



# The Transportation Nightmare's Project

A vertical strip on the left side of the slide shows the painting 'The Scream' by Edvard Munch. It depicts a figure in the foreground with a pale, yellowish face and wide, staring eyes, set against a turbulent, swirling background of orange, red, and blue. The figure's hands are raised to their face in a gesture of distress or shock.

# Introduction

Richard Lodge, Editor-in-Chief, MetroWest Daily News

# Transportation Committee Membership

## Co-Chairs

Kathleen Bartolini, Town Planner, Framingham

Robert Nagi, Project Manager, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Vera Kalias, Town Planner, Southborough

Rosemarie Scrivens, CMRPC

Ted Welte, MetroWest Chamber of Commerce

Scott Weiss, Planning Board, Town of Ashland

Don Wheeler, Selectman, Town of Boxborough

Amy Cotter, MetroWest Growth Management Committee

Lyn Billman-Golemme, MetroWest Transportation Equity Coalition

Michele Brooks, MetroWest/495 TMA

Laura Castelli, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Paul Matthews, 495/MetroWest Partnership

Al Lima, City Planner, Marlborough

Michelle Ciccolo, Assistant Administrator, Hudson

The painting 'The Scream' by Edvard Munch, showing a figure in the foreground with a pale, yellowish face and wide, staring eyes, set against a turbulent, swirling sky of red, orange, and yellow, and a dark, swirling sea below.

***“The public does not understand, nor does it care, about city limits or jurisdictional responsibilities. If the transportation system is not operating effectively, the public wants it fixed.”***

**Steven Hofener, PE, PTOE,**  
International President of the Institute  
of Transportation Engineers (ITE)

# What is driving the Nightmares Project?

The past decade has seen shifts in the MetroWest demographics.

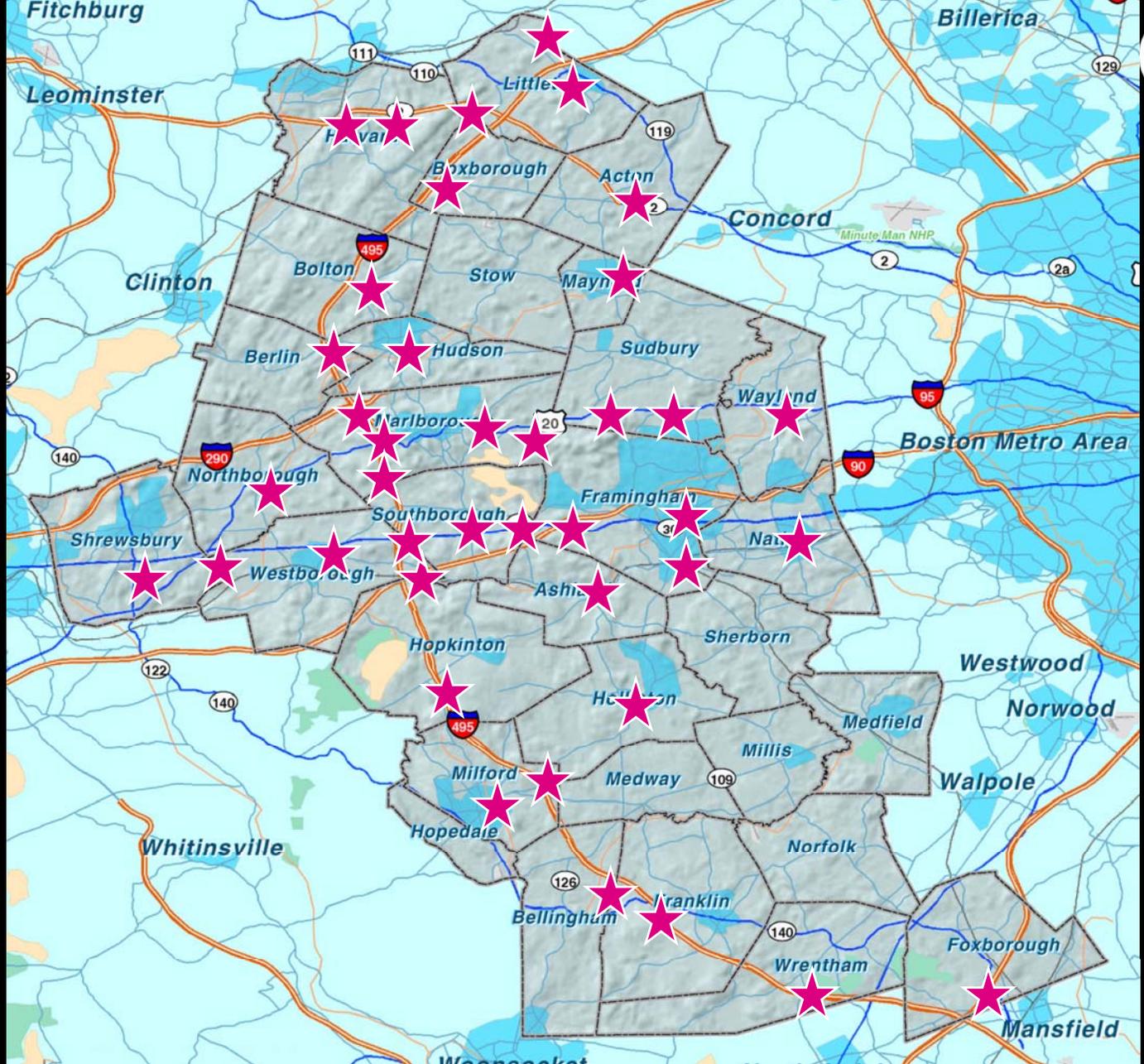
- In 1990, 40 % of the MetroWest Population lived and worked in the region and 25 % worked in the greater Boston area
- In 2000, 57 % of the MetroWest Population live and work in the region and only 17 % work in the greater Boston area
- Like it or not, the shift is happening. People want to work where they live.

# Nightmare Evaluation Criteria

“Nightmares” were nominated by the general public and informed through the MetroWest Daily News.

The Committee considered all the nominations and rated the “top 10” using the following criteria:

- How many people does this affect?
- How severe is this issue?
- How often / when does it occur?
  - Does it happen all the time or just during the peak commuter hours?



