

**Public Comments Submitted to the Boston Region MPO  
June 6, 2024**

The following written comments were submitted during the 30-day public comment period for the FFYs 2025-29 Transportation Improvement Program:

- **Letter from Regional Transportation Advisory Council regarding TIP process, content, and equity considerations (page 3-4)**
- **Belmont: Belmont Community Path (Project #609204)**
  - o Letter in opposition with two signatures from Aleida Leza, Darin Takemoto, Belmont residents (pages 5-10)
  - o Reference letter (previously submitted) from Aleida Leza et. al. (pages 11-13)
  - o Letter in support from Patrice Garvin on behalf of the Belmont Community Path Project Committee (pages 14-15)
  - o Comment in opposition from Paul Cobuzzi, Belmont resident (pages 44-45)
  - o Comment in opposition from anonymous Belmont resident (pages 45-47)
- **Letter from MBTA Rider Oversight Committee in support of projects programmed in Transit Transformation, Community Connections, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs (page 16)**
- **Malden: Route 60 (Eastern Avenue and Centre Street) Improvement Project (Design Only; not programmed in FFYs 2025-29 TIP)**
  - o Letter in support from State Senator Jason Lewis, State Representative Steven Ultrino, State Representative Kate Lipper-Garabedian, State Representative Paul Donato (pages 17-18)
  - o Letter in support from Mayor of Malden Gary Christenson (pages 18-20)
  - o Comment in support from Stephen Winslow, Malden City Council (pages 43-44)
  - o Comment in support from Allison Gardiner Durak, Malden resident (pages 47-48)
- **Letter from 495-MetroWest Partnership regarding several TIP projects (pages 21-25)**
- **Letter from Milton Select Board regarding TIP evaluation criteria and MBTA Communities Act compliance penalties (pages 26-27)**
- **Swampscott: Rail Trail Construction (Project #610666)**
  - o Letter in opposition from Maura Carroll and Bill Carroll, Swampscott residents (page 28)
  - o Letter in opposition from Kimberly S. Nassar, Swampscott residents (pages 29-30)
- **Weston: Reconstruction of Route 30 (Project #608954)**
  - o Petition in opposition with 58 signatures (pages 31-32)
  - o Petition in opposition with 137 signatures (pages 33-35)
  - o Comment in support from Jonathan Buchman, Weston resident (page 37)
  - o Comment in opposition from Anne and Paul Donohue, Weston residents (page 37)
  - o Comment in support from Ken Skudder, Weston resident (pages 37-38)
  - o Comment in support from Emily Hutcheson, Weston resident (page 38)
  - o Comment in support from Marga Hutcheson, Weston resident (page 39)
  - o Comment in support from Joel Angiolillo, Weston resident (pages 39-40)

- Comment in opposition from Alison Barlow, Weston resident (pages 40-41)
- Comment in opposition from Rebecca and Lou Mercuri, Weston residents (pages 45-46)
- **Holliston- Intersection Improvements at Rt 16 and Whitney Street [Design Only] and Project #613477 (MassDOT) Holliston-Linden Street Improvements at Robert Adams Middle School (SRTS)**
  - Comment in support from Christina Hein, Holliston Select Board (page 36)
  - Comment in support from Cynthia Listewnik, Fitchburg resident (pages 36-37)
  - Comment in support from Carol Bailey, Holliston resident (pages 41-42)
  - Comment in support from Karen Apuzzo Langton, Holliston resident (page 42)
- **Norwood – Intersection Improvements at Route 1 and University Avenue/Everett Street (Project #605857)**
  - Comment in support from Joseph Collins, Norwood Economic Development Director (page 41)
- **Medford – Shared-Use Path Connection at Route 128/Wellington Underpass (Project #611982)**
  - Comment in support from Mystic River Watershed Association (pages 43-44)

#### **General Comments**

- Regarding pedestrian safety concern from Kate Elizabeth MacLean (page 36)
- Regarding investment priorities concerns from Rufino Velazquez (page 36)
- Regarding MBTA maintenance investments from Joel Schwartz (page 45)

May 22, 2024

Boston Region MPO Board  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116

**Re: Draft Federal Fiscal Years 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Dear Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board:

The Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council) is an independent group of citizen and regional advocacy groups, municipal officials, and agencies charged with providing public input on transportation planning and programming to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The Advisory Council has reviewed the MPO's Federal Fiscal Years 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and we offer some comments for your consideration:

- We continue to appreciate the extent to which the MPO staff, especially the TIP Manager, Ethan Lapointe, has worked closely with the Advisory Council (especially the Chair) each step along the way. He attended many Advisory Council meetings and had several additional conversations with the Chair.
- We acknowledge and express our deep appreciation for the work of the TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee (TIPPER). The challenges the Board faced this cycle were handled more effectively thanks to the TIPPER which decided to meet about twice/month from mid-February to mid-April. Getting a better handle on the reasons for project delays and/or significant cost increases allowed the MPO to make better decisions with respect to project selection or rescheduling. Thankfully the TIPPER is aware of the potential for similar challenges in the course of the next TIP cycle, and it is committed to working with the staff and the project proponents to keep a closer eye on the progress of projects and their associated costs.
- We are pleased to see approximately \$6 million allocated to projects in this first year of the Design Pilot. We understand the MPO is limited by the availability of project managers, but it's good to see the MPO trying to do what it can with the resources it has.
- We appreciate the extra effort made by CATA, MWRTA, MassDOT, and the MBTA to provide the MPO with as much info as possible regarding the merits of their projects available for funding in FY25, and we are especially supportive of the MBTA-related projects, some of which we feel will transform the services provided to transit riders. Also, we understand that the MPO was unable to score any of projects presented by CATA, MWRTA, MassDOT, and the MBTA, but we feel it would be helpful to score, *post facto*, the projects which were selected and

perhaps some which weren't selected so we can have a better assessment of the projects. Having a sense of their scores may prove helpful if/when we find ourselves in a similar situation.

- We applaud the increased effort the MPO is making toward more fully evaluating the results of projects after they are completed. We know this requires a very large amount of effort that in and of itself comes a cost, but as we have done with the MPO's equity-based goals, we support the MPO's determination go above the minimum requirements in order to assess the benefits that result from the projects that have been implemented.
- The equity analysis is thorough and superb in its presentation. More importantly, though, the results of the equity analysis is encouraging. It appears that the MPO is doing a good job of selecting projects which will benefit equity populations. One concern this year, however, is the dramatic dip in the projected reduction of emissions for the LEP population. We hope this is just an outlier, and we trust more analysis will be done to identify the cause for the large dip.

In closing, the encyclopedic nature of the TIP is impressive, and it makes the document a valuable resource. We especially appreciate the effort that goes into putting together the extensive set of appendices. Though we have many more comments we could offer, we feel that these are sufficient for now. As always, we thank you for your comprehensive attention and for being cooperative colleagues as we all continue striving to improve transportation for everyone in the Boston Region.

Sincerely,  
The Advisory Council

April 28, 2024

Mr. Ethan LaPointe  
TIP Manager  
CTPS  
Boston MPO

Re: Project #609204

Dear Mr. LaPointe,

At your Boston-MPO meeting of April 18th, I spoke of my concern about safety that the waiving of the 25% design review process may represent. Concern over safety comes up because we, abutters, have seen:

1. acceptance of at least 2 “fatal flaws” (revealed in the Feasibility Study) in the path’s chosen location
2. choice of the location in back of our homes for politics and making possible budget inflation. This includes ignoring MBTA safety recommendations which Senator Brownsberger vowed he would *“go to the bat all the way to the Governor if need”* to have MBTA accept it.
3. choice of tunnel jacking for additional budget inflation. The fact that this technique is damaging to neighboring homes and residents’ health and unsuitable for our soil type and high water table (as per PE Michalak) did not matter. What seemingly mattered was making use of the most expensive method to construct a tunnel under the tracks.

Hence, you can see how a skipped review raised alarms since it was obvious it was done for the purely political goal of scheduling the MassDOT public hearing prior to the Boston-MPO’s February 15th meeting. To understand this you should know that at the February 7th CPPC (Community Path Project Committee) meeting, Jarred Goentzel (acts as unofficial member of the CPPC and, at times, conduit of information from Senator Brownsberger and MassBike to the CPPC) requested that someone attend the MPO's February 15th meeting to let the MPO Board know that a public hearing had been scheduled. Goentzel deemed it important for the Board to know prior to its April TIP meeting for fear that otherwise, the project would be switched to a year later than 2026.

This revealed that it was politically expedient to schedule the PH before February 15th. To add to this picture of this being a politically driven process, at that meeting, Chairwoman Muson also made the comment that:

*"I will say that [Senator] Will Brownsburger has also been doing what he can behind the scenes and may have had an impact on that happening in March rather than April as well."*

On April 18th's Boston-MPO meeting, Mr Bouchard explained that he waived the review to make sure townspeople would attend prior to disbanding for summer vacations (I'm sure that, as usual, the town tugged at his heart strings with images of children and teens eagerly wanting to attend). However, a scheduling of April, May or June would have addressed this concern but, it would not have saved the project from possibility of postponement which indicates once again that the project is being rushed through to meet someone's deadline of 2026 for construction. This is purely a political aim and raises alarm as to how much political force will continue to be applied that may affect proper construction and engineering of the project.

As you can see, witnessing the development of this project (#609204) for a period of 7 years has created a great deal of distrust and skepticism in me and other abutters. Many of us no longer believe what the town says or promises since town representatives seem adept at speaking out of both sides of their mouth i.e. the message is modified to suit the audience and our concerns are routinely ignored.

What level of "disinformation/misinformation" is there currently?

1. **Lights, plowing and salting** have been abutters' concerns due to effect on our health and the health of the soil/gardens. To appease an abutter's concerns present at the March 7th MassDOT Public Hearing (PH), Selectman Epstein stated that, even if lights were installed in the path, the town would not turn them on and the town would neither plow nor salt the path to avoid maintenance and energy costs. However, at a subsequent meeting, a town official stated that the town would plow and salt the path if people requested it. He did not mention lightning but the implication is that the path would also be lighted based on popular request. Once again, the abutters can go pound sand.

