

Draft Summary of Public Comments on the Proposed Critical Urban Freight Corridors

ISSUE	COMMENTS(S)*	COMMENT (SUMMARIZED)	INITIAL RESPONSE (SUMMARIZED)
Clarification			
East Boston Haul Road to the Mystic River (Figure 1)	Geri Vatan, MassDOT Highway Division, District 6	Requests extending the CUFC on Eastern Avenue north to the intersection with Route 16.	Each MPO has a mileage quota. MPO staff will ask MassDOT to extend the CUFC north until the MPO runs out of its mileage allotment.
Everett-Chelsea Industrial Area and Charlestown (Figure 2)	Geri Vatan, MassDOT Highway Division, District 6	Questions if the effect on current traffic patterns in the Rutherford Avenue area have been thoroughly vetted. States that the route is affected by the Wynn Casino development, and there is a long-range improvement project currently planned for Rutherford Avenue from Sullivan Square to City Square as well as for Maffa Way.	Trucks are most active in early morning and midday, and decrease in activity when casino traffic begins to increase. Some of the plans proposed for Sullivan Square could cause congestion for all vehicles, and many trucks still need to pass through the area even if capacity is constrained. The preservation of the underpass is under active consideration reflecting the importance of this location for all regional traffic.
Everett-Chelsea Industrial Area and Charlestown (Figure 2)	Brad Rawson, Director of Transportation & Infrastructure, City of Somerville (phone conversation)	Concerned that Figure 2 highlights as a CUFC the frontage road between Sullivan Square the the I-93 northbound on-ramp.	This recommended CUFC actually ends where Maffa Way meets the elevated I-93 alignment, reflecting the editing conventions of the MassDOT GIS database. The frontage road in Somerville is highlighted in Figure 2 solely to illustrate how vehicles using the CUFC would actually reach the northbound I-93 ramp.
Charlestown to the Turnpike (Figure 3)	Justin Schreiber, Somerville Resident	States that the Charlestown to the Turnpike CUFC (Figure 3) displays an illegal turning movement, as westbound traffic on Massachusetts Avenue may not turn left onto Western Avenue. Requests an alternate route.	The left turn is made at Pleasant Street, and this is coded in the MassDOT database. The maps in the memorandum only display streets with a functional class of "collector" or higher, and Pleasant Street is not shown. The proposed resolution on Page 1 states that the vote refers to the routes as they are coded with MassDOT.
Charlestown to the Turnpike (Figure 3)	Geri Vatan, MassDOT Highway Division, District 6	States the proposed CUFC depends on 3 heavily traveled bridges. Two of these bridges are structurally deficient, and one needs repairs.	Designating a corridor as a CUFC allows federal funds specifically reserved for improving the freight network to be utilized for needed reconstruction and modernization. This may allow work on the bridges to proceed in an earlier timeframe.
Charlestown to the Turnpike (Figure 3)	Marilyn Wellons, Cambridge resident	Regarding ongoing work on the I-90 redesign, states that it would be useful for districts in Cambridge that abut the proposed CUFC to know how the proposed CUFC relates to changes on the Boston side of the River Street and Washington Bridges.	This issue previously arose when the CUFCs were first presented to the MPO, regarding the South Boston Waterfront (Figure 4). The CUFC branch using Cypher Street has to jog to First Street because the extension of Cypher Street has not yet been accomplished. Chairman Mohler stated that when Cypher Street is extended, the MPO will be able to petition MassDOT and FHWA to adjust the CUFC route.
Route 24 and the Granite Street Corridor (Figure 5)	Geri Vatan, MassDOT Highway Division, District 6	Advises that Mayor Joseph Sullivan may not be receptive to the CUFC designation in Braintree.	MPO staff developed the Granite Street corridor in consultation with Christine Stickney, Braintree Town Planner. Mayor Sullivan is receptive to the designation.
CUFC Program	Joanne Tierney, Office of Representative William C. Galvin	Requests information about the CUFC program. (by telephone)	The CUFC program is a national program defined by federal statute and administered by the Federal Highway Administration in partnership with the states and MPOs. CUFCs will be eligible to utilize dedicated federal funding to help defray the cost of improvements and reconstruction. Future projects in CUFCs will be planned and programmed as part of the ongoing MPO planning process. (by telephone and e-mail)

