

## **Memorandum**

**To:** Board of Selectmen, Town Manager

**From:** Transportation Advisory Committee

**Subject:** Request for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to support Massachusetts Avenue Corridor improvements

**Date:** 3 March 2003

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### **Background**

Over the past two years, the Town has been considering improvements to Massachusetts Avenue in East Arlington. A key portion of this corridor is the 5-block segment between Lake and Varnum Streets, which includes much of the East Arlington business district. This business district is located in a densely populated residential neighborhood, is well served by transit, and has limited parking. Safe pedestrian access is essential. However, between 1989 and 2000, this 5-block segment has seen approximately 20 reported crashes involving pedestrians. It also has seen a significant number of vehicle crashes. Between 1992 and 2000, State accident reports indicate there were 64 crashes at the Lake/Winter intersection and 34 crashes at the Cleveland Street intersection.

Considerable work has been done already. In 2001/2002, traffic counts were performed, and several conceptual designs were developed. Volunteers assisted with the collection of pedestrian and bicycle counts. Since the summer of 2002, a small working group has reviewed options for the corridor. Two larger public meetings have also been conducted, the first sponsored by the Town and the second by the East Arlington Good Neighbor Committee.

### **Request**

Full implementation of corridor improvements is a large undertaking that will require state or federal funds. We need to be prepared to act when an opportunity for such funds becomes available. It is important that the design work and public/business involvement continue in preparation for that future opportunity.

The Transportation Advisory Committee respectfully requests \$25,000 to facilitate a detailed design and public process for that five-block portion of the Massachusetts Avenue Corridor between Lake/Winter and Varnum Streets. The funds will be used to hire a professional design firm to:

- facilitate the development of a detailed design, including road width, sidewalk width, lane configuration and pedestrian amenities to create an urban village atmosphere in the area, and
- facilitate the building of consensus among the various stakeholders, including residents and businesses

Respectfully,

Edward Starr, Chair  
Transportation Advisory Committee