

Albemarle Road Traffic Calming

April 19, 2023 Public Facilities Committee Meeting



neighborwaysdesign

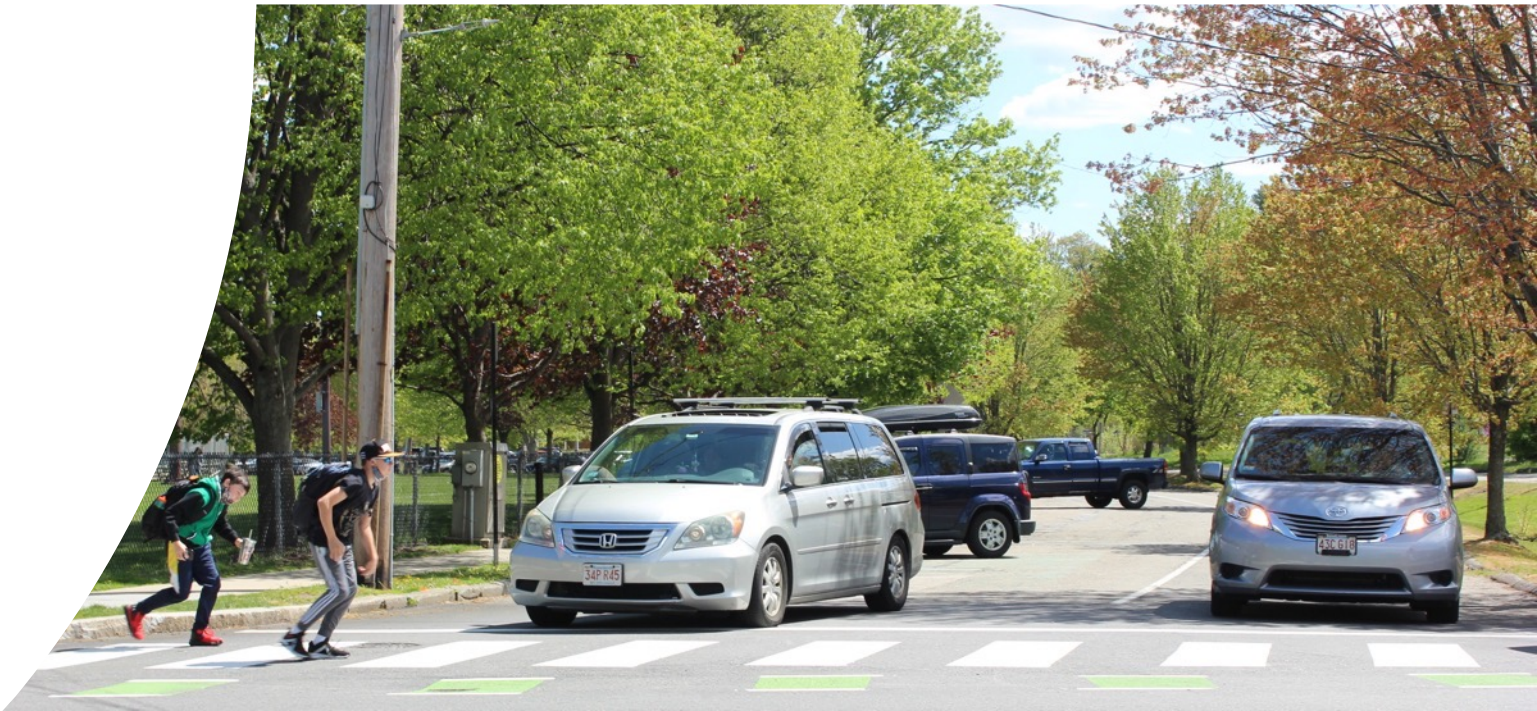


HOWARD STEIN HUDSON

Agenda

- Project Overview
- Safety Improvement Features
- Review Design
- Feedback to Date
- Next Steps

ROAD
CLOSED



Newton in Motion

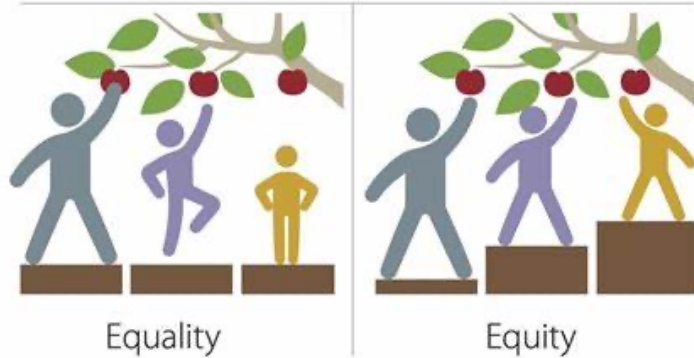
VISION

SAFE | SMART | ACCESSIBLE | LIVABLE | SUSTAINABLE



City of Newton Policies

- Complete Streets
- Safety #1 Priority
- Safe Routes to School (SRTS)
- Equity
- Public Health
- Climate Action Plan



