



Border to Boston Trail Implementation Plan

Draft: January 15, 2007



ESSEX NATIONAL
HERITAGE AREA



Border to Boston Trail Alignment

Northern Section: Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham, Danvers



Total length:
27.8 miles

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --- Town boundaries Regional Planning Agency MAFC MVPC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Railways Inactive or Unknown Status Active Rail Service Commuter Rail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right-of-Way Control Local Ownership MBTA MBTA-Lease Secured National Grid On-Road | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared Use Paths Potential Path Existing Path Underway Bay Circuit Trail |
|--|---|--|---|

Acknowledgements

The development of regional trails is a complex process involving the imagination, energy and coordination of advocates, elected officials, and professional staff at all levels. In preparing this Implementation Plan, its authors acknowledge the myriad of knowledge, activities, and support that comprise a successful trail building effort.

The Implementation Plan is a product of the Border to Boston *ad hoc* coalition, whose participants are listed below. Staff of the Essex National Heritage Commission, National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program, Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, and Merrimack Valley Planning Commission jointly prepared the plan. The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission prepared all GIS based maps with input from the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission. The National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program and the Essex National Heritage Commission provided funding for the design, layout, and printing of the plan.

Ingrid Barry	Danvers Bi-Peds
Marsha Blythe-Brown	Boxford Rail Trails Committee
Deborah Allen Carey	Coastal Trails Coalition
Stephen Davis	Town of Boxford
Carole Davis	Boxford Rail Trails Committee
Ed Deardon	Newbury Planning Board
Gregg Demers	Topsfield Tail Trail Committee
Win Dodge	Wenham
Matthew Duggan	Danvers Bi-Peds
Joe Geller	Topsfield Rail Trail Committee
David Hall	Coastal Trails Coalition
Annie Harris	Essex National Heritage Commission
Bill Hastings	Georgetown Recreational Path Committee
John Hendrickson	Fay, Spofford & Thorndike
Bobbi Klima	Coastal Trails Coalition
Jerry Klima	Town of Salisbury
Tom Leonard	Essex National Heritage Commission
Susan Lippman	Essex National Heritage Commission
Barbara Lucas	Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Acknowledgements

Elizabeth Marcus	Coastal Trails Coalition
Nancy Merrill	Boxford Rail Trails Committee
Bill Monroe	Georgetown Recreational Path Committee
Bob Morehouse	Georgetown Recreational Path Committee
Ben Murphy	Essex National Heritage Commission
Larry Olasky	Haverhill
Danielle Ondrick	Boxford Rail Trails Committee
Richard Paganelli	Georgetown Recreational Path Committee
Mark Phelan	Boxford Rail Trails Committee
Andrew Plucinski	Boxford Rail Trails Committee
Bob Straubel	Salisbury Planning Board
Dan Streeter	Newbury Recreation Committee
Larry Tormey	Danvers Bi-Peds
Judy Tymon	Town of Newbury
Geordie Vining	City of Newburyport
Jeff Wade	Georgetown Recreational Path Committee
Dennis Whittemore	Boxford Rail Trails Committee
Conrad Willeman	Wenham Bike & Pedestrian Committee
Steve Golden	National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program
Tony Komornick	Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
Bill Steelman	Essex National Heritage Commission
Scott Walker	Metropolitan Area Planning Council



Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	.iii
Executive Summary .....	.iv
Introduction .....	.1
Section 1: Background .....	.5
Section 2: Project Need .....	.9
Section 3: Project Initiation and Public Participation .....	.13
Section 4: Project Development and Phasing .....	.17
Section 5: Funding Strategy .....	.23
Section 6: Management System and Process .....	.29
Section 7: Glossary .....	.31
Appendix A: Town by Town Status .....	.33
Appendix B: Joint Planning Resolutions .....	.75
Appendix C: Trail Name and Termini Analysis .....	.83

Executive Summary

The purpose of the Implementation Plan is to establish a comprehensive strategy for planning and developing the 27.8 mile, eight community northern section of the Border to Boston Trail. The plan is intended to provide clear direction for accessing federal funding set aside for the trail in the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) and to demonstrate a cohesive approach.

The Border to Boston Trail has been discussed for over 12 years and is intended to serve the alternative transportation needs of the eight communities, as well as to have public health, economic and recreational benefits. Significant progress and commitments already have been made by the individual communities. In January 2006 trail advocates and officials from all eight communities formed an ad hoc coalition, and the chief elected officials of seven communities adopted a Joint Planning Resolution related to the trail's development. The coalition is receiving major support from the Essex National Heritage Commission, National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC).

The proposed trail utilizes 21.1 miles of rights-of-way along two abandoned railroads, the Eastern Route Main Line from the New Hampshire border in Salisbury to Newburyport, and the Newburyport Branch Line from Newburyport to Danvers. The trail route also uses 6.7 miles of low traffic volume, low speed roads in Newbury and Boxford to bypass two crossings of Interstate 95. The project has been recognized for its regional significance in the Regional Transportation Improvement Plans of both MAPC and MVPC. The project is included in the preliminary mapping being completed for an update of the Massachusetts Statewide Bicycle Transportation Plan.

The principal owners of the railroad rights-of-way are the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and National Grid. Local communities have already secured long-term public access to 6.7 miles of the 21.1 mile off-road corridor, while another 6.3 miles are the subject of active negotiations. Including the on-road segments, approximately half of the overall 27.8 mile route is currently accessible to the public. Securing the remaining rights-of-way as well as overseeing the subsequent pre-design planning activities will be the responsibility of the individual municipalities.

It is estimated that full project development cost will be between \$13.7 and \$22 million. A more refined estimate will be prepared as part of the Preliminary Design. The Preliminary Design for the

entire route will be paid for by funding earmarked as High Priority Project #843 in SAFETEA-LU of 2005. Final design and construction funding will be sought from a variety of federal and state sources. Each community will be responsible for developing a strategy to operate the trail over the long term.

The next major step for the project is to complete the Preliminary Design and required feasibility studies for the entire eight-town trail. Two ways have been identified to accomplish this: 1.) A centralized Preliminary Design contract under the auspices of the Mass Highway Department and; 2.) Preliminary Design contracts by individual communities with participation in the process by the ad hoc coalition, MVPC and MAPC. The choice of one of alternative or the other (or a combination of the two) will be made after consultation with the top transportation officials.

Introduction

The Border to Boston Trail is envisioned as a nearly 30-mile multi-use pathway utilizing abandoned railway corridors and quiet roads extending from the New Hampshire border in Salisbury south through Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham, and into Danvers. A future phase will explore connections from Danvers to Boston. The project addresses the need to improve and diversify the region's transportation infrastructure through the creation of an off-road, non-motorized facility that will connect local residents and visitors to a large number of diverse destinations, including public services, schools, businesses, transportation, and recreational opportunities.

The vision for the Border to Boston Trail extends back to 1994 while current day coordinated planning activity for the entire route began in early 2006 with the formation of the Border to Boston *ad hoc* coalition. The coalition includes representation from all of the eight communities on the designated route. Organizational and technical assistance is provided by the Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) and the National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program, as well as the two regional planning agencies whose jurisdictions the route traverses -- the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). The *ad hoc* coalition has produced this Implementation Plan to further the Border to Boston Trail.

The Border to Boston Trail Implementation Plan is intended to:

- Establish a common vision for the regional trail,
- Present current information on the project,
- Describe the active planning efforts,
- Set out common principles among the eight communities and agencies providing technical assistance,
- Present a preliminary strategy for planning, designing, and constructing the facility,
- Justify further planning and funding,
- Move the project towards a greater state of readiness, and to
- Serve as a reference for all involved in the project.

Border to Boston Trail Contacts

As will be noted in Section 1, elected officials in each Border to Boston Trail municipality were requested to identify a committee or individual to represent their community in the on-going planning meetings. To date, all but the Town of Danvers has designated an official community liaison to the Border to Boston *ad hoc* coalition. In addition to community representation, several area organizations have formed a regional partnership to help lead and facilitate the joint planning process.

Community	Contact Person	Affiliations
Boxford	Nancy Merrill Boxford Recreation Committee Town of Boxford 7A Spofford Road Boxford, MA 01921 978-887-2194 nancymerrill@comcast.net	Chairman, Boxford Rails-Trails Subcommittee under the Boxford Recreation Committee, designated Border to Boston group representative
Danvers	Ingrid Barry Danvers Bi-Peds, Inc. www.danversbipeds.org 978-774-8159 ibarry@danversbipeds.org	President, Danvers Bi-Peds, Inc., a citizens' advocacy group working to improve biking and walking conditions, Border to Boston group representative
Georgetown	Richard Paganelli Recreational Path Committee Town of Georgetown 1 Library Street Georgetown, MA 01883 978-352-2587 recpath@yahoo.com	Chairman, Georgetown Recreational Path Committee, designated Border to Boston group representative
Newbury	Judy Tymon Town of Newbury 25 High Road Newbury, MA 01951 978-463-3516 planningboard@townofnewbury.org	Town Planner; designated Border to Boston group representative
Newburyport	Geordie Vining City of Newburyport 60 Pleasant Street Newburyport, MA 01950 978-465-4400 gvining@CityofNewburyport.com	Senior Project Manager, designated Border to Boston group representative
Salisbury	Jerry Klima Town of Salisbury 5 Beach Road Salisbury, MA 01952 978-465-5325 jerryklima@hotmail.com	Town Selectman, designated Border to Boston group representative

Topsfield	<p>Joe Geller Topsfield Rail Trail Committee 8 West Common Street Topsfield, MA 01983 (W) 978-887-7000, (H) 978-887-9572 jg@gellermicro.com</p>	<p>Chairman, Topsfield Rail Trail Committee, designated Border to Boston group representative</p>
Wenham	<p>Conrad Willeman Wenham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee 138 Main Street Wenham, MA 01984 978-468-7520 cwilleman@mac.com</p>	<p>Member, Wenham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, designated Border to Boston group representative</p>
ENHC	<p>Bill Steelman Essex National Heritage Commission 221 Essex Street, Suite 41 Salem, MA 01970 978-740-0444 bills@essexheritage.org</p>	<p>Co-Director of Heritage Development</p>
NPS	<p>Steve Golden Rivers and Trails Program National Park Service 15 State Street Boston, MA 02109 617-223-5123 steve_golden@NPS.Gov</p>	<p>Program Manager</p>
MAPC	<p>Scott Walker Metropolitan Area Planning Council 60 Temple Place Boston, MA 02111 ph: 617-451-2770, x2058 swalker@mapc.org</p>	<p>Transportation/Land Use Planner</p>
MVPC	<p>Tony Komornick Merrimack Valley Planning Commission 160 Main Street Haverhill Ma 01830 978-374-0519 AKomornick@mvpc.org</p>	<p>Transportation Program Manager</p>



Section 1: Background

History of Rail Service

The proposed Border to Boston Trail will follow the rights-of-way of two abandoned rail lines, the Eastern Route Main Line from the New Hampshire border in Salisbury to Newburyport and the Newburyport Branch Line from Newburyport to Danvers.

The Eastern Railroad was chartered in 1836 as a route from Boston to Salem, Newburyport, Portsmouth (NH) and into Maine. Construction began in 1836, but did not reach Newburyport until 1840. The Eastern line was the main competition to the Boston and Maine Railroad, which served similar destinations, until 1884 when B&M prevailed by leasing the Eastern system. Passenger service on the line ended in 1965 north of Newburyport, with official abandonment in 1982. Following a 20-year period of inactivity, the line from Newburyport south to Ipswich was restored in 1998 providing MBTA commuter rail service directly to Boston.

The Newburyport Railroad was chartered in 1846 as competition to the Eastern Railroad. Construction began in 1849 on the section from Newburyport to Georgetown and was completed the following year. The Danvers & Georgetown Railroad was chartered in 1851 to extend the line south to Danvers, opening in 1854. After many years of declining service, the line was abandoned between Topsfield and Newburyport in 1941. Passenger service continued to Topsfield until 1950 and to Danvers until 1959. By 1971, just sixty carloads of freight traveled the line between Danvers and Topsfield. The line was formally abandoned in 1977. Guilford Transportation Industries, a privately held holding company, maintains a freight easement between Danvers Junction and Wakefield, but the route is inactive.¹

1. Karr, Ronald Dale. *The Rail Lines of Southern New England*. Branch Line Press, 1995.

History of Planning Activity

The North Shore Bikeways Coalition, a chapter of the Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition (MassBike), first promoted a vision for the Border to Boston Trail in 1994. The Coalition's efforts culminated in 1997 when, at the urging of a U.S. Congressman, six state senators and representatives, two regional planning councils, and over 25 local elected officials and municipal boards representing all eight communities, the Massachusetts Highway Department commissioned a study of the trail's physical feasibility. *The North Shore Bikeways Reconnaissance Study* was prepared by the Central Transportation Planning Staff of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and contains a detailed review of the physical characteristics of the corridor. Though not released until May 2005, the study identifies "no physical barriers that would preclude construction" of the trail.

After a period of inactivity at the regional level, the first years of the new millennium saw renewed activity at the local level. In Newburyport, it took the form of a mayoral rail-trail advisory committee and an advocacy group called Newburyport Pathways. Responding to local inquiries, selectmen in Georgetown, Boxford, and Topsfield designated standing committees or appointed *ad hoc* ones to investigate or pursue each town's interest in the potential trail. In Danvers, the nonprofit organization Danvers Bi-Peds launched a credible effort to regain ground lost following a contested 1998 town meeting vote in which anti-trail abutters prevailed. The groundswell of interest led the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management (now the Department of Conservation and Recreation) to include the Border to Boston Trail project in its 2001 Greenways and Trails Vision Report. Throughout this period, the individual communities requested and received technical assistance on numerous issues from their respective regional planning agencies: Merrimack Valley Planning Commission and Metropolitan Area Planning Council. The Border to Boston Trail has been included the Regional Transportation Plan for both regions since 2001. Funds for construction of segments in Salisbury and Newburyport are programmed in the MVPC 2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and funding from a federal SAFETEA-LU High-Priority Project is included in the MAPC 2007-2010 TIP. The project is also included in MAPC's 1997 Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and 2006 Regional Bicycle Plan.

Interest in regional trail-related transportation facilities was notably rekindled during a July 2003 meeting facilitated by the Essex National Heritage Commission in which advocates, elected officials, and planning staff from three Border to Boston communities (Salisbury, Newburyport, and Newbury – along with Amesbury) and MVPC mutually agreed to pursue a collaborative approach to trail development. With continued leadership and technical assistance from the ENHC and the National Park Service through its Rivers and Trails Program, the evolving grassroots effort led to formation of the nonprofit Coastal Trails Coalition (CTC) in February 2004. Since then the CTC has advocated and provided support to its member communities in the areas of visioning, organizational structure, fundraising and promotion. Amongst the CTC's numerous accomplishments are laying the groundwork for 99-year MBTA leases in Salisbury and Newburyport, bike lanes on the Plum Island Turnpike, a 20-page trail guide, the Rover community awareness project, and over \$40,000 in raised funds.

The Border to Boston Trail is a designated segment of the East Coast Greenway (ECG), a proposed 2,600-mile route linking major East Coast cities from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida via a continuous, off-road path. Twenty-one percent of the trail is now open for public use, but none yet in Massachusetts. To date Border to Boston Trail advocates have organized three notable ECG related activities in the region. On April 2, 2004, the Massachusetts Committee of the East Coast Greenway Alliance (ECGA) partnered with the Essex National Heritage Commission to host ECGA Massachusetts Day in conjunction with the ECGA national board meeting being held in Salem. Representatives from most of the Border to Boston communities as well as the NPS Rivers and Trails Program and Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation participated in an afternoon of information sharing. In June 2004, ENHC awarded grant funds to the Massachusetts Committee for preparation of a map and other interpretive materials relating to the historical development of Newburyport Branch (Newburyport to Danvers) of the former Boston & Maine Railroad (aka the Border to Boston Trail). On September 20, 2004 the CTC and ENHC provided overnight accommodations and hosted a potluck dinner for nine riders participating in the first-ever, full-length ride of the East Coast Greenway.

More recently in fall of 2005, representatives from the Border to Boston communities of Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, and Topsfield initiated meetings with National Grid (formerly known as Massachusetts Electric) to discuss issues regarding the conversion of National Grid's right-of-way into a rail-trail. With Boxford and Georgetown as a primary focus, the meetings have continued into 2006.

In November 2005, in response to an application submitted by ENHC, the Border to Boston project was accepted into the National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program. In lieu of direct funding, a NPS program staff member has worked in partnership with staff from ENHC, MAPC, and MVPC for a year to facilitate the organization of the working coalition of trail stakeholders who share a common vision for the interconnected trail system.

To increase awareness and lend credence to the *ad hoc* coalition's work, elected officials in each Border to Boston community were asked to endorse a resolution regarding its participation in a joint planning process for the Border to Boston Trail (See Appendix B). Each municipality was asked to formally consent to participating in ongoing discussions as part of a regional coordinating committee, and to identify a committee or individual from the community to represent it at the meetings. In addition, each community was asked to request technical assistance from their respective regional planning agency to support development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for the management, use and development of the trail corridor. To date, all but the Town of Danvers have endorsed the joint planning resolution.

With the support gained from passage of the joint planning resolutions, the *ad hoc* coalition turned its attention to the preparation of this Implementation Plan.

Section 2: Project Need

Development of the Border to Boston Trail represents a unique opportunity to expand non-motorized transportation alternatives within the eight corridor communities and beyond. It will serve to link numerous destinations such as town centers, schools, and recreational facilities, providing an active, healthy, non-polluting option to local residents, as well as enhancing tourism and contributing other associated economic benefits. The trail project directly addresses the goals and objectives for improving bicycle and pedestrian transportation as stated in the Regional Transportation Plans of both the Merrimack Valley MPO and the Boston Region MPO and in local plans of the eight communities.

Population and Destinations Served

The total population of the eight communities along the proposed route is 82,824 (Census 2000). Approximately 47,000 people live within one mile of the corridor.¹ The City of Newburyport and the Town of Danvers are the most populous, and the path would connect directly into the downtown areas of both communities. The route also passes through the town centers of Georgetown, Newbury (Byfield), Salisbury, and Topsfield. Users of the Border to Boston Trail would have access to public services, businesses, recreational facilities, and connections to bus and commuter rail.

Community	Population	Land Area	Pop/sq. mile
Boxford	7,921	24.0	330
Danvers	25,212	13.3	1,896
Georgetown	7,377	12.9	572
Newbury	6,717	24.2	278
Newburyport	17,189	8.4	2046
Salisbury	7,827	15.4	508
Topsfield	6,141	12.7	484
Wenham	4,440	7.7	577
<i>Totals</i>	82,824	118.6	698 avg.

Source: Census 2000

¹ Calculation based on Census 2000 Block-level populations.

Section 2: Project Need

Non-motorized transportation options can be especially beneficial to those who cannot drive themselves or do not have access to a vehicle. A student population of 8,591 children ages 5 to 18 and 6,847 people age 65 or older live within one mile of the Border to Boston Trail. The trail would pass within 1/2-mile of eighteen (18) schools, four senior centers, and three senior housing facilities. The path would also connect with many parks, recreational facilities, and other bike and pedestrian pathways. (See Appendix A: Local Status for a town-by-town listing of destinations along the route.)

The decennial Census is presently the best commonly accepted source of data on the transportation choices of the population along the Border to Boston Trail corridor, though there are several reasons to suggest that bicycling and walking are underestimated.² Table 2, below, indicates the modes of transportation favored by residents of the eight communities. Wenham shows the greatest percentage of non-motorized commutes, with 7.2% of workers choosing to walk or bike. The Border to Boston Trail would create opportunities for many more to travel under their own power to work, shopping, and services.

