



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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## MEETING CALENDAR

*For the most recent information on the following public meetings and others that may have been scheduled after TRANSREPORT went to press, go to [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org) or call (617) 973-7119. A photo ID is required to access most meeting sites.*

**AT THE STATE TRANSPORTATION BUILDING, 10 PARK PLAZA, BOSTON**

**May 5 (Wednesday)**

Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee: Municipal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Input Day. Conference Room 1. 9:00 AM

MassDOT Board of Directors. MBTA Board Room, Suite 3910. 1:00 PM

**May 6 (Thursday)**

Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee: Municipal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Input Day. MassDOT Conference Room, Suite 3170. 9:00 AM

**May 12 (Wednesday)**

Regional Transportation Advisory Council Freight Committee. Conference Room 4. 1:00 PM

Regional Transportation Advisory Council. Conference Room 4. 3:00 PM

**May 13 (Thursday)**

Boston Region MPO Clean Air and Mobility Subcommittee. MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150. 9:00 AM

**May 19 (Wednesday)**

Massachusetts Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board. MassDOT Conference Room, Suite 3170. 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

*Calendar continued on p. 2*

## MPO Offers Walkable Community Workshops

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is currently scheduling Walkable Community Workshops. If there are areas in your municipality where you wish to encourage more walking, the MPO can help. MPO staff will work with you to evaluate potential walking sites that might be difficult spots for

pedestrians, places that are relatively attractive for walking but could use some improvement, or areas slated for new development where planning for walking needs to be considered.

The workshops last approximately two and a half hours, starting with a presentation

• Workshops *cont. on p. 4*



The Boston Region MPO is hosting a Candidates' Forum on May 20 at 4 PM to introduce municipal representatives vying for local member seats on the MPO, which programs federal transportation dollars and conducts long-range transportation planning in the region. (See the calendar for meeting details.)

Two municipal seats, currently held by the City of Somerville and the Town of Framingham, are up for election. Framingham is running unopposed for the town seat, and the City of Beverly is challenging Somerville for the city seat.

The MPO election will take place on June 2 during the annual meeting of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). (The meeting details will be posted on the MPO's website, [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org).) Therese McMillan, Deputy Administrator of the Federal

• Election *cont. on p. 4*

## TIP Timeline

The Boston Region MPO is in the midst of the development process for the federal fiscal years 2011–2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a plan for allocating federal transportation funds in the region over the next four years.

Below are the key dates (subject to change) in this process when the MPO's Transportation Planning and Programming Committee will address the TIP, and project proponents and members of the public may provide input to the Committee.

- June 3 Target date for Committee members and municipal TIP contacts to receive MPO staff recommendation options for the "TIP Tables." Members begin the development of the draft TIP.
- June 17 Proposed date for the Committee to vote to release the draft TIP for public review.
- July 5 Proposed date for the beginning of the public review period for draft TIP.
- August 3 Proposed date for end of public review period for the draft TIP.
- August 19 Proposed date for MPO action on the draft TIP.

For more information, contact Hayes Morrison, TIP Manager, at (617) 973-7129 or [hayesm@bostonmpo.org](mailto:hayesm@bostonmpo.org).

**See the insert to find out how to share your ideas for the MPO's new long-range transportation plan.**

The members of the Boston Region MPO: Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Office of Planning and Programming, cities of Boston, Braintree, Newton, and Somerville, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Advisory Board, MassDOT Highway Division, Massachusetts Port Authority, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, towns of Bedford, Framingham, and Hopkinton

# MBTA Puts Diesel-Hybrid Buses into Service

## CLEANER AND MORE ACCESSIBLE BUSES TO SERVE BOSTON'S NEIGHBORHOODS

A new and improved fleet of MBTA buses is beginning to roll on Boston streets. The MBTA has purchased 25 new 60-foot articulated low-floor diesel hybrid buses with federal economic stimulus funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009,

The new buses are 20 percent more fuel-efficient than conventional diesel buses, and run more quietly. They have improved accessibility features, such as wider center and rear doors, a wheelchair ramp at the front door, and the ability of the bus to kneel at curbside to facilitate passenger boarding and alighting. Safety features include an onboard camera system that allows the MBTA Police to remotely view live images of the inside of the bus. All

of the buses have an external bicycle rack that holds two bicycles.

