

**REPORT OF THE
MILTON TRAFFIC MITIGATION COMMITTEE**

Submitted to the Milton Select Board and the Milton Traffic Commission

By the Milton Traffic Mitigation Committee:

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A. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Introduction/Charge to the Committee

On August 13, 2018, the Select Board of the Town of Milton voted to establish the Milton Traffic Mitigation Committee (the “Committee”).

The Board’s charge to the Committee is as follows:

“(i) to explore opportunities for lessening, mitigating, and calming the effects of automobile traffic on public ways located within the Town of Milton, including but not limited to the potential for regional approaches, (ii) to report to the Traffic Commission¹ and to the Board of Selectmen on the results of its work at least once each calendar quarter, and (iii) to make recommendations based on the results of such work for the consideration of the Traffic Commission and the Board of Selectmen.”

This Report details the work of the Committee since that time. It is respectfully submitted to the Milton Select Board and to the Milton Traffic Commission along with the thanks of the members of the Committee for the opportunity to serve and to look into this important issue. The Committee also thanks the professionals from the City of Boston, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (“MassDOT”) and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (“MBTA”) for their collective advice and expertise, and, of course, the many citizens of Milton who came to our meetings and took the time to share with the Committee their concerns about safety and mobility in Milton.

2. Makeup of Membership of the Committee

The Committee consists of seven (7) members appointed by the Select Board, as follows:

- (i) one (1) of whom is the Chief of Police or his/her designee;
- (ii) one (1) of whom is the Town Administrator or her/his designee;
- (iii) one (1) of whom is the Chair of the Planning Board or his/her designee;

- (iv) one (1) of whom is the Chair of the Master Plan Implementation Committee or his/her designee;
- (v) one (1) of whom is a member of the Board of Selectmen; and
- (vi) two (2) of whom are residents of the Town of Milton.

3. Members of the Committee

Following its creation by the Select Board, the Committee was established and began meeting on November 29, 2018 with an introductory meeting.

The members of the Committee are as follows:

Jeffrey B. Mullan, Committee Chair

Tracy Dyke-Redmond, Secretary/Clerk

Mark L. Alba, Lt. MPD, Appointee of Chief of Police

Richard S. Burke, member of the Milton Master Plan Implementation Committee

William B. Clark, Jr., Town Planner, Appointee of Milton Planning Board

Michael D. Dennehy, Milton Town Administrator

Michael F. Zullas, Chair of the Select Board

B. WORK PLAN, MEETINGS AND RECORDS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Work Plan

The Committee adopted the Work Plan attached to and made a part of this Report as Exhibit B. Where noted, the Work Plan was revised to accommodate scheduling issues that arose.

The Work Plan involved an initial data collection phase during which the Committee reviewed steps that had been taken to date, the work that was ongoing in this area, and the available data sets. Following that initial phase, the Committee focused on soliciting public input and reaching out to experts in state and municipal agencies who are working on matters that are central to the Committee's mission. Finally, the Committee began a deliberative phase

during which it reviewed the input it had received and formulated the recommendations that are detailed in this Report.

2. Meetings of the Committee

Generally, the Committee conducted its meetings at 7:00 a.m. on Thursday mornings at Milton Town Hall. Deliberations of the Committee were supplemented by citizen information nights and reports to the Select Board. Detailed minutes of the deliberations of the Committee available on the Town of Milton's website. The Committee notes the work of the Committee Treasurer/Clerk, Tracy-Dyke Redmond, who compiled and published all of the minutes.

As required by its charge, the Committee reported to the Select Board on March 27, 2019 and June 26, 2019 and consulted with the Traffic Commission on October 2, 2019. Public hearings, at which the Committee shared the progress of its work and solicited public input, were held on February 28, 2019, June 13, 2018, and September 19, 2019. Presentations delivered at the public hearings are included with this Report as Exhibit C. The Committee offers a special note of thanks to transportation advocate and member of the Town's Bicycle Advisory Committee Lee Toma and to Elaine Cushman Carroll of *The Milton Times*, both of whom attended all or nearly all of the Committee's many meetings. Ms. Carroll has written extensively about traffic in the Town. Mr. Toma also submitted a thoughtful commentary on the issues addressed in this Report that appears as a part of Exhibit D.

3. Use of Town of Milton Website

The Committee took full advantage of the Town of Milton's website while it conducted its work. Data assembled by the Committee is available at:

<https://www.townofmilton.org/committees/traffic-mitigation-committee>. The Committee recommends that this Report be added to the Committee's webpage for use as a resource.

In March, 2019, the Committee arranged for the publication of a Wiki page to solicit citizen input on issues that are central to the Committee's charge. The Wiki was open for receipt of comments from all concerned between March and September of 2019. A presentation on the results of the input received via the Wiki and a summary of the data is included with this Report

as Exhibit D. Due to its volume, the raw data from the Wiki is not included as a part of Exhibit D, but has been placed on the Committee’s webpage referenced above.

While the Committee’s work is complete, several citizens have requested that they be provided with an opportunity to easily make the Town aware of their traffic and safety concerns. As a result, the Committee has recommended and the Town has implemented a feedback function on the Town’s website which is available here:

<https://www.mapsonline.net/miltonma/forms/standalone.html.php?id=126601532>. The Committee expects that this function will be a resource for the Town Administrator, the Traffic Commission, and other Town representatives as they address these issues in the future.

C. EXTERNAL INPUT FROM PROFESSIONAL/GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

During the course of its work, the Committee consulted and received advice from several agencies and individuals involved professionally in the issues related to the Committee’s charge. Initially, Mr. Jeff Maxtutis and Mr. Justin Qurewitz from the transportation engineering firm of BETA Group met with the Committee to review potential traffic modeling and data collection techniques being deployed in Milton and elsewhere. Town Engineer John Thompson met with the Committee early in its deliberations to discuss the work of the Town with respect to traffic. Mr. Seth Asante from the Commonwealth’s Central Transportation Planning Staff (“CTPS”) joined the Committee in January to discuss CTPS’s study of the Route 138 corridor. In March, Boston’s Chief of Streets, Mr. Chris Osgood, joined the Committee to discuss Boston’s efforts with respect to traffic control, road safety and Vision Zero.

Details of the advice each of these professionals offered the Committee are included in the minutes of the Committee’s meetings. The Committee thanks each person who took time to offer advice and to the contributions they have made to the Committee’s work.

D. SUMMARY AND REPORT ON CITIZEN INPUT AND FEEDBACK

As noted above, during the course of its deliberations, the Committee received a significant amount of feedback in the form of e-mail correspondence, input into the Wiki, and testimony and other comments offered at the Committee’s public hearings. Exhibit D contains a

summary of this input, feedback and comments, all of which has been taken into account in the completion of this Report and in the formulation of the Committee’s recommendations.

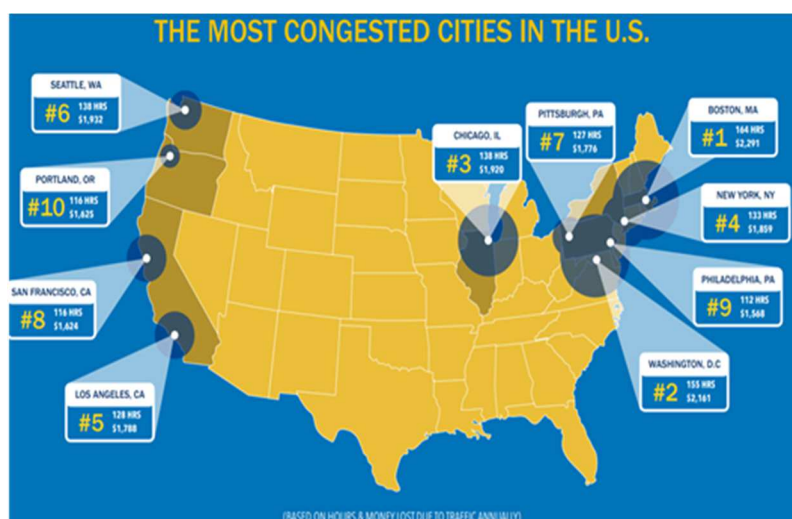
E. OBSERVATIONS AND CAUSATION

1. Overall Observations

a. Traffic conditions.

Traffic and overall congestion in Milton and the overall Boston metropolitan area is bad and is getting worse. That statement comes as no surprise to anyone reading this Report, as it was the reason the Select Board created the Committee in the first place.

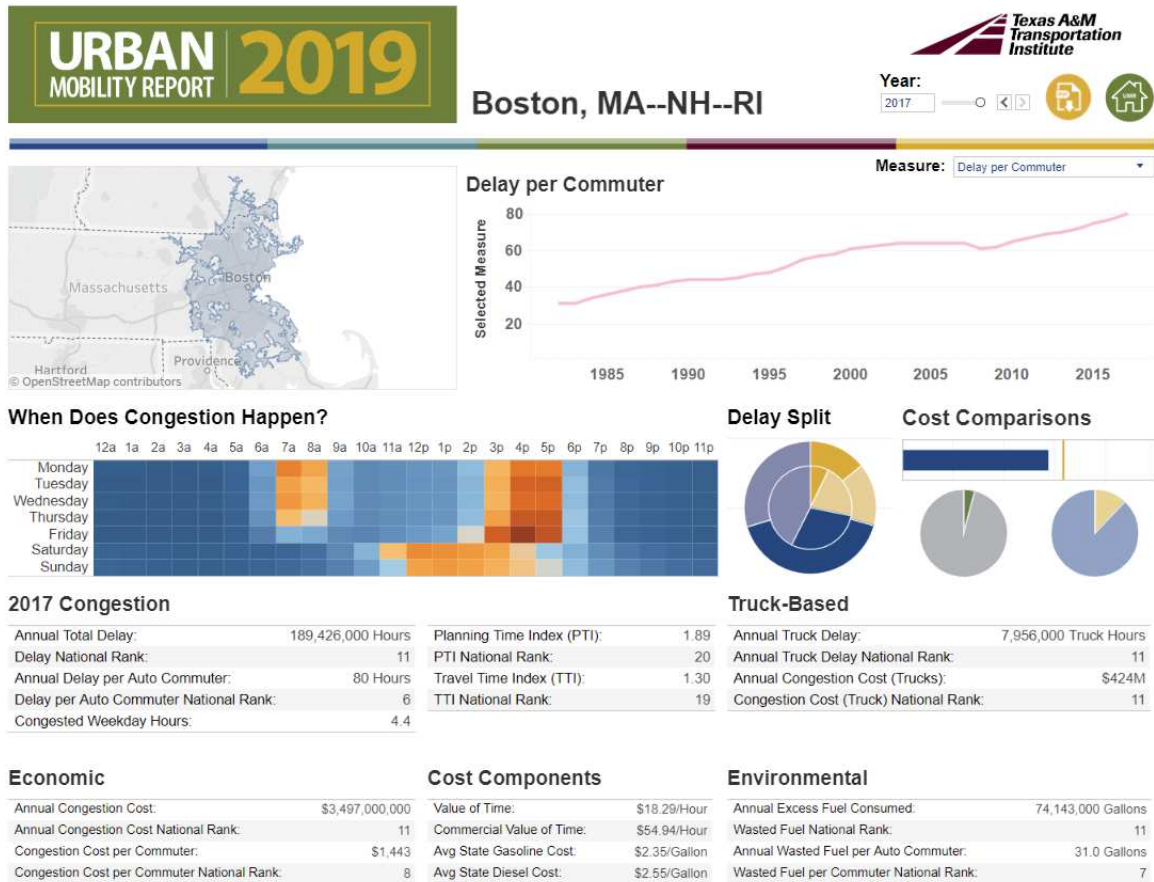
On February 11, 2019, the transportation data and mobility analytics firm INRIX, Inc. released its 2018 Global Traffic Scorecard, which ranked Boston as the most congested city in the United States based on hours lost due to congestion. INRIX estimated that the average Boston driver lost up to \$2,291 per year due to congestion, a statistic that it believes costs the region \$4.1B in productivity each year. The rankings are available here: <http://inrix.com/scorecard/>, and the most congested regions in the United States are illustrated on this graphic:



