



**River Street  
Reconstruction**



# Working Group #3

Tuesday April 23, 2019

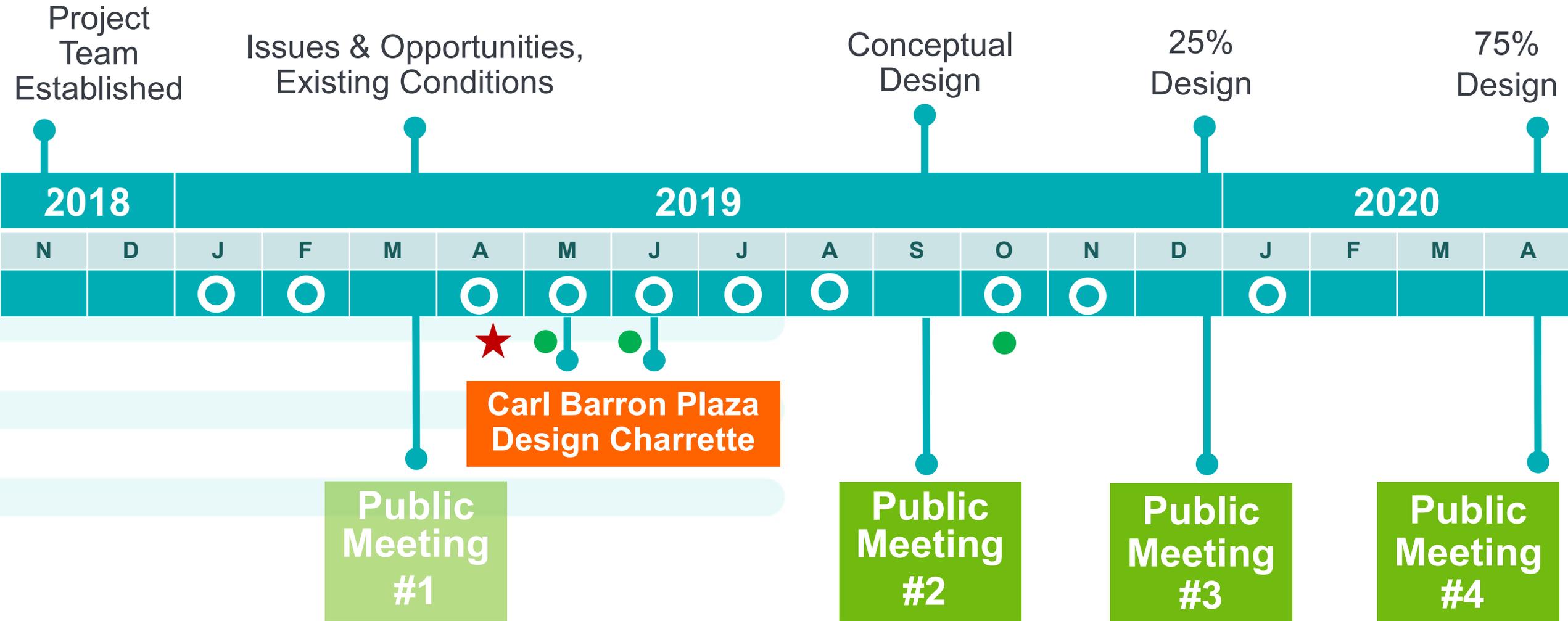
# Today's Agenda

- Welcome and logistics 10 min.
- Issues and Opportunities Wrap-Up 50 min.
- Emerging Design Goals 15 min.
- Introducing the River Street Design Toolbox 10 min.
- Introducing Design Challenge Areas 10 min.
- Carl Barron Plaza Process Preview 10 min.
- Public Comments 10 min.
- Next Steps 5 min.

# **Welcome and Logistics**

# Expected Timeline

-  Working Group Meetings
-  Public Walks
-  Today



# Summer Schedule

## Former WG Schedule

- Working Group #5 Tues., 5/28
- Working Group #6 Tues., 6/25
- Working Group #7 Tues., 7/23
- Working Group #8 Tues., 8/27

## Other Summer Activities

- Mobility/Safety Walk: Tues., 5/14
- Carl Barron Open House: Thurs., 5/16 and Sat., 5/18
- Outreach at Riverfest in Central Square 6/1
- Urban Design Public Walk: Tues., 6/11
- Carl Barron Design Charrettes: Thurs., 6/20 and Sat., 6/22

# Summer Schedule

## New WG Schedule

- Working Group #5 Tues., 5/28
- Working Group #6 Wed., 7/17
- Working Group #8 Tues., 8/27

## Other Summer Activities

- Mobility/Safety Walk: Tues., 5/14
- Carl Barron Open House: Thurs., 5/16 and Sat., 5/18
- Outreach at Riverfest in Central Square 6/1
- Urban Design Public Walk: Tues., 6/11
- Carl Barron Design Charrettes: Thurs., 6/20 and Sat., 6/22

# Working Group Meeting Agendas

- Working Group #5 Tues., 5/28
  - Urban Design 101
  - Mobility 101
- Working Group #6 Wed., 7/17
  - Charrettes for:
    - Memorial Drive to Putnam
    - Tubman Square
    - Typical Cross-Section
- Working Group #8 Tues., 8/27
  - TBD



# Other Items

- Working Group substitutions
- Check-in on Working Group and Public Meeting locations
- Ground rules reminder – phones off!
  - Keep an open mind and respect other opinions
  - Speak, and let others be heard
  - Read agenda and materials before the meeting
  - Request agenda changes prior to meeting
  - Help us stay on schedule
  - Public comments during public comment periods
- Anything else?



# The Design Process

## Collect Data & Identify Issues

- Survey
- Counts (all users)
- Level of service, level of comfort (multi-modal)
- Parking/Vehicle Storage
- MBTA bus data
- Sewer & drain
- Utility connections
- Flow-metering
- Soil & tree
- Urban design
- Identified by Public

## Establish Vision

- Review existing planning & policies, adapt to local context
- Gather community goals, ideas, and aspirations through a broad and inclusive process

## Complete Design

- Develop design alternatives
- Analyze alternatives
- Select alternative
- 25%, 75%, and 100% design
- Construction documents & permitting

# Issues & Opportunities Wrap-Up



# Venues for Public Input

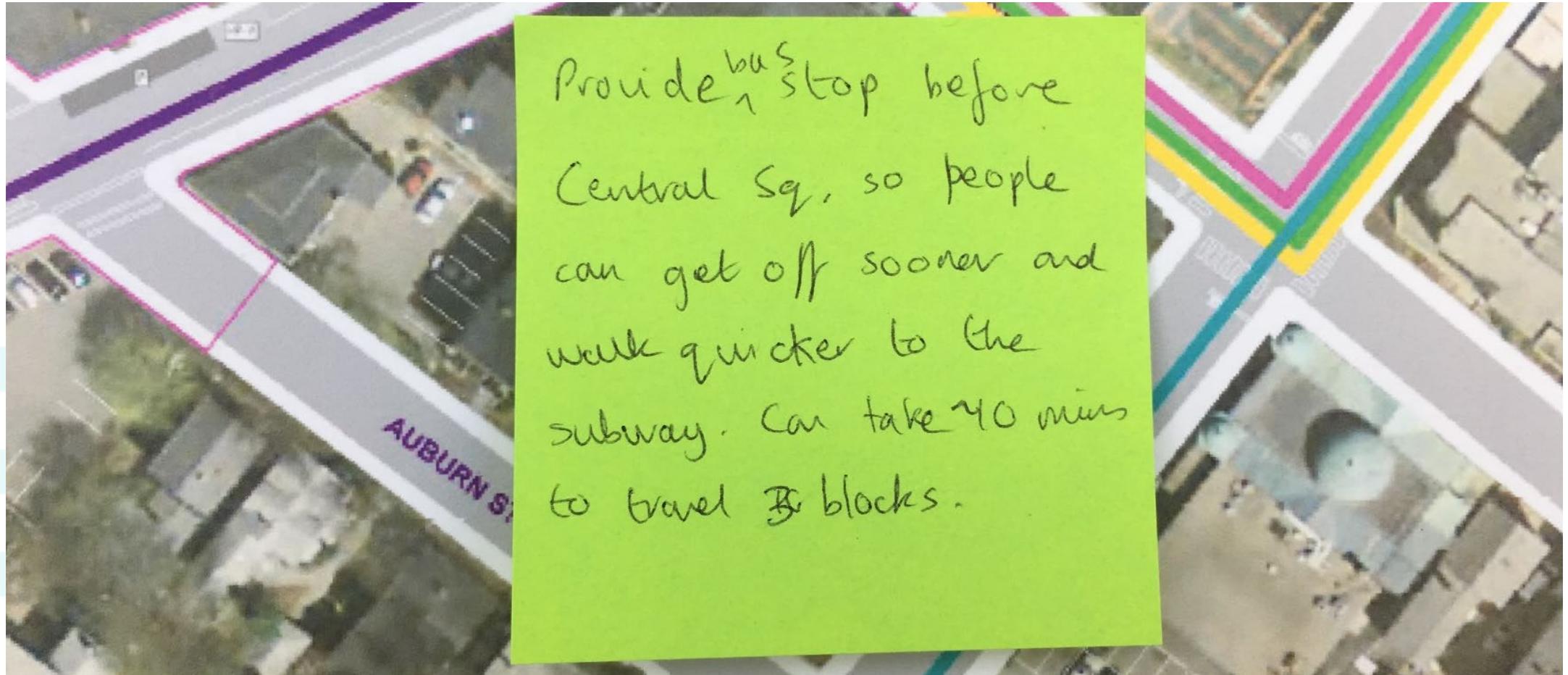
- Working Group meetings #1 and #2
- Online comments
- Emails/calls
- Stakeholder interviews and focus groups for Carl Barron Plaza (*Ongoing*)
- Public meeting on 3/26
- Days of Engagement (Carl Barron Plaza) (*still to come*)



