

TRANS REPORT

TRANSPORTATION NEWS FROM THE BOSTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Major Temporary Traffic Change on I-93 Southbound

On April 4 Boston drivers saw the largest traffic rerouting of the Central Artery/Tunnel project to date, the closing of one lane of traffic on I-93 southbound between Exit 23 (Purchase Street/South Station) and Exit 20 (I-90/MassPike/West Albany Street). This temporary traffic configuration, the last major traffic change of the entire project, will allow work crews to refurbish the eastern side of the 45-year-old Dewey Square Tunnel near South Station. When it is completed in early 2005, the new Dewey Square Tunnel will accommodate six lanes of traffic.

"This is the most challenging shift of traffic the project has done," said Massachusetts Turnpike Authority Chairman Matthew J. Amorello.

During the construction period, traffic will be shifted to the right into the new, western side of the tunnel. Under the new configuration, the two right-hand lanes of I-93 southbound will continue through the Dewey Square Tunnel. The far left lane will split off, bringing drivers onto the Exit 22 ramp to the Surface Artery near South Station. From there, motorists can return to I-93 South, I-90 (MassPike) West, or Albany Street by traveling four blocks along the Surface Artery and getting back onto the highway at Kneeland Street.

Drivers in downtown Boston are asked to try to avoid using the I-93 southbound tunnel. Instead of using the Haymarket on-ramp, drivers in the Government Center area should use Congress Street to access the highway system via the Surface Artery near South Station.

For more information or updates on the Central Artery/Tunnel project, visit www.bigdig.com.

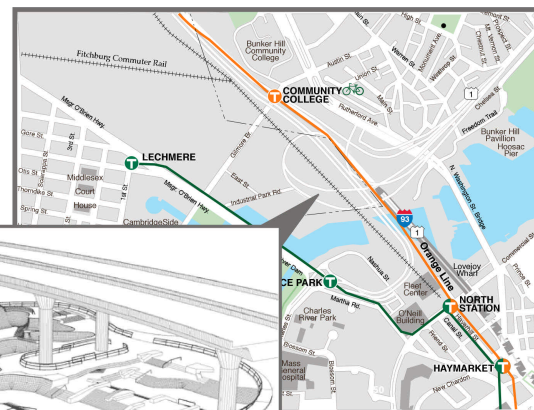
Charles River Skatepark Design Unveiled

The preliminary design of the Charles River Skatepark was presented in April by the Santa Cruz, California-based firm Wormhoudt, Inc. The \$1.1 million skate park is planned to occupy 40,000 square feet under Interstate 93 in East Cambridge.

The park's design features elements tailored to skaters ranging from beginner to expert and gives it the potential to serve as a venue for skateboarding competitions and expositions. In addition to areas for skateboarders, the design provides specific areas for BMX-bike riders and inline skaters.

Since 2000 the Charles River Conservancy, an advocacy group focused on the Charles River parklands, has advocated for a skate park as part of the Central Artery/Tunnel project mitigation. The group is working on raising the money to build the facility.

The park is planned to be located in the Artery project's parcel 29F, the last section of New Basin land to be designed as part of the mitigation efforts. It is intended to be built simultaneously with playing fields and parklands currently being considered for the other parts of the parcel. The skate park is expected to open in 2006.



Graphic courtesy of Charles River Conservancy Web site

Design for Charles River Skatepark in East Cambridge

Transportation Celebrated in the Month of May

May 16–22 is National Transportation Week, which provides an opportunity for the transportation community to join together in promoting greater awareness of the importance of transportation. Exhibits created by several agencies will be displayed in the State Transportation Building during that week.

