

# BACK BAY MOBILITY PROJECTS VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

May 2, 2024

CITY of BOSTON



Transportation

# THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

- ▶ We will begin with a presentation. There will be time for discussion after the presentation.
- ▶ We invite you to update your name in Zoom to include your preferred name and your pronouns, if you would like.
- ▶ The meeting is being recorded and will be posted on the project webpage [boston.gov/back-bay-streets](https://boston.gov/back-bay-streets)



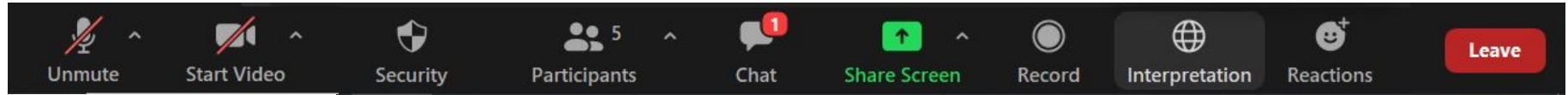
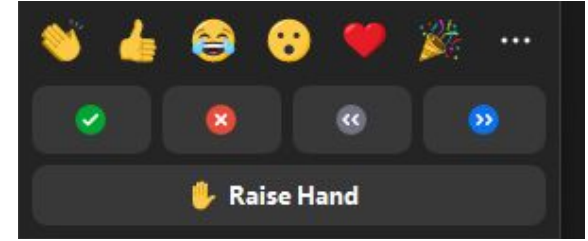
# PARTICIPATING IN A ZOOM MEETING

- ▶ Your microphones are turned off to start.
  - During discussion time, you can raise your 'digital hand' to join the queue. We will go in sequential order.
  - We will unmute your microphone when it's your turn to speak.
  - Joining by phone? Press \*9 to raise your hand. Press \*6 to unmute.



# USING THE ZOOM CONTROL PANEL

- ▶ You can use non-verbal feedback at any time during the meeting.
- ▶ Leave a message in the chat box if you have a question.
- ▶ Use emoji reactions if you would like to



Mute /  
Unmute

Camera  
On/Off

Chat  
Box

Raise  
Hand

# TONIGHT'S PRESENTERS



**Jascha  
Franklin-Hodge**

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Chief of  
Streets



**Julia  
Campbell**

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Deputy Chief of  
Streets for  
Infrastructure &  
Design



**Nathaniel  
Fink**

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Planner,  
Infrastructure &  
Design

# Tonight's Meeting

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1. Introduction
2. Projects ready for construction
3. Projects in design
4. Next steps
5. Discussion

# STREETS CABINET VISION

*To make Boston's streets work for everyone.*

- ▶ Safe and welcoming for people of all ages and abilities, regardless of how they travel.
- ▶ Functional, well-maintained, and reflective of the uniqueness and vitality of every neighborhood.
- ▶ Designed for a zero-carbon future and adapted for the impacts of climate change.



Public Works



Transportation

# SAFETY

Our *Vision Zero* goal is to end serious and fatal crashes in the city by 2030.

- ▶ Streets that are safer for people walking and biking *are safer for everyone*
- ▶ When vehicles travel at speeds below 25 mph, streets are safer
- ▶ Shorter crossing distances reduce the risk of crashes for pedestrians.





# BIKE LANES ARE PART OF A WELL-ROUNDED, AGE-FRIENDLY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

- ▶ More options for making everyday trips
- ▶ Organizing *all road users* into more predictable spaces
- ▶ Safe, connected networks are key

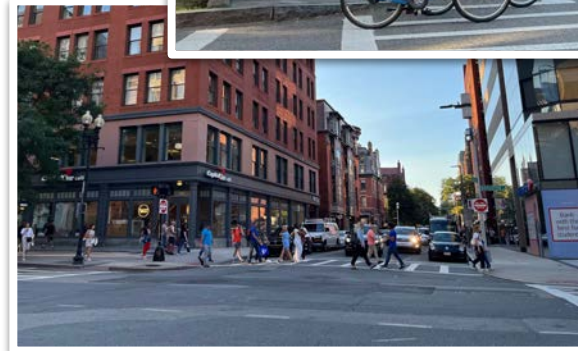
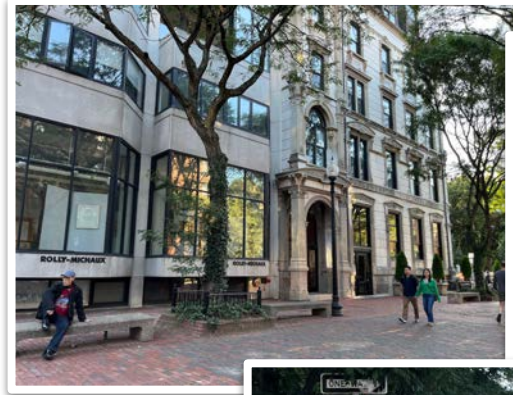
Last year, we began projects to fill missing links in the Back Bay bike network.

- ▶ We're making adjustments based on your feedback.
- ▶ We can create a connected network while addressing your concerns.



# VISION FOR BACK BAY STREETS

- ▶ A *walkable*, thriving, mixed residential and commercial district with *great public spaces*
- ▶ A *transit hub*; buses can circulate efficiently
- ▶ An active commercial area with *managed curbside access* to serve residents and businesses
- ▶ A destination thousands of people *access by bike* daily with a safer, more connected network



# TALKING WITH YOU



*Thank you for your feedback so far!*

- ▶ **Fall 2019:** Connect Downtown community walks in Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Bay Village, and South End.
- ▶ **March 2020:** Open house for Connect Downtown at Boston Public Library
- ▶ **September 2022:** Mayor Wu announces a 9.4 mile expansion of better bike lanes throughout Boston, including Boylston Street and Berkeley Street in Back Bay
- ▶ **Winter 2022:** Boylston Street and Berkeley Street postcards, outreach to businesses, virtual office hours
- ▶ **Spring/Summer 2023:** Pop-up events around Back Bay, virtual office hours, more business outreach

# WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

- ▶ What is the City doing to maintain infrastructure for pedestrians and drivers?
- ▶ Are bike routes possible on other streets in the Back Bay?
- ▶ Will adding separated bike lanes add congestion on busy streets?
- ▶ Can you avoid adding more complexity to already challenging intersections?
- ▶ Can we maintain parking and curbside access for residents, businesses, and institutions?



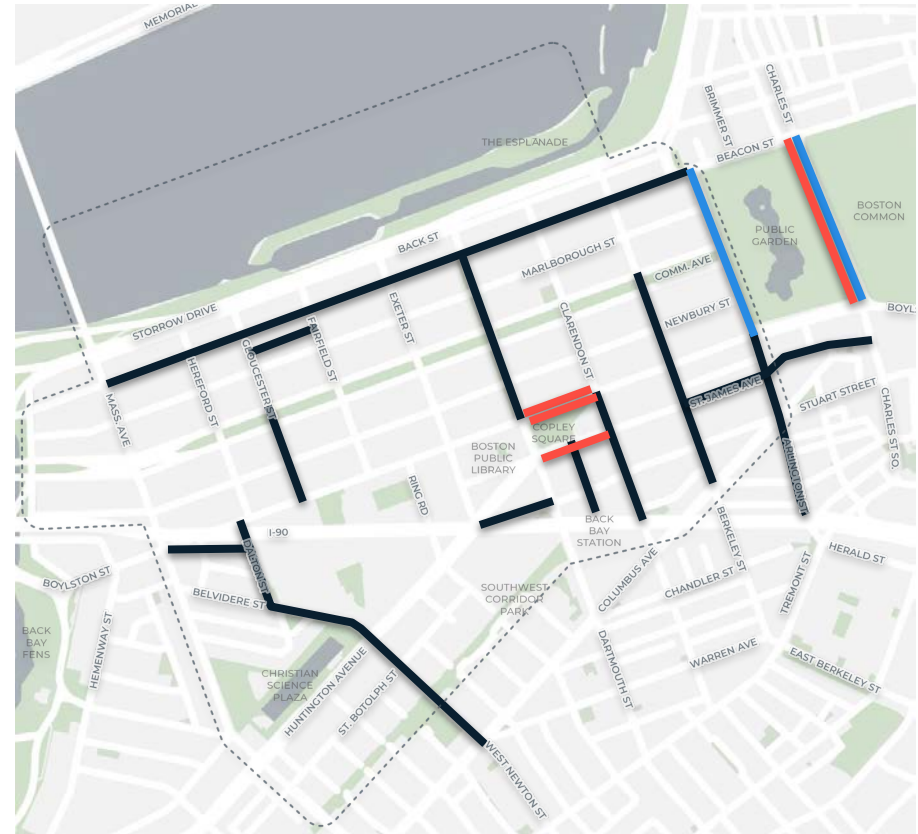
# STATE OF GOOD REPAIR WORK

We plan to repave 3.4 miles of streets and rebuild about 200 curb ramps throughout Back Bay. We'll prioritize streets with planned safety and mobility projects.