Over 150 Suggested "Nightmare's" Presented for Consideration



## ***What is my nightmare?***

***“The Reckless drivers on 495! The highway is like crackerjacks – 50% nuts!”***

***“The MassPike between 495 and 128... you don’t know if it’s going to take 20 minutes or 60 minutes!”***

***“Why can’t I commute from Cambridge to Marlborough on my bike?”***

***“All that construction is crazy!”***

***“Route 9 is getting worse by the day. ‘Nuf said.”***

**-- A small sampling of the comments received by the commuters in the region**



## ***What is my solution?***

***“Add a lane to 495 from I-290 to I-93”***

***“Increase the presence of the State and Local Police to slow down those reckless drivers”***

***“Widen the road, put in some traffic lights – or both!”***

***“Remove all those traffic lights!”***

***“Consider major investments NOW in alternatives to roads:  
Trains, buses, bicycles, and walking”***

**-- A small sampling of the solutions suggested by the commuters in the region**

**And now...**  
And now.....

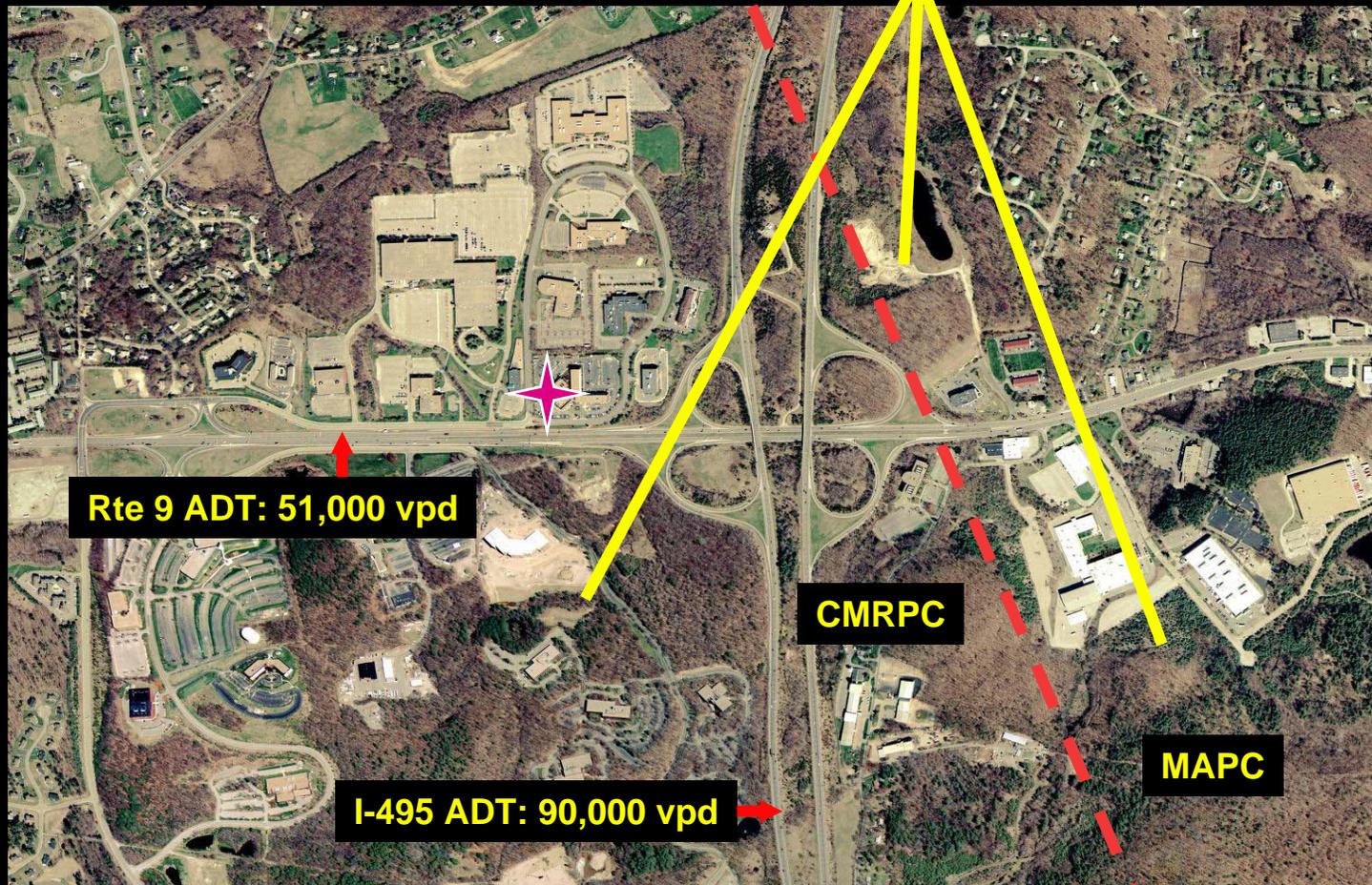
# The TOP 10 TRANSPORTATION NIGHTMARES

## in the I-495/MetroWest Region



# #10 – I-495 at Route 9

## 3.0 MSF of Future Development Potential



Rte 9 ADT: 51,000 vpd

I-495 ADT: 90,000 vpd

CMRPC

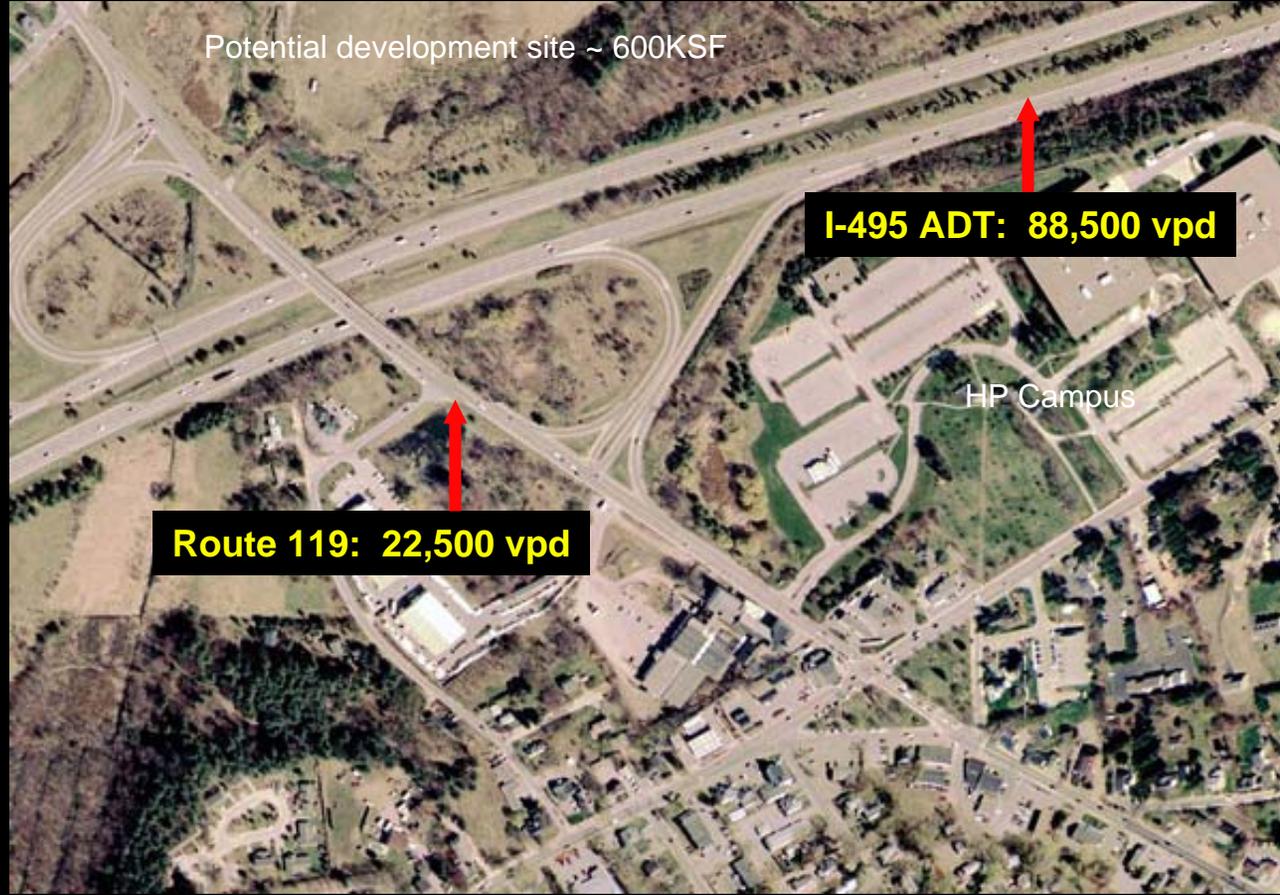
MAPC

3.0 MSF = ~18,000 new ADT

# #9 – The “Bookends”

*Exit 31 (Route 119 in Littleton)*

*Exit 17 (West Central Street –Route 140 in Franklin)*



**600KSF = 2,400 new ADT**



## #9a – The “Bookends”

*Exit 31 (Route 119 in Littleton)*

### Route 119

Constraints: Half Cloverleaf

Numerous Destinations:

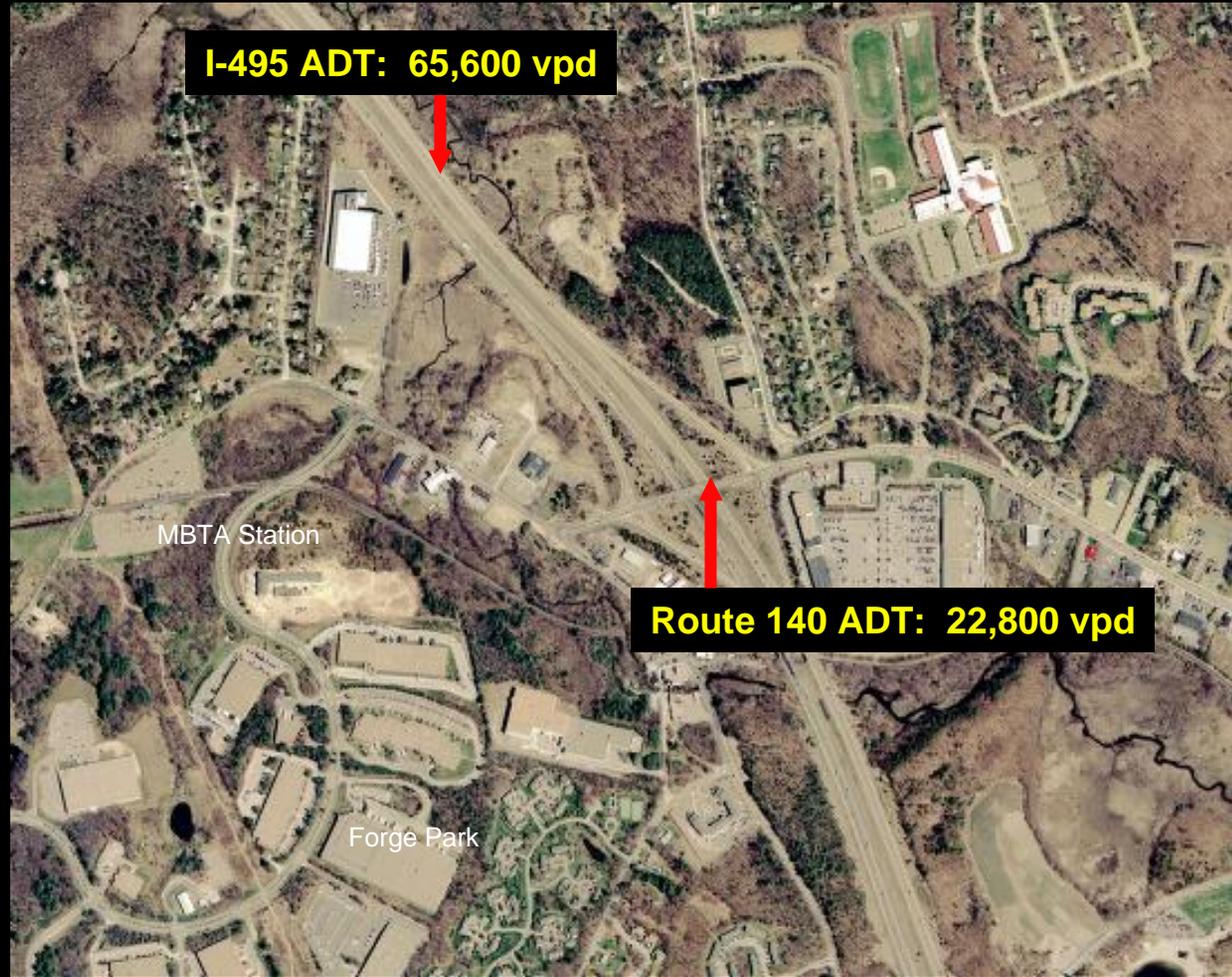
- Littleton Common & HP
- Backdoor access to Route 2 / Concord Rotary
- Westford Technology Park/Route 225 Area

No Traffic Lights, predominant movement is left-turns on & off the ramps

PLUS another 600,000 sf of development already permitted for the interchange itself!

