

Arlington Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project

Department of Planning and Community Development

November 3, 2021





Agenda

Introductions and Meeting Guidelines 5 min

Background 5 min

Initial Findings 20 min

Next Steps 5 min

Presentation Q&A 10 min

Break Out Groups 20 min

Report Back 15 min

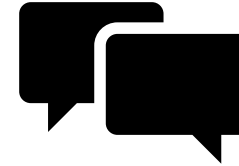
Zoom Meeting Guidelines



Everyone is muted by default. You will have the opportunity to virtually raise your hand and unmute during the Q&A and may be unmuted during breakout sessions.



If you're comfortable, activate your camera to better connect with other attendees. Feel free to use a digital background if you want.



If you have a question during a presentation, enter it in the chat. All chats will go to the host and will be addressed at during the Q&A portion of the presentation.



This meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the Town's website.

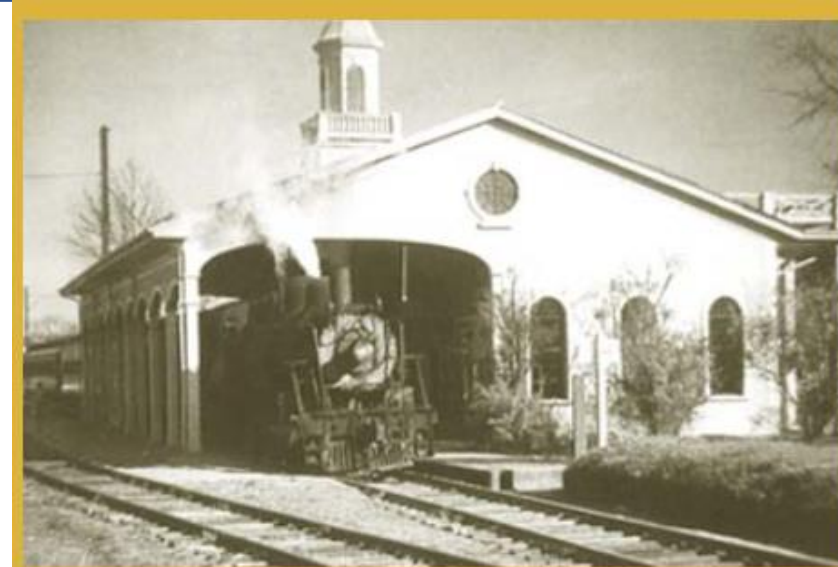
Zoom 101

- Mute and unmute buttons are in the lower left corner of the Zoom screen
- Raise hand feature: Click on Reactions at the bottom of your screen and choose "Raise Hand". Don't forget to "Lower Hand" once you've been called on.
- If you are calling in by phone, *9 controls mute/unmute and *6 is to raise your hand.

Project Background



- **Built in 1993, the Minuteman Bikeway is a critical non-motorized travel corridor that runs 3.6 miles in Arlington**
- **It is a key benefit for the town and makes connections to public transit, schools, parks, commercial centers, other trails & towns/cities**
- **As a maturing shared-use path with a wide variety of users, there is a need to understand how to keep the path safe and accessible to all and plan for future investments**



This 1954 photograph shows a steam locomotive passing under the Lexington Center Depot's train shed. Today, the Minuteman Bikeway passes through this railroad structure. (Photo courtesy of Mystic Valley Railway Society.)



LEXINGTON

ARLINGTON

MEDFORD

Minuteman Bikeway

BELMONT

Massachusetts Avenue

SOMERVILLE

3.6 miles



CAMBRIDGE



Project Purpose



- **Identify opportunities to improve safety, comfort, access, and user experience throughout the Minuteman Bikeway in Arlington**
- **Develop an Action Plan for pursuing site-specific improvements**
- **Develop programmatic strategies for ongoing success**

Project Timeline



- Assess existing conditions along the Bikeway
- Public meeting and survey outreach

