

Destination 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan: Public Comment Summary Including Response

7/20/2023

Comment Topic	Name	Support / Oppose / Request / Concern	Comment	Response
Formal Comments Submitted via Email and MPO Comment Forms				
<i>Destination 2050</i> LRTP: Collaboration, projects, programs, Needs Assessment, planning framework	Lynsey Heffernan, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Support	MBTA comment letter on <i>Destination 2050</i> : https://www.ctps.org/data/calendar/pdfs/2023/0720_MPO_LRTP_Public_Comment_Letters_Compiled.pdf	Thank you for sending these comments. We will share them with the MPO board at their meeting on July 20. We also look forward to continued collaboration with all of you.
<i>Destination 2050</i> LRTP: Bicycle investments, resiliency, investment program allocation, projects, safety, rail expansion	Cole Rainey-Slavick, Somerville resident	Request, Suggest, Concern	Hello, I am writing to share general comments on the Long Range Transportation Plan: On page 4 of the executive summary in the list of investment priorities the description of intersection improvements seems notably incomplete. Conspicuously absent from the description is any mention of bikes or bicyclists. This seems to be a notable omission given the repeated mention of prioritizing vulnerable road users throughout. Although the longer description in chapter 5 does mention bicyclists it does not specifically mention protected intersections. Massachusetts' Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide includes models for minimizing conflicts and protecting bicyclists through intersections in chapter 4 with the highest standard being protected intersections. However, as someone who uses a bike as one of my primary means of transportation there are only a small handful of intersections (even along protected bike routes) I can think of that come close to	Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the Boston Region MPO's Destination 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). We appreciate your feedback. Your comments will be shared with the MPO at the July 20th board meeting. During that meeting, board members will vote on the endorsement of the LRTP after considering public comments. You are welcome to participate in the meeting, which will be held virtually via Zoom. More information on the meeting will be posted to the MPO's meeting calendar as the meeting date approaches. The Boston Region MPO is composed of 97 cities and towns, including densely populated communities such as Cambridge and Brookline and sparsely populated

meeting those standards. This is a missing piece of our bike infrastructure and an especially glaring one given that the worst crashes typically occur at intersections. Please include protected intersections for bikes explicitly into your Intersection Improvements planning as well as your Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections planning. It would be an important improvement to the developing bike network and start to meet already established guidelines from the Commonwealth.

In response to the resiliency summary, Table 2-4 and the resiliency goal in Figure 3-1, I would urge you to think beyond simply protecting existing infrastructure with mitigation projects and to incorporate an understanding of how existing infrastructure contributes to climate change and other environmental impacts. That should include the impact of pavement on heat island effect, runoff, flooding, local ecology, and lack of groundwater replenishment as well as the relative impact of various travel modes in terms of emissions with a prioritization of lower emission travel modes. That the existing transit network actively contributes to climate change and worsens its impacts should be openly acknowledged and steps for transformation explicitly spelled out.

In response to Table ES-1 and the list of Major Infrastructure projects/Table 5-2, which seems to be highly oriented towards highway projects, I would urge you to increase the funding share of Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections, Transit Transformation, Community Connections, and Bikeshare Support. These projects should be the priorities

communities such as Essex and Carlisle. The MPO tries to balance the needs of all of its constituents. Some of those needs include better bicycle routes, roadway improvements that increase safety for all road users, efficient movement of freight around the region, and improvements to the transit system. The MPO works to address the region's needs through its LRTP, the 5-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and other planning documents.

The MPO is required by federal regulations to list regionally significant projects in its LRTP. Regionally significant projects tend to be large, and they often reconfigure highways or expand passenger rail service. Every year the MPO develops its TIP, a 5-year capital spending plan that funds dozens of projects, many of which are geared towards bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders. However, because those projects typically do not change the capacity of the highway or passenger rail system, the MPO is not required to list them in its LRTP. In its 2019 LRTP, the MPO listed a couple dozen projects of various sizes. In this current draft LRTP, the MPO chose to list a smaller number of large projects, many of which are required to be listed for federal compliance purposes. Reducing the length of the project list in the LRTP gives the MPO more flexibility to fund projects in future years through its TIP.

going forward. I would also urge you to consider refocusing on major projects that are primarily oriented towards pedestrians, transit, and people on bikes and wheelchairs which could include pedestrian bridges across rivers, completing entire trail projects in one go rather than as a series of stops and starts (for example completing the Massdot priority trails in the MPO region or even taking on the development of the whole landline as proposed by MAPC), infill stations on transit lines, electrification of commuter rail and busses, Red-blue connector, blue line to Lynn etc. The impact of these projects can be enormous there is no reason to see some of them as a series of small projects or the larger ones as less of a priority than highway interchanges. This would seem to be more compatible with the MPO's stated goals.