Community	Workers 16 and older	Drive alone	Carpool	Transit*	Bike/Walk	Work at home	Other**
Boxford	3,854	3,237 (84.0%)	222 (5.8%)	70 (1.8%)	17 (0.4%)	278 (7.2%)	30 (0.8%)
Danvers	12,730	11,010 (86.5%)	828 (6.5%)	312 (2.5%)	177 (1.4%)	334 (2.6%)	69 (0.5%)
Georgetown	3,783	3,290 (87.0%)	210 (5.6%)	90 (2.4%)	20 (0.5%)	162 (4.3%)	11 (0.4%)
Newbury	3,476	2,943 (84.7%)	120 (3.5%)	80 (2.3%)	103 (3.0%)	215 (6.2%)	15 (1.1%)
Newburyport	9,186	7,369 (80.2%)	610 (6.6%)	222 (2.4%)	301 (3.3%)	584 (6.4%)	100 (0.2%)
Salisbury	3,950	3,291 (83.3%)	497 (12.6%)	50 (1.3%)	52 (1.3%)	52 (1.3%)	8 (0.2%)
Topsfield	2,844	2,392 (84.1%)	128 (4.5%)	113 (4.0%)	37 (1.3%)	159 (5.6%)	15 (0.5%)
Wenham	1,620	1,220 (75.3%)	82 (5.1%)	139 (8.6%)	117 (7.2%)	52 (3.2%)	10 (0.6%)
<i>Totals</i>	41,443	34,752 (83.14%)	2,697 (6.3%)	1,076 (3.2%)	824 (2.3%)	1,836 (4.6%)	258 (.5%)
<i>*Transit includes bus, streetcar, subway, and rail **Other includes taxi, motorcycle, or other means</i>							
<i>Source: Census 2000</i>							

² The numbers include only workers age 16 and up; students, the unemployed, and retirees are not counted. The Census data is collected in early spring, when Massachusetts's weather conditions reduce the numbers of bicyclists and pedestrians. The Census asks for the mode used on the longest part of the journey—walking one mile to a five-mile train trip counts as a train trip.

Meeting Local and Regional Goals

Planning efforts at the local and regional level show support for projects like the Border to Boston Trail, and for this project in particular. All of the eight communities have included the project in local plans such as Open Space and Master plans, or intend to include it in imminent updates. As noted in the previous section, the project has appeared in the Regional Transportation Plans of both the Merrimack Valley and Boston Region MPOs since 2001, the 1997 and 2006 MAPC Regional Bicycle Plan, and the 2001 DEM Greenways and Trails Vision Report.

The Border to Boston Trail satisfies many of the policy objectives of *Journey to 2030*, the 2006-2030 Boston Region MPO regional transportation plan, including policies to “provide bicycle and pedestrian routes, networks, and facilities,” “provide better access for all to transportation throughout the region, including for our youth, elderly and disabled users, and members of zero-vehicle households,” and to “encourage...transportation choices that promote a healthy lifestyle such as walking and bicycling.”

Similarly, the Merrimack Valley MPO’s 2003 Regional Transportation Plan notes that the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission has and will continue to provide technical assistance to communities seeking to develop rail trails and that the Commission “supports the preservation of inactive rail trails as they strengthen alternative modes of transportation throughout the region while enhancing the surrounding environment”. This project also meets the MPO’s transportation goal of promoting the development of a regional transportation system that “maximizes the inter-connective use of all modes of goods and person transportation in the Valley.”

Public Health

Auto dependency eliminates the physical activity that was a normal part of daily life when walking, bicycling, and public transportation were the only options available. Physical activity reduces the risk of developing high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, colon cancer, and other serious health problems. Physical activity can also improve mental health by reducing anxiety and depression. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), 54.4% of Massachusetts residents were either overweight or obese in 2004.¹ Poor nutrition and physical inactivity account for some 300,000 premature deaths in the United States each year.² Setting aside time to exercise is difficult for many in our busy society. The problem is compounded when personal free time is further eroded by hours spent stuck in vehicular congestion. Bicycling for transportation allows one to more easily incorporate the daily physical activity recommended by the Surgeon General to improve health and reduce the risk of some of the leading causes of illness and death in the United States.³ To help combat the growing health crisis the federal and state Safe Routes to School programs were created to encourage and enable more children to safely walk and bike to school.

Economic Benefits

As noted above, the trail would pass directly through the town centers of six of the eight communities, providing easy pedestrian and bicycle access for local residents to numerous shops, services, and restaurants. The trail would also be an attractive destination to tourists.

Recreational and Historical Destinations

The Border to Boston Trail lies within the Essex National Heritage Area, a 500 square mile region designated by the US Congress in 1996 to recognize the national significance of the region's abundant historical, cultural, and natural resources. Together, the eight communities contain over 3,100 properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places as well as four National Historic Landmark properties. Within close proximity of the trail lie a national wildlife refuge, three state parks, three state forests, two state wildlife management areas, the Topsfield Fairgrounds, and properties owned by The Trustees of Reservations, Essex County Greenbelt, and other land conservation organizations. Salisbury, Newburyport, and Newbury abut the Great Marsh, the largest salt marsh in New England and a regionally significant natural, historical and economic resource.

Notes

1. Center for Disease Control Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/display.asp?cat=RF&yr=2002&qkey=4409&state=MA>
2. Center for Disease Control, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Website, 2003 <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/trend/maps/index.htm>
3. Center for Disease Control, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, "Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General." (<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/ataglan.htm>).

Section 3: Project Initiation and Public Participation

Because the Border to Boston Trail will largely be designed and built with federal transportation funds, it must be developed in accordance with the procedures for developing transportation projects that have been established by the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway), the agency responsible for administering federal transportation funds in the Commonwealth. Some of these procedures are outlined in Chapter 2 of the *Massachusetts Highway Department Project Development and Design Guidebook*. The guidebook, substantially revised and released in January 2006, provides guidance on how to advance a project from planning to construction.

This section briefly describes the steps that must be taken to obtain MassHighway approval for the project, key steps in its design and permitting, and the process of programming federal transportation funds for its construction. It also identifies key public involvement actions that must be conducted to both meet federal requirements and ensure that the project development phase satisfies both the interests and concerns of the communities that will host the trail. It should be noted that Chapter 2 of the *Design Guidebook* emphasizes that “there should be ample opportunities for public participation throughout the process.”

It is anticipated that many of the required or recommended project implementation activities will occur in the calendar years of 2006 and 2007.

Project Implementation Activities

1. **Hold Informal Meeting(s)** with MassHighway District 4 staff, MPO staff, environmental agencies, local officials, and community groups.
2. It is proposed that a single “**Project Need Form**” be prepared for MassHighway. This form contains such information as the identification of interested parties, public outreach and feedback on the project to date, and an outline for a public participation process for moving the project forward. It should also clearly identify the goals and objectives of the project, making use of the information contained in the Implementation Plan and other planning reports completed to date.

Section 3: Project Initiation and Public Participation

3. Hold **Local Issues Meetings** in each community. At these meetings, the project concept should be presented to the general public and to regulatory agencies that may be involved in issuing permits for it. Informal Outreach Meetings may be held if it is determined that any agencies, individuals or groups that were not present for the Local Issues Meeting should be contacted.
4. Hold **Project Presentation Meetings**. Based on the input received through the Local Issues Meetings and any Outreach Meetings, presentations should be made to the public on the preferred build alternative at a Project Presentation Meeting. This meeting should also include regulatory agencies so as to determine, at an early stage, what permits are likely to be required as part of the project design process.
5. A **Project Initiation Form** (PIN) should then be submitted by each community to the MassHighway District 4 Office as well as the Boston and Merrimack Valley MPOs. This form includes a description of the project, a summary of the planning process, a definition of the public outreach plan for the design process and the proposed project management plans. The Boston and Merrimack Valley MPOs have established Transportation Evaluation Criteria that are used in assessing transportation projects and these will be applied to the project as it is defined in the PIN.
6. The Project(s) must then be included in the **Regional Transportation Plans** of the Boston and Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organizations. This step is important in that any project that is to be built with federal transportation funds must first appear in the MPO's Regional Transportation Plan before it can be programmed to receive construction funds in each region's TIP. Both the Boston and Merrimack Valley MPOs are now updating their Plans. Projects may be added to the Plan in each region either at the request of the community or through the identification of the project by the transportation planning staff of the MPO. Including the project in the Plan for each MPO also provides communities with another venue to provide information to the public. The Border to Boston Trail has been included in prior editions of both the Merrimack Valley MPO and Boston Region MPO Regional Transportation Plans. The information included in these documents will need to be updated based on the information contained in the PIF and how well the project does based on the results of the Transportation Evaluation Criteria applied by each MPO.
7. Upon approval of the project by the Massachusetts Highway Department's Project Review Committee (PRC), proponents may then proceed with the design of their project. At about this time, the proponent should also be taking steps to have the appropriate MPO include the project in its **Transportation Improvement Program** (TIP). This can take place at any time but is best accomplished during the spring of each year when each MPO goes

through the process of developing a new TIP and evaluates funding availability and the status of all transportation projects. As was noted above in discussing adding the project(s) to the Transportation Plan, the process of including a project in the TIP will offer an opportunity to present information to the public.

8. The proponent will be responsible for administering the project design process, including **selecting a design consultant** to perform the necessary work. It is also likely that the proponent will have to provide funding to cover at least the development of preliminary design (25%) of the project.
9. The project must be designed in accordance with the design considerations laid out in **Chapter 11 of the Massachusetts Highway Department Project Development and Design Guidebook**. MassHighway and FHWA require that bike paths be constructed to meet AASHTO standards. The path must also comply with the Rules and Regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board.
10. The proponent and the selected project designer should work with the Environmental Section of the Massachusetts Highway Department for **identifying and complying with all environmental laws and obtaining the necessary permits**. This must be accomplished during the Preliminary Engineering Phase (25% Design) of the project. Key permits could include a Coast Guard Bridge Permit, Section 404 Permit, Water Quality Certification and Wetlands Order of Conditions. MassHighway recommends that most if not all permits be submitted at the 25% design stage but not later than the 75% stage.
11. A **Design Public Meeting** is required once the project reaches the end of the Preliminary Engineering Phase. Additional public meetings will be required as part of the permitting process or if there is a significant change to the scope of the project.

Section 4: Project Development and Phasing

The Border to Boston Trail will succeed or fail based on the support it receives from each of its communities. The intent of this plan is to draw out the value of a common effort that builds on the individual towns' vision and historic commitment. Several of the communities have pre-existing projects underway to improve the right-of-way that should not be impeded by this plan. The primary goal that all communities embrace is trail continuity.

As noted in Section 3 of this plan, most aspects of the Border to Boston Trail's development will need to adhere to a process outlined in the *Massachusetts Highway Department Project Development and Design Guidebook*. To that end and in accordance with the project development process detailed in Chapter 2 of the *Design Guidebook*, this section of the implementation plan sets forth a proposed schedule for developing the project over time. The activities and their sequencing (phasing) were determined based on the status of the trail right-of-way in each of the eight communities as of August 1, 2006 (see table below) and proceed from the following assumptions:

- The project will be funded primarily through federal-aid transportation programs, plus any required non-federal match (local, state, or other).
- Requests for federal funding will follow the process described in the *Massachusetts Highway Department Project Development and Design Guidebook* and will be recommended and approved by the appropriate Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Regional Planning Agency (RPA) or combination thereof.
- The communities that control the right-of-way will be responsible for managing use of the trail and operating their portion in a manner consistent with the guidelines set out in this document and subsequent management plans.

Trail Right-of-Way Status (as of August 1, 2006)

As noted elsewhere, the rights-of-way that make up the Border to Boston Trail are held primarily by National Grid, the MBTA, and the individual municipalities. The table below denotes the ownership and status of each community's rights-of-way.

Section 4: Project Development and Phasing

Note: In an effort to be consistent throughout the Implementation Plan, trail mileage figures cited on maps and in tables were calculated using geographic information system (GIS) technology. It is acknowledged that other sources list different figures, though none were found that provided mileages for all Border to Boston communities.

Table 3: Trail Right-of-Way Status

	Total Mileage	MBTA Lease secured	MBTA to be secured	National Grid active negotiation	National Grid to be negotiated	On-road	Town-owned
Salisbury	3.8	3.8					
Newburyport	2.0	1.2				0.8	
Newbury	4.9				1.0	3.9	
Georgetown	4.5			4.5			
Boxford	3.5			1.8		1.7	
Topsfield	3.5	1.7			1.3	0.3	0.2
Wenham	1.3		1.3				
Danvers	4.3		4.3				
Total	27.8	6.7	5.6	6.3	2.3	6.7	0.2

A. Project Development

All successful transportation improvement projects respond to a clearly identified need or opportunity. The first step in the project development process as shown in the *Design Guidebook* is **Problem/Need/Opportunity Identification**. In the case of the Border to Boston Trail, the need is to improve and diversify the region's transportation options. The proposed solution of developing an off-road, non-motorized, multi-use facility also provides the region with the opportunity to connect local residents and visitors to a large number of diverse destinations, including public services, schools, businesses, transportation, and recreational opportunities.

Problem/Need/Opportunity Identification (1994-2005)

Over the past decade several initiatives have focused on better defining both needs and opportunities of the Border to Boston Trail, including the following:

- North Shore Bikeways Coalition advocates for creation of Border to Boston Trail, 1994-1998
- *Border to Boston Rail Trail/Connecting Places...Connecting People*; a prospectus by Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, Inc.
- *North Shore Bikeways Reconnaissance Study*, Danvers-Salisbury Rail Trail; Central Transportation Planning Staff for MassHighway, 2005
- \$800,000 in federal High Priority Project (#843) transportation funds authorized by Congress in the 2005 SAFETEA-LU legislation to "Design, engineer, permit and construct "Border to Boston Bikeway rail trail project, from Salisbury to Danvers."

Planning (2003-2007)

The second step in the project development process is **Planning**. Since 2003, several key planning activities have been or soon will be completed (Items 1-5) with the remaining activities proposed for the upcoming year, including the following:

1. Right-of-way negotiations as noted in Trail Right-of-Way Status table above
2. *Ad hoc* coalition of towns begins regular meetings in January 2006
3. Joint Planning Resolutions signed by elected officials in seven of eight towns
4. Implementation Plan drafted collaboratively by towns, ENHC, NPS, MAPC, MVPC
5. NPS and Rails-to-Trails Conservancy contract with consultant to study Border to Boston Trail termini, name, logo, marking identity
6. Project Need Form drafted and approved by all eight Border to Boston towns
7. Agreement reached for overall project management
8. Management Plan drafted and approved by all eight towns
9. Conceptual design for trail (MBTA corridor/National Grid corridor/road sections) prepared and endorsed by all towns.

Environment/Design/ROW (2007-2008)

Note: Funding from MassHighway will be sought for italicized items.

1. Public Outreach: meetings/events, websites, email, newsletters
Local trail committees are already established in Salisbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield and Danvers; *ad hoc* coalition meetings monthly
2. *Base maps to be drafted for entire route – based on existing data*

Section 4: Project Development and Phasing

3. Design requirements according to status of ROW negotiations:

MBTA lease signed	MBTA under Negotiation	National Grid: Active Negotiation	National Grid: To be Negotiated	On Road
<i>Conduct design and engineering feasibility studies</i>	Prepare conceptual design	Prepare conceptual design	<i>Complete title search</i>	Prepare conceptual design for bike lanes and crossings
<i>Complete Preliminary Design (25%)</i>	Negotiate long-term lease	Negotiate long-term lease	Prepare conceptual design	<i>Conduct traffic studies as required</i>
<i>Obtain permits</i>	<i>Conduct design and engineering feasibility studies</i>	<i>Conduct design and engineering feasibility studies</i>	Negotiate long-term lease	<i>Obtain permits from local authorities</i>
<i>Complete 75% and final Plans</i>	<i>Complete Preliminary Design (25%)</i>	<i>Complete Preliminary Design (25%)</i>	<i>Conduct design and engineering feasibility studies</i>	
	<i>Obtain permits</i>	<i>Obtain permits</i>	<i>Complete Preliminary Design (25%)</i>	
	<i>Complete 75% and final Plans</i>	<i>Complete 75% and final Plans</i>	<i>Obtain permits</i>	
			<i>Complete 75% and final Plans</i>	

Programming 2007-2010

1. Funds for construction programmed on both regional TIPs.
2. Funds programmed and match secured

Procurement 2007-2012

1. Contractors selected
2. Bids awarded

Construction 2007-2015

1. Sections constructed in phases as the final plans are approved.

B. Project Phasing

Phase 1: 2007

1. Ad Hoc Committee with support from National Park Service and Essex National Heritage Commission prepares a management plan and agreement.
2. Management plan is prepared and endorsed by all Border to Boston communities.
3. Right-of-way negotiations continue with National Grid and MBTA and for remaining corridor.
4. Outreach effort in communities grows with events, programs, websites and meetings.
5. Conceptual design for trail (MBTA corridor/National Grid corridor/road sections) endorsed by all towns.

[Note that steps above are to be conducted with existing resources]

6. Base maps prepared for the entire trail to meet MassHighway's standards.
7. Feasibility studies conducted on road and river crossings in Salisbury, Newburyport and Topsfield.
8. Preliminary design (25%) plans completed for Salisbury, Newburyport, and Topsfield (outside scope of existing TIP project).
9. Program funds and match; amend regional TIPs.

Phase 2:

1. Complete 75% and final designs for Salisbury, Newburyport, and Topsfield.
2. Conduct feasibility studies conducted on road and river crossings in communities with long-term leases approved in Phase 1.
3. Preliminary design (25%) plans completed for communities with approved long-term leases in 2007.
4. Obtain required permits for trail construction in Salisbury, Newburyport, Topsfield and the on-road sections in Newbury, Topsfield and Boxford.

Section 4: Project Development and Phasing

5. Solicit construction bids for Salisbury, Newburyport, Topsfield and other communities with approved long-term leases and select contractors.
6. Obtain additional permits required.

Phase 3:

1. Complete 75% and final designs for sections with approved 25% plans.
2. Award construction bids for Salisbury, Newburyport, Topsfield and other communities with approved long-term leases.
3. Feasibility studies conducted on road and river crossings in communities with long-term leases approved in Phase 2.
4. Preliminary design (25%) plans completed for communities with long-term leases approved in Phase 2.
5. Obtain additional permits required.

Phase 4:

1. Complete 75% and final designs for section with approved 25% plans.
2. Award construction bids for other communities with approved long-term leases.

Section 5: Funding Strategy

Planning for the Border to Boston Trail will be decentralized with each town taking the lead for planning for and endorsing a selected route. The towns will all cooperate according to the terms in the Joint Planning Resolution (Appendix B).

Securing long-term control of the right of way will be the obligation of each community. Sufficient control must be obtained to meet Federal Highway Administration requirements to access state funding. Funds from the SAFETEA-LU earmark will only be available to those communities which have demonstrated substantial commitment to securing the corridor for public recreational use.

The design, engineering, permitting and construction conducted from the SAFETEA-LU earmark will be done either on a collaborative basis under the auspice of the Massachusetts Highway Department or via contracting by individual towns according to MassHighway procedures or a combination of the two approaches. The ad hoc coalition of communities will advise on and consent to all centralized MassHighway design contracts and will review the design standards under individual town contracts. Each municipality must affirm its desire to proceed independently with contracting for Preliminary Design or to participate in the centralized Preliminary Design process.

The top priority for use of the earmark funding will be to complete the Preliminary Design (25%) for the entire trail including required feasibility studies. Any residual funds will be used for permitting and construction for those sections of trail which have secured control of the right of way. Communities which have used other funding sources to complete their Preliminary Design will be given highest priority for accessing residual funds for completing design and trail construction.

Final design, engineering and construction funding required beyond the earmark will follow the process established for communities in the MassHighway Project Development and Design Guidebook. Communities will pursue a variety of funding sources to complete the project according to the approved Preliminary Design.

Principles:

1. Funding earmarked specifically for the Border to Boston Trail will be utilized according to the approach laid out in this Implementation Plan and only those communities which demonstrate substantial commitment to securing long-term public recreational use for the trail will have access to the funding.