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Bicycle and Pedestrian Concerns			
CUFC Designation in Everett, Chelsea, and East Boston	Stephen Winslow, Bike to the Sea	Requests that any improvements to roadways take into account the safety and quality of life of residents in the communities. States that the roads proposed for CUFC designation are critical for pedestrian access to transit, adding that cyclists have no other convenient route into Boston other than the proposed roads.	The designation of a roadway as a CUFC does not change the design or function of a road. A CUFC designation grants eligibility for federal funds specifically reserved for improving the freight network, allowing for easier incorporation of the projects into the state's capital budget. The planning and reconstruction of Beacham and Second Streets can incorporate bicycle and pedestrian amenities regardless of the CUFC designation.
CUFC Designation in Everett, Chelsea, Charlestown, Cambridge, South Boston, and East Boston	WalkBoston (attached letter from Wendy Landman)	Expresses concern regarding potential increases in heavy truck traffic may negatively impact pedestrians. States that the proposed CUFCs are all busy city streets through densely settled residential and commercial areas. Increased truck traffic and potential roadway changes along these routes can pose direct threats to pedestrian safety. Notes that several communities are environmental justice communities that are vulnerable to hazards including diesel pollution. Adds that MassDOT's Healthy Transportation Policy Directive would apply to any projects receiving freight funding.	The Healthy Transportation Policy Directive will apply to any proposed improvements in these corridors, even if an additional freight-specific funding source is utilized. The MPO project selection process will continue to apply to projects in the designated CUFCs.
Charlestown to the Turnpike (Figure 3)	Jim Lerner, Boston Resident	States that the Cambridge section of the Charlestown to the Turnpike CUFC is heavily used by cyclists, and expresses concern about the mix of cyclists and trucks. Binney Street and Massachusetts Avenue currently see heavy traffic and have no separated bike lanes.	The route is currently signed as a truck route because through truck traffic is not allowed on many nearby streets. A CUFC designation will allow the use of federal funds to continue to improve the roadway and associated amenities for all users. Binney Street is getting a set of separated bike lanes.
Freight Advocacy			
Route 140 (Figure 6)	495/MetroWest Partnership (attached letter from Paul Matthews and Jessica Strunkin)	Supports the designation of a portion of Route 140 in Foxborough as a CUFC. States agreement with the characterization of the area as including a "large concentration of industrial and logistic activity." Notes Route 140's connectivity to Route 1 in Foxborough as an important factor given Route 1's potential build-out opportunities as a Growth District and a Regionally Significant Priority Development Area.	Aerial photos of the region clearly show the importance of the Route 140 corridor to freight and industrial logistics. The Southeastern Region Planning and Economic Development District is designating the section of Route 140 in Mansfield between Foxborough and I-495 as a CUFC, completing the Route 140 CUFC serving this industrial concentration. Congress recognized the importance of freight and significantly expanded the Nation Highway Freight Network in the FAST Act. If the CUFC program is deemed successful, there may be future opportunities to designate additional mileage.
CUFC Study and Selection	Sara Hines, Ashland Resident	States that the proposed CUFCs are mainly limited to Route 128 and locations near Boston. With the Allston/Brighton rail yard to be developed by Harvard, rail freight access is now terminated by a rail yard near Westborough. This will result in added freight transfers via routes that have not been planned for freight distribution. There is no study of how the MetroWest area will accommodate rail generated trucking, nor is there is a study for air freight from Logan and Hanson. States that the overall impact of truck traffic is worth studying.	The MPO is expanding its knowledge of regional logistics patterns using a range of investigative techniques. Within the next year, the MPO hopes to use this data to more accurately reflect truck movements in travel demand models. Progress on these efforts will be reported to the MPO and its Advisory Council.
Bellingham / I-495 Region	Jim Kupfer, Town Planner, Town of Bellingham	Expresses interest in the CUFC program, stating that the Town of Bellingham has several industrial freight complexes and many businesses are seeking sites in Town. Asks how the Town's sites relate to those in other states. Adds that I-495 and the region have become a central location for trucking in Northern New England, connecting to states to the south.	The importance of I-495 is valid, and Congress recognized this by including the entire Interstate Highway system in the National Highway Freight Network in the FAST Act; MAP-21 only included a portion of the Interstate system. [MPO staff included a copy of the memorandum with the response.]