In response to Table 2-1, I would urge the MPO to consider the increased damage to the human body created by SUV's/Light Trucks with raised grills which have proliferated in recent years. These trucks have limited visibility, have more force than a car, and have a higher strike point on pedestrians which is a deadly combination. There need to be strategies to mitigate this such as mandating sight lines and lowered grill heights or taxing vehicles by size and weight (heavier vehicles also contribute more to road degradation).

In response to Table 2-2, I would urge the MPO to not limit itself to BRT projects and also consider rail expansion where appropriate. BRT is great where it is appropriate but there are clear rail projects that have been talked about for decades such as Red-Blue connector, Blue line to Lynn, and NSRL and

With regard to rail expansion projects, the MPO did contribute funding to the Green Line Extension, and that project is not listed in this LRTP because it is now complete. The MPO listed the South Coast Rail project in its 2019 LRTP. South Coast Rail will expand the commuter rail system, but the new rail segments are located outside the Boston MPO region, so the MPO is not listing the project in its 2023 LRTP.

The MPO's largest proposed investment program in this draft LRTP is its Complete Streets program. The MPO proposes to spend 45% of its available funding on this program for much of the life of the plan. The Complete Streets program funds projects that seek to improve roadways for all users: bicyclists, pedestrians, bus riders, and drivers. Also, some of the MPO's Major Infrastructure projects are large complete streets projects, such as McGrath Boulevard in Somerville and Rutherford Avenue in Charlestown.

Again, thank you for taking the time to comment on the LRTP.

they should not be preemptively eliminated from discussion. The Framingham: Route 126/Route 135 Grade Separation project seems primarily oriented to improving automobile traffic and out of step with the state priorities of the MPO. A project that would seem to line up more to those priorities would be grade separating the Worcester line through downtown Framingham. and building a multi use path on top.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Destination 2050
LRTP: Investment programs, projects, funding allocation
[reply to staff response]

Cole Rainey-Slavick,
Somerville resident

Oppose,
Concern

Thank you for the explanation, however I do not feel it adequately addresses or even acknowledges the validity of my concerns.

You say "Every year the MPO develops its TIP, a 5-year capital spending plan that funds dozens of projects, many of which are geared towards bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders. However, because those projects typically do not change the capacity of the highway or passenger rail system, the MPO is not required to list them in its LRTP." but this appears to be an artificial and unnecessary barrier. Why are high capacity bike and pedestrian projects not seen as worthwhile in and of themselves but only in their capacity to influence rail or highways? This would appear to be a strong bias towards certain modes of transportation and functionally excluding others from large scale projects, regardless of potential capacity or predicted usership. This is despite, as I said originally, it is actually very much possible to craft large scale bike and pedestrian projects, even if simply by combining what are currently considered to be

Thank you for your thoughtful and thorough reply, and I am sorry you feel your concerns were not adequately addressed. While the MPO board decided to include fewer projects in the LRTP this year, primarily projects that are federally required to be included, policy discussions about LRTP projects and project listing are ongoing. Your comments will be shared with the board and will help inform future discussions and decisions on this topic.

The LRTP functions as an overarching and goal-oriented planning document that guides the development of other MPO programs like the TIP, where the majority of project funding decisions are made each year. The absence of a particular project in the LRTP does not imply it is excluded or lesser valued in MPO decision making, and

seperate small projects (such as the various parts of the Landline network, or the MCRT under construction/in planning) but could instead be framed as a single large project. The potential capacity of these projects looked at collectively is enormous so there truly is no reason to only view them as disconnected small projects.

When you say that the length of the LRTP was reduced to allow for more flexibility in the future, what was left out this time? Is there a list of the projects you chose not to fund? Is there anywhere I can see a breakdown of how much was saved and where it is planned to be used?

