

PARKS HIGHWAY
Alternative Corridor PEL Study

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING #3



May 17, 2023

PROJECT TEAM



Clint Adler, PE
Project Manager

Doug Campbell
Consultant Coordinator



Renee Whitesell, PTP
Project Manager

Kristen Hansen
Environmental Lead

Rachel Steer
Public Involvement Lead



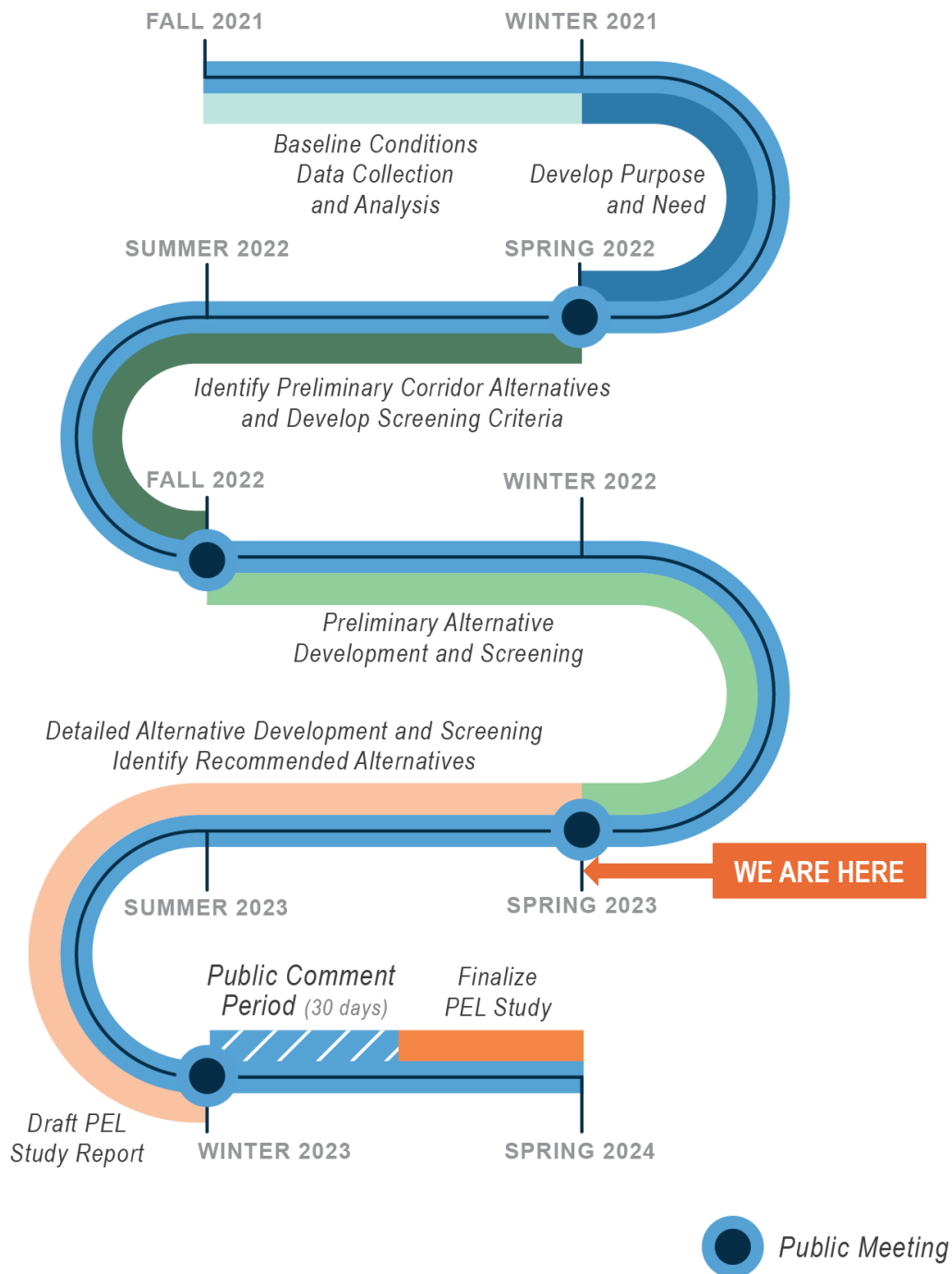
Joe Taylor, PE
Engineering Lead



Andrew Ooms, PE, PTOE, RSP
Traffic Forecasting Support

AGENDA

- Welcome, Introductions, PEL Study Schedule
- PEL Process Update
- Purpose and Need Statement
- Evaluation Process Refresher
- Recommended Alternatives Overview
- Screened Out Alternatives
- Discussion and Feedback
- Wrap up and Next Steps

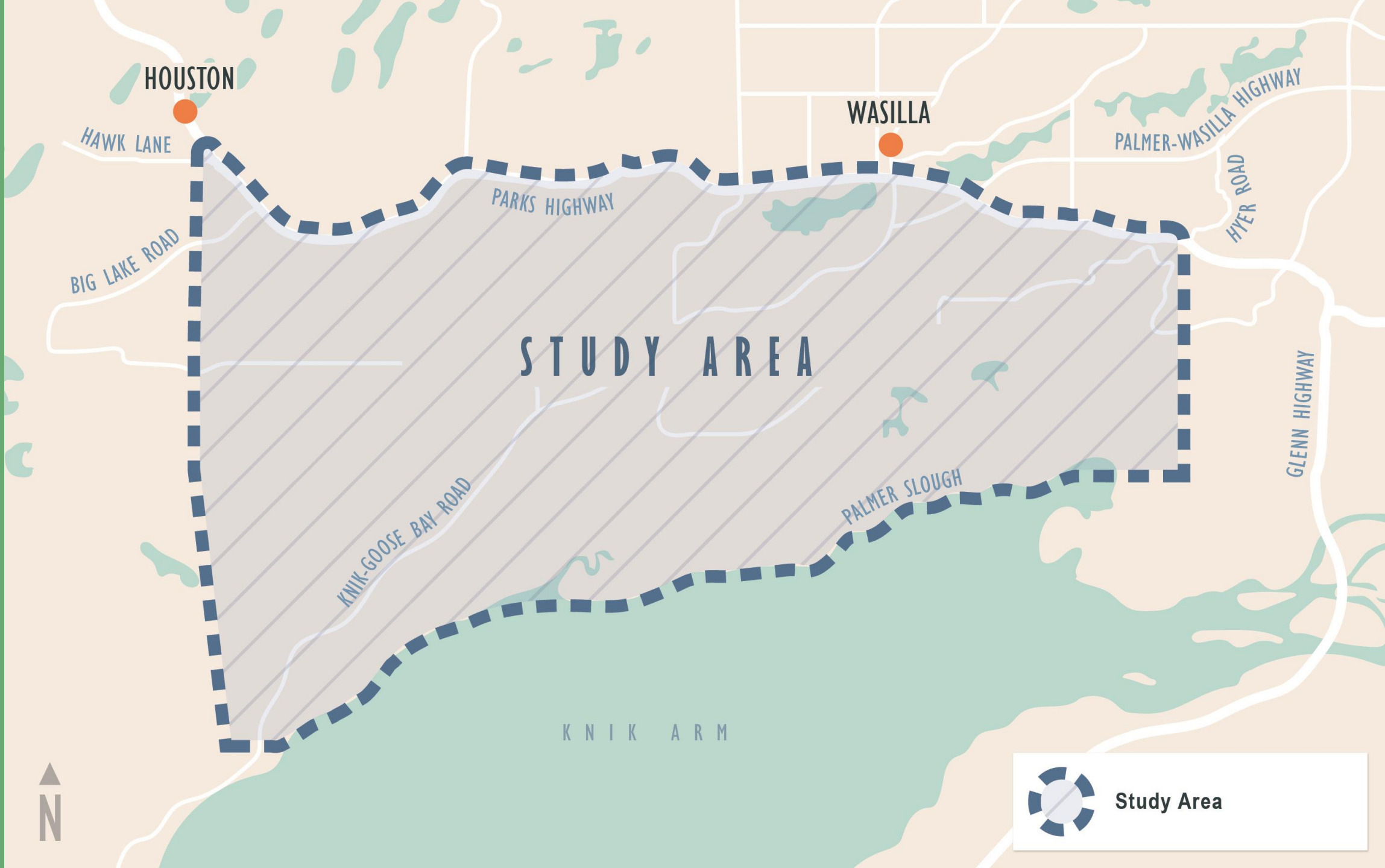


PEL STUDY SCHEDULE

PARKS HIGHWAY
Alternative Corridor PEL Study



PEI STUDY AREA





PEL PROCESS & BENEFITS

PEL PROCESS

PLANNING

ENVIRONMENT



Data &
Analysis Tools



Public/Stakeholder
Involvement



Purpose & Need



Alternatives
Development &
Evaluation



Identify Recommended
Alternative(s) & Define
Projects to Implement



PEL BENEFITS

FALL 2021



Project Initiation, Problems to be Solved, Purpose & Need: Emerging Themes

Baseline Analysis, Data Collection, Purpose & Need: Emerging Themes

2022



Evaluation Criteria, Develop & Screen Alternatives

Identify Crossing Alternatives and Develop Screening Criteria

WINTER 2022 / SPRING 2023



Evaluate, Refine, & Select Alternatives

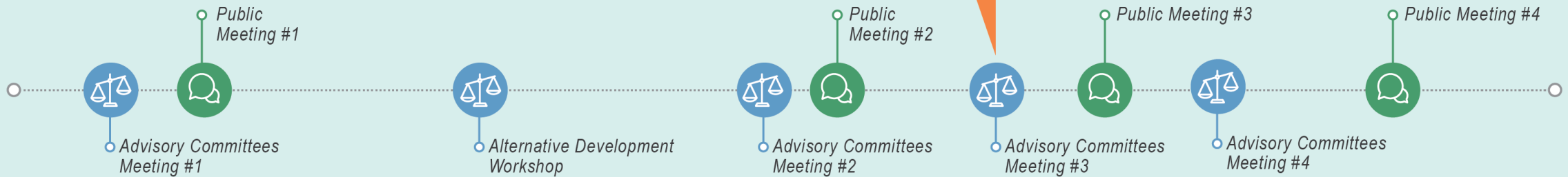
Screening, Recommended Alternatives, Draft PEL Study

WINTER 2023 / 2024

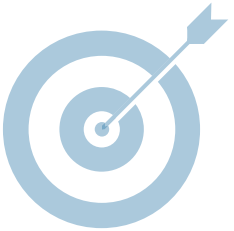


Finalize Documentation

Public Comment Period (30 days) and Finalize PEL Study



PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT



PURPOSE

The purpose of the Parks Highway Alternative Corridor PEL study is to improve regional and local transportation through the Wasilla area of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough by identifying an alternative highway corridor that will improve safety for all transportation modes, reduce existing and future traffic congestion, and increase mobility.

The study will seek to improve transportation for non-motorized users, respond to community values, and support or enhance economic, social, environmental and energy conditions.

PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT



NEEDS

Through a collaborative process that balances multiple viewpoints of stakeholders, agencies, and the public, and working within regulatory requirements, DOT&PF determined that a successful solution should address the following needs:

- Improve safety in the corridor for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- Decrease fatal and serious injury crashes
- Reduce existing traffic congestion and intersection delay on Parks Highway
- Add roadway capacity to meet projected transportation demand in the corridor
- Improve the roadway network to better separate local, regional, and through trips
- Improve efficiency for freight transport
- Improve multi-modal access and flexibility for all users
- Improve the durability of roadway improvements and ease maintenance operations

PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT



GOALS

Improvements should also meet these additional goals:

- Improve the efficiency of the local and regional transportation system for all its users
- Enhance and protect the public health and safety of travelers and the communities that transportation facilities traverse
- Improve existing natural environmental conditions when possible and avoid/minimize/mitigate adverse impacts to the natural environment
- Contribute to the improvement of the economy, social fabric, and quality of life along the Parks Highway corridor and in the greater Wasilla area
- Satisfy applicable federal, state, and local plans, policies, and regulations

WHY IS THE PURPOSE AND NEED IMPORTANT?

- Outlines the reasons for pursuing a project and its importance in the transportation system
- Supports the identification of reasonable project alternatives
- Assists with evaluating the benefits/disadvantages of each alternative
- Helps to identify the recommended alternative(s)
- Should be revisited throughout the project and updated if needed
- Keeps the project team focused on whether a future project is viable
- Will be incorporated into future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes

WHY IS THE PURPOSE AND NEED IMPORTANT?

For This Project:

- Safety for all transportation modes
- Reducing congestion
- Reducing intersection delay
- Separating local and through trips
- Improving freight trips
- Improving durability of roadway improvements



QUESTIONS, COMMENTS?



**PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES
MOVING FORWARD FOR DETAILED
ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

COMMENTS & SURVEY RESULTS — PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES

- Received over 900 responses to the Open House No. 2 survey
- Most surveys came from individuals who indicated they use the Parks Highway daily
- Most used roads are Parks Highway, Knik-Goose Bay Road, Seward Meridian Highway, and Fairview Loop Road
- Most trips were defined as being local, including trips to the grocery store, schools, doctors' office, etc.

Features that generated the most interest:

1. Less congestion
2. Safer driving, fewer accidents
3. New roadway - wider lanes, smoother surface, no potholes

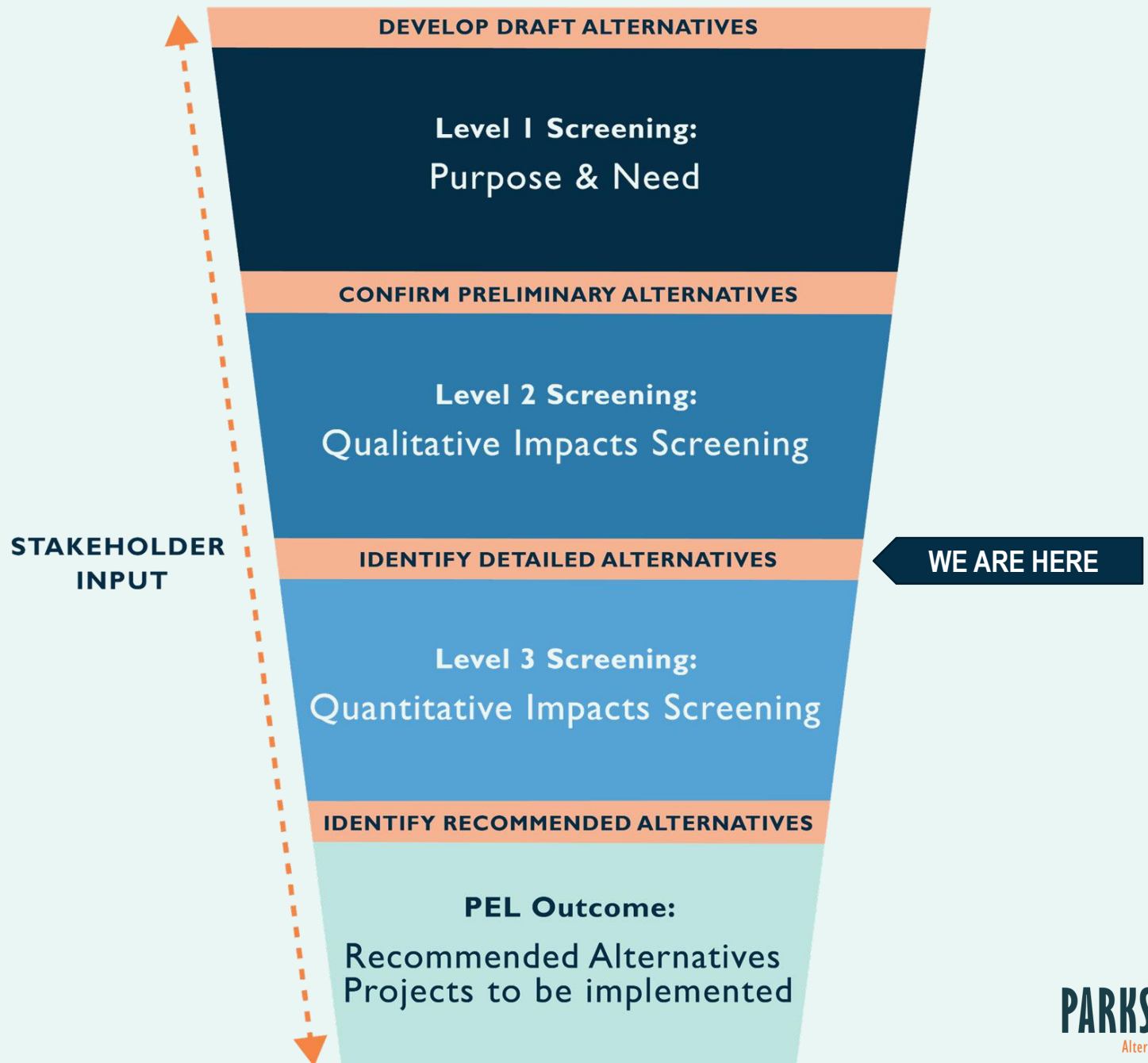
Top concerns:

1. Homes and properties may be impacted
2. Environmental impacts – cut through wetlands and streams
3. An alternate route will cut through their neighborhood



ALTERNATIVE SCREENING CRITERIA & EVALUATION

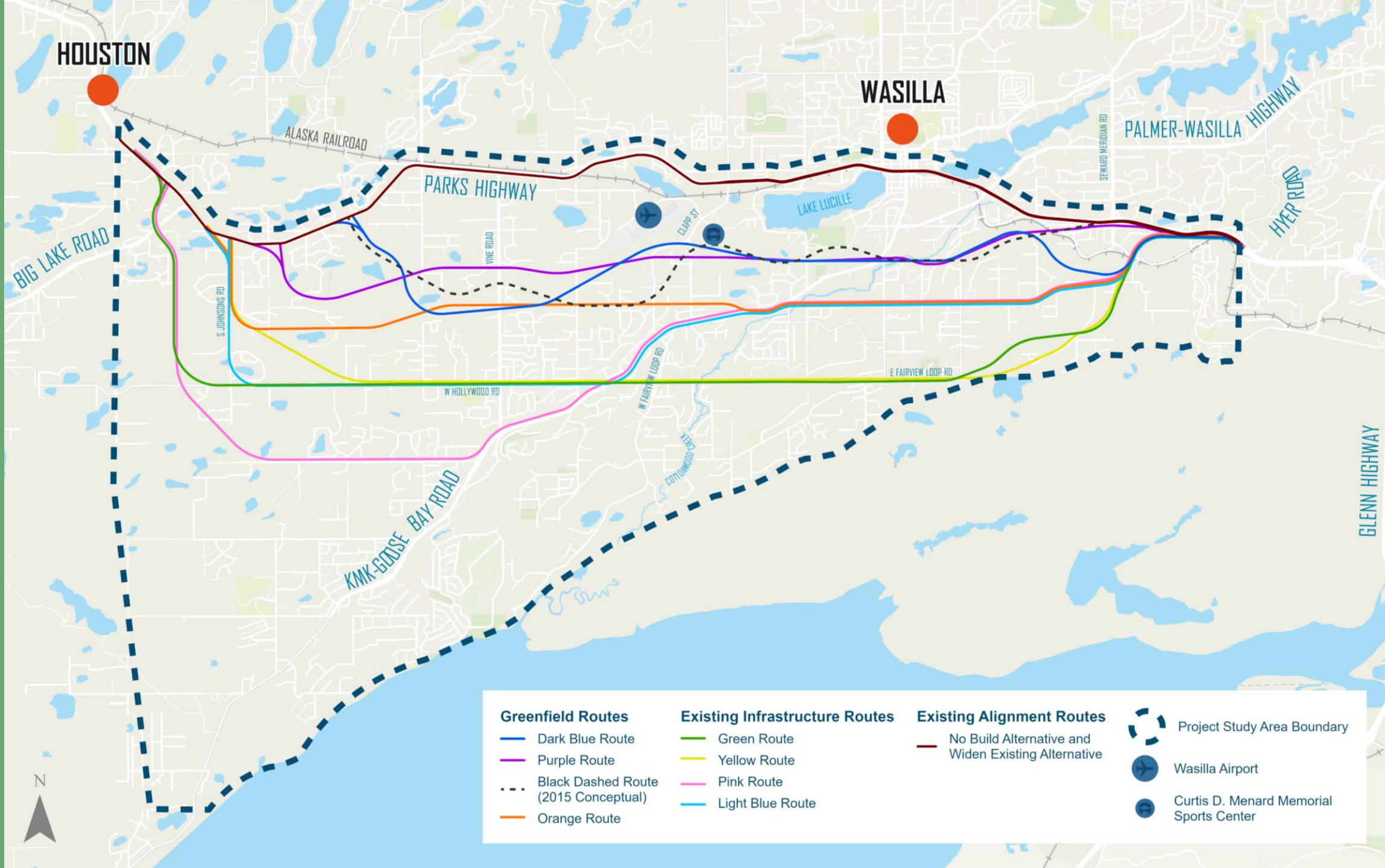
PEL ALTERNATIVE SCREENING PROCESS



ALTERNATIVE SCREENING CRITERIA & EVALUATION

Criteria	Measure
Safety	Rate of fatalities per 100 million VMT
	Rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT
	Number of nonmotorized fatalities and serious injuries annually
Mobility	Average PM peak period (mph)
	Level of travel time reliability index (LOTTR)
	Truck travel time reliability index (TTTR)
	Percent of person-miles traveled that are reliable
Pavement Condition	Percent pavement area in good/poor condition
Environment	Section 4(f) & 6(f) impacts
	Area of wetlands impacted
	Potential noise impacts on nearby residential properties
	Potential for wildlife mortality; impact on wildlife movement
Community Support	Level of community support for alternative
Cost	Capital cost, maintenance cost

PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES



HOUSTON

WASILLA

PALMER-WASILLA HIGHWAY

PARKS HIGHWAY

LAKE LUCILLE

BIG LAKE ROAD

S JOHNSONS RD

VINE ROAD

CLAPP ST

HYER ROAD

W HOLLYWOOD RD

W FAIRVIEW LOOP RD

E FAIRVIEW LOOP RD

KMK-EDGE BAY ROAD

W FAIRVIEW LOOP RD

GLENN HIGHWAY



Greenfield Routes	Existing Infrastructure Routes	Existing Alignment Routes	
Dark Blue Route	Green Route	No Build Alternative and Widen Existing Alternative	Project Study Area Boundary
Purple Route	Yellow Route		Wasilla Airport
Black Dashed Route (2015 Conceptual)	Pink Route		Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center
Orange Route	Light Blue Route		

LEVEL 2: PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVE SCREENING RESULTS & EVALUATION DISCUSSION

- Qualitative Evaluation, some high-level quantifying impacts where logical and needed
- Ranking Alternative's Performance Against Criteria
- Ranking Scale Used for each criteria
- No weighting applied

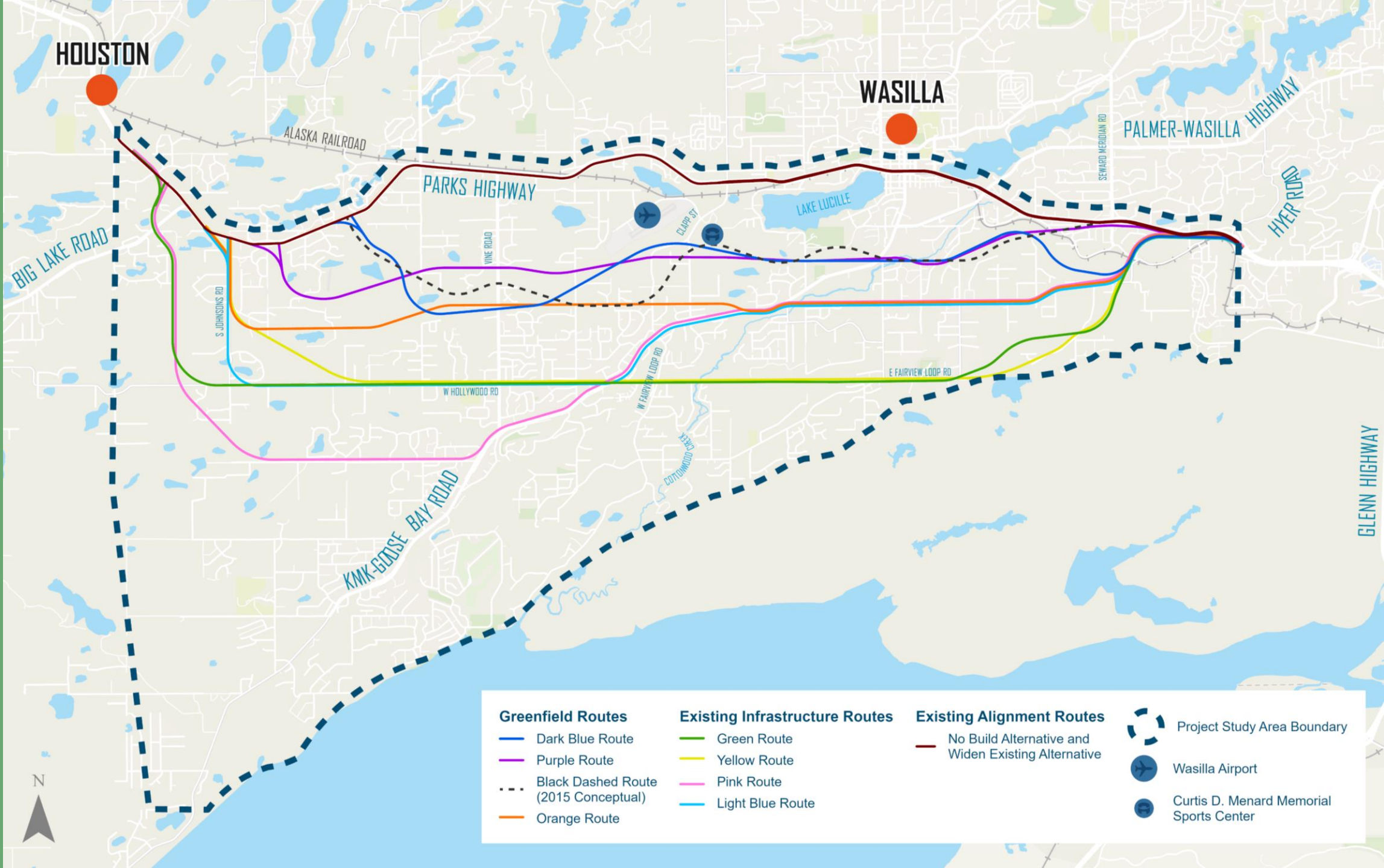
2	Alternative demonstrates strong performance against the criteria
1	Alternative demonstrates slightly strong performance against the criteria
0	Alternative demonstrates neutral performance against the criteria
-1	Alternative demonstrates slightly weak performance against the criteria
-2	Alternative demonstrates weak performance against the criteria

LEVEL 2: PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVE SCREENING RESULTS & EVALUATION DISCUSSION

All the alternative corridors (excluding the Widen Parks Highway) include common elements:

- Meet the purpose and need.
- Potential to generally improve system performance and safety conditions for both motorized and non-motorized users.
- Reduce traffic on the existing Parks Highway.
- Cross the existing Alaska Railroad corridor once.
- Consistent with local, area, and statewide plans.
- Potential to impact views.
- All the alternative corridors cross Cottonwood and Lucille Creek at least once. Any corridor that crosses waterways and wetlands has the potential to directly impact fish and essential fish habitat.
- Moose and wildlife impacts are probable and require further evaluation and potential mitigation.

DISMISSED ALTERNATIVES



Greenfield Routes

- Dark Blue Route
- Purple Route
- Black Dashed Route (2015 Conceptual)
- Orange Route

Existing Infrastructure Routes

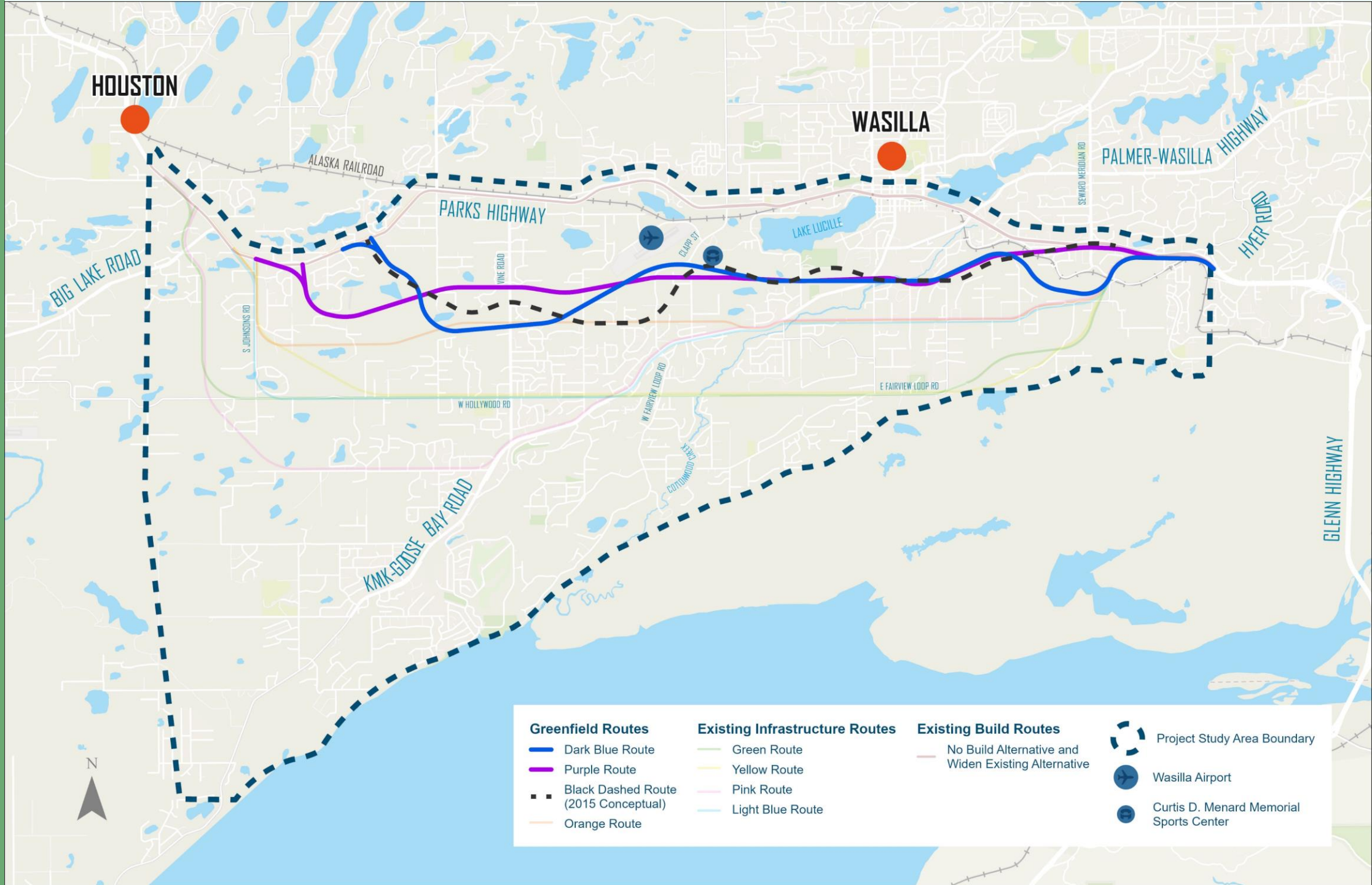
- Green Route
- Yellow Route
- Pink Route
- Light Blue Route

Existing Alignment Routes

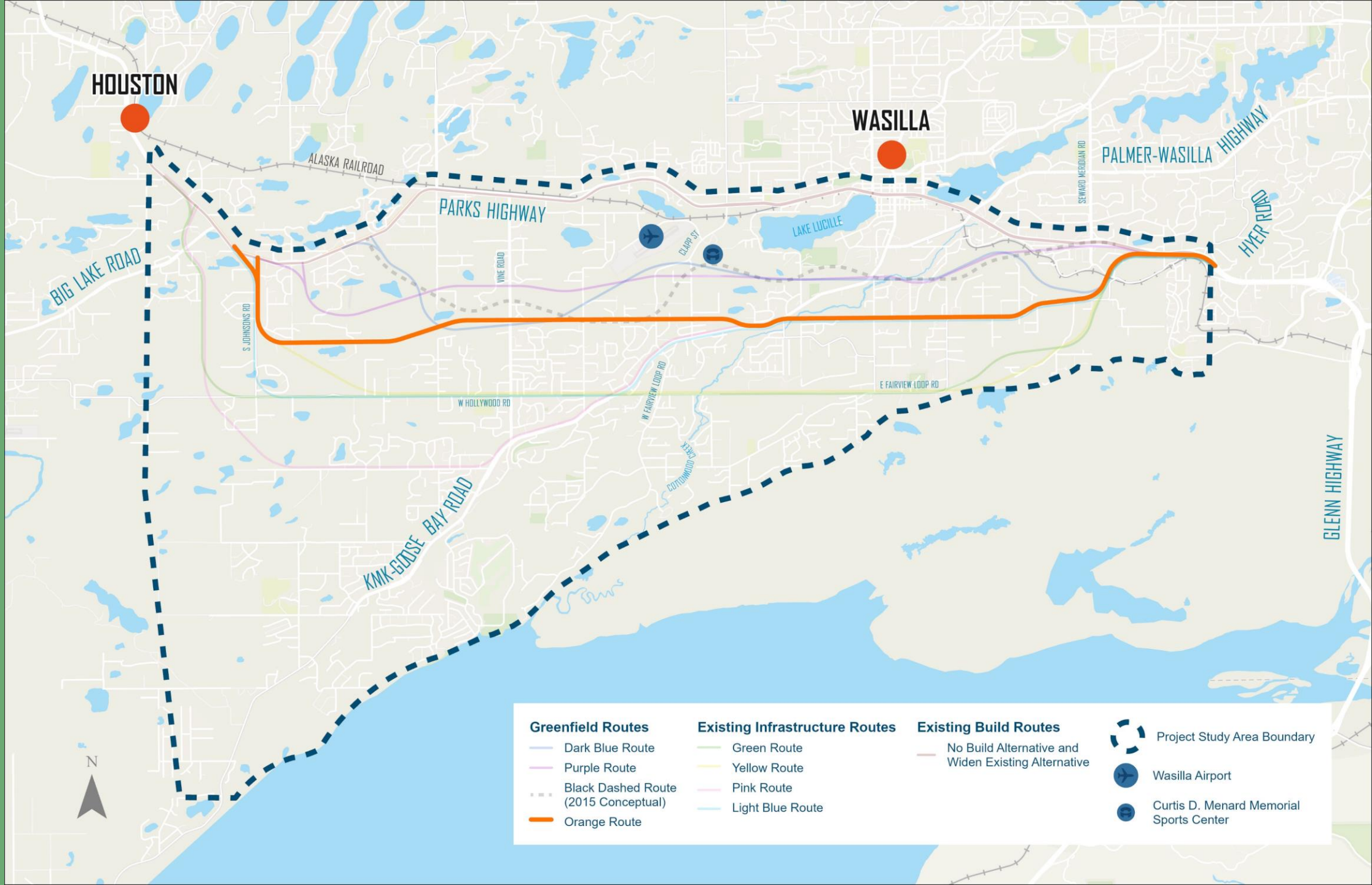
- No Build Alternative and Widen Existing Alternative

- Project Study Area Boundary
- Wasilla Airport
- Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center

DARK BLUE, BLACK DASHED & PURPLE ROUTES — ADVANCE AS GROUP



ORANGE ROUTE — ADVANCE AS ALTERNATIVE

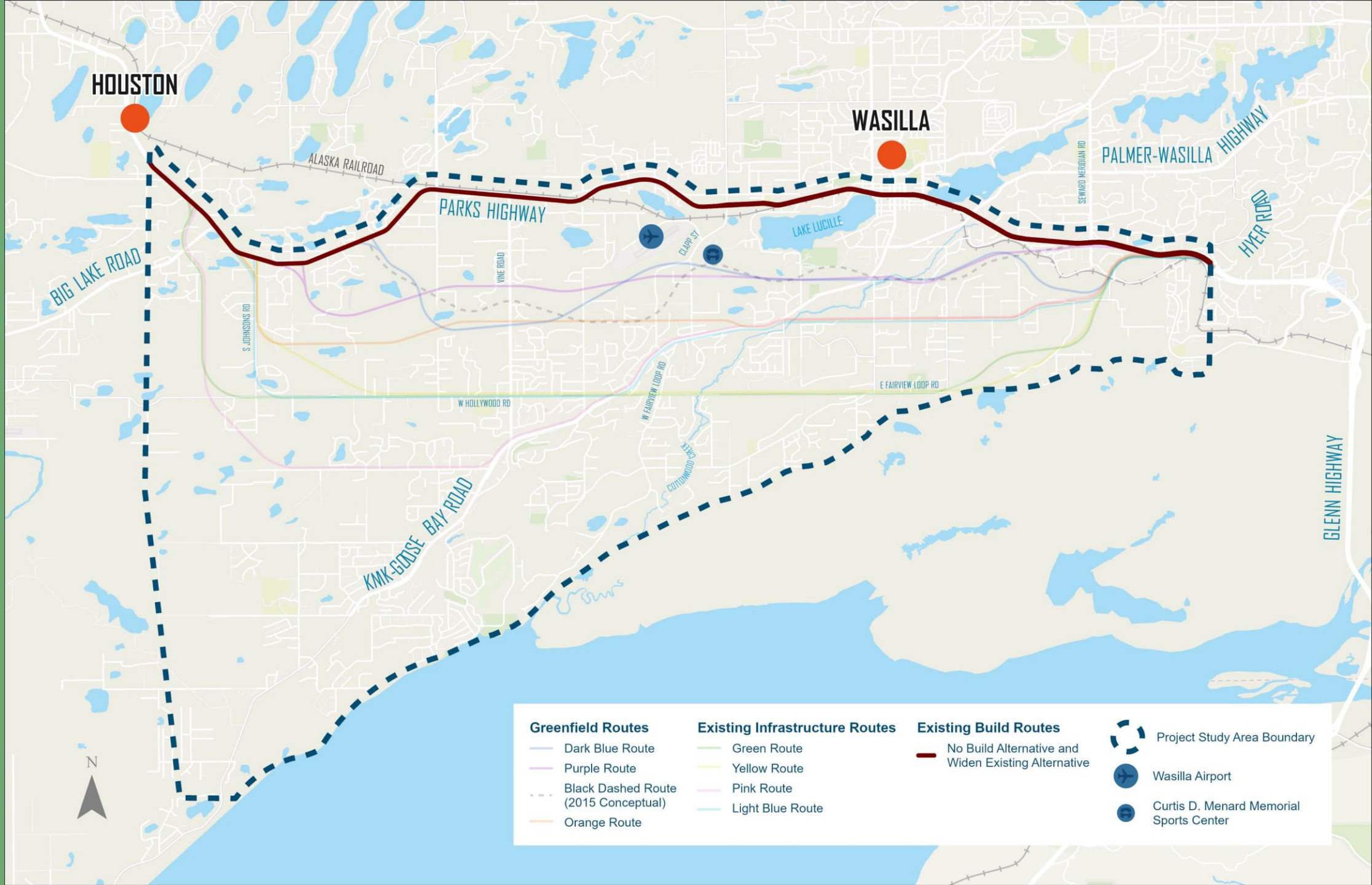


Greenfield Routes	Existing Infrastructure Routes	Existing Build Routes	
Dark Blue Route	Green Route	No Build Alternative and Widening Existing Alternative	Project Study Area Boundary
Purple Route	Yellow Route		Wasilla Airport
Black Dashed Route (2015 Conceptual)	Pink Route		Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center
Orange Route	Light Blue Route		

YELLOW ROUTE — ADVANCE AS ALTERNATIVE



NO BUILD — EXISTING CONDITIONS BASELINE



Greenfield Routes	Existing Infrastructure Routes	Existing Build Routes	
Dark Blue Route	Green Route	No Build Alternative and Widen Existing Alternative	Project Study Area Boundary
Purple Route	Yellow Route		Wasilla Airport
Black Dashed Route (2015 Conceptual)	Pink Route		Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center
Orange Route	Light Blue Route		



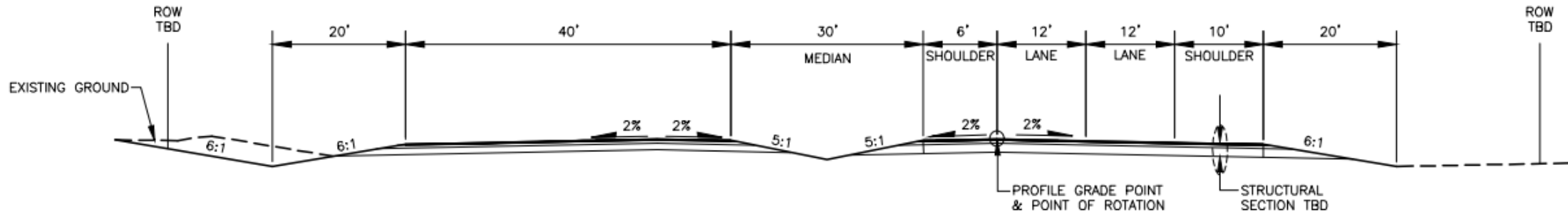
DISCUSSION



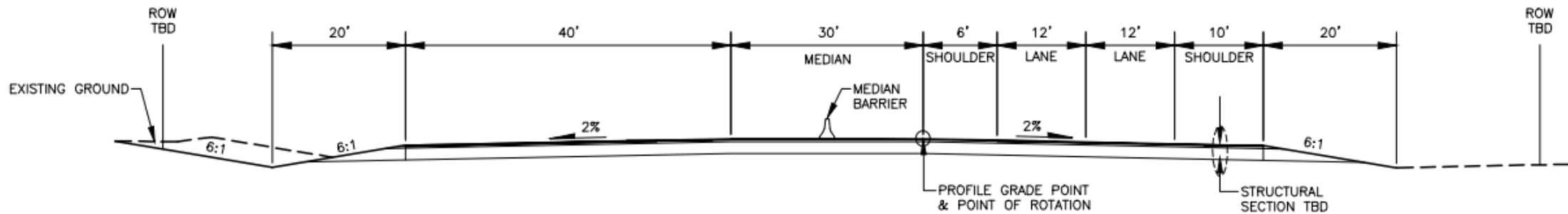
DETAILED ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND SCREENING

DETAILED ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Corridors have been laid out using alternative design criteria
- Efforts underway to combine three alternatives
- Potential interchange locations identified (and conceptual interchange forms considered)
- Planning-level cost estimates developed
- Revisions made based on environmental conditions and engineering criteria

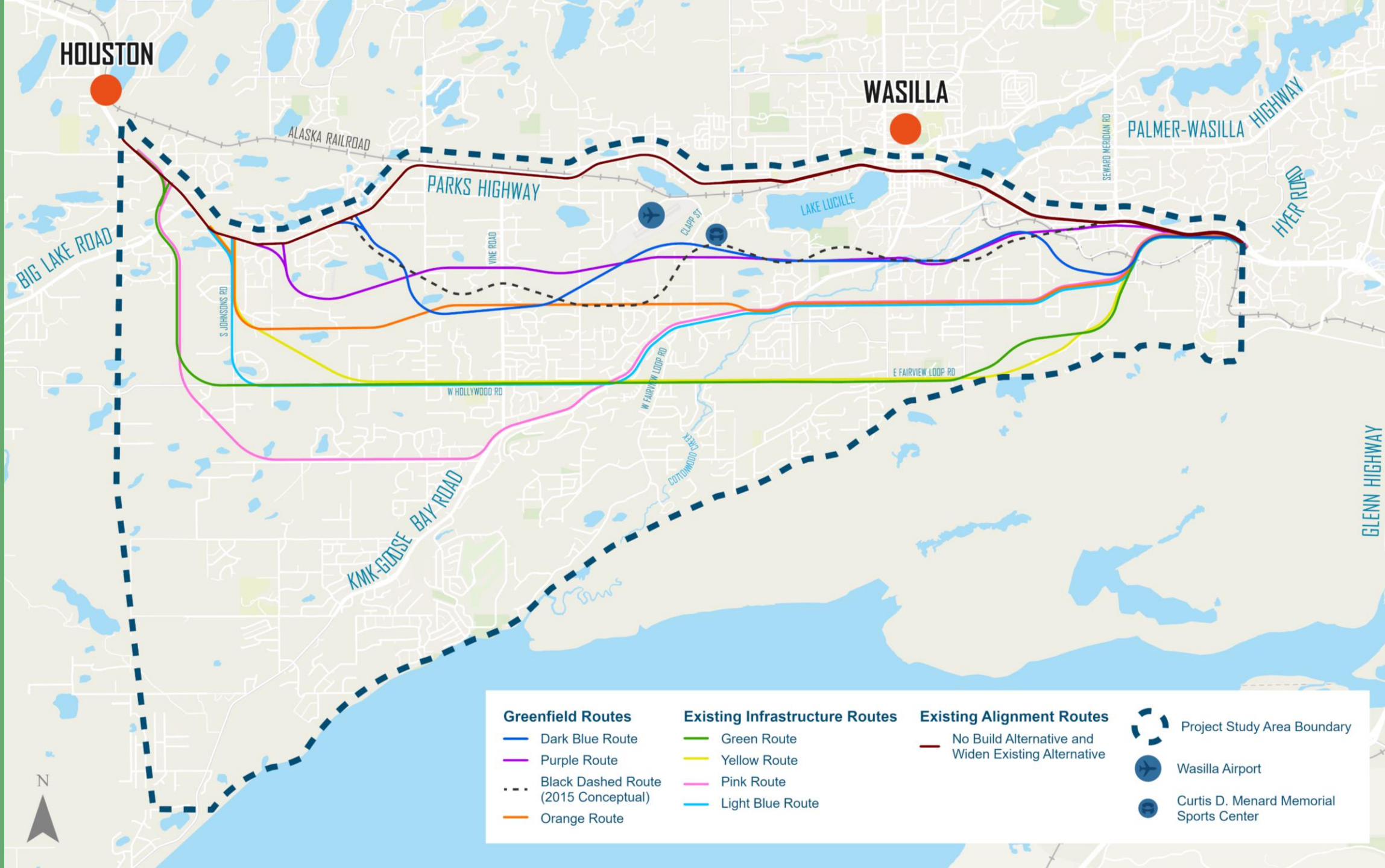


4 LANE TYPICAL SECTION – DEPRESSED MEDIAN

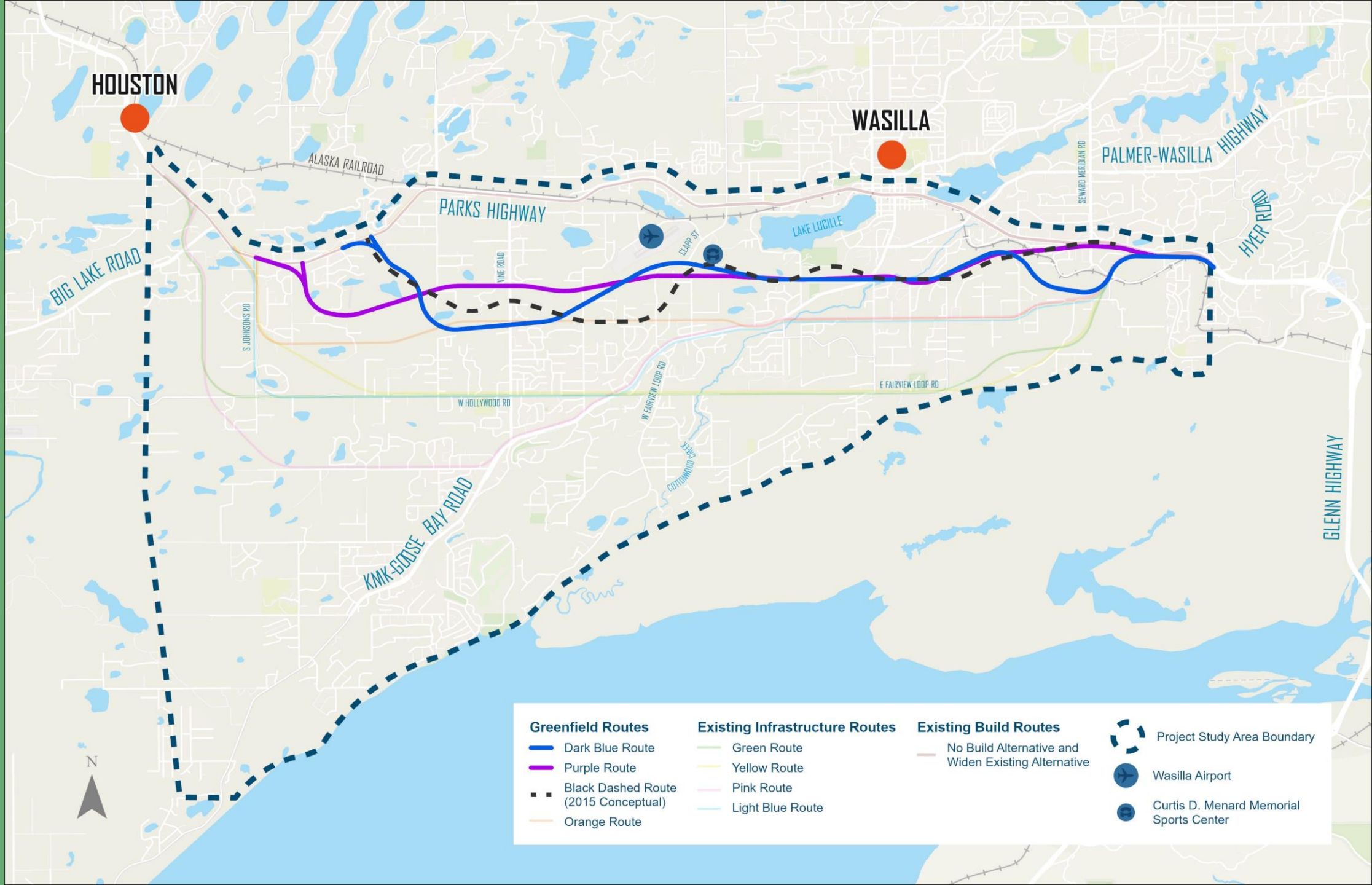


4 LANE TYPICAL SECTION – BARRIER MEDIAN

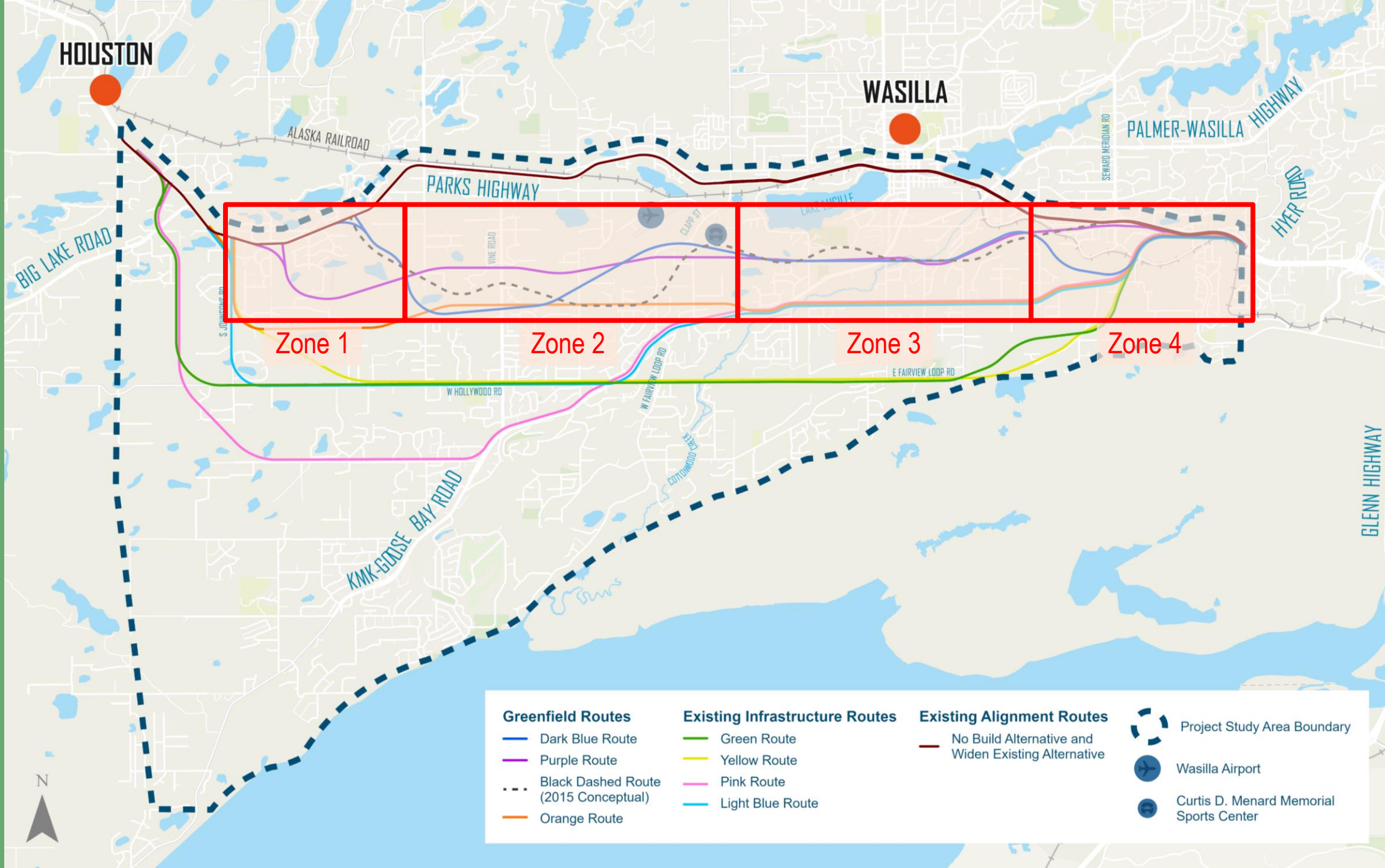
PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES



DARK BLUE, BLACK DASHED & PURPLE ROUTES — ADVANCE AS GROUP



PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES - ZONES



Greenfield Routes

- Dark Blue Route
- Purple Route
- Black Dashed Route (2015 Conceptual)
- Orange Route

Existing Infrastructure Routes

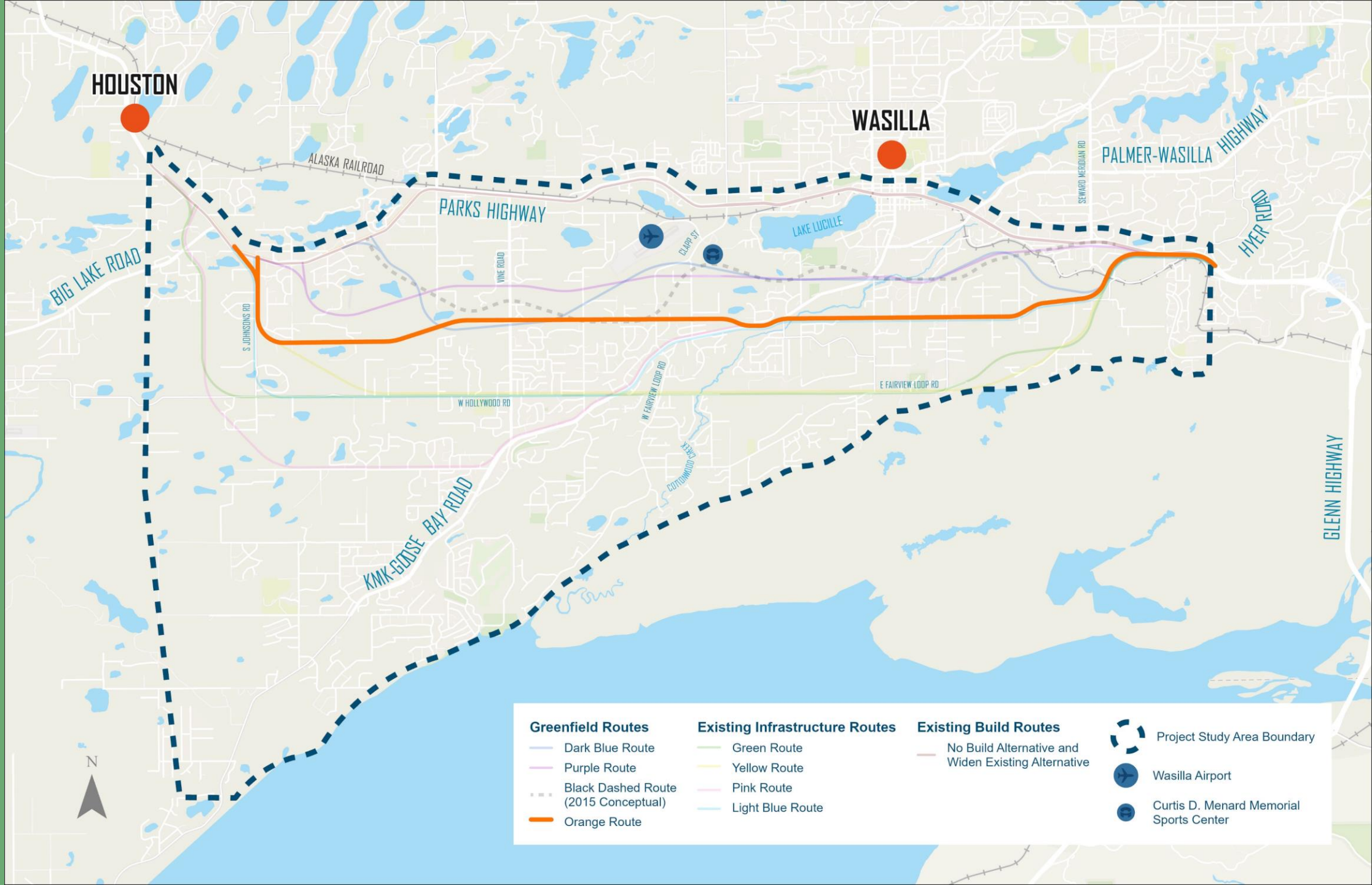
- Green Route
- Yellow Route
- Pink Route
- Light Blue Route

Existing Alignment Routes

- No Build Alternative and Widen Existing Alternative

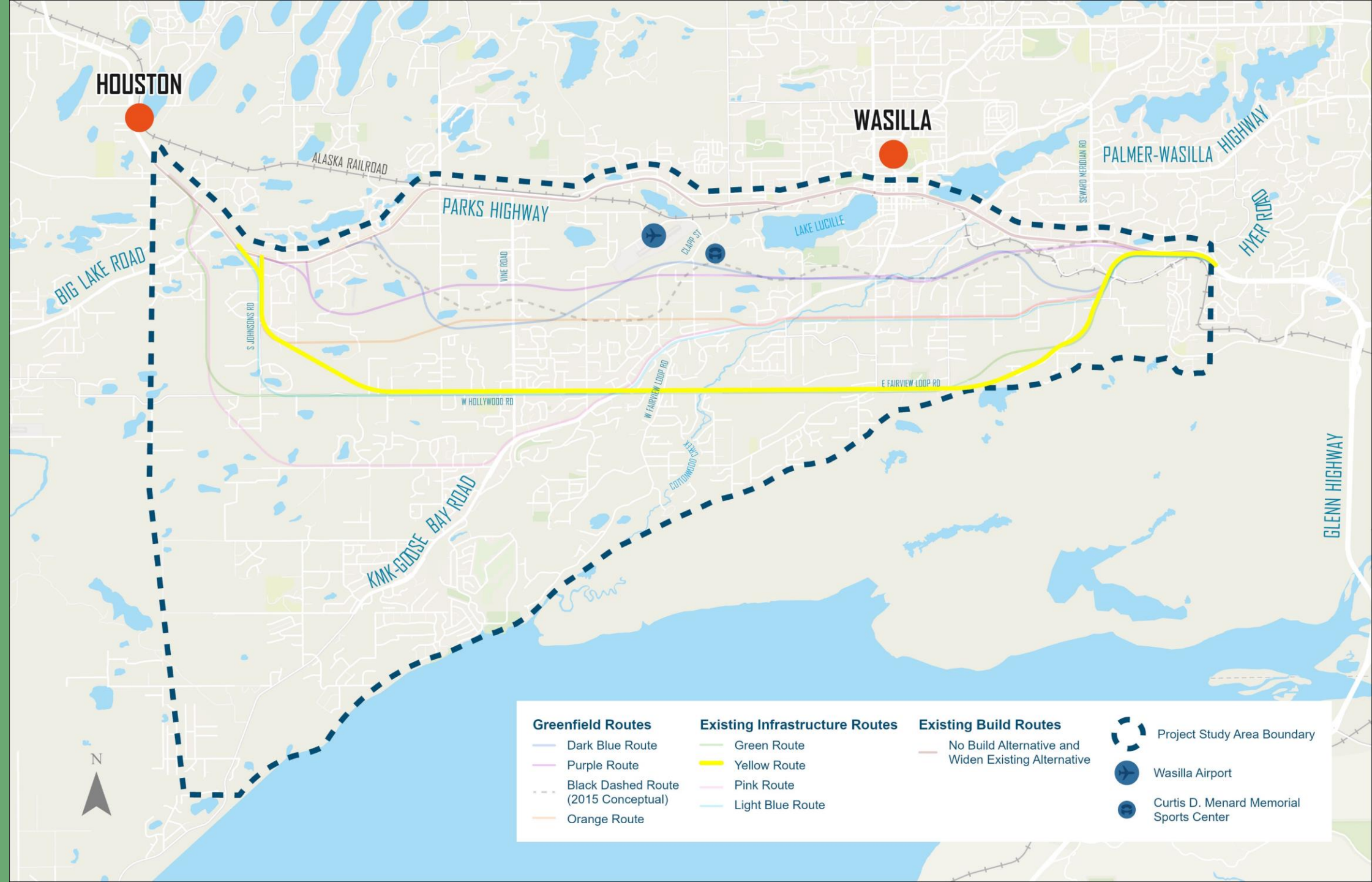
- Project Study Area Boundary
- Wasilla Airport
- Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center

