

Public Meeting #3 (FINAL)

Feasibility Study: Mystic River Path Connection to the Minuteman Bikeway

Wednesday
June 22, 2022



Zoom Meeting Guidelines



Everyone is muted by default. You will have the opportunity to virtually raise your hand and unmute during the Q&A.



If you're comfortable, activate your camera to better connect with other attendees. Feel free to use a digital background if you want.



If you have a question during the presentation, enter it in the chat. It will be addressed during the Q&A after the presentation.



This meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the Town's website.

Zoom 101

- Mute and unmute buttons are in the lower left corner of the Zoom screen
- Raise hand feature: Click on Reactions at the bottom of your screen and choose "Raise Hand". Don't forget to "Lower Hand" once you've been called on.
- If you are calling in by phone, *9 controls mute/unmute and *6 is to raise your hand.

Agenda

7:30 pm

Introduction

7:35 pm

Presentation

- Recap of project and timeline
- Summary of results from 2nd public survey
- Overview of feasibility study report and preferred alternative
- Next steps

8:05 pm

Question & Answer

8:20 pm

Open Comment + Q & A

9:00 pm

Close

Chapter 1

Project Context



Project Funding & Team

- Funded through a grant of \$80,000 from the MassTrails program and \$10,000 from the Lawrence & Lillian Solomon Foundation
- **Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development**
- **Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA)**
- Toole Design
- City of Medford
- MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
- MA Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)



Study Purpose

From Alewife Brook Greenway to the Minuteman Bikeway, establish multiuse path:

- Preferred alignment
- Facility types
- Intersection safety improvements



Goals

- Provide an accessible route that contributes to a regional biking network by connecting the Minuteman Bikeway, Mystic River Paths, and Alewife Brook Greenway
- Strengthen the walking and biking network between Arlington, Medford, and Somerville by developing connections to perpendicular streets, sidewalks, and planned bike routes
- Increase safety and comfort for all users, particularly at intersections and rotaries
- Improve access to and views of the Mystic River and Mystic Lakes to enhance people's experience and draw them to these resources
- Reduce emissions by increasing bicycle mode share, and incorporate planning and design concepts that contribute to climate resiliency
- Preserve and enhance wetlands, trees canopy, and animal and plant habitat

Process & Timeline

| Task | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun |
|---|-----|---------|-----|-------------|-----|-----|---------|
| Existing conditions, data collection, plan review | | S PM | | | | | |
| Draft concepts for segments & intersections | | | | S, FG PM | | | |
| Refine concepts & develop recommended | | | | | | S | |
| Feasibility study & implementation | | | | | | | S PM |

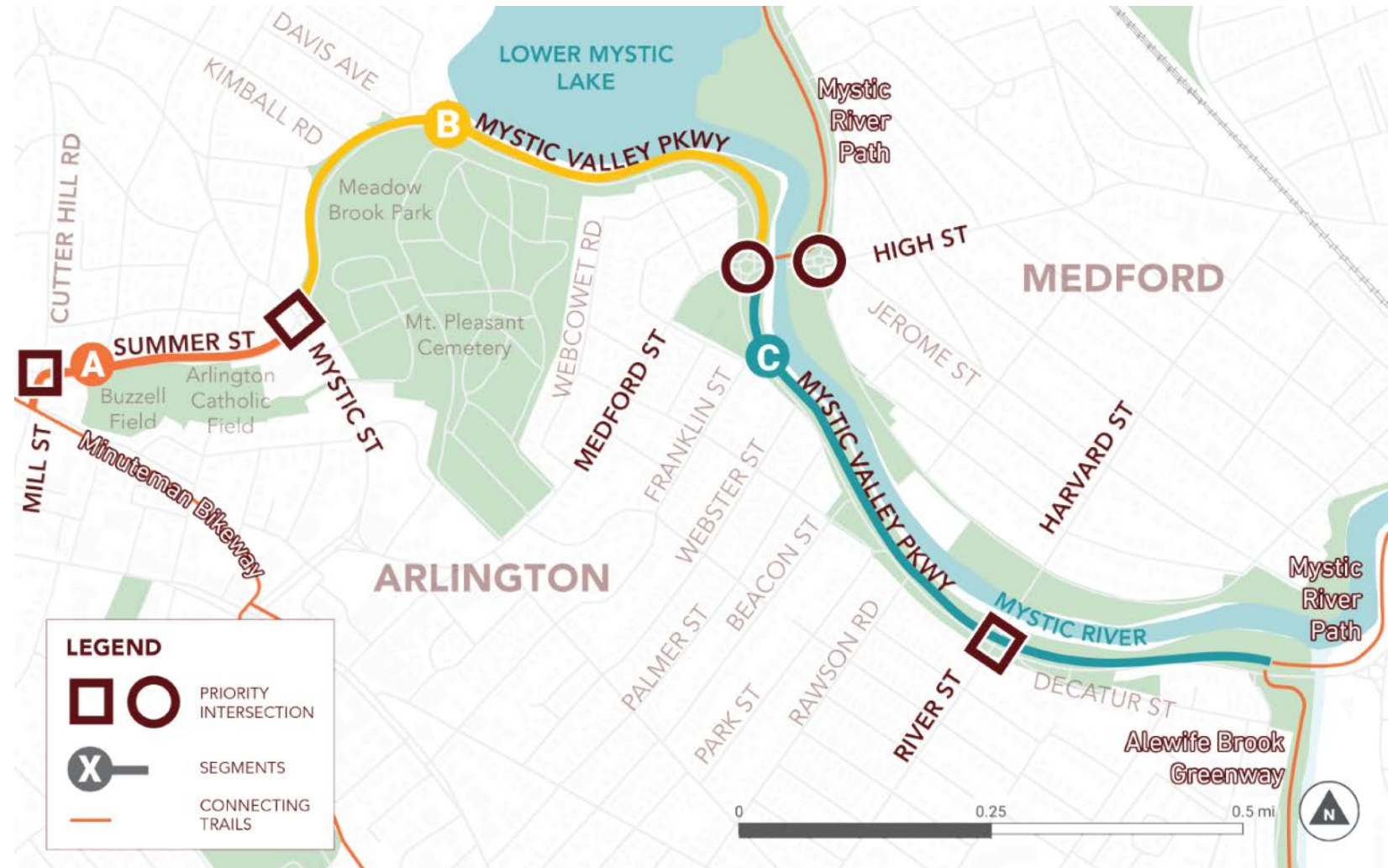
PM - Public meeting

S – Stakeholder meeting

FG – Focus group meeting

Segments and Priority Intersections

- Three segments and five priority intersections
- Existing conditions summaries and concept options developed for each



