

From: Alan Wright [<mailto:alnwright@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 3:17 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Cc: comments@walkboston.org
Subject: I-90 Allston EEA #15278

Dear Mr. Strysky,

I bicycle along the Paul Dudley White bike/pedestrian path regularly. It is a disgrace that CO2 emitting vehicles get so much space and bicyclists and pedestrians are squeezed in on top of each other.

AW-1

Please "Unchoke the throat" and greatly widen the path and reduce the number of vehicle lanes.

Thank you,

Alan Wright
98 Birch street
Roslindale, MA 02131

From: Alfred Fantini [<mailto:fredfan1@aol.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 10:53 AM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)

Cc: Cerbone, James (DOT); joseph.boncore@masenate.gov; jay.livingstone@mahouse.gov

Subject: I-90 DEIR

Secretary Beaton,

AFAN 1- 8 SEE HDAVIS

Having just read former Mayor Henrietta Davis's detailed and thoughtful comments regarding the issues associated with the I-90 DEIR, I request you take the time to respond to each of those concerns regarding the project itself and its impact on Cambridge. the best

Fred Fantini
Cambridge School Committee
4 Canal Park Unite 203
Cambridge MA 02141

Thank you

fred

From: Andrew Farnitano [<mailto:afarnitano@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 9:24 AM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Subject: comments on EEA No. 15278 - I90 Allston

Secretary Matthew Beaton,
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Attn: MEPA Office
Alexander Strysky, EEA#15278
100 Cambridge St., #900, Boston MA 02114
alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

AFRN 1 thru 16 same as DI

Dear Secretary Beaton,

The reconstruction of the Mass Pike in Allston will define our region for decades to come. There must be major transformations of Massachusetts' transportation system to make it far more climate-friendly, socially equitable, and suited to the 21st century economy, and Allston must show a bold commitment to these changes. Unfortunately, the project as currently proposed in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) fails to do so. I therefore ask that you require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR to address these deficiencies and study the items described below.

Under the Global Warming Solutions Act, Massachusetts must cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 1990 emissions levels by 2020 and at least an 80% reduction by 2050. I appreciate that in 2017 you and MassDOT Secretary Pollack held a series of listening sessions to discuss reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. While the Allston DEIR is an improvement over the existing dreadful conditions, it recreates an outdated 20th-century car-centered transportation system incompatible with such a reduction in emissions.

The DEIR is also inconsistent with the City of Boston's Imagine Boston 2030 and Go Boston 2030 plans and the Boston Planning and Redevelopment Agency's I-90 Allston Placemaking Study. While it is commendable that the MBTA is in the process of launching a Commuter Rail Vision Study, it is unacceptable that MassDOT's Allston DEIR perpetuates out-dating thinking (using valuable acres of urban land for rail layup) while it should instead support better mid-day service, construction of West Station in the first phase, and steps to move forward with passenger service on the Grand Junction.

What the Allston I-90 must do is create a 21st-century network of transit by bus, rail, and bike that also dramatically improves active transportation in the Charles River Parklands. I ask that you require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR to address these issues:

- Build West Station with two-track service in the first phase of the project
- Rebuild the highway at-grade in the "throat" using the A Better City (ABC) concept or with an elevated rail line as in the Ari Ofsevit concept
- Reduce the number of lanes in streets throughout the proposed urban grid to create a safer environment more conducive to walking and biking.
- Study how separate paths for biking and walking can be provided in the entire section of Charles River Parkland from the River Street Bridge to the BU Bridge, including the "throat", for all viaduct and at-grade options. This study should include consideration of a

boardwalk (both temporarily during construction and as a permanent structure) and the use of fill, and how to mitigate impacts on the river by restoring today's degraded bank into a "living shoreline" of native vegetation. Consider how this can be done both as part of the I-90 project or in a subsequent project.

- Construct new footbridges near Agganis Way and Amory Street that cross over the highway and link Commonwealth Ave in Boston and Brookline to the Charles River parkland to further encourage commutes by bike.
- Introduce new North-South bus routes that cross over the highway and connect North Allston and Commonwealth Ave, and by extension Harvard Square and Longwood.
- Fully evaluate the possibility of shifting the rail lines away from the abutting homes and creating an at-grade, off-road walk/bike path from the Regina Pizzeria end of Harvard Ave to West Station and over the at-grade highway to the Charles River. A simple barrier wall is insufficient mitigation for the Environmental Justice community that is so heavily burdened by the air pollution, noise pollution, and vibration impacts of the highway and rail.
- Study how to upgrade the Grand Junction railroad linking West Station, Kendall Sq. and North Station, and enhance the Grand Junction Bridge to become a walk/bike connection between the Charles River parkland in Cambridge and Boston.
- Evaluate increasing off-peak commuter rail service between Worcester and Boston—obviating the need to build a layover area to store idle trains in Allston.

Sincerely,

Andrew Farnitano
8 Bard Ave #3
Boston, MA 02119

From: Claire Stampfer [<mailto:claire.stampfer@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 6:36 PM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)

Cc: Clint Richmond; Andrew Fischer; lindaolsonpehlke; Alan Christ; Johnson Anita; David Lescohier; Ilan Wapinski; Kim Smith; Caro Carol; Childs Cooke Lee; Jane Gilman; Isaac Silberberg; Bob Miller; Bob Schram; donald.leka; Werner Lohe; Mary Dewart; Mary Dewart; Meggan Levene; Chanyasulkit Chris; Jennifer Englund; Paula Friedman; John Shreffler; Michael Burstein; Frank Caro; Neil Gordon; Elijah Ercolino; Hadassah Margolis TMM8; Marty Farlow; Brian Hochleutner; David Klafter; Don Weitzman; Kate Becker; Randolph Meiklejohn; John Bassett; Siegel Marjorie; Bob Lepson; Shira Fischer; Edward Loechler; Sneider Ruthann; Coffin Abby; Axelrod, Sarah T.; maura toomey; Kathleen Scanlon; Slotnick Will; Elizabeth Goldstein; Stephanie Bruce; Scott Englander / BTB (scottenglander1@gmail.com); djlowe; Virginia Smith

Subject: fully fund the construction of the proposed West Station in the FIRST PHASE of the Mass Pike reconstruction in the Beacon Park Yards.

To MASSDOT:

Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs

c/o Alex Strysky, EEA # 15278

alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)

100 Cambridge St., Suite 900 (9th Floor)

Attn: MEPA Office

Boston MA, 02114

Dear Mr. Beaton & Mr. Strysky,

We write to you in strong support of fully funding the construction of the proposed West Station in the first phase of the Mass Pike reconstruction in the Beacon Park Yards. Simultaneous improvements in access for pedestrian, bicycle and public transport should accompany any major highway improvement such as I-90 in Allston. Traffic all over our region has become increasingly congested and this can result in diminishing economic prospects for us all. Merely improving highway transport will result in more pass through traffic, but will not enrich our region. We need to make it easier for large numbers of people to travel within our metropolitan area so that commutes can be shortened and productivity throughout our region can be increased. We need to improve the availability, efficiency and connectivity of rail and bus service. BGC-1

West Station should serve as a multi-modal hub. For example, we strongly support new public transit services via West Station joining destination stations such as Longwood, Harvard Square, Kendall Square, and Ruggles. This could include bus rapid transit and light rail along existing corridors. We also strongly support improved access for pedestrians and bicyclists, including safer crosswalks and easier ways to cross large roadways at this location. We encourage you to build on the example set in the residential neighborhoods of BGC-2

Lower Allston which have benefited greatly from the new Boston Landing Rail station where ridership has already exceeded expectations.

We, your neighbors in the Greater Boston Metropolitan Area, will oppose plans that limit our communities to being mere traffic corridors, and will strongly support MASSDOT's efforts to improve the quality of life for all of us who live in this great urban region. We strongly urge you to incorporate pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation improvements in the first phase of Mass Pike highway improvements. It is time to move beyond 1950's highway solutions and move on to comprehensive mass, pedestrian and bicycle transit for the 21st century. Collectively, this will also help decrease green house gas emissions and increase opportunities for healthful activities in cleaner air in this new neighborhood. BGC-3

Yours truly,

Town Meeting Members of Brookline's Green Caucus

Co-Chairs Claire Stampfer Precinct 5 and Clint Richmond Precinct 6

Andrew Fischer Precinct 13

Linda Olson Pehlke Precinct 2

Alan Christ Precinct 4

Anita Johnson Precinct 8

David Lescohier Precinct 11

Ilan Wapinski Precinct 7

Kim Smith Precinct 6

Carol Caro Precinct 10 and Member of the Advisory Committee

Lee Cooke Childs Precinct 12

Jane Gilman Precinct 3

Isaac Silberberg Precinct 14

Robert M. Miller Precinct 8

Bob Schram Precinct 1

Donald G. Leka Precinct 3

Werner Lohe Precinct 13

Mary Dewart Precinct 3

Meggan Levene Precinct 3

Chris Chanyasulkit Precinct 13

Jennifer Englund Precinct 2
Paula K. Friedman Precinct 14
John Shreffler Precinct 2
Michael A. Burstein Precinct 12
Francis G. Caro Precinct 10
Neil Gordon Precinct 1
Elijah Ercolino Precinct 1
Hadassah Margolis Precinct 8
Marty Farlow Precinct 4
Brian Hochleutner Precinct 6
David Klafter Precinct 12
Don Weitzman Precinct 8
Kate Becker Precinct 3
Randolph Meiklejohn Precinct 5
John Bassett Precinct 6
Marjorie Siegel Precinct 4
Robert Lepson Precinct 9
Shira Fischer Precinct 11
Ginnie Smith Precinct 4
Ed Loechler Precinct 8
Ruthann Sneider Precinct 6
Abby Coffin Precinct 15
Sarah T. Axelrod Precinct 4
Maura Toomey Precinct 8
Kathleen Scanlon Precinct 3
Will Slotnick Precinct 12
Elizabeth Goldstein Precinct 10
Stephanie Bruce Precinct 12
Scott Englander Precinct 6
David Lowe Precinct 11



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

(617) 349-4260

FAX: (617) 349-4269

RECEIVED
FEB 9 2018
MEPA

DONNA P. LOPEZ
CITY CLERK

PAULA M. CRANE
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

February 1, 2018

Alex Strysky, EEA, No. 15278
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Mr. Strysky:

Pursuant to the request of the Cambridge City Council, I am forwarding to you the enclosed Policy Order sponsored by Mayor McGovern, Vice Mayor Devereux, Councillor Zondervan and Councillor Carlone.

