

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Community Development Department

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To: Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager
From: Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development
Date: March 15, 2017
Re: CO #-0-4 dated -1/30/17 Evaluation of Removing and Replacing Bus Shelters in Residential Districts and Parkway Overlay District

I am happy to report that we have worked with JCDecaux to lower the lights in the replacement shelter on Aberdeen Avenue to address the neighbors' concern. Additionally, CDD staff will begin supplementing JCDecaux's outreach in the future to communicate with abutters regarding proposed installations. JCDecaux has agreed to make an exception at this location, and will reduce light levels by 25% in the advertising panel in the new shelter. Due to this exception and given the benefits to the City of the bus shelter program with JCDecaux, the capital cost of non-program shelters, and complexity of maintaining shelters that are not part of the program with JCDecaux and absence of a City program for this task, I cannot support the request to remove the JCDecaux bus shelters in residential base districts and the Parkway Overlay District and replace them with non-advertising shelters.

The following is background on the Cambridge Bus Shelter Program and comments on the challenges with creating exceptions that treat parts of the city differently than others.

Cambridge Bus Shelter Program

Cambridge's bus shelter program is part of the MBTA's master contract which extends until 2019, to expand the number and maintenance of bus shelters in the MBTA service area. These shelters are privately maintained in exchange for the placement of an advertising panel at one end of the shelter. Cambridge's bus shelter program with JCDecaux allows the city to provide well-maintained shelters on many types of streets where the most passengers board, as well as at reasonably busy bus stops that are in close proximity to important services such as hospitals and low-income and elderly housing. This is particularly important for providing the best service possible to vulnerable populations, but it is also very important in elevating the experience of taking transit in the City for all residents.

Program Benefits

One of the major benefits of the City's partnership with JCDecaux is that they are responsible for maintenance of the shelter, including regular cleaning, removing graffiti, clearing snow, and replacing glass panels, if needed. The costs of purchasing, installing, and maintaining the shelter are covered by the revenue generated from the advertising

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Attachment: Aberdeen bus shelter response 032017 (4344 : AR Response RE: Aberdeen Ave bus shelter)

panel at the end of the shelter. The advertising panel is internally lit. The light source is powered by solar panels installed on the roof of the shelter. The lighting also makes the bus stop area feel safer at night.

Currently, the City does not maintain any bus shelters. In order to do so, we would need to allocate significant resources as well as tackle difficult challenges related to how we prioritize snow clearance needs. When JCDecaux (formerly Cemusa) asked to re-negotiate their existing contract, the city agreed to reduce advertising revenue in exchange for maintenance of other city-owned shelters not scheduled to be replaced with advertising shelters in locations not attractive to advertisers or where a narrow shelter needed to be placed instead due to limited sidewalk widths. In total, we now have 42 JCDecaux shelters.

