

## Position Statement on Safe Bicycling Infrastructure in Brookline

Climate Action Brookline strongly supports the implementation of the network of safe biking streets identified in Brookline’s Green Routes Bicycle Network Plan as the Protected Framework and Safe Connecting Streets.

Brookline has an official goal of achieving Net Zero Emissions by 2040<sup>1</sup>. In Massachusetts, 37% of emissions are from transportation<sup>2</sup>. In 2019, Brookline Town Meeting adopted a Sustainability Resolution (Warrant Article 31) setting the goal that by 2050 75% of trips would be by human power, electric micromobility or electric shared ride<sup>3</sup>. There has been an important push in Brookline to support the adoption of electric vehicles. However, whereas the lifecycle emissions of an electric vehicle are approximately 70% of those of a gas-powered car, those of a bicycle or electric assist bicycle are only 10% as large<sup>4</sup>.

Shifting from cars—even electric vehicles—to bicycles and walking is the best way to reduce the transportation sector’s emissions. What will it take to do that? Research in the US has shown that over 50% of people would like to bike but don’t because they don’t feel safe<sup>5</sup>. Copenhagen, Denmark, has shown that, with their extensive network of protected bike lanes, the vast majority of Copenhageners feel safe cycling<sup>6</sup>, and over 75% of Copenhageners cycle throughout the year<sup>7</sup>.

Brookline has a Green Routes Bicycle Network Plan identifying a network of streets that need to be made safe for cycling. It includes the **Protected Framework** of high traffic routes that need protected bike lanes, and the **Safe Connecting Streets**—lower volume streets that connect the high traffic routes to neighborhoods and key destinations—that need protected bike lanes or are traffic calmed to 20mph.<sup>8</sup>

To achieve our commitment to Net Zero by 2040, Brookline needs to systematically implement the Green Routes **Protected Framework** and **Safe Connecting Streets**.

## Statement advocating for protected bike lanes on Washington Street

Consistent with our position calling on Brookline to systematically implement the Green Routes Network Plan for safe bicycling through the implementation of its proposed Protected Framework and Safe Connecting Streets, and the fact that Washington Street corridor is a key street in the proposed Protected Framework, Climate Action Brookline strongly advocates for implementing safe protected bike lanes throughout the Washington Street corridor as part of the Washington Street Complete Streets project.

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<sup>1</sup> Brookline Climate Action Plan as updated by Town Meeting in May, 2021, Warrant Article 37, <https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/24610/Combined-Reports-May-2021-Annual-Town-Meeting-with-supplements>, pp37-6ff.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-clean-energy-and-climate-metrics#ghg-emissions-snapshot>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/20751/Combined-Reports-November-2019-Brookline-Special-Town-Meeting-with-Supplements>, pp31-1ff.

<sup>4</sup> Bernhard Isopp, “Why aren’t more big bike firms tracking their environmental impact?”, The Guardian, Sep 23, 2021

<sup>5</sup> Jennifer Dill, Ph.D., Portland State University, <https://jenniferdill.net/types-of-cyclists/>

<sup>6</sup> Copenhagen City of Cyclists: Bicycle Account 2012

<sup>7</sup> Copenhagen City of Cyclists: Bicycle Account 2012

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/18782/Green-Routes-Master-Network-Plan>, pp 10-13.