The much respected Texas A&M Transportation Institute’s (“TTI’s”) 2019 Urban Mobility Report also confirmed increased congestion in the Boston region, going so far as to

subtitle the report “The Story: Traffic is Bad and Getting Worse”

(<https://mobility.tamu.edu/umr/>). Its report noted that the average commuter² in Boston “wasted 80 hours in 2017 sitting in traffic,” and features this information-rich graphic:



TTI has also reported that its “gridlock data extends back to 1982, when Ronald Reagan was in his first term, a postage stamp cost 20 cents, and gas was about \$1.25 a gallon. Since that time, the number of jobs in the nation has grown almost nonstop by just over 50 percent to the current total of 153 million. Furthermore,

- the number of hours per commuter lost to traffic delay has nearly tripled, climbing to 54 hours a year;
- the annual cost of that delay per commuter has nearly doubled, to \$1,010;

- *the nationwide cost of gridlock has grown more than tenfold, to \$166 billion a year; and*
- *the amount of fuel wasted in stalled traffic has more than tripled, to 3.3 billion gallons a year.”³*

Commonwealth Magazine recently reported⁴ that “[A]ccording to US Census data, the average travel time to work for Bostonians was 27.5 minutes in 2007. In 2017, the travel time was up only 2.3 minutes to 29.8 minutes, a gain of 9 percent.” Commonwealth goes on to quote from research completed by New York City transportation consultant Bruce Schaller, who notes that, while drivers are experiencing a lot more congestion, they and many employers are continually adjusting to that congestion to make their commutes somewhat reasonable.

The process starts when people accept a slightly longer commute into the city in exchange for a suburban house and lawn,” Schaller writes. “Jobs soon follow to the suburbs, shortening the commute for many residents. Some people then move out a bit further to take advantage of cheap land prices, and get closer once again to open countryside. As jobs follow again, metro areas expand like a balloon, everyone and everything moving outward from the center but not so far apart from each other. That’s how workers can keep their commutes to a reasonable duration.

There is evidence that dynamic is changing as people and jobs return to cities and new technologies and ways to move around present issues for high traffic regions today that are different from those in the past.

In August, 2019, the MassDOT released a “*Report to the Governor 2019*” entitled “*Congestion in the Commonwealth*” (the “2019 Report”, available here: <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/08/12/MassDOTCongestAug19Acc.pdf>) in which it detailed the extent of congestion in the Commonwealth, made several key findings, suggested the core reasons for congestion, and set forth several next steps. Many of those same strategies have been discussed and considered by the Committee and are noted in this Report.

At the same time congestion is increasing, roads also appear to be getting more dangerous. The New York Times recently reported “[P]edestrian fatalities in the United States have increased 41 percent since 2008; more than 6,000 pedestrians were killed in 2018 alone. More than 4,000 American kids are killed in car crashes every year.⁵”

Of course, Milton residents sense this and see it daily. Indeed, congestion in the Boston metropolitan region and the impact that congestion has on Milton’s streets and Milton residents’ quality of life are the reasons so many are focused on this issue today. For the purpose of framing its work, the Committee has categorized the issues it has considered into three types: (a) Type 1: solutions that require Federal attention and action; (b) Type 2: solutions that require a cooperative and sometimes regional approach with the Commonwealth (DCR, MassDOT MBTA) and other local jurisdictions (Boston, Quincy, Canton); and (c) Type 3: solutions that can be studied and evaluated, with further action addressed by the Town exclusively. Even though the Town of Milton may not be able to address the causes of all of the factors leading to congestion within the Town, to fully address the issues the Committee has been charged to examine, each type of solution should be examined and evaluated.

One way to think about what we are experiencing is to picture a glass that is nearly full. At times during the day, the introduction of even small amounts of fluid causes the glass to overflow. We acknowledge that some of the core issues driving congestion are beyond the Town’s, and this Committee’s, ability to effectively address alone. However, the metaphor illustrates that even small increases in traffic can have significant consequences - that every trip counts and that taking steps to make our roads safer and to shift demand even slightly, particularly when other communities and stakeholders are focused on these same objectives, can make a difference. And, because every trip does indeed count, Milton residents, although many do not think of it this way, are part of the problem we all face. So too must they be a part of the solution.

This Report focuses on the steps we, as residents of Milton, working together, can take as we begin to make a difference.

b Traffic in Context.

What people are experiencing is more than just the same old “traffic is bad” complaints. We all know that people complain about traffic, have always complained (and probably will always complain) about traffic - just like we probably will always complain about the weather or the Red Sox.

And while traffic complaints in metropolitan regions like the one Milton is a part of are common and long held, traffic is different today, as is the transportation business. Today, “Transportation Network Companies” (“TNCs”) such as Uber and Lyft, offer us more choices than ever before, sometimes replacing a short car ride with what we might have completed by a bus ride or a walk or perhaps not a trip at all in the past. More importantly, TNCs have added many, many more vehicles to our roadways at peak travel times, precisely the same time our roadways are at or near capacity – and they continue to expand.

According to a 2018 study on the topic, TNCs added 5.7 billion miles of driving in the nation’s nine largest metro areas.⁶ The study noted that policymakers need to increasingly focus on trip fees, congestion pricing, bus lanes and traffic signal timing, which can help cities manage current congestion generated by increasing TNC trip volumes while pursuing the ultimate goal: less traffic. Key steps involve limiting low-occupancy vehicles, increasing passenger occupancy of TNCs and taxis, changing commercial vehicle operations, and ensuring frequent and reliable bus and rail service. Predictable steps, perhaps, but worth noting, particularly for a better understanding how everyone can assist in achieving these outcomes.

As was recently noted in a terrific article on the relationship between traffic and inequality featured in *the Atlantic*⁷:

*What seems most convenient for the individual in the moment—whether it’s driving alone, hopping in an Uber or a Lyft, or soaring over a gridlocked highway in a helicopter—is often the worst for everyone in the aggregate. Ultimately, the kind of freedom of movement that a service ...promises can really only be offered at large scale by collective planning and government action.**

Transportation and traffic have also been dramatically impacted by cellphones, which provide all of us with maps in our pocket and distractions that all too often lower our overall awareness. Distracted driving has become a major safety concern – leading to the Commonwealth’s recent outright ban on handheld cell phone use while driving. Perhaps most significantly, mapping technology apps such as Waze provide motorists with instant advice on how to avoid our increasingly congested regional highway system - the system specifically designed to accommodate commuter traffic - in favor of local roads never designed to accommodate the volume or speed of commuter traffic. The results are of major consequence, with local roads once little known now becoming cut-through routes for large volumes of traffic in Milton (and elsewhere). Indeed, the data and anecdotal evidence suggest that this technology is the cause of many of the concerns of Milton residents, as once quiet streets become heavily trafficked motorways and others bear traffic at high and unsafe speeds rarely seen in the past.

Waze has become a national lightning rod, promoting what some call a “War on Waze” that involves large (New York City, Los Angeles) and small (Takoma Park, MD, which organized a data misinformation campaign designed to route traffic away from the community) communities. Fremont, California delayed traffic signals and restricted rush-hour turns; Brookhaven, Georgia, partially closed roads; and Leonia, New Jersey closed 60 streets during rush hour, all in an effort to combat the effects of Waze. Litigation has been threatened in places such as Los Angeles, but at least to date, has not been initiated. Defenders of Waze point out that the application provides a valuable service that is helping cities and states deal with an increasing congestion problem caused by simple economics – too many people seeking limited space on the road at the same time. Waze, they claim, increases the supply of roads available to motorists, thereby, at least in theory, lessening the congestion. That may be true, but it comes at a cost.

Online shopping is also contributing to increased local traffic, as one trip to shop has become several deliveries from online retailers for many of us. According to research compiled by Professor José Holguín-Veras at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, between 1963 to 2009, the U.S. per capita rate of deliveries of all kinds of freight (commercial and residential) remained remarkably stable, declining a small fraction over those five decades to 0.12 daily deliveries per American, or slightly over one freight trip a day for every ten people in the country. Between

2009 and 2017, that figure increased to an average of 2.5 freight trips for every ten Americans. At current growth rates, that number will double again by 2023⁸.

Each of these external factors, taken alone, may not be forcing Milton's traffic to its tipping point. But, together, they add up. And, as we have seen, every trip counts. For better or worse, the reality of increasingly distracted driving, efficient roadway traffic technology, companies (TNCs) specifically created to create more traffic volume, and modified consumer behavior, are with us for the foreseeable future. Combined, they create a very different traffic situation that many are used to, and require increasingly sophisticated and coordinated tactics to address. Of course, the best solution to the elimination of cut-through traffic is to make our regional roadway system function more efficiently. That effort, which includes improvements to our mass transportation network, is ongoing, and will take time. It is most certainly a goal that Milton should embrace at the top of its transportation agenda.

