

# Melnea Cass Boulevard

**Design Objectives  
Meeting  
March 15, 2012**

*presented by*  
**Boston Transportation  
Department**

*with*

Howard/Stein-Hudson  
Crosby | Schlessinger | Smallridge  
Toole Design Group  
GLC Development Resources



# Agenda

## Part 1 – Presentation

6:00 – 6:30 PM

Introduction/Process

What we have learned:

- Community Vision
- Design Directions

Complete Streets Principles

Corridor-wide Framework

- Melnea Cass Boulevard  
by Area

## Part 2 – Framing Design Concepts

6:30 – 7:15 PM

- Breakout Groups

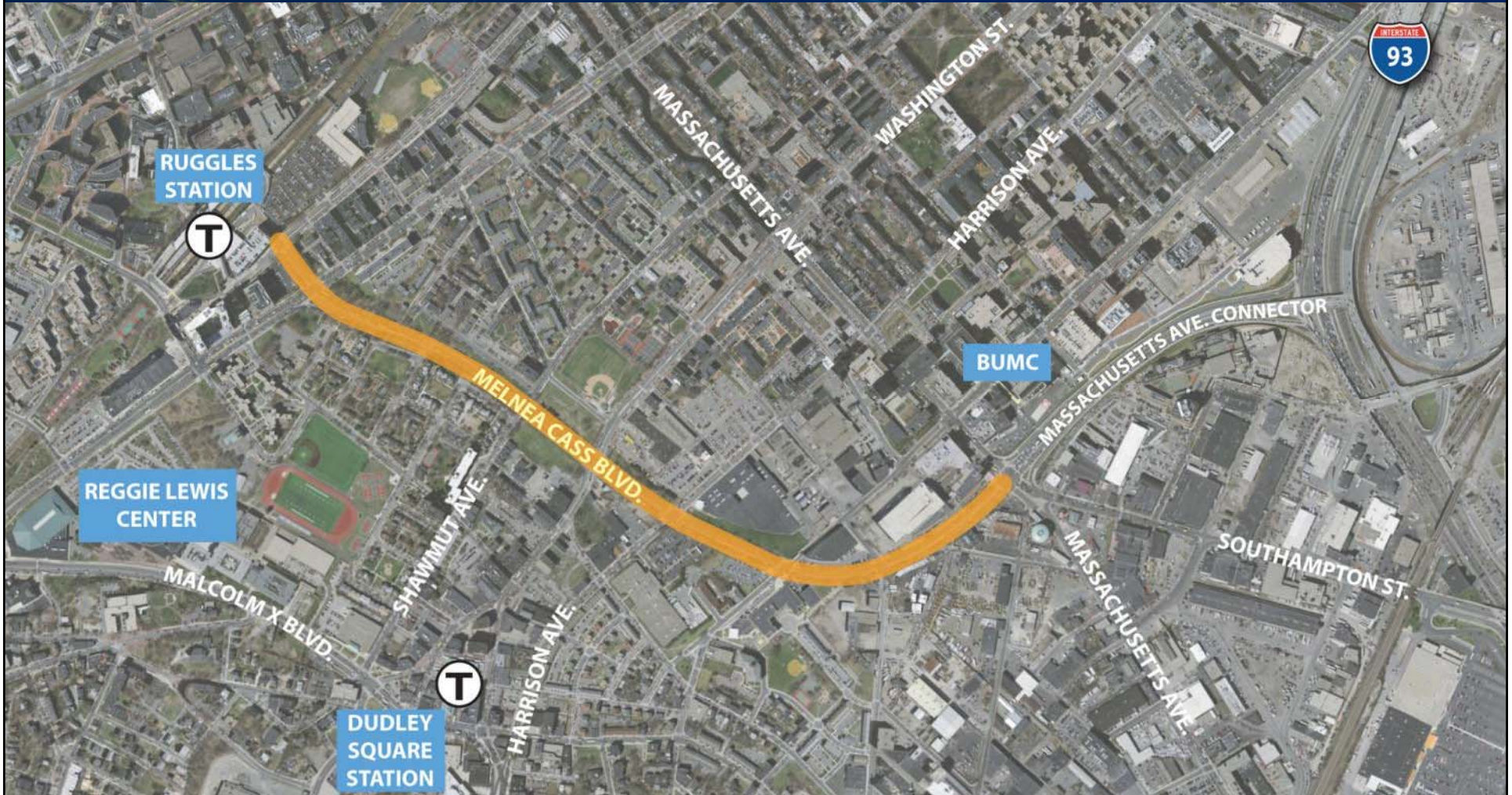
## Part 3 – Breakout Group

Reports/ Q & A – 7:15 – 8:00 PM

- Group representatives give summaries of breakout group discussion
- Questions and answers



# Project Area



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# Project Timeline

- **Initial Public Meeting – 10/11/2011**
  - *Introducing the project*
- **Community Visioning Meeting – 12/14/2011**
  - *Envisioning success*
- **Design Objectives Meeting – Tonight**
  - *Turning the vision into concepts*
- **Sharing Initial Concepts – Spring 2012**
- **Gaining consensus on Preferred Option – Summer 2012**

# What We Heard From You - Vision

- Safe, clean and beautiful
- Well-maintained – snow and litter consistently removed
- All parcels owned and cared for
- Safe for cyclists and pedestrians
- Providing safe, effective transit service
- Moving calmed vehicular traffic effectively
- Fully integrated with its surrounding neighborhood
- A catalyst for neighborhood economic development



# What We Heard From You – Design Direction

- **Keep mature trees as part of new landscaping**
- **Soften the Boulevard – reduce “highway feel”**
  - Calm traffic – enhance pedestrian/cyclist safety
  - Connect to walking/cycling infrastructure beyond the corridor
- **Fully integrate the Boulevard with cross streets and the neighborhood**
  - Provide a gateway to Dudley Square
  - Design buildings for active street life
  - Safe and family-friendly





# What We Learned – Economic Development

## Community Vision

Tighten connections to jobs:

- Longwood Medical Area
- Boston University Medical Center
- Southeast Expressway

Strengthen and grow retail center:

- Improve connections between Dudley Square and South End
- Increase shopper population



## Development Tools

Improve transit

Keep, but calm, high traffic volumes

Improve pedestrian environment

Create attractive, high-quality environment

Develop retail and commercial:

- At major intersections
- Visual connections between Dudley Square and South End
- Draw people across the Boulevard
- Create a sense of place

# Complete Streets Principles

- **Complete Streets** are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users.





# Complete Streets Principles

- *Create vibrant public spaces*
- *Respect and foster a “sense of place”*
- *Create opportunities for healthy living and physical activity*
- *Support economic development*
- *Design for sustainability*
- *“Smart” in the use of technology*



# Complete Streets Principles

## ■ Pedestrian

- Safety
  - Accessible sidewalks
  - Appropriate degree of separation from roadways
  - Lower motor vehicle speeds
  - Well-lit facilities
  - Pedestrian-friendly intersections
    - *Shorter crossings*
    - *Minimal delay*
    - *Less exposure to conflicts*
    - *Frequent accessible crossings*
- Comfort and Convenience
  - Street trees
  - Comfortable and inviting spaces with amenities
  - Connections to other modes





# Pedestrian Connectivity



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# Pedestrian Connectivity



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# Complete Streets Principles

