

Chapter 1 – Introduction and Project Summary

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1.1. Introduction

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) have for decades identified the expansion of rail capacity at South Station as a crucial transportation need, one that has been articulated in multiple local, regional, state, and Northeast Corridor (NEC)-wide planning documents.¹ In cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Amtrak, and the MBTA, MassDOT is now pursuing the expansion of South Station.

1.1.1. Project Purpose

The purpose of the South Station Expansion (SSX) project is to expand South Station terminal capacity and related layover capacity in order to meet current and anticipated future high-speed, intercity, and commuter rail service needs. The expansion of South Station would enable growth in passenger rail transportation along the NEC and within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The project would improve the passenger experience of using South Station, promote city-building in a key area of Boston, and allow for Dorchester Avenue to be reopened for public use and enjoyment for the first time in decades.

1.1.2. Project Need

South Station is a critical component of transportation infrastructure for the City of Boston and the Boston metropolitan area, and is Boston's busiest intermodal and multimodal transportation hub. South Station today has fewer than half the original number of tracks that were available when the station first opened in 1899, but it continues to serve as the most heavily used passenger rail facility in New England. Currently, all 13 existing tracks are fully used by Amtrak and the MBTA, and both operators are severely limited in their ability to increase service or offer new services due to the constrained size and configuration of the station and terminal facilities. Terminal capacity constraints currently degrade service reliability and will inhibit future service delivery. The most critical piece of South Station's track infrastructure is the Tower 1 Interlocking (a series of signals and switches), which has failed twice in recent months and, in its current configuration, severely limits the number of trains that can simultaneously approach the station. South Station's passenger facilities, including platforms, waiting areas, and customer support services, do not meet preferred standards for passenger transit facilities. Additionally, midday vehicle layover capacity for the MBTA's south side commuter rail service area is needed to allow the commuter rail system to expand in the future.

At a local level, South Station is viewed as a key gateway linking downtown Boston and the emerging South Boston Waterfront/ Innovation District. With recent growth in the area, including the relocation of General Electric Co., there is an increased demand for improved transportation services, specifically at South Station.

At a regional level, travel demand is expected to grow faster than the 14% population growth rate anticipated by 2025.² Ridership on Amtrak's NEC services is projected to increase from 13 million in 2010 to 23 million in 2030.³ With capacity already nearly or fully reached, however, the rail system's

¹ Documents citing the need for an expanded South Station include: *Critical Infrastructure Needs on the Northeast Corridor* (2013), *The Northeast Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan* (2010); *The Amtrak Vision for High-Speed Rail in the Northeast Corridor* (2010), *A Vision for the Northeast Corridor* (2012), the *Massachusetts Department of Transportation Rail Plan* (2010), the *Massachusetts Department of Transportation Freight Plan* (2010), and two recent long range transportation plans of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (2007, 2011).

² Amtrak. *Northeast Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan*. June 4, 2010. <http://www.amtrak.com/ccurl/870/270/Northeast-Corridor->

ability to absorb future demand is limited.

As the number of Amtrak and MBTA commuter trains increase, the existing capacity constraints at South Station will make reliable operations increasingly difficult, which will in turn negatively impact service reliability on the northern portion of the NEC and on the south side of the MBTA commuter rail system. Furthermore, the existing constraints will greatly inhibit the ability of both Amtrak and the MBTA to serve future demand by supplementing existing services or adding new rail service to South Station. Without additional platform track capacity, these services cannot be accommodated and their projected benefits will not be realized.

The expansion of South Station, along with additional layover capacity, would address the above issues and provide a number of benefits related to transportation, the environment, and public amenities, as detailed in Section 1.4 of this report.

1.1.3. Project Review and Analysis

MassDOT secured a grant in 2011 from the FRA to complete environmental review and preliminary engineering for the project. MassDOT filed an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) in April 2013 and a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) in October 2014. In December 2014, the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) issued a Certificate on the DEIR (EEA No. 15028), which stated that the DEIR adequately and properly complied with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and its implementing regulations, and required preparation of this Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) of limited scope. A horizon year of 2035 and an approximate opening year of 2025 are used for analysis of the project.

Because MassDOT received grant funding through the FRA, the project also requires review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). MassDOT is concurrently preparing a separate Environmental Assessment (EA) to comply with NEPA, which is anticipated to be filed in 2017. Project funding for next phases of the project – final design and construction – are anticipated to be provided in the future by other federal and state funding sources.

As required by the Secretary's Certificate, the FEIR provides additional analyses of the project and status updates, including:

- Summary of project benefits (see Section 1.2);
- Description of the project (see Section 1.3);
- Summary of project changes since the DEIR (see Section 1.4);
- Update of project-related activities (see Section 1.5);
- Updated list of possible permits and approvals anticipated for the project (see Section 1.6);
- Project design updates, cost, funding, and schedule (see Chapter 2);
- Updated summaries of project environmental impacts (see Chapter 3);

[Infrastructure-Master-Plan.pdf](#).

³ Amtrak. *Northeast Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan*. June 4, 2010. <http://www.amtrak.com/ccurl/870/270/Northeast-Corridor-Infrastructure-Master-Plan.pdf>.

- Expanded discussion of proposed South Station and layover facility improvements and future operations (see Chapter 3 and Appendices D and E);
- Proposed mitigation measures and draft Section 61 Findings for project impacts (see Chapter 4); and
- Responses to comments received on the DEIR (see Chapter 5).

1.2. Summary of Project Benefits

The project provides many benefits related to transportation services, the environment, and public amenities as outlined below and depicted on Figure 1-1.

1.2.1. Transportation

Rail Service

- Improves reliability and performance: The project would improve reliability and provide the ability to meet Amtrak's and the MBTA's established performance goals for service at South Station.
- Increases operational efficiency: New layover facilities and track improvements would increase rail service capacity and efficiency by eliminating the need to store non-revenue trains⁴ at the South Station platforms and by expanding track options for arriving and departing trains.
- Supports increased ridership: The project would improve the rail system's ability to absorb future demand along the MBTA's south side commuter rail lines, the NEC, as well as any potential service that could result from the ongoing environmental analysis of the Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative and the consideration of how it is prioritized in the current update of the Massachusetts State Rail Plan. In the 2025 opening year, the project would support the projected increase in ridership of approximately 16,000 additional daily combined commuter rail and Amtrak intercity rail boardings and alightings at South Station over the No Build Alternative. The project would continue to support ridership growth in 2035, by which time these boardings and alightings would increase to approximately 20,000.⁵
- Addresses midday layover deficiencies: The project contemplates providing additional midday layover space for up to 38 eight-car trainsets to support the growth of the MBTA's south side commuter rail service.

Passenger Experience

- Provides new facilities: The project would provide four new pedestrian platforms and an expanded headhouse; adding approximately 385,000 sf of new circulation space, waiting areas, and amenities for passengers and other station visitors.
- Implements ADA upgrades: Platform upgrades would be implemented to stay current with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and life safety regulations, including emergency egress considerations.

⁴ Non-revenue is a railroad industry term used to describe the movement of equipment and/or crews between locations when trains are not in revenue service (such as to and from layover).

⁵ See DEIR Chapter 4, Section 4.2.7, for ridership projection details.

Pedestrian Connections

- Extends Harborwalk: Constructing 0.5 miles of the Harborwalk adjacent to Fort Point Channel would close one of the last remaining gaps in an otherwise continuous waterfront walkway. In addition to a dedicated pedestrian path, seating and landscaping would also be provided.
- Improves pedestrian connections: Pedestrian connections and wayfinding would be improved around and through the South Station site to the neighboring communities of the Leather District, Chinatown, the Downtown/Financial District, and the South Boston Waterfront/Innovation District.

Bicycle Accommodations

- Provides new cycle track: Constructing 0.5 miles of cycle track on Dorchester Avenue would provide new connections between Summer Street and the proposed South Bay Harbor Trail in South Boston.
- Provides additional bicycle storage: The project would provide new covered, secure bicycle storage facilities adjacent to the expanded headhouse on Dorchester Avenue.

Vehicular Circulation

- Reopens Dorchester Avenue for public use: The project would reopen approximately 0.5 miles of Dorchester Avenue for public use.
- Improves overall roadway and intersection operations: Mitigation to existing intersections surrounding South Station would improve overall traffic operations and efficiency for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- Provides new curbside facilities: The project would relieve congestion and improve safety on Atlantic Avenue by providing a new area for curbside activity on Dorchester Avenue to accommodate taxicabs, drop-off and pick-up, MBTA buses, and private shuttles.

