



# SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



## 2017 Annual Report

### Somerville Bicycle Advisory Committee

<b>Community Representatives</b>	<b>Ex Officio Members</b>
Ken Carlson, Chair	Skye Stewart, Office of the Mayor
Tom Lamar, Vice Chair	Maryann Heuston, Board of Aldermen
Charlie Dennison, Secretary (resigned in July)	Stephen Carrabino, Somerville Police Department
Katie Pierce, Secretary	Terry Smith, Traffic and Parking
Alex Anderson	Stan Koty, Department of Public Works
Emily Balkam	Mike Tremblay, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development
Alex Epstein	
Alex Frieden	
Enid Kumin	
Tom Lamar	
Kevin McGrath	
Alan Moore	
Brian Postelwaite	
Brandon Stafford	
Sara Wasserman (resigned September)	
Lena Webb	
Ian Woloschin	

<b>Team Leaders</b>
Education: Sara Wasserman and Katie Pierce
Encouragement: Alex Anderson
Enforcement: Ian Woloschin and Kevin McGrath
Engineering: Brian Postelwaite and Alex Frieden
Evaluation and Planning: Tom Lamar and Alex Frieden

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## Note from the Chair

Greetings fellow bicyclists, supporters of bicycling, or just those who are bike-curious. This is Ken Carlson, the current Chair of the Bike Committee. I am pleased to report that 2017 was one of the most productive years for the Somerville Bicycle Advisory Committee (SBAC) and the City to date. But as our list of accomplishments grows, so does the list of next steps towards our goal of making Somerville the most bicycle-friendly city in the country. Presented here is a summary of those achievements and a look ahead at what we have planned for 2018. But first I'd like to say that I feel incredibly fortunate to be Chair of this incredibly hard working and dedicated bicycle committee and for the committee to have the full support of a talented group of city staff who implement progressive bicycle mobility and safety projects; all under the progressive leadership of Mayor Joe Curtatone. I am so proud to live in Somerville and to be part of the amazing bicycle culture we have created here.



Ken Carlson, SBAC Chair

On a policy level, the City of Somerville committed to Vision Zero this year. Vision Zero is a policy to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roadways to zero. This is a major milestone in road safety for Somerville and joins us with Cambridge and Boston as communities that have committed to this high standard.



Details regarding the City's proposed implementation of goals are found here in [Mayor Joe Curtatone's presentation on Vision Zero](#) given at the SBAC's monthly Bike Talk Social Hour. Additional coverage of the announcement in this article about [Somerville's declaring Vision Zero in the Somerville Scout](#) emphasizes how the adoption of the policy is important given the City's high number of bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as its commitment to environmental sustainability. Stay tuned this year as the City rolls out its Vision Zero Action Plan.

On a national level, Somerville is now ranked 7<sup>th</sup> with 6.6% of people (that's 5,300 of us) using a bicycle as their primary mode of transportation, based on the [U.S. Census Bureau's 2016 Transportation data](#). We even beat out Portland, Oregon! Our 6.6% bicycle mode share doesn't tell the whole story, as it only captures work commutes and not local bike trips, nor the large university student population. And now, with cities like Somerville, Cambridge, and Boston increasing their prioritization of building safe and interconnected infrastructure, [Massachusetts](#) is now ranked the 4<sup>th</sup> highest state for bicycling in the country.

### TOP 20 CITIES WITH HIGHEST SHARE OF BICYCLISTS

CITY	STATE	RANK	TOTAL COMMUTE BY BIKE	TOTAL POPULATION
DAVIS	CALIFORNIA	1	16.6%	68,107
BOULDER	COLORADO	2	9.0%	108,108
BERKELEY	CALIFORNIA	2	9.0%	121,241
PALO ALTO	CALIFORNIA	3	7.8%	67,021
CHICO	CALIFORNIA	4	7.7%	91,545
MISSOULA	MONTANA	5	7.2%	72,362
SOMERVILLE	MASSACHUSETTS	6	6.6%	81,324
PORTLAND	OREGON	7	6.3%	639,635
EUGENE	OREGON	8	6.2%	166,581
CAMBRIDGE	MASSACHUSETTS	9	6.1%	110,644

On a community level, Somerville applied for and received a [Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Community](#) status from the League of American Bicyclists (LAB). We now join Cambridge as the only Gold level bicycle communities on the East Coast. We also actively encourage businesses to apply for Bicycle Friendly Business Status from the LAB, and this year Aeronaut Brewery and Brooklyn Boulders earned Silver and Bronze Status, respectively. They join Whole Foods Somerville (Silver) and clypd (Bronze) in Davis Square as official bicycle-friendly businesses in Somerville. Somerville also dominated the MassCommute Bike Challenge. The challenge, which ran during Bay State Bike Week, May 13-21, counted up all the miles ridden by residents of cities and towns around the state—and Somerville won with a total of 17,540 miles!



On a street level, Somerville has made great strides in improving our bicycle infrastructure. The gold standard for safe bicycle facilities are dedicated bike paths and protected bike lanes. In 2017, we saw a significant increase in protected bike lanes in Somerville. Bollard-protected and buffered bicycle lanes were installed on Washington Street in Union Square, an innovative protected bus/bike lane was also added on Prospect Street, and the groundwork was laid for bollard-protected bike lanes on Webster Ave between Prospect St and the Cambridge City line. This latter project was a year-long endeavor of extensive community involvement. We continue to wait for the completion of the Beacon Street cycle track, a project that has great promise but that has had a frustratingly slow construction timeline. With respect to dedicated bike paths, all of us in the bicycle and pedestrian community were thrilled to hear that the Community Path will now be extended all the way to Lechmere with the Green Line Extension Project. And progress towards a dedicated bicycle-pedestrian bridge over the Mystic River will provide a vital transportation link to the north where the current infrastructure is either unsafe or non-existent.

With respect to new bike lanes, Somerville has added new bike lanes on Dane Street and Elm Street. And with Webster Avenue and Prospect Street becoming two way for traffic, there are now uphill sharrows on Prospect St and downhill sharrows on Webster Ave in addition to the bike lanes in the opposing direction. We have also added a number of new contraflow lanes, several of them as part of our growing Neighborways network. We now have legal contraflow bicycling on Newton Street in Union Square, Hancock Street near Porter Square, and Gilman and Oliver streets in East Somerville. We also have a new and beautiful Neighborway street painting on Dimick Street.