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General Inquiries			
General Inquiries at MPO Open Houses	Bob Mickiewicz, Hancock Civic Association; Howard Wu, Northeastern Student; Alison Pultinas, Friends of the Melnea Cass Boulevard; Barry Steinberg, Association for Public Transportation; Carl Seglem, Boston Resident; Paul Regan, MBTA Advisory Board; Natalie Raffol, McMahon Associates (open house visitors)	Asked general questions regarding the CUFC program during MPO Open Houses.	MPO staff provided information on the CUFC program to Open House attendees.



walkBostonTM

May 22, 2017

Bill Kuttner
Boston Region MPO
10 Park Plaza #2150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: comments on proposed Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFCs)

Dear Bill,

WalkBoston appreciates this opportunity to comment on the Boston Region MPO's proposed Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFCs). For the past 27 years, we have worked to make walking safer and easier in Massachusetts to encourage better health, a cleaner environment and vibrant communities. We are concerned that potential increases in heavy truck traffic along the proposed CUFCs may undermine these goals.

Of particular note, the proposed CUFCs in East Boston, Chelsea, Everett, Charlestown, Cambridge, and South Boston all run along busy city streets (as opposed to highways) through densely settled residential and commercial areas. Increased truck traffic along these routes and potential roadway changes to accommodate this traffic (such as widening roadway lanes, which leads to longer street crossing distances and higher traffic speeds) can pose direct threats to pedestrian safety. It is also worth noting that several of the aforementioned communities are environmental justice communities that are disproportionately vulnerable to environmental hazards, including diesel pollution from trucks. The negative health impacts of such pollution further diminish the walkability and livability of our cities and towns.

If the proposed CUFCs are to be incorporated into the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN), appropriate measures must be taken to ensure safety for pedestrians and the reduction/mitigation of diesel pollution. We have reached out to MassDOT about this and we are reassured to hear that their Healthy Transportation Policy Directive would apply to any projects receiving freight funding. WalkBoston stands ready to assist with these issues and we look forward to receiving further guidance to this end.

Sincerely,

Wendy Landman
Executive Director, WalkBoston

Cc: Gabe Sherman, MassDOT

MAKING MASSACHUSETTS MORE WALKABLE

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May 22, 2017

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

RE: Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Proposed Critical Urban Freight Corridors

Dear Mr. Mohler:

On behalf of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, please accept the following as our official comments regarding Boston Region MPO’s Proposed Critical Urban Freight Corridor.

The 495/MetroWest Partnership is a non-profit advocacy organization serving thirty-five communities, over half a million residents, and an employment base of over \$23 billion per year. The Partnership seeks to address regional needs through public-private collaboration by working to enhance economic vitality, improve quality of life and sustain natural resources. The Partnership focuses on helping to alleviate regional constraints and limitations, and conducts numerous initiatives on transportation, workforce housing, brownfields, and water resources.

With our latest economic analysis, we know that the 495/MetroWest region continues to grow thanks to a diverse economic base and a high quality of life. While this growth has resulted in opportunities and benefits, transportation challenges remain. If ignored, these challenges threaten the quality of life and economic wellbeing of a region that has become an economic engine for the Commonwealth. Our regional transportation challenges affect the state’s ability to remain economically competitive. These challenges include: increasing traffic congestion, an increase in vehicle miles traveled, and highway capacity issues. Freight Corridors play an essential role in our regional and state economy, and investing in these corridors is important to creating a balanced transportation system.

As such, we are pleased that the Boston MPO is recommending the inclusion of a portion of Route 140 in Foxborough as a Critical Urban Freight Corridor (CUFC). We concur with the characterization of the proposed area as including a “large concentration of industrial and logistic activity” and would note Route 140’s connectivity with Route 1, also in Foxborough, as an important factor given Route 1’s potential build-out opportunities as a Growth District and a Regionally Significant Priority Development Area. Considering both the industrial base and freight service in the region, the Partnership strongly supports the inclusion of Route 140 in Foxborough as a CUFC.

If there are any questions regarding our support of the proposed CUFC, please contact Jessica Strunkin at 774.760.0495 x.101, or by email at Jessica@495partnership.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul F. Matthews
Executive Director

Jessica L. Strunkin
Deputy Director

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