

TO: Cambridge City Council
By email to: council@cambridgema.gov

cc: Yi-An Huang, City Manager
Melissa Peters, Acting Assistant City Manager of Community Development
Brooke McKenna, Transportation Commissioner
Kathy Watkins, DPW Commissioner
Nick Schmidt, Cambridge DOT, Transportation Program Manager
Cambridge City Clerk

From: Richard Freierman, Chair, on behalf of the Cambridge Bicycle Committee

June 14, 2025

Dear City Council Members,

We are writing to you to emphasize the support of the Cambridge Bicycle Committee for full implementation of projects under the Cycling Safety Ordinance (CSO) without further delay. Our advisory committee opposes the requests put forth in *POR 2025 #88* and *POR 2025 #89*. Both Orders would delay the implementation of bike lanes on Segment A of Broadway, already underway. The second would suspend or eliminate construction of bike lanes on Broadway indefinitely.

The City Council has already voted once to extend the deadline for CSO completion. Doing so again—or worse, reducing the CSO mandated network—ignores prior City Council support and votes as well as years of community input and planning by city staff. To suspend or eliminate implementation of a key artery in the network will have a significant negative impact on the benefits of the CSO and street safety in Cambridge.

Broadway is a heavily traveled main thoroughfare connecting CRLS, Fletcher Maynard Academy, the main branch of the Public Library, Harvard University, the east campus of MIT, Kendall Square, and numerous parks. In its present state, it's a dangerous street.

Vehicles on Broadway are often traveling at excessive speeds with over half exceeding the speed limit, and some well over that. The danger to vulnerable users is significant—over 40 vehicle crashes reported with people walking or biking since 2022. That doesn't include the 100 plus vehicular crashes with parked cars, poles and other structures. The redesign of Broadway will slow traffic and add a safe space for bikes and other micromobility devices. It will also improve crossings and overall safety for pedestrians. Delayed implementation will mean more crashes and likely more injuries.

We support efforts to mitigate the loss of parking from this project, but not at the cost of street safety. Policy Orders 5 and 6 offer good ideas to that end, and we support them.

The improvements brought about by the Cycling Safety Ordinance and the work done by city staff in the past five years are yielding results. By any measure, bicycle use has increased dramatically. Cycling on sidewalks has decreased. Cycling by children has increased. Micromobility use is up. The rate of crashes per miles traveled has gone down. Serious injuries from crashes have gone down dramatically. Cambridge is a national leader in working to ensure safe streets for all users. Let's not stop the progress now.

People for Bikes (peopleforbikes.org) is a national organization that promotes bicycle safety and provides city rankings. In their rankings, Cambridge is in the top three medium sized cities in the U.S. Here's what they had to say about us:

The city of Cambridge saw one of the largest improvements in City Ratings scores in recent years, growing from a score of 36 in 2020 to a tremendous 72 in 2024. In 2019, Cambridge passed the Cycling Safety Ordinance (CSO), one of the strongest Complete Streets mandates in the nation, to require the creation of safe biking routes. In 2020, the city set a timeline to have 25 miles of those routes completed by 2026. By relying on quick-build projects, using bollards and flex posts to create separated bike infrastructure, Cambridge has made substantial progress on the goals outlined in the CSO.

Cambridge has much to be proud of. Rather than pulling back from our successes we should join together to stay on track to create more safe streets for everyone.

Thank you,

Richard Freierman, Chair

On behalf of the Cambridge Bicycle Committee