



# Gorham Connector: Early Public Input Meeting

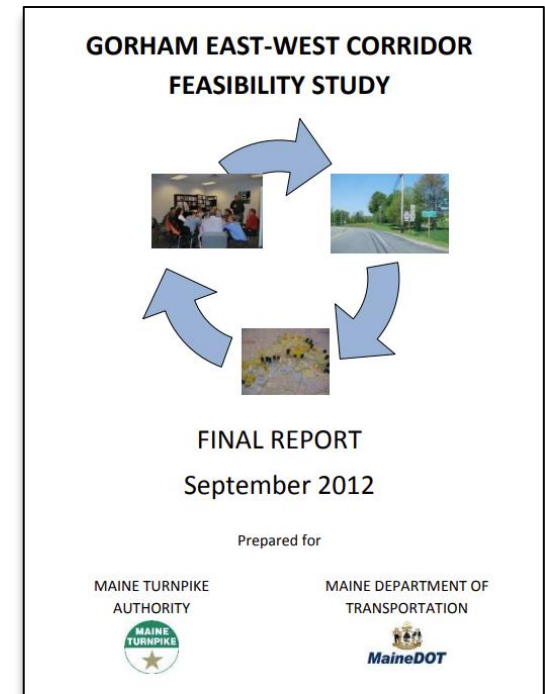
February 28, 2024

# Welcome and Introductions



# Why Are We Here?

- Decades of safety and mobility issues west of Portland
- 2007 and 2017 Legislative Direction
- 2007, 2017, and 2022: Four municipalities and MaineDOT signed MOAs
- 2012 Gorham East-West Corridor Feasibility Study findings and recommendations
- Ongoing transit route expansions and comprehensive planning updates
- 2020-2023 Alternatives Analysis to identify Preferred Alternative, new roadway opportunities and impacts



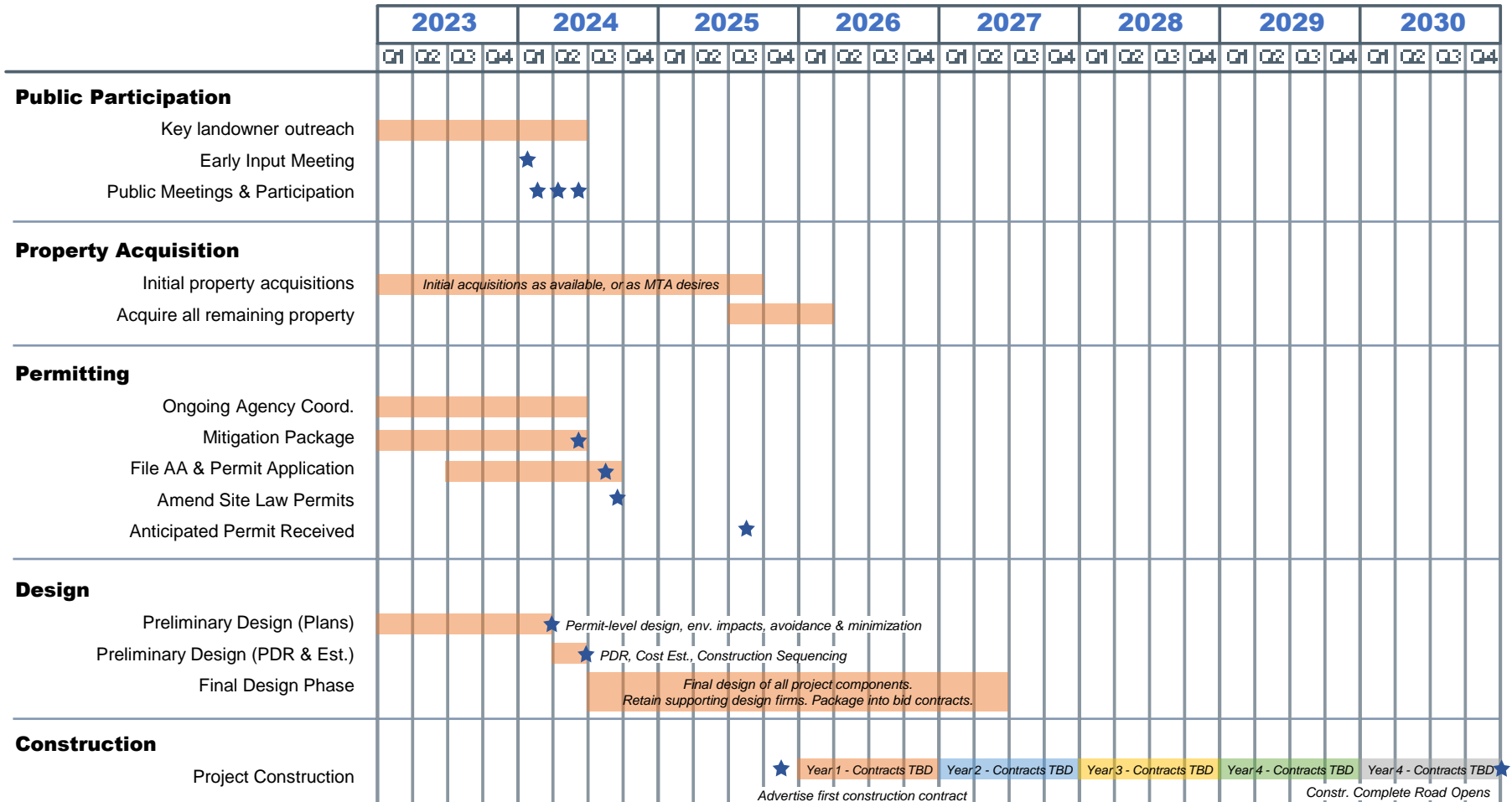
# Why is this important to us?

## Benefits of Considering a New Roadway

- Ability to advance new roadway, while at the same time create transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and land use opportunities
- Consistent with our local plans
- Improved accessibility promotes economic growth and housing opportunities
- Reduce “cut through” traffic on local roads
- Not become what other places have become with similar challenges

