

Main Street Safety Improvement Project

Second Community Meeting

May 31, 2023

Provide Feedback after the Presentation

 You will find information on how to give feedback at the end of the presentation

Cameras + Microphones

- Your camera is off
- We will enable your microphone only when you are speaking

We are Recording

We will post the recording of tonight's meeting on the project page

www.cambridgema.gov/MainStreetSafety

Meeting Purpose, Outcome, + Process

Purpose

• In this meeting, we will discuss the feedback we have received so far and will present the design options that we developed based on this feedback.

Outcome

 You'll have enough information to be able to provide new feedback on which design options would work best.

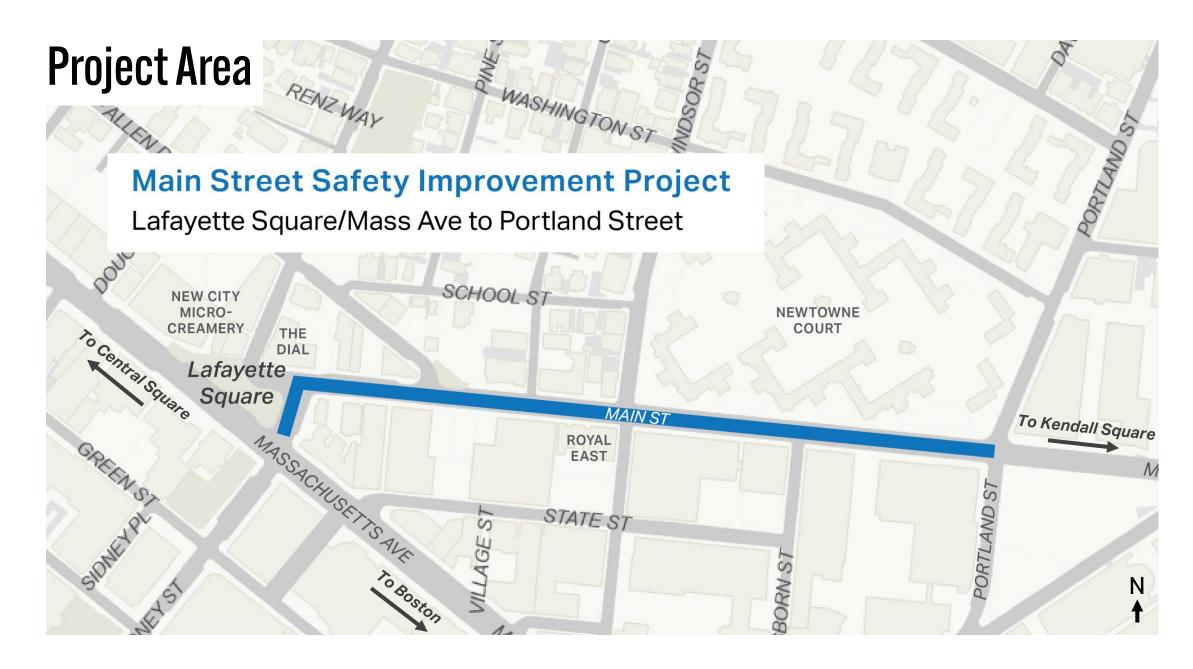
Process

We will present slides with updates on the project and then you will be able to ask
questions and make comments during a public comment period. You can also write
your questions in the Q&A box.

Contact Information

Stephen Meuse, P.E. Street Design Project Manager 617-349-4713 smeuse@cambridgema.gov

www.cambridgema.gov/MainStreetSafety



Agenda

- Timeline
- Planning Background
 - How do we design our streets?
 - Why are we making changes?
- Project Introduction
 - What's Main Street like today?
 - What things are we proposing to change?
- Design Options
 - Which option works best for you?
 - What further adjustments could be made?
- Outreach
 - How can you be involved?
 - How can we let you know what's going on?
- Questions + Feedback



Project Timeline



Phase 1: March to Late May Introduction

No design yet. Community provides feedback to help us design the project.

Questions such as:

- How do you currently use the street?
- What safety concerns do you have?
- Where is it important to keep parking or loading?
- What parking types are most important to you?

First Community Meeting: March 16 Open Houses: March 22 and April 26

Phase 2: Late May to Summer Design Feedback

Draft designs developed based on community feedback received so far.

- Present draft designs to the community
- Gather additional feedback

Questions such as:

- Which design option works best?
- Are there opportunities to make further improvements?

Second Community Meeting: Now! Open Houses: June 6 and June 8

Phase 3: Summer 2023

Final Feedback and Installation

Preferred design developed using feedback on the draft designs/options.

- Present preferred design to community
- Gather feedback on final adjustments
- Inform community about plans for installation
- Install the project

Third Community Meeting and Open Houses: TBA Summer 2023

Community meetings serve as updates on project status. No decisions are made at community meetings.

Project Timeline- Continued

The first phase of the design process included:

- First Community Meeting March 16 (Virtual)
- Open House at Main Street/Bishop Allen Drive Plaza March 22
- Open House at the Pisani Center April 26
- Meetings with businesses, houses of worship, and community members
- Emails, phone calls, online feedback form, and feedback map

Following this meeting, the second phase includes:

- Open House at the Pisani Center Tuesday, June 6
- Open House at Main Street/Bishop Allen Drive Plaza Thursday, June 8
- Additional meetings with with businesses, houses of worship, and community members
- Emails, phone calls, online feedback form, and a survey



Image: Feedback notes for the project on placed on maps during the Open House at the Pisani Center

Getting Involved

Attend a meeting or open house:

You can learn more about the project by attending an online meeting or in-person open house, but attending meetings is not the only way to get involved.

Visit the project webpage:

You'll find presentations and recordings from meetings, background information on the project, and information on how to get involved: www.cambridgema.gov/MainStreetSafety

Sign up for the email list:

Sign up for the email list for the latest news.

Provide feedback online:

We will have options to provide feedback online at every stage of the process. These could include comment forms, surveys, and comment maps.