Section 5: Funding Strategy

2. Towns that have pre-existing projects on a regional TIP are not required to wait for the endorsement of the Implementation Plan or management plan by other towns nor are they required to be entirely consistent with its direction.
3. New independent transportation projects submitted by towns that affect the trail corridor should be reviewed and negative impacts to the Border to Boston Trail minimized.
4. The local communities will conduct planning work for the Border to Boston Trail with help from regional groups. Funding from federal and state sources will be utilized for design, engineering, permitting and construction. Outreach efforts will span planning and continue through all stages.
5. All towns will be given equal priority for funds for design and engineering, based on the number of miles of off-road trail to be built in each town that has not already been funded from other sources. Funding for required feasibility studies will be included. Priority for remaining funding to be used for permitting and construction will be given to towns that first obtained control of their trail right-of-way.
6. Each community will find resources to maintain its section of the trail. The Rails to Trails Conservancy has surveyed a wide range of rail-trails throughout the country, and documented an average basic annual cost for operations and maintenance of approximately \$2,000 per mile. There are a number of potential sources of funding to support annual maintenance costs, from existing local police and public works, to new annual budget lines, to local charitable foundations, nonprofits, and sponsoring businesses, to state grants.
7. To facilitate fund raising from private sources for the Border to Boston Trail either a new non-profit organization will be established or arrangements made with an existing organization to serve as a partner to local government.

Match Requirements

A non-federal, "local" match of 20% is typically required for federally funded projects, including SAFETEA-LU "High Priority Projects." Often the match is provided in part by the state through MassHighway, though other sources are acceptable. Importantly, due to a congressionally enacted rescission in early 2006, all "High Priority Projects" in SAFETEA-LU have been reduced by approximately 15% and the funding available must be spread out over the 5-year authorization period (2005-2009). The match is calculated based on the full project amount not just the funding identified in SAFETEA-LU.

The full funding in SAFETEA-LU for the Border to Boston Trail (High Priority Project # 843) was:

Funding Earmark \$800,000
At 85%= \$680,000
With a 20% match = \$816,000
Match = \$136,000

Funding will be dispersed over multiple years and the MPO/RPA team will prepare an annual budget responding to the recommendations of the Border to Boston *ad hoc* Coalition.

Preliminary Cost Estimate and Proposed Allocation of Funding

Estimating total costs for a multi-community and multiple-owner rail-trail is difficult at this early stage. Once a preliminary design has been completed, a far more precise estimate will be developed. To avoid either under-estimating or inflating costs, two separate approaches have been followed to generate fair projections, with the mean figure used as the basis for our calculations on the cost for the preliminary design.

For the purpose of comparison only both estimates were prepared for the 27.8 mile long Border to Boston Trail assuming a 21.1 mile, 12 foot-wide asphalt surface trail plus an additional 6.7 miles of on-road trail marked along existing roadways as detailed in Table 3.

Currently, rail-trails in Massachusetts cost approximately \$1M per mile with some coming in for less and some more. Estimates fluctuate greatly according to cost of materials, environmental and site work required, and the number and complexity of the road and river crossings. The Massachusetts average figure tracks slightly higher than project costs nationally. Using the Massachusetts average cost approach, the 21.1 miles of off-road trail will cost \$21.1M, plus an additional \$.7M for the 6.7 miles of on-road trail. A total estimated cost of \$22M is reached after adding funds for contingency and inflation.

A second, more detailed approach for cost estimating can be generated using the Benefit-Cost tool developed by the National Pedestrian and Bicycling Information Clearinghouse (<http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/bike/cost/>) based on information from other recent rail trail construction projects in the Northeast. Using this model the 21.1 miles of off-road trail and 6.7 miles of on-road trail would cost approximately \$650,000 per mile. The total estimated cost would be approximately \$13,715,000.

A big factor in calculating the total cost for the Border to Boston Trail will be the costs required for bridging the Merrimack River (Salisbury-Newburyport), Ipswich River (Topsfield) and the crossings of Route 1 (Salisbury and Topsfield), Route 97 (Topsfield) as well as a possible underpass for Route 110 (Salisbury). In addition, 40 at-grade road crossings will be required, plus an undetermined number of wetlands and environmental permits.

Section 5: Funding Strategy

Typically, 12% of total project costs are required for complete design and engineering of a trail facility, with the Preliminary Design expending 40% of the design and engineering budget. As Newburyport and Salisbury have already received funding commitments for the design and construction of a total of 2.8 miles of the Border to Boston Trail from the MVPC 2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), the total cost for design, permitting and construction is reduced by an additional 10%. Following this formula and using the mean projected total cost (between \$22M and \$13.7M) the Preliminary Design for the remaining mileage could cost \$771,444.

This figure is less than \$816,000, the new combined value of the reduced federal earmark amount (\$680,000) and the required 20% match (\$136,000), but more than is available in revised direct federal funding alone (\$680,000). As noted earlier, an across the board recision of all High Priority Projects reduced the original mark of \$800,000 by 15% to \$680,000.

If the federal funding and match are provided, sufficient funds would be available to complete the Preliminary Design for the entire trail. Any residual funds could be used for finalizing design, permitting and to begin construction in those communities which used other funds to complete the preliminary design.

Table 5: Funding Sources	
Federal Funding Sources	Local Match Requirement
<p>Transportation Enhancements Program Ten percent of federal Surface Transportation Program funds are set aside for the Transportation Enhancements program, which may be used for provision of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians and preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails).</p>	10%
<p>Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) May be used for either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or non-construction projects (such as brochures, public service announcements and route maps) related to safe bicycle use.</p>	10%
<p>Regional Transportation Demand Management Program (TDM) Funded under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program, the TDM program provides funds for efforts to change the behavior of motorists, encouraging them to use alternatives to driving alone and supporting strategies that promote the use of these alternatives.</p>	10%
<p>Safe Routes To School (SR2S) SR2S is a new federal program inaugurated under SAFETEA-LU. States are required to hire an SR2S coordinator to fund projects to increase bicycling and walking to primary and middle schools. At least 70% of funds must be used for infrastructure projects, while 10-30% may be used for educational and promotional activities.</p>	0%
<p>Recreational Trails Program (RTP) RTP funds may be used to create trails for use by motorized and/or non-motorized users. This federal program is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation in conjunction with the Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board and the Massachusetts Highway Department.</p>	20%
<p>Scenic Byways Program Federal program administered through MassHighway. Funds may be used for planning activities and promotion of tourism on state designated routes.</p>	N/A
<p>National Park Service Rivers and Trails Assistance Program This program offers technical assistance (not direct funding) to communities in planning trails and greenway projects.</p>	N/A

Section 5: Funding Strategy

Other Funding Sources	Local Match Requirement
<p>Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) DCR, under its responsibilities for the care and oversight of the natural resources, can directly acquire land and property interests for trail projects.</p>	N/A
<p>DCR Trails and Greenways Demonstration Grants Program DCR provides grant awards to municipalities, non-profits and regional planning agencies to support innovative projects that advance the creation and promotion of greenway and trail networks throughout Massachusetts. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$10,000.</p>	N/A
<p>Community Preservation Act (CPA) This program allows communities to collect a surcharge on local property taxes (if approved by local vote) to fund open space acquisition, affordable housing, historic preservation, and recreational projects.</p>	N/A
<p>Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Infrastructure and Housing Support Program Also known as the TOD Bond Bill, this program is a joint effort of the MBTA and the Office of Commonwealth Development. It provides grants of up to \$500,000 for bicycle and pedestrian improvements within 1/4-mile of a transit station.</p>	N/A
<p>Division of Conservation Services Self Help Program Reimburses up to 90% of the total project cost for the acquisition of land for conservation and recreation purposes.</p>	10% minimum
<p>Division of Conservation Services Urban Self Help Program Reimburses up to 90% of allowable costs towards the acquisition of land, undertaking of new construction or rehabilitation of land for park or outdoor recreation purposes. For communities with a population of at least 35,000.</p>	10% minimum

Section 6: Management System and Process

In 2007, a Management Plan will be developed for the Border to Boston Trail. It will include the definition of the trail's purpose, and a set of principles for its management. Each community will participate in its development through the *ad hoc* coalition and will endorse the plan.

Similar multi-jurisdictional trails have developed management compacts or councils representing all of the towns. Construction of the Border to Boston Trail will require a multi-year effort and regional coordination. Likewise, ongoing maintenance and operational costs will require close coordination between communities. Costs for the entire system could range from \$50,000 to \$100,000 per year with most of the expense covered by existing budgets of the departments of public works and police.

A clear consensus has emerged that the trail will serve a variety of functions including transportation, recreation, health promotion, education, and economic development.

Points of General Agreement

Purposes of Trail:

- The trail will be continuous and open to the public
- Primarily serves local communities and the region
- Connects to transit, schools, parks, town centers, neighborhoods
- Responsive to needs of abutters
- Restricted to bicycle and pedestrian users and horses on suitable sections
- Safe for all users
- Year round use promoted
- Context sensitive design encouraged
- Trail signage and markings should be consistent throughout the towns

Community Role:

- Local Government – ownership, maintenance, and policing
- Private Organizations – supplement local government, information, outreach and education

Key Links:

- Newbury/Newburyport MBTA Transit Center
- Municipal Centers: Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury (Byfield), Georgetown, Topsfield, Danvers
- Coastal Trails Network
- Bay Circuit Trail
- Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
- Essex National Heritage Area
- Salisbury Beach State Reservation
- Martin Burns Wildlife Management Area (Mass Department of Fish & Wildlife)
- Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary (Massachusetts Audubon)
- Bradley Palmer State Park
- Willowdale State Forest
- Peabody Bikeway
- Salem Bike Path
- Marblehead Rail Trail (The Path)
- Swampscott Spirit Trail
- Northern Strand Community Trail

Section 7: Glossary

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

A federal funding program funding for surface transportation and other related projects that contribute to air quality improvements and reduce congestion.

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cmaqpgs/>.

Earmark

A legislative requirement that all or part of a particular revenue source be devoted to a specific use.

Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC)

The non-profit management organization for the congressionally designated Essex National Heritage Area (ENHA). The Commission's mission is to promote and preserve the historic, cultural and natural resources of the ENHA. *<http://www.essexheritage.org>.*

Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

The regional planning agency for the 101-community Boston Region. One of 14 members of the Boston Region MPO. *<http://www.mapc.org>.*

Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD), also known as MassHighway

MassHighway's primary responsibilities are the design, construction, and maintenance of the Commonwealth's state highways and bridges. *<http://www.state.ma.us/mhd>.*

Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)

MEPA requires that state agencies study the environmental consequences of their actions, including permitting and financial assistance. It also requires them to take all feasible measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate damage to the environment. MEPA requires public study, disclosure, and development of feasible mitigation for a proposed project.

<http://www.mass.gov/envir/mepa/index.htm>.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

MPOs are regional transportation planning organizations for urban areas in the US. MPOs program federal transportation funds according to the "3-C" planning process (Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative), instituted by the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962. MPOs are responsible for developing the TIP.

Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)

MVPC is the regional planning agency for fifteen communities in Northeastern Massachusetts.
<http://www.mvpc.org>.

National Parks Service (NPS)

A federal bureau of the Department of the Interior responsible for the US National Park System.
<http://www.nps.gov>.

Regional Planning Agency (RPA)

In Massachusetts, RPAs are consortia of local governments that have banded together under the provisions of state law to address problems and opportunities that are regional in scope. The regional planning areas delineated for each of Massachusetts' 13 RPAs are designated by state enabling legislation as special state districts. Each RPA is governed by a board formed of representatives from its member communities. *http://www.pvpc.org/web-content/html/home/marpa_index.html.*

Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS)

Also known as the Rivers & Trails Program or RTCA. The RTCA is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provides technical assistance to community groups and local, State, and federal government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. *<http://www.nps.gov/rtca/>.*

SAFETEA-LU

Acronym for Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. SAFETEA-LU authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009. *<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/>.*

Transportation Enhancements Program (TE)

The TE program provides opportunities to preserve, restore, and enhance components of the surface transportation system. Its purpose is to provide added features to standard transportation facilities and programs. Eligible projects include development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, educational programs, landscaping, acquisition of scenic easements, historic preservation, restoration of buildings and structures, removal of outdoor advertising, archaeological research, environmental mitigation of storm water pollution, and establishment of transportation museums.
<http://www.eot.state.ma.us/default.asp?pgid=content/enhanceProgram&sid=about>.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

A prioritized, multi-year program for the implementation of transportation improvement projects. The TIP is developed by the MPO.
Boston MPO: *<http://www.bostonmpo.org/bostonmpo/resources/tip/tip.htm>*
Merrimack Valley MPO: *http://www.mvpc.org/transport_sec/transimprov.html*

Appendix A: Town-by-Town Status

This section provides information specific to each community along the Border to Boston right-of-way. Information is presented in the following format:

- **Right-of-Way (ROW)**
 - Ownership
 - At-grade crossings
 - Obstacles
 - Physical status
 - Current use of ROW
 - Abutters

- **Local Project Activities**
 - Actions completed or underway
 - Local votes
 - Inclusion in local plans
 - Local organizations in support
 - Local organizations opposed

- **Destinations (within ½-mile of the right-of-way)**
 - Schools
 - Public services
 - Town centers, shopping centers, employers
 - Transit
 - Parks and open space
 - Other trails



Town of Boxford

Right-of-Way

Ownership

National Grid owns a majority of the rail bed, especially at the road intersections.

Private parties own other sections, including the old depot station and the historic railroad sheds west of Rte 95. Boxford and Georgetown have been working together for a separate ROW lease for each town from National Grid. Boxford needs to complete a title review.

At-grade crossings

The path will cross five (5) streets at-grade in 2.8 miles.

Obstacles

The ROW intersects I-95 in Boxford, which will require a bridge or underground crossing. An on-road alternative using Bare Hill Rd. for approximately two miles would eliminate this crossing.

Physical status

The tracks were taken up many years ago. The rail bed is the same base used by the railroad. Grass and shrubs have grown, and are cut either by National Grid or volunteers.

Current use of ROW

National Grid currently runs a power line on the rail bed through Boxford. There are two sets of poles from Pond Street to Georgetown and one set of poles from Pye Brook Road to Topsfield. The ROW is informally used for walking, horseback riding, birding, and biking.

Abutters

134 abutters: 132 residential properties, one commercial center (Boxford Meeting Place) and one business (Welloset Kennels – Best Friends Pet Care). A meeting was held with rail bed abutters on July 10, 2006.

Local Project Activities

• Actions completed or underway

Boxford is preparing to spend \$27,500 for land title review on the ROW.

• Local votes

March 6, 2006: Boxford Selectmen signed a joint planning resolution.

May 9, 2006: Boxford Town Meeting voted to spend \$27,500 from the Boxford CPA fund for due diligence on land title review.

- **Inclusion in local plans**

The Fall 2006 new revised Boxford master plan will include the rail-trail.

- **Local organizations in support**

Boxford Recreation Committee

Boxford Rails-Trails Subcommittee

BTA/BOLT (Boxford Trails Association / Boxford Open Land Trust) Boxford's main map source is the BTA/BOLT Trail Guide to the Bay Circuit and other parcels, produced and printed by BTA/BOLT in 2005. In 2006, BTA/BOLT is planning a town map, which will show the Boxford public trail system and proposed rail-trail.

The Horticultural Society of Boxford

BAA

Boxford Historical Society

Destinations

- **Town centers, shopping centers, employers**

Boxford Meeting Place, which includes public parking, a real estate office, restaurant, and day care center.

- **Parks and Open Space**

The Kelsey Arboretum, 3.5 acres

Boxford Woods on Great Pond Road and Baldpate Pond

- **Other Trails**

Bay Circuit hiking trail at the Kelsey Arboretum on Kelsey Road

Boxford Woods at Great Pond Drive, woods single file trail along Baldpate Pond.

Pye Brook Trail, a neighborhood trail, part of the Boxford trail system for walkers and horse-back riders.



Danvers

Right-of-Way (ROW)

Ownership

The MBTA owns the right of way for the Newburyport Branch across Danvers but Guilford Rail has an easement on the portion from the Peabody line to near the town center. The town manager is currently looking into a lease of ROW from MBTA.

At-grade crossings

The path will cross ten (10) streets at-grade in 4.3 miles.

Obstacles

There is a bridge over Rt. 114 near the Peabody line that will need some work but appears stable. Another short bridge near the High School will need to be made passable. Along the way there are a three or four small streams to cross.

Physical status

All the sections are passable, except in summer when vegetation makes it difficult in places. The town will soon be removing the rails from Chestnut Street to Wenham Street to enable construction of a new electric substation near the high school.

Current use of ROW

The town power company has power lines along the area from Chestnut Street to Wenham Street. At Agway and a professional building on Popular Street (Rt. 35) they have put parking lots on the rail line or into the ROW and at Maple Street; the town has a banner support structure in the middle of the right-of-way.

Abutters

130 Homes, five owners have been vocal opposition

5 Condo Groups with a total of 153 units

1 Apartment House

1 Danvers Senior Housing Area with 5 apartments directly adjacent to ROW

18 Businesses, Agway has greatly infringed on the ROW.

1 Historic Property

2 Churches

1 MBTA owned lot (currently the town is purchasing it)

Brooksby Senior Community with about 1,400 residents adjacent to ROW just beyond the Danvers/Peabody line.

Avalon at Crane Brook, 387 apartments, adjacent to ROW on the Danvers/ Peabody line.

Local Project Activities

- **Actions completed or underway**

At the present time no funds have been spent for the trail.

- **Local votes**

May 15, 2006: Town Meeting voted to approve a warrant article to support efforts by the Board of Selectmen, the Town Manager, and others to explore the feasibility of constructing a multi-use pathway along the Newburyport Branch rail corridor between the Peabody town line south of Andover Street/Route 114 and the Wenham town line near Choate Farm, or take any other action thereon.

- **Inclusion in local plans**

The Open Space and Recreation five-year plan from 2001 recognized and made specific references to the use of the rail bed for trails. This plan is a recommendation to the town. Danvers is currently developing on the next five-year Master Plan to guide recreation, park, and open space planning and development. In conjunction with this, a town-wide Community Needs Survey will be taken in October 2006.

- **Local organizations in support**

Conservation Commission and the Recreation Committee
Open Space and Recreation Advisory Committee
Disability Commission
Downtown Improvement Committee
Danvers Bi-Peds, Inc.
Rotary Club
Danvers Community YMCA
Essex County Horticultural Organization (ECHO)
Danvers Historical Society
Danvers Art Association

- **Local organizations opposed**

In the latter half of 2005, the Neighborhood Information Council (NIC) was formed to oppose the trail. Most of them are adjacent property owners. Their list of concerns includes crime, cost, and privacy.

