



Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Deval L. Patrick
Governor

Timothy P. Murray
Lt. Governor

Jeffrey B. Mullan
MassDOT
Secretary & CEO

John R. Jenkins
MassDOT
Board Chair

Richard A. Davey
General Manager and
Rail & Transit Administrator

August 20, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

The State of New Hampshire and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) are pleased to provide you with this letter of support to accompany the TIGER II Discretionary grant application for capital funding for the expansion of commuter rail service from Boston, Massachusetts to Plaistow, New Hampshire. This application represents a significant step forward in our continuing effort to coordinate on issues of benefit to New England and to seek regional transportation solutions.

For many years, our states have worked together toward the goal of expanding the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's Commuter Rail Line to Southern New Hampshire. We have recognized that an extension on the Boston-Haverhill line to Plaistow would expand transportation options in the highly congested Route 125 corridor, provide for significant operational improvements in the Haverhill Line operation, and accommodate the removal of a layover and maintenance facility from a dense residential area to a more appropriate former industrial site. Notably, this project would capitalize on the significant prior Federal investments in this rail corridor, especially the \$17.4 million Haverhill Commuter Rail Project funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA).

To further this exceptional, multi-state project, we agreed to seek an award of capital funds from the TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program. We feel that the Plaistow MBTA Commuter Rail extension project fully meets the four selection criteria delineated in your published guidance and are confident that our application clearly describes the project's many attributes.

As part of our commitment to making this project a reality and, hopefully, attracting federal funding assistance, we have agreed to develop and execute a bi-state Massachusetts-New Hampshire partnership agreement that sets forth our mutual funding, operation, and liability commitments. It is our intent to model our agreement on the "Pilgrim Partnership" agreement, which has successfully provided the mechanism for commuter rail service between Massachusetts and Rhode Island for almost twenty years. We are currently in active dialog on the agreement and expect that an agreement will be approved by our respective governing bodies in early November.



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As a further commitment to the project and, in particular, our TIGER II grant request, the MBTA has agreed to provide the 20% non-federal funds required to match the TIGER II grant that is awarded to fund the project, based upon the Partnership Agreement that the parties will need to finalize and which will require MBTA board approval as well as approval of the NH Governor and Executive Council. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation has agreed to be the lead proponent of the TIGER II request and to serve as project sponsor for the expansion, including the design and construction of the new Plaistow commuter rail station and the layover facility.


In sum, this project is a display of innovation, partnership, and interstate cooperation in solving a regional transportation need. We are well aware of your continuing goals of fostering economic recovery while supporting transportation projects that promote efficiency, livability and sustainability. We are confident that you and your TIGER team will agree that the Plaistow MBTA Commuter Rail Extension project is a prime example of a project that meets all of your standards.

We thank you for your consideration of our request and look forward to welcoming you on the inaugural trip in 2012.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Davey
General Manager and Rail & Transit Administrator
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority



George N. Campbell, Jr.
Commissioner
New Hampshire DOT