

ELISE HARMAN And with that, I think I'm going to pass it over to Brooke.

FREEMAN:

BROOKE

Great. Thank you, Elise, and thank you, everybody, for joining us. We're excited to be here for the very first

MCKENNA:

community meeting for the Main Street Safety Improvement Project. We'd like to start out just talking a little bit about our meeting's purpose, outcomes, and process for tonight. So our purpose tonight-- oh, and before I get started, I just wanted to thank Councillor Toner for being with us tonight, before we jump right in.

So the purpose of the meeting tonight is to introduce the Main Street Safety Improvement Project, as I mentioned. You'll learn tonight about the project's goals and background. The outcome that we're hoping for from tonight is that everyone who joins us or watches the meeting later on will have enough background information to be able to provide feedback on the Main Street that they know today and to make suggestions to help us start designing the project.

In terms of the process, we'll be sharing background during our presentation. And then we will transition over to a question and answer, question/comment period. And then that's just the first opportunity to give us feedback or ask us questions. In the coming months, there will be more opportunities to be involved in different ways.

So the project area for this particular project goes from Mass Ave near Lafayette Square up to Portland Street. So it's that kind of westernmost portion of Main Street, including that small segment of Sidney Street Extension leading to Mass Ave.

So tonight's agenda, we'll start off talking a little bit about the timeline for the project. We'll go through some planning background, talking about how we design our streets and why we're making these changes that we're proposing. We'll give a broad introduction to the project, what are the current conditions, what Main Street is like today, and what changes are we proposing.

And then we'll talk in more detail about the outreach that we're going to be doing in the coming months and how you can get involved and how you can let us-- how we can communicate with you, and then how we can collect your feedback and your suggestions. And after that, we'll transition over to the questions and feedback portion of the evening.

So we're here tonight, on March 16th, at the first community meeting, or the project introduction. And next week, on March 22nd, we will have an open house. The open house will be a chance for folks to come in person outside, ask us questions, take a look at maps, give us feedback in person.

And then between March and May, we'll continue to collect this community feedback. Beyond today, there'll be an online comment map, an online feedback form, the open house. We're always available by email or by phone. And you can also request a site visit with the project manager, as well.

Then come May, we'll have our second community Zoom meeting, where we start to present draft design options. And we'll follow that with a community open house, a second community open house shortly thereafter. Then after that, from June to July, we'll continue to solicit feedback on those draft designs. And in the June/July time period, we'll have our third community meeting, where we'll present the revised designs based on the feedback that we got on the drafts.

And then after community meeting number three, we'll continue to take feedback on these revised layouts. We'll make some final changes to the design and then announce a firmer schedule for project installation and what folks should be expecting at that point. And then hopefully by late summer of this year, we'll be starting with the project installation.

So how can you get involved beyond coming to this meeting tonight or listening to the meeting at a later time? So you can attend these meetings. And we hope you will attend these meetings or come to the open houses. You can visit anytime, you can visit our project webpage. That's www.cambridgema.gov/mainstreetsafety.

Definitely sign up for our mailing list. That's always a great way to make sure you know the latest news and know about upcoming events. You can provide lots of feedback online. We'll have feedback opportunities online at every stage of the process in the form of comment forms or surveys or comment maps.

And then at any time in the process, you can always reach out to us directly. Stephen Meuse is the project manager. You can reach out to him to talk on the phone, to meet in person, or to get any questions answered. So we're available for either in-person or virtual meetings with community members, businesses, and really any other stakeholders.

So a little bit of the notification that we've done leading up to this first meeting, we did put up posters around the project area. We made some individual notifications to major stakeholders, including businesses, houses of worship, and other stakeholders. We sent update emails to our city and project mailing lists, and we mailed postcards out to 3,800 addresses around the project area.

But one of the things that we'd really like to hear back from folks on are, are there other ways that we should be reaching out that we've missed. Do you have great ideas that could help us reach your neighbors who we haven't reached yet? And again, you can always visit the project page and give us that feedback.

So in terms of outreach next steps, we absolutely acknowledge that we don't and we can't reach the entire community with meetings like this. So we do try and make many different ways that people can get information and provide feedback. So the project mailing, signage, visits to businesses, online engagements, all those things will help us reach people who weren't able to make it tonight. And we'll do additional outreach to hear from more people.

And again, as I mentioned just a moment ago, we'd love to hear from you about better things that we can do to help reach a wider audience. Maybe you're on a great email list that you'd like to share information on. Is there a particular community bulletin board that you regularly check where we should be posting our information. We'd love to hear back from you on that.

And just I really want to emphasize that tonight is just the beginning of the feedback period, not the end, by any means. No decisions are being made right now. And over the coming months, we would love to get your feedback in whatever way is easiest for you. And to that end, we'll be posting a recording of tonight's meeting online, including the presentation slides, so that people can view it at a more convenient time.

So a little bit about how we design our streets. We really design our streets for people of all ages and all abilities. So this means people who may not have access to a car. Some people aren't able to drive. Some people don't want to drive. And some people may not be able to afford a car.

And then we also design our streets for people who use all different types of mobility devices, not just bikes. People who use mobility scooters or adult tricycles or child trailers or adapted bicycles. So it's really a wide range of folks that we want our streets to be inclusive to everyone in our community.

So when we think about how we want to design our streets to move people around Cambridge, moving people slowly is moving them safely. So speed is not our goal when we think about our priorities on Cambridge streets. We also don't prioritize eliminating delay for people driving over the safety of other people using the roadways. So our focus is really on moving people and goods, not the vehicles themselves.

Bike riding and taking transit is a more efficient use of our limited street space, so we really try to support that whenever possible. Safe and accessible facilities, including bike lanes that can be used by a wide range of people from young to old, are really key to our approach, but we also recognize that we need to allow for trucks, who make it possible for us all to live in the city, to have safe access to our streets, as well. And then we also like to keep in mind that public space on streets can also be used for other things non-transportation-related, such as outdoor dining or public gathering and community space.

So we really have our street design is what we call a human-centered approach. We design our streets to prevent errors as much as possible, and then to lessen the impacts of those errors when they do occur. It kind of shifts the thinking around street safety from individual blame for behaviors or incidents to creating a safe system that allows us to be human.

We're all human. We make mistakes. But by designing safe streets, those mistakes that are inevitable do not have to have horrible outcomes. So it's really about designing our streets for the most vulnerable users, meaning the people who don't have the safety of a car around them. And really, crash prevention is more effective than crash mitigation.

So enforcement and education are both supplemental, in our minds, to that safe street design. It's not a replacement for designing our streets safety. And when we talk about kind of making our system safe for errors, an example of that is anyone can be distracted for a moment.

And that momentary distraction can mean that a driver doesn't see a cyclist or a cyclist doesn't see a driver. And by providing separation between people in cars and people on bikes, it really decreases the chance that that momentary distraction can lead to a deadly crash. And that's really at the heart of the way that we design our streets.

So we talk a lot about sustainable transportation in Cambridge. And sustainable transportation options are those that allow people to get around in ways that reduce emissions and congestion, like walking, biking, and taking public transit. And the city has a very long history of supporting these sustainable modes, going back to the early '90s with the Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance all the way up through our adopting our Complete Streets policy back in 2016, Vision Zero in 2018, and the Cycling Safety Ordinance in 2019.

And with that, I'm going to hand things over to Cara Seiderman with CDD to talk through some of the planning background. Thanks, Cara.

CARA SEIDERMAN: Thank you, Brooke. Good evening. And thank you very much for being here and for taking the time to engage with us on this project. So I'm going to give a bit of background, and I'm going to talk about the Bicycle Plan and some elements of it.