In this Policy Order the Cambridge City Council endorses the "Requests for Action or Further Study" in Mayor Davis' submittal (attached). The City Clerk has been requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this order to you.

The order was adopted by the Cambridge City Council on January 29, 2018 by the affirmative vote of eight members.

Your kind attention in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Donna P. Lopez
City Clerk



City of Cambridge

O-7
IN CITY COUNCIL
January 29, 2018

MAYOR MCGOVERN
VICE MAYOR DEVEREUX
COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN
COUNCILLOR CARLONE

- WHEREAS:** The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) issued a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the I-90 Allston Interchange Project in Boston (EEA No. 15278) (the Project) on November 30, 2017; and
- WHEREAS:** The Project would reconstruct the Massachusetts Turnpike, Soldiers Field Road, and the Paul Dudley White Path on the Boston side of the Charles River between the BU Bridge and the River Street Bridge, all with an estimated cost of between \$900 Million and \$1.2 Billion depending on which of several options are selected; and
- WHEREAS:** The Project would have major impacts on the Cambridgeport neighborhood as well as the City of Cambridge as a whole; and
- WHEREAS:** Comments on the DEIR must be submitted to the Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (Secretary of EEA) not later than February 9, 2018; and
- WHEREAS:** A Task Force of community, municipal, and agency representatives (the Task Force), named by the Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation (MassDOT Secretary), has been active for several years in advising on the studies, analysis, and options presented in the DEIR; and
- WHEREAS:** In 2016 the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association requested that the MassDOT Secretary add a Cambridge "community representative" to the Task Force to join Bill Deignan, Transportation Program Manager of the Cambridge Community Development Department who has been ably serving as the official City representative on the Task Force since its inception; and
- WHEREAS:** The Secretary appointed Henrietta Davis, long-time resident of Cambridgeport and former Cambridge Mayor and City Councillor, to serve as the Cambridge Community Representative on the Task Force; and
- WHEREAS:** Former Mayor Davis is submitting to the Secretary of EEA the attached letter and memorandum as the Community Representative response to the DEIR; and

WHEREAS: Former Mayor Davis' submittal sets forth over 20 specific "Requests for Action or Further Study" to minimize the Project's negative impacts on Cambridge and maximize its potential to enhance environmental assets of importance to Cambridge, including 17-acre Magazine Beach Park and the Charles River and its pathways and parklands; and

WHEREAS: Such "Requests for Action or Further Study" include specific steps to deal with Cambridge concerns for the following sets of issues: CACC 1-8

- Transit and Multi-Modal Planning – to be implemented early (rather than 2040, as proposed in the DEIR), and to include bus routes, the start of West Station as a new transit hub for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access to Kendall Square, long an objective of the City, and reconstruction of the Grand Junction Railroad bridge over Soldiers Field Road to make such future access possible and remove an obstacle in the Paul Dudley White Path;
- Cambridge Access to/from Soldiers Field Road – to be preserved with a narrow one-lane exit ramp providing a right-turn only to the River Street Bridge toward Cambridge, to be designed to enhance the pathway and parkland leading to the bridge and to be accompanied by plans for an underpass for walkers, joggers, and cyclists under River Street Bridge;
- Cambridge Access to/from the Turnpike – to be studied further to determine if travel times and traffic loads can be made to function effectively through the grid of signalized urban streets in Allston and on Western Avenue, River Street, and Memorial Drive, and other Cambridge streets, and develop plans to implement an acceptable plan;
- Noise – to develop effective noise barriers and other features to reduce existing harmful noise levels from the Turnpike, which constitute a constant roar in Cambridgeport and Riverside and greatly diminish the value of Magazine Beach;
- Options for the "Throat," the narrow space for roadways, pathways, and parklands between BU and the Charles River – to develop a comprehensive alternative that reduces current noise levels, is visually attractive from Cambridge, and has a positive impact on the Paul Dudley White path, green space, and river edge;
- Width of the Turnpike – to reconstruct the Turnpike to be as narrow as possible, rather than MassDOT's plan in the DEIR that would widen travel lanes and add wide shoulders that do not exist in any other parts of the Turnpike between Route 128 and the Prudential Tunnel;
- Parkland and Paul Dudley White Pathways – to design the riverfront parkland and pedestrian/bicycle pathway system to enhance this world-class environmental resource and its pathway system, which is increasingly used for both commuting and recreation; and
- Construction Mitigation and Project Compensation – to develop a detailed action plan to mitigate impacts from years of aggravation and disruption that will be experienced by Cambridge while the Project is constructed, including actions to reduce construction noise, improvements to pathways on the Cambridge side to accommodate increased use while the Paul Dudley White path is closed, and traffic management steps to minimize expected heavier traffic on Memorial Drive, Western Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue, the many bridges over the Charles River, and Cambridgeport and Riverside neighborhood streets; and

- WHEREAS:** Harvard University has recently announced that it will contribute \$50 Million to the construction of both an interim and long-term West Station as a public transportation hub; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED:** That the City Council endorses the "Requests for Action or Further Study" in Mayor Davis' submittal (attached); and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the City Clerk is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution, the attached letter from former Mayor Davis, and the "Response to Draft Environmental Impact Report" (January 24, 2018), to Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs; Alex Strysky, Environmental Analyst; MassDOT Highway Division; Stephanie Pollack, Secretary & CEO of MassDOT; Representative Mike Capuano; Representative Katherine Clark; and to the elected members of Cambridge's State Congressional delegation on behalf of the entire City Council.

In City Council January 29, 2018.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of eight members.
Attest:- Donna P. Lopez, City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-



Donna P. Lopez, City Clerk

**RESPONSE TO DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
OF I-90 ALLSTON INTERCHANGE PROJECT IN BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
BY HENRIETTA DAVIS,
CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE TO I-90 TASK FORCE
January 24, 2018**

1. TRANSIT/MULTI-MODAL PLANNING

Problem: Transit plans in DEIR for I-90 are inadequate; implementation of West Station is delayed until 2040.

Requests for Action or Further Study:

- Begin transit planning now.
- Plan West Station as a future public transportation hub for access (transit, pedestrian, bicycles) to Kendall Square and North Station, as well as to the Longwood Medical Area (in addition to serving as a commuter rail station).
- Take short-term action to develop and implement bus routes.
- Construct initial parts of West Station, at least as a temporary station for buses, as part of the I-90 project.
- Rebuild the Grand Junction railroad bridge over Soldiers Field Road as part of I-90 project to accommodate two transit tracks in the future and remove an obstacle in the Paul Dudley White path. Include this rebuilding in all "throat" options.

Comment: It is unacceptable to defer transit planning and implementation. It has long been part of Cambridge's public transportation objectives to develop plans for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access for Kendall Square and beyond to North Station and the Longwood Medical Area. It is essential that these plans focused on West Station move forward as part of the I-90 project, and not wait until detailed plans for the development of the project area are created. Public infrastructure should create the context for development, not wait to react to it.

2. ACCESS TO/FROM SOLDIERS FIELD ROAD

Problem: The DEIR proposes to eliminate the important direct exit from Soldiers Field Road to Cambridge by removing the entire 2-lane exit ramp.

Requests for Action or Further Study:

- Retain a narrower exit ramp from Soldiers Field Road as a single-lane with right-turn-only for cars heading to Cambridge via River Street Bridge.
- Design the single-lane exit ramp to be as narrow as possible to create space for improved pedestrian/bicycle pathway leading to River Street Bridge.

Comment: We support the DEIR plan for an underpass of Soldiers Field Road at new Cambridge Street in Allston for SFR moves to and from Allston, Brookline and the Turnpike. Eliminating the right-turn exit toward Cambridge, however, creates an unacceptable and longer route through the new Allston street grid with 4-6 signalized intersections. That grid must also handle all traffic to/from the Turnpike as well as traffic generated by future Harvard development. Separating out Cambridge traffic onto its own exit ramp from SFR will reduce the load on the new street grid.

3. ACCESS TO/FROM MASS TURNPIKE

Problem: There is no analysis of travel times connecting Cambridge to/from the Turnpike in DEIR. Current street grid proposed in DEIR is likely to create unacceptable time delays.

