

Western Avenue Reconstruction Advisory Committee meeting #5 May 26, 2010



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Environmental &
Transportation Planning

Welcome

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Environmental & Transportation Planning
Community Development Department

Agenda

- Overall traffic configuration concepts
- Conceptual design options #1-5
- Public comment period
- Wrap-up, next steps

Overall Traffic Configuration Concepts

Make Western Avenue 2-way again?

- This analysis was requested by the committee. 2-way streets are generally more “community friendly” than 1-way streets, in part because 1-way streets have higher vehicle speeds and are more about passing through than stopping.
- Though Western Avenue used to be 2-way pre 1950’s, it is not possible today because of the creation of the Mass Pike. Both River and Western bridges, River Street and all the neighborhood streets in would require reconfiguration. Our traffic analysis indicates that conversion to a 2-way street would result in significant reduction of roadway vehicle capacity, which is not recommended.

Make Western Avenue 1-lane?

- This analysis was requested by the committee. A 1-lane configuration would allow for a much wider sidewalk, which could be used for landscaping and pocket parks. It would radically change the feel of the avenue, would significantly reduce vehicle speeds, and increase pedestrian safety by allowing for much shorter crosswalks.

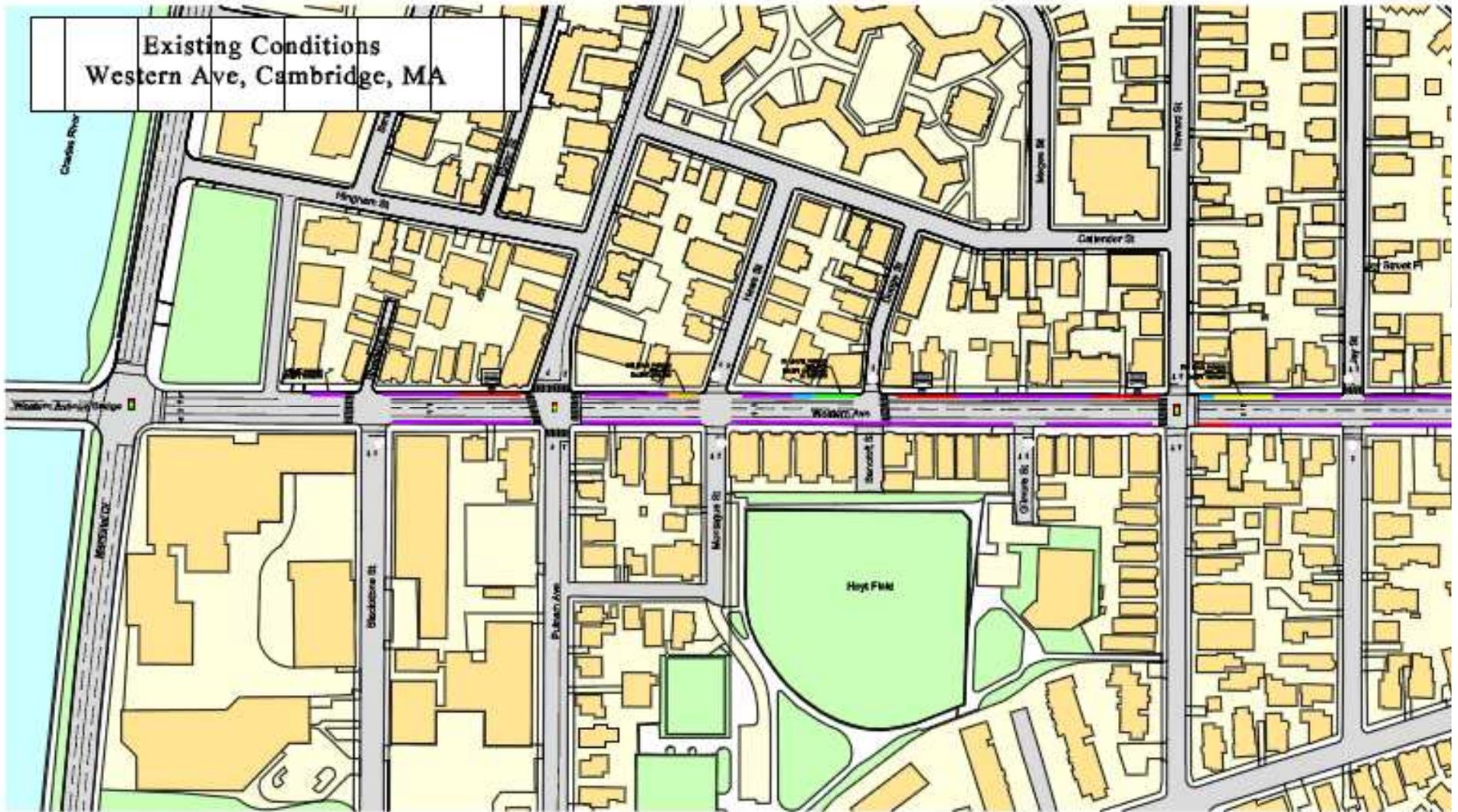
Make Western Avenue 1-lane? (cont'd)

- Our analysis indicates that a 1-lane configuration from Mass. Ave. to Gilmore St. is a viable option if the traffic signals at the Western Ave. Bridge and River St. Bridge are coordinated (this would be done in collaboration with MassDOT). The street would remain as it is today (2 lanes) from Gilmore to Memorial Drive.
- The coordination of the signals will significantly reduce the travel time down Western Avenue during typical rush-hour conditions.
- With the coordination of the signals, even during extreme traffic conditions, queues would rarely extend all the way to Mass. Ave.

