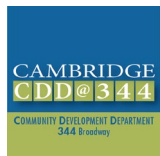


City of Cambridge  
Community Development Department

# Transit Advisory Committee

July 2020



# Meeting Agenda

Welcome

MBTA transit service during COVID-19

Cambridge transportation updates

- Shared Streets initiative
- Amendment to cycling safety ordinance
- Project updates

Public Comment





# MBTA Transit Service during COVID-19

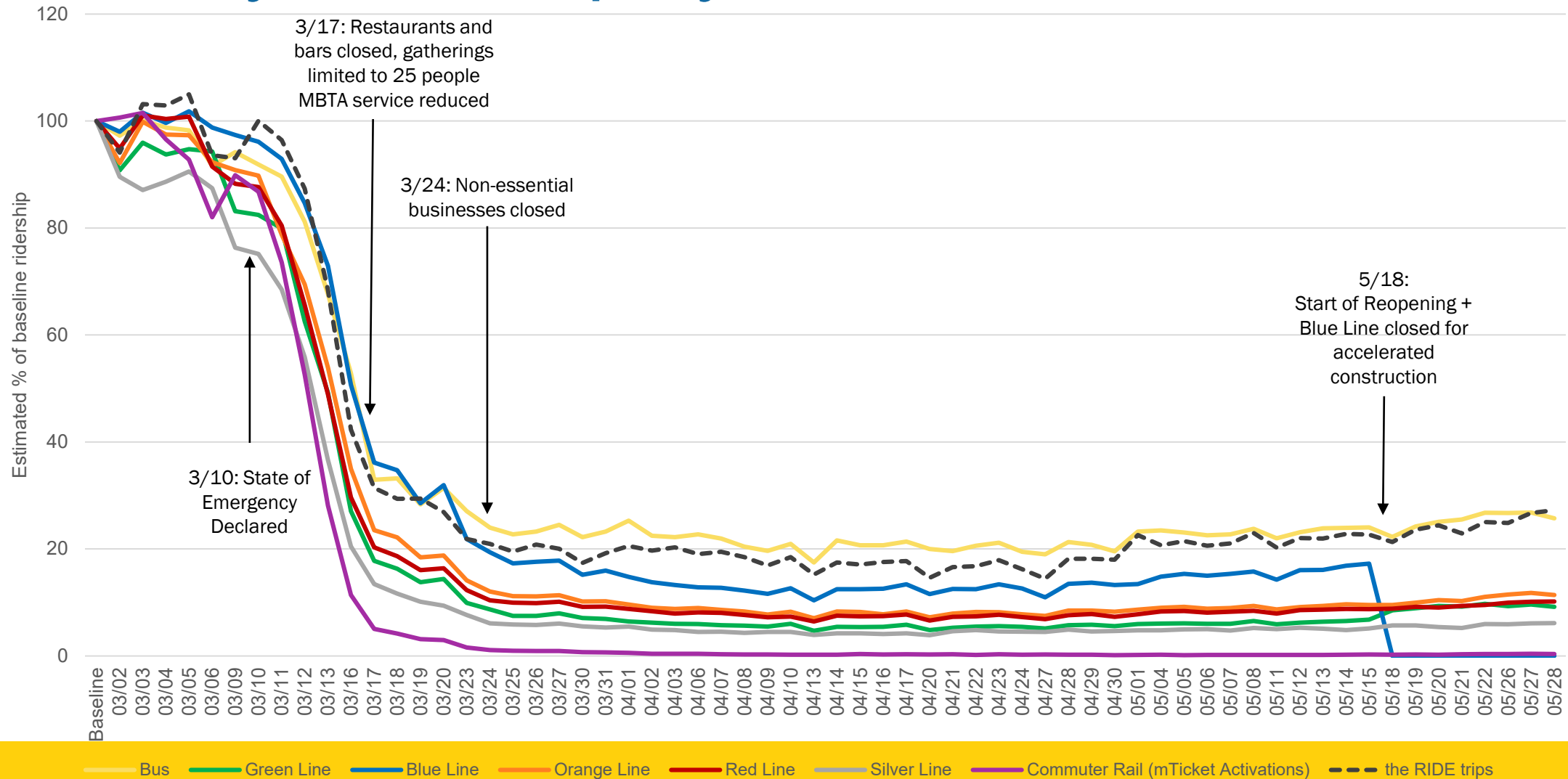
Kat Benesh, Chief of Operations Strategy, Policy and Oversight  
MBTA

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# COVID initial response—Spring 2020

