

Somerville Bicycle Advisory Committee Annual Report 2018





2018 SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Community Representatives

Ken Carlson, Chair

Tom Lamar, Vice Chair

Katie Pierce, Secretary

Alex Anderson

Emily Balkam

Mark Chase (Resigned Jan 2019)

Alex Epstein, Vision Zero Liaison

Ted Feldman

Alex Frieden

Enid Kumin (Resigned Oct 2018)

Ted Lester

Kevin McGrath

Alan Moore

Brian Postlewaite (Resigned Mar 2018)

Brandon Stafford (Resigned Jan 2019)

Mark Vollinger

Lena Webb, Traffic Commission Member

Michael Weber

Ian Woloschin

Ex-Officio Members

Skye Stewart, Office of the Mayor

Jesse Clingan, Board of Aldermen

Stephen Carrabino, Somerville Police Department

Terence Smith, Traffic and Parking
(Resigned Jan 2019)

Stanley Koty, Department of Public Works

Mike Tremblay, Office of Strategic Planning and
Community Development (Resigned Jan 2019)

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Introduction

As I reflect back on 2018, I have to say I am proud of the bicycle culture that we have in Somerville. This strong bicycling culture is clearly reflected in the results of the latest [American Community Survey](#) (2017 Census), which reported that Somerville is now 5th in the country, and #1 on the east coast, in the percentage of commuters who bike. We came in at 9%, with our friends in Cambridge coming in right behind us at 8.2%. This puts us ahead of cities considered bicycling meccas like Portland, Oregon, and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Of course this data does not include everyone who bikes (e.g. college students, senior citizens, and children), and it does not count all of the non-work trips taken by bicycle. Our percentage could be even higher if we considered all bike trips. Another metric of Somerville's passion for bicycling comes from results of the [MassCommute Bike Challenge](#), in which people in the 'Ville logged more biking miles during the bike challenge week than any other city in the metro region. In 2018, Somerville was rated a gold level bicycle friendly community by the league of American Bicyclists.

US Cities with the Highest Share of Bicyclists					
Geography	State	Rank	2017 % of Commuters Who Bike	# of Bike Commuters	2016 % of Commuters Who Bike
Davis	California	1	15.5%	4914	16.6%
Santa Cruz	California	2	13.2%	4384	N/A
Boulder	Colorado	3	10.7%	6141	9.0%
Palo Alto	California	4	10.0%	3155	7.8%
Somerville	Massachusetts	5	9.0%	4781	6.6%
Cambridge	Massachusetts	6	8.2%	5335	6.1%

Clearly we have a great bicycling culture here in the 'Ville. What do we as a City do to support this culture? The City has an active Bicycle Advisory Committee, which is comprised of resident volunteers who are passionate about bicycling and who are approved by the Mayor as unpaid City employees. The Committee is comprised of five teams organized around the "Five E's" of bicycle advocacy (Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, and Evaluation/Planning). The Committee and the various E teams work closely with a number of dedicated City employees in various departments (Transportation and Infrastructure, Traffic and Parking, Public Works, Police, and the Office of the Mayor) to help develop safe bike facilities, promote bike safety, and encourage residents to ride bicycles for commuting and recreation. The Bicycle Committee pushes the City to do as much as it can to promote our active bicycle culture. Our advocacy and advisory efforts with the City were captured nicely in this [Somerville Scout article](#). In addition to the Bicycle Committee, the City also has a Vision Zero Task Force that is working towards developing a Vision Zero Action Plan. This plan is expected to have a significant impact on bicycle and pedestrian mobility and safety.

So what have we, as a Bicycle Committee and a City, done to support bicycling in Somerville this year? The City has expended our Bluebikes bike share network, adding 9 new stations citywide. On the ground, we have added new bike lanes on a number of streets to increase our bike network. We consider our biggest bike facility accomplishment of the year to be the protected bike lanes on Webster Ave. This project took several years and significant advocacy efforts. As a result, the City resurfaced the bike lanes and added flex posts to drastically improve the riding experience. Painted bike lanes and conflict zone markings will be applied in 2019 to complete this project.

We are hopeful that Cambridge will follow through on its commitment to improve the section of Webster Ave that connects to the new facilities on Webster to the line between our cities. New bike lanes on Cutter Ave, Marshall St, Lowell St, Cedar St, and Calvin St are all significant additions to Somerville's cycling infrastructure as well.

New Bike Facilities in 2018	
Street	Bike Facility Type
Calvin St	Advisory Bike Lane
Cedar St	Buffered Bike Lane
Cutter Ave	Buffered Bike Lane
Lowell St	Climbing Bike Lane
Marshall St	Contraflow Bike Lane
Mt Vernon St	Buffered Bike Lane
Webster Ave	Protected Bike Lane

Our Engineering, Evaluation, and Planning Team have worked closely with the City on these important facilities. Adam Polinski, the City's dedicated Transportation Analyst, managed the implementation of these new facilities and updated the City's bike map upon completion of the work.

Of course, we have a long way to go in making the entire city bikeable. There are many sections of the City that need significant improvement to bicycle mobility and safety, such as Powder House Circle and Davis Square. One of the biggest disappointments of the year was the Beacon St reconstruction project. There were considerable delays due to the ongoing utility work and other complications that led to considerable frustration for many residents. The Bicycle Committee worked tirelessly to advocate for bicycle-related improvements to the temporary conditions on Beacon, many of which were implemented. But alas, until the Beacon St project is finished, the busiest biking street in the entire Boston Metro region will remain a substandard bicycling route.

