



# POWDER HOUSE BLVD TRAFFIC SAFETY PLAN UPDATES AND DISCUSSION



Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Ward 7 Councilor Katjana Ballantyne  
Adam Polinski, City of Somerville Transportation Analyst  
Ona Ferguson, The Consensus Building Institute



# AGENDA

- ▶ Intro
- ▶ Pedestrian Safety Measures Update
  1. Presentation by City
  2. Clarifying Questions
- ▶ Bicycle Safety Measures Discussion
  3. Presentation by City
  4. Clarifying Questions
  5. Small Group Discussion
  6. Open Discussion
  7. Next Steps



## IMPORTANT NOTE

- ▶ Tonight, residents will have the opportunity to learn about the options that are currently on the table and express thoughts and concerns
- ▶ After tonight's meeting, staff will review feedback, collect additional information on existing conditions, and advance thinking on aspects of each street design option and parking mitigation strategies
- ▶ When appropriate, the City will reach back out to continue the discussion around bicycle safety improvements and on-street parking management

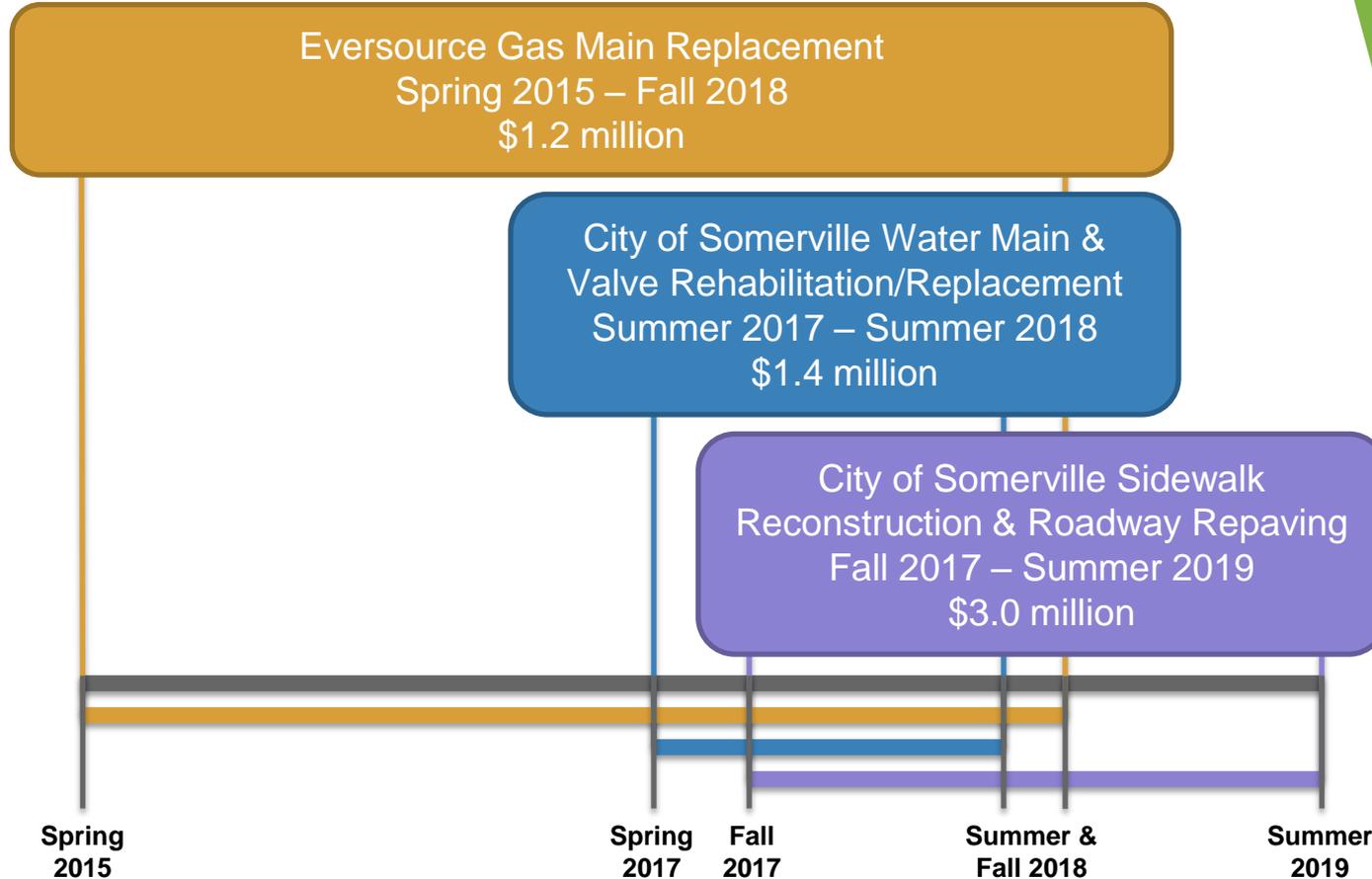
# 1.

## PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MEASURES AND TRAFFIC CALMING AT THE WEST SOMERVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL

Adam Polinski  
City of Somerville  
Office of Strategic Planning  
& Community Development



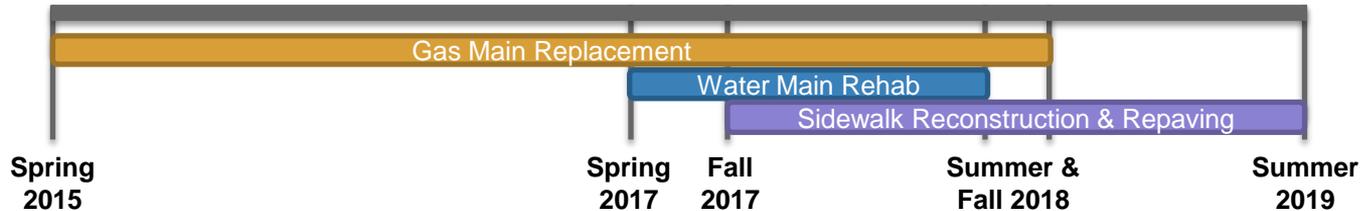
# WORK TO DATE





# REMAINING WORK

- ▶ **Sidewalk Reconstruction**, including the new bumpout at North St, is expected to be completed in June.
- ▶ **Roadway Repaving** from Burnham St to Alewife Brook Pkwy will follow, and is anticipated for July.





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**May 2017**

Meeting to discuss water main work, sidewalk reconstruction, and restriping options

**April 2019**

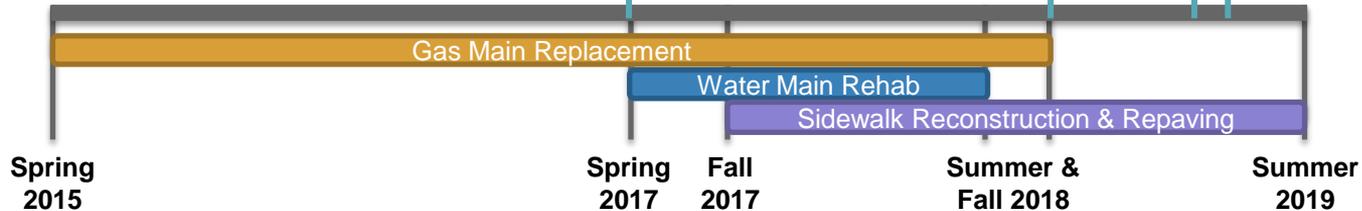
“Office hours” style meetings to discuss traffic safety plan in detail

**October 2018**

Meeting to discuss traffic calming options at the West Somerville Neighborhood School

**March 2019**

Meeting to discuss traffic safety plan following fatal crash at WSNS





# TRAFFIC SAFETY PLAN UPDATE



## Enforcement

- ▶ Police enforcement of speeding vehicles on Powder House Blvd is ongoing
- ▶ Police also continue to monitor conditions on Raymond Ave during school pick-up and drop-off hours



## Signage

- ▶ In-street pedestrian signs have been put out at all crosswalks
- ▶ Lighting has been adjusted
- ▶ Pruning needs will be monitored on an ongoing basis
- ▶ Additional radar feedback signs (“Your Speed Is...”) are expected to be installed in the next month or so



# RUBBER SPEED TABLES



- ▶ Rubber speed tables have been delivered and installed!
- ▶ While this type of traffic calming device is easier to implement, the drawback is that they need to be removed in the winter. If more permanent measures are not in place by November, flex posts will be installed to keep speeds down at these locations over the winter.



