



I-90 ALLSTON INTERCHANGE A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECT

Task Force Meeting
February 23, 2021- MS Teams

Today's Agenda

- NEPA/MEPA Schedule
- Contents of NPC Overview
- Commenting on the NPC



Today's Agenda

- NEPA/MEPA Schedule
- Contents of NPC Overview
- Commenting on the NPC



Current proposed MEPA/NEPA Schedule

- MEPA Notice of Project Change (NPC) : **Early Spring 2021**
- Joint NEPA Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)/
MEPA Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Report (SDEIR) : **Summer 2021**
- Preferred Alternative Identified: **Fall 2021**
- MEPA Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) : **Spring 2022**
- NEPA Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)/
Record of Decision (ROD) : **Spring 2022**

Identification of a Preferred Alternative

- MassDOT has decided to postpone the identification of a Preferred Alternative in the Throat Area until Fall 2021, after a DEIS/SDEIR has been published
- Postponing the decision will give MassDOT more time to
 - Analyze differences between the throat variations and present that analysis in the DEIS/SDEIR next Fall
 - Advance important work on developing traffic control and multimodal mitigation plans for the project and present that work in subsequent environmental documentation
 - Advance a finance plan to determine how the project could/would be paid for

Today's Agenda

- NEPA/MEPA Schedule
- Contents of NPC Overview
- Commenting on the NPC



Contents of NPC Overview

- **Description of the Project as Most Recently Reviewed in 2017 Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)**
- **Description of Material Changes to the Project as Previously Reviewed in 2017 DEIR**
 - Updates to the Project Purpose and Need
 - Updated Project Alternatives
 - Environmental Impacts of Throat Area Variations
- **Response to Secretary's Certificate and agency and public comments on the DEIR**
- **Note: Regulatory mitigation measures for resource area impacts will be provided in the DEIS/SDEIR**

NPC Filing

- NPC will provide updated discussion of major Project elements including the following:
 - Purpose and Need
 - Project Alternatives
 - Traffic Analysis
 - Qualitative discussion on Air and Noise issues
 - Natural resource impacts for all Throat Area variations
 - Massachusetts Coastal Flood Risk Model (MC-FRM)
 - Utilities and Construction Impacts
 - Construction Phasing and Costs
 - Public Outreach
 - Response to comments received on DEIR
 - All of these items will be updated and expanded upon in SDEIR/DEIS filing

Updates to the Project Purpose and Need

- NPC updates the Project's MEPA purpose and need to align with the refined purpose and need presented in the NEPA Scoping Report & Scoping Summary Report
- Greater emphasis on improving mobility and transportation access within the project area
 - Improve Level of Service within the I-90 interchange area
 - Do not preclude a connection from BU and the Allston, Brighton and Brookline neighborhoods to the Charles River Reservation
 - Upgrade the PDW Path to provide a two-way pedestrian and bicycle facility
- Continues to include rail improvements
 - Construction of a new West Station
 - Infrastructure supporting mid-day commuter rail operation
- Continues to address roadway deficiencies and safety concerns
 - Structurally deficient I-90 viaduct

Allston Multimodal Project Components for "Purpose and Need"



No Build Alternative (Major Preservation)