Requests for Action or Further Study:

- Demonstrate and design reasonable travel times between Cambridge and Turnpike (to/from Turnpike both East and West).
- Design appropriate signalization, possible reserved lanes, and other traffic management strategies for Cambridge access and egress in new street grid.
- Require that "East Drive" and "Stadium Way" be built and added to the grid of new streets to provide more direct access to/from the Turnpike and Western Avenue.
- Undertake detailed traffic and design study of the Cambridge roadways most impacted by the I-90 project, including River Street Bridge, Western Avenue, Memorial Drive, and adjacent neighborhood streets.
- Study details of such traffic analysis and management plans in collaboration with transportation departments of Cambridge, Boston, Brookline, and the two universities directly involved – Harvard and BU.

Comment: Under the current plan, all cars and trucks entering and exiting the Turnpike are expected to use the new, signalized street grid in Allston. The new street grid would serve the Mass Turnpike, Soldiers Field Road, new Harvard development, and Allston/Brookline traffic – as well as Cambridge. This is an essential area for Cambridge auto travel toward the west to Route 128 and east to downtown Boston, South Boston, and Logan Airport. Drivers going to and from the West may choose, instead, to use Nonantum Road/Soldiers Field Road, and the Newton Corner access points. Expected travel times to and from Cambridge have not been studied.

As for Cambridge roads, the DEIR analysis of additional traffic on Western Avenue and Memorial Drive is inadequate. What there is shows unacceptable loads on residential streets. Additional traffic would overload such already highly congested roadways. Impact on truck traffic routing is not addressed. The Mass Avenue Bridge, Main Street/Longfellow Bridge, Memorial Drive, and other routes will become more attractive alternatives to the Mass Pike to avoid the project area entirely.

4. NOISE

Problem: DEIR provides inadequate analysis of noise impacts on Cambridge residents and park users, and fails to develop acceptable mitigation plans.

Requests for Action or Further Study:

- Reduce current Turnpike noise levels at the source of the noise.
- Conduct additional study and analysis to adequately understand impacts on Cambridge.
- Require a detailed action plan to mitigate noise impacts.
- Include modern 21st Century noise walls on the Turnpike (including visually transparent ones) that are increasingly added to highways around the world.

Comment: The DEIR proposes no effective design elements to reduce current harmful noise levels from the steady Turnpike roar now heard in the Cambridgeport and Riverside neighborhoods and at Magazine Beach park. From their homes, residents complain of noise disturbances, particularly in third floor bedrooms. These residential disturbances are not adequately covered by DEIR studies.

Magazine Beach, which is a large urban park of 17-acres, is a gem of a public space, but its value is greatly diminished by noise. Noise is magnified by reflecting off the flat surface of the river and the tall BU buildings. The DEIR uses standardized, nation-wide formulas to conclude that

noise walls and other design elements to lower noise levels in the neighborhood and in the park are not "cost effective." The focus of plans should be on effectiveness; official formulas do not account for the site-specific circumstances.

5. THE "THROAT"

Problem: The DEIR fails adequately to analyze comparative impacts on Cambridge of the three options for the "Throat," and fails to present a comprehensive alternative that reduces those impacts.

Requests for Action or Further Study:

- Create a fourth throat option for the Turnpike, revised from the current three, that meets the following criteria:
 - Reduction of current noise levels.
 - A visually inoffensive and possibly even attractive structure.
 - Reconstruction of the Grand Junction Bridge over Soldiers Field Road to prepare for potential use of the Grand Junction route for future transit and pedestrian/bicycle pathway.
 - Positive impact on the Paul Dudley White path, green space, and river edge.

Comment: The categories of impacts on Cambridge are noise, visual appearance from our side of the river, reconstruction of Grand Junction Railroad over Soldiers Field Road, and pathways and greenspace along the river edge. These issues were not adequately addressed in the DEIR. Also needed is analysis of use of the vacant "barrel" under one direction of the Turnpike in the HV-3 option for relocation of east bound direction of Soldiers Field Road, thereby providing more space for pathways and parkland.

6. TURNPIKE WIDTH

Problem: HV3, MassDOT's currently preferred viaduct option, unnecessarily increases the width of the Turnpike viaduct by about 60 feet more than currently exists. This result is a significant reduction in already limited space for pathways and parklands at the edge of the Charles River.

Requests for Action or Further Study:

- Minimize Turnpike width to protect and increase space for pedestrian/bike pathways and maximize parkland by the river.
- Revise HV3 option to have narrower shoulders or use HV4, an option described in the DEIR that does have narrower shoulders but was rejected.
- Rebuild the Turnpike with travel lanes no wider than those now existing.

Comments: HV3 adds wider travel lanes and wider shoulders equating to almost a full travel lane in each direction over what now exists in the Turnpike both east (toward Prudential Tunnel) and west (toward Newton Corner) of the reconstruction area. HV3 would widen the curb-to-curb width of the Turnpike pavement from existing 96 feet to 120 feet, and increase overall width of the viaduct structure by about 60 feet. We question the "safety" justification for increased width in the limited project area, since the rest of the Turnpike from Route 128 to downtown Boston has a consistently narrower design, with occasional pull-out areas for breakdowns. Increasing the viaduct width unnecessarily occupies valuable space that should be used for enhanced pathways, green space, and river edge.

7. ENHANCE PARKLAND AND PAUL DUDLEY WHITE PATHWAYS

Problem: The DEIR acknowledges that statutes require that proposed transportation facilities that would use public parklands must be developed to “enhance” those parklands, as well as mitigate negative impacts. The DEIR focuses on minimizing negatives, but fails to deal sufficiently with creating positives in this area of the Charles River, with its parklands, river edge, and Paul Dudley White pathways.

Requests for Action or Further Study:

Actions described above:

- Develop effective strategies and design features to improve noise levels at Magazine Beach
- Minimize the width of Turnpike to maximize parkland and enhance the Paul Dudley White Path and river edge.
- Maximize the potential area for pathways and parkland in designing the single-lane right-turn exit ramp from Soldiers Field Road to River Street Bridge.
- Rebuild the Grand Junction bridge over Soldiers Field Road to remove a current obstacle in the Paul Dudley White path.

Additional actions:

- Add design of an underpass for pedestrians and cyclists under both the River Street and Western Avenue Bridges on the Boston side of the Charles River to plans for reconstruction of those bridges in the future.
- Study whether the relocation of Soldiers Field Road in the area of new “Cambridge Street South” can be moved further from the river.
- Include as a feature of the all at-grade throat option (ABC) two pedestrian/bicycle bridges from the BU/Commonwealth Avenue area to the Paul Dudley White path, as described in the submission of A Better City to MassDOT in July 2017.

Comments: The Charles River basin is a world-class environmental resource profoundly affected by the proposed highway project. Pedestrians, cyclists, and joggers treasure this resource, both as parkland and as non-auto transportation corridor. Cambridge residents and many others extensively use the river-front pathways for commuting and recreation, with the pathways increasingly used as bikeways. This huge highway project should enhance these parklands and non-auto transportation uses now and for the future.

8. CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION/PROJECT IMPACT COMPENSATION

Problem: Cambridge will experience years of aggravation and disruption while this project is constructed. Our quality of life will suffer. Traffic shifts and increased congestion will affect all alternative routes and all modes of transportation. Pathway and roadway closings, as well as years of construction noise impact, need to be addressed at this stage of the I-90 project.

Requests for Action or Further Study:

- Develop a specific action plan now to mitigate construction impacts.
- Detail a bus and transit plan to address years of disruption.
- Plan roadway traffic management for the routes noted below when auto traffic will seek other routes during construction periods.
- Address impacts of construction diversions on Memorial Drive and neighborhood streets.
- Describe specific steps to reduce the impact of construction noise on Cambridgeport, Riverside, and Magazine Beach Park.
- Improve the pedestrian/bicycle pathways on the Cambridge side of the river to accommodate heavier use during construction.

Comments: When Soldiers Field Road and the Turnpike are closed for periods, there will be unavoidable traffic impacts on Memorial Drive, River Street, Western Avenue, Mass Avenue, the many bridges across the Charles, and many neighborhood streets. Central, Kendall, and Harvard

Squares will be impacted. Closing of Paul Dudley White pathways will result in more walkers, bikers, and joggers using paths on the Cambridge side of the river. Transit, bus, shuttles, trucks and other transportation modes will also face congestion. We will have years of hassle.

LETTER TO MATTHEW A. BEATON, SECRETARY OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
January 24, 2018

(jgw)

Dear Secretary Beaton-

I am writing today as the Cambridge community representative to the I-90 task force to comment upon the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the I-90 Allston Interchange Project in Boston, MA, issued November 30, 2017 (EEA No.15278). As the former mayor of Cambridge, I am able to reflect a city-wide response to this project. As a long-time Cambridgeport resident, I will also share that neighborhood perspective, living very near the project area.

While construction of the proposed project is on the Boston side of the river, impacts will land heavily on Cambridge. The attached memorandum outlines concrete steps to lessen negative impacts and build on positive ones to address these environmental impacts.