Where were we?	Decreased staffing, decreased ridership, increased uncertainty... so what did we do?
<b>New service principles...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide critical services to those who rely on the MBTA for essential trips</li><li>• Build additional flexibility into service, but still be predictable and reliable</li><li>• Support physical distancing for our employees and our customers where possible</li><li>• Strongly encourage essential travel only</li></ul>
<b>Developed tiered plans to reduce service, based on...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staffing shortages</li><li>• Significantly reduced ridership—especially on commuter-oriented services</li><li>• Fewer routes and reduced frequencies, to allow for pool of flexible operators available to respond to areas of greatest need</li></ul>
<b>What did we learn?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ridership dropped, but not uniformly. “Durable ridership” persists on some routes and modes with more essential travel</li><li>• Monitored ridership, service levels, and feedback on daily basis to make data-driven decisions on where flexible service adds would be most impactful</li><li>• Definition of crowding has changed—as a result, on some routes we are running more service than on a regular weekday to service durable ridership with new physical distancing</li></ul>

# Weekly Ridership by Line and Mode



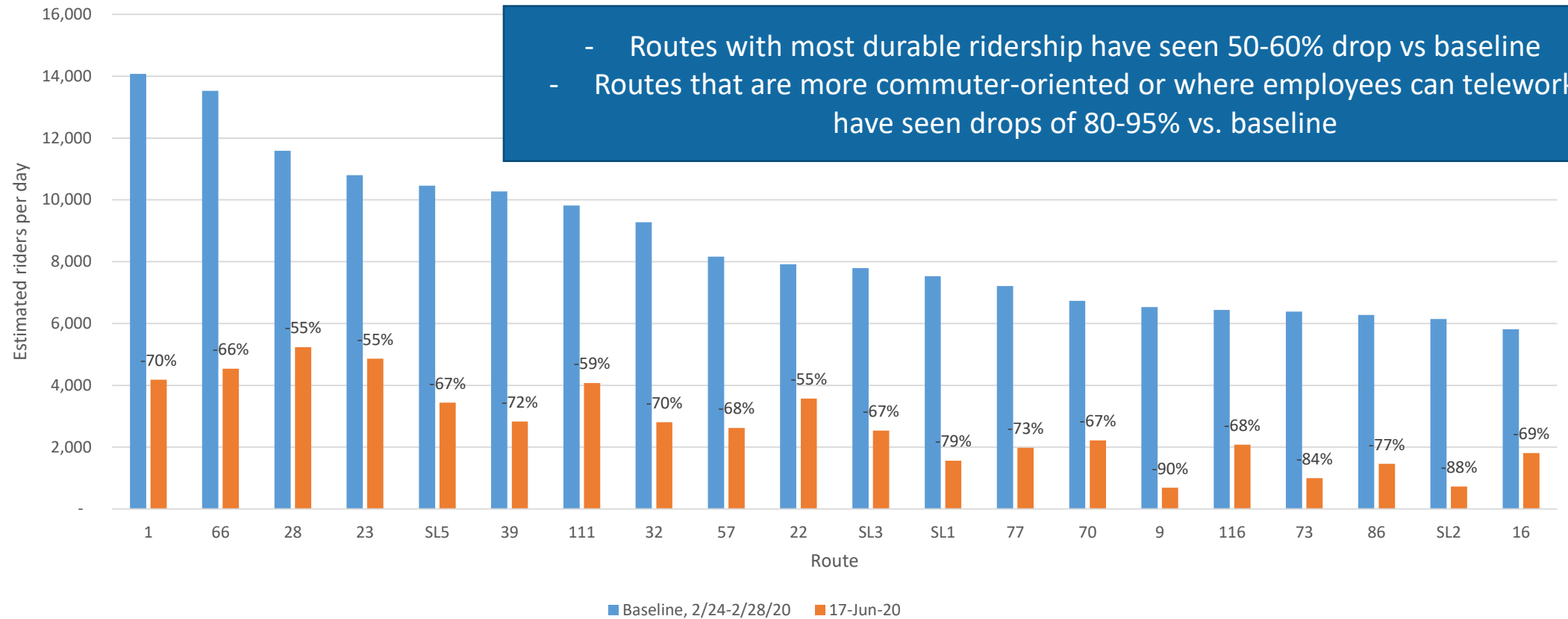
**Baseline:**  
Average weekday from 2/24-2/28

**Sources:**  
Faregate counts for subway lines, APC for buses, mTicket activations for CR, RIDE vendor reports

**Notes:**  
Recent data preliminary. CR rides likely undercounted here - closer to 3-5%

# Bus Ridership: Top 20 Routes

Daily Bus Ridership, Baseline (2/24-2/28/20) vs. 6/17/20, Top 20 Routes by Ridership



