

ELISE HARMON-OK, the recording started. Hello, everybody. And welcome to the first community meeting for the Safety Improvement Project on Cambridge Street. My name is Elise Harmon-Freeman. I'm the communications manager for the Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department. And I'm going to be emceeding you today.

This is our first community meeting. Like I said, you'll have a chance to provide feedback after the presentation. Your camera is off. We will only enable your microphone at the end when you have a chance for your public comment.

And I did want to let everybody know that we posted the presentation slides online. So if you go to the project website at www.cambridgema.gov/cambridgestreetsafety, you'll be able to download the webinar sites there and follow along if you'd like to do that.

Let's see. With that, I'll just introduce the project staff who I have on the call today. I have Brooke McKenna, the commissioner of the Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department; Jeff Parenti, who is our new assistant commissioner for Street Management; Andreas Wolfe, who's the project manager for this project; Stephen Meuse, who's the street design project-- another street design project manager within our department. And also from TP&T, I have Chaimaa Medhat, who is our community relations project administrator.

We also have staff here today from the Community Development Department and Department of Public Works. Cara Seiderman is our transportation program manager, and Andy Reker is our transit program manager, both from the Community Development Department. And then Jerry Friedman is a supervising engineer within the Department of Public works. So we're all very excited to be here today. Next slide, please.

So I'm just going to start with a little mention of the meeting purpose, outcomes, and process. But before I do that, I'd like to acknowledge that we have a couple city councilors on the call. We have Councilor Patty Nolan, and we have future Councilor-Elect Joan Pickett. So thank you so much for joining us today.

Today we are here to introduce a new project. We're creating a new design for Cambridge Street as part of the city's Cycling Safety Ordinance. Today you'll learn more about the project. You'll learn about the goals and background.

At the end of this meeting, you'll have enough background information to be able to provide feedback today and make suggestions to help us start designing the project. And what that's going to look like, we will present a slideshow and then have a question-and-answer session for public input. In the coming months, there will be more opportunities to be involved in different ways. And we'll go over that a little bit today. Next slide. Thank you.

So our agenda for today, we will start with the planning background, move on to an introduction to the project itself, talk a little bit about the design considerations we'll be looking at as we design the project, talk about how we're going to be measuring success, talk about our community outreach planning, and then give you that chance for feedback and to ask questions. Next slide, please. So just to put us all on a map a little bit, our project area that we're talking about today is the section of Cambridge Street between Inman Square around Oak Street and 2nd Street towards Lechmere.

And an idea of our project timeline-- it's fall 2023 now. We're beginning our phase one outreach, letting people know that this project is happening and gathering feedback on existing conditions, your personal experiences on Cambridge Street, and your parking needs. As we gather that feedback, we'll start on a-- we'll start designing some draft plans for the street. We don't have anything designed yet.

And we'll be presenting those to you in the late winter or spring of next year. We'll present you a couple draft designs for feedback. And then with your feedback on those draft designs, we'll create a final preferred design, present that in the spring and summer of 2024 for your final feedback and any other adjustments we can make.

And then in summer of 2024, you'll give feedback on that revised plan, we'll make those final changes to the design, and we will finalize the design in fall 2024, prepare bid documents and procurement, and then we plan to implement in spring 2025. And this is a bit of a different timeline than we've presented in the last couple of weeks. We recently learned that we can do a little bit more construction that will require some procurement work as part of this project. So we'll talk a little bit about that later. But that's why this is a little different than you might have seen if you attended one of our open houses.

And you've met some of the project team already, but Andreas Wolfe is our project manager. You'll be hearing a lot from him in the future. We have a project email address. We're always happy to answer your questions and take your comments at this email.

And in addition to all the staff that I introduced tonight, we have a couple of design consultants working on this project from Toole Design and Kleinfelder. And with that, I will transfer you guys over to Jeff Parenti.

JEFF PARENTI: Thank you, Elise. And thank you, everybody, for coming and being with us tonight for this project. As Elise mentioned, I'm the assistant commissioner for street management in the Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department. And I'm going to go through a few slides with you that explains a little bit of our planning background and our policies. Next slide, Andreas.

Everybody uses our street network a little bit differently. There are several stakeholder types. We have business owners, we have residents, we have people who are visiting, and we have people who are just passing through.

There's a few of you out there that use the street maybe in one way. Maybe you only drive. Maybe you only bike. Maybe you only walk. But most people do a combination of the above and some additional things, too.

Here we are in 2023, and there are so many ways of getting around. We have micromobility devices now, like scooters and powered unicycles and all kinds of things. And we in the city staff and the members of the project team understand that there is a wide variety of the way people use the street. And we have experience building these projects elsewhere in Cambridge. And we are using that experience. And that is going to inform some of the things that we're doing here in Cambridge Street. Next slide.

One idea that we are carrying through all these projects is that the idea is to move people, not necessarily vehicles, and people and their goods. These three photographs here we've shown many times before. It's a demonstration of how much space it takes to transport or to contain this same number of people.

So at each one of these three pictures, it's the same number of people. And the first photo is a bus. In the second, it's a series of bicycles. And the third photo, it's single-occupancy vehicles. So you can see the difference in the amount of space that we need for each one of those.

And so every square foot of street in an environment as dense as ours is very important. And so we put a great deal of thought into every piece of the project that we're working on. And Cambridge Street is no different. Next slide.

So we take a holistic approach to the work that we do. Safety is a very important part of what we're doing. And so we are following the idea that the streets should be safe for all users of all abilities and all modes of transportation, particularly the more vulnerable modes, which are people on foot and people on bicycle. Essentially, anyone outside of a vehicle is considered vulnerable. We want to make sure that those people are protected.

We know from years of experience why crashes happen on each one of our streets. And we approach our street design to make sure that we can correct for those type of crashes in the engineering and planning work that we do. But it also includes enforcement and education as well as part of our approach. Next slide.

So the street network has been around for longer than any of us. And the needs of the community does change over time. So the way that the street was laid out, say, 50 years ago or 75 years ago is different from what we need today. And so the community has demonstrated those needs, those changing needs over the years. And here's a few examples.

So the city council in 1992 passed a Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance, and then in 1998, the Parking and Transportation Demand Ordinance. And then the staff has pitched in as well with the Climate Protection Plan and some others. And then today, what informs this project is the Cycling Safety Ordinance in 2019.

So a combination of city council action and staff work today reflects the needs of the community in 2023. And that guides our street design and the project that we're talking about today, which is Cambridge Street. Next slide.

So focusing now on Cambridge Street, I said before that people use streets differently. And here's what that looks like. So on a survey that came back, we asked people, how do you use Cambridge Street? And people said, well, I use it first choice, second choice, third choice.

So you can see here on this chart that walking is very popular. That's on the left side of the chart in the upper-right-hand part of the slide. But you can also see that biking, driving, and transit is also heavily used, too. So the project team needs to take all of that into account to make sure that all of these needs are taken care of aside with the safety elements that I talked about before in going through the design and planning of this project. Next slide. And now I'll hand it over to Stephen Meuse, who will talk a little bit about the planning background of this project.

**STEPHEN
MEUSE:**

All right. Thank you, Jeff. Hi, everyone. My name is Stephen Meuse. And I'm one of the street design project managers at Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department. I'll continue on with the planning background for this project and speak specifically about the Cambridge Bicycle Plan and what separated bike lanes are and why they're important.

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 number of-- a variety of barriers that make it harder for people to choose to bike, even if they'd like to. And creating safe and comfortable streets is necessary to enable everyone to have this choice. Next slide.

Most importantly, the bike plan explores and celebrates the diversity of people that do or may bike in Cambridge. And it strives to create an environment that is safe and comfortable. And this reinforces the philosophy that people are at the center of transportation planning and design. Everyone who has the option to bike should feel comfortable biking in Cambridge. Next.

When thinking about transportation projects, people often focus on commute to work trips during the times of day that we call the morning or evening rush hours. But those are only about 20% of the trips that people make. People may choose different ways of getting to places depending on where they're going or other factors, such as how much they're carrying for that particular trip.

So for example, someone may take a train to get to the job, to their jobs. They might walk to their local library or bike to a friend's house. So that's why it's important to think about how we can enable people to get around the city on a full network of safe and comfortable facilities so that they can get to all destinations throughout the city, not just to work.

During our outreach for the 2020 Bicycle Plan update, which is our most recent plan, we asked people about their experiences and concerns. We heard that while people were enthusiastic about having opportunities to bike at least sometimes, they had significant concerns about safety. And that prevented them from biking. Issues included speeding drivers, too much traffic, and the lack of connections for good biking infrastructure. Significantly, the concerns were more pronounced for people identifying as female. For the vast majority of people, creating separated bike lanes on major streets will enable them to feel comfortable making the choice to ride and have safe access across the city. Next.

As we've begun implementing the Cambridge Bicycle Plan, we've observed that biking has become increasingly safer in the city. When you look at the crashes and the likelihood of crashes, you need to compare crash rates, not total crashes. So the crash rate or the number of crashes per million bicycle miles traveled has steadily decreased since 2003.

And last year, we reached the lowest bicycle crash rate to date. This means that the likelihood of a crash for an individual person biking continues to decline in the city. When you look at the crashes that have occurred, we've also seen them become much less serious than they had been previously, with more than half becoming noninjury in nature, up from less than 20% a number of years ago. Serious or incapacitating injury crashes have declined by as much as 84%, from being about 5% of crashes previously to under 1% today. Next.

So what has changed over the last years that has helped us improve bike safety in the city? It's mainly been installing separated bike lanes. 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, as seen in the photo on screen here.

When we build separated bike lanes, we increased the comfort and access for people of all ages and abilities. The 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 the people biking and driving allows for more time to react to any potential conflict, allowing a corrective action to avoid that injury and potential crash.

We also know that by visually narrowing the roadway, we encourage slower traffic speeds. And statistics show that when these types of facilities are implemented, crashes go down, as we saw in the previous slide. And that's actually not just crashes for people biking, but for all modes. And that's partly because of the decrease in driver speeds and also because of the increase in attention that people have on the street.

We are tracking the progress and the effect of bicycle facilities that we've installed over the years. On the graph on the right, the colors show the miles of bicycle infrastructure in the city each year broken down by type. So that might be regular bike lanes. That might be the green shared lane markings in the street and the separated bike lanes, off-street paths.

The orange line running through is the number of people biking, which is data from our biannual bike counts. And 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, many of whom would not be-- would not consider biking without these dedicated facilities. Next.

So as previously referenced, 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. So creating safe and comfortable streets is a necessary condition to enable everyone to have this choice. And as mentioned on the previous slide, we're seeing the effects of this as more people are biking, as more barriers are removed. Next slide.

So to fulfill the city's policy goals of increasing the use of sustainable transportation, as Jeff talked about earlier, and enabling people to choose to bike by providing safe and comfortable bike lanes, the city council passed the Cycling Safety Ordinance in 2019. The 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. That's the big DPW, full reconstruction, and when they have been designated in the bike plan for greater separation.

