

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Department of Transportation

Central Square Safety Improvement Project

Virtual Information Session

November 12, 2026

In collaboration with: The **Department of Public Works**

Project Team

Project Manager

Andreas Wolfe, *Street Design Project Manager | Department of Transportation*
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Department of Transportation (CDOT)

- **Brooke McKenna,** *Transportation Commissioner*
- **Jeffrey R. Parenti, P.E., P.T.O.E., P.T.P., ENV SP** *Asst. Commissioner for Street Management*
- **Stephanie Groll,** *Assistant Commissioner for Transportation Planning*
- **Bill Deignan**, *Sen. Transportation Program Manager*
- **Stephen Meuse, P.E.** *Principal Traffic Engineer*
- **Jackie McLaughlin,** *Communications Manager*
- **Chaimaa Medhat,** *Community Relations Project Administrator*
- **Andy Reker,** *Transit Program Manager*
- **Nick Schmidt,** *Transportation Program Manager*
- **Leah Grodstein,** *Street Design Project Manger*
- **Jess Horne,** *Senior Traffic Engineer*

Department of Public Works (DPW)

- **Jim Wilcox,** *City Engineer*
- **Jerry Friedman,** *Supervising Engineer*
- **Penny Antonoglou**, *Supervising Engineer*

Design Consultants

- **Kleinfelder Inc**
- **Toole Design Group**
  - Sneha Adhikari, P.E.

Meeting Purpose, Outcome & Process

Purpose

We are adding separated bike lanes to Central Square as part of the City’s Cycling Safety Ordinance. Today, we will introduce the project and what to expect.

Outcome

Participants of today's meeting will have a clearer understanding of what to expect with the Central Square Safety Improvement Project, including how to provide feedback.

Process

City staff will present a slide show 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, including more information regarding impacts and updates to the project design.

Agenda

01. Planning Background

- Cycling Safety Ordinance (CSO)
- Separated Bike Lane Network
- Quick-Build vs. Construction

02. Project Introduction

- Project Area, Sections and Timeline
- Utility Work and Construction Scope
- Key Design Features
- Related Projects

03. Project Design

- Section A, Inman St to Prospect St
- Section C, Pearl St to Lafayette Sq

04. Parking Impacts

- Working With Businesses
- Existing Parking Spaces

05. Next Steps

- Outreach/Engagement Timeline
- Questions + Feedback

01. Planning Background

Cycling Safety Ordinance Overview

2019

Cambridge City Council passes the Cycling Safety Ordinance

- The Ordinance requires the City to construct separated bike lanes if the street has been designated for “Greater Separation” in the Bicycle Network Vision.

2020

Cambridge City Council passes amendments to the Cycling Safety Ordinance

- Requirement for the City to install about 25 miles of separated bike lanes by April 30, 2026, including quick-build projects not on the Five-Year Plan.

2024

City Council sets new deadline of November 30, 2026

Preparatory utility work began in 2025. Surface installation begins in calendar year **2027** to align with the MBTA’s Central Square Station Renovation.



Image: A separated bike lane on Brattle St

Cycling Safety Ordinance Overview

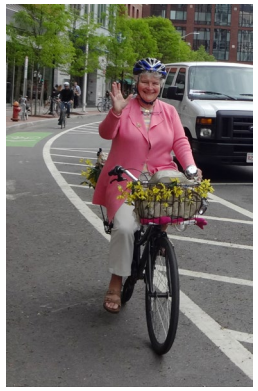
The Ordinance requires the City to install separated bike lanes on:

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

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

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









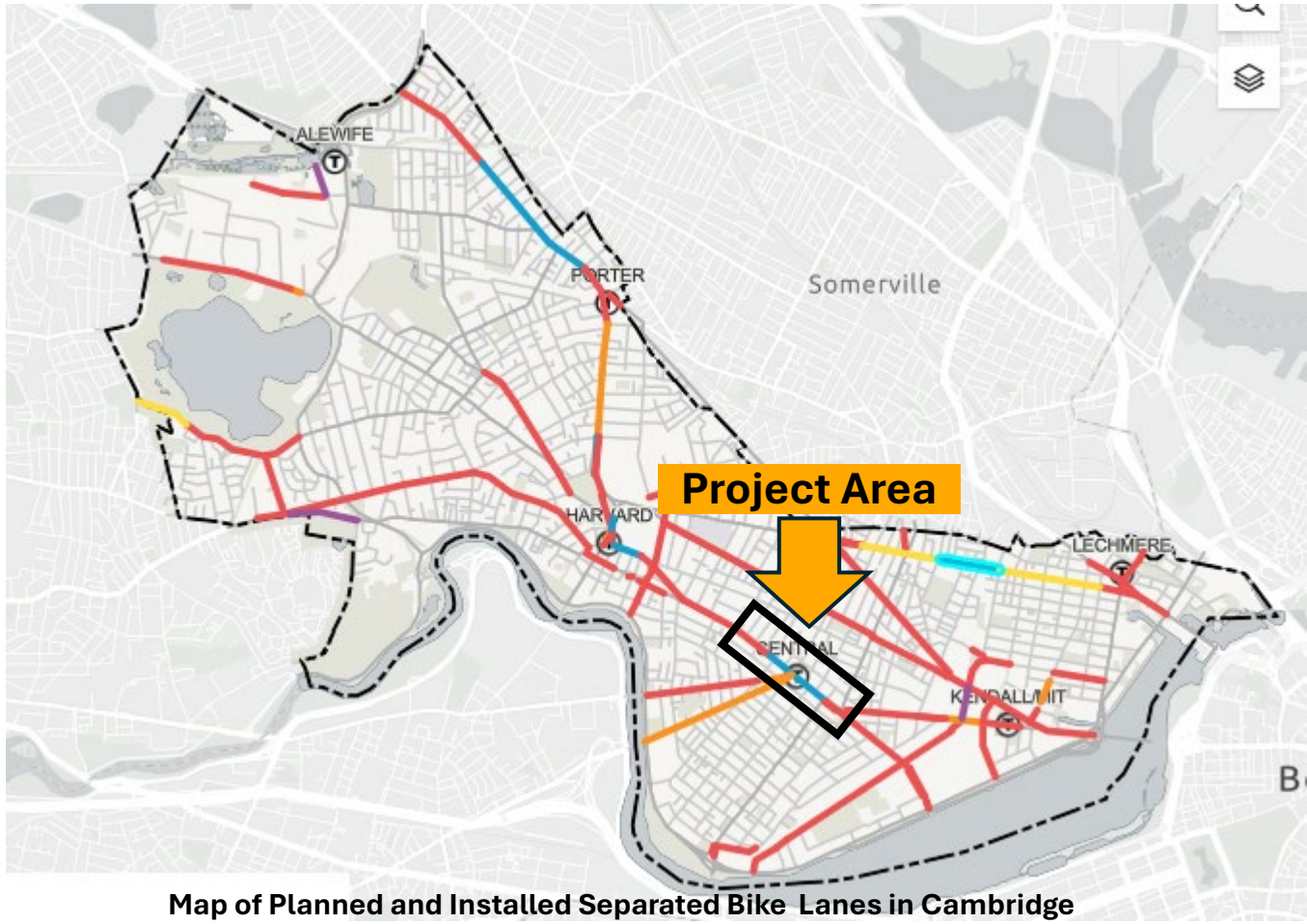




The Separated Bike Lane Network

- We are creating a network for biking that is safe, comfortable, connected, and people-centered.
- A network that connects important destinations throughout the City helps more people choose to bike if they want to.
- Follows the Bicycle Plan from 2015 and updated in 2020

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



Map of Planned and Installed Separated Bike Lanes in Cambridge

Map Key: Project Not Yet Started | Project Started- Community Engagement Ongoing | Plans Complete or Under Construction | Project Complete

Quick-Build vs. Construction

This project includes both quick-build and construction.

- Quick-build projects can be installed significantly faster than typical construction projects.
  - **Within months.**
- Capital Construction projects must be included in the City's Five-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan for funding and coordination with utilities.
  - **Can take 2-5 years depending on the amount of work.**
- **Quick-build** projects allow us to address road safety concerns *quickly*
- **Capital Construction** projects allow us to make more major changes.



Broadway Quick-Build Bike Lane



Western Avenue separated bike lane built by Capital Construction

02. Project Introduction

02. Project Introduction

Related Projects and Initiatives

Central Square Station Accessibility Improvements

Project Features

- Adding two new elevators: one on the inbound platform and one on the outbound platform
- Replacing the existing elevator on the outbound platform
- Building an accessible fire- and smoke-proof area of refuge on each platform for riders to wait safely for emergency rescue and evacuation
- Upgrading the public restroom
- Updating the existing inbound escalator
- Replacing interior lighting
- Improving power and communication systems, wayfinding signage, and fare collection
- Cleaning and painting throughout the station

Rider Benefits

- Easier access to station and Red Line platforms
- More reliable elevator and escalator service
- Multiple accessible station entrances
- Improved rider experience and safety due to station modernization

