



Aberdeen Ave Safety Improvement Project

September 24, 2024 | 6 p.m. | Zoom

Project Team

Project Manager: Andreas Wolfe, A.I.C.P., Street Design Project Manager
Traffic, Parking, + Transportation Department
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Traffic, Parking, + Transportation Department

- Brooke McKenna, Transportation Commissioner
- Jeffrey R Parenti, PE, PTOE, PTP, ENV SP Asst. Commissioner for Street Management/Traffic Director
- Stephen Meuse, PE Supervising Engineer
- Jonathan Brown, EIT Traffic Engineer

Community Development Department

- Andy Reker, Transit Program Manager

Department of Public Works

- Jerry Friedman, PE Supervising Engineer

Meeting Purpose, Outcomes and Process

- **Purpose:** We're presenting upcoming changes to Aberdeen Ave
- **Outcomes:** We want you to learn about the proposed project design and give feedback.
- **Process:** We will present background slides. You can write a comment or question using the Zoom Q&A panel or make a verbal comment after the slideshow.

www.cambridgema.gov/AberdeenAve

Contact Information

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Street Design Project Manager

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Agenda

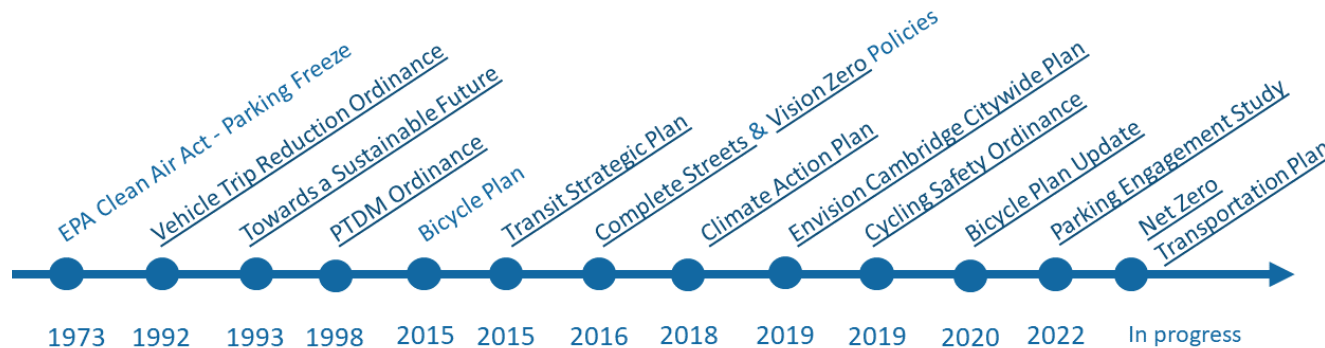
- Planning and Project Background
- Project Design
- Other Options Considered
- Next steps

Planning Background

Sustainable Transportation

Sustainable transportation options allow people to get around in ways that reduce emissions and congestion, such as walking, biking, and public transit.

Cambridge Transportation Policies and Plans



The overall goal is to support a healthy, livable community that enables people of all ages and abilities to get around easily and safely

- Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance
- Parking & Transportation Demand Ordinance
- Climate Protection Plan
- School Wellness Policy
- Envision Cambridge
- Complete Streets Policy
- Vision Zero
- Cycling Safety Ordinance

Cambridge Bicycle Plan

The *Vision* of the 2020 Bicycle Plan is that Cambridge will be a place where:

- ▶ Bicycling is equally available to everyone
- ▶ All destinations can be reached by bike
- ▶ Streets are designed to accommodate bicycling for people of all ages, abilities and identities.

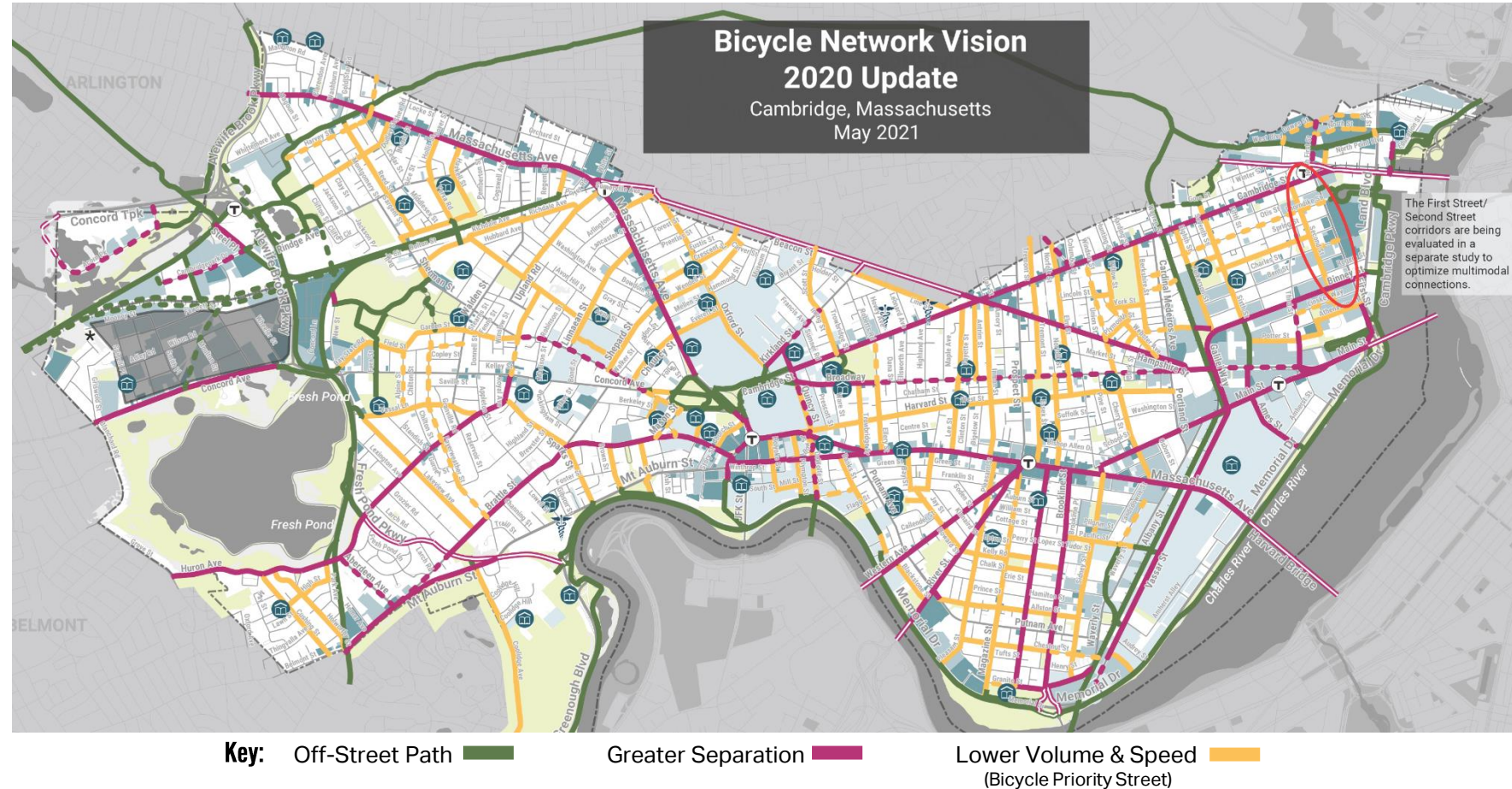
We're removing the barriers that make it harder for people to choose to bicycle in Cambridge. Creating safe and comfortable streets makes it easier for people to bike instead of drive.