Call or email the project manager:

If you want to talk to the project manager directly, reach out via the contact information on the project webpage. We are available for in-person and/or virtual meetings with community members, businesses, and other stakeholders.

Outreach

We acknowledge that the entire community isn't present tonight

- Project mailings, signage, visits to businesses, and online engagement will help us reach members
 of the community who could not make it tonight
- We'll do more outreach to hear from more people
- Let us know your suggestions for how to reach a wider audience
 - Are you on a neighborhood list serve?
 - Is there a community bulletin board you check regularly?

Tonight is the beginning of the feedback period for this phase, not the end

- We do not plan to make any decisions tonight
- Over the coming months, we welcome your feedback, whether online or in-person
- We'll post a recording of tonight's meeting online, including the presentation slides

www.cambridgema.gov/MainStreetSafety

Planning Background: Street Design + Policies

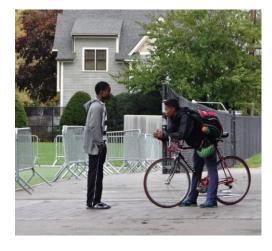
What guides our street design?

We design for people of all ages and abilities.

- People who may not have access to a car
 - May not be able to drive
 - May not want to drive
 - May not be able to afford to drive
- People who use different kinds of mobility devices
 - Mobility scooters
 - Adult tricycles
 - Child trailers
 - Adaptive bicycles
 - and more!













What guides our street design?- Continued

How we think about vehicle congestion and delay:

- Moving people slowly is moving people safely
- We do not prioritize eliminating delay for people driving over the safety of others

Focus is on moving people and goods, not their vehicles.

- Biking and riding transit is a more efficient use of limited street space
- Safe and accessible facilities, including bike lanes, that can be used by a wide range of people, young and old
- Need to safely allow access for trucks and local deliveries
- Public space on streets can also be used for other purposes, such as outdoor dining or public gathering



Images: Amount of street space occupied by the same number of people on a bus, on bicycles, and in single-occupant vehicles





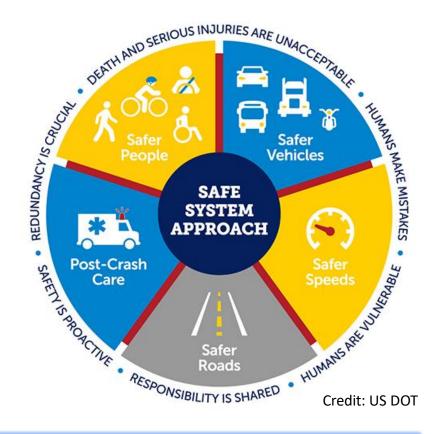
Street Design - Enforcement - Education

Street Design

- We take a human-centered approach to street design. We design our streets to prevent errors as much as possible and lessen the impacts of errors when they do occur.
- Shifts away from individual blame to create a safe system
- Keep road users safe by designing for the most vulnerable (i.e. people not in cars)
- Crash prevention is more effective than crash mitigation

Enforcement and Education

 Enforcement and Education are supplemental to proper street design, not a replacement



Example: A momentary distraction can mean a driver doesn't see a cyclist or vice versa.

Providing separation between people in cars and people on bikes decreases the chance that a momentary distraction leads to a deadly crash.

Sustainable Transportation

Sustainable transportation options allow people to get around in ways that reduce emissions and congestion, such as walking, biking, and public transit.

The City supports this through many policies, plans, and ordinances, including:

- Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance (1992)
- Parking & Transportation Demand Ordinance (1998)
- Climate Protection Plan (2002)
- School Wellness Policy (2017)
- Envision Cambridge (2019)

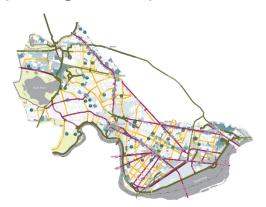
Complete Streets (2016)



▶ Vision Zero (2018)



Cycling Safety Ordinance (2019)



Planning Background: Cambridge Bicycle Plan and Separated Bike Lanes

Cambridge Bicycle Plan

The *Vision* of the 2020 Bicycle Plan is that Cambridge will be a place where:

- Bicycling is equally available to everyone
- All destinations can be reached by bike
- Streets are designed to accommodate bicycling for people of all ages, abilities and identities.

We're removing the barriers that make it harder for people to choose to bicycle in Cambridge. Creating safe and comfortable streets makes it easier for people to bike instead of drive.



Separated Bike Lanes

What are separated bike lanes?

- People biking and driving are each provided dedicated travel space
- The bike lane has physical separation from the vehicle lane (i.e., curb, flex post)

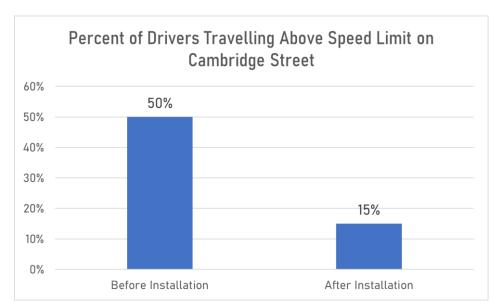
Benefits for people biking:

- Increases comfort and access for people of all ages and abilities
- Reduces crash and injury risk
- Eliminates threat of "dooring" from parked vehicles
- Reduces potential conflicts between vehicles and people biking
- Encourages slower traffic speeds by visually narrowing the roadway width



Separated Bike Lanes-Speed Reduction

- Separated bike lane projects narrow the roadway for drivers, both physically and visually
- This lowers driver speeds, which increases overall safety
- Lower speeds are safer for all users, including people walking, driving, and biking
- Example: The Cambridge Street project (2017/2018) saw a reduction in overall speeds of about 25%



<u>Cambridge Street Bicycle Safety Demonstration Project - CDD - City of Cambridge, Massachusetts (cambridgema.gov)</u>

