

CAMBRIDGE COMMON TO  
ALEWIFE BROOK PARKWAY

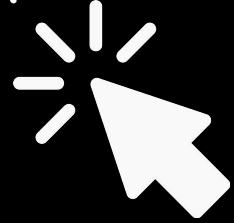
# Public Meeting #1

2/29/24

# Welcome!

PLEASE SIGN IN

*Click the link to sign in*



*Or scan:*



# OUR TEAM

## PROJECT LEAD:

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT (CDD)

**Melissa Peters**, Director of Community Planning

**Drew Kane**, Senior City Planner

## IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

CDD - EOD (Economic Opportunity and Development) Division

CDD - Environment & Transportation Division

CDD - Housing Division

CDD - Zoning & Development Division

CDD - Community Planning Division

DPW - Dept. of Public Works

TPT (Traffic, Parking, and Transportation)

CHC - Cambridge Historical Commission

DHSP - Department of Human Services Program (Council on Aging and Commission for Persons with Disabilities)

CDD CET - Community Engagement Team

GIS - Geographic Information System

## CONSULTANT TEAM:

### INTERFACE STUDIO

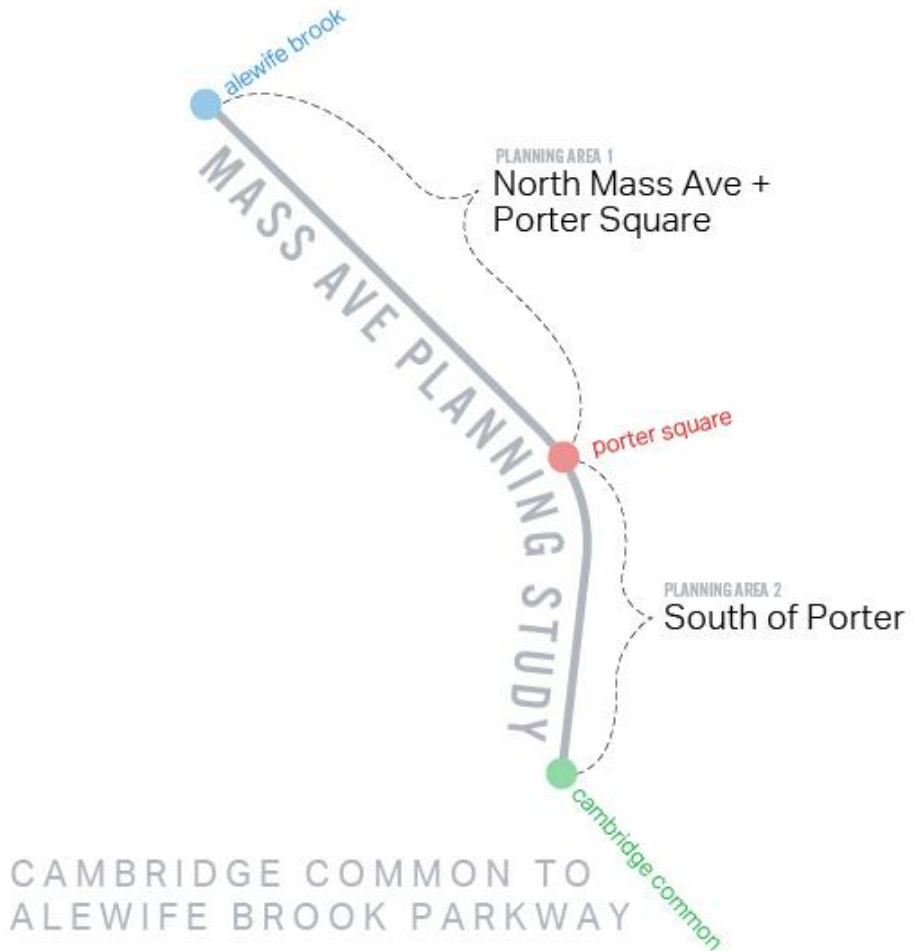
Lead, planning and urban design

### CAMBRIDGESEVEN

Architecture

### CONSULTECON

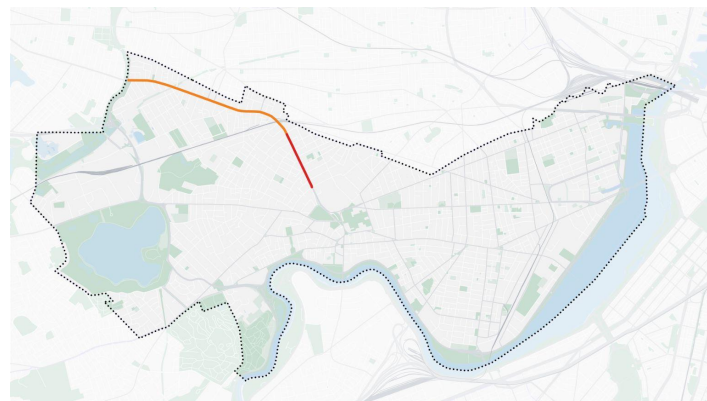
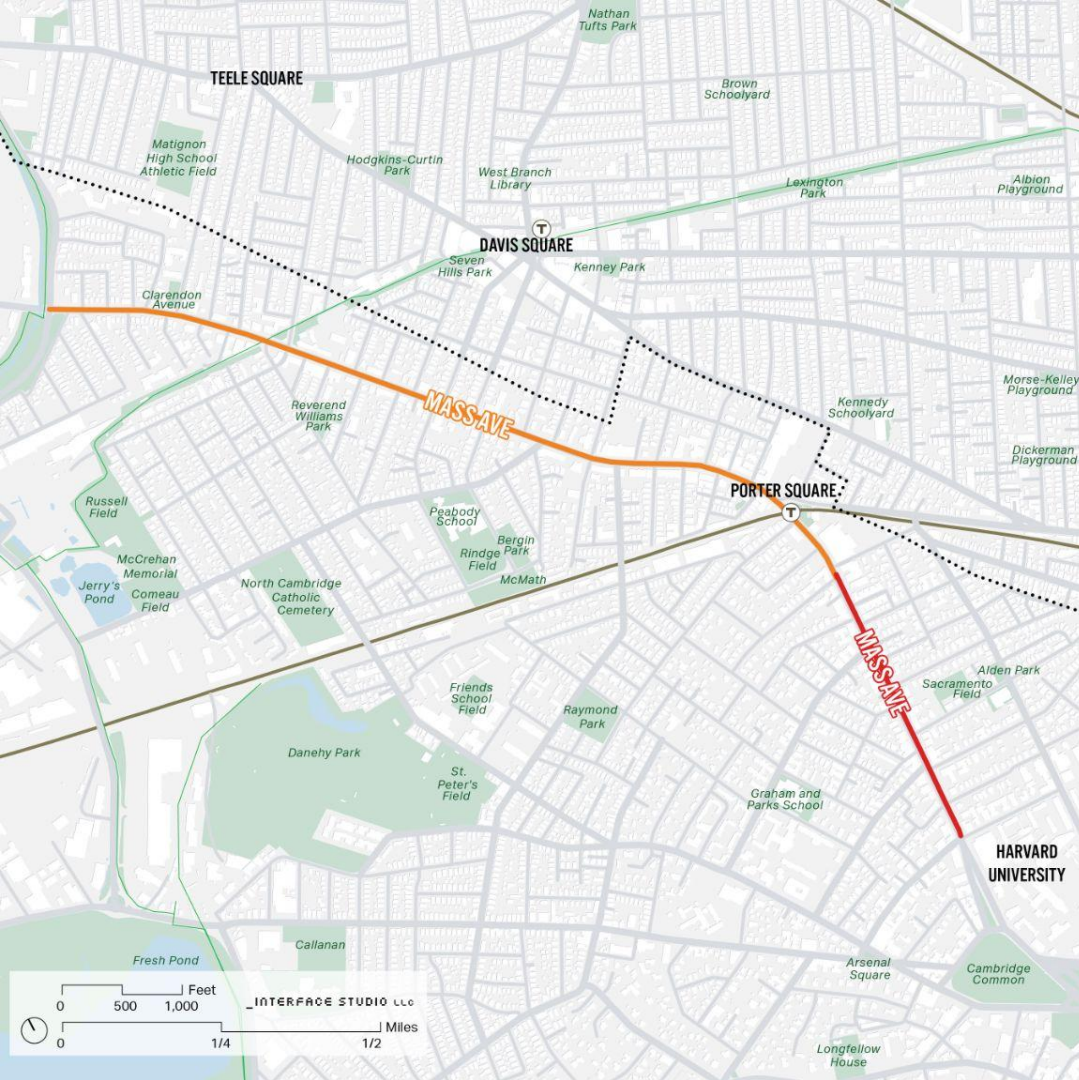
Real estate and housing



