

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs ■ MEPA Office

ENF Environmental Notification Form

For Office Use Only
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

EOEA No.: *14346*
 MEPA Analyst: *Aisling Eglinton*
 Phone: 617-626-*1024*

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, 301 CMR 11.00.

Project Name: South Coast Rail Project (formerly the New Bedford/Fall River Commuter Rail Project)		
Street: South Station, Boston to New Bedford and Fall River		
Municipality: South Coast Region	Watershed: Buzzards Bay, Taunton, Narragansett Bay, Ten Mile, Boston Harbor, Charles	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:	Latitude:	Longitude:
Estimated commencement date: 2012	Estimated completion date: 2016	
Approximate cost: \$0.5-3 billion	Status of project design: 5 %complete	
Proponent: Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works (EOT)		
Street: Ten Park Plaza		
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02116-3973
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this ENF May Be Obtained: Charlie Patton		
Firm/Agency: Regina Villa Associates	Street: 51 Franklin Street, Suite 400	
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02110
Phone: 617-357-5772	Fax: 617-357-8361	E-mail: cpatton@reginavilla.com

- Does this project meet or exceed a mandatory EIR threshold (see 301 CMR 11.03)?
 Yes No
- Has this project been filed with MEPA before?
 Yes (EOEA No. 10509) No
- Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before?
 Yes (EOEA No. 10509) No
- Is this an Expanded ENF (see 301 CMR 11.05(7)) requesting:
- a Single EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.06(8)) Yes No
 - a Special Review Procedure? (see 301CMR 11.09) Yes No
 - a Waiver of mandatory EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.11) Yes No
 - a Phase I Waiver? (see 301 CMR 11.11) Yes No

Identify any financial assistance or land transfer from an agency of the Commonwealth, including the agency name and the amount of funding or land area (in acres): **Project will be funded by Commonwealth (EOT).**

Are you requesting coordinated review with any other federal, state, regional, or local agency?

Yes (Army Corps of Engineers) No

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals: **State (MA Wetlands Protection Act; Section 401 Water Quality Certification; MA Endangered Species Act; Chapter 91; Article 97; MHC Review; Coastal Zone Management Consistency Determination) and Federal (NEPA; Section 404; NPDES Construction Permit; Section 106; Air Quality Conformity Determination)**

Which ENF or EIR review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03):

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rare Species | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wetlands, Waterways, & Tidelands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water | <input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Air | <input type="checkbox"/> Solid & Hazardous Waste |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACEC | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historical & Archaeological Resources |

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Existing	Change	Total	State Permits & Approvals
LAND				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Order of Conditions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Superseding Order of Conditions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chapter 91 License <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 401 Water Quality Certification <input type="checkbox"/> MHD or MDC Access Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Water Management Act Permit <input type="checkbox"/> New Source Approval <input type="checkbox"/> DEP or MWRA Sewer Connection/Extension Permit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Permits (including Legislative Approvals) – Specify: See above
Total site acreage	N/A			
New acres of land altered		See Chapter 5		
Acres of impervious area	To be determined in the Draft EIR			
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		Approx. 6.8 ac		
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		LUW = Approx. 0.8 ac Bank = 12,300 lf Riverfront Area = Approx. 19.3 ac BLSF = Approx. 6.8 ac Other = Approx. 0.14 ac		
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		N/A		
STRUCTURES				
Gross square footage	N/A			
Number of housing units	N/A			
Maximum height (in feet)	N/A			
TRANSPORTATION				
Vehicle trips per day	Project will reduce vehicle trips on highways			
Parking spaces	To be determined in the Draft EIR			
WATER/WASTEWATER				
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	N/A			
GPD water withdrawal	N/A			
GPD wastewater generation/treatment	N/A			

Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	N/A		
----------------------------------------	-----	--	--

CONSERVATION LAND: Will the project involve the conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97?

Yes (Specify **See Narrative Section 5.2, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Open Space**) No

Will it involve the release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation restriction, or watershed preservation restriction?

Yes (Specify _____) No

RARE SPECIES: Does the project site include Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, Vernal Pools, Priority Sites of Rare Species, or Exemplary Natural Communities?

Yes (Specify **See Narrative Section 5.4, Threatened and Endangered Species**) No

HISTORICAL /ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Does the project site include any structure, site or district listed in the State Register of Historic Place or the inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth?

Yes (Specify **See Narrative Section 5.11, Historic Resources**) No

If yes, does the project involve any demolition or destruction of any listed or inventoried historic or archaeological resources?

Yes (Specify _____) No

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN: Is the project in or adjacent to an Area of Critical Environmental Concern?

Yes (Specify **See Narrative Section 5.2, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Open Space**) No

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project description should include (a) a description of the project site, (b) a description of both on-site and off-site alternatives and the impacts associated with each alternative, and (c) potential on-site and off-site mitigation measures for each alternative (*You may attach one additional page, if necessary.*)

The South Coast Rail project is an initiative to bring public transportation to the South Coast region. The project will increase transit accessibility and the equitable distribution of transit services, increase transit ridership, improve regional air quality, and support opportunities for smart growth initiatives and sustainable development. The current transportation system serving the South Coast region is inadequate to meet the current needs of the region and will not meet the future demand placed upon it.

Over the last year, the Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works (EOT) has reviewed sixty-five alternatives and conducted a review process to determine the most viable transportation alternatives to and from New Bedford and Fall River, and Boston. The April 2008 *Analysis of South Coast Rail Alternatives: Phase 1 Report*¹ recommended five alternative routes with mode options, in addition to the No-Build Alternative (Transportation System Management Option), to be advanced for a more detailed analysis. These alternatives (described in detail in Chapter 4) include:

1 A CD containing the full *Analysis of South Coast Rail Alternatives: Phase 1 Report* (April 2008) is included in the ENF. The report is also available on the project website at www.southcoastrail.com.