Last spring, along with the Cambridge City Council and City Manager, I submitted a letter to Secretary Stephanie Pollack listing items that we requested be addressed in the DEIR to respond to Cambridge community concerns. After a series of well-attended community meetings, we identified major issues needing information and analysis:

- Transit/multimodal planning
- Access to/from Soldiers Field Road
- Access to and from the Mass Turnpike
- Noise
- Comparative impacts of the three "throat" options, just across the river from the Cambridgeport neighborhood
- Parkland, bike and pedestrian pathways, and
- Construction mitigation

Most of these issues are insufficiently addressed in the DEIR. In addition, now that we have received and reviewed the full DEIR, we question the **proposed turnpike width**. Does the Turnpike in the throat area need to be as wide as presented, since every foot of space in the narrow, environmentally sensitive area by the Charles River is needed for parklands and the Paul Dudley White pathway network?

This project, first presented as a crucial highway repair project, is also a critical city planning endeavor involving all modes of transportation, a commitment to enhancing the environment, and close involvement with Harvard's development plans. No project which affects a buildable area of 75 acres, is bounded by densely populated neighborhoods in three cities and borders on what is an invaluable environmental, recreational and visual asset such as the Charles River could avoid at its heart being a planning challenge. Add to that the churn of the innovation economy and university development pressing into this particular acreage, and you have a potential development/environmental/transportation clash that can only be resolved by careful, creative, collaborative, and transparent planning, including not only MassDOT and DCR but also the cities of Cambridge, Boston, and Brookline, as well as the two universities directly involved – Boston University and Harvard.

We must avoid repairing the highway today without considering all that is to come: the future of the economy, the future of the Charles River environment, the future of the people who will live in that area or in the nearby neighborhoods.

Secretary Beaton, I urge you to think broadly about the importance of this project, require the additional analyses requested in this letter (perhaps combined into a Supplemental DEIR) and press for the very best outcome. The result will be with us for the next 50-100 years. We need to make that future the best we can. This part of the Charles River and its parklands, pathways, and people living on both sides of the river and in the region as a whole will be profoundly affected by the choices made about these facilities. It would be irresponsible to make these choices without additional actions and analysis as requested here.

Thank you very much for your careful attention to the issues raised in this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Henrietta Davis, Community Representative to the I-90 Redesign Task Force

From: Cayla Saret [<mailto:cayla.saret@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 10:52 AM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)

Cc: comments@walkboston.org

Subject: I-90 Allston, EEA # 15278

Mr. Strysky,

I'm writing in support of Walk Boston and the Charles River Conservancy's #UnchokeTheThroat proposal to make a narrow stretch of the Charles River paths wider, safer, healthier, and more pleasant. As someone who has passed through this often stressful area on foot or by bike, for commuting and for fun, I would love to see it expanded to match the comfort and beauty I and others are able to enjoy on other wonderful stretches of the path. CSAR-1

Thank you,

Cayla Saret

February 2, 2018

Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114
Alex Strysky, EEA, No. 15278 - alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

Re: Draft EIR for I-90 (EEA #15278)

Dear Secretary Beaton:

As a resident of Cambridgeport, I have attended recent community meetings about the DEIR filed for the I-90 Allston interchange rehabilitation project. I appreciate the thoroughness of the report and the sincere efforts made to study a range of alternatives in order to determine the best way forward for this complex, expensive project.

The part of the development that most concerns me is the lack of a functional transit station in the first phase of the reconstruction, with West Station not built until 2040. DVS-1

This is extremely short sighted. It essential that West Station move forward immediately, and not wait until detailed plans for the development of the project area are created. Even constructing initial parts of West Station as a temporary station for buses would set the stage for future rail connections. Public infrastructure should create the context for development, not react to it.

West Station would be ideally located to serve not only the Allston site being developed, but also highly congested areas such as the Longwood Medical Area and Kendall Square, North Station and beyond with reconstruction of the Grand Junction Bridge over Soldiers Field Road to prepare for potential use of the Grand Junction route for future transit and pedestrian/bicycle pathways.

One needs look no further than the untenable congestion in the Seaport District (with elevated tram lines now being proposed no less!) and Boston's recent bid to become the site of Amazon's new headquarters to see that public transit is vital to the viability of any large-scale urban development going forward. Harvard has recently pledged additional money towards the construction of the station. The Commonwealth must find additional funds now to make the station and future Grand Junction Bridge connections a reality.

As a secondary concern, I do not agree with the total elimination of the direct exit from Soldiers Field Road to Cambridge. Eliminating the right-turn exit toward Cambridge creates a longer route through the new Allston street grid with signalized intersections that must also handle all traffic to/from the Turnpike as well as traffic generated by future Harvard development. A narrower exit ramp from Soldiers Field Road as a single-lane with right-turn-only for cars heading to Cambridge via the River Street Bridge would eliminate some of the load from the new street grid and still leave room for improved pedestrian and bike paths along the Charles River. DVS-2

Thank you for noting my concerns....
Sincerely,

Dagmar von Schwerin
114 Hamilton Street, Cambridge, MA 02139

cc: MassDOT Highway Division
Environmental Services Section
10 Park Plaza, Room 4260
Boston, MA 02116
Attn: James Cerbone - James.Cerbone@state.ma.us

From: Darrah Bowden [<mailto:darrahbowden@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 11:09 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Subject: #UnchokeTheThroat along the Charles River

Dear Alex,

DBO-1

It has come to my attention that a very strong proposal has been made for widening and overall improvement to a particularly narrow section of the path along the Charles River in Allston west of the BU bridge, and I am writing to voice my support for this proposal. I bike along this path several times a week in the summer between North Harvard St. in Allston to get to Community Boating, and the very narrow section of the path from River St to the BU bridge is harrowing to say the least— especially the section closest to River St. It is hard to believe that addressing this problem spot is not currently in the overall plan for the i-90 reconfigure currently being discussed.

Here is a link to a video detailing the proposal, which does not include edging out automotive traffic (as much as I wish it were feasible to do so) but proposes building out over the river in addition to other solutions to make the path usably wider:

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_youtu.be_S06XDNsetKc&d=DwlFaQ&c=IDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWLOQWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=mJIUKkpgqRk5lfrl4usD8iBZ3S6BKBEKmhEMOwsMWH0&m=UmDSWxm3T_lfR0AUKcvqcs8BYaJiEWsw4jf5aw1YVwM&s=hGwffKHukP8o2Et2bR4qrgZbT1AD9A4A1g9kOYsXtAM&e=
and you can read more here: https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A_walkboston.org_what-2Dwe-2Ddo_event_i-2D90mass-2Dpike-2Daction-2Dalert&d=DwlFaQ&c=IDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWLOQWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=mJIUKkpgqRk5lfrl4usD8iBZ3S6BKBEKmhEMOwsMWH0&m=UmDSWxm3T_lfR0AUKcvqcs8BYaJiEWsw4jf5aw1YVwM&s=-aH6HRWJxRLaUQdn1w78T0yD1rqQeH1A0LhWockd9jo&e= .

Thank you for considering this proposal. I believe that something must be done to fix this inadequate section of what should someday be a world-class bike and pedestrian path.

Sincerely,
Darrah Bowden

From: Donald Weitzman [<mailto:greendcw@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 8:53 PM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA); Cerbone, James (DOT)

Cc: nwishinsky@brooklinema.gov; bfranco@brooklinema.gov; nheller@brooklinema.gov; bgreene@brooklinema.gov; hhamilton@brooklinema.gov; tkirrane@brooklinema.gov; apappastergion@brooklinema.gov; pditto@brooklinema.gov; kjohnson@brooklinema.gov; Jennifer Englund; Ben Hellerstein; Judith Kidd; Lisa Liss; Rita McNally; lindaolsonpehlke; Jane Piercy; Susie Roberts; Chris Kahl; John Shreffler; Diana Spiegel; Stanley Spiegel; Caitlin Studdard; Bruce Wolff; Lauren Bernard; Craig Bolon; Abigail Cox; Gina Crandell; David-Marc Goldstein; John Harris; Anita Johnson; Edward Loechler; Hadassah Margolis; Kate Poverman; Barbara Scotto; Lisamarie Sears; Maura Toomey; Donald Weitzman; weinberg@wi.mit.edu

Subject: Allston I-90 Interchange Project

January 31, 2018

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Attn: Alexander Streaky, MEPA Office

MassDOT Highway Division
Environmental Services Section
Attn: James Cerbone

Re: Allston I-90 Interchange Project

Gentlemen:

As a resident of North Brookline and a Town Meeting Member representing my neighborhood, I am compelled to comment on the current plans for the I-90 reconstruction.

My primary concern is for the possible deluge of traffic that my neighborhood could experience, especially if north-south traffic is permitted over a widened Malvern Street and bridge. The DEIR estimates an additional 15,000 to 20,000 additional vehicle trips per day, a quantity that would seriously endanger the health and safety of North Brookline residents.

Consider the impacts to my own street, Babcock Street, which would be subject to a large share of the resulting cut-through traffic. We are already dealing with problematic traffic that will only be made worse by a number of on-going events.

- A major reconstruction of the street, the new surface of which is likely to encourage higher vehicular speeds, especially to cut-through traffic
- The reopening of Devotion School, which at 1,000 students will be one of the largest K-8 schools in the Commonwealth, and will add unprecedented vehicle and pedestrian traffic, much of it school children, to Babcock Street
- A number of new housing construction projects, including a large 40-B project that will add considerable density.

