

# INMAN SQUARE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT CONSTRUCTION UPDATE DECEMBER 2018

Dear Inman Square Neighbor,

The City is excited to provide this **Construction Update** for the Inman Square improvements project. This is the first in what will be a series of construction-phase communications over the 24-month duration of the project. We expect to transmit occasional high-level project **Updates**, such as this one, as well as more frequent **Notices**, which will detail specific short-term construction operations impacting various portions of Inman Square as construction progresses.

We know that living, working, operating a business, and traveling through an active construction project will be challenging. We truly appreciate all of the efforts that the Inman Square community and local businesses have put forth so far during the planning and design phases of the Project, including attending numerous Community Meetings and providing us with very useful feedback, which has led to continual improvements in the design. We join you in looking forward to a very successful project, which will improve safety for people walking, biking and driving through the Square, and enhance the public open space in Inman Square.



The City is committed to working with the Inman Square community and local businesses throughout the project. We encourage you to reach out to us with any questions, concerns, or suggestions about construction; visit the Project website; and attend planned community events. We have begun a pilot construction mitigation program to support small businesses (see page 3), and we also urge you to continue to show your support for the local businesses that make Inman Square unique.

Sincerely,

Louis A. DePasquale  
City Manager



A "bird's-eye view" of Vellucci Plaza looking north to Hampshire Street after construction is complete.

## What is the Inman Square project?

In 2015, the City began a process of studying the Inman Square intersection to develop short- and long-term improvements for what is one of the City's highest crash-rate locations. These crashes have involved all modes of travel through Inman Square (vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles), and improving the safety of Inman Square has been an extremely high priority and is aligned with Cambridge's **Vision Zero** commitment to eliminate transportation-related injuries and fatalities.



Findings from the initial study were presented to the community in mid-2016, and short-term improvements including restrictions on left-turns and bicycle intersection markings were implemented in summer and fall 2016. These short-term improvements did not involve significant construction, and have always been considered an interim measure until a more permanent solution could be implemented.

The process of designing permanent improvements to Inman Square began in late 2016, and continued throughout 2017 and 2018. Several different design options were developed and analyzed, and six widely attended public meetings have been held. The Plan addresses the safety and operational issues of Inman Square, and meets other project goals including improving transit operations and experience, maximizing the quality and experience of pedestrian plaza space, and providing necessary parking and loading functions.

### Key components of the plan include:

- Improved and more conventional intersection geometry
- Separated bicycle lanes and protected bicycle crossings
- Additional pedestrian crosswalks and protected pedestrian signal phases
- Improved signage and markings
- Peak hour dedicated bus lane and improved bus stop locations and bus routing
- Restoration of high-demand left-turn movements for vehicles
- Extensive tree plantings in immediate project area, Springfield Street parking lot, and nearby neighborhood streets to mitigate tree removal
- Pervious and light-colored paving materials to improve stormwater quality and reduce the urban heat island effect

The Plan, in its basic form, is shown here. For a much more detailed look at the design, including its extensive landscape, urban design and public arts components, we encourage you to visit [www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/inmansquare](http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/inmansquare) and click on the "Documents" tab to view the October 24, 2018, community meeting presentation.



## Community Outreach and Construction Mitigation

The City is committed to maintaining clear communications and minimizing impacts to residential and commercial abutters, throughout the construction phase. Planned outreach and mitigation activities include:



**Business Mitigation (began in Fall 2018 and ongoing):** DPW and the Community Development Department's Economic Development Division are collaborating with the East Cambridge Business Association (ECBA), Inman Square Neighborhood Association (ISNA), Cambridge Chamber of Commerce, and Cambridge Local First on a business impact mitigation plan. The plan includes:

- Ongoing electronic and printed communications and periodic surveys of individual businesses to learn about critical operations issues
- A "Preparing Your Business for Construction" workshop to be held in January 2019
- A "Shop Local" customer loyalty program
- Installation of wayfinding and promotional signage and distribution of promotional materials
- Monthly "coffee-talk" drop-in sessions with City and Contractor staff and attendance at regular ECBA meetings
- Temporary changes to area parking regulations
- Property tax abatements may be warranted if there are measurable decreases in rent attributable to construction activities