Multimodal Connections

- Improves connectivity: The project would improve station accessibility and mobility for passengers using commuter and regional rail, subway, city and regional buses, pedestrians, bicyclists, taxis, and private vehicles.
- Provides opportunity for improved bus connections: Reopening Dorchester Avenue presents an opportunity for bus connections to Downtown Boston and the South Boston Waterfront/Innovation District.

1.2.2. Environment

- Incorporates sustainability: The project incorporates sustainable design measures, including climate change adaptation strategy. MassDOT would consider implementation of Leadership in Energy and Environmental and Design (LEED) standards and use of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST) as guidance for final design.
- Meets air quality standards: The project would not lead to any exceedances of air quality standards, nor would it have any adverse air quality impacts.

- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions: As a result of compliance with the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code, project-related stationary source GHG emissions at South Station would be reduced by approximately 8%. Reduced congestion and idling time on the tracks from locomotives near South Station would reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from that source by approximately 5%, and would save approximately 46,000 tons of CO₂ per year regionally.
- Improves stormwater management: The project would include stormwater management measures designed to reduce volume and peak runoff rates and improve water quality, in many instances resulting in an improvement over pre-development conditions.
- Increases public open space: The project would result in an increase in public open space of approximately 4.7 acres,⁶ including the conversion of portions of the restricted Dorchester Avenue to publicly accessible sidewalks, the Harborwalk and cycle track.

1.2.3. Public Amenities

- Restores public waterfront access via the Harborwalk: Public access to the waterfront would be restored through the conversion of approximately five acres of filled tidelands, currently occupied by the USPS, to a combination of rail transportation improvements, walkways, roadway, and cycle track.
- Improves the public realm: New and expanded urban landscaping and appropriate lighting and signage on Dorchester Avenue and along the Harborwalk would provide a safe, well-lit environment on a 24-hour basis.

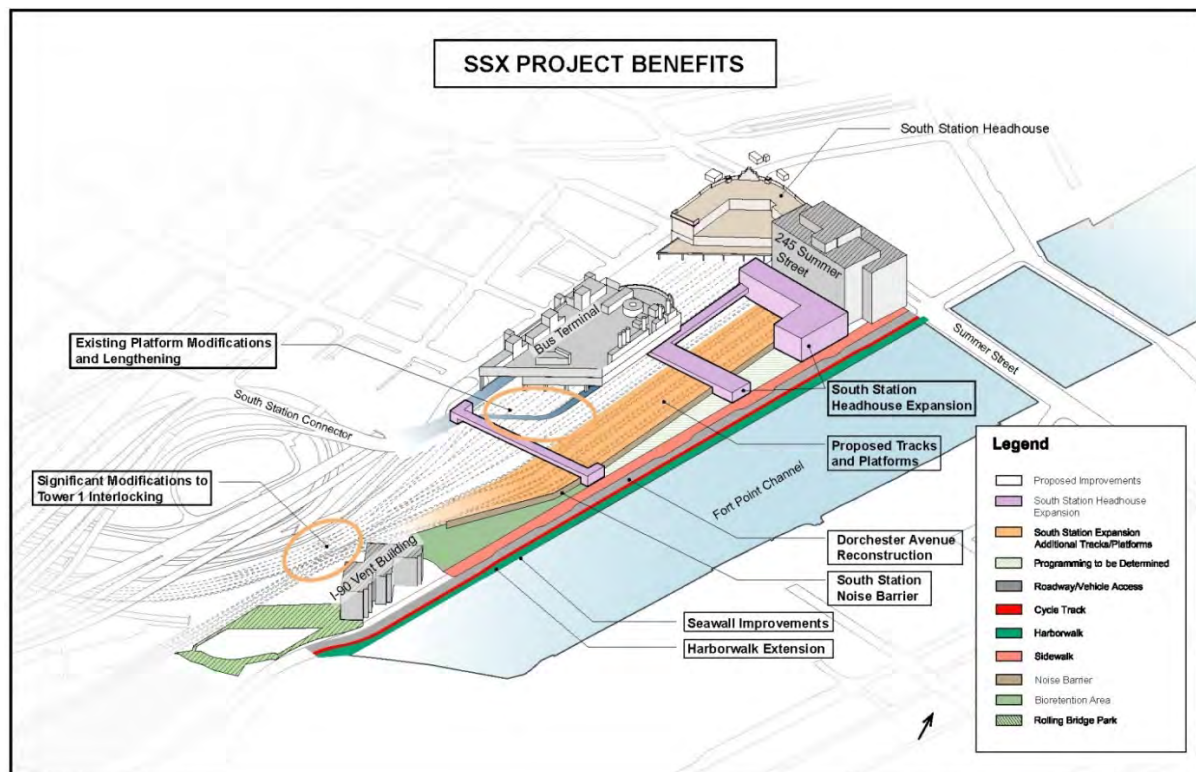


Figure 1-1 — SSX Project Benefits

⁶ New open space includes sidewalks, the cycle track, and the Harborwalk within the reopened Dorchester Avenue, and areas adjacent to the expanded headhouse.

1.3. The Project

The preferred alternative, referred to as “the project,” includes the 49-acre site located in and around the existing South Station Transportation Center, which consists of the South Station Rail/Transit Terminal, South Station Bus Terminal and existing United States Postal Service (USPS) property, Dorchester Avenue, and adjacent roadways. Additionally, the project contemplates two proposed layover facility sites, the expansion of the existing MBTA layover facility at Readville – Yard 2 in Hyde Park and the creation of a new layover facility at Widett Circle in South Boston. Beacon Park Yard in Allston, previously identified as a third layover facility alternative in the DEIR, is now subject to environmental review as part of the I-90 Allston Interchange project. The decision to separate the Beacon Park Yard layover site from the South Station DEIR and include it in the Allston project was done both to provide a more focused discussion of impacts in the affected community and in acknowledgment of the fact that the Allston project, including the construction of the Beacon Park Yard layover facility, is expected to advance to construction prior to South Station. Figures 1-2, 1-3, 1-7, and 1-8 depict existing conditions at the project sites. The following sections describe the activities that would take place at the project sites.

1.3.1. Upgrade Existing Rail Infrastructure

The project would include improvements to the existing rail infrastructure at South Station Terminal and the approach interlockings. The aging rail infrastructure at the Terminal, including tracks, signals, and communication, have contributed to service delays and upgrading these systems will have a direct improvement to service reliability and capacity. Modifications to Tower 1 Interlocking, as well as one approach interlocking, would be required in order to reduce conflicting movements through the terminal area and improve efficiencies (refer to Figure 3-15). An interlocking is a segment of railroad infrastructure comprised of track, turnouts, and signals linked (interlocked) in a way that allows trains to move from one track to another, or across tracks safely, preventing conflicting train movements. The interlockings enable train dispatchers to route incoming trains over a variety of tracks to/from available station tracks. An approach interlocking is an interlocking leading up to a terminal interlocking and station. Typically, approach interlockings are only a short distance from the terminal and allow trains to switch tracks leading into the terminal to prepare to berth at specific platform tracks. Making these movements at the approach interlocking instead of at the terminal also allows for more efficient operations as the crossing movements can be made at higher speeds while avoiding conflicting movements.

1.3.2. Expand South Station Terminal

The project would result in the expansion of South Station Terminal, adding seven new tracks and four platforms for a total of 20 tracks and 11 platforms. Figures 1-4 and 1-5 depict proposed conditions at the South Station site. Reconfiguration of several existing tracks and platforms would be required and platform lengths would be designed to meet Amtrak’s and the MBTA’s future berthing requirements.⁷ The proposed platform upgrades would improve existing access and emergency egress measures. The new tracks, platforms, and station expansion would be aligned so that it would not preclude any future air rights development.