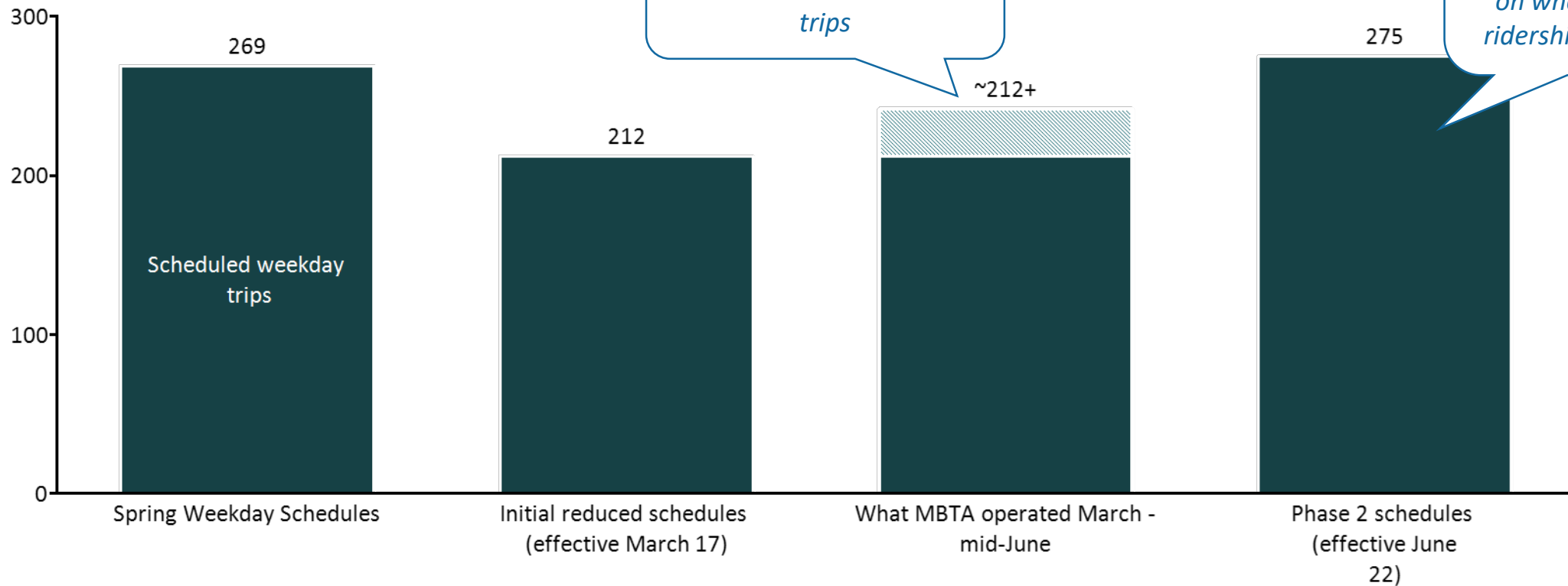
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# COVID Phase 2 recovery—summer 2020

Mode	Change effective 6/21 or 6/22
<b>Bus &amp; Silver Line</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Return 100% of service hours, but only 80% of routes</li><li>• Increase scheduled service on most durable ridership routes—e.g. 1, 22, 23, 28, 31, 32, 57, 65, 66, 70, 104, 109, 111, 116 and 117</li><li>• Resume 19, 245 which serve hospitals</li><li>• Maintain operational flexibility to respond to changes: 70% of service scheduled, with 30% flexible to run on routes that need additional capacity</li><li>• Temporarily suspend certain commuter routes: 325, 326, 351, 352, 501</li></ul>
<b>Light Rail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Return to near pre-COVID weekday service <i>(depending on workforce availability)</i></li></ul>
<b>Heavy Rail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Return to near pre-COVID weekday service <i>(depending on workforce availability)</i></li></ul>
<b>Commuter Rail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 85% of normal service, with Fairmount Line receiving full planned service as part of Fairmount Line Weekday Service Pilot</li></ul>
<b>Ferry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Restart service at 75% of regular weekday service to Hingham, Hull, and Charlestown</li></ul>
<b>The RIDE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to operate full service</li></ul>

# Route 1 example – how service has evolved

Weekday trips on the Route 1





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# A Complete Network Approach

We are considering how to best use all of our service to facilitate social distancing. We currently have more capacity on commuter rail than bus, so are piloting fare policy changes and adding off-peak service to shift riders.