## ■ Bicycle

### • Safety

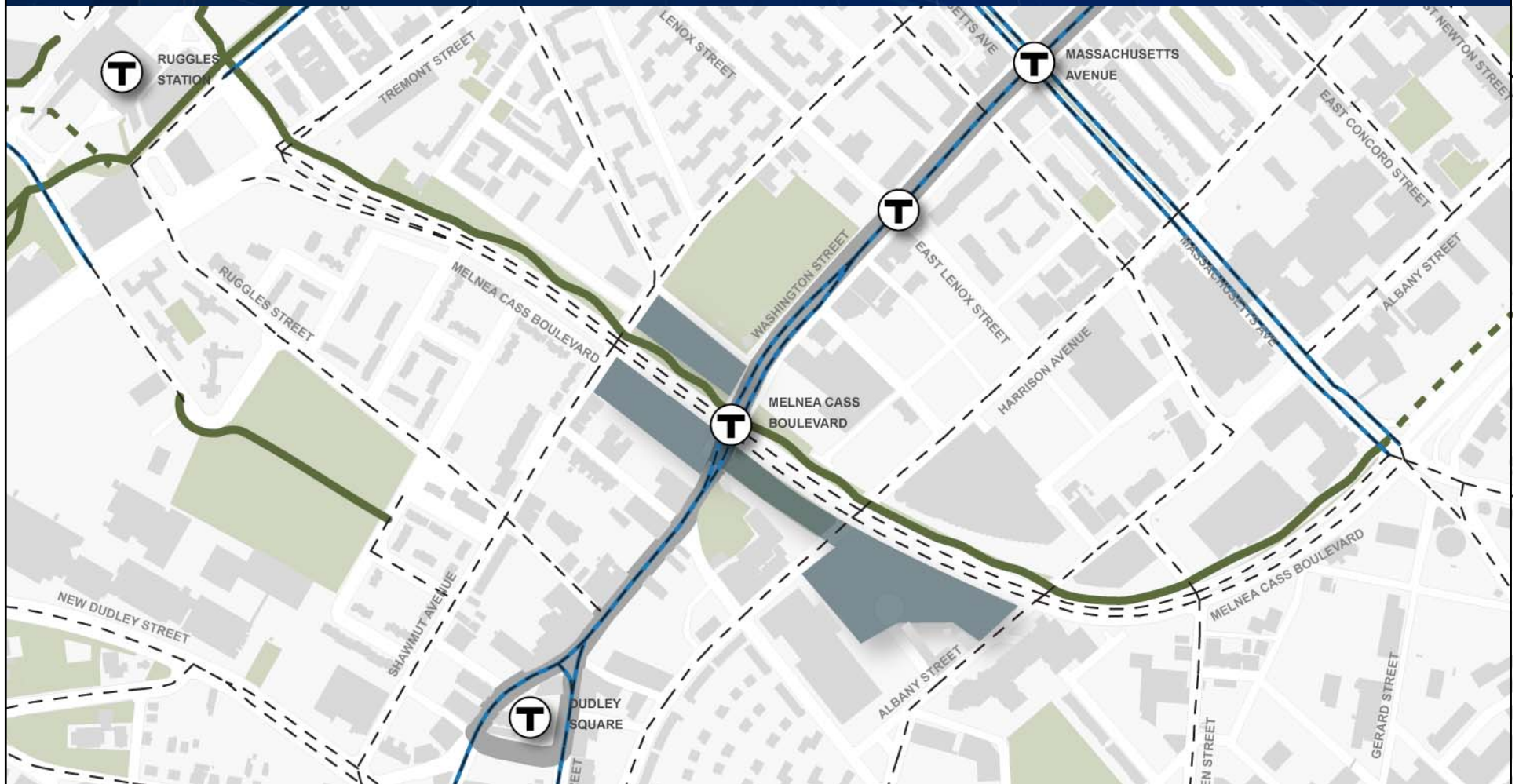
- Dedicated space
- Degree of separation between modes
- Lower motor vehicle speeds
- Less exposure to conflicts
- Well-lit facilities
- Bicycle-friendly intersections
  - *Minimum green intervals*
  - *Bicycle detection*
  - *Bicycle priority (i.e. signals, bicycle boxes, etc.)*

### • Comfort and Convenience

- Consistent facility types
- Connections to other modes
- Access to short term and long term parking
- Wayfinding signage



# Bicycle Connectivity



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# Complete Streets Principles

## ■ Motor Vehicles

- Safety
  - Designs that reduce conflicts and the severity of crashes
  - Intuitive and clear geometry
  - Appropriate degree of separation between modes
  - Safe options for turning movements
  - Well-lit facilities
  - Efficient intersection designs
    - *Minimal delay*
    - *Coordinated signal timing*
- Comfort and Convenience
  - Well-maintained roadways
  - Clear guidance and Wayfinding
  - Access to parking



