

An aerial photograph of Beacon Park Yard in New York City, featuring a large parking lot, a multi-lane highway with an overpass, and surrounding urban buildings. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The main title is in large white font, and the subtitle is in a smaller white font.

Beacon Park Yard Regional Framework Plan

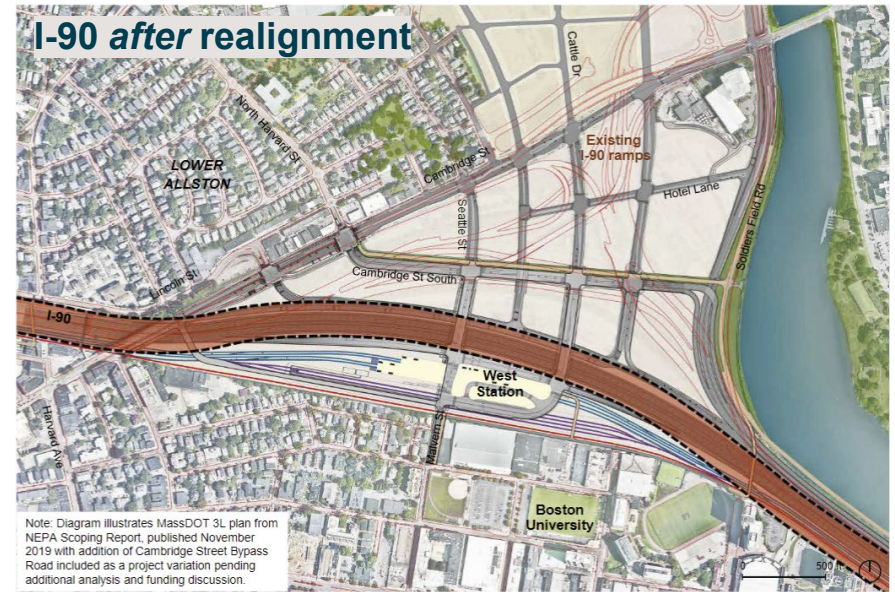
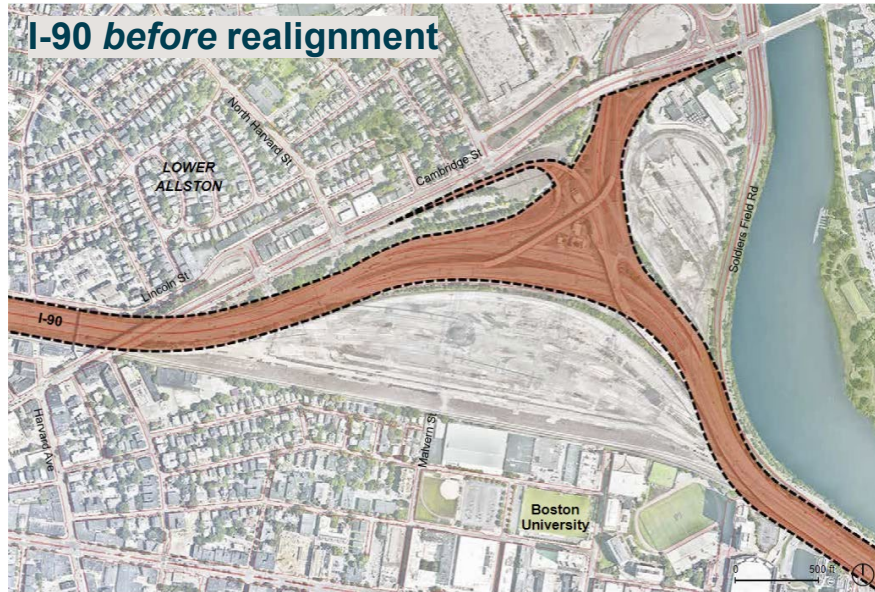
'Beacon in a Box' Board Game
June - July 2024

Overview

1. Project Timeline & Background
2. Frameworks and Guiding Principles
3. Site Understanding & Constraints
4. Beacon In a Box!
5. Next Steps

Background

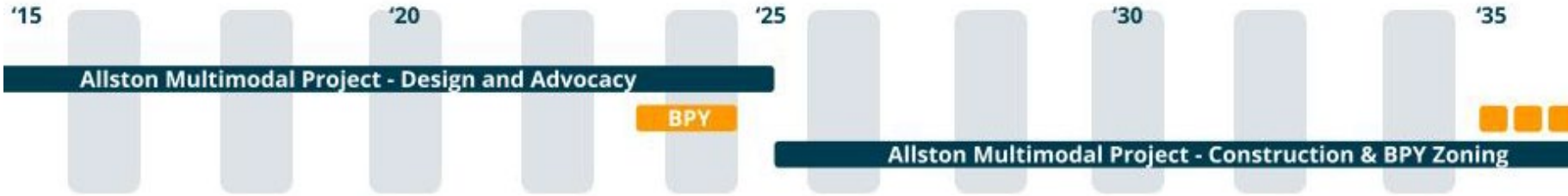
MassDOT's Allston Multimodal Project Enables the Beacon Park Yard Planning Process



The Allston Multimodal Project will deliver robust multimodal transit.

**depictions from the Harvard, Beacon Park Yard Pre-Planning Analysis (2023)*

Collaborative Process



The Beacon Park Yard Regional Framework Plan will establish a regional, community vision for dense urban development to support and inform the transformational urban infrastructure project.

Engagement Summary

Experience of Infrastructure

Current Context

1. People live, work, study, move, and connect regionally.
2. People feel unsafe walking and/or biking.
3. People expressed that there is a lack of infrastructure connections to and across the Charles River.

Visions for the Future

1. **Prioritize multimodal uses, meaning safer and comfortable streets and sidewalks for all users through new transportation infrastructure in the Plan Area in conjunction with comprehensive green infrastructure.**
2. **Create multimodal connections at a regional scale.**
3. The experience of infrastructure at a **human-scale is integral and necessary** to create a connected region, encourage multimodal movement, and foster community.

Engagement Summary

Partnership with Natural Systems

Current Context

1. **The Charles River is identified as a regional asset, a place for gathering and connecting to nature.**
2. **People experience, enjoy, and connect to nature and natural systems at various scales.**
3. **Parks, open spaces, and natural systems are integral community assets where people go for their general wellbeing. If nature is a health space, then the health and maintenance of parks and nature impacts the community's well being.**

Visions for the Future

1. **Existing and new green spaces should be connected through multimodal infrastructure regionally in the Study Area.**
2. **Natural green infrastructure strategies should be implemented in the Plan Area to mitigate climate change including the urban heat island effect and flooding.**
3. **An empowered collective is necessary to achieve climate resilient natural systems alongside infrastructure.**

Engagement Summary

New Models for Opportunity

Current Context

1. **Civic, public, and service spaces (private and public) are valued community assets** in the Study Area.
2. **Shops and restaurants are valued assets** in Allston-Brighton, community members would **like to see more variety, especially affordable and accessible options for families with children and youth.**
3. **There is a strong arts and culture presence in Allston-Brighton, particularly music, but it is not always so visible.**
4. **Partnerships and collaborations occur...strengthen these relationships and create new opportunities by more specifically aligning institutional and government investments with service providers' priorities and needs.**
5. **People expressed concerns about new development design, affordable housing, and supporting retail space.**

Visions for the Future

6. **Large scale planning and development unlocks opportunities for land uses and policy experimentation to create an economically diverse and climate resilient sub-neighborhood.**
7. **Invest in community anchors to create a supportive infrastructure network**

Guiding Principles

Improve Pedestrian + Cyclist Experience in and around Allston



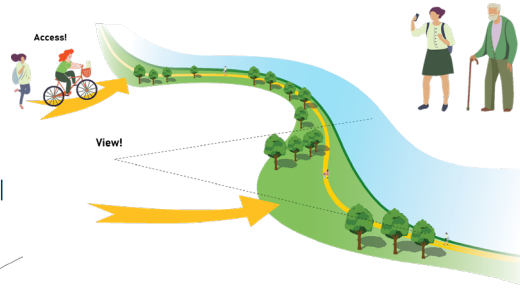
Develop with the City



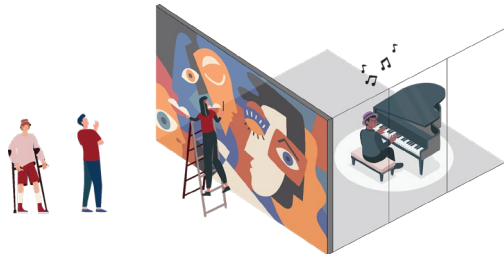
Create Accessible + Reliable Multimodal Connections Regionally



Connect to the Charles



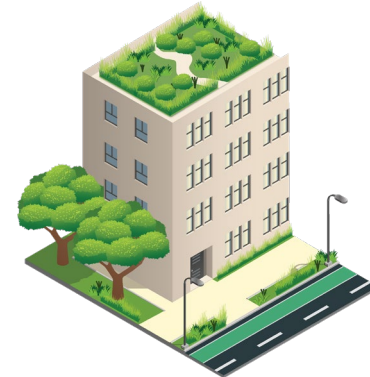
Amplify Allston's Creative Capital



Invest in Community Anchors



Employ Nature-Based Solutions



Engagement Summary

Cultural & Natural Assets

Current Conditions

1. The Charles River is repeatedly a place people connect to nature, feel part of a larger community, and connect and take care of self. However, the experience along the Charles River Waterfront is not consistent in Allston.

