

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED FOLLOWING MAY 16, 2019

RE: Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), *Destination 2040*,
Development

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NEPONSET VALLEY SUBURBAN MOBILITY WORKING GROUP

Infrastructure Subcommittee

May 14, 2019

Mr. David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Comment on the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan regarding the Canton Interchange Project

Dear Mr. Mohler:



The [Neponset Valley Suburban Mobility Working Group](#) (SMWG) is a partnership created to address mobility challenges in the suburban Neponset Valley region through multi-modal infrastructure improvements. The group collaborates and advocates for reliable, affordable, cost-effective, efficient, and accessible innovative transportation solutions that serve all needs. This group consists of individuals representing a wide variety of sectors including nine municipalities, the business community, Neponset River Regional Chamber, Neponset Valley TMA, Councils on Aging, social service agencies, and regional transportation service providers focused on solutions to resolve mobility gaps and unmet needs in the region.

The SMWG appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan regarding the Canton Interchange Project

On a daily basis the communities of Canton, Dedham, Norwood, Walpole, and Westwood see increased commuter traffic spilling from I-95 onto Route 1 and Route 1A. Ultimately this traffic travels onto lesser side streets through neighborhoods; seeking a quicker and less congested way to and from jobs in Boston or along the Route 128 corridor. This pass-through traffic chokes local roadways not designed for such use and leads to greatly increased care and maintenance than was needed when the highway came online. Additionally, the perception of traffic clogged roads by residents is now an obstacle to each town in permitting additional housing projects, which is a priority of the Commonwealth.

Traffic backs up on I-95 and I-93 with commuters from as far away as Rhode Island and Cape Cod. Those cars that do not find their way through our communities sit idling on I-95 and I-93 as their vehicles spew harmful emissions into the atmosphere.

This does not need to be the case. The reconstruction of the Canton Interchange has been a priority of the Commonwealth and the communities in our region for decades. We believe it must be placed on the Long-Range Transportation Plan, *Destination 2040*, in order to maintain it's standing as a project of regional significance. The benefits of this project are numerous:

Canton, Dedham, Foxborough, Norfolk, Norwood, Sharon, Walpole, Westwood, Wrentham

- This is a rare case of a highway project that will actually increase open space. Upon completion, more than 30 acres restored as open space and wetlands will be incorporated back into the Blue Hills Reservation.
- Included in this will be a bike path connecting the Route 128 Railroad Station and the University Station development to the Blue Hills Reservation and to Royall Street businesses, creating increased commuter rail use, reduced vehicle dependence, and pollution in the region.
- The cloverleaf design of the interchange is dated and unsafe; its hair pin turns have caused accidents that have resulted not only in serious personal injury and death, but also in the release of hazardous materials in an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC).
- Traffic congestion has reduced the air quality of the region and impeded the ability of the area communities to effectively compete for economic development, thereby costing our communities many millions of dollars in potential annual tax revenue.
- The current bridge structures over Route 128 are deteriorating and will need repair/replacement in the foreseeable future, costing money better dedicated to the permanent solution.
- The Route 128 Add-A-Lane Project has added travel and breakdown lanes along I-95 between the Route 9 and Route 24 Interchanges. Unfortunately, because of the chokepoint at the interchange the full impact of these improvements will never be realized until the Canton Interchange is reconstructed.

Moreover, it should be noted that this project will not add capacity to the highway system, but rather allow for a better and safer flow of existing traffic throughout the region.

While we believe the projects stands on its own merits, it should be noted that it has been in the works for some time and we believe the time is now to add it to the Long-Range Transportation Plan and ultimately to the Transportation Improvement Program for funding.

We respectfully request the Boston Region MPO members in the strongest manner possible to support the inclusion of the Canton Interchange Project on the Long Range Transportation Plan, *Destination 2040*. This region and in fact the entire Boston Metropolitan Area will benefit from a project that is in fact forty years overdue. We thank you in advance for your consideration, partnership and assistance.

