

# CONGRESS, SLEEPER, & A STREETS UPDATE

*January 28, 2025*

*Presentation to Fort Point Neighborhood Association*



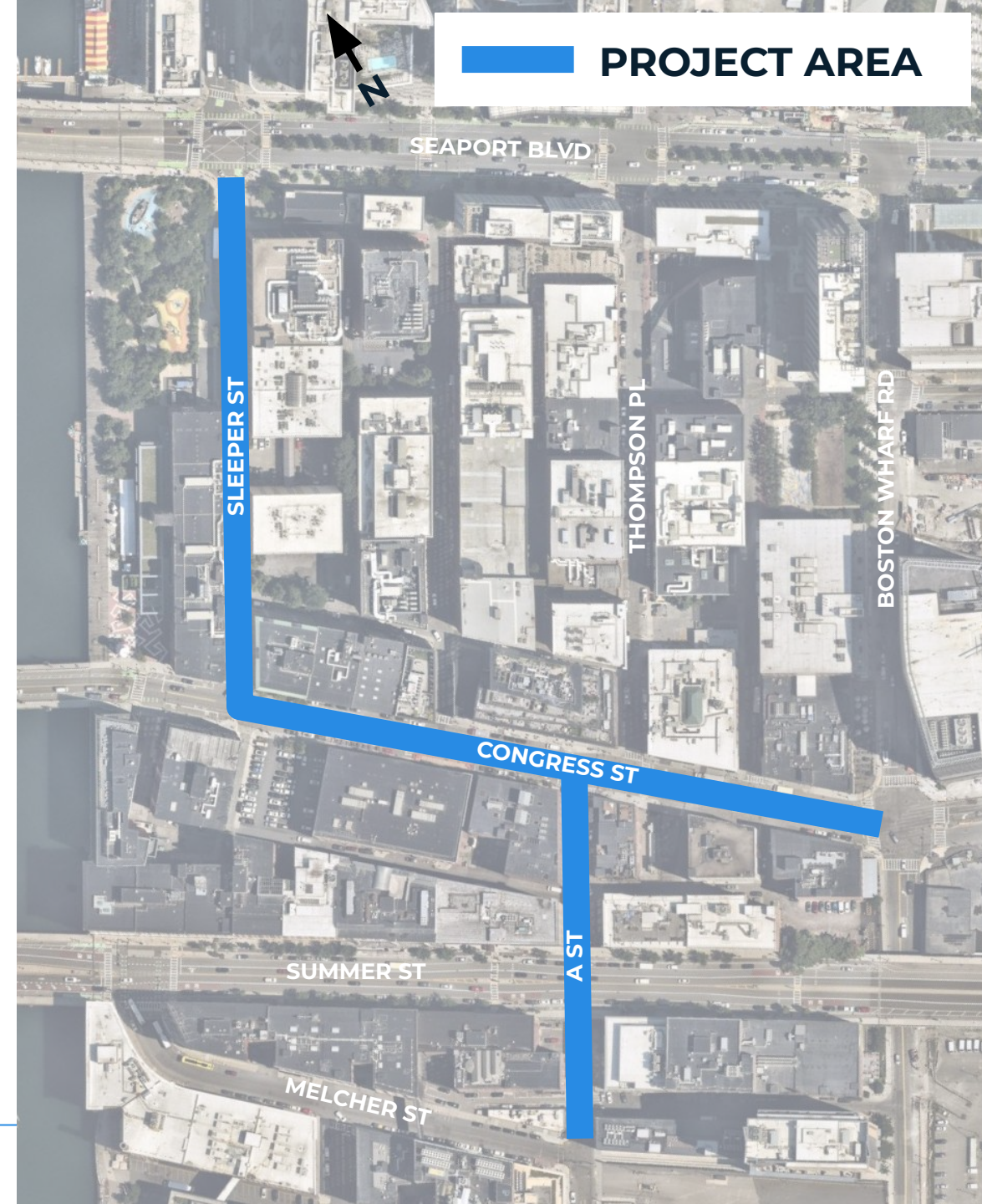
# AGENDA

1. *Project Refresher*
2. *Congress St and A Street Overview*
3. *Sleeper St Recommendations*
4. *Upcoming Process*

# PROJECT REFRESHER

## OVERVIEW

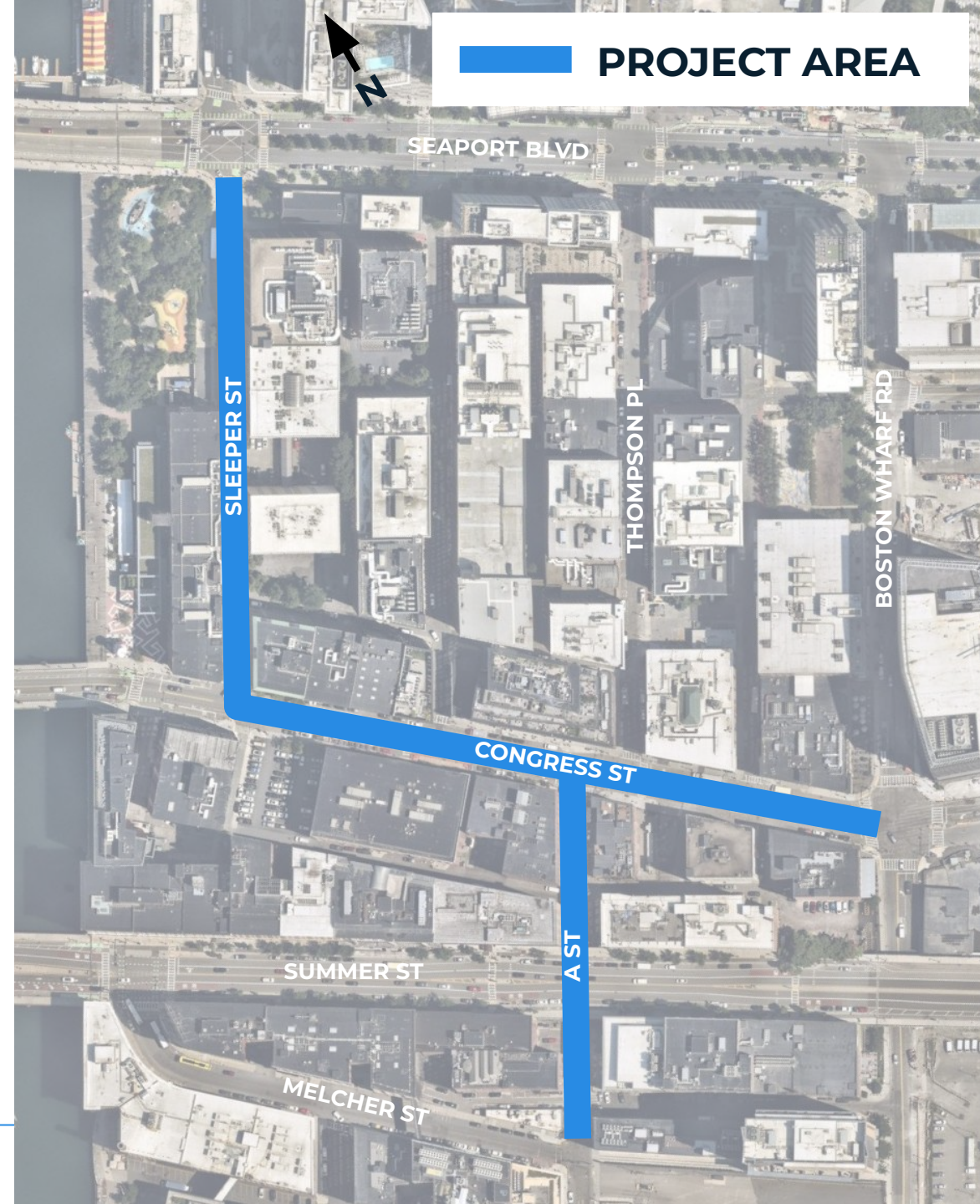
- When the Central Artery project (“Big Dig”) was completed, the City shifted gears to look at important neighborhood connector streets, including Congress St
- Over time, additional streets were introduced into the project area to address pressing community needs, including A Street and Sleeper St
- The project will include a full reconstruction within the project limits to provide:
  - *Wider and more accessible sidewalks*
  - *More and safer crosswalks*
  - *Contextually appropriate streetlight upgrades*
  - *Many new street trees and landscaping areas*
  - *Bike lanes that fill key gaps in the network*