The Bicycle Network Vision

We are creating a network for biking that is safe, comfortable, connected, and people-centered.

A safe, comfortable network that connects important destinations throughout the City helps more people choose to bike if they would like to.



Learn more: cambridgema.gov/2020bikeplanupdate

Cycling Safety Ordinance Overview

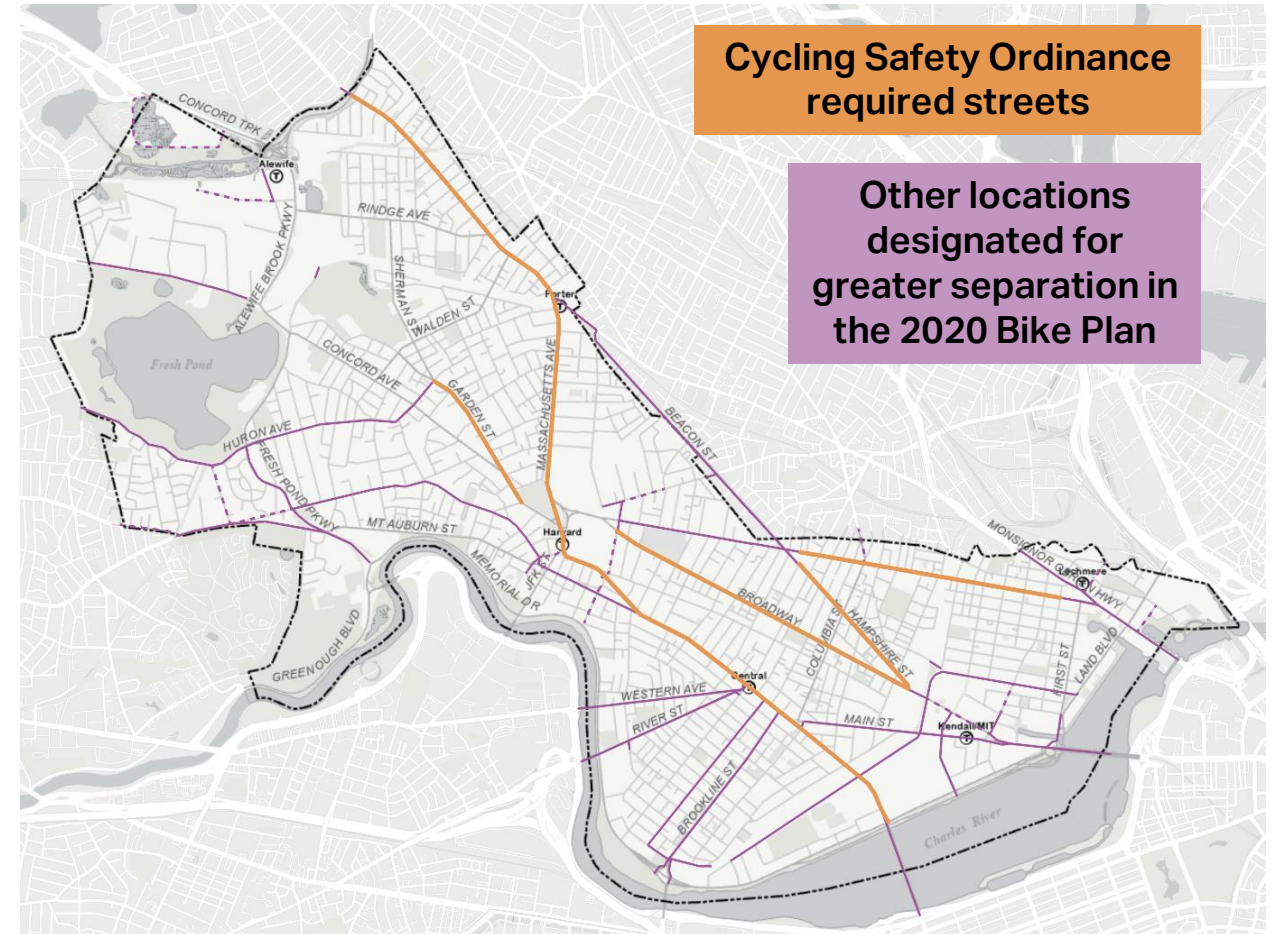
In general, the Ordinance requires the City to install separated bike lanes on:

- All of Massachusetts Ave;
- **Broadway** from Quincy St to Hampshire St;
- **Cambridge St** from Oak St to Second St;
- **Garden St** from Huron Ave to Berkeley St/ Mason St;
- **Hampshire St:** from Amory St to Broadway;

It also requires 11.6 miles of separated bike lanes in other locations identified in the 2020 Bicycle Network Vision.

