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MassDOT appoints director of newly created Sustainable Mobility

By: Olivia Quintana, Globe Correspondent
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The Massachusetts Department of Transportation appointed its director for the newly created position of director of sustainable mobility, who will focus on bringing more modes of travel to more people throughout the Commonwealth, authorities said.

Jackie DeWolfe, who was named to the post on Wednesday, said the job will also focus on projects such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing public health, and solving the problems that can arise with those goals.

“There is a growing demand for ‘complete streets’ — roads that facilitate all modes of travel — and Jackie will help ensure that MassDOT is thinking broadly and inclusively about all users of our transportation system,”

transportation department secretary Stephanie Pollack said in a statement.

DeWolfe, who previously served as executive director of the LivableStreets Alliance, said making the roads more inclusive is an important goal. “A lot of people would love to have transit near them, but how do you give that to more people so they have that option?” she said. “I talked to so many people who don’t feel safe or comfortable riding a bike in a city, but they wish they could. So how do you make that more accessible to more people?”

DeWolfe said that she will technically be in the MassDOT secretary’s office, but that she will be focusing on combining efforts from different divisions and agencies so that they can work together.

MassDOT said DeWolfe will work closely on the Complete Streets program, which provides local areas with funding to make streets safer and more accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and those traveling on public transit.

The department said that over the next year, \$12.5 million will be awarded to cities and towns that plan to increase funding for the Complete Streets program. DeWolfe is expected to try to make the program an essential part of road design in Massachusetts.

“It’s not just about bike lanes or walking,” she said. “It’s a little bit broader. It’s about thinking how to integrate more ways of getting around, sometimes that includes biking, but more holistically about how we can move more people in a sustainable way.

“I’m excited to work with all the different people I get to work with,” DeWolfe said. “I get to work across different divisions, and I get to work with different partners, so I’m excited for us to tackle these issues and solve these problems.”