All of these improvements are the result of dedicated work from the City of Somerville and its departments, SBAC, and the countless businesses, residents, and involved community members. These efforts often take many years of planning and implementation, and it can be difficult to see results if you just look back a few months. However, when looking back at the progress over the last several years, the results are impressive. Since 2010, the number of people traveling by bicycle has nearly tripled across the city – some areas have seen a four-fold increase in people riding bikes during commute hours.

The Somerville Bicycle Advisory Committee is divided into five Teams, aligned along the Five E's of Bicycle Planning: Engineering, Evaluation, Education, Encouragement, and Enforcement. All of the above mentioned bicycle infrastructure improvements involved our Engineering Team and Evaluation Teams, along with the hard work of City employees. The Evaluation Team also worked hard to monitor bicycle safety and mobility during the reconstruction of Beacon Street and was frequently giving feedback and advice to the City on the impact of the project on people who bicycle.

The Education Team organized an exciting lineup for our highly successful Bike Talk Social Hour series where once a month we bring great speakers from the bike community to speak at Aeronaut Brewery. We also held a well-attended Bicycle Advocacy Discussion Panel during the Bike Month Kick-off Event, and developed and distributed bicycle safety information to the community.

The Encouragement Team did a fantastic job setting up and tabling at the Bike Month Kick-off Event, as well as the Rush Hour Challenge during Bay State Bike Month. The Team also organized several bike rides during the year and tabled at the monthly Whole Foods bicycle commuter breakfasts.

Our Enforcement Team had a busy year. The team works closely with the Somerville Police Department to help promote a safe bicycling environment. The Team has developed a Crash Survey that will be rolled out this spring which can be used to capture additional information about bicycle crashes. Members of the Team drafted a winter snow removal maintenance letter that was sent to the Department of Public Works. And finally, the team has developed a “Stop on the Line Every Time” campaign to encourage all road users, but especially motorists, from rolling into intersections.

None of this can happen without our amazing SBAC Members and dedicated volunteers. Our Committee has evolved over the course of the year. Long-term member Charlie Dennison stepped down this year, and Sara Wasserman, the head of our Education Team, also resigned when she moved outside of Somerville. But we were able to add an amazing crop of new members: Neighborways champion Mark Chase, and Kevin McGrath, Alex Frieden, and Katie Pierce--all of whom were leaders of “E” Teams before becoming official members-- as well as Lena Webb, who also serves as Commissioner-at-Large on the City’s Traffic Commission. We’d like to thank our many volunteers, with a particular shout out to Michael Weber for his help in designing educational posters and taking on our Twitter postings.

And none of Committee’s hard work can go anywhere without the hard work from city officials and employees who support and help realize our goals. We’d like to give a big shout out to Senior Transportation Planner, Mike Tremblay who is our primary liaison to the City; Transportation Analyst, Adam Polinski; and the Director of Transportation and Infrastructure, Brad Rawson. And another big shout out to Deputy Chief Steve Carrabino, one of the biggest bike advocates in the city, as well as Captain Jim Donovan who serves on the Enforcement Team. We also had tremendous support from Alderman Maryann Heuston who was our liaison to the Board of Aldermen. Many thanks to the dedicated employees at Traffic and Parking, Public Works, and the Mayor’s Office. And of course, a big thanks to Mayor Joe Curtatone.

Ken Carlson, Chair



## Education

The Education Team's goal is for people of all ages and abilities to feel confident and safe while biking in the City of Somerville. Our outreach efforts are aimed at all road users, including bicyclists, drivers, and pedestrians.

### Bike Talk Social Hour

Our monthly Bike Talk Social Hour began near the end of 2015 and continues to draw crowds as a popular local event. One Wednesday evening each month (the first Wednesday of the month this year), cycling enthusiasts gather at Aeronaut Brewery to hear a different speaker's perspective on a biking related topic. The speaker presents for about thirty minutes and then opens up the floor for a lively question and answer period. Following each presentation, speakers, audience members, and others who happen to be at Aeronaut have time to socialize with each other.

This year's speakers featured an amazing collection of advocates and public officials who spoke on a variety of important topics:

Month	Speaker	Topic
Jan	Laura Borrelli and CRLS Students	Cambridge Ringe and Latin Bike Advocates
Feb	Matt Carphree	How to Tell Your Story to Improve Law Enforcement Response
Mar	Phil Goff	The Battle for a Complete Street in Arlington
Apr	Tim Snyder	I Don't Want to Die and You Don't Want to Kill Me
May	Josh Zisson and Steve Carrabino	On Your Side: Biking and the Law
Jun	Brad Rawson	The Future of Bicycling in Somerville
Jul	Janie Katz-Cristy and Family	A Decade of Living Car Free with Kids in Camberville
Aug	Matt Carphree and Ken Carlson	Ad Lib'ed Bike Talk to Fill in for Noah Hicks
Sep	Joe Curtatone	Vision Zero: Striving to Eliminate Serious Injuries and Traffic Deaths on Somerville's Streets
Oct	Zach Litiff	Bike Touring is Not What You Expected: It's Better!
Nov	Nicole Friedman	Newton Transportation Strategy: A Suburban Model for Progressive Transportation
Dec	Joe Barr	Accelerating Separated Bike Lane Implementation in Cambridge

### Updated Bicycle Map of Somerville

The Somerville Bike Map had a significant upgrade, thanks to a student in Mark Chase's [Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation](#) class at Tufts and the hard work of Transportation Analyst, Adam Polinski. Check out the new [Somerville Bike Map](#).

### Bike Month Kick-off

Bike Month Kick-off was a large and lively event that took place over five hours at Aeronaut Brewery in early May. We brought together an array of bike-friendly businesses and organizations to share Aeronaut's space. Boston Cyclists Union, MassBikes, Livable Streets Alliance, Somerville Bike Kitchen, SHIFT Community Bicycle Collective, Common Wheels, and more were present to table during the event.