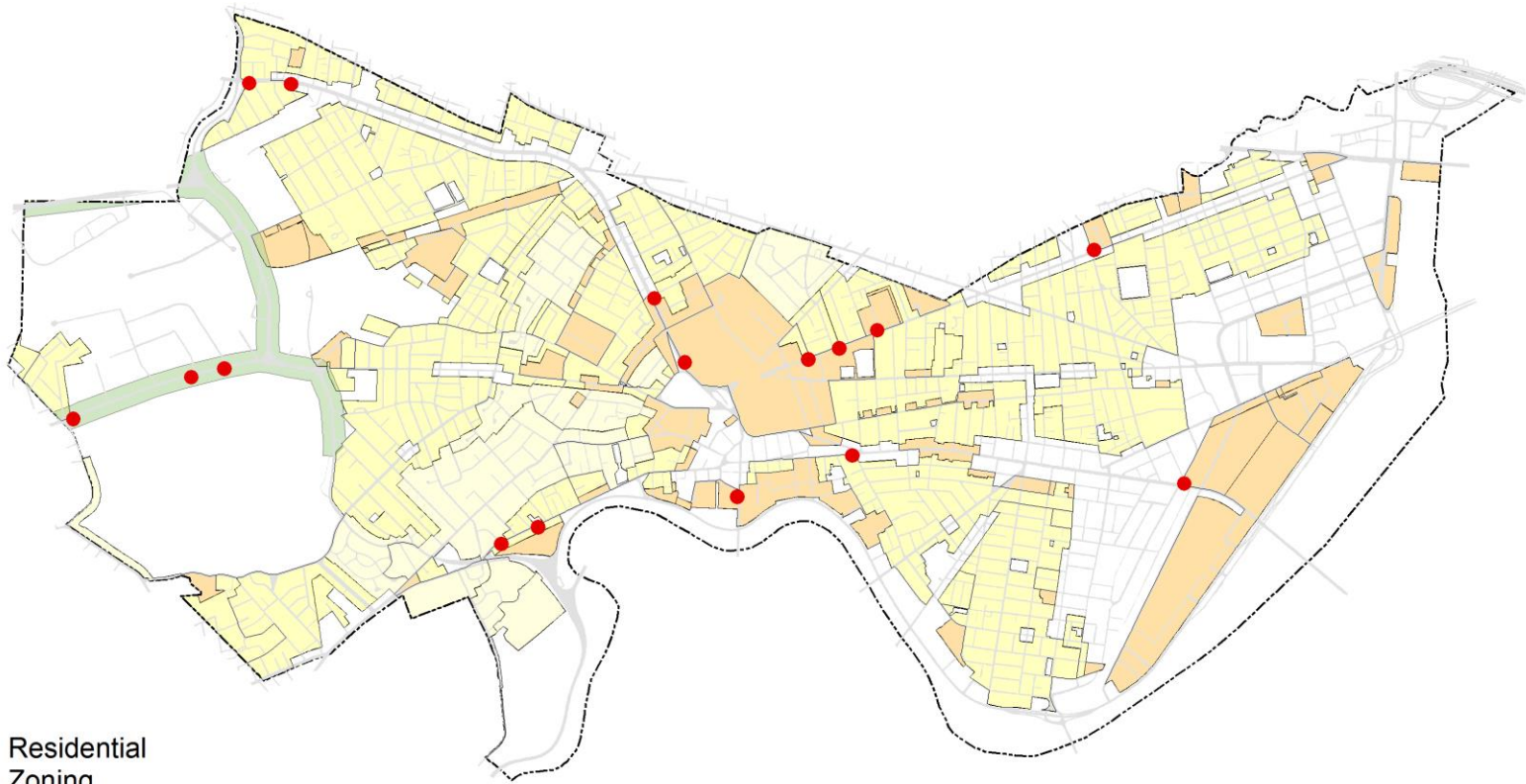
Outreach

In addition to the advertising and lighting, we have received feedback on the level of outreach carried out before installing a new JCDecaux shelter. Currently, the primary form of outreach is a construction notification sent by certified mail by JCDecaux. Staff will rethink how outreach is done in an effort to communicate with abutters regarding a proposed installation with information on the benefits of the program and what to expect, during the planning stage and well in advance of construction.

Evaluation of Removal and Replacement of Bus Shelters in Residential Base Districts and Parkway Overlay Districts

As requested, City staff have evaluated the impacts of removing advertising shelters in residential base districts and the parkway overlay district. A preliminary evaluation based on zoning and bus shelter locations shows that 16 shelters, with over 2000 total daily boardings, would be impacted by such a policy. This amounts to about one third of the existing advertising shelters in the city.

If the 16 shelters were removed and replaced with city-purchased shelters in order to eliminate advertising, the City would also need to develop a program and allocate resources to maintain the shelters. Such a maintenance program would be challenging given the wide distribution of the affected shelters. The cost of purchasing and installing 16 new shelters, if allowed under the current contract with JCDecaux, would be approximately \$240,000 in up-front costs, plus the annual maintenance costs. If all 42 JCDecaux shelters were removed, including in commercially zoned areas, and replaced by non-advertising shelters, the capital costs would be approximately \$630,000, in addition to on-going maintenance costs for cleaning, repairs and snow removal.