## 4-WAY STOP PILOT AT CURTIS ST



- ▶ The intersection of Powder House Blvd and Curtis St will be converted from traffic signal control to 4-way stop sign control beginning either next Friday or the following Friday.
- ▶ While the pilot is underway, the City will assess conditions to determine how well the 4-way stop is working.
- ▶ If significant safety concerns develop as a result of the pilot, the stop signs can be removed and the signal can be turned back on.



# IMPROVEMENTS AT SCHOOL

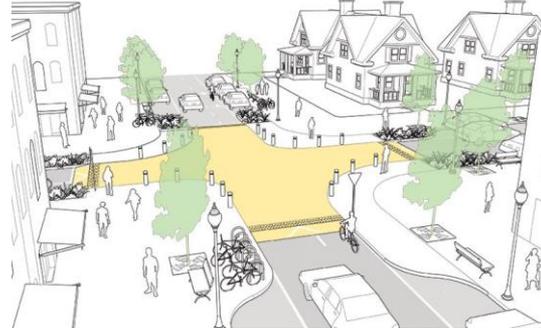
- ▶ The improvements at the entrance to the WSNS at Hardan Rd are dependent on the success of the 4-way stop pilot and rubber speed table treatment:

If rubber speed tables and 4-way stop at Curtis St are both effective:

If either the rubber speed tables or the 4-way stop at Curtis St are *not* effective:



Design and implement a HAWK signal at Hardan Rd and permanent speed tables between North St and Curtis St



Design and implement a raised intersection at Hardan Rd

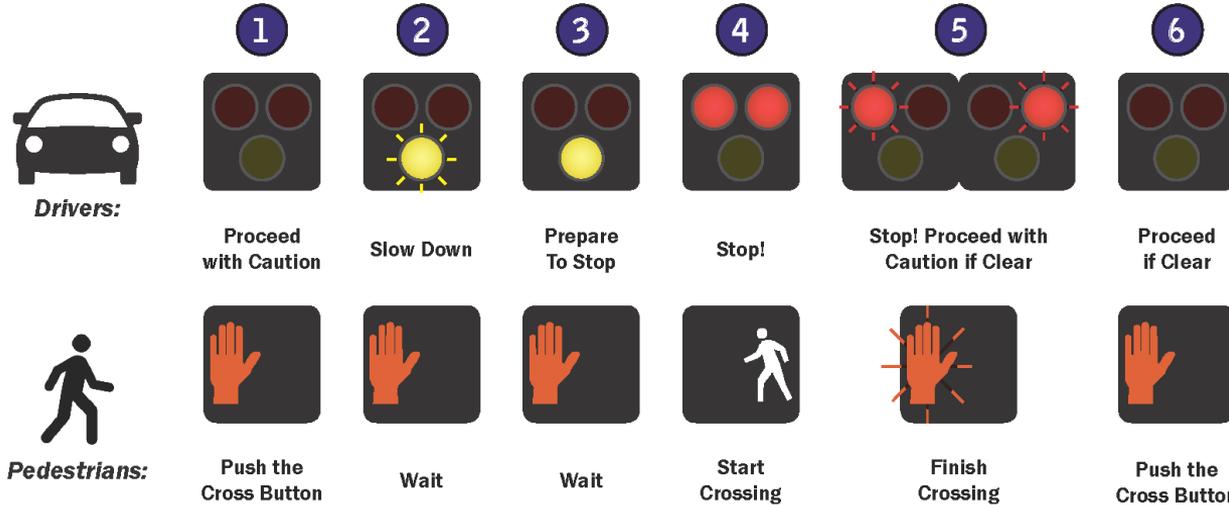


# IMPROVEMENTS AT SCHOOL

## What is a HAWK Signal?



“HAWK” stands for **H**igh-intensity **A**ctivated cross**W**alk, which is a new type of traffic signal found in Somerville and the greater Boston region. It is intended to make crossing the street safer for pedestrians without forcing drivers to stop when there isn't anyone in the crosswalk. See the diagram below for instructions on how to use a HAWK signal as a driver and a pedestrian.