The expansion of the South Station Terminal would include the addition of new structures totaling approximately 385,000 sf, including an expanded headhouse, with a major station entrance along Dorchester Avenue, to provide larger passenger circulation and waiting areas as well as amenities such as

⁷ The future berthing requirement is the length of track adjacent to the platform required to allow passengers to enter or exit the train cars. This length is based on potential future trainset length.

retail and food outlets. The station expansion would also include a mid-platform elevated concourse. The concourse would span above the new and existing platforms, located at the midpoint of the platforms' north-south axis. The concourse would provide a direct connection to the existing bus terminal, a direct connection to the existing headhouse, and would also provide a mid-block pedestrian connection between Atlantic Avenue and the newly reopened Dorchester Avenue. The vertical connection between the elevated concourse and the historic headhouse would be coordinated with the vertical elements planned as part of the South Station Air Rights (SSAR) Project.

The proposed station would have two access points on Dorchester Avenue. The more prominent one would be proximate to the Dorchester Avenue and Summer Street intersection and would provide direct access to the trackhead and the existing headhouse. The other would provide direct access to the mid-platform elevated concourse. Both access points would be designed to accommodate integration with future development on the remaining land along Dorchester Avenue.

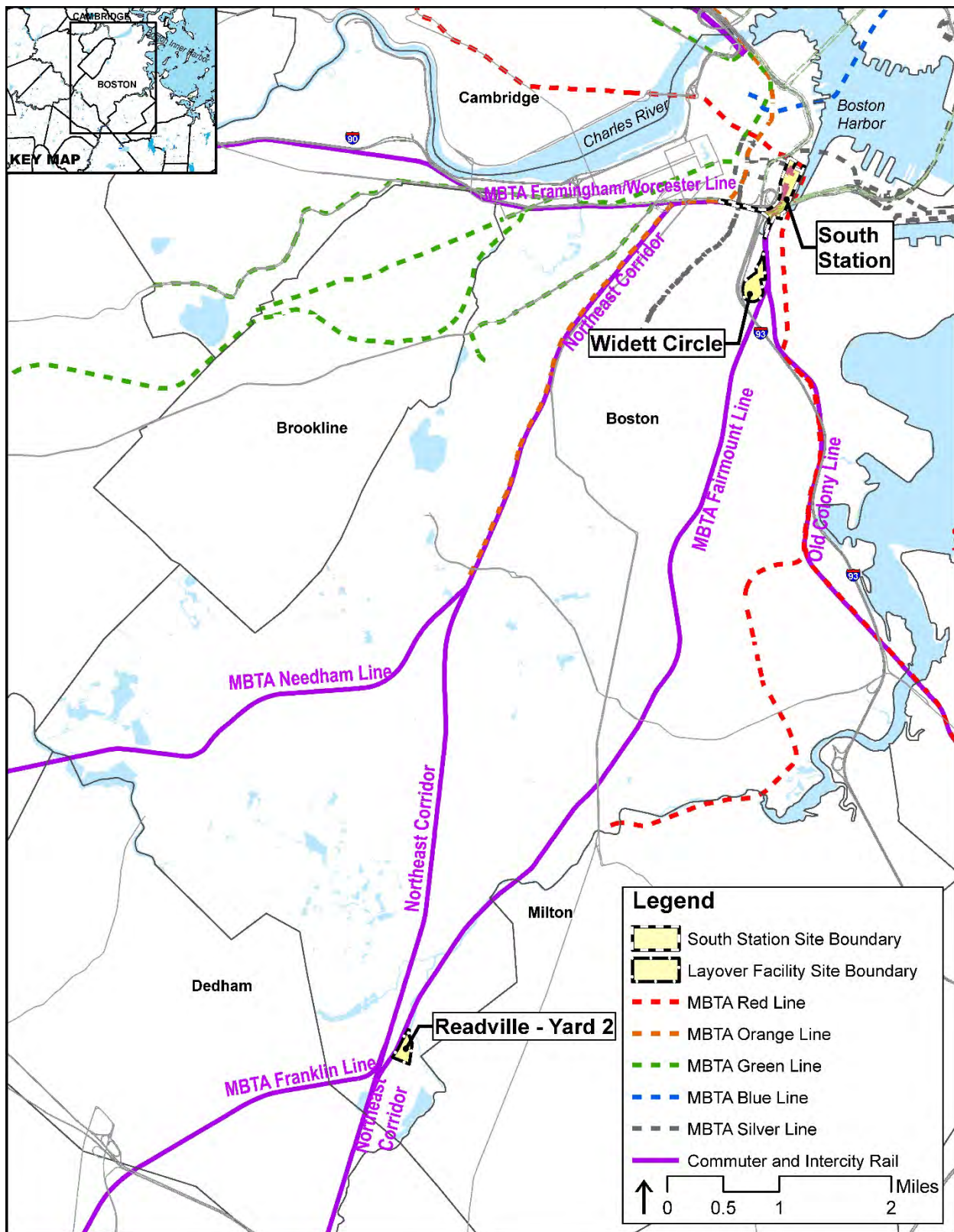


Figure 1-2 — Project Location Plan

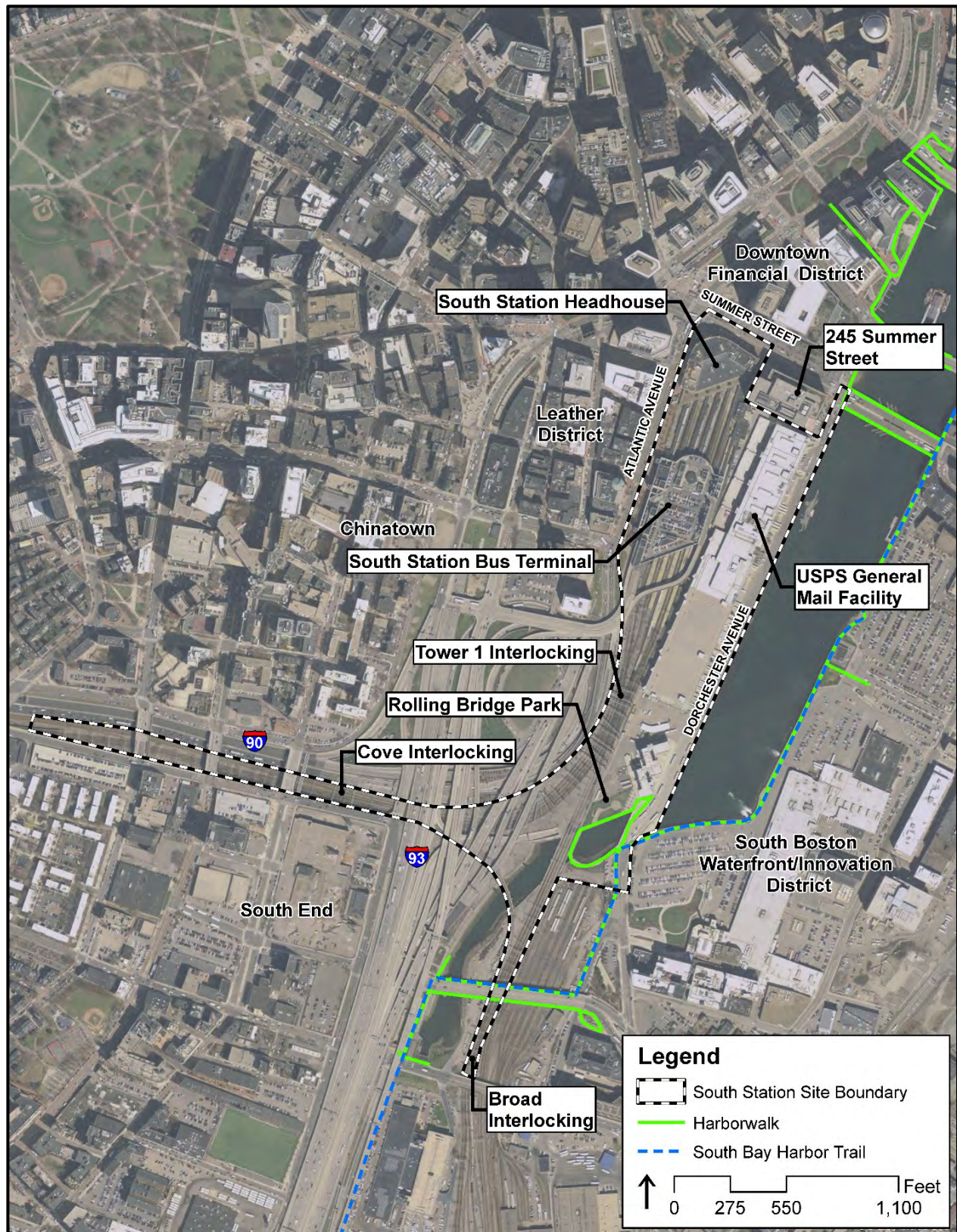


Figure 1-3 — South Station Site – Existing Conditions

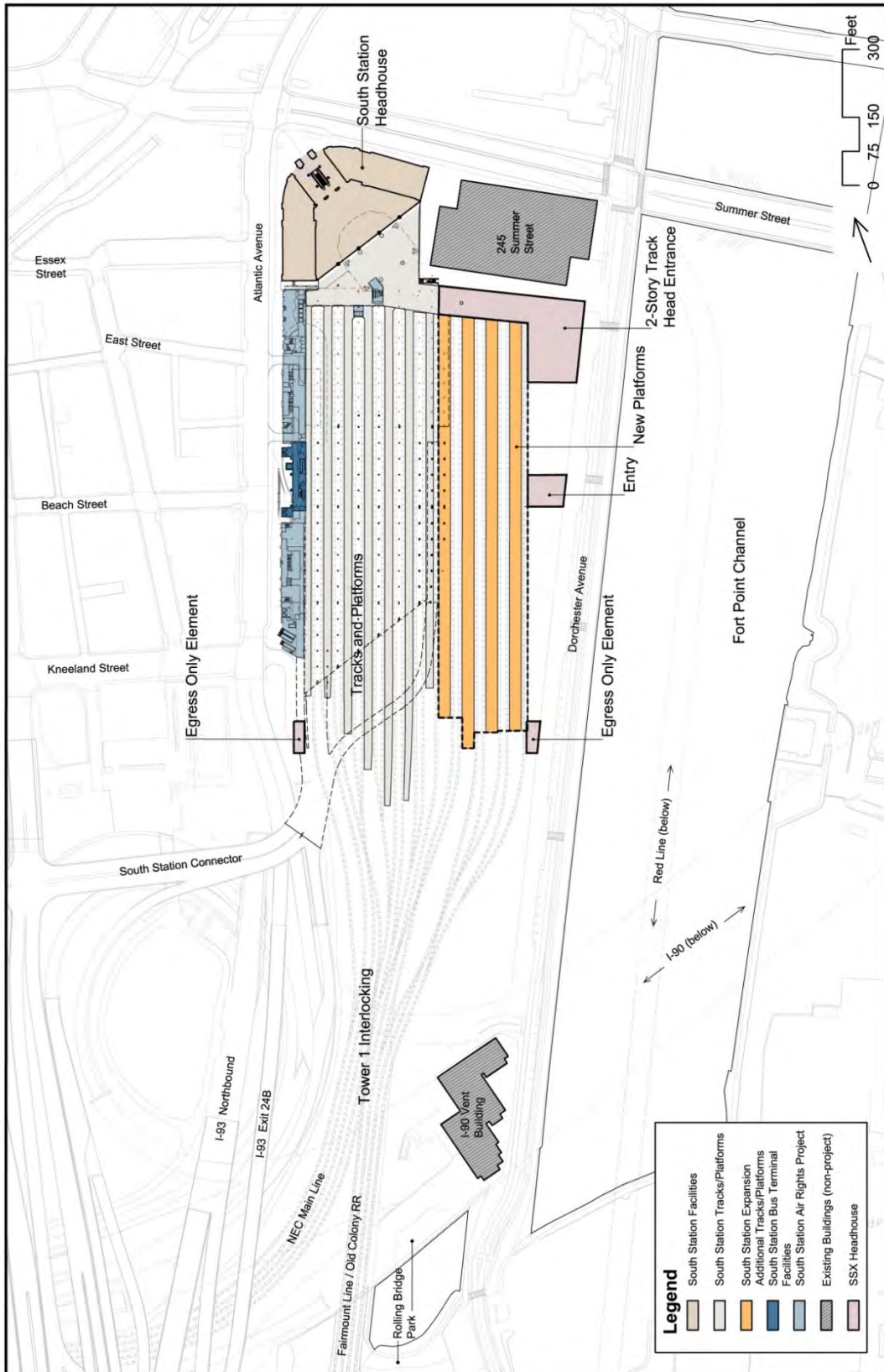


Figure 1-4 — South Station Site – Proposed Platform Level

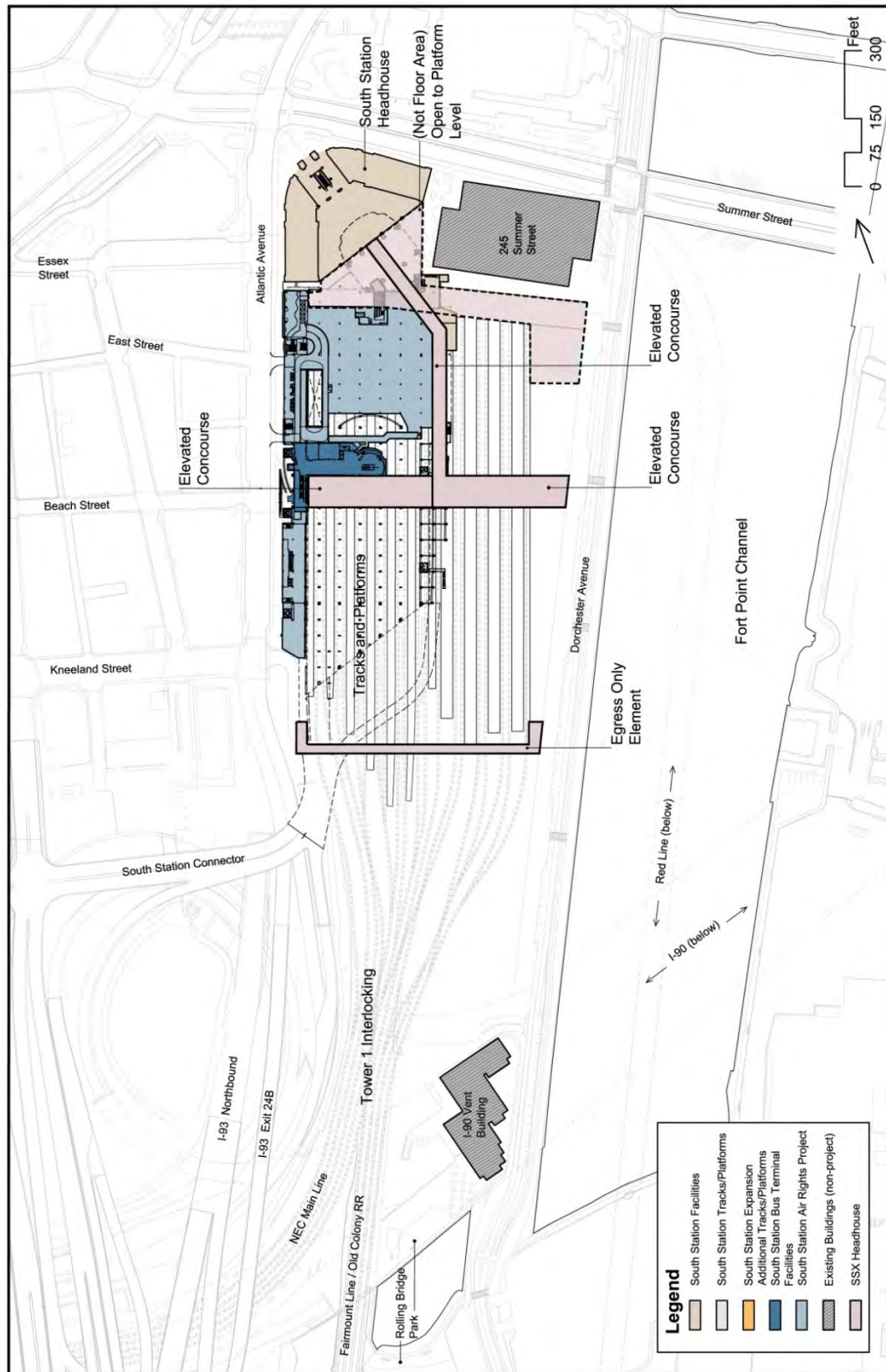


Figure 1-5 — South Station Site – Proposed Elevated Concourse Level

1.3.3. Reopen Dorchester Avenue and Extend the Harborwalk

Currently, access along the majority of Dorchester Avenue in the immediate vicinity of South Station is restricted for use by the USPS in support of its operations, with very limited public access allowed for USPS customers and MBTA commuters. The project would restore approximately 0.5 miles of Dorchester Avenue for public use and provide for multiple access points into the expanded station from Dorchester Avenue. These access points would allow passengers multiple station arrival and departure options and would provide connectivity through the station between Atlantic Avenue and Dorchester Avenue. Restoration of Dorchester Avenue includes landscaping and improved pedestrian and cycling connections and facilities, including adjacent sidewalks and crosswalks. Figure 1-6 presents a typical cross section for Dorchester Avenue.

