



Cities of **Somerville**
and **Cambridge**

McGrath Boulevard Construction

Thank you for joining us.

This meeting will begin shortly.





Cities of **Somerville**
and **Cambridge**

McGrath Boulevard Construction

Public Information Meeting

Zoom | March 25, 2025 | 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

Project File No. 607981



Zoom Webinar Controls for Meeting



- Ask a question and share comments



- Drop down menu to check microphone and speakers



- Raise your hand - *9 for users dialing in and Alt + Y to raise your hand



- If you are unable to access the internet or are having technical problems, please call into the meeting at (309)205-3325, Webinar ID: 826 7289 4984



Live Transcript

- Closed captioning automatically generated by Zoom



View

- Use the View button in the upper right-hand corner to adjust the meeting view settings to your preference

If you have trouble with the meeting technology during the presentation, please call:

[1.888.799.9666]



Audio Settings ^



Raise Hand



Q&A



Live Transcript

Leave

Public Meeting Notes and Procedures

Notification of Recording

This virtual public meeting will be recorded. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation may choose to retain and distribute the video, still images, audio, and/or transcript. All parts of this hearing are considered public record.

- By continuing attendance with this virtual public meeting, you consent to participate in a recorded event.
- If you are not comfortable being recorded, please turn off your camera, and keep your microphone muted, or excuse yourself from the hearing.
- **Other Important Notes**
- Your microphone and webcam are automatically disabled upon entering this hearing.
- The meeting will be open to questions and answers at the end of the formal presentation.
- Please take time to respond to our survey! Your feedback is important.

**Unauthorized
use or
distribution of
this material is
prohibited
without consent
of the MassDOT
Communications
Department**

Notice of MassDOT's policy on diversity and civil rights

- All MassDOT activities, including public meetings, are free of discrimination.
- MassDOT complies with all federal and state civil rights requirements preventing discrimination based on sex, race, color, ancestry, national origin (limited English proficiency), religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or veteran's status.
- We welcome the diversity from across our entire service area. If you have any questions or concerns, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/nondiscrimination-in-transportation-program> to reach the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights.

All questions and comments are welcome and appreciated, however we do request that you refrain from any disrespectful comments.

Advertisements/Public Outreach

MassDOT Website

- Flyer posted on March 6, 2025
- Translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Arabic, and Chinese

Local Newspapers

- Charlestown Patriot Bridge
- Somerville Medford Transcript Journal
- Somerville Times
- Cambridge Chronical
- Cambridge Day
- El Planeta

Somerville Council on Aging & Disabilities Commission

Neighborhood organizations and community groups

Legislative briefing



Public Information Meeting (Virtual) – Somerville – Cambridge – McGrath Boulevard

What is happening?

This is an informational meeting for the design team to share design updates regarding this important transportation project and to invite public input. The proposed project consists of the reconstruction of McGrath Highway (Route 28) between Broadway in Somerville and Rufo Rd & 3rd St in Cambridge. The current design proposes to remove the McCarthy Overpass and replace it with a tree-lined boulevard with at-grade signalized intersections. The project includes the provision, expansion, and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities.

How will this affect you?

The project focuses on improving community connectivity between different neighborhoods and accommodation for all roadway users. The project also includes safety improvements, increased green space, physical separation of bicycles and pedestrians from motor vehicles wherever feasible, and the removal of a physical and visual barrier (the overpass) within the community. This is an opportunity for the public to review feedback and project updates since the last public meeting in February 2024 and to provide comments as the project advances to 75% design.

When

Tuesday, March 25, 2025
6:30 – 8:00 PM

Attend

bit.ly/4bkjjsl



Visit mass.gov/mcgrath-boulevard-project for more information.



To ensure its meetings are accessible, MassDOT reasonably provides: translation, interpretation, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services. To request such services, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer at 857-368-8580 or MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us. For adequate time to process such request, please make them as early as possible, ideally 10-15 days prior to the event.

Project inquiries may also be emailed to MassDOTMcgrathblvd@dot.state.ma.us. Please submit any written statements regarding the proposed undertaking to: Carrie A. Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: MAJOR PROJECTS, PROJECT FILE NO. 607981

Presentation Participants

- **MassDOT**

- Christopher Cameron, Project Manager
- Brian Fallon, District 4
- Joe Doucette, District 6
- Michael Ruderman, State Right-of-Way

- **City of Somerville**

- Brad Rawson, Director of Mobility

- **City of Cambridge**

- Bill Deignan, Transportation Program Manager

- **Design Consultant Team**

- Gary McNaughton, Bowman
- Maureen Chlebek, Bowman
- William Van Duzer, Bowman
- John Tamburrini, GPI
- Sean McIntyre, GPI



Agenda

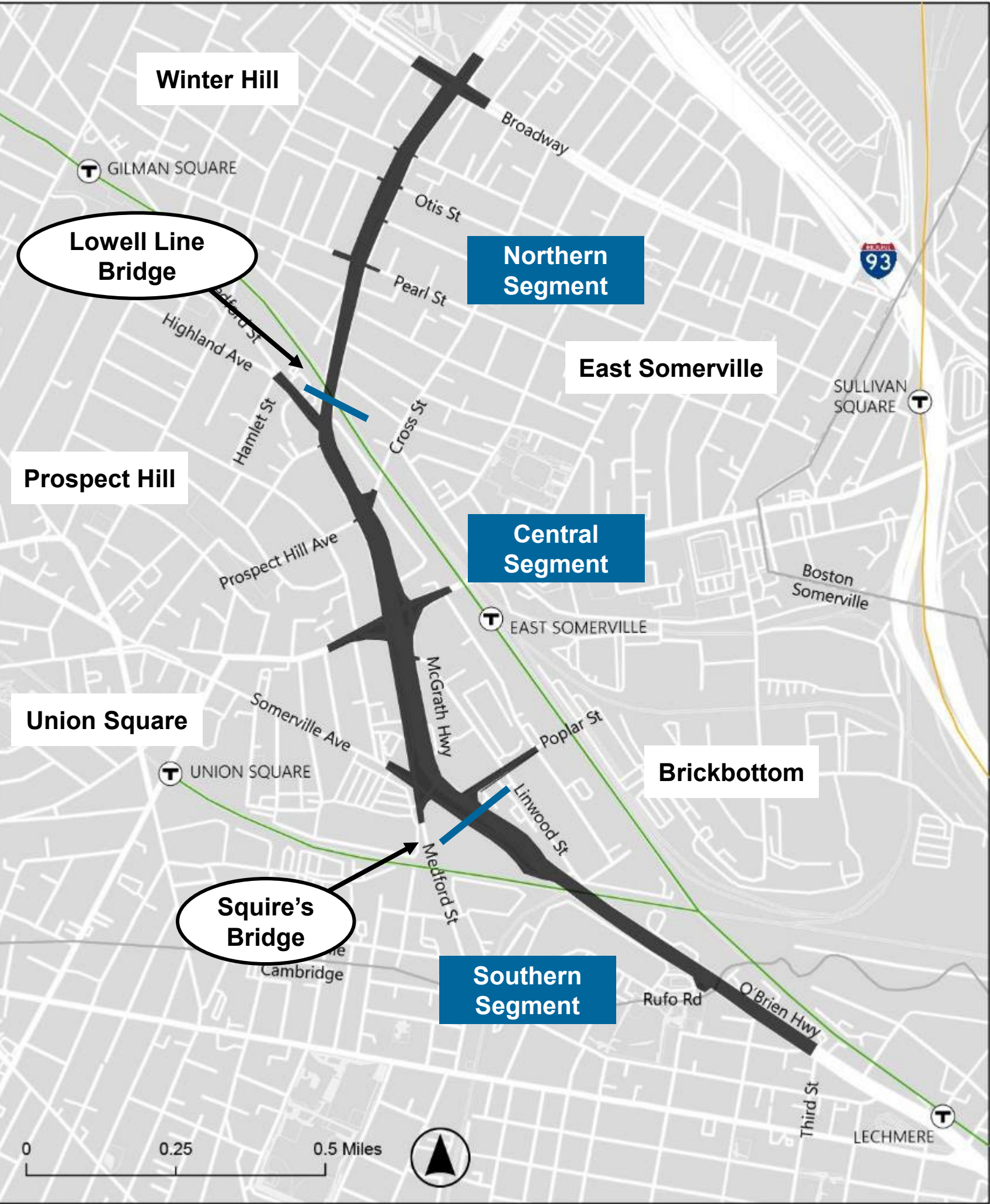
- 01 Introduction
- 02 Project Overview
- 03 Project Goals
- 04 Design Update
- 05 Next Steps
- 06 Question & Answer



Image source: Boston Globe



Project Overview

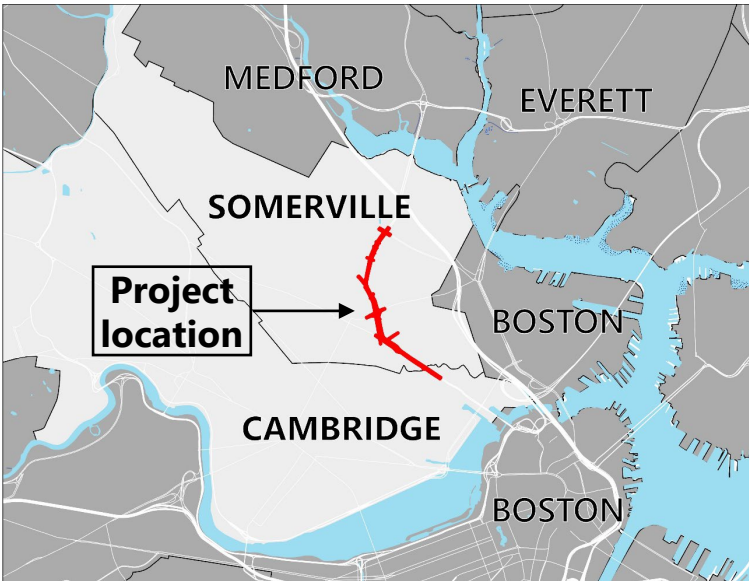


Project Area

This McGrath Boulevard project extends along **McGrath Highway** from the southern extent, just over the city line, at **Third Street** in Cambridge to the northern extent at **Broadway** in Somerville.

This McGrath Boulevard project is adjacent to the following Somerville and Cambridge neighborhoods:

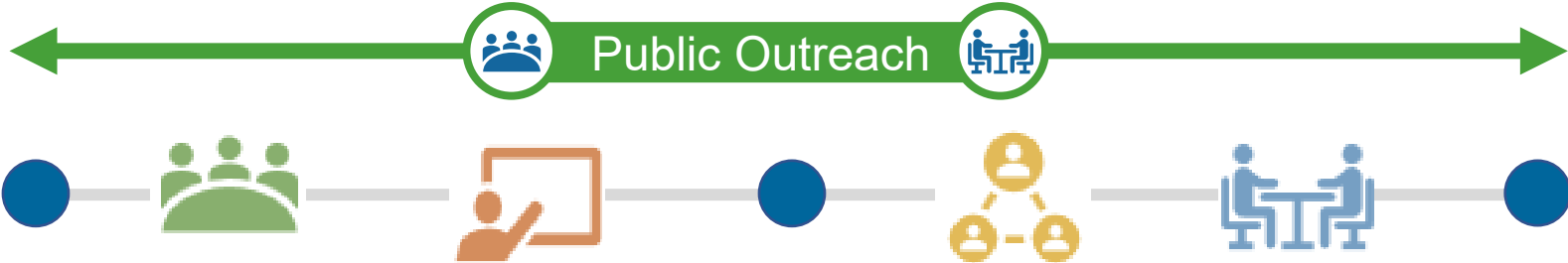
- East Somerville
- Union Square
- Brickbottom
- Winter Hill
- Prospect Hill
- East Cambridge





Reasons for the Project

- McCarthy Viaduct overpass is structurally deficient and divides neighborhoods
- McGrath Highway is overbuilt for the number of vehicles that need to use it
- Accessibility standards not met along the corridor



2011-2018
Planning Study

- McCarthy Overpass identified as needing replacement
- MassDOT convened McGrath Boulevard Project Development Working Group
- McGrath Boulevard included in regional transportation plan

2021-2023
Project Development

- Preparation of 25% design: conducted survey, environmental studies, utility investigation
- McGrath Boulevard Project programmed for federal and state funding starting in 2027 TIP year

2024-2025
Preliminary Design

- 25% Design Development
- Continued public outreach
- MEPA/NEPA Review
- Design Public Hearing



Figure 4-1: August 2011 Working Group Discussion

McGrath Boulevard Working Group Discussion in August 2011

Public Outreach Overview



8 working group meetings



3 public information meetings:



10 targeted briefings:

- Cities of Somerville and Cambridge
- Abutters
- Somerville Community Groups
- Portuguese Sportsman’s Club

Coordination with:

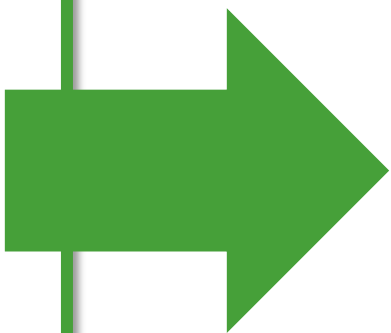


- Livable Streets Alliance
- MassDOT District offices

Appearances by project team members



- Tufts University
- Somerville ArtBeat festival



Public Outreach Outcome

- Consensus for preferred alternative among stakeholders and public
- Successfully programmed construction funding (FY 2027)
- Continued feedback on design refinements