# PROJECT REFRESHER

## TIMELINE

- **Spring 2021** Project Kickoff
- **2021-2022** Preliminary Design & Engagement
- **2022-2024** Design Development & Engagement
  - 75% December 2022
  - 100% April 2024
- **Spring 2024** Gracie Gancheva killed March 24th
  - *Rapid Response Interventions in April*
- ▶ ● **Winter 2024** Design Updates & Engagement
- **Spring 2025** Advertise Project, Contracting
- **Summer 2025** Construction Start



# CONGRESS ST OVERVIEW

*The final design for Congress Street has not changed*

## KEY ELEMENTS

- Wide sidewalks ranging from 10 - 17.5 feet
- Two new crosswalks across Congress St and raised side street crossings
- Street-level separated bike lanes
- Two vehicle travel lanes with turn lanes at key intersections
- On-street parking pockets west of A Street
- “Fort Point Fixture” street lights, benches, trash cans, and bike parking
- Preserves all existing healthy trees with 35+ new trees

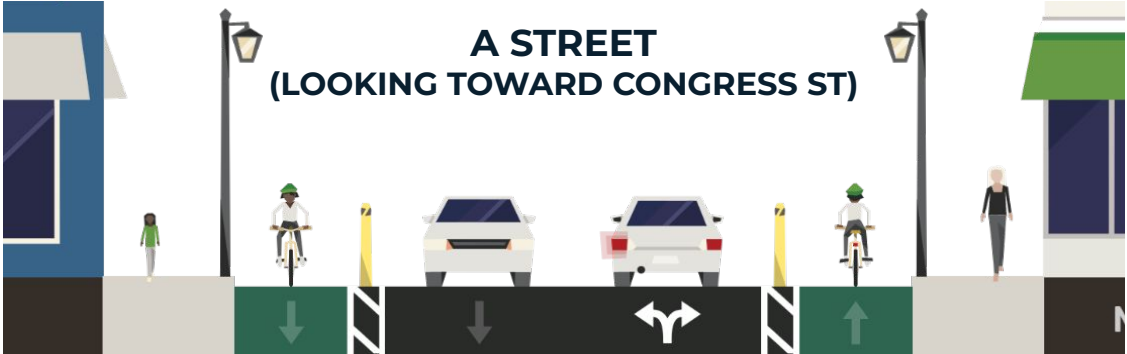
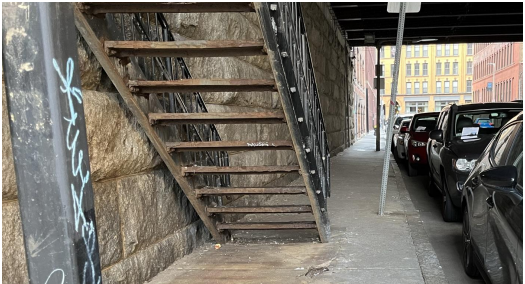


# A ST OVERVIEW

*The final design for A Street has not changed*

## KEY ELEMENTS

- Sidewalks widened to at least 7 feet on both sides, some segments up to 10 feet wide
- Street-level, curbside bike lanes (mix of protected and paint-only)
- Additional and relocated “Fort Point Fixture” street lights
- We are exploring options to offset parking reductions (14 spaces) on A Street:
  - *Converting 11 metered spaces to 24 hour residential parking on Melcher and A St.*
  - *Adding additional parking on Melcher St where parking is currently restricted.*



# SLEEPER STREET RAPID RESPONSE (2024)

- Implemented rapid response improvements at Congress Street/Sleeper St intersection as an interim measure, including:
  - *Intersection daylighting (clear corners)*
  - *Refreshed crosswalks & other safety-critical markings and signage*
  - *Implemented parking restrictions that interfered with sight lines*
  - *Installed speed humps on Sleeper Street*
  - *Deployed Boston Police Department mobile speed radar followed by permanent installation*
- The community conversation following the pediatric fatality led to additional questions and discussion about the long-term design



# SLEEPER STREET RECOMMENDED CHANGES

A one-way, southbound circulation pattern on Sleeper Street is the recommended because it:

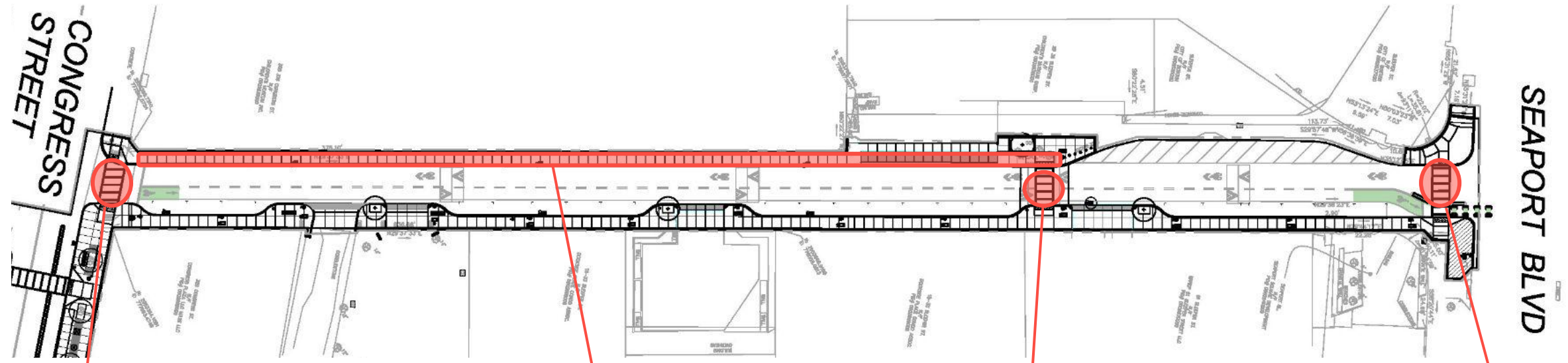
- **Minimizes conflicts** *between all travelers at intersections*
  - *Eliminates intersection conflicts by nearly 50%*
- **Prioritizes pedestrians** *(who make up 30% - 40% of daily travelers) with comfortable sidewalk widths and priority at intersections*
  - *Allows for a wider sidewalk*
  - *Reduces crosswalk distances and improves sightlines*