MBTA General Manager Richard Davey joined MassDOT Secretary and CEO Jeffrey Mullan at the MBTA's Southampton Street bus facility to celebrate delivery of the buses in time to mark the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. The first four buses to arrive were immediately put into service on MBTA bus Route #39, which runs from Forest Hills Station to Back Bay Station. Seventeen more buses will go into service by the end of June on two bus routes: Route #28, which runs from Mattapan Station to Dudley Station and Ruggles Station, and the Silver Line (SL5) route, from Dudley Station to Downtown Crossing.



New diesel-hybrid buses went into service on MBTA bus Route #39 in April.



## DRIVING IN TUNNELS

MassDOT is reminding motorists to be alert and take simple precautions when traveling through a tunnel. A new series of "Roadway Safety Tips," posted on MassDOT's website, advises drivers to turn on headlights when entering a tunnel, obey signs and signals, listen for media and traffic updates, maintain a safe distance between vehicles, and look for the location of emergency exits.

In the event of a fire in a tunnel, drivers should stop and turn off their vehicles, leave keys in the vehicles to assist emergency responders who may have to move them, and leave through the nearest tunnel entrance unless directed otherwise by officials or responders on the scene. If responders are not already there, drivers should call 911, and should help others if possible.

More tips on a variety of safety topics are posted on the "Roadway Safety Tips" webpage of the MassDOT Highway Division's website, [www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway](http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway), under the Quick Links tab.

Calendar cont. from p. 1

May 20 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. *Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 10:00 AM*

Boston Region MPO Clean Air and Mobility Subcommittee. *Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 1:00 PM*

Boston Region MPO Election Candidates' Forum. *MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150. 4:00 PM*

May 24 (Monday)

MBTA Rider Oversight Committee. *Conference Rooms 1, 2, and 3. 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM*

May 26 (Wednesday)

Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA. *Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM*

May 27 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Unified Planning Work Program Subcommittee. *MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150. 10:00 AM*

June 3 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. *Conference Room 4.*

### AT OTHER BOSTON AREA LOCATIONS

May 13 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Walkable Community Workshop. *Needham Public Library, 1139 Highland Avenue, Community Room, Needham. 4:00 PM to 6:15 PM*

May 14 (Friday)

Boston Region MPO Walkable Community Workshop. *Bedford Free Public Library, Meeting Room, 7 Mudge Way, Bedford. 8:00 AM to 10:30 AM*

May 19 (Wednesday)

MassDOT Public Meeting: Five-Year Capital Spending Plan. *Quincy City Hall, Foy Conference Room, 1305 Hancock Street, Quincy. 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM*

May 25 (Tuesday)

MassDOT Public Meeting: Five-Year Capital Spending Plan. *Framingham Town Hall, Memorial Building, 150 Concord Street, Framingham. 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM*

*Meetings sponsored by the Boston Region MPO are conducted in accessible locations, and materials can be provided in accessible formats and in languages other than English. If you would like accessibility or language accommodation, please contact the MPO at (617) 973-7100 (voice), (617) 973-8855 (fax), (617) 973-7089 (TTY), or e-mail [publicinformation@bostonmpo.org](mailto:publicinformation@bostonmpo.org).*

# Planning for the Future of the Boston Region's Transportation Network

## THE CHALLENGE OF PLANNING OUT TO 2035

One of the MPO's jobs is to look ahead, envision what our region will want from its transportation network in the future, and take the steps needed to make that future transportation system a reality. This work is part of preparing the long-range transportation plan, which is now underway in the Boston region. Over the past several months, the MPO has been thinking about the future and grappling with the challenges of achieving desired visions. These challenges are:

- Money available for transportation is severely limited
- Existing infrastructure must be maintained in a state of good repair
- Greenhouse gas emissions must be controlled and reduced
- Mobility, access to destinations of choice, and accessibility must be expanded in order to maintain and foster our region's quality of life and economic vitality
- Transportation investments must bring to life the concepts of livability and sustainability

Overarching all, though, is the challenge of developing sustainability for our transportation system and, as the two are inextricably linked, in our communities. To build for a sustainable future, the MPO has decided to find ways to accomplish needed and desirable mobility goals while reducing greenhouse gas emissions, participating in building livable communities, and getting the most from each transportation dollar. This is what the long-range transportation plan, *Paths to a Sustainable Region*, is all about.

## IDEAS FOR THE VISION

Over the years, many individuals, organizations, and agencies have shared their views and given guidance to the MPO about ways to manage and improve the region's transportation network. This framework of ideas was described in the April edition of *TRANSREPORT*. Using the framework as a starting point, the MPO formulated ideas for how the region's transportation network and communities might work and interrelate 25 years from now and what specific steps the MPO will need to take to get there.

The MPO has organized its own thinking about the future by identifying several main topic areas reflecting key issues for transportation planning: system preservation; modernization and efficiency; livability; mobility; environment; climate change; regional equity; and safety and security.

With the limited financial resources expected to be available, the MPO will first attend to maintaining and modernizing the



existing system and bringing it toward a state of good repair. Management and operations strategies will be used to optimize the performance of the existing system.

Transportation capital resources will focus on already developed areas and planned smart-growth areas, as defined by the MetroFuture regional planning. Smart density will be encouraged. This supports active transportation options and access to transit, both good ways to improve sustainability.

Improving mobility will be achieved by first implementing lower-cost strategies—such as those that improve reliability of service, accessibility, and travel time—through management and operations actions, the use of technology, and system enhancements. Bottlenecks will be prime targets that the MPO will aim to address. The MPO will take a mode-balanced approach that considers highway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel, as well as the movement of freight. There will be judicious expansion, which will include projects and programs with strong cost-effectiveness in criteria such as ridership, average daily traffic affected, travel-time savings, and closing a gap in the network.

To help protect human health and the environment, the MPO will adopt and act upon greenhouse gas reduction goals, and will continue to support projects and programs that make the transportation system safer and more secure for all users.

Full details of the MPO's visions and policies are available on the MPO's website, [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org), by clicking on the link to the Transportation Plan, and then *Paths to a Sustainable Region*. Also check the site to view and provide feedback on draft documents as they become available.

# What is your vision for 2035?

The Boston Region MPO is asking for your help in formulating the transportation vision for the region. Please use the space below to share your ideas about how the region's transportation network should look and serve us in the future. Your ideas will contribute to the MPO's final visions and policies for the next long-range transportation plan, Paths to a Sustainable Region.

- What is your vision for our future transportation system?*
- How will it serve you?*
- What will it look like?*
- How will it relate to our communities and the environment?*
- What direction will you give to the MPO to guide its decisions?*



## Your ideas

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To sign up for the MPO's mailing lists and to receive information about about the development of the long-range transportation plan, please provide your contact information below.

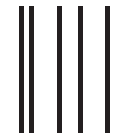
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# Boston Region MPO Activities

## BOSTON REGION MPO ACTION ITEMS

The Transportation Planning and Programming Committee acted at an April meeting to help advance initiatives by the MBTA and the City of Revere to improve the area around Wonderland Station on the Blue Line as a mixed-use and transit-oriented development (TOD). The Committee amended the FFYs 2010–2013 Transportation Improvement Program to incorporate a \$20 million federal grant for the construction of the Wonderland Station TOD Plaza. This Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant was made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The Committee also voted to recommend that proposals from area transportation providers requesting funding for transit projects through the federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs be forwarded to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for further review and selection.

In addition, the Committee amended the MPO's Public Participation Program to reflect recommendations from members of the public and federal agencies, and to clarify the MPO's policy on public comment periods for the review of certification documents.

Information on these actions is posted on the MPO's website, [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org).