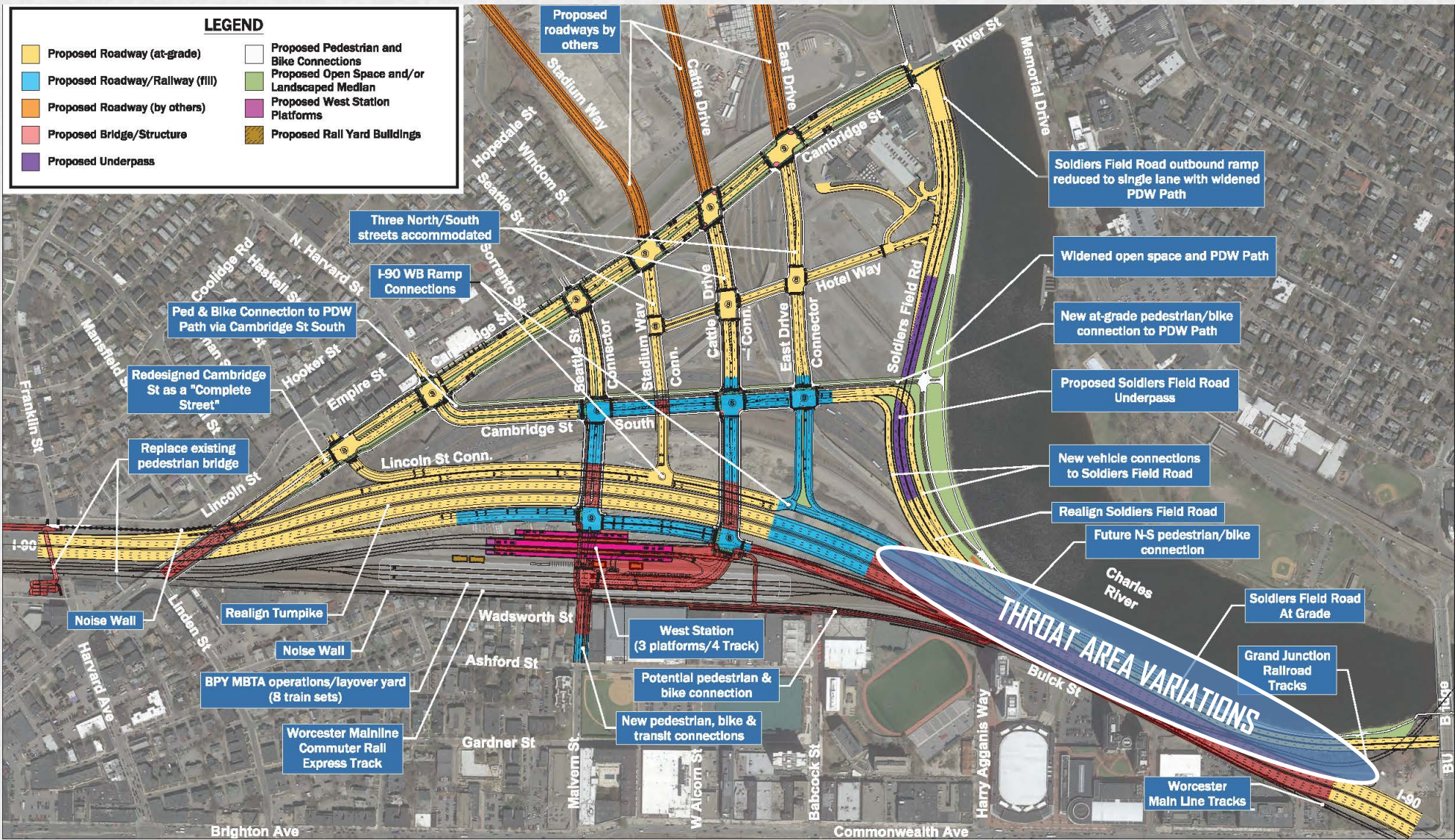


- No Build Alternative describes the conditions that would exist should the Project not be implemented and makes assumptions regarding the future transportation network including what physical improvements would occur
- No Build Alternative is a major preservation of the existing viaduct, including replacement of the bridge deck, deck joints and bridge railings and repair of the substructure
- Includes Rehabilitation of Cambridge Street over I-90 Bridge Rehabilitation and Preservation of Franklin Street Pedestrian Bridge over I-90

Updated Project Alternatives

- **DEIR Preferred Interchange 3K and “Throat Area” variations refined as a result of public and stakeholder input on DEIR, Independent Review Team Study and NEPA Scoping Report and are now referred to as the following:**
 - Preferred Interchange 3L Re-alignment Alternative
 - Modified Highway Viaduct Variation
 - Modified At-Grade Variation
 - SFR Hybrid Variation
- **Modified Flip West Station and Rail Layout**

Preferred Interchange 3L Re-alignment Alternative with Three "Throat Area" Variations