## WHY SOUTHBOUND?

- A one-way southbound circulation pattern provides greater safety benefits than a northbound circulation pattern would because it fully eliminates uncontrolled vehicle movements at all intersections.
- There are more northbound alternatives than southbound alternatives in the immediate vicinity.
- Existing vehicle volumes are roughly evenly split between northbound and southbound traffic on Sleeper Street.



# SLEEPER STREET DESIGN OVERVIEW



## SHORTER, SAFER CROSSWALK

The raised crosswalk at Congress St will be further shortened to 20 feet and one-way circulation eliminates half of existing vehicle/pedestrian conflicts.

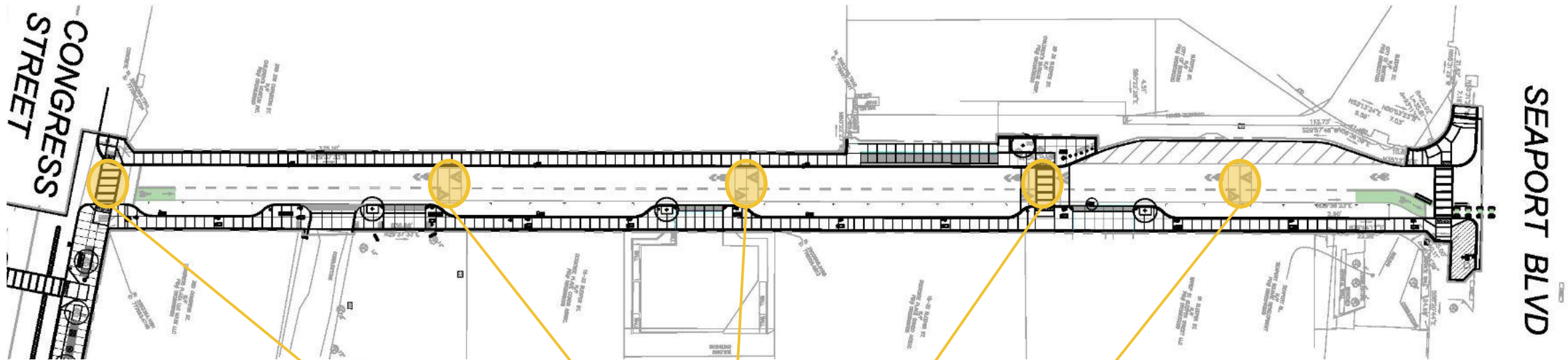
## EXPANDED SIDEWALK

The sidewalk on the west side of the street will be expanded to 7 feet with a one-way configuration (instead of 5 feet).

## SIMPLER, SAFER CROSSWALK

One-way southbound traffic only requires people to cross one direction of vehicle traffic at crosswalks. At Seaport Boulevard, northbound right-turn-on-red conflicts with the crosswalk are eliminated.

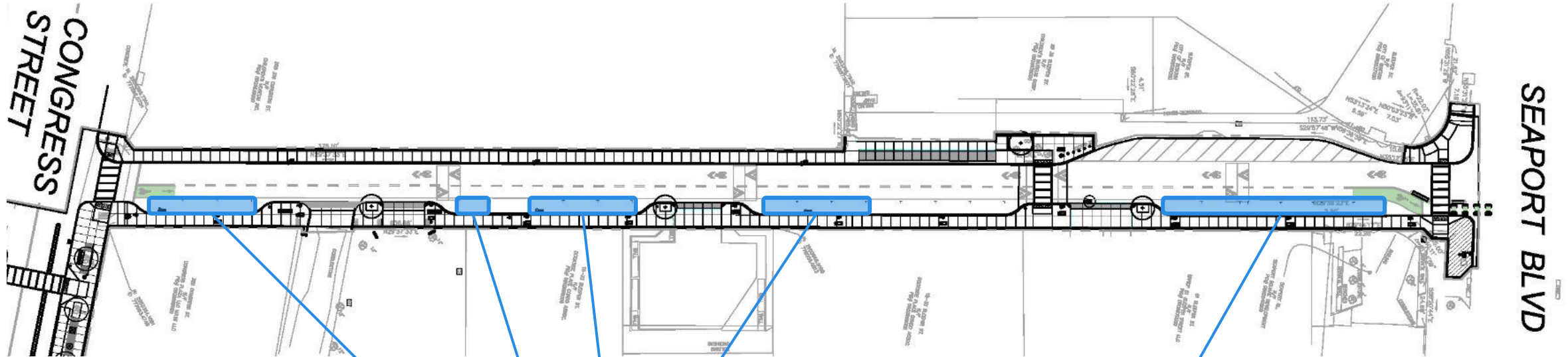
# SLEEPER STREET DESIGN OVERVIEW



## TRAFFIC CALMING ELEMENTS

Traffic speeds are controlled by two raised crosswalks and three speed humps

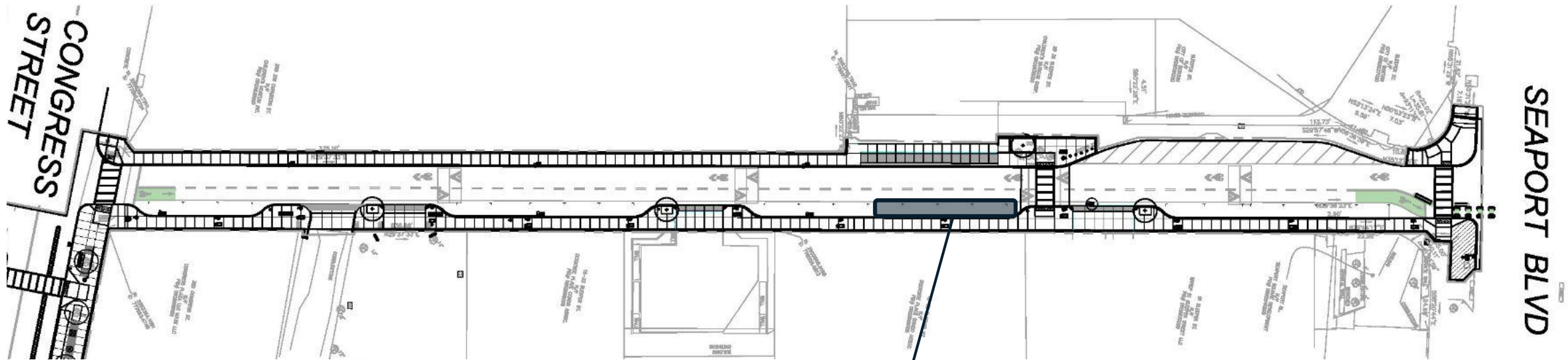
# SLEEPER STREET DESIGN OVERVIEW



## ON-STREET PARKING

At least 16 vehicle parking spaces will be provided including residential permit parking, parking reserved for people with disabilities, and parking to support Our Lady of Good Voyage.

