

## TOWN OF SUDBURY

*Office of Selectmen*

[www.sudbury.ma.us](http://www.sudbury.ma.us)

278 Old Sudbury Road  
Sudbury, MA 01776-1843

978-639-3381

Fax: 978-443-0756

Email: [selectmen@sudbury.ma.us](mailto:selectmen@sudbury.ma.us)

February 12, 2020

Ms. Stephanie Pollack  
Secretary & Chief Executive Officer  
Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160  
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D, Sudbury Design (Project # 608164)

Dear Secretary Pollack:

The Sudbury Board of Selectmen writes to request your attention to expediting the advancement of reviews and responses to requests for information associated with progress on the design of the 4.5-mile section of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT), Phase 2D, in Sudbury. Advancing the BFRT to meet the December 2021 advertising date is a high priority goal of the Select Board, and we hope MassDOT can help us keep on schedule. In particular, we request:

- 1) Timely review of submissions and response to requests and
- 2) Dedicated resources to help keep the whole project and priority projects like it on track.

Sudbury has demonstrated its support for the project at Town Meeting numerous times with more than one million dollars in municipal funds allocated to the design. This important project is on the Boston MPO's Transportation Improvement Program for FY 2022, and is a statewide and regional priority to continue the BFRT into Sudbury and advance the dream of a regional multi-use path from Lowell to Framingham. Nearly 15 contiguous miles of the BFRT north of Sudbury from Lowell to Concord are open or in construction. Negotiations are underway to potentially acquire the rail corridor currently owned by CSX south of the Phase 2D section in Sudbury and Framingham.

The Town of Sudbury is pleased to be making progress on the BFRT design, having submitted the Sketch Plans on November 27, 2019. The 25% design of the trail had previously been submitted, and now the 25% package is complete and under review by MassDOT. Town staff have maintained close coordination with the MassDOT Project Manager and met with MassDOT on several occasions to develop and review the project design submission. At a meeting on October 16, 2019, MassDOT indicated they would attempt to expedite review of the 25% design once submitted. The Town is disappointed to learn the review is now delayed and District comments may not be issued until March 2020. We are eager to advance to the next phase of design and request attention be directed to the submission review as soon as possible. When additional submissions are made, we hope expedited review will also be prioritized.

Additionally, over the past couple of years, we have been seeking to work with the MassDOT Rail Division to request information on property agreements, licenses, leases, and easements on the Rail Division-owned corridor and determine the terms of the corridor lease. A meeting was held with the Rail Division's consultant in March of 2017, at which time the initial request for information was made. This information is vitally important for our planning and design advancement, however, we are repeatedly


informed there is insufficient staff within the Rail Division and legal departments to respond to our project before we reach the final TIP year. We appreciate staff need to prioritize projects that will advertise first, but we implore you to ensure departments like the Rail Division have sufficient capacity to allow projects like ours to be advanced as needed to stay on track. Portions of our design and right of way processes are unable to be advanced without MassDOT's attention to the Town's requests.

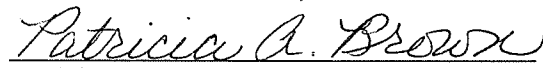
We appreciate the dedication of Governor Baker, his administration, and MassDOT to the development of a more robust multi-use path system, and the development of the MassTrails Team and Grant Program. There is a significant burden placed on municipalities in developing these projects, as the MassTrails Team has acknowledged and worked to address. However, there appear to be institutional barriers prohibiting support for the development of priority trail projects, and we wish genuine support for projects like ours might be advanced with adequate staffing to help accommodate critical requests and more timely reviews.


Please let us know if we can answer any questions or provide further information.

Sincerely,

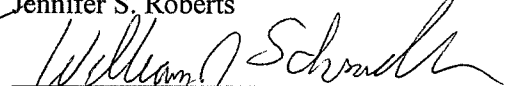
Town of Sudbury Board of Selectmen

  
Daniel E. Carty, Chairman

  
Patricia A. Brown, Vice-chairman

  
Janie W. Dretler

  
Jennifer S. Roberts

  
William J. Schineller

cc:

Senator Michael Barrett  
Senator Jamie Eldridge  
Representative Carmine Gentile  
Patty Leavenworth, Chief Engineer MassDOT Highway Division  
Kurt Gaertner, EEA Director of Land Policy and Planning  
Jackie DeWolfe, Director of Sustainable Mobility  
Barry Lorian, District 3 Highway Director  
Michael Trepanier, MassDOT MassTrails Coordinator  
Matt Genova, Boston MPO