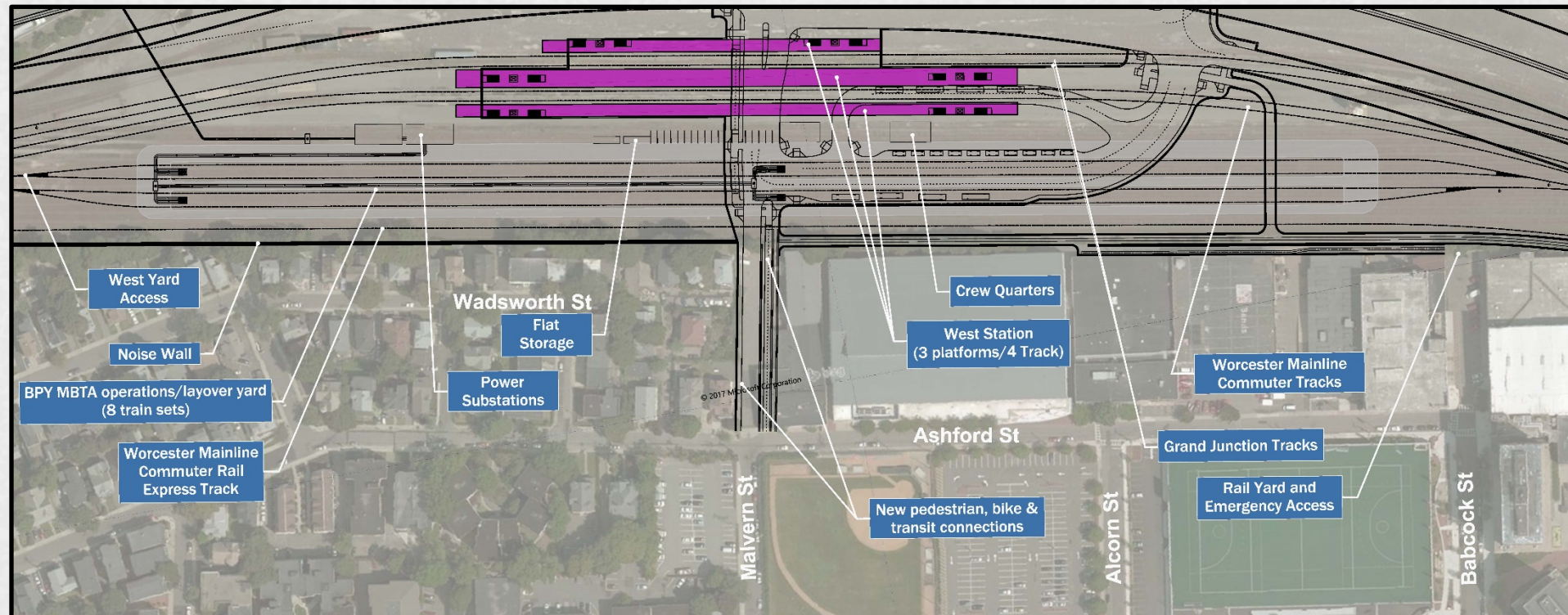
Preferred 3L Re-alignment Alternative

Noteworthy changes since the development of the DEIR 3K Alternative:

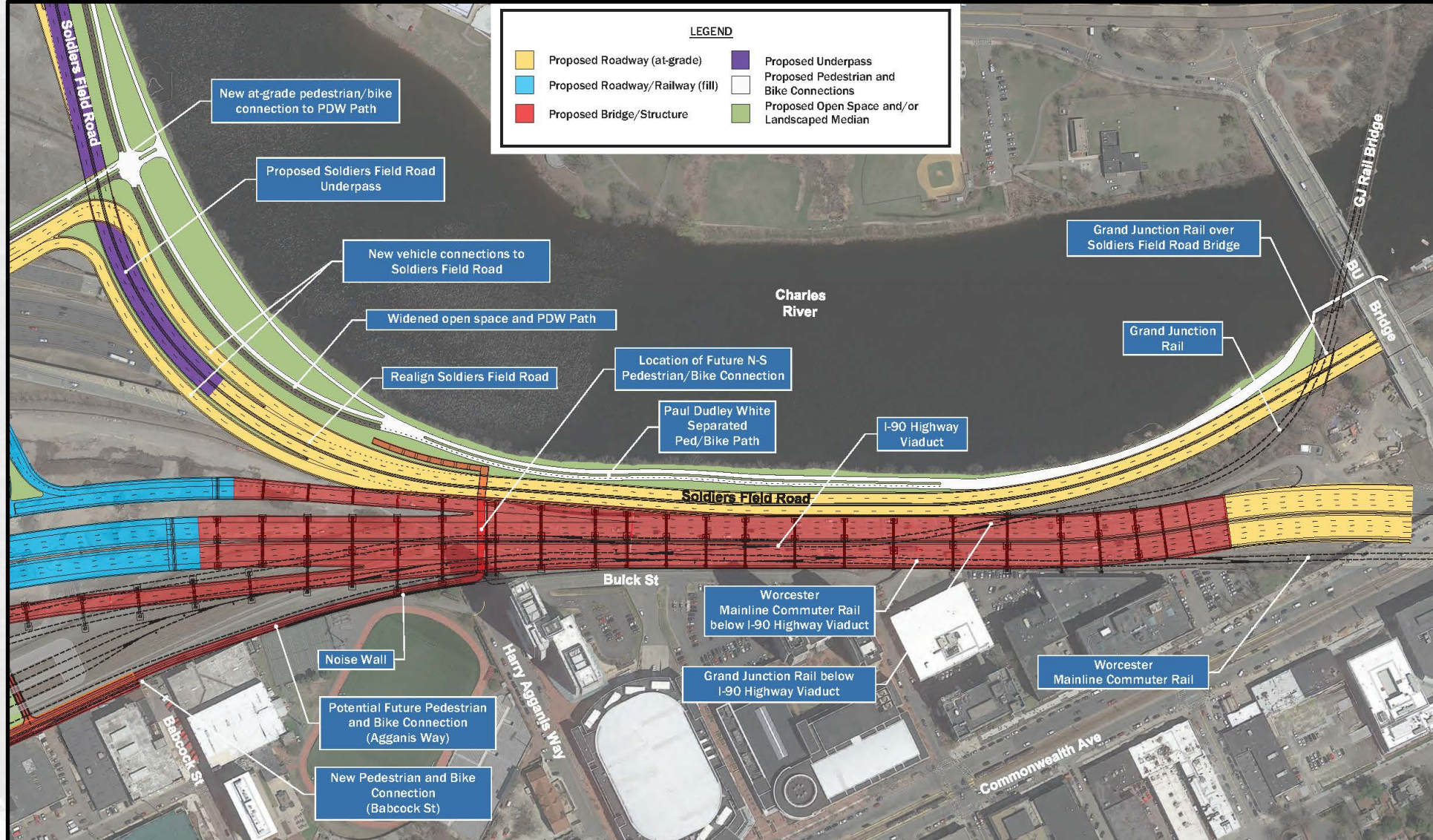
- Malvern Street Transit Way with enhanced pedestrian/bike connection from West Station to Commonwealth Avenue added to the Project
- Restoring the SFR westbound off-ramp to Cambridge Street/River Street
- Removing the North Connector Road (SFR to Stadium Way)
- Removing the West Connector, reducing the number of signalized intersections on Cambridge Street
- Improve bicycle/pedestrian connectivity and safety between the community and the Charles River Reservation by grade separating Cambridge Street South and Stadium Way Connector

