



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE GENERAL COURT
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

June 3, 2019

Jonathan L. Gulliver, Highway Administrator
Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 7410
Boston, MA 02116

Leo Roy, Commissioner
Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Administrator Gulliver and Commissioner Roy,

We are writing to seek your guidance on how to best move forward with the daylighting of the Muddy River. The opportunity to daylight the river will be created by the Storrow Drive Eastbound Bridge Replacement Project. Moving the westbound lane away from the river, which is an aspect of the bridge replacement project, promises to unlock more usable parkland and many of the project alternatives would enable possible daylighting of Muddy River as it enters the Charles River at Charlesgate Park. While daylighting the river is not currently contemplated as part of the scope of work, the prospect of doing so is of great interest to the community.

Daylighting the Muddy River where it meets the Charles would provide benefits, not only to Charlesgate Park but to the thousands of daily users of the Muddy River, the Emerald Necklace Park system, and the Esplanade. The Muddy River flows along Boston's border with Brookline from Jamaica Pond to the Charles River. It winds through the neighborhoods of Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill, Longwood, Fenway, Kenmore and into Back Bay. It is surrounded along its entire length by heavily used parkland.

As the river empties into the Charles, it flows for its final two hundred seventy feet through large culverts. The culverts slow the flow of the surface water, resulting in large algae blooms and a seemingly permanent collection of floating trash in Charlesgate Park. Daylighting the river and returning it to a natural flow will drastically improve water quality, improve wildlife habitat and connections, and remove a potential flood chokepoint in Charlesgate Park. We believe this can be done without degrading the water quality of the Charles River.

The construction of Storrow Drive is what necessitated diverting the flow of the river into culverts. The Storrow Drive Eastbound Bridge Replacement Project will remove large swaths of roadway that were built on top of those culverts. Daylighting the river as part of, or in parallel to the Storrow Drive project would minimize disruptions and create efficiencies that would

otherwise be lost by pursuing daylighting at a later date. Moreover, certain tasks needed for construction may also overlap with tasks useful for daylighting. We hope that we can work with you to determine the best way to advance this exciting opportunity.

Sincerely,



Senator William N. Brownsberger
Second Suffolk and Middlesex



Representative Jon Santiago
9th Suffolk



Councilor Josh Zakim
Boston City Council – District 8



Representative Jay D. Livingstone
8th Suffolk



Representative Chynah Tyler
7th Suffolk