# AGENDA

- 01** PROJECT BACKGROUND  
Project goals and schedule
- 02** EVOLUTION OF MASS AVE  
Where we came from, who we are, where we're going
- 03** Q+A
- 04** BREAKOUT ROOM DISCUSSION  
What do we need to know about Mass Ave?
- 05** DEMO + NEXT STEPS  
How to stay engaged and what to expect

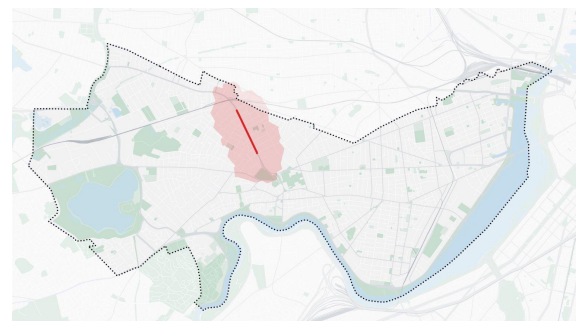
# PROJECT BACKGROUND



## STUDY AREA

Interface Studio, October 2023

- South of Porter Square Study Area
- North Mass Ave + Porter Square Study Area
- Parks/Open Space
- Water
- Commuter Rail
- - - City Boundary

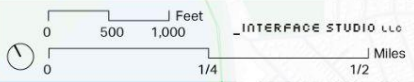


## SOUTH OF PORTER SQUARE PRIMARY SERVICE AREA

Interface Studio, October 2023

- South of Porter Square Study Area
- North Mass Ave + Porter Square Study Area
- Parks/Open Space
- Water
- Commuter Rail
- ⋯ City Boundary

**Within .25 miles of Mass Ave south of Porter Square:**  
 Total population: 11,100  
 Total number of households: 4,700  
 Average Household Size: 1.89







# PLAN GOALS

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This plan builds on the work of *Envision Cambridge*, which set forth a vision and goals for the City. Our task is to translate and refine these **for the future of North Mass Ave, Porter Square and Lower Mass Ave** with a meaningful community engagement process.

This vision will inform recommendations for:



## HOUSING + DENSITY

Adjust policies to ensure future development type and scale aligns with the community's vision



## PUBLIC REALM

Enhance neighborhood street character and supports people of all ages, abilities and identities



## BUSINESS

Support small business retention and growth



## CLIMATE

Plan for climate mitigation and resilience

**“Cambridge is a forward-thinking, welcoming, and diverse city. We enjoy a high quality of life and thrive in a sustainable, inclusive, and connected community.”**

# ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

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**Planning recommendations** will lead to:

- Prioritization of goals and implementation
- Coordination with other planning initiatives
- Policy recommendations
- Proposed changes in zoning
- Complementing future Citywide Design Guidelines
- Long-term infrastructure projects (public realm, open spaces, sidewalks, etc)

# OUR PLANNING APPROACH

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**Our goal** is to listen to all perspectives, create value, and build consensus

## **Our shared values for working together:**

- Be open and transparent, especially about how input informs the plan
- Always be respectful
- Embrace differences and disagreement
- Engage with a diversity of stakeholders and people not historically in the room