	Broad, corridor-wide comments	Location-specific details
Issue	Contributes to Themes/Goals	Summarized on a map
Opportunity	Contributes to Themes/Goals	Summarized on a map

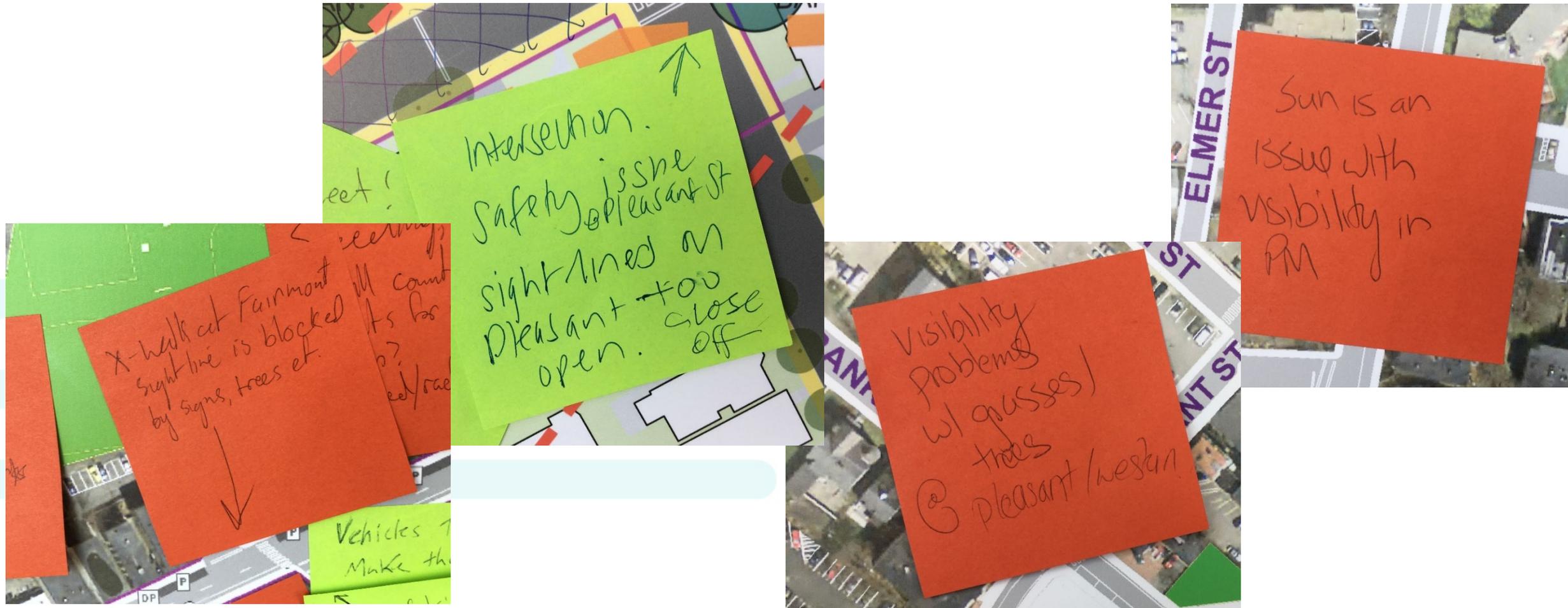
- Help us process public input!
- Check our work.
- Make sure we all understand the big picture, and the small details.

# Broad Issue Example – Bus Delay

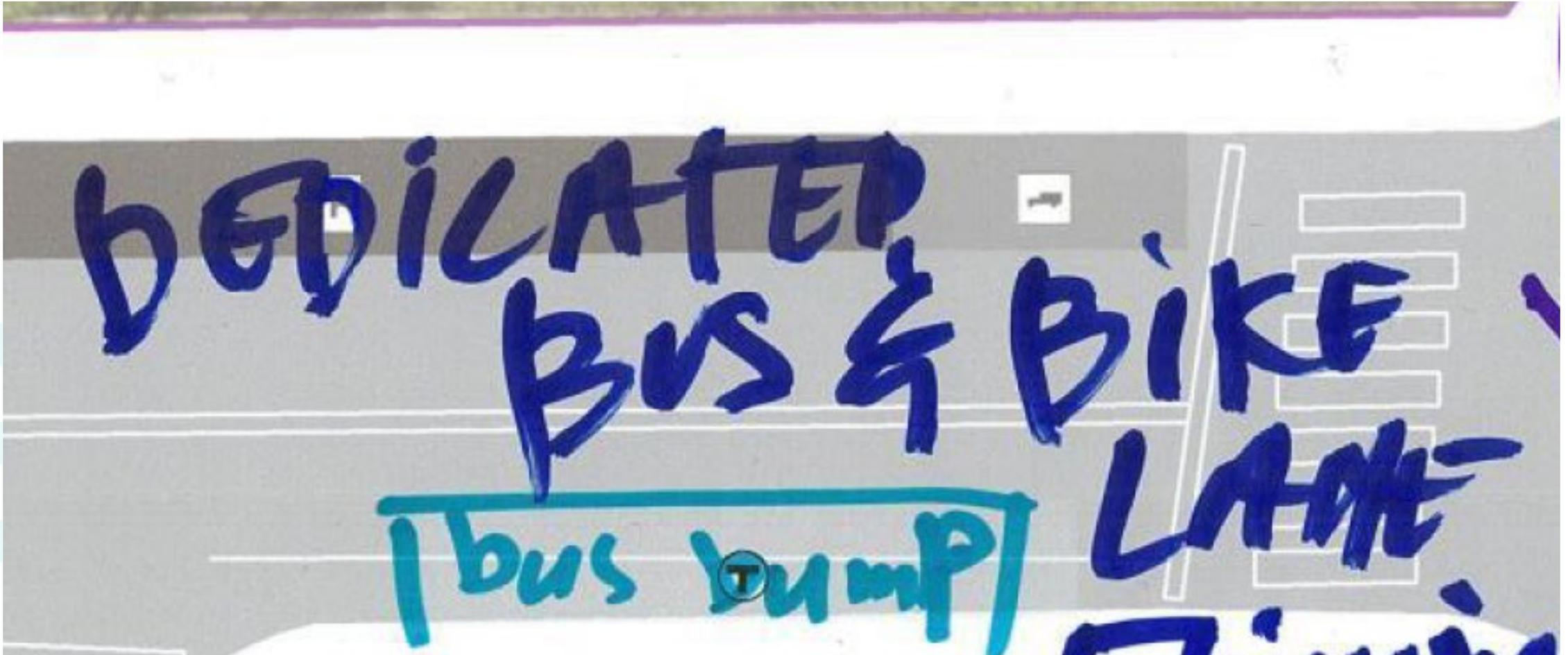


Provide <sup>bus</sup> stop before  
Central Sq, so people  
can get off sooner and  
walk quicker to the  
subway. Can take ~40 mins  
to travel 3 blocks.

