

MEMO

To: Pete Stidman, Howard Stein Hudson

Mary Catherine McLean, Department of Conservation and Recreation

From: Cambridge Transit Advisory Committee

Date: December 7, 2016

Re: Mount Auburn Street Corridor Study

The Cambridge Transit Advisory Committee, which was established in 2013 to help guide the City on transit-related issues and currently consists of twenty-one neighborhood residents and representatives of institutions, businesses, and other stakeholders, met recently to discuss the Mount Auburn/Fresh Pond Parkway study and wishes to provide comments.

We would like to thank the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Howard Stein Hudson for your work on the Mount Auburn Street Corridor Study to date. High quality bus service along this corridor is vital, and we are encouraged to see that bus priority treatments have been considered at locations throughout the study area. At the last Committee meeting, we reviewed the draft concepts and other available materials and discussed the following points:

Introduction of new delay to buses: One of the stated goals of the study is to “improve transit delays,” which we strongly support. However, we are concerned that some aspects of the proposed concepts could lead to *increased* delay for buses:

- 1) Converting the Mt Auburn Street and Brattle Street intersection to a signalized intersection could result in additional delay due to queueing. One potential solution, if a signalized intersection is indeed warranted, would be to provide a queue jump lane (at least eastbound but preferably in both directions) and Transit Signal Priority for buses. We ask that the study team assess the impact to buses.
- 2) Reducing the number of travel lanes at the Mt Auburn Street approach to Fresh Pond Parkway in the westbound direction. Currently, there are two lanes approaching this intersection, and buses tend to use the right lane as an informal queue jump. If this approach is reduced to one lane, buses will be forced to wait in the remaining single-lane queue. Perhaps a formal queue jump lane could be established.
- 3) Although we strongly support adding an eastbound bus only lane on Mt Auburn Street between Brattle Street and Coolidge Avenue, it will be important to ensure that, if a westbound travel lane is removed, delay to westbound buses does not outweigh the benefits to eastbound buses.

