

TRANS REPORT

TRANSPORTATION NEWS FROM THE BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

MBTA Begins Public Education Campaign on Automated-Fare-Collection System

The MBTA has unveiled Easy Way, an upcoming program of service enhancements centered on a new automated-fare-collection system that will revolutionize how customers pay for their rides. The T will phase in the system over a two-year period. Tokens will eventually be replaced by new fare media, the CharlieCard and the CharlieTicket.

The MBTA began to familiarize the public with the two new fare media on November 8 at an event held outside Government Center Station. The highlight was a rendition by the Kingston Trio, aided by Governor Mitt Romney, of the group's



Standing left to right with the Kingston Trio: MBTA General Manager Michael Mulhern, Transportation Secretary Daniel Grabauskas, FTA Regional Administrator Richard Doyle, and Governor Mitt Romney

1959 hit "Charlie on the MTA." The CharlieCard and CharlieTicket are named after the everyman hero of the song, who was unable to pay the nickel MTA exit fare.

program will be systemwide safety enhancements, and customer service agents available at stations throughout the system to assist passengers.

The new fare-collection system will also feature new fare gates that replace existing turnstiles, fare vending machines in stations, and new fareboxes on buses and light rail vehicles. Other components of the Easy Way pro-

The transition to Easy Way will begin on the Silver Line this winter with a test run of the new fareboxes to determine how well they work and identify necessary modifications. In this preview phase, selected participants will be given a "smart card" that is a test version of the CharlieCard. Participants will be asked to provide feedback to the MBTA during and after the preview period, which will conclude in spring of 2005. During this farebox preview, Silver Line customers will be the first to interact with new fare

■ MBTA Fare Collection *cont. on p. 3*

Smart Growth Urged at Forum

What are the "three B" land uses necessary to attract young workers? "Beer, books, and bistros," said Secretary Ranch Kimball of the Executive Office of Economic Development. They want places where they can socialize with friends, buy books, and have dinner.

Secretary Kimball was speaking on November 19 at a forum held at Suffolk University in Boston on smart growth in the metropolitan region. Broadly, smart growth consists of practices fostering livable communities that use resources efficiently. It could be called the opposite of sprawl.

The secretary went on to say that smart growth is job growth. The number one issue for companies considering locating here is now housing costs, not taxes, as Massachusetts is now 47th in the nation in terms of the total tax burden as a percentage of income.

Secretary Douglas Foy of the Office for Commonwealth Development (OCD), sponsor of the event, spoke of reforming governmental regulations that have discouraged smart growth, such as the state's paying 80 to 90 percent of the cost of

■ Smart-Growth Forum *cont. on p. 2*

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED FOR STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REVISION PROCESS

The Executive Office of Transportation and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection will hold a public meeting this month to discuss the process for revisiting the Central Artery transit commitments, and possible changes to the transit regulation, that are currently contained in the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The public meeting will be held on **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, at 1:00 P.M. in Gardner Auditorium at the State House.**

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BOSTON REGION MPO ACTIVITIES



BOSTON REGION MPO ACTION ITEMS

In November the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approved the work program for the Mid-North Shore Transportation Study, which will be conducted by the Central Transportation Planning Staff on behalf of the MPO. The objectives of the study are to:

- Develop multimodal strategies for addressing congestion-related transportation concerns in Lynn, Swampscott, and southern Salem.
- Assist the MBTA in assessing conditions in these communities in support of its preparation of the North Shore Transit Improvements draft environmental impact statement and its application for capital funding for these improvements under the federal New Starts program.
- Assess the effectiveness of the North Shore Bus Improvements Study recommendations that have been implemented.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

At the November Advisory Council meeting, members added their ideas for the future of the region to the inventory being gathered by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and its partners as part of the MetroFuture initiative to develop metropolitan Boston's vision for its future and a strategy to get there. An increase in transit-oriented development, more transit (including intrasuburban services), shorter commute times and distances, a regionwide network of multiuse paths, and more regional planning were among the members' many goals for the region.

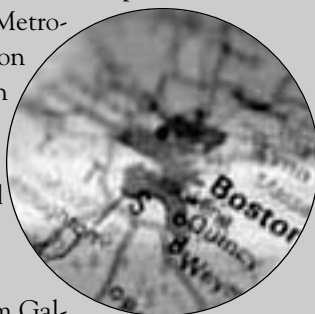
The visioning session was led by Barbara Lucas and Jim Gallagher of MAPC. MetroFuture is an updating of MetroPlan, the agency's 1990 regional long-range plan. The project is being undertaken by MAPC and such partners as the Boston Foundation, the Boston College Citizen Seminars, and the University of Massachusetts Boston.

The December Council meeting will feature a discussion of the MBTA's draft fiscal years 2005–2010 Capital Investment Program.

ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MBTA (AACT) UPDATE

On December 15, AACT will hold its regular monthly meeting—see page 4 for details—and, at the same location, its annual holiday party. The party will begin at 11:30 A.M. and be immediately followed by the meeting at 1:00 P.M. A \$3.00 advance donation is suggested to help cover the cost of refreshments. AACT members, CTPS and MBTA staff, and RIDE service vendors have attended this popular event for more than 25 years.

