

The background image shows a park setting with a red brick path leading through lush green trees. On the left, there is a brick wall and a black metal fence. On the right, a multi-story yellow building is partially visible behind the trees. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

# Mass Ave Safety Improvements Second Community Meeting Dudley St to Alewife Brook Pkwy

Thursday, October 28, 2021 | 6:00 p.m. | Zoom

Image: Cambridge Linear Park near Cameron Ave



# Cycling Safety Ordinance Overview

## 2019: Cambridge City Council Passed the Cycling Safety Ordinance

Requires the construction of separated bike lanes when streets are being reconstructed as a part of the City's Five-Year Plan for Streets and Sidewalks and they have been designated for "Greater Separation" in the Bicycle Network Vision



Image: A separated bike lane in Brattle Sq; Credit: Kyle Klein



# Cycling Safety Ordinance Overview - Continued

## 2020: Cambridge City Council Passed Amendments to the Cycling Safety Ordinance

The amendments set ambitious requirements for the installation of approximately 25 miles of separated bike lanes within the next five to seven years

The location of these facilities will be informed by both the Cambridge Bicycle Network Vision and specific requirements in the Ordinance



Image: Buffer area and flex posts next to the separated bike lane on Cambridge St; Credit: Kyle Klein

# Cycling Safety Ordinance Overview - Continued

In general, the amendments to the Ordinance require the installation of separated bike lanes on:

- All of Massachusetts Ave;
- Broadway from Quincy St to Hampshire St;
- Cambridge St from Oak St to Second St;
- Hampshire St from Amory Street to Broadway;
- Garden St, eastbound from Huron Ave to Berkeley St, and westbound from Mason St to Huron Ave; and
- 11.6 miles of separated bike lanes in other locations that are a part of Bike Network Vision



Learn more at  
[cambridgema.gov/cycling-safety-ordinance](https://cambridgema.gov/cycling-safety-ordinance)



# What drives our street design?

We design for people of ALL ages and abilities. This means including:

- People who may not have access to a car
- Safe and accessible bike lanes that can be used by a wide range of people
- Streets that are safe and accessible for all abilities

**How we think about vehicle congestion and delay**

- Moving people slowly is moving people safely
- We do not prioritize eliminating delay for people driving alone

**Many policies and plans are foundational to our work, not only the Cycling Safety Ordinance**

- **1)** 1992 Cambridge Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance, **2)** 1993/2007 Cambridge Growth Policy, **3)** 2016 Complete Streets Policy, **4)** 2016 Vision Zero Policy

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

- Buses run less frequently than cars and carry more people
- Cannot ignore access for trucks and local deliveries





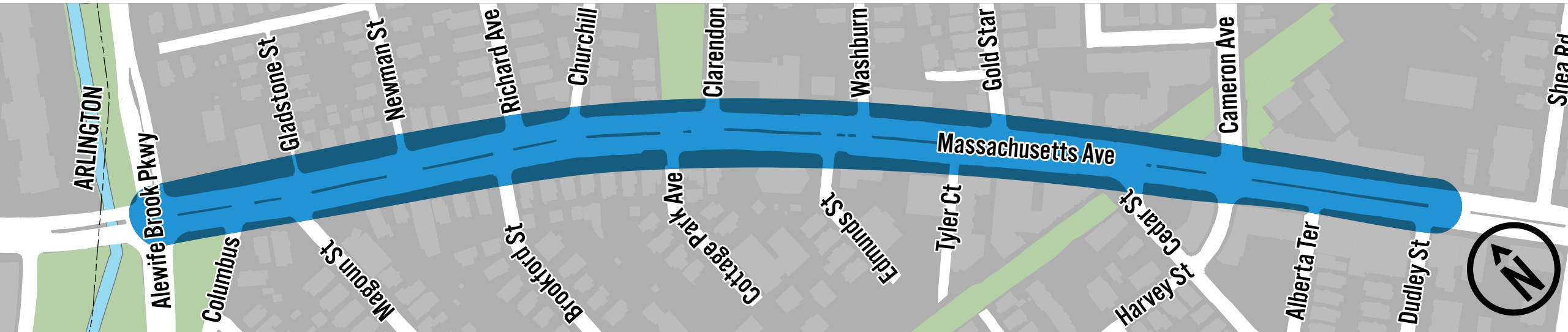


# Mass Ave Dudley St to Alewife Brook Pkwy Project Details

Image: Mass Ave near Dudley St

# Project Area

Mass Ave between Dudley St and Alewife Brook Pkwy



# Public Outreach so far

## **Week of August 30**

- Flyers posted along the corridor to inform the general public of the upcoming meeting

## **Week of September 3**

- Targeted visits to businesses to inform them of the upcoming meeting

## **September 14**

- Community meeting to discuss proposed plans

## **September 14 to today**

- Feedback on proposed changes

## **Week of October 11**

- Follow up meeting with businesses to discuss proposed plans, parking and loading considerations. Draft plans posted on project web-page

## **Week of October 18**

- Notice regarding upcoming meeting, reminder about draft plans

## **Thursday October 28**

- Today's meeting to share updated plans

## **After today**

- Installation, ongoing feedback and modifications as needed



# Who did we hear from?

## September 14 Community Meeting

- We had over 200 attendees at the meeting and 200 questions

## Emails

- Over 400 emails have been received, both in favor and against

## Phone calls

- Dozens of phone calls

## Community Office Hours

- 14 individual meetings to discuss the project one-on-one

## Business outreach

- Individual meetings with every business owner along the corridor. Follow ups as well.

# What did we hear?

## Feedback on parking and loading

- Modifications to specific locations for loading and metered parking
- Opposition to removal of parking on Mass Ave.