Very truly yours,

Neponset Valley Suburban Mobility Working Group Infrastructure Sub Committee:

- Laura Smead, Canton Town Planner and SMWG Co-Chair
- Thomas O'Rourke, Neponset River Regional Chamber and SMWG Co-Chair

- Karen Dumaine, Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association
- Patrick Deschenes, Norwood Assistant Town Planner
- Steven C Findlen, McMahon & Associates
- David Wluka, Wluka Real Estate Corp.
- Sharna Small-Borsellino, MSM, Director, Human Service Transportation Office EOHHS
- Peter McFarland, The Allied Group
- Susan Price, Sharon Planning Board/Three Rivers Interlocal Council, Vice Chair
- Steve Olanoff, Westwood Planning Board



May 14, 2019

Mr. David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Comment on the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan regarding the Canton Interchange Project

Dear Mr. Mohler:

The Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association (TMA) region encompasses the towns of Canton, Dedham, Foxborough, Norwood, and Westwood. The TMA acts as a formal structure for transportation collaboration focused on reducing traffic congestion and air pollution while increasing mobility and commuting options. The Neponset Valley TMA works with communities to address transportation concerns and increase economic development opportunities, and with employers to provide their employees with commuter services promoting a wider range of options for getting to and from work.

The Neponset Valley TMA appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan regarding the Canton Interchange Project

On a daily basis the communities of Canton, Dedham, Norwood, Walpole, and Westwood see increased commuter traffic spilling from I-95 onto Route 1 and Route 1A. Ultimately this traffic travels onto lesser side streets through neighborhoods; seeking a quicker and less congested way to and from jobs in Boston or along the Route 128 corridor. This pass-through traffic chokes local roadways not designed for such use and leads to greatly increased care and maintenance than was needed when the highway came online. Additionally, the perception of traffic clogged roads by residents is now an obstacle to each town in permitting additional housing projects, which is a priority of the Commonwealth.

Traffic backs up on I-95 and I-93 with commuters from as far away as Rhode Island and Cape Cod. Those cars that do not find their way through our communities sit idling on I-95 and I-93 as their vehicles spew harmful emissions into the atmosphere.

This does not need to be the case. The reconstruction of the Canton Interchange has been a priority of the Commonwealth and the communities in our region for decades. We believe it must be placed on the Long-Range Transportation Plan, *Destination 2040*, in order to maintain it's standing as a project of regional significance. The benefits of this project are numerous:



- This is a rare case of a highway project that will actually increase open space. Upon completion, more than 30 acres restored as open space and wetlands will be incorporated back into the Blue Hills Reservation.
- Included in this will be a bike path connecting the Route 128 Railroad Station and the University Station development to the Blue Hills Reservation and to Royall Street businesses, creating increased commuter rail use, reduced vehicle dependence, and pollution in the region.
- The cloverleaf design of the interchange is dated and unsafe; its hair pin turns have caused accidents that have resulted not only in serious personal injury and death, but also in the release of hazardous materials in an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC).
- Traffic congestion has reduced the air quality of the region and impeded the ability of the area communities to effectively compete for economic development, thereby costing our communities many millions of dollars in potential annual tax revenue.
- The current bridge structures over Route 128 are deteriorating and will need repair/replacement in the foreseeable future, costing money better dedicated to the permanent solution.
- The Route 128 Add-A-Lane Project has added travel and breakdown lanes along I-95 between the Route 9 and Route 24 Interchanges. Unfortunately, because of the chokepoint at the interchange the full impact of these improvements will never be realized until the Canton Interchange is reconstructed.

Moreover, it should be noted that this project will not add capacity to the highway system, but rather allow for a better and safer flow of existing traffic throughout the region.

While we believe the projects stands on its own merits, it should be noted that it has been in the works for some time and we believe the time is now to add it to the Long-Range Transportation Plan and ultimately to the Transportation Improvement Program for funding.

We respectfully request the Boston Region MPO members in the strongest manner possible to support the inclusion of the Canton Interchange Project on the Long-Range Transportation Plan, *Destination 2040*. This region and in fact the entire Boston Metropolitan Area will benefit from a project that is in fact forty years overdue.

We highlight the need to focus on innovative, collaborative, and cross-jurisdictional approaches to transportation, mobility, and economic development challenges in order to ensure that the region functions as a whole and is more than the sum of its parts.



Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association
Phone 781-404-5023 Fax 781-895-1122
www.neponsetvalleytma.org

Neponset Valley TMA
c/o TransAction Associates, Inc., 5 Wheeling Avenue, Woburn, MA 01801

We thank you in advance for your consideration, partnership and assistance.

