

Appendix C – Public Correspondence

Van Kacoyannakis

From: Sheila McElwaine <sheila.mcelwaine@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2018 11:14 AM
To: Clark, Michael (DOT)
Subject: Correction: Elevator connecting to skybridge over Railroad Tracks in Springfield

In the report which reviews options for the I-91 viaduct in Springfield, I note the following:

"It should be noted that this ramp system does include an exterior elevator system; however, the elevator, although recently repaired, has been inoperable for several years and requires significant maintenance."

This statement is incorrect and should be updated. In fact, this elevator has been working during warm weather months, as was intended, since 2013 when the City, under pressure from the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, finally repaired it.

Please correct this statement.

Thank you very much.

Sheila McElwaine

From: Dave Broer [<mailto:dbroer@lincon.com>]
Sent: Thursday, October 4, 2018 11:53 AM
To: Clark, Michael (DOT) <Michael.Clark@dot.state.ma.us>
Subject: I-91 Viaduct Replacement Study

Hello,

I commute to Springfield on a daily basis and I wanted to comment about the I-91 Viaduct Replacement Study conclusions. I believe that the conclusion to do nothing but recommend some remediation due to the fact that the railroad tracks will not be relocating is short-sighted at best. Doing nothing leaves the existing infrastructure in place and provides none of the improvements that replacing the viaduct would bring. Regardless of where the railroad tracks are, the city and the region would benefit from having the additional developable land that would be created if the viaduct was removed, not to mention improved traffic flow through the area.

To me, the location of the railroad tracks is separate phase or transaction that has no impact on I-91 and using that as a reason why the I-91 viaduct and all the other benefits from it's replacement makes no sense. Doing nothing but mitigation projects between now and the 2040's when this will inevitably need to be reviewed again will only increase the price tag of any future project. This will only increase the likelihood that the viaduct will remain forever because the conclusion then would probably be the same.

In my opinion, we need to do the right thing now. Make the recommendation for either alternative 1 or 2, reap the benefits as outlined in the report and recommend a separate study for the railroad tracks that all options could be considered.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

David Broer
4 Clinton Street
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

October 4, 2018

Office of Transportation Planning
Attn: Michael Clark
10 Park Plaza, Suite #4150
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Clark

RE: I-91 Viaduct Study Massachusetts Department of Transportation

We appreciate the opportunity to file formal comments on the above captioned I-91 Viaduct Study. These comments are made on behalf of the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council (EDC). The EDC is a membership based organization committed to stimulating and facilitating a vigorous regional economy, encouraging and sustaining capital investment and quality job growth. (Attached is the current list of members).

Over the last three years, the EDC has been actively involved in the long range planning process MassDOT facilitated. Attorney Paul Nicolai, who chairs our Infrastructure Committee and is a member of our Board of Directors, has been a faithful member of the working group, attending 11 working group meetings and a number of additional public meetings. EDC has been a good partner with MassDOT on this and many other initiatives. In this case we worked through a number of options for the future of the viaduct, publically supporting the process and organizing the local mayors to support a preferred alternative. (Mayor's letter attached). In fact, our support of this project pre-dated the formation of the study. Our infrastructure committee's initial support of a study on the future of I-91 began before the funds to make the current repair were even available.

The EDC and the mayors of all the communities adjacent to I-91 support alternative #2 after considering the alternates. We and our mayors have always been aware that alternative #2 is not the cheapest option. From the perspective of the economic and political leaders of the Pioneer Valley, it is the best option because it not only solves the problems associated with the structure and location of the highway but also is a strong and reasonable investment in our region's economic future.

The cost of this option is about \$3.5 billion in 2040 dollars; about 20% of the final cost of the Big Dig project in Boston; a project that solved the same problems in that market. By the way, the city of Boston has about 700,000 residents; Springfield has about 150,000 residents. An investment of \$3.5 billion in 2040 is barely equitable in terms of population affected and certainly in no way unreasonable.