What else have we done to support better bicycling? Our Education and Encouragement teams have done considerable outreach to the community. Our Bike Talk series, now in its fourth year, is going strong, bringing local and nationally known speakers to Aeronaut Brewery every month. The Bike Month Kick Off event in April was a great success and brought together local bike advocacy organizations, bike businesses, and a world class speaker in Jeff Speck. We also continued our popular monthly bike breakfasts in partnership with Whole Foods on Beacon St and held bicycle clinics, including our Winter Bike Clinic with the Somerville Bike Kitchen. We have also developed and distributed educational material, such as our snow removal brochures for residents who live along the Beacon St cycle track. We also led a number of bicycle rides, including several new rides such as the sports bar ride and the Tour de Neighborways, as well as the ever-popular Illuminations ride.

We work hard to educate the community through an active social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as well as our lively and fun Somerville Bike News. I am personally proud of an educational video that several of us on the committee worked on, titled [Safer Trucking in Changing Cities](#), that strives to educate drivers of large trucks on how to drive safely amidst bicyclists and pedestrians. This video was made in response to the tragic death of Joe Lavins in Porter Square in 2016 and to others who lost their lives in crashes with large trucks.

Our Enforcement team works on bike safety issues, and works closely with our colleagues at the Somerville Police Department on issues ranging from cars and rideshare vehicle parked in bicycle lanes to cars not stopping at stop signs on side streets along the Beacon St cycle track. The team also worked closely with Somerville DPW to develop priorities and set expectations for snow removal for the winter months.

We are also advocates in the general Boston Metro region and have supported many project efforts both inside and outside of Somerville, such as the Longfellow Bridge protected bike lane project, the Mystic River bicycle and pedestrian bridge, the Grand Junction Path, and the Inman Square redesign project. In our regional advocacy efforts, we have worked closely together with a number of amazing local organizations such as the Boston Cyclists Union, LivableStreets Alliance, MassBike, and the Friends of the Community Path.

What makes for a strong advocacy/advisory organization? My answer is the people behind it. The Bicycle Committee is currently comprised of a board of 15 community representatives and City representatives, the latter referred to as ex-officio members.

I'd like to give a big shout out to the Vice Chair of the committee, Tom Lamar, and our Secretary, Katie Pierce. I'd also like to thank all of those who acted as team leads during the year. I'd also like to thank several members who resigned during the year to make room for new members. A big thank you to two long-standing member: Brian Postlewaite, a former Chair, and Enid Kumin, who both stepped down from the committee after more than twelve years of service. The community owes you both a lot. Also, at the beginning of 2019, Brandon Stafford, famous for his authoring of the Somerville Bike News (4 years of service) and Mark Chase, well known for his work on Neighborways (3 years of service) both stepped down. Thanks to you both.

I'd also like to give a special shout out to our super volunteer, Laura Borelli, who led the Encouragement team with great energy and enthusiasm for half the year until stepping down in the beginning of 2019. Laura proved that you could have a great impact on the committee without being a member. Another example of this would be Jon Ramos. Jon is one of the best known Boston area bike advocates who, lucky for us, recently moved back to Somerville and has been significantly involved in making West Somerville a safer and better place to bike.

We had three new members join the Bicycle Committee in 2018. Ted Lester, who quickly became the Evaluation team lead, Ted Feldman, who is taking on Engineering lead in 2019, and Mark Vollinger, who is part of the Enforcement team. We also had over 40 people appear as guests at our monthly meetings over the course of the year, many of whom brought fresh ideas and energy to the committee.

And we would go nowhere on two wheels without the energy and talent of our dedicated city staff. We'd like to thank everyone in Transportation and Infrastructure (in particular Mike Tremblay, Adam Polinski, and Brad Rawson), Traffic and Parking (in particular Terry Smith), Police (particularly Steve Carrabino and Jim Donovan), and DPW (in particular Stan Koty) who worked on bicycle-related projects and efforts. We are sorry to be saying goodbye to two very dedicated city employees: Mike Tremblay, Senior Transportation Planner and our liaison to the City, and Terry Smith, the City's Traffic Engineer. Mike has left Somerville to take a new position for the City of Portland, Maine after working for the City for two years. During his tenure, he had his talented hands on many bicycle projects. Terry recently announced his retirement after countless years with the City of Somerville. He was responsible for painting all bike lanes and bike boxes in the City, and became a true friend of the committee. And did we mention Steve Carrabino? Yes we did, but Steve deserves an additional shout out for all the work our Deputy Chief does in promoting bicycle education and bike safety in the 'Ville.

-Ken Carlson, Chair

Accomplishments in 2018

EDUCATION & ENCOURAGEMENT

The Education and Encouragement team's goal is to encourage and assist people of all ages and abilities to feel confident and safe while biking in the City of Somerville. Our educational outreach efforts are not restricted to bicyclists, but rather include all road users, including drivers and pedestrians. During 2018, the Education team was led by Bicycle Committee member Katie Pierce. Encouragement was headed by member Alex Anderson until July and Laura Borelli took over for the remainder of the year. Laura provided great enthusiasm and innovation within the Education and Encouragement meetings that was contagious to the entire team.

BIKE TALK SOCIAL HOUR

The Bike Talk Social Hour has entered into its fourth season (over 40 talks to date) and remains a popular series. Amazingly, it has been no problem finding engaging speakers, including several internationally-known speakers. We also had a rare repeat performance; Mark Chase spoke in August after kicking off the Bike Talk series way back in September 2015. Many thanks to our long time and generous host, Aeronaut Brewery, who is also a bronze level bicycle friendly business.

