



Deval L. Patrick, Governor
Timothy P. Murray, Lt. Governor
Richard A. Davey, Secretary & CEO

massDOT

Massachusetts Department of Transportation

April 3, 2013

Stephen Smith, Executive Director
Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District
88 Broadway
Taunton, MA 02780

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am writing to clarify MassDOT's policy on the introduction of shared use trails along active rail lines. While MassDOT has consistently supported the appropriate development of rails with trails, we have considered their implementation on a case-by-case basis. This method of analysis has, unfortunately, caused unnecessary difficulties and tended to result in little to no progress for proposed rails with trails. Going forward, therefore, MassDOT will as a matter of policy permit the construction of shared-use paths along active or planned railroad rights-of-way provided appropriate fencing separates the two uses. Further, the design and construction of such fencing is an eligible project cost for such projects and MassDOT will participate in funding as appropriate.

MassDOT is firmly committed to improving bicycling and walking conditions across the Commonwealth. We are actively pursuing the implementation of the 740-mile, seven-corridor Bay State Greenway (BSG) that is identified in the 2008 Massachusetts Bicycle Transportation Plan. To that end, the Governor's transportation finance plan (*The Way Forward*) provides approximately \$430 million for the construction of bicycle facilities, including the implementation of much of the BSG. Going forward, MassDOT will continue to seek new opportunities to increase healthy transportation options and to prompt mode shift from single-operator vehicles to more sustainable transportation options. MassDOT asks that you join us in developing and funding such multi-modal transportation opportunities.

Should you have any questions on this policy, please feel free to contact David Mohler, MassDOT's Executive Director of Planning, at (857) 368-8865 or david.mohler@state.ma.us.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Davey
Secretary and Chief Executive Officer

cc: Frank DePaola, Highway Administrator
Dr. Beverly Scott, Rail and Transit Administrator
David Mohler, Executive Director of Planning

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