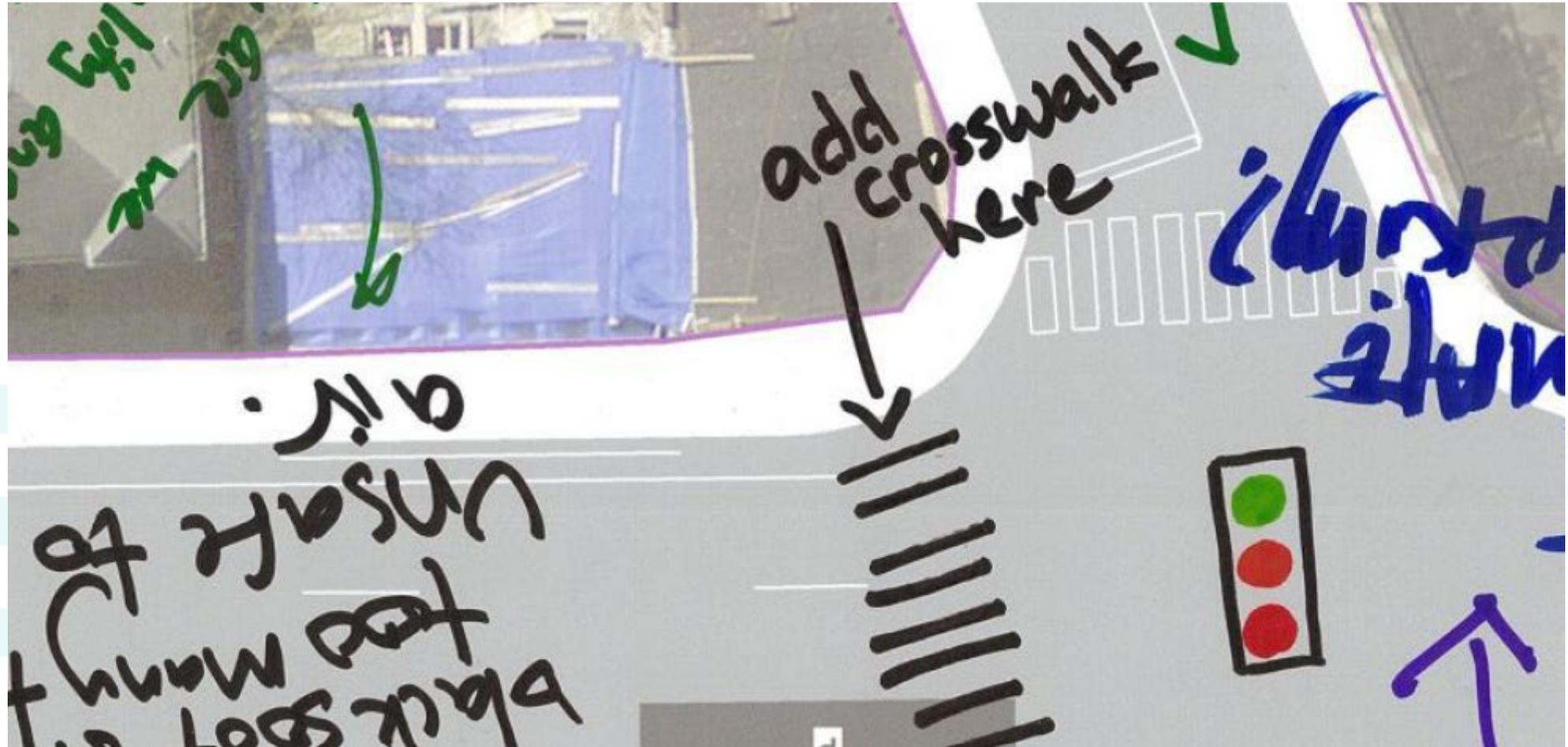
# Location-Specific Issue Example – Sight Line and Visibility Issues



# Broad Opportunity Example – Dedicated Bus/Bike Lane



# Location-Specific Opportunity Example – Add Crosswalk Here



# Issues and Opportunities Become One Set of Goals and One Map

## Broad = Goals

**"People are speeding"**

*becomes:*

**"Calm Traffic"**

*or more simply:*

**"Improve Safety"**

## Location-Specific are Mapped

**"People Speed around this corner"**

*becomes*

**"Request for slower turning speeds here"** (*on our location-specific public input summary map*)

# Goals are Broad and Memorable, Map all the Details

## Goals

**Broad and far reaching, not specific**

**Easy to keep in mind and remember**

**No more than 8 goals**

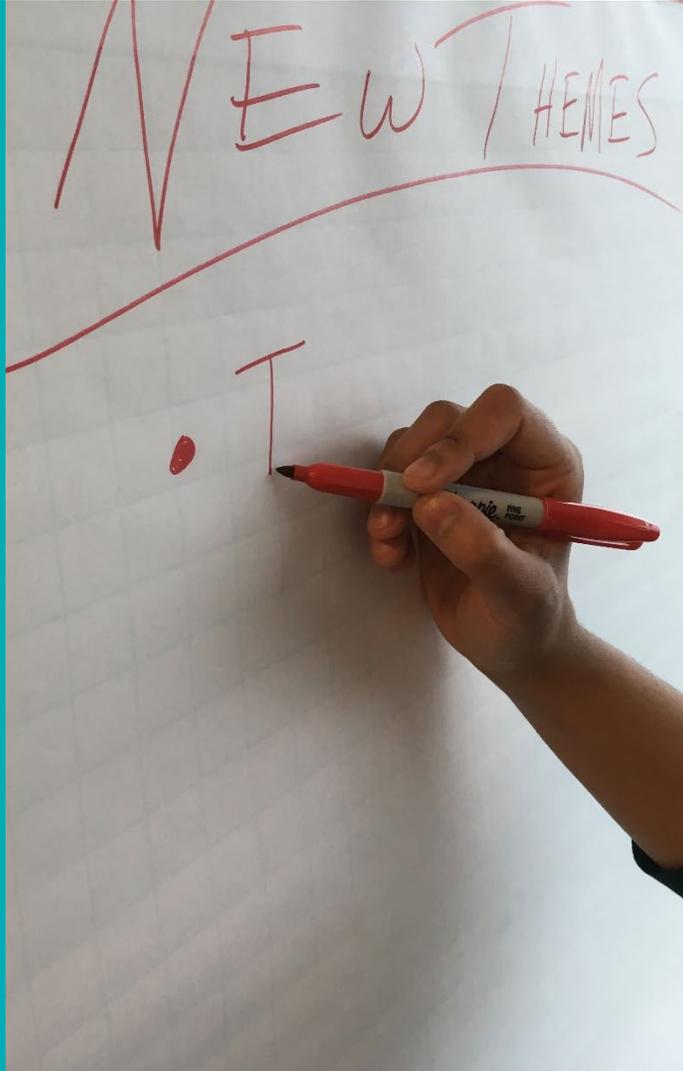
**Keep it brief (2-3 words at most)**

## Location Specific Map

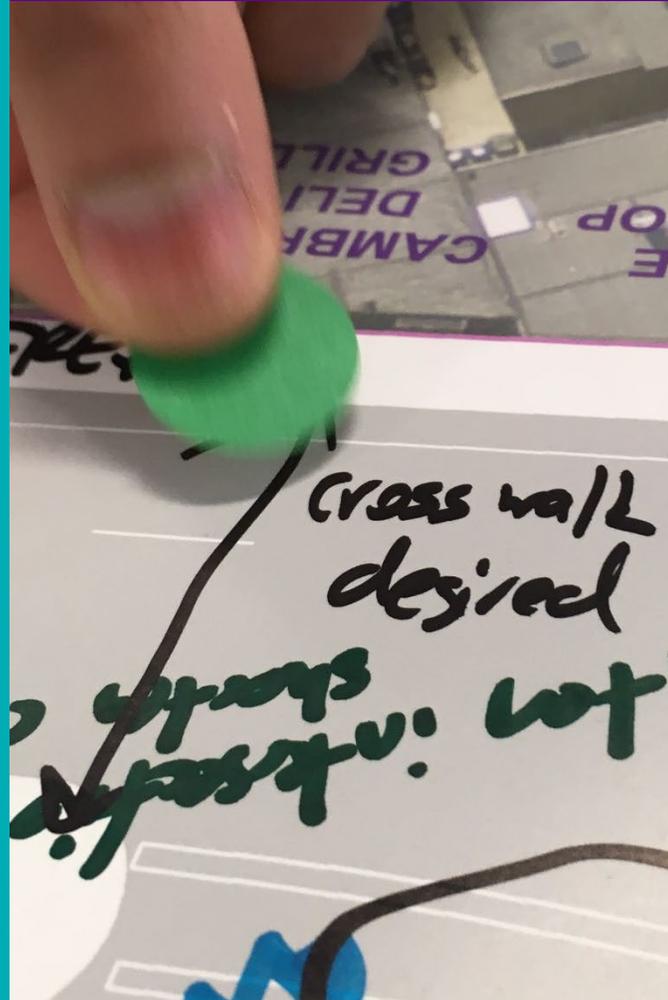
**Specific details are important to capture**