This year's Bike Talk speakers and topics included:

January	Susan McLucas	Spreading the Joy of Riding
February	Pete Sutton	MassDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Statwide Initiatives
March	Scott Mullen	What's Up Dock? The Promise and Potential of Dockless Bikeshare
April	Nate Filmore & Annie Tuan	People Power: Community Organizing for Bike Safety in Cambridge
May	Becca Wolfson & Stacey Thompson	Steering Us Towards Safer Streets
June	Julia Hansen	Bad Bike Racks: Just Say No
July	Anna Luten	Life cycle: Where Can the Bicycle Take Us?
August	Mark Chase	Bicycle Friendly Designs from the Netherlands
September	Chris & Melissa Bruntlett	Building the Cycling City: The Dutch Blueprint for Urban Vitality
October	Liza Burkin & Tyson Bottenus	Tour de Taco: Bikepacking the Baja Divide
November	David Loutzenheiser	What's My (Land) Line: Mapping & Creating a Connected Trail Network
December	Jonathan Lansey	Safe by Sounds: How Loud Bicycle Horns are Keeping People Safe

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

With the rapidly expanding bike network in Somerville and the incoming GLX stations, the current bike infrastructure map needed to be refreshed. The Bicycle Committee's Education and Encouragement team worked alongside the Somerville Transportation & Infrastructure Division's Adam Polinski to update our current bike map. This map has been a wonderful addition to our tabling materials. We've also provided a printed display version to Aeronaut Brewery in acknowledgement of their close partnership with the committee.

With the skills and enthusiasm of member Michael Weber, the Education and Encouragement team has also put together many new educational materials this year. One of the highlights includes flyering the Beacon St cycle track to make neighbors aware of the best practices around a cycle track, as this is the first of its kind in Somerville. A group of volunteers made their way to all abutters of the cycle track, placing flyers on doors to inform residents. The flyer was fully designed by Michael and included two sides of information: one geared towards cyclists and the other aimed at non-cycling residents. Additional resources created by the team this year include a snow removal policy reminder, a door zone information flyer, business cards to be used by cyclists with important links, and an informational leaflet that includes Bicycle Committee monthly meeting times and online resources.

The Bicycle Committee was also heavily involved in local community events, using them as a platform to share materials and educate our community. For the first Gilman Square Association block party, Katie Pierce was there to table the event. Additionally, the Bicycle Committee was involved in tabling at the Somerville Climate Forward event. Member Ted Lester was there to represent. We also table for Bike Month Kick Off (which we also host), and during the commuter breakfasts at Whole Foods. Tabling has been an excellent way to connect with our community and deliver on-the-spot education through our hand outs, materials, and own specific experience/insight.

SOCIAL MEDIA

2018 marked a focus in social media presence, which was spearheaded by the Education and Encouragement team. In efforts to reach greater numbers of local cyclists, we took to regularly posting content on Facebook as well as platforms like Twitter and Instagram. The committee's dedicated volunteers Michael Weber and Anthony Elias have been instrumental in taking the committee's presence on these platforms to the next level. Anthony created our [Instagram](#) account in the summer and has since amassed 252 followers! Michael has worked extensively on the [Twitter](#) presence, which now boasts 384 followers, and is a great source for up-to-date bike advocacy news. [Facebook](#) continues to be our largest platform. With continued posting from numerous members, but mainly committee Chair Ken Carlson, we often reach over 300 individuals with our posts, sometimes receiving views from over 1,200. We hope the continued use and reach of our social media platforms will allow us to connect with even more

cyclists, Somervillians, and local road users that might be aware of the committee's work.

TRUCK SAFETY VIDEO

The Bicycle Committee collaborated with other leading bicycle advocacy groups to produce a video intended to educate drivers of large trucks how to operate safely around people who bicycle. The video, [Safer Trucking in Changing Cities](#), was made in response to the tragic death of Joe Lavins, who was killed by a truck in Porter Square in October 2016. Joe was a friend and work colleague of our Chair, Ken Carlson, and together with another work colleague of Joe's, Caroline Kurtz, they formed the Joe Lavins Bicycle Safety Fund and raised \$10,000. The steering committee was comprised of SBAC member and national truck safety expert Alex Epstein, Executive Director of the Boston Cyclists Union Becca Wolfson, Deputy Director of MassBike Tom Francis, and LivableStreets Alliance Board Member Steve Miller. We were able to hire two top flight video producers, Kevin Pierce (who worked pro bono) and Jim Carrol, as well as project coordinator Mason Wells. The video has been shown to every truck driver at the Somerville DPW and will be shown to newly licensed drivers for the City of Boston, as well as included in truck driver training programs in Boston. The cities of Newton, Cambridge, and Arlington have also committed to using the video for training. We would love help getting the video adopted for training by local companies with large trucking fleets, such as Shaws, Dunkin Donuts, WB Mason, and Target. Please reach out to us if you have any contacts with any company that has a truck fleet so we can continue to expand the impact of this project.



BIKE MONTH KICK OFF

One of the ways the Education and Encouragement team shares information and inspires more people to ride bikes is through rides and events. 2018 was a particularly busy year for local rides and allowed us to forge stronger connections with our local community and partners like Somerville Bike Kitchen, Tufts Bikes, ACE Wheelworks, and more.

