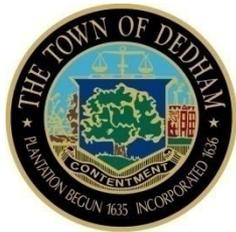


# Benefits of Rail Trail Development



Minuteman Bikeway

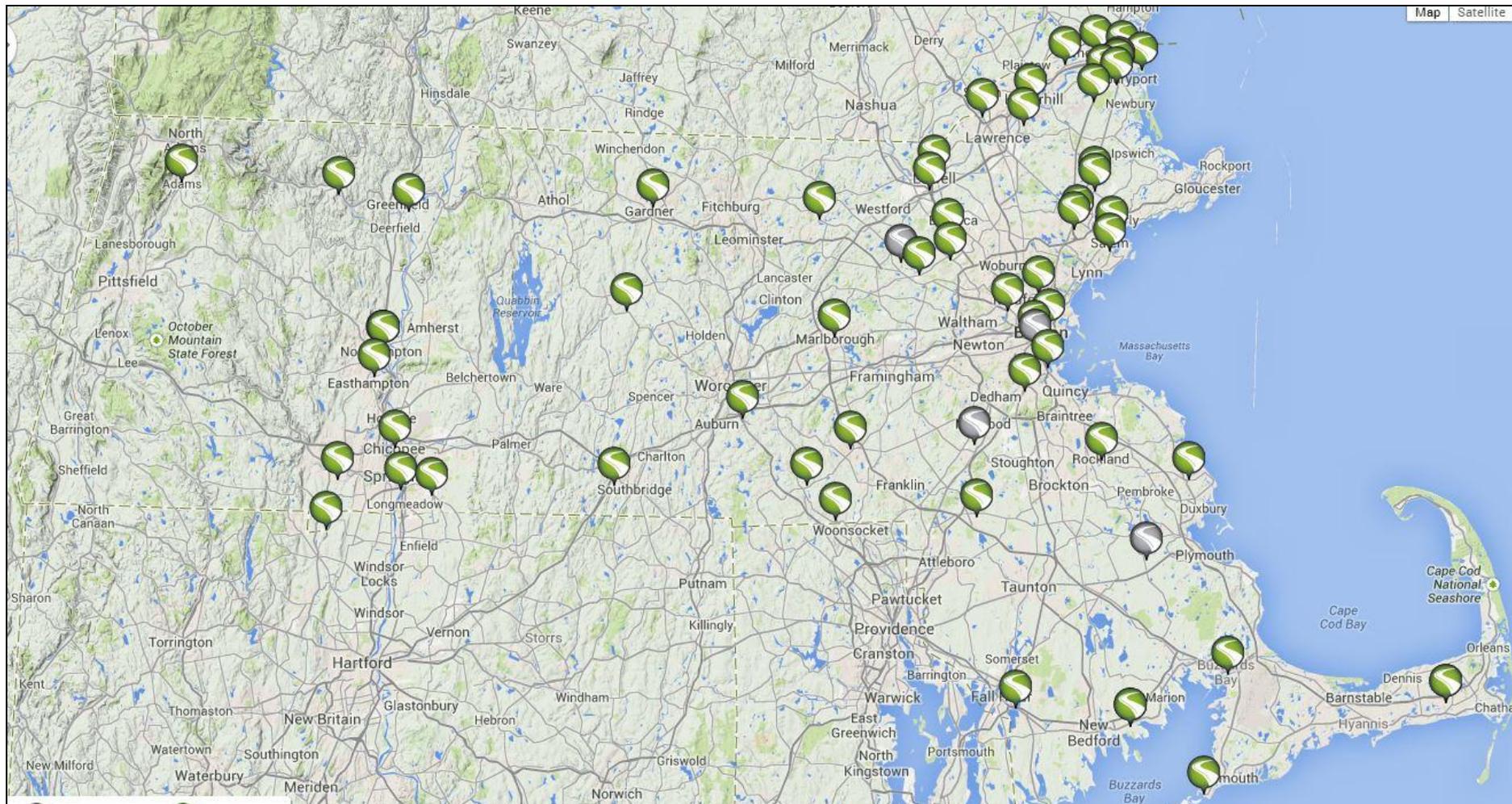
# Dedham Greenway

The Dedham Greenway is a community-led effort to transform a 1.5 mile stretch of abandoned railway into a new linear park and cultural greenway. The project will convert the abandoned railway into a pedestrian and bike path, which will incorporate public art and community gardens, as well as connect the adjacent neighborhoods to each other and to Boston.