Carbon-neutral by 2050

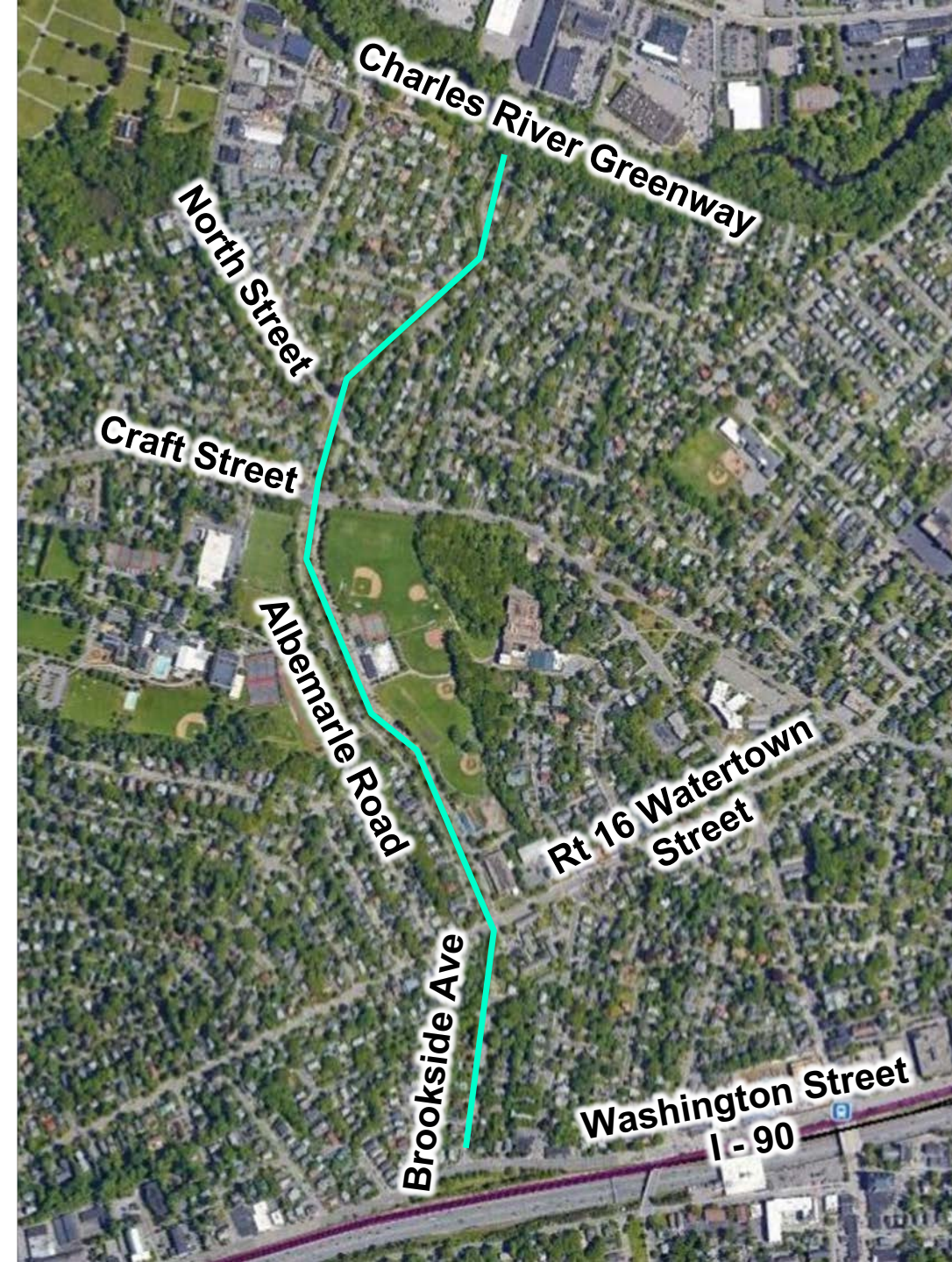


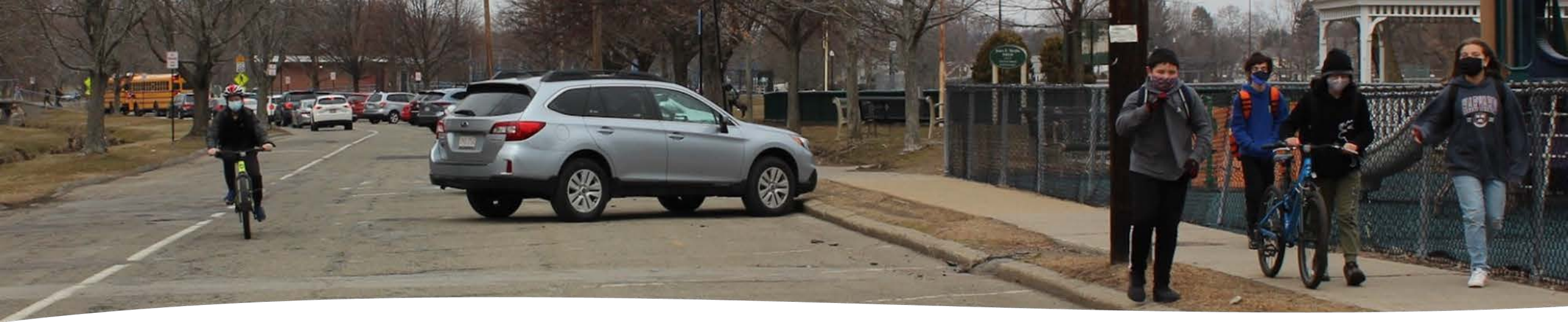
Slower Speeds Save Lives



Project Overview

- Limits
 - Brookside Ave / Albemarle Rd from Washington St to Charles River
- Scope
 - Short-term Pilot Project
 - No Construction / Lower Cost
 - \$\$ temporary measures – paint and posts
 - \$\$\$\$ not moving curb lines / no signal work





Project Goals



Increase
safety and
access



Lower traffic
speeds



Reduce
conflicts



Add bike
lanes

Project History

Conceptual
Design
2021-2022

Public
Meeting
March 2022

MassDOT
Shared
Streets Grant
Council
Accepted
June 2022

Engineering/
Design/Public
Process
Winter-Spring
2023

Installation
Summer
2023

2023 Proposed Safety Features

Temporary Speed Cushions

Flexposts

Head-out Angle Parking

Sightline Improvements

Painted Buffered Bike Lanes





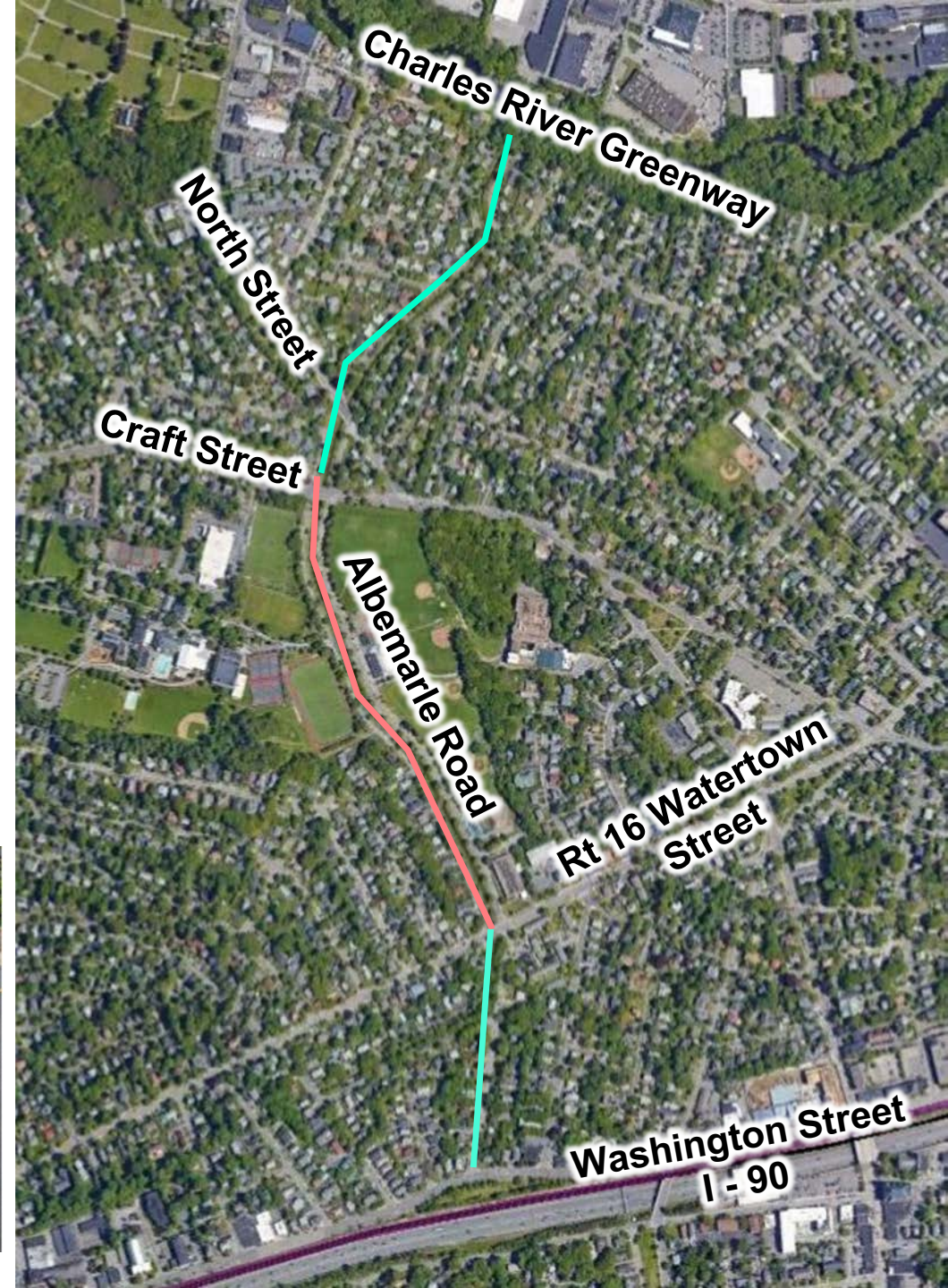
Temporary Rubber Speed Cushions



- Like speed humps
- Designed to 20 mph
- Allows emergency vehicles to pass directly over without delay
- Slots too wide for passenger vehicles
- **Temporary Pilot** to be removed in winter