Learn more at:

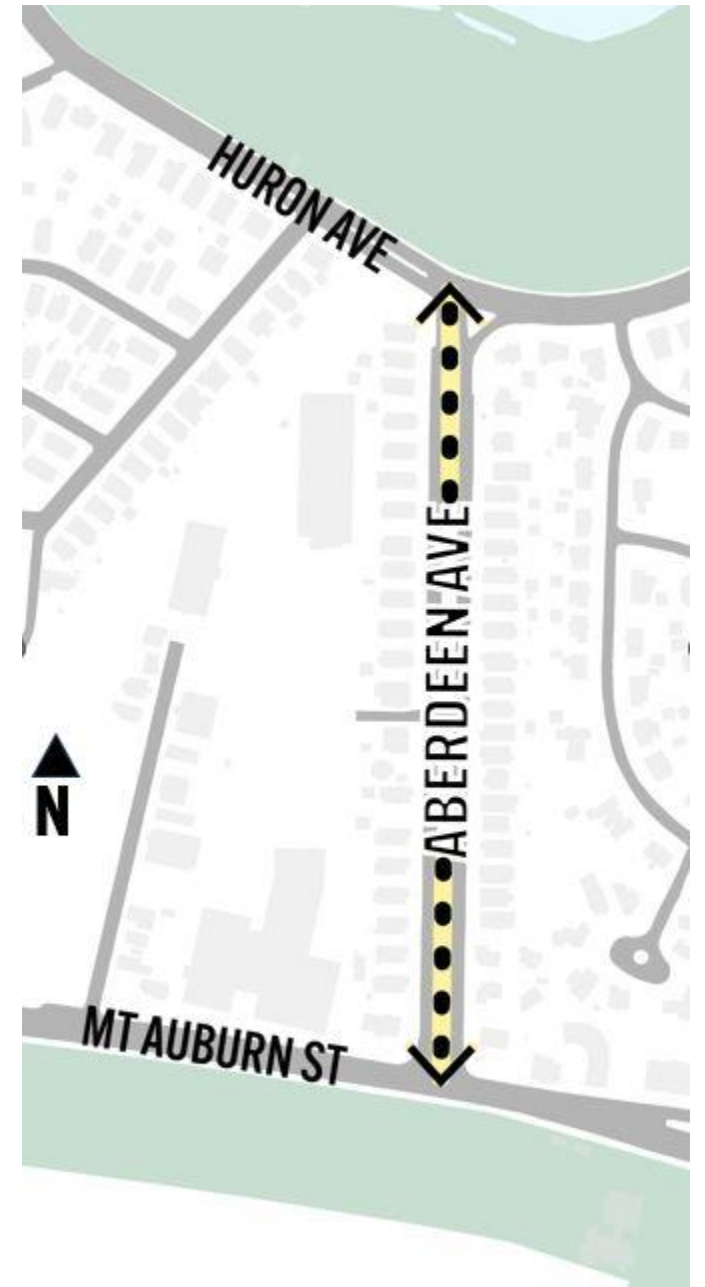
cambridgema.gov/cycling-safety-ordinance



Project Background

Project Area

- Aberdeen Ave



Project Goals



Goal 1: Reduce driver speeds to improve safety



Goal 2: Continue building out the Bicycle Network

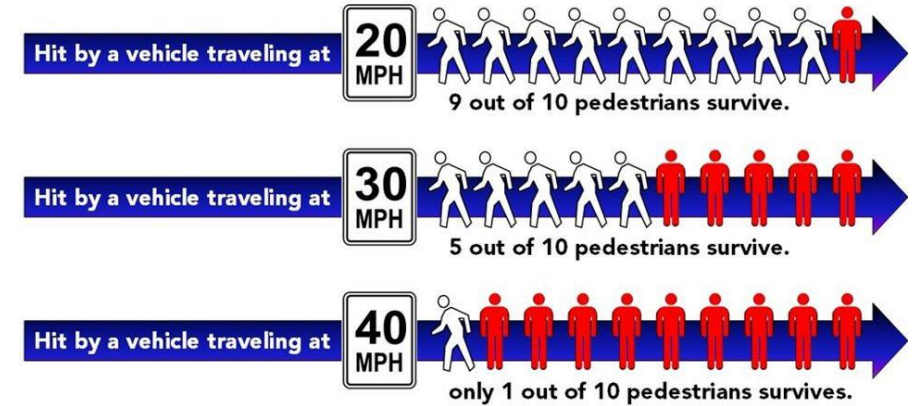


Goal 3: Improve crossing locations for people walking

Project Goal 1: Reduce Driver Speeds to Improve Safety

How:

- Narrow streets
- Shorten crossing distances

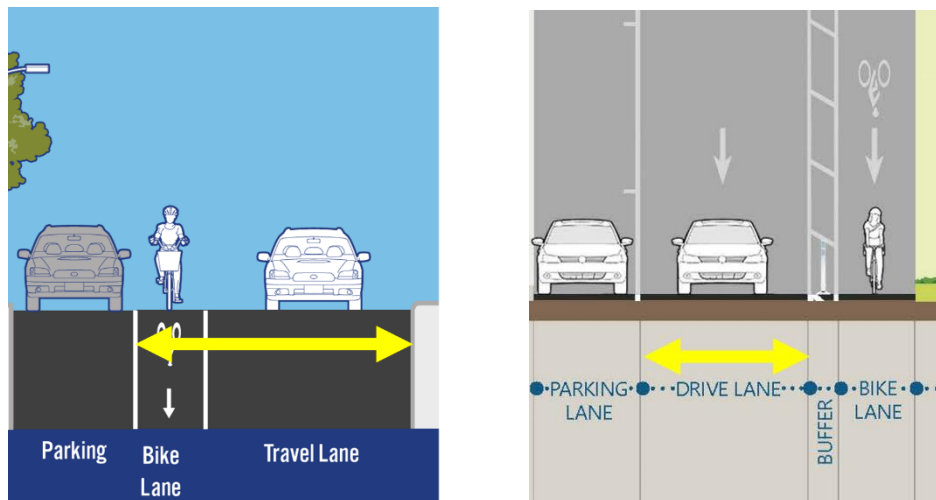


Speed is the #1 factor in the severity of a crash.