# Process

- 2009 Open Space Plan
- 2009 Dedham Master Plan
- 2013 Dedham/Westwood Bicycle & Pedestrian Network Plan
- 2013 Town hired Rails to Trails Conservancy to create a conceptual plan
- 2014 (February) 1<sup>st</sup> Public Meeting
- 2014 Presentations to School Committee, MBCG & Park and Recreation
- 2014 (October) 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Meeting

# Rails to Trails in MA



# Trails + Transportation

**Trails provide a safe, affordable, alternative mode of transportation**

The Dedham Greenway would:

- Connect 3 schools together providing a safe, continuous 1.5 mile route for children to get to and from school
- Connect Dedham Square with East Dedham and eventually Boston's Readville Commuter Rail Station, providing a safe route for commuters through trails and on-road bicycle lanes
- Motor vehicles are the single greatest pollutant in cities across the United States. Every journey made on foot or by bicycle reduces traffic congestion and pollution.



Manhan Rail Trail, Northampton

# Trails + Health

## Fighting Childhood Obesity

“Over the past 40 years, rates of obesity have soared among children of all ages in the U.S. **More than 33% of children are now overweight or obese or at risk of becoming so.**” *Safe Routes to Schools*

“The daily recommendation for physical activity for children 6 years and older is **at least 60 minutes per day.** Active play is the best exercise for younger children.”  
*American Academy of Pediatrics*

“Communities need to look at their local areas and see what issues are keeping kids from walking to school, where that’s feasible,” says Phyllis F. Agran, M.D., MPH, FAAP, lead author of the American Academy of Pediatrics’ newly updated policy on school transportation safety. **“We’re looking at the first generation of children in the U.S. who aren’t expected to outlive their parents because of obesity-related illnesses.** Walking is a great way to combat this epidemic, but it must be done safely.”



Northern Strand Community Trail

# Trails + Health

## Fighting Obesity

A new report by the McKinsey Global Institute released Thursday that the **global cost of obesity has risen to \$2 trillion annually** — nearly as much as smoking or the combined impact of armed violence, war and terrorism.

The report offers the stark prediction that **nearly half of the world's adult population will be overweight or obese by 2030** should present trends continue.

*McKinsey Global Institute 11/20/2014*



Northern Strand Community Trail

# Trails + Schools

## Safe Routes to School

**Walking School Bus** - A Walking School Bus (WSB) is a fun, social, physically active, and environmentally friendly form of transportation. A WSB consists of a group of children that walk together accompanied by adults on a pre-determined route to or from school. Routes can originate from a particular neighborhood or a parking lot, park, or church. They may operate daily, weekly or monthly.

## Safe Routes to School Provides:

### School

- 25 safety vests per school to increase visibility and safety
- Customized map of Walking School Bus routes
- Marketing materials to publicize Walking School Bus
- Outreach Coordinator support and technical assistance

### Volunteers

- Walking School Bus Training for adults including safety training

### Students

- Incentives – zipper pulls, pencils, bookmarks
- Pedestrian Safety Training for students

### Biking Education

### Parent/Teacher Education



Walking School Bus

# Trails + Schools

- Outdoor classroom for various classes, before and after school programs and clubs
  - art
  - environmental education
  - gardening club
  - walk and talk club
  - physical education – running, biking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing demos etc.



# Trails

**This is being done in many other communities safely and successfully**

- Somerville, MA: **Community Path**
- Arlington, MA: **Great Meadow Trail**
- Dennis, Harwich, Brewster, Orleans, Eastham, Wellfleet: **Cape Cod Rail Trail**
- Lowell, Chelmsford and Westford, MA: **Bruce Freeman Rail Trail**
- Malden, MA: **Northern Strand Community Trail (Bike to Sea)** links several schools—including Linden School, Salemwood Elementary School, Malden High School and Madeline English School—with these residential neighborhoods, providing a safe route to school for many children.
- Saugus, MA : Second segment of the **Northern Strand Community Trail** connects many houses with local schools – including Belmonte Saugus Middle School and Douglas Waybright Elementary School, as well as Saugus' popular Anna Parker Playground.
- Arlington, Lexington, Bedford, and Concord, MA: **Minuteman Bike Path** - Heading northeast from Cambridge, the bikeway connects Arlington, Lexington and Bedford, easing access to neighborhoods, schools and such natural areas as Spy Pond and Great Meadows.
- Londonderry, NH: **Londonderry Rail Trail** – Trail Head at North Elementary School Parking Lot



Londonderry, NH

# Trails + Safety

## Public Safety

- Dedham Greenway would be:
  - Open from Dawn to Dusk
  - Patrolled by Dedham police and self-patrolled by the community using the path
  - Wide enough for emergency vehicles to access at any point
  - Marked with mile markers to allow for more rapid emergency response if needed
  - Well maintained, with vegetation trimmed to allow for adequate sight lines



