



MAYOR JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
Office of Strategic Planning &
Community Development

COVID-19

Mobility Strategy

June 4, 2020

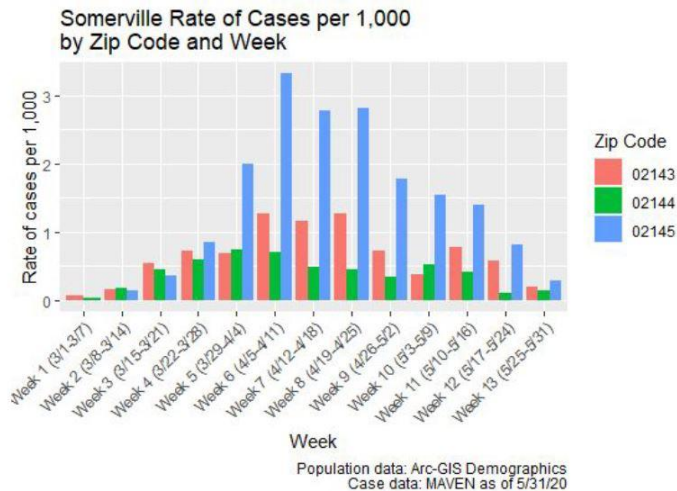
Our Current Context

- **Transportation is a basic need, particularly for:**
 - People working in essential services
 - Access to grocery stores and other essential services
 - Opportunities for movement and fresh air for physical and mental health
- **Many Somerville residents walk, bike and use bus transit to make essential trips**
 - 1 in 4 households do not have access to a vehicle (2018 ACS 5-year estimate)
 - MBTA service levels have been reduced and bus ridership is 15%-30% of typical
 - People walking at signalized intersections are avoiding push buttons
 - Utilizing low cost modes frees up stretched budgets for food, housing, and other necessities.
- **Our streets are experiencing significantly reduced vehicle volumes**
 - We can provide safer places to walk, bike, and access essential services if we rethink the distribution of time and space on our streets.
- **Vehicle speeds are elevated**
 - A crash involving a person walking or biking will likely have unacceptable consequences

Disparate Impacts of COVID-19 on Lower-Income and Communities of Color

Somerville Case Data:

Rate of Cases by Zip Code and Week (through 5/31/20)



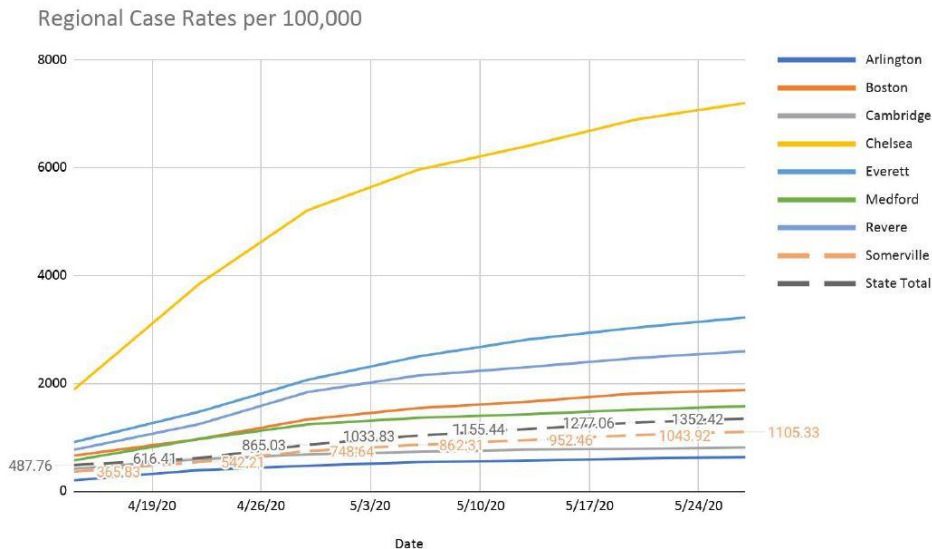
- ▷ Gap between 02145 and other zip codes has decreased
- ▷ For the week of 5/25-5/31:
 - ▶ 02143: 0.19 cases per 1,000 residents
 - ▶ 02144: 0.15 cases per 1,000 residents
 - ▶ 02145: 0.29 cases per 1,000 residents

Source for population data:

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=8d2012a2016e484dafaac0451f9aea24>

Disparate Impacts of COVID-19 on Lower-Income and Communities of Color

Regional Cases per 100,000



- ▶ As of 5/27, Somerville had **1,105.3 cases per 100,000** (up from 1043.9 on 5/20)
- ▶ Chelsea continues to see the highest case rates across MA (7,203.1), followed by
 - ▶ Brockton (4,031.6)
 - ▶ Lawrence (3,333.1)
 - ▶ Lynn (3,251.6)

