

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Traffic, Parking and Transportation
57 Inman Street,
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Susan E. Clippinger
Director

Administration	349-4700
Parking Violations	349-4705
Resident Parking	349-4701

February 19, 1997

TO: Robert Healy, City Manager

FROM: Susan E. Clippinger, Director

SUBJECT: Council Order #36 dated 9/30/96

RE: Report on ways complaints can be made and report on the intersections or streets that are now being examined for improvements.

The Council has asked about the process for responding to citizens concerns about unsafe and unpleasant traffic conditions.

The Department's responsibilities include increasing the safety of our transportation system and working with residents to reduce the adverse affects of traffic in their neighborhood.

Citizen areas of concern are brought to the Department's attention through a variety of ways. People write or call the department, they raise issues at community meetings, concerns are referred to us from other departments, issues are raised in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee meetings, accident data indicates that a particular intersection needs attention or we hear about concerns from a Council Order.

Always, the more information we have describing the problem or concern, the more specifically we can focus on finding solutions. The concerns raised fall into four general categories: Repairs, regulation changes, traffic control devices, traffic calming and planning studies being undertaken by other developments.

Repairs include missing signs, faded crosswalks and signals knocked askew or bulbs out. These are problems that can be called into the department and repairs will be scheduled immediately.

Regulation changes include anything that involves the curb regulations--parking, loading zones, HP spaces, no parking areas. These requests involve a review of the area and the current regulations, a determination that all effected parties are aware of the proposed change. Then the new regulation is written and advertized for 30 days. A work order is prepared and the necessary

sign is then posted at the end of the 30 day advertising period.

The request that lead to the need for a traffic control devise (stop or yield sign, signal, etc.) or a traffic calming solution take a longer time from initial complaint to a final resolution and implementation. The city is focusing more attention on traffic calming treatments to resolve problems that are not well addressed by the more traditional traffic control devices. The Department is working closely with Community Development and Public Works to strengthen our traffic calming program and to develop criteria for prioritizing and scheduling each construction year's work.. Depending on the issues being raised, some or all of the following steps need to be followed--prepare accident chart for the last 3 years, speed study, traffic counts, turning movement counts, field investigation, pedestrian counts. All this information is then reviewed to determine the best recommendations for improvement that can be reviewed with the citizens affected to reach a consensus on the preferred solution. The Department then determines the funding source and schedule for implementation.

The fourth category of concerns are the ones that are raised as part of a planning project being undertaken by other Departments. These projects include the Hospital's Reach Program, the new water treatment plant, Public Work's sewer separation projects, the Community Development planning projects such as Cambridgeport roadways, Fresh Pond Parkway, Cambridge Street, Central Square, Porter Square and Mass. Ave., Lafayette Square to Memorial Drive. In these projects, most concerns are handled as part of the overall project. However, occasionally activities are broken out for early implementation or outside the project scope and can be broken out. They are then treated like the traffic control devises/traffic calming projects described above.

In summary, the preferred way for citizens to make a complaint to the Department is in writing. They will get a response to their letter within 2 weeks that is either an answer or a report of what steps will be taken and a time line. As part of our calendar year goals, the department committed to create an automated complaint tracking system. We expect the system to be in operation starting in April and should allow us to enhance our timely response to citizen complaints. We will be tracking this as part of our performance measures in our FY98 budget.

The Department would be happy to work through the City Manager with the City Council to further enhance this important issue.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

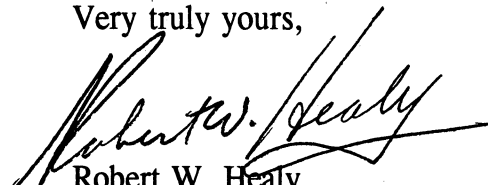
RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

February 24, 1997

To The Honorable, The City Manager:

In response to Awaiting Report Item Number 4, relative to the way complaints can be made and report on the intersections or streets that are now being examined for improvements, please find attached a report submitted by Susan Clippinger, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation.

Very truly yours,


Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/dls
attachment

Consent Agenda #28

5-100

Relative to Awaiting Report Item
Number Four, regarding the way
complaints can be made and report on the
intersections and streets that are now
being examined for improvements.

In City Council February 24, 1997

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