



Public Facilities Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, September 21, 2016

Present: Councilors Crossley (Chair), Lennon, Albright, Brousal-Glaser, Gentile, Danberg, Laredo, and Lappin

Also present: Councilors Auchincloss, Baker, Blazar, Ciccone, Cote, Fuller, Leary, Lipof, Sangiolo, and Yates

City staff present: Barney Heath (Director of Planning), James Freas (Deputy Director of Planning & Development), Rachel Blatt (Urban Designer), Lily Canan Reynolds (Community Engagement Manager), Nicole Freedman (Transportation Director), James McGonagle (Commissioner of Public Works), and Lou Taverna (City Engineer)

Chair's Note: The Committee met jointly with the Public Safety and Transportation Committee for presentations and discussion on the Planning Department's Transportation Strategy and Department of Public Works' Draft Roadways Rehabilitation Plan.

Newton in Motion Presentation

Director of Planning and Development provided a brief overview of the Newton in Motion Project. The Planning Department has been working over the past year with Consultants from Nelson/Nygaard, the Department of Public Works, the Police Department, other City departments, and the community toward developing a transportation plan and strategy for Newton for now and in the future. The Planning Department and the consultant held meetings with the Councilors from each of the City Wards to review the draft Newton in Motion Materials after they were distributed. The draft recommends strategies according to a "Complete Streets" approach, that is, to incorporate infrastructure that serves multiple modes of transportation. The draft provides data that is measureable to ensure Newton is meeting its transportation goals. Mr. Heath added that the strategy identifies implementation priorities that will be included in the upcoming and future Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Transportation Director Nicole Freedman expressed enthusiasm about the transportation strategy. She feels it is a way to make Newton a leader and model for small to mid-size cities. The strategies can be used to create a plan for all modes of transportation. She believes that once the Newton in Motion Project is complete, it will be a great asset to the City.

Jason Schrieber, Nelson/Nygaard provided the committees with the attached PowerPoint presentation on the Newton in Motion Project. Mr. Schrieber explained that the project recognizes the changing transportation patterns in the region and the proposed transportation projects address those changes. The project takes into consideration why people move through the City and what

problems they encounter as they move through the City. The transportation strategy provides goals and metrics to address transportation needs and prioritize projects. It is the framework for moving forward with transportation planning.

The presentation includes community input data from workshops and an on-line survey. What is coming out in the transportation strategy is community driven. Newton in Motion includes projects that enhance safety, create a more walkable Newton, connect the bike network, develop better connections between neighborhoods, and improve public transportation, accessibility, and school safety. Goals for the project are to improve safety, create consistency among all streets, reduce driving, and streamline the decision making process for transportation projects. There are five action areas included in the strategy, which include complete streets/Vision Zero (no fatalities), transit and shared mobility, active transportation, parking management and congestion reduction. For further detail on Newton in Motion please see the attached PowerPoint presentation or refer to the Newton in Motion draft previously provided to the Council.

Councilors were pleased to see that data driven metrics and creating a framework for decision-making will be part of the overall transportation strategy. Several Councilors raised questions and commented on the presentation and the Newton in Motion Plan. Although the plan is to incorporate transportation projects into the CIP, the City will still need to fund the projects and make hard decisions about what its priorities are in terms of whether to repair more roads and/or implement transportation strategies. The City's roadways are in terrible shape and the reality is most people drive. It is important that strategies be carefully integrated with the roadways rehabilitation plan and to address the needs of the biggest users. Councilors asked whether there should be a goal added to Newton in Motion specific improving funding for road improvements and traffic signals. The City's current list of roads that need repair exceeds the number of roads that the City has the work force and funding to repair.

Mr. Schrieber pointed out that the projects they are considering look to address transportation at a strategic level and measure neighborhood wants or needs against the broader framework of transportation planning. The strategic plan looks to balance all modes of transportation in the City. While everyone has thought about and discussed transportation planning, it takes commitment and agreement from City officials to make the changes necessary to meet the broader goals of the City's transportation plan. Examples include approving and enforcing a congestion management plan or a demand management ordinance to reduce the number of vehicles on the road. As the city is spending to improve its roadways, it is also important to recognize how the City can motivate the people to choose alternate modes of transportation.

Concern was raised regarding whether there should be another goal added to Newton in Motion specific to improving funding for road improvements and traffic signals. The City's current list of roads that need repair exceeds the number of roads that the City has the work force and funding to repair.

Councilors noted that community consensus should not be the most important factor in making decisions related to transportation and traffic. It is important that the City is consistent with its approach to similar roadways and intersections. A Councilor pointed out that to have a more walkable Newton; it would require that the sidewalks be plowed in the winter.

Draft Roadways Rehabilitation Plan

Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle updated the Committee on progress with the Roadway Rehabilitation Plan. The Public Works Department is working with the Planning Department on its upcoming transportation projects. Public Works worked with Street Scan to gather data on roadway conditions to develop a street repair plan to raise the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) average, which is currently at 52%. The plan is not yet available because the Commissioner recently asked Street Scan to incorporate the City's utility plans into the roadway data so that the prioritization plan will integrate this work. Commissioner McGonagle expects to have the rehabilitation plan at some point in October. The hope is to have the plan complete by early October and will incorporate projects into the CIP.

The estimated cost of bringing the City's roadways up to standard is over \$100 million. There are 276 miles of roadway in the City. Of the 276 miles, 200 are local roads and 76 are arterial roadways. The City will have to increase its road repair budget significantly to meet a 10 to 20- year goal that will bring our roadway condition index up to an acceptable level. The Administration will have to think through a strategy for financing road repair. The Public Works Department is looking to do the road repair incorporating the Complete Streets approach. The repair plans would address sidewalks, curbing, and all other street related improvements.

There was a request from Councilors to assess the cost of bringing the pavement condition index up to a point of predictable maintenance separately from other costs relating to the Complete Streets approach. That is, is there a separate assessment of the condition and cost to repair sidewalks, curbs, berms, trees, access ramps, etc....-all work that is in the public way. It was also requested to review what the design standards for the various elements are and that these are made consistent at similar conditions across the City.