# ADDITIONAL ANTICIPATED IMPROVEMENTS



Powder House Circle



Powder House at Route 16

A large green diagonal graphic element that starts from the top right and extends towards the bottom left, creating a split background of white and green.

# 2.

## CLARIFYING QUESTIONS



# AGENDA

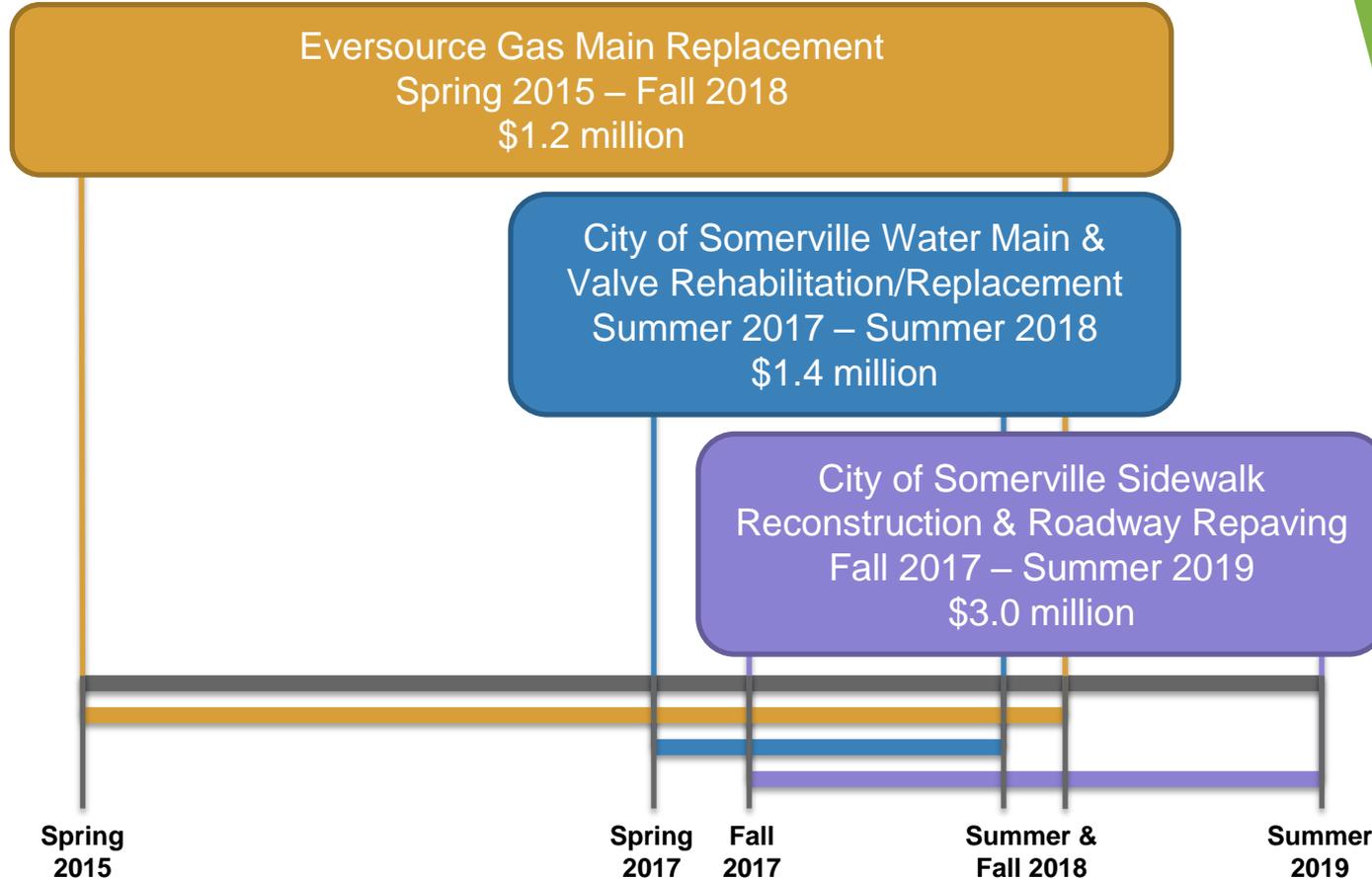
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# 3.