Temporary Rubber Speed Cushions

- Proposed on Albemarle Southbound and Northbound between Watertown St and Crafts St
- Spacing ~200 ft to 500 ft
- 5-6 cushions per side, in consultation with Newton Fire
- Recent experience on Grant Avenue



Approximate Speed Cushion Locations



Flexposts

- Provides vertical separation:
 - At crossings and intersections
 - In bicycle lanes
- Used at corners to reduce turning radii while also allowing emergency access
- Remove for Winter

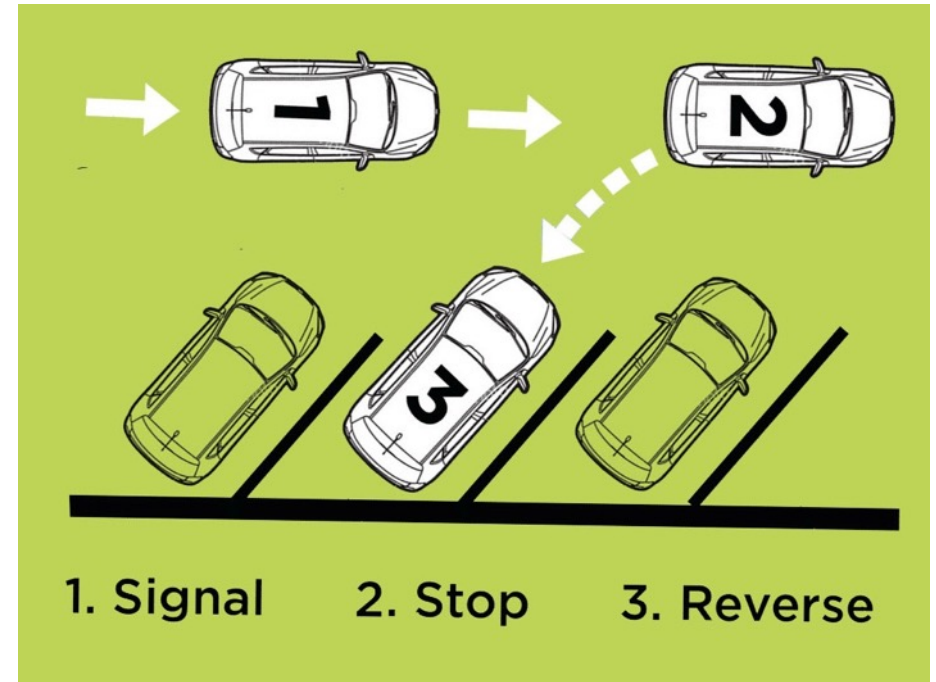


*Flexpost and sight line improvement example,
Mass Ave Porter Square Safety Improvement Project, Cambridge, MA*

Head-Out Angle Parking

- Like head in angle parking
- Backing up when entering vs exiting
- First step of parallel parking

AAA recommends that
“drivers reverse into parking
spaces whenever possible.”



Head Out Safety Benefits

1. Improved visibility for everyone
2. Back into static space vs moving traffic
3. Vehicle doors shield passengers from traffic and direct them onto the sidewalk
4. Trunk loading on sidewalk vs in travel lane



Source: T. Boulanger, Transportation Services, City of Vancouver, WA.

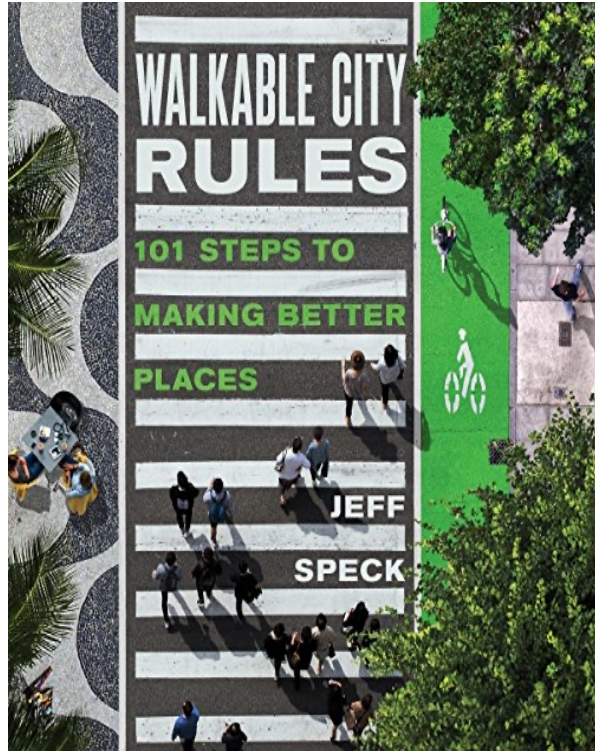


Source: T. Boulanger, Transportation Services, City of Vancouver, WA.



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Head Out Parking in Tucson, AZ



Before – Head-in

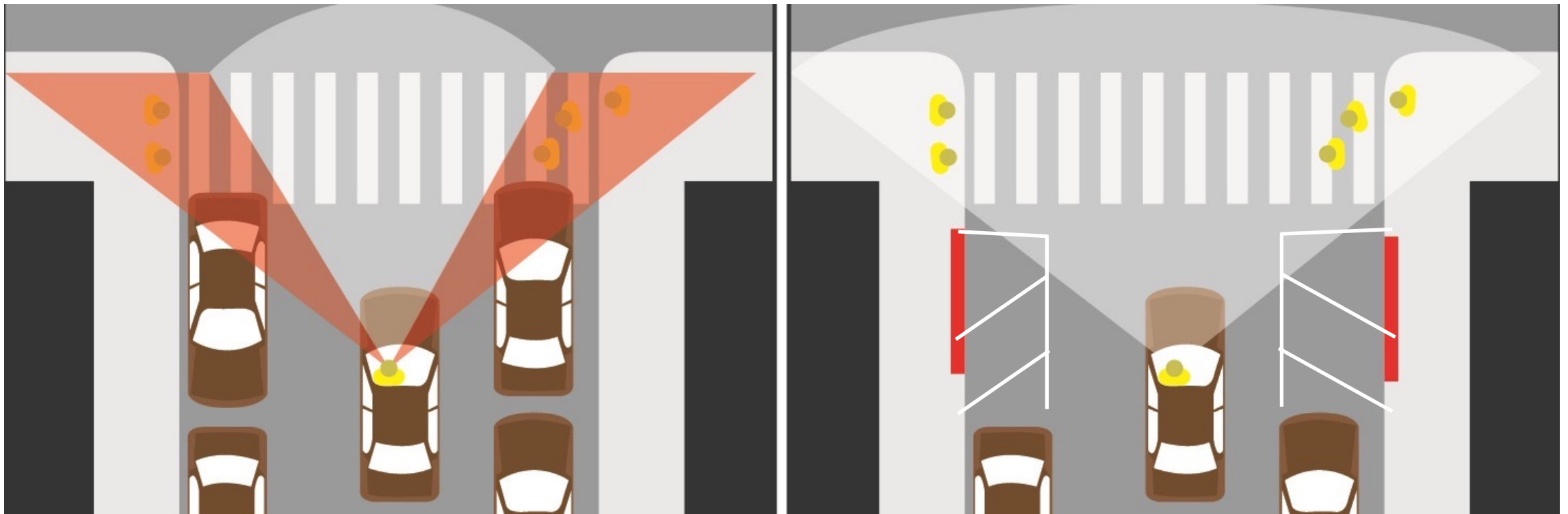
Roughly one car/bicycle crash week

After – Head-out

No crashes in 4 years

Improving Sightlines at Crossings

- Restrict parking on approach to crossings to improve visibility and safety
- Helps to enforce City Laws - no parking within 20' of intersection / on crosswalks



