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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **History Cambridge to Sell Building, Expanding Citywide Community Programs**

*Move Will Support Citywide Innovative Programming and Enhance Presence Across Cambridge*

**Cambridge, MA (DATE)** – History Cambridge today announced plans to sell its current headquarters at 159 Brattle Street, also known as the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House.

Pursuing a bold strategy to expand its presence and programming throughout the city, History Cambridge will continue to work closely with long-time partners to create new opportunities for collaboration, storytelling, and engagement. This transition is part of a multi-year strategic shift to become a more open, inclusive, and responsive organization—meeting people where they are and amplifying the diverse voices and histories of all Cambridge residents.

History Cambridge was founded in 1905 as the Cambridge Historical Society. Fifty years later the organization acquired the Hooper-Lee-Nichols House (built c. 1685) at 159 Brattle Street. The increasing costs of maintaining this historic property—(the second oldest building in Cambridge—have limited the organization’s ability to invest in new and meaningful initiatives. Beyond financial considerations, 159 Brattle no longer serves the functional needs of History Cambridge as it seeks to expand its programming to serve all of Cambridge.

“After years of careful consideration, the Board of Directors determined that reallocating resources away from property upkeep will allow History Cambridge to better serve residents across the city in more innovative and more relevant ways,” said Amy Devin, President of the Board. “The building itself is not suited to the flexible, community-focused work we are committed to. Moving on from 159 Brattle enables us to find a new location that truly supports our mission and the needs of Cambridge today.”

This move is part of a larger, multi-year strategic shift designed to bring engaging public history programs directly to Cambridge’s neighborhoods and communities. In recent years, History Cambridge’s neighborhood focus has expanded its reach and cultivated new partnerships. Looking ahead, the organization is preparing to mark the 400th anniversary of Cambridge’s founding in 1630 by developing robust activities and events that will celebrate the city’s diverse history.

“Moving on from 159 Brattle is the beginning of a new era,” said Marieke Van Damme, Executive Director of History Cambridge. “Our mission is to connect people with the stories and history of all of Cambridge. This sale allows us to invest more fully in programming that brings Cambridge’s rich and varied histories to life wherever people live, work, and gather. We’re committed to making Cambridge’s history accessible, inclusive, and relevant to everyone.”

By focusing on accessibility and a more meaningful presence throughout Cambridge, the organization aims to make local history more relevant and engaging for all. History Cambridge is exploring options for its next office space, one that supports flexibility, collaboration, and deeper engagement with communities across the city.

“Cambridge has always been a city defined by its ability to evolve—embracing new ideas, new people, and new ways of connecting with our shared past,” said State Representative Steve Owens, 29th Middlesex District. “As our neighborhoods grow and change, so too must our institutions. History Cambridge’s decision to move beyond its historic home reflects this spirit. It’s about meeting the moment, ensuring that our city’s rich and diverse stories are accessible to everyone, no matter where they live.”

The 159 Brattle property is comprehensively protected to ensure its preservation and stewardship. Its sale will provide important resources to advance this next chapter.

“Recognizing when change is necessary to ensure long-term organizational health shows a forward-thinking approach to stewardship,” said Brian Boyles, Executive Director of Mass Humanities. “By making this choice, History Cambridge is setting a precedent for responsible leadership in the cultural sector.”

As it prepares for this transition, History Cambridge remains committed to connecting residents with the city’s many stories and strengthening its ability to bring history to neighborhoods across Cambridge.

In 2025, History Cambridge is focusing on East Cambridge, delving into the unique character of this often-overlooked part of the city. By partnering with organizations like the East End House, East Cambridge Business Association, Cambridge Public Library, Cambridge Plant & Garden Club, the Multicultural Arts Center, and Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, the organization is working to uncover the neighborhood’s fascinating past.

History Cambridge recently received funding from the Cambridge Community Foundation and the Cambridge Savings Charitable Foundation to open a temporary pop-up history center in East Cambridge. Look for guided tours, History Cafés, History Hangs, community exhibitions, and more in the space later this fall.

### **About History Cambridge**

History Cambridge, founded in 1905 as the Cambridge Historical Society, is an inclusive, audience-centered organization serving everyone. We believe that by actively exploring and sharing the diverse stories of our city, we can foster greater social cohesion and build a stronger Cambridge. We go out into the city, meeting people where they are, to collect and amplify previously unheard voices alongside more familiar narratives. By connecting individuals and organizations with their shared past and offering historical context to today’s issues, we empower

them to shape a more equitable and vibrant future, together. Ultimately, our work strengthens the fabric of Cambridge, creating a more connected and informed community.

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