# #9b – The “Bookends”

Exit 17 (West Central Street –Route 140 in Franklin)



**Forge Park = 2,500 new ADT**

## #9 – The “Bookends” (cont)

*Exit 31 (Route 119 in Littleton)*

*Exit 17 (West Central Street –Route 140 in Franklin)*

### Route 140

Truck Traffic impacts the interchange and surrounding intersections

MBTA Station parking at capacity (as with all other stations on this line)

Route 140 is growing 100% in 6 years

*The good news – It’s already under construction  
And should be fixed with the help of both public  
and private efforts!*

# #8 – System-wide Maintenance

## Signal Systems & Roadways

# Maintenan

- 32 Communities
- 200+ Traffic Signals
- Not 1 dedicated Municipal Traffic Engineer... *anywhere!*
- Limited repair Expertise at Municipal Level



## #8 – System Wide Maintenance (Cont)

What does system-wide maintenance mean?

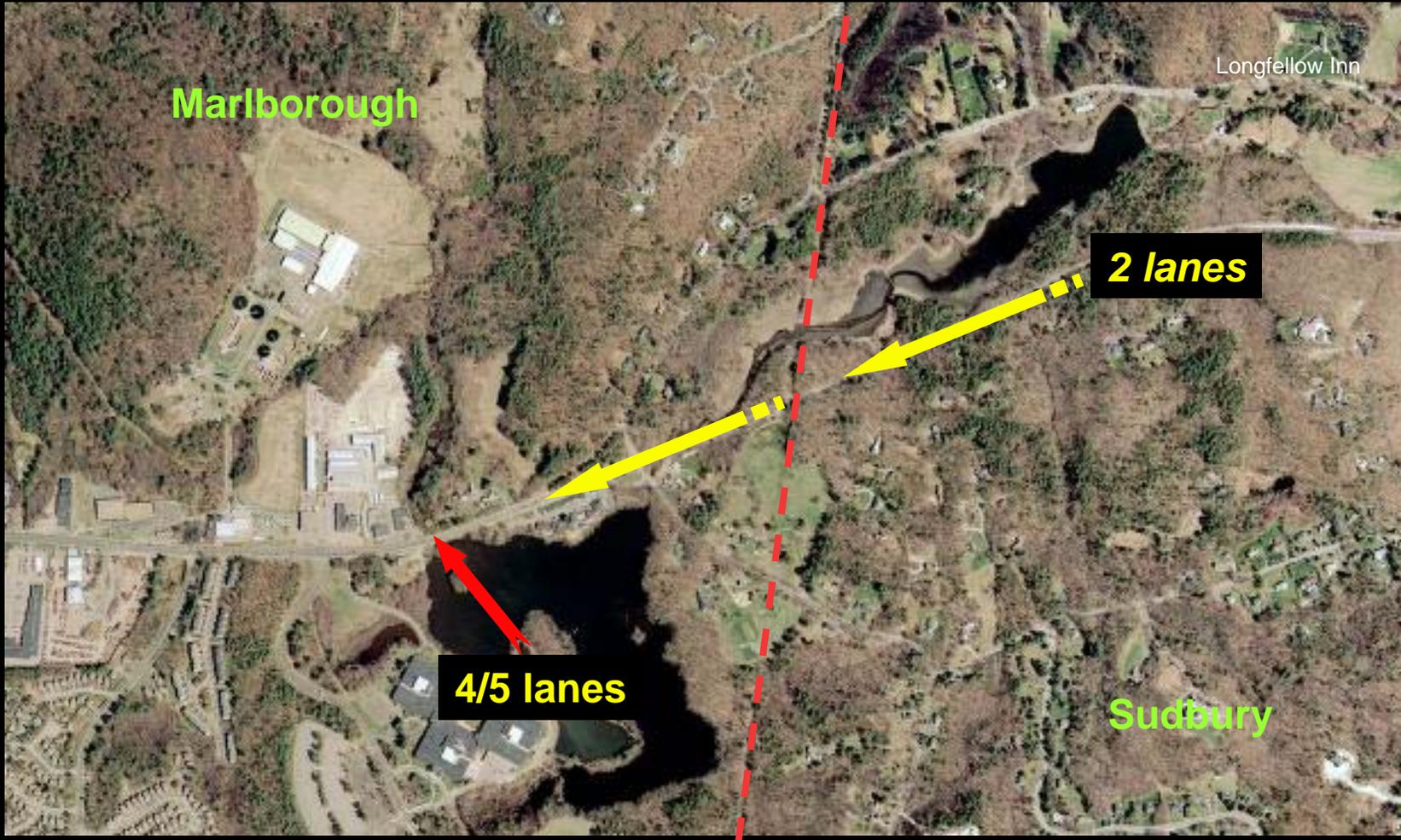
Unlike building new roads, manage and maintain the ones we have and provide results now – in the short term.

Signals, pavement management, lane markings...

A recent study in a nearby municipality revealed:

- *45 of 60 signals not operating as planned and/or programmed.*
- *It took less than 3 weeks to get 30 of these signals up and running the way they were supposed to be.*
- *It took less than 2 hours for the first “thank you” call to come into City Hall.*

