



## **NEWTON CORNER**

LONG-TERM PLANNING STUDY

### **Newton Corner Long-Term Planning Study Public Involvement Plan<sup>1</sup>**

#### Outreach Approach and Methods

Our approach to Public Participation and Stakeholder Engagement will focus on being open, inclusive, and interactive—providing multiple opportunities throughout the process to engage with the project and multiple platforms for providing input. We plan to use a variety of tools to reach a diverse set of stakeholders, and to leverage what we hear with what we create. Using outreach as both an engagement tool as well as a data collection exercise enables the study team to identify transportation issues, priorities, and opportunities, and offers community members a platform to make connections not often recognized within the sole context of transportation, such as green space.

#### Public Outreach Team

Public outreach for this project will include participation of a Working Group and informational meetings with the general public that document the study methodology and engage interested parties in the assessment of alternatives and development of recommendations. Our approach involves all Team members actively participating in the public outreach program, with appropriate team members from the technical disciplines leading each discussion (Table 1).

#### **Outreach Team Members**

1. Patrick Snyder, MassDOT Project Manager
2. Christine Trearchis, Consultant team Project Manager (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin)
3. Nicolette Hastings, Consultant team Principal in Charge (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin)
4. Toni Pignatelli, Engagement Lead (FHI Studio)
5. Christine Yi, Engagement Support (FHI Studio)

#### Community Engagement Plan

It is a priority for studies of this type to identify and engage with a diverse range of stakeholders. Residents, workers, and others who rely on the Newton Corner interchange or must navigate the study area currently experience congestion, safety, and reliability issues. The Newton Corner Long-Term Planning Study will engage a diverse group of stakeholders including federal, state, and local elected officials, city and state departments, and advocacy organizations. The

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<sup>1</sup> Elements of this plan are subject to change based on study deliverables, milestones, and relevant state, municipal, and other guidance about outreach, in-person meetings, etc. This document reflects a date of July 30, 2024.

consultant team will employ a variety of outreach strategies, including meetings of the Working Group and with the public at project milestones, and internet and print communications.

#### Working Group

MassDOT has convened a Working Group consisting of local, state, legislative, and federal representatives; advocacy groups; and other organizations. MassDOT will engage the Working Group throughout the study and collaborate through meetings and online communication. The Working Group will provide valuable insight into the needs of the region and their constituents to help inform and shape the course of the study. A list of invited Working Group members is located at the end of this document.

#### Public Information Meetings

In addition to Working Group meetings, the public will be invited to learn about the progress of the Newton Corner Long-Term Planning Study and provide feedback on the study analysis and alternatives. Four public information meetings will be scheduled according to major project milestones. MassDOT and the consultant will publicize the meeting on agency and project websites, announce the meetings with email blasts to the project email lists, and broadcast information to social and print media in coordination with stakeholders.

#### Project Communications

MassDOT and the consultant team will distribute email blasts to publicize Working Group and public information meetings, and other project updates. To increase awareness of public engagement events, the study team will develop meeting notification flyers for each of the four (4) public meetings. The study team developed a project logo and design standards for use throughout the project.

#### Study Website

MassDOT will create, maintain, and update the study website with content drafted by the study team. MassDOT's website allows users to translate the content into other languages. Visitors will be able to click a link on the website to sign up to receive email updates from the project team. The MassDOT study website will be supplemented by a virtual meeting room (VMR) hosted by the consultant team, with interactive elements and a comment form.

The study website can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/newton-corner-long-term-planning-study>

#### Outreach Phases

We have organized the Newton Corner Long-Term Planning Study effort into three phases that line up with the project tasks as follows:

» **Phase 1: Reflect:** This is where we gather data, talk with members of the community, and assess how people are using the transportation network and understand how development patterns have and will continue to influence this in the future. This provides us with a strong baseline of needs and opportunities.

» **Phase 2: Explore:** We use what we learned to develop a long list of potential solutions, and to evaluate their effectiveness against meeting a set of goals and objectives. At the beginning of this phase, “all ideas are on the table”, and through our effective, data-informed process, we can discern which strategies are most effective at achieving the desired results.

» **Phase 3: Confirm:** The final phase is primarily focused on seeking feedback on draft recommendations to pursue consensus or general agreement with stakeholders, in order to provide support for any future project development.

#### Meetings and Anticipated Schedule<sup>2</sup>

##### **Study Kickoff, Goals and Objectives, Evaluation Criteria, Existing Conditions**

- Working Group Meeting #1, 5/22/2024
- Working Group Meeting #2, Summer/Fall 2024
- Public Information Meeting #1, Fall 2024

##### **Future Conditions and Alternatives Development**

- Working Group Meeting #3, Winter 2024/2025
- Public Information Meeting #2, Winter 2025
- Working Group Meeting #4, Spring 2025

##### **Alternatives Analysis and Study Closeout**

- Working Group Meeting #5, Spring/Summer 2025
- Public Meeting #3, Summer 2025
- Working Group Meeting #6, Summer 2025
- Public Meeting #4, Fall 2025
- Anticipated study completion: Fall 2025 or Winter 2025/2026

#### Invited Working Group Members

##### **Federal Elected Officials**

- Office of U.S. Senator Edward Markey
- Office of U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren
- Office of U.S. Representative Jake Auchincloss
- Office of U.S. Representative Katherine Clark
- Office of U.S. Representative Ayanna Pressley

##### **State Elected Officials**

- Office of State Senator William Brownsberger
- Office of State Senator Cynthia Creem
- Office of State Representative Kay Khan

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<sup>2</sup> Dates are subject to change, based on work progress

- Office of State Representative Steven Owens

### **Local Representation**

- Newton City Council
- Watertown City Council
- Boston City Council
- City of Newton Mayor's Office
- City of Boston Mayor's Office
- City of Watertown City Manager's Office
- Boston Transportation Department
- Newton Planning and Transportation Departments
- Newton Council on Aging
- Newton Commission on Disability

### **State Representation**

- MassDOT Highway Division
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

### **Advocacy Groups**

- Newton Corner Neighborhood Association
- MassBike
- LiveableStreets Alliance
- WalkMassachusetts
- Bike Newton
- Newton Safe Routes to School Task Force
- Newton Transportation Advisory Committee

### **Other Stakeholders**

- Watertown TMA
- Allston/Brighton TMA
- Perkins School for the Blind