For further information contact AACT Coordinator Janie Guion at (617) 973-7507 (voice) or (617) 973-7089 (TTY).



■ Smart-Growth Forum *cont. from p. 1*

new schools but only 40 percent for rehabilitation. This has resulted in schools being located in undeveloped parts of our communities, and the central schools—schools within walking distance of more homes—closing down. He spoke of the growing obesity in our country and the need to allow children to walk to school, to walk to the library.

Secretary Foy also related the obesity trend to increasing health costs in the state. Almost half of the state budget (\$11.5 billion of \$24 billion) is dedicated to Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies, and that cost is growing 10 percent a year, or about a billion dollars—twice the \$500 million operating budget of all the OCD agencies. At this rate, he noted, the entire state budget would be taken over by HHS in seven years.

Marc Racicot of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council highlighted smart growth efforts underway at many spots in our region: Cronin's Landing in Waltham, downtown Canton, Milton Landing, the former LePage's glue factory in West Gloucester, and Summer Street housing in Manchester-by-the-Sea.

Journalists Neal Pierce and Curtis Johnson presented some results from their Boston Unbound study, funded by the Boston Foundation. This research explored the questions, What are the most pressing issues facing Boston? and, What are we to do about them? While we are still “comfortably uninterested in the views of outsiders,” the authors conclude that we are, with notable exceptions, “looking more and more like the rest of the country”: four-lane roads with tacky development. At the same time, nationally, there are 17 regions starting transit systems, 27 in the process, 24 in preliminary design, and 120 thinking about it. While this is good, they noted that Boston—lucky to have a good system—must compete more strenuously now for transit funds.

For more information about smart growth, sustainable-development initiatives, and policies such as “Communities First,” visit the OCD Web site at www.mass.gov/ocd/.



Bicyclist Access to Subways Expanded

The MBTA revised its bicycle policy in November, expanding both the number of bicycles allowed on Blue, Orange, and Red Line trains and the hours during

which they are permitted. Previously only two bicycles per entire train were allowed, and only between 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M., and after 7:30 P.M. The new policy allows two bicycles per indi-



Bicycles at Salem Station

vidual car on any Blue, Orange, or Red Line train at all times except during weekday rush hours (from 7:00 to 10:00 A.M. and from 4:00 to 7:00 P.M.).

The MBTA's bicycle policies on its other modes remain unchanged: Bicycles are

allowed on MBTA commuter boats at all times, and on commuter rail lines they are permitted during all hours of operation except weekday rush hours. The

rush hours, which vary by commuter rail line, are specified in each line's schedule. Bicycles are not allowed at any time on the Green Line, the Mattapan High Speed Line, or most bus routes. They are permitted on crosstown (CT) buses, which are equipped with bicycle racks.

The MBTA has implemented the revised policy on a trial basis and will review its impact on congestion and safety on both trains and platforms in six months.

MBTA to Phase In New Fare-Collection Media

■ MBTA Fare Collection *cont. from p. 1* equipment that will accept dollar bills and coins, existing MBTA monthly passes, CharlieTickets, and the CharlieCard.

In the spring of 2005 the MBTA will expand the use of the CharlieTicket to the Blue Line, and later that summer to the Red, Orange, and Green subway lines. The entire system conversion will continue (station by station and bus by bus) for approximately 18 months. The CharlieTicket with magnetic stripe will be introduced first.

The CharlieTicket is a magnetically encoded ticket that will either contain stored value or act as a T pass. A stored value CharlieTicket will have your fare deducted from it each time you ride the T, allowing you to pay as you go on the subway and bus. A CharlieTicket encoded as a pass will function the way passes do today. The CharlieTickets can

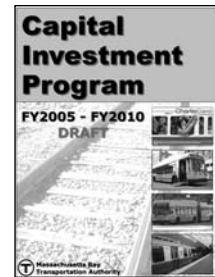
also be used at the new fareboxes, which will be installed on all bus and light rail vehicles.

When all the equipment is installed system-wide, the MBTA will introduce the more permanent, plastic CharlieCard with a computer chip. The CharlieCard is a smart card that will provide an even greater level of convenience and faster service.

The CharlieCard will be a "contactless" smart card: it will not need inserting into a farebox or faregate (like a token or a ticket). It simply will need to be waved near the CharlieCard "target," which will make travel faster. CharlieCards can be reused over time and you will be able to add stored value and passes to your card at vending machines, fareboxes, MBTA ticket offices, and online. You will eventually be able to use a credit or debit card to automatically update your CharlieCard with new passes and value. While the CharlieTicket will continue to be available, tokens will be phased out after the automated system is fully introduced.



Public Meetings on MBTA Draft Capital Program



The MBTA has scheduled eight public meetings to be held this month on its draft fiscal years 2005–2010 Capital Investment Program (CIP), which was released to the public on November 19.

The draft document outlines a proposed program of \$196.4 million in planned capital expenditures for the next five years. It may be downloaded from the MBTA's Web site at www.mbta.com. A hard copy may be requested by writing to the MBTA's budget department at the address given below.