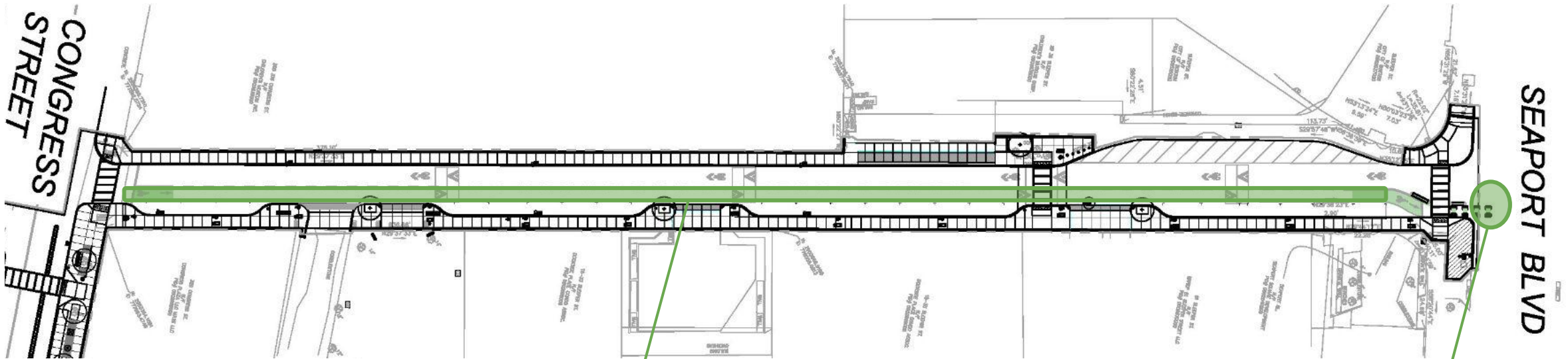
# SLEEPER STREET DESIGN OVERVIEW



## LOADING/MANEUVERING SPACE

Space to support safe maneuvering and loading operations, including for the Boston Children’s Museum.

# SLEEPER STREET DESIGN OVERVIEW



## CONTRAFLOW BIKE LANE

A painted contraflow bike lane with corner separation at Seaport Blvd allows two-way bike traffic on Sleeper St. Before/after analyses of three streets in Boston with new contraflow bike lanes showed that bike riding on the street increased an average of 113% after installation.

## SIGNALIZED BIKE CROSSING

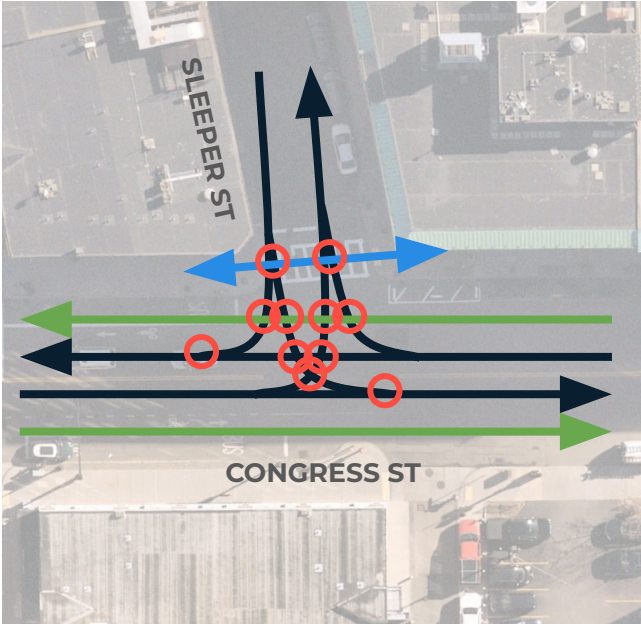
Contraflow bike movements through the intersection will be managed with the existing traffic signal at Seaport Boulevard.

# SAFETY BENEFITS OF ONE-WAY SLEEPER STREET

## MINIMIZING CONFLICTS

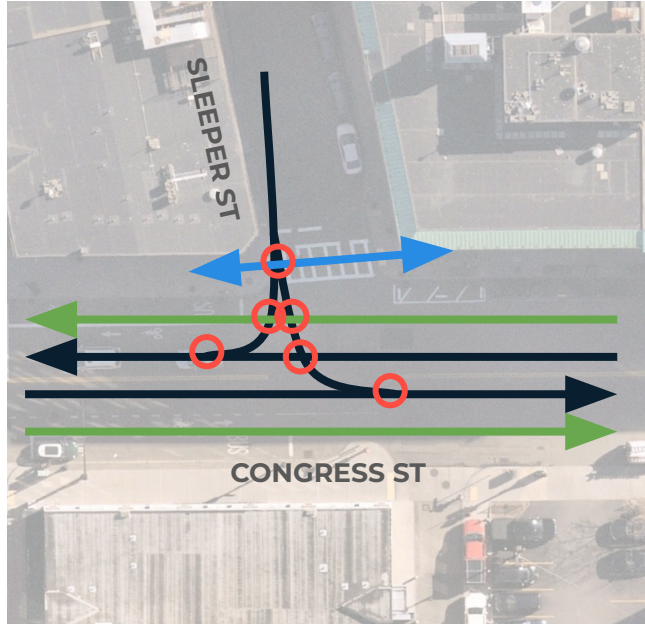
- Half as many conflicts at intersections as a two-way configuration
- Conflicts that remain are slower and more predictable
  - *All Vehicle to Ped/Bike conflicts come after a complete stop*
  - *All vehicles approaching the Sleeper Street crosswalk approach it head-on instead of from a turning movement*

TWO-WAY SLEEPER ST



- 2 **pedestrian/vehicle** conflicts
- 4 **bike/vehicle** conflicts
- 5 **vehicle/vehicle** conflicts
- 11 total conflict points