First Public Meeting and Survey

- Reviewed initial existing conditions assessment and filled in gaps with local knowledge

Highlighted public priority for:

- Safety
- Universal accessibility
- Nature experience and ecological preservation

Chapter 2

Concept Design Options

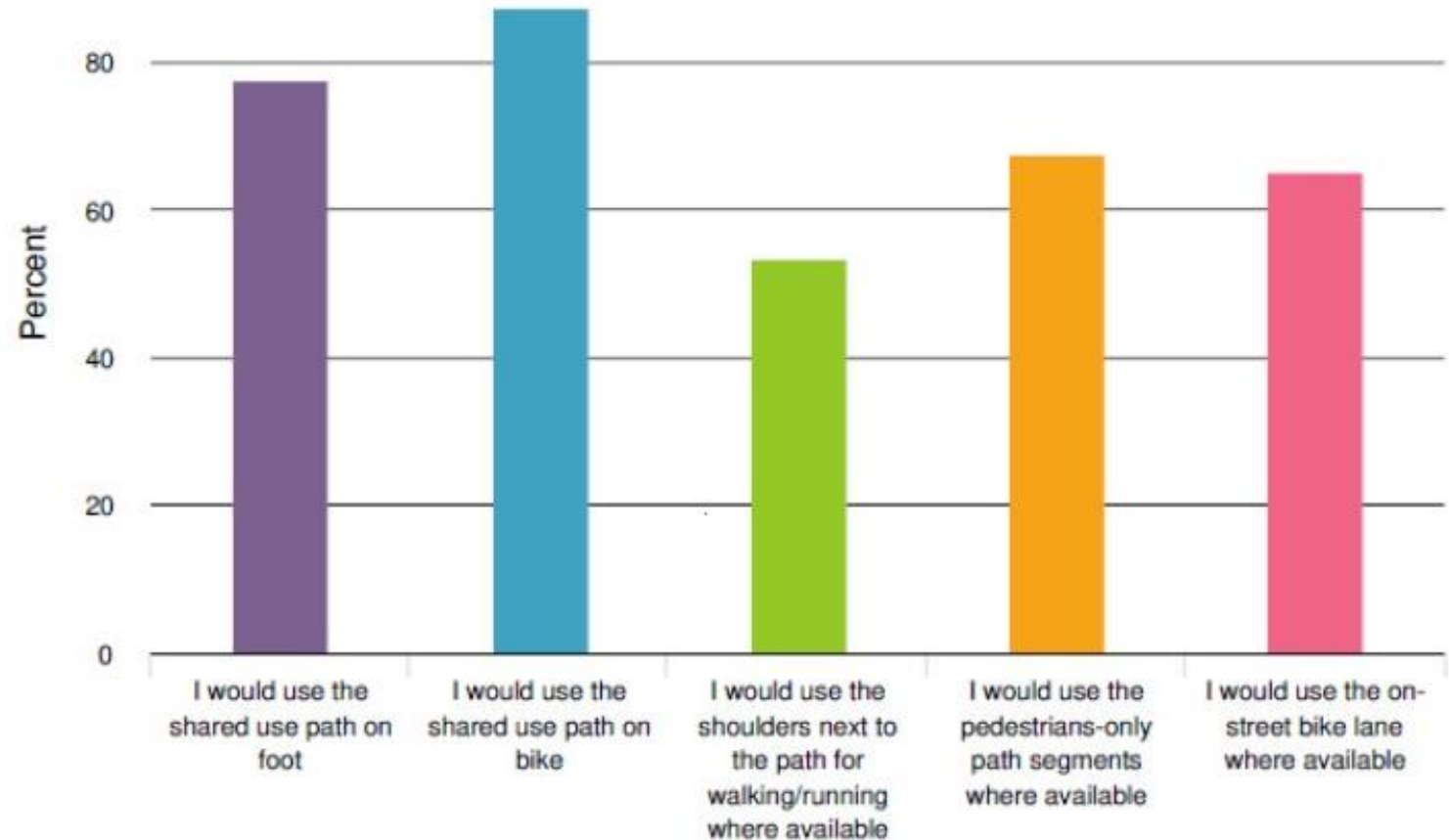


Results from 2nd Public Survey & Meeting

Proposed Trail Designs and Placemaking Concepts

How I Would Use the Path

- 87% would use the shared use path on bike
- 78% would use the path on foot



Facilities

Bike Lanes:

59% prefer 12-foot two-way buffered vs **41%** one-way buffered pair

Shared Use Path:

88% support asphalt as the path material with the understanding that soft shoulders and pedestrian-only paths will be provided

Many comments in meeting and survey received related to path materials and user groups, comfort, and ecological impacts

Summer St Parking & Diagonal Crossing

Summer Street:

75% support parking removal,

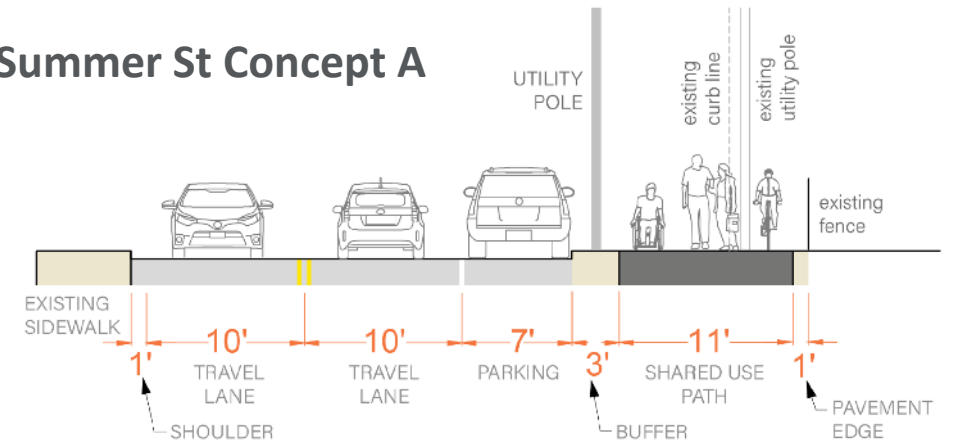
25% against removal

1/3 of those who supported parking removal prefer to keep it if it prevents project delays