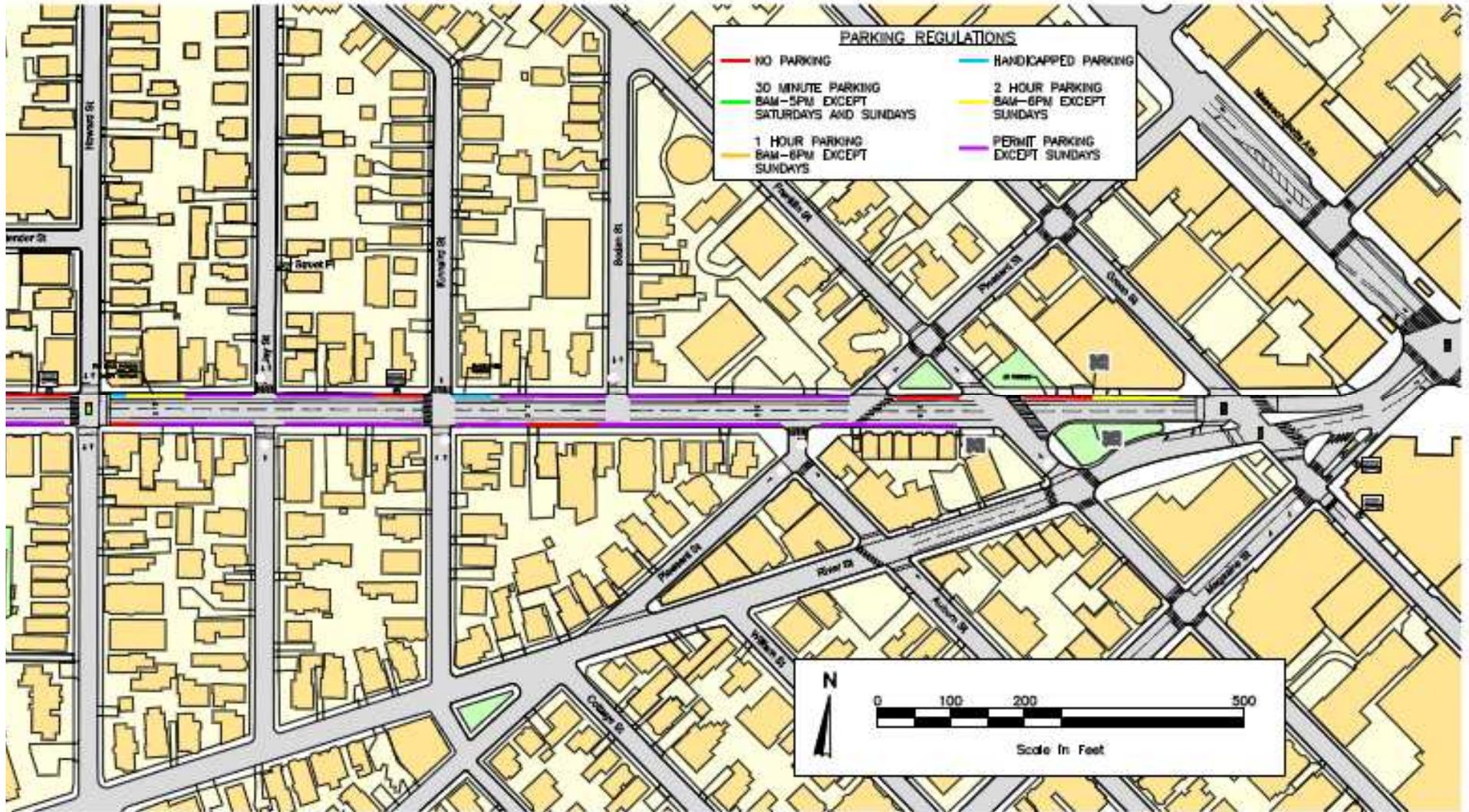
Existing conditions map



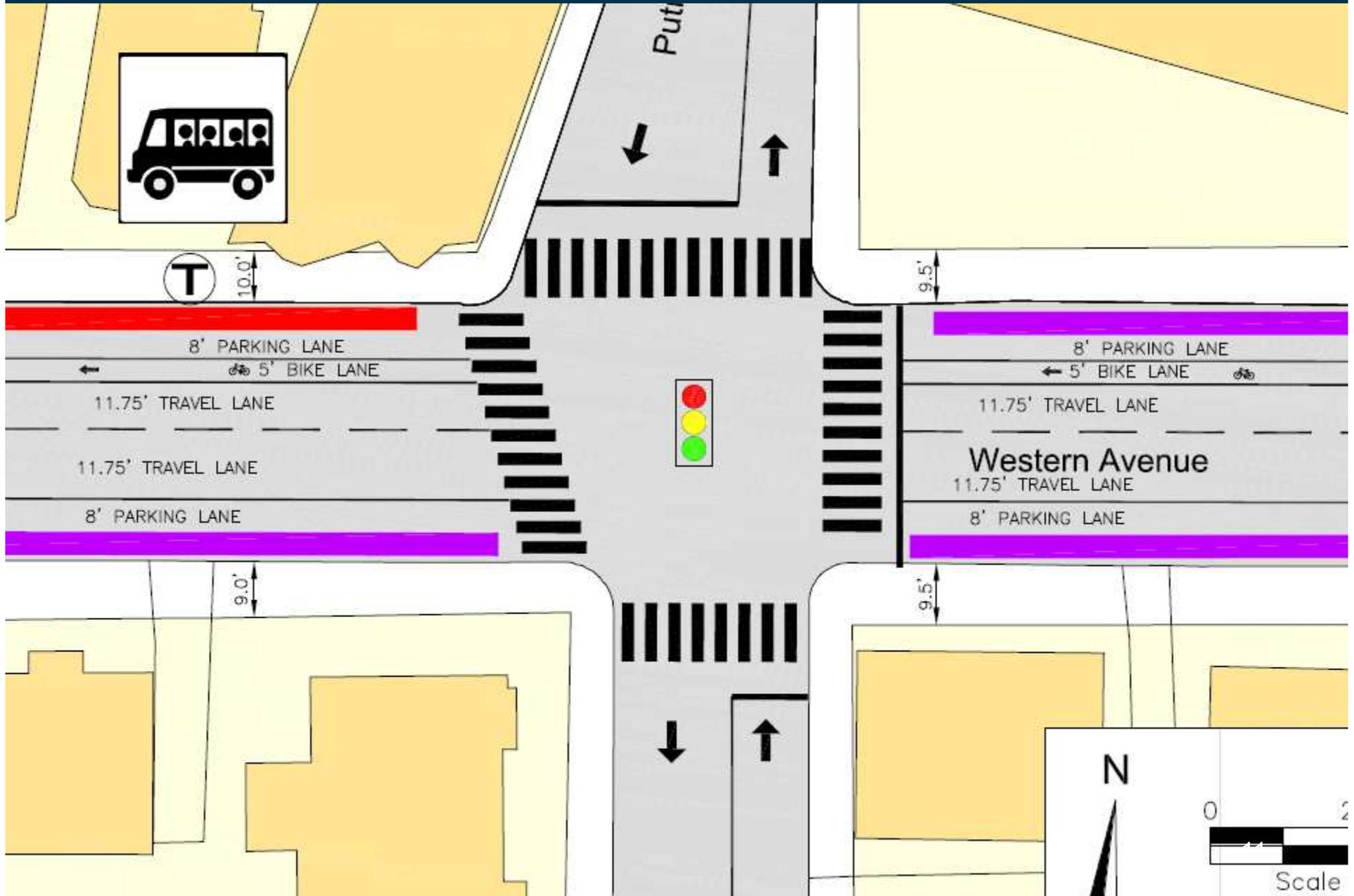