From the Cambridge Bicycle Plan, we have a vision that Cambridge will be a place where bicycling is equally available to everyone, where all destinations can be reached by bike, and where streets are designed to accommodate biking for people of all ages, abilities, and identities. We recognize that there are a variety of barriers that make it harder for people to choose to bike, even if they would like to, so creating safe and comfortable streets is a necessary condition to enable everyone to have this choice. And this reflects the philosophy that people are at the center of transportation planning and design.

Most importantly, the Bicycle Plan explores and celebrates the diversity of people that do or may bike in Cambridge, and strives to create an environment that is safe and comfortable for people of all ages, abilities, and identities. So that means all ages, from young children to senior, people who are newer to cycling to those who are more confident, people of all income levels, people who speak English or don't speak English, people of all physical abilities, races, genders, and cultural backgrounds. These reinforce the philosophy that people are at the center of transportation planning and design.

I will note here that the Bicycle Plan actually covers much more than just the physical bicycle network. That's what we're focusing on tonight, primarily, but in the plan, there are chapters on many other parts of the program, such as outreach and engagement, safe routes to school, our Blue Bikes program, and other elements. So please feel free to explore that full plan, which is available online. And you can link to it from the main project page.

So when thinking about transportation, people often focus on the commute to work trips, but those are actually 20% or even fewer of all the trips that people do make. People use transportation to get to other places, to go shopping or go to restaurants or visit their friends.

And people may choose different ways of getting to places, depending on where they are going, other factors such as how much they are carrying for that particular trip, et cetera. So for example, someone may take a train to get to their job, then walk to the local library and bike to a friend's house. And this is why it's important to think about how to enable a full network of safe and comfortable bicycle facilities, so that people may travel to destinations throughout the city and for different trip purposes.

People are indeed choosing to bicycle more often in Cambridge. And we hear from residents that they would like to bicycle more, including people who have not even recently bicycled. The charts here are from a 2020 residents survey.

And compared with the residents survey from 2018, we see that more people biked in 2020 than biked in 2018. And when we asked people through that survey about whether they would like to bicycle more, we heard that 85% of the people who had biked in 2020 still wanted to do so more, and over half of those who had not bicycled that year said that they did want to bicycle more.

During the outreach for the 2020 bicycle plan update, we asked people about their experiences and concerns. We heard that, while people were enthusiastic about having opportunities to bicycle at least sometimes, they had significant concerns about safety.

And issues included speeding drivers, too much traffic, and the connections of good bicycling infrastructure. Significantly, the concerns were more pronounced for people identifying as female. So if we want to actually enable people to make the choice, we really need to address these concerns and consider the backgrounds of people who are responding and giving their feedback to us.

What we heard from Cambridge residents is similar to what people say in other places. And listening to what people have to say helps to guide the way we plan our streets. So I'm going to just take a moment to explain what's up here on the screen. The categories in the pie chart on the left represent people's comfort riding a bicycle on different types of bikeways.

So people were asked in surveys how they felt bicycling on these different bikeways. And when I say bikeways, is that a city street or is it an off-road path? And based on their comfort levels, they were sort of categorized. Not to say that people who identify this way is fully representative of the way that people see themselves, but this just is a relation to how they are biking on the street.

So the strong and fearless group will ride regardless of roadway conditions. And that's about 1% of the population. The enthused and confident group are people who are comfortable riding on a road with automobiles, but prefer to do so operating on bicycle-specific facilities.

The interested but concerned group, which is the majority of the population, like to ride on off-road paths or quiet neighborhood streets, but are afraid to do so on major roads without separation from traffic. The "no, interested" or "it depends" category includes people who are not able to ride or generally have no interest in riding. But further investigation within this group found that there are some people who might actually like to ride, they just don't have available safe infrastructure where they live.

So for the vast majority of people, creating separated bicycle lanes on major streets enables them to feel comfortable making the choice to ride. And if you see the chart on the right, the blue bars show that people feel comfortable or very comfortable. And for those people, the protected or separated bike lanes are the ones that make them feel comfortable enough to choose to ride.

Sorry.

So I referred to separated bike lanes, and we'll talk a little bit about what those are. Separated bike lanes have a physical separation between the bike lane and general travel lanes. The separation can be accomplished in many ways, including with regular or concrete curbs or buffers with white flex posts, like the ones you see in a lot of the quick-build bike lanes that we've installed over the years here in Cambridge.

When we build separated bike lanes, we increase the comfort and access for people of all ages and abilities. These lanes reduce crash and injury risk, including eliminating the threat of dooring, which is when someone in a parked vehicle opens their door and strikes a person riding a bike.

In general, the increased separation between people biking and driving allows for more time to react to any potential conflicts, allowing corrective actions to avoid injury. We also know that by visually narrowing a roadway, we encourage slower traffic speeds. The statistics show that when these types of facilities are implemented, crashes go down, and not just for people biking, but for all modes. And that's partly because of the decrease in speeds, and also because of the increase in attention people have on the street.

To elaborate on the speed reduction aspect of separated bike lanes, here's some data on vehicle speeds in a portion of Cambridge Street where we installed quick-build bike lanes a few years ago. We saw a large decrease in speeds with that project, and speeding was one of the major concerns that residents had about the roadway, similar to concerns we've heard on other streets in the city.

Before the project was installed, about 50% of drivers were traveling above the speed limit. After the project was installed and when things settled, we found that only 15% of drivers were traveling above the speed limit. As previously mentioned, enforcement and education are supplemental to proper street design, not a replacement for it.

And we're seeing exactly that here, where the design of the roadway is what led people to use our streets more safely. We gathered a lot of other information on the impacts of the Cambridge Street project. And that can be found on the city's website, if you're interested in learning more.

Installing separated bike lanes also helps improve safety for people walking. Separated bike lanes shorten crossing distances, providing better sightlines and allowing each potential conflict to be handled separately, in more manageable pieces. For example, you can cross the bike lane first, then wait to cross the vehicle lanes. This contrasts with roads that lack separated bike lanes. On those types of streets, you have to decide when to cross all lanes at once-- bike lanes, vehicle lanes, and there may be multiple lanes in multiple directions.

On the previous slide, I mentioned that separated bike lanes narrow the roadway and encourage slower speeds. And that's very helpful at crosswalks because it leads to higher yielding rates. That means drivers who yield to people walking and crossing the streets. And so that makes it easier and safer for everyone who is walking.

We are tracking the progress and affect of the bicycle facilities that we've installed over the years. On the graph on the right, the color-coded bars show the miles of bicycle infrastructure in the city each year, broken down by type. The orange line running through is the number of people biking, which is data from our biennial bike count locations.

A lack of safe and accessible routes for people of all ages and abilities prevents many people from biking. And what we've seen is that, as we've built more bicycle infrastructure, we've enabled a wider variety of people to bike, in addition to more people biking, and particularly addressing conditions for people who would not have considered biking without these dedicated facilities.

As previously mentioned, we have a vision that Cambridge will be a place where bicycling is equally available to everyone, where all destinations can be reached by bike, and where streets are designed to accommodate biking for people of all ages, abilities, and identities. Creating safe and comfortable streets is a necessary condition to enable everyone to have this choice. And as mentioned on the previous slide, we are seeing the effects of this, as more people are biking as more barriers are removed.

In order to fulfill the city's policy of increasing the use of sustainable transportation and enabling people to choose to bicycle by making the city safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities, the Cambridge City Council passed the Cycling Safety Ordinance in 2019. That ordinance requires the construction of separated bike lanes when streets are being reconstructed as part of the city's five-year plan for streets and sidewalks and when they have been designated for greater separation in the Bicycle Network Vision.

