

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Rail Modernization: Reading Turnback Track Project

Sharon G. Cranston, Director of Rail Modernization Delivery

October 7, 2025

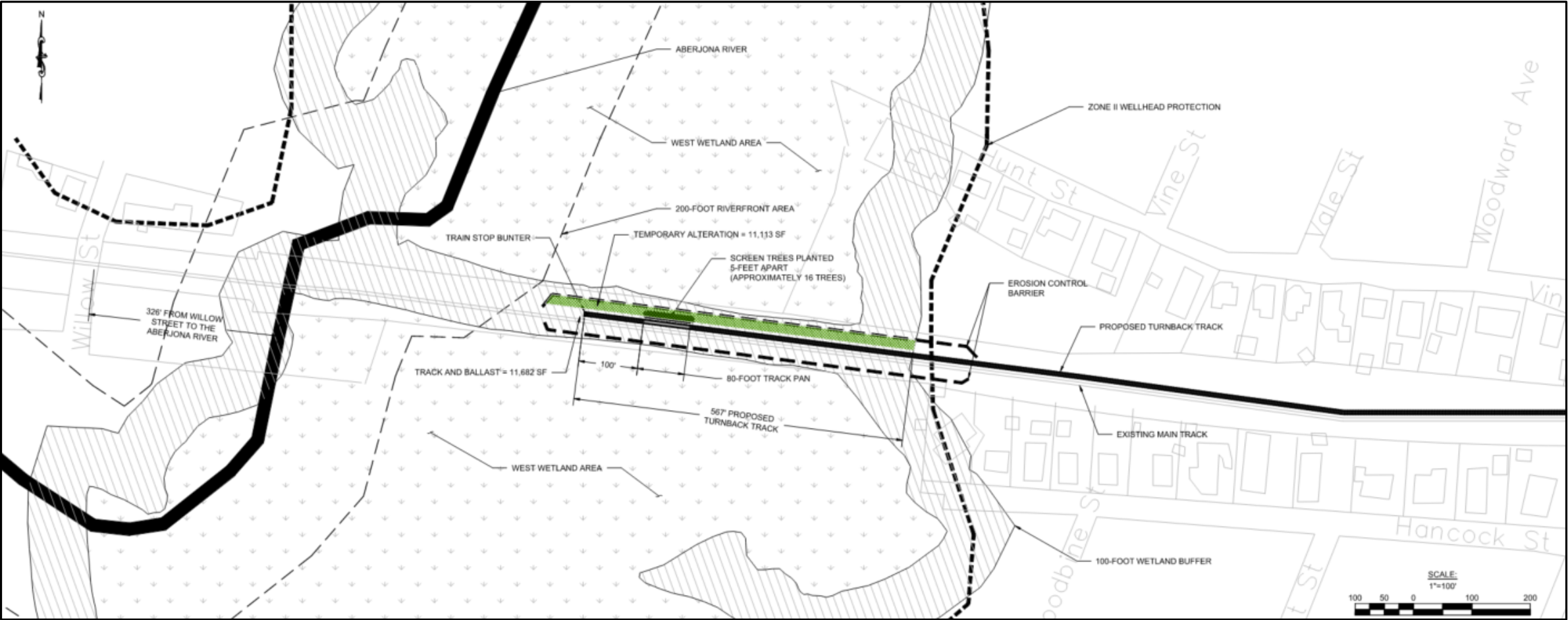


RegionalRAIL

Public Outreach Summary

- MBTA paused project after Public Meeting in February to:
 - Review alternative project locations
 - Investigate noise, grade crossing, and emissions concerns
- Met with Reading Police and Fire Chiefs to review grade crossing data, followed by similar meetings with Wakefield, and Melrose
- Last month met with elected officials, abutters group, and held a follow up public meeting to present additional information on those areas of concern