Locally, any effort to truly address cut-through traffic will require collection and analysis of origin and destination traffic data, consideration of tactics to address the consequences of the cut-through traffic, and communication with those most affected to test the success of those tactics. More comprehensively, to make real improvements in these areas we need to work with our transportation system as a whole (roads, trains, subways, buses, bikes, pedestrians) rather than as a series of independent modes. Indeed, Milton is fortunate to offer its citizens transportation choice. Much of the Commonwealth has little choice – leaving people with only the option to drive. Certainly, Milton must push to make the regional highway system more efficient. Ultimately however, our success in relieving the Town of its congestion will depend on making alternatives to driving more acceptable and workable for people. In the meantime, Milton can and should undertake several steps to help the situation.

c Local Causation Factors.

The national issues we have described are certainly impacting local traffic as well. Big picture, traffic is a supply and a demand issue – we have limited supply (roads, trains, bus routes) coupled with increased demand (particularly into Boston)⁹. It is unreasonable to expect the current regional highway network to grow appreciably. Our most effective strategies therefore

will increase supply to move the most people most efficiently (increase rail service, improve and increase bus connections), while also making these mass transportation modes more attractive.

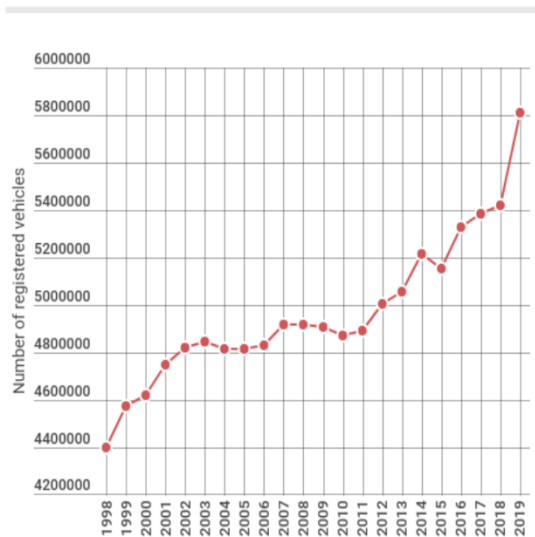
The trend toward rideshare is part of the issue and is driving, to some extent, additional traffic.

*“In 2018, rideshare companies, also called transportation network companies (TNCs), provided **81.3 million** rides in Massachusetts, approximately 25% more than in 2017. This increase happened across the state, in towns and cities of all sizes and types. Massachusetts law requires rideshare companies to share data with the Commonwealth. The companies also pay an assessment, 20 cents per ride, that is distributed among cities and towns, Massachusetts’s general transportation fund, and the taxi and livery industry. In 2017, these fees amounted to more than \$12 million, and in 2018, more than \$16 million.”*

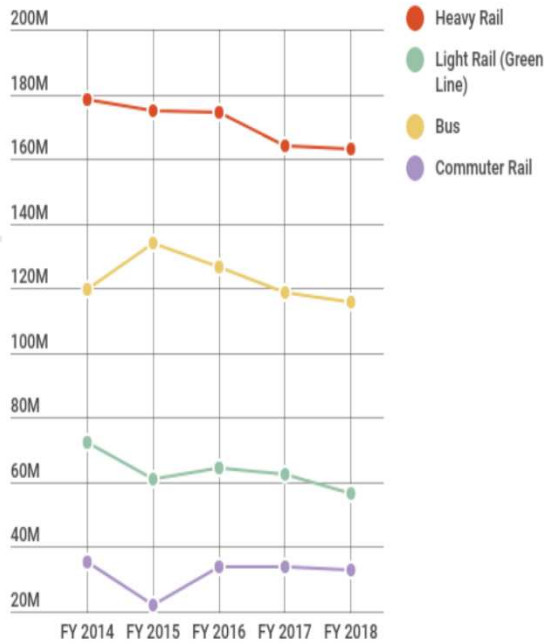
While TNCs rideshare companies pay a \$0.20 fee to the Commonwealth for each trip, most experts believe that the total fees paid for a TNC ride are too low. TNC fees are distributed to cities and towns based on where the trip originates. In 2018, 173,227 TNC trips originated in Milton, resulting in a payment to the Town of \$17,059.20. Milton increased 26% (from 137,861 originating rides in 2017 to 173,227 originating rides in 2018). Now at 80,000,000, Governor Baker has predicted that total TNC trips in Massachusetts will soon top 100,000,000 annually¹⁰. And that doesn’t count the miles travelled when these TNCs are awaiting a customer or are otherwise in transit.

This is also happening against the backdrop of increased vehicle registrations in Massachusetts. In an October, 2019 report, WCVB reported that ridership on the MBTA has declined over the past several years while the number of registered vehicles in Massachusetts has expanded dramatically, and offered us these graphics:

Vehicle Registrations in Massachusetts



MBTA Ridership



These same trends are seen here in Milton. Consider that by all accounts traffic and congestion overall is at an all-time high in Milton – at least anecdotally. However, the Town has not grown appreciably in 60 years. In 1960, Milton’s population was 26,482, had 6,628 households, and issued 11,579 auto excise bills.¹¹ In 2018, it had 27,031 residents, 9,274 households and issued 21,601 auto excise bills. This suggests that, while the Town’s population hasn’t grown appreciably during this time, individual households have grown by thirty percent and the number of automobiles Milton hosts has increased by a factor of nearly one hundred percent.

Milton is not alone. As just one example, according to this report:

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article220932410.html> (retrieved on July 1, 2019), Coral Gables, Florida is dealing with many of the same issues that Milton faces, with the results being similar recommendations:

Among the options city planners and engineers can select: Speed bumps, speed tables, speed cushions (aka “sleeping policemen”), roundabouts (traffic circles), realigned intersections, raised intersections, raised medians, chicanes (curved travel paths), pedestrian crossings, and trees and vegetation planted in close proximity to roadways.

“The goal is enhanced neighborhood livability,” said Mark R. Brown, who is overseeing Coral Gables’ traffic calming project that has focused on some 165 locations.

After three years of discussions and data collection, Coral Gables reached an agreement with Miami-Dade County that allows the city to tailor its traffic calming criteria to its needs. Trouble spots are evaluated with a scoring system that measures traffic volume and speed, pedestrian numbers from schools, parks and transit lines, driveway density and the number of preventable crashes.

Finally, Waze and similar apps have exacerbated traffic concerns in Milton. Consider two examples - on Governor’s Road and in the Blue Hills. At a public meeting held in Milton in the Fall of 2019, Town Administrator Dennehy explained that the Town has also gathered helpful data from radar speed monitors. For example, a total of 13,704 cars traveled northbound and passed the traffic radar on Governor’s Road in one week of June of 2018 (during the work week, but not when school was in session). A similar volume of traffic was recorded a year later. There are statistically significant drop-offs in traffic during the weekend. This suggests that most of the traffic on Governor’s Road is cut-through traffic – intuitively correct to those familiar with the situation, but also supported by actual data.

In the case of the Blue Hills roadways, while we don’t have good data to support the theory, we do know that those roads are not obvious parts of the regional roadway network, are not signed as such, and, while they are well known locally, are not obvious routes for someone travelling from, say, Quincy to Stoughton. Nevertheless, they are popular routes for that journey during peak traffic hours today. Regardless, no one would deny that those roads feature massive congestion during commuting hours, congestion that was not common just a few years ago.

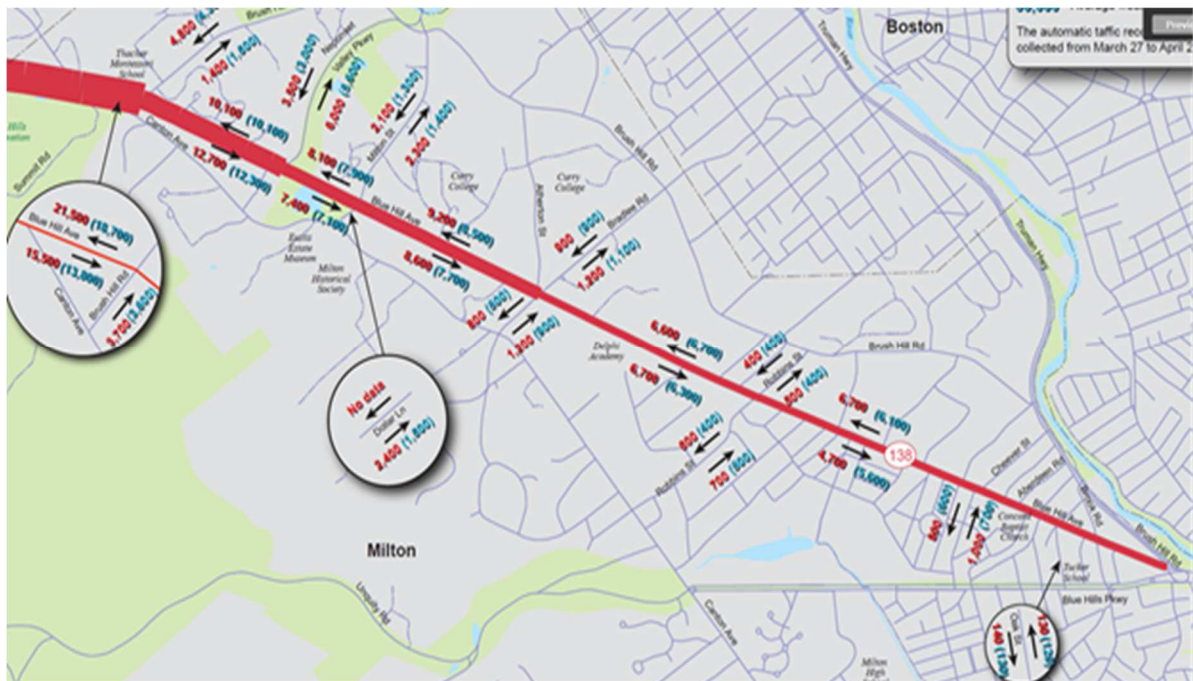
F. MILTON TROUBLE SPOTS

Milton has acute congestion at key locations at specific times of day. As summarized in Exhibit D, citizens who interacted with the Committee indicated that they are primarily concerned with safety in the Town in general and in the following locations more specifically. There are also concerns about congestion, and the Committee recognizes that congestion can lead to safety concerns as frustrated drivers seek shortcuts and speed through neighborhood roads trying to avoid congested main streets. Nevertheless, while congestion is real, the majority of citizen comments have been focused on safety concerns.