The warm weather cycling season began with another awesome Bike Month Kick Off. Dozens of bike advocacy organizations and bike businesses were present, and a special talk was given by world renowned author Jeff Speck. We love this annual event!

WHOLE FOODS BIKE BREAKFAST

The Whole Foods Bike Breakfast is a recurring event that takes place at the bike-friendly Whole Foods on Beacon St (a main commuter corridor) between April and October. Free food, a chance to speak to local advocates from the committee, and bumping tunes made the bike breakfasts a particularly fun event for all.



BIKE TO WORK CONVOYS

We also hosted numerous bike to work convoys originating in Davis Square and ending up in downtown Boston during commuter rush hour. The Bike to Work Convoy took place between June and October 2018.

MYSTIC RIVER BIKE RIDE

The Bicycle Committee also partnered with the Mystic River Watershed Association and Bike to the Sea, Inc. to run the Mystic River Bike Ride on May 19th. This ride is run in tandem with the Mystic River Watershed Association's Herring Run and Paddle event. The ride started at Blessing of the Bay Boathouse and continued into Everett.

ANNUAL HISTORIC RIDE

The Bicycle Committee also partnered with the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission for their 17th Annual Historic Ride called "Exploring Somerville: New Faces of Enduring Places". The ride took place on June 17th and included a police escort.





SPORTS BAR RIDE

Back in August, the Bicycle Committee Education and Encouragement team embarked on our first community ride, the Somerville Sports Bar Ride. Originally we had thought to have a “Bikes and Brews” tour to have folks see the different types of breweries in the Somerville area, however the sports bar tour included bars that have been around for a long time and are rich with history in the city. During the tour we stopped at five sports bars in different parts of Somerville, including Olde Magoun’s Saloon, Parlor Sports, Michael’s, R.F. O’Sullivan’s, and Bull McCabe’s. We had about a dozen people for our first ride. A few of the bars provided free food for us, and in exchange we promoted them on social media via Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. All things considered, and given that it was the first ride of the season, the Sports Bar Ride was a success. Folks enjoyed going to places that they hadn’t been before; Michael’s, for example, has been around for many years but none of the participants knew about it. The ride was a great way to get people on bikes and out and about while also learning about their community and the people that serve them.

TUFTS POP-UP RIDE

In September, the committee ran a pop-up ride in partnership with Tufts Bikes, a local university club aimed at getting Tufts students on bicycles and helping students repair their rides. This ride was led by Tufts Professor Mark Chase and featured the low stress ways that Tufts students can get off campus and into Somerville’s popular squares. Hot spots like cafes and entertainment venues were called out so new students could find good places to study and have fun off campus. The ride had about 15 people in attendance and provided a great opportunity for the Bicycle Committee to connect with Tufts University bicycle advocates.

TOUR DE NEIGHBORWAYS

Bicycle Committee member Mark Chase led two Tour de Neighborways rides in effort to strengthen the committee’s connection with the many local families in Somerville. The first iteration was a walking tour for the Landline and the most recent was an October bike ride for residents. Both were well attended with over a dozen people. At least two participants were interested in exploring how to use Neighborways to get their children to the Capuano School. Neighborways is something the committee hopes to promote more of in the coming year, especially with the bridge closures due to the construction of the Green Line Extension.

ILLUMINATIONS RIDE

The Illuminations Ride is always a crowd pleaser! This year we had one of the largest turnouts with over 160 in attendance, including numerous families. We had help from the Somerville Police Department, as they provided assistance at intersections and helped guide the ride. It was a perfect committee-coordinated ride to end 2018.

WINTER BIKE CLINIC

This year the Bicycle Committee worked with Somerville Bicycle Kitchen (SBK) and local bike shop ACE Wheelworks to host our first Winter Bike Clinic. SBK was the perfect venue for the over 20 eager attendees to learn about tips and tricks for winter riding. ACE showcased their favorite store items for winter commuters along with items brought in by SBAC members that were passed around for attendees to get a closer look. After the gear session, Tom from Somerville Bike Kitchen and Laura from the Bicycle Committee took over discussing riding and maintenance best practices during winter months. They invited questions and did an excellent job providing a welcoming environment to cyclists of all skill levels.

ENFORCEMENT

The Enforcement team's efforts are directed at ensuring safe roads for everyone, especially vulnerable road users, with a focus on enforcing existing laws related to road use by all mode users and proposing new laws and regulations. In late 2018, the team expanded their mission to include safety. This better aligns with the original Enforcement description from the League of American Bicyclists. The team acts as the liaison for and regularly coordinates with the Somerville Police Department (SPD) and Neighborhood Bicycle Officers.

After a long discussion period during which we went through multiple iterations and edits, the Enforcement team began collecting signatures from local municipalities and advocacy organizations for the Rideshare Letter. This letter highlights the issue of rideshare vehicles parking in bike lanes and urges a multi-pronged approach involving driver and rider education, increased dedicated pickup/dropoff zones, and fostering partnerships in local communities to improve the experience for all and ensure safety. The committee plans to circulate the letter to get signatures from other advocacy groups and send the letter in early 2019.

