

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

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The Wachusett Extension Project is the result of a planning process that coordinates transportation and land-use planning. The proposal for the Project was developed as a result of stakeholder participation; extensive review of existing community and transportation plans; field work; and, technical expertise. The Project provides improved public transportation for residents west of Fitchburg; reduced congestion on Route 2; enhanced economic development; and, creation of new jobs.

As a result of environmental effects being given equal importance as engineering considerations, potential environmental impacts have been avoided altogether with respect to some impact categories, while impacts have been greatly minimized in other categories. Mitigation measures, where necessary, essentially involve routine best management practices.

The Project is expected to result in a variety of environmental and economic benefits:

- ◆ Improve commute time over driving-alone.
- ◆ Reduce vehicle traffic on Route 2 by intercepting commuter rail riders at a convenient point west of Leominster, having the associated benefits of
  - Reduction in vehicle miles traveled,
  - Air quality improvements, and
  - Decreased fuel use.
- ◆ Increase operational efficiencies associated with a layover facility located west of the terminus and updated and expanded layover facility, resulting in
  - Improved train movements by eliminating need to double back on revenue track between the layover and terminus station,
  - Increased capacity for an additional train set, reducing the need to send an empty train from Boston,
  - Reduced train idling, conserving fuel and decreasing emissions by providing electrical plug-ins for train sets, and
  - Decreased passenger delay because shift changes will not occur during revenue service.
- ◆ Provide benefits provide to disadvantaged populations in Route 2 Economic Target Areas.

- ◆ Economic development potential in the City of Fitchburg's 231 Industrial Park, adjacent to the proposed Wachusett Station.
- ◆ Job creation consisting of
  - 149 Project-related construction jobs, and
  - 157 Project-related permanent jobs.