



T'OOLE
DESIGN

BSC GROUP

Environmental Review for Main Street Rebuild

Northampton, MA

6:30 - 8:30 PM | January 23, 2024



Agenda

- Project Background
- Existing Issues & Project Goals
- Design Overview
- Environmental & Public Health Review Components
- Next Steps
- Questions & Answers

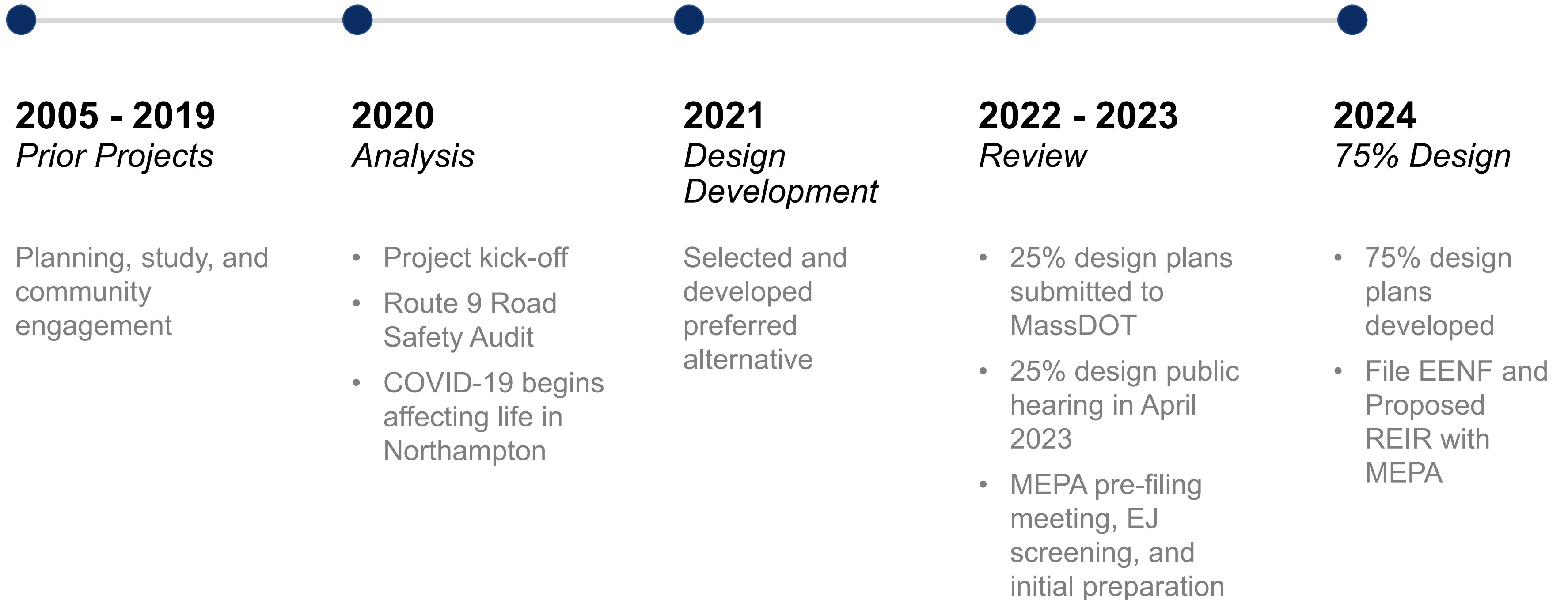


Project Basics

- Reconstruction of Main Street in downtown Northampton from building face to building face
- The project extends approximately 0.4 miles from:
 - West of the intersection of Elm and West Streets
 - East to the intersection of Market and Hawley Streets
- All intersections within the extents are included in the project



Project Timeline



Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Review

Review due to roadway construction with public shade tree removal above threshold of 5 trees

- ❖ Review includes other environmental and public health components
- ❖ Considerations for Environmental Justice populations, Climate and Resiliency
- Expanded Environmental Notification Form will be filed with a proposed Rollover Environmental Impact Report
- Both have a sequential review period of 37 days, with public comments due in the first 30 days

Environmental Permitting

- Permits generally to be completed with 75% design submittal
- Permits / consultations address cultural resources, water, endangered/threatened species