About the Data:

- ▶ State releasing city and town-level data on a weekly basis
- ▶ Case rates per 100,000 show burden of disease regardless of population
- ▶ Data only reflect reported positive cases only

Somerville's focus is on public health and an equitable economic recovery



10h

there are two americas: one fights for black lives and the other fights for brunch



1



32



118



Our Current Policy Responses*

1. Make pedestrian signals “hands-free”
2. Calm traffic to reduce frequency & severity of crashes
3. Share curb space to support physical distancing
4. Create a network of shared streets for essential trip-making
5. Deliver bus priority projects to help protect MBTA customers and workers



Davis Square - May 2020

***Somerville's COVID-19 mobility strategies are not limited to “Shared Curbs” and “Shared Streets”**

Strategy 3:

**Shared Curbs for
Physical Distancing**

Shared Curbs for Physical Distancing

- **Problem:**

- a. 2-hour parking meters can inhibit contactless pickup activities
- b. Circulation and queueing on narrow sidewalks can conflict with physical distancing guidance

- **Actions / Considerations**

- a. **Pick-up/Drop-off zones** at existing metered parking spaces
- b. **Sidewalk widening** where feasible to provide safe queueing space

- **Performed by:** In-house staff (design + install + monitoring)

- **Status:**

- a. Request form is online for interested stakeholders to request signs
- b. 15-minute signs installed at Assembly; Ball; Magoun; East Broadway; etc.
- c. Sidewalk widening Pilot #1 is operational in Union Square

- **Case studies:** Brookline, Salem, Toronto, Washington DC (plus dozens more)

Shared Curbs: Stakeholder Request Form



COVID-19 Business Needs Survey: Temporary Streets, Sidewalks, & Parking Reuse

Spanish Version - Haga clic aquí para obtener la versión en español de esta encuesta: <https://bit.ly/COVIDBusinessNeedsSP>

Portuguese Version - Clique aqui para a versão em português desta pesquisa: <https://bit.ly/COVIDBusinessNeedsPG>

The impacts of COVID-19 and the reopening guidelines created by the Commonwealth and the City will require businesses to fundamentally rethink how to operate during this crisis. The priority is to keep people safe and healthy, but also allow business flexibility.

The City of Somerville is eager to rethink how our public spaces, streets, sidewalks, and public parking can be repurposed to help businesses maintain viability and ensure safety for customers. This could include temporarily creating:

- Pickup and drop off areas in front of businesses while enabling safe physical distancing outside businesses
- Expanded 15-minute parking zones
- Widened sidewalks to manage expected lines outside of businesses
- Expanded outdoor dining or vending spaces for businesses on sidewalks and other nearby public spaces
- Other out-of-the box solutions that use public spaces to enhance customer safety and business viability

The possibilities are limited by our creativity and the real physical limits in a city as dense as Somerville.

Business Needs

Please indicate which of the below initiatives you are interested in and rank them by their importance or priority for your business.

- Temporary 15 minute parking zone
- Temporary widening of existing sidewalk to support expected lines.
- Temporary outdoor vending or seating zones

First priority *

Select

Second Priority *

Select

Third Priority *

Select

Please describe the service you will be offering and/or would like to offer, and any additional details about your request: *

If you are proposing an outdoor vending or dining space, please include where you're proposing to have vending/dining take place (sidewalk, parking, street, etc.), how many tables and chairs you're proposing to place, and whether the proposed space is public, private, or something else.

Are you expecting lines to form outside of the storefront? *

Please describe how will you be managing lines and any other strategies you will use to prevent crowding (for example, staggering customers pickups over time)

Shared Curb Peer Example: Brookline “Extend the Sidewalk”