**Must be relevant to design**

## Discuss Potential New Themes/Goals



## Highlight Location of Key Design-Related Comments



- Work together
- Read public input
- Explore agreements & disagreements
- Share what you've heard
- Listen

Next up:  
Building the goals

# What is not covered by existing themes?

- Improve safety / lower speeds
- Improve accessibility
- Enhance public space
- Support businesses
- Make transportation / movement of people more efficient

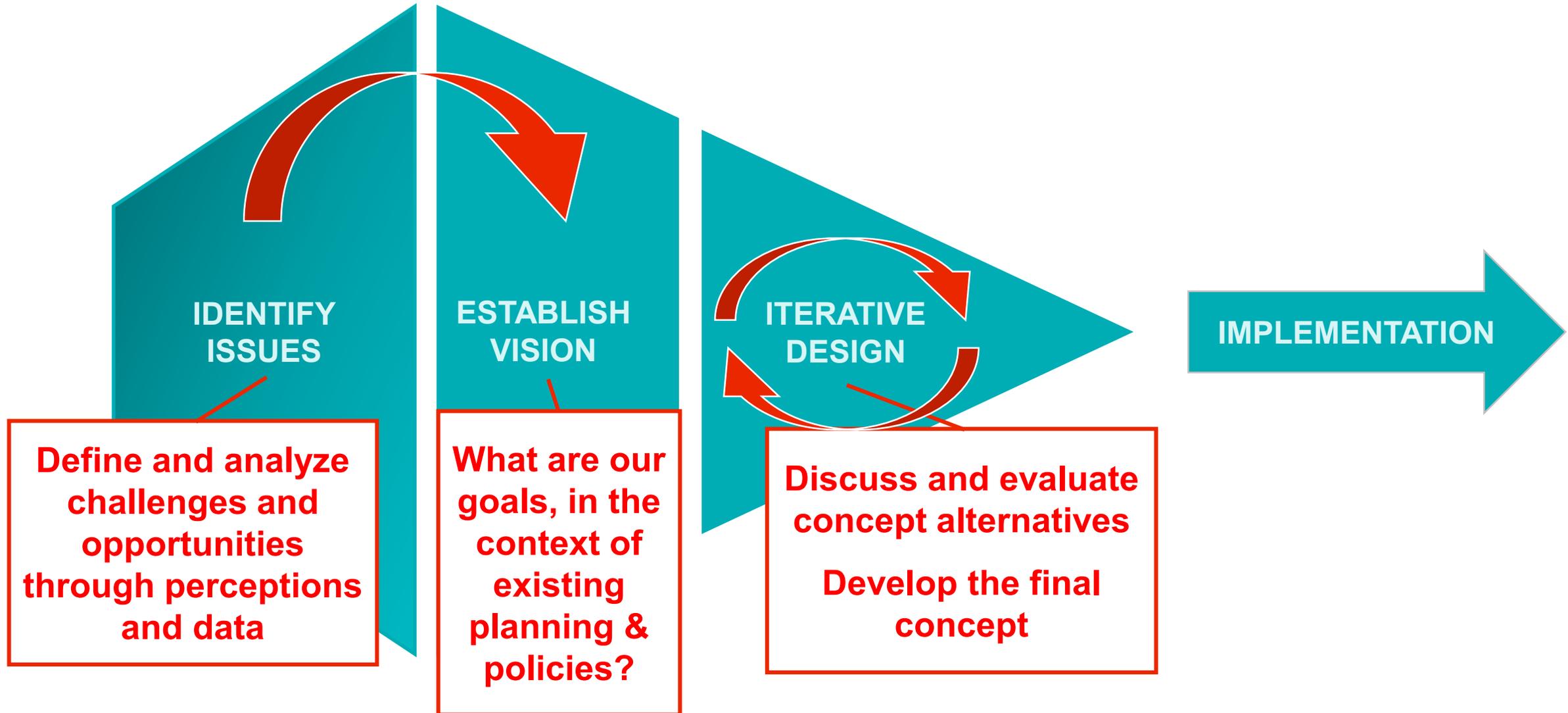
**Place dots on key location-specific comments!**



# Emerging Design Goals



# Moving Toward a Shared Vision



# Goals are the Outcomes We Want to See

## Working Group Themes

- Improve safety / lower speeds
- Improve accessibility
- Enhance public space
- Support businesses
- Make transportation / movement of people more efficient

## Goals/Outcomes

- Safe
- Accessible
- Enjoyable
- Thriving
- Multimodal

# More Themes from the Public

- Fix potholes
- Improve bus stops with amenities and to alleviate crowding
- Reduce bus delay
- Add separated bikeways
- Create shorter, safer, and more visible crossings
- Improve visibility on turns
- Expand and activate open space
- Retail would benefit from this being a nice street
- Create long lasting, smooth surfaces
- Reduce noise by slowing traffic
- Regulate parking, meet business needs
- Add electric vehicle charging stations
- Add more greenery
- Create spaces that encourage people to stay and spend money
- Reduce sidewalk crowding
- Do more for the homeless community
- Reduce speeding

# City Policies and Prior Planning

- Update aging infrastructure
- Reduce vehicle trips
- Employ universal design/accessibility
- Create mobility hubs
- Incorporate play elements
- Introduce green infrastructure for improved stormwater management
- Add interest and open up edges
- Balance the use of curbside space
- Install Energy-efficient lighting
- Understand the micro-climate
- A consistent look & feel
- Design a street that is reflective of or fits the community it is in
- Integrate public art
- Design for the future we want

# Do they fit?

**Safe**

**Accessible**

**Enjoyable**

**Thriving**

**Multimodal**

- Create shorter, safer, and more visible crossings
- Improve visibility on turns
- Create smooth surfaces for walking
- Reduce speeding
- Add separated bikeways

# Do they fit?

Safe

Accessible

Enjoyable

Thriving

Multimodal

- Employ universal design/accessibility
- Be reflective of the community
- Create smooth surfaces
- Do more for the homeless community
- Incorporate play elements
- Balance the use of curbside space

# Do they fit?

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Thriving

Multimodal

- Employ universal design/accessibility
- Be reflective of the community
- Create smooth surfaces
- Do more for the homeless community
- Incorporate play elements
- Balance the use of curbside space

# Do they fit?

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Thriving

Multimodal

- Understand the micro-climate
- Expand and activate open space
- Add more greenery
- Reduce noise by slowing traffic
- Incorporate play elements
- Create a consistent look & feel
- Add interest and open up edges
- Integrate public art

# Do they fit?

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

**Thriving**

Multimodal

- Create spaces that encourage people to stay and spend money
- Regulate parking, meet business needs
- Retail would benefit from this being a nice street

# Do they fit?

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Thriving

**Multimodal**

- Reduce sidewalk crowding
- Add separated bikeway
- Improve bus stops with amenities and to alleviate crowding
- Reduce bus delay
- Balance the use of curbside space
- Regulate parking
- Design for the future we want
- Create mobility hubs
- Reduce vehicle trips

# Do they fit?

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Thriving

Multimodal

- Fix potholes
- Create long-lasting surfaces
- Add electric vehicle charging stations
- Install energy-efficient lighting
- Update aging infrastructure
- Add green infrastructure
- Improve stormwater management

# Do they fit?

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Thriving

Multimodal

**Lasting**

- Fix potholes
- Create long-lasting surfaces
- Add electric vehicle charging stations
- Install energy-efficient lighting
- Update aging infrastructure
- Add green infrastructure
- Improve stormwater management