The Department of Public Works will be using goals of Newton in Motion for the West Newton Square Rehabilitation Project. Public Works has already held one public comment meeting and is planning two more. The department received a lot of input from the community at the first meeting. West Newton Square will be a Complete Streets project. There was a question regarding whether things like having a framework for undergrounding utilities and tree location would help make project implementation more efficient. The Commissioner responded that the Public Works Department has started to work with the utility companies and the City's Director of Urban Forestry Marc Welch on roadway plans.

There needs to be a connection between Newton in Motion and the Roadways Rehabilitation Plan. The Newton in Motion Plan is not reflective of the roadway and signalization needs. The roadway plan is likely to take 20 years, which the transportation strategy should reflect.

Commissioner McGonagle will be back before the Committees in October to present the final Roadways Rehabilitation Plan.

Referred to Public Safety, Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#324-16 **Request for \$75,000 for design services for two intersection improvement projects**
HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) from Free Cash for the purpose of funding design engineering services for the Dedham at Nahanton and Dedham at Brookline Streets Intersection Improvement Project. [09/12/16 @ 3:48 PM]

Public Safety Approved 6-0 on 09/21/16

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 7-0 (Laredo not voting)**

Note: The Committee met jointly with the Public Safety and Transportation Committee on this item. Commissioner McGonagle explained that the request is to appropriate \$75,000 from Free Cash to fund the design of two intersections on Dedham Street. The project is included in the 2017 Capital Improvement Plan. Environmental Partners will undertake the redesign of the Dedham Street at Nahanton Street and the Dedham Street at Brookline Street intersections. The project does not entail a major reconfiguration of either intersection. The project is being done in order to create safer intersections for all users of those roadways. The bids for construction will be out in January and the construction project will begin in the spring. The Public Works Department held community meetings on the project and there was support for the redesigns.

Councilor Lappin moved approval in the Public Facilities Committee and Councilor Lipof moved approval in the Public Safety and Transportation Committee and both motions carried unanimously.

Referred to Public Safety, Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#325-16 **Request for \$250,000 for design services for the West Newton Square rehab project**
HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) from Free Cash for the purpose of funding design engineering services for the West Newton Square Rehabilitation Project. [09/12/16 @ 3:48 PM]

Public Safety Approved 4-0-1 (Ciccone abstaining; Lipof not voting) on 09/21/16

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 6-0 (Laredo, Lappin not voting)**

Note: The Committee met jointly with the Public Safety and Transportation Committee on this item. Commissioner McGonagle presented the request for \$250,000 to fund the redesign of West Newton Square. The project is included in the Capital Improvement Plan for 2017. HDR, Inc.

will be handling the conceptual design study using Complete Street principles. The conceptual design plan will include a number of improvements for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles including wider sidewalks, coordinated traffic signalization, bike lanes and parking. The conceptual plan design scope is for West Newton village and the immediately adjacent areas, which includes 15 intersections. The Department of Public Works will receive three conceptual designs and will work with the Administration to determine the best designs.

The City and HDR, Inc. held one of three public comments sessions. Community endorsement is key to the success of the project. The design and construction documents should be complete by the spring, the construction project will go to bid, and construction will begin by August of 2017. The Administration will return to request approval of funds for the construction.

The Chair of Finance asked Commissioner McGonagle and City Engineer Lou Taverna to be prepared to discuss why the design services were not part of a public bid process. Mr. Taverna explained that design and engineering services are exempt from the public bid law. Firms base design fees on hourly rates and expenses, which they bill monthly. It is very difficult to predict the number of hours needed for design, as the project is in a conceptual phase. The Department of Public Works currently uses three firms with expertise for transportation design. The Department chooses the firm best suited for the project and compares fees with the other firms. Mr. Taverna is aware of what the design firms are capable of and about what a design should cost. A good rule of thumb for design fees is that the cost should be 10 to 12% of the whole project cost. Design services are paid on a monthly basis. With the expectation that the Finance Committee will continue the discussion on bidding design services, Councilor Brousal-Glaser moved approval in Public Facilities Committee and Councilor Cote moved approval in the Public Safety & Transportation Committee. The motion in Public Facilities Committee carried unanimously and the motion in Public Safety & Transportation Committee carried by a vote of four in favor and one abstention.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#323-16

Request for \$300,000 for funding to purchase sand and salt spreaders

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) from Free Cash for the purpose of providing funding for sand and salt spreaders for the Public Works Department's snow operations.
[09/14/16 @ 1:10 PM]

Action:

Public Facilities Approved 6-0 (Laredo, Lappin not voting)

Note:

Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle reviewed the request for \$300,000 to purchase sand and salt spreaders for large trucks and sidewalk tractors. The new spreaders will be equipped to handle magnesium chloride, as well as sand and salt. In addition, each spreader comes with Compu-Spread, which allows users to program the spreader to dispense a specific amount of material. The spreaders are not in the Capital Improvement Plan but are invaluable to the Department of Public Work's snow operations and will improve efficiency while generating cost savings. Councilor Danberg moved approval, which carried unanimously.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#191-16 Funding to relocate the Zervas modulars to NSHS and Brown Middle School
HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) to the Public Buildings Department for the purpose of funding the relocation modular classrooms from the Zervas Elementary School to Newton South High School and Brown Middle School from the following accounts:

<u>Department</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Executive Office	Full-time Salaries	\$40,000
Treasury	Debt Service (010772-582A48)	\$403,784
Treasury	Debt Service (010772-582A49)	\$21,216
Financial Info Systems	Full-time Salaries	\$35,000

[05/09/16 @ 4:59 PM]

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 7-0 (Laredo not voting)**

Note: The Mayor has submitted the attached request to amend the above item by increasing the requested amount to \$600,000 to be appropriated from Free Cash. The money will be used to fund the relocation of the Zervas Elementary School modular classrooms to Newton South High School and Brown Middle School. The increased cost can be attributed to the need to rebid the contract because the original contractor is no longer available and the addition of the covered walkway at Brown Middle School.

Several Committee members felt that the costs seemed high for the project and requested that the Commissioner of Public Buildings provide a detailed budget for the Finance Committee’s discussion of the item. In addition, there was a request to provide the costs for the last modular classroom project for the Finance Committee meeting. Councilor Gentile moved approval of the item as amended, which carried unanimously.

