the City

Chelsea

2018



*Presented by City Manager Tom Ambrosino
to the Chelsea City Council and the Residents of Chelsea*

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Chelsea City Hall. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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City Manager's Statement

Dear Reader:

I'm proud to present the 2018 State of the City Report. It has been an exciting year for Chelsea. We've been working hard to deliver high quality, efficient public services and to improve the quality of life for all residents.

This Report highlights some of the important developments underway in our City. Although Chelsea has its share of urban ills, City employees and community partners are dedicated to tackling these problems, strengthening the City and better responding to residents' needs. Whether it's adopting a new technology to make an issue more transparent or forming a cross-sector taskforce to get to the root of a problem, the City is exploring innovative tactics to address long-standing public sector issues. We're excited to build on the momentum from 2017 and make 2018 the best year yet for Chelsea.

I hope you enjoy reading this Report. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, comments or concerns. You can visit me in City Hall in Room 302, write me at tambrosino@chelseama.gov or call me at 617-466-4100.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas G. Ambrosino". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Thomas G. Ambrosino
City Manager

Progress in Chelsea

Improved Communication and Transparency

Social media: Facebook and Twitter

The City has made a concerted effort this past year to increase its social media presence. The City of ChelseaMassachusetts-Gov Facebook page has grown to more than 1500 followers. Chelsea has also grown its Twitter page, @ChelseaGov_MA with a current follower base in excess of 500. Included on these pages are many informational updates, along with community events. To keep up to date, please follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

City Website: Increased video presence and access to information

The City also made a number of improvements to its website as part of an effort to ease access to public services. For example, we put our Facebook feed and Twitter feed directly onto the City website. We also added more information on each Department's page, in both text and video form. Our Social Media Specialist will continue to update the news from the City on a daily basis.

Open Data Portal: Increasing transparency

In an effort to increase the City's transparency beyond social media, the City chose OpenGov as our Open Data Portal vendor. The goal of this effort is to make City data accessible to Chelsea residents and partners, to improve the delivery of services, and to enhance coordination and efficiency among departments. With this new software, we will soon be making City data more user-friendly and accessible.

Amusement / Entertainment license

The online Amusement / Entertainment license for Chelsea, MA. Please note, that once has been submitted the deadline is satisfied.

OVERVIEW DATA & STATS

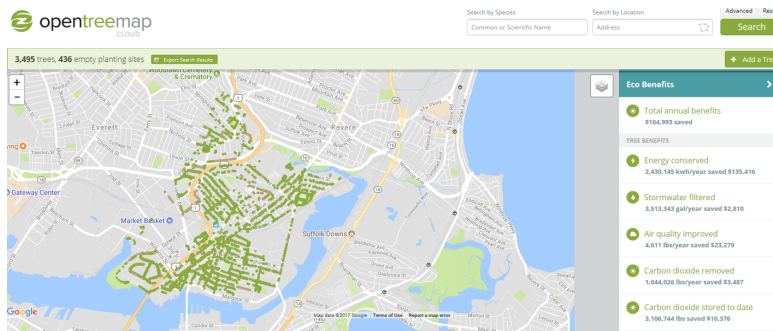
STEPS

- Petitioner: Instructions & Overview**
For the amusement / entertainment license. Please carefully read and review.
- Petitioner: Application Information**
- Petitioner: Attest And Sign**
- Petitioner: Application Fee**
- City Preliminary Review**
- City: Document Check**
City licensing staff review the application for completeness and add/upload any missing documents submitted by the petitioner.
- City: Internal Tracking**
Review application and application fee completion. Add the scheduled date of any required public hearings. Confirm the number of amusement device categories (this will be the number used for calculation of the license fee due).

Snapshot of online licensing application

Online licensing: Easing the licensing application and renewal process

We've recognized the growing demand for online permitting on behalf of businesses and residents, and have set up online licensing for three specific licenses: Amusement/Entertainment application, Common Victualler application, and Rooming House application. We will be exploring online licensing for parking permits and building permits in the coming year.