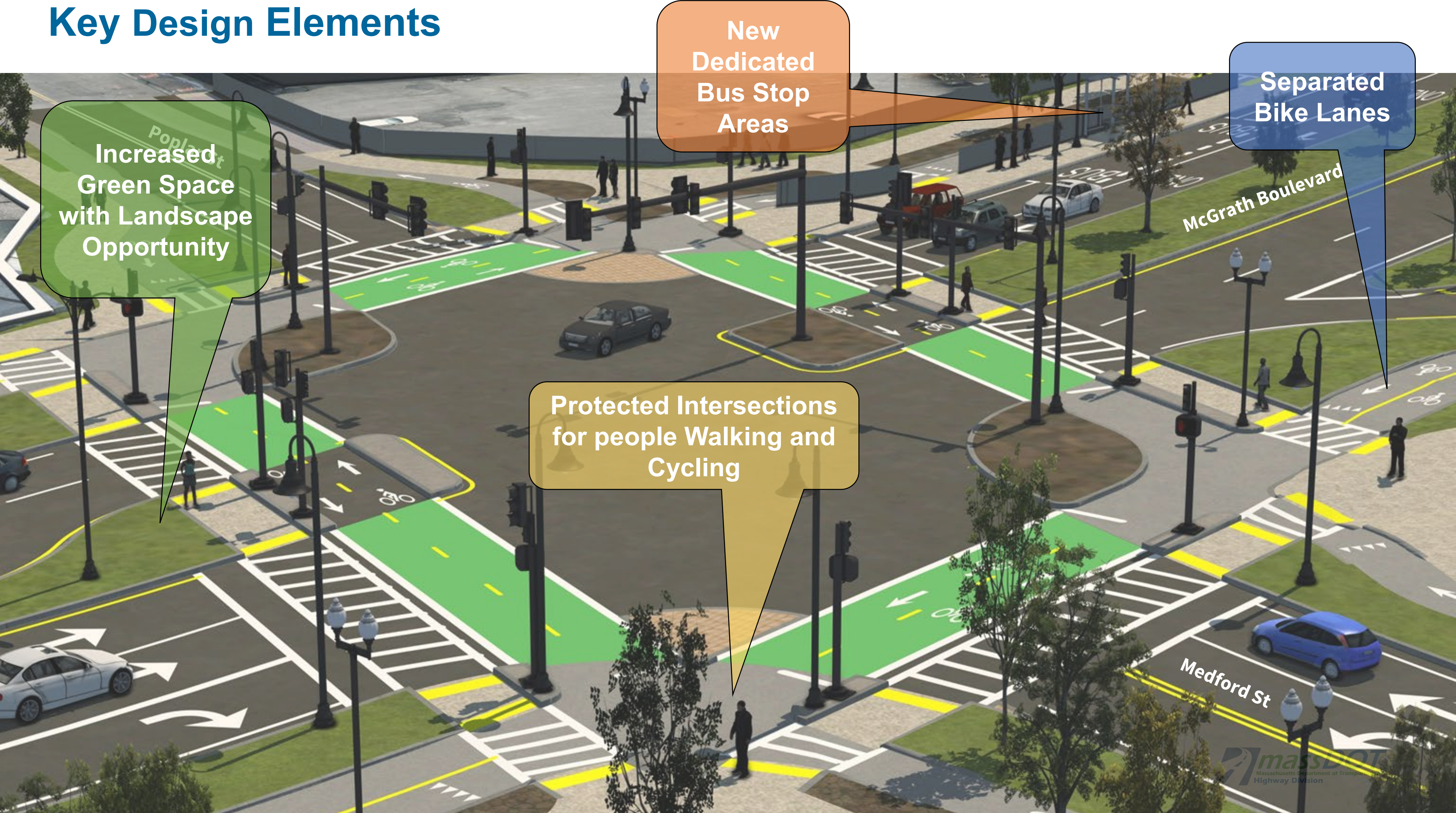
Project Goals

Project Goals

- **Safety improvements** to support Vision Zero objectives
- Improve **neighborhood connections** to nearby amenities
- Improve facilities supporting **sustainable transportation**
- **Resilient infrastructure** to face our changing climate
- **Accessible design** that removes barriers



Key Design Elements



Increased Green Space with Landscape Opportunity

New Dedicated Bus Stop Areas

Separated Bike Lanes

Protected Intersections for people Walking and Cycling

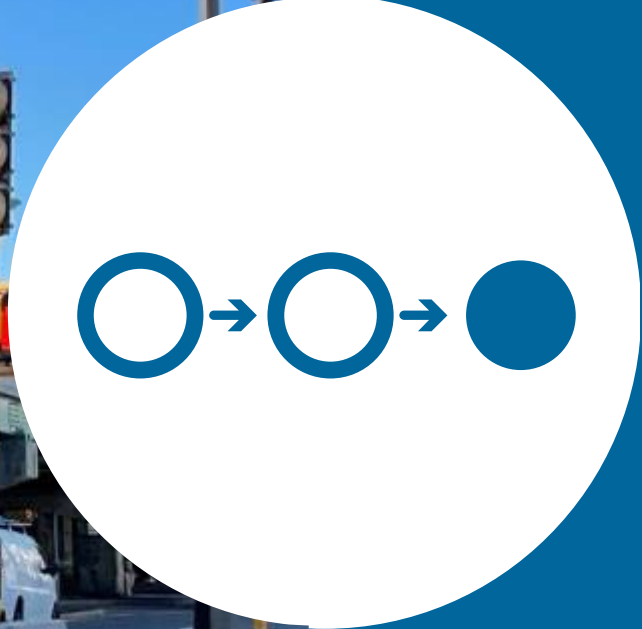
Roadway Reallocation

- One travel lane removed from each direction → two lanes of general-purpose traffic in each direction
- Separated bike lanes in each direction
- Removal of overpass



What it can look like A look at the before and after of the Casey Overpass in Boston





Design Updates

What We Heard



Support For:

Pedestrian safety and accessibility

Expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure

Additional green space and parks

Transit priority and bus accommodations



Ongoing Considerations:

Vehicle speeds

Removal of pedestrian bridge and the accessibility of Otis Street during construction

Width of boulevard (number of travel lanes, slip lanes, and frontage roads)



Comments We Considered

Raised crosswalks

- Limited use of raised crosswalks to side streets due to guidelines for federal funding.

Frontage roads

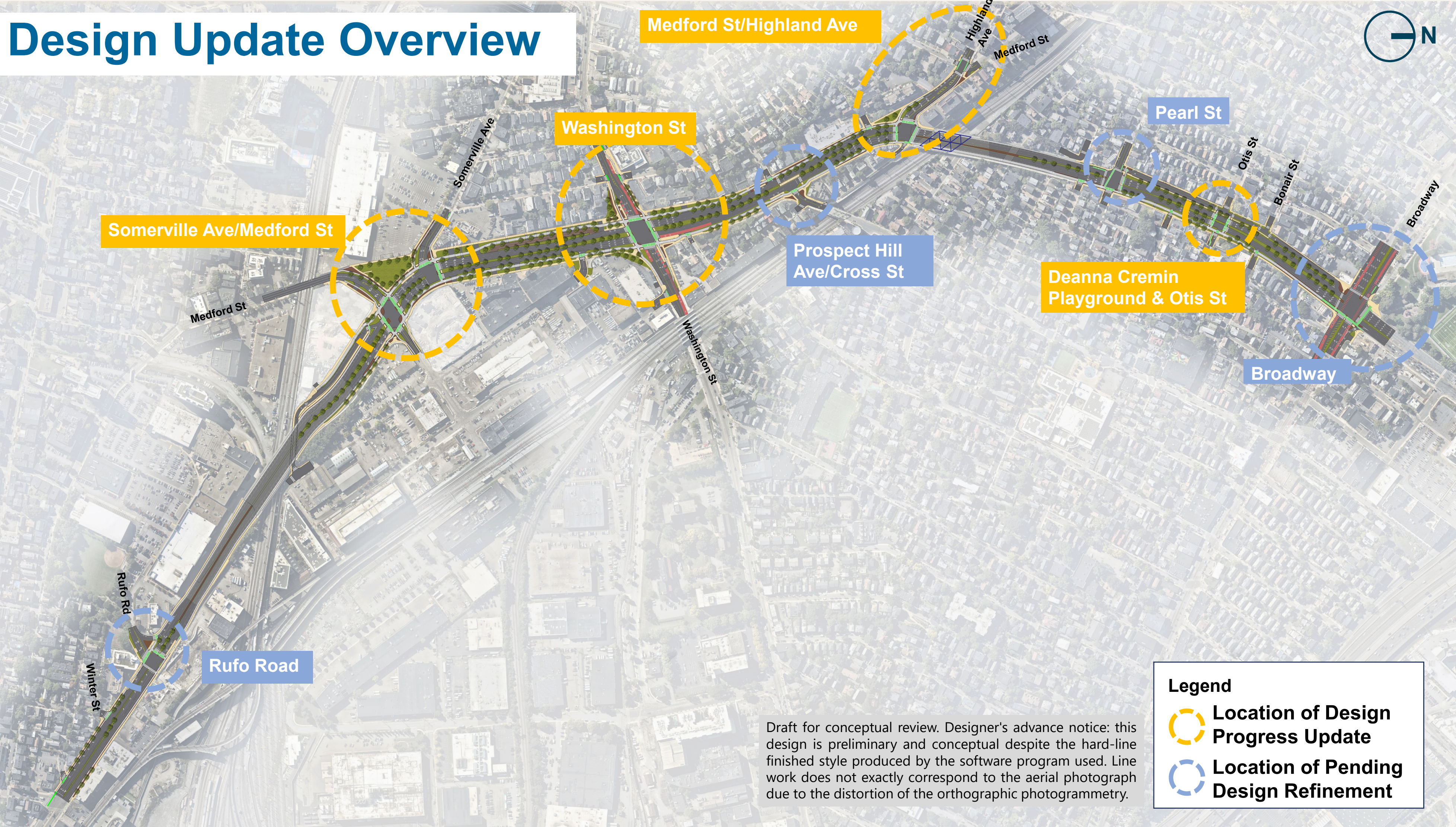
- Kept in design to provide for safe local access to homes/businesses and potential for neighborhood ways & gateway treatments

Center median

- Necessary to accommodate vertical grade difference, provide a pedestrian refuge, restrict left turns, and provide flexibility for future lane configurations.



Design Update Overview



Medford St/Highland Ave

Washington St

Pearl St

Somerville Ave/Medford St


Prospect Hill Ave/Cross St

Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St

Broadway

Rufo Road

Legend

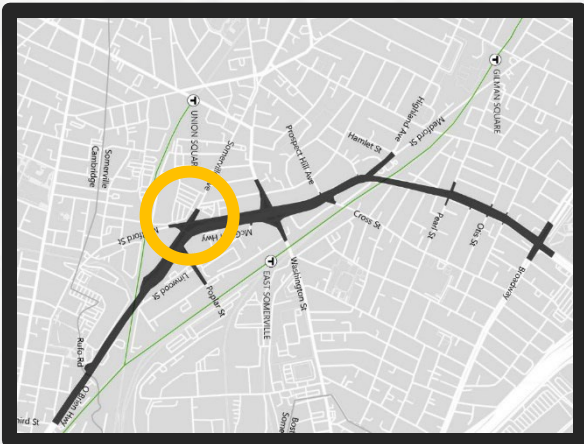
-  Location of Design Progress Update
-  Location of Pending Design Refinement

Draft for conceptual review. Designer's advance notice: this design is preliminary and conceptual despite the hard-line finished style produced by the software program used. Line work does not exactly correspond to the aerial photograph due to the distortion of the orthographic photogrammetry.

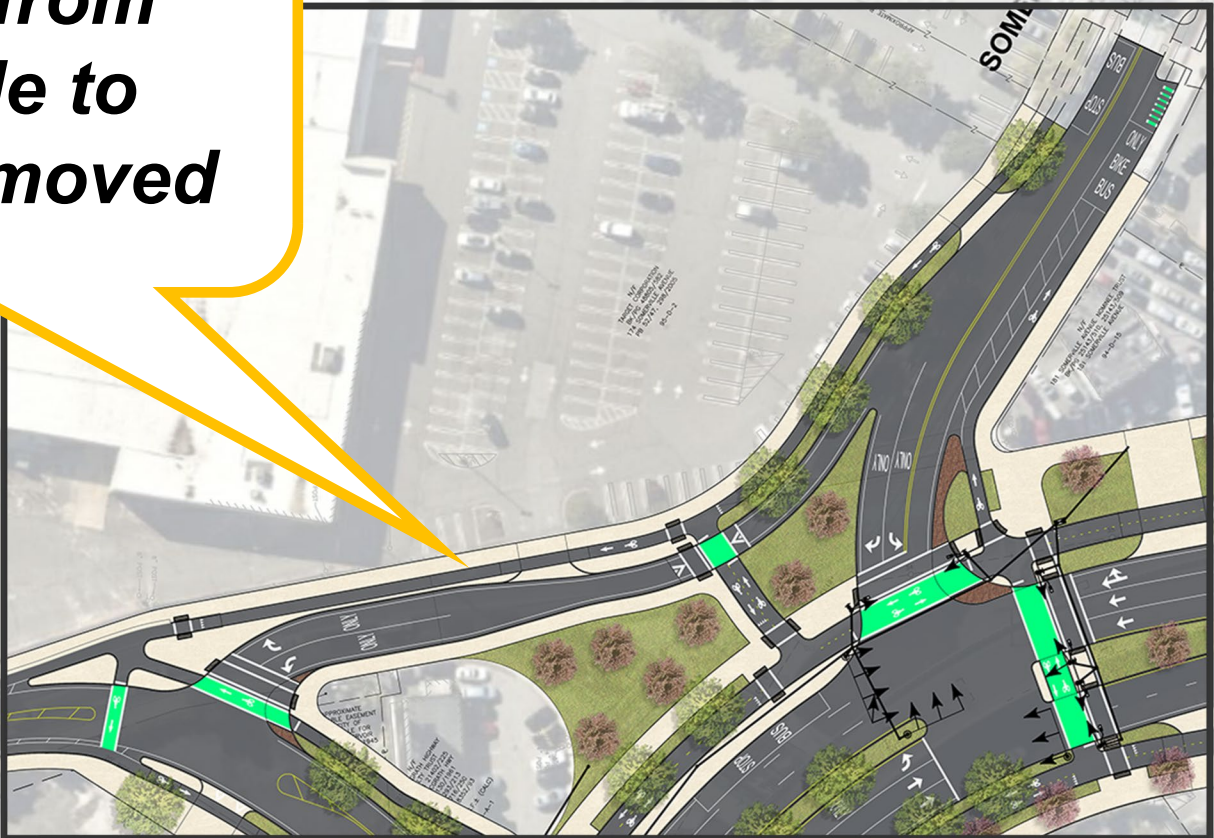
Somerville Ave/Medford St



Somerville Ave/Medford St – Previous Concept Design



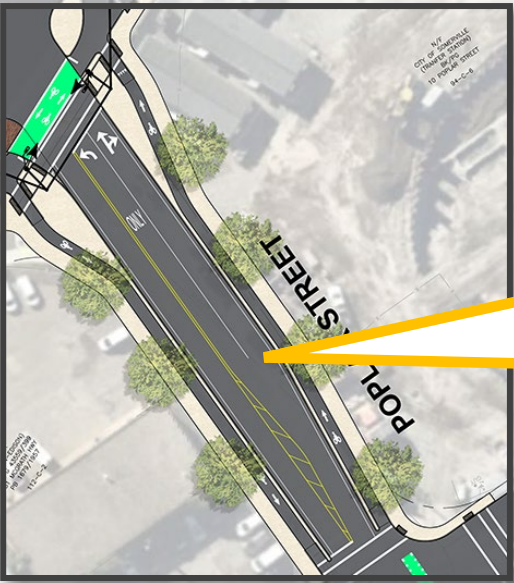
Slip road from Somerville to Medford removed



