

Frank S. DeMasi 26 Macarthur Road Wellesley, MA 02482

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: New England Transrail, LLC d/b/a Wilmington & Woburn Terminal Railway –Construction, Acquisition and Operation Exemption – in Wilmington and Woburn, MA STB Finance Docket No. 34797

Dear Secretary Williams:

I am writing in response to your request for comments from interested parties in your June 29, 2007 decision in the above captioned matter.

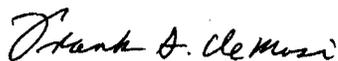
As you know from my testimony before the Board at the April 19, 2007, hearing in this matter, as an active advocate of rail freight in Eastern Massachusetts through my involvement as co-chairperson of the Freight Committee of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (BRMPO) of the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC), I have outlined the overwhelming need for a facility like the one being proposed by New England Transrail, LLC (NET).

Because of the changes in rail freight operations nationwide, and specifically in areas such as Eastern Massachusetts where railroads have formally or informally abandoned service to feeder lines and individual shippers/consignees, there is a need for centralized and well located transloading facilities such as the one being proposed by NET close to the center of the Boston metropolitan area in Wilmington, MA. See letter dated March 2007 from Lisa E. Lepore to Kenneth Miller, Chair Transportation Planning and Programming Committee, BRMPO re: *Regional Transportation Plan*, copy attached. At the August, 2007 Freight Committee meeting, the need for such facilities was discussed through the concept of developing what we call “Freight Villages” where various services essential to a transloading and distribution operations can occur. The proposed NET site serving the north side of the metropolitan area was cited as a prime examples of such Freight Villages in *Intermodal Freight Village Proposal for the Commonwealth*, a copy of which is attached, and another potential site in Readville, Mass was cited to serve the south side. See also letter from Steven H. Olanoff, Chair of Boston RTAC to David Mohler, Chair Transportation Planning and Programming Committee, BRMPO re: *Draft Fiscal Years 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*, copy attached.

In my testimony I discussed how one of many consequences of the failure to divert heavy-duty long-distance trucks from our region’s highways is the increased maintenance and repair costs of our region’s roads and bridges. This factor was dramatically brought to light by the recent collapse of the I-35 bridge in Minneapolis, a contributing factor of which has been reported to be the compression-tension cycle created by heavy duty trucks resulting in added metal fatigue. See letter dated June 1, 2007 from Lisa E. Lepore to Chairman State Senator Steven A. Baddour and Chairman State Representative Joseph F. Wagner re: *Transportation Planning –Regional Transportation Advisory Council Freight Committee*, copy attached, and a recent August 5, 2007, editorial in the Albany Democrat-Herald *Hering: Rail Could Help Save Bridges*, copy attached, and a recent article in the Newark Star-Ledger on August 11, 2007, *Heavier Trucks buckling U.S. Roads*, copy attached.

I urge your prompt approval of this proposal so that Eastern Massachusetts can begin to enjoy the benefits of diverting trucks from our region’s roads and bridges to its rail network.

Very truly yours,



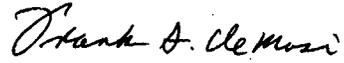
Frank S. DeMasi

Date: August 29, 2007

Frank S. DeMasi 26 Macarthur Road Wellesley, MA 02482

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I served a copy of the foregoing to each person listed on the STB Service list for Finance Docket No. 34797.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank S. DeMasi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F'.

Frank DeMasi

ATTACHMENT

1

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL



March 2007

Kenneth Miller
Chair Boston MPO, Transportation Planning and Program Committee
Executive Office of Transportation
10 Park Plaza Suite 2150
Boston, Ma 02116

Re: Regional Transportation Plan

Dear Mr. Miller:

Greetings and thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above reference subject. On behalf of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Freight Committee, let me please take a moment to give you an abbreviated background of the Freight Committee and it's efforts in the last decade. The committee consists of various stakeholders in the freight rail industry, including private, public, and government stakeholders. I recently became the chair of the committee replacing Frank DiMasi, who had been the committee's Chair and lifeblood for the past 3 years. It is becoming increasingly important that the Commonwealth within itself and with our neighboring states in the Northeast join forces to develop a work plan to address the problem: freight rail's diminishing role in the mode of cargo and trade.

The decline of the rail industry that we have seen over the last 3 decades has been dramatically reversed in the last several years. Double digit growth in the intermodal sector has now been followed by additional growth in the broader "multi-modal" arena. To the point, if our planning model remains in a status quo position logistic experts predict exponential growth in intra- and interstate truck traffic. Many studies show that in all cases "lane mile" increases do not keep pace with "ton mile" growth as driven by our growing population. This cumulative growth will increase the annual budgets "to maintain a state of good repair" on our highway systems and existing air quality problems will be further exacerbated. The only mode of transportation capable of providing sufficient relief in a realistic time frame is freight rail.

A creation of a multi-modal freight planning study to support a Multi-Modal Freight Policy. The ability of the region's port facilities to capture the growth of imports and commodities is inhibited without freight rail port access and landside trans-loading improvements. The Commonwealth will not be able to take advantage of it's own port investments and the increasing Atlantic Seaport Trade (Short Sea Shipping) in the coming years due to limited freight facilities at ports and other issues such as encroaching

Providing transportation policy advice to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

State Transportation Building • Ten Park Plaza, Suite 2150 • Boston, Massachusetts 02116-3968
Tel. (617) 973-7100 • Fax (617) 973-8855 • TTY (617) 973-7089 • ctps@ctps.org

commercial development and channel depths. We believe an underutilization of key rail corridors, existing facilities and freight terminals in Metro-Boston and seaport docks (MASSPORT) to be major problems. To expand and plan for freight to accommodate commodities and cargo trade and transport effectuating the future economic and environmental health of the Commonwealth can be realized- but we need your help.

To be more specific the Freight Committee envisions the following as missing elements in the RTP:

- A Regional Freight Plan describing current freight delivery system and its needs to meet current and future demands
- Recommendations for capital projects, policies, and programs
- Suggestion for a substantial program for freight transportation and planning
- Public education of freight transportation characteristics /issues from shippers, carrier and other affected stakeholder's perspectives.
- A formal program to solicit public and industry input on:
 - Defining regional freight system
 - Definition of assessment of needs
 - Assessment of improvements and solutions
 - Selection and implementation of freight strategies

The Metropolitan Freight Plan could adopt best practices quickly by simply inserting other MPO's **MORP**:

- **M_** Mandate Freight Planning- mission visions and goal
- **O_** Organization-Public private sector and other stakeholders
- **R_** Resources- funding and staffing resources for freight planning
- **P_** **Projects** and Programs- innovative freight planning activates.

Thank you again for your time and consideration. The Freight Committee through RTAC looks forward to working with the MPO on this plan and making freight rail a significant component of a future the Commonwealth's multi-modal Regional Transportation System.

