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Massachusetts 2026 Air Monitoring Network Plan Response to Comments

June 24, 2026

MassDEP operates a network of 26 ambient air quality monitoring stations at locations across the Commonwealth as part of a comprehensive program to provide information about air quality to the public and to determine compliance with National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Each year, MassDEP is required to submit to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) an Air Monitoring Network Plan in accordance with Title 40 CFR Part 58.10. On March 6, 2026, MassDEP published a draft 2026 Network Plan for a 30-day public comment period that closed on April 6, 2026. MassDEP received comments on the draft Plan from EPA, citizens and local organizations. MassDEP has summarized and responded to the comments below.

1. **Comment (EPA):** Page 6, Table 1: Table 1 omits the 1971 secondary 3-hour SO₂ National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) at a level of 0.5 parts per million (ppm), not to be exceeded more than once per year. The 2024 rulemaking added a new secondary annual SO₂ NAAQS in 40 CFR Part 50 without altering the 1971 secondary 3-hour SO₂ NAAQS, which remains in effect. Please add the 1971 secondary 3-hour SO₂ NAAQS to Table 1.

Response: MassDEP added the 1971 secondary 3-hour SO₂ NAAQS to Table 1.

2. **Comment (EPA):** Page 7, section 1.1 Ozone (O₃); page 9, section 1.2 Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂); page 10, section 1.3 Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂); page 13, section 1.5 Particulate Matter (PM); page 19, 2.1 Total Reactive Nitrogen (NO_y): We acknowledge the planned move of monitoring for ozone, SO₂, nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), total reactive nitrogen, inhalable particles (PM₁₀), and fine inhalable particles (PM_{2.5}) from the Ware MA air monitoring station (25-015-4002) to a new air monitoring station (25-015-4003) at Belchertown MA. Please indicate whether you also plan to move meteorological equipment to the Belchertown site.

Response: MassDEP plans to move the meteorological equipment to the new Belchertown site. MassDEP added the underlined language in sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.1, and 5, “MassDEP is in the process of moving meteorological equipment and the O₃, SO₂, NO₂, NO_y, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} monitors at the Ware (25-015-4002) monitoring station to a new location in Belchertown (25-015-4003).”

3. **Comment (EPA):** Page 14, Continuous PM_{2.5} Monitors: We acknowledge the establishment of a new air monitoring station in Saugus (25-009-2007) that includes a PM_{2.5} monitor.

Response: MassDEP has begun submitting data from the Saugus monitor to EPA’s Air Quality System (AQS) for comparison to the NAAQS.

4. **Comment (EPA):** Page 16, PM_{2.5} Collocated Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC) Sampling Procedures: We acknowledge that in June 2025, EPA approved a waiver of collocation distance requirements at the Boston – Roxbury monitoring station due to the unique configuration of the PM samplers at the site.

Response: MassDEP will continue to operate the collocated samplers in accordance with the approved waiver.

5. **Comment (EPA):** Page 17, Ultrafine Particulate Monitoring: We acknowledge that MassDEP added four continuous ultrafine particulate matter (PM_{0.1}) monitors to enhance ambient air monitoring, although not a requirement under 40 CFR part 58.

Response: MassDEP has begun submitting data from the PM_{0.1} monitors to EPA’s AQS.

6. **Comment (EPA):** Page 18, PM_{coarse}: MassDEP should adjust the text in this section to indicate that PM_{coarse} measurement will be moved from Ware (25-015-4002) to Belchertown, because MassDEP plans to move all related equipment (i.e., instrumentation to monitor PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀).

Response: MassDEP added the following statement to the PM_{coarse} summary on Page 18, “MassDEP is in the process of moving T640x monitor at the Ware (25-015-4002) monitoring station to a new location in Belchertown (25-015-4003).”

7. **Comment (EPA):** Page 20, Text and Table 14: We acknowledge that MassDEP established a new air monitoring station in Saugus (25-009-2007) that includes a black carbon monitor to enhance ambient air monitoring, although not a requirement under 40 CFR part 58.

Response: MassDEP has begun submitting data from the Saugus monitor to EPA's AQS.