ONE-WAY SLEEPER ST

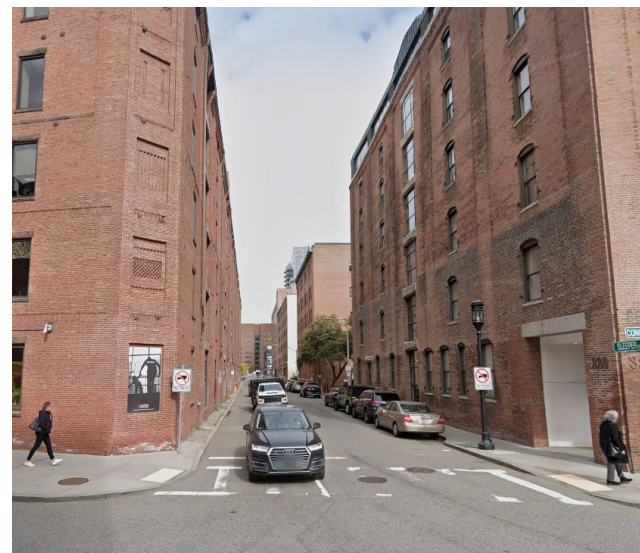


- 1 **pedestrian/vehicle** conflicts
- 2 **bike/vehicle** conflicts
- 3 **vehicle/vehicle** conflicts
- 6 total conflict points

# SAFETY BENEFITS OF ONE-WAY SLEEPER STREET

## PRIORITIZING PEDESTRIANS

- Allows for wider (7-foot) sidewalks on the western side of Sleeper Street than a two-way option
  - Provides **better sightlines** approaching the Congress/Sleeper intersection
  - More than **doubles the reaction time** for vehicles approaching the crosswalk
  - Creates **larger clear width** for people with mobility disabilities, pushing strollers, etc.
- Reduces crosswalk distance by an additional 9% over a two-way option

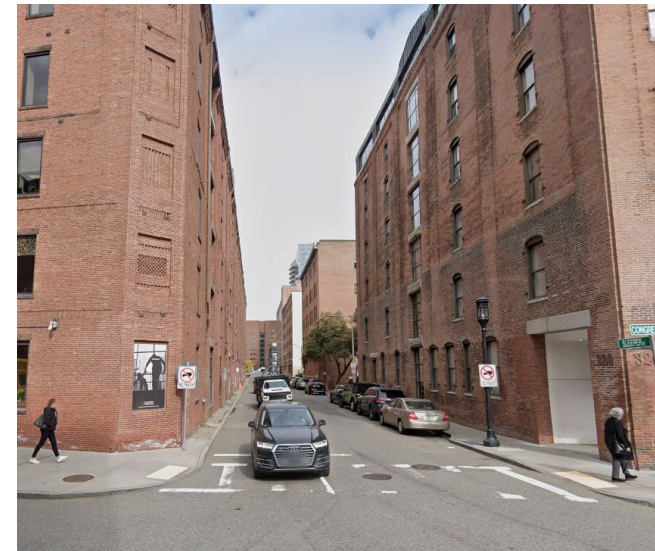


# SAFETY BENEFITS OF ONE-WAY SLEEPER STREET



## PRIORITIZING PEDESTRIANS

- We analyzed whether a traffic signal would be the most effective method to safely control traffic and pedestrian movements at the intersection.
- With a one-way southbound circulation pattern, a signal would have limited utility because there will be no uncontrolled vehicle movements across the crosswalk.
- A traffic signal at this intersection would have unintended negative safety impacts including:
  - *Eliminating pedestrian priority at an intersection where 30%-40% of the travelers are pedestrians.*
  - *Removal of the raised crossing across Sleeper Street.*
  - *Encouraging higher vehicle speeds through the intersection.*
  - *Creating more waiting time for all travelers, including over 4,000 pedestrians during the day.*





# AREA CIRCULATION PATTERNS

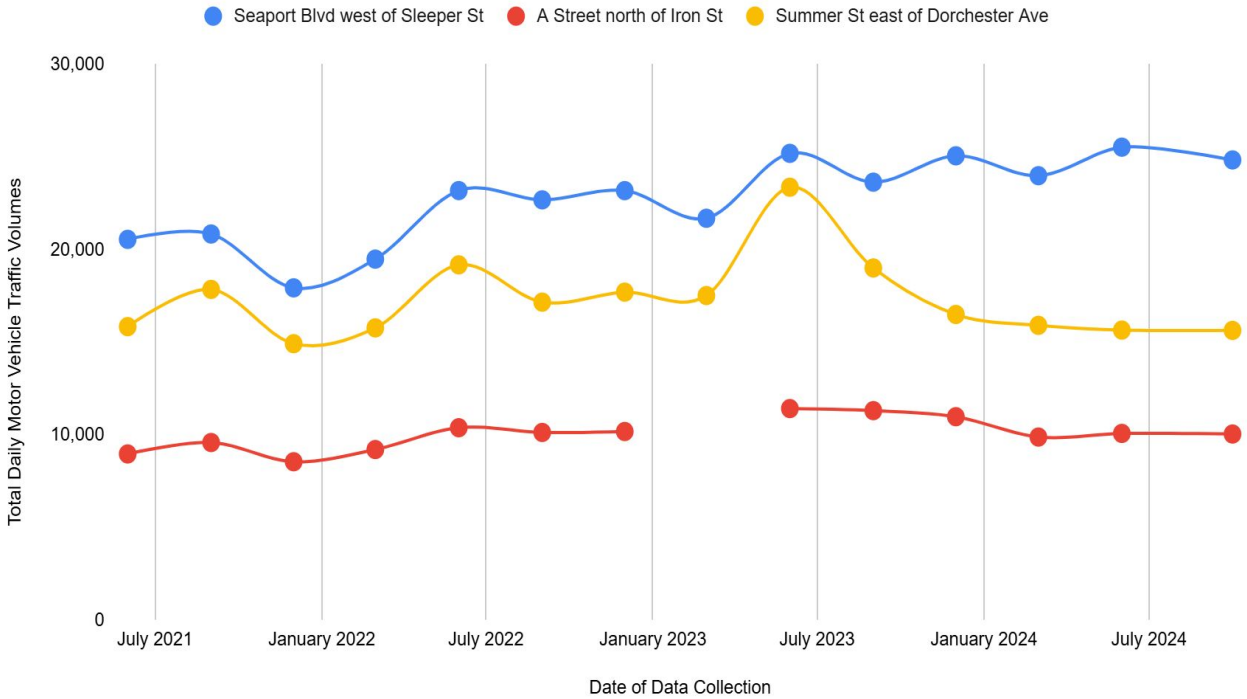


- During peak hours, ~150-200 vehicles will require a new northbound route.
- Rerouted trips are expected to be dispersed across several routes.
- Some intersections will be simplified by the project, which will help manage circulation changes:
  - a** Without northbound vehicles at the Seaport Blvd signal, additional green time for Seaport Blvd may be added.
  - b** Without vehicles waiting for gaps to turn left from Congress St to Sleeper St, traffic on Congress St will no longer be interrupted.
  - c** New signal phasing at Congress/Thompson Pl separates left turns across Congress, which reduces friction at the intersection

This redistribution analysis is based on turning movement count data collected on Thursday, July 15, 2021. These counts were compared against additional counts collected between 2021 and 2024 to help us understand fluctuations and plan for the future accordingly.

