



# I-90 ALLSTON INTERCHANGE

## A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECT

MASSDOT/FMCB JOINT MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2020



# Today's Agenda

- **Status of Project Planning**
- **NEPA Process/Preferred Alternative Selection**
- **Schedule**
- **Appendix: Criteria for Evaluating Alternatives**



# Status of Project Planning

- Meeting with Task Force on August 18<sup>th</sup> 2020
  - Presented Scoping Summary Report
  - NEPA and MEPA Schedule
  - Review of Frequently Received Comments
- Cooperating Agency Coordination
  - Meeting to Present Scoping Summary Report
  - Concurred on Alternative Carried Forward (CP#2)
  - Three Workshops on Alternatives Carried Forward



## Status: Continuing Development of Alternatives Carried Forward

- **Materials developed for workshops on alternatives carried forward and additional information on the Build and No Build alternatives will be released to Concurring Agencies and the public in late September/early October**
  - Will help inform evaluation of alternatives
- **Additional development of At-Grade Alternative**
  - MassDOT is seriously considering refinements and improvements to at-grade as proposed in the Scoping Summary Report based on concept put out by City of Boston/A Better City
  - Held four coordination meetings with City of Boston / A Better City
  - Revised version of City of Boston / A Better City at-grade being reviewed by MassDOT consultants so that it can be compared against SSR at-grade before process begins of comparing all Build and No Build alternatives to determine the Preferred Alternative

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# NEPA Process

- NEPA Scoping Summary Report: **August 2020 (Completed)**
- Concurrence Point #2 – Reasonable Range of Alternatives: **August 2020 (Completed)**
- FHWA and Cooperating Agencies Alternatives Workshops **August – September 2020 (Completed)**
- Information Exchange for the Preferred Alternative **Decision: September –October 2020**
- Concurrence Point #3 – Preferred Alternative: **Fall 2020**

# Cooperating Agencies Concurrence on the Preferred Alternative

- In order to ensure the timely review, permitting and funding of the Allston Multimodal Project, MassDOT is using a NEPA process designed to accelerate the timeframe from Notice of Intent to Record of Decision by establishing “concurrence points” to facilitate the process across all of the agencies whose authorization is required for the project
- The next Concurrence Point addresses whether one of the Build alternatives should be considered the Preferred Alternative, given the criteria already identified for comparing alternatives
- Earlier identification of a Preferred Alternative will allow MassDOT to move ahead with the state permitting process and development of a finance plan prior to publication of the NEPA Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- Regardless of concurrence on a Preferred Alternative this fall, all alternatives identified in the Scoping Summary Report will be thoroughly and equitably analyzed in the DEIS



## OFD Concurrence Point #3 – Preferred Alternative

- **What does it mean to concur on the Preferred Alternative at this stage? Per the 2018 MOU Implementing One Federal Decision:**
  - **“Concurrence” means confirmation by the lead agency that the information is sufficient for that stage, and the environmental review process may proceed to the next stage of the NEPA process”**
  - **“...the lead agency will request written concurrence on the preferred alternative from all agencies whose authorization is required for the project, and will explain in such request the rationale for its selection.”**
- **MassDOT and FHWA are pursuing the identification of a preferred alternative**
- **Three Workshops held with FHWA and Cooperating Agencies where information on alternatives was presented**
- **The next step will be the 30-Day Information Exchange period for the Preferred Alternative**
- **Concurrence on the Preferred Alternative will be requested in the Fall upon completion of the 30-Day Information Exchange and after an additional round of public engagement which MassDOT is adding even though it is not required by the NEPA process**



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## Schedule: Upcoming Milestones (Anticipated)

- Release of additional information to the Concurring Agencies, Task Force and Public: Late September/Early October
- Task Force and Public Meetings : Early **October** (with opportunity for submission of written feedback on selection of a preferred alternative)
- MassDOT Board Meeting : **October 19**
- Concurrence Point 3 on Preferred Alternative: Fall 2020 (following completion of 30 day information exchange with Concurring Agencies and of public engagement period)
- MEPA Notice of Project Change (NPC) : **Winter 2021**
- NEPA Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) : **Summer 2021**
- MEPA Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) : **Fall 2021**
- NEPA Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)/ Record of Decision (ROD) : **Winter 2021/2022**



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# Select Criteria for Evaluating Alternatives

- **Purpose & Need**
  - Does the alternative fully meet the Purpose & Need of the Project?
- **Construction Logistics**
  - Is the alternative feasible to construct with existing technologies?
  - What are the anticipated construction period impacts and overall duration?
- **Environmental Impacts/Effects**
  - Does the alternative cause excessive permanent environmental impacts to natural resources when compared to other alternatives?
  - Does the alternative result in permanent or temporary intrusion into the Charles River?
- **Highway Traffic Safety, Operations, and Maintenance**
  - Will the alternative improve safety?
  - Does the alternative adversely impact travel times within the Project Area due to congested conditions on existing or proposed roadways, or at existing or proposed intersections?
  - Does the alternative result in worse LOS at existing or proposed intersections, or long vehicular queues that impact operations at adjacent intersections?
  - Will the alternative improve maintenance operations?



# Criteria for Evaluating Alternatives (continued)

- **Rail Operations**

- Does the alternative support local and regional multi-modal (pedestrian, bicycle, bus, passenger vehicle, and transit) access to a future West Station?
- Does the alternative support the rail operation needs of MBTA including providing operational flexibility between Worcester Main Line, layover, and Grand Junction Railroad?
- Does the Alternative Require Construction of the South Side Maintenance Facility (MBTA) in advance of mobilization?

- **Cost and Schedule**

- Does the alternative require an unreasonably high cost compared to other alternatives?
- Does the alternative require an unreasonably complicated or lengthy project schedule?
- Has cost/schedule of environmental performance commitments been considered?