Existing conditions map (lower)



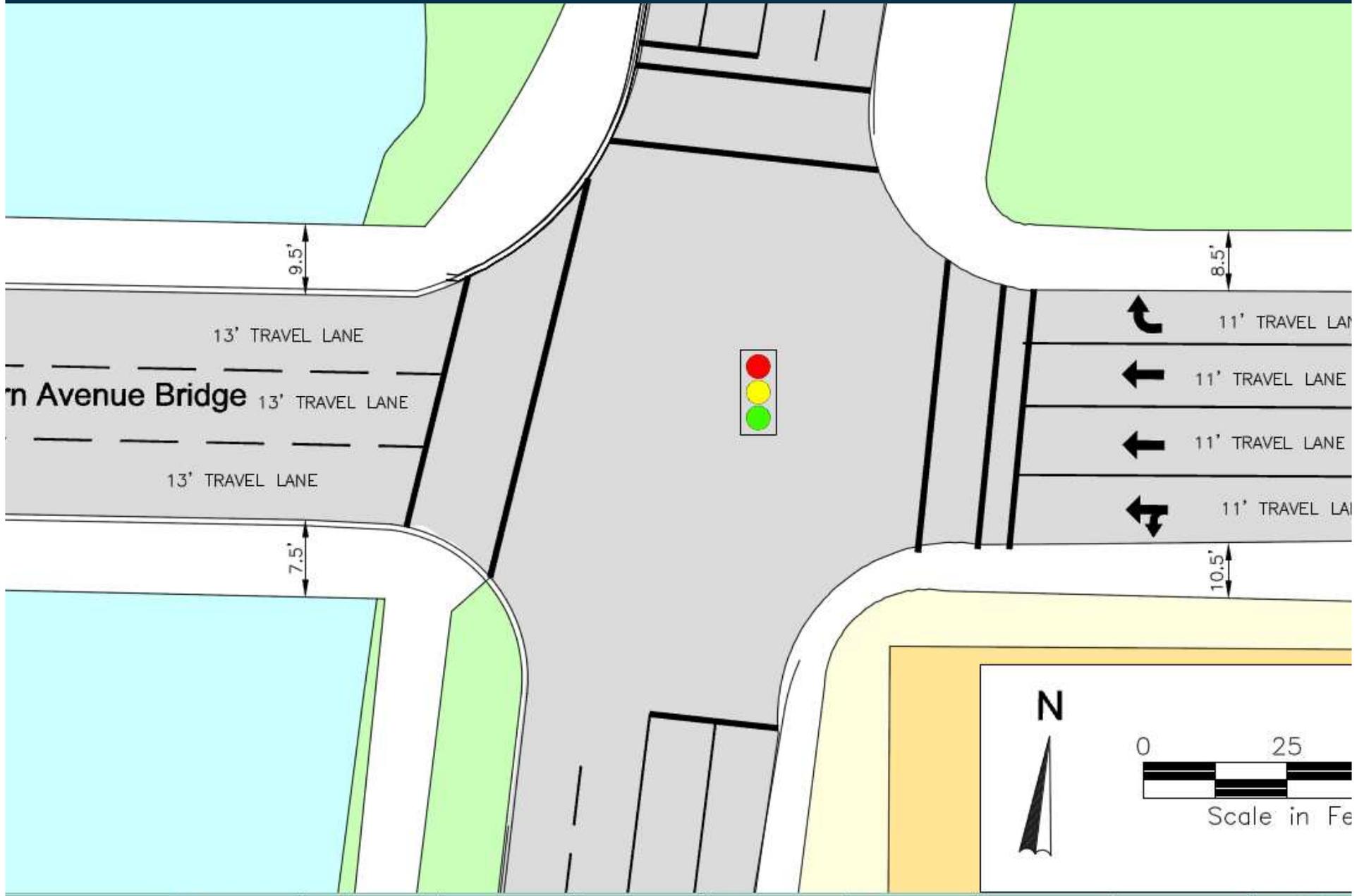
Existing conditions map (upper)