MassBike is sponsoring Massachusetts Bike Week 2004, which will be May 15–23. A list of events is available on MassBike's Web site, www.massbike.org.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MPO activities update	2
Logan runway funding	2
WiFi at Logan's Terminal E	2
Green Line's B branch	3
MPO municipal election	3
Meeting calendar	4



BOSTON MPO ACTION ITEMS

On April 22 the MPO's Transportation Planning and Programming Committee voted to release for public comment a [proposed amendment](#) to the fiscal years 2004–08 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that involves changes to the fiscal year 2004, 2005, and 2006 highway and transit elements and the fiscal year 2004 bridge program. The proposal would change the program year for several projects and add several projects not previously programmed. Cost adjustments are recommended for other projects in all three fiscal years. The new projects are:

- Route I-93/Route 125/Ballardvale in Wilmington (\$4 million).
- Route 1A/Route 121 (Wampum Corner) in Wrentham (\$550,000).
- Route 1/Route 97 (High Street) in Topsfield (\$575,000).
- Silver Line, Phase III (\$2.46 million federal earmark).
- Auburndale Station Access Improvements (\$368,000 federal earmark)
- Malden Center Station (\$2.2 million).
- Fairmount Line Improvements (funding to be identified).
- Laurence Intermodal Center (\$3 million).

To request a copy of the proposed amendment, contact the TIP coordinator, Jonathan Church, at (617) 973-7097 or jchurch@ctps.org. It is also available at www.bostonmpo.org. *The public comment period will close at 5:00 P.M., Monday, May 31, 2004.* Comments may be sent to Dennis A. DiZoglio, Chairman, Transportation Planning and Programming Committee, c/o CTPS, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116. Comments may also be sent by fax to (617) 973-8855 or e-mailed to publicinformation@bostonmpo.org.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

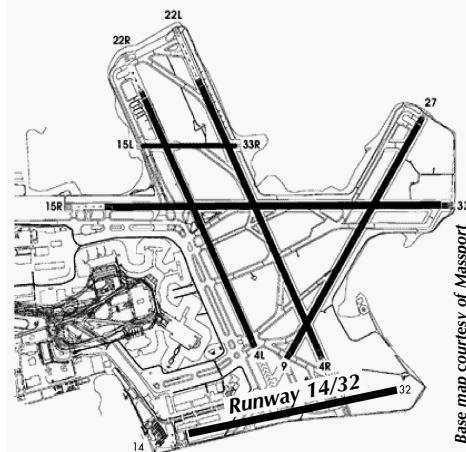
At the Advisory Council's April meeting, Boston Police Superintendent Robert Dunford briefed Council members on the transportation and security preparations underway for this summer's Democratic National Convention. The group discussed with him the proposed subway and commuter rail service changes, bus shuttle plans, and highway detours resulting from the closures of North Station and I-93. Superintendent Dunford also shared solutions to some of the logistical challenges posed by such an event in the post-9/11 era.

Also in April, Council members and their guests toured the three phases of the MBTA's Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit Project in one of the new high-tech, high-capacity, CNG-powered vehicles now in Phase I service between downtown Boston and Dudley Square. At the May meeting, the Council will hear a presentation from a representative of MassRIDES, the state's new travel-options program.

ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MBTA (AACT) UPDATE

At AACT's April meeting, members learned that the MBTA board of directors has approved the lease-purchase of 69 new lift-equipped paratransit vans from the Braun Corporation at a cost of \$2.6 million and heard details about the recently approved RIDE service contract. Service improvements include the capability for customers to book trips and check schedules via the Web and the option for drivers to automatically dial customers to announce their arrival.

Steve Spinetto, the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities for the City of Boston, is expected to make a presentation at AACT's May meeting (see page 4 for details). Also in May, AACT will have a display at the State Transportation Building during National Transportation Week (May 16 to 22). Assistive technology will be featured in the exhibit along with information about AACT and disability access.



Logan Airport, including the new runway

Logan Runway Receives Federal Support

U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta announced on March 29 a federal commitment of \$90.8 million for construction of a new runway and other projects at Boston's Logan International Airport that will allow the airport to reduce flight delays.

"Air travel is an engine of economic growth, and this investment will gear up Boston to tap into the resurgence of air travel," Secretary Mineta said.

Under the letter of intent, signed by the U.S. Department of Transportation's [Federal Aviation Administration](#) (FAA) and the [Massachusetts Port Authority](#) (Massport), the FAA will provide funding to Massport for the project between fiscal years 2005 and 2012.