Source: MBTA website

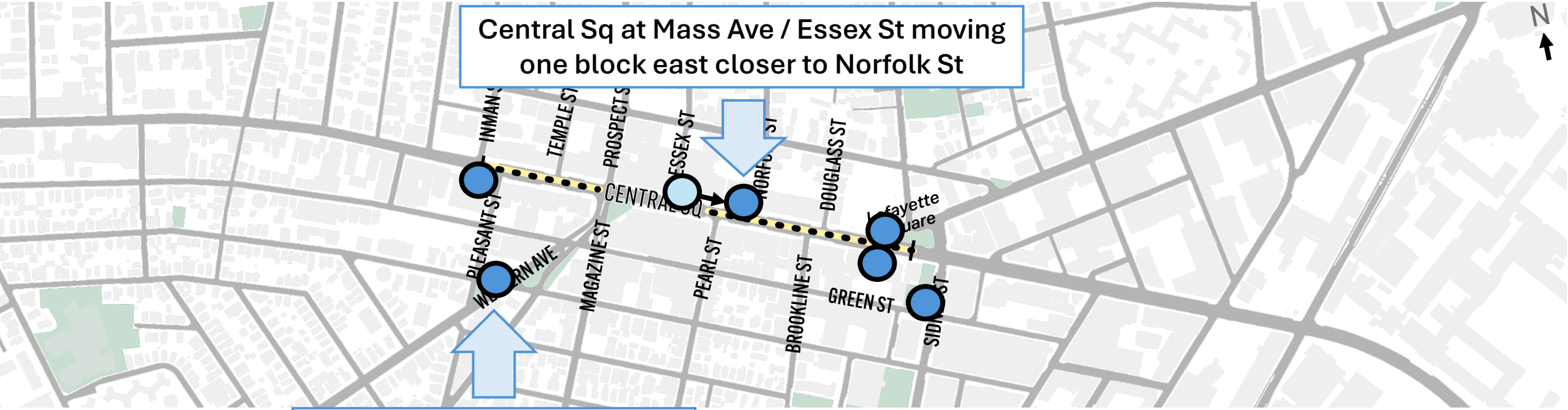


Image: Rendering of new MBTA station headhouse

www.mbta.com/projects/central-square-station-accessibility-improvements

Bluebikes

- **Six Bluebikes stations near the Project Area**, including two of the highest ridership stations in the Boston region
- **Central Sq at Mass Ave / Essex St will temporarily move** during MBTA construction

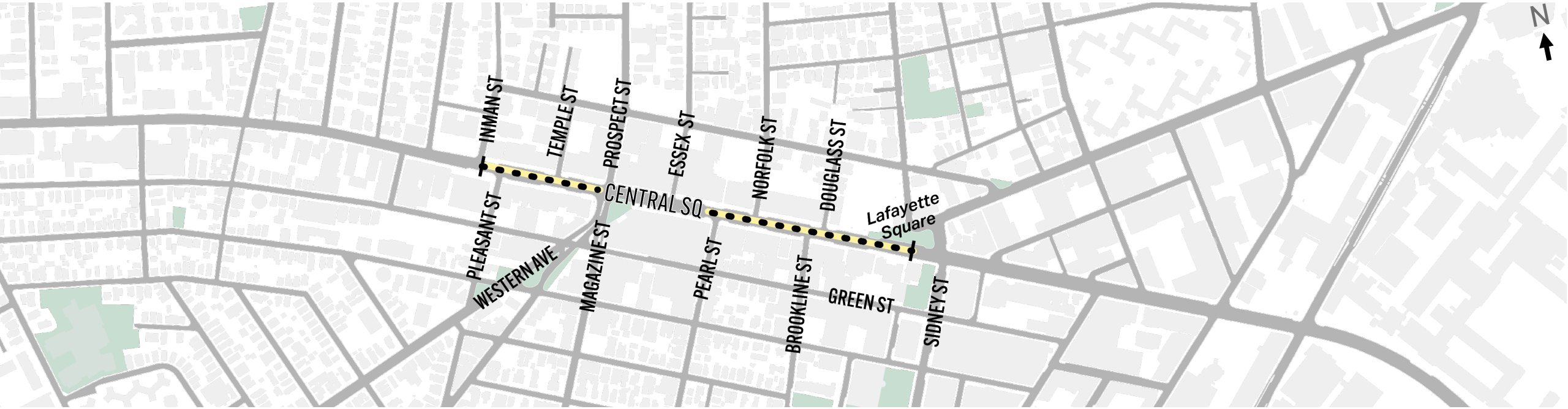


02. Project Introduction

Timeline and Sections

Project Area

Mass Ave: From Inman St to Lafayette Square



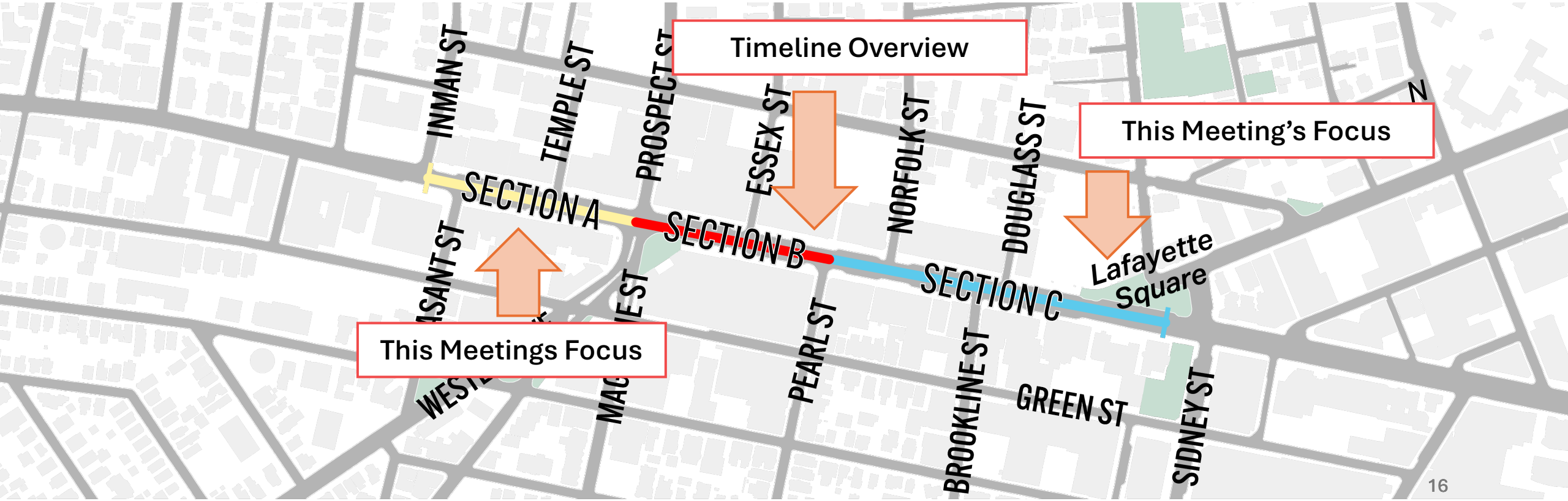
Project Sections

Section A: Inman St to Prospect St. Installation 2027.