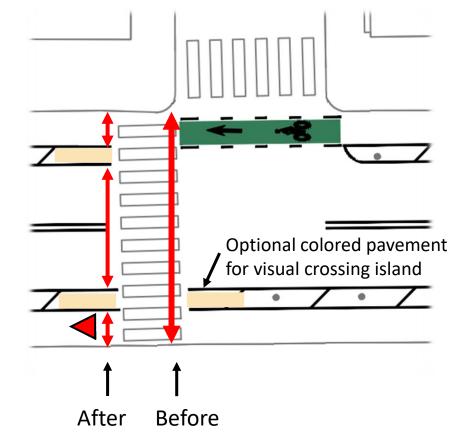


Image: Cambridge Street separated bike lane (2017)

Separated Bike Lanes- Pedestrian Safety

Benefits for people walking:

- Shorter crossing distances
- Better sightlines
- Each potential conflict can be handled separately (i.e., cross bike lane, then vehicle lanes)
- Visually narrows the roadway for drivers, encouraging lower speeds and higher yielding rates at crosswalks



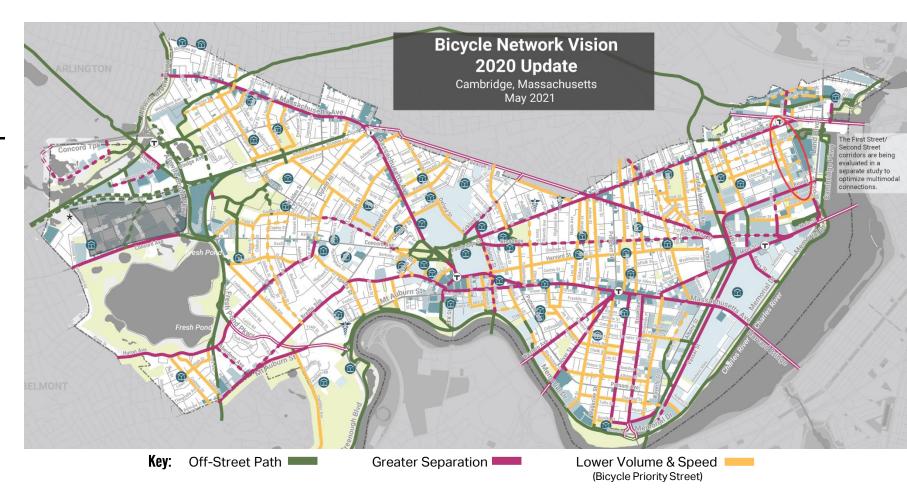


Example: Separated bike lane at crosswalk at Mass Ave at Clinton St

The Bicycle Network Vision

We are creating a <u>network</u> for biking that is safe, comfortable, connected, and peoplecentered.

A safe, comfortable network that connects important destinations throughout the City helps more people choose to bike if they would like to.



Cycling Safety Ordinance Overview

2019: City Council Passed the Cycling Safety Ordinance

 Requires construction of separated bike lanes when streets are being reconstructed as a 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

2020: City Council Passed Amendments to the Ordinance

- The amendments set ambitious requirements for the installation of approximately 25 miles of separated bike lanes within the next five to seven years.
- The location of these facilities is informed by both the Cambridge Bicycle Network Vision and specific requirements in the Ordinance.



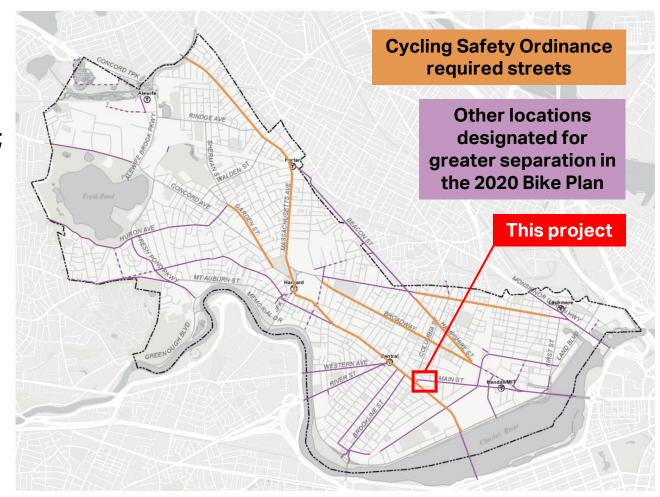
Cycling Safety Ordinance Overview- Continued

In general, the Ordinance requires the City to install separated bike lanes on:

- All of Massachusetts Ave;
- Broadway from Quincy St to Hampshire St;
- Cambridge St from Oak St to Second St;
- Garden St from Huron Ave to Berkeley St/ Mason St;
- Hampshire St: from Amory St to Broadway;

It also requires 11.6 miles of separated bike lanes in other locations from the 2020 Bicycle Network Vision.

Main St is part of these 11.6 miles



Learn more at cambridgema.gov/cycling-safety-ordinance

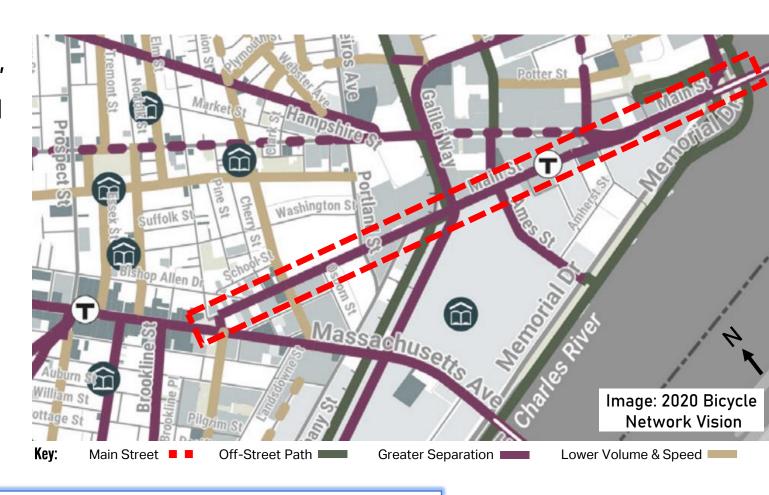
Project Introduction

Context- Main Street in the Bike Plan

The entire length of Main Street is designated for "greater separation" to support people biking safely and comfortably.