With the help of SPD, we've partnered behind a new public safety initiative: Stop on the Line. This initiative is aimed at encouraging drivers to use painted lanes as a guide for where to stop when they reach an intersection. Doing so ensures that drivers have time to react to cyclists, pedestrians, and other drivers around them before safely proceeding. With changing streetscapes and more bike lanes, drivers need to give ample space to react to bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

EVALUATION, PLANNING, & ENGINEERING

Evaluation and Planning Team Lead: Alex Frieden (January-June); Ted Lester (July-December)

Engineering Team Lead: Alex Frieden (January-March); Brandon Stafford (April-December)

The Engineering team's main task is to make design recommendations to create safe and convenient places to ride and park bicycles. The team reviews bicycle and roadway plans and makes recommendations to the City. To do so, the team members must stay up to date on cutting edge bike facilities and infrastructure to make sure Somerville is leading the way in innovative bike facilities.

The Evaluation and Planning Team looks at projects and changes in the city's bike infrastructure that are less mature than those considered by the Engineering team. The Evaluation team seeks to identify needed projects, and champion them through to completion. The team also works with the city to mitigate the effects of construction projects on people who bike.

Due to the related work of the two teams, they met together monthly in 2018, spending half of the meeting on engineering topics and half on evaluation topics. These lively discussions enabled members of the bike committee and others from the community to pool expertise in providing valuable recommendations to the City on bicycle infrastructure changes.



CHAMPION CHECKLIST

In 2018 the Bicycle Committee tried a new approach to managing projects in the committee, creating the role of “Champion” to advocate for and track each project. We created a checklist to help the Champions in the Bicycle Committee shepherd projects they are enthusiastic about through the steps needed to go from identifying a bad road condition to getting the physical changes made. This checklist documents the process that we’ve found to be successful at getting major changes completed in this city such as the protected bike lanes on Webster Ave:

Bicycle Committee Champion Checklist

- 1. Notional Plans.** What’s the vision for the project (contraflow, protected bike lanes, road diet, etc.)? Where would it go? How would it help residents (high bike traffic, diversity, equity, connectivity, multi-modal)?
- 2. Talk to OSPCD.** What is already planned or feasible? Repaving? Budget for the changes? Timeframe? May need to advocate for future funding with the Board of Aldermen (now City Council).
- 3. Talk to Neighbors.** Talk to nearby neighbors and business owners (Encouragement team). What are their concerns and needs? Who are local advocates? Consider a local potluck to discuss.
- 4. City Councilor on Board.** Talk to the local Councilor. Are they supportive? What are their concerns? Keep up communication with the Alderman as things evolve.
- 5. Parking Study/Mitigation.** If parking removal is necessary, discuss the need for a parking study with the Evaluation & Planning team. Are there other possible parking mitigation strategies (off-street parking, additional resident parking elsewhere)?
- 6. Engineering Reviews/Plans.** Work with the Engineering team to review the project and develop more detailed plans. Reiterate steps, and once an agreeable plan is in place, begin the public process.
- 7. Public Meeting.** Help organize a public meeting if requested by the local alderman or the traffic commission.
- 8. Traffic Commission.** Get approval for any parking or street changes.
- 9. Public Notification.** Work with the Education team to let neighbors know about the change (e.g. flyers, digital signboard). Detour needed? Work with Enforcement for any SPD actions.
- 10. Celebrate making Somerville a better place for cyclists!**

WEBSTER AVE

Our biggest accomplishment in 2018 was the new bike facility on Webster Ave. Webster Ave, by bicycle counts, was the third most traveled bicycle route in Somerville, making it one of the most heavily traveled bicycle routes in the Boston metro region. And that was when it was a third-world quality, pot-holed street with no bicycle facilities. Two years ago, we presented a plan to the Mayor to remove on-street parking and develop flex post protected bike lanes. The Mayor told us and City staff to make it happen. And we did, with frequent advocacy and outreach to residents, parking counts at all hours of the day and night, close coordination with our then Ward 2 Alderman (Maryann Heuston), public meetings, and support from the City. The project was delayed by never-ending utility work and was almost halted in its tracks when the city realized that if they resurfaced the street they would be obligated to rebuild sidewalks and curbs as well (the City will do this, but not for a few more years). We saved the project by coming up with the idea of resurfacing just the bike lanes (credit Mark Chase) and the Webster Ave protected bike lane project was able to move forward. It officially opened in December, with thermoplastic striping planned for spring of 2019. How did we make this happen? By having a passionate champion of the project, hard-working and creative committee members, elected officials with vision and skin in the game, open-minded and engaged residents, data (i.e. bike counts and parking counts) and dogged persistence. Our efforts on Webster Ave have resulted in what we call “The Playbook” (again credit to Mark Chase) and we hope to use this playbook elsewhere in the City.



Flex-post protected bike lanes on Webster Ave.

BROADWAY BRIDGE CLOSURE MITIGATION

The Bicycle Committee Evaluation and Planning team reviewed the Green Line Extension (GLX) project plans for the closure of the Broadway bridge near Ball Square. We provided a memo to the city transportation leadership identifying our concerns about the bicycling impacts of the bridge, not only due to the inconvenience, but also the potential to introduce unsafe situations between people on bikes and people driving cars on the unfamiliar detour routes. The memo listed six mitigation strategies for the City to investigate to make the closure safer and more manageable for people who bike. The bridge closure was delayed until March 2019, so this will be a situation that we will continue to monitor and we will notify the City of any unsafe situations caused by the closure.

SNOW CLEARING PRIORITIES FOR BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The team authored a memo to Stan Koty, DPW Commissioner, recommending a list of prioritized bike infrastructure for snow clearing during winter months. The recommendation was divided into two parts, separated bike lanes and paths that require specialty equipment and non-separated bike lanes and roads that can be cleared using regular plows. We used this memo to facilitate two productive conversations with the DPW Highway Division leadership regarding snow clearing concerns and expectations.