Speed Bracket	Actual Speed (Southbound)	Actual Speed (Northbound)
50 th percentile (50% of drivers went faster)	29 MPH	27 MPH
85 th percentile speed (15% of drivers went faster)	33 MPH	32 MPH
95 th percentile speed (5% of drivers went faster)	36 MPH	35 MPH

Table 1: Speed and traffic volume collected September 10-12, 2024, 72-hour average

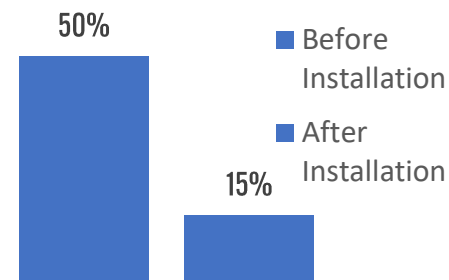
Why Narrow Lanes? Reduce Speeds. Improve Safety.



Compared to today, the street will feel about 5' narrower.

Drivers will be closer to physical objects, in this case parking on one side and flex-posts on the other.

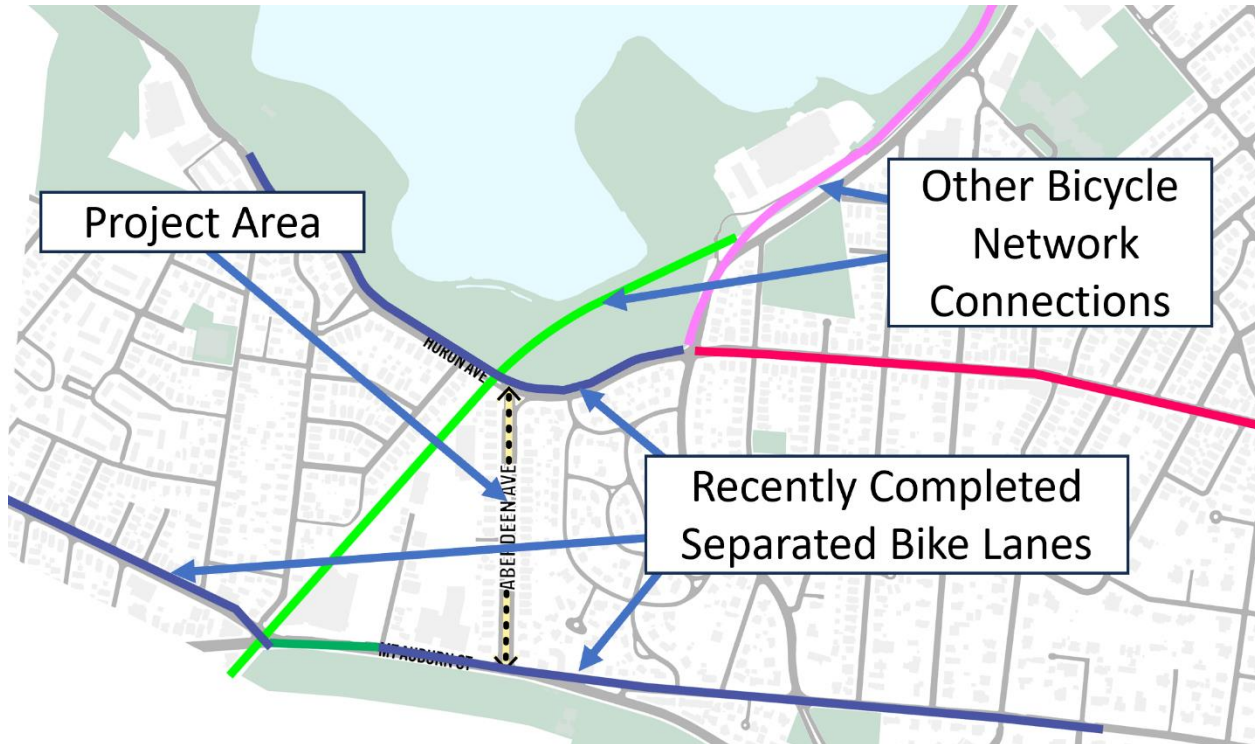
Percentage of drivers travelling above 25 mph speed limit (Cambridge St between Dana St and Ellery St)



Example: A 2017/2018 project on Cambridge St saw a reduction in overall speeds of about 25% with narrower lanes

Project Goal 2: Continue building out the Bicycle Network

- Connects to recently completed facilities on nearby streets
- Improves local access to the Cambridge-Watertown Greenway and Fresh Pond Reservation Shared-Use Path



Learn more at
cambridgema.gov/2020bikeplanupdate

Separated Bike Lanes

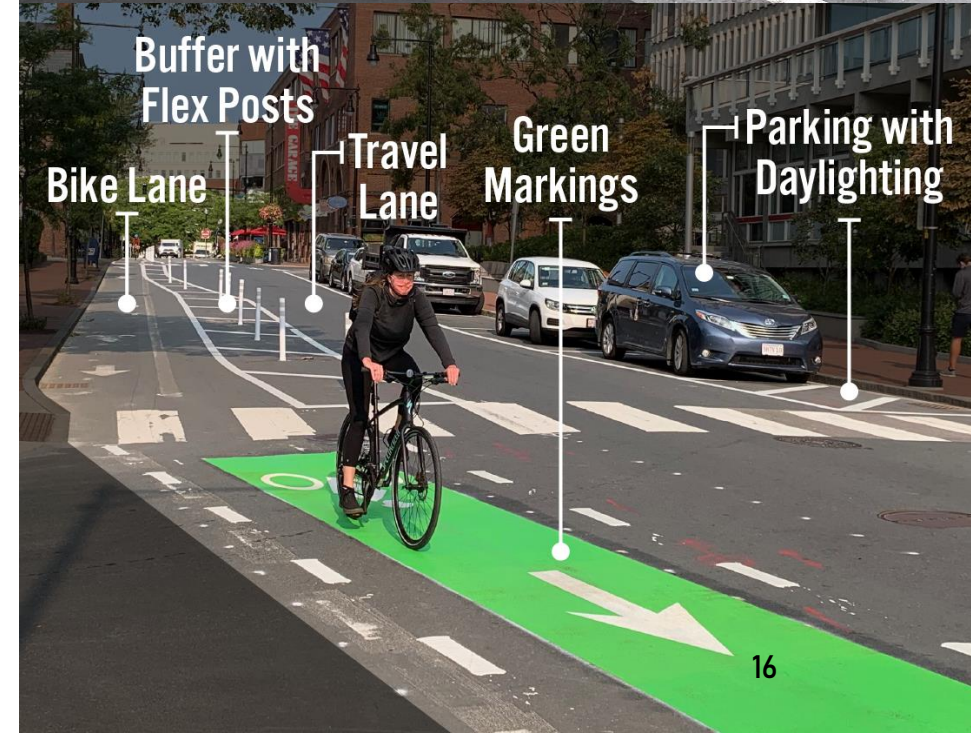
What are separated bike lanes?