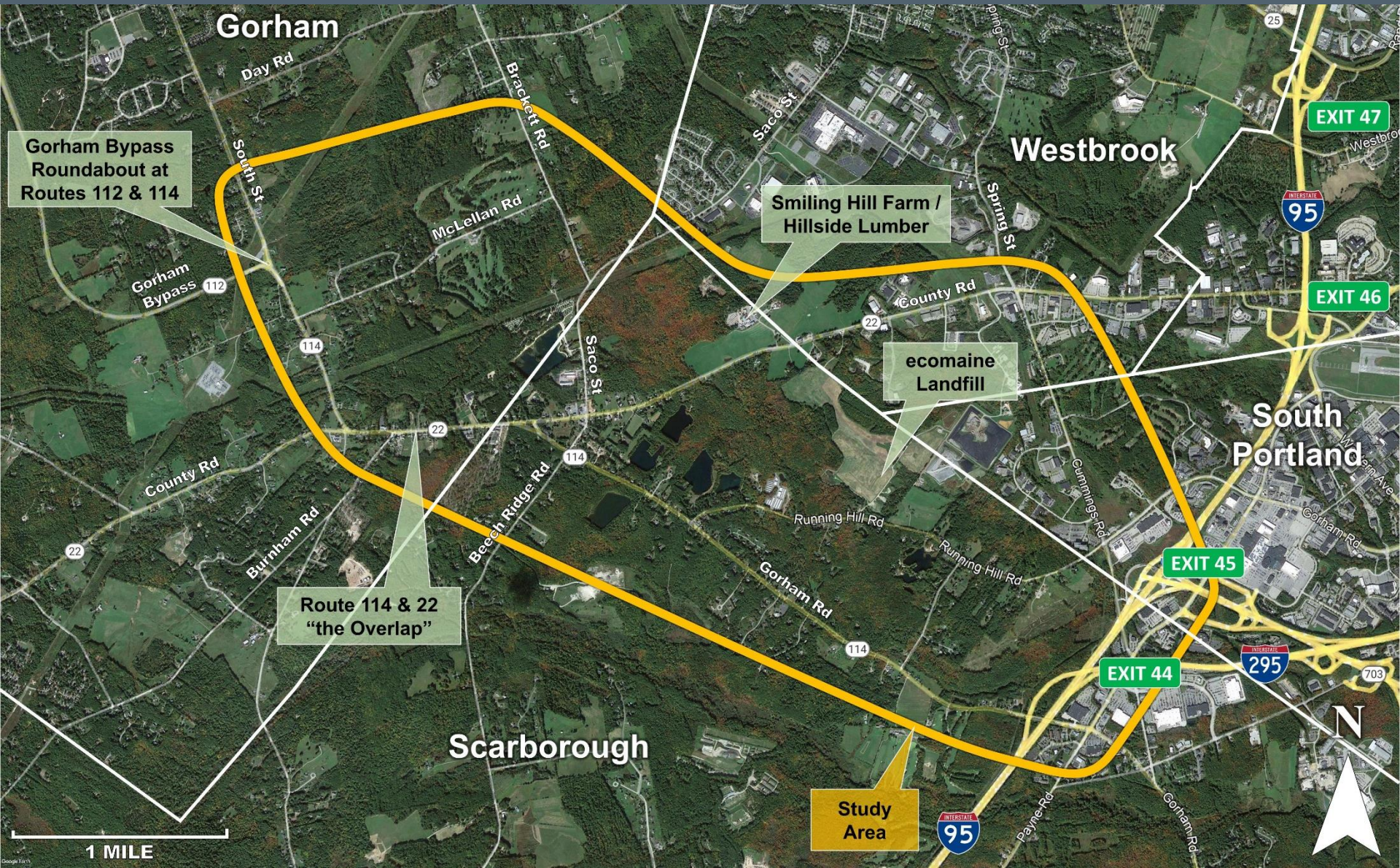


# Schedule

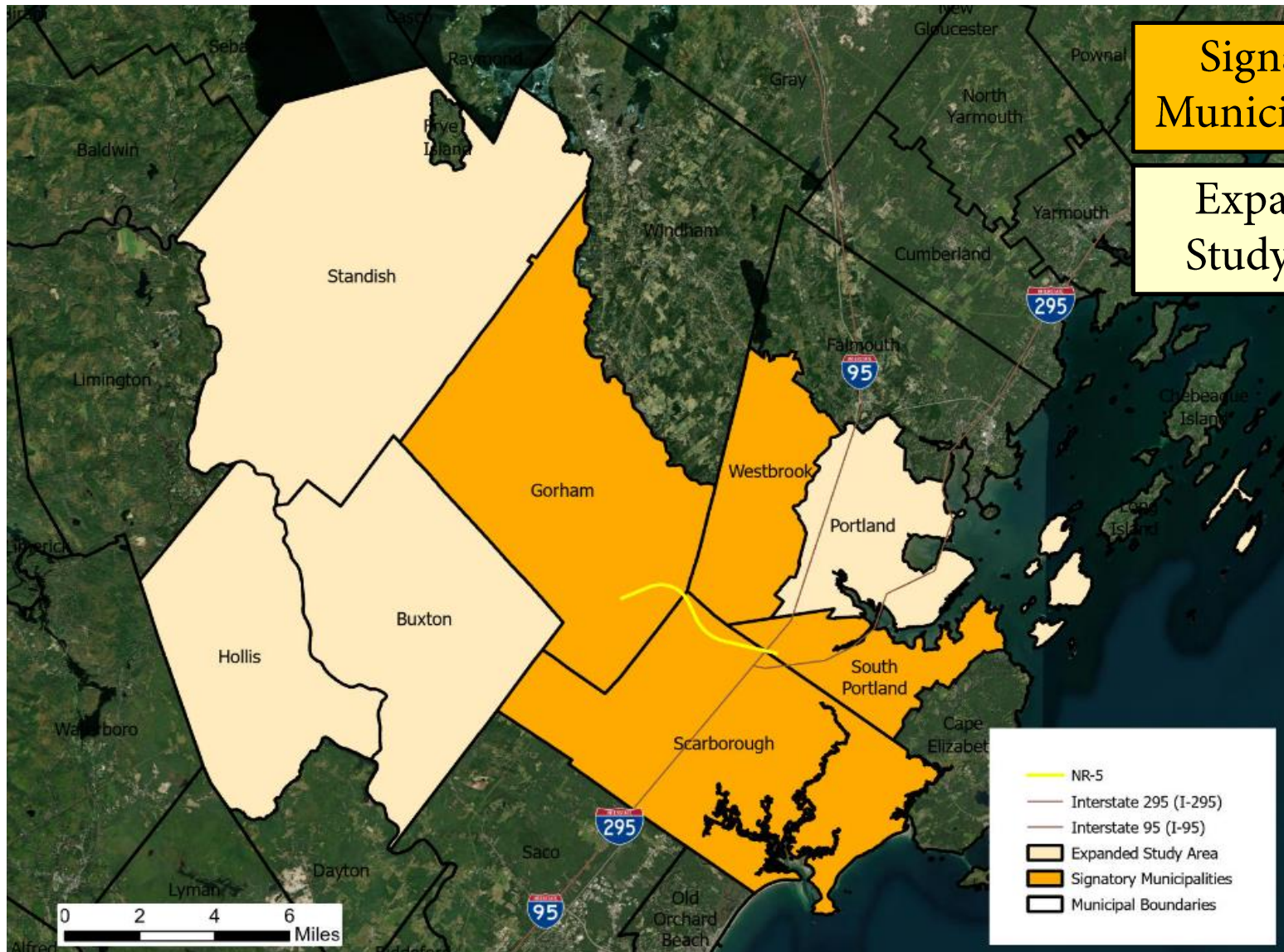


# Study Area

# Study Area



# Expanded Study Area



Signatory Municipalities

Expanded Study Area





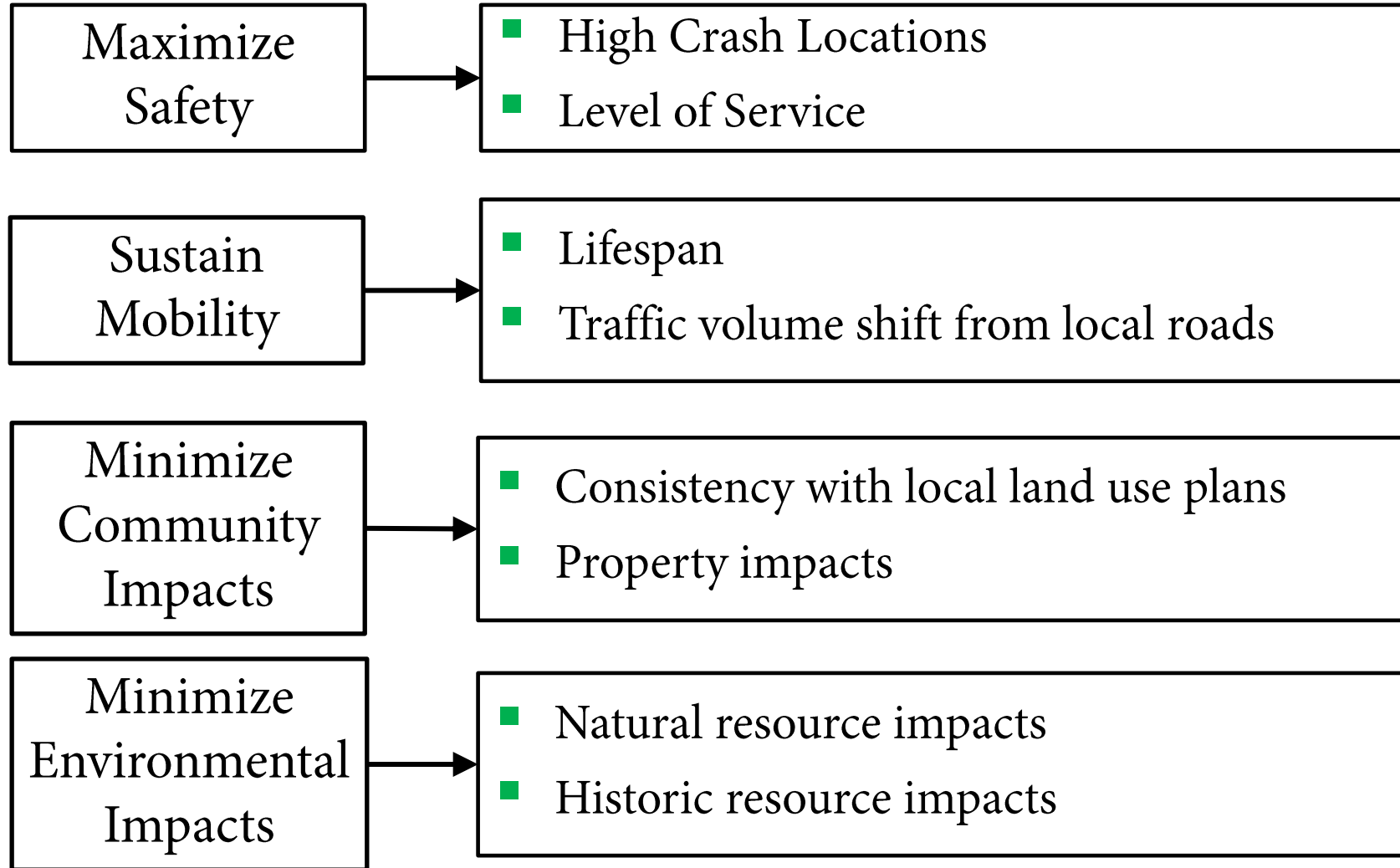
Why a new road?  
What alternatives have been  
considered?

# Project Purpose

To address demonstrated transportation safety and mobility deficiencies within the Gorham - Portland corridor by implementing improvements that **maximize public safety**, the **sustainable mobility** of people and goods, and **minimize adverse community and environmental impacts**.

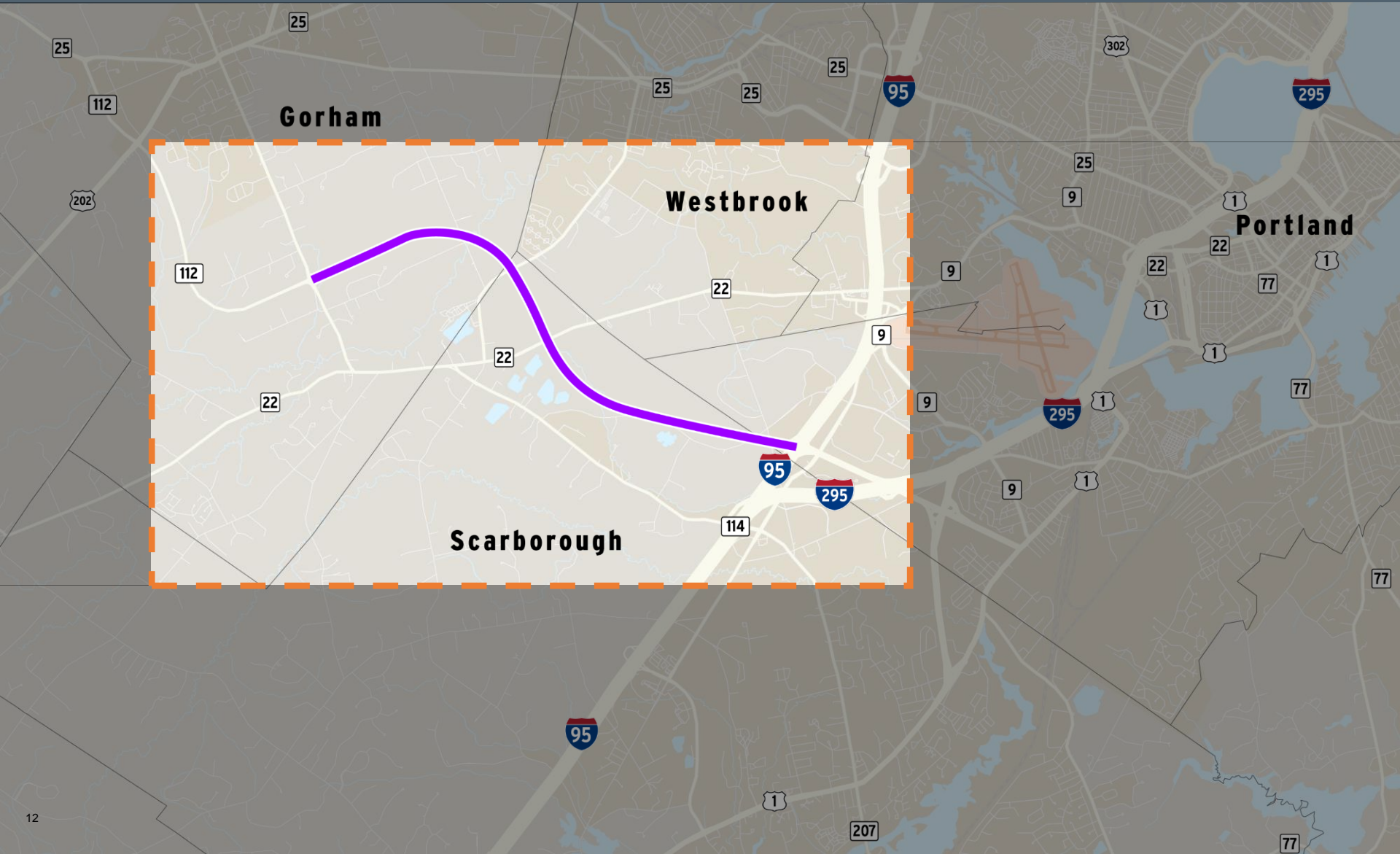
*US Army Corps of Engineers, EPA & USFWS, May 2017;  
Modified Agency Briefing #1, November 30, 2020*

