



City of Gloucester
Office of the Mayor
Gloucester City Hall
9 Dale Avenue
Gloucester, MA

Mayor Greg Verga
Telephone: 978-281-9700
Email: mayor@gloucester-ma.gov

September 30, 2025

RE: S.2596 – An Act relative to maintenance of private roads in the City of Gloucester

Dear House Chair Lewis and Senate Chair Rausch,

As Mayor of the City of Gloucester, I am writing in strong support of S.2596, *An Act relative to maintenance of private roads in the City of Gloucester*. Like many communities across the Commonwealth, Gloucester faces ongoing challenges in addressing road repairs and paving needs, particularly because of limitations on what cities can do to maintain private ways.

As a coastal community with over 500 private ways, our roads face extreme weather events, including snow and heavy rain falls, which further wear on the roadways. Currently, our inability to use public funds on private roads has left many neighborhood streets deteriorating, with little the City can do to provide relief to residents. While the city has an ongoing paving program in place for municipal streets, our private ways are left to the responsibility of the abutters. This legislation would give Gloucester much-needed flexibility to make more substantial repairs on qualifying private roads, ensuring safer, more reliable infrastructure for our neighborhoods.

Early in my first term, I launched the Private Roads Working Group to study these challenges and develop recommendations for addressing Gloucester's unusually high number of private ways. The group's report underscored the need for greater municipal authority and tools to address deteriorating private roads – this proposed legislation would be that tool.

Gloucester is not alone in confronting the challenges of maintaining private ways, but we are committed to creative solutions that strengthen our infrastructure and support our residents. I respectfully urge your favorable consideration of this legislation, and I welcome any questions or further discussion.

Regards,

Greg Verga
Mayor

SENATE No. 2596

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Bruce E. Tarr and Ann-Margaret Ferrante

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to maintenance of private roads in the city of Gloucester.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>
<i>Ann-Margaret Ferrante</i>	<i>5th Essex</i>

SENATE No. 2596

By Mr. Tarr and Ms. Ferrante of Gloucester, a joint petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2596) of Bruce E. Tarr and Ann-Margaret Ferrante (with approval of the mayor and city council) for legislation relative to the appropriation and expenditure of funds for the maintenance, repair and improvement of private roads under certain conditions. Municipalities and Regional Government. [Local approval received.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act relative to maintenance of private roads in the city of Gloucester.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Notwithstanding Section 6N of Chapter 40 of the General Laws or any
2 other general or special law to the contrary, the city of Gloucester may appropriate and expend
3 public funds for the maintenance, repair, and improvement of private roads when the following
4 conditions are met:

5 1) The private road serves a minimum of ten (10) residential properties that contribute
6 property tax revenue to the City of Gloucester.

7 2) The private road is a connector street between two roads;

8 3) The private road leads to a place of interest open to the public such as a community or
9 recreational venue/facility or a multi-use commercial or recreational location.

- 10 4) The private road is not maintained by a developer or private entity under an agreement
11 or covenant requiring such maintenance.
- 12 5) The private road is primarily used as a through street by non-abutting property owners.