



TRANS REPORT

JUNE 2008

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

PARK-AND-RIDE LOT UTILIZATION

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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 or call (617) 973-7119. A photo ID is required to access most meeting sites.

AT THE STATE TRANSPORTATION BUILDING, 10 PARK PLAZA, BOSTON

June 4 (Wednesday)

Boston Region MPO Forum: Draft Interim Coordinated Human-Services Transportation Plan. MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150. From noon to 2:00 PM

June 5 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. Conference Room 4. 10:00 AM

June 11 (Wednesday)

Regional Transportation Advisory Council Freight Committee. MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150. 1:00 PM

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

June 12 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. Conference Room 4. 10:00 AM

June 19 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. Conference Room 4. 10:00 AM

June 25 (Wednesday)

Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA. Conference Room 4. 1:00 PM

Calendar continued on p. 2

Green Line Extension Moving Forward

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works (EOTPW) is in the process of choosing the best route and station locations for the Green Line Extension Project. This long-envisioned transit project will extend existing service along a corridor from Lechmere Station through the communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford. By bringing MBTA light rail service to these three densely

populated cities, the Commonwealth will address long-standing transporta-

tion inequities and meet strong demand for improved transit. EOTPW

and the MBTA are committed to this project, which will produce both economic and environmental benefits for the corridor.

At the May 5 meeting of the Project Advisory Group, the project's consultant team presented the preliminary recommendations for station locations and the proposed support facility for additional

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Input Sought on MPO's Draft Interim Coordinated Human-Services Transportation Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD BEGUN, PUBLIC FORUMS SCHEDULED

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is developing an interim Coordinated Human-Services Transportation Plan (CHST Plan) for the Boston region. The CHST Plan is required under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Act (the current legislation governing federal transportation programs) in order

to obtain funding for projects from several Federal Transit Administration programs. These programs include: the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310), the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (Section 5316), and the New Freedom Program (Section 5317).

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works (EOTPW) is administering the funds for

• Draft CHST Plan cont. on p. 4

MPO TIP Amendment Released for Review



The Boston Region MPO is considering an amendment to the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2008 element of the FFYs 2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The proposed amendment would add several new transit projects and reallocate funding among several other transit

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The members of the Boston Region MPO: Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works, Cities of Boston, Newton, Salem, and Somerville, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Advisory Board, Massachusetts Highway Department, Massachusetts Port Authority, Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, Towns of Bedford, Framingham, and Hopkinton

Demand Increasing At Massachusetts Park-and-Ride Lots

Parking demand at park-and-ride lots in Massachusetts increased an average of 11 percent between May 2005 and May 2007. This trend may continue as fuel prices climb to record highs.

There are 39 park-and-ride lots, with a total of 6,886 spaces, operated by MassHighway and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority throughout the commonwealth. Some commuters use these lots for carpooling to work. Some lots serve as a meeting place for vanpools, and others have commercial bus service.

Three lots in Newton and one in Woburn are located near MBTA commuter rail stations.

Park-and-ride lots where bus service is available are more popular than those without it. In 2007, 73 percent of

spaces at park-and-ride lots with bus service were utilized, compared with 27 percent of spaces at lots without bus service.

Convenience also seems to be a factor in parking utilization rates. Park-and-ride lots that are located within one-half mile of a highway interchange tend to have a higher parking utilization rate than those located farther from highway access points. Most lots with low (less than 10 percent) utilization are located more than two miles from the nearest interchange.

With an average statewide parking utilization of 51 percent in 2007, there is room at most lots to accommodate continuing growth in utilization. The Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works (EOTPW) is working with interested municipalities

and MassCommute, the association of transportation management associations in Massachusetts, to identify locations for new park-and-ride lots.

EOTPW collected the parking utilization data, and MPO staff conducted the analysis as part of the MPO's ongoing Mobility Management System (MMS), which is a component of the MPO's metropolitan transportation planning process. For detailed information on each park-and-ride lot, as well as an interactive map of all park-and-ride lots in Massachusetts, visit www.bostonmpo.org.

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June 26 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. *Conference Room 4. 10:00 AM*

June 30 (Monday)

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

AT OTHER BOSTON AREA LOCATIONS

June 2 (Monday)

Green Line Extension Project Advisory Group. *St. Clement High School, New Parish Hall, 579 Boston Avenue, Medford. 4:00 PM*

June 5 (Thursday)

Boston Region MPO Forum: Draft Interim Coordinated Human-Services Transportation Plan. *Boston Public Library, 700 Boylston Street, Copley Square, Boston. 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM*

June 16 (Monday)

MassHighway Public Hearing: Proposed Bridge Replacement over Belle Isle Inlet at Saratoga Street (Route 145) in Boston and Main Street in Winthrop. *Winthrop Senior Center, 35 Harvard Street, Winthrop. 7:00 PM*

June 18 (Wednesday)

MassHighway Public Hearing: Proposed Pleasant Street and Morse Street Intersection Improvements and Signalization in Norwood. *Norwood Public Safety Building, 135 Nahaton Street, Norwood. 7:00 PM*



UTILIZATION OF MASSHIGHWAY AND MASSACHUSETTS TURNPIKE AUTHORITY PARK-AND-RIDE LOTS

- LOT UTILIZATION***
- Full (>85% of capacity)
 - Partially utilized (50%-85%)
 - Underutilized (<50%)

*EOTPW Planning, 2007 survey

- LOT SIZE**
- 301-600
 - 151-300
 - 76-150
 - 1-75

- LOT OWNERSHIP**
- MassHighway
 - ▲ MassPike

MBTA Begins Summer Weekend Commuter Rail Bike Train Service

This season the MBTA has made it easier to bicycle to more beaches by expanding the service begun last year on the Rockport Line, out of

North Station. This year the MBTA has added bike trains to the Greenbush Line, out of South Station. Specially equipped bike coaches com-

fortably accommodate bikes, passengers, and gear, making it convenient to go car-free to places such as Nantasket, on the South Shore, or Cape Ann, on the North Shore. The schedule at the left lists the departure and arrival times for this seasonal service, which began on Memorial Day weekend.

