



www.RCIC-Charlestown.org

Sandy Johnston
UPWP Manager,
MPO Staff
Suite 2150
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

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Dear Ms. Johnston:

As you know, transportation numbers can often be used to justify bad decisions and the role that CTPS plays in providing forecasts that are unbiased and data-driven, is critically important. That also means that the methodology that the agency uses is must be state-of-the art - if not better – so that the billions invested in transportation in the Boston metro-area are utilized for their highest benefit to transit riders, pedestrian, cyclists, and vehicle drivers.

We continue to struggle with the City of Boston’s plans for Rutherford Avenue/Sullivan Square (RA/SS). The City has announced in May that its preferred design is to effectively rebuild the current underpasses at Sullivan Square (SS) and Austin Street, which is unfortunate, as it continues to place regional traffic above local needs. Hundreds of residents have made it clear that we seek to have a 50+-foot corridor of open space created along the neighborhood by narrowing Rutherford Avenue and moving the traffic away from century old residences toward the industrial/mixed-use parcels abutting I-93.

This green corridor would provide a transitional opportunity for multi-use paths and greater connection to the Sullivan Square and Community College MBTA stations. Data has shown that people are willing to walk farther to transit if they do so in a pleasant environment and we know that improved connectivity in Charlestown will improve pedestrian, cyclists and local transit use. In addition, the surface option redesign would provide many acres of developable land that can be used for transit-oriented development, further increasing transit ridership. The City’s preferred design is a 1960’s answer that not only anticipates that new development will rely on single car occupancy travel, it compels a local street to serve travelers who should remain on I-93 or the Tobin Bridge, at great cost to resident health and safety.

The RCIC urges the MPO to:

- Elevate pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders in CTPS analyses so they receive equal treatment to vehicles; i.e., measure people-trips in lieu of vehicle trips. This would be consistent with the new USDOT congestion rule that counts persons rather than vehicles. Indeed, transportation analysis as a whole should conform to the new USDOT congestion rule requirements. We recommend that all projects at less than 25% design be re-analyzed using the new congestion rules and specifically request that CTPS reanalyze the surface and underpass options for Rutherford Avenue/Sullivan Square project using this framework.

- Incorporate strict transportation demand management requirements on analyses of all new developments, similar to those currently imposed on the Wynn Harbor Casino. In addition, the TDM requirements should require flex time and work at home regulations, and emphasize multi-passenger service to water and rapid transit points.
- Incorporate more frequent Orange Line service analysis (e.g. three minute headways).
- Develop a strong methodology to evaluate “disappearing traffic” as well as “induced demand”. As we have seen, the gridlock that was anticipated in advance of construction on key bridges in the area, like the Longfellow Bridge and Mass Ave Bridge, never materialized. One of the Boston area’s greatest assets is that travelers have choices on what mode they choose. All efforts should to encourage transit, cycling, and walking over vehicle travel.

Such a methodology used on each and every new development of more than four units will force collaborations and partnerships among developers, and will provide a substantial reduction in vehicle trips, making the City of Boston’s preferred design immediately obsolete and inappropriate.

We ask that this request be filed with each transportation study, which considers vehicle trip generation and traffic studies.

In summary, Charlestown has a long history of making our transportation projects better for the community. That history is celebrated in the moving inscriptions at City Square which compare what might have been to what we have today, which works for the community. We ask that respect be paid to this tradition of serving the community while meeting transportation needs.

Thank you very much,

Monica Lamboy Elizabeth Levin Nathan Blanchet Robert Pelychaty

David Yashar Rachel Brown MB Flanders Ivey St John

Rutherford Corridor Improvement Coalition (RCIC) Working Group

RCIC is a coalition of advocates who support rebuilding Rutherford Avenue and Sullivan Square in a design reflecting the goals and objective of Boston 2030 and Go Boston 2030. We seek to return these streets to urban residential and commercial use in keeping with other parts of Charlestown.