



CAMBRIDGE LICENSE COMMISSION

831 Massachusetts Avenue, First Floor, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Telephone Number: (617) 349-6140

September 9, 2015

Mike Izzo
Bridj
283 Newbury Street
Boston, MA 02115

RE: Review Hearing

Dear Mr. Izzo:

On September 8, 2015 the Board of License Commissioners held a review hearing for the Bridj jitney permit. At this time the Board voted 3-0 to recommend that the jitney permit approval be continued at the end of the pilot program, to the City Manager for the City Council. This approval is subject to the conditions outlined in the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Memorandum dated July 21, 2015.

The matter will be on the September 21, 2015 City Council agenda. If you wish to speak, be sure to sign up prior to 5:30 pm.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Y. Lint". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over the printed name and title.

Elizabeth Y. Lint
Executive Director

CC: Acting Chair Arthur Goldberg; Commissioner Robert Haas; Chief Gerald Reardon; Assistant Chief Gerard Mahoney



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Traffic, Parking and Transportation
344 Broadway
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

www.cambridgema.gov/traffic

Joseph E. Barr, Director
Brad Gerratt, Assistant Director for Parking Management

Phone: 617-349-4700
Fax: 617-349-4747

MEMORANDUM

To: Andrea Jackson, Chairperson, License Commission
From: Joseph E. Barr, Director 
Date: July 21, 2015
Re: GroupZoom (Bridj) Jitney Application

On Monday November 10, 2014, the City approved a pilot program for the Bridj bus service, a direct, flexible mass transit system where users can request to be picked up and dropped off at specific locations using the Bridj web site or mobile application on their smart phone. The pilot program was based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), dated October 28, 2013, between the Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP&T) and Bridj. The purpose of the pilot program was to monitor the impacts on MBTA and other transit services at bus stops, on bike lane obstructions, and generally on traffic in Cambridge.

During the 6 month pilot program, TP&T, in coordination with Bridj, was able to evaluate the impacts of the system on the transportation infrastructure in the City. Results of the pilot program are discussed below, followed by TP&T's conclusions and recommendations.

Pilot Program Results

Overall Routing and Stop Locations:

- The primary Bridj routing during the pilot program was between Kendall Square, Boston's Allston neighborhood and the Town of Brookline (generally in the Coolidge Corner area).
- Bridj dropped-off and picked-up riders at the following locations in Cambridge: 1.) Main Street in Kendall Square (EZ Ride stop), 2.) Vassar Street at Massachusetts Avenue, both sides of Vassar Street, 3.) Massachusetts Avenue in Porter Square (during only one week in January 2015), and 4.) Broadway eastbound side at 120 Broadway.
- A map depicting Bridj service area and current stop locations in Cambridge is provided below.

Noise and Safety:

- Bridj contracts with a team of fully licensed and insured vendors to provide service. Vehicles are of various makes and models and range between 12 passengers and 32 passengers. The vast majority carry 12-14 passengers.
- TP&T received no noise or safety complaints about Bridj.
- No Bridj vehicles were cited for any violations or accidents while traveling in Cambridge.

Impacts on MBTA Stops and Congestion:

- Bridj reported dwell times at the stops between 26 to 78 seconds.
- There were no issues reported by MBTA bus operators regarding Bridj impacts on MBTA buses pulling in or out of MBTA bus stops.
- There were no issues reported by EZ Ride bus operators regarding sharing the Main Street stop in Kendall Square, including during the period when construction on Main Street has disrupted access to those stops.

- During the pilot program, Bridj did not stop at any of the four heavily used MBTA bus stop locations that were raised as concerns by TP&T in the October 28, 2014 MOU. Therefore, it was not possible to evaluate impacts on those stops. The specific locations were
 - i. Massachusetts Avenue in Harvard Square opposite Holyoke Street,
 - ii. Massachusetts Avenue at 77 Massachusetts Avenue by MIT,
 - iii. Central Square stops between Western/River/Pearl Streets and Prospect Street (both sides of Massachusetts Avenue) and,
 - iv. Massachusetts Avenue at Upland Road at Porter Square, both sides of the Street.