2. **Fencing** is seen as essential by abutters to maintain the safety and privacy of their homes considering that ~1000 individuals daily will be using the path which overlooks many of our backyards. Nitsch's PE Michalak has been saying - including at the March 7th PH and during the "abutters' walk" on April 6th - that abutters will be able to choose the fencing that will separate their backyards from the path. This is absolutely misleading since Michalak has stated at several CPPC (Community Path Project Committee) meetings, as far back as 2021 and as recently as April 24th, that fencing will be 4' high post-and-rail/split

2 rail fencing while most abutters desire and expect a solid wall between them and the path.

3. **Landscaping.** To make residents including abutters accepting of the project's killing of the trees that currently line the path's future location, the town has been peddling landscaping to replace the trees. At the April 6th "abutter's walk", Copley-Wolff's Sean Sanger enchanted the abutters telling them that they could choose whether to be screened by evergreens or choose to see the winter sun with deciduous trees while showing tantalizing sketches of trees, serviceberries and magnolias among others.

Once again, the town is gaining acceptance through deception. The town knows (I pointed it out several years ago) that that promised landscaping for which our trees will be sacrificed is ephemeral. There are several independent issues that the town is willfully ignoring:

A) Herbicide. Keolis has a yearly herbicide program for track safety in which the area parallel to the tracks is sprayed with a herbicide cocktail. That herbicide forms a cloud ~7' high that has killed young bushes in my backyard; the promised landscape will be even closer to that lethal cloud. In talking with Sean Sanger on April 6th about the herbicide issue, nonetheless he still peddled to me serviceberries and magnolias.

The reason for Nitsch and the town ignoring the track safety herbicide program became apparent at the 1.5 hr, April 24th CPPC meeting which heavily revolved around landscaping. At the end, Sanger addressed me as an abutter and I took the rare opportunity to speak. Thus, I pointed out that the herbicide program had not been discussed. Sanger's response was to dismiss my words with a flick of his hand and an eye roll saying that he would "talk with MassDOT and MBTA" because nothing could stand on the way of this "multimillion dollar project". Obviously, the money angle, in the mind of those involved in the project, overrides the wellbeing of abutters and the thoughtful, **safe** development of this project.

So will track safety be sacrificed for a multimillion dollar project? Or will the landscaping be installed after the May herbicide spraying followed by great fanfare and ribbon cutting ceremony and when it is killed by the Fall spraying it can be blamed on "winter"? I hope you won't let either outcome happen.

B) Watering. How will the new plants be watered? Who will water this long stretch of landscaping? Who will pay for the water? This new landscaping will stretch for ~1 mile along the dusty tracks with nary a

water faucet in sight except for that of the abutters. Will the abutter be forced to water the landscape so as not to be left with bare ground? That possibility is not farfetched since the town has already indicated that, if abutters don't want to drown in trash and rats, we will have to be the path's janitors.

There is another question. Has anyone considered how the climate is driving summer days to greater and greater heat that may kill the new plantings even before they are sprayed with herbicide? Typically, native plants are chosen for this type of project but they evolved for maximum temperatures in the 80° F's. Plants are also damaged by the dust clouds raised by the trains and there are 38 trains daily raising dust clouds. In reality, the proposed landscape has no business being near the tracks.

- C) Japanese knotweed. A few years ago, I pointed out to the town the existence of the knotweed in town and MBTA land near and in the planned path. Knotweed takes over landscapes as it is seen in the Arlington Minuteman Bikeway and it lowers property values where it is found. It is highly obnoxious due to a deep root system and formation of strong root ball capable of destroying foundations. It is very difficult to eliminate as every little bit of root and stem can regrow. Both of these factors make mechanical removal unadvisable. The recommended method is herbicide treatment that may take years for complete elimination.

At a February 28th CPPC meeting, Sean Sanger informed the committee members that the knotweed would be removed mechanically from the path's ROW, leaving untouched the knotweed outside of the ROW boundaries. It would be up to the town to maintain the landscape knotweed-free. However, the town has been negligent for decades in removing knotweed in the high school fields, town center (starts close to Pleasant St- Concord Ave moving west), Rock Meadow and along Concord Ave where a ~20' patch near the DPW yard has now spread 1 mile and has invaded Lexington. Hence, it is highly doubtful that Belmont will do anything about knotweed and it spreading along the path and into our properties.

- D) Rabbits. This area is plagued by hordes of non-native rabbits that eat just about everything in sight including garlic. I have had to fence in my front pollinator garden and create cages for the plants in the backyard. Last fall, I forgot to fence in the azalea and it was eaten down to 1' tall stems; it is dead. So here is my question: leaving aside the herbicide and water issues, how will you protect the new landscaping from the voracious rabbits?

As you see, each issue makes it impossible to have and maintain this landscaping. Of course, you could install protective fences for the plantings, water pipes and soaker hoses, hire gardeners and janitors and stop the herbicide program risking the safety of the tracks, etc. How likely is that? This town abhors maintenance; there is far more to be gained from new projects. What I am pointing out is that it is criminal to propose killing our trees when there is high risk that we will be left staring at bare ground.

4. **Trash.** In the past, it was made clear to me, directly by a town official, that the town would not pay for trash pickup along the path hence no trash cans were planned. Abutters were welcomed to pick up trash if they wish to avoid living in a sea of trash and rats, which are abundant in this area.

Project Manager Tom Currier informed me recently that location of trash cans was under discussion implying that now there is planning for trash pickup. But, with this town, since it makes out of deceiving a sport, it is important to dig into the details; Are these trash cans the size of thimbles and most of the trash will land on the ground? Will someone be hired to pick up the trash on the ground? How frequently will the pickup happen? Because of the lax scheduling of trash pickup at a playground adjacent to the Winn Brook Elementary School, the town succeeded in having a successful rat breeding program that led to the closure of the playground for an entire summer. The rat population was brought down but it is still abundant.

4. **Public hearing (PH).** Although the excuse for waiving the review was to inform the public, the PH was scant in detail outside of informing the public of what it already knew: that a shared use path would go somewhere paralleling the tracks. An uninformed public is not likely to complain or reject the plan and this serves those ramming this "multimillion project" through.

In answer to my complaint (letter to MassDOT after the PH - attached), PM Currier replied that the engineering plans had been provided at the back of the hall. When I requested those plans from the town, what I received was the 25% design submittal of 2021 and not the revised 25% design hence what was laid out for the public was dated information (example: it shows a jacked tunnel instead of cut-and-cover).

It is disingenuous of PM Currier to state that information has been provided when it is outdated and presented in a manner not understandable by an audience composed - mostly or entirely - of lay people. In summary, if the purpose of the PH was to honestly present the design so that an informed,

educated public could make a reasonable decision about the path's design, PM Currier and PE Michalak were entirely successful in **not** achieving it.

Finally, my request to you is that the town is made to properly address/ answer the issues raised in this letter before formally approving this "multimillion dollar project". But I will remind you that this town's word or promise is worthless so it should all be in writing.

Thank you for providing a way of presenting our concerns and complaints.

Sincerely,

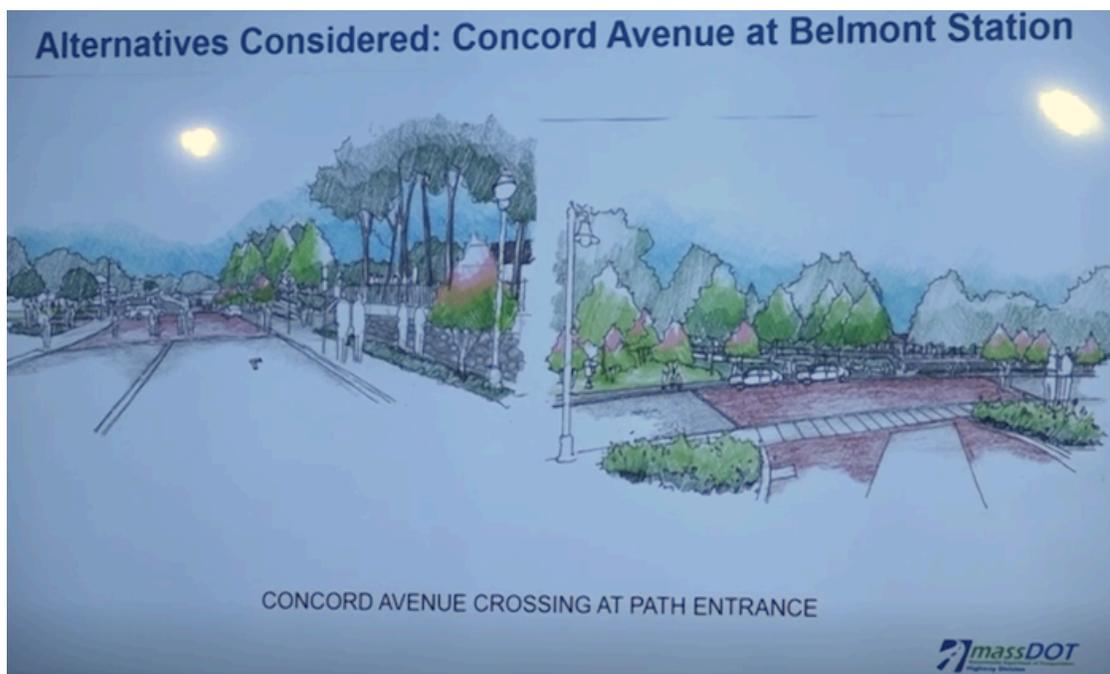
M. Aleida Leza  
Darin Takemoto  
91 Channing Rd.  
Belmont, MA

March 14, 2024  
 Re: Project 609204

Dear Chief Engineer Lavallee,

If what we saw on March 7th's Public Hearing (PH) is the way MassDOT normally conducts PHs, I would call it a disgrace and a disservice to the public.

On March 7th, Mr. Michalak PH presentation was vague and lacked substance. For example, the public walked away with no idea of the final Belmont Train Station design; only of the alternatives considered. The reason for this is that whichever design is chosen it will require the cutting down of station trees. The town knows will be rejected by the public ergo that fact is hidden with this inane slide.



Hence, in our criticism of this project, we primarily must rely on Mr Michalak's presentation of this project in November 2021 to a Town Meeting and to the CPPC in the intervening years.

Our conclusion is that the town and various committees dealing with this project have been deaf to the abutters: our concerns have not been addressed.

1. road/path will impact our privacy but no one seems to care probably because those of us who live along the tracks are considered "the lowest of the low" as one resident put it and we chose to live along the RR so we "have to put up with whatever it brings", said another.
2. town will not install trash bins on the road so we will be awash in trash that the town has implied abutters should pick up (lowest of the low so it makes sense to turn us into janitors.) It means we will also be pest control as rats will have another area for breeding

besides the schools.