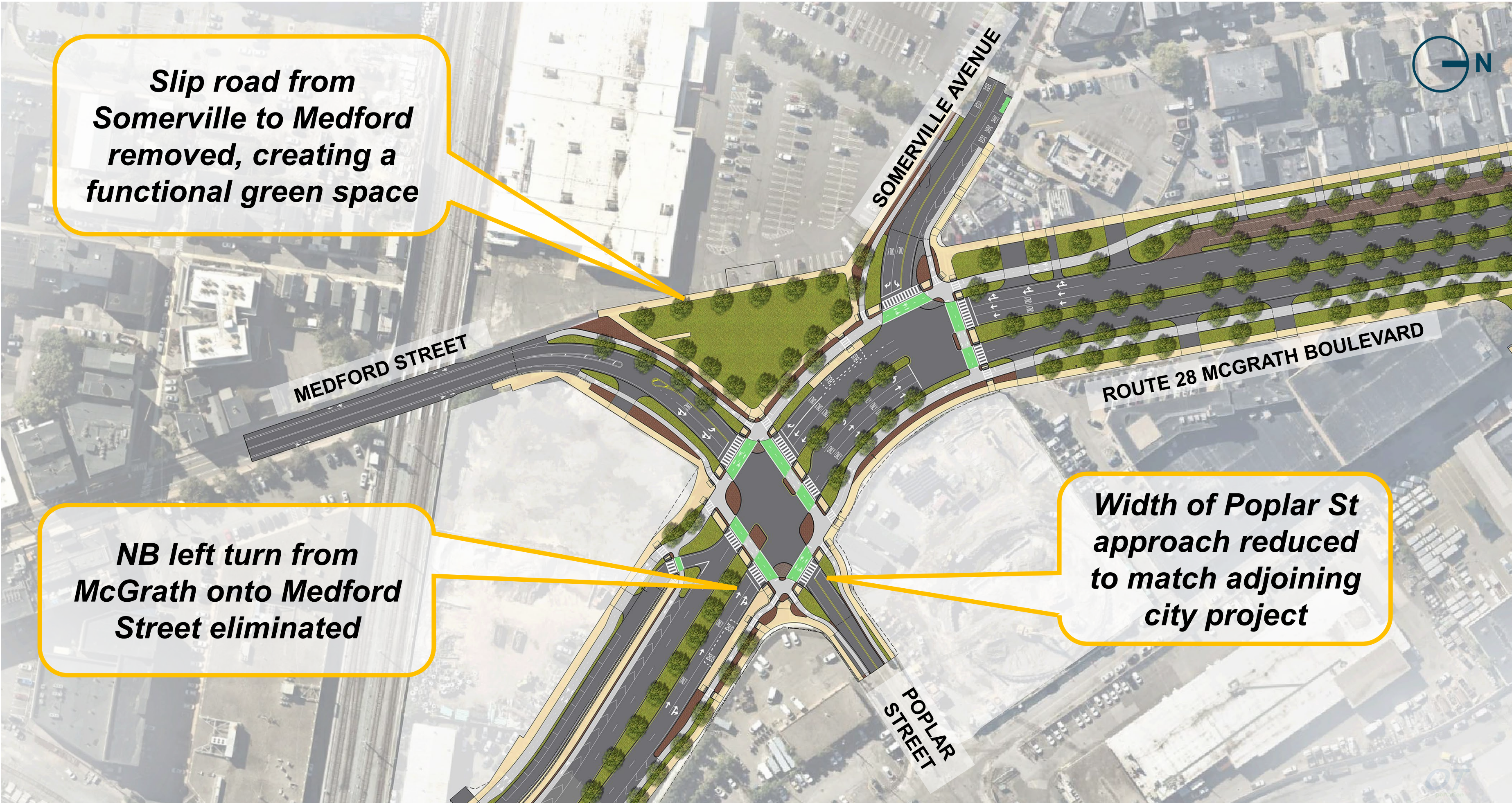
NB left turn from McGrath onto Medford Street eliminated



