Meeting Overview

- Introductions and opening remarks
- Presentation (approx. 30 min)
- Questions and Answers (approx. 30 min)
- Proposed end at 7:15 with time for additional conversation

Purpose of meeting:

to provide an update to Strawberry Hill residents and hear comments and concerns about neighborhood needs before a larger public meeting to discuss the Mt Auburn Bus Priority pilot in more detail (scheduled for May 1).
Presentation Contents

- Overview of planning projects
- Mt Auburn Street Bus Priority pilot
  - Purpose and context
  - Conceptual layout
  - Public process and evaluation timeline
  - Additional neighborhood concerns
- Next steps
OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROJECTS
PROJECTS

DCR Mt. Auburn St. Corridor Study 2016 - 2017

DCR Short Term Design Implementation 2018

Boston BRT Mt. Auburn St. Bus Priority Pilot 2018

Belmont St. Design and Construction 2018 - 2021

DCR Mt. Auburn Corridor Study Area

DCR Short Term Design

City Mt. Auburn St. Bus Priority Pilot

City Belmont St. Reconstruction
DCR Mt. Auburn Corridor Study

Goals:
- Slow traffic speeds, provide clarity, reduce crashes and severity of crashes
- Measure people, reduce transit delays
- Address cut-through traffic
- Offer short-term and long-term solutions
- Acknowledge enforcement and special uses
  (BB&N, Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Mt. Auburn, Shady Hill, and Tufts Health Plan)

Process:
- 7 stakeholder meetings, 3 public meetings (final public meeting December 13th, 2017)
- City-organized Strawberry Hill neighborhood meeting May 8, 2017
Mt. Auburn St. Bus Priority Pilot

- Implement some recommendations from the DCR Study
- Test and refine a design that makes bus travel more reliable, predictable, faster
- Enhance safety for people walking and cycling on the corridor
- Keep driving travel time similar overall and improve safety
- Inform the upcoming Belmont St. design
Belmont Street Design/Construction

- New sidewalks and paving, improve accessibility, make improvements for all users
- Belmont St and Holworthy St (up to #37-39)

Schedule
- Design: 2018 – early 2019
- Bid: July 2019
- Construction: summer 2019 – 2021

Contact
- Melissa A. Miguel, P.E., Supervising Engineer
  617-349-9351, mmiguel@cambridgema.gov
- Daniel Vallee, P.E., Project Manager
  617-349-4813, dvallee@cambridgema.gov
MOUNT AUBURN STREET
BUS PRIORITY PILOT

Purpose and Context
Policies

**2016 Cambridge Complete Streets policy:**
Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for *all* users – regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.

**2016 Vision Zero policy:**
Calls for the elimination of fatalities and serious injuries resulting from traffic crashes, and emphasizes that they can and should be prevented.
Density map of crashes requiring EMS transport to a hospital as reported by responding officer

2015 and 2016

See City of Cambridge Crash Analysis Summary,
http://www.cambridgema.gov/cpd/Publications/2017/05/cityofcambridgecrashanalysissummary
Plans

City of Cambridge
2015 Transit Strategic Plan

Figure 5.16: Bicycle Network Vision with Key Destinations

- bicycle accommodations
- places
  - retail
  - joos
  - universities
  - open space
  - schools
  - subway station
  - mbra station

http://cambridgema.gov/transit
Context

**MBTA Route 73 (Harvard to Waverly Square)**
**MBTA Route 71 (Harvard to Watertown Square)**

Mount Auburn Street: typically two travel lanes in each direction and carries approximately 19,000 vehicles per day

**Route 71 and 73: 12,000 weekday daily passenger trips combined**

**Shuttles: Mt. Auburn Hospital, athenahealth, Bentley, etc.**
Vehicle Volumes vs. People Volumes on Mt. Auburn St. Between Brattle Street and Coolidge Avenue

Brattle St. to Coolidge Ave. (AM Peak)

**Vehicles**
- Other: 97%
- MBTA: 3%

**People**
- Driving: 765, 44%
- Riding: 985, 56%

(Source: DCR Public Presentation, January 10, 2016, Slide 70)

Analysis of Transit Reliability and Delay (2014)
(Data for Route 73, morning peak rush hour)
BostonBRT Bus Priority Pilot Project

- Cambridge and Watertown Barr Foundation grant
- Bus priority Mt. Auburn Street west of Fresh Pond Parkway:
  - Bus-only lanes and signal priority eastbound (toward Harvard)
  - Bike lanes westbound (toward Watertown)
- “Pilot” with minimal or no construction, intended to test and evaluate
  - Materials: Paint, signal changes, signs, education and enforcement
- MUST be implemented in conjunction with DCR’s short-term design:
  - Minor construction and signal improvements at Coolidge Ave and Fresh Pond Pkwy
  - Improve traffic flow and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety
DCR Short-term Design