Destinations

- **Schools**

Danvers High School, grades 9-12
St. Mary's School, grades pre-kindergarten-8
Great Oak, grades K-5

Highland, grades K-5
Holten Richmond Middle School, grades 6-8

• **Public services**

Danvers Town Hall
Danvers Department of Public Works
Danvers Police Department
Danvers Senior Center
Peabody Institute Library (public)
Maple Street Congregational Church
St. Mary's Church
Unitarian Universalist Church
YMCA

• **Town centers, shopping centers, employers**

All of downtown Danvers
Liberty Tree Mall
18 businesses directly adjacent to the ROW

• **Transportation connections**

Bus stop in town center on High Street
Bus stop on Holten Street
5 public parking lots, including recently purchased MBTA lot bordering ROW

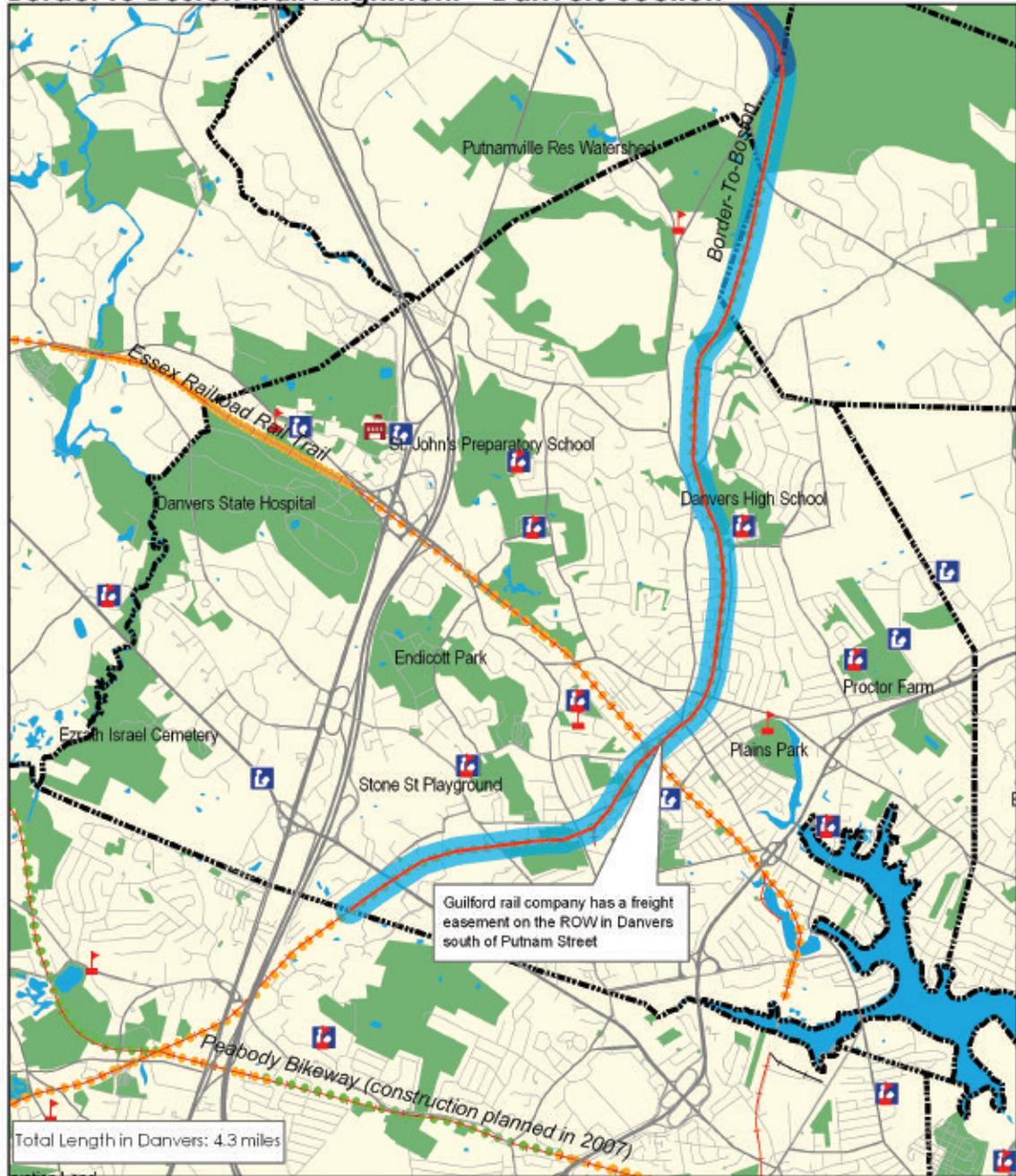
• **Parks and open space**

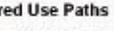
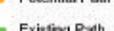
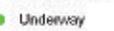
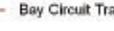
Tapley Park (Little League field)
Meadows Ice skating area
Danvers High School athletic fields
Gates Park
Plains Park, ball fields, tennis courts, next to Holten Richmond Middle School
Choate Farm, located at 273 Locust Street, newly acquired open space
Plans are also in the works to move and restore the last remaining train station in Danvers. It will sit less than 1/4 from the trail next to a public parking lot. Plans have mentioned public bathrooms and a visitor center.

• **Other trails**

There is the potential for this trail to one day connect into Peabody and beyond to the south and southwest. None of these trails are complete at this time, though the Peabody Bikeway will begin construction soon.

Border to Boston Trail Alignment - Danvers Section



	 Schools	Regional Planning Agency  MAPC  MVPC	Right-of-Way Control  Local Ownership  MBTA  MBTA-Lease Secured  National Grid  On-Road	 Border to Boston Alignment Shared Use Paths  Potential Path  Existing Path  Undeveloped  Bay Circuit Trail
	 Libraries  Colleges  Town boundaries  Open Space	Railways  Inactive or Unknown Status  Active Rail Service  Commuter Rail		

0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1 Miles

Town of Georgetown

Right-of-Way (ROW)

Ownership

The ROW is predominantly owned by the National Grid Company. There are also several other owners who have given easements to National Grid. The Georgetown Recreational Path Committee seeks to validate ownerships and has issued a Request for Qualifications from several title companies. Neither an agreement with National Grid nor agreements with individuals have yet been negotiated. There have been several meetings with National Grid on the subject but Georgetown needs to first complete due diligence on ownership and also prepare a preliminary design before further meaningful discussions can be held. National Grid has given the following concerns to be addressed: Liability, Environmental, and Operational including a design plan, Environmental, Abutter Concerns, and Security.

At-grade crossings

The path will cross seven (7) streets at-grade in 4.5 miles.

Physical status

Rails and ties have been completely removed. It is being used as an electrical utility corridor, there are utility poles on each side of the ROW that average 14 feet apart, however some are closer and some are wider apart. The overall ROW is not overgrown except for a short .25-mile section running through the center of town. There is one 10 foot and one 20 foot bridge that need to be built.

Current use of ROW

The current use of the ROW is for electrical utility distribution by National Grid. Sections of the ROW are unofficially used by walkers, bikers, horseback riders, hunters, fishermen, and all terrain vehicles (ATVs).

Abutters

There are approximately 114 trail neighbors at this time. There are two major over 55 residential development projects underway at this time that could raise the number to about 130. One project on the former Georgetown Sand and Gravel property is nearly complete; the other is in the planning stages. The latter project owner recently purchased a section of the ROW for access. The current abutters are approximately 105 residential properties, 8 business properties, and a 2100-acre state wildlife management area. All but one of the businesses is located near the center of town. The residential areas are concentrated in three areas: near the center of town on both sides of the ROW; on the east side of the ROW in northerly section; and also on the east side of the ROW in the southerly section. There are many sections where there are wooded and/or glades on each side.

Local Project Activities

- **Actions completed or underway**

\$30,000 in Community Preservation Act Funds has been allocated for legal title research expenses and a preliminary conceptual design plan. The Kiwanis of Georgetown awarded a \$500 grant for seed money in February 2004 for the Recreational Path Committee.

- **Local votes**

May 3, 2004: Annual Town Meeting, Warrant Art. 29 for Community Preservation Funds that carried by majority approval for \$30,000 for preliminary investigation of a Recreational Path on the former B&M Railroad ROW.

Since 1998 and annually: The Board of Selectmen have appointed a Recreational Path Committee focused on creating a recreational pathway on the former B&M Railroad and have been supportive of this initiative.

March 6, 2006: Border to Boston Resolution – Unanimous approval by the Selectmen of Georgetown that approves of the Town of Georgetown's participation in planning for the Border to Boston initiative.

A town-wide survey was distributed via a mailing through Light Department bills. We sent out 2000 surveys and 500 were returned. There was a 90% overall approval of the trail.

- **Inclusion in local plans**

The Georgetown Recreation Path is an integral part of both the: 2006 Community Development Plan and also the Open Space Plan. Both these plans are electronically available from <http://www.georgetownma.gov>, under the Planning Department and Open Space Committee sections.

- **Local organizations in support**

The Recreational Path Committee is the officially appointed committee to focus on this project. Other Recognized committees that support the rail-trail are: Planning Board; Parks and Recreation Committee; Open Space Committee; Highway Surveyor; Conservation Committee; Board of Selectmen.

Kiwanis of Georgetown, Rotary Club of Greater Georgetown

- **Local organizations opposed**

There are several abutters who are concerned about privacy, safety, and security. The town-wide survey indicating 90% overall approval of the trail showed only 60% in favor of the 30 surveys returned by ROW abutters. As of today, there has not been organized opposition but there may very well be once that project gets closer to required town votes.

Destinations

- **Schools**

Perley School - grades pre-K and 1st
Georgetown Middle/High School – grades 6-12

- **Public services**

Georgetown Town Hall with all associated departments
Public Safety Building (Police and Fire Departments are direct abutters)
Senior Center at the Congregational Church
Georgetown Water Department

- **Town centers, shopping centers, employers**

Medical and dental offices, two pharmacies, clothing stores, supermarket, barbershops and hair salons; therapeutic massage salons. Georgetown's major shopping area is directly accessible via town owned property. Also accessible are several restaurants, antique shops, and ice cream stands; a major greenhouse and gardening facility, general merchandise store, gift shops; chocolate and candy shop. Major employers include medical and dental offices, insurance agents, real estate offices, several banks and the two pharmacies.

- **Transportation connections**

The Georgetown Park-and-Ride Lot on East Main Street (Rt. 133), with commercial bus service (The Coach Company) and Merrimack Valley Regional Transportation Authority shuttle service to the MBTA commuter rail station in Rowley.

- **Parks and open space**

American Legion Park – approximately 6 acres on the shore of Pentucket Pond. Activities include basketball, tennis, baseball, swimming, fishing, volleyball, food concession, and the Kiwanis Ice House Performing Art Pavilion.

Camp Denison – 36 acres of town-owned conservation land located on the shore of Baldpate Pond. Used for quality passive recreational and environmental experiences; including picnicking, hiking, fishing, and boating. Facility has shelters, multiuse lodge, and environmental center. Programs include annual art camp in the park program; scout meetings and camping; other educational programs.

- **Other trails**

Camp Denison access pathway. Natural hiking trails connected to a network of hiking trails in a 40-acre parcel that is adjacent to pristine Baldpate Pond. The access pathway is currently privately owned but the town is negotiating its purchase.

Crane Pond Wildlife Management Area (WMA) – A 2,100-acre wildlife area managed by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife). Numerous natural hiking trails and small craft paddle access to the Parker River.

Groveland/Georgetown ROW – Former B&M Bradford Branch and now a National Grid utility corridor passing over King Street. Although no active planning is currently underway, there have been very preliminary discussions about developing this east-west connection that would link the Border to Boston Trail in Georgetown to the Bradford portion of Haverhill via Groveland.

Thurlow Street access - A publicly owned paved road that is a frequently used by cyclists.

Wells Street access - Currently a natural walking trail over private land used for unapproved access to the trail. No negotiations have occurred with owner.

Mill Street Access - A publicly owned paved road that is a frequently used by cyclists.

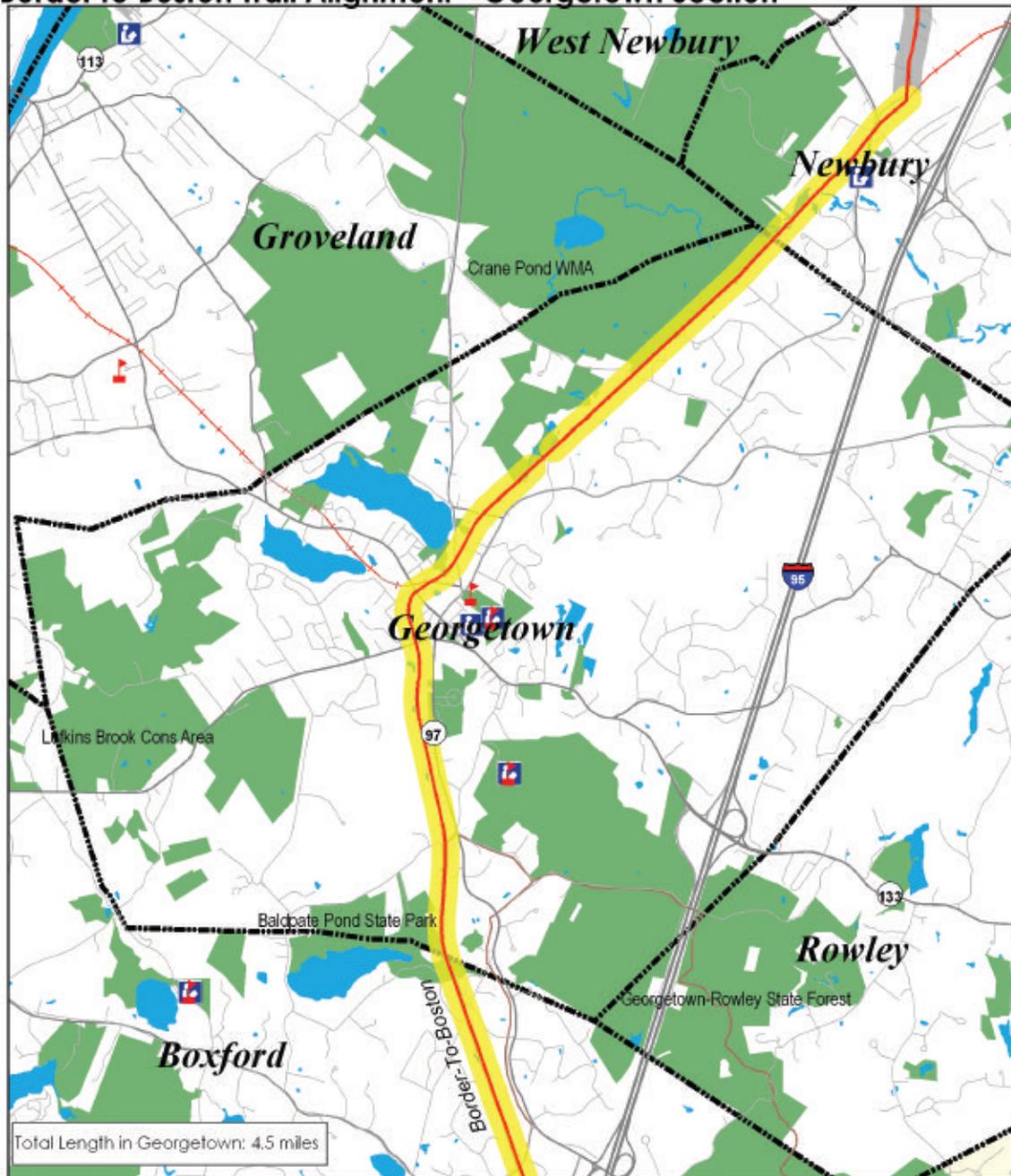
Pond Street access - A publicly owned paved road that is very frequently used by cyclists and pedestrians.

Georgetown Public Safety Building access - Currently heavily vegetated but an ideal spot for access to the center of town.

Central Street access and parking - A recently gifted un-buildable parcel to the Georgetown Park and Recreation Commission that could be used to create a small park, a few parking spaces and access to the proposed trail.

Nelson Street access - A public paved road that is frequently used by cyclists and walkers.

Border to Boston Trail Alignment - Georgetown Section



Town of Newbury

Right-of-Way (ROW)

Ownership

Newburyport municipal line to Route 1 traffic circle and Newburyport MBTA Station: In accordance with a 2006 inter-municipal agreement between Newbury and Newburyport, portions of this segment were recently purchased from Guilford Transportation for use in conjunction with Newburyport's "Clipper City Rail Trail." These newly acquired parcels remain interspersed with those owned by National Grid. Each community will own those portions that lie within its borders and they are working to formulate an agreement regarding trail construction and maintenance.

Newburyport MBTA Station to the Georgetown municipal line: Further research into ownership is needed for this section. Based on town assessor information, the trail appears to be owned by National Grid. However, the North Shore Bikeways Reconnaissance Study completed by CTPS indicates that the MBTA has rights from Highfield Road to the commuter rail station, and that MassWildlife owns from Highfield Road to I-95.

At-grade crossings

The path will cross six (6) streets at-grade in 5.2 miles.

Obstacles

The ROW is bisected in this section by federal interstate highway I-95 and state Rt. 1. A 4.8-mile on-road alternative route from the Newburyport MBTA commuter rail station to the village of Byfield would avoid the need for a new crossing of the I-95. From the MBTA station such a route could follow Parker Street to Scotland Road under I-95 to South Street, which turns into Main Street in Byfield.

Physical status

Where the utility ROW passes through the state-owned Martin Burns Wildlife Management Area, the area surrounding this section of the trail is mostly undeveloped. Several waterways are crossed with well-maintained bridges. The bridge at the Parker River has no deck, but the abutments appear to be sound. There are some sections west of I-95 that have some wet areas or eroded edges. There appears to be some encroachment in a couple of locations near the center of Byfield.

Current use of ROW

The primary use is an electric transmission line and appears suitable for vehicular access. Some public access takes place in Martin Burns WMA, both vehicular and on foot for recreation and hunting.

Abutters

Newburyport municipal line to Route 1 traffic Circle and Newburyport MBTA Commuter Rail Station: This segment passes through some municipal open space, a gravel pit, and a large parcel that is currently zoned residential/agricultural. There are several residences at the Parker Street crossing, and commercial potential along Rt. 1. At this point, density is low and abutter issues don't appear to be especially problematic.

Newburyport MBTA Rail Station to the Georgetown town line: From the MBTA station to Highfield is largely open agricultural land and wetlands along the Little River. Overall, abutter conflicts are not likely. A company that is presently interested in developing the area at the Route 1/Hanover/Middle St. interchange has indicated a willingness to develop pedestrian pathways throughout the development, to provide walkways within the development and to provide a connection to the train station on one end and to the ROW on the other.

From Highfield Road to I-95: MassWildlife controls many acres of undeveloped land on either side of the ROW. While this might seem advantageous to have open space along this section, there are indications that MassWildlife may be less than favorable to a recreational trail through the property due to a potential use conflict with hunting. However, the state division has some new managers that may have a different view than was expressed in the past.

From I-95 to the Georgetown municipal line: There are numerous residential abutters due to the village setting in Byfield. Some buildings are very close to the ROW and one residence's driveway appears to be in the ROW. The Knobb Hill subdivision backs up to the ROW and includes a large number of homeowners interested in the this trail project. While there are no specific problems noted, the large numbers of abutters make this section the most likely to need attention and outreach.

Local Project Activities

- **Actions completed or underway**

Newbury is also working with Newburyport to support that community's efforts to construct its municipal 'rail-trail', since part of the trail is located in Newbury. A recent town meeting vote will allow Newburyport to design, build and maintain those portions of the trail that are in Newbury so both communities can enjoy this alternative transportation path.

- **Local votes**

April 25, 2006: Board of Selectmen sign joint planning resolution voicing their support for the Border to Boston Trail

May 23, 2006: Newbury Town Meeting voted in the majority to support the joint ownership of the Guilford Rail property and to enter into an inter-municipal agreement to determine the construction and maintenance of Newburyport's future Clipper City Rail Trail.

• **Inclusion in local plans**

Newbury Master Plan (2006), available at <http://www.townofnewbury.org>.

The transportation section of Newbury's newly completed master plan states that one of the primary goals of the plan is to "Enhance safe bicycle and pedestrian circulation/access throughout the Town." The plan calls for the town to inventory current and potential bicycle routes and to incorporate bicycle access to public transit and recreation areas.