# THIS PROCESS

time

short time commitment    medium time commitment    dedicated time commitment

tools

## INFORMATION SHARING

## DESIGN FOR CONVENIENCE

## GATHER COMMUNITY

## FOCUSED ATTENTION AND TIME



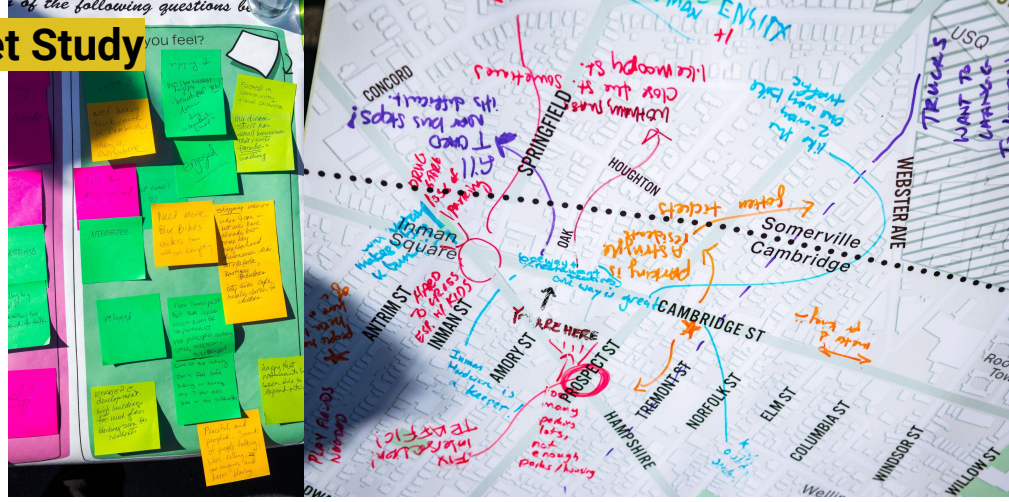
audience



# Engagement examples from Cambridge Street Study



**INMAN SQUARE** 3rd Annual East Cambridge Clean Up Day May 5, 2011



**WE-HA: VOLPE BLOCK PARTY**



**EAST CAMBRIDGE**

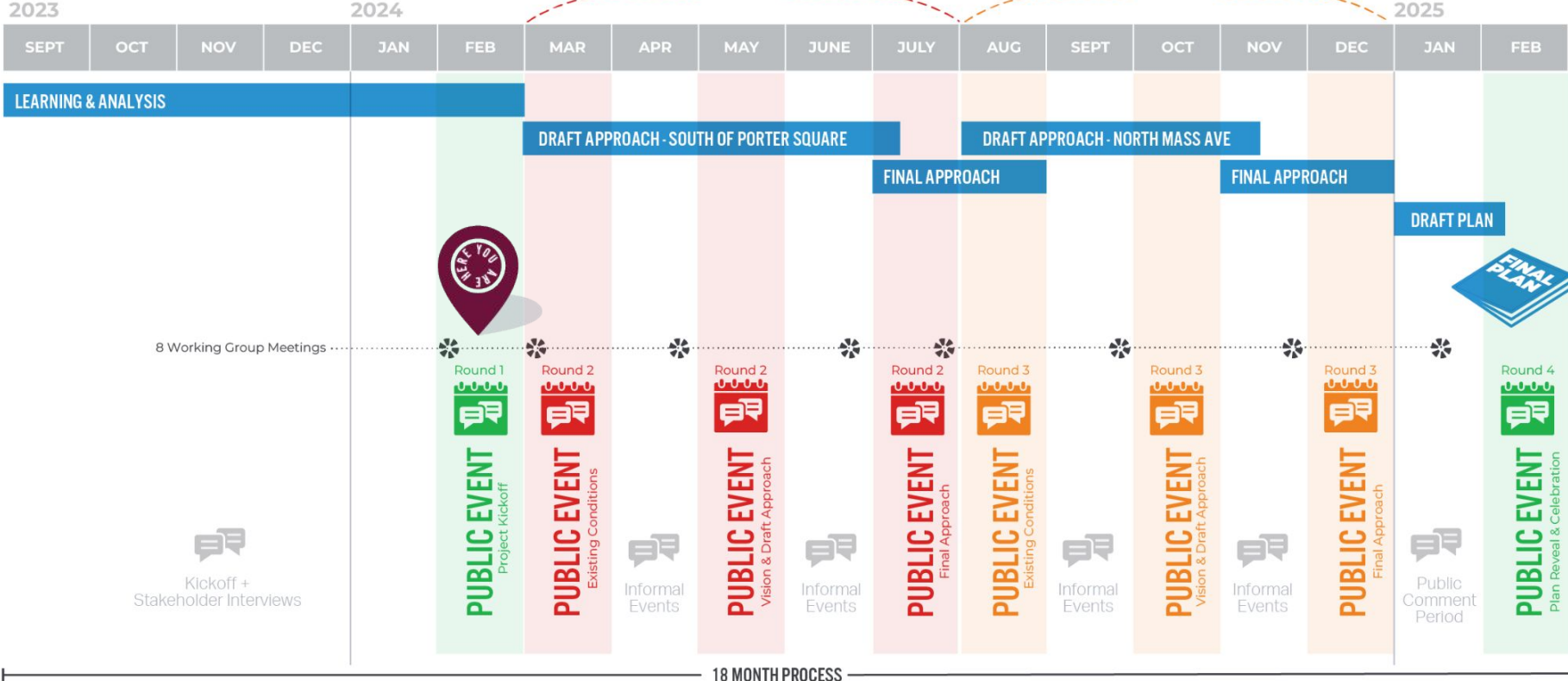
# PROJECT SCHEDULE

## ROUND 1 PROJECT KICKOFF

## ROUND 2 SOUTH OF PORTER SQUARE

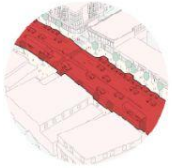
## ROUND 3 NORTH MASS AVE + PORTER SQUARE

## ROUND 4 FINAL PLAN



18 MONTH PROCESS

# FOUR CONCURRENT CITY INITIATIVES



## **PARTIAL CONSTRUCTION**

Planning and Design of the separated bike lanes along Mass Ave

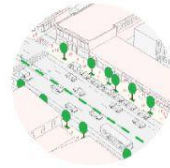
Near term



## **IMPACT STUDY**

Assessing economic impact of bike lanes to businesses along Mass Ave

Annually For The Next Five Years



## **COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW MITIGATION**

Exploring Green Stormwater Infrastructure Mitigation measures to prevent Combined Sewer Overflow events on North Mass Ave.

Five -10 Years From Now

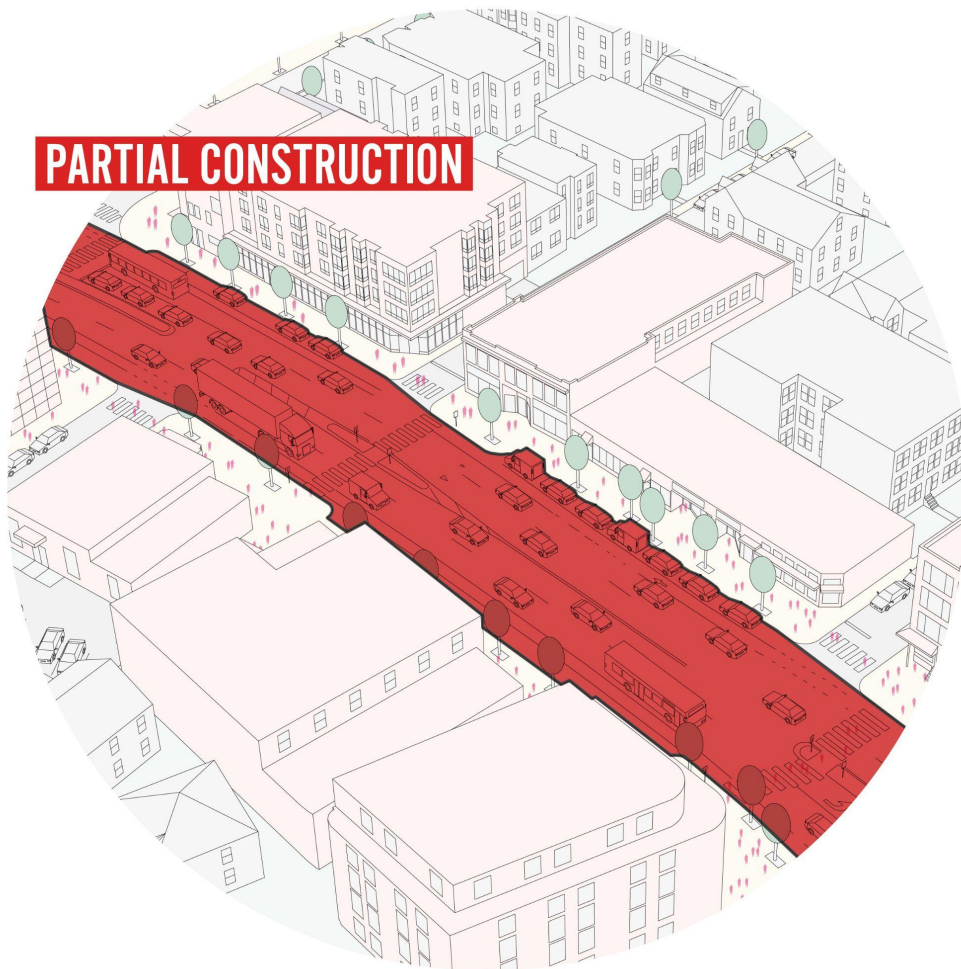


## **PLANNING STUDY**

Vision plan for the properties surrounding Mass Ave, including Zoning, Urban Design, Housing and Business Supports.



