



You are subscribed to the South Coast Rail Project from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

Dear friends of South Coast Rail,

Since the last round of public meetings on South Coast Rail in September 2016, MassDOT and the MBTA have been looking at ways to provide service to the South Coast more quickly and cost effectively. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is committed to moving forward with the SCR project and to doing so in a manner that provides long-awaited commuter rail service for the South Coast region as soon as possible. For this reason, MassDOT is proceeding with permitting and early actions on the Stoughton Electric project already reviewed by the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act office (MEPA) while also proposing to adopt a phased approach that could provide an interim service years before revenue service is possible on the final phase project.

MassDOT filed a Notice of Project Change (NPC) on March 15, 2017 in order to advance the option of an interim service serving both New Bedford and Fall River using the existing Middleborough/Lakeville Commuter Rail Line while at the same time work proceeds to design, permit and fund the Stoughton Electric final phase project (including, particularly, the so-called Southern Triangle).

While the Stoughton Electric Route remains the choice of the federal and state environmental process, a phased implementation will permit the MBTA to serve the region sooner while continuing to work with the agencies and the public to design and build the full service. SCR Phase 1 would provide service from New Bedford, Fall River and Taunton to Boston using the Middleborough Secondary line and the existing Middleborough/Lakeville Commuter Rail line. For Phase 2, MassDOT will continue to advance the full Stoughton Electric (preferred alternative) design, which consists of new track and stations between Canton Center and Cotley Junction.

Phase 1 service would be diesel service to be compatible with the existing line. The ride from New Bedford and Fall River to South Station will be longer compared to Stoughton Electric service. However, MassDOT heard the sentiments expressed in the last round of public meetings – to do something now to provide a transit option to residents of the region, restoring service last provided to the South Coast in 1959.

The NPC is required since the Middleborough Option was not previously evaluated in the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) documents, and MassDOT did not propose a phased approach. The NPC discusses aspects of the project that are likely to require additional analysis in a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR). MassDOT is also working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to define the federal process.

MassDOT will host a public meeting on the NPC during the comment period. More details will be announced in a future email and on the [website](#).

How to Review and Comment on the NPC:

Download the NPC from the [Documents page](#) of the project website. You can also review a copy at many South Coast libraries (please see the [website](#) for a complete list). To request a hard copy of the document, please contact Jean Fox by email (jean.fox@state.ma.us) or phone (857-368-8853).

To comment on the NPC, please send a letter, postcard or email to MEPA by **April 21, 2017**, the last day comments are accepted:

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton, EOEEA
Attn.: MEPA Office (Purvi Patel)
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114
fax: 617-626-1181
email: purvi.patel@state.ma.us
or via hand delivery

MassDOT would like to receive a copy of your letter, which you can email or mail to:

Jean Fox (jean.fox@state.ma.us)
MassDOT
Ten Park Plaza, Room 4150
Boston, MA 02116

Please visit the [South Coast Rail website](#) to learn more. We encourage you to review the NPC and share your ideas with MEPA and MassDOT.

We look forward to continuing this conversation,

Jean Fox, MassDOT Project Manager
Kim Dobosz, MBTA Project Manager