Impacts on Bicycle Facilities:

- There were no issues reported about Bridj impacting bicycle lanes.
- There was no indication that Bridj caused any increase in driver, pedestrian or cyclist crashes adjacent to stops.
- There were no comments or complaints from people that they were impacted from Bridj use of stops.

Impact on Traffic and Congestion:

- Bridj estimates that 20-25% of their current riders take Bridj instead of driving in Cambridge and estimates 25-30 car trips are removed from Cambridge streets each week.
- Customer sign-up surveys between January and December 2014 indicated that the mode share people typically used to get between their origin/destination was approximately: 17% drive, 61% public transit, 20% walk/bike, and 2% other.
- Not all riders made two-way trips, only about 30%. For example, some people used Bridj in the morning and used another mode to travel in the afternoon.

Conclusions and Recommendations

During the pilot program, Bridj cooperated fully with TP&T, had no adverse impacts on the City, and provided a new transit service between Kendall Square and the Town of Brookline and Boston’s Allston neighborhood. By providing another mobility option, Bridj (during this early stage period) reduced approximately 5-8 vehicle trips from City streets per day. It also shifted trips from transit, walking, and bicycling.

According to the 2011-2013 American Community Survey, 45% of Cambridge employees and 30% of Cambridge residents drive alone to work. The TP&T Department, in coordination with the Community Development Department work hard to shift people from driving alone to using more sustainable transportation such as mass transit. TP&T supports innovative programs to help encourage mode shift from single occupant vehicles. Therefore, we support an annual Jitney License for Bridj, with the following conditions, in order to protect residential streets, ensure the service does not adversely impact MBTA service at bus stops, or interfere with the management of streets and curb regulations. As with any jitney license, we would expect that the continued issuance of this license would be subject to generally safe and accountable operations, and that the License Commission would reserve the right to terminate the license if any of the conditions below are not being met, or if Bridj is operating in an unsafe manner.

Routing Conditions:

1. Bridj will not operate vehicles of a weight and/or size qualifying it as a truck over truck-restricted routes in the City of Cambridge.
2. Bridj will only operate on Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) regulated parkways in accordance with an operating permit granted by DCR.
3. Bridj will not use Pearl or Magazine streets unless they have a stop on those streets. Through trips will use Waverly/Albany, Sidney, Brookline, or River Streets instead.

Stop Conditions:

As stated in the October 28, 2014 MOU, TP&T supports Bridj use of the MBTA stops within the City as the safest and most appropriate locations to stop for passengers to board or alight from their vehicles. TP&T recommends the following Stop Conditions:

1. Bridj will not stop at Cambridge Street eastbound in front of Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, as this location is highly congested due to school bus operations.
2. Bridj will use the Galleria Mall shuttle stop on Main Street in Kendall Square instead of the MBTA stop on Main Street in Kendall Square (except when construction conditions dictate it not practicable).
3. The four heavily used MBTA bus stop locations permitted during the pilot program will continue to be permitted. However, because Bridj did not stop at the locations during the pilot program it was not possible to evaluate the impacts on MBTA bus services at those stops. TP&T wants to know when, where, and how often any of those locations are used. The information should be part of the monitoring program described below. The four heavily used MBTA locations are as follows:
 - v. Massachusetts Avenue in Harvard Square opposite Holyoke Street,
 - vi. Massachusetts Avenue at 77 Mass. Ave by MIT,
 - vii. Central Square stops between Western/River/Pearl Streets and Prospect Street (both sides of Massachusetts Avenue) and,
 - viii. Massachusetts Avenue at Upland Road at Porter Square, both sides of the street.