Section B: Prospect St to Pearl St. Timeline Overview.

Section C: Pearl St to Lafayette Sq. Installation 2027.

This Meeting's Focus



Project Timeline

This Meeting's Focus

SECTIONS A+C (Inman St to Prospect St, Pearl St to Lafayette Sq)

Preparatory utility work began in 2025.

1 **Today (Now)**
- Introduce Project
- Timelines and Sections

2 **December 2, Project Open House**
- Draft Project Design, Roll Plan
- Initial Design Feedback

3 **Late Winter/Spring 2027**
- Revise Design
- Additional Feedback

4 **Spring and Summer 2027**
- Final Feedback
- Installation

Timeline Overview

SECTION B (Prospect St to Pearl St)

1 **Fall and Winter 2026 (Now)**
- City and MBTA Coordination
- Reconstruction of River St/Carl Barron Plaza
- Early outreach on Central Square

2 **2027-2028**
- MBTA Station Renovation Project

3 **Beginning 2029 or Later**
- City-led capital construction project
- Bus stop and separated bike lane improvements

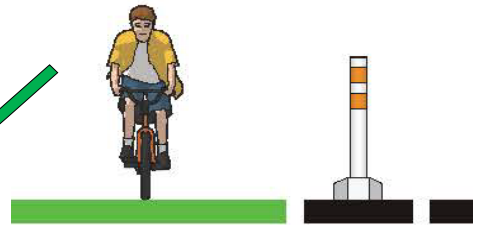
Construction Scope Comparison

Sections A+C vs. Section B

Sections A+C	Section B
Timeline 2027 installation and completion.	**Timeline** MBTA Station project: 2027-2028. City reconstruction project: 2029 or later.
Amount of Construction Limited	**Amount of Construction** Moderate
Utilities Limited.	
Design and Scope Quick-build	**Design and Scope** Capital Construction Project

Construction Scope Comparison

Sections A+C



Quick-Build Separated Bike Lanes



Street Milling and Paving



Changes to Outdoor Dining

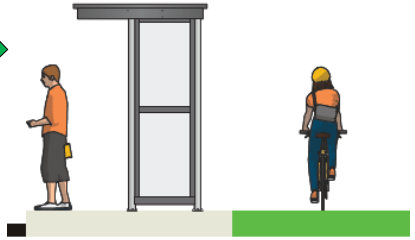


Painted Safety Improvements

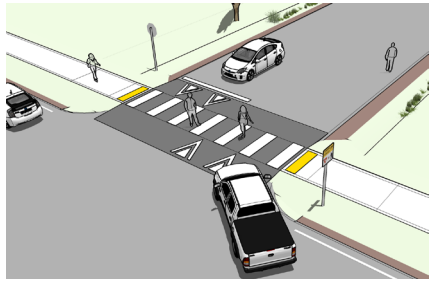
Section B



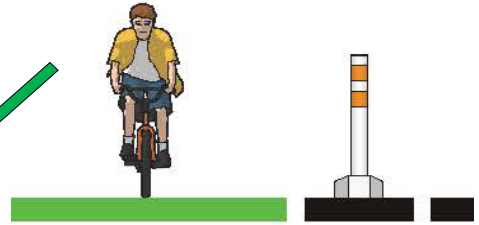
Moderate Construction



Opportunities for Transit Improvements



Opportunities for Crosswalk Improvements



Opportunities for Bike Lane Improvements

Schedule Reminder:

Section A, Inman St to Prospect St | **Section C**, Pearl St to Sidney St

Introduction

Familiarize people with project, scope, timeline

Now

Preliminary Feedback

Review the draft designs and provide feedback.

December 2026

Final Feedback

Tweaks and adjustments.

Late Winter, Early Spring 2027

Implementation

Street Paving. Markings and Flex-Posts

Late Spring or Summer 2027

03. Project Design

03. Project Design

Key Design Features

Separated Bike Lanes

What are separated bike lanes?

