

Garden Street Safety Improvement Project Listening Session

November 29, 2022 | 6:30 p.m. | Graham and Parks School



Agenda

- Today's Meeting and Upcoming Listening Session
- Background
- Our Observations and Adjustments
- Short-Term Plan
- Medium-Term Plan
- Listening Session



Today's Meeting

- **Purpose:** This is a meeting focused the impacts of the Garden Street one-way switch on the surrounding area.
- **Outcomes:** We want to hear your concerns so that we can observe and respond.
- **Process:** We will present what we've done so far and what we're planning, go over ground rules for feedback, and then hear from you.



Upcoming Listening Session

Tuesday, December 13

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Zoom

Learn more at:

www.cambridgema.gov/GardenStHuronMason



Background



Garden Street Safety Improvement Project

Meetings and Outreach Events

May 24

Community Meeting 1: Broad outline of project, gathered initial community feedback

July 12

Community Meeting 2: Presented two draft layouts of Garden Street

August 9

Community Meeting 3: Presented a third draft layout based on community feedback

September 20

Community Meeting 4: Presented details on final selection based on community feedback

September 22

Community Open House on Garden Street:
Chance to meet with City staff and ask questions

November 9

First Listening Session on impacts of the Garden Street Safety Improvement Project



Garden Street Safety Improvement Project

Outreach Overview

General Outreach

- City's daily email updates
- Regular updates to website and email list

Before Community Meeting 1

- Postcards to 3,500 addresses in project area. This did not include Raymond Street.
- Physical signage: 40 laminated signs on Garden Street and side streets announcing the project and meeting.
- Flyers: We distributed flyers at doors on Garden Street.

Before Community Meeting 2

- Physical signage on Garden Street and side streets.



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Garden Street Safety Improvement Project

Project Kickoff

Safety improvements will be coming to Garden Street from Huron Avenue to Mason Street near Cambridge Common.

This project will install separated bike lanes and make improvements to existing pedestrian crossing locations.

We will host our first community meeting on May 24th, where we will introduce the project, its goals, and gather initial feedback from the public. See other side for details.



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www.cambridgema.gov/GardenStHuronMason



City of Cambridge
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Community Meeting

Tuesday, May 24th
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
via Zoom

For more information on:

- Joining our mailing list
- Attending the meeting



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Outreach Overview

At Community Meeting 2, attendees requested that we look into turning a significant section of Garden Street to a one-way. Recognizing that this would impact a larger area, we expanded our outreach ahead of Community Meeting 3.

Before Community Meeting 3

- Physical signage: on Garden Street and side streets, alerting people about the three layout options, including the one-way
- Flyers: We distributed flyers at doors on streets impacted by the one-way (including Raymond Street).

Before Community Meeting 4

- Physical signage on Garden Street and side streets.
- Postcards: We sent postcards with information on the meeting and intended one-way to over 4,700 addresses, including Raymond Street



City of Cambridge | Community Meeting

Garden Street Safety Improvement Project

Tuesday, August 9, 2022

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. via Zoom

Join us for our third community meeting to discuss upcoming safety improvements to Garden Street between Huron Avenue and Mason Street. During this meeting we will:

- Discuss three layout concepts for the street
- Give you an opportunity to ask questions and provide additional feedback

One of the three layout concepts that we will discuss includes converting Garden Street to one-way for vehicles in the eastbound direction between Huron Avenue and Concord Avenue.

Learn More + Join the Meeting

Join online: cambridgema.gov/GardenStHuronMason

Join by phone: call 929-436-2866 and Meeting ID 820 6801 5465

Contact the Project Manager

Stephen Meuse | smeuse@cambridgema.gov | 617-349-4713

Accessibility Statement

People with disabilities may request accommodations by contacting Traffic, Parking, and Transportation at 617-349-4700 (voice), 711 (relay), or tpt@cambridgema.gov.

Garden Street Safety Improvement Project

August Flyers and Posters



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Garden Street Safety Improvement Project

September Postcards

Garden Street Safety Improvement Project

Changes Coming in 2022

This fall, the City of Cambridge will install separated bicycle lanes and make improvements to existing crosswalks on Garden Street between Huron Avenue and Mason Street.