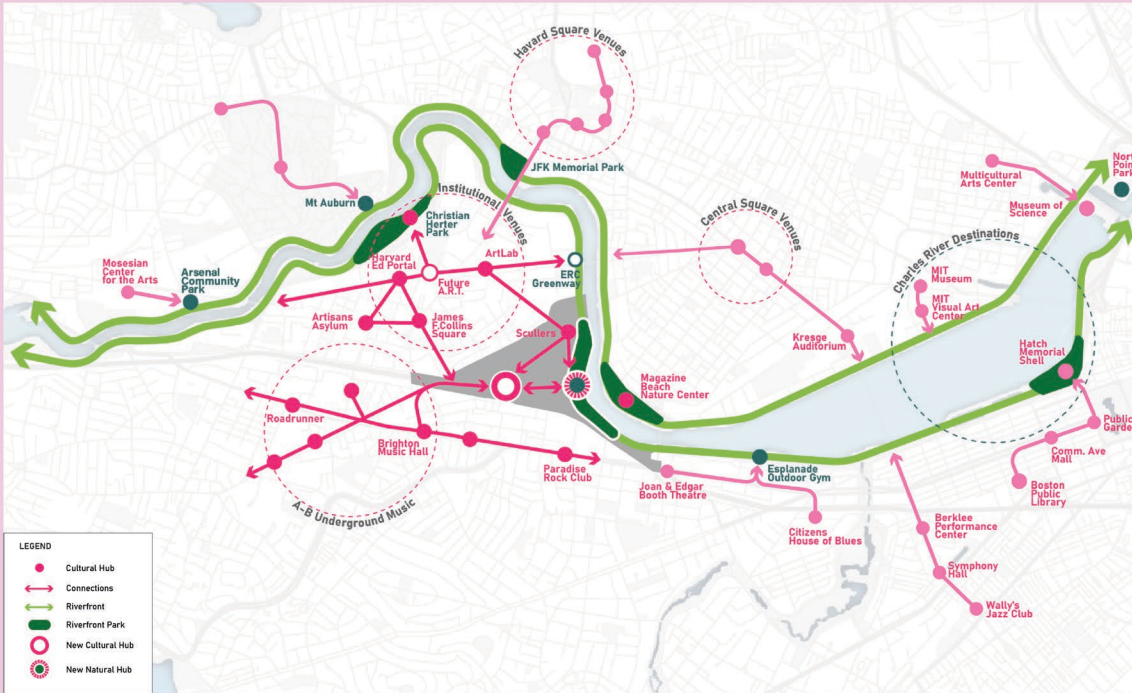
Vision for the Future

1. People want to be able to easily and safely get to a robust open space area at the Charles River Waterfront that complements the rest of the nodes along it.
2. Design is a powerful tool to create a space of inclusivity, belonging, and connection to place.
3. The future West Station should be a cultural point of arrival that is pleasant, safe, and promotes civic, arts, and cultural activities.
4. West Station can serve as a cultural destination that serves more closed cultural and art venues while the Charles River Waterfront can serve as open space for arts and culture.
5. Arts and cultural spaces at the Charles River Waterfront can include more permanent facilities such as an outdoor amphitheater and less permanent spaces such as pop-ups and events.
6. Community leadership and advocacy is crucial for the activation, protection, and health of open green spaces.

Arrive at the Gateway + Journey to the Beacon

**BEACON
PARK
YARD** regional
framework
plan

ARRIVE AT THE GATEWAY + JOURNEY TO THE BEACON FRAMEWORK - CULTURAL & NATURAL ASSETS



Summary: Two Cultural Hubs

West Station cultural hub focused on indoor civic, arts, and cultural services to create a new gateway, drawing in regional visitors. Connecting closely to the future transit station will encourage arrival by public transit and ensure a vibrant center, accessible and visible to all that connects to Allston's existing cultural hubs and to the new the transformational investment cultural hub at Charles River waterfront.

The waterfront cultural hub can service permanent and more flexible outdoor civic, arts, and cultural activities. The future BPY cultural corridor will align and support Allston's current vibrant arts presence while providing an opportunity to provide unique experiences to fill in gaps that exist today.

Engagement Summary

Transportation

Current Conditions

1. There is an existing network of partnerships across service providers and institutions across Allston-Brighton. BU and HU Students are participating in volunteer and internship opportunities in the neighborhoods. However, students expressed consistent and reliable bus service as the main challenge to getting to their volunteer and internship jobs and sometimes a deterring factor from partaking in these roles.

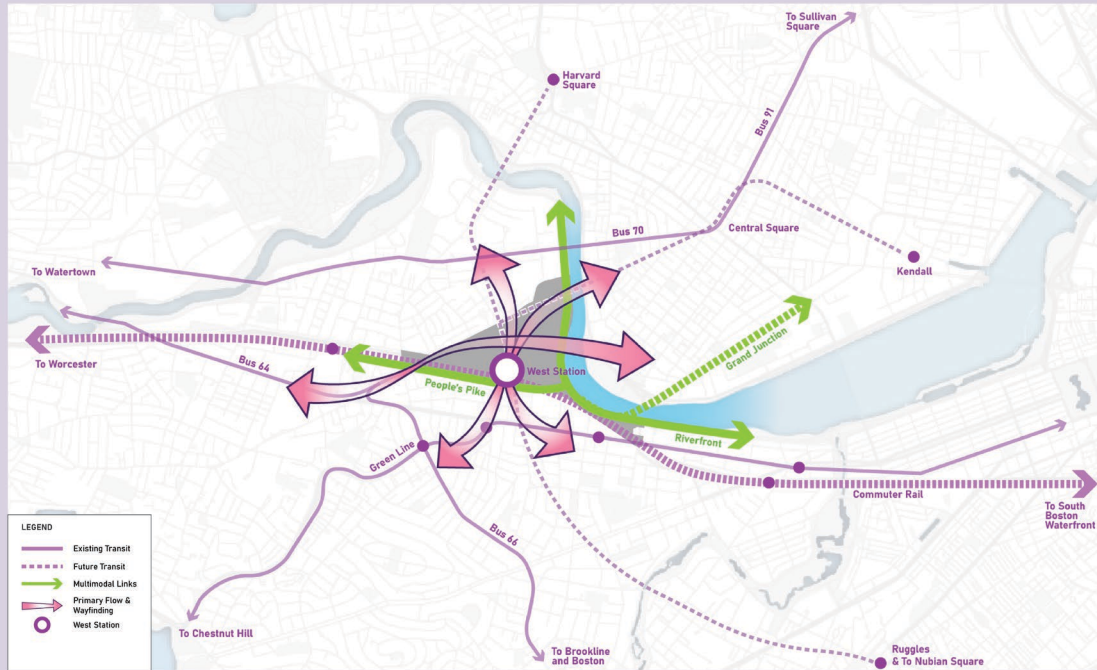
Vision for the Future

1. West Station has the potential to deliver on the high-need for more high-frequency MBTA bus service to get to other parts of Allston-Brighton, across the Charles River, and other CoB neighborhoods.
2. For West Station to be a successful regional cultural transportation Hub, big infrastructure moves need to happen like establishing decking early on and connecting to existing and incoming to neighboring multiuse paths like Cambridge's Grand Junction Multiuse Path.
3. Green multimodal infrastructure to arrive at a large public open space that encourages public recreational and cultural activities at the Charles River Waterfront.
4. Transportation infrastructure should include small street networks that accomodates multimodal infrastructure which people should be able to easily navigate through accessible wayfinding. At the same time, these conditions would contribute to a sense of wonder and foster community and belonging.

Embrace the Resources

**BEACON
PARK
YARD** | regional
framework
plan

EMBRACE THE RESOURCES FRAMEWORK - TRANSPORTATION



Summary:

Create a regional destination at the new transit station with multimodal infrastructure and robust MBTA bus service. This will be balanced with small unique experiences and "little streets" through the rest of the area for pedestrians and cyclists. The Cambridge Street Bridge is a critical connector across the Mass Pike and into the Plan Area. Aligning transportation investments with key existing corridors will expand opportunities for community and regional partnerships. Emphasizing connections through infrastructure and state of the art wayfinding to the rail, bus, Charles River, and commercial corridors are necessary to create an inclusive sense of place with new opportunities for resource generation.

Engagement Summary

Land Uses

Current Context

1. The renter population is transient with increasing housing costs while the path to homeownership is increasingly more difficult citywide.
2. To the south of the site there's institutional, residential (mostly-student housing), and strong arts and cultural hub while to the west side of the site there're multi-family homes (owner-occupied) and Harvard owned land institutional and private.

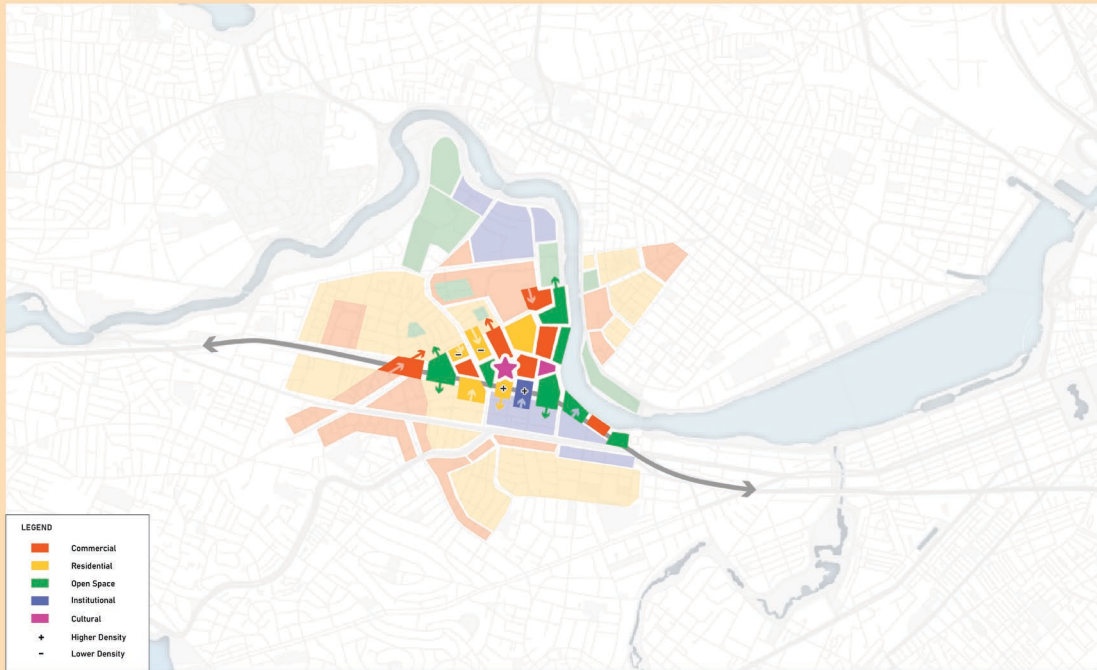
Vision for the Future

1. Overwhelmingly, housing is a desired use on this site, but housing should be accompanied by various uses such as retail, restaurants, jobs, open space, and public services etc. to support multigenerational communities.
2. Mixed-use is the desired path forward for Beacon Park Yard. Desired uses include, residential, open space, retail and commercial, cultural, and public and civic services.
3. Civic uses are current community assets in Allston and the region. Further service level analysis and collaboration is needed with public civic uses such as public works, fire stations, and Emergency Management Services (EMS), and such.
4. How do the edges interact with future land uses in BPY?
5. Opportunity to mix uses in parcels - there's flexibility.