In 2020, the city council amended the ordinance, and the amendment set ambitious requirements for the installation of approximately 25 miles of separated bike lanes within the next five to seven years. And the location of these facilities is informed by both the Cambridge Bicycle Network Vision and by specific requirements in the ordinance.

On this slide, you can see some of those specific requirements. And those include all of Massachusetts Avenue, Broadway from Quincy Street to Hampshire Street, Cambridge Street from Oak Street to Second Street, Garden Street from Huron Avenue to Berkeley Street, Hampshire Street from Amery Street to Broadway. And it also requires 11.6 miles of separated bike lanes in other locations from the 2020 Bicycle Network Vision.

Main Street is part of these 11.6 miles. And you can learn more about the ordinance and references to the bike plan at the website that's on the slide, which is cambridgema.gov/cycling-safety-ordinance. And thank you, and I think next up is Stephen Meuse, project manager.

**STEPHEN
MEUSE:**

Thank you, Cara. Hi, everyone. My name is Stephen Meuse. I'm the project manager for the Main Street Project. I'll provide some context for Main Street, and then we'll discuss the existing conditions and things we consider as we work to design this project. As a reminder, we do not yet have a design for the street, and we are having this meeting to start the process of figuring out what we can improve.

This photo is a zoomed-in version of the bike plan that Cara talked about a few slides ago. And Main Street has the red dashed box around it. The entire length of Main Street is designated for greater separation in the plan to support people biking safely and comfortably.

Main Street is a key east-west corridor. It connects Cambridge to Boston via the Longfellow Bridge. It intersects with the future Grand Junction multi-use path. It's a direct connection between Central and Kendall squares. And just in general, it connects residents and visitors to retail, jobs, parks, and squares along the street and around the city.

All of Main Street is due for separated bike lanes. However, this project is only focusing on the section between Lafayette Square and Portland Street. That section is the really thick blue line on the map. This project is only focusing on that section because the rest of Main Street is either already designed or is being designed by adjacent projects.

So the portion we're talking about is the west or left side of the screen. And then moving from there to the east or the right, we have a segment being constructed as part of the Ragon Institute. That's between Portland and Albany Street. And they should finish up late this year.

Then we have design work that's ongoing as part of the Grand Junction multi-use path. That's still being designed. And then we have a couple of blocks that are part of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority. They have a design effort going on there. And that's from Galileo Way slash Vassar Street towards Third Street.

And then finally, we have a separated bike lane from Third Street to and over the Longfellow Bridge. Those are already complete. Just to refocus, once again, the project area consists of Main Street from Mass Ave at Lafayette Square to Portland Street. And this does include a small section of Sidney Street Extension, which is the small jog in the blue line.

The scope of the project is as follows. We will install separated bike lanes on the street. We'll improve crossing locations for people walking. We'll identify locations for curbside access, such as parking, loading, pickup, dropoff and the like. And we'll address safety for all users at key intersections.

This is a quick-build project, meaning that we can make these safety improvements faster than with traditional construction. With quick-build projects, we can make changes to pavement markings, we can install flexible posts in the roadway to separate the modes, we can change signs, and we can make minor modifications to traffic signals.

Quick-build does not include construction. We are unable to make changes such as replacing crosswalk ramps or adding new ramps. We also cannot address anything underground or pursue changes that require substantial digging. These are the types of improvements that need to be part of larger projects.

A major benefit to quick-build is that it can be done faster than construction projects. We can implement most quick-build projects within months, due to them being surface-level only. The larger projects, such as those that do require digging or moving curbs or new traffic signals, those are included in the city's five-year sidewalk and street construction plan. And that's so that we can coordinate with utilities and set aside funding. Due to their complexity, those types of projects can take two to five years to implement.

So back to Main Street, Main and Sidney Street Extension have conventional bike lanes for the full length of the project area. And those are the types of bike lanes that are between the travel lane and parking. There is no separation provided for people biking and people driving or parking. They're designated only with pavement markings, and sometimes signs.

At this point, I just want to introduce our first blue question box of the presentation. So let us know your thoughts about the existing bike lanes, including what works and what doesn't work. You can type your comments to us using the Zoom Q&A feature.

You can also hold your comments and speak towards the end of the presentation, or you can fill out our online comment form or contact me directly via phone or email. I'll review these options in more detail once we finish the presentation and enter the question and feedback session.

So the biking experience on Main Street in the project area does not meet the needs of people biking. Because there's no separation, they are subject to additional conflicts with people driving. And as we heard earlier in the presentation, Main Street is identified in the Bicycle Network Vision for greater separation.

We also heard that this section of Main Street is part of the Cycling Safety Ordinance, and separated bike lanes are required as part of that legislation. And this is just the same blue box I had on the previous slide. So please let us know your thoughts.

Biking on and especially nearby Main Street has grown considerably over the last two decades. We have one of our 16 annual bike count stations at Lafayette Square. That's the Mass Ave, Sidney Street, Columbia Street, Main Street intersection, at the western end of the project.

And while most of the people that bike through that intersection are on Mass Ave, we've still seen large growth in the number of people biking on Main Street, as well. On Main Street, specifically, peak hour counts show more eastbound trips-- those are going towards Kendall Square-- in the morning, and then more westbound trips towards Central Square in the evening.

And so now this slide serves as a summary of the existing parking and loading along Main Street. There are approximately 190 parking and loading spaces of various types in the project area. About 90 of those are on Main Street and Sidney Street Extension.

And just remember, these numbers are approximate because the total does vary day to day, based on the length of vehicles that are using those spaces and then how much space is left between parked cars. And we're looking to hear what types of parking and loading you use on Main Street, if you do. And do the existing regulations and location of that parking and loading work?

So most of the parking along Main Street and Sidney Street Extension is metered. There's about 52 of those 90 spaces. There's 32 permit parking spaces, which are located along Newtowne Court. You might remember earlier in the presentation that separated bike lanes have a buffer between the bike lane and the travel lane or parking lane.

In order to add that space, we'll need to remove about half of the parking spaces on this section of Main Street. That equates to about 45 to 50 spaces. And we're going to do our best to maximize the total number of spaces that we can keep, but we need to hear from you what types of parking are important here and where they should be located.

That will help us figure out what regulations the remaining spaces will have. Now, keep in mind that parking spaces can have more than one regulation. For example, a loading zone or metered parking space during the day, or maybe even in the morning, could also be permit parking at another time.

Trucks are also another consideration for Main Street. Main Street is a designated and signed truck route. Those are the green lines on the map on the screen. There are a number of businesses on Main Street and near Main Street that rely on trucks to supply goods and materials. However, we know that trucks make wide turns and have large blind spots, as shown in the image on the right. Adding separation and improving sightlines helps people walking and biking stay out of the blind spots of large vehicles. And that increases overall safety.

This project also allows us to look at crosswalks along Main Street. The map shows that we have six crossing locations within the project area. And four of these locations have traffic signals. Two of them do not. The crosswalk at Cherry Street does, however, have a flashing crosswalk sign that is activated by a push button. And that's relatively new. We'd like to hear which crossing locations work well and which you might have concerns about.

Buses. There are no MBTA bus routes currently on Main Street within the project area. However, the MBTA's bus network redesign is proposing a new high frequency bus service along Main Street that's shown in the black dashed line. They're calling it route 70. It's basically an extension of route 70 and it would run from Waltham to Kendall Square via Watertown. They're looking at 7 day week service about every 8 to 15 minutes according to their most recent update. You can find more about the proposed route on the MBTA's website. The link is on the screen.

