



walkBoston

August 7, 2007

Secretary Ian Bowles
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
Attn: MEPA Office, Briony Angus

Re: EEA Greenhouse Gas Policy

Dear Secretary Bowles:

WalkBoston is very pleased that Massachusetts will soon include specific attention to Greenhouse Gas emissions in the MEPA review process. This comes not a moment too soon, and we hope that it signals a vigorous exercise of public policy.

Our comments focus on the need to add specificity to the suggested mitigation measures for transportation with respect to pedestrians. The most recent measurement of work trips in Massachusetts (2000 census) showed that walking accounted for 4.3% of those trips (substantially higher than the US average of 2.9%). Given that walking is more frequently the mode of choice for non-work trips than work trips - Massachusetts citizens are already showing with their feet a willingness to walk. We should take full advantage of this in our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

WalkBoston proposes the addition of two items to the transportation mitigation measures:

- On-site and off-site improvements that reduce VMT by increasing walk and transit mode share [for example by removing impediments to walking to school (school traffic contributes approximately 20% of morning commute period traffic), or adding walk-in trips to transit by improving pedestrian conditions). Such improvements could include, but are not limited to, addition or improvements of sidewalks, addition of off-street paths, crosswalks and traffic signals, traffic taming measures, lighting and landscaping.
- Site all public facilities, especially schools, libraries, civic offices, post offices, senior centers, health care facilities, and senior housing in locations that are central to their service areas to maximize walking, transit and bicycle access.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to this important new element of MEPA review.

Sincerely,

Wendy Landman
Executive Director

Cc Philip Griffiths, Undersecretary for Environment