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MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

WAYS AND MEANS
GLOBAL WARMING AND
CLIMATE CHANGE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES
ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES
AND AGRICULTURE

May 15, 2017

Secretary Stephanie Pollack, Chairwoman
Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Secretary Pollack:

We are writing to request that Amendment Three of the FFY 2017-2021 TIP for the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) be revised to include \$200,000 in funding to operate seasonal ferry service from the City of Lynn to Boston in FFY2017. For residents of the North Shore region, who consistently face congested roadways and rush hour trains at capacity, this funding would provide a critical connection to Boston and would have a strong impact on stimulating economic growth for the region. In addition, with planned shutdowns for commuter rail service north of Lynn this summer, ferry service for the summer season would serve to promote and preserve environmental justice for the region by mitigating the negative impacts that the required upgrades will have on commuters and tourists traveling to and from the North Shore this summer.

As you know, the City of Lynn has recently been awarded \$4.5 million in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant funds through the Passenger Ferry Grant program to purchase a ferry boat which will operate year round and offer additional trips to and from Boston and Logan Airport for residents of and visitors to the North Shore. We strongly believe that continuing to operate the Lynn Ferry and growing ridership, while MassDOT and the City await the federal funding and complete the procurement of a ferry boat, is critical to ensuring the future success of the ferry.

The Lynn Ferry, which began the two year pilot program in May 2014, has demonstrated viability for ferry service from Lynn to Boston for commuters from all over the North Shore.

Funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Seaport Advisory Council and in partnership with Boston Harbor Cruises as the operator, the Lynn Ferry completed the second of two years in the pilot program in 2015. Ridership numbers far exceeded projections--13,322 passengers in 2014 and 14,577 passengers in 2015--and broad community and regional support continues to build.

The Lynn Ferry project has been a vision of community leaders for over a decade. It was incorporated into the City's Waterfront Master Plan in 2007 to maximize planning and economic development. Work toward this vision began in 2008 with a \$750,000 grant from the Massachusetts Seaport Advisory Council which shared the vision for water transportation to transform access to and from the North Shore. This initial funding was used at the designated Blossom Street Extension site for the reconstruction of the boat ramp, improvements to the drainage, pavement of the adjacent lot and demolition of an existing building, both of which had been vacant for over 30 years.

The City's only owned port facility received another state grant in 2011 for \$1.6 million, which was used to improve the deteriorating shoreline and fund construction necessary to extend the existing bulkhead to enhance the waterfront access. These improvements were key to priming the site for future passenger ferry operations. The City of Lynn, through their Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC/Lynn) also invested \$750,000, in addition to the more than \$2 million in state funding, which clearly demonstrates both the state and local commitment to advancing water transportation from Lynn and to providing a transit service option that will benefit the entire region.

In response to this substantial investment to date, the communities of the North Shore have embraced water transportation for what it offers: convenient, affordable, stress-free commuting that highlights the City of Lynn's waterfront and its proximity to Boston. As a direct result of federal, state, and local investment in this site and in operating the ferry for two seasons, the City of Lynn has already seen economic growth, new developments and increasing property values as a direct result of access to the ferry service.

After the successful two-year pilot program, the key to continuing this service on a permanent, year-round basis was determined to be the purchase of a commuter ferry boat dedicated to Lynn's ferry operations. A dedicated vessel will enable a more robust daily schedule and will better connect employees to jobs, students to institutions for higher education, elders and others to medical resources in Boston, and tourists to a region rich in history and recreational options. The Lynn delegation continues to work with MassDOT and the City to finalize the specifications for this vessel.

As MassDOT and its consultants finalize the procurement of a boat for Lynn ferry service using the FTA grant funds, we cannot stress enough how important operational funding for the interim is to the future success of the ferry service and to the ultimate return on investment for federal,

state and local funds already expended to provide that service. The Lynn Ferry has the potential to match the ridership of the Hingham and Hull ferries if given the opportunity to build ridership.

The Lynn Ferry is the catalyst for change that the City of Lynn and the entire North Shore region need, and that our residents deserve. We greatly appreciate the support of the Boston MPO in proposing a TIP amendment in 2016 in support of the Lynn Ferry, although the CMAQ funding ultimately was not available, and of MassDOT for submitting the successful FTA grant application on behalf of the City of Lynn.

We respectfully request that the members of the Boston MPO amend the FFY2017-2021 TIP to include this critical funding for the Lynn Ferry in FFY2017 to provide a much needed transit option for the North Shore, particularly as the region is negatively impacted by commuter rail upgrades this summer.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. McGee
State Senator
Third Essex District



Lori A. Ehrlich
State Representative
Eighth Essex District



Brendan P. Crighton
State Representative
Eleventh Essex District



Daniel F. Cahill
State Representative
Tenth Essex District

Sent: Monday, May 15, 2017 3:04 PM

To: publicinfo@ctps.org

Subject: [General Comment] Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Funding Amendment (Sent by Doug Brown, doug@friendsofthegreenway.com)

Doug Brown (doug@friendsofthegreenway.com) sent a message using the contact form at <http://ctps.org/contact>.

Dear Boston MPO,

We are writing today to express our strong support for the addition of the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway multi-use path to Draft Amendment Three of the current FY2017 Transportation Improvement Program. This project, listed under the Statewide CMAQ Program, represents a critical missing link in the development of our regional path network. As such, we believe that funding this project is the single most important effort available at this time for the purposes of relieving congestion, mitigating poor air quality, and improving mobility options throughout the Watertown-Cambridge-Belmont region.

Thank you for seeing fit to include this project in your funding priorities for the coming year.

Sincerely,

Doug Brown
Founder
Friends of the Greenway, Inc.
Cambridge, MA

ZIP code: 02138