Not least, Babcock Street is home to one of Brookline's most active fire houses. Lives depend on our Fire Department being able to respond quickly to calls. Public safety demands that an analysis of the effects of increased traffic on response times be included in the decision making process.

DCW-1

I hasten to add that there is much to this project to like, including improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, better access to the river, and of course the opening up of 90 acres of developable land.

But it also seems clear that the impacts on local neighborhoods has perhaps not been of central concern in the planning process, as evidenced by the fact that the project maps do not show land south of Commonwealth Ave. But of course the impacts extend most emphatically to Brookline, even if not represented on the maps.

In summary, I urge you to consider the impacts that a major increase in vehicular traffic would have on North Brookline, and prevent such an occurrence, specifically by ensuring that a Malvern Street bridge will not be opened to general vehicular traffic.

DCW-2

Thank you for your consideration.

Don Weitzman

Donald C. Weitzman

Town Meeting Member, precinct 8

104 Babcock St, Unit #4

Brookline MA 02446

(617) 738-7864 (H)

(617) 640-3718 (C)

From: Erin McNeill [<mailto:emcn17@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 6:04 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Subject: Subject Line: I-90 Allston, EEA # 15278

Dear Mr. Strysky:

EM-1

I strongly support the Walk Boston “Unchoke the Throat” plan to improve the pedestrian and bike path along the river in connection with the highway project. This area is heavily used. I bike along this path regularly to work and for recreation. Transportation projects should be improving all forms of transportation. Improving this area could get more people out of cars and improve traffic. I ask that you include one of the two Sasaki plans in the project.

Best regards,
Erin McNeill
Belmont

--

Erin McNeill
508-735-4527 cell

Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office
Alex Strysky, EEA # 15278
100 Cambridge St Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Secretary Beaton,

Thank you for the review that you, Deirdre Buckley, Alex Strysky, and all of your staff are doing for this large and complex project. It will change how more than 200,000 people travel every day, the quality of life and health of tens of thousands of people who live nearby, and the Charles River parkland alongside the highway. It will make a strong statement about the priorities of our Commonwealth.

The MEPA regulations are clear:

State agencies must use all feasible measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate damage to the environment or, to the extent damage to the environment cannot be avoided, to minimize and mitigate damage to the environment to the maximum extent practicable.

MassDOT has not come close to meeting that standard. I therefore ask that you require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR that will comply with MEPA.

Similarly, MassDOT has failed to comply with the Federal Section 4(f) which requires: "all possible planning to minimize harm" and the selection of the alternative "that causes the least overall harm".

Traffic-related air pollution is a main contributor to unhealthy urban air quality¹.

- Over the last 30 years, growing numbers of studies have shown that smaller particulates emitted by trucks and cars barreling down our nation's highways can promote heart disease and strokes
- Traffic pollution not only worsens asthma, but may cause it
- Living close to heavy traffic is associated with a higher incidence of dementia

Please do not let MassDOT abdicate its responsibility for these and other impacts on the Environmental Justice communities surrounding the project area. While the impacts of living near a highway cannot be avoided, they can be minimized and mitigated much more than proposed in the DEIR. This theme should be emphasized throughout the requirement for the Supplemental DEIR.

MassDOT should do much more in Allston to be consistent with the statewide mode shift goal of tripling the share of travel in Massachusetts by bicycling, transit and walking² which would go a long way towards minimizing the impacts of the highway's continued operation and construction impacts of this project. In downtown Boston, MassDOT spends millions of dollars to support the Rose Kennedy Greenway³. The people of New Bedford are the fortunate beneficiaries of five million dollars from MassDOT for the CoveWalk path⁴. New recreational paths across Massachusetts are made possible by state funding⁵ and the Northern Strand path just got a \$1.5 million planning

¹ <http://now.tufts.edu/articles/big-road-blues-pollution-highways>
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/04/13/new-evidence-dangers-living-near-highways/hVygTnY4iyn9YRoNSwWtGI/story.html>
[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)32399-6/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)32399-6/fulltext)
<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6203a8.htm>

² <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/main/tabid/1085/ctl/detail/mid/2937/itemid/223/MassDOT-Announces-Mode-Shift-Goal-to-Triple-the-Share-of-Travel-in-Massachusetts-by-Bicycling--Transit-and-Walking-.aspx>

³ <http://www.wbur.org/news/2017/06/19/greenway-funding-deal>

⁴ <http://www.southcoasttoday.com/news/20170419/covewalk-officially-opens-on-new-bedfords-south-end>

⁵ <https://www.mass.gov/guides/recreational-trails-program>

grant from the State⁶. When MassDOT spends hundreds of millions of dollars to build a new highway that harms our health and degrades our quality of life in Allston, what is MassDOT doing to improve our health and well-being?

The Massachusetts Port Authority (MassPort) operates airports and shipping facilities that, like MassDOT's operation of I-90, are essential to the regional economy and also damaging to the environment. But MassPort does much more for the local benefit of the people who bear the impacts of its activities. When considering what is "feasible" for MassDOT to do in Allston to minimize and mitigate, consider what MassPort has already done:⁷

"The new 18 acre Bremen Street Park in East Boston and up to \$15 million for a series of four Airport Edge Buffers. Massport also improved a two-mile-long trail system located on 42.5 acres of property at L.G. Hanscom Field. We've invested \$50 million to develop, maintain and secure 33 acres of green space in East Boston for walking, playing, biking and enjoying panoramic views of the Boston skyline. Massport has spent \$170 million to soundproof dwellings and schools."

See Comments and Responses HM3-A through HM3-I

While I can't possibly enumerate for you every inadequacy of the DEIR and MassDOT's highway-centric approach to the Allston project, here are few items that many people have consistently suggested:

- A. Prioritize walking and biking by building streets that have 2 or 3 total lanes. The 4, 5, and 6 lanes streets MassDOT proposes are unacceptable.
- B. Prioritize transit by building West Station at the start of Phase One construction. MassDOT's too-low ridership projections fail to align with the actual ridership at Boston Landing⁸. The DEIR's Appendix L Ridership Forecasting Technical Report uses flawed land use assumptions for Transportation Analysis Zone 245 that incorrectly estimate zero population growth by 2025 in this zone and population growth of 462 people between 2025 and 2040 even while Harvard has already submitted plans to the Boston Planning and Development Authority to rezone 14 acres⁹ and start development of what many call the "next Kendall Square"¹⁰.
- C. Prioritize transit by building a transit connection capable of Bus Rapid Transit service from Cambridge Street to Commonwealth Ave¹¹
- D. Prioritize transit by building dedicated bus lanes or bus/bike lanes
- E. Reduce the traffic load on neighborhood streets by building the Cambridge Street - West Station bypass¹²
- F. Minimize project cost, construction impacts, and make possible new bike/ped connections to the Charles River Parkland by building the highway in the "throat" at-grade using the ABC option
- G. Increase walking and biking with two footbridges over the at-grade highway in the throat, one from Agganis Way and one from the BU Bridge/Commonwealth Ave
- H. Improvements to the Charles River's natural environment that mitigate the impacts of the project and create better places for people to walk and bike as proposed by Sasaki, WalkBoston, and the Charles River Conservancy¹³
- I. A linear park along South Cambridge Street connecting to new Charles River Parkland comparable to the Commonwealth Ave Mall in Boston's Back Bay

With this in mind, below is more thought on that items I ask you to require MassDOT to address in the Supplemental DEIR:

⁶ <https://www.itemlive.com/2018/02/02/car-free-path-north-shore-beaches-gets-1-5m-boost/>

⁷ <http://www.massport.com/massport/community/initiatives/>

⁸ <https://commonwealthmagazine.org/back-story/west-station-vs-boston-landing/>

⁹ <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/1797b053-d7df-4d71-a92d-9ab393c16673>

¹⁰

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2017/12/26/harvard-makes-first-step-toward-commercial-development-allston-land/YJwn9ohJCivU2YOrtqDU8H/story.html>

¹¹ <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/4b43e98f-7790-4885-bbbc-39f4fe478611> - page 13

¹² <http://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/4b43e98f-7790-4885-bbbc-39f4fe478611> - page 12