Separated Bike Facility Priorities	Non-Separated Bike Facility Priorities
Beacon St cycle track	Beacon St
Webster Ave protected bike lane	Somerville Ave
Prospect St bus/bike lane	Holland St
Washington St protected bike lane	Elm St
	Washington St
	Broadway
	Willow Ave
	Cedar St

CEDAR STREET

In 2018, the entirety of Cedar St was repaved and the Bicycle Committee considered various options to improve the street. A particular focus was put on the section from Highland Ave to Somerville Ave, which is one-way southbound and approximately 26 feet from curb to curb. Since biking northbound is a significant desire line, several designs were considered where a northbound bike lane would be added. Alternatives

included a two-way bike lane, a pair of one-way bike lanes, or just a northbound lane without a southbound lane. While several options had potential, there ultimately wasn't sufficient time to flesh out all the details of a northbound bike lane due to the complicating factor of traffic signalization at intersections. The final condition became a simple (but still improved) southbound buffered bike lane.



Southbound buffered bike lane on Cedar St.

CUTTER AVE

Cutter Ave has long been one overly wide, unmarked lane, where cars often drove too fast. In 2018 the City, following the Bicycle Committee's recommendations, striped a buffered bike lane.



Northbound buffered bike lane on Cutter Ave.

HOLLAND STREET

The team investigated multiple approaches to redesigning Holland St in light of a repaving scheduled for 2020. In addition to the needs of people who bike, we also looked at the needs of bus riders, pedestrians, residents with cars, and patrons of neighborhood stores and restaurants. Looking to the recent success with implementing priority bus/bike lanes in Roxbury and Arlington, we are recommending that the city conduct a bus/bike lane trial in the spring of 2019 to explore this concept. This trial should continue west onto Broadway at the northern end of Holland St and go all the way to the Clarendon Hill neighborhood.

MARSHALL STREET

The City added a northbound bike lane on Marshall St, allowing two-way bike travel. The bike lane was previously tested during the Winter Hill Better Block project, where it was also demonstrated to moderately decrease speeding. The bike lane provides a low-stress connection between Broadway and Gilman Square and is the first of its kind in Winter Hill, but will soon connect to facilities being implemented as part of the Winter Hill in Motion project on Broadway.



MOUNT VERNON STREET

A bike lane was added on Mt Vernon St from Pearl St to Broadway, providing an improved connection to East Somerville and Assembly. The bike lane is implemented as a basic parking-side bike lane from Pearl St to Perkins St, and is a buffered curbside bike lane from Perkins St to Broadway.

TYLER STREET/PROPERZI WAY

We worked with representatives from local businesses and community activists to review potential redesigns of Tyler St and Properzi Way with the goal of making the area a go-to destination. We explored possibilities of one-way traffic for certain stretches to reduce cut-through traffic and create more room for safe bike infrastructure. We will continue in 2019 to work with

local representatives to finalize and advocate for plans to improve this area of the City.

NEIGHBORWAYS

Neighborways received flexible posts at the corner of Hancock St in the summer of 2018. These were crucial in guiding cars out of the path of travel of oncoming cyclists. Tufts student Liza Burkin will be analyzing data and doing resident and cyclist surveys in Spring 2019.

COMMUNITY PATH

Early in 2018, the community received great news that the contractor who had been awarded the contract to complete the Green Line Extension project would also build a number of additive options. Two of these were an extension of the existing Community Path all the way to Lechmere in Cambridge (instead of terminating at Washington St) and a connection from the path to Cross St. These were critical project changes that the Friends of the Community Path, the Bicycle Committee, the City, and the community had long and strenuously requested. More good news related to the Community Path was announced at the end of 2018; the route of the path would not jog to the north side of the tracks at Central St and then back to the south side at School St. Still, there are other smaller but important Community Path design changes that we will continue to ask for.

MYSTIC TO CHARLES CONNECTOR

A new group was formed in 2018 to investigate and advocate for an off-road, multi-use path from the end of the Assembly Row path along the MBTA Orange Line to Inner Belt and the Community Path along a seldom-used, 2-track rail line and Washington St.