# #7 – Route 20



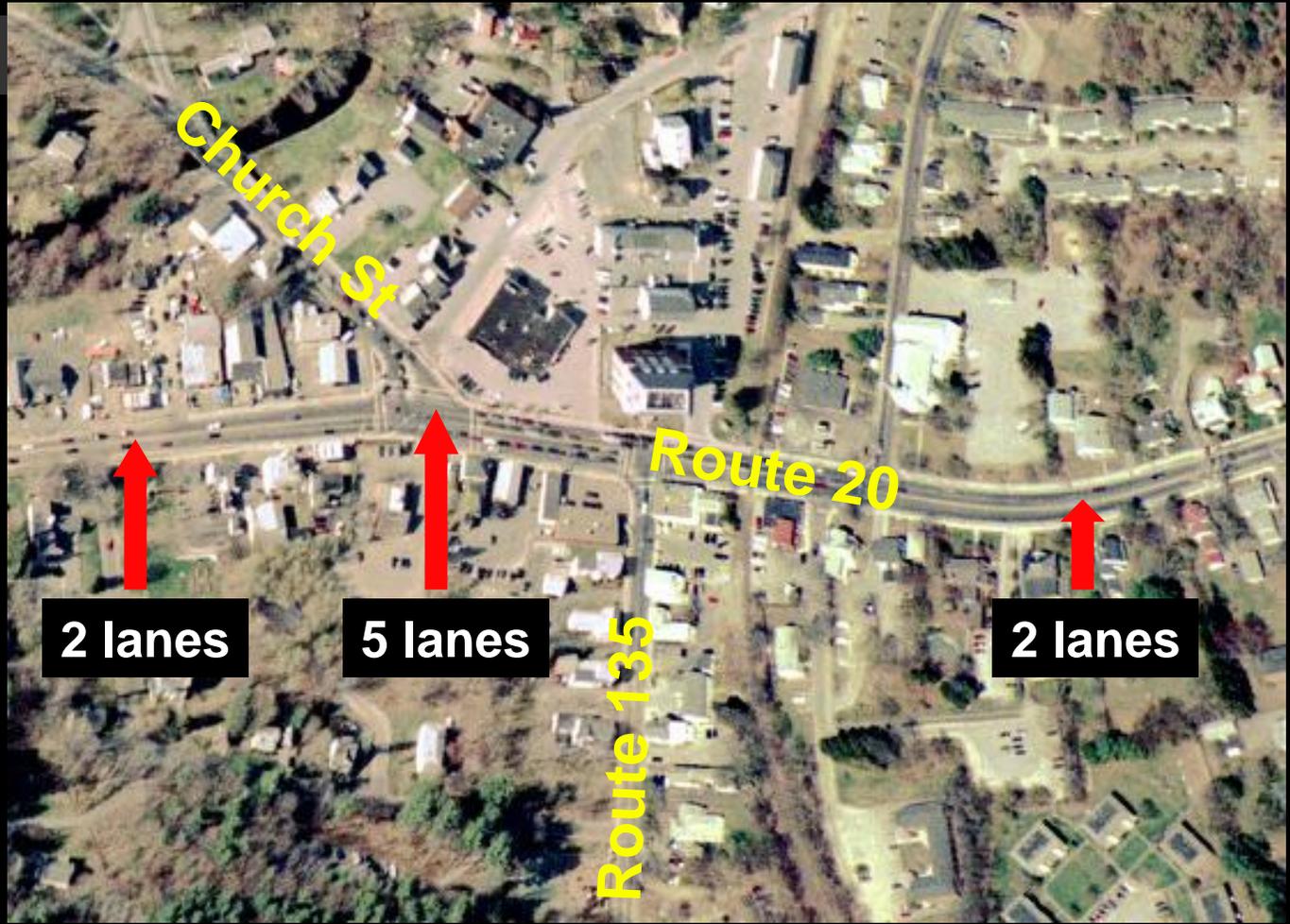
Is it a historic roadway through Sudbury?

Is it a business corridor in Marlborough?

# #7 – Route 20



# #7 Route 20 in Northborough



# #7 – Route 20

## “The Schizophrenic Roadway”

Is it –

A U.S. Route connecting Waltham and Marlborough and points beyond?  
 The trucking and freight capital of the Commonwealth in Shrewsbury?  
 The critical commercial corridor between Weston, Wayland, Sudbury,  
 Marlborough, Northborough, and Shrewsbury?

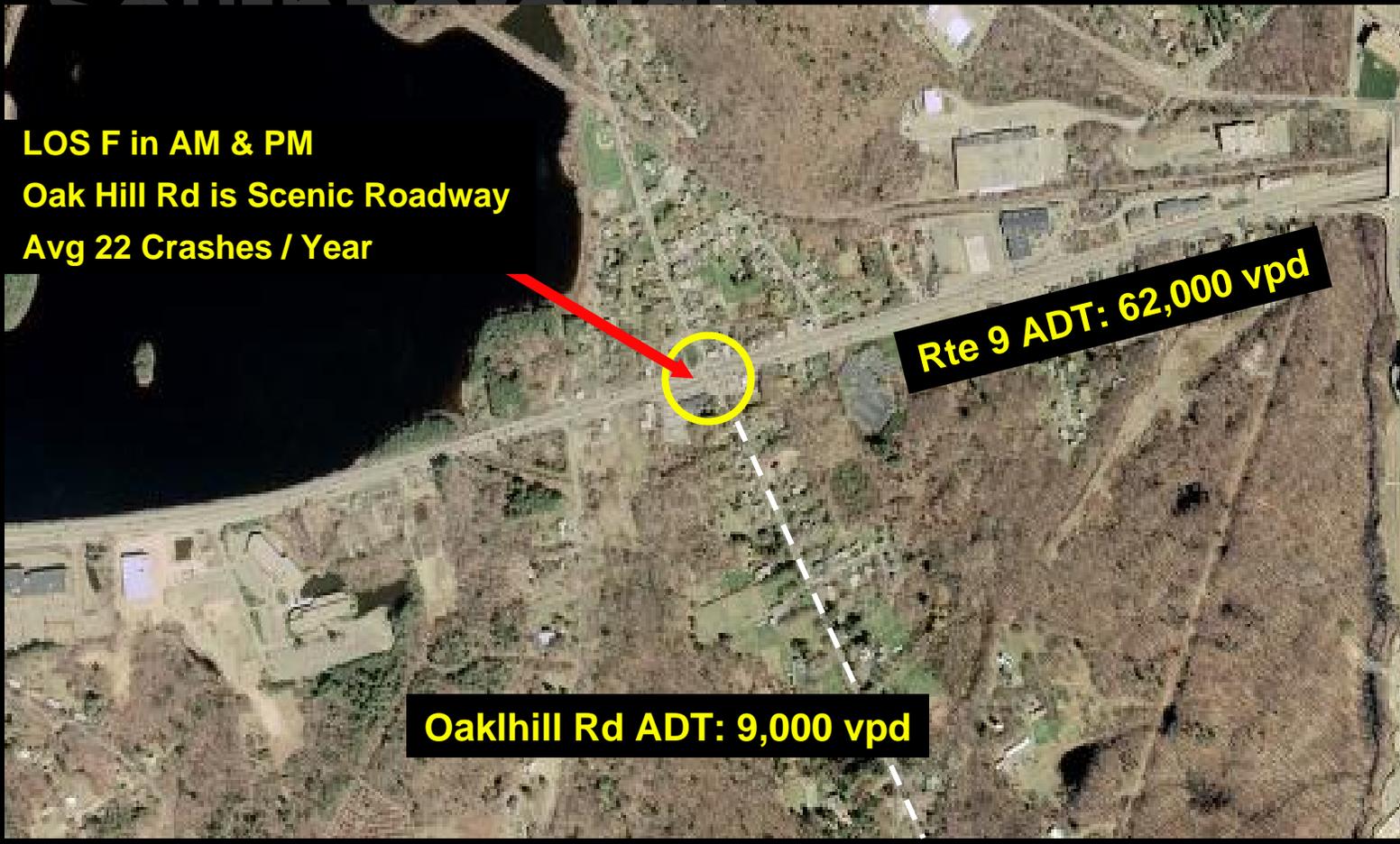
The Route 20 design is driven *by community views, not regional views.*

“Schizophrenia” – different communities have different goals for the same road!

Nightmare is driven by economy – when things are good, don’t plan on using Route 20 to get anywhere!

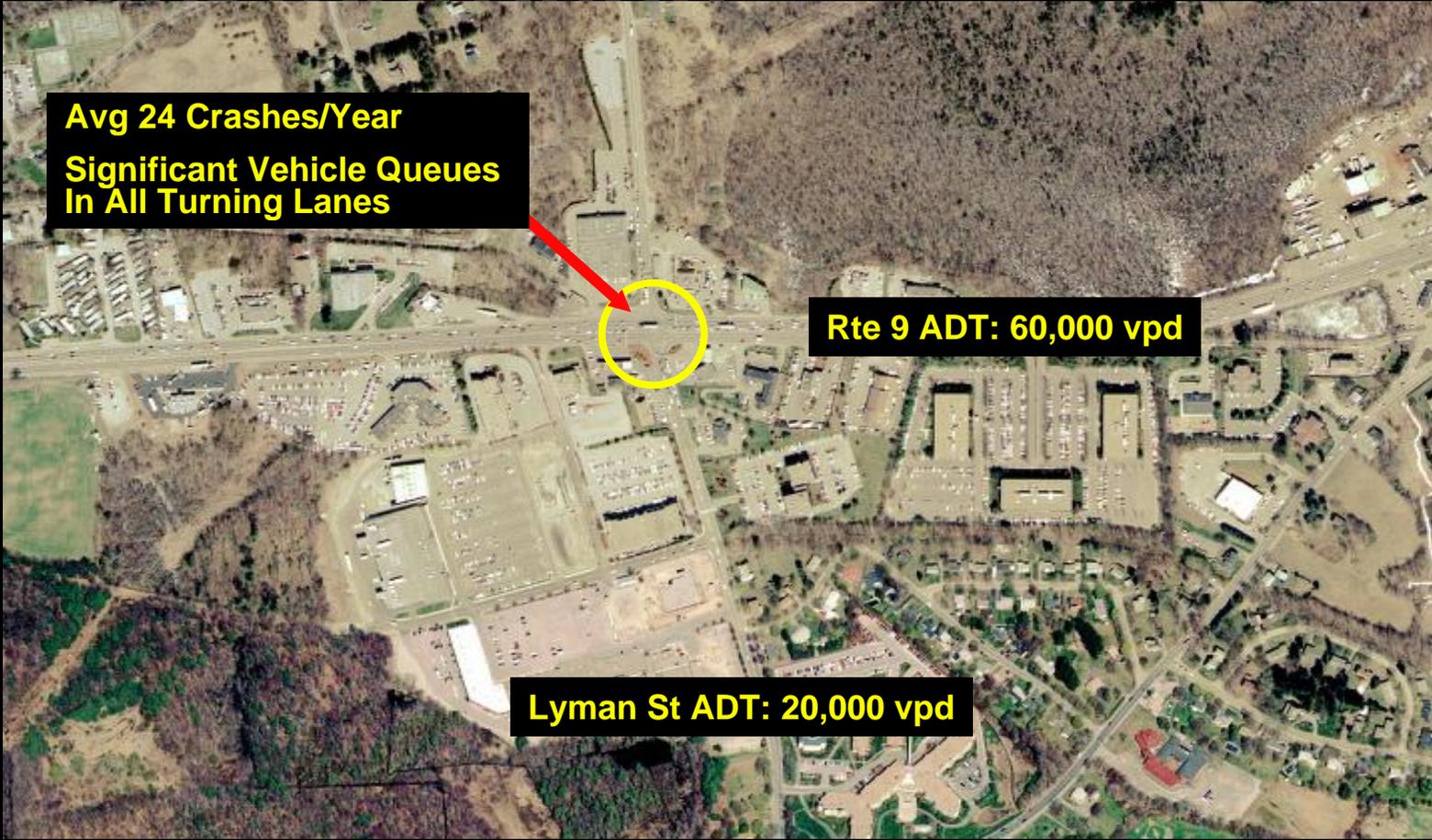
“Who created a bypass around downtown Marlborough that has two more lights than the main street!?”

# #6 – Route 9 at Central Street & Oakhill Road (Southborough)



*“Who can I talk to about reducing the solar glare on Route 9 and the MassPike?”*

# #5 – Route 9 at Lyman Street (Westborough)



**Avg 24 Crashes/Year**  
**Significant Vehicle Queues**  
**In All Turning Lanes**

**Rte 9 ADT: 60,000 vpd**

**Lyman St ADT: 20,000 vpd**



## #5 – Route 9 at Lyman Street (Westborough)

Preferred route is through neighboring properties

Land use issues heavily influence this intersection

Did you notice that there are no pedestrian amenities anywhere?