15 Years From Now



**The Mass Ave Partial Construction** is focused on the **near term street design of Mass Ave, curb to curb**. The project was initiated in response to the city's Cycling Safety Ordinance (CSO) and includes:

- The design of **separated bicycle lanes**
- Evaluating existing crossing locations for pedestrians and recommendations for additional crossing opportunities
- Curb use regulations (i.e., understand where parking/stopping/loading is possible and not possible)
- Options for bus priority to reduce travel times and improving the reliability of MBTA buses

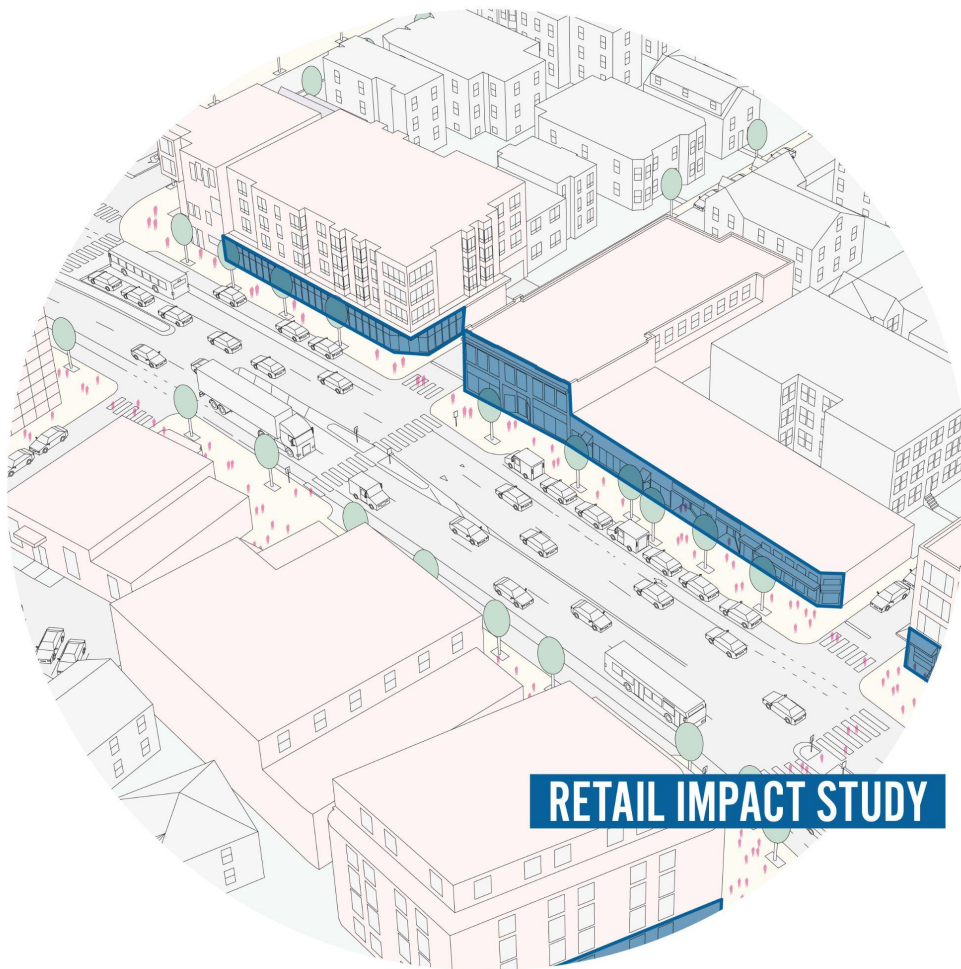
**For more information:**

[cambridgema.gov/massavepartialconstruction](http://cambridgema.gov/massavepartialconstruction)

**Questions or comments? Contact:**

[massave4@cambridgema.gov](mailto:massave4@cambridgema.gov)





## The Economic Opportunity and Development Division Cycling Ordinance Citywide Retail Impact Study

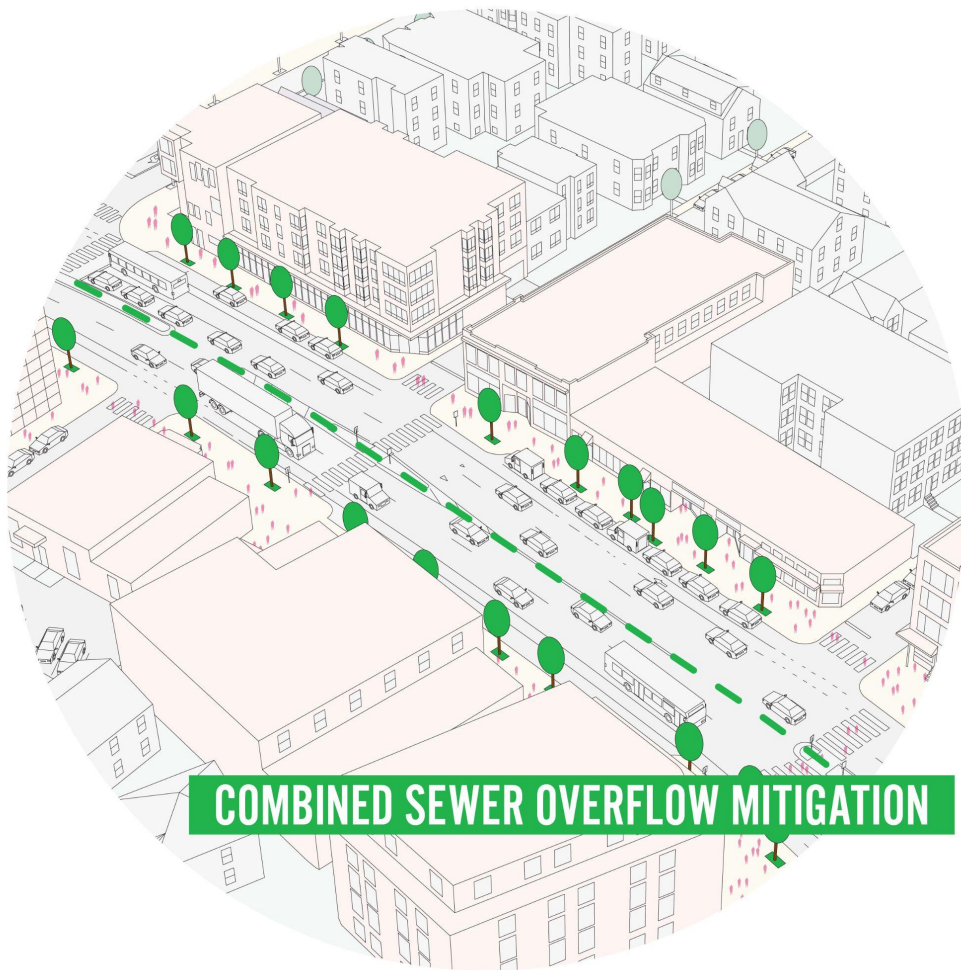
is an annual analysis to be conducted by the city for the next five years for corridors with separated bike lanes or that will have separated bike lanes and includes:

- Analysis of retail sales and transportation data
- Business and customer surveys

### For more information:

[cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/EconDev/cyclingsafetyordinanceeconomicimpactstudy](http://cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/EconDev/cyclingsafetyordinanceeconomicimpactstudy)

**Questions or comments? Contact:** Pardis Saffari, Director of Economic Opportunity and Development, [psaffari@cambridgema.gov](mailto:psaffari@cambridgema.gov)



## The Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Mitigation

**Study** is a citywide study to develop updated CSO Control

Plans with goals to

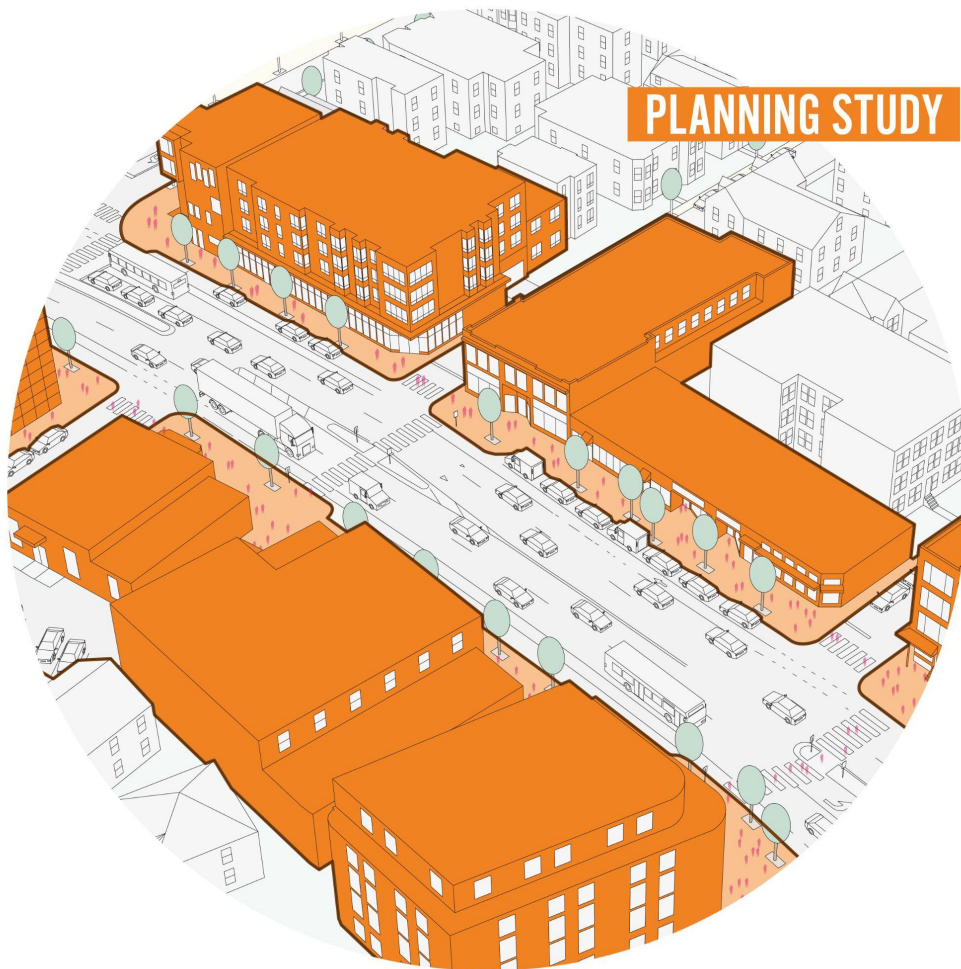
- Develop a new Typical Year to reflect future climate conditions
- Development, assess, and select alternatives for decreasing/eliminating CSOs
- Identify alternatives to improve water quality in the Charles River, Mystic River, and Alewife Brook
- Engage with the community throughout the process
- Consider and address impacts of CSOs on Environmental Justice communities

### For more information:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/publicworks/cityprojects/2022/updatedcombinedseweroverflowcscontrolplan>

### Questions or comments? Contact:

Catherine Woodbury, Senior Project Manager,  
cwoodbury@cambridgema.gov



**This Mass Ave Planning Study (MAPS)** is a planning effort help map Mass Ave's future for the next 15 years and will focus on areas including:

- Increasing density & housing opportunities along the corridor
- Addressing affordability issues
- Supporting small & local businesses
- Creating and enhancing vibrant sidewalks & public spaces

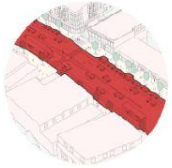
**For more information:**

[www.cambridgema.gov/massaveplan](http://www.cambridgema.gov/massaveplan)

**Questions or comments? Contact:**

Drew Kane, Senior City Planner  
[dkane@cambridgema.gov](mailto:dkane@cambridgema.gov)

# FOUR CONCURRENT CITY INITIATIVES



## **PARTIAL CONSTRUCTION**

Planning and Design of the separated bike lanes along Mass Ave

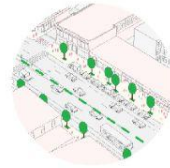
Near term



## **IMPACT STUDY**

Assessing economic impact of bike lanes to businesses along Mass Ave

Annually For The Next Five Years



## **COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW MITIGATION**

Exploring Green Stormwater Infrastructure Mitigation measures to prevent Combined Sewer Overflow events on North Mass Ave.

Five -10 Years From Now



## **PLANNING STUDY**

Vision plan for the properties surrounding Mass Ave, including Zoning, Urban Design, Housing and Business Supports.



15 Years From Now

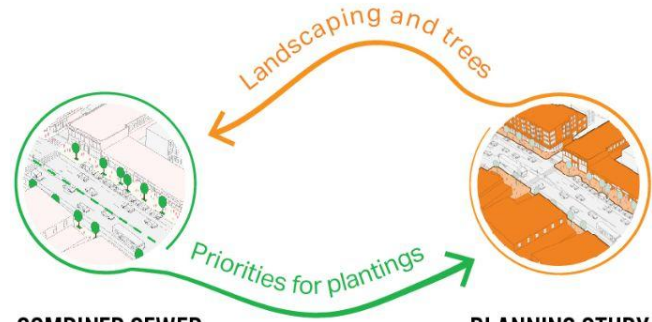
# FOUR CONCURRENT CITY INITIATIVES



**PARTIAL CONSTRUCTION**  
Planning and Design of  
the separated bike lanes  
along Mass Ave



**IMPACT STUDY**  
Assessing economic  
impact of bike lanes to  
businesses along Mass  
Ave



**COMBINED SEWER  
OVERFLOW MITIGATION**  
Exploring Green  
Stormwater  
Infrastructure Mitigation  
measures to prevent  
Combined Sewer  
Overflow events on  
North Mass Ave.

**PLANNING STUDY**  
Vision plan for the  
properties surrounding  
Mass Ave, including  
Zoning, Urban Design,  
Housing and Business  
Supports.



