Forest Hills Improvement Initiative

Transportation Action Plan

 Short Term Recommendations ONLY Final Draft as of April 30, 2008
 For Community Review and Feedback

Prepared for:

- The City of Boston
- Boston Transportation Department
- Boston Redevelopment Authority
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

With additional funding provided by: Massachusetts Priority Development Fund, MassHousing & the Department of Housing and Community Development

Prepared by:

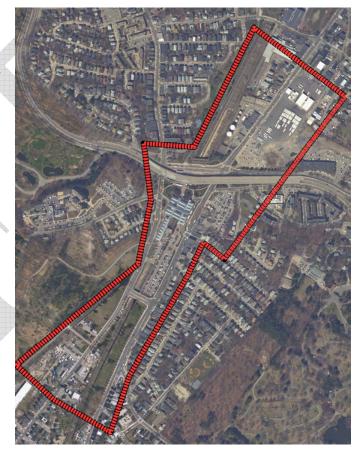
Traffic Solutions LLC with Planners Collaborative and Von Grossman & Company

Executive Summary

The Boston Redevelopment Authority in conjunction with the Boston Transportation Department has retained Traffic Solutions, LLC to perform a transportation study of the Forest Hills neighborhood. The study's focus was to improve transportation conditions in the Forest Hills area. The study approach included identifying issues on a short-term, mid-term, and long-term level. Each level corresponded to a level of financial commitment and level of effort. In the short-term, improvements can be made with relative ease, with a modest budget and staff; conversely, the long-term level improvements require significant capital outlay, planning and design.

Traffic Solutions was able to identify the issues crucial to the neighborhood through meetings with community members, field visits, and an extensive data collection effort. This action plan identifies and describes improvements that are relatively inexpensive to implement and will have an immediate effect on traffic operations, providing immediate benefit to the community. These short-term improvements comprise changes to intersection geometry, pavement markings, signage, crosswalks, and operations related to entering and exiting the MBTA station.

We would like to extend our appreciation to John Dalzell, and John Read, both of the BRA, Don Burgess, Frank Johnson, and Vineet Gupta of the BTD, and Mark Davis of the MBTA for their assistance on this project.



Forest Hills Study Area



The intersection of Washington St. at New Washington St. is a gateway to Forest Hills from the northeast. The intersection geometry is confusing to drivers. This is a particularly dangerous intersection with a high crash rate and high volumes of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.



Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Intersection Geometry

- Oue to the wide expanse of pavement, and limited pavement markings, the intersection can be confusing to drivers, particularly those making left turns.
- On the northeast corner, there is a wide right turning lane that receives very little traffic.

Pavement Markings

- Most of the pavement markings in this area are worn.
- The crosswalk markings were faded, inconsistent with those in the area, and not on pedestrian desire lines.





Recommendations (See Figure 1):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

• Signal Coordination

 The signal timing should be updated to reflect suggested changes.

Intersection Geometry

The right-turn slip lane on the northwest corner may be eliminated due to the relatively light volume. This will create opportunities (e.g. additional green space) at the intersection while making it more pedestrian friendly.

• Pavement Markings

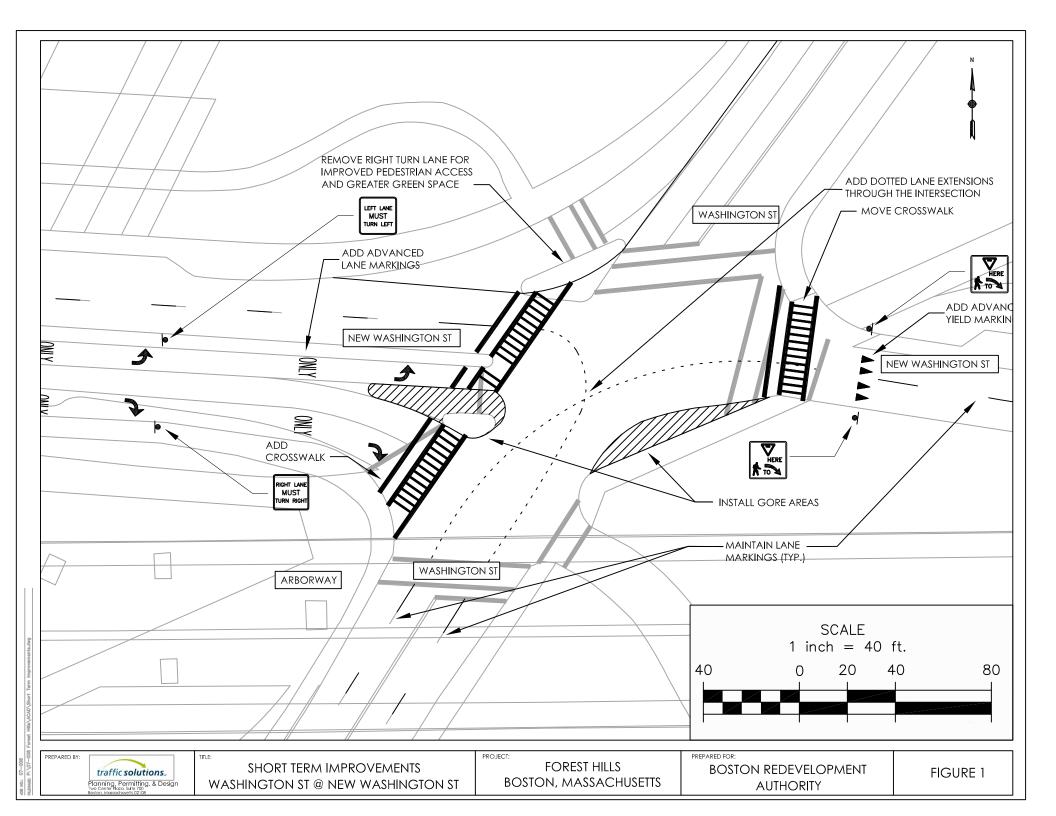
- Lane line extensions should be added so that drivers turning left onto New Washington St. from Hyde Park Ave, and turning left onto Hyde Park Ave. from New Washington St. can better distinguish their lanes.
- The lane markings on New Washington St. and Washington St. northbound approach should be maintained.
- Additional legends (e.g., RIGHT TURN ONLY) should be added on the eastbound approach, to address extended queues.
- A gore area should be added to the eastern side of the intersection to guide turning drivers, and to the western side to shorten the pedestrian crossing.

Signs

 Signs should be added in advance of the intersection on New Washington St. eastbound to inform drivers of the lane configurations.

- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.
- The crosswalk on the eastern approach of New Washington St. should be re-aligned. This will reduce the pedestrian crossing distance.
- Crosswalks should be installed on the western approach of New Washington St. This is a common crossing route leading from the station to Washington St. north. The crosswalk should be located to take advantage of the many islands on this crossing for pedestrian refuge.