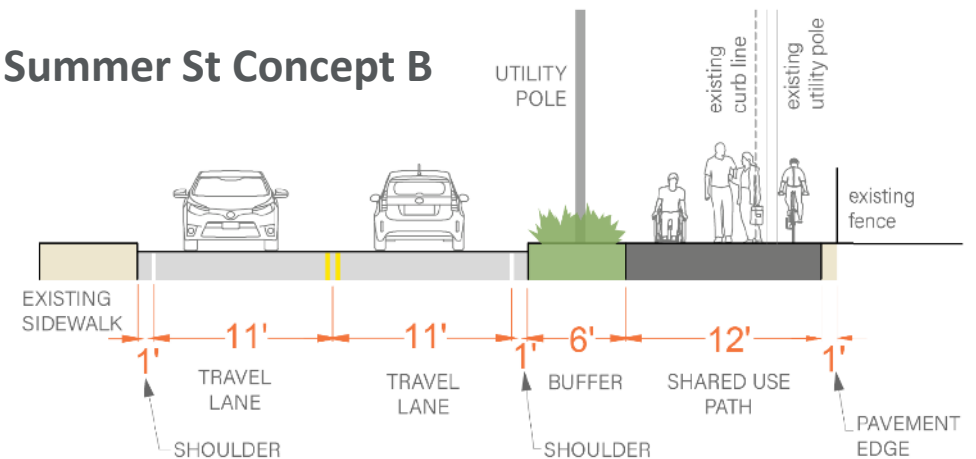
Diagonal crossing at MVP / Summer / Mystic intersection

86% of respondents favor diagonal crossing

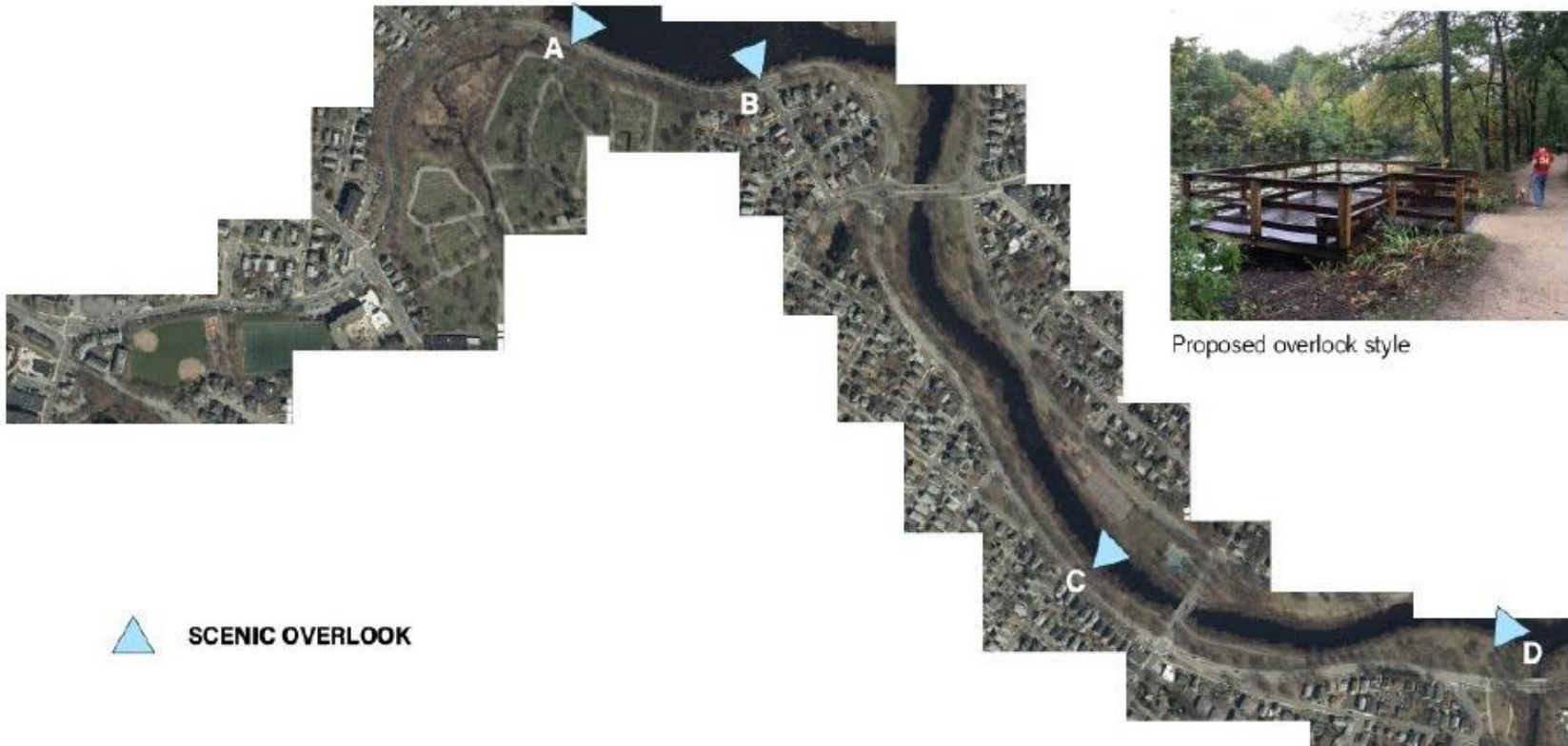
Summer St Concept A



Summer St Concept B



Placemaking: Overlooks



Proposed overlook style

Rank (High to Low)

- Site B
- Site A
- Site D
- Site C

Some people prefer overlooks be placed away from roadway for more separation

Placemaking Takeaways

- Protect ecosystems & design / maintain for habitat
- Replace some lawn with native plantings
- Preserve existing trees
- Interpretive signage on watershed, wildlife, and local history – emphasizing Indigenous and Black histories
- Many amenities suggested: benches, picnic tables, bike parking, and restrooms the highest mentioned