The Town’s most significant traffic trouble spots, along with a summary of the public input the Committee has received, and a recommendation on each, follows.

1. Route 138 Corridor/Blue Hill Avenue

a Description of Issue. Route 138 is a state highway that runs through the entire Town of Milton, from the Boston line (at Mattapan Square) to the Canton line (near the Blue Hills Ski Area). It is named Blue Hill Avenue and is designed to serve regional and local traffic. Average daily traffic on this corridor (two way) is shown in this figure, which shows little difference between weekend and weekday volumes:



According to MassDOT, peak traffic is experienced northbound between 7:30 AM and 8:30 AM and southbound between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM. The corridor has been the subject of extensive study, including a 2001 study of the road from Stoughton to Boston, and 2018 studies of the road in Canton and in Milton¹², all by CTPS. CTPS's report concludes¹³:

Our analysis rates the corridor as poor based on the quality of vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle travel it provides. Many locations in the study area experienced a greater-than-expected number of crashes; and two intersections are on the list of Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) crash clusters. The roadway is considered unfriendly for pedestrians and bicyclists because of:

- A lack of connected and continuous bicycle lanes*
- Gaps in the sidewalk network*
- Narrow and substandard sidewalks*
- A lack of crosswalks at midblock locations*
- Obstructions in sidewalks*
- Poor street lighting*
- High vehicle speeds*
- Roadway configurations that create inequity by placing too much emphasis on vehicular use*

The traffic safety and operational problems facing roadway users include, but are not limited to:

- High vehicular speeds*
- High-crash locations*
- High volumes of traffic*
- Inadequate capacity at some of the signalized intersections*
- A lack of left-turn lanes*
- Outdated signal-timing plans*
- Outdated signal equipment*
- Drainage problems and pavement conditions*

- *Motorists' difficulty in turning left or pulling out of side streets and business driveways.*

A representative from CTPS presented its work to the Committee in 2019. The study makes several recommendations aimed at addressing CTPS's findings in a project being advanced by MassDOT (Project 608484), which highlight a complete streets approach for the corridor. Improvements have been programmed in the 2020 Transportation Improvement Program, and public input and planning is being pursued now.

b Citizen input to the Committee. Several people have raised issues with the corridor to the Committee. Notably, many comments align with the CTPS study, particularly in taking steps to improve the pedestrian environment of the roadway. Signage issues have also been raised, particularly with respect to truck traffic exiting to Neponset Valley Parkway. Citizens have also raised concerns about the lack of a pedestrian environment on the road, as well as the need for additional awareness messages along Route 138 and its side streets connecting to Brush Hill Road.

Wiki data indicates that residents are concerned about safety around the Tucker School drop off area and cars backing up onto Blue Hill Avenue, the pedestrian crossing at Oak Street, and school zone signage around the Tucker School. Residents also expressed concern about accidents at Churchill and Tucker Streets and suggested that both streets should be one-way. Residents noted the difficulty for cars exiting the Thatcher Montessori school and trying to turn from Blue Hill Ave. southbound to Canton Ave. Residents suggested there should be no parking near busy intersections because it is difficult to see around cars that are parked on Blue Hill Ave., for example cars trying to pull out of Churchill St. Residents also expressed concern about truckers using engine braking in the vicinity of 680 Blue Hill Ave. (between Atherton Street and Barbara Lane), and the associated noise pollution.

c Committee Recommendation. The Committee recommends that the Town become directly involved in the planning and advocacy of improvements to the corridor, with particular emphasis on pedestrian improvements, bicycle accommodation, pedestrian safety in the Blue Hills Ski Area section, and traffic calming. The Town should consider forming a group of interested citizens to drive better outcomes. The Committee further recommends that the

design of the corridor improvements being led by MassDOT continue, and that the Town work to improve the pedestrian environment on the road in the short and long term.

The Committee notes that the Town has worked with DCR on signage in this area and that DCR has added a sign closer to the Boston (Hyde Park) line that should help with lessening truck traffic entering Milton Street. Given the volumes of traffic in this area and the importance of the route, this situation will likely need to be regularly monitored. The Committee thanks the Town and DCR for their collective efforts in taking these corrective steps.

2. Blue Hills Reservation pedestrian, traffic and parking issues

a Description of Issue. The Committee has observed a noticeable increase in pedestrian and vehicular activity in the Blue Hills Reservation. Owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and managed by its Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Blue Hills is a 6,000 acre plus state park that comprises one of the largest parcels of open space in the Greater Boston Area. Roads within the Blue Hills, including Unquity Road, Chickatawbut Road, portions of Hillside Street, and Blue Hill River Road, are under DCR's control and are patrolled by the Massachusetts State Police from the Hillside Street barracks.

Traffic on these roads experience significant congestion many hours of the day, particularly in the afternoon commute. This congestion is no doubt exacerbated by Waze, Google maps and other on-line traffic monitoring tools. The additional pedestrian traffic that has come with the increasing popularity of the Reservation adds safety concerns to these congestion issues, a situation that is particularly noticeable by the large increase in roadside parking at the Reservation, particularly near Houghton's Pond.

b Citizen input to the Committee. Little public comment was made about Blue Hills traffic during the Committee's public sessions. In the Wiki, some residents did raise concern about congestion in the Blue Hills Reservation, particularly at the intersection of Hillside Street and Blue Hill River Road. One resident suggested that DCR consider making this intersection a roundabout to better accommodate large volumes of traffic that primarily travel in a singular direction based on the time of day. Other residents suggested adding bike racks at the Houghton's Pond parking lot to encourage bikers and less car traffic. One resident also noted

that turning onto Harland Street from Unquity Road is confusing, with drivers turning into two adjacent entrances onto Harland, especially when driving south on Unquity.

Committee Recommendation. The Committee recommends that the Town urge DCR to develop a pedestrian and vehicular master plan for the Blue Hills aimed at addressing pedestrian safety around the Reservation’s most popular locations, additional ways to access the Reservation, and congestion mitigation strategies. Given the multi-faceted nature of this issue and the high volume of interest, this issue would benefit from the creation of a citizen group, perhaps in cooperation with other organizations interested in improvements to the Reservation.

3. Route 28 corridor (Randolph Avenue, Route 28)

a Description of Issue. The Route 28 corridor is home to Milton’s most severe traffic concerns. Like Blue Hill Avenue, it is a state highway under MassDOT’s control, extending from the intersection of Randolph Avenue and Reedsdale Road (at St. Elizabeth’s Church) south to the Milton/Quincy Line just south of Chickatawbut Road¹⁴. MassDOT is currently planning a major intersection improvement¹⁵ at Chickatawbut Road, which it has represented to “*rank[s] second in the state’s top 200 list given the severity of accidents that occur at this location.*”¹⁶ The project would introduce a roundabout at this location. According to reports, MassDOT is also planning a mill and overlay (repaving) project for this stretch of road in the near future.

Congestion on Randolph Avenue also causes traffic issues elsewhere, as, for example, Pleasant Street has become a major cut-through. It also appears that traffic originating at Randolph and Pleasant is effecting pedestrian and bike accessibility as cars are now opting not to stay on Edgehill Road past the Collicot/Cunningham schools due to congestion but continuing on Pleasant to Brook Road as a commuting option. This issue is exacerbated by the fact that this stretch of Pleasant Street is narrow and winding, with curbs that make the street one lane in many instances due to parking. These high volumes of traffic discourage walking or biking, adding still more trips near the schools. Enforcement of stop signs and traffic signals in this stretch of road, particularly during commuter hours, is also an issue.

b. Citizen input to the Committee. Randolph Avenue is the source of many concerns of Town residents. It has been a frequent subject of the Traffic Commission, and concerns about high speed on the road have been expressed for many years. It is the sight of frequent crashes, including high-speed crashes that have resulted in fatalities. It features bumper to bumper traffic in the commuting hours, broken only by delays due to signals. At all other times, it is a virtual raceway. It lacks a safe pedestrian environment. Nearby residents are consistently concerned about speed, traffic volumes, and their own inability to access the road due to both issues. The situation demands significant attention.

In the Wiki, many residents expressed concern about safety on Randolph Ave., with the majority of comments focused on excessive speeds and the difficulty of turning onto Randolph Ave. from side streets. Some residents expressed concern that if a roundabout is installed at the Chickatawbut/Randolph intersection, it will make it harder for residents to exit their neighborhoods because there won't be a break in the traffic from traffic lights. Residents also requested traffic lights at the Wollaston Golf Course entrance and Hallen Ave., improvements that may not be possible due to MassDOT's minimum traffic requirements and the location of other lights on the road. In addition, residents pointed out dangerous driver behavior (e.g., running red lights and making U-turns in the middle of Randolph Ave) and cut-through traffic resulting from cars trying to avoid congestion. Residents offered specific suggestions for adjusting traffic lights (e.g., by adding a left turn only arrow to the light cycle at all times for turning left from Randolph Ave. onto Chickatawbut) and adjusting lanes. Finally, residents suggested making Randolph Avenue safer for other modes of travel through the introduction of a multi-use path.

c. Committee Recommendation. The Committee recommends that the Town continue to work with MassDOT on the intersection improvements. While the improvements represent progress aimed at improving safety, they do not go far enough in addressing the multiple issues on this stretch of roadway. Plans for the intersection need to address neighborhood concerns about access to the road, additional speed control and pedestrian safety measures must be addressed, and a corridor study similar to the one completed for Route 138 should be completed. Sections of the road may be particularly well suited for the creation a Safety Speed Zone in cooperation with MassDOT (see additional discussion on Safety Speed

Zones later in this Report). CTPS has recently indicated that the Route 28 corridor ranks high on its list of priorities. The corridor has been identified in the needs assessment featured in the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Long Range Transportation Plan. The Town supports the selection of the corridor for study in the 2019 Federal fiscal year, a position that the Committee supports and recommends as a high priority and much needed step to identify measures to be taken to address these several concerns.