3. road will be lighted and it affects both human and wildlife's well being but ... silly me! the well being of the latter won't matter because all of our trees will be cut and our wildlife will suffer the ecological equivalent of ethnic cleansing and genocide.
4. road will grieve us with more standing runoff water issues in our backyards because, as Mr Michalak said, there is a clay layer and the water table is high. AND guess what? climate instability is causing heavier rains.

Originally the runoff was supposed to move down to Clay Pit pond but raising the RR bed cut off that escape route. Now adding insult to injury, you are planning a paved road and a useless standard road drainage system Useless because top of embankments don't flood unlike the foot of embankments. So that perforated drainage pipe will never carry water away.

Besides runoff, we will be cursed with snow melt and roadside salt. Incidentally, have you considered that that salt will run into the tiny wetland bordering this road as it starts a steep rise towards Clark St?

5. over 1000 people per day traveling on this road in back of our homes will inevitably bring crime to our neighborhood. It is a matter of statistics coupled to an increasingly dire situation in our country including homelessness, inflation, and political instability. But then isn't the lowest of the low expected to live in neighborhoods riddled with crime?
6. road will deprive us of our trees which, although some are Norway maples, the wild life makes them their home. Removing the trees means losing the wildlife and losing the shade that cools our homes at a time when the climate has shot above the Paris/IPCC 1.5°C limit.

You will be killing trees for a landscaping that will inevitably be killed or grow sickly by the twice a year MBTA herbicide program needed for track safety. Setting aside the MBTA's herbicide program, let's ask: how will the new landscaping be watered? Are abutters to be given another janitorial task, this time of watering the new plantings and pay for the water to boot? Similarly, people in the town's public housing (also "lowest of the low"?) will be facing these janitorial tasks of trash pickup, pest control and watering duties in Phase 2.

There is also the planned handling of the Japanese knotweed present in the proposed ROW: the landscaping - whatever survives lack of watering, climate heat and herbicide - will be overwhelmed by the knotweed. This invasive attacks foundations and therefore lowers property value and the disturbance caused by this road building will inevitably spread as it has done in Arlington's Minute Man. But then again, isn't a landscape either bare or consumed by knotweed a suitable setting for the lowest of the low?

7. road brings people close to trains that occasionally shed chunks of metal that - one RR staffer told me - are capable of beheading people. (Abutters may have the special treat of picking up heads besides the poisoned rats, slices of pizza, bagels and burgers brought from town center.) Add to this, vandalism taking the form of "let's throw a bike onto the tracks" (we've seen teens hanging bikes high up in oaks). Bottom line you may do studies about the RR but we live next to it and we want RR safety above all because our lives depend on it.

Finally, I will bring to your attention the sudden scheduling of this March 7th PH; it raises doubts that state procedures were followed correctly. The facts are that on December 13th, 2023, Mr. Michalak reported that the earliest date for a PH would be in April but, on January

7th, Mr Michalak announced the PH was scheduled for March 7th. My concern is that some overeager MassDOT staffer decided to take a short cut and the PH was scheduled before the engineering plan was completed. Taking short cuts when we are dealing with the RR should be absolutely unacceptable.

Sincerely,

Aleida Leza  
Darin Takemoto  
*91 Channing Rd.*  
*Belmont, MA*  
*Landline: 617-489-2952*

Paul Cobuzzi  
*125 Channing Rd.*  
*Belmont MA*



**TOWN OF BELMONT**  
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May 20, 2024

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

Via email at [David.Mohler@state.ma.us](mailto:David.Mohler@state.ma.us)

Dear Chairperson Mohler and Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

I am writing to update the members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization on the continued progress of Project #609204 (Community Path, Belmont Component of the Massachusetts Central Rail Trail [Phase 1]), and to thank the MPO for maintaining the Transportation Improvement Program in the FY2026 funding cycle as planned for the project. As you know, MassDOT held the 25% Design Public Hearing for the project on March 7, 2024. The Town's design consultant, Nitsch Engineering, is progressing steadily with design, and is expected to submit the 75% design plans to MassDOT this summer, at which point the Town will begin the work to acquire all necessary rights-of-way for the project.

In addition, Belmont's elected Town Meeting continues to demonstrate the breadth of support for this project by voting overwhelmingly in November, 2023 to approve an additional \$335,868 for project design adjustments that arose during the review of the 25% design. The project also enjoys strong support in the community, and the Town is deeply committed to completing this project as soon as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us through the Town Engineer, Glenn Clancy at [gclancy@belmont-ma.gov](mailto:gclancy@belmont-ma.gov) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Patrice Garvin  
 Town Administrator

On behalf of the Belmont Community Path Project Committee:

Holly Muson, Chair  
Bonnie Friedman, Vice Chair  
Mark Kagan, Secretary  
Steve Engler, Member  
Philip Lawrence, Member  
Vincent Stanton, Member  
Ellen Sugarman, Member  
Eric Perkins, Member and liaison to the School Committee  
Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator  
Glenn Clancy, P.E., Town Engineer  
Jay Marcotte, Director of Public Works

cc:

The Belmont Select Board, comprised of:

Roy Epstein, Chair (via email at [repstein@belmont-ma.gov](mailto:repstein@belmont-ma.gov))  
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Ethan Lapointe (via email at [elapointe@ctps.org](mailto:elapointe@ctps.org))

May 22, 2024

Boston Region MPO Board  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116

**Re: Draft Federal Fiscal Years 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program**

Dear Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board,

The MBTA Rider Oversight Committee (ROC) is pleased to offer our brief comments on the Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). As might be expected, we are focused on the MBTA and other transit-related projects. In particular, we appreciate the extent to which the MPO worked with the MBTA, CATA, and MWRTA when funds become available in FY25. We feel that the projects, which are also aligned with the MPO's goals, benefit MBTA riders and other transit users greatly.

More specifically, we support the selections in the following programs:

- Transit Transformation Program

In particular, we are pleased to see funding for the MBTA Systemwide Pedal and Park Modernization Program. Anything that makes it easier for riders to access the MBTA by foot or by bike is especially welcomed. We are confident that the benefits to health and the environment from encouraging more active transportation warrant the expenditure.

- Community Connections Program

With the projects selected in this program either providing access to more Bluebikes or creating more bike lanes, again, we are supportive of projects that increase active transportation. We are especially supportive of projects that make cycling and rolling safer.

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Program

Though the funded projects are mostly for the development of shared-use paths, given their popularity and heavy use, undoubtedly these will benefit the communities (and the nearby communities) in which they are built; and of course, we solidly support any project that makes it safer for children and their parents to walk to school.

We continue to appreciate all of your efforts and especially the emphasis on equity by which transit projects become a justifiable high priority.

Sincerely,  
The MBTA Rider Oversight Committee  
[roc@mbtaroc.org](mailto:roc@mbtaroc.org)  
<https://mbtaroc.org/>



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

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*Chair*  
Senate Committee on Ethics  
*Vice Chair*  
Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce  
Development

May 13, 2024

David Mohler, Chair  
Boston MPO  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston MA 02116

Re: Comments FY 2025 – 2029 TIP  
Project – Malden – Route 60 Improvement Project

Dear Chair Mohler and Members of the Boston MPO:

As the delegation representing Malden, we are writing to encourage the Boston MPO to reconsider inclusion in the FY 2025 – 2029 TIP the City's project to redesign the Route 60 Corridor. This is a vital artery that runs through the heart of Malden, connecting the west and east sides of the city, and has not been substantially revisited since the 1970s.

Redesigning this auto-focused corridor into a safer, accessible, and multi-modal roadway will transform Route 60 into a critical resource for all Malden residents and visitors. Currently, Route 60 suffers from poor signalization that poses a real safety risk for motorists and pedestrians alike. While the City and MBTA have been collaborating since 2022 to make these changes, a cohesive redesign of the entire route is necessary so that community members can make their needs known and experts can weigh in on how best to transform this dangerous road into one that meets Malden's current and future needs. A redesign will also allow the city to best plan how to support the MBTA's Bus Network Redesign and MBTA Community Zoning law, both of which we are excited to see bring new visitors to Malden.

We understand that staff and financial capacity place certain limitations on what projects can be funded and supported in any given year. Given the critical importance of Route 60 to Malden, and how a redesign would allow a Gateway City to support state priorities like transit-oriented development, we encourage the Boston MPO to reconsider their decision to retract their funding for this project.

With any questions, please be in touch with Sarah Zeiberg at [Sarah.Zeiberg@masenate.gov](mailto:Sarah.Zeiberg@masenate.gov)

Yours sincerely,



Jason Lewis  
State Senator  
5th Middlesex



Steven Ultrino  
State Representative  
33<sup>rd</sup> Middlesex



Kate Lipper-Garabedian  
State Representative  
32<sup>nd</sup> Middlesex



Paul Donato  
State Representative  
35<sup>th</sup> Middlesex



**Gary Christenson, Mayor**

Thursday, April 11, 2024

David Mohler, Chair & Members  
Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116

**Re: Design Pilot Funding for Route 60 (Eastern Ave & Centre Street) Improvement Project  
MPW Meeting 4/18/2024**

Dear MPO Members:

The City of Malden respectfully requests that the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) restore the funding recommendation for design pilot funding of one of the City's two candidate submissions, the Route 60 (Centre Street/Eastern Avenue) Improvements Project.

The City of Malden was initially recommended for an award of FY 2025 TIP Design Pilot funding for the Route 60 (Centre Street/Eastern Avenue) Improvements Project from Pearl Street to Lynn Street, a 2.6-mile urban arterial that carries approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. Unfortunately, the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) recently voted to retract the award amount. As a result, the City of Malden now proposes to reduce the design scope and offer a 20% local match of \$ 340,000 as evidence of our intent and desire to see this project advance.

The 2.6-mile Route 60 Project consists of critical infrastructure improvements for all users of the facility including multiple traffic calming measures, pedestrian accessibility enhancements, bicycle, and transit accommodations, upgraded traffic and pedestrian signal equipment, pavement rehabilitation, traffic regulatory and wayfinding signs, and high visibility pavement markings. Our project's goal is to transform this busy commuting and commercial vehicle route into a first class, urban arterial that improves mobility and safety for all users of this corridor while providing economic and social benefits to adjacent businesses and residents alike. This corridor includes the Centre Street Busway, a groundbreaking and controversial modification to the roadway to facilitate Complete Streets with a transit emphasis. The City hopes to build upon this initial step towards modal balance by restoring and enhancing the street infrastructure.