Existing Issues & Project Goals

Existing Issues

Safety Issues

- MassDOT identified high crash location
- Confusion over travel lanes
- Unsafe & wide crosswalks with restricted sightlines
- Lack of accessibility
- No dedicated space for cyclists

Other Considerations

- Accessibility and waiting space for public transit
- Attract business investment
- No designated space for loading
- Planting areas for trees not sufficient
- Subsurface utilities need improvements

Project Goals

1 Improve Safety & Access for All

- Narrow the roadway
- Delineate travel lanes and crossings
- Improve visibility
- Improve accessibility
- Provide dedicated space for bicyclists

2 Promote a Vibrant & Attractive Downtown

- Widen sidewalks
- Provide outdoor spaces for business
- Provide flexible curbside space

3 Create a Functional, Enduring & Sustainable Streetscape

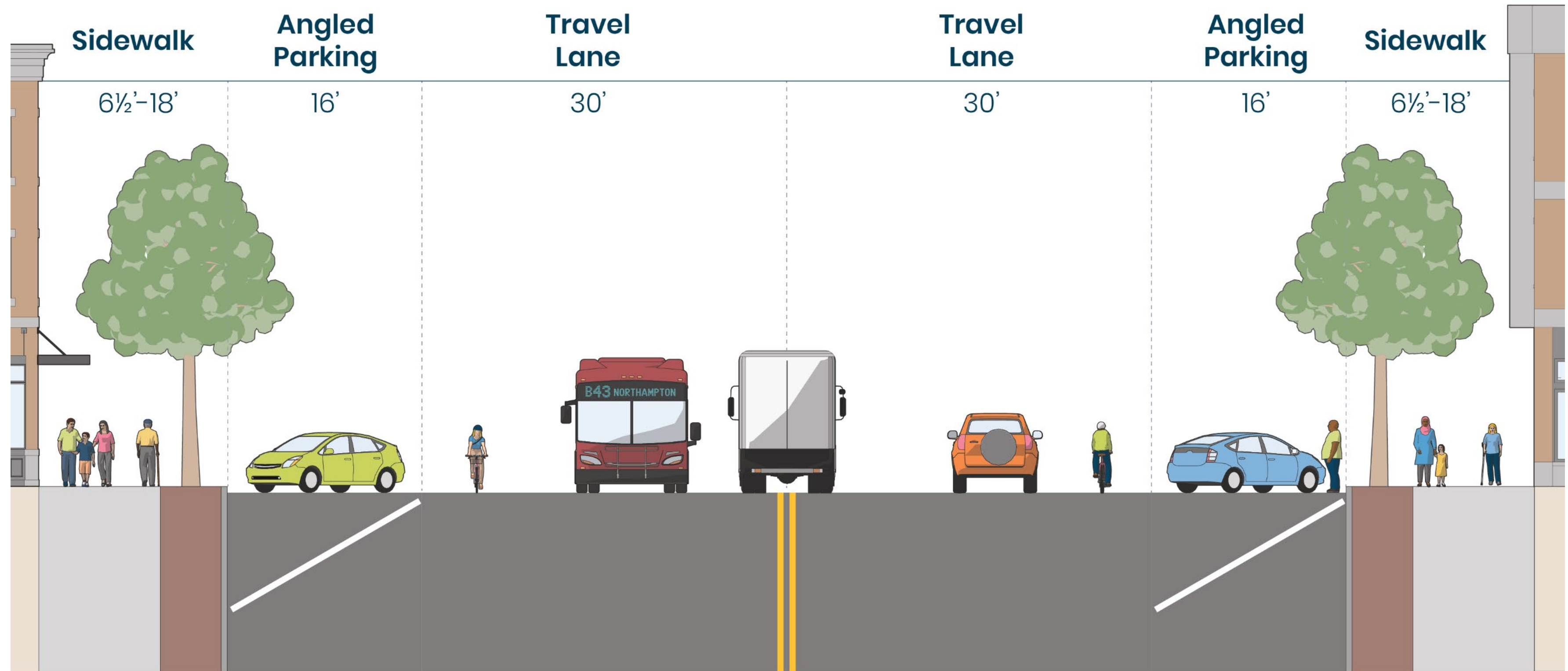
- Address utilities
- Infiltrate stormwater
- Support new tree planting



Design Overview

Existing Conditions

Undelineated travel lanes (with some medians), angled parking, sidewalks



What alternatives were considered?