This will continue to serve as a backdoor access to Algonquin and the office developments located in the Marlborough West area

*Let's look to fix it during the off-peak now and then look for other, larger-scale opportunities in the future.*

# #4 – Route 135 at Route 126

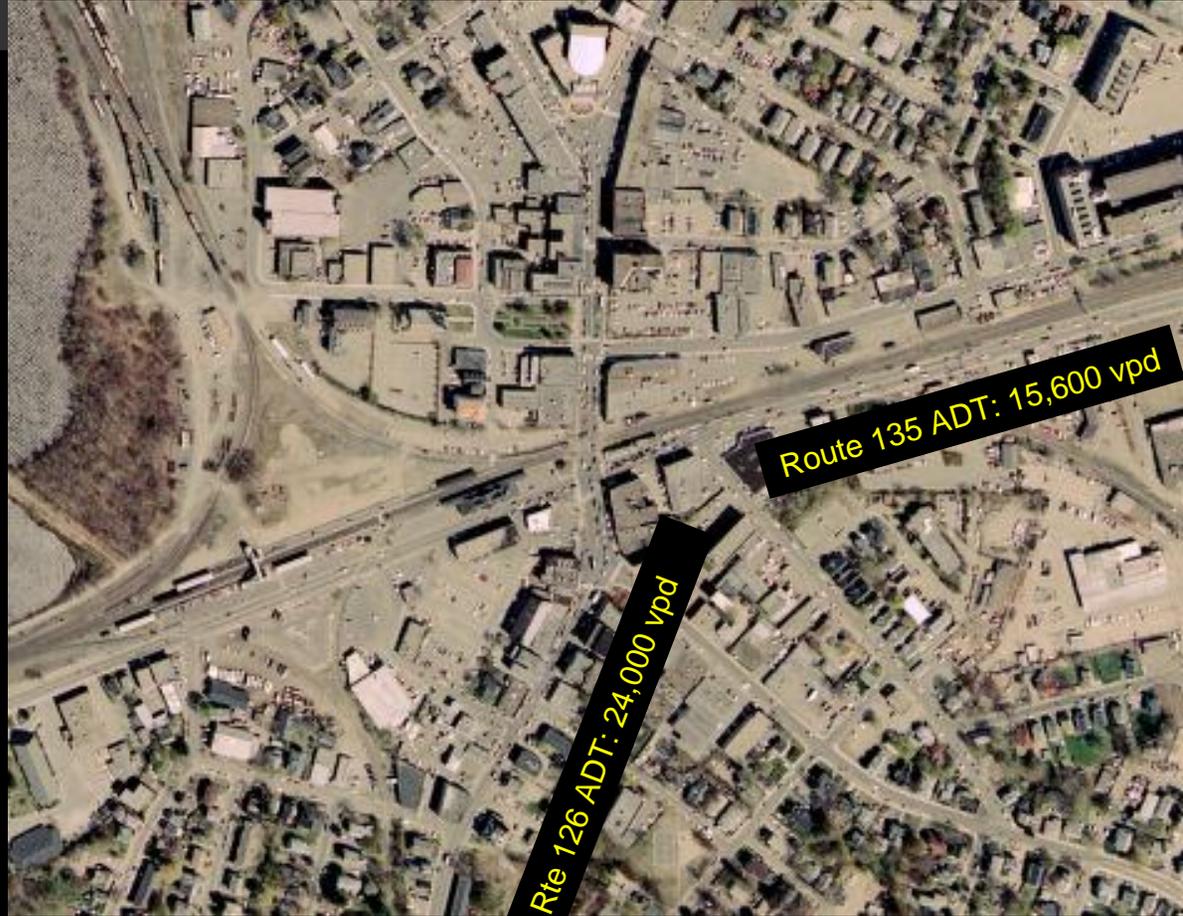
## Downtown Framingham

Where do we begin?

AM & PM Freight and Passenger Trains create gridlock

Two rotaries, three traffic signals, and two railroad tracks in the space of a few blocks

Commuters travel “miles out of their way to avoid this intersection”