# Project Purpose → Practicability Criteria



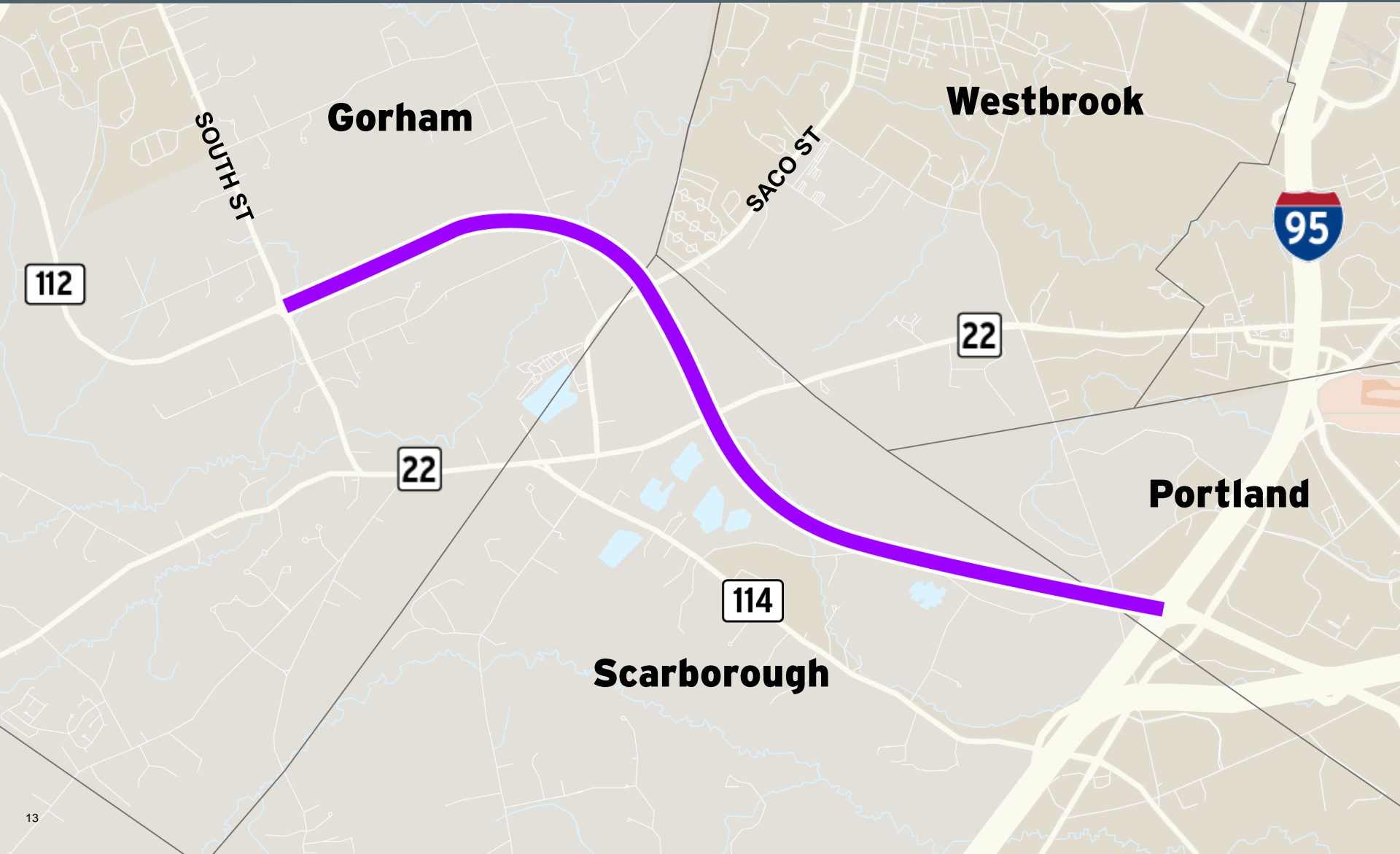
# Alternatives Evaluated

## Landscape Context



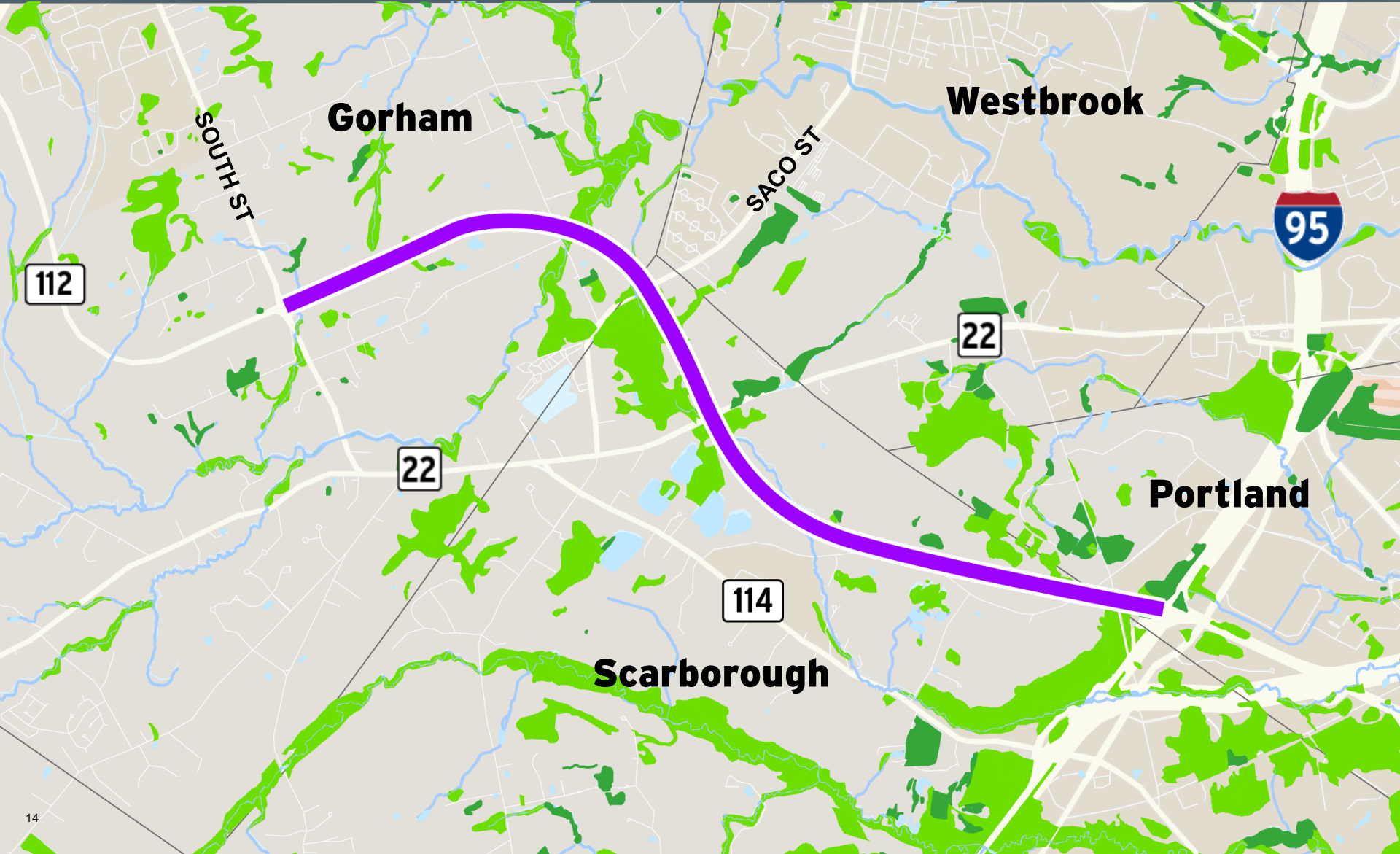
# Alternatives Evaluated

## Landscape Context



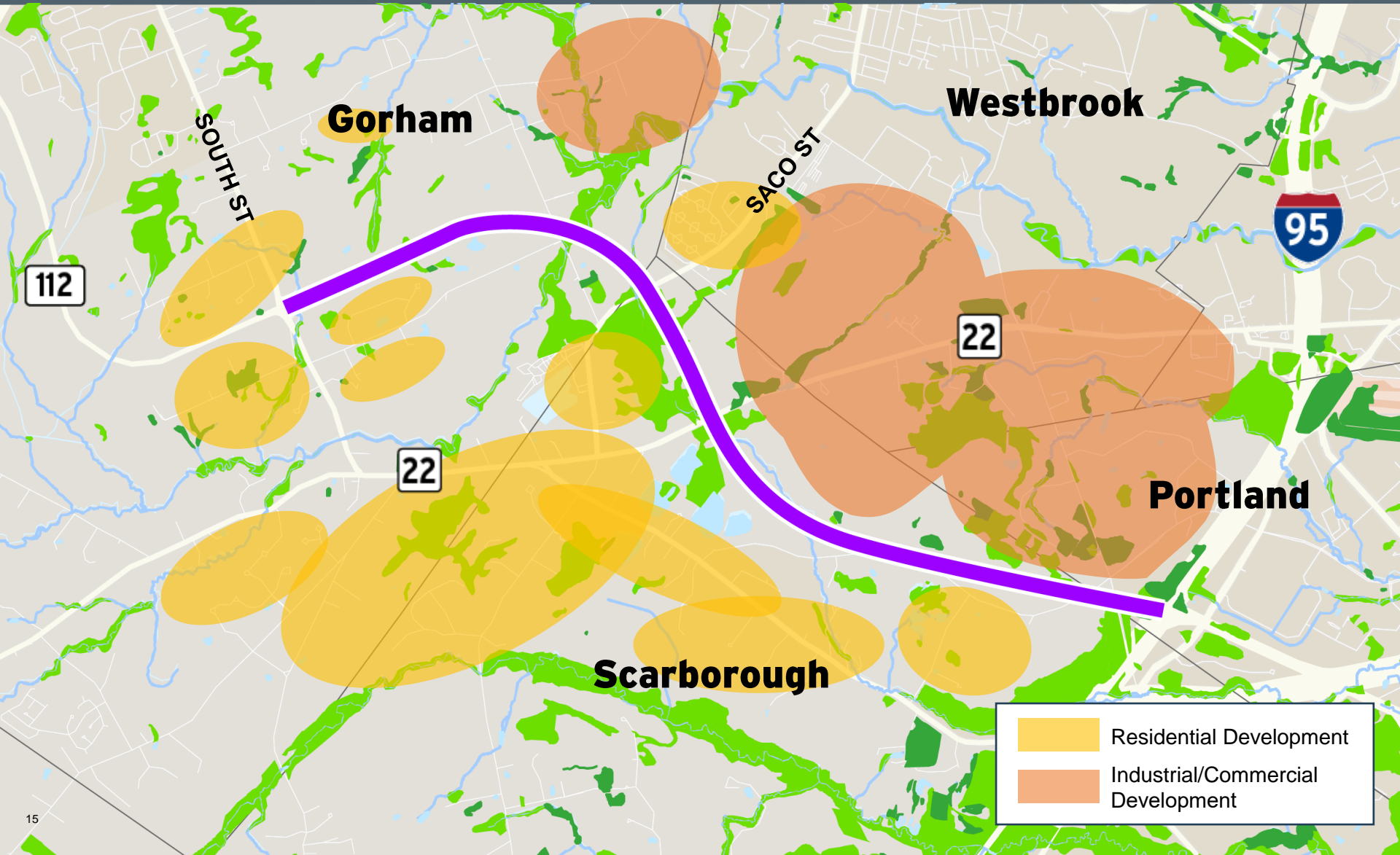
# Alternatives Evaluated

## Landscape Context



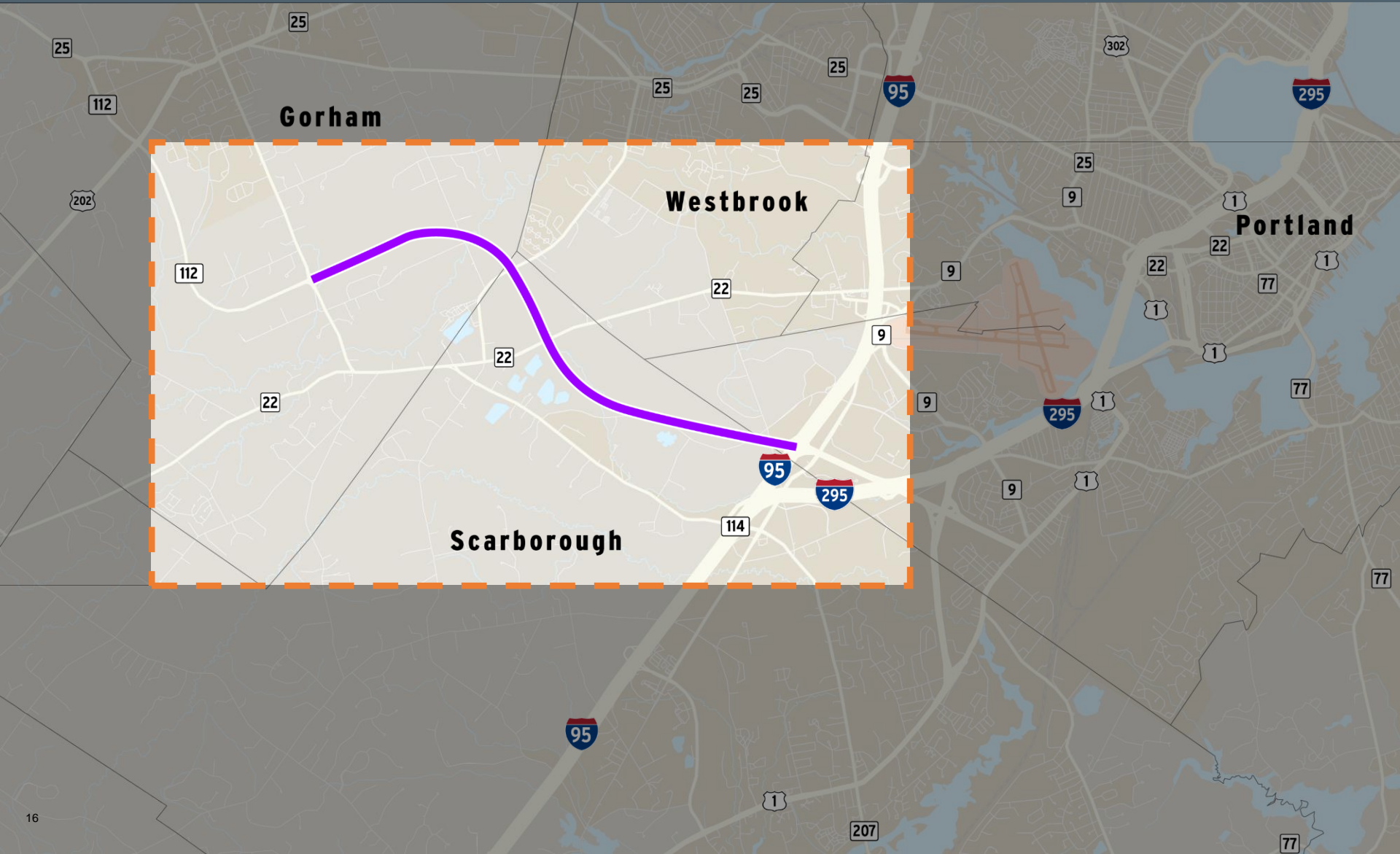
# Alternatives Evaluated

## Landscape Context



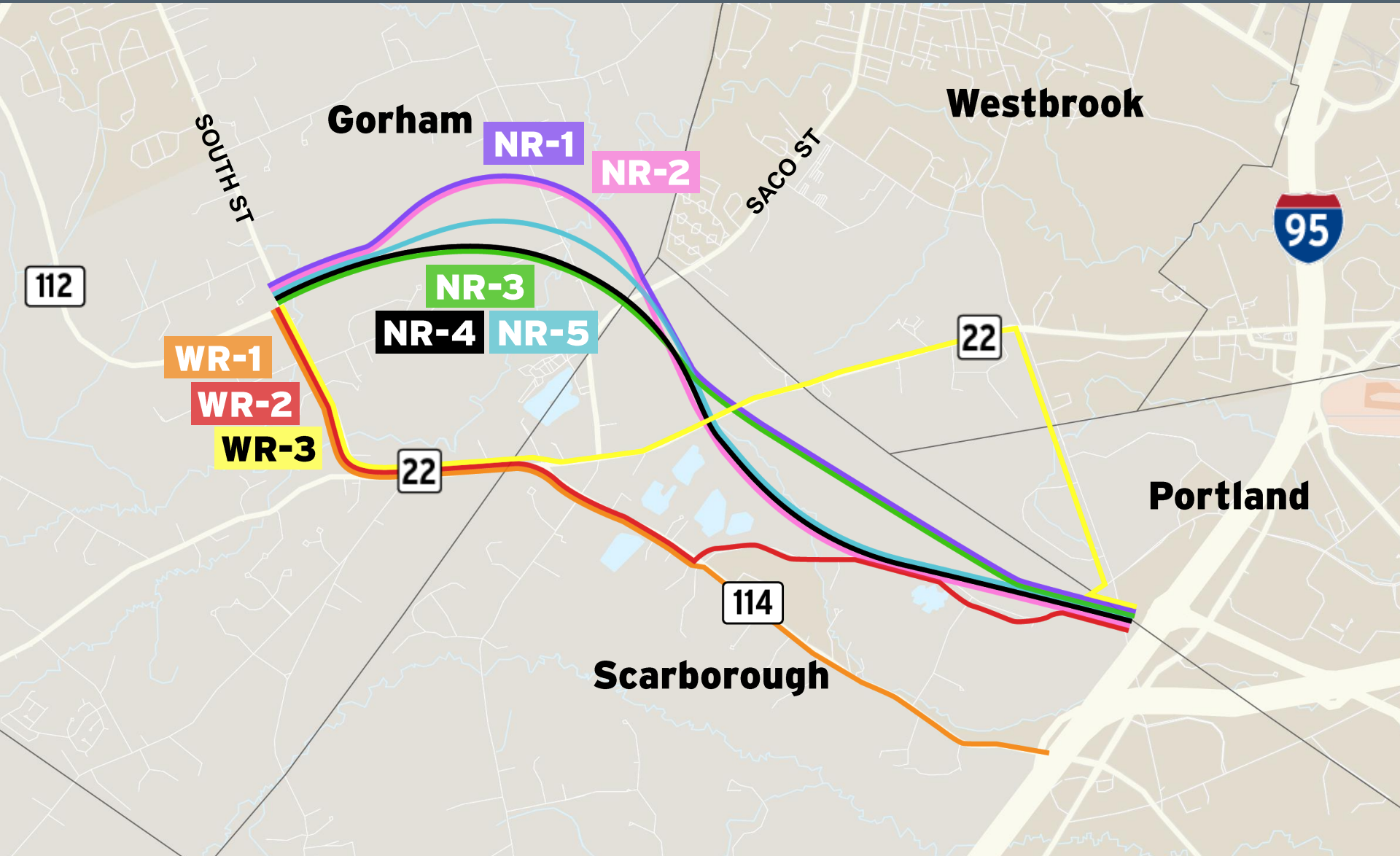
# Alternatives Evaluated

## Landscape Context





# Alternatives Evaluated



# Alternatives Evaluated

## No Build **does not meet** the Project Purpose

- Safety declines
- Mobility declines
- Not consistent with community objectives
- Worsening congestion increases idling emissions

**WR-1**

## WR-1, 2, and 3 **do not meet** the Project Purpose

**WR-2**

**WR-3**

- Redundant infrastructure investments required
- Construction logistics untenable
- Not sustainable – new capacity will be required