## Feedback on traffic congestion

- Desire for more information on traffic impacts
- Concern about environmental impacts of increased traffic congestion

## Support for improvements for people biking and riding transit

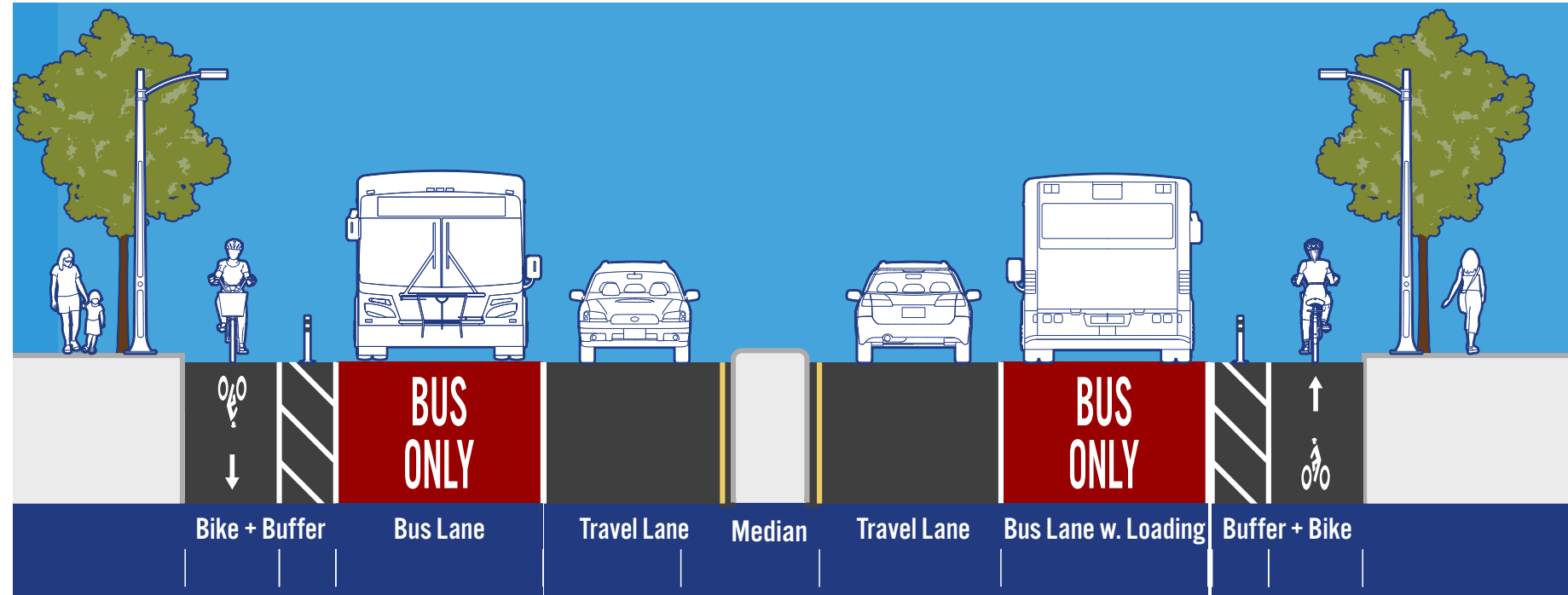
- Environmental and safety benefits of shifting people to these modes from driving
- Feedback on additional changes to travel patterns, i.e. Cedar St and Harvey St



# Proposed Typical Cross Section

From left to right:

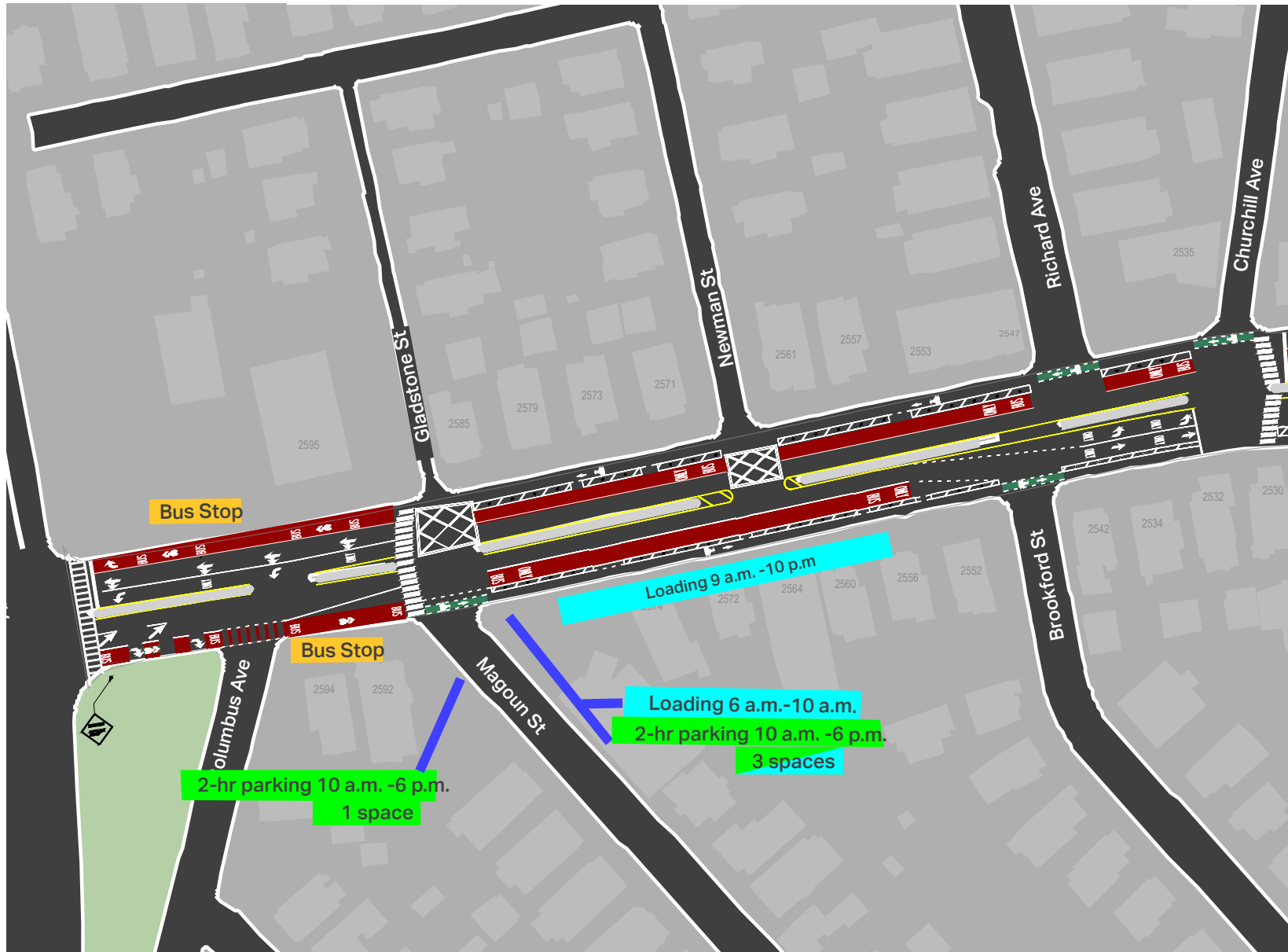
- Sidewalk
- Separated bike lane w/ buffer
- Bus Lane
- Travel Lane
- Median
- Travel lane
- Bus lane with part-time loading
- Separated bike lane w/ buffer
- Sidewalk