Create a Mosaic

**BEACON
PARK
YARD** | regional
framework
plan

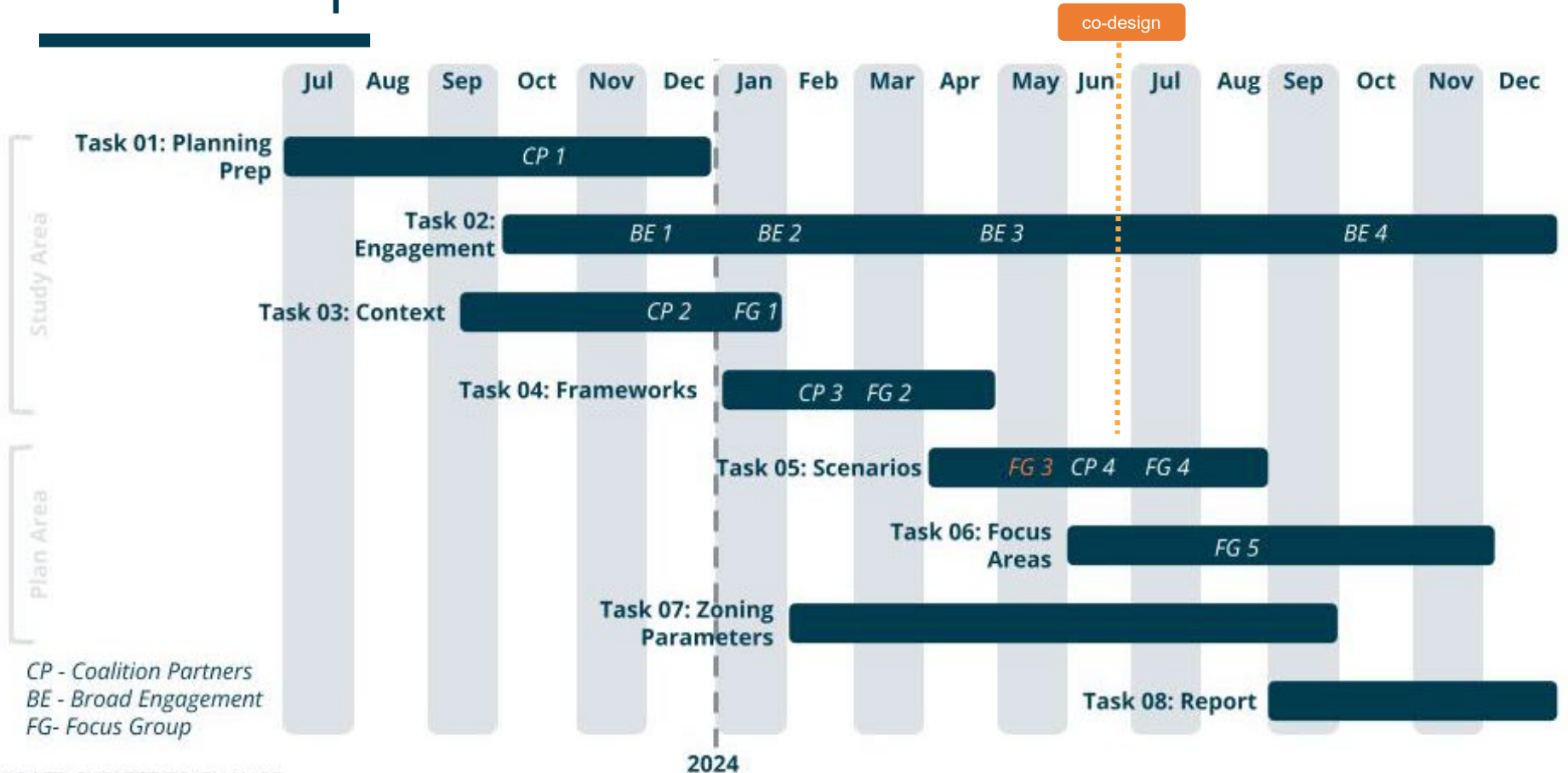
CREATE A MOSAIC FRAMEWORK - LAND USE



Summary:

Acknowledge that land use changes over time, creating a mosaic across the Study Area with a balance of residential and institutional from the north to south and a patchwork of commercial and open space from west to east. Focus on the mixing of uses along the edges of the Plan Area and creating options for housing and small businesses with density near the new transit station.

Next Steps



CP - Coalition Partners
BE - Broad Engagement
FG - Focus Group

Beacon Park Yard - Existing

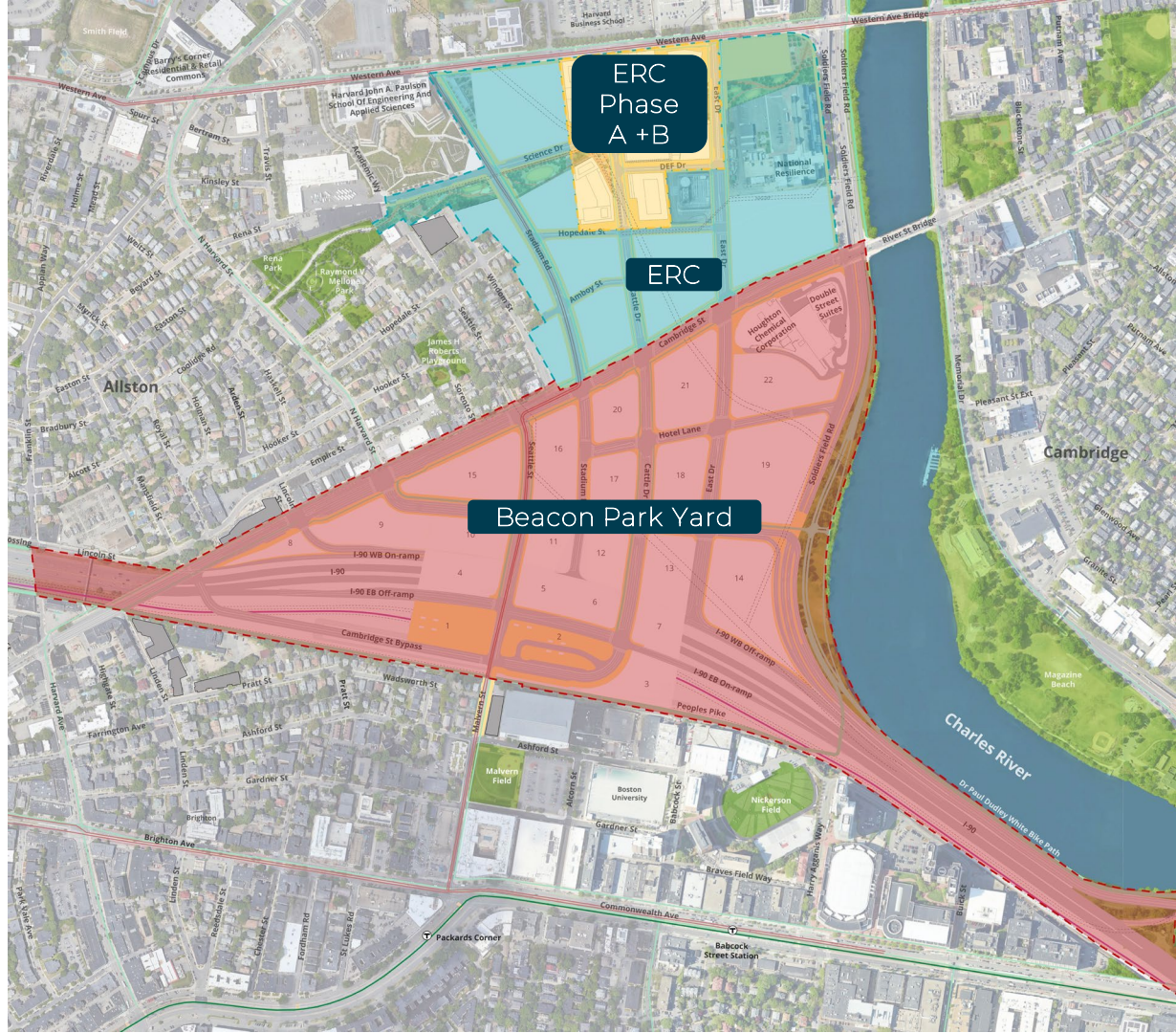


Beacon Park Yard - Future

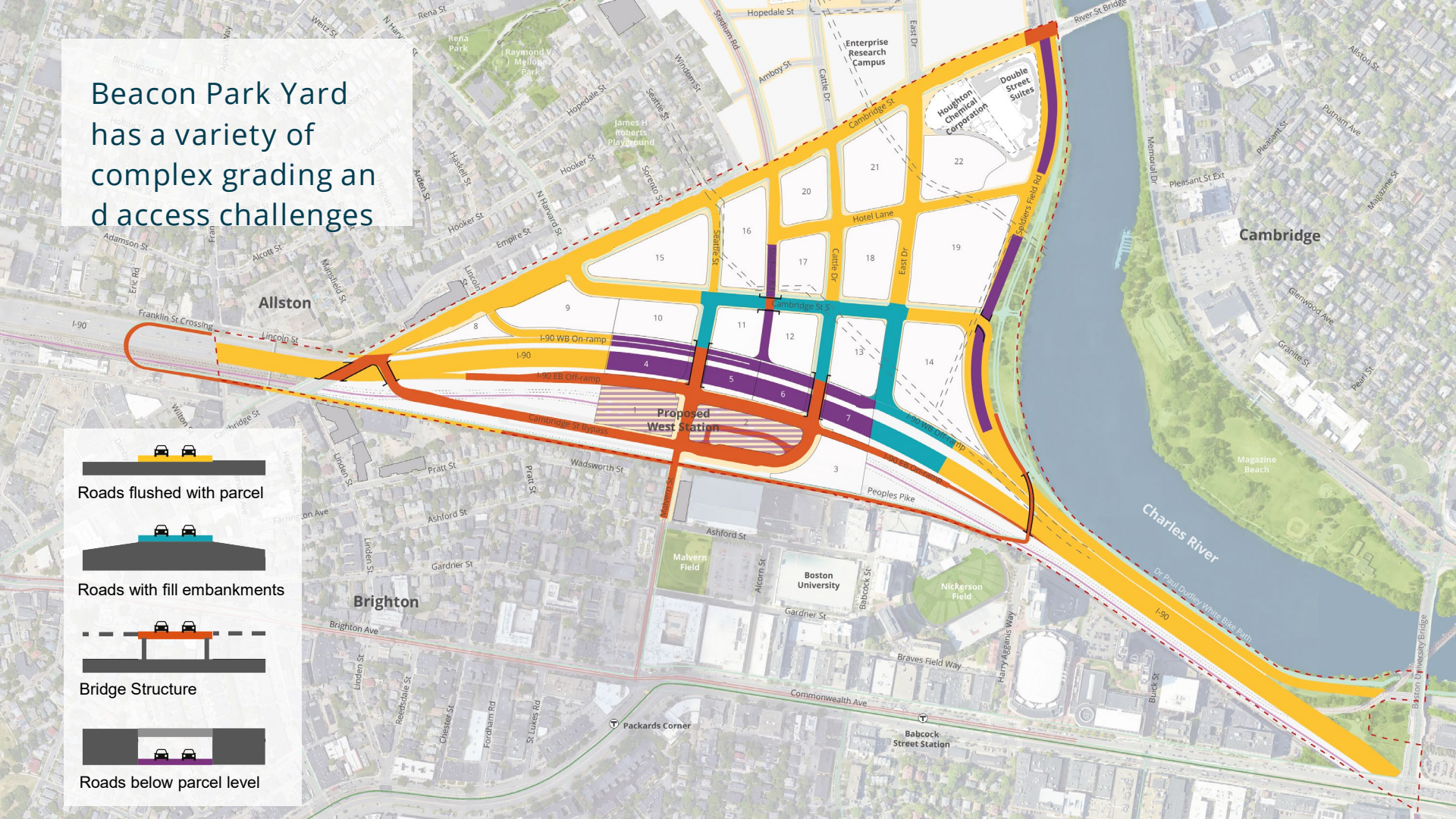
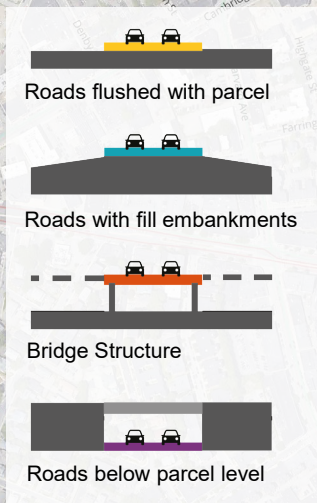