So in 2020, that ordinance was amended by the city council, who then set an ambitious-- who set ambitious requirements for the installation of approximately 25 miles of separated bike lanes within the next five to seven years. So they expedited the process. So the location of these facilities is informed by both the Bicycle Network Vision and then specific requirements in the ordinance, which I can go into on the next slide.

Specifically, the ordinance requires the city to install separated bike lanes on all of Mass Ave., Broadway from Quincy Street to Hampshire Street, Cambridge Street from Oak Street to Second Street, which is this project, Garden Street from here on out to Berkeley/Mason Street, Hampshire Street from Amory to Broadway, and a number of miles, about 11.6, in other locations that are identified on the 2020 Bicycle Network Vision plan. Next.

And so why is Cambridge Street included in the plan and in the ordinance? Well, it's a main road that forms an important connection for residents to be able to bike to jobs, businesses, friends, et cetera. It has high vehicle volumes. There's a lot of parking and loading conflicts for people biking and people driving. And it has a history of crashes.

So now I'll hand it off to Andreas, who's going to introduce you to the specifics of the project and where we're at. Thanks.

**ANDREAS
WOLFE:**

Hello, everyone. And thank you, Stephen. And thank you, Jeff. And thank you to everyone for joining us tonight.

So as stated, my name is Andreas Wolfe. I'm the project manager for Cambridge Street. For many people, I'll be their first contact on the project. But as mentioned, we have a whole team who's working behind this.

So what exactly is happening in Cambridge Street? As you know, this project will include separated bike lanes, consistent with the city's Cycling Safety Ordinance. However, we're not just looking at improvements for people biking. We're designing for all users. This includes improvements to make it safer to cross the street. Your feedback is going to be critical as we consider places to add treatments at crosswalks to improve safety, visibility, and reduce speeds.

We also know that adding separated bike lanes requires removing parking. With your help, we'll identify the right places for parking and loading and the right parking regulations. We expect to be able to accommodate parking and loading on one side of the street or about half of the existing total number of spaces. With changes to parking regulations, we can better manage the parking we have today or that we will have as part of the project in order to best accommodate businesses and visitors.

We're also evaluating changes to improve safety at key intersections, such as changes to signal timing or changes to pavement markings, such as adding turn lanes and other markings. Later on in this presentation, you'll see more information about crash data, which is one of the key ways that we identify intersections that would benefit from additional improvements. Lastly, we're evaluating changes to improve bus service, including making it easier for persons with disabilities to board the bus and evaluating ways to increase bus reliability and travel times.

There's more than one way to implement these types of changes. For Cambridge Street, we're installing a quick-build project. Quick-build projects are significantly faster than typical construction projects. We can typically make changes as part of a quick-build project within a matter of months.

This contrasts greatly with larger capital construction projects, which often take upwards of two to five years to construct. Those types of projects involve a lot of changes, including constructing underground utilities or new drainage, such as additional sewers, pipes, and catch basins. They're a full package, similar to what we did a number of years ago in Western Avenue, which included a separated bike lane, fully constructed at sidewalk level. Eventually, as sewers and utilities are replaced throughout the city, we will build out more streets like Western Ave. But we have to start somewhere today to address the safety concerns that people are experiencing.

Quick-build bike lanes are not just in Cambridge. There are many hundreds of miles of examples across the US. Some examples they're showing here include Chicago, Maryland, and San Diego. Separation of the bike lane can be accomplished in different ways, including with concrete curbs or FlexPosts, like the ones that you see throughout Cambridge.

FlexPosts are a valuable tool. Not only do they provide physical separation, but they meet a number of other standards. We sometimes refer to this as roadworthiness. An example of this is that emergency vehicles can run over FlexPosts.

Taller or harder barriers, such as fencing or Jersey barriers, don't provide this type of flexibility. And so we can only deploy those in limited contexts. We also design bike lanes to be wide enough to allow for maintenance vehicles, such as street sweepers and snowplows, to use them. In fact, on streets of separated bike lanes, drivers typically no longer move their car for street sweeping since the sweeper can actually sweep the bike lane directly-- sweep the street directly from the bike lane.

In the winter, we also have plows that remove snow from the bike lane. Studies have shown that one of the biggest barriers to riding a bike in the winter isn't actually the weather but having a safe place to ride that is clear of snow and ice. Conventional bike lanes, such as ones that aren't separated, are too narrow for the plow, which forces cyclists to ride in the middle of the travel lane during the winter months.

So everyone here, I'm sure, is familiar with Cambridge Street today. We have a travel lane in each direction and parking on both sides of the street. A driver looking to park typically has to cross into the bike lane, even when they're parking legally. And there's no separation between drivers and people biking. This means that the design of the street does not keep bike lanes clear of parked or stopped vehicles.

The existing bike lanes, while better than nothing, function more like a roadway shoulder than a bike facility. Drivers are able to pull over easily and get out of the way of other vehicle traffic. However, this creates hazards for cyclists.

Since this is a key transportation corridor, including a bus route, we will maintain two-way traffic. With separated bike lanes, we'll have to remove parking from one side of the street. This creates the added width needed to add the buffer between the bike lane and parking.

The buffer provides a space for people to safely exit their vehicle without having to enter directly into the bike lane and provides room to add the physical barrier, physical separation between the bike lane and drivers. The side of the street that will have parking can vary based on the needs of each block, including looking at locating parking on the side of the street where there are fewer driveways, which typically retains more parking spaces.

Now I'll cover additional design considerations for this project. As we mentioned previously, we do not have a design to share with you tonight. We'd like to get your initial feedback on the street today. Before we begin design. This will give us key information to begin, such as where we should propose bus stops, accessible disability parking, loading zones, and so forth.

Shown here on the screen are examples of how we've improved crosswalks with previous separated bike lane projects. The two examples shown are Cambridge Street at Dana Street by Cambridge Hospital and Mass Ave. at Clinton Street in Central Square. In both cases, we were able to design pedestrian crossing islands in order to reduce the distance a person must travel to cross the street.

This also has the benefit of narrowing the street, which leads to slower driver speeds. As we'll discuss later, speeds are critically important, as they are the key factor in the severity of a crash. Your feedback on safety concerns you experience today is important as we determine where we should install similar treatments as a part of this project.

As part of this project, we're also looking at ways to improve transit. We want to identify bus stop locations that provide better access to board the bus for persons with disabilities. Shown on your screen here is an example of one of the existing bus stops at 6th Street. This bus stop is located at what we call the near side of the intersection, as shown in the photo. The bus driver has difficulty pulling to the curb, which makes it harder for the driver to deploy the bus's ramp and allow people with a mobility aid to board. Typically we can improve accessibility by moving the bus stop to the far side of the intersection, which lengthens the amount of space a driver of the bus has to pull into the stop.

We'll also look at improvements to improve bus travel times and reliability. This may include consolidating bus stops that are close together and looking at opportunities to reduce the amount of time the bus must stop or dwell at an existing bus stops. Certain stops that are highly used or key destinations we'll aim to keep in the same location as today.

One key difference between this project and other quick-build separated bike lane projects is that we'll look to install bus boarding islands. Cambridge has existing bus boarding islands in places like Western Ave. and in Inman Square. Boarding islands allow for faster boarding and reduce conflicts between buses and people biking.

By installing bus boarding islands, we'll also be able to retain more parking, as the bus will require less space along the curb. Boarding islands require additional time to install than the standard quick-build bus stop. We expect the construction of bus boarding islands to take approximately three to four months, in addition to time needed to solicit bids for the construction.

Of course, parking and loading is a key consideration. We know that Cambridge Street is a vibrant corridor and want to make sure that businesses can continue to receive deliveries and that their customers have options as to how they get there. Different businesses have different parking needs. Some require loading, and others may require more metered parking.

This project provides an opportunity to consider a fresh slate of parking regulations that will better address the needs of the current businesses on Cambridge Street. For example, if there's a location where there's a lot of loading occurring in the morning, we can look to convert an existing stretch of all-day loading or parking to morning loading and have metered parking in the afternoon. We want to know from you what your needs are so we know what ideas we should consider.

As the total number of spaces is reduced, we also want to ensure that people with limited mobility can still park reasonably close to their destination. We'll be paying close attention to disability parking. We'll look to keep existing disability spaces and in addition, add more to ensure that these are spaced consistently throughout the street. In addition, in most cases, disability parking will be directly adjacent to the curb rather than floating off the curb, which is what we refer to standard parking spaces on a street with a separated bike lane.

Related to accessibility, we'll also improve curb ramps along the street. Some of this work has already begun. And shown is a recently reconstructed ramp at Cambridge Street and Cardinal Medeiros Ave., which we reconstructed earlier this year.

Lastly, we're continuing the outdoor dining program next year, and restaurants may continue to apply to have outdoor dining where there is parking out front, even with a separated bike lane. We'll design the bike lane in a way that keeps the dining adjacent to the curb and keeps physical separation between both the bike lane, diners, and moving traffic.

Next, we'll talk about what will make this project successful. And key to that is establishing a set of goals. And we'll dive into the city policies that support these goals.

One goal of this project will be to increase bike ridership. This is consistent with the Envision Cambridge Mobility Plan, along with the city's Climate Action Plan and Climate Protection Plan. On streets without separated-- without proper bike infrastructure, we typically see lower bike ridership. And separated bike lanes are shown to increase bike ridership when they're installed.

We recently finished a study of separated bike lanes installed in 2021, and we found an increase in bike ridership on sections of Mass Ave. where bike lanes were installed. We'll conduct similar studies of more recent projects, including this project, once it's complete. Increasing bike ridership on Cambridge Street and other streets throughout the city means that more people can visit Cambridge Street, whether shopping, attending school, or visiting friends and family.

We also aim to reduce speeds as part of these projects. When we installed separated bike lanes on the other half of Cambridge Street, about five years ago, we saw a large decrease in speeds of that project. Speeding was one of the major concerns that residents had about the street. Before the project was installed, about 50% of drivers were traveling above the speed limit. And after the project was installed, we found only 15% of drivers were traveling above the same speed.

As previously mentioned, education and enforcement are supplemental to proper street design. This was an example where redesigning the street was what brought the most substantial gains for safety.

In preparation for this project, we collected crash data on Cambridge Street as well. We're collecting a three-year period between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2023. And we'll update this chart with the data for the remainder of the year.

What we see on Cambridge Street and what, unfortunately, we see throughout Cambridge is that people walking and biking are most frequently the victim of crashes that result in injury. Crashes where only drivers are involved, while more frequent, are less likely to result in an injury. As a city, we have a Vision Zero policy, which strives for a transportation system with zero serious injury or fatal crashes. Therefore, we focus on crashes between a vehicle and a vulnerable road user, such as a bicyclist or a pedestrian, who are outside of the car and are more likely to be hurt.