- Four (4) alternatives were presented to the public in April 2021
- They varied by number of travel lanes and configurations of parking and bike lanes
- They were evaluated through criteria aligned with the project's goals
- Public was surveyed on importance of each criteria and ranking of each alternative

Picture Main Street Website



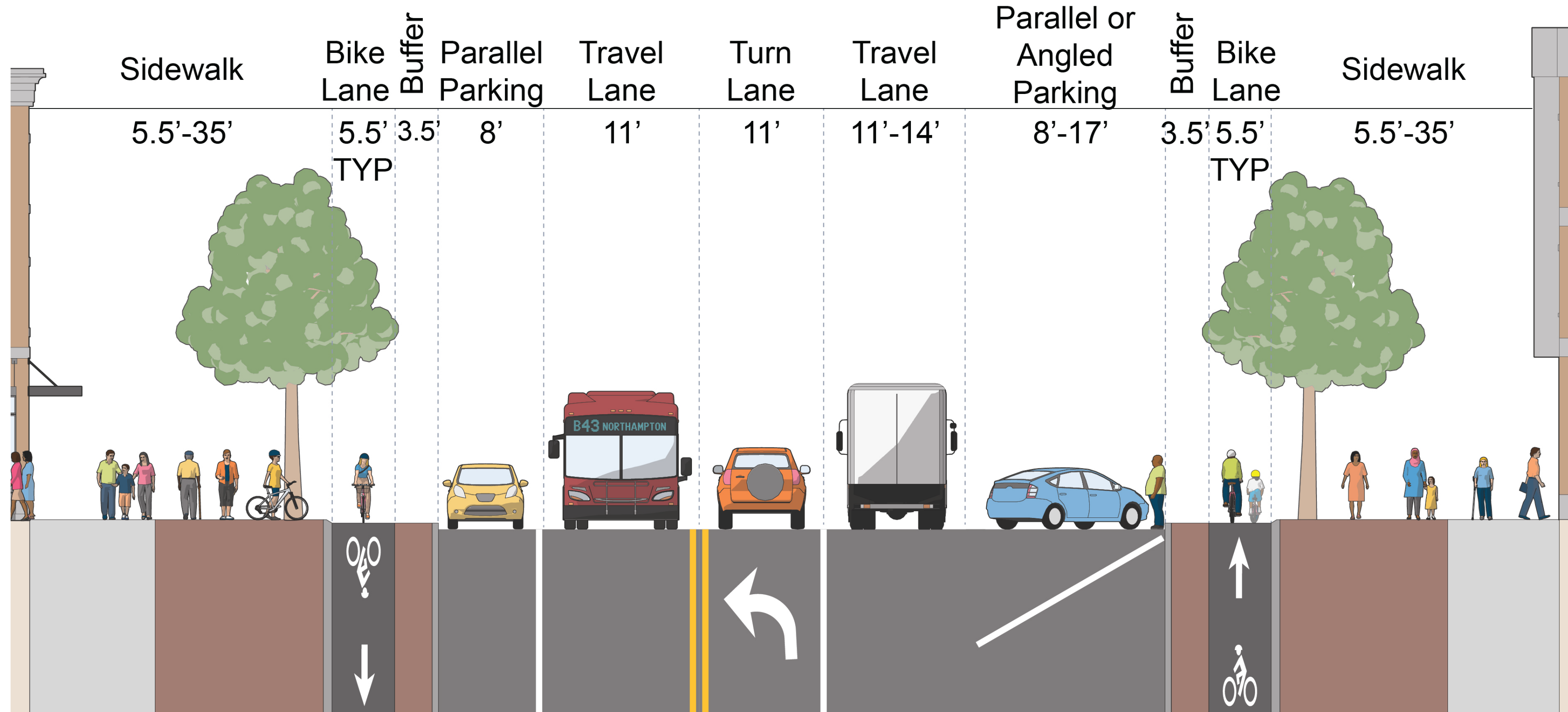
For full details on all alternatives, visit the project website: Scan the QR code, or type the URL link below into your browser