Referred to and Programs & Services and Public Facilities Committees

#255-16 5-58 waiver for relocation of modular classrooms
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS requesting a waiver of the City of Newton Ordinance Sec. 5-58. Site plan approval for construction or modification of municipal buildings and facilities for the relocation of the existing modular classrooms from the Zervas Elementary School to the Brown Middle School and Newton South High School.
[07/06/2016 @ 11:51 AM]

Action: **Public Facilities voted No Action Necessary 7-0 (Laredo not voting)**

Note: The docket request is no longer necessary, as the Administration opted to pursue the site plan approval for the relocation of modular classrooms from the Zervas Elementary School to the Brown Middle School and Newton South High School. Therefore, a motion for no action necessary was made and carried by a vote of seven in favor and none opposed.

The Committee held all other items before the Committee without discussion and adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah J. Crossley, Chair

Newton in Motion Project Update



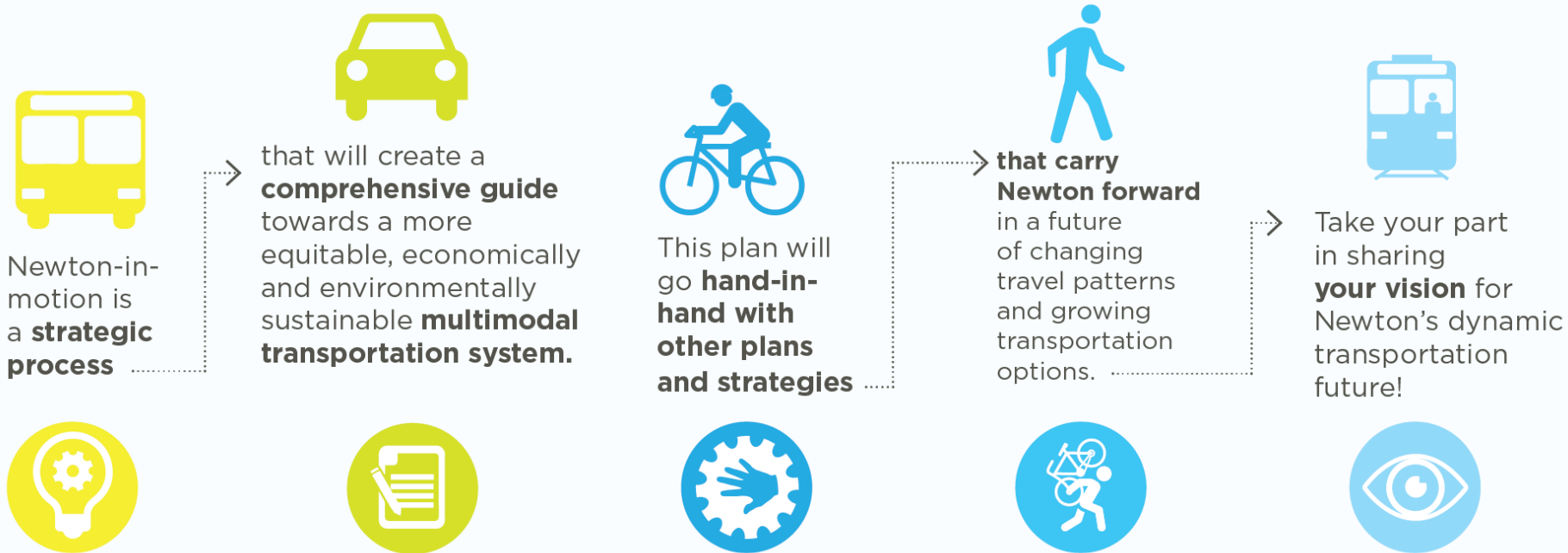
Agenda

- » **Project Recap**
- » **Community Input**
- » **Vision, Goals, Metrics**
- » **Action Areas**
- » **What's Next**