# Complete Streets Principles

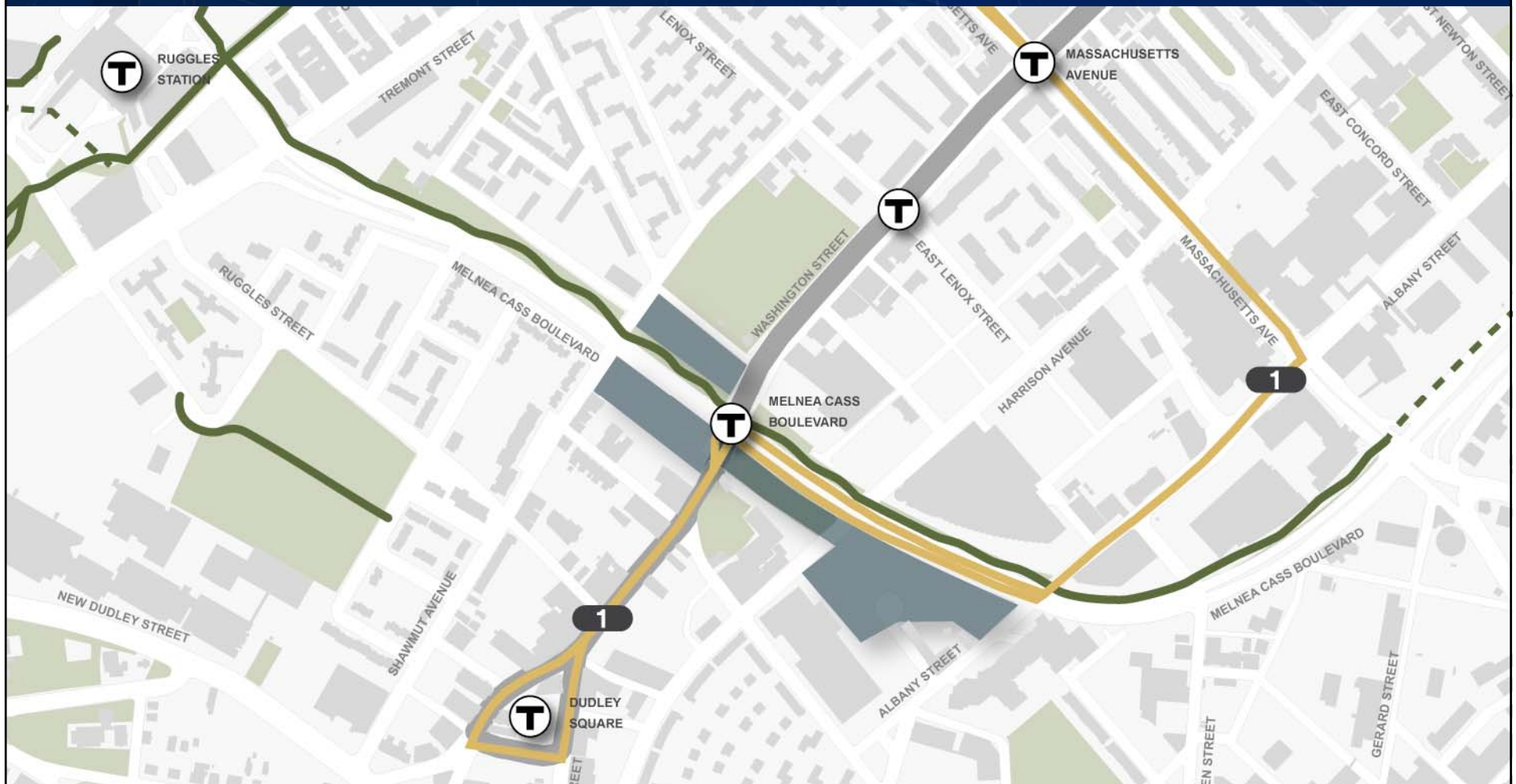
## ■ Transit

- Safety
  - Safe and accessible transit stops
  - Appropriate sidewalk widths
  - Less conflicts with other modes
  - Well-lit facilities
  - Transit-friendly intersections
    - *Minimal delay in service*
    - *Accessible crossings*
    - *Transit prioritization*
    - *Responsive signal design*
- Comfort and Convenience
  - Comfortable and inviting transit stops with amenities
  - Well-maintained transit stops and roadways
  - Connections to other modes
  - Real-time route information





# MBTA Route 1



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# MBTA Route 8



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# MBTA Route 19



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# MBTA Route 47



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# MBTA Route CT3

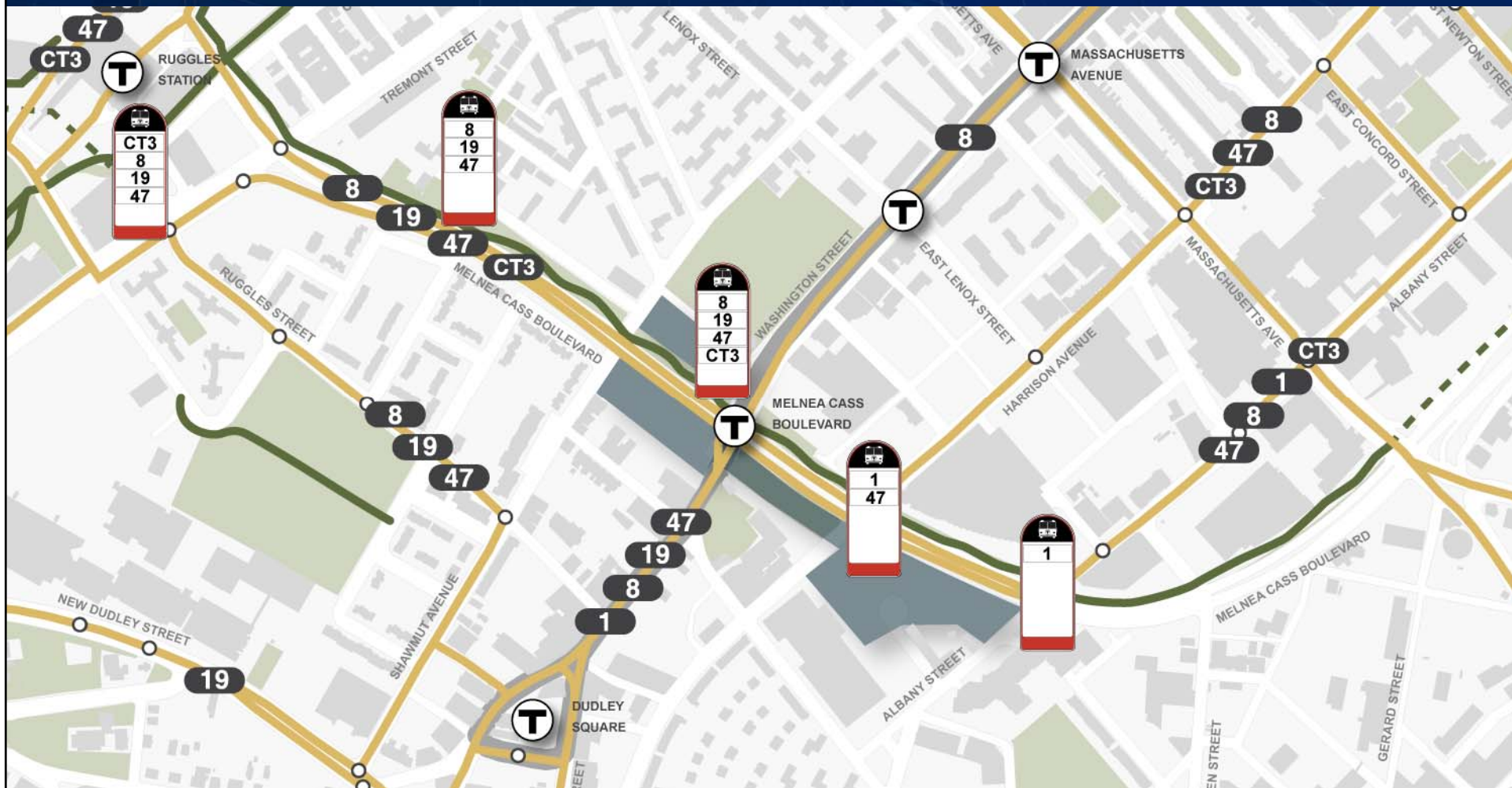


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# MBTA Routes and Stops



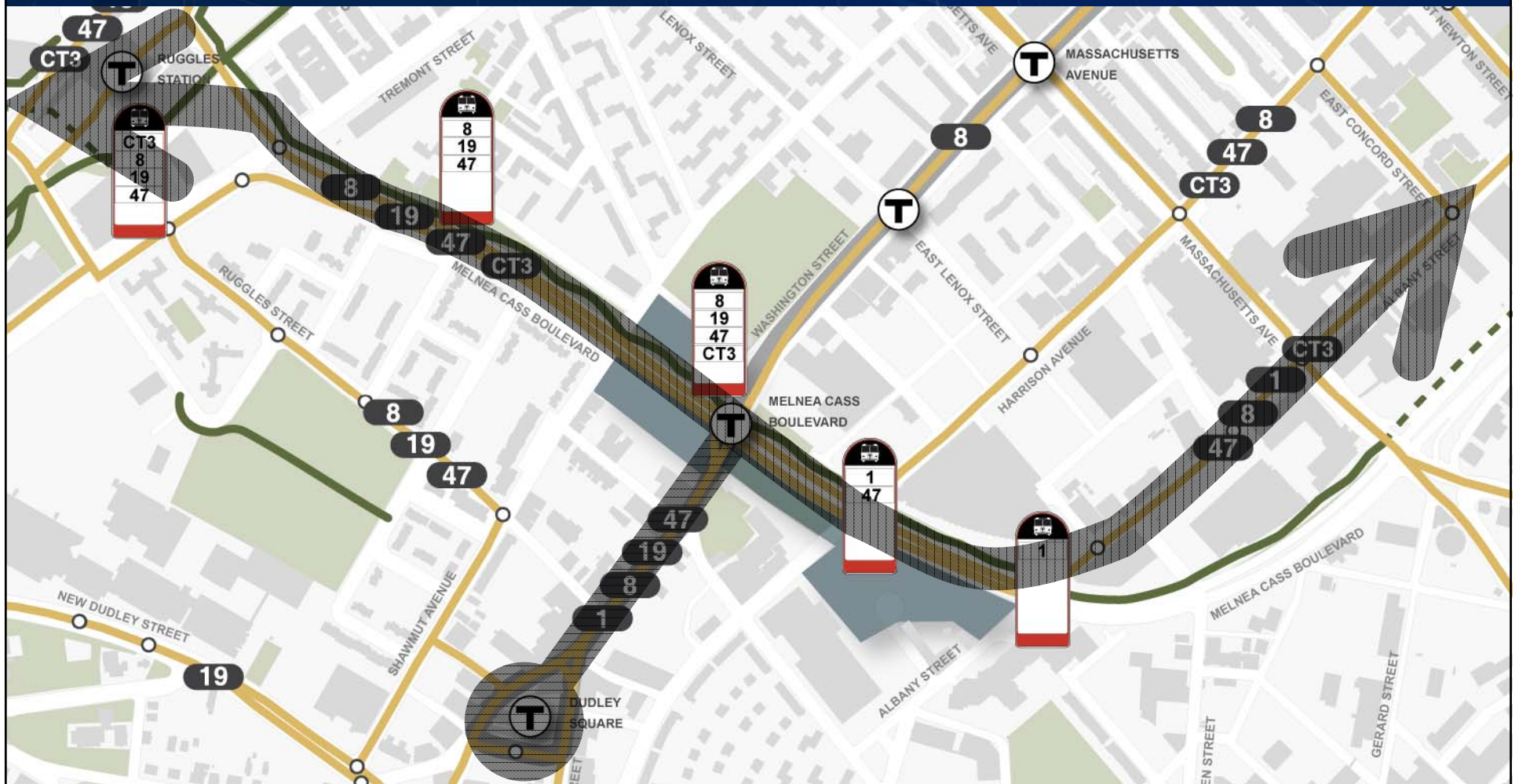
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# The Urban Ring