- People biking and driving are each provided dedicated travel space
- The bike lane has physical separation from the vehicle lane (i.e., curb, flex post)

Benefits for people biking:

- Increases comfort and access for people of all ages and abilities
- Reduces crash and injury risk
- Eliminates threat of "dooring" from parked vehicles
- Reduces potential conflicts between moving vehicles and people biking
- Encourages slower traffic speeds by visually narrowing the roadway

Top Image: Before a separated bike lane was installed
Bottom Image: After a separated bike lane was installed



Project Goal 3: Improve Crossing Locations for People Walking

- Build out improvements at crosswalks, such as crossing islands



Quick-build vs Capital Construction

This will be a quick-build project

- Quick-build projects can be installed significantly faster than typical construction projects. **Within weeks or months.**
- Capital Construction projects must be included in the City's Five-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan for funding and coordination with utilities. **Can take 2-5 years depending on the amount of work.**
- Quick-build projects allow us to address road safety concerns *quickly*

Western Avenue is an example of a separated bike lane built by Capital Construction

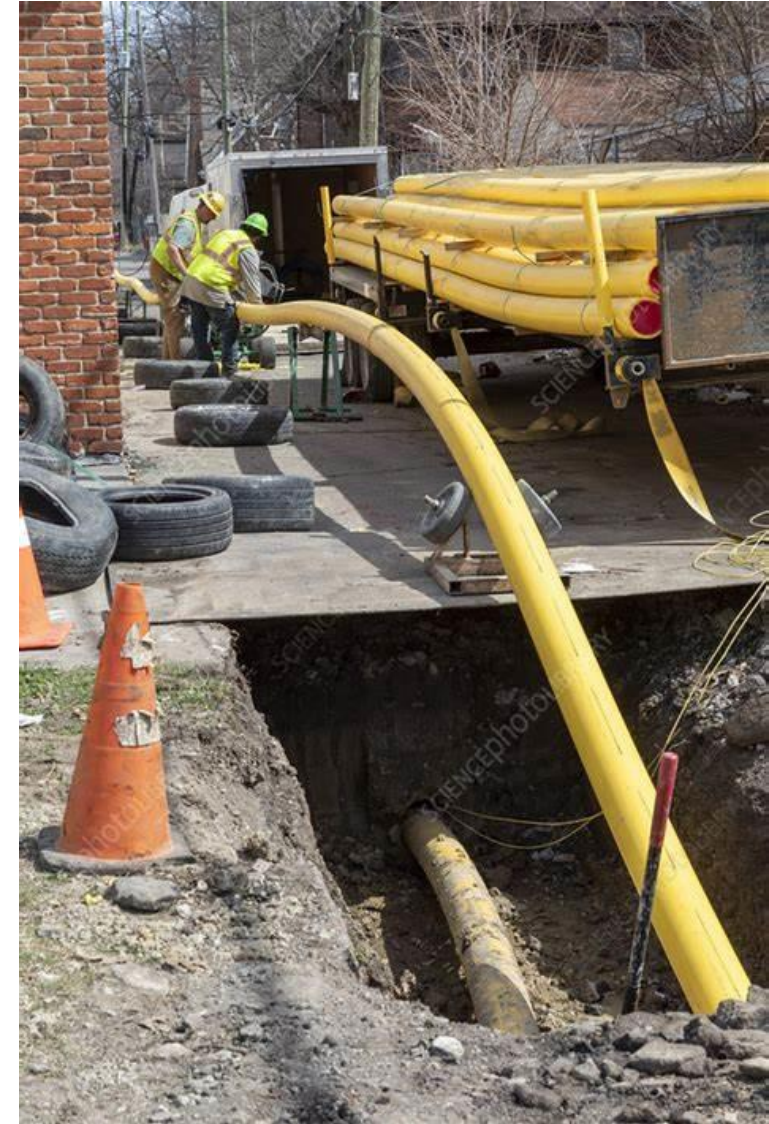


Utility Coordination

- Eversource Gas is upgrading gas main on Aberdeen Ave
- This is critical work required under federal law to replace old cast-iron gas main that can corrode.

The City is coordinating with Eversource to:

- Repair and replace any affected sidewalk with in-kind materials (concrete)
- Fully repave the roadway (Beginning Spring 2025)
- Install the project and the associated improvements to street safety once all gas work and paving is complete



Project Schedule

- 1 **September/October 2024 Curb Construction**
 - Ramp and accessibility improvements
 - Sidewalk repairs
 - Construction of the crossing island

- 2 **Spring 2025 Paving**
 - Full width, including parking lane
 - Temporary detours and parking restrictions likely

- 3 **Spring 2025 Project Implementation**
 - Pavement marking
 - Flex-Posts
 - Additional signage

Implementation will only take a few weeks after the street is paved. Pavement markings will occur overnight. Flex-posts during the day.

- 4 **Ongoing Project Follow Up**
 - Adjustments to markings and signal timing as needed
 - Maintenance, including clearing the street of leaves, debris and snow



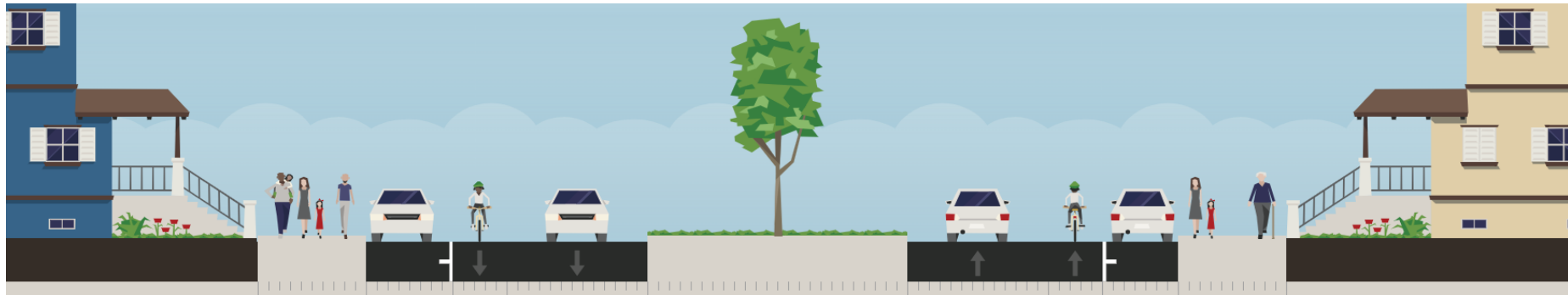
Image: Winter biking on Mass Ave, Cambridge.