<https://tinyurl.com/PictureMainStreet>



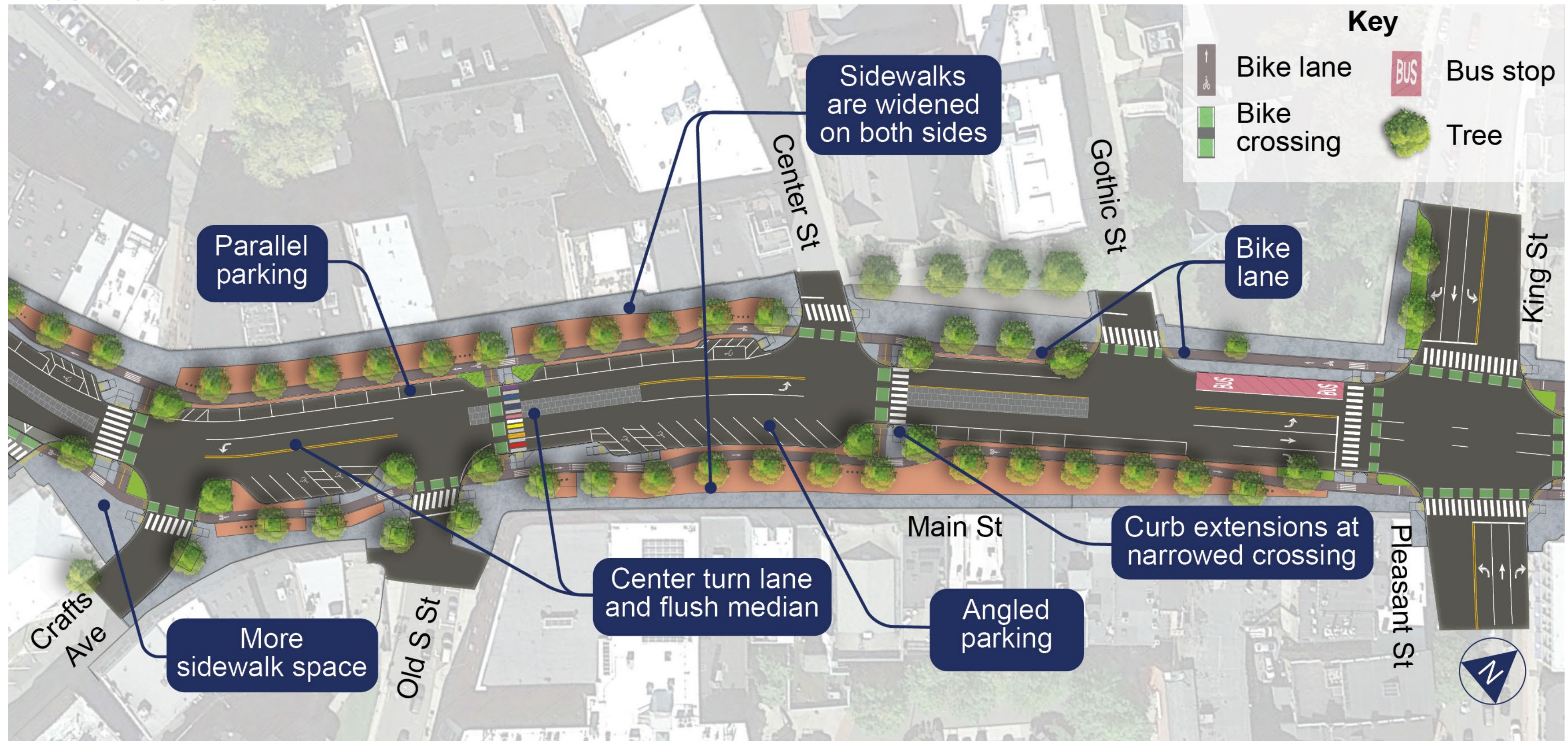
Preferred Alternative

Three vehicle lanes with expanded sidewalks, separated bike lanes, and mix of parallel and angled parking



Preferred Alternative

Design overview example



What else is changing?