Newbury Open Space and Recreation Plan (2001), available at <http://www.townofnewbury.org>. The plan's objectives include:

"Develop new passive recreational opportunities within existing public open spaces" (4-2) and "Participate in regional trail planning and development efforts" (4-4)

The town has also taken the initiative in incorporating bicycle access into its plans as evidenced by the following actions:

- Working cooperatively with Newburyport to design, fund, and construct bicycle lanes along the Plum Island Turnpike. Created in conjunction with a Plum Island water and sewer infrastructure project, the dedicated bike lanes will provide safer access to and from island.
- Incorporating bicycle and pedestrian access as part of a redevelopment plan. The town is working on a mixed-use overlay district to be located near the MBTA commuter rail station. The plan calls for the provision of non-vehicular access to the station as well as other parts of Newbury.
- Newbury is working with Newburyport to construct a rail-trail linking the two communities. A May 2006 town meeting vote will allow Newburyport to design, build and maintain those portions of the trail that are in Newbury so both communities can enjoy this alternate transportation path.
- Local organizations in support
 - Coastal Trails Coalition
 - Newbury Bay Circuit Trail Committee

Destinations

• **Schools**

Newbury Elementary School (some impediments)

• **Public services**

Newbury Town Hall, Yellow School Center for the Arts, Newbury Town Library, Newbury Senior Center, U.S. Post Office, and several churches.

- **Town centers, shopping centers, employers**

The southern end of the trail passes through one of the villages of Newbury known as Byfield. Byfield is more densely developed than most of the rest of Newbury and consists mainly of single-family homes and some commercial businesses. It is considered by many to be a ‘village center,’ as it is home to Newbury’s library, a post office, several churches and a performing arts center.

Newbury Town Hall is in the Upper Green Village Center, which is located slightly off the trail on Rt. 1. Also in the immediate vicinity are the Newbury police and fire stations, professional offices, a gas station, and several stores offering food and convenience items.

The MBTA commuter station area currently has no commercial/retail. However, the Newburyport District Courthouse, Newburyport Industrial Park, several retail stores, and number of food service establishments lay just over the Newbury-Newburyport line. Additional development will likely occur in this area, whether under current zoning or the proposed transit orientated development zoning under consideration by both Newbury and Newburyport.

- **Transportation connections**

MBTA Commuter Rail Newburyport station

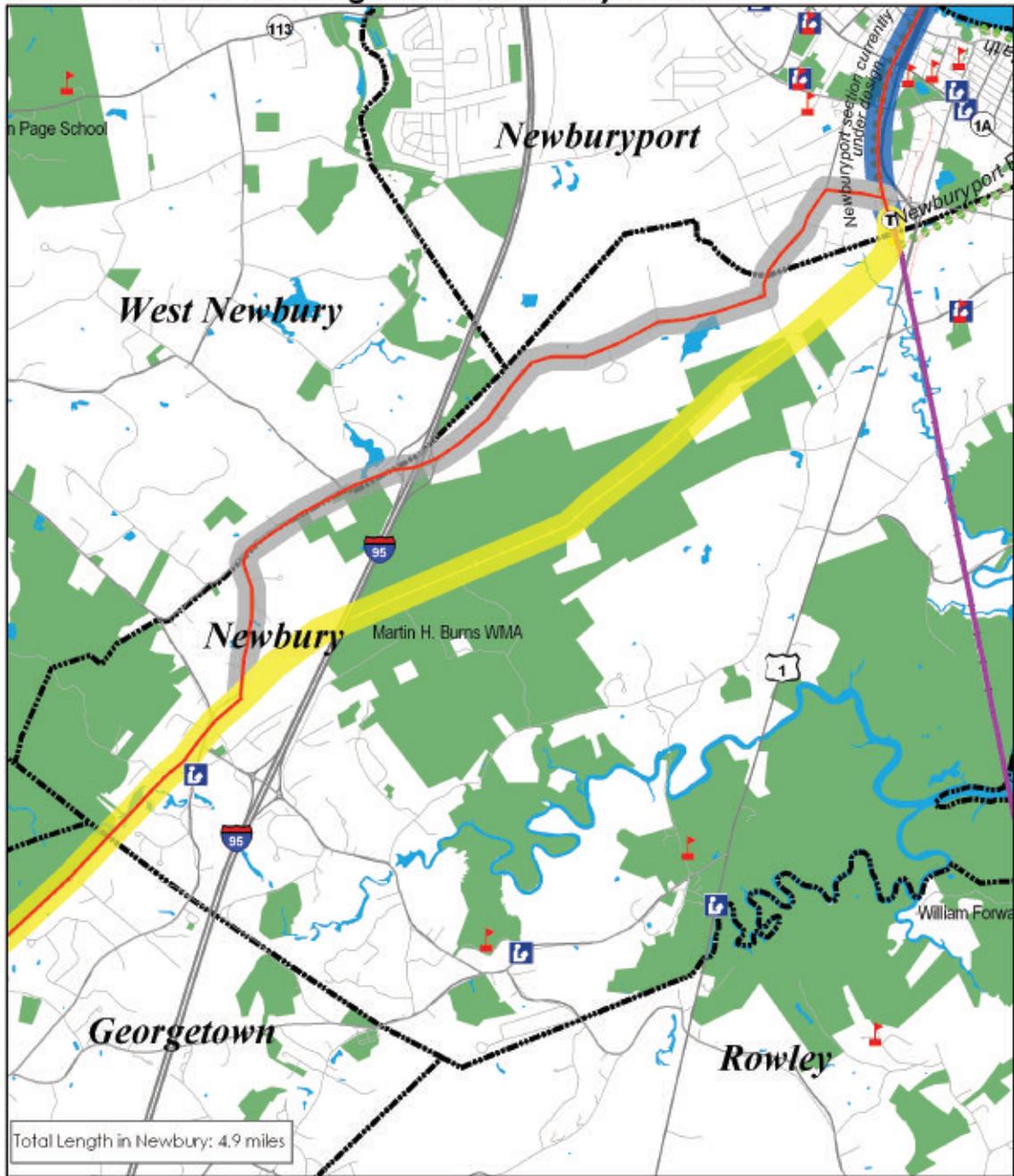
- **Parks and Open Space**

Martin Burns Wildlife Management Area
Crane Pond Wildlife Management Area
Parker River canoe access points

- **Other Trails**

Plum Island Bike Path intersects with the Clipper City Rail Trail in Newburyport, which then intersects with the Border to Boston Trail. The Plum Island Bike Path is a bike travel lane on an existing 2-lane asphalt street.

Border to Boston Trail Alignment - Newbury Section



City of Newburyport

Right-of-Way (ROW)

Ownership

In Newburyport the Border to Boston right-of-way is part of the Clipper City Rail Trail. The Clipper City Rail Trail, part of which is currently in design phase, and part of which will enter design phase in the next two years, will form a continuous loop through downtown, connecting the MBTA train station with the downtown Boardwalk/Harbor Walk. Information provided here primarily concerns the main north-south corridor, the Old Eastern Main Line, which is owned by the MBTA.

The City signed a 99-year lease with the MBTA May 31, 2005, the first such 99-year MBTA rail trail lease in the state. The trail section from Parker Street to the Newbury line will remain under MBTA control, and MBTA cooperation will be required in deciding how to route the trail adjacent to the station.

At-grade crossings

The path will cross three (3) streets at-grade in 1.4 miles.

Obstacles

The trail crosses the Merrimack River between Newburyport and Salisbury, which will require a bridge. See additional information in “Physical status” section.

Physical status

The old rail bridge over the Merrimack River is said to be structurally sound, but the swing section is permanently open. It was last closed in 1965 and is likely to be completely inoperable. The bridge would need decking and some means to span the gap. This is would be the most physically direct way to connect to Salisbury over the River. Another option would be to align the trail with the up-river side of the Gillis (Rt. 1) road bridge. A third choice would be to loop around under Rt. 1 and cross along the down-river side of the Gillis Bridge, then loop around again under the bridge on the Salisbury side. The City is currently working on these design issues.

The ROW south of the Merrimack River is generally in fair to good condition, with some minor underbrush narrowing the path in places. It is passable on foot or with a mountain bike. Some rails and ties are partially buried in this section; but most have been removed.

The trail bridge over Merrimack Street was made usable by local volunteers, although it needs additional work to make it permanently usable.

From Merrimac Street to Washington Street, some rails and ties have been removed, some are partially buried, and a stretch of welded rail is visible at the site of the old station. The bed of the trail is railroad ballast covered with gravel and soil. Members of Newburyport Pathways, neighbors, and

other volunteers have worked extensively on this section of the trail, building stonewalls, planting trees and flowers, removing invasive exotics, and conducting cleanups. It has been designated by the City as Battis Grove. Some trees need to be limbed up to discourage mosquitoes. Drainage during rainstorms is an issue. The trail crosses Washington Street at grade level.

From Washington Street to High Street, some rails and ties remain, but the rails are loose and have been used by volunteers to define the edges of the trail. We plan to eventually remove them and donate them to a museum. Invasive Norway maples occur in this section. Drainage during rainstorms is an issue.

The trail crosses underneath High Street. Stairs and/or ramps are envisioned to provide access to the trail from High Street.

From High Street to Low Street, the corridor widens in some places and the trail surface is rough. The foundation of signal station is present and is planned to be removed. Encroachment by an industrial abutter is an issue.

The original bridge over busy Low Street has been removed, so a new bridge is needed. Volunteers installed rough stone steps up and down the steep banks, and some residents currently use these.

From Low Street to Parker Street, one set of rails remains.

At Parker Street, across from the MBTA station, the entrance to the trail is not readily apparent. From Parker Street to the Newbury line, the ROW is in active railroad use for trains at the new MBTA station; the Border to Boston route continues south past the station via the Martin Burns Wildlife Management Area in Newbury.

Current use of ROW

The MBTA section of the trail (the ROW) is currently used by residents as a trail, although sections of it are rough. Design work is underway to address the major physical issues associated with constructing a finished trail and connecting to the Harbor Walk at the Merrimack River.

Abutters

Abutters to the MBTA trail sections include about 35 homes, a large condominium complex with boat slips, several industrial businesses, retail/office businesses and restaurants, and the DCR Graf Skating Rink. One business is encroaching. Some abutters are either high above or well below the level of the trail. Many abutters are enthusiastic rail trail supporters. We do not know of opposition to this section of the trail.

Local project activities

- **Actions completed or underway**

A request for \$50,000 in design funds for the entire trail (not just the ROW) is currently under consideration by the Community Preservation Committee.

A trail-design consulting firm, Vollmer Associates, is currently working with City planners on such matters as trail width, surfacing, and drainage in various sections, as well as entry arches, bridges, and grade-level crossings. Residents have expressed considerable interest in surfacing options and landscaping opportunities, as well as in how the trail/Harbor Walk connection will be designed.

In relation to other trail sections -- not the ROW -- the City Council on November 14 and December 12, 2005, approved the use of Community Preservation Funds to acquire land from Guilford Transportation. Similarly, the City Council in 2005 approved the expenditure of more than \$50,000 in City funds for the design and construction of bike lanes connecting the rail trail to Plum Island.

In terms of staff time, the City Planning Office has been working intensively on the rail trail system for 10 years. (Interest in the trail began more than three decades ago.) Also, the Department of Public Works has assisted volunteer efforts, especially in the section between the Merrimack River and Low Street, with a backhoe, rubbish hauling, and wood chipping.

- **Local votes**

In early spring, 2006, the mayor signed the Border to Boston Joint Planning Resolution. On May 31, 2005, the City Council voted to authorize the Mayor to execute the 99-Year Lease Agreement with the MBTA.

The Community Preservation Committee voted in 2005 to recommend that CPA funds be expended to buy land from Guilford Transportation for the southern branch of our rail trail loop, a connector to the Border-to-Boston.

On November 28 and December 12, 2005, the City Council voted unanimously to approve the Guilford acquisition.

- **Inclusion in local plans**

Master Plan, 2001

Waterfront Strategic Plan 2003

Strategic Land Use Plan, 2004

Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2005-2010

- **Local organizations in support**

City Council

Community Preservation Committee

Open Space Committee
Planning Board
Parks & Recreation Commission
Coastal Trails Coalition, Inc.

The Greater Newbury Friends of Our Trails (FOOT), a local trails group, has strongly supported the rail trail and the Border to Boston project for many years. FOOT has conducted many walks and work parties to encourage citizen understanding and appreciation of the potential of our old rail beds as trails. FOOT has recently combined with CTC, above.

Newburyport Pathways; an informal group of residents, including the neighbors of Battis Grove.

The Timberland Company made a major contribution of labor and funds to an Earth Day 2003 work party, which made major improvements on the trail section from the Merrimack River to Low Street. Many local banks and other businesses contributed significant funds to pay for materials and supplies for this event.

• Organizations opposed

We are not aware of opposition to the MBTA sections of the trail (the ROW here described).

Destinations

• Schools

Bright Horizons Preschool
River Valley Charter School, grades K-8.
Nock Middle School, grades 5-8.
Kelley Elementary School, grades K-4.
Immaculate Conception Elementary School, Pre K-8.
Newburyport Montessori School, Pre K- K students.
Inn Street Montessori School, grades 1-6.

• Public services

Newburyport Superior Court
Newburyport District Court
Newburyport City Hall
Newburyport Public Library

• Town centers, shopping centers, employers

Lively downtown Newburyport, including many shops, restaurants, offices, galleries, theaters, museums, churches, tour-boat excursions, and other attractions.
Lord Timothy Dexter Industrial Park
Senior housing.

- **Transportation connections**

- MBTA commuter rail Newburyport station
 - Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority bus line
 - Route 1 traffic circle

- **Parks and Open Space**

- Fuller Field (outdoor track and field)
 - DCR Graf Skating Rink (indoor rink)
 - Skate Park (skateboard park)
 - Bartlet Mall and Frog Pond Playground, 7.3 acres, a formal park with frog pond, benches, picnic tables, playground with basketball court and play structures. Also a site of festivals and winter sledding and skating.
 - YWCA swimming pool (indoor)
 - Cushing Park/Ayers Playground, 2 acres, a neighborhood park with basketball courts, a hard-surface play area, and playground.
 - Brown Square, 0.6 acre, a small downtown park with trees, statue, memorials, and benches. Site of political and memorial events.
 - Cashman Park, 12.4 acres, riverfront park with playground, basketball and tennis courts, ball field, soccer field, boat launch, parking.
 - Inn Street Mall/Tot Lot, 0.5 acre, downtown brick pedestrian corridor with fountain and play structures.
 - Market Landing Park, 4.1 acres, central waterfront park. Site of concerts and festivals. Small boat launch nearby.

- **Other Trails**

Longer connectors will eventually connect the rail trail to March's Hill Park in the South End and to Plum Island beaches, the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, and the Sandy Point State Reservation. It is hoped that bike lanes will provide connections to Atkinson Common, a large City park, to Moseley Woods, a spectacular City park on the Merrimack River, and finally to Maudslay State Park, one of the real jewels of the State park system.

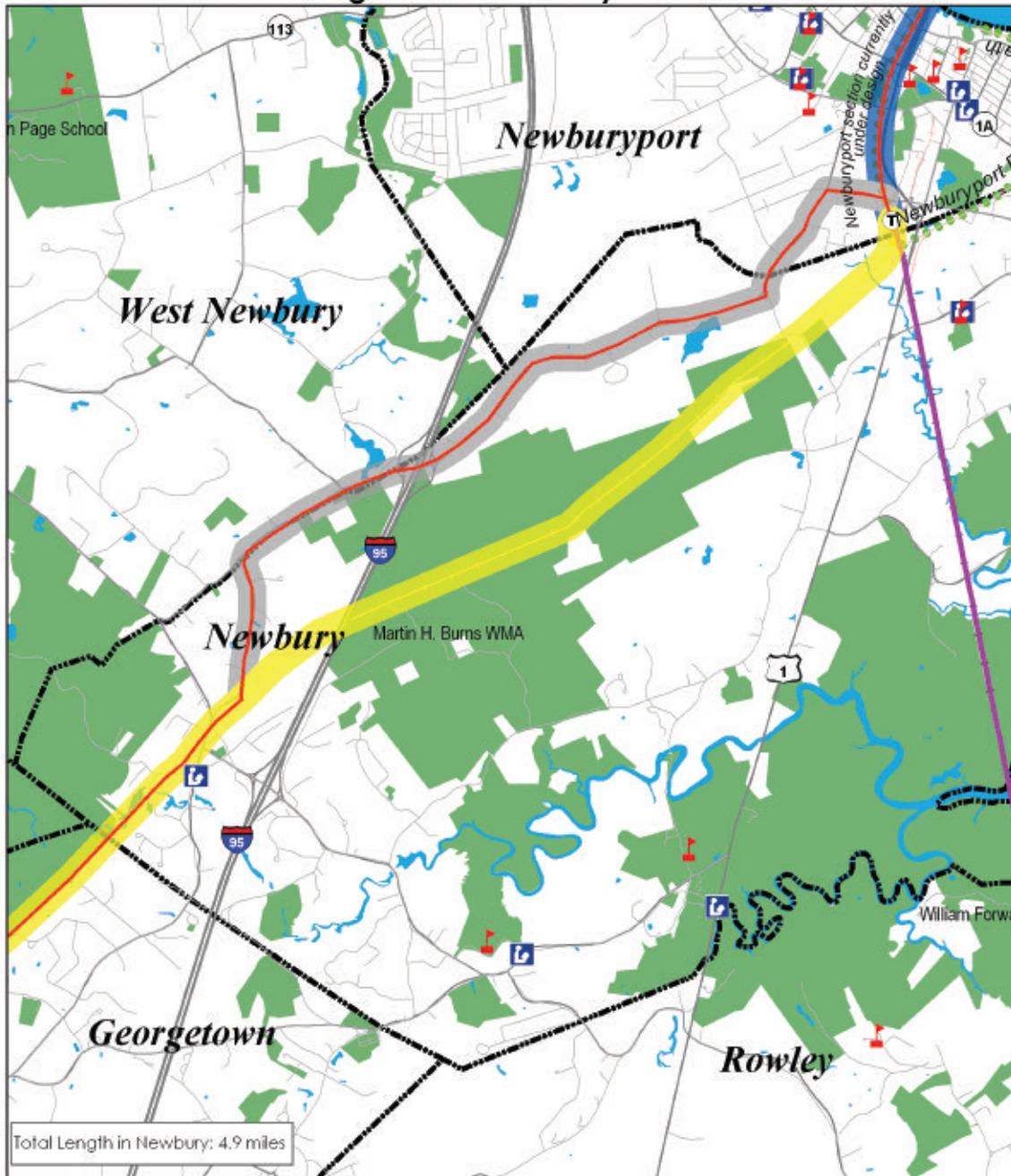
The ROW section emphasized in this document is part of the larger Clipper City Rail Trail, which will consist of a loop connecting downtown and the train station with the most densely populated parts of the City, as well as with two areas of proposed intensive redevelopment, Waterside West and the Little River Village. Surfaces of the entire Clipper City Rail Trail have yet to be determined, as the design process is currently underway.

At the Merrimack River, the Clipper City Rail Trail will connect to the Boardwalk/Harbor Walk, which will extend beyond Cashman Park to the northwest. It will extend along the river to the southeast through downtown to Joppa Park. Surfaces of the Boardwalk/ Harbor Walk will

include boardwalks, where bicyclists must walk their bikes, brick, and some asphalt sections. At Joppa Park, on the Merrimack River, trail users can connect with the Bay Circuit Trail and with the Plum Island bikes lanes. These surfaces are asphalt. From there, trail users can access, numerous trails in the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge.

Along the ROW section, trail users may leave the Clipper City Rail Trail at Washington Street, an on-road (asphalt) and bike lane connector, and head west to Moseley Woods, a City park, and to Maudslay State Park, both of which have extensive, natural-surface trail networks.

Border to Boston Trail Alignment - Newbury Section



Town of Salisbury

Right-of-Way (ROW)

Ownership

The Town of Salisbury and the MBTA have signed a 99-year ATC Lease Agreement for the entire main line ROW in Salisbury (except for the Merrimack River railroad bridge) on standard terms.

At-grade crossings

There is one grade crossing at Mudnock Road, a lightly traveled residential road.

Obstacles

Bridges are needed across US Route 1 (Lafayette Road) and the Merrimack River and an underpass is needed at Route 110.