Existing Conditions & Outreach

September - November

Visioning

- Review survey results
- Draft vision, goals, and priorities

November - December

- Develop policy, corridor-wide, and site-specific recommendations

Develop Recommendations

December - March

Action Plan

- Create an action plan for implementing recommendations

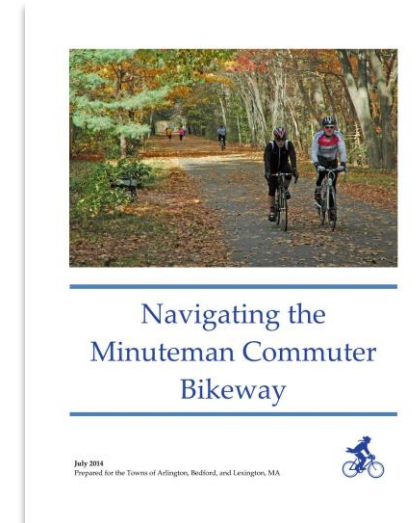
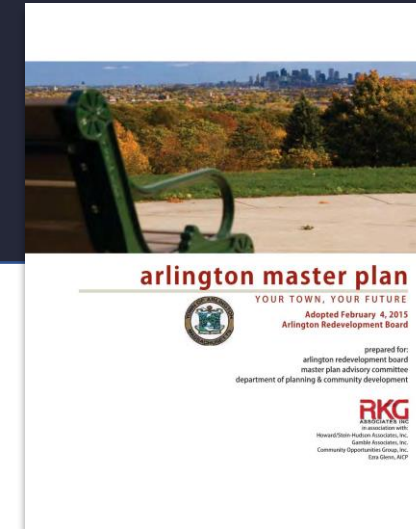
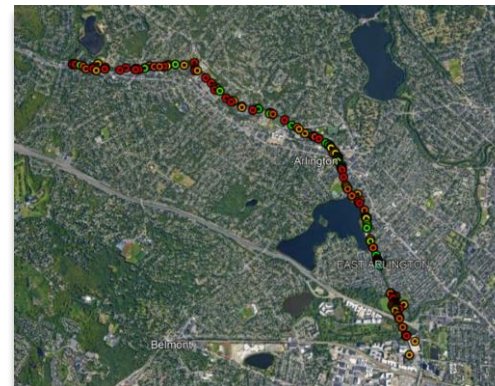
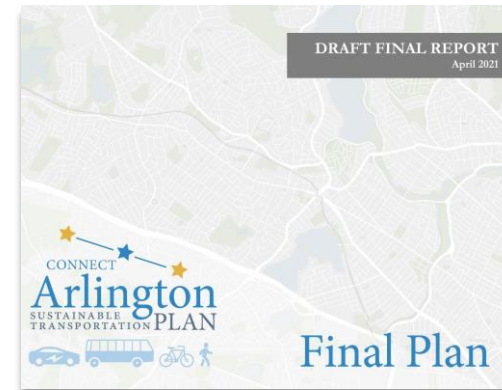
April - May

Work in Progress

- Background document review
- Site visits and data collection
- Existing conditions analysis
- Survey - open until November 15th!



899 responses to date!