Sincerely,



Lisa E. Lepore

Chair Freight Committee, RTAC

CC; Thomas Chair, EOT, Deputy Secretary for Transportation Programs

Todd Fontanella EOT

Dean Cavaretta EOT

Barbara Lucas- Chair MAPC Transportation Committee

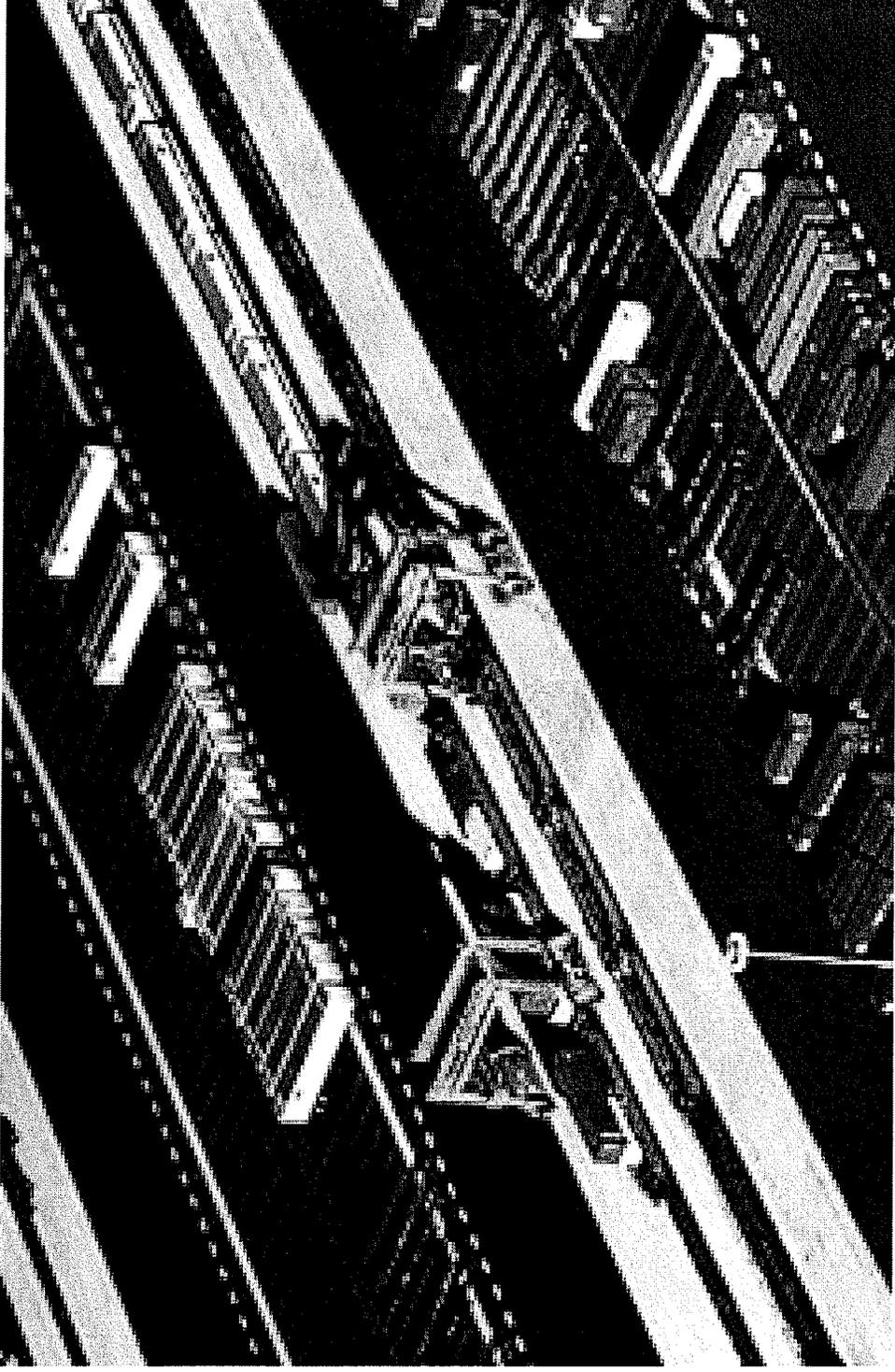
Providing transportation policy advice to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

State Transportation Building • Ten Park Plaza, Suite 2150 • Boston, Massachusetts 02116-3968
Tel. (617) 973-7100 • Fax (617) 973-8855 • TTY (617) 973-7089 • ctps@ctps.org

ATTACHMENT

2

The Intermodal Freight Village Proposal For the Commonwealth



Presented to the RTAC Freight Committee by

Frank DeMasi - 14 March 2007

Data Sources/Acknowledgements

**New York State Department of Transportation/Proposed
Long Island Truck - Rail Intermodal (LITRIM) Facility
Project P.I.N. 0339.12 - Town of Islip - Suffolk County, NY
Regional Freight Plan Project/New York Metropolitan
Transportation Council
Northern New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
(MPO)
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Freight
Planning
New England Transrail LLC**

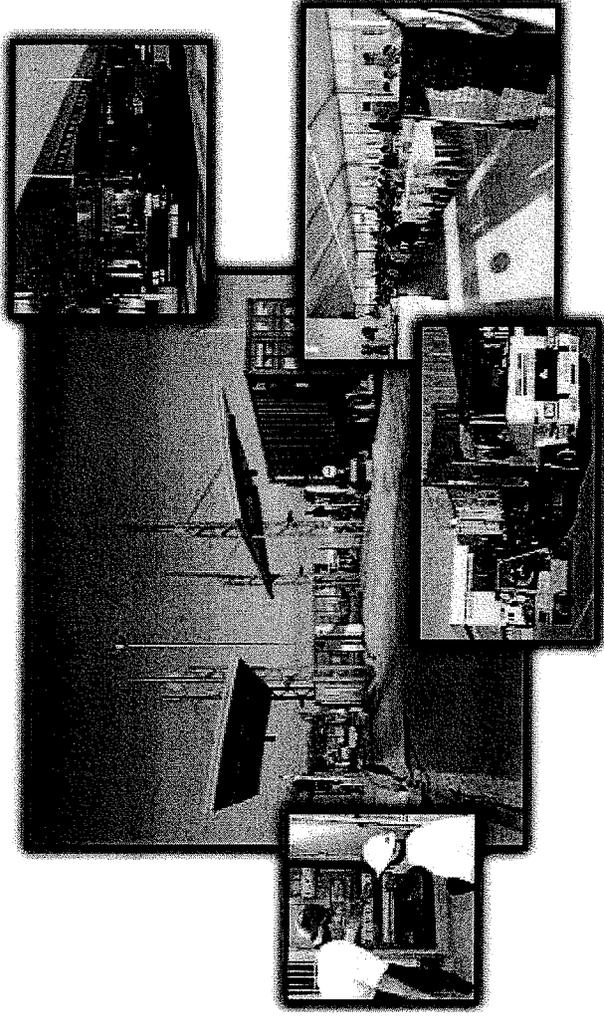
Intermodal Rail Operations and Development of Freight Villages

Presentation to involve freight stakeholders/general public in a discussion of:

- **Feasibility of developing Freight Villages in Industrial zoned areas in Metro West/South Coast of the Commonwealth**
- **Importance of the freight rail infrastructure in Eastern Massachusetts**
- **Feasibility of consolidation and or relocation of Rail Road operations (Class I – CSX, Regional – Pan AM/P&W, and Branch Lines) and transportation and industrial enterprises into so called Freight Villages in Eastern Massachusetts**
- **Focus/Planning/setting priorities that influence future *regional freight policy*, industrial development, public policy in land use, and Public/Private investment to favorably effect our Quality of life and Economic Well Being**

Freight Villages

- **Multi-modal options**
- **Intermodal transfer**
- **Logistics services**
- **Rich in freight options**



Intermodal Rail Issues/Goals

- Freight transportation provides goods/services the economy depends on and people rely on*
- Cost of consumables/manufactured goods/raw materials are more expensive in this region*

Goal 1: Improve the Movement of Goods in Eastern Massachusetts

Goal 2: Create a Balanced System for Goods Movement in Eastern Massachusetts

Goal 3: Improve Environmental Quality

Goal 4: Promote Economic Development

The Planning Role of the State Agencies

- **Comprehensive Port Improvement Plan (MassPort/Seaport Advisory Council/EOT)**
- **Comprehensive state freight plan with rail modernization (EOT/MBTA)**
- **Improving productivity/throughput of existing port terminals**
 - **Dredging (MassPort/Seaport Advisory Council)**
 - **Ship/Truck/Rail efficiency (MassPort/Seaport Advisory Council/EOT)**
- **Expand port terminals (MassPort/Seaport Advisory Council)**
 - **New facilities – On Dock Rail/Chassis and Container Storage (MassPort/seaport advisory Council/EOT)**
 - **Land acquisition: Conley Terminal at Former Coastal Oil/MBTA Powerhouse site (MassPort/MBTA)**
- **Inland Distribution (EOT)**
 - **“Freight villages”**
 - **Port regionalization**

