

# City of Cambridge

## Transit Advisory Committee

### Abbreviated Meeting Notes

Wednesday, October 3, 2018

Ballroom, Citywide Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Avenue

#### [Attendance \(16 people\)](#)

**Members (8)** John Attanucci (Chair); Devin Chausse; Chantal Eide; Robert Fitzgerald; Katherine Rafferty; Arthur Strang; Saul Tannenbaum; Melissa Zampitella

**City Staff (2)** Susanne Rasmussen and Andrew Reker (CDD)

**Others (6)** 4 members of the public; Scott Hamwey (MassDOT); Andy Smith (MBTA);

This meeting of the Cambridge Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) began at approximately 5:30 PM. Andy Reker (AR) opened the meeting and gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

#### [Committee introductions and August and September meeting notes](#)

As the attendance lower than quorum, the TAC meeting began without approving the August and September meeting notes.

#### [Public comment](#)

No members of the public made a comment.

#### [Presentation: Bus and Bus Priority Pilot Outreach Update](#)

AR presented a review of the City's outreach efforts for the previous month for Cambridge's supplemental outreach initiative for the MBTA's Better Bus Project (BBP). The review included:

- Review of outreach events, activities, and communications
- Summary of initial feedback on the survey and Wikimap responses
- MBTA's extension of the BBP timeline

- Preview of the outreach plan for the Mount Auburn St Bus Priority Pilot

TAC members asked for clarification on the summary statistics included in the initial feedback and a sense of the ideas from the community. Arthur Strang (AS) commented on his initial impressions from the early action changes on Mount Auburn Street, including initial concerns about the new “bent” approach on Brattle Street approaching the intersection with Mount Auburn Street.

#### [Presentation: Mt. Auburn St. Bus Priority Pilot Updates](#)

AR presented updates on the Mount Auburn Street Bus Priority Pilot project, including:

- Project context
- Recently completed work
- Upcoming work
- Review of the DCR short-term concept

TAC members asked to clarify the extent and schedule of project-related transit signal priority work. Susanne Rasmussen (SR), Director of Environmental and Transportation Planning, Community Development Department, provided the schedule of transit signal priority work.

#### [Discussion: MBTA RailVision](#)

Scott Hamwey, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (SH) presented about the MBTA and MassDOT Rail Vision study. MBTA's objective for the Rail Vision study is to identify cost-effective strategies to transform the MBTA's existing Commuter Rail system to better support improved mobility and economic competitiveness in the Boston region. The Rail Vision study is providing input into MassDOT's long-term planning project, Focus 40. SH presented several service concepts in the initial evaluation. This initial evaluation will inform 8 service alternatives. Some of the service concepts presented were:

- Urban rail with all-day service in the core of Greater Boston
- Express and zonal express service with expanded limited-stop services throughout the commuter rail network
- Interline service by pairing commuter rail routes and conversion of some lines to rapid transit

SR then presented some of the City of Cambridge's initial comments and input into the Rail Vision project advisory group, which included:

- Infill station on the Fitchburg Main Line at Alewife
- Additional service on the Grand Junction branch from the Worcester Main Line to North Station including station(s) in the Kendall Square area

TAC members discussed the following:

- Avoiding neighborhood displacement, gentrification, and supporting affordable housing in the region
- Developing service alternatives that combine elements from the different concepts
- Evaluating other rail proposals such as the North-South Rail Link, South Coast Rail, and South Station Expansion in context with the service concepts
- Evaluating the effects of increased service and/or all-day service on terminal capacity at North and South Stations.
- Highlighting development areas within Cambridge that may benefit from access to rail service: Alewife, North Point/Cambridge Crossing, and Kendall Square
- Using software to evaluate feasibility, estimate required capital investments, estimate potential ridership, evaluate potential changes to land use and development

[Presentation: S. Mass. Ave. Corridor Safety Improvements Updates](#)

SR presented a brief update on changes to the planned safety and bus priority improvements in the South Massachusetts Avenue corridor. These included:

- Change in location of the bus priority lane
- Updated lane design and traffic configuration in the section between Albany Street and Vassar Street

## Additional Updates

AR shared the following announcements:

- Staff will poll TAC members about the January 2019 meeting. Sticking to the regular schedule would mean meeting on January 2, 2019. Potential options will be to cancel the January 2019 meeting or postpone by 1 week
- November 2018 TAC meeting is expected to be a joint meeting with the CDD Central Square Advisory Committee with a conversation about values that would help inform changes to Carl Baron Plaza and the adjacent bus transfer facility that are proposed in the upcoming River Street design project.
- MassDOT will accept public comment on the Focus 40 long-term transportation plan until October 22.

## Public Comment

A member of the public commented that his office is on the Mount Auburn Street corridor and would be a good place to conduct outreach for the Mount Auburn Street project and for supplemental bus planning outreach.

Following the close of public comment, at 7:30 PM, the TAC moved to adjourn.