8. **Comment (EPA):** Pages 20-21, Enhanced Monitoring in Disadvantaged Communities: We acknowledge your efforts described under “Enhanced Monitoring in Disadvantaged Communities,” although EPA notes that these activities are not a requirement under 40 CFR part 58. Specifically, we acknowledge the establishment of monitoring stations in 2025 for PM_{2.5} and black carbon in Framingham (25-017-0011) and for PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and black carbon in Saugus (25-009-2007). In addition, we acknowledge the beginning of MassDEP’s third phase of its PM_{2.5} air sensor grant program, and MassDEP’s plans to install and begin operation of advanced air sensors at four locations in East Boston to monitor outdoor air quality over the next two years starting in 2026.

Response: MassDEP continues to prioritize air monitoring in disadvantaged communities through regulatory monitors and air sensors.

9. **Comment (EPA):** Page 21, Summary of Recent and Proposed Network Changes: We note and acknowledge the following as your “Summary of Recent and Proposed Network Changes,” as reported by MassDEP in the summary.

The following are recent and planned changes to the air monitoring network:

- In November 2025, MassDEP established a PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and black carbon monitoring station in Saugus (25-009-2007).
- MassDEP is in the process of moving the O₃, SO₂, NO₂, NO_y, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} monitors at the Ware (25-015-4002) monitoring station to a new location in Belchertown (25-015-4003). The new Belchertown air monitoring site is about 1.6 miles away from the Ware location and will continue to serve as a rural monitoring station but is more accessible than the Ware location. MassDEP is working with the utility company to complete the final step of bringing power to the new location.

Response: MassDEP appreciates EPA’s comments.

10. **Comment (EPA):** EPA provided funding to MassDEP to establish a new air monitoring station, at which the Commonwealth will measure and report PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and black carbon. MassDEP should indicate the status of that effort in the final monitoring plan.

Response: MassDEP added the following status summary in Section 4, “MassDEP allocated a portion of EPA grant funding, awarded under Section 60105(a)(b) of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), to establish an air monitoring station in a disadvantaged community. This site will monitor PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and black carbon. In consultation with

MassDEP's Environmental Justice (EJ) Director, MassDEP is evaluating potential locations within disadvantaged communities where the new monitoring station could be sited, with a target operational date of 2029."

11. Comment (EPA): Pages 22 through 35, Attachment 1: Monitoring Site Descriptions

- a. Page 31, Saugus (25-009-2007): The Saugus site was established on November 11, 2025. Please correct the "Year Established" date listed in the site table.
- b. Page 33, Ware (25-015-4002): We suggest that you note the planned move of the air monitors from this location to a new station 1.6 miles away in Belchertown.

Response: MassDEP changed the "Year Established" to 2025 and added the following language to the Ware section, "MassDEP is in the process of moving all monitors and equipment to a new location in Belchertown (25-015-4003). The new location is about 1.6 miles away from the Ware site. MassDEP is working with the utility company to complete the final step of bringing power to the new location."

12. Comment (Falmouth Board of Health): Along with an active citizens group, the Falmouth Board of Health has concerns regarding air quality impacts resulting from the daily operation of the Steamship Authority (SSA) terminal in Woods Hole. The SSA operates multiple aging vessels making at least 20 round trips daily during summer months. Based on testimonials and data provided by the citizens group, as well as our own observations, the frequent ferry traffic, particularly the restarting of engines to depart the terminal, results in visible smoke (likely exceeding opacity limitations) and residual particulate on local household surfaces. Many residents do not open windows and stay indoors in the summer based on wind direction.

Publicly-available research documents that inefficient diesel fuel combustion by ferry vessels can be a significant source of emissions, including SO_x, NO_x, PM_{2.5} and ultrafine particulate, CO₂, PAHs, and volatiles (e.g., benzene, formaldehyde). The citizens group recently purchased multiple Purple Air Monitors to begin quantifying impacts to air quality; however, the limitations of this type of citizen-based data collection are acknowledged.