"With regard to rail expansion projects, the MPO did contribute funding to the Green Line Extension, and that project is not listed in this LRTP because it is now complete. The MPO listed the South Coast Rail project in its 2019 LRTP. South Coast Rail will expand the commuter rail system, but the new rail segments are located outside the Boston MPO region, so the MPO is not listing the project in its 2023 LRTP." Does not address my concerns at all. First of All GLX isn't actually complete. The mandated mitigation for the big dig was supposed to take the GLX all the way to the medford hillside and the EPA approved plan took the line to route 16. Why is the proposed phase II of GLX for the Medford branch not included? Does the MPO intend not to follow through on phase II?

GLX and SCR are also not the only potential rail expansion projects available to fund. MBTA is still moving forward on studies for the Red-Blue Connector in its capital plan, why is this

we welcome your engagement in the development of the next TIP and other MPO work to ensure projects and decisions are consistent with the vision and goals set forth in the LRTP. Your comments regarding specific projects and project priorities in the region will also be considered and shared with the board and staff as part of our planning and program development processes.

Thank you again for your input and engagement.

project not included? The city of Boston has committed to moving forward the Orange line extension to Roslindale, why is this project not included? The city of Lynn has been pushing for the Blue line to be extended there for decades and there have been numerous studies for it at this point, why is this project not included? Why are a series of highway projects all deserving of funding but none of these transit projects that have been languishing, sometimes for decades? The MBTA has committed to electrifying buses and commuter rail, why are these projects not included?

"The MPO's largest proposed investment program in this draft LRTP is its Complete Streets program. The MPO proposes to spend 45% of its available funding on this program for much of the life of the plan." You say this and yet the current proposal does not actually align with this. Instead, the actual proposed spending flips this ratio with 47% going to the major projects, which are predominantly highway projects, and only 30% going to complete streets. The proposed spending ratios also reduce the spending on intersection improvements from 12% to 10%. If you are going to Highlight the 45% complete streets number to push back on criticism over the focus on highways you really should be following through on that commitment in practice. Given the actual proposed breakdown of spending, this response frankly feels deceptive.

You can do better.

Destination 2050
LRTP : Appendix D,
Salem Bridge Street
Project (#612990)

David Kucharsky, Salem,
Director of Traffic and
Parking

Correction

In Table D-3 Notes for this project indicate the project would widen Bridge Street from two to four lanes. I believe that was the old design and does not reflect the new design which would maintain two lanes and add a separated bi-directional path along the north side of the roadway.

Thank you for your comment on Appendix D to the LRTP, and for catching that error. We'll incorporate the correction to that project as part of our last batch of edits before finalizing the document. Just so you know, I believe the reason why the error occurred was because MassDOT is now tracking a new Project ID, # 612990, for the Bridge Street project. The old one (#5399) was first initiated back in 1986 (I don't honestly know why its still in MassDOT's system given we have the new one). If you have any other feedback on the LRTP or projects in it, please let us know.

I look forward to seeing how the Bridge Street project continues to advance, and if you have any questions about seeking construction funding once you guys hit 25% design you know where to find us!

Destination 2050
LRTP: Safety

Tina Hein, Holliston, Select
Board Member

Request

The Town of Holliston is the location of approximately 6 miles of a major regional transportation corridor along routes 16-126. The number of weekday commuting vehicles surpasses the total population of the town. This corridor bisects the town, seperating residential zones from downtown schools, open space, public buildings, and parks on either side. It runs through our commercial/retail dense downtown areas. And also serves as the heavy commercial vehicle access route to each

Thank you very much for your feedback on the Draft Long Range Transportation Plan, Destination 2050. My name is Ethan Lapointe, and I work as the manager of the Boston Region MPO's Transportation Improvement Program, which takes the objectives outlined in the LRTP in the long term and works to implement and realize them in the short term. In recognition of the issues that you highlighted in your comment, the MPO and our partners at MassDOT

of our industrial parks.

Without an investment from the MPO to improve safety for all road users, as well as bicycle and pedestrian access, we will continue to experience crashes with serious injuries, a poor level of comfort and incomplete network for people who bike and walk. This limits the potential to expand safe routes to school and promote increased foot traffic to our downtown businesses. As a small town in a growing region, with limited staff resources to focus on competitive grant opportunities, we benefit from MPO funding and assistance to achieve community priorities of expanded network for biking and walking.

have worked to integrated multimodal connectivity and enhanced user safety into the designs of all transportation projects that appear in the LRTP, and, eventually, into the five-year TIP.