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# BRT (Bus Rapid Transit)

- Frequent Service
- Widely-spaced Stops
- High-capacity Vehicles
- Real-time Information
- Traffic Signal Control
- Dedicated Lanes





# BRT Stations

- Safe Pedestrian Access
- Easy Loading/Unloading
- Comfort and Security



# BRT Configurations

- **Curbside Bus Lanes**
  - Buses mix with traffic
    - Parking conflicts
    - Right turn conflicts
    - Slower travel times and less reliability





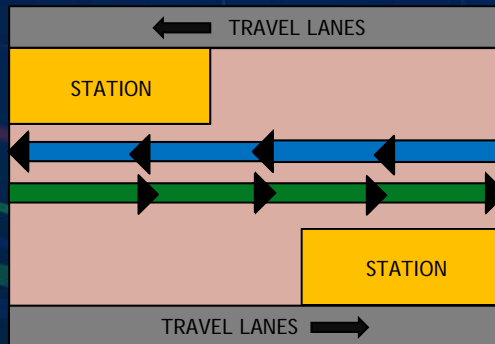
# BRT Configurations

- Center Bus Lanes
  - Buses don't mix with traffic
    - No parking conflicts and turning conflicts managed through signal design
    - Faster travel times and increased reliability



# BRT Alternatives

## Center Bus Lanes



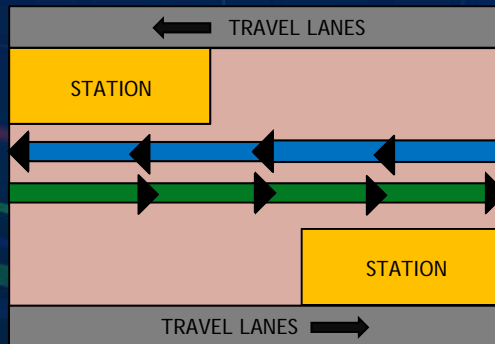
- Urban Ring Phase 2 Locally Preferred Alternative
- Reviewed by the Roxbury community including RSMPOC
- Typically most efficient design for BRT
- Passengers exit onto median island station
- Better access for new development and curbside parking





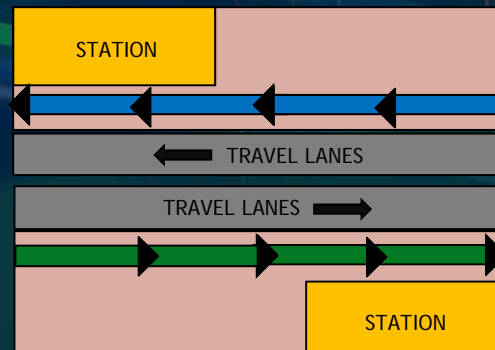
# BRT Alternatives

## Center Bus Lanes



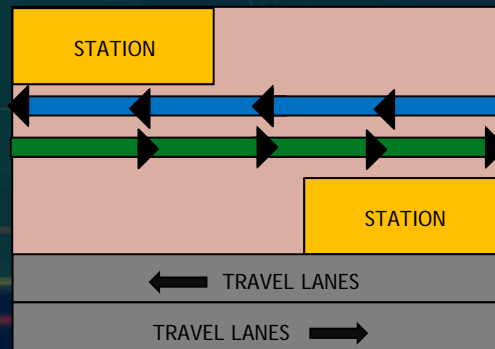
- Urban Ring Phase 2 Locally Preferred Alternative
- Reviewed by the Roxbury community including RSMPOC
- Typically most efficient design for BRT
- Passengers exit onto median island station
- Better access for new development and curbside parking

## Curbside Bus Lanes



- Bus stops next to curb for passenger loading/unloading
- Parking conflicts
- Intersection conflicts

## Bus Lanes One Side



- Passengers exit bus onto island and curb stations
- Parking access issues
- Intersection challenges

# Complete Streets Components



Exclusive  
Transit  
Lanes



# Complete Streets Components



Travel/  
Parking  
Lanes

Exclusive  
Transit  
Lanes

Travel/  
Parking  
Lanes

# Complete Streets Components



Travel  
Parking  
Lanes

Exclusive  
Transit  
Lanes

Travel Bikes  
Parking  
Lanes



# Complete Streets Components



**Pedestrian**

**Travel  
Parking  
Lanes**

**Exclusive  
Transit  
Lanes**

**Travel  
Parking  
Lanes**

**Bikes**

**Pedestrian**

# Community Input

## ■ Vision of Success for Melnea Cass Boulevard:

- Fully integrated with its surrounding neighborhood
- Safe, clean and beautiful
- Well-maintained – snow and litter consistently removed
- All parcels owned and cared for
- Safe for cyclists and pedestrians
- Providing safe, effective transit service
- Moving calmed vehicular traffic effectively
- A catalyst for neighborhood economic development



# Urban Design Framework



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# Community Goals

- Melnea Cass should be fully integrated with its surrounding neighborhood, providing access to local side streets and a gateway to Dudley Square
  - Importance of connecting streets