Our total conceptual cost estimate for the entire Route 60 Improvements Project in Malden is over \$ 2.6 million. To facilitate funding for initial design work, the project can be segmented to an initial \$16,980,000 according to our consulting engineer's estimate. Construction would likely be phased by geographical location using separate contracts. The City has accounted for engineering and design effort direct costs (i.e., survey, borings, test pits, etc.) and contingencies. We suggest using 10% of the estimated construction cost or \$1.7M to estimate engineering and design costs.

Throughout the TIP process, the City has been present and participatory, and is understandably disappointed that last minute, unvetted changes to the TIP Committee funding recommendation resulted in both of Malden's design pilot candidate projects being dropped. To demonstrate our continued good faith and commitment to the TIP process and the Route 60 Improvements project, the City of Malden now proposes to flex the project scope and provide a funding match.

We hope these actions will be acceptable to the Boston MPO and allow the City of Malden to work cooperatively with MassDOT and other regulatory agencies to move this vitally important project forward. Thank you for your time and consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,



**GARY CHRISTENSON**

Mayor of Malden

Copy: Stephen Winslow, President of the Malden City Council



# 495/METROWEST

## PARTNERSHIP

*Leaders for Regional Prosperity*

200 FRIBERG PARKWAY  
WESTBOROUGH, MA 01581  
774-760-0495  
495PARTNERSHIP.ORG

May 8, 2024

Mr. David Mohler, Chair  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116

**RE: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's Draft Transportation Improvement Program, FFY 2025-2029**

Dear Mr. Mohler,

On behalf of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, please accept the following as our comments to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (Boston MPO) regarding the draft *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP) for FFY 2025-29.

The 495/MetroWest Partnership is a unique alliance among businesses, municipalities, and other stakeholders leading the advancement of the 495/MetroWest region as an exceptional location for people, businesses, and communities. Our vision is one in which the 495/MetroWest region enjoys sustainable economic growth, well-stewarded natural and built resources, and diverse transportation and housing choices across our 36 cities and towns. The Partnership accomplishes this by providing coordination, education, and advocacy for solutions to regional constraints.

Transportation challenges such as congestion, interchange capacity issues, and gaps in public transit coverage pose a major threat to the economic vitality of our region. Several indicators suggest the region would benefit from enhanced transportation infrastructure and transit investment, including the region's population growth rate, the sharp rise in housing costs, the low rate of housing churn, and an increased emphasis on transit-oriented development alongside fixed transit routes in downtown settings reflected both in municipal planning efforts and promulgated regulations regarding the inclusion of by-right multifamily zoning in MBTA communities.

Last year, in accordance with our organization's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, the Partnership's Transportation Committee convened a working group to review and update our organizational priorities for roadway projects in our region. We are pleased to note a number of these priorities are reflected in the draft TIP for FFY 2025-29.

The Partnership greatly appreciates the 495/MetroWest projects included in the draft FFY2025-29 TIP. The Partnership strongly supports the inclusion of the following projects (with newly added projects emboldened for reference):

### **FFY 2025**

- **612173 Bellingham - Bridge Replacement, B-06-022, Maple Street Over I-495**
- **S12982 Framingham - Chris Walsh Trail Phase 2**

*Page 1 of 5*

- **S12907 Framingham - Chris Walsh Aqueduct Trail Connectivity Project (MA-275)**
- **611952 Harvard/Littleton/Acton/Concord - Guide and Traffic Sign Replacement on a Section of Route 2**
- **607342 Holliston - Intersection Improvements at Route 16 and Whitney Street (Design Only)**
- **607977 Hopkinton & Westborough - Reconstruction of Interstate 90/Interstate 495 Interchange**
- **S12703 MART - Montachusett RTA Microtransit Service**
- **613216 Marlborough - Bridge Preservation, M-06-010, Elm Street Over I-495**
- **S12979 Marlborough - Reconstruction of Granger Boulevard (Design Only)**
- **S12807 MWRTA - Catch Connect Microtransit Service Expansion Phase 2**
- **S12972 MWRTA - Procurement of Three 29 Foot Buses**
- **S12971 MWRTA - Blandin Hub Equitable Redesign Initiative**
- **S12981 Norfolk/Walpole/Wrentham - Shared-Use Path Installation (Metacomet Greenway)**
- **S12983 Sherborn - Reconstruction of Route 27 and Route 16**

#### FFY 2026

- **436436 Ashland - Rehabilitation and Rail Crossing Improvements on Cherry Street**
- **613274 Foxborough - Bridge Preservation at 6 Bridges Along the I-95 Corridor**
- **S12977 Framingham - Preliminary Design of Intersection Improvements at Route 126/135/MBTA & CSX Railroad**
- **607977 Hopkinton & Westborough - Reconstruction of Interstate 90/Interstate 495 Interchange**
- **608045 Milford - Rehabilitation on Route 16, From Route 109 to Beaver Street**
- **613182 Milford - Bridge Preservation, M-21-022 (1UD, 1 UE), I-495 Overt State Route 109/Medway Road**
- **S12701 MWRTA - MWRTA Catch Connect Microtransit Service Expansion**
- **S12807 MWRTA - Catch Connect Microtransit Service Expansion Phase 2**
- **S12971 MWRTA - Blandin Hub Equitable Redesign Initiative**
- **610680 Natick - Lake Cochichuate Path**

#### FFY 2027

- **613343 Foxborough - Interstate Pavement Preservation and Related Work on I-95**
- **S12984 Holliston - Linden Street Improvements at Robert Adams Middle School SRTS**
- **607977 Hopkinton & Westborough - Reconstruction of Interstate 90/Interstate 495 Interchange**
- **607420 Natick - Superstructure Replacement, N-03-012, Boden Lane Over CSX/MBTA**
- **610660 Sudbury/Wayland - Mass Central Rail Trail**

#### FFY 2028

- **613639 Framingham - Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 9**

- 605091 Natick - Bridge Preservation, N-03-032, N-03-033, N-03-034, N-03-035, Ramp A & B Over Route 9 & Speen Street over Ramps G & D
- 610691 Natick - Cochituate Rail Trail Extension, From MBTA Station to Mechanic Street; however, we note with concern that funding for this project has been reduced.

### FFY 2029

- 612963 Bellingham - Roadway Rehabilitation of Route 126 (Hartford Road), From 800 Feet North of the I-495 NB Off Ramp to Medway Line, Including B-06-017
- 613162 Littleton - Bridge Replacement, L-13-008, Route 119 Over Beaver Brook and Causeway Improvement for Wildlife
- 613640 Natick - Resurfacing and Related work on Route 9
- 613319 Sudbury/Framingham - Bike Path Construction of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, from the Sudbury Diamond Railroad Crossing to Eaton Road West

We greatly appreciate continued programming for the *I-495/I-90 Interchange Improvement Project*, and the *Natick - Bridge Replacement, N-03-020, Route 27 (North Main Street) Over Route 9 (Worcester Street) and Interchange Improvements* project, both of which have been longstanding priorities of the Partnership. The Partnership also supports the inclusion of funding for the preliminary design of the Route 126 and Route 135 intersection in downtown Framingham. This intersection has been of major concern to the Partnership since the organization's inception and it has been included as one of the main projects in our updated roadways vision and priorities statement.

We also appreciate the continued funding for *S12807 MWRTA - Catch Connect Microtransit Service Expansion Phase 2*, a successful inter-local service that link passengers to regionally significant commercial, medical, and recreational facilities within Framingham and Natick. The Partnership supports continued funding for demand-response services through the Community Connections program as a vehicle to expand innovative RTA service models that both meet the needs of transit dependent populations and broaden ridership potential in suburban and exurban areas where fixed-route bus service may not be feasible.

The Partnership will continue reiterate support for the I-495/Route 9 interchange project, which deserves future funding consideration given its proximity and interdependency with the I-495/I-90 interchange, and the area's key role in serving freight across Eastern Massachusetts. Since the Interstate 495 and Route 9 Interchange Improvement Study was conducted by MassDOT in 2013, the immediate area continues to grow as a regionally significant employment base.

The Partnership would like to express concern regarding projects that have been rescheduled to later years than previously planned. In particular, we are chagrined to see a project in Ashland moved from FY2025 to FY2028; this project is of significant safety importance to the Town of Ashland. Delayed implementation could potentially impede necessary roadway rehabilitation and hinder the region's overall transportation safety and efficiency. This includes:

- 608436 Ashland - Rehabilitation and Rail Crossing Improvements on Cherry Street

Further, we are concerned with delays to the following initiatives:

- 607748 Acton - Intersection and Signal Improvements on Routes 2 and 111 (Massachusetts Avenue) at Piper Road and Taylor Road (moved from FY28 to FY29)
- 612099 Ashland - Bridge Replacement, A-14-006, Cordaville Road over Sudbury River (moved from FY26 to FY27)
- 612894 Framingham - Improvements at Harmony Grove Elementary School (SRTS) (moved from FY26 to FY27)
- 604564 Maynard - Bridge Replacement, M-10-004, Route 62 (Main Street) Over the Assabet River (moved from FY25 to FY26)
- 612178 Natick - Bridge Replacement, N-030010, Speen Street Over RR MBTA/CSX (moved from FY25 to FY26)
- 610660 Sudbury/Wayland - Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) (moved from FY27 to FY28)

The Partnership notes that the following project was scheduled for programming in the FFY24-28 TIP but does not appear in the draft TIP for FFY25-29; we strongly encourage its inclusion within its originally programmed year of FY25:

- 610722 - Acton, Boxborough, and Littleton: Pavement Preservation on Route 2

Finally, the Partnership identified several projects included in the FFY25-29 Universe of Projects that are of significance to our stakeholders and which we will continue to monitor. Those projects include:

- 610553 Acton - Intersection Improvements at Route 2 and Route 27 Ramps
- 604862 Bellingham - Ramp Construction & Relocation, I-495 at Route 126 (Hartford Avenue)
- Bellingham - South Main Street (Route 126) - Elm Street to Douglas Drive Reconstruction
- 612740 Foxborough - Intersection Signalization at Route 140/Walnut Street and Route 140/I-495 (SB Ramp)
- 609280 Framingham - Roundabout Construction at Salem End Road, Badger Road, and Gates Street
- 606109 Framingham - Intersection Improvements at Route 126/135/MBTA and CSX Railroad
- 607774 Franklin - Resurfacing and Intersection Improvements on Route 140, from Beaver Street to I-495 Ramps
- Franklin - Southern New England Trunk Trail (SNETT) Extension, from Grove Street to Franklin Town Center
- Holliston - Reconstruction of Concord Street (Route 126)
- 611932 Hopkinton - Campus Trail Connector, Shared Use Trail Construction
- Hopkinton - West Main Street Reconstruction and Shared Use Path
- 610702 Littleton - Intersection Improvements on 119/Beaver Brook Road
- 612807 Medfield - Intersection Improvements at Route 27 and West Street
- Medfield - Reconstruction of Route 109 (Millis T/L to Hartford Street)
- Medway - Improvements on Route 190 West of Highland Street
- Medway - Traffic Signalization at Trotter Drive and Route 190
- Millis - Town Center Improvements
- 612091 Milford - Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 16
- Sherborn - Intersection Improvements at Route 16 and Maple Street

- Sherborn - Upper Charles River Trail Extension to Framingham City Line
- 613095 Stow - Stow/Assabet
- 608497 Wrentham - Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 1
- 610676 Wrentham - Intersection Improvements on Route 1A at North and Winter Street
- 603739 - Wrentham Construction of Interstate 495/Route 1A Ramps
- Wrentham - Intersection Improvements at Randall Road and Route 1A
- Wrentham - Intersection Improvements at Route 1A and Route 140

We thank you for your consideration of these comments. Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact me at any time, (774)-760-0495 or by email at [jason@495partnership.org](mailto:jason@495partnership.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Palitsch', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jason Palitsch  
Executive Director  
The 495/MetroWest Partnership



TOWN ADMINISTRATOR  
NICHOLAS MILANO  
TEL 617-898-4845

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
TOWN OF MILTON  
OFFICE OF THE SELECT BOARD  
525 CANTON AVENUE, MILTON, MA 02186

TEL 617-898-4843  
FAX 617-698-6741

**SELECT BOARD**

MICHAEL F. ZULLAS,  
CHAIR

ERIN G. BRADLEY,  
VICE CHAIR

ROXANNE MUSTO,  
SECRETARY

RICHARD G. WELLS, JR.,  
MEMBER

BENJAMIN ZOLL  
MEMBER

April 24, 2024

**VIA First-Class Mail and Email**

Boston Region MPO  
C/O Executive Director Tegin Teich  
State Transportation Building  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116

**Re: Penalty in Evaluation Criteria Based on the MBTA Communities Act**

Dear Executive Director Teich:

In January 2024, the Town of Milton was informed by Boston Region MPO staff that the Town would incur a 5-point penalty in the evaluation criteria for transportation projects funded through the Transportation Improvement Program if the Town was noncompliant with the MBTA Communities Act.

Putting aside whether such a penalty is appropriate, consistency and fairness dictate that, at the very least, the penalty be postponed until at least three months after the decision of the Supreme Judicial Court in the case captioned Attorney General v. the Town of Milton et. al., No. SJ-13580 (Supreme Judicial Court) (the "Attorney General's Lawsuit").

As you may know, the Attorney General's Complaint and Brief in the Attorney General's Lawsuit requests that the Court order the Town of Milton to comply with the MBTA Communities Act "within three months after entry" of and injunction in the Attorney General's favor.

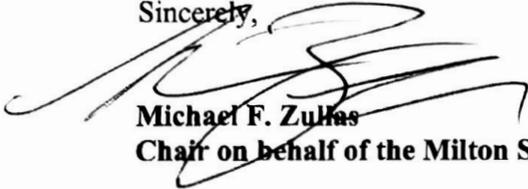
As you may also know, the Single Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court has ordered that oral argument in the Attorney General's Lawsuit should be scheduled for October 2024.

While we recognize that the Attorney General is an independently elected officer separate from Boston Region MPO, and that the Supreme Judicial Court is a separate branch of government under the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights, the Town of Milton is facing concerted action as a result of the Attorney General's Lawsuit, and we think it fair and reasonable that any potential penalties imposed on the Town follow the same schedule. Moreover, if the Town were to prevail in the Attorney General's Lawsuit, particularly

with respect to its challenge to the MBTA Communities Act Guidelines as ultra vires, the penalty described above would unquestionably be unfair.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. We look forward to your response, and would be happy to discuss this matter at a time and place of your convenience.

Sincerely,



**Michael F. Zullas**

**Chair on behalf of the Milton Select Board:**

Erin G. Bradley, Vice Chair  
Roxanne Musto, Secretary  
Richard G. Wells, Jr.  
Benjamin Zoll

CC: Senator Walter F. Timilty  
Representative William J. Driscoll, Jr.  
Representative Brandy Fluker Oakley

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

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail (Project 610666)

Dear Mr. Mohler,

I have been a resident of Swampscott for 31 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 April of 2022 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. 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, especially in this time of accelerating global warming and the resulting extreme weather. 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

May 5, 2024

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 #610666

Dear Mr. Mohler,

I am writing as a follow-up to my previous letters dated **March 28, 2021** and **May 10, 2022** regarding the proposed Swampscott Rail Trail (Project #610666).

As noted previously, I am a 50-year resident of Swampscott, MA and have lived in the same neighborhood for all of those years with the exception of when I attended college. I again respectfully request that you **decline funding for the Swampscott Rail Trail** at this time. With respect to the section of the proposed Rail Trail in my neighborhood, and since the dates of my previous letters, no changes have been made as it relates to ownership, use of eminent domain, density, nor has the Town of Swampscott been willing to consider alternatives outside the proposed Trail path which could eliminate the use of eminent domain. Additionally, the Town of Swampscott has not been transparent with respect to the timing of the project in this section over the last 7 years, leaving residents in limbo and anxious as to what is actually happening. As an example, the last status update on the Town's website project page is dated May 2018: [Swampscott Rail Trail | Swampscott, MA \(swampscottma.gov\)](#).

For context, my section of the proposed Trail runs between Bradlee Avenue and Humphrey Street. This section of the proposed Trail is definitively owned by the adjacent property owners and is reflected on their deeds, including myself. The Town's campaign in 2017 to support the provision of \$850k for the design and related land acquisition costs was run on vague and misleading information related to the true ownership of the related property. Additionally, I note again that the Town has misrepresented in the information provided to you that Swampscott Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved the provision of \$850k in 2017; what they have failed to mention is that a group of residents pushed the matter to a town wide vote which occurred on June 29, 2017. While that vote was not successful in preventing the provision of funding, it more accurately represents the divided sentiments of Swampscott's residents. On that voting day, 46% of Swampscott's registered voters turned out with the proponents winning by 589 votes, which is hardly the overwhelming majority the Town would have you believe.

The Town of Swampscott intends to use Eminent Domain to take an easement for a recreational path in this section. Although the Town maintains that the residents will continue to "own the dirt

underneath the easement,” once the land is taken via eminent domain for a recreational path, the use of the land is forever changed and will never be returned to the property owners. Furthermore, the Town is not willing to pay market value for the property. This then puts the onus on the homeowner, at their own expense, to take the Town to court to secure reasonable compensation. A representative of the Town came to visit my property in 2017 and provided paperwork seeking the easement, along with a 10-year construction easement, with compensation of \$100, which is hardly market value.

I continue to maintain my previous position which is that I am not at all opposed to Rail Trails, however, I am vehemently opposed to using eminent domain for a recreation path. Eminent domain powers were created to facilitate building hospitals, schools and highways, not recreational paths.

This section of the proposed Trail would run between a dense area of homes, many of whom have maintained the property as part of their yards because it is. This tract is full of mature trees and vegetation, including native blackberry bushes on my own property. The Town likes to mention that the proposed Trail is currently a trash-strewn deserted area . . . while that may be true in some sections, it is most notably not true in the Bradlee Avenue to Humphrey Street section. As property owners, we take pride in maintaining our yards and properties.

In the past, we have suggested that the Town take a less aggressive approach in our section and move the trail to the quiet adjacent street. This would eliminate the need for eminent domain, however, to date, the Town has not been willing to consider any alternative outside the proposed path.

I again respectfully ask that you **decline all funding** until the Town of Swampscott is willing to engage in meaningful dialogue with affected residents in this area and to at least consider alternatives that do not require the use of any form of eminent domain.

As in the past, I invite you and your colleagues to visit my property at any time to view first-hand the devastation the Trail will cause in this very dense section of Town. I am confident that my neighbors would agree to the same site visit. I am happy to arrange such a visit at your convenience.

Thank you for your consideration,



Kimberly S. Nassar

27 Morton Road

Swampscott, MA 01907



Ethan Lapointe &lt;elapointe@ctps.org&gt;

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## Opposition to the Route 30 Reconstruction project in Weston

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neil diver &lt;nldiver1@gmail.com&gt;

Tue, May 21, 2024 at 2:15 PM

To: Ethan Lapointe &lt;elapointe@ctps.org&gt;

May 22, 2024

Mr. Ethan Lapointe, Transportation Improvement Program Manager  
State Transportation Building  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116-3968  
elapointe@ctps.org  
857.702.3703

Dear Mr. Lapointe,

You have received letters from Weston residents regarding the project #608954, the Route 30 Reconstruction project in Weston.

In consideration of the previous year FFYs 2024-2028 TIP, a letter of concern regarding the same project was signed by 110 residents and sent to the Boston MPO on May 17, 2023

The proposed shared use path is the most costly and critical component of the entire Route 30 Reconstruction project. **The undersigned residents oppose funding the project** until bicycle facilities are designed for Route 30 in a way that meets AASHTO design standards, reduces or eliminates conflicts at crossings in the corridor, and most importantly, proposes that bicycle traffic travel in the same direction as vehicular traffic along both sides of Route 30 where the path crossings and intersections are most concentrated.

In addition to the safety issues described here, there is also a significant concern pertaining to the environmental damage from clearcutting 15 feet of all of the trees on the south side of Route 30 to create a pathway 3.7 miles in length.

Furthermore, of the 40 houses along the south side of Route 30 in Weston, 20 are located between 50 and 75 feet of Route 30. These houses will lose a significant (15-25%) of their frontage including mature trees and shrubbery, reducing the value of their properties when there is better alternative for a pathway that will not economically impact these residents. We believe it is a moral outrage to avoidably cause their decline in property value.

