

Bicycle Committee Meeting on July 16, 2025

DRAFT Meeting Notes

Attendees

- Members in attendance: Richard Freierman, Gregory Carey-Medlock, Randy Stern, Mark A. Boswell, Guido Cuperus, John P. Ellersick, Amy Flax, Diane Gray, Denise Haynes, Camille Jonlin, Scott Kilcoyne
- Members absent: Martha Birnbaum, Michael Burke, Muna El Taha, Alison Harris, Eitan Normand, Vanessa Nwankwo, Leah Pickett, Carola Voelker, Ling Zeng
- City staff: Nick Schmidt (DOT), Jerry Friedman (DPW), Quinn Murphy (DOT), Tenzin Choephel (DOT)
- Visitors: None

Minutes

- June 11, 2025, draft meeting minutes approved

Project Updates

- From Nick Schmidt on behalf of the **Department of Transportation, Transportation Planning Division (DOT)**:
 - Upcoming meetings:
 - Pedestrian Committee Meeting (7/31 - Grand Junction Connector site walk)
 - Transit Advisory Committee Meeting (8/7)
 - Bicycle Committee Meeting (8/13 - will decide by 8/1 if it will be a meeting, potluck, or bike ride)
 - Announcements:
 - [E-Cargo Delivery Bikes for Businesses](#) application process ending July 20
 - Mount Auburn and Sparks Street closure from 7/19 to the end of the year due to [221 Mt Auburn Street building demolition](#). Detours for all modes available online.
 - 2025 Bicycling in Cambridge Data Report still undergoing review
 - New Bluebikes stations at Cambridgeport Drive and Vassal Lane coming in August
 - Street projects:
 - [Broadway Safety Improvement Project](#): Broadway to Quincy summer outreach planned
 - Section A (Portland to Columbia) installed with flexpost installation later this month
 - [Aberdeen Avenue Safety Improvement Project](#): repaving on hold

- [Cambridge Street Safety Improvement Project](#): Section A (Prospect Street to Willow Street) implementation planned this fall
- [Main Street Safety Improvement Project](#): Central Square to Portland Street installation tonight, flexposts later this month
- What is the status of the intersection safety audit process?
 - Still being developed – Nick will coordinate with DOT staff for update at an upcoming Bicycle Committee meeting
- From Jerry Friedman on behalf of the **Department of Public Works (DPW)**:
 - [Harvard Square Plaza](#): Work to continue through 11/26 - complexity around building over the MBTA station
 - [River Street Reconstruction Project](#): Full-depth roadway and Carl Barron Plaza reconstruction continues
 - [Mass Ave Partial Construction](#): Median removed between Waterhouse Street and Linnaean Street and water main work underway
 - Garden Street Eversource Project: gas main replacement through early August
 - [Memorial Drive Greenway Improvements, Phase III](#): Department of Conservation and Resources (DCR) opened bids; project could start soon

Bike Parking Census (Tenzin Choephel, DOT)

- The city installs 100-150 new bike racks in the public right-of-way per year
- Asset data collection is underway for all existing racks. Data should be available by winter 2025.
 - This will allow better tracking of repairs.
 - Current data only shows location of bike racks, but new data will track location, install method, type of racks, owner, condition, orientation to curb, and include photos
- What about people locking bikes to street signs as though they are racks?
 - This isn't tracked and City does not officially recommend locking bikes to street signs
- How to request a bike rack?
 - City maintains a bike parking request online form: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Transportation/gettingaroundcambridge/bike-sincambridge/Parking/bikeparkingrequestsmap>
- Will data be compatible with OpenStreetMap?
 - Not currently

Bow Tie Ride

- Tentatively selected October 5, with September 28 as a backup:
 - Both dates are Sundays
 - Tenzin will check with Cambridge Police and DPW for conflicting events
- Tentatively selected a former Bow Tie route after review of prior rides from Bicycle Committee Site. Will update, as needed, based on review and test ride:
 - Randy and Richard will check them out as candidates for 2025 ride

- John Ellersick volunteered to test the route

Bicycle Level of Comfort Methodology Update

- Work in progress, not a final draft
- Bicycle Level of Comfort (BLC) is a planning tool that estimates perceived comfort biking on a street or path. Most people will only bike if they are comfortable.
 - BLC 1 indicates the most comfortable, BLC 5 is the least comfortable
- Bicycle Level of Comfort helps orient planning towards achieving “all ages and abilities” conditions
- Original definitions came from an academic paper co-authored by professor Peter Furth of Northeastern University
- Exposure to motor vehicles
 - Eliminating them entirely is the most comfortable
 - Reducing them can be comfortable under the right conditions
- Bicycle Level of Comfort can be seen as a toolbox to reduce vehicle speeds and volumes
- There are new Big Data sources on vehicle speeds and volumes that the DOT can apply citywide to better understand comfort levels on all streets
- This update includes a new methodology for bus stop BLC based on conflicts with buses and passengers
- Separated bike lanes and paths are always BLC 1, non-separated lanes can be 1-5
- Comments:
 - Would be nice to have “Intersection Level of Comfort,” too
 - Recommend that contraflow bike lanes aren’t penalized in the BLC ratings by being located next to on-street parking. It is safer to approach a parked car in the contraflow direction because the passenger can see you directly through the windshield.
- Discussed engagement of Subcommittee to work with Nick on reviews; Richard will follow up

Consolidating Communications

- Plan to reduce the number of monthly emails and meeting reminders from 6 to 4
- Brief discussion about timing of both post- and pre-meeting emails for sharing slides and agenda planning
- Richard and Nick will meet to discuss a fall meeting agenda look-ahead and propose topics to the Bicycle Committee

Public Comment

- None