Restoration of Dorchester Avenue would include construction of a long-awaited 0.5-mile section of the Harborwalk network. The Harborwalk is a 40-mile public walkway extending along the Boston Harbor waterfront. As depicted in Figure 1-3, in the vicinity of the project, the Harborwalk extends to the north and south along Fort Point Channel in the vicinity of the project. There is currently no Harborwalk along Dorchester Avenue between Summer Street and Rolling Bridge Park. The project's Harborwalk extension would close one of the last remaining gaps in an otherwise continuous waterfront walkway. It would include landscaping and street furniture, and would add more than one acre of open space to the area.

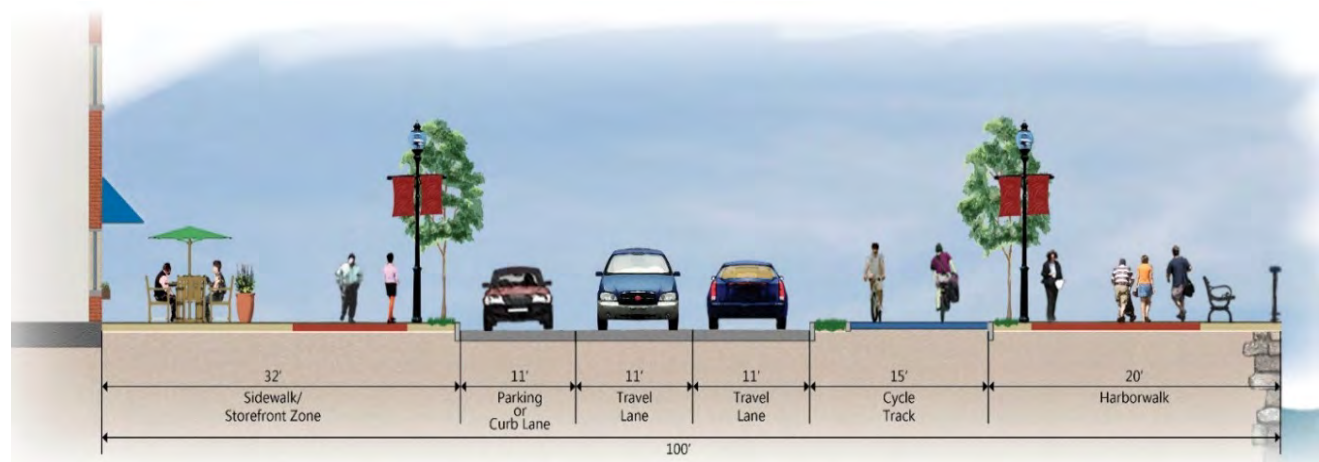


Figure 1-6 — Dorchester Avenue – Typical Cross-Section

1.3.4. Acquire and Demolish the USPS Facility

The project would involve acquisition and demolition of the USPS General Mail Facility (GMF) located on Dorchester Avenue adjacent to South Station, which would provide an approximately 14-acre site on which to expand South Station. Although demolition of the USPS facility after it is vacated is part of the project for the purposes of environmental review, the relocation of USPS operations is not part of the project. The USPS would determine the future location(s) to which its operations would be relocated, and the relocation would be subject to its own environmental review as required by state and federal regulations. Should the acquisition of the USPS advance before funding is identified for the entire project, MassDOT may consider moving forward with the demolition of the USPS and reopening of Dorchester Avenue (along with associated Harborwalk improvements) before other project elements in order to provide improved public access along the Fort Point Channel.

1.3.5. Construct Rail Layover Facilities

The project is designed to provide additional midday layover capacity to meet south side midday layover facility program needs and railroad operation requirements. Due to a lack of midday layover space, the MBTA is currently forced to store trains at the station platforms while waiting for space to become available for them to layover at any of the existing sites. This storage problem would be exacerbated by the projected increase in MBTA and Amtrak service. As mentioned earlier, MassDOT and the MBTA are currently developing a DEIR for the Allston Interchange project that includes the construction of a midday layover facility in Beacon Park Yard. That facility, which is particularly well situated for service arriving from the west of Boston, is expected to be constructed and in service in advance of the ultimate construction of the South Station Expansion project. This FEIR contemplates providing additional midday layover space by constructing a new facility at Widett Circle and expanding the existing MBTA Readville – Yard 2⁸ layover facility to meet current and future layover facility program needs and operational requirements.⁹

The Widett Circle layover facility site, totaling approximately 30.2 acres, is located in South Boston along the MBTA's Fairmount Line, approximately one track-mile from South Station, as shown in Figure 1-7. It is comprised of two parcels, primarily in private ownership, known as the Cold Storage and Widett Circle properties. The Cold Storage property, located at 100 Widett Circle, currently houses a temperature controlled food storage and distribution facility, owned by Art Mortgage Borrower Propco 2006-2 LP, and used by Americold/Crocker & Winsor Seafoods. Widett Circle, located primarily at 1 and 2 Foodmart Road, is owned by The New Boston Food Market Development Corporation and is made up of approximately 30 units leased to multiple businesses in the food processing, food storage, and food logistics industry. This project proposes construction of a new layover facility at this site for up to 30 eight-car trainsets. Support facilities would include a crew building, support shed, and power substation, totaling approximately 44,000 sf. FEIR Section 3.3 addresses project property land use and ownership in more detail.

The Readville – Yard 2 layover facility site, totaling approximately 17.5 acres, is located in the Readville section of Hyde Park, at the intersection of the NEC and the MBTA's Fairmount Line, approximately 8.8 track-miles from South Station, as shown in Figure 1-8. Owned by the MBTA, Readville – Yard 2 is a currently maintenance repair facility and the largest midday layover yard used by the MBTA for its south side commuter service. The MBTA currently uses Readville – Yard 2 for midday layover storage of 10 trainsets of variable lengths. The project proposes to expand the existing layover facility by up to eight eight-car trainsets, for total layover site capacity of 18 trainsets. Support facilities would include expansion of the existing crew building and support shed, and construction of a power substation, totaling approximately 11,700 sf.

⁸ Beacon Park Yard in Allston, previously identified as a third layover facility alternative in the DEIR, is now subject to environmental review as part of the I-90 Allston Interchange project (EEA No. 15278). The I-90 Allston Interchange project is further refining the concept design and environmental evaluation of Beacon Park Yard, which is occurring concurrently with the SSX project.

⁹ A detailed layover facility site alternatives analysis is included in Appendix C of the SSX Environmental Notification Form (March, 2013).

