

## Public Comments Submitted to the Boston Region MPO

April 3, 2025

The following written comments were submitted to the MPO during the development of the FFYs 2026-30 Transportation Improvement Program:

### *Comments received since last MPO meeting (March 20, 2025):*

- **Marblehead Village Street Bridge Replacement**
  - o Letter in support of project from Town of Marblehead (pages 2-3)

### *Comments received prior to last MPO meeting (March 20, 2025):*

- **Project #609246: Lynn—Rehabilitation of Western Avenue and Project #609252: Lynn—Rehabilitation of Essex Street**
  - o Letter in support from City of Lynn Mayor Jared Nicholson (pages 4-5)
- **Project #613816: Malden—Route 60**
  - o Letter in support from Malden City Council (page 6)
- **Project #613695: Lexington—Bedford and Hartwell Complete Streets Reconstruction Project and Project #S12978: Lexington—Design of Safety Improvements at Interstate 95 and Route 4/225 Interchange**
  - o Letter in support from State Representative Michelle Ciccolo, 15<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District (pages 7-9)
- **Project #606226: Boston—Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue**
  - o Letter in support from City of Boston (pages 10-12)
- **Project #605168: Hingham—Improvements on Route 3A**
  - o Letter in support from Town of Hingham Select Board (pages 13-15)
- **Project #613111: Littleton—Littleton Bridge Preservation, Route 119 over I-495**
  - o Letter in support with request from Town of Littleton (pages 16-18)
- **Project #610666: Swampscott—Swampscott Rail Trail**
  - o Letter in support from Swampscott Public Schools (page 19)
  - o Letter in support from Town of Swampscott Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee (pages 20-21)
  - o Letter in support from Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail (page 22)
  - o Letter in support from Swampscott Conservancy (pages 23-24)
  - o 4 letters in support from Swampscott residents (pages 25-28)
  - o 2 letters in opposition from Swampscott residents (pages 29-31)
- **Project #609204: Belmont—Belmont Community Path Phase 1**
  - o 24 letters in support from Belmont residents (pages 32-40)



Brendan Callahan  
Director of Community  
Development & Planning

The Department of  
**Community Development and Planning**

Mary Alley Building  
7 Widger Road  
MARBLEHEAD, MASSACHUSETTS 01945

Thatcher W. Kezer III  
Town Administrator

March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Dear Members of the TIP Process, Readiness, and Engagement Committee,

I write in strong support of the Town of Marblehead's application for funding through the Boston MPO grant program for the Village Street Bridge improvements. This project is critical to addressing long-standing safety and accessibility concerns while enhancing connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists, and all users.

After reviewing your proposed discussion item, TIP Scenarios 2A-C, I was surprised to see \$6,956,297 currently unprogrammed in FFY 2030 for Scenario 2A. The Marblehead Village Street Bridge Replacement project is currently estimated at \$5,166,582 and planned for construction in FFY 2030. This municipal priority would make a great addition to Scenario 2A that the Committee is considering today.

The Village Street Bridge is a key link over the Marblehead Rail Trail, connecting schools, businesses, and neighborhoods. However, its outdated infrastructure—including narrow sidewalks, inadequate cyclist accommodations, and deteriorating surfaces—poses safety risks. The proposed upgrades, including ADA-compliant sidewalks, increased roadway width for bike-supportive infrastructure, and safety enhancements, will create a safer and more accessible corridor. This project is an important investment in safety, mobility, and sustainability.

I urge the Boston MPO to support Marblehead's Village Street Bridge replacement application and to fund these essential improvements. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Logan Casey  
Sustainability Coordinator, Town of Marblehead

caseyl@marblehead.org

# City of Lynn



City Hall, Room 306  
Lynn, MA 01901

Phone: 781-586-6850  
jared.nicholson@lynnma.gov

*Jared C. Nicholson*  
Mayor

March 25, 2025

Mr. David Mohler, Chairman  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
State Transportation Building  
Ten Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116-3968

Re: **LYNN** - Rehabilitation of Western Avenue (Project No. 609246)  
**LYNN** - Rehabilitation of Essex Street (Project No. 609252)

Dear Chairman Mohler,

On behalf of the City of Lynn I would like to thank the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) for their support in our efforts to improve the transportation infrastructure of our City. I know how vitally important it is to have a transportation system that is designed to provide modern technology, and current best practices in roadway design that accommodates all users to ensure safer streets, enhances access to alternative modes of transportation, and improves traffic operations. These investments will provide a better quality of life for our citizens and inspires economic growth that will sustain us in the future.

I also recognize the difficult task the MPO has in balancing significant funding obligations with the needs of the region. That said, it is our understanding that at your March 20, 2025 meeting, the MPO voted for TIP Scenario 1A which would delay two of the roadway projects in Lynn for two years. Under this scenario, the Rehabilitation of Western Avenue (Route 107) and the Rehabilitation of Essex Street are proposed to be delayed to FFY 2030 and FFY 2028, respectively, for the upcoming FFY 2026-2030 TIP cycle. It is my understanding that these are the only two projects in the current scenario being delayed for two years.

The purpose of this letter is to reaffirm our commitment to the members of the Boston MPO and MassDOT that my administration is committed to advancing these projects expeditiously. While the City of Lynn supports delaying Essex Street to FFY 2028, we respectfully request that the MPO reconsider delaying Western Avenue only one year to FFY 2029 for programming in the upcoming FFY 2026-2030 TIP cycle, rather than to FFY 2030.

The Western Avenue Project is one of the highest scoring projects in the Boston Region MPO with a score of 74.9 further validating the urgent need for the City of Lynn to continue to advance this effort. The project will provide critical transportation infrastructure and safety improvements at critical locations in the City. In addition to providing comprehensive corridor improvements for vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles and transit riders, the project will correct long overdue safety deficiencies that are critical to all transportation modes. This includes improving traffic safety and operations at Top 200 High Crash intersections as well as multiple HSIP pedestrian and bicycle crash cluster locations. Moreover, the project also supports Lynn's underserved populations and multiple Environmental Justice communities that will benefit from the improvements.

We recognize that we are early in the process, but much work has already been accomplished. Ongoing meetings with MassDOT and MBTA staff have been instrumental in obtaining concurrence on critical project elements, including the roadway cross-section, enhanced transit options and bus stop locations, complete streets and healthy transportation applications. Likewise, I am pleased to report that to date the project has achieved key milestones with the approval of the Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) for both Stage 1 and Stage 2. As you know, this approval is an essential component to advancing our design.

Our current design schedule, which has been submitted and approved by MassDOT, supports programming in FFY 2028 based on the key project target dates below. While the current schedule suggests that the Western Avenue project could be available for FFY 2028, the City would support moving the project to FFY 2029.

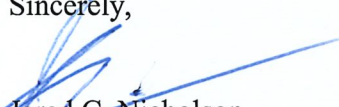
*Current Schedule Milestones*

- MassDOT Public Information Meeting – May 14, 2025
- 25% Submission – July 7, 2025
- Official Design Public Hearing – January 2026
- Anticipated PS&E Submission - August 2027
- Anticipated Advertisement Date – June 2028

The City of Lynn is committed to this project. We again respectfully request that the Western Avenue project be reconsidered for programming in the upcoming FFY 2026-2030 TIP cycle for FFY 2029. We fully understand that we are responsible for the design, right of way and regulatory permitting for the project and are committed to this obligation. We will provide the support necessary at the executive level to ensure that the State and Federal design requirements are met. Together with our consultant team we look forward to continuing to work with our community leaders, MassDOT and the Boston MPO, to advance the project expeditiously.

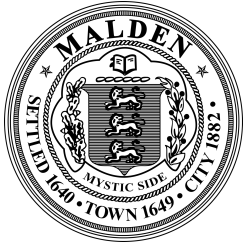
I would like to personally thank the Boston MPO members and MassDOT for your continued support in addressing our transportation infrastructure needs and for considering this worthy request. If you require additional information or we can be of further assistance, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Jared C. Nicholson  
Mayor

- c. Senator Brendan Crighton  
Jonathan Gulliver, Highway Administrator, MassDOT  
Thomas Mc Gee, Chairman, MBTA Board of Directors  
Aaron Clausen, Principal Planner City of Lynn  
Ethan LaPointe, Program Manager, Central Transportation Planning Staff  
Richard Benevento, Tighe & Bond



# City of Malden Massachusetts



Stephen Winslow, Ward 6  
[swinslow@cityofmalden.org](mailto:swinslow@cityofmalden.org)  
[www.cityofmalden.org](http://www.cityofmalden.org)

Malden City Council  
215 Pleasant St, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Malden, Massachusetts 02148

Council Office: 781-397-7130  
Cell Phone: 781-661-8032

March 20, 2025

Ethan LaPointe  
Boston MPO  
State Transportation Building  
Ten Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116-3968

Public Comment – Malden Project #613816  
Design Improvements Route 60

Dear Mr. LaPointe,

I am writing to express my support for funding the design of improvement along Route 60 in Malden, from Lynn Street at the easterly end of Malden to Pearl Street by the Malden MBTA Station including the very congested Ward 6 stretch from Broadway (Route 99) to Maplewood Street.

Route 60 runs east to west the length of Malden connecting several environmental justice neighborhoods to Malden Center. The purpose of undertaking a redesign of Route 60 will be to allow a project conceived and constructed in the 1970's as primarily a project to move autos along the corridor to be transformed into a street that re-connects rather than separates our City. The Council has already voted to change zoning along stretches of Route 60 to implement the MBTA Community Housing law. Design funds will ensure that new residential and multi-use options planned and constructed will ensure transit, walking and bicycling prove to be safe and reliable modes to travel for work, school, shopping and recreation for all residents in Malden.

The project will further several regional efforts to provide more equitable mobility choices to Malden residents and beyond. In 2022, the MBTA and the City agreed to work on a community connections grant to demonstrate the effectiveness of bus lanes along this corridor. That project with great effort on the part of the MBTA and the City to overcome antiquated traffic signal equipment has resulted in 20% fewer crashes along the corridor while providing more efficient and safe mobility to the bus riders, pedestrians and bicyclists who travel along or cross Route 60. Design funds will allow Malden to plan out and ultimately help fund additional measures to enhance mobility and safety along the corridor.

Sincerely

Stephen Winslow  
Ward 6 Councillor

Cc: Yem Lip  
Malden State Delegation



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts 194<sup>th</sup> General Court*

**House of Representatives**

State House, Boston 02133 | Room 473F

**Vice Chair Michelle Ciccolo**  
**State Representative**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District**

**Committee on Climate Action and Sustainability**  
**michelle.ciccolo@mahouse.gov**  
**617-722-2210 O / 781-330-0730 G**

3/19/2025

David Mohler, Chairman  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
State Transportation Building  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116-3968

RE: Project #613695- *Bedford and Hartwell Complete Streets Reconstruction Project and Project #S12978 Rt 4&225-Rt 128/I-95 Interchange and Bridge Design, Town of Lexington, MA*

Dear Chairman Mohler and Esteemed Members of the Boston MPO,

I write in support of the Town of Lexington's Bedford Street and Hartwell Avenue Complete Streets Reconstruction Project and to request that the Boston MPO include this regionally significant project on the FFY 26-30 Transportation Improvement Program. In addition, I want to highlight the importance of continuing to allocate design pilot federal funding in the amount of \$1.65M in FFY 2026 to advance the study and design of the adjacent 4&225 bridge & I-95 interchange. The interchange is integral to the success of the Rt.4/225 (Bedford Street) and Hartwell Avenue Complete Streets Reconstruction Project. As you know, this complete streets project is currently on the MPO's Destination 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan slated for FY 2029-2033, and under design through \$3.25 million in municipal appropriations. With that design substantially advanced, it has become apparent that the interchange and adjacent highway bridge will also need upgrading to accommodate the planned growth for the area. The Town will have invested \$12 million dollars into design and adjacent upgrades of water and sewer and a local bridge to ensure this corridor continues to be accessible and multimodal.

This is a vital regional corridor connecting the communities of Bedford, Carlisle, Westford, and Billerica to the interstate. 4/225 and the I-95 Interchange also provide access to one of the Town of Lexington's MBTA Zoning districts, and its biotech Innovation Corridor. Equally important, the corridor connects Hanscom Air Force Base, and MIT Lincoln Labs to I-95 providing employment access for approximately 20,000 workers. Finally, this project will upgrade and improve transit, bicycle, and pedestrian access to the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway, one of the



# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts 194<sup>th</sup> General Court*

## **House of Representatives**

State House, Boston 02133 | Room 473F

**Vice Chair Michelle Ciccolo**  
**State Representative**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District**

**Committee on Climate Action and Sustainability**  
**michelle.ciccolo@mahouse.gov**  
**617-722-2210 O / 781-330-0730 G**

most heavily traveled bike paths in the country. Lexington continues to support and witness growth in this corridor and has made pro-active efforts to reduce the areas transportation demand. Lexington Planning Board's regulations require more covered bike parking per residential unit than vehicular parking and encourage developers to provide only the minimum required amount of vehicle parking in addition to unbundling the cost of parking and housing. The MBTA development projects are encouraged to work with the 128 Business Council to enhance shared transit opportunities. The Town and MassDOT continue to support the REV Shuttle which carries passengers, with a stop in Lexington Center, to Alewife MBTA Red Line station.

In 2023 Lexington amended its Zoning Bylaw and Map to create districts for multi-family housing or mixed-use developments by-right, otherwise known as the MBTA Communities Act. Lexington was one of the first two municipalities in Massachusetts to become compliant with this new zoning and the applications for multi-family developments are encouraging. Within the limits of this project and just beyond along Maguire Road, Lexington zoned over 50 acres for multi-family housing. The Lexington Planning Board recently approved a proposal for 312 rental units and a 2,100-SF commercial building at 17 Hartwell Avenue and is currently reviewing an application for 130 rental units and a small cafe at 7 Hartwell Avenue. Throughout town, including areas just east of these project limits, the Town has in total approximately 1,200 new multifamily housing units in permitting. 440 Bedford Street, a 6-story lab/office building anticipates occupancy in 2025. These substantial housing and commercial developments necessitate upgrades to our surface transportation systems.

Lexington has and continues to initiate progressive action towards housing development, transit safety, accessibility, and climate resilience. In January 2025 the Lexington Select Board voted unanimously to endorse the preferred project design so that the town and VHB can advance towards the 25% design with MassDOT. It is important that the design of Bedford/Hartwell streets and the interchange happen together. The interchange design request will augment the work already underway for the Rt4/225 Bedford/Hartwell Complete Street Reconstruction project listed in the LRTP Destination2050 in the 2029-2033-time band. Lexington has plenty of experience overseeing large-scale roadway projects, including a \$10M center streetscape project completed in 2023 (Mass Ave), and a \$5M battle green streetscape and roundabout completed in 2024. Through funding allotted by the TIP program, Lexington and the region can continue to advance its goals and those of surrounding communities to provide a safe, accessible and friendly roadway corridor for Lexington and the many neighboring communities.





*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts 194<sup>th</sup> General Court*

**House of Representatives**

State House, Boston 02133 | Room 473F

**Vice Chair Michelle Ciccolo**  
**State Representative**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District**

**Committee on Climate Action and Sustainability**  
**michelle.ciccolo@mahouse.gov**  
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This year marks the semi-quincentennial celebration of the Battles of Lexington and Concord. Lexington will be celebrating 250 years since the battle occurred just 2 miles from this project site, commemorating a lasting legacy for the community and welcoming visitors from all over the globe.

A safe and inviting streetscape is paramount to the region's success. We ask the MPO to include this complete streets reconstruction project on the FFY 26-30 TIP and to continue to advance the adjacent bridge and highway interchange. I commend and appreciate all the work that the Boston MPO members and staff provide for the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Ciccolo".

Michelle Ciccolo  
State Representative  
Massachusetts State House  
24 Beacon St  
Boston, MA 02133



City of Boston  
Mayor Michelle Wu  
Public Works & Transportation

Mr. David Mohler, Chair  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)  
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116

March 18, 2025

Dear Chair Mohler and Members of the Boston Region MPO,

The City of Boston respectfully requests Boston Region MPO program funding for the **Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue from City Square to Sullivan Square** (Project #606226) in Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2029 and 2030. The project is on track to advertise in FFY 2029, as reflected in the simplified schedule shared with MPO staff and attached to this letter. We urge MPO board members to program the project for \$33,500,000 in FFY 2029 and \$33,500,000 in FFY 2030, as reflected in three of the four Initial Readiness Scenarios.

The Rutherford Avenue/Sullivan Square project is critical to **accommodating development** in the Lower Mystic area, within and beyond Boston's borders. In place of the existing highway cutting through the neighborhood, Rutherford Avenue will become a people-friendly multimodal boulevard that efficiently carries **local and regional vehicular traffic** while supporting **rapid bus service**. Separated paths for walking and biking will connect the **regional pedestrian and bicycle network**, including the Mystic River Greenway, Northern Strand Trail, Charles River paths, and the proposed Lower Mystic and Medford Greenway. At Sullivan Square, a new street grid in place of the existing traffic circle will unlock safe and direct access to **Sullivan Square Station** for people walking, riding, and rolling. It will also pave the way for reliable, high-frequency service along the **four key bus corridors** that reach riders in Medford, Somerville, Cambridge, Everett, Malden, and Revere.

The City of Boston appreciates the continued support of the MPO board, MassDOT, MAPC, the MBTA, and our neighboring municipalities. The project team is moving at full steam to deliver a 25% design submission by the end of the calendar year and looks forward to continued collaboration in the coming months to deliver a truly transformative project for the Boston Region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jascha Franklin-Hodge".

Jascha Franklin-Hodge  
Chief of Streets, City of Boston



City of Boston  
Mayor Michelle Wu  
Public Works & Transportation

Attachment: Rutherford Avenue/Sullivan Square Simplified Schedule

CC:

Tegin Teich, Executive Director, CTPS/MPO Staff

Eric Bourassa, Transportation Director, MAPC

Jim Nee, Administrator, MWRTA

John Bechard, Deputy Chief Engineer of Project Development, MassDOT

John Romano, Legislative Affairs Manager, MassDOT

Laura Gilmore, Senior Director of Strategic Transit Planning, MBTA

Brian Kane, Executive Director, MBTA Advisory Board

Sarah K. Lee, Manager of Transportation Planning, Massport

Lenard Diggins, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council

Jay Monty, Transportation Planner, City of Everett

Erin Chute, Commissioner of Public Works, Town of Brookline

David Koses, Department of Public Works, City of Newton

John Alessi, Senior Transportation Planner, Town of Arlington

Darlene Wynne, Director of Planning & Development, City of Beverly

Rachel Benson, Director of Planning & Community Development, Town of Wrentham

Melisa Tintocalis, Economic Development Director, Town of Burlington

Tom O'Rourke, Neponset River Regional Chamber President/CEO, Town of Norwood

Tom Bent, Mayor's Liaison, City of Somerville

Dennis Giombetti, City of Framingham

Kristen Guichard, Planning Director and Zoning Enforcement Officer, Town of Acton

Chris Dilorio, Community Development and Planning Director, Town of Hull

Kenneth Miller, Assistant Division Administrator, FHWA

Peter Butler, Acting Regional Administrator, FTA Region 1

## 2025

- Feb - Oct: Design Development X = MPO-requested milestone
- Oct: draft 25% cost estimate
- Dec: 25% Design Submission with updated cost estimate, Sketch Plan Submission

## 2026

- May: 25% Design Public Hearing

## 2027

- March: Submit MEPA Expanded ENF with EIR Rollover Request

## 2028

- Jan: 75% Design Submission, Bridge Plan Submission-1st Structural, submit NEPA CE
- Aug: Wetland permits filed
- Sep: 100% Design Submission, Bridge Plan Submission-2nd Structural

## 2029

- March: PS&E Submission
- May: Project Readiness/Ad Date
- Contractor Notice to Proceed

# TOWN OF HINGHAM

OFFICE OF THE SELECT BOARD



Joseph M. Fisher, Chair  
William C. Ramsey  
Elizabeth F. Klein

Tom Mayo, Town Administrator

Michelle Monsegur,  
Assistant Town Administrator

Arthur Robert,  
Assistant Town Administrator

February 11, 2025

Ms. Tegin Teich  
Executive Director, Boston Region  
Metropolitan Planning Organization  
State Transportation Building  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116  
(via email: tteich@ctps.org)

**Subject: 605168– Hingham- Improvements on Route 3A Project for FFY 26-30 TIP Development**

**Attention: Ethan Lapointe, Program Manager, TIP**

Dear Ms. Teich:

On behalf of the Town of Hingham, and as authorized by the Hingham Select Board, I am contacting you in response to Mr. Lapointe's email dated February 7, 2025, to Hingham's Town Engineer, J R Frey, regarding project readiness of the Route 3A Improvements Project. I am also providing you with a project status update and suggested solutions to advance this project and maintain the project's position in the FFY 26 TIP. As mentioned in your email, the submission of the 100% Design submission has been delayed by requests from MassDOT's District Five Office to include additional work that is outside of the original scope of the project. Included in this additional work are requirements (1) for the Town of Hingham to replace a 12-inch water main for the length of the project; (2) for National Grid (NGRID) to replace their gas utility lines for significant lengths of the project; and (3) for deferred maintenance of the MassDOT's drainage system and discharges to be addressed before the design would be allowed to advance. These issues, requested at such a late stage of the design process, have delayed and impeded the project's advancement.

Customarily there are three issues that drive a project's advertised schedule. They include utilities, environmental permitting, and right-of-way issues. The Town of Hingham made these issues its primary focus and took proactive measures to assure that this project would move forward on schedule. The Town worked closely with NGRID to perform as much work as possible prior to the advertisement of the project. Below we discuss a solution to address MassDOT's most recent request for additional NGRID gas line replacement. Regarding environmental permitting, the Town has met informally with the Hingham Conservation Commission, which supports the project and is ready to review the environmental permits once submitted. Regarding the Right-of-Way process, the Town of Hingham's counsel met with MassDOT's ROW Bureau and its counsel and has discussed the process and offered assistance in providing

research, if needed, on the affected properties which may require Article 97 approval. The Town of Hingham, through the respective Boards or Committees which control the properties subject to Article 97 approval, is prepared to issue easements or licenses, as applicable, to expedite the requirements of MassDOT and FHWA.

The Town offers the following solutions to address the issues impeding the schedule for this project:

**Town of Hingham Water Main** – The Town of Hingham is advancing the design and replacement of the Town’s water main to begin construction in the Spring/Summer of 2025, to be completed prior to the Spring of 2026. This will reduce the overall cost of MassDOT’s advertised project and allow the selected contractor to begin work sooner.

**NGRID Gas Main** – NGRID has already performed some work in preparation for the reconstruction of Route 3A, including relocation of a pressure regulating station which was within the 3A Rotary. In our discussions with NGRID they are prepared to replace additional sections of gas main consistent with the same schedule that governs the Town’s water main work. NGRID has applied for a State Highway Access Permit to perform the work, but the conditions set by MassDOT include full width reconstruction of the impacted roadway segments. Based on this condition, NGRID has chosen to wait until the larger project is constructed in order to avoid duplicative work and costs. Requiring NGRID to reconstruct the entire roadway width versus providing an appropriate patch would only result in wasted time and money as all of the roadway work they would perform would necessarily be reconstructed again when the larger project begins. Allowing NGRID to perform its work in advance of the larger project would likewise reduce the total cost of MassDOT’s advertised project and allow the selected contractor to begin work sooner.

**MassDOT Drainage System Maintenance** – The drainage discharge improvements requested by MassDOT at the 75 percent submission are a result of deferred maintenance of MassDOT’s roadway drainage system. We understand that there has been considerable time and effort spent investigating these issues due to a lack of plans and the need to locate the drainage discharge points. While we understand the importance of these improvements, we recommend that this work be advanced as a separate drainage improvement project that could be advertised prior to the larger project so as not to interfere with nor delay the larger project. MassDOT’s project consultant has sufficient information to prepare the design for these improvements and advertise a separate project, again reducing the total cost of the larger MassDOT project.

**MassDOT Submission Review Periods** – The Town of Hingham requests that MassDOT accept the submission of the 100 percent design plans as soon as possible, which would facilitate initiation of the environmental permitting and required right-of-way process. The Town also requests that MassDOT maintain a 30-day review period for all significant submissions and an accelerated schedule for coordination and resolution of issues.

**MassDOT Right-of Way Process** – As noted above, the Town of Hingham has been and continues to be proactive in assisting MassDOT in the right-of-way process. The Town is prepared to assist in any way possible and is working directly with MassDOT’s ROW Bureau to remove any perceived barriers in the process and to advance the required approvals as quickly as possible. The Town is preparing warrant article language that would provide the Select Board with the necessary authority to approve and finalize the associated real estate transactions supporting the project.

Ms. Tegin Teich  
February 12, 2025  
Page 3

In closing, we request consideration of the above solutions to keep this process on track and to keep the subject project within the FFY 26 TIP as currently scheduled. Thank you for your consideration. This project is a priority for the Town and we are available to meet and discuss all aspects of the project.

Sincerely yours,



Joseph M. Fisher, Chair  
Town of Hingham Select Board

cc: Mr. Jonathan Gulliver - MassDOT Highway Administrator  
Senator Patrick O'Connor  
Representative Joan Meschino



## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

P.O. Box 1305  
Littleton, Massachusetts 01460



Jan. 16, 2025

RE: Littleton Bridge Preservation, Route 119 (Great Road) over I-495  
MassDOT Project Number: 613111 and Related Improvement Requests

MassDOT Chief Engineer Carrie Lavalley, P.E.,  
MassDOT District 3 Highway Engineer Barry Lorion  
MPO TIP Manager Ethan LaPointe

MassDOT Team:

The Town of Littleton previously provided comments on the Littleton Bridge Preservation, Route 119 (Great Road) over I-495 MassDOT Project Number 613111. It was suggested that since Littleton's comments were beyond the scope of the work under this project, that we forward the comments to Chief Engineer Carrie Lavalley, P.E.; MassDOT District 3 Highway Engineer Barry Lorion, and MPO TIP Manager Ethan LaPointe. We forward this memo as consolidated comments from the Town of Littleton, and we look forward to working with MassDOT to bring this work to completion.

The Town is pleased to see the proposed bridge improvements; however, we would like to see a more comprehensive approach to address utility infrastructure, traffic flow, and pedestrian safety. The replacement of the bridge deck should include updated water, electric transmission, fiber optic, and sewer infrastructure, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on both sides of Route 119 extending from King Street to Constitution Avenue. Current pedestrian safety issues exist throughout Littleton Common due to the lack of signalized crosswalks on Great Road and King Street (Routes 119, 110, and 2A).

We are concerned that a bridge improvement plan that does not include an increase in the number of travel lanes will not address traffic or pedestrian safety concerns in the long term. Bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on both sides, providing public transit, and other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) solutions are necessary. The King Street Commons development on the immediate southeasterly side of this bridge includes between 800 and 1,000 units of new multifamily housing and mixed-use development with 117,000 sf retail, 150 hotel rooms, 45,000 sf light industrial, and 19,000 sf new office space plus re-use of the existing 550,000 square feet of R&D/light industrial "former IBM" buildings.

We are looking forward to working with MassDOT to provide signalized pedestrian crossings for Great Road and King Street to address a significant pedestrian safety issue. We are hopeful that full use of TDM programs will address current and near-term Level of Service issues at intersections throughout Littleton Common.

**Planning Department, Maren Toohill, Town Planner – Dec. 20, 2024**

*There are significant utility infrastructure, traffic flow, and pedestrian safety issues throughout Littleton Common that should be addressed in a comprehensive manner. This bridge deck project*



*allows the opportunity to include water main, electric transmission, and sewer infrastructure, bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on both sides of Route 119 extending from King Street to Constitution Avenue and the addition of several signalized crosswalks on Great Road and King Street to address known pedestrian safety issues. Additional MassDOT improvements on and near Route 119 from the proposed Beaver Brook Road roundabout, Beaver Brook Culvert/Bridge replacement, and I-495 drainage issues impacting public infrastructure should be considered*

**Water Department, Matt Silverman – December 19, 2024; updated Jan. 14, 2025:**

*Water Department requests:*

- 1. Replace the existing 10" asbestos cement water main in this section with 10" high-density polyethylene water main, with triple gate valves and a hydrant on either side of the bridge to test for leaks if needed.*
- 2. Install a 12" water transmission main (high-density polyethylene) to connect with the main in place from the Littleton Common down Great Rd (Rte. 119). 12" raw water main installation should be included in all portions of Great Road to be reconstructed.*
- 3. Install 18" PVC sewer main for potential future connections to existing sewer collection system.*

**Light Department, David Ketchen – December 19, 2024:**

*Light Department requests to move the two overhead electrical transmissions circuits under the bridge and add conduit for fiber optic cable and for future use.*

**Littleton DPW Director, Stephen E. Jahnle – December 17, 2024:**

- 1. Extend the project limits to between the 495 north on ramps and Constitution Ave so that sidewalk could be included on that side of Great Road. This would allow connection from 550 King Street to the Point and also future projects continuing west on Great Road. There appears to be enough room on the bridge for sidewalk on both sides.*
- 2. Add a sleeve under the deck for a future sewer line.*

**Conservation Department, Tim Pearson & Stantec Engineering, Michael Paiewonsky – December 9, 2024**

*Littleton Assistant Conservation Agent Tim Pearson: We received your letter regarding the proposed bridge work. Has there been a review of the wetlands adjacent to the proposed work area?*

*Stantec Engineering Michael Paiewonsky: Yes, A wetland scientist from Stantec delineated the wetlands in the area of the bridge. The wetland flags were survey and included in the construction plans. We do not anticipate any direct wetland impact. Also, as this project is funded through the state transportation bond bill, it is exempt from the Wetlands Protection Act, MEPA, and Chapter 91. So, although the work area is likely within the 100-foot buffer zone of state-regulated wetlands, MassDOT will not be filing an RDA or NOI with the Littleton ConCom.*

**Littleton Select Board, Mark Rambacher, Chair – Dec. 20, 2024**

- The bridge will be highly used for bike and pedestrian and needs lanes in both directions separated from traffic to accommodate this. With the development at the Point and housing at 550 King St, we expect a lot of new non-car traffic*
- An expansion to 4 lanes of car traffic would be helpful as well with the addition of the two developments since the bridge was designed.*

- *The project should be extended to the bridge replacement over Beaverbrook and to the exits for 495N, if not all the way to the light at the common. This will better allow a pedestrian corridor to be established.*
- *There is a drainage issue in the area of 495 south exit ramp that should be addressed if possible.*
- *Revisiting and improving the light signal progression would be beneficial*
- *What happens at the junction of White Street with traffic?*

**Littleton Transportation Advisory Council, Gary Lacroix – December 19, 2024**

*I am happy to hear that the road deck of Rte. 119 over Rte. 495 is slated for replacement after 36 years. I would ask however that the scope of the repair not be limited to the scope as specified. Littleton has changed a lot since 1960 when the bridge was built. I would recommend that the scope of the bridge work factor in some of these new realities of more traffic and the need to better accommodate multi-modal means of transportation.*

*A specific need is the need for increased accommodation of bicycle and pedestrian traffic on the bridge. The Point shopping center which is just to the north of the bridge is the major concentrated shopping area in Littleton to include a very busy Market Basket supermarket. The former IBM complex, just south of the bridge will soon be the home of a major mixed-use development to include 780 densely spaced housing units. It would be highly desirable that the bridge and its traffic lane configurations be modified to the fullest extent possible to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians as part of the deck replacement project so folks could more easily go the 1 mile between the two locales without needing a car (and thus adding to the busy traffic on that stretch of road).*

*With any changes to the traffic lane configurations, the approaches to the bridge would also need alteration to better accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians but it is understood that is outside of the scope of this project. But given it has been almost 40 years since the bridge underwent a major repair, if changes are going to be made along this stretch of Rte. 119, it is critical that we use this opportunity to make alterations to the traffic lanes on the bridge so that the approaches can then be addressed as time and funding allows and we need not wait another 3+ decades for a chance to have work on the bridge again.*

In summary, Littleton is looking forward to working with MassDOT to bring these significant improvements forward. These roadway, infrastructure, TDM, and safety improvements will help ensure that the significant multi-family and mixed-use developments already approved by the town can come to fruition and pedestrian safety issues can be addressed.

Respectfully submitted,



Maren Toohill, AICP  
Town Planner

February 13, 2025

Ethan Lapointe, Program Manager, TIP  
Central Transportation Planning Staff  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
[elapointe@ctps.org](mailto:elapointe@ctps.org)

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail (Project number 610666)

Dear Mr. Lapointe and Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

On behalf of the Swampscott Public Schools, I write to you in support of the Swampscott Rail Trail Project (610666) and respectfully request that you include this project in the FFY 2022-26 Transportation Improvement Plan currently under development.

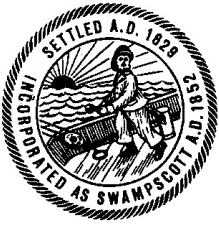
This project will convert an abandoned railroad corridor and create a safe, accessible linear park that will provide students, staff, and families safe off-road access to Swampscott High School (9th-12th), Swampscott Middle School (Pre-K, 5th-8th), Stanley Elementary School, Clarke Elementary School and Hadley Elementary School (all K - 4) which together have a student population of 2,094, majority of which live within a mile of the school. Pre-COVID 19, Swampscott only provided bus service to special needs students and majority of our students either walked or rode bicycles to and from school.

In addition to providing residential access to schools, the trail will fill a gap in Swampscott's open space and green corridor network, connecting residential neighborhoods and visitors to recreational and open space destinations. The rail trail will create a town asset that can help enhance the overall health of our community and I respectfully request your support for this project.

Sincerely,



Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.  
Swampscott Superintendent of Schools



TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT  
**OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE**

ELIHU THOMSON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
22 MONUMENT AVENUE, SWAMPSCOTT, MA 01907

**MEMBERS**

TANIA LILLAK, CHAIR  
TONI BANDROWICZ, VICE CHAIR  
SIERRA MUNOZ  
BRIAN LONGIN  
LAURYN HART  
SHAUNA VERA  
PAULA CLARIDGE

February 12, 2025

Ethan Lapointe, Program Manager, TIP  
Central Transportation Planning Staff  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
[elapointe@ctps.org](mailto:elapointe@ctps.org)

**RE: Swampscott Rail Trail Construction Project**

On behalf of the Swampscott Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee, I am writing to express our strong support for the Swampscott Rail Trail. We request that the Boston MPO award Transportation Improvement Program funding for the rail trail construction project in our town.

In addition to being one of the specific objectives of Swampscott's 2013 and new 2020 Open Space & Recreation Plan, the creation of the Rail Trail was identified as a top priority by residents in the Town's master planning process. "The rail trail has been one of the most supported open space and transportation initiatives during this planning process," the final Swampscott 2025 Master Plan notes, "[it] could serve as the spine of a town-wide green corridor network and offer an additional transportation option for bicycle commuters." Providing an alternative walking and biking route away from traffic, especially for our children, we believe provides a very strong incentive for the creation of the Rail Trail.

In addition to promoting healthy recreation and transportation by providing a place for adults and children to walk and safely ride their bikes, the Swampscott Rail Trail will add accessible green space to a Town woefully short on open space. Frederick Law Olmsted, creator of New York City's Central Park and Boston's "Emerald Necklace" of parks -- as well as our own Olmsted District here in Swampscott -- would have wholeheartedly approved of the proposed Rail Trail. He was a believer in the benefits of green space. Parks are the "lungs of the city," he said, and "the heart of the community."

The Rail Trail's 90,000 square foot linear park running the length of Swampscott will provide access for all the Town's residents to open space for enjoying recreation, the outdoors, and our community. It will give Swampscott's residents needed space to breathe and a better connection to our community. The time for fulfilling the creation of this green space is long overdue.

I appreciate your time and attention to this matter. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tania Lillak', written in a cursive style.

Tania Lillak, Chair  
Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee

# SWAMPSCOTT RAIL TRAIL

Community transportation, open space & recreation



February 10, 2025

Ethan Lapointe, Program Manager, TIP  
Central Transportation Planning Staff  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
elapointe@ctps.org

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail (Project number 610666).

Dear Mr. Lapointe and members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

I am once again writing to you on behalf of the community group Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail to ask for your continued support of the Swampscott Rail Trail (Project #610666) and its funding date of FFY28. Since I last wrote to you, Swampscott's new consolidated elementary school has opened. This new K-4<sup>th</sup> grade school of almost 800 students as well as our 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade middle school of over 700 students are both situated adjacent to or within blocks of the proposed Swampscott Rail Trail. Students and parents are already using the unimproved trail as a safer off-road route to school and we hear from residents weekly who are waiting in eager anticipation of the completion of the trail which will link their neighborhood and provide fewer and safer road crossings for their children to walk and bike to school.

In addition to the many benefits for local residents, the completed Swampscott Rail Trail will fill a recognized critical gap in the regional trail network with our current connections to the Marblehead Rail Trail and Salem Bike Path to the north and the future connections to the Northern Strand Community Path in Lynn to the south. Constructing this gap will meet goals established by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council as well as add additional off-road mileage to the East Coast Greenway and the Border to Boston Trail, of which we are already a part.

The Friends group was created in 2017 by Swampscott residents with the mission of advocating for the creation and use of the Swampscott Rail Trail, providing maintenance and upkeep of the trail, and fundraising for trail creation and beautification. We represent the thousands of Swampscott residents who voted to create the Rail Trail in 2017 as well as all the individuals and businesses who have donated to that end. In addition to the \$150,000 we donated to the town in 2022 for additional design and engineering, we continue to fundraise for additional costs as well as native plantings, signage, and other trail enhancements.

I hope that construction of the Swampscott Rail Trail Construction Project will continue to be scheduled for the FFY28 for the lasting benefit it will bring to the community of Swampscott and all of Massachusetts. Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexis Runstadler, President  
Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail

## Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail



89 Burrill Street  
Swampscott, MA 01907



info@swampscottrailtrail.org



swampscottrailtrail.org



34 Bay View Drive  
Swampscott, MA 01907  
info@swampscottconservancy.org

February 12, 2025

Ethan Lapointe, Program Manager, TIP  
Central Transportation Planning Staff  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
elapointe@ctps.org

**RE: Swampscott Rail Trail Construction Project**

Dear Mr. Lapointe:

I write on behalf of the Swampscott Conservancy to urge the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization to award Transportation Improvement Program funding for the rail trail construction project in our town. This two-mile community path located on a former rail corridor will run the length of Swampscott and link neighborhoods, schools, parks, and the MBTA Commuter Rail station. One of the greatest benefits of the proposed rail trail is the off-road access and connection to three schools, including a new 900 student district wide K4 grade school, that will provide parents and students a safe active transit solution and reduce air pollution, encourage fitness, and healthy lifestyle.

Moreover, by getting people out of their cars and starting to bike and walk more, trails like this will help fight climate change in a meaningful way given that the transportation sector generates the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions. The Swampscott Rail Trail will provide non-polluting forms of transportation, such as biking and walking, and so help decrease the amount of carbon dioxide and other global warming gases emitted into the atmosphere. That personal vehicles are a major cause of global warming is not disputed. As the Union of Concerned Scientists, in a 2014 article, noted: “collectively, cars and trucks account for nearly one-fifth of all US emissions, emitting around 24 pounds of carbon dioxide and other global-warming gases for every gallon of gas. About five pounds comes from the extraction, production, and delivery of the fuel, while the great bulk of heat-trapping emissions—more than 19 pounds per gallon—comes right out of a car’s tailpipe.”

Even though the fuel efficiency of our cars may be improving in recent years, it's negated by the fact that we're driving more. To drive less, we need safe alternatives for biking and walking. Providing these alternatives will be an important part of managing climate change. As observed in an on-line article of railstotrails.org: "walking and biking currently have a much stronger impact on climate management than the much-ballyhooed Toyota Prius." Swampscott's rail trail offers just such an alternative.

The Swampscott Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit volunteer organization that actively collaborates with Town of Swampscott committees, boards, commissions, and departments, as well as other non-profit entities, to maintain and improve public open spaces. The Swampscott Rail Trail will provide much needed open space in Town and will fill a recognized critical gap in the regional trail network. Constructing this gap will meet goals established by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council as well as add additional off-road mileage to the East Coast Greenway and the Border to Boston Trail.

We also intend to work with the Town in designing and providing native plants along the trail. Such plantings have multiple benefits. They create a low maintenance border, saving costs for ongoing upkeep of the trail. Native plantings also provide sources of food for insects (butterflies, honeybees, etc.) and animals (birds, chipmunks, and other small warm-blooded animals) that live in the area and forage these plants. Such plantings also provide opportunities for education regarding native planting, which is particularly important during our era of climate change. And, of course, such vegetation provides evidence of the beauty that exists in nature in New England.

We hope that the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization will award funding for this multi-beneficial project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Toni Bandrowicz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Toni Bandrowicz, President

cc: Marzie Galazka, Director of Community and Economic Development, Town of Swampscott



8 Parsons Drive  
Swampscott, Massachusetts 01907  
February 12, 2025

Ethan Lapointe, Program Manager, TIP  
Central Transportation Planning Staff  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
[elapointe@ctps.org](mailto:elapointe@ctps.org)

RE: SWAMPSCOTT RAIL TRAIL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT 610666

Dear Mr. Lapointe:

We are writing in support of completion of the Swampscott Rail Trail. As residents of Swampscott for the past 43 years, we enjoy walking and biking in the area. We are grateful that Swampscott Town Meeting members have consistently supported creation of the Rail Trail. We are asking for the Metropolitan Planning Organization's continued support of the Swampscott Rail Trail and the inclusion of this project (#610666) for funding in FY28.

Enthusiasm has continued to grow following completion of the first two sections of the trail. In addition to private contributions, the Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail has raised funds through a number of used bike sales, enabling the Friends group to donate \$150,000 to the town for additional design and engineering.

Volunteers can regularly be seen picking up litter, planting shrubbery and flowers. As a former rail bed, the Rail Trail in particular is prone to having invasive plant species, because nothing was ever deliberately planted on the train tracks. The Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail has worked with the Swampscott Conservancy identifying and removing invasive plants and replacing them with native species. The aim of this effort is to complete this recreational trail while adding more native trees and plants than have ever existed along this beautiful pathway. We are helping, and are continuing to plant as we remove invasives to ensure that this remains a "green" project!

We have been so pleased to see extensive use of the completed sections of the trail, and now that our new elementary school is completed, parents and students are using undeveloped portions of the trail as well and are eagerly awaiting its completion! We urge you to approve the funding for FY28 to ensure that the entire trail is accessible for many years to come. Thank you very much!

Sincerely,



Irene Leamon



Jonathan Leamon

**Date: 2/12/2025**

**From: Larry G. Simmons, Swampscott resident**

**Comment:**

Hi Ethan,

Rail trails are awesome for everyone.

Swampscott is in desperate need of more and better bike trails in general.

I don't know how anyone could be against a rail trail unless they have never seen a rail trail.

We have enjoyed the rail trails throughout Massachusetts and New England. New Hampshire and Vermont have some exceptional rail trails.

I lived next to a bike/rail trail which was part of the extensive trail network in Boulder, Colorado. It was completely unobtrusive and convenient. It was a great way to meet neighbors and other community members taking walks, riding bikes or walking their dogs.

It would be great if we could connect with the existing trails in literally every adjoining city- Marblehead, Salem and Lynn.

Do not listen to ignorance and obstructionism. Nobody actually opposes the rail trail, unless they just oppose change...even when it's for the benefit of all.

Thank you for your time,  
Larry G. Simmons

**Date: 2/12/2025**

**From: Erin Pierce, Swampscott resident and member of the Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail**

**Comment:**

Hello- I am writing to ask you to continue to support funding for the rail trail in Swampscott.

I moved to Swampscott about three years ago. I live a few houses down from where the rail trail crosses Walker Road. I was curious about this empty and overgrown space and learned that it is an unfinished portion of the Swampscott Rail Trail. I quickly became involved with Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail because I see it as a potential asset to our wonderful community.

The road where I live is very busy and we have no driveway. My kids don't have a safe place nearby to ride their bikes or scooters. If the trail were finished, they would have easy access to a safe place to walk and ride. Additionally, they would be able to take the trail all the way to the elementary school and middle school (a little more than a mile) without having to cross any streets. It would be a great option for my kids and my neighbors' kids so they don't have to deal with traffic. In the other direction, we would be able to walk to the commuter train stop without having to cross any streets, including the very busy Paradise Road/Route 1A. (I've almost been hit by cars running the crosswalk light there a few times.) The rail trail bridge there would make it much safer for all pedestrians.

I have a native plant nursery and I have donated plants and spent time removing invasive plants on the finished portion of the trail. Every single time I am there working, the trail is busy with walkers and bike riders. Many people have stopped to talk to me about my work on the trail and tell me how much they appreciate having the trail finished. They also ask when the rest of the trail will be done because they can't wait to use it. A few people have expressed frustration that the unfinished portion in Swampscott keeps the trail system from being connected from Lynn to Marblehead and Salem.

Please continue to fund this project which would be so beneficial to the community. I look forward to being able to walk the finished trail with my kids.

Thank you,

Erin Pierce

Swampscott Resident and member of the Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail

**Date: 2/12/2025**

**From: Paula Claridge, Swampscott resident**

**Comment:**

Hello Ethan,

I was given your contact information as the person to send a letter of support for the Swampscott Rail Trail. I live within a few houses of the proposed rail trail route and fully support its completion.

I've used many rail trails throughout New England, as well as the small section that has been completed in Swampscott and feel it will be a tremendous benefit to our town. I think it will provide a vital, safe and healthy community connection for the adults and children of our town to access schools, parks and businesses, while reducing vehicular traffic and enjoying the natural areas within our special community.

The connection it will provide to neighboring communities and the commuter rail station in Swampscott will also be an opportunity for people to have a safe link to walk and bike to those destinations, as well.

I hope you will also agree that the Swampscott rail trail will be a valuable asset to our community.

Thank you,

Paula Claridge

March 14, 2025  
Nason Neighborhood Association  
Swampscott, MA 01907

Mr. David Mohler  
Chair, Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
State Transportation Building  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116  
c/o Ethan Lapointe Elapointe@ctps.org

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail (Project number 610666)

Dear Mr. Mohler and members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

We are writing to you as concerned residents of Swampscott regarding the town's funding request for the proposed rail trail project. As currently constituted, there are numerous land ownership, legal, design, funding, and environmental issues that have not been addressed or resolved.

Below is a succinct list of the main, but not all, concerns:

- **Legal/Property** – A significant section of the trail is owned by private residents who proved this, at their own cost, by perfecting their deeds. Thus, eminent domain against town residential property would be a necessity to complete the project. There are several major legal issues in terms of property rights regarding the trail. Ahead of the town wide election in 2016 to approve the trail, residents were lead to believe from town leadership that all property issues had been resolved and the town had rights to all land needed for the project. In fact, this was far from the truth.
- **Environmental** – The Swampscott Rail Trail design is not approved by the Swampscott Conservation Commission due to a litany of environmental concerns that have remained unaddressed and outright ignored, a small but not exhaustive, list include:
  - **Streambed crossing issues** – The town must comply with the Massachusetts Stream Crossing Standards to the fullest extent as acknowledged in the project narrative; Insufficient information has been provided in regards to the proposed stream crossing, including, but not limited to: disruption of streambed from 4-sided culvert construction rather than an open bottom design, lack of documentation on matching substrate replacement for restored impact areas; justification as to why existing stream substrate will be buried with imported material rather than stockpiled and preserved for reuse in subsequent restoration
  - **Vernal pool impact** – as currently proposed, trail construction including clearing and grading, will take place within the 100 foot buffer zone of four vernal pools. No analysis has been provided as to the potential impact on those areas.
  - **Lack of scope of work depiction** – The Commission requires depictions of elevations and grading; the project narrative notes that “minor grading beyond the shoulder may be required”; given the close proximity to wetlands, further clarification must be required
  - **Drainage analysis and water carrying capacity** – The project narrative states that “the water carrying capacity and groundwater and surface water quality...will be maintained”; It is unclear whether the town's proposal as currently situated can meet this standard; In addition, no analysis has been prepared for storm water drain off for abutting properties
  - **100 foot buffer zone** – A significant portion of the entire project will take place within existing vegetated portions of the 100 foot buffer zone, which will include clearing and a permanent change in surface type. Additional analysis must be provided as to how to minimize this impact.

- **Stone dust** - The current design calls for the use of a stone dust base along a half mile of protected and unprotected wetlands. The use of stone dust in this manner fails to meet many state and federal standards and will silt up/destroy the protected vernal pools and wetlands along the proposed trail.
  
- **Design** – The rail trail design team has repeatedly refused to work with neighboring abutters on the project to make reasonable accommodations, such as moving the trail further from property lines or providing a narrower easement in certain areas. I invite you to examine the one small section of the trail that has been completed – the Bradlee Avenue entrance. Dozens of mature trees were felled, an entire swath of land razed, and ten foot stockade fences put up on either side of a 20 foot wide ‘trail’. What does this do to preserve our green areas? Does the sight of this inspire or bring anyone closer to nature? The reality is, according to current designs, much more devastation would be required to complete the project – *hundreds* of mature trees would have to be felled and our fragile wetland areas would have to be significantly compromised. Furthermore, another proposed section is owned by National Grid and is outright dangerous for public foot traffic. This portion consists of low hanging high power electrical wires in wetlands.
  
- **Funding** – At the time of the town vote and henceforth, residents were promised that zero tax dollars would be used for this project. Zero. Yet, despite this fact, that town is asking for an enormous sum of money - \$8.6m, from the MPO. Furthermore, the town has repeatedly taxed the resources of the Swampscott DPW for repairs and maintenance on the one small completed section after publicly stating that no town resources would be used for the project.

As proposed, the current plans for the Swampscott Rail Trail do not take into serious consideration the numerous legal, design, safety and environment issues at stake, nor has the town in good faith sought to actively engage the impacted residents of the project. We strongly urge the MPO to deny funding for this flawed project.

Respectfully,

The Nason Neighborhood Association

Matthew Dragani

15 Nason Road

Swampscott, MA 01907

Andrew Samalis

23 Nason Road

Swampscott, MA 01907

March 17, 2025

Mr. David Mohler, Chair  
Chair, Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116  
C/O Ethan LaPointe, [elapointe@ctps.org](mailto:elapointe@ctps.org)  
CC: [tip@ctps.org](mailto:tip@ctps.org)

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail (Project 610666)

Dear Mr. Mohler,

I have been a resident of Swampscott for 32 years and am writing to express my opposition to the town of Swampscott's request for funding related to the Swampscott Rail Trail. I last wrote to you in May of 2024 and my concerns remain.

First, my section of the proposed rail trail runs between Bradlee Ave. and Humphrey St. There are approximately 30 landowners in this dense section and it's been proven that the land is owned by the adjacent property owners, including myself. My deed has been corrected to reflect our ownership, along with many others along this corridor. The town does not own this land, which I believe is a prerequisite to receiving the grant. If the town chooses to move forward with Eminent Domain, not only would it be a drawn out, costly endeavor for such a small town, but I believe it would be a grave misuse of power. Eminent Domain may be necessary in extreme cases, but to use it for a recreational path is misguided and I believe setting an unsettling precedent.

My second and perhaps even more compelling reason are the effects on the environment. Two short segments have already been completed and the decimation of trees, brush, plants and wildlife habitat is inexcusable and completely unnecessary. We live in a beautiful seaside town with tremendous access to the coastline, including a well maintained boardwalk from Swampscott, along Lynn Shore Drive and into Nahant. We are also lucky to have not only our own Harold King Forest with a 1 mile walking loop, but we are in close proximity to Salem Woods and Lynn Woods, allowing plenty of opportunity for walking and recreation. Respectfully, this is not the time to be destroying trees and vegetation, especially when there is no need.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. We appreciate the good work the MPO board does and the ever increasing volume of projects you have to analyze and prioritize. We appreciate your efforts!

**We respectfully request that the town of Swampscott's request for funding related to this project be denied.**

Sincerely,

Maura and Bill Carroll  
33 Morton Road, Swampscott, MA 01907

**Date: 1/17/2025**

**From: Lydia Kogler, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for walking and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. I live in a neighborhood that will directly benefit from this improvement. My children will be able to use the path and the tunnel to walk to Belmont Middle and High Schools. As a family that currently walks to our local elementary school, I am thrilled that my children will continue to have a convenient and safe way to get to their future schools on foot. As a Town Meeting member, I am well aware of the deep support for this project across the town as evidenced by the multiple votes we have had to allocate Community Preservation Funds for the design of the path. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area. I am deeply appreciative of your work to make our community a safer place to travel by foot.

**Date: 1/17/2025**

**From: Dan Eldridge, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I understand that the the Boston Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will be gauging community support for the first phase of the Belmont Community Path project. I would like to express my wholehearted support for this project! This path represents a critical missing piece of infrastructure for the town of Belmont and to connect through to Cambridge and Boston from points west of the city. Having a dedicated mixed-use path would benefit residents in a number ways. Personally I would use it for transportation, exercise and recreation (all with and without my kids). It would also help reduce traffic and provide a much safer way for many students to get to the middle and high schools in town.

**Date: 1/17/2025**

**From: Ed Barker, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for walking and cycling and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. This project has deep support within town residents as evidenced by the multiple votes of Town Meeting to allocate Community Preservation Funds for the design of the path. I like to get around town on bicycle and this will make it easier to do so. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.



**Date: 1/17/2025**

**From: Gi Yoon-Huang, Ambrose Huang, Children, Belmont residents**

**Comment:**

I have lived in Belmont for 12 years with my 2 children and husband. We all support the Belmont Community Path project. We look forward to using the underpass so that my daughters can safely walk to school, my husband can bike off-road to work, and that I can jog off road. We are thrilled that Phase 1 is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. When a town becomes more walkable, it not only improves the traffic, decreases car emissions and improves air quality, but it also makes it a more of a hometown where people can see each other and talk. What a great way to help build relationships and help address the epidemic of loneliness and mental health issues. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/17/2025**

**From: Trisha Kahn, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for walking, cycling & commuting and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. This path will fill a missing link in the Massachusetts Central Rail Trail. Having a safe route for my children to travel to school/sports activities/the public library/town pool on foot or bike is good for my family and the town. This project has deep support within town residents as evidenced by the multiple votes of Town Meeting to allocate Community Preservation Funds for the design of the path. I like to get around town without using my car and this will make it easier to do so. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/17/2025**

**From: Meenal Bagla, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for commuting and having my kids commute as well. I am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. Having a safe route for my children (and us grown-ups) to travel to school, the town pool, and the public library on foot or bike will be wonderful for my family. It would also be so beneficial for the town to enable

independence for our children, in a safe manner, and also hopefully reduce cars on the roads. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/18/2025**

**From: Amanda Lubarsky, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I am very much in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I feel the underpass tunnel that will allow kids walking to the Belmont Middle and Belmont High schools (grades 7th-12th) to have safe passage underneath the train tracks is especially important. Right now kids who live just on the other side of the school jump a fence and cut across the active tracks, which is unsafe but much quicker than the longer road route that's available now. My son bikes to school several days a week and the new community path will be a much safer option than the congested roads. This path and tunnel will have a huge impact not just on the students, but also on parents who can leave their cars at home and walk to events at the schools, and on community members who would like to go from one part of Belmont to the other. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. I can't wait to have it started and completed. Thank you for your work to create new, vital infrastructure like this.

**Date: 1/18/2025**

**From: Lucia Sullivan, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I write as a resident and also am the Assistant Superintendent of schools, and can't help but consider my professional capacity as well as my personal desire for a more walkable community. We currently have a situation where the train tracks create significant bottlenecks as there are only two congested routes (through Belmont center on Leonard St or Brighton ST) that allow access from a large section of town to the middle and high school campus. It creates tremendous traffic at peak times, but even more distressing, it leads to students illegally (perilously!) crossing the train tracks at the location where the pedestrian access is slated to be so they can get to school without adding 20 minutes (walking and traffic are fairly similar timing). I look forward to using this new off-road path for my own personal access to this part of town and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. It can't come quickly enough!! This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. But most importantly, it will create safe ACCESS to schools for thousands of students. My husband served on this bike path committee more than a decade ago. I am amazed it has taken so long to get this final leg completed. It will be transformational in terms of community access through town and traffic reduction, because this safe and legal cut through will dramatically reduce the distance kids are now going to get to school. We all realize that walkability (bike access etc) creates a higher quality of life and I am so eager to see this well supported project enter its

final phase. Please know the whole community would like to see this come to fruition!! Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/18/2025**

**From: Taylor Yates, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for getting around town and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. This path will fill a missing link in the Massachusetts Central Rail Trail. This project has deep support within town residents as evidenced by the multiple votes of Town Meeting to allocate Community Preservation Funds for the design of the path. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/20/2025**

**From: Erin Lynch, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for [pick one or more: exercise/socializing/walking/running/cycling/commuting] and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. Other possible comments to add if desired: This path will fill a missing link in the Massachusetts Central Rail Trail. Having a safe route for my children to travel to [school/sports activities/the public library/town pool] on foot or bike is good for my family and the town. This project has deep support within town residents as evidenced by the multiple votes of Town Meeting to allocate Community Preservation Funds for the design of the path. I like to get [around town/to work/my exercise] without using my car and this will make it easier to do so. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/21/2025**

**From: Julie Lemay, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for safe commuting options for families and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. Having a safe route for my

children to travel to school and other local activities on foot or bike is good for my family and the town. This community path will also alleviate high school-related traffic on Brighton St in Belmont, which is important to commuters in our region. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/21/2025**

**From: Corinne Foster, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for safely commuting through Belmont and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. Having a safe route for my children to travel to school and other town activities on foot or bike is good for my family and the town and is incredibly important to me. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/22/2025**

**From: Georgina Lamont, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

My whole family supports and needs the Belmont Community Path project - thank you for your help in bringing this long-awaited project to life.

My 10 and 8 year-old daughters will need a safer walking/bike route to the Middle/High School via the planned underpass to avoid dangerous roads (a cyclist competing with cars on busy Brighton St is no joke - for a child cyclist it is unthinkable). My husband and I already use the existing Minuteman bike path almost daily for cycling, running, walking, socializing, and accessing Alewife & Davis. My group of Winn Brook Elementary friends who walk together as a parenting sanity-break each morning can't wait for this extension to vary our exercise routine :) Belmont needs this path to ease traffic congestion and bring more footfall to local businesses from surrounding towns. I appreciated discussing the Path Project with helpful representatives at the last Town Day - I am one of many (perhaps quiet, unheard) voices who think construction can't start soon enough.

**Date: 1/23/2025**

**From: Tom Lynch, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to having this new off-road path as a safe route for my kids to travel to school, sports, and the library on foot or bike. I am also excited to use the path for running, walking, and biking and just to get around Belmont without having to use my car. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses, and I am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/23/2025**

**From: Martha Pickett, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for [pick one or more: exercise/socializing/walking/running/cycling/commuting] and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. Other possible comments to add if desired: This path will fill a missing link in the Massachusetts Central Rail Trail. Having a safe route for my children to travel to [school/sports activities/the public library/town pool] on foot or bike is good for my family and the town. This project has deep support within town residents as evidenced by the multiple votes of Town Meeting to allocate Community Preservation Funds for the design of the path. I like to get [around town/to work/my exercise] without using my car and this will make it easier to do so. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/23/2025**

**From: Ciara Glenmullen, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I am writing in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I am excited at the prospect of my kids having a way to walk from the Winn Brook neighborhood directly to the Belmont Middle/High School via the underpass, as well as safer access to Alewife via bike/walking. Additionally, our family very much prefers to get around on our bikes, rather than with by car, and this will make it easier to do so. I am very pleased that the project is slated to begin construction in 2026. The project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 1/23/2025**

**From: Erika Roberts, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

We are writing today with enthusiastic support of the Belmont Community Path project. We purchased our Belmont home in 2008 specifically so my husband could bike to work in Cambridge every day and I could bike to Alewife and take the redline to work in Boston. (In fact, we first looked to buy in Arlington along their Minuteman Bikeway for this purpose but lost out on a number of competitive bids there and turned to the Belmont housing market instead.) We were so happy when the bike path was improved/extended from Alewife Station to Brighton Street in Belmont along the active railroad track and use it regularly with the family for commuting, exercise, and pleasure. We have been anxious to see the rest of the Belmont Community Path come to fruition! We will have innumerable uses for the Belmont Community Path project when complete. We would walk and cycle even more than we do currently which will in turn reduce traffic congestion, emissions, and parking issues in our local community. Due to our prime location just off Channing Road where it intersects Alexander Avenue, our family would especially take advantage of the proposed Alexander Avenue Tunnel underneath the railroad that connects our Winn Brook neighborhood with new Belmont Middle and High School (BMHS) campus as well as other desirable amenities on Concord Avenue. We can't wait to have safe and convenient access by foot and by bike to: the brand new Belmont Library (under construction) the brand new skating rink (under construction) the post office Underwood Pool where we are members in the summer Higginbottom Pool within BMHS where our children have Dolphins Swim Team practice and meets Countless events at BMHS (concerts, art shows, plays, musicals, dances, etc.) Countless events at Harris Field and Stadium (Belmont Soccer Night, BHMS sporting events, charity runs, etc.). Every day we see students and residents cut cross the live railroad tracks to access BMHS and know the tunnel will provide a safe and much needed alternative. Just like we have for years with the Minuteman Trail, we will regularly use the new off-road Belmont Community Path for exercising, dog walking, cycling, meeting up with friends, and commuting. This will give our children more autonomy getting to friends' homes in other parts of town safely and help them avoid the congested and dangerous intersection under the Belmont Center bridge where Leonard Street meets Concord Ave. We understand construction is slated to begin in 2026 and support any and all efforts to stay on or ahead of schedule. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area, it really is life-changing and quality-of-life-changing. We commit to being good neighbors and stewards of the project once built, use it safely, and take care of this wonderful addition to our town for all our years.

**Date: 1/26/2025****From: Sarah Sanderson Meade, Belmont resident****Comment:**

I write in support of the Belmont Community Path project. I look forward to using this new off-road path for walking, running, and cycling with my kids and am very pleased that it is slated to begin construction in 2026. This project will help to ease car traffic congestion on our local roads, improve safety for all users, and support the economy in this area by increasing access to businesses. Having a safe route for my children to travel to school, the public library, and town pool on foot or bike is good for my family and the town. This project has deep support among town residents as evidenced by the multiple votes

of Town Meeting to allocate Community Preservation Funds for the design of the path. Thank you for your work to create new infrastructure like this in the greater Boston area.

**Date: 2/19/2025**

**From: Rebecca Benson, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I continue to strongly support the development of the community path for Belmont.

**Date: 2/19/2025**

**From: Catherine Rockwood, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I'm a resident of Belmont, MA where we deal (like most inner Boston suburbs) with a heavy automotive-traffic burden, which reduces the safety of our streets for pedestrians and people on bikes and scooters -- including a lot of school-age kids who travel to school that way -- and contributes to atmospheric pollution, accelerates the harm of climate-change, etc., etc., etc. We truly do need to complete the Belmont Community Path, so people have increased access to safe travel-ways for bike traffic. Belmont has a lot of committed bike-commuters, and people really are looking for methods of reducing their dependence on cars: but they need to not be penalized for this effort via consistent risk to life and limb. I'm grateful we have funding thus far for the construction of Phase I, and hope we will continue to be supported via the Transportation Improvement Program.

**Date: 2/19/2025**

**From: Ed Barker, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I'm writing in support of the Belmont community path project, which will be a significant improvement in quality of life, non vehicular transportation, and safety for a wide range of people in Belmont and beyond. This path will make it possible for bikers to avoid the busy and dangerous Concord Avenue bridge intersection when traveling to and from Cambridge. It will allow students to walk to school more quickly and safely from the neighborhoods north and east of the tracks, and it will encourage greater use of alternative modes of transportation to reach important public infrastructure like the library, hockey rink and high/middle school. Please help to ensure that the funding and political support for this project continues.

**Date: 2/19/2025**

**From: John and Ann Verilli, Belmont residents**

**Comment:**

I want to express our support for the Belmont Community Path, construction scheduled to start in 2026. Thank you.

**Date: 2/19/2025**

**From: Marcy Franck, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I'm a resident of Belmont, MA where I'm nervous about the safety of our streets for pedestrians and others traveling not in cars. I'm especially nervous about the paths kids take to and from school, as there are way too many incidents of pedestrians being struck by cars. I am horrified to be among the drivers who did not see a kid in time to stop fully. The child was not hurt seriously, but we both came away with emotional scars. I know too well that being an attentive driver doesn't prohibit these accidents from happening. We need to complete the Belmont Community Path, so people have increased access to safe travel in town. We have a lot folks who commute on bikes in addition to so many pedestrians. I am writing to express my deep desire and support to complete this project.

**Date: 2/21/2025**

**From: Everett Tatelbaum, Belmont resident**

**Comment:**

I wanted to share my support for the Belmont Community Path. It will be a tremendous benefit to the area.