# Trails + Local Economy

- Enhancement to the community
  - Quality of Life
  - Increase in property values
  - New businesses formed and expansion of existing businesses
- Amenity towards economic development
  - East Dedham Revitalization
  - Arts Overlay District
  - East Dedham Village Charrette



Danvers Rail Trail

# Trails + Local Economy

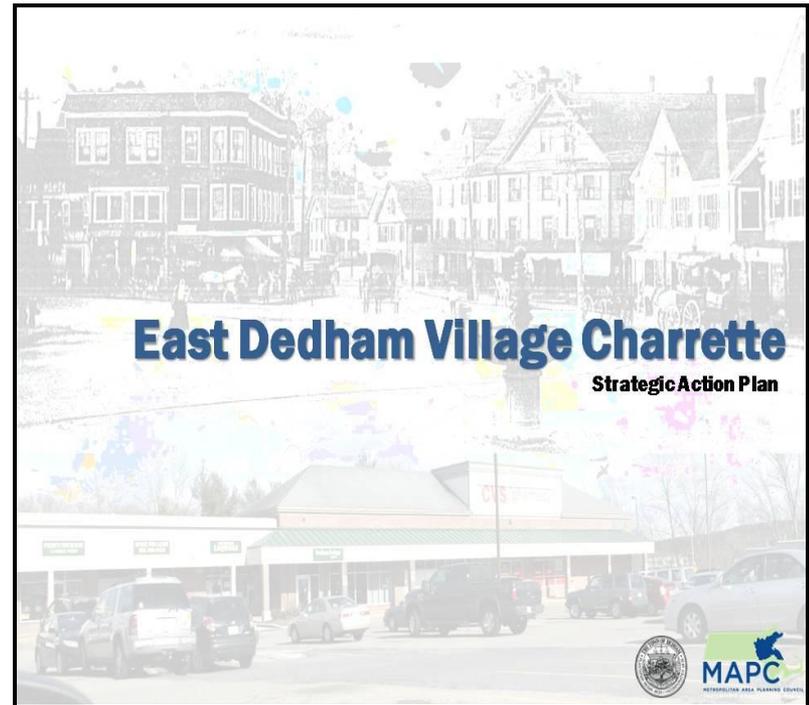
## East Dedham Village Charrette

### Key Recommendations of the Shared Community Vision

Strategy 3.4: Advocate for the complete development of the rail trail as both a recreational amenity for the community, and to better connect East Dedham with Dedham Square and the Readville Commuter Rail station.

#### Actions:

- Work with town committees (Open Space Committee, Sustainability Committee, others) to advocate for the funding to study the project.
- Identify funding sources to build the trail.



# Trails + Public Art

- Public art can help elevate a rail-trail from practical infrastructure to a space cherished by the community.
- Art establishes the trail as a community asset and encourages public engagement and stewardship.
- Art can illustrate both the identity of the trail itself and the identity of the community.
- It can stimulate the mind and the senses, allow for rest or contemplation, or encourage participation.
- Student art, murals, exhibits
- Community art – Mother Brook Arts and Community Center, NewBridge on the Charles, Dedham Artist Guild etc.



Clipper City Rail Trail, Newburyport



Manhan Rail Trail, Easthampton

# Dedham Open Space and Master Plans

## Open Space and Recreation Plan

Section 8: Goals & Objectives;

- R-2 - #9 - Create & expand bike routes, paths and **consider abandoned rail line.**
- GOAL R-2: Provide universal access to recreation properties and recreation programs.
- Objectives: Create and extend pedestrian and bicycle paths and trails.

## Dedham Master Plan, April 2009

- Chapter 1: Master Plan Goals, Open Space & Recreation

Increase opportunities for passive recreation such as walking and biking by developing a system of trails and paths throughout Town



Southwick Rail Trail

# Dedham and Westwood Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan, April 2013

- **Regional Trail and Greenway Recommendations**
  - The Dedham Greenway is a proposed bicycle and pedestrian priority corridor
  - Key gaps in the proposed Greenway include developing the town owned railroad corridor into a rail trail
  - The Greenway would connect with the future Bay Colony Trail in Needham to the west
  - Connect into the developing Neponset River trail system to the east