Project Recap

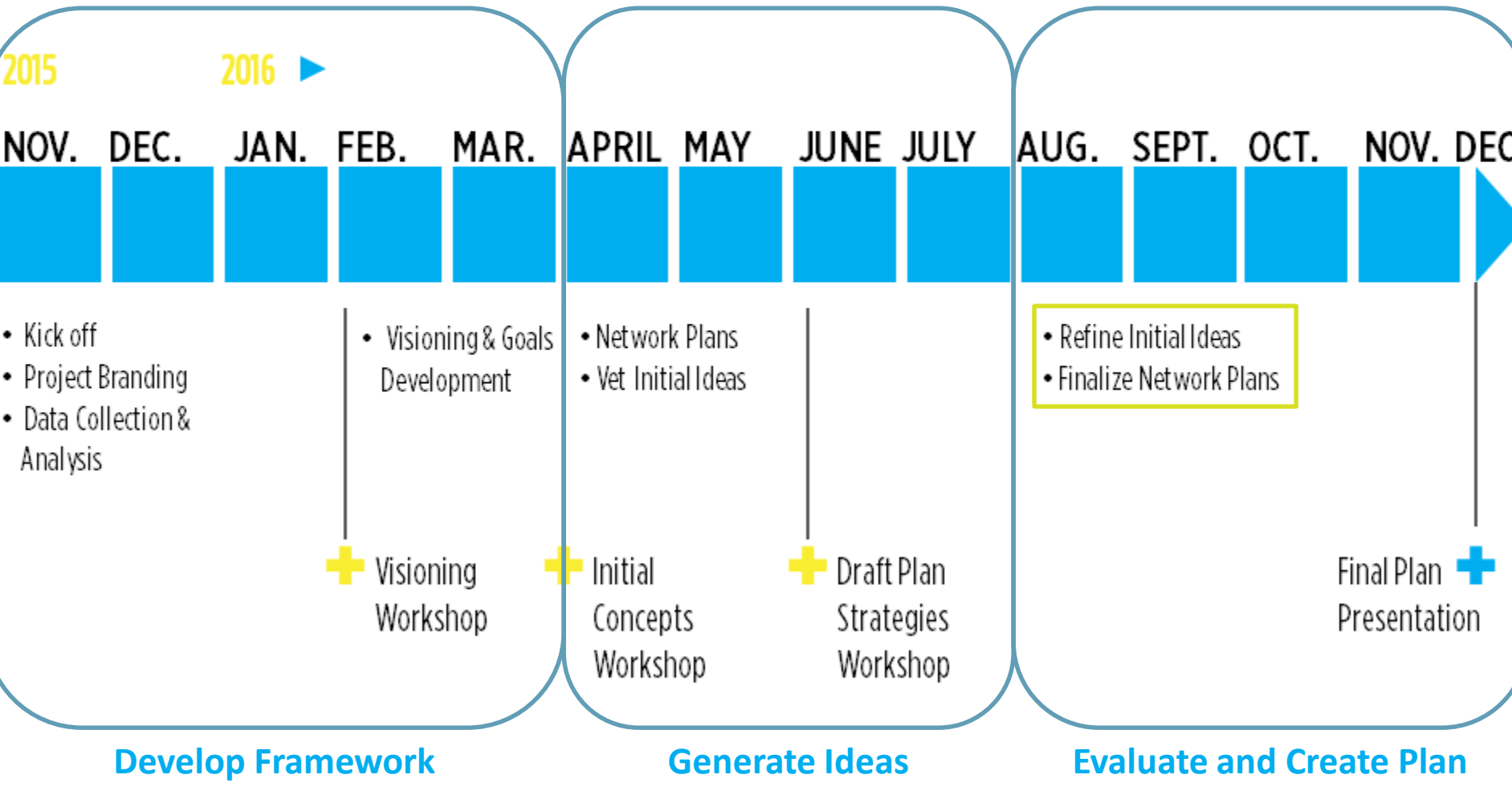


Newton-in-Motion Process Overview



www.newtonma.gov/transportationstrategy
transportationstrategy@newtonma.gov

NEWTON TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY PROJECT SCHEDULE



Project Outcomes

- » Develop a vision for transportation in Newton
- » Identify goals and metrics
- » Recommend early action projects, policies, network plans, and future projects
- » Tie it all together in Action and Implementation Plans

Project Outcomes

- » The difference on a street between a Monday morning traffic jam and a smooth Sunday afternoon ride, can be as little as 10% fewer cars.
- » Expanding roads would scar the well-loved character of the City's walkable neighborhoods and lively village centers
- » Newton-in-Motion will approach congestion from the perspective that through investment in transportation options, traffic congestion can be reduced.
- » During rush hour, every person walking, biking, riding transit, carpooling, or flexing their hours is actively reducing congestion

Community Input



The infographic features a central blue circle with white text. Surrounding it are seven smaller blue circles, each connected to the center by a solid line. The circles are arranged in a roughly circular pattern. In the background, there are two concentric dotted circles. The text in the circles is as follows:

**Newton-in-Motion
Visioning reached
hundreds of people
through:**

2.5 day Needham Street
Workshop, "open house"
style

Gallery of Transportation
Information showcase at
City Hall

Three presentations,
including the Housing
Strategy and MBTA Focus
40 project, televised on
NewTV

10 mobile/pop-up workshops,
including the Newton Senior
Center, Newton Free Library,
Albert Edgar Angier School, and
several village centers

Online workshop
exercises and dynamic
project website

Draft strategies
workshop

Complete
streets
demonstration
& feedback
booth

WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

Total Number of Attendees
Who Provided Their Age:

389

OVER 60 YEARS OLD



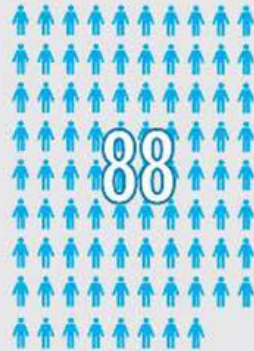
41-50 YEARS OLD



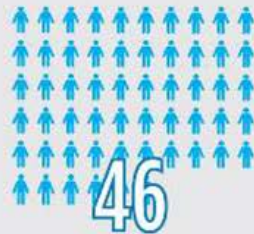
21-30 YEARS OLD



51-60 YEARS OLD



31-40 YEARS OLD

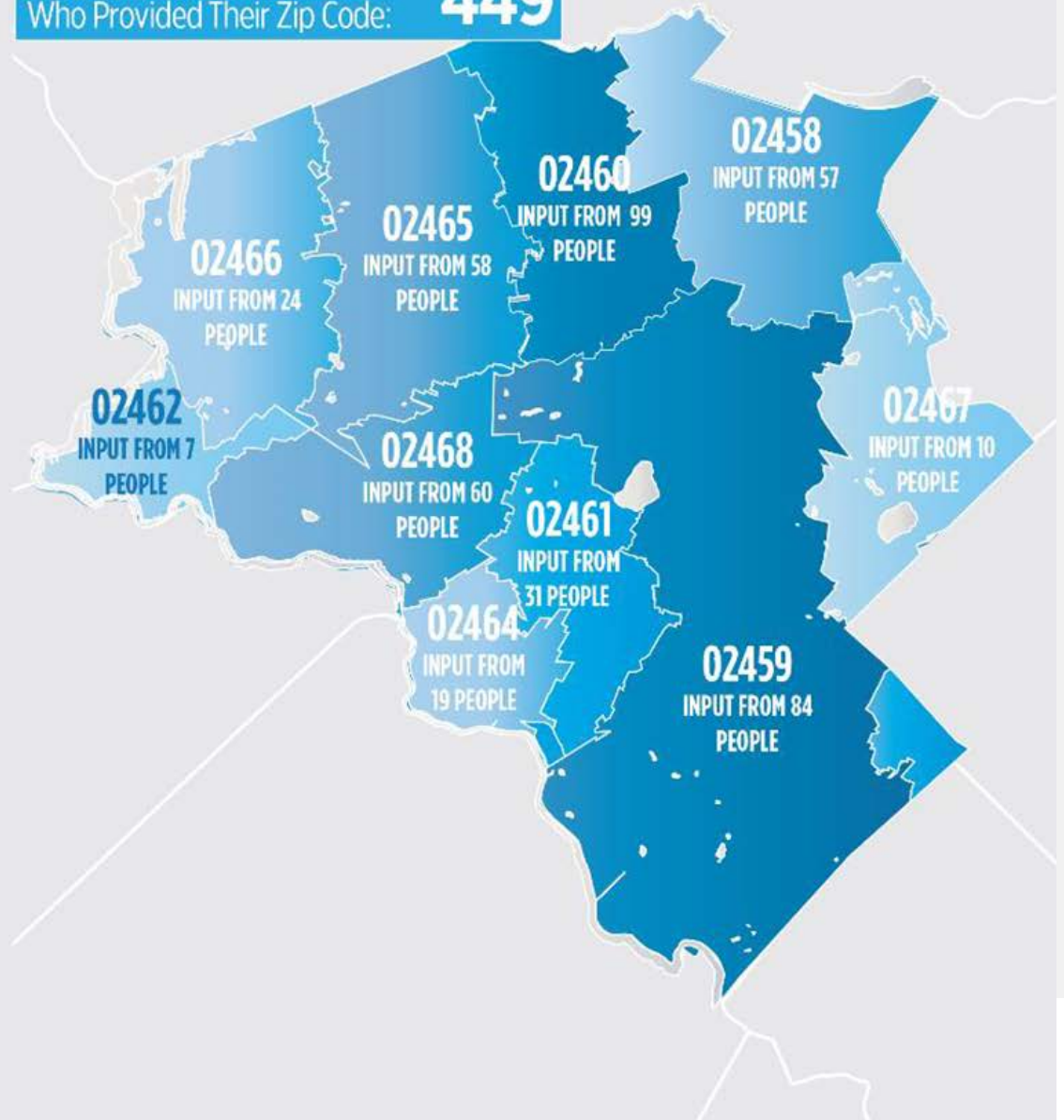


UNDER 20 YEARS OLD



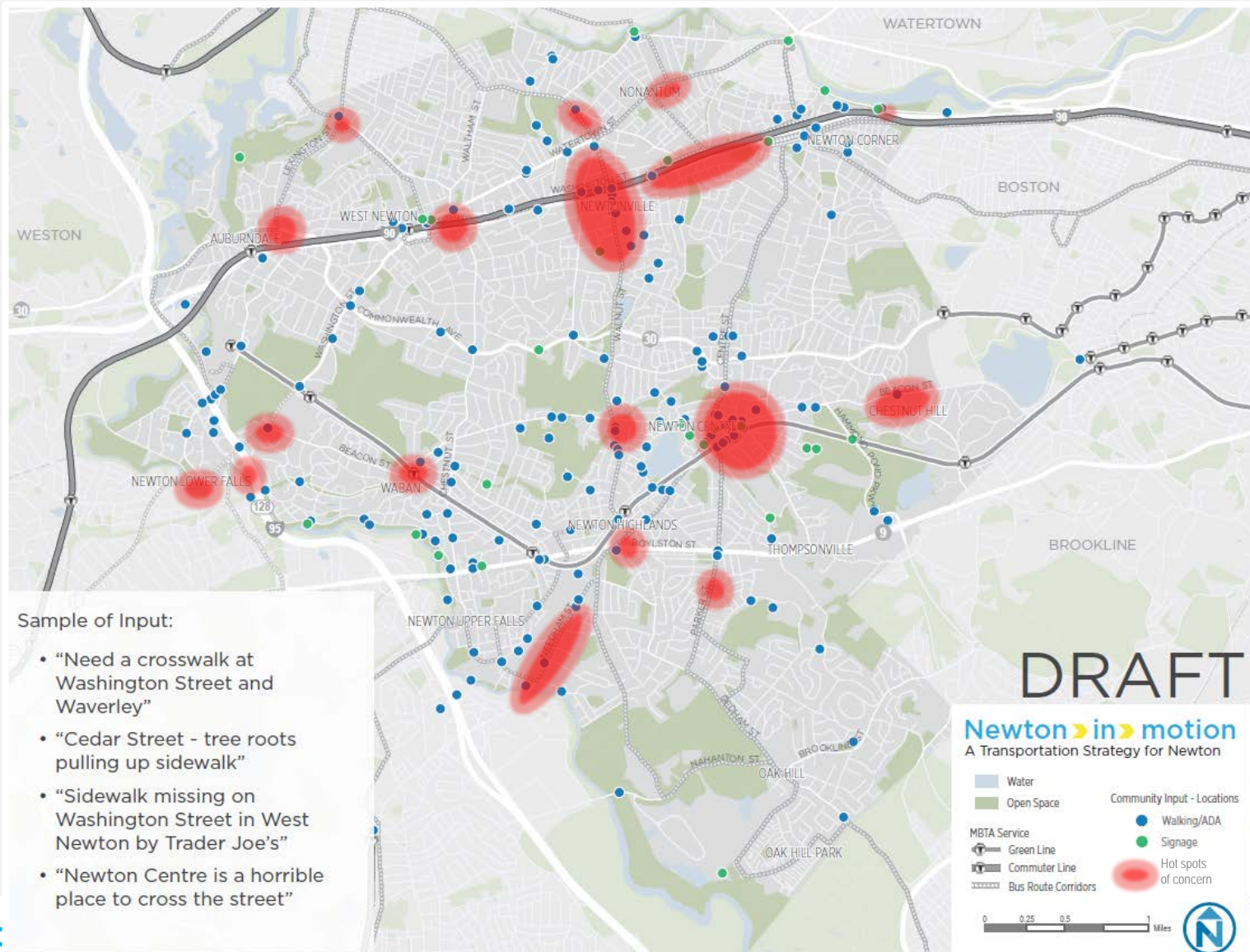
Total Number of Attendees
Who Provided Their Zip Code:

449

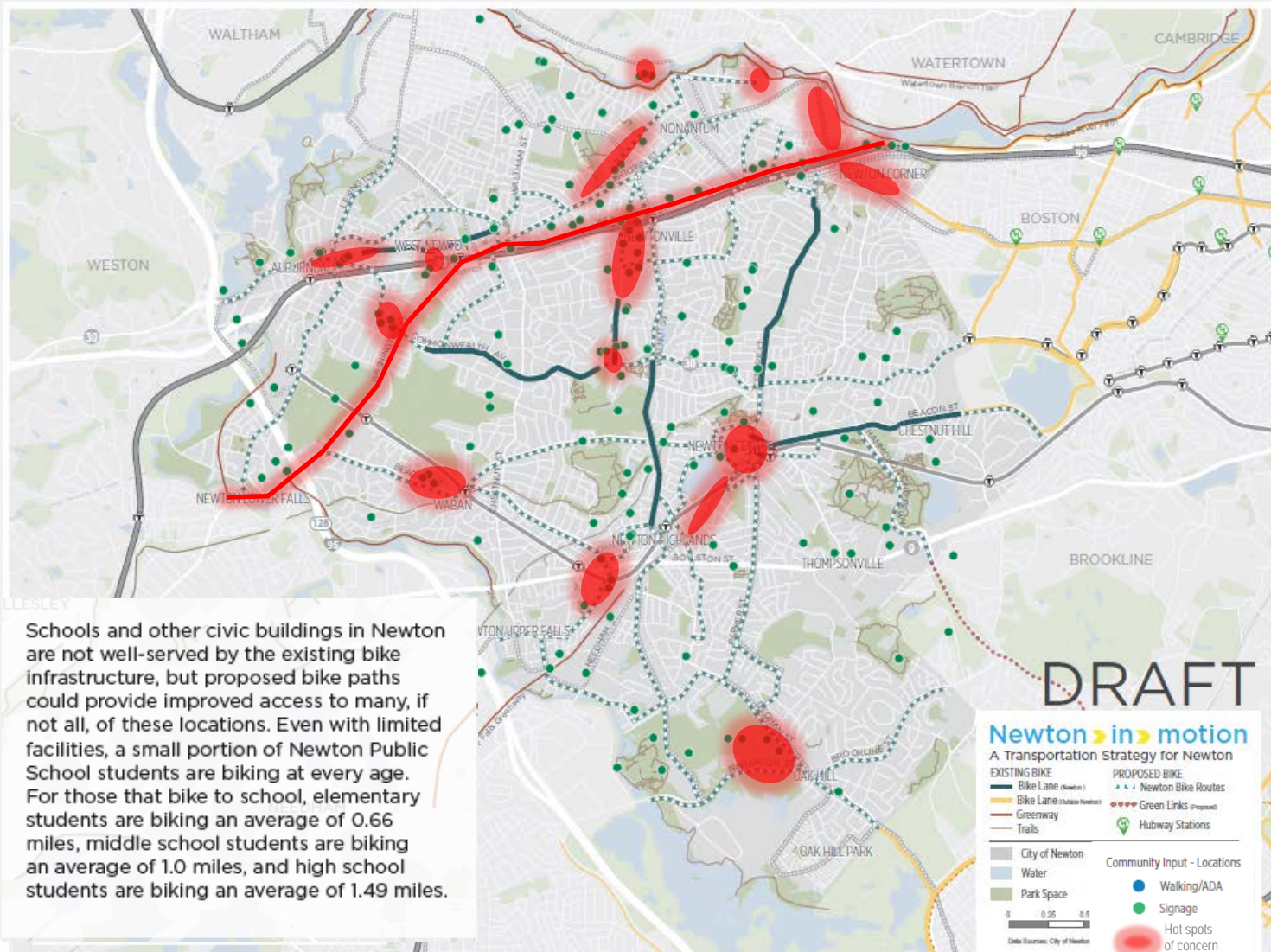




We heard: The need for a safer, more walkable Newton



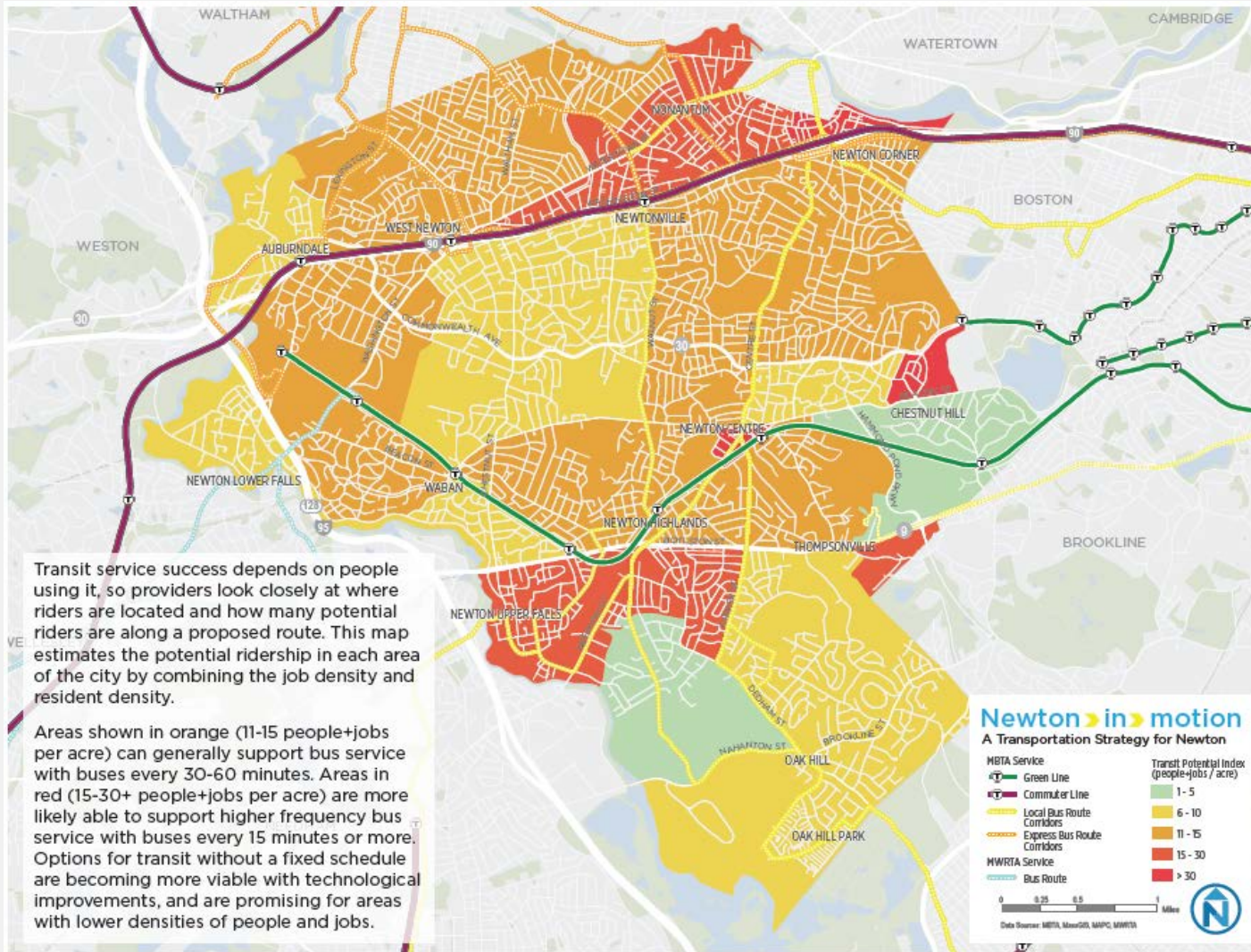
We heard: A desire for a connected bike network



