

Complete Streets Public Discussion Minutes

September 22, 2021

Town Staff Present: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Alecia Alleyne, Assistant to the Town Administrator; Robert (Brutus) Cantoreggi, Director of Public Works; Michael Maglio, Town Engineer

Town Administrator Jamie Hellen (TA Hellen) opened up the meeting with an explanation that this is not a formal town board or committee meeting, but rather a discussion led by Brutus Cantoreggi, Director of Public Works, and Mike Maglio, Town Engineer, to provide an overview of the Complete Streets Program. TA Hellen provided a brief explanation of the program, which the Town Council voted unanimously to support in the Spring of 2021, and explained that we are now in the phase of developing a comprehensive plan that is required by the state and must be submitted this month.

Summary of Presentation by Brutus Cantoreggi [Presentation attached.]

- A Complete Street is one that provides safe and accessible options for all travel modes – walking, biking, transit and vehicles – for people of all ages and abilities.
- MassDOT runs the program, provides technical assistance, funds construction projects up to \$400k per year
- We have registered with MassDOT, participated in training and developed a Complete Streets policy.
- Currently we are finalizing a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan for which Franklin was awarded \$38k from Mass DOT to complete in collaboration with an outside consultant.
- We are working to apply for individual construction project grants and are conducting public outreach opportunities to gain feedback from the community (i.e. this meeting).
- Benefits of Complete Streets include safer and more convenient access and travel for all users and people of all abilities, improved health, economic viability and quality of life in the community, and better connectivity for travel between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations. Improvements achieved are both large and small scale, depending on what fits with the need and character of the community.
- Challenges of Complete Streets include physical constraints, available right-of-way and traffic volume and speed.
- Types of eligible projects include pedestrian facilities, traffic & safety, transit facilities and bicycle facilities.
- Next step is to complete and submit the Prioritization Plan.

TA Hellen spoke briefly about the Prioritization Plan and how some of the projects it includes were influenced by the ideas and comments that came out of a Complete Streets meeting with Town residents, staff and Council members. TA Hellen also mentioned that this is not a permanent plan; rather, each year projects will come off and go on depending on available funding and priorities.

Summary of Prioritization Plan projects by Mike Maglio [Complete (Draft) Projects List attached.]

- Grove St. & Washington St. (would be broken up into a few projects)
 - Traffic signal @ Grove St. / Washington St.
 - Bike lane from Grove St. / Washington St. intersection to SNETT trail
 - Extend bike lane to Beaver St. and eventually Chilson Park / Beaver Pond
- Sidewalk on Beaver St.
- Traffic calming on King St. & Wachusett St.
- Bicycle parking throughout town
- Extend newly created Lincoln St. / Skyline sidewalk further up towards Medway (would be broken up into a few projects)
- Washington St. sidewalk – King St. intersection up to 495 (would be broken up into a few projects)

Mr. Maglio discussed that prioritization of projects is in process, and the timeline of completion will depend on available funding from the state and other sources.

Resident Beth Wierling discussed the possibility of utilizing other grant funds for some of the smaller projects, i.e. bicycle parking, in order to free up the Complete Streets funding for the higher priority projects, with a focus on safety.

Mr. Cantoreggi commented that in addition to considering the Town's priorities we also need to consider the State's priorities. They assign more points for different types of things (public safety in particular) and we want our priorities to align with theirs.

Resident Steve Sherlock from Franklin Matters asked where to find the Complete Streets website link and the list of priorities. Mr. Cantoreggi replied that it would be up and available tomorrow.

Mr. Sherlock also discussed some project ideas:

- Sight lines: There are some corners where the sidewalks are blocked by fences with overgrowth or hedging so it is difficult to see the traffic around the corner. Mr. Cantoreggi responded that these matters are handled by the Building Department and Building Commissioner, Gus Brown.
- Sidewalks: There are areas where a person in a wheelchair cannot remain on the sidewalk due to the placement of a utility pole or other obstruction. Mr. Cantoreggi replied that this is an important issue that they are aware of. The minimum required distance of a pole to the curb is 36 inches but sometimes when poles are installed they lean. Mr. Cantoreggi asked that any specific locations that have a leaning pole or a distance issue please be reported. TA Hellen commented that there are Pole Hearings any time new poles are installed. Both the TA office and the DPW do everything they can to hold the utility companies accountable but very often they don't comply. We will continue to do our best to enforce the pole installation regulations.
- Hedging and tree branches along the sidewalk that extend over the sidewalk pose a danger to people walking. Mr. Cantoreggi discussed that if branches etc. are growing over town property (i.e. sidewalks) then the DPW is able to prune them.