Leaving I- 91 as it stands long-term is not acceptable. Our region's economic future deserves as much attention as Boston and its surrounding communities. What DOT proposes not only ignores the input of the Pioneer Valley's economic and political leadership, it says our region's economic

future deserves no investment. The economic future of our region and the essential role this highway plays in it requires that this decision be reversed.

At the political level, if the mayor of Boston and eight mayors of its surrounding communities told MassDOT that one of the alternatives in a Boston-based study of this nature was the preferred alternative, MassDOT would acquiesce without question. Does the Governor really want his representatives on MassDOT to openly disrespect the Pioneer Valley's political leadership?

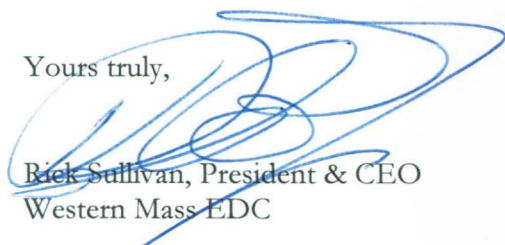
If finally adopted, this decision will be a roadblock to any discussion of improving the economic benefit Route 91 can provide to the Pioneer Valley. The answer will always be that a three-year study was conducted, all the alternatives were reviewed and it was determined that leaving the road alone was the solution. This decision will be an excuse to relegate our region to second-class status.

EDC urges MassDOT to reject the "repair in place recommendation" and adopt alternative #2 as the formal preferred alternative for the future construction of the I-91 viaduct.

While we believe the overall direction being proposed needs revision, we do thank MassDOT in recognizing that EDC and our mayors had requested that some ancillary projects, Longmeadow Curve, South End Bridge, Route 5/57 interchange, and 291 Southbound to 91 Southbound entrance be separated from and completed in advance of any future Viaduct project. We asked that these improvements be considered as standalone projects and designed to be incorporated into the future work. MassDOT is recommending all of these projects be constructed regardless of the future design and lists them as "Short and Medium-Term Alternatives". But, as a strategic alternative for our economic future, fixing these side projects is just not enough.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you need any further information or wish to discuss any matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,



Rick Sullivan, President & CEO
Western Mass EDC

Cc: Governor Baker, Lt Gov Polito

Stephanie Pollack, Transportation Secretary

Patrick Carnavale Director of Governor Baler's Western Mass Operations

Stephanie Pollack, Secretary/CEO
Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, Ma 02116

Re: Support Letter for the Depressed/New Alignment of the I 91 Viaduct Replacement Project and Segmentation of the “Longmeadow Curve/Routes 5/57” portion of the project

Dear Secretary Pollack

Please let this letter serve as a formal support letter from the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council (EDC) and the nine (9) Mayors of Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties, for the Depressed/New Alignment to be the preferred alternative for the I 91 Replacement Project. Further, and as importantly, the parties support segmenting the Longmeadow Curve/ Routes 5/57 from the larger project and moving forward immediately on this phase of the project.

The EDC is a membership based organization committed to the economic development of Western Massachusetts. Our members are the largest employers in the region and the companies and businesses that drive our regional economy. We believe that the I 91 replacement project is an opportunity to create an economic development asset, one that should be maximized.

The EDC has convened the nine Mayors of the region, who recognized the importance that I 91 plays in our economy and quality of life in the area. The Mayors further wanted to speak with a united voice in supporting the preferred alternative and segmentation of the project. (Attached is the letter, signed by all the Mayors and submitted as part of the public record. The letter was submitted by Attorney Paul Nicolai, Chair of the EDC Infrastructure Committee, in testimony at the MassDOT Working Group).

DEPRESSED/NEW ALIGNMENT – this alternative depresses the highway from approximately the Basketball Hall of Fame to a point beyond Boland Way and moves the highway to be nearer the railroad tracks and then places a cover over the railroad tracks so that more access to the riverfront can be obtained without having trains cause safety issues.