Snapshot of Open Tree Map

Open Tree Map: Technology to measure and promote tree growth

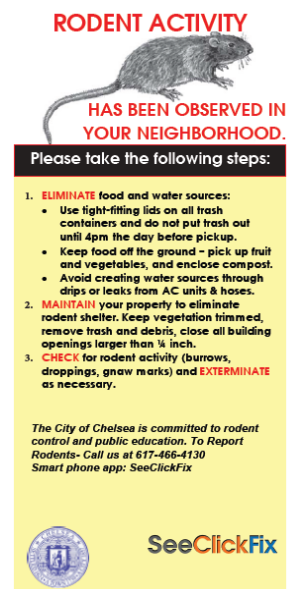
The City recently unveiled new software called Open Tree Map which tracks all of the City's trees and their current status. To experiment with this new software, go to <https://www.opentreemap.org/chelseama/map>.

City Hall Greeters: a welcoming City Hall.

In order to make City Hall more welcoming and inviting, the City Council approved funding for a small group of City Hall Greeters. Starting in the Spring, when residents arrive at City Hall to do business, they will be met by a person available to answer questions and direct them to the correct office.

Communications task force: Increasing awareness and access to information

Employees from the City's Planning and Development Department, the City Manager's Office, and the Recreation and Cultural Affairs division came together this year on a weekly basis to streamline the City's communication methods and better interact with the public. Some of their initiatives included raising awareness about ways to combat rat control, increasing information for new homeowners, and simplifying the City Hall phone directory.



Door hanger for residents to raise awareness on rat prevention

Improved Community Engagement and Collaboration



Celebration of receiving the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Prize

In 2017, the City of Chelsea became one of the eight cities nationwide to win the Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Prize. The award is given to a community that demonstrates a commitment to creating a healthy environment. This was truly a collaborative effort, with numerous non-profits, City agencies, residents and elected officials contributing to the work. MGH's Leslie Aldrich and GreenRoots Executive Director Roseann Bongiovanni jointly applied for the Prize. A delegation from the City traveled to New Jersey to accept the Prize, and we had a community-wide celebration this past November at the Williams School. More information about the award is available at <http://www.rwjf.org/Prize>.

Strong Partnerships with Nonprofits

The City continued its strong partnerships with community organizations such as The Neighborhood Developers, ROCA, the Chelsea Collaborative, CAPIC and GreenRoots. Some of these collaborations include: the “Hub,” a weekly meeting of nonprofits and government agencies aimed at providing individuals wraparound support; and “Chelsea Thrives,” a monthly meeting of City leaders focused on cross-sector and cross-agency awareness of initiatives.

Beautification Committee

The Beautification Committee is a team of residents, City officials, nonprofit employees and others who come together each month to take on initiatives that make Chelsea safer and more beautiful. Some of the accomplishments and ongoing projects from this past year include:

- **Welcome to Chelsea signs:** The City commissioned a local artist to paint two “Welcome to Chelsea” signs. The Beautification Committee will, over the course of the next year, commission more decorative signage for the City.
- **New mattress rule:** The Department of Public Works instituted a new rule on trash which took effect on December 1, 2017. The new rule is aimed at preventing the spread of bedbugs by requiring all mattresses placed out for trash pickup by the City’s vendor to be fully wrapped in plastic.
- **Proposed plastic bag ban:** Following the lead of Cambridge, Brookline, Boston, Salem, and 56 other cities in Massachusetts, the Chelsea Beautification Committee began discussing the prospect of a plastic bag ban in Chelsea. The Chelsea City Council will likely make a decision about an ordinance on this topic in the coming months.

Major Community Events

- **Summer Nights in Chelsea Square:** This past Summer, the City sponsored several fun evenings of music downtown.
- **Tree lighting:** This past November, Chelsea hosted its annual tree-lighting, this year with performances by the Back Bay Bell Ringers, Chelsea Community Chorus, Off Broadway and the Apollinaire Theatre. It was a wonderful and festive celebration, which we hope to replicate each year!



Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony



Chelsea's first Paw-Raid

- **Paw-Raid:** In September, the City put on a “Paw-Raid,” where dogs and their friends could walk from Chelsea City Hall to the Mystic Overlook Park.

Partnership with Harvard Innovation Field Lab



Students from the Kennedy School present their proposal on problem properties.

The City continued its collaboration with the Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center and the students in its Innovative Field Lab, who are working with the City to develop a predictive model for addressing problem properties.

