

AGENDA

- **Staff Introductions**
- **Project Objectives**
 - **What is a shared Street?**
- **Resident Q&A**

City Staff:

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****Please send all questions/comments/concerns/feedback to the Community Relations staff listed above. The staff will then triage the request internally before providing response back.***

What will this reconstruction project address and how are design decisions made?

- The Chetwynd Rd Reconstruction Project is part of the City’s Five-Year Plan (cambridgema.gov/fiveyearplan). The Five-Year Plan is a comprehensive plan for designing streets that safely accommodate all users, of all ages and abilities - pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and public transportation users. The plan is developed with many priorities in mind: existing street and sidewalk conditions, proximity to destinations such as, but not limited to, parks, major squares, senior centers, and schools.
- The City Council adopted a complete streets policy in 2016 for redesigning streets in Cambridge. Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enables safe access for all users who need them.



What other policies guide the design?

- Vision Zero
- City of Cambridge Pedestrian Plan
- Cycling Safety Ordinance (CSO)
- Urban Forestry Master Plan
- Clean Water Act / City's MS4 permit

These policies and plans provide a basis for our design.

How do all these plans and policies translate to specific street and sidewalk designs?

Starting with accessibility. Why is Accessibility important?

- ***It's the law!*** Both Federal and State regulations cover the construction of new sidewalks and require newly constructed sidewalks to be accessible.
- ***It's the right thing to do!*** The City wants its sidewalks to be as inviting and usable for people of all ages and abilities, i.e., people using wheelchairs, walkers or pushing strollers for example.
- ***Chetwynd Rd will be designed as a shared street. What is a shared street?***
 - Shared streets provide the pedestrian the right of way. By removing the formal distinctions between spaces dedicated to pedestrians, cyclists, and motorized vehicles, the street is shared by everyone, with each user becoming increasingly aware and respectful of the others.
 - These streets are typically found in low-volume residential neighborhoods, especially in older cities.
 - Often, they lack sidewalks or have narrow and crumbling ones.
 - Residents and children share the roadway with drivers, creating a natural space for play and socializing.
 - Design enhancements can transform these streets into shared spaces that prioritize pedestrians and recreation.

Existing Public Shade Trees –

- Public street trees in Massachusetts are protected under Mass General Law (MGL). Healthy, existing street trees will not be removed or replaced as part of this contract. The City Arborist is the only person authorized to remove a healthy street tree. All new street tree planting locations will be identified as part of this design process.
- As part of the design process the City Arborist, or one of his designers, will evaluate the existing tree health on Chetwynd Rd prior to final design completion.



Q6

What else do you want the design team to know about Chetwynd Road?

-We think with a project like this, there's a unique opportunity to put the overhead powerlines underground for Chetwynd Road (for climate resilience, improve street aesthetic, replace the leaning utility poles with street trees). It would be great to discuss if this is feasible and how we could potentially help facilitate

- **The poles carry other utilities not just electric that would need grounding.**
 - *None of the utility companies currently have plans to convert their overhead cables to underground systems in Cambridge.*
- **What is the cost / LF to ground? Is this something the entire neighborhood needs to agree to?**
 - *It is difficult to give a typical LF cost for this work because it is very site specific. The utility companies would be entitled to recover their costs for design and construction. Where this would be a benefit specifically for Chetwyn Road residents, the property owners would all need to agree to pay for the cost of design and construction to move the distribution cables to underground duct banks and new underground services to their buildings. A new underground duct bank system on Chetwynd would likely remain fed from overhead cables on Newell St. Poles would need to remain on Chetwynd for City streetlights. New underground duct banks will also occupy space that could be used for additional trees or other plantings. The duct bank work would add significant time to the construction duration.*
- **What exactly is the resident paying for?**
 - *The property owners would need to agree to pay for the distribution duct banks as a shared cost plus each property owner would need to pay for new underground services to their building. This could also trigger electrical upgrades in the buildings at the owner's cost. A very rough ballpark number is a minimum of \$100,000 per building.*
- **Anything else we should know?**
 - *The City has only seen this type of overhead to underground happen as part of major redevelopment projects which are paid for entirely by the developer. The cost/benefit and level of disruption does not make sense for an individual street.*

Project Website

- cambridgema.gov/chetwyndrd
- *To sign up for email notifications please visit the project page above. Under the "Contact" tab please click "Sign Up Now" to enter your email address to be added to the list.*