# Urban Design Framework - Shawmut



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**Tremont Street**



**Columbus Avenue**



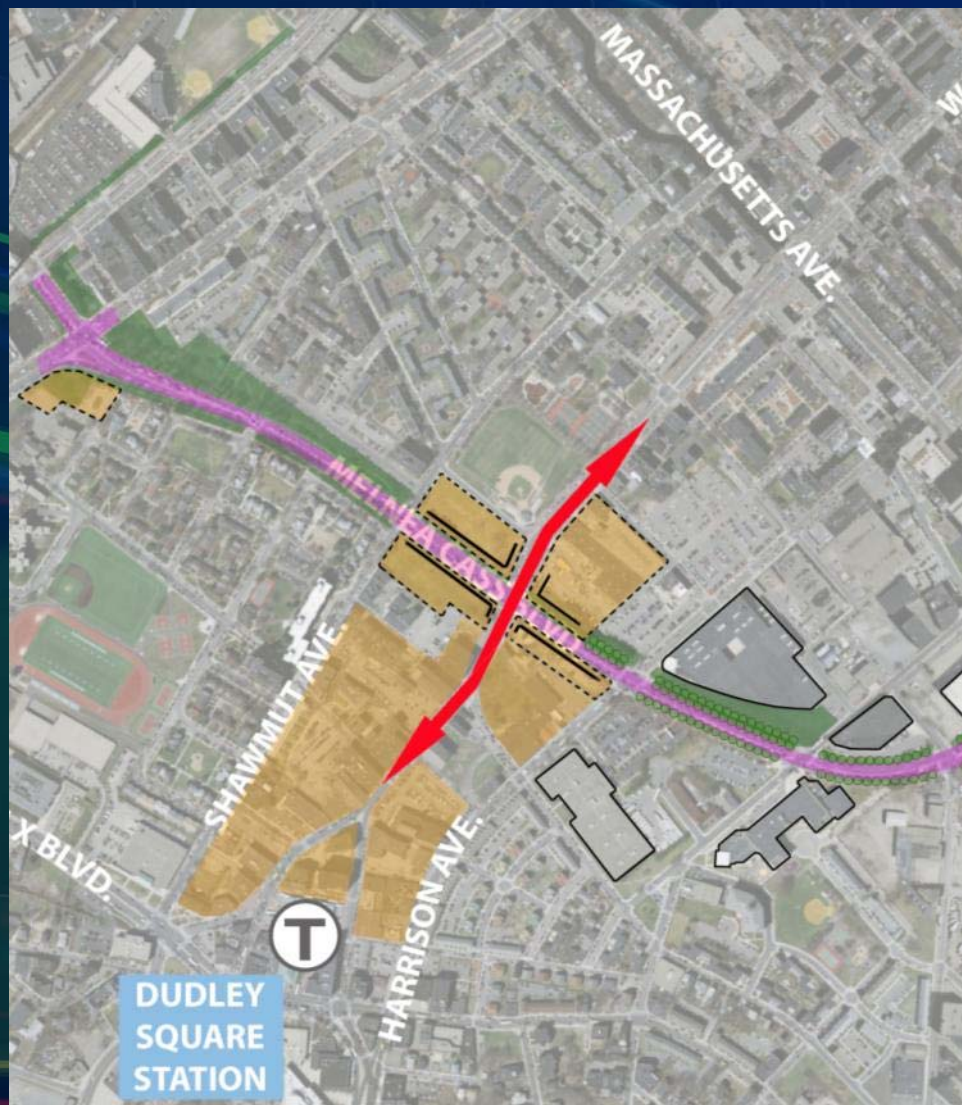


**Shawmut Avenue**



**Kerr Way**

# Urban Design Framework - Washington



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**“... Dudley Square is turning out to be more than just a new place... it’s a perspective shift. Known as the heart of Roxbury, it is where the neighborhood’s major institutions and businesses are clustered in some of the city’s most beautiful historic buildings. It is also the busiest bus station in the public transit system. In this ‘grand central’ of communities, you can imagine that one encounters an incredible variety of people.”**

Historic Boston, Inc. Newsletter



## ■ Parcel 9



## ■ Parcel 10





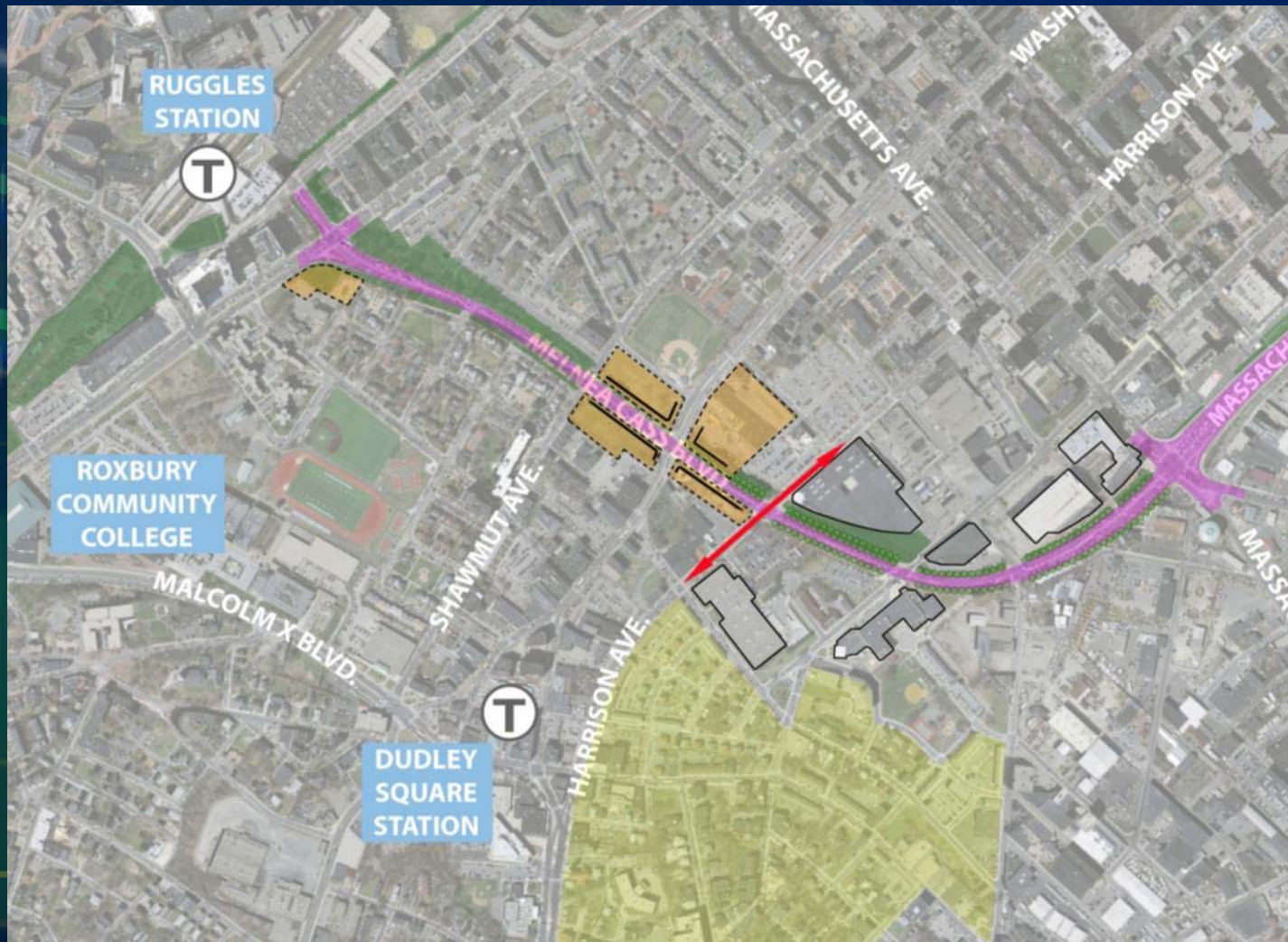
## Washington Street

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# Urban Design Framework – Harrison



