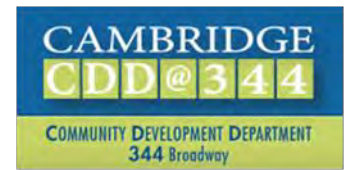


Huron Avenue Reconstruction

Surface Streetscape Final Design



About the project

Huron Avenue from Concord Avenue to Fresh Pond Parkway will be fully reconstructed, including the roadway and sidewalks, beginning in summer of 2013 as part of the Huron B phase of the Department of Public Works Alewife Sewer Separation Project. The project will separate the storm water and sewer pipes located under the street to improve the water quality of Alewife Brook. The City is taking advantage of this opportunity to incorporate streetscape improvements to Huron Avenue.

Community process

From May to November 2012, four community-wide meetings were held plus three open drop-in sessions. These were augmented by email distribution to 350 people and USPS mailings to over 250 abutters. *Note: The community process for Huron Avenue itself is being run by the Community Development Department; the community process for the residential streets is being run by the Department of Public Works.*

Community survey

- **Positive perceptions of the street:** Small-scale businesses integrated with residential areas; stores are friendly and locally owned; a lovely tree-lined street with nice canopy; small town feel in a big city area; free parking in business district; close proximity to Fresh Pond recreation area; there is convenient bus service that are electric and quiet; ease of access when driving kids to school.
- **Negative perceptions of the street:** Drivers think it's a highway; drivers are not careful around pedestrians; sidewalk is in poor condition and the ramps are difficult for wheelchairs; sidewalks are often too narrow to walk two abreast; need more trees – that's what makes for a beautiful neighborhood and street; improve bicycle safety, bicycle lane is uncomfortable to ride in; bus doesn't come frequently enough.
- **How do you usually travel to get the shops?** 80% by bicycle or walk, 17% by car, 3% by bus.

From an on-line survey conducted from June to August 2012 of residents living in the Huron community.

Guiding City policies

- **Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance** (1992) requires the implementation of, "measures to discourage, and provide alternatives to, vehicle trips and trips by single-occupancy vehicles made by residents of and visitors to Cambridge."
- **Growth Policy Document** (1993, 2007). Policy #22: "Undertake reasonable measures to improve the functioning of the city's street network, without increasing through capacity, to reduce congestion and noise and facilitate bus and other non-automobile circulation." Policy #23: "Encourage all reasonable forms of nonautomotive travel including, for example, making improvements to the city's infrastructure to support bicycling and walking."
- **Climate Protection Plan** (2002) establishes a goal of reducing single occupancy vehicle trips by 10%.

Surface design project goals

The goals for street reconstruction projects in the city include improving pedestrian and bicycle access, slowing the speed of traffic on residential streets, upgrading the aesthetics of a corridor, making travel safer, and improving access to businesses. Street design focuses on making it easier to bike, walk and get around by transit, as well as making neighborhood streets more livable by reducing the impacts of vehicle traffic through traffic calming and make all modes of transportation in Cambridge accessible to all regardless of age or abilities.

Huron Avenue surface design highlights

Note: please see the accompanying graphic showing the final design.

Walking

- **More crosswalks.** It is city policy to have crosswalks at all roadway intersections where possible especially where pedestrian activity is high, such as in business districts. Nine additional crosswalks are being added.
- **Crossing island.** A flush crossing island is being added at Fayerweather Street to serve as a traffic calming measure and improve pedestrian crossing safety.
- **Special intersection treatment.** The intersections at Chilton and Appleton Streets will be constructed with pavers (though not raised intersections) to visually reinforce that drivers are in a business district and should slow down.
- **Curb extensions.** Curb extensions are being added at most intersections to shorten the roadway distance pedestrians need to cross and also make pedestrians more visible to drivers.
- **Raised side-street crosswalks.** Most crosswalks parallel to Huron Avenue will be raised at side-streets to be at the same level as the sidewalk, thereby eliminating the need for curb ramps. This helps prioritize pedestrians at intersections and reduces problems of puddles forming at ramps.

Bicycling

- **A striped buffer** will be painted between the bicycle lane and parked cars to improve bicyclist safety. Where Huron bends at Sparks Street, the painted buffer will be placed between the bicycle and travel lanes.
- **Green pavement** will be used for the bike lane at intersections of concern, such as at Sparks Street, to improve bicyclist safety.
- **Dashed white lines through intersections** will be used for the bicycle lane at all intersections.
- **A Hubway bicycle sharing station** will be incorporated into the new plaza design at the end of Vassal Lane.

Bus stops

- **Bus stop curb extensions** will be created for most bus stops to facilitate the driver getting both the front and back doors of the bus aligned with the curb. This is especially critical for wheelchair users and people with mobility limitations, including the elderly, who are frequent users of the bus system.
- **Consolidation** of bus stops that are too close together help speed the bus trip. The stops at Lexington and Reservoir will be consolidated.

Miscellaneous

- **New street trees** will be added throughout the corridor.
- **Vassal Lane Plaza** will be reconstructed to include landscaping and seating.
- **Pedestrian scale lighting** will be added between Lakeview and Fayerweather Streets.
- **Unrestricted parking will be changed to 2-hour/residential combination** in the main business district and **1-hour/residential combination** by Appleton Street to increase the amount of parking turnover which will benefit business district customers.

Contact

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Updated May 1, 2013