

Public Comments Submitted to the Boston Region MPO

April 3, 2025

The following written comments were submitted during the 21-day public comment period for the draft Amendment Ten to the Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2025-29 Transportation Improvement Program:

- **Letter in support of Amendment 10 from the MBTA Advisory Board**
 - Particular support expressed for projects S13212: MBTA—Bus Priority and Accessibility Improvements (PATI); S13206: MBTA—Catamaran Overhaul; S13207: MBTA—Natick Center Station Accessibility Improvements; and S13208: MBTA—Wellesley Station Upgrades.
- **Project S13208: MBTA—Wellesley Station Upgrades**
 - Letter in support from the Wellesley Select Board
- **Project S13207: MBTA—Natick Center Station Accessibility Improvements**
 - Letter in support from State Representative David P. Linsky, Fifth Middlesex District
 - Letter in support from the Natick Select Board
- **Project S12971: MWRTA—Blandin Hub Accessible Redesign**
 - Letter in support from the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority



March 13, 2025

Ethan Lapointe
TIP Manager
Boston Region Metropolitan Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Lapointe,

As the MBTA Advisory Board Representative to the MPO, I write in support of TIP Amendment #10, which allocates more than \$24 million in new transit funding across nine projects in FFY 2025 for the Cape Ann Transportation Authority, MBTA, and MetroWest Regional Transit Authority. In particular, I write in full support of S13212: MBTA- bus priority and accessibility improvements (PATI), S13206: MBTA-Catamaran Overhaul, S13207: *MBTA- Natick Center Station accessibility improvements & 13208: MBTA-Wellesley Station upgrades.*

The MBTA Advisory Board supports any MBTA project where accessibility will be improved. In addition, the demand for ferry service has increased and this amendment will help support having spare parts for the Catamarans, so there will be less disruption in service should a vessel need a part. For the town of Natick this funding will directly improve the need for accessibility at and around the train station. It will construct two new elevators, accessible ramps for the station platforms, and six new stairways. In the town of Wellesley, this funding will create an accessible connection between the inbound and outbound platforms at Wellesley Station, which will greatly help the ease of commuting.

Should you or Executive Director Teich have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Sincerely,

Hanna Switekowski

Deputy Director, MBTA Advisory Board

CC: Sheila Page, Town of Wellesley, Morgan Griffiths, Town of Natick

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

March 11, 2025

Mr. David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

Re: TIP Amendment Ten: #S13208: MBTA – Wellesley Station Upgrades

Dear Mr. Mohler and Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

The Wellesley Select Board writes to support the proposed FY 2025-2029 TIP Amendment Ten and urges the MPO to vote to approve the amendment. We are particularly excited about the inclusion of Project #S13208 MBTA – Wellesley Station Upgrades into FY 2025 funding.

Making Wellesley Square Commuter Rail Station accessible to all passengers has long been a goal for the Town. The MBTA recently completed the installation of mini-high platforms providing accessibility to all passengers. Thanks to the tireless effort of residents and town officials working with our MBTA and Federal partners, the mini-high platforms opened last month. The mini-high platforms enable passengers with mobility challenges to comfortably board trains. Construction was relatively simple with minimal disruption to rail service. This concept is now being applied at other commuter rail stations in the region.

While we greatly appreciate these new improvements, access between the inbound and outbound tracks is extremely difficult as there is no accessible route between the two tracks. The proposed \$5 million Wellesley Station upgrade will provide ramps and paving to enable all passengers to travel between the two tracks safely and efficiently. We are eager for the station to be fully accessible as required by the Federal Transit Administration.

The Town of Wellesley is ready to assist the MBTA in expediting this project. We urge the Board to vote to approve FY2025-2029 TIP Amendment 10.

Thank you for your work in improving our region's transportation network.

Sincerely,

Colette E. Aufranc, Chair

cc: Laura Brelsford, Assistant General Manager, System-wide Accessibility
Honorable Representative Alice Peisch
Honorable Senator Cynthia Creem



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

DAVID PAUL LINSKY
REPRESENTATIVE
5TH MIDDLESEX DISTRICT
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VICE CHAIR
Joint Committee on Revenue

Committees:
Joint Committee on
Public Service

January 13, 2025

Ethan Lapointe
Program Manager, TIP
Central Transportation Planning Staff
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

Dear Mr. Lapointe,

I write to you regarding the MBTA request for funding for cost increases in the Natick Center station. The project is bringing the station into compliance with new accessibility standards. The \$6M would go along way in helping Metrowest citizens access the commuter rail safely and efficiently.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your leadership and work in the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Linsky".

