

# Empowered Public Participation in the Design of the Turtle Creek Viaduct

Pittsburgh, PA



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January 14, 2008

# Empowered Public Participation

“I know of no safer depository of the ultimate powers of society than the people themselves, and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion.”

Thomas Jefferson



# Project Background

- MonFayette Expressway, new 24 mile urban toll road
- Supports Industrial Redevelopment of Monongahela River Valley
- FEIS/ROD approved January, 2005.
- Required Design Advisory Teams in 5 Communities

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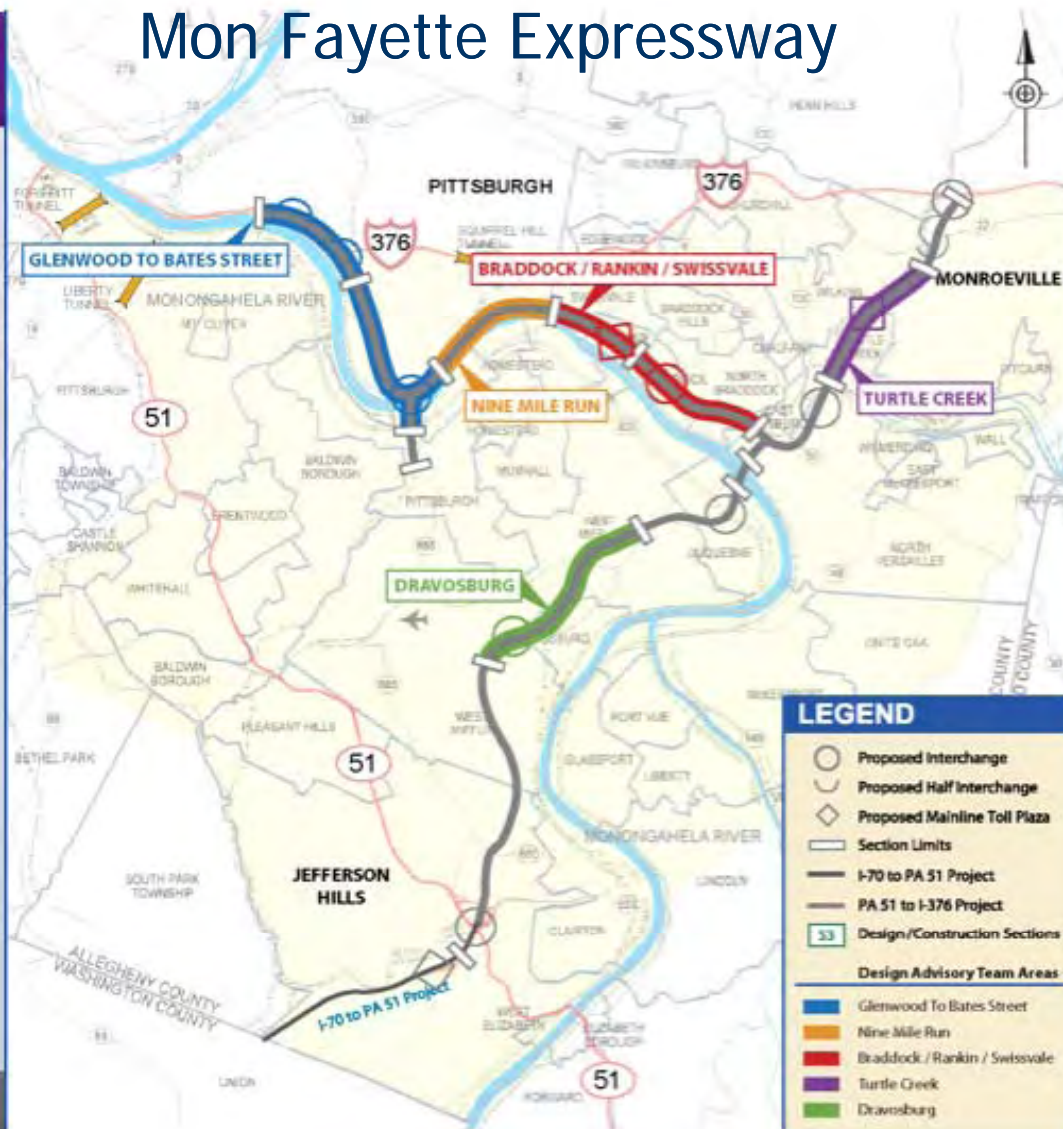


# Mon Fayette Expressway

DESIGN  
advisory team

## DAT Areas

- Glenwood to Bates
- Nine Mile Run
- Braddock/Rankin/Swissvale
- Dravosburg
- Turtle Creek



Mon Fayette Expressway  
PA 51 to I-376

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# BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR

- Designing an Expressway that complements the communities and landscape through which it passes
- Incorporating innovative features and design concepts from the onset



# Turtle Creek Borough



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# Turtle Creek Borough



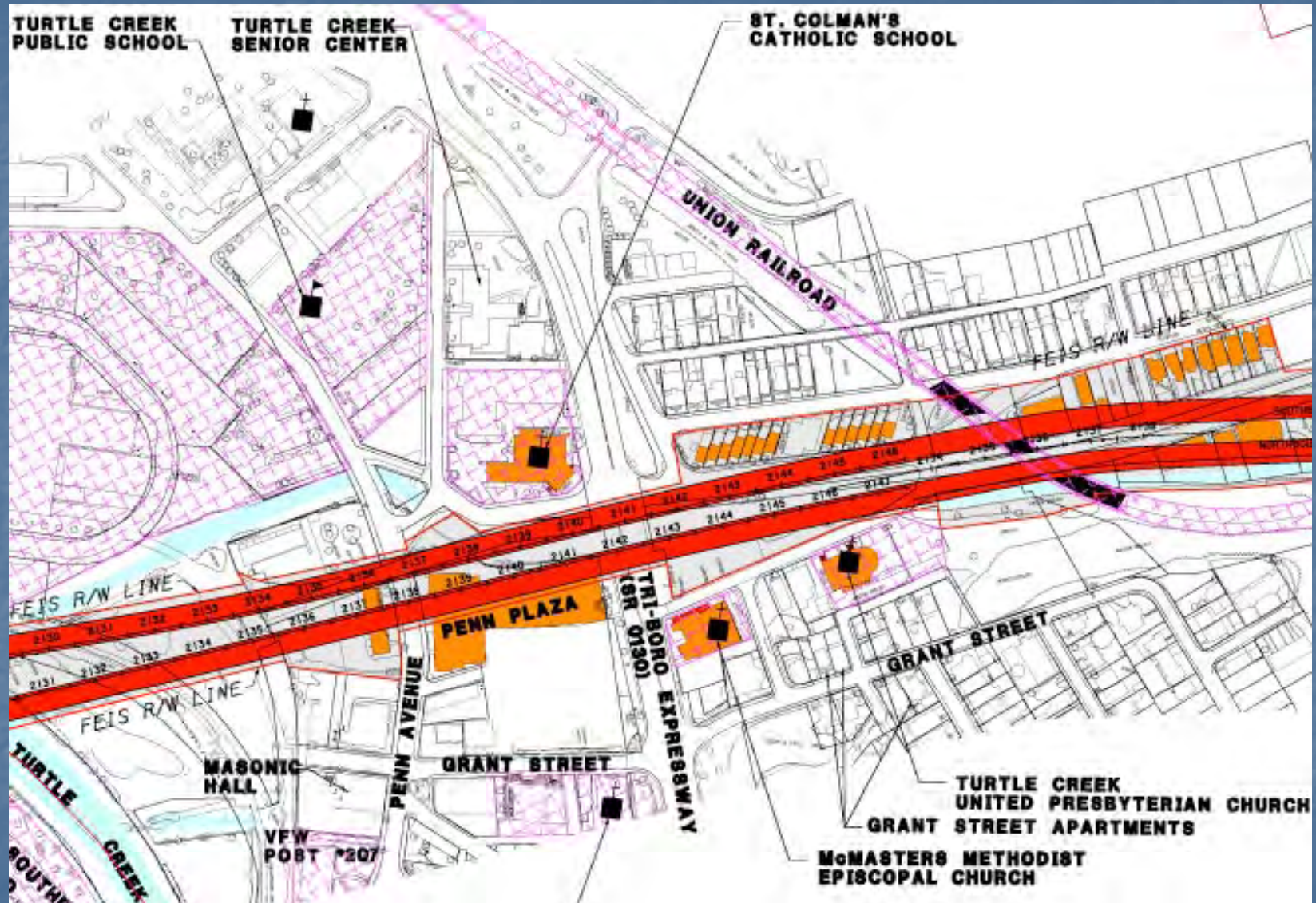
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# The Mon/Fayette Expressway in Turtle Creek



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# Turtle Creek as Visualized in the FEIS



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# DAT Process: Organization

- Membership: 12 community & 5 Technical
- Members screened
- Initial Organizational Meeting: Identified additional representative group needs
- Monthly meetings: held at a Penn Plaza restaurant central in the DAT design section
- Second Meeting: Identified 31 Issues
- Meeting Agenda & Minutes on website

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# DAT Process: Team Composition

- Community Members - most resided on Turtle Creek or worked there
- Technical Team
  - PTC representative
  - Design section engineer
  - Environmental consultant
  - Urban design consultant
  - Technical Support consultant

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# DAT Process: Empowerment

- Empowered by PTC to make decisions
- Consensus Building
- PTC Leadership Team
- PTC Commitment to implement decisions
- Decision Chronicles
- DAT acted in a responsible manner

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# DAT Process: Community Input

- DAT Deliberations
  - Sequential List of Issues
  - Options considered
  - Visualizations offered
  - Trust developed early
- DAT Outreach
  - Community Fairs
  - Feedback to Council

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# DAT Process: Impact on Cost

- PTC approach to cost requests
- Cost control focused on cost-effective design decisions
- DAT informed of cost considerations prior to making decisions
- Some DAT decisions added costs, some reduced costs



# Design of the Viaduct

- Viaduct Height
- Viaduct Alignment
- Median Width/Double Deck
- Span Lengths, Pier Placement & Bridge Type
- Development Opportunities
- Business Relocation and Construction Staging

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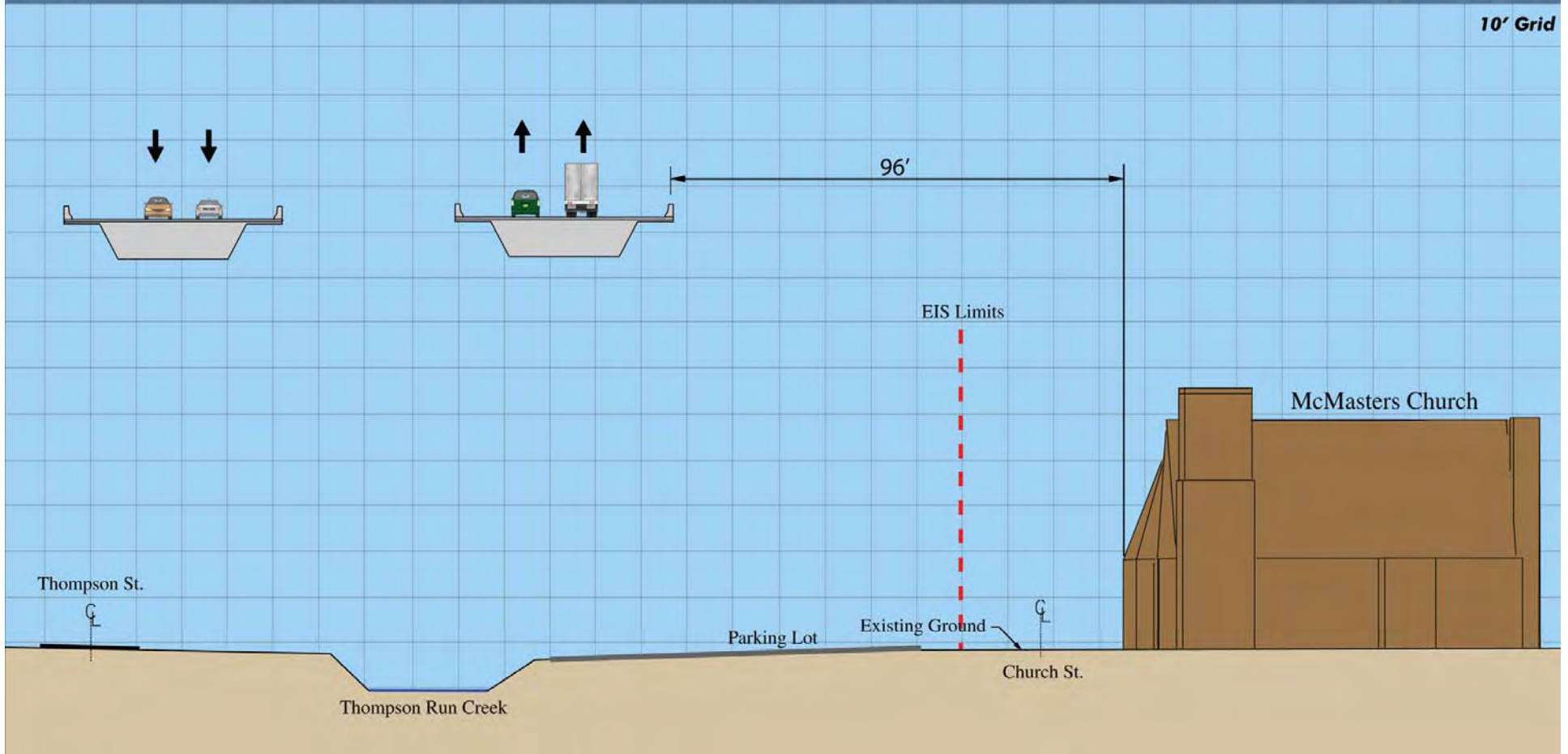


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# Viaduct Height

10' Grid



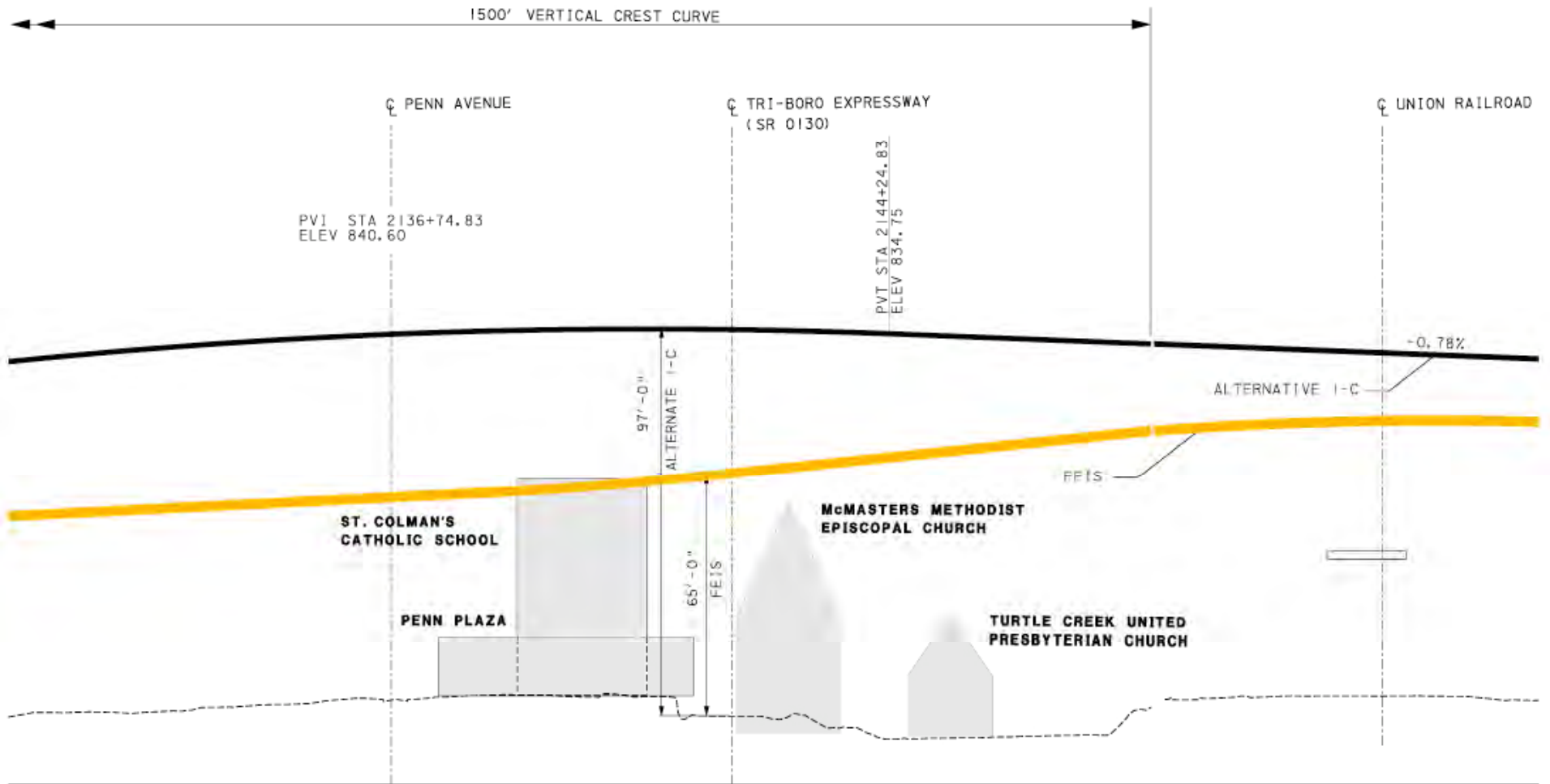
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# Viaduct Height



**FEIS DAT PROFILE 2005**

# Viaduct Height



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# Span Lengths, Pier Placement & Bridge Type

- Box - Type Structures
- No Piers @ Churches
- Few Piers in Redevelopment Area

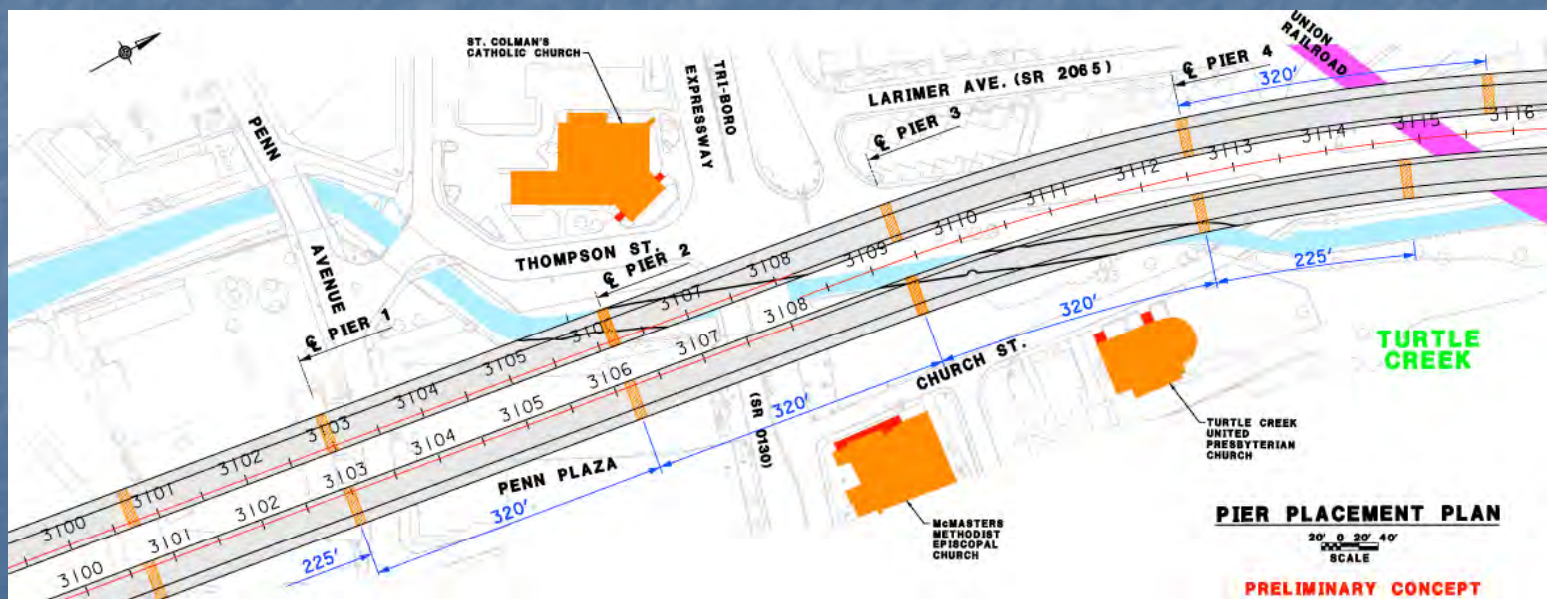
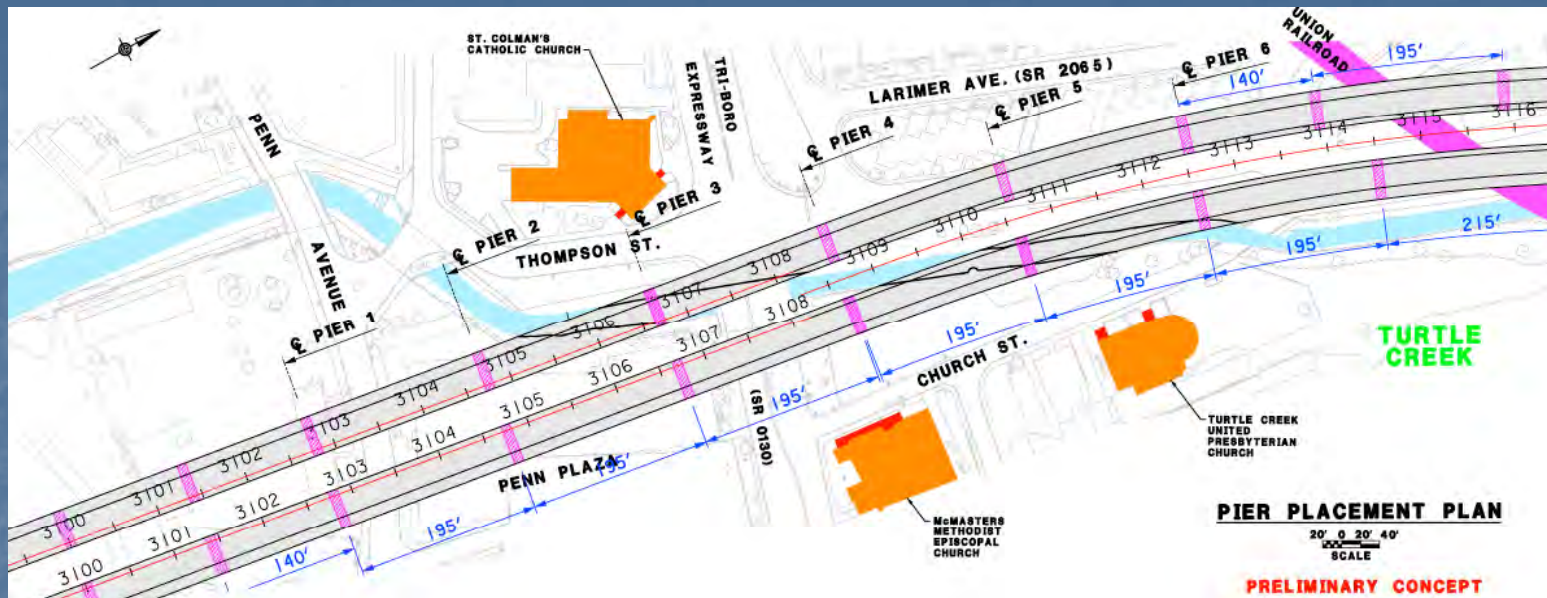
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# Span Lengths, Pier Placement & Bridge Type



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# Span Lengths, Pier Placement & Bridge Type



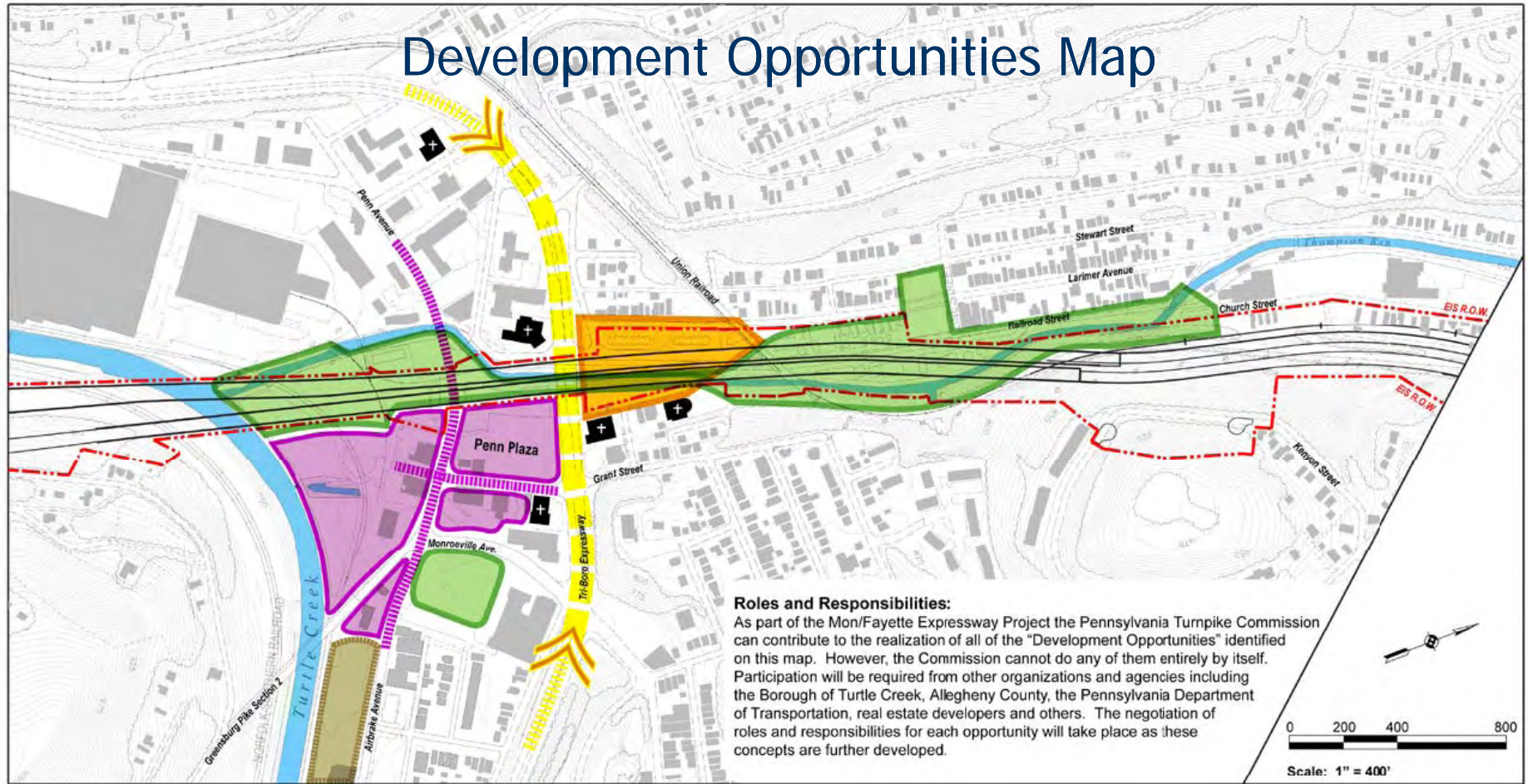
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# Development Opportunities Map