4. Blue Hills Parkway

a Description of Issue. Blue Hills Parkway is an historic parkway under DCR control that runs from the Boston line at Mattapan Square south to Canton Avenue and the entrance to the Blue Hills Reservation at Unquity Road (originally a traffic circle, now a modern, signalized four-way intersection). It was designed by Charles Eliot and dates from 1893.¹⁷ It now features a beautiful landscaped strip as its median, is tree-lined and is home to many handsome, well-cared for homes as well as Tucker Elementary School and an entrance to Milton High School. It is on the National Register of Historic Places. Recently, pedestrian improvements have been made at its northern terminus to assist with bicycle and pedestrian connections to Mattapan Station and the Neponset River Trail. While it is a relatively low volume road, high rates of speed are experienced on the Parkway throughout the day.

b Citizen input to the Committee. The Committee received a letter about the Parkway expressing several concerns about the loss of several historic features notable to the Parkway, the volume of truck traffic, and high rates of speed (see Exhibit D). In the Wiki, many residents expressed concern about Blue Hills Parkway, particularly about the need to improve pedestrian crossings and make the bike lane safer (e.g., grade separated) because cars drive in the bike lane. In addition, residents noted that it is difficult for drivers turning onto Blue Hills Parkway or attempting to cross the road to see oncoming traffic due to parked cars. Residents also expressed concern about the high rate of speed on the Parkway.

c Committee Recommendation. The Committee recommends additional traffic enforcement on the Parkway in consultation with DCR and the State Police. The Committee also recommends a meeting with DCR concerning additional safety improvements and concerns

about the loss of historical attributes on the Parkway, and that the Town request that DCR conduct a comprehensive review of all pedestrian crosswalks and the bike lanes on the Parkway.

5. The Areas Around All of Milton’s Schools

a Description of Issue: The Town has taken several steps to improve motorist and pedestrian safety at all Milton Schools over the past several years. While the Committee will not catalogue those improvements, it does acknowledge that they have universally helped address issues that are central to this Report – primarily pedestrian safety. Data observed by the Committee shows measurable vehicular congestion in the areas of Milton’s schools in the mid-afternoon hours.

The Committee also acknowledges the work of the Milton Schools Traffic and Transportation Sub-Committee, which was created to serve a forum to discuss safety and transportation issues central to the schools, including transportation fees. Further, the Committee notes that the Town has a “School Traffic Control Unit” within the Milton Police Department that is focused on road crossing safety.¹⁸

b Citizen input to the Committee. Some residents noted student safety in their discussions with the Committee. In the Wiki many residents expressed concern about pedestrian safety and excessive speeds near schools. For example, residents expressed concern about the need for a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Central Ave. and Fairbanks Road near the Pierce Middle School. Residents requested improved pedestrian crosswalks, improved signage, reduced speed limits, and police details to cut down on speeding. Residents also requested additional bike racks at the middle and high schools.

c Committee Recommendation. The Committee recommends:

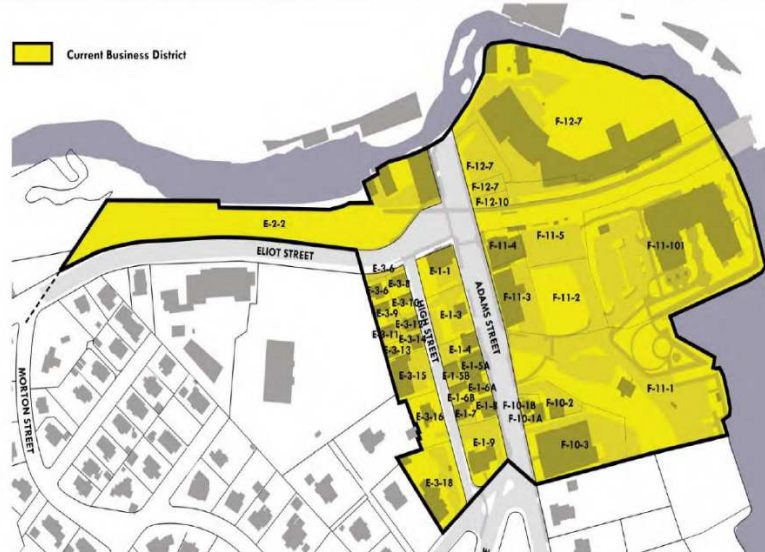
(i) that concerted efforts be made to encourage less vehicle trips to the school through, among other things, a continued focus on the Safe Routes to School Program, which “*works to increase safe biking and walking among elementary and middle school students by using a collaborative, community-focused approach that bridges the gap between health and transportation.*”¹⁹ All Milton schools are partners with the Commonwealth in this effort;

- (ii) that the Town make a concerted effort to increase traffic enforcement near all schools, specifically targeting speed violations at pick-up and drop-off times;
- (iii) that the Town conduct a review of where children cross the street in large numbers near schools, with the objective of making certain that there are sufficient pedestrian crossings and appropriate signage in these key locations;
- (iv) that the Town install additional bike racks at the Pierce Middle School and Milton High School;
- (v) that the Town work with private schools in the area to identify consolidated, central pickup locations for their students, a planning effort that is aimed at reducing trips and assisting with congestion during the school commuting hours; and
- (vi) that traffic through the parking lot at Kelly Field (near the Pierce Middle School) be revised to flow one way so that cars don't enter the lot from both sides as they turn around to drop off students at Pierce.

6. Milton Village/Central Avenue

a Description of Issue: The Milton Village Business District has been an area of focus for with the work of the Town's Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC).²⁰ Since traffic issues at Central Avenue, near the Central Avenue trolley stop and in and around the Central Avenue business area, share some traffic characteristics with Milton Village, this Committee has addressed them together. Already an area with high congestion during the commuting hours, implementation of the Master Plan would result in zoning changes that would increase density, encourage higher land uses, and potentially lead to more congestion in the districts.²¹

Milton Village Mixed-use
Zoning District Boundary and Parcels:



Among other things, the MPIC has recommended that a traffic signal be installed at the intersection of Adams Street and Randolph and Canton Avenues, and that signalized improvements be made to assist with queuing of traffic between Boston (Dorchester) and Milton. The MPIC has also recommended improvements to the pedestrian signals at the Adams and Eliot Streets intersection, and the addition of a southbound right right-turn lane at the Adams Street and Randolph Avenue intersection.

b Citizen input to the Committee. At the Committee’s first public meeting, one citizen spoke to the issue of traffic in Milton Village. She also requested that the Committee advocate for a “Block the Box” treatment on Adams Street at the entrance to the Milton Landing area. This same person noted that it is very hard to see around the parking spots on Adams Street adjacent to Wharf Street; these have since been removed in response to citizen concerns.

In the Wiki several residents suggested that there should be a traffic light at the intersection of Adams Street, Randolph Ave. and Canton Ave. Others noted high rates of speed and accidents in the area and suggested posting speed limits on Adams Street. Another questioned why there was designated street parking in the area, given the congestion on the roads during peak hours, and suggested that additional lanes of traffic be allowed. Another echoed the comments in the public meeting about the difficulty of exiting Wharf Street. A bit further out on

Canton Ave, two residents suggested 4-way stop signs at the intersection of Canton Ave. and School Street.

Several residents noted concerns about traffic speed on Eliot Street, suggesting the speed limit should be reduced to 25 MPH. Several residents also expressed concern about drivers ignoring stop signs and red lights and suggested greater enforcement. Another resident noted that sight lines for drivers coming from Valley Road onto Eliot Street are impaired by hedges on the right.

At Central Avenue near the trolley and bike path crossing, residents requested installation of a four-way stop sign. Many residents also expressed concern about the number of cars rolling through the stop signs at the intersection of Central Ave. and Eliot Street, and suggested the need for greater enforcement. In addition, residents suggested transit signal prioritization and addition of parking along Central Ave. for commuters to encourage residents to take transit rather than driving. One resident also suggested reconfiguring the intersection of School Street and Canton Ave. to improve sightlines and prevent parking too close to the intersection.

c Committee Recommendation. The Committee recommends that the traffic signals at Randolph/Adams/Canton be installed, in the configuration as recommended by the MPIC. The Committee also recommends that the Commission review the several other improvements summarized above, and that the stop signs at the Central Avenue trolley stop, which were removed because they had been installed in violation of requirements, be re-installed to improve the dangerous situation created by road traffic, high pedestrian volumes, and trolleys crossing all at the same time (stop signs for the trolleys have returned, but a four-way stop is warranted). Finally, the Committee recommends that traffic in the area be monitored closely as the recommended changes in zoning are aimed to increase density in the district, a goal that will likely lead to increased traffic.

7. East Milton Square/Wood Street Extension

a Description of Issue: Milton Square traffic is second only to Randolph Avenue in traffic-related discussions amongst Milton residents. It is not a new issue, with traffic issues being a part of Milton Square matters since before the Southeast Expressway was constructed

more than sixty years ago. From 1995-1997, MassDOT constructed a deck over a section of open highway, capping a portion of the expressway on which the Town now maintains M. Joseph Manning Park. In creating this park, the Town initiated a diversion of Adams Street so that it no longer passed straight through the Square, but rather followed a circuitous route as traffic moved north to south. Like other business districts in small towns, the square suffers from a lack of parking and from intense congestion during commuter hours. As traffic entering the Square from Quincy has grown and traffic on the regional highway system (I-93) increasingly becomes congested (or fails²²), the traffic situation is exacerbated. While the MBTA is served in this area by bus, the congestion impacts trip times (so-called headways²³) as they make the trip to either Ashmont or Wollaston Stations on the Red Line. In addition, heavy volume on Wood Street Extension, particularly during commuter hours, results in motorists increasingly seeking to avoid traffic on Interstate 93 – using Hollis Street to access Edge Hill Road to Randolph Avenue in an attempt to keep moving rather than use the expressway. This, of course, drive more volume to Randolph Avenue.

