



MGNA
Medford Green Line Neighborhood Alliance
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Green Line Extension Project Background

- The Green Line Extension to Somerville and Medford is a legal obligation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, agreed to in 1991 as mitigation for impact of the Big Dig highway construction project.
- The Green Line Extension also is a key part of the Commonwealth's State Implementation Plan (SIP) to become compliant with the federal Clean Air Act by Dec. 31, 2014 (it currently is not in compliance for ozone in Eastern Mass.)
- Failure to be compliant with the Clean Air Act by this date could result in all future federal funding for transportation projects in Eastern Mass. being denied.
- The four remaining projects in the SIP are the Green Line extension to Medford Hillside and Union Square-Somerville, the addition of 1,000 commuter parking spaces in the MBTA system, the addition of four stations on the Fairmount commuter rail line, and the completion of design of the Red Line/Blue Line connector.
- Of those projects, MassDOT expects to realize 85 percent of the air quality improvements from the Green Line extension.
- MassDOT received approval of the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Green Line Extension project in August 2010 and is embarking on the Preliminary Engineering phase in 2011.
- The Preferred Alternative recommended in the DEIR is an extension from Lechmere Station in Cambridge through Somerville and Medford, terminating at a station at Mystic Valley Parkway and Boston Avenue on the Somerville/Medford line, and also a one-station spur from Lechmere to Union Square in Somerville.
- The Final Environmental Impact Report states that the Preferred Alternative would result in the greatest air quality improvements, mobility improvements, ridership gains, traffic reduction and service to environmental justice communities. This reinforced MGNA's research and position.
- However, the FEIR also states that, due to "constraints placed on MassDOT by federal funding requirements and the economic crisis facing the commonwealth," MassDOT is not able to identify sufficient funding to support the construct the entire Preferred Alternative in the SIP timeframe (legally, by Dec. 31, 2014).
- Therefore, MassDOT proposes to construct 80 percent of the project – a main branch extension to College Avenue/Boston Avenue in Medford and the Union Square spur – in one Phase, by October 1, 2015, then seek funding to build the remainder of the Preferred Alternative – to Mystic Valley Parkway – at a later date.