Existing conditions (@ Putnam)



Existing conditions (@ Mem. Drive)



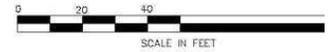
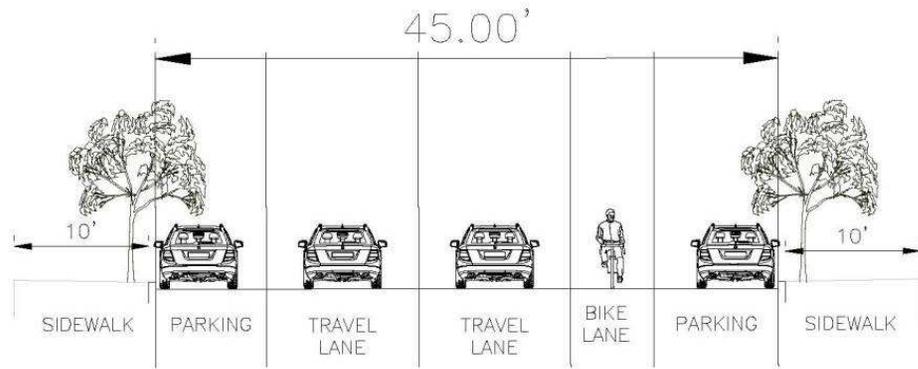
Conceptual design options

1 to 5

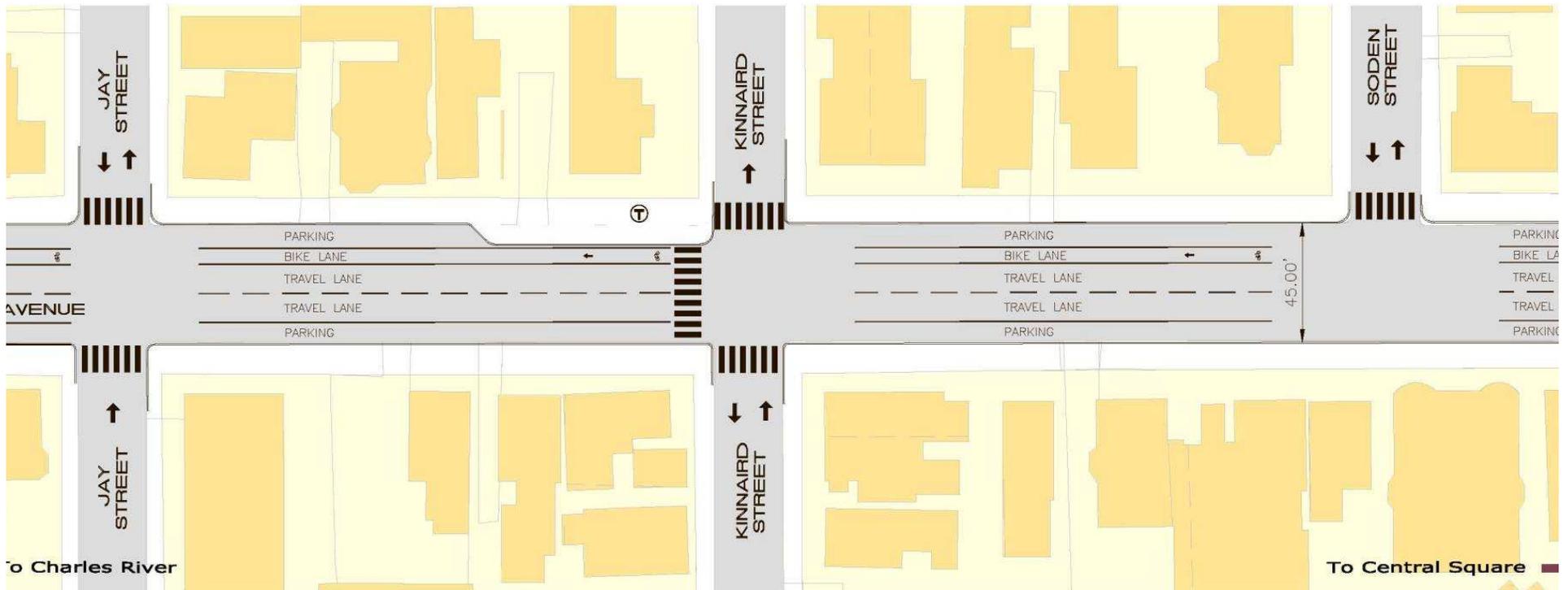
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WESTERN AVENUE CONCEPT 1