Main Street is a priority:

- Key East-West corridor
- Connects to Boston via Longfellow Bridge
- Grand Junction Multi-Use Path
- Direct connection between Central Square and Kendall Square
- Connects residents and visitors to retail, jobs, parks, and squares

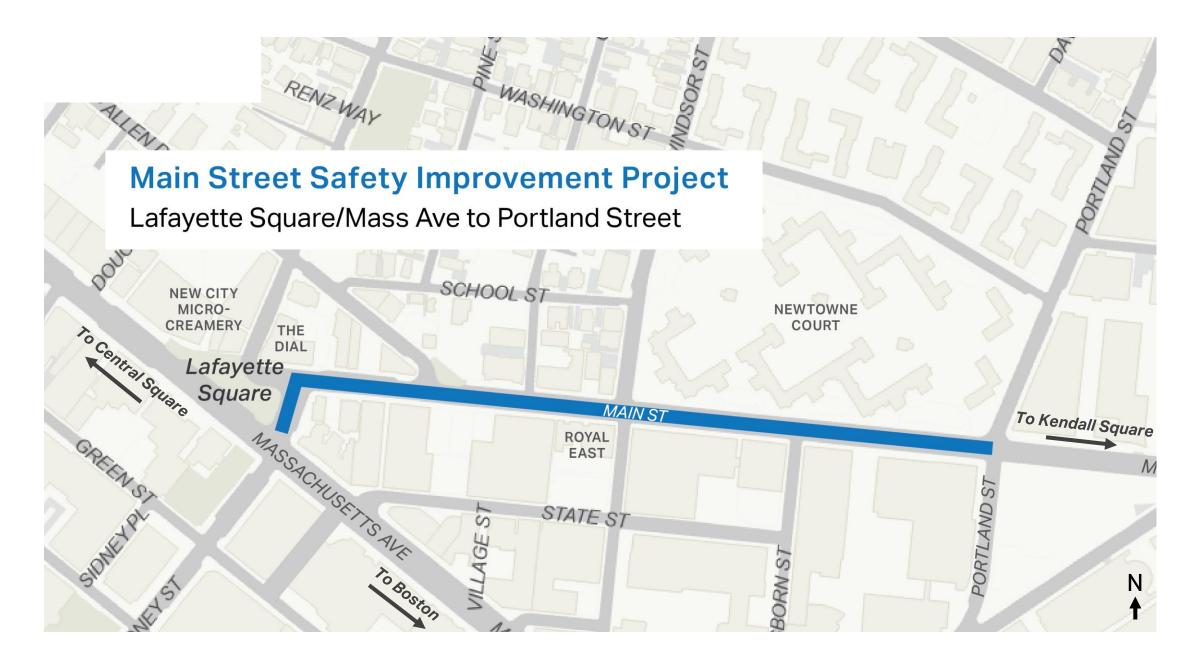


Learn more: cambridgema.gov/2020bikeplanupdate

Context- Implementation Status



Separated bike lanes are being installed on the full length of Main Street as part of nearby projects and initiatives. This includes design and implementation by both the City and private developers. These lanes connect to separated bike lanes on the Longfellow Bridge.



Project Scope



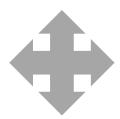
Install separated bike lanes



Improve crossing locations for people walking



Identify locations for curbside access (parking, loading)



Address safety at key intersections

What is a quick-build project?

Quick-build projects allow us to make safety improvements more rapidly

Our quick-build toolbox includes:

- Pavement marking changes
- Installation of flex posts
- Changes to signage
- Some modifications to signal timing

Quick-build projects can be installed within **months**, compared to construction, which can take **years**.



Image: Cambridge Street Separated Bike Lane (2017)

Community Feedback Helped Guide the Design

"Please do not remove any residential zoned parking areas, if you must remove parking take away the metered spots and loading zones."

"Parking for Cambridge residents who live in the two housing projects is important to us because we drive around and around sometimes."

"There's a lot of big trucks and it's scary to have to ride right next to them. Separation would help me be seen by cars AND trucks."

"Please also consider daylighting every intersection and crosswalk so cars can't block sightlines for people crossing the street." "I am a senior who bikes and appreciate the city making Central Square a safer place for me to get around."

"If bikes had a safer route, maybe they wouldn't need to cut through the plaza and ride on the sidewalk at Mass Ave."

"Kendall Square workers and people going to restaurants and always park in the resident spaces and even in our Newtowne Court lots."

"The more that bikes and pedestrians can be prioritized, the better. [...] while walking is generally pretty solid, the biking experience is definitely a bit limiting, and opening of car doors is a big fear."

"I'd be concerned with removing too many parking spots. We have parking spots in the housing complex, but I often have to park on the street."

"I'm always so worried about getting doored, that most of my attention goes to watching the parked cars, which is also not safe."

"I do NOT want to hit a bicyclist when I'm driving and it's much easier to drive with protected bike lanes. Please build us protected bike lanes everywhere."