## Phase 2

- Lynn in Zone1A for bus and Blue line riders to use commuter rail
- Added back off-peak service to Lynn
- Youth Pass valid for ½ priced fares in all zones

Results of these pilots and ridership data will inform commuter rail service and fare changes in the Fall and next year.

# Looking ahead to this fall / Phase 3

- Continue to assume less capacity on vehicles with more physical distancing
- Temporarily rebalance service levels to match new demand patterns—more ridership rebound on durable ridership routes, slower rebound on commuter-oriented routes or areas with more telework
- Consider temporary route restructuring, combinations, continued suspension, etc.
- Bus Priority to maintain/improve capacity
- Use incentives and information to shift travel patterns by mode and time of day



# Cambridge updates

Andrew Reker, Transit Planner, City of Cambridge

# Cambridge updates

- Shared Streets initiative
- Amendment to cycling safety ordinance
- Project updates





# Shared Streets Initiative



# Street changes for COVID-19 response

The City is implementing a number of changes to streets in response to COVID-19. The changes focus on providing:

- **Shared Streets for physical distancing**
- **Support for local businesses**
- **Efficient, reliable transit for physical distancing**

Goals for these street changes:

- **Address need for physical distancing**
- **Create space for people to comfortably walk and bike**
- **Encourage shared streets/lower speeds**
- **Mitigate impact of reduced capacity on transit**
- **Account for accessibility needs and consider equity impacts**
- **Pilot projects that can be modified or stopped if they're not working as intended**



# Shared Streets & support for local businesses

The City has begun a **“Shared Street”** pilot, where through traffic on three streets is restricted. These streets are open for:

- Walking and biking
- Local residents and businesses
- Parking, delivery, waste pick-up, street cleaning
- Emergency vehicles

The following streets are designated as “Shared Streets”

- **Garden St, Field St, Bay State Rd**
- **Harvard Street (Quincy to Prospect)**
- **Magazine Street**
- **Soon - Harvard Street (Prospect to Portland)**

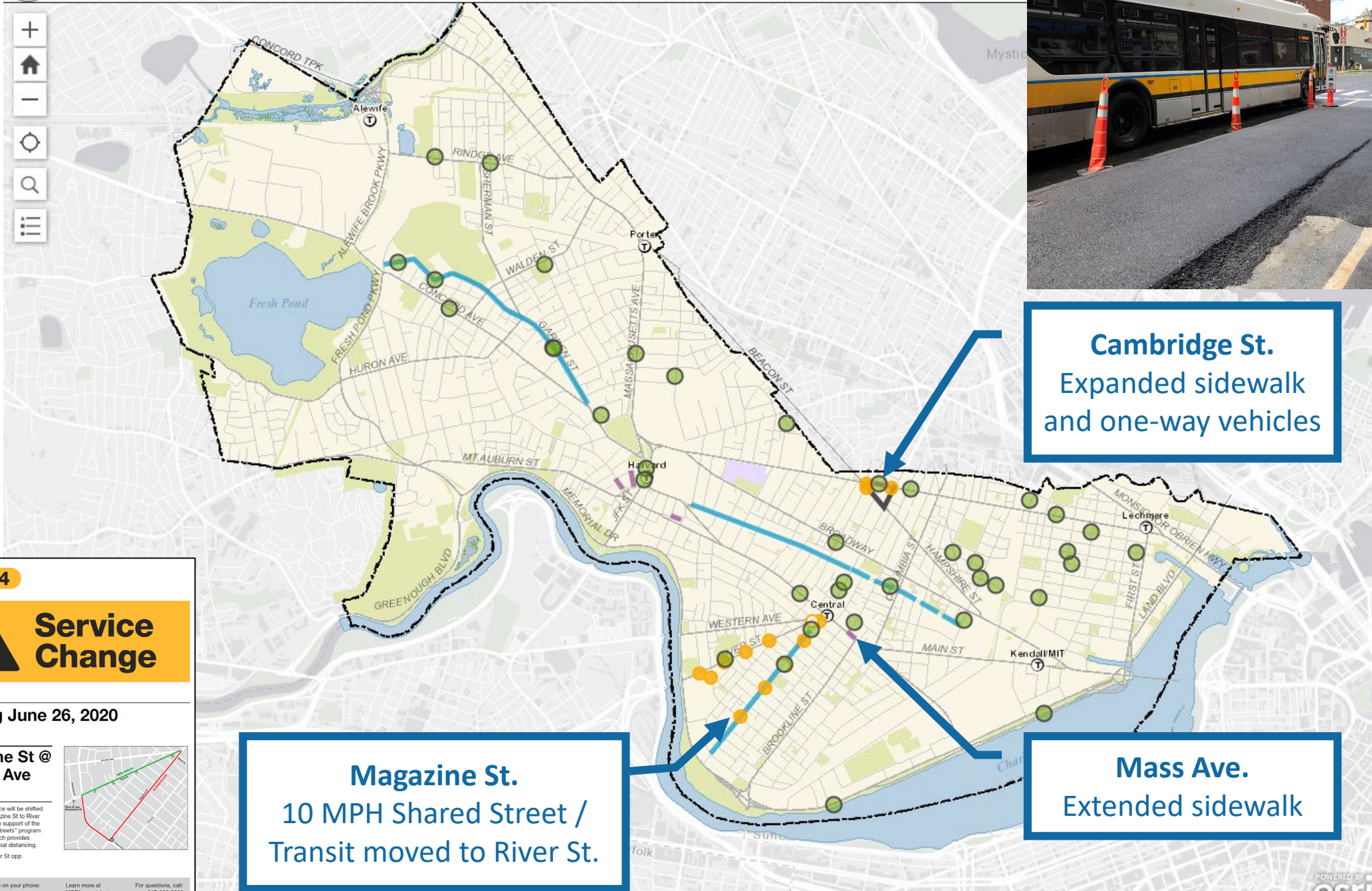
The City is also supporting businesses in Cambridge through changes with curbside access.