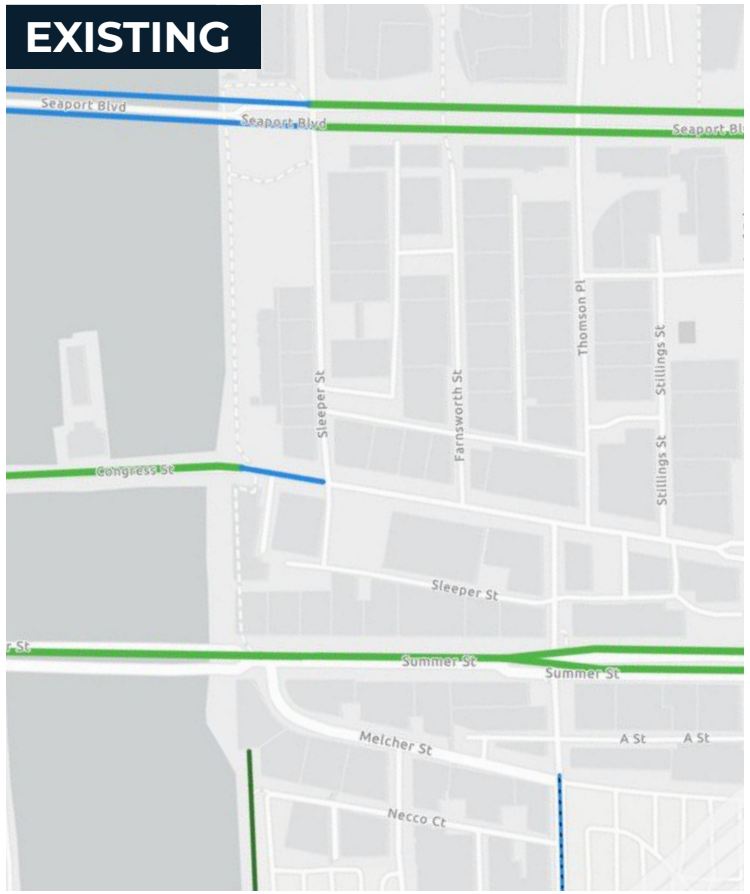
# AREA CIRCULATION PATTERNS

Change in Motor Vehicle Volumes at Various Locations around Fort Point/Seaport, 2021-2024  
Average of two mid-week count days per month/year



- We are committed to using the most accurate and up-to-date data needed to inform our design decisions.
- We reviewed 42 separate motor vehicle counts at three nearby locations collected between 2021 and 2024 to help us understand fluctuations and plan for the future accordingly..
  - *Since July 2021, counts have remained relatively stable on A St and Summer St, while Seaport Blvd has seen moderate increases.*
- Signal timings at signalized intersections will be informed by these data and fine tuned as the design is finalized.

# ADDITIONAL TRAVEL OPTIONS



- existing painted bike lane
- existing separated bike lane
- new bike connection

- This project will fill three major gaps in the bike network on Congress St, A St, and Sleeper St.
- New bike lanes in the area have contributed to significant increases in bicycle volumes, especially where bike lanes are physically separated from vehicle traffic.
- Between 2018 and 2023, the number of people biking in the area increased by:
  - 81% on Summer St
  - 77% on Seaport Blvd
  - 38% on A Street

# UPCOMING PROCESS

## NEXT STEPS

- **January - February 2025** Continuing Stakeholder Engagement
- **March 2025** Complete Design, Public Improvement Commission
- **April 2025** Construction Advertising
- **Late Summer 2025** Construction Start (precise phasing TBD)
  - *Access to all residences and businesses will be maintained during the entire construction period.*
  - *A full construction management and traffic management plan will be prepared by the selected contractor.*
  - *Pre-construction notification will be provided to the community.*
  - *Construction updates will be provided throughout the duration of the work.*
- **Spring 2028** Construction End
  - *Substantial completion by the end of 2027 expected.*

# THANK YOU

*Discussion and Q&A*

*Email the Team: [pwdengineering@boston.gov](mailto:pwdengineering@boston.gov)*

*Project Website: [www.boston.gov/congress-street-fort-point](http://www.boston.gov/congress-street-fort-point)*



# APPENDIX

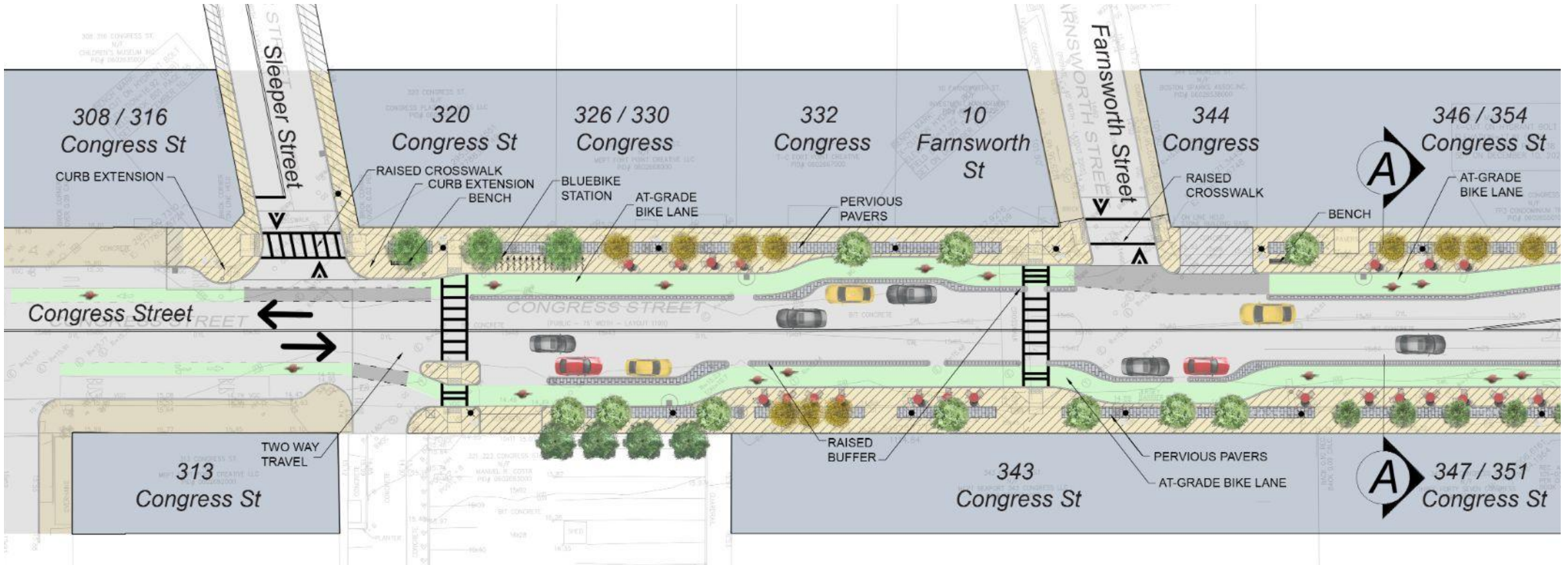


# CONGRESS STREET DETAILS



The final design for Congress Street has not changed.