- Not consistent with community objectives
- Many properties affected by full or partial takes and access challenges
- Not fiscally viable

**NR-1**

## NR-1 and 3 **do not meet** the Project Purpose

**NR-3**

- Not available due to state law barring construction through landfill
- Not practicable due to technical feasibility associated with landfill.

**NR-2**

## NR-2, 4 and 5 **meet the Project Purpose**

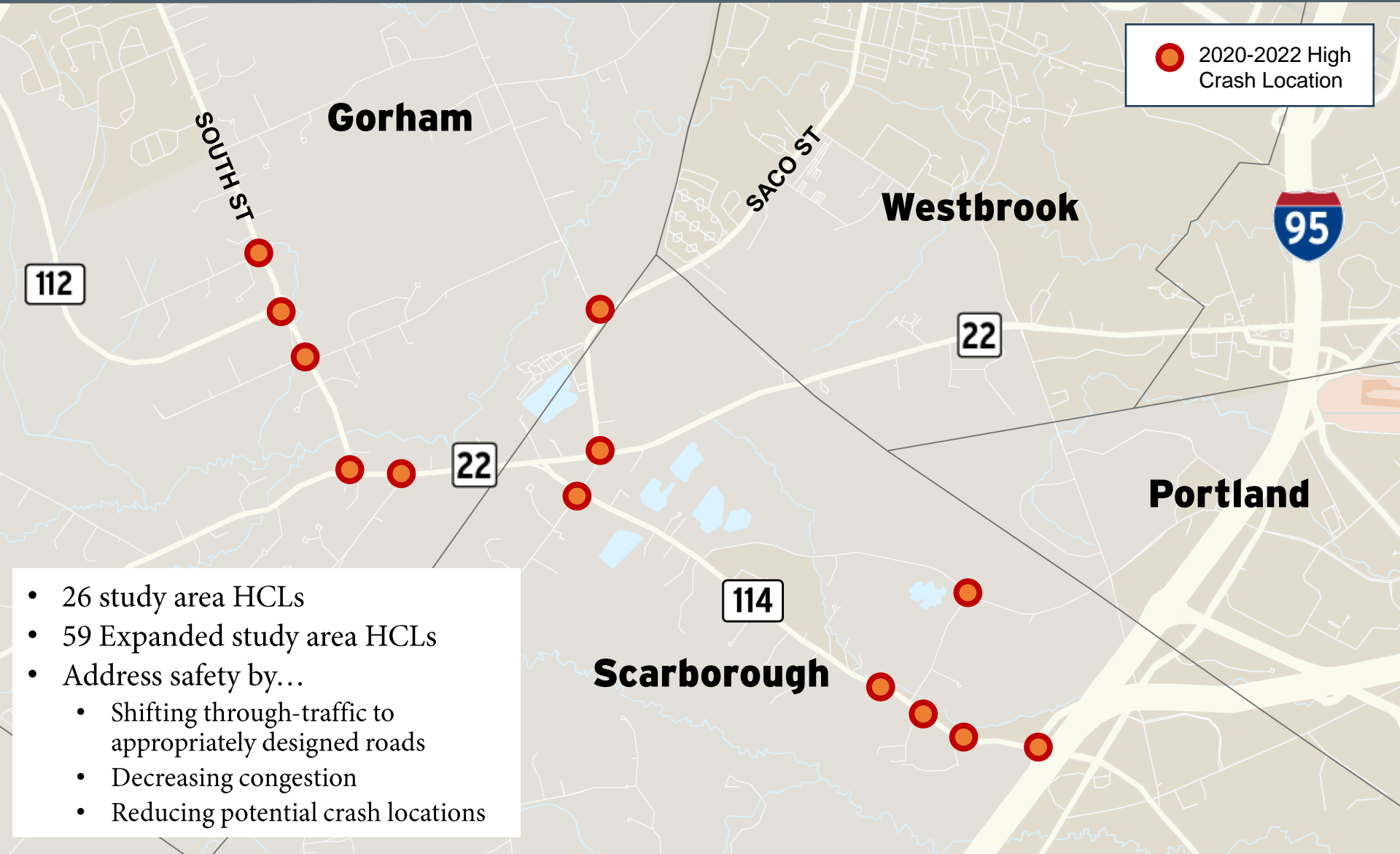
**NR-4**

**NR-5**

- Available, financially & logistically feasible
- Maximize safety
- Maximize sustainable mobility
- Consistent with community objectives
- Forwarded to assessing environmental impacts



# Maximize Safety

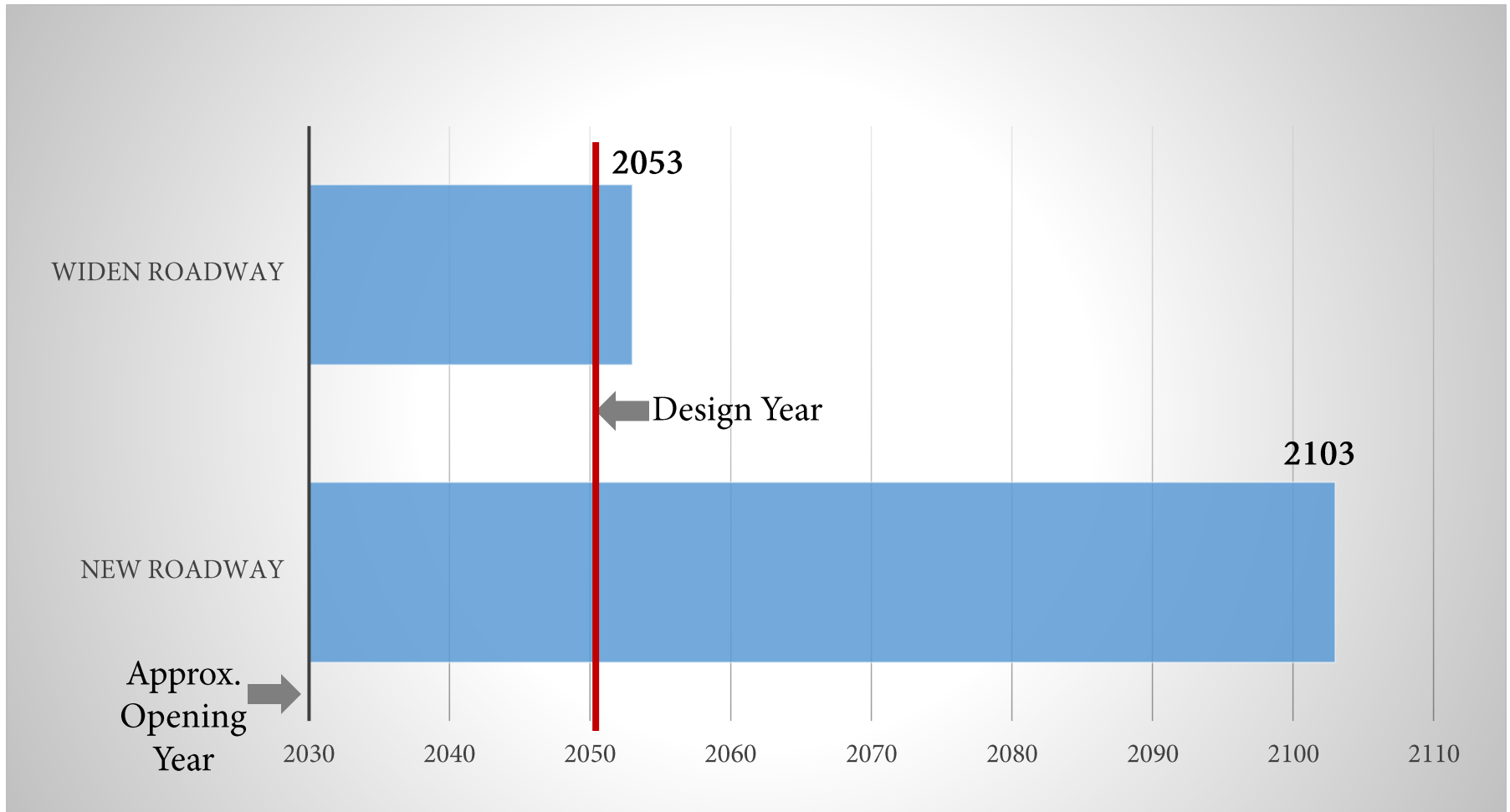


● 2020-2022 High Crash Location

- 26 study area HCLs
- 59 Expanded study area HCLs
- Address safety by...
  - Shifting through-traffic to appropriately designed roads
  - Decreasing congestion
  - Reducing potential crash locations