ORANGE ROUTE — ADVANCE AS ALTERNATIVE



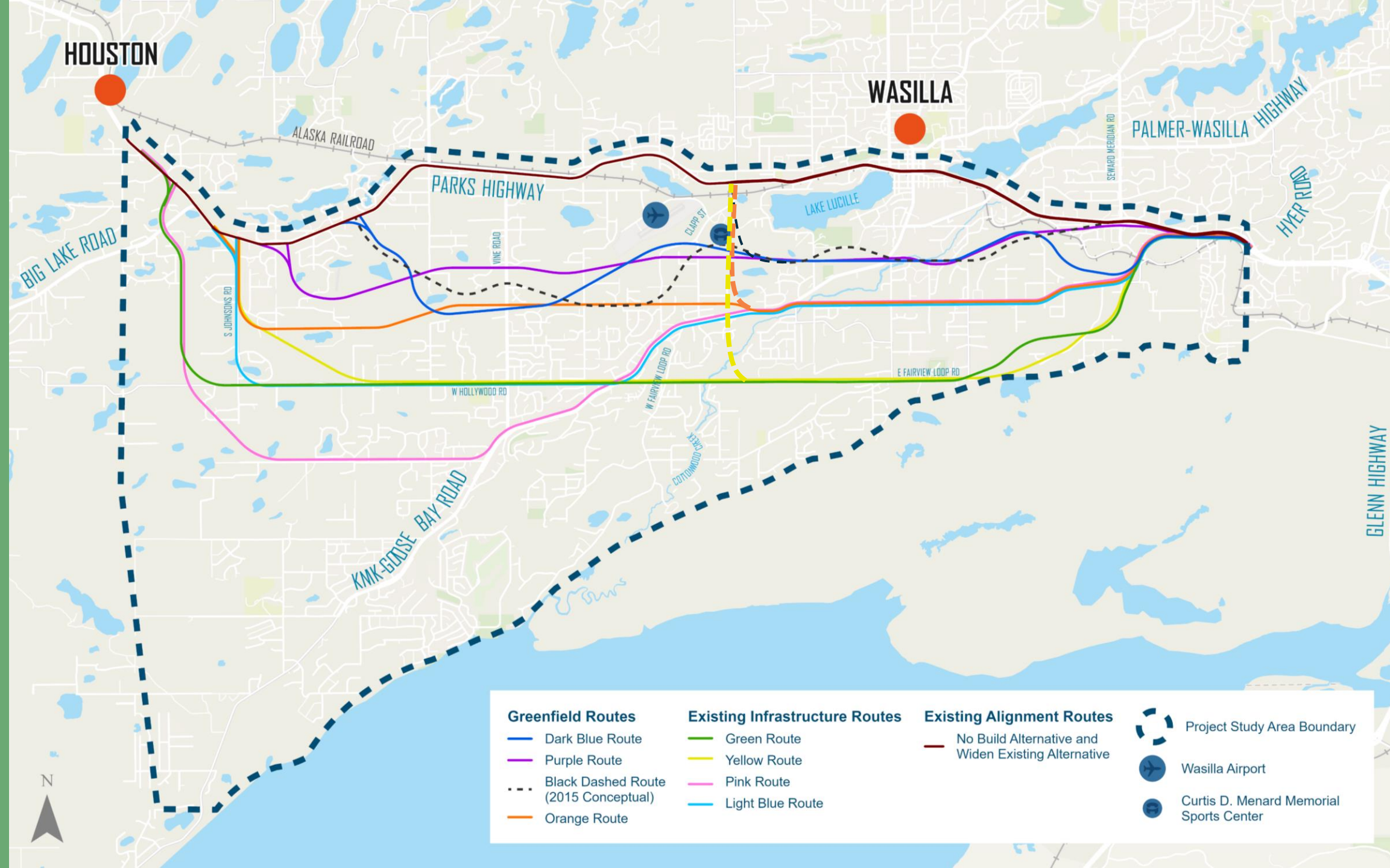
Greenfield Routes	Existing Infrastructure Routes	Existing Build Routes	
Dark Blue Route	Green Route	No Build Alternative and Widen Existing Alternative	Project Study Area Boundary
Purple Route	Yellow Route		Wasilla Airport
Black Dashed Route (2015 Conceptual)	Pink Route		Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center
Orange Route	Light Blue Route		

YELLOW ROUTE — ADVANCE AS ALTERNATIVE



Greenfield Routes	Existing Infrastructure Routes	Existing Build Routes	
Dark Blue Route	Green Route	No Build Alternative and Widen Existing Alternative	Project Study Area Boundary
Purple Route	Yellow Route		Wasilla Airport
Black Dashed Route (2015 Conceptual)	Pink Route		Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center
Orange Route	Light Blue Route		

VARIANT - MINIMUM ALTERNATIVE BYPASS



HOUSTON

WASILLA

BIG LAKE ROAD

ALASKA RAILROAD

PARKS HIGHWAY

LAKE LUCILLE

PALMER-WASILLA HIGHWAY

HYER ROAD

S. JOHNSONS RD

W HOLLYWOOD RD

W FAIRVIEW LOOP RD

E FAIRVIEW LOOP RD

KMK-GOOSE BAY ROAD

COTTONWOOD CREEK

GLENN HIGHWAY



Greenfield Routes	Existing Infrastructure Routes	Existing Alignment Routes	
Dark Blue Route	Green Route	No Build Alternative and Widen Existing Alternative	Project Study Area Boundary
Purple Route	Yellow Route		Wasilla Airport
Black Dashed Route (2015 Conceptual)	Pink Route		Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center
Orange Route	Light Blue Route		

DETAILED ALTERNATIVE SCREENING CRITERIA

- Quantitative measures (as much as possible)
- Criteria based on:
 - Transportation planning
 - Roadway system performance
 - Environmental impacts
 - ROW requirements
 - Cost

DETAILED ALTERNATIVE SCREENING CRITERIA

Criteria	Impact Categories
Safety	Fatalities and serious injuries – motorized and non-motorized
Mobility	Speed, travel time reliability, travel time improvement, trip redistribution
Pavement Condition	Ease of maintenance/likely frequency of maintenance needs
Natural Environment	Wetlands, waterbodies, flora and fauna, contaminated land, cultural resources, Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources
Socioeconomic	Distance to dwellings, potential residential displacements, land impacted, EJ populations, neighborhoods, community facilities, commercial and industrial land uses, visual effects
Right of Way	Total acreage, potential number of partial and full property acquisitions
Community Support	Level of community support for alternative
Cost	Cost of alternative corridor construction, maintenance



QUESTIONS, COMMENTS?




WHAT'S NEXT?

Public Meeting #	Focus	When
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Vision▪ Purpose & Need Statement	Winter/Fall 2022
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Range of alternatives▪ Alternatives screening process▪ Screening criteria	Fall 2022
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Preliminary alternatives screening results, and▪ Detailed alternative screening criteria	Spring/Summer 2023
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Detailed alternative screening results▪ Recommended alternatives to advance to NEPA▪ Draft and Final PEL Study	End of 2023/early 2024



THANK YOU!

PROJECT CONTACTS:

-  Clint Adler, PE // DOT&PF Project Manager
(907) 707-1911
-  Renee Whitesell, PTP // DOWL Project Manager
(907) 865-1161
-  Rachel Steer // DOWL Public Involvement
(907) 562-2000

PROJECT EMAIL:

-  parkshighwayalternative@dowl.com

WEBSITE:

-  parkshighwayalternative.com

Materials and summaries from the Public Meetings are available on the project website at www.parkshighwayalternative.com

PARKS HIGHWAY
Alternative Corridor PEL Study

