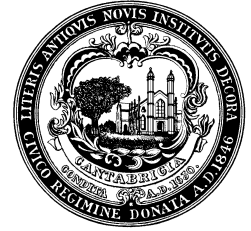


City of Cambridge

Commission for Persons with Disabilities

51 Inman Street · Cambridge, MA · 02139-1732

617-349-4692 voice · Relay via 711 · 617-349-4766 fax



Keisha Greaves
Chair

Danielle Jones-McLaughlin
Secretary

Loring Brinckerhoff
Avril dePagter
Rayna Jhaveri
Melissa Miguel
Deepti Nijhawan
Emma Pan
Zach Solomons
Daniel Stubbs

Rachel Tanenhaus
*Executive Director/
ADA Coordinator*

Kate Thurman
*Deputy Director/
Assistant ADA Coordinator*

The Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities is holding an abbreviated meeting online via Zoom on September 12, 2024 from 5:30 – 7:00 PM

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO JOIN BY 5:30 PM

AGENDA

Please keep your microphone muted when you are not speaking

- | | | |
|---|---------|--|
| 1. Introductions | 2 min. | |
| 2. Announcements | 2 min. | CCPD staff / Board |
| 3. City Collaboration with the MBTA | 30 min. | Andy Reker,
Community Development Dept. |
| 4. Approval of August Minutes | 2 min. | CCPD Board |
| 5. Chair's Report
<i>Re-examining Advisory Board Working Groups
Review of CCPD Member Survey Results</i> | 25 min. | Keisha Greaves |
| 6. Staff Report | 15 min. | Rachel Tanenhaus |
| 7. Public Works Update | 7 min. | Melissa Miguel |
| 8. CCPD Member Community
Conversation | 5 min. | CCPD Board |
| 9. Public Input | 3 min. | general public |

CART/closed captioning will be provided for this meeting

Captions can be turned on within the Zoom platform. Additionally, you may stream CART in a separate URL at <https://bit.ly/CCPDcaptioning>

(captions will not appear until the meeting has started)

The City of Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities, does not discriminate, including on the basis of disability. The Commission for Persons with Disabilities will provide auxiliary aids and services, written materials in alternative formats, and reasonable modifications in policies and procedures to persons with disabilities upon request.

The next CCPD meeting will be held on Thursday, October 10, 2024 from 5:30-7:00 PM

Members of the public: See instructions on pages 2 & 3 on how to watch the CCPD meeting and provide public comment via Zoom

Approved 10/10/2024

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)

Minutes for Thursday, September 12, 2024 CCPD Meeting

Online via Zoom

Meeting was called to order at 5:36 PM

Present:

Members: Loring Brinckerhoff, Keisha Greaves (Chair), Rayna Jhaveri, Melissa Miguel, Danielle Jones-McLaughlin (Secretary), Deepti Nijhawan, Emma Pan, and Dan Stubbs

Absent: Avril dePagter, Zach Solomons

Staff: Rachel Tanenhaus and Kate Thurman

Guest speaker: Andy Reker, Community Development Department

Announcements:

- Deepti reported going to the MIT Job Connector, where she spoke with someone there about helping people with disabilities in the community get access to and trained for jobs. The MIT Job Connector is housed in MIT-owned space between Central and Kendall Squares, although they don't report to MIT. They are a community resource that helps with resumes and coaching for interviews, etc. They currently work mostly on construction jobs and Deepti was asking more about office and desk jobs and computer jobs. Sarah Reese, the manager, said she would be happy to come to a CCPD meeting to brainstorm about how residents with disabilities can get access to jobs. Deepti reported that the MIT Job Connector cannot help directly, but that they can provide language for the City to put into contracts with large companies stipulating a minimum number of jobs designated for Cambridge residents with disabilities, for example.
 - Deepti added that Lesley University has a job lab program, so they know how to interact with some of the larger corporations, as does the Perkins School for the Blind.
 - Emma offered to make introductions with Microsoft hiring teams since they have an office in Kendall Square.
 - Rayna has worked with MIT Job Connector in the past and knows Sarah Reese.

