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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

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October 25, 2010

To the Honorable, the City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report Item Number 10-128, regarding an update on the Broadway project and the goals of the project, Public Works Commissioner Lisa Peterson and Traffic, Parking & Transportation Director Susan Clippinger report the following:

**25% Broadway Plans**



## Project Goals

The design of Broadway between Ames Street and Third Street has been developed to address the following goals:

- Repair deteriorating roadway and sidewalk conditions and address accessibility problems.
- Improve the safety of the heavily used midblock crosswalk (the Volpe crosswalk).
- Provide a clear and accessible pedestrian path along the sidewalk in front of the Marriott.
- Maintain the full traffic capacity at the two intersections to handle current and future traffic.
- Create a design that accommodates taxi and bus loading at the hotel in a way that does not block the bicycle lanes or cause unsafe merging.
- Maintain and add to the street trees both in the median and along the sidewalk that make this corridor so attractive.

## Design

The design

- Maintains the vehicular capacity of the intersections by retaining 3 approach lanes to Third Street and 2 approach lanes to Ames Street.
- Accommodates future traffic volumes, including the 3 million square feet of projects currently permitted and additional background growth. The traffic analysis is conservative based on past experience with traffic in Kendall Square.
  - Based on the annual count program conducted by the CRA, traffic in the Kendall Square area in the past 15 years has grown very little in spite of the significant growth in new buildings.
  - The percentage of employees driving to work has declined, while the use of transit, walking and biking and increased.
  - 45% of commuters driving into Kendall Square come from the northwest. The Green Line extension will provide new transit service for those commuters.
- Improves the safety of the Volpe crosswalk by eliminating the double jeopardy situation, which is one of the most serious types of pedestrian crashes. This occurs at unsignalized crossings of multiple travel lanes where the first driver yields to a pedestrian, but the driver in the second lane does not see the pedestrian.
- Improves the operation of the bus loading operation at the Marriott. The Marriott currently loads tour busses on Broadway adjacent to the hotel. This blocks the bike lane and one of the travel lanes, causing drivers and cyclists to merge unexpectedly. The plan, as presented at the 25% design hearing, did not provide space for this bus loading operation. The plan has since been modified, as shown below, to provide a legal and safe bus loading area in front of the hotel on Broadway that does not require the bike lane or a travel lane to be blocked.



- Improves the operation of the taxi zone operation at the Marriott. The current taxi zone is too short to accommodate the demand, so taxis often extend into the bike lane. The plan provides a longer taxi zone to accommodate this demand and eliminate the conflict between the taxi stand and the bike lane.

### **Community Process**

City staff have had numerous meetings and reviewed the plans with the abutters and other stake holders; Volpe Center, Boston Properties, Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, Kendall Square Association (KSA), Marriott Hotel, Bicycle Committee and Pedestrian Committee. A 25% Design hearing was held on July 22, 2010. Subsequent to that meeting, the City received correspondence from the KSA expressing concerns about the traffic impacts of the project. The City held a meeting with the KSA on September 14, 2010 to address concerns about traffic, review the traffic analysis in more detail and ran the Synchro Traffic Model, which represents the vehicular operation of the future conditions.

### **Summary**

This project provides the opportunity to enhance the corridor for all users, improve safety for pedestrians, provide fully accessible sidewalks, maintain and enhance the mid-block crosswalk, eliminate illegal parking in the bike lane, improve the operation of the taxi zone, provide on-street loading and increase the quantity and quality of green space, while also maintaining vehicular capacity along this critical corridor.

City staff is committed to continuing the collaboration with abutters and other interested parties to develop the best possible plan for this area.

Detailed plans and additional project information are available on DPW's website at [www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/projects/BroadwayThirdToAmes.htm](http://www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/projects/BroadwayThirdToAmes.htm)

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy  
City Manager