The MassDEP monitoring stations described in the Draft 2026 Air Monitoring Network Plan (Draft AMN Plan) are located in Fairhaven and Aquinnah, and would not be expected to provide valuable data regarding air quality associated with the SSA ferries. The Draft AMN Plan proposes relocation of at least one monitoring station in the coming year. As a result, we are requesting consideration of Woods Hole as a new monitoring station location pursuant to the objectives listed in Appendix D of CFR Title 40, Chapter I, Subchapter C to identify and monitor:

(c) Sites located to determine the impact of significant sources or source categories on air quality.

(e) Sites located to determine the extent of regional pollutant transport among populated areas; and in support of secondary standards.

Response: MassDEP's monitoring stations are meant to be permanent and only are relocated out of necessity (e.g., loss of access to existing location or other changes necessitating a change). MassDEP does not have the resources to establish a new monitoring station in Woods Hole. However, in January 2026, MassDEP provided five PurpleAir sensors to the Falmouth Health Department that are in addition to the sensors local residents purchased to monitor air quality near the Ferry Terminal.

13. **Comment** (Walt Thompson): Newburyport sits at the hinge of heavily traveled I 95 and I 495. Newburyport absorbs roughly half a million visitors a year. Yet there is no area level air quality monitoring.

The state's own site lists monitors in Boston, Lynn, Haverhill, Chelmsford, Fall River, Springfield, Worcester, and a scattering of rural stations. Nothing in or near the lower Merrimack estuary.

Nothing in a city with heavy seasonal traffic, persistent congestion and a regional tourism load that would justify basic environmental surveillance.

So the question stands. Why is there no monitoring here?

Response: MassDEP's monitoring network is designed primarily to determine statewide compliance with EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria pollutants and resource limitations prevent the siting of monitoring stations in every community impacted by congested traffic and transportation pollution. The data generated by the existing air monitoring stations in Haverhill and Chelmsford are considered representative of ambient conditions in the surrounding areas. These monitoring stations show that criteria pollutants monitored are well below the respective NAAQS. MassDEP continues to support local air quality assessment through its community-based air sensor grant program, which enables communities to measure PM_{2.5} pollution in their local area. MassDEP announced its third PM_{2.5} air sensor grant in October 2025 and continues to provide up to 5 sensors to eligible tribal organizations, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, and municipalities. More information is available at the [MassDEP Air Sensor Grant webpage](#).

14. **Comment** (Nicholas Rodenhouse): I am a member of the Open Space Committee, Sherborn, MA and hence interested in environmental factors that potentially affect the wildlife, plants and residents of our town. Air quality is one of those factors. The comments below, however, are mine and have not been reviewed or approved by the Open Space Committee.

The plan is described as "a comprehensive program to collect and provide information about air quality to the public," so I have reviewed the plan with this goal in mind.

The key points I would like to make are these.

- 1) The plan does not seem scientifically designed to represent air quality throughout the Commonwealth. Sampling sites seem to have been placed randomly. For example, the station in Framingham is identified as a sampling site that will be used to assess population exposure, but this will only occur if the wind is from the northwest, as the sampling site is in the southeast corner of the town. In addition, many residents of the state live within the I95 loop around Boston, but sampling locations that might indicate air quality in this area are concentrated within the city near the harbor, and hence are confounded by emissions from the city. Consequently, they are not representative of nearly all of the area inside the I95 loop yet outside of downtown Boston.
- 2) It is not clear in the text or from Table 1 that peaks in air pollution will be captured, because the shortest averaging time is 24 hours. Peaks in air pollution can be dangerous to humans, wildlife and plants.
- 3) Although the Commonwealth is obligated to meet federal standards, there is to my knowledge no prohibition to exceeding those standards, e.g., by sampling in a way that identifies the magnitude and duration of peaks in pollutants.
- 4) No mention is made of analytical methods that will be used to spatially integrate the data such that locations distant from sampling sites have at least some information about air quality in their town. Confidence in air quality degrades with distance from the sampling location, so some measure of confidence in the accuracy of estimates should be provided.
- 5) No mention is made of citizen science contributions to monitoring air quality in the Commonwealth or integration of the Commonwealth's data with such programs as the Air Resource Management Program of the US Forest Service.
- 6) A laudable statement on page 20 is that, "The data collected by these sensors will increase public understanding of air quality including in disadvantaged communities." However, no mention is made about how the data might be summarized for the average citizen or made available to them.