- **15-minute pick-up zones**
- **Outdoor dining areas in Central Square, Harvard, Square, and Inman Square**





# Cambridge COVID-19 Street Changes



**Cambridge St.**  
Expanded sidewalk  
and one-way vehicles

**Magazine St.**  
10 MPH Shared Street /  
Transit moved to River St.

**Mass Ave.**  
Extended sidewalk

**T 64**

**Service Change**

**WHEN**  
Starting June 26, 2020

**WHERE**  
Magazine St @ Putnam Ave

**WHAT**  
Route 64 inbound service will be shifted from Putnam Ave/Magazine St to River St. This is being done in support of the Cambridge's "Shared Streets" program along Magazine St, which provides additional space for social distancing. The closest stop is River St opp Blackstone St.



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# Next steps

The City is asking for **feedback** by e-mail, phone, and on our website.

- **Additional shared streets, to create a network across the city**
- **Expanded sidewalks pace for physical distancing in key locations**
- **Additional space for local businesses including sidewalk/street dining, pick-up areas for restaurants and retail, sidewalk queuing, or other ideas**

For transit, we are looking at:

- **Ways to help buses run more frequently and reliably – bus lanes, signal priority**
- **Expanded sidewalks by removing parking, rearranging curbside access**



# Amendments to cycling safety ordinance



# Proposed amendment

The City is proposing an ordinance which would require the following

- **Implement 22.6 lane-miles of Separated Bicycle Lanes by May 1, 2026**
- **Lane-miles must be either:**
  - **Included in the separated lane network defined in 2015 bike network vision or any update**
  - **On Broadway (Quincy St to Hampshire St) or on Garden Street (Huron Av to about Mason St)**
- **Permanent (capital project) SBLs count toward this goal as long as construction *starts* before dead line**

Some milestones are included in the proposal

- **Required lane-miles must be implemented by 5/1/2026**
- **City Manager has discretion to extend the dead line by 1 year, but must submit a report to council by 5/1/2025, documenting necessity of extension**
- **Additional one-year extension can be automatically triggered if sufficient miles of SBLs are installed on the norther portion of Mass Ave.**



# Project updates



# City projects

Project	Update	Next public event
<b>Inner Mount Auburn Corridor Safety Improvements</b>	Design is being finalized with implementation planned for this year	TBA
<b>Grand Junction MUP</b>	Engineering and design ongoing	TBA
<b>River Street Reconstruction</b>	Engineering and design ongoing	TBA
<b>Belmont Street</b>	Engineering and design ongoing	TBA



# City projects

Project	Update	Next public event
<b>Glacken Field &amp; Fresh Pond Reservation paths</b>	Plans to establish 1 new bus stop, improve 1 bus stop	TBD
<b>Concord Avenue transit signal priority grant</b>	Grant application ranked sufficiently high to get funding, to be accepted and funded beginning October 2020	TBA



# Public comment

Members of the public will have up to 3 minutes to make a comment

Thank you for participating in the first virtual  
Transit Advisory Committee meeting.

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**Thank You**