**Community Meetings and Open Houses (spring 2019 and ongoing):** DPW will hold a Community Open House once the City's Contractor for the main project has been engaged, but before significant roadway construction work begins. This will be an opportunity for members of the public to meet key staff from DPW and the Contractor who will be on-site daily, and gain an understanding of what work will be accomplished during 2019. In addition, members of the public will be able to attend monthly "coffee-talk" drop in sessions to be held throughout the construction season.

**Updates and Notices (Fall 2019 and ongoing):** DPW will disseminate electronic and written communications throughout the duration of the project. This will include periodic general "Updates" (such as this); and more specific "Notices," which alert the community to imminent operations in the field and related impacts to roadways, crosswalks, sidewalks, and parking. Updates and Notices will be posted on the project website, [www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/inmansquare](http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/inmansquare), and will be emailed to those on the Project contact list. Visit the website to be added to the contact list. In addition, hard-copies of Updates and Notices will be distributed to residents and businesses as appropriate.

## Upcoming Exploration and Construction Activities

The project will begin construction in early 2019, with a total construction duration of approximately 24 months. The initial work activities include:

### Exploratory Trench in Vellucci Plaza

*Early January 2019*

A City contractor will excavate an exploratory trench in the Plaza to verify underground soil conditions. This work will occur in the center of the plaza, and will take approximately 4-5 working days. Work will occur 7 AM - 4 PM, weekdays. Four parking spaces (two each on the Cambridge Street and Hampshire Street edges) will be unavailable during these hours. Sidewalks will remain open along the street edges of the Plaza, as well as along the rear of the Plaza.



### Sewer and Drain Video Inspection and Pipe Lining/Repairs

*January-February 2019*

A City Contractor will insert mobile cameras into sewer and drain pipes from various manholes in Inman Square. Following this activity, pipe interiors will be repaired and/or relined as required, primarily using “trenchless” technology, which is minimally disruptive to street operations. Work will be performed 7 AM - 4 PM weekdays. Police details will be on-site to help direct traffic. “No Parking” signs, if needed, will be posted at least 24 hours in advance.



### Tree Removals in Vellucci Plaza

*January 2019*

A City Contractor will begin removal of 4 honey locust trees and the relocation of the birch trees in the granite planters in Vellucci Plaza to facilitate initial utility relocations including Eversource Gas construction.



### Eversource Gas Construction

*Late winter 2019*

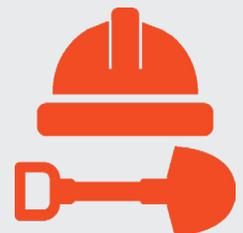
Eversource Gas and their Contractors will relocate gas mains from the current alignment of Hampshire Street to the new roadway alignment. A new gas main will also be installed in the sidewalk along 225-243 Hampshire Street to allow continued service to those properties. This work will be performed in phases around the Square, and may take several months to complete, depending on winter weather. More detailed Notices regarding this work will be distributed to abutters and those on the project email list, and posted on the DPW website, prior to start of work.



### Inman Square Reconstruction

*Beginning May 2019*

The main DPW project will be advertised and bid over the winter, and begin construction in May. The work will be performed in phases around the Square, and the design team is currently developing a phasing plan. A more detailed sequence and schedule will be available once a Contractor is on-board. Detailed Notices regarding upcoming work will be distributed to abutters and those on the project email list, and posted on the DPW website, prior to the start of each major phase of work.



## QUESTIONS?

**Kate Riley**  
Community Relations  
kriley@cambridgema.gov  
617.349.4870

**Jerry Friedman, P.E.**  
Supervising Engineer  
jfriedman@cambridgema.gov  
617.349.9720

**Pardis Saffari**  
Small Business Liaison  
psaffari@cambridgema.gov  
617.349.4654

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