- + Many other helpful comments, including feedback with specific areas of improvement and concern
- + Lots of strong feelings about what the project should look like and what it signifies to the community

Considerations- Parking

We heard near unanimous support for maintaining as much permit parking for residents as possible

Based on this feedback and more, we will:

- Prioritize permit parking over metered spaces
- Add more permit parking opportunities on side streets
- Adjust regulations at metered spaces where appropriate
 - Overnight permit parking signs
 - > A later morning start for payment (10am vs 8am for example)
- Remove no parking signs for street cleaning
 - Streets are swept with smaller equipment
- Coordinate with CHA for improved signage for Newtowne Court parking lots to discourage use by non-residents
- Identify sufficient space for business loading and drop-off/pick-up

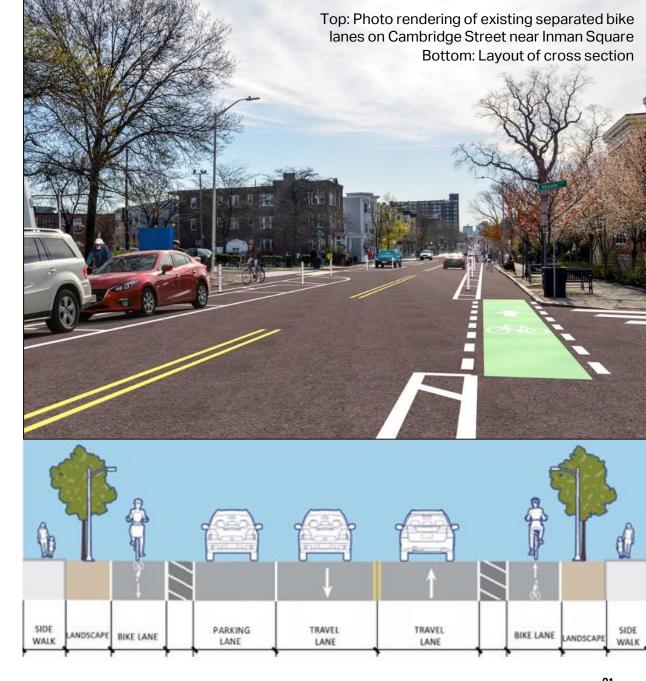


Image: Bike lane street sweeper Credit: Boston Public Works

Considerations- Bike Lane Type

Bike lanes along Main Street are planned to be <u>one-way</u> and on <u>both sides</u> of the street. Parking can be on one side, but not both sides.

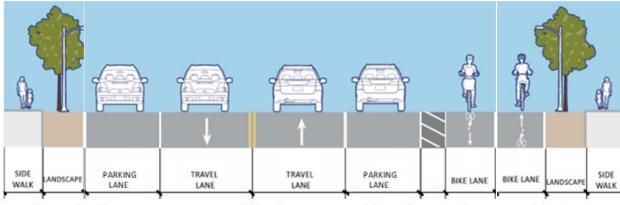
- Predictable interactions between people biking, walking, and driving at intersections
- Familiar design used elsewhere in Cambridge, within the region, and nationwide
- Better access by bike to destinations (homes, businesses, etc.) on both sides of the street without the need to cross mid-block or walk/ride a bike on the sidewalk
- No major changes to traffic signals
- Accommodates future bus stops



Considerations- Bike Lane Type

We heard requests for a <u>two-way</u> bike lane on <u>one side</u> to make space for more parking, but that design was not feasible for Main Street.

- At signals, two-way lanes require either:
 - New bike-only phases, which would increase delay for all users
 - New turn lanes, which would reduce parking
- Complicated movements at ends of project, especially at Mass Ave/Lafayette Sq
- Longer no parking zones at driveways and intersections for sight distance
- People biking have limited access to destinations on the other side of the street. Would need to cross mid-block or walk/ride their bikes on the sidewalk
- Does not facilitate future bus stops



Example of a two-way separated bike lane on one side with space for two parking lanes

We do not believe that this design is safe in the context of Main Street.

We plan to try to make up for the loss of parking by:

- Better management of the parking that we can keep
- New regulations for nearby parking spaces on side streets

Design Options: Street Layout

Street Layout Options

We've divided the project area into two sections to review layout options

- Sidney Street Extension to Windsor Street (two options)
 - Mix of businesses, industrial uses, houses of worship, and residential
- 2. Windsor Street to Portland Street (three options)
 - Residential on north side
 - > Businesses and institutional uses on south side



The options show parking in different areas. We need help determining which options work best.

All options have one-way separated bike lanes along the curb.

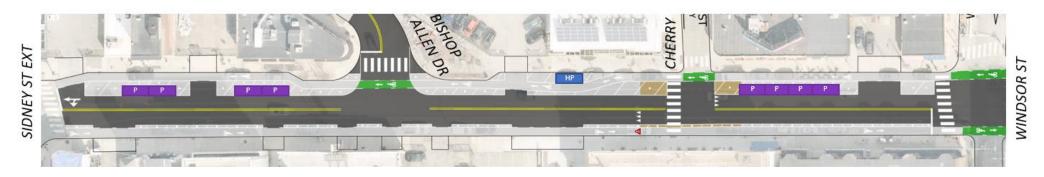
Street Layout Options: Sidney Street Extension to Windsor Street

(Two Options)

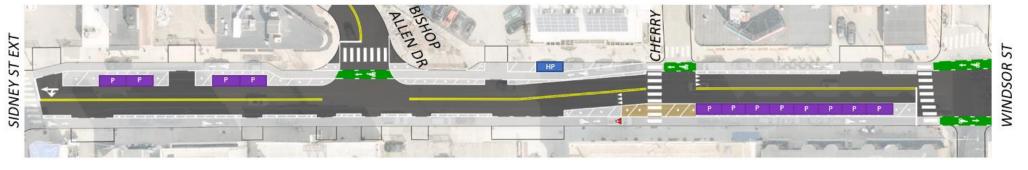
Street Layout Options - Sidney Street Extension to Windsor Street