# Draft Design Goals

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Thriving

Multimodal

Lasting



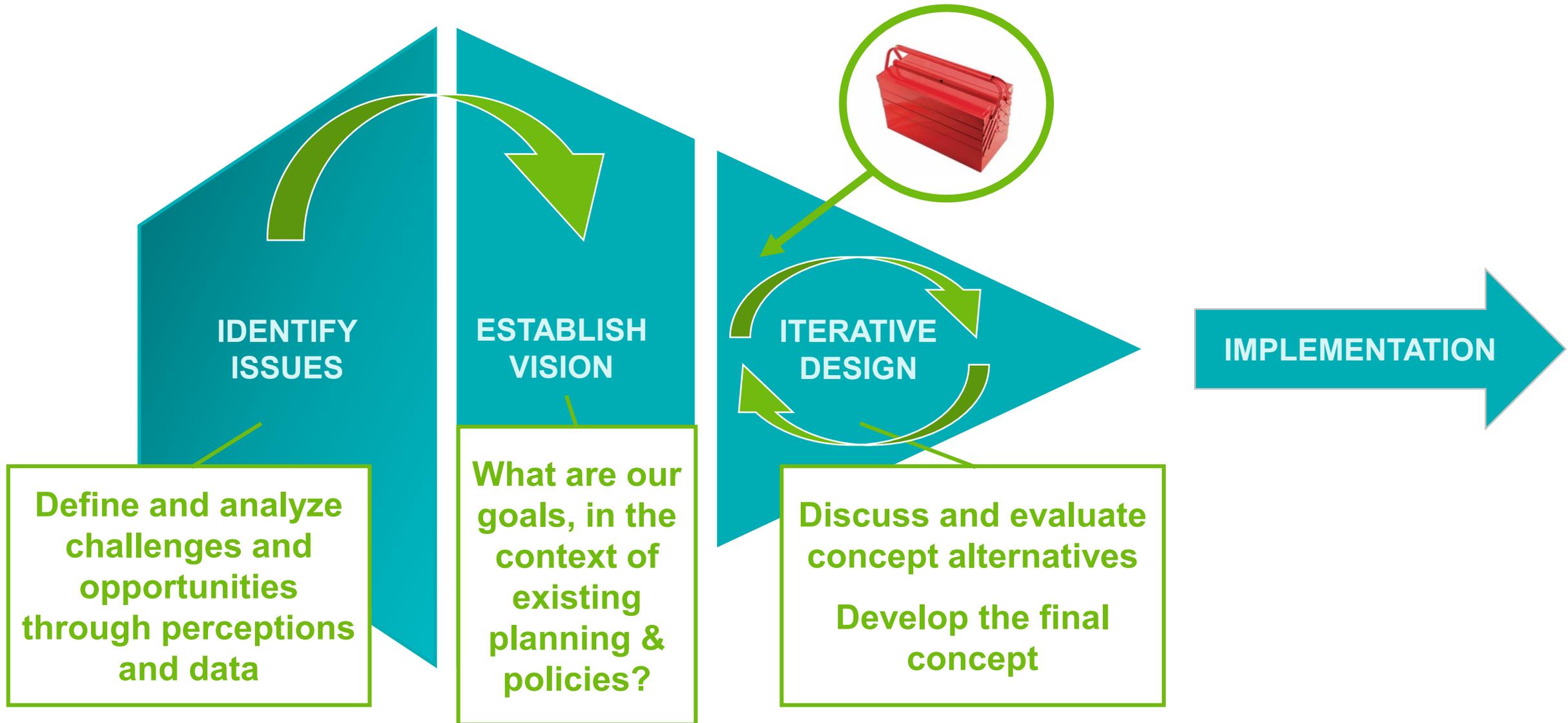
# **Building the Design Toolbox with Public Input**

# The River Street Design Toolbox

- A place to collect elements and techniques that could be useful in meeting our design goals
- A living document
- Builds on past successes
- Contain multiple possible ways to address issues/opportunities
- Reference guide for Working Group members



# Moving Toward a Shared Vision



# Design Goals (Draft)

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Thriving

Multimodal

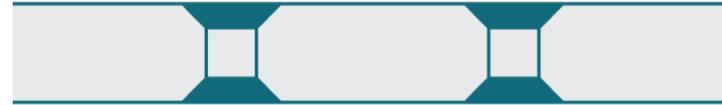
Lasting



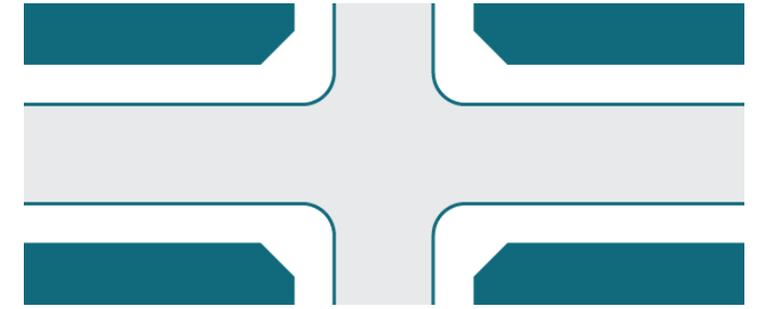
# Traffic Calming



Pinch Point



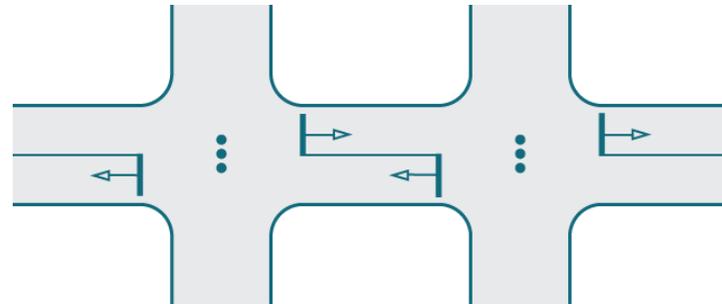
Speed Humps &  
Raised Crossings



Dense Building Lines  
(Constrained sight lines)



Lane Shift



Signal Progression

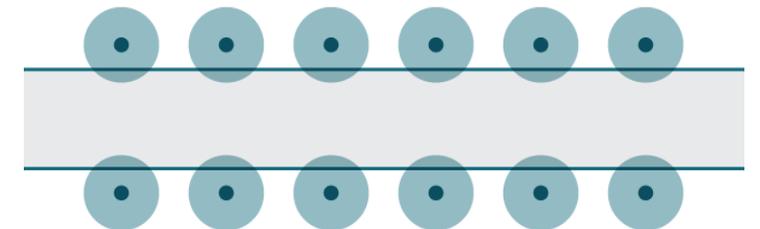
(Signals timed to match the target speed)



On-Street Parking



Chicanes



Street Trees

# Design Goals (Draft)

Safe

Inclusive

Enjoyable

Thriving

Multimodal

Lasting



# Trees and Landscaping



## Streetscape Tree Canopy



## Accent Planting



# Trees and Landscaping



## Pocket Parks



## Landscape Space Definition



# Trees and Landscaping



## Landscape Buffers



## Gateway Treatments



**The toolbox is a living document.  
More coming soon!**

**Be ready to review before our next  
Working Group meeting**



# Identifying Design Challenge Areas

# Identifying Design Challenge Areas

Keeping in mind our goals and the public input, define design challenge areas:

- Where do issues and opportunities present a challenge for balancing needs within the space?

Examples of multiple needs for a limited cross-section:

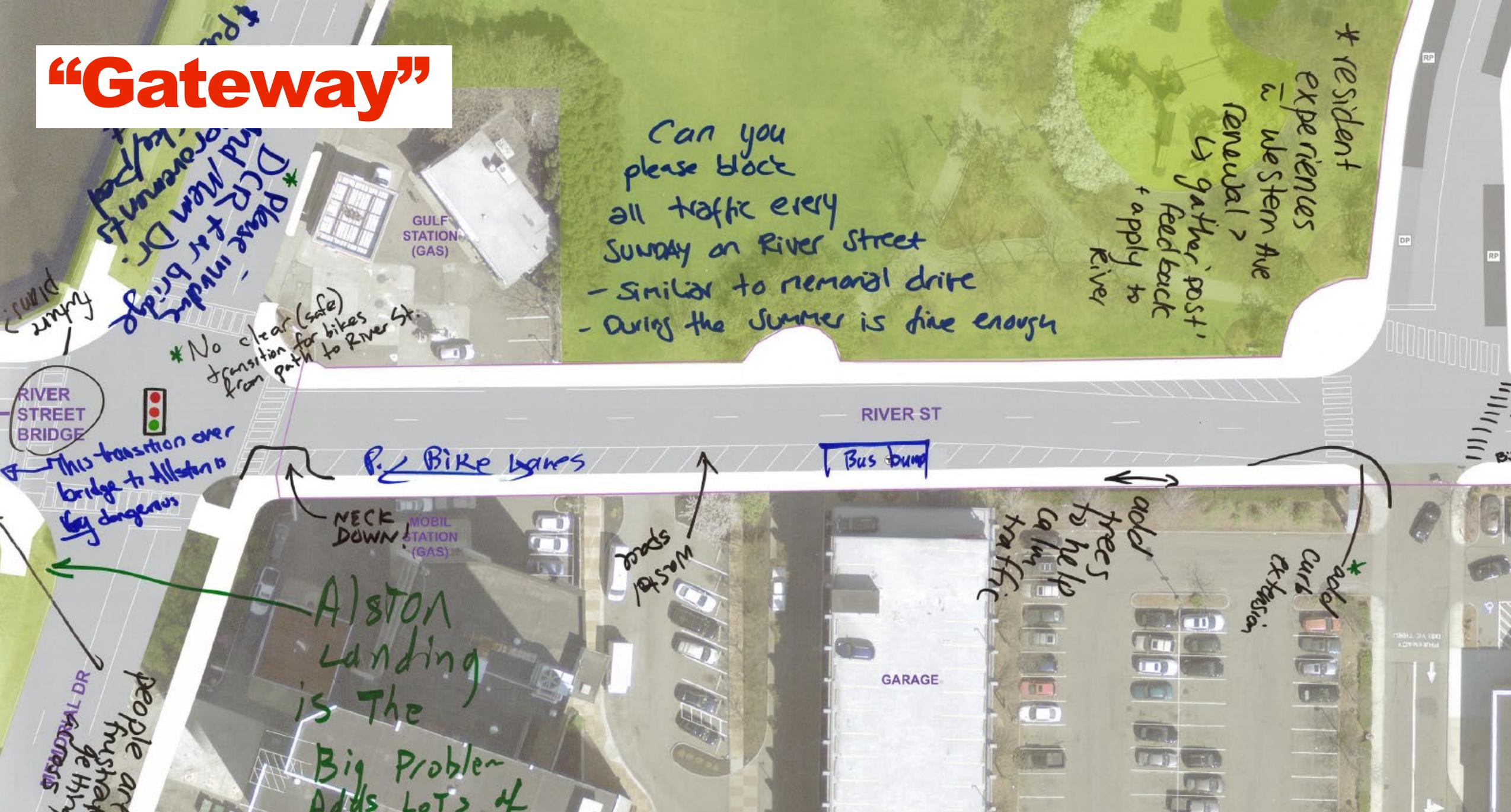
- Adding, changing, and/or expanding public space
- Improving safety for vulnerable users (pedestrians, cyclists)
- Reducing bus delay and promoting public transit
- Organizing bus, vehicle, truck, shuttle, pedestrian, and bike traffic
- Balancing curbside uses for all users
- Integrating surface and sub-surface elements
- Ongoing maintenance