In addition to creating a new runway, 14/32, the funds will be used to construct, reconfigure, and extend taxiways.

WiFi at Logan's Terminal E

High-speed, wireless Internet access (WiFi) is now available to the public throughout Logan International Airport's Terminal E for use with WiFi-enabled devices such as laptops and PDAs. The fee is \$7.95 per day. WiFi access to Logan flight information via Massport's Web site, www.massport.com, is provided free of charge in the terminal.

The Terminal E system is the first phase of an airport-wide WiFi system. Massport plans to launch the complete system this June.

Green Line B Branch Service Enhancements

On April 20 the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority implemented the Stop-Elimination Pilot Program on the B branch of the Green Line. In order to reduce trip times on the Green Line's busiest branch, trolleys are bypassing four stops during a six-to-eight-month trial period. The Greycliff Road, Mt. Hood, Summit Avenue, and Fordham Road stops were chosen based on the average number of boardings and the proximity of other stops.

Serving the corridor of Commonwealth Avenue, trolleys on the B branch ordinarily make 22 stops along 3.94 miles of track. In contrast, trolleys on the Green Line's second-busiest branch, the D, make 13 stops over 9.17 miles.

Other improvements to the B branch:

- The Show-N-Go program, which shortens dwell times at stations by allowing monthly-pass holders to board through the rear doors after displaying their pass to an MBTA official on the platform. The program is in place at the Washington Street, Harvard Avenue, Packards Corner, and Blandford Street stops.
- More supervisory personnel along the line to closely monitor service and make schedule adjustments when necessary.
- The addition of more two-car trains, particularly at night and on weekends, to increase capacity on the line that serves two major college campuses.
- Platforms lengthened to accommodate three-car trains, which operate during peak commuting periods.
- Investment of \$6 million in track work and platform reconstruction.

The MBTA has established an e-mail address, greenline@mbta.com, for comments on the Stop-Elimination Pilot Program. As the trial period nears its end, MBTA staff will decide whether to permanently adopt the program, modify it, or restore the stops to service.

MPO Municipal Election

On May 26 the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will hold an election of municipal members at the Annual Spring Meeting of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council at the Marriott Newton Hotel. The MPO is a 14-member body, of which 7 members are local municipalities. The City of Boston is a permanent member, and the other 6 municipal members, 3 cities and 3 towns, are elected to three-year terms. Each year, one city and one town seat is up for election. This year, Everett runs unopposed for the city seat and Framingham runs unopposed for the town seat.

The following are the statements of candidacy provided by the nominees.

STATEMENT OF CANDIDACY

Community: City of Everett

Chief Elected Official: Mayor David Ragucci

Mayor David Ragucci was born and raised in the city of Everett. Prior to being elected mayor of the city of Everett, Mayor Ragucci served 18 years on the board of aldermen, of which he was president. He graduated from Boston State College with a degree in political science.

Mayor Ragucci, his wife Twinkx, and their two children—David, age 16, and Bianca, age 14—reside in the Village neighborhood of Everett.

Currently, Mayor Ragucci is vice chairperson of the Mystic Valley Development Commission, the agency overseeing the development of the River's Edge (formerly the TeleCom City) Project. Mayor Ragucci serves on the United States Conference of Mayors—Community Development Committee.

For the past eight years Mayor Ragucci has served as a member of the MWRA and the MBTA Advisory Board.

"Planning and overseeing local and regional transportation improvements has been and continues to be one of my top priorities. I strongly believe in quality public transportation and have supported many regional and local initiatives, not only within the Boston area but within

the entire MPO region. I have worked with fellow MPO members to endorse the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies formula for proposed federal funding for the Boston region.

"Today, the benefits of a comprehensive system of mass transit are of utmost importance to the working people, businesses, and the environment. If reelected to the MPO, I will continue to work with my fellow MPO members to propose and endorse projects that will benefit the residents and businesses within the MPO region. My past experience and skills will prove to be beneficial as we work together to effectively stand for our region's interests and communicate these interests in order to support local economics and improve our quality of life and the environment."