- 57 less parking spaces than existing
- Parking management has been adjusted on Main Street to increase turnover
- Sufficient parking will be available from on-street spaces, lots, and garages off Main St
- More ADA parking will be provided:
 - Existing ADA parking: 3 angled, 2 parallel
 - Proposed ADA parking: 4 angled, 3 parallel
- Signal timing to support reconfigured lanes



Environmental & Public Health Review Components

Limited Impact

Endangered/ Threatened Species

- No critical habitat in project zone
- Endangered or threatened species, such as northern long-eared bat, within the County

Historic / Cultural

- Several historic districts, dozens of buildings
- No impact to buildings
- Limited right-of-way takings of land
- No change of use for protected public space

Construction Phase

- Temporary loss of trees/canopy. Replaced and increased (with maturity)
- Anti-idling requirements to reduce emissions
- Dust & sediment controls for active construction

Active Mobility

- Main Street will support more physical activity with wider sidewalks & updated curb ramps
- Improved pavement and crossings
- Improved access for people with wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers
- Dedicated bike lanes and bike parking will make biking a safe and comfortable option

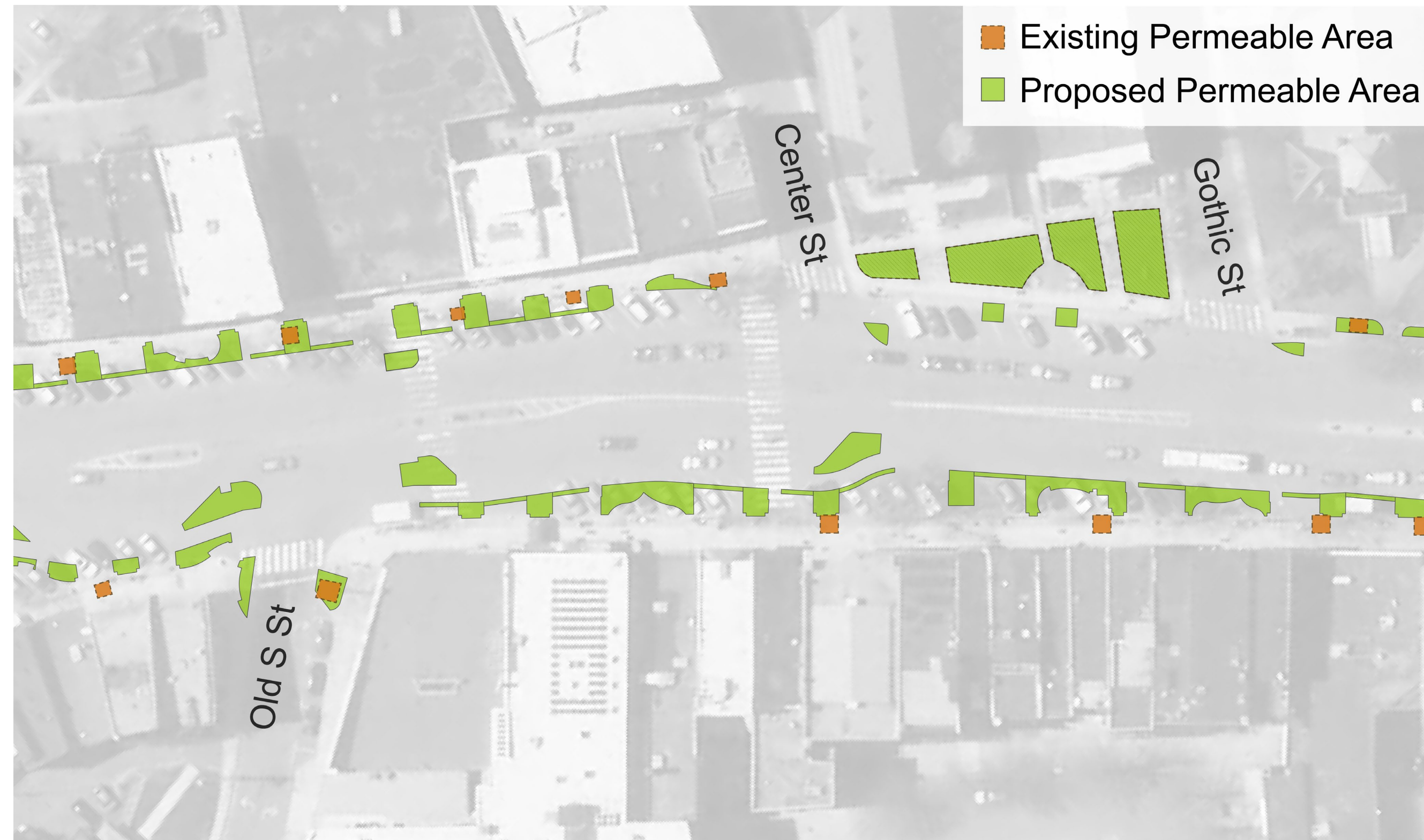


No increased burden assessed to public health

- Increased safety
- Improved mobility, accessibility, green space
- Mitigation for extreme precipitation, heat islands
- No new sources of emissions/pollutants