The intersection of South St. at New Washington St. is a gateway to Forest Hills from the northwest. The intersection geometry is confusing to drivers. This is a dangerous intersection with a fairly high crash rate and high volumes of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.



Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Intersection Geometry

- Due to the wide expanse of pavement, and limited pavement markings, the intersection can be confusing to drivers, particularly those making left turns.
- On the southbound approach, busses turning left are waiting in queue and blocking the other vehicles from entering the intersection.

• Pavement Markings

- Many of the pavement markings in this area are worn
- The crosswalk markings were faded, inconsistent with those in the area, and not on pedestrian desire lines.





Recommendations (See Figure 2):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

Signal Coordination

 The signals at the northern and southern ends of this intersection should run on the same cycle to eliminate red-time queuing under the Arborway.

• Intersection Geometry

 The bus lane entrance and exit should be reversed to allow cars to pass while busses queue (during green-time) under the Arborway.

Pavement Markings

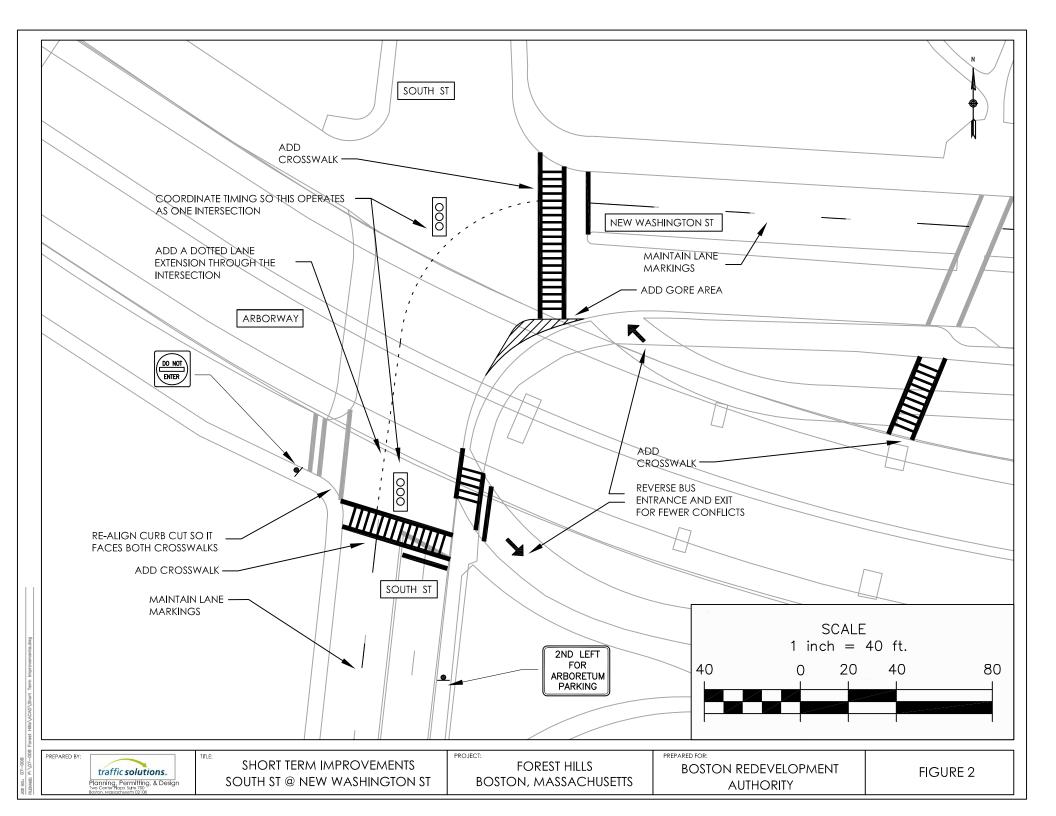
- Lane line extensions should be added so that drivers turning left from New Washington St. onto South St. can better distinguish their lanes.
- The lane markings on New Washington St. and South St. northbound should be maintained.
- A gore area should be added on the eastern side of the intersection to guide motorists away from the bus lanes.

Signs

- A "Do Not Enter" sign should be installed along the Arborway exit ramp.
- Way-finding signs should be introduced along South St. northbound to direct drivers to available parking on New Washington St.

- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.
- Crosswalks should be installed on New Washington St, across the southern end of South St. and through the bus lane.
- A Bike crossing should be installed adjacent to the crosswalk on New Washington St, across the southern end of South St. and through the bus lane.





The intersection of Washington St. at South St. is a gateway to Forest Hills from the west. This is a busy intersection with high volumes of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Pavement Markings

- Most of the pavement markings in this area are worn.
- o The crosswalk markings were inconsistent with those in the area.

• Signs

The angles and locations of signs make them difficult to see while approaching the intersection.

Recommendations (See Figure 3):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

• Pavement Markings

 The lane markings on Washington St. should be maintained.

Signs

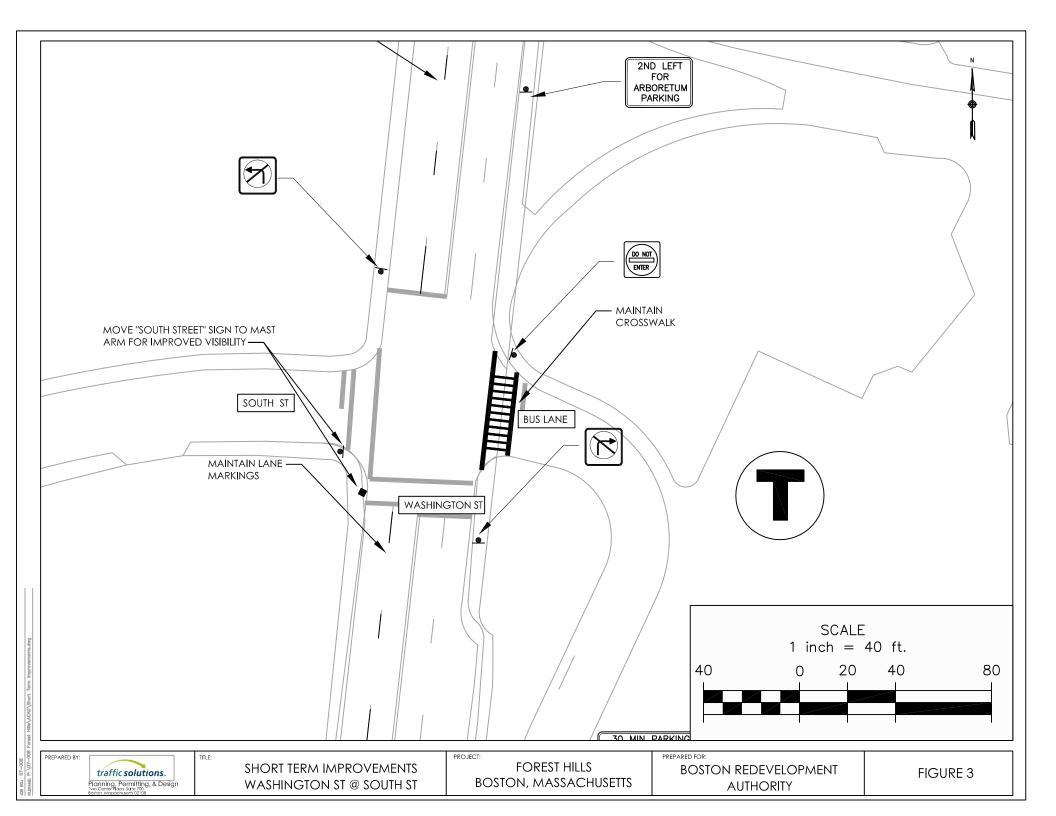
- "Do Not Enter" and "No Left/Right Turn"
 Signs should be added in advance of the intersection to inform drivers of the turning restrictions. This will prevent drivers from making hasty decisions at the intersection.
- The South Street sign should be relocated to the mast arm so that it is visible to all approaches.

- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.
- The crosswalk across the bus lane on the eastern side of Washington Street should be reinstalled to match the other crosswalks.



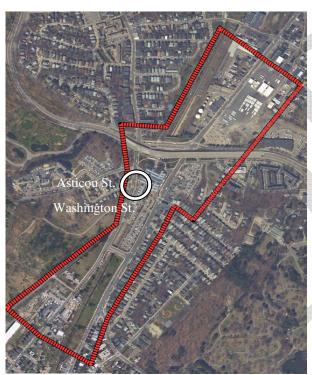






The intersection of Washington St. at Asticou St. is the location of the pick-up/drop-off area and cab stand for the station.





Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Pavement Markings

 Many of the pavement markings in this area are worn.

Station

- The cab stand is very long and there are many cabs queued in front of the station. This limits drivers' ability to effectively use the pick-up/drop-off area; causing congestion and lane blockage during the peak hour.
- The allotted pick-up/drop-off area, south of the cab stand, was not being used and vehicles were double parking behind it.
- There was an excessive amount of trash along this section of Washingron St. and the garbage bins were overflowing.

Recommendations (See Figure 4):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

• Pavement Markings

The lane markings on Washington St. southbound should be maintained.

Signs

 A Sign informing drivers to park on New Washington St. should be introduced to reduce double parking on Washington St.

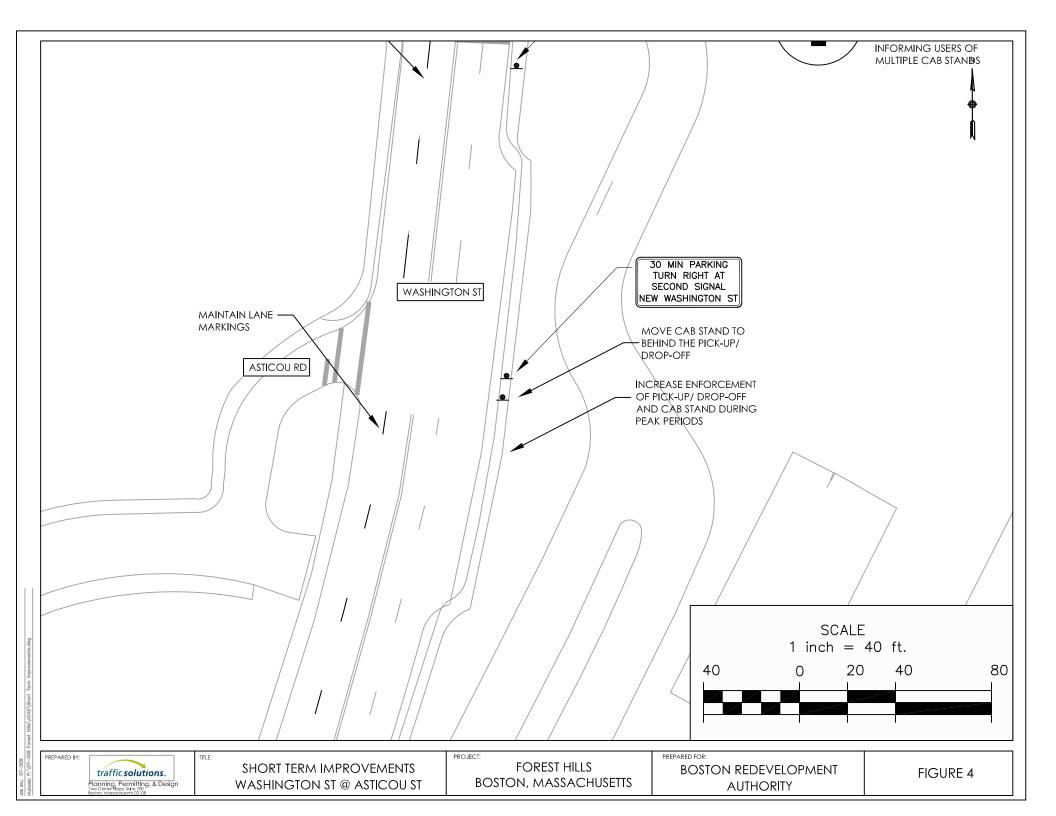
• Station

- The cab stand should be relocated to behind the pick-up/drop-off lane.
- o Police enforcement of the pick-up/drop-off lane should increase.
- Garbage disposal and street cleaning should occur on a regular basis.



Looking South on Washington St.

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The intersection of Washington St. at the Bus Lane Entrance is a heavily used roadway for MBTA busses. It is also the location of an Arboretum entrance.

Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Pavement Markings

- Many of the pavement markings in this area are worn.
- The crosswalk markings were inconsistent with those in the area.

• Signs

 The angles and locations of signs make them difficult to see while approaching the intersection.

Recommendations (See Figure 5):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

Pavement Markings

o The lane markings on Washington St. should be maintained.

