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Subject:	Comments on Green Line Extension delay, SIP, TIP, LRTP
Date:	Saturday, September 10, 2011 11:15:03 AM

To whom it may concern -

I am writing to express my deep disappointment, shock, and outrage at the additional recently announced delay of the Green Line Extension.

I urge you to reject the delay and reject the TIP and LRTP that reflect this delay. I urge federal and state entities to enforce the legal and environmental obligations that this project represents.

The delay from 2011 to 2014 was frustrating. The delay from 2014 to 2015 was disappointing. A new proposed delay of another 4-5 years is simply unacceptable. The people of Somerville, Medford, and Cambridge have been patient, and we have been collaborative, and we have been understanding. But we cannot accept a delay to 2019 or 2020, and we will not stop making our voices heard on this critical issue.

Honor your commitment: open the entire Green Line by 2014.

This project is a legal obligation under the Clean Air Act. It has been the most important SIP obligation for years and as such must be given highest priority for funding and construction, but has not been treated that way by the state. Over recent years, the state has slowed design progress and most important, has avoided showing realistic funding sources and a timely completion schedule. MassDOT has consistently missed promised deadlines, consistently avoided answering tough but valid questions, and consistently pretended that the project is on track and on schedule. The TIP and LRTP do not show full funding, do not show a schedule for completion by the legal deadline, and do not show potential interim replacement projects. The state cannot continue to pretend it can ignore these legal commitments.

The Green Line Extension is a sustainable project perfectly aligned with GreenDOT, and its benefits to the public health are universally acknowledged. Research is clearly showing the benefits of public transit over auto pollution in our densely populated city. Without this project, we will see a rise in childhood asthma rates and mortality rates related to lung cancer and heart disease. If the state truly believes in the title of the LRTP ("Paths to a Sustainable Region"), it's time to walk the talk and prove it.

Financially, it makes no sense to delay the Green Line. First, the project itself will cost $200 million more, as MassDOT admits. Second, the delay means the state is obligated to create new interim offset projects that provide the same air quality benefits, which will clearly cost even more. Third, if the state can't execute these interim offset projects in time, $650 million in federal funding per year is at risk. Fourth, the project is vital for economic development all along the route, and a delayed opening means delayed economic growth. Whether the Green Line Extension is built now or later, the state needs to find the funding. Better to do this now for less money than later for much more.

Breaking this legal obligation and delaying the Green Line has dire consequences all around. It will affect the public health. It will cost us all more. It could cost the state a great deal of federal funding. It will dampen economic development. It will shatter the public trust.

Honor your commitment: open the entire Green Line by 2014.

Thank you for gathering and reading this important feedback from the public you serve.

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