Options Summary

Option 1: Parking on north side



Option 2: Parking switches sides



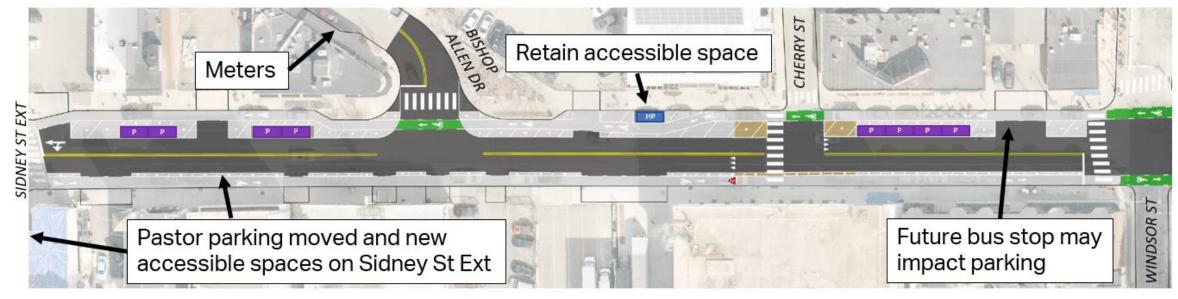
	Existing	Option 1	Option 2
Permit	0	0	- 0
Loading	2	a TBU	12 TBU
Meter	23	О	1
Accessible	1	1	1

- What type of parking/loading is important here?
- Which side makes the most sense?
- Number of spaces versus location of spaces?

Note: No viable option for all south side parking due to number of driveways and truck activity.

Street Layout Options - Sidney Street Extension to Windsor Street

Option 1: Parking on north side only



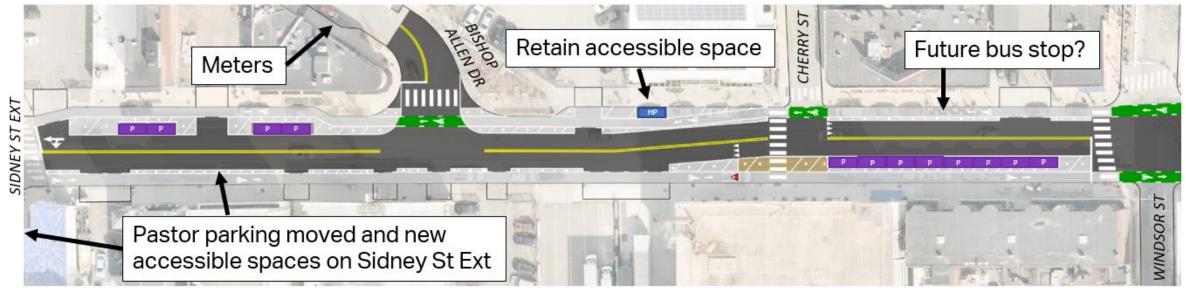
Parking Inventory on Main Street only

	Existing	Option 1
Permit	0	2
Loading	2	a TBU
Meter	23	\mathcal{O}
Accessible	1	1

- A separated bike lane on each side
- Retained accessible/disability parking space
- Pastor parking moved and new accessible spaces added to Sidney St Ext
- 8 parking spaces remain can be loading, drop-off/pick-up, meters, etc.
- Parking/loading on north side near Windsor St where many businesses with drop-off/pick-up and loading needs
- Parking meters on Bishop Allen Dr could be changed to something else

Street Layout Options - Sidney Street Extension to Windsor Street

Option 2: Parking switches sides at Cherry Street



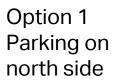
Parking Inventory on Main Street only

	Existing	Option 2
Permit	0	-0
Loading	2	127BU
Meter	23	
Accessible	1	1

- A separated bike lane on each side
- Retained accessible/disability parking space
- Pastor parking moved and new accessible spaces added to Sidney St Ext
- 12 parking spaces remain can be loading, drop-off/pick-up, meters, etc.
- Parking switches sides to maximize number of spaces
- Bend in roadway (chicane) can slow speeds near Cherry St crosswalk
- Parking meters on Bishop Allen Dr could be changed to something else

(Three Options)

Options Summary





Option 2 Parking on south side



Option 3
Parking
switches
sides



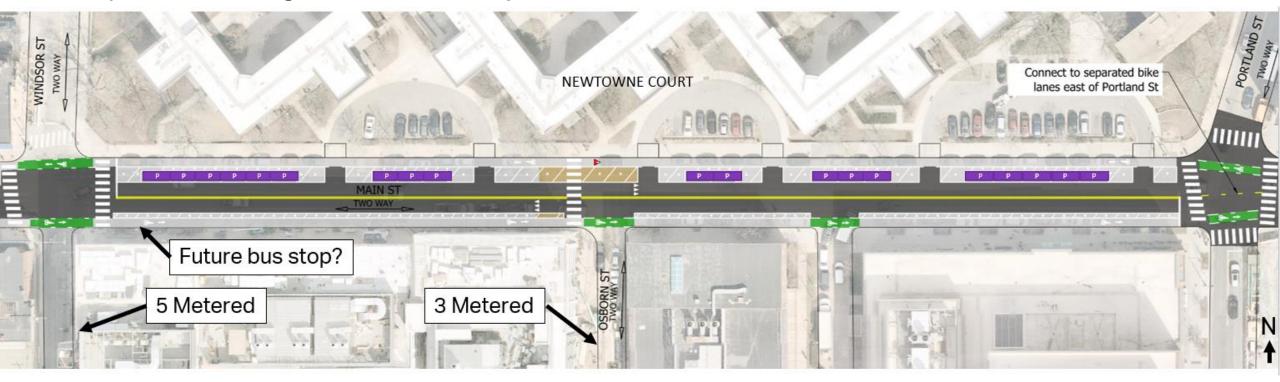
	Existing	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	
Permit	32	19	29	22	
Loading	1	0	0	0	
Meter	27	0	0	0	

Strong community support for all spaces to be permit parking

Consider what is more important:

- Total number of spaces?
- Proximity of spaces to homes?
- Design/layout of spaces?