# “Gateway”



Comment The block between Blackstone and Putnam is always jammed with cars and with no protected bike lane or cycle track you end up weaving through stopped cars or riding on the sidewalk. The sidewalk next to the rite-aid is constrained by a fence and then feels exposed due to the parking lot. The sidewalk opposite rite-aid is better because it is protected by parked cars and has some tree cover.

# “Gateway”



Can you please block all traffic every SUNDAY on River Street

- Similar to memorial drive
- During the summer is fine enough

\* resident experiences in western Ave renewal?  
↳ gather post, feedback + apply to river

\* Please include DCR for bridge improvements  
↳ Main Dr. / Main Dr.

\* No clear (safe) transition for bikes from path to River St.

This transition over bridge to Alston is very dangerous

Alston Landing is The Big Problem  
Adds lots of

add trees to help calm traffic  
add curb extension

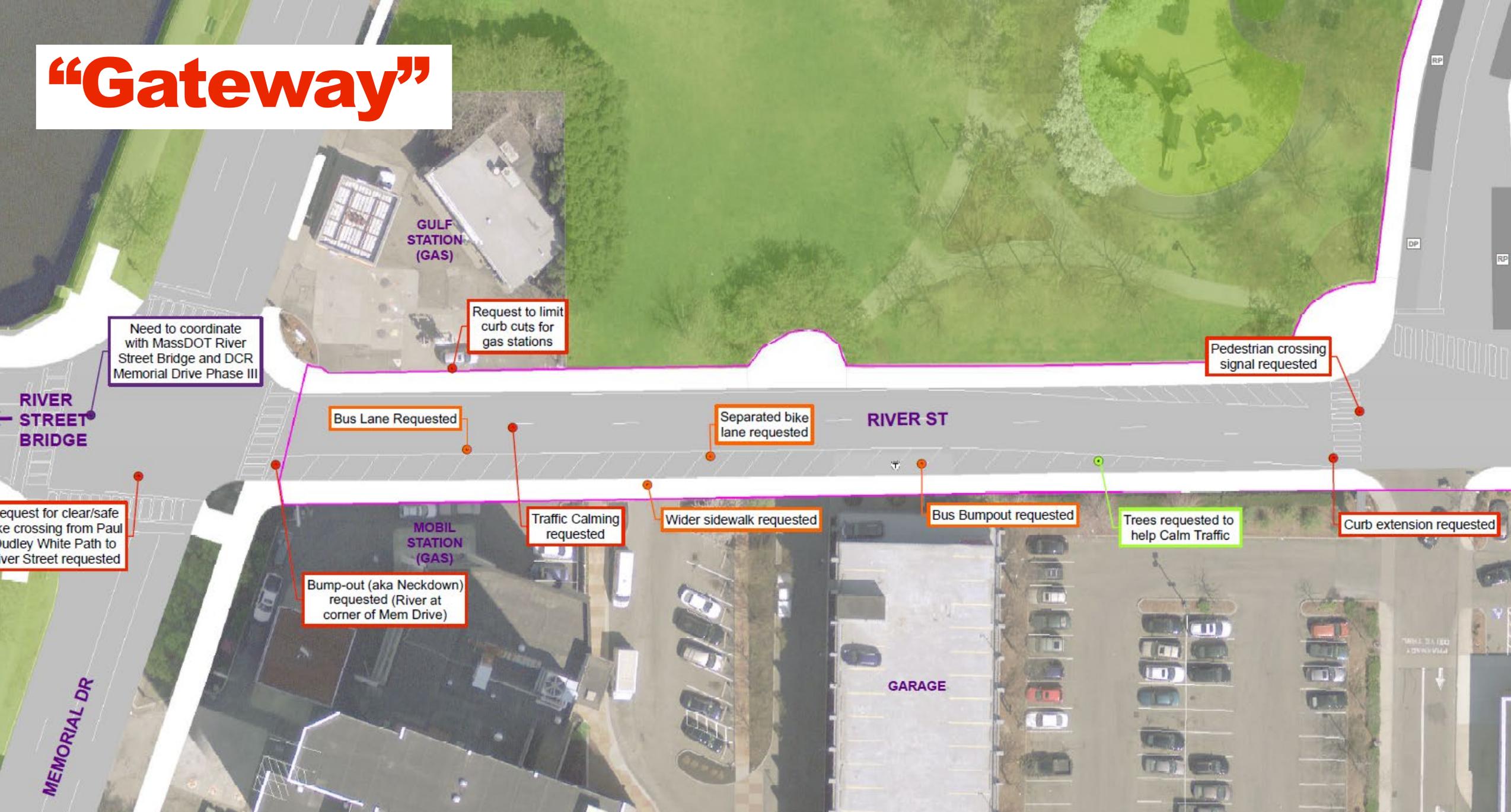
waste space

NECK DOWN!