The EDC and the Mayors believe that the Depressed/ New Alignment preferred alternative can create an additional 25.51 acres of accessible green space/development land. As a result, this has the potential of increasing the population in the development area by 888 persons, 347 households and 2330 jobs within the study area. It is anticipated this project would create 460 additional housing units. When developed, this project would create an additional \$3.5 million a year in property tax revenue for the city of Springfield at full buildout.

SEGMENTATION OF THE LONGMEADOW CURVE/Route 5/57 Portion of the Project: The overall study also includes a solution to the Longmeadow curve and the route 5/Route 57/South end bridge traffic and safety issues. The design and cost of those projects are included in the overall project, but are separately stated. As discussed in the public, MassDOT working group sessions, the segmented project can proceed on an interim basis because it does not require any change to the I 91 via duct in order for it to be accomplished. The EDC and the Mayors urge MassDOT to segment the project and proceed immediately to full design and construction of this portion of the project.

I do want to thank you, your staff and the project team for the thoughtful and open process that has been conducted in relation to the I 91 replacement project. The EDC, through our infrastructure committee, has been a full participant and your team has been professional and collaborative. The EDC and the Mayors have provided a strong and unanimous voice in support of the preferred alternative and segmentation, which recognizes the importance and significance of the project to the future economic wellbeing of Western Massachusetts.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If I can provide any further information or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Sullivan', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rick Sullivan, President & CEO
Western Mass EDC

WesternMass

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

EDC Membership

AECOM/Tishman Construction Corp
A.L. Griggs Industries
All States Material Group
Bacon, Wilson PC
Balise Motor Sales
BayPath University
Baystate Health Cluster Initiative
Baystate Health Systems
Baystate - Noble Hospital
Berkshire Bank
Berkshire Gas Company
Big Y
Bradley International Airport
Bulkley Richardson and Gelinas
CBS 3 Springfield/Western MA News
Chicopee Electric Light Department
CRRC MA
Columbia Gas of Massachusetts
Comcast Cable Communications
Community Foundation
Country Bank
Davis Foundation Irene E & George A
Dufault Vann & Co
Eastern States Exposition
Easthampton Savings Bank
Eversource
Farmington Bank
Financial Partners Inc. (FPI)
Florence Savings Bank
Freedom Credit Union
Friendly's Manufacturing and Retail, LLC
Greenfield Community College
Greenfield Co-Op
Hazen Paper
Health New England

Holyoke Community College
Holyoke Gas & Electric
Holyoke Medical Center
Key Bank
Markens Group, The, Inc.
MassLive
Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale
Mass Mutual Life Insurance Co.
Mass Mutual Life Insurance Co.
Maybury Material Handling
Mercy Medical Center
MGM Springfield
Monarch Enterprises / Sheraton Springfield
Monson Savings
Mount Holyoke College
National Grid
New England Farm Worker's Council and Partnership for
Community
Nicolai Law Group
OMG, Inc.
Peerless Precision, Inc.
Peoples Bank - Holyoke
Peter Pan Bus Lines
Pride Stations & Stores
Renaissance Advisory Services LLC
Sarat Ford
Six Flags New England
Smith College
Smith & Wesson
Solutia Inc.
Spherion Staffing
Springfield College
Steve Roberts (former retired owner of FL Roberts)
STCC
Sulco Warehousing
TD Bank - Main Office
The Republican
UMASS Amherst Cluster Initiative 2018
UMASS Amherst Chancellor's Office
United Bank-Main Office
United Personnel Service

Universal Plastics Corp
U. S. Tsubaki
Verizon-Spfd
Western New England University
Westfield Bank
Westfield Gas & Electric
Westfield State University
WWLP-22 News
Yankee Candle



*The Economic Development Council
Of Western Massachusetts*

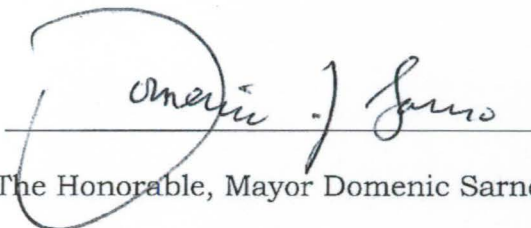
Western Massachusetts Mayors, Joint Statement of Support for the "Depressed Alternative" for the Future Construction of Route 91.