- ▶ We'll rebuild deficient curb ramps within the limits of repaving.
- ▶ **Construction schedules are subject to change.** Any streets we don't get to this year will be done next year.
- ▶ Crews will notify abutters and post signs before work begins.
- ▶ Once completed, utility work will be restricted for a period of time to maintain pavement quality.

## Legend

- Annual repaving program - Funded for 2024
- Repaving through other contract - 2025 or later
- Sidewalk reconstruction - varied timelines
- ..... Back Bay neighborhood boundary



This map only includes work fully or partially within Back Bay

# BACK BAY SAFETY & MOBILITY PROJECTS

## Design completed - Construction update

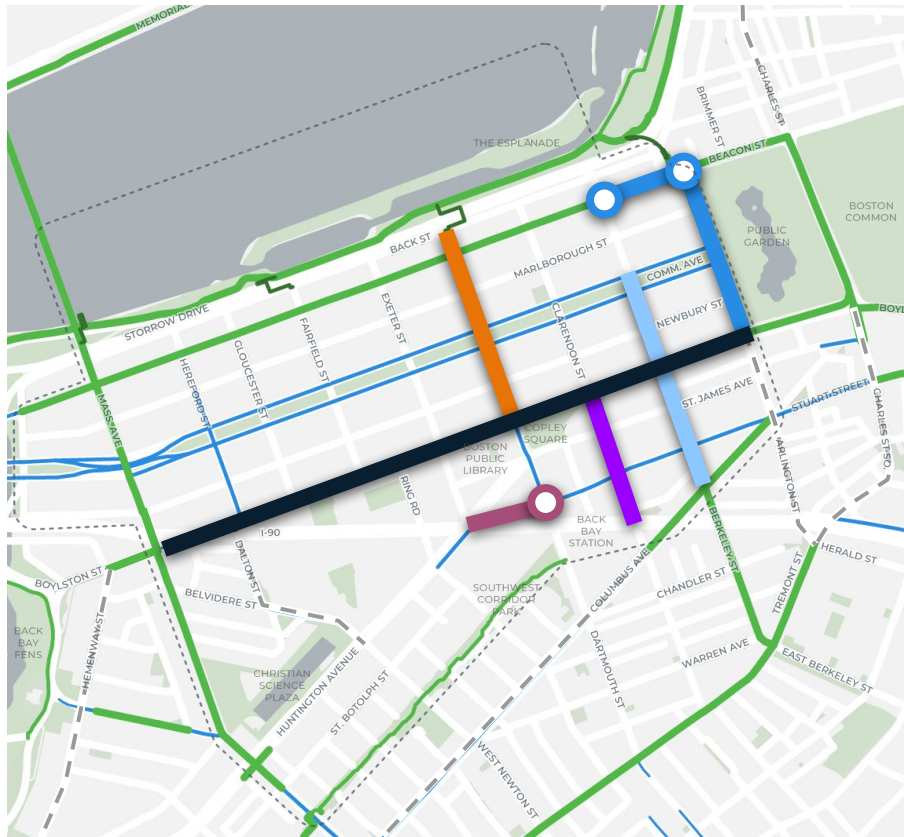
- Boylston Street Bus and Bike Lane
- Berkeley Street Better Bike Lane - *Modified*
- Clarendon Street Bus Lane

## In Design - We want your feedback!

- Beacon Street and Arlington Street - *Modified*
- Dartmouth Street Better Bike Lane - *New*
- Dartmouth/Stuart Safety Improvements - *New*
- Other project - opportunity for bike facilities

## Existing and already in construction

- Paths and separated lanes
- Footbridge
- Bike lane
- Back Bay Neighborhood Boundary

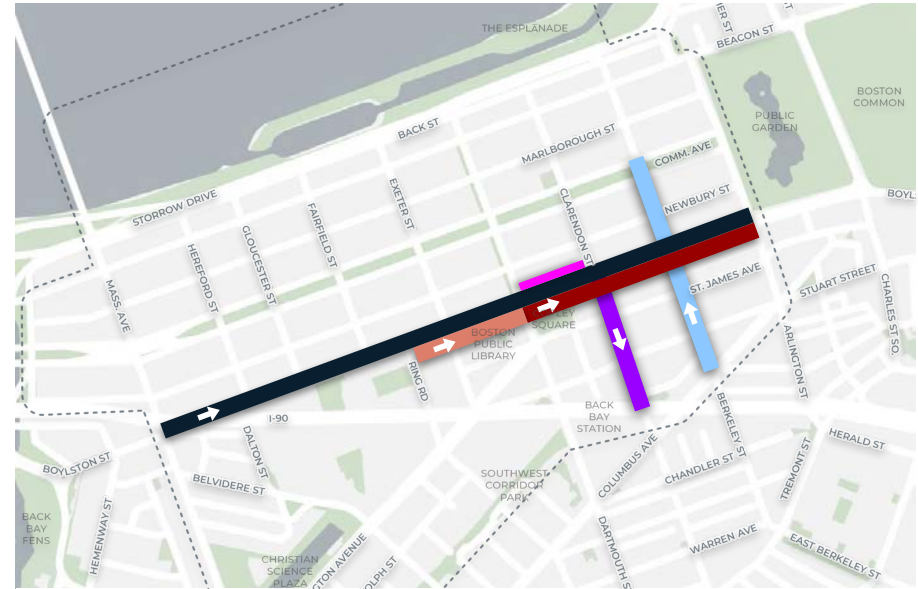


# DESIGN COMPLETED

*Informational updates*

# READY FOR CONSTRUCTION

- ▶ We're providing an update for informational purposes
  - Anticipated timeline
  - What to expect during construction
- ▶ Design and community engagement finished last year - **thank you for your feedback!**



- Boylston Street separated bike lane
- Boylston Street PM peak hour bus lane
- Boylston Street all-day bus lane
- Boylston Street sidewalk: Dartmouth to Clarendon
- Berkeley Street separated bike lane
- Clarendon Street bus lane



# BOYLSTON STREET: STARTING SOON

- ▶ **Separated bike lane** eastbound from Mass Ave to Arlington St
- ▶ **PM peak bus lane (4-7 pm):** Ring Rd to Dartmouth St
- ▶ **All-day bus lane:** Dartmouth St to Arlington St
  - Serves MBTA Routes 9, 10, 39, and 55
  - Replaces parking
- ▶ **Two lanes** for cars traveling eastbound, with additional turning lanes where needed. One lane will be available during PM peak hour (4-7 pm) approaching Exeter Street.
- ▶ **New signal equipment and signal timing changes**
- ▶ Targeted **curb regulation changes** to support deliveries, pick up & drop off
- ▶ **Rebuild sidewalk** on north side between Dartmouth Street and Clarendon Street



# BERKELEY STREET: THIS YEAR

- ▶ Repave roadway and upgrade curb ramps
- ▶ A **separated bike lane** northbound from Columbus Avenue to Commonwealth Avenue
  - Tremont Street to Columbus Ave completed last fall
- ▶ Two northbound **general travel lanes**, with added turn lanes where needed
- ▶ **New signal equipment and signal timing changes**
- ▶ Parking impacts:
  - 13 metered spaces total from Boylston to Comm
  - Supportive letter from Church of the Covenant



# CLARENDON STREET: LATER THIS YEAR

- ▶ Making bus lane permanent after success during 2022 Orange Line shutdown
- ▶ **Repaving** the roadway and upgrading **curb ramps**
- ▶ A **bus lane** southbound from Boylston Street to Back Bay Station busway
  - Serves MBTA Routes 39 and 55
- ▶ New Configuration
  - 1 Bus/Bike lane
  - 1 Through Lane
  - Parking locations rearranged slightly but likely no change in amount

## Orange Line shutdown begins

Saturday is the first full day of the 30-day subway shutdown to accommodate repairs

By [Laura Crimaldi](#), [Camille Caldera](#) and [Kate Selig](#) Globe Staff and Globe Correspondent.  
Updated August 20, 2022, 12:18 p.m.