Understanding the Site

1. Critical Grade & Access Constraints
2. Utilities
3. West Station



Beacon Park Yard
has a variety of
complex grading and
access challenges



Beacon Park Yard has a variety of complex grading and access challenges



West Station

Alston

ERC

DoubleTree Suites

Cambridge Street

Hotel Lane

Cambridge Street S

Cambridge St Bypass

Proposed West Station

Malvern Field

Boston University

Nickerson Field

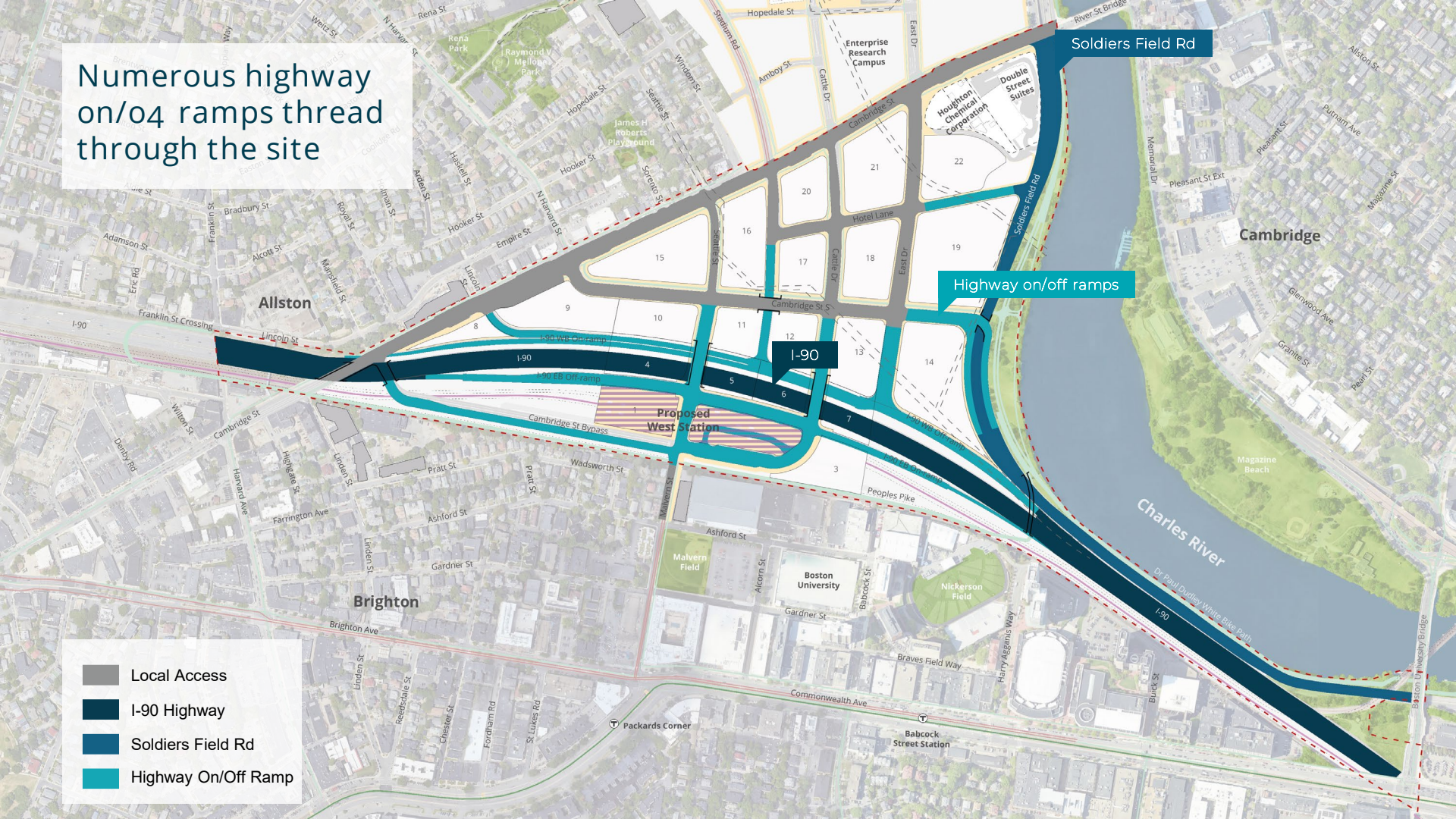
Charles River

Dr Paul Dursey White Blue Path

Magazine Beach

Brookline

Numerous highway on/off ramps thread through the site



Soldiers Field Rd

Highway on/off ramps

I-90

Proposed West Station

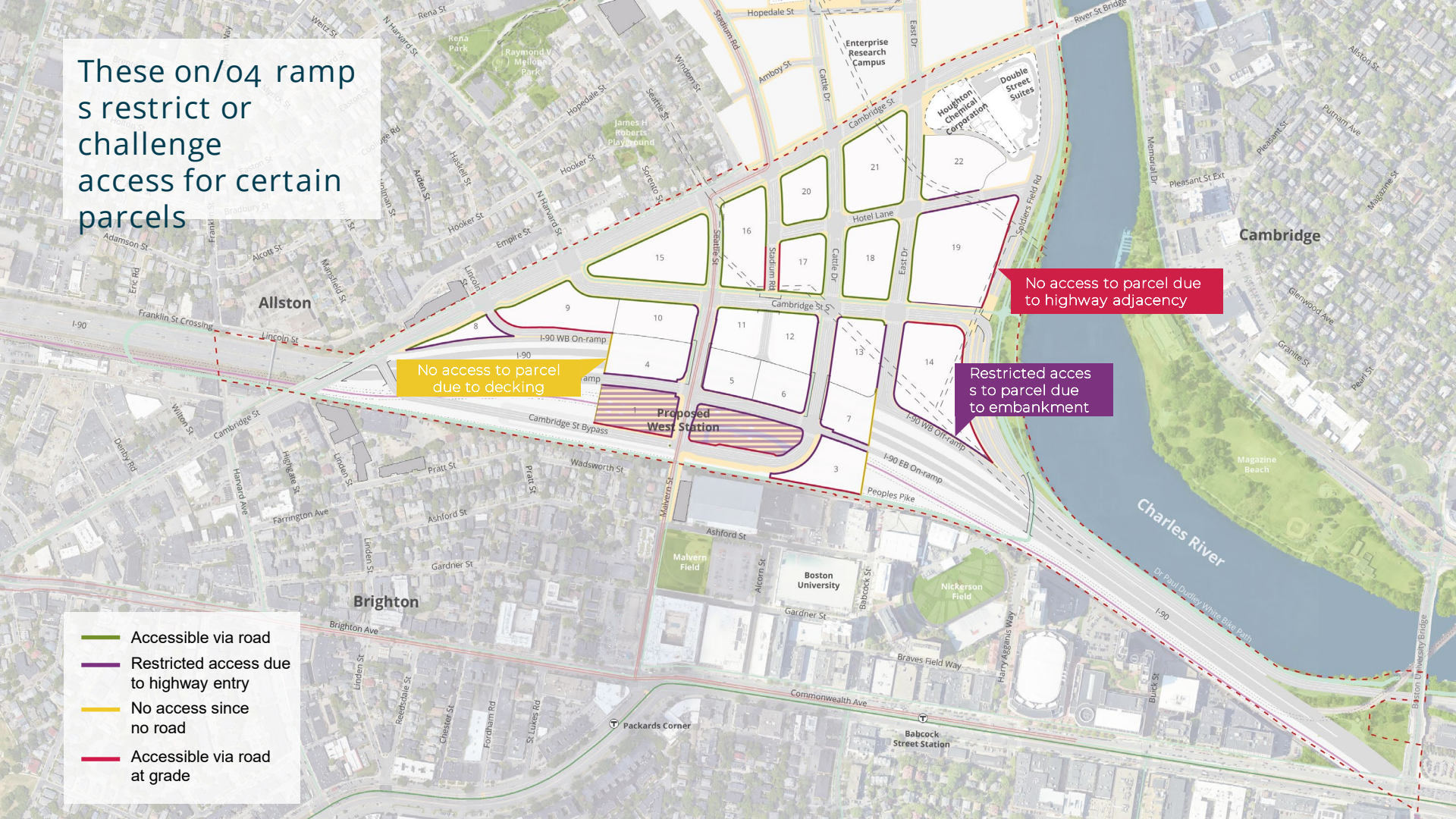
Cambridge

Allston

Brighton

- Local Access
- I-90 Highway
- Soldiers Field Rd
- Highway On/Off Ramp

These on/04 ramp
s restrict or
challenge
access for certain
parcels



No access to parcel
due to decking

No access to parcel due
to highway adjacency

Restricted acces
s to parcel due
to embankment

- Accessible via road
- Restricted access due to highway entry
- No access since no road
- Accessible via road at grade