Crashes between two cyclists or between a pedestrian and a cyclist are much less common or typically result in a less severe injury than with a vehicle. That isn't to say we don't want to reduce conflicts between people walking and biking. In fact, when we install separated bike lanes, we typically see a substantial decrease in the number of bicyclists riding on the sidewalk, which is one of the primary pedestrian and cyclist conflicts that we hear concerns.

As part of our crash data collection, we also mapped crashes on a street. This provides us with valuable information as to what intersections have the most conflicts and where we should consider additional modifications.

Lastly, right now, the city is undertaking a study that looks at business sales on corridors where separated bike lanes have been installed, including streets that saw a reduction in parking. Similar studies from other streets have typically found that bike lanes have either a neutral or positive impact on business sales. However, this will be the first such study that is specific to Cambridge. We expect to release the first report early next year, and we'll update the report annually to reflect more recent installations and changing trends. And with that, I will turn it back to Elise to talk about the outreach.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks, Andreas. Before I get started, I would love to hear how you heard about this meeting, do a little gauge of **FREEMAN:** how our outreach efforts are doing so far. So I have just launched a poll asking about any methods that reached you in terms of learning about this project or this meeting. So I'm going to leave that open for a few minutes as I get started. And I will announce the results at the end of this section. Next question, Andreas. Sorry. Next slide, Andreas.

So we talked a little bit earlier about the timeline for the project, including the construction and the installation. But in terms of engagement, we really have three phases. Right now we're in phase one, which is our introductory phase, making sure people hear about the project and give us feedback on existing conditions, safety on the street, their personal experiences and parking needs.

We're here right now. We'll be collecting more feedback after this meeting. And we'll use that feedback to design the street, and in phase two-- or come up with draft designs for the street. And in phase two, we'll collect design feedback on those draft designs. There'll be some more meetings and opportunities to give feedback online and in other ways on those options.

And then in phase three, we will use your feedback to come up with a preferred design for the street, present that to you, and gather your thoughts on final adjustments to those plans. And that will be a spring and summer 2024. Perfect.

So some of the ways that we have been notifying people about this project, we mailed postcards with information about the project to about 6,000 households within the project area. We put out postcards along Cambridge Street, I think about 80, with information about the project, put up some large-scale A-frame poster boards in two locations or three locations along the street. And we sent emails to the city email list, posted news stories, and we've done some social media from city accounts.

And then for each phase of this project, we will have a virtual community meeting, like the one tonight. So tonight we've had an overview of the project. You've seen we have no design yet. And we're going to gather some early feedback to inform our concepts. And then we'll be coming back with two more virtual community meetings in 2024.

We'll also host several in-person open houses. We started with two open houses in November and December, gathered some feedback from the folks who attended on existing conditions on the street, and we'll do similar events in the winter/spring/summer of 2024. And we will also have online opportunities to give feedback. Right now we have a comment map open online, where you can click on specific areas and make notes about any safety concerns, anything you like about that area, parking needs, loading needs, anything like that.

We also have an open-ended comment form online. And we always gather feedback as well through email and phone calls. We'll have another survey in the spring of 2024 when we have some design concepts. Where you can comment on specific blocks or sections of our draft design.

And you can always schedule a one-on-one meeting with the project team or, like I said, email or call us. Right now we're really gathering trying to gather information on loading and parking needs, questions about curbside uses, safety or design concerns on Cambridge Street. We're happy to meet with individuals, businesses, groups. And that could be in-person, phone calls, whatever works best for you.

So with that, I'm going to close the poll and see what you guys said about how you heard about the meeting. So let's see, share results. It looks like a majority of you heard via an email from the city or an email from someone else.

And then we have about a quarter of you hearing via social media or a poster on the street. About 10% of you received a postcard. A few people saw flyers. And a couple people saw the news article. So it sounds like we're coming from-- you're coming from everywhere, but email was definitely the best way to reach you.

Next slide, please, Andreas. With that, I'd love to get into the questions and feedback portion of the evening. We've talked at you for a while, and we'd love to hear your comments and questions.

Like I said before, there are multiple ways to give feedback. This isn't the end of our phase one of engagement. We're still definitely willing to accept comments and questions after this meeting. And we have a fair amount of people online today. We'll be here till 8:00. And we're going to try and get through everybody who has comments and questions.

Before we get started, I'd love to just go over our format for feedback. So we're going to take the comments in order of that hands are raised. I see we have a couple phone-in listeners. If you're calling in, you're going to dial *9 to raise your hand. I'm going to open. I'm going to allow you to raise your hands now.

There you go. So again, if you're calling in, dial *9 to raise your hand. You can also feel free to ask questions and make comments using the Q&A function of this chat. Allow everyone to speak. Please try and limit your time to one minute. I'll try and give you a notice when your minute is up.

As a reminder, please be respectful to other attendees and city staff. Avoid personal attacks, foul language.

And the way we do this is a little different than you might otherwise have done community meetings. About every 15 minutes, we'll provide answers to questions that we receive in the Q&A and verbally. And that's just so we can get through as many people as possible and consolidate our answers. Our meeting is scheduled to end at 8:00 PM. And like I said, you may also contact the project manager directly to provide written or verb-- sorry, verbal feedback.

Let's see. With that, I think I'm going to start calling on some of the raised hands. And in about 10 or 15 minutes, we'll answer some of the questions in the Q&A and some of the questions we hear from you guys now.

So up first, I've got Jason Stockman, and Tom Kowolski is going to be second. Jason, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. Thanks very much for this great slide presentation. I really appreciated the thoughtfulness of the details that were included.

I wanted to ask if it might be a good idea to have alternating parking on different blocks of Cambridge Street, maybe alternating every block or every two blocks, in order to shift the direction of traffic so that drivers navigate an alternating direction of tr-- sorry, side of the street so that it's not a complete straight shot. I think the biggest problem with Cambridge Street is that it's several miles of completely straight traffic lanes, which encourages speeding. And by shifting from one side to the other with alternating parking between different blocks, it might help encourage traffic to slow down.

And I also encourage the use of bump-outs to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians. The pedestrian crossings, especially around Sciarappa and 5th, are really unpleasant for pedestrians. And I've lived in the neighborhood for 12 years. And I've always seen pedestrians struggle along those blocks in particular. And drivers just don't always stop for them promptly. So anything we can--

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Jason. Sorry, that was your minute. And we have a lot of hands raised. So I'm just going to try and get through as many people as possible.

AUDIENCE: Thank you.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: So I apologize if I interrupt anybody. Up next, I have Tom Kowolski, followed by Itamar Turner Charing. Tom, please feel free to talk.

AUDIENCE: Hello. My name is Tom. I've lived in Cambridge Street for the past five years. And yeah, I find that I use it in a lot of different ways. I cycle. I walk. I drive.

I think one of the things that'll be really difficult intersection to tackle is near Cambridge Street, Warren, Cardinal Medeiros, and the Grand Junction bike path that will eventually go in. That is a really chaotic intersection right now. I've seen multiple crashes almost happen. I got hit by a car there when I was cycling. A car did a left hook in front of me.

And I really hope that there's a good deal of thought into that intersection because it is a big conflict zone. And a lot of stress happens there as multiple road users. So yeah, a lot of other stuff. The street is very complicated, but I really look forward to seeing some of the plans when they come out. Thank you.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thanks, Tom. I'm sorry to hear you were hit. Up next, I have Itamar Turner Charing, followed by Jim Wall. Itamar, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. As a cyclist, I don't actually go to Cambridge Street much by bike. I try to bypass it because I just don't feel safe. When I was younger and more foolish I would sometimes bike on it, but now I just don't, which means since that's how my family gets around mostly, we don't go to restaurants, which I would like to go to more. So I'm looking forward to this and getting cannoli at Royal Pastry Sheet-- Royal Pastry Shop. They're great and cheap.

From a pedestrian perspective, my daughter is going to school around there. And so she's walking to the Valente Library. And yeah, the Cardinal Medeiros is kind of terrifying. I think there might be a traffic guard sometime, but not when my daughter is walking there. It's probably gone by then. So anything you can do to make that intersection better for pedestrians is very important.

I'm also very happy to see you're putting some thought into making the bus faster. I took the bus a couple days ago, and it's very slow. So if you can think about maybe making the traffic lights also timed for the bus or bus priority. But probably also just the floating bus stops will definitely make the bus faster. So looking forward to that, too.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you. Sorry, that's your minute. Thanks very much for your comment. I am going to turn it over to Jim Wall, followed by John Leo. Jim, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. Yeah, thanks very much. Excellent presentation. I just wanted to say, I live in Kendall Square. My kids went to King Open for a while. And so we're familiar with Cambridge Street and some of the difficulties of having the kids just get to school. They couldn't really bike to school because the street wasn't safe. And the sidewalks, we didn't really want to have the bikes on the sidewalk.

So I think everything you're proposing here is fantastic. It would really be a big improvement to the lives of the kids that want to go to the playgrounds, the school, the library that are all accessible from Cambridge Street. So really, really, really positive things I hope that you continue with this kind of work. It's great. Thanks very much.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Jim. Up next, I have John Leo, followed by Nihit Trivedi. John, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. Thank you. One of the things I wanted to mention was just I'm very for this project and redesigning the street. I know as a pedestrian walking around, I dislike crossing the street on many of the intersections.

Specifically one that I think-- the Fulkerson intersection. I love Lone Star Taco Bar, but it's really hard to get around and cross that street unless you're coming from the correct side, especially the diagonal intersection and the Austin intersections there. So I wanted to make sure that that's being reviewed as well.

Also a fan of putting in bump-outs where possible because it is-- I've seen so many cars speed along that route. And that's one of the reasons, without any traffic lights around or signals and signage, it makes it very difficult to cross.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, John. Up next, I have Nihit Trivedi, followed by Chris Cassa. Nihit, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi there, Elise. Can you hear me?

ELISE HARMON-Yes.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: OK, great. Yeah, I live in North Cambridge. My family and I live in North Cambridge. I work in East Cambridge a couple of days a week. And my daughter attends school at King Open.

And so we are on Cambridge Street, some member of our family, in a car, dropping her off, picking her up, or she takes the bus, obviously, every day. And now with the increase in bicycle lanes around the city, I'm actually riding a lot more because I feel a lot safer. So I first just want to say I really appreciate what the city is doing here. I think this is a great plan and a great progress towards making the city safer for drivers that, like I said, we're on a lot on Cambridge Street as drivers but also as bikers.

My one question and thought is really around the intersection in connection with the school, the Upper School and the King Open School. Obviously, a lot of buses are coming in and out, cars. And just thinking through how do we continue to make that safe for everyone and also easy for people to get in and out-- obviously, people are dropping off kids by multiple modes of transit. So just thoughts on that. And once again, really appreciate what the city is doing here. Thank you so much for this plan.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you for your comment. I'm going to have Chris Cassa up next, followed by Irene. And then I think we're

FREEMAN: going to go to answering some of the questions that we've heard so far and in the chat. So Chris, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi, there. Thanks for the opportunity to speak. I live nearby on Gore Street, and I've lived in the area for 25 years. And I'm a really strong supporter of this project. It's great to see that you guys are running a really thorough year-long public process here, as this is a complicated and important road in the city.

