



VIA EMAIL: Michael.Furlong@state.ma.us

13 December 2010

Mr. Frank A. Tramontozzi, P.E., Chief Engineer
Attn: Michael Furlong
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Draft Purpose and Need Statement, *I-93 Tri-Town Interchange Project*

Dear Mr. Tramontozzi:

On behalf of the Junction Transportation Management Organization (JTMO), I am writing in regard to the Draft Purpose and Need Statement for the *I-93 Tri-Town Interchange Project*.

The mission of the JTMO is to administer a transportation demand management program that improves mobility, reduces congestion and improves air quality. We provide ride matching for carpools and vanpools, a popular bike-2-work program, seasonal commuter promotions, incentive programs for people to rideshare, and a free Emergency Ride Home Program. In the last calendar year, participating employees of our member companies reduced their commutes by approximately 79,200 vehicle trips with a corresponding reduction of 2,180,000 VMT and the elimination of 995 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

For almost ten years, the JTMO has expressed a keen interest in the *I-93 Interchange Project* and has submitted public comments in response to its many evolutionary stages. During that time, our support for a new "Junction" area interchange has been consistent and unequivocal. Direct access to I-93 from businesses in the Lowell Junction employment area is needed in order to a) benefit area employees by reducing their commutes; b) reduce air pollution and traffic on local roads; and c) enable growth and jobs in the area.

The proposed change in the Purpose and Need Statement has added the component of widening I-93 from three to four lanes in each direction along I-93 to the NH border. It is our understanding that the use of breakdown lanes as travel lanes along this stretch of I-93 had been approved by federal authorities as an interim measure. Since the proposed widening can be expected to improve safety along the highway while meeting the expectations of Federal Highway, we support this change.

We also understand that the expanded footprint and cost of the project may require that construction be performed on individual portions, the sequence of which is yet to be determined. If so, we hope that by extending the project with the added lane widening, interchange construction – especially the northbound ramp – will be given priority as the construction schedule is confirmed.

Thank you for considering our comments. We look forward to providing assistance to the project staff as plans come to fruition.

Sincerely yours,

Stan Franzeen
Director