To Arlington

To Porter Square

# Alewife Brook Pkwy to Churchill Ave



## General Improvements

- Separated bike lanes in both directions
- Dedicated bus lane in both directions
- Parking changes on Magoun St
- Loading after 9 a.m. on Mass Ave southbound from Magoun St to Brookford St

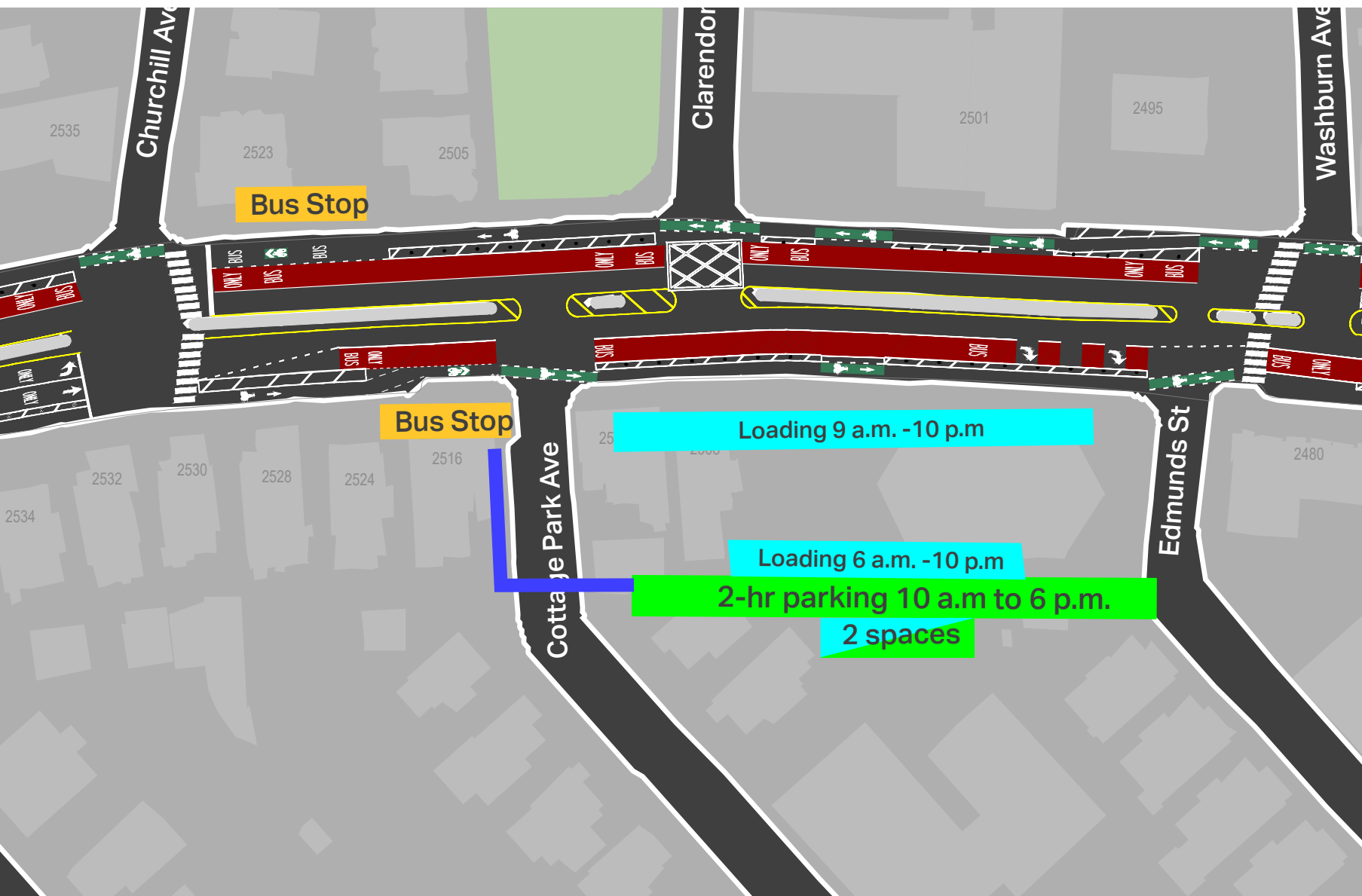


# Churchill Ave Intersection



- New left turn lane onto Churchill Ave
- Unable to bring the bus lane through the intersection due to volume of left turns