I'm glad to see you've already had two in-person open houses where everyone can have a seat at the table and have direct personal communication with the transportation planners and managers. Most people in the world don't get that opportunity on these types of projects, and it's really amazing that you're able to do that.

I also received one of the 6,000 postcards that went out to all of the nearby residents. And I saw that materials were translated into many languages. So you guys are doing the hard work to do this public engagement right. And I'm so glad to see it. Also in the meetings, I think the discussions about getting block-by-block work done correctly and understanding what the parking is already and those policies is very clear that you're doing that right.

I have to say also, though, I was shocked to see the crash data. The status quo that's online-- you can see it on the project website. The status quo is just not something we can accept anymore. There's rampant speeding and dangerous behavior all the time on Cambridge Street.

And it's resulted in 60 crashes a year. And that includes 50 pedestrians and cyclists who were hit since 2021. And the large majority of them left in ambulances.

I was one of them who wasn't in an ambulance, so I wasn't even marked as injured because I didn't leave in an ambulance, but I needed X-rays. And I had serious back pain. And it kept me from work. And my bike was damaged. And it really, really stinks. And I don't want to see this happen to anyone else.

I didn't tell anyone until somebody was actually hit at the exact same intersection less than two weeks later. And it was really depressing to see in the presentation that seven people were also hit at the exact same intersection. So I hope people appreciate the need for this project. And I'm sorry for being so personal, but it's just really important that we do this. Thank you so much.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks, Chris. I'm sorry to hear about that crash. That's scary. Irene, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hi. Can you hear me?

ELISE HARMON-Yes.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: My name is Irene, and I live in East Cambridge on 7th Street with my husband and my 10-year-old son, Kyle. We strongly support the plan to make separated bike lanes, as well as the other safety improvements on Cambridge Street.

Our family does not own a car. So we depend on biking and walking to get around. My son goes to King Open, and we use Cambridge Street every day to get to school, doctor's appointments, stores, restaurants, and to other parts of Cambridge to visit friends. And Kyle, do you want to say something?

AUDIENCE: Yeah. So if there are more separated bike lanes on Cambridge Street, I would be able to bike to school and to my friends' houses much more safely.

AUDIENCE: Thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Irene. And thank you, Kyle. With that, I think we're going to turn over to some answers to the

FREEMAN: questions we've been hearing and seeing in the Q&A.

So let's see. I'm going to start with a question from the Q&A that I'm going to answer. Let's see. So what efforts has the planning team made to hear voices regarding feelings of safety as a pedestrian? This person does not feel safe as a pedestrian due to some of the habits of cyclists along Cambridge Street, not necessarily because of vehicles.

That's something that we are definitely willing-- we are definitely trying to hear as part of this initial outreach. What we're asking you to give feedback on right now is your safety concerns, especially specific locations or specific intersections where you feel unsafe as a pedestrian or as any other kind of road user, as well as just general comments about situations that make you feel unsafe. So I encourage you to continue giving feedback. Use our comment map if you have specific locations that you'd like us to look at a little deeper.

Let's see, another question from the Q&A. Lack of secure bike parking and bike theft is a huge concern for a lot of people biking for transportation. Will the project include increased bicycle parking and corrals and sidewalk posts?

Cara, if you are on, I'm going to turn that over to you. Cara is with our Community Development Department.

CARA Hi. Can you just say if you can hear me OK?

SEIDERMAN:

ELISE HARMON-Yep.

FREEMAN:

CARA Yes. So I'm going to answer two questions. One was about bike parking, and the other was about Bluebikes. And
SEIDERMAN: so we will be looking at opportunities to add bicycle parking. And we would very much like to hear from people who are using the street where you think the need is that we can plan.

You can also put a request into the request form right now. It doesn't necessarily need to wait an entire year. Depending on where it is, we might be able to put bike parking in already next year. I don't know if there's a way to share that, but it's on our website, a request form for how to-- where you'd like to see more bicycle parking. But definitely also as you're responding on this project, then you should indicate that.

There was also a question about whether there'd be more Bluebike stations. We are always looking for opportunities to increase that. We do have a potential location that we are looking at nearby. But we also have a request form on Bluebikes online. And so the answer is yes, we will be looking for it. And also, we would like to hear from you where you think it's important that we specifically look that is going to help you as users.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Cara. And yeah, maybe we can send out those links as part of our follow-up email just so that people
FREEMAN: can see the places, the best places to request. But if you request via any of our project forms, we're happy to pass that along to the appropriate place.

So Andreas, I have a question for you next. Is it possible to have parking alternate sides every block or every few blocks so that the street isn't so straight and fast?

ANDREAS Sure. So yeah, as we talked about tonight, we don't have the street designed. And part of this process is
WOLFE: understanding concerns and sharing a design and during the next phase of engagement.

With that said, we know that it's likely parking will have to alternate sides of the street for a number of reasons. One is that the needs vary. There may need to be loading on one side of the street. And that may need to switch to the other side of the street.

However, as the person noted, we do typically see that when we design a street that isn't as straight and does require people to make a lateral shift in their driving pattern, that does reduce speeds. And that's one thing that we saw with the other half of Cambridge Street, is that that lateral shift in the driving direction is what caused-- is what lowered speeds.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks, Andreas. A couple of questions for Brooke from both the Q&A and our verbal questions. So this is from
FREEMAN: the Q&A. Since there's a significant amount of parking being removed, are there possible locations along the stretch of the street where municipal parking lots may be incorporated?

BROOKE Thanks for that question, Elise. So while we currently have a few municipal parking lots-- we have two municipal
MCKENNA: parking lots within the project area and then one slightly outside in Inman Square-- we are looking for ways to access additional off-street parking. I think it's really challenging for the city to identify lots for us to purchase and make standard municipal parking lots. But we are looking at different ways of accessing off-street lots. So we don't have answers on that right now, but it is something that we're exploring.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you. And a couple more questions, so don't mute yourself yet. So this person wants to know-- yeah, I'll just

FREEMAN: read this. "I was under the impression that this is the design phase with input from the community, yet the presentation seems to insinuate that the separated bike lanes are guaranteed. Is this the case?"

BROOKE So I think we mentioned early on the Cycling Safety Ordinance calls for the installation of separated bike lanes

MCKENNA: on Cambridge Street. So when we start this process, we don't have a design for the street, but we do know that at the end of the day, the design will incorporate separated bike lanes.

Now, as we start the design process, everything else, basically, is on the table. So we are looking for feedback from the community on all of the other elements that go into the design, things like what side of the street should parking be on? What are areas of concern around pedestrian safety, where we might be able to make additional pedestrian improvements? So while we go in with the assumption that the final design will have separated bike lanes, the actual design is done incorporating the feedback from the community.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Brooke. And one more, and I'll let you go. Another question about parking. So there are various

FREEMAN: businesses that have parking lots across Cambridge Street and across Cambridge in general. Can the city work with businesses to provide some of those spaces for overnight or early-morning parking for residents?

BROOKE So similar to my answer about the municipal parking lots, that is something that we're looking at in parallel to

MCKENNA: this design process. So we are exploring that and hoping to be able to move in the right direction on that. But we don't have answers yet.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Brooke. A couple of questions for Andreas. Let's see. We had a couple of questions about the bus stop

FREEMAN: islands construction work. So how will the timing of that work with the project installation timing?

ANDREAS Sure. So we know that this project will include slightly more construction work than some of the other quick-build

WOLFE: lanes that we've done over the past couple of years in order to add things like the floating bus boarding islands, which will be actually built out into the street. So all that work will actually precede the actual implementation of the bike lanes and requires more construction. And so that's part of the reason for the longer timeline that was shared tonight, is that all those changes, after we have a final design, we'll have to solicit bids from companies to come and basically build out the boarding islands or other curb work that's involved, like the changes to improve accessibility.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you. And we heard from a couple people who have children that go to the school on Cambridge Street.

FREEMAN: And we heard a question about how can we make the area in front of the school safer? Is there any initial thoughts we have about that?

ANDREAS Sure. So as we talked about tonight, we don't yet have a design to share. But that is an important location. It's

WOLFE: something that was mentioned also at our open houses. And so we'll be looking at a close eye to that to make sure we can design the street in a way that accommodates both the needs of the school along with cyclists and pedestrians.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you. And another question about parking for you. So in responding to the feedback, how much flexibility

FREEMAN: does the enabling legislation allow? For example, at present, if parking is to be reduced by half, is that level of reduction fixed? Is that in the Cycling Safety Ordinance? Can you just talk about that a little bit?

ANDREAS WOLFE: Sure. No, so the half of the existing parking is an estimate. That number will depend. And throughout the design process, it will fluctuate.

We say half because we know that separated bike lanes require additional width from the street than what's out there today. And we know that we have to maintain two-way traffic. And so that width to basically add the buffer space has to come from somewhere. And since we're not looking at changes in traffic patterns or making the street a one-way, it would be from the parking on one side of the street. And so we'd have enough width for separated bike lanes.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you. And one more question, and then I will turn it over to somebody else. So will we be meeting with businesses individually to understand their needs for loading and customer pickup?

ANDREAS WOLFE: Absolutely. We want to meet with every business owner. We understand people have busy days. And if you're watching this, we want to know the best way to reach you, whether it's in person, over the phone, et cetera.

But we've already begun to stop by every business, at least drop off a flyer that says please-- I know maybe you're busy right now, but we'd like to talk to you. Can we set up a time? So definitely interested in having those conversations.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you. And I'm going to move over to a couple questions for Jerry from our Department of Public Works. And then I'm going to let some more people with their hands raised talk because I know we've been talking for 15 minutes. So Jerry, I've got two questions for you. One is, will we be repaving this section of Cambridge Street as part of this project?

JERRY FRIEDMAN: Yes. We will be repaving Cambridge Street, actually, in advance of the implementation of this project. So look for that in the paving season of 2024, which is basically the spring and summer of 2024.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Great. And we had a question about if it's possible to straighten the sidewalk in front of Lone Star at Fulkerson street, the diagonal crossing being confusing for both cars and pedestrians.

JERRY FRIEDMAN: Right the question was about straightening that diagonal crosswalk. I am almost sure, but not 1,000% sure, that the Grand Junction Pathway Project, which is also in that vicinity and also includes work on Cambridge Street in the future after this project, plans to address that crosswalk.

Straightening out a crosswalk does require construction. It requires new ramps, et cetera, et cetera. But think that will be addressed, not as part of this project, but as part of the Grand Junction Path Project.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Great. So on our radar. And I know I haven't gotten to all of the questions. We're going to get back to that in about 10 minutes. But I wanted to give you a break from listening to us and hear a little bit about what you have to say.

