

COALITION FOR ANDERSON BRIDGE UNDERPASS

c/o Charles River Conservancy, 4 Brattle Street (Suite 309), Cambridge, MA 02138

June 15, 2015

Stephanie Pollack, Secretary of Transportation
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA

Dear Secretary Pollack,

On behalf of the members of the Coalition for Anderson Bridge Underpass, I am writing to thank you for supporting the resumption of work on the Feasibility Study intended to establish the engineering, financial and permitting feasibility of an underpass under the Anderson Bridge on the Boston side of the Charles River. Michael Trepanier, MassDOT Project Manager of the Study, announced at a public meeting held June 11 in Cambridge that Gill Engineering would resume work on the Study so that the project can be brought to 25% design, thereby providing objective analysis on which to base a decision to go forward to final design and construction.

Attached is the Coalition's letter to you dated April 9, 2015, supporting the construction of the underpass. If built, it will be a major step to enhance the Charles River Parklands, one of the Boston area's major assets, for at least the next hundred years. Designed to tunnel through the bridge abutment, it would add significantly to the Paul Dudley White pathway system by eliminating the need for many users (pedestrians, runners, cyclists and others) to cross the busy surface intersection of ramps from Soldiers' Field Road and JFK/North Harvard Street. As we wrote to you in April, the underpass would be an extremely important addition to the excellent surface changes now under construction at the Anderson Bridge.

To maximize cost-effectiveness and maintain the momentum for the underpass project initiated when your predecessor endorsed the project in July 2014, it is our continued hope that the design and permitting of the underpass can be completed in time to enable its construction as part of the ongoing activities at the bridge. If the installation of the final finished surface of the current rehabilitation of the bridge can be coordinated with the underpass, scarce public funds can be expended in the most cost-effective manner. Expediting design and permitting consistent with all legal requirements will be required to accomplish this objective.

As advocates for the project, the Coalition has been kept informed of the progress of design work by Gill Engineering under the direction and support of the Highway Administration. We look forward to the earliest possible public meeting where this design work can be described for wide public review and participation.

Sincerely,

Jack Wofford, on behalf of the Coalition:

Katherine Blakeslee, Institute for Human-Centered Design
Greg Galer, Executive Director, Boston Preservation Alliance
Jack Glassman, Boston Society of Architects, Historic Resources Committee
Ken Kruckemeyer, LivableStreets Alliance
Wendy Landman, Executive Director, Walk Boston
Galen Mook, Boston Cyclists Union
Jon Puz, Cambridge Running Club
Renata von Tscharnier, President and Founder, Charles River Conservancy

cc: Thomas J. Tinlin, Highway Administrator, MassDOT
Michael Trepanier, Project Manager, MassDOT
Paul Moyer, Gill Engineering