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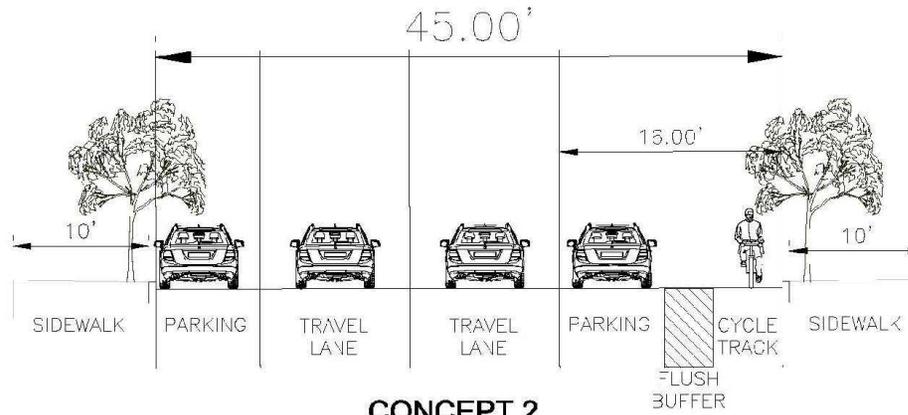
CONCEPT 1



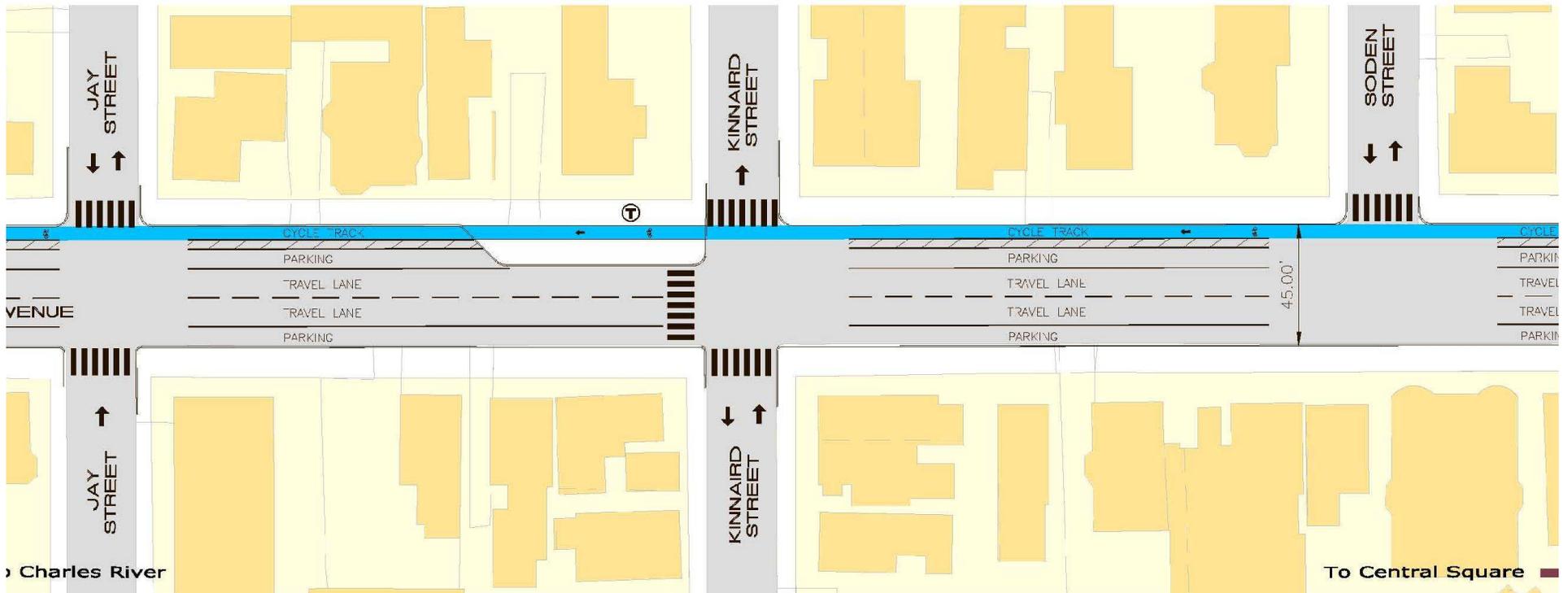
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WESTERN AVENUE CONCEPT 2