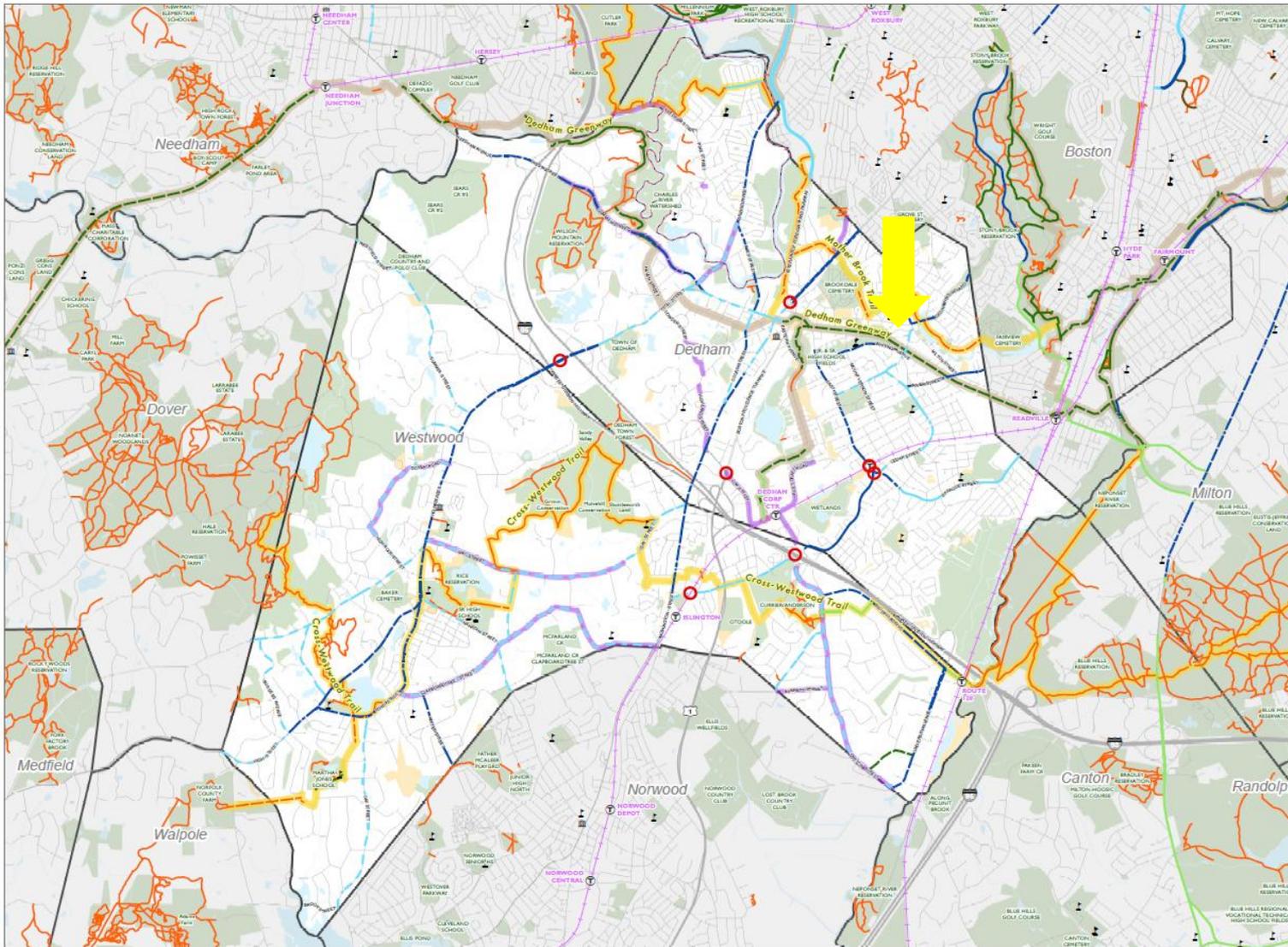
*Consortium for Sustainable Communities*

## Dedham and Westwood Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan

April 2013



# Dedham & Westwood Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan 2014



## Dedham & Westwood Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan 2014

- Proposed Existing
- Shared-use paths**
- Improved path --- ---
  - Unimproved path --- ---
- Bicycle facilities (on-road)**
- Cycle track --- ---
  - Bike lane --- ---
  - Shared lane --- ---
  - On-road route --- ---
- Walking facilities**
- Walking path or trail --- ---
  - Sidewalk priorities --- ---
  - Significant barrier / conflict point ○

### Regional Trails and Greenways

- Regional Greenway (proposed) ---
  - Regional walking trail (proposed) ---
- Town halls ■
  - Schools ■
  - Commuter rail ---
  - Municipal boundary ---
  - Water bodies ---
  - Open space ---
  - Town-owned land ---



Source: MAPC, Town of Dedham, Town of Westwood, MassGIS, MassDOT, OpenStreetMap.

March 2013



# Existing Conditions

- Graffiti under Walnut Street Bridge
- Open path with broken asphalt
- Trash throughout trail – L.L. Bean clean up spring 2014
- Already being used by students and residents year around



# Conclusion

Trails are a vital part of our community; they encourage stewardship of our environment and connect people with the nature and each other

The Dedham Greenway would create a healthier community for people of all ages by providing a continuous 1.5 mile trail for people to run, walk, push a stroller or ride a bike.



Minuteman Bikeway

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