At the Weston Town Meeting on May 6 for the consideration of funding additional engineering expense, 42% of the Town Meeting attendees opposed the funding. They were presented the same concerns contained in this letter. Many of those in opposition are represented by the 70 signatures below.

Sincerely,

Neil L. Diver

857 263 8986  
 12 Somerset Place  
 Weston, MA 02493  
 ndiver1@gmail.com

Neil Diver Somerset Place	Katherine Williams Somerset Place	Frank Caine Cutting Lane	Becky Ames Cutting Lane
Paul Donahue Kettle Lane	John Mc Donald Church Street	Lise Revers South Avenue	Janice Kaplan Cutting Lane
Barbara Baker Fillmore Place	Robert Froh Fillmore Place	Richard Flynn Flagg Circle	Laura Schiff Bean Flagg Circle
Warren Pinckert Fox Meadow Lane	Beverly Watson Fox Meadow Lane	Steve Watson Fox Meadow Lane	Sheila Weinstock Gambrill Lane
Norman Weinstock Gambrill Lane	Linda Harding Gambrill Lane	John Harding Gambrill Lane	Barbara Bush Meissner Gambrill Lane
Cody Meissner Gambrill Lane	Natty MacArthur Kettle Lane	Andi Shaw Nolte Circle	Doug Shaw Nolte Circle
Susan Schaefer Nolte Circle	Christian Halby Nolte Circle	Marty Broff Nolte Circle	Jenifer Lipson Nolte Circle
Freya Bernstein Nolte Circle	Louis Grossman Nolte Circle	Amy Gerson Nolte Circle	Bruce Pastor Pine Summit Circle
Richard Tedlow Pine Summit Circle	Donna Staton Pine Summit Circle	Barbara Bowen Pine Summit Circle	Kathie Collman Pine Summit Circle
Bob Collman Pine Summit Circle	Nancy Lukitsh Ridgehurst Circle	Linda Davidson Ridgehurst Circle	Barry Davidson Ridgehurst Circle
Duncan Warden Somerset Place	Gail Warden Somerset Place	Margaret Ewald Somerset Place	Laraine Levy Somerset Place
Jeff Levy Somerset Place	Al Aydelott	Diana Chaplin Love Lane	Richard DiVito Boston Post Road
Margaret Griner Pine Summit Circle	Paul Griner Pine Summit Circle	Tom Keery Oak St.	Laura Keery Oak St.
Gary Lee Somerset Place	Janice Glynn Somerset Place	John Sallay Wellesley St	Anne Sallay Wellesley St
Rachael Stewart Sudbury Road	Rochelle Nemrow		

May 22, 2024

Mr. Ethan Lapointe, Transportation Improvement Program Manager  
 State Transportation Building  
 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
 Boston, MA 02116-3968  
[elapointe@ctps.org](mailto:elapointe@ctps.org)  
 857.702.3703

Dear Mr. Lapointe,

In accordance with the annual FFYs 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) comment period, the **137 undersigned residents** would like to offer public comment and concern regarding the project #608954, the Route 30 Reconstruction project in Weston, while the 25% design plan submission is under review at MassDOT, District 6.

In consideration of the previous year FFYs 2024-2028 TIP, a letter of concern regarding the same project was signed by 110 residents and sent to the Boston MPO on May 17, 2023. That three-page letter highlighted specific detailed concerns related to the safety of the proposed shared use path, the questioning of the need for two new full traffic signals along the corridor, and the lack of meaningful and engaging public participation for the project. To date, these concerns, yet again, remain unaddressed.

The proposed shared use path is the most costly and critical component of the entire Route 30 Reconstruction project. **The undersigned residents oppose funding the project** until bicycle facilities are designed for Route 30 in a way that meets AASHTO design standards, reduces or eliminates conflicts at crossings in the corridor, and most importantly, proposes that bicycle traffic travels in the same direction as vehicular traffic along both sides of Route 30 where the path crossings and intersections are most concentrated.

We have previously identified the public safety concerns for cyclists and motorists under the proposed two-way shared use path. The key safety points are:

- **47 vehicle crossing points** along corridor create numerous opportunities for collisions as drivers cannot see cyclists traveling in the “wrong” direction (against the normal flow of vehicle traffic) when seeking to turn left into driveways or unsignalized intersecting streets. Short of creating 94 new stop signs along the path, there is no mitigating engineering factor that can address this specific concern.
- Using the design consultant’s own data collected in 2018, we have recently calculated that **over 9700 vehicles per day (7AM to 6PM) on weekdays would cross the shared use path**, turning on to or off of Route 30. This number accounts for all crossings except for the fully-signalized Route 30/Wellesley Street and Route 30/Park Street intersections. This is an extraordinarily high number of possible points of contact for cyclists.
- **Cyclists will face a crossing point, on average, every 202 feet in roughly half the length of the path.** For example, along most of the path, a cyclist traveling at a modest 15 mph on a bicycle will cross a driveway or roadway every 9.6 seconds. Faster riders, such as those on electric or motorized bikes and scooters, will encounter a crossing point every 6-7 seconds. These situations create a stressful environment for cyclists, whether they are experienced or inexperienced riders.

Environmental concerns include:

- Creating the two-way shared use path requires **clear-cutting of up to 15-20 feet** adjacent to the roadway to create a buffer of up to 5 feet on either side of the path. The proposed design will require the removal of all trees (big and small) and ground cover in the path and buffer area, re-grading to make the area level, and the displacement of stone walls and other streetscape features.
- The green space will be replaced by nearly **4 acres of asphalt**, causing increased warming and stormwater runoff. The loss of large street trees will greatly reduce the canopy and shading that is currently provided, as well as remove the visual buffering of the Massachusetts Turnpike and homeowners’ yards.

- **Blasting and removal of the ledge that provides noise buffers and visual screening** adjacent to the Massachusetts Turnpike east of Oak Street will be an irreversible change to the character of this scenic road. The loss of noise protection for hundreds of residents has not been studied or evaluated.

In terms of community participation and public support for the project, ongoing concerns have increased as stakeholders become more aware of what is proposed. The consultant for the project, Howard Stein Hudson, and the Weston Select Board have opted to move forward with the two-way shared use path with virtually no substantive response to significant issues that have been raised by concerned residents. Concerns include:

- **No focus groups or specific outreach** to over 100 households and property owners along the corridor who are directly impacted by the project have ever been conducted. The Town has used focus groups to gather input and make decisions for the TIP project at Route 20 and Wellesley Street in Weston (project # 608940) that is currently moving toward 75% design, however no similar outreach has occurred for the Route 30 project.
- **The consultant has not conducted any noise studies** to measure impact to residents east of Oak Street where blasting and removal of considerable amounts of ledge adjacent to the Massachusetts Turnpike will be required to construct the shared use path.
- **No studies or evaluations have been conducted of the potential day-to-day usage of the shared use path.** This assessment is imperative to a cost-benefit analysis for a \$20 million project.
- Once the consultant settled on the current plan for the two-way shared use path in the fall of 2019, with minimal community input, there has been **no desire to seriously discuss design alternatives.** Meetings of the Town's Traffic and Sidewalk Committee where the Route 30 project was listed on the agenda were informational only in the sense that concerned residents were told, in a top-down fashion, of the decisions that had already been made without their input.

There are several viable design alternatives for providing improved bicycle facilities for the Route 30 Reconstruction project that would offer a significantly safer alternative to what is currently proposed.

**We urge the MPO to defer funding and programming in the FFY2025-2029 TIP of the Route 30 Reconstruction project in Weston until the design of the project – in particular, bicycle facilities and other project elements – reflect safe and equitable considerations that protect the users and residents of the Route 30 corridor in Weston.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Rebecca Mercuri	Lou Mercuri	Kayla Mercuri	Lenore Zug Lobel	David Robbins
Matt Lane	Jessica Moy	Jon Moy	James Dwinell III	Ellen Dwinell
Mohammed Hassan	Thamina Hassan	Constance Moore	Sheila Smallwood	Laurie Endlar Lee
Paul Davenport	Aviva Jeruchim	William Davenport	Joan Marion Parrish	Susan Zacharias
Jim Kappel	Nancy Kappel	Henry Fizer	Gabriel Fizer	Carol Fizer
Sarah Butera	Steve Butera	Artemis Willis	Nagy Mikael	Lillian Mikael
Michael Lee	Doreen Mirley	John Mirley	Victoria Huber	Tony Brooke
Alison Barlow	Janet K. Fronk	Michele Schuckel	John R. Barlow	Julia M. Barlow
Joan Kertis	Katherine A. Barlow	Barbara Gilman	Richard Gilman	Neil Diver
Katherine Diver	Frank Caine	Becky Ames	Paul Donahue	John McDonald
Janice Kaplan	Barbara Baker	Robert Froh	Richard Flynn	Laura Schiff Bean
Warren Pinckert	Beverly Watson	Steve Watson	Sheila Weinstock	Norman Weinstock
Linda Harding	John Harding	Barbara Bush Meissner	Cody Meissner	Natty MacArthur
Andi Shaw	Doug Shaw	Susan Schaefer	Christian Halby	Marty Broff
Jenifer Lipson	Freya Bernstein	Louis Grossman	Amy Gerson	Bruce Pastor
Richard Tedlow	Donna Staton	Barbara Bowen	Kathie Collman	Bob Collman
Nancy Lukitsh	Linda Davidson	Barry Davidson	Duncan Warden	Gail Warden
Margaret Ewald	Laraine Levy	Jeff Levy	Al Aydelott	Richard DiVito
Margaret Griner	Paul Griner	Tom Keery	Laura Keery	Gary Lee
Rachel Stewart	Janice Glynn	Rochelle Nemrow	John Sallay	Anne Sallay
Hugh Pearson	Gustav Christensen	Bette Pearson	Vivake Pearson	Paul Brontas

Richard Trant	Sherwin Greenblat	Joyce Flaherty	Richard K Babayan	Sonya Nersessian
Lawrence Lee	Nicole Lee	Alexandra Lee	Madeline Lee	Charlotte Lee
Averill Bromfield	Mary Bromfield	Jonathan Chase	Laura Dixon	Clarence Dixon
Doug Garron	Lorna Garron	Jennifer Garron	Amy Silverstein	Roxanne Ferreiro
Jack O'Donnell	Andrew Tamoney	Susan Tamoney	Elizabeth Messina	Mark Messina
Fernanda Bourlot	Barbara Fullerton	Burt Fullerton	Diana Chaplin	Nina Danforth
Clifford Abrecht	Michele Abrecht			

cc: Leon Gaumond, Town Manager/Select Board, Town of Weston  
Thomas Cullen, Director of Operations, Town of Weston  
Jason Lavoie, Town Engineer, Town of Weston  
Jay Doyle, Chair, Weston Traffic and Sidewalk Committee  
John McInerney, District Highway Director, District 6, MassDOT  
Stephanie Upson, Project Manager, MassDOT  
Alice Peisch, Representative, 14<sup>th</sup> Norfolk District

Message:

Hi,

The Rt. 9 intersection at Temple St. and Rt. 9 in Framingham (West Framingham) is an intersection iwth a grocery store, a CVS, a bank and many apartments and a university nearby. This intersection needs to be converted to a four way crosswalk to prevent hazardous conditions for pedestrians. Please do not put this off. There's a diagram that this committee created showing what is needed.