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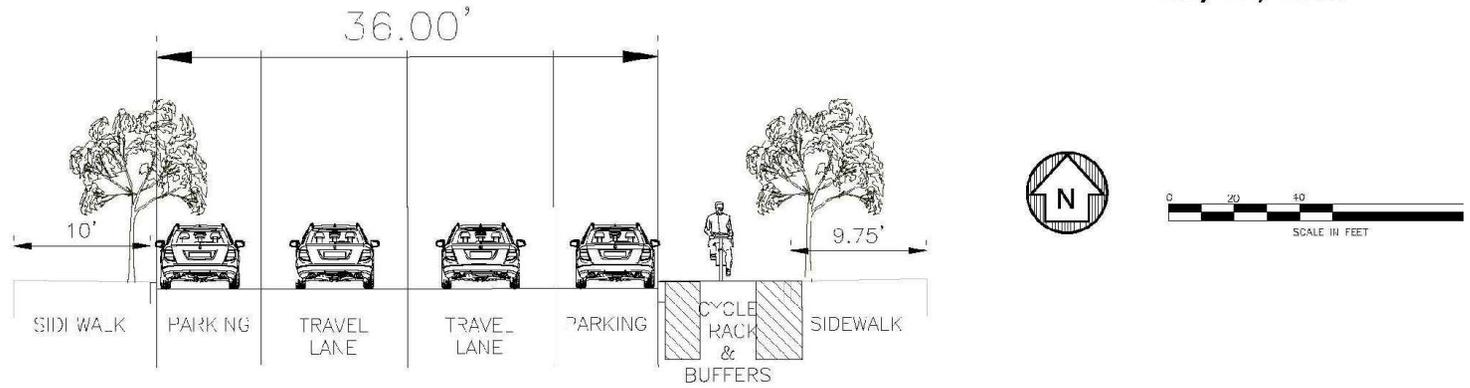
CONCEPT 2