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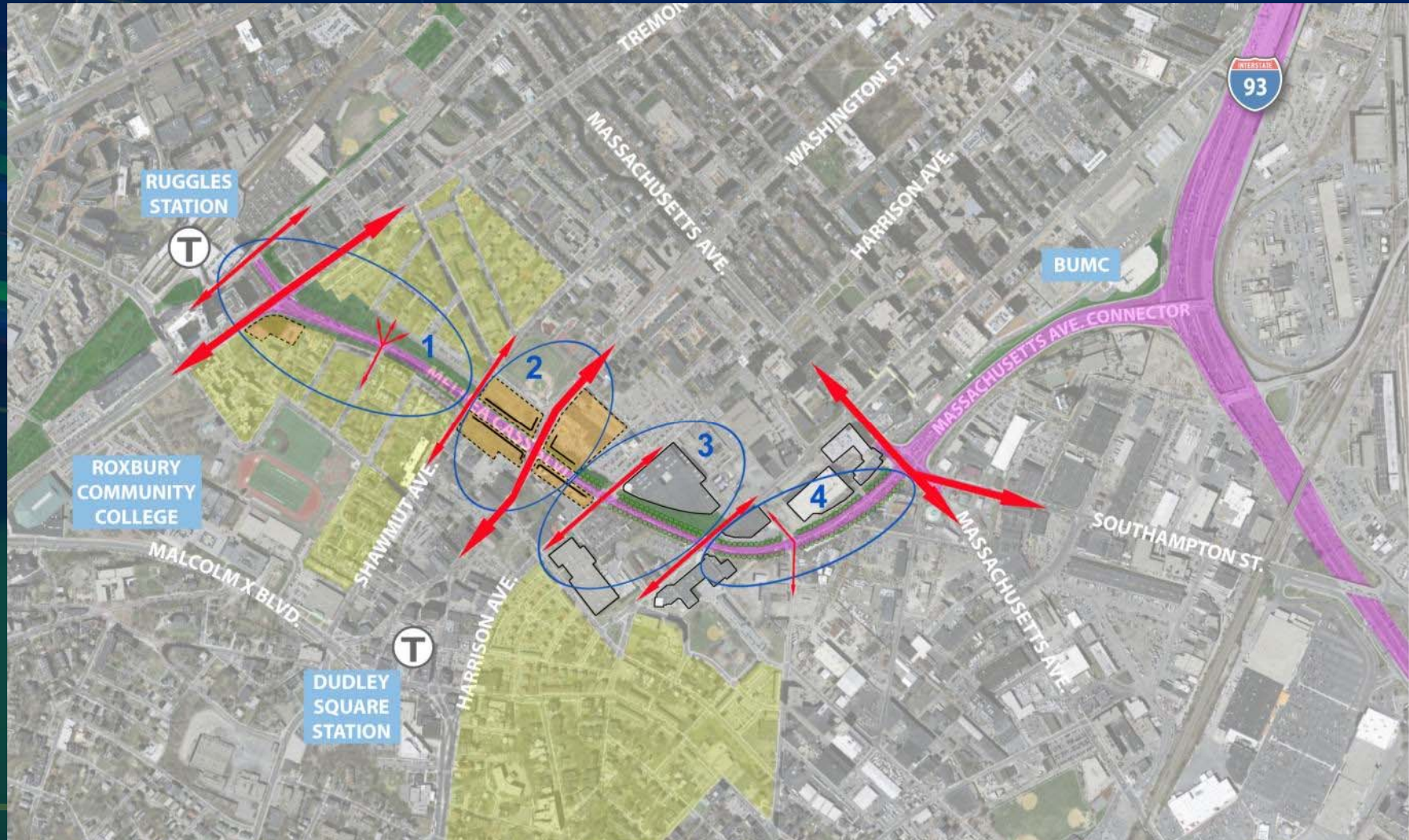
**Orchard Gardens**



**Harrison Avenue**

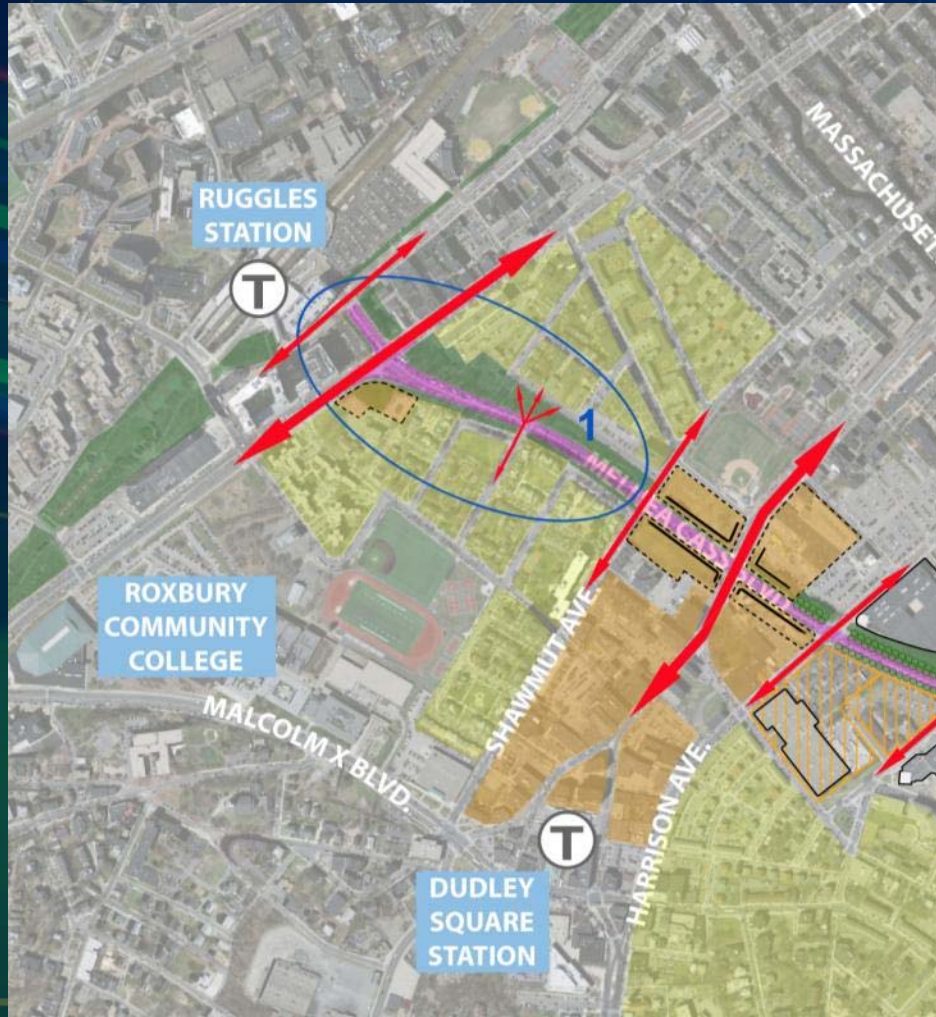


# Opportunities





# Area 1 — Columbus Ave to Shawmut Ave



## NORTH SIDE

- Residential neighborhood set back behind park land
- Separated ped/bike

## SOUTH SIDE

- Residential neighborhood set back behind park land
- Separated ped/bike

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Intersection of Melnea Cass and Tremont
- Open space