# FOUR CONCURRENT CITY INITIATIVES



**PARTIAL CONSTRUCTION**  
Planning and Design of  
the separated bike lanes  
along Mass Ave



**IMPACT STUDY**  
Assessing economic  
impact of bike lanes to  
businesses along Mass  
Ave



**COMBINED SEWER  
OVERFLOW MITIGATION**  
Exploring Green  
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**PLANNING STUDY**  
Vision plan for the  
properties surrounding  
Mass Ave, including  
Zoning, Urban Design,  
Housing and Business  
Supports.

Business Impacts

Business Supports

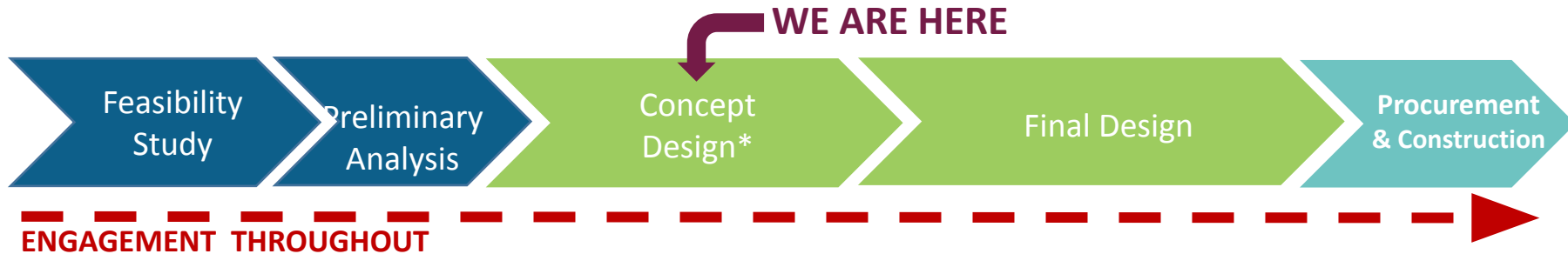


# FOUR CONCURRENT CITY INITIATIVES



# Mass Ave Partial Construction Project Timeline

- April 2021: the City released the *MassAve4 Impact Analysis* report.
- November 2021 – March 2022: City conducted public outreach and performed additional analysis of Quick-Build vs. Construction.
- April 2022: City Council approved the recommendation for Partial Construction between Waterhouse Street and Alewife Brook Parkway.
- April 2022 – May 2023: City collected data and performed field investigations and analysis.
- May 2023 – Present: Working Group three meetings to date; 3 site walks



\*Concept design for Linnaean-Waterhouse released December 2023.

Additional segments to be released during 2024.





# To stay connected and make comments on the Partial Construction:

Please reach out to the Project Team at

Email: [MassAve4@Cambridgema.gov](mailto:MassAve4@Cambridgema.gov)

Webpage: [cambridgema.gov/massavepartialconstruction](http://cambridgema.gov/massavepartialconstruction)



# EVOLUTION OF MASS AVE



Massachusetts Avenue looking north from the Little Common about 1875.

Source: Preliminary Landmark Designation Report: Charles Hicks Saunders House, Charles Sullivan and Sarah Burks, Cambridge Historical Commission. March 24, 2023

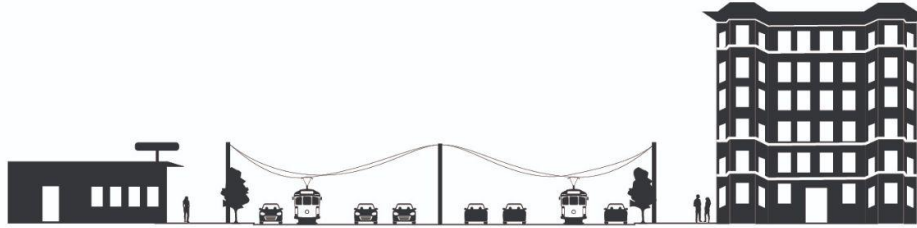
# THE STREET THROUGH THE CENTURIES

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18<sup>th</sup> Century



19-20<sup>th</sup> Century



Today



FUN FACT: In 1961, you could build up to 60 feet on most of the corridor. Today, it is 45 feet in many places.

# REMNANTS AND RELICS OF HISTORY TODAY



Many buildings still stand, but may have other uses, such as the Henderson Carriage Repository (1892), now used for office and retail.



Efforts have been made to create modern additions and affordable housing while preserving historic homes, such as Frost Terrace (1865, renovated 2021).

