



Neighborhood Goals & Street Design Workshop

October 30, 2019



**boston planning &
development agency**



AGENDA

- 1 Review of Neighborhood Goals & Feedback
- 2 Neighborhood Goals: Framework
- 3 Neighborhood Goals: Exercise
- 4 Transforming Western Avenue: Framework
- 5 Transforming Western Avenue: Exercise
- 6 Next Steps



1

Review of Neighborhood Goals & Feedback

Housing
Economic Development
Public Realm, Open Space &
Placemaking



Open House, September 16, 2018



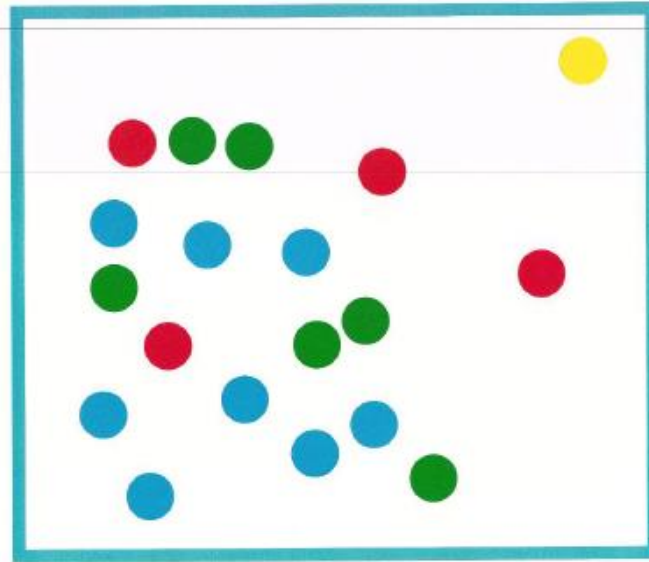
Walking & Bike Tour, October 5, 2019

HOUSING

September 16 Feedback on Goals from NASFP & Community Wide Plan

Provide significant new housing affordable to a wide range of incomes and family types. Expand the affordable options for potential homebuyers and renters.

Paste a sticker to indicate your support!



HAVE A RETAIL DISTRICT
Between North Harvard +
Everett with mix of
Affordable housing.

Wide spectrum of affordable housing (Rental + Homeownership) that
builds upon the diversity of the neighborhood. Income levels
should range between 30% AMI-100% AMI (w/partnerships
w/non profit developers to bring more resources to bear).

Deed restricted
home ownership.

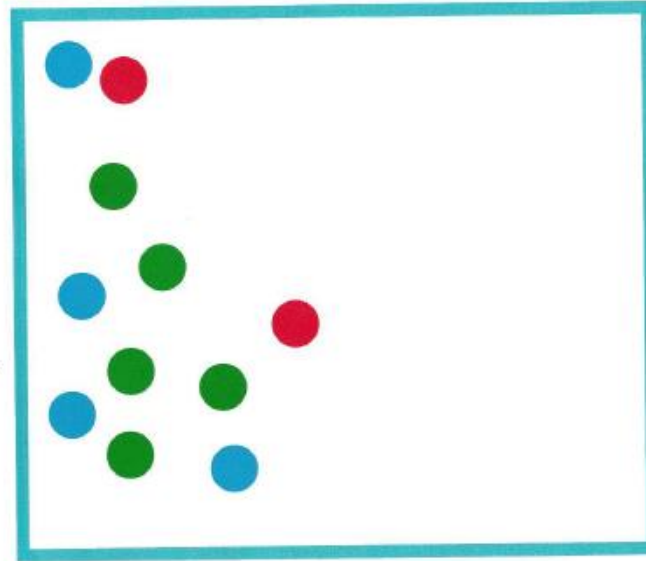
HOUSING!
DENSE w/
OPEN SPACE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

September 16 Feedback on Goals from NASFP & Community Wide Plan

Leverage the economic development opportunities afforded by Harvard's presence in North Allston to create new well-paying jobs.

Paste a sticker to indicate your support!



There needs to be a better mix of housing & commercial. Be careful of MASSING, density, height & parking!

✓ Keep vs AS A
✓ Neighborhood (NOT A commercial district)

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACE & PLACEMAKING

September 16 Feedback on Goals from NASFP & Community Wide Plan

Public Realm:

General term for shared public spaces, especially streets, sidewalks, plazas, “streetscape”



Continuum, Barry's Corner



Boylston Street near Mass Ave.

Open Space:

Often used to refer to parks and green spaces but can also include plazas and more urban “hardscape” spaces



Artists' Way at NEXUS (Proposed)



Ray Mellone Park

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACE & PLACEMAKING

September 16 Feedback on Goals from NASFP & Community Wide Plan

Placemaking:

The process of creating or reinventing urban places with the goal of attracting people. Placemaking is not just about physical form but also about “activation,” i.e. the addition of elements such as food, entertainment, music, or art that will cause people to gather and stay.



Zone 3, Aeronaut Allston



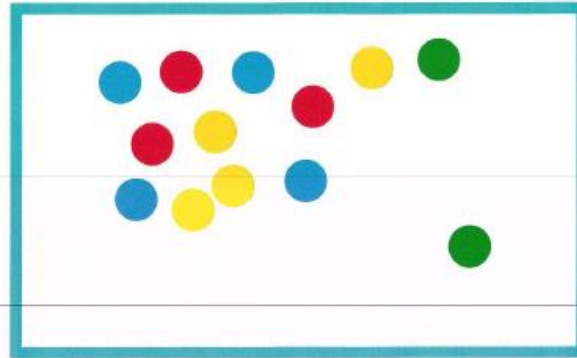
Shopper's Park, Downtown Crossing

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACE & PLACEMAKING

September 16 Feedback on Goals from NASFP & Community Wide Plan

Preserve, enhance, and increase open spaces and public realm opportunities for an expanding population.

Paste a sticker to indicate your support!

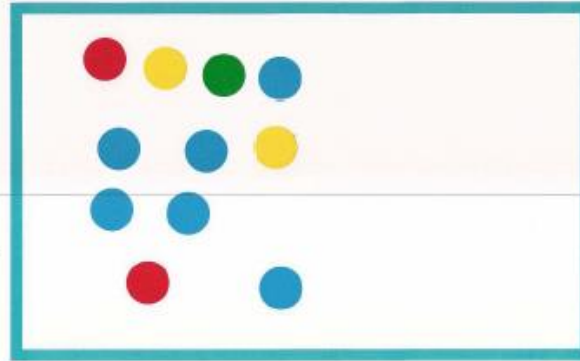


✓✓ Connections To River
that Ties Together
Open spaces on Both
Sides of Soldier's Field
RD.

Keep buildings set-back or
add set-backs. Add greenspace.