Shared Curbs Pilot #1: Union Square

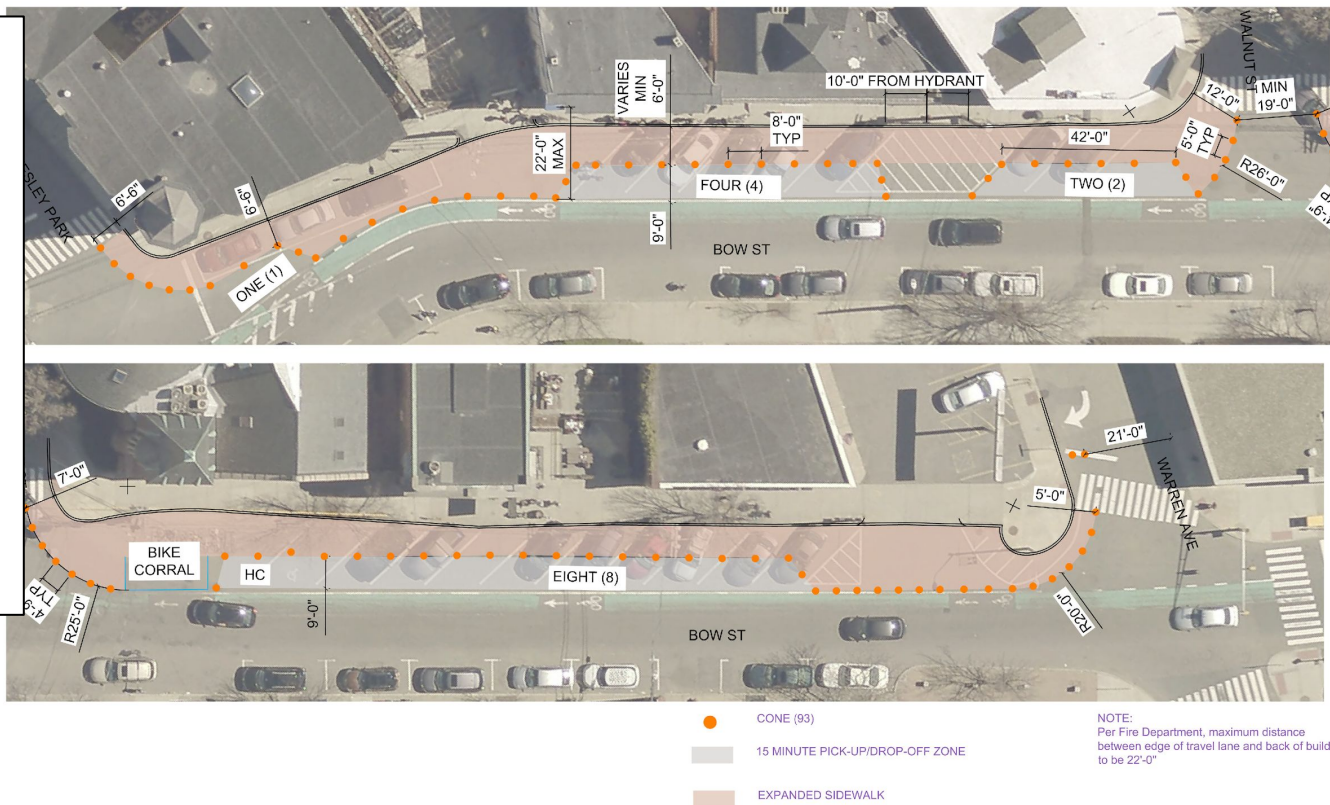
(existing sidewalk +/- 7 feet including furniture zone)

- Conversion of 17' angled parking to:
 - 9' pedestrian zone
 - 8' loading/pickup parking zone
- 15 min parking zone
 - Retains ADA space
 - Reduction of only 2 parking spaces
- Pedestrian zone marked with 45 [weighted channelizer cones](#) spaced at 5' and 8'
- Utilize existing crosswalk and driveway for ramp entry/exit onto walkway



Pilot 1: Design (existing sidewalk +/- 7 feet including furniture zone)

- Conversion of 17' angled parking to:
 - 9' pedestrian zone
 - 8' loading/pickup parking zone
- 15 min parking zone
 - Retains ADA space
 - Reduction of only 2 parking spaces
- Pedestrian zone marked with 45 [weighted channelizer cones](#) spaced at 5' and 8'
- Utilize existing crosswalk and driveway for ramp entry/exit onto walkway



SHARED CURB/PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF - BOW STREET

5/28/20

0 10 20 25

Strategy 4:

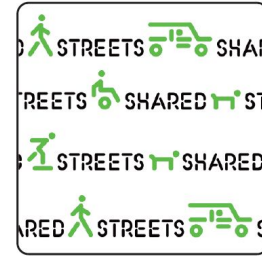
**Shared Streets for
Essential Trip-Making**

Shared Streets for Essential Trip-making

- **Problem:**
 - Physical distancing is difficult on many local streets
 - People traveling in the street may be threatened by speeding vehicles
- **Action:** Identify a network of streets and implement by placing cones / barrels / sawhorses to restrict vehicular access to only abutter / emergency / deliveries.
 - Select low-volume residential streets that connect to essential services
 - Create a useful network - Somerville's model is not a "recreation streets" model
- **Performed by:** In-house staff (design + install + constituent engagement)
- **Status:** First pilot route is operational in East Somerville, Winter Hill
- **Case studies:** Oakland; New Orleans; Providence; Arlington, Seattle; Burlington

What are Shared Streets?