Buffered Bike Lanes

- Separated space for people biking
- Provides visual / painted buffer
- Improves clarity of the safest place to ride

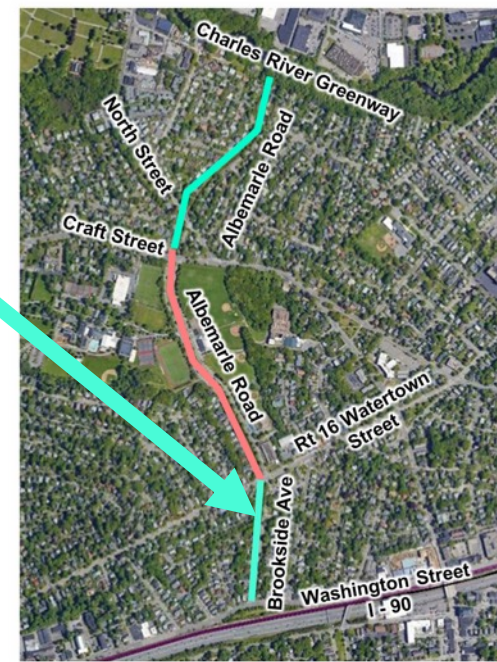


*Left side buffered bike lanes,
Commonwealth Avenue Boston MA*



*Buffered Bike Lane,
Centre St @ Beacon St Newton*

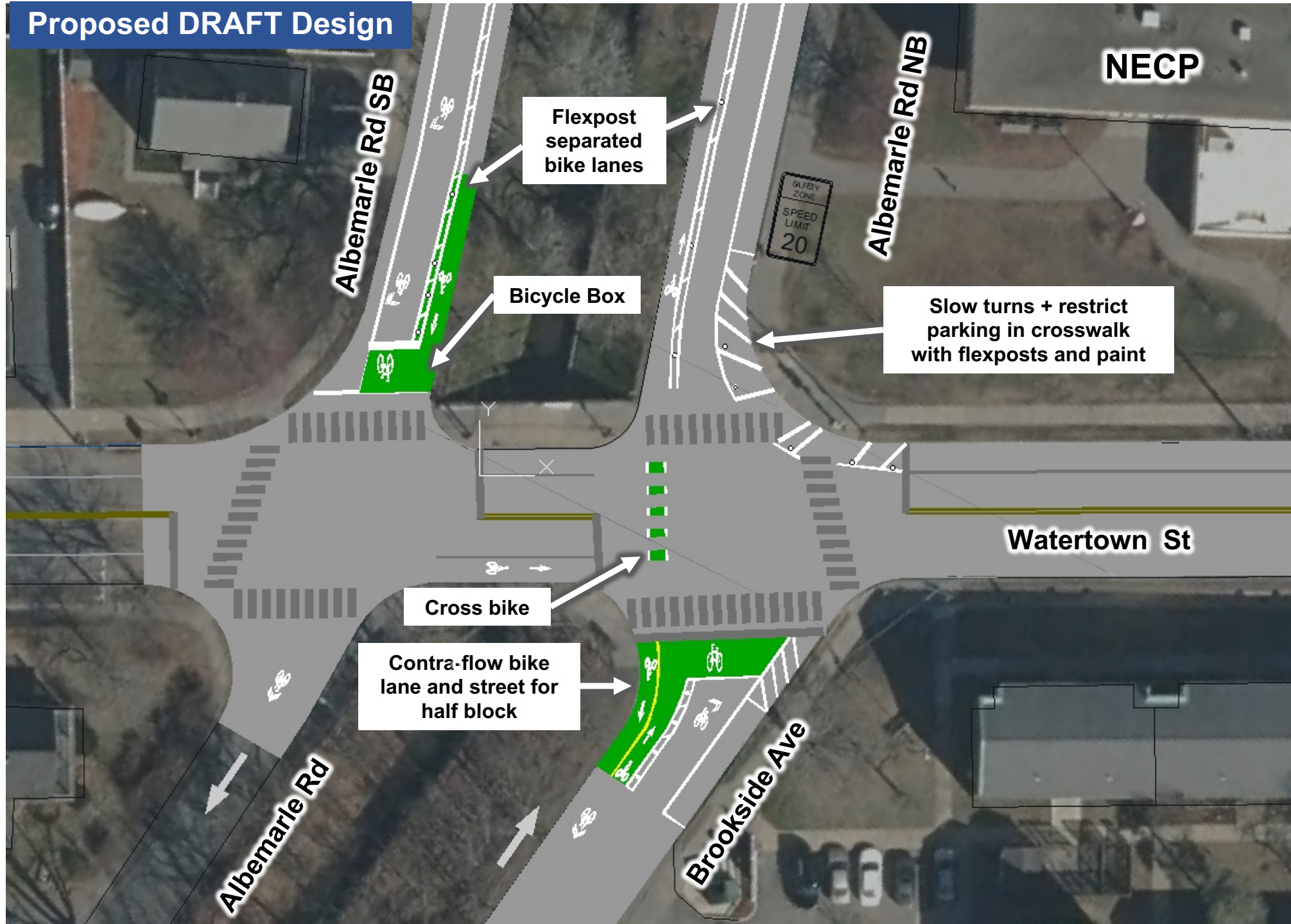
Brookside Ave



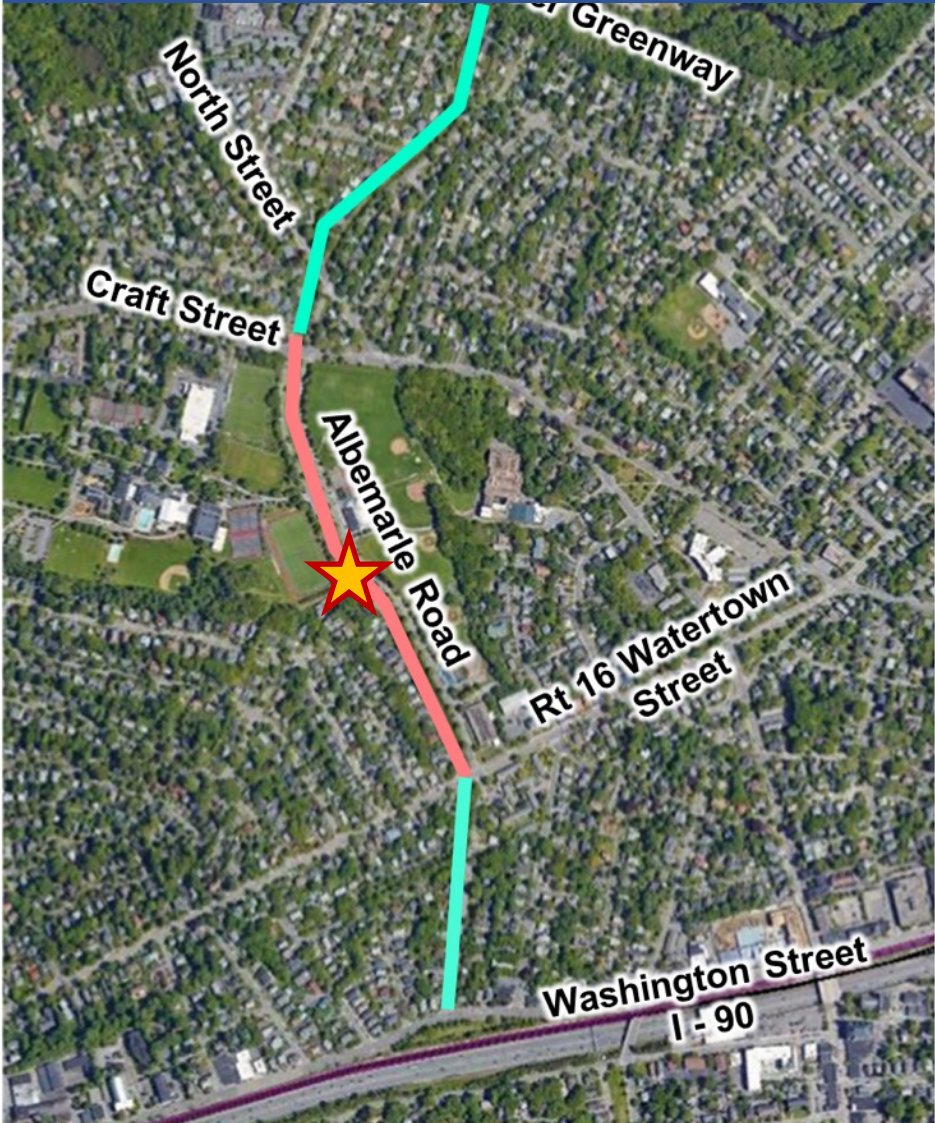
- Neighborhood Greenway
- Sight line improvements @ Washington St
- Slow turns with flexposts and paint at Albemarle Rd
- Contraflow bike lane for one block; two way street to Washington