Modified Flip West Station and Rail Layout

- Modified for 4 track & 3 platform operation
- Includes express track to the south to accommodate more express trains in future
- Allows for future two-track urban rail service to Cambridge

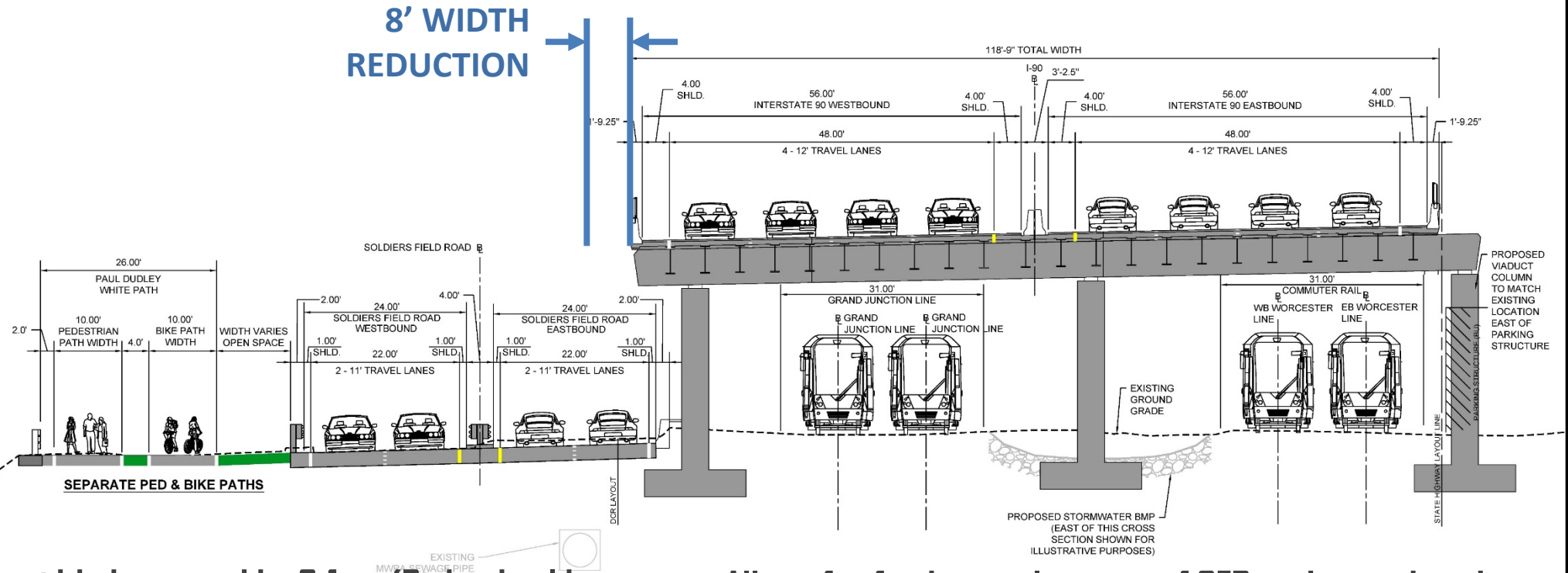


Throat Area Options: Modified Highway Viaduct – Plan View



- Viaduct width decreased by 8 feet
- Pier column arrangement reduced from 4 to 3 columns
- Allows for further realignment of SFR to the south resulting in a greater limit of separated ped/bike PDW Path
- Accommodates future N-S (Agganis Way) ped/bike crossing and potential future Agganis Way connection to West Station

Throat Area Options: Modified Highway Viaduct – Cross Section



- Viaduct width decreased by 8 feet (Right shoulders decreased from 8 feet to 4 feet, left shoulders remain 4 feet and travel lanes remain 12 feet)
- Pier column arrangement reduced from 4 to 3 columns
- Allows for further realignment of SFR to the south and allows for greater limit of separated ped/bike PDW Path
- SFR travel lanes remain 11 feet and shoulders remain 1 foot