- Shared Streets are for **traveling**
 - No social gathering or events are allowed.
 - Facial coverings and proper distancing are required.
 - A dispersed network of streets reduces perception of a “destination”.
- Shared Streets are **shared between all modes**
 - Residents can utilize the entire street width to safely distance themselves while traveling.
 - Somerville’s model is not “Open Streets” or “Closed Streets” - these are “Shared Streets”.
- Shared Streets **maintain access** for residents, emergency services, & deliveries
 - Closed to thru traffic, open for local traffic to access a final destination, emergency vehicles, and local deliveries.



Shared Streets appear similar to temporary closures during construction



East Somerville - May 2020

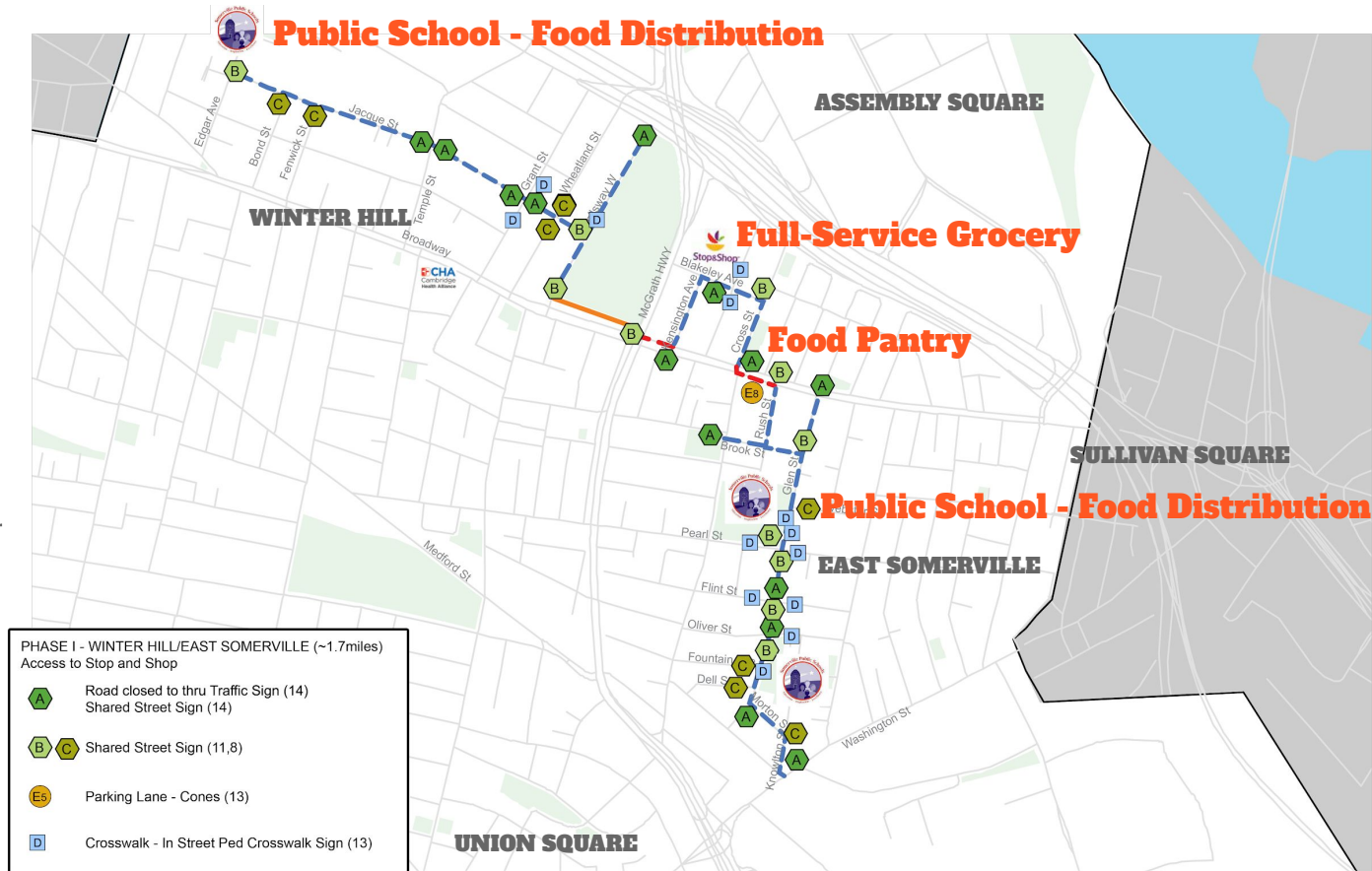
Shared Streets Pilot #1: East Somerville