Signs

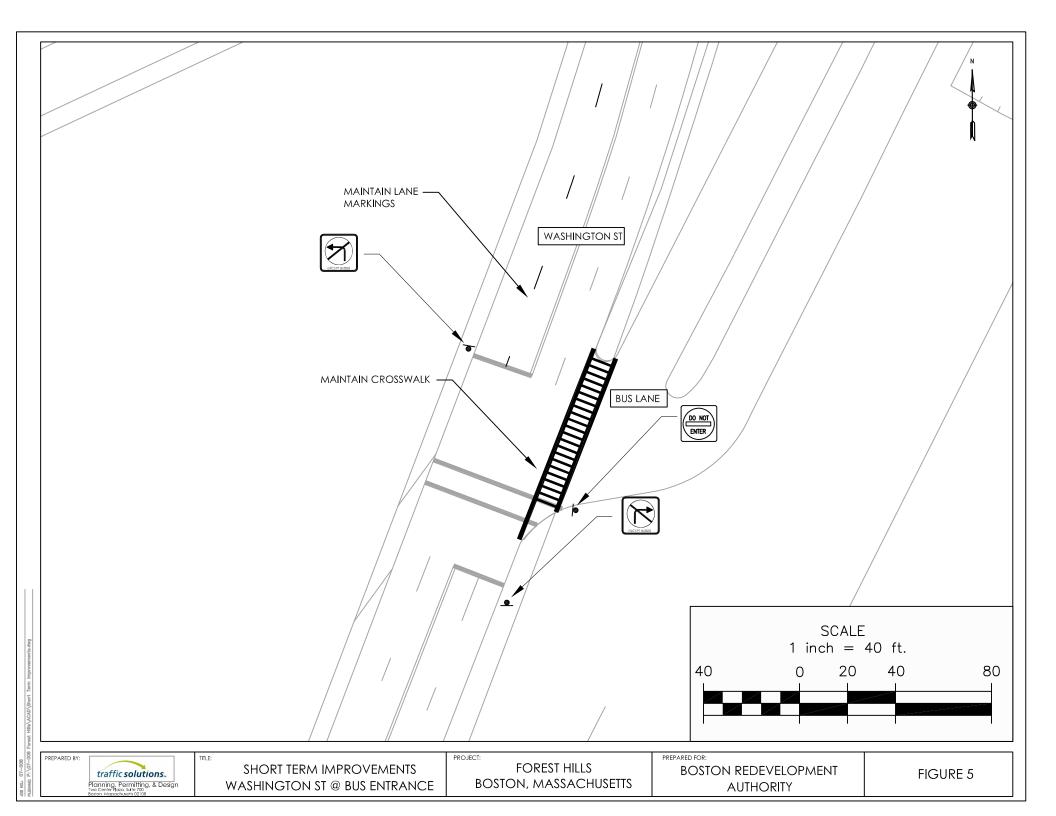
 Signs should be added in advance of the intersection on Washington St. to inform drivers of the restrictions. This will prevent drivers from making hasty decisions at the intersection.

- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.
- The crosswalk across the bus lane on the eastern side of Washington Street should be redone to match the other crosswalks.









The intersection of Washington St. at the MBTA Parking Lot is a short distance from the bus lane and is where the majority of MBTA employees park.

Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Pavement Markings

The crosswalk markings were inconsistent with those in the area.

Parking

The lot is exclusive to MBTA employees.

Recommendations (See Figure 6):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

• Pavement Markings

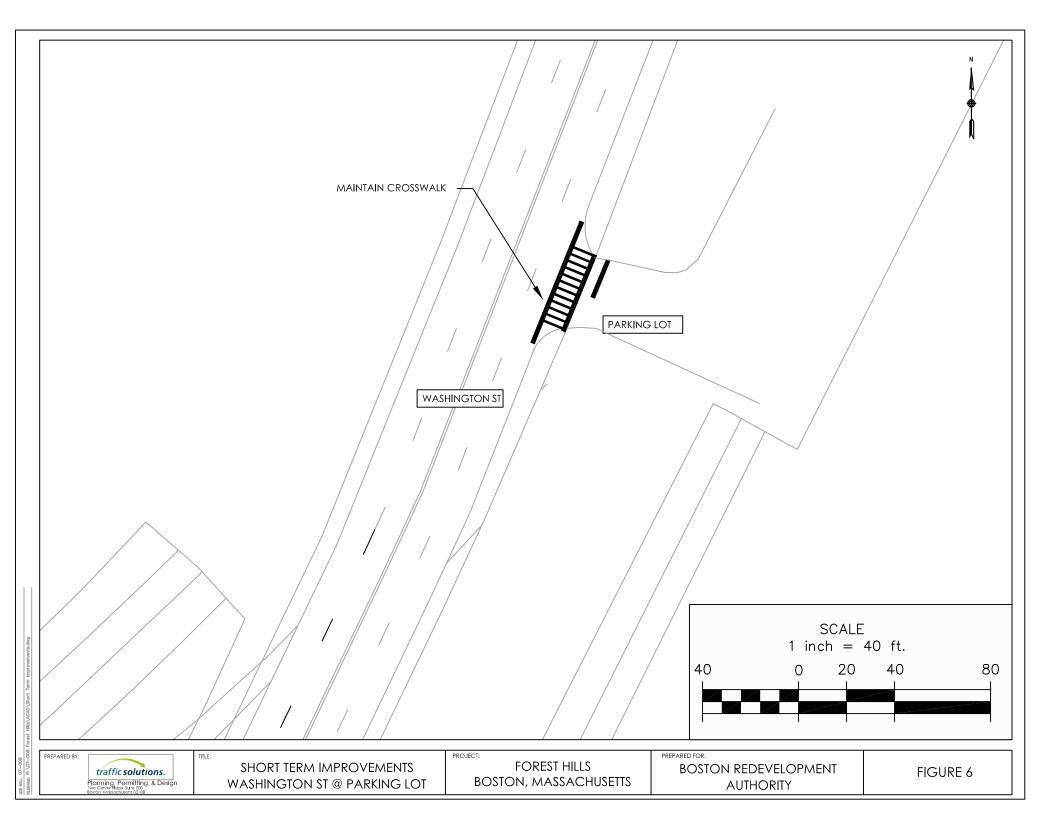
 The lane markings on Washington St. should be maintained.

- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.
- The crosswalk across the bus lane on the eastern side of Washington Street should be installed to match the other crosswalks.









The intersection of Washington St. at Ukraine Way is a gateway to Forest Hills from the southwest. This is a particularly dangerous intersection with a high crash rate and high volumes of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Intersection Geometry

Due to the wide expanse of pavement, and limited pavement markings, the intersection can be confusing to drivers, particularly those making left turns.

• Pavement Markings

- Most of the pavement markings in this area are worn.
- The crosswalk markings were faded.

Signs

 A sign on Ukraine Way was not visible for westbound drivers due to an overgrown tree.





Recommendations (See Figure 7):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

Pavement Markings

- Lane line extensions should be added so that drivers turning left can better distinguish their lanes.
- The lane markings on Washington St. and Ukraine Way should be maintained.