¹³ <https://commonwealthmagazine.org/opinion/unchoke-the-throat/>

1. MassDOT presents multiple alternative only for the small “throat” section between Agganis Way and the Charles River. For the rest of the project area there is only one alternative presented. To select the alternative that causes the least overall harm, there must be multiple options for the entire project, not just one piece of it.
2. A significant amount traffic would be removed from Allston, and damage to the environment reduced, if new I-90 ramps were created closer to the Longwood Medical Area. This would reduce vehicle miles travelled in Boston and Cambridge and allow for fewer roadway lanes in the new streets proposed for Allston. Building these ramps before Allston construction would reduce the impacts of construction as fewer drivers would need to access I-90 via the Allston ramps. MassDOT should be required to study how such ramps would reduce damage to the environment and mitigate temporary and permanent impacts even though these ramps would be outside the project area.
3. MassDOT proposes to immediately introduce into Allston a new facility for mid-day storage of trains. These trains would need to navigate the single track in the opposite direction from the commuter flow, further complicating rail operations, as well as disrupting the I-90 construction process. The locomotive activity at this layover facility would increase noise and air pollution in Allston, degrade conditions for walking and bicycling, and preclude environmentally-friendly transit oriented development on those acres. MassDOT should be required to provide proof of the “ghost trains” that it claims to run without passengers due to a lack of layover space. MassDOT should be required to study using those trains to increase mid-day service instead of parking them in Allston.
4. One or more bus connections between South Cambridge Street, the I-90 ramps, West Station, and Commonwealth Ave is an essential element that needs to be included in the Supplemental DEIR. Preventing this bus connection will do significant damage to the environment by limiting options for public transportation on the Harvard-Allston-Longwood-Dudley route. This route was identified as one of the Five Prime Corridors for Boston BRT¹⁴ and current operations of this route are severely hampered by the conditions in Allston.
5. Possibilities for Bus Rapid Transit require further study including how Stadium Way can be connect directly from North Harvard Street to the I-90 ramps and the use of Bus-Only or Bus-Bike lanes throughout the project area. Increased express bus service from Allston to downtown via I-90 should also be studied for the reduction in single-occupancy drivers that it could bring.
6. The DEIR is inadequate in its analysis of construction impacts, alternatives, and mitigation.
 - a. West Station could be installed at the start of construction with bus connections to Harvard Square, Kendall, and Longwood Medical area to provide for some transit options for western passenger rail riders to avoid the construction disruption and to encourage some turnpike drivers to shift to public transportation.
 - b. The Paul Dudley White Path can be relocated onto a new structure in the River. By relocating the Path out of the construction zone, the construction process can have more room, be less disruptive, and take less time to complete. The relocation would also permit a more generous path for pedestrians, joggers, and bicycle riders, buffered from the noise of high-speed traffic.
 - c. Any mid-day storage of commuter rail trains in Allston must be postponed until after the I-90 construction is complete to avoid further disruption of passenger rail service and disruption of construction. Instead, mid-day service schedules should be increased during construction to minimize and mitigate the construction impacts.

¹⁴ <http://www.bostonbrt.org/the-brt-report/>

- d. The project is to be built using a competitive design-build technique and the competing teams must be provided with reasonable constructability conditions to avoid excessively high bids, pressure to modify designs and objectives, and substantial delay (similar to what occurred with the Green Line Extension). It is particularly important that the Supplemental DEIR and FEIR deal adequately with constructability to avoid the risk that some or all of the environmental process might need to be repeated if significant changes are required to facilitate construction. More immediately, responsible bidders will be reluctant to bid unless they see a project that can be built with sufficient certainty and predictability, with environmental approval in hand, and adequate flexibility built into the design for the design-build teams to identify and pursue the most cost effective methods to complete the project.
- e. The DEIR construction staging proposes to relocate active rail use to the southernmost tracks to increase the space available to build the new eastbound turnpike roadway. This relocation is compatible with the maximization of the footprint of the land to be made available to the contractor for lay down space and is a positive feature. It could also be consistent with the construction of West Station as a very early action to provide passenger rail customers with the opportunity to transfer to bus services to Commonwealth Ave and Longwood and mitigate the disruption of both road and rail service and damage to the environment that will be caused by the construction by traffic delays and increased cut-through traffic seeking longer routes that avoid the construction area. But the DEIR does not provide for such an early action West Station, nor the early connection via Malvern street for bus service which has widespread support. This must be corrected in the Supplemental DEIR. Every western commuter who can use rail instead of the auto will make the constructability better, and every rail passenger who can use shuttle bus service to Longwood Medical Area, Harvard Square, or Kendall Square makes the roadway conditions more reasonable during construction. Establishing from the very beginning of construction rail and public transportation options to encourage more public transit and less auto reliance will support good constructability conditions.
- f. The DEIR proposes that the Grand Junction Rail connection should be in service throughout the reconstruction process. But this places an active rail running diagonally across the area between the Beacon Park Yard/ contractor lay down area, and the Throat. The Supplemental DEIR should instead consider two alternatives:
 - i. Suspend operations of the GJR during reconstruction using the technique used by MBTA in the past of doing most commuter rail equipment light maintenance at AMTRACK facilities near South Station, doing DownEaster light maintenance at the Somerville MBTA facility, and shifting Freight service to Pan Am services at convenient locations further west such as Worcester or even Schenectady. This has already been successfully done. What did it cost and could it be used during the I90 project?
 - ii. Alternatively, the GJR connection could be relocated along the relocated Soldiers Field Road and via the Houghton spur (crossing orthogonally under temporary rebuilt ramp connections to Cambridge street) to the Romar track to access Beacon Park Yard.

Either of these would avoid the disruption of construction activity by active rail operations, leaving the access space for contractors from the Beacon Park Yard to the throat unimpeded, to support efficient construction.
- g. The DEIR reconstruction sequence proceeds from West to East. This has several downsides:
 - i. the most structurally deficient viaduct in the throat gets dealt with last.
 - ii. the more progress the construction achieves in building the new turnpike replacement roadways, the less lay down area the contractor will have.
 - iii. the reconstructed new turnpike roadways block the contractor access to deal with the most challenging viaduct replacement in the throat.

All three options in the throat would benefit from a construction sequence that deals with the throat before the Beacon Park Yard area so that the contractors will have maximum ability to use the lay down area while rebuilding the throat.

7. A proposal to flip the active rail and layup is included on Appendix A, Page 80. This includes shifting the active rail line away from the abutting homes. MassDOT never presented this option to its Task Force, and if it had I expect that it would be favorably received. This could be further improved by increasing the distance separating the abutting homes and nearest rail line to create an at-grade bike/ped path and a modest amount of landscaping. This would provide an appropriate buffer for the abutters and minimize and mitigate the environmental damage they suffer for having the increased rail and highway operations closer to their homes. It would also encourage more people to travel by bike instead of car by creating a safe, separated path from the Harvard Ave end of the new Franklin Street Footbridge to West Station and the Charles River (via a new footbridge constructed over the at-grade highway).
8. Rail and road facilities should be decked over from the outset, rather than wait for developers to come back later to develop "air rights". Decking as part of the I-90 construction project will reduce air and noise pollution. MassDOT should compare the costs and benefits of decking as part of this project vs. doing it after the new highway is operational. It is completely inadequate for MassDOT to suggest that a 20' sound wall next to abutters' home will adequately minimize and mitigate the environmental impacts of this project.
9. MassDOT ignores that I-90 currently operates at approximately 20 miles per hour due to capacity constraints, roadway geometry, and too many cars both to the east and west of Allston. MassDOT should study how this reality relates to the number of highway lanes in Allston and the number of lanes in proposed new streets in Allston. While in an ideal world, vehicles on the highway may always travel 50+ mph, I-90 does not and will not function in that way. So MassDOT should study the possibility of having access to the highway function comparably to how it does at the Newton exits and if that would allow much narrower new roads in Allston that would be more conducive to encouraging more walking and biking and less land-use dedicated to asphalt roads.
10. MassDOT often explains that permits would be needed to make several positive improvements in this project that would minimize and mitigate damage to the environment. Many great projects in Boston and across the country have obtained permits. Boardwalks have been built in navigable rivers in New York City, Philadelphia, and Portland Oregon. The Chicago River is being partially filled to create new urban civic spaces. A boardwalk was built in the Charles River in Cambridge's Kendall Square and a boardwalk was temporarily used in the Charles River during the reconstruction of the Bowker Overpass. A footbridge crossing the Mystic River is currently being planned. When MassDOT has mentioned permitting as a significant obstacle in the DEIR, please require that the Supplemental DEIR require additional information about precedents for similar permits and what can be done to permit these changes.

Because these and so many other issues need further design and analysis, a robust public process is needed to continue improving this project and complying with MEPA regulations. MassDOT's I-90 Task Force should be required to continue meeting on a regular basis, perhaps monthly, through the submission of the Supplemental DEIR, Final EIR, and through the Design-Build and construction of this project.

Sincerely,

Harry Mattison, I-90 Allston Task Force member
28 Mansfield St
Allston MA 02134

From: Jane Gilman
To: [Claire Stampfer](#)
Cc: [Strysky, Alexander \(EEA\)](#); [Clint Richmond](#); [Andrew Fischer](#); [lindaolsonpehlke](#); [Alan Christ](#); [Johnson Anita](#); [David Lescohier](#); [Ilan Wapinski](#); [Kim Smith](#); [Caro Carol](#); [Childs Cooke Lee](#); [Isaac Silberberg](#); [Bob Miller](#); [Bob Schram](#); [donald.leka](#); [Werner Lohe](#); [Mary Dewart](#); [Mary Dewart](#); [Meggan Levene](#); [Chanyasulkit Chris](#); [Jennifer Englund](#); [Paula Friedman](#); [John Shreffler](#); [Michael Burstein](#); [Frank Caro](#); [Neil Gordon](#); [Elijah Ercolino](#); [Hadassah Margolis TMM8](#); [Marty Farlow](#); [Brian Hochleutner](#); [David Klafter](#); [Don Weitzman](#); [Kate Becker](#); [Randolph Meiklejohn](#); [John Bassett](#); [Siegel Marjorie](#); [Bob Lepson](#); [Shira Fischer](#); [Edward Loechler](#); [Sneider Ruthann](#); [Coffin Abby](#); [Axelrod, Sarah L.](#); [maura.toomey](#); [Kathleen Scanlon](#); [Slotnick Will](#); [Elizabeth Goldstein](#); [Stephanie Bruce](#); [Scott Englander / BTB \(scottenglander1@gmail.com\)](#); [djlowe](#); [Virginia Smith](#)
Subject: Re: fully fund the construction of the proposed West Station in the FIRST PHASE of the Mass Pike reconstruction in the Beacon Park Yards.
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2018 10:00:50 PM

Thank you so much, Claire. It's a great letter and I appreciate the work you put in it.