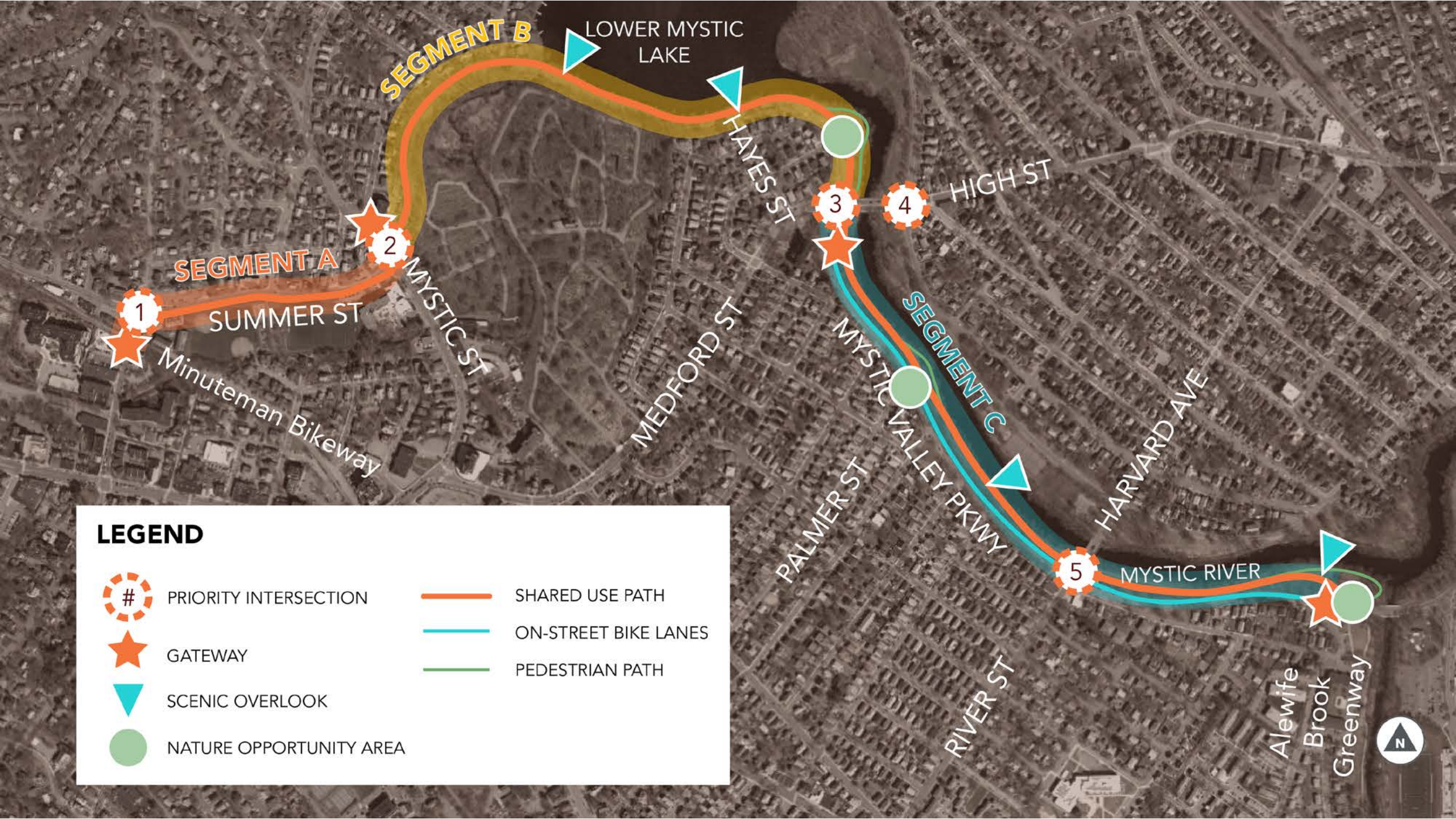
Chapter 3

Recommended Conceptual Design



Refinement and Preferred Concept Selection

- Concepts adjusted based on feedback from public meetings, surveys, and stakeholders
- Concepts considered:
 - Parking
 - Bike connections
 - Width
 - Materials
 - Placemaking/ecological preservation