Crews worked on the tracks at the Wellington MBTA station in Medford on Saturday. CRAIG F. WALKER/GLOBE STAFF

Greater Boston woke up Saturday to a [closed Orange Line](#), the first full day of the 30-day subway shutdown for a high-stakes repair blitz that is expected to cause delays and inconvenience while coinciding with the return to school, and for some workers, to the office.

The subway, which runs from Malden to Jamaica Plain, [closed at 9 p.m. Friday](#) and shuttle buses moved in, with 160 buses operating by midday Saturday, the T said.

# SUMMARY OF PLANNED CONSTRUCTION

## May - June:

- ▶ Boylston Street bus and bike lane:
  - Install striping, signage, and signal equipment

## Over the summer:

- ▶ Boylston Street sidewalk
  - Rebuild sidewalk on north side of Boylston between Dartmouth Street and Clarendon Street
- ▶ Berkeley Street bike lane:
  - Repave roadway, rebuild curb ramps, install striping, signage, and signal equipment

## Fall:

- ▶ Clarendon Street bus lane:
  - Repave roadway, rebuild curb ramps, install striping, signage, and signal equipment

## Throughout the year:

- ▶ State-of-good-repair work:
  - Curb ramp reconstruction and street repaving

**Remember!** Schedules are subject to change based on weather and other factors. Construction crews will notify abutters with flyers and post signs prior to work starting. Thank you for your patience and cooperation during construction.

# PROJECTS IN DESIGN

*We want your feedback!*



# BEACON STREET AND ARLINGTON STREET

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*Closing a bike network gap*

# CLOSING A KEY BIKE NETWORK GAP

Following last year's proposal to add separated bike lanes on Beacon Street and Berkeley Street, we received valuable feedback from you:

- ▶ How can we improve safety at Berkeley/Beacon?
- ▶ Can we maintain parking for residents and institutions?
- ▶ Can the road surface be improved?
- ▶ Are there alternative routes for bicyclists?

We revised the design to address your concerns while creating a connected bike network.