Intermodal Yard Site Selection Criteria

Sufficient available land: (Approx 40-100 Acres)

- The capacity to accommodate current and projected freight shipment service levels for South Eastern Massachusetts and Metro West Regions (rail cars/hour and trucks/hour).**

Rail system access:

- Intermodal yard site must be in close proximity/easy access to rail line**
- The intermodal yard must operate without impact to existing MBTA commuter rail service**

Intermodal Yard Site Selection Criteria

Suitability of site:

- **The intermodal yard must have adequate buffers/avoid negative impact on residential neighborhoods**
- **Must facilitate rail use/decreases long haul truck for shipment in the MetroWest Region/South Eastern Massachusetts**
- **Must handle projected growth in intermodal operations**

Access to major truck routes:

- **Must have easy access to major arterials, such as I-495/95/93 and the MassPike (I-90), State Routes 2/3/24/44 and include consideration for Bypass Route(s) to avoid Business Districts**

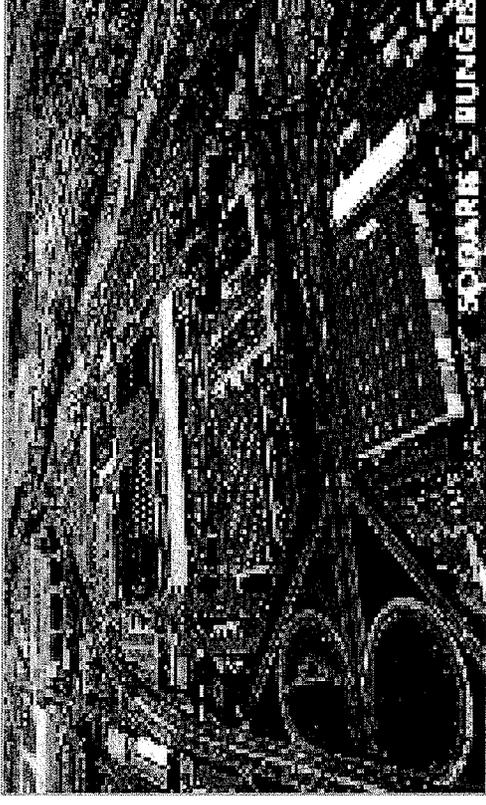
Centrally located to effectively distribute goods:

- **Must maintain or improve travel time/cost for movement of goods to/from eastern Massachusetts**
- **Must be located to reduce truck travel miles in the MetroWest Region and South Eastern Massachusetts**