LEGEND



PRIORITY INTERSECTION



GATEWAY



SCENIC OVERLOOK



NATURE OPPORTUNITY AREA



SHARED USE PATH



ON-STREET BIKE LANES



PEDESTRIAN PATH

1

SEGMENT A

SUMMER ST

Minuteman Bikeway

2

MYSTIC ST

SEGMENT B

LOWER MYSTIC LAKE

MEDFORD ST

HAYES ST

3

4

HIGH ST

SEGMENT C

PALMER ST

MYSTIC VALLEY PKWY

5

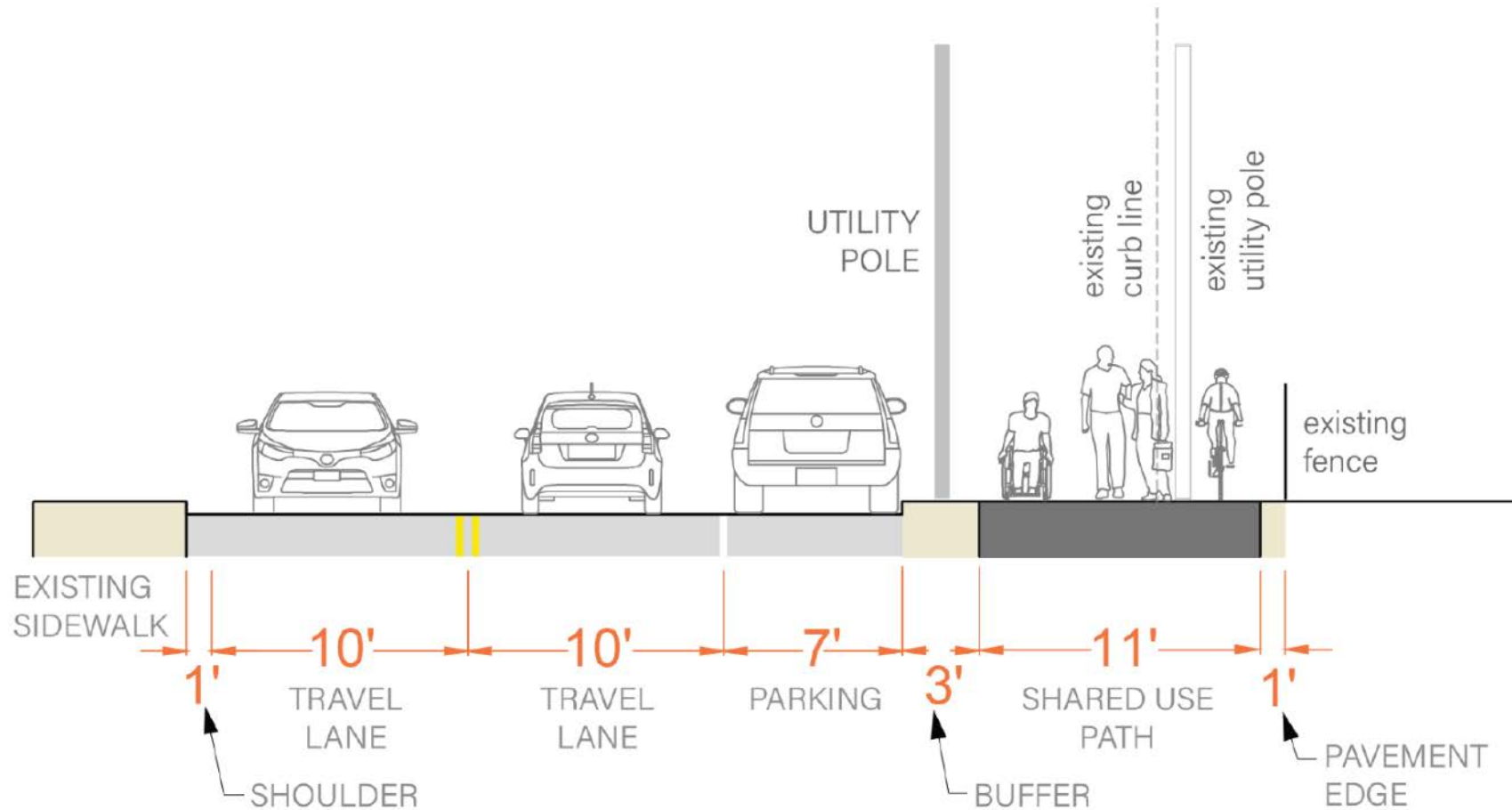
HARVARD AVE

MYSTIC RIVER

Alewife Brook Greenway

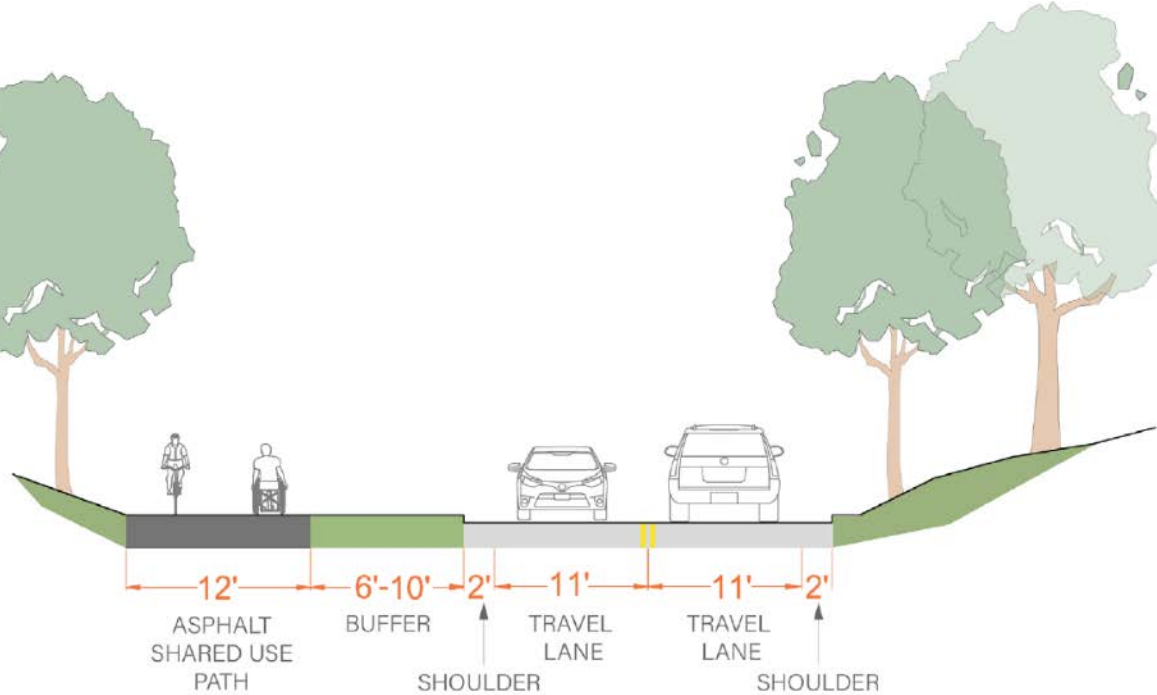


Segment A: Summer Street

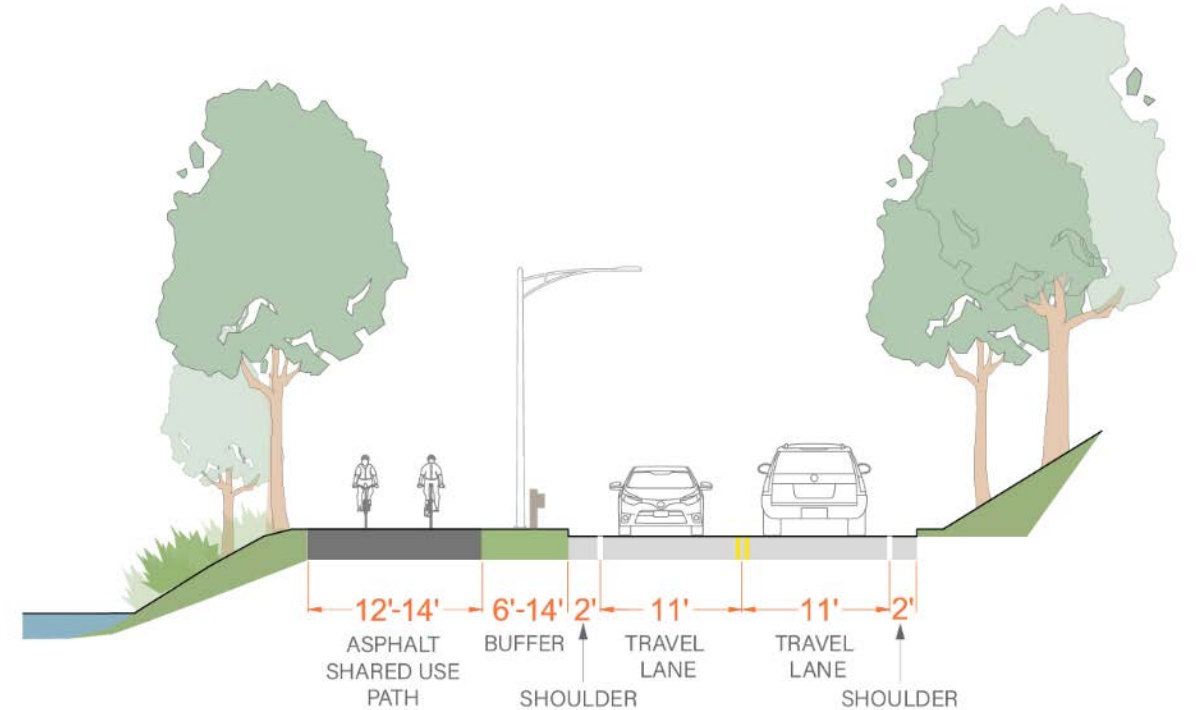


Segment B: Lower Mystic Lake

Just east of Mystic St/Summer St/Mystic Valley Pkwy



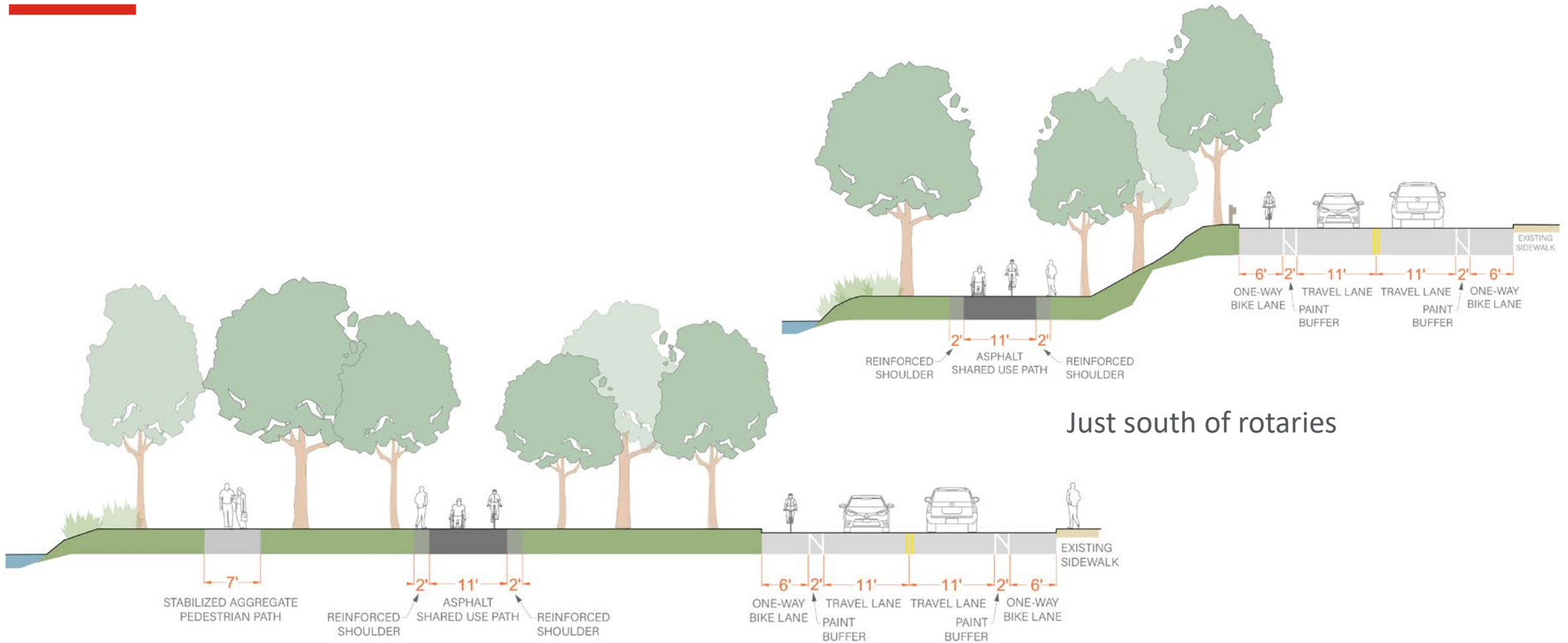
Lower Mystic Lake