Project Design

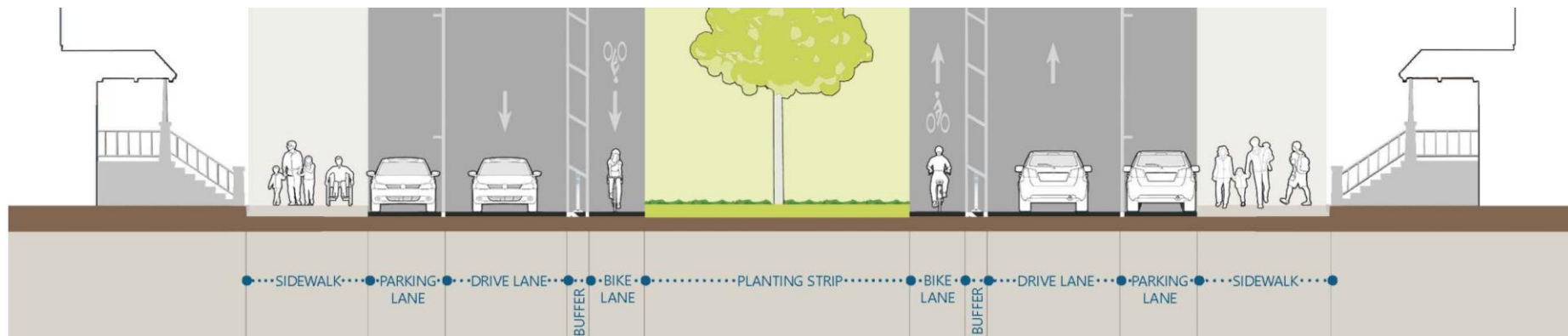
Key Change: Separated Bike Lanes

- Separated bike lane on left side of traffic, next to median
- The travel lane will become narrower, which will reduce vehicle speeds

Aberdeen Ave
Existing



Aberdeen Ave
Proposed



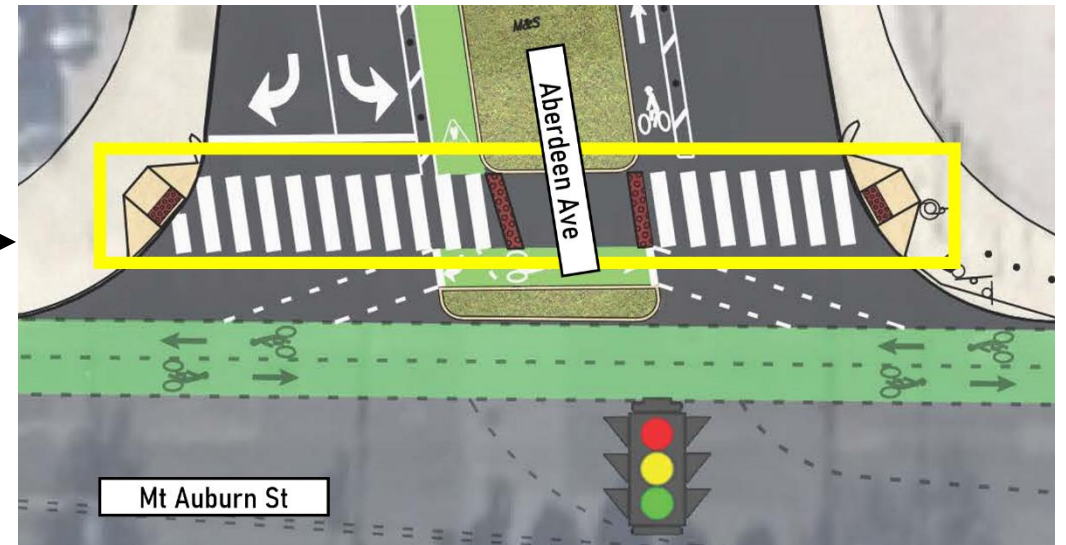
Key Change: New Crossing Island at Mt Auburn St

- Provides physical protection for people crossing Aberdeen Ave
 - Vertical separation; also acts as a refuge island
- New ADA-compliant curb ramps to complement recent accessible signal upgrades