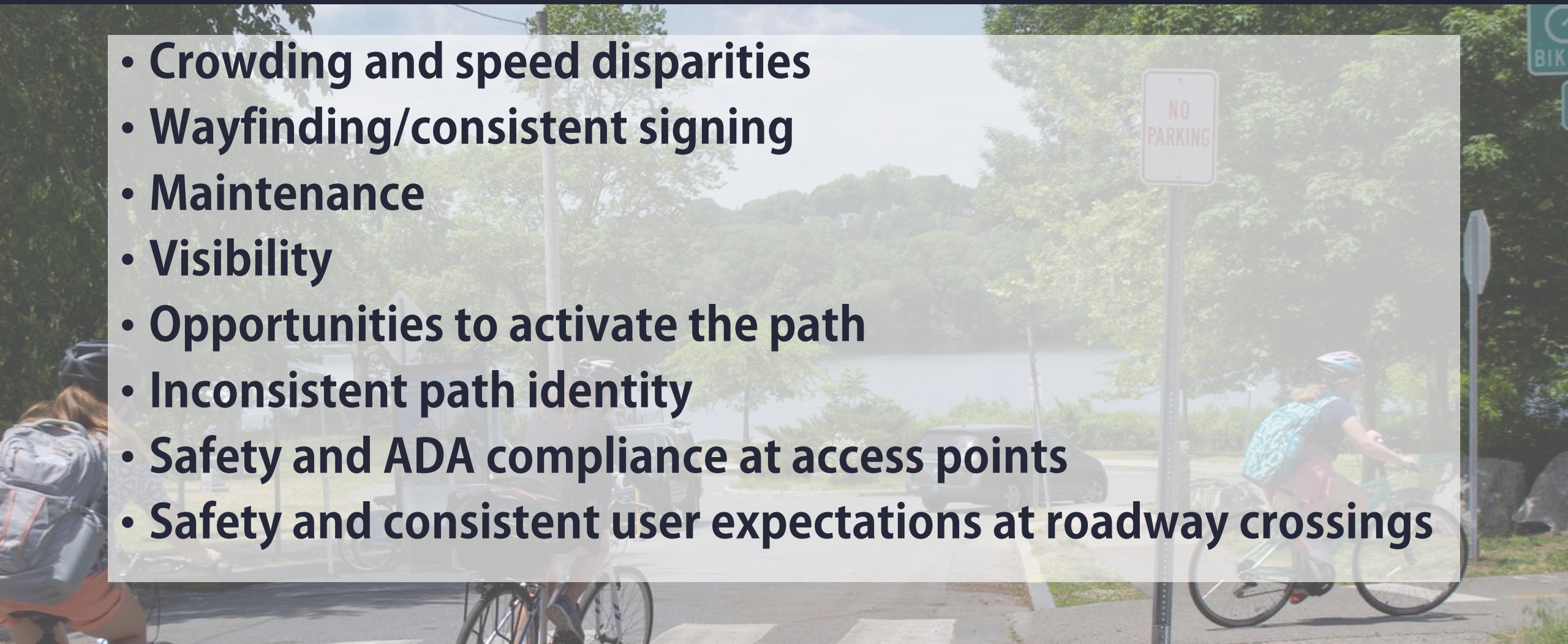
Initial Findings



Focus Areas



- **Crowding and speed disparities**
- **Wayfinding/consistent signing**
- **Maintenance**
- **Visibility**
- **Opportunities to activate the path**
- **Inconsistent path identity**
- **Safety and ADA compliance at access points**
- **Safety and consistent user expectations at roadway crossings**



Path Users



- Primarily people walking, running, biking
- But also... people roller blading, skate boarding, with strollers, in wheelchairs, on one wheel...



High volumes of users of all ages and abilities



Users have informally expanded the Bikeway with adjacent treadways

Path Users



2600
Average
Daily Path
Users!

Bike volumes tend to dip in the winter months while pedestrian volumes are more consistent throughout the year.



44% walking



56% biking

Access Points

- Access points are often subtle and lack wayfinding
- Frequency/distribution of access points
- Limited sight distances
- Comfort and security challenges
- Slope and erosion
- User expectations
- ADA accessibility challenges