## This project

■ Separated bike lane

## Existing & other planned facilities

■ Path or separated lane

■ Footbridge

■ Bike lane

■ Bus lane

# 2023 PROPOSED DESIGN

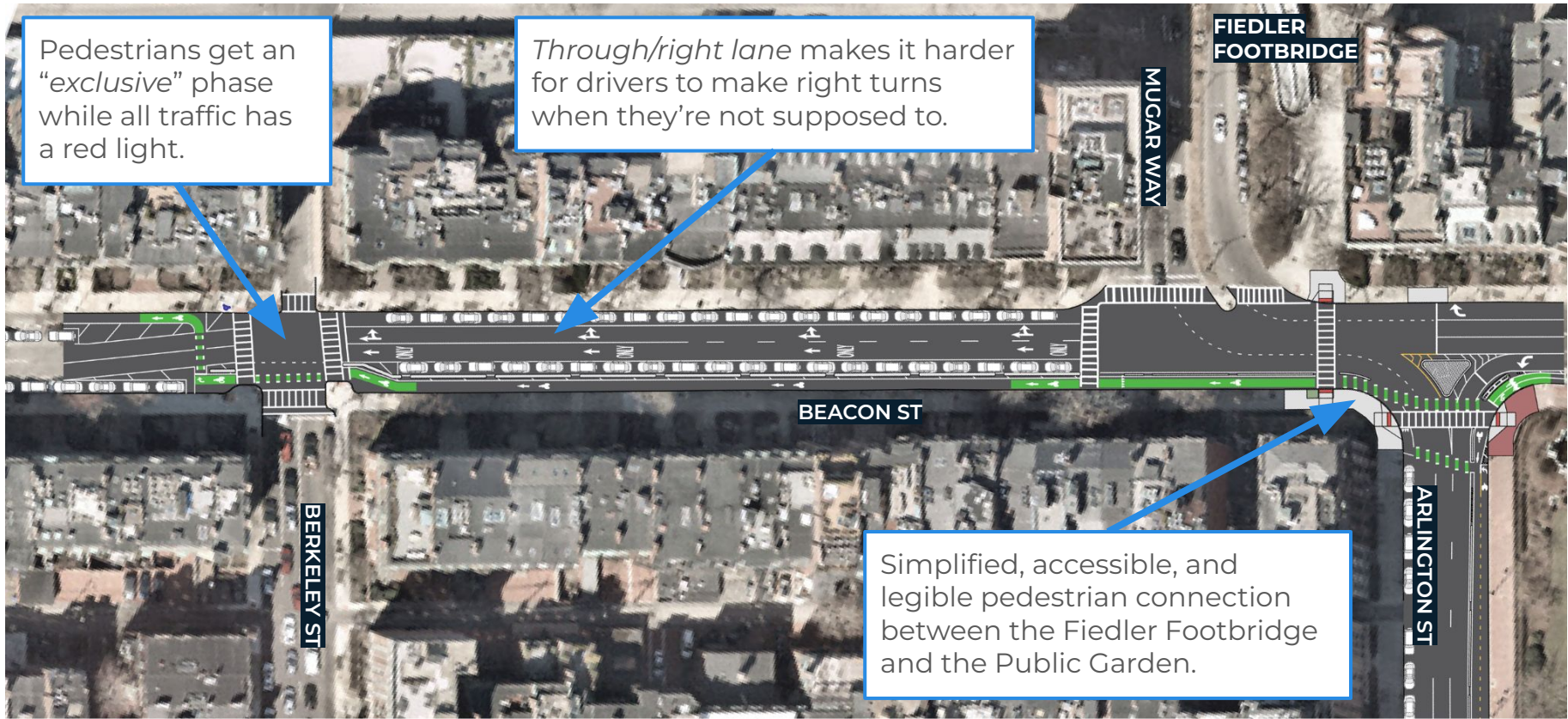




# REVISED DESIGN



# REVISED DESIGN: PEDESTRIANS

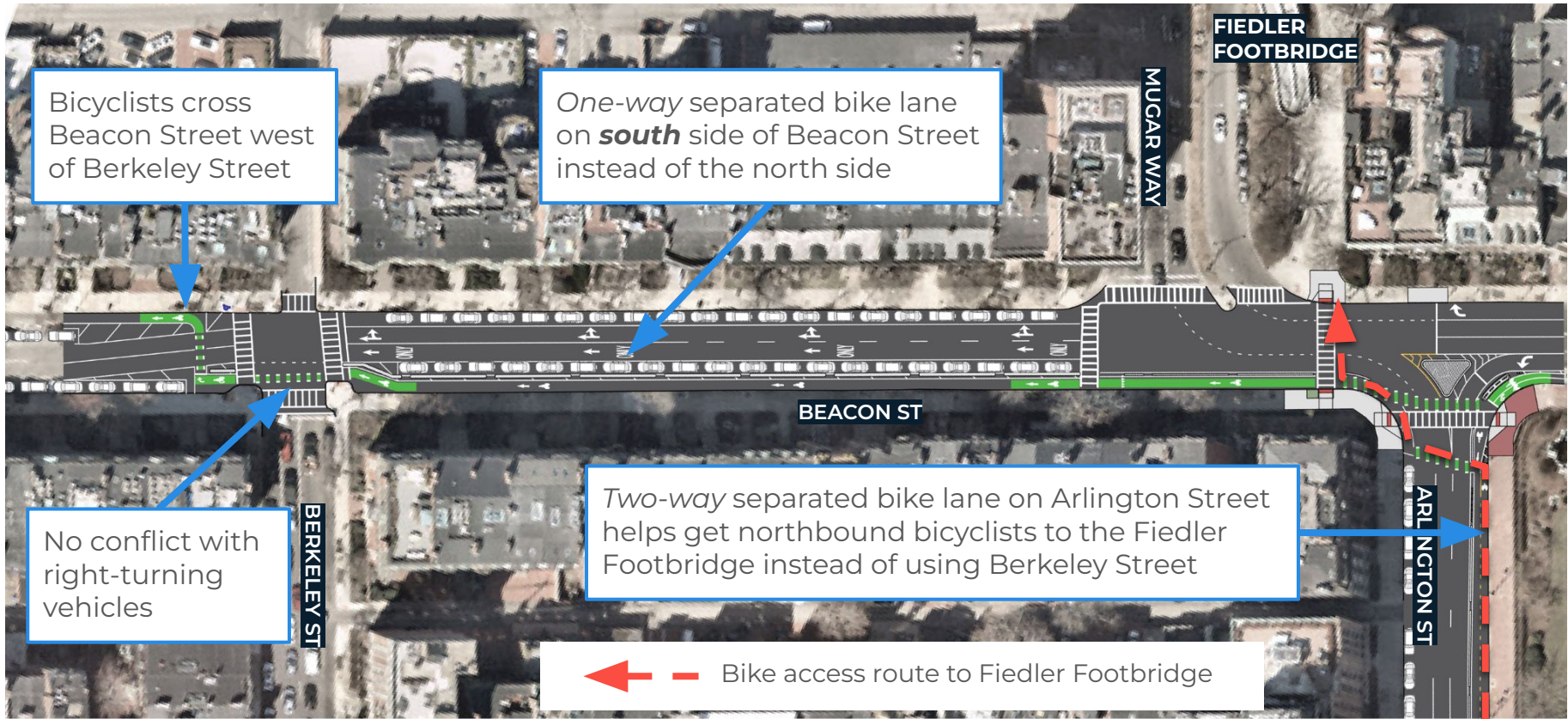


Pedestrians get an "exclusive" phase while all traffic has a red light.

*Through/right lane* makes it harder for drivers to make right turns when they're not supposed to.

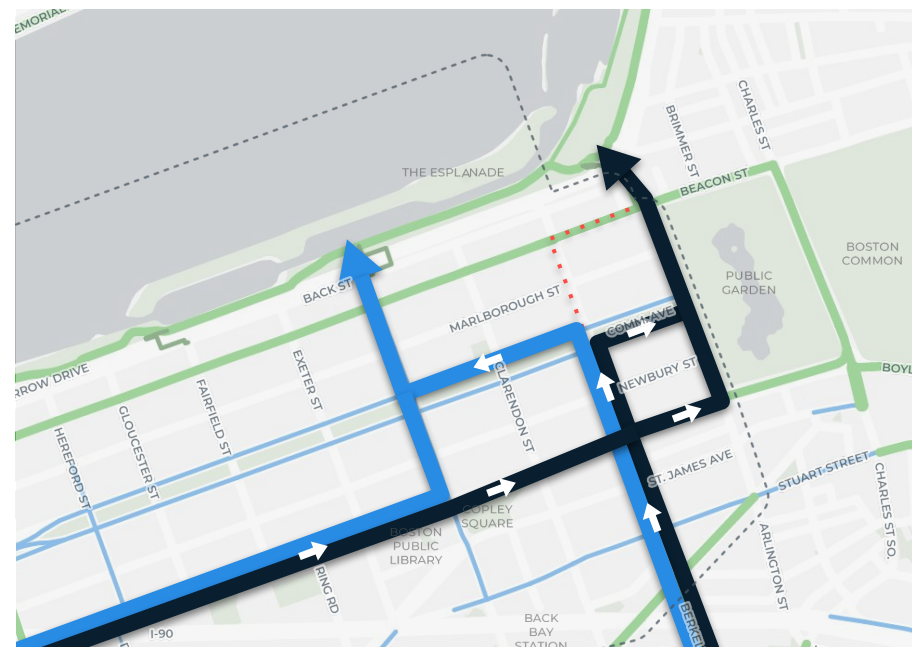
Simplified, accessible, and legible pedestrian connection between the Fiedler Footbridge and the Public Garden.

# REVISED DESIGN: BIKES



# CONNECTING YOU TO THE ESPLANADE

- ▶ Our revised plan provides better connections to the Charles River path system compared to the previous plan.
- ▶ New and revised projects can form a more connected bike network:
  - Boylston Street
  - Berkeley Street
  - Dartmouth Street
  - Arlington Street



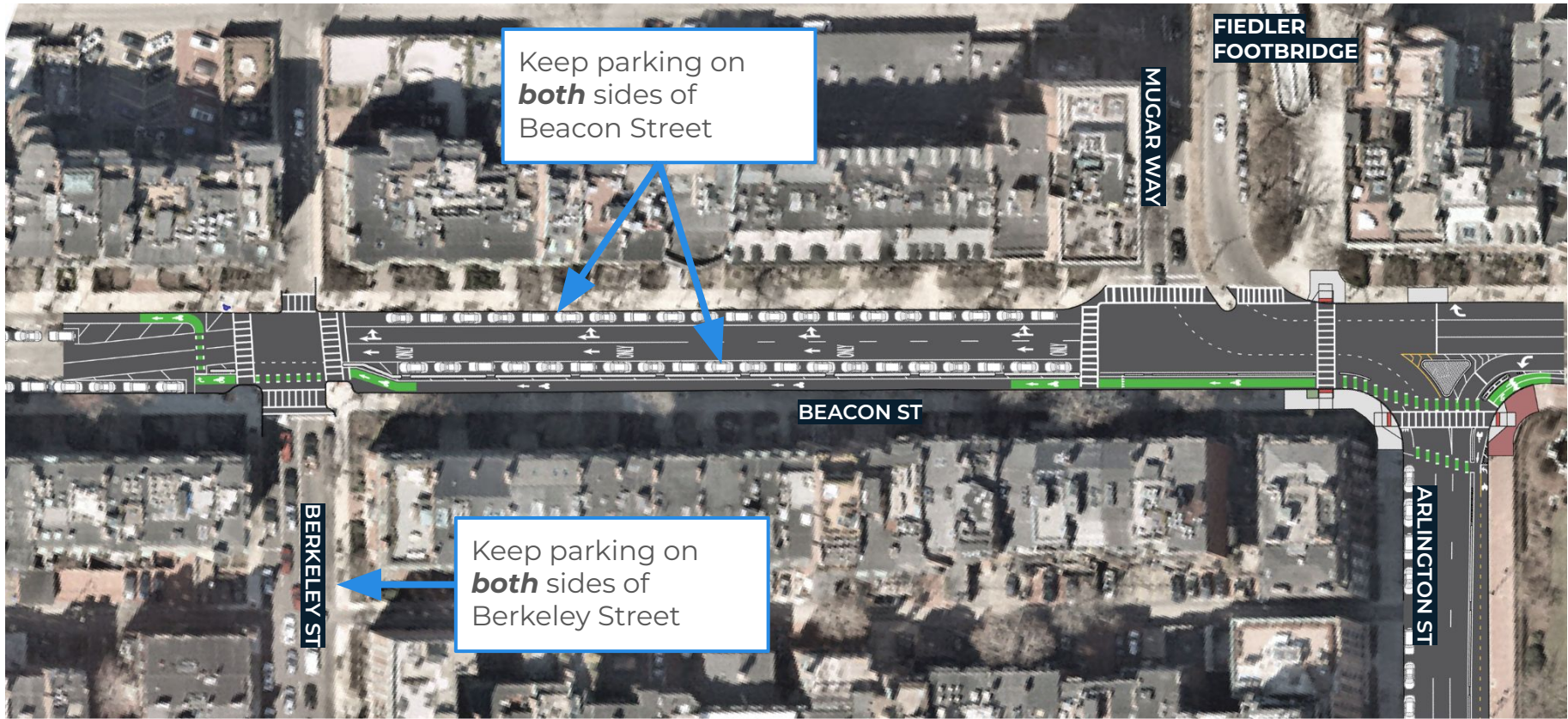
## New connections

- ▶ To Fiedler Footbridge
- ▶ To Dartmouth Street Footbridge
- ⋯ Previously planned route