# Somerville Bikes

Issued August 2017

MORE



Mixed Use Path / Protected Bike Lane



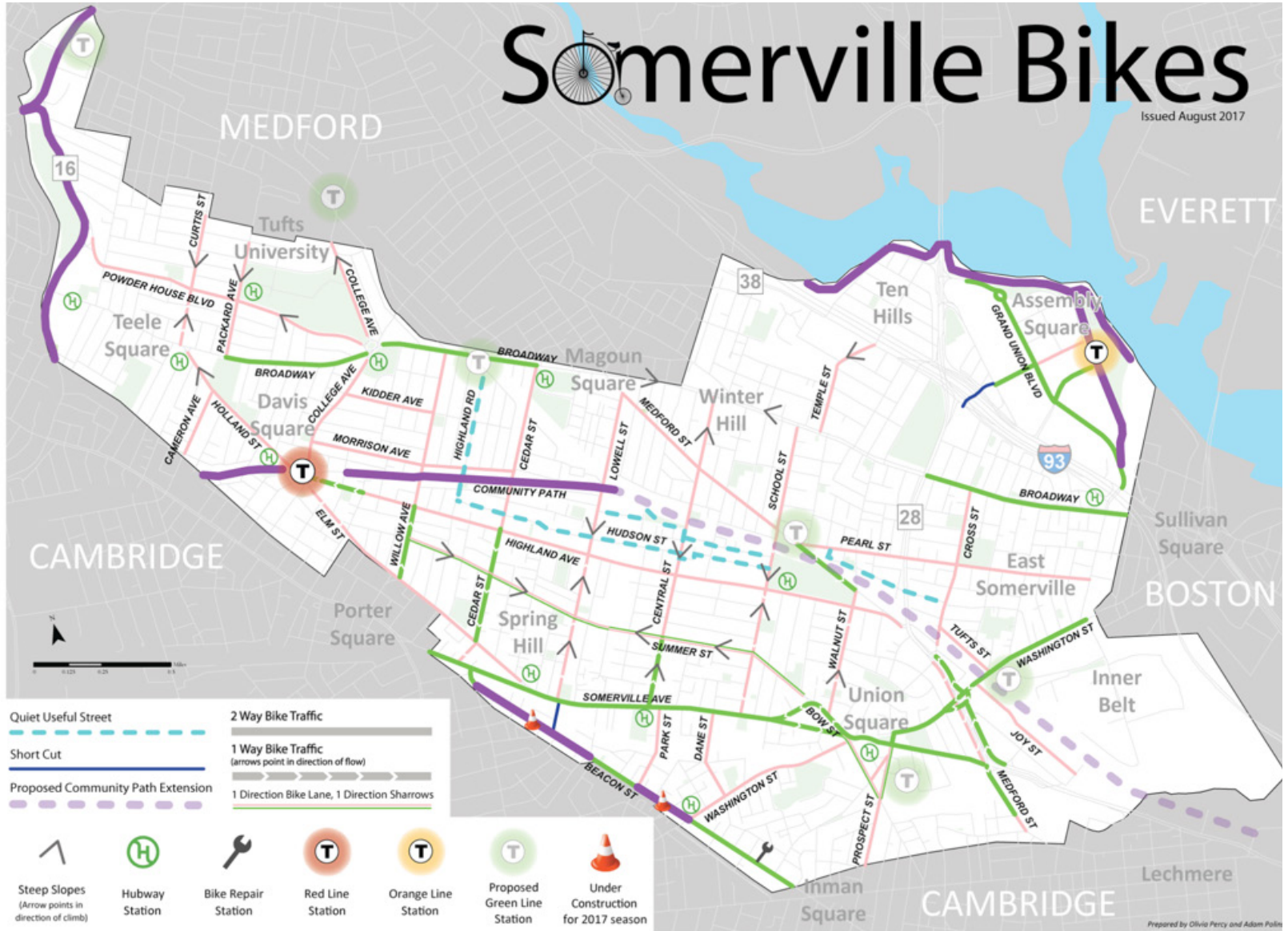
Bike Lane



Sharrow

COMFORT LEVEL

LESS



The Somerville Bike Map is continually updated as more bicycle accommodations are installed.



The kick-off ended with a lively panel discussion focusing on advocacy. The panel included Galen Mook, Jon Ramos, Nicole Friedman, Michelle Cook, and Jonathan Fertig. Each participant provided their methods for advocacy, providing a range from formalized political campaigning to tactical urbanism, all to showcase the variety of forms advocacy can take.

SHIFT Community Bicycle Collective provided a helpful demo for fixing a flat to aid newer cyclists, which was a great add to the agenda this year.

### Bicycle Education Materials

The Education Team strives to develop educational material that can help all road users better navigate our streets. The team developed a handout (see above) to help educate bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, and residents how to interact with each other on the newly developed Beacon Street cycle track. Big shout out to volunteer Michael Weber for the excellent art work. The flyer was delivered to every door/building on Beacon Street and to many neighbors on intersecting streets.



### Somerville Bike Kitchen

We're lucky to have an active bike organization dedicated to assisting cyclists with building and maintaining their bikes. The [Somerville Bike Kitchen](#) has put together numerous workshops over the course of 2017 to assist many riders with things like brakes, derailleurs and drivetrains. The Bike Kitchen has open hours for members and those curious to work on their bikes within their space on Summer Street. They also have a tool share program to allow for cyclists to borrow items useful for repairs.

### Bike Safety in the News

2017 was a busy year for commentary (and education) from the SBAC. We provided feedback on items such as biking while pregnant, Beacon Street's new cycle tracks, Somerville's new Vision Zero commitment, Union Square's redesign, and more.

Tom Lamar was interviewed regarding [Beacon Street by Dig Boston](#). Tom was interviewed at length about his cycling habits and the updates to Beacon St.

Ken Carlson was quoted in [an article by Somerville's Wicked Local news site](#) regarding the work on Beacon Street. Ken also discussed other roads that are sub-par for cyclists due to lack of infrastructure and his excitement for the future developments in cycling in Somerville.

Ken was also quoted in [an article from Scout Somerville regarding Somerville's commitment to Vision Zero](#), which went public June of 2017. He discusses the importance of streets that are made for every mode of transit. Ken was also interviewed in [an article from the Somerville Times on the re-design of Prospect Street and Webster Avenue](#) to allow for two-way traffic flow.

Bike Committee member Emily Balkam provided a perspective on [biking while pregnant for the BCU blog](#). Her perspective is both refreshing and a great addition to the press we typically see. As Somerville continues to draw in and keep young couples, I anticipate many more young families taking up bikes as a mode of transportation.