The Town is advocating for the completion of an improvement plan that would relocate and improve traffic signals, install bike lanes and safety islands, make other pedestrian improvements, and add parking along Bryant Avenue and Edge Hill Road. Design plans are nearly complete, with construction planned through 2022. The Committee supports these efforts.

b Citizen input to the Committee. Included with the Citizen feedback exhibit to this Report are comments received from the Committee with respect to traffic concerns in the East Milton Square area, consistent with the preceding section. Further east of the Square, between the Square and the City of Quincy line, residents on Brackett, Washington, Eaton, Rockwell, Eaton and other streets have expressed concern about the safety of young children, noting that the number of near misses is growing and that speeding is a serious problem. Residents note that there is a school bus stop at the corner of Washington and Bunton, which lacks a stop sign and that the area is a well-known cut-through from Beale Street in Quincy and Adams Street in Milton that often features cars travelling in excess of 40 MPH. Citizens have requested that the Town install stop signs in both directions on Washington Street to slow traffic. An additional issue of importance in the Square is effective use of the curb, which is an increasingly important area of focus in similar areas.²⁴

c Committee Recommendation. The Committee supports all efforts to make East Milton Square more pedestrian friendly and walkable. It supports the Town’s current plans, but believes that additional improvements in the Square are necessary to truly improve the Square consistent with the Committee’s overall goals of improving safety and relieving congestion in the Town. The Committee is aware that traffic is a significant issue for residents in the area and that much effort and discussion has gone into the issue over many years. Specific steps to be taken require more study than is permitted by this Report. A working group of Town officials, residents, and members of the business community should be formed to evaluate specific strategies for next steps in the Square. Traffic on Wood Street Extension is a major issue, as is pedestrian safety, particularly with respect to routes to and from the Square, and parking continue to be major issues.

Simply put, residents must be able to feel safe in walking to the Square, particularly from the west. Unfortunately, this is not true today. In addition, cut-through traffic that spills from the main streets of East Milton Square (e.g., Granite Ave. and Adams Street) into surrounding neighborhoods should be addressed. Traffic calming measures such as tree planting, lane narrowing, minimizing radii at intersections, special treatments at “gateway” intersections, highlighting of pedestrian crossings, speed tables, and improvements to signals (collectively, “Traffic Calming Measures”) should all be considered. The Committee notes that, while turn restrictions have been implemented elsewhere in Milton in an effort, sometimes successfully, to limit cut-through traffic, these steps can also have the effect of simply putting regional traffic on other local streets and must be carefully considered. Overall, while some treatments may not be appropriate for the Square, the working group should consider those that are appropriate in its efforts to make the Square and approaches to the Square safer. Attention is also needed to address the Wood Street Extension traffic and its diversion into residential neighborhoods.

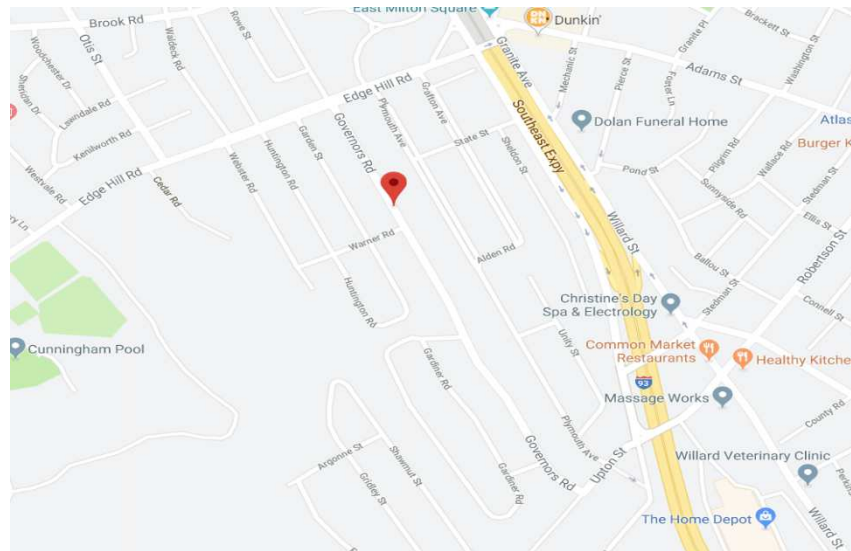
The Committee also recommends that the Town create a Parking Benefit District (“PBD”) in the Square. PBDs are authorized by Section 22A1/2 of Chapter 40 of the General Laws and permit parking revenue collected within the PBD to be used in that district through a dedicated fund in accordance with the purposes and uses listed in section 22A of said Chapter 40.²⁵ They also feature an Advisory Board to manage the PBD. PBDs are design to do two things: (1) better manage precious parking resources in commercial areas, and (2) raise revenue

that can be reinvested in the vibrancy and vitality of a commercial district. A PBD engages residents and businesses on how to make parking easier and more efficient and what enhancements to a district would deliver the most benefits. While the Town today has no parking meters, a PBD for the Square is worth pursuing at this time.

The Committee endorses residents’ request for stop signs on Washington Street and other efforts to control speed as summarized above.

8. Governor’s Road/Garden Street

a Description of Issue: Governor’s Road is a north-south street near Cunningham Park that connects to the City of Quincy and increasing serves as a cut-through street by motorists wishing to avoid East Milton Square.



Traffic has traditionally been high on Governor’s Road.²⁶ A noticeable uptick in traffic was observed several years ago when a Home Depot was constructed on Willard Street in Quincy. More recently, traffic volume and speed has increased on the street. In addition, residents on adjacent Garden Street, which connects to Governor’s Road but not to Quincy, have experienced increased traffic as motorists seek to avoid congestion. The situation is unsafe and inconsistent with the residential character of the streets. Traffic Calming Measures have been attempted to no avail in the past.

b Citizen input to the Committee. Many people have commented about this situation to the Committee. During the public meetings there have been numerous concerns raised about cut-through traffic on Governor’s Road and concern about safety, especially safety of children and pedestrians, but also other drivers. The concerns encompass both congestion and speeding. As one resident stated, there is congestion on Governor’s backed up for an hour in the morning, and then traffic becomes a “freeway,” with cars going much too fast, in the afternoon. Some residents reported that the cut-through traffic on Governor’s Road could be the result of drivers trying to avoid congestion in East Milton Square. Residents suggested a variety of remedies, such as speed bumps and enforcement. In the Wiki residents echoed concerns about speeding and congestion on Governor’s Road, with many comments focused on safety. Commenters suggested making the street one-way, adding a “do not enter” sign for two hours per day, and increasing enforcement in the area. One resident also suggested adding a short lane marker line at the stop sign at Edge Hill Rd on the south side, because many drivers pull up to the stop sign in the middle of the road making it hard to turn onto Governor’s.

c Committee Recommendation. The Committee recommends that a small working group of Town officials and neighborhood residents meet to consider Traffic Calming Measures for this area.

G. OTHER TRAFFIC OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Milton has addressed traffic issues for many years. The establishment of the Committee is only one of many things that the Town has implemented in this area over the years.

a Long term work of the Traffic Commission. Milton has had a formal Traffic Commission (the “Commission”) for decades, having issued Annual Reports to the Town since at least 1959. According to the Town:²⁷

The Traffic Commission is an advisory board only. The Traffic Commission studies the traffic situation in town and advises the Select Board on ways and means to regulate traffic in the town and increase public safety. The Traffic Commission recommends to the Select Board changes and amendments to the Traffic Rules and Orders of the town with a view towards reducing crashes and relieving traffic congestion throughout town.

Given the number of cars that travel our roads each day, this objective often proves to be very challenging.

The Traffic Commission meets 4-6 times annually. Meetings and locations are posted on this webpage and citizens are welcome to attend and speak.

Any recommendations made by the Traffic Commission regarding changes to Massachusetts General Law or the Town of Milton Bylaws are then submitted to the Select Board for approval and implementation.

Note - The Traffic Commission does not review traffic enforcement issues. All enforcement authority lies solely with the police department.

Originally limited to Town officials, the Commission has recently been expanded to include three Town citizens. Members of the Commission, effective as of January, 2020, are:

Chase P. Berkeley, PE DPW Director (Chair)

John E. King Police Chief

John J. Grant Fire Chief

Lt. Mark Alba, Milton Police (Safety Officer)

William B. Clark, Jr., Planning Director

Glenn Pavlicek, School Department

Jack Calabro, Mgr. of Street/Traffic Lights (DPW)

John P. Thompson, PE DPW (Engineering)

Lee Toma, Member (as of January 2020)

Steven Geyster, Member (as of January 2020)

Marion Driscoll, Member (as of January 2020)

b Improvements to Central Avenue/Brook Road/Canton Avenue/Bike Lanes/Lincoln Street/Other Locations. Over the past several years, the Town has advocated for and completed several projects aimed at roadway safety, increasing pedestrian flow, and general infrastructure improvements, notably on Central Avenue (at Turner's Pond), Canton Avenue (near Glover School at Brook Road), bike lanes on several roads, and the recently completed sidewalk improvements at Lincoln Street.

More recently, the Town has completed improvements that were recommended as a part of the public process leading to this report, including painting of crosswalks and other areas in the Town, the installation of signs on Route 138, and improvements to the signal phasing at the busy Thatcher/Canton/Highland Avenue intersection.

The Committee encourages the Town to continue with these forms of improvements.

c Speed limit ordinance. In 2017, the Town voted to reduce the default speed limit in Milton to 25 MPH. Today, unless otherwise posted, the speed limit in the Town is 25 MPH.

d Complete Streets Program. In 2018, the Town adopted a Complete Streets policy to ensure that all projects in the Town will incorporate complete streets design principles (those that provide safe and equitable access to all travel modes) to the maximum extent possible. Adopting a formal policy allowed the Town to participate in MassDOT’s Complete Streets funding program. The recently completed work at Lincoln Street is an example of a “Complete Streets” project.

In 2018, the Town was awarded a grant to implement three Complete Street projects on Lincoln Street, the Thatcher Street corridor, and Reedsdale Road at Milton Hospital. These projects were completed in 2019 at a cost of approximately \$400,000.

e Town-wide traffic model. In 2019, the Town retained an engineering firm to develop the Town’s first Town-wide traffic model that will, when completed, assist Town officials and the Commission to more accurately assess traffic conditions and predict the benefits to be expected by specific improvements.

Planners believe that the model will permit the Town to more closely examine and understand origin and destination trends, to better predict the outcomes and consequences of actions, including the real time effect of restricting traffic on local streets, and will produce valuable data critical to developing future traffic strategies. The Committee recommends that the Commission use the model proactively in its work moving forward as it promises to be an effective tool for future planning.

f Traffic Enforcement Officer appointed (full time). In 2019, the Milton Police Department appointed its first full-time traffic enforcement officer who is devoted on a full-time basis to traffic issues in the Town.

g Radar Speed Monitors. Over the past several years, Milton has located traffic speed radar monitors at strategic locations throughout the Town. Devices such as these provide important data to Town officials and tend to act as a deterrent to drivers.

