

July 21, 2014

Mary R. Ainsley, Senior Director of Design & Construction for GLX
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
100 Summer Street, Suite 250,
Boston, MA 02110

RE: Green Line Extension (GLX) Project Equivalent Facilitation Request

Dear Ms Ainsley:

First, I would like to thank you for the very clear and succinct presentation of the access issues at the meeting held on July 10, 2014. I found the information to be useful and easy to follow and appreciate the care with which the issues were shared with the community.

WalkBoston has several comments on the Equivalent Facilitation Request (EFR), and hopes they are useful to the design process as it continues.

1. We are pleased that no bricks or pavers will be used for walking surfaces, and understand that the sketches shown gave an erroneous impression.
2. As presented in the EFR, the width of the existing sidewalks on several of the bridges will not change even though they barely meet legal access requirements and are narrow for their present pedestrian volumes. Once the new Green Line is in place, these sidewalks will be the primary access routes for many additional transit users.

We are very concerned that their combination of steep grades, narrow width, proximate traffic and imperfect snow clearance (this is New England) will result in unsafe and possibly inaccessible conditions during some portion of the year. We urge the MBTA to explore the possibility of widening the sidewalks – perhaps by narrowing the adjacent roadway shoulders or travel lanes, or by removing one lane of travel. The photos in the report (one is reproduced below) show the problem quite clearly.



Figure 13 - Union Square Station - Variance #2 - Photo overlay on Prospect Street

3. Cross slopes that exceed ADA standards are described in several locations, and the project team has addressed the issue reasonably well in most places. However, at both the Gilman and College Ave. Stations there are crosswalks with cross slopes in excess of 8%. We believe that this is not an appropriate condition for access to transit stations, and worry that both able-bodied and patrons with disabilities will be put at risk crossing streets with such steep cross slopes, especially during snowy, icy or wet conditions.

Again, we applaud the MBTA's clear delineation of the issues, and hope that the concerns raised by WalkBoston and others can be addressed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Landman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy Landman
Executive Director

Cc Laura P. Brelsford, MBTA Assistant General Manager for System-Wide Accessibility
 Hayes Morrison, Somerville Transportation Department