We undersigned Mayors, representing communities in the Western Massachusetts Region, recognize the Route 91 Corridor as an important transportation and economic development asset. We state our support for the "Depressed Alternative" for the future construction of Route 91 and the corresponding railroad corridor.

We urge MassDOT to depress Route 91 from Liberty Street Springfield, MA to the "Longmeadow curve". This alternative will build the roadway and the rail corridor in close proximity to each other, remove the overhead visual and physical impediments of the current I-91 viaduct structures, and create a green corridor redevelopment opportunity along the River. It will also relieve traffic congestion and maintain 3 lanes of traffic, each way, in the corridor. We also urge that the "depressed option" be built so as to support the development/construction of buildings between 6-10 stories on top of the depressed road/railway to maximize the economic development potential of the City of Springfield and the region.

We appreciate the public process that MassDOT has undertaken, the many alternatives that have been developed, and the opportunities that have been provided for the public to participate in this important design and hoped for construction project.

Sincerely yours,



The Honorable, Mayor Domenic Sarno

The Honorable, Mayor William Reichelt

The Honorable Mayor Richard Cohen

The Honorable, Mayor Richard Kos

The Honorable Mayor Alex Morse

The Honorable, Mayor Karen Cadieux

The Honorable, Mayor David Narkewicz

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "alex morse", is written over a horizontal line.

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The Honorable, Mayor David Narkewicz

The Honorable, Mayor Brian Sullivan

The Honorable, William Martin

From: Meagan Magrath [<mailto:megmagrath@gmail.com>]
Sent: Sunday, October 7, 2018 6:07 AM
To: Clark, Michael (DOT) <Michael.Clark@dot.state.ma.us>
Subject: Route 91 project

Hello Mr. Clark,

I was reading over the Mass Live article about the proposed future plans for 91. I definitely commend the focus on rerouting traffic to bring down congestion and lane changes, especially at the Longmeadow Curve and the 5/57 roundabout after the bridge. I also commend the plan to try to connect bike paths across this area. I know it would be expensive to bury 91 through Springfield but I would basically beg you to do it. I look with my students each year at the plans to extend court square from the turn of the 20th century and kids are always floored by the vision that existed then compared to our reality now - the viaduct completely separates us from a major asset to our city. Now is the time to bite the bullet and sink those massive costs - 4 billion - into burying the highway. The city is experiencing some momentum around reuse, the redevelopment of downtown, and be casino development, and this type of investment by the state could really help turnaround a gateway city like Springfield that is struggling to redefine itself in the 21st century as it bears fine heavy weight of the 19th and 20th centuries. Part of that weight was this highway build relatively recently, but which greatly affected and continues to affect our city, and not in a good way. As we move into this century people want walkable mixed-use neighborhoods! Please help us to revitalize our city. Expensive while it is, I really do not think the city's transformation can fully occur without this investment.

Sincerely,

Meg Magrath-Smith
Instructional Leader
The Springfield Renaissance School

From: Price Armstrong <pricearmstrong@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 9, 2018 11:38 AM
To: Clark, Michael (DOT)
Subject: I-91 Viaduct Study Comments

Hi Michael,

I wanted to submit some brief, high-level comments on the I-91 Viaduct study:

1. A depressed highway is preferable to a viaduct, even if it is a 'better' modern viaduct.
2. The Bicycle and Pedestrian connections between Main Street and the riverfront are key. Same goes for a new connection to Forest Park and a connection to Agawam. The main problem with the current river path is that it's very difficult to get to and, once you do get there, you can't really go anywhere on it.
3. I would like to see, to the greatest extent possible, improved north-south multi-modal connections across I-291, which right now serves to isolate the North End of Springfield.