So up first, with your hands raised, I have Ted Moore, followed by Catherine Carlson. And as a reminder, if you are calling in, dial *9 to raise your hand. And I do see we have a call-in listener who has done that. And I will let you know how to unmute yourself when we get to you. So Ted Moore, please go first.

AUDIENCE: Hi, there. I live along Cambridge Street with my wife. We've been here for about eight years. Now we have a four-year-old daughter. And I think the thing that has really struck me about biking on Cambridge Street since having her is the transient blockages that happen in the bike lane, so during either loading or gig drivers or just the things that happen with the nonseparated bike lane. Having to merge into the street with a kid, you become much more aware of the risks of that.

And so I just wanted to lend my voice into support of the separated bike lanes. Really looking forward to it, and great presentation. And thank you for putting this together. That's all.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you for your comment, Ted. Up next, I have Catherine Carlson, followed by Phyllis Breitholtz. Catherine, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi, there. Hi. Can you hear me?

ELISE HARMON-Yes.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Great. Thank you so much. Catherine Carlson. I've lived on Spring Street in East Cambridge for over a decade now and use Cambridge Street every day, either walking, biking, the 69 bus, or driving. And I'm really excited to hear about these updated plans and the separated bike lanes.

Last summer, I was basically attacked by a pickup driver or a pickup truck driver coming from the west or north of Cambridge Street into Cardinal Medeiros, when he pulled over without signaling to try to grab a parking spot, which happens all the time because, God forbid, you would look around when you find an open parking spot. And when I touched the back of his car, he chased me with his pickup truck. I did actually call and report this at that point.

But it just, every time I now get on Cambridge Street past Inman Square in the separated bike lanes, it's like this relief of stress. And a big part of that is cars parking are not coming in on you. I can see pedestrians better. Pedestrians can see me better.

And when I hear all the parents on this call talk about their kids or not feeling safe having their kids ride, I think all of us as a community here, it would be amazing if our kids could all bike to schools and bike to their friends' houses. And so I really thank you for doing this work. And if I can voice my support in any other way, please let me know.

One quick question. I know I'm up to my minute. As you do the outreach to businesses, I hear that there's a lot of business pushback. But I'm also a customer of all these businesses, as are, I'm guessing, most of the people on this call who do ride bikes. And I'm wondering if actual intercept surveys on the street with customers rather than just anecdotes from businesses will be incorporated as well. So that is my question. Thank you all so much for the work you're doing.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Catherine. And I'm sorry to hear that happened to you. That sounds scary. Up next, I have Phyllis Breitholtz, followed by Tom Lamar. Phyllis, please go ahead. Phyllis are you able to unmute yourself?

OK, Phyllis, I'm going to give you a minute to see if you can figure out your audio. And I'm going to go to Tom Lamar and then come back to you. Tom, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hey. I work right next to Cambridge as part of Cambridge Street. I'm very, very excited. This will be making it safer to bike and walk and more efficient to take the bus.

I might have missed this, but I wanted to ask if y'all had made a decision about the 1st and 2nd Street study. I think there are two different corridors they were considering for bike priority, for bus priority there. I was curious if the city has decided about that and if this project would take it into account to facilitate possibly difficult bike turns on either of those streets. Thanks so much. Really excited for this project.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Tom. I see we've Phyllis for now. Phyllis, if you come back on, raise your hand, and I will get you to the top of the queue. So I have William Riley up next, followed by Janie Katz Christy. William, sorry that this is a little bit short notice, but I'm going to give you permission to talk.

AUDIENCE: Thanks so much. A lot of great things reported tonight. I'm excited about the prospect of the lanes, especially learning tonight that they're guaranteed or baked into by the ordinance what this project will be. I really thought I needed to get on here and be an advocate for saying, yes, we need to have these. But I'm pleased to hear it's going to happen.

My concern is not-- I'm wondering about the folks who are worried about parking. And I'm happy to hear tonight how you're going to have a survey that shows the actual impact of the project on businesses in regards to the loss of half the parking or some amount. I'm just looking forward to learning more about that, how that works.

Somebody just touched on, what about interviewing the actual customers who come in? Many of them actually are on bicycles. So the impact for businesses-- and I was also appreciative hearing the way you're going to be talking to every business up and down the street. So a real outreach to them, I hope, helps smooth the concerns.

That's my kind of primary concern, that the impact of this has any negative take for certain parties. So I'm definitely in the bike camp. Glad the lanes will be there. But I'm hoping that the large thing about the parking constraints is something that all parties eventually arrive at a sense of yes, this can work. We see it work elsewhere. This is a continuation of that.

That was the point I wanted to bring out tonight. Thanks so much for your time. I look forward to the work.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, William. Up next, I have Janie Katz Christie, followed by Mark Boswell. Janie, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi, there. Thank you for this fantastic presentation and work that you're all thinking about and planning and doing. It's really nice to hear so many people talking about the needs from their various perspectives, from young to old and getting older, like me.

I guess I wanted to ask a few broader questions. Well, I was intrigued by the-- I guess Andreas had said that because this is a major route, it will be two ways. And I guess I think of Cambridge Street, it's a pretty narrow street.

And I'm wondering if there's any possibilities to provide more options and space for active transit users, for buses, and for bikes by making it to two-- whoops-- two-directional for everybody except for cars and maybe one directional for cars. I know that's a little bit out there. But I thought it would be something that it would be good to see discussed and explored.

And also, I'm wondering what ways people are being engaged to consider giving up parking spots on residential streets. More and more of us are now able to live without cars or want to live without cars for many different reasons. And I'm wondering what incentives the city is giving to people to do that. And I can imagine many different carrots that can be used.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Janie. Sorry. That's your minute. If you had anything else you wanted to share, feel free to put it in the chat or email us.

AUDIENCE: OK, thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you. Up next, I have Mark Boswell, followed by Jacob Adamson. Mark, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hello, everyone. Thanks for the very good presentation. You make a lot of great points about street layout and safety. Cambridge Street is a very, very important corridor and connection for cyclists and scooter riders and other vulnerable users. I travel frequently from my home in neighborhood 9 to East Cambridge on Cambridge Street. Part of that was doing food pantry deliveries to families in need. And those are done by bicycle.

And I've always needed to use Cambridge Street. Unfortunately, I've had too many close calls with distracted drivers making me feel at times it's unnecessarily dangerous and a bit chaotic. The bike lane obstructions are a constant on the street, I think as someone else commented. So separated bike lanes are desperately needed. So thanks for that.

And finally, I am wondering about, instead of improved pedestrian ramps, I'd really like to see raised crossings instead. I know that would increase the cost and complexity, but they are certainly very nice to have and appreciated by pedestrians. Thanks.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Mark. Up next, we have Jacob Adamson, followed by Holy Family. And then I believe we're going to go

FREEMAN: back to some answers to your questions. So Jacob, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. Can you hear me?

ELISE HARMON-Yes.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hi. Yeah, I live by Donnelly Park. And so this is right in my neighborhood. I'm really excited about it. I use Cambridge Street to walk to restaurants. I'm a cyclist. I bike to the CVS up at the end of Cambridge Street and occasionally to Star Market, though that is often quite difficult. And I also drive in the street as I get off the interstate and go back to my house.

So I do all uses. But definitely the most difficult one and the one I'd like to do the most, though, is cycling. And the difficulty there has just been the cars that just are nonstop stopped in the bike lane. It's just sort of incessant, I would say, and just in that short stretch of road between Windsor and the CVS up on 3rd Street. There's always two to three cars parked in the bike lane, and I have to enter into main traffic.

The other pain point-- and this is something other people have mentioned, is Cardinal Medeiros Ave. Cars basically will often stop there to let other cars take left turns, which I appreciate, having driven there. And know why it has to happen.

But then you're just not expecting that as a cyclist. And they can't see you. And so I've had instances where I have to slam on the brakes because this car is turning into me.

Yeah, so those are some of the uses of Cambridge Street. I'm really excited about this project and really appreciate the care and thoughtfulness that the whole team on this call and behind the scenes are putting into the project. Thanks.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thanks, Jacob. Thanks for that specific feedback. We can definitely take a look at those spots. Up next, I have Holy Family. And then we will go to some of these answers. You should be able to talk now.

AUDIENCE: Hello. Thank you for your presentation. I'm a pastor, actually, of four churches in East Cambridge. And one of my churches is on Cambridge Street. So I appreciate certainly what is trying to be done.

I do have some concerns. And probably our situation will be dealt with better one-on-one. A lot of my older parishioners have concerns about how they're going to get to church. We have concerns about how funerals are going to happen at our church on Cambridge Street. So it's just concerns of parishioners. We do have some people who bike to church, but we have others who certainly appreciate the opportunity to be able to park and go to church.

And just I have some concerns. One of my communities is very Latino. And a lot of people moved out of Cambridge years ago because they couldn't afford Cambridge anymore, but they do come back to church. So they're coming from out of town because this was their church, but they could no longer live in Cambridge.

So I have these kind of concerns. And probably I appreciate everything that's being done. And I do share some of the concerns that people have been sharing tonight about biking. But I just wanted to be able to meet the concerns that we are facing as a community. And I thank you again for this opportunity and for speaking with us.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, pastor. Yes, we are more than willing to talk to you about your individual needs and see what we can do to assuage some of your concerns. So we can reach out to see what we can do to do some one-on-one meetings. Thank you very much.

So with that, I know we still have some hands up. We'll get back to you in a few minutes. But first, I wanted to answer some of the questions we've heard in the last 10 minutes.

I know that Cara has a hard stop at 7:30. And I just wanted to ask her one or two questions before she has to go. So Cara, do we know how many Cambridge school students use Cambridge Street to get from home to school and to get to practice?

CARA: Are you seeing me?

SEIDERMAN:

ELISE HARMON: Yes.

FREEMAN:

CARA OK, all right, because I can't see myself on the screen. Anyway, so we don't have specific responses to exactly what-- who's travel-- where people are traveling on what streets, but we do know that through surveys that we're doing in the schools and through the counts that we've done on our streets that more and more children are biking in the city. Some of them who are younger are doing it with their parents. By the time they get to the middle school or high school, they might be doing it on their own. So we know that the numbers are increasing.

And we also have heard feedback from people who go to different schools about the concerns for safety for their children. Cambridge Street is one of those because there's a major school. I should just say my son also went to that school, and I definitely experienced it myself.

So this is one where we've gotten a lot of requests for making improvements. And safety improvements is one of the corridors that's come up. And I think that's the answer to the question best we can,

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you. And had one more question for you before you have to leave. And that's a question around since we've installed separated bike lanes in other places in the city, have we seen a difference in pedestrian injury rates in terms of collisions with both drivers and cyclists? Are we able to see a connection there?