# Churchill Ave to Washburn Ave

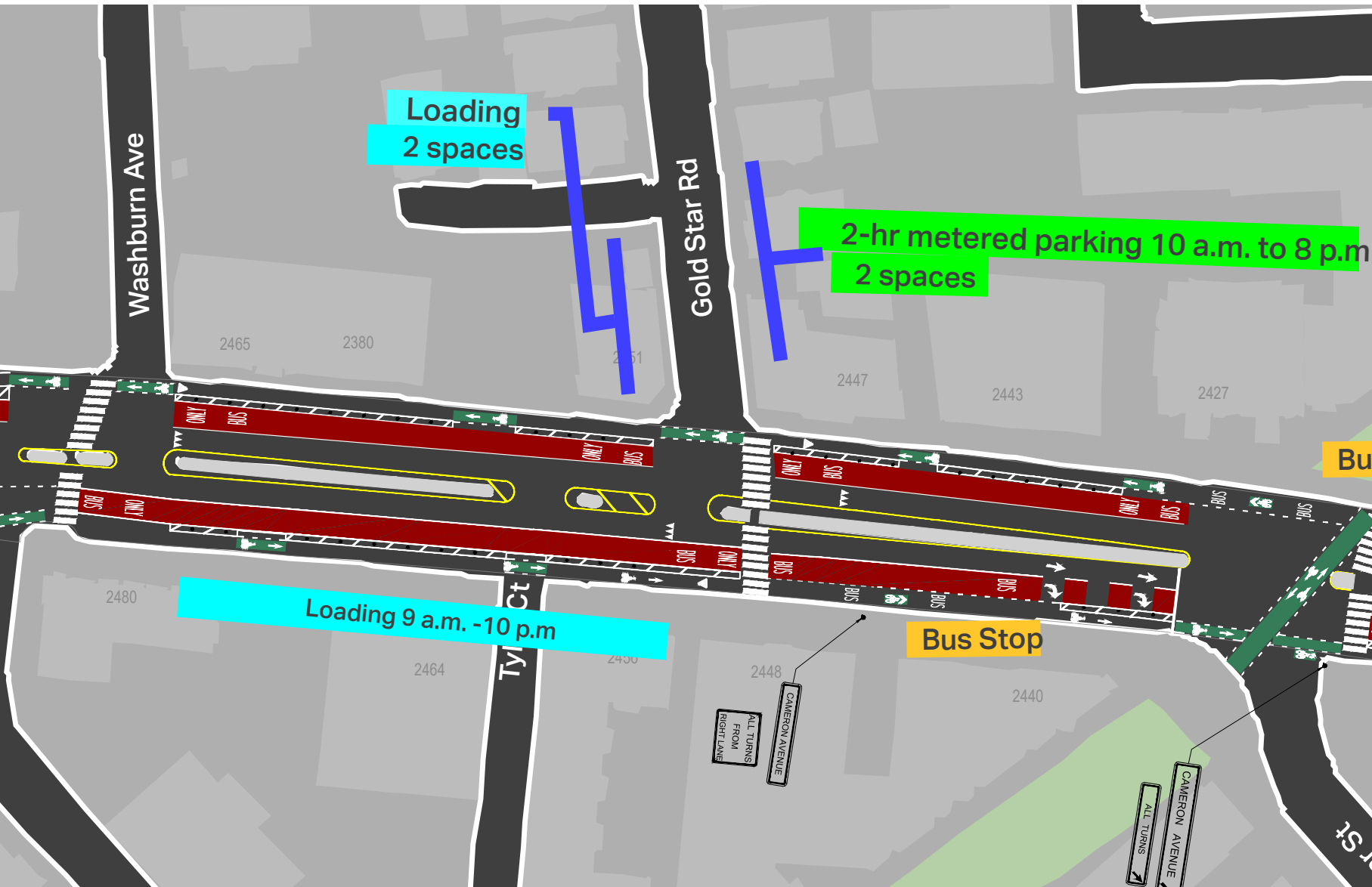


## General Improvements

- Separated bike lanes in both directions
- Dedicated bus lane in both directions
- Parking changes on Cottage Park Ave
- Loading after 9 a.m. on Mass Ave southbound after Cottage Park Ave



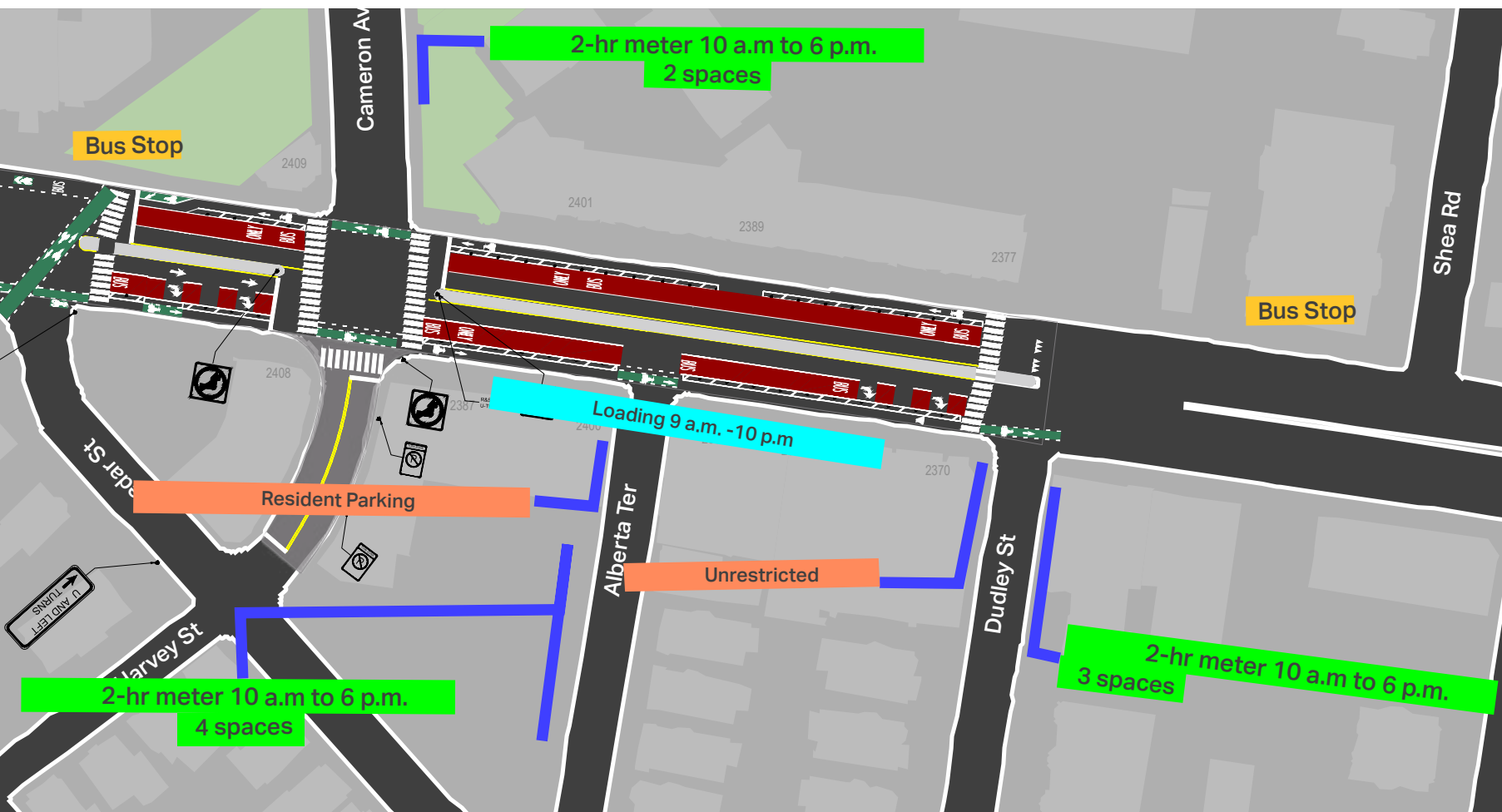
# Washburn Ave to Linear Park



## General Improvements

- Separated bike lanes in both directions
- Dedicated bus lane in both directions
- Parking changes on Gold Star Rd
- Loading on Mass Ave southbound after 9 a.m. up to Cedar St