Width of Poplar St approach reduced to match adjoining city project

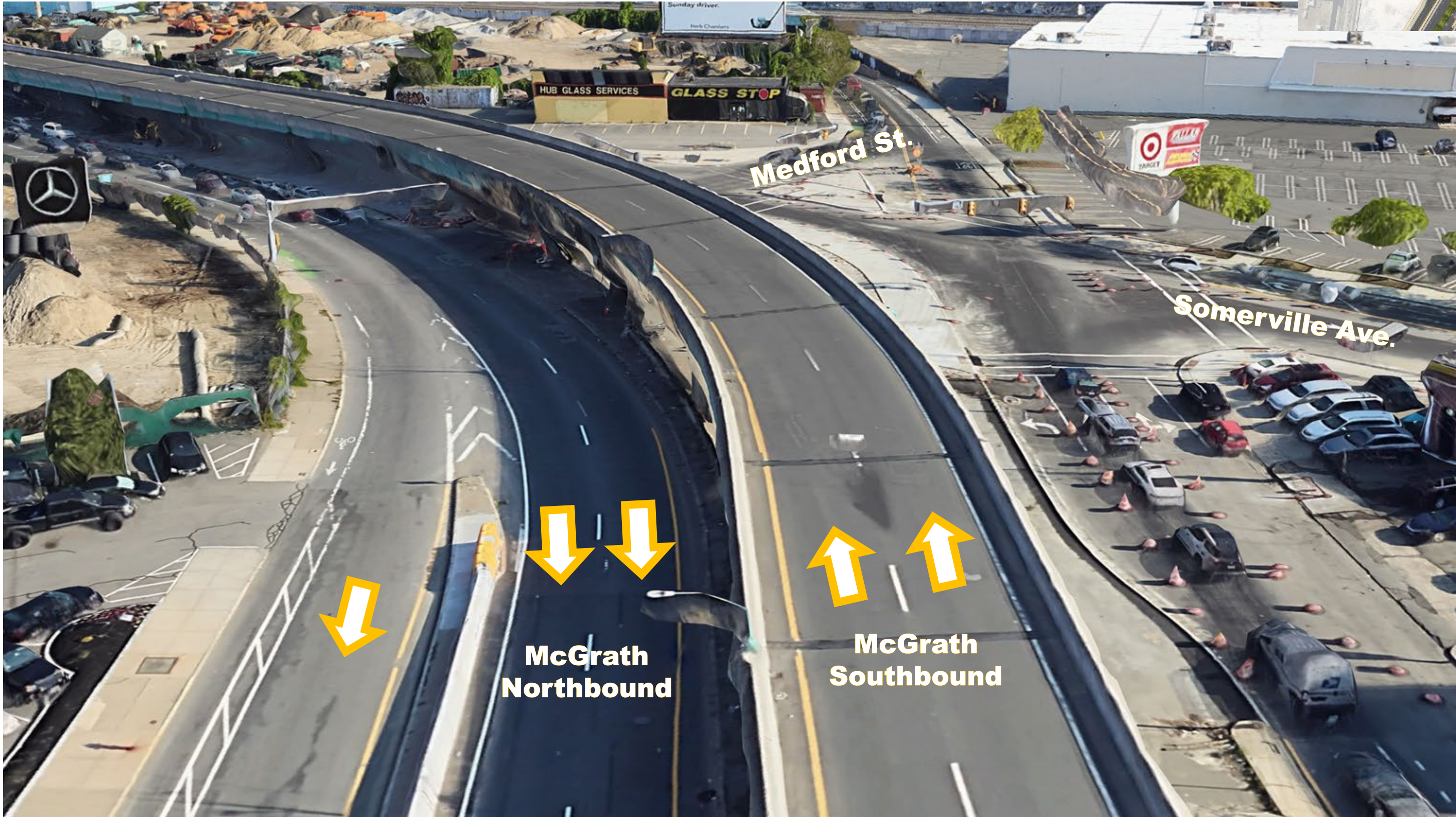


Somerville Ave/Medford St – Design Updates



Somerville Ave/Medford St

Existing Conditions



Somerville Ave/Medford St

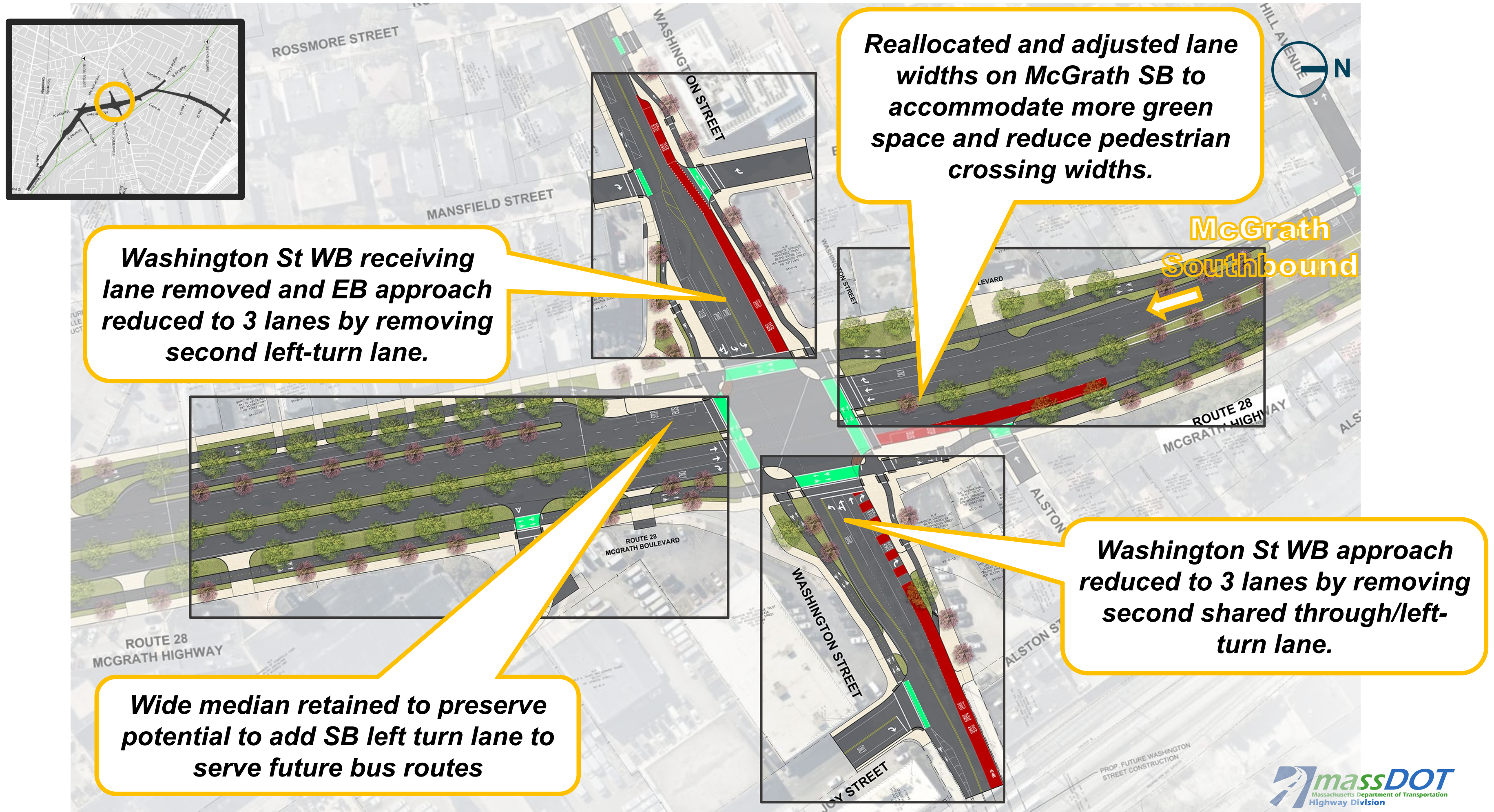
Conceptual Rendering



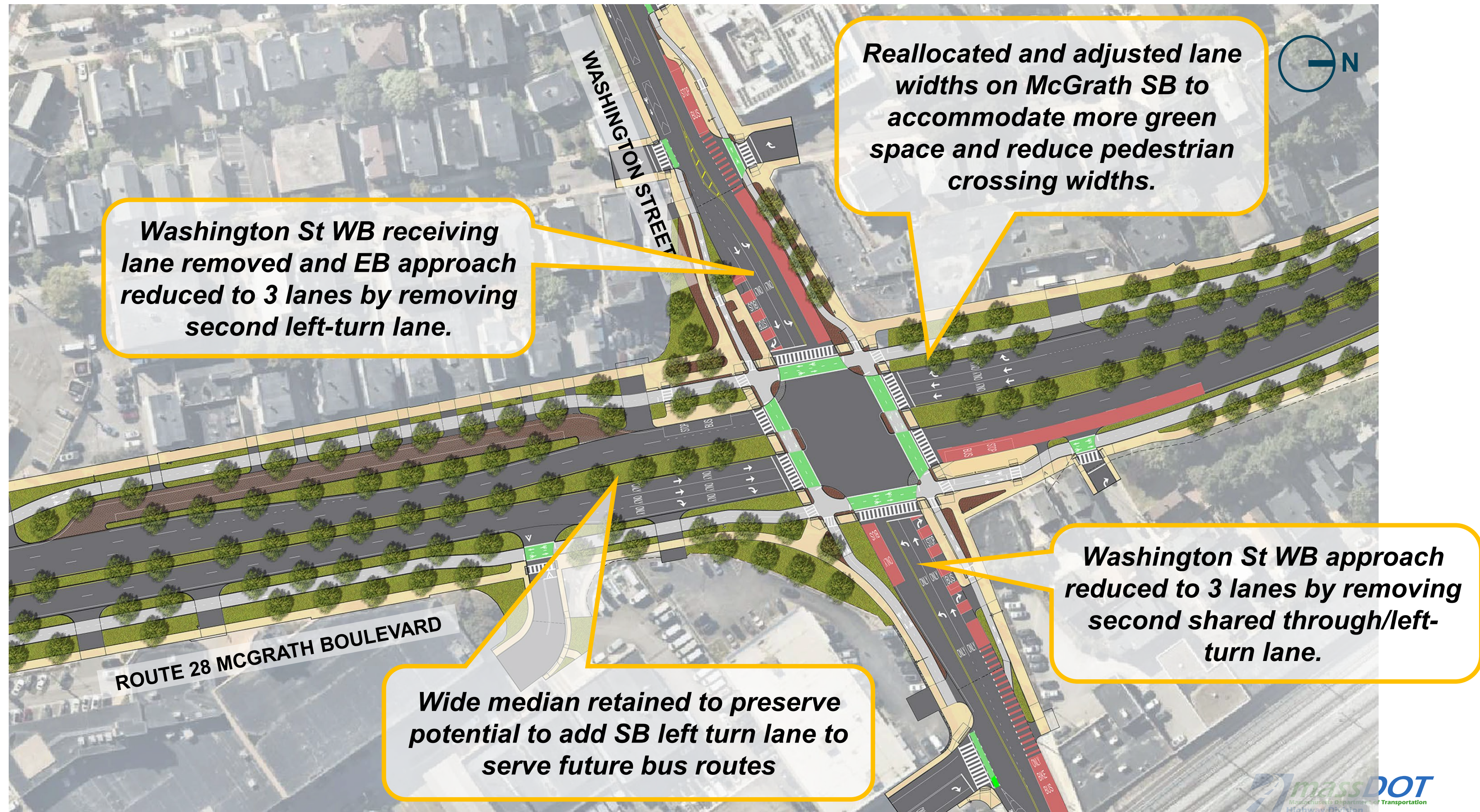
Washington Street



Washington Street – Previous Concept Design



Washington Street – Design Updates



Washington Street

Existing Conditions



Washington Street

Conceptual Rendering

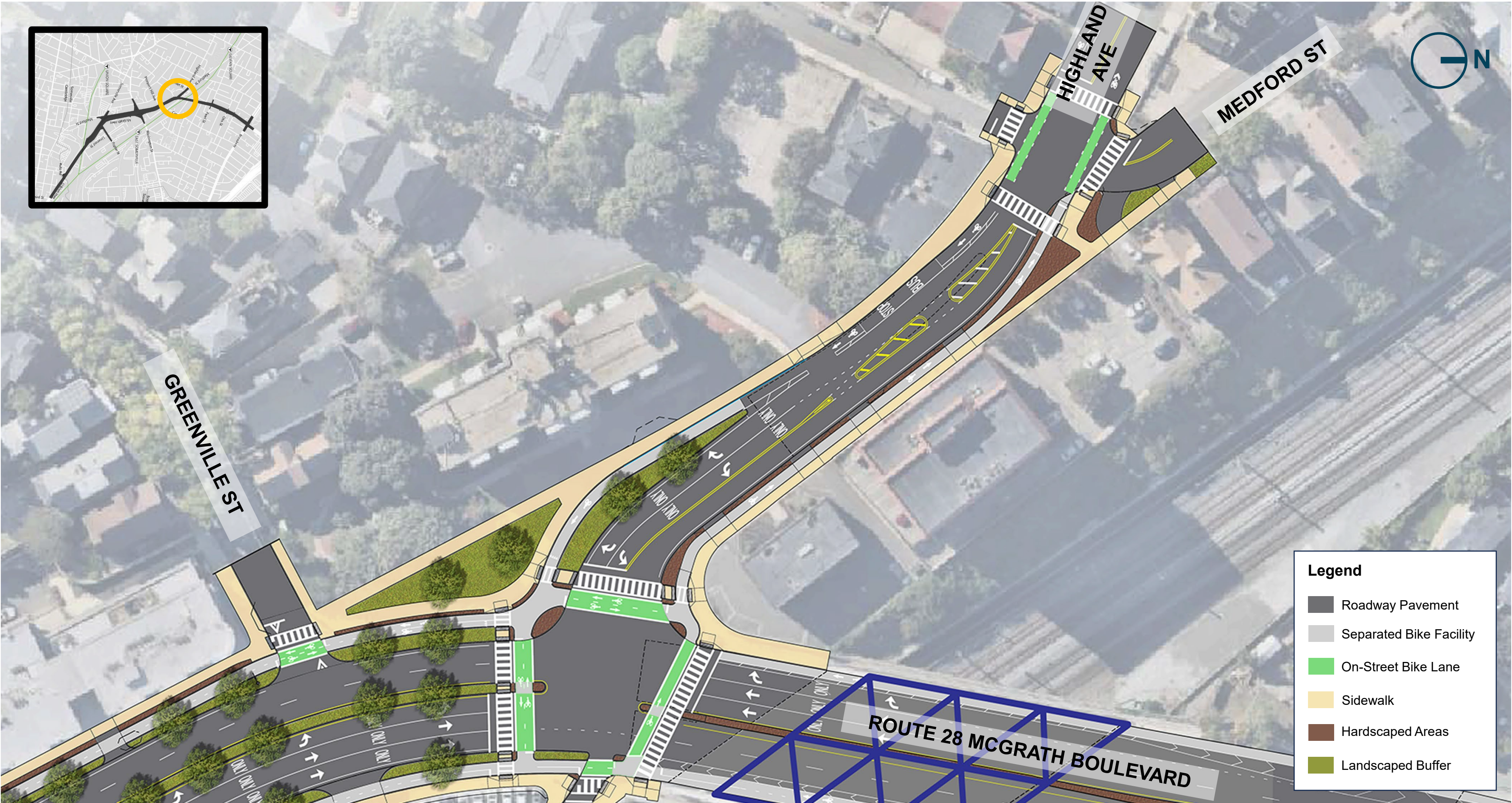


Washington Street

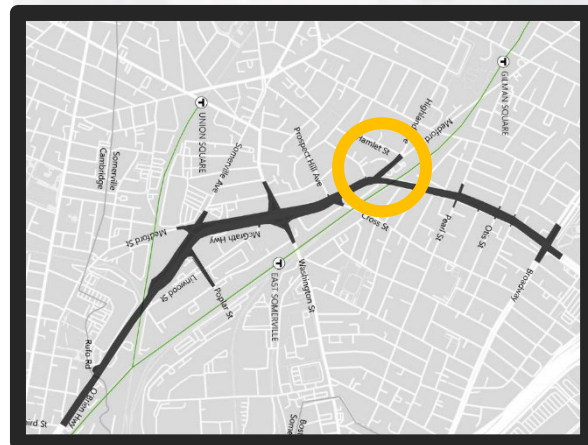
Conceptual Video



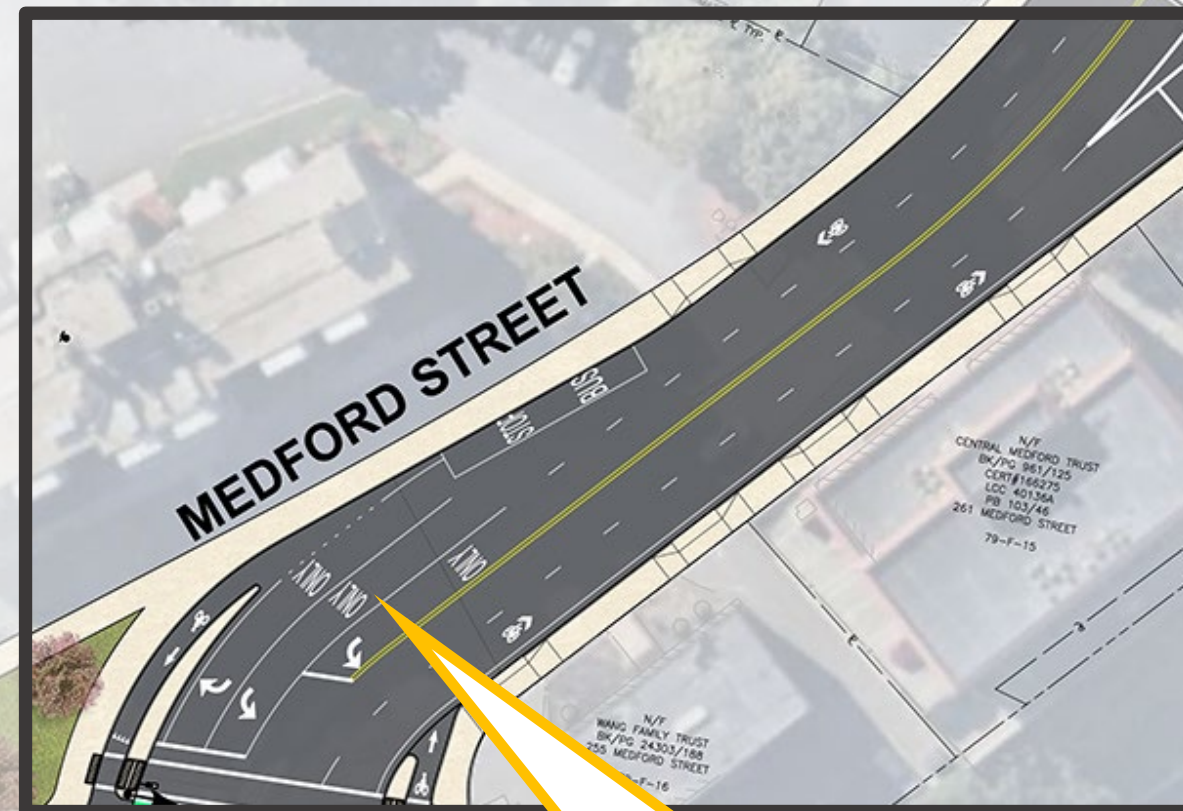
Medford St/Highland Ave



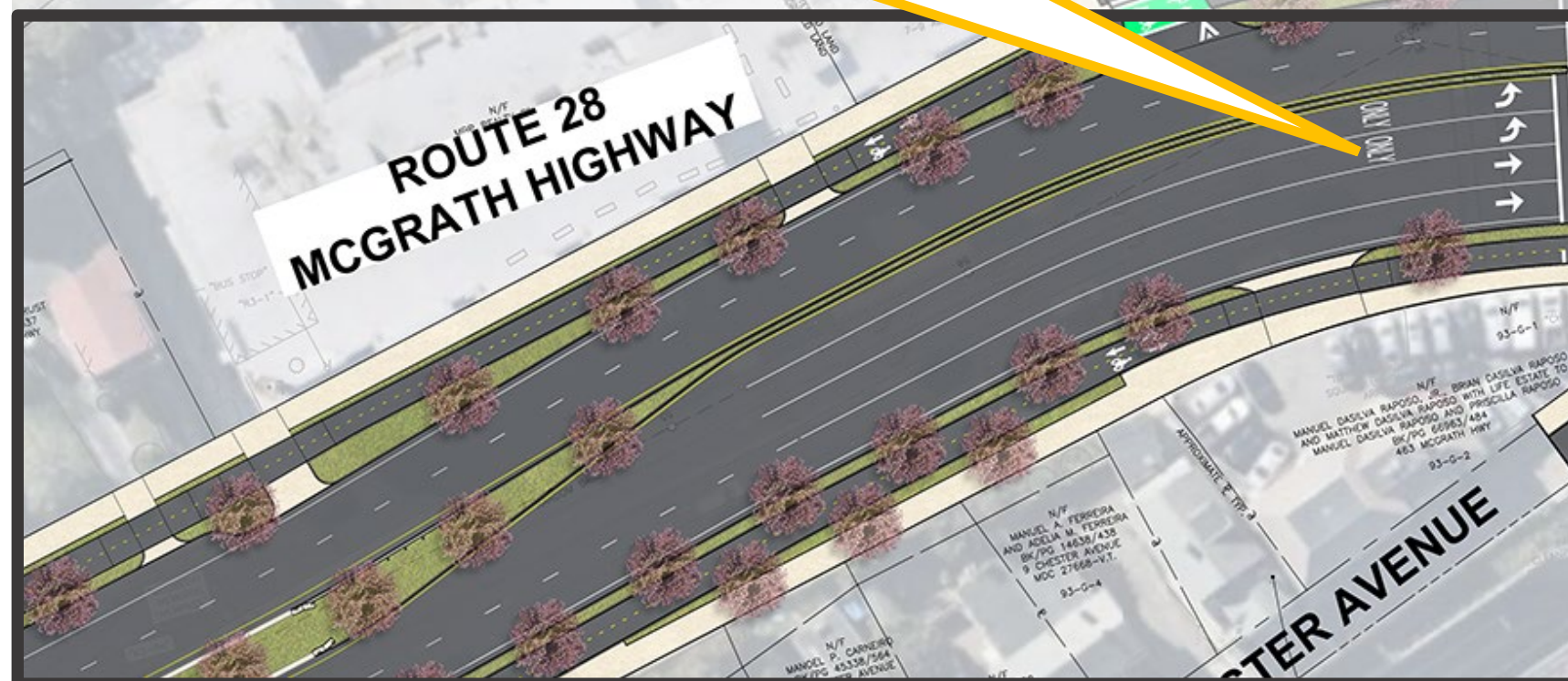
Medford St/Highland Ave – Previous Concept Design