## WEST OF A ST

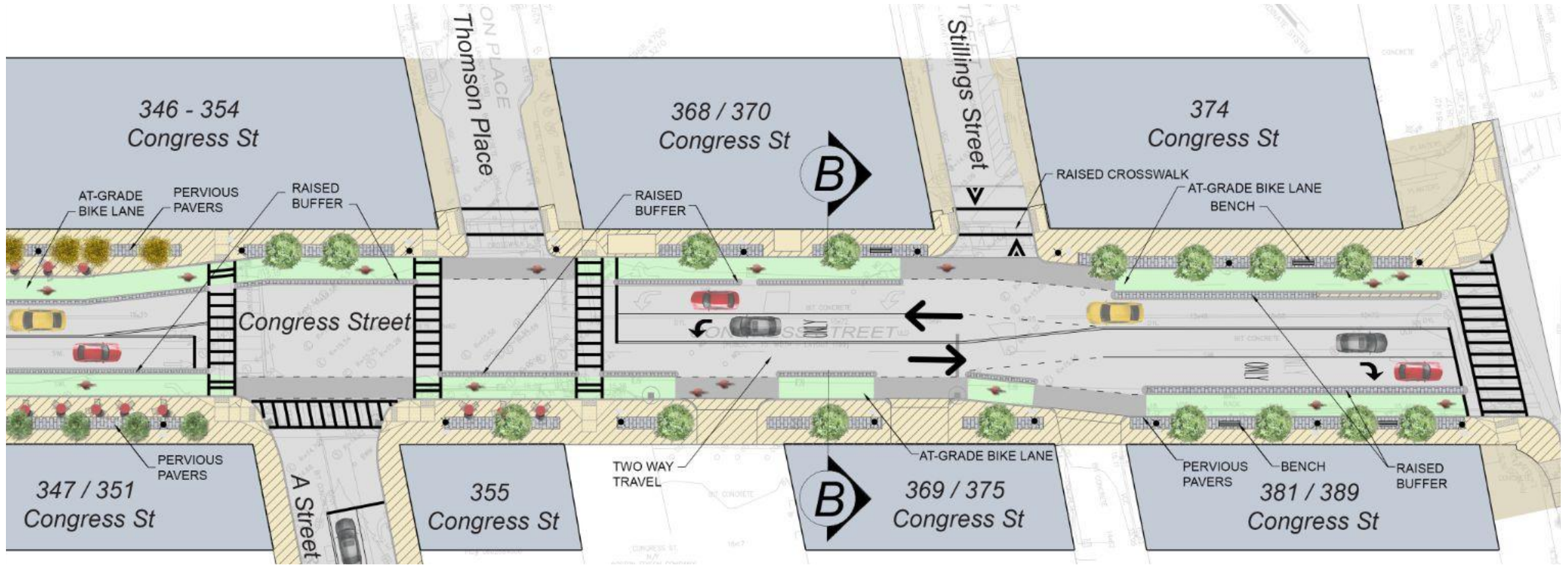


# CONGRESS STREET DETAILS



The final design for Congress Street has not changed.

## EAST OF A ST

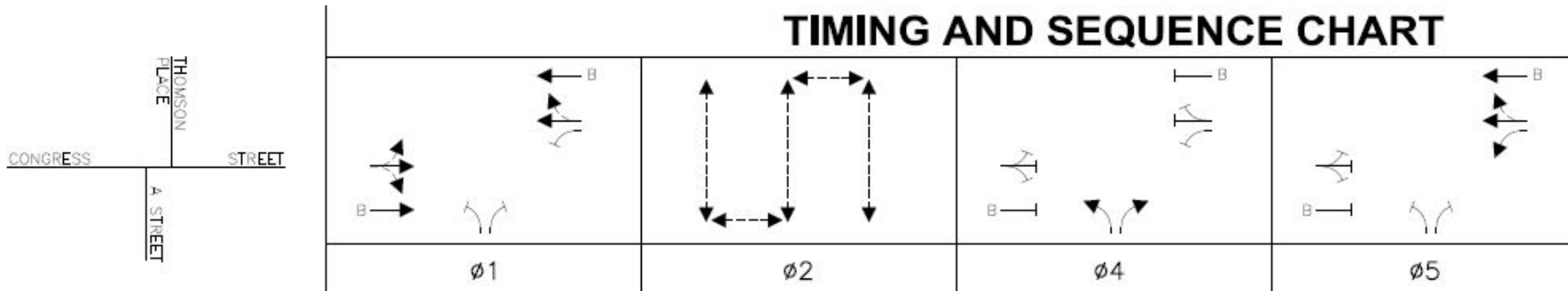




# CONGRESS STREET DETAILS

The final design for Congress Street has not changed.

## CONGRESS/THOMPSON/A INTERSECTION



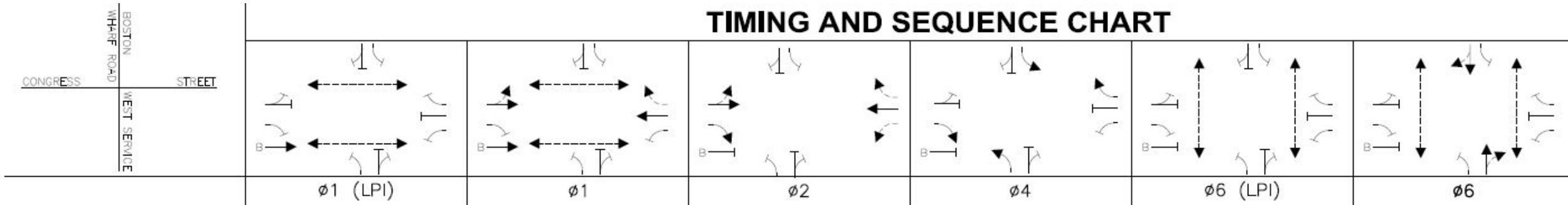
- Bikes and vehicles may proceed on Congress St, except for westbound left turns
- Pedestrians have have “do not walk” signal
- Pedestrians have an exclusive (“All Walk”) phase with all other traffic coming to a stop
- All turns from A street proceed onto Congress St
- Pedestrians have have “do not walk” signal
- All westbound bike and vehicle movements may proceed on Congress St, including westbound lefts onto A St
- Pedestrians have have “do not walk” signal

# CONGRESS STREET DETAILS

The final design for Congress Street has not changed.