Bike-share Program

Last year, following the lead of Worcester and Revere, the City piloted a bike-share program, bringing more transit options to Chelsea residents and visitors. The pilot ran through early December. The City will continue to offer bike-sharing options in 2018, likely partnering with a regional vendor chosen by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.



Chelsea tested a dockless bike-share program last Fall. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Public Safety

One of the City's top priorities has been to improve public safety

Innovative safety and support systems: Walking Patrols, Navigators, Healthy Streets, the Hub, and Selah Day Resource Center

- This year, the Police Department continued its program of dedicating walking patrols seven days a week in Bellingham Square and in the Broadway Business District during the Spring, Summer and Fall.
- The CPD also continued its oversight of the City's comprehensive program to address persistent substance use disorder problems. The program includes two street workers (called Navigators), housing support, clinical outreach and case management for ongoing treatment.

- Healthy Streets, an anti-prostitution effort and outreach program managed by Health Innovators, Inc., continued to target individuals caught up in the sex trade, with the goal of reducing both supply and demand.
- The City of Chelsea's "Hub" continued into its second year. The "Hub" is an innovative crime-reduction initiative led by the Chelsea Police Department. It includes a team of community and government agencies that meet weekly to identify individuals facing elevated levels of risk for crime, and who require the support of more than one agency. Each Hub case receives immediate and coordinated responses through multi-agency mobilization of resources.
- In addition to the Navigators and the Hub, Chelsea is tackling the opioid crisis through their Community Outreach (Overdose) Response Team. As part of the City's public health response to the opiate crisis, first responders and harm-reduction professionals visit individuals that have recently experienced an overdose. The aim is to guide individuals to treatment options and ultimately a path to recovery. Overdose awareness and support is also provided to family members.
- Selah Day Resource Center: This past year, the City partnered with the religious organization, Iglesia La Luz de Cristo, to open a resource center for individuals at risk. The Center is funded in part by a grant from MGH. The church is open from 9am to 1pm and offers breakfast and lunch to individuals struggling with homelessness, addiction and other issues. Visitors are also able to shower on site and get clothing from a clothing bank. Roughly 25 individuals come through the center each day.



Community Engagement Specialist Dan Cortez leads a Hub meeting at the Chelsea Police Department. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The CPD is the lead agency of the Hub; 17 other agencies are participating voluntarily. Over 200 cases have come up since its inception in 2016.

Increasing Capacity through Grants

Bloomberg Mayor's Challenge

The City was recently named as one of 35 finalists in the Bloomberg Mayor's Challenge. This award recognizes innovative efforts in municipalities. Chelsea plans to scale up the Hub crime prevention model, led by the Chelsea Police Department. The City will receive \$100,000 over the next six months and is now eligible to compete for the Bloomberg \$5 million grand prize in the Fall.

Byrne Grant

This year, the City won a three year, \$1 million U.S. Department of Justice Byrne Grant for Re-imagining Broadway. The funds will be utilized to supplement the City's ongoing efforts to address quality of life issues in the downtown, provide technical assistance to downtown businesses and increase public events in the area.

DPH Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition Grant

In 2017, the cities of Chelsea, Revere, Winthrop and Saugus were awarded a five year, \$500,000 grant (\$100,000 annually) from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for Substance Abuse Prevention. The goal of the grant is to educate youth in the four cities against the use of alcohol and other drugs.

A regional manager has been hired and will be working from the MGH Health Center in Chelsea.

OJJDP Grant

The City completed its planning process for the \$1 million U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Grant and is now implementing the program. This year, the City and its non-profit partners, MGH, TND, the Chelsea Collaborative and ROCA will be engaged in activities such as trauma training, youth advocacy and intervention, all aimed at reducing youth violence in the City.