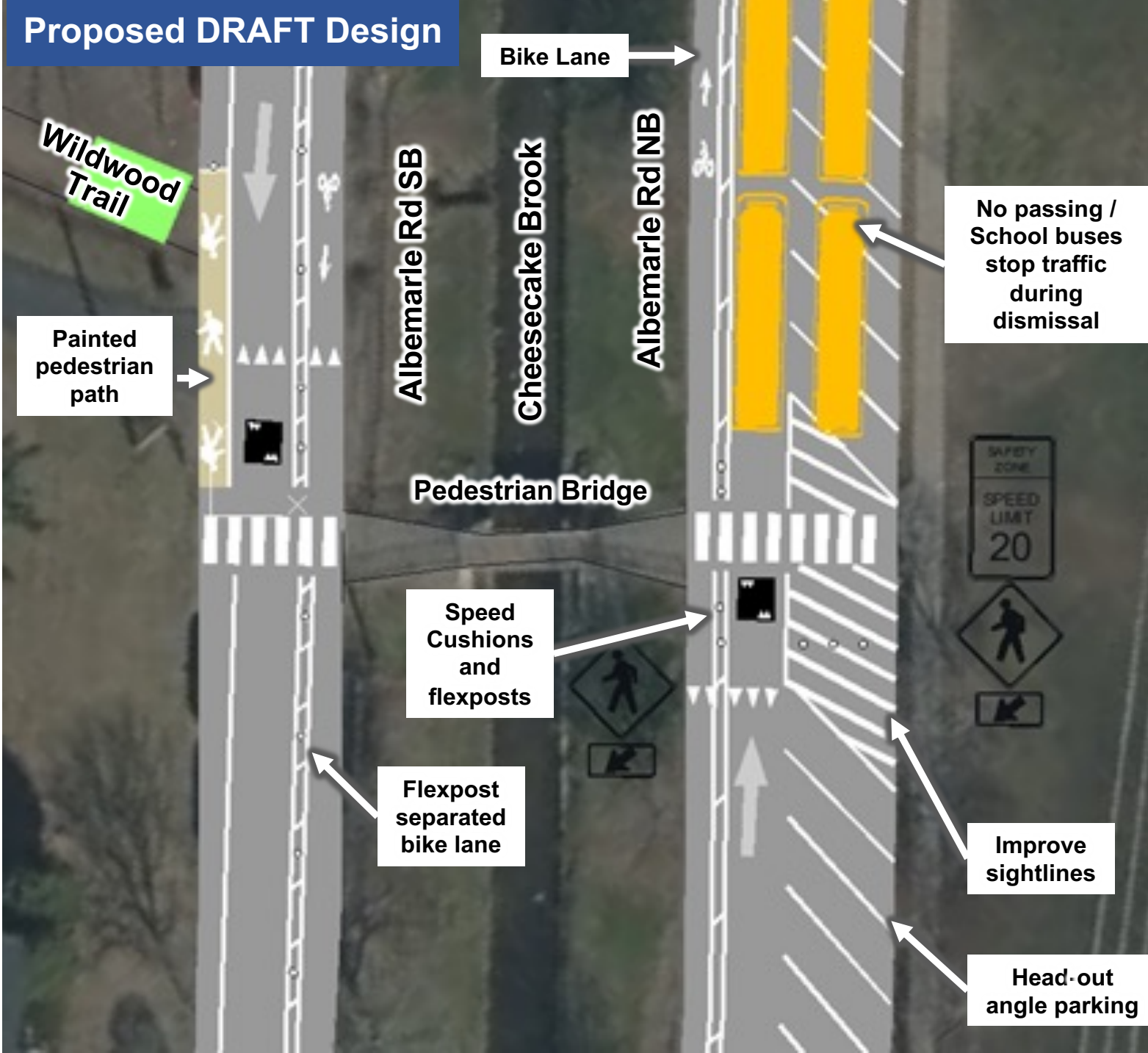
Albemarle @ Watertown St



Albemarle Rd between Watertown St and Craft St

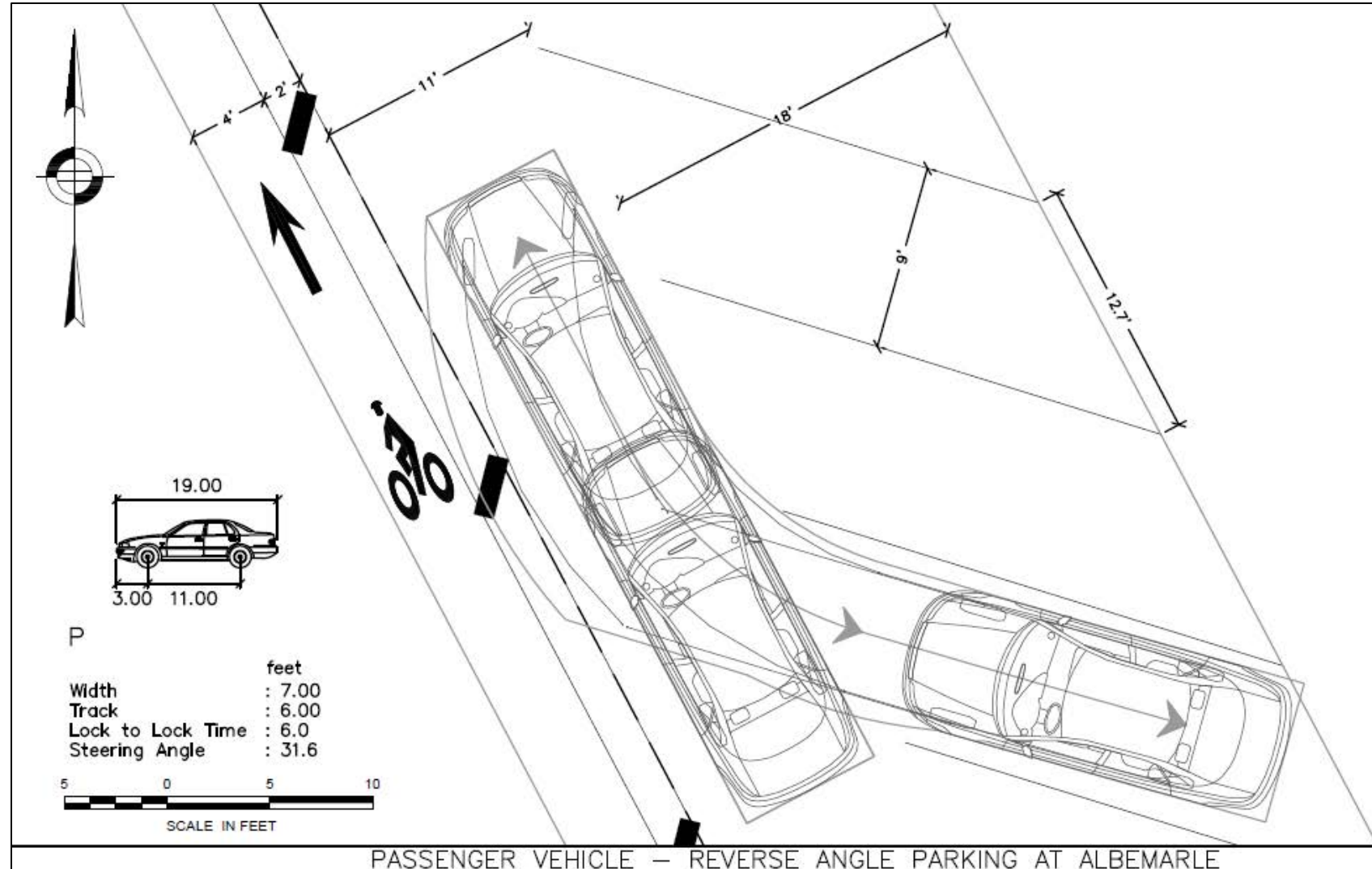


Proposed DRAFT Design



Autoturn Parking Analysis

- **Albemarle NB**
bike lane
- NB flexposts at
priority
locations only



Installation Considerations

- **Albemarle SB Resurfacing Timeline**
- Poor Pavement Quality
- Paint - more suitable and cost effective than thermoplastic