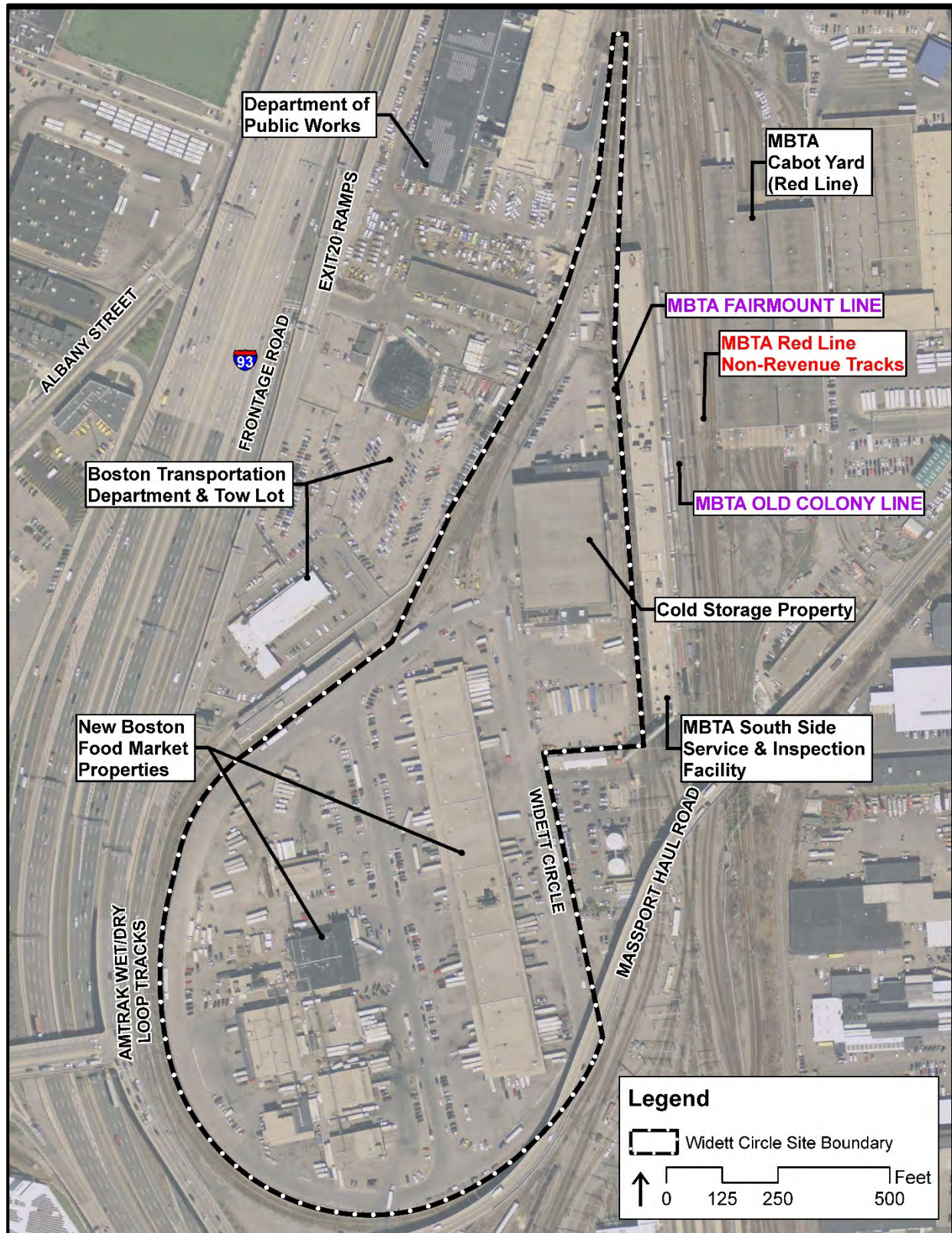


Figure 1-7 — Widett Circle Layover Facility Site – Existing Conditions

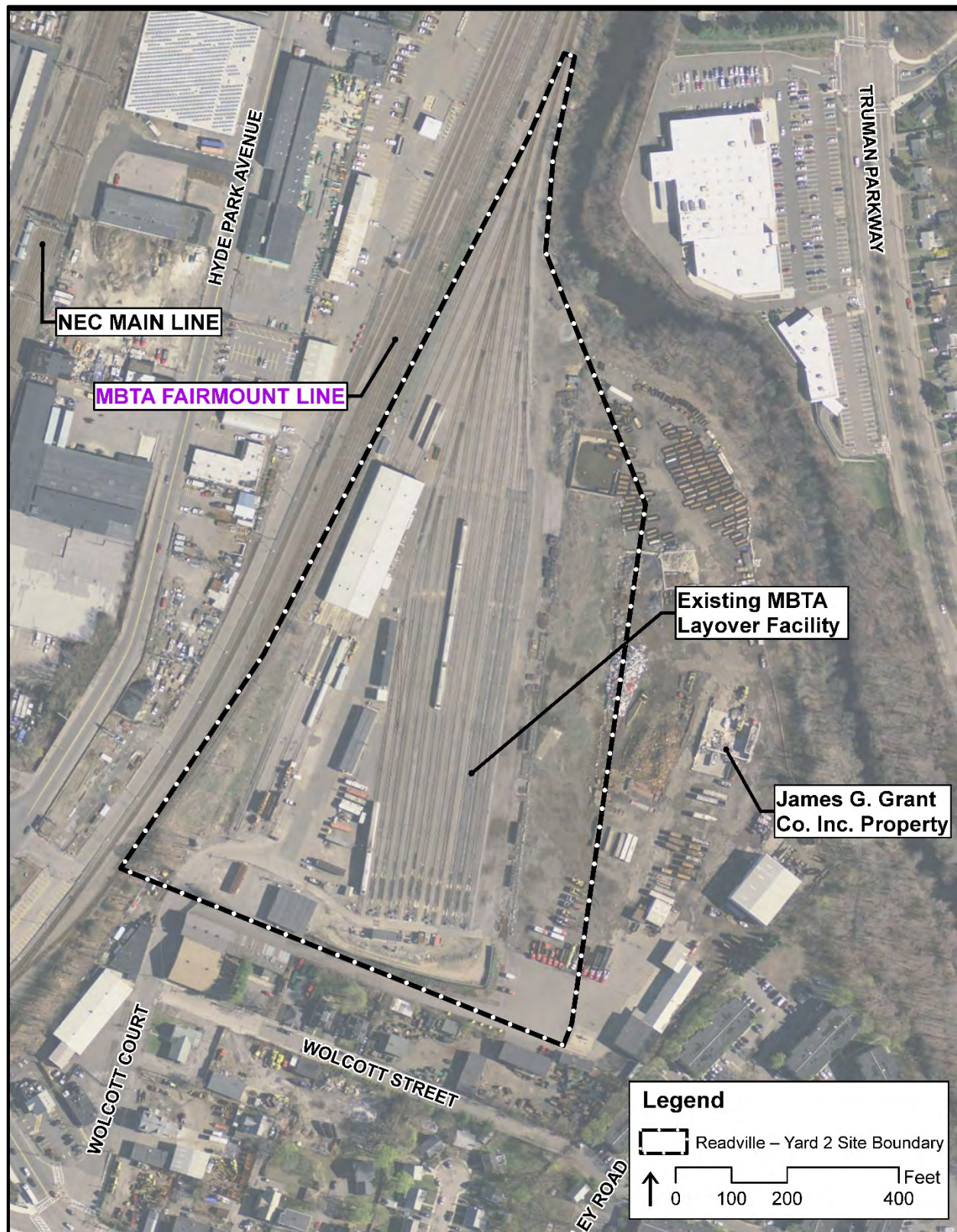


Figure 1-8 — Readville – Yard 2 Layover Facility Site – Existing Conditions

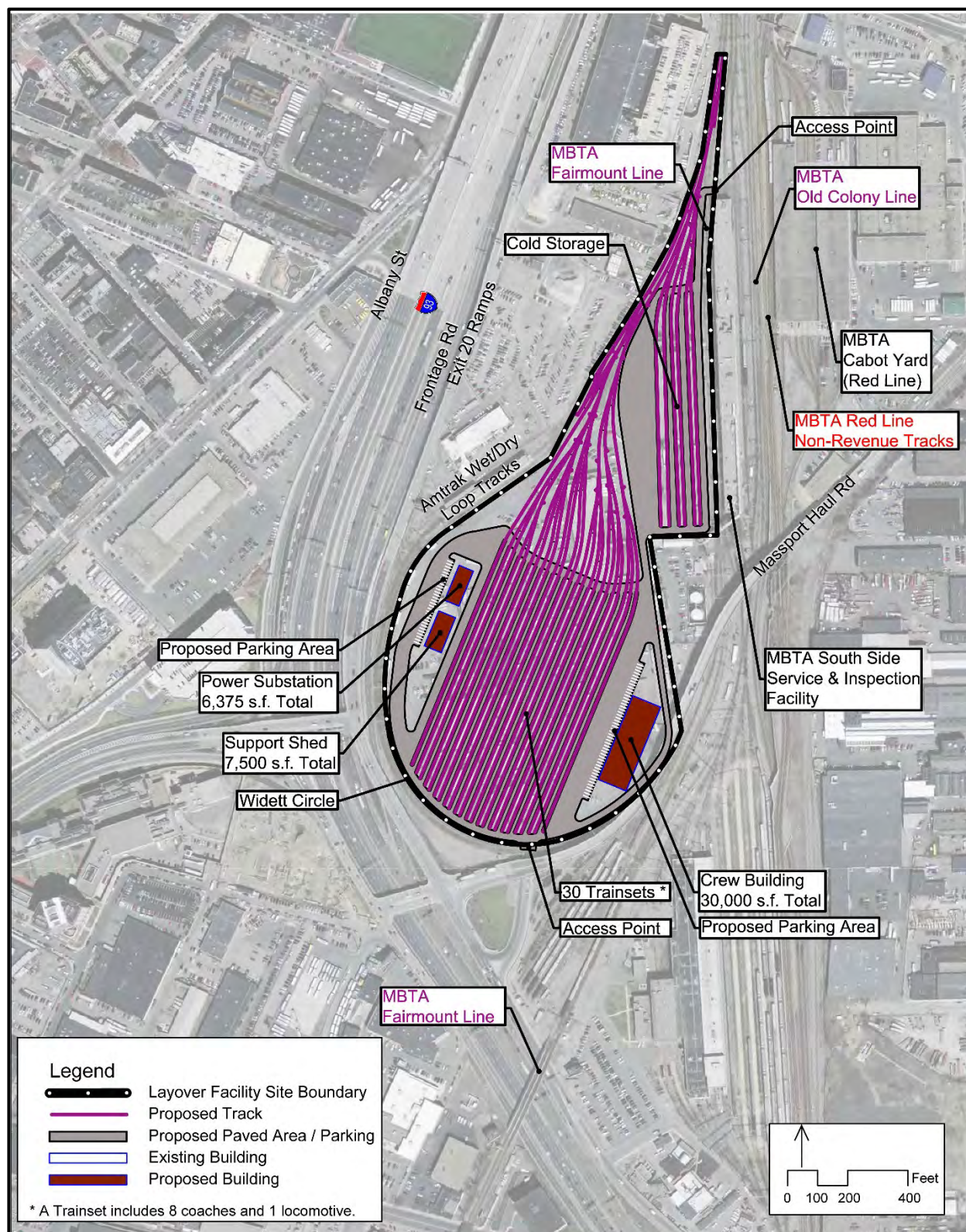


Figure 1-9 — Widett Circle - Concept Plan

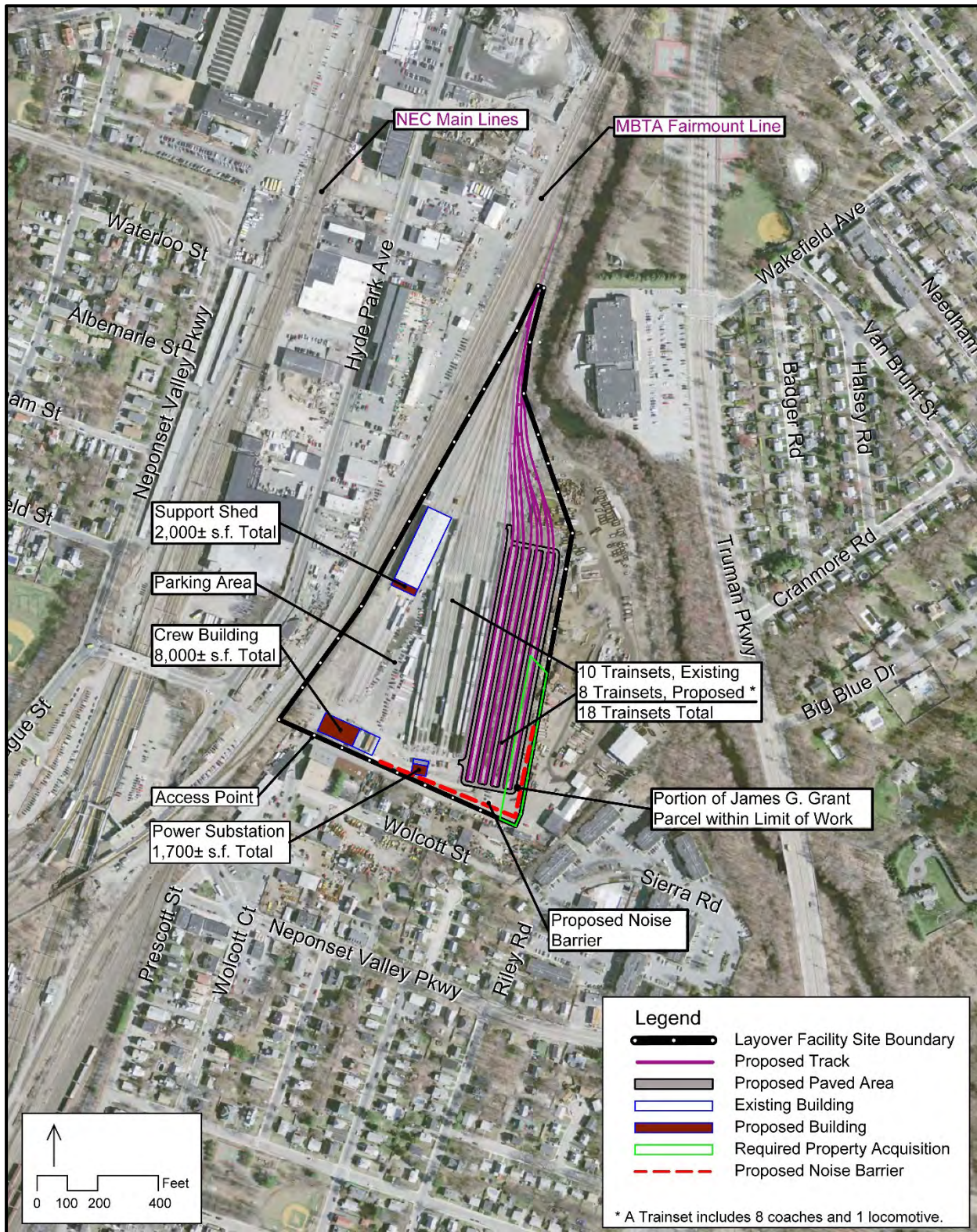


Figure 1-10 — Readville – Yard 2 - Concept Plan

1.4. Summary of Project Changes since the DEIR

This section highlights key changes to the project since the October 2014 release of the DEIR. The project website [<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/southstationexpansion>] provides links to the full DEIR document, which presents a comprehensive alternatives analyses, existing conditions evaluation, impact methodologies, and results of the environmental evaluation. Hyperlinks to each DEIR section are also provided in Appendix H, *DEIR Web Links*.

The project has been modified since the issuance of the Secretary's Certificate on the DEIR in the following manner:

- The DEIR identified four alternatives for the expansion of the South Station Terminal:
 - No Build Alternative
 - Alternative 1 – Transportation Improvements Only
 - Alternative 2 – Joint/Private Development Minimum Build
 - Alternative 3 – Joint/Private Development Maximum Build

After reviewing the DEIR alternatives for South Station, MassDOT determined that the “Transportation Improvements Only” (TIO) alternative (previously analyzed as DEIR Alternative 1) will advance as the preferred alternative in the FEIR and the EA.

