

2025 Cambridge Bike Safety School Committee Candidate Questionnaire

Cambridge's transportation choices shape public health, climate emissions, affordability, and mobility justice for students and guardians. Because road-space is finite, each mile of sidewalk, bike lane, or bus lane represents a deliberate policy trade-off, one that either widens or narrows opportunity for children and guardians walking and biking to school. This questionnaire, developed by Cambridge Bicycle Safety (CBS), lets voters see where you stand on those trade-offs. We appreciate you taking the time to share your views with potential voters.

- **Candidates must submit this form no later than Friday, August 22, 2025 (11:59 p.m. EDT).**
- Responses received by the deadline may be published and/or shared with our membership.
- Final endorsement decisions will be made shortly after the deadline based on questionnaire responses along with candidates' backgrounds, voting records (if applicable), advocacy work, platforms, and public statements.
- CBS will not coordinate election strategy or messaging with any School Committee candidate or committee, and endorsements will not be negotiated.
- For questions about this questionnaire or process, please contact us at info@cambridgebikesafety.org.

Section A – Candidate & Campaign Details

What is your full name as it appears on the ballot? *

Arjun Jaikumar

What is the URL of your official campaign website? (If applicable)

arjunjaikumar.com

Please provide the name of your primary point of contact. (This information will be kept confidential and not published.) *



Please provide the email address of your primary point of contact. (This information will be kept confidential and not published.) *



Please provide the phone number of your primary point of contact. (This information will be kept confidential and not published.) *



If offered, would you accept an endorsement from our organization? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Section B – Background Questions

Use this section to share your personal travel experiences to school and, if applicable, how your children travel(ed) to school. **Please keep each response under 1,500 characters.**

How did you travel to and from school when you were growing up, and how did that affect your independence and which activities you participated in? *

From kindergarten until fifth grade, I mostly walked to and from school (excepting during poor weather and on particularly cold winter days). One exception: in first grade, my family lived abroad and I attended an English-language school several miles from our apartment, so I took a school bus to school, and came home on the bus or on public transit with a caregiver. From sixth grade through twelfth grade, we used school buses and carpools.

If you have kids, how do they travel to school and school activities (e.g. sports)? How has the city's street environment affected your choices for your kids? *

We walk to school with my son, except on days when he prefers to ride his bike (which is increasingly common). Similarly, we generally walk to his activities within Cambridge, such as Cambridge Youth Soccer.

Part of the reason we chose to live in Cambridge in the first place is because we wanted to raise our family in a walkable city with good public transit. For the first five years after we moved here, we did not own a car.

Section C – Questionnaire

For each question, select your position on a scale from **Yes, No, and Partial**.

You may also provide up to 700 characters to briefly explain your position or describe how you would implement or address each topic. **Explanations are optional, and you are welcome to share additional context or priorities that can help voters better understand your perspective.**

Do you support completing the [Cycling Safety Ordinance](#) projects scheduled for 2026? Among them, [Cambridge St.](#) and [Broadway](#) are major projects connecting directly to multiple schools (CRLS, Fletcher Maynard, King Open). *

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Partially

You may elaborate on your response (optional):

I support completing these projects. I don't have much to add other than that Cambridge Street Upper School (CSUS) is also affected!

As of 2019, over 40% of K-8 students walk or bike to school (data from [2020 Bike Plan](#)), and the city only [provides bus service](#) to those students PreK-5 living more than a mile away from school and grades 6-8 more than 1.5 miles from school. **Do you support ensuring that every school has a safe biking connection installed by 2030?** *

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Partially

You may elaborate on your response (optional):

I do support this initiative. I'd add that although the focus of the question is on K-8 students, (and rightly so), many kids bike to CRLS as well, in part because there is no bus service to CRLS aside from MBTA buses.

Do you support piloting [School Streets](#) (which close a block adjacent to the school to car traffic during arrival and departure to [provide a safe space for students](#)) at all City schools? *

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Partially

You may elaborate on your response (optional):

I support piloting such a program. I think it will be challenging to implement, both logistically and politically, but that we shouldn't be afraid to try a pilot program because of what we *fear* effects on traffic will be.

Clear communication well ahead of time to school families, people in the neighborhood, and people who commute along those streets will be essential to the success of a pilot -- the more buy-in the program has from the neighborhood at the outset, and the more time affected parties have to prepare and adjust routes, the smoother the transition will be.

The City has a few [parent-organized Bike Buses](#), where [volunteers lead a group bike ride of students](#) to school. **Do you favor the City formally supporting bike buses and expanding the practice to all elementary schools?** If you have ideas for what formal support could look like, please include them. *

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Partially

You may elaborate on your response (optional):

I would love to see the City formally support bike buses. My kid and I have participated in our school's Bike Bus previously and we have both loved it. It enables kids to bike to school in a safe and protected environment, and it helps build community and relationships among caregivers who may not otherwise have met.

To support bike buses, schools should use their communications platforms and resources -- emails, class lists, room parents, family liaisons -- to promote bike buses. At our school, the organizers have relied primarily on word-of-mouth and the school hasn't been involved. Also, the city can increase bike rack space (including newer, more permanent racks) at several schools.

Do you support ensuring that all students have bike safety training at all levels of education (at least three times)? *

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Partially

You may elaborate on your response (optional):

Absolutely. Bike safety training protects not only cyclists, but pedestrians. I think continuing training at all levels of education helps students to internalize proper safety practices, and helps to normalize cycling as a preferred means of transportation into adulthood.

My kid actually became a confident rider, and got excited about biking, through PE in school rather than at home. I think it's important to give kids that opportunity throughout their education, and to teach and reiterate safety practices throughout.

Please elaborate on any other ways that you, as a School Committee member, plan to enhance safety of students traveling to and from school and related activities and encourage more students to bike to school. *

Schools should work closely with the CambridgeBikeGiveBack program and similar organizations that help provide bikes, helmets, locks, and lights to kids who may not otherwise be able to afford them.

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