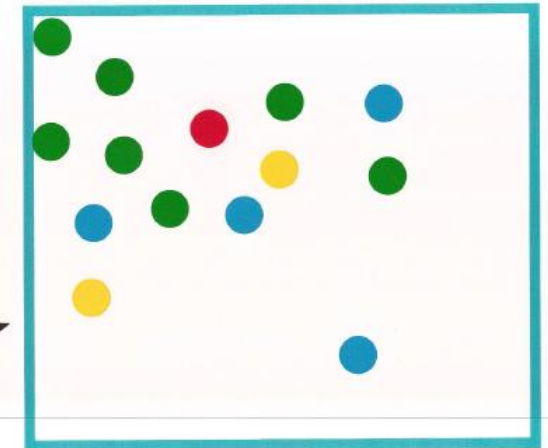
Enhance access – both visual and physical – to the Charles River from the traditional neighborhoods and other parts of the community.

Paste a sticker to indicate your support!



Match increases in height and density with new public spaces, affordability, appropriate transitions to existing neighborhoods, good design, and enhanced connections to the river.

Paste a sticker to indicate your support!

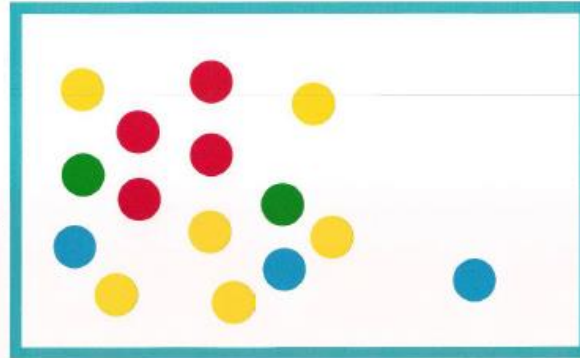


PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACE & PLACEMAKING

September 16 Feedback on Goals from NASFP & Community Wide Plan

Enhance Western Avenue and North Harvard Street as pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environments.

Paste a sticker to indicate your support!



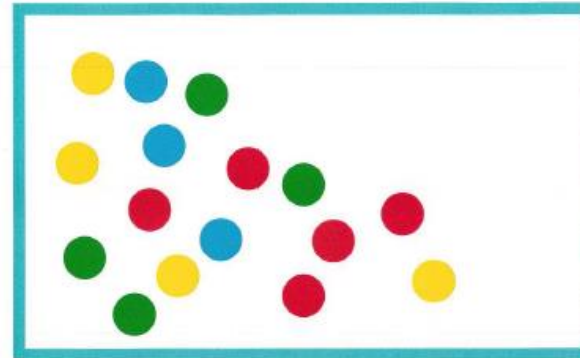
✓ "complete streets" with Big trees, protected bike lane and Bus priority lane.

✓ Western Ave is a good place to add more housing, ~~an~~ especially inclusive affordable housing, because it is accessible by public transportation + bike. Add housing but DO NOT add more parking. It is easy to live in this neighborhood without a car.

} not true

Create a walkable commercial and mixed-use "Main Street" along Western Avenue from North Harvard Street toward Brighton Mills and a vibrant commercial center at Barry's Corner.

Paste a sticker to indicate your support!



Better walking! Better biking! ★
I want to be able to walk around Western with my kids without worry. TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ✓

How active it is now compared to 15 years ago. But it needs to be more walkable + bikeable, please.

2


Neighborhood Goals: Framework



BREAKING DOWN THE STUDY AREA INTO SUBAREAS

Proposed Criteria

- **Parcel size**
- **Adjacencies**
 - For example, Western Avenue frontage, existing residential fabric
- **Opportunities**
 - For public realm improvements, open space, placemaking, key connections
- **Performance**
 - Desired future character, uses, role, i.e. what do we want this subarea to do?

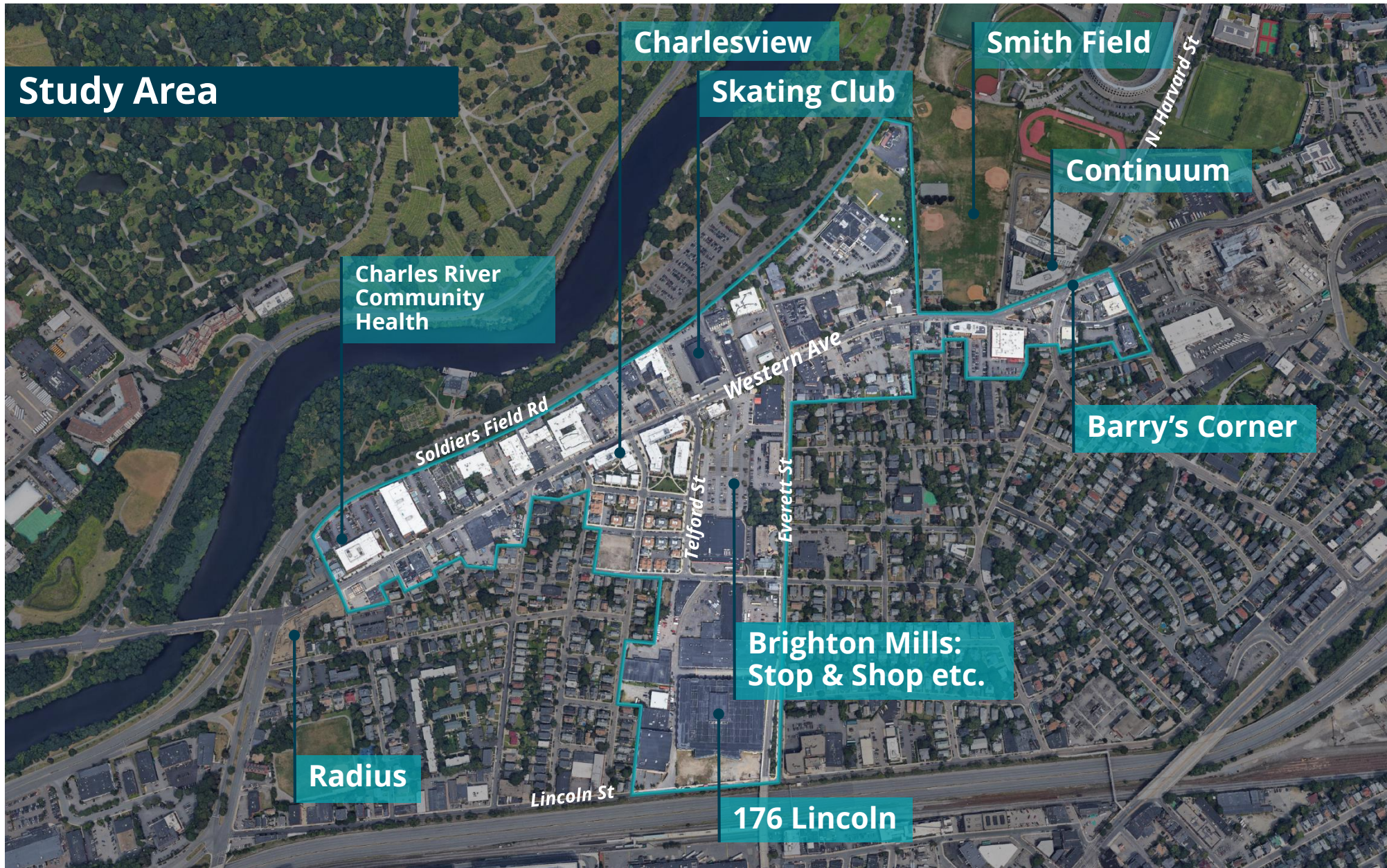
A diagram consisting of two large blue brackets on the left side. The top bracket groups the 'Parcel size', 'Adjacencies', and 'Opportunities' criteria. The bottom bracket groups the 'Performance' criterion.