- Considerations for future longer term/higher cost improvements (e.g., constructed sidewalks)



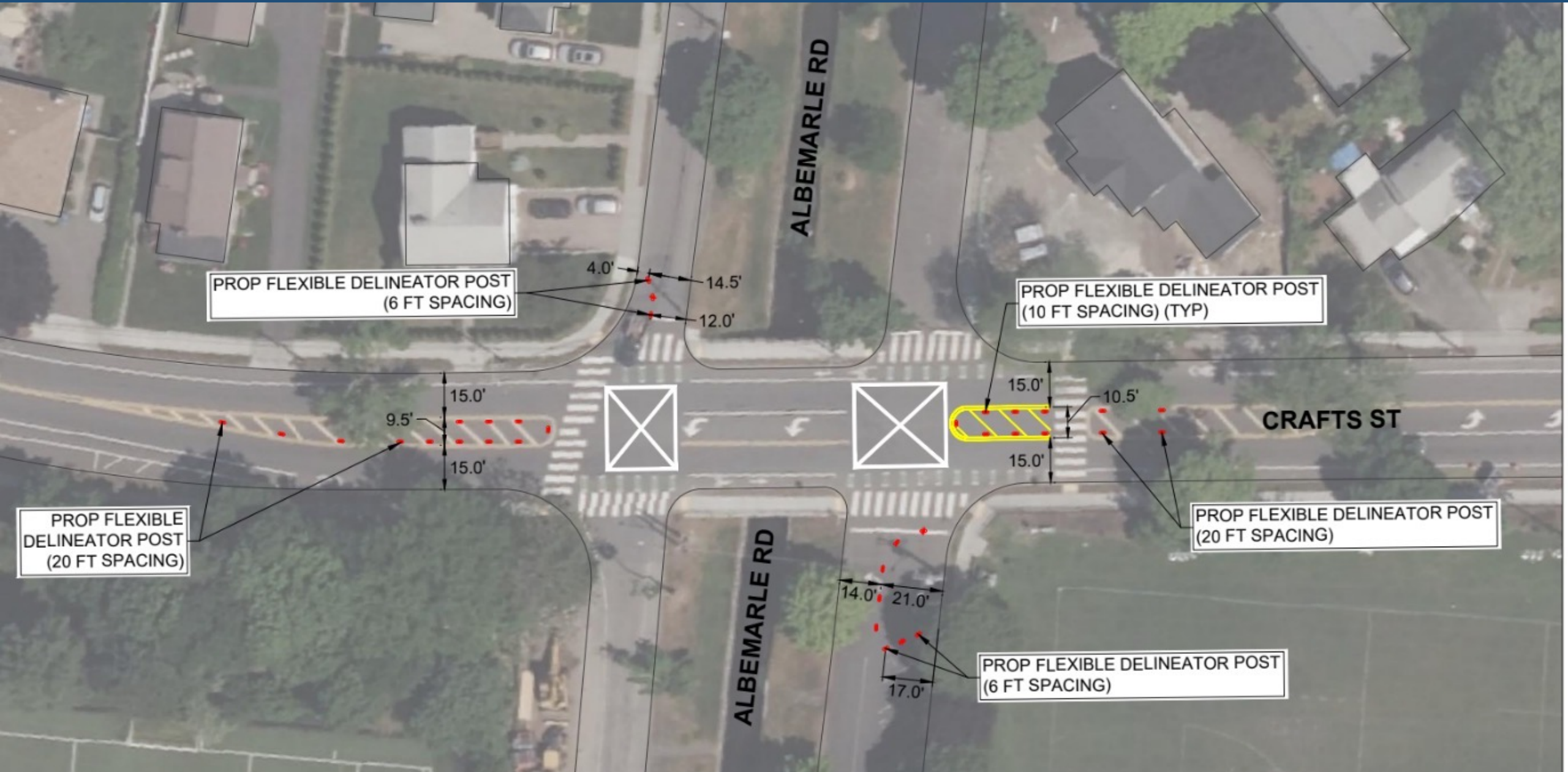
Albemarle / Crafts / North Safety Improvements



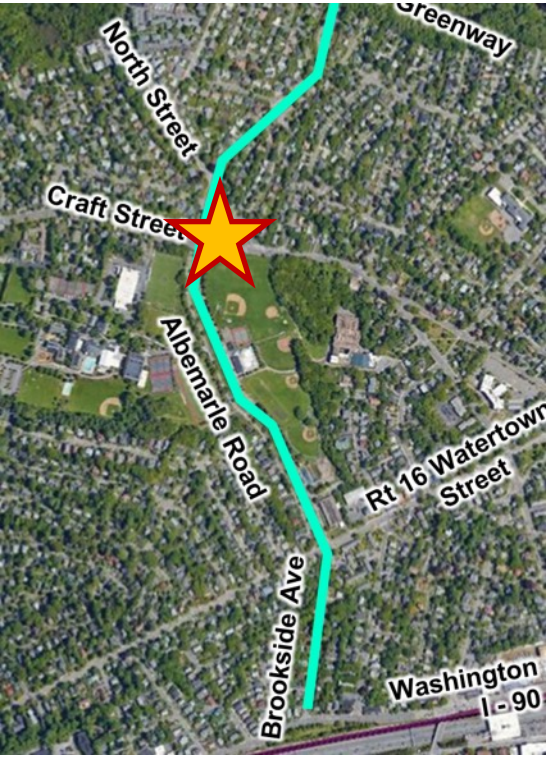
- Safe routes to school (SRTS) signalization project for Federal FY 2025
- Recent Friends of Albemarle Letter of Support
- Engineering to install short-term safety improvements this Spring