Signs

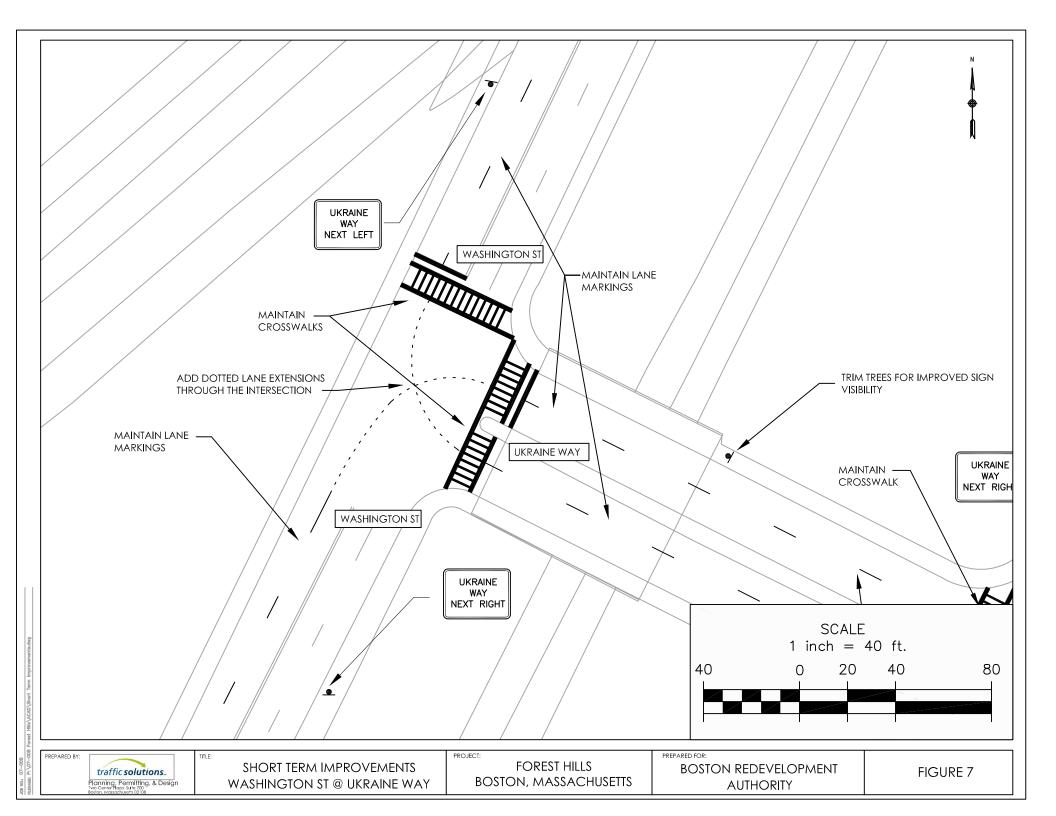
- Signs should be added in advance of the intersection on Washington St. to inform drivers of the lane configurations. This will prevent drivers from making hasty decisions at the intersection.
- Existing signs should be maintained so they are visible to all drivers.

- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area..
- Crosswalks should be installed on the northern end of Washington St. and across the western end of Ukraine Way.



Looking South on Washington at Ukraine Way





The intersection of Hyde Park Ave. at Ukraine Way is a gateway to Forest Hills from the southeast. This is a particularly dangerous intersection with a high crash rate and high volumes of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Intersection Geometry

Due to the wide expanse of pavement, and limited pavement markings, the intersection can be confusing to drivers, particularly those making left turns.

• Pavement Markings

- Most of the pavement markings in this area are worn.
- The crosswalk markings were faded and inconsistent with the rest of Forest Hills.



Recommendations (See Figure 8):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

Pavement Markings

- Lane line extensions should be added through the intersection so that drivers turning left from Hyde Park Ave. Northbound to Ukraine Way Westbound, and from Ukraine Way Eastbound to Hyde Park Ave. Southbound, can better distinguish their lanes.
- The lane markings on Hyde Park Ave. and Ukraine Way should be maintained.

• Signs

 Signs should be added in advance of the intersection on Hyde Park Ave. to inform drivers of the lane configurations. This will prevent drivers from making hasty decisions at the intersection.

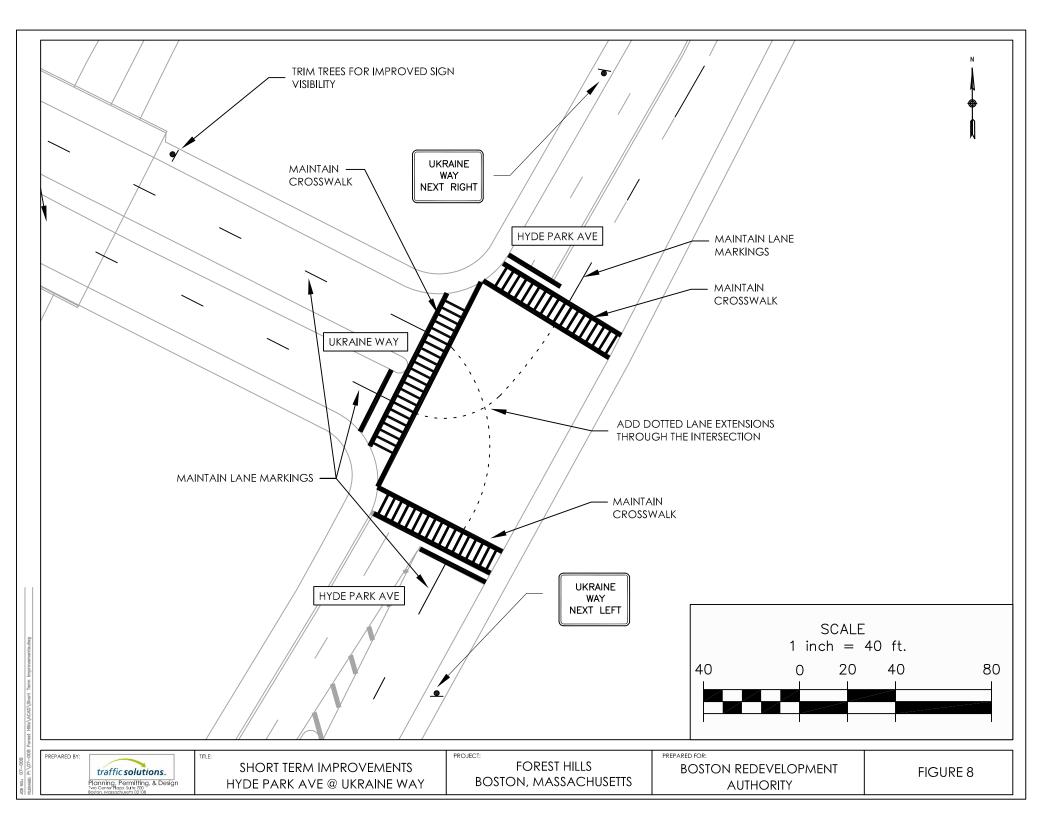
- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.
- Crosswalks should be installed on Washington St. and across the eastern end of Ukraine Way.



Looking South on Hyde Park at Ukraine Way







The intersections of Hyde Park Ave. at Weld Hill St. and Woodlawn St. are a gateway to Forest Hills from Forest Hills Cemetery. It is also an entrance to a large public parking lot.

Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Pavement Markings

The crosswalk markings were faded, inconsistent with those in the area, and not on pedestrian desire lines.

Signs

The angles and locations of signs make them difficult to see while approaching the intersection.

Recommendations (See Figure 9):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

Signs

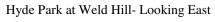
The Weld Hill Street sign should be relocated to the top of the One Way sign for easier identification by drivers.

- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.
- Crosswalks should be repainted across the parking lot and Woodlawn St.
- A Crosswalk should be installed across Weld Hill St.

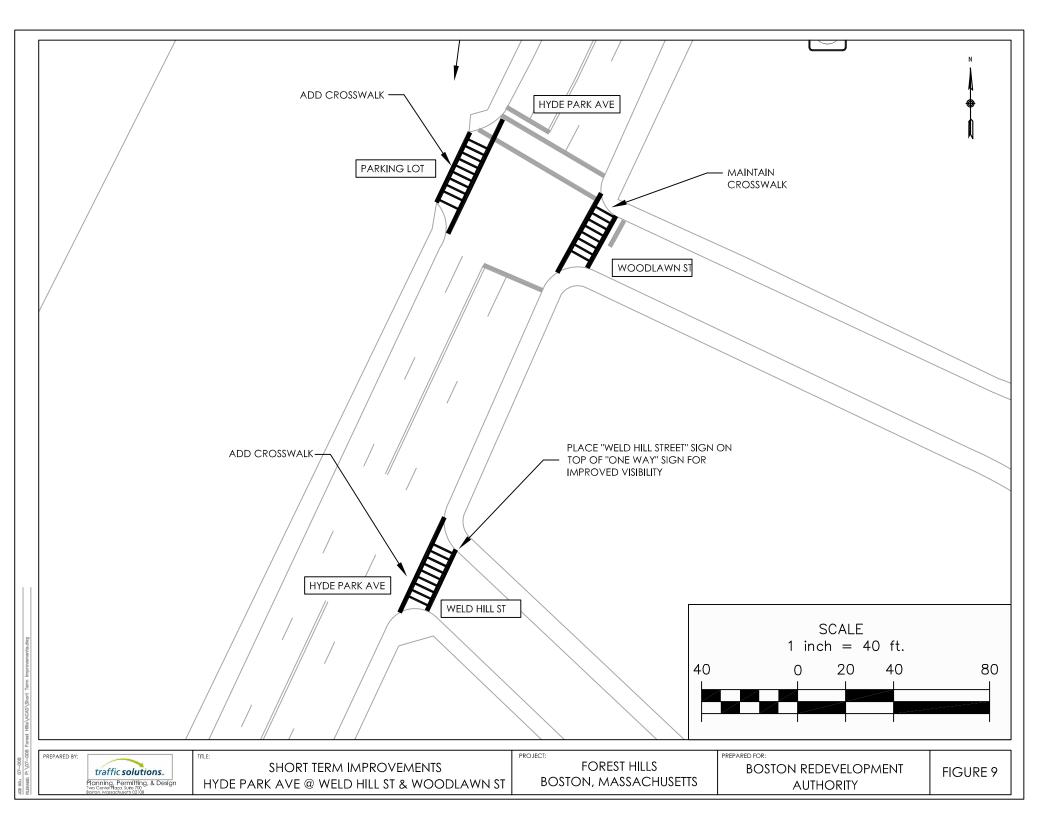






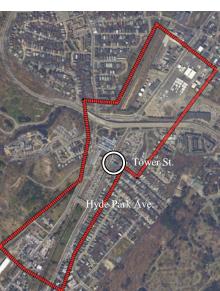






The intersection of Hyde Park Ave. at Tower St. is a heavily used entrance for MBTA busses.





Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

Pavement Markings

• The crosswalk markings were inconsistent with those in the area.

Signs

 The angles and locations of signs make them difficult to see while approaching the intersection.

Recommendations (See Figure 10):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

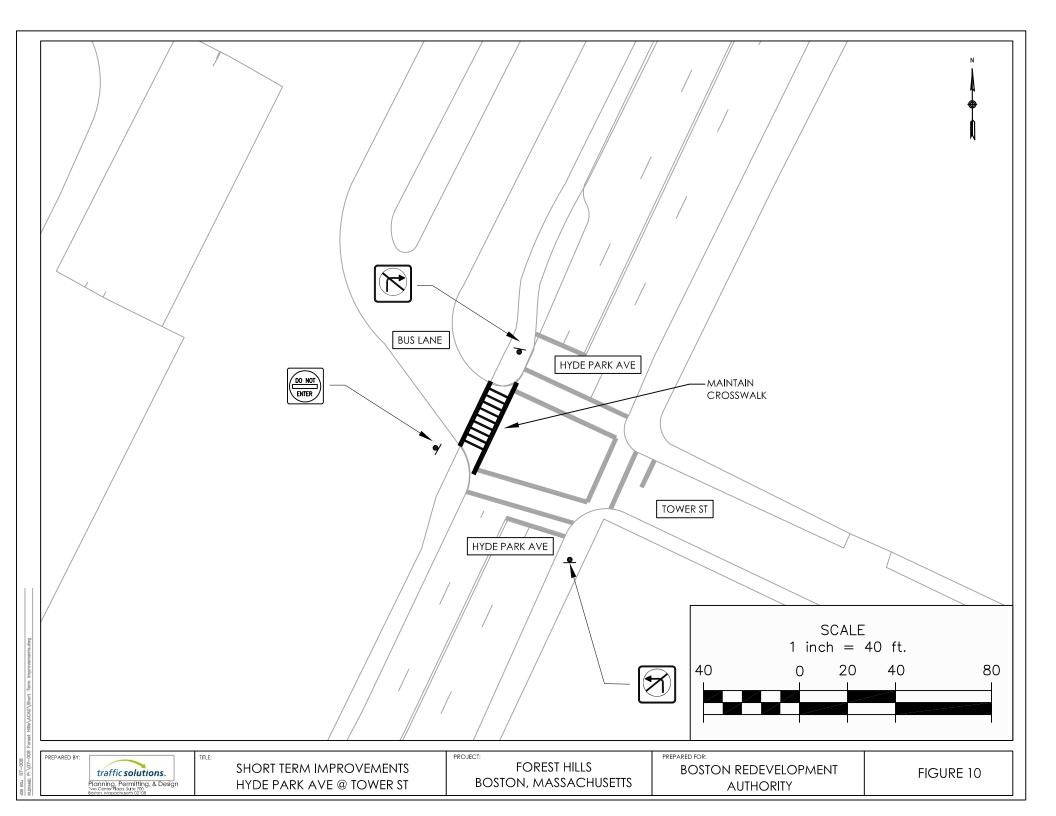
Signs

 Signs should be added in advance of the intersection on Hyde Park Ave. to inform drivers of the turning restrictions. This will prevent drivers from making hasty decisions at the intersection.