MYSTIC RIVER BIKE/PED BRIDGE

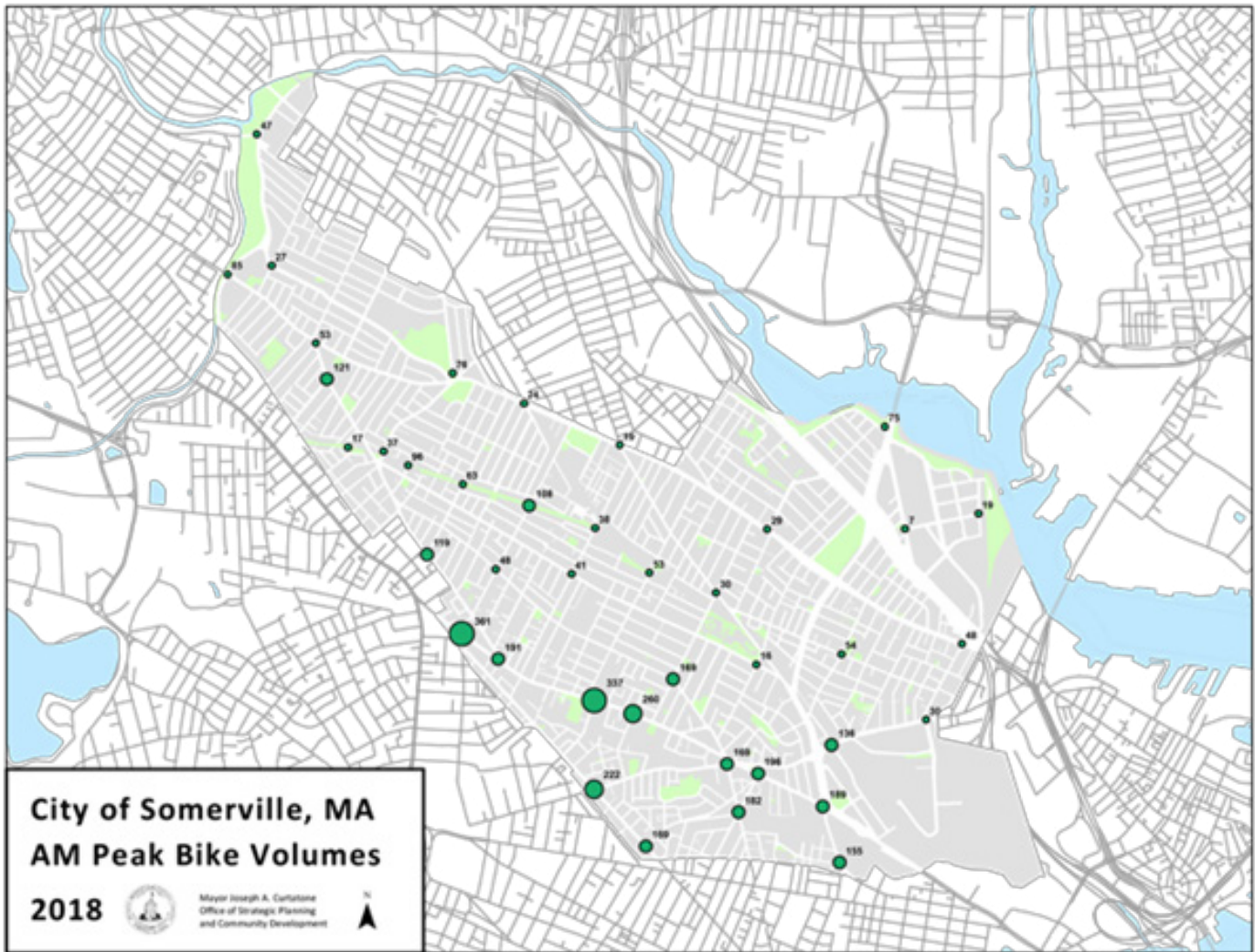
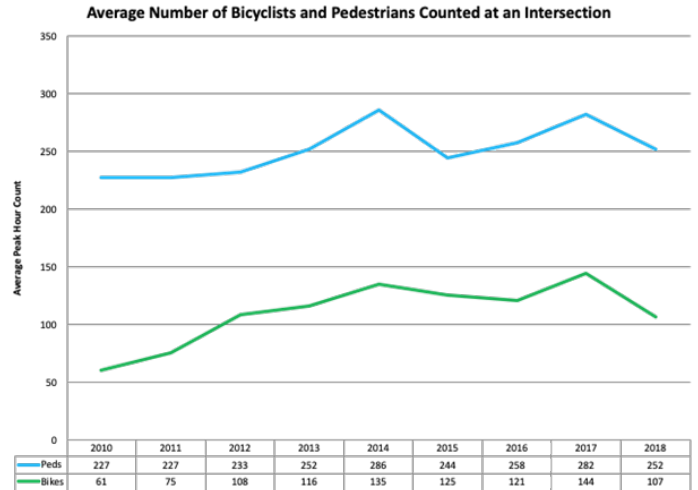
In early 2018, the Massachusetts Department of Recreation and Conservation (DCR) presented the conceptual plan of a proposed multi-use bridge across the Mystic River from Everett, near the new casino, to Somerville at Draw Seven park.

CONNECTION BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY PATH AND GRAND JUNCTION PATH

The Friends of the Community Path and the Friends of the Grand Junction Path (with the support of the Bicycle Committee) have been working with Cambridge, Somerville, and other stakeholders to insure that in the near future, when the Somerville Community Path and the Grand Junction Path are completed, there is an off-road connection between these important regional paths that will be less than a half-mile apart.

ANNUAL BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN COUNTS

The Bicycle Committee assisted the City in conducting the annual bicycle and pedestrian counts at the beginning of October by providing volunteer counters. The same locations and sign up method were used as in 2017, but a contractor was used for to collect turning movement counts (TMCs) at 5 of the 42 locations. The average per-intersection peak hour counts for both pedestrians and bicycles were down slightly in 2018 from 2017. We believe this could be due to the contractor counts taking place on days with worse weather, since typically volunteers chose days with better weather to stand outside and count.



Priorities For 2019

GOALS

OVERALL COMMITTEE GOALS

- Increase communication between the Bicycle Committee and City Councilors
- Increase the diversity of the Bicycle Committee
- Work with the City to finalize and help realize the Vision Zero Action Plan
- Increase coordination with adjacent municipalities on projects that connect to other cities and towns

ENFORCEMENT TEAM GOALS

- Expand team scope to include safety
- Partner with the City to secure a budget for bike lights/safety items
- Partner with SPD Brass to improve targeted bicycle-issue enforcement
- Send Rideshare letter
-

EDUCATION & ENCOURAGEMENT TEAM GOALS

- Make information more accessible and visible to a diverse local audience, including Uber/Lyft (informational materials, giveaway events, Dutch Reach, etc.)
- Continue certain regular rides and events (Bike Month Kick Off, Bike Talk, Historic Ride, etc.)
- Improve, maintain, and strengthen connections with local schools (Tufts, Somerville High School, etc.)