Physical status

There are four sections of the Old Eastern Main Line ROW that probably will be developed at different times.

Phase 1: Merrimack River to Mudnock Road

Length: 1.5 miles

Condition: Rails removed, ties left behind. One track of ROW is open and passable on foot or bike, ATVs having kept the trail clear, but washboarded. Other track is lightly overgrown. Trail begins at the abutments of the old railroad bridge across the Merrimack River. It then passes through outstanding wooded and salt marsh areas with beautiful views and varied bird and animal life. We plan to call this section of the trail the Old Eastern Marsh Trail.

Phase 2: Lion's Park to Mass/NH State Line

Length: 1.7 miles

Condition: Rails and ties removed from one track of ROW. This track is open and passable on foot or bike, except for one stretch in which ATV's have disrupted water flow and caused ponding on the rail bed. Ties and some rail remain on other track, which is somewhat overgrown. A trail bridge is needed to cross US Route 1 (Lafayette Road), which is heavily traveled. (A recent June 2006 weekend day traffic count recorded 15,200 vehicles.) The trail passes through mature woodlands, including developable upland and some wetland habitats. At the Massachusetts/New Hampshire border, the trail passes under State Route 286, one of the main access routes to Salisbury Beach and the Seabrook and Hampton, New Hampshire beaches.

Phase 3: Mudnock Road to Lion's Park

Length: 0.6 miles

Condition: Rails and ties removed. Track is heavily overgrown and is not easily passable on foot

and not passable on a bike. Track follows a streambed, which will lead to some construction issues. We will need a trail underpass under Route 110 (Elm St.), which is heavily traveled, especially in the summer, as it is the principal route to Salisbury Beach and the Salisbury Beach State Reservation. (The most recent summer weekend day traffic count was 27,536 on August 8, 1998.) The railroad underpass on Route 110 was filled 20+ years ago when MassHighway improved Route 110.

Phase 4: Potential Merrimack River Crossing on old Railroad Bridge

Length: 0.2 miles

The original railroad bridge was constructed in 1888. It has an abandoned non-functional turntable in the middle of the Merrimack River that is locked in the open position, creating two navigable channels each about 65 ft. wide. In 1999 the Rockingham Planning Commission performed a feasibility study of restoring rail service on the ROW from Newburyport to Portsmouth and found the bridge to be structurally sound.

The Town commissioned an environmental study of the ROW by Nangle Consulting Associates in 2005, which disclosed no significant environmental contamination issues. We will have issues related to development in and near sensitive salt marshes and wetlands and issues concerning what to do with the abandoned railroad ties on the ROW.

Current use of ROW

The ROW is used informally by walkers, birders, sightseers and ATV users.

Abutters

Almost the entire ROW passes through undeveloped marshes and woodlands. In the vicinity of Salisbury Square it passes along a street with houses on the opposite side. It also passes alongside a few back yards and next to Lion's Park, the town's principal recreational facility. We have not had any issues with abutters. There is significant support for the trail both from the public and from the Town administration.

Local Project Activities

• Actions completed or underway

The Town Manager spent \$1,400 of Town funds during 2005 to pay for the environmental study of the MBTA-owned parts of the ROW referred to above.

The Town's DPW spent approximately \$15,000 and the MBTA spent approximately \$65,000 earlier in 2006 in a cooperative project to repair a washout of the main line ROW at Town Creek, a tidal creek that runs under the ROW. Restoration of the ROW was essential to moving forward with the ATC Lease Agreement with the MBTA.

Phase 1 is included in the Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Improvement Program for 2008. \$74,500 is programmed for the design of the project and \$521,460 for the construction portion. With the MBTA ATC Lease Agreement in hand, the town plans to seek bids for the design in 2006.

We plan to seek federal and state funding to construct Phase 3 at the same time as MassHighway reconstructs Lafayette Road (US Route 1). The highway reconstruction work is included in the Merrimack Valley MPO's Transportation Improvement Program for 2009 and funded at \$3,600,000.

We will be proposing a joint lease of the Merrimack River railroad bridge by Salisbury and Newburyport in order to develop the bridge as a pedestrian and bike river crossing and sightseeing walkway. In addition, we will propose development of a fishing pier, dinghy dock and canoe and kayak access ramp below the bridge on MBTA property that is part of the ROW. To make the connection the bridge needs to be decked and fenced. We also will need to construct an elevated pedestrian bridge over one of the channels and a pedestrian drawbridge over the other channel to provide the same clearance above the river channels as the adjacent US Route 1 highway drawbridge. The highway bridge operator would operate both the pedestrian and highway drawbridges from an existing station located on the highway bridge .

On September 21, 2006, with the assistance of 150 volunteers from the Timberland Corporation and the Salisbury Coastal Trails, the town was able to extend the improved part of the Salisbury Point Ghost Trail and connect it with local neighborhoods.

- **Local votes**

The Town's Community Development Plan fully supports trail development as a Town-wide Action Plan Priority. Town Meeting approved the Community Development Plan in 2004. On February 27, 2006, the Board of Selectmen unanimously adopted the Border to Boston Joint Planning Resolution.

On March 13, 2006, the Board of Selectmen unanimously voted to authorize the Town Manager to execute the ATC Lease Agreement with the MBTA.

During 2005 the Board of Selectmen approved a grant application to the Essex National Heritage Commission for funding trail entrance signs and historical interpretive signs for the Salisbury Point Ghost Trail.

On September 25, 2006, the Board of Selectmen approved a \$50,000 grant application to the Recreational Trails Program to extend the Salisbury Ghost Trail to Lion's Park and connect it to the main line right of way that is part of the Border to Boston Trail.

On October 23, 2006, Town Meeting approved accepting two recreational trail easements for the Salisbury Point Ghost Trail, one that is needed to connect the trail to Lion's Park and another needed to connect the trail to business areas along the western part of Route 110 (Elm Street)

- **Inclusion in local plans**

The June 2004 Town of Salisbury Community Development Plan includes the following as a primary Town-wide Action Plan Priority: "Develop Salisbury Rail Trail and bike routes as part of Coastal Trails Network." (See p. 122.) Additional Action Plan Priorities are detailed on page 127, including "Seek to develop Rail Trail," "Activate land beneath highway draw-bridge to link to Rail Trail," "Study utilizing Railroad Bridge for fishing and observation," and "Study feasibility to implement Rail Trail" along Lafayette Road. Another Action Plan Priority on page 155 states, "Develop Rail Trail linking the River and Lion's Park." The Town's Community Development Plan is fully supportive of rail trail development both on the main line and on the Amesbury Branch. The Plan is available on the Town's Web site. (www.salisburyma.gov)

- **Local organizations in support**

Board of Selectmen
Parks and Recreation Committee
Community Development Plan Committee
Planning Board
Harbor Commission
Coastal Trails Coalition, Inc.

Salisbury Coastal Trails is a local volunteer group (about 50 people strong) supporting development of rail trails in Salisbury. The group holds regular meetings and sponsored a trail clean up, sign dedication and cookout on the Salisbury Point Ghost Trail on April 22, 2006. The group will participate actively in planning and carrying out further construction of the Salisbury Point Ghost Trail and in planning and supporting development of the segment of the Border to Boston Trail in Salisbury.

- **Local organizations opposed**

There has been no opposition to speak of. Neighbors are supportive of the development of the Salisbury Point Ghost Trail because it has reduced ATV use and offers safe, new biking, walking, and jogging routes. There is broad support throughout the Town.

Destinations

- **Schools**

Salisbury Elementary School, K-6. Salisbury Elementary School also provides fields, a playground and indoor and outdoor basketball courts.

Sparhawk School, grades 9-12.

Phase 2 of the trail originates near Salisbury Square, within two blocks of the Lower Merrimack Valley Boys & Girls Club. It then crosses US Route 1 and passes right next to the rear of the Salisbury Elementary School. We envision this stretch as offering an outstanding opportunity for children from neighborhoods near the Square to get to and from school and the Boys & Girls Club by bike or on foot. Today the school is accessed solely from US Route 1 and there are no sidewalks connecting the school to any neighborhood, so walking or biking to school is virtually impossible. North of the school the trail passes through privately owned land that will likely be developed in the near future. We hope to make new subdivisions in this area walkable and bikeable, incorporating the rail trail and its connections into the planning of new subdivisions.

- **Public services**

Salisbury Town Hall, Town Library, Hilton Senior Center, DPW, Boys & Girls Club, municipal parking lot.

- **Town centers, shopping centers, employers**

The trail runs through Salisbury Square, which includes the historic Town Green and is the principal business, governmental and civic center in Salisbury.

The trail will connect Salisbury and downtown Newburyport and provide easy access to people from both municipalities. Salisbury people can use the trail to shop in Newburyport and Newburyport residents can use the trail as an easy way to get to a large, beautiful open area of marshes and woods.

The trail parallels Bridge Road (US Route 1) in Salisbury, which is a busy commercial corridor. The trail passes alongside the rear of many commercial properties and will provide direct access to many such businesses, both for customers and employees.

- **Transportation connections**

The trail will provide a direct link to the MBTA commuter rail station in Newburyport. The trail will also provide easy access to bike routes to Salisbury Beach and the Salisbury Beach State Reservation as well as to Plum Island and the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge there.

- **Parks and Open Space**

Lion's Park, Lion's Way near Salisbury Square. Ball fields, playground, and tennis courts. This is the Town's principal recreational facility and is located next to the Border to Boston Trail ROW. It will provide a parking area for trail users.

- **Other Trails**

The trail is an essential link in the Coastal Trails Network, a developing 30-mile network of trails and bike routes that will link Salisbury, Amesbury, Newburyport and Newbury as well as Salisbury Beach and Plum Island. Amesbury has already created a paved rail trail on about 1 mile of the Amesbury Branch as part of its Riverwalk project. Salisbury has created a gravel trail (Salisbury Point Ghost Trail) on about 0.7 miles of the Amesbury Branch west of Bartlett St. in Salisbury and plans to develop a continuous 1.7 mile trail from Lion's Park on the main line ROW in Salisbury Square to the Salisbury/Amesbury Town Line. This will eventually provide a direct link to Amesbury's Rail Trail, to a nearby shopping center in Amesbury and to downtown Amesbury.

Border to Boston Trail Alignment - Salisbury Section



Town of Topsfield

Right-of-Way (ROW)

Ownership

The ROW is approximately 3.8 miles in length. The southern half is owned by the MBTA and the northern half by National Grid. The Town of Topsfield owns a 935 ft. section of the trail in the Village District and a 655 ft. section is privately owned (with an easement for the rail trail). Topsfield finalized a 99-year lease with the MBTA in July. We have yet to make progress with National Grid.

Crossings

The path will cross seven (7) streets at-grade in 3.8 miles. Crossings of Rt. 97 and U.S. Route 1 will need to be carefully evaluated.

Obstacles

There is an old railroad bridge over the Ipswich River that could potentially be rehabilitated. We also consider the Rt. 1 crossing an obstacle.

Physical status

The MBTA section has rails on about 80% of its length of 2 miles. The entire length (MBTA and National Grid) has electric utility poles and has just been clear-cut by National Grid.. Behind the Topsfield Fairgrounds there are piles of sand and gravel on the trail. The National Grid's section is clear and passable although there are two gates blocking vehicular access. In two areas the ROW is wet from poor drainage (drainage ditches have not been maintained). The Town owns a section of 935 ft. that is used as a footpath with access to the Proctor School, tennis courts, tot lot, and Village Shopping Center. There have been no reported hazardous spills on record along the trail. A freight barn that is adjacent to the rail trail has recently been tested. The 21E environmental report did not have any positive findings.

Abutters

There are about 120 lots, 52 of which have houses. Approximately 85% of the ROW distance has residential abutters. Other abutters include the Mass Audubon, Topsfield Fairgrounds and Topsfield town parking lot, Village Shopping Center, Proctor School, Town tennis courts, tot lot and Pye Brook Community Park. There is some abutter (trail neighbor) opposition on the MBTA section but they seem to be accepting the trail. When the National Grid section starts progressing we expect more resistance.

Local Project Activities

• Actions completed or underway

The Topsfield Rail Trail Committee has been studying the trail. The Town has extensively mapped the trail resulting in a set of 2 ft. contour topographical maps. The Topsfield sec-

tion has been part of the “North Shore Bikeways Reconnaissance Study” published by the state Executive Office of Transportation.

The Topsfield Rail Trail Committee has pledged not to use municipal funds for the rail trail, which we may call “Topsfield Linear Common, or TLC.” However, the Town approved \$60 for the Topsfield Rail Trail Committee web site (<http://www.TopsfieldTrail.org>) and has also spent funds for legal review of the MBTA lease. The Rail Trail Committee has a lot of talent that includes a Licensed Site Professional, a surveyor, a licensed wetland scientist, marketing expertise, webmaster knowledge, and other enthusiastic people. Over 2,500 man-hours have been spent pursuing the trail lease over the past 10 years.

• **Local votes**

The Topsfield Board of Selectmen has twice (2/6/06 and 4/20/06) voted unanimously to sign the MBTA lease. Topsfield Open Space Committee surveys (incorporated in the Town’s Open Space Plan) were sent to every household in Topsfield in 1994, 1999, and 2004. The surveys had questions concerning constructing a recreation path on the abandoned rail bed. The surveys had up to 82% favorable responses (see the link below for the Open Space Plan). We have support from the Selectmen, Police, Fire, Highway, Council on Aging, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Foundation and the Planning Board.

• **Inclusion in local plans**

The 2003 Open Space Plan [<http://www.topsfield-ma.gov/documents/2005TopsfieldOpenSpacePlan.pdf>] includes a description of the rail trail. The Town Master Plan, which is currently in progress, also mentions the trail and its relationship to transportation. At the request of the Topsfield Selectmen the Rail Trail Committee prepared a position paper booklet discussing many aspects of the trail including legal, environmental, recreational and town support, fund raising and maintenance. Topsfield received equivalency for the transportation element of the EO-418 plan in part because the “Border to Boston” bikeway runs through Topsfield. The 2003 community development strategy mentions the “Board to Boston” bikeway in the transportation element and references the efforts to lease the rail bed from the MBTA.

• **Local organizations in support**

Topsfield Rail Trail Committee
Essex County Trails Association
Essex County Horse Organization
Topsfield Historical Society
Topsfield Main Street Foundation

• **Local organizations opposed**

There are no organized groups opposing the trail. However, there are several abutters that came to a meeting about a year ago that were not in favor of the trail. Lately, the most

vocal abutter shows signs of accepting the trail and noted that he wanted to be included in a forum regarding the trail's design. On the National Grid section we know there are several abutters that are opposed. There are some that are in favor of the trail.

Destinations

- **Schools**

Proctor School, grades 4 – 6.

- **Public services**

Post Office, Town Hall, Library, and three senior housing facilities.

- **Town centers, shopping centers, employers**

Trail runs adjacent to the Village Shopping Center. An old rail road freight barn, adjacent to the ROW, is being rehabilitated and is expected to house The Bicycle Shop of Topsfield, now located on Main Street. In the future, a caboose or passenger car may be acquired and positioned near the railroad freight barn for a yet to be determined public use.

- **Transportation connections**

The ROW runs through the town parking lot. The Coach Company commuter bus (Boston) parking and pick-up area is also adjacent to the ROW.

- **Parks and Open Space**

Pye Brook Community Park has 65 acres of land, with 35 acres of playing fields, at the northern end of Topsfield adjacent to the rail trail. Activities there include playing fields, disc golf, the Topsfield horse and multi-use park. There is a wildlife trail around the entire park along with wetland, handicapped accessible picnic area, children's playground, fishing, birding, and nature studies.

Proctor School playground in the center of Topsfield, includes playing fields, tennis courts, basketball court, tot lot, and play structures for older children.

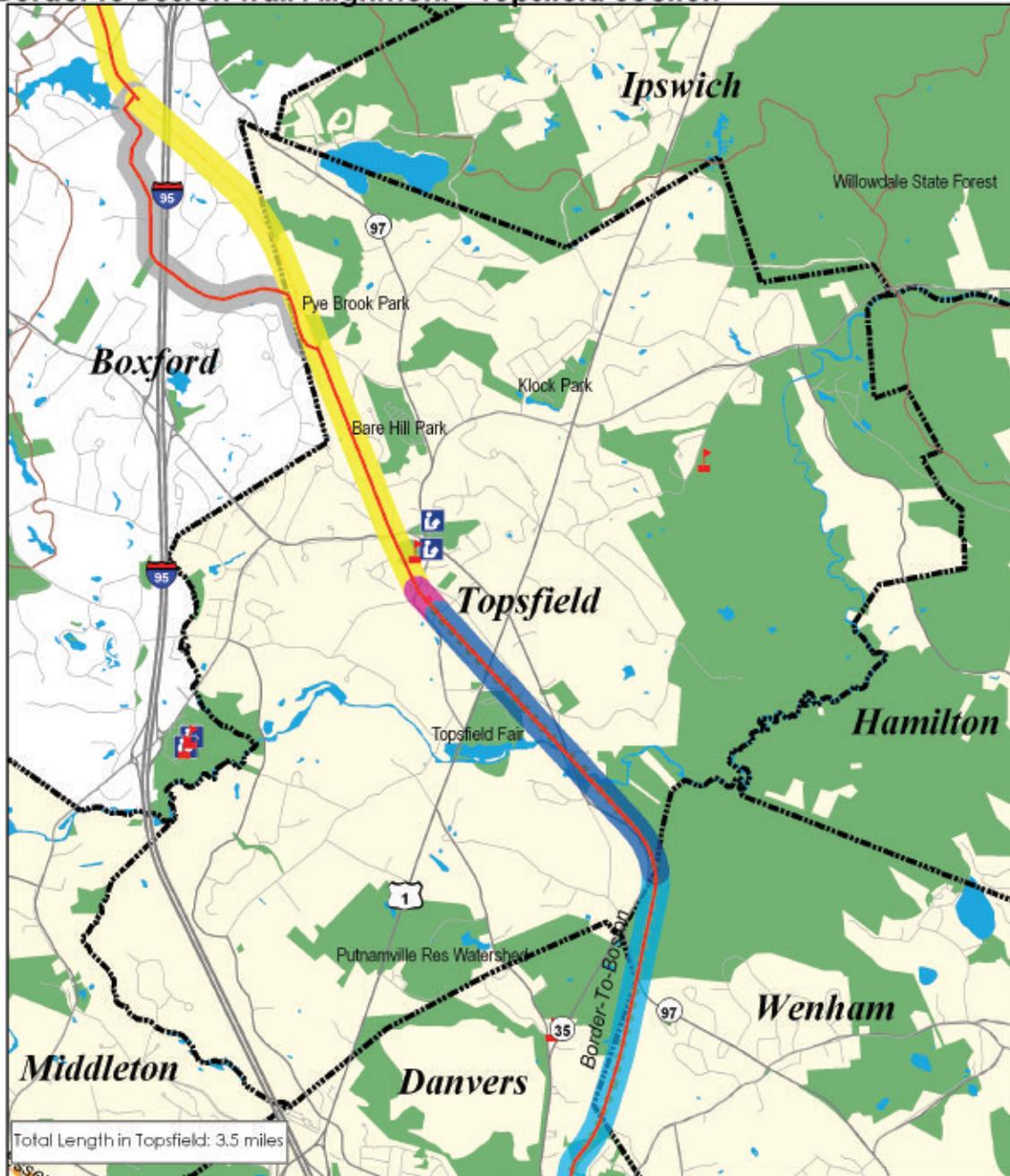
Ipswich River canoe landing

Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary. The largest property of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the sanctuary has more than 10 miles of trails linking forests, meadows, and wetlands.

Hoods Pond. Managed by the Topsfield Beach Association, the 100-acre fresh water pond features a private beach, swimming, and boating.

John Nutter Town Forest. Abuts Willowdale State Forest.