What we have been looking at

What we want to talk about in this workshop

Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.

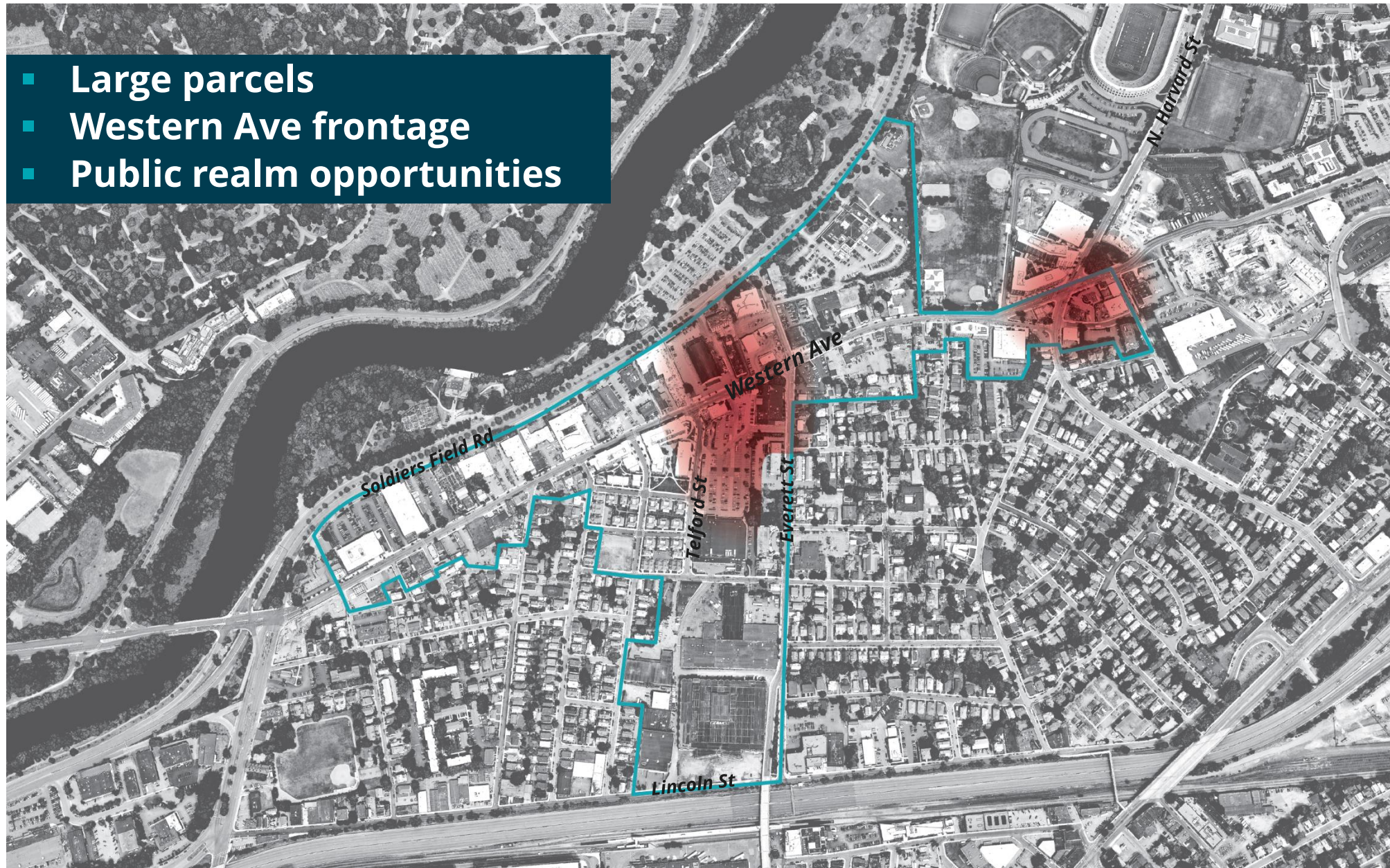


Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



- Large parcels
- Western Ave frontage
- Public realm opportunities



Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



- Large parcels
- No Western Ave frontage
- Opportunities for connections

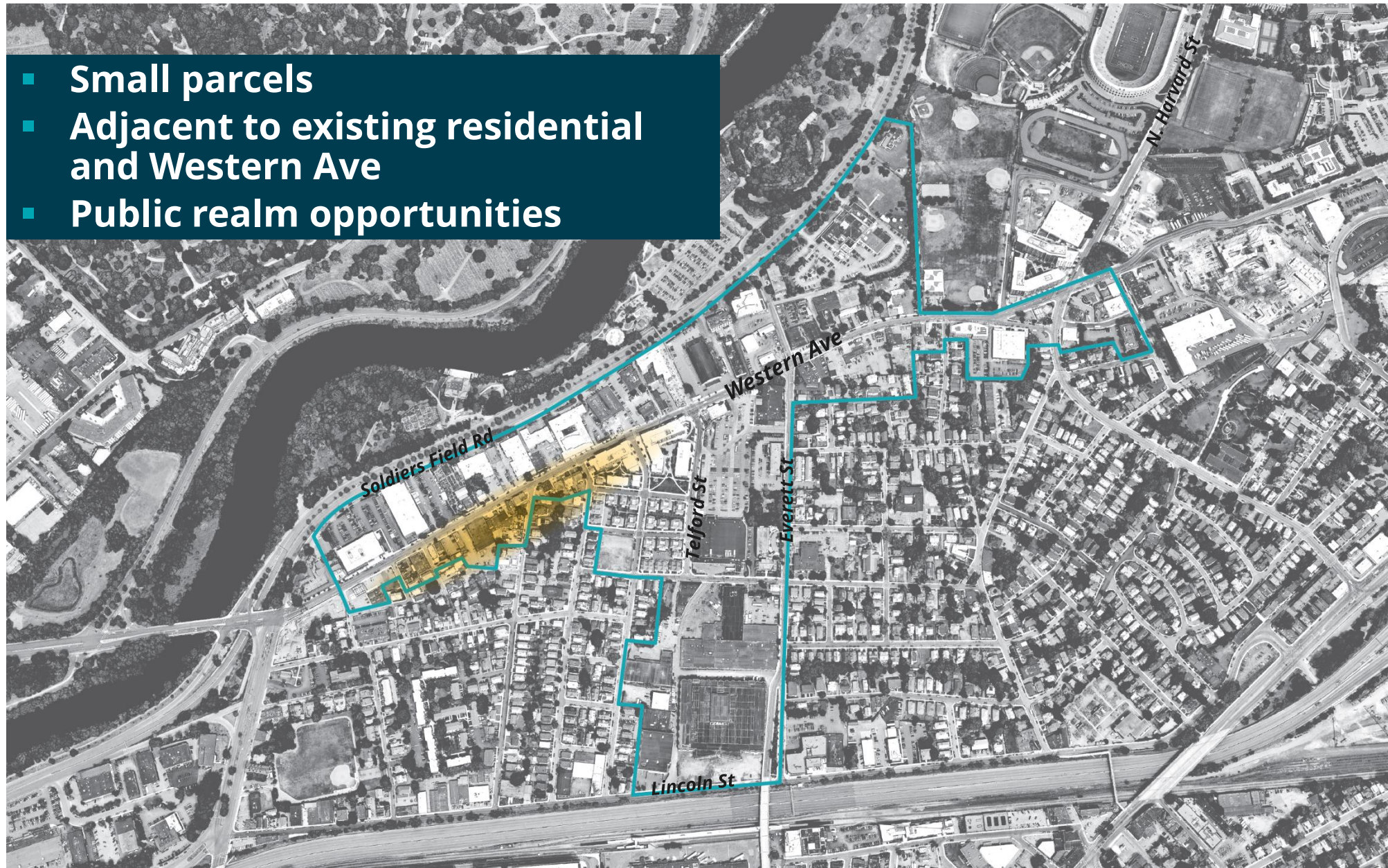


Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



- Small parcels
- Adjacent to existing residential and Western Ave