Schools and other civic buildings in Newton are not well-served by the existing bike infrastructure, but proposed bike paths could provide improved access to many, if not all, of these locations. Even with limited facilities, a small portion of Newton Public School students are biking at every age. For those that bike to school, elementary students are biking an average of 0.66 miles, middle school students are biking an average of 1.0 miles, and high school students are biking an average of 1.49 miles.

We heard:

The need for more frequent, reliable & accessible transit



Source: MBTA, ACS 2010, 5-year estimates via Census Transportation Planning Products

We heard:

A desire to plan for the future, including supporting aging-in-place and planning for new technologies

Create places that are walkable & cater to all potential users

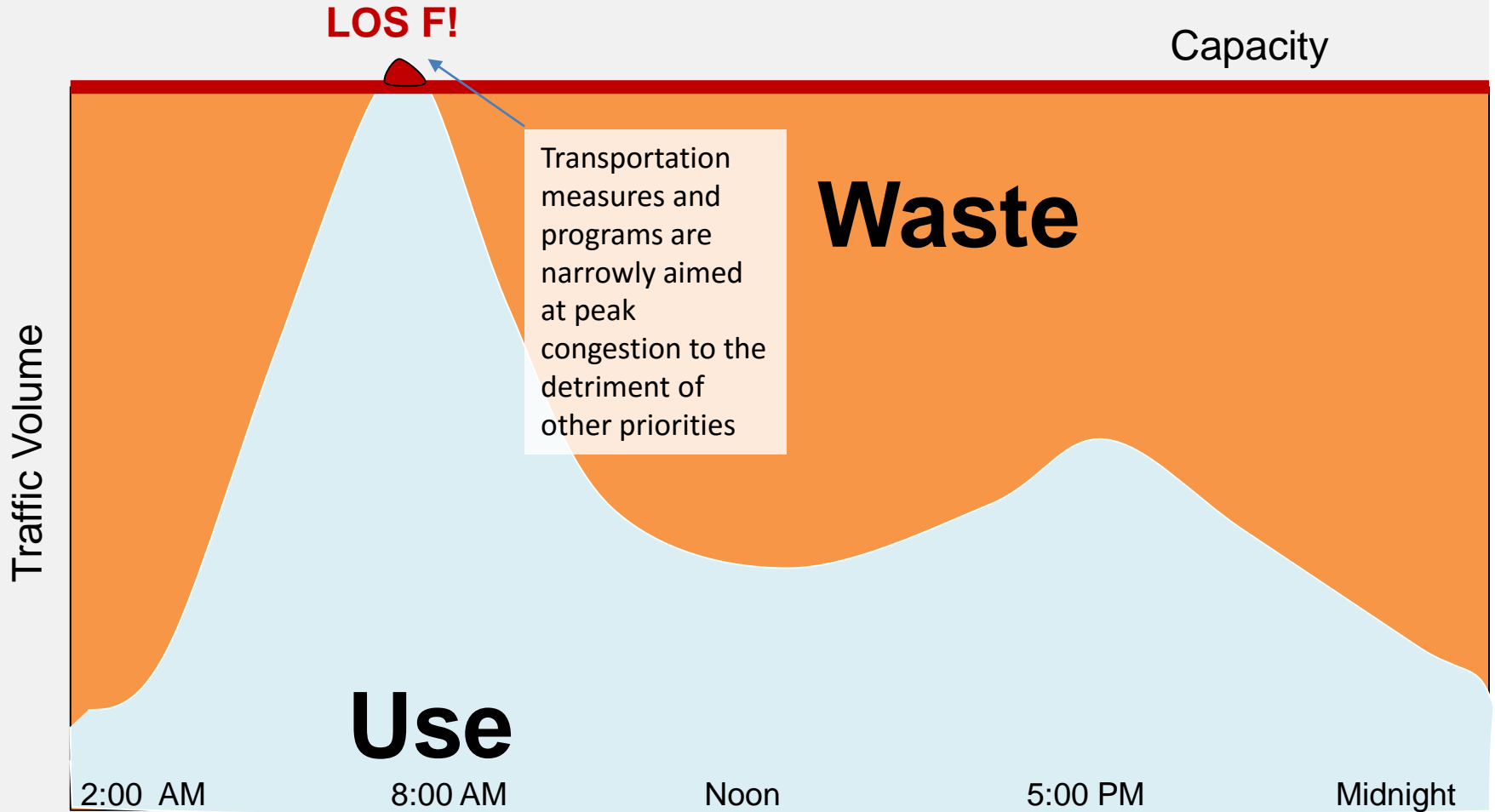


Fixed-Route Transit vs.
Door-to-door Demand Based
Services?



We heard:

The need for more streamlined decision-making, policies and accountability that supports City goals



We heard:

School access by school bus, public transit, walking and biking is a priority (plus smart school siting)

- » % that feel their child's school encourages or strongly encourages walking and biking to school
 - 64% Elementary school
 - 15% Middle School
 - 10% High School

2014 City of Newton Planning Department Safe Routes to School Survey



We heard: An appeal for ACTION!