Feedback from three community meetings identified a preferred plan: **convert Garden Street to a one-way for vehicles** between Huron Avenue and Concord Avenue, with vehicles traveling eastbound (toward Harvard Square). Bicycle lanes will travel in both directions, with a one-way separated lane on each side of the street.

Learn more at an online community meeting or an in-person open house this September. (See other side for details.)



City of Cambridge
344 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139

Garden Street Safety Improvement Project

Fourth Community Meeting
Tuesday, September 20, 2022
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
via Zoom

Community Open House
Thursday, September 22, 2022
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Garden Street/Concord Avenue
intersection



More info, meeting details, and mailing list sign up.
Visit www.cambridgema.gov/GardenStHuronMason.

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Observations and Adjustments



Observations

- **October 28:** Garden Street switches to one-way operation between Huron Avenue and Mason Street.
- City staff, including TP+T staff and Cambridge police officers, have regularly observed the impacts on side streets.
- We are making adjustments to signal timing to help traffic flow better.



Clip recorded by a TP+T staff member -
Thursday, November 3 approx. 8:30 a.m.



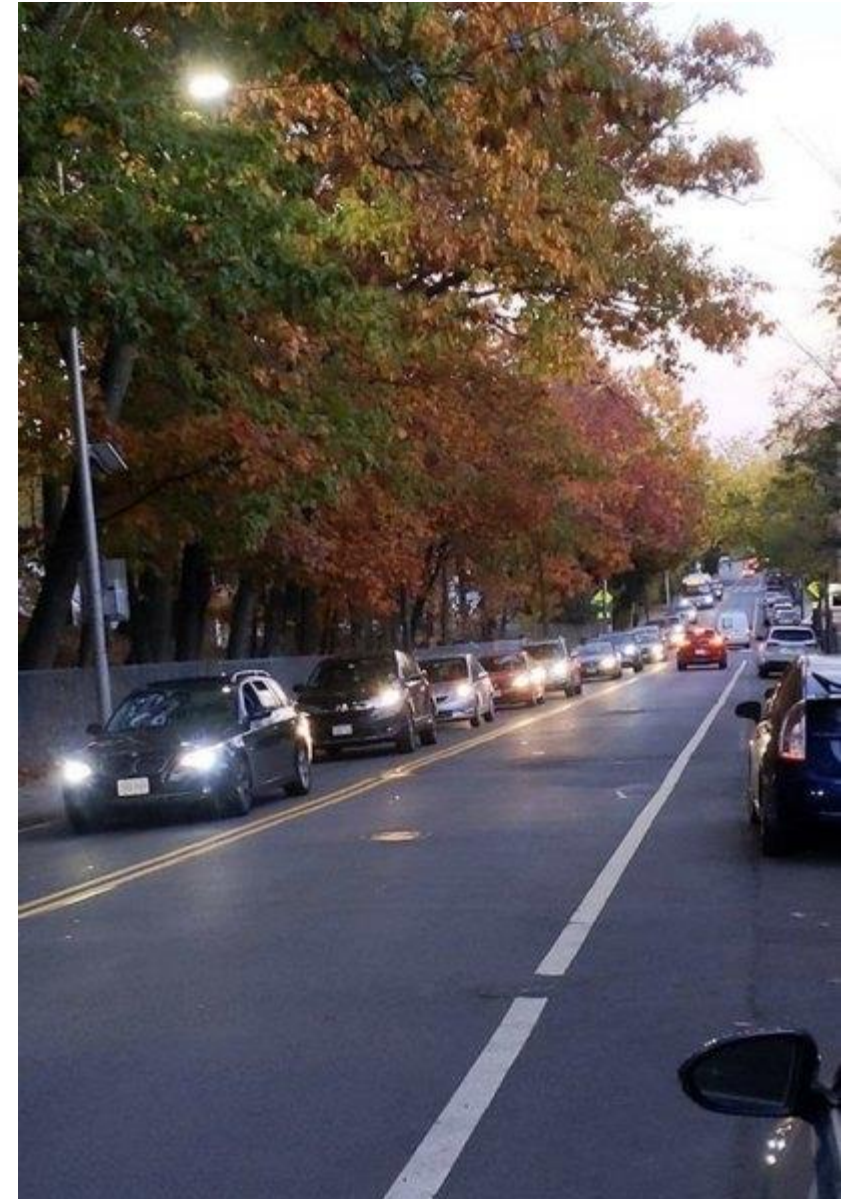
Wayfinding Apps

- There were initial issues with wayfinding apps like Google and Waze. Information submitted to apps was not accurately reflected for several days.
- Apps continued to direct people the wrong way down Garden Street, causing cars to reroute to surrounding streets.
- Once the apps brought drivers to the area, they had to find alternative routes through the neighborhood.