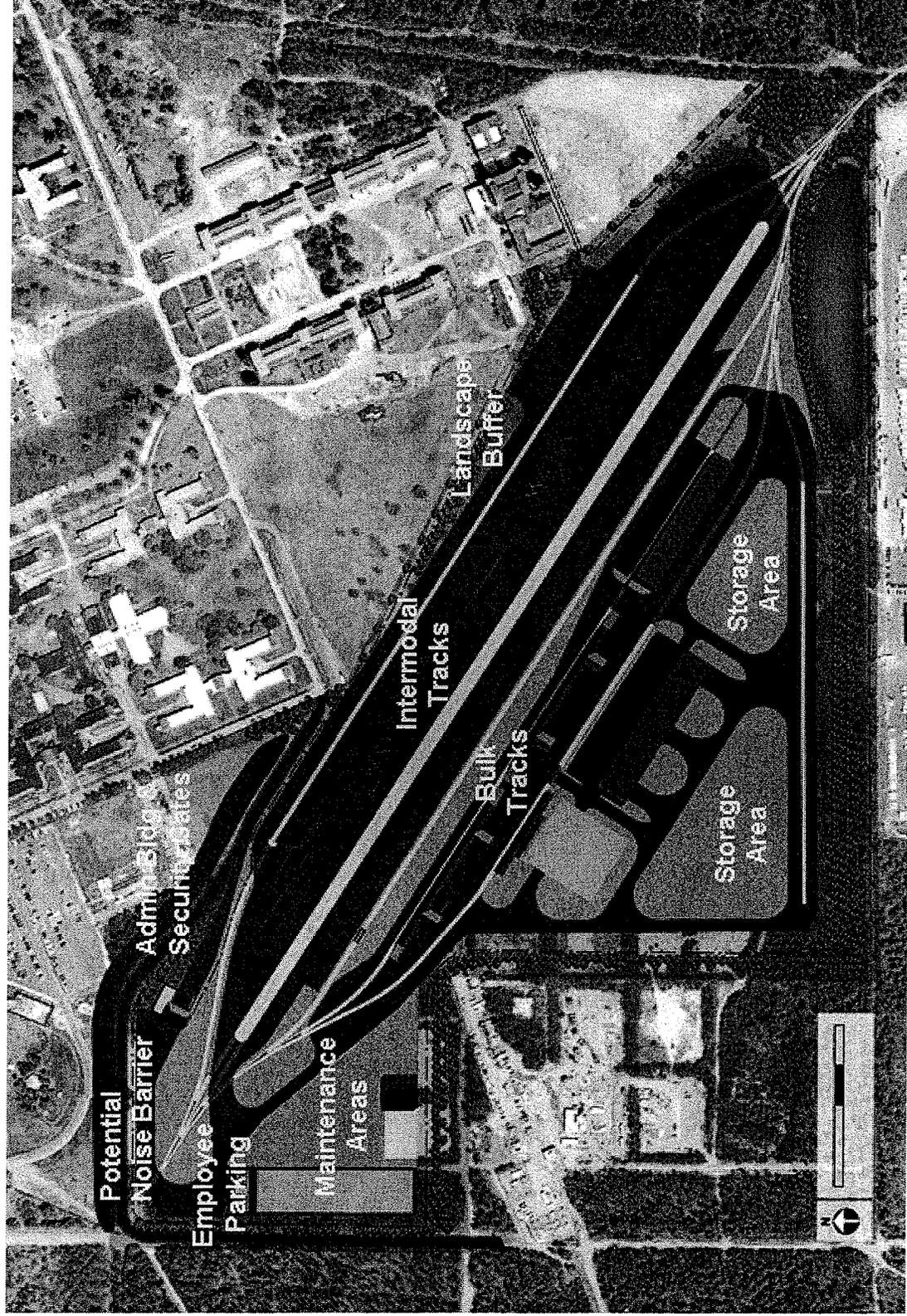
Freight Villages: Defined FHWA

Data Source

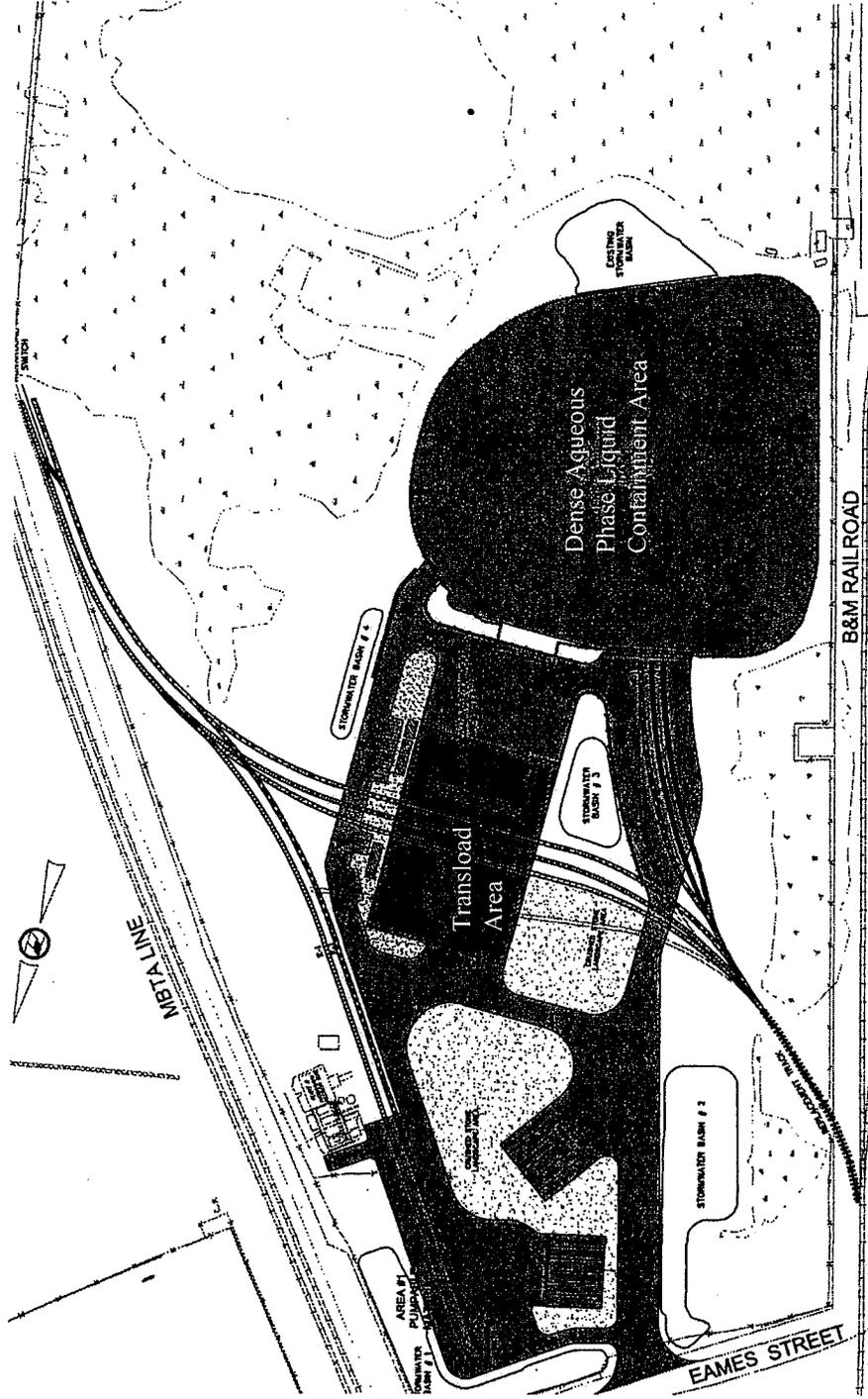
- **Cluster of freight-related business**
- **In a secure perimeter**
- **Single management**
- **Master planned**
- **Near cities**
- **High quality settings**
- **Support services**



Long Island NY Proposed Freight Village Template



New England Transrail LLC proposed Transload Facility – Wilmington/Woburn MA

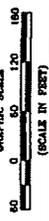


LEGEND:

- WETLANDS
- CRUSHED STONE LANDSCAPING
- PROPOSED ASPHALT PAVEMENT

NOTES:

- AREA #1: AREA WHERE PUMPABLE MATERIALS WOULD BE TRANSLOADED
- AREA #2: AREA WHERE WASTE MATERIALS (BOTH CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION DEBRIS AND MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE) AND OTHER CONTAINERIZED MATERIALS WOULD BE TRANSLOADED
- AREA #3: AREA WITHIN THE DAPL CONTAINMENT AREA WHERE BREAK BULK MATERIALS WOULD BE STORED (STONE, GRAVEL, WOOD CHIPS, SALT, ETC.)



PROJECT TITLE: NEW ENGLAND TRANSRAIL, LLC PROPOSED TRANSLOAD FACILITY WILMINGTON, MA	SHEET TITLE: SITE
---	----------------------

**Freight Villages:
What is the US Impetus?**

The Urban Freight Dilemma

- **Trade -- value & growth are high**
- **Urban areas as market -- benefit from cheap goods, jobs, value-added businesses**
- **Real estate for freight is scarce/expensive**
- **Congestion, VMT, emissions result**
- **Urban area loses business/quality of life**

Freight Villages: Context sensitive design and sustainability features

- **Improve land values - highest and best use**
- **Appropriate density - minimize foot print**
- **Jobs for local residents - opportunity/access**
- **Access to CBD**
- **Consolidation of deliveries possible**
- **Natural area protection/enhancement**

Freight Villages: Benefits to businesses

- **Market proximity**
- **Access to multimodal transport**
- **High quality perimeter security**
- **Efficiency**
- **Business services**
- **Synergistic business opportunities**
- **Esthetic**

Freight Villages: Public benefits

- **Support/Enable trade**
- **Relieve congestion, VMT**
- **Encourage a growth sector of the economy**
- **Provide jobs in urban area, access to jobs**
- **Restore lands to tax roles**
- **High-value use of property**
- **Landscaping and natural resource protection**
- **Esthetic**

Freight Villages

Where are they found?

- **Over 40 in Europe**
- **France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Poland**
- **Several in Planning stages in NY and New Jersey**
- **Networked as part of an intermodal freight distribution system**

Massachusetts needs a Port Inland Distribution Network

The Port of New York and New Jersey developed Port Inland Distribution Network (PIDN)

Should be emulated in Commonwealth by EOT/MassPort/MassHighway

Hub-and-spoke system designed to move containers by barge to water accessible ports, Bridgeport, Ct, Camden, NJ (rail service being considered): Providence, RI, and Boston, MA. New Bedford /Fall River should also be included.

Rail connections access terminals in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania in addition to existing rail service between the Port of New York and New Jersey and Worcester, MA. Boston and Massachusetts South Coast port rail connections need to be improved via Framingham and Middleboro.

Inland terminals are located at/near centers of marine customer service/distribution activities in 13-states. 82% container market in 13-state area found in 50-mile radius of these clusters!

Benefits of a Massachusetts Port Inland Distribution Network

Improves Container Handling

Reduces dwell time

- lowers empty container repositioning costs
- Improves container turnaround times
- Increases equipment utilization
- Enhances response time with an empty container depot and chassis pool

Creates Sustainable Environmental Benefits

Reduces traffic congestion on the hub port, highways, and major service routes.

- Lowers total truck vehicle miles traveled and fuel consumption
- Improves air quality