## The Beacon Street Cycle Track is here to connect!

*Cycling is a great way to explore the area and commute to work. The Beacon Street cycle track provides a safe lane for cyclists and is part of a network that connects Porter Square to Kendall Square and Boston. It runs from Oxford Street to Museum Street and then again from Park Street to Washington Street. The new cycle track brings better biking facilities to one of Somerville's busiest thoroughways.*



**As a resident**, use the bricked space between the sidewalk and the cycle track for trash/recycling bins. Please don't shovel snow into the cycle track during or after storms.



**As a pedestrian**, please do not walk in the cycle track and take care when crossing it. You have right of way when using a crosswalk.



**As a cyclist**, look for pedestrians crossing the cycle track near crosswalks. Pedestrians have right of way to cross the cycle track to use crosswalks.



**As a motorist**, look for cyclists when entering or exiting driveways and side streets. Stop before the white line marked on side streets before proceeding. Cyclists on the cycle track have right of way.

Brought to you by the Somerville Bicycle Committee | [www.somervillebikes.org](http://www.somervillebikes.org)

## Encouragement

The Encouragement team focuses on activities and efforts that celebrate and engage people who currently bike for their commutes, errands, recreation, and fun. The team also focuses on outreach to members of the community who do not currently consider bike riding as a viable option for their travels around Somerville and the surrounding neighborhoods. In this spirit, the Encouragement team organizes group rides, social activities, and public outreach by joining community events to share information about the SBAC and improvements to Somerville's bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

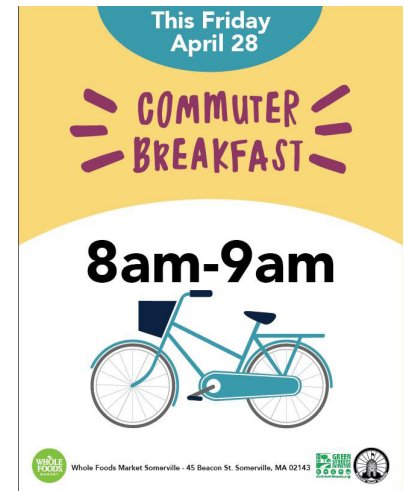
In 2017, the following events were held to encourage people to ride bicycles in the Somerville community while also fostering a stronger sense of community among people who bike in the neighborhood.

### **Whole Foods Bike Breakfasts**

For the last several years, the Whole Foods located on Beacon Street has hosted a Bike and Pedestrian Commuter Breakfast on the last Friday of the fair-weather months. In 2017, the breakfasts were held from April to October. During these morning get-togethers, members of the SBAC set up an informational table to connect with commuters. Many of those who stop to check in are people who happen to be commuting on foot or by bike. The breakfast provides a great opportunity to engage with members of the car-free commuting community and to share information about the various infrastructure projects and public events going on in Somerville.

### **Community Rides and Events**

The SBAC works with several organizations over the course of the year to put on community rides and other events. The rides are often supported by the Somerville Police Department, with officers who volunteer their time to help keep riders safe! This year's rides and events included:



### Bike Month Kick-Off Event

May is Bay State Bike Month in Massachusetts. Each year, the SBAC works to raise public awareness through campaigns on social media, group rides, and community events. This year's Bay State Bike Month started with Bay State Bike Month Kick-off event at Aeronaut Brewing Company. The event brought together the greater Boston community of bicycle advocates and commuters and bicycle riders of all levels. Those in attendance also enjoyed live music from bands whose members are regular bike riders and advocates. Over 25 bicycle advocacy groups and bike businesses from the greater Boston metro region joined the event to share information about their work. The event was an amazing kick-off to bike month!

### 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Rush Hour Challenge

For the last five years, the Somerville Bicycle Advisory Committee has participated in a Rush Hour Challenge to bring awareness to the many options that commuters have to get around Somerville and the greater Boston area. This year, the Rush Hour Challenge was organized with other bicycle and pedestrian advocacy groups, including the LivableStreets Alliance, MassBike, and the Boston Cyclists Union. This year's challenge included a new element – both the morning and afternoon commutes were counted as part of the challenge. And, as organizers, we were excited to highlight many of the leading local bicycle, pedestrian, and transit advocates and enthusiasts as our challengers. The challengers represented several modes of transportation: traditional



bicycle, MBTA public transit, personal car, electric assist bicycle, Hubway bikeshare bicycle, and a runner. The electric assist bicycle – a Copenhagen Wheel provided by Superpedestrian Inc. – registered the lowest total commute time. The traditional bike was in second, followed by the MBTA transit user. The personal car, Hubway bikeshare rider, and runner, all arrived within a few minutes of each other to round out the challenge. The event wrapped up with an after party at Red Bones, a Somerville-based barbecue restaurant. Red Bones has hosted a fund raiser for MassBike for over 20 years which supports statewide policy improvement for bike and pedestrian safety.



Official challengers, members of the public, and organizers of the 2017 Rush Hour Challenge are pictured in front of Quincy Market near Faneuil Hall in Downtown Boston.

JOIN US FOR SOMERVILLE'S 175TH ANNIVERSARY WITH OUR

## Annual Historic Bike Ride:

CITY-WIDE HIGHLIGHTS OF COMMUNITY PRESERVATION IN ACTION



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8TH, 2017  
2:00-4:45PM

Interior tour and refreshments at end  
Ride escorted by the Somerville Police  
Rain date: Sunday, October 15th

*Several stops, family friendly, and free!*

Start: Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue  
End: Temple B'Nai Brith, 201 Central Street

Advance reservations appreciated to [twilson@somerville.gov](mailto:twilson@somerville.gov) or 617-625-6600 ex. 2532  
Designed for all ages and riding levels. Don't forget your helmet!  
This event is sponsored by the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission and the Somerville Bicycle Committee, in concert with the Somerville Community Preservation Committee celebrating its 5th anniversary this fall!



MAYOR JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
[somervillema.gov/historicalpreservation](http://somervillema.gov/historicalpreservation)



### Tour of Somerville Ride

The SBAC also hosts the annual Tour of Somerville Bike Ride. Each year, the SBAC organizes a fall ride to highlight some of the hallmarks of the Somerville Community while highlighting some of the area's history. This ride is organized with the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission. 2017 marked Somerville's 175<sup>th</sup> year as a city, and the Tour of Somerville Ride highlight projects around the city that were awarded historic preservation grants. The ride included stops at 10 historic preservation projects and covered most of the city's geographic footprint. The Historic Preservation Commission provided brief histories and shared information about each of the stops for those who attended.