Today

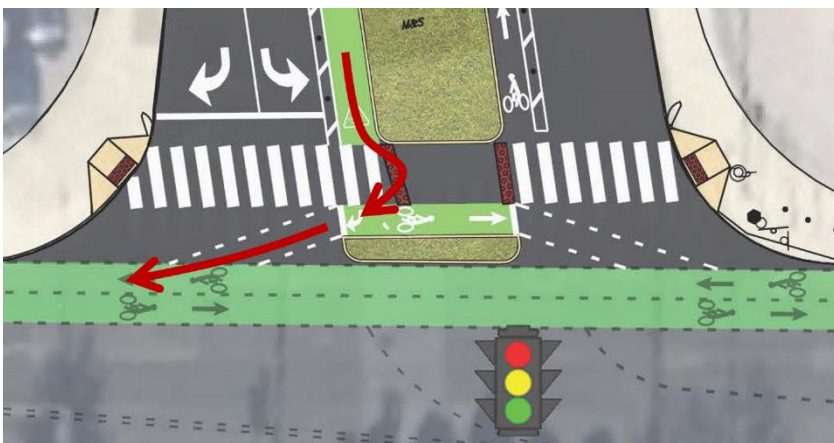


Proposed



Key Change: Bicycle Turn Box

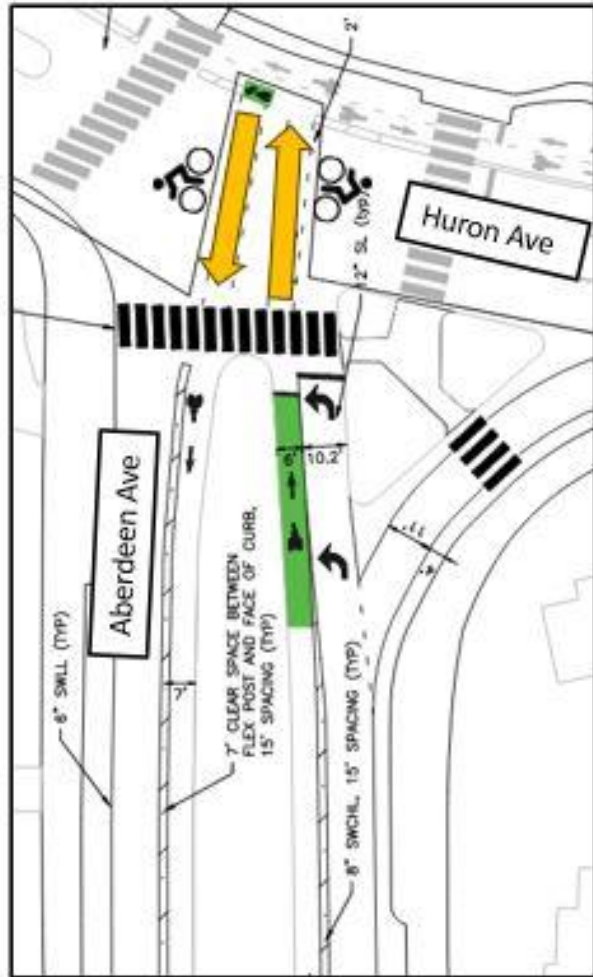
- Maintains separation from vehicles up to the intersection
- Improves connections for bicyclists to adjacent facilities
 - Cambridge-Watertown Greenway via Mt Auburn St
 - Harvard Sq via Brattle St



Proposed



Key Change: Changes to signal timing at Huron Ave



- Additional signal phase for people riding bikes to enter and exit Aberdeen Ave to enter the two-way path on the north side of Huron Ave

How will this impact me:

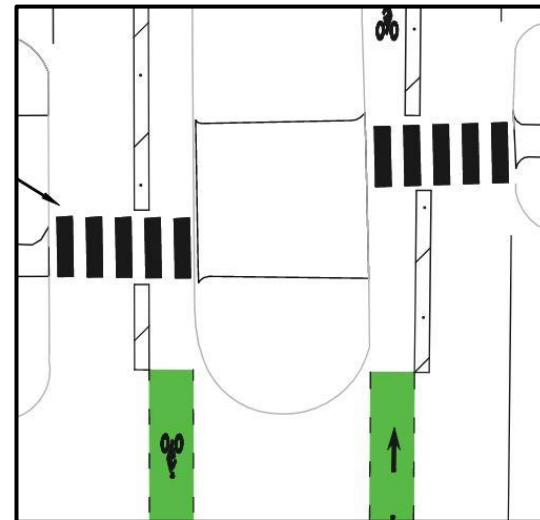
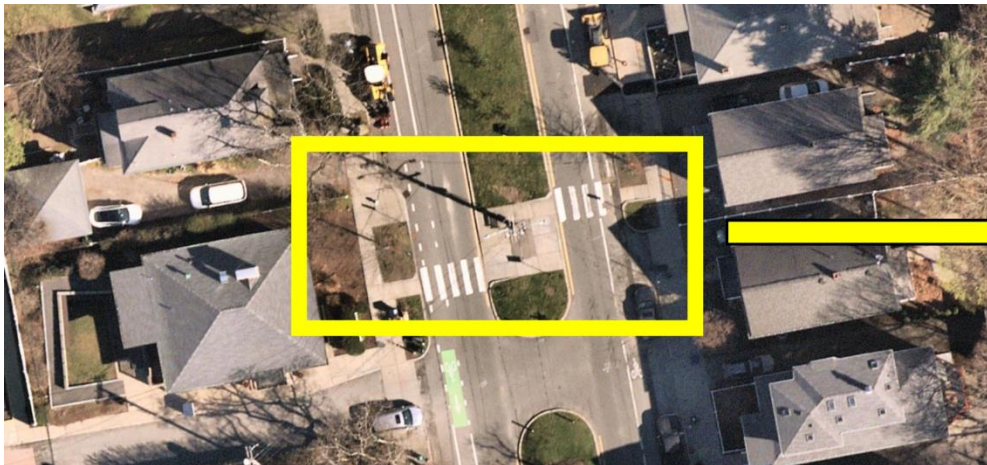
- Vehicles turning onto Huron Ave will be separated from people biking in time and space
- No change in the amount of green time for each vehicle movement
- Total signal cycle will increase from 90 seconds to 100 seconds

Project Design: Mid-Block Crosswalk at Aberdeen Way

- As elsewhere on Aberdeen Ave, at the mid-block crosswalk, the width of the travel lane will be narrowed

Improvements crossing Aberdeen Ave at this location:

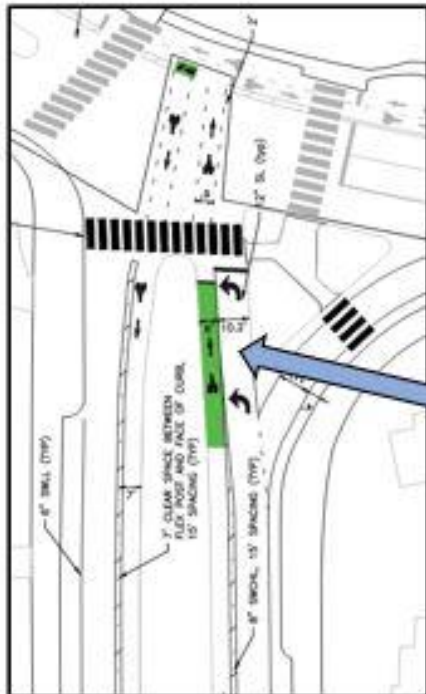
- Slower vehicle speeds, resulting in more frequent yielding to people crossing
- More frequent flex-post spacing approaching crosswalk to emphasize slower speeds at the crosswalk