Shared Street Pilot #1: ~1.7 mile route

- East Somerville & Winter Hill route

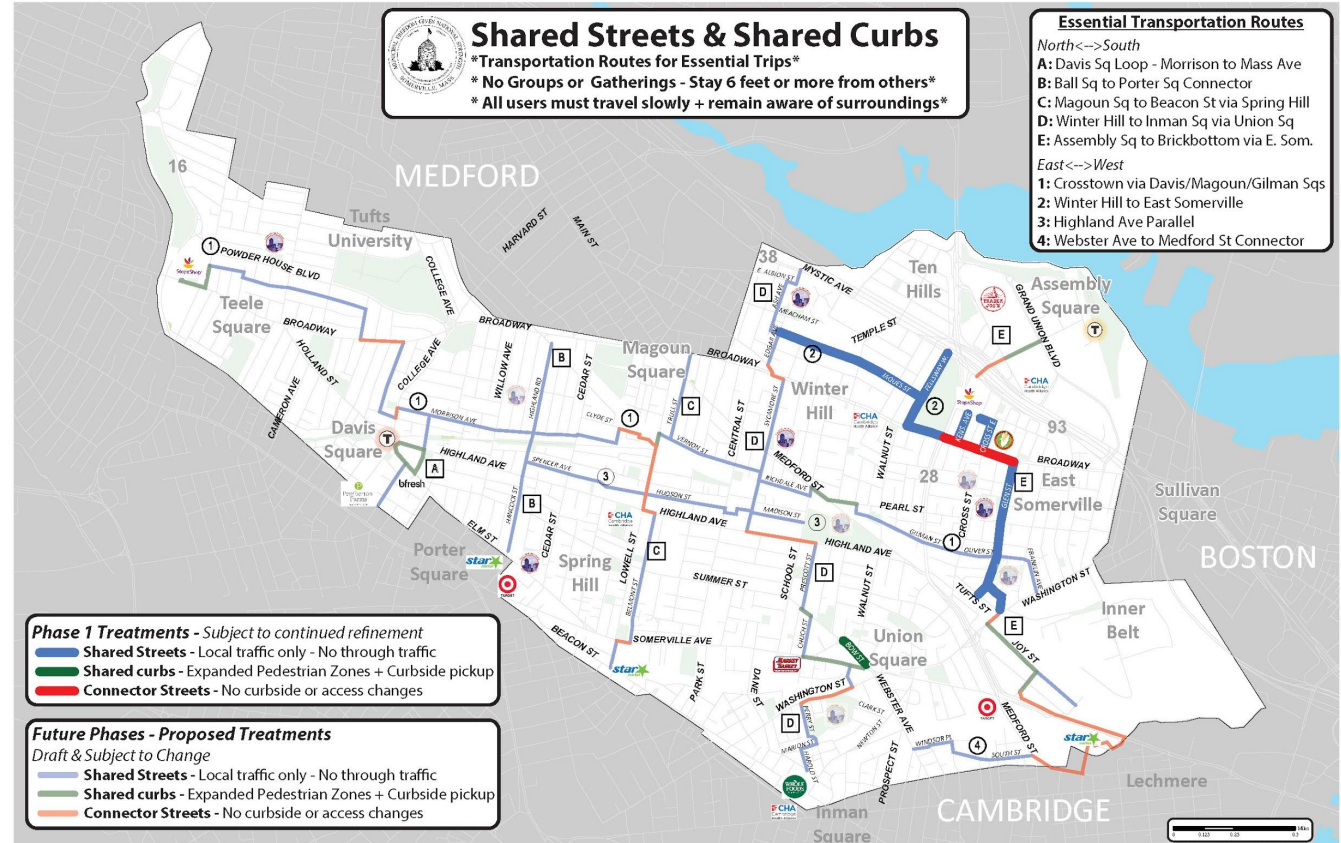
- Neighborhoods where access to a vehicle is lowest
- Neighborhoods with highest populations of youth and communities of color
- Connections to grocery stores, SPS food pickup sites, and SHC Project SOUP food pantry