- MassDOT selected Widett Circle in South Boston and Readville – Yard 2 in Hyde Park for further consideration in the FEIR as midday layover facilities. Beacon Park Yard in Allston, previously identified as a third layover facility alternative in the DEIR, is now subject to environmental review as part of the I-90 Allston Interchange project (EEA No. 15278).¹⁰ The I-90 Allston Interchange project is further refining the concept design and environmental evaluation of Beacon Park Yard.
- In consultation with the City of Boston, MassDOT has selected a preferred alternative that does not include joint development, thereby eliminating the environmental impacts of the project associated with those development scenarios. The design of the expanded headhouse and terminal will not preclude, and to the extent practicable, will support private transit-oriented development in the future. MassDOT continues to be committed to working with the City of Boston, interested stakeholders, and the general public to ultimately realize a vision of an expanded South Station integrated with transit-oriented development that contributes to a vibrant downtown Boston with private development and non-transportation uses. However, with the City of Boston currently engaged in the Imagine Boston planning process, it would be premature to provide information on the development component of SSX at this time.
- Since the DEIR, the size of the South Station Terminal expansion has been reduced from approximately 400,000 square feet (sf) to approximately 385,000 sf. The locations of the headhouse, pedestrian access points, and elevated concourses have been further refined. The updated design modifications are further described in Section 2.1.1, Update on South Station Headhouse Design.