Project Site Plan

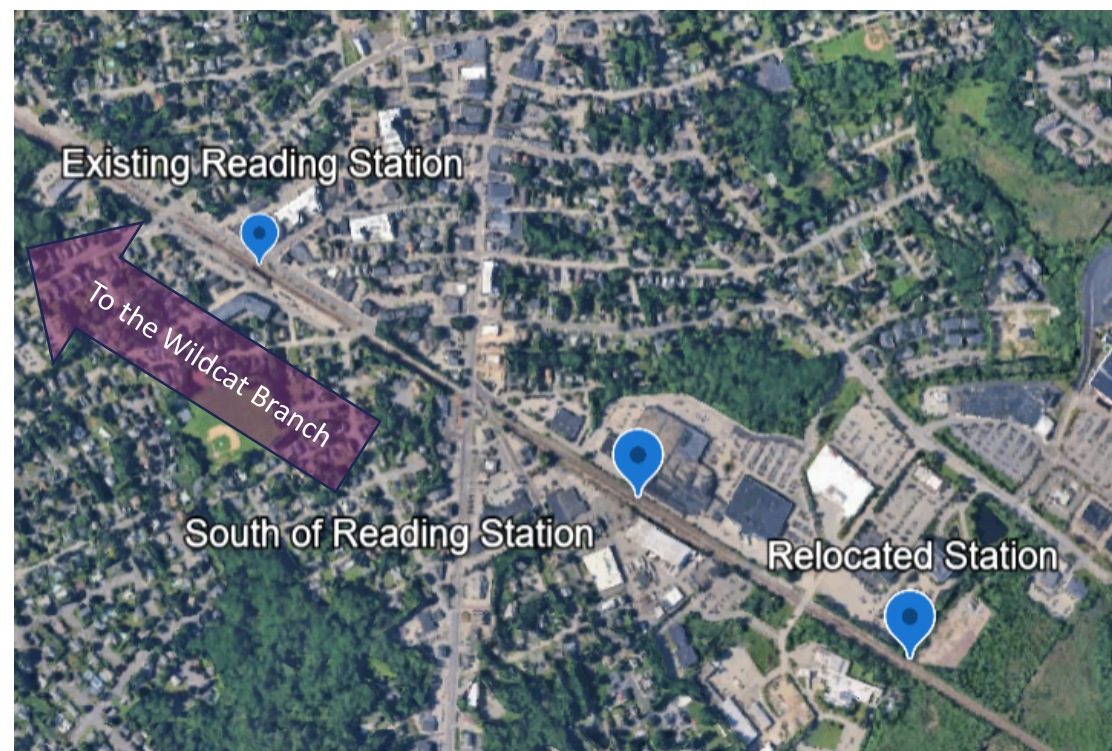
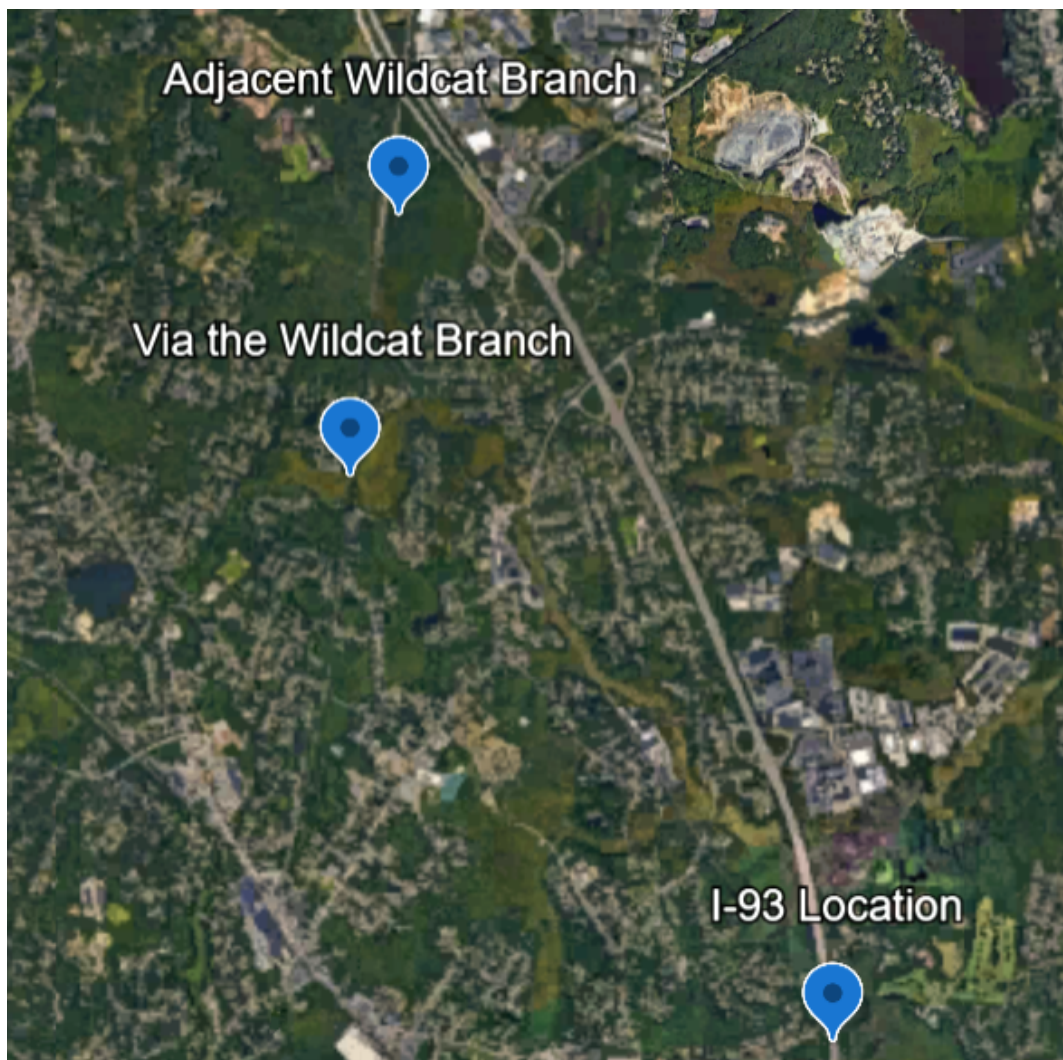


New Scope Elements

- Track-pan installed (length of locomotive)
 - Locomotive will always stop at the same location and would not be closer to homes
- Plantings
 - Native species *Arborvitae* and/or other species approved by the Conservation Commission to provide screening of the stationary train
 - Noted as an ideal “privacy planting”



Alternative Locations Considered



Alternatives did not work as they variously:

- Did not support 30-minute Reading service frequency
- Required full station rebuild
- Required property acquisition to relocate power lines

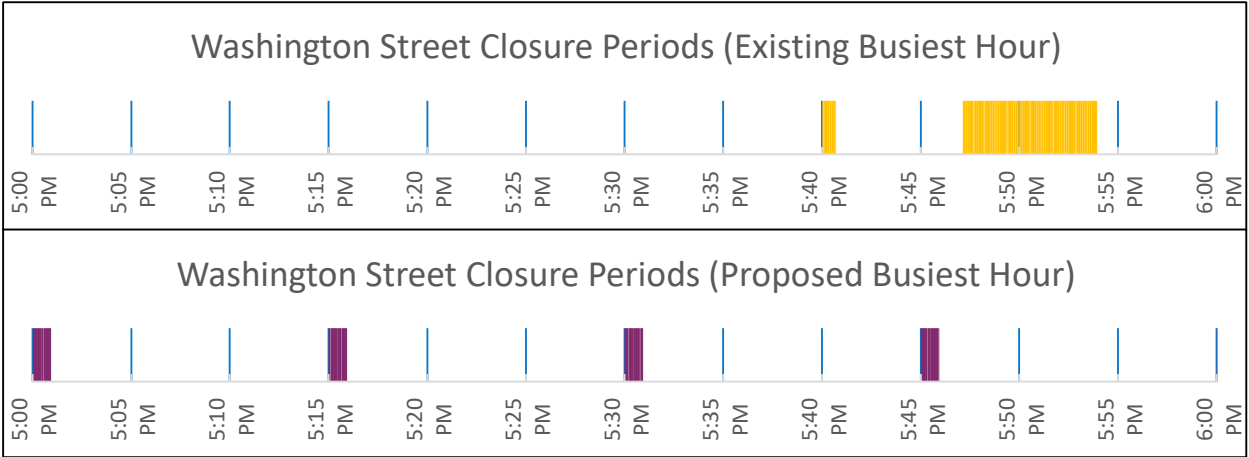
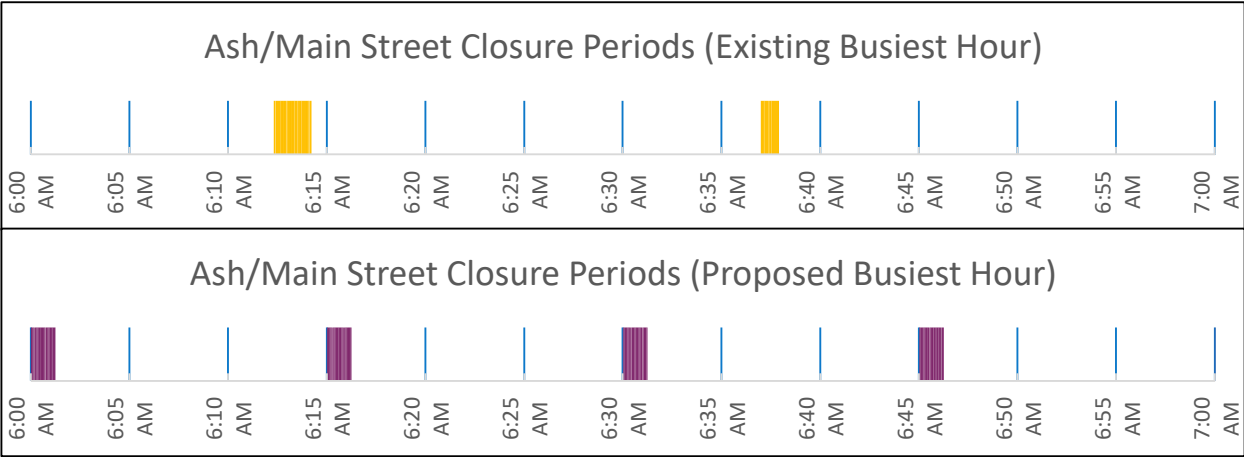
Noise Study

- Recorded from April 23 to 24 for a total of 27 hours
 - MBTA provided test train 12:37 to 12:58 on April 23 to record stationary train noise
- Does not exceed FTA or MassDEP noise criteria limits

Site No.	Address	Test Condition	Leq dBA	Audibility (+5 dBA)
			With and Without Train	Leq dBA Difference
			12:40 to 13:00	12:40 to 13:00
N-1	20 Hunt Street	With Test Train	51	5
		Without Test Train	46	
N-2	88 Hancock Street	With Test Train	51	6
		Without Test Train	45	
N-3	13 Willow Street	With Test Train	51	1
		Without Test Train	50	

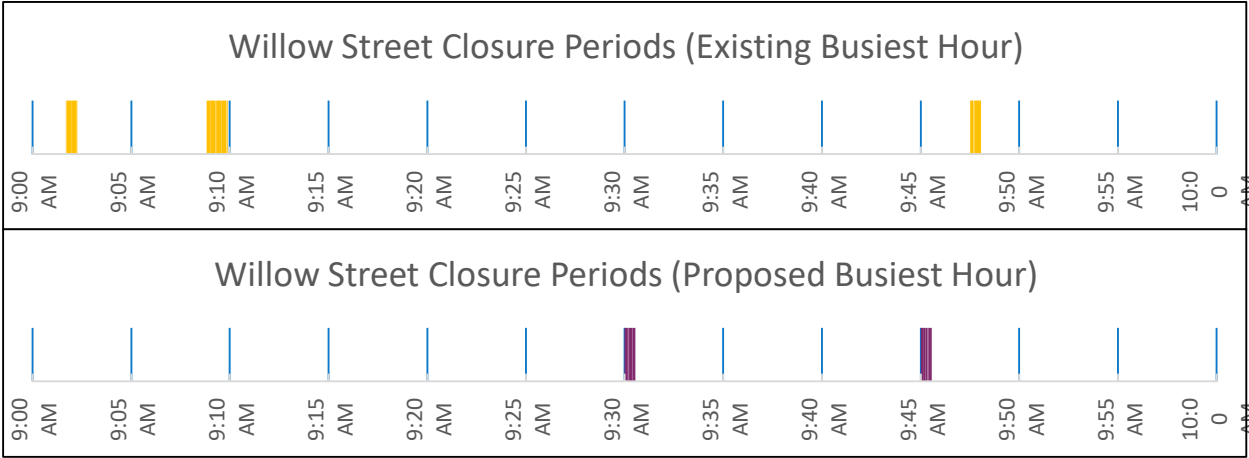
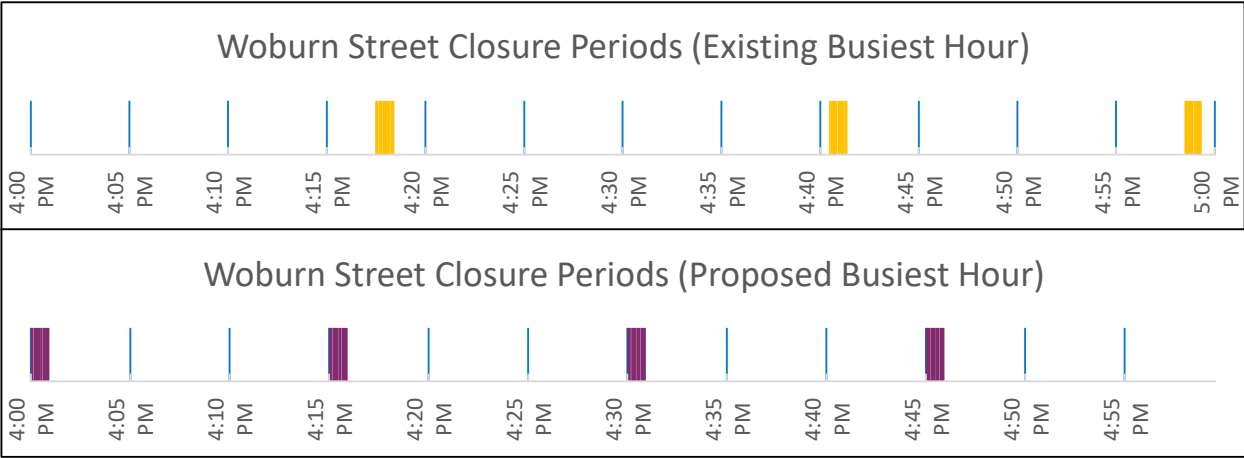


Gate Closure Comparison



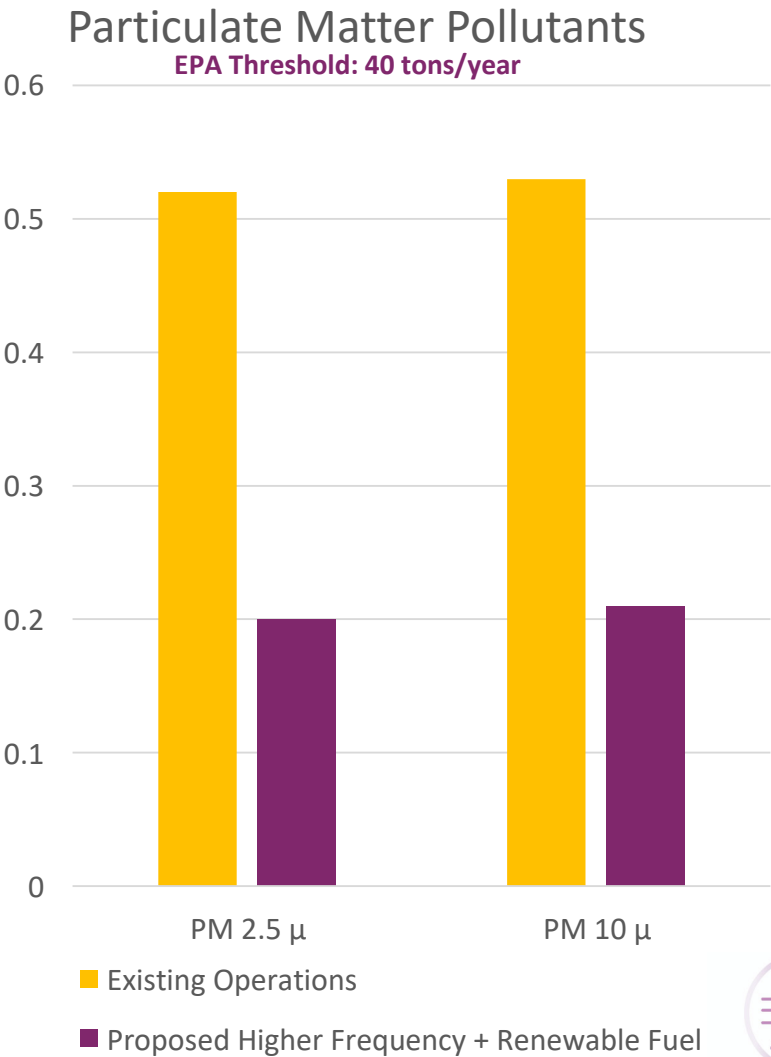
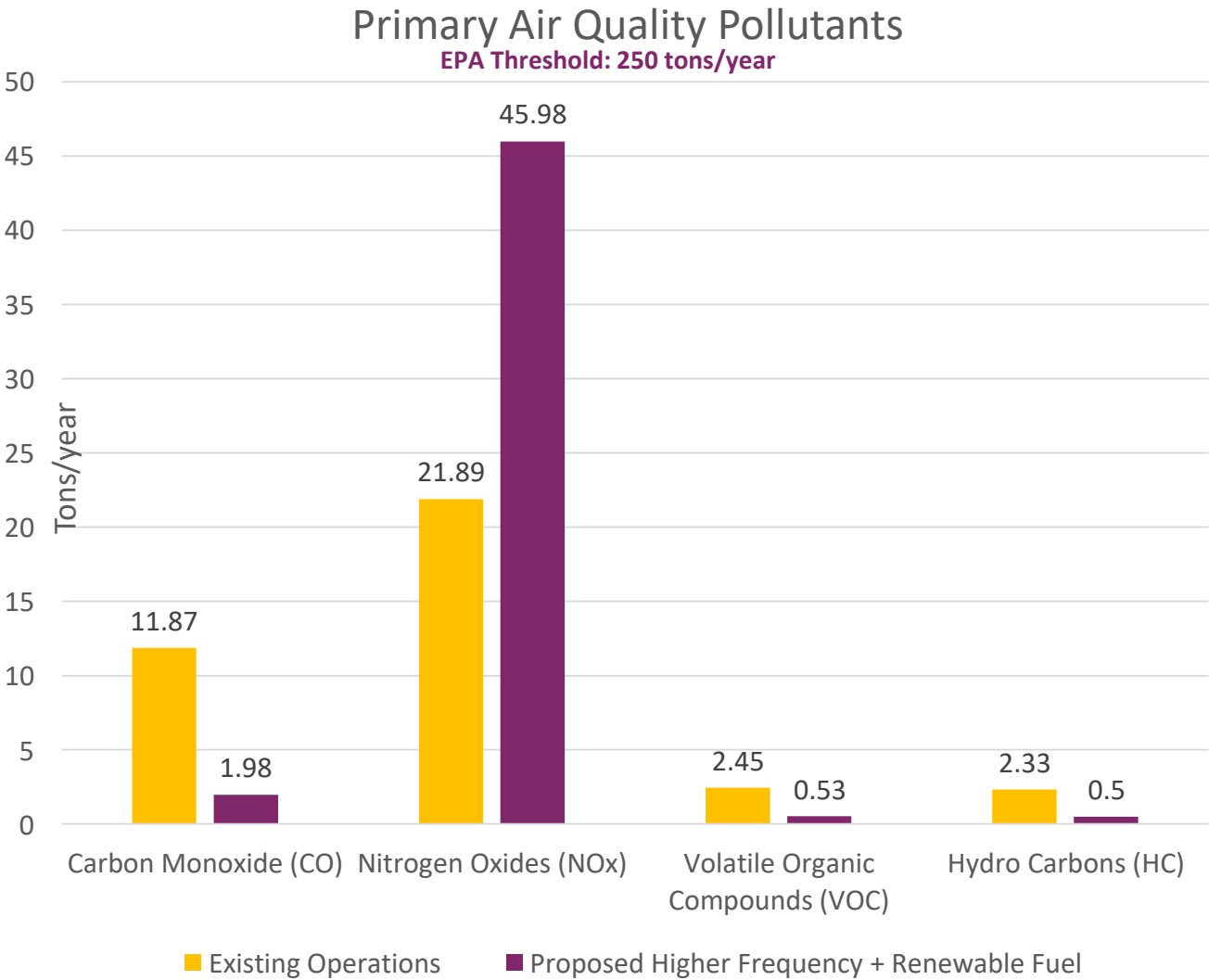
	Existing	Proposed		Existing	Proposed
Average Activation Time	78.1s	74.4s	Average Activation Time	71.7s	53.0s
Number of Activations	42	62	Number of Activations	42	62
Average Activations per Hour	3	4	Average Activations per Hour	3	4

Gate Closure Comparison, cntd



	Existing	Proposed		Existing	Proposed
Average Activation Time	56.9s	52.9s	Average Activation Time	37.4s	34.3s
Number of Activations	24	62	Number of Activations	24	34
Average Activations per Hour	1.5	4	Average Activations per Hour	1.5	2

Emissions from Commuter Rail Operations



Other Environmental Information/Questions

- Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) 301 CMR 11.00 and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Air Quality Regulations 310 CMR 7.0
 - Per 301 CMR 11.03 Review Thresholds, the project does not exceed any MEPA thresholds to require a MEPA review
 - Locomotives are categorized as mobile sources by the EPA and regulated differently than stationary sources like powerplants even when idling
- Notice of Intent (NOI) has been filed with Reading Conservation Commission
- Other environmental permitting
 - A due diligence review of other environmental permits and reviews was conducted, and no other permits are deemed necessary for this project based on the current scope of work, other than an Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission

Next Steps

- Conservation Commission meeting is tomorrow night

