

City of Worcester, Massachusetts

Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
City Manager

Michael E. Traynor, Esq.
Chief Development Officer



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August 16, 2016

Daniel R. Elliot III, Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423

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Office of Proceedings
August 17, 2016
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Public Record

Re: Petition of Boston Surface Railroad Company; Docket Number FD-36043

Dear Chairman Elliot:

I am the chief development officer for the city of Worcester, and I also serve as the chief executive officer of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority ("WRA"). The WRA owns and operates Union Station, an intermodal transportation facility in Worcester. I write on behalf of both the City administration and the WRA to express support for the Boston Surface Railroad Company's ("BSRC") petition for exemption that is currently pending before your board.

BSRC seeks to initiate privately-operated interstate/intercity passenger rail service between Worcester, MA to Providence, RI, with a stop in Woonsocket, RI. Currently, the travel between the cities is almost exclusively by automobile and travelers experience congestion and inconsistent trip duration. While there is also an intercity bus line, it has a very limited schedule.

Furthermore, this passenger rail service will expand the options Worcester and Central Massachusetts residents have by providing a direct connection to the Amtrak intercity network at Providence. Currently, to take the trip entirely by rail, travelers must take an MBTA commuter rail to Boston to connect with Amtrak. This direct rail connection would shave 25 – 45 minutes off that trip. In addition to passenger convenience, this rail service will provide an economic and cultural link between these two cities. And by alleviating congestion on the highways, it will provide significant environmental benefits for the region. This project should therefore be considered an importation component of New England's transportation future.

I respectfully request that the Board to look favorably on BSRC's petition and grant approval.

Very truly yours,

Michael E. Traynor, Esq.
Chief Development Officer