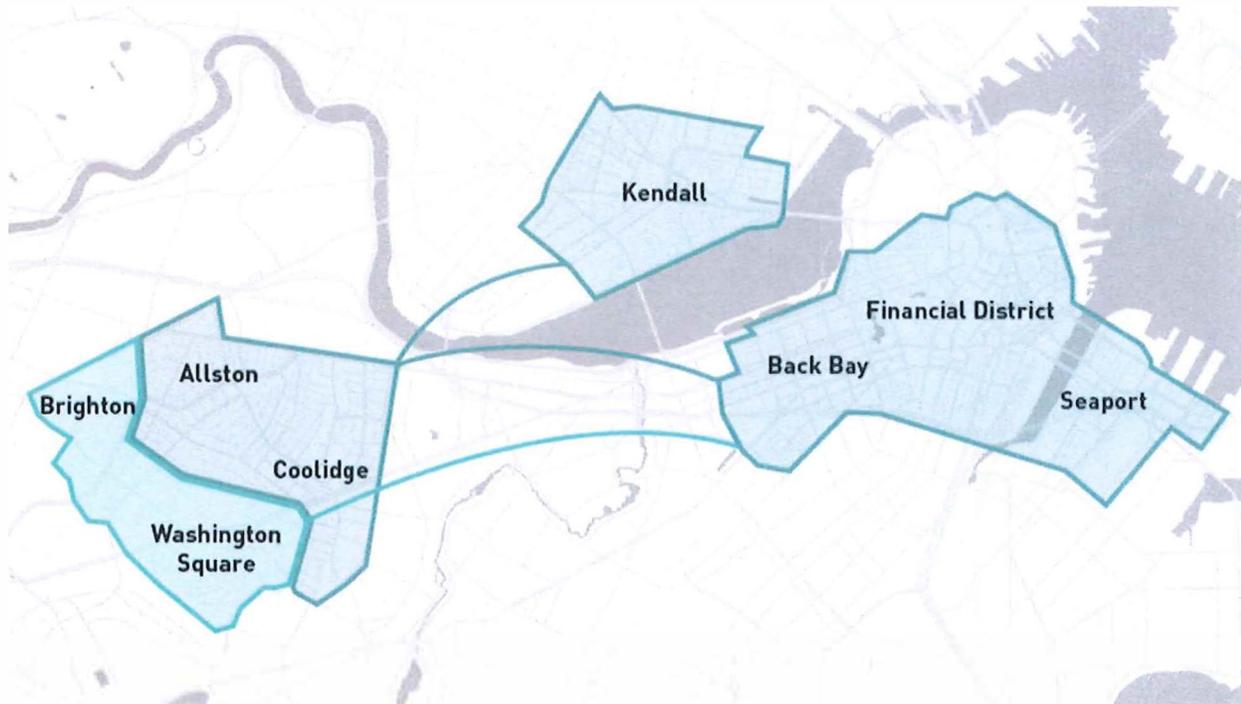
Monitoring Conditions:

1. Bridge will continue to make available to TP&T information on weekly stop locations and frequency for annual reporting purposes.
2. Bridj will report to TP&T the stop locations and frequency for any of the 4 heavily used MBTA bus locations (noted above). The information should be provided monthly for any of the stops used.
3. Bridj will provide an annual report which shall include:
 - i. Service area and stop locations.
 - ii. Service frequency in Cambridge.
 - iii. Bridj staff will meet with City staff as needed through the year to discuss ridership levels and trends. In the future, the City may wish to have Bridj release ridership publicly but this will occur only upon future mutual discussions.
 - iv. Summary of an annual Bridj rider survey, such as rider origin and destination, previous mode before using Bridj, and number of cars not traveling in Cambridge.
 - v. Any other information that Bridj has to support achieving their service goals and/or areas of success.

Other Conditions:

1. All Bridj vehicles must be clearly marked "Bridj" so they are identifiable.
2. All vehicles must be licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU).
3. Bridj service hours may not extend longer than MBTA service hour without additional approval.
4. No stopping in crosswalks or bicycle lanes.
5. If reserved ahead of time, TP&T and CDD staff and members of the License Commission may ride Bridj service at any time to evaluate performance.
6. TP&T may request (and if needed, require), with appropriate written notice, that Bridj restrict routes and stop locations at any time, if those routes and stop locations do not promote the City's policies regarding traffic congestion, environmental impacts, and public safety.

Bridj Service Area



Current Bridj stop locations in Cambridge

Updated 6/5/2015

