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CAMBRIDGE BICYCLE SAFETY

WORKING TO MAKE STREETS SAFER AND MORE ENJOYABLE FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, USA

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Cambridge Sets Nation's First Mandatory Timeline for Completing Bike Network

🕒 October 6, 2020 👤 Mark Boswell 📁 Uncategorized 💬 0



On Monday night, the Cambridge City Council passed a new ordinance requiring that the vast majority of Cambridge's network of protected bike lanes be built within six years. This new law sets the most ambitious target in the nation, with a goal of ensuring that people of all ages and abilities can get around Cambridge safely and comfortably within 6 years.

The updated **Cycling Safety Ordinance** sets a May 1, 2026 deadline for Cambridge's 22.6 mile network of protected bike lanes to be installed using either permanent construction or quick-build approaches. It also includes milestones for yearly progress. This new ordinance was drafted jointly by the office of City Manager Louis DePasquale, City Councillors Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler and Marc McGovern, and Cambridge Bicycle Safety. It amends last year's landmark Cycling Safety Ordinance, which required protected bike lanes to be included when streets are reconstructed, by also adding a 6-year timeline for a connected network of protected bike lanes to be installed using quick-build approaches when streets are not scheduled for reconstruction.

"People of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds would love to bike around Cambridge, but many don't because it doesn't feel safe enough, so the ordinance's 6-year timeline for a full, connected network is very exciting," said Cambridge Bicycle Safety member Janie Katz-Christy. "It's heartbreaking that people have lost lives and health because these safety improvements didn't happen sooner."

The ordinance sets an overall timeline for completion of the network, but does not specify details of each segment's design beyond the need for safe, protected cycling facilities that are separated from motor vehicle traffic by a physical barrier. In order to address the needs of businesses and other stakeholders, each street segment in the network will be designed following the City's usual community process, with public meetings gathering feedback to help the City improve their designs. Cambridge Bicycle Safety co-founder Nate Fillmore said, "The ordinance was designed with a robust community process in mind, and the process of designing each street segment will also provide an exciting opportunity to make improvements that reduce delay for busses, improve pedestrian safety, and make it easier for businesses to receive deliveries."

Cambridge Bicycle Safety is an all-volunteer group of residents working to improve safety for cyclists of all ages and abilities in Cambridge. The new Cycling Safety Ordinance's passage follows years of efforts by community members to accelerate the pace of safety improvements in Cambridge, including petitions to the City Council with thousands of signatures from residents. In the most recent City Council election, over 70% of #1 votes were cast for candidates who pledged to do everything in their power for rapid implementation of a network of protected bike lanes. In the City's 2018 bi-annual resident survey, the survey directly asked residents for the first time if they agreed with the statement: "I would like to see the City install more protected bike lanes in Cambridge". Of those who expressed agreement or disagreement, 71% of online respondents and 70% of telephone respondents agreed.

Of the ordinance, Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui said, "The Cycling Safety Ordinance is critically needed in Cambridge. More and more of our residents are using alternate means of transportation to commute to work and get to daily activities, and do so for our environment and for their health. This Ordinance allows us to expand our bicycle lanes in a way that will protect our residents while also making a safer and greener Cambridge."

"I'm proud to be the lead sponsor on this update to the Cycling Safety Ordinance, which will create more than 22 miles of protected bike lanes in Cambridge over the next six years," said City Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler. "This will be perhaps the most impactful local ordinance for safe street infrastructure a city has enacted anywhere in the United States. Cambridge is committed to Vision Zero to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries, but we continue to see cyclist deaths and serious injuries every year in our city. This ordinance is a big step to creating safer streets and a more equitable, sustainable transportation network for all our residents."

"This ordinance builds on the ground breaking ordinance passed last term, and brings us closer to creating a bike safety network that will increase safety for all modes of transportation," said City Councillor Marc McGovern, who was the lead sponsor of the original Cycling Safety Ordinance and co-drafted the updated ordinance.

"The newly passed Cycling Safety Ordinance lays out a bold vision and a clear, achievable timetable that ensures the City of Cambridge continues to build a fully protected bike lane network to help us reach our Vision Zero and environmental goals. I look forward to seeing this infrastructure implemented across the city over the next 6 years, and as a consequence, seeing more residents opt to ride their bikes over driving their cars as it becomes safer and safer through this new protected cycling infrastructure," said Vice Mayor Alanna Mallon.

"City streets and sidewalks are public property and as such we need to ensure the best use of public property," said City Councillor Patty Nolan. "The Cycling Safety Ordinance is a step in the right direction – to re-imagine our streets and provide for a safe way for cyclists to transit the city. Public health, safety and sustainability goals all benefit when we expand the network of protected bike lanes."



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