With the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, there is now an unprecedented amount of infrastructure funding available for the state and its municipalities to capitalize upon. In order to assist municipalities in getting projects onto the TIP, the MPO is launching a competitive initiative with applications starting this fall to fund up to 80% of costs for the design of transportation projects. This is intended to capitalize on the elevated funding levels to construct projects that have moved through MassDOT's design process already. If folks from Holliston are interested in having a call to discuss how the MPO can work with your community to initiate a project in the pipeline, and potentially provide a pathway for funding through the TIP, I would be more than happy to set up a meeting to discuss. In addition, the MPO was recently awarded a federal discretionary grant through the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program to develop a Safety Action Plan for the entire Boston Region. Once this action plan is developed, the MPO will be able to utilize federal discretionary funding for the implementation of projects that advance safety for all users across

the system. I would be happy to speak more to this topic in a meeting as well, or put folks from Holliston in touch with Rebecca Morgan, the MPO's Director of Projects and Partnerships, and the lead on the SS4A grant.

Destination 2050 L RTP: Rutherford Avenue project, transportation system improvements in Charlestown

Dan Jaffe, Boston resident

Request / Suggest

Comment letter on *Destination 2050*: https://www.ctps.org/data/calendar/pdfs/2023/0720_MPO_LRTP_Public_Comment_Letters_Compiled.pdf

Thank you for reaching out with these comments. Your comments will be shared with the MPO board during the board's discussion and vote on endorsement of the final LRTP next week on Thursday, July 20 (materials and Zoom link will be posted to the MPO Calendar). You are also welcome to attend that board meeting.

Destination 2050 L RTP: Rutherford Avenue project, transportation system improvements in Charlestown

Dan Jaffe, Boston resident

Request / Suggest

We are at the edge of no return if we don't have a good plan going forward for both Everett and our selves here in C-Town!

The sign posts are visible! We can close our eyes or respect what they are telling us.

Communities need to grow! My hat goes out to Everett on what they have managed so far and moving forward with these two properties. The root issue here is not killing us with traffic! We too are growing. And as we have no means to add lanes of traffic (nor do we wish to!) we need to stay within the bounds of the Rutherford Ave corridor. It is not wide enough

Thank you Dan. We appreciate your input and engagement. Your comments will be shared with the MPO board and staff.

for any additional surface or elevated options and again we don't want additional impediments to our access across, it's tough enough as is.

Destination 2050
LRTP: Complete
Streets funding

Daniel Albert, Marblehead,
MBTA Advisory Board
Representative

Suggest

Leveraging Complete Streets Funding by
Monitoring Local Spending

I reside in Marblehead and am the Town's MBTA Advisory Board. The MPO should develop a robust process for monitoring the degree to which the 97 towns implement their CS policies. Currently, towns are expected to incorporate the CS philosophy into all projects - whether or not they are funded through the CS program -- but MassDOT and the MPO have no way of knowing whether that expectation is being met.

In Marblehead (and I'm told in other towns as well), officials pretend CS Committees exist solely to develop grant applications and CS Policies are documents to be shelved once they have served the purpose of making the town eligible for CS money.

The bottom line is that Marblehead has done several projects using multiple funding streams -- including CS -- but failed to integrate the CS philosophy into projects and, moreover, its standard operating procedures and approach to mobility.

My name is Ethan Lapointe, and I am the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Manager with the Boston Region MPO. The TIP is the MPO's short range capital plan, which works to implement the vision, goals, and objectives of the upcoming Long Range Transportation Plan, Destination 2050. I wanted to thank you for your feedback on the new LRTP, and share some insight into how the MPO prioritizes investments in projects that commit, in full, to complete streets principles. In addition to MassDOT's separate Complete Streets Funding Program, which provides technical assistance and construction funding for municipalities whose projects align with their local Complete Streets Policies and prioritization plans, the MPO offers a separate Complete Streets Investment Program through the TIP. This investment program amounts to just shy of 50% of all MPO regional target funding, and in the FFY 2024-2028 TIP the total target funding amounts to approximately \$700M across five years. The other investment programs, which are defined by the LRTP, have overlap with complete streets principles as well, including

intersection improvements that prioritize safe pedestrian crossings, major infrastructure projects like Rutherford Avenue in Charlestown, or bicycle and pedestrian projects like the Swampscott Rail Trail.