ENGINEERING, EVALUATION, & PLANNING TEAM GOALS

- Categorize roads for resurfacing priorities
- Bike network future map
- Identify and rank more contraflow opportunities
- Identify and rank problematic intersections that could be engineered using crash data (joint effort with Enforcement team)
- Improve Somerville Bikes map - better use of bike level of comfort, interactive, online version
- GLX bridge closure detours
- CPX and Sullivan Square connections
- Review designs for Broadway, Medford St, and Holland St

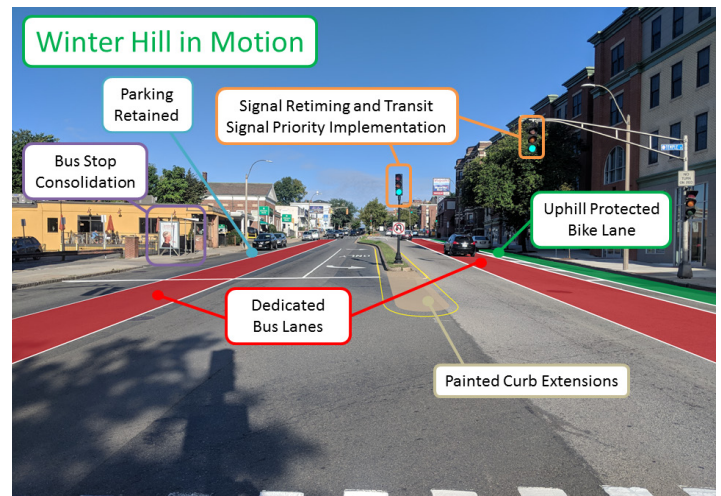
PROJECTS

CTPS BUS ROUTE STUDY

A [CTPS study](#) of the most delayed MBTA bus routes identified portions of Broadway, Washington St, and all of Holland St as the corridors most contributing to bus passenger delay in Somerville. Several of these streets also have little or no bike infrastructure, making them strong candidates for multimodal improvements. Since the safest bike infrastructure on arterial roads is protected bike lanes, the Bicycle Committee always advocates for fully separated, protected bike lanes where possible. In some constrained corridors with high bus delay, bus/bike lanes offer a significant speedup for buses and some safety improvements for biking.

WINTER HILL IN MOTION (CENTRAL BROADWAY)

The Bicycle Committee worked with the City to build a plan for improving biking conditions along Broadway in Winter Hill. The plan calls for protected bike lanes along some sections, and a bus/bike lane along others, expected to speed up both the 89 and 101 buses. Implementation is expected to begin in Spring 2019.



HOLLAND STREET BUS LANE PILOT

Holland St and adjacent portions of Broadway are a significant source of delay for the 87 and 88 buses. In addition, there are no dedicated bike facilities on this corridor. The Bicycle Committee recommends a spring pilot for a temporary bus/bike lane on Holland and Broadway. The bus/bike lane could be either full time or peak hours only, and could either extend the entire length of the corridor or could focus on the most congested sections. We are recommending a quick-build pilot in Spring 2019 so that more substantial changes can be integrated with Holland St repaving in 2020.

How to Get Involved in the Bicycle Committee

ATTEND OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Members of the public are welcomed to attend the monthly committee meetings, which take place on the first Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:00 p.m at the Academy Room in the Public Safety Building, 220 Washington St. The meetings cover a variety of topics important to bike safety, education, policy, and infrastructure. Agendas are posted on the Bicycle Committee Facebook page and on the [Bicycle Committee web page](#).

JOIN THE COMMITTEE

Members of the public can become members of the Bicycle Committee if there are open positions. To become a member, the interested candidate generally needs to attend six meetings, get involved in a team, and demonstrate active interest in improving the state of bicycle transportation in Somerville.

JOIN A TEAM

A very simple way to get involved is to join one of the five teams that are organized around the "Five E's" of bicycle advocacy and planning.

- **Education & Encouragement** - Focused on educating all road users with respect to bike safety and encouraging everyone to bike through organizing events and activities
- **Enforcement** - Coordinating with the Somerville Police Department and others to propose and enforce existing bicycle related laws
- **Engineering, Evaluation, & Planning** - Focused on providing detailed engineering solutions to our make our streets more bike friendly and evaluating existing bicycle conditions while proposing new ideas

Our teams meet in between the monthly Bicycle Committee meetings. If you are interested in joining a team, come to a monthly meeting and express interest, or send an email to info@somervillebikes.org.

VOLUNTEER

If you are interested in volunteering with any of our events or rides, let us know by emailing info@somervillebikes.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit us at our monthly bike breakfasts - Held at Whole Foods on Beacon Street, the last Friday of the month from April to October
- Visit our website - somervillebikes.org
- Email us - Info@somervillebikes.org
- Subscribe to our [Monthly Newsletter](#)
- Like us on Facebook - [Somerville Bicycle Committee](#)
- Follow us on Twitter - [@Somervillebike](#)
- Follow us on Instagram - [@Somervillebike](#)