## Existing & other planned facilities

- Path or separated lane
- Footbridge
- Bike lane

# REVISED DESIGN: PARKING



Keep parking on **both** sides of Beacon Street

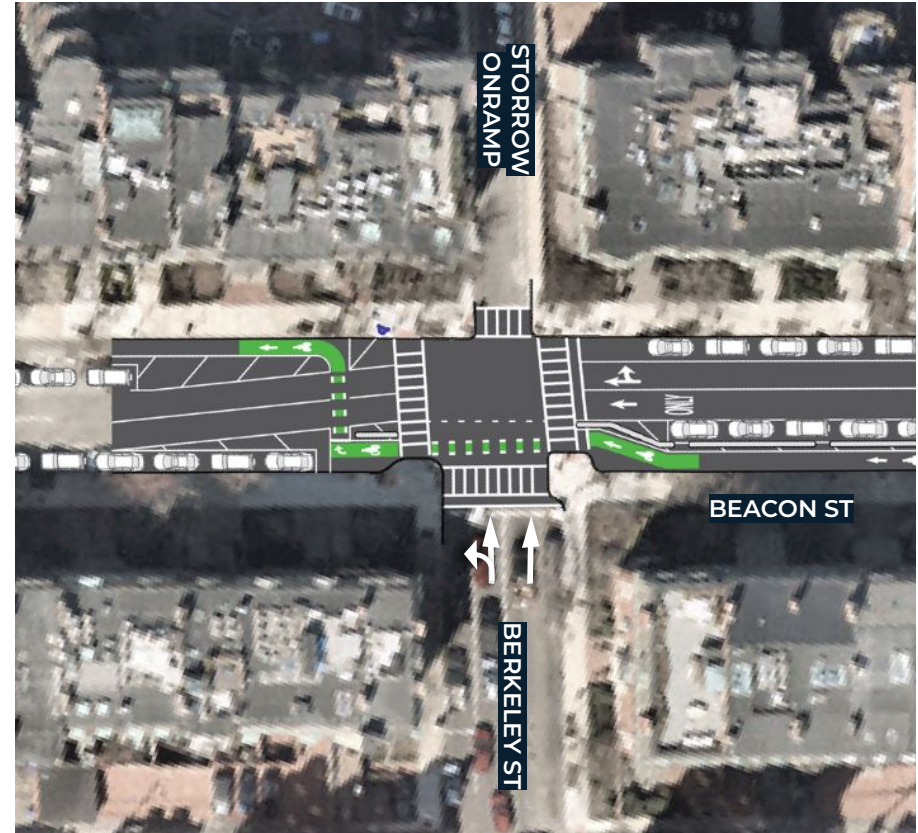
Keep parking on **both** sides of Berkeley Street

# REVISED DESIGN: TRAFFIC CAPACITY

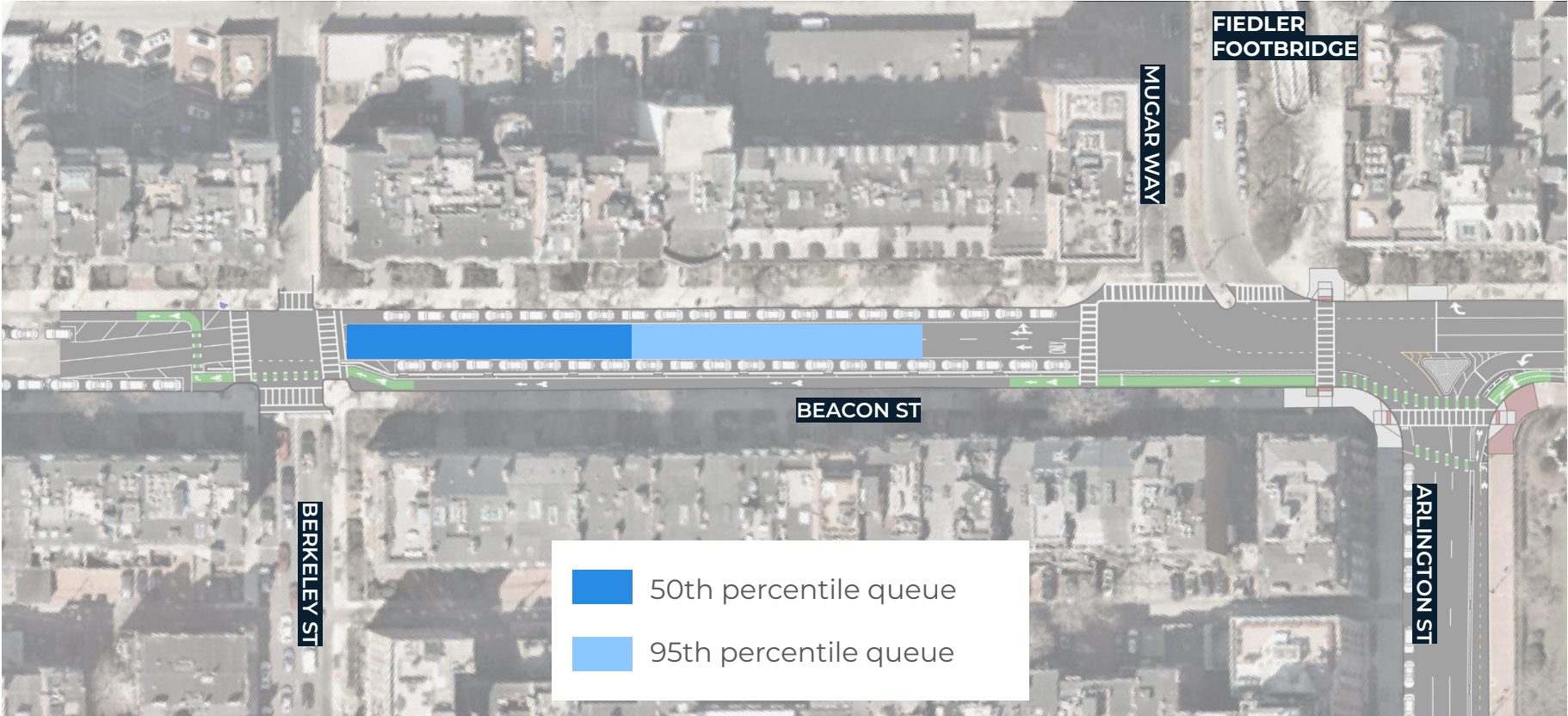
- ▶ **Two lanes** on Beacon Street approaching Berkeley Street:
  - **Right lane:** for continuing straight and turning right.
  - **Left lane:** for continuing straight only.
- ▶ Berkeley Street: No lane changes planned.

How we design traffic signals:

1. Gather traffic data to understand current conditions.
2. Use traffic modeling software to test different designs.
3. Our goal is to find a balance between safety, access, and keeping traffic moving smoothly for everyone.