Also, is there any plan to study I-391 and a long-term vision for the roadway? It seems massively overbuilt for the amount of traffic that it carries, and also acts as a barrier running right through Chicopee. I can't imagine that it's worth the cost of maintaining it for the traffic that it carries.

Hope all is well!

Price

--

E. Price Armstrong, AICP
blog: pvplanner.wordpress.com
twitter: [@pricearmstrong](https://twitter.com/pricearmstrong)
linkedin: [linkedin.com/in/pricearmstrong/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/pricearmstrong/)

From: Ben Heckscher [<mailto:benheckscher@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 10, 2018 1:46 PM
To: Clark, Michael (DOT) <Michael.Clark@dot.state.ma.us>
Subject: Draft Interstate 91 Viaduct Study | Comment

With this email I wish to offer the follow comment on the Draft Interstate 91 Viaduct Study

REFERENCE

Chapter 2 | Page 93

Freight Rail

Within the Regional Study Area and Primary Study Area, there are two major freight lines: the Boston Line, which runs east-west, and the New England Central Railroad (NECR) line, which operates north-south. The Boston Line, operated by Amtrak, handles the largest amount of freight rail moving in and out of Massachusetts. It connects Boston, Worcester, Springfield, and Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and Albany, New York. The route runs directly under the I-91 Viaduct. Just west of the Viaduct, the Boston Line crosses the Connecticut River into West Springfield, entering one of the major intermodal freight facilities in the state.

The NECR line parallels I-91 and the Connecticut River within the Primary Study Area. This rail line has a large number of connections with other short lines in the region, playing an important role in regional commerce and providing access to the national rail system. Information on train scheduling and frequency from the freight companies is unavailable for inclusion in this study.

COMMENT

The wording of this section includes a number of statements that are not accurate.

1. There are actually three freight lines in the study area not two.
 - The east-west rail corridor, which known as the Berkshire subdivision, is owned by CSX.
 - The rail corridor that runs south from the CSX line, is known as the Springfield Line, and is owned owned by Amtrak.
 - The rail corridor north of the CSX line, which is known as the Connecticut River Main Line, in owned by MassDOT.
2. Freight service on the CSX Berkshire subdivision (aka the east-west line) is provide by CSX not Amtrak. I believe that the Connecticut Central Railroad and Pan Am Railways have limited trackage rights on the CSX line for access to CSX's West Springfield yard.
3. New England Central Railroad (NECR) does not own any of the rail lines or operate freight service in the the study area.
4. Freight service on the Amtrak Springfield Line is operated by the Connecticut Central Railroad. I believe that Pan Am Railways maintains limited trackage rights on this line.