# #4 – Route 135 at Route 126

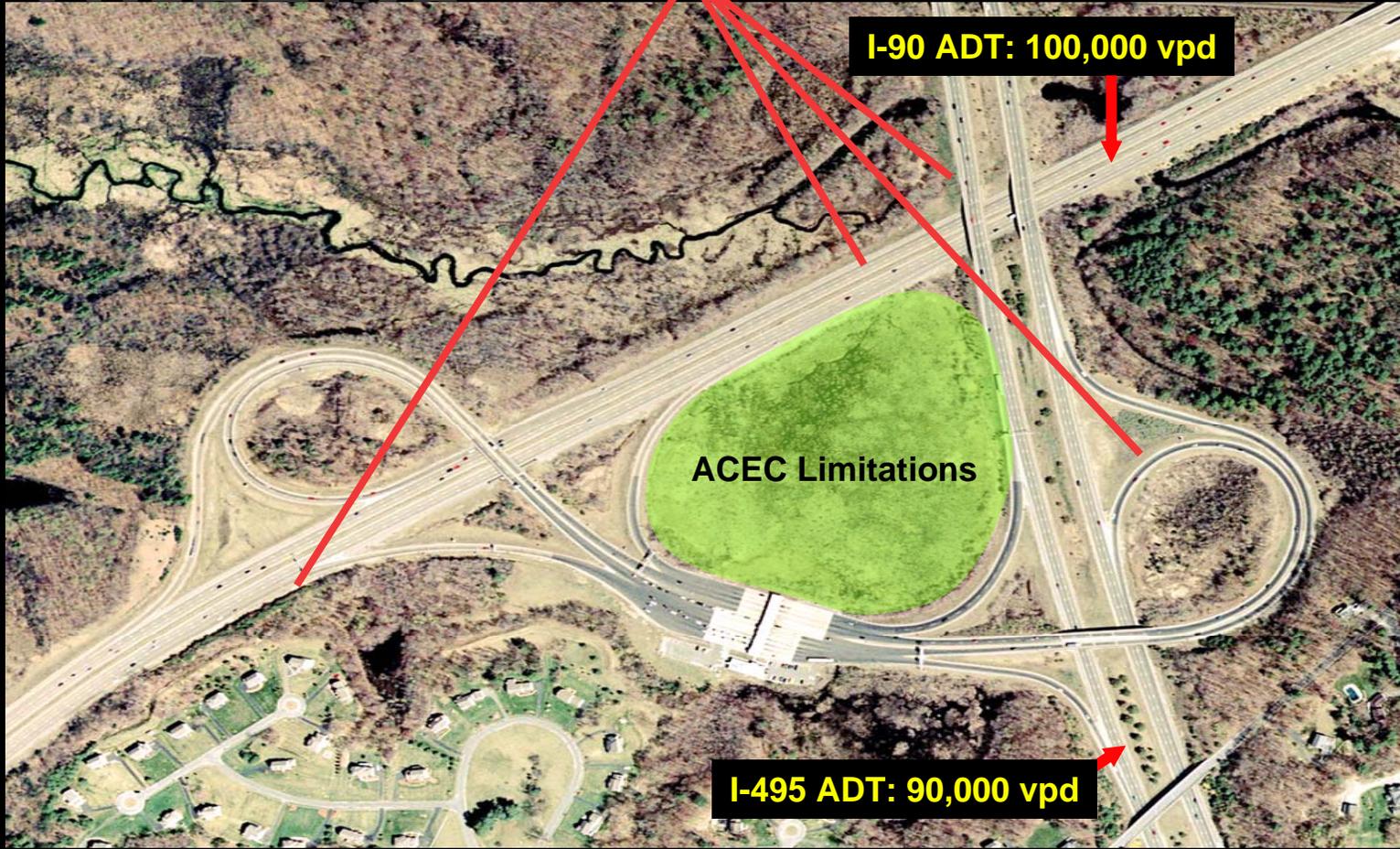
## *Downtown Framingham*



*The Solution (?)*

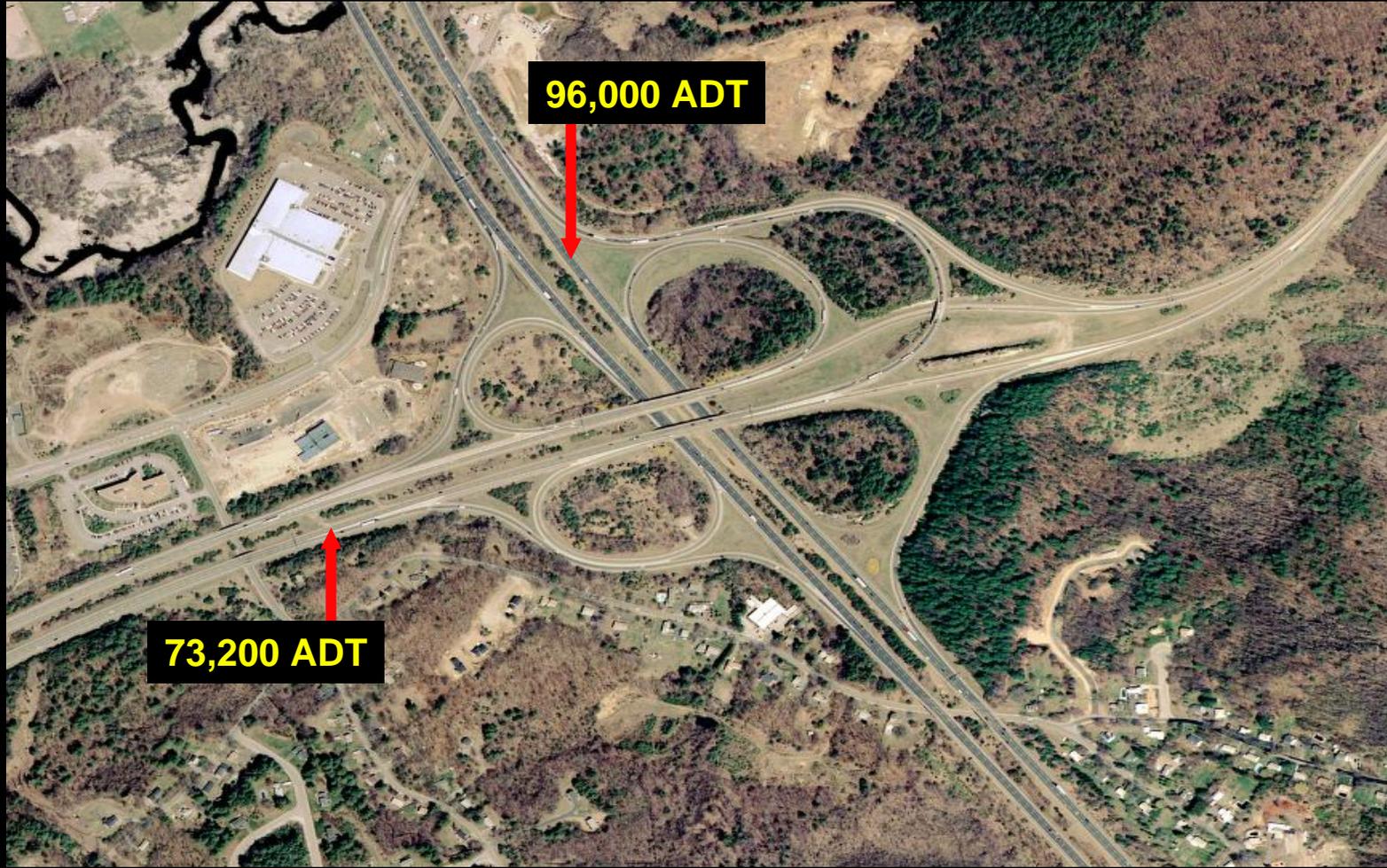
# #3: I-495 at the Mass Turnpike

Significant Recurring Vehicle Backups



Avg 54 Crashes/Year

# #2 – I-290 at I-495





# #1 – Lack of Public Transportation

## Transportation

There has been a major shift in population, economic trends and land use into the MetroWest region

The majority of the communities pay for public transit services, but don't receive the type of services that they want or need

The MetroWest area wants a North-South option – which is simply not available

*"I live in Franklin and work in Marlborough and I don't own a car, someone please tell me...how am I supposed to get to work?"*

# #1 – Lack of Public Transportation

## Transportation

Can you envision a road-train along the I-495 median bringing people to their jobs?

“Nay” sayers suggest – Development patterns in the MetroWest region are too scattered

Under the urban criteria, sure... but we need to look at this as a SUBURBAN issue

Remember... 57% of us want to live AND work in the MetroWest area

*LIFT Buses with only 5 routes carried 30,000 riders in 4 months, despite funding and scheduling issues... they just kept on coming!*



## Next Steps?

**Recognize that the 495/MetroWest region is different than Boston and Worcester**

**Address suburban mobility issues without using Urban criteria to measure or solve them**

**We need to advocate for the 495/ MetroWest area to deal with regional transportation issues**