One of the key components of programming projects in these investment programs is a scoring framework, which is outlined in full detail in Appendix A (Page 355) of the TIP document I linked above. Every winter and into the spring, the MPO reviews the projects that it receives funding applications for and assigns them a score based on criteria categories laid out by the LRTP. Destination 2050, is actually prompting a criteria rewrite to further emphasize investments in resilient, equitable, accessible, connected, and safe transportation systems, and these changes will take effect this fall. The score a project obtains through this evaluation process is a significant determining factor in prioritizing which projects get funding. Even after a project has been funded for construction, the MPO works closely with MassDOT to ensure that the full vision of these projects is realized, accommodating, as able, any necessary adjustments to budget or schedule. With the launch of the MPO's Project Design Pilot this autumn, staff will also take a more active role earlier in the project development process to further emphasize projects that seek to

implement a holistic transportation corridor, and fund those projects through design so that they can be built. We look forward to working with planning staff in Marblehead and the other 96 communities in the Boston Region to make these initiatives successful.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Destination 2050
LRTP: DI/DB policy,
funding, public
outreach, themes

Abby Jamiel, LivableStreets
Alliance

Suggest

LivableStreets Alliance comment letter on
Destination 2050:
https://www.ctps.org/data/calendar/pdfs/2023/0720_MPO_LRTP_Public_Comment_Letters_Compiled.pdf

Thank you so much for sharing this feedback on behalf of the LivableStreets team. We appreciate not just the thoughtful and thorough comments, but also your engagement and input throughout the development of this LRTP. Your suggestions on the content of the document are helpful and we'll definitely keep these in mind as we continue to publicize and implement this LRTP as well as start work on the next one.

I've passed this feedback along to colleagues and we can certainly dig into any questions or specifics more when we next meet. In the meantime, your comments will be tracked and shared with the MPO board to inform their discussion and vote on the endorsement of the final LRTP at next Thursday's MPO meeting (which you are also welcome to attend and participate in). Please let me know if you have any questions or would like

any additional follow-up in the meantime!

Destination 2050
LRTP: Lexington
Bedford/Hartwell Rt
4/225 Project

Sheila Page, Lexington,
Assistant Planning Director

Support

Thank you to the MPO staff, particularly Ethan LaPointe and Bradley Putnam in answering Lexington's many questions through out the LRTP development process.

Lexington appreciates the MPO's careful consideration of the projects - of which to include and which not to include as it was not an easy decision. We very much appreciate the MPO keeping Bedford/Hartwell Rt4/225 Complete Streets Reconstruction Project in the LRTP as it provides us the assurance as we continue to invest in the project. As you know we are in the 25% design phase now and just this spring we have secured more funding from Town Meeting to continue the design work towards construction. We expect to submit to the PRC for review/recommendation this fall. We look forward to our continued work with the MPO.

[includes updated letters of support]

Thank you very much for passing these letters along. We'll be sure to add them to our records for the project. I'm glad to hear that Lexington is making good progress on design, and that you're looking to get through PRC this fall. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to facilitate the process of getting the project to PRC or working with District 4. I very much look forward to seeing the project get a 25% design submission to MassDOT so we can begin discussions about construction funding options!

Once again, thank you for your feedback on the LRTP!

Destination 2050
LRTP: Prioritizing
funding for equity
populations

Sarah Mattes, Lincoln
resident

Concern /
Oppose

Distribution of resources-lack of prioritizing minority and low-income populaitons:

I was surprised to see a lack of serious focus on projects (resource allocation) that would have maximum impact on minority and low-income populations. Mass transit is key for these groups. Bike lanes will do nothing to assist most of these populations. Projects in

Thank you very much for your feedback on the Boston Region MPO's Destination 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan. We appreciate your response and concern over the allocation of transportation resources to minority and low-income communities. We do believe that providing resources to these

the suburbs (Lexington, e.g.) will not address the transit inequities experienced by the noted populations.

More needs to be done to strengthen existing public transit options and to, in fact, expand them. This is both an equity and climate resilience issue. I am very disappointed in the recommendations made in the LRTP.

communities in the form of transportation improvement projects is critical to addressing their transportation needs and alleviating adverse impacts that harm communities today.