# Linear Park to Dudley St



## General Improvements

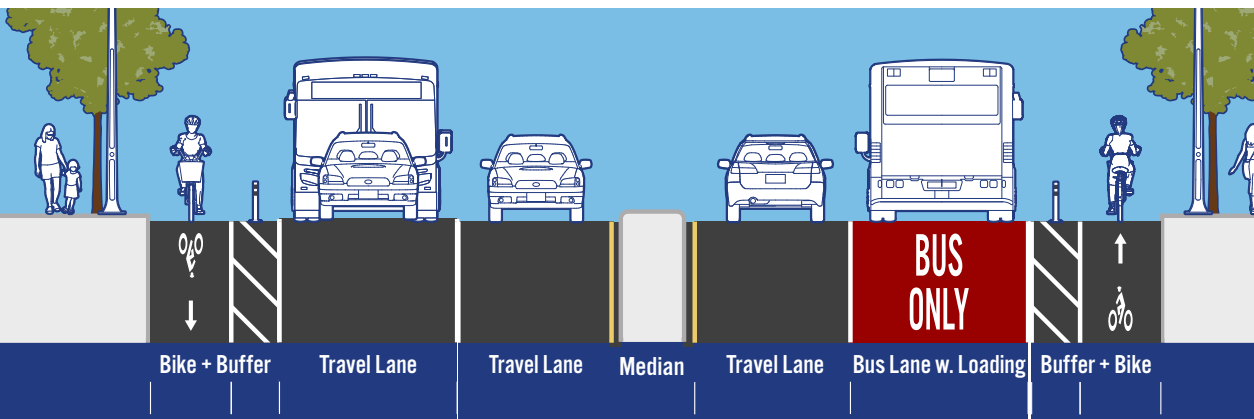
- Separated bike lanes in both directions
- Dedicated bus lane in both directions
- Safer turns at Mass Ave and Cameron Ave intersection
- Parking changes on Alberta Ter and Dudley St
- Loading on Mass Ave southbound after 9 a.m. Harvey St to Dudley St



# Key Changes - Outbound Bus Lane

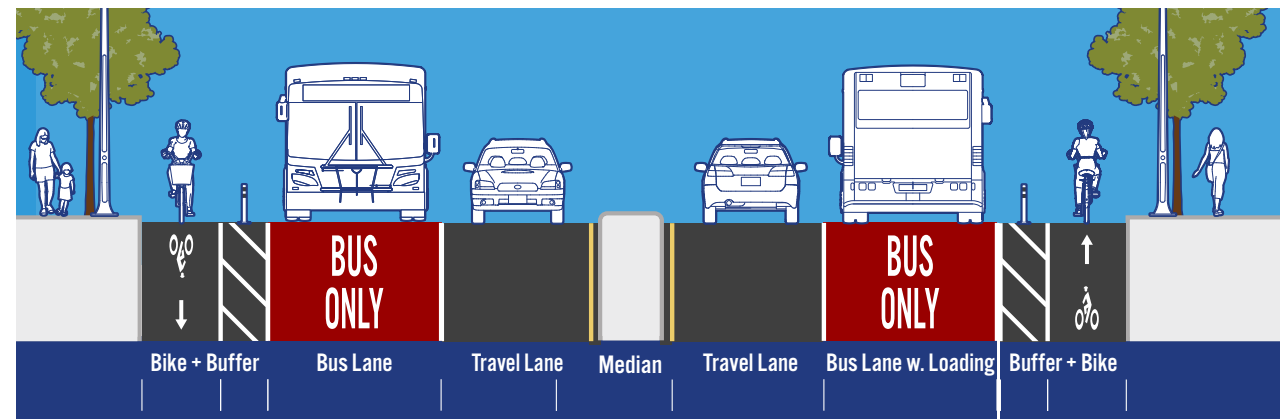
## September 14 Plan

- Dedicated bus lane only southbound
- Two general purpose travel lanes northbound
- Solicited feedback for northbound lanes



## Today's Plan

- Dedicated bus lanes in both directions
- No loading and/or parking in the northbound bus lane



**Per the Envision Cambridge Mobility Plan**

Partner with surrounding communities to create multi-jurisdictional bus rapid transit and bus priority routes. For example, collaborate with...Arlington on Route 77 improvements

# Bus Lane Benefits

## More Reliable Trips

- More reliable trips allow riders to plan with more accuracy
- Drivers can serve more passengers with fewer buses, allowing the MBTA to add service

## Faster Trips

- Where we're proposing a dedicated bus lane, we expect travel times to improve

### Results from Arlington Bus Lanes on Mass Ave

- On average, buses saved 5 - 6 minutes
- The most delayed buses saved over 10 minutes
- 40% reduction in trip variability



# Key Changes - Side-Streets with parking changes

- Magoun St (4 spaces)
- Gold Star Rd (4 spaces)
- Cameron Ave (2 spaces)
- Alberta Ter (4 spaces)
- Dudley St (3 spaces)
- Cottage Park Ave (2 spaces)