My recommendations

- 1) Expand the number of sampling locations by incentivizing citizen science that includes training, data quality monitoring and a time commitment in years.
- 2) Use a scientifically credible sampling design for assessing air quality. Such a design would have sampling stations representative of where most Commonwealth residents live.
- 3) An alternative to expanding the number of sampling sites operated by the Commonwealth would be to fold in air quality measures made by federal agencies, e.g., US Forest service and NASA. Near real time data is available from NASA for aerosols, CO, dust, Nitric acid, nitrous oxide, ozone and sulfur dioxide. However, the relevance of satellite data to surface estimates is not always clear and the period over which measurements have been made is short, e.g., since 2019.
- 4) Develop and promulgate plans for making air quality data available to the public. Summarize the data so that all can understand why the findings and why these data are important. Doing this will at a minimum justify the cost of air quality monitoring.

Response: MassDEP supports citizen science projects through the [Air Sensor Grant Program](#), and by providing recipients with technical guidance. MassDEP's monitoring network is designed primarily to determine statewide compliance with EPA's NAAQS for criteria pollutants and resource limitations prevent siting monitoring stations in every community. MassDEP evaluates air monitoring site locations based on EPA's Network Design Criteria for Ambient Air Quality Monitoring, the physical and logistical constraints associated with EPA's Siting Criteria for Ambient Air Quality Monitoring, and consideration of public comments. MassDEP follows EPA siting criteria, measurement methods, data verification and validation guidance, and strict quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) activities. Air quality data collected by US Forest Service and NASA is useful and is reviewed by MassDEP as needed but cannot easily be integrated into MassDEP's air quality data systems. MassDEP makes air quality data available to the public by posting near-real time air monitoring data on its [MassAir Online](#) website and it also publishes annual air quality data summaries on the [Massachusetts Annual Air Quality Reports webpage](#).

15. **Comment** (Niouma Semega): As a public health researcher based in Massachusetts, I write to urge MassDEP to strengthen the network in three areas that I believe are critical to protecting public health across the Commonwealth.

Expand monitoring to more communities.

A network of 26 stations across 21 communities is a meaningful foundation, but it leaves significant geographic gaps particularly in smaller cities and rural areas where industrial activity, traffic corridors, and other emission sources may be affecting residents without detection. I urge MassDEP to prioritize expanding the number of monitoring sites, particularly in underserved areas with limited existing data.

Prioritize environmental justice communities.

The communities most exposed to air pollution are often those least represented in monitoring networks. In Massachusetts, many environmental justice communities including neighborhoods in Roxbury, Chelsea, Brockton, and Springfield bear disproportionate pollution burdens. Robust, continuous monitoring in these communities is not just a technical question; it is a matter of equity. I strongly encourage MassDEP to use environmental justice designations as an explicit criterion when citing new or expanded monitoring stations.

Expand the range of pollutants monitored.

Emerging evidence on PFAS, fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) from specific source types, and air toxics associated with industrial facilities suggests that current standard monitoring parameters may not fully capture the health risks residents face. I urge MassDEP to explore adding pollutants of emerging concern to the monitoring network, in coordination with EPA guidance and the latest public health science.

Response: MassDEP has prioritized siting air monitoring stations in disadvantaged communities. While resource constraints currently limit the addition of permanent monitors in every impacted area, MassDEP evaluates its air monitoring network every year and considers expanded monitoring as funding becomes available. Currently MassDEP's network includes 21 PM_{2.5} monitors, and MassDEP also provides PM_{2.5} sensors through its [Air Sensor Grant Program](#). MassDEP also monitors ultrafine particulates (UFPs) in Chelmsford, Boston-Chinatown, Boston-Dorchester, and Springfield. Additionally, MassDEP participates in EPA's National Air Toxics Trends Station (NATTS) program to track air toxics at the Boston-Roxbury site and also collects the volatile organic compound (VOC) component of toxics data in Chelsea, Lynn, and Weymouth. In November 2025, MassDEP launched a [VOC Monitoring Data dashboard](#) to display VOC data from all four locations.