Expands logistics and warehousing Opportunities

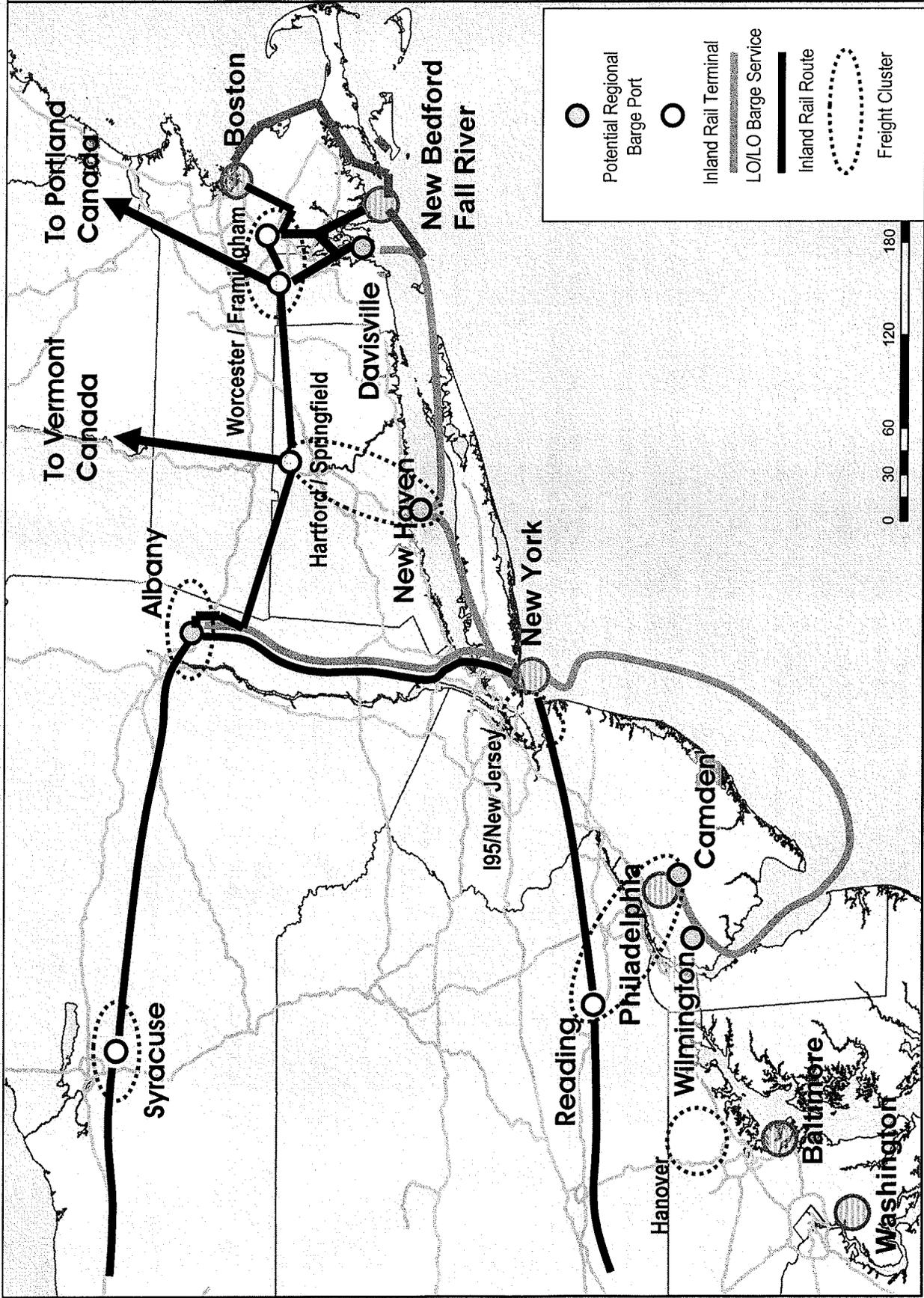
- Expands use of water and rail network to meet customer needs
- Reduces inland distribution costs by means of economies of scale and enhanced logistics control
- Creates value added warehousing and distribution opportunities at feeder ports – especially for “heavy” containerized freight

Builds new partnerships

Expands use of barge and rail in port distribution

- Helps truckers better use limited manpower to meet growing drayage needs
- Creates more efficient use of trucks and lower turnaround times at new feeder ports, and focused drayage opportunities

Suggested Massachusetts Port Inland Distribution Network



Rail Intermodal Facility Size Comparison

Conley Terminal On-Dock Rail needs additional land

Available lands include:

Former Coastal Oil Property

Former MBTA Power House

Easement over Utility Power House

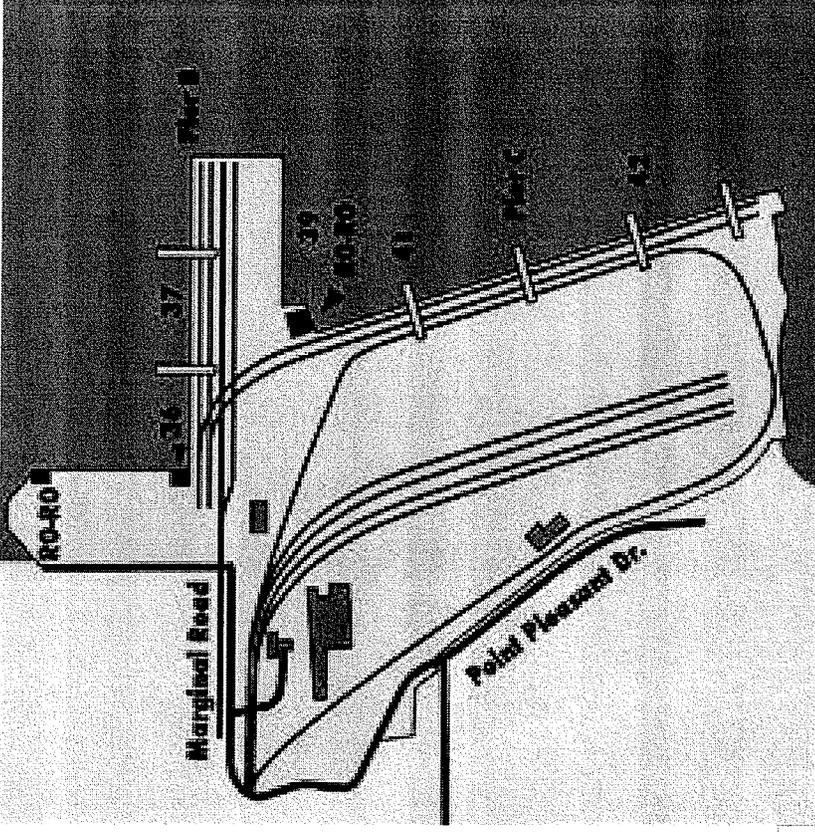
Halifax Port/Intermodal Rail facilities:

Approximate scale of Conley Terminal including
above additions

Total of two Halifax intermodal terminal land area
equal 70+ 72 = 142 Acres

Halifax-South End Container Terminal Comparison
Compact and efficient use of available land

- Halifax, Nova Scotia, South End Container Terminal, opened in 1969, Canada’s 1st common user container terminal.
- Operated by Halterm Limited, delivers 24-hour service, seven-days a week.
- Commodities handled: containerized cargoes, break bulk, heavy-lift, roll-on/ roll-off cargoes.
- Six gantry cranes (two post-Panamax) on-dock double-stack train service 9,000+ feet trackage on terminal.



TERMINAL SIZE	72 acres
REEFER OUTLETS	306 in-ground outlets x 440 V
STORAGE CAPACITY	12,500 TEUs, 2,780 square-meter (29,924 sq-ft) consolidated shed

Halifax - Fairview Cove Container Terminal

The Fairview Cove Container Terminal is located in the Bedford Basin immediately adjacent to CN's main rail yards in Fairview and Rockingham. Since opening in 1982, the capacity of the Fairview Cove Container Terminal has doubled with further expansion capabilities still available on land and water. Operated by Cerescorp Company, Fairview Cove Container Terminal offers full-service 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