Water

- No wetlands impacts
- Improving stormwater conditions by:
 - Reducing pavement
 - Infiltrating water with planted areas and rain gardens
 - Improving drainage features and therefore resiliency



Green spaces indicate areas that are proposed to be permeable, allowing water to filter through, where the orange is existing permeable

Rain Gardens

- Collects stormwater runoff from road and sidewalks
- Filters and slows flow into pipes
- Plantings can filter debris and some pollutants from the water



Rain garden in Burlington, VT



Rain garden in Washington, D.C.



Rain garden in Pittsfield, MA

- Plants add seasonal beauty, texture, and color
- Food and shelter for pollinators

Access to Public and Green Space

- Design increases overall green space (planted areas) by 187%
- Wider sidewalks with additional seating, tables, and small gathering areas to support social activities
- Benches with armrests to support the elderly and wheelchair companion spaces
- Bus stops with more seating



Trees

- 39 trees within project limits today*
- 93 trees after project completed

Trees Removed: 27

Trees Preserved: 12

Total Trees Planted: 81

Replacements: 27

Additional: 54

Of removed:

- 12 in poor condition
- 9 fair, 6 good condition removed due to location



Existing trees on Main Street show dying limbs, dying crown, issues with root growth and girdling

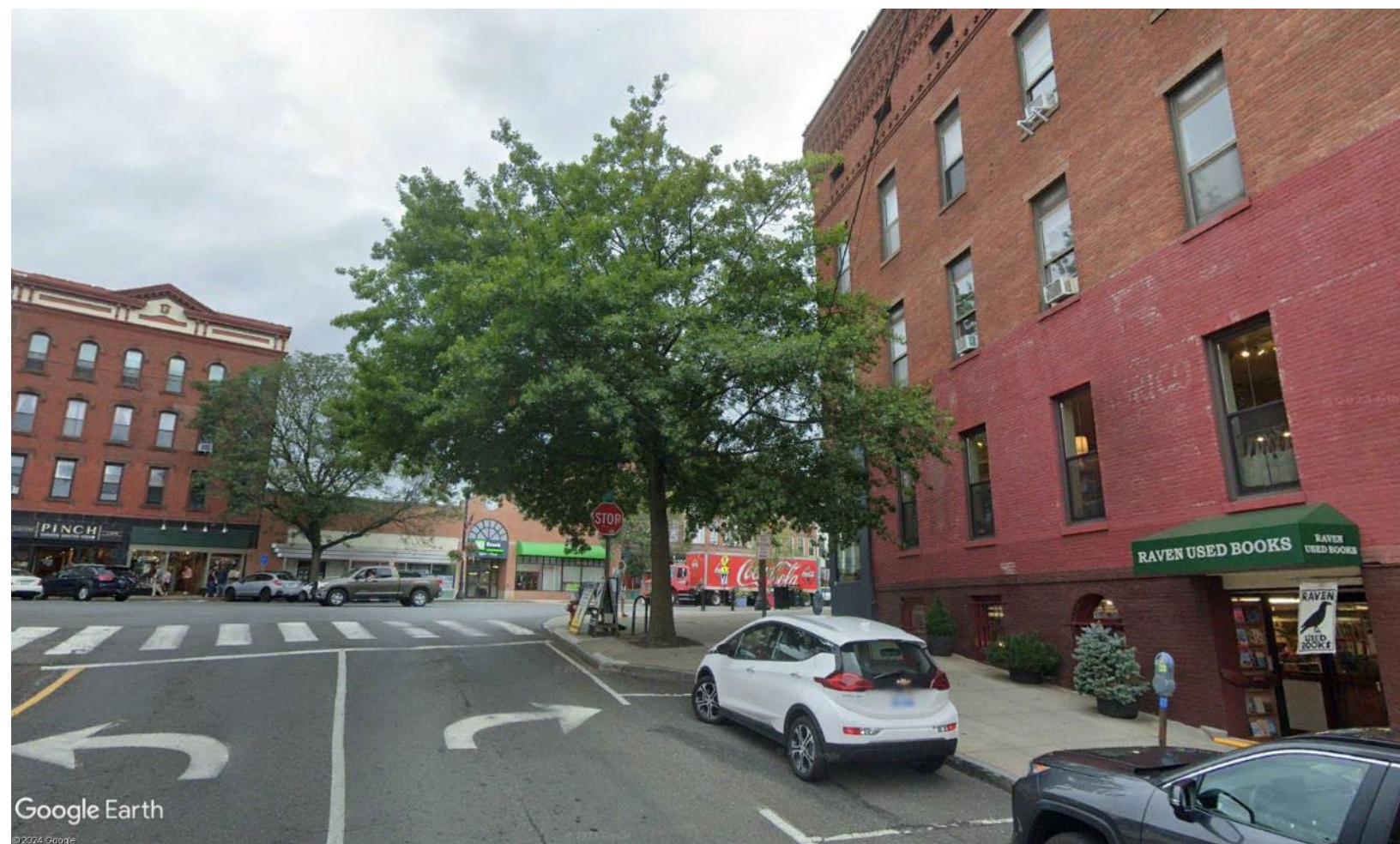
Trees Removed ≤ 14 " DBH: 16

Trees Removed > 14 " DBH: 11
(6 in poor condition)

**15 additional trees are adjacent to Main St, mostly in lawns west of City Hall. These will be preserved but are not included in counts for the project area*

Preserved

- Preserving 12 trees
- 6 trees over 14" DBH
- Pin oaks, elm hybrids, honeylocust

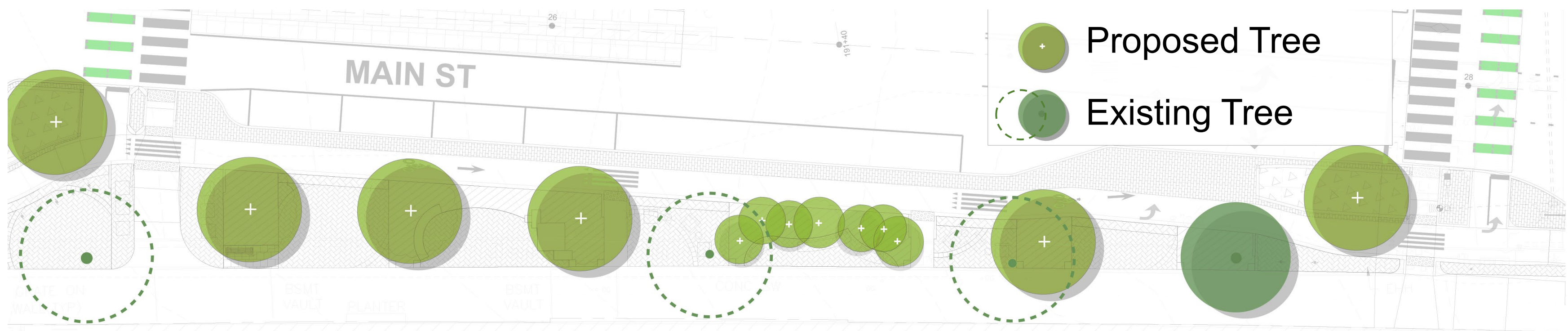


Planted Trees

- Per the EPA, heat waves are expected to continue in frequency and intensity
- Increasing canopy will lower pavement and air temperatures, reducing chance of heat-related stroke and exhaustion
- Shade trees can also help reduce air conditioning needs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions over time

Species selected for:

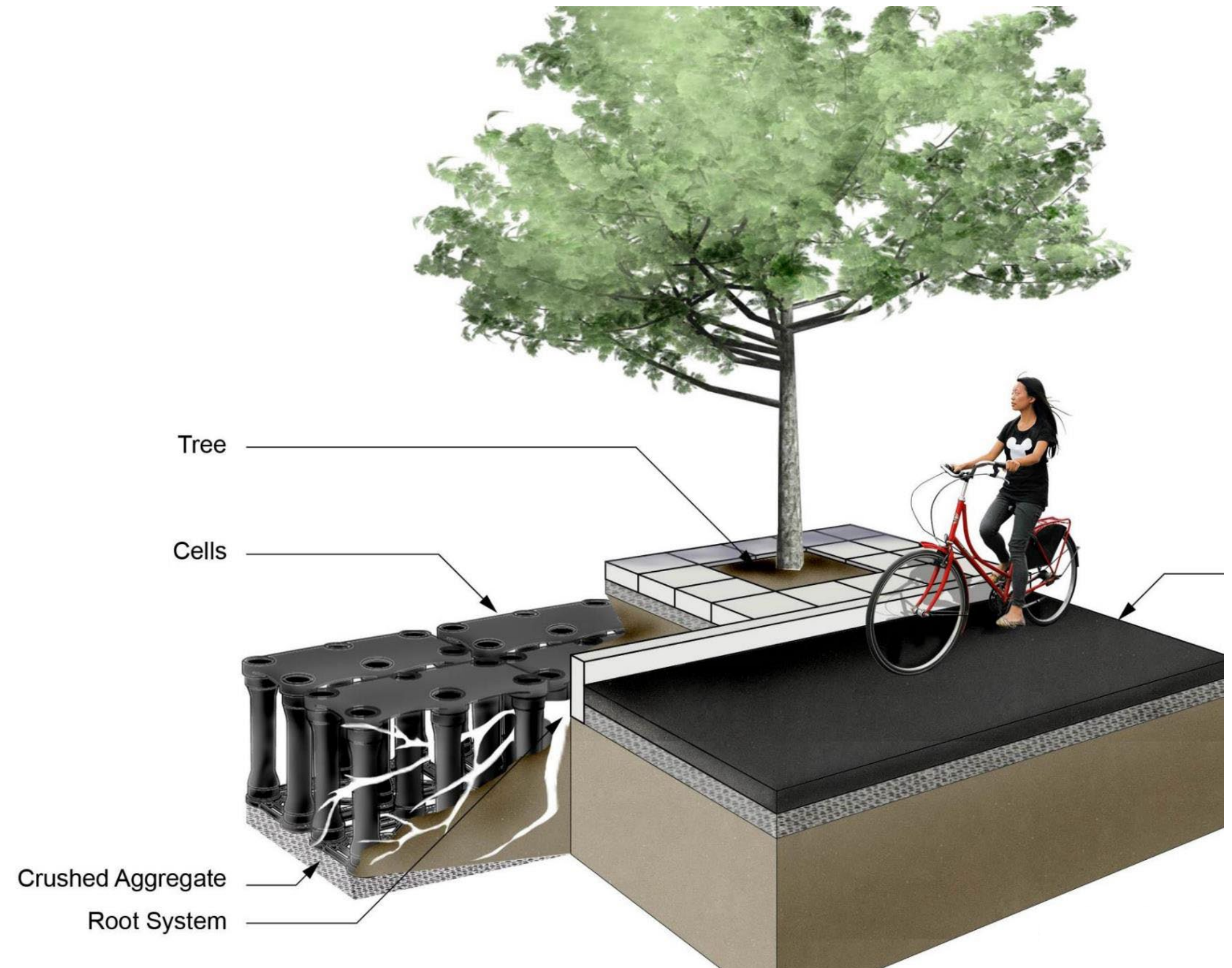
- Heat and salt tolerance
- General hardiness
- Diversification with preference for natives



Proposed trees are spaced to fill the canopy gaps observed with existing street trees

Trees & Soils

- Increased soil volume with:
 - Connected trench
 - Structural soil cells
- Design provides roughly 1,000 cubic feet of soil per canopy tree
- Average soil volume is estimated to be 380 cubic feet per existing canopy tree





Next Steps & Contact Info

Our next steps



Winter 2024

Complete 75%
design



2024

- Final design
- File documents
with MEPA



Fall 2025

Construction
begins

How to reach us

*Carolyn Misch, Director of Planning and Sustainability at
413.587.1287 or cmisch@northamptonma.gov*

*You can reach MassDOT, our State partner, with comments at
MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us
Reference #609286 Northampton Main St*

For additional project information:

Scan the QR code or visit

<https://northamptonma.gov/2547/Picture-Main-Street>





Questions & answers