City Collaboration with the MBTA:

Andy Reker, Transit Program Manager in the Community Development Department (CDD), which is the City's planning department, spoke about the City's public transit program, which he helps manage. See the attached slides for more information.

- Andy explained that the City is most able to influence changes or improvements in getting around Cambridge by MBTA buses and shuttles because they run on City-owned streets, whereas the subway and commuter rail are much harder to influence because they run on MBTA property.
- Door2Door Transportation, a shuttle service providing door-to-door transportation for residents of Cambridge and a few other local cities who are either disabled or who are 60 years or older recently received a grant to expand their services.
 - Currently, eligible residents can request the shuttle to pick them up at their home and drop them off at their destination for non-emergency medical appointments and to certain grocery stores. The City

helped Door2Door apply for grant funding to address other trip types for which people need transportation. These include social trips, trips outside of regular operating hours, etc.

- This grant program is extending services through June 30, 2025, but will hopefully be renewed to extend services into 2026.
- Andy said that Door2Door is working on a communications plan to let residents know about the expansion of services. Once the details and marketing materials are finalized, he will share them with Kate and Rachel to pass along to CCPD members.
- The Charles River Transportation Management Association (TMA) runs the EZRide shuttle service, which primarily serves employers in East Cambridge. The free shuttle buses serve Cambridgeport, Kendall Square, East Cambridge, Lechmere, North Point, and North Station. The shuttle currently runs every 7-8 minutes on weekdays and is free to the public, though it's currently oriented towards employees commuting. Charles River TMA is working on getting funding to add service on the weekends.
- Andy noted that there is a gap of bus services in the eastern part of Cambridge from Kendall Square to Lechmere, so the City is working on addressing that.
- Andy reported that the MBTA is implementing their Bus Network Redesign this winter, starting in Harvard Square and Sullivan Square.
 - The City also has bus stop improvement funds to make some minor changes to bus stops each year.
 - Large City construction projects like River Street and Mass Ave. reconstruction also provide opportunities for major changes to be made to the City's street design, including bus stops.
- Cambridge currently has 258 bus stops. 240 of those stops serve MBTA buses and may also serve other shuttles like the EZRide. 18 of the stops specifically serve the EZRide
- Andy reported that high school students working for CDD under the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program surveyed the street furniture at every bus stop in the City. They counted how many bus stops have benches, shelters, etc.
 - About 40% of Cambridge bus stops offer some kind of seating. CDD is trying to make sure that bus stops with the highest numbers of boardings have seating. Some bus stops are located on sidewalks that are too narrow to fit a bench, so CDD is thinking about alternatives like railings to lean against or a single seat at a bus stop and looking for nearby places for benches.
 - John Boyle asked about stadium-type seating that could fold up. Andy noted that street furniture with moveable parts is hard to maintain, so they try to avoid that but are open to hearing about different types of seating or configurations that can help increase seats at bus stops
 - Rayna asked if participatory budgeting (PB) funds have been used for bus stop seating or if they could be used for that. Andy responded that because the City already has funds for bus stop amenities, PB requests tend to be for seating in areas that are not also bus stops.
- Summer employees also looked at bike parking at bus stops, and how many bus stops have lighting designed for pedestrians. Additionally, CDD has a researcher who is working with the geospatial data that the City collects, looking at tree shade during the summer mid-days and seeing how that aligns with bus stops.
- Andy noted that the City has been working on creating bike lanes on streets that have not had them in the past. As streets are redesigned, the City is considering what it means to be safe while navigating Cambridge by bike. As a result, they have tried a lot of different bus stop designs in order to meet the needs of a diverse group of users. Cambridge currently has 73 bus stops that are either located next to or are a part of a separated bike lane. There are 26 locations where the separated bike lane is on the sidewalk level and the bus stop is either closer to the vehicular traffic lane than the sidewalk and bike lane or is sharing the same space as the bike lane.
 - He explained that there are 3 categories of bus stops located along bike lanes: floating islands, shared stops, and step-out bus stops (see slide in attached presentation).
 - The following feedback was provided by CCPD members
 - Dan noted that the designs appear to be dependent on bike riders being courteous in yielding to pedestrians and asked if there was any data on complaints or crashes. Andy noted that crash data comes from the Police Department and the MA Department of Transportation, so not