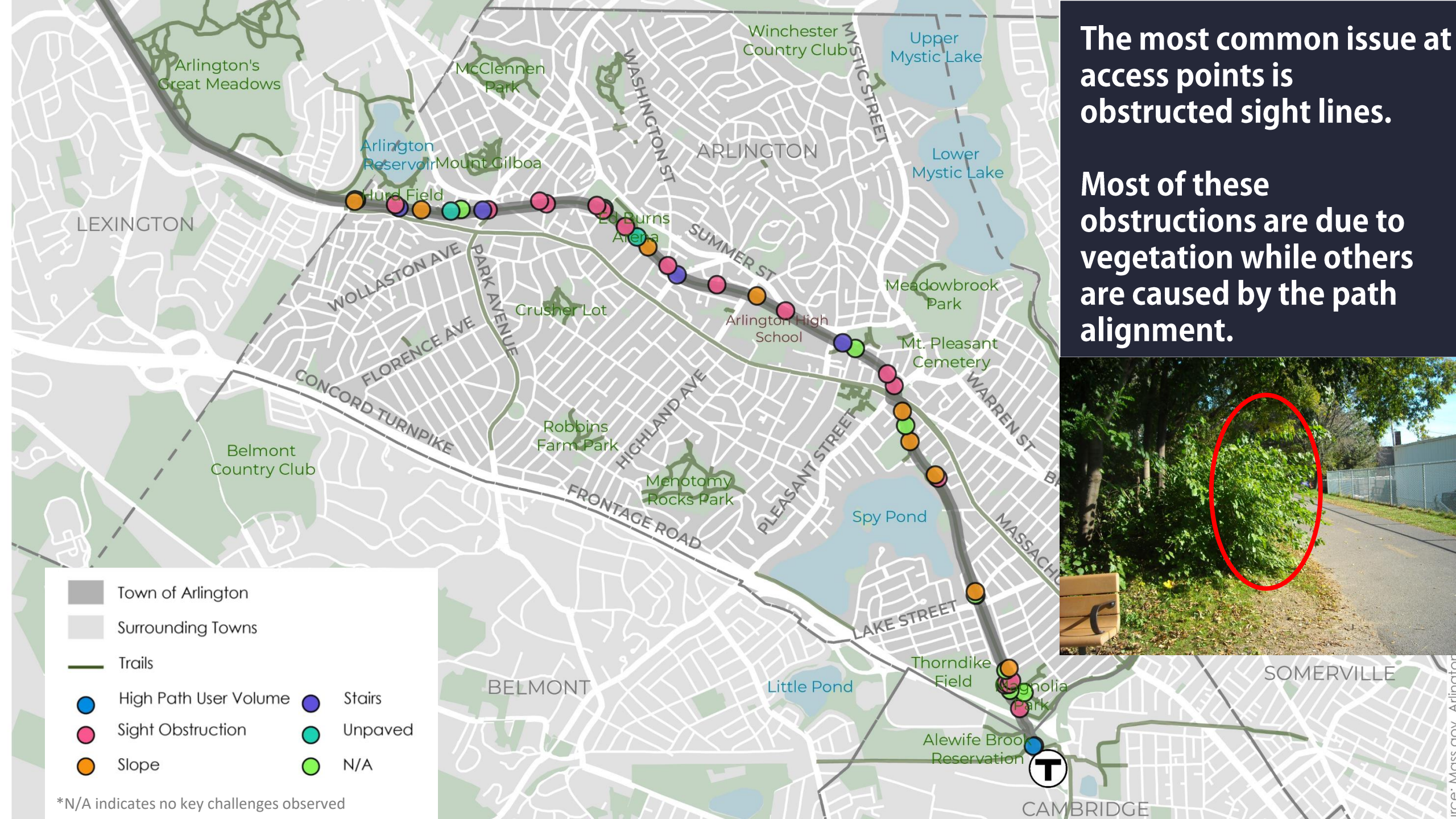
Enhanced wayfinding from the bikeway and street network, improved sight distance and geometry, and ADA compliance could improve this and similar access points



Drainage issues, surface material, and vertical elements inhibit ADA access

The most common issue at access points is obstructed sight lines.

Most of these obstructions are due to vegetation while others are caused by the path alignment.



- Town of Arlington
- Surrounding Towns
- Trails
- High Path User Volume
- Sight Obstruction
- Slope
- Stairs
- Unpaved
- N/A

*N/A indicates no key challenges observed

Wayfinding and Signing



Key Challenges:

- Inconsistent application and design of signs
- Lack of wayfinding between path, street network, and local destinations
- Varying path use guidance



Informational



Gateway



Wayfinding



Regulatory



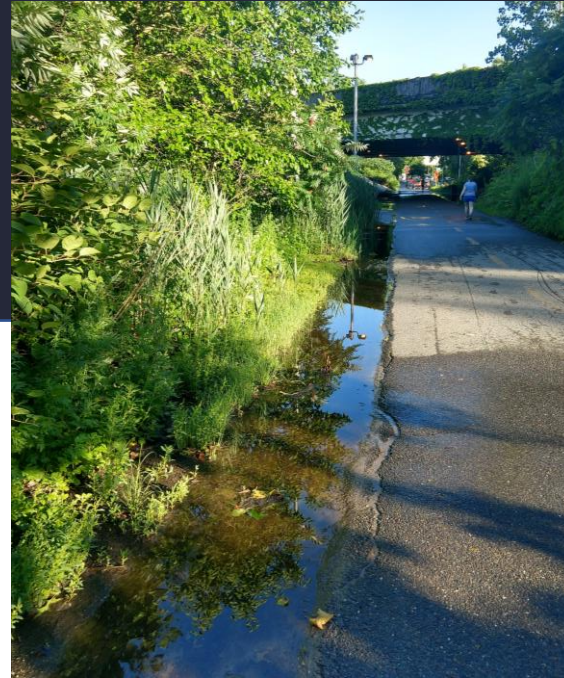
Warning



Path Use

Maintenance

- Paving
- Vegetation
- Drainage
- Bridge



Water pools along the path



"STOP" marking is faded



Crack sealing and overgrown vegetation

Maintenance (cont.)



