



January 25, 2018

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

Secretary Stephanie Pollack
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Secretary Beaton and Secretary Pollack,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on transportation sector strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve climate resiliency in our Commonwealth. WalkBoston believes that policies and programs that encourage equitable, compact, mixed-use transit-oriented development and that drive mode shift from single occupancy vehicles to walking, biking and transit are critical to meeting these objectives. We look forward to working with your agencies and our partners in the transportation advocacy community to advance these issues.

We encourage you to recognize the importance of walking itself as a climate resilient form of transportation. Extreme weather events may obstruct roads and railways or disrupt electricity and gasoline supply systems, but they do not affect one's fundamental ability to walk. Relatedly, sprawling development patterns undermine resiliency, as they inhibit one's ability to access goods, services and social networks during times of weather-related stresses and emergencies. Creating safe and comfortable walking conditions and walkable development patterns therefore helps achieve both climate mitigation and resiliency goals, and we hope that future statements and directives from your agencies will explicitly address this.

In order to shift people out of single occupancy vehicles and toward walking, biking and transit, we need transportation systems and roadway networks that support those modes. That means safe, convenient and attractive walking, biking and transit for all of our communities. To this end we are deeply appreciative of your Complete Streets efforts. We also urge EEA and MassDOT to support the following approaches to these issues:

- Ensure that there are safe crosswalks serving every bus stop and transit station in the Commonwealth.
- Add low stress bike facilities to all urban and suburban arterial roadways because they are the roads that serve the majority of work sites, schools and transit connections.
- Ensure that there are safe walking routes to all of the Commonwealth's senior centers and elementary schools.
- Improve bus operations by working with cities and towns to provide signal priority for buses.

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- Enforce no parking regulations for crosswalks, bus stops and bike lanes.
- Work with municipalities, state agencies and private property owners to improve snow clearance for sidewalks, curb ramps, bus stops, transit stations and crosswalks.

As your agencies develop policies and programs that address these issues from safety, accessibility and climate perspectives, we also urge you to incorporate these principles into transportation and development projects in the near term. For example, we are deeply concerned and dismayed that the construction of West Station in Allston has been delayed, even as the state moves forward with the reconstruction of the I-90 viaduct there. We are similarly concerned that a highway underpass appears to be the preferred option for Rutherford Avenue in Charlestown, at the expense of a surface road option that emphasizes walkability and active transportation and reconnects communities long separated by infrastructure designed to move cars as fast as possible.

These are just two examples of projects that take us backwards on climate and livable community goals in their current configurations. In an era of climate crisis, we can no longer prioritize highways and automobiles above everything else. In fact, we need to seriously examine opportunities to implement road diets, removing vehicular travel lanes and re-dedicating that roadway space to safe and connected walking, biking and transit infrastructure.

We urge you to re-prioritize the construction of West Station in the near term as a first step towards building a statewide transportation network grounded in principles of accessibility, livability, sustainability and resiliency. Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Landman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy Landman
Executive Director