- Public realm opportunities



Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



- Medium to large parcels
- Western Ave frontage
- Connections & placemaking opportunities



Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



- Potential open space opportunity (as identified in Community Wide Plan)



Where else do you see such opportunities?

Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



- **Potential placemaking opportunity**
(as identified in NEXUS proposal)



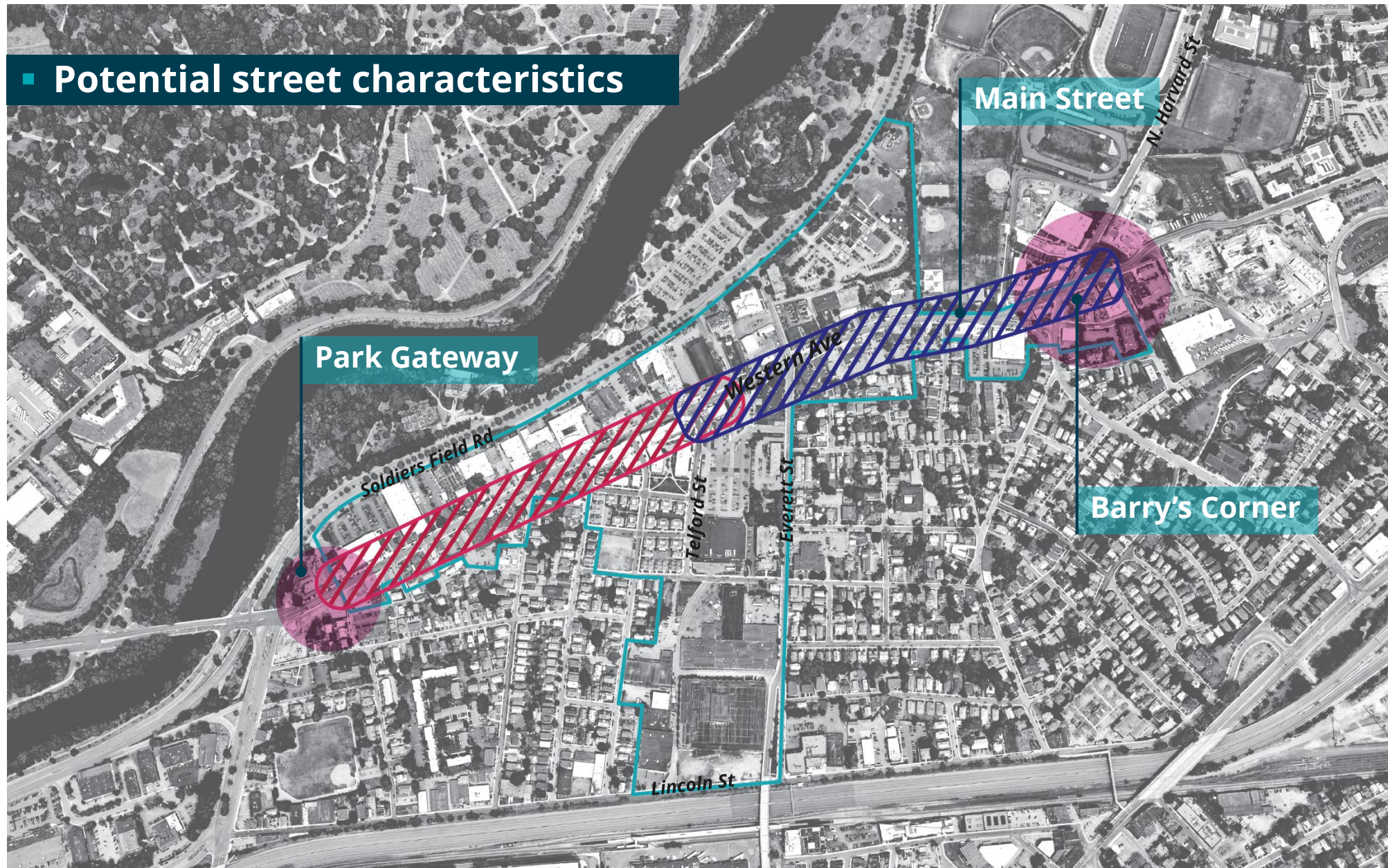
Where else do you see
such opportunities?

Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



■ Potential street characteristics



Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



■ Potential street connections

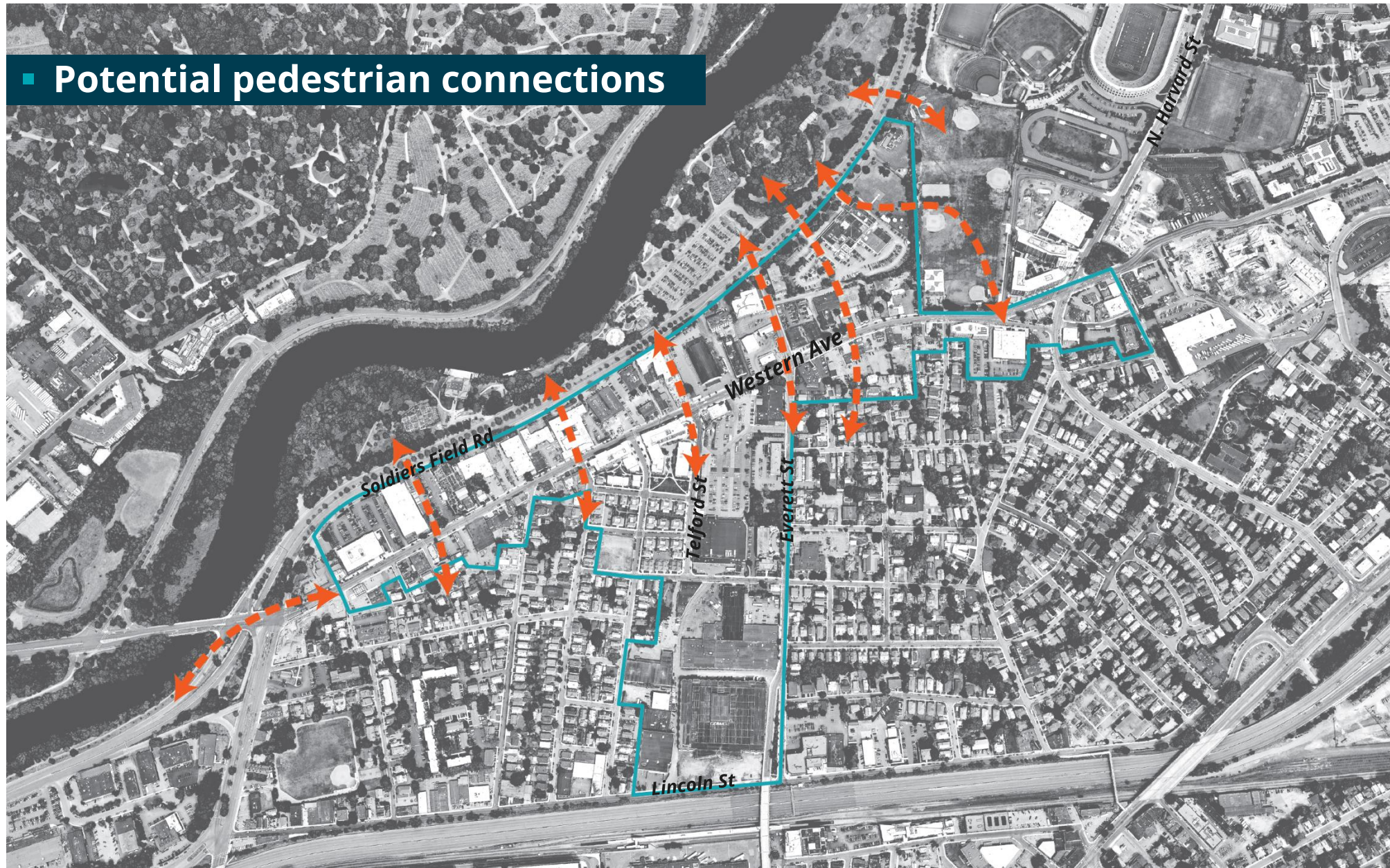


Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.