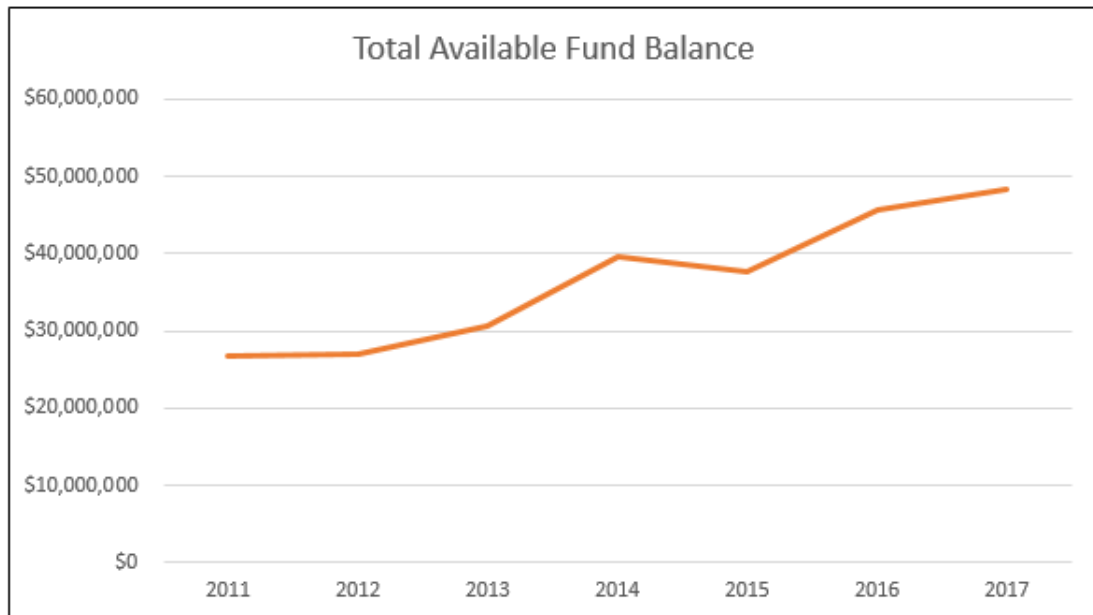
MGH continues to partner with Chelsea on health-related initiatives. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Roca, an anti-poverty organization in Chelsea, continues to partner with the City on crime prevention initiatives. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Financial Investments

The City continues to do well financially, allowing continued investments in facilities, equipment and programs to serve its residents



FY19-FY23 Capital Improvement Plan

- The FY19-FY23 Capital Improvement Plan focuses on public infrastructure improvements, including parks development, building enhancements, water and sewer upgrades, and neighborhood street and sidewalk improvements. The proposed budget for public projects for FY2019 is \$11.5 million. A copy is available here: https://www.chelseama.gov/sites/chelseama/files/uploads/cip19_final_version.pdf.



The Chelsea Fire Department received new vehicles as part of the Capital Improvement Plan.

- One agency that benefited from the capital improvement investment in 2017 was the Fire Department. In October, the Fire Department received a new Ladder 2 and a new Rescue 1 vehicle, purchased through the Capital Improvement Plan and the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, respectively. The Rescue vehicle carries specialized equipment used for technical rescue incidents such as confined space, trench rescue, rope rescue and building collapse.

Economic Development

The City continues to seek economic development opportunities to enhance its tax base and improve the City's already strong economic position

Ongoing projects include:

- The new Holiday Inn on Broadway at the Mill Creek area is taking shape and should open by the Summer of 2018.
- Spencer Lofts, the new 35 unit affordable housing project at the site of the old French Club, is now under construction.
- Phase I of the Fairfield Residential Project at the old Chelsea Clock site has a foundation permit and will break ground shortly.
- A new Hampton Inn is fully permitted for Second St. across from Market Basket, and is awaiting final design review.
- An innovative public-private partnership between the Chelsea Housing Authority and J. Corcoran will hopefully lead to the full redevelopment of the current Innes Apartment Complex on Central Avenue. The redevelopment will preserve current affordable housing and add additional market rate housing.

Chelsea's Downtown

- The City's efforts to improve the Downtown gained momentum this past year. A new Downtown Coordinator was hired, and the City's Chelsea Prospers initiative, the effort to revitalize the Downtown with activities and business improvements, started events this year, including concerts, lunchtime gatherings, and a pilot program for sidewalk dining.



