

# Mass Ave Outbound Bus Lane & Safety Improvements

## 2022 Shared Streets & Spaces Grant

Town of Arlington | MBTA

June 5, 2023 Selectboard Meeting



# Project Background

## MassDOT Shared Streets & Spaces Grant

- Joint MBTA / Town application
- Application submitted in March 2022
- Request for \$133,640 to improve transit priority and pedestrian safety
- Funding Agreement entered August 2022



### Massachusetts Ave Shared Bus/Bike Lane; Arlington

MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grant; March 1, 2022

Applicant:	Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
Partner Municipality:	Town of Arlington
Amount Requested:	\$133,640.00
Project Type:	Transit Supportive Infrastructure; Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure
Project Elements:	Shared Bus/Bike Lanes; Pedestrian Safety Improvements

#### Overview

MBTA in partnership with Town of Arlington will install an outbound shared bus/bike lane on Massachusetts Ave from Alewife Brook Pkwy to opposite Lafayette St and will extend the existing inbound shared bus/bike lane from Boulevard Rd to Alewife Brook Pkwy. The project will include a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) at the Lafayette St crosswalk, as well as potential circulation changes to improve transit, pedestrian, and cyclist safety at Boulevard Rd.

The project will improve bus travel time and reliability, pedestrian safety, and cyclist safety, on Massachusetts Ave in both directions from an extension of the existing inbound shared bus/bike lane and addition of an outbound shared bus/bike lane. In 2019 approximately 5,600 passengers passed through this corridor in both directions on MBTA bus routes 77, 79, and 350 (note that route 79 service has been temporarily suspended).

The project will make bus and bike a more competitive mode choice by improving comfort, safety, travel time, and reliability. Bus lanes can help alleviate crowding conditions on buses by reducing running time and allowing for more trips provided with the same operations resources. The project extends the existing outbound bus lane on Massachusetts Ave in North Cambridge into Arlington, matching the existing inbound bus lane in Arlington.

#### Project Features

This project includes the following features as described in the scoring criteria.

**Quick Launch:** The project can potentially be completed within the 2022 construction season, ahead of the 2023 deadline, depending on public engagement and construction materials availability.

**Permanence:** This project is planned as a potentially permanent project.

**Equity:** The project improves transit that connects to minority, income, and minority-income Environmental Justice block groups, but is not within an EJ block group itself.

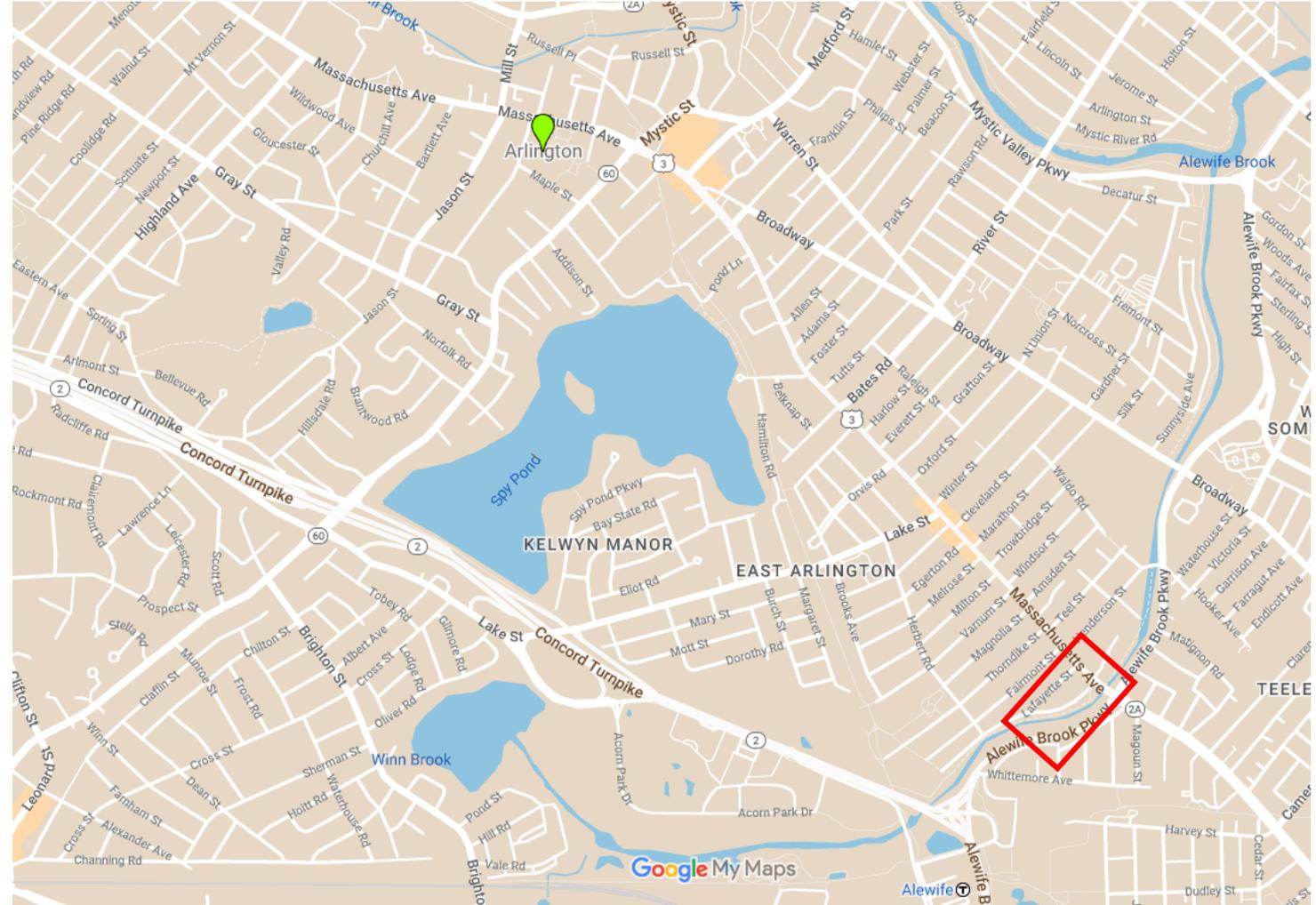
**Transit:** The project adds outbound bus lane to a corridor with existing inbound bus lane and extends the new bus lanes installed in North Cambridge this past season.