CARA SEIDERMAN: Right. So if anybody had a chance to look, we did do a very extensive data report that looked in great detail at bike crashes that have happened. And then you saw one of the chart, a couple of the charts earlier in the presentation. We are working to put together a similar kind of study for pedestrian crashes.

We do know that citywide, over time, the crashes-- number of crashes have gone down overall, but certain corridors still remain. We have not seen an increase where the separated bike lanes have been installed. But I would also say we will be doing a much broader study. And we look forward to sharing that with the community.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Cara. I'll let you go. And I'm going to turn this over to Andreas. Andreas, we got a question about connectivity with nearby walking and bicycling infrastructure, for example, the community park near Lechmere and Grand Junction. Can you just talk a little bit about how this project will interact with those?

ANDREAS WOLFE: Sure. So yeah, as part of this design process, we'll be coordinating closely with other city projects nearby. As discussed, we have a whole team. It includes Jerry Friedman from the Department of Public Works and plus others from our Community Development Department who are involved in the Grand Junction Path Project.

So as part of that project specifically, there will be a short section of Cambridge Street from Cardinal Medeiros Ave. to Warren Street that when the Grand Junction Path is built will include fully constructed, separated bike lanes. That is a longer-term process. And there's some utility work that has to happen before the Grand Junction Path is complete.

And so they will be installing separate bike lanes on that stretch as part of this project. But they will be rebuilt as part of the Grand Junction Path Project into the fully constructed bike lanes you see on other streets.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thanks. And I saw a question in the chat. And I think we heard this a little bit at our open houses, people who want to know if we can make modifications to the slightly raised bike lane in front of the school.

ANDREAS WOLFE: So as we said tonight, we don't have a design yet to share tonight. We will be including that stretch as part of the design process. And so we certainly want to hear people's feedback on how they experience the street, including school pick-up and drop-off. And we look forward to getting comments on the exact design that we propose at the next set of meetings.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you. And one last question for you, and then I will go back to Brooke. We heard a question verbally about if there's any possibility to make more space for other uses by making the street one-way for cars. Is that under discussion? Any reactions there?

ANDREAS WOLFE: Sure. So as you mentioned in presentation, we're looking to maintain two-way traffic. And one of the primary reasons is that it's a bus route. So even if we were to look at a street layout with one-way traffic, just having two-way bus traffic still requires two travel lanes in each direction and wouldn't-- in addition to that, it's also we wouldn't want to do-- it's a major corridor for all modes of transportation. And there aren't necessarily other routes in the area that can get people from point A to point B.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Andreas. A couple of questions for Brooke. Question from the chat, will there be a formal parking study documenting parking use currently on the streets and side streets as part of this project?

BROOKE MCKENNA: Yes, we are planning to do a parking utilization study that will look both at Cambridge Street itself and the side streets coming off of it.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thanks, Brooke. Easy answer. Somebody said that they are concerned when they see fire trucks and emergency vehicles struggling to get through traffic on Cambridge Street. Are public safety personnel part of this project?

BROOKE MCKENNA: So we do review our designs with public safety-- with the public safety folks here in the city. And as Andreas had mentioned earlier during the presentation, the FlexPosts that we use to separate the bike lane from traffic actually do provide in a way more flexibility than parked cars in terms of either an emergency vehicle, or another vehicle that needs to get out of the way of an emergency vehicle is able to go over the FlexPosts without damaging the FlexPosts or the car.

So I will say that emergency responders in Cambridge are really fantastic at getting around the city. And it's very challenging, bike lanes or not or no bike lane. But the flexible delineators do add a little bit of space and flexibility there for people to get by.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you. And we have a question about the economic impact study. Sorry, I'm just going to read it. "The slide describing bike lane impact on businesses did not look like it was Cambridge Street specific. Is the city--" oh wait, "does not look like it was Cambridge specific. Is the city surveying businesses on Mass Ave. and other streets in Cambridge where bike lanes have been installed?"

BROOKE MCKENNA: Yes. So the city, led by the Community Development Department's Economic Opportunity and Development Division is leading a Cambridge-specific economic impact study. This is year one of a six-year study that will be looking at the economic impacts of separated bike lanes. And that did include a survey to businesses. And they're in the process of finalizing the year-one report. And we expect that early in the new year to be released.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thanks, Brooke. And a quick question about are we considering any way of increasing turnover at parking spaces on Cambridge Street, part one? Part two, could we possibly incorporate anything like the automated monitoring that's happening in Davis Square in Somerville?

BROOKE Sure. So one of the really important elements of feedback that we're looking for from the public is around what
MCKENNA: are the parking needs? Where do you need really short-term-- and especially feedback from businesses, when do you need really short-term parking? Is your business one that needs just people to stop for a few minutes, run in, and come out?

And the result of that feedback is better regulated parking so that the parking that remains after the installation of the separated bike lanes is really regulated in a way that works for the surrounding businesses and the surrounding residents. So this does basically result in a really fine tuning of the parking regulations. So that is one of the outcomes that we're looking for.

And the second part of that question about what they're doing in Somerville, we're taking a look at that. It's unclear at this point whether that is something that's legal under state law. But we're absolutely looking into it.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Brooke.

FREEMAN:

BROOKE And actually, for everyone else's interest, Somerville is piloting something called a SafetyStick, which is installed
MCKENNA: on the street and takes pictures of parking violations that are then issued by the city. So that's what that question was about.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Brooke. Yeah, context is helpful. I'm going to ask one question of Jerry, and then I'm going to try and
FREEMAN: get through everybody else with their hand raised because I know we're getting closer to 8:00. So Jerry, we had a verbal question about if there's any possibility of raised crossings as part of this project.

JERRY So not as part of this quick-build project because when you think about raised crossings, which have a number of
FRIEDMAN: issues-- we have to we'd have to talk to emergency response and others. But they also involve construction and often then require drainage. And drainage, in turn, often requires other utilities. So they can be more complicated than they look. So not as part of this quick-build project.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks, Jerry. And I see we have about 20 people with their hands raised. So I'm going to be a little stricter about
FREEMAN: the minute deadline. If you ask questions that we're not able to get to, feel free to reach back out, and we can answer them separately. But I just want to make sure that we can get as many people's voices heard as possible tonight. So I have Kevin Moses up first, followed by Dan Totten. Kevin, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. I'll try to keep it as brief as I can. First off, I'd just love to say that I am very excited for this project. Cambridge Street used to be the most dreaded part of my commute. And now that I no longer have to go that way, I find myself doing it less just because there are so much nicer routes in the city. And it's a shame because I love to visit places on the street, like Lone Star and Curio Coffee. And this project will make it so I'm able to do that more.

Quickly, to reiterate something that some other folks said, I agree that the Grand Junction crossing and the adjacent intersections are probably the most problematic area on the street today. I understand that there's going to be work done as both part of this project and the Grand Junction Path Project, but would love to have some focus on that. Whether it's coordinated signals or reconfiguration there would be great.

Someone else mentioned bike parking. I definitely agree with that, too. To be more specific, definitely down--

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Kevin. Sorry, just trying to get us through. But feel free to email us with any specifics. We're happy to log that.

I have Dan Totten up next, followed by a phone-in listener ending in 311. So Dan you can go next. And as a reminder, if you are another phone-in listener, you can dial *9 to raise your hand. Dan, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Yes. Hi. My name is Dan Totten. I live in Central Square. I just want to say the staff are doing an amazing job. This presentation was very, very impressive. Personally, I'm an avid Bluebiker. I'm one of those people who is now more likely to go to Inman Square now that Hampshire is protected, one of those people that's more likely to go to Harvard now that Mass Ave. is protected. And I will certainly be more likely to patronize the businesses on Cambridge Street once Cambridge is protected, Cambridge Street.

I want to plus one the idea of considering a design that introduces chicanes to match the reduction in speed from the other section of Cambridge Street. I also want to ask, as others have, to take a really close look at Cardinal Medeiros and Cambridge Street, which is just a mess, whether you're on foot, driving, biking, whatever it might be. It's horrible. And really think creatively about things that might improve safety there. So thank you very much.

And lastly, I just want to say it's disappointing that we would deem something experimental and interesting to be illegal in Cambridge if they're doing it in Somerville. I just want to throw that out there. Thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks for your comment, Dan. Up next, I have our phone-in listener ending in 311. You can dial *6 to unmute yourself.

AUDIENCE: Hello. Heather Hoffman, 213 Hurley Street. First off, I just can't not say that in the nearly 40 years that I've lived in East Cambridge, I've never encountered a city study that was open, and there weren't already conclusions prewritten. Perhaps this will be different. I hope so.

And one of the things that I hope you will think a whole lot about is that the safest thing in my experience is for people to know where they are supposed to be so that they can do what they're supposed to do and not conflict with other uses. So you need to make sure that markings are clear.

When Inman Square was still in flux, it was terrifying to go through there on anything except foot, because I know where a pedestrian is supposed to be, because there weren't any markings. So I hope that you will really, really think about that because when people don't know what they're supposed to do, they make it up. And it's not likely that we're going to read everybody else's mind.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks very much, Heather. If you have any other comments, please feel free to email us or call us. Up next, I have Nate Fillmore, followed by Scott. And please, if you would like to make a comment, raise your hand in the next minute or two just so that I can make sure we can get to everybody with their hands raised. Nate, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hello. Yes. Yeah. Yeah, I've been waiting for this project for such a long time. I've ridden probably thousands of times on Cambridge Street over the years and yet felt unsafe so frequently. I now have kids, and I personally wouldn't bike with my kids on Cambridge Street east of Inman Square the way it is today.

And that's because of the concerns that people have raised with double-parked cars almost every single time you go down the street, especially in the areas that have restaurants with drivers picking up delivery or other stuff like that, and also just truck traffic, and you're right there. Riding right down on that white line between the doors opening and the trucks going past you. So I'm extremely excited about this project and really impressed with the presentation so far today. And thank you guys so much.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Nate. Up next, we have Scott, followed by Mark Keebler. And thank you for everybody who has their hand raised. Just so you know. Seamus Joyce Johnson, you're going to be our last speaker tonight. So Scott, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. Thank you so much for this project. I'm very excited about it. Cambridge Street is one of the few streets I generally avoid at this point because it doesn't feel comfortable to go on it, which is really disappointing because there are some excellent places to go along Cambridge Street. This weekend that was there at Elmendorf, which is excellent. And I'd like to be able to go there more often.

I do usually bike around the city on Bluebike. So I would really like to see as many stations as you could possibly add. But I think specifically adding stations to the bus islands that you plan on doing would be a really nice combination to have good connection between biking and taking the bus and also have it nicely positioned.