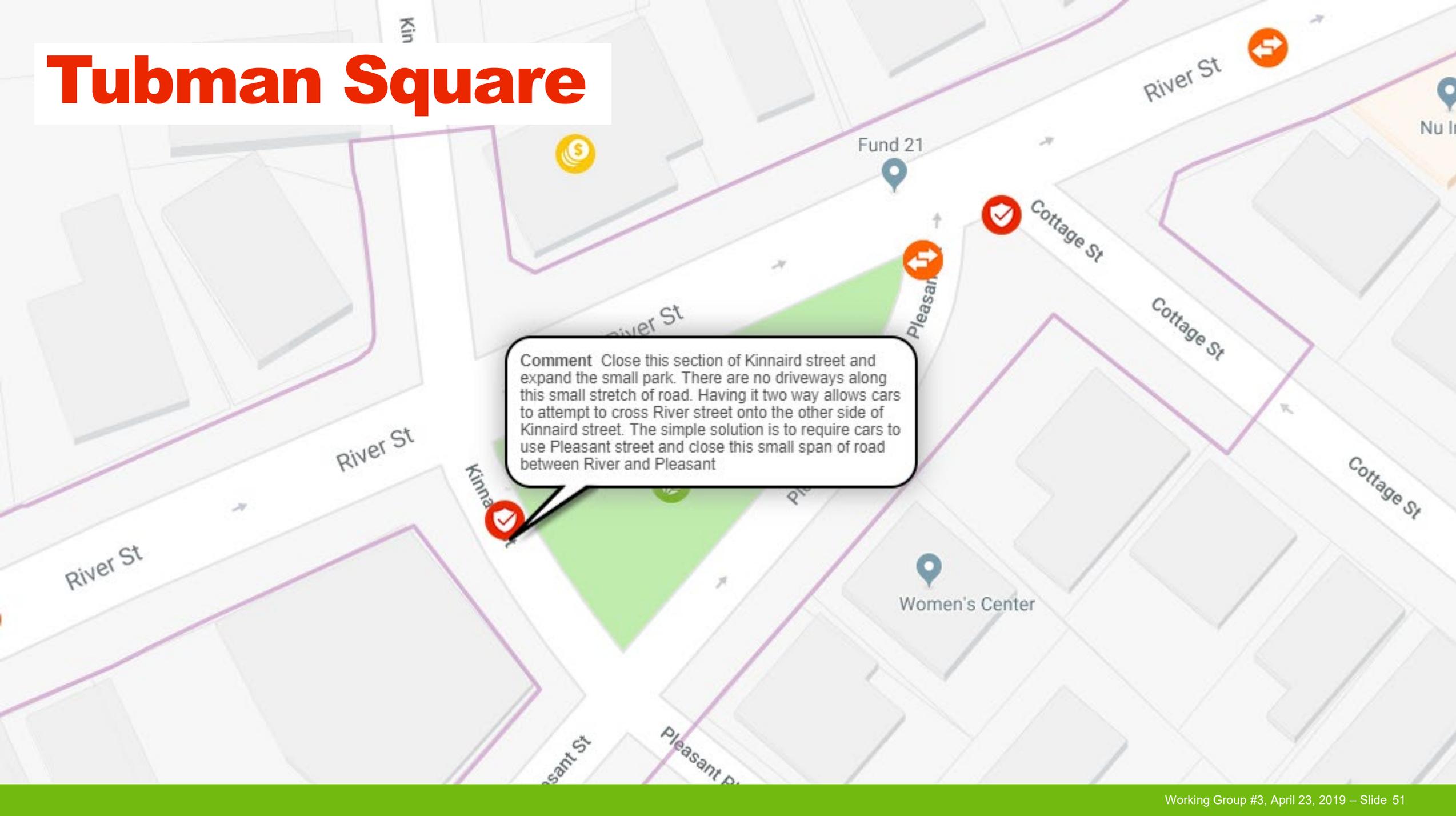
Bus lane

Bike lanes

# “Gateway”

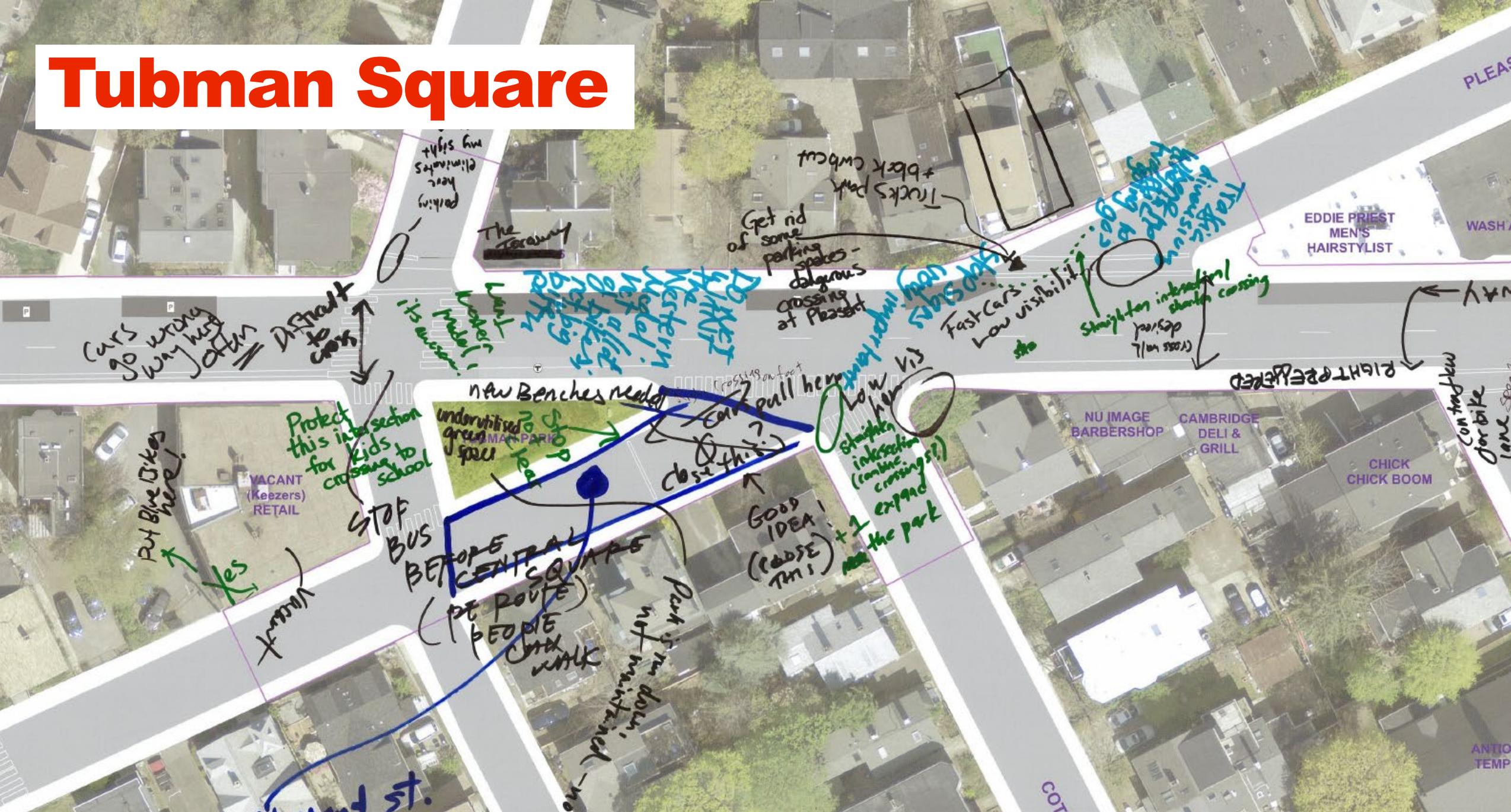


# Tubman Square

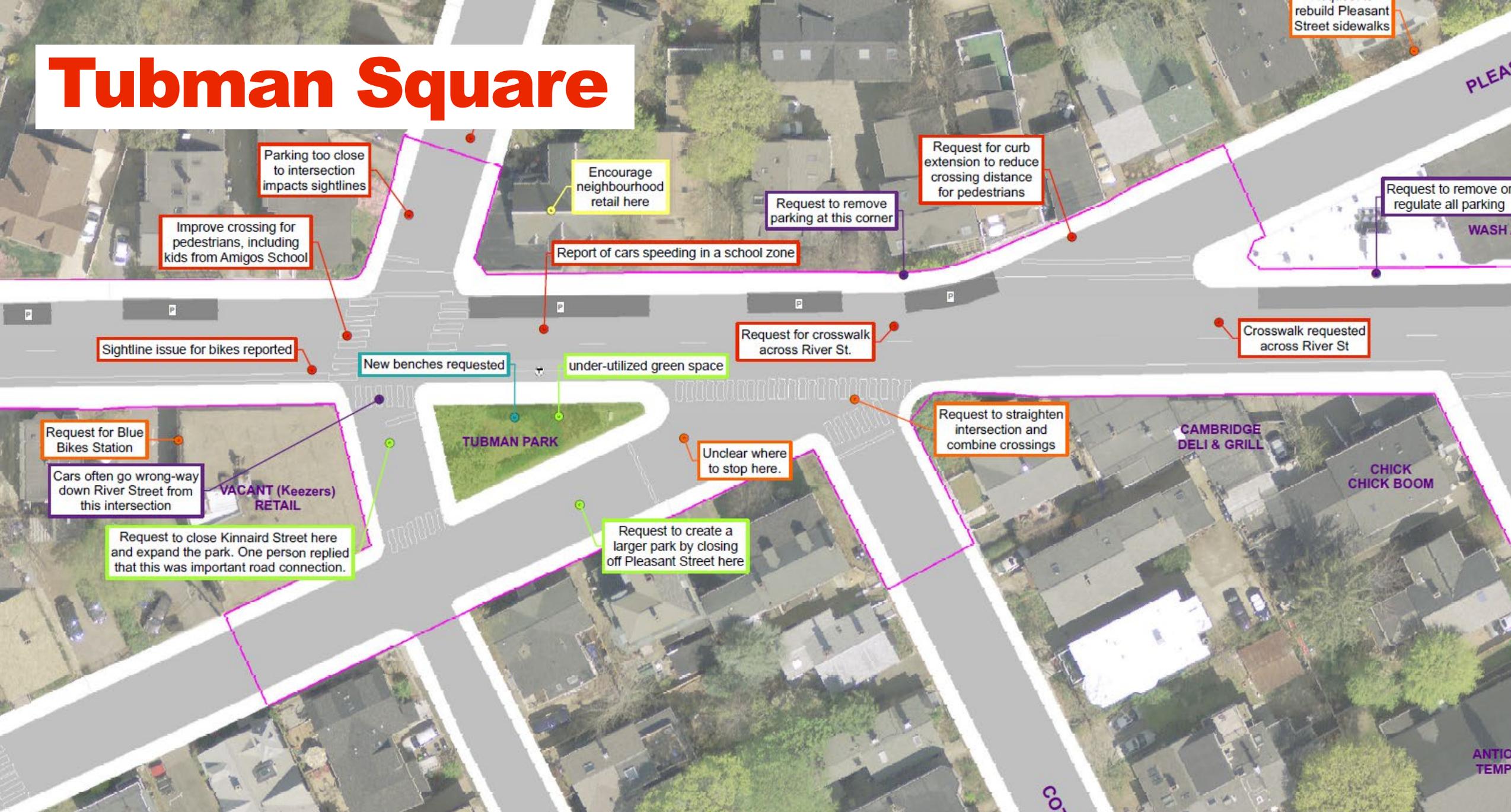


Comment Close this section of Kinnaird street and expand the small park. There are no driveways along this small stretch of road. Having it two way allows cars to attempt to cross River street onto the other side of Kinnaird street. The simple solution is to require cars to use Pleasant street and close this small span of road between River and Pleasant