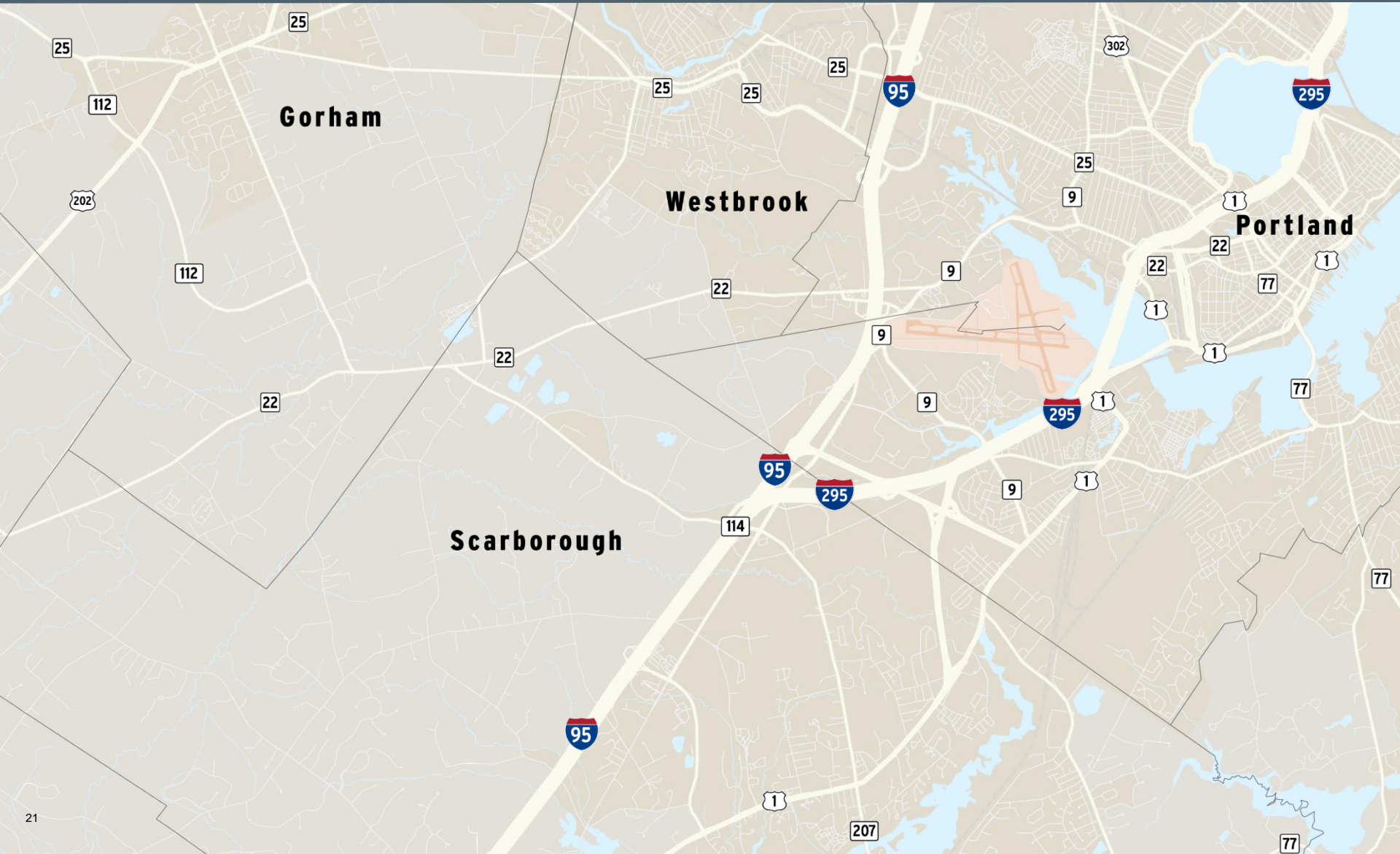
# Sustain Mobility

## Lifespan of Additional Capacity Scenarios



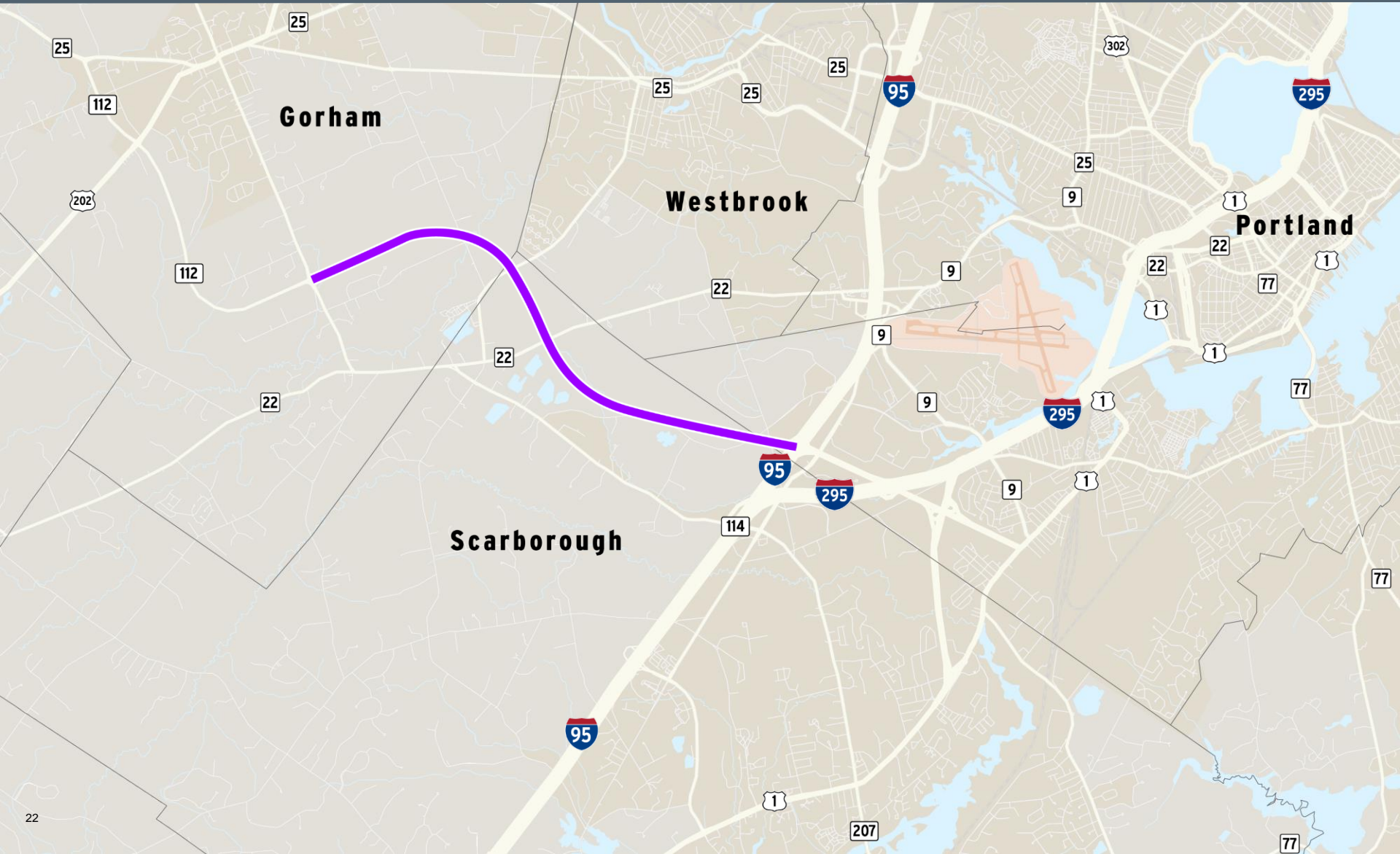
# Sustain Mobility

## Shift Traffic to Roads Built for Capacity



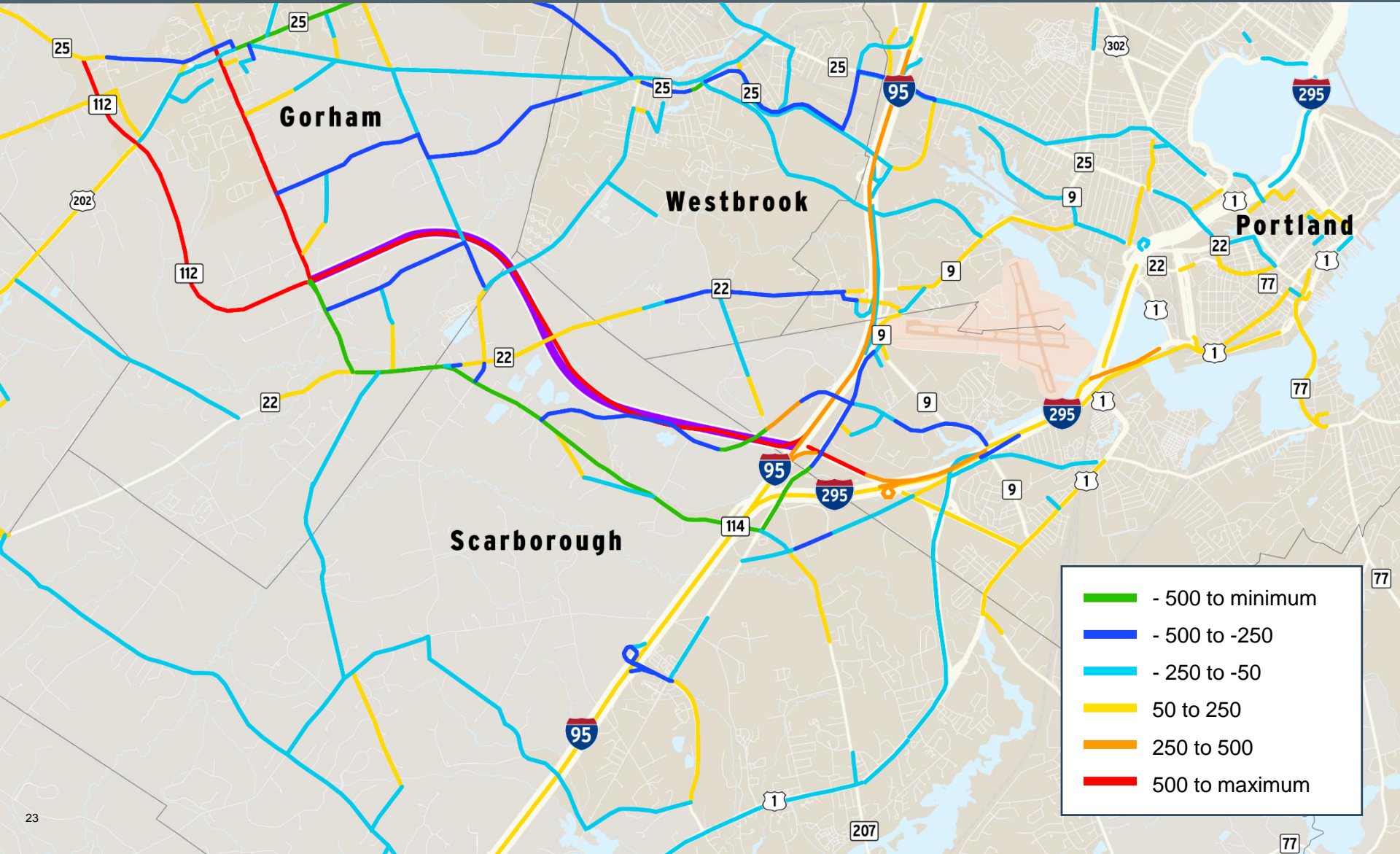
# Sustain Mobility

## Shift Traffic to Roads Built for Capacity



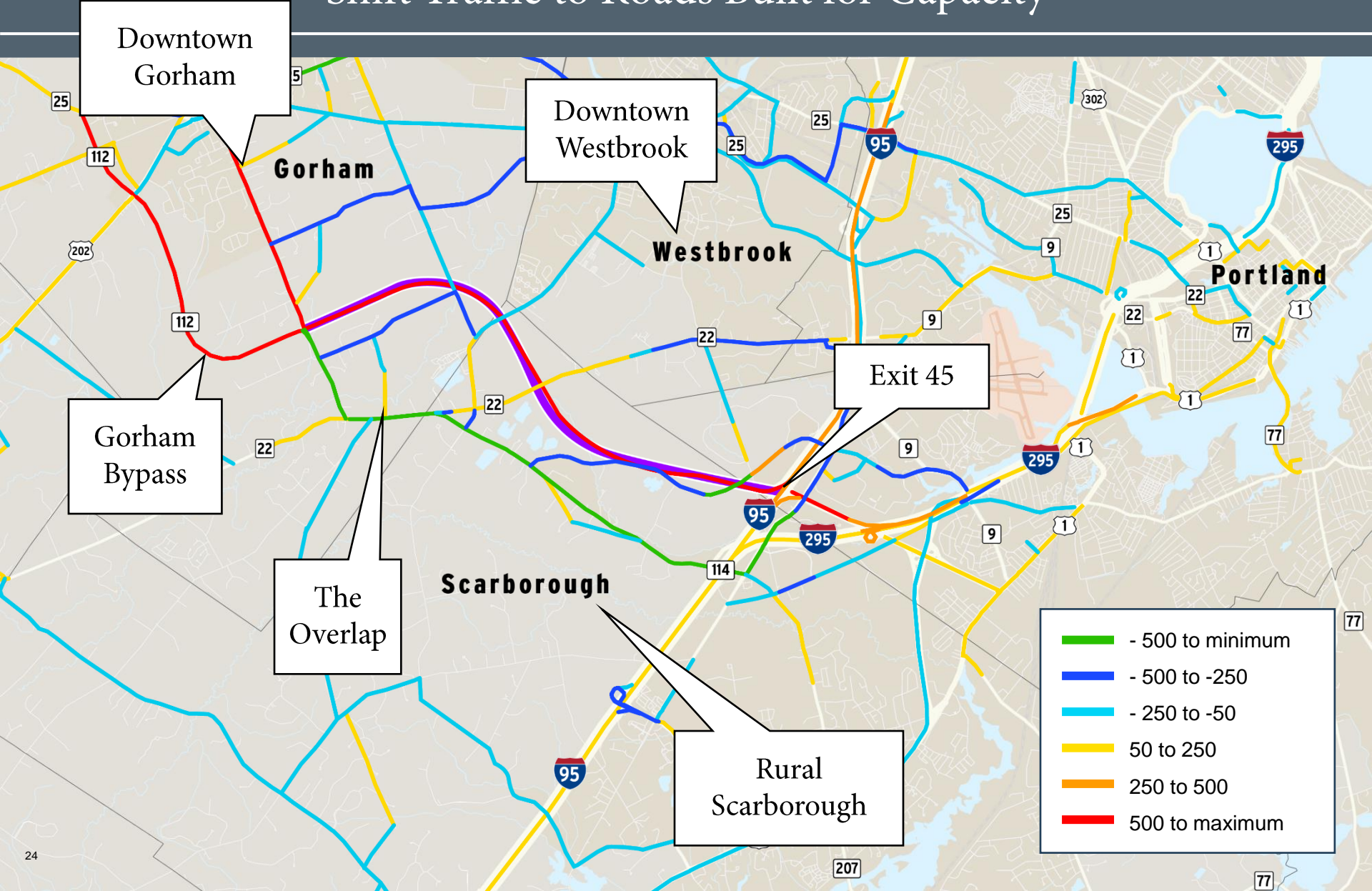
# Sustain Mobility

## Shift Traffic to Roads Built for Capacity



# Sustain Mobility

## Shift Traffic to Roads Built for Capacity

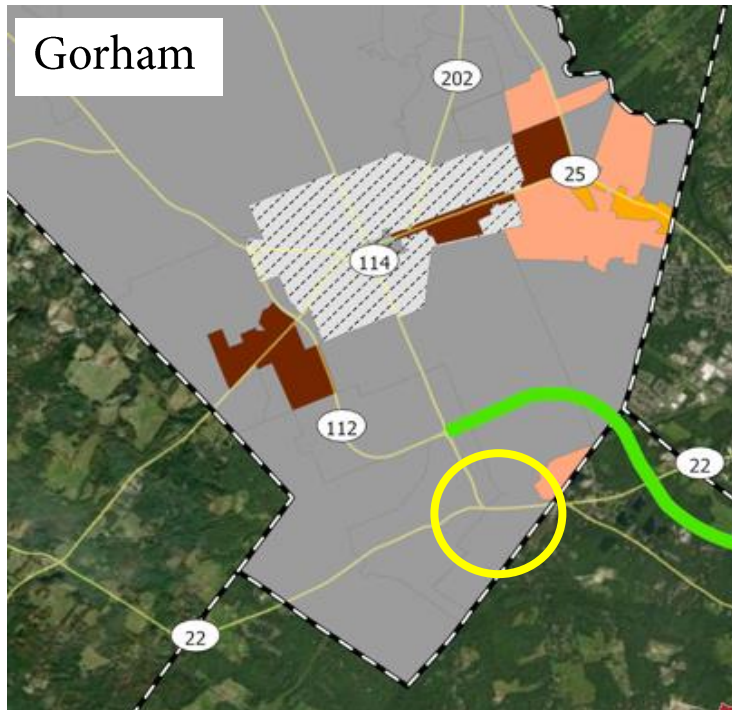




# Minimize Community Impacts

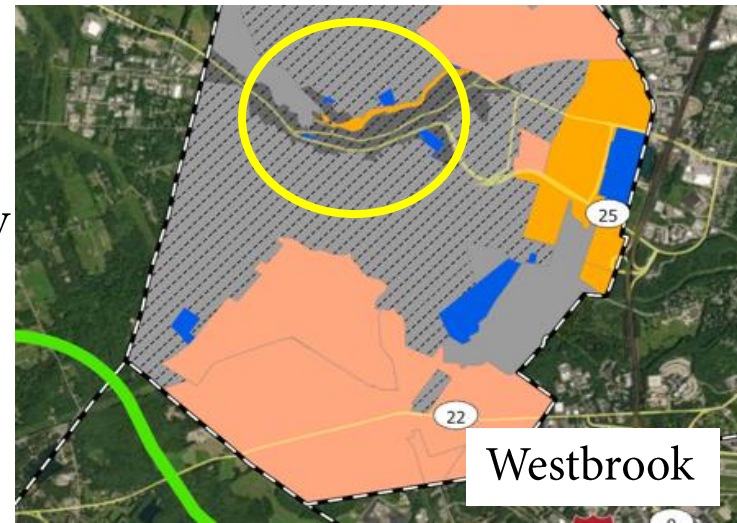
## Consistency with Local Land Use Plans