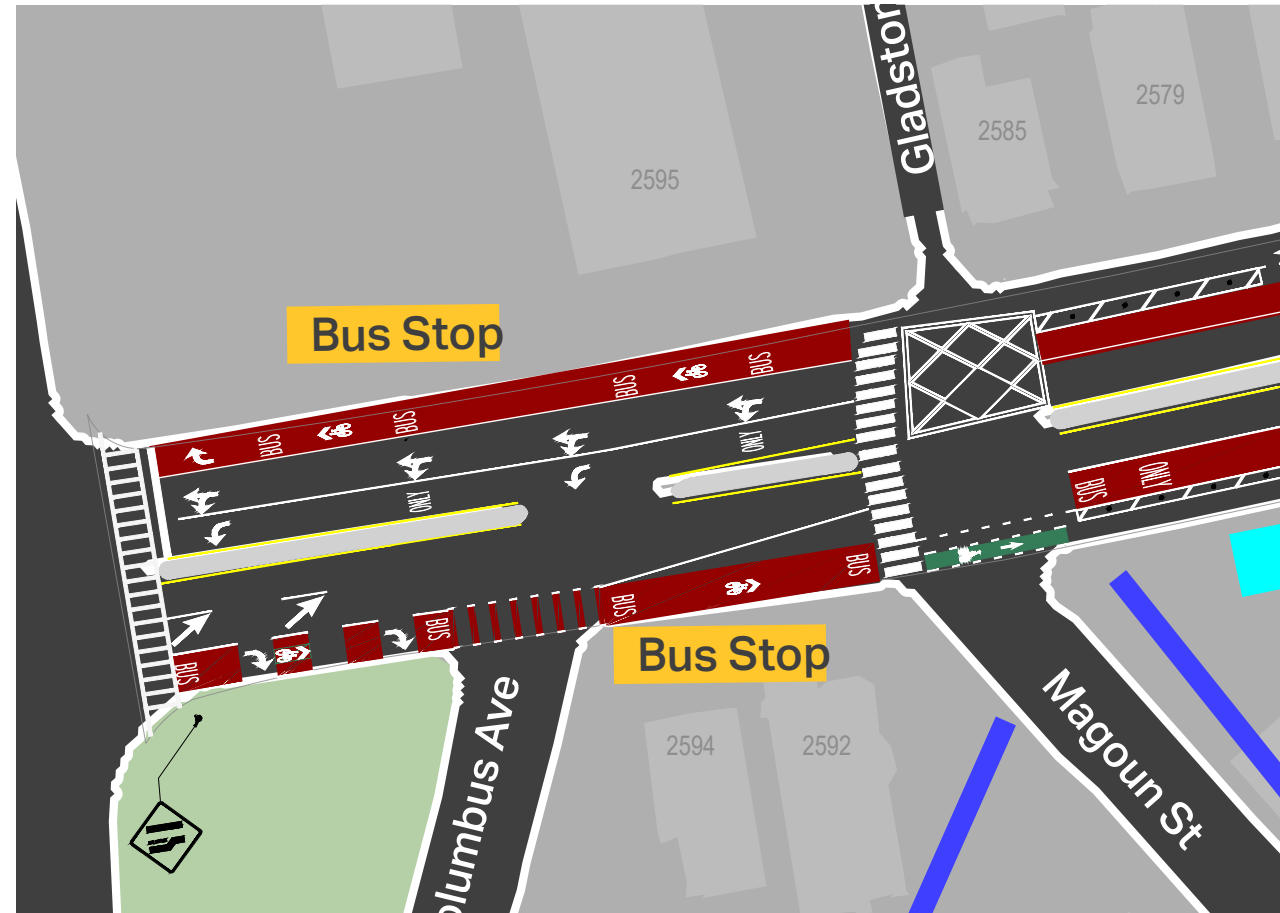


# Key Changes - Mass Ave Northbound Gladstone St to Alewife Brook Pkwy

MBTA requested lengthening of the existing bus stop at Gladstone St

## Benefits

- Improves bus operations, i.e. to prevent bus bunching
- Better positioning of bus at signal



# Key Changes - Mass Ave at Cedar St Signal Timing

Right turns onto Cedar St separated from people biking and walking

## Benefits

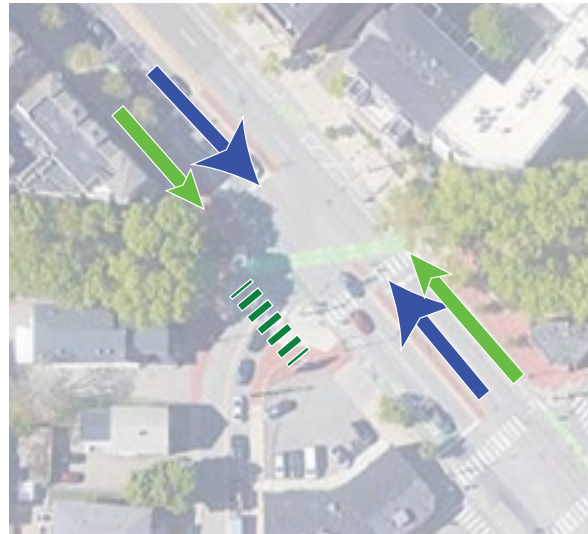
- Reduced risk of a crash between a person biking straight and a person driving turning right
- People driving turn right during separated, dedicated signal phase