Segment B: Lower Mystic Lake



Segment C: South of Rotaries



Just south of rotaries

Segment C: Mystic River at Palmer St



BEFORE



AFTER

Priority Intersection 1: Summer St / Mill St

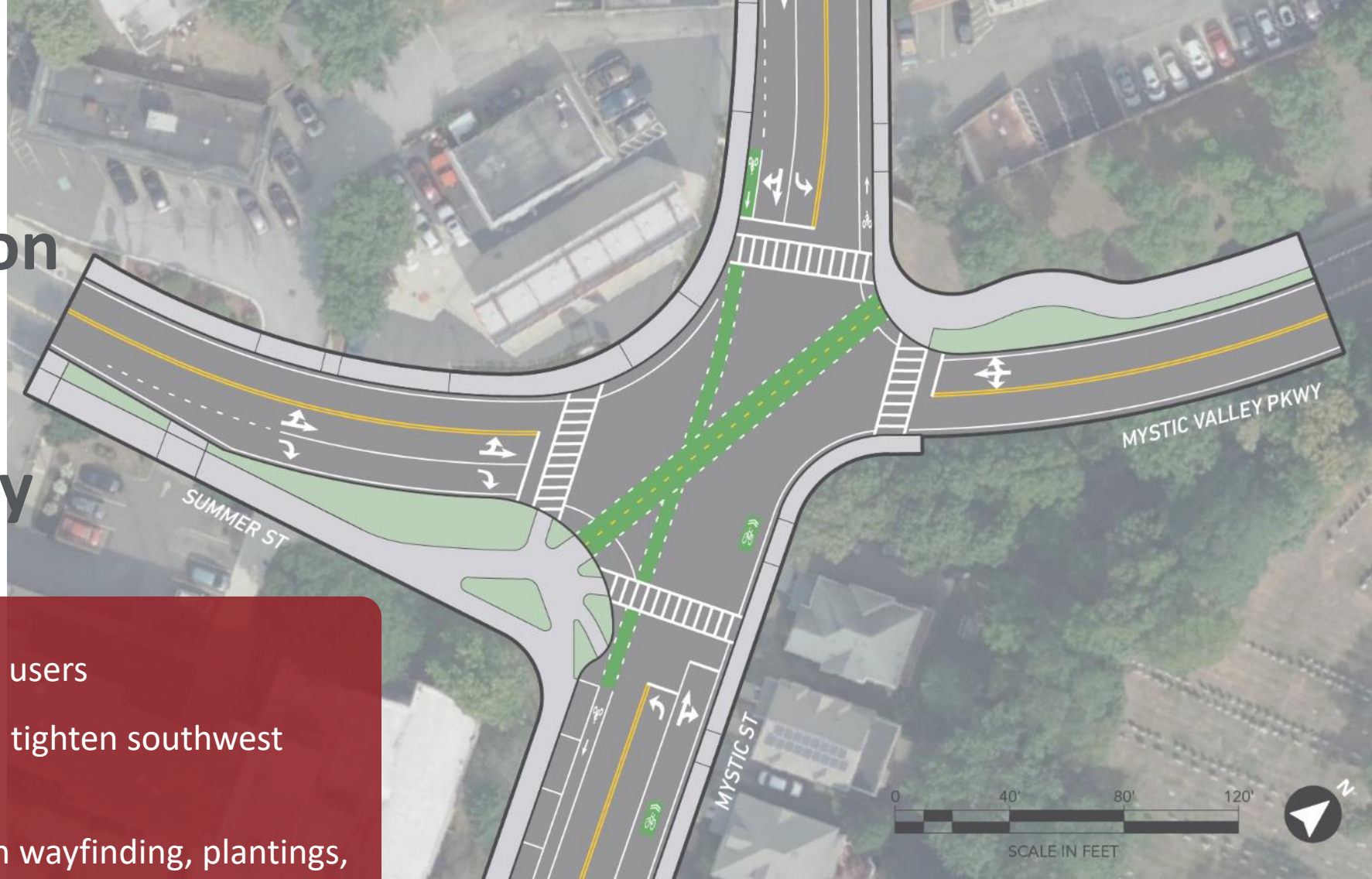


- Narrow travel lanes, and remove eastbound and northbound right turn lanes to provide space for path and buffer
- Incorporate bike lanes west of intersection
- Where possible, provide protected queuing space for cyclists on corners
- Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project addresses crossing at Mill Street

Last public meeting for
Minuteman Bikeway Planning
Project is Wed, June 29 at
7:30pm!