From: Kate MacLean, Framingham resident

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Message:

Hello,

Thank you for sharing this draft plan. Please continue to divest from highways and roads and invest in better transit and alternative modes of transportation and pedestrian safety. Our cities are already overbuilt for cars, and further investment needs to be made into alternatives and protecting our most vulnerable users.

From: Rufino Velazquez, Boston resident

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Message:

I am writing as a resident in full support of the two listed projects for the Town of Holliston, the Washington and Whitney intersection re-design and the Linden Street SRTS multi-use path. Both of these projects will result in significant improvements to safety and access for all road users to a degree not seen in many years.

Thank you,

Tina Hein

(Vice Chair, Select Board)

From: Christina Hein, Town of Holliston Select Board

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Message:

Please consider funding for the following projects to improve safe access in Holliston. Thanks.

Project 1 - Linden Street multi-use path improving an existing safe route to school and providing protected access for people who bike and walk from Washington Street to the Woodland Street school campuses and the rail trail.

Project 2 - Washington and Whitney Street intersection redesign to address conflict among all road users, including a trail crossing, commuting passenger vehicles and heavy industrial vehicles accessing the adjacent industrial park and transfer station.

From: Cynthia Listewnik, Fitchburg resident

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Message:

Hi Ethan,

I'm a resident of Weston for 27 years and I'm also a Builder / Developer in town.

That said, the proposed Route 30 roadway improvement and multi use walking / biking / running project will be a huge benefit to not only Weston residents but also to other surrounding towns and Massachusetts residents that use it daily for commuting along this 3.7 mile stretch. It will connect all towns from Wayland / Natick through Weston and Newton into Boston with a safe way for bikers, walkers and runners to use without the alternative, which is to use the existing very busy roadway for cars, trucks etc only.

Please approve the funding for this project asap and lets improve Massachusetts for all citizens.

From: Jonathan Buchman, Weston resident

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Message:

Mr. Ethan Lapointe -

We are opposed to additional funding for the design and engineering of a shared use bicycle path along Route 30 in Weston. There are no bikers on route 30. If people want to use bikes they should use the bike paths that they insisted on. The roads are for motor vehicles. END OF STORY!! Roads=cars/trucks. Bike Paths=bikes. We have cold and inclement weather 9 months a year and NO ONE is riding bikes. Stop the nonsense of these ridiculous bike lanes.

From: Anne & Paul Donahue, Weston residents

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Message:

Hello,

I wanted to write to you to express my support for the Rt 30 shared use path. I have a friend who lives in Weston right near where this path will be. We both enjoy riding bicycles, and if this path is completed we will be able to do more bike rides that start and/or end in Weston. That'll be pleasant for us, and will also be good for Weston, since we usually get some food and/or coffee before or after a bike ride, which will mean more business for local Weston businesses.

This path will also enable people to walk and bike more for transportation, which has huge health and happiness benefits, and helps the planet too.

I believe it is a vocal minority who oppose the path, and their arguments against it lack substance (they appear to consist mostly of nonsensical fear mongering and NIMBYism). I hope that construction of this shared use path, which will be such an asset, will not be blocked by these flimsy objections.

Thank you,

From: Ken Skudder, Weston Resident

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Message:

Dear Mr. Lapointe,

I'm very much in favor of the shared use path through Weston on Rt. 30. As a life-long 75-year-old resident, I've seen lots of changes over the years and know the value of good projects like this one that connect people in different neighborhoods and towns.

I live next to the Mass Central Rail Trail and take daily advantage of it, riding or walking for almost all of my errands, and to walk with friends. What a gift it is to have a safe way to be outdoors biking and walking rather than having to use a car!

I'm hoping the people along Rt 30 will know the same gift with the completion of their shared use path. The anonymous group, Focus on Weston, is spreading misinformation about the path that is reminiscent of the NIMBY fear that stopped the Rail Trail 25 years ago. May that not prevail at Town Meeting this time. Please know lots of us are working for the success of this project.

Onward!

From: Emily Hutcheson, Weston resident

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Message:

Dear Ethan,

I'm writing in strong support of the proposed shared use path on Rt 30 in Weston (Project File No. 608954). I'm a biker, runner, and walker for both transportation and recreation. (I'm 37. My husband and I live in Weston and don't have a car, so about 85% of our trips outside of the house are on foot or bicycle, 10% are via borrowing my parents' car, and 5% are public transportation.)

I strongly believe that we need to invest in accessible recreation/active transportation infrastructure in order to give people of all ages and abilities the ability to enjoy being outside and to get places. The shared use path would do this. I hear you may be getting a number of emails against the shared use path, many of them prompted by outreach by a shadowy/sketchy completely anonymous group called "Focus on Weston" that is spreading inaccurate information about the path. I believe more people in Weston are in favor of the path than against. (It's easier to get people riled up to be against something than to be for it.) I'm writing to you as someone who is strongly in favor of a shared use path (and the overall Rt 30 redesign.)

[Commenter provided a list of "pros" for the project including emissions reductions, ADA compliance, safety, and intersection design. Expressed some concern over tree removal, but noted that many of the trees were already dead and their removal for the purpose of the project was better than for single family housing.]

From: Marga Hutcheson, Weston resident

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Message:

An anonymous email went out to many Weston residents asking them to oppose the Route 30 reconstruction project. (The full text is below.) I would like to speak for the future users, over many generations, of a multi-use path along route 30.

Facts: Currently there is no safe way to ride or walk east-west from Wayland/Natick to Waltham/Newton. Route 117, Route 20 and Route 30 are all highly bike/pedestrian unfriendly with no end-to-end sidewalks or bike lanes. Only the most confident bike riders would ever attempt to ride one of these roads. There are no pedestrians using these roads today. Several inflammatory statements were made in the anonymous email (full text below):

The proposed design is specifically opposed by American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) This is not true. The proposed design requires massive removal of trees and relocation of historic stone walls

"massive removal" = about 50 healthy trees, while MADOT will be planting 2 trees for each removed. (In any case, the proponents seem to be ok with a 5' sidewalk, just not a 10' multi-use path. The 5' sidewalk would require the removal of about as many trees. The scope of the project changed from a sidewalk to

a shared use bicycle path. This is true. But it is in response to the new Complete Streets guidelines. The scale and design of the current proposal accommodates the requirements of Mass DOT, not the betterment, safety, or needs of our Town. This is a bike path to nowhere! This is not true. Newton is actively working on the Carriageway. The route 30 bridge across Rt 128 and the Charles is in process. Natick and Wayland have both hope to follow Newton's and Weston's lead.

Thank you,

From: Joel Angiolillo, Weston resident

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Message:

Dear Mr. LaPointe,

I am a Weston resident. My family moved to Weston in the mid 1970s, I became a Weston homeowner in 2004 and my parents now live with us. I have served on Weston's Conservation Commission since 2006, but I write to you today with my own separate opinion, not speaking on behalf of the commission.

I vehemently oppose the 2-way shared use path that is being proposed along Rte. 30. I oppose it for so many reasons, among them:

Weston thought we were initially voting on a 5 ft wide sidewalk, similar to what exists now. Weston should at least be given a chance "turn back the clock" and vote on what is actually being proposed. This stinks. It's a bait and switch (whether it was intentional or not). Weston did not vote to approve the project as proposed.

The approx 50 driveway crossings is ridiculous and is not safe for all of those homes, the bikers trying to cross, etc.

Cars travel at 45-50mph, a bike lane along that road, even if separated will make a mess of traffic, cars stopping suddenly if they can't get into their driveways, etc.

The earthworks for this project is ridiculous and will basically make it an ugly corridor running along the mass pike exposing so many homes, cars, bikers, to the massive, currently hidden highway.

The number of trees and walls needing to be removed is absurd. So much screening from the massive Mass Pike highway that Weston already has running though it will be lost.

The planned Rte 30 crossing (flip flopping the path from one side of Rte 30 to another) will be a mess with traffic.

The path will end in Natick, so far from anything. Who will use this??? Commuters to Boston?? That won't happen for so many months of the year, and really, that means you can't carpool, pick up kids or groceries. VERY impractical.

I'm all for biking, but this is absurd. This isn't a place where commuting by bike makes sense. It's not a true suburban space, it's rural.

I would still vote for a 5ft wide sidewalk for walkers and an occasional bike. But the proposed 10' bike lane will become a mini road for e-bikes, bikes with motors, and mopeds. This has already happened on other similar paths in Massachusetts, making them unsafe for walkers. Even if bikes with engines aren't allowed, how would this be policed??? It won't be policed, so it shouldn't be built.

Total costs are nowhere near close to being defined.

From: Alison Barlow, Weston resident

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Message:

Dear Ethan Lapointe,

Please accept this public comment concerning the "Intersection Improvements at Route 1 & University Avenue/Everett Street - 605857" project.

I am writing to support the MPO's recommendation to fund this project fully in FY2025 with a construction start date of the beginning of FY2026. This project has been pushed back several times, and I am happy to see that it will finally receive 100% of its funding next fiscal year rather than split the funding between FY2026 & FY2027 as was the plan in the current TIP.

Several of Norwood's largest employers are located on University Avenue and Everett Street. Several of them, including, but not limited to, Metropolitan Cabinets & Countertops, UPS, Amazon, MS Walker, MSI Boston, and Taylor New England, use the Route 1/University Avenue/Everett Street intersection dozens of times each day to access Route 1 and 95. The upgrade to the intersection will provide each company with significant improvement in shipping and receiving operations, significantly improving each company's operational efficiency.

Thank you for your time,

From: Joseph Collins, Norwood Economic Development Director

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Message:

I am in favor of the 2 Holliston projects. #1 Linden Street:

our children need safe access to the schools . Improvements are always needed and welcome.