- All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.
- The crosswalk across the bus lane on the western side of Washington Street should be reinstalled to match the other crosswalks.







The intersection of Hyde Park Ave. at the Parking Lot and the Arborway is heavily used for MBTA busses, and is an entrance to a major public parking lot. It is a major exit point for Forest Hills to neighborhoods east.



Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Pavement Markings

- Some of the pavement markings in this area are worn.
- The crosswalk markings were faded, inconsistent with those in the area, and not on pedestrian desire lines.

• Signs

 The angles and locations of signs make them difficult to see while approaching the intersection.

Parking

 Street parking on Hyde Park Ave. has low turnover and few spaces available in front of businesses.

Recommendations (See Figure 11):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

Pavement Markings

• The lane markings on Washington St. should be maintained.

Signs

Signs should be added in advance of the intersection on Hyde Park Ave. to inform drivers of the turning restrictions. This will prevent drivers from making hasty decisions at the intersection.

Crosswalks

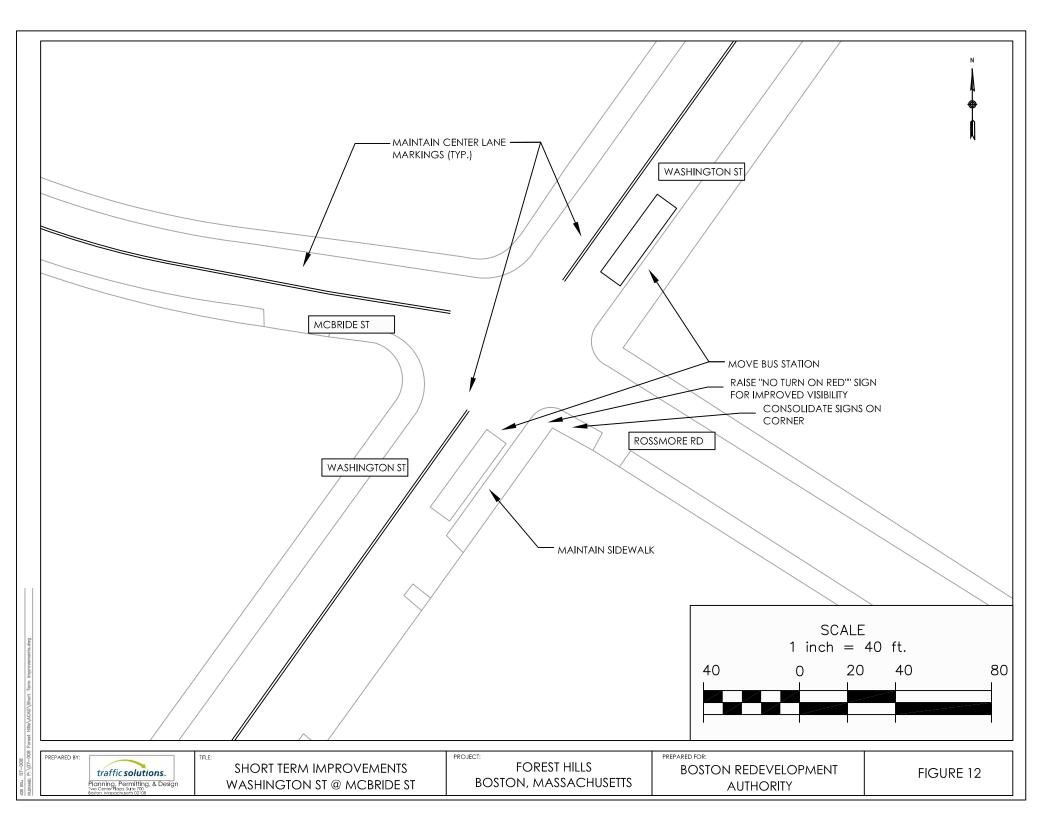
 All five crosswalks should be reinstalled to be consistent with the other crosswalks (e.g., ladder type) surrounding Forest Hills.

Parking

 Metered parking should be introduced on Hyde Park Ave. to increase turn-over.







Forest Hills is home to many modes of transportation. These multi-modal uses often block traffic and create safety and capacity problems around the station. All users should be accommodated by the transportation infrastructure.



Looking South on Washington St. - Cab Stand

Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

School Busses

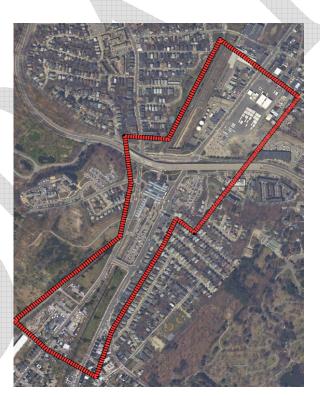
 In the AM peak period, school busses are often found parked in the street blocking traffic on New Washington St. and Hyde Park Ave.

Cabs

 The cab stand on Washington St. overflows into the pick-up/drop-off lane forcing those drivers into the street.

• Bicycles

Bicycle theft is a problem around the station.



Recommendations (See Figures 14, 15, & 16):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

• School Busses (Figures 14 & 16)

- Busses should use the cab stand on New Washington St. in the AM peak.
- On Hyde Park Ave, if the pick-up/drop-off lane across from Tower St. is full, busses should pull into the turn-around across from Woodlawn St.

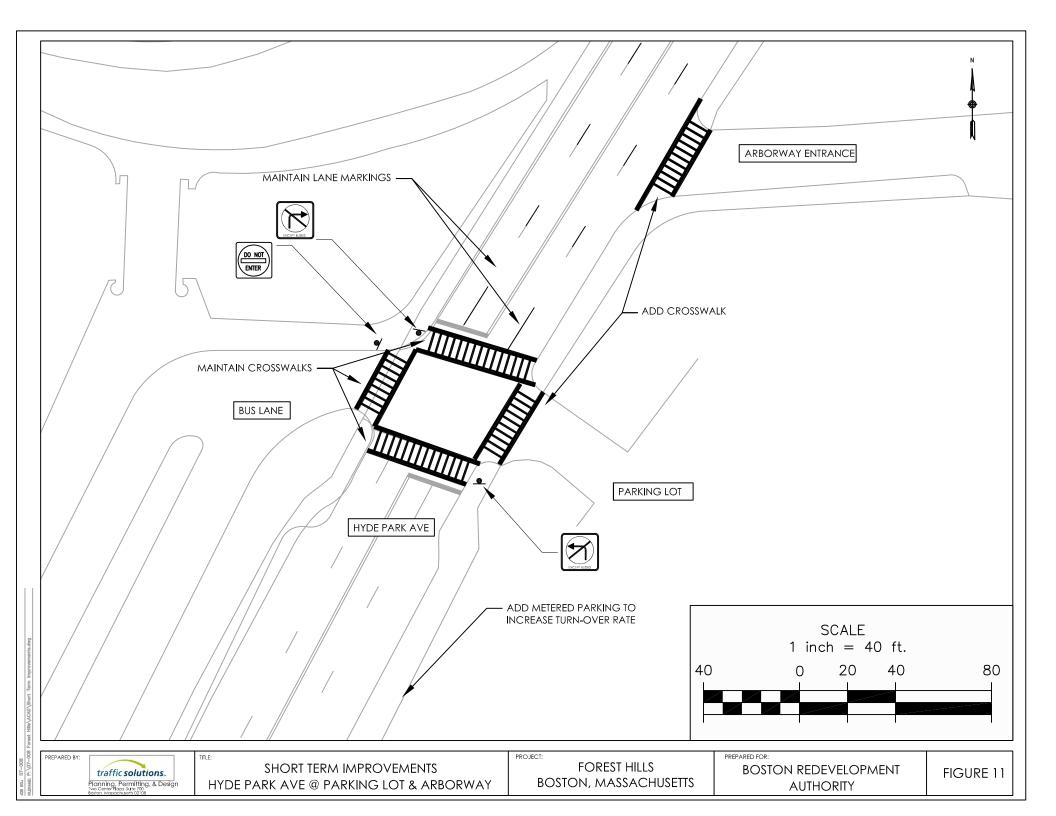
Cabs (Figure 15)