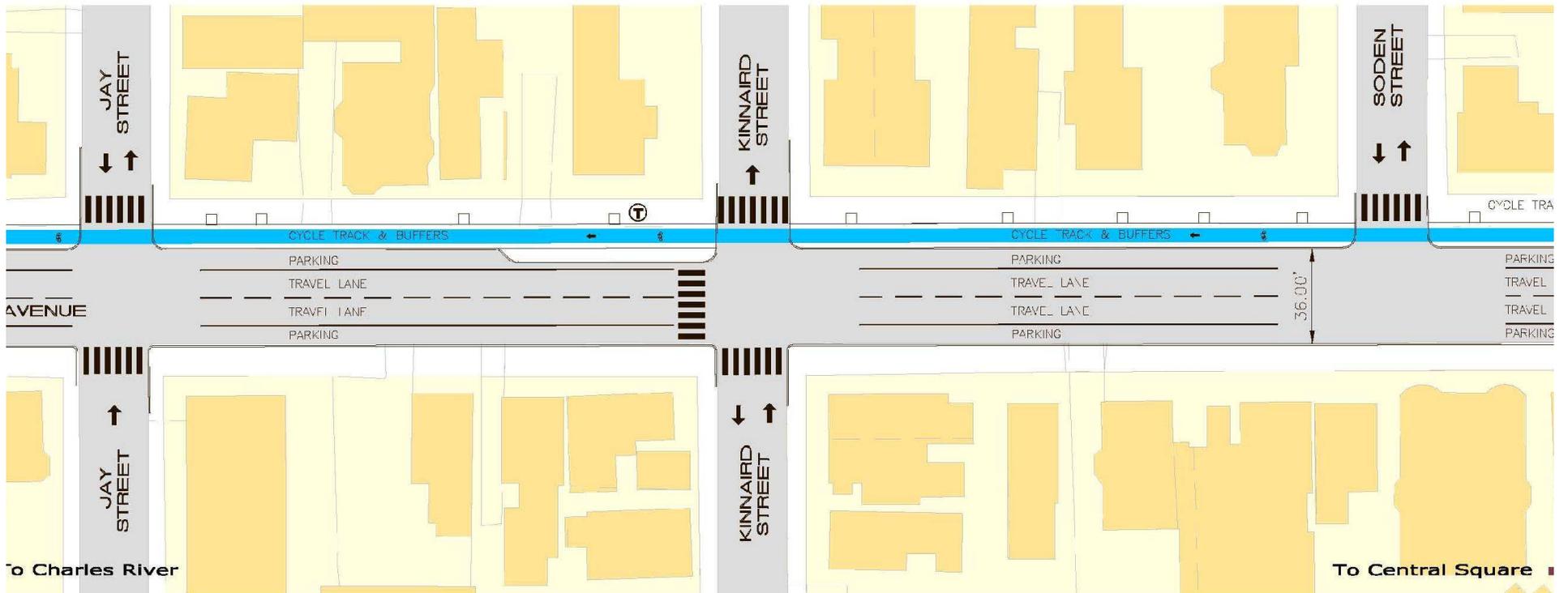
WESTERN AVENUE CONCEPT 3

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3



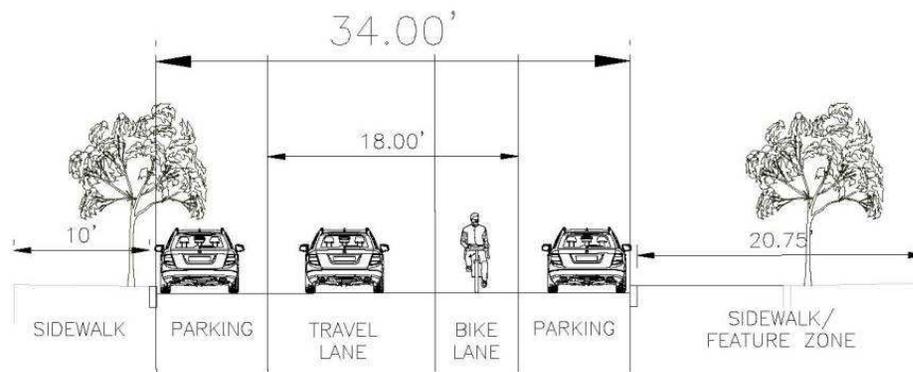
CONCEPT 3



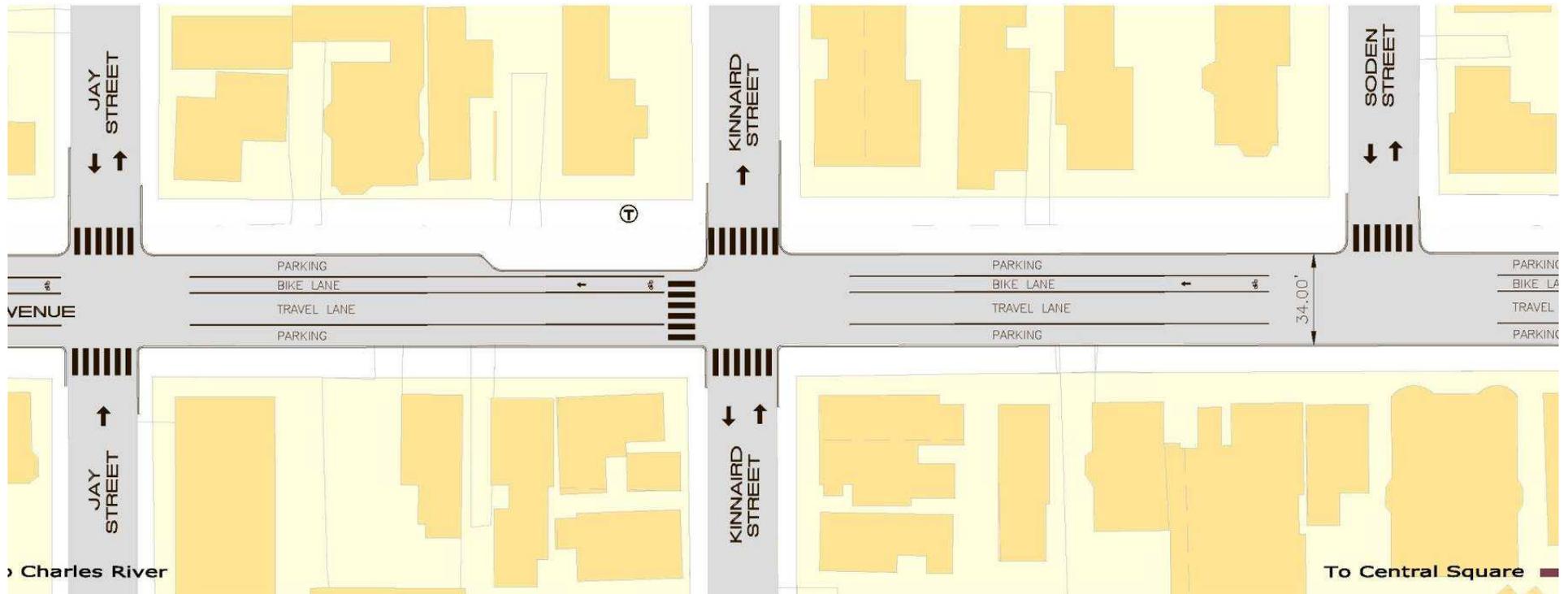
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WESTERN AVENUE CONCEPT 4

