



Thomas G. Ambrosino
City Manager

City of Chelsea
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December 15, 2015

Stephanie Pollack, Secretary of Transportation
Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Mr. Frank DePaola, MBTA General Manager
Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3910
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Re: *MBTA Youth Pass Program*

Dear Secretary Pollack and General Manager DePaola:

I am the City Manager in the City of Chelsea. I am writing to express the City's strong support for the MBTA's Youth Pass Pilot to become a permanent program of the MBTA. After many years of advocacy and now several months of program implementation, the City is eager to see this program move forward and provide affordable public transportation to an entire generation of youth in our City.

Chelsea residents, particularly youth, are highly dependent on public transportation to access opportunities to learn, work, thrive and contribute. Unfortunately, many young adults in Chelsea face significant financial barriers to accessing public transit services. This has huge ramifications for the overall progress of our City. The City of Chelsea and the Chelsea Collaborative decided to take an active role in solving these barriers by becoming partners of the Youth Pass Pilot Program. We have been directly involved in the design and implementation of the program and have committed significant resources to administering it in Chelsea. Notwithstanding certain barriers in outreach and enrollment, the program has been a huge success for all participants.

The City of Chelsea is committed to the long-term success of this program and will continue to partner with the MBTA to make the Youth Pass available in Chelsea. The City is committed to finding the most appropriate office/program in the City to house the Youth Pass Program, which may include marketing the program with other City services, reviewing eligibility for the pass and issuing Youth Pass cards. If necessary, it may also include collecting payment, although the City has long felt that payment is better accomplished by the MBTA at Charlie Card machines.

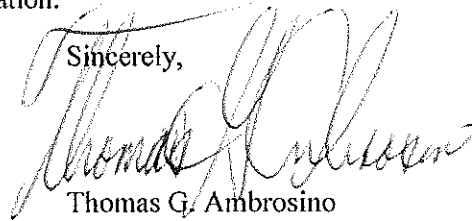
Based upon feedback from participants during implementation of the Pilot, let me offer the following suggestions for improvement if the program were to become permanent. First, I strongly urge that the permanent program begin on July 1, 2016, so there is no interruption for pilot participants. Second, both the weekly and the monthly passes (\$7 and \$26 respectively) should be available for

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purchase at Charlie Card machines for those youth who have qualified for the program and received a Youth Pass card. Third, for youth over 18 years old, the list of qualifying institutions should be expanded to include two-year degree programs, such as Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC). The City has found that many youth who attend community colleges, such as BHCC, experience similar financial barriers to accessing public transit. Finally, I ask that the Youth Pass Program be available to youth up to 25 years old in order to better align with federal and state workforce and healthcare statutes.

For the above reasons, I hope that you support the full implementation of the Youth Pass Pilot Program. I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas G. Ambrosino", written over a horizontal line.

Thomas G. Ambrosino
City Manager

Cc: MBTA Financial & Management Control Board