# Area 1 — Columbus Ave to Shawmut Ave



Existing



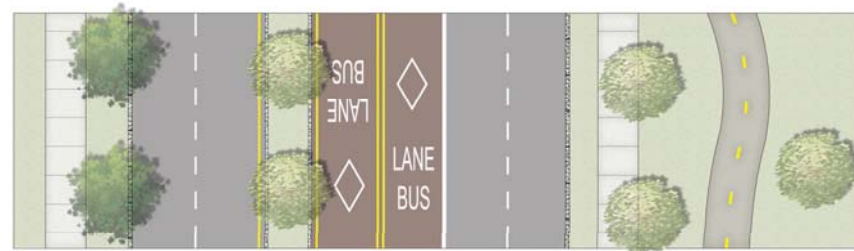
# Area 1 — Columbus Ave to Shawmut Ave



Existing



Center Bus Lanes



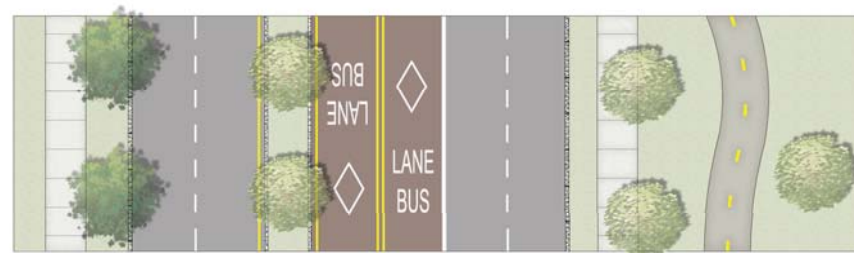
# Area 1 — Columbus Ave to Shawmut Ave



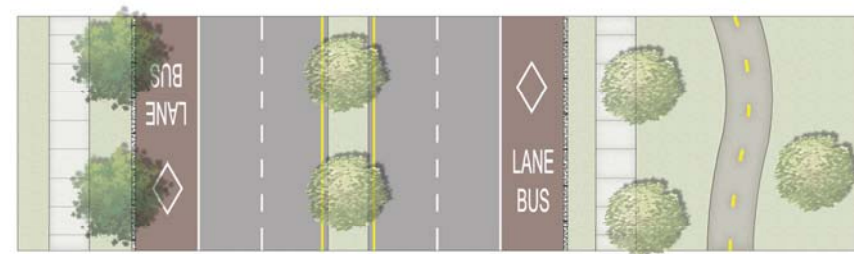
**Existing**



**Center Bus Lanes**



**Side Bus Lanes**





# Area 2 – Shawmut Ave to Harrison Ave



## NORTH SIDE

- Future building edge / destination
- Ped/bike use?

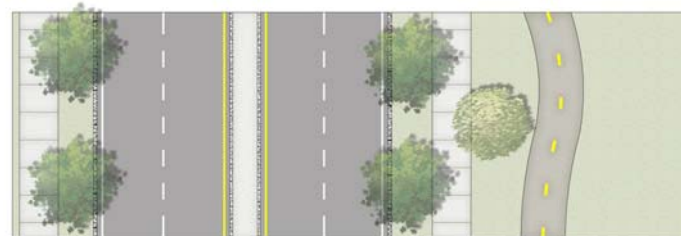
## SOUTH SIDE

- Future building edge / destination
- Sidewalk

## OPPORTUNITIES

- New development to front Melnea Cass and Washington Street
- Gateway connections to Dudley Square
- Innovative transportation solutions