- Changes to wayfinding apps went into effect in early November.



Concord Avenue Congestion

- After Garden Street became a one-way, congestion worsened on Concord Avenue
- We adjusted signal timing on Monday, November 7
- Fewer cars stuck behind the red light and traffic flows more efficiently
- Peak-hour observations showed queues are similar to pre-project levels



Huron Avenue Congestion

- We heard that Huron Avenue was backed up during the PM commute.
- We made signal timing adjustments at the Garden Street/Huron Avenue/Sherman Street traffic signal on November 8.
- We made green time adjustments at Walden Street and Sherman Street on November 8.



Sherman Street Left-Turn from Huron Avenue

- We heard that it is hard to turn left onto Sherman Street from eastbound Huron Avenue.
- We're evaluating the need for a protected left turn phase to the traffic light.
- This would help the signal process more left turns and clear the block more efficiently.



Wrong-Way Biking and Scooting

- We heard that people biking and scooting are going the wrong way in the new Garden Street bike lane between Shepard Street and Concord Avenue.
- We will install “wrong way” biking signs to discourage this practice.
- We will do outreach to bike lane users to educate them on wrong-way biking.



Wrong way sign on Western Avenue



Short-Term Plan



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Short-Term Plan

- Listen to residents about areas of concern
- Continue to make observations
- Police Department has placed speed trailers on Raymond Street and Garden Street
- Adjust signal timing to address congestion
- Identify more small changes to street layout or operations
- Education and outreach efforts around correct bike-lane usage, including wrong-way riding of biking and scooters