On Thu, Feb 1, 2018 at 6:36 PM, Claire Stampfer <claire.stampfer@gmail.com> wrote:

To MASSDOT:

Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
c/o Alex Strysky, EEA # 15278

alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)

100 Cambridge St., Suite 900 (9th Floor)

Attn: MEPA Office

Boston MA, 02114

Dear Mr. Beaton & Mr. Strysky,

We write to you in strong support of fully funding the construction of the proposed West Station in the first phase of the Mass Pike reconstruction in the Beacon Park Yards. Simultaneous improvements in access for pedestrian, bicycle and public transport should accompany any major highway improvement such as I-90 in Allston. Traffic all over our region has become increasingly congested and this can result in diminishing economic prospects for us all. Merely improving highway transport will result in more pass through traffic, but will not enrich our region. We need to make it easier for large numbers of people to travel within our metropolitan area so that commutes can be shortened and productivity throughout our region can be increased. We need to improve the availability, efficiency and connectivity of rail and bus service.

JGIL-1

West Station should serve as a multi-modal hub. For example, we strongly support new public transit services via West Station joining destination stations such as Longwood, Harvard Square, Kendall Square, and Ruggles. This could include bus rapid transit and light rail along existing

JGIL-2

corridors. We also strongly support improved access for pedestrians and bicyclists, including safer crosswalks and easier ways to cross large roadways at this location. We encourage you to build on the example set in the residential neighborhoods of Lower Allston which have benefited greatly from the new Boston Landing Rail station where ridership has already exceeded expectations.

We, your neighbors in the Greater Boston Metropolitan Area, will oppose plans that limit our communities to being mere traffic corridors, and will strongly support MASSDOT's efforts to improve the quality of life for all of us who live in this great urban region. We strongly urge you to incorporate pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation improvements in the first phase of Mass Pike highway improvements. It is time to move beyond 1950's highway solutions and move on to comprehensive mass, pedestrian and bicycle transit for the 21st century. Collectively, this will also help decrease green house gas emissions and increase opportunities for healthful activities in cleaner air in this new neighborhood.

JGIL-3

Yours truly,

Town Meeting Members of Brookline's Green Caucus

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Maura Toomey Precinct 8
Kathleen Scanlon Precinct 3
Will Slotnick Precinct 12
Elizabeth Goldstein Precinct 10
Stephanie Bruce Precinct 12
Scott Englander Precinct 6
David Lowe Precinct 11

From: Judy Mason [<mailto:judyemason@aol.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 4:17 PM

To: Cerbone, James (DOT)

Subject: I-90 Traffic Impacts

Dear Mr. Cerbone:

I live in North Brookline and I'm dismayed to hear the new traffic plan involving I-90 exits and entrances for this area. Already the traffic at the rush hours (which these days are longer than they used to be) is horrendous here. It takes an inordinately long time to travel down St. Paul Street and Commonwealth Avenue to cross the BU Bridge to get to work. The consideration of Malvern Street is concerning because of the impact the additional traffic will have on the already overcrowded streets, to say nothing about Coolidge Corner. A plan to allow only buses would alleviate that. JEM-1

I hope there will be as much open space as possible to allow for pedestrian and bike pathways. I do appreciate that the project will give us better access to the river. JEM-2

Thank you for your consideration.

Judy Mason

From: Kara Anderson [<mailto:kanderson@ahfboston.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 2:00 PM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)

Cc: comments@walkboston.org

Subject: I-90 Allston EEA # 15278

Dear Mr. Strysky-

I am writing in support of the WalkBoston and Charles River Conservancy's ideas to 'unchoke the throat' at Esplanade path at Soldier's Field Road. The section of path is unpleasant, and unsafe with the multiple users of the path and it would be a benefit all to implement the changes described in the Sasaki report. A buffer and a wider path are excellent ideas! KA-1

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

Best,

Kara Anderson
Architectural Heritage Foundation
45 School Street
Boston, MA 02108

From: Karen Taylor [<mailto:lindallct@mac.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 3:40 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Subject: I-90 Allston. EEA #15278

Dear Mr. Stysky,

I recently saw a video about what people are calling the “throat” next to Storrow drive between BU and that bizarre and dangerous Allston exit to Cambridge and Storrow Drive from the Pike. I believe you intend to fix that.

I really hope you can also widen the path for pedestrians and bikes. Even though I walk the Esplanade regularly, I never go there because when I have done so I feel VERY UNSAFE. Cars are only inches away and we are separated by only a bit of metal, which I’m sure wouldn’t protect me if a car lurched out of control. KCT-1

The solutions I saw in that video — it was created by WalkBoston — were elegant.

The state is spending a great deal on this project, which is necessary not only to fix rotting infrastructure but also gives us the opportunity to bring under-used space into a fine part of the city. It would be a shame to leave this part of the project in the sorry state it is in now.

Don’t you think we are better than that? Beauty and convenience to walkers, who are the main kind of transportation in any dense city, and safety are so important to a city. We need to make those attributes priorities.

Karen

Karen Cord Taylor
1 Lindall Court
Boston, MA 02114
617-523-0615
Cell: 617-899-0027
lindallct@mac.com

From: Kate Enroth [<mailto:kbenroth@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 5:35 PM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)

Cc: comments@walkboston.org

Subject: I-90 Allston, EEA # 15278

Hello, I am a resident of downtown Boston and I love the idea of improving the riverbank for people walking and exercising along this stretch of the Sorrow Drive highway. With the improvements to the interchange, I hope that you will also improve the riverside and walkway. I am very impressed and support the suggestions proposed by Walk Boston and the Charles River Conservancy, they are beautiful. KE-1

Thank you,

Kate Enroth
44 Brimmer Street
Boston, MA 02108

From: Larry Lebowitz [<mailto:llebowitz@lhlcap.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 9:26 AM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)

Cc: peoplespike@gmail.com

Subject: EEA No. 15278 - I90 Allston

I support the plans proposed to widen and improve the walking/biking paths at the “throat” of the Turnpike project. I saw the videos showing the two options developed by Sasaki, either of which would be a huge improvement. Please do not miss the opportunity to improve this part of the project when you rebuild the Turnpike. LLE-1

Thank you.

Laurence Lebowitz
8 Mt. Vernon Place
Boston, MA 02108

From: Matthew Pearlson [<mailto:pearlson@mit.edu>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 11:21 AM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)

Subject: feedback re: EEA No. 15278 - I90 Allston

Dear Sec. Beaton + Mr. Strysky -

I believe that the reconstruction project of the Mass Pike + Soldiers Fields Road should include MP-1
multimodal upgrades for pedestrians and cyclists. The current pathway is very constricted. I support
the #UnchokeTheThroat proposals from WalkBoston, Sasaki, and The Charles River
Convergency and request that these multi-modal options be included to create a better path.
Sincerely, Matthew Pearlson

From: Michael Dornbrook [<mailto:dornbrook@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 5:27 PM

To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)

Cc: comments@walkboston.org

Subject: I-90 Allston, EEA # 15278

Dear Sir,

I would like to add my support to the push to improve the walking/biking paths along the Charles. I can't see this adding that significantly to the \$1 billion budget for rebuilding the interchange, and it would greatly improve access to and enjoyment of one of the most beautiful places in the city. Our Emerald Necklace is a big reason why Boston is so livable and attracts the most talented people and the best companies.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mike Dornbrook

Boston

From: Melissa Mattison [<mailto:mlpmelissa@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 01, 2018 9:45 AM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Subject: #UnchoketheThroat

Secretary Matthew Beaton,

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Attn: MEPA Office

Alexander Strysky, EEA#15278

[100 Cambridge St., #900, Boston MA 02114](#)

alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

MMATT1 thru MMATT-16 same as DI

Dear Secretary Beaton,

The reconstruction of the Mass Pike in Allston will define our region for decades to come. There must be major transformations of Massachusetts' transportation system to make it far more climate-friendly, socially equitable, and suited to the 21st century economy, and Allston must show a bold commitment to these changes. Unfortunately, the project as currently proposed in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) fails to do so. I therefore ask that you require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR to address these deficiencies and study the items described below.

Under the Global Warming Solutions Act, Massachusetts must cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 1990 emissions levels by 2020 and at least an 80% reduction by 2050. I appreciate that in 2017 you and MassDOT Secretary Pollack held a series of listening sessions to discuss reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. While the Allston DEIR is an improvement over the existing dreadful conditions, it recreates an outdated 20th-century car-centered transportation system incompatible with such a reduction in emissions.

The DEIR is also inconsistent with the City of Boston's Imagine Boston 2030 and Go Boston 2030 plans and the Boston Planning and Redevelopment Agency's I-90 Allston Placemaking Study. While it is commendable that the MBTA is in the process of launching a Commuter Rail Vision Study, it is unacceptable that MassDOT's Allston DEIR perpetuates out-dating thinking (using valuable acres of urban land for rail layup) while it

should instead support better mid-day service, construction of West Station in the first phase, and steps to move forward with passenger service on the Grand Junction.