TERMINAL SIZE : 70 Acres

REEFER OUTLETS: 300 in-ground outlets x
440 V

STORAGE CAPACITY: 9,000 TEUs

TERMINAL EQUIPMENT

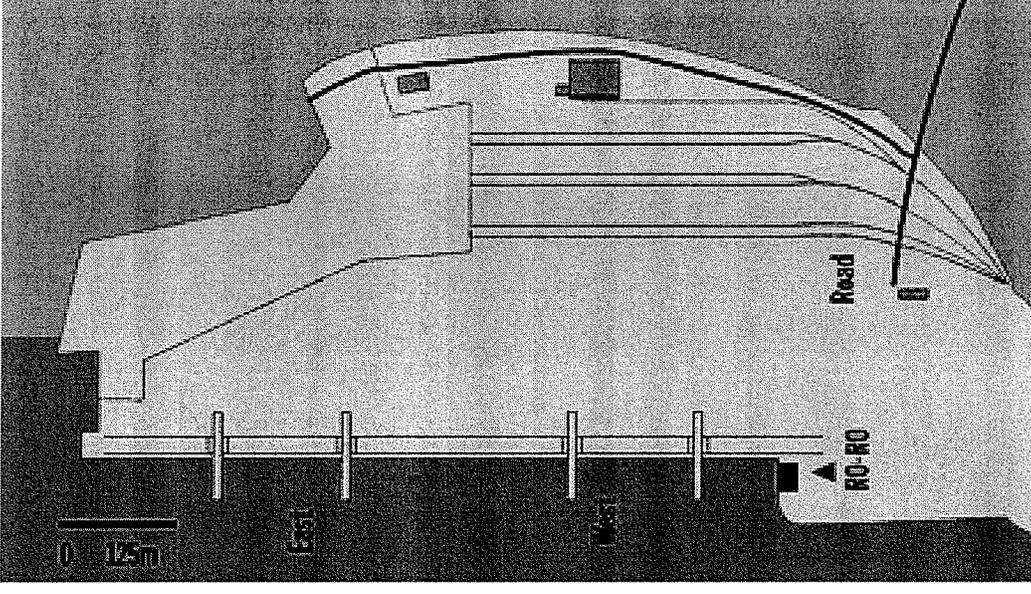
- 3 - 40 tonne gantry cranes
- 1 - 60 tonne gantry crane
- 7 yard gantries
- 5 front-end loaders
- 2 side loaders
- 19 yard tractors
- 3 ro/ro tractors
- 30.5 metre (100 feet) ro/ro ramp

CARGO CAPABILITIES

Containers, Ro/ro, Breakbulk,
Heavy-lift

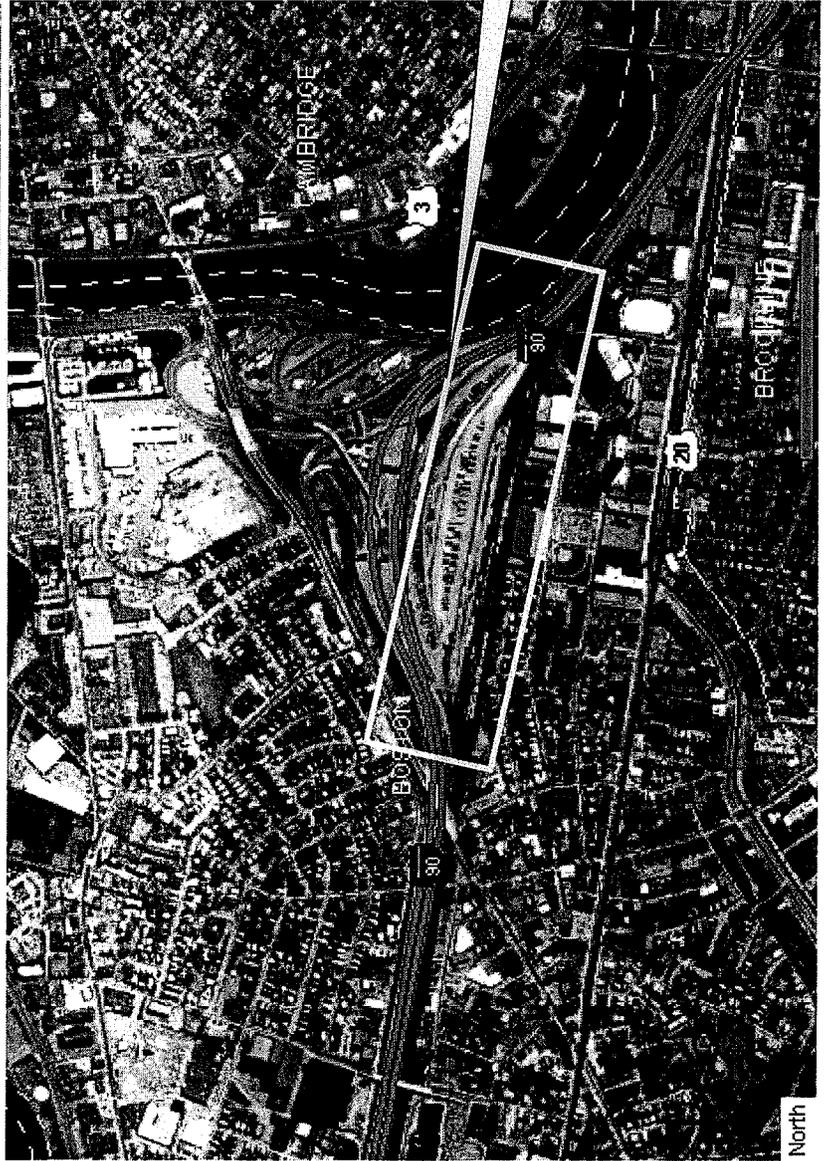
INTERMODAL CONNECTIONS

On-dock double-stack rail service
Truck and highway access



MassPort Intermodal Rail Terminal Site Feasibility

These aerial photos the same scale. Beacon Park Yard would fit within the Former Coastal Oil, MBTA Yard, and South Boston Power House Properties. (Over 200 Acres)



Yellow Boundary of Beacon Park Intermodal and Storage Tracks superimposed on MassPort expansion site

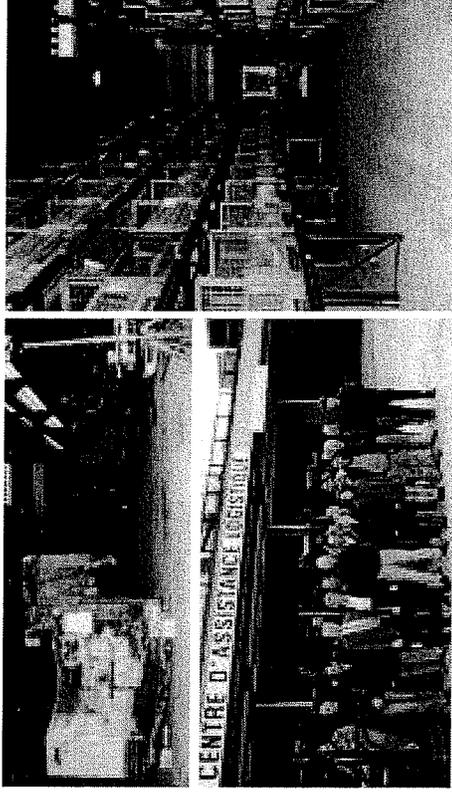
Yellow Boundary of Beacon Park intermodal loading and storage tracks

Proposed Rail ROW

F. S. DeMasi
02.20.07

Freight Villages: Functional characteristics

- **Intermodal operations**
- **Integrated distribution**
- **Smart warehousing**
- **Logistics**
- **Showrooms**
- **Customs**
- **And support services**



Freight Villages: Support Services

- **Security**
- **Maintenance**
- **Office space**
- **Meeting/conference rooms**
- **Eating facilities**
- **Banking, mail, extra warehouse**
- **Public transportation/internal transit**

**Freight Villages:
Additional support services/related businesses**

- **Vehicle service, repair, leasing**
- **Hotel/motel**
- **Truck stop**
- **Training facility**
- **Employment agency**
- **Insurance**
- **Communications**

Freight Villages: Inappropriate Uses

- **Passive storage**
- **Storage of empty containers**
- **Uncontrolled public use (retail, car rental)**
- **Heavy manufacturing**

Freight Villages: Improving the concept of Context Sensitive Design

Make explicit the following values:

- **Improve environment: air emissions, VMT**
- **Improve business efficiency (reduce/avoid congestion, reduce costs, energy use)**
- **Allow urban labor access to jobs**
- **Improve work conditions of mgmt. & labor**

**Freight Villages:
Issues to consider and research**

Making the case/improving the outcome:

- **Quantify benefits of compactness, etc**
- **Maximize public benefits (spillover)**
- **Quantify value for public/private sectors**
- **Quantify ROI for public/private sectors**
- **Design for the future**

Freight Villages

- **Brownfields: perfect for freight infrastructure**
- **High value smart warehouses**
- **Planned unit developments**

Freight Villages: Case Study

Tremley Point, Union County, New Jersey

Ref: <www.njtpa.org>

- **County is rich in freight transport**
- **Near major market**
- **Classic Brownfield**
- **Wetlands**
- **Investment anticipated**

Freight Villages: Coming to Massachusetts?