And this is important to keep in mind for the Main Street Project because our design will need to accommodate bus stops when that route is finalized. The bus route will not start running this year and the TSA said it could be a couple of years out, but we're asking you to let us know where bus stops should be located so that our design will not preclude their installation in the future.

We reviewed crash data for Main Street from the last three years. So between 2020 and 2022, there were 34 crashes along Main Street between Mass Ave. and Portland Street. Of those crashes, 15 involved a driver colliding with another driver and 9 involved a driver colliding with a person walking or biking. In most crashes involving someone walking or biking, the person who was hit needed to be transported to the hospital. People walking and biking are more vulnerable to injury when involved in a crash. And as part of this project we'll be looking at each crash location to determine if there is something we can do to prevent future crashes.

All right. Outreach. So it's important to remember that tonight is the beginning of the feedback period, not the end. We do not yet have a design for the street. And we aren't making any decisions tonight, either. Over the coming months we welcome your feedback, whether online or in person, and we'll use this feedback to design the project. For those who aren't here tonight, we'll post a recording of the meeting online, including these slides. And we have a lot of other ways to gather feedback as well. And I'll go through some of them right now.

So today's meeting is the official start of this project. We have no design yet. We're just here to figure out how we can improve the street by hearing user experiences and feedback about what we should look into. We've anticipated having three community meetings at major project milestones. This project, this provides the community with periodic, sort of big updates about the project status and where we're at in the process. Our second community meeting, which is we're aiming to have in May, we'll have design options to present. And those we develop based on the feedback we hear tonight and following tonight.

Following that second meeting, we'll have another round of feedback on those design options that were presented at the meeting, the second meeting, leading to a third meeting where we'll share one final design. And then open it up to any comments or adjustments that maybe still need to be made to the plan. And we do plan to install this project in late summer of this year.

In addition to the community meetings, we have two open houses plan to help us reach community members who may not be able to attend a community meeting. The first one is next week, and it summarizes what we presented tonight. And then there's one more plan to take place after the second community meeting. At these events, will have boards summarizing key slides and information from the presentations as well as either a large map or design plans for people to look at and comment on. They can also ask us questions directly.

Following this meeting, you can also submit comments to us using our online form or map. The project web page will have the information on how to access both. The comment form is available to use right now, but the map is not yet ready. We'll include a link to the comment map in the email summarizing this meeting when it's ready. And with the comment map, you'll be able to add a pin to any location and tell us that you have a concern about driving, walking, biking or others. Then we can look into it. And this is just a picture of a map we had for Hampshire Street's project. And so those are all the number of locations that people alerted us to a concern.

As we move along in this design process, we're available for in-person and/or virtual meetings with the community member and stakeholders. You can send us an email. You can call us or use our online comment form at any time to request a meeting. We anticipate discussions with many entities along Main Street, including but not limited to Newtowne Court in Washington Elms, the DPW's Port Infrastructure Improvements projects, the Bike Pedestrian and Transit Committees, The Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities, businesses, houses of worship, and more. Some of these meetings are already or meetings and discussions already planned. And then for others we're looking forward to setting up a time for discussion.

And so I want to thank everyone for attending. And I'm going to hand it over to Elise and we can begin the question and feedback portion of the night.

ELISE HARMAN Thanks, Stephen. And thank you to all our presenters tonight. Just to reintroduce myself to anybody who came in
FREEMAN: late, my name is Elise Harman Freeman. I'm the communications manager for the Traffic Parking and Transportation Department. And I'll be facilitating our Q&A and feedback session today.

So the way that we're going to do this, I'm going to allow everybody to raise their hand right now. We're going to take a comment in the order that hands are raised. If you're dialing in, if you're calling in, dial star 9 to raise your hand. I don't see anybody calling in at the moment. You can also feel free to ask questions or make comments using the Q&A function. Approximately every 15 minutes we're going to provide answers to questions. We're scheduled to end at 8PM today. And you may also contact Stephen directly to provide written or verbal feedback, visit our webpage for the range of options to provide feedback.

I think I'm going to start with just a couple of good questions we got in the Q&A. And then I'll start calling on people with their hands raised so let's just ask-- Kara, I have a question for you first. On the general background slides, you had some information on the bicycle accounts. Can you tell us a little bit more about the bike counts? Are those trips done by-- are those counts down by street or is it a general account across the city?

CARA Thank you, Elise. Thanks for the question. So since about 2002, we've actually been doing counts of people bicycling at 16 different intersections across the city that are sort of representative of different areas of the city with the notion in mind that we would use them consistently over time as kind of one snapshot of what's happening. And they are done typically in September. And we've added, just as an aside, we've added some other locations that we also can keep track of. But for the purposes of calculating that line that you saw on that chart, it's the same 16 intersections. And they're done, well they started to be every year, but now they're done every other year.

And the last one that you saw was 2019. Then of course that pandemic happened, and we did some in 2022 that we're still working on capturing all of the data that will be published soon. And there is information on our website with all of the accounts that if anybody really is interested in looking at that, it's all publicly available on the Open Data. So again, consistent accounts across the city over 20 years.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you, Kara. Brooke, can you just talk for a minute about how we keep bike lanes clear now?
FREEMAN:

BROOKE Sure. So we work very closely with the Department of Public Works in designing these bike lanes. And we have minimum lists of clear space so that DPW is able to use their small snow clearing equipment in these lanes. So planning for snow removal is or snow clearance is a very large part of what goes into the design. So DPW has really added a lot of equipment in the past years and is really quite good at keeping these lanes clear.

ELISE HARMAN Thanks, Brooke.
FREEMAN:

Stephen, I'm going to ask you a final question from the Q&A. And then I'm going to move on to people with their hands raised. Chris Cassa, you're going to be first. Just so you can prepare. Stephen, what strategies are in place to address the safety of pedestrians relative to bikes?

STEPHEN So I had a slide in here that was talking about the benefits of separate bike lanes for pedestrians. And a lot of those are for slowing vehicles down and narrowing streets, but there are a number of benefits for people walking, in terms of how they're interacting with bikes. And so putting people on bikes in a predictable location with better sight lines helps both the person biking and the person walking be able to see each other. And then also we do install on the ground bikes yield to people walking, little triangles that look like yield signs just so people can be reminded that they are required to let people cross the street.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you. And just before I get to the people with their hands raised, we have a slide up just kind of going over the questions that would be most helpful for us if you answer tonight. But please feel free to ask any questions you have, make any comments you'd like to. Our questions include how you currently use Main Street, any safety concerns you have, thoughts on existing bike facilities, what types of parking and loading you use and are most important to keep, what crossing locations work well, where do you have concerns, where should any bus stops be located in the future, and what can we do to improve traffic safety generally.

So I'm going to start with Chris Cassa as our first commenter and then I'm going to go to Joan. Chris, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hey there. I just want to say it's great to hear that you're having these meetings before any of the designs are made and that you're encouraging people to spread the word so you can hear what matters to people when you're designing it. I know it can be really hard to reach people who are busy or even people who rely on walking or biking down Main Street who wouldn't be tuned in to these sorts of projects. So I like the idea of reaching out to houses of worship, to residents, like Newtowne Court and stuff like that.

As for the design, it can be really stressful to walk across the street or to bike on parts of Main Street. I think like by Al Subs, especially, is always stressful for me. Like where people are-- like trucks are often double parked by the restaurants. And also by the U-Haul where the moving trucks are pulling in out, people are often like new to the city or stressed with moving and everything so they don't always look where they're going.