### Illuminations Bike Tour

The final community ride of the year is the Illuminations Bike Tour. This annual ride takes participants through the City of Somerville to highlight some of the most festive, impressively decorated, and well-lit homes and businesses during the holidays. Many members of the public join the ride in holiday themed clothes and several even decorate their bikes with lights that rival those on the homes along the tour. With an official low temperature of 7°F, this year's Illuminations Bike Tour highlighted some temperatures familiar to the many residents who commute year-round in town – a fitting end to the year's community rides and events.

**ILLUMINATIONS BIKE TOUR**

Sat. Dec. 16  
Meet 5:50pm  
Somerville High  
Main Entrance

Holiday lights & festive cheer encouraged  
Bike lights req'd & dress warmly

90 minute, family friendly ride  
Heavy rain, snow, wind or ice cancels

A Somerville Arts Council & Bicycle Committee Event  
\$5 Donation Suggested

Updates:  
[www.somervillebikes.org](http://www.somervillebikes.org)  
[www.facebook.com/SomervilleBikes/](https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleBikes/)




## 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. The team acts as the liaison for and regularly coordinates with the Somerville Police Department (SPD) and Neighborhood Bicycle Officers. The team also has a goal of ensuring safety during public bicycle rides.



Somerville Police Department Deputy Chief Steve Carribino

In 2017, the Enforcement Team continued to build strong relationships with the SPD, including our relationships with Deputy Chief Stephen Carrabino and Captain Jim Donovan, who served as a crucial contact for the SBAC on enforcement issues. We increased our cross-team collaborations throughout the year as enforcement is closely tied to education and other team initiatives.

We continued to work with the SPD on new safety initiatives. In addition to the citywide speed limit of 25 mph established in November 2016 and 20 mph Safety Zones established in 2017, we helped identify and prioritize areas for targeted enforcement and (together with other SBAC teams) recommend appropriate safe bike facilities upgrades. We've continued to focus our attention with SPD and Traffic and Parking around the Beacon Street cycle track, Somerville Avenue bicycle lanes, Davis Square, and other key transportation corridors in Somerville.

## Moving

Please describe the nature of the crash

Your answer

Please select an option from the list below that best describes your crash

- The crash involved a pedestrian
- The crash involved a car/truck
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

An excerpt from the optional bicycle crash report, to be rolled out in 2018.

### Crash Survey

Through discussions with SPD and local cycling advocacy groups, it was clear that the amount of data currently collected about crashes involving cyclists in Somerville is not sufficient for determining the cause of the crash and how it could have been prevented. After researching how other cities across the US and internationally track bicycle crashes, the Enforcement Team has designed an optional survey to begin collecting data around the locations and circumstances of crashes that occur in Somerville. The survey will be publicized early in 2018. Once sufficient data has been collected, the Enforcement Team plans to push for better incident reporting for cyclists through official channels so that Somerville and other cities can leverage this information and make targeted infrastructure and policy improvements.

### Winter Maintenance Letter

After the Beacon Street cycle track was opened under intermittent conditions, the SBAC drafted and submitted a letter detailing recommendations for winter maintenance to the Mayor's Office. The letter notes how critical to safe winter travel bike lanes and protected bicycle infrastructure (like the Beacon Street cycle track) and provides guidelines for:

- Routine inspection of priority bicycle transportation routes during/after snow and ice storms
- Sanding/salting/plowing
- Addressing adjacent sidewalks and parking spaces to prevent residents from displacing snow into bike lanes

### Stop on the Line Every Time

Towards the end of 2017, the Enforcement Team kicked off an initiative in tandem with the Education Team aimed at ensuring that all road users obey stop signs by stopping at the stop bar adjacent to the sign. Particularly at intersections where traffic crosses crosswalks and bike lanes, this can be dangerous when cars or cyclists proceed through the stop line without checking their surroundings first. Together with the SPD, city officials, and other advocacy groups, the Enforcement Team plans to launch the campaign in Spring 2018 in time for the re-opening of the Beacon Street cycle track. This initiative is one of many that will be linked with the City's Vision Zero plan.



## Engineering

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.

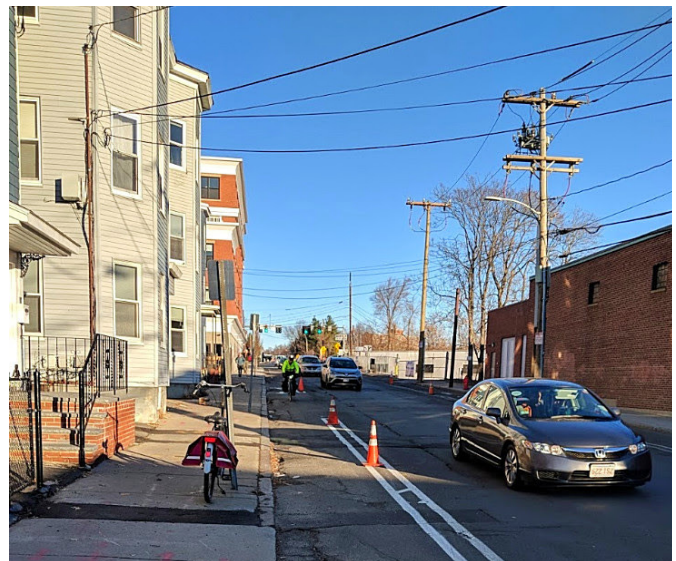
The team is primarily project based, which parallels the process for City, developer, and/or future projects. These projects are usually defined by a street segment, intersection, or corridor.

The Engineering Team's 2017 projects included the following:

- Webster Avenue protected bike lanes
- Proposed design for bollard protected bike lane on Medford Street
- Cedar Street contra flow design
- Elm Street bike lane
- Neighborways contraflow design
- A concept for Powder House Circle
- Powder House Boulevard and College Avenue protected bike lane concepts

### Webster Avenue

The Engineering team was instrumental in developing quick-build concepts for a safer Webster Avenue south of Prospect Street. Once the project was identified as a priority, the Engineering Team developed four different concepts evaluating the safest conditions under different sets of assumptions, including partial or complete parking removal, or making the street one-way. The Evaluation & Planning Team continued the project, studying on-street and off-street parking availability. After meeting with Mayor Joe Curtatone, it was clear that the City should pursue the safest overall option, which was only possible with parking removal. City staff prioritized an interim design in 2017, implementing protected bike lanes using cones. In 2018, the project will be completed with flex posts and an improved crosswalk.