Actions for developing Freight Villages

- **Develop land use plans with Mass Gateway Cities (Boston, Fall River, New Bedford, Salem, Gloucester) and...**
- **Inland Port Intermodal Rail Facilities (at Springfield, Worcester, Framingham, Ayer, Lowell, Wilmington, Woburn, others...)**
- **Encourage state interest/support: EOT, MBTA, MAPC, MassHighway, Office of Commonwealth Development, Office of Economic Development, Seaport Advisory Council**
- **Encourage/meet with private investors (CSX/Pan AM/P&W) Trucking Firms/Logistics Providers, Warehousemen**
- **Work with New England and adjacent States (NY-NJ-CT)**
- **Improve Rail/Highway access to Ports**

**The EOT/Boston MPO Missing Elements:
to include freight village concept**

- **A Regional Freight Plan that contains timely descriptive narratives of the current freight delivery system;**
- **Recommendations for capital projects, policies, and programs;**
- **Suggestions for further freight transportation planning; and siting of Freight Villages/Transload/Reload Facilities**
- **Public education of freight transport multi-modal characteristics/issues from point of view of shippers, carriers, other affected stakeholders**

The EOT/Boston MPO Missing Elements:

Solicit public and industry input

- **1 - Defining the regional freight system**
- **2 - Definition of assessment of needs**
- **3 - Assessment of improvements and solutions**
- **4 - Selection and implementation of freight strategies**

Develop a constituency for a planning and freight action plan in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The EOT/Boston MPO Missing Elements:

- **Metropolitan freight planning “best practices” from other MPOs from four perspectives**
 - **Mandate**
 - Freight planning missions, visions, and goals
 - **Organization**
 - Public/private sector coordination
 - **Resources**
 - Funding and staff resources for freight planning
 - **Projects and programs**
 - Innovative freight planning activities

The EOT/Boston MPO Missing Elements:

- **There are many examples of excellent metropolitan freight planning programs, all with similar characteristics**
 - **Clearly defined, attainable goals for the region’s freight transportation system**
 - **A high degree of public agency and private sector involvement in the freight planning process**
 - **A designated “freight expert” within the organization**
 - **A move toward the development of freight-specific models and databases**
 - **A willingness to “think outside the box” in developing and funding freight improvement projects**
- **The RTAC Freight Committee needs to execute an action plan to the MPO/EOT to advocate for these Missing Elements**

ATTACHMENT

3

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL



August 14, 2007

David Mohler, Chair
Transportation Planning and Programming Committee
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
Ten Park Plaza, Room 4150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Draft Fiscal Years 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Dear Mr. Mohler:

The Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council) is an independent group of citizen and regional interest groups and municipal officials charged by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with providing public input on transportation planning to the MPO. The Advisory Council provides a forum for broad-based discussions of transportation issues and planning, particularly on programming of federal and some state transportation funding for the region, and is a main avenue for public participation in the MPO's planning process.

At its July 11, 2007 meeting, the Advisory Council discussed the Draft FYs 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that was in circulation for public review and comment. Based on that discussion, the Advisory Council voted at its August 8 meeting to support the draft, but requests your attention to the important reservations listed below:

Funding Constraints

The Advisory Council understands the tremendous funding constraints placed upon the MPO this fiscal year and appreciates the difficult decision-making needed in formulating the document. In fact, what is most important in the TIP is not the projects that were chosen, but the large number of projects that were not programmed. The Advisory Council urges the MPO to aggressively pursue additional financial support from the State Legislature and the Administration to provide the funding needed to adequately meet the transportation needs of the region.

Future Project Cost Estimates

The Advisory Council continues to be interested in developing a mechanism for providing more dependable project cost estimates and believes all cost estimates should be adjusted for projected inflation to the date of expected contract bidding. The Advisory Council is aware that projects listed in future TIP years reflect a 4% per year anticipated cost increase, but requests that the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee conduct a policy discussion on this issue and monitor that this 4% is serving its intended purpose.

Providing transportation policy advice to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

State Transportation Building • Ten Park Plaza, Suite 2150 • Boston, Massachusetts 02116-3968
Tel. (617) 973-7100 • Fax (617) 973-8855 • TTY (617) 973-7089 • ctps@ctps.org

Freight Progress

The Advisory Council is discouraged to find no specific freight projects in the draft document. We believe that the lack of a designated intermodal route, including doublestack clearance, to our region and our ports continues to contribute to congestion to our interstate system. This puts the region at a disadvantage in competing with comparable metropolitan regions with better freight accommodations. The MPO should pursue funding for projects that address freight operation and mobility, preserve existing facilities, and increase access to our ports. This will improve conditions on the region's highways, protect the environment, and encourage economic growth in the region.

Transit Progress

The Advisory Council is concerned about providing for improved access to transit and the expansion of transit facilities and services so that more people can use it. The Advisory Council supports the prompt construction of the Green Line extension to Somerville and Medford Hillside with a spur to Union Square, the design and construction of the Blue Line/Red Line Connector, the extension of the Blue Line to Lynn, the South Coast rail expansion, and a heavy rail version of the Urban Ring. The MPO should promote appropriate and timely expansion of the transit system.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Access and Accommodation

The Advisory Council strongly supports alternative transportation modes and is pleased to see a number of bicycle infrastructure projects programmed. However, while the Bruce Freeman Memorial Bicycle Path is included in the FY2010 element, it is not fully funded. The Advisory Council encourages the MPO to find the funds for this project.

TIP Process

The Advisory Council is generally pleased with how the TIP process is working and encourages the MPO to continue its extensive outreach. The MPO's information gathering and evaluation work is more evolved and responsive every year and this is helpful to decision-making.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Steven H. Olanoff, Chair

ATTACHMENT

4

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL



June 1, 2007

Chairman STATE SENATOR STEVEN A. BADDOUR
Chairman STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH F. WAGNER
JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Room 134
State House
Boston, MA 02133

RE: *Transportation Planning - Regional Transportation Advisory Council Freight Committee*

Dear Senator Baddour and Representative Wagner,

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council) Freight Committee, I would like to invite you to a meeting with the Freight Committee to hear about your plans for improving the Commonwealth's Transportation System. Our meetings are held on the second Wednesday each month at 1:00 PM at the State Transportation Building. Your participation would be very helpful to our members in getting a broader picture of transportation issues as seen by the legislature through your committee's plans and activities. The Advisory Council is an independent group of citizens and officials providing the Boston MPO a forum for broad-based and robust discussions of transportation issues and planning. Your input would add dimension to the freight Committee's deliberations of the Boston MPO's Regional Transportation Plan, Unified Planning Work Program, and Transportation Improvement Program, and Air Quality Conformity Determinations, an integral part of the federally required 3C (continuing, cooperative, comprehensive) transportation planning process.