## CITY BICYCLE PRESENTATION



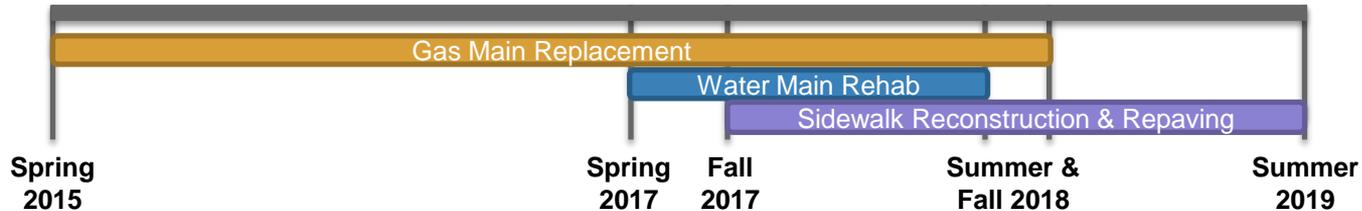
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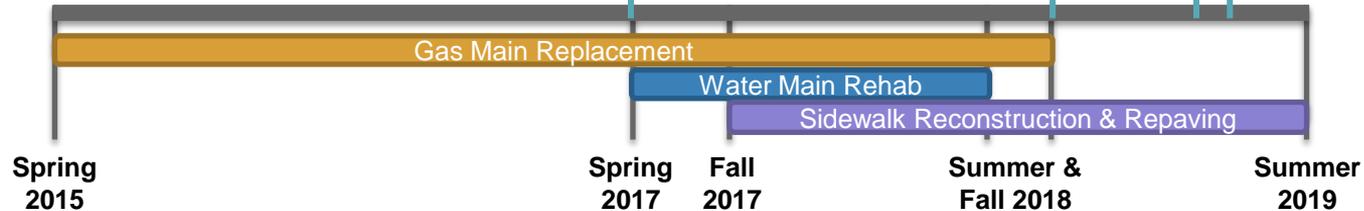
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# WHAT FACTORS BEYOND COMMUNITY INPUT ARE GUIDING THIS DECISION?





# STREET DESIGN & RESTRIPING



- ▶ Before construction began on Powder House Blvd, the only markings were crosswalks and a double yellow centerline running down the middle of the street. We're calling this Option A, or the existing condition.
- ▶ This condition encourages faster driving and provides no dedicated space for people on bikes.



# STREET DESIGN & RESTRIPIING



- ▶ In recent years, the City has begun to investigate whether improved street design plans can be implemented when a street undergoes repaving.
- ▶ Option B was borne out of this process, which includes a bike lane in one direction but otherwise maintains the same number travel lanes and parking lanes.
- ▶ This means that people on bikes would have a dedicated lane when traveling in the “uphill” direction (or towards Packard Ave from either end), but would have to share the lane with motor vehicles when traveling in the opposite direction.