¹⁰ For the purpose of the 2035 operations analysis, future MBTA proposed midday layover facilities were assumed at Widett Circle and Beacon Park Yard in addition to expanding the existing facilities at the MBTA's South Side Servicing and Inspection (S&I) and Readville - Yard 2 facilities, as further described in Appendix E, Railroad Operations Analysis Technical Report.

- Since the DEIR, a proposal to raise a portion of the Fort Point Channel seawall has been added to the project, largely in response to updated projections of sea level rise of nearly two feet by the year 2050. In order to mitigate potential flooding on the future South Station site, a lower portion of the seawall and Dorchester Avenue would be raised to match the elevation of the existing seawall to the north and south. Raising the seawall and adjacent roadway in this manner would help protect the South Station site, in the area along Dorchester Avenue where the USPS facility is currently located, from future coastal storm flooding.
- Additionally, since the DEIR, a number of analyses of environmental impacts have been updated, including: floodplains; water quality and stormwater; water use and wastewater; climate change; and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These analyses are described in detail in Chapter 3, Environmental Analyses.

1.5. Status Updates on Project-Related Activities

The Secretary's Certificate requested that the FEIR include status updates for the following project-related activities:

- Public Outreach Activities (see Section 1.5.1);
- Section 106 Review Process (see Section 1.5.2);
- South Station Air Rights (SSAR) Project (see Section 1.5.3);
- I-90 Allston Interchange Project/Beacon Park Yard (see Section 1.5.4); and
- North/South Rail Link Project (see Section 1.5.5).

1.5.1. Update on Public Outreach Activities

Appendix 1 of the DEIR summarized MassDOT's public involvement and agency coordination efforts for the environmental review and design phases of the project. The project's Public Involvement Plan (PIP), which lays out specific strategies for implementing MassDOT's outreach goals, is provided on the project website at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/southstationexpansion/home.aspx>. The PIP complies with MassDOT's policies regarding Environmental Justice, Title VI, and accessibility. The following section provides an update to public outreach efforts since the release of the DEIR, as required by the Secretary's Certificate.

MassDOT continues to implement its public outreach program outlined in the PIP. Activities conducted since the DEIR include:

- Developed and distributed a project fact sheet outlining the elements of the FEIR and a fact sheet on layover facility alternatives;
- Briefed the City of Boston's Office of Neighborhood Services, the Boston Redevelopment Authority and the Mayor's Office on the development of the FEIR and its recommendations;
- Held a series of briefings and/or corresponded with local agencies and other stakeholders in spring 2016 to provide project information to project area neighborhoods;
- Developed a layover facility outreach activities plan in coordination with the release of the FEIR, and invited community groups and area residents to attend a briefing in the Widett and Readville neighborhoods to learn about the FEIR and encourage review and comments on the document;

- Disseminated email notices about all project publications, meetings, blogs and other social marketing and events;
- Tracked issues from meetings, email comments and other input provided to the team; and
- Publicized project meetings and events through media advisories and other opportunities.

MassDOT continues to coordinate its project planning with the City of Boston; the MBTA and its commuter rail operator; Massport; the FRA; Amtrak; and other state and federal agencies.

1.5.2. Update on the Section 106 Review Process

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. MassDOT anticipates the FRA will submit the Section 106 report to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) in summer 2016. It indicates that at South Station, the project, implemented with noise mitigation and designed consistent with the historic preservation design principles, would have no adverse effect on historic properties. No historic properties would be affected in the vicinity of the layover facilities. The EA is scheduled for circulation in 2017.

1.5.3. Update on the South Station Air Rights Project

The Secretary's Certificate requested additional analysis of how proposed platform lengths, column placement, passenger waiting areas, and passenger access points are reliant on action to be undertaken by either SSAR or MassDOT. The Secretary also requested a discussion of contingencies in MassDOT's Preferred Alternative design if SSAR does not proceed prior to the SSX project.

Prior to the expansion of South Station, MassDOT anticipates that the site would include the planned SSAR project, consisting of approximately 1.8 million square feet of mixed-use development to be located directly above the railroad tracks at the existing South Station headhouse. The SSAR project would also include expansion of the existing bus terminal towards the existing headhouse. The SSAR project was approved by the Secretary of EEA in 2006.¹¹ However, the developer has not yet begun construction. Nonetheless, for environmental review of the SSX project, the SSAR project is assumed to be built for the future year analysis, and is part of the SSX project's No Build Alternative.

The current project design is not dependent on the prior construction of the SSAR project, nor does it inhibit the ability to build the SSAR project subsequent to SSX project completion, should that be the order in which construction occurs. If the project were to be built without needing to accommodate the SSAR project as it is currently designed, the circulation at the ground level and trackhead could be improved, and a direct connection to the existing headhouse could be made without any obstructions. MassDOT understands that a SSAR Notice of Project Change is forthcoming. Coordination between MassDOT and the SSAR project proponent will continue as design of each project advances.

1.5.4. I-90 Allston Interchange Project/Beacon Park Yard

The purpose of the I-90 Allston Interchange project is to reconstruct the functionally obsolete viaduct between the Allston-Brighton tolls and Commonwealth Avenue. In addition, MassDOT plans to remove the I-90 tollbooths and replace them with an overhead All Electronic Tolling System, which would allow

¹¹ The South Station Air Rights (SSAR) project was approved by the Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) in 2006 (EEA No. 3205/9131).

realignment of the highway and simplification of the Allston-Brighton interchange. As previously noted, the I-90 Allston Interchange project team is further refining the concept design and performing the environmental evaluation of Beacon Park Yard as a future layover yard and maintenance facility.

MassDOT submitted an ENF for the project in October 2014 (EEA No. 15278), and received a Certificate from the Secretary of EEA in December 2014. Since that time, MassDOT has refined the design concepts identified in the ENF in association with the project stakeholders, and is evaluating the alternatives put forth by the project's task force members. MassDOT expects to submit a DEIR in spring 2017.

1.5.5. North/South Rail Link Project

MassDOT's *draft 2017 – 2021 Capital Investment Plan* (CIP) has \$2.0 million programmed for a North/South Rail Link corridor and area planning study. MassDOT continues to commit to expanding South Station in such a way that the goals of the project can be met without eliminating the potential for future underground infrastructure, such as tunnel portals and station locations.

1.6. Anticipated Permits and Approvals

Table 1-1 lists federal, state, and local agency permits and approvals that are anticipated for the project.

Table 1-1 — Anticipated Permits, Approvals and Notifications

| Agency | Permit, Approval or Notification | South Station | Layover Facilities |
|--|---|---------------|--------------------|
| Federal | | | |
| Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding of No Significant Impact Section 4(f) Determination Section 106 Finding Federal funding approval | yes | yes |
| Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration | yes | no |
| Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Register Review Section 106 Review | yes | yes |
| Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Consistency Certification | yes | Widett Circle only |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 404 Water Quality Certification | no | if required |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Discharges from Construction Sites | yes | yes |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPDES Industrial Stormwater Permit for Stormwater Discharges | no | if required |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notification of Building Demolition | yes | yes |
| State | | | |
| Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 91 Waterways License | yes | no |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stormwater Management Standards Compliance Review | yes | yes |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewer Extension/Connection Compliance Certification | yes | yes |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massachusetts Contingency Plan Review/Preliminary Determination | yes | yes |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notification Prior to Construction or Demolition | yes | yes |

| Agency | Permit, Approval or Notification | South Station | Layover Facilities |
|--|--|---------------|--------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asbestos Notification/Mass Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Occupational Safety (DOS) Section 401 Water Quality Certificate | yes | yes |
| | | no | if required |
| Massachusetts Department of Public Safety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Permit | yes | yes |
| Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Review/ FEIR Certificate Public Benefit Determination | yes | yes |
| Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary Construction Site Dewatering Discharge Permit 8(m) Permit | if required | if required |
| | | if required | if required |
| Local | | | |
| Boston Conservation Commission | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order of Conditions (Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act) | yes | yes |
| Boston Department of Parks and Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of construction within 100 feet of a park | yes | no |
| Boston Fire Department | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demolition and construction-related permits | yes | no |
| Boston Public Improvement Commission (PIC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approvals | yes | yes |
| Boston Transportation Department (BTD) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signal Change Approval Construction Management Plan | yes | yes |
| | | yes | yes |
| Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demolition Termination Verification Approval Building Site Plan Review and Approval Drainage Discharge Permit | yes | yes |
| | | yes | yes |