

Columbia Road Community Advisory Team

The tenth Community Advisory Team (CAT) meeting took place on Tuesday, March 11, from 6:00 to 7:30pm.

This month, the Community Advisory Team got a first look at some early design ideas for the Parkway Segment of Columbia Road, which runs from Blue Hill Avenue to Quincy Street. These ideas were shaped by feedback gathered from community members throughout the project.

What We Discussed

The meeting began with a presentation from Reed Hilderbrand, which provided important neighborhood context for the design process. This section of Columbia Road is a residential area with many family households, front yards, and schools. It is also the widest section of the corridor, at 110 feet across, and has the largest average household size, with over 30% of households including children under 18.

After the presentation, the project team shared two different road design diagrams with CAT members as two different draft potential road design options.



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Key Design Considerations

Some of the core ideas discussed included:

- Reallocate space by narrowing the median and using that space to improve sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus stops.
- Enhance safety by removing select left-turn lanes that have been identified as high-risk in community feedback and are less frequently used.
- Better separate pedestrians and cyclists from traffic with improved bike lanes and clear walking paths.
- Enhance bus stops to make them more comfortable and accessible, with better waiting areas and easier boarding.
- Create social spaces to support gathering and community activity along the corridor.

Common Themes Across Both Draft Design Options

- Both designs maintain four travel lanes—two in each direction with a median in the center.
- Neither design includes center-running or dedicated side bus lanes. However, both incorporate bus bulbs—curb extensions that make it easier for buses to pull up to stops, improving accessibility and efficiency.
- Both design options incorporate additional space for greenery along the corridor, including more trees in the median, green infrastructure, and enhanced landscaping along the roadway edges.

The project team also presented draft designs for two key intersections—the overpass area and Geneva Avenue. These concepts focus on improving safety by adjusting crosswalk placements and limiting certain vehicle movements to reduce conflicts.

The next CAT meeting will explore similar draft design options for the Upham's Corner segment of Columbia Road.