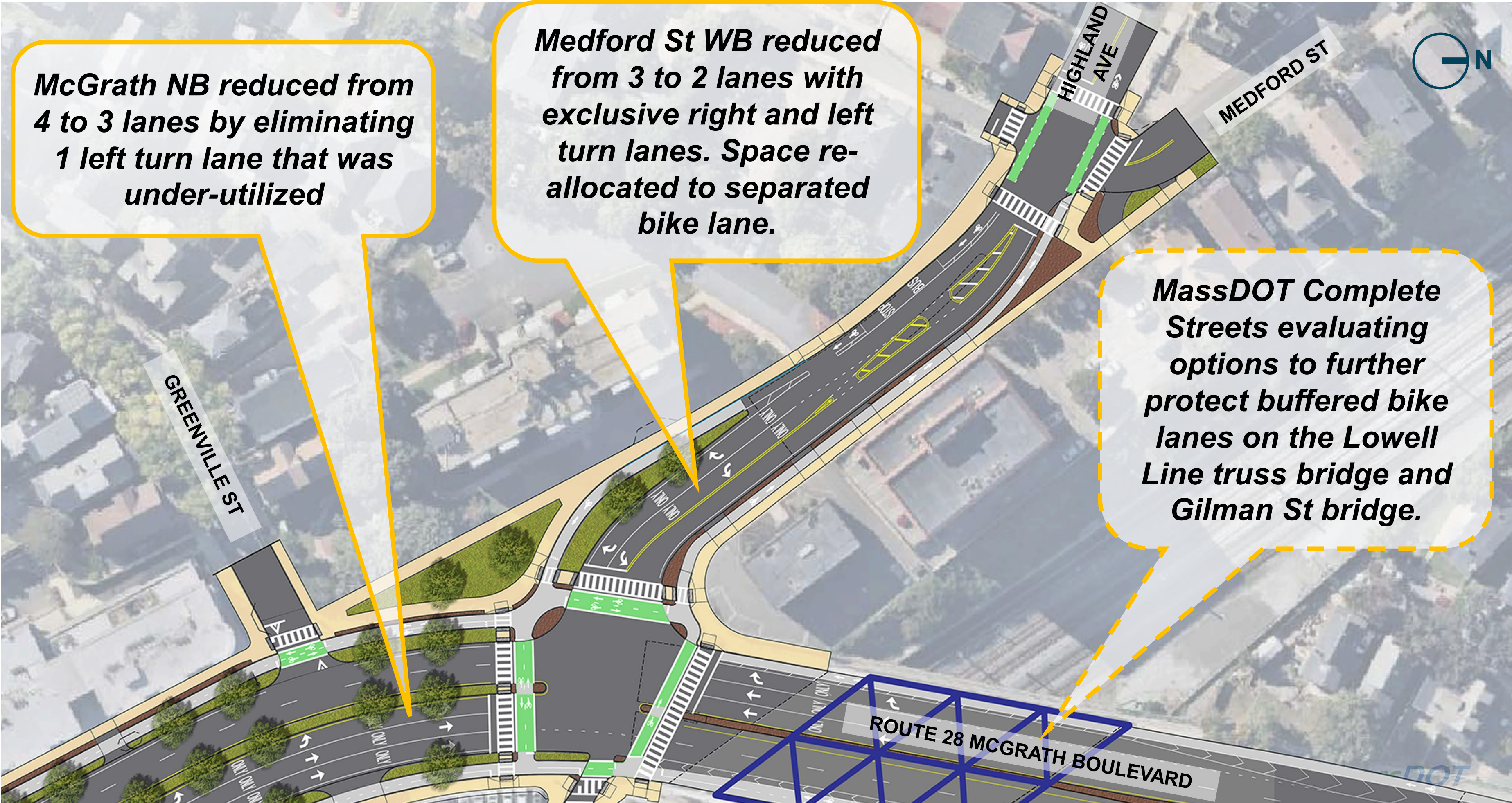
McGrath NB reduced from 4 to 3 lanes by eliminating 1 left turn lane that was under-utilized



Medford St WB reduced from 3 to 2 lanes with exclusive right and left turn lanes. Space re-allocated to separated bike lane.



Medford St/Highland Ave – Design Updates



Medford St/Highland Ave – Over Lowell Line Bridge

Consideration given to providing flexible delineator posts



Medford St/Highland Ave

Existing Conditions



McGrath
Northbound



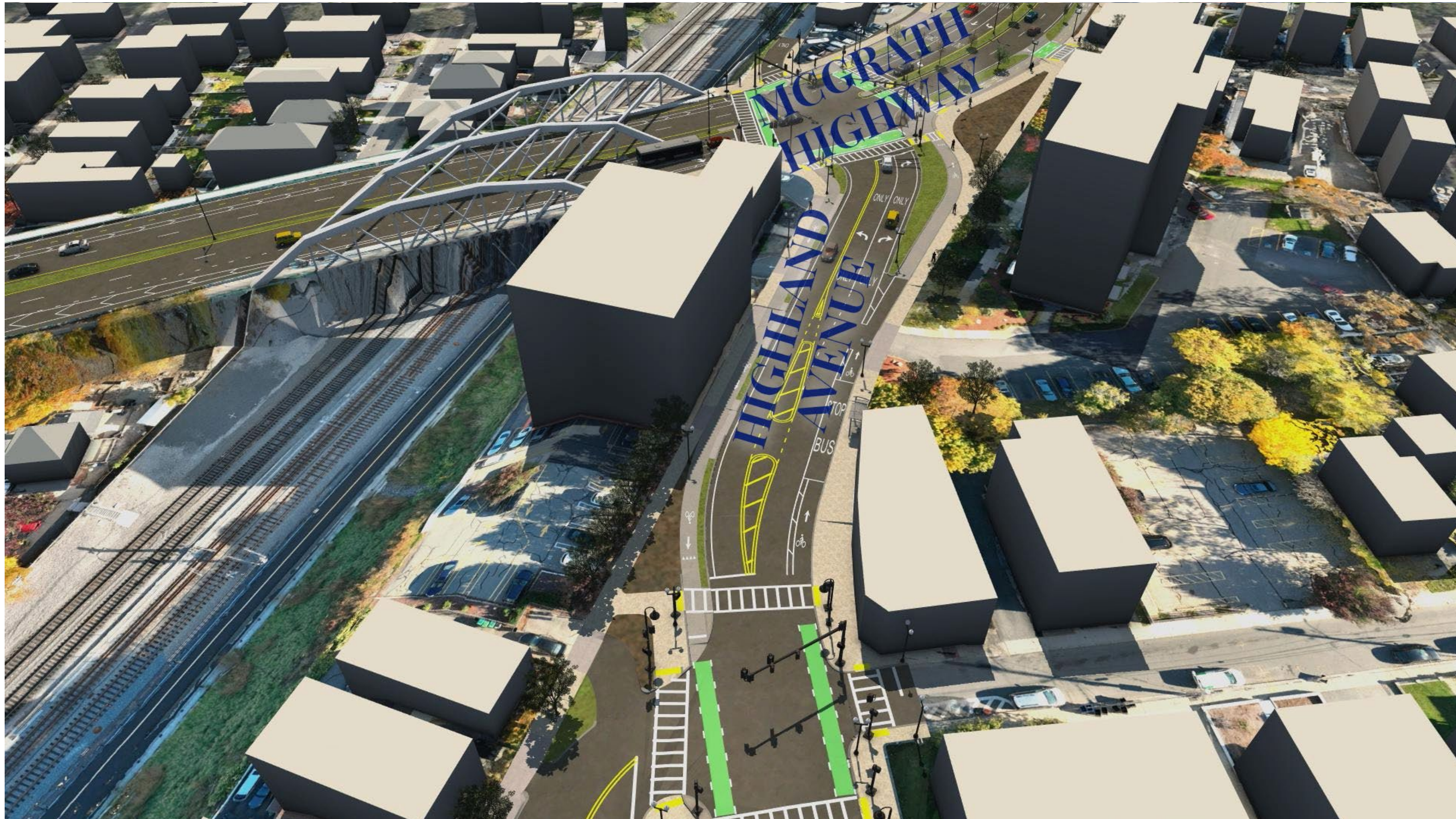
Medford St/Highland Ave

Conceptual Rendering

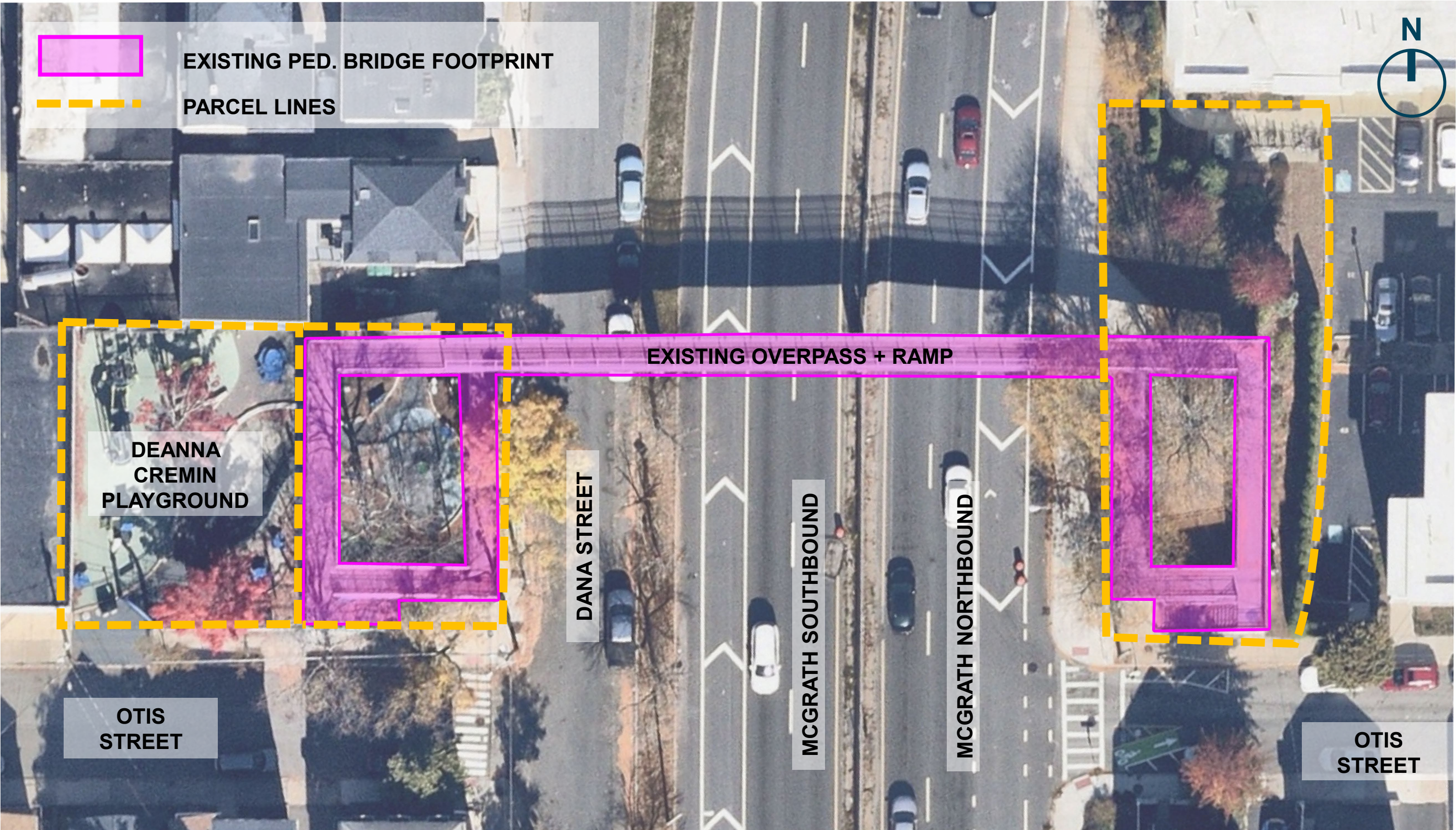
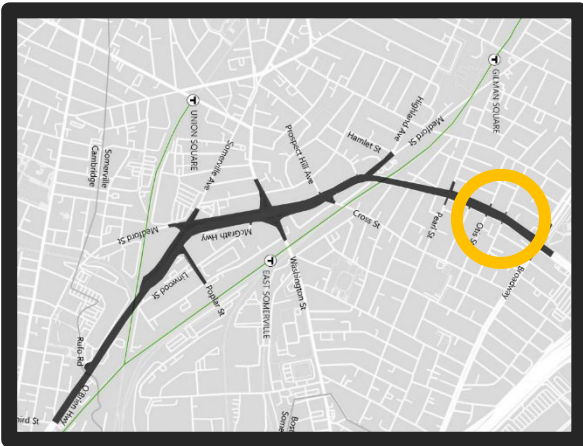


Medford St/Highland Ave

Conceptual Video



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Existing Pedestrian Bridge



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Issues and Opportunities

Existing Issues

- Ramp is not ADA compliant (too steep)
- Interferes with location of center median
- Renovating bridge for ADA compliance significantly expands footprint into the playground