Visual – DEIR Highway Viaduct Variation

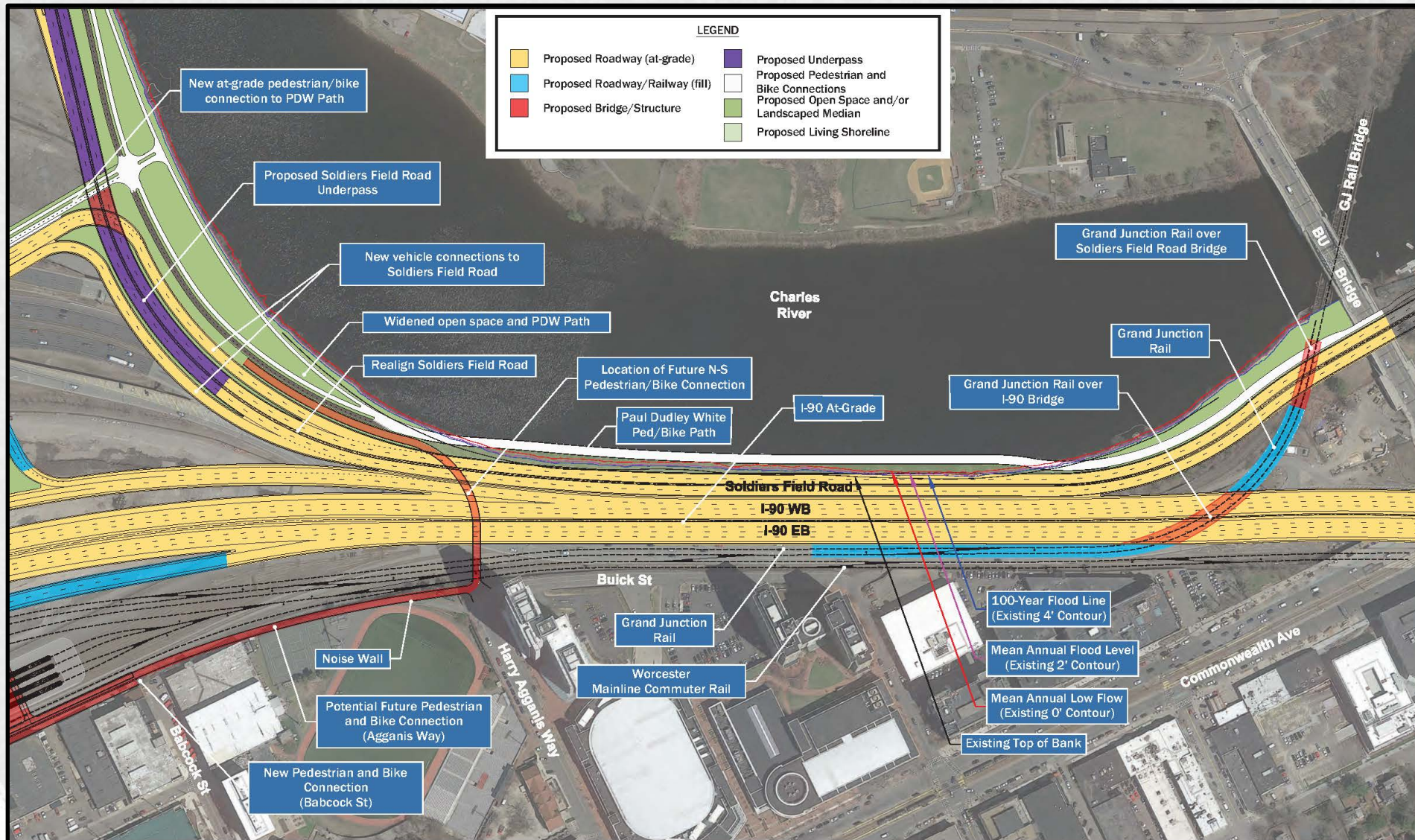


Visual – Modified Highway Viaduct Variation

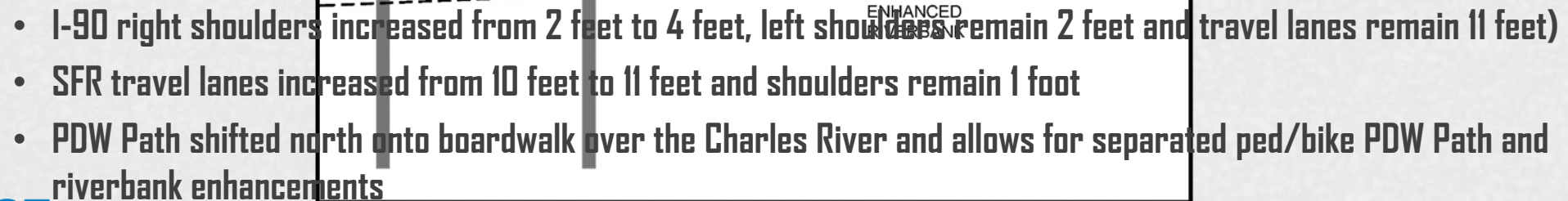
- I-90 remains on a viaduct – new viaduct will include architectural improvements
- Separated ped/bike PDW Path