Allston

Cambridge

Brighton

Proposed West Station

Charles River

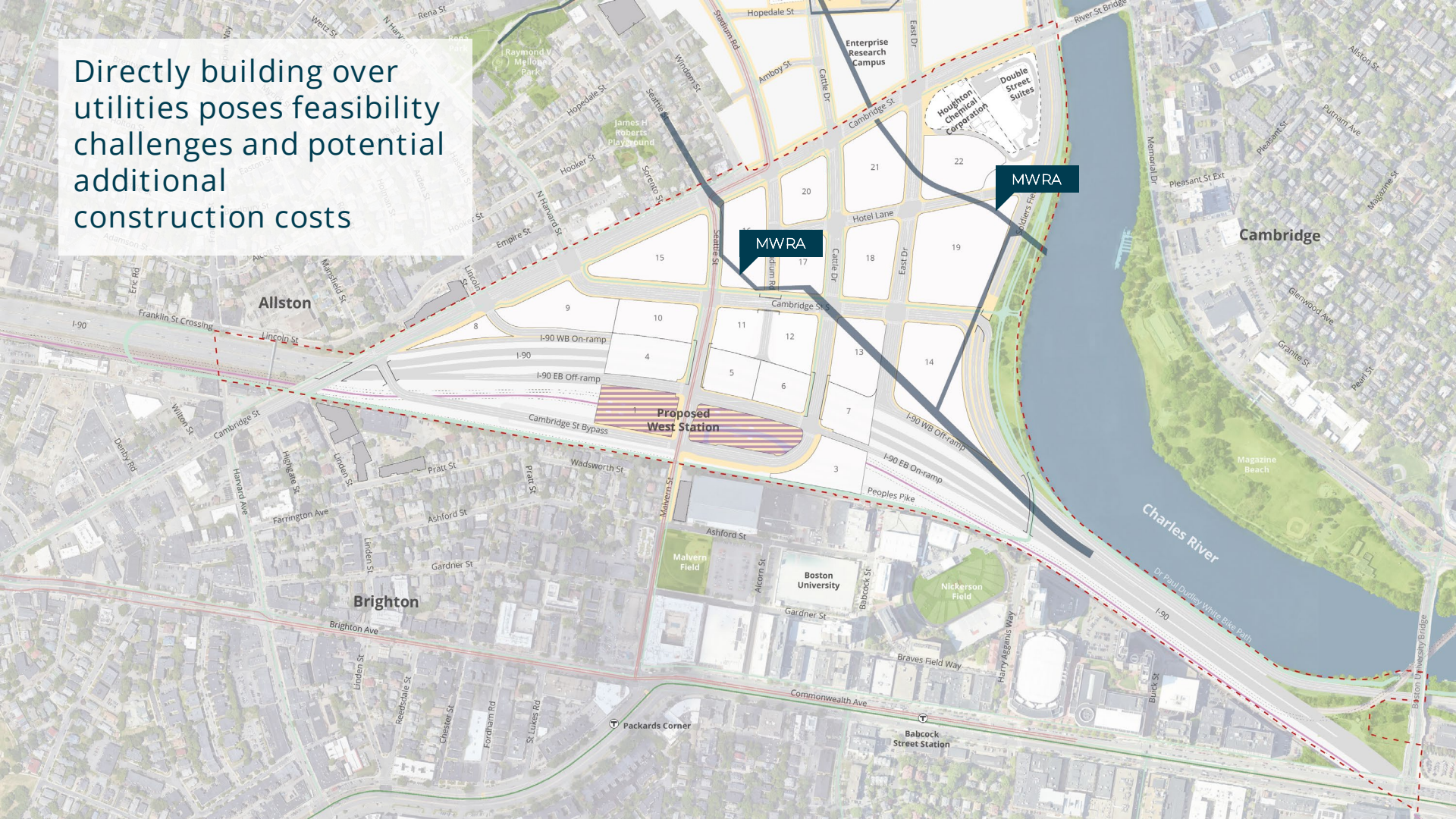
Boston University

Nickerson Field

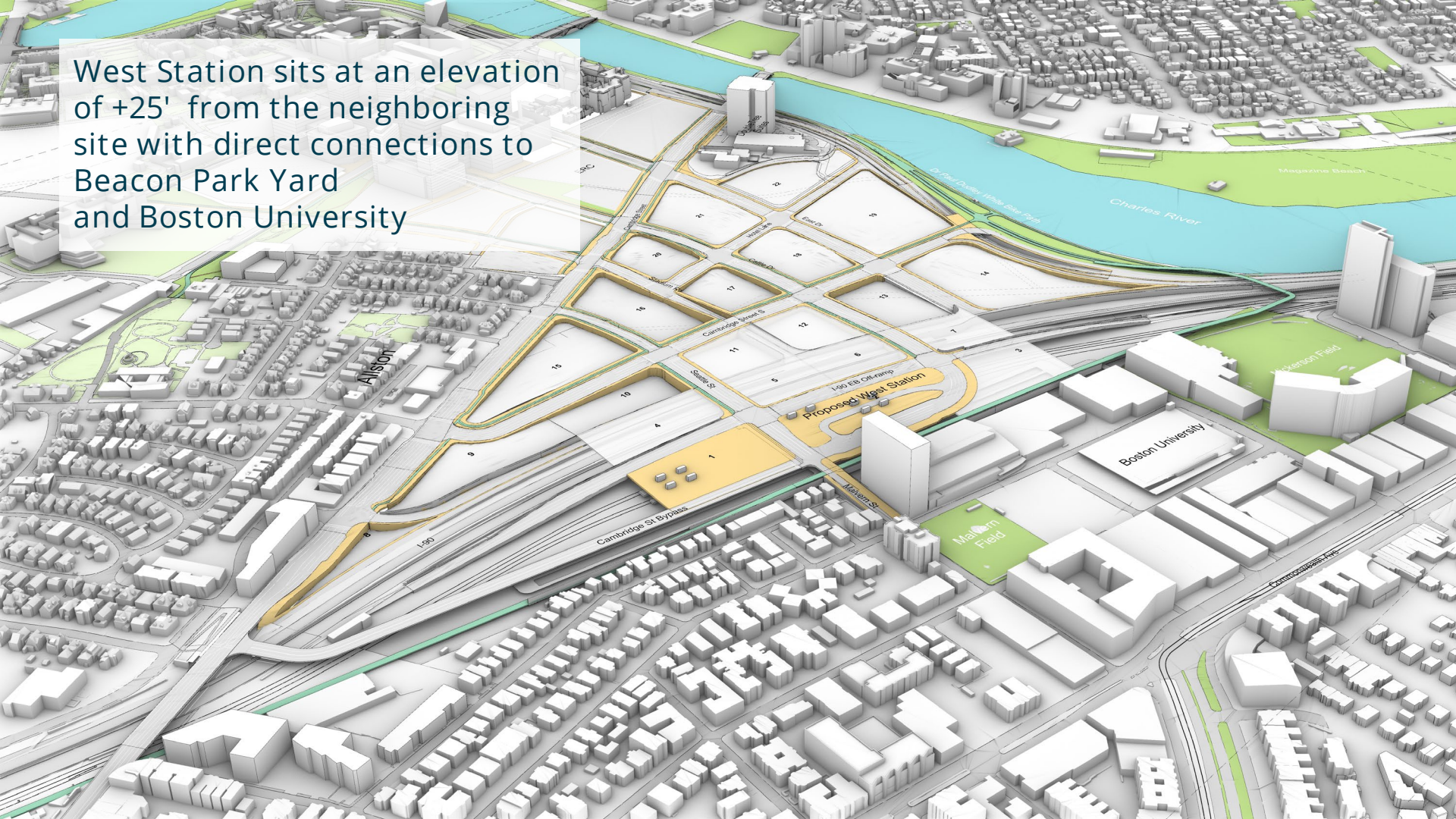
Packards Corner

Babcock Street Station

Directly building over utilities poses feasibility challenges and potential additional construction costs



West Station sits at an elevation of +25' from the neighboring site with direct connections to Beacon Park Yard and Boston University