Residential Zoning Districts

- A-1, A-2
- B, C, C-1
- C-1A, C-2, C-2A, C-2B, C-3, C-3A, C-3B

Parkway Overlay District

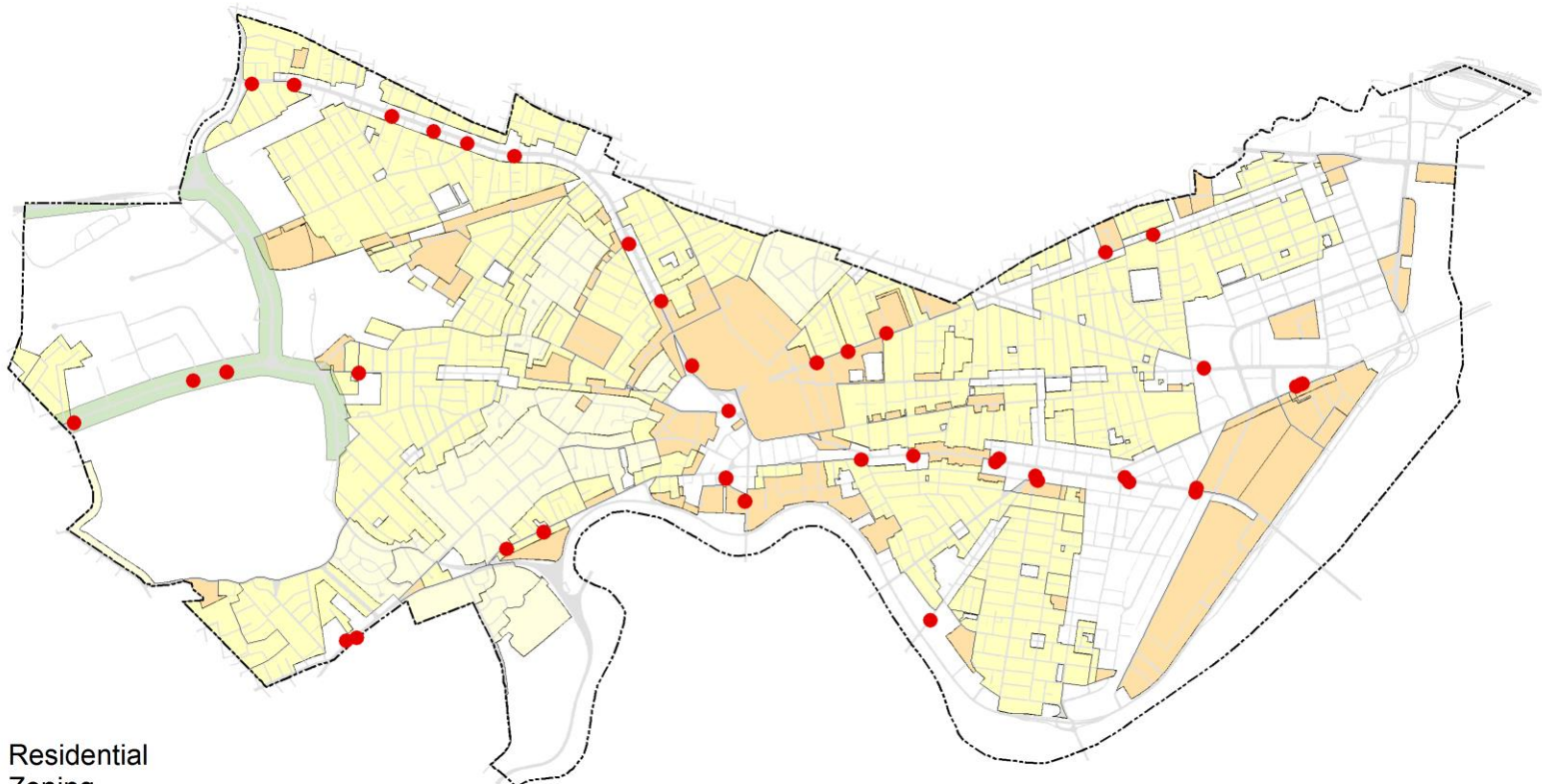
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Existing shelters in residential zoning districts and/or Parkway Overlay

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0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
Prepared by CDD, 2/6/17