Border to Boston Trail Alignment - Topsfield Section



	Schools Libraries Colleges Town boundaries Open Space	Regional Planning Agency MAPPC MVPC Railways Inactive or Unknown Status Active Rail Service Commuter Rail	Right-of-Way Control Local Ownership MBTA MBTA-Lease Secured National Grid On-Road	Border to Boston Alignment Border to Boston Alignment Shared Use Paths Potential Path Existing Path Underway Bay Circuit Trail
	0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1 Miles			

Topsfield Fair Grounds- including buildings on the Massachusetts Historical Commission's register of historic sites. Events are held year round at the fairgrounds, including shows, sales, auctions, and the oldest agricultural fair in the U.S.A.

Topsfield Town Common. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and widely recognized as one the best represented rural town commons in New England. Properties adjacent to the common include the 1683 Parson Capen House (a National Historic Landmark owned by the Topsfield Historical Society), the ca. 1710 Joseph Gould Barn (owned by the Topsfield Historical Society), Topsfield Congregational Church and its Emerson Center, Topsfield Town Library, Topsfield Town Hall, Proctor School, and private residences representing major eras of American architecture.

River Road – Cross Street Historic District. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

- **Other Trails**

Salem Beverly Waterway Canal. Access to the 2.2-mile long recreational path is off Rt. 97.

Topsfield has bicycle paths connecting the town center to Hoods Pond and Klock Park (via North Street)

Pye Brook Community Park has a perimeter trail that connects to the John Nutter Town Forest and Willowdale State Forest.

Wenham

Right-of-Way (ROW)

Ownership

The 1.3-mile right-of-way falls just inside the westernmost municipal boundary and is owned by the MBTA. The town has not begun active negotiations for a lease.

At-grade crossings

The path will cross Rt. 97 (Topsfield Road) at-grade.

Obstacles

None reported.

Physical status

Much of the ROW passes through the Great Wenham Swamp. Rt. 97 bisects the ROW and both sections are presently overgrown with vegetation. The 0.5-mile section north of the crossing appears to have ties still in place with no rails, while it is believed that rails and ties exist on the southern portion of the ROW.

Current use of ROW

Largely inaccessible from within Wenham, the ROW receives minimal use, which appears limited to pedestrians.

Abutters

There are no residential abutters on the section north of the Rt. 97 crossing. One residential abutter resides on Birch Road at the extreme southern end of the ROW. Other residential properties on Conrad Circle may extend to the ROW, but any structures are far from the ROW.

Local Project Activities

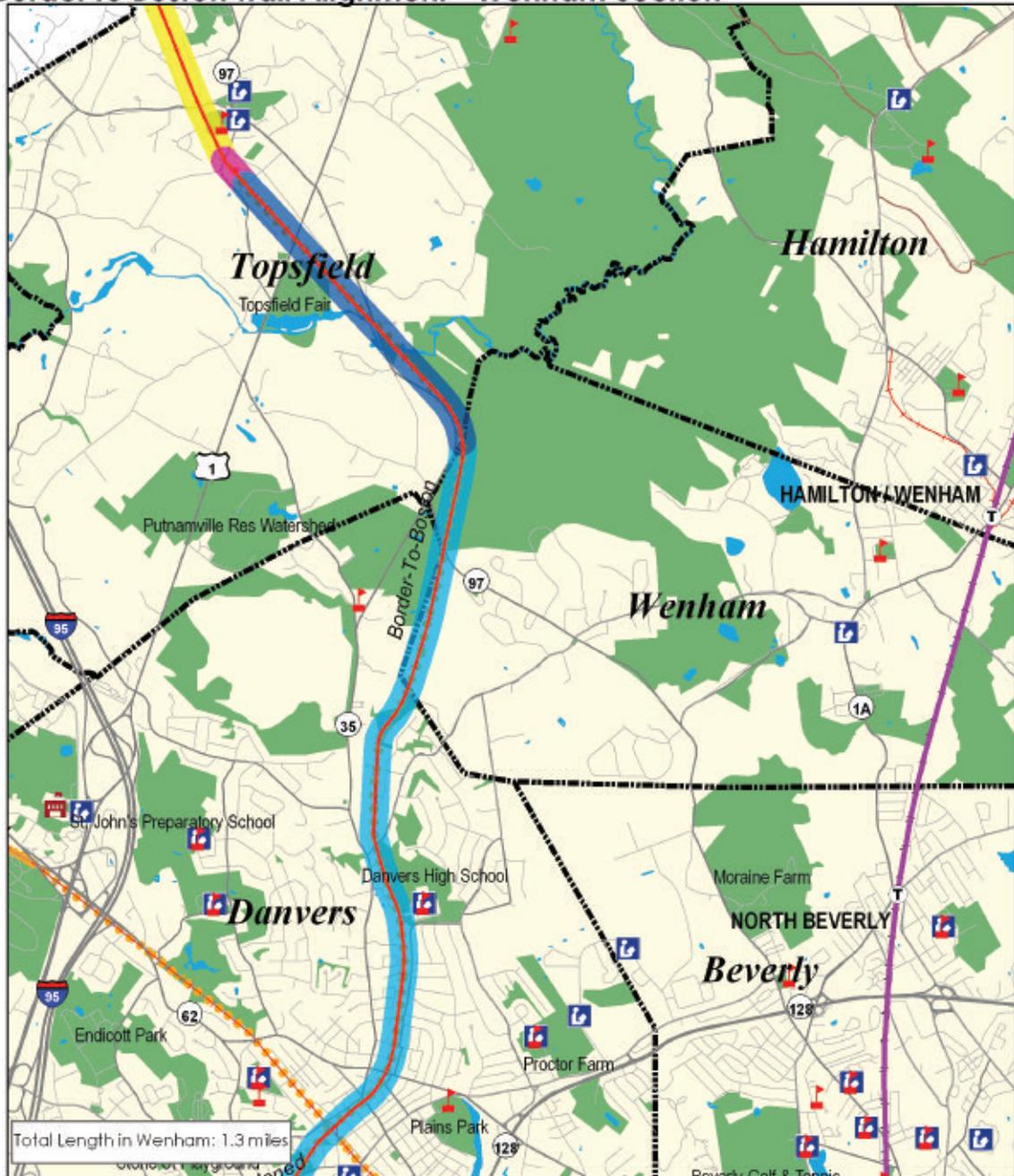
- **Actions completed or underway**

- **Local votes**

August 1, 2006: The Wenham Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to sign the joint planning resolution, agreeing to participate in ongoing discussions and to request technical assistance from the MAPC. Conrad Willeman of the Wenham Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee is designated as Wenham's official representative on the ad hoc coalition.

No town-wide votes have been taken at this time.

Border to Boston Trail Alignment - Wenham Section



- **Inclusion in local plans**

None reported.

- **Local organizations in support**

Wenham Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee

- **Local organizations opposed**

Destinations

- **Schools**

- **Public services**

- **Town centers, shopping centers, employers**

- **Transportation connections**

There are no significant Wenham destinations, services, employers, or transportation connections within ½-mile of the trail.

- **Parks and open space**

North of the Rt. 97 crossing the trail passes along the edge of an extended natural wetland area, with opportunities for experiencing plant and animal wildlife.

- **Other trails**

An asphalt roadside pathway along the west side of Topsfield Road (Rt. 97) currently ends about 100 yards from the point where the trail crosses Rt. 97.

Appendix B: Joint Planning Resolutions

Rail Trail Joint Planning Resolution

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North is an approximately 30+/- mile non-motorized recreational trail located along two contiguous segments of the former Boston & Maine Railroad (Eastern Route Main Line and Newburyport Branch) right-of-way currently owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (the "MBTA") and the National Grid (the "National Grid"); and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North runs through the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham and Danvers, (the "eight communities") linking together commercial and transportation centers, neighborhoods, schools, natural areas, parks and recreation facilities in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North would create more recreation and transportation opportunities and choices for the residents in each of the eight communities by providing bicycling and walking facilities that improve the mobility, health, air quality and recreational choices in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, each of the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham, and Danvers share common opportunities and potential challenges associated with the proposed non-motorized recreational use of the right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LU of 2005, included a funded High Priority Project in the amount of \$800,000 to "design, engineer and permit" the Border to Boston trail from Danvers to Salisbury; and

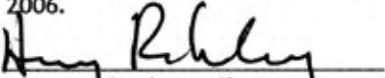
WHEREAS, the ability to access this SAFETEA-LU 2005 funding will help and assist the eight communities to make informed decisions about the planning, designing, engineering and permitting of the right-of-way as a non-motorized recreational trail; and

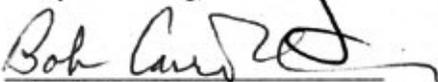
WHEREAS, the eight Border to Boston/North communities, as well as additional neighboring communities with rail trail opportunities, have been meeting on a regular basis as a regional ad hoc coordinating committee with the support from the National Park Service and Essex National Heritage Commission; and

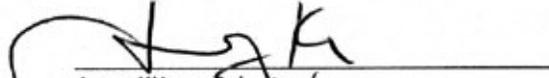
NOW THEREFORE: In consideration of the mutual benefits and opportunities set forth herein the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Salisbury hereby acknowledges and agrees:

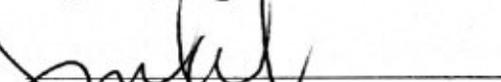
1. To participate in ongoing discussions among the eight communities and neighboring towns concerning the appropriate recreational use of the right-of-way and to identify an individual or committee from the Town to represent it at ongoing meetings of the regional coordinating committee; and
2. To request technical assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and/or the Merrimack Valley Regional Planning Commission as support for the development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for the management, use and development of the trail corridor.

This Joint Planning Resolution was adopted by the Salisbury Board of Selectmen this 27th day of February, 2006.


Henry Richenburg, Chairman


Bob Carroll, Selectman


Jerry Klima, Selectman


Fred Knowles, Selectman

Ed Hunt, Selectman

Border to Boston Rail Trail – Joint Planning Resolution

WHEREAS , the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North is envisioned to be an approximately 30+/- mile non-vehicular recreational trail located along two contiguous segments of the former Boston & Maine Railroad (Eastern Route Main Line and Newburyport Branch) right-of-way currently owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (the "MBTA") and National Grid ("National Grid"); and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North runs through the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham and Danvers, (the "eight communities") linking together commercial and transportation centers, neighborhoods, schools, natural areas, parks and recreation facilities in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail /North would create more recreation and transportation opportunities and choices for the residents in each of the eight communities by providing bicycling and walking facilities that improve the mobility, health, air quality and recreational choices in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, each of the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham, and Danvers share common opportunities and potential challenges associated with the proposed non-vehicular recreational use of the right-of-way; and

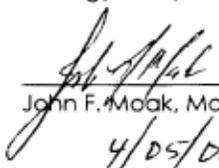
WHEREAS, the Federal Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LU of 2005, included a funded High Priority Project in the amount of \$800,000 to "design, engineer and permit" the Border to Boston trail from Danvers to Salisbury; and

WHEREAS, the ability to access this SAFETEA-LU 2005 funding will help and assist the eight communities to make informed decisions about the planning, designing, engineering and permitting of the right-of-way as a non-vehicular recreational trail; and

WHEREAS, the eight Border to Boston /North communities, as well as additional neighboring communities with rail trail opportunities, have been meeting on a regular basis as a regional ad hoc coordinating committee with support from the National Park Service and Essex National Heritage Commission;

NOW THEREFORE: In consideration of the mutual benefits and opportunities set forth herein, the City of Newburyport hereby acknowledges and agrees:

1. To participate in ongoing discussions with the eight communities and neighboring towns concerning the appropriate recreational use of the right-of-way and to identify an individual or committee from the Town to represent it at ongoing meetings of the regional coordinating committee; and
2. To request technical assistance from the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission and Metropolitan Area Planning Commission as support for the development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for the management, use and development of the trail corridor.



John F. Moak, Mayor NEWBURYPORT
4/05/06

Date



Town Of Newbury

Office of
The Board of Selectmen
Newbury, MA 01951-4799
978-465-9241
Fax: 978-465-3064

April 5, 2006

Rail Trail Joint Planning Resolution

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North is an approximately 30+/- mile non-vehicular recreational trail located along two contiguous segments of the former Boston & Maine Railroad (Eastern Route Main Line and Newburyport Branch) right-of-way currently owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (the "MBTA") and the National Grid (the "National Grid"); and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North runs through the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham and Danvers, (the "eight communities") linking together commercial and transportation centers, neighborhoods, schools, natural areas, parks and recreation facilities in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail /North would create more recreation and transportation opportunities and choices for the residents in each of the eight communities by providing bicycling and walking facilities that improve the mobility, health, air quality and recreational choices in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, each of the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham, and Danvers share common opportunities and potential challenges associated with the proposed non-vehicular recreational use of the right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LU of 2005, included a funded High Priority Project in the amount of \$800,000 to "design, engineer and permit" the Border to Boston trail from Danvers to Salisbury; and

WHEREAS, the ability to access this SAFETEA-LU 2005 funding will help and assist the eight communities to make informed decisions about the planning, designing, engineering and permitting of the right-of-way as a non-vehicular recreational trail; and

WHEREAS, the eight Border to Boston /North communities, as well as additional neighboring communities with rail trail opportunities, have been meeting on a regular basis as a regional ad hoc coordinating committee with the support from the National Park Service and Essex National Heritage Commission; and

NOW THEREFORE: In consideration of the mutual benefits and opportunities set forth herein the Town of Newbury hereby acknowledges and agrees:

1. To participate in ongoing discussions with the eight communities and neighboring towns concerning the appropriate recreational use of the right-of-way and to identify an individual or committee from the Town to represent it at ongoing meetings of the regional coordinating committee; and
2. To request technical assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and/ or the Merrimack Valley Regional Planning Commission as support for the development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for the management, use and development of the trail corridor.

Dr. Vincent J. Russo, MD

**Town of Georgetown
Border to Boston-North Trail Planning Resolution**

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North is an approximately 30+/- mile non-vehicular recreational trail located along two contiguous segments of the former Boston & Maine Railroad (Eastern Route Main Line and Newburyport Branch) right-of-way currently owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (the “MBTA”) and the National Grid (the “National Grid”); and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North runs through the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham and Danvers, (the “eight communities”) linking together commercial and transportation centers, neighborhoods, schools, natural areas, parks and recreation facilities in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail /North would create more recreation and transportation opportunities and choices for the residents in each of the eight communities by providing bicycling and walking facilities that improve the mobility, health, air quality and recreational choices in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, each of the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham, and Danvers share common opportunities and potential challenges associated with the proposed non-vehicular recreational use of the right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LU of 2005, included a funded High Priority Project in the amount of \$800,000 to “design, engineer and permit” the Border to Boston trail from Danvers to Salisbury; and

WHEREAS, the ability to access this SAFETEA-LU 2005 funding will help and assist the eight communities to make informed decisions about the planning, designing, engineering and permitting of the right-of-way as a non-vehicular recreational trail; and

WHEREAS, the eight Border to Boston /North communities, as well as additional neighboring communities with rail trail opportunities, have been meeting on a regular basis as a regional ad hoc coordinating committee with the support from the National Park Service and Essex National Heritage Commission; and

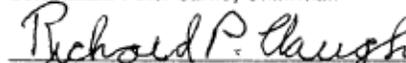
NOW THEREFORE: In consideration of the mutual benefits and opportunities set forth herein the Town of Georgetown hereby acknowledges and agrees:

- 1. To participate in ongoing discussions with the eight communities and neighboring towns concerning the appropriate recreational use of the right-of-way and to identify an individual or committee from the Town to represent it at ongoing meetings of the regional coordinating committee; and**
- 2. To request technical assistance from the Merrimack Valley Regional Planning Commission as support for the development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for the management, use and development of the trail corridor.**

This resolution is hereby acknowledged and agreed to this 6 day of MARCH 2006.



Selectman: Peter Sarno, Chairman



Selectman: Richard Clough



Selectman: Lonnie Brennan

Rail Trail Joint Planning Resolution

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North is an approximately 30+/- mile non-vehicular recreational trail located along two contiguous segments of the former Boston & Maine Railroad (Eastern Route Main Line and Newburyport Branch) right-of-way currently owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (the "MBTA") and the National Grid (the "National Grid"); and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North runs through the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham and Danvers, (the "eight communities") linking together commercial and transportation centers, neighborhoods, schools, natural areas, parks and recreation facilities in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail /North would create more recreation and transportation opportunities and choices for the residents in each of the eight communities by providing bicycling and walking facilities that improve the mobility, health, air quality and recreational choices in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, each of the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham, and Danvers share common opportunities and potential challenges associated with the proposed non-vehicular recreational use of the right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LU of 2005, included a funded High Priority Project in the amount of \$800,000 to "design, engineer and permit" the Border to Boston trail from Danvers to Salisbury; and

WHEREAS, the ability to access this SAFETEA-LU 2005 funding will help and assist the eight communities to make informed decisions about the planning, designing, engineering and permitting of the right-of-way as a non-vehicular recreational trail; and

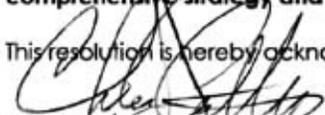
WHEREAS, the eight Border to Boston /North communities, as well as additional neighboring communities with rail trail opportunities, have been meeting on a regular basis as a regional ad hoc coordinating committee with the support from the National Park Service and Essex National Heritage Commission; and

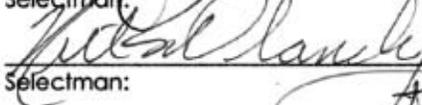
NOW THEREFORE: In consideration of the mutual benefits and opportunities set forth herein the Town of BOXFORD hereby acknowledges and agrees:

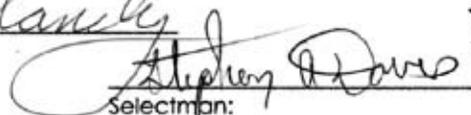
1. To participate in ongoing discussions with the eight communities and neighboring towns concerning the appropriate recreational use of the right-of-way and to identify an individual or committee from the Town to represent it at ongoing meetings of the regional coordinating committee; and

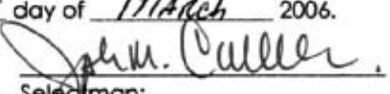
2. To request technical assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and/ or the Merrimack Valley Regional Planning Commission as support for the development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for the management, use and development of the trail corridor.

This resolution is hereby acknowledged and agreed to this 6th day of MARCH 2006.


Selectman:


Selectman:


Selectman:


Selectman:


Selectman:

Border to Boston Rail Trail Joint Planning Resolution

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North is an approximately 25+/- mile non-vehicular recreational trail located along two contiguous segments of the former Boston & Maine Railroad (Eastern Route Main Line and Newburyport Branch) right-of-way currently owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (the "MBTA") and the National Grid (the "National Grid"); and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North runs through the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham and Danvers, (the "eight communities") linking together commercial and transportation centers, neighborhoods, schools, natural areas, parks and recreation facilities in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail /North would create more recreation and transportation opportunities and choices for the residents in each of the eight communities by providing bicycling and walking facilities that improve the mobility, health, air quality and recreational choices in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, each of the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Boxford, Topsfield, Wenham, and Danvers share common opportunities and potential challenges associated with the proposed non-vehicular recreational use of the right-of-way; and

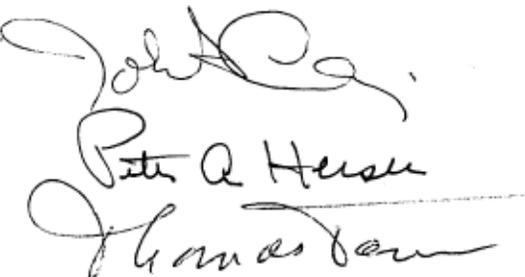
WHEREAS, the Federal Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LU of 2005, included a funded High Priority Project in the amount of \$800,000 to "design, engineer and permit" the Border to Boston trail from Danvers to Salisbury; and

WHEREAS, the ability to access this SAFETEA-LU 2005 funding will help and assist the eight communities to make informed decisions about the planning, designing, engineering and permitting of the right-of-way as a non-vehicular recreational trail; and

WHEREAS, the eight Border to Boston /North communities, as well as additional neighboring communities with rail trail opportunities, have been meeting on a regular basis as a regional ad hoc coordinating committee with the support from the National Park Service, Essex National Heritage Commission, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and Merrimack Valley Planning Commission;

NOW THEREFORE: In consideration of the mutual benefits and opportunities set forth herein the Town of **Wenham** hereby acknowledges and agrees:

1. To participate in ongoing discussions with the eight communities and neighboring towns concerning the appropriate recreational use of the right-of-way and to identify an individual or committee from the Town to represent it at ongoing meetings of the regional coordinating committee; and
2. To request technical assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and/ or the Merrimack Valley Regional Planning Commission as support for the development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for the management, use and development of the trail corridor.