And then similarly, where you might not need to have a Bluebike station at every stop if they're across the street from each other. So also having just general bike parking increased would be really nice and helpful so that we can more easily get to Cambridge Street and go to all the wonderful places, like Elmendorf, and get pastries.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Scott. Sorry. Going to cut you off. Just going to move us along. Mark Keebler, you're up next, followed by Nat. Mark, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: All right, I think I'm unmuted. Thank you. Thank you very much. So I just wanted to first just get my support for this effort. I'm a big fan of the idea of having separate bike lanes on Cambridge Street. I've been a resident who lives a few blocks off of Cambridge Street for a few years now. I take my bike nearly every day for work and just errands. So I haven't personally had any injuries but definitely a few close calls.

Definitely with the cars double parked in the bike lanes, swerving out into traffic can be difficult. I agree with the intersection with Cardinal Medeiros and Warren Street being a challenge. And also just as a pedestrian, I'd say adding street or crossing signs or lights that pedestrians could activate, say, around Sciarappa Street, when they're trying to cross, I think, would be really helpful.

But yeah, just wanted to go and reiterate, I think it'll make things a lot safer to go and install the separate bike lanes. And thank you again for your presentation and chance to speak.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you very much. Up next, we have Nat, followed by Gavin. Nat, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hey. Hope you can hear me. I'm Nat Talbot. I live on Cambridge Street near Inman Square. I bike a lot around the city as well as I walk and drive. I walk along Cambridge Street a lot. And I will say that as a cyclist and as a pedestrian, it's probably one of the areas of the city that I find to be the most stressful as a cyclist and the one where I worry the most about being in potential serious injury situations.

As people have reiterated, there's a lot of blockages of the existing paint lane, as well as just right hook and left hook potentials, as a lot have cited. And just want to say that I'm strongly in support of this project. I do hope the city will consider daylighting some of the intersections found on some of the parking protected lanes that exist in the city. When there's parking all the way up to the edge of the curb into an intersection, cars don't look for cyclists. And it's increases right hook's potential. So especially for areas like the Cardinal Medeiros intersection and close by, I worry about the risk there. And I hope the city will consider, if they can, potentially reduced parking in order to increase cyclist and pedestrian safety.

But overall, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to weigh in. Thank you guys for continuing to push this project along. I'm really looking forward to this project being completed and really looking forward to being able to bike to the businesses on the street very safely. Thanks.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Nat. Gavin, I have you up next, followed by Amy A. Flax. Gavin, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hey, there. I have a lot of thoughts. I'll try to keep this brief. But I want to start by saying I'm beyond excited for this project. I've been waiting for years and years to have real functional bike lanes in my neighborhood. So I'm super stoked that it's finally coming.

There are a couple of issues I wanted to raise. I know a lot of people mentioned the Cardinal Medeiros and Warren Street intersection. I think there's maybe plans to signalize that intersection as part of the Grand Junction project. I was wondering if maybe we could grab that particular part and accelerate it to help with this implementation.

Lambert street in particular has pretty bad sightlines. Merging traffic has a really hard time seeing people coming, I think partly due to the side of the building and especially with the outdoor dining. So if you could give that a special consideration, that's been a particular pain point for me. I want to re-emphasize bike parking just throughout the corridor would be super helpful for me visiting all the local businesses I love.

And one thing we've been seeing a lot on other installations is truck drivers are starting to just ignore flex posts and just park in the bike lane anyway. So I think we need to either take a hard look at durable separation or making sure our loading zones are functional because I think a lot of the times, cars are parked in the loading zones. And the trucks will just say, oh well, and park in the bike lane. So if we can keep those loading zones clear, I think we'll see fewer incursions into the bike lane.

And I would also like to add support for fixing the bike lane in front of the school, which is the worst of both worlds right now between separated and street level. It's not really truly separated.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks, Gavin. If you have any other thoughts--

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: That's it. Thank you very much. I'm really excited about this project.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Amy Flax, I have you up next, followed by Ian Hunt Isaac. Amy, please go ahead. Amy, are you able to

FREEMAN: unmute yourself?

AUDIENCE: Sorry. OK. Hear me? I'm sorry about that.

ELISE HARMON-No worries.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: OK, so I wanted to thank you for holding this community meeting and for offering all the different avenues for feedback. It's wonderful. This is a very important corridor. And I've lived in Cambridge for 45 years. For the first 20, I lived on Tremont Street. And I avoided biking or walking, actually, on Cambridge Street when I lived there because it didn't feel safe, even when I was younger.

And now I'm a senior citizen, and I live in a different part of town, and I still don't go to Cambridge Street, that part of Cambridge Street. I was so excited when the other part of Cambridge Street, one of the first separated lanes opened and all the separated lanes that I can use now as a senior on Huron and Concord and Garden and Brattle and so on.

So this will be just such an important link and for-- I think a lot of people have talked about kids. And also the other end of the spectrum is when you're older, it's really important that you feel safe. It's important that everybody feels safe, of course. But there are special issues. So I thank you so much for this.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you very much, Amy. Up next, I have Ian Hunt Isaac, followed by Carl Schmuckpepper. Ian, please go

FREEMAN: ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hey. Hi. My name is Ian. I live between Harvard and Porter Square, but I actually bike on Cambridge Street-- bike on Cambridge Street pretty much every day, every week, for the past decade. So I'm a regular user of it, going to Donnelly Field and going to businesses along there.

So I super, super appreciate this project. Love it west of Inman Square, and I'm always really sad when I have to go further along and, I think, limit how much I go there as a consequence. So I'm strongly in support of this.

I have two specific questions/comments. One is the part where the train crosses, I hate biking over that. And I hate the material that they use to bridge the train tracks. I don't know if that's possible to fix.

And then the other thing is that on Hampshire Street, which I really love, the drainage when it rains has been really. Bad it's like biking through pooled, like just biking through a continuous pool. And I know this is a quick build, but if there was any way to help with better drainage in the bike lane, that would be, I think, make it a lot safer and be really fantastic. So thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Ian. Great timing. My timer is just going off. Carl, you're up next, followed by Aram Harrow. Carl,

FREEMAN: please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hello. I'm Carl. I live on 3rd Street. And I spend a lot of time on Cambridge Street for shopping and getting to other places. So this project is really important to me. I bike a lot. And this is one of the places that I feel least safe anywhere in Cambridge. And even many places in Boston are more safe than this.

I, about a week ago, almost got hit by a car when going around a truck that was double-parked next to an empty parking spot, so blocking both the empty parking spot and the bike lane. So I think just having enough parking isn't enough to prevent illegal parking. You have to have physical barriers to prevent them from doing unsafe things.

I also want to support daylighting the intersections, but especially daylighting that has physical barriers that prevent people from just parking in the supposedly daylighted areas. So thank you. And I really like this project.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks, Carl. Up next, we have Aram Harrow, followed by Joseph Poirier. Oh, Aram just disappeared on me.

FREEMAN: Aram, raise your hand again if you'd like to speak.

Joseph, please go ahead. If Aram doesn't raise their hand again, I'm going to go to Glenna next. Joseph, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hey. Can you hear me OK?

ELISE HARMON-Yes.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Oh, great. I'll be quick. I just wanted to say thank you for working on this project. I've been biking on Cambridge Street for a long time, actually there the other night. And I don't think I need to reiterate everything everybody said about the issues and why it's unsafe. So I just want to say thanks so much for helping make it safer. Really appreciate it.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Joseph. I do see Aram has their hand up again. So I'm going to go to Aram and then Glenna.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hello. Sorry, I thought lowering my hand unmuted. Thanks--

ELISE HARMON-No worries.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: --for all your work on this. I'm really, really excited about Cambridge becoming-- Street being a safer place to bike. I've lived here for 20 years, and it's finally feeling like biking is starting to be a safe thing around here.

Two little things I want to mention. It feels like cars turning left are both a big source of danger for bikes and also congestion for cars, especially during rush hour. I wonder if you'd consider making intersections no left turn.

The other thing is that by the time this project is done, there'll be even more people biking. And also e-scooters are going up a lot and especially are good for accessibility. So I wonder if you're thinking about your design with an idea that maybe in 10 years, we'll need even more space for bikes and scooters. Finally, my seven-year-old daughter, Everin, wants to say something.

AUDIENCE: My name is Everin. My name is Everin, and I want safer bike lanes.

AUDIENCE: That's all. Thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Aram. And thank you, Everin. Thank you, Aram. And thank you, Everin. Up next, I have Glenna,

FREEMAN: followed by Ariana. Glenna, please go ahead.

Nope. Have I lost Glenna? Glenna, I will look out for you if you raise your hand again. Otherwise, Ariana, you are up next, followed by Lee Farris. Ariana, go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. I hope you can hear me OK. I'm Ariana. I live in Inman Square right at the intersection of Prospect and Cambridge Street. A lot of my questions have already been answered tonight.

So firstly, I just want to add my support for this project. I was so excited to hear about getting safety improvements on Cambridge Street. It's definitely been a street that I've avoided biking on for a while, despite the fact that I love biking around Cambridge. So just really, really excited about the project as a whole.

One question I did have is if signal timings-- excuse me. Sorry-- was if signal timings were in scope for the project. Specifically Columbia Street and Prospect Street, those intersections are quite treacherous around rush hour. And I'm wondering if they could be improved for pedestrians by making them an all-way walk signal. But again, really excited about the project. Thank you for your time.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Ariana. And I know our meeting officially ends at 8:00, but we are going to stay on a little extra just to get everybody whose hands are currently raised. Right now, I have ten people or nine people with their hands raised, including Zena Thompson as the last one. So we will get to you all today, although a couple of our staff might have to drop off at 8:00.

So with that, I have Glenna up next, followed by Lee Farris. And we understand if you also have to leave at 8:00. Thank you for joining us. Glenna, go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Can you hear me?

ELISE HARMON-Yes.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: I didn't see the unmute button before. I also want to thank you for the work on this project and reiterate the need for bike posts to lock your bike all up and down Cambridge Street. It's surprising to me that currently there's so few places where you can lock your bike. And everything else I was going to say someone else has said. So thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thanks very much, Glenna. Up next, I have Lee Farris, followed by Brittany Bichovsky. Lee, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hi. I wanted to share my experience with the Hampshire Street bike lane because I thought it might be instructive for any folks that are listening about what to expect.

So I live right on the corner of Hampshire Street. And I bike, walk, and drive. And one of the good things about our project was getting rid of overnight parking for people that don't have Cambridge stickers. However, there has been very little ticketing to enforce it that I can see. And that means that sometimes delivery trucks in front of restaurants don't have a place to park.

And then on the up side, some people thought that getting rid of that parking overnight was going to put more people-- or getting rid of the parking for the bikes was going to put people on the side streets. But it has not been that bad from a parking point of view. So I just wanted to reassure people that if you are worried, it might not be as bad as you think. And I'm looking forward to supporting the project. Thanks.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Lee. Up next, I have Brittany Bichovsky, followed by Brett D. Brittany, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hi, everyone. I just want to chime in to support this project. I've lived in the Inman Square area for 19 years. And over that period of time, I have regularly biked in Cambridge. And I agree with what other people have said, that Cambridge Street could do a better job of becoming more bike friendly. And I'm excited about this project in regards to having protected bike lanes.