What the Allston I-90 must do is create a 21st-century network of transit by bus, rail, and bike that also dramatically improves active transportation in the Charles River Parklands. I ask that you require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR to address these issues:

1. Build West Station with two-track service in the first phase of the project
2. Rebuild the highway at-grade in the "throat" using the A Better City (ABC) concept
3. Reduce the number of lanes in streets throughout the proposed urban grid to create a safer environment more conducive to walking and biking.
4. Study how separate paths for biking and walking can be provided in the entire section of Charles River Parkland from the River Street Bridge to the BU Bridge, including the "throat", for all viaduct and at-grade options. This study should include consideration of a boardwalk (both temporarily during construction and as a permanent structure) and the use of fill, and how to mitigate impacts on the river by restoring today's degraded bank into a "living shoreline" of native vegetation. Consider how this can be done both as part of the I-90 project or in a subsequent project.
5. Construct new footbridges near Agganis Way and Amory Street that cross over the highway and link Commonwealth Ave in Boston and Brookline to the Charles River parkland to further encourage commutes by bike.
6. Introduce new North-South bus routes that cross over the highway and connect North Allston and Commonwealth Ave, and by extension Harvard Square and Longwood.
7. Fully evaluate the possibility of shifting the rail lines away from the abutting homes and creating an at-grade, off-road walk/bike path from the Regina Pizzeria end of Harvard Ave to West Station and over the at-grade highway to the Charles River. A simple barrier wall is insufficient mitigation for the Environmental Justice community that is so heavily burdened by the air pollution, noise pollution, and vibration impacts of the highway and rail.
8. Study how to upgrade the Grand Junction railroad linking West Station, Kendall Sq. and North Station, and enhance the Grand Junction Bridge to become a walk/bike connection between the Charles River parkland in Cambridge and Boston.
9. Evaluate increasing off-peak commuter rail service between Worcester and Boston—obviating the need to build a layover area to store idle trains in Allston.

Sincerely,

Melissa Mattison

28 Mansfield Street

Allston, MA 02134

mlpmelissa@yahoo.com

January 28, 2018

Mrs. Monica Kelly Hexner
Member
Cambridge Plant & Garden Club
12 Shady Hill Square
Cambridge, MA 02138

RECEIVED

JAN 31 2018

Executive Office of Energy
& Environmental Affairs

Matthew Beaton
Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

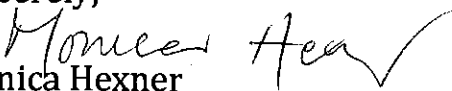
Dear Mr. Beaton,

In my view, the most important issue now in the I-90 project is the building of the West Station. A whole new neighborhood (bigger than Kendall Square) without a transit station does not make sense.

In the Throat Area, Mass DOT developed three options, and the preferred option is replacing the highway viaduct. This would make the pathway very noisy and also preclude any connectivity between Brookline and the Charles river ! The lack of an attractive bike and pedestrian path along the water's edge is unthinkable! Bicycle commuting is a rapidly increasing mode of transportation - and a healthy one. A better bike path and pedestrian walkway are essential.

This new neighborhood needs plenty of green space. Please do not make the same mistakes as those made in the development of the Seaport district! The Charles River Conservancy is currently working with Sasaki Architects to illustrate how this can be achieved.

Sincerely,


Monica Hexner

Cc: Alex Stryisky

February 1, 2018



Secretary Matthew Beaton
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Attn MEPA Office
Alexander Strysky EEA#15278
100 Cambridge St. #900 Boston Ma. 02114
alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

Re: Allston I-90 Interchange DEIR
Date: Feb 1, 2018

Dear Secretary Beaton,

We City Councilors from Newton are writing to express our grave concern regarding the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Draft Environmental Review (DEIR) for the Allston Interstate 90 Interchange project. MassDOT's proposed project timeline will have a disastrous impact on thousands of our constituents during the 6 years of construction and beyond. The concerns raised in this letter pertain to several domains; disruption during construction, cost of the project, and long term environmental impact to our community. As this project is proposed to be funded in part by tolls our constituents pay, we feel it is important to make sure that the road reconstruction has the least impact possible on our residents, and is fiscally and environmentally responsible. It appears that MassDOT has overlooked outreach to the western suburbs, which includes key stakeholders in this process. We are joining the more than a dozen community and advocacy organizations who have been overseeing the planning of this project for several years to advocate for a more effective, affordable, and environmentally sound alternative to the proposed project.

Our concerns are as follows:

Worcester Line Impact During Construction

The Worcester Line is one of the busiest Commuter Rail corridors in the Commonwealth, yet the decision matrix between the three potential options for replacing the viaduct does not take into account the full impact to the Worcester Line. MassDOT's assumption is that the highway will be reduced to three lanes and that the *Worcester Line will be reduced to one track*. This is unacceptable to communities which have been fighting for decades for better train service. When the second track was finally put in to service in Allston last year, it led to significantly faster and more reliable service. Yet the DEIR assumes that a single-track bottleneck will be acceptable during construction, and does not analyze the differences between the proposals in this regard. This must be addressed, especially considering that the highway will have reduced capacity because of construction during this time.

NCC-1

Our legislative leaders and constituents have fought for decades for improvements to the Worcester Line, and now is not the time to renege on these improvements. We believe that the at-grade "ABC" alternative could be built with minimal disruption to Worcester Line service, while MassDOT's viaduct option would require several years of strangled, single-track operation. This must be fully addressed as a major construction impact—on par with, if not ahead of the Grand Junction—in the final alternative decision, and a supplemental DEIR may be necessary to fully account for these impacts.

NCC-2

Traffic Modeling

The traffic model used by MassDOT makes several assumptions about transit ridership which are hard to reconcile with reality, and the result will likely be an automobile-centered development which increases traffic volume and congestion on the Turnpike. The model shows most traffic in 2040 in the new Allston neighborhoods coming and going by car. Such a car-centric Allston will be one which requires more people to drive, adding to the already heavy traffic on the Turnpike. A reliable traffic model must be investigated to assure that 7 million square feet of new construction is not served chiefly by highway traffic and takes into account new connections in the Allston area to minimize any increase to congestion on the Turnpike. Planning for car-centric Boston neighborhoods flies in the face of state-level emission goals, as well as Governor Baker's commitment to the US Climate Alliance in support of the Paris Climate Agreement. NCC-3

Cost Considerations

The Allston project is state-funded, and much of this money will come from the tolls Turnpike users pay every day. We believe it is imperative that the state make a fiscally prudent choice in selecting a final alignment for the project. MassDOT's highway viaduct alternative is significantly more expensive than the at-grade "ABC" alternative (by nearly \$100 million dollars; simplifying construction staging for this alternative may bring costs down further). Furthermore, the DEIR does not take in to account any life cycle costs for the viaduct. The current viaduct costs \$800,000 annually to keep in a safe, usable state. A new viaduct would cost less to maintain at first, but it would still cost more to maintain—and have a shorter life span—than an at-grade alternative. NCC-4

Environmental Impact

We are in agreement with officials from Boston, Brookline and Cambridge, Harvard University, the Charles River Conservancy, WalkBoston, the LivableStreets Alliance, A Better City and many other organizations and individuals, who believe that this highway project should also create the new Worcester Line commuter rail stop dubbed West Station, and a new bus route over the highway to connect Harvard Square, North Allston, West Station, Boston University, Commonwealth Ave, and Longwood. In addition, "Thinking more broadly, cities all over the world are re-imaging how their urban rivers can enhance their lives...It can correct one of the worst strips of the entire Charles River." If, as part of the lower-cost at-grade alternative, MassDOT can add land to the riverside park, and improve the pedestrian and bike connections to and through it, this would greatly serve our constituents who bike to work. NCC-5
NCC-6

Recommendation:

We believe that an at-grade alternative—already the least expensive to construct, according to MassDOT—is the best path forward. We call on the state to provide a full life-cycle cost estimate for each alternative, to make sure that the citizens of the Commonwealth, and the toll payers on the Turnpike in particular, do not overpay for an unnecessarily complex highway. NCC-7
NCC-8

Sincerely,

Andreae Downs, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 5
Susan Albright, Councilor-at Large, Ward 2

On behalf of:

Allan Ciccone Jr., Councilor-at-Large, Ward 1
Maria Scibelli Greenberg, Ward Councilor, Ward 1

Alison Leary, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 1
Jacob Auchincloss, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 2
Emily Norton, Ward Councilor, Ward, 2
Barbara Brousal-Glaser, Ward Councilor, Ward 3
James Cote, Councilor-at Large, Ward 3
Andrea Kelley, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 3
Leonard Gentile, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 4
Joshua Krintzman, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 4
Christopher Markiewicz, Ward Councilor, Ward 4
Deborah Crossley, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 5
John Rice, Ward Councilor, Ward 5
Victoria Danberg, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 6
Brenda Noel, Ward Councilor, Ward 6
Gregory Schwartz, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 6
Marc Laredo, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 7 and President of the City Council
Rebecca Walker Grossman Councilor-at-Large, Ward 7
David Kalis, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 8 and Vice President of the City Council
Cheryl Lappin, Ward Councilor, Ward 8
Richard Lipof, Councilor-at-Large, Ward 8

Cc: Secretary Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT
Representative Kay Khan
Representative Ruth Balser
Senator Cynthia Creem