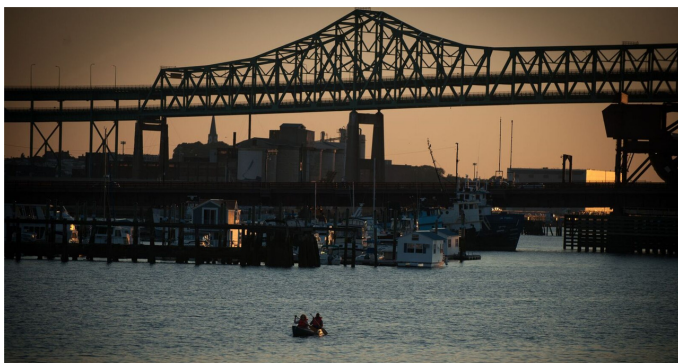
Broadway is the main focus of the downtown initiative. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken.
Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



A view of Broadway in the Downtown District. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

- The Reimagining Broadway initiative remains on track. Final design proposals for the full redevelopment of the Broadway Business Corridor are expected in early 2018.
- A Microenterprise Grant Program will premier in early 2018. These grants will provide technical assistance for small business owners in the Downtown.
- In 2018, the City will solicit proposals for redevelopment of the former Salvation Army site on Broadway.
- The City is also pursuing an opportunity to partner with MassDevelopment in its Transforming Development Initiative for the areas around Bellingham Square.

The City's Planning Department is heavily engaged in efforts to improve Chelsea's future including:



The Tobin Bridge separates Chelsea from Boston. Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

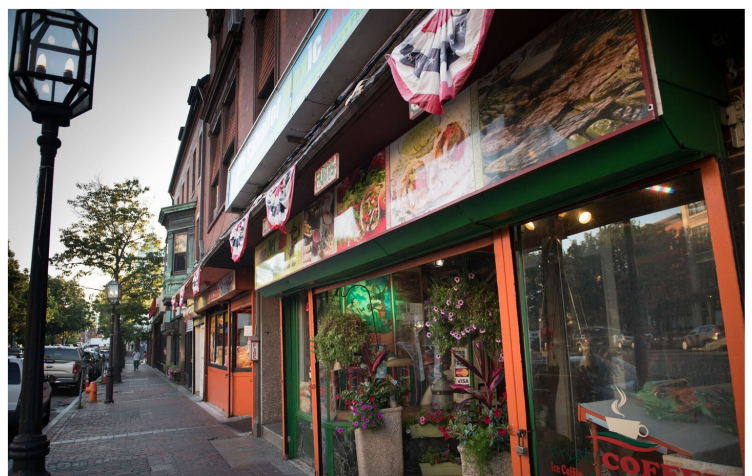
- Overseeing the Municipal Harbor Plan, which will commence in early 2018. The completed Plan will guide permitting and development along the Chelsea Creek for the foreseeable future.



The City continues to build new commercial and residential properties.

- Conducting a Hotel Market and Economic Development Study that will look at the regional market for additional hotel rooms in light of the current supply, the addition of Wynn Boston Harbor, and projected demand for additional rooms and facilities. The study will review different types of hotels, possible sites, and whether additional hotels are the best use of limited land within Chelsea.

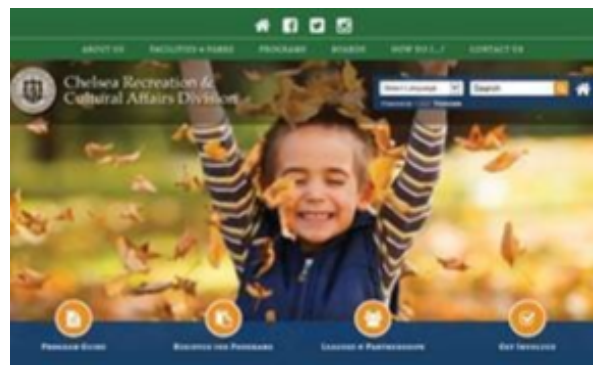
- Joining Boston, Cambridge, Quincy, Somerville and Braintree in the Greater Boston Regional Economic Compact to encourage regional approaches to economic development.
- Piloting a Facade Improvement Program in the Broadway Central Business District.
- Conducting a Cultural Asset Survey with the help of students from UMass Amherst, and creating an interactive public portal to enable current and future residents, as well as visitors, to become involved in Chelsea's cultural economy.