Medium-Term Plan

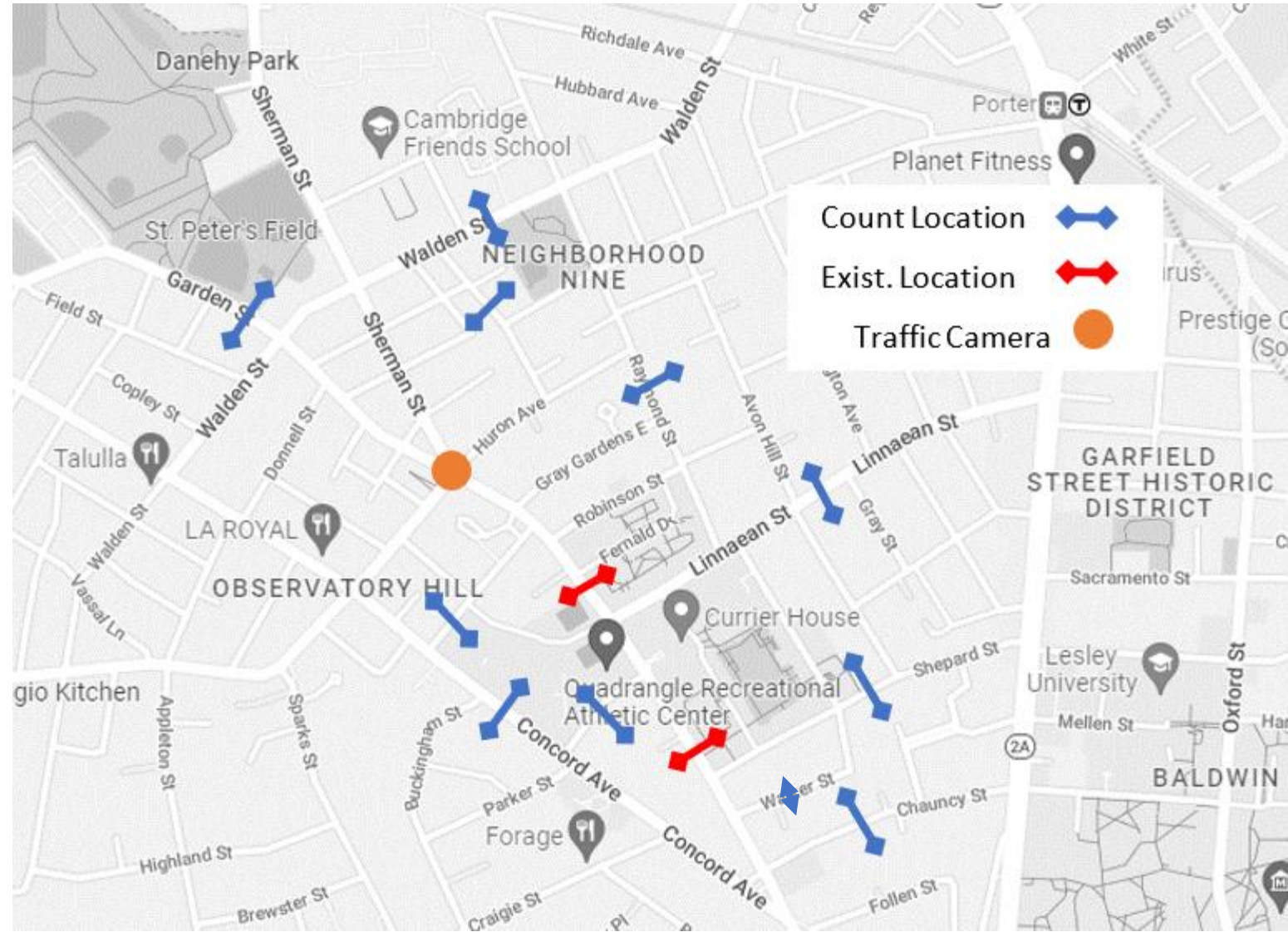


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Traffic Counts

- Before we made changes on Garden Street, we conducted traffic counts on October 12.
- We will take interim counts to understand current conditions.
- We will conduct “after” counts in a few months.
- **Why wait for a few months?**
To let people get used to the new traffic flow and settle into new routines.



Parking

- Total parking spaces in the project area changed from 112 to 59.
- We prioritized parking in the eastern section of the project between Linnaean Street and Mason Street.
- Majority of parking loss was located closer to Huron Avenue, where most houses have driveways.
- Informal observations on evenings of November 7, 8, and 9 noted that five to seven spaces remained between Linnaean and Shepard.
- We plan to do a more significant parking utilization study within the next few months.



Reporting Back

- We will provide a preliminary update to the City Council in December.
- It takes a while for traffic patterns to settle after changes to the road.
- In March or April (depending on weather), we will conduct traffic counts and report back on the impacts of the change.
- In the meantime, we will continue to listen to concerns, make observations, and respond as necessary.



Our Toolbox

- **Changes to signs** (such as adding all-way stops where warranted)
- **Markings** (such as adding parking lines, edge lines, and center lines near intersections)
- **Parking regulation changes** (to create better sight lines at stops and turns)
- **Traffic calming**, such as alternating which side parking is on (chicanes)
- **Permanent speed feedback sign**
- **Changes to street operations** (requires additional analysis of larger network impacts)



Listening Session / Q&A



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Community Meeting Agreements

We recognize that people have strong feelings about the project, and that we don't all necessarily agree. A diversity of opinions will strengthen our ability to see the issues.

But we are all working to make our streets safer. To have a productive meeting, let's:

- **Show respect to all that participate**
- **Embrace diverse points of view**
- **Give everyone a chance to participate**
- **Avoid debates and interruptions**
- **Listen to understand, rather than to respond**
- **Limit strong forms of reaction, whether positive or negative**
- **Do not engage in personal attacks**