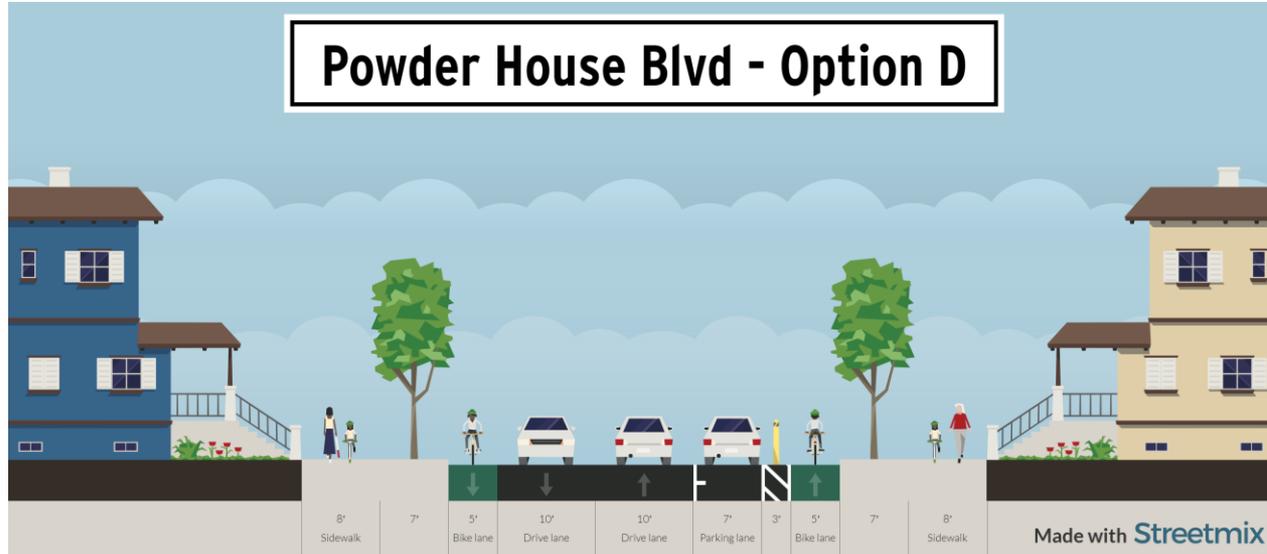
# STREET DESIGN & RESTRIPIING



- ▶ An additional concept was also put forth by the Somerville Bicycle Committee in the form of a two-way, parking-protected bike lane between Powder House Circle and Packard Ave. This design features a safe facility for people traveling by bike in both directions, but the tradeoff is that it requires converting a parking lane into a bike lane.
- ▶ Given that the community's focus on traffic safety has increased recently, the City would like to have a conversation around the benefits and drawbacks of providing safer bike facilities.



# STREET DESIGN & RESTRIPIING



- ▶ This effort has also resulted in the creation of an Option D, which requires converting a parking lane to a bike lane as well.
- ▶ This option has a more traditional design, where the bike lanes are on either side of the street and intersection operations are simplified.



# CURRENT PARKING CONDITIONS

- ▶ A number of concerns have been raised regarding the possible removal of on-street parking on Powder House Blvd, most notably:

## **Operations at Neighborhood Institutions:**

Doherty's Funeral Home  
Clarendon Hill Presbyterian Church  
West Somerville Neighborhood School

## **Parking under special circumstances:**

Street sweeping  
Snow emergencies  
Tufts events



# PARKING MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- ▶ Create time-limited parking for users of the church and funeral home (for example, setting aside some spaces as pick-up/drop-off or two hour parking except by permit)
- ▶ Do not issue more permits than there are parking spaces on Powder House Blvd by using a waiting list
- ▶ Paint parking tees to clearly define each space and encourage more efficient parking
- ▶ Encourage people to use their driveways when they have access to one
- ▶ Incentivize more tenants to come without bringing a car
- ▶ Work with Tufts to gain access to off-street parking for snow emergencies and large events
- ▶ Adjust the street sweeping schedule so that some key streets can operate with parking on both sides
- ▶ Pilot any of the above strategies to see how they work before committing to anything



## NEXT STEPS

- ▶ Review feedback from handouts
- ▶ Gather input from survey for those that couldn't attend tonight's meeting:
  - ▶ <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9JSRTZD>
- ▶ Conduct additional field work to better understand current conditions
- ▶ Continue to have conversations with neighborhood institutions regarding their needs
- ▶ Reach back out to community when another meeting date has been set
- ▶ Goal is to allow for as much dialogue as possible, keeping in mind that the street will be paved this summer

# 4.

## CLARIFYING QUESTIONS



**5.**

**SMALL GROUP  
DISCUSSIONS  
AND WRITTEN  
FEEDBACK**

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**6.**

**OPEN  
DISCUSSION**

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**7.**

**NEXT STEPS**



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