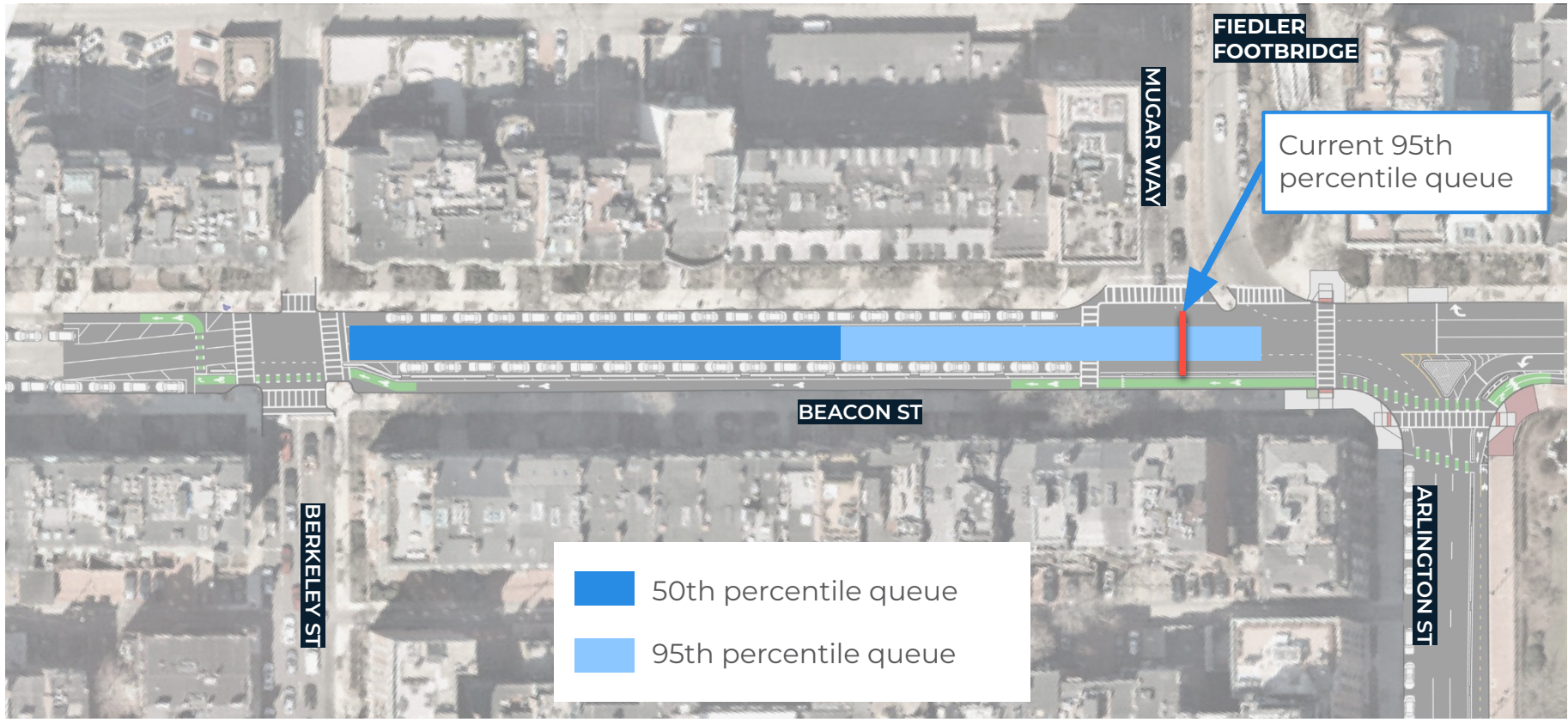


# REVISED DESIGN: AM PEAK QUEUE



■ 50th percentile queue  
■ 95th percentile queue

# REVISED DESIGN: PM PEAK QUEUE

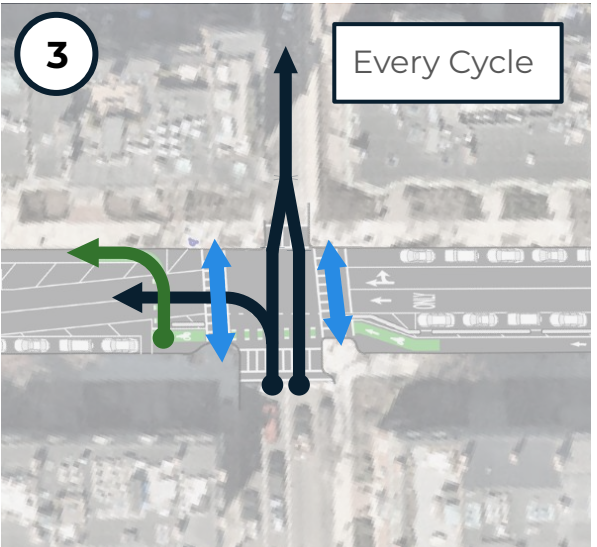
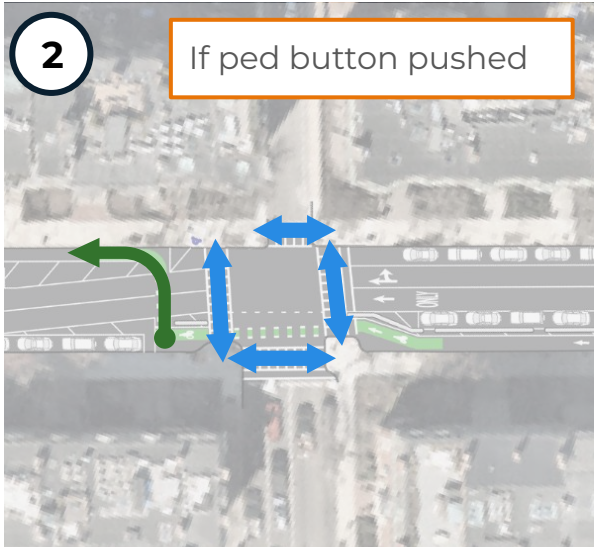
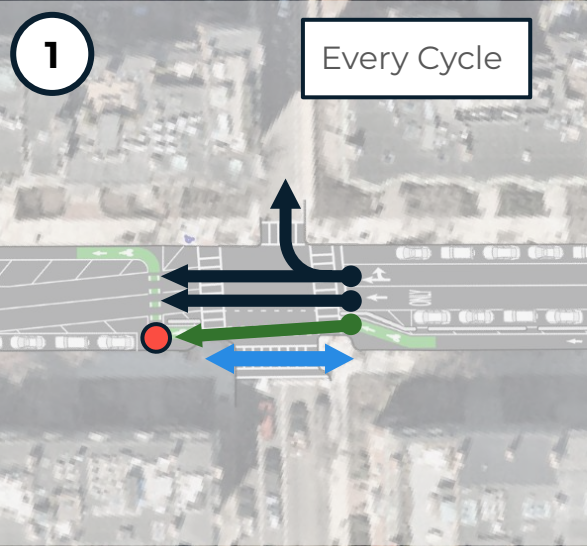


■ 50th percentile queue  
■ 95th percentile queue

Current 95th percentile queue



# HOW THE INTERSECTION WILL WORK



**Phase 1:** Beacon St westbound gets a green light, including those going straight, turning right, and bicycles. Bikes wait on the west side of the intersection to cross during the next phase.

**Phase 2:** If the button is pressed, pedestrians cross in all directions. Bikes cross Beacon St outside the crosswalk, continue westbound.

**Phase 3:** Pedestrians and bikes get a head start before vehicles proceed. Berkeley St northbound gets a green light, including those going straight and turning left.

**Legend**

←● General traffic

↔ Pedestrians

←● Bicyclists

# ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK?

- ▶ *What do you like about this revised design?*
- ▶ *What are your questions?*

We'll continue to fine-tune the design based on your feedback

Potential construction timeline:

- ▶ **This year or early next year:** Beacon Street from Mugar Way west
- ▶ **Next year:** Reconstruct Beacon/Arlington/Mugar intersection with *Public Garden Crossings* project

NEW PROJECT

# DARTMOUTH STREET AT STUART STREET

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*Pedestrian safety improvements*

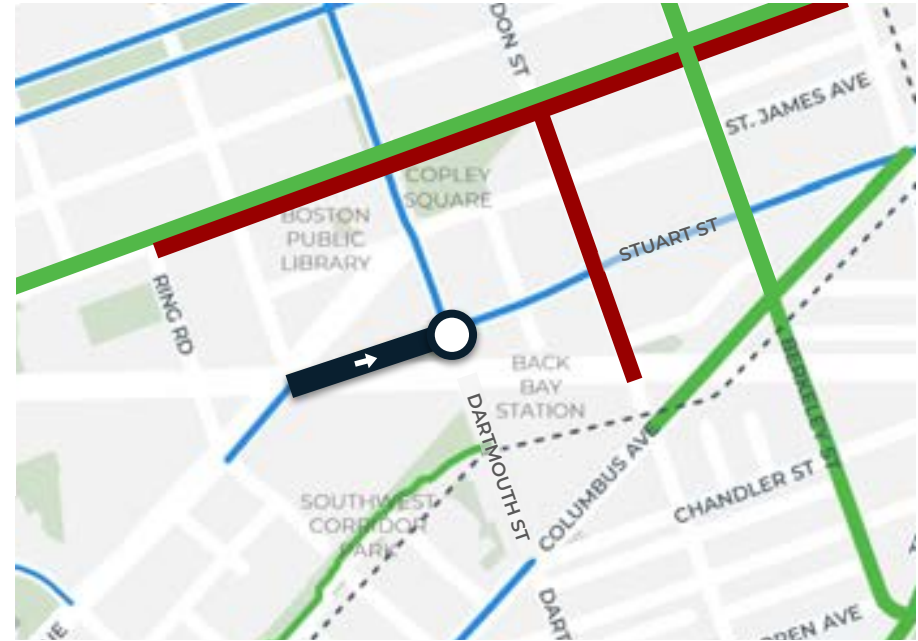
# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Project origin