Mr. Cantoreggi stated that the best way for people to contribute ideas going forward will be to send an email. The email address and contact name will be posted on the Complete Streets website. TA Hellen noted that the Prioritization Plan that is being posted now is in draft form, and the final plan will be posted when it is complete.

TA Hellen asked for further questions or comments. Upon receiving no response, TA Hellen adjourned the meeting.

COMPLETE STREETS



Franklin DPW

Robert A. Cantoreggi, Public Works Director
Michael Maglio, Town Engineer

September, 22nd, 2021

Complete Streets

- A Complete Street is one that provides safe and accessible options for all travel modes - walking, biking, transit and vehicles – for people of all ages and abilities.



Complete Streets Funding Program

- Program Run by MassDOT
 - Provides technical assistance
 - Funding source for construction projects
 - Up to \$400,000 per year

Program Tiers

● Tier 1

- Register with MassDOT, Participate in Training, and Develop a Complete Streets Policy

● Tier 2

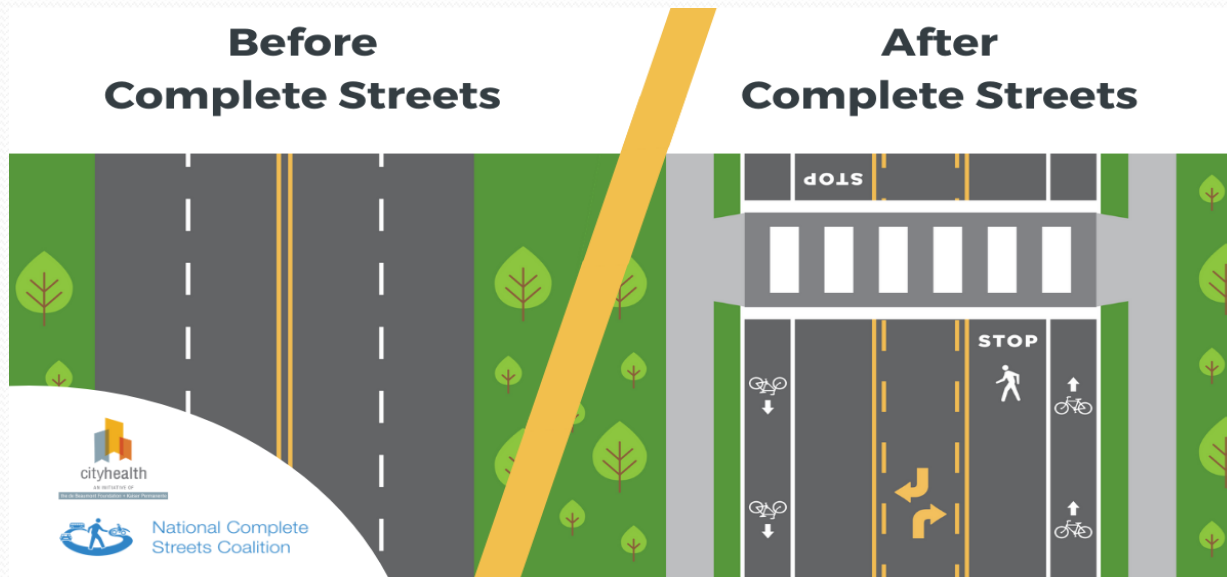
- Develop a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan
(MassDOT has awarded Franklin a \$38,000 grant to complete)

● Tier 3

- Apply for individual construction project grants, MassDOT issues Project Approval and Notice to Proceed

Benefits of Complete Streets

- Promotes safer and more convenient access and travel for all users and people of all abilities
- Contributes toward the safety, health, economic viability and quality of life in the community
- Provides better connectivity for travel between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations



Complete Streets Improvements

- May be large scale:
 - Corridor-wide improvements that include a separated bicycle lane, or new traffic signals that address pedestrian and bicycle movements
- May be small scale:
 - Pavement markings to delineate shared bike lanes, or upgrading accessible curb ramps

The design of a Complete Street should incorporate improvements that fit with the need and within the character of a community