Shared Streets Network Plan




Network

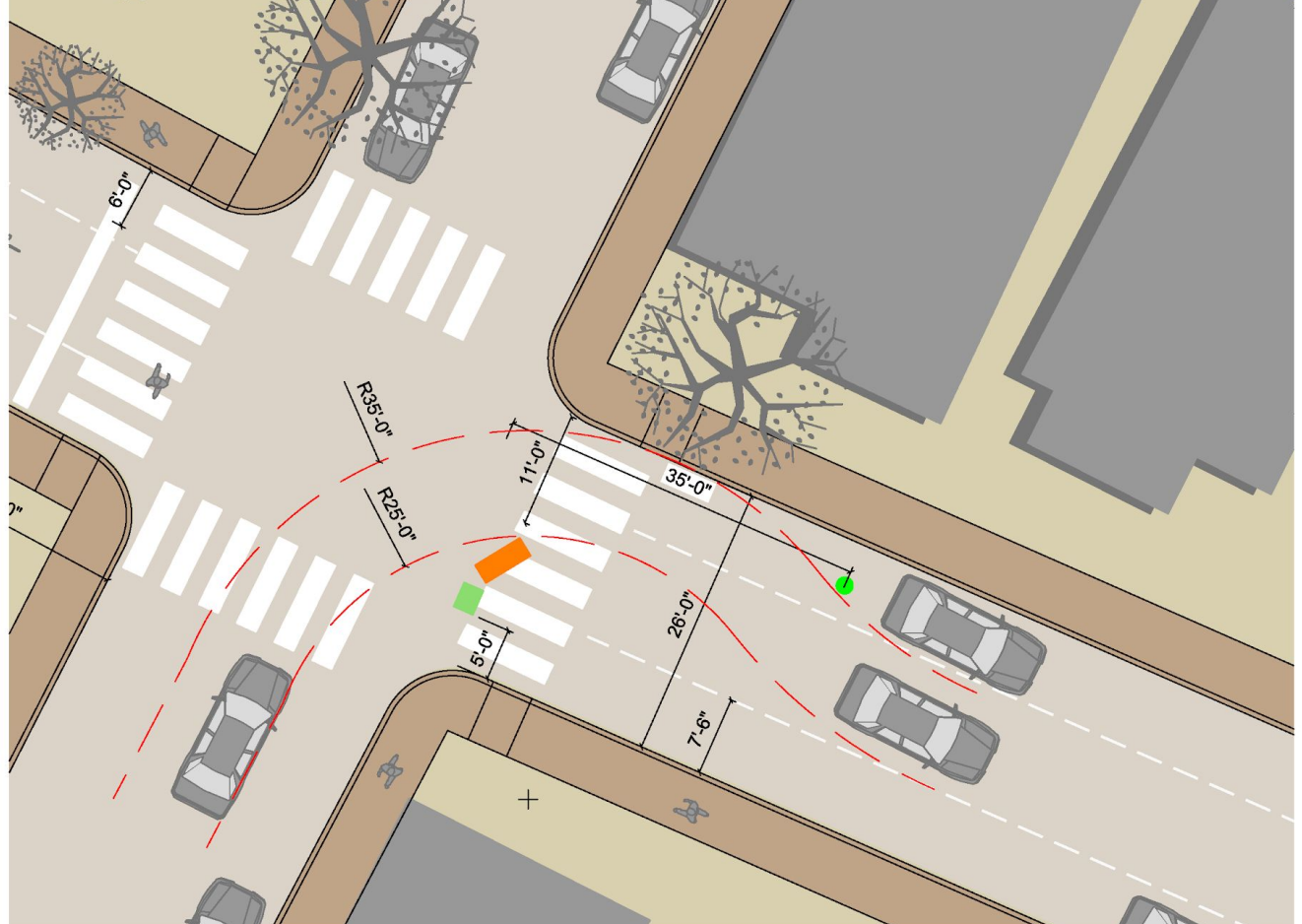
- Focus on access to essential trips
- Avoids creating destinations
- Somerville's first routes serve lower-income neighborhoods and communities of color



Shared Streets allow motor vehicle access

SHARED STREET ACCESS TO TYPICAL ONE- WAY RESIDENTIAL STREET

-  R11-4 Road Closed to Thru Traffic
60" x 30"
On Saw Horse
-  Large Custom Shared Sign
30"x30"
On Saw Horse
-  Small Custom Shared Sign
18"x18"
On Tube



Information / Feedback: SomerVoice

somervoice.somervillema.gov/covid19mobility

somervoice.somervillema.gov/covid19mobility

Translate this page
Select Language ▼

City of **Somerville**

Search

SomerVoice Home City Website City Calendar SomervilleByDesign SomerVision2040 Sign In | Register

Home > COVID-19 Mobility Strategy

COVID-19 Mobility Strategy



This page is your resource for how the city is responding to essential mobility and transportation needs during the pandemic.