- ▶ Your feedback
  - Uncomfortable pedestrian crossing
  - High turning speeds
- ▶ Data
  - Injury crash history for all modes ([Boston Vision Zero](#))

## Timeline

- ▶ 2024-2025 construction



### This project

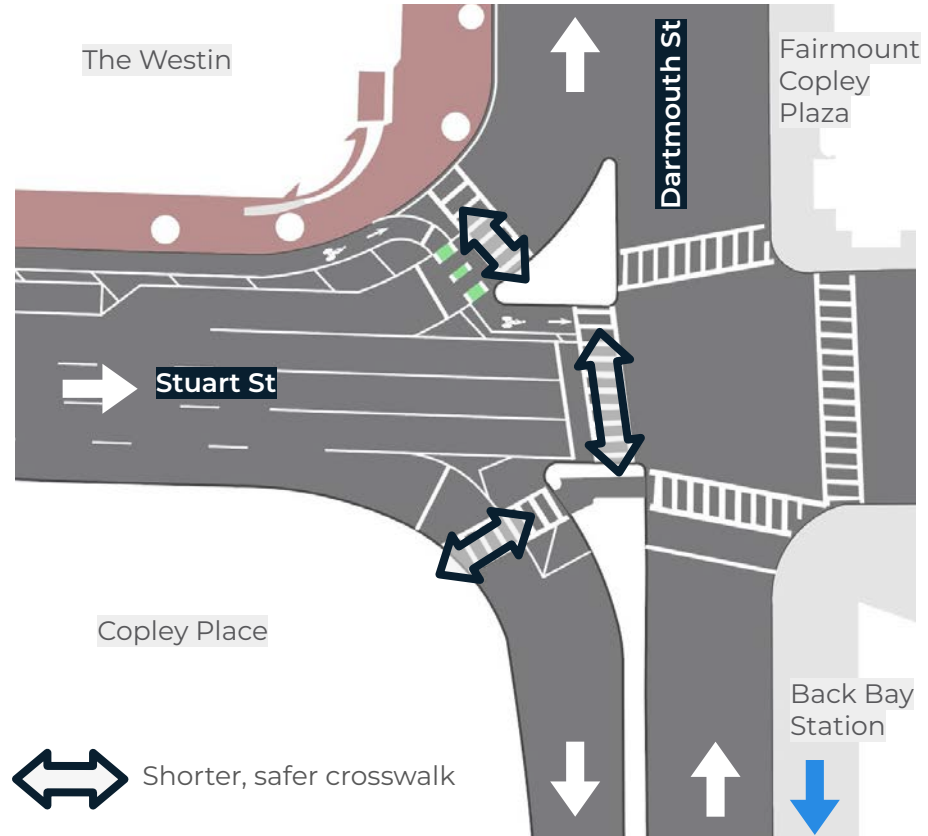
- Safer intersection
- ▬ Separated bike lane

### Existing & other planned facilities

- ▬ Path or separated lane
- ▬ Footbridge
- ▬ Bike lane
- ▬ Bus lane

# DESIGN PREVIEW

- ▶ Use “quick-build” materials
  - We’ll also explore longer-term fixes
- ▶ Shorten pedestrian crossings
- ▶ Slow turning vehicles
- ▶ Add a separated bike lane



NEW PROJECT

# DARTMOUTH STREET BETTER BIKE LANE

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*Boylston Street to Back Street*



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Project origin

- ▶ Your feedback:
  - Is Dartmouth Street a better route to connect the neighborhood to the Esplanade compared to Berkeley Street?
  - How can we encourage Bluebikes riders to use bike lanes and avoid sidewalks?
  - Can we minimize the impact on parking spaces neighborhood wide?
- ▶ Create a **direct, legible** connection between Copley Square and the Esplanade to serve tourists, shoppers, and commuters

## Timeline

- ▶ 2024-2025 construction



### This project

- Separated bike lane

### Existing & other planned facilities

- Path or separated lane
- Footbridge
- Bike lane
- Bus lane

# DESIGN PREVIEW: BOYLSTON TO BEACON

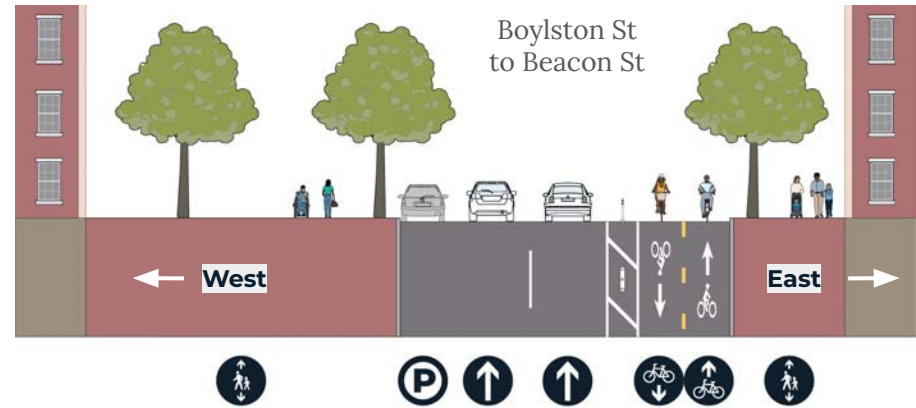
**Two-way separated bike lane** on the east side of Dartmouth Street between Boylston Street and Beacon Street

- ▶ Most direct connection from the footbridge to Copley Square
- ▶ Fewer conflicts with turning vehicles on the east side
- ▶ Easier connection to Boylston Street separated bike lane

**No change to vehicle capacity**

- ▶ Two general travel lanes from Boylston and Marlborough
- ▶ One general travel lane from Marlborough to Beacon

*Typical cross section*





# DESIGN PREVIEW: BEACON TO BACK

Between **Beacon Street** and **Back Street**:

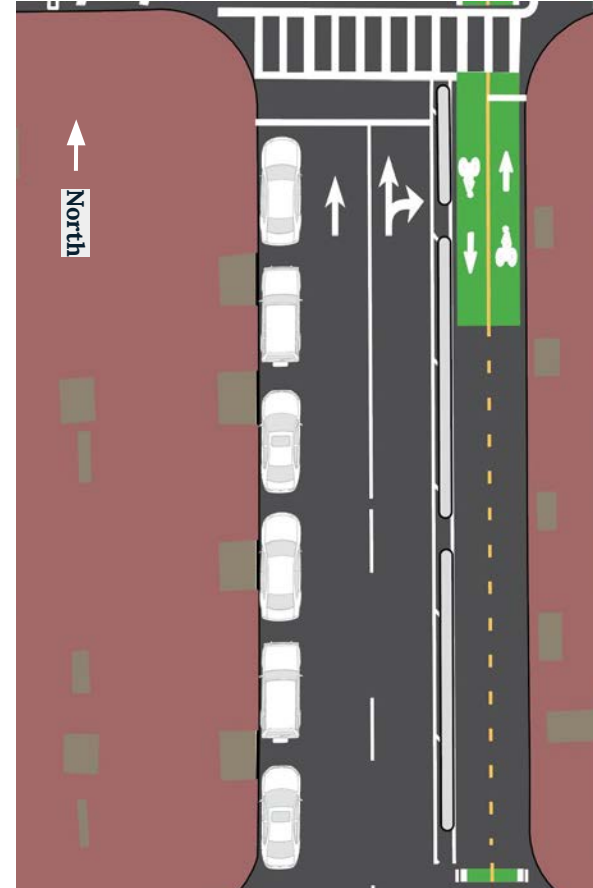
- ▶ Northbound **contraflow bike lane** (towards footbridge)
- ▶ One southbound **general travel lane**



# PARKING

- ▶ Compared to 2023 plan, fewer spaces removed
- ▶ Parking remains on the **west** side of Dartmouth Street
- ▶ **Preliminary** estimate of parking impact: **31 - 39 spaces**
  - 16 spaces between Boylston and Comm Ave
  - 15 - 23 spaces between Comm Ave and Back Street
  - These figures are **subject to change** as we refine the design
  - We will work with you to fine-tune curb regulations
- ▶ We also considered a pair of one-way separated bike lanes on Dartmouth Street and Exeter Street. That would impact **63 parking spaces**

Typical block overhead view



# WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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- ▶ *What do you like about this design idea?*
- ▶ *What are your questions?*

Upcoming virtual office hours and other ways to talk with us.