The Freight Committee consists of various proponents for the freight industry, including private, public, and government stakeholders. We have concluded it is becoming increasingly important that the Commonwealth with our neighboring states in the Northeast join forces to develop a work plan to address the problem of moving an increasing amount of freight over our constrained transportation infrastructure, especially with the current movement of 94% of our freight by truck. We would like to know how the Joint Transportation Committee considers the role of freight transportation in its activities and would enjoy your comments on our concerns. Many studies show that in all cases "lane mile" increases do not keep pace with "ton mile" growth as driven by our growing population. This cumulative growth will increase the annual budgets "to maintain a state of good repair" on our highway systems and existing air quality problems will be further exacerbated. The mode of transportation capable of providing sufficient relief in a realistic time frame is freight rail. We believe under utilization of key rail corridors, existing facilities and freight terminals in Metro-Boston and seaport access (MASSPORT) to be major problems. It is critically important to plan for freight transportation to accommodate the commodities and cargo trade and transport effectuating the future economic and environmental health of the Commonwealth - but we need your help.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to meeting with you at our 11 July meeting. Please contact our vice Chairman, Frank DeMasi at fsdemasi@verizon.net or by phone at (781) 235-6383 to advise us of your availability.

Sincerely,

Lisa E. Lepore
Chair Freight Committee, RTAC

CC: Steve Olanoff, Chair RTAC
Barbara Lucas, Chair MAPC Transportation Committee
Tom Cahir EOT

State Transportation Building • Ten Park Plaza, Suite 2150 • Boston, Massachusetts
02116-3968 Tel. (617) 973-7100. Fax (617) 973-8855. TTY (617) 973-7089 •
ctpsectps.org

ATTACHMENT

5

Democrat-Herald

democratherald.com[Print Page](#)**Tuesday, August 28, 2007**

Last modified Saturday, August 4, 2007 11:03 PM PDT

Hering: Rail could help save bridges

One way to prolong the life of our aging highway bridges would be to carry more freight on the nation's railroads. But one way or another, we have to face the fact that much of the infrastructure supporting our economy is older than its design life.

In Oregon, trucks are allowed to weigh up to 105,000 pounds with special permits. Because heavy loads put old bridges at greater risk, the state has put limits on some of the I-5 bridges in Southern Oregon, forcing truckers on a long detour via Highway 97 for particularly heavy loads.

A fully loaded modern rail car now weighs up to 286,000 pounds, including car and freight. So you would think that putting more freight on rails, especially heavy freight, would not just relieve some of the interstate highway traffic but would also spare the bridges and make them last longer than they will last under current conditions.

Many of the highway bridges now rated as insufficient or obsolete are only about 50 years old. Railroad bridges in some cases are more than 100 years old. They can handle the much heavier loads because they were designed and built in an age when they had to support giant steam locomotives. And of course the major railroads, such as Union Pacific and BNSF, inspect the bridges on their main lines all the time and do maintenance as needed.

But even if a shift of freight to rail could be accomplished, it would not answer our problem for long. Many railroad trestles and bridges, especially on the short lines, while still carrying larger loads, also are getting too old and need to be replaced.

One example is the trestle used by the Portland & Western going out out Albany north of the Willamette River, for which Congress has authorized about \$8 million dollars in reconstruction aid.

That project also illustrates the difficulty of the task. Congress authorized a total of about \$8 million in 2005, based on cost estimates done earlier. But the money was not made available right away, instead being spread over the six years of the transportation bill. Also, details had to be worked out with the Federal Railroad Administration and other regulatory authorities.

As a result the project is still in its engineering phase. It will be next year before construction can start to replace the wooden trestle, partly with a built-up embankment and largely with steel and concrete pilings.

That will be a full four years after congressional funding was first proposed in a bill. Multiply the complexity and protracted length of the approval process — along with the amount of money, by several thousand — and you get a rough picture of the reconstruction job America must face.

— *Hasso Hering*

Copyright © 2007 Democrat-Herald

ATTACHMENT

6

[First match](#) | [New search](#) | [More Like This](#) | [Printer Friendly Version](#) | [Log Out](#)

The Star-Ledger Archive
COPYRIGHT © The Star-Ledger 2007

Date: 2007/08/11 Saturday Page: 003 Section: NEWS Edition: FINAL Size: 747 words

Heavier trucks buckling U.S. roads

Weight on urban highways up by half since 1995

By SETH BORENSTEIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS - WASHINGTON

Just like Americans themselves, the nation's roads and bridges are carrying more weight today.

Added to an aging and deteriorating highway system, it means more safety problems, delays and repair costs for drivers, experts said.

In just a decade, from 1995 to 2005, the weight load on urban highways increased by half. Since 1970, the weight carried on rural highways has gone up nearly 7 times, according to Federal Highway Administration statistics.

And it's not just more traffic. It's the heavier trucks.

"The number of trucks and the number of heavy trucks have gone up dramatically since 1965," said Mark Hallenbeck, director of the Washington State Transportation Center at the University of Washington.

The number of tractor-trailer truck miles driven on American roadways has well more than doubled to more than 145 billion miles a year since 1980, increasing faster than the rate of smaller trucks or cars, according to federal statistics.

"If we're doubling our loads, we need to look at our infrastructure to be able to carry that," said James Garrett, co-director of the Center for Sensed Critical Infrastructure Research at Carnegie Mellon University. "We need to ask the questions."

That's why some engineering experts speculate that the wear and tear over the years of heavier loads could be one of the factors that triggered the collapse of the interstate bridge in Minneapolis last week.

More weight wouldn't be a problem if the highway system were regularly and adequately maintained because well-kept roads and bridges can handle the added weight, said University of Texas civil engineer professor C. Michael Walton.

The American Society of Civil Engineers gave the nation's roads a "D" grade and the bridges a "C" in 2005. One of the factors was the increased weight, said John E. Durrant, the society's managing director of engineering programs. Extra weight from increased truck traffic over time will push a bridge that's already susceptible to fatigue "to reach the end of its life sooner," he said.

Wayton Boyce, a spokesman for the American Trucking Association, said it is unfair to single

out trucks.

"Yes, it is an increase in traffic and, yes, it's an increase in cumulative weight, but there has been a similar increase in the number of automobiles," Boyce said.

Mark Berndt, chairman of the truck weight committee for the National Academies of Sciences' Transportation Research Board, said the United States has some of the strictest weight limits of any industrialized nations, limiting trucks on the federal interstate system to 80,000 pounds, a limit that has been around for decades. State roads, however, can allow heavier trucks.

America is gaining a great economic advantage by using more and heavier trucks, said Walton. But the next step is to take just part of the cost savings and translate that into fixing roads and bridges, he said.

Boyce said his trucking group supports an increase in gasoline tax as long as it is targeted to fixing roads.

"We've gone too long really making just incremental improvements to the interstate program. We haven't kept up with maintenance," he said.

The problem boils down to basic engineering. When engineers design bridges and roads there are two factors to balance: load, the force weighing on the structure, and resistance, the ability to withstand that force.

What's happening is that loads are increasing while time, weather and fatigue weaken resistance.

Bridges are designed to withstand up to twice as much as the anticipated weight loads, said W. Gene Corley, a forensic engineer with the Skokie, Ill.-based engineering firm CTL Group.

But when a bridges can't handle the weight, states put up load limits, restrict the size of trucks using them.

A 2006 Department of Transportation Inspector General study checked out 43 bridges in Massachusetts, New York and Texas and found that at least 12 of them allowed vehicles to cross that were heavier than the bridge's maximum weight limit. And 11 of those did not have the required posting signs.

The collapsed Minnesota bridge had no weight limits but was categorized as structurally deficient, one of more than 73,000 U.S. bridges with that designation last year. The federal government usually places bridges that have weight limits on the functionally obsolete list, which includes more than additional 80,000 bridges.

etc. BOX: "If we're doubling our loads, we need to look at our infrastructure to be able to carry that. We need to ask the questions." JAMES GARRETT, Co-director of the Center for Sensed Critical Infrastructure Research

URL: Heavier trucks buckling U.S. |