Understanding the Edges

1 Cambridge Street & ERC Interface

2 Soldiers Field Road, Open Space & the River's Edge

3 Southern Edge, West Station, People's Pike & Boston University



Cambridge St & ERC

Existing



Cambridge St & ERC

Future



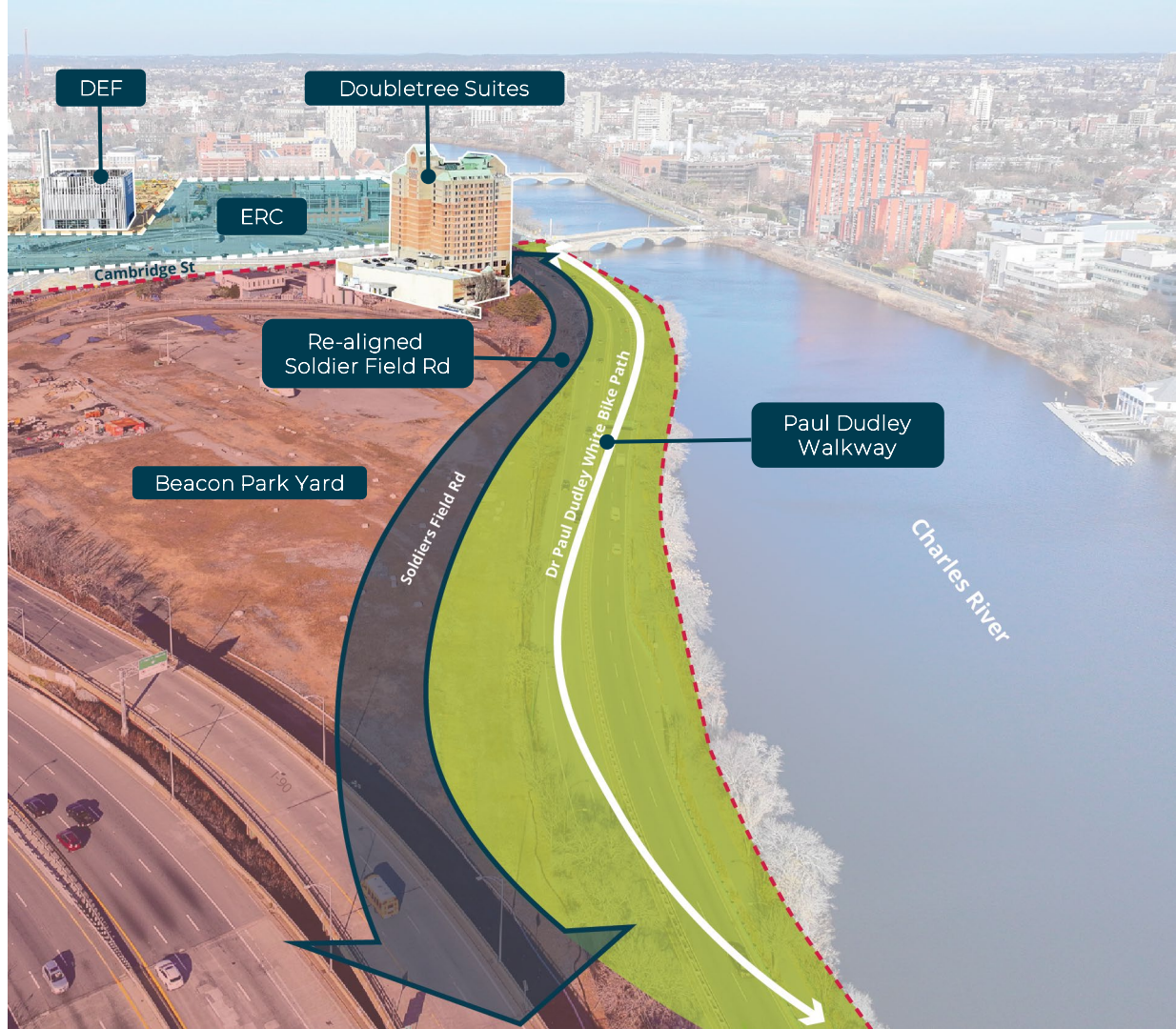
Soldiers Field Road

Existing



Soldiers Field Road

Future



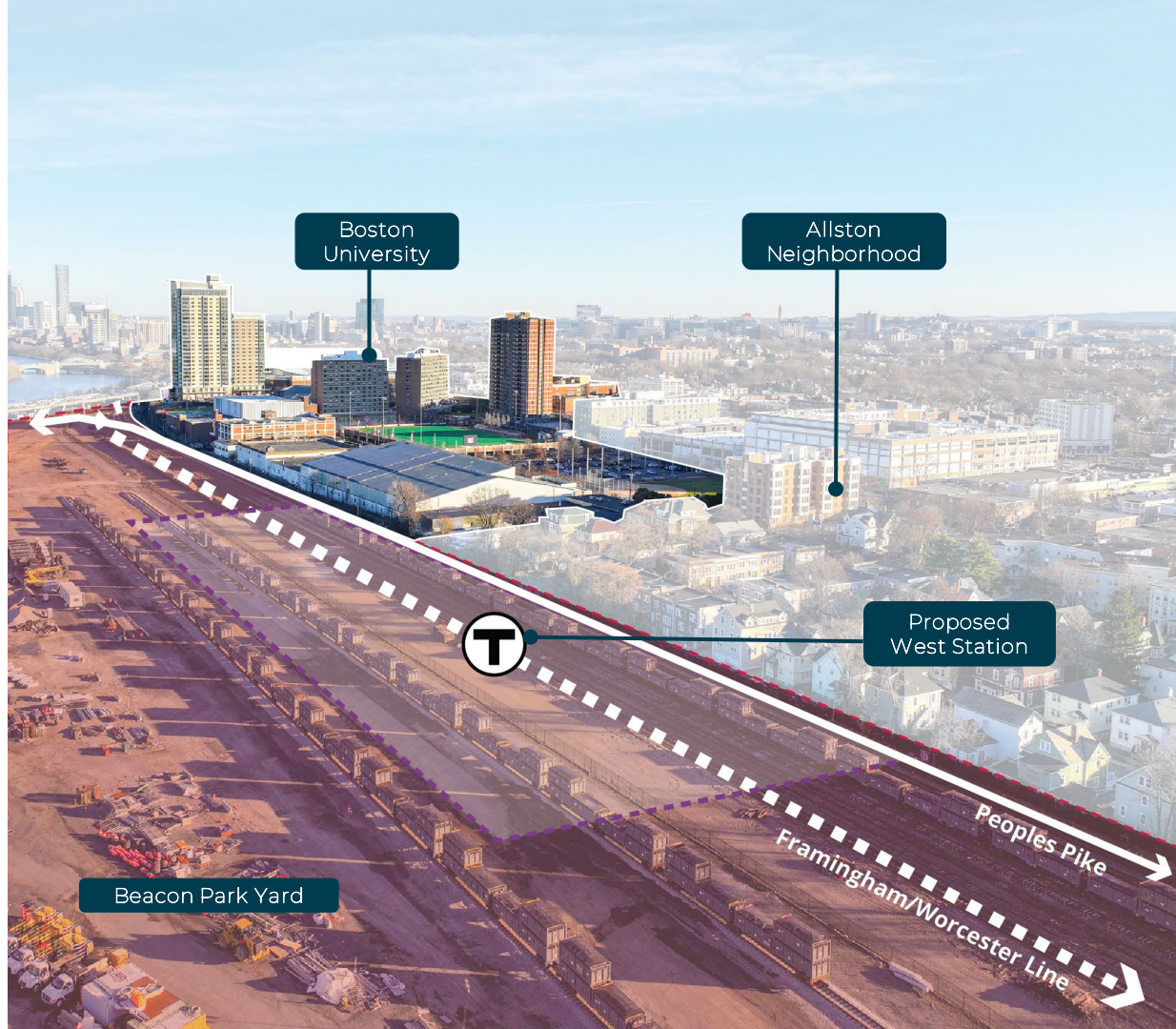
West Station Edge

Existing



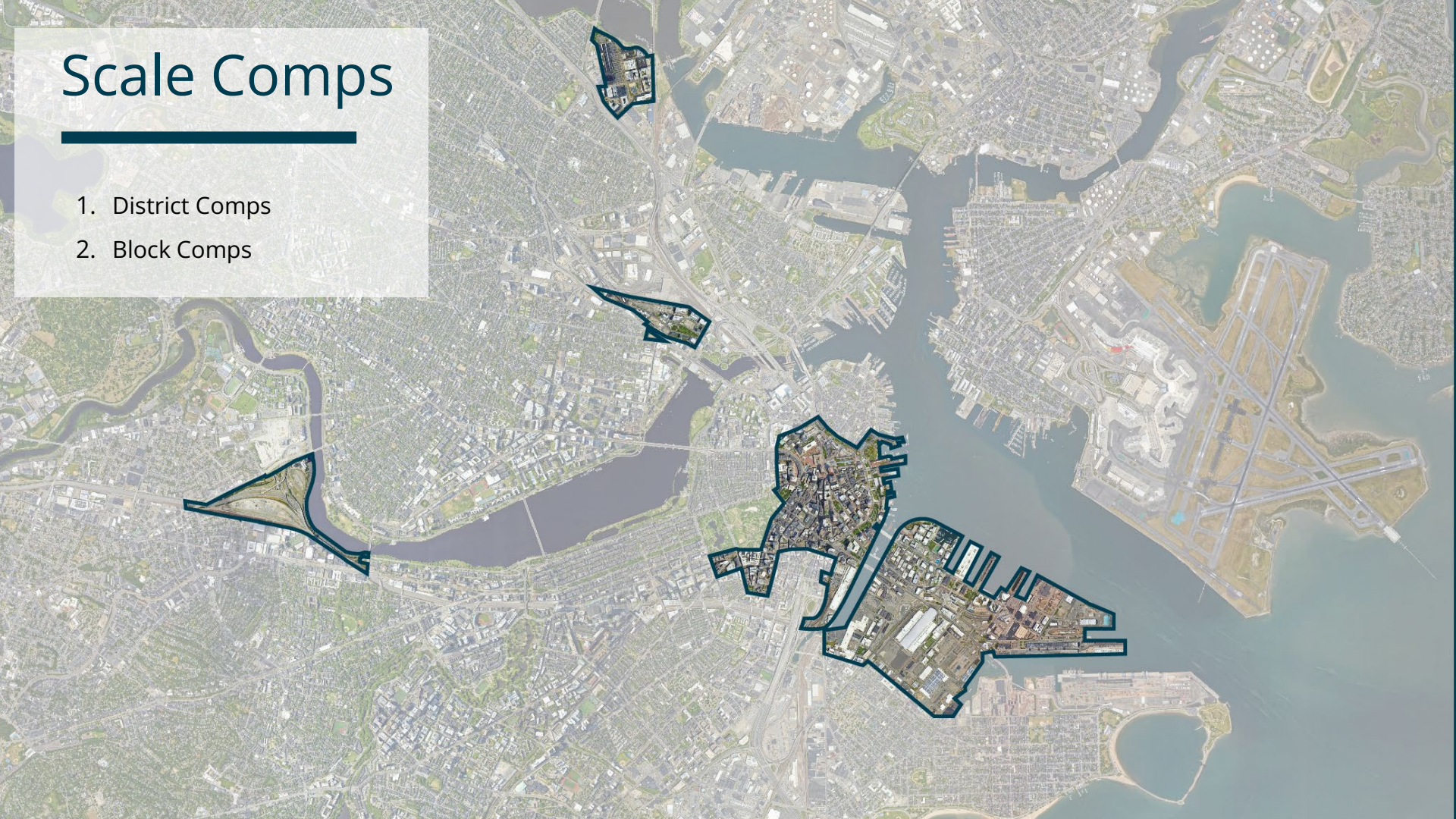
West Station Edge

Future



Scale Comps

1. District Comps
2. Block Comps



District Scale Comps



Beacon Park Yard
Boston, MA
116 Acres



Seaport
Boston, MA
607 Acres



Downtown Boston
Boston, MA
380 Acres



North Point
Cambridge, MA
56 Acres



Assembly Row
Somerville, MA
76 Acres

Block Scale Comparisons

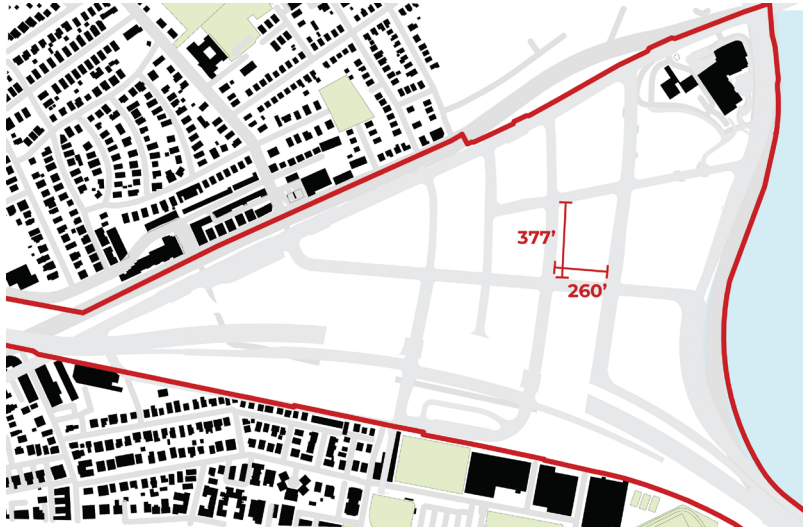


Beacon Park Yard

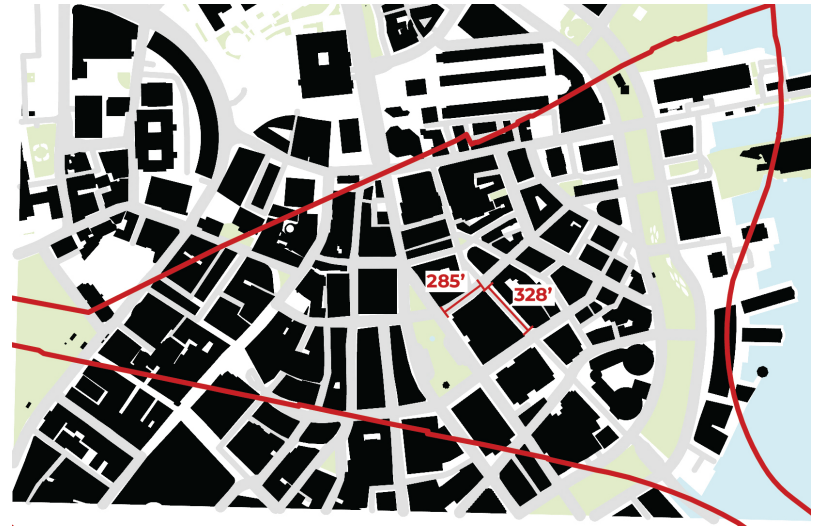


Allston

Block Scale Comparisons



Beacon Park Yard



Downtown Boston

Block Scale Comparisons

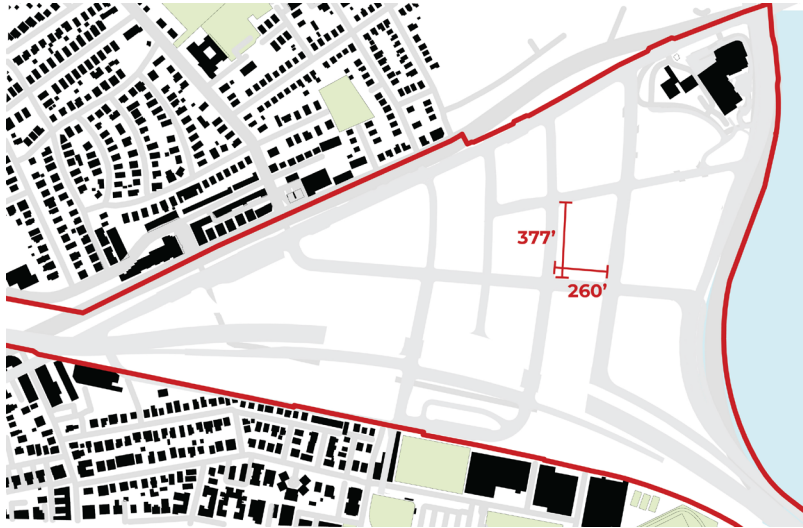


Beacon Park Yard

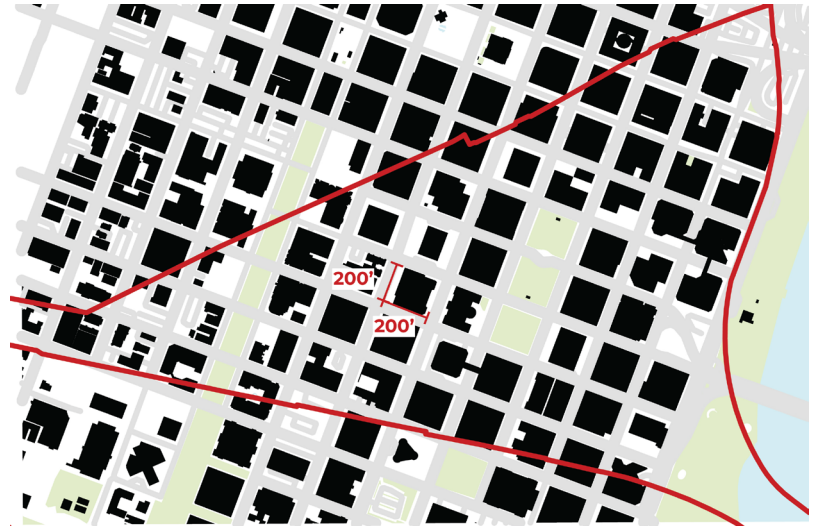


Seaport

Block Scale Comparisons

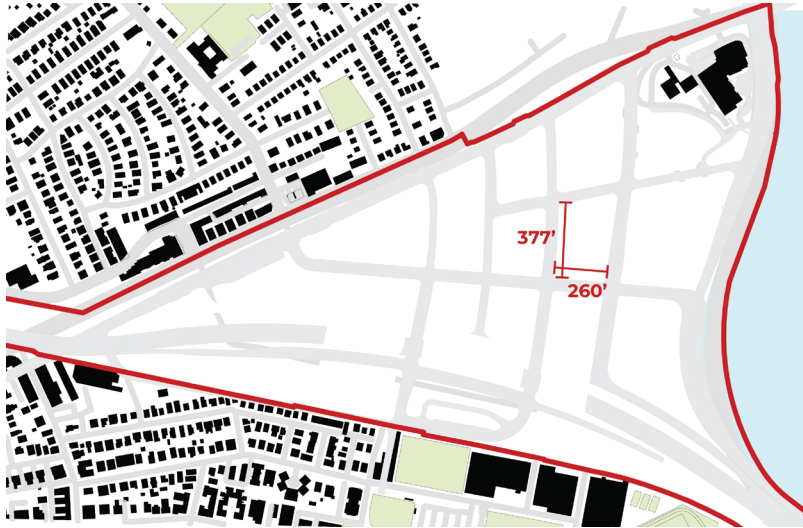


Beacon Park Yard



Portland, OR

Block Scale Comparisons



Beacon Park Yard



Manhattan

Beacon in a Box!

1. Key Questions & Considerations
2. How to play
3. Game Etiquette



Key Questions & Considerations

How can this site help achieve Boston's goals for housing?

How can this site best respond to changing needs over time?

How does your built district respond to or build on the given framework?

How can Beacon Park Yard be transformed into a destination?

What are the key corridors and key connections that Beacon Park Yard can build and enhance?