16. **Comment** (Conservation Law Foundation (CLF)): We support MassDEP's plan to install advanced air sensors at four locations in East Boston to monitor outdoor air quality over the next two years, with operation to begin in 2026, given this neighborhood's proximity to Logan Airport and industrial sites. MassDEP should add additional monitors in

communities like Roxbury, Brockton, Lawrence, and Springfield where communities bear the brunt of decades of air pollution, compounded by other cumulative burdens. These monitors should ideally measure multiple pollutants, including PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, UFPs, volatile organic compounds (“VOC”), O₃, CO, SO₂, NO_x, and black carbon. Adding multi-pollutant monitoring stations to these communities and gaining precise data is fundamentally important to the Commonwealth’s public health and safety. This precise data can also help decisionmakers understand the best ways to mitigate specific hot spots of this dangerous pollution – something EJ communities have long asked for.

Response: MassDEP operates air monitoring stations in Roxbury, Brockton and Springfield, recently added air monitoring stations in disadvantaged communities in Framingham and Saugus, and is supporting the use of air sensors to enhance and broaden monitoring coverage. MassDEP does not have the resources to establish multipollutant monitoring stations in all communities at this time; however, as new resources become available, MassDEP will evaluate opportunities to add monitoring equipment and expand coverage in future Network Plans.

17. **Comment (CLF):** We are pleased that in November 2025 MassDEP established a PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and black carbon monitoring station in Saugus. However, we continue to recommend that Lawrence receive a UFP and black carbon monitor. Lawrence is a community with significant EJ populations: 100% of Lawrence is mapped for EJ population criteria, and 79.9% of the city’s residents speak a language other than English at home. Lawrence experiences significant tailpipe pollution due to Interstate 495 and Massachusetts Route 28. While Framingham is an EJ community in need of monitoring, we recommend that Lawrence also receive priority for the siting of a UFP and black carbon monitor Massachusetts.

Response: MassDEP remains committed to enhancing our network; however, we do not have the resources to establish a new monitoring station in Lawrence at this time. We will continue to explore new technology and opportunities to expand our monitoring capabilities within our available budget.

18. **Comment (CLF):** MassDEP has announced and begun to roll out a Multi-Pollutant Sensor Pilot Program of 40 black carbon sensors and fifty multi-pollutant sensors across EJ communities to track high levels of pollutants from truck traffic and other transportation pollutants. We recommend MassDEP prioritize Roxbury, Springfield, New Bedford, and Brockton, with EJ populations representing between 78.9%, and 100% of local residents. New Bedford, Amherst, Framingham, and Randolph are all also communities with significant EJ populations, ranging from approximately 79 – 100% of the population living in EJ block groups.

Regarding the Commonwealth's special relationship with American Indians, we recommend that these tribal governments and EJ populations should also take priority. As Massachusetts' oldest urban Indian organization, the North American Indian Center of Boston should take priority in this pilot program.

Rural communities like Dudley and Becket, both of which have EJ populations, should also receive consideration in this program.

Response: MassDEP is committed to deploying advanced air sensors in disadvantaged communities to address local air quality concerns. We are currently deploying sensors in East Boston and will consider the areas recommended in the comments for future sensor projects.

19. **Comment (CLF):** We encourage MassDEP to add additional monitors in congested areas and operate them such that they monitor for all pollutant parameters associated with transportation pollution. This includes PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, VOCs, O₃, NO_x, CO, SO₂, black carbon, and UFPs. MassDEP should deploy UFP monitoring and expand NO_x and black carbon monitoring. MassDEP should work to secure federal and/or state funding for new monitoring stations for UFPs. MassDEP should also prioritize adding the capacity to test for all pollutants associated with nearby industrial emissions and tailpipe pollution, including PM₁₀, VOCs, O₃, NO_x, CO, SO₂, black carbon, and UFPs, to all air quality monitoring stations in the network that are proximate to EJ populations.