David P. Linsky
State Representative
Fifth Middlesex District



TOWN OF NATICK SELECT BOARD

Kathryn M. Coughlin, Chair

Bruce T. Evans, Vice Chair

Richard Sidney, Clerk

Kristen L. Pope

Linda Wollschlager

Email: selectboard@natickma.org

January 10th, 2025

Ethan Lapointe
Program Manager, TIP
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza #2150
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Lapointe,

The Natick Select Board is pleased to support the MBTA's request to the FFYs 26-30 TIP for \$6 million to cover the cost increase of its Natick Center Station Accessibility Improvement project.

As outlined in Natick 2030+, our Master Plan, the Town of Natick is committed to increasing safe and accessible multimodal transportation options across our community. The renovation of Natick Center Station will be key in helping us to meet this goal for the following reasons:

- First, the installation of new elevators, ramps, and high-level platforms will bring the station into compliance with updated accessibility standards, allowing for a greater number of folks to access the opportunities that the MBTA system provides.
- Second, the project will extend the Cochituate Rail Trail from its current terminus at Mechanic Street to Natick Center Station. This will provide a seamless multimodal link between the commuter rail and the Golden Triangle, one of the town's economic hubs.
- Third, the project includes streetscape improvements around the station. When complete, these will connect to nearby state- and town-led roadway projects aimed at improving multimodal infrastructure, making it safer for folks to access the station on foot or bicycle.

The completion of this project will significantly improve Natick's multimodal transportation network by giving more residents, workers, and visitors the ability to access key destinations in and around town without a car. The Town is thus fully supportive of the MBTA's funding request and looks forward to working with both the MBTA and the MPO as the project continues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Kathryn M. Coughlin'.

Kathryn M. Coughlin, Chair



METROWEST REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Public Transportation System

15 Blandin Ave Framingham, MA 01702

Ph. (508) 935 2222 ▪ Fax (508) 935 2225 ▪ www.mwrta.com

March 28, 2025

Boston MPO
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Members and Staff of The Boston MPO:

The MWRTA is pleased to support Amendment 10 to the Boston MPO's 2025-2029 TIP, including the public transportation projects contained therein. In particular, the MWRTA strongly supports the additional funding for the Blandin Hub Accessible Redesign Project. The Boston MPO previously awarded funds for the initial design phase of this project through its Transit Transformation Program (TTP) in FFY2024.

The Blandin Hub Accessible Redesign Project will ensure a safe, modern, reliable, and environmentally sustainable public transit system throughout the MetroWest region. Initial cost estimates for the project are based on new construction of a three story, 7,200 sq/ft. expansion, major renovations to two areas totaling 5,300 sq/ft, as well as minor renovation of office space approximately 3,500 sq/ft. While new construction and renovation costs have experienced sharp increases over the last several years, the MWRTA has conservatively projected total project costs at approximately \$12,500,000 for this project. The Blandin Hub Accessible Redesign Project will allow the MWRTA to introduce key accessibility upgrades, expanded maintenance space for heavy-duty and zero-emission vehicles, updated dispatch center, driver training area, and driver retention features at the Blandin Hub. MWRTA will also implement key net zero building technology throughout the facility, including geothermal and solar energy production systems.

The MWRTA continues to collaborate with MassDOT in securing matching state funds and expects to dedicate a portion of its 5307 formula funds to this initiative. The Blandin Hub Accessible Redesign Project contains several scalable features. MWRTA is prepared to address possible cost overruns, manage surplus funding, and ensure project completion.

Funding made available for design through the 2025-2029 TIP is being flexed to FTA, with anticipated availability to the MWRTA in 30-45 days. Upon execution of the award, the MWRTA will immediately deploy its three on-call architect and engineering (A&E) firms to bring the Blandin Hub Accessible Redesign Project to fruition. Should changes to the scope of work arise, they will be brought to the Boston MPO for review.

Sincerely,

Jim Nee, MWRTA Administrator