Challenges

- Physical constraints
- Available right-of-way
- Traffic volumes and speeds



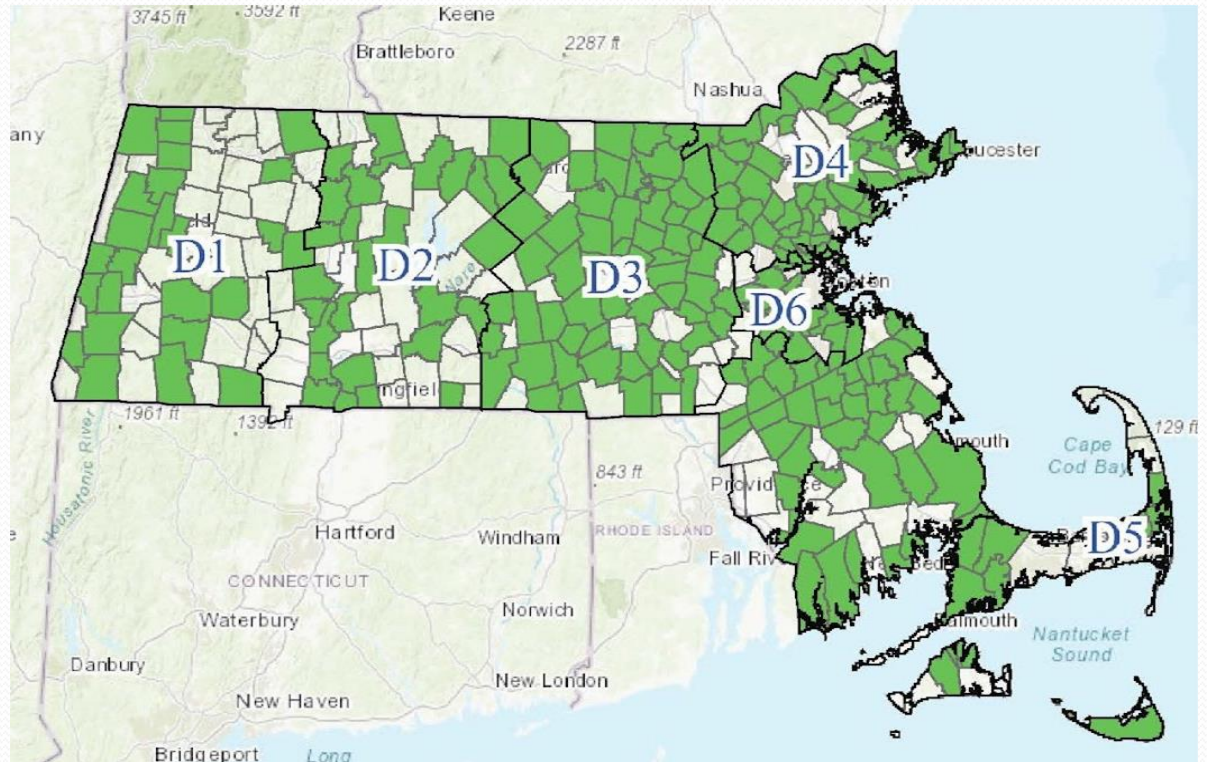
Types of Eligible Projects

- Pedestrian Facilities
 - New sidewalks, sidewalk repairs, accessible curb ramps
- Traffic & Safety
 - Traffic calming, shoulder widening, radar speed signs
- Transit Facilities
 - Secure bicycle parking, signage, transit shelters
- Bicycle Facilities
 - Shared use paths, bicycle lanes, bicycle parking fixtures

Participating Communities

✓ 230 Communities have adopted a Complete Streets policy

* An additional 22 communities have registered with MassDOT to participate in the program



Next Steps

- Develop a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan
 - Prioritized list of potential projects to be submitted to MassDOT in September



Questions?