everything is captured. While no crashes have been reported in Cambridge at the shared bus stops and bike lanes, CDD has heard about conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists. Andy added that the MBTA is working on providing some kind of announcement on buses that reminds passengers to double-check for cyclists as they exit the bus onto bike lanes, so the passengers know it's not a regular bus stop at a sidewalk curb.

- Rachel noted feeling unsafe as a blind person having to step off a bus into a bike lane or having to walk across bike lanes.
- Rayna suggested adding a flag or stop sign that deploys from the side of MBTA buses similar to those found on school buses to alert cyclists to passengers exiting. Andy said that they have suggested this to the MBTA in the past, but that the MBTA isn't willing to install them for several reasons, including that it would be challenging to train operators on when and where to deploy the signs. However, Andy said CDD can continue to push for them.
- Another suggestion was to add some kind of signage or messaging on the back of buses to alert cyclists.
- Keisha said that cyclists have their own lanes and that people with disabilities need their own lanes, too, with signs and lights.
- Rayna noted that there are all types of services available for people with disabilities, but that there isn't a comprehensive source that provides all the information, so many people don't know about what's out there. Kate noted that CCPD staff is working on a website redesign and requested feedback on information members feel would be helpful to have on the new website.

Minutes:

A motion to approve the August minutes was seconded and then passed unanimously by all present.

Chair's Report:

Keisha deferred a discussion of reviving small working groups until the next meeting, due to time constraints.

Loring suggested reviewing the member survey results in next month's meeting.

Staff Report:

Rachel said that the office will soon be posting a new part-time, 19.5 hour per week, non-benefitted administrative position. She will share the job posting once it's up.

Rachel reported on a few Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) variance applications that have been submitted over the last several months.

- She submitted testimony against a request for 30 JFK Street because it sounded like they had previously negotiated with the MAAB to provide a room on the ground floor for meetings when tenants needed accessible meeting space, and the owners of the building wanted to switch that room into rented tenant space. The MAAB denied their variance request.
- 747 Cambridge Street is a newly constructed residential building that was built without the required elevator. The building owners didn't submit a variance request until construction had been completed. The MAAB denied the request. An elevator is now being constructed.
- The Red House Restaurant in Harvard Square requested a variance to construct a roof top deck without providing vertical access (via an elevator or lift). That case has been continued.

Rachel reminded CCPD members that she sent out an email about relocating accessible parking spots in Kendall Square and that the City is requesting their feedback on where to relocate them.

She noted that the participatory budgeting (PB) process just opened up and that folks can submit ideas through the end of September on how to spend two million dollars in the next fiscal year.

Rachel said that Mt. Auburn Hospital is doing a community health needs assessment and that they want to hear from people. Let Rachel know if you'd like to learn more.

Rachel said that she gave a presentation to the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program folks at the beginning of the summer about accessible transportation and communication.

Lastly, Rachel said that she and Kate have been working with the City on issues of web and document accessibility. The Department of Justice has issued a timeline for local governments to come into full compliance. She said that the City has a document accessibility problem and an issue with training people because we have a lot of people who come up with documents who don't have the technological knowledge for making them accessible.