Key Questions & Considerations

- **Yellow** means residential
- A **red base** signifies an active commercial ground floor
- Residential blocks can be town homes, mid-rise apartments or high rise apartments! You decide!



I like vibrant commercial areas and active open spaces!



I can usually be combined with Commercial or Civic uses!

Key Questions & Considerations

- Red means commercial
- A red base signifies an active commercial ground floor (like a retail store or restaurant)

I like to have a housing population to support my needs as well as a vibrant district!



Key Questions & Considerations

- Purple is generally lab or life sciences use!
- A red base signifies an active commercial ground floor

I like to have a housing population to support my needs as well as a vibrant district!



Key Questions & Considerations

- Blue is for civic uses including things like schools, community centers, universities, post offices etc!
- Use the tokens to help specify my use!

I'm here to support the community to achieve their needs!



Key Questions & Considerations

- Teal signifies unique arts, cultural and civic amenities!
- These can be used to create destinations in the district

Cluster me with other civic or commercial areas to create a local destination!



Key Questions & Considerations

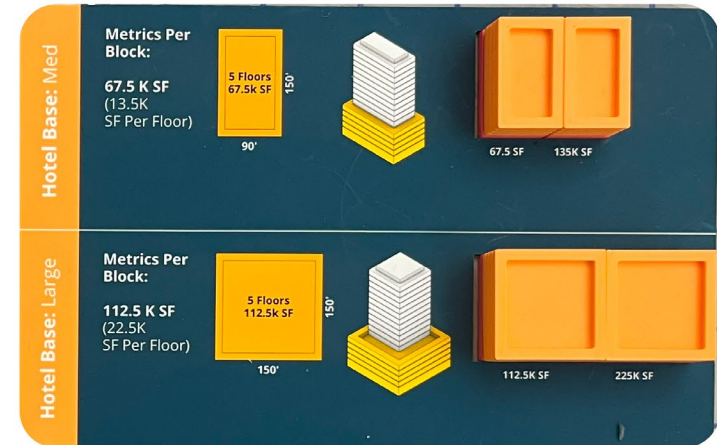
- Green is open space!
- There are small and large pieces so use them as you see fit!
- Use the tokens to help specify the kind of open space!



Key Questions & Considerations

General Guides :

- Take blocks from the top left to help make calculations at the end easy!
- Most blocks have a "tower" and "base" type. Towers usually stack on top of these bases