Project Details				
Rank	ID	Project Name	Project Description	Project Location
1	N	Grove St	Install separated shared-use path 10 feet wide on the east side of Grove Street between Washington Street and Beaver Street (1.75 miles long). A total of eight pedestrian curb ramps will be provided at intersection crossings. Funding for pavement mill and overlay and a new traffic and pedestrian signal at Grove Street and Washington Streets is being pursued through a MassWorks grant. The project will improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, mobility and fill a network gap.	The project is approximately 1.75 miles long on the east side of Grove Street between Washington Street and Beaver Street.
2	G	Grove St Crossing	Install a new crosswalk and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at the Southern New England Trunk Line Trail crossing. The project will improve safety for pedestrians and improve driver awareness.	Southern New England Trunk Line Crossing on Grove Street
3	L	Beaver St	Install a new five-foot-wide asphalt sidewalk and granite curb along the south side of Beaver Street from the recently completed asphalt sidewalk with granite curb at Chilson Beach / Beaver Pond Recreational Area parking lot, south to Grove Street. Incorporate a minimum three-foot-wide grass buffer between new sidewalk and roadway edge where feasible. Consider the installation of an 8' to 10' wide asphalt shared use path in place of a sidewalk to provide a bicycle connection from Recreational Area to Grove Street and the SNETT trailhead. Provide one pedestrian ramp and detectable warning panel. Total length is 2,100 feet. The project will improve pedestrian safety, mobility and fill a pedestrian network gap.	The project is approximately 2,100 feet long on the south side of Beaver Street from the Pond Recreational Area to Grove Street
4	R	King St at Wachusett St	Install a median refuge island at the existing crosswalk across King Street at the corner of Wachusett Street to calm motor vehicle traffic and promote safe crossing near the Parmenter Elementary School. Narrow traffic lanes from current width of 12 feet to 11 feet. Include seven-foot-wide raised concrete pedestrian refuge island with detectable warning panels. Include three-foot curb extensions at existing pedestrian ramps. Tighten northwest corner of the intersection in order to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians along that left of the crosswalk. Install two new speed feedback signs and provide new pavement markings.	At the intersection of King Street and Wachusett Street.
5	P	Washington St North	Install a new five-foot-wide asphalt sidewalk and three pedestrian curb ramps along the east side of Washington Street from current northern terminus at 236 Washington Street south to Wilson Road. Work will incorporate new curbing, drainage, outfalls, retaining walls, earthworks, and permitting. Additional work includes removing and/or rebuilding of retaining walls built by homeowners that is within the right of way (# 302 Washington Street, just north of Wilson Road). Total project length is 2,030 feet. The project will improve pedestrian safety, mobility and fill a pedestrian network gap.	The project is approximately 2,030 feet long on the east side of Washington Street from 236 Washington Street to Wilson Road.
6	Q	Washington St South	Install a new five-foot-wide asphalt sidewalk and granite curb with three pedestrian curb ramps along the east side of Washington Street from Wilson Road south to King Street. Total project length is 2,140 feet. The project will improve pedestrian safety, mobility and fill a pedestrian network gap.	The project is approximately 2,140 feet long on the east side of Washington Street from Wilson Road to King Street
7	M	Upper Union St	Install a new five-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with three-foot-wide grass buffer strip with bituminous asphalt cape cod berm on the east side of Upper Union Street from the current sidewalk terminus at 837 Upper Union Street, traveling south to the corner of Constitution Boulevard at Upper Union Street. Total length is 2,000 feet. The project involves the relocation of a low rock wall and navigating existing utility poles and water utilities near the existing back of curb. Project may have potential to be funded by future development of undeveloped parcels along Upper Union Street. The project will improve pedestrian safety, mobility and fill a pedestrian network gap.	The project is approximately 2,000 feet long on the east side from 837 Upper Union Street to the corner of Constitution Boulevard at Upper Union Street
8	K	Lincoln St South	Extend a new five-foot-wide concrete sidewalk and granite curb on the west side of Lincoln Street from the current sidewalk terminus at Georgia Drive north to Bent Street. The project involves backfilling of slopes (earthwork at #800 Lincoln Street), tree removal, mailbox relocations, and driveway apron paving work. Provide two pedestrian ramps and detectable warning panels. Total length is 1,500 feet. The project will improve pedestrian safety, mobility and fill a pedestrian network gap.	The project is approximately 1,500 feet long on the west side of Lincoln Street from the current sidewalk terminus at George Drive to Bent Street.
9	J	Lincoln St North	Extend a new five-foot-wide concrete sidewalk and granite curb on the west side of Lincoln Street from Bent Street north to the current gravel driveway utility access road area (Town property / hiking trails). Total length is 1,480 feet. Provide three pedestrian ramps and detectable warning panels. The project will improve pedestrian safety, mobility and fill a pedestrian network gap.	The project is approximately 1,480 feet long on the west side of Lincoln Street between Bent Street and a utility access road driveway
10	I	Lincoln St/Sherman Ave	Install a new rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) at the existing crosswalk on Lincoln Street south of Sherman Avenue. Install two pedestrian ramps and detectable warning panels. The project will improve safety for pedestrians and improve driver awareness.	Lincoln Street south of Sherman Avenue
11	E	Emmons St/Main St	This intersection has STOP control at two of three approaches. Add a STOP sign on the Main Street northbound approach. Remove the existing crosswalk signage. Utilize existing pole for new STOP sign. Include three "ALL WAY STOP" plaques. Include street signage – there are currently no identifying street name signs. The project will improve safety for all users.	Intersection of Emmons Street and Main Street
12	S	Union St Bike Lanes	Stripe bicycle lanes on both sides of Union Street from Washington Street at Arlington Street to Pleasant Street at the northern edge of the Town Common. This will improve safety for bicyclists in this area.	The project is approximately 1.0 miles long on both sides of the street along Union Street from the intersection of Washington Street at Arlington Street up to Pleasant Street.
13	H	Bicycle Parking	Add Inverted-U style bicycle parking at the following locations which will improve bicycle mobility: 1) Davis Thayer Elementary School 2) King Street Memorial Park (reset existing bike parking and add paved blacktop access to bike parking racks) 3) Chilson Park at Beaver Pond 4) MBTA Commuter Rail station downtown 5) Southeastern corner of Union and Cottage Street intersection. 6) Town Common	Bicycle parking at several locations
14	F	Dean Ave/Main St	Add eight new detectable warning panels at each location where they are missing. Include detectable warning panels at the sidewalk segment adjacent to the post office mailbox driveway pullout. The project will improve safety for people with disabilities.	Intersection of Dean Avenue and Main Street