Public Works Update:

Melissa Miguel reported

- There will be pedestrian changes in Carl Barron Plaza in a few weeks when the brick surface will be removed and replaced by asphalt. Accessible pedestrian routes will be maintained during construction.
- DPW is holding an Arts in the Park event on September 28 to present updated park designs.
- Construction has finally broken ground at the Harvard Square Plaza after more than 10 years of planning and coordination with the MBTA. There will be a drop-in coffee hour about the project in the Harvard Smith Campus Center from 9-10 AM on Wednesday, September 25. Melissa noted that barriers will be going up at the crosswalk at Dunster Street by the Smith Campus Center; that crosswalk will be closed for 4-6 weeks for construction.

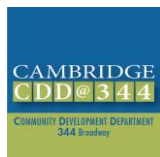
Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Thurman

City of Cambridge
Community Development Department

Public transit program

September 2024





Let's talk about public transit in Cambridge

- **New transit services**
- **Bus stop designs**
- **MBTA Track Improvement Program + shuttling**
- **Your questions**



New transit services

Service expansions



We're working to expand public transit

City staff are working to expand public transit – this includes expansions on existing services and advocating for new forms of public transit. Some upcoming changes

- Grant-funded expansion of “Door2Door” service in Cambridge and other cities – new types of trips, earlier hours, and later hours – launching soon
- Additional service on Charles River TMA’s EZRide began in July and fare-free service continues
- Additional trips on MBTA Bus Route 109 and extension from Sullivan to Harvard Square in December



New bus stop designs

Bus stop improvement program, newer bus stop designs



Bus stop improvements

Each year, we have some money to make bus stop improvements at specific locations.

- Adding bus stop amenities – benches, shelters
- Design or build curb extensions for bus stops

One topic that I'm interested to hear feedback from this group is about our new bus stop designs where we have separated bike lanes.

Separated bike lanes are the ones where the bike lane is next to the sidewalk and then has a buffer from larger vehicle traffic. There are many designs to the vehicle buffer. Often the buffer is paint and flexible plastic posts or granite curb and parking.



Some statistics about bus stop benches and shelters

The city has 258 bus stops

- 240 for MBTA
- 18 for EZRide

Many bus stops have seating:

- 59 stops have benches [~23% of stops]
- 55 stops have shelters [~21% of stops]
- 104 stops have seating, i.e. either bench or shelter [~40% of stops]

Some statistics about bus stop amenities

The city has 258 bus stops

- 240 for MBTA
- 18 for EZRide

Many bus stops have street furniture nearby:

- 15 stops have bike parking [~6% of stops]
- 44 stops have pedestrian-scale lighting [17% of stops]
- 61 stops have trash or recycling bins [~24% of stops]
- Future analysis of tree shade during summer middays



