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Subject:	SIP Transit Commitments, Boston MPO 2012-2015 TIP, Boston MPO LRTP
Date:	Tuesday, September 13, 2011 1:06:57 PM

To: Jerome Grafe, Christine Kirby, David Mohler, Katherine Fichter, MPO staff

Re: SIP Transit Commitments, Boston MPO 2012-2015 TIP, Boston MPO LRTP

From: Lisa Brukilacchio, 16 Holyoke Rd, Somerville, MA 02144

The Green Line Extension (GLX) project represents many promises—most of them broken or crumbling at this critical time. Based on recent turns in the various state processes, I am writing to request that the Mass Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) reject MassDOT's request to delay the Green Line opening to 2018-2020. The communities impacted by the GLX have waited long enough.

From a legal perspective, GLX is the obligation of the state under the Clean Air Act, essentially a promise from the state to the federal government that the Green Line Extension will be given priority by the region and the state for funding and construction. Currently, the TIP and the LRTP do not reflect the intention of this legal obligation. I request that the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) reject the delays that are contained within the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). And *any* such agreement that contains any delay should legally require the completion of the Rt 16 station as part of the GLX, as this is the station that serves the most noted environmental justice populations in the target area.

From an environmental health perspective, the GLX project was a promise to reduce the negative environmental impacts of heavy vehicular traffic going through Somerville on Rt 1-93 and to reduce regional ozone levels. Somerville is already disproportionally impacted by traffic and diesel rail pollution, the most impacted in the state. Also, the GLX light rail system, in conjunction with the Red and Orange line stops will provide reasonable transit access to 85% of Somerville residents—in contrast to the current 15%, providing transportation options to work, school and recreational destinations. Based on our experience when the Davis Square station opened, we know that Somervillans take their T seriously and will walk and/or bike to stations that are integral to residential neighborhoods.

Economically, the promises of the GLX dwindle as we have watched the cost projections go up with each prior delay. The delays in the GLX impact the other developments that are intertwined with this project, most notably the Community Path extension which is tied at the hip to this project both concretely due to construction contingencies and economically as it is challenging to fund as the GLX timeframe continues to erode. On a broader scale, the continued delay on the SIP jeopardizes the state's federal transportation funding.

The GLX has stalled long enough and it is time to get a shovel in the ground. The advantage of having the existing rail corridor location should allow for significant portions of the work to begin, even if the land acquisition for some of the stations is in progress. Any delays related to the maintenance facility should not be allowed to delay the GLX as that was not part of the SIP

agreement and should not strangle the rest of the project.

We trust that the state will do the right thing—but it is challenging to believe any promises from the state based on the extended public process around the GLX at this point. We have invested time, money and considerable energies to be responsive to the state. It would be absurd to have this situation require yet another law suit to have the state honor its promise to the federal government and the people of the Commonwealth.

Cc:

Ms. Anne Arnold, Manager, EPA Region 1 Air Quality Planning Unit

Mr. Donald Cooke, Conformity and mobile monitoring, EPA Region 1 Air Quality

Ms. Rosemary Monahan, EPA Region 1 Smart Growth Coordinator

Ms. Pamela Stephenson, MA Division Administrator, Federal Highway

Mr. Michael Chong, Federal Highway Planning and Environ. Program Manager

Ms. Mary Beth Mello, Regional Director, Federal Transit Region 1,