Throat Area Options: Modified At-Grade – Plan View



- PDW Path shifted north onto boardwalk over the Charles River and allows for separated ped/bike PDW Path and riverbank enhancements
- Accommodates future N-S (Agganis Way) ped/bike crossing and potential future Agganis Way connection to West Station
- Allows for extension of PDW Path below GJR bridge over SFR



Visual – DEIR At-Grade Variation

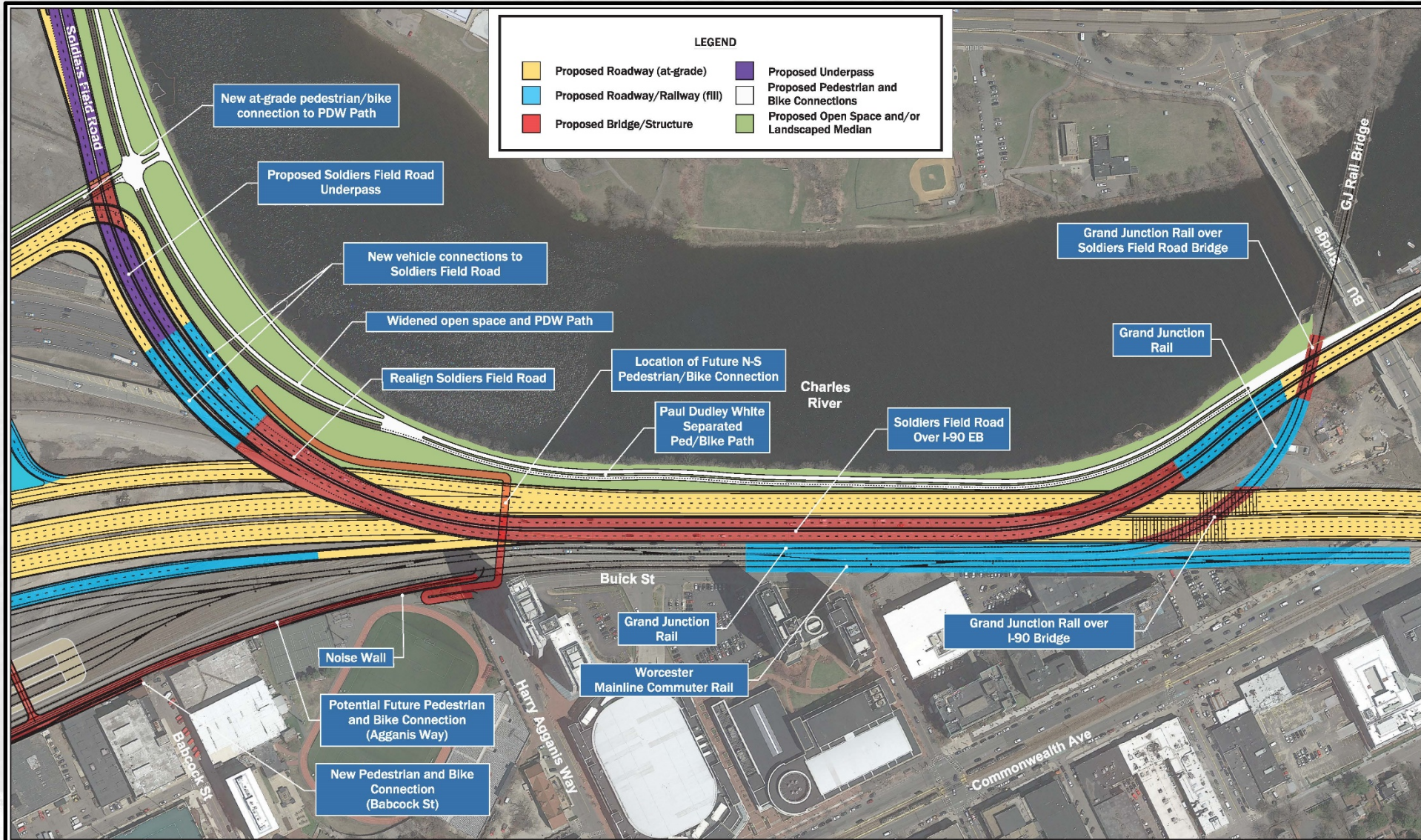


Visual – Modified At-Grade Variation

- No viaducts, resulting in improved views of the Charles River from the south
- Separated ped/bike facilities with improved views for users of the PDW Path
- Enhanced Charles Riverbank