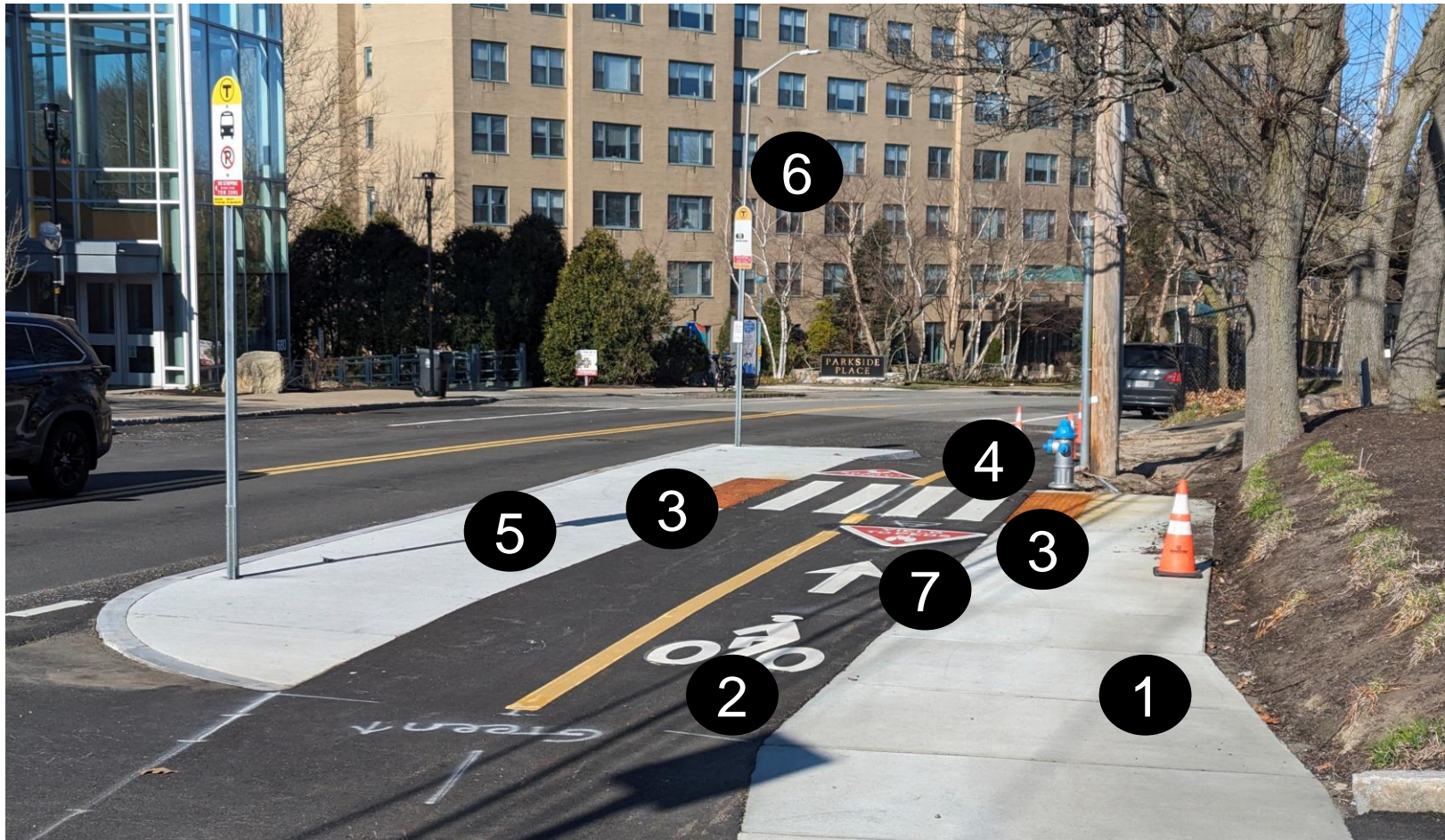
Some statistics about bus stop designs

We have 26 stops with newer designs for locations with separated bike lanes

- 13 “floating” islands
- 10 “shared” stops
- 3 “step-out” stops

Another 47 stops have the bus enter the bike lane to serve the stop at the curb

An example of a “Floating” island design



Key

1. Sidewalk
2. Bicycle lane (at sidewalk level)
3. Tactile warning panels
4. Crosswalk
5. Waiting area
6. “Front” bus stop sign
7. “Yield to ped” marking

An example of a “Shared” stop design



Key

1. Sidewalk
2. Bicycle lane (at sidewalk level)
3. No tactile warning panels
4. Crosswalk
5. Waiting area on sidewalk
6. “Front” bus stop sign
7. “Yield to ped” marking