Response: MassDEP remains committed expanding its air monitoring capabilities in disadvantaged areas and utilizes air sensors to enhance and broaden monitoring coverage, particularly in underserved communities. Resource limitations prevent the addition of new permanent monitors in all communities impacted by congested traffic and transportation pollution; however, as new resources become available, MassDEP will evaluate opportunities to add monitoring equipment and expand coverage in future Network Plans.

20. **Comment (CLF):** We are pleased that MassDEP announced the third phase of its PM_{2.5} air sensor grant program to provide tribal organizations, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, and municipalities up to five "PurpleAir" sensors at no cost. As stated above, PM_{2.5} will be particularly important for continuous monitoring as such pollution remains an issue for non-combustion vehicles. For ensuring transparency and enabling knowledge of the network, we ask MassDEP to continue to publish the progress made on deploying sensors, as well as any subsequent lists of awardees for this grant. We further recommend that MassDEP again conduct outreach to EJ communities

that have not received PurpleAir sensors and ensure that communities have access to up-to-date information on how to apply for additional sensors.

Response: A summary of the sensor grantees and number of sensors deployed to date is provided in Attachment 1. As the data show, some grantees did not end up deploying the sensors they received. This is due to various reasons (e.g., grantee staff turnover, difficulty finding sensors hosts, shifting priorities). In cases where grantees do not deploy sensors MassDEP asks grantees to return the sensors so they can be used for future sensor grants. MassDEP has promoted the grant program in disadvantaged communities and worked closely with grantees by providing technical guidance and support throughout the process. The most up-to-date information on how to apply for additional sensors is available at the [Air Sensor Grant Program](#) webpage.

21. **Comment (CLF):** MassDEP should correct any inoperable monitors and sensors. MassDEP should devise an annual schedule for performing quality assessment checks on all operating monitors. MassDEP should publish the results of these checks in its Annual Air Quality Reports. This report should include any plans for addressing substandard monitor performance. In the latest Massachusetts 2024 Air Quality Report, published in June 2025, the section entitled “Quality Assurance and Quality Control” provides a general overview of standard procedures for quality assurance but does not include any data. MassDEP should include up-to-date information in the same section of next year’s report.

Response: MassDEP implements a rigorous maintenance program at all air monitoring stations, carried out by trained staff in accordance with an EPA-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). This includes automated quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) checks for gas analyzers, specifically ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and sulfur dioxide (SO₂), to evaluate instrument precision and bias every three days. EPA provides summary reports of these precision and bias assessments on their [Single Point Precision and Bias Report](#) webpage. Additional QA/QC checks include routine equipment performance audits following EPA and manufacturer specifications, daily data quality review to detect potential equipment issues, and coordinated responses to address any signs of malfunction or compromised data quality. These QA/QC activities maintain consistent operation according to EPA specifications and minimize downtime throughout the monitoring network. MassDEP also supports communities that have received sensors to ensure proper operation. While these sensors offer a low-cost monitoring option, they are less durable than regulatory-grade equipment and have a limited life expectancy.

22. **Comment (CLF):** MassDEP should coordinate with MassDOT to plan for future monitors based on plans for future changes to infrastructure. As MassDOT evolves and decarbonizes the transportation sector to meet our climate targets, MassDEP should work closely with MassDOT through all available channels to plan for locations of future monitor siting. Although combustion vehicle use will likely decrease in the future, combustion vehicles will continue to be used for the foreseeable future, and electric vehicles still place communities at risk for exposure to particulate matter of various kinds. Since many of MassDOT's future plans will inevitably revolve around vehicles driving through our network—and even further siting infrastructure to support electrification—vigilant monitoring of air in EJ communities will be essential for ending the generational cycle of EJ communities suffering from pollution as the Commonwealth strives to transition away from fossil fuels. We support MassDEP's deployment of UFP monitors at four air monitoring stations in high traffic areas and encourage MassDEP to continue to consider transportation infrastructure plans into the design of its monitoring network and sensor programs.