Signed: 

Border to Boston Trail/North Rail Trail Joint Planning Resolution

February 23, 2006

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North is an approximately 30+/- mile non-vehicular recreational trail located along two contiguous segments of the former Boston & Maine Railroad (Eastern Route Main Line and Newburyport Branch) right-of-way currently owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (the "MBTA") and the National Grid (the "National Grid"); and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail/North runs through the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Roxford, Topsfield, Wenham and Danvers, (the "eight communities") linking together commercial and transportation centers, neighborhoods, schools, natural areas, parks and recreation facilities in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Border to Boston Trail /North would create more recreation and transportation opportunities and choices for the residents in each of the eight communities by providing bicycling and walking facilities that improve the mobility, health, air quality and recreational choices in each of these communities; and

WHEREAS, each of the eight neighboring communities of Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, Roxford, Topsfield, Wenham, and Danvers share common opportunities and potential challenges associated with the proposed non-vehicular recreational use of the right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transportation Bill, SAFETEA-LI of 2005, included a funded High Priority Project in the amount of \$800,000 to "design, engineer and permit" the Border to Boston trail from Danvers to Salisbury; and

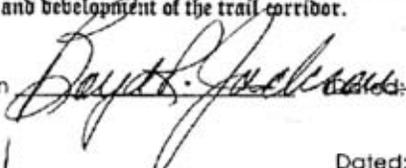
WHEREAS, the ability to access this SAFETEA-LI 2005 funding will help and assist the eight communities to make informed decisions about the planning, designing, engineering and permitting of the right-of-way as a non-vehicular recreational trail; and

WHEREAS, the eight Border to Boston /North communities, as well as additional neighboring communities with rail trail opportunities, have been meeting on a regular basis as a regional ad hoc coordinating committee with the support from the National Park Service and Essex National Heritage Commission; and

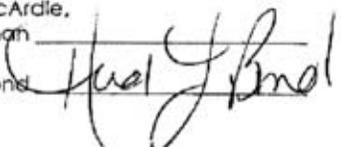
NOW THEREFORE: In consideration of the mutual benefits and opportunities set forth herein the Town of Topsfield hereby acknowledges and agrees:

1. To participate in ongoing discussions with the eight communities and neighboring towns concerning the appropriate recreational use of the right-of-way and to identify an individual or committee from the Town to represent it at ongoing meetings of the regional coordinating committee; and
2. To request technical assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and/ or the Merrimack Valley Regional Planning Commission as support for the development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for the management, use and development of the trail corridor.

Boyd Jackson,
Chairman Topsfield Board of Selectman

 3/27/06

John McArdle,
Selectman



Dated: _____

Heidi Bond

Dated: 3/27/06

Appendix C: Trail Name and Termini Analysis

CLARK
strategic communications

MEMORANDUM

To: Steve Golden, Betsy Goodrich, Scott Walker, Bill Steelman
From: Dorie Clark, Clark Strategic Communications
Re: Border to Boston Trail Strategic Brand Assessment and Recommendations
Date: December 6, 2006

The following is a report surveying and analyzing the name/brand of the “Border to Boston Trail.” The report, based on interviews with key stakeholders, offers insight into leaders’ current feelings about the name, whether a change might be appropriate, and potential next steps.

The Problem

The idea of the “Border to Boston Trail,” describing a 25.4-mile rail-trail corridor stretching from Salisbury to Danvers, has been in circulation since 1994—more than a decade. It is familiar to advocates and community leaders, and has made its way into official government planning documents. However, there is one problem: the trail does not actually go to Boston. Danvers is over 21 miles away and to promote the trail with such a name may ultimately be misleading to the public.

The Goal

The National Park Service and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy commissioned this survey and analysis to determine if the trail’s current name presented a problem that should be addressed before the planning and development process got any further along. The three potential outcomes of this study were: 1) Public consensus is that the geographic inaccuracy of the name is not a problem and, given its catchiness and brand awareness cultivated over the past decade, should not be changed; 2) the name is problematic and should be changed to reflect the fact that the trail does

not end near Boston; or 3) the name “Border to Boston” can be viewed as a rallying cry to expand the state’s bike network, and the actual scope of the plan should be expanded to include a component stretching all the way into the city.

The Methodology

Throughout November and December 2006, Clark Strategic Communications (CSC) conducted telephone interviews with the list of stakeholders the core group (NPS, RTC, MAPC, ENHC) provided, as well as others that various stakeholders suggested. These included:

- Contact person for core groups involved in the Border to Boston project:
 - Steve Golden, National Park Service (via conference call)
 - Betsy Goodrich, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (via conference call)
 - Scott Walker, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, representing Danvers, Wenham, and Topsfield (via conference call)
 - Tony Komornick, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (regional transportation planner serving Salisbury, Newburyport, Newbury, Georgetown, and Boxford)
 - Bill Steelman, Essex National Heritage Commission

- Contact person for each community in the Border to Boston region:
 - Ingrid Barry, Danvers
 - Richard Paganelli, Georgetown
 - Judy Tymon, Newbury
 - Geordie Vining, Newburyport
 - Jerry Klima, Salisbury
 - Joe Geller, Topsfield
 - Conrad Willeman, Wenham
 - Nancy Merrill, Boxford

- State officials
 - Josh Lehman, Executive Office of Transportation, State Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator
 - Todd Fontanella, Executive Office of Transportation (Alternative Transportation)
 - Cathy Buckley-Lewis, Central Transportation Planning Staff

- Outside advocates
 - Steve Winslow, Northern Strand (formerly Bike to the Sea)
 - Eric Weis, East Coast Greenway Alliance
 - Dan Tieger, Essex County Velo (creator of Border to Boston name)
 - Craig Della Penna, Northeast Greenway Solutions

- George McCabe, Congressman John Tierney’s office

- David Loutzenheiser, Planners Collaborative (overseeing state bike plan)

Overview of Findings

The following is the breakdown of interviewees' sentiments regarding the name "Border to Boston". Please note that some respondents expressed a range of opinions; CSC has made every effort to distill them accurately into clear categorizations.

- 10/22 stakeholders preferred for the route to be extended to Boston under the name "Border to Boston." This includes Scott Walker of MAPC; Steve Golden of NPS; Betsy Goodrich of RTC; Conrad Willeman of Wenham; Judy Tymon of Newbury; Josh Lehman of EOT; Cathy Buckley-Lewis of CTPS; Jerry Klima of Salisbury; Nancy Merrill of Boxford; and Joe Geller of Topsfield.
- 2/22 wanted to see the route expanded to Boston but with a different name for the upper segment. This includes Steve Winslow of the Northern Strand, who would like to see that trail connected with this one; and Bill Steelman of ENHC.
- 5/22 support changing the name and did not express a preference about expanding the project to Boston. Two were troubled by the expansive vision of "Border to Boston" and felt that it may stir fears in abutters about large numbers of cyclists (Ingrid Barry of Danvers and Rick Paganelli of Georgetown). The other three disliked the name's geographical inaccuracy (Craig Della Penna of Greenway Solutions; Geordie Vining of Newburyport; and Todd Fontanella of EOT).
- 5/22 had no clear preference. This includes Eric Weis of the East Coast Greenway Alliance; George McCabe of Congressman Tierney's office; David Loutzenheiser of Planners' Collaborative; Tony Komornick of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission; and advocate Dan Tieger.

Please note: Some partners expressed concerns that the East Coast Greenway Alliance and/or Congressman Tierney's office might have objections to changing the project's moniker. Both ECGA and the Congressman's office expressed neutrality, and a desire to let the affected communities determine the name. It may be beneficial to check in with the Congressman's office regarding any paperwork that may need to be amended related to funding for the trail, but staffer George McCabe did not feel a name change would present fundamental problems. Specifically:

- Eric Weis of ECGA notes, "First and foremost, these trails that comprise the East Coast Greenway are local projects, put together by local people for the communities that they pass through... Not that ECGA has or should have any sway over it, but there'd be no beef from us if the people who were the primary advocates of the trail wanted to change the name."
- George McCabe of Congressman Tierney's office stated succinctly, "I don't think we care. We're happy to get funding; if you need to tweak the name, no big deal."

From this data, we can conclude several important facts:

- **Stakeholders do not believe that “Border to Boston” is a suitable name for the current 25.4 mile stretch of rail-trail.** Indeed, no one spoke in support of retaining the name without also advocating for it to extend to Boston (though some noted it would be very difficult, they supported Boston as an ultimate goal).
- **There is strong support for extending the trail to Boston.** Of those polled who had an opinion on the issue, a healthy majority (12/17) supported expanding the trail to Boston. No one spoke directly against expanding to Boston; one can speculate based on their rationale for disliking the “Border to Boston” name that the two who worried about abutters’ sentiments may have concrete objections to expansion.
- **Sentiment is split on changing the name of the Salisbury to Danvers portion of the trail; a small majority prefer keeping it.** Of those polled who had an opinion, 10/17 supported keeping the Border to Boston name, while 7/17 wanted to change it.

Further Explication: Respondents’ Rationale for Their Positions

Expand Project to Boston

Advocates who supported expanding the scope of the project to connect with Boston did so for the following reasons:

- Appeal as a major destination/starting point. As Scott Walker of MAPC observes, “There is not a conceptually attractive stopping point anywhere north of Boston.”
- Ability to generate increased legislative and grassroots support for the trail. Bill Steelman of ENHC pointed out, “If our real goal is to get this trail built, get it done, there is some value and virtue in thinking even more regionally than Essex County, and thereby picking up some legislative horsepower. We’ll be able to tap into a larger potential user base.”
- State’s preference for connected bike routes. In the creation of the state bike plan, notes Josh Lehman of EOT, “We’re looking at potential long-distance routes, especially ones that serve multiple regions and have linkage to other states and with projects like East Coast Greenway.”

Retain the Name “Border to Boston”

Some advocates support retaining the name, while others would like to change it (whether or not the project actually goes all the way to Boston). Below are their reasons:

- The name has already been in use for 12 years and is known to advocates and some community members. Notes Lehman, “There is some traction to the term ‘Border to Boston’ in that it’s been in play for a number of years.” He adds, “I would say it’s in strong enough usage that it’s the vernacular at this point. If no one has a better expression, why confuse people?”

- The memorable, alliterative name. “‘Border to Boston’ has a ring to it, the two ‘B’s,’” says Judy Tymon of Newbury. “It’s always nice to have something that is easily remembered, easy to say, has a catchiness to it.”
- The name is an incentive for the trail to be completed. If the name were changed and did not evoke Boston specifically, then there may be less pressure to complete a route to the city. Said Conrad Willeman of Wenham, “That’s the value of the name; it suggests a bigger vision.”

Change the Trail’s Name

- If the trail is not expanded to Boston, or is not for a long time, the inaccuracy will confuse people. “For tourism in the future, they will be confused if it’s ‘Border to Boston’ but it’s 30 miles to Boston,” said Ingrid Barry of Danvers. “That’s not very good advertising.” Todd Fontanella of EOT also points out that “Border” is unclear, and to someone unfamiliar with the trail could mean Rhode Island, Vermont, or other states Massachusetts abuts.
- Changing the name will reduce neighbors’ fears about hordes of bicyclists. Noted Rick Paganelli of Georgetown, “You can scare somebody, if you’re coming from a quiet North Shore community and you say, this is going to be a main corridor into Boston.”
- Changing the name will ease community members’ class anxieties. “There is momentum to link up trails, but it’s so much a town-by-town phenomenon, you don’t want to create problems for one trail by linking it with another and getting residents emotional [about class issues related to neighboring towns],” said Steve Winslow of the Northern Strand.
- It may be misleading to link a trail that is mostly off-road (Danvers-Salisbury) with the portion to Boston, which (though the exact route has not yet been determined) is likely to feature more on-road components, including some potentially challenging ones. Geordie Vining of Newburyport remarked, “I really don’t think of on-road connections as ‘trails.’ I don’t think it deserves that connotation...It’s not a trail, it’s a suggestion of a route.”

If We Did Change the Name, What are the Possibilities?

Background

Josh Lehman, State Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator, noted that rail-trails changing names is not unprecedented. The Norwottuck Rail Trail’s original name was the “Five College Trail,” but was ultimately rejected because it was considered too elitist. David Loutzenheiser of Planners Collaborative, the consultant charged with updating the state bike plan, adds that “If you’re going to do it, now’s your time,” since the trail is still in the planning stages and has plenty of time to allow a new name to gain currency.

Framework

Todd Fontanella of EOT provides some useful guidelines related to naming trails. “Trail projects are usually named because of where they are, or because someone was instrumental in getting them funded, or it’s critical to the identity of the region,” he says. “[The name] is important for promoting the trails because the public needs to understand where to look on the map to find the thing in the first place. I’d suggest that whatever decision is made, whether the name is kept or a new one, that it accurately relate to ‘where it is’ and ‘what it connects.’” He cautions us to be careful of situations like that created by the Ashuwillticook Trail, in which “people couldn’t pronounce it, and didn’t know where it was.”

Suggested Names

A number of different names were suggested in conversation with the key stakeholders. They primarily focused on the trail’s regional identity, as “Essex County” and “North Shore” are the primary links between the eight communities. (Some respondents raised the possibility of using the name of the former rail lines, or an Indian tribe, but dismissed the ideas as unworkable.) Please note that while the suggested names’ originators are listed for the sake of attribution, some are simply the result of brainstorming and may not be their preferred name.

- Bill Steelman would like to have “Essex” as part of the name, given his organization’s mandate to brand the region. (However, he recognizes that this may conflict with the goal to extend the trail to Boston, and wonders if an “Essex-hyphen” name might work for the northern portion of the trail.)
- Border to Boston North (Jerry Klima and Steve Golden)
- North Boston to Border Trail (Joe Geller)
- Essex County Greenway (Craig Della Penna, Dan Tieger)
- North Shore Greenway (David Loutzenheiser)

Analysis

Clark Strategic Communications concludes from this research that the concept of expanding the trail to Boston is popular and, because of the additional political and grassroots support it could generate, desirable. We therefore recommend this course of action, noting that a critical challenge is identifying and recruiting community leaders to push for the southern extension (please see “Next Steps” section below).

Thus, the main controversy is whether, if the commitment to create a trail to Boston is made and the name becomes geographically accurate, a change in nomenclature is necessary or desirable. On the “pro Border to Boston” side, as we have previously discussed, the name is both “catchy”

and commonly-used, at least among the advocacy community. On the “anti Border to Boston” side, abandoning the name could potentially alleviate some knee-jerk concerns among neighbors wary of interlopers, and this should be taken into account. However, as Danvers is the only community that has not officially signed on to the project under the current “Border to Boston” rubric, it is likely that as other parts of the trail become developed and their benefits manifest, the community’s opposition will soften, regardless of the nomenclature.

Challenges

There are three main issues, however, that lead CSC to conclude that the Danvers-Salisbury portion of the trail should be conceptualized differently from the southern tier.

- **Timeline.** The Danvers-Salisbury portion of the trail has had a CTPS reconnaissance study completed, and advocates have been mobilized in each community. Its planning is much more developed than that of the southern segment, for which a definitive route has not yet been set.

- **Off-road vs. on-road.** First, as Geordie Vining correctly points out, there is a disjunct between the northern portion and the southern one, which—though the official route has not yet been determined—is likely to include at least some challenging on-road cycling conditions. This could be misleading to families or less-than-skilled cyclists who might be drawn to the off-road bike paths in the north.

- **Essex County vs. Middlesex County.** The primary long-range driver of the Border-to-Boston Trail is the Essex National Heritage Commission. (The National Park Service, while very influential in the process, is providing short-term technical assistance.) While ENHC recognizes the value in a larger project, their concern essentially stops at the Essex County line. (With regard to future route planning toward Boston, please note that ENHC would potentially be able to assist the process if an easterly extension of Border to Boston were pursued, as the Peabody Bikeway, Salem/Marblehead Paths, Swampscott Rail Trail, and portions of the Northern Strand all lie within Essex County.)

Conclusion

1. CSC recommends extending the “Border to Boston” trail to Boston.

2. However, given the clear differences in timeline, type of route (almost all off-road vs. at least some challenging on-road conditions), and county lines and jurisdiction, we recommend specially delineating the Danvers-Salisbury portion. Given that some communities have names for their own stretch of path (e.g., Topsfield Linear Common), and the East Coast Greenway is the broad construct covering Florida to Maine, we believe there is room for separate designations. We offer two suggestions:
 - a) Border to Boston North (Danvers-Salisbury) and Border to Boston South (Danvers to Boston); or

b) Essex County Community Trail (Danvers-Salisbury) and Border to Boston (entire Boston-Salisbury route).

- We recommend using Essex County as part of the name because it is the key unifying factor amongst the eight communities, and as a nod to ENHC's leadership in the project. "Greenway," while appealing, risks confusion with the "Essex County Greenbelt Association" and evokes the "East Coast Greenway," which—at least in Danvers—is unpopular. Having "Community Trail" in the name follows the lead of the "Northern Strand" (formerly "Bike to the Sea") project, which determined that greater community support could be achieved by changing the name to indicate that the project benefited more than just bicyclists. "Trail" additionally indicates its off-road status.
- Retaining the name "Border to Boston" for the entire Boston-Salisbury segment builds upon the brand currency we have built up, and would be geographically accurate.

Next Steps

Key next steps include:

- Working to fast-track a feasibility study through CTPS regarding the Boston-Danvers portion of the trail, or—perhaps more likely—leverage the resources of the Statewide Bike Plan development process to help with the key question: which route will end up as the preferred option. The principal choices are an eastern route from Charlestown/Everett via the Northern Strand, Swampscott Rail Trail, Salem/Marblehead Paths, and Peabody Bikeway; or a western route via the Mystic Valley Parkway, Winchester, Stoneham, and Wakefield into Peabody.
- Discussing the results of this analysis with stakeholders and reaching a final conclusion on the trail's route and name.
- Perhaps the most significant challenge is recruiting leaders to spearhead the Boston-Danvers effort, in an analogous role to what ENHC is performing for Danvers-Salisbury. The potential leadership is contingent on the route selected.
 - Organizations mobilized around the creation of local bike paths are a natural constituency—for instance, advocates for the Northern Strand.
 - Local bike committees are another likely pool of advocates, though unfortunately many communities do not have them. The Somerville Bicycle Committee may be helpful with advocacy on behalf of the crucial improvements needed in the Sullivan Square area (though much of the area affected is in Everett and Boston, those communities do not have organized committees).

- The owners of bike shops may recognize the economic potential of a major, 30 mile bike route coming through their communities. Owners and staff might be good targets for leadership recruitment in the organizing effort. A list of Massachusetts bike shops can be found on MassBike's site: <http://www.massbike.org/membership/shops.htm> and searchable by zip code at the National Bicycle Dealers Association's site: <http://nbda.com/page.cfm?PageID=32> .
- MassBike may be able to assist in leadership recruitment, including targeted email messages or phone calls to their members in communities where assistance is needed.