Gorham

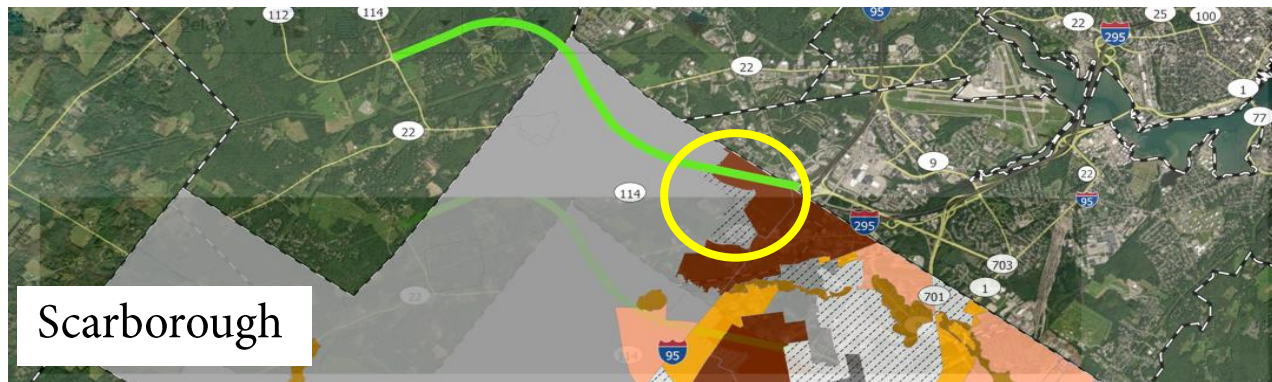


Planned Village-type  
Development

- ✓ Mixed-use
- ✓ Higher density
- ✓ Transit and bike/ped friendly



Westbrook

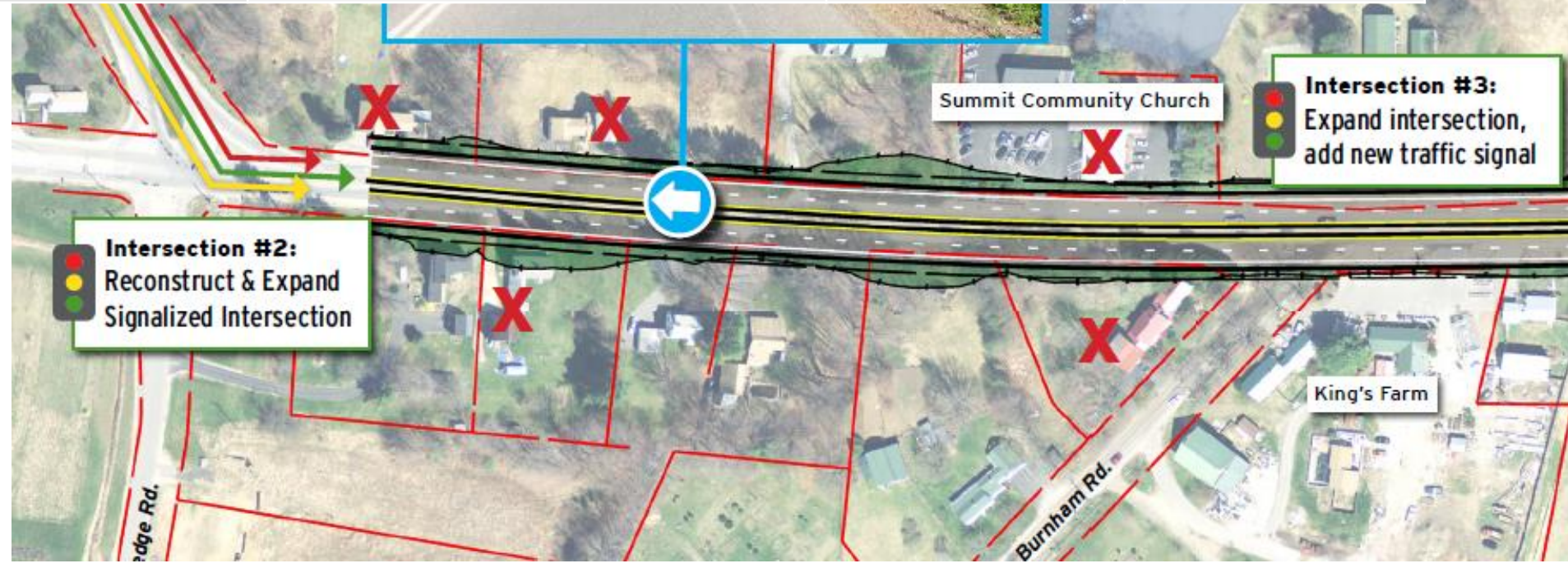


Scarborough

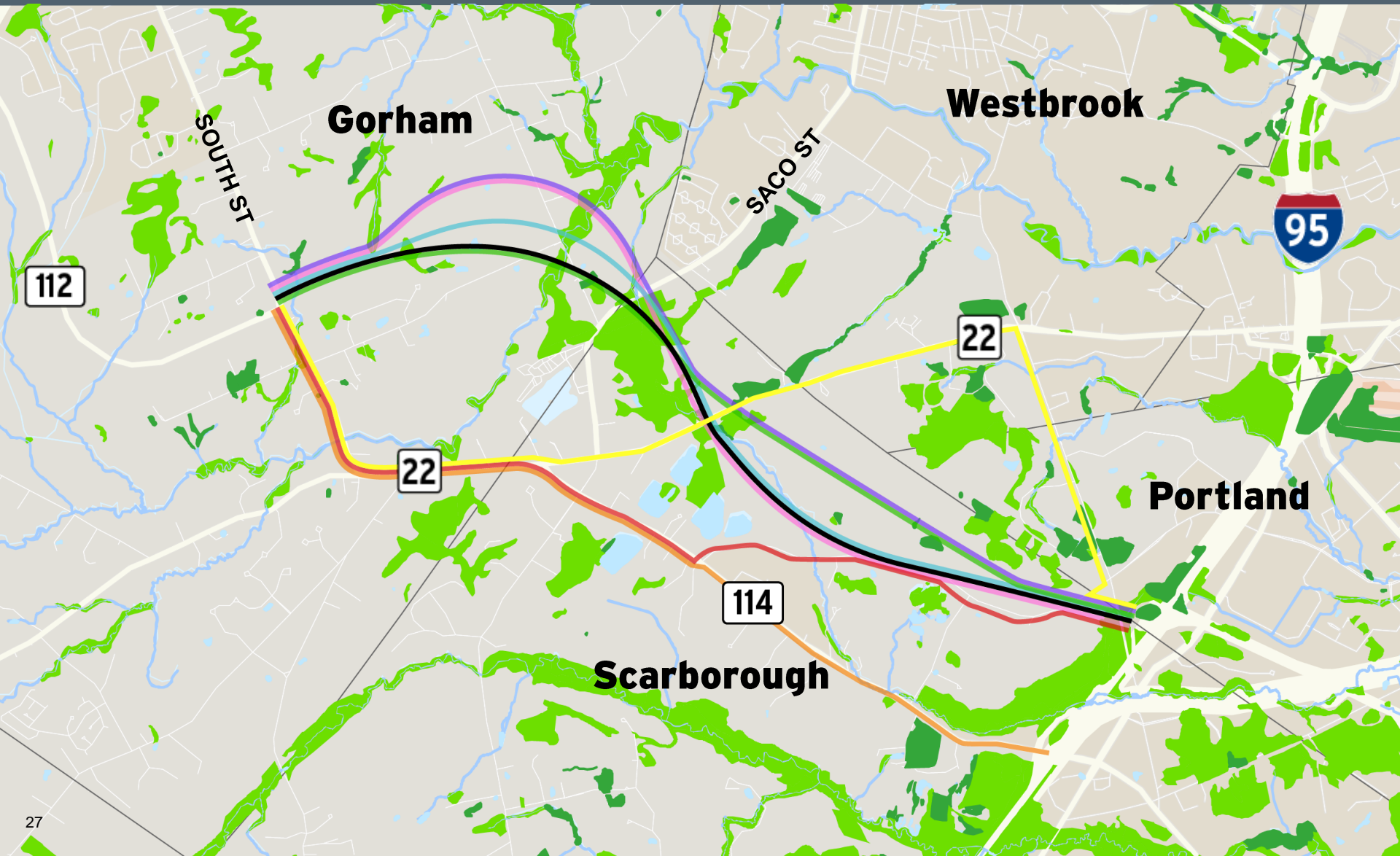
# Minimize Community Impacts

## Property Impacts

Criteria		Widen Roadway	New Roadway
ROW	Parcels Affected	182-184	46-62
	Buildings Acquired	21-24	10-13



# Minimize Environmental Impacts



# Findings: New Road vs. Widen Roadways

No-Build does not meet the Project Purpose



- Safety and mobility decline
- Not consistent with community objectives
- Worsening congestion increases idling emissions

Widen Roadways Alternatives do not meet the Project Purpose



- Redundant infrastructure, construction untenable
- Not sustainable – new capacity will be required
- Not consistent with community objectives
- Many properties affected by full or partial takes

New Road Alternatives 1 and 3 do not meet the Project Purpose



- State law negates ability to construct road through landfill
- Not practicable due to technical feasibility associated with landfill.
- Not fiscally feasible

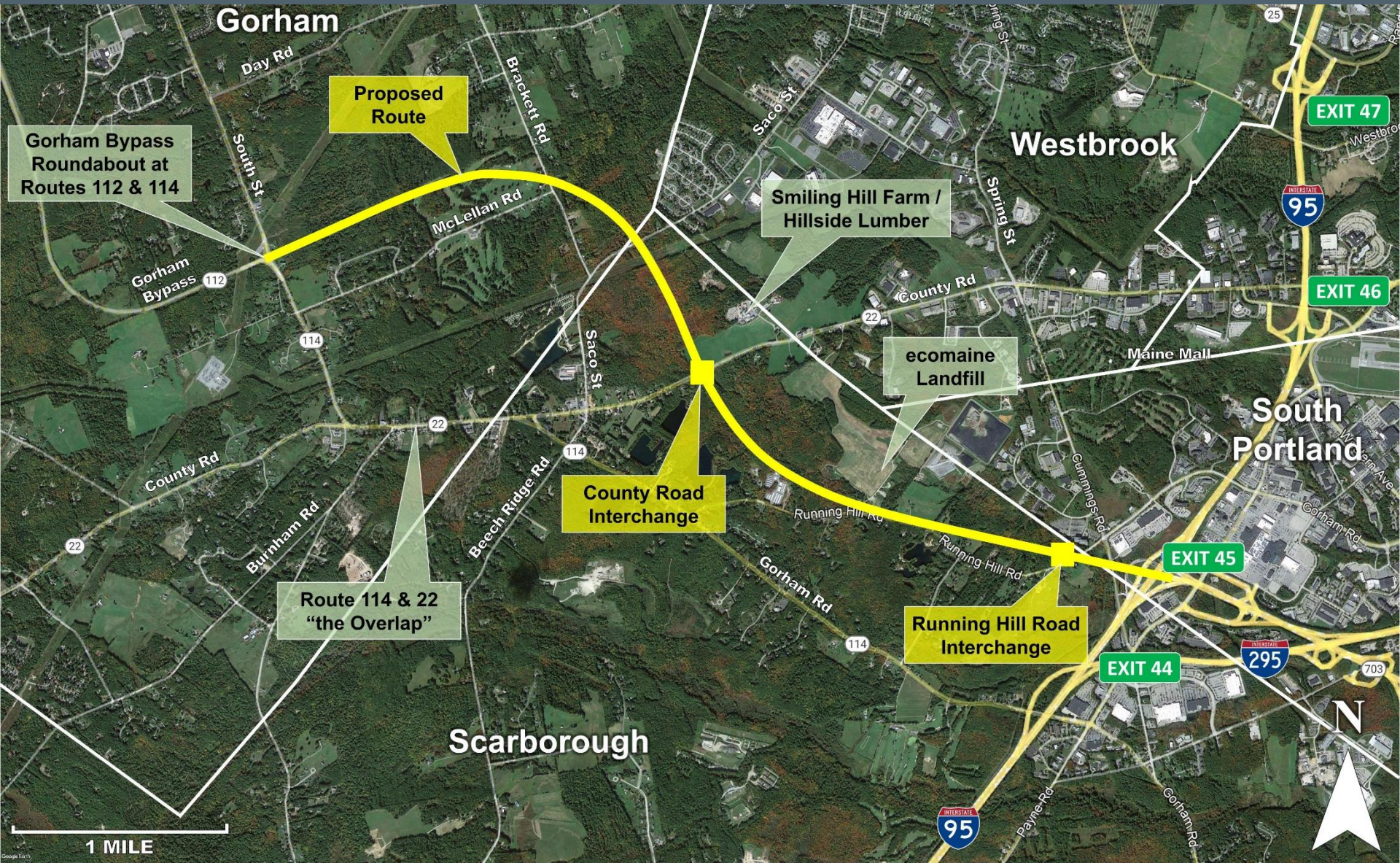
***New Road Alternatives 2, 4 and 5 meet the Project Purpose***



- Available, financially & logistically feasible
- Maximize safety and sustainable mobility
- Consistent with community objectives
- Evaluated for comparative natural resource impacts

# Preferred Alternative

# Applicant's Preferred Alternative



# Transit and Bicycle Pedestrian Opportunities

# Transit and Bicycle/Pedestrian Opportunities

- Gorham Connector may present unique opportunities for enhanced bicycle/pedestrian and transit between Portland and communities to the west.