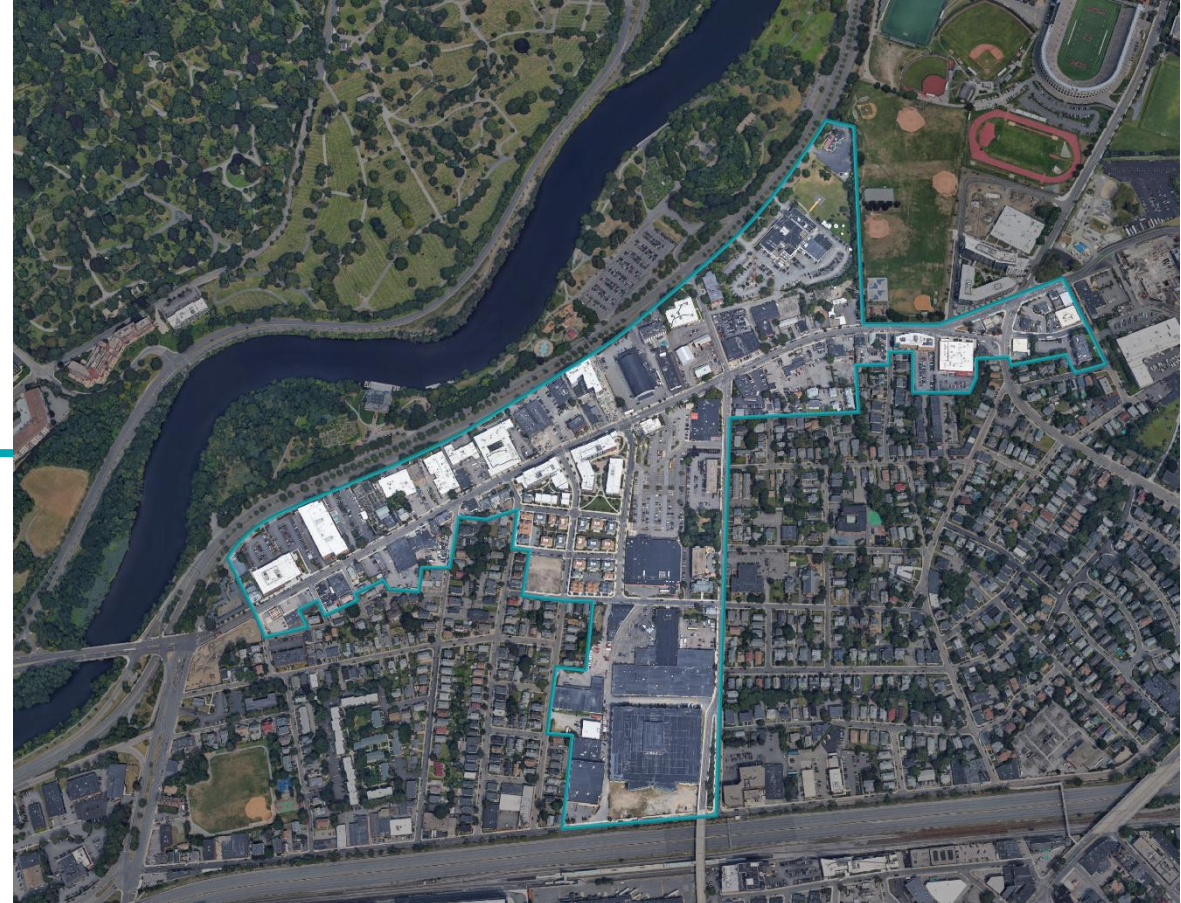


■ Potential pedestrian connections



3

Neighborhood Goals: Exercise

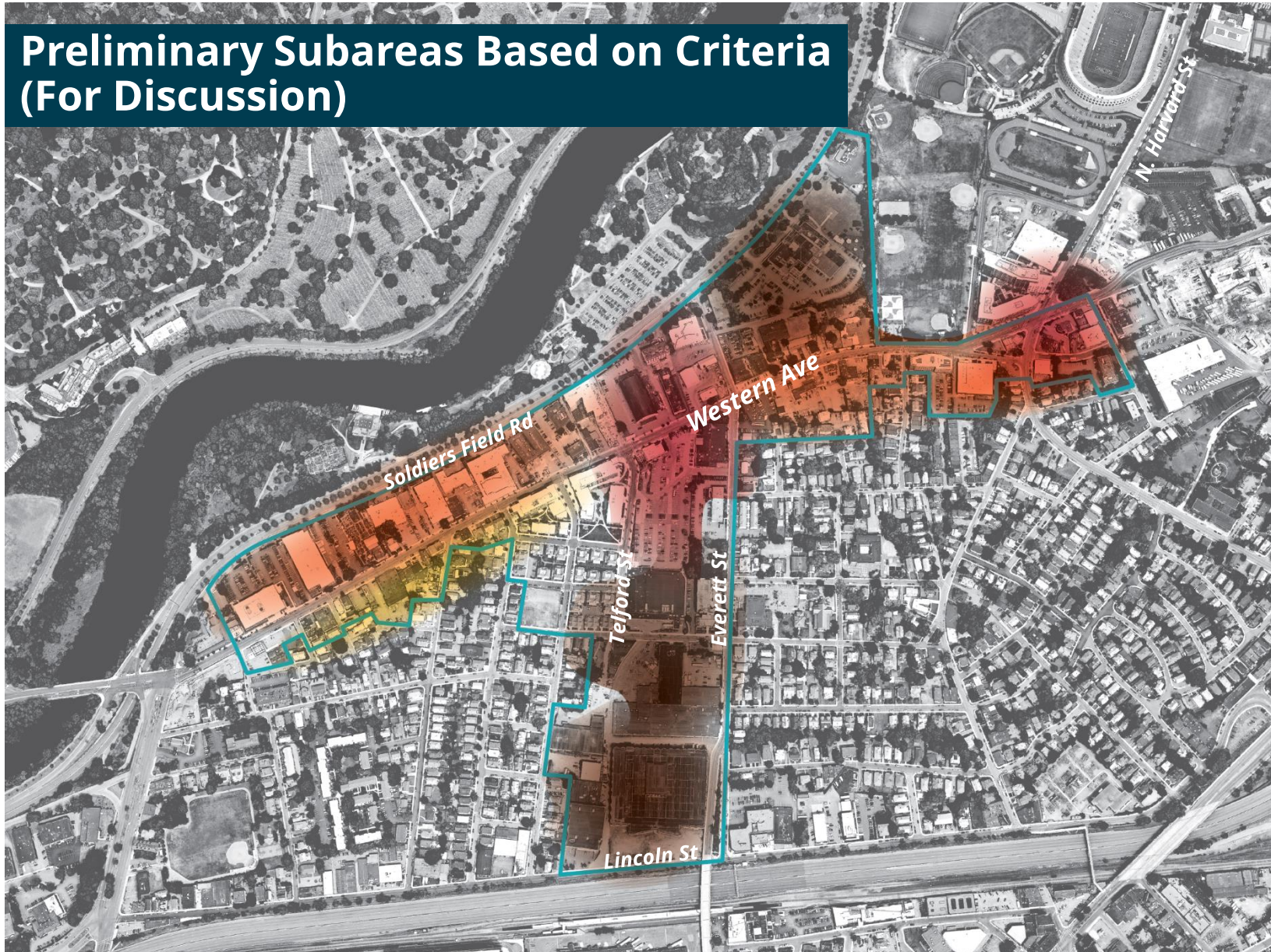


Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



Preliminary Subareas Based on Criteria (For Discussion)



-  Large parcels
Western Ave frontage
Public realm opportunities
-  Large parcels
No Western Ave frontage
Opportunities for connections
-  Small parcels
Adjacent to existing residential
and Western Ave
Public realm opportunities
-  Medium to large parcels
Western Ave frontage
Connections & placemaking
opportunities

NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS: EXERCISE

Group Activity (15 minutes)

- Tell us if you think differently about these subareas.
 - E.g. Should a subarea be extended, shrunk etc.
 - Are there additional criteria that you would suggest?
- How do you envision the character of these subareas?
 - E.g. Uses, role, height and size of buildings etc.
- Where else do you see:
 - Placemaking opportunities?
 - Open space opportunities?
 - Street & pedestrian connection opportunities?

NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS: EXERCISE

Table Facilitator Report (5 minutes)

- What is the group's vision for the character of these subareas?
- What are the criteria that the group used?
- Where else are there placemaking, open space or street & pedestrian connection opportunities?

4

Transforming Western Avenue: Framework



RELEVANT CITY POLICIES

■ **Go Boston 2030:**

- Citywide mobility vision created with input from thousands of residents.
- *Vision and Action Plan* released in March 2017.

■ **Boston Complete Streets:**

- Guidelines developed and adopted by the city
- Improve quality of life in Boston
- Streets that are both great public spaces and sustainable transportation networks.

■ **Vision Zero:**

- Commitment to focus the city's resources on proven strategies
- Eliminate fatal and serious traffic crashes in Boston by 2030.

■ **Allston Brighton Mobility Study:**

- Ongoing initiative: develop an actionable “menu” of options
- Improve mobility, safety for all modes, and quality of life for the Allston-Brighton neighborhood.