And with more people definitely biking now, especially people in the area who can't afford cars or who don't want to deal with parking, it would be great to add more blue bike stations to the area if you can when you do the project just so it really feels like it's a real benefit to people in the area as well who bike.

It's also great to hear you prioritizing the residential areas near Newtowne Court. That you're going to make every effort to prioritize parking for residents who live there. I really like the idea of making more of those metered spots residential at night even after 6:00 PM because I know the parking needs really die down across the street at Pfizer and stuff at five or six. So if you can get more spaces at night, I think that would be really helpful. Thanks so much for doing the project. And thanks for taking the time to do this.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you, Chris. I'm going to go to Joan next and following Joan is Kevin Moses. So Joan, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hi there. I want to echo what Chris said in terms of the outreach prior to the design to the list that you showed before. I think that's really great. The question about how you use Main Street. I actually use it quite a bit for takeout, to pick up for Grotoochis and for Royalis and a couple of other restaurants. So I hope your design incorporates or designates some area where you can pull over for a quick, 5 minute pickup and leaving.

And I've also had the occasion to be at the U-Haul location. And that is one area that can get very chaotic at particular times of the year. And I'm hoping in your design you give some consideration for how that area is being used and by whom in your design. So those are the comments I have. Thank you very much.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you very much for your comment, Joan. Up next we have Kevin Moses. And then we don't have anybody

FREEMAN: else with their hand raised so feel free to make a comment or ask a question. So Kevin, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. As always, thank you for doing this. In my mind and experience biking down this corridor, there's really two areas I'd like to emphasize. One is at the intersection with Mass Ave and Sydney Street extension. Right now, there are turn restrictions for cars, which I think are good. But there are also some for bikes, which I feel are pretty hard to work around. One is there's not really a legal way for bikes to turn left onto Sydney Street extension from Mass Ave, which is pretty annoying considering that's where you'd want to go if you're continuing down Mass Ave towards the Longfellow Bridge.

And then similarly, the other direction, the only option is to turn right onto Mass Ave. There's no option to go straight on to Sydney or left onto Mass Ave. So I would encourage you to look and see if there's any way via signal separation, especially to allow bikes to make more movements there. And then secondly, there's a safety concern at the factory between Bishop Allen drive and Windsor Street. 53 foot trailers often pull in and out of there.

I don't think those size trucks should be operated in the city anyway as they're inherently unsafe, but that's a policy decision. But they are required to have flaggers, but I imagine if they're trying to cross a protected bike lane at that driveway, it's still going to be pretty painful for cyclists going in that direction. Any flex posts that happen to be installed they're probably going to be instantly destroyed.

So for those reasons I wonder if you would consider making this a two way protected bike lane on the North side of the street just to avoid that conflict entirely. I think that would be much safer for cyclists, especially if it was protected by precast curbs. And yeah. The rest of the project seems pretty straightforward. But again, thanks for your consideration.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you very much for your comment, Kevin. Mr. Harding, I saw you raise and then lower your hand. Would **FREEMAN:** you like to ask a question or make a comment? I'm going to let you talk just to check in.

AUDIENCE: Yes I would.

ELISE HARMAN Please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: I would of course. Can you hear me?

ELISE HARMAN Yes.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Yeah. So just quickly. Thanks. I forgot exactly who it was who reached out to give me a heads up for this meeting, but some personnel at traffic in practice. I do want to thank you for that. But I would say that one question is how extensive was the actual outreach to the community, particularly Newtowne Court and Washington Ave? Those folks who will be most close to the pain, I don't believe, but you could tell us if they were actually given a piece of direct mail to let them know that this meeting was happening. So that's just one question we can answer now or later.

I'd also just want to talk about the design. In this particular design, I believe Main Street has the ability-- the folks who are designing Main Street have the ability unlike some other streets to actually maintain most, if not all, of the existing parking. And this is a place where obviously the residents there are already having a tough time with parking. So if you were to imagine street cleaning or a snow emergency, it's already a tough time for these folks, who by the way of the poorest in the city living in the poorest housing projects across the city. And I don't believe that this conversation should go much further without having their direct impact.

And I'm going to ask that we have an in-person meeting, if possible, at the Pisani Center. I'd also just want to talk about other projects that have set the precedent for this quick lane construction. Some of them that happened in North Cambridge, for instance, had moved parking into the neighborhoods, which I don't think is a great idea. You'll see in some streets in North Cambridge places that have meters that didn't have them, which ultimately takes up resident parking. And also it seems like from the projects that I've seen, the relief for parking all we put 5,000 handicap spaces and very little parking for other folks. Or you're doing stuff on smaller streets that are encroaching on Park.

And I'd also just wanted you to think about the businesses that are now thriving and coming back from COVID, whether it be Cafe Luna or Sao Mona, those businesses also need parking. I don't know that they were necessarily aware of the meeting tonight, but there are businesses as the person spoke earlier, Royals or Rotoochis. There are many businesses that are going to need parking. So I'm asking that any design that happens without a doubt keeps the existing parking. This I believe this particular street-scape allows for that. And later on, there'll be a different conversation about this actual policy and who actually benefits from having this continuous bike route through Cambridge.

And I also want to say just in terms of the data, what happens in Central Square-- and that bike traffic is much different than what happens on Main Street. Similarly, when you talk about the incidence of accidents of people and bikes, yeah. People are different than bikes. I think we should dis-aggregate that data and talk more candidly about what that actually means. And I'd also want to think about what an actual traffic study of the bike usage on that particular stretch of Bishop Allen, excuse me, Main Street up to Portland, actually, the actual bike, the level of bike traffic.

And then for most of the people, and I don't speak for everyone in the neighborhood, but I am a lifelong resident. And I understand the need for them to also have a voice in this particular project. Too often do they just show up with Novartis, that building had happened, a building right across the street. And now this stuff is encroaching upon their quality of life. And so I just want to make sure that we're doing everything we can to reach out to the people who are closest to this pain and understanding what's going on in the neighborhood around the bikes.

My last comment is this that we don't know if the MBTA is going to be an agency in two or three years. So the fact that we're now planning now for a potential bike lane, understanding all of the challenges that the MBTA had, is having. I think that is not really taking into consideration what's happening now for the people of Newton Court Washington down to the Port. Who knows if that 70 bus is ever going to make it down Main Street. So if that's going to be a factor in taking parking, I think that should be something that's clear. And we should have the clear data and a clear starting date and when that bus route is actually going to take effect. Thank you for your time. I look forward to talking to you more about this important issue.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you, very much, Mr. Harding. And we are going to answer a bunch of those questions. I'm going to let one more person with their hand-raised talk. And then we'll get to some of these answers. So Sam Burgess, I have you up next. Please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Thanks. Can you hear me OK?

ELISE HARMAN Yes.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Great. Thanks for the presentation. I bike this stretch of Main Street pretty regularly and biking in the door zone is not optimal. So would love to see protected bike lanes here. A couple of specific comments, it would be great if day-lighting your intersections and the mid-block crossing near Cherry Street would be considered. So cars aren't parking near the crosswalks where people are walking across the street, and it's easier to see drivers when they're coming up.

I would also love to see an addition of flex posts as part of the quick build if possible, prefab concrete blocks like we've seen on Mass Ave in Boston through Back Bay or maybe some form of planters, which have been deployed in New York that both green up the space and make it more difficult for drivers to park in the bike lanes. So those are my two main suggestions, but excited to see a preliminary design whenever it's available.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you very much, Sam. And I am going to go on to some of these questions we've heard in the Q&A and **FREEMAN:** verbally. So let's start out with a question for Stephen. We just had someone in the Q&A asking why the project isn't continuing further East into Kendall Square.