The projects listed in the LRTP do not constitute the entirety of projects that will be funded in the region through 2050, simply those that are required by federal law that will be included in the LRTP. Other projects—including many transit projects, such as Bus Network Redesign and the implementation of Rail Vision—will also be implemented over the coming years in the region. Under the MPO's major infrastructure, transit transformation, and Community Connections programs, the MPO explicitly has reserved funds through this LRTP for supporting these and other transit projects that are critical to the region and especially for environmental justice and other underserved communities who rely on transit.

In this way, the LRTP focuses on the very large-scale projects that must be included in the LRTP and on developing investment programs that prioritize the types of projects the MPO will invest in over the coming years. The projects funded under the major infrastructure, transit transformation, and Community Connections programs will be selected each year through the

development of the Transportation Improvement Program—and equity is a significant proportion of a project's score, evaluating the impacts (benefits and burdens) the project is expected to have. These criteria are also being revised to include a bigger emphasis on climate resilience and impacts, reflecting the new Resiliency goal area established in Destination 2050.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to connect further about the MPO's equity work. Your comments will be shared with the MPO board in advance of the MPO board meeting this Thursday (7/20), during which the board is expected to vote on the endorsement of the LRTP after considering public comments. You are welcome to attend and participate in this meeting, and can find more information on the MPO calendar. Thank you again for your input and engagement.

Destination 2050
LRTP: Planning
framework, public
engagement, transit
infrastructure

Andrew MacNichol, Reading,
Community Development
Director

Suggest

Vision and Goals are great, more engagement should be done on engagement about why these initiatives (i.e. transit/bike/multimodal) are important instead of asking preferences should be done. A consensus is hard to reach but data is there to support induced demand for build outs. From user standpoints, sustainability, quality of life, etc. the information is there to push.

Municipalities face a challenge of building

Thank you very much for sharing your comments on the Destination 2050 LRTP. I appreciate your input on the importance of public engagement efforts to better publicize and build consensus around our vision and goals, and the work that Destination 2050 will guide, and we will certainly consider this feedback in the context of our Public Engagement Program.

transit infrastructure because the MBTA itself almost doesn't support it based on their data, which is due to failing/outdated programming and cars. It feels like a chicken and egg scenario, who comes to the table first.

I do not mean for these comments to sound cynical, I very much find the report and efforts super helpful and exciting. It is a tough area to push for, but together all partners can achieve a lot.

We also appreciate your perspective on transit infrastructure. While the MPO provides a relatively small amount of the overall funding the MBTA receives, transit is a core part of our planning process and we look forward to working with municipalities over the next several years on improving and expanding transit infrastructure through the Transit Transformation Program set forth in Destination 2050 and currently being developed in the TIP, as well as other investment programs. Please don't hesitate to reach out to TIP Manager Ethan Lapointe (copied) if you have any questions or feedback about MPO funding for transit.

Your comments will be shared with the MPO board to inform their discussion and vote on the endorsement of the final LRTP at this Thursday's MPO meeting (which you are also welcome to attend and participate in; more information is available on the MPO calendar). Thank you again for your input and engagement.

Destination 2050
LRTP: Newton Corner
Project

Josh Ostroff, Newton,
Director of Transportation
Planning

Request

Comment letter on *Destination 2050* LRTP:
https://www.ctps.org/data/calendar/pdfs/2023/0720_MPO_LRTP_Public_Comment_Letters_Compiled.pdf

Thank you very much for Newton's LRTP comment letter. I will get back to you later with a more detailed response. In the meantime, your letter will be shared with the MPO board in advance of their meeting on Thursday, July 20. At that meeting the

board is expected to consider public comments and vote on the endorsement of the LRTP. You are welcome to attend and participate in this meeting, and you can find more information on the MPO calendar.

Destination 2050
LRTP: GLX Phase II

Christine Barber, State
Representative, 34th
Middlesex District

Request

RE: Comment on Destination 2050, the Long-Range Transportation Plan
Dear MPO Board;
As the state legislative delegation for the Green Line Extension corridor, we are writing to comment on the MPO's draft Long-Range Transportation Plan, Destination 2050.

We greatly appreciate the MPO's support for the Green Line Extension over many years, and we strongly support the inclusion of a GLX stop at Route 16/Mystic Valley Parkway, considered GLX Phase II, as part of the LRTP. As you know, the MPO previously programmed \$150M in funds for the Phase II stop. In 2016, when resources were requested to support Phase I of the GLX, the MPO voted to reprogram the funds to support the Phase I GLX project, now completed and on-budget. In the MPO vote, then-Secretary Pollack committed to the MPO to complete the environmental impact review for Phase II. MassDOT filed a notice of project change in 2017, but the review process has not yet begun.

