

WESTERN AVE CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Dear Western Ave Neighbor:

Construction of the Western Avenue Project will begin later this summer. This project includes the reconstruction of Western Avenue between Green St and Memorial Dr – newly constructed street, sidewalks, separated bicycle lane, enlarged park with public art at Cronin Park, and new sewer, drain and water mains. The City is currently in the process of hiring a contractor to build the public improvements and utility companies have begun upgrading their facilities prior to our construction.



The City construction is expected to begin this August and take 24 months to complete. Improvements will be completed in phases to minimize disruption to the neighborhood. A summary of the design of Western Avenue is provided on the back of this letter. City staff will host a **construction open house later this summer** to introduce the contractor, present the phasing of the project, discuss construction details, and address resident questions and concerns.

Utility Construction Schedule

Utility companies are currently upgrading their facilities to coordinate with the City construction.

NSTAR Gas began replacing their gas main last fall and is making good progress. The final stage of gas main installation (Howard St to Putnam Ave) will begin during the week of June 11, and we expect the work to take 2 months to complete.

NStar Electric continues to work on their cooling line in the neighborhood. For an updated schedule, list of locations and to receive updates, please visit www.nstarcambridge.com.

Comcast will perform repairs in several locations. Crews will begin upgrades during the week of June 11, and the work will take approximately 4 weeks to complete.

Information and Assistance

For any information or assistance during this project, or to be added to the project email list, please contact Kelly Dunn, Community Relations Manager, at 617.349.4870 or kdunn@cambridgema.gov. If you have any questions regarding the Western Ave design, please contact Jeff Rosenblum, Project Manager, at 617.349.4615 or jrosenblum@cambridgema.gov.

In case of an emergency after hours or on weekends, please call the 24-Hour line at 617.349.4800.

Thank you in advance for your patience during this construction. We hope you enjoy these improvements once they are complete.

Sincerely,
Kelly Dunn, Community Relations Manager
Cambridge Department of Public Works

WESTERN AVENUE RECONSTRUCTION – FINAL DESIGN

The design process for the surface redesign of Western Avenue ran from January 2010 through 2011 and included eight Advisory Committee meetings, five neighborhood walks, and six public meetings. Five concept alternatives were developed to identify the full range of potential options for Western Avenue and extensive community feedback was taken into consideration. <http://www.westernavenue.info>

Evaluation criteria was developed by city staff and the advisory committee to guide the design process:

- Traffic calming effect / vehicle speed reduction
- Pedestrian crossing safety
- Expanded sidewalk space
- Bicycle facility safety and comfort
- Bus operations and efficiency
- Rush hour vehicle capacity
- Parking availability
- Snow clearance and street cleaning
- Emergency vehicle access
- Construction cost
- Community support

Final Design Elements:

- Pleasant St to Blackstone St will have two vehicles travel lanes, parking on both sides, and a separated bicycle lane (raised cycle track).
- Pedestrian safety will be improved with raised crosswalks on (unsignalized) side streets, curb extensions, and new crosswalks.
- New trees, planting beds, trash / recycling containers, and energy efficient streetlights will be installed.
- Pedestrian crossings will be improved at Pleasant / Western / Franklin and at Blackstone.
- Cronin Park will be enlarged, landscaped, and include a rain garden and permanent public art installation “Breaking Bread”.