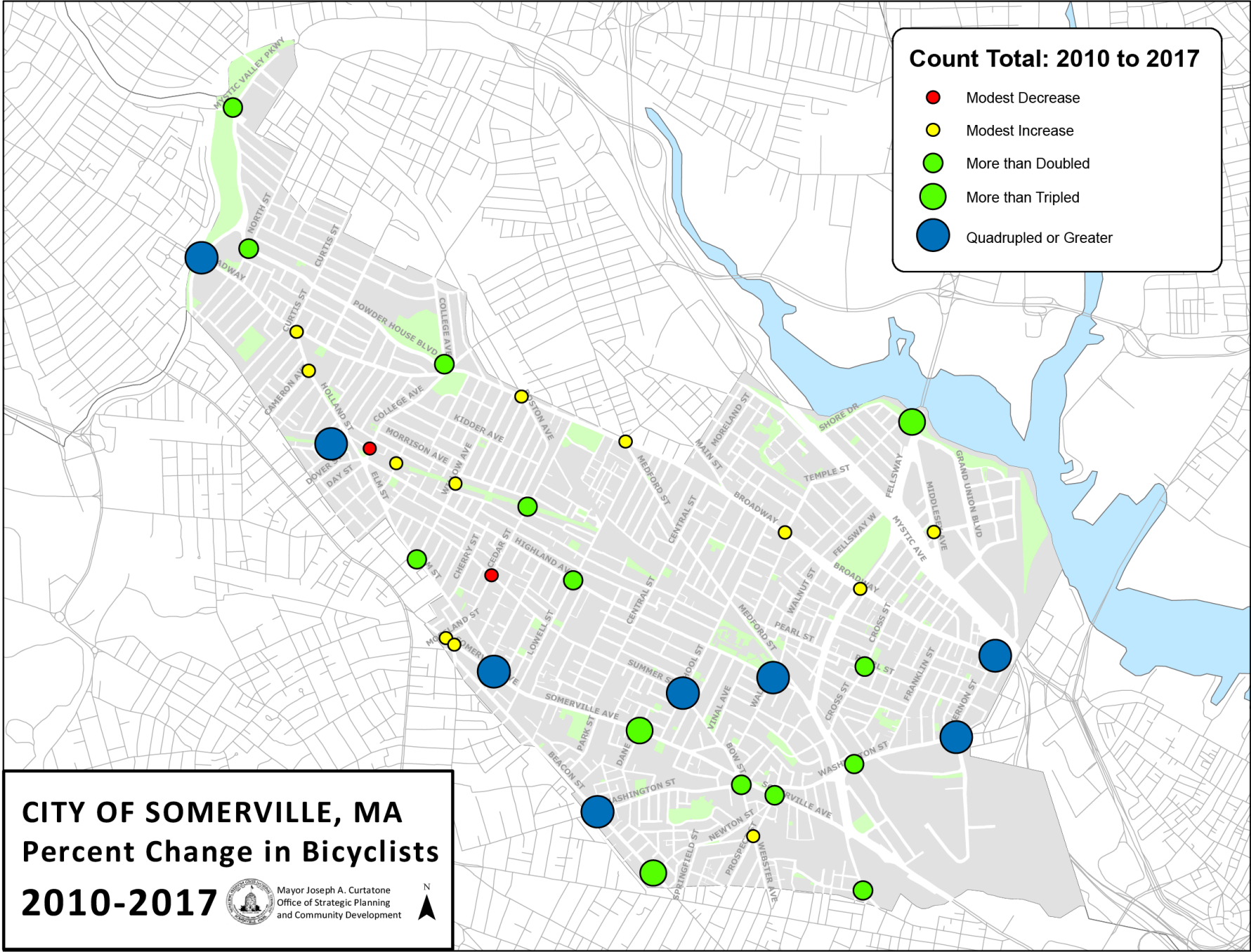


### Elm Street

The Engineering Team designed safety improvements to Elm Street under three conditions, with different assumptions about parking removal or moving curbs. In 2017, after Elm Street between Cedar Street and Somerville Avenue was partially repaved as part of the Cedar Street sewer project, the City implemented SBC's quick-build recommendations for a climbing bike lane and bike box at Mossland Street. In the future, SBC will consider the Engineering team's more involved recommendations for Elm Street.

### Contraflow bicycling

The Engineering team reviewed striping treatments for certain Neighborways projects that included contraflow treatments, where two-way bicycle traffic would be allowed on streets that are one-way for cars. Based on the evaluation that conflicts are primarily located at intersections, the Engineering Team recommended a "gateway" treatment where a double yellow center line would be striped at intersections but otherwise would not have a centerline, consistent with existing yield streets in Somerville and elsewhere. This treatment was implemented on Hancock Street in Porter Square and Gilman and Oliver streets in East Somerville, two locations where contraflow bicycling was observed before being permitted by the City.





# Evaluation & Planning

## Annual Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts

In the fall, the SBAC worked with the City and numerous volunteers to conduct the annual Somerville bicycle and pedestrian counts. The numbers of people on bikes and people walking during peak commuting hours continue to grow. The images below show the AM and PM peak-commuting hour counts for people on bicycles and pedestrians

Additionally, this year's counts provided a good reference point for bicycle use increase since 2010. The map below shows the percent change at locations that have been counted since 2010. The largest green circles represent a four-fold increase in the number of people counted on bicycles. And, the majority of green circles in the map show a three-fold increase. When people commute by bicycle in Somerville, they commute as part of the community!

## Medford Street

The Evaluation and Planning team looked into the feasibility of providing continuous, bollard-protected bicycle lanes on Medford Street between McGrath Highway and the Cambridge City Line. We worked to get parking counts to show there was little need for overnight parking on Medford Street in the vicinity and removing a half-dozen parking spaces allowed room for a protected bike lane facility and improved crosswalk. The Traffic Commission approved removal of all parking and we are working with the City to get the protected infrastructure in place.