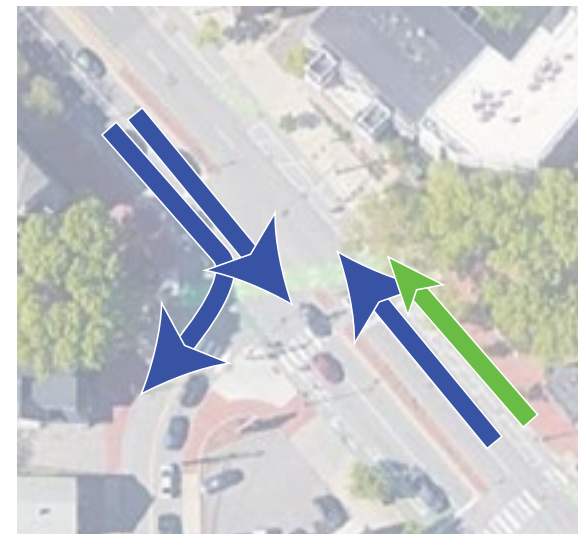
Phase 1



Phase 2



Phase 3



Phase 4

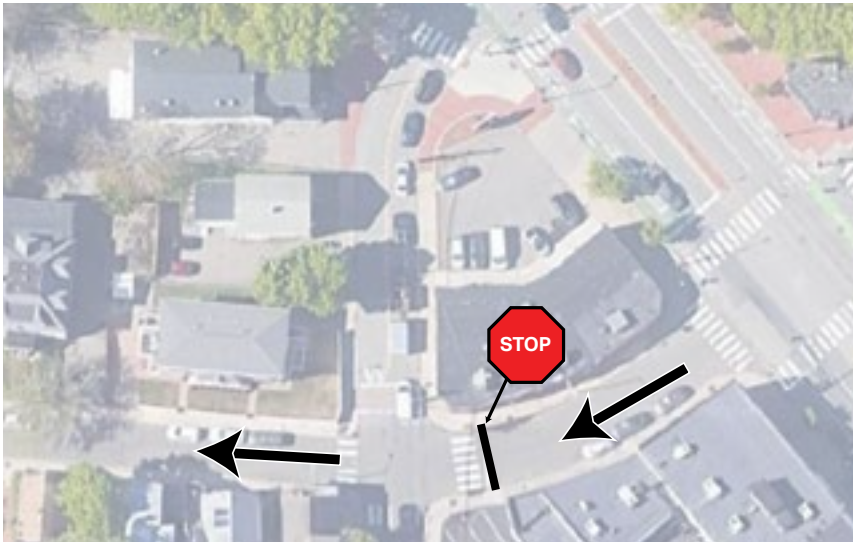


# Key Changes - Cedar St at Harvey St - All-Way Stop

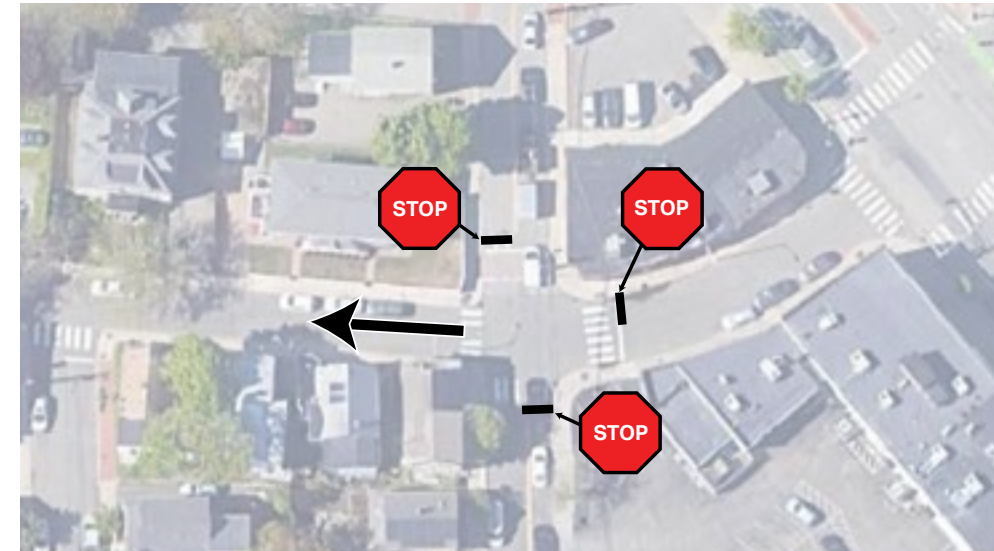
## Benefits

- More clearly defines intersection expectations
- Creates gaps for turning traffic
- Safer crossings for people walking

## Existing



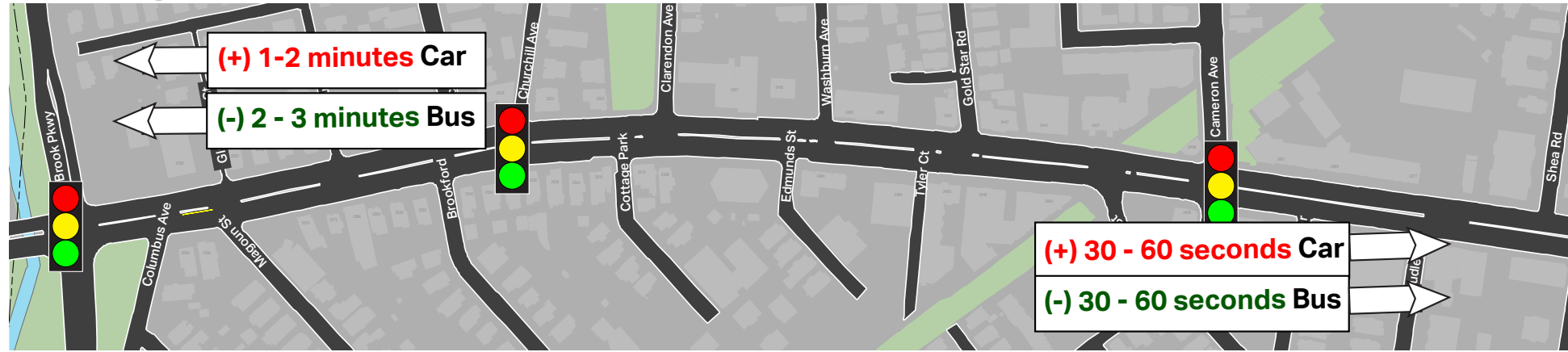
## Proposed



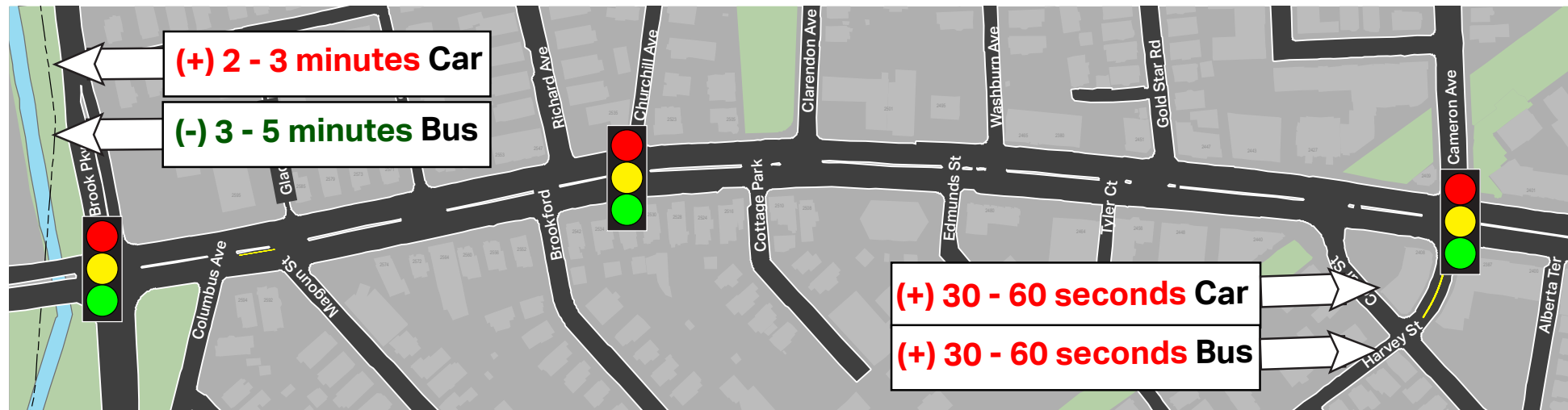


# Traffic impacts

## Morning Peak



## Evening Peak



## Southbound loading zone (9 a.m. to 10 p.m.)

### Why is this loading and not metered parking, like in Arlington?

- Metered parking would introduce concerns for emergency response vehicles
- With a loading zone, drivers will likely be nearby to move their vehicle in an emergency
- This configuration is being tested to confirm its feasibility