**Safe Routes to Open Space and Parks:** Several open spaces and parks are within a mile of this project.

**Community Engagement:** The community has been asking for pedestrian improvements at two locations in the project, which the project will address. Additional public engagement will occur for the specific details of the full project.

# Project Location

- Mass Ave: Alewife Brook Parkway to Lafayette St
- Boulevard Road



# Transit Priority Scope & Benefits

- Inbound / Southbound:
  - Extends existing bus lane from Boulevard Rd to Alewife Brook Pkwy
  - Extension would be 24/7, existing segment is AM peak-only
- Outbound / Northbound:
  - 24/7 bus lane from Alewife Brook Pkwy to existing bus stop just north of Sunapee Rd
  - Continuity for existing northbound bus lane that ends at Alewife Brook Pkwy
  - No parking impact



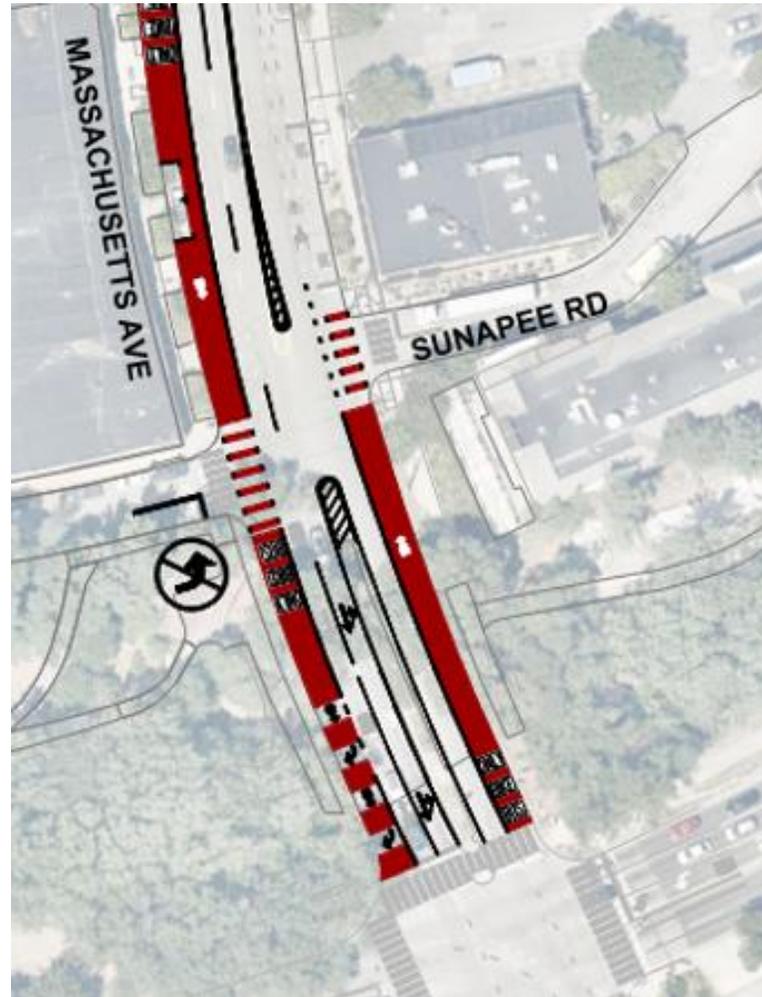
# Safety Scope & Benefits

- **New RRFB, Mass Ave at Lafayette**
- Preclude left-turns from Lafayette St onto northbound Mass Ave
- Traffic calming, Lafayette St at Boulevard Rd