- People biking and driving are each provided dedicated space
- Physical separation between each (i.e., curb, flex post)

Benefits

- Increases comfort and access for people of all ages
- Reduces crash and injury risk
- Eliminates threat of dooring
- Reduces conflicts between people driving and biking
- Reduces speeds by visually and physically narrowing the roadway



Image: 30th Street, San Diego
Courtesy: Stephan Vance



Image: Mass Ave
Courtesy: City of Cambridge

Pedestrian Safety Improvements

- **Crossing Islands** to allow people to wait in the middle of the street, away from moving traffic
- **Shorter crossing distances**: Each potential conflict can be handled separately (i.e., cross bike lane, then vehicle lanes)
- **Better sight lines for everyone** at crossing locations
- **Lowers speeds, increasing yielding** by drivers



Image: Mass Ave at Clinton St

Outdoor Dining Changes

Pearl St to Lafayette Sq

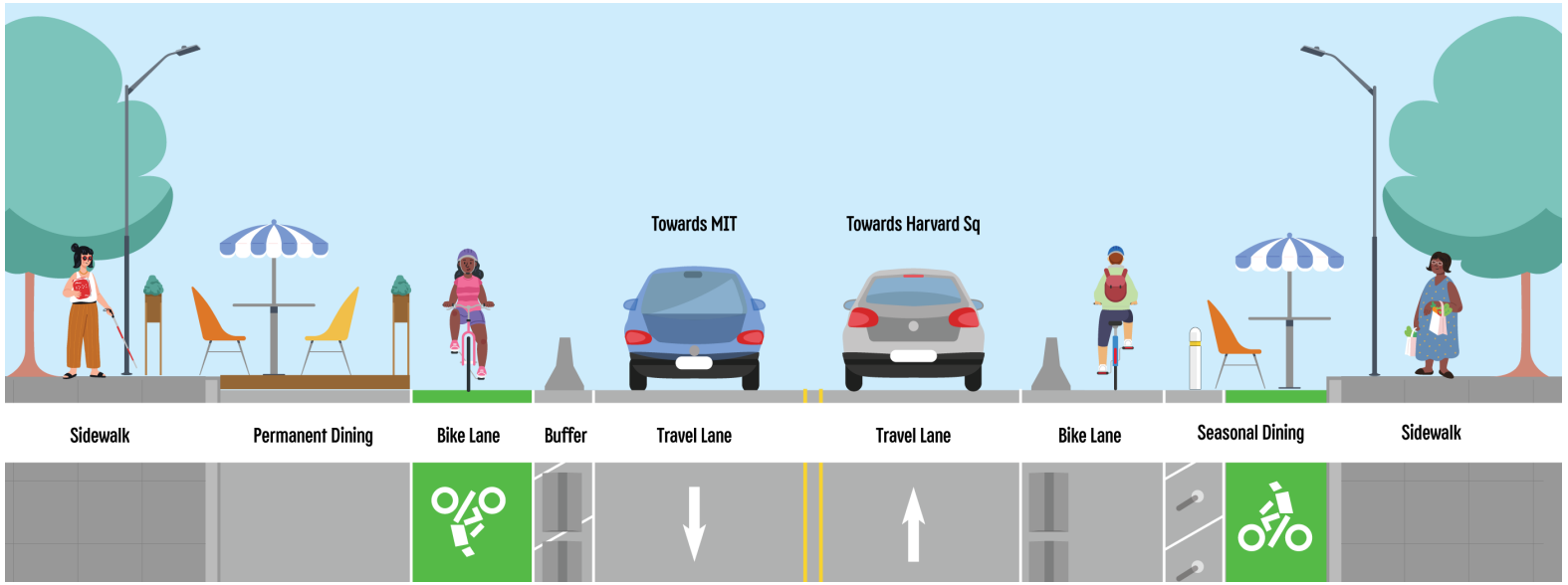




Image: Outdoor dining set up in Central Square

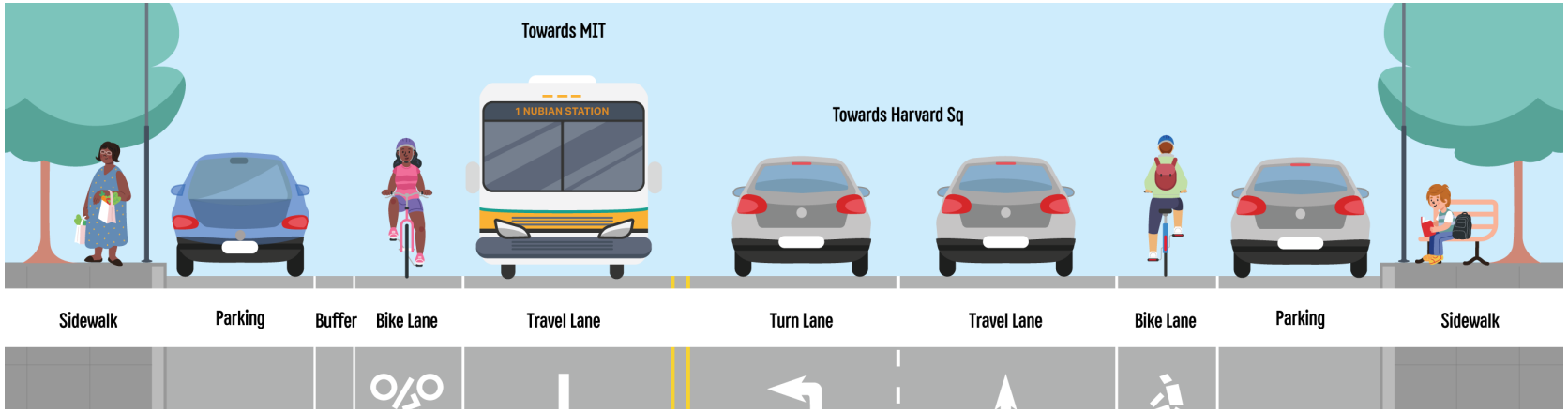
- **Outdoor Dining** will remain
- Some **design changes** expected, i.e. parking loss, new pavement markings
- **Maintenance Work,** i.e., milling and paving, will delay dining start in 2027