Design in progress. Existing conditions shown.

https://www.mass.gov/service-details/mount-auburn-street-corridor-study
MOUNT AUBURN STREET
BUS PRIORITY PILOT

Conceptual Layout
Existing Conditions
Conceptual Layout – Bus Lanes

Source: DCR Mt Auburn Corridor Project, presented at May 8, 2017 Strawberry Hill public meeting
Conceptual Layout – Narrower lanes

- Lanes will likely be narrowed slightly - widths will still accommodate buses / truck traffic
- Wide lanes encourage faster speeds
Estimated Impacts, Morning Rush Hour

Bus (AM Peak) – Passenger Travel Time Impacts

- **Average**: 2.4 minutes faster (Existing 502 sec, Proposed 360 sec)
- **90th Percentile**: 3.7 minutes faster (Existing 257 sec, Proposed 301 sec)

Auto (AM Peak) – Travel Time Impacts

- **Average**: 49 seconds faster (Existing 486 sec, Proposed 437 sec)
- **90th Percentile**: 12 seconds slower (Existing 289 sec, Proposed 323 sec)

Source: DCR Mt Auburn Corridor Project, presented at May 8, 2017 Strawberry Hill public meeting.
MOUNT AUBURN STREET
BUS PRIORITY PILOT

Public Process and Evaluation
Current Public Outreach / Evaluation Timeline

- **Jan-March:** City Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Advisory Committees
- **February 15:** Watertown Mt. Auburn corridor transit meeting
- **March 27:** Strawberry Hill Neighborhood Meeting (TONIGHT)
- **March/April:** Outreach to stakeholders (businesses, institutions)
- **April/May:** Gather additional data
- **May 1:** Joint Watertown/Cambridge public meeting
- **May/June:** Street teams, implementation, education and enforcement
- **June:** Implementation
- **July/August:** Evaluate and refine into the Fall
Possible / Example Evaluation Measures

- Speeds (main streets and side streets)
- Travel time (cars and buses)
- Turns onto / out of side streets
- Wait times / queues at side streets
- Number of people using each mode
- Surveys / perception (all users)
- Others?

2 expected evaluation phases:
1. Summer immediately after implementation (when traffic is lighter)
2. Fall (when traffic will be heavier)
MOUNT AUBURN STREET
BUS PRIORITY PILOT

Neighborhood Concerns
Additional Neighborhood Questions / Comments / Concerns

Additional questions /comments received from neighbors:

• “We can’t all take the bus or ride a bike to work”
  • Travel time by car should not be significantly affected
  • The region is growing economically and regional traffic is increasing
  • Encouraging use of transit is smart and efficient and can help reduce congestion, relieve parking pressure, for those who still want/need to drive
  • A goal to improve safety for EVERYONE, including drivers

• Maintaining access in and out of Cushing and Holworthy, without encouraging cut-through traffic
  • Proposed changes should make this less confusing
Additional Neighborhood Questions / Comments / Concerns

Diagram of expected impact to exiting vehicles
Additional Neighborhood Questions / Comments / Concerns

- Idea from the public: stripe a left and right turn lane at the end of Cushing
Additional Neighborhood Questions / Comments / Concerns

- Access to Star Market parking – no decisions made in advance, ongoing discussion
- No changes to the “plaza”/parking are being proposed
Additional Neighborhood Questions / Comments / Concerns

Additional ideas from the public:

- Remove parking on Belmont Street for a bus lane and/or neighborhood left turn “circulator lane” (Cushing to Belmont to Holworthy)
  - The City is NOT proposing removing parking on Belmont as part of the pilot project
  - More conversation with businesses would be needed regarding parking, loading
  - Consider possibility of attracting additional cut-through traffic

- Morning only bus only lanes, allow HOV vehicles, “smart lane” lane activated by bus
  - Other times of day, there is less congestion and drivers likely wouldn’t gain from the extra lane
  - Consider enforcement challenges

More concerns, ideas, questions?
NEXT STEPS
Next Steps

- Continue developing communications materials, outreach, and coordination
- Refine design through public process
- May 1 public meeting
- Implement in June with DCR
- July/August evaluate and refine
- Continue to evaluate throughout fall
- Fall/Winter 2018 begin Belmont Street design process
Thank you!

- Tegin Teich, tteich@cambridgema.gov, 617-349-4615
- Website: cambridgema.gov/MtAuburnBusPriority