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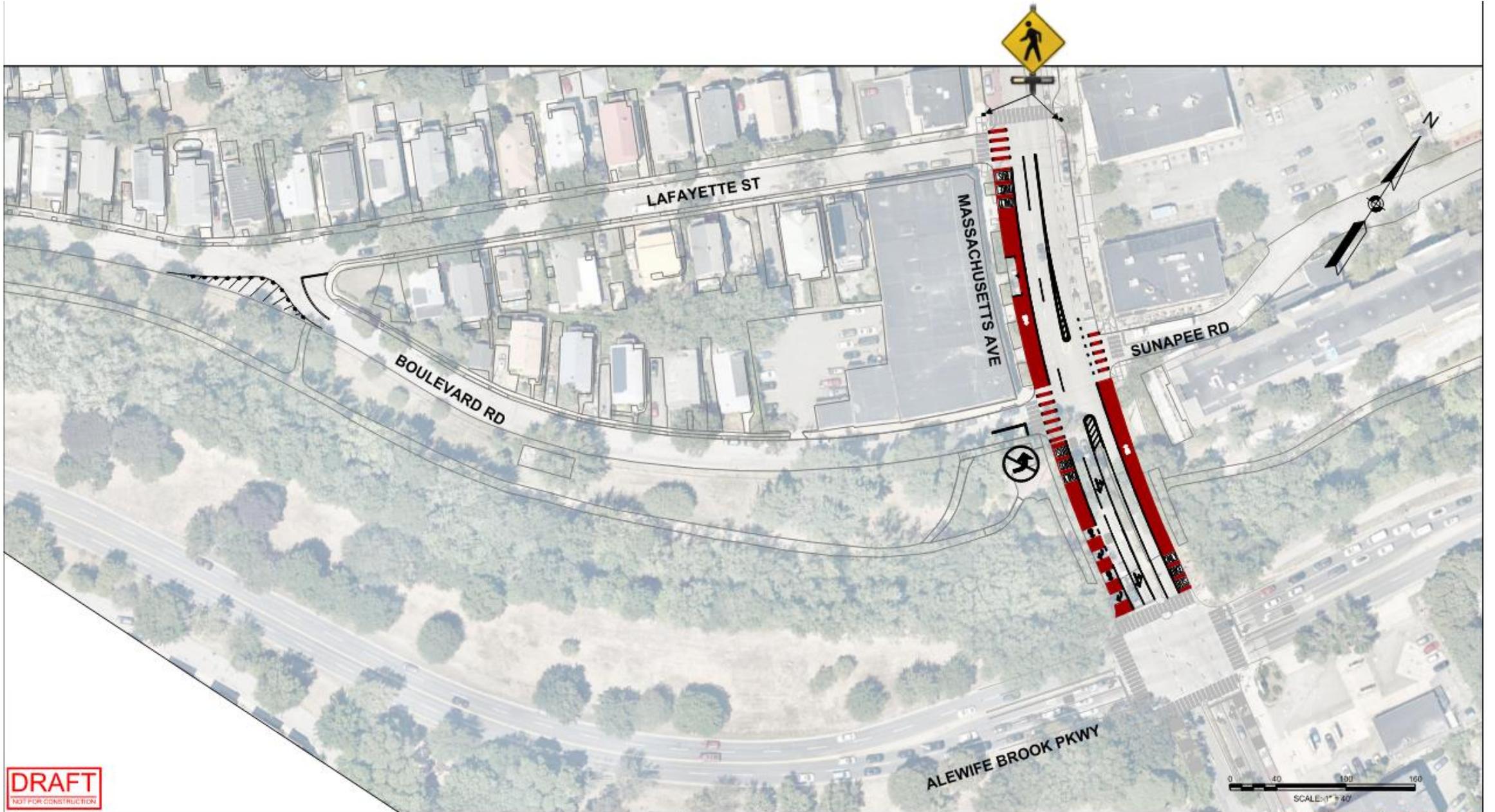
- New RRFB, Mass Ave at Lafayette
- Preclude left-turns from Lafayette St onto northbound Mass Ave
- **Traffic calming, Lafayette St at Boulevard Rd**



# Additional Design Nuance

- Two parking spaces outside of existing building
- Peak Performance Physical Therapy expressed strong preference for keeping these spaces
- MBTA is requesting to codify removal of these spaces and conversion to Red Paint in any future development documents





**DRAFT**  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

**CONCEPT  
PLAN**

MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE BUS LANE  
05/30/23

MBTA BUS SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS  
ARLINGTON, MA

**MCMMAHON**  
a Bowman company

# Next Steps

- Finalize engineering design (Summer 2023)
- Plan is to implement in Fall 2023
- MBTA – Town MOU to codify future maintenance responsibilities