- Municipalities of South Portland, Scarborough Westbrook, and Gorham have asked MaineDOT to conduct studies of those opportunities.
- Partners:
  - Host Communities
  - MTA
  - Metro
  - PACTS
  - Conservation/Land Trusts
  - Other?



# Transit and Bicycle/Pedestrian Opportunities

- MaineDOT has sent a request for proposals to prequalified consulting firms
  - Evaluation of an extension of Bike Ped Trail Backbone
  - Evaluate trail alignment alternative and termini
  - Evaluate and accommodate current and future connections
  - Evaluate generators and parking facility locations
  - Evaluate municipal and stake holder goals

# Transit and Bicycle/Pedestrian Opportunities

- Enhanced Transit
  - Evaluate how the Gorham connector can be utilized for more direct and efficient regional connections
  - Evaluate location of potential ridership generators and propensity to ride
  - Evaluate connections and enhancements to existing transit systems
  - Evaluate integration with existing and future Active Transportation connections
  - Evaluate integration with existing and future parking areas
  - Evaluate multiple routing and service options in context of potential ridership and cost

# Consistency with Maine Climate Action Plan

# Consistency with Maine Climate Action Plan

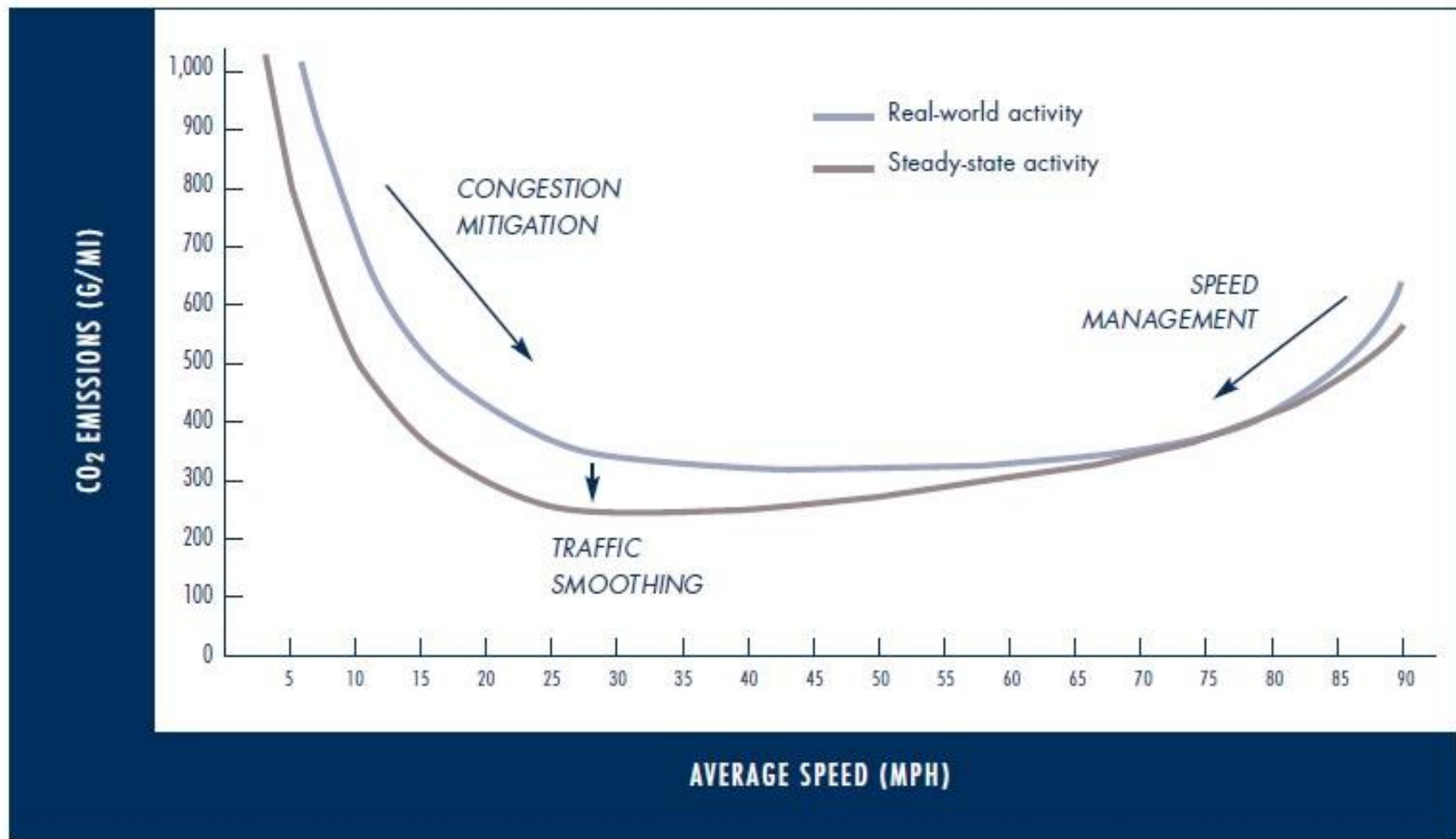
- Gorham Connector project to include elements that support Governors Climate Action plan
- Additional elements likely be included as part of this project that will support Plan:
  - Funding transit
  - Park and Ride facilities
  - EV Charging
  - Considering the elimination of cash collection on Gorham connector
- MaineDOT to also assessing opportunities (transit, bicycle/pedestrian) in parallel
- Collectively, these added elements can make the project in alignment with Maine Climate Action Plan