# Tubman Square



# Tubman Square



rebuild Pleasant Street sidewalks

Parking too close to intersection impacts sightlines

Encourage neighbourhood retail here

Request to remove parking at this corner

Request for curb extension to reduce crossing distance for pedestrians

Request to remove or regulate all parking

Improve crossing for pedestrians, including kids from Amigos School

Report of cars speeding in a school zone

Sightline issue for bikes reported

New benches requested

under-utilized green space

Request for crosswalk across River St.

Crosswalk requested across River St

Request for Blue Bikes Station

Cars often go wrong-way down River Street from this intersection

VACANT (Keezers) RETAIL

Request to close Kinross Street here and expand the park. One person replied that this was important road connection.

Unclear where to stop here.

Request to create a larger park by closing off Pleasant Street here

Request to straighten intersection and combine crossings

CAMBRIDGE DELI & GRILL

CHICK CHICK BOOM

# Carl Barron Plaza & Green Street



Comment This sidewalk is so narrow given the foot traffic from the bus dropoff and train station! With the bus shelter, people standing and waiting, the benches outside the convenience store where people congregate and smoke, it is difficult to navigate just on foot. With a stroller, wheelchair, or rolling a cart it is near impossible.



# Carl Barron Plaza & Green Street



Reverse direction of Green

not well used

Difficult to cross all intersection legs on all modes

Request for separated bike lane

Bike box requested

Bus way too complex, request for a more efficient plan.

Move bus drop off somewhere else to create a park

Confusing Traffic Lights

Stop sign not obeyed

Request for bike boulevard on Green Street.

Request for better separation for bus stop and movements. Vehicles often block bus access here.

Current bus bay organization causes routes to cross each other after departing.

Improve safety/comfort of bus waiting area and plaza

Accessibility problems and narrow sidewalk reported.

Request to include courtyard at Holmes building in solution.

Protected bike lane requested "as part of Carl Barron Plaza"

Support for signals that have been added to Central Sq

Request to allow for...

# Many tools needed at Green and River Streets



## MBTA

- Current and future bus capacity needs
- Significant delays on Green Street and River Street due to competing traffic

## Cyclists

- Requests for separated bike lanes
- Requests to connect to Massachusetts Avenue bicycle facilities

## Pedestrians

- Complaints of crowding and public safety near busway
- Confusing crossings at Green, Magazine, and River Streets

## Motor Vehicles

- Heavy congestion on both River and Green Streets at peak hour

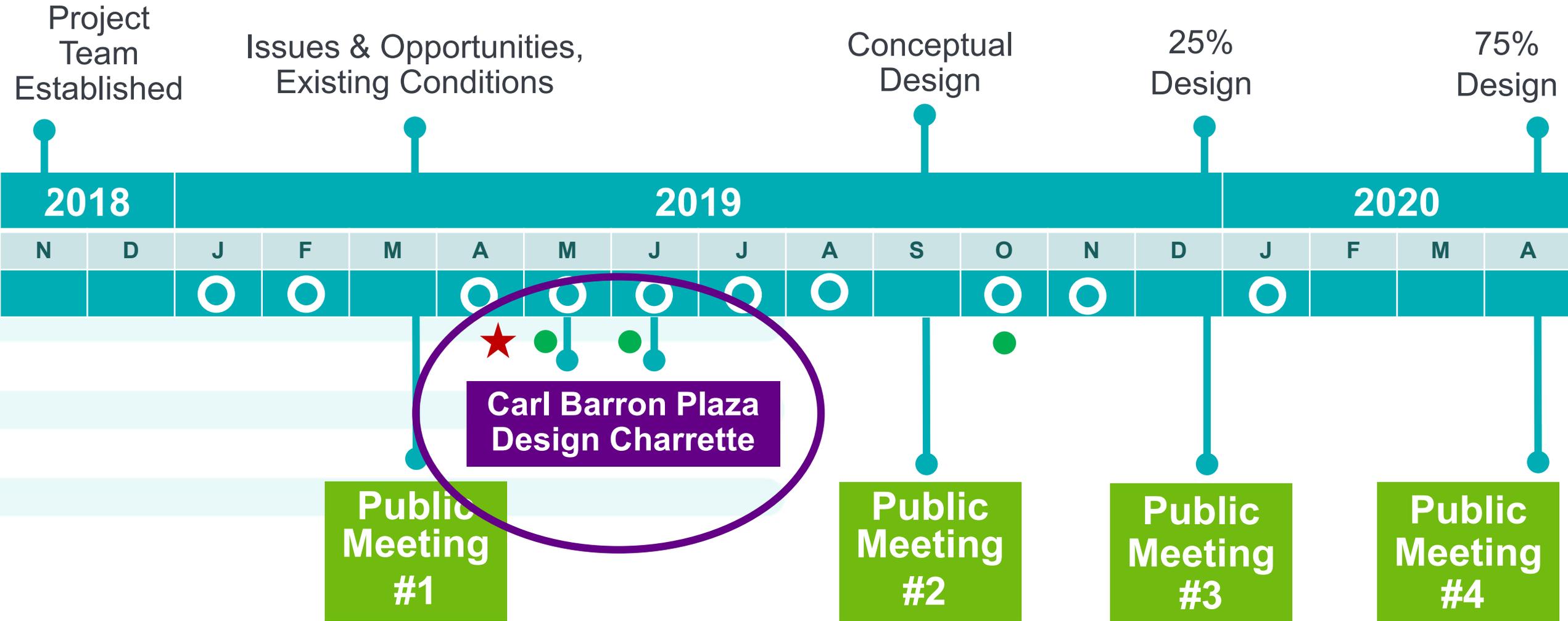
# **Discussion: Was there anything you saw on the public input map that identified a challenge area we haven't identified yet?**

- **"Gateway": Mem Drive to Putnam**
- **Tubman Square**
- **Carl Barron Plaza, the Bus Terminal Area, and Green Street**
- **Cross Section from Putnam to Green (balancing curbside uses)**

# **Carl Barron Plaza Process Preview**

# Expected Timeline

-  Working Group Meetings
-  Public Walks
-  Today



# Event Dates, Times, Locales

- Phase 1 - Carl Barron Existing Conditions Open House  
*Interactive exhibit with existing conditions information and activities to gather input*
  - Indoor version: **Thurs., May 16 (or June 6), 6pm-9pm** at Manning Apartments
  - Outdoor version: **Sat., May 18 (or June 8), 4pm-7pm** at Carl Barron Plaza
- Phase 2 - Carl Barron Design Charrettes  
*Multi-day charrette to generate design ideas. Longer workshop plus outdoor engagement to facilitate quicker interactions.*
  - Indoor version: **Thurs., June 20 (or 27), 6pm-9pm** at location TBA
  - Indoor/Outdoor version: **Sat., June 22 (or 29), 1pm-4pm** at Carl Barron Plaza and location TBA

# Elements from the Carl Barron Existing Conditions Open House

- Activity Heatmap(s)
- Movement Tracking Map
- Interactive Exercises
- Public Input Map for Carl Barron Plaza
- Public Feeling Map (dots to put where you feel good/bad/happy/sad)
- Urban Design Conditions Board for Carl Barron
- Social Services Map
- Place Comparisons (other similar sized plazas and parks)

# **Public Comments**

# Next Steps

# Next Steps

- Add all summer meeting dates in your calendars (email to follow)
- Prior to next meeting: review draft toolbox and other available materials
- Next Working Group Meeting: Tuesday, May 28, 6pm at Manning Apartments
  - Agenda: Education ("101") on Traffic and Urban Design Issues and Tools

**THANK YOU!**

**[riverstreet@cambridgema.gov](mailto:riverstreet@cambridgema.gov)**