Also in April, the MPO staff received authorization to begin work on three studies:

- The "Analysis of Silver Line Service to Airport Station and Chelsea" study will explore the possibility of extending Silver Line service to Chelsea.
- "MBTA Title VI Program Monitoring" is conducted annually to assess the level and quality of transit service provided to minority and low-income communities, as part of the MBTA's compliance with the Title VI requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- The "Evaluation of the Central Mass Rail Right-of-Way as a Joint Busway and Trail Facility" study will assess the feasibility of converting the right-of-way of a former branch of the Fitchburg rail line into a shared busway and trail facility.

## REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

Jeffrey Mullan, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), and Clinton Bench, of the MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, addressed the Regional Transportation Advisory Council at the April 14 meeting.

They discussed the progress of the consolidation of the Commonwealth's transportation agencies into MassDOT. Members learned that the estimated savings achieved through the state's trans-

portation reform measures are close to \$100 million so far. The creation of MassDOT also makes it easier for the transportation divisions to share services, such as planning and marketing, and facilitates the sharing of knowledge and expertise developed within each division.

Other topics discussed include the interagency Healthy Transportation Compact; freight planning; high-speed intercity passenger rail; the innovative finance tools MassDOT is using to leverage more federal capital funds for regional transit authorities; achieving bicycle and pedestrian improvements through the Accelerated Bridge Program;

and the MBTA Key Bus Routes Improvement Program.

The agenda for the Advisory Council's May meeting includes a presentation of the draft Massachusetts Statewide Freight and Rail Plan. (See the calendar for the time and location.)

## ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MBTA (AACT) UPDATE

Richard Davey, the new General Manager of the MBTA and the Administrator of MassDOT's Rail and Transit Division, spoke at the April meeting. He described his vision for the MBTA, emphasizing the goals of providing good customer service to the 1.3 million people who

use the MBTA, assuring the safety of passengers and employees, and maintaining fiscal responsibility while developing innovative solutions.

At the March meeting, John Lozada, Director of Civil Rights for MassDOT, addressed AACT. He presented examples of civil rights violations against persons with disabilities.

He offered to return at a later date and have a further discussion with the AACT.



## Green Tips

*Are you shopping for a fuel-efficient car? Do you need to find a fuel station that sells alternative fuels? Is your company or organization planning to reduce conventional fuel use in its vehicle fleet?*

*The Alternative Fuels and Advanced Vehicles Data Center (AFDC) website, [www.afdc.energy.gov/afdc](http://www.afdc.energy.gov/afdc), can guide your decisions, with tools that help individuals and organizations find ways to reduce petroleum consumption.*

*The AFDC, an information clearinghouse sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Cities initiative, provides information on vehicle fuel economy, alternative fuel options, advanced transportation technologies, and more.*

## Needham and Bedford to Host Walking Workshops

• Workshops *cont. from p. 1*  
on elements that make a community more pedestrian-friendly. Participants then go for a short walk and return to discuss ways to engender improvements.

A good walking environment is an important aspect of community livability, which in turn is related to the community's economic vitality and residents' physical health. People walk more when the environment is safe and pleasant.

Workshops are scheduled in the town of Needham and the town of Bedford on May 13 and 14, respectively. (See the calendar for times and locations.) The next workshop will be the thirtieth conducted to date by MPO staff.

If you think that your community or neighborhood would benefit by hosting a workshop, please contact the MPO at (617) 973-7100 or e-mail [walkable@ctps.org](mailto:walkable@ctps.org).

## Election to Be Held in June

• Election *cont. from p. 1*

Transit Administration, will be the keynote speaker at that meeting.

MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board, both MPO member agencies, administer the election. For more information, contact Eric Bourassa, at (617) 451-2770 or [ebourassa@mapc.org](mailto:ebourassa@mapc.org), or Paul Regan, at (617) 426-6054 or [pregan@mbtaadvisoryboard.org](mailto:pregan@mbtaadvisoryboard.org).

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## TRANSREPORT

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