#2- Whitney/Washington St will make that intersection safer for the trail crossing and vehicles in that area , and to have a clear direct safe and steady passage for commercial trucks and vehicles entering and exiting the Industrial Park.

From: Carol Bailey, Holliston resident

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Message:

Holliston- Intersection Improvements at Route 16 and Whitney Street [Design Only]

Is desperately needed to improve the safe flow of heavy commercial vehicle to and from the main entrance of Lowland Industrial Park at the intersection of Route 16 and Whitney - which services all businesses in the industrial zone. This improvement will assist in stopping heavy commercial cut-through truck traffic using a safe route to school woodland and redirect it to stay on Route 16 @ Whiney where the improvements will make it easier for this traffic to use.

HOLLISTON- LINDEN STREET IMPROVEMENTS AT ROBERT ADAMS MIDDLE SCHOOL (SRTS) - this is needed to improve the safety of this area. We have already had an altercation with a car and a student. Linden street is a multi - use road that bisects a safe routes to school.

From: Karen Apuzzo Langton, Holliston resident

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Message:

Re: Comments FY 2025 – 2029 TIP Project – Malden – Route 60 Improvement Project

Dear Chair Mohler and Members of the Boston MPO:

On behalf of the Malden City Council I am writing to call for the FY 2025 – 2029 TIP to include funds to redesign the vital Route 60 Corridor through Malden.

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 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. In terms of buses and bicycles, design funds will develop lay-outs to improve intersection operations and the installation a cycle track to connect the Northern Strand Trail to MBTA's Malden Station. New lay-outs will also provide better pedestrian connections along and across the corridor and help reconceive Route 60 as more of an urban boulevard than a 2 to 4-lane suburban highway.

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 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.

Sincerely

From: Stephen Winslow, Malden City Council President

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Message:

Hello,

I'm writing on behalf of the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA), whose mission is to protect and restore the Mystic River and its tributaries. Our vision is a healthy, vibrant, and resilient Mystic River Watershed for the benefit of all our community members. MyRWA works with residents to protect water quality, restore important habitats, build climate resilience, transform parks and paths, inspire youth and grow community. Our Mystic Greenways vision is bringing to reality a 25-mile, high-quality network of greenways for active transportation and recreation, enhanced climate resiliency, and improved physical and mental health outcomes for residents of our watershed and Commonwealth.

We are delighted that the Boston Region MPO has voted to fund Project #611982 – Medford– Shared-Use Path Connection at the Route 28/Wellington Underpass (\$5,509,294) in FFY25, which was previously funded under MassDOT's statewide highway program. The underpass, a project which is included in our greenways vision and one that we helped to spearhead in collaboration with DCR, MassDOT and the City of Medford, will provide a vital connection for the region's greenways and eliminate a dangerous at-grade crossing of State Route 28. Projects like this will help to reduce the region's reliance on single occupancy vehicles for everyday commuting needs.

Thank you for all your hard work for the region,

From: Karl Alexander, Greenways Program Manager, Mystic River Watershed Association

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Message:

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you because I have reservations concerning the Belmont Community project# 609204 proximity to the live MBTA Fitchburg Commuter rails. I believe the planned distance is 10.5 feet from the northern most rail. There have been so many changes to the specifications that who knows what to believe. The proposed fence(steel or titanium or whatever) could be cut with a diamond blade.

Yes, they sell them for hacksaws too in hardware stores.

Right now, the MBTA keeps the number of 'trespassers' to a minimum, keeping the home break ins, homes Invasions, assorted damage and home burglaries to a minimum.

What will happen when the machines that plow the tracks and the paths, pack the snow and ice against the fences and the accumulation fills in between the chain links and freezes, then bends the fence so heavily that the fence posts lean under the weight and snaps the fasteners that hold the chain links to the posts?

The town will do nothing.

What will happen when holes are cut by the trespassers(adults or students) seeking shortcuts across the live tracks because no one will walk 1/4 mile around to the tunnel when they can just short cut thru the fence?

The town will do nothing.

The Town has repeatedly stated they will not maintain this fence or any other part of the path. They will not patch the holes or repair any other damage.

The Windbrook public grammar school located north of the MBTA tracks graduates between 80 to 100 students per class, depending on the year. Most of them probably will travel south thru the proposed new tunnel to attend the new High school/Middle school each morning. An equal number could travel north in the afternoon. That could be as many as 700 students each way, for grades 6 thru 12, that is 1,400 trips more or less daily.

The CPPC has estimated as many 1000 users per day each way, East to West and West to East. That is another 2000 users daily.

The CPPC wish to make project# 609204 into a playground. They have not called it that yet. But, they will be encouraging our children to play up there by adding lights and benches. That technically makes it a park. When you increase the population(trespassers), you increase the crime and the accident rate.

On May 13, 2024, Boston news WCVB channel 5 reported the headline: "Two people dead after being hit by MBTA Commuter Rail train". This happened on the Framingham/Worcester line. Part of the article read "The tracks run parallel to a bicycle park for children.

Just thought I would give you a heads up!!!

Thank you and sincerely,

From: Paul Cobuzzi, Belmont resident

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Message:

The systemic lack of maintenance on MBTA trains and tracks is how it got into the disaster it is at the moment. The allocation of 0 dollars for maintenance in out years in this plan is a recipe for disaster. I know money is tight, but you must reallocate some money to maintenance.

From: Joel Schwartz, Newton resident

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Message:

Dear Ethan,

We are writing regarding the Route 30 Reconstruction Project (#608954) in Weston. In the draft 2025-2029 FFY TIP, the project is placed in the FFY 2027 budget year. In May 2023, as part of the TIP comment period, 110 residents signed a letter of concern regarding this project, with the primary concern being the proposed implementation of a two-way shared use path. In spite of our best efforts to engage the Town and its consultant on specific design alternatives to the proposed shared use path, the 25% design has not changed since the design direction was communicated in 2019. There has been little to no meaningful engagement to understand and fully consider design alternatives with the 100+ property owners who are directly impacted by the project.

In recent months statements have been made by Town officials and others familiar with the project, that the Route 30 Reconstruction will not be funded by MassDOT and the Boston MPO unless the two-way shared use path is included, as proposed, consistent with the 25% design submission.

To provide clarity on this topic, we respectfully ask for your guidance on the following questions:

Can you confirm or deny that funding for the Route 30 Reconstruction TIP project will be denied, and the project will be dropped by MassDOT, if the Town of Weston does not support the currently proposed two-way shared use path along the entire 3.7-mile length of Route 30 in Weston?

Is it true that no alternative options, such as separated bike lanes or single-direction shared use paths on each side of the road, will be considered or accepted for the project?

We look forward to hearing from you on this,

Sincerely,

From: Lou and Rebecca Mercuri, Weston residents

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Message:

To Mr. Ethan LaPointe,

Regarding Project #609204 Proposed Belmont Community Path

I am writing to express serious concerns regarding Project #609204 the proposed Belmont Community Path. The extremely pertinent backstory is that the town of Belmont hired The Pare Corporation to conduct a feasibility study to decipher the best route of the path. The Southside of the train tracks was the selected route by the unbiased professional corporation tasked with deciding the best placement. Additionally, abutters to this proposed Path have raised countless concerns and vehemently opposed this path being placed on the north side of the tracks behind their homes. Also countless neighborhood residents submitted letters of opposition in 2021 when previous comment periods were open. However, the town of Belmont has continuously disregarded the independent expert findings of the Pare Corporation, the objections of the abutters, and disapproval of members of the neighborhood and have forced the selected path route on the north side of the tracks. This project should not be funded as currently proposed on the north side. Please allow the impartial and rightfully sought after route of this

path to be placed on the south side of the tracks or on another route as many other routes have been proposed. If the town continues to improperly fight for the less feasible option, contrasting the very experts they paid to decide the best route, please do not fund this. The north side is not the right side.

Other pertinent factors are that the abutters were promised on multiple occasions to have a say in the fencing between their homes and the Path. There was even an advertised abutters walk in April 2024 for feedback from the neighborhood on their desired fencing. Now it seems to have all been for show, as a four foot post and rail fence dividing this path from homes has somehow been decided. The very people who will be forced to live with thousands of people traveling directly behind their homes have been misled on multiple occasions. This project is expected to be funded by MassDot- how can a project that has so much opposition and contradictions to expert findings be funded? There has been zero accountability within this project. Please consider how unfair and wrong this is.

A last Point so that you are fully aware of a grave fault in the current proposed Path is that there is a building standing in the way of the North side route of the path. Safety guidelines require a minimum amount of feet between the live railroad tracks and the path. The occupied building makes it so that the required bare minimum distance of necessary separation does not seem achievable given the minimum path width. Pedestrian safety should be of the utmost concern to everyone. How could the proposed path be placed here. Not having the minimum square footage separating the live rail and the path is a direct violation of known laws and rules meant to keep people safe. This route appears inoperable for a path. Also abutters should not be misled, the serious lack of accountability is obvious.

Building the path on the expert decided south side of the tracks solves these concerns. The feasibility study has been paid for and is complete. The clear and concise findings are in writing and there is no way to deny what the legitimate answer is- this path should have been presented to MassDot on another route- not the north side. Please do not fund this deceptive project until honesty and transparency prevail. All paths lead to not placing this path on the north side of the tracks given the safety concerns and the objections of abutters. How and why have all these issues been completely ignored?

Thank you,

From: Belmont resident

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Message:

Re: Comments FY 2025-2029 TIP

Project – Malden – Route 60 Improvement Project

Dear Chair Mohler and Members of the Boston MPO:

It has come to my attention that funds have been shifted away from the redesign of the Route 60 Corridor here in Malden. I have seen that Malden has invested in beautifying and creating safe spaces for its locals in recent years. Does this not include Route 60? I have attended town hall meetings here in my hometown. I know Route 60 is a pain point, so why doesn't the city move forward with its plans for welcoming town structures and roads? As a mother, I am concerned the city isn't taking enough action for my son's safety especially when I expected one thing and there are now plans to alter course. Please do not remove funds from the redesign of Route 60 Corridor or help me understand what is more important and why you have changed your mind.

Let's keep and include the funds for the Route 60 Corridor redesign in FY 2025 -2029 if not for you, for my son. He can't drive a car. He's still a pedestrian.

Sincerely,

From: Allison Gardiner Durak, Malden resident