# Area 2 – Shawmut Ave to Harrison Ave



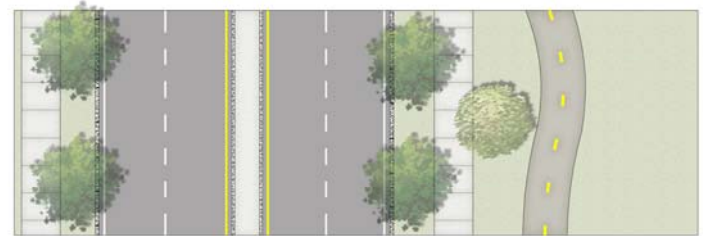
Existing



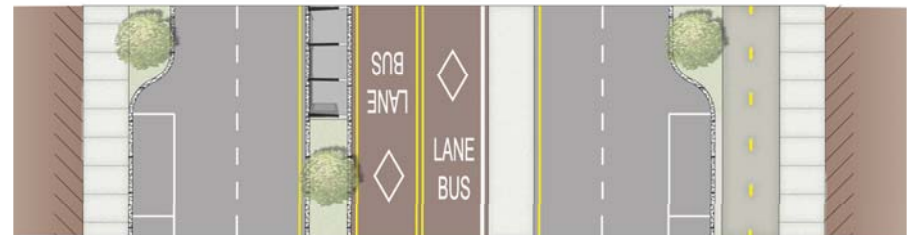
# Area 2 – Shawmut Ave to Harrison Ave



Existing



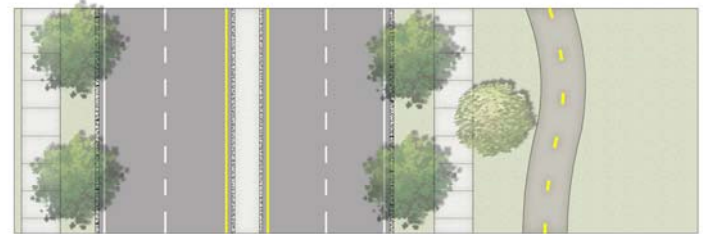
Center Bus Lanes



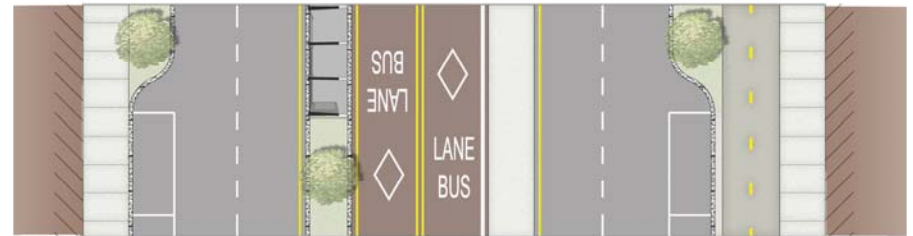
# Area 2 – Shawmut Ave to Harrison Ave



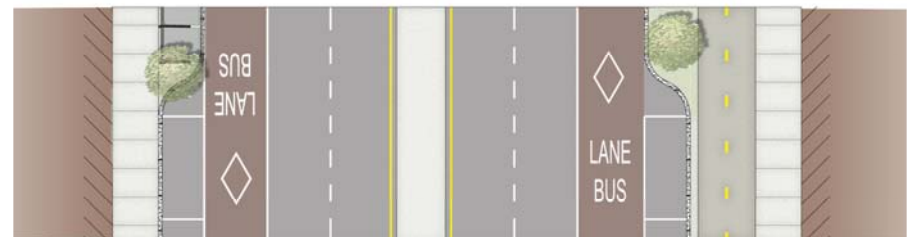
Existing



Center Bus Lanes

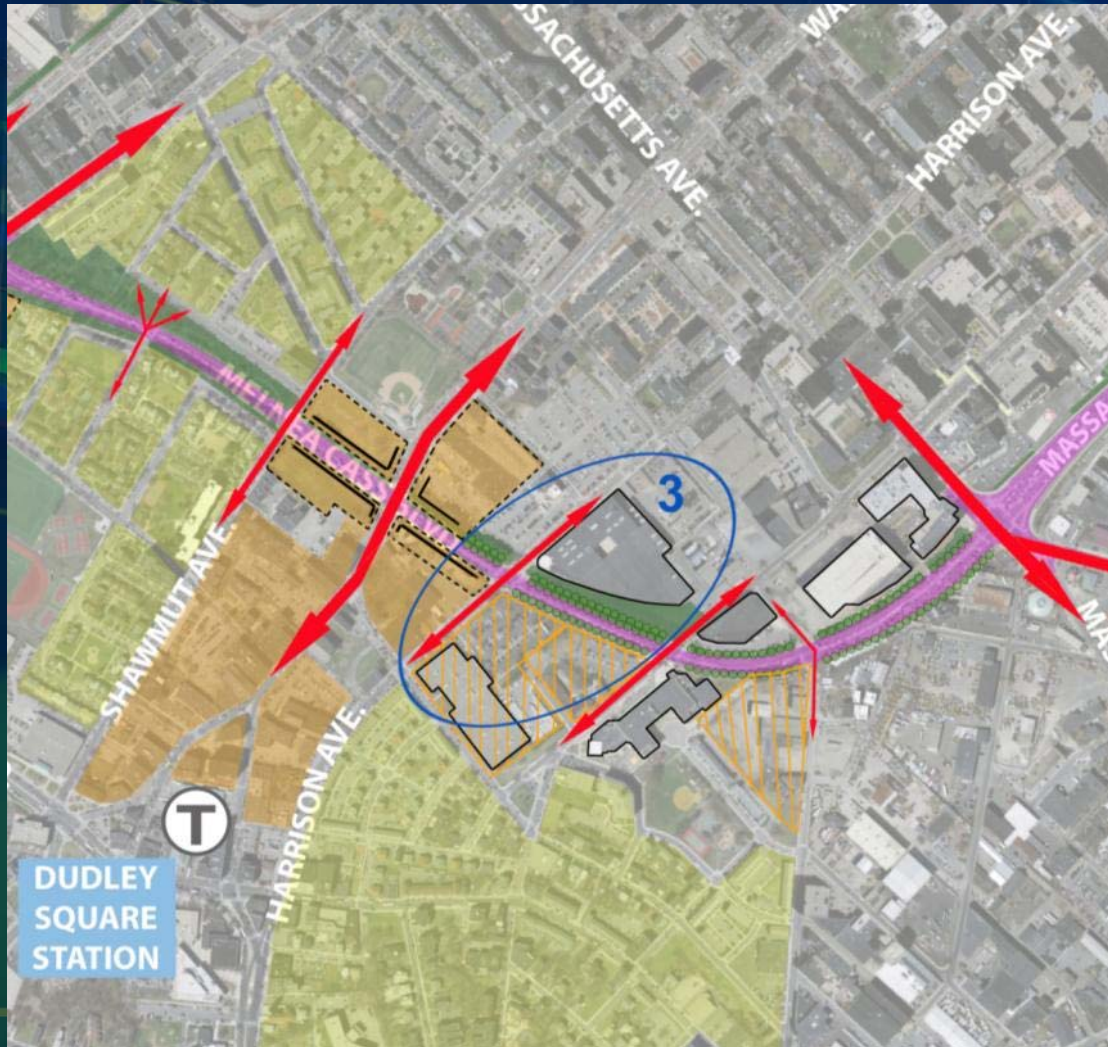


Side Bus Lanes





# Area 3 – Harrison Ave to Albany Street



## NORTH SIDE

- Building set back behind landscaped zone
- Strong double row of trees at road edge
- Separated ped/bike use

## SOUTH SIDE

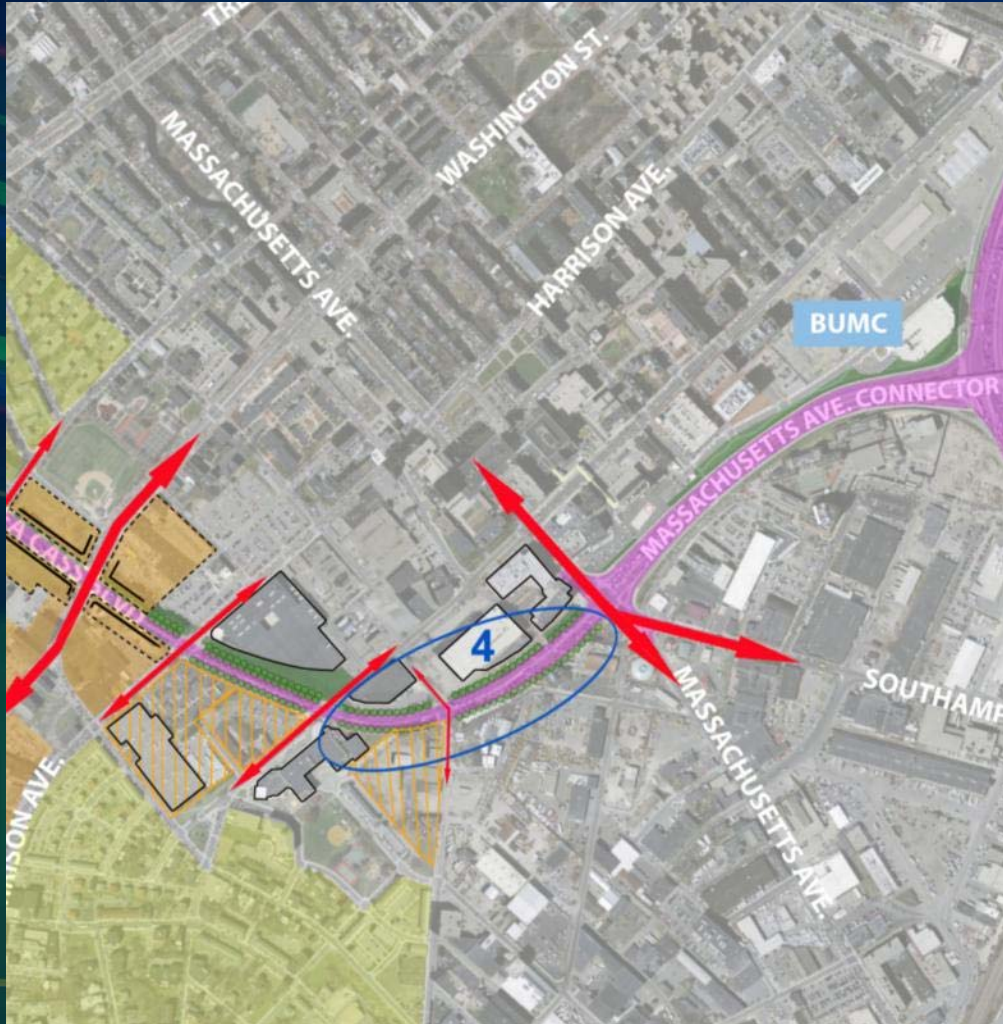
- Fenced parking / open areas - future development sites
- Single tree edge
- Sidewalk

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Strengthen pedestrian connections across Melnea Cass
- Keep separated ped/bike on north side



# Area 4 – Albany St to Massachusetts Ave



## NORTH SIDE

- Building set back behind landscaped zone
- Single tree edge
- Separated ped/bike use

## SOUTH SIDE

- Fenced parking - area / yards
- Single tree edge
- Sidewalk

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Strengthen gateway at Mass Ave
- South bay Harbor Trail as designed on north side
- Improved median treatment



# Area 4 — Albany St to Massachusetts Ave

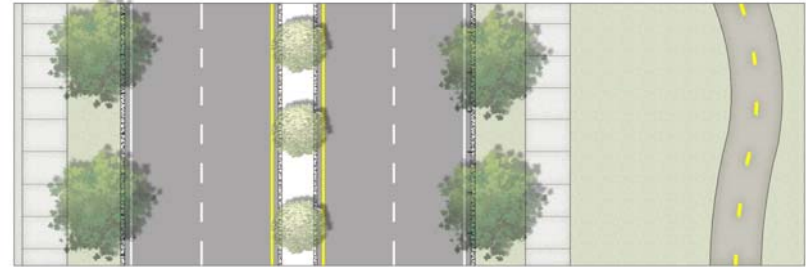


Existing

# Area 4 — Albany St to Massachusetts Ave



Existing



Concept



# Opportunities Summary



# Breakout Sessions

## Thinking about Design Concepts

- Develop evaluation criteria based on community input
- Review and discuss BRT options



# Breakout Sessions – 30 min.

- Break into small groups (number on handout)
- Discussion in small groups
  - Each group should nominate a speaker to present a summary of its discussion
  - Moderator will board comments/questions

# Next Steps

- Review feedback from tonight's meeting
- Continue to develop and refine design alternatives based on project goals and community feedback
- Hold the next community meeting in late April/early May