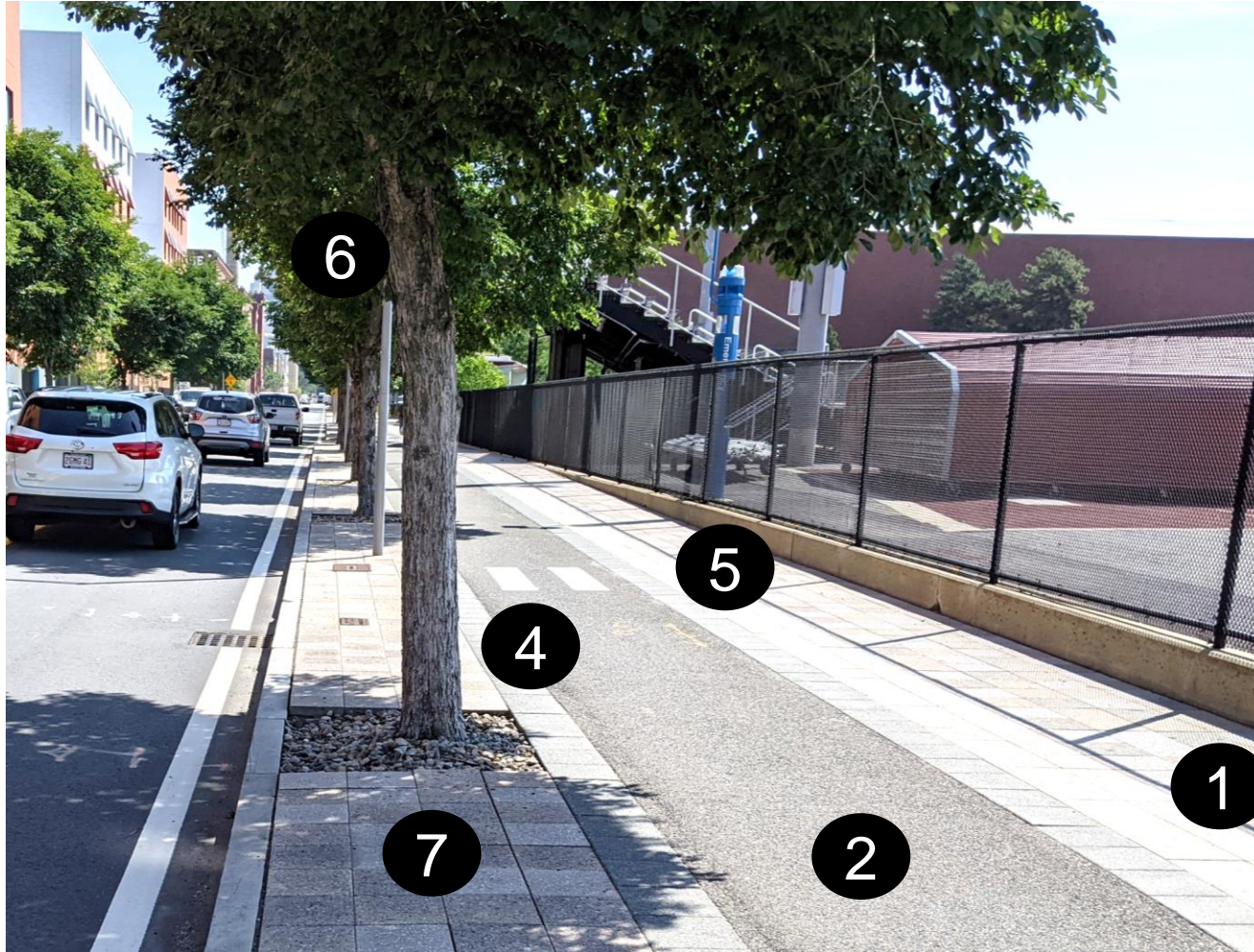
Another view: “Shared” bus stop design



Key

1. Sidewalk
2. Bicycle lane (at sidewalk level)
3. No tactile warning panels
4. Crosswalk
5. Waiting area on sidewalk
6. “Front” bus stop sign, off image
7. “Yield to ped” marking, off image
8. Narrow buffer between bike lane and curb