STEPHEN The quick answer is that because this is the only section that does not have a plan in the process yet. So I had a **MEUSE:** slide earlier on, this will probably make more sense if you look at it on the website at a slower speed, but from Portland Street a little bit further down towards the Longfellow, that block, between Portland and Albany, there is a construction project right now they're going to institute that is under construction. And they are doing that block. That's part of their mitigation for that building.

And then from Albany Street down towards the Vassar and Galloway way where it crosses the railroad tracks, we are looking at that section as part of that path project. Because having the path across the street where the railroad tracks are is going to be pretty complicated. So they are going to figure that out as part of that process. And that also has its own website, which we can link to if people are interested in that process and what the designs are looking like right now.

Further down into Kendall Square, the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, the CRA, is leading a design process there or at least come up with some different alternatives for what the street could look like. And those are also on their website, which we can also link from our website. And then further down, the Longfellow Bridge already has separated bike lanes. And then the city built bike lanes from Third Street to the bridge in both directions over the last couple of years. So this section is the only one that did not have a plan so far.

ELISE HARMAN Thanks, Stephen. Actually, Brooke. I'm going to switch over to a question for you about how extensive our **FREEMAN:** outreach to Newtowne Court in Washington Elms has been and whether we can have a closer in-person meeting with those communities.

BROOKE Sure. Absolutely. So we did, in addition to posting, putting up posters in the neighborhood, Newtowne Court and **MCKENNA:** Washington Elms were included in the direct mailer that went out. But we know sometimes those don't make their way as intended. But so hopefully folks did receive a postcard, but we are absolutely-- we want to be doing a lot more outreach there. And we're looking for opportunities to do that. So we are happy to set something up at the Pisani center.

And we're happy to work with you, Mr. Harding, to do that. And just I'm open to other suggestions about opportunities to engage with residents in other ways for folks who might not come to a specific meeting. Are there community events or times when we could set up a table where we might catch a lot of people coming and going who might want to learn. So we're really open to doing as much outreach as we can, very specifically in Newtowne Court and Washington Elms.

STEPHEN MEUSE: And just to add to that, I did drop off some flyers at the signing center, also the health center over there. And then we did reach out to the management of Newtowne Court and Washington Elms, hoping to set up an event soon. And then next week is the open house that is along Main Street because I know it can be a hassle for people to make it to a community meeting like this. So if it's just passing while you're on the street, stop in and ask a quick question about how it might impact you or if you have any comments if it's a 5 minute thing out of your day. We're hoping to get more comments through that. And we can also set up additional open house type things or go to the Pisani center or elsewhere in the neighborhood if need to. We do have the time to do that.

ELISE HARMAN FREEMAN: Thanks, Stephen and Brooke. And yes, please reach out. We're happy to work with you to set up events in places that you might identify.

BROOKE MCKENNA: Or if I just share the right contacts.

ELISE HARMAN FREEMAN: Right. Exactly. Yes. Sorry, we don't have to work directly with you Mr. Harding if you have someone better. So Stephen, I'm actually going to hop back to you. Can you talk a little bit about-- we had a question about whether we can prioritize resident parking. For example, can we allow resident parking at night, meter spaces. How do we balance this with the needs of restaurants and pick up, drop off type of situations?

STEPHEN MEUSE: Yeah. So the only resident parking right now is in front of Newtowne Court. We'd be looking to look at all the abutting uses along the street to see what makes the most sense. So for example, at night down by perhaps at U-Haul, there may be less demand overnight for certain types of parking. And maybe that can become a different use at night. During the day, maybe meters aren't the right type of regulation for some of those businesses. Maybe they want pick up and drop off like another commenter suggested.

So we're going to be going and talking to the business owners. I've already talked to a couple already. Others I left notices at. And I'm looking forward to speak with them and just to see what type of needs they have. And then also, of course, what the community is looking for. It's not just the business owner's needs. It's the patrons needs and everyone else lives in the neighborhood. So right now, we're just starting off to hear what people are looking for.

ELISE HARMAN FREEMAN: Thank you. And we had the commentor talking about Sydney Street and Mass Ave. What we can do to improve biking there. I think there is a specific suggestion about allowing bikes to turn onto Main Street from Mass Ave. and possibly considering a two way bike lane on the North side of the street.

STEPHEN MEUSE: So a couple things. Yes, that big intersection. The Mass Ave., Sydney Street, and Main Columbia, Sydney Street intersection is actually sort of controlled as one. And that is within the scope of this project to take a look at how those movements work. We have heard support for Sydney Street going straight through for people biking and the left turn being difficult so people cutting through the plaza. So we'll be looking at that. We also do need to keep in mind that Main Street is the truck route. And so the size of trucks that are allowed on that type of street take up a lot of space on that turns and that type of zigzag movement kind of limits what we can do. But it also is a reason why we need to look at the safety at that intersection.

In terms of the two way, it has its own types of issues in a more thickly settled type of area. We could look at it. I think that what I've seen from the Tootsie Roll building there, they just recently had a renovation and submitted truck turning diagrams and things like that. So I know that they kind of already use a lot of the road space. So I'm not sure even if you did that, I think they still need the opposite side of the street and the two way might actually be too much width for that. And so we'll definitely look at how much space these different uses take up and what they need.

ELISE HARMAN FREEMAN: Thank you, Stephen. Brooke, I'm going to ask you a question next. And then after I ask that I'm going to go to some of the raised hands. And Dan Toten is up next. So Brooke, can you just speak a little bit about the prefab concrete barriers and what we consider when we consider putting those in.

BROOKE MCKENNA: Sure. So the majority of the projects, quick build projects, that we've done so far, we have used flex posts. And that is the plan for this project as well. We do have a pilot running right now of some concrete curves, but they just went in this fall. And we are really looking to monitor how they perform in the coming year. This winter has not been much of a test, for better in my mind, we haven't gotten much snow. But we really want to see how those concrete barriers perform before we spread it more widely to other projects. So right now we're watching that pilot, but we are continuing with flex posts for now. We're also continue to always look at additional options as well.

ELISE HARMAN FREEMAN: Thanks, Brooke. I'm going to go to some of the people with their hands raised. I have Dan Toten up first, followed by Aisha and Welson. Dan, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: I'd actually love to hear Aisha before I speak if you don't mind.

ELISE HARMAN FREEMAN: Yeah, absolutely. Let me just mute you and let her speak. Aisha, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. Good evening. Can you hear me?

ELISE HARMAN FREEMAN: Yes.

AUDIENCE: OK. Great. Thank you. And thank you Dan, for that. So I just really wanted to speak on many levels because as you heard from Richard who spoke earlier and really taking into consideration the outreach to the community, to the residents specifically, out of Newtowne Court and the efforts that are being done to make sure that we are reaching many individuals who utilize that space. I think what we've learned over the course of many other projects around the city is that the intentional messaging in the outreach is critically important.

And so while I don't necessarily live in that neighborhood, I've spoken to residents about what they may have received if any, and it doesn't speak clearly to what exactly would be happening in the community. And so I think there is something to be said around the messaging that's going out and especially to individuals who English is not their first language what that ultimately means. So I do look forward to probably partnering in terms of having a conversation at the Pisani centered or another location that is convenient to our residents.