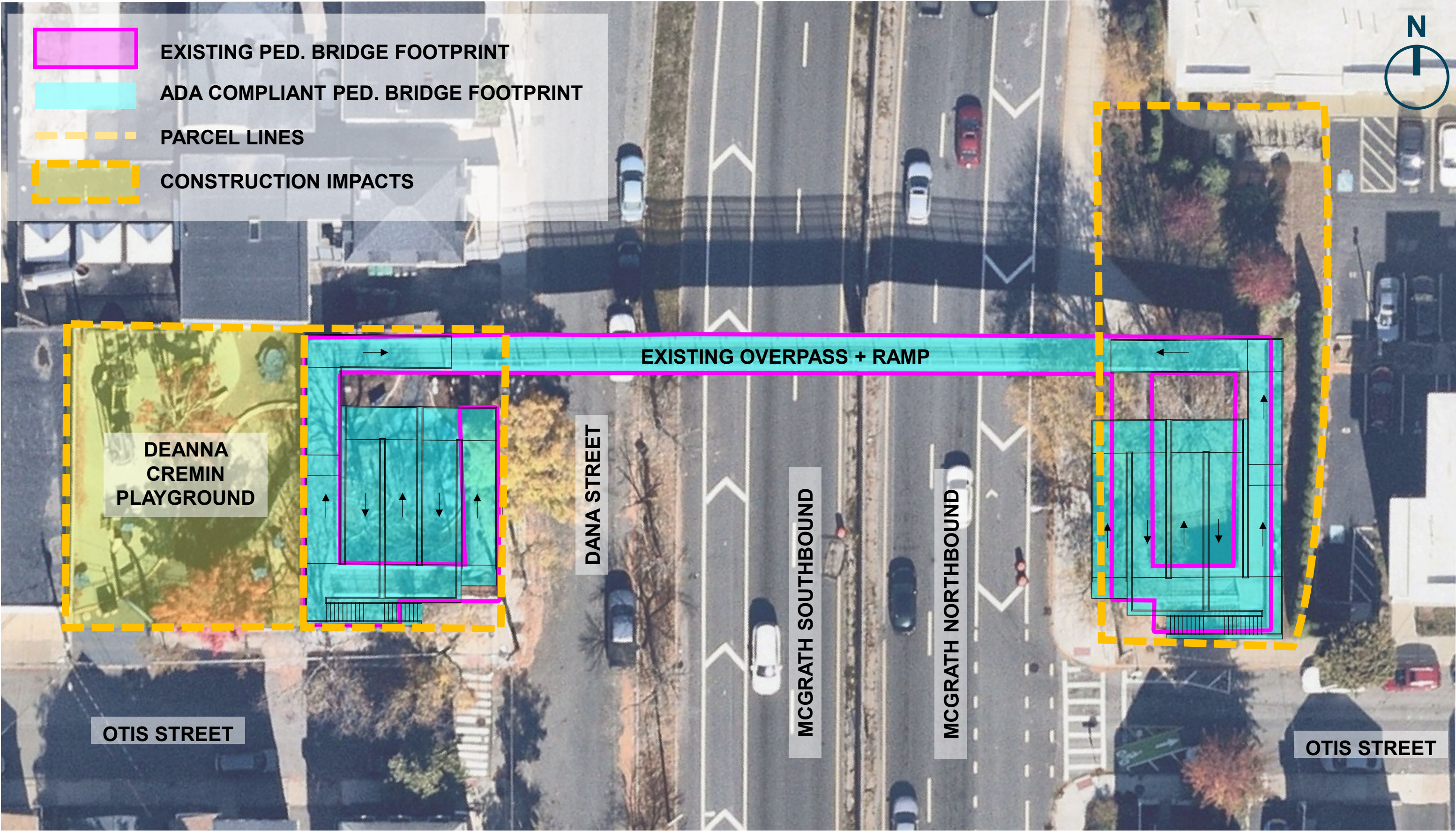


Opportunities with Bridge Removal

- Creates new green/park space
- Improves bike/ped connections
- Adds signalized crosswalk at Otis Street

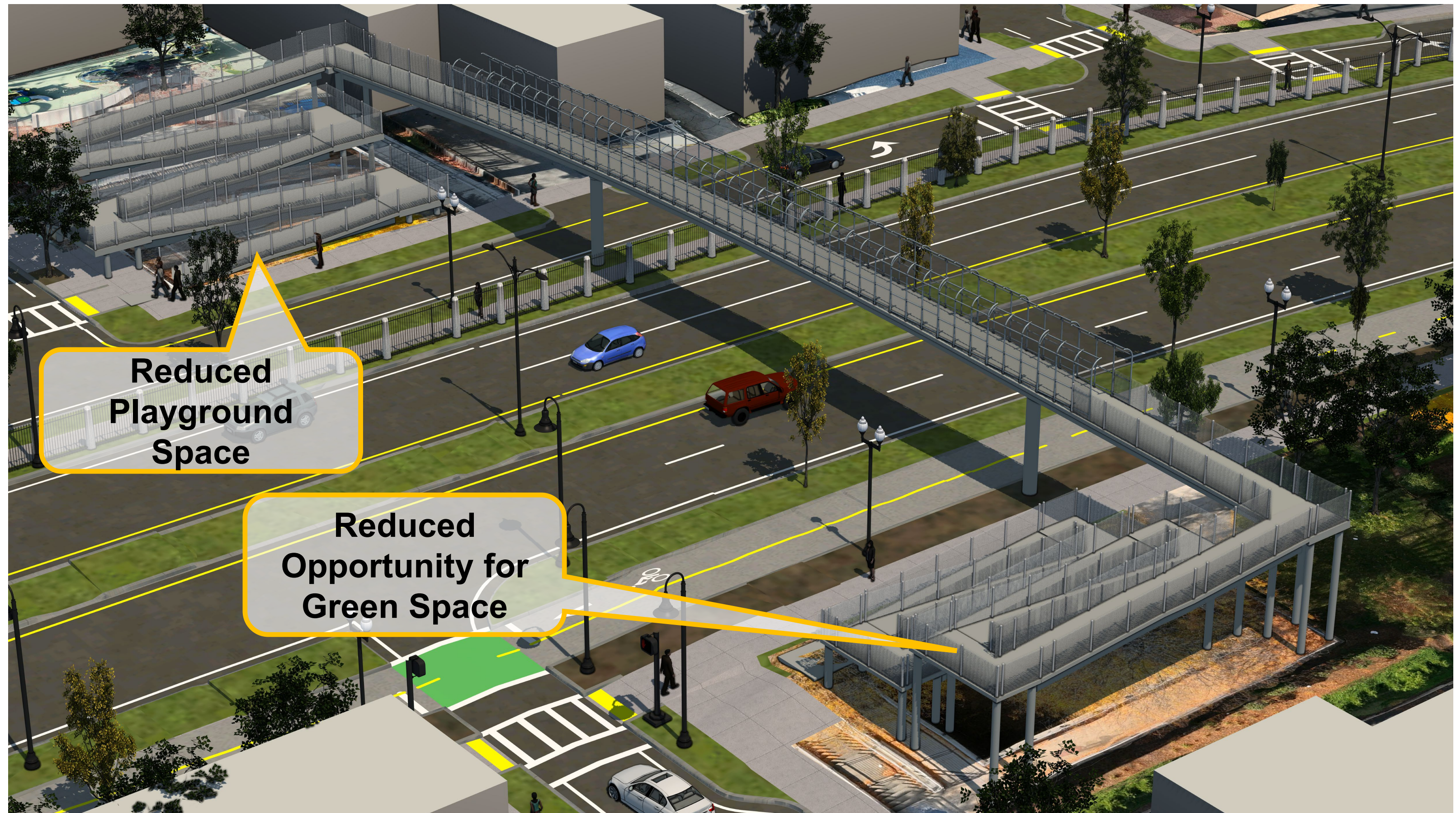


Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – ADA Compliant Ped. Bridge



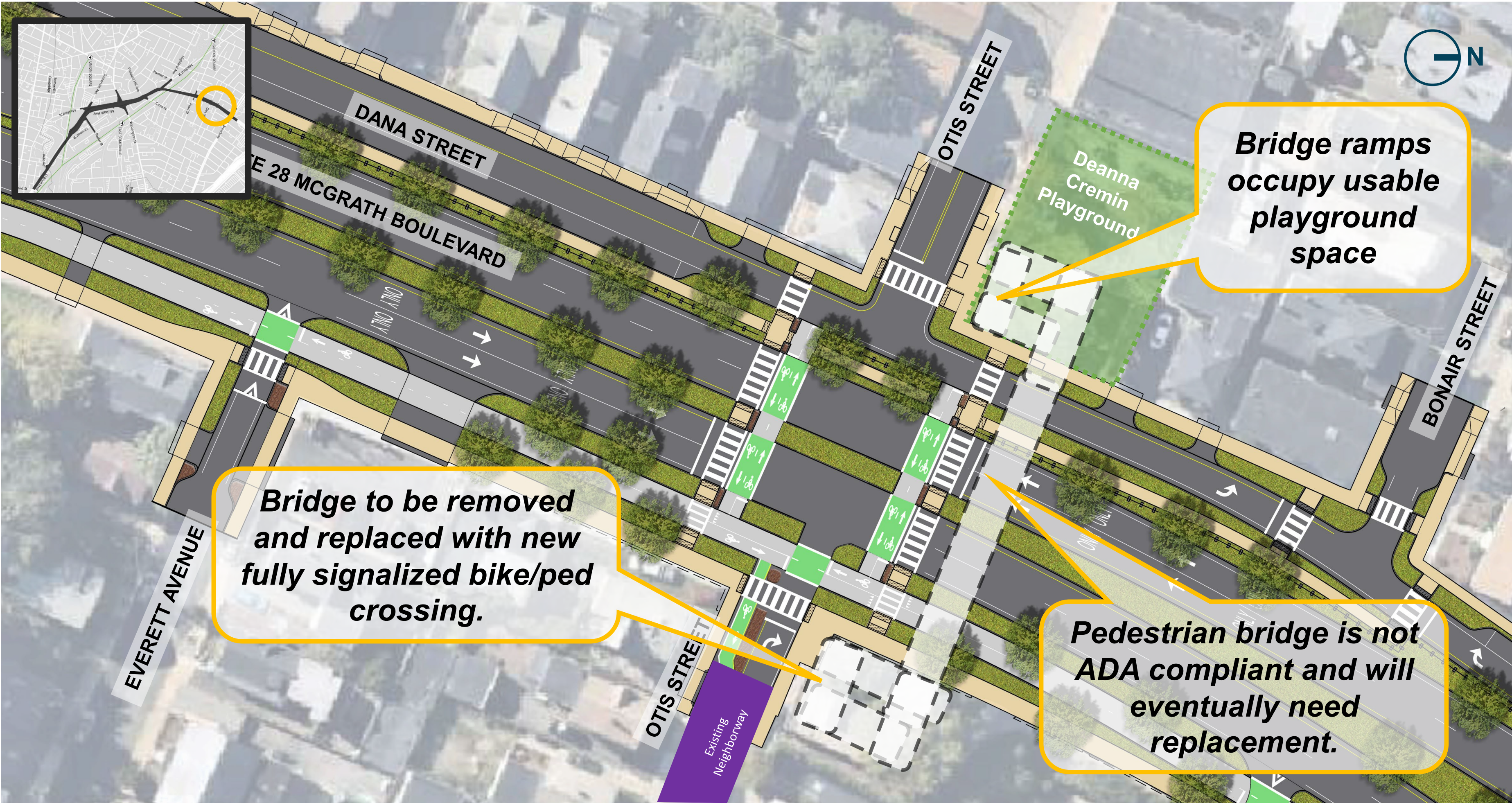
For conceptual rendering only.

Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – ADA Compliant Ped. Bridge

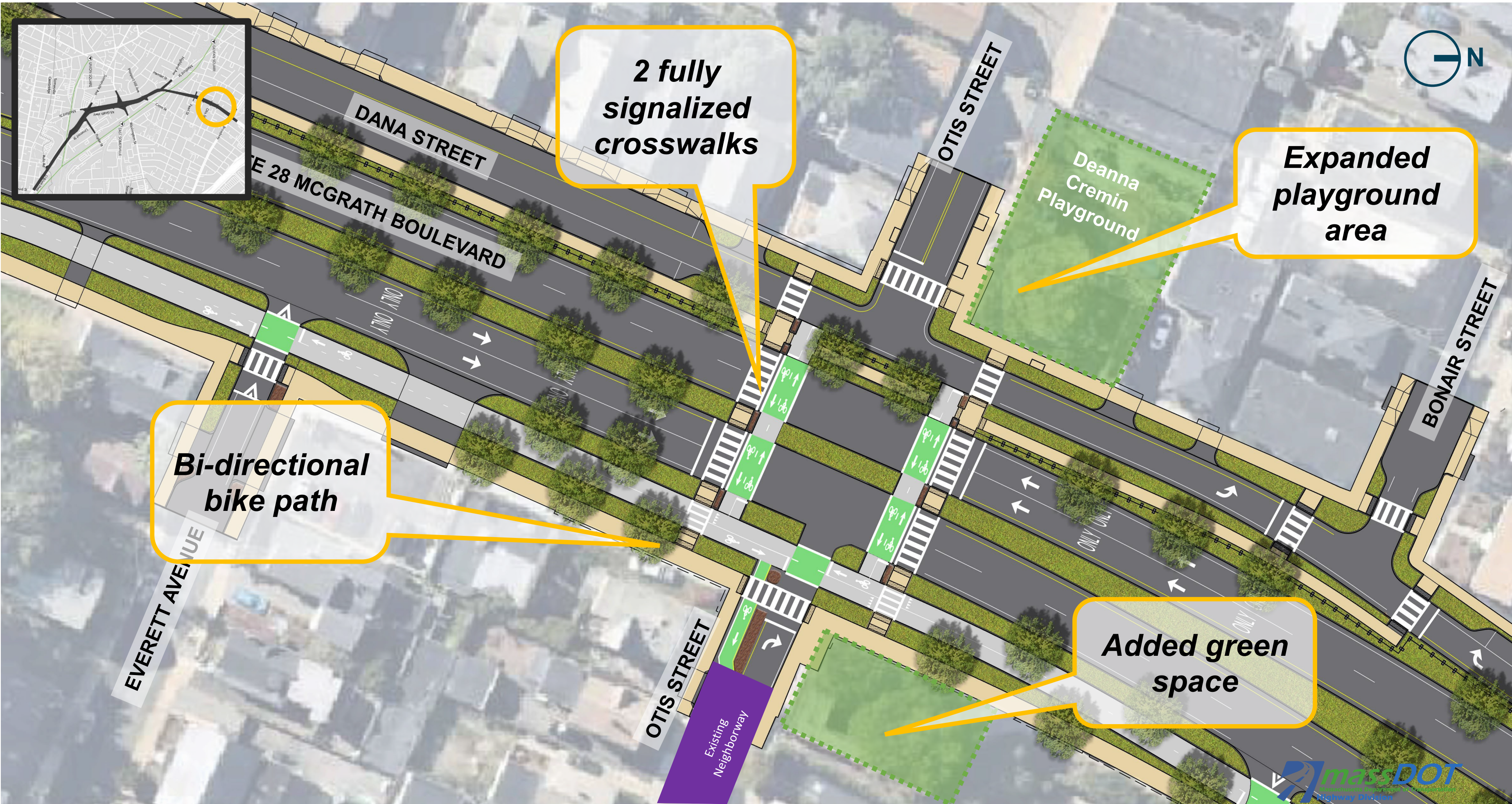


For conceptual rendering only.

Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Ped. Bridge Removal



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Proposed Design



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Existing Conditions



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Conceptual Rendering



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Existing Conditions



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Conceptual Rendering



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Existing Park

- Ramp landing space occupies nearly half of the usable space in the park
- Ramp removal creates opportunity for expanded park/playground space

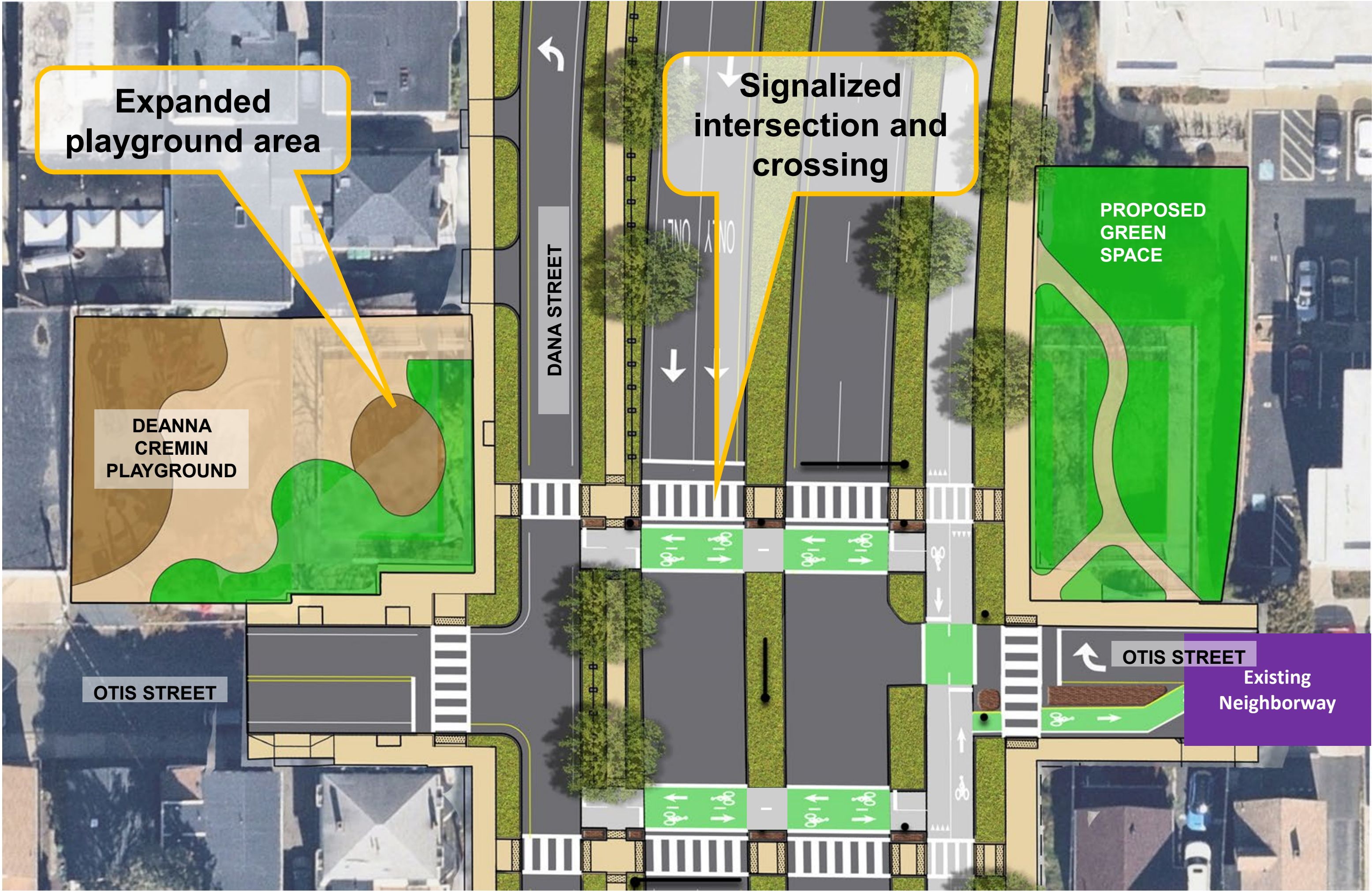


Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Conceptual Rendering

- Ramp landing space occupies nearly half of the usable space in the park
- Ramp removal creates opportunity for expanded park/playground space



Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St – Conceptual Rendering



Coordination with Relevant Projects

STATE PROJECTS

- Intersection Improvements at Mystic, McGrath, Fellsway & I-93 Ramps (#608562)
- Bridge Preservation of Eight Bridges Over Green Line Extension Medford Branch (#613598)
- Squires Bridge Replacement (#612634)
- Lighting Upgrades to McGrath Highway (#613337)
- Rutherford Avenue (#606226)
- MBTA Bus Network Redesign
- Silver Line Extension Alternatives Analysis

SOMERVILLE PROJECTS

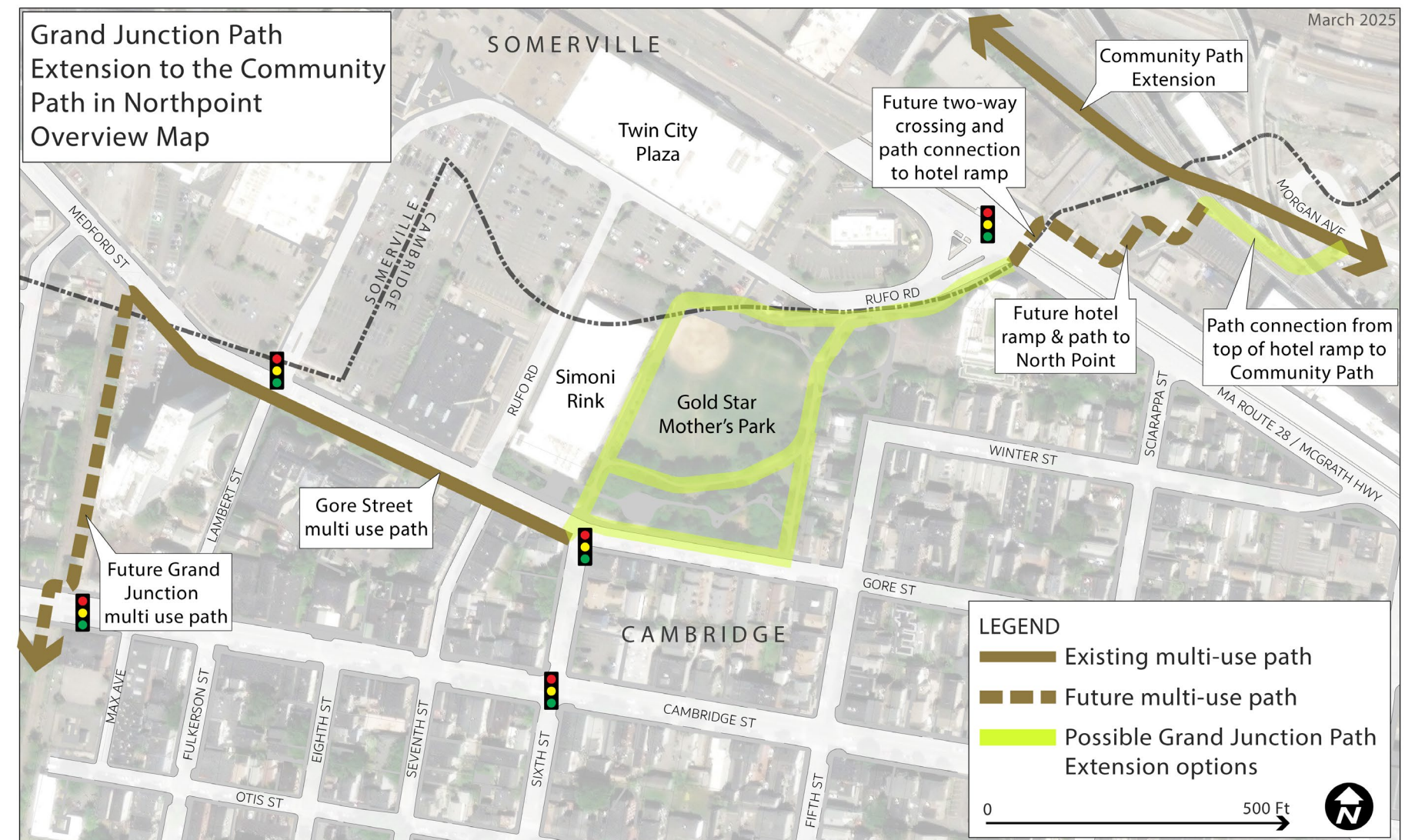
- Western Pearl Street Reconstruction Project (Bike Lanes)
- Highland Avenue Reconstruction Project
- Poplar Street Pump Station
- Redevelopment of Brickbottom based on Neighborhood Master Plan

CAMBRIDGE PROJECTS

- Sciarappa Street Reconstruction (City of Cambridge)
- Grand Junction Shared-Use Path (Planning Stage)

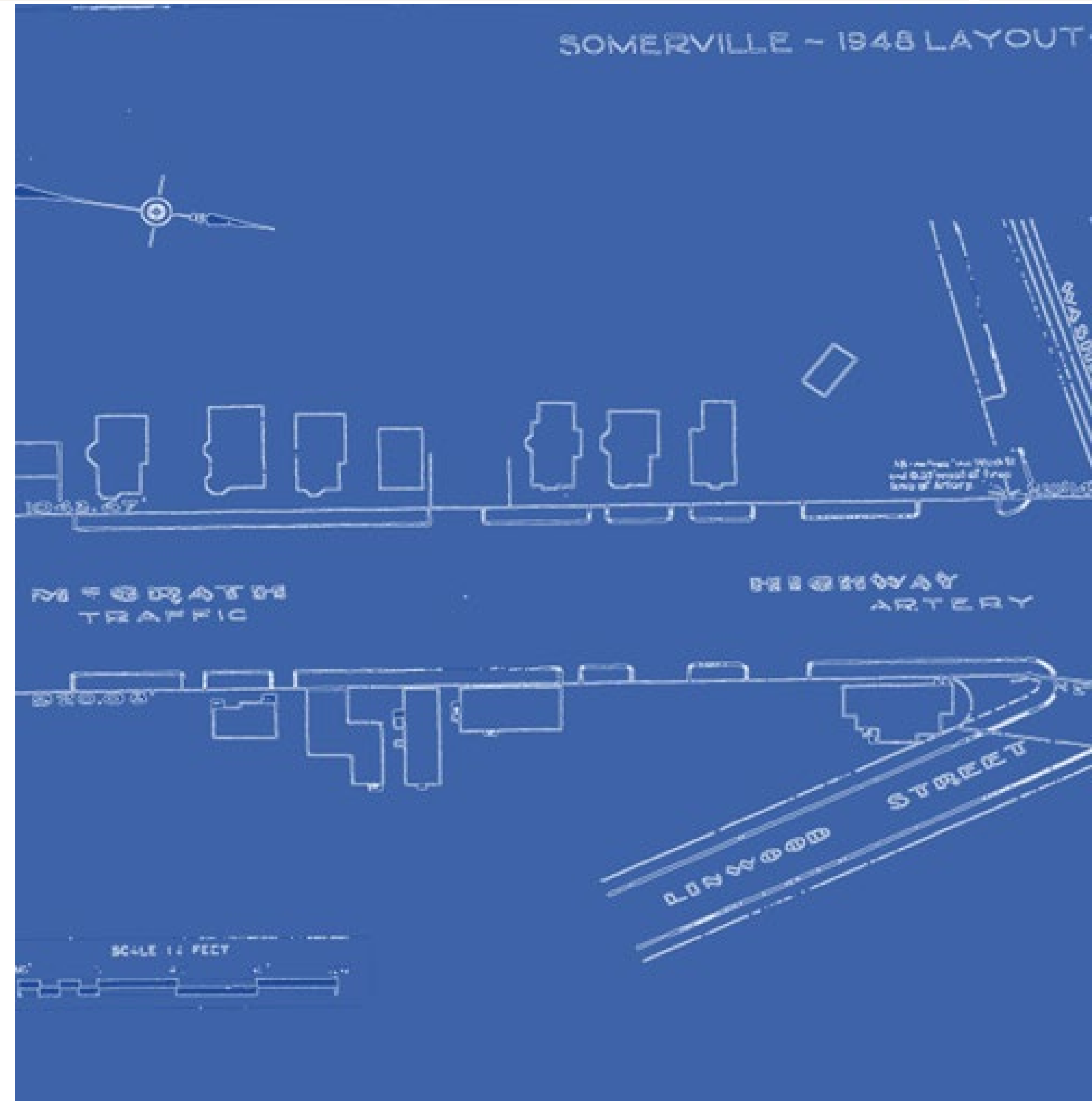
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- Redevelopment of 200 McGrath Highway
- Redevelopment of 1 McGrath Highway, including potential connection to Somerville Community Path near Rufo Rd (Planning Stage)



