



35 Varnum Street
Arlington, MA 02474

May 17, 2011

Transportation Planning and Programming Committee
Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116
Email: publicinformation@bostonmpo.org

Re: Investment Strategies for Paths to a Sustainable Region

Dear Committee:

The East Arlington Livable Streets (EALS) Coalition is a neighborhood-based advocacy organization founded in 2008. EALS has almost 250 supporters on our e-mail list, over 450 fans on our Facebook page and we aspire to become the neighborhood's voice on transportation and livability-related issues. Residents throughout East Arlington have been strong supporters improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, complete streets initiatives, and expansion of transit facilities including of the Green Line Extension (GLX) project through Somerville.

I am writing to express our group's concerns about some of the investment strategies that are being considered for the Paths to a Sustain Region plan. The investment strategies of this plan will clearly tell the residents of this region what the leadership of the MPO considers a sustainable region for the next 25 years. Unfortunately two of these strategies, strategies II and III, do nothing to expand transit in this densely populated region. Strategy II is doubly unsustainable for its increased funding and emphasis on highway expansion at the expense of transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements funding. These are clearly the wrong choices with the serious energy issues we have seen reflected in the price at the pump, which will no doubt be any different in 2035.

We urge you to continue with the current strategy of investment, which will fund the expansion of the Green Line to Route 16 which will have an enormous positive impact on our community. The current plan stopping at College Ave is completely disappointing, especially when compared with the highway expansion projects that are in the planning over the same time period. The Boston metropolitan area should be leading the way for the country in progressive transportation policy that reduces our dependence on the automobile. Instead we have to fight and continually advocate for a small slice of the pie, which is under attack in these two alternative strategies. Help this region onto

a true path for sustainable transportation, not just more highway projects. We can do better for our residents, communities, economy, and the environment.

Sincerely,

Chad Gibson, Co-chair

Cc:

Jeffrey Mullan, Secretary of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation

Senator Ken Donnelley, Massachusetts State Senator

Representative Sean Garballey, State House of Representatives

Representative Will Brownsberger, State House of Representatives

Ed Starr, Transportation Advisory Committee Chair

Brian Sullivan, Arlington Town Manager

Carole Kowalski, Director of Community Planning