



Mass Central Rail Trail Coalition

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Boston
—MassBike
—WalkBoston

Somerville
—Friends of the Community
Path

Cambridge
—Cambridge Bike Committee

Belmont
—Friends of the Belmont
Bikeway

**Waltham, Weston, Wayland,
Sudbury, Hudson, Berlin**
—Wayside Trail

Clinton
—Clinton Greenway
Conservation Trust

**Sterling, West Boylston,
Holden, Rutland, Oakham**
—Wachusett Greenways

**Barre, New Braintree,
Hardwick**
—East Quabbin Land Trust

Ware
—Ware River Valley
Greenway Trail

Palmer
—Town of Palmer Trail

Belchertown
—Belchertown Land Trust

**Amherst, Hadley,
Northampton**
—Norwottuck Rail Trail
Advisory Committee
—MassBike Pioneer Valley
—Friends of Northampton
Trails and Greenways

John Cogliano, Secretary
Executive Office of Transportation
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116
Re: Green Line Extension

October 20, 2006

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We—the MassCentral Rail Trail Coalition—have been watching the efforts to plan the extension of the Green Line Rapid Transit beyond Lechmere Station. Additionally, we have heard the local call to include the construction of the Community Path—a segment of the MassCentral Rail Trail (MCRT)—as a component of the larger transit project.

We fully support this effort to include the build-out of one tread-way in the multi-track corridor to be the route of the Community Path. Here are our key points:

- Community Path is an integral part of this transportation corridor and it will be needed for both access to the Green Line extension stops, and access for transit maintenance crews as well.
- Both the transit improvement and the trail really can't be constructed separately from each other and should be done at the same time.
- The Community Path is the essential eastern link for the statewide MassCentral Rail Trail connecting 104 miles from Boston to Northampton. The trail will also connect densely populated Cambridge and Somerville to Boston and to the Minuteman Trail for transportation and recreation.

In June of 2002, you were among the speakers featured at Golden Spike II at Bentley College in Waltham. We have made much progress since that time in defining this corridor—the MCRT—as the flagship trail for the Commonwealth.

Secretary Cogliano, since that gathering at Waltham, the MassCentral Rail Trail Coalition continues to meet on a regular basis to develop strategies that will:

- Preserve this important corridor from further segmentation
- Reassemble segments sold off or encroached-on
- Encourage and support appropriate policies at the state and municipal level that ensure the MCRT will be knit together
- Strengthen the local groups actively working to improve the trail
- Raise awareness of the importance of this corridor for future transportation, recreation, tourism and health benefits.

Since the time of the Golden Spike II, over ten miles of the MCRT have been bought by land trusts and other land protection entities and plans for construction of those segments are firming up and scheduled to begin in 2007. Another ten miles or so have been constructed and opened since the momentous 2002 event in Waltham.

Bundling the construction of the Green Line Extension with the construction of the Community Path in Somerville will help connect our communities and unite our Commonwealth with a wonderful resource for transportation, recreation and good health.

Thank you,

Craig P Della Penna, Coordinator
For the MassCentral Rail Trail Coalition