Key Challenges:

- MBTA owns and maintains right-of-way outside of immediate bikeway
- Maintaining ADA-compliant access points



Overgrown vegetation restricts sight lines



Erosion



Bridge surface is worn

Lighting

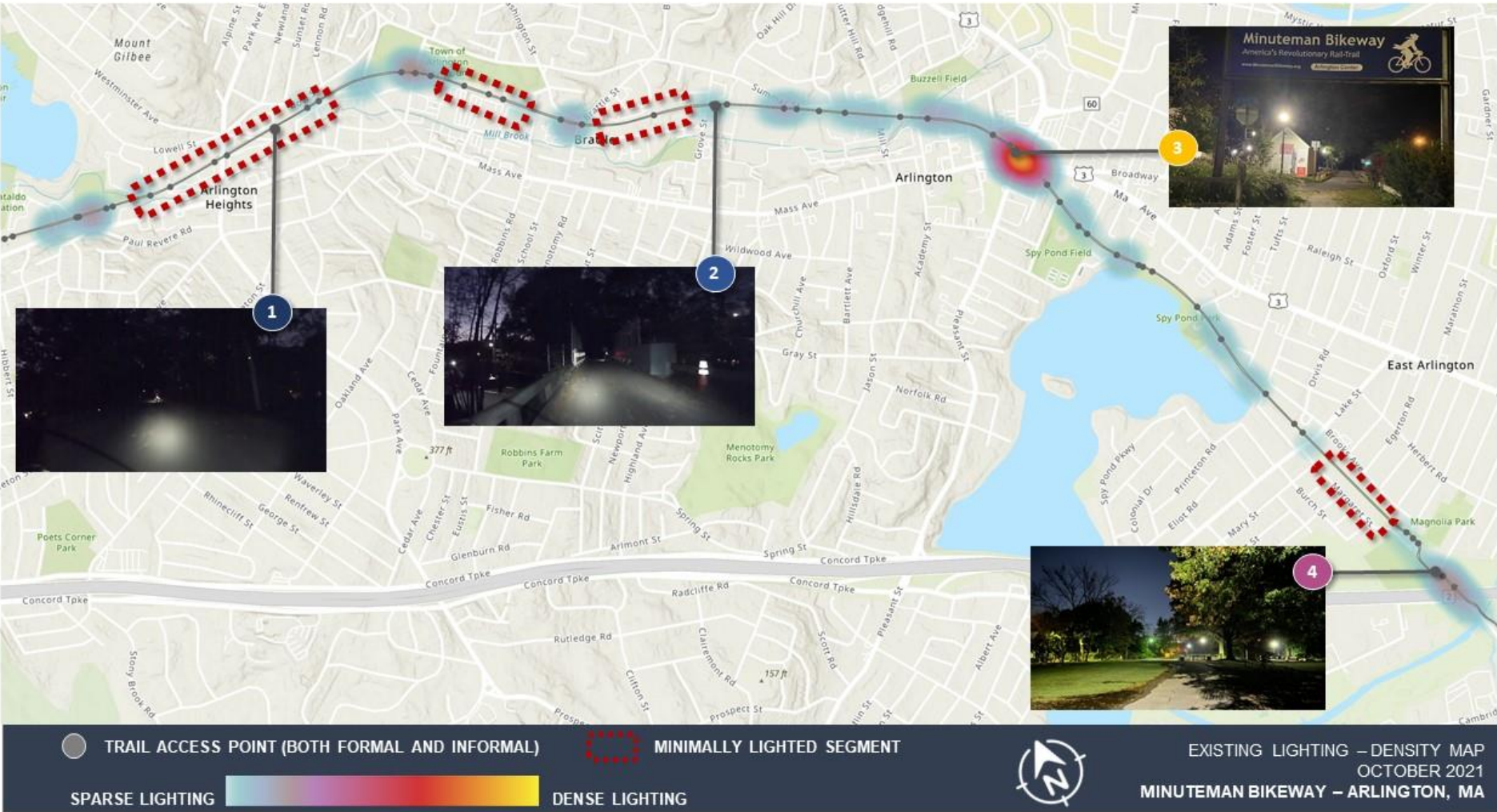


Key Challenges:

- Street lighting found at each at-grade crossing but lack of lighting at most access points
- Sporadic light spillage from abutting properties
- Ability to install and run power to lighting on the MBTA right-of-way



Lighting



Waysides and Public Art

Waysides

- Path currently does not engage the landscape as it passes through
- Numerous wide shoulder areas are available with potential for secondary paths, lookouts, benches, etc.

