



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

House of Representatives

State House, Boston 02133-1054

Secretary Stephanie Pollack
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Stephanie.pollack@dot.state.ma.us

Jeffrey McEwen
Federal Highway Administration
Jeff.McEwen@dot.gov

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Dear Secretary Pollack and Administrator McEwen,

Thank you for the opportunity to once again comment on MassDOT's designs for the Allston I-90 Intermodal Interchange Project. Given the proximity of this project to our districts, these plans will be of immense consequence for our constituents' quality of life and the climate as a whole.

We write in support of the **Modified All At-Grade Proposal** which is the only plan that should move forward in this process and we reiterate our opposition to plans which include a Highway Viaduct. Of course significant work must be done to refine the design, but this proposal is the right choice for everyone: walkers, park users, neighbors and commuters. An all at-grade option is most flexible for the future layout of roads, rails, and parkland and potential further reductions in asphalt. Furthermore, such an option will ensure a more healthful use of Magazine Beach Park and a quieter Cambridge in addition to the restoration of a natural Charles River shoreline, a longstanding priority for the City of Cambridge. Additionally this proposal preserves the opportunity for a direct connection to the Grand Junction Path.

The project should **prioritize transit**. The construction process should include a four track, two platform West Station as soon as possible to connect this area to Kendall Square and beyond. In addition to improved connectivity and regional economic development, West Station transit service would relieve pressure on the core of the MBTA system. Completion of a two-track bridge over Soldiers Field Road for the Grand Junction as part of this project is an important next step toward implementing this service, while also providing more space for widening of the Paul Dudley White Path, a connection frequented by our constituents.

The approach to **resilient design** to fortify the Charles River and surrounding communities from the impacts of climate change must be holistic. MassDOT recently suggested they view the highway viaduct as the most resilient option due to elevation above future stormwater floods. However, floods are only one component of the many interrelated effects of climate change. The biggest contribution the Allston Multimodal project can make toward the Commonwealth's ambitious carbon reduction goals and climate resilience is to encourage commuters to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips by prioritizing high-functioning multimodal transit.

The project's **advisory process should be expanded**. Voice must be given to those most impacted by environmental injustices along the corridor. Further oversight from collaborating state and local agencies,

environmental and transportation advocates, historically impacted abuters, and commuters along the I-90/Worcester Line corridor should also be established.

In closing, the viaduct is the legacy of the poor decisions made by auto-centric urban planners and civil engineers during a bygone era. The values of our Commonwealth and society have evolved since then. Only through an at-grade framework can we further our shared goals of restoring the local ecology, mitigating climate change, upholding environmental justice, and incentivizing mass transit over single occupancy vehicle trips.

We look forward to continued engagement to ensure the success of this project.

Yours in service,



Mike Connolly



Jay Livingstone

c/o I-90Allston@state.ma.us