Short Term: Reduce corner radii with painted curb extensions and flexposts, separator curb, or planters.

Priority Intersection 2: Summer St / Mystic St / Mystic Valley Pkwy



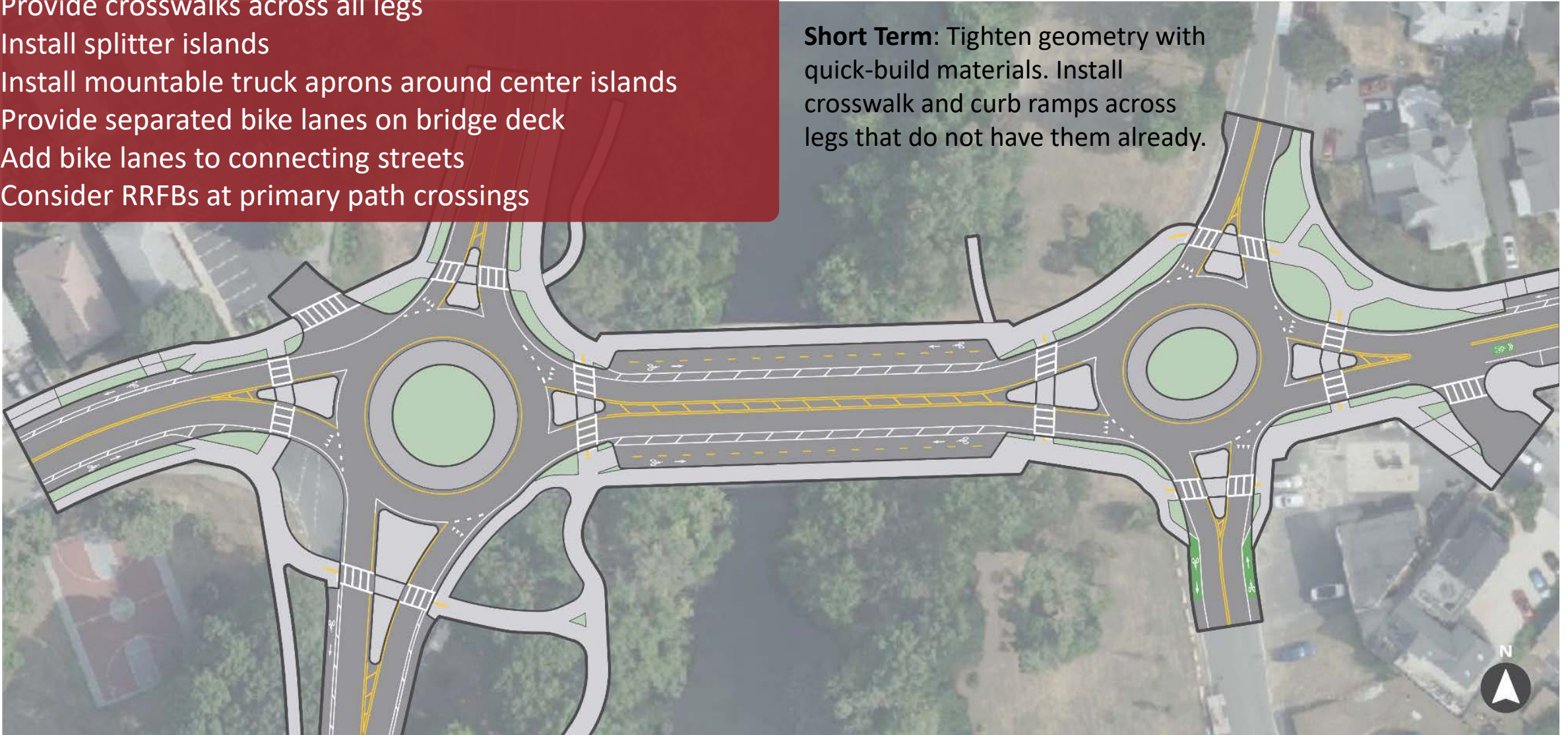
- Direct diagonal crossing for path users
- Remove eastbound slip lane and tighten southwest corner radii
- Establish gateway onto path with wayfinding, plantings, and other features on northeast corner
- Install high visibility crosswalk across southern leg where one does not already exist

Short Term: Reduce corner radii with paint and delineators. Evaluate signal timing adjustments and potential for shorter cycle lengths that reduce pedestrian/cyclist delay.