Public Art

- Existing art installations are tucked along the bikeway
- There are opportunities to highlight more public art along the bikeway via partnerships with the community, local schools, and Arlington residents
- Numerous shoulder areas and adjacent buildings/walls available



Roadway Crossings

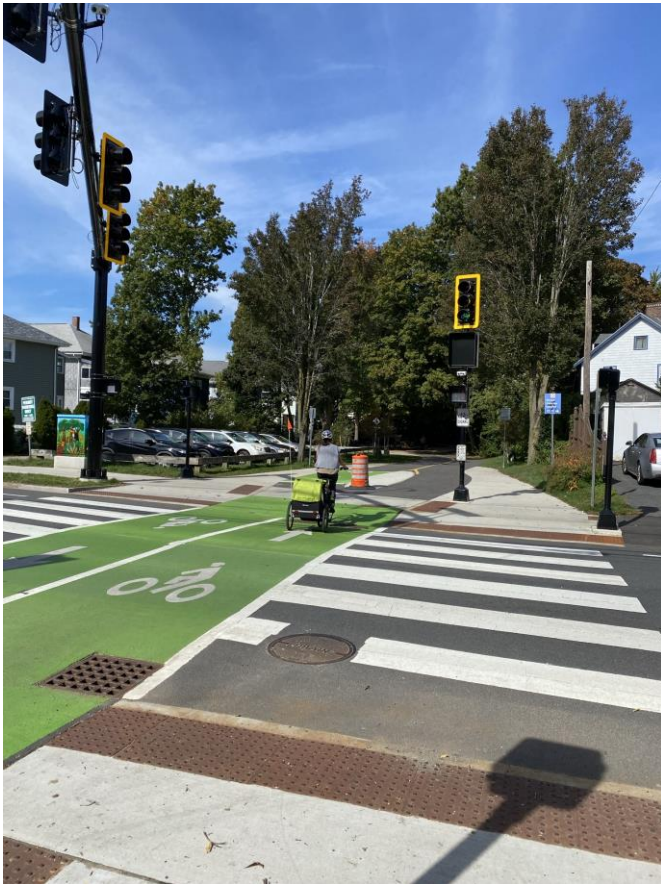


- **Crossings are where path users come into conflict with vehicles and where crashes are more likely to occur**
- **Crossings also provide access to the bikeway from adjacent neighborhoods**

Key Challenges and Observations:

- **Varied traffic control (Stop, RRFB, Bicycle Signal, Pedestrian Signal)**
- **Varied pavement markings**
- **Understanding correct user priority**
- **Sight lines for vehicles and path users**
- **ADA compliance**

Focus Crossing Locations



Lake Street



*Linwood Street
(Spy Pond)*



Swan Place/Massachusetts Avenue/Mystic Avenue

Focus Crossing Locations (cont.)



Water Street



Mill Street

Project Approach



Complete existing conditions analysis



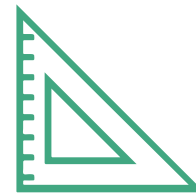
Develop broadly applicable, corridor-wide recommendations



Develop vision and goals to guide recommendations



Develop policy recommendations



Develop site-specific recommendations at select locations

Immediate Next Steps



- **Complete existing conditions analysis**
- **Synthesize survey findings**
- **Develop draft vision and goals**
- **Begin drafting policy and maintenance recommendations**

Presentation Q&A



Don't forget to fill out the survey by November 15th!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ArlingtonMinuteman>

Questions? Contact Daniel Amstutz, Senior Transportation Planner, at Damstutz@town.Arlington.ma.us

Breakout Groups



- **Brief Introductions**
 - Name and when you were last on the Minuteman
- **What do you enjoy about the Minuteman?**
- **What stands in the way of you enjoying the Minuteman or using it more frequently?**
- **What does the perfect Minuteman Bikeway look and feel like to you?**
 - Feel free to think outside the box!

Breakout Group Report-back



Thank you!



Thank you for sharing your experiences and vision for the Minuteman Bikeway in Arlington.

Here are other ways to stay involved:

- 1.** Take the project survey before November 15th at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ArlingtonMinuteman>
- 2.** Visit the project website at arlingtonma.gov/abac
- 3.** If you have questions about the project, please contact Daniel Amstutz, Senior Transportation Planner, Department of Planning and Community Development at Damstutz@town.Arlington.ma.us