And so as people may know, I wear a number of different hats. And so I'm here as a member of the NAACP as an individual who does work with members from our housing development through Cambridge Housing Authority as well as a member of the Union Baptist Church. And I know my pastor is not able to be on this call right now. And I really just wanted to speak and support his ask and request to really think about the usage from the historically black houses of worship in this community and how limiting parking spots that are already significantly limited is really telling to who we center in these spaces and who we are not centering.

One thing that I want to speak to, and so I think it's important to us all to be thinking about that as we're outreaching and having these community conversations about limiting our parking spots. The other question that is more of a concern for me is how do you all get in, I guess this is the question really, is how do you all define or come to a conclusion that perhaps 50% of parking spots will now have to be reduced in order to put in these bike installations?

Because for me, that is significant. And whereas we know the majority of those resident parking spots is in as Richard already said, in the most, I would say, the poorest community of Cambridge right down there in Newtowne Court, Washington Elms area, that's going to be a huge challenge for our residents. And so, you know, regardless of how many voices we actually get to the table to actually speak up and say this will be a challenge for us, the real challenge is that you all have already come to some number of 50% of these parking spots will have to go.

I want to hear that you all are talking from a more solution-focused place of let's not reduce any parking and let's still make this be a happy place for both car riders and bikers and pedestrians to use these spaces in the equal form in which we need to, or should be, utilizing them versus a reduction of 50% of parking. I yield my time.
Thank you.

ELISE HARMAN Thanks very much, Aisha. And we really appreciate that comment. We'll answer a couple of the questions that you specifically raised and again, you and everybody else should feel free to reach out to us. We're very committed to expanding our engagement around this so we know this isn't the end of the conversation. So Dan, I would love to hear you now. Please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Awesome thanks. Hi. My name is Dan. I live at Dan Toten. I live at 54 Bishop Allen Drive, which is pretty close to the end of the stretch that we're talking about here. And I just want to affirm the need to really have a deeper conversation with the residents of Newtowne Court about what the impact to them is going to be. I think there's a very big difference between this meeting and the meetings that we've recently had about the impact to places like Raymond Street and Garden Street.

And you know, I'm really encouraged to hear that the city is going to do the work that's necessary to engage with residents who frankly, might not be able to make a Zoom on 6 to 8 on a weeknight. So I'm really encouraged by that. I think that there are a lot of people, in my experience, talking to people in Newtowne Court there's a lot of people who feel like the city makes decisions for them and doesn't really engage with them very much. And so I think this is an opportunity to kind to try to maybe do something different.

Now specifically speaking to the design, I think that the question of how much parking remains needs to be looked at. And we really need to think about a design that retains as much of the residential parking around on the Newtowne Court block as possible. You know, I walk by this, I walk down this stretch of Main Street multiple times a day, and it's very obvious that those spots on the left side of the street as you're heading towards Kendall Square, it's very obvious that those spots are entirely used by people who live in Newtowne Court. And it's not as if the off street parking at Newtowne Court is empty. And so, yeah. That's going to be a big impact. And we need to figure out what that looks like and start talking to people about it.

The other thing I'll say is that on the right side of the street there is a lot of metered parking that isn't getting used overnight. And so I do wonder, I don't want to take, I know that there's needs for that parking too. But I don't want to-- but I do wonder if there's an opportunity there to really expand the opportunity for the residents on the other side of the street.

And then just quickly, on the further down area, I want to affirm whoever mentioned the U-Haul. I think the U-Haul, to be quite honest, is out of control several nights a week in terms of just having trucks like all parked in all the spaces. And it's not the kind of thing that I've ever done like I've never, I've always walked by it and just kind of been like, oh that's kind of weird. Like why are there just U-Haul trucks in all the spots? But it actually is a really important thing to point out that people may not realize unless they walk around the neighborhood at like eight or nine at night because we could be reallocating some of that space away from U-Haul and giving it back to residents who are looking for residential parking.

I also just want to flag finally, that there may be opportunities to add a few spots on streets nearby. And that should be looked at as well because at the end of the day, this will have a real impact on these residents. And they're not as good at self advocating. They're not as able to be self advocates as people who might live on Garden Street or Raymond Street. And so I just want to make sure we take our time with this and that we have our conversations with the people in this neighborhood. And it sounds like things are heading in that direction.

And the last thing I'll say is I think having an in-person meeting at Pisani center is a really good idea. And I would also say that maybe you want to think about a way to kind of leave the layouts up for an extended period of time, maybe 48, 72, a week, right? And give people that chance to just kind of walk by and see it. Because again, like at any given point in time, like these people may not be able to commit to being there at that exact time. But if you give them a window, if you find a way to make it a window, it might actually reach more of those folks. Thanks so much.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you, Dan. Thanks for the suggestions. I'm going to get to some of our questions. And now feel free to raise your hand, put a question in the Q&A. First, Stephen, can you just talk a little bit about how we came up with that rough 50% estimate for that parking removal.

STEPHEN

Yeah. So we did an inventory of the parking in the neighborhoods, that's Main Street and then about 300 feet up each side street just to have an idea of what is in the surrounding area. And there is about 90 spaces on Main Street itself. And so we know that right now we have a parking lane with parking on each side, we have two bike lanes, and then we have two travel lanes.

MEUSE:

And so in order to move that parking out so the bike lanes are on the curb, you need extra space for those buffers. And so the street is not wide enough for buffers on both sides. So we know that probably about half of it the parking needs to be removed. So that you can make space for all the buffers for the separated bike lanes to provide that separation. So it's a range because it depends on driveways, it depends on if we prioritize a side of the street that has fewer side streets and things like that. That's the type of stuff that we're looking.

And how we're going to maximize parking is just what side is it on? What is the-- is there a hydrant there? So it may make sense for the parking for the other side of the street or to many curb cuts. But if we know from just the basic measurements of how wide is the street today and what are our minimums to put separation in that we probably can't have parking on both sides right now.

ELISE HARMAN

Thank you, Stephen. Just a quick follow up to the last commentor, Dan. Can you talk about is U-Haul allowed to park trucks on the street at night? Can this use be limited or eliminated as part of the design?

FREEMAN:

STEPHEN

Brooke probably knows more about whether they can leave them overnight, but I believe they can, I think they can leave them after the meters for a period of time. It's just a regular vehicle parked there. Long term storage or overnight storage for commercial vehicles is a different matter. But it was an interesting point about the meters being empty across from Newtowne Court because after those meters turn off, I think it might be six or maybe eight. That is free parking for anyone to use. There's nothing stopping residents from using those today overnight if they can't find a parking spot.

MEUSE:

I do not recognize, however, that it is annoying to have to wake up and then move your car before the meter turns on. But I mean we could work, if we wanted to provide specific signed parking overnight, we could work on some times and things like that make more sense if it's a location that is in demand for that type of use. And then, Brooke.

BROOKE

Yeah I would just add that Will that's a very interesting observation about the U-Haul that I wasn't aware of. And I think we can look at that deeply because a lot of what is allowed, and what isn't allowed. Some of it is kind of general regulations of what commercial vehicles can do and what they can't do, but some of it is also just about what are the signs that we have up for regulation. So we can look very closely at that and we've started in some areas of the city we will have some specific, maybe there's a commercial need during the day, but then rather-- so in a typical space if you have a loading zone or you have a meter, once you're beyond the hours of the meter, then it's just unrestricted. But we are able to put resident parking restrictions in overnight at metered spaces and things like that. So we can really look very closely at the regulations along this whole corridor in order to really optimize the residential parking for what remains.

