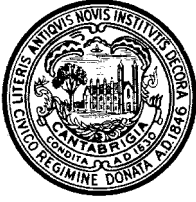


# City of Cambridge



Community Development Department  
Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager

Department of Public Works  
Owen O’Riordan, Commissioner

Traffic, Parking, and Transportation  
Joseph E. Barr, Director

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager

**From:** Joseph E. Barr, Director of Traffic, Parking, and Transportation  
Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development  
Owen O’Riordan, Commissioner of Public Works

**Date:** September 20, 2017

**Re:** Awaiting Report 17-55 and 17-64 – Update on Bicycle Lane Implementation and Outreach

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This memo is in response to Order 10 from the June 26, 2017 City Council Meeting (Awaiting Report 17-55) and Order 14 from the August 7, 2017 City Council Meeting (Awaiting Report 17-64), and provides an update on the status of future projects to upgrade the city’s infrastructure for cyclists, as well as our efforts to ensure that the appropriate level of community engagement occurs before, during, and after implementation of these projects.

The Cambridge Bicycle Plan lays out a vision for where the City intends to implement bicycle facilities in the future, with a goal of creating a network that is safe and accessible for users of all ages and abilities. As noted in the plan, this future vision includes a combination of off-street paths, separated bicycle facilities on busier streets, and slower speed/lower volume “bicycle boulevards” on more local neighborhood streets. This plan is based on a wide range of community input and technical analysis (including a detailed review of crash statistics), and represents our best thinking about where additional/enhanced bicycle facilities are needed to improve safety and mobility. The Cambridge Bicycle Plan can be accessed online here:

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Transportation/bikesincambridge/bicyclenetworkplan>.

Implementation of the vision laid out in the Bicycle Plan is occurring in two main ways:

- 1) Retrofit projects of the type implemented on Cambridge Street, where existing streets are reconfigured to install separated bicycle lanes without major capital construction.
- 2) Capital projects in the Five Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan, which has been updated to prioritize locations where separated bicycle facilities are desirable, and to which an additional \$1M/year has been added for bicycle safety and infrastructure projects. The most current version of the five year plan can be accessed online here:

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/engineering/aboutengineering/fiveyearplandescription>

The City is continuing to implement a number of significant bicycle safety projects over the course of this summer and into the fall:

- Separated bicycle lanes on Massachusetts Avenue from Trowbridge Street to Quincy Street (one direction), on Broadway from Galileo Galilei Way to Hampshire Street (both directions), and on Cambridge Street from Quincy Street to Fayette Street (both directions).
- A two-way cycle track on Brattle Street from Brattle Square to Mason Street.
- Bicycle lanes on Massachusetts Avenue from Beech Street to Alewife Brook Parkway (both directions).
- Adding green markings to bicycle lanes at key conflict points such as intersections, bus stops, and loading zones,
- Adding shared lane markings on streets that are too narrow for full bicycle lanes.

As requested in Awaiting Report 17-55, we have also begun the process of determining future corridors where we intend to pursue implementation of the network laid out in the bicycle plan, and have identified the section of Massachusetts Avenue between Sidney Street and Memorial Drive (in both directions) as the most appropriate next location to install significant improvements to bicycle infrastructure, most likely including separated bicycle lanes. This decision is based on a number of factors:

- This corridor has a crash history that indicates the need for meaningful safety improvements for all users, particularly vulnerable users that are walking and cycling. Making improvements on this corridor is therefore consistent with both the bicycle plan and our Vision Zero commitment.
- This corridor has a significant volume of cyclists, and is part of a network of bicycle facilities connecting multiple communities including Cambridge, Boston, Arlington, and Somerville.
- This corridor also presents an opportunity to make bus priority improvements, particularly in the area near the MIT campus. The MBTA 1 and CT1 bus routes carry heavy passenger loads in this area, and improving their speed and reliability will benefit many Cambridge residents and employees who travel in this corridor.
- This corridor is relatively wide as compared to many other Cambridge streets, and presents the opportunity to improve conditions for cyclists, pedestrians, and bus riders while minimizing the impacts on parking and loading.

In addition to pursuing these improvements along Massachusetts Avenue, we also intend to select a low volume and/or low speed street (or set of streets) where we can implement bicycle improvements that involve calming traffic, installing signs and pavement markings that emphasize a shared street environment, and making other improvements to create a bicycle connection that is suitable for users of all ages and abilities. The Bicycle Network Vision map located on page 91 of the bicycle plan shows potential locations for these types of improvements (shown in the yellow lines), but the decision as to where to begin making these types of improvements will require consultation

with a range of stakeholders, including cyclists, businesses, residents, the City Council, and others, and we intend to pursue these discussions during the fall and early winter months.

As part of the planning for these future improvements (on both Massachusetts Avenue and the low volume/speed corridor that we are working to identify), we intend to pursue a significant community engagement effort to gather feedback from local residents, employees, businesses (including customers), and other stakeholders along the specific corridors being considered, so that we can tailor the improvements to meet the needs of all street users. As we have done for projects on Cambridge Street and in Inman Square, this will include both establishing a stakeholder working group that meets multiple times during the planning and design process, and multiple public meetings along the corridor to gather broader feedback from the public. We have found this to be an effective structure for gathering a wide range of feedback, creating continuity through the process, and providing a venue for detailed discussions about issues such as parking and loading. In addition to these more formal community engagement opportunities, we will continually seek out informal opportunities to raise awareness and gather feedback, including at community events, talking directly to people who are using the streets in different ways, stopping in at local businesses, and soliciting information online and through social media. We will also continue to distribute fliers within the local neighborhoods to make residents and businesses aware of both the community engagement opportunities and when project implementation is imminent.

In addition, we will conduct the parking and curb use studies that are necessary to understand the ability of the surrounding streets to absorb any parking impacts, and look for additional mitigation opportunities, such as installing parking meters on side streets, creating shared business parking, and consolidating bus stops, to achieve corridor plans that stakeholders can support. Moving forward, we intend to use a similar community engagement template for future bicycle infrastructure improvement projects, as well as for other projects that involve retrofitting significant changes onto existing street designs. We will also continue to work with business associations on more general awareness of these projects, and participate in the Mayor's ongoing meetings with businesses, residents, and advocacy organizations to continually improve the community engagement process.