We are watching what cities around the world are doing and working with other city departments, so that we can adapt and implement the right mobility solutions for Somerville. We want to hear from you! The situation caused by the pandemic changes daily and we want to meet your mobility needs and help you get where you need to go safely and efficiently - everything we're implementing is being put on the ground with a light touch, so that it can be modified to meet the needs of the city.

Current Mobility initiatives to help keep residents safe during this time include:

- hands-free pedestrian signals
- traffic calming
- shared curbs
- shared streets (see draft Shared Streets Network map)

Read more below for information on these projects.

For information on other Mobility Division planning and projects, please refer to the main [Mobility Division web page](#).

Current Updates

Shared Streets and Shared Curbs

Important Links

- COVID-19 Business Needs Survey

Shared Streets and Shared Curbs Map

- Shared Streets Shared Curbs Map.pdf (5.95 MB) (pdf)

Who's Listening

Viola Augustin

Transportation Planner/Designer
OSPCD: Mobility Division

Email transportation@somervillema.gov



Shared Streets

2 days ago



Continue reading

What are Shared Streets?

The city is planning a network of shared streets for essential trip making. We will make temporary changes to city streets to give people more space to get around in their neighborhood car-free and safely during this time.

Take a look at our vision for a Shared Streets Network for essential trip making. The network map represents the city's initial thinking of how to link low volume residential streets in a network that spans the entire city.

These streets will remain open to local vehicle traffic, deliveries, and emergency vehicles, while discouraging drive through vehicle traffic....

Shared Curbs

2 days ago



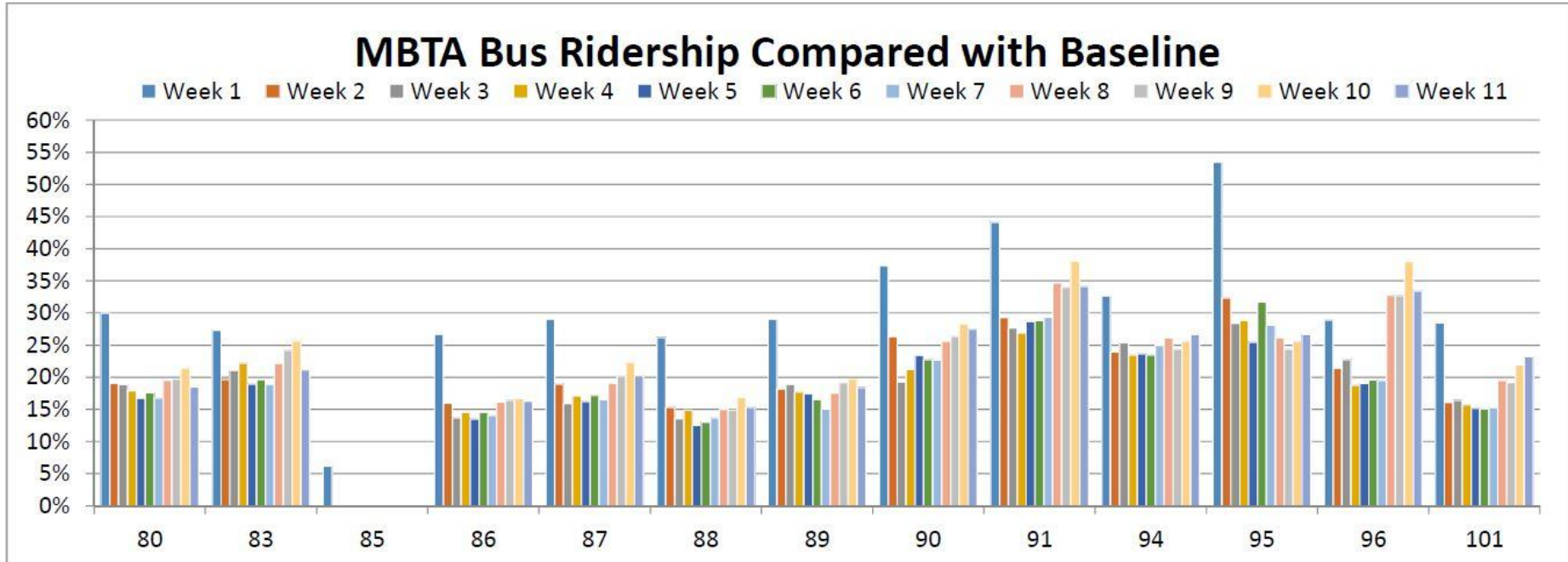
What changes are being made to extend sidewalks and who is making them?

The Shared Streets approach will be applied to lower volume residential streets; however, there is also a need for more pedestrian space on busier arterials and in commercial districts so that pedestrians are able to safely maintain physical distance in these locations.

