

Letter from the Cambridge Business Community

March 15, 2020

City Manager Louis DePasquale
Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui
Members of the Cambridge City Council
Cambridge City Hall
Cambridge, MA 02139

Mr. City Manager, Mayor Siddiqui, and City Councillors:

On behalf of the local business communities we represent, we are asking for the immediate suspension of non-essential businesses and immediate action availing emergency relief funds. We support the forthcoming policy order from the Mayor and City Councillors calling for the closure of all non-essential businesses.

In the last 48 hours, the dual threat of COVID-19 on public health and our local economy has become alarmingly clear. Now is the time for leadership. Now is the time to center those who will be most adversely affected: the newly unemployed, elderly, sick, homeless, and under-resourced.

We all chose this line of work because we love and believe in Cambridge. Now is the time to take urgent measures to ensure the safety of its residents and sustainability of its businesses and organizations in the months to come.

As a group, we are at your service. Please let us know how we can help. Our joint recommendations are listed on the following page.

We thank you for your leadership.



Central Square Business Improvement District
620 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite #3
Cambridge MA 02139

Joint Recommendations

In order for our local business economy to recover from this crisis, we need relief and resources now. Below are our recommendations:

- Call for immediate closure of non-essential businesses in order to protect employees and the public
- Adopt Rent Relief Tax Credit program
- Waive Meals Tax and Sales Tax
- Institute anti-eviction protections, commercial and residential
- Avail more relief funds and resources to focus on protecting our most vulnerable neighbors
- Establish emergency fund for employees affected by closures
- Waiver on earnings related to crisis response for the unemployed
- Liquidate Participatory Budgeting and use funds to provide immediate temporary assistance to the newly unemployed
- Offer mortgage relief for property owners who can't make payments either through a city-backed guarantee or bond
- Establish centralized food delivery for seniors with local partners in hospitality industry
- Call on us for help. We can help inform, disseminate, and carry out new procedures and relief programs.



Michael Monestime
Executive Director, Central Square BID



Patrick Magee
President, East Cambridge Business Association



C.A. Webb
President, Kendall Square Association



Patrick Barrett
Treasurer, Central Square BID



Jason Alves
Executive Director, East Cambridge
Business Association