Residential
Zoning
Districts

- A-1, A-2
- B, C, C-1
- C-1A, C-2, C-2A,
C-2B, C-3, C-3A,
C-3B

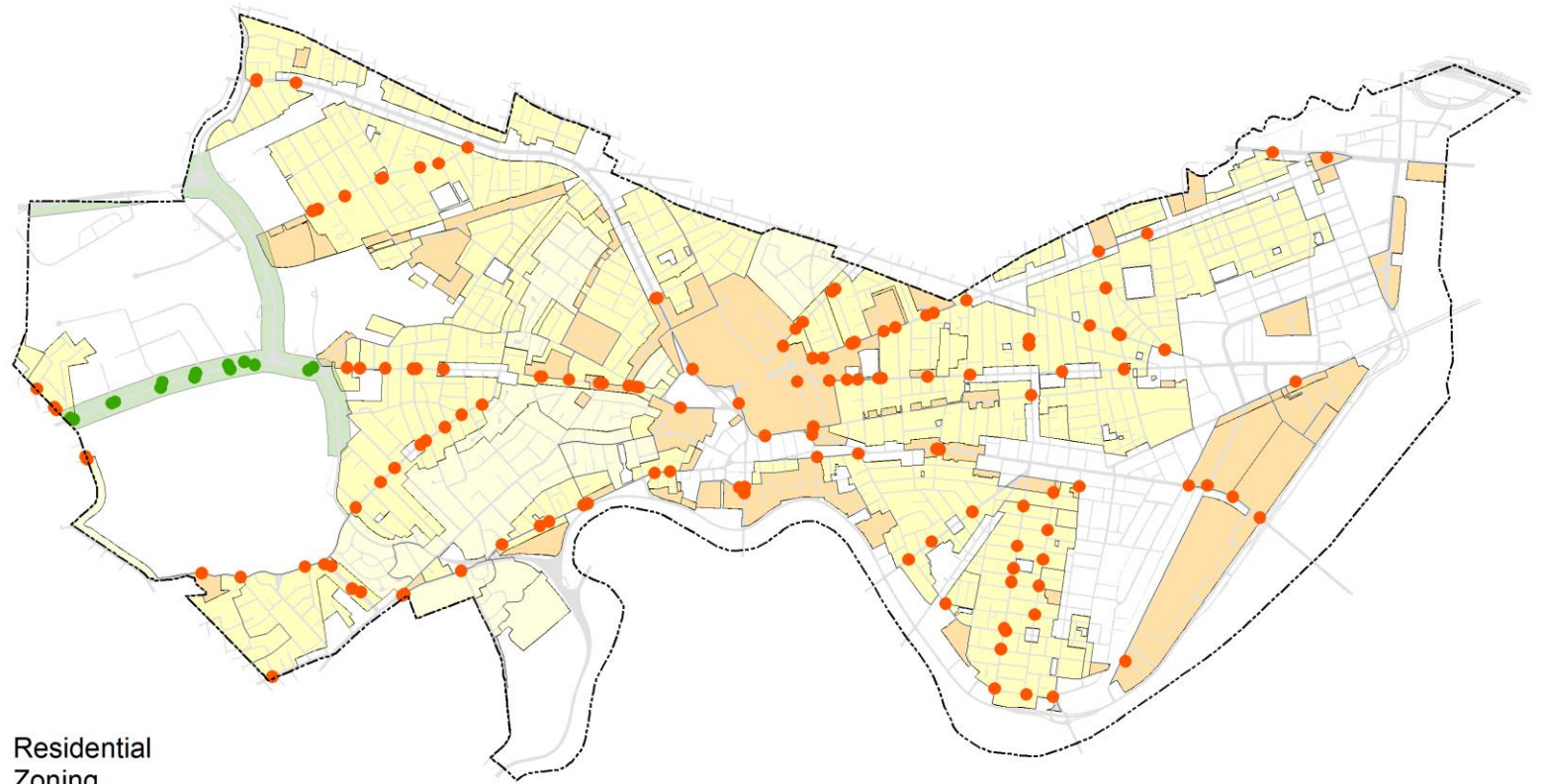
Parkway Overlay
District

-

JCDecaux
shelters

-

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
Prepared by CDD, 2/6/17



Residential
Zoning
Districts

- A-1, A-2
- B, C, C-1
- C-1A, C-2, C-2A,
C-2B, C-3, C-3A,
C-3B

Parkway Overlay
District

-

- Bus Stops in
Parkway Overlay
- Bus Stops in
Residential
Zoning Districts