- **No-Build Alternative – Enhanced Bus**

The No-Build Alternative would provide enhancement to existing bus service with limited improvements to the existing transit and roadway system.

- **Alternative 1 – Through Attleboro**

Build Alternative 1 would provide commuter rail service to South Station through Attleboro. Both electric and diesel commuter rail options will be evaluated for this alternative. Major improvements for this alternative include: reconstructing existing freight tracks, adding a new bypass track in Attleboro, and adding a third track on the Northeast Corridor from the Attleboro Bypass to Readville. Stations being considered for this alternative include:

- Battleship Cove
- Fall River Depot
- Freetown
- State Pier
- Whale’s Tooth
- King’s Highway
- East Taunton (North)
- Taunton Depot
- Barrowsville

- **Alternative 2 – Through Middleborough**

Build Alternative 2 would provide commuter rail service to South Station through Middleborough. Variations to this alternative include providing this service with and without major infrastructure improvements to the Old Colony Main Line between Braintree and Quincy. Major improvements for this alternative include: reconstructing existing freight tracks, adding a second track on the Old Colony Main Line north of Plymouth Line Junction to South Station, modifying the existing Red Line tracks, and constructing a tunnel through Quincy Center for the Red Line. Stations being considered for this alternative include:

- Battleship Cove
- Fall River Depot
- Freetown
- State Pier
- Whale’s Tooth
- King’s Highway
- East Taunton (South)
- Middleborough Center

▪ **Alternative 3 – Through Attleboro/Middleborough**

Build Alternative 3 would provide commuter rail service to South Station through Attleboro and Middleborough. Both electric and diesel commuter rail options will be evaluated for the section of the alternative through Attleboro and diesel only commuter rail will be evaluated for the section of the alternative through Middleborough. Major improvements for this alternative include: reconstructing existing freight tracks, adding a new bypass track in Attleboro, and adding a third track on the Northeast Corridor from the Attleboro Bypass to Readville. Stations being considered for this alternative include:

- Battleship Cove
- Fall River Depot
- Freetown
- State Pier
- Whale's Tooth
- King's Highway
- East Taunton (South)
- Taunton Depot
- Middleborough Center
- Barrowsville

▪ **Alternative 4 – Through Stoughton**

Build Alternative 4 would provide commuter rail service to South Station through Stoughton with an option to serve the Whittenton section of the City of Taunton. Both electric and diesel commuter rail options will be evaluated for this alternative. Major improvements for this alternative include: reconstructing existing freight tracks, restoring an out-of-service and an abandoned right-of-way on the Stoughton Line between Taunton and Stoughton and on the Whittenton Branch, and adding a second track to the Stoughton Line from Stoughton Station to Canton Junction. Stations being considered for this alternative include:

- Battleship Cove
- Fall River Depot
- Freetown
- State Pier
- Whale's Tooth
- King's Highway
- East Taunton (North)
- Taunton
- Whittenton
- Raynham Park
- Easton Village
- North Easton

▪ **Alternative 5 – Rapid Bus**

Build Alternative 5 would provide Rapid Bus express service to South Station using a proposed dedicated bus lane to be built along existing highway infrastructure (Route 24 and I-93), an existing HOV zipper lane, and a short portion through mixed traffic. Major improvements for this alternative include: adding a new lane to Route 24 from Route 140 to Interstate 495, constructing a reversible bus lane in the median from Interstate 495 to the Braintree split, and modifying the interchange at the Braintree split. Stations being considered for this alternative include:

- Fall River Depot
- Freetown Park
- State Pier
- Whale’s Tooth
- King’s Highway
- Taunton Depot
- Galleria Station

Alternatives 1 through 4 could require constructing a new Boston mid-day layover facility, new overnight layover facilities in the South Coast region and track improvements at South Station, which will all be identified and evaluated in the Draft EIR. Alternative 5 would require constructing new layover facilities at terminal bus stations.

The attached ENF narrative provides information on the Purpose of and Need for the South Coast Rail project (*Chapter 2*); an overview of the Phase 1 Alternatives Analysis (*Chapter 3*); the alternatives advanced from Phase 1 on which EOT has gathered additional information (*Chapter 4*); the environmental resources likely to be affected by the build alternatives with a preliminary evaluation of potential environmental impacts and benefits (*Chapter 5*); EOT’s recommendations for alternatives to be carried forward into the Draft EIR (*Chapter 6*); and a list of permits and approvals that would be required to construct the South Coast Rail project (*Chapter 7*). This ENF also includes a proposed Scope for the Draft EIR (*Chapter 8*), which could serve as the scope for the Draft EIS.

LAND SECTION – all proponents must fill out this section

I. Thresholds / Permits

A. Does the project meet or exceed any review thresholds related to **land** (see 301 CMR 11.03(1))

Yes No; if yes, specify each threshold:

See Narrative Chapter 4, Alternatives Advanced from Phase 1 for further detail.

II. Impacts and Permits

A. Describe, in acres, the current and proposed character of the project site, as follows:

Not applicable

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Total</u>
Footprint of buildings	_____	_____	_____
Roadways, parking, and other paved areas	_____	_____	_____
Other altered areas (describe)	_____	_____	_____
Undeveloped areas	_____	_____	_____

B. Has any part of the project site been in active agricultural use in the last three years?

Yes No; if yes, how many acres of land in agricultural use (with agricultural soils) will be converted to nonagricultural use?