03. Project Design

Section A – Inman St to Prospect St

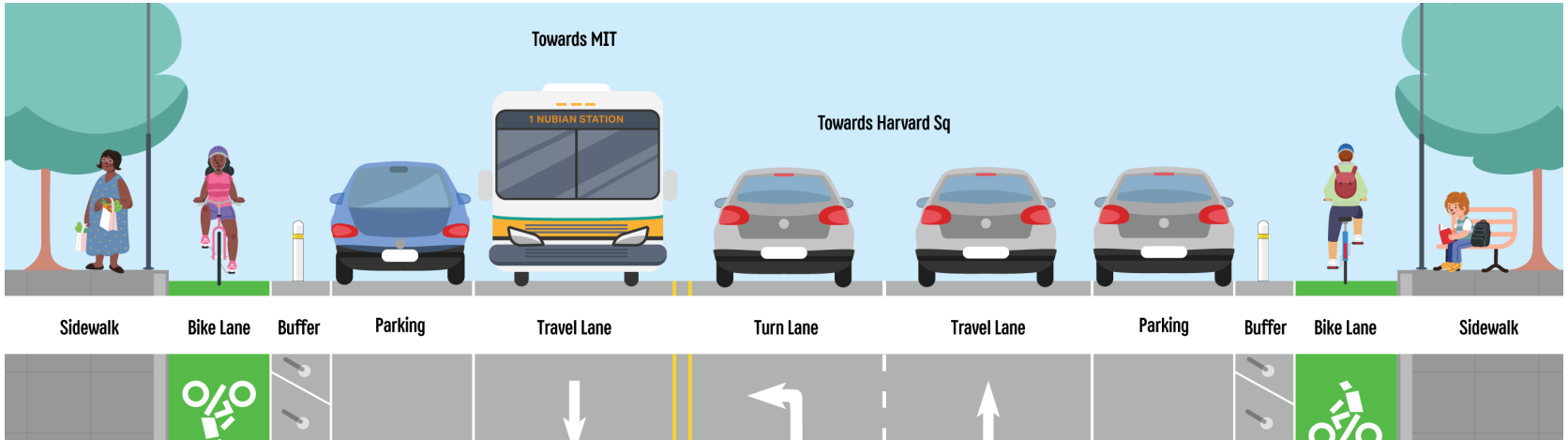
Planned Street Layout, Inman St to Prospect St

Current Street Layout



- Parking and loading to remain on both sides
- Keep about 80% of spaces
- Bike lane and parking lane are swapped
- Changes to parking regulations

Proposed Layout



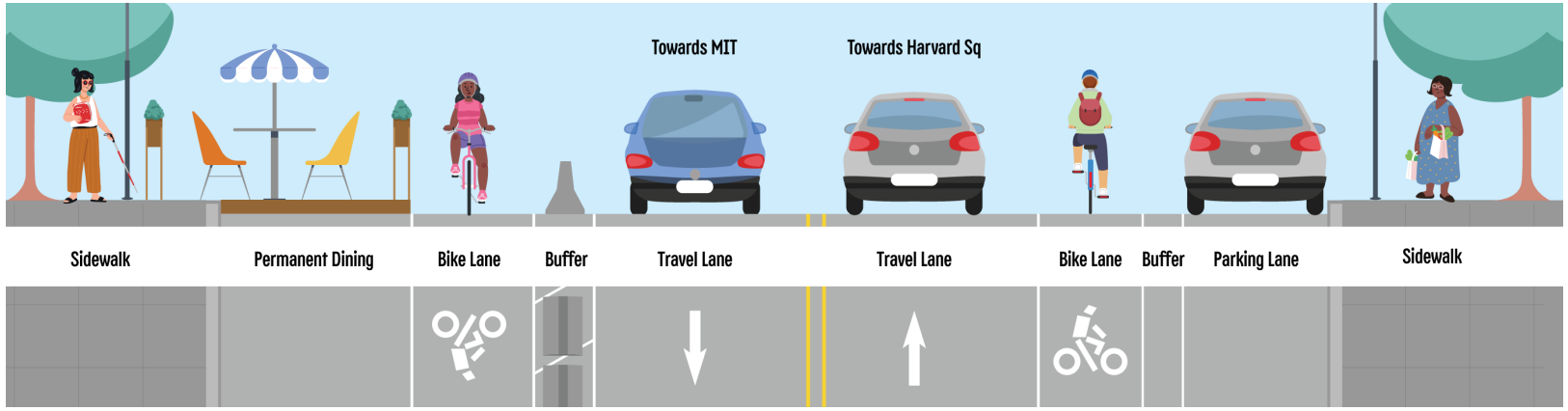
Join us December 2nd, or follow up online, to view the draft roll plan