The City is focusing on making the Downtown district more appealing to residents and visitors.
Copyright 2017 Tracie Van Auken. Courtesy of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

School Activity

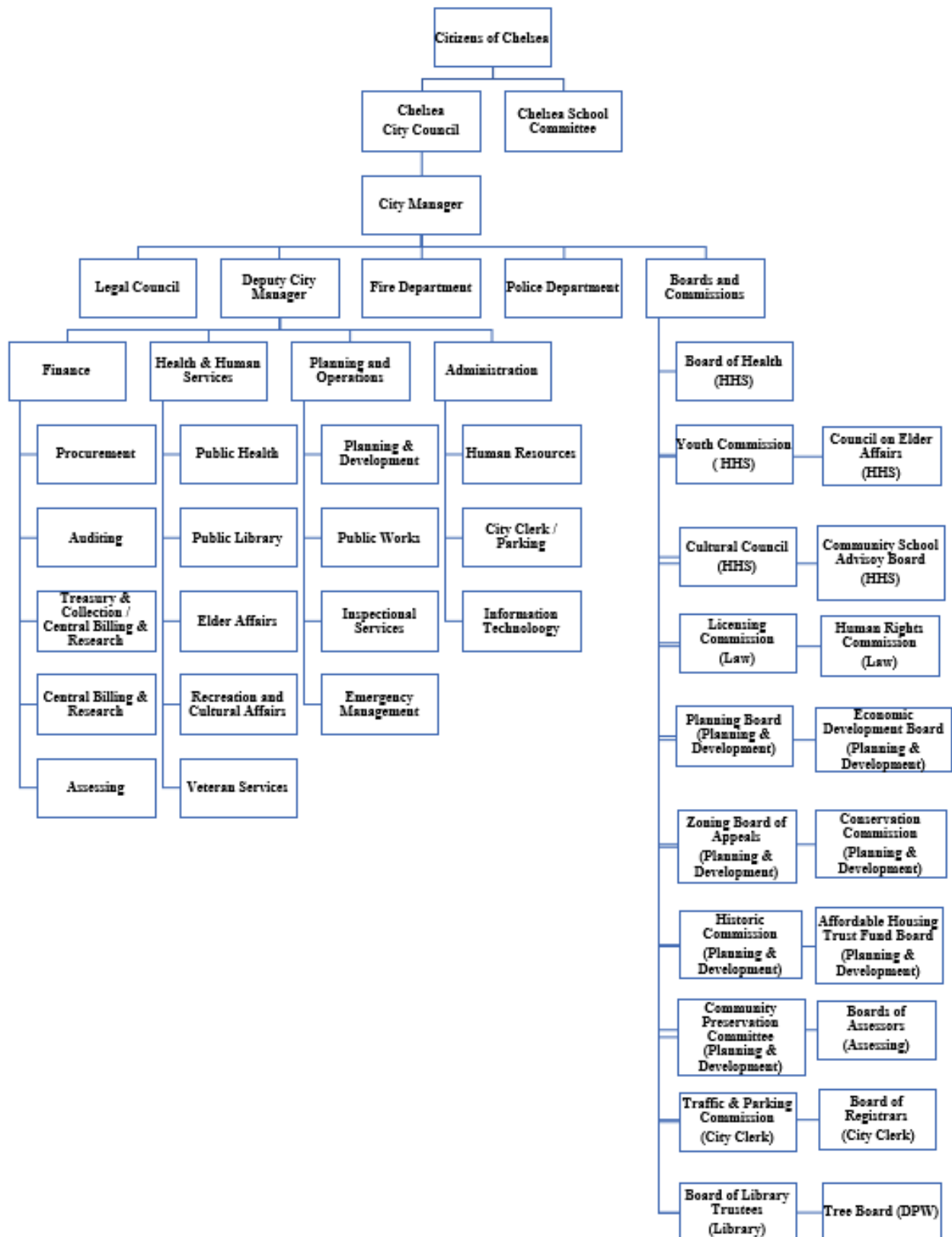
- The final phase of the new Clark Avenue Middle School is making progress. The School Dept. occupied the academic wing of the building in January of 2017. The second phase of construction includes the gymnasium, library, music room and other amenities. The new areas should be fully complete by Summer. The community will be invited to tour the new \$59 million facility sometime in the Fall.
- The Chelsea Public School System and Bunker Hill Community College continue to expand their partnership for dual enrollment of Chelsea High School students. This program allows Chelsea High students to complete college level courses while still in high school. Last year, the Class of 2017 earned 1,162 college credits equaling 385 courses. Dual enrollment graduates saved over \$200,000 in college tuition and fees and over \$50,000 in books. In 2018, the City hopes to partner with Bunker Hill to subsidize the costs for CHS dual enrollment students to complete their Associates Degree after graduation from Chelsea High School.
- In 2017, the School Department was awarded a \$175,000 Barr Grant to develop an alternative high school concept – a separate school within Chelsea High School called the Chelsea Opportunity Academy -- targeting students at risk of drop out. The School Dept. will complete its planning for the Chelsea Opportunity Academy this year and then be eligible for an additional \$750,000 Barr Grant in 2018 for implementation of the concept.
- Chelsea Community Schools youth & adult programs are now part of the Chelsea Recreation & Cultural Affairs Division. You can check out their new website at <https://recreation.chelseama.gov>.