## CONGRESS/BOSTON WHARF RD INTERSECTION



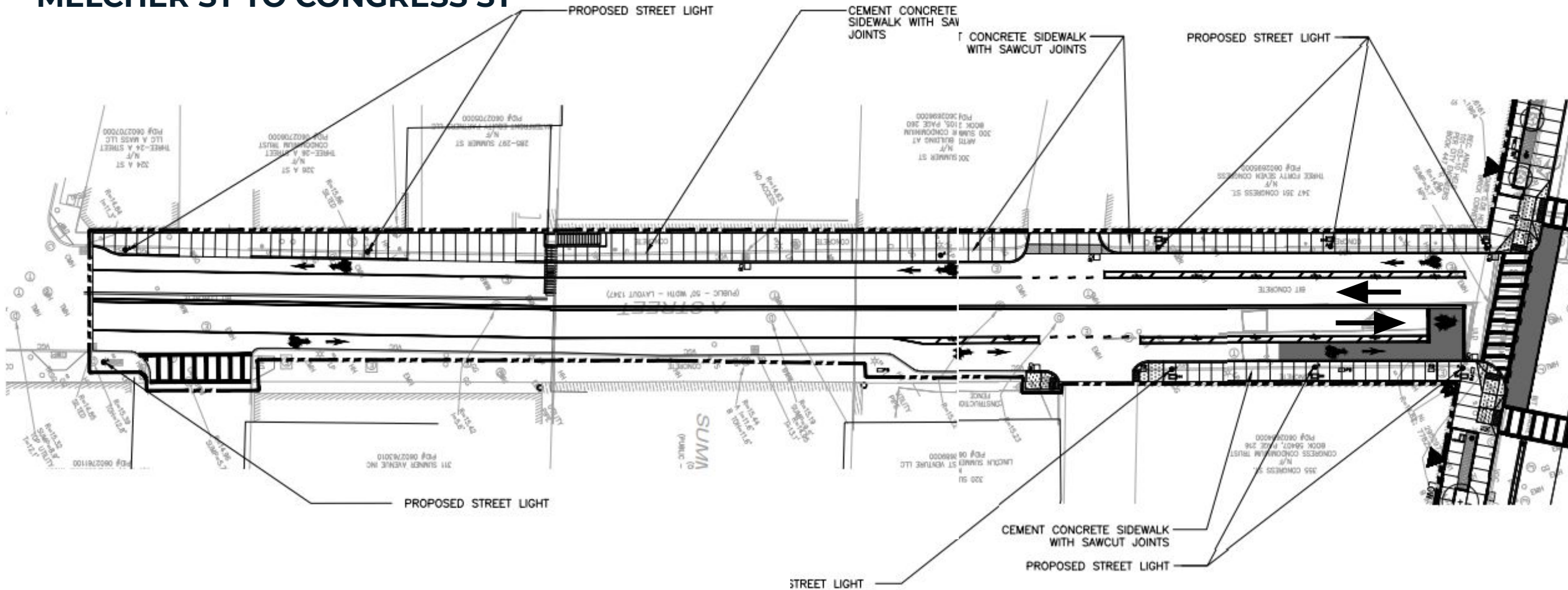
- Bikes and pedestrians get a head start to cross Boston Wharf Road traveling along Congress St
- Vehicle through movements on Congress St and turns onto Boston Wharf Rd allowed to proceed
- Pedestrians maintain legal right-of-way at Boston Wharf Rd crosswalks
- All Congress Street vehicle movements including all turns may proceed
- Pedestrians have have “do not walk” signal
- Non-conflicting right and left vehicle turns through the intersection may proceed
- Pedestrians have have “do not walk” signal
- Pedestrians get a head start to cross Congress Street traveling along Boston Wharf Rd
- Vehicle through movements and right turns on Boston Wharf Rd may proceed
- Pedestrians maintain legal right-of-way at Congress St crosswalks

# A STREET DETAILS

The final design for A Street has not changed



## MELCHER ST TO CONGRESS ST



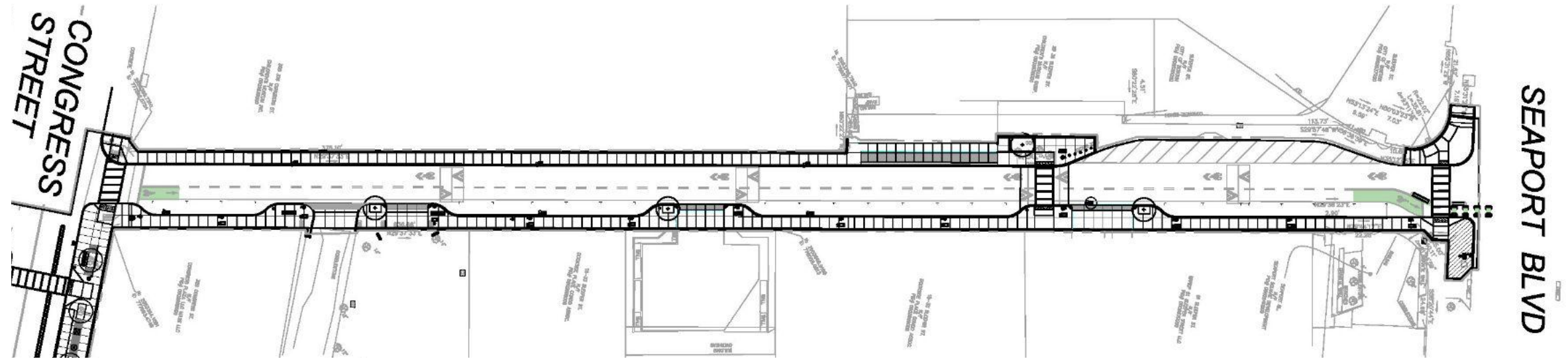
# SLEEPER STREET DESIGN COMPARISON



## PREVIOUS DESIGN

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>SIDEWALK WIDTH</b>           | ● 5 feet on west side, 7 feet on east side |
| <b>RAISED CROSSWALKS</b>        | ● 2 provided                               |
| <b>SPEED HUMPS</b>              | ● 3 provided                               |
| <b>BIKE LANE WIDTH</b>          | ● No bike lane provided                    |
| <b>ON-STREET PARKING SPACES</b> | ● 20 provided                              |
| <b>CIRCULATION PATTERN</b>      | ● Two-way                                  |

# SLEEPER STREET DESIGN COMPARISON



## PREVIOUS DESIGN

## CURRENT RECOMMENDATION

### SIDEWALK WIDTH

- 5 feet on west side, 7 feet on east side

- 7 feet on both sides

### RAISED CROSSWALKS

- 2 provided

- 2 provided

### SPEED HUMPS

- 3 provided

- 3 provided

### BIKE LANE WIDTH

- No bike lane provided

- 6.5 foot contraflow bike lane

### ON-STREET PARKING SPACES

- 20 provided

- At least 16 provided

### CIRCULATION PATTERN

- Two-way

- One-way (southbound)

# SLEEPER ST OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

## LOADING

- All typical day loading vehicles (up to 10 total vehicles a day) can maneuver into and out of the Children’s Museum loading dock.
- Multiple options for less frequent and larger loading vehicles are currently being explored.

## SCHOOL BUSES

- Confirmed that Boston Public Schools will not be impacted by the one-way change.