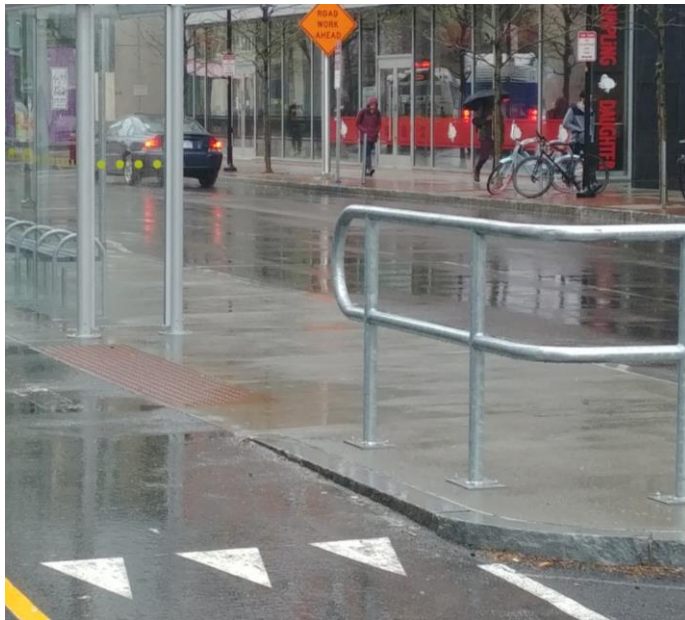
An example of a “Step out” stop design



1. Sidewalk
2. Bicycle lane (at sidewalk level)
3. No tactile warning panels
4. Crosswalk
5. Waiting area on sidewalk
6. “Front” bus stop sign
7. Small buffer between bike lane and curb

Other features

We are considering other street design features, to be installed, with engineering judgement, if appropriate.



Barriers to direct passengers to crosswalks



Additional or different markings



In-street pedestrian crosswalk signs



MBTA Track Improvement Program

Program of subway closures to rapidly repair tracks and
remove speed restrictions by December 2024



MBTA subway closures in Cambridge

As many of you may know or have experienced, the MBTA has closed the Red and Green Lines in Cambridge several times this year to repair or replace subway tracks. This is so that all subway tracks are in good repair by the end of 2024.

In Cambridge, the MBTA closed or plans to close parts of the subway during:

- **February – Red Line closure Alewife to Harvard (9 days)**
- **July – Red Line closure Alewife to Kendall (16 days)**
- **August – Red Line closure Kendall/MIT to JFK/Umass (7 days)**
- **November – Green Line closure Union Square or Medford to Park Street (via Lechmere) (14 days)**
- **December – Red Line closure Harvard to Park Street (7 days)**



Your questions + other topics



Questions from you

- **What transit challenge is energizing you most these days?**
- **What outcome, result or solution are you most proud of as City Transit Planner?**
- **For Cambridge residents with transit accessibility needs (e.g. temporary or long-term disability): how do they come to learn about the resources, services & support available to them? What is the process of communication?**
- **What future vision, hopes & dreams do you have for the city's transit system?**

Thank you for your time and your thoughts

Andy Reker
Transit Program Manager
Community Development Department

areker@cambridgema.gov

Thank You



Appendix

Locations of “floating” bus stop designs

- Hampshire St @ Cambridge St
- Cambridge St @ Hampshire St
- Cambridge St @ Springfield St
- Western Ave @ Putnam Ave
- Western Ave @ Howard St
- Western Ave @ Kinnaird St
- Huron Ave Opp Larchwood
- Huron Ave Opp Park Ave - Fountain Terrace
- Fresh Pond Golf Course
- Ames St @ Broadway
- O’Brien Highway At Twin City Plaza/Rufo Road
- North First At Lechmere East
- North First At Lechmere West



Locations of “shared” bus stop designs

- Belmont St @ St. Mary's St
- Concord Ave @ Blanchard Rd
- Concord Ave @ Moulton St
- Concord Ave Opp Spinelli Pl
- Concord Ave @ Spinelli Pl
- Concord Ave Opp Moulton St
- Concord Ave @ Wheeler St
- Concord Ave Opp Fawcett St
- Concord Ave Opp Wheeler St
- Concord Ave Opp Smith Pl



Locations of “step-out” bus stop designs

- Vassar St @ Pacific St Extension
- Vassar St Opp Pacific St Extension
- Galilei At Broadway