

Draft

To: cambridgereidoverpass@dot.state.ma.us, carrie.lavallee@dot.state.ma.us,
jonathan.gulliver@dot.state.ma.us, massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us

Re: Reid Overpass: Major Projects, Project File number 611987

Dear Chief Engineer Carrie Lavallee, Undersecretary Jonathan Gulliver, and the Project Design Team,

We are writing on behalf of the three Cambridge Transportation Advisory Committees—Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit—in response to the design concepts presented at the January 6 meeting for the Reid Overpass, MassDOT project 611987. These three committees jointly advise the Cambridge City Manager on matters pertaining to citizen priorities for these modes of transportation.

We write because we are concerned that the designs presented at the January 6 meeting fail to meet key goals for pedestrian and bicycle safety and public transit.

The designs presented emphasize peak-hour Level of Service for vehicles over considerations of safety and comfort for other users and improvement of transit for bus and shuttle service. We urge MassDOT to present a broader range of design options that better serve all modes of transportation at this key intersection.

We look forward to detailed reviews and opportunities for comment on further iterations of the project plans. We would also appreciate information on the expected timing for presentation of updated plans incorporating community feedback, and on the timeline for the entire project.

In the meantime, we urge you to take the following points into consideration as you develop and refine design alternatives:

- Project goals should prioritize safety for all users, especially people walking, biking, and taking transit, not peak-hour vehicle Level of Service.
- Bicycle and pedestrian lanes should be protected from motor vehicle traffic by physical barriers or grade separation, and should be separated from each other whenever possible.
- Roadway design should eliminate slip lanes and tighten turning geometry so vehicles cannot make high-speed turns into crosswalks and bike lanes. Through traffic lanes should target a maximum design speed of 25 mph.
- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing distances should be minimized and avoid multi-stage crossings with long delays. At the same time, all pedestrian and cyclist crossings should be signal controlled to allow safe passage.

- The redesign should provide transit priority for bus routes and shuttles that use the BU Bridge and Brookline Street corridor.
- If an overpass is considered, it should be no more than one lane in each direction and designed to reduce vehicle speeds. Consideration should also be given to including fully separate bicycle and pedestrian paths on the overpass.
- All design options must align with the Commonwealth's safety and climate commitments, including the DCR Parkways Master Plan, the Healthy Transportation Policy Directive, the MassDOT Pedestrian Plan, and state and local Vision Zero goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important project.