### Can you do this northbound as well?

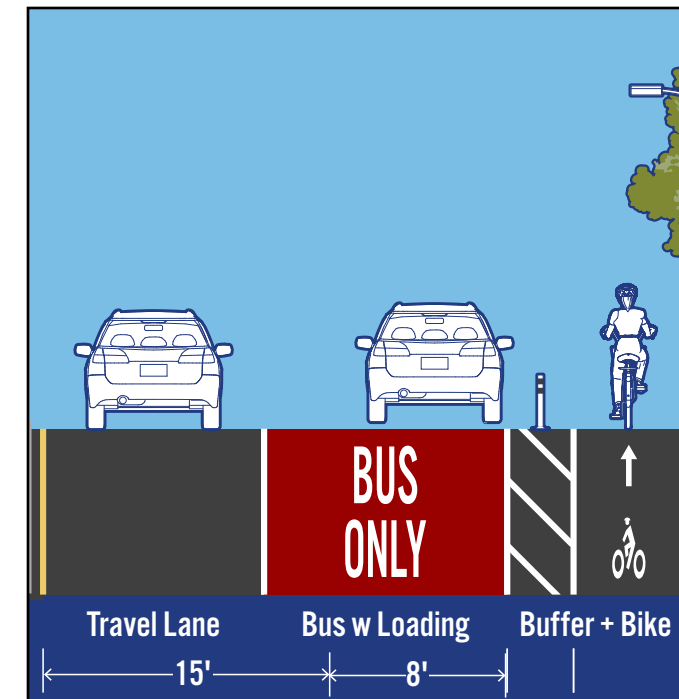
- There is bus delay all day
- More loading and curb access needs on the southbound side
- Additional fire safety concerns

### How will buses operate when there is loading in the bus lane?

- After 9 a.m., expect to see buses in the general purpose travel lane

### Is there overnight parking on Mass Ave?

- Overnight parking would interfere with both bus and fire operations



# Crash Data

## Between January 2018 and August 2021

- People biking were involved in 75% of possible injury crashes that occurred
- People biking were involved in all crashes disproportionately to their share of use of the street
- Zero crashes involving people walking

## Who was involved?

Involved	Total Crashes	Injury Crashes	Share of Injury Crashes	Share of All Crashes
Bicyclist	10	6	75%	19%
Driver	43	2	25%	81%

## Crashes involving bicyclists by type

Type	Share of crashes
Driver failing to yield on turn (i.e. right or left hook)	60%
Driver passing too close (i.e. sideswipe	10%
Dooring	10%
Angle collision	10%
Driver Rear-end and DUI	10%



# Changes we made in response to feedback

## Since September 14

- Bus lane added in the northbound direction
- Additional safety features at Harvey St and Cedar St
- Finalization of the section from Gladstone St to Alewife Brook Pkwy

## Since October 11

- Additional metered spaces on Cottage Park Ave and Cameron Ave
- Additional loading areas based on business feedback

# Changes we evaluated but were unable to implement

## Since September 14

Continuous bus lane at Churchill Ave, southbound

- Left turn needed for safety benefits

Metered parking on Mass Ave

- Concerns for emergency response vehicles

## Since October 11

Loading and/or parking in the northbound bus lane

- Analysis suggested benefit to passengers during all hours of the day

Meters at specific locations due to physical constraints, i.e.:

- Insufficient space to install a parking meter
- Insufficient length
- Conflict with travel lanes

# Frequently asked questions

## Can you remove the median?

- Modifications to the median are complex and would not allow us to complete the project by the April 2022 deadline
- No curbs are being moved for this project, including the sidewalk as well

## What are the impacts to people driving?

- In addition to the removal of parking, a travel lane will be converted to a bus only lane in each direction
- This will cause increased travel times for people driving, but will promote the use of transit and biking

**A full length FAQ section is posted on the project web-page**



# Frequently asked questions (FAQ) cont...

## Why only loading? Why not parking?

- Parking on Mass Ave under the future layout would interfere with emergency response vehicles
- We will test loading on a pilot basis and evaluate the configuration on an ongoing basis to ensure emergency response vehicles are not negatively impacted

## Was there a referendum on the Cycling Safety Ordinance?

- The City Council voted the Cycling Safety Ordinance into law
- As an ordinance, no public referendum is required

**A full length FAQ section is posted on the project web-page**

# Implementation Timeline and Weather Impacts

Weather permitting, the project will be installed early this November (2021).

The deadline for us to install this project is **April 30, 2022**.

Four other sections of Mass Ave are required by **April 30, 2022** as well.

These are:

- Beech St to Roseland St (in design)
- Waterhouse St to Cambridge St (complete)
- Plympton St to Bow St (complete)
- Small portions between Sidney St to Memorial Dr (in design)

Crosswalk markings that were removed during recent repaving will be re-installed, possibly at an earlier date

Implementation is necessary this Fall so that we can meet the April 30, 2022 deadline for all sections.



# Feedback

- We will take comment in the order hands are raised
- Take one minute for comment. You will need to un-mute yourself to speak.
- City staff will not respond individually to comments to allow as many speakers as possible
- Please refrain from raising your hand a second time until we have announced that all speakers have spoken, On the phone: \*9 to raise, \*6 to un-mute
- If you are not able to speak tonight, send written comment or call with the information below
- The meeting is scheduled to end at 8 p.m.

## Follow Up

- We will review feedback following the meeting to inform the updated plan
- Staff will have access to a detailed transcript of the comments

## Contact Information

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- [awolfe@cambridgema.gov](mailto:awolfe@cambridgema.gov)