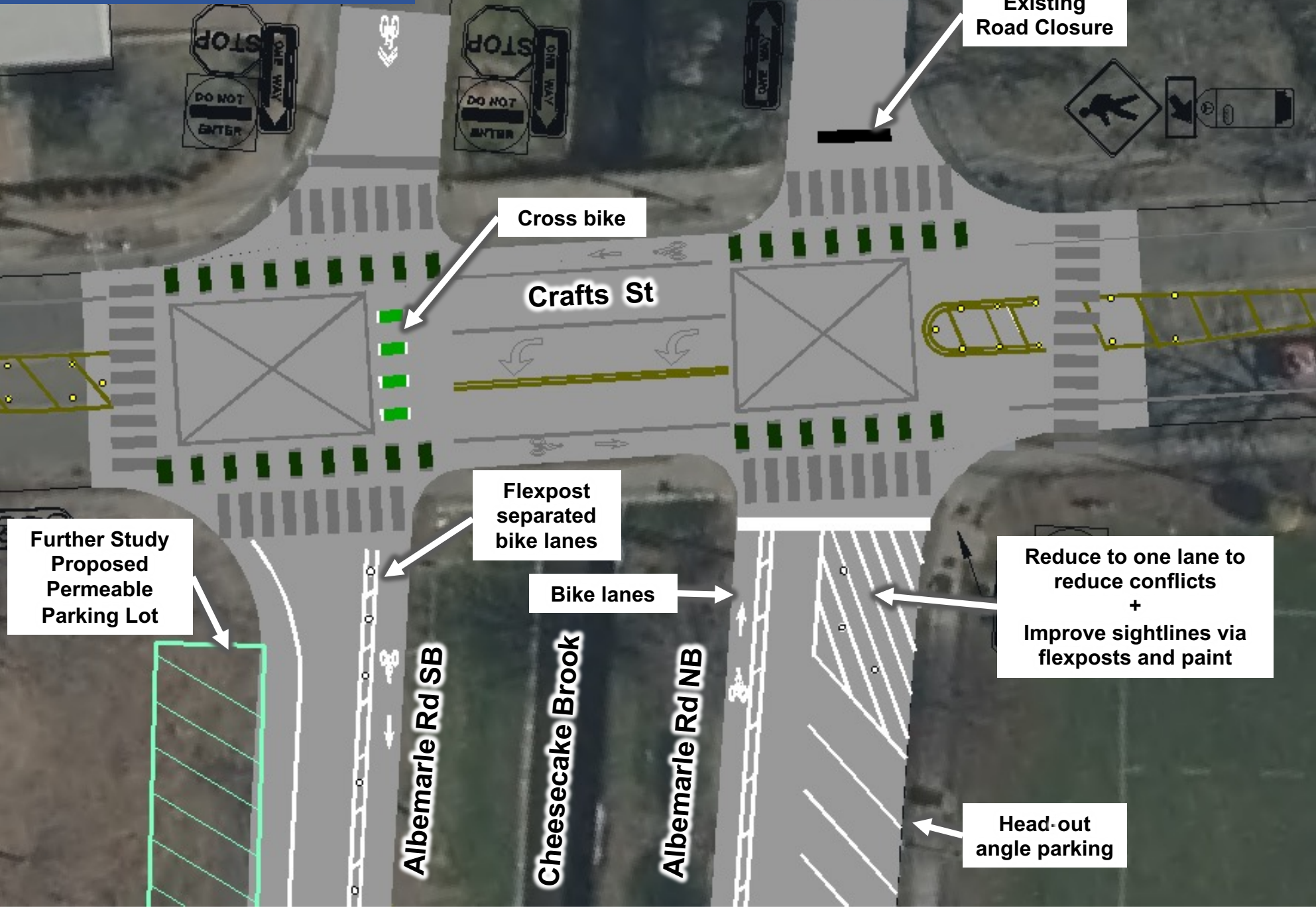
Spring 2023 Intersection Safety Improvements: Albemarle at Crafts



Albemarle @ Crafts St



Proposed DRAFT Design



Albemarle Rd North of North Street

Proposed Design



Proposed Pilot Parking Overview





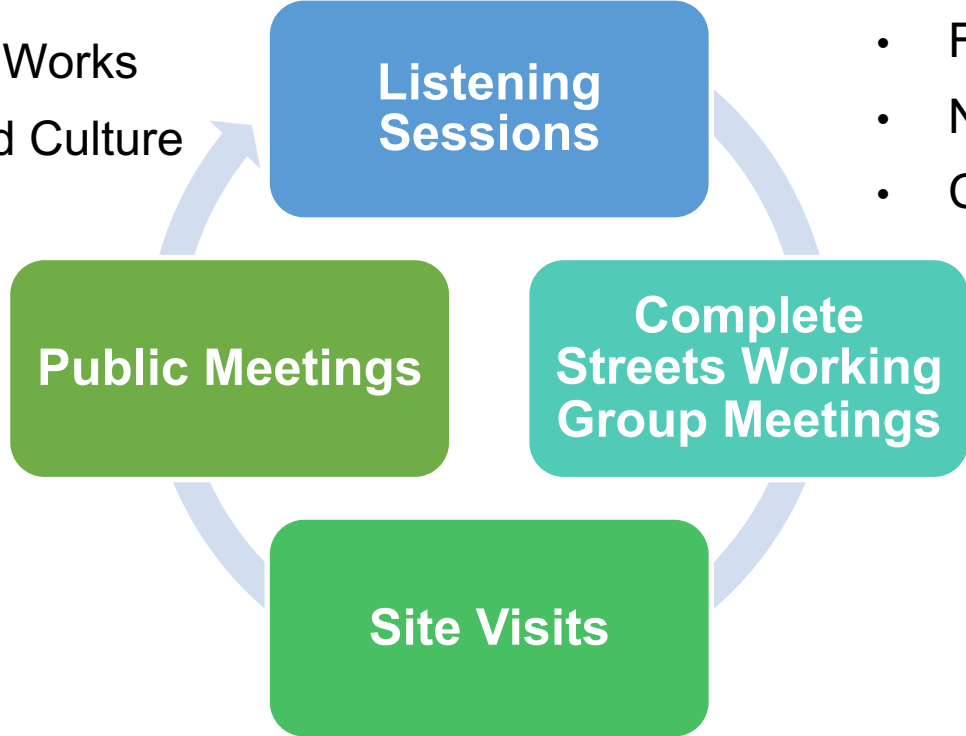
Parking Impacts

- Change in angle + sightline improvements ~ - 23
- Potential future area



Engagement Process

- Newton City Councilors
- City Departments
 - Department of Public Works
 - Parks, Recreation and Culture
 - Planning
 - Public Buildings
 - ADA Coordinator
- Newton Public Schools
- NECP



- Complete Streets Working Group
- Friends of Albemarle
- Fessenden
- Newton Chinese School
- Charles River Watershed Association
- Newton Athletic Organizations
- Transportation Advisory Group
- Safe Routes to School
- Bike Newton
- Boys and Girls Club