I am hopeful that the bike lanes can be raised adjacent to the sidewalk, just like how they've been placed in Inman Square. And ideally, if that isn't possible, protect it on the street with poles.

And I do agree that the bike lane in front of King Open School and Valente Library could definitely be improved upon. My kids go to that school, and we definitely do not bike in that bike lane because I feel like it's unsafe.

I would love to see the street become more bike friendly. And I think it will bring a lot more people to the area to shop at local businesses and enjoy restaurants. Thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Brittany. Up next, I have Brett D., followed by Seamus Joyce Johnson. Brett, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Yes, hi. I use Cambridge Street while biking from South Station to visit friends and patronize businesses in the area. And I fully support lanes, separated lanes going in here. And I also would like to voice support for durable separation. It doesn't seem like posts are really quite enough to actually provide safety.

But I still think the separated lanes are a great idea. Double parking is prolific, particularly in front of restaurants and bodegas. And I've nearly been right hooked by a driver who ignored the warnings of their side collision system. I hope that there's equal effort put into speaking with travelers, as there seems to be the will for one-on-one consultations with local businesses and organizations.

And lastly, I'd like to suggest that the anonymous pastor could engage with his parishioners to tell them that buses, they're not just for atheists and heathens anymore. Thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Brett. Up next, I have Seamus Joyce Johnson, followed by Marie Saccoccio. Seamus, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hi. I'm Seamus. I live in Inman Square near Cambridge Street. I'm very excited about this project. Just wanted to bring up two things.

One, on recent similar quick-build projects, I feel like we need more pedestrian crossing islands on the center line of streets. Those make it a lot easier to cross as a pedestrian and could really help.

And then the other thing is I think that you should take another look at whether Cambridge Street needs to stay a through-route for cars. I think there's a real opportunity with contraflow bus lanes to improve the 69 and really bolster the businesses by turning it into a destination rather than a through-route for cars. Thanks. That's it. I'm super excited about the project.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Seamus. Up next, we have Marie Saccoccio, followed by Vivian Ortiz. Marie, please go ahead.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Good evening. I did raise my hand a few times before, but for some reason, it was [AUDIO OUT]. Just a couple of comments. Two open houses [AUDIO OUT] people [AUDIO OUT].

ELISE HARMON-Marie, you're cutting out a little bit. We're no longer able to hear you.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: I can no-- [AUDIO OUT]

ELISE HARMON-Marie, you're cutting in and out. I'm going to mute you and give you a chance.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: --intersections and who is involved. The Cambridge data does not comport with the Massachusetts data. And that's mostly-- I asked Joe Barr about that. And he said because we in Cambridge encompass near misses. And it's self-reporting. So the data for this [AUDIO OUT].

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Marie. You're cutting in and out. We heard maybe half of what you said, but--

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: And then a pedestrian bump-out--

ELISE HARMON---feel free to email us or put your comment in the Q&A. And we're happy to respond to any questions you have.

FREEMAN: Sorry for the audio issues. Vivian Ortiz, you are up next, followed by Melanie. Vivian, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Sorry about that. A gentleman that spoke just a moment ago I, have the same experience. I bike to Cambridge from South Station. And a couple of years ago, when I started biking, going into Cambridge was so different than biking in Boston. But Cambridge Street was the one that reminded me a lot of Boston. So I'm really, really excited about this project.

I also work in Cambridge. I go into the schools. I'm part of the Safe Routes to School Program. So anything that I can do to help to get more kids on bicycles, please reach out to me. Especially the parents that are here, I put a question in the question and answer. So my contact information is there. We can look to see what we can do about finding other places for drivers to park and having their kids walk.

This is such a different experience for me to come to a meeting in Cambridge than it is to come to a meeting in Boston. I love the fact that we have so many folks that are in favor of this. I really wish that this would rub off on my community. But I'll take some of the tips that you have here and see what I can do in my neighborhood. Thank you. And I'm 100% in support of this project.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Vivian. And we have five more people with their hands up. We're going to get to all of you. Again,

FREEMAN: sorry to be going over late.

And if you had any questions that we weren't able to address today, please feel free to email us. We'll try and get some of the answers up on our website. The website might already have some of the answers, but we're very willing to answer any questions you have via email. So I have Melanie up next, followed by Phyllis Breitholtz. Melanie, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hi. My name is Melanie. Oh, there's my-- I didn't realize that you'd had my bike as the picture, but there we are. So that's me and my two kids on our bike.

So we live in Charlestown. I'm sitting here right now with my nine-year-old. And they go to school over by Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, which means that we do a lot of commuting from Charlestown to their school. And the most direct route is via Cambridge Street.

But it does not feel safe. I have long felt like I was playing some kind of 1980s-era video game, where I'm dodging cars and buses and shopping carts. And it's just a little bit of chaos.

We are so grateful, so deeply grateful for the new bike infrastructure that's already been put up on Cambridge Street and on Brattle Street. And we are so excited for this project and are very much in support of it because it will really change our lives as far as the commute. And then in the next couple years, as my kids become independent bikers to school, it will make biking to school possible, whereas right now it is not. Did you want to say anything?

AUDIENCE: No.

AUDIENCE: OK. Thank you so much.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Melanie. Phyllis Breitholtz, I have you up next, followed by Zena Thompson. And sorry, Phyllis, I know **FREEMAN:** you raised your hand earlier. I didn't realize you'd reraised it. Please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Am I still having a problem?

ELISE HARMON-We can hear you now.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: OK, great. So this is a couple of things, a couple of observations and a couple of questions. There are two bus shelters on Hampshire Street right near Inman Square. And they're facing the wrong direction. They're the people who sit in those shelters sit with their backs to the street. And so the shelters need to be turned around so that people can face the way the buses are coming. That's that's one point.

Another is that walking through Inman Square, since I live on Antrim Street, is very challenging. I feel like I have to look in five different directions. And one of the things that makes it particularly difficult is that the green paint, which I love because it clearly indicates where the bikes are going, stops any number of times in and around the square.

And when I was walking there today, and a friend of mine who lives in another part of the city was suddenly saying to me, wait a minute. Wait a minute. Where are we supposed to be walking? And I realized that because I'm walking there all the time, I'm more accustomed to where the bikes come from and where they're going. But for somebody who is not from the immediate neighborhood, without the green lines, without the green passages, it's very, very difficult.

And I'm requesting a speed bump on Antrim street because we have an elementary school at the end of the street. And people come flying from Inman Square and use Antrim street as a cross-street out to Broadway. And--

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Phyllis. Sorry. I just want to make sure we have time to get to everybody. Feel free to email us and we **FREEMAN:** can make sure we get answers to any questions you have that you weren't able to raise.

Zena Thompson, you're up next, followed by Phyllis Russell. And Marie, if you're still here, I know you're having some connectivity issues. But feel free to raise your hand if you're still here, and we can see if your connection is any better. So Zena Thompson, followed by Dylan Russell, please go ahead.

AUDIENCE: Hello. Can you hear me?

ELISE HARMON-Yes. Thank you.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Hi. My name is Zena Thompson. I'm a business owner on Cambridge Street. I've been here over 25 years. I'm very, very disappointed in the changes on Cambridge Street because the businesses are going to be hurt. I'm between Courthouse Cleaners and Skampa Pizza. There's 10 businesses along just our block alone. I haven't heard anybody speak about us.

What's going to happen to us? We have people who commute in with their cars. We have Cambridge residents that use their cars. We have not been heard. People have been walking around visiting us. The meetings are always at times that we cannot attend.

I myself walked to each of these businesses during the week and spoke to everybody. And everybody is disappointed because we are worried. What will happen to us?

I just want someone to come and check on the businesses on Cambridge Street. I mean, the drivers are reckless, but you cannot blame the businesses. We are going to be hurt by this. And I'm sorry for the bikers and for the children. People should pay more attention.

But I'm very worried about the businesses. And there's businesses that have been here longer than my businesses. This is how we raise our families. This is how we support our community. Who's going to come and talk to the business owners on our block? We need this done.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you, Zena. And we're very willing to have one-on-one meetings with you and any other businesses if you

FREEMAN: can't make any of the formal meetings. We can reach out and see if we can set something up.

AUDIENCE: I'd greatly appreciate that. Thank you.

ELISE HARMON-Thank you. Dylan Russell, I have you up next, followed by Justin Saif. And then we are at the end of our raised

FREEMAN: hands. Dylan, please go ahead.

Dylan, we are not able to hear you. And I am not getting a prompt to allow you to unmute. So I'm wondering if you're connected to the audio. Oh, there you go. Are you able to talk?

AUDIENCE: Yeah, can you hear me? Sorry.

ELISE HARMON-Yes. No worries.

FREEMAN:

AUDIENCE: Yeah, I just wanted to say that I'm in support of the project. I bike on Cambridge Street regularly to get to work and also go there to visit businesses. Nothing else to add, really. Just wanted to say I'm in support of the protected bike lanes on the street. Thanks.

AUDIENCE: Thank you, Dylan. And Justin, I have you up next. Please go ahead. Thank you for holding on this whole time.

AUDIENCE: Hi, Justin Saif. I've lived in Cambridge since before I had children. And I have daughters and first and third grade. Thanks for the presentation and the hard work I'm excited for this project as well.

I haven't been hit while cycling, but I did have a close call on Cambridge Street while riding to the high school with my daughter on the back of my bike that left me quite shaken at the time. An older driver pulled into a parking spot without looking and nearly sideswiped us. So I think protected bike lanes are important for this street.

When I ride with my daughters, who now both ride their own bikes, we tend to go places where we can reach them using separated bike lanes. I'm still a little anxious about their safety in mixed traffic, as novice cyclists, in places like Cambridge Street. I do hope you'll follow what-- I understand the process was for Main Street, which was letting the local businesses have a central role in deciding where parking would go. And I hope you work with them to maintain street dining and replace parking street-- parking on Cambridge Street with metered parking on the side streets to the extent needed.

And speaking very personally, my daughters get on the school bus at Sciarappa in front of the St. Francis Church there. So I would love to see a raised crosswalk there. And I'm excited for the road diet because the car traffic-- the truck traffic is going quite at a high rate of speed there. So thank you very much for everything.

ELISE HARMON-FREEMAN: Thank you, Justin. And thank you, everybody else who has held on for 15 minutes later than our scheduled end of the meeting. We really appreciate everybody who came today, left a comment, made a comment, asked a question.

If there's anything we didn't answer that you'd like to know, please feel free to reach out to us. The email and phone number is on the web page right now-- is on the screen right now. And on our web page, you'll find options for how to sign up for our email list, leave a project a comment on the comment map, or leave a comment on our comment form.

So we accept feedback always. We don't weigh anything more than the others. So whatever is easiest for you to do, please reach out and let us know your thoughts. Have a great night, everybody. And happy holidays.