03. Project Design

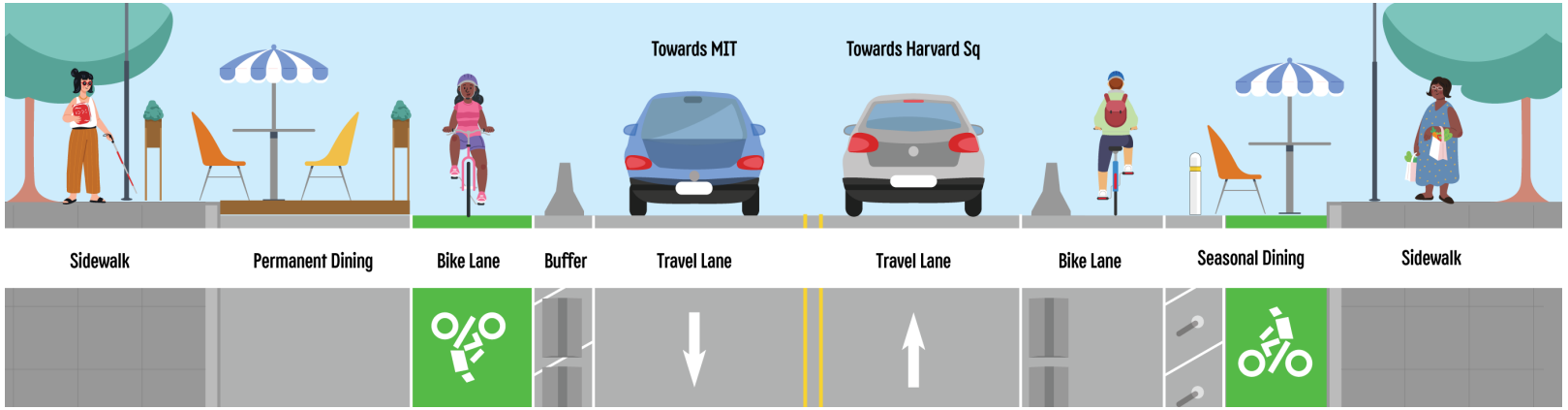
Section C – Pearl St to Lafayette Sq

Typical Street Layout: Pearl St to Brookline St

Current Street Layout



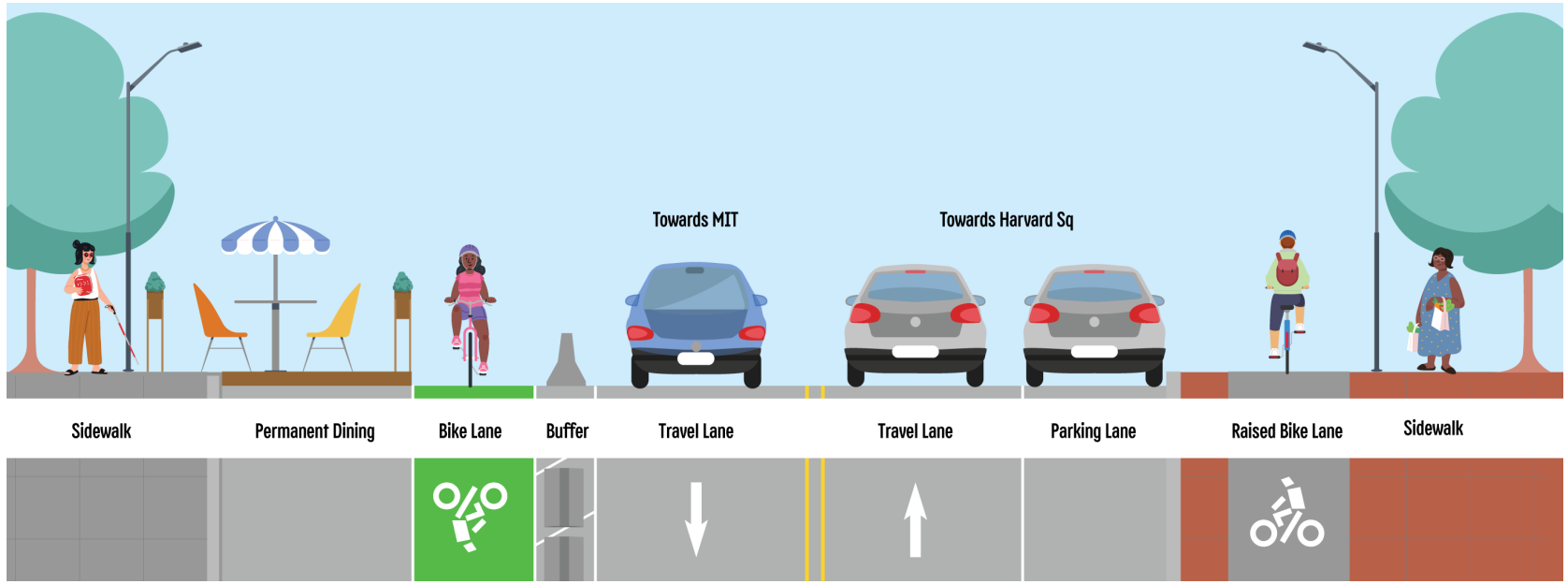
Proposed Layout



- Outdoor dining spaces remain
- Most parking removed
- **Temporary removal of patios required in spring 2027**

Join us December 2nd, or follow up online, to view the draft roll plan

Typical Street Layout: Brookline St to Lafayette Sq



- Constructed separated bike lane northbound remains.
- Crossing and bike lane improvements southbound.