Comment Themes

1. High volumes of vulnerable users
2. Speeds
3. Accessibility
4. Pedestrian safety
5. Bicycle safety
6. Bus operations
7. Intersection safety
8. Parking
9. Environmental preservation
10. Placemaking and art



High Volumes Of Vulnerable Users

- Used year round day and night weekends and weekdays
- High population of children
- Popular walking and biking route – regional trail access
- Serving as Newton's Athletic complex - more than a park
- 4th of July





Speeds

- Support traffic calming and speed cushions
- Speeding on side streets / cut-thru neighborhood traffic
- Requests for more enforcement



Pedestrian Safety

- People walk in the road
- Need sidewalks on southbound side of Albemarle
- SRTS survey: parents did not want their kids to walk or bike to school because of safety concerns
- People bike on sidewalks
- Flexposts improving safety and visibility at crosswalk
- Improve sight lines at crosswalk approaches
- Restrict people from parking in crosswalks / intersections
- Consider rapid flash beacon at Gath Pool crosswalk
- Need signal and crosswalk improvements at Albemarle / Crafts / North Streets
- Need wayfinding signs



Accessibility

- ADA compliance of bridges
- Increase number of bridges across Albemarle
- Maintain / increase existing accessible parking
- Relocate accessible crossing and bridge to Pool entrance

Bicycle Safety

- Desire for safe and accessible bicycle facilities
- Requests for protected bicycle lanes
- People biking on sidewalks and in road
- Safety concerns and conflicts with people backing out of head-in parking spaces
- Requests for head-out angle parking to improve safety and sightlines
- Need more bike parking
- Need wayfinding signs



Bus Operations

- F.A Day, Fessenden, and athletic programs buses on Albemarle
- Kids weave between buses
- Improve sight lines at crosswalk
- Formalize bus pick-up / drop-off



Parking

- Conflicts / high parking turnover
- Not enough parking
- Shoulder erosion from parking
- Need pickup / drop off
- Need parking map and wayfinding
- Need education and practice for head out angle parking



Intersection Safety

Crafts @ Albemarle

- High crash location
- Northbound traffic forms multiple lanes in peak – creates multiple conflict points
- Concerns about reducing Albemarle NB to one lane and increasing traffic
- Maintain road closure – improving safety, reducing conflicts, more people walking/biking



North @ Albemarle

- Requests for:
 - Signs for two-way traffic
 - Double yellow center line
 - Shared lane markings
- Resident observed crashes with right turning vehicles from Albemarle to North

Intersection Safety



Environmental Preservation

- Erosion of banks from parking on shoulders
- Educational opportunity – from “ditch” to **beloved brook**
- Community concerns to address flooding and runoff



Placemaking and Art

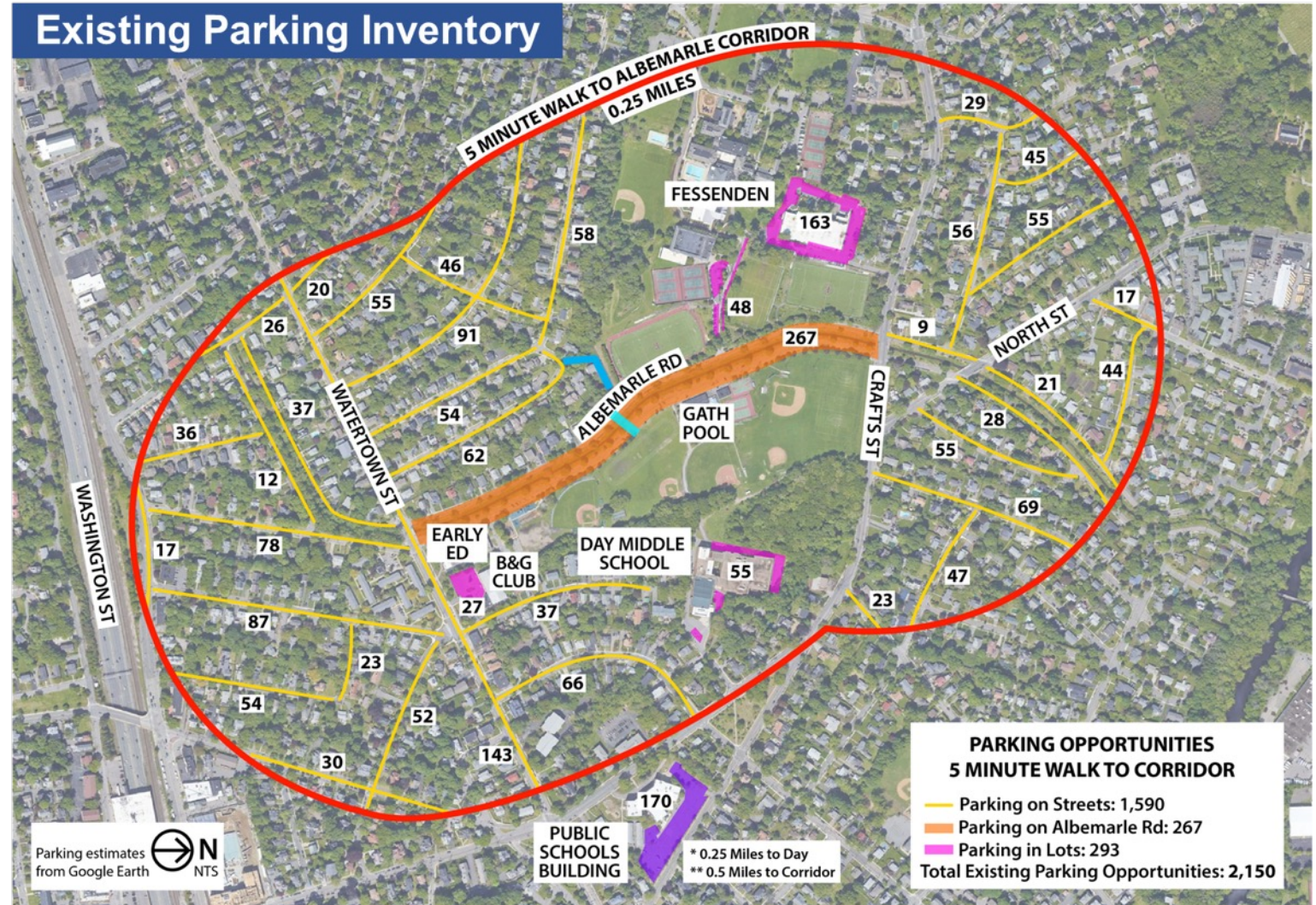
Requests for:

- Water fountain
- Rain gardens / landscaping
- Mural at Gath Pool
- Asphalt murals
- Educational kiosks / signs



Upcoming Community Engagement

- Events to promote and practice head-out angle parking
- Multimedia campaign
- Area-wide parking strategy and map
- Work with schools, athletics, and neighbors to notify about changes and installation schedule



Ongoing Coordination

- Pool Reconstruction
- Bridge Replacement And Accessibility Upgrade
- Field Upgrades
- SRTS Craft / North / Albemarle Intersection Signalization
- Washington Street Safety Improvement Pilot



Next Steps

Comments and Feedback
Email: jostroff@newtonma.gov



Finalize Design based on feedback – Spring 2023



Traffic Council Approvals – May 2023



Bid Process – June 2023



Ongoing Community Education and Engagement



Installation – Estimated August 2023

Discussion / Questions / Approval

Approval requested for Albemarle Traffic Calming Plan, including Speed Cushions in accordance with City Ordinance 26-51B.

Comments and Feedback
Email: jostroff@newtonma.gov

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