The opening of the GLX Phase I to Medford/Tufts and to Union Square has proved a great success and significantly increased mobility in the region. Phase II, the Mystic Valley Parkway/Route 16 stop, would serve a

Thank you very much for providing this comment on the Boston Region MPO's Destination 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan on behalf of the Green Line Extension corridor legislative delegation. We appreciate your ongoing support for the Green Line Extension project, and your input regarding the inclusion of GLX Phase II in the LRTP. Your feedback will be shared with the MPO board in advance of this Thursday's (7/20) board meeting, at which the board is expected to vote on the endorsement of the LRTP after considering public comments. You are welcome to attend and participate in this meeting, and can find more information on the MPO calendar.

Thank you again for your input and engagement.

number of state-designated environmental justice communities, and connect thousands of people in Medford, Arlington, and Somerville to accessible transit in a model for successful regional partnerships for mobility infrastructure. We now have the opportunity to fulfill the commitments made in 2016. We request that the MPO include the GLX Phase II to Route 16 in the LRTP.

Thank you again to the MPO for your support, and we urge the inclusion of this project to continue the commitment to greater mobility.
Sincerely,
Christine Barber
State Representative
34th Middlesex District

Patricia Jehlen
State Senator

2nd Middlesex District

Sean Garballey
State Representative
23rd Middlesex District

Destination 2050
LRTP: Infrastructure
maintenance,
resilience, public
transit priorities,
bicycle and

Mark Gailus, Concord
resident

Suggest

Comments on
0615_MPO_Draft_Destination_2050 (mg
20230716):
1) First of all we should focus a greater portion
of our resources than is now the case on
proper maintenance of the transportation
infrastructure that already exists. This is of
benefit to all users: pedestrians, cyclists, public

Thank you very much for your
feedback on the Boston Region
MPO's Destination 2050 Long-Range
Transportation Plan (LRTP). We
appreciate your feedback on priorities
the Plan should include. The LRTP
lays out long term transformative
investments, many of which include

pedestrian
investments

transit users, motorists, and truckers. It improves safety across the board. This needs to be in the Plan.

2) Utilize existing paved locations for any new construction. In this time of alternate flooding and droughts, we should not be cutting down trees and adding more impervious surfaces. Wetlands must be protected. Groundwater recharge is necessary for our drinking water supplies. Avoid encroachment on areas supporting local biodiversity and rare and endangered species. This should be in the Plan.

3) The major takeaway from the Figure C-3 pie chart on page 84 is that the public overwhelmingly supports prioritizing investment in public transportation, by the measure of 70.7% = the sum of "Transit improvements" + "Major transit infrastructure" + "Bus improvements" + "Community shuttles." Public transportation needs big-picture integrated system-wide re-thinking and major investment. The public response is right on target. The "individual" split-up segments of public transportation in this chart should instead be thought of and presented as a whole. Investing in a high-functioning public transportation network is by far the best way to achieve the desired goal of major reduction of Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) travel and its associated environmental costs related to greenhouse gas emissions and extractive/energy-intensive battery production for private electric vehicles. Note that in contrast to the 70.7% for public transportation, there is only 11.3% support for major highway infrastructure, for which funding beyond maintenance needs should be reduced. This should all be in the Plan.

4) Figure C-3 on page 84 also shows a

infrastructure maintenance and state-of-good-repair elements. The currently programmed Rutherford Avenue project and McGrath Highway projects are good examples, where the physical assets are nearing the end of their useful lives, but the work being done to keep the transportation system usable will not only improve flow for car users, but also improve transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accessibility. In 2019, MassDOT published an updated Transportation Asset Management Plan that lays out this strategy in more detail.

In the nearer term, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the MPO's 5-year rolling capital investment plan, funds projects that implement the transformative work outlined by the LRTP for all transportation modes, including infrastructure maintenance and improvements to the public transit system. Investments made through the TIP also prioritize safety, resilience and environmental protection, emissions reduction, and mode shift / SOV travel reduction through a project scoring system with criteria based upon LRTP goals and objectives.

