

Bus Routing Charrette – Transit Advisory Committee, March 2, 2016

The Cambridge Transit Strategic Plan states several objectives (under Goal 1) related to identifying transit needs and gaps as well as prioritizing transit investments. As a preliminary effort towards realizing these objectives, city staff will facilitate brainstorming on bus routing issues and improvements in this charrette. We will explore two types of improvements:

- Resource-constrained, more immediately feasible reallocation of existing resources (short-term)
- Bigger-picture, systemic changes that require increased investments and that could have significant barriers to implementation (long-term)

While this is an exercise to help us further explore implementing Strategic Plan recommendations, it could also be informative for MBTA service planning, City investments in street infrastructure, as well as MassDOT's forward-looking strategic planning for investment in the MBTA (Focus40).

Materials

- Maps of existing MBTA routes and City streets
- Laptop and projector for using online tools, such as Google Maps
- Recommendations from the Cambridge Transit Service Analysis and Central Square Bus Access and Circulation studies
- Other maps and data (e.g. demographics, MBTA service statistics)

Structure of Exercise (60 minutes)

1. (5 minutes) Review available materials
2. (15 minutes) Identify shortcomings, gaps, issues, etc. with existing bus routing. Look at additional data sources such as demographics, ridership, etc. Consider:
 - Routing (individual bus routes and the overall network)
 - Stops (location, frequency)
 - Level of service (headways, service hours)
3. (10 minutes) Breakout with individual blank maps to brainstorm routing changes
 - Make modest modifications to existing service on a current system map
 - Using a blank slate map, re-think the system
4. (30 minutes) Group brainstorming to mark recommended modest / short-term changes on a large, shared map
5. Other topics to keep in mind:
 - Privatized routes or other ways of providing service
 - Changes to infrastructure to better accommodate buses
 - Key locations for implementing bus priority

Takeaways

- Large shared map of issues
- Individual maps brainstorming ideas (both short and long-term)
- Larger shared map of suggestions