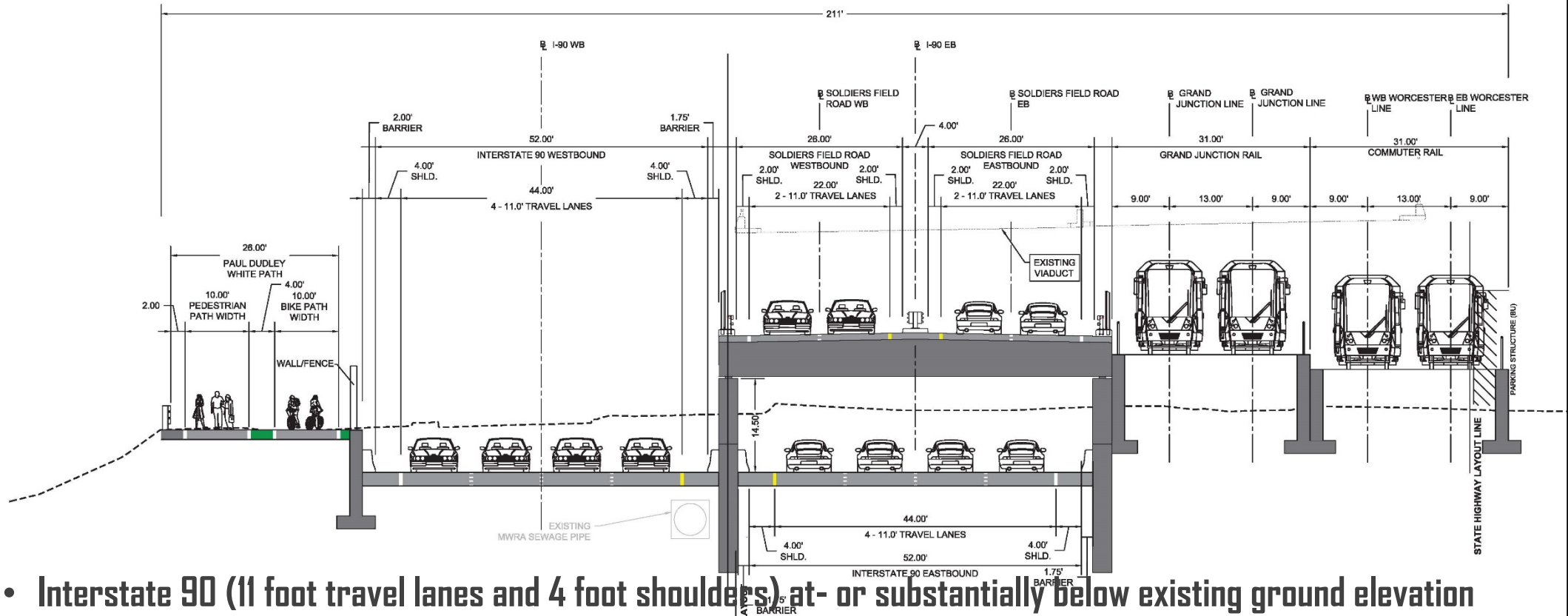


Throat Area Options: SFR Hybrid – Plan View



- DEIR 3K-AMP Throat Variation replaced with SFR Hybrid as a result of 2018 IRT Report
- Interstate 90 at- or substantially below existing ground elevation
- Soldiers Field Road on a viaduct over Interstate 90 eastbound
- PDW Path location similar as existing and provides separated ped/bike PDW Path within Throat Area
- Allows for extension of PDW Path below GJR bridge over SFR

Throat Area Options: SFR Hybrid – Cross Section



- Interstate 90 (11 foot travel lanes and 4 foot shoulders) at- or substantially below existing ground elevation
- Soldiers Field Road (11 foot travel lanes and 2 foot shoulders) on a viaduct over Interstate 90 eastbound
- PDW Path location similar as existing and provides separated ped/bike PDW Path within Throat Area

Visual – SFR Hybrid



- Removes I-90 viaduct – smaller SFR viaduct will include architectural treatments



NPC Filing - Traffic & Rail Analysis



- The NPC traffic section provides a brief summary of new traffic counts performed since filing of the DEIR
- Update of the latest CTPS modeling assumptions consistent with updated land use assumptions provided by MAPC
- Discussion of lane requirements based on traffic volumes and operations on I-90 in the Throat Area
- I-90 Traffic and Speed Data provided in Appendix E of NPC
- The NPC provides updated (from the DEIR) rail and West Station layouts, consistent with the NEPA Scoping Summary Report
- The NPC does not include new rail modeling results – those will be presented in the SDEIR

NPC Filing - Air & Noise and Vibration



- **Qualitative discussion of Air & Noise and Vibration Impacts**
 - Detailed CTPS traffic numbers not available at time of NPC
 - The NPC includes a screening-level air quality analysis to compare the potential air quality impacts of Concept 3L with those presented in the DEIR for Concept 3K. The results of the screening analysis show that air quality emissions for Concept 3L will be up to 11 percent lower than Concept 3K for the 2040 Build scenario. A full detailed emissions calculations and modeling analyses will be performed for the DEIS/SDEIR.
 - The NPC includes a preliminary Noise/Vibration analysis, based on the same traffic volumes and train operations assumed in the DEIR to provide a consistent comparison between the 3K and 3L Alternatives.
 - Full Air and Noise/Vibration modeling based on latest CTPS model, updated train operations information, and any design modifications will be included in SDEIR