2. Specific Recommendations Regarding Traffic Planning

a Continued Diligence and Progress; Specific Traffic Strategy.

The Committee encourages the Town to continue with the types of measures that are set forth above. Each is consistent with traffic calming and safety measures that are needed throughout the Town. The Town should deputize the Town Administrator to implement those of the recommendations in this Report that are ultimately adopted. Without a central point of contact for implementation of the recommendations, they risk getting lost in other important Town priorities. Moreover, many are of the nature that require the cooperation and coordination of several Town departments, requiring a high level mandate inherent in the Town Administrator's position. The Town Administrator should affirmatively discuss and make clear the Town's overall traffic strategy, its goals, and its expectations and the roles of the Milton Police Department, Public Works Department, Planning Department, and Traffic Commission, respectively, in furthering these goals.

The policies adopted toward these objectives should be formally adopted in a "Transportation Vision Statement" or "Transportation Plan" that will increase transparency and serve as a roadmap toward improvement in these areas under the Town Administrator's capable leadership.

b Modification of the Traffic Commission.

The Committee believes that the Commission is an important body for the implementation of the Town's overall traffic strategy. More specifically, the Committee recommends that steps be taken together with the Select Board to confirm the Commission's

mission so that residents are aware of the Commission’s role, that expectations can be managed and that a more clearly defined process can be implemented. At its core, the Commission is charged with studying “*the traffic situation in the Town and shall suggest and advise the Selectmen in ways and means to regulate traffic in the Town and recommend changes and amendments to the Traffic Rules and Orders of the Town with a view towards reducing accidents and relieving traffic congestion.*”²⁸

The Committee recommends that the Commission’s traffic strategy expand to further consider the recommendations in this Report as a means of embedding these recommendations into the Town’s government, under the overall supervision of the Town Administrator. The Commission should also move to a more regular meeting schedule and shift some of its focus to consider specific actions the Town should implement in the future as part of the Town’s planning efforts in addition to its main current focus of responding to issues brought to the Commission for consideration.

The Committee believes that a regular meeting schedule will assist the Town and Town residents greatly in addressing the issues raised in this Report over the long term, and believes that the changes to the Commission’s mission are within its current charge as authorized by the General Bylaws of the Town.

c Dedicated Traffic Engineer. The Town should retain a dedicated person, perhaps part-time or through the use of a consultant, exclusively focused on traffic. The Town of Brookline has such a role, for example. While the Town has excellent engineering resources, it lacks personnel dedicated to the issues that are central to this Report.

d MPIC Use. The Committee recommends that the Master Plan Implementation Committee consider this Report and its recommendations going forward.

e Focus on Demand. Recognizing that it is unlikely that additional roadway supply will be built within the Town, the Town should adopt policies that have a bias toward reducing traffic and encouraging less traffic demand by, for example, partnering with the MBTA, improving the pedestrian environment, and encouraging and assisting local businesses. The Committee is aware that the Milton Chamber of Commerce has recommended that the Select

Board implement a Town-wide two-hour parking limit. The Committee recommends that this be studied as a part of the Town's overall demand strategy.

f Additional Safety Zone Speed Limits. Some work has been done in the Town to determine whether additional safety zone speed limits – short segments of roads where posted speed limits are reduced - are merited. According to MassDOT:

Safety Zone speed limits are intended to be used mainly on municipal roadways, which in general are not high speed roadways. The intent is to protect vulnerable road users in the vicinity of hospitals, senior citizen housings, playgrounds, etc.

Before speed limits for a Safety Zone can be established an engineering study must be performed to analyze the existing speed distribution on the roadway. The engineering study would determine if establishing of a safety zone would be beneficial or not. For example, establishing of a 20 MPH Safety Zone on a high speed main roadway, even if vulnerable road users are present, may not be a good idea and may be detrimental to safety.

Safety Zone speed limits are permitted on Town-owned ways without MassDOT approval.²⁹ They cannot be placed on state highways (such as the most dangerous stretches of Randolph Avenue) without MassDOT's written approval. Once established, speed within these areas is 20 MPH, and are common in high pedestrian areas such as nearby schools and hospitals.

The Committee encourages the Town to explore the need for, and establishment of Safety Zone speed limits in particularly vulnerable areas and specifically recommends that a Safety Zone be explored for the intersection of Randolph Avenue and Chickatawbut Road.

3. Milton Should Increase Its Focus on Safety and Should Evaluate the Adoption of Vision Zero

Vision Zero is multi-national road traffic safety project that aims to achieve a highway system with no fatalities or serious injuries involving road traffic. Started in Sweden in the

1990s, it is a strategy designed to eliminate all traffic fatalities on roadways, while at the same time increasing “safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.”³⁰ Vision Zero features a network of like-minded professionals and communities achieve these objectives. Most significantly, the City of Boston has embraced these objectives, with the result being a shift in its planning efforts toward a bias based on safety.

The Committee believes that a town’s approach to the issues central to the Committee’s mission speak to the culture of the town, just as traffic is a statement of culture. Vision Zero, while rooted in technical recommendations and planning, is at its core a statement of culture. Once adopted, the idea is that everything the Town does in this area is done with the goals of Vision Zero in mind. Based on what it has heard and learned through its work, those goals are consistent with what the Town’s citizens value.

With its most recent project focus, the programs it has adopted, and its top leadership focused on these issues, Milton seems particularly well suited to become a Vision Zero community. Such a position is not taken lightly. Since it pervades several different parts of government, it requires a true commitment by many people to succeed. It makes no sense to pursue Vision Zero without such a commitment. Moreover, it has, at least to date, largely (although not exclusively) been implemented by large municipal areas. The Committee recommends that a roadmap to become a Vision Zero community be developed and encourages its adoption by the Town as a priority of the Town Administrator.

4. Milton Should Work on Traffic as a Culture Issue and Work with the Schools.

Like many transportation improvements, some of the steps recommended in this Report will take a long time to implement. It will also take time for the Town to embrace a safety culture on its roadways. Indeed, doing so could cause congestion in and of itself. The Committee recommends that the Town immediately begin working with the Milton Public Schools on roadway safety issues. Tomorrow’s drivers are in school today. The Town will benefit from a better understanding of how tomorrow’s drivers perceive today’s issues. It will be helpful to understand congestion, safety, distraction, and technology issues from our student’s perspective. And, the students will learn about how important these issues are to them and to their future.

We recommend outreach to Milton High School on this initiative.

5. Milton Should Support Additional Enforcement Measures and Authority.

Perhaps the most common comment that the Committee received during its deliberations is the desire for more traffic enforcement in the Town. Certainly positive steps have been taken with the hiring of the Town's first traffic enforcement officer, who joins the Town's current Safety Officer, a Lt. in the MPD, in traffic and roadway related enforcement. At a time of limited resources and challenging budgets, the Committee is not prepared to recommend additional MPD personnel at this time. It does, however, support the expenditure of funds on radar sign placement in strategic locations and recommends that the Town make these radar signs permanent.

The Committee also supports additional study of technology that would permit video enforcement of traffic laws at specific locations. Such a measure, now being tested within school zones in New York City, would require legislation at the state level.

6. Milton Should Work with MassDOT/MBTA/Boston/ Quincy/Canton/Randolph.

While Milton can and should be taking steps to address the issues that are central to this Report, those issues are regional in nature. They are also common to other communities and are a part of the core business of the Town's partners in State government at MassDOT and the MBTA. Many of the congestion and speed issues that the Town is facing result from the failure of the regional highway system at peak times of the day. Traffic from Quincy is impacting congestion in East Milton Square and our other neighboring communities are all struggling with similar issues. Traffic in Canton and Randolph impact volume on Route 138 and Route 28 respectively.

The Committee recommends the formation of a working group with our neighboring communities to deal with these issues in a unified manner.

7. Milton Should Observe (and copy) What Other Towns Are Doing.

Almost daily, information becomes available about a community, whether locally (Concord) or elsewhere in the United States (Brookhaven, Georgia) taking steps to address

identical, or nearly identical issues to those facing Milton. Milton should not be shy about copying the best of those ideas.

Concord is embracing a series of traffic calming measures to address and discourage cut-through traffic, for example. These tactics can and should be further evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The Committee notes that the City of Medford has recently implemented steps to close streets during certain hours of the day to City residents only. Because of difficulties with the enforcement of this type of measure, the Committee does not recommend that this step be considered in Milton.

8. Milton's Policies Should Encourage Mode Shift (modify demand).

At the core of the Committee's work is to encourage the Town to embrace tactics aimed at reducing overall traffic. Central to this strategy is to provide citizens with additional and real choices with their daily commuting patterns. The Committee recommends outreach to the MBTA and participation in the MBTA's Better Bus Routes program – including, among other things, additional service on the Route 217 bus that connects Ashmont and Wollaston (and Quincy Adams) Stations, additional bike stations (bike cages) at Mattapan Station, Milton Station and Wollaston Station, consideration for shuttle service from Milton Town Hall to the Fairmont Commuter Rail line, and working with the City of Boston on a dedicated bus lane through Milton to Ashmont Station.

The Town should also work with MassDOT and the Town of Canton on steps to be taken to improve use of the Park and Ride lots on Route 138 and on Granite Avenue.

9. Milton Should Continue to Support Investments in Supply and Maintenance.

Noting that the Town has limited funds to implement large-scale infrastructure improvements and that so many of the congestion and safety issues the Town faces are related to regional transportation issues, the Town must work closely with MassDOT, the MBTA, and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council on regional improvements. Currently the list of projects in Milton that have been approved for the Commonwealth's Transportation Improvement Plan are:

- Rehabilitation Of Central Avenue, From Brook Road To Eliot Street

- Deck Reconstruction Over Se Expressway (East Milton Square), Includes Parking & New Landscaped Area
- Intersection & Signal Improvements @ Route 28 (Randolph Avenue) & Chickatawbut Road
- Reconstruction On Granite Avenue, From Neponset River To Squantum Street
- Milton- Bridge Replacement, B-16-022=M-25-001, Granite Avenue Over Neponset River
- Canton- Milton- Roadway Improvements On Route 138
- Intersection Improvements Squantum Street @ Adams Street
- Randolph- Milton- Resurfacing And Related Work On Route 28
- Milton- Randolph- Interchange Improvements At Route 24/I-93

The Committee recommends continued support for each of these projects and that the Town continue to work with these state and regional groups on this issues raised in this Report.

H. CONCLUSIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

As detailed in this Report and its Exhibits, Milton suffers from traffic congestion at key times of every day. The situation is not unique, and indeed is increasingly common in greater metropolitan Boston and is similarly situated urban regions in the United States. While Milton has dealt with traffic issues for many decades, increases in technology, in the way people move, in the options we have and in the ways we purchase goods have combined to make the traffic we deal with today somewhat different than the “same old” traffic congestion issues.

Fortunately, not all areas of the Town experience this worsening congestion. The most significant congestion is witnessed in areas that are well known to most people in the Town: parts of Randolph Avenue (Route 28), East Milton Square, Blue Hill Avenue (Route 138), the areas around our schools at drop-off and pick-up times, Blue Hills Parkway, Governor’s Road and Milton Village are the key congestion and safety areas, each of which would benefit from some sort of affirmative steps being taken.

Over the past several years, the Town has taken steps to address congestion and safety issues by, among other things, making key improvements at important locations, the steady work of the Traffic Commission, the adoption of a Town-wide ordinance setting the default speed in the Town at 25 MPH, and through the use of speed monitors and the appointment of a full-time traffic enforcement officer. These steps show commitment to the issue and demonstrate progress.

Still, more can and should be done. Most importantly, the Select Board should charge the Town Administrator with implementing the recommendations set forth in this Report that are adopted. Given the involvement of many persons and entities both within and outside of Town government in the matters addressed in this Report, it will take high level commitment to continue to make progress. In addition, the Town should continue to work closely with state officials on making the regional highway system as efficient as possible, as many of the issues facing the town stem from cut-through traffic resulting from chronic congestion on those routes. And, the Town should closely partner with the MBTA on increased use of the mass transportation options offered by the MBTA. Locally, this Report recommends that working groups of citizens be formed to address issues in several of the key traffic hot spots. Finally, we recommend that Town government itself become more active in this issue through:

- Adopting a formal policy statement and plan on the Town's goals with respect to traffic congestion and safety;
- The appointment of the Town's first engineer dedicated to addressing traffic and congestion issues;
- Tasking the Traffic Commission to meet on a regular basis and to forecast steps that can and should be taken to address the issues in an anticipatory manner rather than as requested as is now the case;
- Beginning a process to adopt Vision Zero as a Town-wide initiative;
- The adoption of Safety Zone Speed Limits in one or more key locations in the Town; and
- Reaching out to the young citizens of the Town to discuss traffic issues.

The Committee believes that good progress has been made in these areas, but much work remains to be done, and looks forward to seeing the implementation of these recommendations.

¹Chapter 6B of Milton General Bylaws establishes the Traffic Commission.

Section 1. A Town Traffic Commission is hereby created.

Section 2. The Traffic Commission shall be composed of eight members as follows: Chief of the Police Department, Chief of the Fire Department, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer, Director of Facilities Milton Public Schools, Wire Inspector, Safety Officer Police Department, Town Planner, Assistant Town Engineer.

Section 3. The members of the Traffic Commission shall receive no compensation for 30 their services as commissioners, but all expenses incurred shall be paid by the Town out of an appropriation for such services.

Section 4. The Chief of Police shall act as the Chairman of the Traffic Commission.

Section 5. The Traffic Commission shall designate one of its members as Secretary. The Secretary shall arrange meetings, supply records, obtain data, prepare reports and attend to such other duties as shall be decided by the Traffic Commission.

Section 6. The Traffic Commission shall study the traffic situation in the Town and shall suggest and advise the Selectmen in ways and means to regulate traffic in the Town and recommend changes and amendments to the Traffic Rules and Orders of the Town with a view towards reducing accidents and relieving traffic congestion.

Section 7. All Bylaws, Traffic Rules and Orders, complaints or suggestions relative to traffic conditions in the Town shall first be submitted through the Secretary of the Traffic Commission to the Commission for study and recommendation before being acted on by the Selectmen.

²We can define a “commuter” as a person who travels during peak traffic periods (6:00AM-9:30AM, and 4:00PM-7:00PM).

³<https://today.tamu.edu/2019/08/22/tti-report-nationwide-gridlock-costs-166-billion-per-year/>

⁴<https://commonwealthmagazine.org/uncategorized/congestion-may-be-bad-but-commute-times-changing-little-2/>

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<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/10/04/opinion/self-driving-cars-safety.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pgtype=Homepage>

⁶“*The New Automobility: Lyft, Uber and the Future of American Cities*,” Schaller Consulting, July 25, 2018.

<http://www.schallerconsult.com/rideservices/automobility.htm>

⁷“*Inequality Is Slowing Cities to a Crawl*,” Angie Schmitt, The Atlantic, October 9, 2019.

⁸ Time, December 18, 2018. <https://time.com/5481981/online-shopping-amazon-free-shipping-traffic-jams/>. Dr. Holguin-Veras is one of the nation’s foremost experts on freight deliveries and in modifying behavior in that industry.

⁹Rideshare travel flows in and out of almost every city and town in Massachusetts. While TNC drivers take passengers all over the Commonwealth, some trips are more common than others. Also, patterns of use for ridesharing can vary greatly from town to town. For example, only 15% of TNC rides that started in Milton ended in Milton. Meanwhile, 47% of trips that started in nearby Quincy ended in Quincy. This discrepancy suggests that TNC services are used much differently in those towns, despite their proximity.

¹⁰According to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the total number of TNC rides in Massachusetts was 64.8M in 2017 and 81.3M in 2019. <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/tnc-dpu-funds/>

¹¹All Town data is from the Town of Clerk’s office, courtesy of William Clark, Town Planner. 2019.

¹²The 2018 Milton report can be accessed here: <https://www.ctps.org/data/pdf/studies/highway/2018-priority-corridors/2018-priority-corridors.pdf>

¹³See CTPS Report, pp. 9-10.

¹⁴Route 28 continues north on Reedsdale Road, Brook Road, and Blue Hills Parkway to the Milton/Boston line and into Boston. These additional sections are not state highways, but rather “state numbered routes” established for the convenience of the motoring public.

¹⁵<https://www.mass.gov/randolph-ave-rt-28chickatawbut-intersection-improvement-project>

¹⁶<https://www.mass.gov/event/milton-intersection-improvements-at-route-28-randolph-avenue-chickatawbut-road-2019-07>. See also a 2016 Road Safety Audit prepared for this location: https://www.townofmilton.org/sites/miltonma/files/uploads/route_28_at_chickatawbut_road_final_road_safety_audit_report_01-17-2017_rev2.pdf

¹⁷ Blue Hills Parkway is actually a widening of the former Mattapan Street, a Town road. See, for example, *Atlas of The Town of Milton*, 1896. The Atlas shows a “Proposed Blue Hills Parkway” immediately to the west of what was then Mattapan Street, which ran from near the Boston (Mattapan)/Milton line to Canton Avenue in a portion of the Parkway’s current right of way.

¹⁸ Milton General Bylaws: Chapter 6A School Traffic Control

Section 1. There shall be a School Traffic Control Unit in the Police Department consisting of not less than five nor more than eighteen Special Police Officers appointed by the Board of Selectmen to serve at the pleasure of the Board. The duties of such special police officers shall be supervised by and be under the direction of the Chief of Police.

Section 2. Special Police Officers appointed under this Chapter shall be designated as School Traffic Supervisors and shall have all the power and authority of regular police officers in the enforcement of Chapter 90 of the General Laws and Acts and amendment thereof and in addition thereto, and of all other Laws and of the Bylaws of the Town relating to the operation, standing or use of vehicles.

¹⁹<https://www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school>

²⁰See this presentation, dated September 23, 2019: https://www.townofmilton.org/sites/miltonma/files/uploads/mpic_9-23-2019_presentation1.pdf

²¹ The MPIC’s work has estimates that about 17,250 cars cross the bridge at Adams Street on an average weekday creating congestion in both the morning and afternoon peak hours. It also revealed midday parking congestion in Milton Village from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

²² A road “fails” when every vehicle is moving directly proportionally to the vehicle in front of it, with frequent stopping and slowing. This is “level of service F.” LOS E is also failure – when the road is operating at full capacity. I-93 fails every day during the peak. We don’t however, build churches for Easter Sunday. There is a huge amount of roadway capacity out there – it’s just available at the wrong times. This is one reason Gov. Baker recommended the creation of a tax credit to work from home.

²³ Headways are the time between trips. So, headways of three minutes means that the Red Line comes every 3 minutes. As one indication of service, some advocates claim that headways on the Red Line have increased (gotten worse) by a factor of 3 since WWII. The T’s efforts to improve signals is specifically to improve headways, improvements that are generally acknowledged to be a key, perhaps the key, to better service and increased ridership.

²⁴ Thanks to Cheryl Tougias of the Milton Planning Board for this observation. See, “*Curbside Management Practitioners Guide*,” page 4, Institute of Transportation Engineers Complete Streets Council. “*The conversation about who controls the curb is quickly shifting in cities and towns. For several decades, curb space uses and regulations have been assembled piecemeal in response to property and business owners, and overwhelmingly allocated to private vehicle storage. The proliferation of shared mobility options like bike share, for-hire vehicles companies, micromobility modes, and e-commerce package deliveries has intensified demand for curb access, and thrown into sharp relief the urgency of managing curb space as a public asset.*” “Curb Control” by Brian Barth on the American Planning Association web site, June 2019, is an interesting and pertinent piece: <https://www.planning.org/planning/2019/jun/curbcontrol/>

²⁵ Funds may only be spent on “acquisition, installation, maintenance and operation of parking meters and other parking payment and enforcement technology, the regulation of parking, salaries of parking management personnel, improvements to the public realm, and transportation improvements, including, but not limited to, the operations of mass transit and facilities for biking and walking.”

²⁶ See Milton Times, December 22, 2019, “*40 Years Later Traffic Woes Remain*,” by Elaine Cushman Carroll, https://www.milontimes.com/news/local/years-later-traffic-woes-remain/article_ca6eba9c-243c-11ea-8e28-2b24dc73ed2d.html

²⁷ <https://www.townofmilton.org/traffic-commission>

²⁸ General Bylaws, chapter 6B, section 6.

²⁹ MassDOT Procedures for Speed Zoning, February, 2017, page 20.

³⁰ <https://visionzeronetwork.org/>