We'll fine-tune the design based on your feedback

# WE'RE CONNECTING THE BIKE NETWORK





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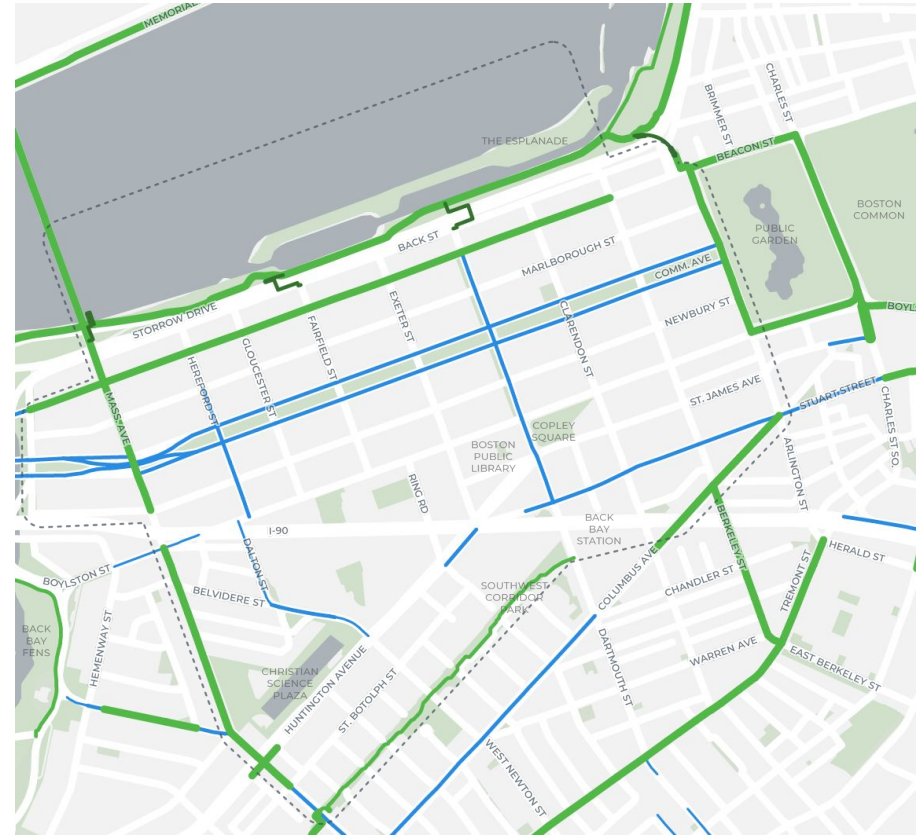


# CURRENT BIKE NETWORK

We've made a lot of progress expanding our network of safe and easy-to-use bike lanes. But, some important connections are missing.

## Existing






-  Paths and separated lanes
-  Footbridge
-  Bike lane
-  Back Bay Neighborhood Boundary

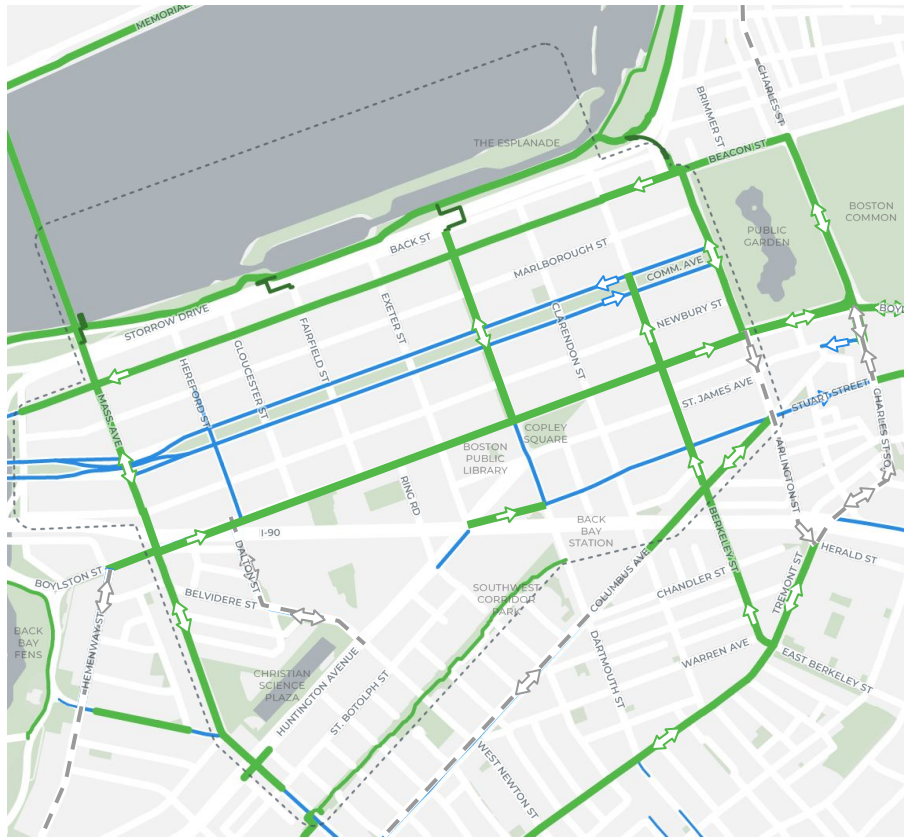


# EMERGING BIKE NETWORK

To address this, we have nearly 2 miles of new high-comfort bike lanes planned in the next few years, filling gaps and creating a more connected network.

### Existing and planned projects

-  Paths and separated lanes
-  Footbridge
-  Bike lane
-  Other project - opportunity for bike facilities
-  Back Bay Neighborhood Boundary



# NEXT STEPS



# NEXT STEPS

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- ▶ Construction to begin on
  - Boylston, Berkeley, and Clarendon Streets
  - State of good repair on paving and sidewalks
- ▶ Get in touch with us about design feedback
  - Beacon and Dartmouth Streets, and Dartmouth/ Stuart intersection



# GET IN TOUCH & LEARN MORE

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- ▶ Email us at [better-bike-lanes@boston.gov](mailto:better-bike-lanes@boston.gov)
- ▶ Website will be updated with more info
  - [boston.gov/back-bay-streets](https://boston.gov/back-bay-streets)
  - Virtual office hours will be posted here
- ▶ [Mayor's Neighborhood Coffee Hour](#) for Back Bay and Beacon Hill is June 18

# BREAKOUT GROUPS



# BREAKOUT GROUPS

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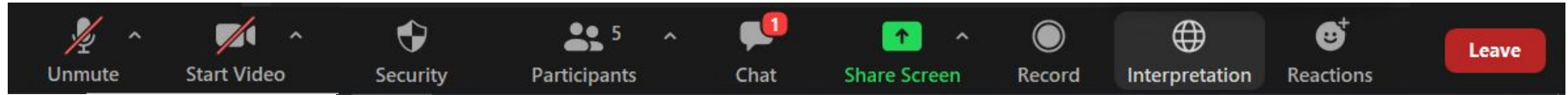
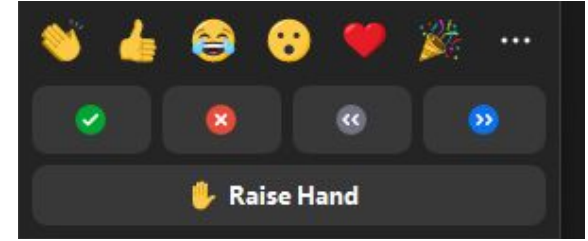
Stay in the main Zoom meeting to:

- ▶ Talk to us about projects in design
- ▶ Share your feedback
- ▶ Ask questions

Go to “Construction questions” breakout room for:

- ▶ Boylston Street
- ▶ Berkeley Street
- ▶ Clarendon Street

# USING THE ZOOM CONTROL PANEL



Mute /  
Unmute

Camera  
On/Off

Chat  
Box

Raise  
Hand