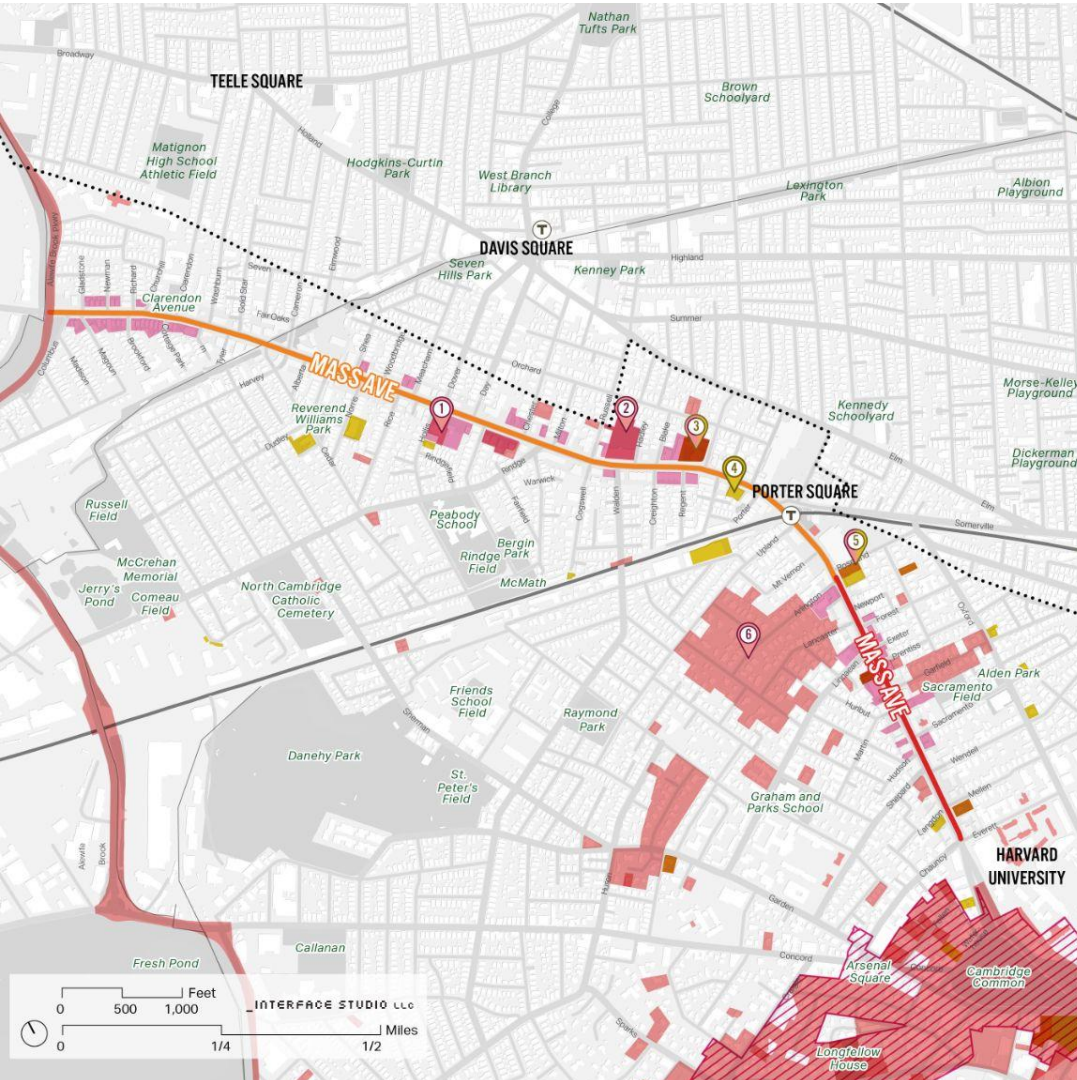


Legacy streetcar trolley infrastructure still remains, but is being removed.

Source: Henderson Carriage Repository. (2019, March 14). In Wikipedia.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henderson\\_Carriage\\_Repository](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henderson_Carriage_Repository)

Source: Robert Benson Photography.  
<https://www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/frost-terrace-affordable-housing>

Source: Interface Studio.



## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

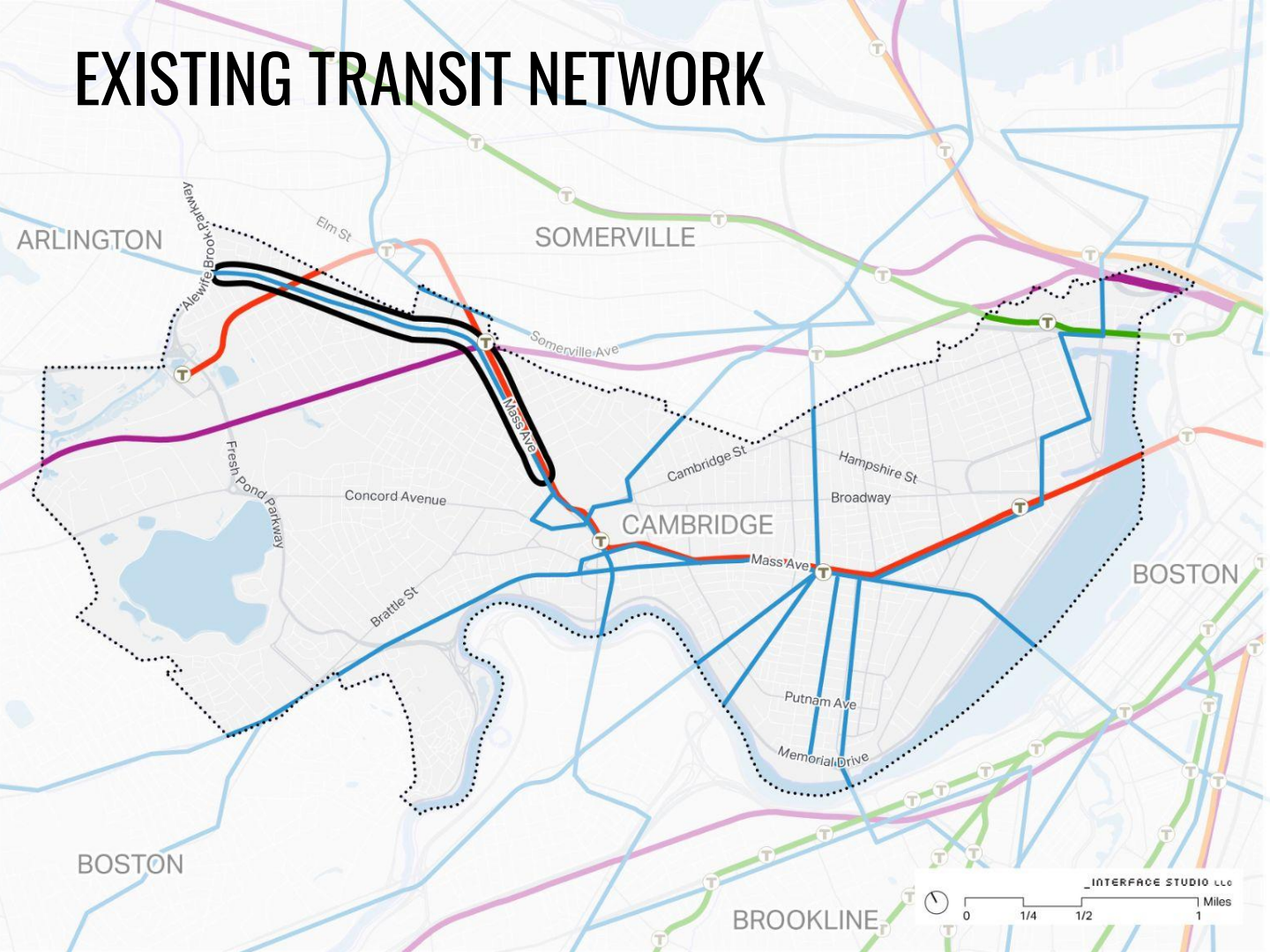
Interface Studio, January 2024

- South of Porter Square Study Area
- North Mass Ave + Porter Square Study Area
- ⋯ City Boundary
- Historic Districts (Old Cambridge)
- Historic Landmarks and Easements
- National Register of Historic Places
- Massachusetts Ave Overlay District Historic Properties

### Selected Historic Places

- 1 St. John's Roman Catholic Church
- 2 Henderson Carriage Repository
- 3 St. James's Episcopal Church
- 4 Cambridge Masonic Temple
- 5 North Avenue Congregational Church
- 6 Avon Hill National Register / Conservation District

# EXISTING TRANSIT NETWORK



## STUDY AREAS + REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

MBTA, Interface Studio, January 2024

- Study Area
- City Boundary
- High Frequency Bus Corridors
- Red Line
- Green Line
- Orange Line
- Commuter Rail

# COMMUTERS

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**1,900**

**BICYCLISTS**

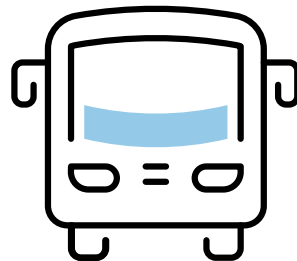
Weekday Bike Count  
2022<sup>1</sup>



**21,000+**

**VEHICLES**

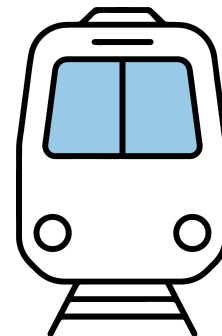
Average Daily Traffic Count  
2020<sup>2</sup>



**12,000+**

**BUS RIDERS**

Average Weekday Boardings  
2022<sup>3</sup>



**~9,500**

**RAIL USERS**

Average Weekday Boardings in  
2018-19  
Porter Square Red Line and Commuter Rail

<sup>1</sup> [Cambridge Open Data](#) - Average Weekday Citywide Bicycle Counts, 2022; from the Total Bike Count on 9/22/22 at Cedar St & Massachusetts Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue & Somerville Ave Locations.