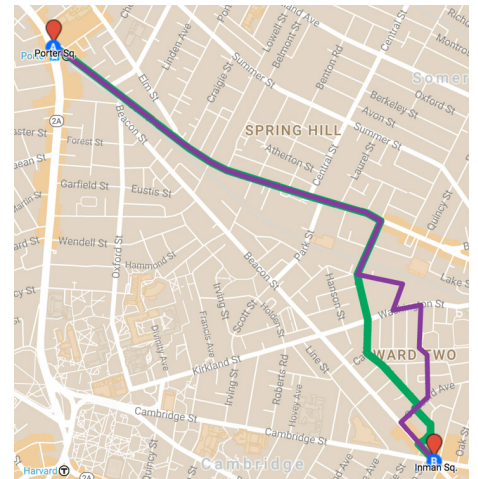
## Webster Avenue

The Evaluation and Engineering teams analyzed data from parking on Webster Avenue, worked with residents to find out what they wanted, and held a public meeting attended by Mayor Curtatone. Parking removal was approved by the Traffic Commission and painted lanes were added to the street, with flexible delineators to follow in 2018.

## Beacon Street Detour

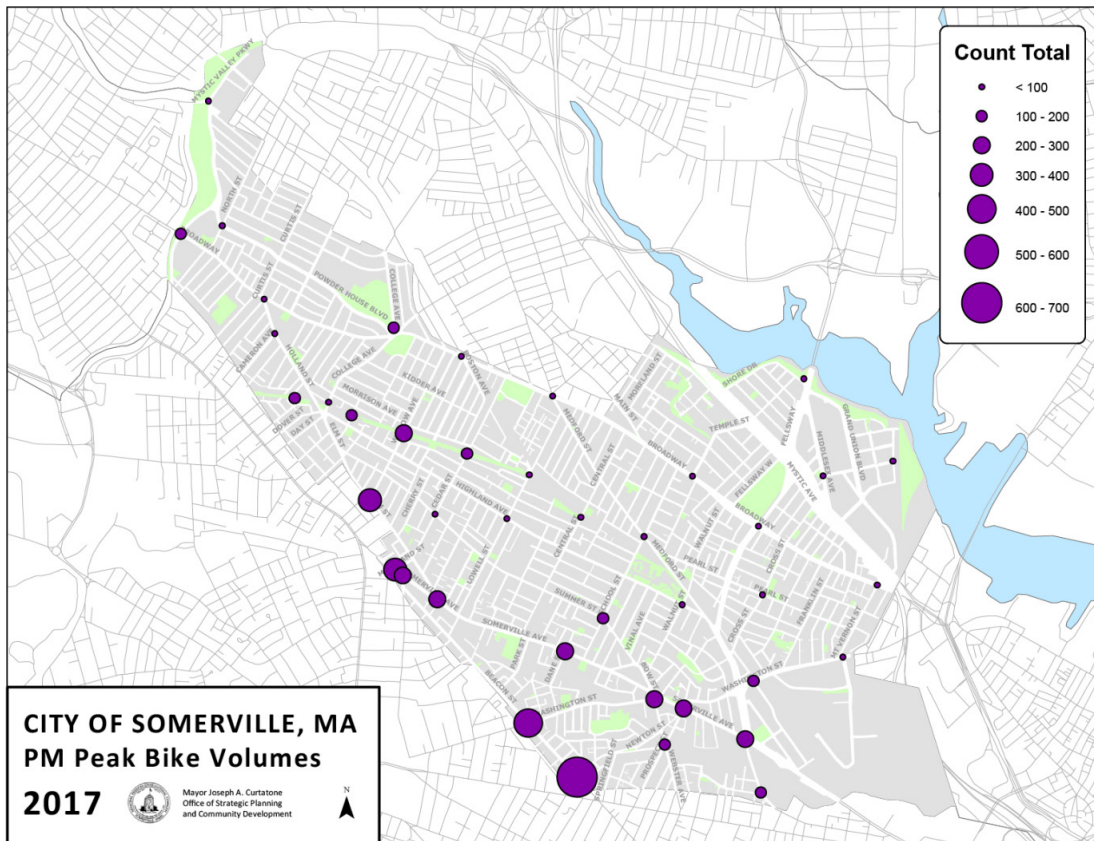
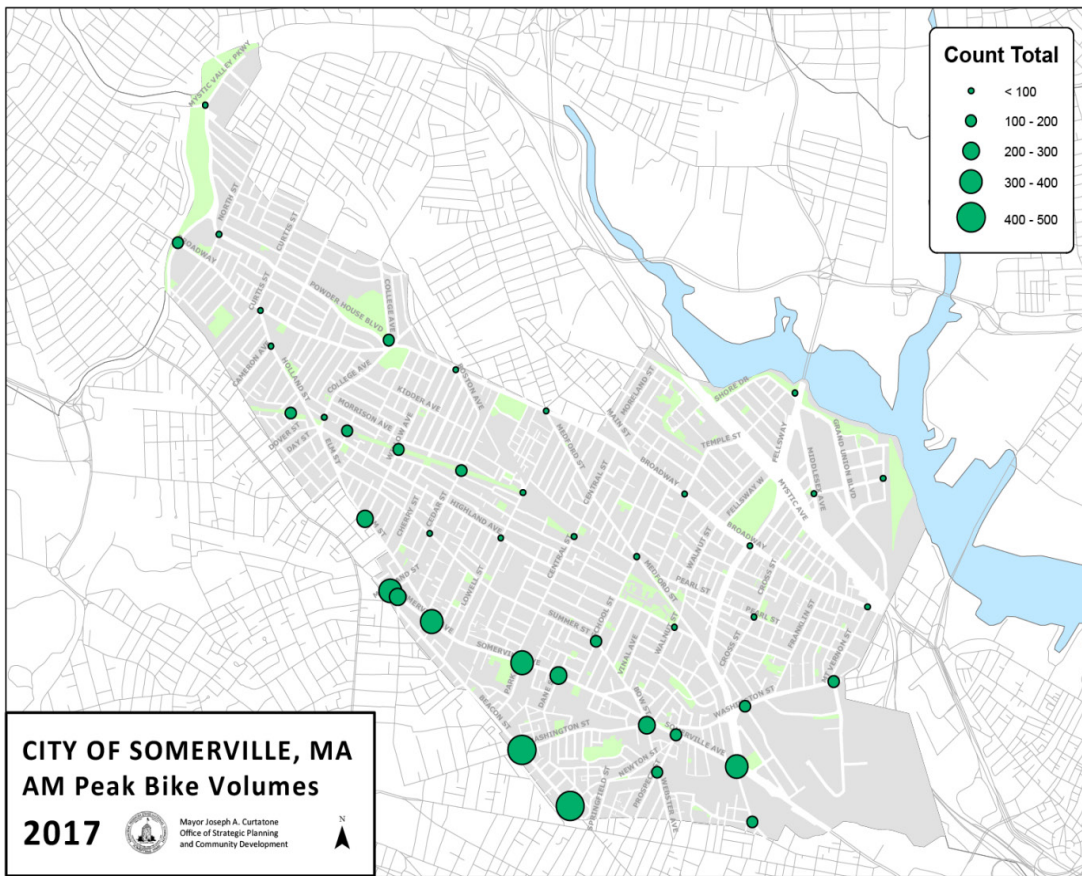
While Beacon Street was under construction, Somerville's busiest bike route needed a detour. In March, the SBAC submitted a recommended bike detour, which was approved by the City and MassDOT and used by Newport Construction.