Sincerely,

Karen Dumaine

Karen Dumaine
Executive Director

cc: Anne McGahan, MPO staff



May 20, 2019

Thomas O'Rourke, President/ CEO
Neponset River Regional Chamber
520 Providence Highway, Suite #4
Norwood, MA, 02062
Tom@nrrchamber.com

RE: Comment on the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan regarding the Canton Interchange Project

Dear Mr. O'Rourke:

Almost every day the communities of Canton, Dedham, Norwood, Walpole, and Westwood see increased commuter traffic spilling from I-95 onto Route 1, Route 1A, and Rt. 138. Ultimately, this traffic travels onto lesser side streets through neighborhoods with motorists seeking a quicker and less congested way to and from jobs in Boston or along the Route 128 corridor. This pass-through traffic chokes local roadways not designed for such use and leads to greatly increased care and maintenance than would normally be needed. The perception by residents of traffic clogged roads is now an obstacle to each town's ability to attract and grow business and to permitting additional housing which are priorities of the Commonwealth.

Traffic backs up on I-95 and I-93 with commuters from as far away as Rhode Island and Cape Cod. Those cars that do not find their way through our communities sit idling on I-95 and I-93 as their vehicles spew harmful emissions into the atmosphere.

Local town officials have been working through the Boston MPO to add the I-95/I-93 interchange project to the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan, and after design is completed, the project needs funding. As a business operator located near the interchange, I am very concerned with the impact of congestion on my business and the environment. There are many good reasons the project should go forward including improved safety, related economic development, and an improved environment.

The reconstruction of the Canton Interchange has been a priority of the Commonwealth and the communities in our region for decades. Millions have already been spent on design with the project being close to 75% design status. We believe it must be placed on the Long Range Transportation Plan; *Destination 2040*, in order to maintain its standing as a project of regional significance.

The benefits of this project are numerous:

- This is a rare case of a highway project that will actually increase open space. Upon completion, more than 30 acres restored as open space and wetlands will be incorporated back into the Blue Hills Reservation.
- A bike path connecting the Route 128 Railroad Station and the University Station development to the Blue Hills Reservation and to Royall Street businesses, will create increased commuter rail use and reduced vehicle dependence and pollution in the region.

- The cloverleaf design of the interchange is dated and unsafe; its hair pin turns have caused accidents that have resulted not only in serious personal injury and death, but also in the release of hazardous materials in an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC).
- Traffic congestion has reduced the air quality of the region and impeded the ability of the area communities to effectively compete for economic development, thereby costing our communities many millions of dollars in potential annual tax revenue.
- The current bridge structures over Route 128 are deteriorating and will need repair/replacement in the foreseeable future, costing money better dedicated to the permanent solution.
- The Route 128 Add-A-Lane Project has added travel and breakdown lanes along I-95 between the Route 9 and Route 24 Interchanges. Unfortunately, because of the chokepoint at the interchange the full impact of these improvements will never be realized until the Canton Interchange is reconstructed.

While the projects stands on its own merits, it should be noted that it has been in the works for some time and we believe the time is now to add it to the Long Range Transportation Plan and ultimately to the Transportation Improvement Program for funding.

The Interchange was originally promised in 1972, when then Governor Sergeant decided to abandon the Southwest Expressway plans to extend I-95 northward through the Route 128 corridor and into the City of Boston from the south.

In the 1990's the federal and state governments were committed to establishing the nation's first high-speed rail connection between Boston – Providence – New York – Washington D.C. The plans included a suburban stop at the Route 128/I-95 University Park Rail Station, which officials planned to rebuild along with a 2,500-car parking garage. The region's communities participated in a Task Force established to assist in the planning and permitting of these improvements. The communities insisted on and ultimately entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that among other terms stated that in exchange for the region's support for the proposed improvements that reduced traffic congestion and pollution within the corridor, the then EOTC, MBTA and MassHighway signed a Memorandum of Understanding promising to design and reconstruct the I-93/I-95 Interchange by 2006. In truth, the preliminary 25% design and environmental impact studies only started well after 2006 had passed. We are still waiting for the design to be completed so the project can bid.

Therefore, for all the reasons described above, we ask for your support of the Project and we ask the Boston Region MPO members in the strongest manner possible to support the inclusion of the Canton Interchange Project on the Long Range Transportation Plan, *Destination 2040*. This region and in fact the entire Boston Metropolitan Area will benefit from a project that is in fact forty years overdue. We thank you in advance for your consideration, partnership and assistance.

Very truly yours,



Stephen P. Costello
President/ CEO
Bank of Canton