NPC Filing - Natural Resource Impacts

- NPC filing outlines potential wetlands and waterways impacts consistent with what was described at the October 2020 Task Force meeting
- Discussion of current State Wetlands and Chapter 91 Waterways impacts from the Throat Area Variations
- Modified Highway Viaduct – Outfalls (Common among all alternatives)
- Modified At-Grade - Impacts from Pile Supported PDW Path and Living shoreline
- SFR Hybrid – Construction Period Impacts including SFR Trestle
- All alternatives result in improved Charles River Shoreline upon completion of the Project

NPC Filing - Resiliency and Climate Change

- NPC to include initial vulnerability assessment to be expanded upon in SDEIR/DEIS
- Updated analysis to reflect Massachusetts Coastal Flood Risk Model (MC-FRM)
- Includes 2030, 2050 and 2070 analysis years
- Analysis of the susceptibility of infrastructure to flooding
- Future flood mitigation to be addressed in SDEIR

NPC Filing – Construction Phasing and Costs

- Phasing of the Project was presented in the DEIR as occurring in 3 Phases
 - Phase 1 (Targeted for 2025)
 - Interchange 3K and Street Grid, Rail Layover Storage for 8 Train Sets and Construction of Noise Walls
 - Phase 2 (Targeted between 2025 and 2040)
 - Additional Layover Tracks for Storage of 16 Train Sets including Utilities, Paving and Crew Quarters for Light Maintenance
 - Phase 3 (Targeted prior to 2040 based on demand)
 - West Station Platforms and Bus Concourse and Reconfigure Rail Layover for Storage up to 8 Train Sets
 - Construct Ped/Bike Connection from West Station to Babcock Street
 - Build out the Balance of the Street Network to the North of Cambridge Street and Stadium Way Connector
- The Project will now be constructed in a Single Phase and timing of major elements will be determined based on construction staging requirements and constraints
- Preliminary Conceptual Construction Costs for No Build and Preferred 3L Re-alignment Alternative and Throat Area variations
 - Detailed cost breakdowns for each variation by major elements including base construction, contingency, escalation and life cycle costs will be included in the SDEIR

NPC Filing – Utilities and Construction Impacts

- Description of Utility Impacts for “Throat Area” Variations
- General sequence of construction for “Throat Area” Variations
- Construction Impacts
 - Worcester Mainline
 - Grand Junction Rail
 - Paul Dudley White Path
 - Highway Operations/Travel Lanes
- Updated conceptual staging plans to be included in SDEIR/DEIS

NPC Filing - Public Outreach



- **MassDOT has continued to prioritize public outreach since publication of the DEIR including:**
 - 17 meetings with the Task Force, including 3 meetings with the IRT, and one 5-hour workshop;
 - 5 public information meetings, 1 in Brighton, 2 in Framingham, 1 in Worcester, and one conducted virtually due to COVID-19; and
 - 1 site walk at the request of Task Force membership.
- **In addition, the Project Team has held an array of targeted briefings including:**
 - 1 for Cambridgeport residents;
 - 3 for rowing and powerboating users of the Charles River;
 - 1 for the Allston Civic Association; and
 - 1 for the Brookline Transportation Committee.
- **Publication of NEPA documents have been made available to the public digitally and hard copies at libraries in Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Framingham and Worcester**

NPC Filing - DEIR Response to Comments

- MassDOT received over 575 comment letters and emails on DEIR
- Responses to EEA Secretary's Certificate on the 2017 DEIR are included in Appendix A of NPC
- Frequent comments and responses are summarized in Appendix B of NPC
- Responses to all comments included in Appendix C of NPC
- Many comments on the DEIR were based on early design and do not reflect current designs being presented in NPC

Today's Agenda

- MEPA/NEPA Schedule
- Contents of NPC Overview
- Commenting on the NPC



Commenting on the Notice of Project Change

- Notice in Environmental Monitor will be in early Spring 2021
- Comment period will be 3 weeks
- Electronic PDF's will be available for download from the MassDOT website
- Hard copies of the report will be available at the following locations*:
 - Boston Public Library – Copley
 - Boston Public Library – Honan/Allston
 - Cambridge Public Library
 - Framingham Public Library
 - Worcester Public Library

*Due to restrictions imposed by COVID-19, copies of the report will be available at each location for loans of up to 96 hours. Each library will be equipped with multiple copies of the report to allow for additional access.

Comments to MEPA

Kathleen Theoharides, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Attn: Alex Strysky, MEPA Office

EEA No. 15278

100 Cambridge Street, 9th Floor

Boston, MA 02114

Alexander.Strysky@state.ma.us



Questions?