• *Green Line cont. from p. 1*
Green Line trains. These recommendations reflect engineering and operating considerations, ridership concerns, and community feedback received from the Project Advisory Group and station-siting workshops that were held in February. The project team will continue to develop and refine these recommendations, incorporating ongoing feedback from the Project Advisory Group and additional public comments.

EOTPW will be presenting the revised recommendations in a series of evening public meetings to be held in the

• *Green Line cont. on p. 4*

Weekend Bike Trains to the South Shore			
DEPARTS	TIME	ARRIVES	TIME
South Station	8:05 AM	Greenbush Station	9:02 AM
South Station	11:03 AM	Greenbush Station	12:02 PM
Greenbush Station	12:20 PM	South Station	1:18 PM
Greenbush Station	6:30 PM	South Station	7:27 PM

Weekend Bike Trains to the North Shore			
DEPARTS	TIME	ARRIVES	TIME
North Station	10:15 AM	Rockport Station	11:27 AM
North Station	2:15 PM	Rockport Station	3:22 PM
Rockport Station	12:00 PM	North Station	1:07 PM
Rockport Station	5:10 PM	North Station	6:22 PM

Boston Region MPO Action Items

Documents Approved for Public Review:

- Draft Amendment to the federal fiscal years 2007–2010 Transportation Improvement Program (Comment period to close on June 25; see related article on page 1.)
- Draft Interim Coordinated Human-Services Transportation Plan (Comment period to close on June 10; see related article on page 1 and calendar on pages 1 and 2 for information on public forums.)

Work Program Approvals:

- An Assessment of the Dudley South/Silver Line Phase IV Corridor, to be conducted by the Central Transportation Planning Staff on behalf of the MBTA.
- I-495 Study from I-90 to I-290, to be conducted by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) on behalf of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

The May meeting of the Advisory Council featured three presentations. The first was on a proposed amendment to the 2008 element of the FFYs 2007–2010 TIP by Hayes Morrison, the MPO's TIP Manager (see related article on page 1).

Next, Holly St. Clair, Data Center Manager at MAPC, presented changes to the region's land-use model.

After being adjusted for neighboring regional planning associations' growth projections and for aggressive smart-growth targets in the region, the revised land-use assumption will influence transportation modeling for the upcoming amendment to JOURNEY TO 2030, the MPO's long-range transportation plan.

The final presentation was on the MPO's Walkable Community Workshops (a free program provided to communities in the region that wish to improve their walking environ-

ment) by Cathy Buckley Lewis, MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager. At the workshops, MPO staff present common challenges and solutions related to pedestrian mobility; conduct a "walking audit" of a host-selected neighborhood; and facilitate local coordination for taking further action.

ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MBTA (AACT) UPDATE

The MBTA Office for Transportation Access (OTA) announced that serial produc-

tion of the MBTA's 155 new Flyer emission-control-diesel buses began in March. The first seven have been delivered and are undergoing inspection by the Department of Public Utilities. Delivery of the remaining buses will continue through the end of 2008.

OTA has also notified the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) about the need for the MWRTA to prepare to assume responsibility for providing paratransit service in Framingham and Natick as of July 1, 2009.

● **Draft CHST Plan** *cont. from p. 1*
all three programs, and only projects derived from the locally developed CHST Plan can be funded through the three programs.

The MPO's draft interim CHST Plan includes an inventory of a broad range of public transit and other



transportation service options, describes areas for potential improvements, and lists criteria that could be used to evaluate and prioritize proposals.

To further develop the CHST Plan, the MPO is soliciting input from stakeholders, such as transportation providers, human services agencies, councils on

aging, workforce investment boards, and members of the public on the unmet transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, individuals with limited incomes, and reverse commuters.

The MPO welcomes ideas for meeting these needs, especially ideas related to achieving efficiencies in service delivery. A 14-day comment period for the draft interim plan will close on June 10, 2008.

The interim plan is available at www.bostonmpo.org. Anyone who is unable to attend the forums listed in the calendar on pages 1 and 2 of this issue is encouraged to use the website to provide input. Comments may also be sent via U.S. mail to: David Mohler, MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee Chairman, Boston Region MPO, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116 .

For more information, contact Annette Demchur at annetted@bostonmpo.org or (617) 973-7140.

● **TIP Amendment** *cont. from p. 1*
programs, remove two highway projects, and add four other highway projects.

The public comment period for the proposed amendment began on May 27 and will close on June 25 at 5:00 PM. A meeting of the Boston Region MPO to consider endorsement is scheduled for June 26.

Copies of the amendment, as well as meeting information, are available at www.bostonmpo.org or by contacting Hayes Morrison, TIP Manager, Boston MPO, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, 02116-3968; (617) 973-7129 (voice); (617) 973-7089 (TTY); (617) 973-8855 (fax); or hayesm@bostonmpo.org (e-mail). Copies in accessible formats are available upon request.

● **Green Line** *cont. from p. 3*
summer. These meetings will allow residents of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford to comment on these recommendations. EOTPW also welcomes public comments at www.GreenLineExtension.org.

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