Won't the project create air quality impacts, more greenhouse gases?

# Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Impacts

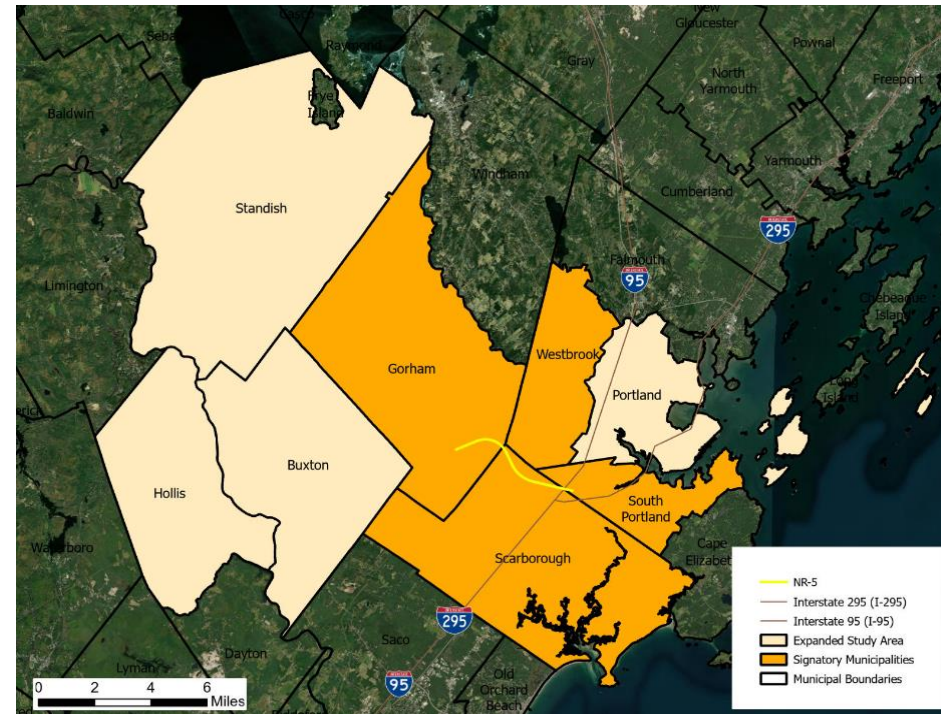
Possible use of traffic operation strategies in reducing on-road CO<sub>2</sub> emissions



Won't the project exacerbate sprawl?  
Have you evaluated the potential  
Induced Land Use Effects?

# What are Indirect Land Use Effects (ILE)?

- An ILE analysis is required as part of the project's overall "Indirect and Cumulative" Impacts analysis
- ILE are changes that would not have occurred without the **increased accessibility** from a specific transportation project
- Compared to direct effects, ILE are:
  - later in time
  - farther removed in distance
  - more uncertain
- Some ILE may be desired, some not
- Accessibility gains are consumed by non land use-induced travel as well as land use....





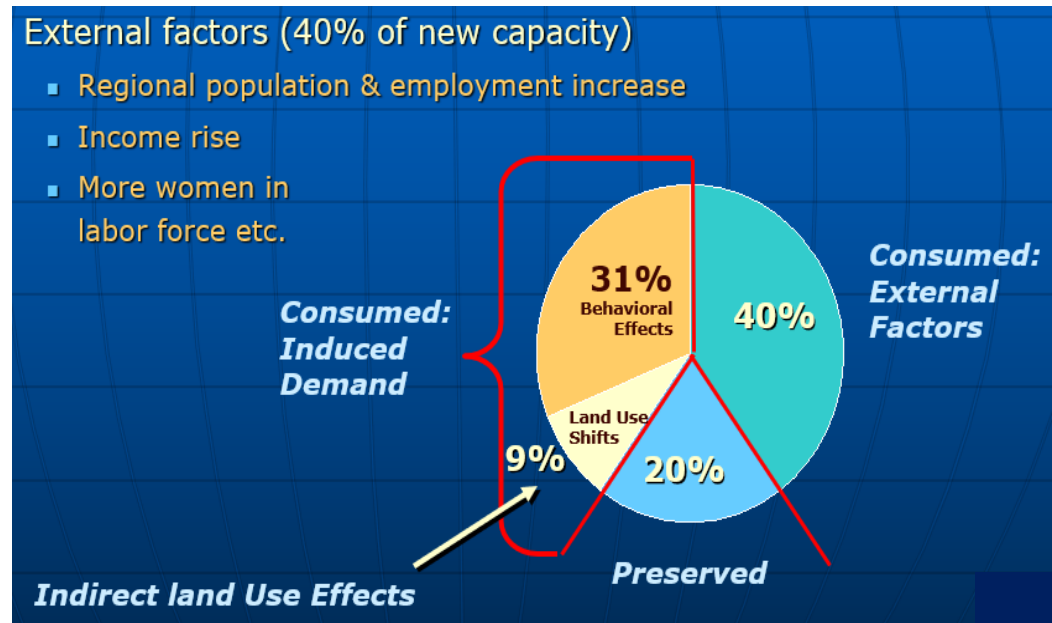
# Bottom Line: Land Use Impacts are Minimal

	2020 HH (Households)	2045 HH (base)	2028 – 2045 annual HH growth (base)	2028 - 2045 annual HH growth (w/Gorham Connector)	Difference in annual HH growth (w/GC – base)
<b>Portland</b>	32,300	35,843	269	269	<b>0</b>
<b>South Portland</b>	12,575	15,238	111	113	<b>2</b>
<b>Westbrook</b>	9,613	11,758	85	85	<b>0</b>
<b>Scarborough</b>	8,965	11,040	86	90	<b>4</b>
<b>Gorham</b>	7,428	8,837	69	73	<b>4</b>
<b>Standish</b>	4,360	4,264	30	33	<b>3</b>
<b>Hollis</b>	2,010	2,199	17	17	<b>0</b>
<b>Buxton</b>	3,561	3,720	23	24	<b>2</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	80,812	92,898	690	704	<b>14</b>

# Why are the Land Use Impacts so Small?

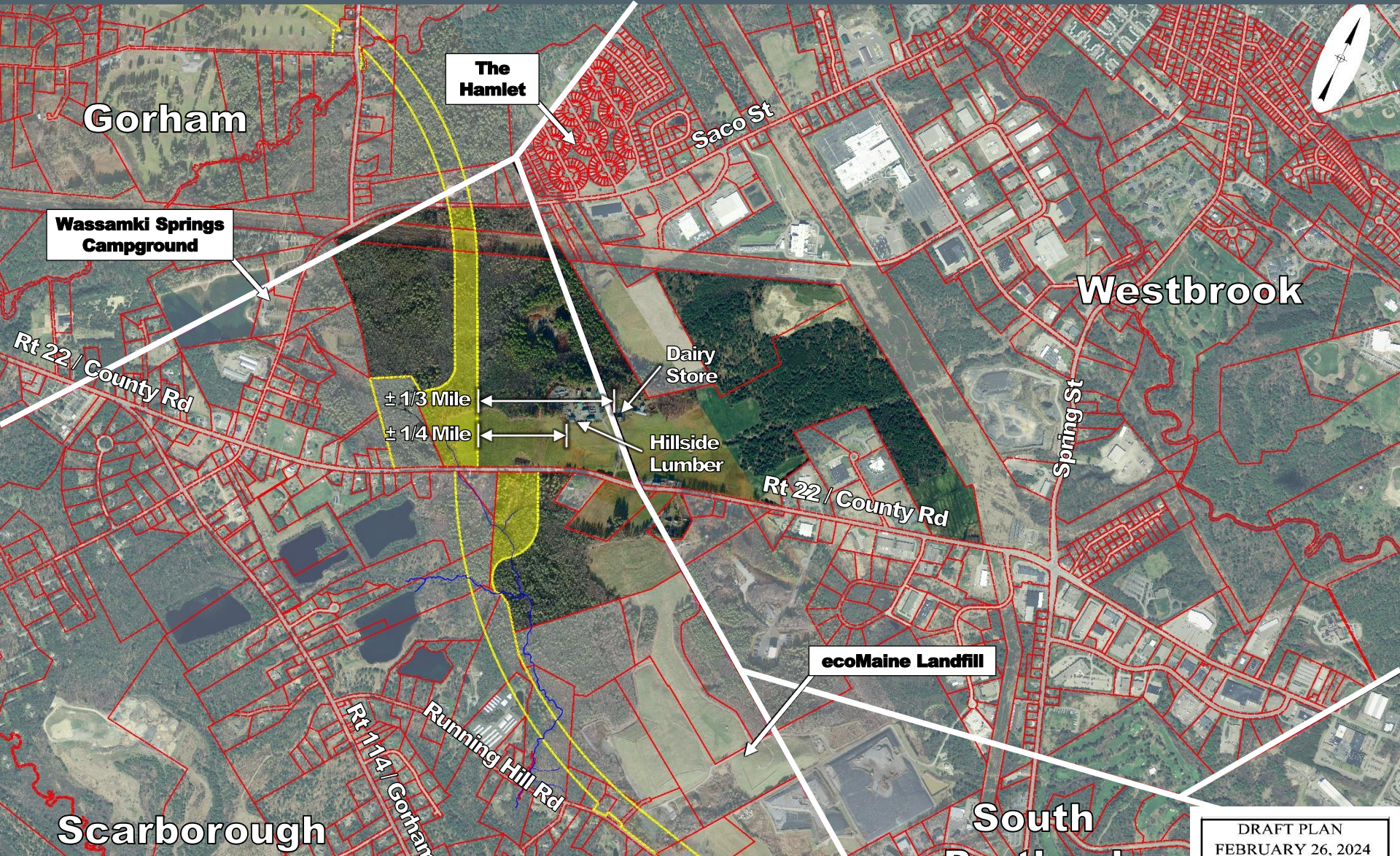
Land Use shifts are only one small part of *Induced Travel*.....Quite apart from any Land Use shifts, the GC's added road capacity will be absorbed by:

- External Factors
  - Increased population and jobs
  - Rising incomes
  - People retiring later
  - More people working
- Changes in travel behavior
  - Some people now make new trips
  - Some people leave for work later
  - Some people stop carpooling
  - Some people use new routes
- External Factors and Behavioral change more important than land use shifts in absorbing added capacity, according to research
- Under 2% of Gorham Connector traffic is from Induced Land Use



How does the new avoid the Smiling Hill Farm operations?

# Smiling Hill Farm



# Thank you!