RELEVANT CITY POLICIES

Go Boston 2030

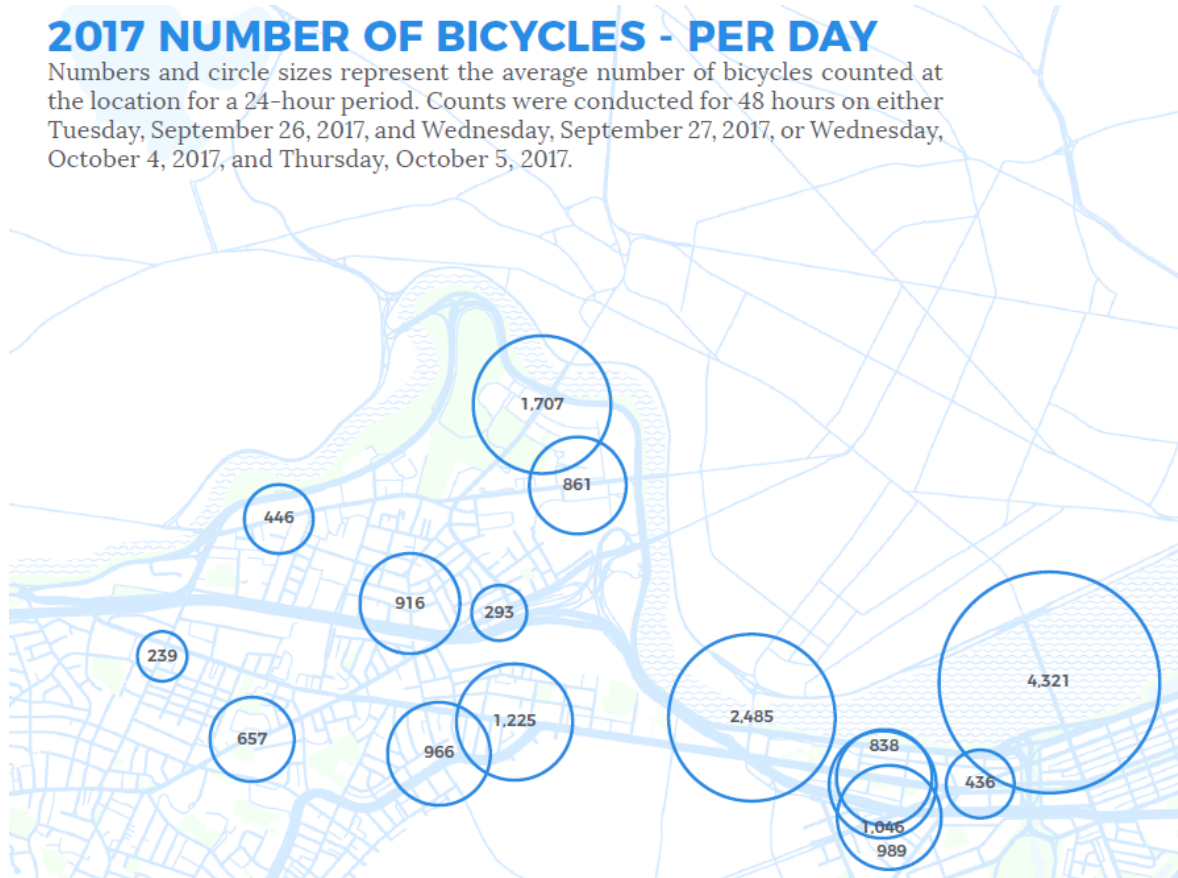
- Improve access into and around Boston's neighborhood commercial districts for people traveling on foot and by bike.
- Citywide mode share goals shown in chart on right

Mode for Bostonian Commutes	Today*	2030 Aspirational
Public Transit	34%	↑ Up by a third
Walk	14%	↑ Up by almost a half
Bike	2%	↑ Increases fourfold
Carpool	6%	↓ Declines marginally
Drive Alone	39%	↓ Down by half
Other/Work from Home	5%	↑ Slight increase in Work from Home

EXISTING CONDITIONS

2017 NUMBER OF BICYCLES - PER DAY

Numbers and circle sizes represent the average number of bicycles counted at the location for a 24-hour period. Counts were conducted for 48 hours on either Tuesday, September 26, 2017, and Wednesday, September 27, 2017, or Wednesday, October 4, 2017, and Thursday, October 5, 2017.

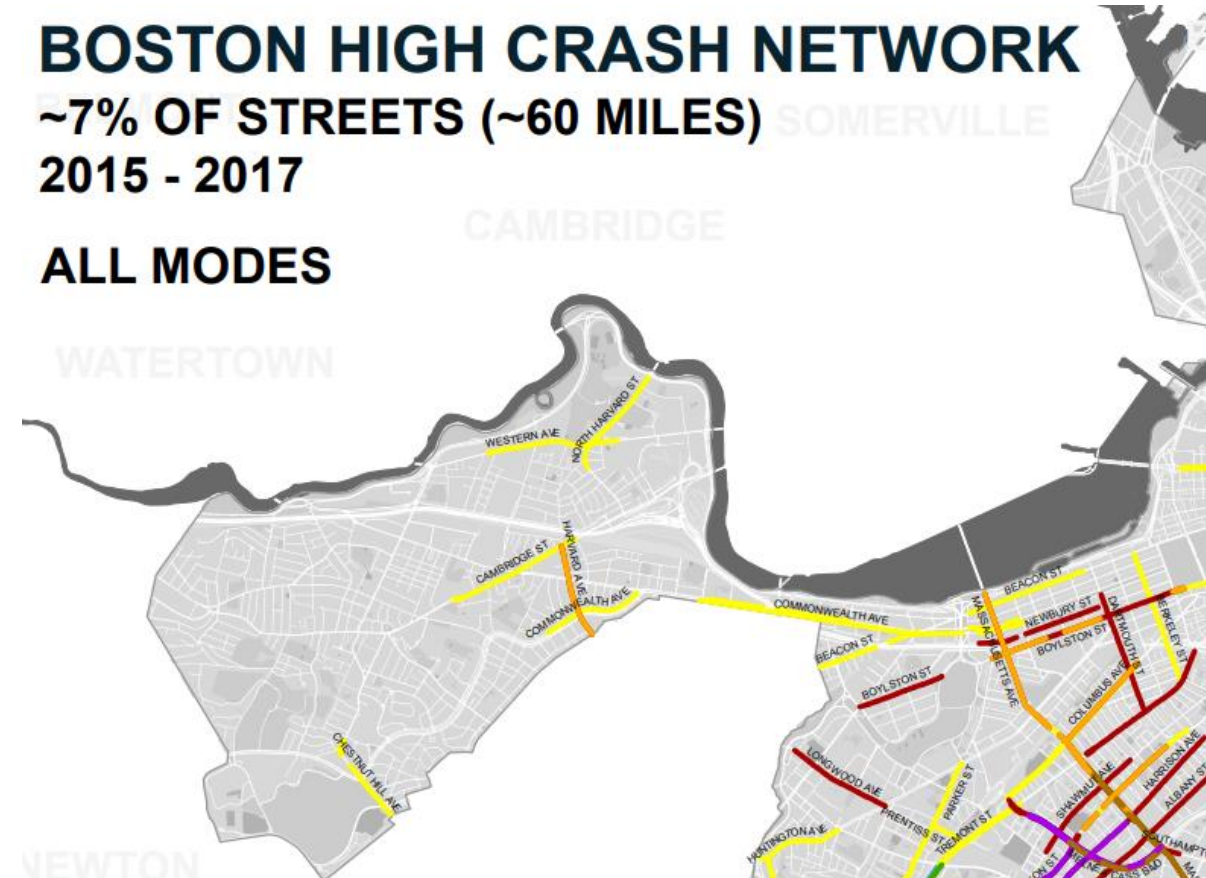


BOSTON HIGH CRASH NETWORK

~7% OF STREETS (~60 MILES)