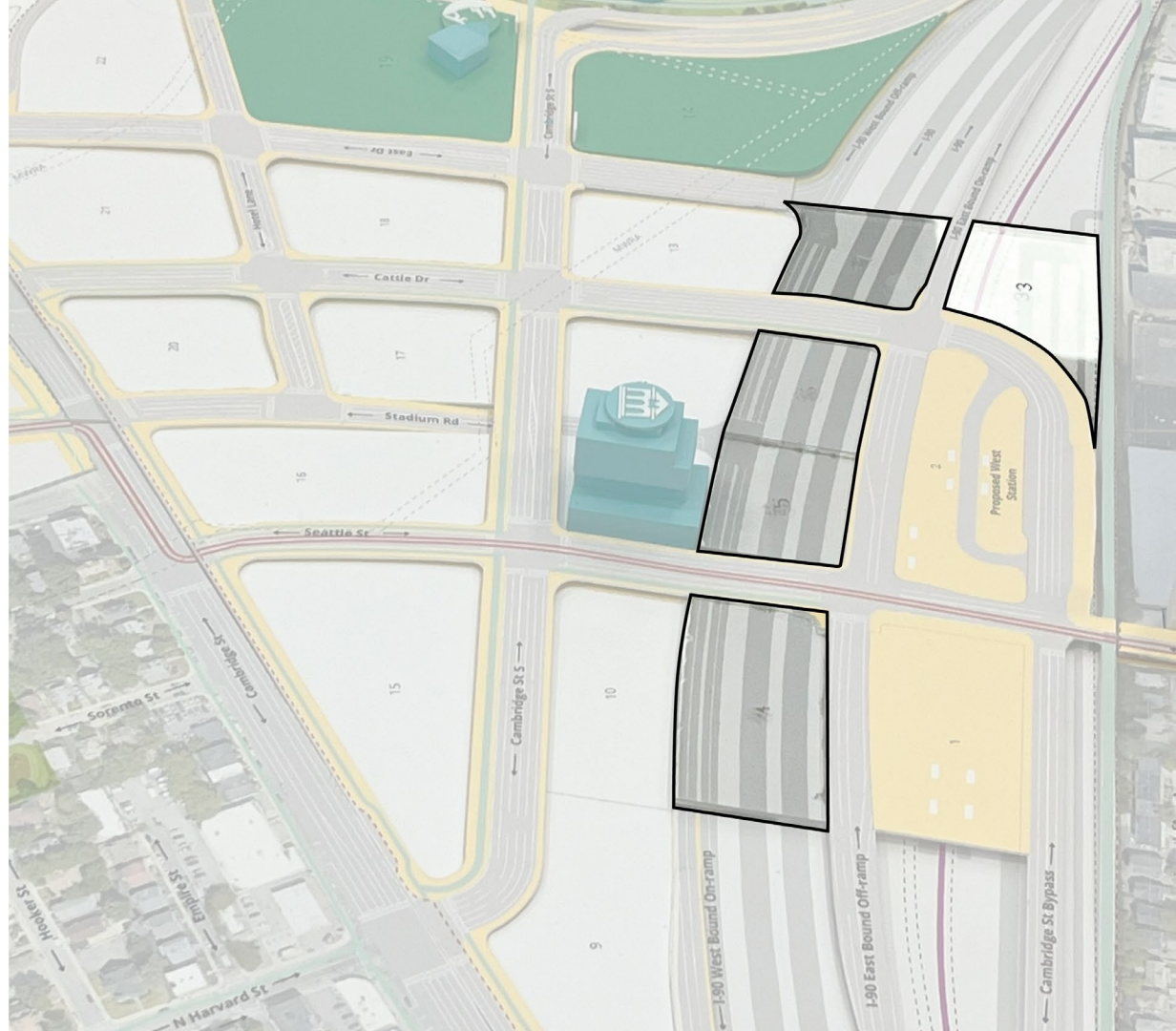


Key Questions & Considerations

General Guides :

The “Decking Parcels” identified by clear plexiglass pieces require a fair amount of investment to be developable.

Therefore, these only get unlocked once the majority of the site has been built/designed. The facilitator will indicate when the decking parcels become available.



How To Play

Draw a Role Card (5 minutes):

- Read out your Role, Goal and Motivations to the group
- Identify potential collaborators



BIKE & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ADVOCATE

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- pedestrians and cyclists
- safety, accessibility, and convenience of biking and walking
- including multi-use paths with any other large improvements
- active ways of getting around

OPEN SPACE & PUBLIC REALM ADVOCATE

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- access to quality open space
- nature based solutions that address climate change and create protective and resilient parks, plazas, recreation areas and green spaces
- connections to an improved and healthy Charles River

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVOCATE

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- affordable housing
- opportunities for sweat building
- housing near community anchors
- amenities and housing for all ages and family types
- street, open space, and community centers near housing

ARTS AND CULTURE ADVOCATE

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- space for arts and culture programming
- space for indigenous cultural design and celebrating immigrant narratives
- informal cultural venues like restaurants, parks, and cafes
- formal cultural venues like theaters, galleries, and community centers
- affordable studio spaces

ALLSTON RESIDENT

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- projects that directly address a common concern projects that fit with where the surrounding community will be in ten to three decades
- projects that create more amenities like libraries, post offices, community centers, schools, and hospitals
- a walkable environment
- mix and small businesses that match the scale of the neighborhood
- inclusive and skillbuilding opportunities

COMMERCIAL / LIFE SCIENCES DEVELOPER

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- develop properties for commercial, life sciences, and research uses by:
 - shaping urban landscapes to support development
 - creating education and job training opportunities providing community benefits that enable development
- support, promote, and advocate for:
 - a bold report for Boston in ten to three decades
 - flexibility in development types and uses

REGIONAL TRANSIT ADVOCATE

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- expanded, equitable bus and rail networks
- frequent bus and rail service
- accessible and reliable connections to support significantly more regional transit users in two decades
- dense development near major stations
- clear and engaging routes to transit stations

RETAIL / SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCATE

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- less barriers to opening small businesses
- spaces for local retail and small businesses
- a network of resources and opportunities for minority entrepreneurs
- policies that grow small businesses and local entrepreneurship

SUBURBAN DRIVER / USER OF I-90

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- road safety and traffic management
- clear difference between local and interstate roads
- regional pricing strategy and parking options
- simple navigation

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNER

GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- Deliver on the university mission by:
 - creating amenities to support students, faculty, and staff
 - building affordable student housing
 - partnering to create workforce development opportunities
- support, promote, and advocate for:
 - feasibility in transportation options
 - long-term investments
 - local businesses and nonprofits that share common goals

HOUSING DEVELOPER

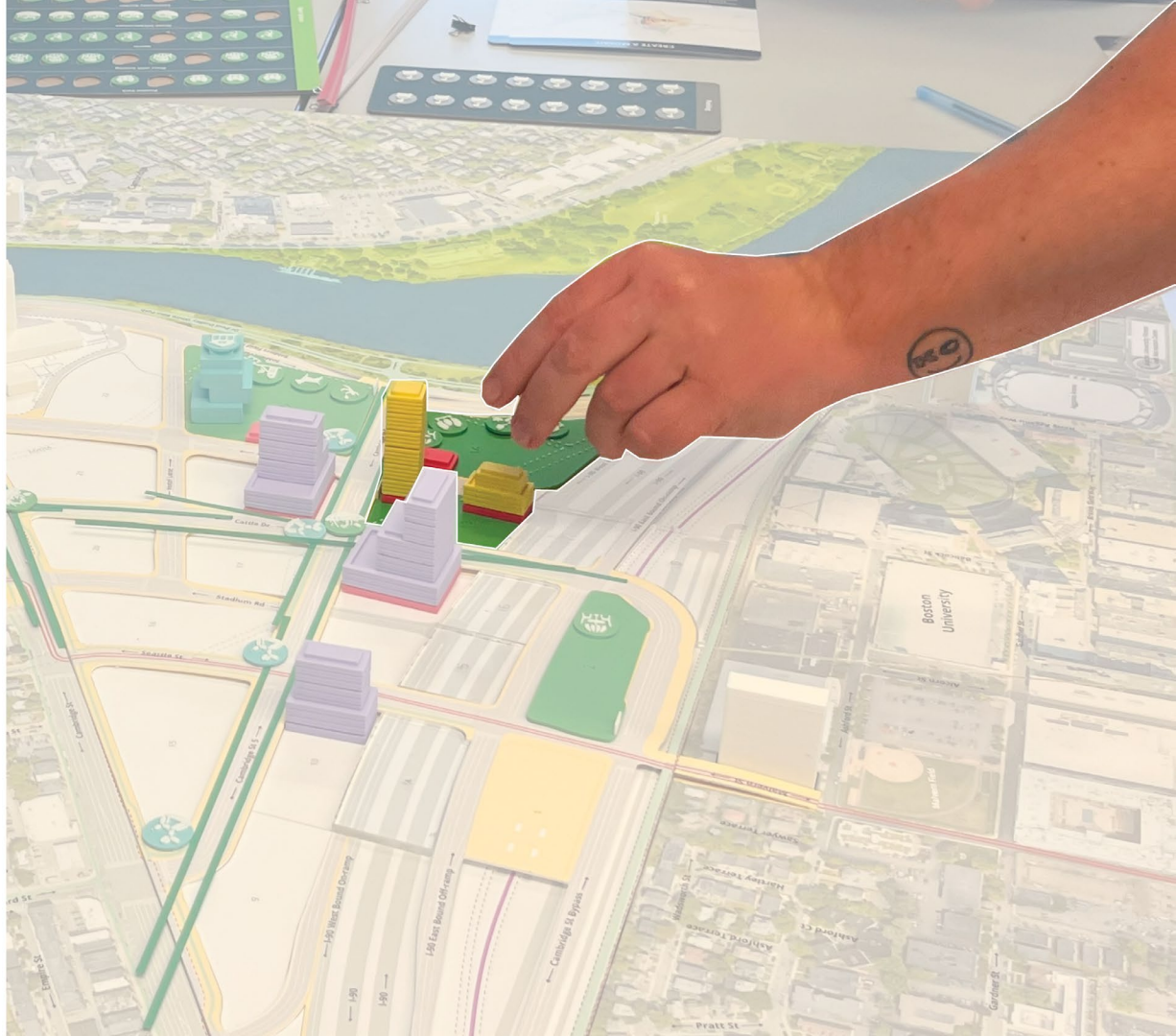
GOAL AND MOTIVATION

- build successful housing developments by:
 - working within financial constraints (the market)
 - meeting Boston's diverse housing needs
 - partnering to create community anchors
- support, promote, and advocate for:
 - inclusive, dense urban development
 - a bold report for Boston in ten to three decades

How To Play

Build & Play (60 minutes)

- The Public official will call on participants to build and play their preferred blocks and tokens
- When called on, each player may build with any of the pieces and tokens and as much as they feel is necessary to lay the groundwork for their goals



How To Play

Build & Play (60 minutes - continued)

- The Facilitator has key gameplay cards that they can play at any time to guide the development
- At the 40-minute mark, you pause and reflect to see if your goals have been met!
- The notetaker will also inform the group of how much has been built so far!
- You spend the remaining 20 minutes refining to meet goals



How To Play

District Review (10 minutes)

1. At the end of the last 60 minutes, the group should have a built out massing, open space and transportation network for the site based on group consensus
2. Now, the players go one by one and briefly say if you feel your goals were met and if you have any additional comments on the outcome.
3. While the notetaker does final calculations, take a moment to fill out your worksheet!

Player's Note Taking Sheet

Your role: _____ Date: _____

Identify potential allies:

<input type="checkbox"/> Open Space & Public Realm Advocate	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial/Life Sciences/BioTech Developer	<input type="checkbox"/> Retail/Small business advocate
<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing Advocate	<input type="checkbox"/> Bike & Pedestrian safety Advocate	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing developer
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Culture Advocate	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Transit Advocate	<input type="checkbox"/> Suburban driver/user of 1-90
<input type="checkbox"/> Ailston Resident		<input type="checkbox"/> Institutional Partner

What are you willing to trade or subsidize?

What are your goals (if any) for development of:

Lab/Life Sci. SF	Commercial SF	Civic SF
Residential Units	Hotels SF	Iconic Number

Reference Targets: Total Built SF = 7.7M SF

Comm/Lab/Life Sci 2.3M SF (30%)	Civic/Institutional 1.2M SF (15%)	Residential 3.5M SF (46%)	Hotel 0.4M SF (5%)	Retail 0.3M SF (4%)
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Other notes:

Game Etiquette

1. Share the airtime – work together to make sure everyone gets a chance to speak and build
2. Respect the diverse viewpoints and experiences in the group - together, we know a lot; alone, we won't know it all
3. Check your negativity bias – focus on constructive discussion instead of what you dislike
4. Most importantly, **Enjoy, Interact and Build!**

Thank You