STATEMENT OF CANDIDACY

Community: Town of Framingham

Chief Elected Official: Selectman Christopher C. Ross, Chairman

Framingham is pleased to announce its candidacy for reelection to the Greater Boston MPO. Framingham has worked hard attending biweekly meetings plus subcommittee meetings to stay well informed on every federal, state, and local transportation issue, so that we are well-educated representatives for you.

We want to ensure that all 101 communities get an equal chance to comment on MPO work products, attend our expanded public-outreach meetings, and file projects for funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or other revenue sources.

Framingham speaks out often and loudly, expressing "local perspectives" on all fiscal and policy matters. We have been an effective voice, forcing changes in many MPO operating procedures with the aim of creating a "Real TIP" we all can use in making local transportation design and construction commitments. We pride ourselves in learning the details of your projects as well as our own. We want

■ MPO Election *cont.* on p. 4

MEETING CALENDAR

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

AT THE STATE TRANSPORTATION BUILDING, 10 PARK PLAZA, BOSTON

Thursday, May 6

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

Wednesday, May 12

**Regional Transportation
Advisory Council** 3:00 P.M.
Conference Room 4

Wednesday, May 19

**Access Advisory Committee
to the MBTA (AACT)** 1:00 P.M.
Conference Room 2

Monday, May 17

**MBTA Rider Oversight
Committee Meeting** 11:00 A.M.
MBTA Conference Room, 3rd Floor

Thursday, May 20

**Boston MPO Transportation
Planning and Programming
Committee Meeting** 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

Monday, May 3

**MBTA Community Meeting:
Preliminary 2004 Service Plan** 2:00 P.M.
Boston Public Library, Dudley Branch
65 Warren Street, Roxbury

**MBTA Community Meeting:
Preliminary 2004 Service Plan** 6:00 P.M.
Boston Public Library, Dudley Branch
65 Warren Street, Roxbury

Thursday, May 13

**MassHighway Public Hearing:
Proposed Cambridge-Somerville-
Belmont Bikeway Construction** 7:00 P.M.
Tufts Administration Building
Council on Aging Meeting Room
167 Holland Street, Somerville

Tuesday, May 18

**Central Artery Environmental
Oversight Committee Meeting** 3:00 P.M.
26th Floor Conference Center
60 State Street, Boston

Thursday, May 20

**MBTA Public Meeting:
Fellsway Bus Facility and
Wellington Station Improvements** 7:00 P.M.
McGlynn Middle School Auditorium
3004 Mystic Valley Parkway, Medford

Wednesday, May 26

**Metropolitan Area Planning
Council Annual Spring Meeting** 8:30 A.M.
Newton Marriott
2345 Commonwealth Avenue

Thursday, May 27

**MassHighway Public Hearing:
Proposed Improvement to Salem
Street in Wakefield** 7:00 P.M.
Wakefield Town Hall
First Floor Meeting Room
1 Lafayette Street, Wakefield

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 MPO Web site, at www.bostonmpo.org.

■ MPO Election cont. from p. 3

rules to equitably and consistently be applied to large and small communities whether they are from the inner core or the south, the west, or the north of our region. We worked hard to adopt selection criteria for both the Regional Plan and TIP, so that local governments could better understand the basis for funding decisions.

The chair of the board of selectmen is Christopher C. Ross, and the board has been sending Selectman Ginger Esty and Planning & Economic Development Director Kathleen Bartolini to represent them at MPO meetings. We are proud to represent you; please provide us the opportunity to continue.

TRANSREPORT

PRODUCED BY THE CENTRAL TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING STAFF

Editors

Sean Daly
Mary Ellen Sullivan

Graphics

Kate Parker
Ken Dumas

Contributors

Jonathan Church

PUBLISHED BY THE BOSTON METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Daniel A. Grabauskas, MPO Chairman
Dennis A. DiZoglio, Chair, and Barbara G. Lucas,
Vice Chair, Transportation Planning and
Programming Committee

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@ctps.org.

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

First Class Mail
U.S. Postage Paid
Boston, MA
Permit No. 52233