Your comments will be shared with the MPO board in advance of the MPO board meeting this Thursday (7/20), during which the board is expected to vote on the endorsement of the LRTP after considering public

combined 18% support for Bicycle and Pedestrian investment. It would be extremely helpful to separate Bicycle and Pedestrian infrastructure and not blend them together, as also occurs in multiple places in the draft. Blending Bicycle and Pedestrian together as the "left over" "not-motor-vehicle" and "not-public-transit" category is confusing as these needs are to a very great extent not the same. Separating these out would make for a better Plan.
5) Thank you very much for listening!

comments. You are welcome to attend and participate in this meeting, and you can find more information on the MPO calendar. Thank you again for your input and engagement.

Destination 2050
LRTP: Public
engagement,
language assistance,
equity analysis, clean
public transit,
resiliency

B. Seth Gadbois,
Conservation Law Foundation
(CLF)

Suggest /
Request

CLF comment letter on *Destination 2050*:
https://www.ctps.org/data/calendar/pdfs/2023/0720_MPO_LRTP_Public_Comment_Letters_Compiled.pdf

Thank you very much for your comments on the Boston Region MPO's Destination 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan. We appreciate CLF's thoughtful and thorough feedback, as well as your input during the development of this LRTP. I am working with my colleagues to provide more detailed responses to your comments. In the meantime, your letter will be shared with the MPO board in advance of their meeting on Thursday, July 20, during which the board is expected to consider public comments and vote on the endorsement of the LRTP. You are welcome to attend and participate in this meeting, and you can find more information on the MPO calendar. We look forward to continued dialogue with CLF about our planning process and work to create a more equitable and resilient transportation system.

<p><i>Destination 2050</i> LRTP: Public engagement, Needs Assessment, planning framework, investment programs, implementation, system performance, equity analysis, DI/DB policy</p>	<p>Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council)</p>	<p>Support, Suggest, Request</p>	<p>Advisory Council comment letter on <i>Destination 2050</i>: https://www.ctps.org/data/calendar/pdfs/2023/0720_MPO_LRTP_Public_Comment_Letters_Compiled.pdf</p>	<p>Thank you. The Advisory Council's comments will be shared with the MPO board and staff.</p>
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<p><i>Destination 2050</i> LRTP: Transit transformation, investment programs</p>	<p>MBTA Rider Oversight Committee (ROC)</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>MBTA ROC comment letter on <i>Destination 2050</i>: https://www.ctps.org/data/calendar/pdfs/2023/0720_MPO_LRTP_Public_Comment_Letters_Compiled.pdf</p>	<p>Thank you. The ROC's comments will be shared with the MPO board and staff.</p>
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Comments Received During In-Person Engagement Events

<p><i>Destination 2050</i> LRTP; transportation needs and priorities</p>	<p>Mattapan Square Farmers Market: Engagement with approximately 20 residents</p>	<p>Popular themes expressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of prioritizing community engagement and providing accessible materials, including translations • Support for prioritizing cleaner, more efficient transportation system • Support for prioritizing safety and accessibility 	<p>Staff discussed <i>Destination 2050</i> vision and goals, highlighted examples of local MPO projects, answered questions, and engaged with residents about transportation needs, priorities, concerns, and ideas.</p>
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- Support for prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- Need for faster, more reliable, and more affordable transit service
- Need for better (and free) access to recreation destinations

Destination 2050
LRTP; transportation
needs and priorities

Framingham Farmers
Market: Engagement with
approximately 30 residents

Popular themes expressed:

- Need for pedestrian safety improvements
- Support for prioritizing system accessibility
- Support for mode shift
- Need for better, more flexible human services transportation

Staff discussed *Destination 2050* vision and goals, highlighted examples of local MPO projects, answered questions, and engaged with residents about transportation needs, priorities, concerns, and ideas.

Destination 2050
LRTP; transportation
needs and priorities

Boston Open Streets
Roxbury: Engagement with
approximately 60 residents

Popular themes expressed:

- Importance of prioritizing community engagement and transparent communication
- Support for fare-free public transit service
- Need for faster, more reliable transit service with broader geographic and temporal coverage
- Safety and roadway operation concerns about center-running bus lanes
- Support for prioritizing safety for all modes and users
- Support for protected bike lanes and better bicycle infrastructure

Staff discussed *Destination 2050* vision and goals, highlighted examples of local MPO projects, answered questions, and engaged with residents about transportation needs, priorities, concerns, and ideas.