The SBAC recommended detours with separate routes for bikes and for cars where possible, allowing people biking the benefit of quieter, safer streets.



## Community Path

Together with the City and the Friends of the Community Path group, the SBAC has been continually supportive of the Community Path being extended with the Green Line Extension (GLX) from its present terminus at Lowell St. to existing paths in North Point Park in Cambridge and then through existing paths to the Charles River Esplanade. In 2016, the State announced that the Community Path Extension would be scaled back, removing three neighborhood connections and not extending the Path to Cambridge. But in October, 2017, the MBTA announced great news that one of the Design/Build contractors submitted an acceptable bid for constructing the GLX that included two (of six total) additional options to expand the Path's extent: one is a Cross St. connection, and a second would complete the Path from Washington St. to Cambridge. There are still details to work out, but the City, the SBAC and the Friends will work together to ensure that the extension of the Path will be carried out with the best possible design and within the established budget.



## Neighborways

Neighborways are residential streets designed for low volumes and speeds for auto traffic, where children playing, cyclists, and pedestrians are given priority.

They are usually a few blocks away from major streets and provide extended connections between neighborhoods, schools, squares, and parks. The SBAC has helped to support the Somerville Neighborway pilot project on Spring Hill and East Somerville In the Fall of 2017. The City used a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to complete major Neighborway Network pieces from Porter Square to the Community Path (Hancock Street) and East Somerville to the High School (Gilman Square).



In addition to improving the bicycle network, Neighborways are also used for placemaking. At the intersection of Dimick and Waldo streets, neighbors came together to paint a beautiful street painting. The street painting mimics a traffic circle and neckdowns, hinting to drivers to slow down, watch for pedestrians, and take turns carefully. Dozens came out to the block party to paint the mural, including lots of families and children.



# Looking to 2018



In late 2017, SBAC members submitted over 80 individual goals for SBC to focus on in 2018. We then consolidated the goals along common themes, including specific streets to target for improvements and new projects to take on. As always, our overarching goal is to improve safety for all transportation modes.

## Continued engagement with the community

- Somerville Bike News
- Bike Talk Social Hour
- Bike Month Kickoff
- Rush Hour Challenge
- Tour de Somerville, Historic Ride and Illuminations Ride

## Expand partnerships with new and existing partners

- Expand:
  - Aldermen - increase involvement of the Board
  - East Somerville – focus on underserved neighborhoods
  - High School – encourage and involve students
  - Business community - “how did you get to our store?” transportation surveys
  - Motorists – working together, sharing the road together
  - Somerville Community Access Television (SCATV) - Public Service Announcements
- Strengthen:
  - Somerville Police Department
  - Boston Cyclists Union and the LivableStreets Alliance
  - SHIFT and the Somerville Bike Kitchen
  - Commuters (commute convoy)

- Casual riders (more informal rides)

#### Follow through on already-planned infrastructure projects

- Projects funded under Highway Safety Improvements Program grant to be built as-is
  - Broadway
  - Washington Street
  - Temple Street
- Park Street (continuous bike lanes)
- Webster Avenue
- (Lower) Medford Street

#### Improvements to already-planned projects

- Lower Beacon Street
- Cutter Avenue
- Community Path Extension

#### Advocate for improvements on streets without existing Safety Projects

- Elm Street
- Powder House Circle
- Holland Street
- Highland Avenue
- Alewife Brook Parkway
- Sycamore Street
- Vernon Street
- Roseland Street

#### Manage construction impacts

- Finishing Beacon Street
- Somerville Avenue sewer separation
- GLX construction

#### Improve Project Planning and Delivery

- Gold-level Bike Friendly Community feedback
- Assess and stripe bike lanes sooner in season
- Improve snow removal
- Evaluate and consider advocating for additional bus/bike lanes



# How to Get Involved in the SBAC

There are many ways to get involved in the Bike Committee.

- **Attend our Monthly Meeting** - Members of the public are welcomed to attend the monthly committee meetings, which take place on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Somerville Police Department Academy Room at 220 Washington Street. The meeting room is just inside the front door to the Police Department on the left. The meetings cover a variety of topics important to bike safety, education, policy, and infrastructure. Agendas are posted on the SBAC Facebook page and on the [City of Somerville's Bicycle Committee](#) site. In 2017, we had 38 different guests attend our meetings. Five of those guests became members of the Committee and many became involved in Committee activities.
- **Join the Committee** - Members of the public can become members of the 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. Our teams meet in between the monthly 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](mailto:info@somervillebikes.org).
  - **Education** - Focused on educating all road users with respect to bike safety
  - **Encouragement** - Focused on 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** - Focused on providing detailed engineering solutions to our make our streets more bike friendly
  - **Evaluation and Planning** - Focused on evaluating existing bicycle conditions and proposing new ideas
- **Volunteer** - If you are interested in volunteering with any of our events or rides, let us know by emailing [info@somervillebikes.org](mailto:info@somervillebikes.org).
- **Visit us at our monthly bike breakfasts** - Held at Whole Foods on Beacon Street, the last Friday of the month from April to October
- **Email us** - [Info@somervillebikes.org](mailto:Info@somervillebikes.org)
- **Subscribe to our Monthly Newsletter** – Somerville Bike News- Subscribe on our web site [here](#)
- **Like us on Facebook**- Somerville Bicycle Committee, we are very active!
- **Follow us on Twitter**- @Somervillebike