The Recreation and Cultural Affairs Division launched its new website this year.

The website provides information on parks, facility use, sport leagues, arts & cultural events and celebrations. Some of the new features include interactive parks & playgrounds maps, direct links to online program registration, a current events section and more.

City of Chelsea Organizational Chart



Contacts

Staff: Below is a list of our City Department phone numbers. For more specific information, please visit our website at www.chelseama.gov/departments.

Assessor (617) 466-4010
Central Billing (617) 466-4042
Chelsea Fire Alarm: (617) 466-4662
Chelsea Retirement System (617) 466-4230
City Auditor (617) 466-4030
City Clerk (617) 466-4050
City Council (617) 466-4060
City Manager (617) 466-4100
Elder Services (617) 466-4370
Finance (617) 466-4035
Fire Department (617) 466-4600
Health & Human Services (617) 466-4080
Human Resources (617) 466-4170
Inspectional Services Department (ISD) (617) 466-4130
Law Department (617) 466-4150
Licensing (617) 466-4160
Non-Emergency 911 (617) 466-4662
Parking (617) 466-4054
Planning & Development (617) 466-4180
Police Department (617) 466-4855
Public Library (617) 466-4350
Public Schools (617) 466-4477
Purchasing (617) 466-4220
Department of Public Works (DPW) (617) 466-4200
Recreation & Cultural Affairs Division (617) 466-4070
Rubbish, Recycling, & Yard Waste (617) 466-4200
Treasurer / Collector (617) 466-4240
Veteran's Services (617) 466-4250
Water & Sewer Services (617) 466-4240

*Boards and commissions: Below is a list of our most updated Boards and Commissions. If you are interested in serving on a Board, please view our openings at:
<https://www.chelseama.gov/home/pages/board-openings>.*

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board - 617 466-4180
Board of Assessors - 617 466-4010
Board of Health - 617 466-4090 or 617 466-5953
Board of Library Trustees - 617 466-4350
Board of Registrars - 617 466-4050
Community School Advisory Board - 617 466-4070
Community Preservation Committee - 617 466-4100
Conservation Commission - 617 466-4180
Council on Elder Affairs - 617 466-4370
Cultural Council - 617 466-4090
Economic Development Board - 617 466-4180
Historical Commission - 617 466-4180
Housing Authority Board of Commissioners - 617 409-5312
Human Rights Commission - 617 466-4100
Licensing Commission - 617 466-4050
Planning Board - 617 466-4188
Traffic and Parking Commission - 617 466-4054
Tree Board - 617 466-4204
Youth Commission - 617 466-4073
Zoning Board of Appeals - 617 466-4182

City Council



Photo Courtesy of Derek Kouyoumjian Photography. From left to right, **top row**: City Council Clerk Paul Casino, Councillor At-Large Leo Robinson, District 5 Councillor Judith Garcia, District 3 Councillor Joe Perlatonda, District 1 Councillor Robert Bishop, District 7 Councillor Yamir Rodriguez, District 4 Councillor Enio Lopez, District 6 Councillor Giovanni Recupero, State Representative Daniel Ryan, Administrative Assistant Ledia Koco. **Bottom row**: District 2 Councillor Luis Tejada, Councillor At-Large, President, Damali Vidot, District 8 Councillor, Vice President, Calvin Brown. **Not pictured here**: Councillor At-Large Roy Avellaneda.