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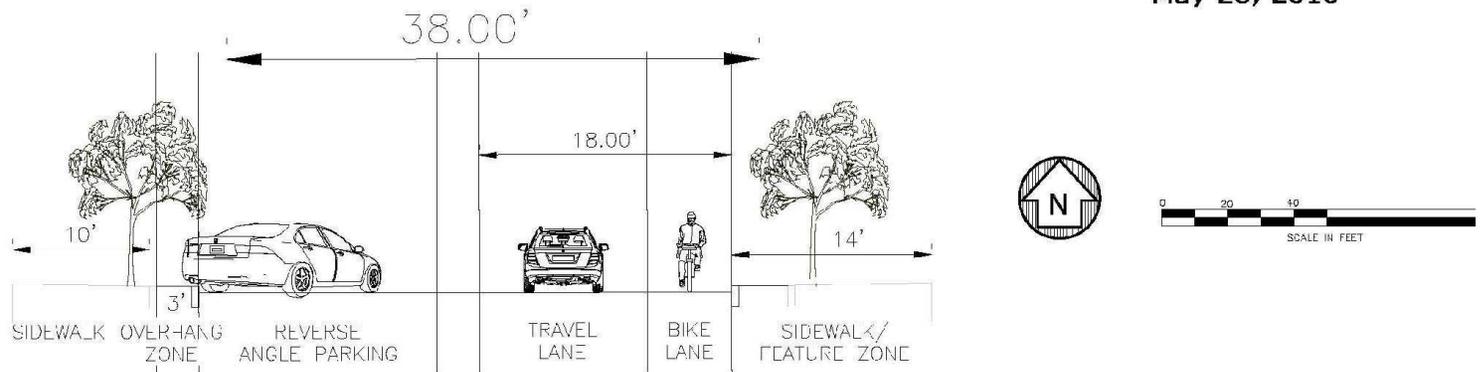
CONCEPT 4



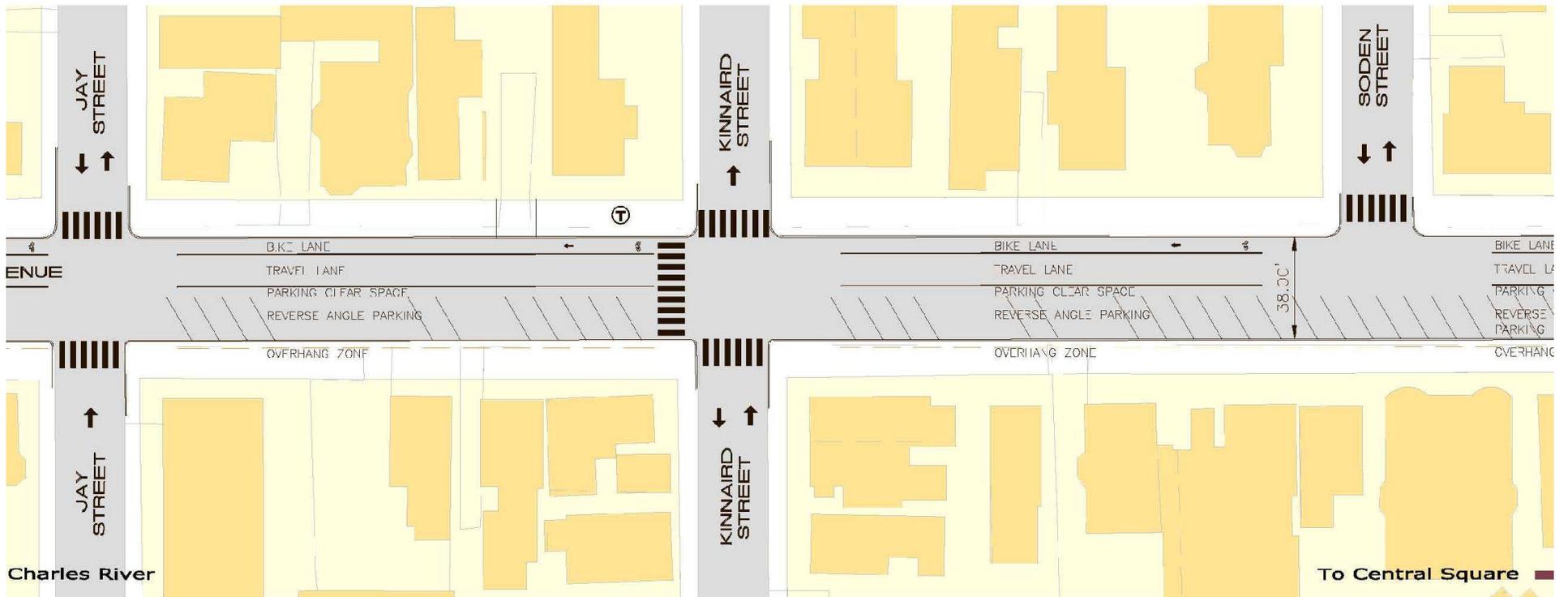
WESTERN AVENUE CONCEPT 5

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5



CONCEPT 5



Surface design: Project goals

- Ensure corridor is safe for all users
- Maintain adequate traffic flow
- Reinforce residential character
- Appropriate traffic speed
- Improve conditions for walking, bicycling, and transit riders
- Provide disability access
- Improve access to businesses
- Help meet stormwater environmental goals through “low impact designs”
- Provide adequate parking
- Environmental sustainability

Committee Input Session

Pros and Cons of each of the conceptual design options, considering the project goals on the previous slide.

Adjourn

Website: <http://westernavenue.info>