MCKENNA:

STEPHEN And I also just want to recognize that to the north of Main Street with the DTW's poor project, that is a very large
MEUSE: infrastructure project where all of those streets basically surrounding New Court, Newtowne Court are being reconstructed, including all the side streets like Cherry School and all the way up. So where in other projects we typically have a lot more leeway to make changes on some of those side streets, some of that will make recommendations to the port construction projects so that they can also prioritize some parking, maybe switching sides, maybe it's changing the regulations. We're working closely with that group as well.

ELISE HARMAN Thanks, Stephen. And one more before I ask Brooke a question. Can you just remind us where the open house
FREEMAN: next week is, next Wednesday the 22nd?

BROOKE Sure. Or Steven do you want to--
MCKENNA:

STEPHEN Sure. Yeah it's we're hoping to have it or well, it's going to be at the corner of Bishop Allen Drive and Main Street
MEUSE: in that vicinity right there.

ELISE HARMAN And people don't have to come for the whole time? It'll be drop in, stay for a couple of minutes?
FREEMAN:

STEPHEN So yeah. The format is basically I'm going to-- some of these slides that have key information, I will be
MEUSE: reformatted into posters. And then people can come and look at the posters that they're interested in. If they have questions, they can talk to a staff member and then there's also going to be a roll plan print out of what the street is like from above. And then people can point to things and let us know where some concerns are. Just a little bit more interactive than this setting. And then also much less time for people if they want to participate.

BROOKE And we'll have a tables and a pop up tent so hopefully it'll be pretty visible.
MCKENNA:

STEPHEN And the weather's looking OK so far. So.
MEUSE:

BROOKE This one will be outside.
MCKENNA:

ELISE HARMAN Brooke, I would love if you could talk a little bit about the messaging for the project, how we might be able to
FREEMAN: improve it, what we can do to reach residents who can't make the Zoom meetings and the open houses. You know, how we'll let people know that changes are coming and that they can have a say in the design.

BROOKE So I think the several comments that were made about the messaging tonight. I think I really, I'm hearing what
MCKENNA: you're saying. And I think when we do our messaging, we hate to lead with the negative. We hate. But I think that we can do some thinking about how we really grab people to make sure they understand that there are things happening as part of this project that are going to impact them. So I think I'm hearing that and taking that to heart.

And we're going to do some thinking about leading with unfortunately what is a little bit negative, but is probably what will grab people's attention. Because we don't want to only, we want to start nature, we want to emphasize the positive, but someone may not care that separate bike lanes are coming. And may not and therefore may just not give this their attention, but if they hear that there is going to be parking removal, that may get their attention and for better, we do want people to know that what is coming and to have their say in advance. So we will do some more thinking about how we can shift some of our, at least some of our, messaging to get people's attention to the things that really are meaningful to them even if they aren't particularly interested in the bike aspect of the project.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you, Brooke. Right now I don't have anybody with their hands raised I'm not seeing any questions in the chat. We still have half an hour scheduled in this meeting so feel free to keep on with us. Raise your hand, ask questions.

BROOKE John has his hand up.

MCKENNA:

ELISE HARMAN Yes, John Pitkin. I see you have your hand up. Please go ahead and talk.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Thank you for taking my comment. I would like to agree with what Brooke just said about getting people's attention. You might consider saying notice of meeting, parking, some parking will be about removing parking or something of that nature. And the sign should be posted where the parking is. So I would just say that if you want to get people's attention put it to where you make the connection for them. You're talking about these spaces on this block or that block. And in large type, the way you do when there's an emergency regulation. You know how to make those signs. So good idea. Please work with it. I encourage you to work with it.

ELISE HARMAN Thanks, John.

FREEMAN:

STEPHEN And I guess it's also a good time to add that some of those flyers that are the posters that are along the street.

MEUSE: And of course they don't say warning, parking is being removed. It says that we're looking at parking and loading changes. But all of the vehicles that were parked on Main Street also got that, a smaller portion of that flyer underneath their windshield wiper. So the people who park there directly knew that there was something being discussed, whether it was enough to get them to show up at the meeting tonight we'll see. But the other options for people to reach out are also listed if they wanted to look at that link or find us in a different event.

ELISE HARMAN Thanks, Stephen. And as we said earlier, we're currently planning for our next meeting to be in May. And over the next two months, we're really going to be trying to gather that information on how people currently use the street, make sure people know the projects coming so that we have some connections made before we start designing the street and presenting that for review. So we have some time to think thoughtfully and do this outreach. And we encourage everybody to keep coming to us with your suggestions, your contacts, your good newsletters. So we really appreciate all of your suggestions tonight. Dan, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Yeah. I just I just want to thank you guys because I think you're hearing what people are saying. And I think it's going to really pay off in the long run. So thank you. Thank you guys.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you, Dan.

FREEMAN:

BROOKE There was-- Elise, there's one question that was just put into the chat asking if there were any plans for the project, in the works, and when will plans be presented to the public. So Stephen, did you want to answer that one?

STEPHEN So at the next meeting, which we're hoping to have in May, is when we will come up with some options. So it's going to be, it won't be like one plan. It's probably going to be what does parking look like on this side, what does parking look like on this side, what other things have we come up with based on what people have told us. And then we'll have another round of feedback to see which ones of those are more palatable and then we'll move forward with sort of a combined option, which would then become the plan at the following meeting. So the quick answer is May.

ELISE HARMAN Yes. We're going to use a couple of months to gather all the information we need to make those designs. And then once we present those, there'll be another feedback period so we can kind of come up with a final, almost final, design. And then we'll get more feedback on that and make any last tweaks. So there's still plenty of time. Yes. Let's see. Sorry, I'm seeing another question in the Q&A, just about off street parking lots. If we could get residents over night parking in kind of nearby lots. Is that something you can answer, Brooke?

BROOKE So that's a challenging question. It's not one with a very straightforward answer. I think the city is looking for ways to-- the city is looking for ways to make changes to things like zoning and other regulations that would allow basically better utilization of existing parking across the city. So I don't know the specifics of the lots that this question is referring to, but as a general kind of concept, It's something that the city is looking at how do we ensure that people are able to make better use of existing parking. So there is some thinking and planning going on around that in the city, but in terms of specifics, I don't have an answer.

ELISE HARMAN Thank you, Brooke. So again, I'm still not seeing any more hands up or any Q&A, questions in the Q&A, feel free to keep putting your questions in there if you have any more. I might end us a little early if we're not getting anything in the next couple of minutes just so I don't take up too much of your, what is it, Thursday night. But I can keep yammering on for another couple of minutes if you guys want to think of your questions.

BROOKE And again, that's the first opportunity to ask questions and give us feedback. So if we wrap up a little bit early tonight and then you have some great inspiration or some burning questions, just reach out to Stephen. You can give him a call or send him an email. Folks can always reach out to me as well. But again, this is really just the start of the conversation.

ELISE HARMAN Thanks, Brooke. And just to reiterate our web page is a great place to go to sign up for the email list. Stephen's contact information will be on there. We'll post tonight's meeting presentation, a video recording. We'll post a transcript. And I'll usually do kind of a summary of what was discussed for each meeting. So that will be up, definitely within the next two weeks. I try and do it within a week. And the comment form is already on the website. So feel free to use that. Feel free to email Steven directly. And we'll get kind of a feedback map for location specific feedback up soon as well.

We are very open to hearing your ideas and suggestions and feedback. So please reach out. We really appreciate everybody who came here tonight, taking time out of their busy schedules to speak to us, and just the beginning of the conversation. So thanks so much. And we look forward to hearing from you further.

Thank you everybody.

BROOKE MCKENNA Thanks, everybody.

STEPHEN

Thank you.

MEUSE: