From: Tammy Quirk
To: publicinformation@bostonmpo.org
Subject: Observations on draft LRTP
Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2011 12:46:43 PM

Dear Mr. Mohler,

It is surprising to see the Assabet and Freeman rail trails included in a major transportation plan that is under financial constraints. Construction of either or both of these trails isn't economically justified. The theory may be that hundreds of people will start biking to mass transit stations on a daily basis, justifying a huge expenditure probably in excess of $60 million, if a Freeman bridge over route 2 is built, for a few miles of trail on both routes. However, based on the use patterns of existing, local suburban rail trails, the reality is quite different. Very few suburban people have the luxury of the extra time required for biking to and from work or public transit, nor have they the inclination. These trails are not plowed or lighted and are little used, if at all, in times that are too hot, too cold, too icy, too rainy etc. or when there just isn't enough time. Even with good intentions, there's no getting around the fact these trails will be used first and foremost for recreation. The only time "transportation" comes into play is when transportation funds are used for their construction. Bruce Freeman proposed a trail to help boost the local economy, now these towns are more affluent than many others and have numerous other recreational options. There are so many current transportation needs and there will be many future ones, some requiring solutions tailored for the demographically projected ageing Metro West population, it is financial folly to spend $3-5 million per mile on recreational trails.

Thank you.

Tammy Quirk
Sudbury