Option 1: Parking on north side only



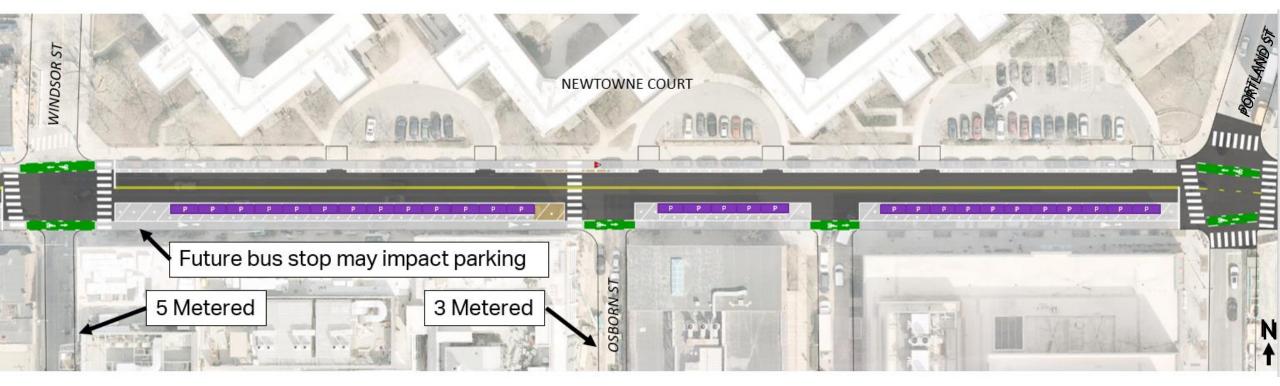
Parking Inventory on Main Street only

	Existing	Option 1	Change
Permit	32	19	-13
Loading	1	0	-1
Meter	27	0	-27

Could make changes to 8 meters on side streets:

- Overnight permit parking signs
- A later morning start for payment (10am vs 8am for example)
 Above could limit permit parking impacts to a loss of 5 spaces

Option 2: Parking on south side only



Parking Inventory on Main Street only

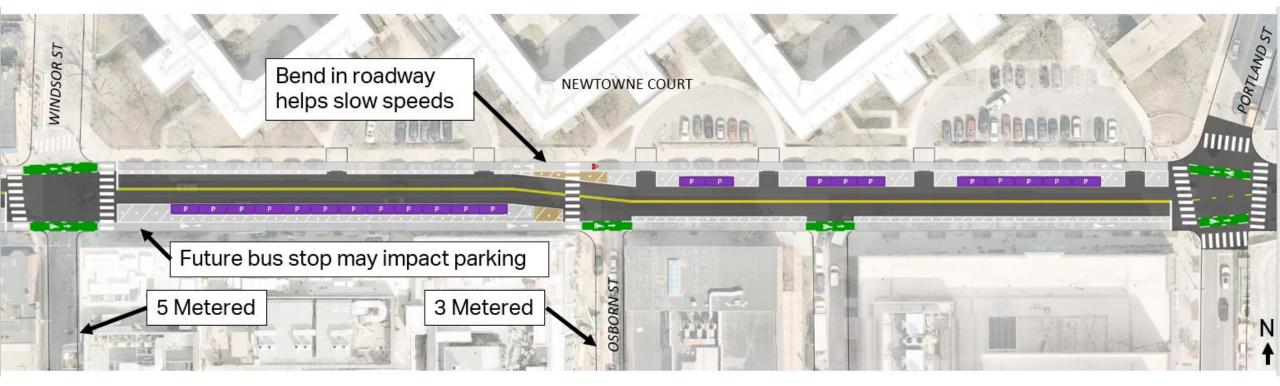
	Existing	Option 2	Change
Permit	32	29	-3
Loading	1	0	-1
Meter	27	0	-27

Could make changes to 8 meters on side streets:

- Overnight permit parking signs
- A later morning start for payment (10am vs 8am for example)

Above could increase total of signed permit parking spaces

Option 3: Parking switches sides at Osborn Street



Parking Inventory on Main Street only

	Existing	Option 3	Change
Permit	32	22	-10
Loading	1	0	-1
Meter	27	0	-27

Could make changes to 8 meters on side streets:

- Overnight permit parking
- A later morning start for payment (10am vs 8am for example)
 Could find permit parking when arriving in either direction

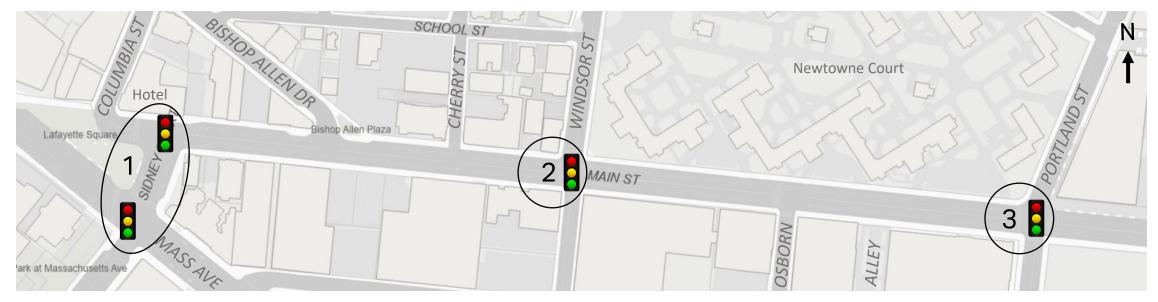
Design Options: Main Street at Lafayette Square

(Two Options)

Traffic Signals - Overview

There are three signalized intersections along Main Street within the project area:

- 1. At Lafayette Square (Mass Ave)
- 2. At Windsor Street
- 3. At Portland Street



We plan to make important safety improvements to the intersection at **Lafayette Square** (Mass Ave), a location where we received significant community feedback and suggestions.