- The cab stand on Washington St. should be relocated to behind the pick-up/drop-off lane.
- Signage should be provided within the station informing users of the cab stand on Hyde Park Ave.
- o Cab stand lengths should be enforced.

Bicycles (Figure 15)

Safe bicycle storage should be provided within Forest Hills Station.





The intersection of Washington St. at McBride St. is an entrance to Forest Hills from the neighborhood north.



Looking Southwest on Washington Street



Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

Bus Stop

The bus stop in the northbound direction is located before the intersection, which blocks through movements.

Pavement Markings

Most of the pavement markings in this area are worn.

Signs

 The angles and locations of signs make them difficult to see while approaching the intersection.

Sidewalks

• The sidewalks along the eastern side of Washington St. are in severe disrepair.

Recommendations (See Figure 12):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

Bus Stop

 The northbound bus stop should be relocated to the northern side of the intersection.

Pavement Markings

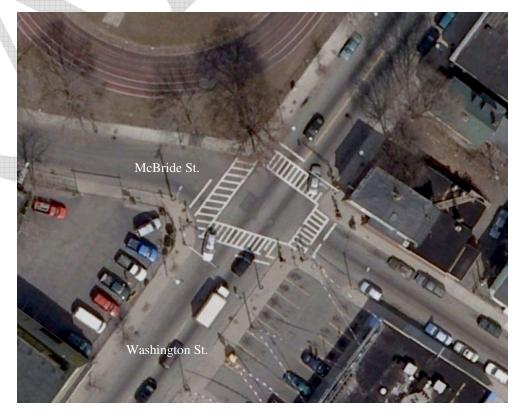
The center lane markings on Washington St. and McBride St. should be maintained.

• Signs

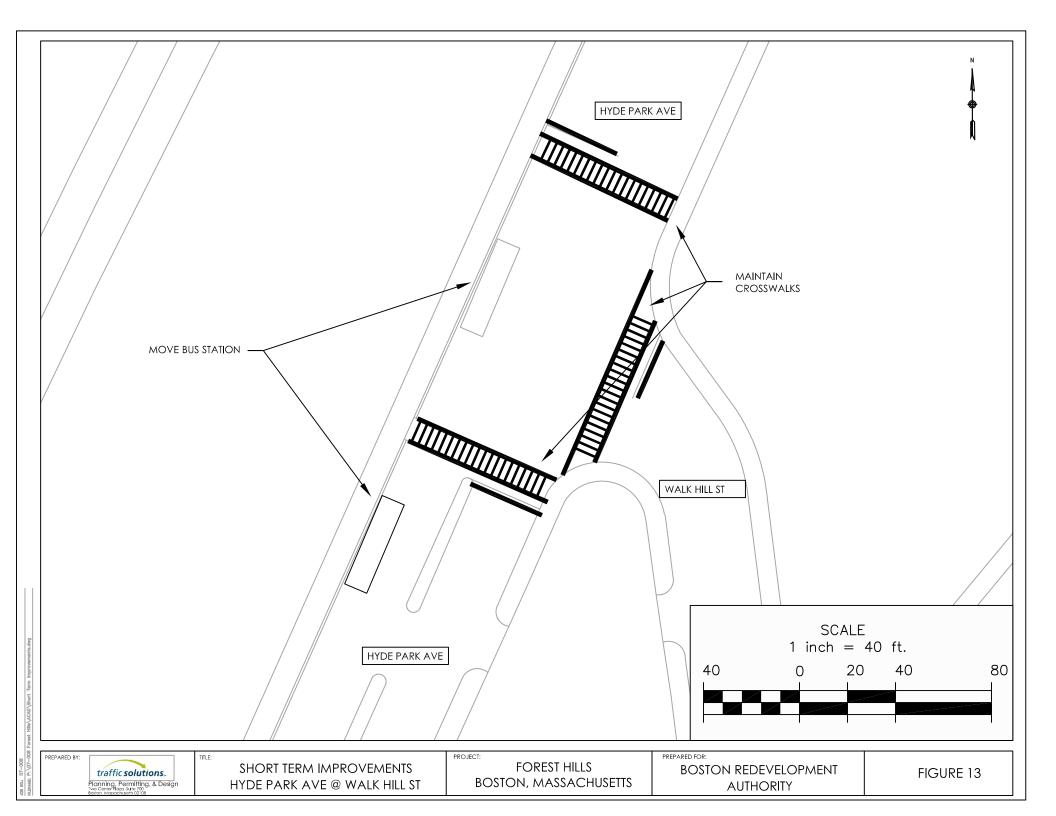
- The "No Turn on Red" sign on the southeast corner should be raised so that it is visible to approaching drivers.
- On the same corner, signs should be consolidated so there are fewer poles.

Sidewalks

 The sidewalks on Washington St. should be maintained.







The intersection of Hyde Park Ave. at Walk Hill St. is a gateway to Forest Hills from the east and the cemetery. This is a busy intersection with high volumes of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Findings:

Traffic Solutions conducted field visits, traffic and pedestrian counts to identify the areas most in need of improvement. A number of issues were identified, including:

• Bus Stop

• The bus stop in the southbound direction is located in the middle of the intersection.

• Pavement Markings

• The crosswalk markings were inconsistent with the rest of Forest Hills.

Recommendations (See Figure 13):

A number of recommendations have been identified and are enumerated in order of priority:

Bus Stop

 Relocate the bus stop to a location just south of the intersection.

Crosswalks

O All crosswalks should be maintained, and consistent (e.g., ladder type) throughout the area.