The meetings are the first step in an extensive public review process that will include review by the MBTA Advisory Board and the Massachusetts State Legislature. Details on the upcoming public meetings that will be held in the Boston Region MPO area are given on page 4.

Comments on the document may be e-mailed to the MBTA at cipinfo@mbta.com or sent via U.S. mail to the MBTA Budget Department, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116. The comment period will close on December 31, 2004.

A key component of this project will be customer service agents (CSAs), who will provide guidance in the stations. CSAs will provide a new level of service, assisting customers with equipment, providing information, and monitoring the station to improve safety and service. In addition, the MBTA will activate state-of-the-art Hub Stations within six of its existing subway stations, improving service and safety for both customers and employees. Personnel monitoring the Hub Stations will be able to direct CSAs to customers and will interact with customers via call boxes located throughout the system. By monitoring various signal and alarm systems, including closed circuit TV, the Hub Station employees will

■ MBTA Fare Collection *cont. on p. 4*

MEETING CALENDAR

The public is welcome to attend the following transportation-related meetings. A photo ID is usually required for access to meeting sites.

AT THE STATE TRANSPORTATION BUILDING, 10 PARK PLAZA, BOSTON

Thursday, December 2
**Boston Region MPO
 Transportation Planning and
 Programming Committee Meeting
 and Work Session** 10:00 A.M.
 MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150

Wednesday, December 8
**Regional Transportation
 Advisory Council** 3:00 P.M.
 Conference Room 4

Monday, December 13
**MBTA Rider Oversight
 Committee** 4:30 P.M.
 Conference Rooms 2 and 3

Wednesday, December 15
**Access Advisory Committee
 to the MBTA (AACT)** 1:00 P.M.
 Conference Rooms 2 and 3

Thursday, December 16
**Boston Region MPO
 Transportation Planning and
 Programming Committee Meeting** 10:00 A.M.
 MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150

**MBTA Public Hearing:
 Fiscal Years 2005–2010 Capital
 Investment Program** 5:30 P.M.
 Conference Rooms 2 and 3

Thursday, January 6
**Boston Region MPO
 Transportation Planning and
 Programming Committee Work Session** 10:00 A.M.
 MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150

Call (617) 222-5179 for date
MBTA Board of Directors 1:00 P.M.
 Conference Rooms 2 and 3

AT OTHER BOSTON-AREA LOCATIONS

Wednesday, December 1
**MBTA Public Hearing:
 Fiscal Years 2005–2010 Capital
 Investment Program** 6:00 P.M.
 Malden City Hall
 Council Chambers
 200 Pleasant Street, Malden

Monday, December 6
**MBTA Public Hearing:
 Fiscal Years 2005–2010 Capital
 Investment Program** 6:00 P.M.
 Braintree Town Hall Auditorium
 1 JFK Memorial Drive, Braintree

**MassHighway Public Meeting:
 Proposed Bridge Street Bypass
 in Salem** 7:00 P.M.
 Carlton Elementary School
 10 Skerry Street, Salem

Tuesday, December 7
**MassHighway Public Hearing:
 Sudbury Road Bridge
 Rehabilitation in Concord** 7:00 P.M.
 Concord Public Works
 1st Floor Conference Room
 141 Keys Road, Concord

Monday, December 13
**MBTA Public Hearing:
 Fiscal Years 2005–2010 Capital
 Investment Program** 6:00 P.M.
 Newton City Hall
 War Memorial Auditorium
 1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton

Tuesday, December 14
**Department of Environmental
 Protection/Executive Office of
 Transportation Public Hearing:
 State Implementation Plan (SIP)
 Commitments** 1:00 P.M.
 Gardner Auditorium
 State House, Boston

**MBTA Public Hearing:
 Fiscal Years 2005–2010 Capital
 Investment Program** 6:00 P.M.
 Vietnamese American
 Community Center
 44 Charles Street, Dorchester

**MassHighway Public Hearing:
 Proposed Improvements to Pond
 Street (Route 115) in Norfolk** 7:00 P.M.
 Freeman Centennial School
 70 Boardman Street, Norfolk

Meeting dates and times are subject to change: please call (617) 973-7119 for confirmation. Additional transportation meetings open to the public are listed on the Boston Region MPO Web site, www.bostonmpo.org.

■ MBTA Fare Collection *cont. from p. 3*
 be able to deploy personnel and other resources as needed to respond efficiently to service or safety matters.

The MBTA is employing an array of techniques to ensure a successful transition to the new system. One is the distribution of *Easy Way News*, a newsletter that will highlight the system's progress and performance. Another is a dedicated page on the MBTA's Web site containing regularly updated information on the new system and its implementation. To access this page, visit www.mbta.com and click on the CharlieCard icon.

TRANSREPORT

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TRANSREPORT is available in accessible formats to people with disabilities. Contact the Central Transportation Planning Staff Certification Activities Group at (617) 973-7119 (voice), (617) 973-7089 (TTY), (617) 973-8855 (fax), or publicinformation@bostonmpo.org (e-mail).

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