Priority Intersections 3 & 4: Medford St/High St Rotaries

- Tighten and formalize travel lanes
- Provide crosswalks across all legs
- Install splitter islands
- Install mountable truck aprons around center islands
- Provide separated bike lanes on bridge deck
- Add bike lanes to connecting streets
- Consider RRFBs at primary path crossings

Short Term: Tighten geometry with quick-build materials. Install crosswalk and curb ramps across legs that do not have them already.



Priority Intersection 5: MVP / River St / Harvard Ave Bridge

- Provide wide crosswalk on the north side of the intersection for path and sidewalk users
- Curve trail to crosswalk to discourage midblock crossing
- Add bike lanes across bridge and on MVP. Provide two-stage bicycle turn boxes to support bike connections
- Close gas station entrance on southeast corner

Short Term: Reconstruct curb ramps to be ADA compliant. Evaluate signal timing adjustments to reduce pedestrian/cyclist delay.



Neighborhood Connections



Minor Intersections

- High visibility / raised crosswalks
- In-street pedestrian signage
- Curb extensions
- RRFBs

Neighborhood Access Paths

- Diagonal / switchback alignment
- Curb / low retaining wall
- Granite markers / boulders
- Signage and pavement

Chapter 4

Implementation



Implementation – Phasing

Phase I

- Short-term improvements to be completed in 1-2 years. Not included in costs.

Phase II (Town)

- Segment A & Priority Intersections 1 & 2 (Mill & Mystic)

Phase III (DCR)

- III a. Priority Intersections 3 & 4 - Rotaries
- III b. Segments B & C plus Priority Intersection 5 (River St)

Implementation – Permitting

- Permitting
 - Wetland Resource Areas
 - Habitat
 - Hazardous Materials
 - MEPA
 - Historic/Cultural

| Regulated Resources | Permit or Review Required | Permitting Agency | Project Area or Component | Application Requirements |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| Floodplain and Floodway | No Rise Certification | FEMA | All areas within 100' of Mystic River or Lower Mystic Lake | 75% CDs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydraulic impacts evaluation by PE • State Engineer review and approval |
| Floodplain and Floodway (bordering land subject to flooding) | Mass DEP review (per 310 CMR 10.57) | Mass. DEP | Mystic River floodplain | 75% CDs |
| Floodplain/Floodway, Riparian Habitat, Wetlands, Waterbodies | Conservation Commission Review | Town of Arlington | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All areas within 200' of Mystic River • Areas within 100' of Lower Mystic Lake • Meadow Brook wetlands | 75% CDs NOI Administrative Filing Documents (4) |
| Wildlife Habitat | Mass DEP review (per 310 CMR 10.59-10.60) | Mass. DEP | TBD: riparian and aquatic habitat areas along Mystic River and Lower Mystic Lake | 75% CDs Site evaluation by ecologist or wildlife biologist |
| Public Waterfront | Public Waterfront Act review (Chapter 91) | Mass. DEP | Mystic River and Lower Mystic Lake frontage | 75% CDs |
| Historic Landscapes and Structures | Mass. Historical Commission Review | Mass. Historical Commission (MHC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mystic Valley Pkwy • Mystic Valley Pkwy tree canopy • High Street bridge • Rotaries at either end of High Street bridge • Meadow Brook culvert | 75% CDs |
| Impervious area, Wetlands, Historic structures, Mature trees | Mass. Environmental Protection Act (MEPA) | Mass. Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mystic River floodplain • Meadow Brook wetlands • Historic Meadow Brook Culvert • Historic Mystic Valley Parkway tree canopy • Other trees and forested areas | Environmental Notification Form (ENF) |

Implementation – Maintenance

- Town of Arlington and DCR to maintain the path and develop coordinated approach
- Plan samples for routine (weekly, monthly, seasonal, annual) and remedial maintenance

| Frequency | | | | Issue | Description of Activity |
|-----------|--------|------|--------|--------------------|--|
| Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter | | |
| X | X | X | | Mowing | Mow and edge grass |
| X | | X | | Landscaping | Perform major pruning of trees and shrubs to ensure limbs do not encroach on clear zones |
| X | X | X | | Weed Control | Trim or remove weeds encroaching on or growing through the trail |
| X | X | X | X | Drainage / Erosion | Stabilize eroded areas |
| X | X | X | X | Inspection | Perform detailed inspection of all trail features |

PATH ELEMENTS TO BE MAINTAINED

PATH AND INTERSECTION PAVEMENT

*Pavement markings
Debris removal
Pavement sweeping
Snow removal*

VEGETATION

*Mow lawns
Clear sight lines
Control overgrowth
Replant dying or displaced vegetation*

SIGNAGE

SITE AMENITIES

*Maintain components such as seating, bike racks, etc.
Remove graffiti*

STRUCTURES

Implementation – Cost Opinion

| Segment/Intersection | Planning-Level Cost Opinion |
|--|--|
| Town of Arlington | |
| Phase II: Segment A & Priority Intersections 1 & 2: Minuteman Bikeway to Mystic St via Mill St and Summer St. Includes Mill St and Mystic St/Mystic Valley Pkwy intersections | \$4,460,000 (underground power & telecom) |
| | \$2,800,000 (utility poles relocated) |
| DCR | |
| Phase IIIa - Priority Intersections 3 & 4: Medford St/High St Rotaries and High St Bridge (MassDOT) | \$2,080,000 |
| Phase IIIb - Segments B & C + Priority Intersection 5: Mystic Valley Pkwy from Rotaries to Alewife Brook Greenway. Includes River St/Harvard Ave Bridge intersection | \$7,830,000 |

Next Steps

- Plan will be finalized and posted to Town's website
- Town has applied for MassTrails funding to start design of Mill/Summer Street
- DCR to coordinate on path under their jurisdiction

For questions / comments, contact:

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Thank you!