<sup>2</sup> [Cambridge Open Data](#) - Cambridge updated Bike Lane Comfort dataset. Average of counts from multiple segments along Massachusetts Avenue. 2020.

<sup>3</sup> [Bus Ridership](#): MBTA Bus Ridership by Time Period. 2022. Bus stops at and between Alewifebrook Parkway and Cambridge Commons.

<sup>4</sup> [Train Ridership](#): [MBTA Average Weekday Gated Entries FY19](#). [2018 Commuter Rail Counts](#). [MBTA](#).

# DYNAMIC STREET, DIFFERENT QUALITIES



## GENERALIZED LAND USE - EXPERIENCE

*Interface Studio, January 2024*

- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Residential
- Institution
- Parks and Open Space
- Transportation



# DYNAMIC STREET, DIFFERENT QUALITIES



# OUR CHARGE:

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**WHAT DOES  
MASS AVE  
LOOK LIKE **15**  
YEARS FROM  
NOW?**

**... and HOW do we get there?**

- **Prioritization of goals and implementation**
- **Coordination with other planning initiatives**
- **Policy recommendations**
- **Proposed changes in zoning**
- **Complementing future Citywide Design Guidelines**
- **Long term infrastructure projects (public realm, open spaces, sidewalks, etc)**

# QUESTIONS?

**Please put your clarifying question in the chat.**

You can **reach out directly to Drew Kane** by phone: 617-349-4640 or by email: [massaveplan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:massaveplan@cambridgema.gov)

**For general comments, we'll be breaking out into discussion rooms shortly!**

# 5 BREAKOUT GROUPS (30 MINUTES)

Two main discussion questions:

- **What do we need to know most about Mass Ave?**
- **How do you envision the corridor evolving in the next 15 years?**

## Your feedback is important

Here are the guidelines for tonight's discussion:

- We want to give **as many people as possible the opportunity to be heard**. If you've already had a chance to speak, or if someone else has voiced your comment, please let people with new ideas be heard.
- Respect the experiences of others
- Listen to each other & divergent perspectives
- Stay on topic and strive to be succinct
- Each person has **two minutes** to speak.
- If we're unable to hear from all raised hands by 7:15 pm, you can **send your comments/questions directly to Drew Kane** by phone: 617-349-4640 or by email: [massaveplan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:massaveplan@cambridgema.gov)

# REPORT OUT BY FACILITATORS

# NEXT STEPS

Send additional comments/questions directly to  
Drew Kane by phone: 617-349-4640 or by email:  
[massaveplan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:massaveplan@cambridgema.gov)

Visit [www.cambridgema.gov/massaveplan](http://www.cambridgema.gov/massaveplan) to sign up for our  
email list!



**Mass Ave Comments**

**Location**

Click the map to draw the location.

Enter an address to search

**Share your thoughts!**

I want to share

Select...

- Select...
- A favorite place**
- An issue
- An idea

Map Comment

SCAN:



on our crowdsource map (case sensitive): [bit.ly/MAPS\\_map](https://bit.ly/MAPS_map)

[+ Add a thought](#)

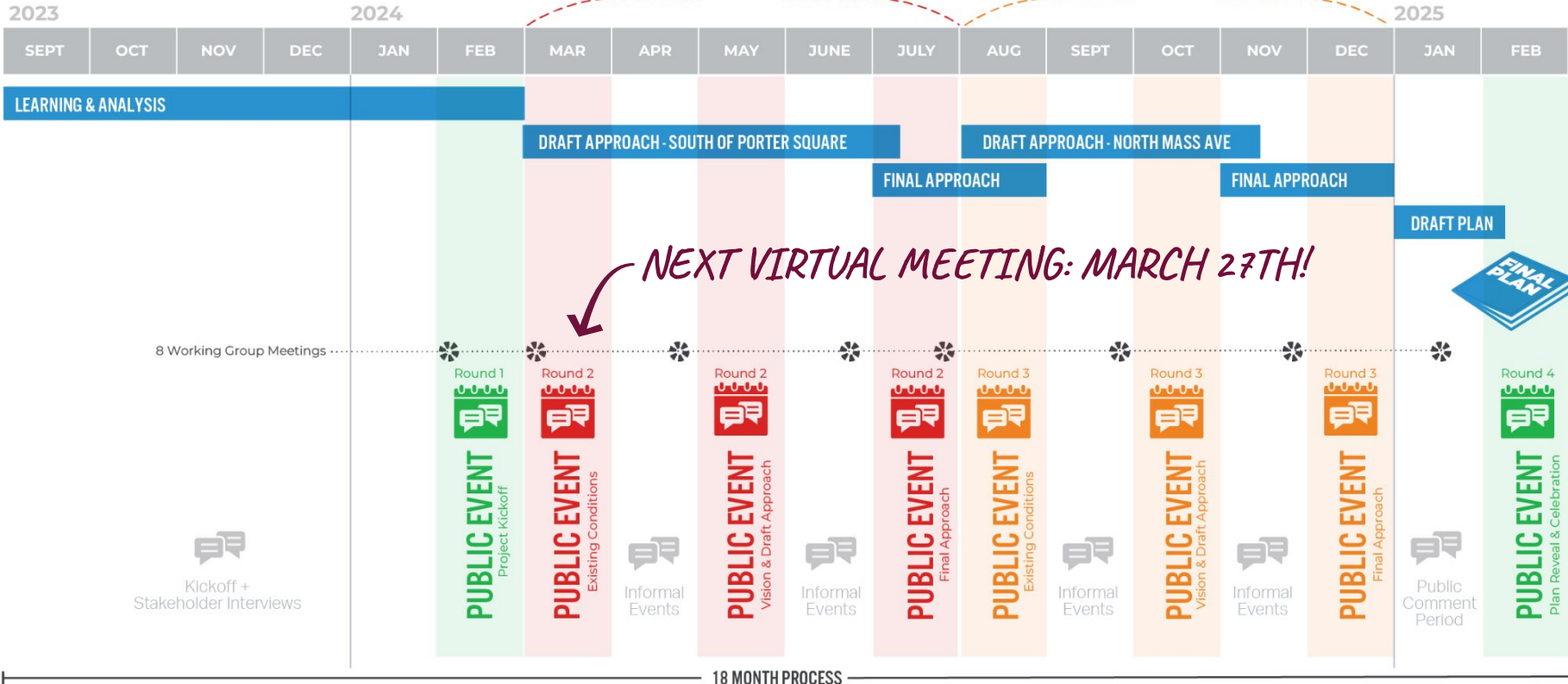
# PROJECT SCHEDULE

## ROUND 1 PROJECT KICKOFF

## ROUND 2 SOUTH OF PORTER SQUARE

## ROUND 3 NORTH MASS AVE + PORTER SQUARE

## ROUND 4 FINAL PLAN





*You're invited to a*

# COMMUNITY MEETING

**JOIN US ONLINE!**

Wednesday, March 27th  
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