Strategy 5:

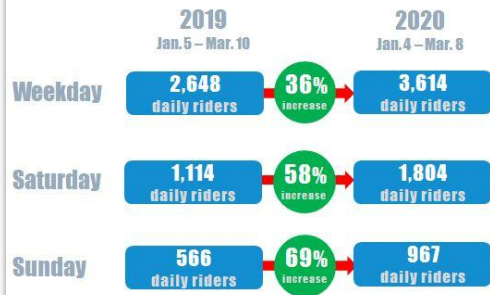
**Bus Priority Projects
to help protect MBTA
customers and workers**

Shared Streets planning should consider bus transit



Bus priority project on municipal streets help MBTA manage bus crowding

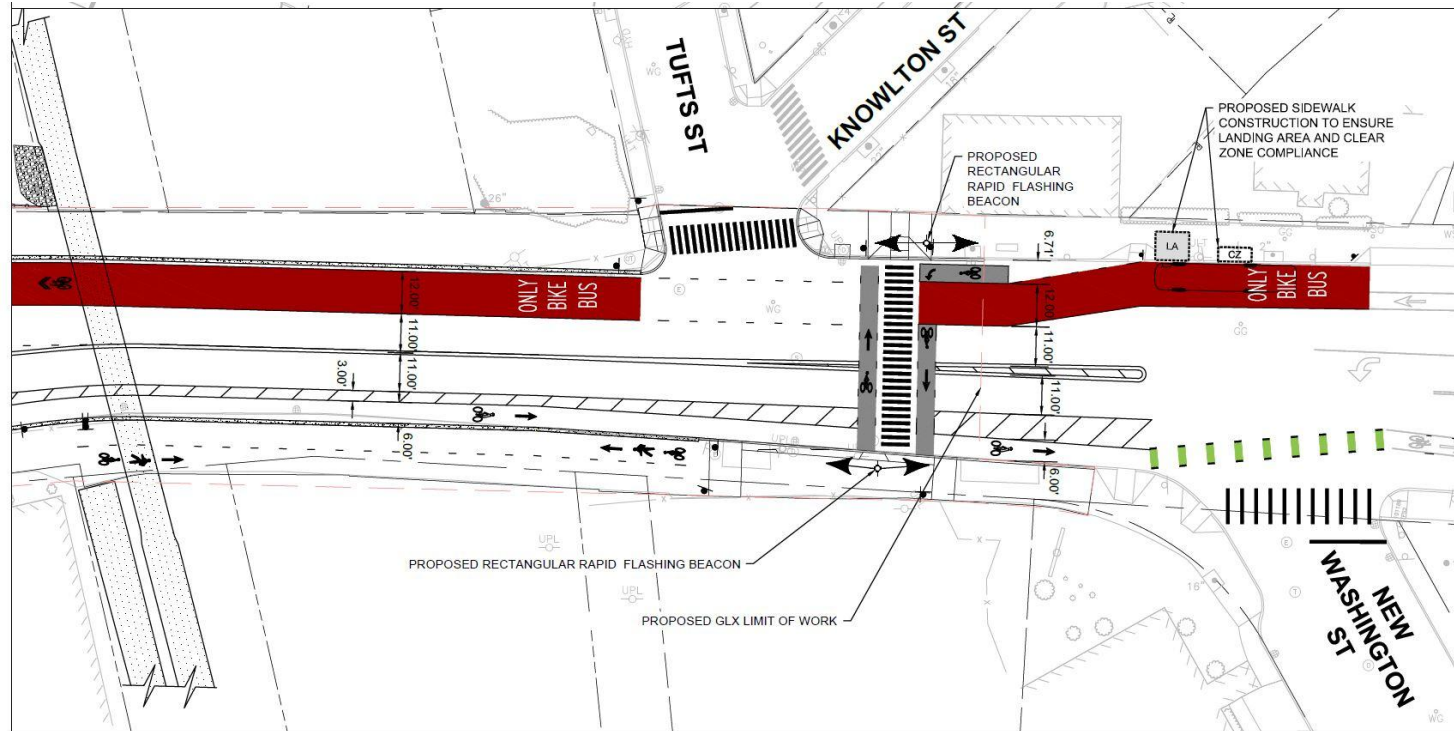
Route 89 Ridership



New bus lane planned in partnership with MBTA & MassDOT Highway

Washington St.

- Between Sullivan and Union
- Route 86, Route 91, Route CT2
- Bus routes impacted by GLX detours during the past
- Mid-summer implementation



DRAFT
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

0 20 50 100
SCALE: 1" = 20'



MAYOR JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
Office of Strategic Planning &
Community Development

COVID-19

Mobility Strategy

June 4, 2020