Right-of-Way (ROW)

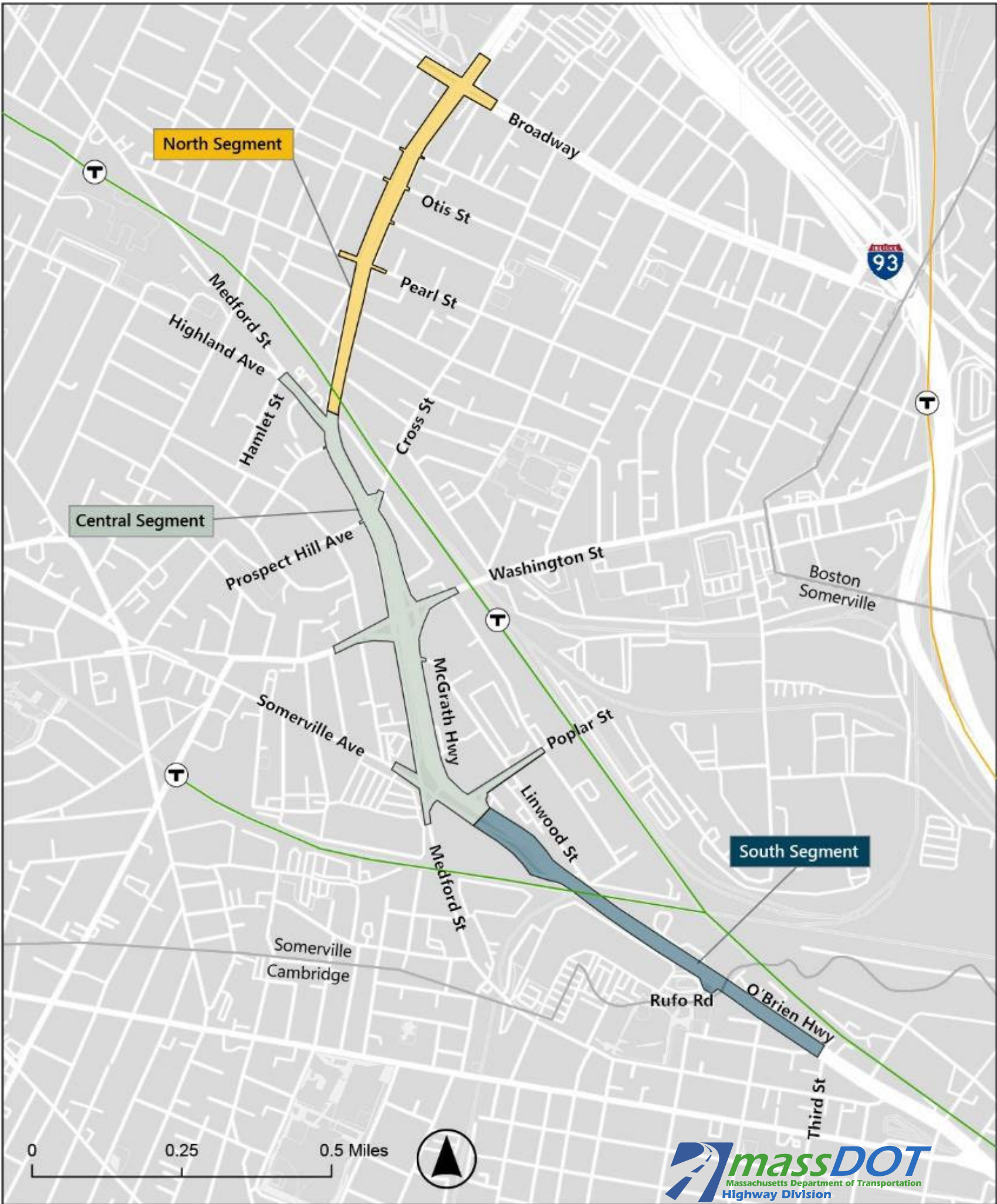
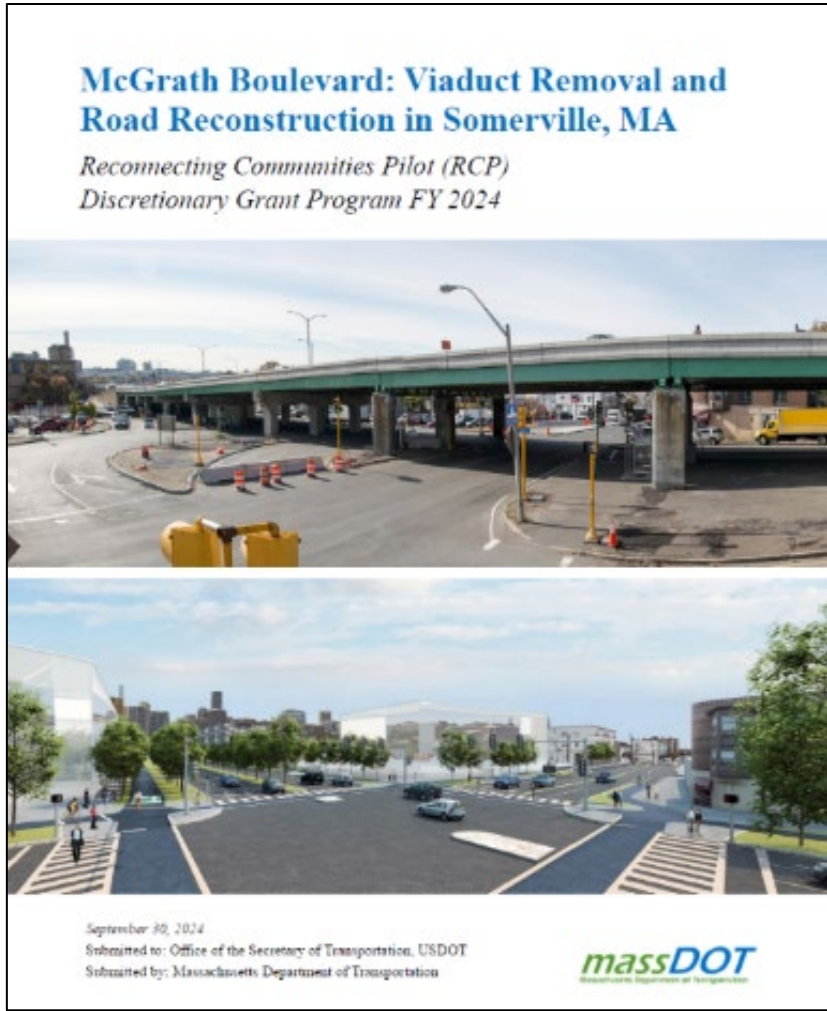
- Project takes advantage of the wide State Highway Layout
- Removing McCarthy overpass frees space for other travel modes with minimal property impacts
- Public will be informed of property impacts as the design advances



Reconnecting Communities Grant Award

USDOT Grant – January 2025 Update

McGrath Boulevard Project awarded a **\$43.15 million** Reconnecting Communities Discretionary Grant for completing construction of the central segment of McGrath (see map on the right)



Our next steps



Continue Outreach

- Stakeholders
- EJ neighborhoods
- Somerville
- Cambridge

Ongoing



Design Public Hearing

- Present detailed 25% level design

Summer 2025



75% Design

- Project coordination
- Plan development
- Environmental Review
- 75% ROW

2025-2026



Final Design

- 100% Design
- Complete ROW
- Prepare Bid Package

2026 – 2027



Construction

- Advertisement
- Bid Review
- Select Contractor
- Notice to Proceed

Begins Fall 2027

How to reach us

- Visit the project website at:
<https://www.mass.gov/mcgrath-boulevard-project>
- Submit email comments to:
MassDOTMcgrathblvd@dot.state.ma.us
- Sign up for project email notifications
https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MADOT/subscriber/new?topic_id=MADOT_244 or
- For project information visit the MassDOT Upcoming Events for Highway Division web site at
<http://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>
- Submit written comments to:
Carrie Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116
Attention: **MAJOR PROJECTS**, PROJECT FILE NO. [607981]





Questions and answers

Questions and Answers



- “Raise your hand” to be unmuted for verbal questions (Alt + Y)



- Submit your questions and comments using the Q&A button (Alt + H)



- Please state your name before your question



- Please share only 1 question or comment at a time, limited to 2 minutes, to allow others to participate



- To ask a question via phone, dial *9 and the moderator will call out the last 4-digits of your phone number and unmute your audio when it is your turn



- Please take a few minutes to complete the survey after the meeting to let us know how your experience was with this virtual meeting

All questions and comments are subject to disclosure for public records. Please use these functions for project related business only.



Cities of **Somerville**
and **Cambridge**

Thank You

McGrath Boulevard Construction

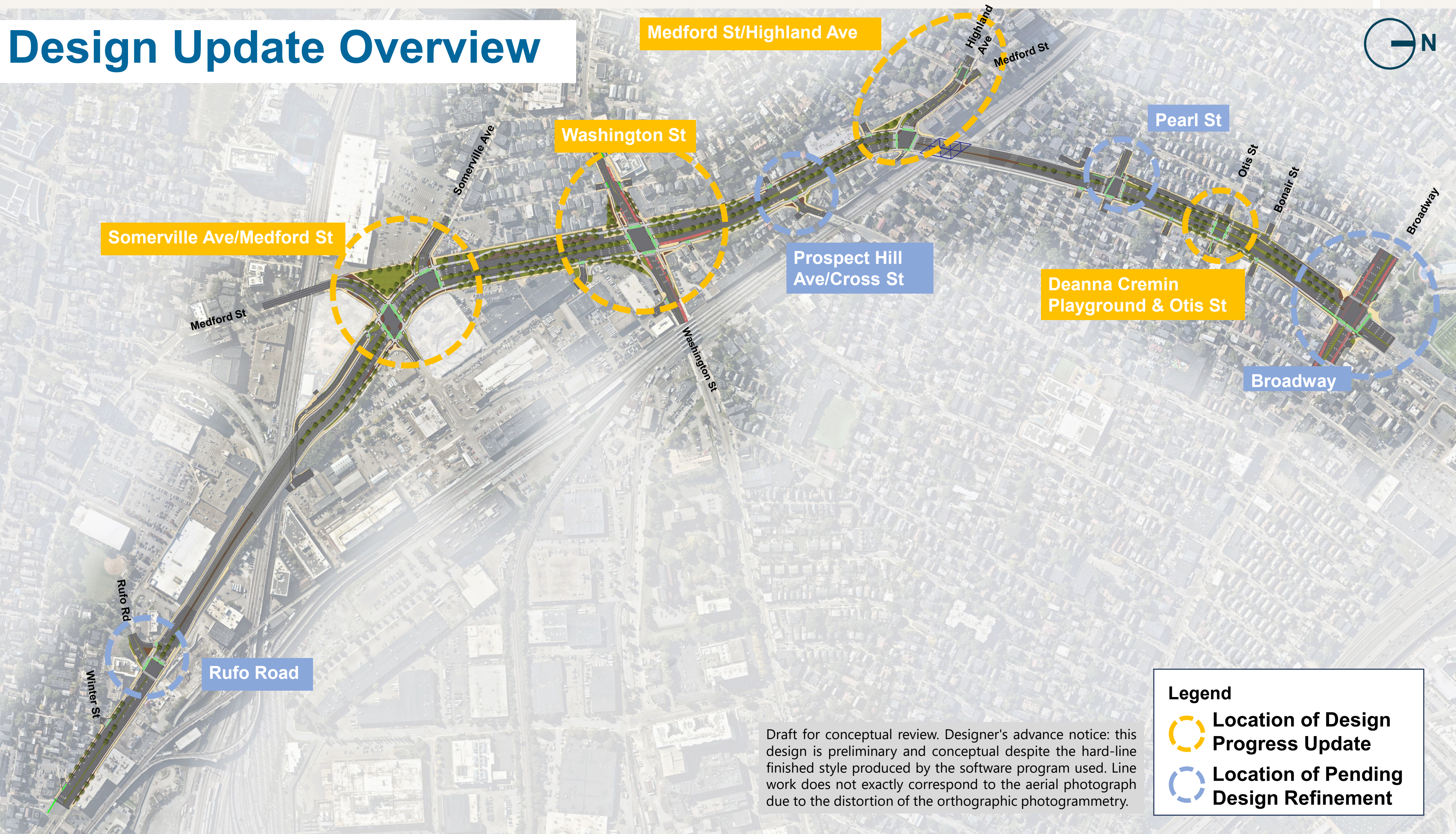
Zoom | March 25, 2025 | 6:30 PM

Project File No. 607981

Project Manager – Christopher Cameron



Design Update Overview



Somerville Ave/Medford St

Medford St/Highland Ave

Washington St

Pearl St

Prospect Hill Ave/Cross St


Deanna Cremin Playground & Otis St

Broadway


Rufo Road

Draft for conceptual review. Designer's advance notice: this design is preliminary and conceptual despite the hard-line finished style produced by the software program used. Line work does not exactly correspond to the aerial photograph due to the distortion of the orthographic photogrammetry.

Legend



Location of Design Progress Update



Location of Pending Design Refinement

Somerville Projects



Broadway



Washington Street

Cambridge Projects