We heard: An appeal for ACTION!



Goals

- Safety
- Smart Growth
- Consistency
- Real Options
- Balance
- Quality of Life
- Reducing Driving & Strengthening Alternatives



1. Safe
2. Smart
3. Accessible
4. Livable
5. Sustainable

Draft Transportation Action Plan

Vision Elements

Goals

Metrics

1. Safe



Base policies, investments, and enforcement on safety first



Crashes

2. Smart



Use adaptive approaches to transportation planning and investment & adopt promising technologies



Travel Time

3. Accessible



Provide a variety of reliable and easy to use options for getting to destinations



Trips

4. Livable



Make the experience of traveling in and visiting Newton pleasant and enjoyable



Neighborhood Vitality

5. Sustainable



Reduce the carbon footprint of travel in Newton



Vehicle Ownership

Draft Transportation Action Plan

Action Areas

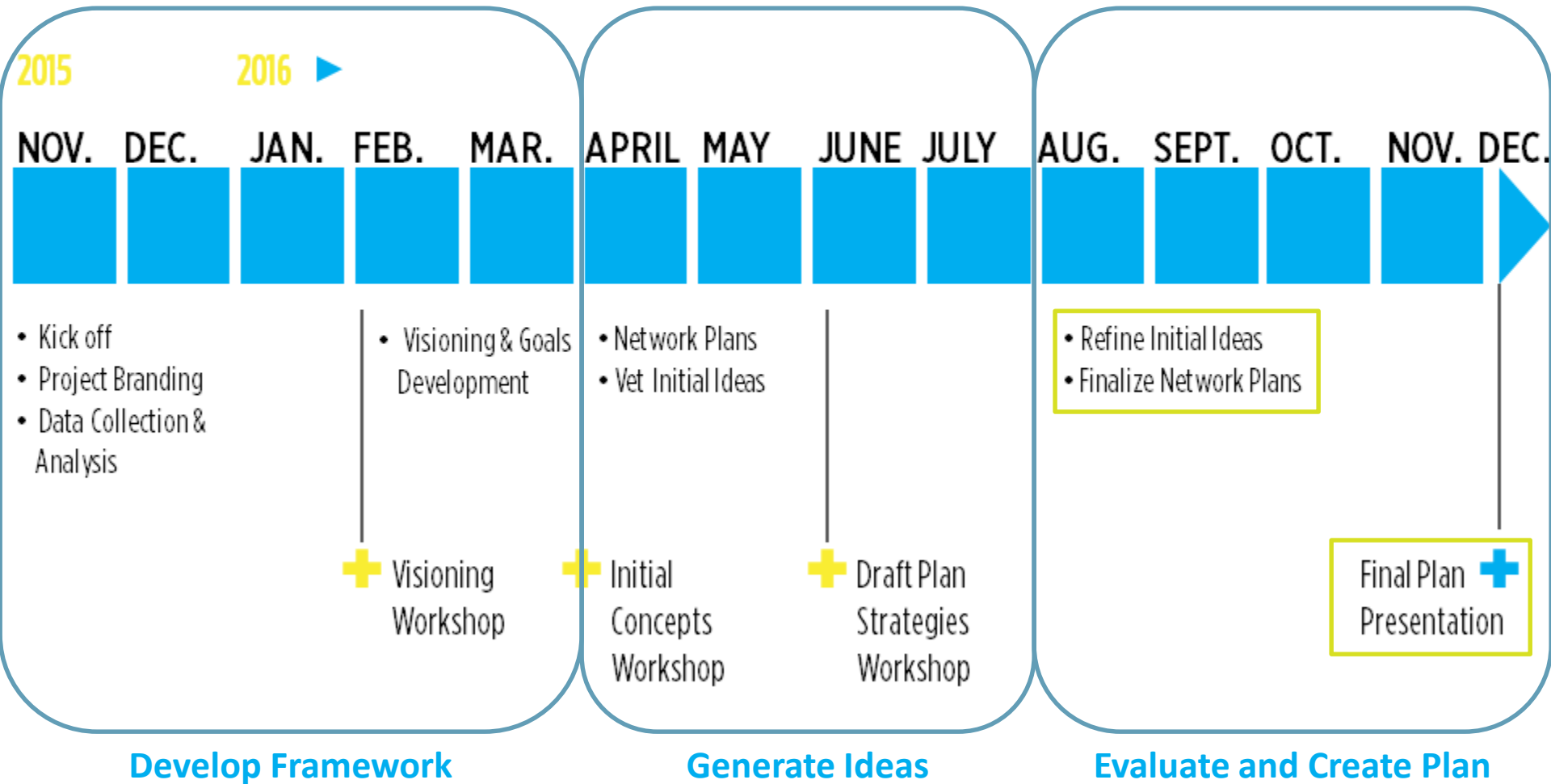
- Complete Streets / Vision Zero
- Transit and Shared Mobility
- Active Transportation
- Parking Management
- Congestion Reduction

Process

- Establish data driven processes
- Explore emerging solutions
- Secure sufficient resources
- Provide excellent customer service

What's Next?

NEWTON TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY PROJECT SCHEDULE



Discussion



SETTI D. WARREN
MAYOR

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Office of the Mayor

#191-16

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September 9, 2016

Honorable City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

RECEIVED
NEWTON CITY OFFICE
2016 SEP -9 PM 12: 56
DAVID A. OLSON, CHM
NEWTON, MA 02459

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I write to request that your Honorable Council amend *Docket Item # 191-16 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) to the Public Buildings Department for the purpose of funding the relocation of modular classrooms from the Zervas Elementary School to Newton South High School and Brown Middle School* by replacing the sum of \$500,000 with the sum of \$600,000 and by replacing the source of funds from the following accounts:

Executive Office Full-time Salaries \$40,000
Treasury Debt Service (010772-582A48) \$403,784
Treasury Debt Service (010772-582A49) \$21,216
Financial Info Systems Full-time Salaries \$35,000

With the following source of funds:

\$600,000 from June 30, 2016 Certified Free Cash.

Timing delays and the covered walkway have caused the projected cost increase. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Very truly yours,

Setti D. Warren
Mayor