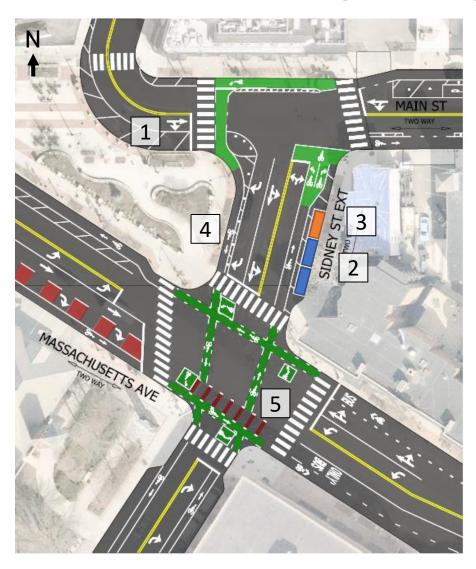
Main Street at Lafayette Square- Existing

Opportunities based on feedback and operational observations:

- Protect more crosswalks from turning vehicles
- Add bicycle signals to help people biking know when it is safe to go and when it is not
- Discourage people from biking through Lafayette Square plaza
- Find space and signal time for people biking to be able to turn without being in vehicle lanes
- Add separation for people biking through the intersection



Main Street at Lafayette Square- Option 1: Modify Existing



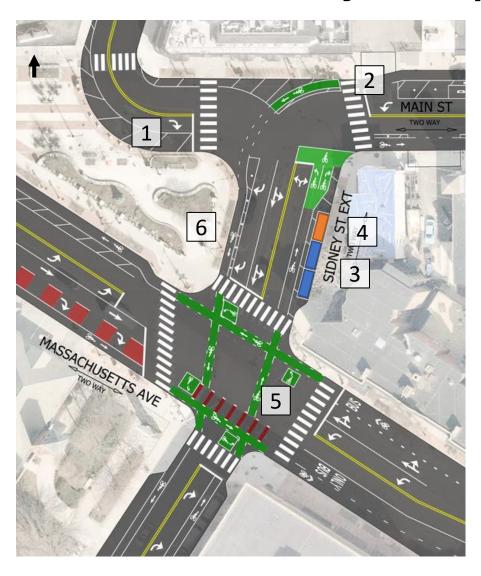
Key changes:

- 1. One lane Columbia St.
- 2. Two new accessible/disability parking spaces
- 3. Relocated pastor parking from Main St to Sidney St Ext
- 4. Improved separation for people biking on Sidney St Ext
- 5. Bikes can go straight from Sidney St to Sidney St Ext

Notes:

- No changes to vehicle access
- Hold rights from Sidney St Ext onto Mass Ave to protect crosswalk and thru bikes (towards Sidney St)
- New bike signals
- Two-stage turn boxes for people biking that need to turn
- 3 meters converted to the pastor and accessible spaces

Main Street at Lafayette Square-Option 2: No Thrus at Main/Columbia



Key changes:

- 1. Columbia St right-only (thrus use Bishop Allen Dr)
- 2. Main St left-only (thrus use Bishop Allen Dr)
- 3. Two new accessible/disability parking spaces
- 4. Relocated pastor parking from Main St to Sidney St Ext
- 5. Bikes can go straight from Sidney St to Sidney St Ext
- 6. Improved separation for people biking on Sidney St Ext

Notes:

- Crosswalks at Columbia/Main protected from vehicle turns
- Hold rights from Sidney St Ext onto Mass Ave to protect crosswalk and thru bikes (towards Sidney St)
- New bike signals
- Two-stage turn boxes for people biking that need to turn
- 3 meters converted to the pastor and accessible spaces
- No thrus discourages bike traffic through Lafayette Square

Outreach

Outreach- Next Steps

Tonight is the beginning of the feedback period for this phase, not the end

- We do not plan to make any decisions tonight
- Over the coming months, we welcome your feedback, whether online or in-person
- We'll post a recording of tonight's meeting online, including the presentation slides

Specific feedback opportunities:

- Our <u>online feedback form</u> is available on the project website: send us comments about the project at any time.
- A <u>survey</u> for the design options presented today will be available online and in-person for community members to express their design preferences. This feedback will help inform the final design.

Outreach- Open Houses

Two open houses for this phase will be held along Main Street to help us reach community members who may not be able to attend a community meeting.



Image: Map with comments for the Hampshire Street Safety Improvement Project (2022)

We will print out the design options for the open house meetings and bring a paper version of the design feedback survey. Come to talk with us, ask us your questions, and add your comments and suggestions to the print outs of the layout options. Materials will include the same information as presented at tonight's community meeting.

Open House at the Pisani Center

Tuesday, June 6

131 Washington Street 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Open House at the Intersection of Main Street and Bishop Allen Drive

Thursday, June 8

4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Outreach- Individuals + Groups

We are available for in-person and/or virtual meetings with community members and stakeholders. You can send us email, call us, or use our online comment form at any time to request a meeting. We anticipate continued discussions with many entities along Main Street, including but not limited to:

- Newtowne Court and Washington Elms
- DPW's The Port Infrastructure Improvements Project
- Cambridge Bicycle Committee
- Cambridge Joint Transportation Committee (Bike-Ped-Transit)
- Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities
- Businesses
- Houses of worship
- and more, reach out!

Questions + Feedback

Questions + Feedback

- We will take comment in the order hands are raised
 - If calling in, dial *9 to raise your hand / *6 to unmute
- Additional questions can be asked using the Q+A function
- In order to allow everyone to speak, please try to limit your time to 1 minute
- Approximately every 15 minutes, we will provide answers to questions
- The meeting is scheduled to end at 8:00 p.m.
- You may also contact the project manager directly to provide written or verbal feedback

Contact Information

Stephen Meuse, P.E. Street Design Project Manager 617-349-4713 smeuse@cambridgema.gov







Questions + Feedback-Continued

We welcome all questions and feedback about the project. The online comment form and survey are also available on the project website to gather additional responses.

Tonight, we'd like to hear:

- 1. Which layout options work best?
- 2. What modifications can we make to develop a preferred layout?
- 3. What types of parking regulations would work best for the spaces we can keep?
- 4. Are there other nearby spaces that can be repurposed to other types of parking?
- 5. Did we miss anything?