

January 2006

Dear Reader:

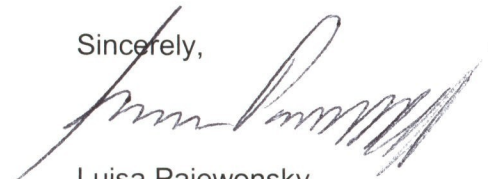
I am pleased to present the *Massachusetts Highway Department Project Development and Design Guidebook*. This Guidebook is a direct product of Governor Mitt Romney's *Communities First Policy*, which directs MassHighway and other state transportation agencies to take a more flexible and accommodating approach to cities and towns as we design and construct roadways all over the Commonwealth. This edition replaces the *1997 Massachusetts Highway Design Manual*.

Among the key features of the new *Massachusetts Highway Department Project Development and Design Guidebook* are:

- Flexibility – The new guidebook has significantly more flexibility in design requirements, particularly for lane and shoulder widths.
- Community Context – Recognizing that we live in a state full of classic New England downtowns, stone walls, historic districts and natural resources, the new guidebook places much more emphasis on what the community looks like beyond the paved roadway. This approach will ensure that the roads we design are compatible with community surroundings.
- Multi-modal Accommodation – The new guidebook reflects the latest methods for encouraging and supporting safe travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other modes of travel.
- Transparent and Clear Project Development Guidelines – the *Massachusetts Highway Department Project Development and Design Guidebook* provides direct guidance on how to advance a project from planning to construction. It also describes new MassHighway procedures to expand and improve our ability to deliver projects we all can be proud of.

We hope that the guidebook will be a valuable resource for designers, planners, community officials, advocacy and professional organizations, and anyone with an interest in improving the Massachusetts transportation system.

Sincerely,



Luisa Paiewonsky
Commissioner