## Roles and Responsibilities:

As part of the Mon/Fayette Expressway Project the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission can contribute to the realization of all of the "Development Opportunities" identified on this map. However, the Commission cannot do any of them entirely by itself. Participation will be required from other organizations and agencies including the Borough of Turtle Creek, Allegheny County, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, real estate developers and others. The negotiation of roles and responsibilities for each opportunity will take place as these concepts are further developed.

Scale: 1" = 400'

## 1 Linear Park

Create a linear park along Thompson Run from Larimer Avenue to the mouth of Thompson Run at Turtle Creek to restore the area under the expressway and support the redevelopment of adjoining areas.

## 2 Street Replanning

Realign Church Street, Railroad Street and Larimer Avenue into a more efficient intersection to improve emergency vehicle access and increase parking spaces for churches.

## 3 Turtle Creek Gateway

Make the Tri-Boro Expressway, through the center of Turtle Creek, more attractive and pedestrian friendly.

## 4 Retail Core

Replace Penn Plaza and encourage the enlargement of retail activities in the center of Turtle Creek.

## 5 Relocation Housing

Encourage the replacement of houses required for the expressway in areas adjacent to the center of Turtle Creek.

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# Business Relocation and Construction Staging



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# Cost Changes

■ Viaduct Height.....	+\$5m
■ Viaduct Alignment.....	0
■ Median Width.....	0
■ Span Lengths, Pier Placement & Bridge Type....	?
■ Development Opportunities.....	0
■ Business Relocation and Construction Staging...	0
■ Other 4 DATs, net.....	<u>-\$85m</u>
Total All DATs, net.....	-\$80m



# Reflections on the DAT Process

- Initial apprehensive attitude of DAT community members
- Early turnaround in attitude due to:
  - Early positive relationship between technical and community members
  - Trust between PTC and DAT
  - Regular face to face contact

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# Reflections on the DAT Process

- Early Positive Experiences
  - Learning Engineering Vernacular
  - The Balloon and Surveyor Stake Story
  - The Bridge Tour
  - Lots of Renderings and Choices

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# Reflections on The DAT Process

- Dispelling Myths about Public Participation
  - Design schedule completed ahead of schedule
  - Overall costs resulted in savings compared with projections
  - PTC and FHWA monitored the process and have been uniformly supportive

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# Recommendations

- The DAT process gives credibility to its application for future transportation projects
- This process has shown to be especially valuable in urbanized areas where significant mitigation is needed to address community impacts