Temporary removal of patios required in Spring 2027

Join us on December 2nd, or follow up online, to view the draft roll plan

04. Parking Impacts

Parking Feedback - Working with Businesses

What guides parking policy?

- Central Square is a commercial district. Most parking is either loading, metered or disability.
- **The number of loading zone spaces will increase** to prioritize deliveries.
- **Disability spaces** may be relocated, but number of spaces will stay the same or increase.
- **Fewer metered spaces on Mass Ave.** Visits longer than 30 minutes will be encouraged to use City-owned lots nearby, unless using disability parking.
- **Side-street parking changes,** usually adjacent to businesses at side entrances.

Getting Feedback:

Meet Business

Understand needs and customer base.

Listen and take notes.

Share Design

Talk through impacts.

Ask what changes will impact them most.

Offer Support

Make changes to parking regulations that are consistent with the business type and needs.

Existing Number of Parking Spaces

Existing Number of Spaces by Type	
Metered Parking	**23**
Loading Zones*	**10**
Accessible/Disability Parking	**5**

**Length varies. Assumes 20ft of loading per 1 space.*

- We'll retain 50% to 75% of existing spaces.
- Parking regulations will change, with business feedback guiding decisions.

05. Next Steps

Schedule Reminder:

Section A, Inman St to Prospect St | **Section C**, Pearl St to Sidney St

Introduction

Familiarize people with project, scope, timeline

Now

Preliminary Feedback

Review the draft designs and provide feedback.

December 2026

Final Feedback

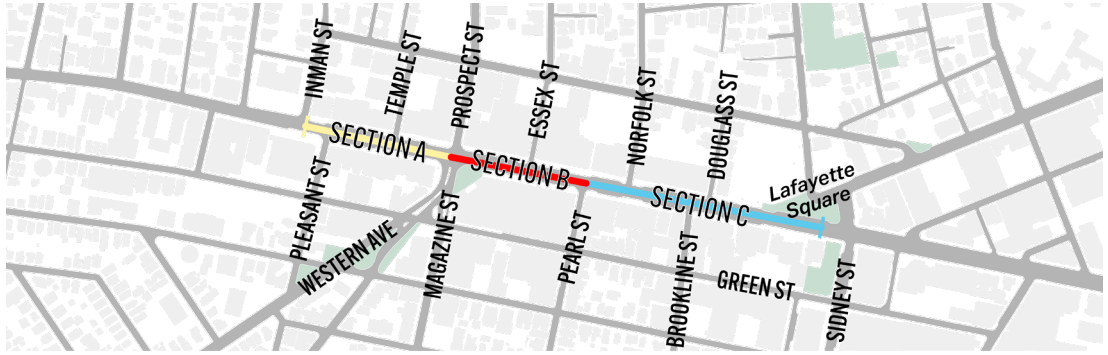
Tweaks and adjustments.

Late Winter/Early Spring 2027

Implementation

Street Paving, Markings and Flex-Posts

Late Spring or Summer 2027



Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

December 2 Open House

- Join us Wednesday, December 2 for an Open House at the Senior Center!
- We will share draft designs for this project and be joined by MBTA Representatives to discuss their accessibility project.

Wednesday, December 2, 2026
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Cambridge Senior Center
806 Mass. Ave





Above: Postcard and Flyer for Project

Upcoming Survey

- Design survey coming soon – be sure to sign up for email updates to be the first to know!
- Share your experiences on Mass Ave to help guide us as we update design

How To Provide Feedback

Design Survey

- Coming soon! A block-by-block view of the design with an opportunity to provide feedback during design stage.

Comment Map

- Have a location-specific comment? Give us your thoughts on what improvements are needed.

General Comment Form

- If you have general comments or feedback on the project, please fill out our Central Square Safety Improvement Project Comment Form and share how you currently travel on Mass Ave.

Contact Project Manager

Andreas Wolfe, *Street Design Project Manager*
Department of Transportation
617-349-9162
awolfe@cambridgema.gov

All available on project site:

camb.ma/centralsquareSIP

Stay Updated!

Sign-up for the project email list to learn about upcoming engagement opportunities, survey launches, and eventually installation updates. This is the best way to stay in the loop about this project!

Visit the Project Website to learn more about where we are in the process, sign up for emails, and find project plans and designs when they're available.

Project Site: camb.ma/centralsquareSIP

Questions & Feedback

How to Participate

- We will take comments in the order hands are raised
- If calling in, dial *9 to raise your hand / *6 to unmute
- Additional questions can be asked using the Q+A function
- To allow everyone to speak, please try to limit your time to 1-2 minutes
- Please be respectful to attendees and City staff
- Avoid personal attacks and foul language

Answering Questions

- Approximately every 15 minutes, we will provide answers to questions
- The meeting is scheduled to end at 8:00 p.m.
    - Contact awolfe@cambridgema.gov for any lingering questions or feedback.