15	A	East Central St/King St/Chestnut St	Expand the pedestrian refuge islands at the northeast and southwest approaches of this intersection so that they nearly fill the space within the current striped area. This will slow turning traffic through this intersection and provide more protection for pedestrians. The project includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •12 new detectable warning panels •Two expanded concrete raised refuge islands. Existing triangular islands are 13 feet by 19 feet on one side, and 9 feet by 19 feet on the other side •8 New countdown pedestrian signal heads •The removal of dead signal lenses on the King Street northbound approach and the Chestnut Street southbound approach 	Intersection of East Street, King Street, and Chestnut Street (at Levia Pieriega Square)
16	O	East Central Street	On East Central Street, between King Street and Ruggles Street, stripe five-foot-wide bike lanes in existing striped shoulder with a new bike lane line and bike lane stencils on both sides of the street. There is no parking along this corridor. There is a transition to shared lane markings at the western end of the proposed project. Total length is 1,230 feet. The project will improve bicycle safety, mobility, and fill bicycle network gap.	The project is approximately 1,230 feet long on East Central Street on both sides between King Street and Ruggles Street
17	T	Cottage St Bike Lanes	Stripe four-foot bicycle lanes on both sides Cottage Street from Union Street to East Central Street. The travel lanes will be reduced from 12 feet to 10 feet wide in each direction. This will improve bicycle connectivity between residential and commercial areas, and safety.	The project is approximately 2,600 feet long along both sides of Cottage Street from the intersection of Union Street to East Central Street.
18	U	Pleasant St Bike Lane	Stripe four-foot bicycle lanes on both sides Pleasant Street from Main Street to the Delcarte recreational area. The travel lanes will be reduced to 11 feet wide in each direction. This will improve bicycle connectivity between residential and commercial areas, and safety.	The project is approximately 6,500 feet long along both sides of Pleasant Street from the intersection of Main Street to the Delcarte recreational area.
19	V	King St Bike Lane	Stripe four-foot bicycle lanes on both sides King Street from Washington Street to East Central Street. The travel lanes will be reduced from 12 feet to 10 feet wide in each direction. This will improve bicycle connectivity between residential and commercial areas, and safety.	The project is approximately 11,400 feet long along both sides of King Street from the intersection of Washington Street to East Central Street.
20	D	Emmons St	Add a midblock crosswalk across Emmons Street at approximately the break in the iron fence at the motor vehicle and pedestrian entrance to the Thayer House parking lot at Dean College and the PieZoni's restaurant / shopping center pedestrian path connection. Total length is 22 feet. There are currently shared lane markings on Emmons Street. Project includes two new pedestrian curb ramps, resetting granite curbing, two new detectable warning panels, and signage. The project will improve pedestrian safety and connectivity.	Midblock crosswalk at Thayer House access on Emmons Street
21	C	Cottage St/Wachusett St	Add a crosswalk across Cottage Street at the northeast corner of Wachusett Street. Total length is 26 feet. Project includes two new pedestrian curb ramps, resetting granite curbing, two new detectable warning panels, and signage. The project will improve pedestrian safety and connectivity.	Northeast corner of Cottage Street and Wachusett Street
22	B	Union Sq/Warren Pl	Add a midblock crosswalk across Union Street between McCarthy Street and Warren Place. The total length is 34 feet. Project includes two new pedestrian curb ramps, resetting granite curbing , two detectable warning panels, and signage. The project will improve pedestrian safety and connectivity.	On Union Street between McCarthy Street and Warren Place