5. Freight service on the MassDOT-owned Connecticut River Main Line is provided by Pan Am Railways.

Regards,

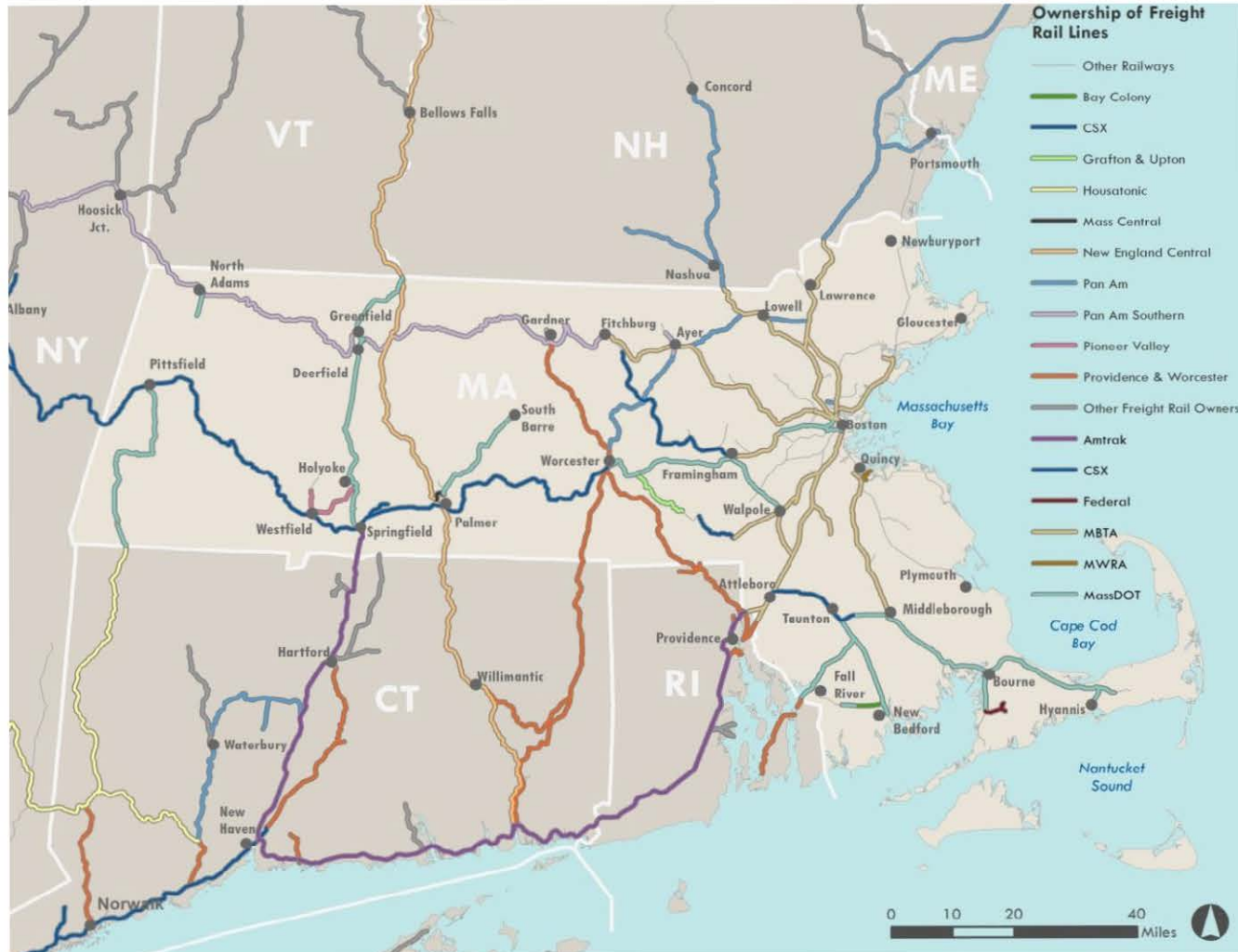
Ben Heckscher
Co-founder
Trains In The Valley

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Existing Rail System

FREIGHT NETWORK: OWNERSHIP



Existing Rail System

FREIGHT NETWORK: OPERATOR



From: Betsy Johnson [<mailto:betsygardnerjohnson@comcast.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, October 10, 2018 7:16 PM

To: Clark, Michael (DOT) <Michael.Clark@dot.state.ma.us>

Subject: I91 Viaduct Study Comment

Agree with the overall conclusion of not pursuing a depressed roadway or a higher viaduct, but to focus on other “shorter” term projects that will accomplish the project’s stated goals. However, these projects can not be done by the individual communities or with the currently available funding sources. Therefore, MassDOT must take responsibility for moving the near-term and mid-term projects forward. Of particular interest to WalkBike Springfield (residents working to improve conditions for walking and bicycling in Springfield) is the “Enhanced Riverfront Bike/Ped Connections”, the “South End Bridge - River Road Bike/Ped Connection”, “Hall of Fame - Riverfront Pedestrian Bridge Improvements,” “US Route 5 shared Use Path”, “Longmeadow Curve, including continuing the Riverwalk shared use path beyond its current southern terminus dead end,” and “the Plainfield Street Improvements - Main Street to the North End Bridge.” These are ALL projects that are critical to achieving a more truly multimodal Springfield.

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