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Cc:	friends of the community path; Ellin Reisner
Subject:	Green Line Extension – Please enforce the SIP air quality and Transportation Conformity Measures in the Boston MPO 2012 – 2015 TIP and LRTP.
Date:	Tuesday, September 13, 2011 11:02:10 AM

To Mr. Jerome Grafe, Mass Department of Environmental Protection, Ms. Christine Kirby, Mass Department of Environmental Protection, Mr. David Mohler, Chair, Boston MPO Planning & Programming Committee, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, and the Boston MPO Staff:

I am writing as a citizen thas has lived, worked or attended university, and voted in Massachusetts for 23 years. I am a 17-year resident of Somerville and a working mother with 6-year-old twin sons in the Somerville public school system. To get around, we mostly take public transit, walk, and bike. We have a car, but prefer to get around other ways. I very much look forward to a day when the Green Line and Community Path extensions will run near 6 Somerville public schools. My sons will likely attend 4 of these schools growing up. Four Somerville public schools are in environmental justice neighborhoods.

I am writing to strongly protest the State's intentions to further delay the Green Line extension (GLX). The State has attempted to the Green Line at least four times that I know of (there may be more) - at great unnecessary taxpayer expense, due to litigation costs, mitigation costs, and also to project inflation over time.

As such, I am urging federal and state government entities to enforce to the fullest extent the legal and environmental obligations (federal Transportation Conformity Measures and SIP air quality) of the project. Full funding of the project and any interim replacements must be identified in the Boston MPO 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

The Green Line extension is a legal obligation under the Clean Air Act. SIP projects - like the Green Line extension - are required to be prioritized over optional projects - like highway expansion. However, that legal prioritization is not happening now, nor has it happened in the past - or the GLX would be on track right now. The State is proud of its GreenDOT initiative, but this newest GLX delay just makes those of waiting for this project - even us optimists - feel cynical.

Delaying the GLX project also delays the Community Path extension, since the two projects need to be designed and built together. Full funding of the the Community Path should also be programmed in the 2012-2015 TIP and LRTP along with the GLX. The City of Somerville is declining this year apply for a TIGER III grant for the Community Path as they did last year (i.e., TIGER II). The TIGER application requires a match, which was to be the shared infrastructure construction (bridges, retaining walls, etc.) for Green Line extension tfrom MassDOT. With the pending GLX delay, MassDOT cannot make this shared infrastructure construction commitment (estimated value of ~$10 Million) in good faith now. Thus, this multi-million grant opportunity for the Community Path is sadly lost at this time due to the pending GLX delay.

I am tired of federal and state funding of highways over transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects. Highways are ever-expanding, but that only increases traffic congestion more. Why do I have to pay a toll every time I get on transit, but not every time I drive on a highway? Tolls are the thing that will really get cars off the road (and generate revenue for the State).

Finally (but not least), I have been appalled by the lack of transparency about this newest attempt to delay the long-waited GLX project. For instance:

- The Green Line Extension project has not even been on the MassDOT/MBTA Board agenda since the State announced its intention to petition the DEP for a delay on August 1, 2011.
- Governor Patrick and Lieutanant Governor Murray have yet to make public statements regarding

their intentions to break their campaign promise to get the Green Line Extension done during there tenure.

- The newest GLX delay announcement took 3 weeks to get on MassDOT's blog, 'Commonwealth Conversations'
- The draft LRTP has been revised several times during the comment period, altering the allocation to the GLX, but still in violation of SIP commitments. How is the average citizen supposed to keep track of this and make comment based on a moving target? (Also, we keep having to writer letters over and over to the MPO about the same thing!)

It is time for the State and the Boston MPO to put the GLX at the top of it's list, as it is legally mandated to do, and to put its money where its mouth is regarding GreenDOT. I hope you will enforce the State's legal obligations to the GLX project to the fullest.

Thank you.

Lynn Weissman
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