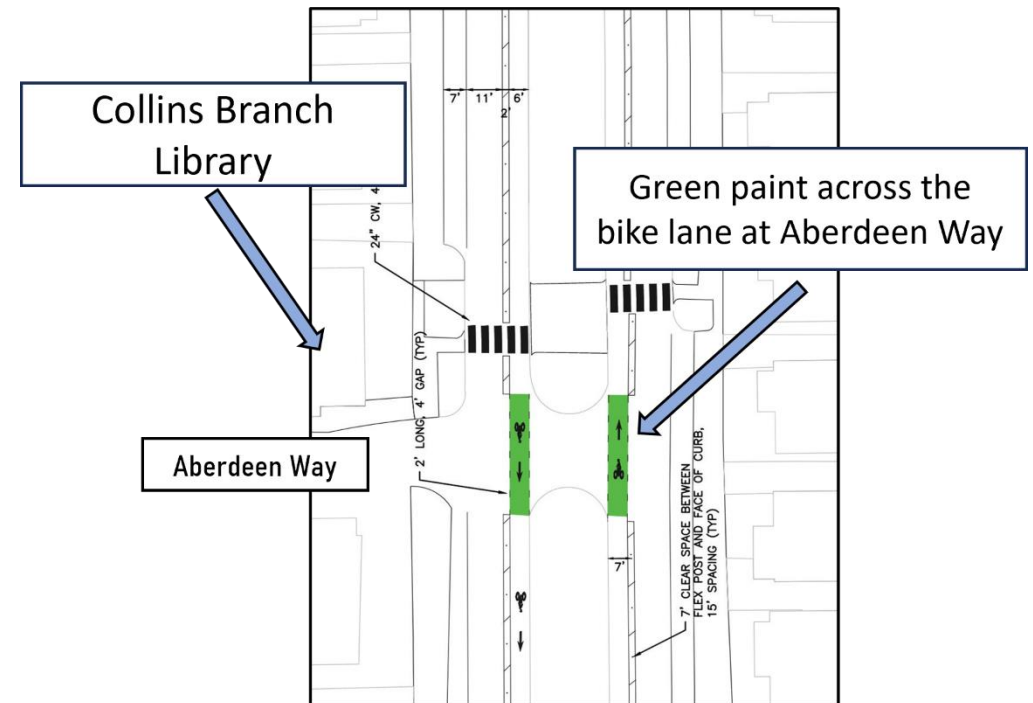
Project Design: Additional Notes

- Approaching Huron Ave, the street becomes too narrow for flex-posts
- Bike lane painted green at Aberdeen Way crossing

A full set of high-resolution pavement marking plans and signal timing plans can be found on the project website



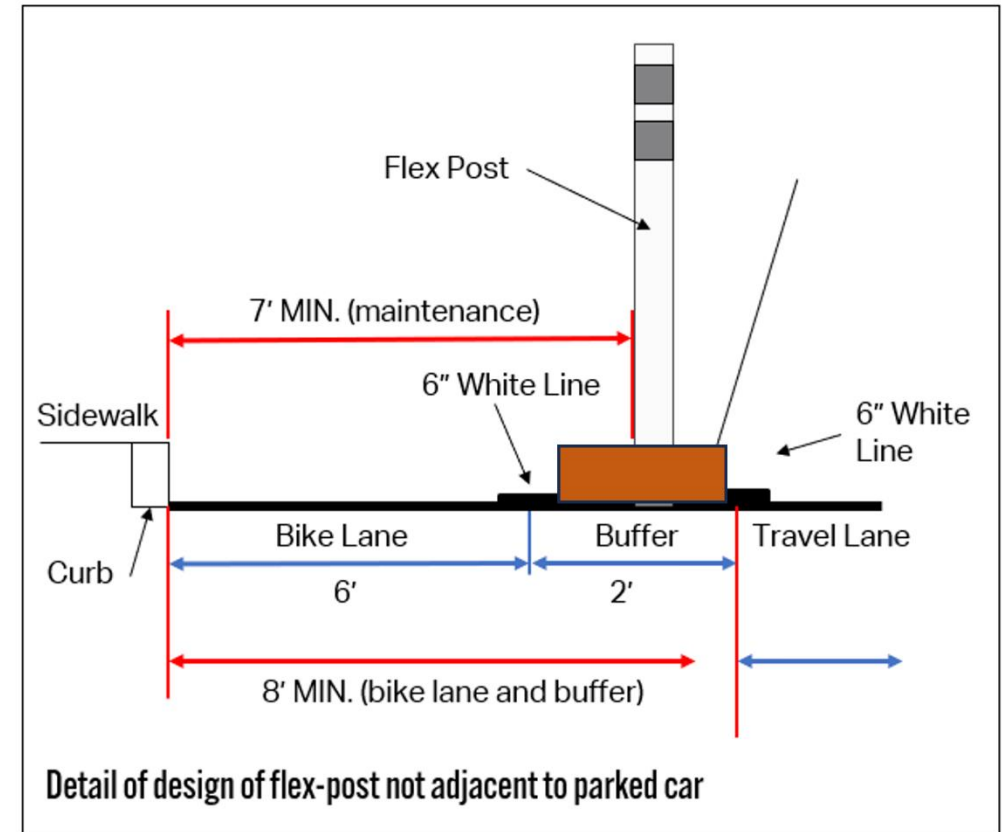
Approaching Huron Ave, the bike lane becomes too narrow for posts



Green paint across the bike lane at Aberdeen Way

Other Options Considered

- **Not advanced for implementation:**
 - Right-side bike lanes
 - Bike lanes on the median
 - Precast curb separation



Next Steps

Get Involved

- [Sign Up for the Project Mailing List](#)
- Provide feedback at the end of this meeting
- Email the Project Manager with any additional feedback

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Image: Winter biking on Mass Ave, Cambridge.

Questions + Comments

- We will take comments in the order hands are raised
 - If calling in, dial *9 to raise your hand / *6 to unmute
- Additional questions can be asked using the Q+A function
- Approximately every 15 minutes, we will provide answers to questions

We ask of you:

- Keep your comments and question to under two minutes to provide time for others to speak
- Direct questions to city staff, not other attendees
- Do not use vulgar language and refrain from personal attacks

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