Response: High-traffic areas are a consideration when selecting locations for air monitoring stations and air sensors. MassDEP operates two EPA-designated near-road monitoring stations and has deployed several monitoring stations and sensors in urban areas with typically higher traffic volumes. Moving forward, MassDEP will continue to consider transportation infrastructure plans into the design of its monitoring network and sensor programs.

23. **Comment (CLF):** MassDEP should increase its community engagement, including enhanced engagement with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council. MassDEP's Director of Environmental Justice, Deneen Simpson, has added tremendous capacity to DEP's EJ outreach efforts. We hope that DEP can provide the EJ outreach office with more staff and resources, as this work is crucial, and without proper staffing will result in communities being left behind or overlooked. We urge MassDEP to continue to coordinate with stakeholders in communities that currently have, or will have, monitoring stations. The process of submitting formal commentary is an important aspect of ongoing agency work. However, MassDEP should frequently engage directly with these communities to remove the barrier of the formal commentary process that many people cannot engage in due to a lack of awareness, lack of technical resources, or language differences. MassDEP should also enhance the accessibility of data collected from the entire air monitor network, ensuring that communities can participate in the process of using the data collected to continue to advocate for change. Finally, we recommend that MassDEP continue to enhance its engagement with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council established pursuant to An Act Creating a Next-Generation Roadmap for

Massachusetts Climate Policy and Executive Order 552 to determine appropriate monitoring locations. This includes mobile and stationary monitors that are located in communities disproportionately burdened by transportation infrastructure. We urge MassDEP to convene an air quality technical advisory committee composed of air monitoring experts and environmental justice community experts to identify additional air monitoring locations for UFPs. We strongly recommend that the proposed 2026 air monitoring plan include baseline air quality conditions and suggestions for reducing and mitigating air pollution in pollution corridors and hotspots by 2030.

Response: MassDEP engages with communities frequently through the Air Sensor Grant Program, Air Sensor Pilot Program, and other air monitoring projects. MassDEP's air monitoring staff work directly with communities, including those in underserved areas, to support air sensor projects and offer expertise. To further strengthen this commitment, MassDEP has added staff positions dedicated to community monitoring and collaborates with its Director of Environmental Justice to ensure inclusive stakeholder engagement and seeks input from disadvantaged community advocates, including the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, on its air quality monitoring plans. This includes significant engagement campaigns like those undertaken in Framingham and Saugus prior to establishing air monitoring stations in those communities. Air monitoring staff participate in panel discussions, public meetings, work groups comprised of government and community leaders, and meetings with community groups concerned about their local air quality. MassDEP is developing public-friendly data tools to enhance data accessibility through online dashboards. Communities can continue to direct questions about air monitoring, air sensors, dashboards, and monitoring data to Allison Langone at allison.m.langone@mass.gov.

Attachment 1**2025 Sensor Grant**

Grant Recipient	Sensors Granted	Sensors Deployed To Date
Salem Alliance for the Environment Inc. (SAFE)	5	0
Town of Rockport	5	5
Quabbin Health District	3	3
Town of Townsend	4	0
Town of Blackstone BOH	5	4
Town of Lenox	5	5
Falmouth Health Department	5	3
Cuttyhunk Steam Academy, Inc.	5	1
City of Melrose - Health & Human Services Dept	5	0
Southwick	3	3
Town of Wakefield Health and Human Services	5	0
Salem Public Schools	5	4
City of Medford	5	5
Town of Williamstown	5	4
City of Worcester Division of Public Health	5	4
Town of Dalton, Clean Air Committee	5	5
Town of Deerfield	4	1
North Shore Community Development Coalition	5	0
Eastern Hampden Shared Public Health Services	5	1
Town of Tisbury	5	0
City of Attleboro Health Department	3	2
Hudson Health Department	5	5
Town of Amherst Public Health Department	5	0
City of Quincy	5	0
North Parish of North Andover	5	0
Town of Ashland	5	0
Sheffield Board of Health	5	0