2015 - 2017

ALL MODES



Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



EXISTING CONDITIONS



CITY of **BOSTON** | Mayor Martin J. Walsh

[VIEW THE MAP](#) [GET THE CRASH DATA](#) [GET THE FATALITY DATA](#) [ABOUT](#)

FILTER CRASHES



CRASHES

FATALITIES

FROM DATE:

09/01/2009

TO DATE:

10/10/2019

Data updated as of: 09/2019

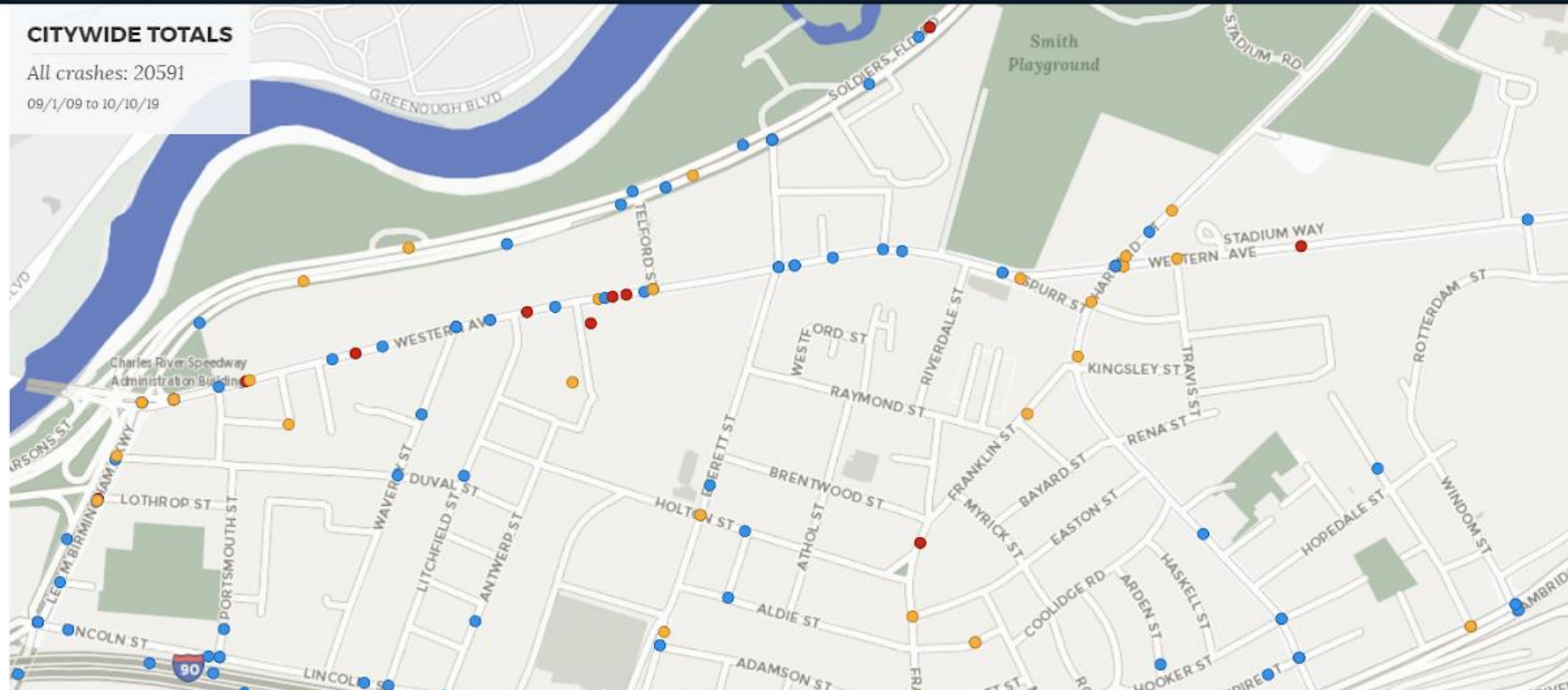
- Pedestrian crash
- Bicyclist crash
- Motor vehicle crash



CITYWIDE TOTALS

All crashes: 20591

09/1/09 to 10/10/19



RESTATED GOALS

- **Expand access** (Go Boston 2030)
 - Make Boston's neighborhoods interconnected for all modes of travel.
- **Improve safety** (Go Boston 2030, Vision Zero)
 - Substantially reduce collisions on every street and reallocate street space to prioritize moving people safely rather than faster.
- **Ensure reliability** (Go Boston 2030)
 - Prioritize making travel predictable on Boston's transit and roadway networks.
- **Create great public spaces** (Complete Streets)
 - Create a vibrant streetscape with active uses
 - Create a beautiful public realm

TRANSFORMING WESTERN AVENUE

What Can the City Do?

1. Determine how to allocate the existing right-of-way to different users
 - Limited space for many different potential users and uses
 - Some modes are much more efficient uses of public space than others
 - Most trips in the City of Boston are made by people on foot, bike, or transit.

Western Avenue Corridor Study & Rezoning

Preserve. Enhance. Grow.



Amount of space required to transport the same number of passengers by car, bus or bicycle.



Car?



Bus?



Bicycle?

(Poster in city of Muenster Planning Office, August 2001)

Credit: Press-Office City of Münster, Germany

TRANSFORMING WESTERN AVENUE: CHOICES

What Can the City Do?

2. Leverage redevelopment to set new buildings back to widen the right-of-way and create more space.



NEXUS at The Allston Innovation Corridor Boston, Massachusetts

DIMELLA
SHAFFER

Figure 1-9
Proposed Western Avenue Street Section

5

Transforming Western Avenue: Exercise



TRANSFORMING WESTERN AVENUE: EXERCISE

Challenge 1 (10 minutes)

- Use the pieces to try to create a street within the existing cross-section that meets the goals as you see them.
 - **Required elements:** Travel Lane, Pedestrian Sidewalk
 - Try different arrangements.
 - What fits? What doesn't?
 - What works? What doesn't?
 - Ask questions about how the city designs, builds, and operates streets.
- As a group, prioritize the optional elements by ranking them from 1-7.

TRANSFORMING WESTERN AVENUE: EXERCISE

Challenge 2 (10 minutes)

- Assume a wider right-of-way that could be created through redevelopment.
 - What elements fit now?
 - Does this change the group's assessment of priorities?

6

Next Steps



NEXT STEPS

- **December 5: Community meeting/workshop**
 - Housing & Development Scenarios
- **Ongoing conversations with development teams:**
 - DPIR, LOI, community conversations
- **Other relevant meetings:**
 - **MAPC First public meeting on the West Station Area Transit Study**
Thursday, November 14
6:00pm – 8:00 p.m.
Jackson-Mann Community Center
 - **Allston Brighton Mobility Study Public Meeting**
Wednesday, December 11
5:00pm – 8:00pm
Jackson-Mann Community Center